

Virginia Transit
Equity and
Modernization



Virginia Transit Equity and Modernization Study

Virginia Transit Association Conference
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Outline

1) Study overview

- Why is DRPT developing this study?
- Study goals
- Topic areas covered
- Timeline
- Progress to-date
- Equity principles

2) Transit Agency Survey Results

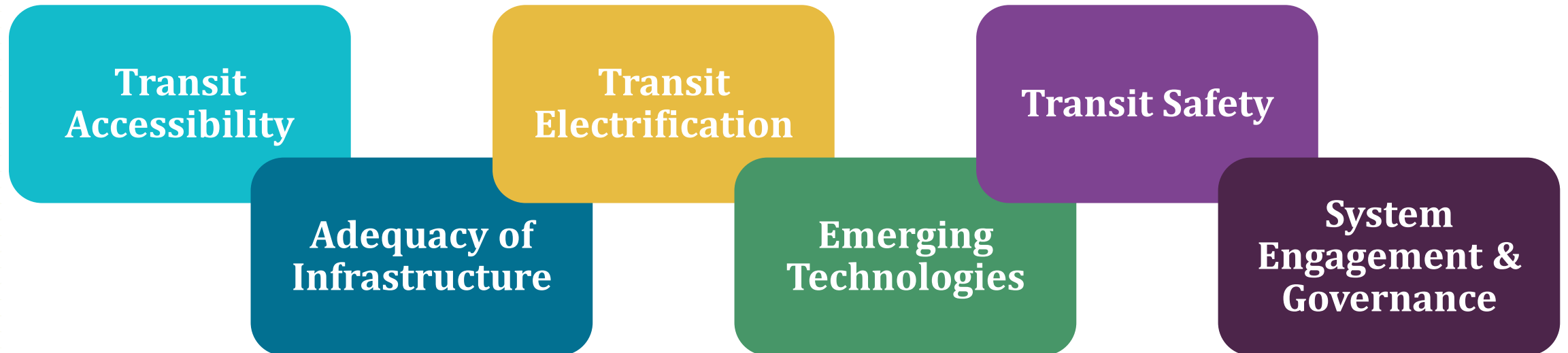
- Equity
- Accessibility
- Adequacy of Infrastructure
- Electrification
- Technology
- Safety
- System Engagement/Governance

Study Overview



How did we get here?

- HJ 542 (2021) bill passed
- The resolution requires exploring a variety of topics that will create recommendations to better equitable transit and forward modernization
- Emphasis on engagement opportunities for underrepresented communities



Study Goals

What will this study accomplish?

