

Proposed New Fare Media Public Involvement Plan

Preliminary Outreach Report



Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
Executive Summary.....	2
Background	4
Proposed New Fare Media	4
Title VI.....	4
Public Involvement Plan (PIP)	5
Public Information and Outreach Program	6
Tactics.....	6
What We Heard.....	10
Online and Print Survey.....	10
Methodology.....	10
Key Findings / Results.....	12
Public Comments.....	30
In-Person/Virtual Community Meetings.....	30
Next Steps	32
Appendix	33
A. Question by Question Summary.....	33
B. Link to brochure / survey instrument	42

Introduction

The proposed new fare media system is a new system that will modernize OC Bus fare payments. The new system includes the implementation of a new smart card (“Wave card”), a new mobile app (Wave mobile app), contactless payments, fare capping, and other features. The Federal Transit Administration requires transit agencies to gather public feedback for any major changes to fare payments, which led to the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) implementing a Public Involvement Plan (PIP) for the proposed new fare media system in early 2025.

The OCTA Board of Directors (Board) directed OCTA staff to initiate the PIP on January 13, 2025. The plan includes a ten-week comprehensive community outreach and public feedback campaign, with a multilingual online and print survey, community meetings, and other outreach opportunities.

This preliminary report is a summary of the feedback gathered so far from the survey, community meetings, and other outreach engagements as of February 21, 2025. Topics covered in this report include interest in the new fare media, potential usage of specific new fare media (including the Wave card), and positive feedback, concerns, and common questions about the proposed new fare media.

The PIP will conclude on March 24, 2025, with a public hearing held during the Board meeting and a report item on preliminary findings.

Executive Summary

The PIP was implemented to fulfill Title VI requirements by gathering public feedback when proposing new fare media. The PIP includes extensive public outreach including a multilingual online and print survey, virtual and in-person community meetings, community outreach events, bus ride-alongs, social media, and email updates.

Responses from 6,125 online and print responses have been collected as of February 21, 2025, along with feedback from community meetings and events.

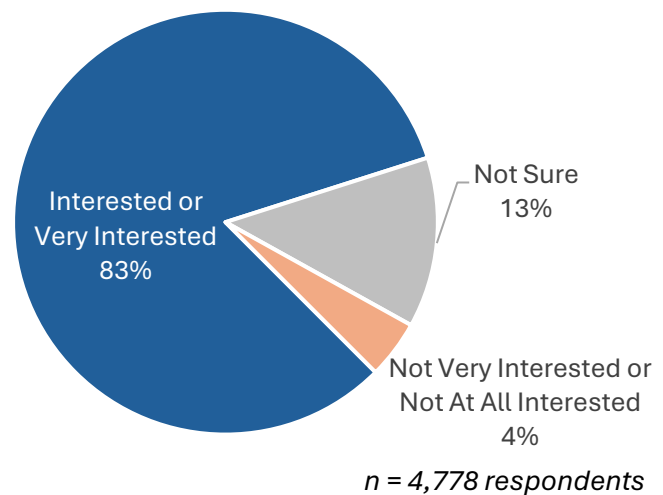
Through the ongoing PIP, several key themes have emerged.

There Is High Interest in New Fare Options

More than 80 percent of respondents say they are interested or very interested in OCTA enhancing new fare options.

Feedback from open-ended comments, community meetings, and outreach events mentioned the flexibility of the new fare options and the environmental benefit of a reusable Wave card.

Interest in OCTA Providing New Fare Options



The Wave card and the Wave Mobile App Attracted the Most Interest

Respondents indicated which future fare options they would use, with the Wave card (30 percent) and the Wave mobile app (28 percent) being the most popular choices.

Interest in contactless payments, cash, and credit/debit cards was lower and more evenly distributed. Cash stood out due to mentions in open-ended comments and outreach feedback.

Fare Option	% Responses
Wave card	29.7%
Wave mobile app	28.3%
Contactless payments	14.5%
Cash for single trip	14.4%
Credit / debit card	13.1%

n = 9,977 responses from 4,589 unique respondents (multiple selections available)

Key Themes from Written Comments

- **Positive responses** to the proposed new fare media **noted familiarity and/or experiences with similar systems from other agencies**, highlighted how the Wave card **added flexibility** to the fare system as a new fare option, and an **environmental benefit**.
- While there was not a significant amount of negative feedback, there were some requests for **keeping cash as a fare option, continuing onboard day passes, and keeping discounted fares for senior, disabled, youth, and college riders**.
- Frequently asked questions from the feedback included **smart card interoperability with other transit agencies** and further clarification on fare capping and the **two-hour transfer period**.

Background

Proposed New Fare Media

The current OC Bus farebox system has been operating for over two decades. Historically, options for paying fares were limited to using cash onboard and magnetic stripe physical passes. A mobile app and mobile ticketing validators were implemented in 2018 as an initial step to modernizing the farebox system.

To keep up with modern public transportation trends and meet customers' needs, the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) is exploring new fare media. The proposed new fare media aims to improve the fare payment experience, enhance rider validation, and offer greater fare flexibility. Included in this new system is a new functionality known as "fare capping", the contactless, reloadable Wave card, and a new Wave mobile app. All current fares, including specialty or discounted, will remain the same.

Title VI

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) guidelines require transit agencies to evaluate new fare media implementations for potential impacts to people of minority and/or low-income populations. As part of this evaluation process, OCTA will implement a PIP that will gather community feedback about the upcoming changes to the fare media. There is also a requirement to conduct a Title VI equity analysis to ensure that the proposed new fare media will cause no disparate impacts, which is a separate study from the PIP and is not included in this document.

The PIP utilizes a broad range of print and digital media, along with various outreach and communication methods, to reach a wide audience and gather feedback from the community, including individuals from low-income and minority communities, as well as those with limited English proficiency. The survey, website, and other communications channels provided information about the proposed new fare media in multiple languages. In-person and virtual opportunities for direct feedback were held at no cost, with interpreters available for non-English-speaking participants.

Public Involvement Plan (PIP)

The PIP is a multifaceted and extensive ten-week campaign from January 13, 2025 to March 24, 2025, that implements broad community outreach. The outreach effort is equitable, inclusive, and accessible to the needs of diverse stakeholder populations and adhered to guidelines required to meet FTA public hearing and Title VI mandates. The campaign can also gather feedback about any potential barriers or impacts to help OCTA understand and address those concerns.

The Board approved an updated fare policy (including fare capping and free two-hour transfers) on November 25, 2024. The Board then directed OCTA staff to start the PIP on January 13, 2025. The PIP will conclude on March 24, 2025, with a public hearing. This preliminary report details outreach tactics and provides an initial report of what OCTA has heard from the public, current and former OC Bus customers, and other stakeholders as of February 21, 2025.

Public Information and Outreach Program

On January 13, 2025, the Board received the Proposed New Fare Media plan and directed staff to implement a public outreach program to solicit feedback.

The outreach program included a broad range of media and communication methods to reach a wide audience, provide information, solicit participation and input, and allow ongoing feedback and input. The outreach effort was equitable, inclusive, and accessible to the needs of diverse stakeholder populations and adhered to guidelines required to meet Federal Transit Administration public hearing and Title VI mandates.

Tactics

The following tactics and activities have been completed in this phase. Unless noted, all communications are in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

Bus Advertisements and Collateral

- 50,000 multilingual brochures were distributed on all buses. Each brochure included a mail-back survey with pre-paid postage
- Interior bus cards (550 each language for a total of 1,650)

Print Advertisements

- Six newspaper ads, including OC Register, La Opinión, El Clasificado, Người Việt, Việt Báo, and Viet Dong

Digital Information

- Dedicated website with 46,456 visits from 27,797 users, including an online survey
- Email blasts regarding the proposed new fare media and in-person/virtual community meetings which reached 85,336 people
- “On the Move” e-Newsletter (English)
- “NextStop” e-Newsletter (English)
- Public information and ads on Facebook, Instagram, X, and Nextdoor
- OC Bus and Transit mobile app notification
- Digital stop signage alert

In-Person Rider Outreach

- Bus ride-alongs on 11 routes in core service areas matched real riders with multilingual outreach staff in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese
- Five pop-up events at transportation centers, staffed with English/Spanish speaking staff

School Outreach

Communications toolkits were provided to all 28 Orange County K-12 school districts and all nine community colleges to share with students, parents, and staff.

An email to K-12 school staff shared resources and encouraged sharing the proposed new fare media materials via parent communications, newsletters, and social media as well as with relevant groups, including parent teacher associations and district English learner advisory committees (DELAC).

The proposed new fare media was presented at a roundtable that invited all community colleges, which participate in OCTA's Community College Pass program. School representatives received a presentation of the proposed new fare media and were able to provide feedback on behalf of their respective constituencies.

Employer Outreach

Communications toolkits were sent to 178 Orange County employers for distribution to their employees.

Community Events & Organizations

- 18 community and ethnic events, staffed with English, Spanish, and Vietnamese speaking staff.
- Communications to ethnic chambers of commerce, business organizations, and community organizations, including Wellness Centers via Santa Ana Unified School District, Santa Ana Active Streets, Costa Mesa Alliance for Better Streets, and local social service agencies.

In-person/Virtual Community Meetings

Several meetings took place in person and virtually where customers and the public had the opportunity to discuss the proposed new fare media and provide input. Spanish and Vietnamese interpreters were accessible as needed for attendees.

- February 4, 2025 - Virtual English Zoom Meeting
- February 5, 2025 - Virtual Spanish Zoom Meeting
- February 11, 2025 - Norman Hertzog Community Center
- February 12, 2025 - Virtual Vietnamese Zoom Meeting
- February 12, 2025 - Laguna Hills Community Center
- February 13, 2025 - Fullerton Community Center
- February 20, 2025 - Santa Ana College

Local Jurisdiction Communication

The public information officers and communication staff from 34 cities and the County of Orange were notified of the service change information and were provided with a digital toolkit to disseminate information via city communication channels.

