

# Altamont Corridor Express

2014 Passenger Study

Draft  
Findings Report

Conducted by:  
Redhill Group, Inc.



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## METHODOLOGY

Under contract to the MTC, Redhill Group conducted a survey of ACE (Altamont Corridor Express) riders to provide accurate trip information to support planning initiatives. The survey included traditional demographics, languages spoken, fare media and selected attitudinal questions. The survey employs a methodology that includes a five to ten minute onboard tablet survey that includes real-time trip mapping to ensure that each component of a rider's complete trip is accurately captured including all trip segments, transfers, and logical access and egress information.

Riders in the quiet cars completed a brief, two-minute onboard survey that was limited to origin and destination-types and rider contact information. The short onboard survey is followed up by a telephone survey that also incorporates real-time trip mapping. Together, these methods produce an accurate picture of true travel patterns, enabling more effective planning.

The sampling plan for riders was established at 210, which is 5.0 percent of average daily boardings of 4,151. Since almost all riders ride in both directions, the number of actual riders is approximately half the number of boardings. Accordingly, five percent of boardings equates to 10 percent of riders. The actual number of surveys completed was 532. Survey quotas were established by on-off station-pair combinations. Where the individual on-off station combinations produced fewer than 100 boardings, cells were combined with the most logical contiguous on-off station combinations to produce a survey target of at least five respondents.

Field surveying was conducted between April 9<sup>th</sup> and April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2014. Follow-up telephone surveying was conducted between April 22<sup>nd</sup> and April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2014. Final results for the surveying process included a total of 482 non-quiet car surveys (onboard), and 50 quiet car surveys (follow-up telephone).

## KEY FINDINGS

- The distribution of home-based trip purposes is primarily work oriented with work trips accounting for 94 percent of home-based destinations. This is followed at a much lower level by college (3%), social/recreational destinations (1%), and dining or coffee, (1%).
- The trip purpose distribution is in line with employment and school demographics. At 97 percent, the majority of riders indicate that they work (95% work only, and 2% work and attend school), and four percent indicate that they are students (2% students only and 2% both students and workers). One percent of riders are neither employed nor students.

- A majority of riders (70%) access ACE from home by driving alone while five percent walk to reach their first boarding point. The remaining 25 percent get dropped off (13%), bicycle (8%), or carpool (4%). The average access walk time is 12.4 minutes and three-quarters (75%) walk more than five minutes. For the 95 percent of riders who do not walk to their first stop, the average distance from home to their first boarding point is 6.0 miles.
- While only five percent walk from home to ACE, two-thirds of riders (66%) walk to their final destination, and have an average walk time of 5.5 minutes. The remaining 34 percent drive alone (15%), use a bicycle (8%), carpool<sup>1</sup> (6%), are picked up (4%), or take a taxi (1%) to reach their non-home destination with an average travel distance of 6.4 miles.
- At 58 percent, a majority of ACE riders require at least one transfer to complete their one-way trip. Forty-two percent do not transfer, 53 percent require one transfer, and five percent require two or more transfers.
- The percentage of riders who at some point have used any of ACE's shuttle connections during their commute is evenly split between riders who have (51%) and riders who have not (49%). In addition, if free shuttle connections were not available, 55 percent of riders that have used a shuttle would continue to use ACE, while 45 percent (23% of all riders) would not.
- Over half (56%) of riders pay their fare with a 20 ride ticket, over one-third (36%) use a monthly pass, six percent pay with a roundtrip ticket, and one percent use a one-way ticket. The vast majority of ACE riders (89%) pay a full "Adult" fare. Discounted fares include those who receive a "Senior" discount (3%), a "Disabled" discount (3%), and other work or school discounts (4%).
- Almost all ACE riders are "choice riders" since 96 percent have a driver's license and 99 percent have at least one vehicle available to their household.
- One-third of ACE riders (34%) speak a language other than English at home. The primary non-English languages spoken at home as a percentage of all boardings are Spanish (11%, 944 boardings, 472 riders), Tagalog (4%, 358 boardings, 179 riders), Chinese-Mandarin (2%, 202 boardings, 101 riders), Hindi (2%, 160 boardings, 80 riders), Chinese-Cantonese (1%, 86 boardings, 43 riders), Vietnamese (1%, 58 boardings, 29 riders), and Korean (0%, 34 boardings, 17 riders).

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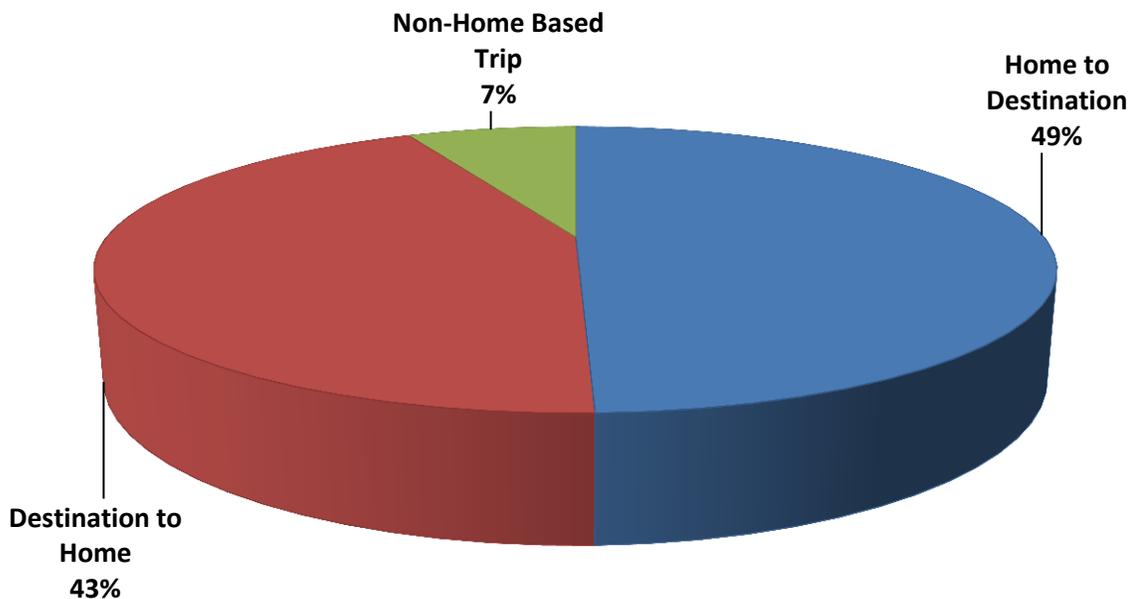
<sup>1</sup> The carpool category includes vanpools and non-public shuttles such as pick-up vans for medical facilities, employers or schools. Public shuttles are accounted for as a trip transfer.

# ACE RIDERSHIP

## TRIP CHARACTERISTICS

ACE riders were surveyed on multiple on-off combinations for all ten train stations traveling to the Bay Area in the AM (inbound) and to Stockton in the PM (outbound). A total of 532 surveys were completed with a relatively even balance between inbound and outbound passengers with 283 surveys completed with riders on inbound trips between 4:20 and 9:05 AM, and 249 surveys completed with riders on outbound trips between 3:35 and 8:26 PM. For all ACE rider trips, 93 percent have an origin or destination that is their “Home,” leaving only seven percent traveling between two non-home locations.<sup>2</sup>

**Figure 1: Is Home Your Origin Or Destination?**  
n=532

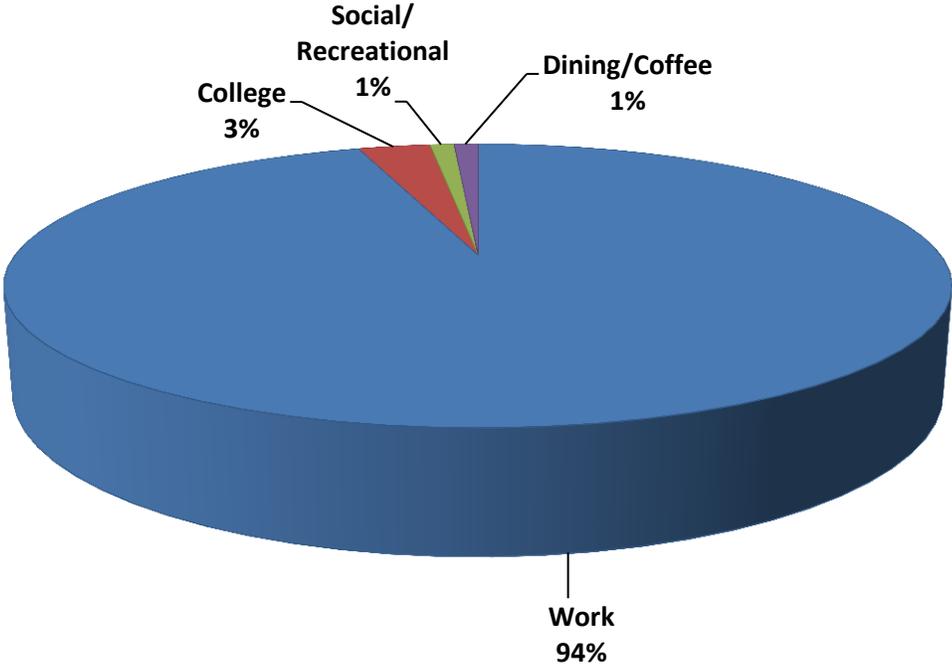


In traditional onboard survey reporting, all origins are reported collectively regardless of the trip's direction or purpose. This results in the information about trip origins and access modes being a combination of home, work, and other starting locations. This methodology does not produce a clear and meaningful representation of riders' trips from home to the first boarding point, or of the final leg of the trip from the last alighting point to the ultimate destination.

<sup>2</sup> Percentages do not add up to 100% due to rounding.

