

# **Rhode Island Commuter Rail Service Passenger Surveys Summary Report**

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**Prepared By: Micah Gensler  
Student Assistant  
Rhode Island Department of Transportation  
Office of Intermodal Planning**

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## **I. BACKGROUND**

In February 1988, The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) commuter rail service began between Boston and Providence. It was made possible by an agreement between MBTA and RIDOT known as the Pilgrim Partnership. Under the terms of this agreement, RIDOT trades federal transit funding to MBTA for capital project. In return, MBTA purchases rolling stock and provides rail service to Rhode Island. The Pawtucket layover yard was funded through this agreement.

In December 2010, RIDOT and MBTA expanded commuter rail service to the InterLink facility in Warwick. The InterLink is located adjacent to T.F. Green Airport, and includes the rail station, a garage featuring both commuter parking and a rental car facility, and a skywalk connecting it to T.F. Green's terminal. A climate-control waiting room exists on the platform; it provides a heated space in the winter and cooling in the summer. The platform is directly accessible from a drop-off lane, parking payment, a small bicycle rack, and bicycle/pedestrian paths leading through the garage to Jefferson Boulevard. Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA) #8 bus serves the InterLink with a stop on Jefferson.

In April 2012, Wickford Junction opened. The Pilgrim Partnership allows rail service to be extended from Providence to T.F. Green station and Wickford Junction. It is a commuter rail station, parking garage, and retail center located in North Kingstown. Wickford Junction is anchored by a Wal-Mart, and in addition features Staples, bank services and medical offices, and other retail services. Food service operates inside the parking garage. Currently, MBTA operates ten trains to T.F. Green and Wickford, both inbound and outbound Monday-Friday.

The purpose for June 2012 passenger survey is two-fold. RIDOT would like to evaluate commuter rail service for people who utilize these trains for transportation to/from RI. In addition, to comply with Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Title VI requirements, six questions in the survey ask passengers for demographic information. Title VI requires RIDOT to report on transit services impacts within minority and low income populations, and on limited English proficiency populations. The last passenger survey was taken in 2008. This report is intended to update the 2008 survey report, and compare results before and after T.F. Green and Wickford Junction opened.

## **II. METHODOLOGY**

The survey form (see exhibit 1 attached) was based on a survey distributed by RIDOT at a public hearing held on February 27, 2012, regarding MBTA fare increase proposal. Questions were altered to focus on MBTA service from Wickford Junction and T.F. Green. Demographic questions were inserted to meet Title VI requirements.

The survey took place over two days. It was undertaken with permission from both MBTA/MBCR and Amtrak. On Tuesday, June 12, 2012 a team of 8 RIDOT interns surveyed passengers at Wickford Junction and T.F. Green stations. Four were sent to Wickford, and four to T.F. Green. The team greeted passengers on the platforms waiting to board trains 808, 812, 814, and 818 at Wickford Junction. At T.F. Green, the team greeted passengers waiting for trains 806, 808, 812, 814, and 818.

After distributing surveys on the platform, teams boarded trains and collected surveys from the passengers they greeted. Teams detrained at the stop following the one at which they boarded. This cycle was repeated for each train. On June 12, 400 survey forms were printed. 245 were distributed, and 195 were filled out and collected.

On Thursday, June 14, 2012 teams surveyed passengers waiting to board MBTA trains 804, 806, 808, 810, 812, 814, and 818 at Providence Station. Each team was assigned half of the seven trains. The same distribution and methodology used on the 12<sup>th</sup> was used on the 14<sup>th</sup>. On the 14<sup>th</sup>, 1500 survey forms were printed, and 568 were distributed. 416 were filled out and collected.

Once collected, results were entered into Excel Spreadsheet. Three spreadsheets were produced; one for each station. For questions 2-13, percentages were taken from the total number of respondents who answered that particular question. Question 13 percentages were taken from the total number of check marks made for reasons for choosing commuter rail. For question 15, percentages were taken from the total number of ratings for each service quality measure. Results were recorded generally; it was determined that because service to T.F. Green and Wickford Junction recently began, general categories of comments would be appropriate to evaluate service.

The following are the results of the final tabulation for the 15 questions broken out by station.

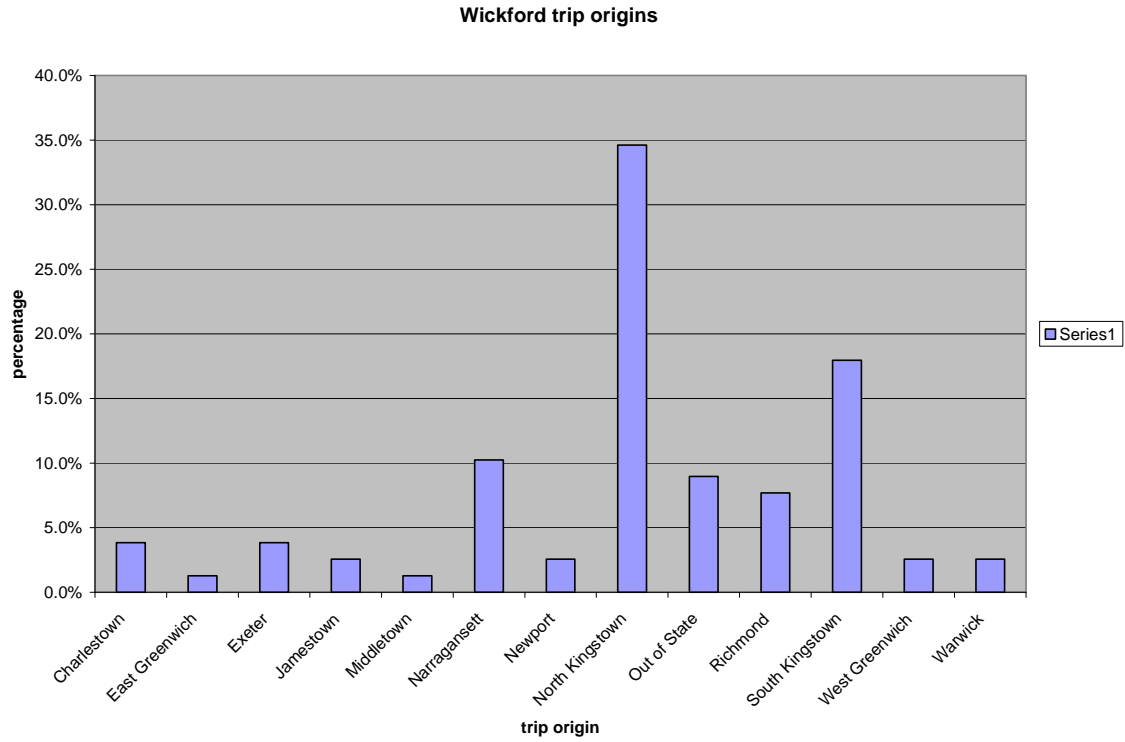
### **III. WICKFORD JUNCTION**

#### **Hometown/Trip Origin**

To understand from where riders begin their trip, the first question asks survey participants to state where they live. Responses were grouped by Rhode Island city or town. Locations outside of Rhode Island were grouped together and labeled “Out of State”.

Of passengers boarding at Wickford Junction, a majority indicated North Kingstown as their hometown, indicating this town as their trip’s origin. South Kingstown followed, according to figure 1. These two towns combined accounted for 51% of commuter rail trips generated by Rhode Island’s newest station. Another 18% of passengers originated in the nearby towns of Narragansett and Richmond. 9% of passengers boarding at Wickford Junction started their trip outside of Rhode Island.

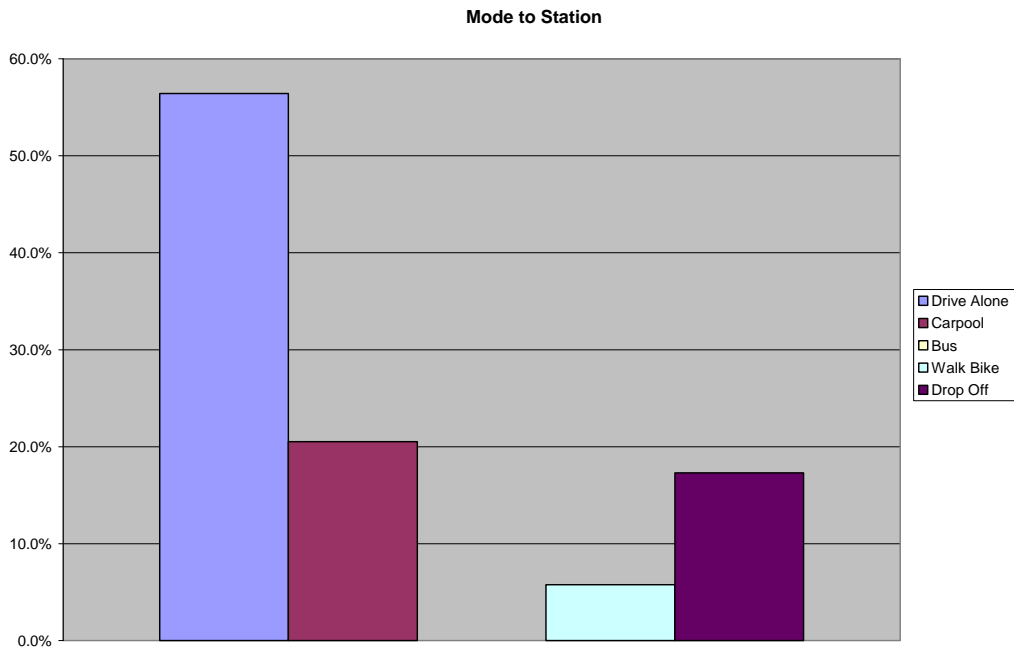
Figure 1: Wickford Junction Origins



### Origin-To-Station Mode Choice

The survey asked passengers about how they access commuter rail stations in Rhode Island. At Wickford, 56% of passengers stated they drove alone to the station. Figure 2 shows how passengers choose to get to Wickford Junction.