Public Comments – Email, Phone Calls, and Social Media

Public comments were collected from multiple channels, including phone calls to the Customer Information Center, emails, and social media comments to OCTA Customer Relations. Public social media discussion was also considered as a source of public comments.

Local News Media

A press release was issued to local media notifying the community about the proposed new fare media and PIP.

OCTA Advisory Committees

The proposed new fare media was presented at the following OCTA advisory committee meetings. Committee members received a presentation of the proposed new fare media and were able to provide feedback on behalf of their respective constituencies.

- January 21, 2025 - Citizen Advisory Committee Meeting
- January 28, 2025 - Accessible Transit Advisory Committee
- February 18, 2025 - Diverse Community Leaders Meeting
- February 18, 2025 - Teen Council

What We Heard

As of February 21, 2025, many comments have been received on the proposed new fare media, including at in-person, virtual community meetings and events, online, print surveys, by email and phone.

Channel	Count
Webpage Unique Visitors	27,797
Community Event Engagements	13,768
People Reached with Organic Social Media Messages	11,218
Online and Print Surveys	6,125
Onboard Ride-Along and Transit Center Engagements	596
Customer Relations Calls, Emails, and Social Media	162
In-person and Virtual Community Meeting Attendees	92
OCTA Public & Advisory Committees Attendees	70

Online and Print Survey

Methodology

The online survey was released on January 13, 2025, and ends on March 24, 2025. Responses from 6,125 surveys have been collected as of February 21, 2025.

The print surveys are distributed through brochures that include pre-paid postage for easy return, as well as individual paper surveys available at community outreach events for participants to complete and return on-site. Both the online and print surveys are available in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese. Following the launch of the PIP, a request was made to offer the surveys in Mandarin and Korean, which was implemented and incorporated into PIP efforts, including key outreach events. Approximately 87 percent of respondents completed the survey in English, 12 percent in Spanish, and one percent in Vietnamese.

The survey prioritized gathering feedback from current and former OC Bus riders, as well as those who are considering using OC Bus in the future. Additionally, respondents could indicate they were a non-rider who were not interested in using OC Bus in the future. These non-prospective riders were excluded from later analysis.

The resulting sample of current, former, or potential OC Bus riders included more than 5,000 respondents.

Trip Frequency	Percent
Daily	43%
Weekly	18%
Monthly	9%
Less than once a month	9%
I used to ride OC Bus, but haven't used it in the last six months	11%
I've never used OC Bus, but I may in the future	10%
Total Respondents	5,014

Results are based on surveys received by February 21, 2025. This information will be updated for the final report, following the closing of the public comment period on March 24, 2025.

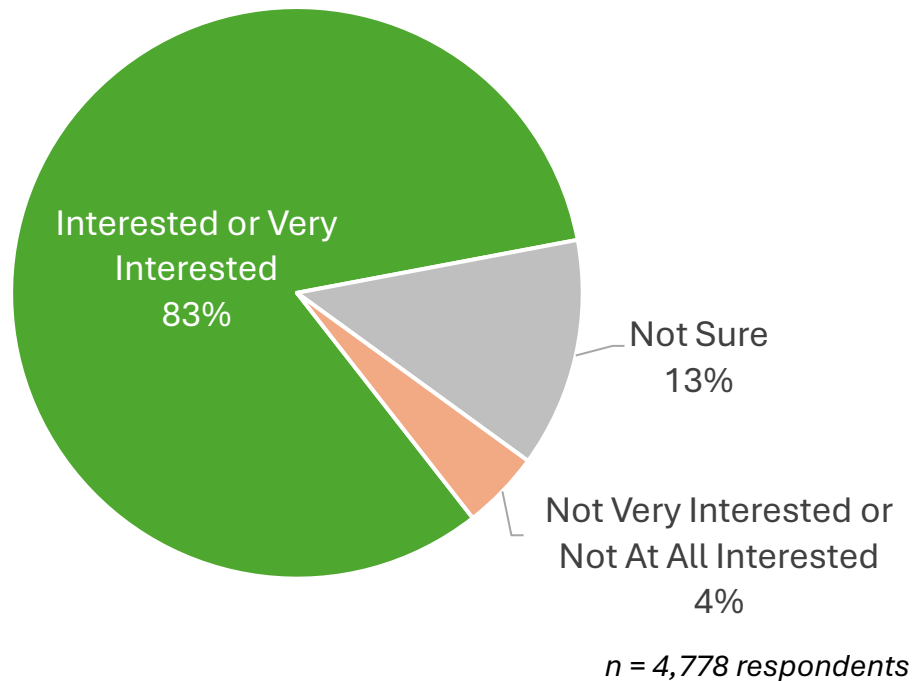
The survey results are considered informal and qualitative rather than statistically significant, as the sample size is small, and participants were self-selected. Informal research such as this survey is useful to explore a group's opinions and views, allowing for the collection of rich and verifiable data. This data can reveal information that may warrant further study and is often a cornerstone for developing new ideas.

Key Findings / Results

Interest in OCTA Providing New Fare Options

Respondents who are current, former, or potential OC Bus riders were asked about their interest in OCTA making changes to its fare system, specifically enhancing the system with new fare options. A majority of respondents (83 percent) say they are interested or very interested in OCTA providing enhanced new fare options. More than ten percent of respondents are not sure if they were interested, and four percent are not very interested or not at all interested. There seems to be high support for OCTA providing additional fare options, including adopting new technologies.

How interested are you in OCTA providing enhanced new fare options?



Further analysis is being conducted to see if the varying interest in OCTA providing new fare options is based on the existing fare options OC Bus riders are using or have used in the past. All fare options have consistent use from respondents who were interested, with no specific fare option being prominent. The variance between the options is small, with a difference of three percent between the least and most picked options. Overall, it seems likely that the current fare options have no effect on interest in OCTA providing new fare options.

Note that the use of current fare options is self-reported in the survey, so responses may not reflect actual numbers found in bus ridership or pass sales data.

	Interest in OCTA Providing New Fare Options			
Current Fare Media	Interested / Very Interested	Not Sure	Not Very Interested / Not At All Interested	Total Responses
Mobile app	90%	8%	2%	2,143
Cash (single trips)	87%	10%	4%	1,882
Paper (pre-paid) passes	89%	7%	4%	1,759
Purchased on-board day passes	88%	9%	3%	1,673
Passes from other agencies	87%	10%	3%	528
Grand Total	88%	8%	3%	7,985

n = 7,985 responses from 4,273 unique respondents (respondents can make multiple selections)

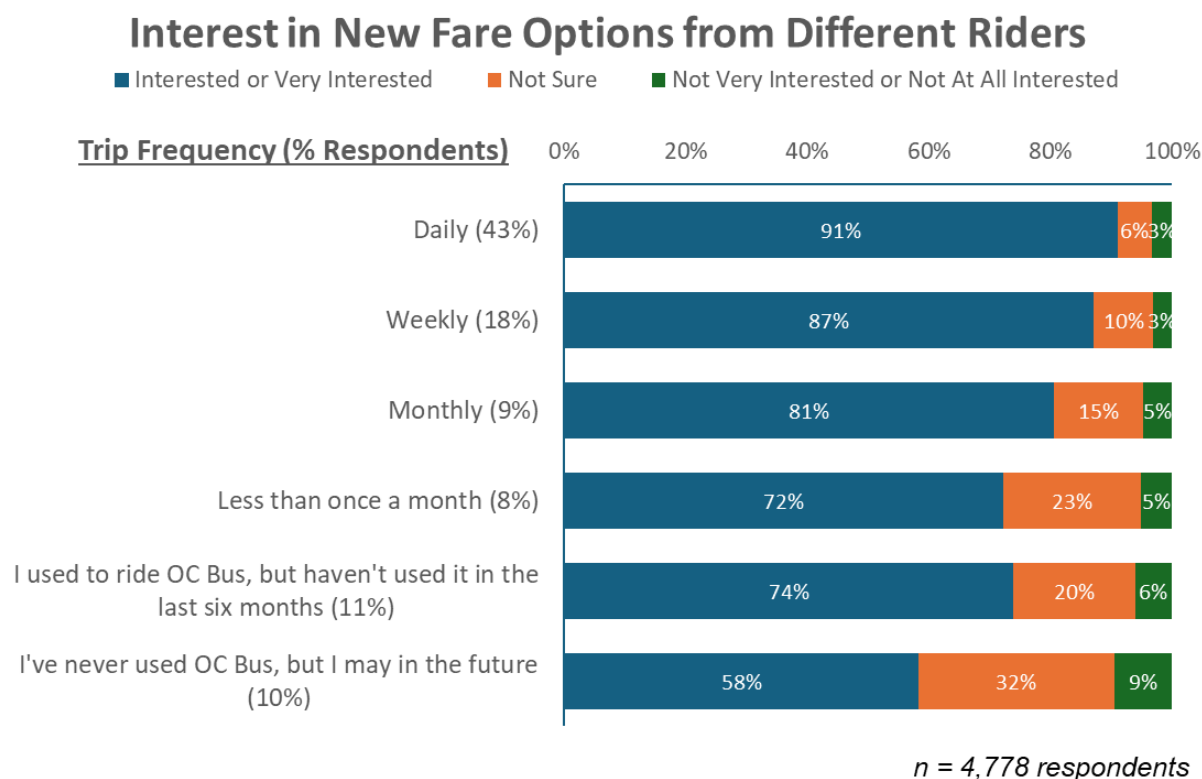
Interest also varies among different types of riders. Frequent riders (those who ride daily or weekly) have the highest levels of interest in the new fare options, with 91 percent of daily riders and 87 percent of weekly riders. 81 percent of monthly riders are also interested in the new fare options.

