



New Orleans
Regional Transit
Authority

Streetcar Modernization Master Plan

Project Advisory Committee | Meeting #2

NORTA.COM

WELCOME

Dwight Norton, Chief Planning and Capital Projects Officer

AGENDA

- **Project Refresh** (5 min)
- **Draft Vision** (15 min)
- **What We've Learned** (20 min)
 - Existing Conditions + Peer Review
 - Survey Results
- **We Want Your Feedback**
 - Potential Scenario Concepts (35 min)
- **Next Steps** (10 min)
- **Closing** (5 min)



PROJECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAC)

The Commitment:

- Represent a wide variety of civic perspectives
- Inform, guide, and advise this process
- Attend three (3) meetings
- Provide open and honest feedback
- Share information widely

The Role:

- **Establish trust in this planning process**
- Be a community voice
- Co-host or attend meetings and event(s)
- Support education through your organization's social media networks
- Encourage participation

TIMELINE & PROJECT SCHEDULE



DRAFT MASTER PLAN VISION

We Want Your Feedback

A distinctly New Orleans system the next generation is proud to inherit. One that connects everyone—regardless of ability—to opportunity by getting you where you need to go. On time. Every time.

OVERARCHING GOALS



**Achieve State of
Good Repair**



**Significantly
Improve Safety**



**Enhance Customer
Riding Experience**



**Honor
Legacy**



**Integrate
Accessibility**

EXISTING CONDITIONS METHODOLOGY



Purpose

to identify issues, strengths and opportunities within the system as it currently stands

Technical review of current:

- Performance (speed, on-time performance)
- Safety (crashes)
- Tracks, Guideways, & Signals
- Stops & Stations
- Vehicles
- Maintenance Facilities
- Communications
- Traction Power

PEER REVIEW

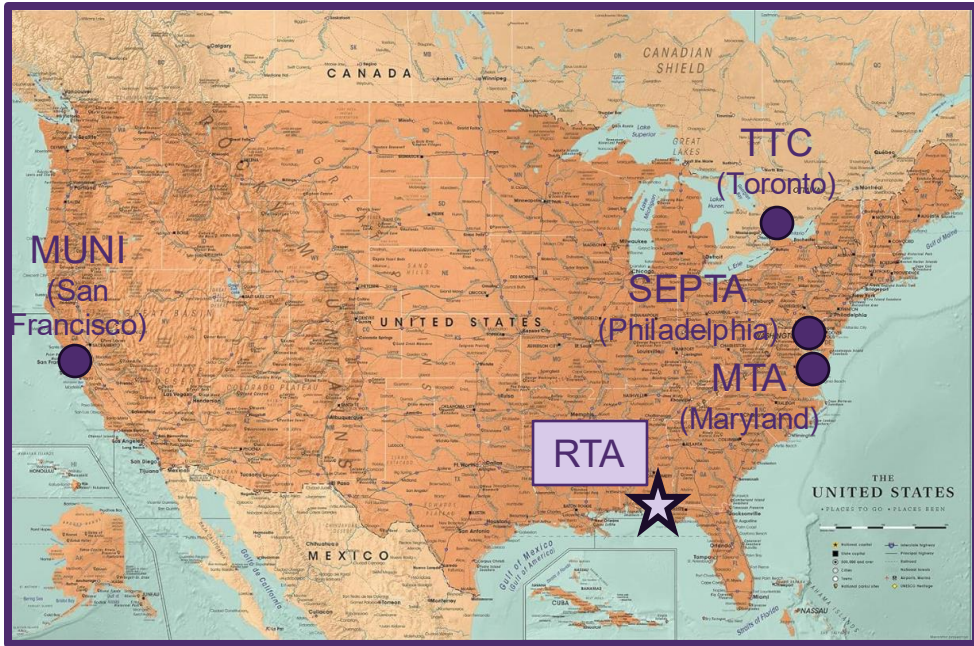


Purpose

to review peer agencies' historic trolley or streetcar lines, existing conditions, and efforts to update their systems

SYSTEMS/AGENCIES:

- SEPTA Trolleys, Philadelphia, PA
- TTC, Toronto, ON, Canada
- MUNI, San Francisco, CA
- MTA, Maryland
- ATM, Milan, Italy
- Yarra Trams, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia
- Wiener Linien, Vienna, Austria
- DPP, Prague, Czech Republic



KEY TAKEAWAYS



**Achieve State of
Good Repair**

EXISTING CONDITIONS

31 yrs / 25.5 yrs

ULB / Average fleet age
(400/2000 series)

58 yrs / 103 yrs

ULB / Average fleet age
(Perley Thomas series)

26.73% increase

in vehicle system failures from
2023 to 2024*

Non-vehicle assets in decent shape

PEER REVIEW

- Implementing best practices **as a main goal of modernization**
- Asset management is critical to **maintain SGR**
- Improved data collection is critical to **data-driven decision making**

KEY TAKEAWAYS



**Significantly
Improve Safety**

EXISTING CONDITIONS

70%

of crashed are on
the St Charles line

48%

of crashes are at
unsignalized
intersections.

Streetcar does not have
priority over vehicular traffic.

PEER REVIEW

Some peer systems give **transit priority**

- TTC, Toronto
- SEPTA, Philadelphia

Enhanced pedestrian signals and
gateways along guideway

- MTA, Maryland

Partnerships/close **coordination with city**

- TTC, Toronto
- SEPTA, Philadelphia

KEY TAKEAWAYS



Enhance Customer Riding Experience

EXISTING CONDITIONS

On-Time Performance: 73%
RTA Standard: 85%

Average Speed: 6.7mph
Best Practice: 8-12mph.

Average Boarding Time: 35 sec.
Best Practice: 20-30 sec.

PEER REVIEW

Fare Collection

- Off-board collection

Improved Operations

- Transit signal priority (TTC, SEPTA)

Construction Timelines

- 15+ year horizon

Application & Wayfinding Signage improvements + Communication (Vienna)

KEY TAKEAWAYS



Honor Legacy

EXISTING CONDITIONS

5

Perley Thomas cars
currently in service
on St. Charles

5

Replica cars currently in
service on St. Charles
(with wheelchair lifts)

Historic Designation for entire
St. Charles streetcar line

PEER REVIEW



Melbourne

- Heritage Fleet route
- W Class Trams
- Accessibility compliance exemption

Note: RTA is committed to a consent decree.

KEY TAKEAWAYS



Integrate Accessibility

EXISTING CONDITIONS

5 (50%)

Wheelchair lifts currently in service on St Charles line

13 (100%)

Wheelchair lifts currently in service on Canal line

3.5 – 23 mins

On average to deploy wheelchair lift

Higher risk of failure

PEER REVIEW

Accessibility addressed in a variety of ways

- Retrofitted vehicles
- Bridge plate/lifts
- Floor height/Low-floor vehicles (TTC, SEPTA)
- Platforms / non-vehicle means (MUNI)
- Or combinations of the above

SURVEY RESULTS

SURVEY: METHODOLOGY

Convenience sample survey promoted via:

- NORTA channels (*social, email, earned media*)
- Partner email lists
 - *Urban League, Convention Center, Clover, Louisiana Landmark Society, NORD, Neighborhood Associations*
- Neighborhood Association presentations
- Canvassing
 - St. Charles Line x1
 - Canal Line x2
 - Hotels along Canal

