

Vashon Alternative Services

Phase 1 Outreach – Mobility Needs Assessment

Summary of what we heard

November 16 to December 9, 2015

Overview

Our primary goal for this phase of outreach was to engage existing and future riders in sharing:

- How they are using public transportation today and how it's working for them
- If they are not using public transportation, why
- Identify what's most important in terms of public transportation on the island – places served and design features
- General awareness and/or experience of existing alternative service options.

This document summarizes our key activities for this outreach period and the results of the online and paper surveys we received. See the attached “Face to Face Survey Results” for a description of key themes we identified from these conversations.

Notifications—how we let people know they could participate

- **Transit alerts sent to route subscribers:** Email or text message was delivered to approximately 2,319 subscribers to routes 118 and 119. The message had an open rate of 15 percent and a click rate of 4 percent.
- **Rack cards:** 800 rack cards were printed and distributed to riders via the timetable racks aboard routes 118 and 119 buses, handed out to working group members for on-island distribution, and handed out by Metro staff doing on-board and face-to-face surveying.
- **Media coverage**—The Vashon-Maury Island Beachcomber ran two stories (September 9 and November 18) about the project, with the second focusing on the survey and providing an online link to it.
- **Working group activities**—Members connected with friends, family, neighbors, and professional/volunteer contacts to spread the word that the survey was open.
- **Ferry announcements**—King County Water Taxi made a captain's announcement on the Vashon route about the survey and directed passengers to pick up rack cards.

Feedback methods—how people shared their opinions

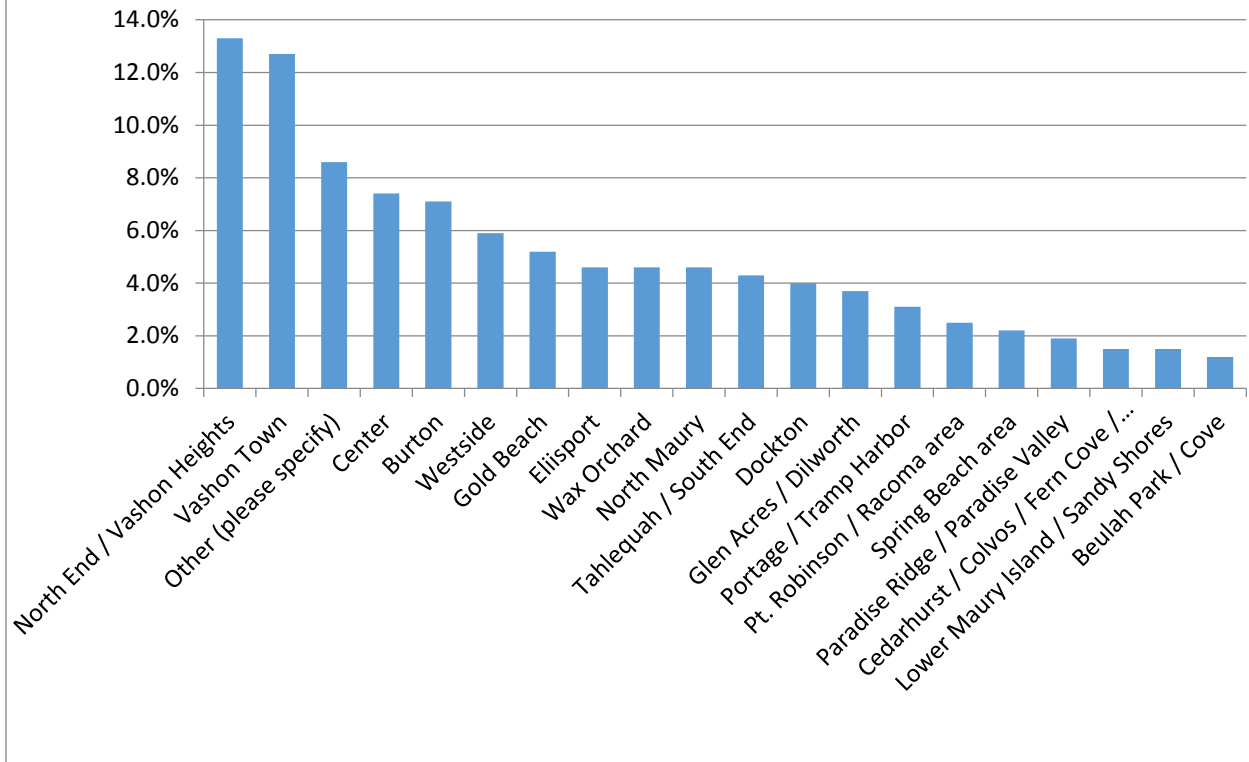
- **Online survey**—311 people completed the online survey
- **Paper survey** – 17 people completed paper surveys that were received by Metro staff, including people who use the senior center and food bank
- **Onboard conversations with riders**—Metro staff rode routes 118 and 119
- **Other face-to-face conversations**—Metro staff spoke with riders at the ferry docks