One likely reason is that frequent riders have familiarity with the current fare media, so they may be curious to see how the new fare options, including the Wave card, will perform compared to the other options.

Interest is relatively lower among riders who ride less than once a month (72 percent being interested or very interested) and former riders (74 percent being interested or very interested). Potential riders who are considering using OC Bus in the future only have 58 percent of respondents interested or very interested in the new fare options.

There is a substantial amount of uncertainty among riders who ride less than once a month (23 percent), former riders (20 percent), and potential riders (32 percent). One reason may be due to lack of familiarity with OC Bus and the different fare options.

Interest in the new fare options is very high for frequent riders, but it decreases as trip frequency decreases, with the lowest interest coming from potential OC Bus riders who have never used OC Bus before.



Interest in OCTA providing new fare options varies by survey language. Compared to 80 percent of English respondents, more than 95 percent of Spanish respondents and 91 percent of Vietnamese respondents say they are interested in OCTA providing new fare options. The higher interest from Spanish and Vietnamese respondents show that the new fare options are appealing to bus riders from communities with limited English proficiency.

	Interest in OCTA Providing New Fare Options			
Survey Language	Interested / Very Interested	Not Sure	Not Very Interested / Not at All Interested	Total Respondents
English	80%	15%	5%	4,029
Spanish	97%	3%	1%	695
Vietnamese	91%	6%	4%	54
Grand Total	83%	13%	4%	4,778

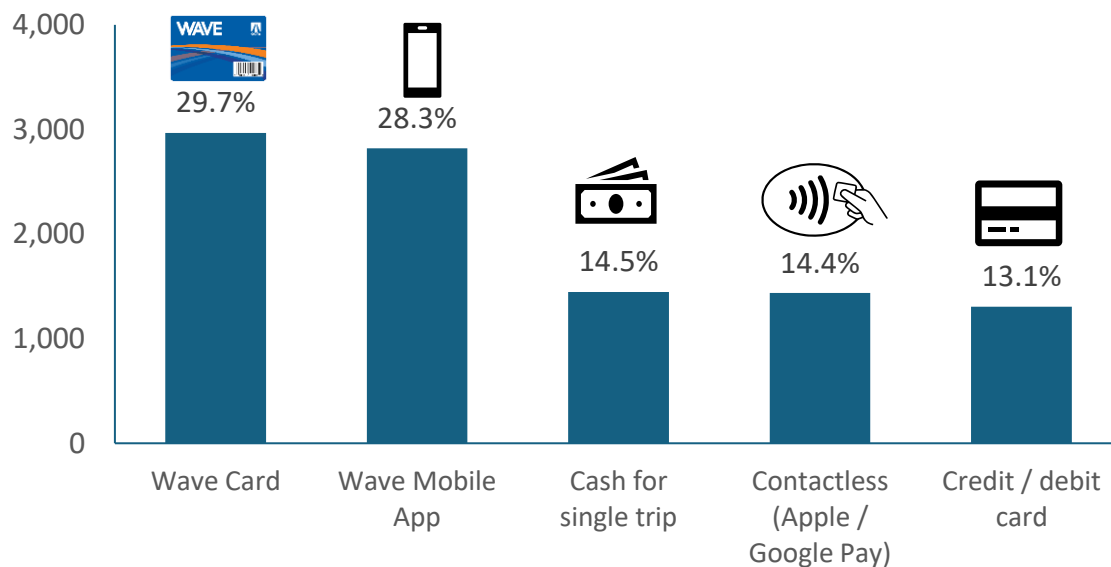
Interest in the Wave Card and Other Potential New Fare Options

Respondents are asked which fare media they want to use after the proposed new fare media is implemented. New options include the Wave card, the Wave mobile app, contactless payments (tap-to-pay using Apple Pay or Google Pay), and the option to tap a credit or debit card directly. Cash is an existing fare option that is available for respondents to pick.

Respondents are interested in using the Wave card (30 percent) and the Wave mobile app (28 percent) in the future. These new fare options received a lot of feedback, especially from respondents who have used similar systems from other agencies before.

Interest in contactless payments, cash, and credit / debit cards options is lower and more consistent. Cash continues to generate some interest even among the newer fare options. This suggests that even with the interest in new fare options, there remains a sustained demand for paying fare with cash.

Which fares would you be interested in using in the future?



n = 9,977 responses from 4,589 unique respondents (respondents can make multiple selections)

Further analysis shows that respondents who are interested in OCTA providing new fare options are further interested in specific options, particularly the Wave card and contactless payments. Both options have more than 90 percent of responses each. Cash received the least interest from interested respondents, although interest is still more than 80 percent.

	Interest in OCTA Providing New Fare Options			
Future Fare Media	Interested / Very Interested	Not Sure	Not Very Interested / Not At All Interested	Total Responses
Wave card	92%	7%	2%	2,953
Wave Mobile App	87%	10%	3%	2,808
Cash for single trip	82%	12%	6%	1,442
Contactless (Apple / Google Pay)	91%	6%	3%	1,432
Credit / debit card	86%	11%	4%	1,299
Grand Total	88%	9%	3%	9,934

n = 9,934 responses from 4,563 unique respondents (respondents can make multiple selections)

Interest was also gauged among different types of OC Bus riders to see if trip frequency affects interest in specific future fare options. OC Bus riders were split into the following categories:

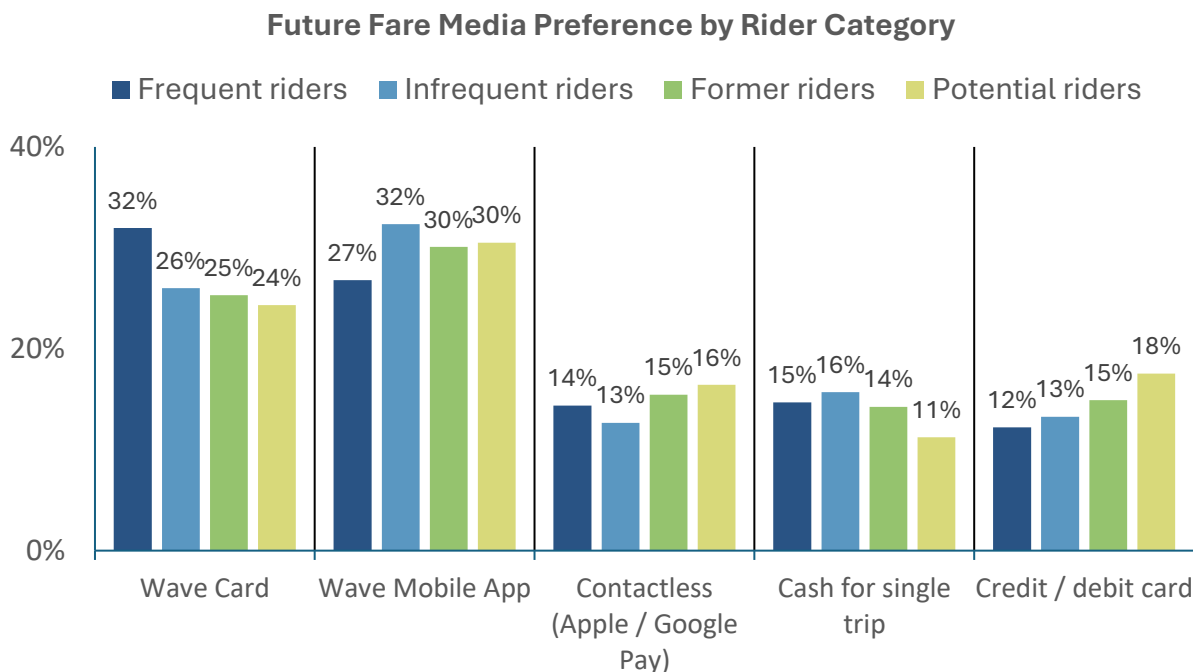
- Frequent riders = riders who ride daily or weekly
- Infrequent riders = riders who ride monthly or less than once a month
- Former riders = riders who used to ride OC Bus, but have not in the last six months
- Potential riders = respondents who have not ridden OC Bus, but may ride in the future

Frequent riders have a very similar distribution of interest in future fare options to the overall survey distribution. A total of 32 percent of responses express interest in using the Wave card, and 27 percent express interest in the new Wave mobile app.

The other groups (infrequent, former, and potential riders) have relatively higher percentages of interest in the Wave mobile app compared to the Wave card. All groups besides frequent riders have between 30 to 32 percent of responses interested in the Wave mobile app.

Potential riders showed a relatively lower amount of interest in using cash in the future (11 percent) compared to other future fare media.

Overall, frequent riders seem to have a slight preference for the Wave card, while other groups of riders prefer the Wave mobile app more.



n = 9,977 responses from 4,589 unique respondents (respondents can make multiple selections)

Interest in specific future fare options vary by survey language. More than 45 percent of responses from Vietnamese respondents show interest in the Wave card, although the small sample size adds more weight to this percentage. There is a lower number of responses for the Wave card from Spanish respondents (34 percent), while there is equal interest between the Wave card (29 percent) and the Wave mobile app (29 percent) from English respondents.

Further analysis reveals that a majority of Vietnamese respondents who selected the Wave card say they are currently using traditional fare media (cash and physical passes). This may imply that there will be movement from traditional fare media to the Wave card for this group.