To create a more meaningful representation of riders’ travel patterns, survey results are presented from a modified database of trips in relation to riders’ homes. This approach creates a consistent picture of boarding accessibility from riders’ ultimate origin, as well as the relationship between their last alighting point to their final destination to create a more meaningful and actionable picture of rider’s trip behavior. It should be noted that the data is also available in its original format. The modified data, which reverses trips to home, into trips from home, is placed in new fields used to report a clearer picture of access of the rider’s access to the station from home and egress from the station to their non-home destination.

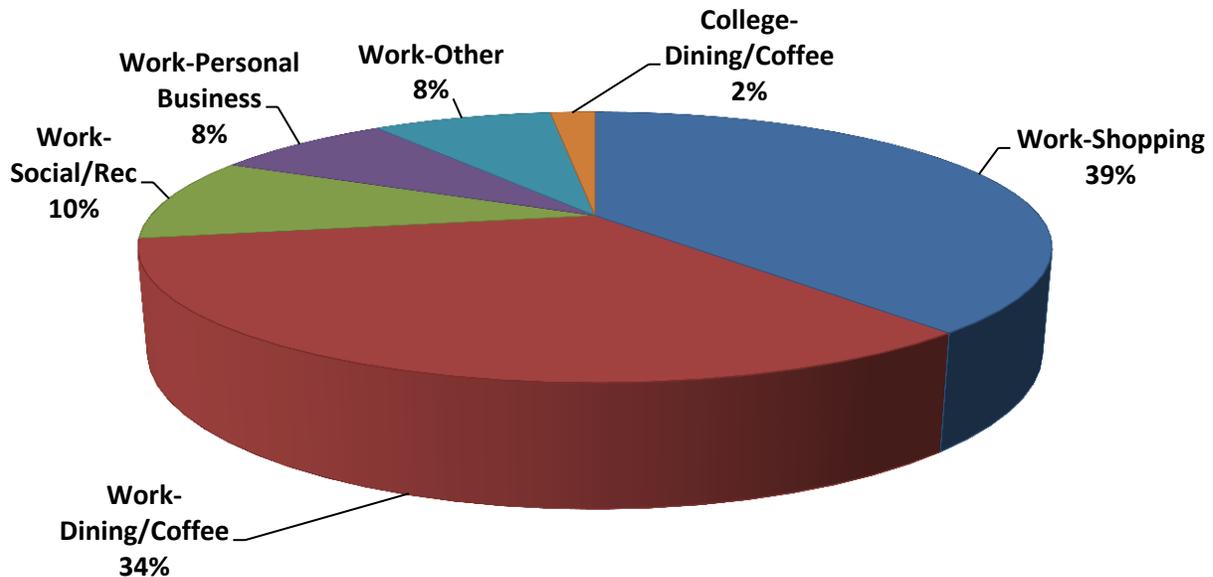
**Figure 2: What Is Your Home-Based Trip Purpose?**  
n=492



ACE riders’ predominant home-based trip purpose is work-related, which accounts for 94 percent of ridership and is in line with the percentage of employed riders which is 97 percent. “College” (3%), is the only other individual category that exceeds one percent. As would be expected, the riders with a college destination are primarily found in the age categories of under 20 or in their 20’s. The two remaining categories, “Social/Recreational” and “Dining/Coffee” are one percent each.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Percentages do not add up to 100% due to rounding.

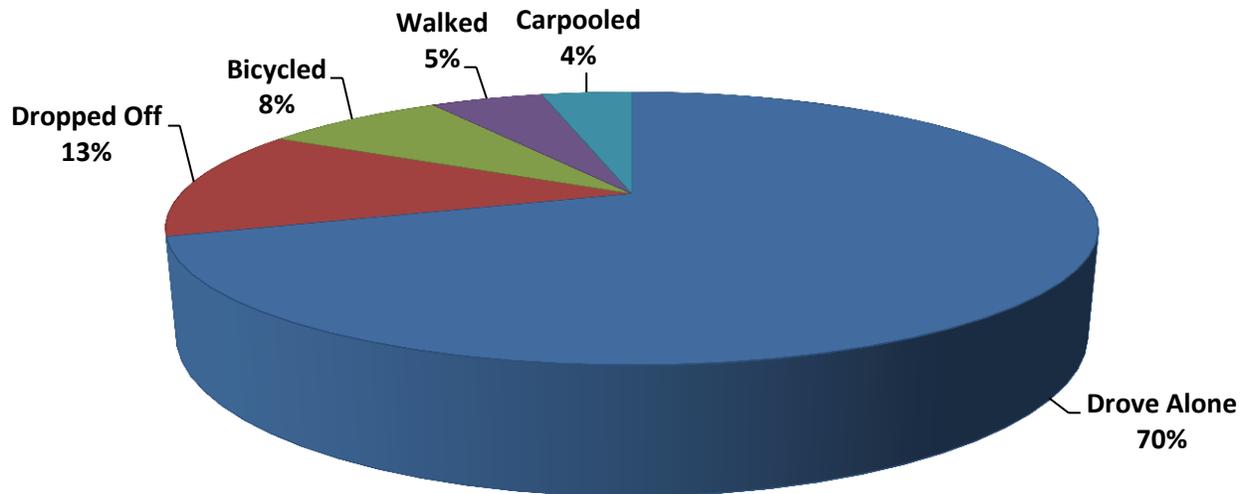
**Figure 3: What Is Your Non-Home-Based Trip Purpose?**  
n=40



A small proportion of trips (7%) neither start nor end at home. Since home is not a common anchor for these trips, there are numerous possible origin-destination combinations, most of which account for less than three percent of all responses. Nearly all of non-home-based ACE trips (98%) involve Work at one end of the trip with the most common pairs having “Shopping” (39%), “Dining/Coffee” (34%), “Social/Recreation” (10%), or “Personal Business” (8%) at the other end.<sup>4</sup>

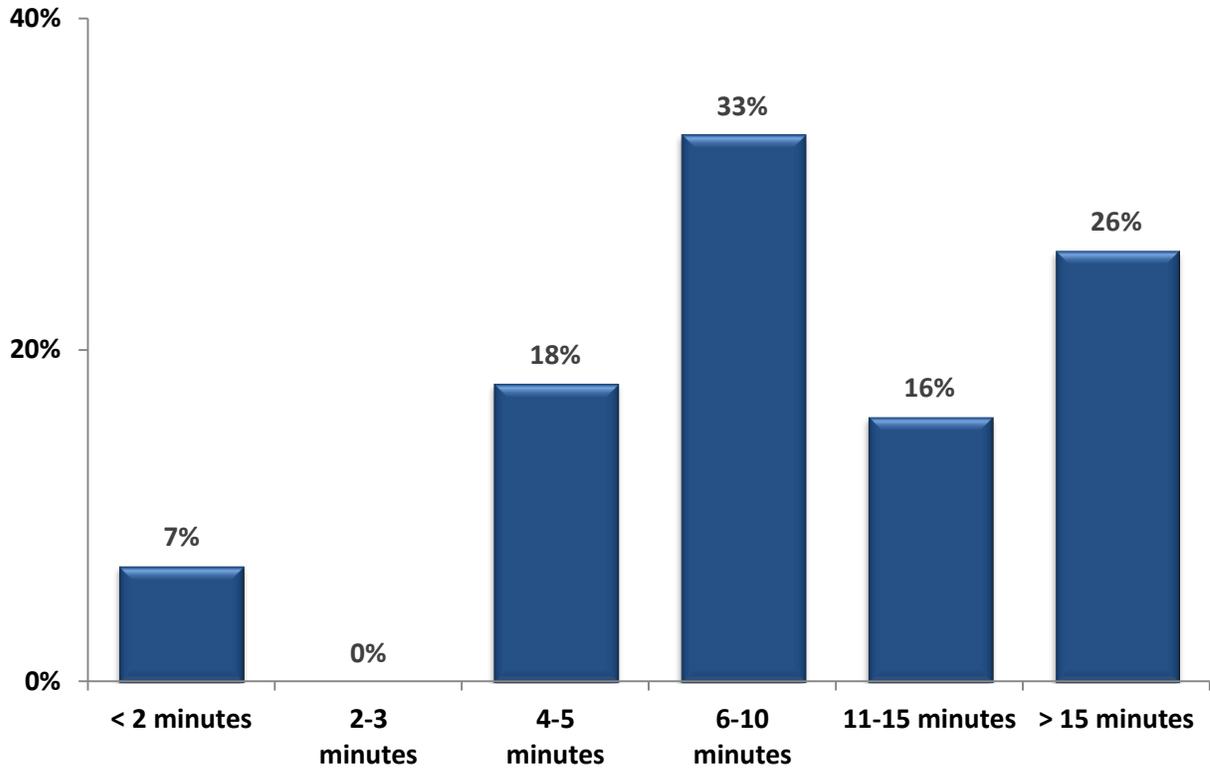
<sup>4</sup> Percentages do not add up to 100% due to rounding.