Timeframe: June 2 – June 30

*Not a statistically significant survey



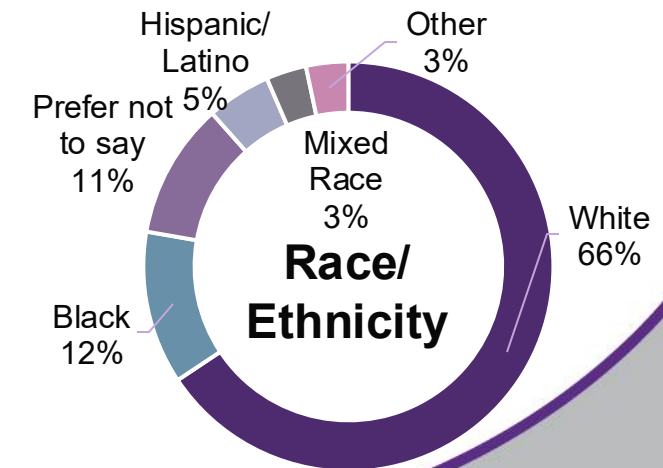
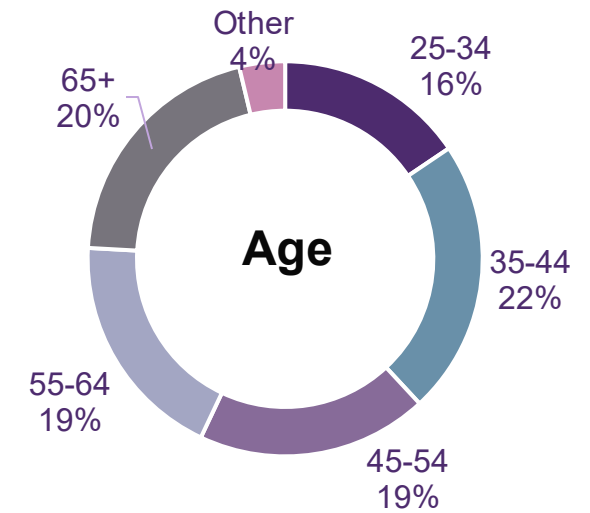
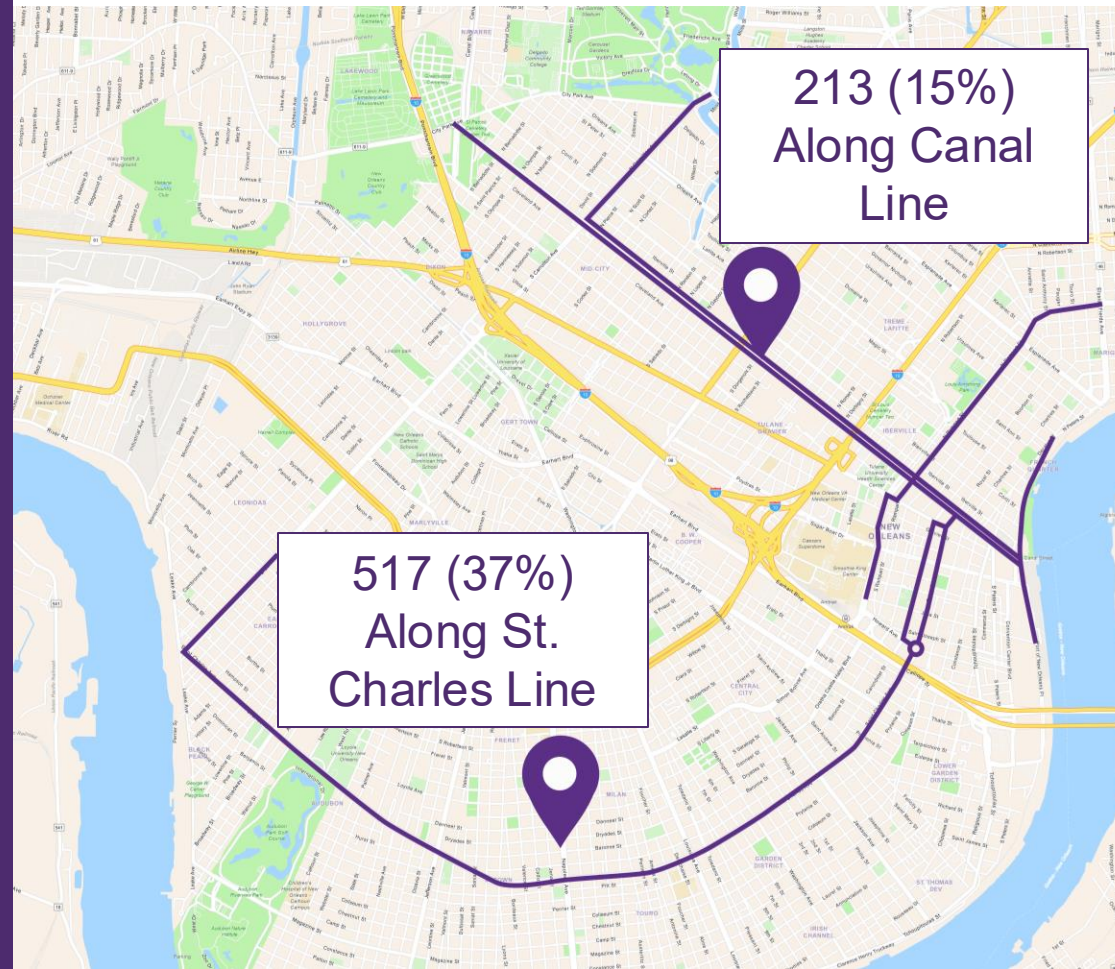
SURVEY: WHO PARTICIPATED

1404
responses

77%
Orleans resident/business
owner along a route

32%
Ride weekly or daily

13%
people living with
a disability



SURVEY: DATA REVIEW

Evaluated data based on:

- All participants
- Weekly/Daily Riders
- Those living with disabilities
- Black/African American participants
- Non-White participants
- Zip Code
 - Uptown (70118, 70115, 70130, 70139)
 - Mid-City (70119, 70112)

SURVEY: KEY FINDINGS



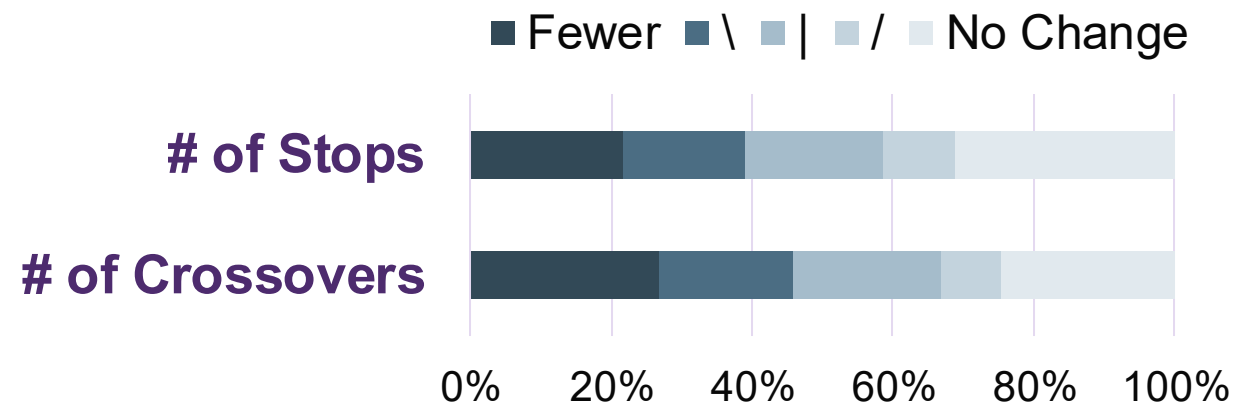
Perception of safety (vehicle and personal) leaned from Medium to Very Safe across groups.



Reliability, Speed/Efficiency, Frequency identified as priority areas for improvement.



Support for reducing stops and number of crossovers

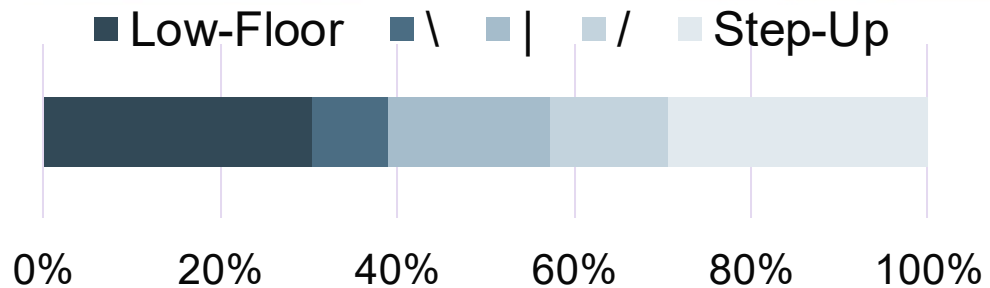
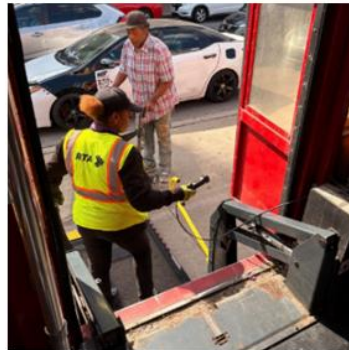


SURVEY: KEY FINDINGS



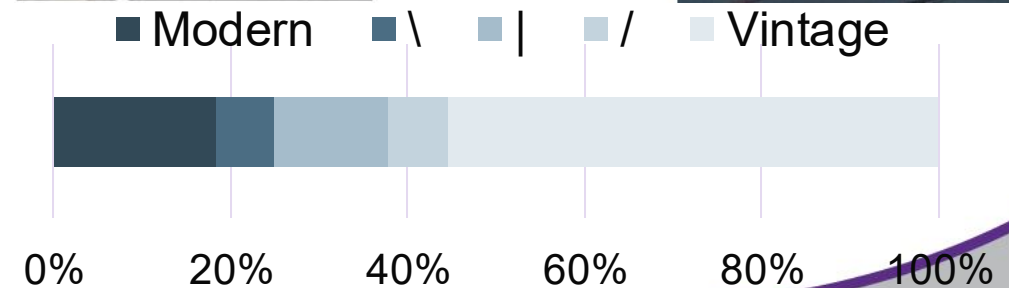
Boarding Style

Participants were open to low-floor / level boarding.