Who we heard from in the online survey

We asked survey respondents to indicate what part of the island they live in using community or neighborhood names. The following table indicates how respondents answered this question from largest percent to smallest percent. It includes answers people wrote in if they marked “Other (please specify).”

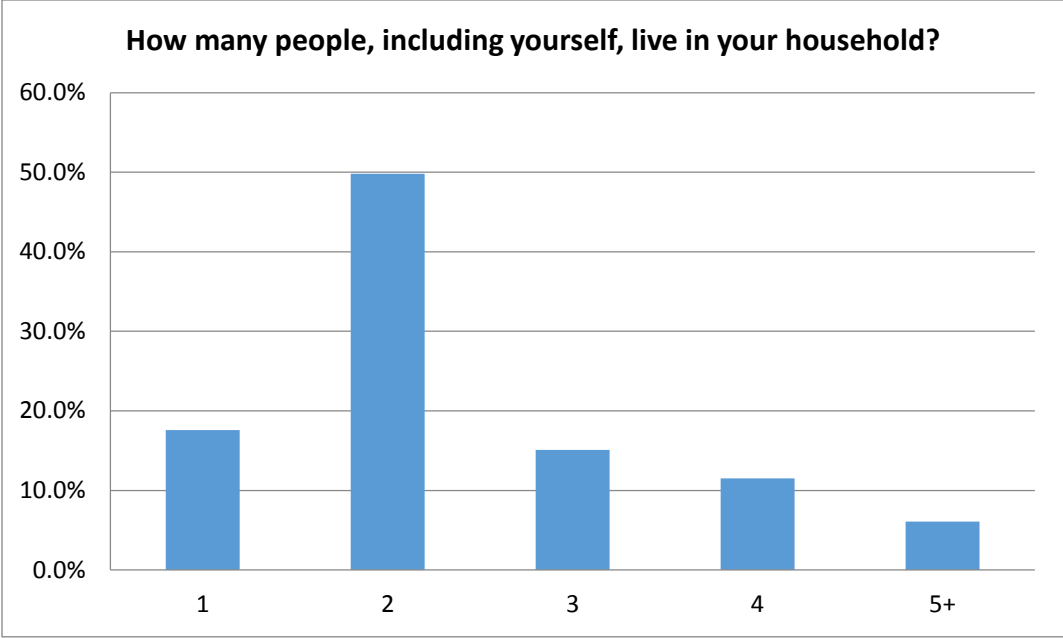
What part of the island do you live on?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
North End / Vashon Heights	13.3%	43
Vashon Town	12.7%	41
Other (please specify)	8.6%	28
Center	7.4%	24
Burton	7.1%	23
Westside	5.9%	19
Gold Beach	5.2%	17
Ellisport	4.6%	15
Wax Orchard	4.6%	15
North Maury	4.6%	15
Tahlequah / South End	4.3%	14
Dockton	4.0%	13
Glen Acres / Dilworth	3.7%	12
Portage / Tramp Harbor	3.1%	10
Pt. Robinson / Racoma area	2.5%	8
Spring Beach area	2.2%	7
Paradise Ridge / Paradise Valley	1.9%	6
Cedarhurst / Colvos / Fern Cove / Bethel Park	1.5%	5
Lower Maury Island / Sandy Shores	1.5%	5
Beulah Park / Cove	1.2%	4
	<i>answered question</i>	324
	<i>skipped question</i>	0

What part of the island do you live on?