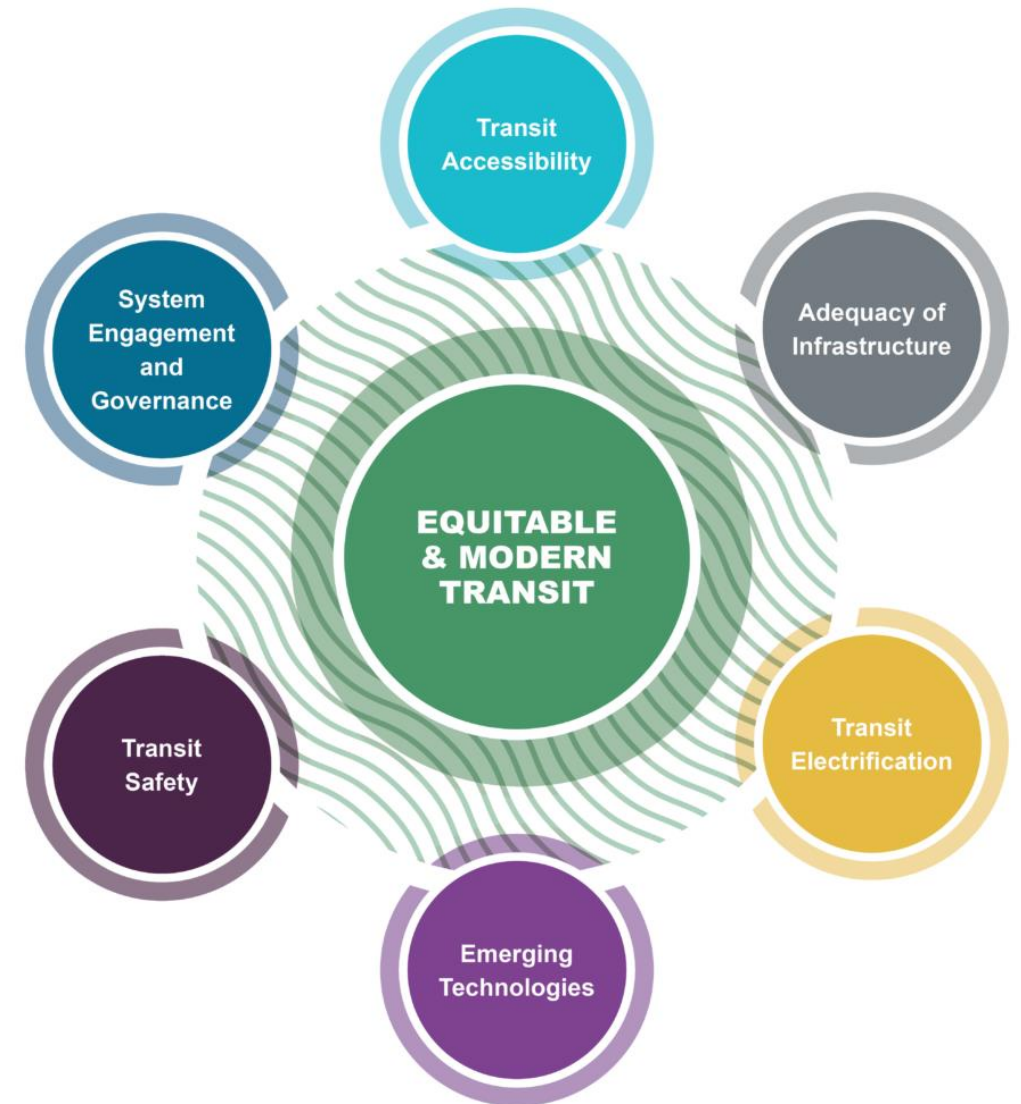
- ✓ Will identify transit agency, rider, and stakeholder needs
- ✓ Will develop an action plan to address those needs
- ✓ Define underrepresented and underserved communities

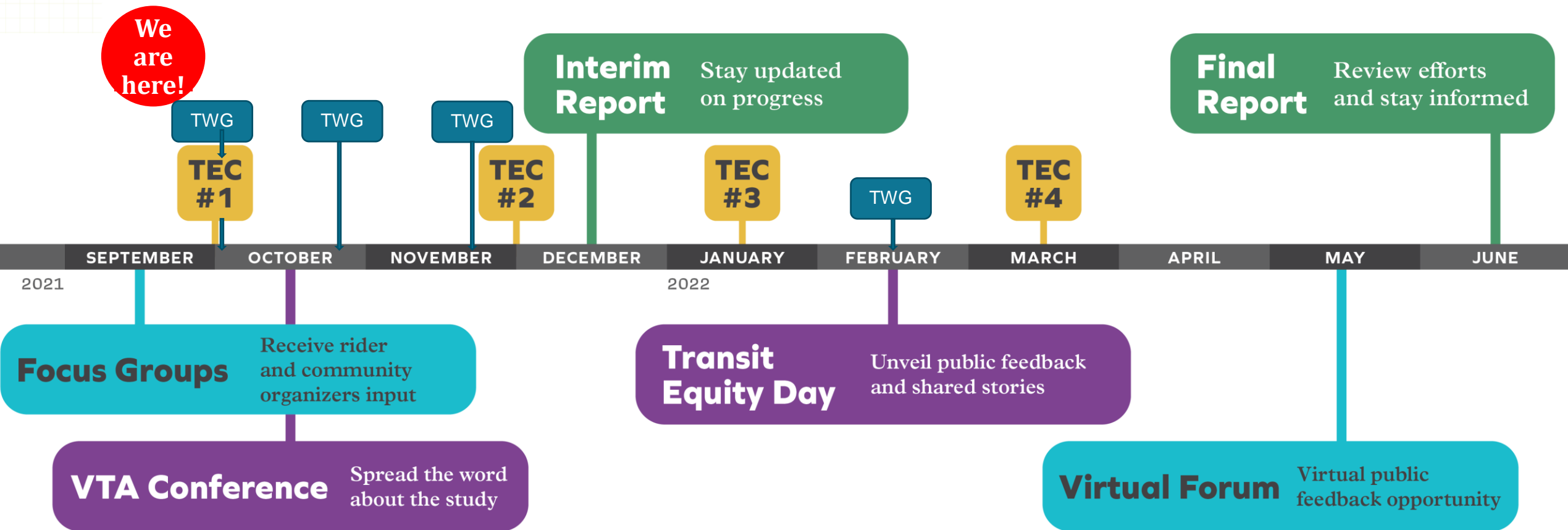
What will this study not accomplish?