Survey Language	Future Fare Media					Total Responses
	Wave card	Wave Mobile App	Cash for single trip	Contactless (Apple / Google Pay)	Credit / debit card	
English	29%	29%	14%	15%	13%	8,210
Spanish	34%	25%	15%	13%	12%	1,662
Vietnamese	47%	17%	14%	12%	10%	105
Grand Total	30%	28%	15%	14%	13%	9,977

n = 9,977 responses from 4,589 unique respondents (respondents can make multiple selections)

Biggest Changes to Fare System

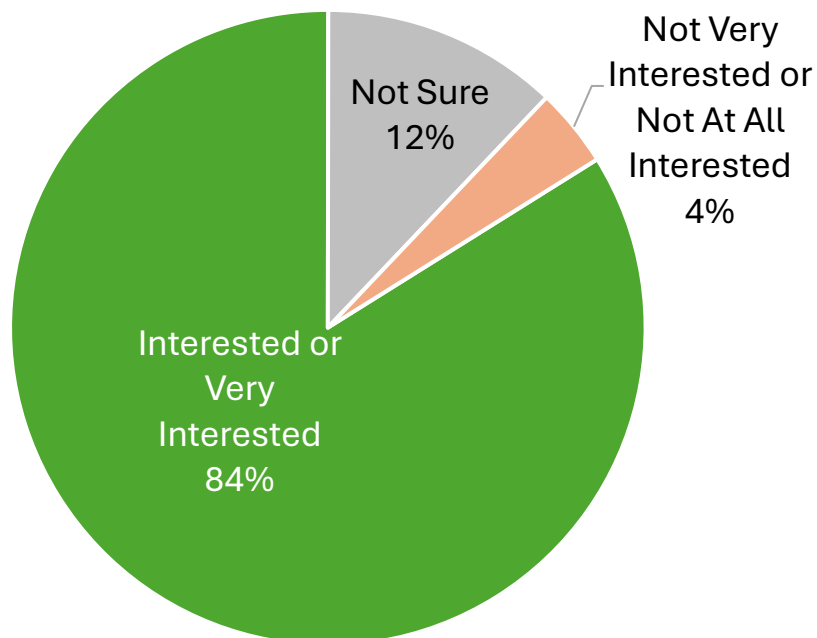
Fare Capping

Fare capping is explained in the survey for respondents who are not familiar with the concept. Respondents are then asked if they are interested in fare capping.

A majority of respondents (84 percent) say they are interested or very interested in “fare capping.” Some respondents immediately understood the concept of “fare capping” and later expressed their opinions in the open-ended comments.

More than ten percent of respondents said they were not sure if they were interested, and four percent of respondents said they were not very interested or not at all interested.

Are you interested in "fare capping"?



n = 4,755 respondents

Usage of current fare options seems to have little to no effect on respondents' interest in fare capping. Interest is consistent across all existing fare options with little variance (between 87 and 89 percent of responses for all options).

	Interest in Fare Capping			
Current Fare Media	Interested / Very Interested	Not Sure	Not Very Interested / Not at All Interested	Total Responses
Mobile app	89%	8%	2%	2,137
Cash (single trips)	87%	10%	3%	1,878
Paper (pre-paid) passes	89%	8%	4%	1,746
Purchased on-board day passes	88%	9%	3%	1,665
Passes from other agencies	88%	8%	4%	528
Grand Total	88%	9%	3%	7,954

n = 7,954 responses from 4,253 unique respondents (respondents can make multiple selections)

Interest in fare capping seems to affect respondents' interest in specific future fare media. Respondents interested in fare capping may be more likely to use the Wave card compared to uninterested respondents.

There are more responses from interested respondents for the Wave card (31 percent of responses) and the Wave mobile app (28 percent) compared to the other options.

In contrast, uninterested respondents show interest in the Wave mobile app (27 percent) and cash (24 percent) but have low interest in the Wave card (18 percent).

Interest in Fare Capping	Future Fare Media					Total Responses
	Wave card	Wave Mobile App	Cash for single trip	Contactless (Apple / Google Pay)	Credit / debit card	
Interested / Very Interested	31%	28%	14%	15%	13%	8,824
Not Sure	24%	31%	19%	11%	15%	846
Not Very Interested / Not at All Interested	18%	27%	24%	15%	15%	255
Grand Total	30%	28%	15%	14%	13%	9,925

n = 9,925 responses from 4,556 unique respondents (respondents can make multiple selections)

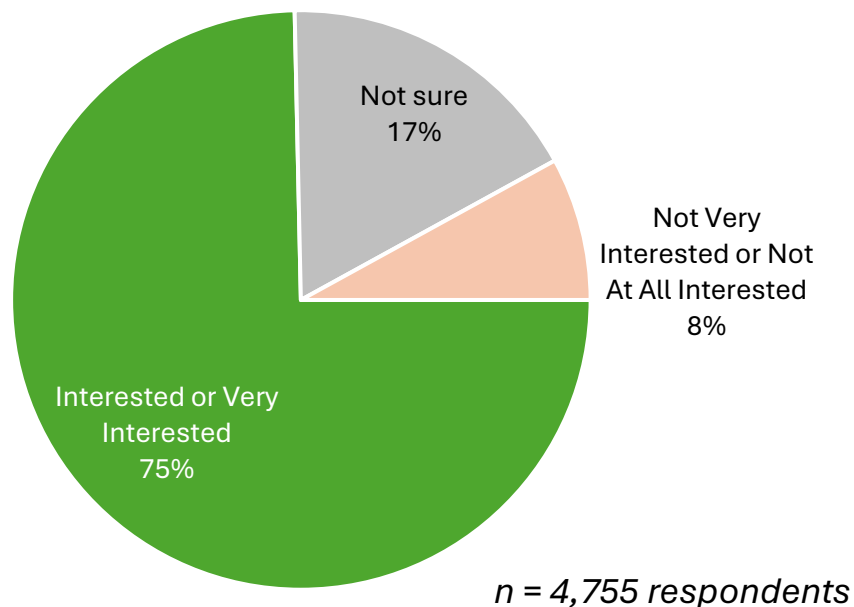
One-Time Purchase of Wave cards

Respondents are asked if they are interested in purchasing the Wave card (paying a one-time fee to obtain a Wave card before officially using it). There is general interest in the one-time purchase fee, although there is some uncertainty. Three-quarters of respondents (75 percent) say they were interested in purchasing the Wave card. A total of 17 percent of respondents say they were unsure, and approximately eight percent say they were not very interested or not at all interested.

A likely reason for higher percentages of respondents being unsure or not interested is because of the one-time purchase fee being an additional cost on top of the usual bus fare. However, Wave card users do not have to pay the fee again once the card is used.

Some respondents are interested in the Wave card because of its environmental benefits, such as its reusability. Others say they appreciate having the card as a back-up option, in case their phones or cash are not available.

Are you interested in purchasing the Wave Card?



Those that indicated an interest in purchasing a Wave card also reflected this interest when asked about their future fare usage. A crosstabulation of responses to those that plan to use a Wave card (future fare media) and those interested in purchasing the Wave card shows a strong plurality of 88 percent. Respondents who indicated that they planned to use other fare media (that does not require a physical Wave card or a one-time fee) showed slightly less interest in purchasing a Wave card but still demonstrated interest.

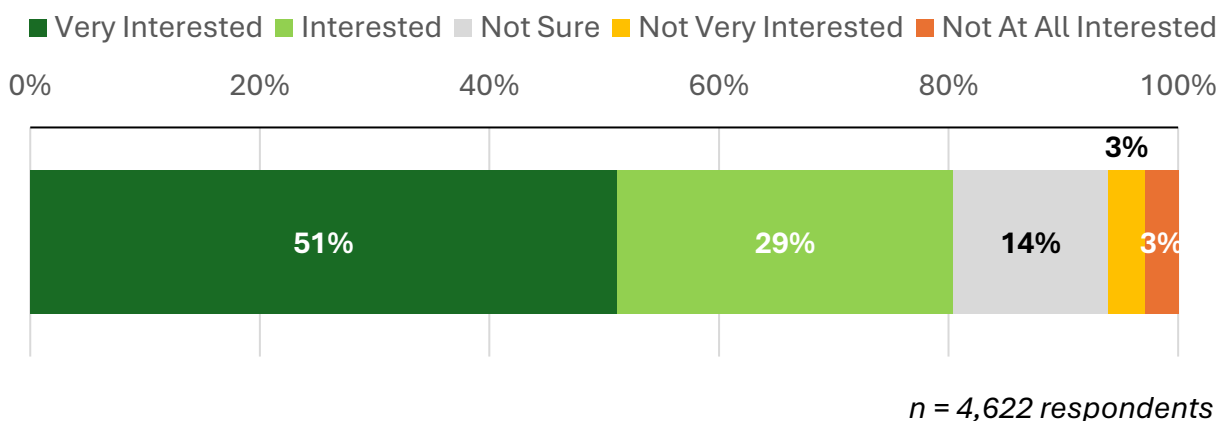
	Interest in Purchasing Smart Card			
Future Fare Media	Interested / Very Interested	Not Sure	Not Very Interested / Not At All Interested	Total Responses
Wave card	88%	9%	2%	2,946
Wave Mobile App	77%	15%	8%	2,803
Cash for single trip	74%	17%	9%	1,441
Contactless (Apple / Google Pay)	79%	13%	8%	1,429
Credit / debit card	77%	16%	7%	1,298
Grand Total	80%	14%	6%	9,917

n = 9,917 responses from 4,552 unique respondents (respondents can make multiple selections)

