

Red Line Transit Impact Study Baseline Survey and Interview Summary Report

The Indianapolis Metropolitan Planning Organization, in cooperation with consultants The McCormick Group and SRF Consulting, completed a study on the current (or baseline) characteristics of IndyGo's Red Line Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) corridor. The first phase of the study included two survey components:

- Mailed and Online Surveys
 - Residents
 - Business Employees
- Interviews
 - Community Leaders
 - Anchor Institutions/Business Representatives

Resulting feedback through each component of the survey process was tabulated and analyzed to identify existing conditions for those living and/or working within a ½-mile radius of the Red Line corridor. Conditions included positive and negative perceptions of the project, demographic information, and current transportation behaviors. The overall findings are summarized, divided by each of the two survey components.

Mailed and Online Surveys

Resident

There were 2,614 resident responses to the mailed and online surveys. Approximately 37,000 residences within ½-mile of the 13.1-mile Red Line corridor were mailed surveys and linked to an online survey. The mailers and online survey were available for responses from December 11, 2017 to January 18, 2018.

For commuting to work, most corridor residents (79 percent) drive alone, with 5 percent walking, 4 percent using the bus, 3 percent biking, and 2 percent carpooling. The primary mode of transportation for non-work travel was still majority driving alone (67 percent), 16 percent carpooling, 7 percent walking, 4 percent using the bus, and 3 percent biking.

About 75% of respondents who don't currently use the bus said that a personal vehicle afforded them with greater convenience.

However, perceptions of the project remained positive, with 64 percent responding that the Red Line would improve access to downtown and positively influence downtown neighborhoods. Seven percent believe that the Red Line would personally benefit their work commute. About 30 percent of respondents hold a negative perception of the Red Line, seeing it as a project of limited value.

Business Employee

There were 470 business employee responses to the mailed and online surveys. Approximately 4,000 businesses located within ½-mile of the Red Line corridor were mailed surveys and linked to an online survey. The mailers and online survey were available from December 11, 2017 to January 18, 2018.

Of the responding businesses, 76 percent reported having 25 or fewer employees. Of all business respondents, 96 percent reported that their employer included free parking; 22 percent offered bike parking; and 4 percent offered bus passes.

Although 88 percent of those who responded that they currently commute to work via car, 15 percent said they would consider the Red Line as their primary mode of transportation upon project completion.

Interviews

Community Leader

This group consisted of ten neighborhood association and community development corporation representatives whose territories are included within the Red Line corridor study area. One-on-one interviews were conducted with participants between December 7, 2017 to December 20, 2017.

Overall, about 80 percent of community leaders interviewed felt that the Red Line would improve connectivity to work and neighborhoods. Some 90 percent believed that the project would move Indianapolis forward. Additionally, 50 percent felt the project would improve access to downtown and have a positive impact on downtown neighborhoods.

There were concerns regarding traffic congestion and the possibility of negative impacts to surrounding small businesses—especially during construction—which was cited by about 60 percent of those interviewed. Overall, this group felt that the Red Line's tradeoffs had been appropriately communicated by officials, but emphasized the importance of continued communication, especially through project construction to completion.

Anchor Institution/Business Representative

This group consisted of 18 human resources professionals representing anchor institutions and businesses within the Red Line corridor study area. One-on-one interviews were conducted with participants between December 7, 2017 to December 20, 2017, with a final anchor institution interview on February 6, 2018.

Overall, about 72 percent felt the Red Line would improve connectivity to work and neighborhoods, with some 44 percent believing that project would move Indianapolis forward. Fifty (50) percent felt it was unlikely that a prospective employee would be concerned with public transportation access to their site of employment, but estimated that roughly 6 to 10 percent currently use public transportation for their work commute.

All (100) percent of respondents noted that any transportation benefits currently offered by their companies are made at the corporate level, not individual sites. Of those, 83 percent currently offer free vehicle parking and 44 percent offer bike parking to their employees.