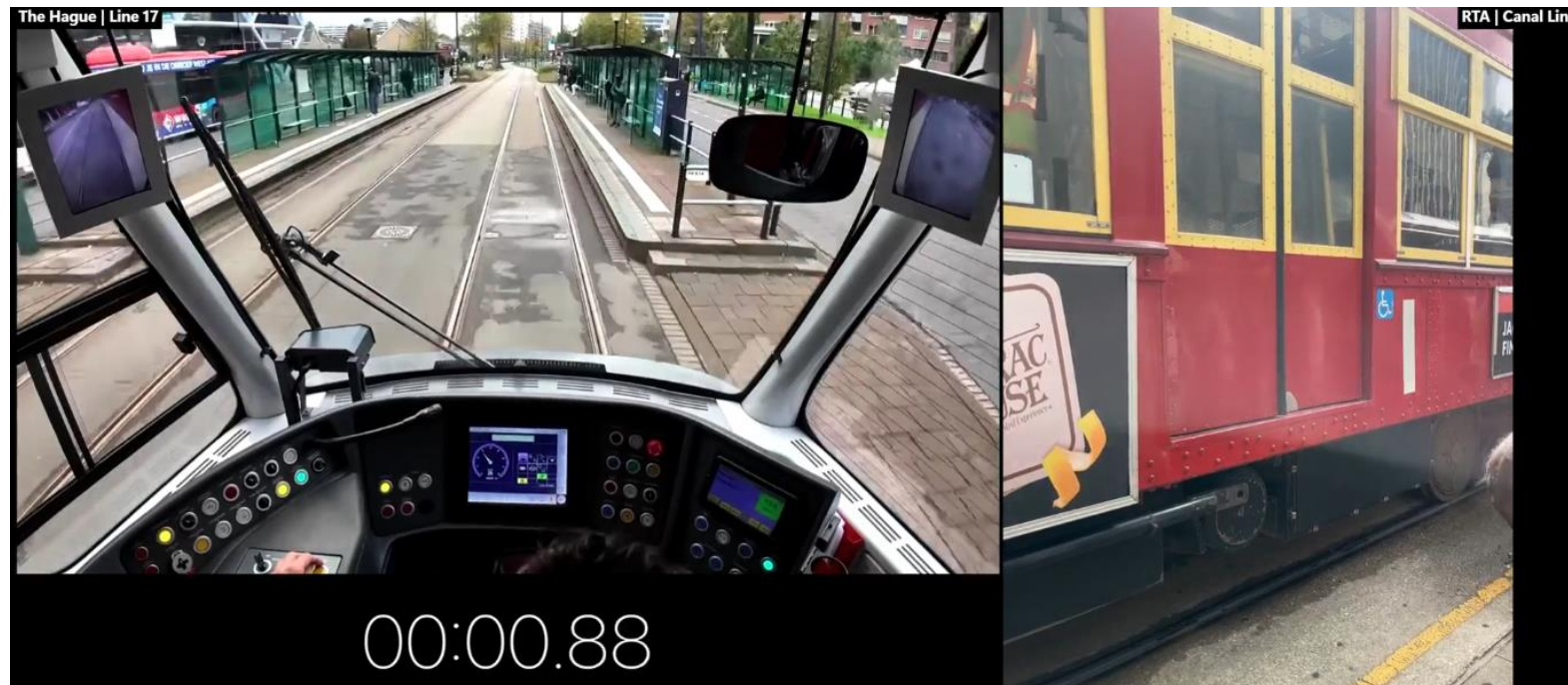
Look and Feel

Participants overwhelmingly wanted to keep the vintage look and feel across lines.



UNDERSTANDING EXPERIENCES

Wheelchair lift vs level-boarding



2026.07.15_STREETCAR MODERNIZATION COMPARISON.MP4

ACCESSIBILITY ≠ WHEELCHAIR LIFTS



DEVELOPING SCENARIOS

- Focus on vehicle scenarios
- Vehicles drive modernization
- Also reviewing non-vehicle improvements
 - Addressing unsignalized intersections
 - Adding transit signal priority
 - Stop consolidation and far-side stops
 - Pre-boarding fare collection
 - All door boarding



ELIMINATED SCENARIOS

No Build / No Change



High Platform – Long Ramp



High Platform – Switchback Ramp



Achieve State of Good Repair	Improved Safety*	Customer Experience	Accessibility	Historic Legacy
				
				
				

**Safety improvements are generally non-vehicle related*

ELIMINATED SCENARIOS

Low-Floor Insert



Suspended Mid-Section



New End Section



Non-Driving Trailer



Achieve State of Good Repair	Improved Safety*	Customer Experience	Accessibility	Historic Legacy

**Safety improvements are generally non-vehicle related*

ACTIVE SCENARIOS: 1

Description:

Modify Perley Thomas cars w/ wheelchair lifts on St Charles
New replica cars across the rest of the system



Modified Perley Thomas



New Replica Cars



Improved vehicle SGR



No change to safety



System-wide ADA accessibility,
mobility challenges remain



No change to customer
experience



Maintains iconic look, alter
integrity of historic cars

*This AI-generated image is for illustrative purposes only and does not represent RTA endorsement of the vehicle type shown.

ACTIVE SCENARIOS: 2

Description:

New modern replica cars for St Charles

Modern low-floor vehicles for the rest of the system



New Replica Cars



Low-Floor Vehicles



Improved vehicle SGR



No change to safety



System-wide ADA accessibility, major improvements on Canal/Riverfront/Rampart



Faster boarding for Canal/Riverfront/Rampart



Preserves some traditional look and introduces latest technology

ACTIVE SCENARIOS 3

Description:

All modern low-floor vehicles across system



AI CONCEPTUAL RENDERINGS ONLY

Low-Floor Vehicles



Improved vehicle SGR



No change to safety



Universal design: same access for all users

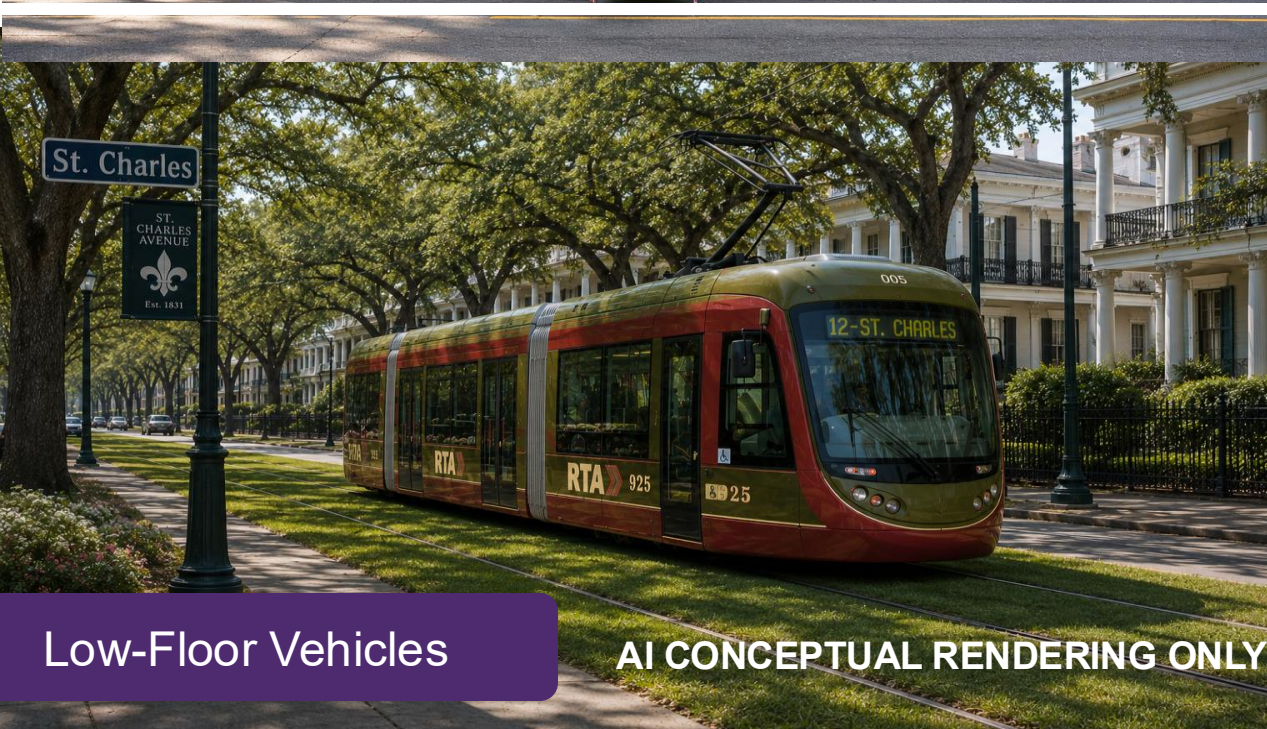


Faster boarding, more capacity, less dwell time



Latest technology, use traditional colors

*This AI-generated image is for illustrative purposes only and does not represent RTA endorsement of the vehicle type shown.



DRAFT MASTER PLAN VISION

We Want Your Feedback

A distinctly New Orleans system the next generation is proud to inherit. One that connects everyone—regardless of ability—to opportunity by getting you where you need to go. On time. Every time.

OUR NEXT STEPS

DRAFT EVALUATION CRITERIA



Customer Riding Experience

- On-time performance
 - Speed
 - Dwell time
 - Frequency
 - Headway adherence
- Resilience/Sustainability



Accessibility

- Wheelchair
- Other mobility devices
- Strollers



Significantly Improve Safety

- Crash reduction



Historic Legacy

- Keeping historic look
- Historic Landmark status
- Longevity



State of Good Repair

- **O&M** – how difficult is it to maintain and operate
 - Resilience/Sustainability
- **Feasibility**
 - Constructability
 - Schedule
 - Fiscal

An Informed Decision

Driven by expertise and public input



NEXT STEPS & PROJECT TIMELINE

August

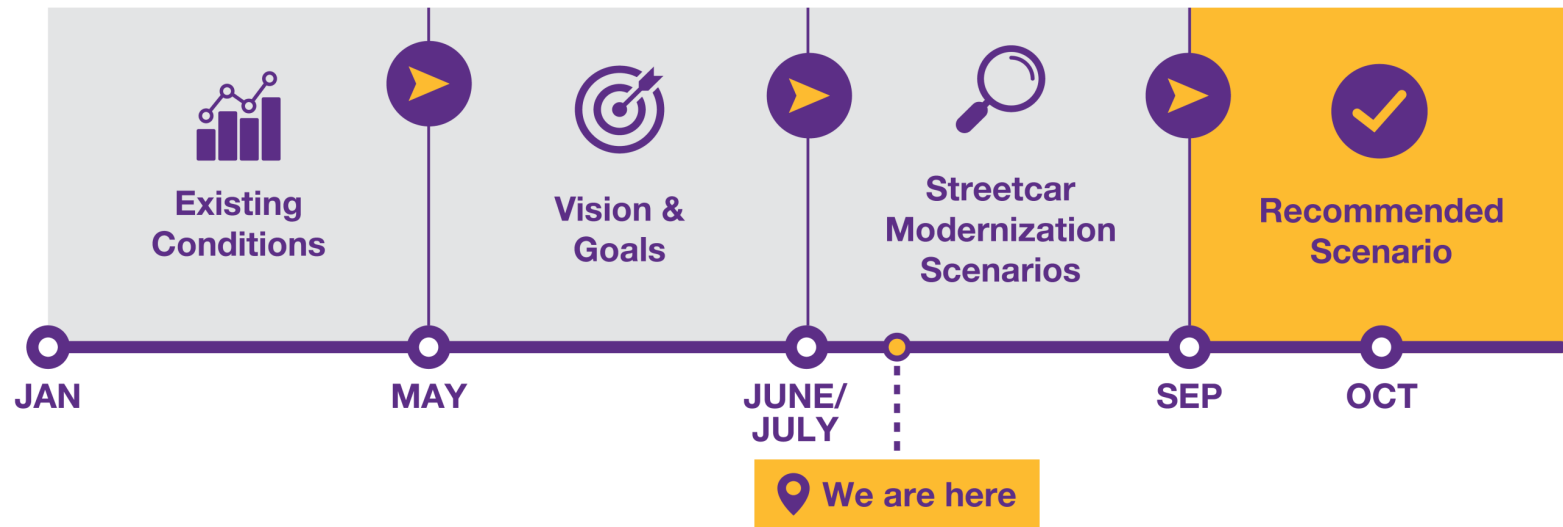
- Open House
- Finalize & evaluate scenarios

September

- Open House

October

- Present recommended scenario to Board of Directors



QUESTIONS / COMMENTS

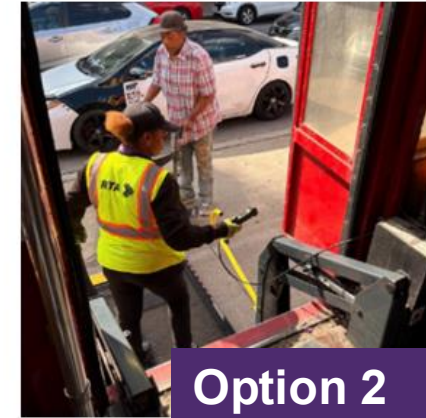
THANK YOU!

