



# **GMT Vision Plan**

## **Key Stakeholder Outreach Results**

GMT Vision Committee  
April 2026

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**BLUF (Bottom Line Up Front)**

# Key Takeaways



1. Strong support for prioritizing near-term (1–3 year) and medium-term (3–5 year) investments in high-ridership corridors and creating useful connections
2. Strong support for building a reputation for high-quality service and an excellent customer experience
3. Strong desire for Chittenden County to offer opportunities to live with reduced reliance on motor vehicles
4. Clear recognition of transit-dependent riders as an important community concern
5. Strong support for GMT to proactively restructure its services to achieve financial sustainability and work with the State and local partners to secure a sustainable funding source

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# Outreach Methods

# Survey



Purpose: To help GMT make informed, balanced decisions and maximize community impact within its available resources and legislative authority.

Duration: March 3 - March 22, 2026

Distribution: Network-based (snowball) sampling of key stakeholders (not statistically representative)

Number Responses: 71

# Focus Groups



Purpose: To help guide GMT through near-term financial stabilization and define our direction as a primarily urban transit system.

Duration: March 11-17

Number: 4 (additional focus group of GMT Stewards planned in April)

- Focus Group 1: GMT Staff
- Focus Group 2: Municipalities (Milton, Essex, Essex Junction, Winooski)
- Focus Group 3: Municipalities (Burlington, Shelburne, South Burlington, Williston)
- Focus Group 4: Partners / Key Stakeholders

## Link to Survey Data



[Survey Data](#)



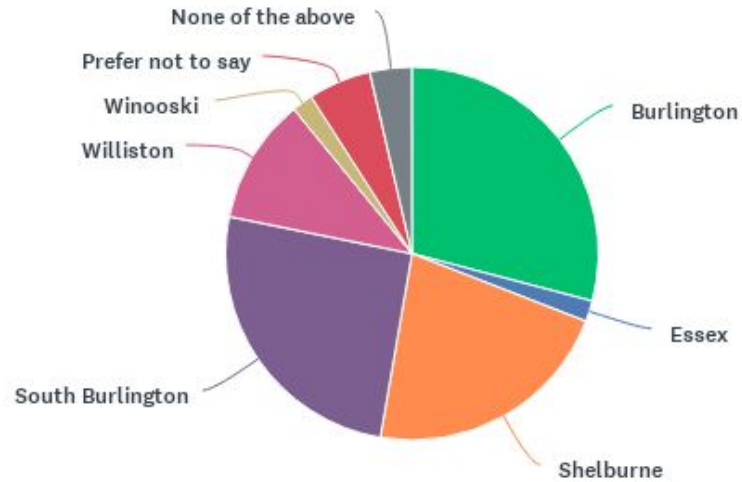
# Survey Results

## Q10 Respondent Category: Which category best describes your role?



71 responses submitted

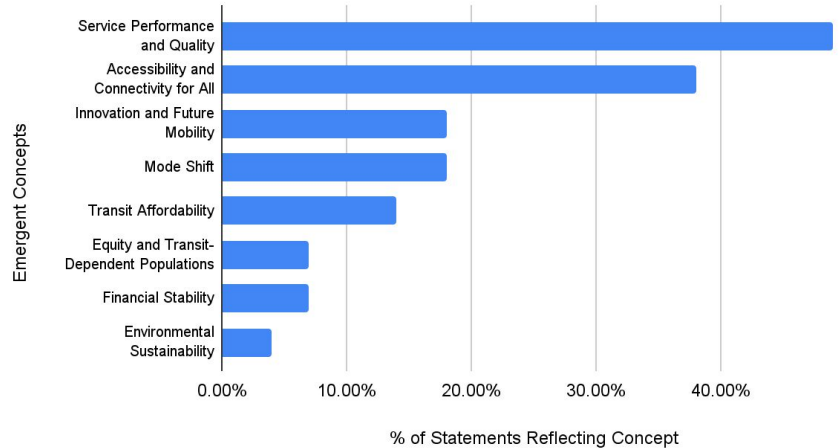
## Q11 Town Affiliation, if any:



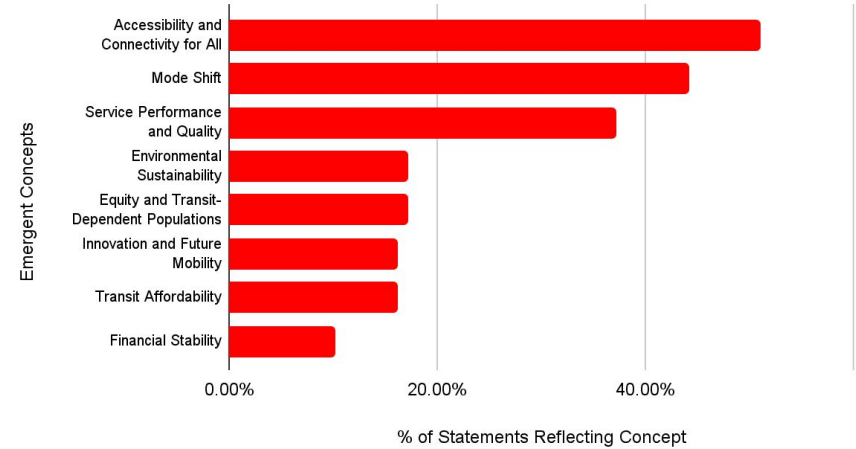
Question added post survey release date. 55 responses total

# Thematic Analysis

## GMT Value Proposition (Q8 - 5YR Horizon)



## GMT Outcomes (Q1 - 10YR Horizon)



Q8 Defining Strength (5-Year Horizon): In one sentence, what should GMT be known for doing exceptionally well in five years?

Q1 Aspirational Vision - Transit in Chittenden County (10-Year Horizon): In one or two sentences, what bold future should transit help create in Chittenden County?