**Figure 4: How Did You Get From Your Home To Your First Boarding Point?**  
n=492



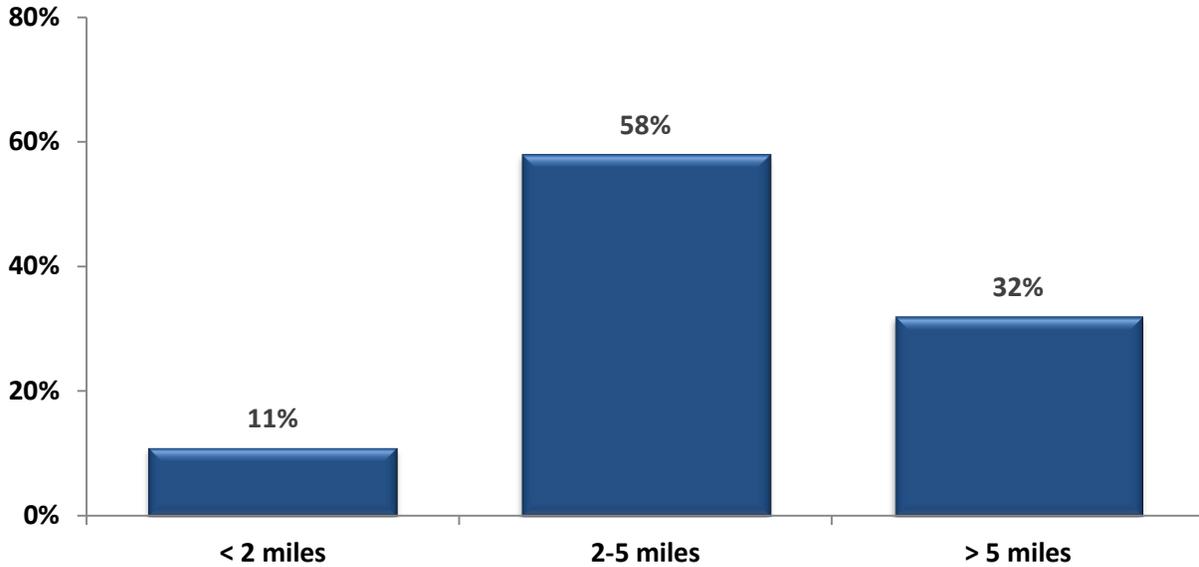
Over two-thirds (70%), of riders “Drove Alone” from home to their first boarding point. Other vehicular modes account for 17 percent of the trips including “Dropped-Off” (13%) and “Carpooled” (4%). Non-motorized travel modes such as “Bicycling” (8%) and “Walking” (5%) comprise the remaining 13 percent of home-based trips. Riders that bicycle are predominantly men (96%) and are employed (98%), and nearly two-thirds (63%) are in their 30’s or 40’s.

**Figure 5: How Many Minutes Is Your Walk From Home To Your First Boarding Point?**  
n=24



For the five percent of trips made by riders who walk from home to their first boarding point, three-quarters (75%) have a walk time of over five minutes, with the most common time (33%) being six to 10 minutes. The overall average walk time from home to the first boarding point is 12.4 minutes. It should be noted that with only 24 respondents that walk to the station, the results of this question are subject to a relatively high degree of variability.

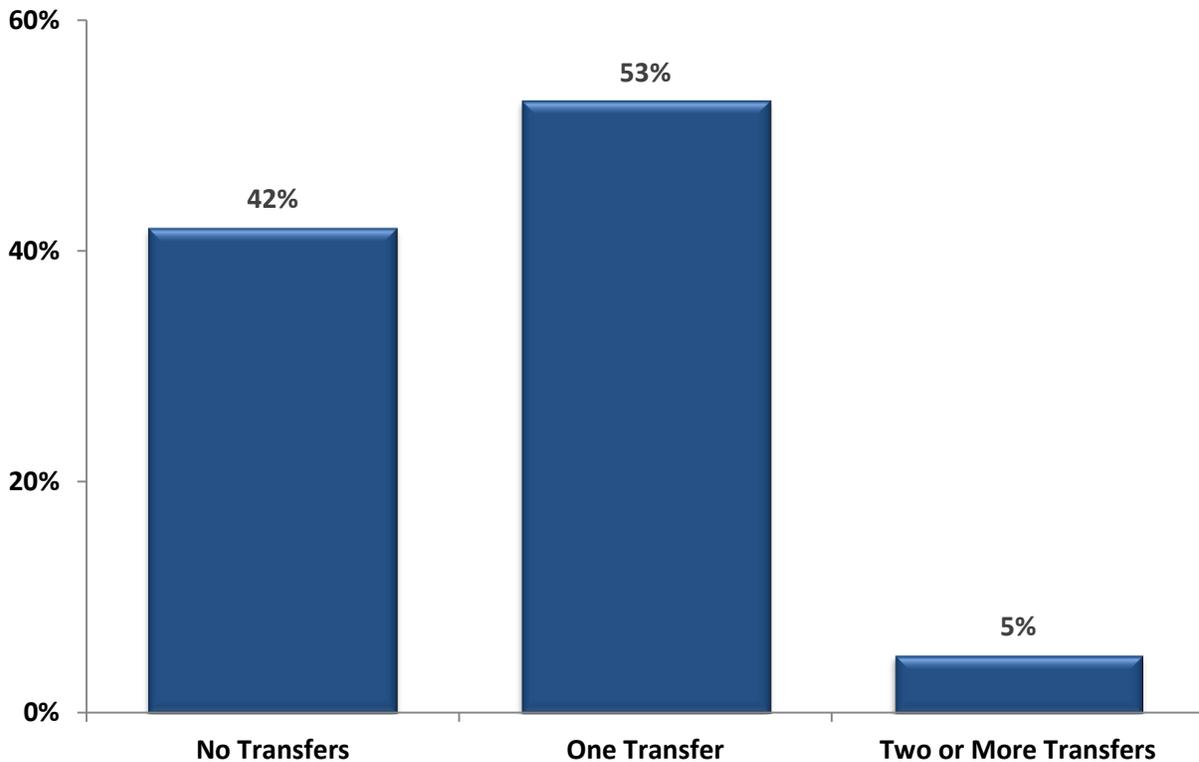
**Figure 6: How Many Miles Is It From  
Your Home To Your First Boarding Point?  
(Non-Walkers Only)  
n=468**



For the 95 percent of riders who access their first boarding point by a mode other than walking, over two-thirds (69%) travel five miles or less. The majority of these (58%) travel two to five miles while 11 percent travel less than two miles. The remaining third of non-walkers (32%) travel over five miles to reach their first boarding point.<sup>5</sup> The average distance traveled from home to the first boarding point is 6.0 miles.

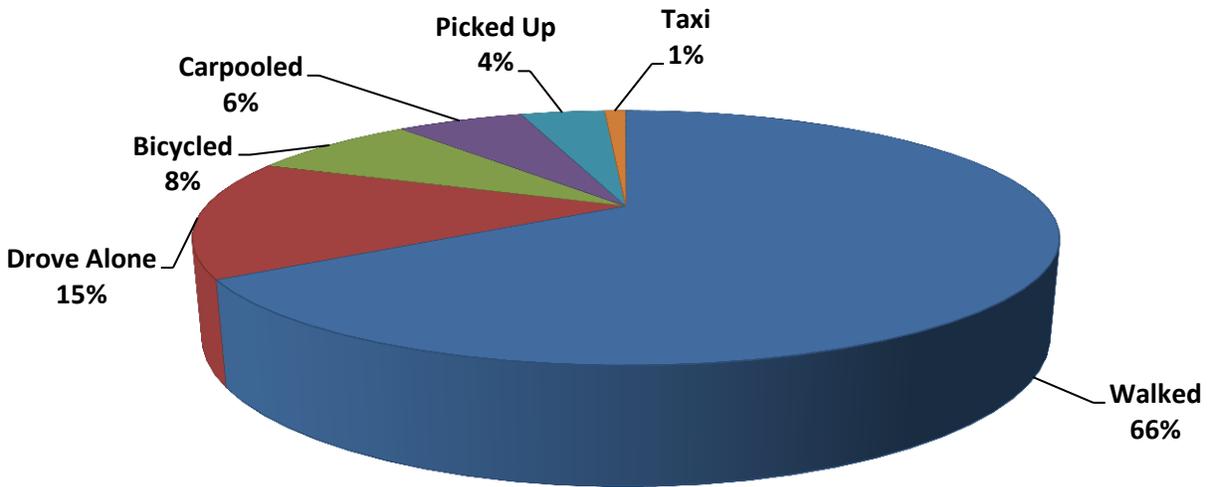
<sup>5</sup> Percentages do not add up to 100% due to rounding.

**Figure 7: How Many Transfers Are Needed To Complete Your Trip?**  
n=532



Forty-two percent of ACE riders complete their trip without transferring to or from other transit services. Among the 58 percent of riders who transfer, 53 percent make one transfer to complete their trip and five percent of riders require two or more transfers to reach their destination. The average number of transfers is 0.6 which equates to 1.6 trip segments.

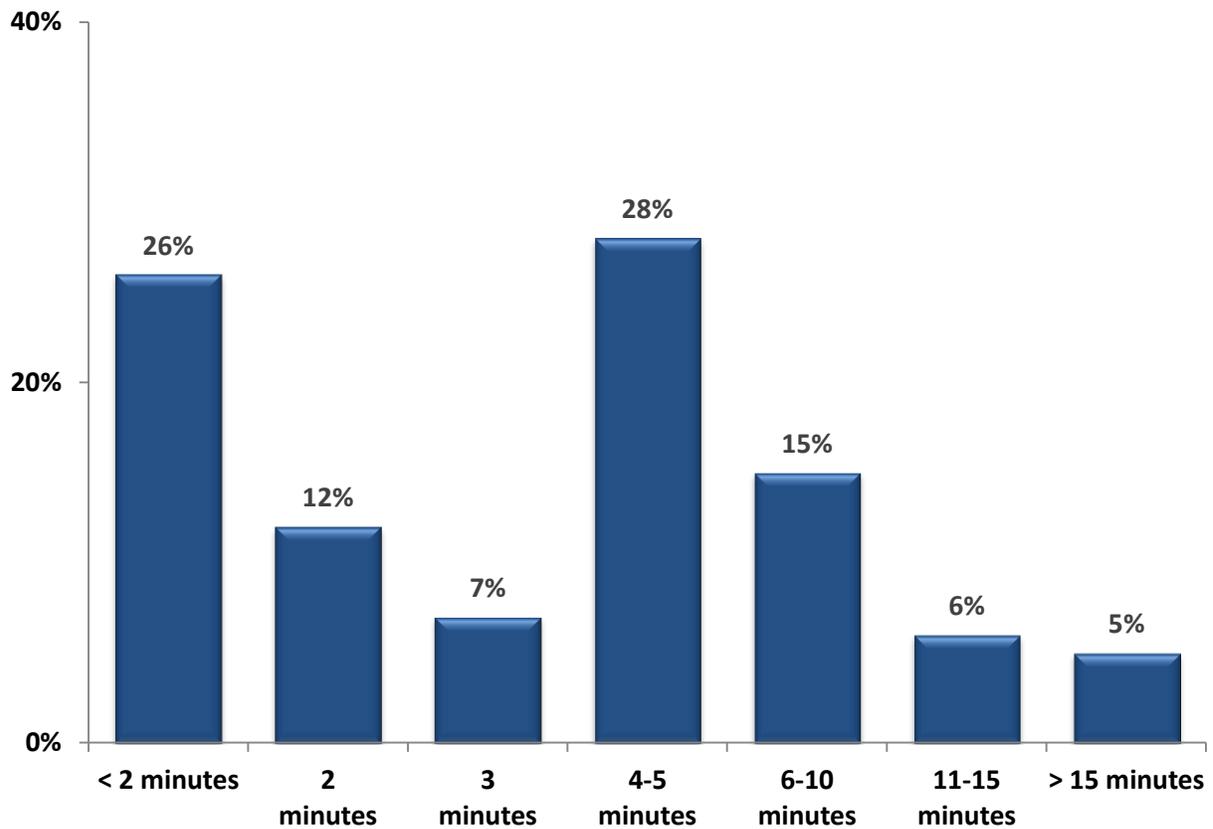
**Figure 8: How Do You Get From Your Last Stop To Your Non-Home Destination?**  
n=492