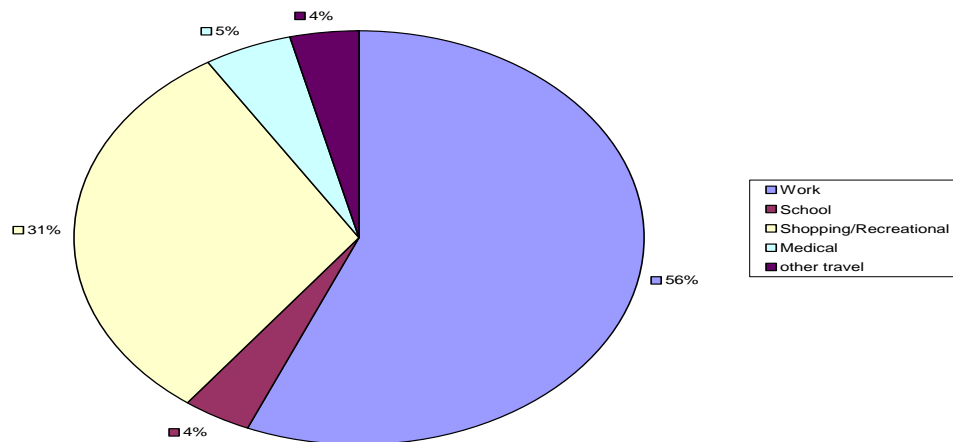
Figure 2: Wickford Junction Accessibility



None of the surveyed passengers indicated taking a bus to Wickford Junction. Combined, 94% of passengers drive alone, are dropped off, or carpool to this station, indicating a personal vehicle trip. A low percentage (5.8%) of passengers getting to Wickford Junction by bicycle or foot suggests a need for improvement in infrastructure for non-motorized transportation.

### Trip Purpose

Figure 3: Purpose for Commuter Rail Trip from Wickford Junction



Over half of the passengers surveyed used commuter rail to get to work. Over half of these passengers indicated they get off the train in Boston or other stations in Massachusetts. Only 22% of passengers boarding at Wickford Junction stated they detrain in Providence.

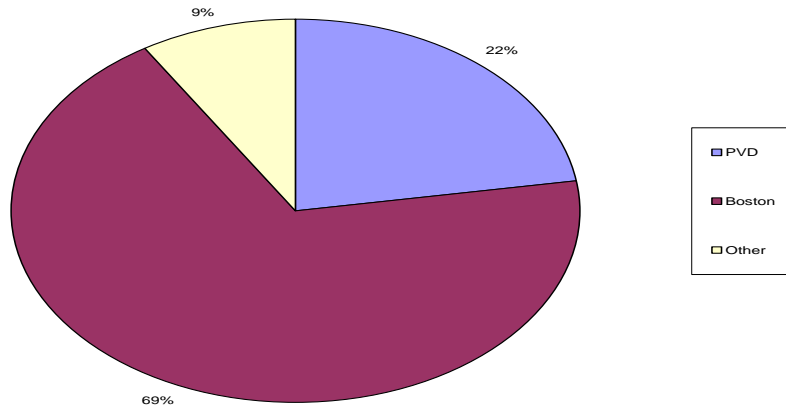
Aside from work, almost 31% of Wickford Junction passengers use the train for social, recreational, and/or shopping purposes. This percentage is higher than passengers boarding at TF Green and Providence stations traveling for these purposes. This indicates that demand may exist for weekend commuter rail service from Wickford Junction.

Because Wickford Junction had opened less than two months before survey data was collected, ridership and therefore percentages of passengers tends to be lower than T.F. Green and Providence stations.

### Alightment Locations

Of the 3 stations surveyed, results from Wickford Junction show the least percentage of passengers (almost 69%) detraining in Boston. 22% indicated they get off the train in Providence, and 9% stated they detrained at another station. Taking this data into account along with the trip purpose responses indicates that passengers are experimenting with Wickford Junction, and that it may be too soon to evaluate daily travel behavior this station generates. However, based on responses from all three stations, most passengers are riding from Rhode Island to Boston or another location in Massachusetts.

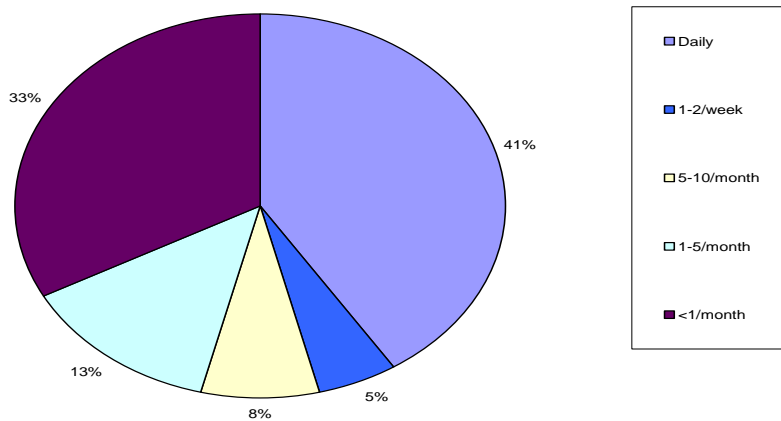
Wickford Junction alightings



### Trip Frequency

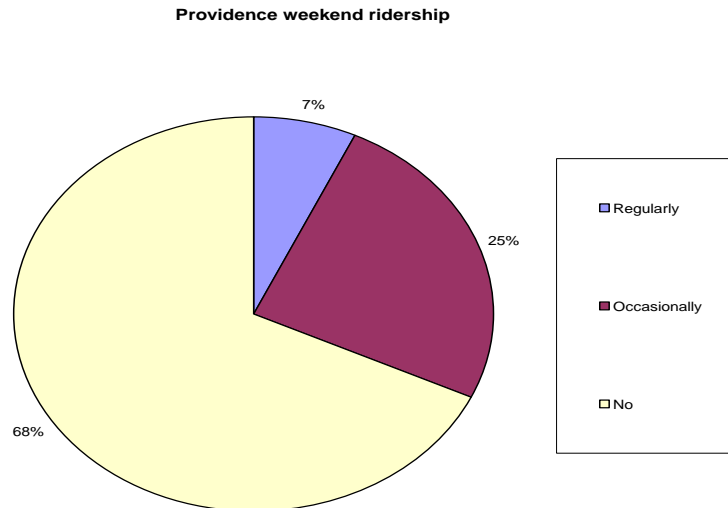
The previously discussed results suggest a high number of commuter rail trips from Rhode Island stations to Boston stations made for work purposes. Just over 40% of passengers surveyed at Wickford Junction indicated they rode commuter rail daily. 5% stated they ride the train 1 or 2 times a week; almost 8% rode 5 to 10 times a month. About 33% indicated riding the train less than once per month, and 13% stated they rode commuter rail from Wickford Junction 1 to 5 times per month. Combined, 46% of passengers that board at Wickford use the rail service 5 or fewer times a month. Of the three stations surveyed, this is the highest percentage of riders riding at this frequency. The same percentage (46%) of passengers ride commuter rail from Wickford at least once a week. This is lower than at both T.F. Green and Providence.

Wickford Junction trip frequencies



## Weekend Travel

Currently there is no weekend service at Wickford Junction. However several passengers used Question 7 to respond to weekend usage at Providence. A majority of passengers surveyed (68%) stated they do not ride weekend commuter rail service from Providence station. 25% said they occasionally ride the train out of Providence on weekends. Almost 7% said they took the train regularly from Providence; combined, 32% of passengers boarding at Wickford indicated they board the train in Providence on weekends. This figure could be used in determining whether or not weekend service at this station is feasible in the future.



## Demographics

Questions 8-13 in the survey are included to learn about the demographics of the current ridership. The first of these questions asked how many people lived in each passenger's household. At Wickford, the highest percentage (47%) indicated they lived a 2-person household. One passenger said they came from a 7 person household.

Regarding annual income, the majority (62%) passengers boarding at Wickford Junction indicated their combined household income is \$100,000 or greater. This is the highest percentage for this income range of all three stations. Conversely, nearly 6% stated making under \$20,000. 13% earned a combined income between \$75,000 and \$99,000 thousand, and almost 9% earned between \$60,000 and \$74,000 thousand.

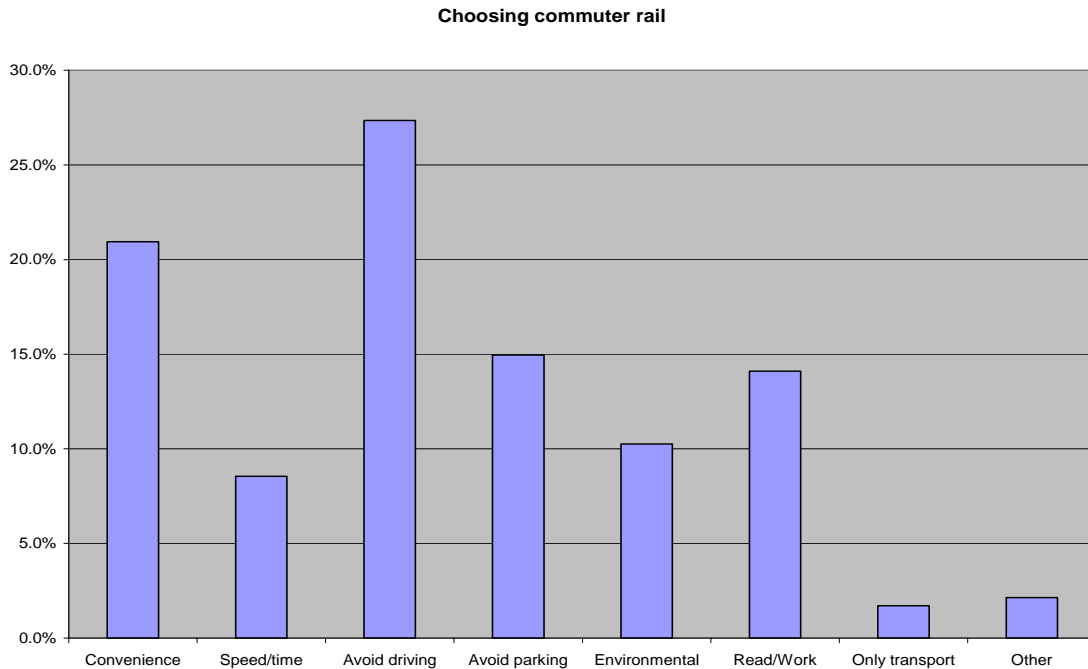
The exact same amount of males as females boarded at Wickford Junction. About 93% identified by race as white, and only 2% identified as Hispanic. All 78 passengers who boarded identified their primary language as English.



## Choosing Commuter Rail

Question 14 asked passengers to identify the main reason(s) they choose to ride commuter rail. Seven choices are given, as well as space to identify a reason not listed. Survey participants were encouraged to select as many reasons as they want.