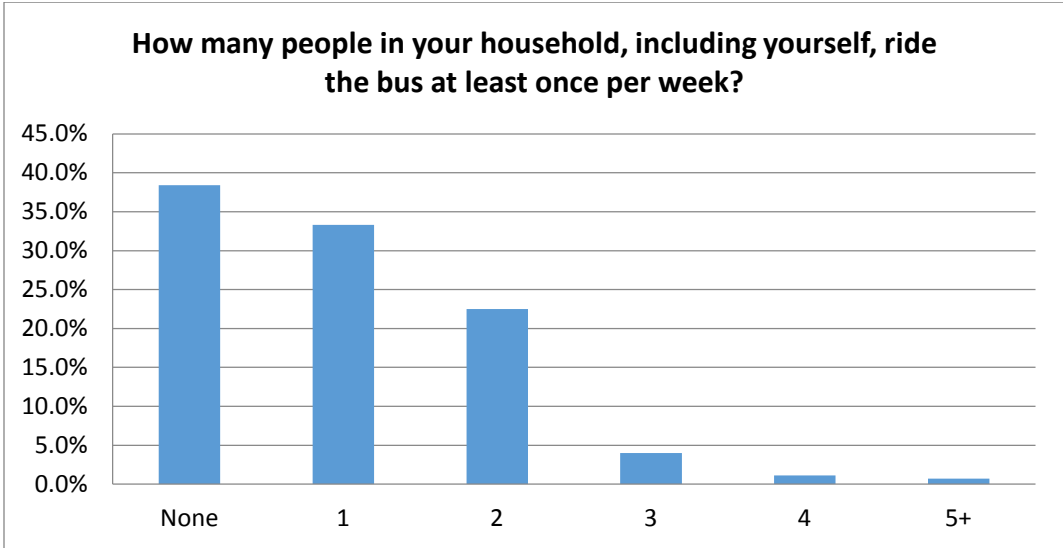
We asked how many people live in their household and then how many use transit.

How many people, including yourself, live in your household?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
1	17.6%	49
2	49.8%	139
3	15.1%	42
4	11.5%	32
5 or more	6.1%	17
answered question		279
skipped question		45



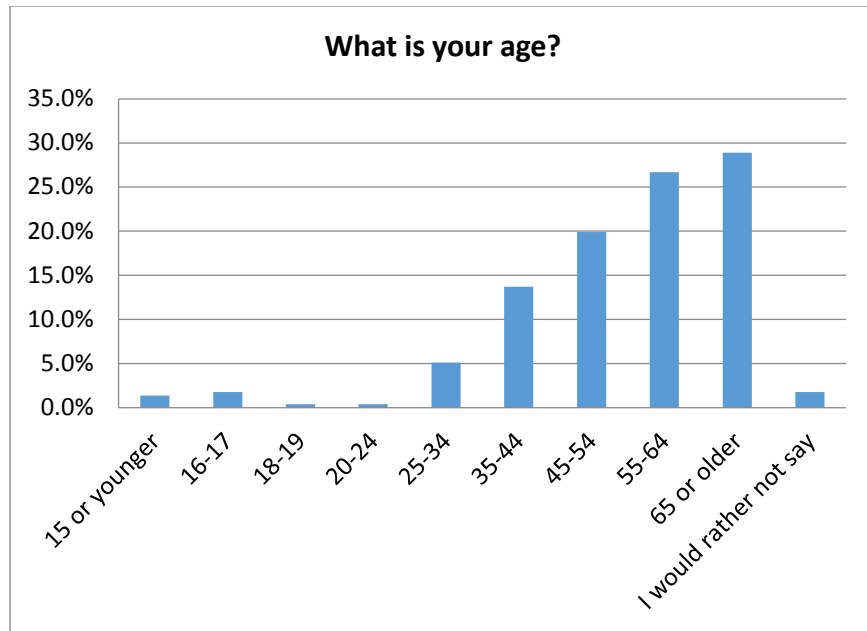
How many people in your household, including yourself, ride the bus at least once per week?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
None	38.4%	106
1	33.3%	92
2	22.5%	62
3	4.0%	11
4	1.1%	3
5 or more	0.7%	2
answered question		276
skipped question		48