Approximately two-thirds of riders (66%) “Walk” from their last rail/transit/shuttle stop to their non-home destination. A significant portion appear to have “station cars” and either drive alone (15%) or carpool (6%) to their destination. Other motorized modes include being “Picked Up” (4%) or a “Taxi” (1%) The remaining eight percent “Bicycle” to their destination.

The likelihood of walking increases with income starting at a low of 51 percent for income under \$50,000 and increasing with each income category to a high of 73 percent for income of \$150,000 or higher. Conversely, the likelihood of carpooling decreases with each income category, starting at a high of 15 percent for income below \$50,000 and dropping with each category to a low of two percent for an income of \$150,000 or higher.

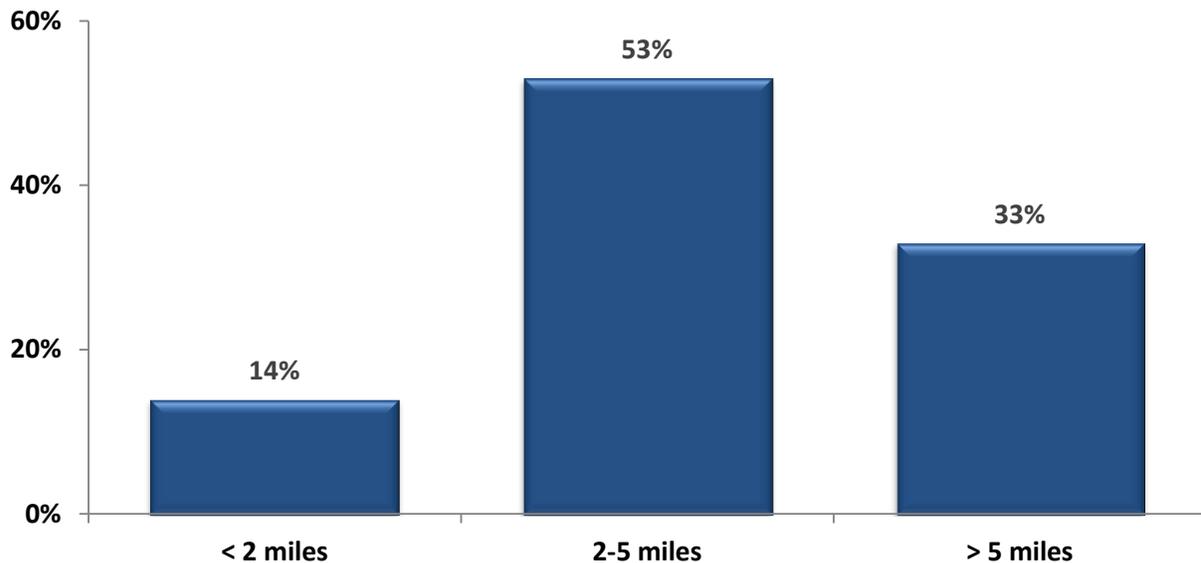
**Figure 9: How Many Minutes Is Your Walk from Your Last Stop To Your Non-Home Destination?**  
n=324



At 38 percent, over a third of riders walk two minutes or less from their last alighting point to their non-home destination. Another 35 percent walk three to five minutes, and 26 percent walk more than five minutes.<sup>6</sup> On average, the walk time from the last alighting point to a rider's final destination is 5.5 minutes.

<sup>6</sup> Percentages do not add up to 100% due to rounding.

**Figure 10: How Many Miles Is It From Your Last Stop To Your Non-Home Destination? (Non-Walkers)**  
**n=168**



Among the third of riders (34%) who do not walk from their last alighting point, two-thirds (67%) travel five miles or less to reach their final destination with most of these (53%) travelling two to five miles. . The remaining third (33%) of riders travel more than five miles to reach their non-home destination. The average distance traveled by non-walkers to their non-home destination is 6.4 miles.

The previous egress mode chart shows how riders get from their last transit leg to their final destination. However, this includes buses and shuttles as part of transit in addition to ACE. To address this, a table was developed that shows how riders get from their destination ACE station to their final destination. The table is presented on the following two pages and shows that over half of ACE riders use some type of transit or shuttle to get from their destination station to their final destination. VTA leads the list at 35 percent, followed by Wheels (6%), County Connection and AC Transit (2% each), and Caltrain (1%). There are also 10 percent that use one of the 18 shuttle services.

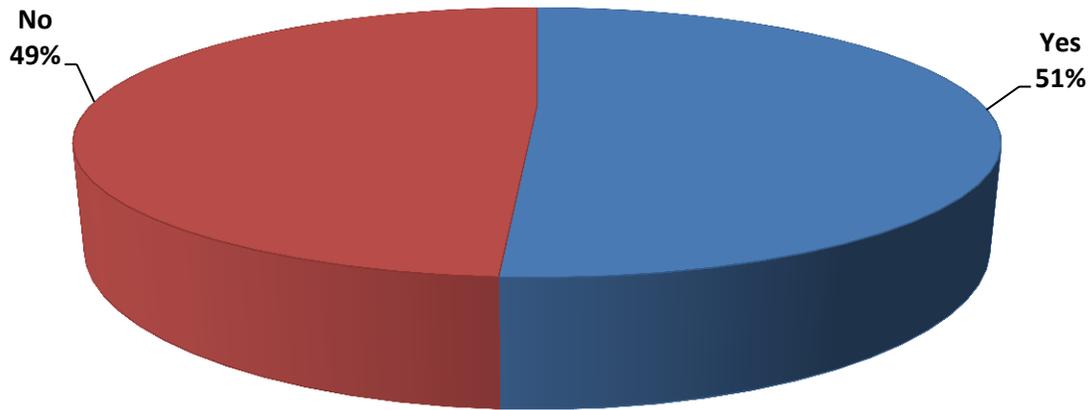
**Figure 11: How Did you Get From Your Non-Home ACE Station to Your Destination? <sup>7</sup>**  
**n=532**

Agency/Egress Mode	Connecting Route/Station	Count	Percentage	
Walk		420	10.9%	
Bicycle		295	7.7%	
Drive Alone		565	14.7%	
Carpool		209	5.4%	
Picked Up		147	3.8%	
Taxi		36	0.9%	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1671</b>	<b>43.4%</b>	
AC Transit		99	14	0.4%
		210	14	0.4%
		212	4	0.1%
	U	26	0.7%	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>1.5%</b>	
BART	Dublin/Pleasanton	6	0.2%	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>0.2%</b>	
Caltrain	Santa Clara Caltrain Station	26	0.7%	
	San Jose Diridon Station	10	0.3%	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>0.9%</b>	
The County Connection		92X	93	2.4%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>2.4%</b>	
Santa Clara VTA		10	25	0.7%
		22	20	0.5%
		32	6	0.1%
		60	24	0.6%
		63	6	0.1%
		64	60	1.6%
		65	5	0.1%
		68	48	1.3%
		181	14	0.4%
		323	14	0.4%
		522	5	0.1%
		822	172	4.5%
		823	102	2.7%
		824	106	2.8%
		825	83	2.1%
		826	111	2.9%
		827	188	4.9%
		828	176	4.6%
		831	71	1.8%

<sup>7</sup> Counts do not add up to totals due to rounding.

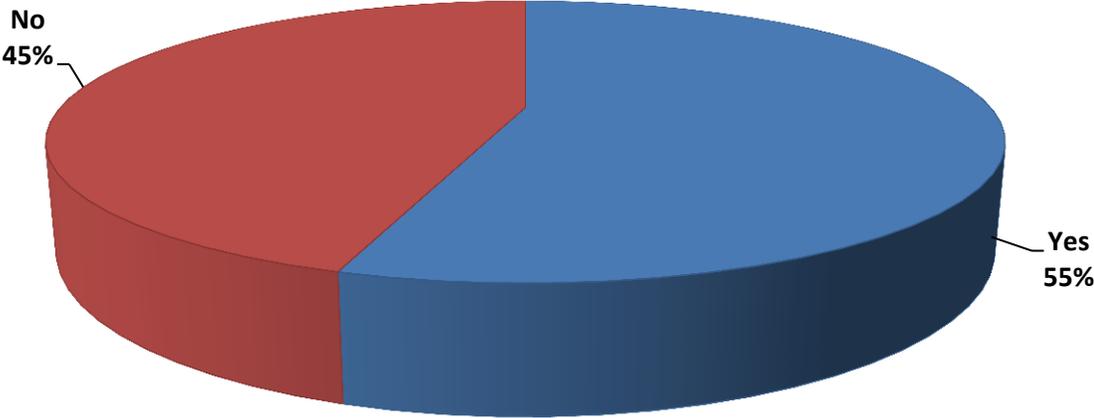
Agency/Egress Mode	Connecting Route/Station	Count	Percentage
	901	15	0.4%
	902	97	2.5%
	970	6	0.1%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1352</b>	<b>35.1%</b>
<b>Wheels</b>	11	11	0.3%
	15	6	0.2%
	53	130	3.4%
	54	83	2.2%
	Rapid	12	0.3%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>242</b>	<b>6.3%</b>
<b>Shuttles</b>	Abbott Company Shuttle	45	1.2%
	Apple Inc. Shuttle	29	0.7%
	Bellarmine College Preparatory Shuttle	8	0.2%
	Cupertino Shuttle	49	1.3%
	Downtown Area Shuttle (DASH)	93	2.4%
	Facebook Shuttle	12	0.3%
	Flextronics Shuttle	6	0.1%
	Lawrence Livermore National Lab Shuttle	23	0.6%
	Microsoft Shuttle	8	0.2%
	OLDCASTLE Inc. Shuttle	4	0.1%
	Oracle Shuttle	13	0.3%
	Qualcomm Shuttle	8	0.2%
	Safeway Shuttle	35	0.9%
	San Jose Water Company Shuttle	18	0.5%
	Stanford Shuttle	6	0.1%
	Texas Instruments Shuttle	10	0.3%
	Thermo Fisher Employee Shuttle	11	0.3%
	Washington Hospital Shuttle	9	0.2%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>388</b>	<b>10.1%</b>
	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>3846</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