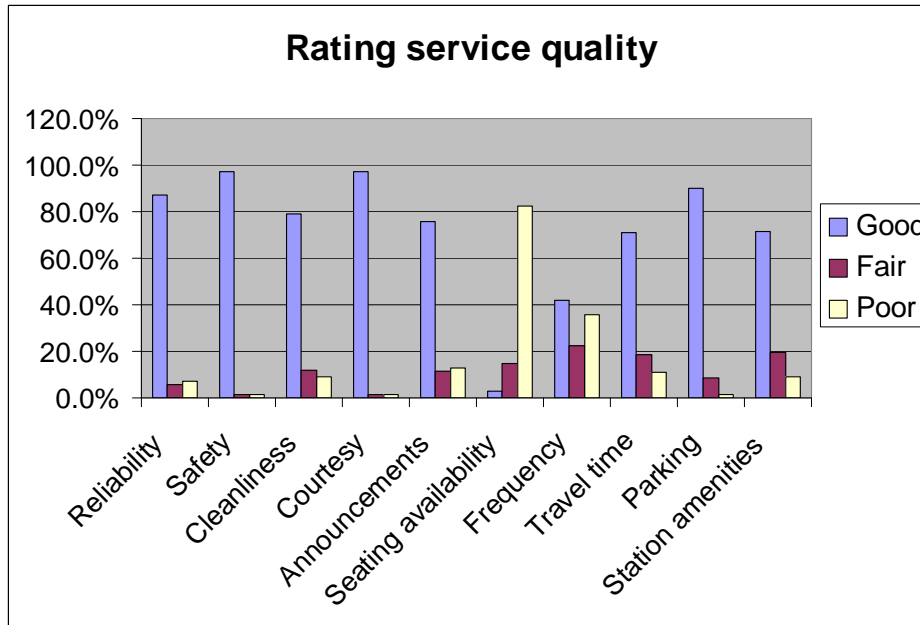
At Wickford Junction, the largest number of passengers (27%) indicated that they chose to take commuter rail to avoid driving. The largest number of passengers chose “avoid driving” at all three stations. Another 21% indicated convenience as a main reason for taking the train.



Combining the choices speed/time, avoid driving, and avoid parking at destination, 51% of passengers ride commuter rail from Wickford to save time and money and get to their destination efficiently. More passengers (14%) chose read/work than environmentally responsibly (10%). Almost 2% indicated the train as the only transportation available to them.

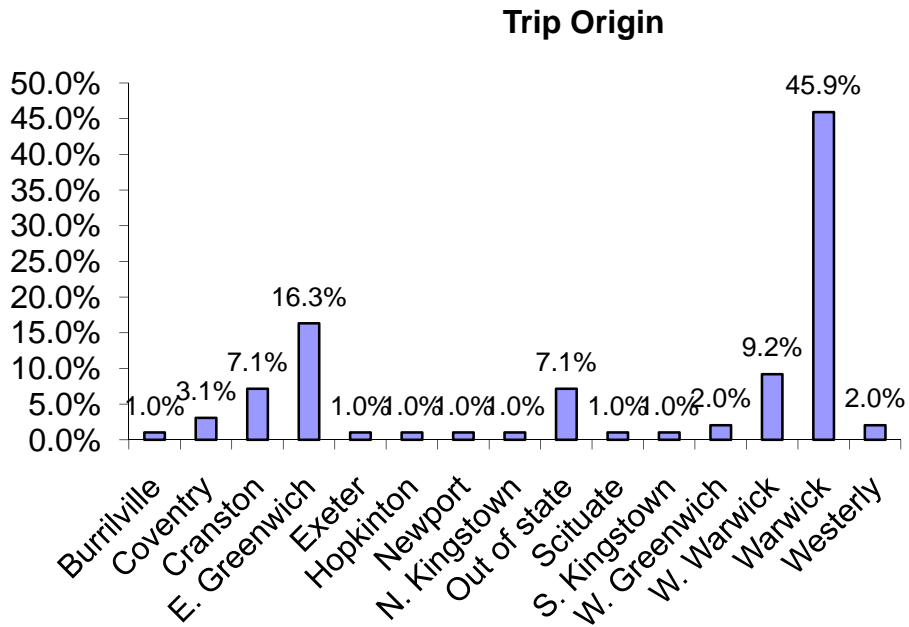
## Rating Service Quality

Lastly, passengers are asked to rate ten measures of rail service quality. At Wickford, safety, crew courtesy, parking, and on-time reliability are rated most positively, with 97%, 97%, 90%, and 87% of respondents giving a 4 or 5 for these measures respectively. Service frequency received the most fair (3) ratings, at 22%. This is followed by station amenities (20%) and travel time (19%). Seating availability received the highest number of poor ratings (1 or 2), at 82%. At 36%, service frequency received the second highest, followed by announcements (13%), and travel time (11%).



#### IV. T.F. GREEN/WARWICK

Figure 4: T.F. Green Station Trip Origins



#### Hometown/Trip Origin

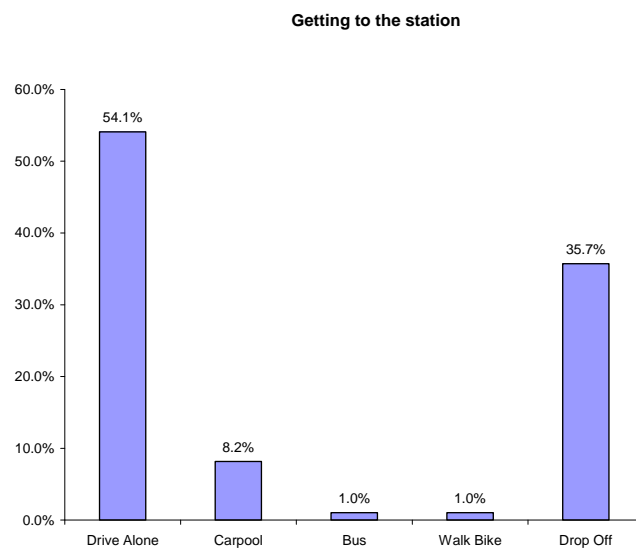
As mentioned earlier, the T.F. Green/Warwick station is part of the InterLink facility. It is composed of commuter parking, a rental car facility, and a moving walkway connection to T.F. Green Airport. The facility was designed with the intention using proximity to the airport combined with a commuter parking facility to generate commuter rail trips.

The InterLink facility’s train station gives residents of Warwick commuter rail access to Providence and Boston. Almost 46% of passengers boarding at this station indicated they begin their trip within Warwick. About 32% come from the nearby towns of Cranston, East Greenwich, and West Warwick combined. 7% of passengers indicated they began their trip outside Rhode Island. In the 1.5 years since its opening, most passengers board trains at T.F. Green work in Boston and start their trips in Warwick.

### Origin-to-Station Mode Choice

The InterLink’s intermodal capabilities give passengers several choices for accessing T.F. Green station. There is a RIPTA bus stop, and walkways leading from the street to the platform, as well as an elevator to the rental car facility. A skybridge connects the airport to this facility, as well as the east side of the railroad tracks.

Figure 5: Getting to T.F. Green Station



As the graph above shows, more than half the passenger’s surveyed boarding at T.F. Green drove there alone. Almost 36% were dropped off. A drop off area exists adjacent to the T.F. Green platform; this could influence a passenger’s decision to be dropped off here. Commuter parking is farther from the platform and commuters rely on signage to find their way from their car to the platform.

Survey responses indicate that more than double the number of passengers are dropped off at this station than at Wickford Junction (36% compared to 17%). Roughly 36% of passengers are dropped off at Providence station as well. Only 2% of passengers got to the InterLink via bus, bicycle, or on foot. This finding suggests transit, bicycle, and pedestrian access to T.F. Green station needs improvement.

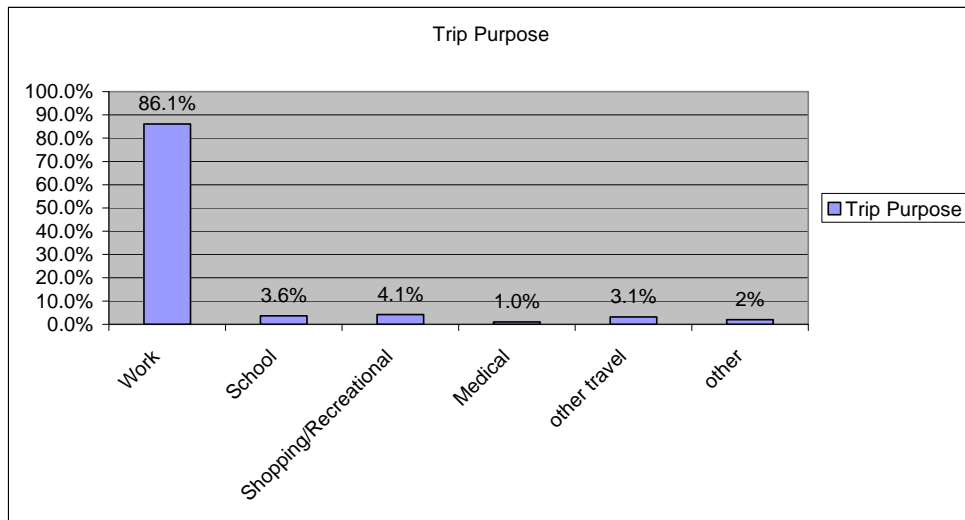
### Trip Purpose

An overwhelming majority (86%) of passengers boarding at T.F. Green indicated they were traveling for work (figure 6). This is significantly higher than the percentage of passengers riding to work from Wickford Junction. Despite the InterLink’s intermodal

capability, responses indicate the facility generated just 3% of trips to connect with other modes of travel. This is slightly less than the 4% of boarding passengers who stated the purpose of their commuter rail trip was shopping, social, or recreational.

Almost 4% said they rode commuter rail to get to school, according to figure 6. The same percentage of passengers boarding at Wickford Junction rode the train for this purpose. Most of the trips (76%) generated by Rhode Island’s newest rail stations are taken to get to school or work in Boston. Out of 176 passengers surveyed at Wickford and T.F. Green combined, almost 19% traveled on commuter rail for shopping, recreational, or medical purposes.