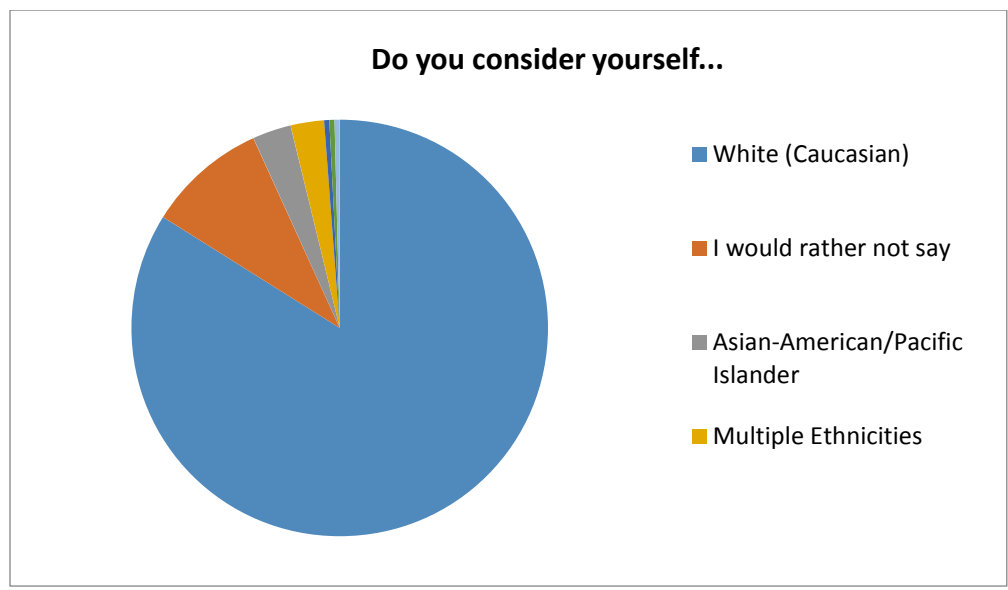


We asked people about their age, race and household income.

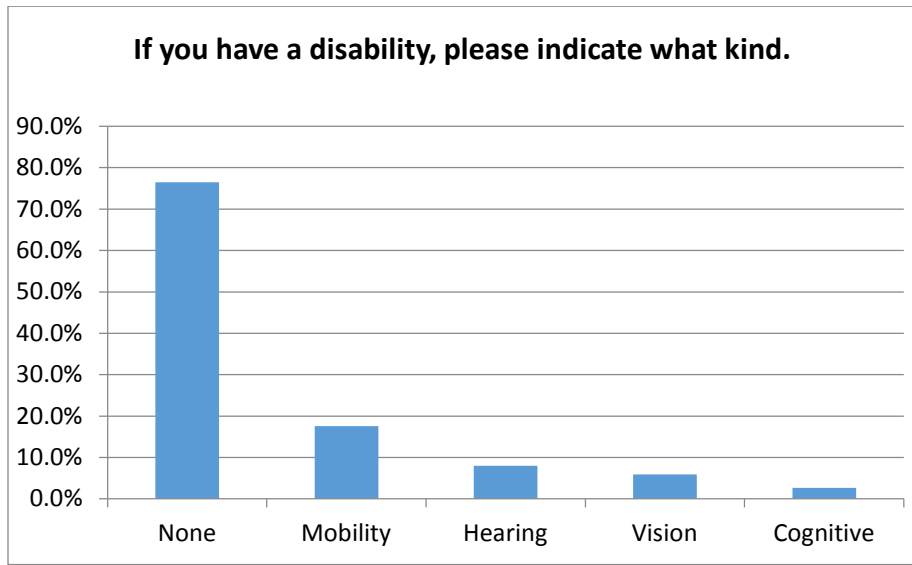
What is your age?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
15 or younger	1.4%	4
16-17	1.8%	5
18-19	0.4%	1
20-24	0.4%	1
25-34	5.1%	14
35-44	13.7%	38
45-54	19.9%	55
55-64	26.7%	74
65 or older	28.9%	80
I would rather not say	1.8%	5
answered question		277
skipped question		47