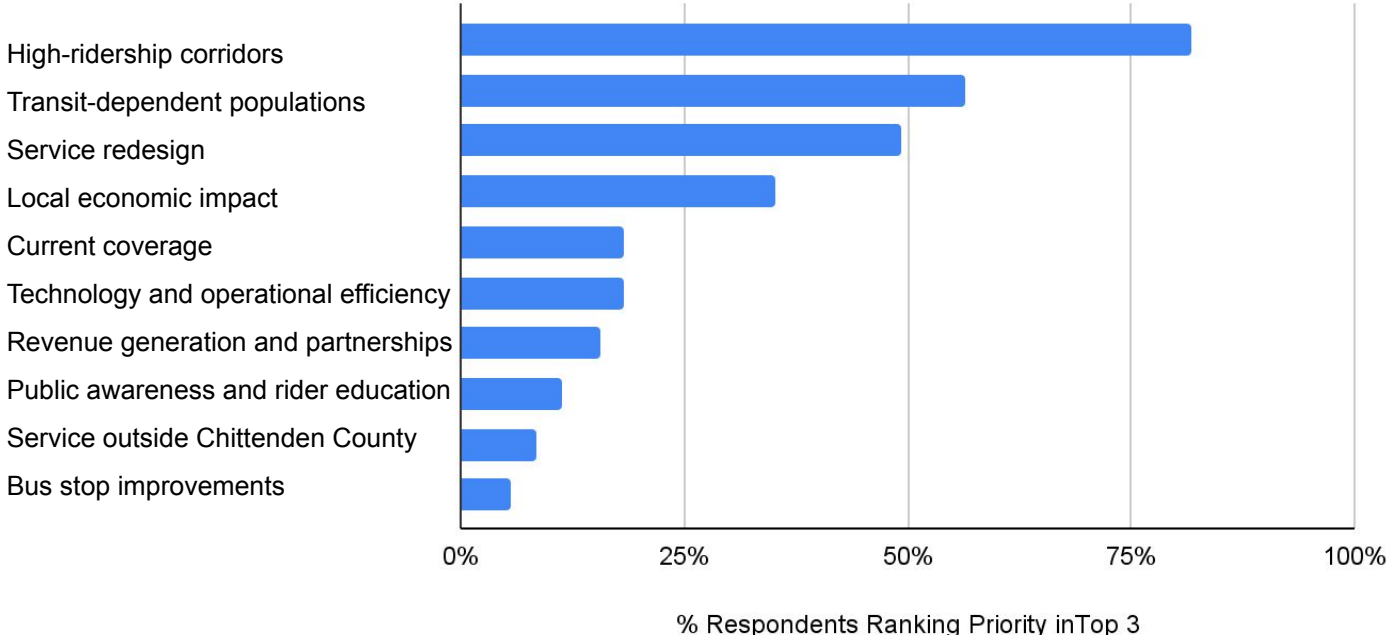
# Code Definitions

<b>Accessibility &amp; Connectivity for All</b>	<b>Environmental Sustainability</b>	<b>Equity &amp; Transit Dependent Populations</b>	<b>Financial Stability</b>	<b>Innovation &amp; Future Mobility</b>	<b>Mode Shift</b>	<b>Service Performance &amp; Quality</b>	<b>Transit Affordability</b>
Focuses on...							
Access to destinations, services, or regional connectivity for all users	Environmental and climate-related impacts of transit	Serving transit dependent and vulnerable populations	The financial health and long-term funding of the transit system	Innovation in technology, service models, and future mobility	Shifting travel behavior from private vehicles to transit at a system level	How well transit performs from the rider's perspective	The cost of using transit and its impact on household transportation expenses
Includes...							
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Access to jobs, healthcare, education, and services</li> <li>-Network coverage and regional connectivity</li> <li>-Economic opportunity and community connection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Reduced emissions</li> <li>-Climate change mitigation</li> <li>-Air quality improvements</li> <li>-Energy efficiency</li> <li>-Electrification</li> <li>-Sustainability goals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Transit dependent riders and those who need transit</li> <li>-Low-income and affordability concerns</li> <li>-Seniors, disabled, and vulnerable groups</li> <li>-Access regardless of income or ability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Sustainable funding models</li> <li>-Dedicated revenue sources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-New technologies</li> <li>-Service models</li> <li>-Forward-looking approaches to mobility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Reduced car ownership or driving</li> <li>-Increased ridership or transit mode share</li> <li>-Reduced traffic or congestion</li> <li>-Transit replacing or competing with car trips</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Reliability and on-time performance</li> <li>-Frequency and wait times</li> <li>-Travel time and speed</li> <li>-Ease of use and convenience</li> <li>-Customer service experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Fare levels</li> <li>-Cost burden on riders</li> </ul>

Q2 Near-Term Priorities RIGHT NOW for Stabilization (1–3 Years): Drag and drop to rank these priorities from most to least important based on where GMT should place emphasis in the short term.



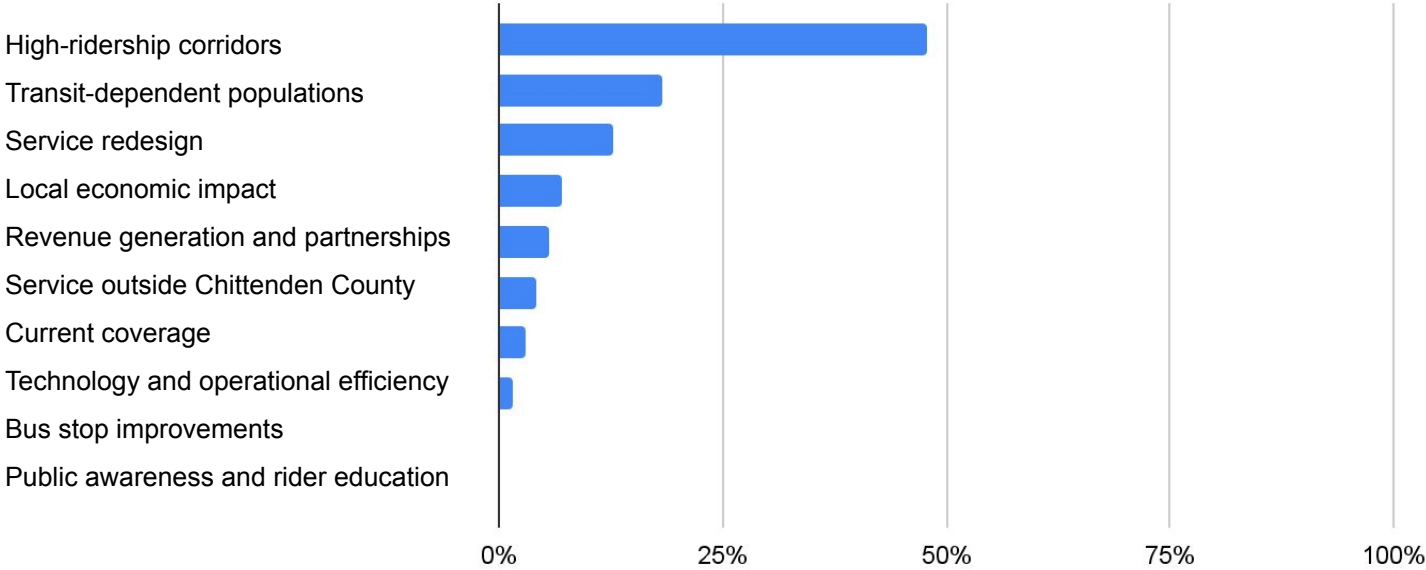
### Priorities Ranked in Top 3, by Percent of Respondents



Q2 Near-Term Priorities RIGHT NOW for Stabilization (1–3 Years): Drag and drop to rank these priorities from most to least important based on where GMT should place emphasis in the short term.