- ✗ Will not be an asset inventory
- ✗ Will not single-out transit agencies for poor performance, conditions, etc.

The study will address:

- Opportunities or Gap Assessment of Transit Service
- Needs and barriers to improve transit infrastructure
- Opportunities to reduce carbon footprint through electrification
- Strategies to inform priorities of implementing emerging technologies
- Framework for identifying and engaging disadvantaged populations and underserved communities





Data Collection

Transit Agency Survey

- **39** responses from VA Transit Agencies
- 42-question survey
- Technical area data requests
- Agency transportation equity efforts

Transit Agency Data Collection

- GIS layers
- Board requirements
- Agency manuals & outreach plans
- Capital Programs
- National Transit Database
- TransAM

Virginia State Agency Data Collection

- Statewide GIS layers
- Standards, Requirements, and Guidance for Transit Agencies
- Fleet Data
- Title VI Plans
- Transit Strategic Plans
- PTASP



**Baseline
Conditions
Assessment**

**Note: Data requests included, but are not limited to items listed above*

Identifying needs and opportunities:

❖ Technical Working Groups

- ❖ Each topic area (6) meets with transit agency leaders and industry partners 4 times at key points in the study for feedback

❖ Transit Equity Committee

- ❖ Transit agency executives provide an equity lens on findings

📅 Technical Area Recommendations & Findings

- 📅 Technical Memos – Fall 2021

📅 Interim Study

- 📅 To General Assembly – December 2021

✓ Completed

❖ Underway

📅 Upcoming

Community Engagement

✓ Focus Groups

- ✓ 8 focus groups – September 2021
- ✓ Riders, Paratransit riders, Rider Advisory Councils, and Community Organizers