**Figure 12: Do You Ever Use Any Of ACE's Shuttle Connections  
During Your Commute?  
n=532**



The percentage of riders who have ever used any of ACE's shuttle connections during their commute is split almost evenly between riders who have (51%) and riders who have not (49%) used a shuttle. The percentage of riders who use an ACE shuttle increases with income and age. The percentage of riders below \$75,000 income using a shuttle is 32 percent, compared to 59% for those with an income of \$75,000 higher. Similarly 36 percent of those under 30 have used a shuttle compared to 53 percent for those 30 or older.

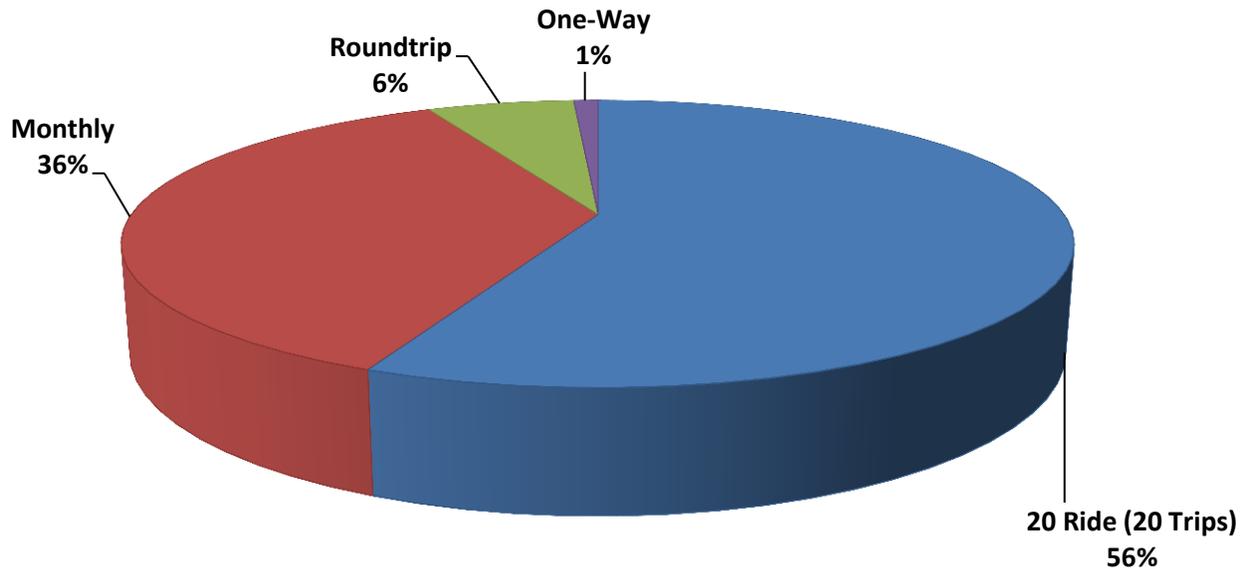
**Figure 13: Would You Use ACE, If Free Shuttle Connections Were Not Available?**  
n=267



If free shuttle connections were not available, 55 percent of riders who have used a shuttle would continue to use ACE, but a significant 45 percent (23% of all riders) say they would not ride ACE if the shuttles were eliminated.

## FARE MEDIA

**Figure 14: What Type Of Ticket Did You Use To Travel Today?**  
n=532



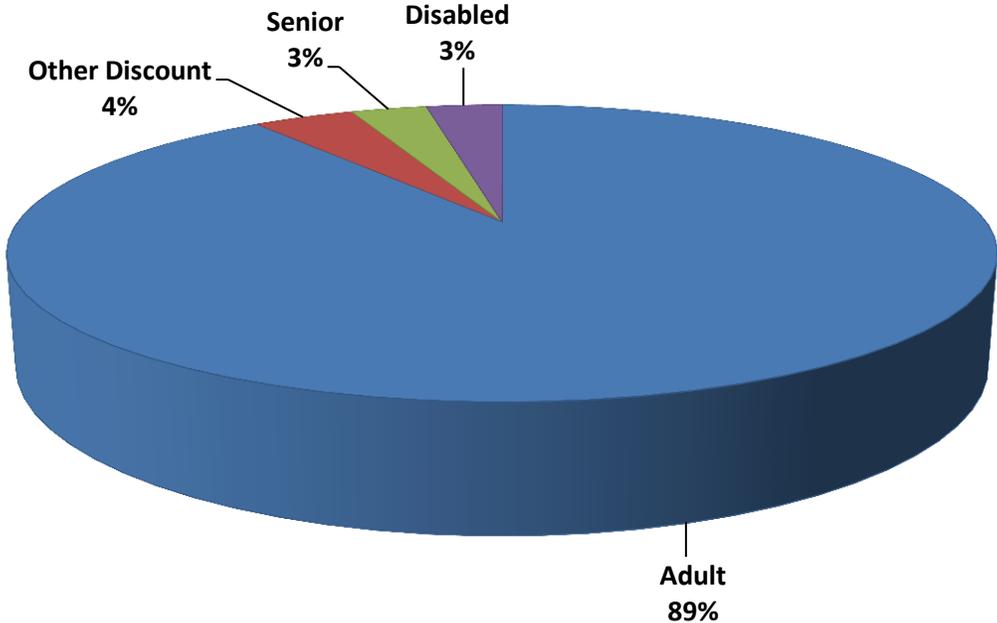
The majority of riders (56%) pay their fare with a 20 ride ticket, and over one-third (36%) use a monthly pass. One-day tickets are only used by seven percent of riders which includes those who pay with a roundtrip ticket (6%) or a one-way ticket (1%).<sup>8</sup>

The percentage of riders who use a one-day ticket (roundtrip or one-way) decreases with each income category starting at 25 percent for riders with a household income of less than \$50,000, decreasing to 12 percent of riders with incomes of \$50,000-\$74,999, and reaching a low of four percent for riders with total household incomes of at least \$75,000.

Conversely, the proportion of riders that use a 20-trip ticket increases with income, starting at a low of 36 percent for riders with income below \$50,000, and increasing to a high of 65 percent for riders with an income of \$150,000 or more. Interestingly, the incidence of monthly passes is not correlated to income.

<sup>8</sup> Percentages do not add up to 100% due to rounding.

**Figure 15: What Type Of Fare Do You Pay?**  
n=532



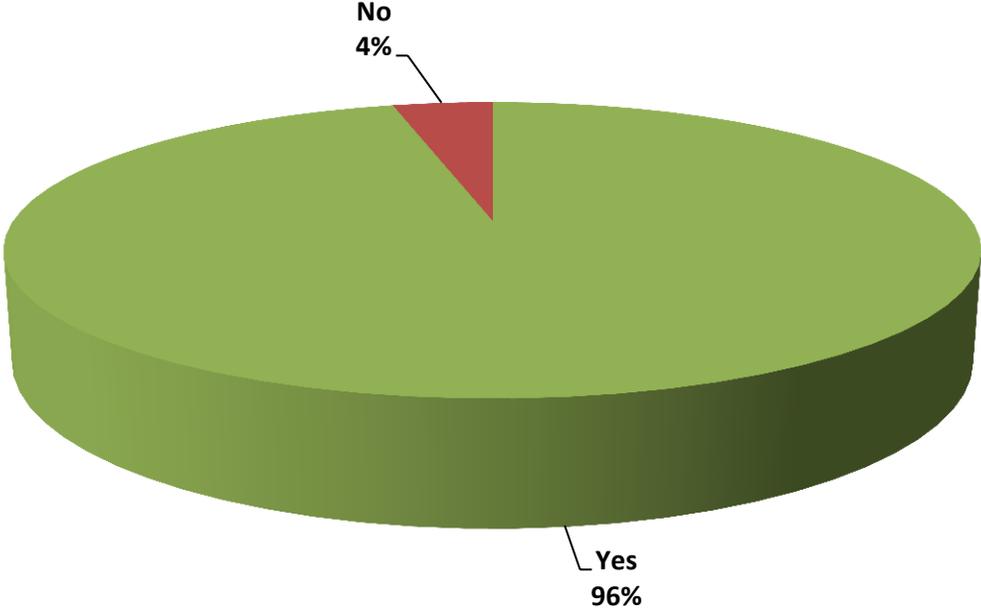
The vast majority of ACE riders (89%) pay a full “Adult” fare. Discounted fares account for ten percent of riders which includes those who receive a “Senior” discount (3%), a “Disabled” discount (3%), and other work or school discounts (4%).<sup>9</sup>

As would be expected, riders in their 50’s or younger (93%) are more likely to pay a full adult fare compared to riders in their 60’s or older who either pay the full adult (57%) or a discounted fare (43%).

