People and Public Transportation

Rachel Murray

BEFORE YOU READ: What is public transportation like in your area? How are different parts of your area served differently?

I started using public transportation when I got my first job at the age of 17. But now I drive a car. I don’t like the pollution and all the traffic jams caused by cars, but I wouldn’t want to go back to taking the bus. In my view, public transportation in Tucson is one of the worst systems in the country.

Some Communities are not Served

Access to buses in Tucson is not good throughout the city. For example, if you live on the west side of town, the buses do not come to your neighborhood. I have lived on the west side of Tucson most of my life. If buses can run all the way to the north side of town, which is a wealthier part of Tucson, why can’t they reach my community?

Safety is another concern for people that live out past where the bus runs. When riders get off the bus, they have to either walk or ride a bike for the rest of their trip. There are not enough street lights in that area of town, so it is very dark and dangerous.

Designed for Tourists & Businesses

Now there is another transportation service in Tucson named the Sun Link Streetcar. It was built to cover 3.9 miles of town. The streetcar starts at a popular market place, goes through downtown, then to another business district, and then makes its way through the University area and back the same route. The new Sun Link Streetcar and the original Sun Tran Bus both cover the same 3.9 miles of service. How is it helpful to have two types of service in one area when there are some areas that have no service at all?

The cost of the streetcar was too high, especially because there were bus routes that already served the downtown businesses, students, and tourists. Meanwhile, some people in Tucson are not served by bus transit at all.

AFTER YOU READ: What are two concerns that Rachel has about public transportation in her city? Using inference, what do you think she would suggest as a remedy for the situation?

Rachel Murray is a native of Tucson, AZ, and a student at El Rio Learning Center. She is retired from a 33-year-long career and is now working to achieve her GED. She is married and has two adult children and a beautiful granddaughter. She enjoys math.