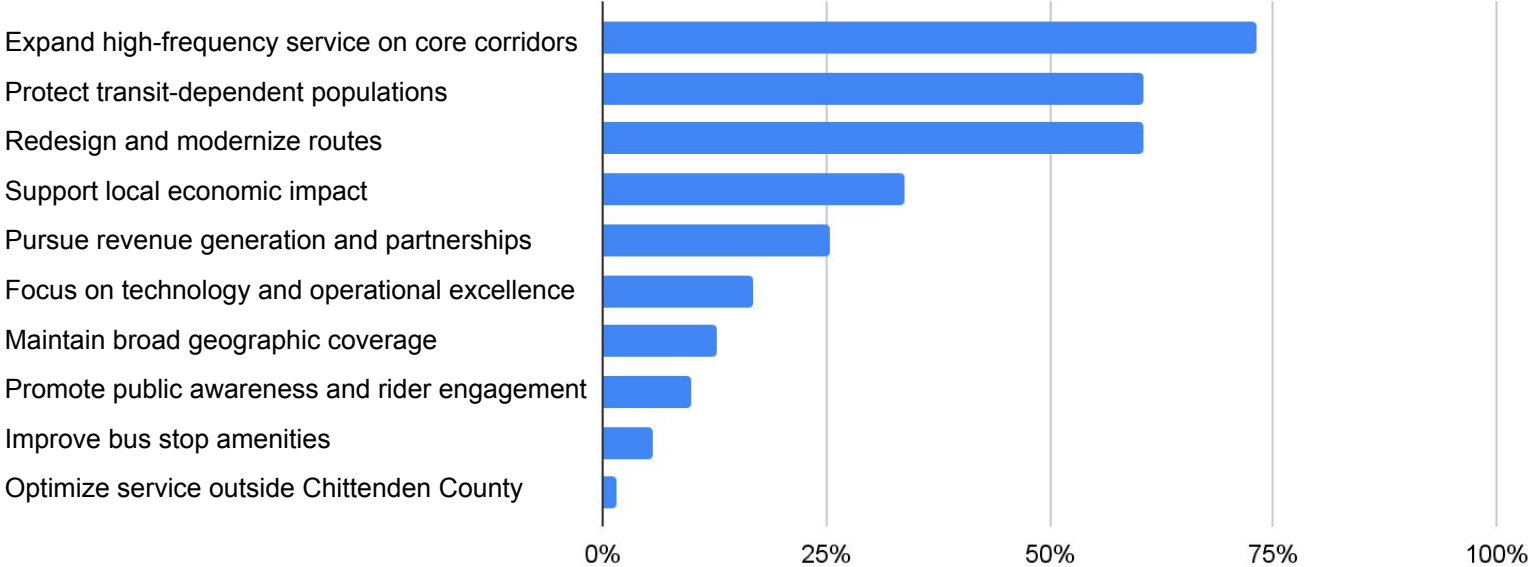
### Priorities Ranked First, by Percent of Respondents



Q6 Aspirational Vision — 3–5 Year Priorities: Looking ahead 3–5 years, GMT aims to evolve as an urban-focused transit agency that meets community needs while maintaining financial sustainability. Please drag and rank your top 5 priorities for GMT’s 3–5 year vision in order of priority. You do not need to rank the remaining items.