Purchasing / Reloading Wave cards at Retail Vendors

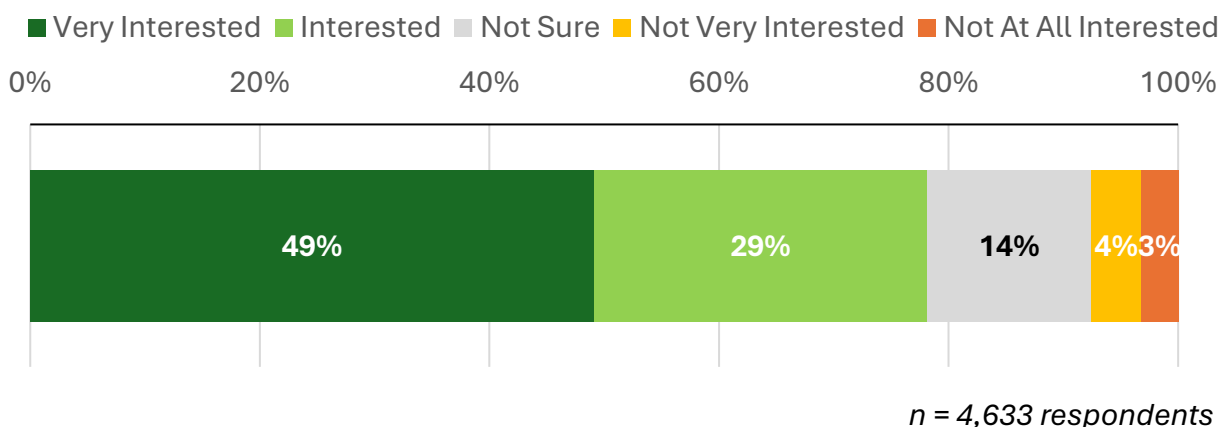
One change from the proposed new fare media is an expanded retail vendor network. Respondents were asked if they were interested in visiting retail vendors as a first point of purchase for the Wave card. Approximately 80 percent of respondents are interested in purchasing new Wave cards at retail locations.

Are you interested in the Wave Card being available for purchase at retail locations?



Next, respondents were asked if they were interested in visiting these retail vendors again for reloading the Wave card. More than three-quarters (78 percent) of respondents are interested in reloading at retail locations.

Are you interested in reloading the Wave Card with cash at retail locations?



There is some correlation between purchasing and reloading at retail locations. More than 90 percent of respondents interested in purchasing the Wave card at retail locations are also interested in reloading their cards at retail locations.

More than 70 percent of respondents who were not interested in purchasing at retail locations say they were also not interested in reloading. Approximately 65 percent of respondents who were unsure about purchasing at retail locations were also unsure about reloading.

	Interest in Reloading at Retail Locations			
Interest in Purchasing at Retail Locations	Interested / Very Interested	Not Sure	Not Very Interested / Not at All Interested	Total Respondents
Interested / Very Interested	92%	6%	2%	3,695
Not Sure	27%	65%	8%	618
Not Very Interested / Not At All Interested	15%	12%	73%	279
Grand Total	78%	14%	7%	4,592

n = 4,592 respondents

Key Feedback Themes from Open-Ended Comments

Respondents were able to provide open-ended responses about the proposed new fare media at the end of the survey. These comments were reviewed and categorized by theme to get a sense of what respondents thought about the system. A comment may contain multiple themes.

As of February 14, 2025, there were 1,374 categorized open-ended comments received from the surveys. Additional comments from social media are included here.

Positive Feedback about Proposed New Fare Media

There are respondents who are excited about the proposed new fare media in the open-ended comments. 20 percent of comments were generally supportive of the proposed New Fare Media. Ten percent of comments included thanks or compliments to OC Bus.

Many comments noted positive experiences with similar systems at other agencies (5 percent), citing examples such as Los Angeles, San Diego, Chicago, and New York. International cities such as London and Tokyo also appeared as examples in the comments. Their experiences helped them understand how these systems operate and how they can benefit OC Bus.

Other comments expressed excitement to use the Wave card (4 percent) as an alternative to cash or a mobile app. These comments appreciated OCTA's efforts in modernizing the fare system and enhancing fare payment flexibility.

The environmental benefit of the Wave card was also a recurring theme in the open-ended comments (2 percent). Some comments valued the Wave card's reusability, noting that it offers a more sustainable option by reducing paper waste from physical passes.

Concerns about Proposed New Fare Media

There were a low number of comments (2 percent) that opposed the proposed new fare media for various reasons.

Elimination of onboard day pass sales

Some open-ended comments expressed concerns about the impact of the proposed new fare media on current fare media. Two percent of comments expressed concern over the onboard day passes being phased out and requested to keep them as a fare option.

Three percent of comments requested to keep cash as a payment option, especially as an option for low-income riders or those who do not wish to use the other fare options. The plan under the proposed new fare media is for OC Bus to continue accepting cash as a fare option for single trips.

Fares for Senior and Disabled Riders

A significant theme that appeared in open-ended comments is the accessibility of the Wave card to senior riders. Three percent of comments were requests to keep the existing discounted fares for senior or disabled riders. The discounted senior and disabled fares will continue under the proposed new fare media system.

Two percent of comments expressed concerns that the Wave cards and the proposed system may be too confusing for senior riders or tech-adverse riders. Some comments suggested providing video tutorials to help these groups better understand how to use the Wave card.

Fares for Youth and Community College Students

Two percent of comments were requests to keep the existing discounted fares for college and youth riders. These concerns are to be expected as the current Youth Ride Free Pass and some College Passes are physical paper passes. Some comments were received from schools and districts about how the new youth passes would be distributed with the proposed new fare media. Youth Ride Free and College Pass will continue under the proposed new fare media system.

Common Questions

Three percent of comments were curious whether the Wave card would work with other transit agencies. The TAP card from the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LA Metro) and the PRONTO card from San Diego Metropolitan Transit System (San Diego MTS) were frequently mentioned examples. Some comments expressed concern about managing an additional transit card. Due to current technological limitations and different fare systems from other agencies, interoperability with other agencies is unlikely to happen in the near future.

One percent of comments were questions about the status of the existing fare media and the existing mobile app. Some comments mentioned issues with the current mobile app. The proposed new fare media will include the new Wave mobile app that will be different from the current mobile app.

Another three percent of comments requested additional details about the proposed new fare media. Specifically, one percent of comments requested more information about fare capping, while 0.3 percent of comments requested clarification on the two-hour transfer period.

Public Comments

In-Person/Virtual Community Meetings

OC Bus riders and the public had the opportunity to discuss the proposed new fare media and provide feedback. There were four in-person and three virtual community meetings. A total of 92 customers participated in the community meetings. Spanish and Vietnamese speaking interpreters were available for language assistance as needed for meetings.

Virtual Community Meetings (all conducted on Zoom)

- February 4, 2025 - English – 46 attendees
- February 5, 2025 - Spanish – 15 attendees
- February 12, 2025 - Vietnamese – 19 attendees

In-Person Community Meetings

- February 11, 2025 - Norma Hertzog Community Center – 4 attendees
- February 12, 2025 - Laguna Hills Community Center – 1 attendee
- February 13, 2025 - Fullerton Community Center – 5 attendees
- February 20, 2025 - Santa Ana College – 2 attendees

A summary of public comments received from the community meetings is listed below. During the meetings, customers noted that they appreciated the opportunity to provide feedback about the proposed new fare media.

Community Meeting Feedback Summary

Attendees expressed enthusiasm for the initiative and progress on “something new.” In addition to thanking staff for the information provided, attendees said they liked a lot of the changes and were excited to use the new smart card – particularly to have a mobile option. Attendees asked for more details about when the Wave card would be available and were also interested in how long existing paper passes would continue to be accepted.

There were several questions and comments related to the interoperability of the Wave card, both on other OCTA systems, as well as other external agencies. These included if the Wave card would be usable on OC Flex or the OC Streetcar system. There were several questions whether the Wave card system would include OC ACCESS, along with inquiries if there would be discounted fares for OC ACCESS riders using OC Bus.

Several attendees noted similarities to other local transit agency smart cards, including Los Angeles Metro and Long Beach Transit’s TAP cards and San Diego MTS’s PRONTO card. Several attendees asked if the Wave card would work with other local transit agencies, including LA Metro, Long Beach Transit, and San Diego MTS. One attendee was also

interested if other agencies would accept the Wave card as a transfer, asking if the card would need to be tapped, or merely shown to the transferring coach operator.

There were several questions about the specific details of the free two-hour transfer period, including questions about when the two-hour period started, if there was any need to “reset” the transfer period, and how the two-hour period would work on longer routes with more infrequent transfer times. In one meeting, an attendee asked if there were any limits on the two-hour transfer, such as direction of travel or the same route.

There were several questions about existing specialty and discount passes and if they would continue to be available and if there would be any changes to the cost or availability of these passes. Passes discussed included senior and disabled fares, Youth Ride Free passes, and community college passes. It was shared that these existing passes would continue and there would be no change to the cost of the passes.

There was some feedback about the cost of the physical Wave card, with one attendee noting that the fares weren’t changing, but now they had to pay the cost to purchase a Wave card. It was asked if there would be a promotional period where the Wave cards are offered free to riders. It was noted that OCTA intends to provide a Wave card to replace the existing Reduced Fare Identification Card used by senior and disabled riders.

One attendee asked how the Perk Pass (Employer Pass) would work with the proposed Wave card system. They asked if the physical Wave cards would include an identification or serial number that could be used to assign to employees.

Additionally, one attendee asked if OCTA would be creating a low-income pass as part of the proposed new fare system.

Community meeting attendees also asked a few technical questions about the proposed new fare system, which included if the use of a mobile phone used or required Near Field Communication in order to operate.

There were several attendees concerned if it was a requirement to create an account in order to use the Wave card. These concerns were mostly noted that the process may be confusing for the elderly or those less experienced with computers and mobile devices. One attendee wanted to clarify that account creation did not have citizenship or other legal requirements.