TRADE-OFF QUESTION ANALYSIS



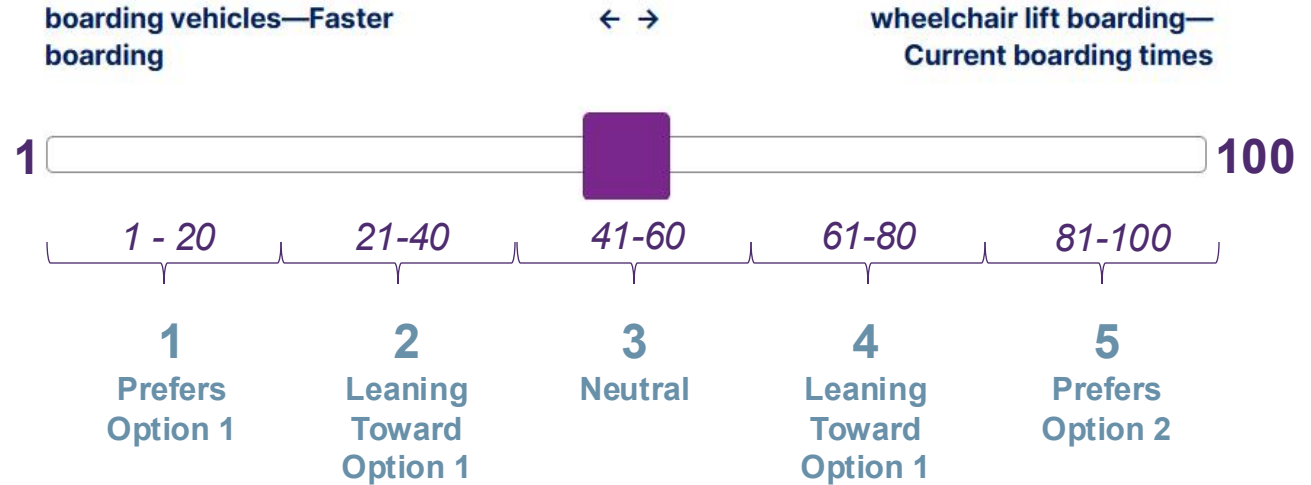
Option 1

Introduce low-floor, level-boarding vehicles—Faster boarding



Option 2

Maintain “step-up” and wheelchair lift boarding—Current boarding times



PERCEPTION OF PERFORMANCE

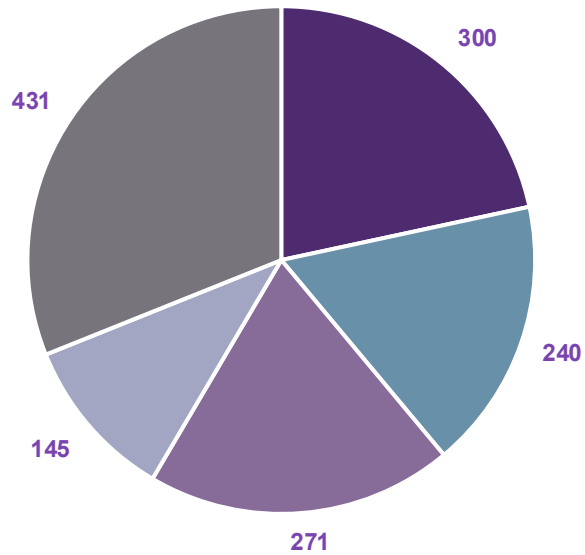
Based on your own personal experience or what you have heard, please **rate your opinion of the streetcar's performance in the following categories on a scale of 1 to 5** (with 1 being poor and 5 being excellent).

	All Participants	Black/African American	Non-White	Living with Disability	Weekly + Daily Riders
Personal Safety	4 5	4 3	4 5	4 5	4 5
Vehicle Safety	4 5	4 3	4 5	4 5	4 5
Accessibility	3 3	3 3	3 3	3 3	3 3
Speed/Efficiency	3 3	3 3	3 3	3 3	3 3
Reliability	3 3	3 3	3 3	3 3	2.5 2

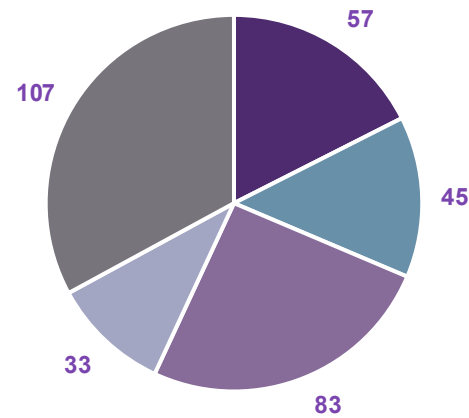
Average | Mode

NUMBER OF STOPS: CURRENT VS FEWER

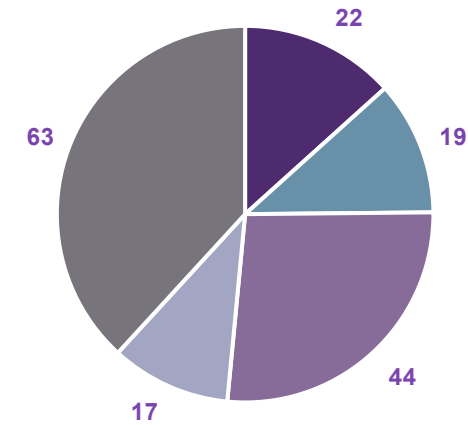
All Responses



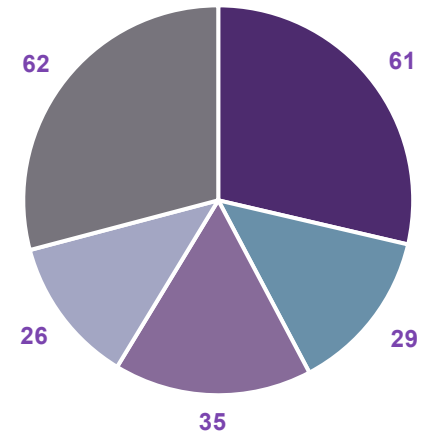
All Non-White Responses



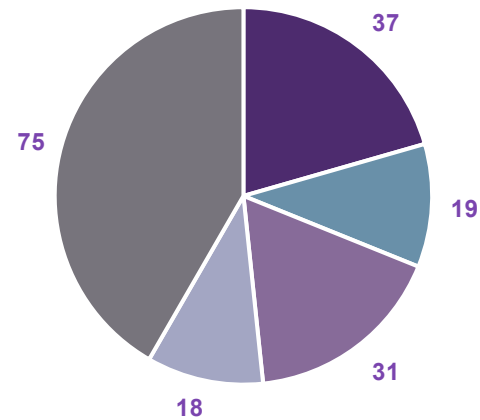
Black-Identifying Responses



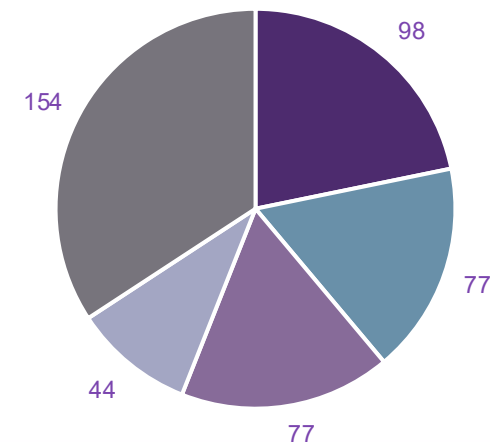
Mid City



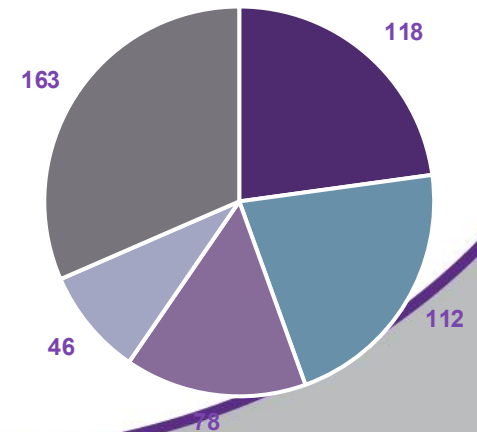
Those Living with Disabilities



Daily + Weekly Riders



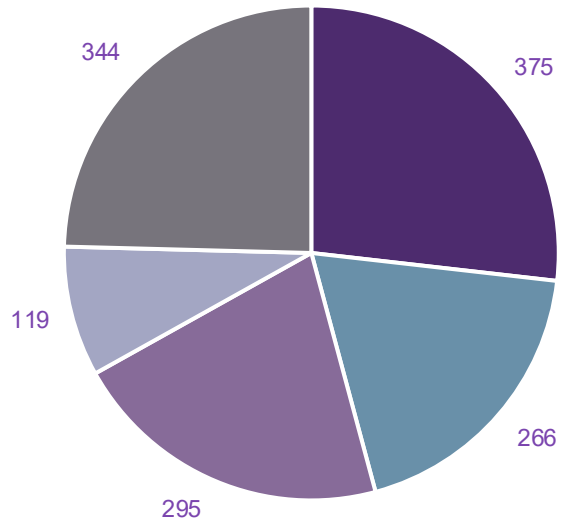
Uptown



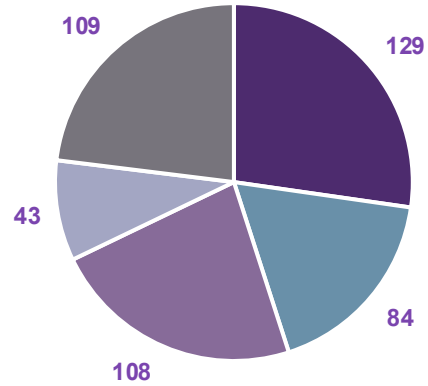
- Fewer Stops (1)
- Fewer-Leaning (2)
- Neutral (3)
- Current-Leaning (4)
- Current Number Stops (5)