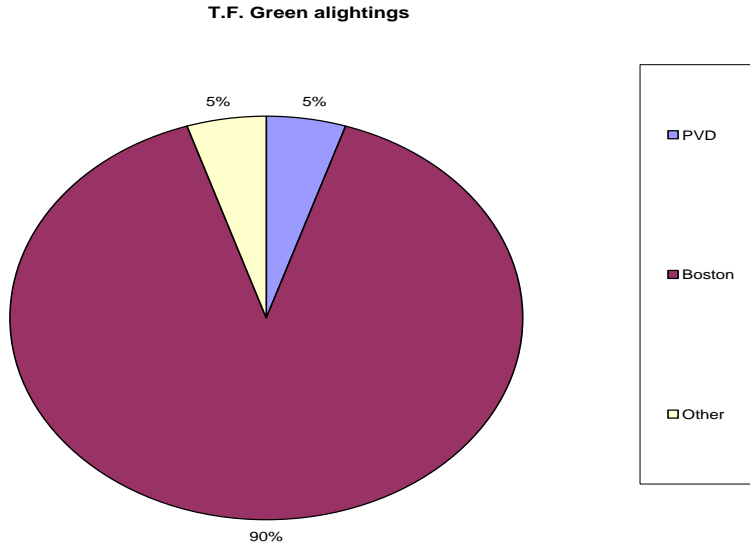
Figure 6: T.F. Green trip purposes



### Alightment Locations

Almost 90% of passengers boarding at T.F. Green stated they ride the train to work in Boston. 5% indicated they detrain in Providence, and another 5% indicated another station as their destination. Considering that passengers who checked the “other” answer choice indicated they detrain at a station in suburban Boston, it is likely that over 90% of passengers surveyed at this station alight in the Boston metropolitan area. This includes Hyde Park and Ruggles stations, which are located within Boston’s city boundaries. Demand appears to exist for commuter rail service from this station to the Boston region.

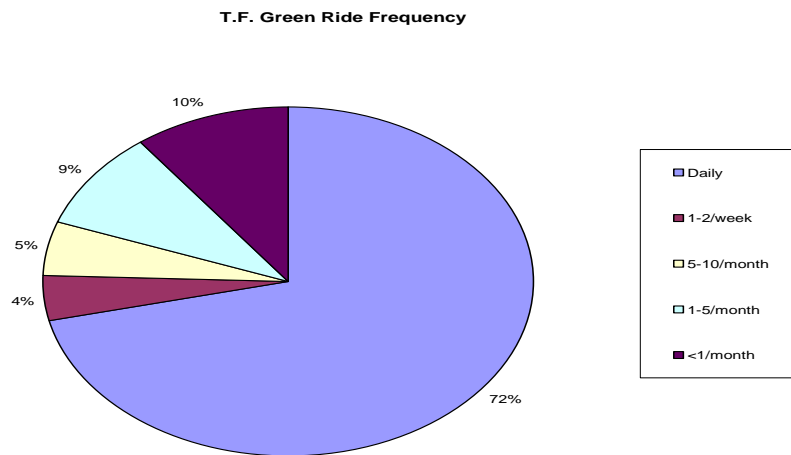
Figure 7: Where T.F. Green Passengers Detrain (aka “alight”)



### Trip Frequencies

A vast majority (75%) rode commuter rail from T.F. Green at least once a week. 71% rode daily; this is the highest frequency of daily ridership from all three stations. 19% indicated they rode the train from this station 5 or fewer times a month. 10% indicated they rode less than once per month.

Figure 8: How Often T.F. Green Passengers Ride



## **Weekend Travel**

Almost 73% of passengers boarding at T.F. Green stated that they do not ride the train from Providence on weekends. Only 4.2% indicated they regularly rode the train out Providence on weekends. Almost 23% of T.F. Green passengers stated they occasionally boarded at Providence on weekends; combined, 95% said they rode commuter rail from Providence at least occasionally on the weekend.

## **Demographics**

The highest percentage of respondents (38%) indicated they live in a two-person household. This is followed by 4-person households (23%) and 3-person households (20%). Almost 9% of respondents reported living in 5-person households. Combined, 90% of passengers boarding at T.F. Green live in 2 to 5 person households.

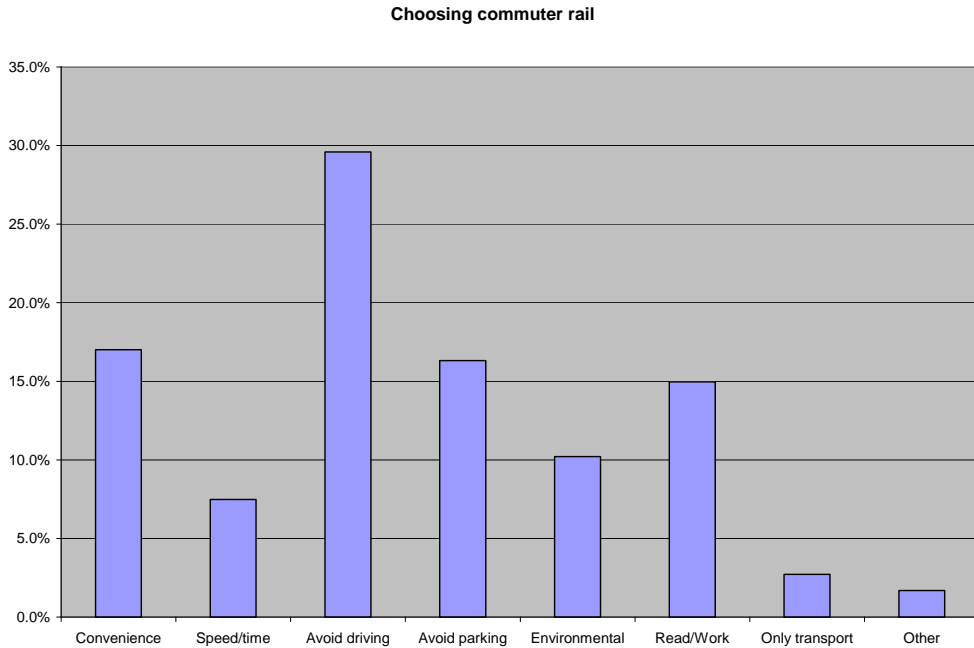
Almost 5% of passengers boarding at T.F. Green earned \$20,000 or less. 6% earned between \$50,000 and \$59,000 a year. Combined, about 85% of T.F. Green passengers earn \$60,000 or more a year. 48% of these passengers earned \$100,000 or more; this is lower than Wickford Junction but higher than at Providence station.

Exactly 50% of passengers boarding at T.F. Green are male, with 48% female. This is opposite of the results from Providence station. Almost 87% identified as white, slightly lower than at Wickford Junction. Almost 9% identified as Asian, higher than Wickford and Providence. Only 2% identified as Black or African American; this is slightly higher than Wickford (1%) and much lower than Providence (13%). Almost 6% of T.F. Green passengers identified as Hispanic. This is higher than at Wickford (2%) but lower than at Providence (9%). 95% of passengers boarding at T.F. Green identified English as their primary language; this slightly higher than Providence (93%).

## **Choosing Commuter Rail**

Of the eight choices listed, “avoid driving” received the highest percentage of check marks (30%) from T.F. Green passengers. Convenience received 17% of check marks. Combined, 53% of check marks indicate travel time, avoiding driving, and avoiding parking at destination as reasons T.F. Green passengers use commuter rail. 3% of passengers indicated it is the only transportation available to them. This is slightly more than Wickford Junction (2%), and less than Providence (7%). The ability to read and work on the train (15%) received more check marks than environmental responsibility (10%).

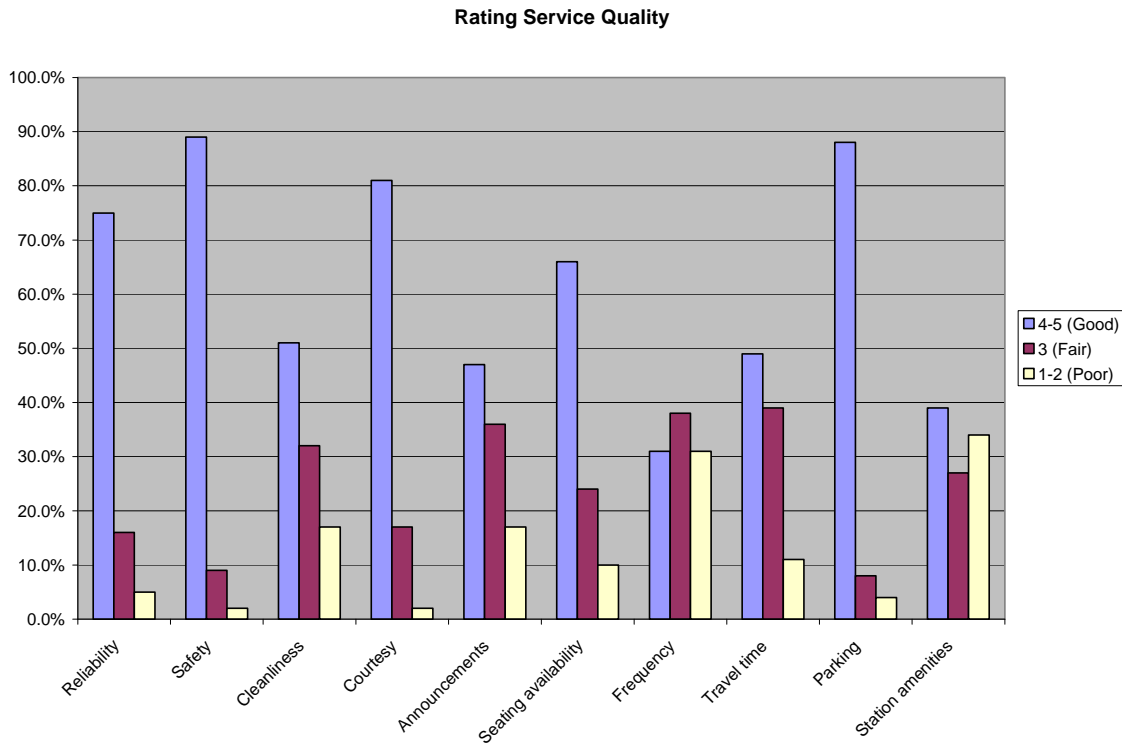
Figure 9: Why T.F. Green Passengers Choose Commuter Rail



### Ranking Service Quality

Of the ten measures of service quality, safety (89%), parking availability (88%), crew courtesy (81%), and on-time reliability (75%) received the highest amount of “good” ratings (4 or 5). Travel time (39%), service frequency (38%), announcements (36%), and vehicle cleanliness received the highest amount of “fair” ratings (3). Station amenities (34%), service frequency (31%), announcements (17%), and vehicle cleanliness (17%), received the highest amount of “poor” ratings (1 or 2). These findings indicate what needs to be improved and what is working well.

