

# **2003 Arlington County “Pike Ride” Transit Service Study**

## **SPONSOR:**

[Arlington County Commuter Services](#) (ACCS)

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## **RESEARCH SUPPLIERS:**

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## **OVERALL STUDY PURPOSE:**

- ☞ The purpose of this study was to assess the initial launch of Arlington County’s new “Pike Ride” transit service and to identify ways to improve the service.
- ☞ The new service began in September 2003 and is provided by Metrobus.

## **RESEARCH OBJECTIVES:**

- ☞ Develop a demographic profile of riders
- ☞ Determine how the new bus service influenced riders’ travel habits
- ☞ Determine reasons riders were using the service
- ☞ Assess riders’ impressions of the service
- ☞ Identify sources of information about the service
- ☞ Assess impression of marketing communication program elements
- ☞ Obtain riders’ reactions to the materials and advertising promoting the service
- ☞ Determine overall satisfaction with the service

## **METHODOLOGY:**

<b>Mode of Data Collection</b>	On-board survey
<b>Completed Surveys</b>	288 Respondents Total: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– 215 English</li><li>– 13 Spanish</li></ul>
<b>Survey Population</b>	Riders of the “Pike Ride” system
<b>Survey Instrument</b>	In-person, on-board interviews
<b>Criteria for Participation</b>	Age 18 and Older

## **SELECTED KEY FINDINGS**

### **Rider Profile:**

- 🚌 Based on respondents intercepted, the typical “Pike Ride” rider was:
  - An average of 36 years old
  - Employed full-time
  - Living in a household with two persons
  - Owner or Leaser of at least one vehicle
- 🚌 Riders represented a mix of ethnicities, including white (47%), black, (31%), and Hispanic (15%)
- 🚌 Most of the riders surveyed were either riding to or from work and used the service an average of about five days per week.
- 🚌 Most walked an average of two blocks to the “Pike Ride” bus stop.
- 🚌 The primary destination of riders surveyed in the mornings was the Pentagon; these riders outnumbered riders going to Pentagon City. But evening boardings at Pentagon City outnumbered boardings at the Pentagon.

### **“Pike Ride” Information:**

- 🚌 The vast majority (84%) of riders surveyed said it is at least somewhat easy to find information about “Pike Ride.” Almost half (47%) said it is very easy.
  - Overall, awareness of information sources was highest for point-of-use media.
  - All (100%) of the Hispanic respondents who had seen or used “Pike Ride” information in Spanish found this information to be useful.
- 🚌 Awareness that the bus they were riding is part of the new “Pike Ride” service was high, but even higher among those riding routes 16 GHKW on which interior and exterior “Pike Ride” logos and advertising were placed.
- 🚌 About one in five were unaware that they could take any of the 16 line Metrobus routes along Columbia Pike to ride between Carlin Springs and the Pentagon or Pentagon City.

### **Overall Satisfaction:**

- 🚌 Overall, satisfaction with “Pike Ride” bus service was high. More than two-thirds rated the overall service as excellent or very good.
- 🚌 The majority of respondents were pleased with the current bus stop locations.
- 🚌 The attributes that received the lowest satisfaction ratings were on-time arrival, cost of riding, and frequency of service.

- Close to three in ten riders surveyed said they have experienced problems with the new “Pike Ride” service – time/schedules were not accurate, buses were overcrowded during rush hours, buses didn’t come frequently enough.
- 🚌 Satisfaction was higher for weekend “Pike Ride” service than for weekday service.
  - Riders surveyed during a morning trip were most likely to say that they had experienced problems with “Pike Ride” service, while weekend riders were the more likely to say they had not had any problems.

### **OVERALL IMPACT:**

- 🚌 One-third said they were riding the bus more as a result of the new “Pike Ride” transit service.

### **OTHER RELATED STUDIES, PLANS & DOCUMENTS:**

- 🚌 2005 Arlington County Teen Transit Initiative Study
- 🚌 2004 Arlington County Public Perceptions of Transit
- 🚌 2006 Arlington County Public Perceptions of Transit

### **AVAILABLE DOCUMENTS:**

Final Report
Questionnaire (with report)

### **KEY WORDS:**

ACCS, Arlington County, Arlington County Commuter Services, Attitudes, Awareness, Bus, Commute mode, Commuters, Commuting, Demographics, Market Segmentation, Perceptions, Performance measurement, Rider profile, Satisfaction, TDM, Transit, Transportation Demand Management, Traveler Opinion and Perception