✓ Study Website

- ✓ Launched on September 20th

✓ Outreach Kits

- ✓ Kits include rack cards and window clings for agencies to spread the word

❖ Open-Comment Database

- ❖ Allows comments from public through website

📅 Virtual Public Forum

- 📅 Spring 2022

📅 Transit Equity Committee

- 📅 Transit agency executives provide an equity lens on findings

✓ Completed

❖ Underway

📅 Upcoming

Equality vs Equity

Equality



Equity

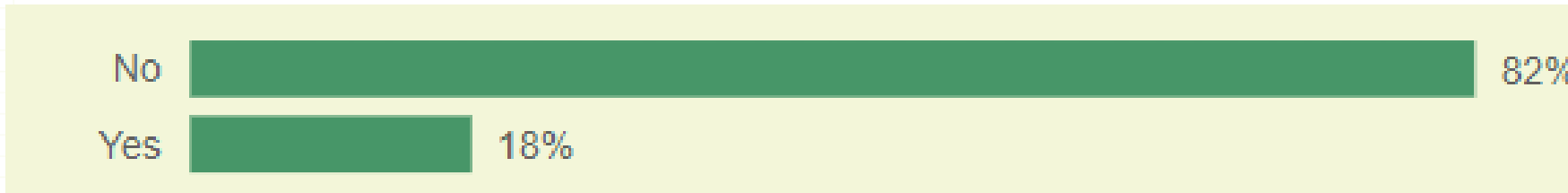


Transit Agency Survey Results

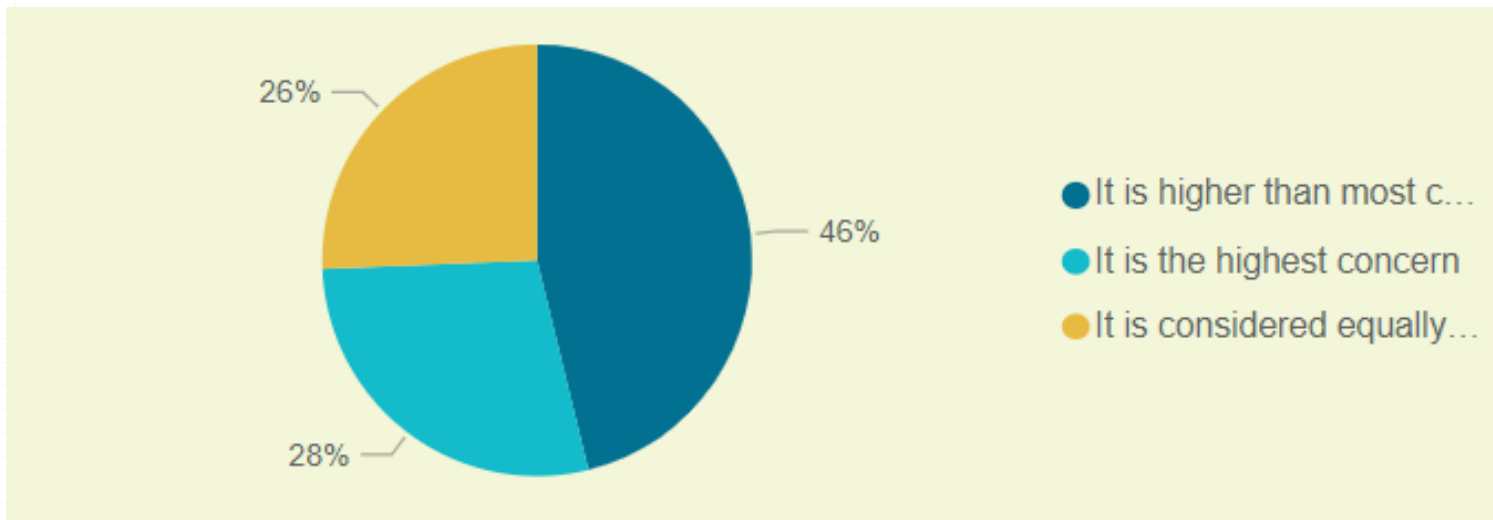


Equity

Does your agency have an equity policy beyond Title VI requirements?



How important is providing equitable transit service relative to other factors?



Accessibility

Does your agency collect data on people's ability to access key destinations via transit?



What are the barriers to ensuring transit accessibility to services/destinations in your community?

- Funding to extend service (span and coverage)
- Ability to reach rural/remote parts of the community
- Permitting/approval process to install basic amenities/infrastructure
- Workforce shortage to extend service
- Safe and accessible bus stops
- Lack of coordination with other providers (service, fares, etc.)

Adequacy of Infrastructure

What percentage of your bus stops have basic amenities?

Average: 43%

- 8 agencies indicated 100%
- 7 agencies indicated 10% or less
- 8 agencies indicated that they do not have this data or N/A

What are the key challenges with installing bus stop amenities in your service area?

- Challenge of working with private property owners
- Historic districts
- Roadway design
- Not enough space
- Funding

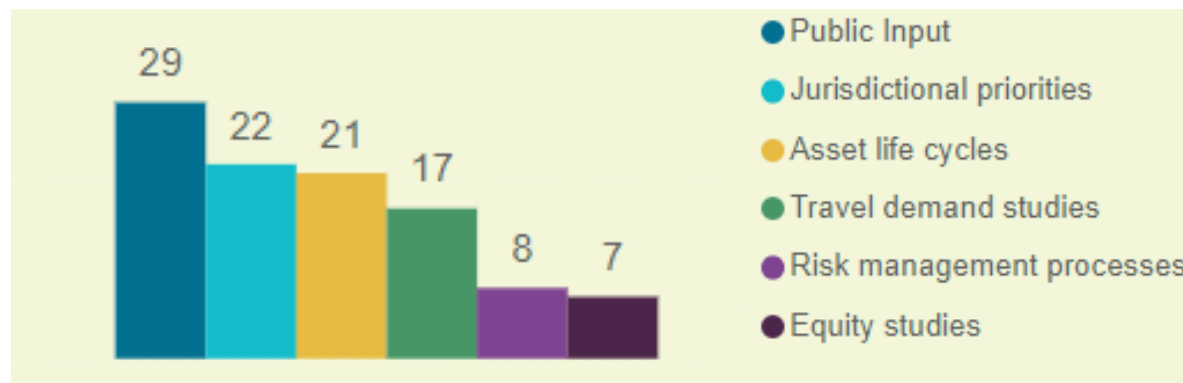
Adequacy of Infrastructure

What percentage of your bus stops are adjacent to sidewalks?

