

2026 CapMetro Customer Satisfaction Survey Research Summary

Prepared by SHERRY MATTHEWS GROUP in partnership with CCR · Research Fidelity · Transit CX

July 2026 | Fielding period: March 23 to April 13, 2026 | 1,552 completed surveys

Summary

Sherry Matthews Group managed CapMetro's 2026 Customer Satisfaction Survey with research partners Creative Consumer Research (CCR), Research Fidelity, and Transit CX.

- Overall rider satisfaction was reported at 69%. That is essentially unchanged from 2024 and 2025.
- Rail satisfaction jumped nine points to 85%. Rail satisfaction was the only change in the study large enough to count as a true shift rather than normal year to year variation.
- Local/Flyer and UT Shuttle both saw satisfaction decline.
- Riders' willingness to recommend CapMetro also improved. The system-wide Net Promoter Score rose from 9 in 2025 to 15 in 2026, with especially large gains among Express and Rapid riders. Both the comments riders wrote in their own words and a deeper look at the survey data point to the same list of priorities:
 - Safety and people experiencing homelessness on the system
 - Bus reliability
 - Cleanliness
 - Clear information about delays and schedules.

Key Findings

Overall satisfaction held steady, but the average hides real movement

Satisfaction is measured on a 5-point scale, where a rating of 4 or 5 counts as a positive score. In 2026, 69% of riders gave CapMetro a positive score. That is down two points from 71% in 2025, though this small dip is not large enough to be considered a meaningful change. Behind this flat overall number, individual services had significant movement. Rail and Express posted the strongest gains, up 9 and 8 points. Local/Flyer and UT Shuttle both declined, down 4 and 6 points. Local/Flyer carries extra weight here because it represents about three-quarters of all CapMetro ridership. Its decline is the single most important number in this report, even though it was not large enough on its own to count as a true statistical change.

Product Group	2025	2026	Change	2026 NPS	NPS Change
Total (all riders)	71%	69%	-2 points	15	+6
Rail	76%	85%*	+9 points*	26	+1
Express	72%	80%	+8 points	28	+21
Rapid	68%	72%	+4 points	21	+22
Local/Flyer	71%	67%	-4 points	14	+4
UT Shuttle	79%	73%	-6 points	9	-3

* A change large enough to be considered real, rather than normal year to year variation.



Biggest improvements led by Express and Rapid

The Net Promoter Score rose from 9 in 2025 to 15 in 2026. Rapid riders drove the biggest gain, moving from negative 1 to 21. Express reached the highest score of any service, climbing from 7 to 28. UT Shuttle was the only service where the score fell, dropping three points to 9.

Addressing safety and people experiencing homelessness are the most urgent themes in customer feedback

When riders explained their lowest ratings in their own words, safety concerns, homelessness, and unstable passengers came up more than any other topic, at 26% of comments. That was well ahead of requests for more routes (20%) and complaints about unclear arrival and cancellation updates (14%). The rating data tells a similar story. Satisfaction with how CapMetro addresses homelessness on the system fell from 47% to 30%, a real decline rather than normal year-to-year noise. It is now the lowest score in the entire survey, even though riders also say it is one of the most important issues to address. One caveat worth noting: CapMetro changed how this question was worded between 2025 and 2026, so part of the drop may reflect the new wording rather than only a change in rider experience. Either way, the open-ended comments point to the same underlying concern in riders' own words. Ease of reporting a safety concern is a related weak spot: only 56% of riders are satisfied with it, low enough, and important enough to overall satisfaction, that it also lands among the top priorities below.

Comfort and cleanliness show a consistent split between bus and rail

For comfort and cleanliness, there is a clear pattern. Nearly every measure related to seating, shelter, temperature, and interior cleanliness improved for rail in 2026. Bus scores on these same measures held flat or declined. Bus stop shelter and bus stop cleanliness remain the two weakest scores in this group, at 50% and 49%. This is true even though shelter saw one of the largest gains of the year.

Information and communication scores improved broadly

Almost every measure related to schedules, apps, and rider communication improved in 2026. The CapMetro website showed the largest gain of any single measure. Still, accurate and timely information about delays remains the weakest score in this group, at just 50%.