<sup>9</sup> Percentages do not add up to 100% due to rounding.

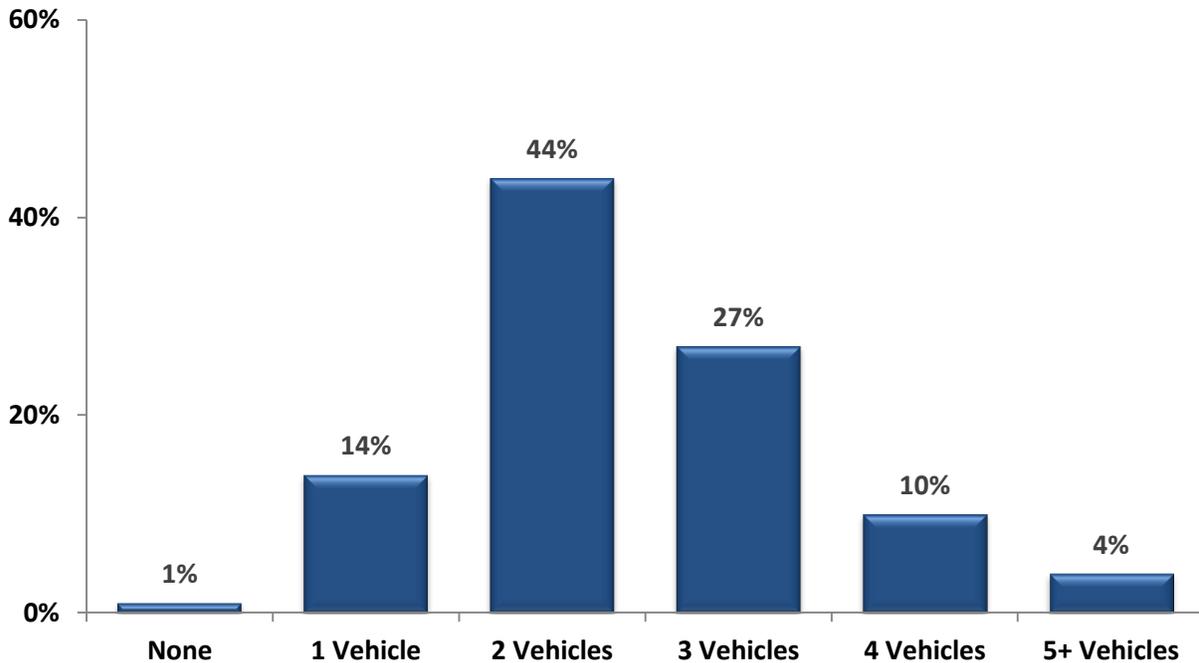
**TRANSPORTATION DEMOGRAPHICS**

**Figure 16: Do You Currently Have A Driver's License?**  
n=532



ACE riders are almost exclusively “choice riders” as measured by having a current, valid driver’s license at 96 percent.

**Figure 17: How Many Drivable Vehicles Are Available To Your Household?**  
n=531



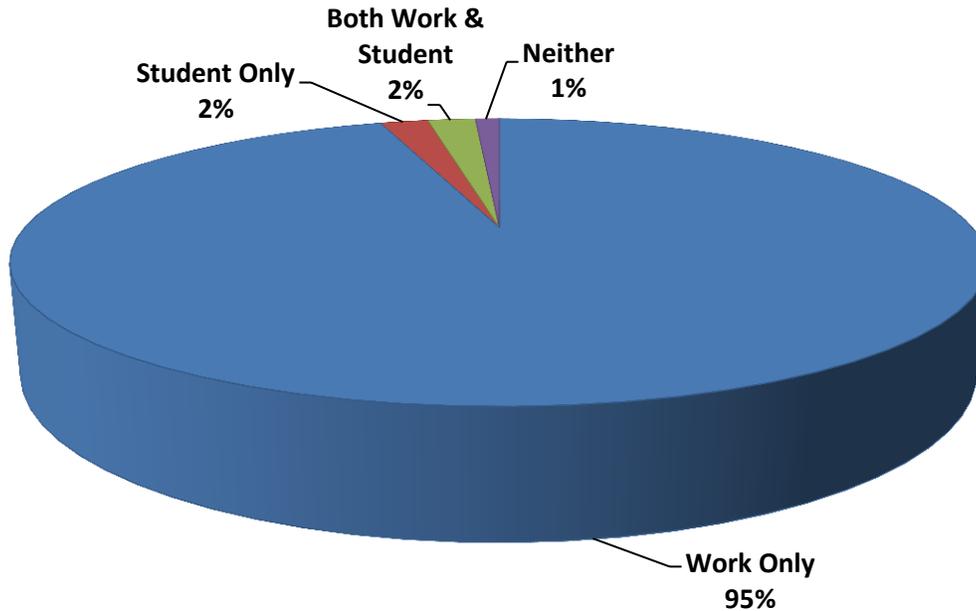
Consistent with almost all riders having a driver's license, almost all of riders (99%) have at least one drivable vehicle available to their household. Fourteen percent of riders have one drivable vehicle available, and 44 percent have two drivable vehicles in their household. As the number of vehicles increases beyond this, the percentage of riders declines from previous category (3 vehicles-27%, 4 vehicles-10%, and 5 or more-4%).

In general, vehicle availability increases with household income. For the under \$50,000 income category, seven percent have not vehicle available and the average number of vehicles is 1.9. Unemployed riders are less likely than employed riders to have a drivable vehicle available at 86 percent and 99 percent, respectively.

The overall average number of drivable vehicles per household is 2.4 vehicles.

## RIDER DEMOGRAPHICS

**Figure 18: Are You Currently Employed And/Or A Student?**  
n=509

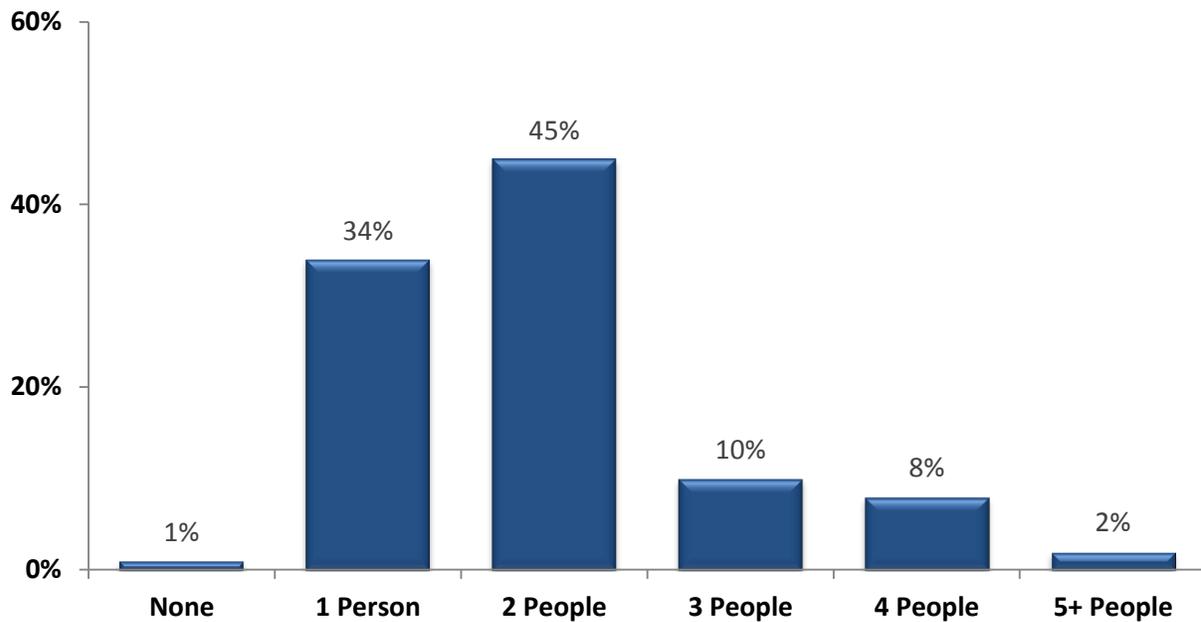


Nearly all ACE riders (99%) are either employed, students, or both. Riders who only work comprise the largest proportion of the population, accounting for 95 percent of all riders. Two percent of ACE riders are only students, and two percent are both employed and a student. Only one percent of riders are neither employed nor students.

As would be expected, riders under 20 years old are by far most likely to be students only at 76 percent, and also most likely to be both a student and work at 14 percent. This drops to five percent and eight percent respectively for riders in their 20's. Combining student-only and student-workers, this drops to five percent for riders in their 30's and one percent or less for all other age categories.