Average: 58%

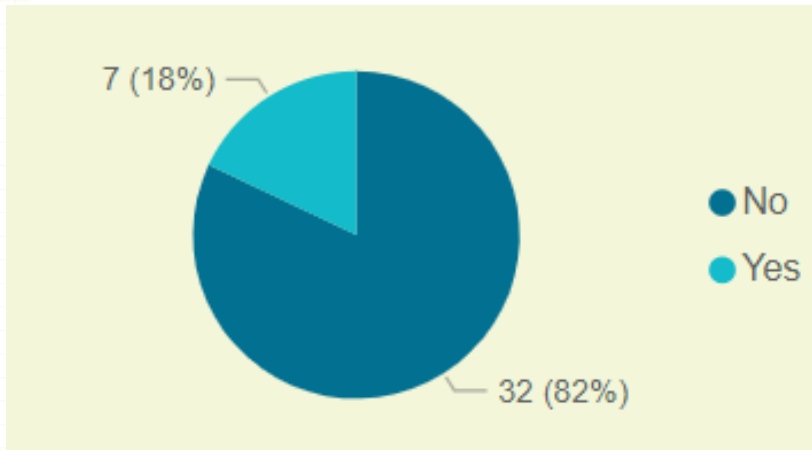
- 1 agency indicated 100%
- 13 agencies indicated 50% or less
- 12 agencies indicated that they do not have this data or N/A

How does your agency determine when and where transit infrastructure investments are needed?

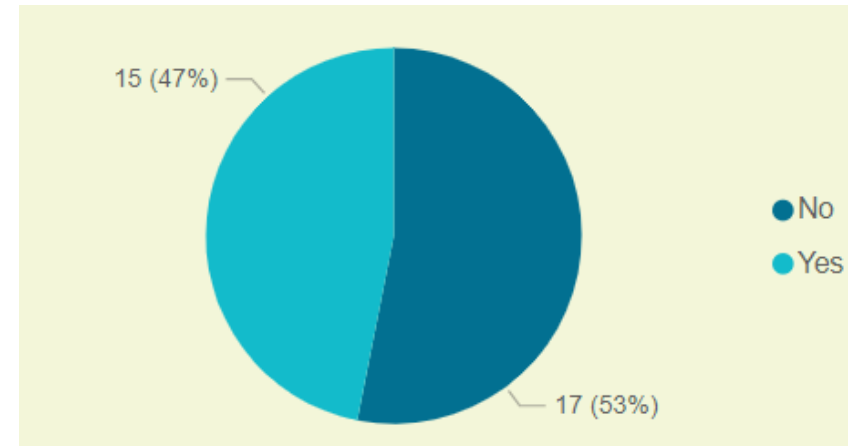


Transit Electrification

Has your agency defined a goal to convert to Zero Emission Bus (ZEB)?