The overall tone of the feedback from community meetings was largely positive, particularly once questions about the continuation of existing fares were addressed. Multiple attendees expressed that OCTA should ensure that riders are notified of the new fare media system to avoid confusion. Others asked if OCTA had information or a program to help seniors or unfamiliar riders with how to use the Wave card system and to load funds onto the card.

Comments from other outreach efforts will be included in the final report.

Next Steps

OCTA is proposing new fare media as part of the Rider Validation System scheduled to launch in late summer 2025. Through the comprehensive Public Involvement Plan, OCTA has gathered community feedback that shows strong interest in these new payment options, as well as limited concerns and questions.

As of February 21, 2025, responses from 6,125 surveys were collected. More than 5,000 current, former, and potential OC Bus riders have provided valuable feedback on the proposed Rider Validation System.

The multifaceted and multilingual outreach program concludes with a public hearing on March 24, 2025. All the feedback received will help shape both the final proposal and the upcoming Awareness and Education Campaign. Following the public hearing and after reviewing all collected feedback, staff will present to the Board on May 27, 2025, to request approval for implementing the proposed fare media.

Appendix

A. Question by Question Summary

All data here is preliminary data reported as of February 21, 2025.

1. How often do you use OC Bus?

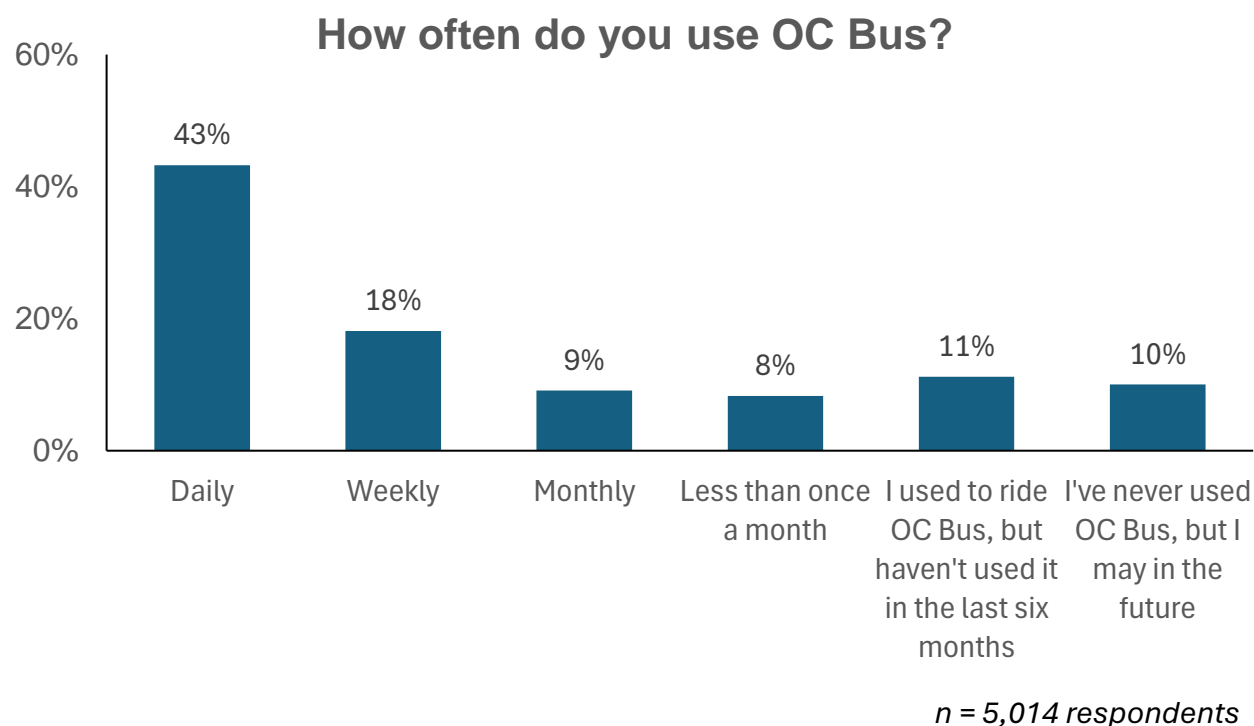
Sixty-one percent of respondents say they use OC Bus daily or weekly, with 43 percent of respondents riding daily and 18 percent of respondents riding weekly. These respondents are considered frequent riders, and they currently make up the majority of respondents.

Nine percent of respondents say they use OC Bus monthly, while eight percent say they use OC Bus less than once a month. These respondents are considered infrequent riders.

Eleven percent of respondents say that they used OC Bus in the past, but they have not ridden the bus in the past six months. These respondents are considered former riders.

Ten percent of respondents say that they have never used OC Bus before, but they may consider using it in the future. These respondents are considered potential riders. Although potential riders are not currently using the bus, they may still provide valuable feedback.

The PIP prioritizes receiving feedback from current and former riders of OC Bus. Respondents who picked “I don’t ride OC Bus” were not qualified to take the survey, although they were given the option to provide feedback in the open-ended comments.

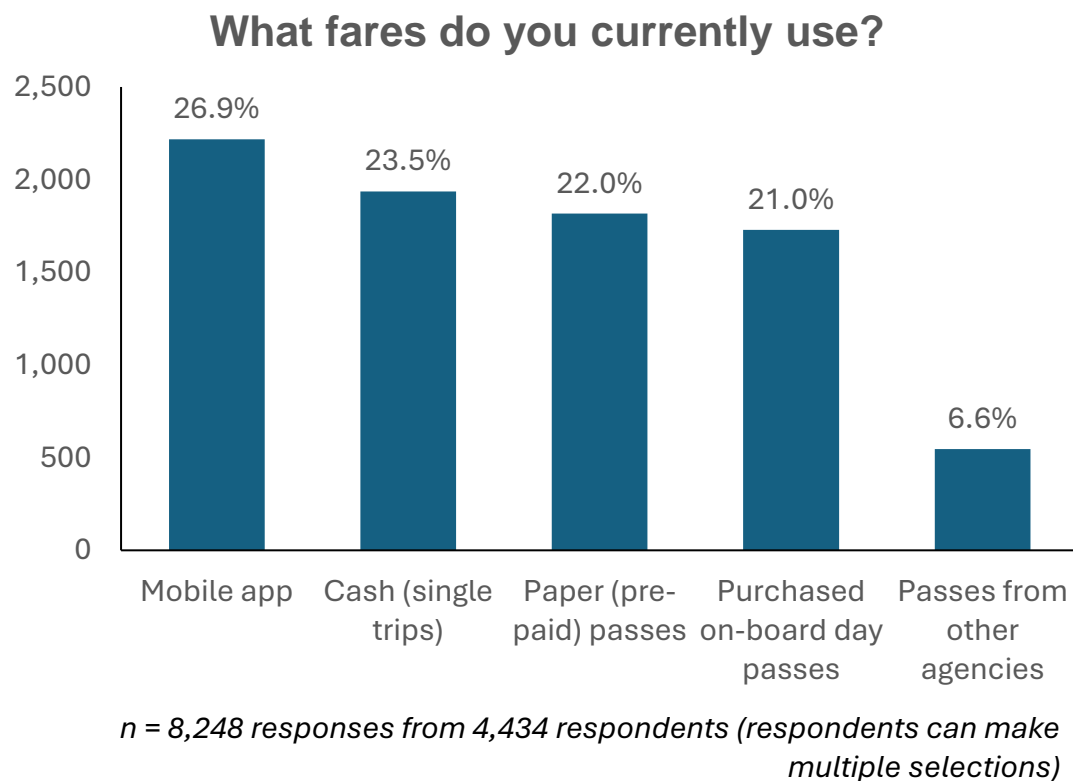


2. What types of fare media have you ever used for OC Bus? (Check all that apply)

A majority of respondents are currently using the mobile app (27 percent) and cash (24 percent) to pay for their fare. There are similar amounts of usage between pre-paid physical passes and physical passes purchased on-board. A small percentage of respondents use passes from other agencies (i.e., Metrolink, Amtrak, etc.). This small percentage is likely due to the relatively smaller segment of the ridership it represents compared to local Orange County riders.

The mobile app has a slight lead over the rest of the options besides the passes from other agencies. Even so, most of the fare options listed here have been used consistently.

Respondents who said they have never used OC Bus but may in the future (potential riders) did not answer this question, but they can answer the rest of the survey.



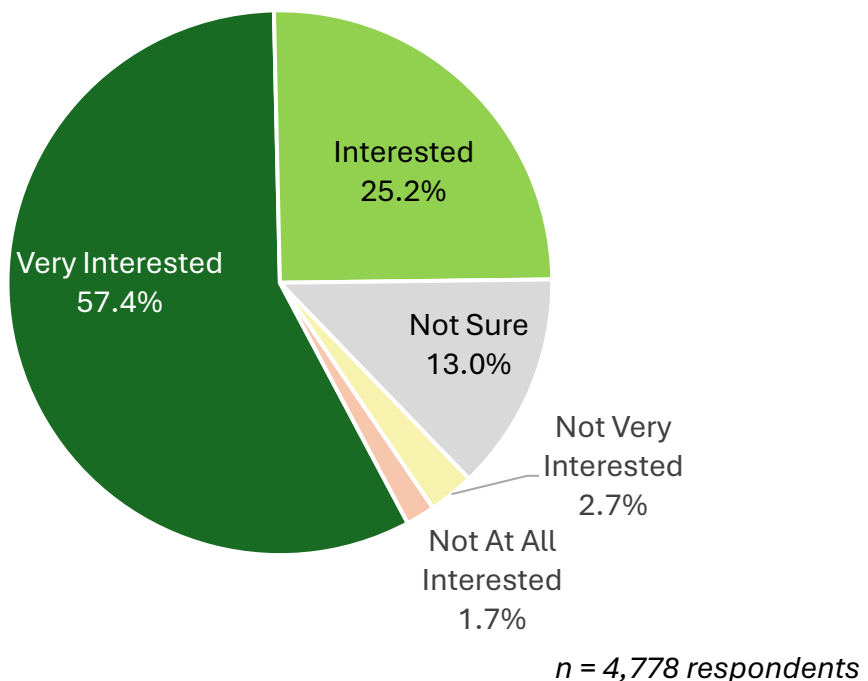
3. How interested are you in OCTA providing enhanced new fare options?