### Priorities Ranked in Top 3, by Percent of Respondents



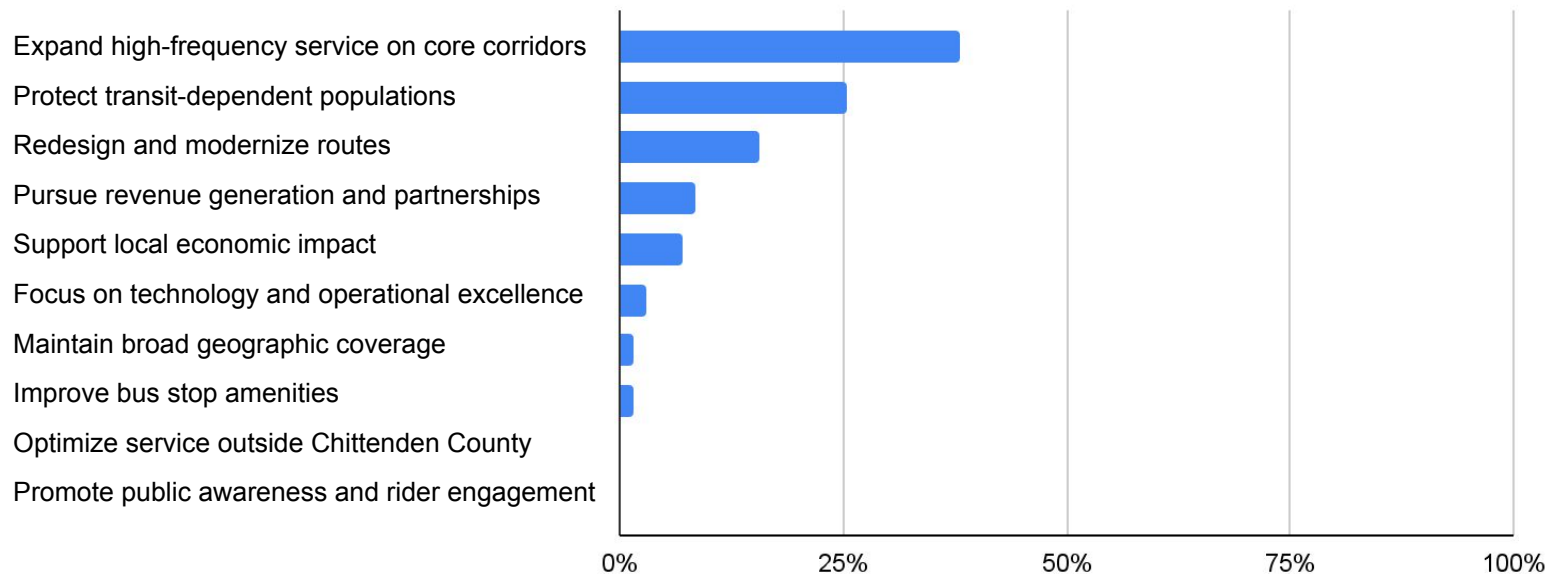
71 responses submitted

% Respondents Ranking Priority in Top 3

Q6 Aspirational Vision — 3–5 Year Priorities: Looking ahead 3–5 years, GMT aims to evolve as an urban-focused transit agency that meets community needs while maintaining financial sustainability. Please drag and rank your top 5 priorities for GMT’s 3–5 year vision in order of priority. You do not need to rank the remaining items.



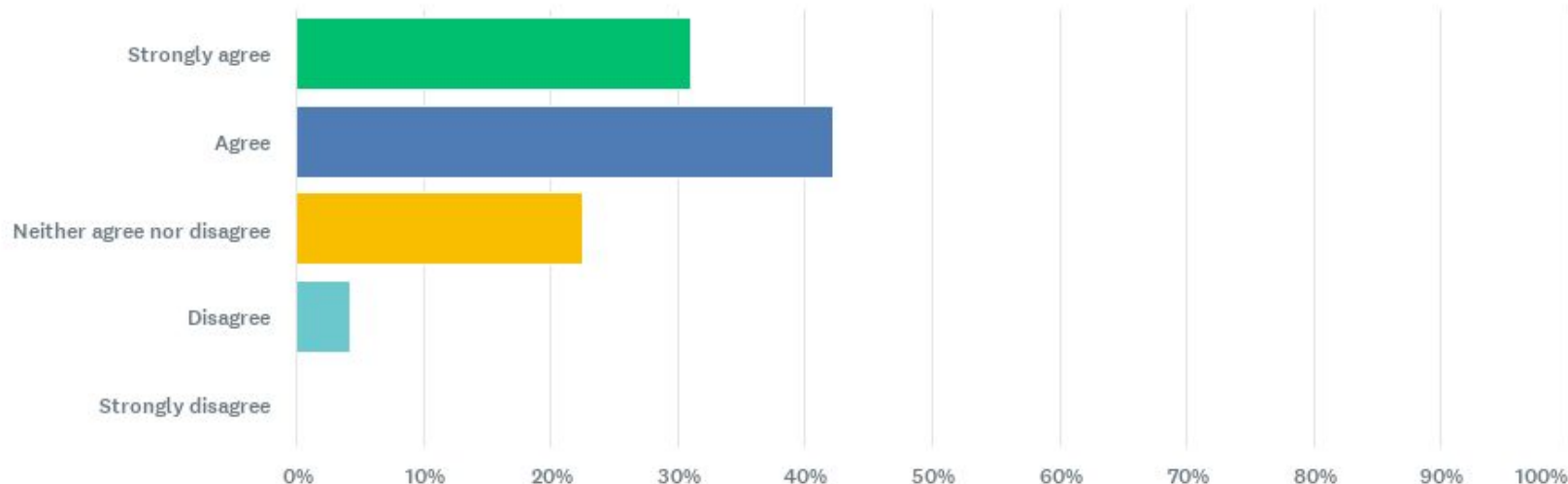
### Priorities Ranked First, by Percent of Respondents