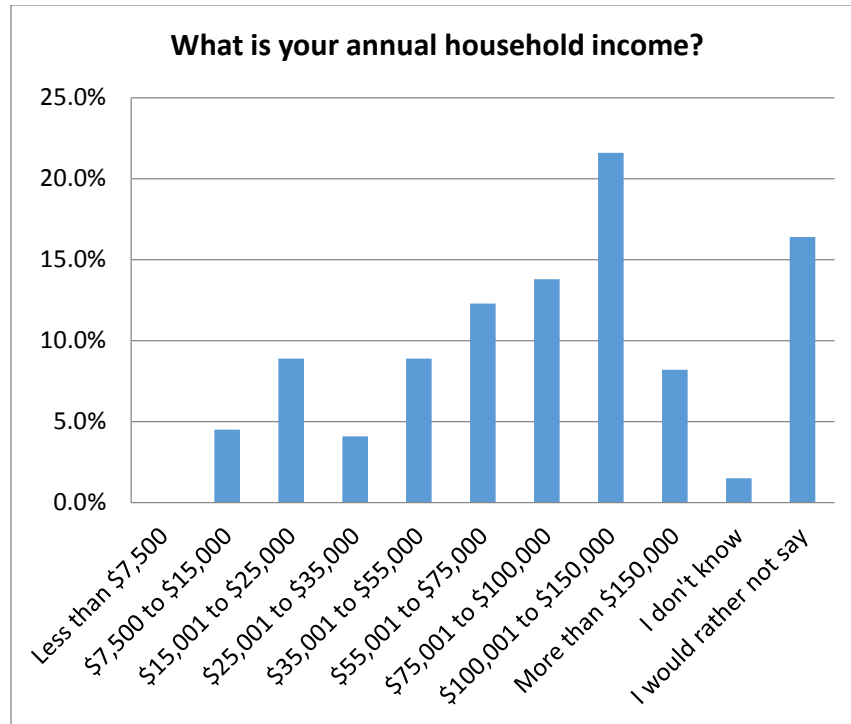
Do you consider yourself...?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
White (Caucasian)	84.0%	225
I would rather not say	9.3%	25
Asian-American/Pacific Islander	3.0%	8
Multiple Ethnicities	2.6%	7
African-American	0.4%	1
American Indian/Alaska Native	0.4%	1
Hispanic (Mexican, Mexican American, Chicano or Latino)	0.4%	1
Other (please specify)	2	2
answered question		268
skipped question		56



If you have a disability, please indicate what kind. (check all that apply)		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
None	76.5%	143
Mobility	17.6%	33
Hearing	8.0%	15
Vision	5.9%	11
Cognitive	2.7%	5
Other (please specify)	15	15
answered question		187
skipped question		137



What is your annual household income?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Less than \$7,500	0.0%	0
\$7,500 to \$15,000	4.5%	12
\$15,001 to \$25,000	8.9%	24
\$25,001 to \$35,000	4.1%	11
\$35,001 to \$55,000	8.9%	24
\$55,001 to \$75,000	12.3%	33
\$75,001 to \$100,000	13.8%	37
\$100,001 to \$150,000	21.6%	58
More than \$150,000	8.2%	22
I don't know	1.5%	4
I would rather not say	16.4%	44
answered question		269
skipped question		55



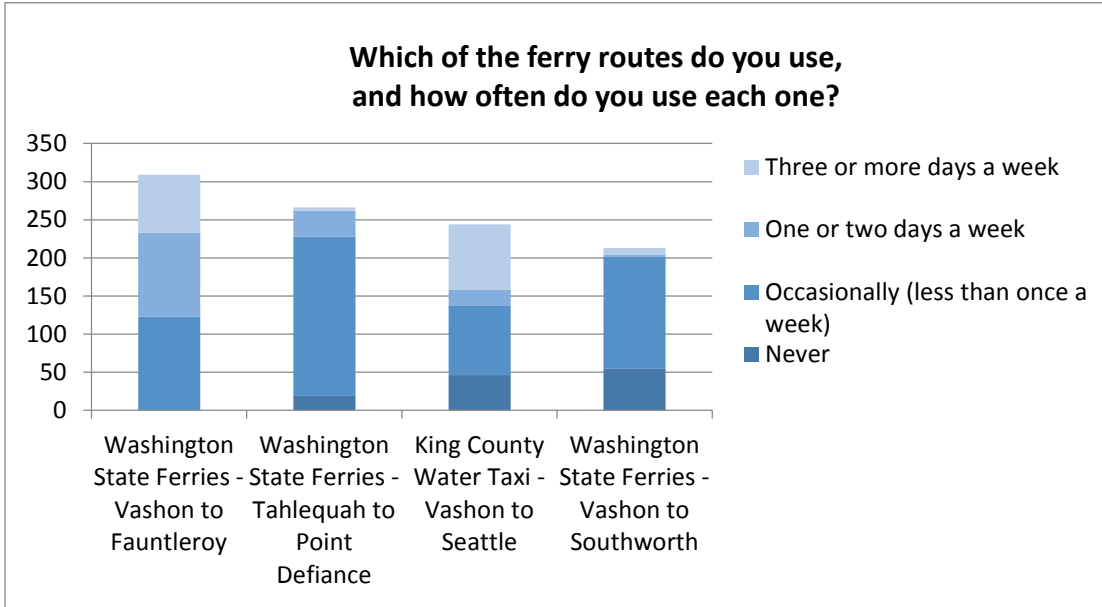
We asked a set of questions about the way people use the transportation system today.

