

# CREATING A PEOPLE-CENTERED TRANSIT HUB: STRATEGIES FOR GREEN SPACE, AMENITIES, AND SEAMLESS TRANSIT IN OLD TOWN, SAN DIEGO

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## INTRODUCTION

Public transit offers an affordable alternative to personal vehicles, helping California residents save money amid rising costs while enhancing urban mobility, economic activity, and social connectivity. This qualitative analysis sets out to find transit site deficiencies, local needs and to recommend design implications.

### STUDY AREA



### RESEARCH QUESTION

This study sets out to answer the following questions:

- By **improving** elements like **green space**, **public amenities**, and **overall transit performance**, could Old Town be formed into a **vibrant community hub**?
- Could such changes **achieve urban, social, and economic prosperity** in a transit hub?

## METHODS

### TRANSIT SITE EVALUATION

Site Evaluation				
Criteria	Excellent (4)	Good (3)	Fair (2)	Needs Improvement (1)
Accessibility and Connectivity	Walkways, bike lanes are wide, and ADA is exceptional	Adequate walkways, bike lanes, and ADA is up to code	Pedestrian Pathways are narrow and congested	Disruptive pathways for pedestrians
Greenspace	Access to greenspace and tree canopy is of an abundance	Green space and trees are sufficient	Minimal greenspace and trees, lacks access	Little to no greenspace and trees
Comfort and Amenities	Comfortable seating/shelter, clean restrooms & water	Sufficient Seating and shelter, restrooms, and water access	Limited seating and shelter, restrooms aren't clean, and lacks water sources	No seating or shelter, no restroom access and no drinking water
Efficiency and Operations	Transit is reliable, clear wayfinding, crowd control, & ticketing easily accessible	Transit, wayfinding, crowd control, and ticketing are adequate	Longer wait times, Wayfinding poor, crowds build, and ticketing is difficult	Noticeably poor transit, Wayfinding is unclear, Unacceptable crowds & ticketing.

- Site evaluation allowed self to **grade current state** and **discover deficiencies**.

### INTERVIEWS

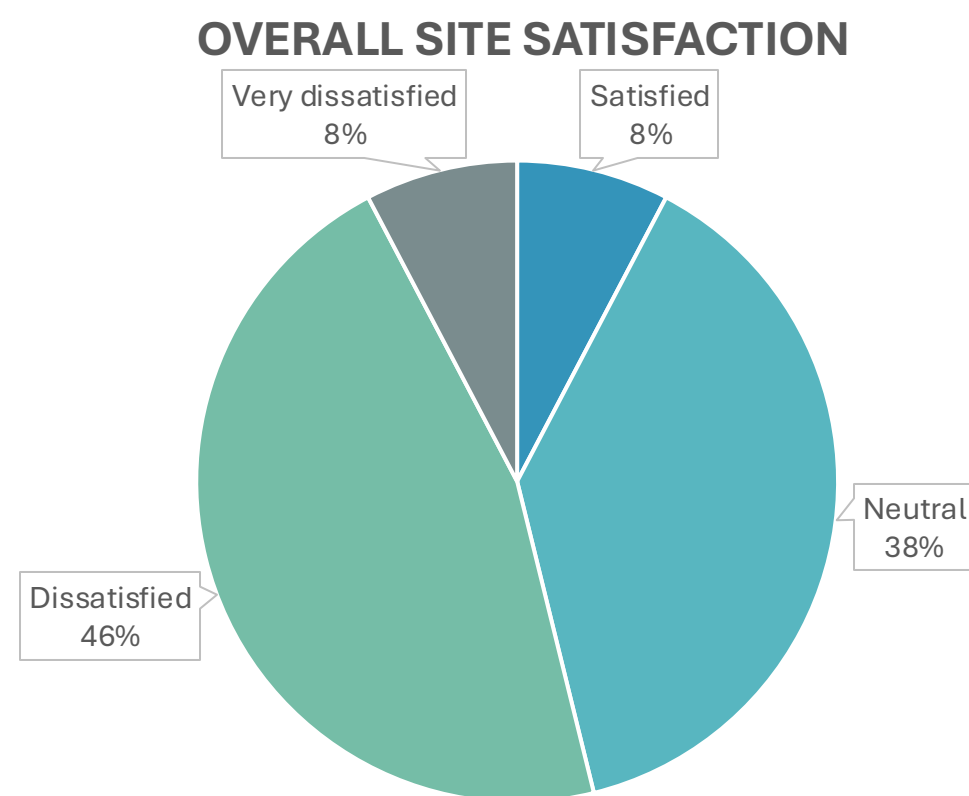
- 11 open-ended multiple-choice **on needs met**, **needs desired**, and **overall site satisfaction**.
- Questions underline **surveyor demographics** and **local opinions** on what improvements could be made.