This question was about OCTA enhancing its fare system with new fare options and whether respondents were interested in the direction OCTA is going.

A majority of respondents (82.6 percent) are interested or very interested in OCTA providing new fare options. The high interest shows that respondents are supportive of OCTA taking steps in modernizing its fare system and making it more friendly for riders to use.

Thirteen percent of respondents said they were not sure, while 4.4 percent said they were not very interested or not at all interested.

How interested are you in OCTA providing enhanced new fare options?

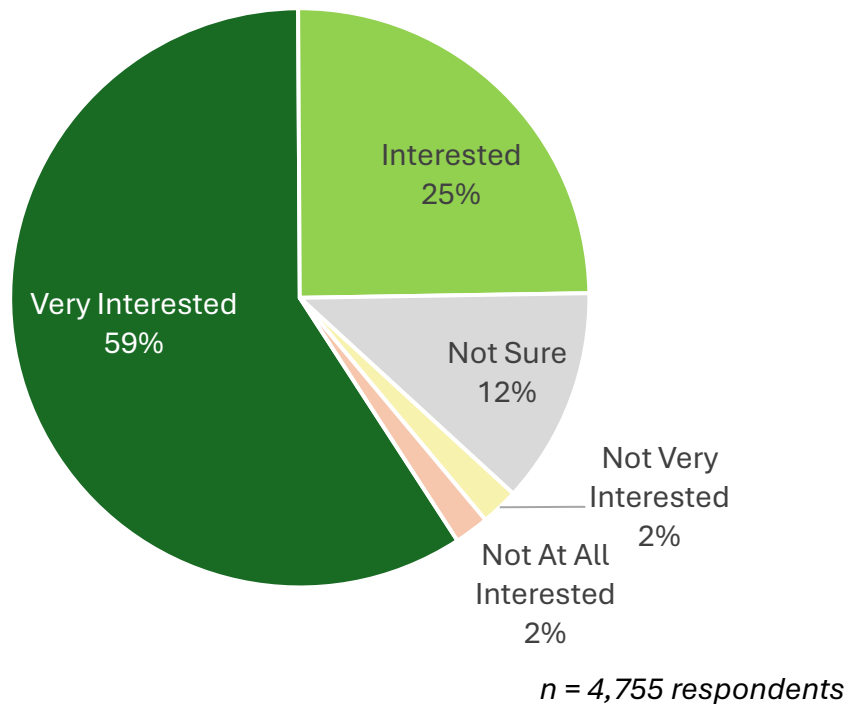


4. Are you interested in "fare capping," which ensures you're always paying the best fare when using OC Bus?

A majority of respondents (84 percent) are interested or very interested in fare capping. Some of the interest in fare capping may be due to other experiences with fare capping in other transit systems, leading to an understanding of how fare capping works.

Other respondents expressed confusion or concern over fare capping in the open-ended comments, although the percentages for those categories are small (12 percent not sure and 4 percent not very or at all interested).

Are you interested in "fare capping"?



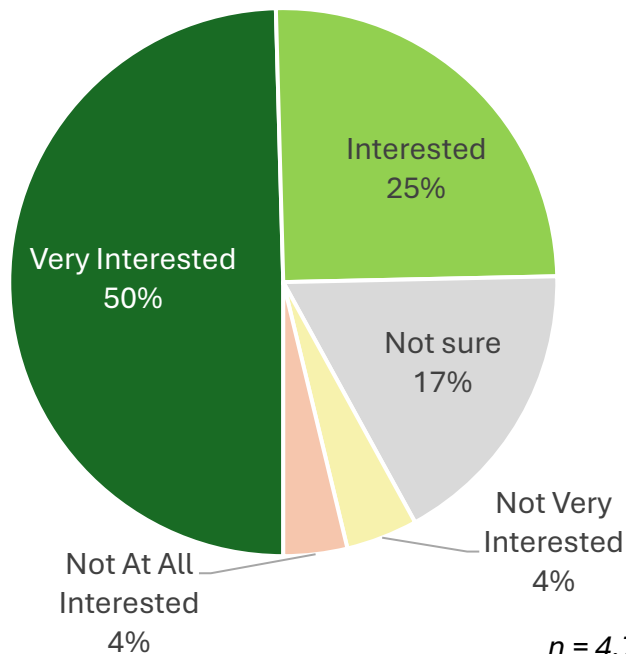
5. Are you interested in purchasing a reusable smart card?

Respondents were asked whether they would be interested in purchasing a reusable smart card, or pay a one-time fee to get a new card. Seventy-five percent of respondents expressed interest in purchasing a reusable smart card.

Seventeen percent of respondents said they were not sure about purchasing the smart card. Some of the uncertainty about this fee can be found in the open-ended comments.

For similar reasons, eight percent of respondents said they were not interested in purchasing the smart card.

Are you interested in purchasing a reusable smart card?



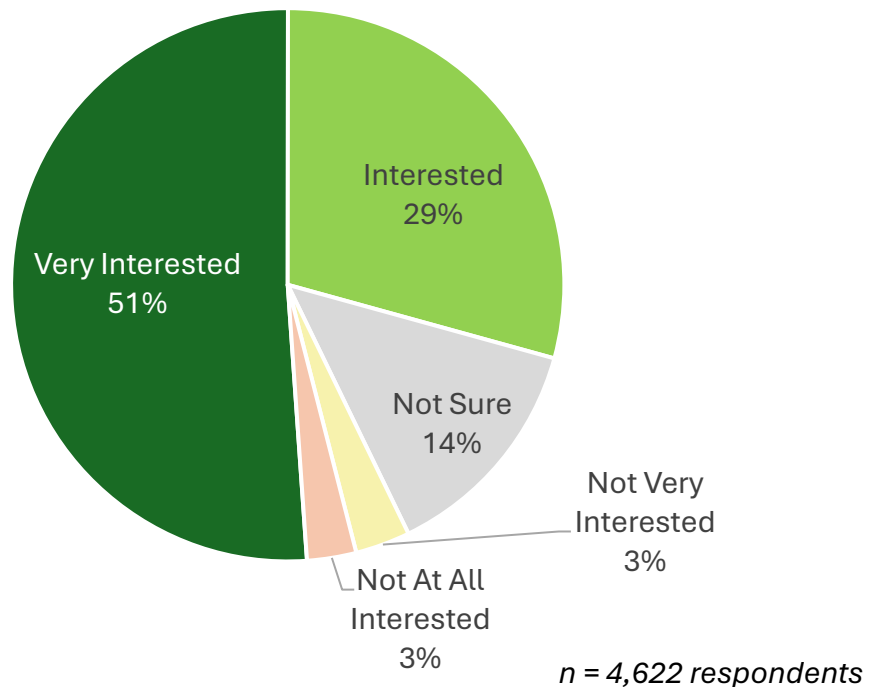
n = 4,755 respondents

6. Are you interested in smart cards being available for purchase at retail locations?

A majority of respondents (80 percent) are interested or very interested in smart cards being available at retail locations. The proposed retail vendor network for the smart card is supposed to have more retail locations compared to the current vendor network. Respondents being open to retail vendors show that retail locations do not pose an obstacle for obtaining smart cards or paying fare.

Fourteen percent of respondents say they are not sure about smart cards being available at retail locations, and six percent of respondents say they are not very or at all interested.

Are you interested in purchasing smart cards at retail locations?

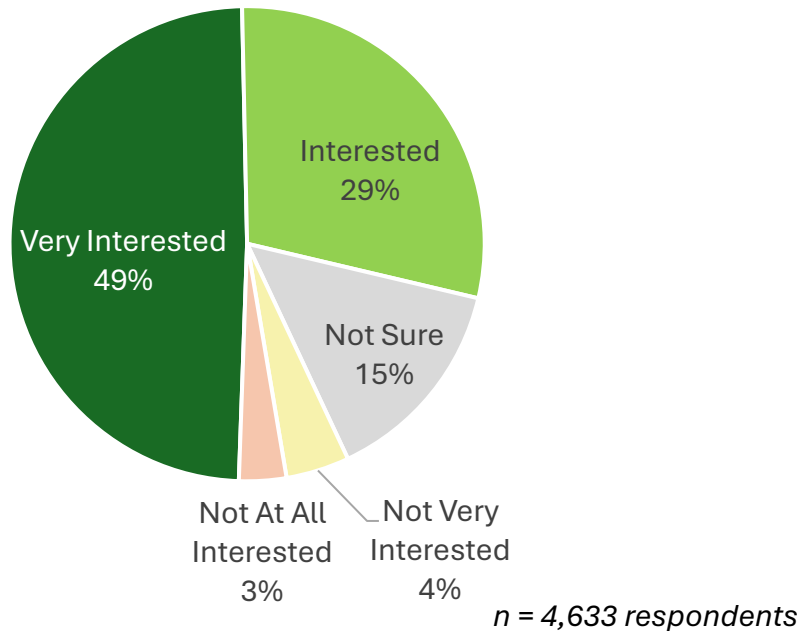


7. Are you interested in being able to reload the smart card with cash at retail locations?

A majority of respondents (78 percent) are interested or very interested in being able to reload the smart card with cash at retail locations.