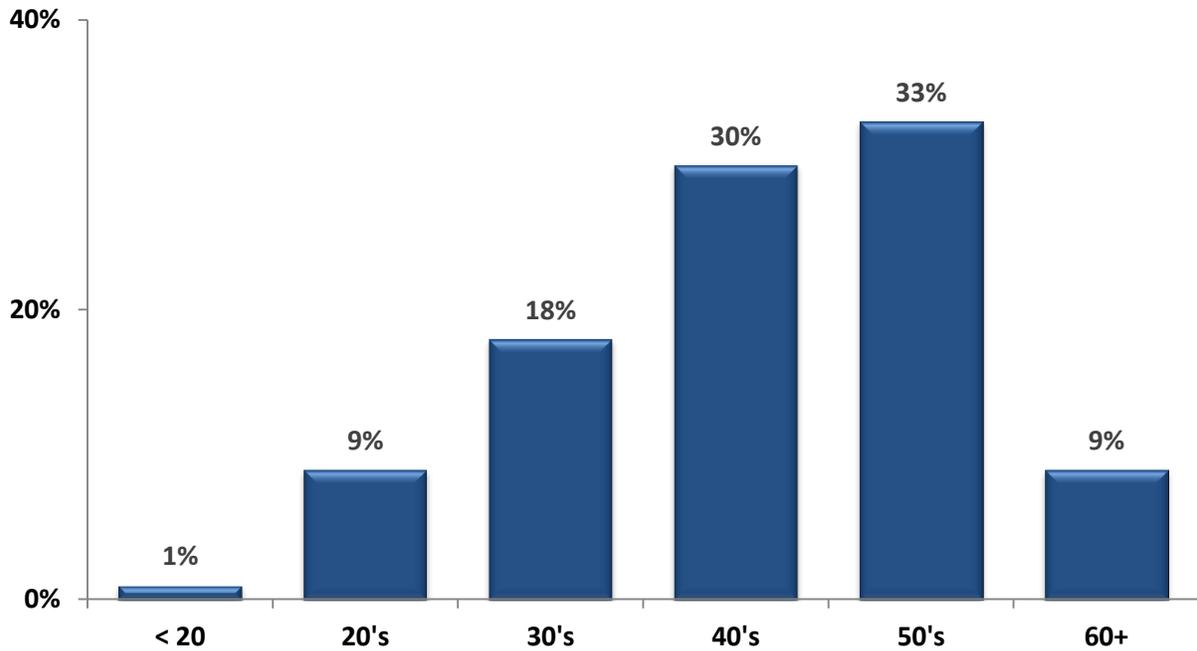
Also as expected, the proportion of riders who only work increases with each income level category starting at 92 percent for those with less than \$50,000, 93 percent for \$50,000 to \$74,999, 99 percent for \$75,000 to \$99,999, and 100 percent for \$100,000 and over. Conversely, the proportion of riders that neither work nor are students declines from a high of four percent for those with a household income of under \$50,000 to one percent for \$50,000 to \$74,999 and zero percent for those with incomes of \$75,000 or more.

**Figure 19: How Many People Are Employed In Your Household?**  
n=531



At 99 percent, almost all riders have at least one person employed in their household. A third (34%) of riders have a single full or part-time worker in their household, forty-five have two employed people in the household, and 20 percent have three or more workers in the household. The average number of employed persons per household is 2.0.

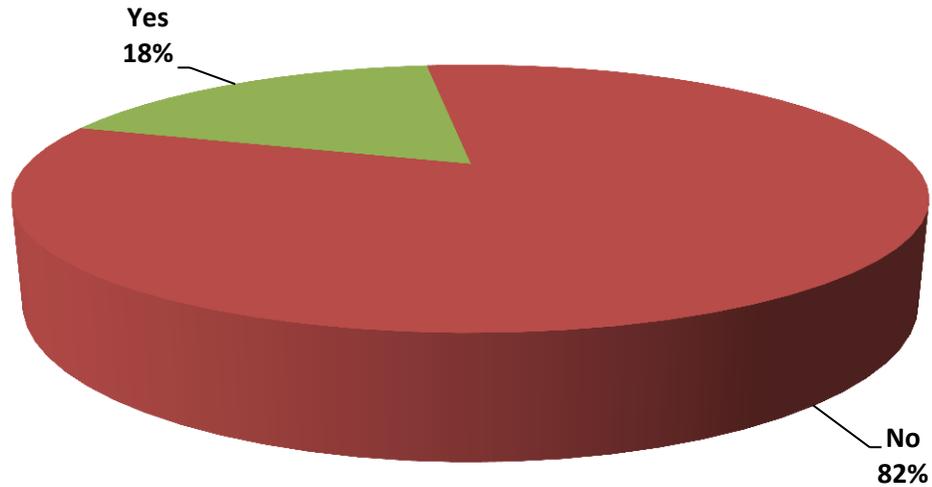
**Figure 20: What Is Your Age Category?**  
n=512



The highest percentage of ACE riders by age is 33 percent for riders in their 50's. This drops to nine percent for riders 60 or older, and declines for each decade younger than 50 to 30 percent for riders in their 40's, 18 percent for those in their 30's and 10 percent for those under 30. These percentages are in line with ACE's high proportion of working riders.

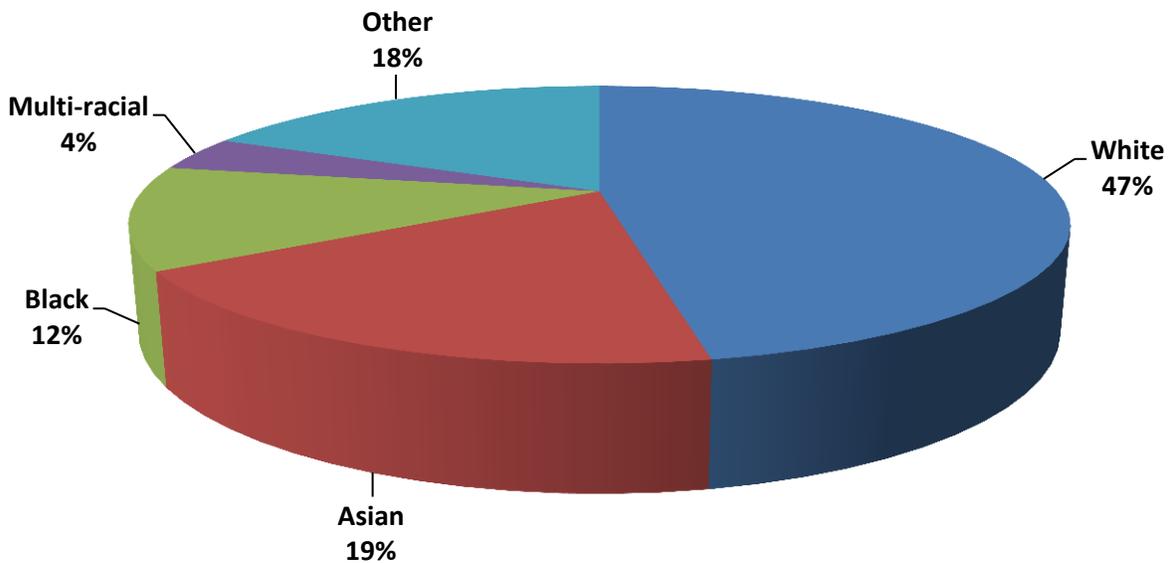
Hispanic riders tend to be younger than non-Hispanic riders with a higher proportion of Hispanic riders under 30 and a higher proportion of non-Hispanic riders 50 or older.

**Figure 21: Are You Hispanic, Latino Or Of Spanish Origin?**  
n=523



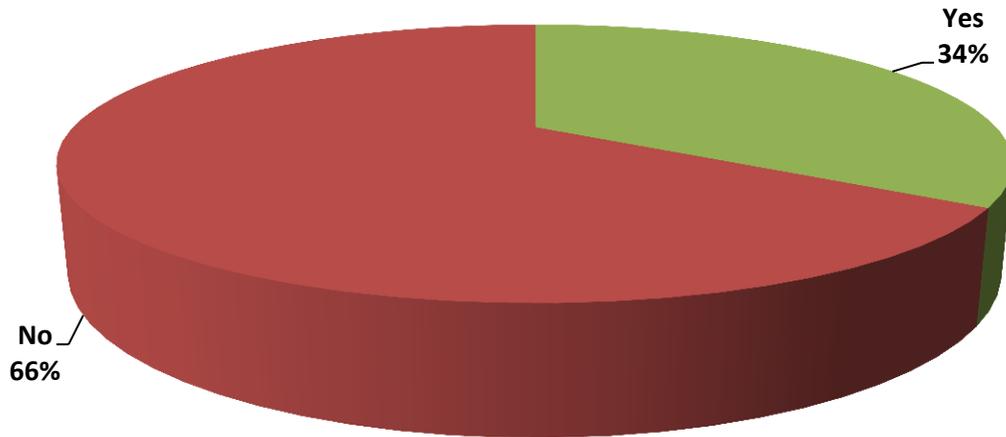
Eighteen percent of riders identify themselves as Hispanic, Latino, or of Spanish origin.

**Figure 22: Which Of The Following Do You Identify With?**  
n=531



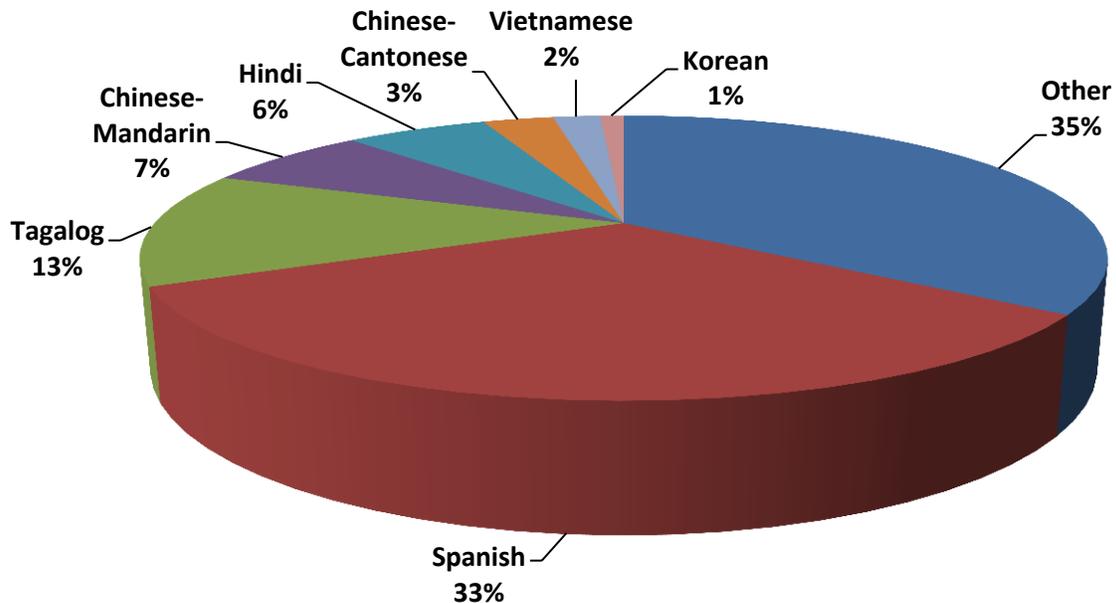
ACE riders were asked to select the U.S. Census race category with which they identify. The largest proportion of riders who selected a discrete listed category indicated they are White (47%). This is followed by Asian (19%), Black (12%), and Multiracial (4%). The remaining 18 percent selected “Other” which consists mainly of “Hispanic,” “Latino” or “Mexican.”