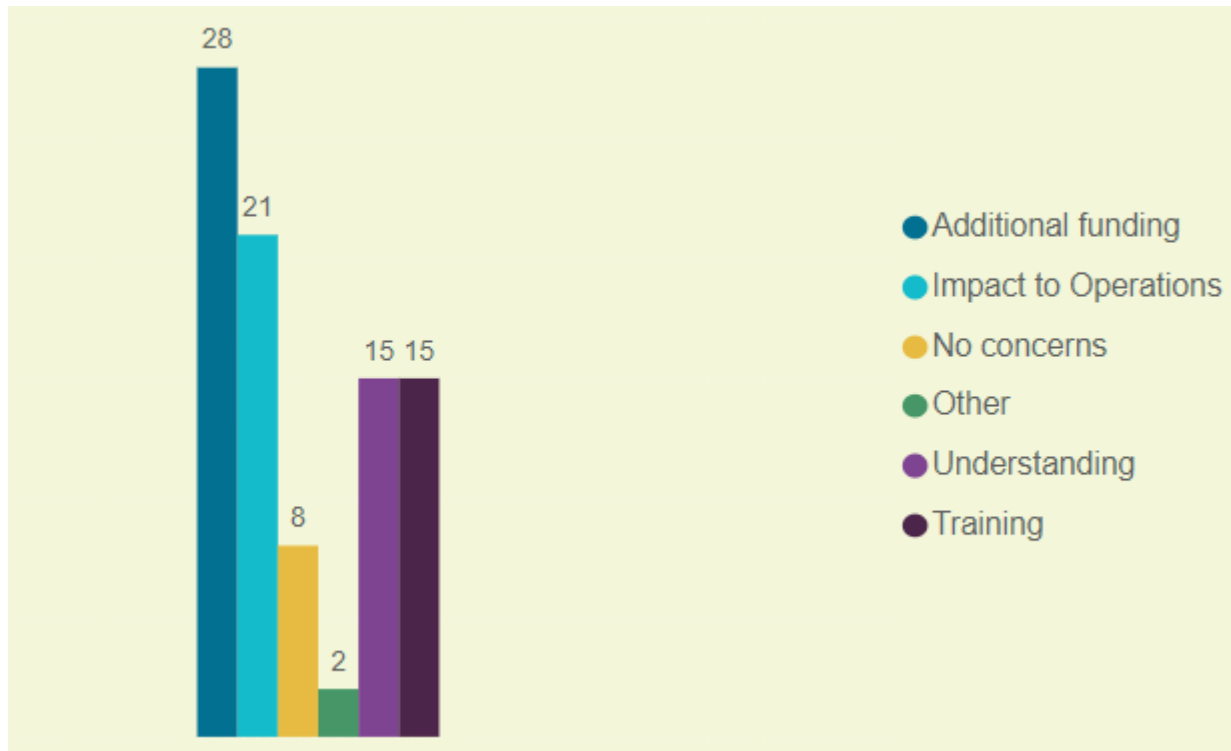


If no, is your agency discussing or considering how to approach a ZEB policy?



Transit Electrification

What concerns do you have about integrating ZEBs into your fleet?



Technology

Which technologies is your transit system most interested in implementing?

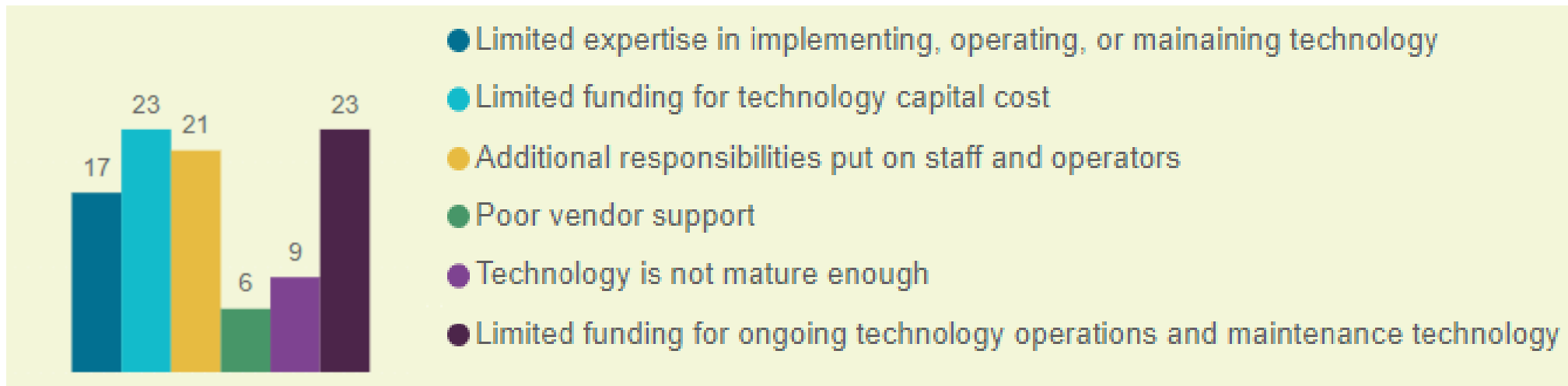
- APCs
- Real-time vehicle tracking
- Electric buses
- Mobility-on-Demand services
- GTFS-Real Time

In what ways can DRPT support your agency?