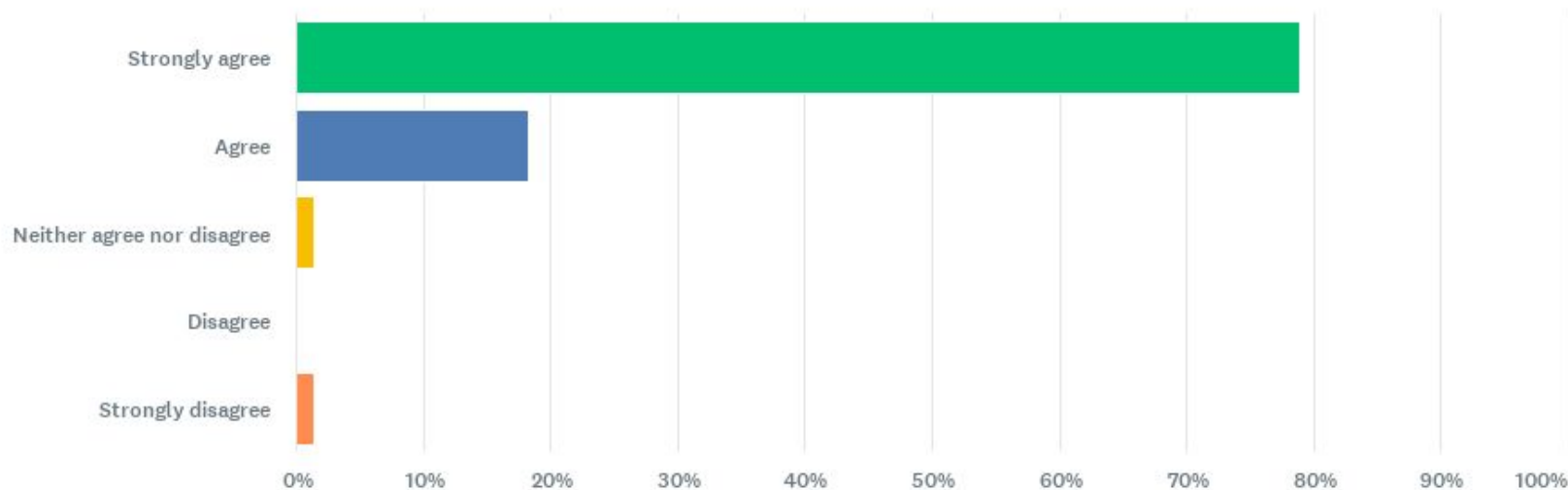
% Respondents Ranking Priority First

71 responses submitted

**Q4 Fiscal Discipline: To what extent do you agree with the following statement: GMT should take proactive steps to restructure its services to achieve financial sustainability.**



Q5 Sustainable Funding Collaboration: To what extent do you agree with the following statement: GMT should proactively work with the State and local partners to secure a sustainable funding source (e.g., state grants, dedicated local funding, or other long-term revenue streams).



**Q9 Additional Considerations (optional): Briefly, what additional considerations should GMT keep in mind as it defines its strategic direction within fiscal and legislative constraints? (36 responses, summarized into main ideas)**

<p>Multimodal coordination (GMT + municipalities)</p> <p>Cross-sector coalition building &amp; advocacy</p> <p>Continuous quality improvement culture</p> <p>Shift to high-frequency arterial service</p> <p>Demand pressures (aging population, climate, fuel costs)</p> <p>Rider safety priority</p> <p>Public funding over fare dependence</p> <p>Car ownership cost → transit alternative</p>	<p>Housing-driven growth alignment (development corridors)</p> <p>Disability &amp; holistic community impact focus (includes aging-in-place + low-mobility access)</p> <p>State-supported transit as economic engine</p> <p>Urban-core prioritization vs low-density tradeoffs</p> <p>Fuel price leverage for transit advocacy</p> <p>Financial sustainability &amp; service cut risk (includes sustainable funding + route protection concerns)</p>	<p>Transit accessibility for those who need it (includes “accessibility to those who need transit”)</p> <p>Mode shift through behavior change (includes incentives + mindset shift toward transit use)</p> <p>Avoid cuts that eliminate usability / protect popular routes</p> <p>Land use–service alignment in planning (includes transit-supportive density prioritization + development patterns)</p> <p>Transit equity in underserved/low-access areas (includes pockets of limited access such as in Shelburne)</p>	<p>High-value destination connectivity (airport, universities, medical centers, job/housing hubs)</p> <p>Structural cost pressures &amp; funding constraints (labor, fuel, fleet cost escalation; funding uncertainty)</p> <p>Transition to autonomous/on-demand mobility models</p> <p>Organizational capacity &amp; internal readiness (includes staff buy-in + internal structure evaluation)</p> <p>Shared governance &amp; partnership ecosystem (state, municipalities, cities; shared vision for transit system)</p>
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# Survey Data - Some Supplemental Findings

## Example Statements

Q1 Aspirational Vision - Transit in Chittenden County (10-Year Horizon): In one or two sentences, what bold future should transit help create in Chittenden County?