OF CROSSOVERS: CURRENT VS FEWER

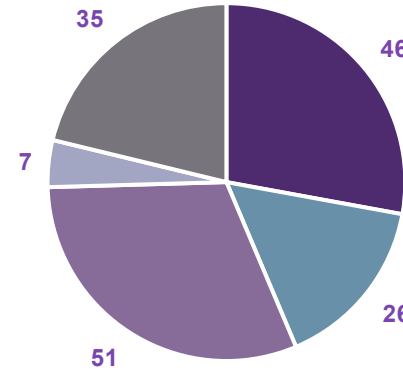
All Responses



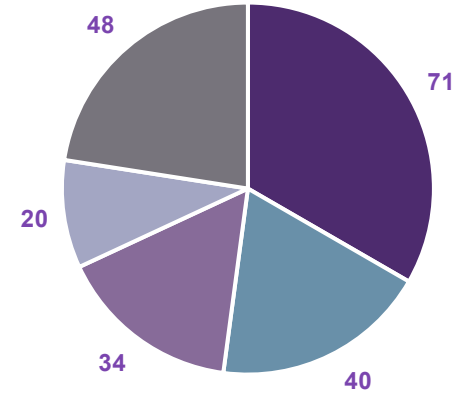
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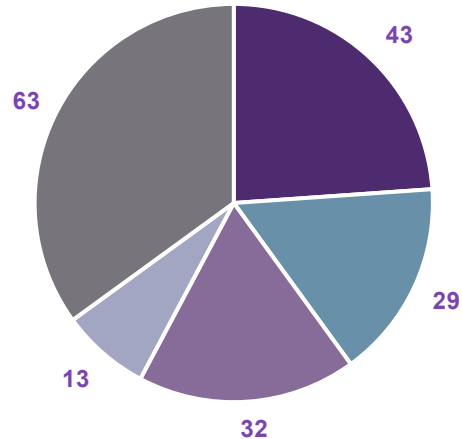
Black-Identifying Responses



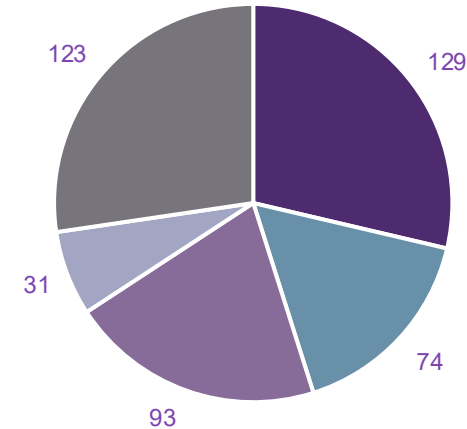
Mid City



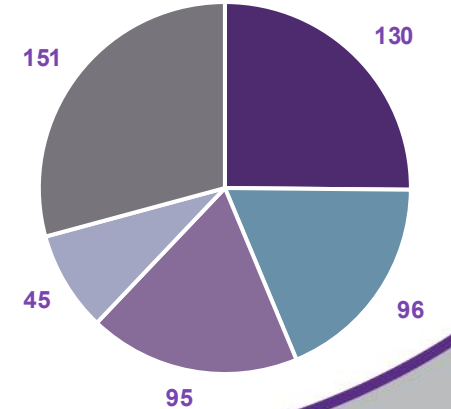
Those Living with Disabilities



Daily + Weekly Riders



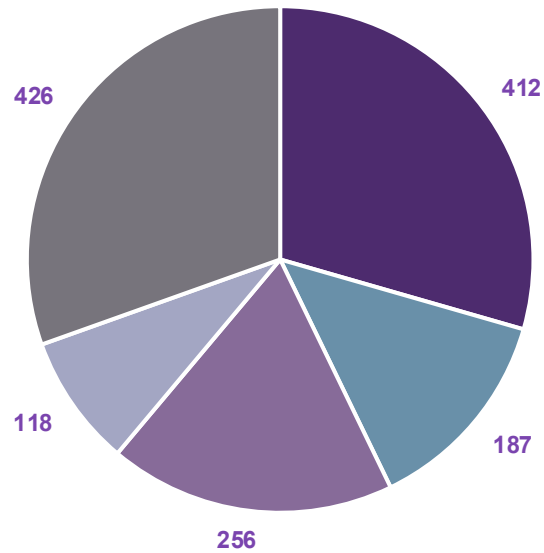
Uptown



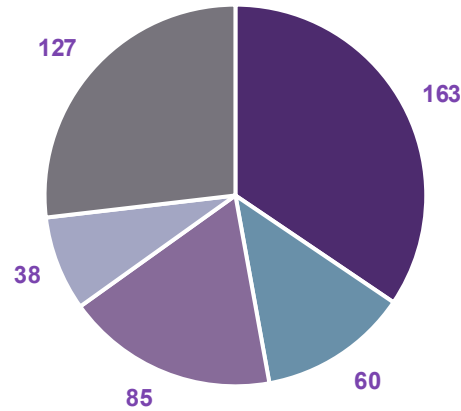
- Fewer Crossovers (1)
- Fewer-Leaning (2)
- Neutral (3)
- Current-Leaning (4)
- Current Crossovers (5)

BOARDING STYLE: LOW FLOOR VS CURRENT

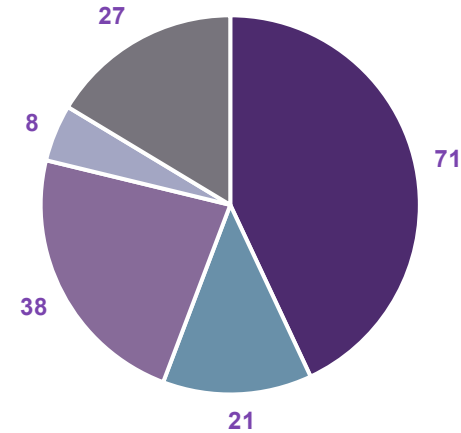
All Responses



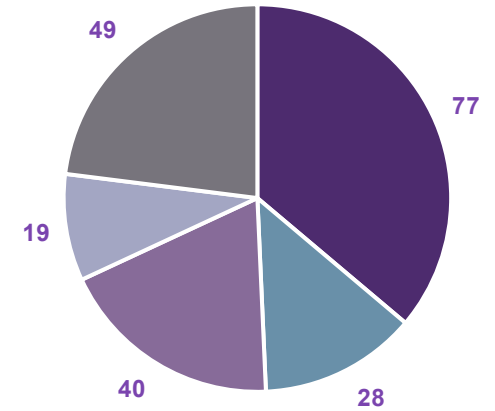
All Non-White Submissions



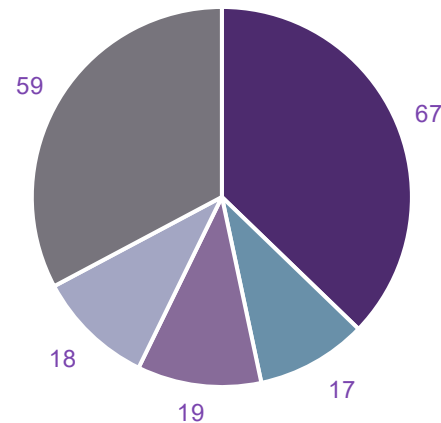
Black-Identifying Submissions



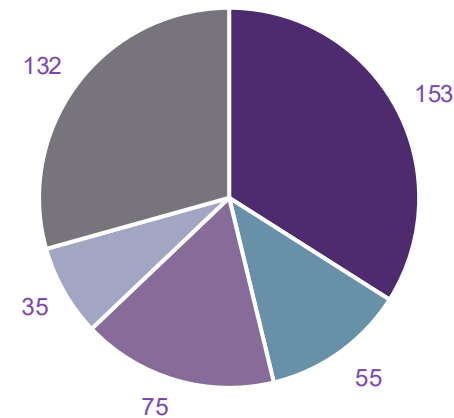
Mid City



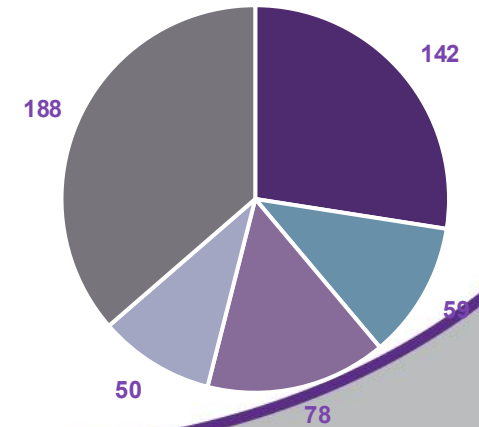
Those Living with Disabilities



Daily + Weekly Riders



Uptown

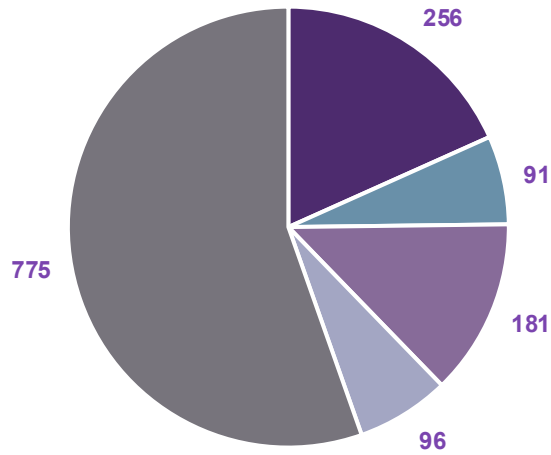


- Low-Floor (1)
- Low-Floor-Leaning (2)
- Neutral (3)
- Step-Up-Leaning (4)
- Step-Up (5)