### PHOTO TAKING

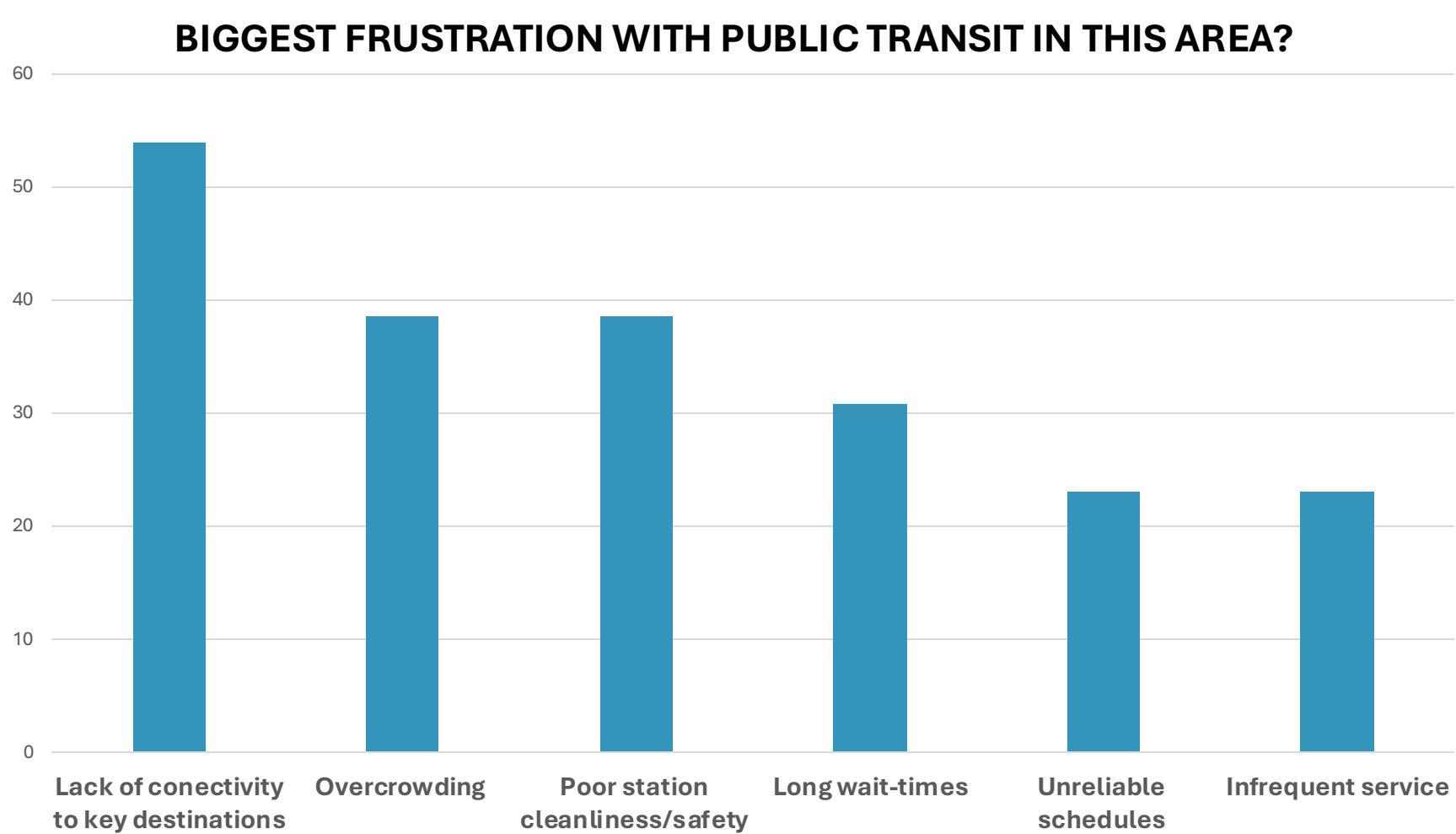
- Photos were taken to capture details in correlation with site evaluation and interview responses.
- Evaluations and Images** were taken **once at 12:00pm** and **once at 8:00pm** to **understand unique challenges** of transit center at different times of the day.

## KEY FINDINGS

- Majority of respondents noted they were **dissatisfied** with the overall transit site.