### THEME: Accessibility and Connectivity for All

*“More staff, drivers, and available times for community members to **get to crucial locations (not only government buildings, but mental health services and low-cost shopping options)**. Additionally, transit service **MUST** become truly welcoming to disabled individuals, not just distantly tolerant as it currently stands.”*

*“enabling Chittenden County residents to live car-free by providing reliable & consistent **access to key employment hubs, shopping centers, and recreational amenities** 7 days/week”*

*“Public transit in Chittenden County should be designed and implemented to help minimize the use of single driver automobile trips, enable all residents to **easily travel from their homes to places of work, shopping, medical appointments etc** and help reduce the effects of climate change through a reduction of green house gases from internal combustion automobiles.”*

### THEME: Mode Shift

*“Connecting dense communities with frequent, reliable service, enabling access to housing, workplaces, medical care and groceries **without needing car access.**”*

*“GMT should make living in the county possible **without a car.**”*

*“Transit must be a part of a housing-rich and proximity-based future in which Chittenden County residents will **rarely need a car** to access daily or weekly needs.”*

## Example Statements

Q8 Defining Strength (5-Year Horizon): In one sentence, what should GMT be known for doing exceptionally well in five years?



### THEME: Service Performance and Quality

“Being *reliable, friendly, and easy to use.*”

“*Frequent, on-time, with a focus of customer service.*”

“Operating innovative, *comfortable, convenient, and well-maintained public transit* in the Burlington area.”

### THEME: Accessibility and Connectivity for All

“GMT should be known for moving people *between and within Chittenden County's largest population and economic hubs and corridors.*”

“Transporting people *to their jobs and to main shopping areas.*”

“Providing convenient and reliable *service between major origins and destinations.*”

## Q2 Near-Term (1–3 Years) Priorities



<b>Role Affiliation (# responses)</b>	<b>High Ridership Corridors Rank Avg/Rank</b>	<b>Transit Dependent Populations Rank Avg/Rank</b>
Transit Staff (8)	1.38 / 1	5.25 / 3
Municipalities + Downtowns (29)	2.14 / 1	3.38 / 2
Advocacy Organizations (7)	2.71 / 1	3.00 / 2
Community Advisory Committees (13)	3.08 / 1	3.38 / 2
Institutional partners + Housing Developers + Employers (6)	2.00 / 1	3.67 / 2


## Q2 Near-Term (1–3 Years) Priorities




<b>Town Affiliation (# responses)</b>	<b>High Ridership Corridors Rank Avg/Rank</b>	<b>Transit Dependent Populations Rank Avg/Rank</b>
Burlington (16)	2.31 / 1	2.81 / 2
South Burlington (14)	2.57 / 1	3.14 / 2
Williston (6)	2.00 / 1	4.00 / 2
Shelburne (12)	3.17 / 2	2.75 / 1
Winooski (1)	1.00 / 1	2.00 / 2
Town of Essex (1)	1.00 / 1	2.00 / 2
Prefer Not to Say (3)	1.67 / 1	4.67 / 3*

\*Tied with Service Redesign

Q3 Near-Term Priorities RIGHT NOW for Stabilization (1–3 Years): Are there any key priorities missing from the list? Please specify them in one sentence and rank their importance compared to the priorities above. (31 responses, summarized)

- 
- Work with our partners and large employers to find ways to meet employee needs / develop employer-based ridership growth strategies
  - Restructure charter governance to prioritize most impactful and largest financially-contributing municipalities
  - Environmental impact
  - Improved bus stop infrastructure, comfort, and weather protection
  - Make system more welcoming to disabled communities / focus on transit-dependent population
  - Improve service to BTV Airport for employees and serving the busiest flight times
  - Make maps and app easier to use / make it easier to pay for rides
  - Expand O&D transportation even if it means reducing other services
  - Create stops where riders can congregate to meet a bus rather than having individual stops
  - Improve safety and comfort at Cherry Street hub
  - Find stable source of funding / enact service cuts to rightsize the organization
  - Grow ridership
  - Evaluate integration of autonomous vehicles into transit service.
  - The last mile - how can riders get to/from the High Ridership corridors to increase ridership
  - Repair GMT's brand image. Make riding the bus fun, convenient, and comfortable

Q7 Aspirational Vision — 3–5 Year Priorities: Are any key priorities missing from the list? Please specify in one sentence and rank their importance within the top five.