Figure 10: How T.F. Green Passengers Rate Service Quality



## V. PROVIDENCE

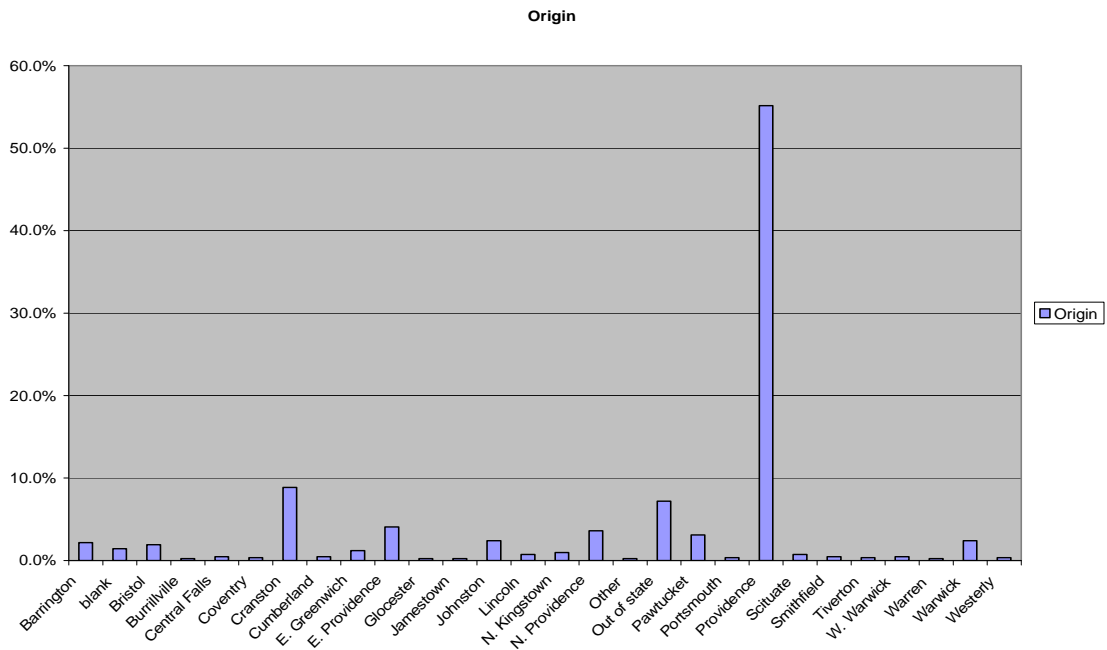
### Hometown/Trip Origin

Approximately 416 passengers boarded and completed surveys at Providence station, more than double the amount at Wickford and T.F. Green combined. Just over half (55%) of these passengers indicated they begin their trip in the city of Providence. Almost 9% started their trip in Cranston, and 7% stated they came from outside Rhode Island.

Trips generated in small percentages from many Rhode Island towns, particularly near Providence. Barrington, Bristol, East Providence, Johnston, North Providence, Pawtucket, and Warwick generated between 2% and 4% of trips out of Providence station respectively. When added together, these communities generated almost 20% of commuter rail trips beginning at Providence station. In all, 75% of passengers boarding at Providence begin their trip in or near the city of Providence.



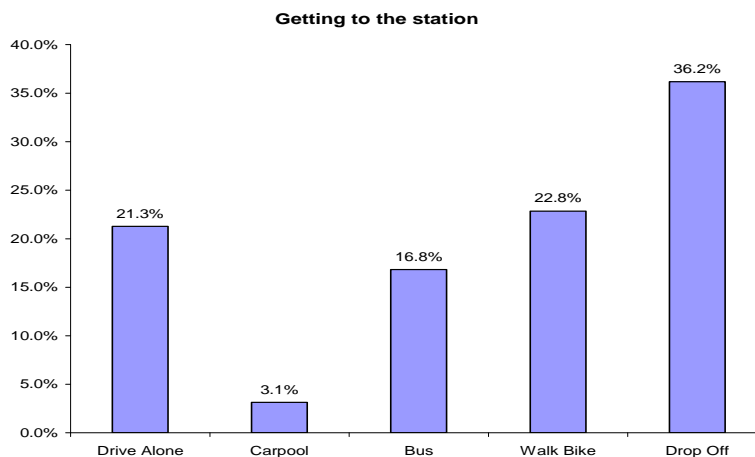
Figure 11: Providence Trip Origins



### Origin-to-Station Mode Choice

The most popular choice to get to Providence is to be dropped off, according to results. Roughly 151 of 416 respondents (36%) indicated they were dropped off at Providence station. Almost 23% walked or bicycled to the station, 17% arrived by bus, and 21% drove alone. Combined, 40% chose to travel to Providence station by foot, bicycle, or transit.

Figure 12: Providence Origin-to-Station Choice



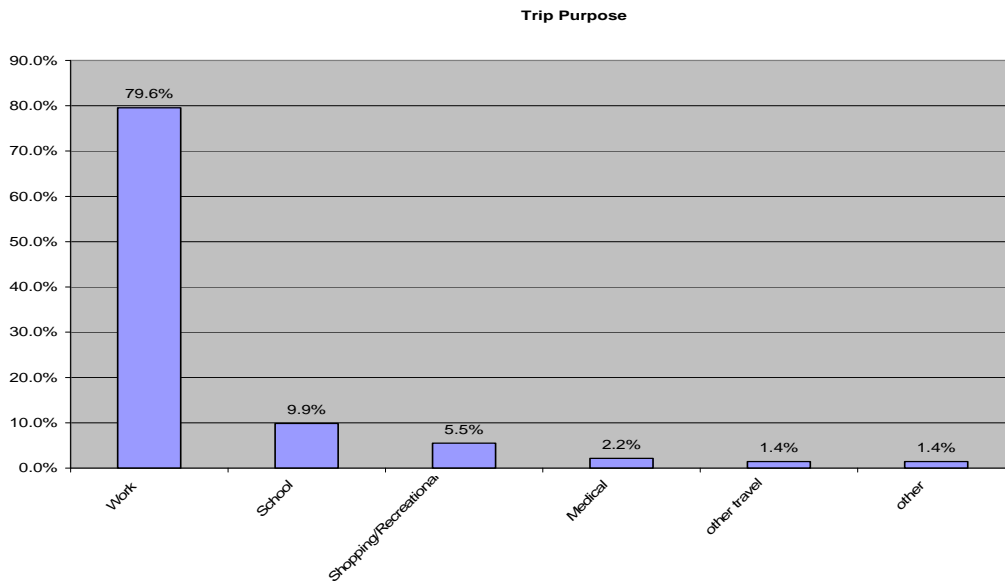
Only 3% of Providence passengers carpoled to the station. This is fewer than both T.F. Green and Wickford Junction-8% and almost 21% respectively. The high number of drop-offs and arrivals on foot or bicycle (almost 59% combined) reflect the high level of

transit service to Providence station, and the fact that residential development around the station has grown. Almost 17% arrived at the station by bus. This is much higher than both Wickford and T.F. Green, but these two stations are served sparsely by transit. The high number of drop-offs could be an indicator for potential transit access improvements particularly a bus connection between the station and Kennedy Plaza along Exchange Street. Another survey could be undertaken to determine whether or not passengers being dropped off or arriving at Providence by train would take such a transit service.

### Trip Purpose

A majority (almost 80%) of passengers boarding at Providence take commuter rail to work. This is a lower percentage than at T.F. Green (86%), but higher than at Wickford Junction (56%). Almost 10% of those boarding at Providence are riding to school in Boston. About 6% board to travel for shopping or recreational purposes. This is slightly higher than T.F.Green (4%), but much lower than Wickford Junction (31%).

Figure 13: Providence Trip Purposes



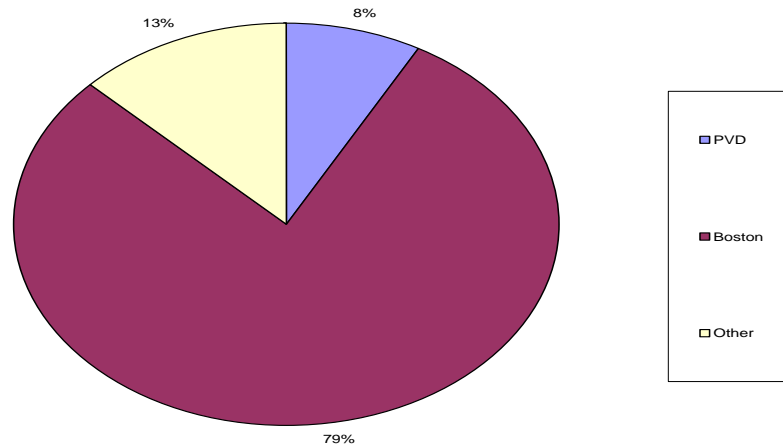
Combined, 15% of trips taken from Providence station were for school, shopping, and/or recreational purposes. This is higher than T.F. Green (roughly 8%) and less than half of Wickford (35%). Shopping and recreational trips are also combined with medical trips. This combination makes up about 8% of Providence trips, based on survey data. 5% of passengers from T.F. Green and 36% from Wickford Junction indicated traveling for either of these purposes. Most passengers boarding at T.F. Green and Providence are traveling to work in Boston or a suburban location between Providence and Boston. Very few passengers ride the commuter rail to work in Rhode Island; the most common destination for the passengers surveyed was in Boston.

### Alightment Locations

Just over 79% of passengers boarding in Providence indicated they detrain in

Boston. Almost 13% of passengers selected “other”. Among passengers boarding at Providence station, almost 8% responded that they detrain in Providence. Based on the nature of the survey, these passengers most likely indicated where they detrain during their PM commute. Where they detrain in the morning cannot be determined.