Fifteen percent say they are not sure about reloading the smart card at retail locations, and seven percent say they are not very or at all interested. One likely reason is that reloading the smart card may require multiple visits to vendors, which may not be as convenient as purchasing a pass one time or purchasing a pass directly on-board.

Are you interested in reloading the smart card at retail locations?

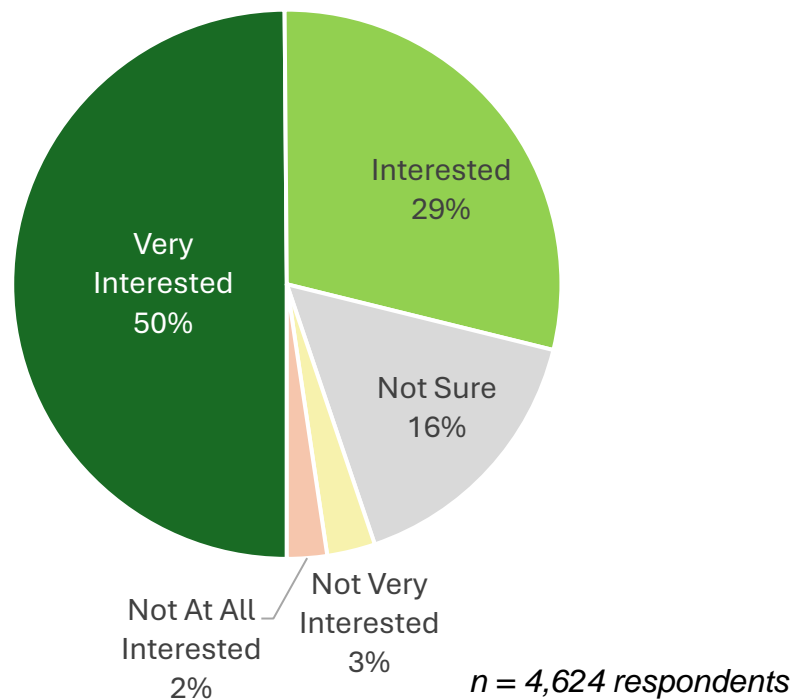


8. Would you be interested in using the new fare media (with a best fare guarantee), instead of a day pass purchased on-board?

A majority of respondents (79 percent) are interested or very interested in using the new fare media, which includes the smart card.

Sixteen percent say they are uncertain about using the new fare media, while five percent say they are not very or at all interested. Some of this can be seen in the open-ended comments, where some respondents expressed concern over paper passes being phased out or asked whether cash will remain an option.

Would you be interested in using the new fare media?

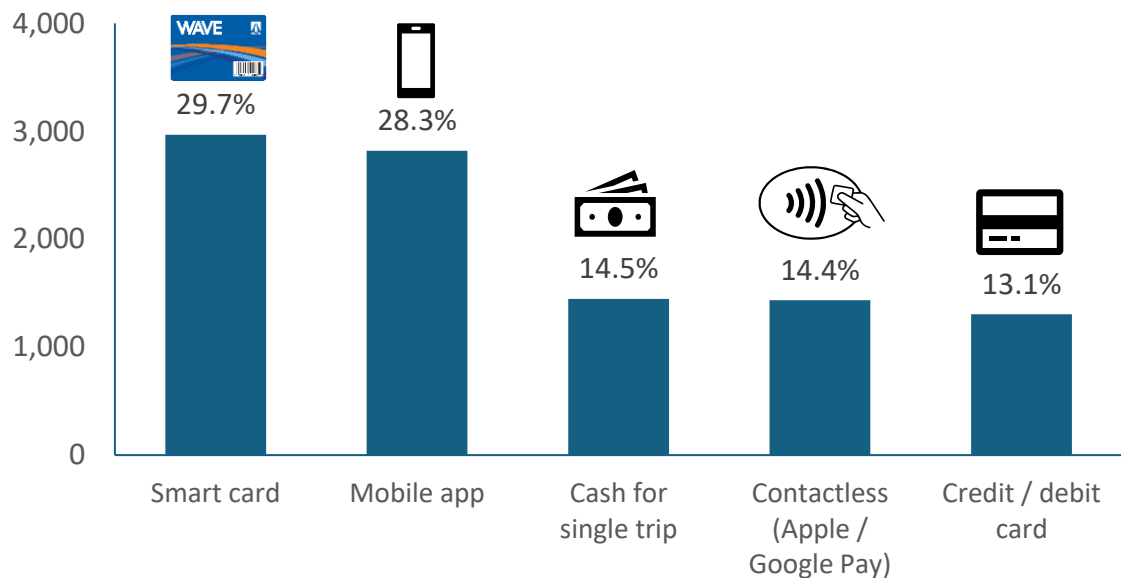


9. Which types of fare would you be interested in using in the future? (Check all that apply)

A majority of respondents are interested in using a smart card such as the Wave card (30 percent) and the new Wave mobile app (28 percent) in the future. Although the smart card will be a new fare option, it seems approachable and accessible for these respondents to consider using it.

Interest in contactless payments, cash, and credit / debit cards options is lower and more consistent. The interest in cash is important since some respondents wanted cash to remain an option for those who do not have access to technology or have enough money to pay for a smart card.

Which fares would you be interested in using in the future?



n = 9,977 responses from 4,589 unique respondents (respondents can make multiple selections)

B. Link to brochure / survey instrument

Goodbye, Paper Passes. Get Ready for Wave Card!

Adiós a los pases de papel. Prepárate para la tarjeta Wave.

Give us your feedback for a chance to win a \$100 VISA gift card

Además de responder al OC Bus, ¡nos daremos a conocer a ti y a tu familia un regalo de \$100!

GET MORE INFORMATION

For more information please visit: OCbus.com/WaveCard. If you are unable to visit the website, please call 714.661.8800 or 1.800.881.8800.

¡OBTENER MÁS INFORMACIÓN

Para más información por favor visite OCbus.com/WaveCard. Si no puede visitar el sitio web, por favor llame al 714.661.8800 o al 1.800.881.8800.

Transparency and Accessibility

Transparency and Accessibility

Any person with a disability who requires a modification or accommodation is encouraged to participate in these meetings. If you are unable to attend, please contact the OC Bus Accessibility Department at 714.661.8800 or 1.800.881.8800. We will make every effort to ensure your participation is as accessible as possible.

Transparencia y accesibilidad

Los usuarios con discapacidades que requieran modificaciones o acomodaciones son alentados a participar en estas reuniones. Si no puede asistir, por favor contacte al Departamento de Accesibilidad de OC Bus al 714.661.8800 o al 1.800.881.8800. Haremos todo lo posible para garantizar su participación sea tan accesible como sea posible.

BUSINESS REPLY MAIL

POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE

ATTN: WAVE CARD

ORANGE COUNTY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

PO BOX 14194

ORANGE, CA 92663

NO POSTAGE
NECESSARY
IF MAILED
IN THE
UNITED STATES



10. Do you have any other feedback that you would like to share?

¿Tiene alguna otra retroalimentación que le gustaría compartir?

11. For a chance to win one of five \$100 VISA gift cards, please provide your email address or phone number.

Para una oportunidad de ganar uno de los cinco premios de \$100 en tarjetas de regalo Visa, por favor proporcione su dirección de correo electrónico o su número de teléfono.

Email/Phone: _____

Please check if you are interested in participating in the testing of the new "smart card" and "mobile app".

Por favor marque si está interesado en participar en la prueba de la nueva "tarjeta inteligente" y "aplicación móvil".

☐ Very Interested ☐ Interested ☐ Not Very Interested ☐ Not At All Interested

12. Which types of fare would you be interested in using in the future? (Check all that apply)

¿Qué tipos de tarifas le interesarían utilizar en el futuro? (Marque todas las que apliquen)

☐ SmartCard ☐ Mobile app ☐ Cash for single trip ☐ Mobile phone payments (Apple Pay, Samsung Pay, etc.) ☐ None of the above

OC Bus is planning to introduce a new technology to make it easier for riders to use the system. The new system will be a "smart card" and a "mobile app". The smart card will be available for purchase at the OC Bus stores and retail locations, such as 7-Eleven, CVS, and Dollar Tree. The smart cards will be available at more than 400 locations throughout Orange County.

OC Bus está planeando introducir una nueva tecnología para facilitar el uso del sistema. El nuevo sistema será una "tarjeta inteligente" y una "aplicación móvil". La tarjeta inteligente estará disponible para su compra en las tiendas de OC Bus y en los puntos de venta minoristas, como 7-Eleven, CVS y Dollar Tree. Las tarjetas inteligentes estarán disponibles en más de 400 ubicaciones en todo el Condado de Orange.

Are you interested in smart cards being available for purchase at retail locations?

¿Está interesado en comprar tarjetas inteligentes en puntos de venta minoristas?

☐ Very Interested ☐ Interested ☐ Not Very Interested ☐ Not At All Interested

Are you interested in being able to reload the smart card with cash at retail locations?

¿Está interesado en poder recargar la tarjeta inteligente con efectivo en puntos de venta minoristas?

☐ Very Interested ☐ Interested ☐ Not Very Interested ☐ Not At All Interested

Are you interested in the mobile app?

¿Está interesado en la aplicación móvil?

☐ Very Interested ☐ Interested ☐ Not Very Interested ☐ Not At All Interested

Are you interested in purchasing a reloadable smart card?

¿Está interesado en comprar una tarjeta inteligente recargable?

☐ Very Interested ☐ Interested ☐ Not Very Interested ☐ Not At All Interested