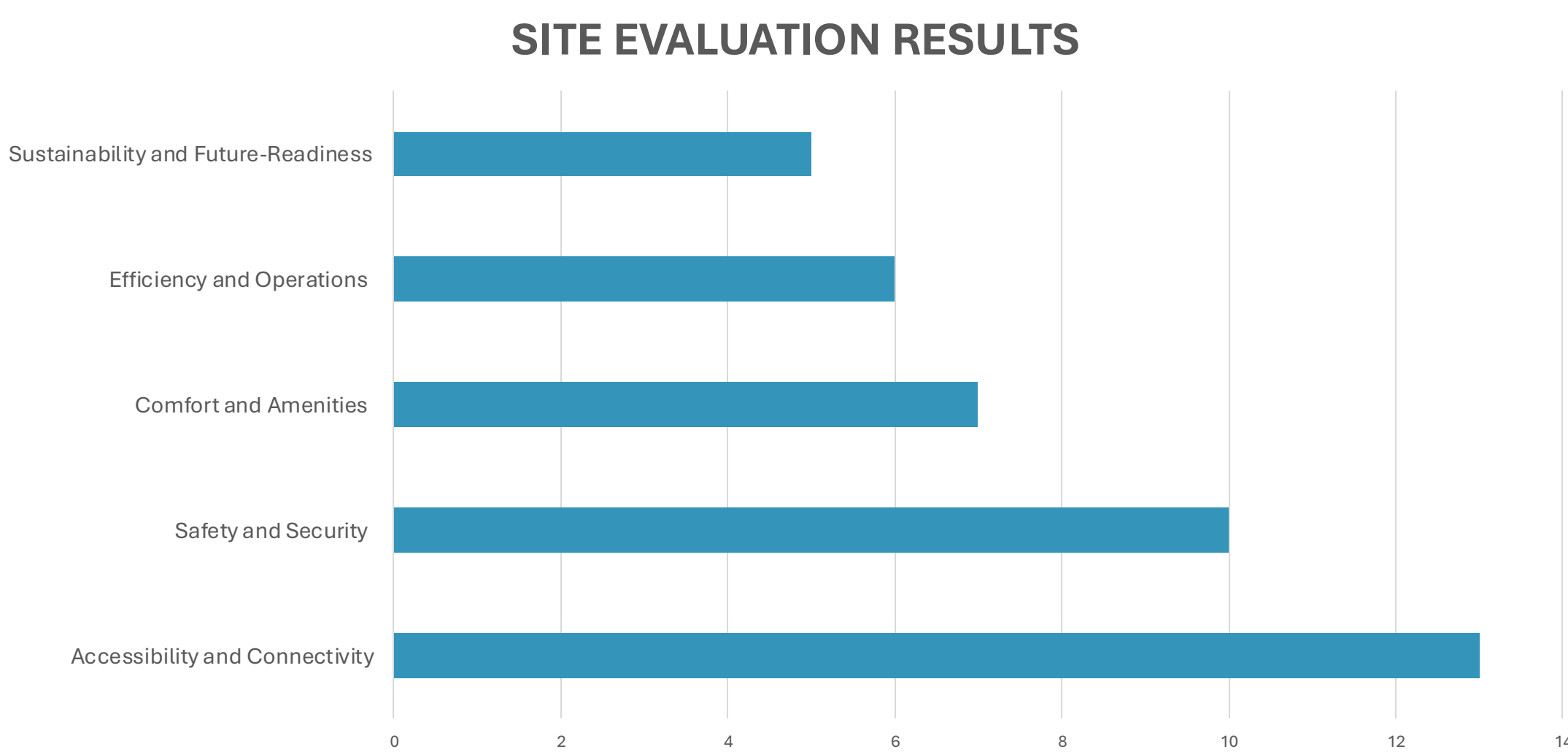


- Most surveyed participants noted they would like to incorporate **small parks** as greenspace infill.
- Participants noted **higher frequency** and **extending operation hours** would improve transit services.
- Cleaner more accessible restrooms** and **shaded comfortable seating areas** scored with the highest frequency for amenities most desired.
- Participants chose **lack of connectivity to key destinations** as the biggest frustration regarding transit performance.



### COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

- Site evaluation results drew comparisons to interview results regarding similar criteria.
- Efficiency and Operations** score correlated with surveyor's biggest transit concern being the **lack of connectivity to key destinations**.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Implement Public-Private Partnerships (PPP's)** to collaborate with developers to fund green infrastructure, amenity, and transit upgrades.  
Enhance **ADA compliance**, **better lighting**, and **clear wayfinding** to boost user experience
- Co-locate essential services** near transit to reduce car dependency and boost equity.
- Develop small, accessible green spaces** near site as only greenspace and access to natural shade is blocked by hand-railings for stairs.



Left: Current State of Greenspace.

Right: Datansha Transit Center, China

- Ensure **high-frequency buses/trains (less than 10 min wait-times)** and **express services** for longer trips. as current trolley system is inefficient in size and speed throughout destinations



Left: Current Train System

Right: High-efficiency rail in Toronto, CA

## CONCLUSION

By **improving** accessibility to **greenspace**, **amenities**, and **overall transit services**, Old Town Transit Center of San Diego, CA can **promote transit usage**, **diversify site-functionality**, and **improve mental well-being** of those visiting the site. By expanding its uses beyond transit access, San Diego City could **transform Old Town Transit into a vibrant community hub that unlocks social, economic, and environmental benefits**. Research patterns were discovered through qualitative analysis of existing conditions and gathered public opinion to meet local needs.

### Acknowledgments:



### CONTACT INFORMATION

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