**Figure 23: Do You Speak A Language Other Than English At Home?**  
n=532



Approximately a third of ACE riders (34%) speak a language other than English at home. Speaking another language at home is more prevalent for riders under 40 (40%) than older riders (31%). Speaking a language other than English at home is also significantly higher for Hispanic (57%) and Asian riders (81%).

**Figure 24: What Language Other Than English Do You Speak At Home?  
(Only Respondents Who Speak A Language Other Than English At Home)  
n=175**



Spanish is spoken by 33 percent of riders who speak a language other than English at home. Tagalog is the second most frequently spoken language for ACE riders at 13 percent. This is followed by Mandarin Chinese (7%), Hindi (6%), and Cantonese Chinese (3%). Although, 35 percent of rider that speak a language other than English at home speak some other language than those listed, no single language was listed by more than three percent.

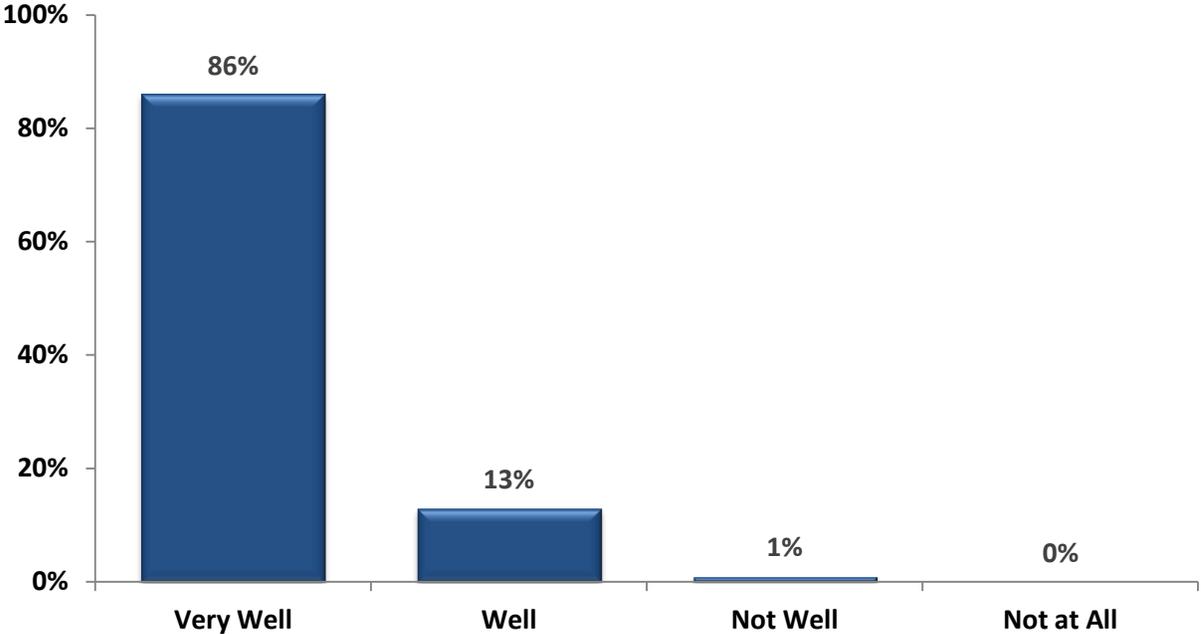
It is useful to convert the language percentages from those who speak another language at home to the actual number of unique riders that speak another language at home. This is accomplished by first dividing the raw number for each language by the total number of boardings to obtain the percentage of all boardings. Furthermore, since almost all riders ride round-trip, the obtained result is divided by two to secure the actual number of unique riders.

Based on these calculations the results are presented in three ways: (i) as the percentage of all boardings, (ii) as the actual number of boardings, and (iii) as the estimated number of unique riders (boardings divided by two).

**Figure 25: Languages Other Than English Spoken At Home**

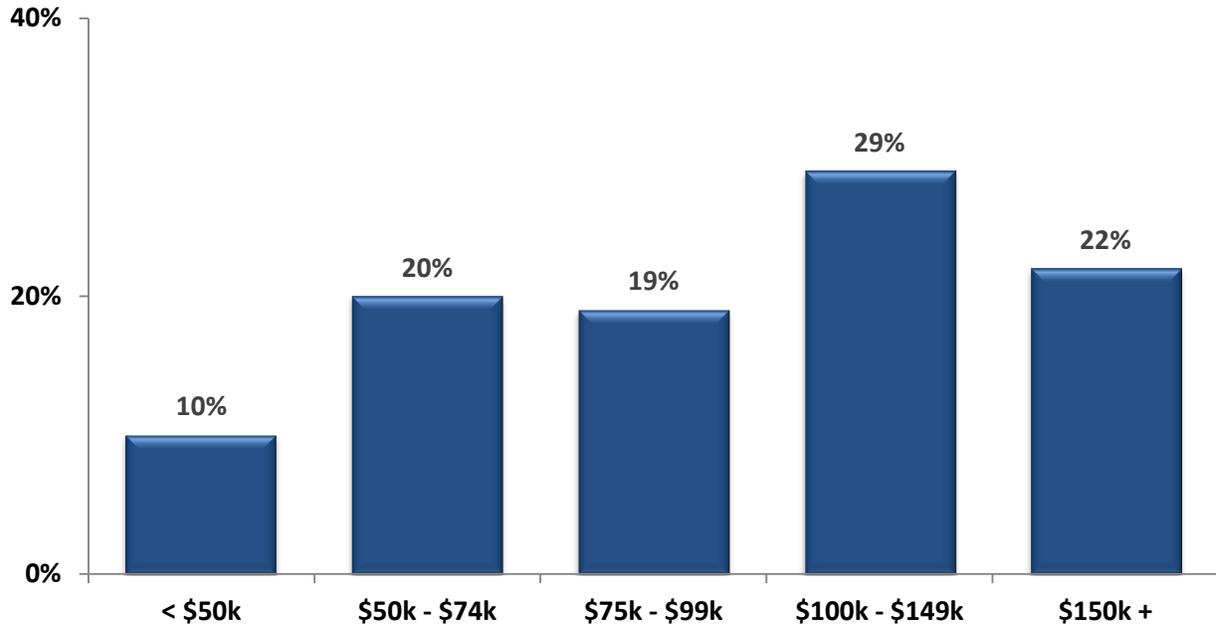
Language	% of Boardings	Boardings	Riders
Spanish	11%	944	472
Tagalog	4%	358	179
Chinese-Mandarin	2%	202	101
Hindi	2%	160	80
Chinese-Cantonese	1%	86	43
Vietnamese	1%	58	29
Korean	0%	34	17

**Figure 26: How Well Would You Say You Speak English?  
(Riders That Speak A Language Other Than English At Home)  
n=175**



For the ACE riders who speak a language other than English at home, the vast majority (86%) indicate that they speak English “Very Well,” and 13 percent indicate that they speak it “Well.” Only one percent of riders that speak another language at home indicate that they speak it “Not Well,” and zero percent say “Not at All.” In summary, although about a third of ACE riders speak a language other than English at home, less than one percent do not speak English at least “Well.”

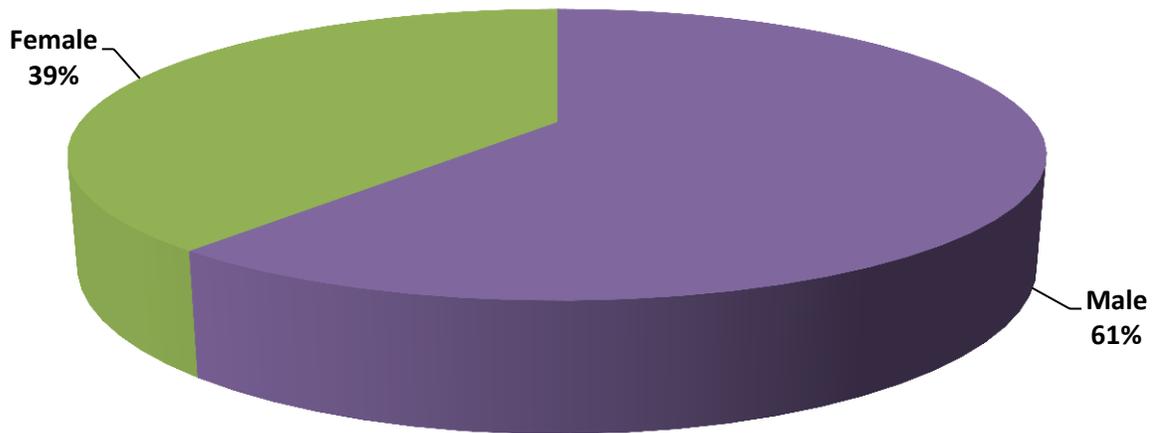
**Figure 27: What Is Your Total Household Income?**  
n=470



Household income for ACE riders reflects the relative affluence of the community served with a majority (70%) earning \$75,000 or more per year. This figure breaks down into 19 percent of riders who earn \$75,000 to \$99,999, 29 percent of those who earn \$100,000 to \$149,999, and 22 percent with \$150,000 or above. Riders whose household income is lower than the district-designated income threshold (\$75,000) account for 30 percent of the total ridership.

The proportion of riders with total household incomes below \$75,000 is higher among Hispanics (56%) than Non-Hispanics (24%). The proportion of riders with incomes under \$75,000 is also higher for riders without a driver's license (56%) than those with a license (29%), for riders who are unemployed (84%) than those who are employed (29%), and for riders who are students (75%) than those who are not students (29%).

**Figure 28: Gender**  
**n=532**



ACE ridership has more male (61%) than female (39%) riders.