What we heard about Vashon transportation

We asked survey respondents a series of questions about what’s working and what’s not working with Vashon transportation today. Most questions were multiple choice, but a few had open-ended responses where we’ve highlighted the most common responses.

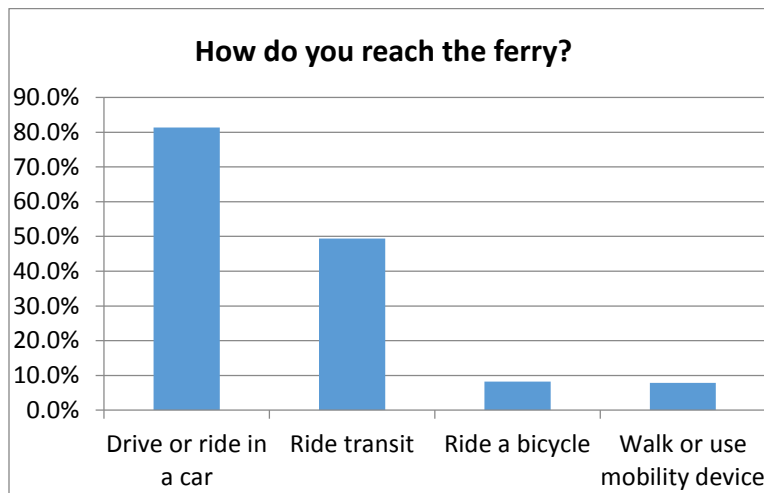
Ferries

Which of the ferry routes do you use, and how often do you use each one?					
Answer Options	Three or more days a week	One or two days a week	Occasionally (less than once a week)	Never	Response Count
Washington State Ferries - Vashon to Fautleroy	76	110	123	0	309
Washington State Ferries - Tahlequah to Point Defiance	4	34	209	19	266
King County Water Taxi - Vashon to Seattle	86	21	91	46	244
Washington State Ferries - Vashon to Southworth	9	2	147	55	213
<i>answered question</i>					324



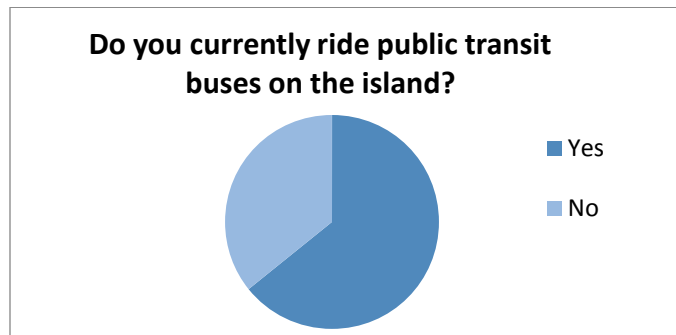
How do you reach the ferry?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Drive or ride in a car	81.4%	259
Ride transit	49.4%	157
Ride a bicycle	8.2%	26
Walk or use mobility device	7.9%	25
Other	24	24
answered question		318
skipped question		6