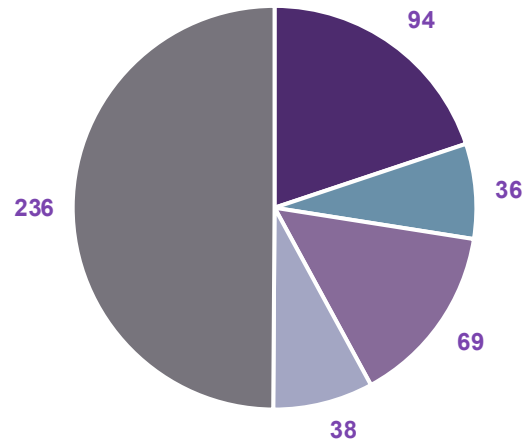
LOOK & FEEL: MODERN VS VINTAGE

Canal, Rampart, Riverfront

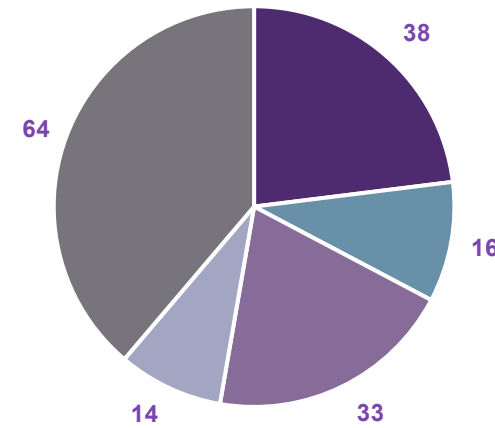
All Responses



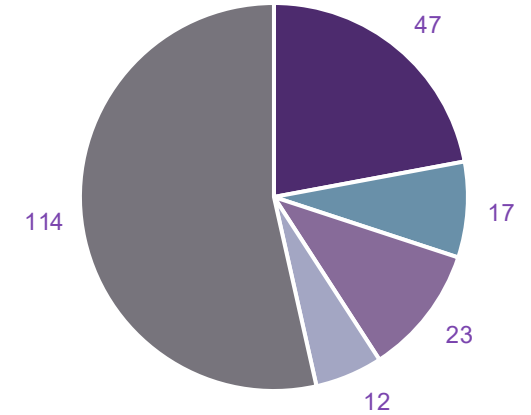
All Non-White Responses



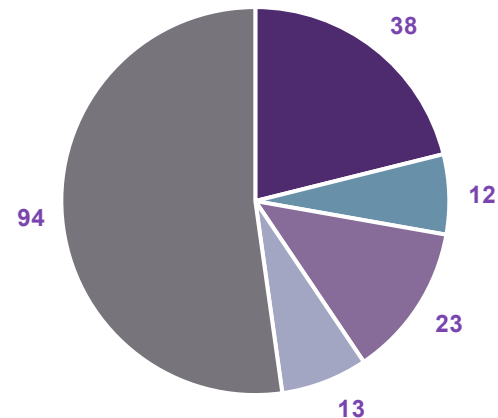
Black-Identifying Submissions



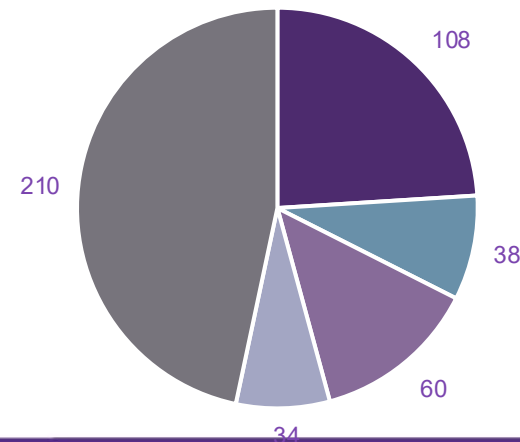
Mid City



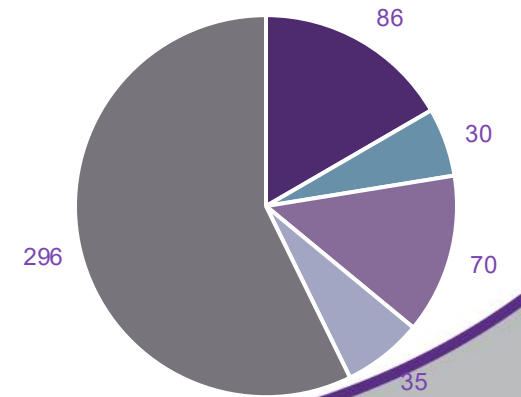
Those Living with Disabilities



Daily + Weekly Riders



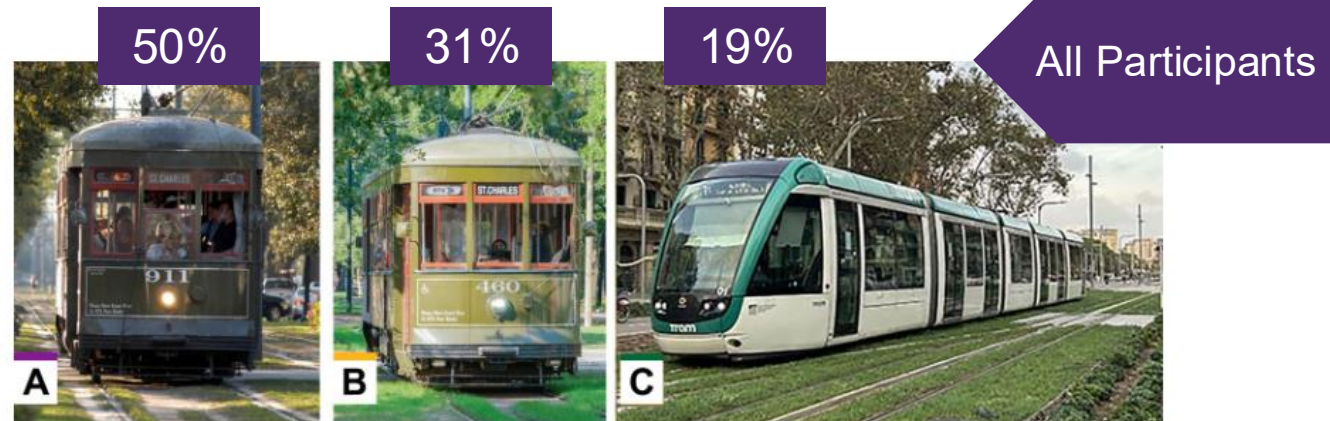
Uptown



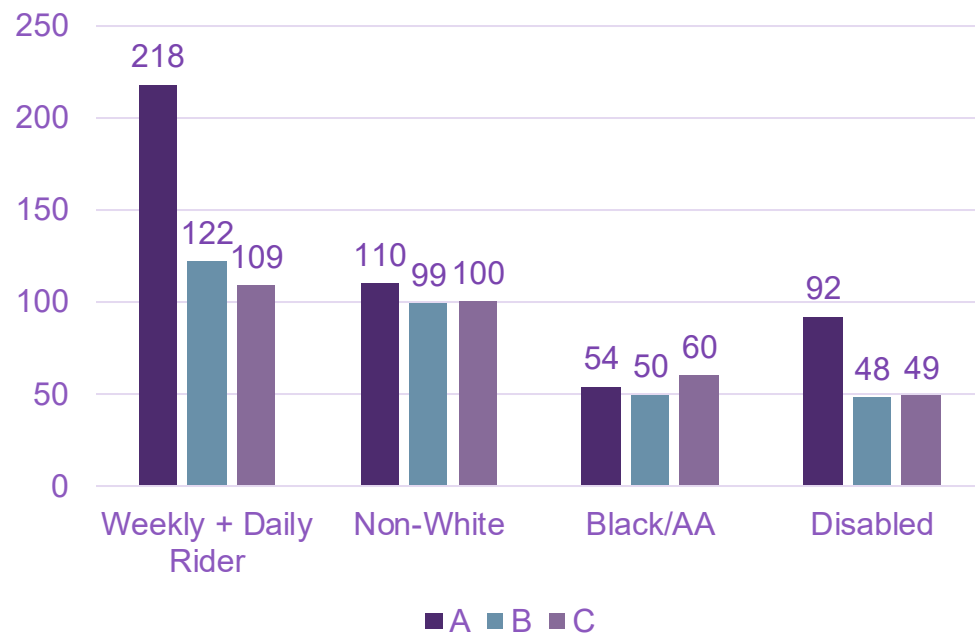
- Modern Cars (1)
- Modern-Leaning (2)
- Neutral (3)
- Vintage-Leaning (4)
- Vintage Cars (5)