Where to Focus: The 2026 Priority Chart

To find the best places to focus, the research team compared 48 different service attributes in two ways: how important each one is to overall satisfaction, and how satisfied riders currently are with it. The attributes that are both highly important and currently underperforming deserve the most attention. These are the items where small improvements are likely to have the biggest impact on overall satisfaction. Ten attributes fell into this priority group in 2026:

Top Priority	Top Priority
Addressing homelessness on the system	Bus stop seating
Bus reliability	Availability and accuracy of printed schedules
Ease of reporting a safety concern	Enforcement of rules and fares
Bus interior cleanliness	Train frequency
Accurate and timely information about delays	Overall journey time

Segment Considerations

- Ride frequency. Riders who use CapMetro three to four days a week were the only group with a real decline in satisfaction, dropping from 73% to 66%.
- How long riders have used CapMetro. First-time riders reported the highest satisfaction of any group, at 86%, along with the highest Net Promoter Score, at 56.
- Age. Riders age 16 to 24 report the lowest satisfaction, between 58% and 69%. Riders age 16 to 17 had a negative Net Promoter Score in 2025, and this only partly recovered in 2026. Riders age 45 and older are consistently the most satisfied and the most likely to recommend CapMetro to others.
- Which service riders use. Local/Flyer represents about three-quarters of all CapMetro ridership. Because of its size, its four-point decline in satisfaction and weaker recommendation scores deserve more attention than the smaller gains seen on Rail and Express, even though those gains are encouraging.

Conclusion

The 2026 Customer Satisfaction Report shows a transit system holding steady overall, even as individual services move in different directions. Rail's gain is large enough to count as a real, confirmed improvement, and Express also improved by a wide margin, while Local/Flyer and UT Shuttle softened. Riders' overall willingness to recommend CapMetro is rising, first-ride experiences remain strong, though based on a smaller sample, and communication tools like the Transit/Umo app and website are earning higher marks each year.

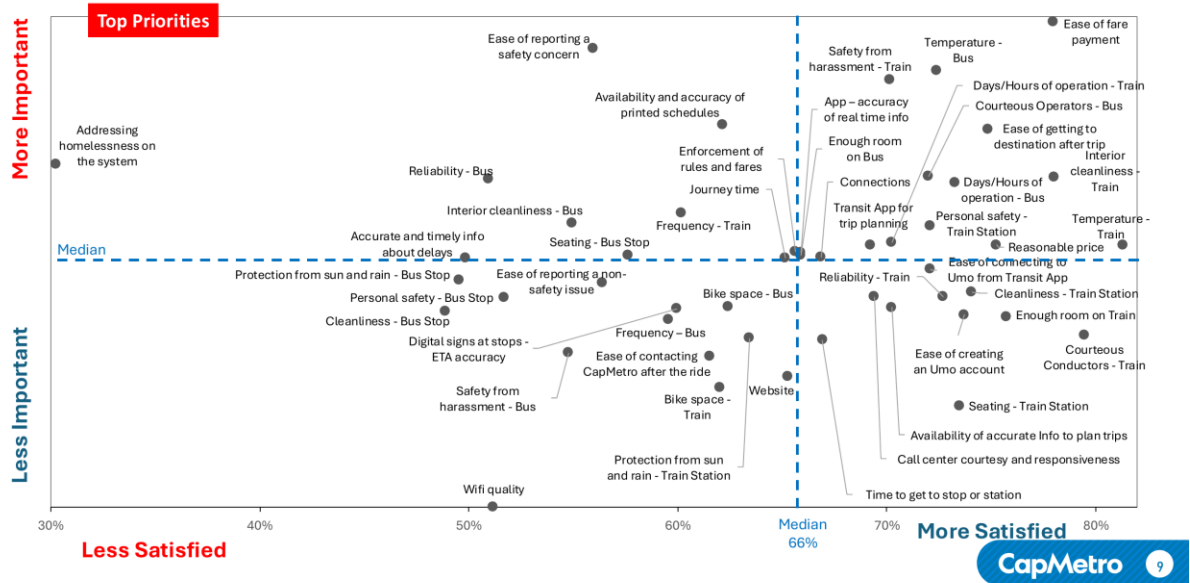
Prepared by Sherry Matthews Group, in collaboration with Creative Consumer Research (CCR), Research Fidelity, and Transit CX. Source: CapMetro 2026 Customer Satisfaction Report, fielded March 23 to April 13, 2026. Report dated July 2026.



Appendix: 2026 Priority Chart (All Riders)

The chart below is the priority chart referenced in the “Where to Focus” section. It compares 48 service attributes on two measures: how important each one is to overall satisfaction, shown on the vertical axis, and how satisfied riders are with it, shown on the horizontal axis. The items in the upper left corner, labeled “Top Priorities,” are both important and underperforming. These are the clearest candidates for CapMetro's next Customer Experience Action Plan accommodations.

Prioritizing Pain Points using a Quad Chart (All Riders) – 2026



Source: CapMetro 2026 Customer Satisfaction Report, page 9 (Research Fidelity analysis).