- Procurement
- Data standards and guidance
- Technical assistance
- Identifying reliable vendors

Technology

What are the biggest barriers to implementing transit technology?



Transit Safety

How does your agency communicate safety policies outlined in your PTASP to frontline employees?

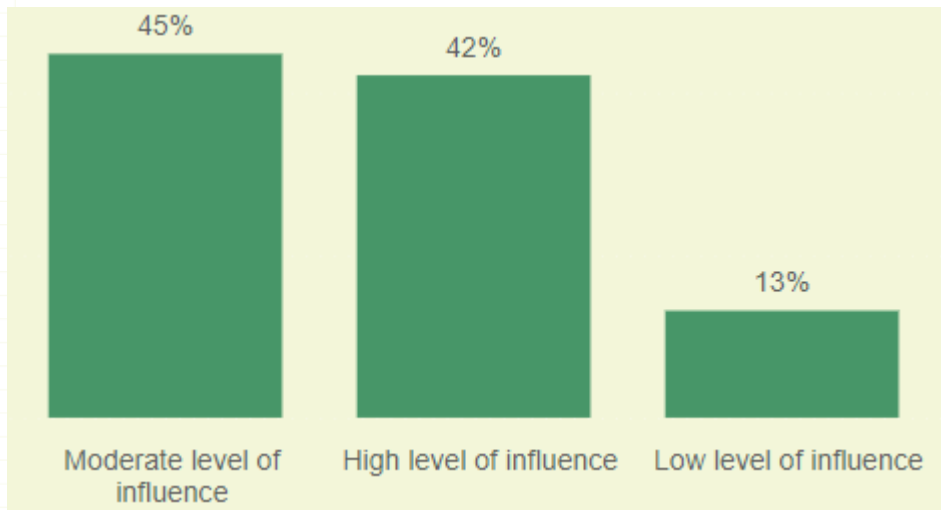
- Orientation
- Recurring safety meetings & trainings
- SMS and email alerts
- Signage

Are there plans for any COVID-19 safety measures to continue post-pandemic?

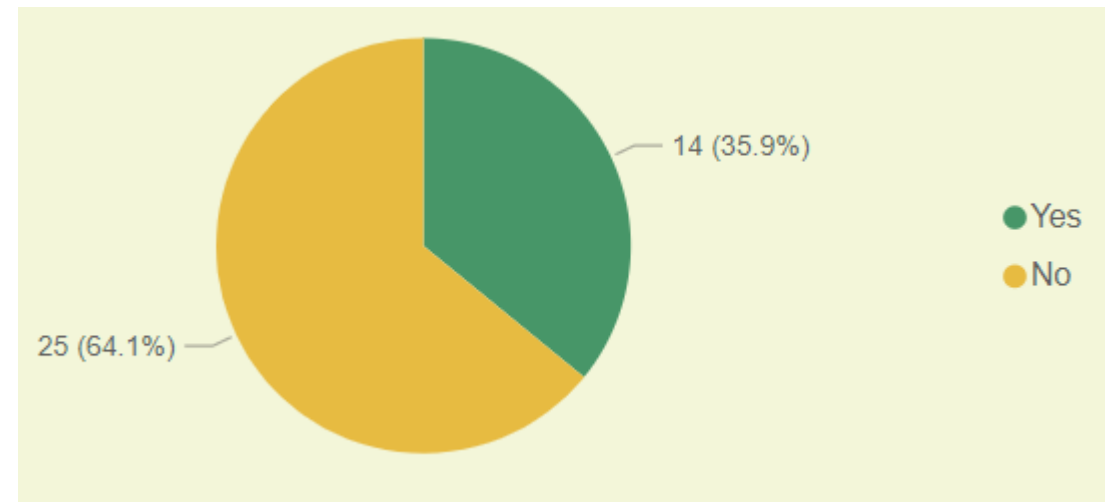
- Regular cleaning of surfaces (34)
- Increased air filtration (13)
- Mask requirements (11)
- Social distancing (5)
- Other (Driver shields)

System Engagement & Governance

What level of influence do disadvantaged populations have on the decision-making process?



Does your agency have a rider advisory committee or any other rider advocates group?



Get Involved

Spread the word to sign up for our email list at:

www.vatransitequity.com

Questions?

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