RTA is federally required to make the St. Charles line more accessible to those living with disabilities or mobility needs.
 (Note: Images to the right are representative examples only.)

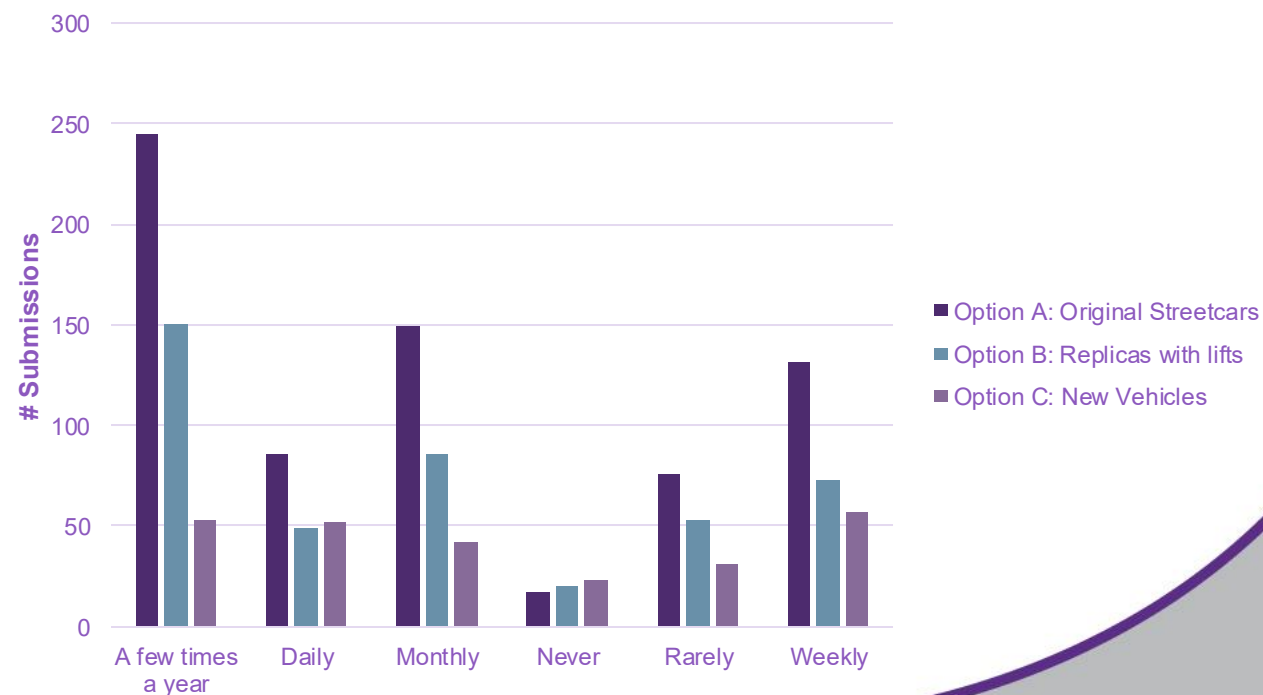
On St. Charles St. specifically, what kind of streetcar would you prefer to see that meets ADA-Compliance requirements?



Responses by Subsection

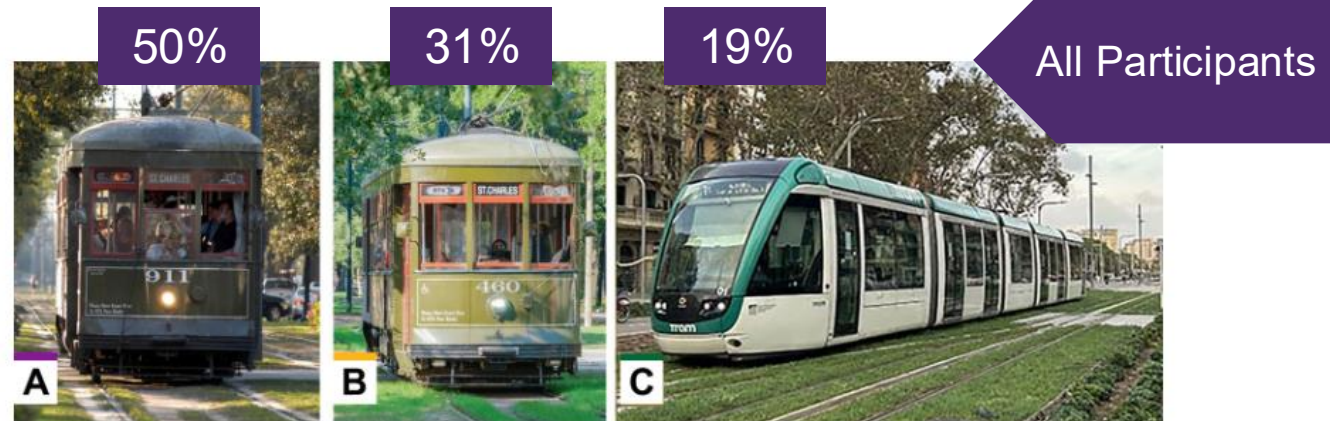


St. Charles Streetcar Preference by Ride Frequency

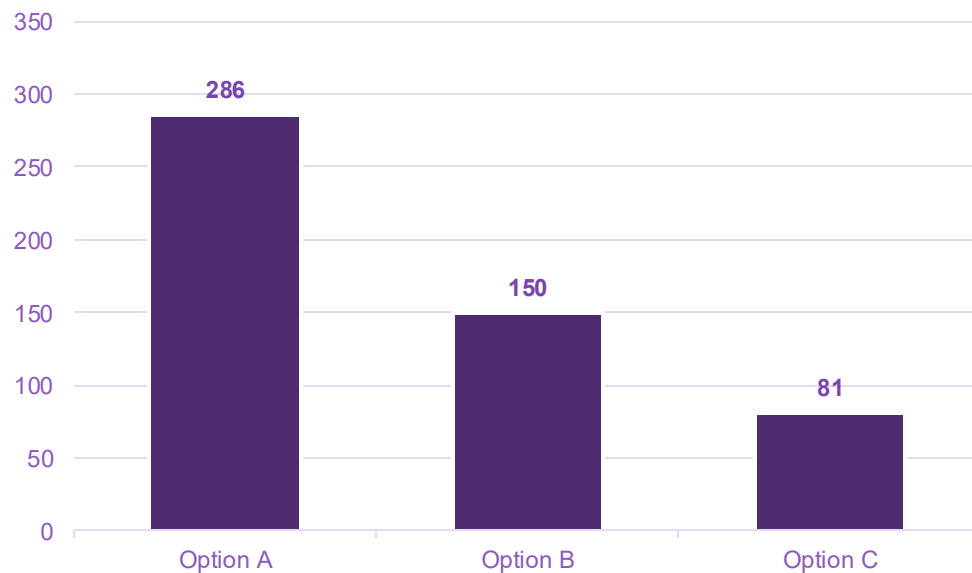


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On St. Charles St. specifically, what kind of streetcar would you prefer to see that meets ADA-Compliance requirements?



Uptown



Orleans Parish (Not Including Uptown)