Figure 14: Where Providence Passengers Detrain



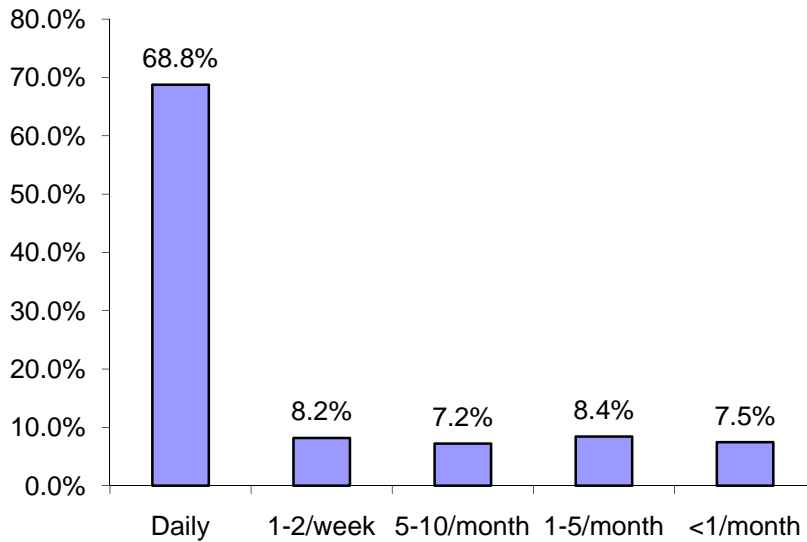
Fewer passengers (79%) than at T.F. Green indicate they detrain in Boston. Almost 13% selected the “other” answer choice. As noted in the key findings, many of this 13% stated they detrain in Ruggles. Taking the proximity of Ruggles and Back Bay stations (approximately 1.2 miles) into consideration, it is likely close to 90% of passengers surveyed detrain within Boston proper. Therefore, the percentage of passengers boarding in Providence and alighting in Boston is almost as high as the percentage boarding at T.F. Green and alighting in Boston (close to 90%).

### **Trip Frequency**

Almost 69% of respondents board commuter rail at Providence daily. Combined with the percentage of passengers that ride the train at least 1-2 times per month, a total of 77% boards at Providence station at least once a week. This is much more than at Wickford (46%) and slightly more than at green (75%). About 8% indicated riding the train less than once per month. Combined with the percentage that rides 1 to 5 times a month, 16% ride at least once per month. These findings indicate that Providence station has the highest frequency of daily ridership. Demand appears to exist for rail service between T.F. Green and Providence stations.

Figure 15: How often Providence Passengers Ride the Train

### Providence Boarding Frequencies



### Weekend Service

Of the survey respondents that board at Providence, almost 49% indicated they occasionally board on weekends as well. Only 8% rode the train regularly on the weekend, and 43% stated they did not board the train regularly on weekends at Providence station.

### Demographics

The percentage of two-person households is indicated consistently by the highest number of respondents at each station. At Providence, 41% of survey respondents stated living in a two-person household. This is lower than Wickford Junction (46%), but higher than T.F. Green (38%) Combined, 87% of passengers boarding at Providence come from a 1 to 4-person household.

Just 36% of passengers boarding at Providence earned a combined household income of \$100,000 million or more. This is the lowest percentage for this income range of all three stations. Combined, 62% of Providence passengers earn \$60,000 or more.

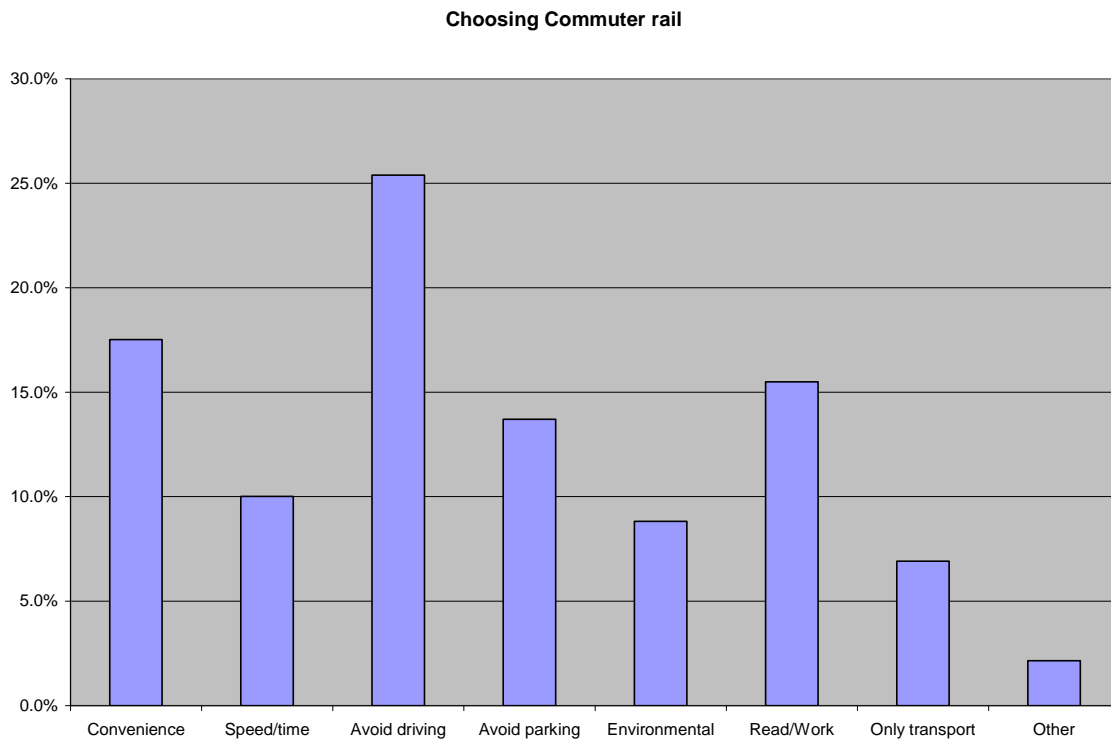
Almost 51% of passengers surveyed at Providence are female, with 48% identifying as male.

Concerning race, 72% identified as white, 13% as African American, 8% as Asian, and almost 6% as “other”. This station has the highest percentage of passengers identifying as African-American. About 9% of passengers surveyed at Providence identified as Hispanic/Latino. This is also the highest percentage of the three stations. 93% of Providence passengers selected English as their primary language-lower than both T.F. Green and Wickford.

### Choosing Commuter Rail

To avoid driving appears to be the most common reason for using commuter rail in Rhode Island. 25% of check marks from Providence station indicated this reason. Combined, 49% of check marks identify travel time, avoiding driving, and avoiding parking as reasons for using commuter rail. The ability to read or work is checked more times (16%) than environmental responsibility (9%). 7% of check marks indicate the train is the only transportation available to passengers boarding at Providence; this is the highest percentage of the three stations. Passengers in Providence are more transit-dependent than those at Wickford Junction and T.F. Green.

Figure 16: Why Providence Passengers Chose Commuter Rail

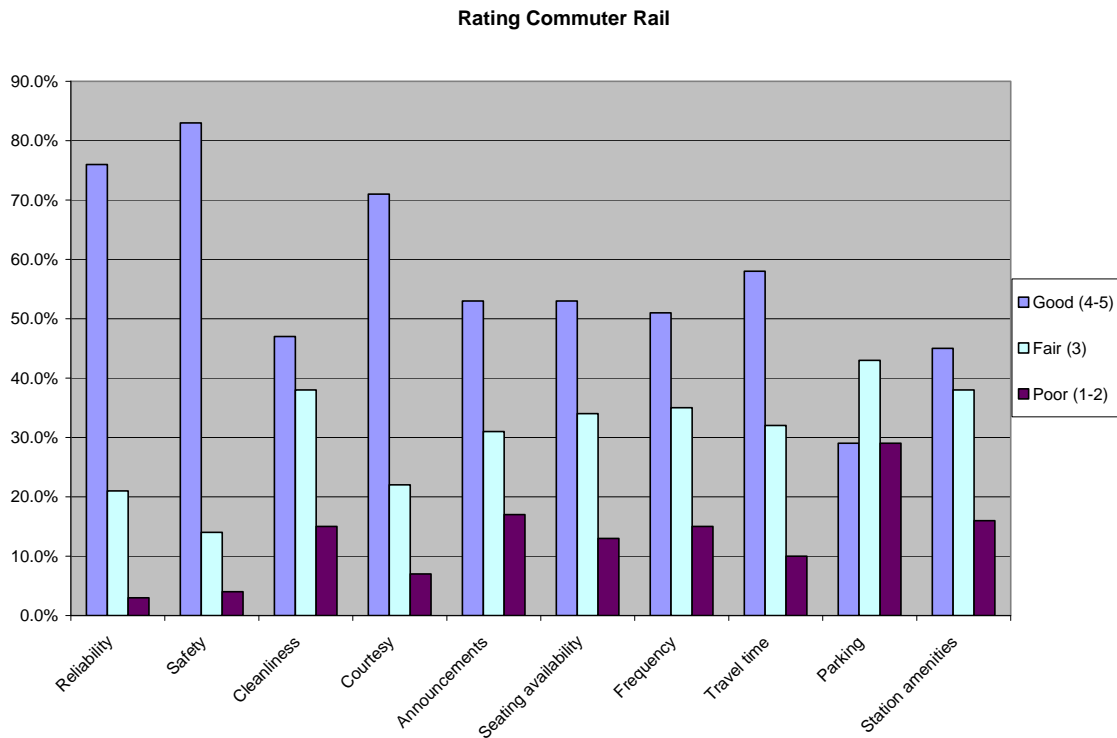


### Rating Service Quality

Of the ten service quality measures, passengers boarding at Providence gave safety (83%), service reliability (76%), crew courtesy (71%), and travel time (58%) the highest percentages of “good” (4 or 5) ratings. They rate vehicle cleanliness (38%), station amenities (38%), service frequency (35%), and seating availability (34%) the highest percentage of “fair” (3) ratings. Of the “poor” ratings (1 or 2), parking availability (29%), announcements (17%), station amenities (16%), vehicle cleanliness (15%), and service

frequency (15%) received the most check marks. It appears Providence has the lowest number of measures rated as “poor”, in comparison to Wickford Junction and T.F. Green.

Figure 17: How Providence Passengers Rate Service Quality



## VI. COMMENTS

The last question on the survey form gave passengers space to voice their opinion on commuter rail service. At Wickford Junction and T.F. Green, passengers most frequently commented on the lack of weekend service, travel time to Boston, and parking garage conditions

At Providence, passengers also complained about parking, particularly the need for more of it because the current garage is too small. WiFi service, purchasing tickets at Providence station, conditions inside and surrounding the station and parking garage, and fare increases had the highest frequency of complaints. Several passengers felt the combination of poor conditions and higher fares would cause them to stop using commuter rail at Providence station.

Many passengers suggested AM inbound trains to Boston should stop at Ruggles in addition to Back Bay and South Station. Ruggles station is located near several universities and hospitals. Many passengers complained about the current frequency of commuter rail service between Boston and Providence, both during the week and on weekends.