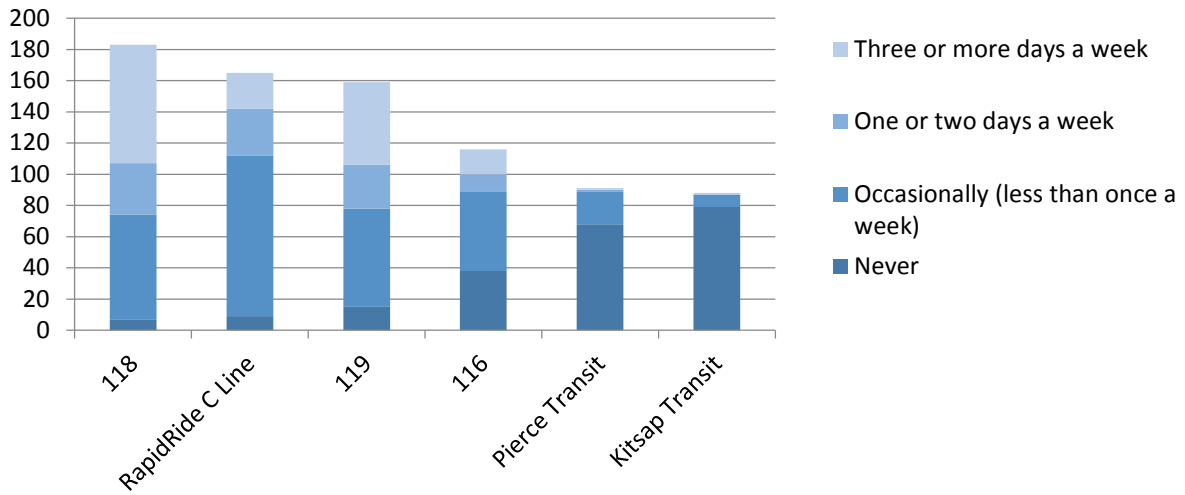
Public transit

Do you currently ride public transit buses on the island?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	64.2%	208
No	35.8%	116
<i>answered question</i>		324
<i>skipped question</i>		0

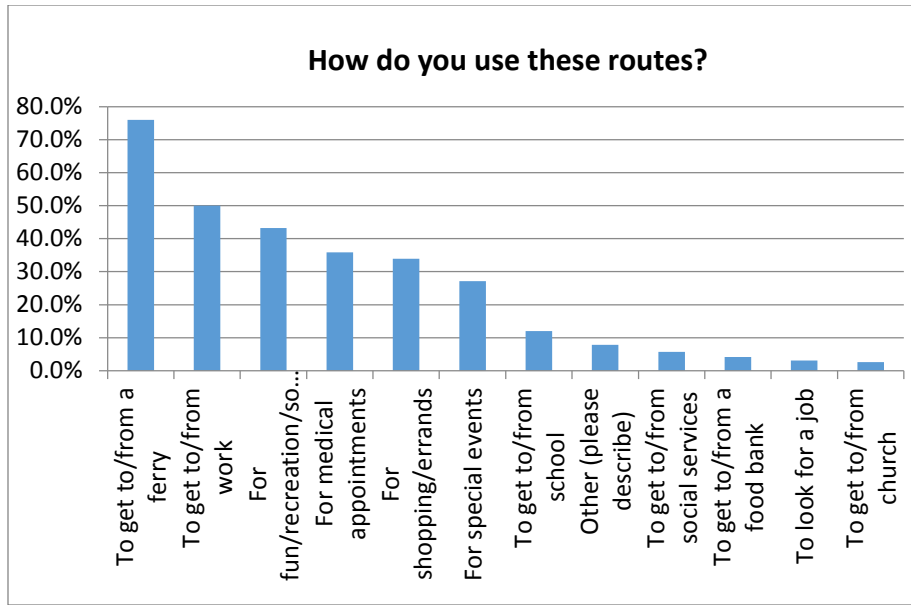


Which of the following Metro transit routes do you ride, and how often do you ride each one?					
Answer Options	Three or more days a week	One or two days a week	Occasionally (less than once a week)	Never	Response Count
118	76	33	67	7	183
RapidRide C Line	23	30	103	9	165
119	53	28	63	15	159
116	16	11	51	38	116
Pierce Transit	1	1	21	68	91
Kitsap Transit	1	0	8	79	88
<i>answered question</i>					195
<i>skipped question</i>					129

Which of the following Metro transit routes do you ride, and how often do you ride each one?