- 
- Evaluate relocation/redevelopment of the Downtown Burlington transit station
  - Improve transit planning [coordinate with regional planning; prioritize transit in roadway design (bus lanes, signal priority); consider environmental and parking impacts]
  - Improve transit connections along the Shelburne Rd–City Center–Tilley Dr corridor
  - Improve cross-area routes that avoid Downtown Burlington
  - Incentivize transit use (e.g., tax credits for bus commuters)
  - Explore microtransit / right-sizing vehicles
  - Expand fleet electrification / evaluate use of autonomous transit
  - Focus on mode shift strategies
  - Focus on financial stability before expanding service; pursue gradual growth
  - Plan for long-term funding beyond current federal conditions
  - Proactively advertise transit-oriented public improvements



# Focus Group Data

# Focus Group 1 (GMT Staff)




Date: March 6, 2026

Participants: Burlington Administrative staff

Key Themes:

- Making transit more appealing by addressing safety measures and amenities
- Improving customer service on board
- Employer transit programs
- Stability, planning, and dedicated funding

## Focus Group 2 (Municipalities)




Date: March 11, 2026

Participants:

- Greg Duggan, Town Manager - Essex
- Regina Mahoney, City Manager - Essex Junction
- Elaine Wang, City Manager - Winooski
- Chris Yuen, Community Development Director - Essex Junction


## Focus Group 2 (Municipalities)



### Key Themes:

- Prioritizing high-frequency service corridors
- Redesign routes for efficiency, rather than continue with incremental cuts
- Focus investment on high-performance routes
- Use ridership and current data as primary decision metrics
- Align with community development goals
- Support TOD
- Develop a clear transition/restructuring plan
- Tailor approaches to different service environments rather than using a one-size-fits-all approach
- Expand community engagement

## Focus Group 3 (Municipalities)




Date: March 16, 2026

Participants:

- Jessie Baker, City Manager - South Burlington
- Matt Lawless, Town Manager - Shelburne
- Samantha McGinnis, Church Street Market Place

## Focus Group 3 (Municipalities)



### Key Themes:

- Don't let perfect be the enemy of good.
- Don't try to be all things to all people.
- Show off, tell your story.
- Avoid the death spiral
- Even if GMT cuts overall hours, must show improvement in remaining service areas.
- Be at the table for land use and community development conversations
- Change the model of funding
- Get creative when thinking about funding
- Make the bus cool
- Choice rider culture
- Contain pay and benefit costs



## Focus Group 4 (Business/Institutional Partners) - March 17, 2026

Katie Meesho Champlain Housing Trust, Residence Services Dept

Beth Goss, Director of Client Care and Coordination, Howard Center

Alysia Beaman, Admin and Facilities, Howard Center

Ashley Bond, Network Director of Real Estate, UVM Health Network

Sandy Thibault, CATMA

Andrea Viets, Executive Director, Heineberg Community Senior Center

Jamie Smith, Director of Transportation & Parking, UVM

Nic Anderson, Assistant Vice President of Planning and Operations, Champlain College

Alex Demoly, Vice President, GBIC

Wendy Koenig, Executive Director of Government Relations, UVM

# Focus Group 4 (Business/Institutional Partners)



## Key Themes:

- Stabilize service and reduce constant changes
- Increase service frequency on key corridors
- Preserve existing access before expanding or cutting further
- Reintroduce or maintain critical bus stops at essential destinations
- Shift away from a Burlington-centric hub model
- Develop partnerships with major employers for targeted routes
- Expand first-mile/last-mile solutions
- Improve ADA/SSTA service quality and accountability
- Use data and performance metrics to guide service decisions
- Prioritize transit-dependent riders in decision-making
- Engage employers and institutions to reduce transportation barriers
- Invest in workforce development pipelines
- Improve rider experience and system usability
- Leverage park-and-ride and regional access points
- Consider proactive system redesign rather than incremental cuts
- Increase transparency and communication about trade-offs
- Position GMT as part of a broader mobility ecosystem
- Advocate for diversified funding sources (beyond transit budgets)
- Avoid trying to serve all needs equally
- Use disruption strategically to drive awareness and change