Exhibit 2 (attached) provides a sample of similar comments received from the Providence Station surveys. Due to the high number of surveys received at Providence, comments were grouped based on common issues. However, Exhibit 3 (T.F. Green) and Exhibit 4 (Wickford Junction) are the survey comments as written on the forms.

## CONCLUSION

On June 12, 2012 surveys were distributed to passengers waiting to board MBTA commuter trains at Wickford Junction and T.F. Green stations. On June 14, 2012 surveys were distributed to passengers waiting to board trains at Providence Station. This survey is intended to evaluate new rail service and collect demographic information to satisfy FTA civil rights regulations. Excellent return rates (almost 80% at Wickford and T.F. Green and 73% at Providence) are evidence that this data is reliable for future planning purposes.

Also, the high return rates increase the accuracy of the general data collected. The desire of daily commuters to participate in the survey evidences their concern for commuter rail service in Rhode Island. This concern is driven partly by the challenge MBTA and RIDOT face in serving both the Rhode Island and Massachusetts commuter markets.

The following are key findings and observations based on the data collected at each station:

### Wickford Junction

- Over 60% of the passengers are from either North Kingstown, South Kingstown or Narragansett
- 50% drive alone to the station, which is well under the general rule-of-thumb of 90% for typical suburban commuter rail stations. 18% get dropped off.
- Nearly 70% travel to Boston, and 22% travel to Providence.
- Over 60% of passengers have a combined household income of over \$100,000.

### T.F. Green Airport

- Over 70% are from Warwick (46%), East Greenwich or West Warwick
- 55% drive alone to the station –well under the industry standard. 36% get dropped off.
- Approximately 90% travel to Boston. This is higher than RIDOT's original projection of 80% traveling to Boston. 5% travel to Providence.
- 85% indicated a combined household income of over \$60,000.

### Providence

- 55% of passengers reside in the City of Providence. Cranston was the next municipality of origin at 9%.
- Drop-offs represent the highest means of getting to the station at 36%. Next was bicycling/walking at 23%, while only 21% drive alone to the station.
- 79% travel to/from Boston.
- Approximately 80% are work trips. School trips represent 10% of all trips.
- 62% of passengers indicated a combined household income of over \$60,000.

The results of the 2012 survey are similar to the 2008 survey results. Both surveys showed the majority of people boarding commuter trains in Rhode Island detraining within Boston city limits. Since train service south of Providence did not exist then. The 2008 survey did not ask passengers about commuting within Rhode Island; it asked passengers if they would adjust their commuting pattern to board commuter rail at T.F. Green or Wickford Junction instead of at Providence when service begins. The survey also questioned passengers if they would use stations in Cranston, East Greenwich, West Davisville, Kingston, or Westerly. Most likely, passengers would board at these infill stations and ride to jobs in Massachusetts.

Almost 66% indicated they would not alter their commute to board at any of these five stations. About 76% of respondents indicated they would continue to board at Providence once T.F. Green and Wickford Junction open. The 2012 survey results indicate 46% of passengers boarding at T.F. Green come from Warwick, 16% from East Greenwich, and 7% from Cranston.

9% of passengers that currently board at Providence station come from Cranston; this is the second-highest percentage behind Providence. The 2008 survey indicates 60% of passengers boarding at Providence station showed interest in a Cranston commuter rail station. The location of a potential Cranston station relative to the city's geography of activities may affect the station's ability to attract riders.

The survey evaluated commuter rail service in Rhode Island by targeting passengers boarding trains at the state's three rail stations. It gathered information about riders themselves, the purpose for their trip, why they choose commuter rail, where their trip originates, at which stations they board and detrain, and service quality ratings.



# EXHIBITS

Exhibit 1: Survey Form

Exhibit 2: Sample Providence Comments

Exhibit 3: T.F. Green Comments

Exhibit 4: Wickford Junction Comments

## Exhibit 1:

### Rhode Island Department of Transportation-Commuter Rail Survey

The Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT) is conducting this survey in an effort to evaluate commuter rail service for people who live and/or work in Rhode Island. Please complete this form and submit it to a RIDOT employee before the next station stop. You may also submit the form via mail to: RIDOT, Room 372, 2 Capitol Hill, Providence, RI 02903. **ALL RESPONSES ARE CONFIDENTIAL. Thank you!**

1. Please write the city or town where you live.

\_\_\_\_\_

2. At which station do you usually board the train?

Wickford Junction                       T.F. Green/Warwick

Providence                                 South Attleboro

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

3. How do you usually get to the train station?

Drive alone                                 Walk

Carpool                                       Bike

Bus     Drop-off

4. At which station do you usually get off the train?

Providence                                 Back Bay

South Station                              Other: \_\_\_\_\_

5. What is the purpose of your trip via commuter rail?

Work                                         School

Shopping                                    Social/Recreational

Medical                                      Connect to other travel

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

6. How often do you ride the commuter train?

Daily                                         5-10 times per month

1-2 times per week     1-5 times per month

Less than once per month

7. Do you ride the train from Providence on

Saturdays?  regularly  occasionally  no

Sundays?  regularly  occasionally  no

8. How many people are in your household, including yourself? (the number of people living in your house or apartment) \_\_\_\_\_

9. What is your annual combined household income?

under \$20,000                             \$50,000 – \$59,999

\$20,000 – \$29,999                       \$60,000 - \$74,999

\$30,000 – \$39,999                       \$75,000 - \$99,999

\$40,000 – \$49,999                       \$100,000 or more

10. What is your gender?  Male  Female

**11. How do you self-identify by race? (Check all that apply)**

- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Black or African American
- Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander
- Asian
- White    Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**12. Are you Hispanic/Latino?  Yes     No**

**13. What is your primary language (the language you speak at home)?**

- English                       Spanish
- French                         Portuguese
- Chinese                      Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**14. What are your main reasons for using commuter rail? (Check all that apply)**

- Convenience                 Environmentally responsible
- Speed/travel time         Can read/work on the train
- Avoid driving/traffic     Only transportation available
- Avoid parking at destination
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**15. Several measures of service quality are listed below. Please circle a number after each measure to indicate how you feel about commuter rail service to and from Rhode Island. (1 = Poor; 5 = Excellent. Leave blank any measures that don't apply.)** Then place a check mark beside the three measures most important to you.

Reliability (on-time performance)	1	2	3	4	5	___
Safety and security	1	2	3	4	5	___
Cleanliness/vehicle condition	1	2	3	4	5	___
Courtesy of train crews	1	2	3	4	5	___
Announcement of stations	1	2	3	4	5	___
Availability of seating on trains	1	2	3	4	5	___
Frequency of service	1	2	3	4	5	___
Travel time/speed	1	2	3	4	5	___
Parking availability	1	2	3	4	5	___
Station amenities	1	2	3	4	5	___

**15. The space below is provided for your comments/suggestions:**

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## Exhibit 2: Sample of Providence Passenger Comments

- Now that the rates are going up and won't be much more expensive to take Amtrak, I will no longer be riding the commuter rail.
- Need to fix wifi, it's too slow and I can't even use it.
- Need greater frequency of trains at TF Green and Wickford Junction.
- How about extending line to Kingston or Westerly? (This could service eastern Connecticut Market also).
- Conductors should be more assertive in asking people not to block vestibules; and to remove their baggages from seats, especially on the 4:35pm outbound from S. Station to Providence.
- Re: Question 5 – 6:33 train was late arriving at station and trains hardly keep to schedule on arrival times as printed on schedule.
- MBTA needs to lower the cost; keep the quiet car quiet!
- As the only means of getting to work, the increase in the fares is going to be a hardship.
- Need more quiet cars and this need to be enforced.
- I think the system runs efficiently given the distance (Providence to Back Bay). Simple and quick and can't imagine driving to Boston.
- The rise in MBTA fares better be worth the extra money.
- This has always been a positive experience. Some of the seats by the window are showing wear and are uncomfortable.
- I really like having internet which it was more consistent
- Thanks for asking.
- Commuter rail is becoming less of a convenience especially with the hike in fares. It is almost unaffordable to go to work.
- I take rail for work, the biggest issue on the Providence to Boston line availability of seating until around 60% of the trip is finished. It is not designed to accommodate standing crowds. Otherwise, it is a comfortable and reliable mode of transportation.
- Would be nice if the Providence station has a dedicated MBTA ticket line with option to buy multi-ride tickets.
- More seating and food options would be great.
- Parking is often full in Providence – it should be reserved for train passengers only.
- Relay delays to the passengers keep them aware of arrival/departure times.
- My monthly pass started at \$98.00 and in July will be \$314.00. I wish my salary would go up that much!

- If gas is a little cheaper I will switch to driving to work.
- I feel there is no priority for RI commuters.
- It's been 10 years since I have been using this commuter. Nothing has changed/improved....
- Must install a purchaser point at PVD. It's ridiculous that people can only pay cash and need to stand in line. Why can't there be a block of ticket machines.
- The ATM is incredibly old and slow and has a 3.00 fee. If you don't have cash you are missing your train

### **Exhibit 3: T.F. Green Passenger Comments**

- More trains between 8pm and 10:00pm
- Please!!! Make service available to/from Green to Providence on Weekends
- One suggestion when you lose your daily pass they won't give duplicate passes and I had to spend another \$265.00. So please give out duplicates...
- T alerts are a great way to notify passengers that there will be a delay
- The trains are always dirty and grim everywhere
- Majority of train crews are rude and have attitudes if you ask them a question
- Announcements of stations is normally a joke (75% of the time its wrong or non-existent)
- Would be nice to have an express train in the am and pm I would pay a premium
- Green has no amenities.
- You have to pay cash and there is no ATM close by.
- Monthly pass holders have to park the furthest away, you would get more monthly if they could park closer.
- The purple "Barney House" (as regular commuters refer to it) was nice but need to be cleaned on a regular basis.
- Went from picking up at S. Attleboro to South Station until recent schedule change. This is much better for me.
- Would love to see the MBTA put a ticket kiosk in with the parking payment machines. Can't pay with credit card on board train.
- Would love additional Warwick Trains
- More conductors with more doors open at stops would save time.
- Travel time need to be shortened.
- Longer distance rides should be less expensive.
- Please extend weekend service and a few more option to/from Warwick.
- Thanks, great job!!!
- Hard to get seats leaving from Ruggles because BackBay and South Station are so crowded.
- Overall experience has been good
- Would prefer 1 or 2 more options in the morning
- It would be nice to have a coffee shop or something at Green Station
- Would love to see a few trains from Green to Providence on the weekends – if only for special events like waterfires
- The 5:30 train is packed please add another train!
- Need to be able to purchase tickets at Green
- TF Green to South Station needs an express train that get in a little over an hour.

- Need more trains in the morning
- Would like late night transfers from Providence to Green after 9:00pm til midnight.
- Regarding the automated announcements even a broken clock is right twice a day!
- Would love the 4:40 out of Back Bay went to TF Green
- Would be nice to have vending machines, (soda, water)
- The addition of the 4:05 out of Back Bay was much appreciated!
- This train is the only reason I can live in RI, to drive to Boston everyday would be awful. I moved to RI when the train started.
- 90 minutes to South Station is long. Wish some train made fewer stops so the trip was faster.
- Adding mid-day and late morning trains a few months ago was a huge improvement.
- There aren't enough trains to make it to work for many people. (people who don't work 9-5)
- Also, please announce stops!!!! For those who have never taken the train its very intimidating
- Also, need ticket machines at TF Green
- Crew has been excellent and train times seem very reliable!
- Could use a couple extra train departures/arrivals and time between Green and Providence could be improved (its very slow cars pass the trains)
- Wifi signal weak, frequency of trains should increase,
- Would like to see a train between the 5:45 and 8:00 train out of Back Bay!
- Parking to take train should be lower fee and train fee should increase especially in these economic times peoples are struggling to get through each day!
- Great idea!
- Need more frequent service
- Ability to buy tickets at the station
- Amenities at the station, restrooms, coffee, etc.
- Not enough trains to/from Green. (don't understand why it takes 20min to get from Warwick to Providence)
- No amenities at the Warwick Station and I am also not happy that monthly parkers have to park so far way from the platform.
- From South Station to TF Green we have train by 5:40 if we miss that, next is 8:15. Previously 6:50pm train arrives at Green but now stopped at Providence.
- Would be great if we have train to Green between 5:40 and 8:15pm
- Highly recommend adding another train between 5:40pm and 8:15pm that goes to Green.  
(it's a long time for someone who has to work til 5:30/6:00pm. Would really appreciate it Please!!
- Monthly passes are pretty expensive for zone 9.
- Looking for you to extend service to/from Warwick
- Would be great to have some concessions at the Warwick parking lot.

- Not happy with the fare increase or the cost of the parking at the Green station
- Travel time from Providence to Warwick is terrible. It takes 15-20 minutes to get to Warwick on the evening commute.
- If I ran my job like the MBTA runs its systems, I would be fired!
- Cutting services and charging customers more is proof of poor management
- Instead of pouring money to revamp stations- BUT NEW TRAINS!!! Too many are disabled and being safe and on time should be priority, our jobs depend on this.
- Instead of cutting jobs – revamp using six-sigma and streamline operations!!!
- TF Green is very nice/clean. The crew is very friendly and do their job with a lot of class!
- It would be of better convenience to have a train between 5:40 and 8:15 if the 7:45 went to Green this would be great.
- Also, on inbound train between 9:10 and 1:10pm would be of convenience, like the 11:15 from Providence.
- Got on the train at South Station both T agent and automated announced train was going to TF Green however, once getting to Providence it announced last stop.
- How do you know which cars are “quiet cars” before boarding?
- Could a Train be added between 5:45 & 8:25pm out of Back Bay?
- Could a Train be added between 6:52 and 8:10am for TF Green?
- Weekend Service
- Express train to Wickford, TF Green, Providence, S. Attleboro, Attleboro to Back Bay and South Station
- Thank You!
- Need ticket machines at TF Green!! Would make so much more sense, from a safe perspective instead of ATM
- This service is so convenient for me so I can go to Dr.’s appt. and not have to rely on anyone to drive me. Great for me to go to Boston no parking....TF Green is easy and convenient!!!
- Announcement are random or not done at all
- Often corralled into a single car in the mornings no access to Quiet Car
- Quiet car is often not marked or enforced in any way
- More late morning stops to TF Green would be great
- Not sure what race, income and language have to do with commuting needs
- Do not raise to more than 300/month.
- Weekend travel to TF Green
- So please to have Green and Wickford. I will never go to Boston any other way
- Hope in years to come, a local train service will branch out from here all across So. County
- Bill Powers is Great!!!!
- Be on-time!!! You have to find a way to be more reliable.
- I commute from South to North Station. I need to change through tow subways can there be subway to connect them?



- Prices of passes are becoming expensive can there be reduction help student?
- Add a restroom clean the cars
- Costs are high
- Takes too long – speeding up commute from RI would be great!
- More frequent trains to Green
- Train is usually on time. When its late it is really late. (much better than driving)
- The new heated enclosure is great!!
- Re-adding the 6:40 train from S. Station to Wickford would make things easier for those of us who leave work at 6:00.
- There should be more trains that leave and come back to Green. Was not happy when Wickford opened and changed the schedule for Green
- If I could find a good job in RI I would take it to avoid having to take commuter rail.
- More service or trains on Saturdays and Sundays from Green to Boston
- More cars are needed. Cars are always overcrowded. The train is either short cars or uses small ones. Train is full by the time Attleboro gets on and Mansfield people have to stand.
- Return trip is mostly full by the time it reaches Back Bay from South Station.
- Take the train at peak hours. It used to be late all the time but now it's getting better. The train crew is very professional and friendly.
- Amtrak Services at TF Green. That would be wonderful....More parking at Providence Station
- Move the monthly parking pass lot to the side of the train pick up
- More trains later that go to TF Green
- Build Amtrak platform at TF Green
- Offer more parking at Providence station
- Please bring back 6:50pm train, which departs from south station in Boston, and have it go to Warwick.
- Monthly parking pas both sides of track.
- Lower daily rate to \$4-5
- Providence Station is neither safe nor available. Bring back 6:50 train from Green to Boston
- How about coffee in the AM?
- How about weekend service? (It would fill up when Red Sox play on the weekend)
- Cleanliness could be better there is trash in the car sometimes and windows are dirty inside I the morning
- I have been using commuter for 20yrs. I enjoy having this time traveling to myself, to read, work, sleep, engage in conversation, and explore the internet. Thanks for wifi.
- Commuting is helping the environment.
- I enjoy Green service but wish there were more options at night.

- I really enjoy the Train Service I would challenge anyone who drives daily to try it at least once.
- The current operator of the commuter rail (Mack) does a terrible job of cleaning the cars. They are dirty all the time.
- More frequent trains to Warwick/Wickford. More options brings more riders.
- I fill out periodic critics for the MBTA and I see no changes.
- Thanks for a chance to give my input.
- The greeter in the morning at TF Green is excellent!
- The seats are worn and to close together. My knees hit the seat in front of me.
- There is dried throw up in some of the window seats.
- By eliminating the 6:00pm to 7:00pm from South Station to Green causes me to get home way to late.
- TF Green should have weekend service.
- First time riding the train.

## Exhibit 4: Wickford Junction Passenger Comments

- First time using train
- Would use more if schedule included weekends
- An express train during commuter time from Wickford make all stops to Attleboro and then express to Ruggles, Back Bay, South Station. (would allow 1 hour trip to Boston)
- Weekend travel would be great!!
- Please don't raise the prices \$2.80 is enough!
- Will let us know after first trip
- I Love the new train service from Wickford.
- Add one more train in the morning between 7:45am and 9:10am.
- A train at 8:15-8:30am to Providence for 9:00am work start would really help.
- App for (smartphone) reliability of train
- Run on weekends
- Have information on Boston sightseeing and activities
- The conductor was great & very helpful
- Would use the train more if it ran on weekends
- Great having the ability to ride the train from Wickford to Backbay!
- Parking attendants never around
- Purchased a monthly pass but never signed my credit card. I was told to come back this week but no one was available.
- To pay for parking in the morning (like TF Green) instead of waiting in line at the end of the day.
- Would be great to have a RI express train to Boston. Stops at Wickford, Green, Providence then straight to Backbay – ridership would increase if it was only 1 hour travel time
- Fare spike is ridiculous
- Would like to see increase in the train schedule. Each time the train goes to Providence it should go to Warwick and Wickford.
- Would like weekend service. It would be an asset to tourists
- Parking garage manager is very rude on how he talks to customers; we need Americans! Food in kitchen
- Need to get message out as to how good this is.
- The train plus parking is costly enough. Stop fare hikes and tract the July 1<sup>st</sup> MBTA increase
- Want food, parking manager unsatisfactory, need weekend service

- Want weekend service
- Weekend service to Boston is when I would use it the most
- Riding Amtrak for last 8 years from Kingston. Rhode MBTA from Wickford all of May – on time but awful way too long a trip.
- Increase daily commute by 45 minutes, sticking with Amtrak MBTA really uncomfortable too for such a long ride.
- Love this train
- More food would be nice
- Weekend trains
- More trains from Wickford earlier and later
- Weekend Trains
- Parking garage need to get a new manager; has not been open four times
- Need food
- Weekend Service
- Every day the 5:09pm train to Wickford arrives at Providence after the 5:10pm train to Boston
- Why not call the 813 train the 5:15pm trains.
- Love to see weekend service
- Wish Wifi was faster and worked between Mansfield and 128 trains
- Weekend service to Providence would be great
- Just found out the ticket cost is about to increase no idea why and it seems crazy with so little notification
- Weekend Service / and food service
- The conductors are very professional, despite having to deal with difficult passengers. Need to run on weekends
- Everything seems great so far. No real complaints
- \$4.00 is ok for parking but adds up after a while; Weekend service would be great
- Get to Boston 10 minutes earlier
- Would take train on weekends / It's a wonderful service
- Bike infrastructure traveling to Wickford is poor and dangerous
- A 900 car is needed from Wickford so there is a fairly modern restroom on the train
- Occasionally the restroom car is very old
- Would you the train more on the weekends from Wickford to Boston
- Increasing fares will force me to reconsider driving to work
- Set the trains up like the Amtrak ones
- More trains to Wickford
- First time using this train in Wickford and 1 ½ hrs late and might miss Dr. Appt in Boston
- Since train opened I have had problems with the garage. Wither it wasn't open causing me to park at Staples or the gates not letting me in or out
- Need more options to and from Wickford

- Beautiful station so glad it is located here. Great job blending in and not disturbing.
- Should improve PA system
- Parking Garage manager is very unprofessional about approaching customers.
- Parking manager is my only complaint
- Thank you!!!