How do you use these routes? (check all that apply)		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
To get to/from a ferry	76.0%	146
To get to/from work	50.0%	96
For fun/recreation/social activities	43.2%	83
For medical appointments	35.9%	69
For shopping/errands	33.9%	65
For special events	27.1%	52
To get to/from school	12.0%	23
Other (please describe)	7.8%	15
To get to/from social services	5.7%	11
To get to/from a food bank	4.2%	8
To look for a job	3.1%	6
To get to/from church	2.6%	5
answered question		192
skipped question		132



Selected comments:

- We take the C-Line when the water taxi is down (very infrequently) or I/we are in town later during the week or on the weekend and catch the State Ferry to the island. We try to take public transport when possible as a car is and continues to be a hassle downtown.
- Mostly my bus excursions are into Seattle. I would take a shuttle if it were available and affordable.
- To get to/from the airport
- Ride bike mostly, occasionally I'll ride the bus for a portion of my biking route.

What are the most common destinations you get to using these routes?

178 participants answered this question, with the top three choices for destination 1 being:

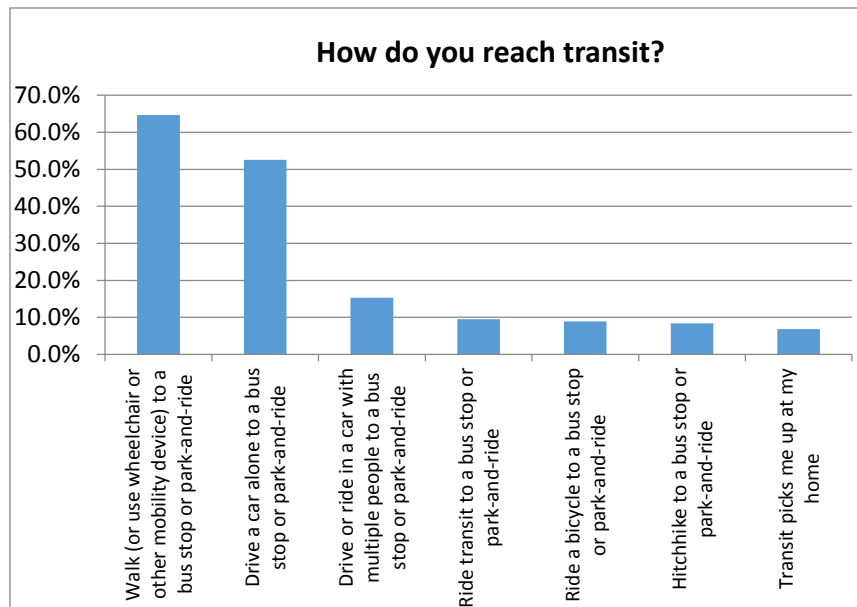
- Downtown Seattle;
- Vashon Ferry Terminal;
- Vashon Town.

The next set of common destinations was:

- Pioneer Square in Seattle;
- First Hill in Seattle;
- South Lake Union in Seattle.

How do you reach transit?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
If you connect with the bus at a park-and-ride, which park-and-ride do you use?	54	54
Walk (or use wheelchair or other mobility device) to a bus stop or park-and-ride	64.7%	123
Drive a car alone to a bus stop or park-and-ride	52.6%	100
Drive or ride in a car with multiple people to a bus stop or park-and-ride	15.3%	29
Ride transit to a bus stop or park-and-ride	9.5%	18
Ride a bicycle to a bus stop or park-and-ride	8.9%	17
Hitchhike to a bus stop or park-and-ride	8.4%	16
Transit picks me up at my home	6.8%	13
answered question		190
skipped question		134



Do you need a lift or ramp when using public transportation?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	4.7%	9
No	95.3%	181
If yes, please describe your mobility needs.		6
answered question		190
skipped question		134

Generally, how satisfied are you with the transit routes you use?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Very satisfied	24.5%	47
Somewhat satisfied	46.4%	89
Somewhat dissatisfied	21.4%	41
Very dissatisfied	7.8%	15
Why?		150
answered question		192
skipped question		132

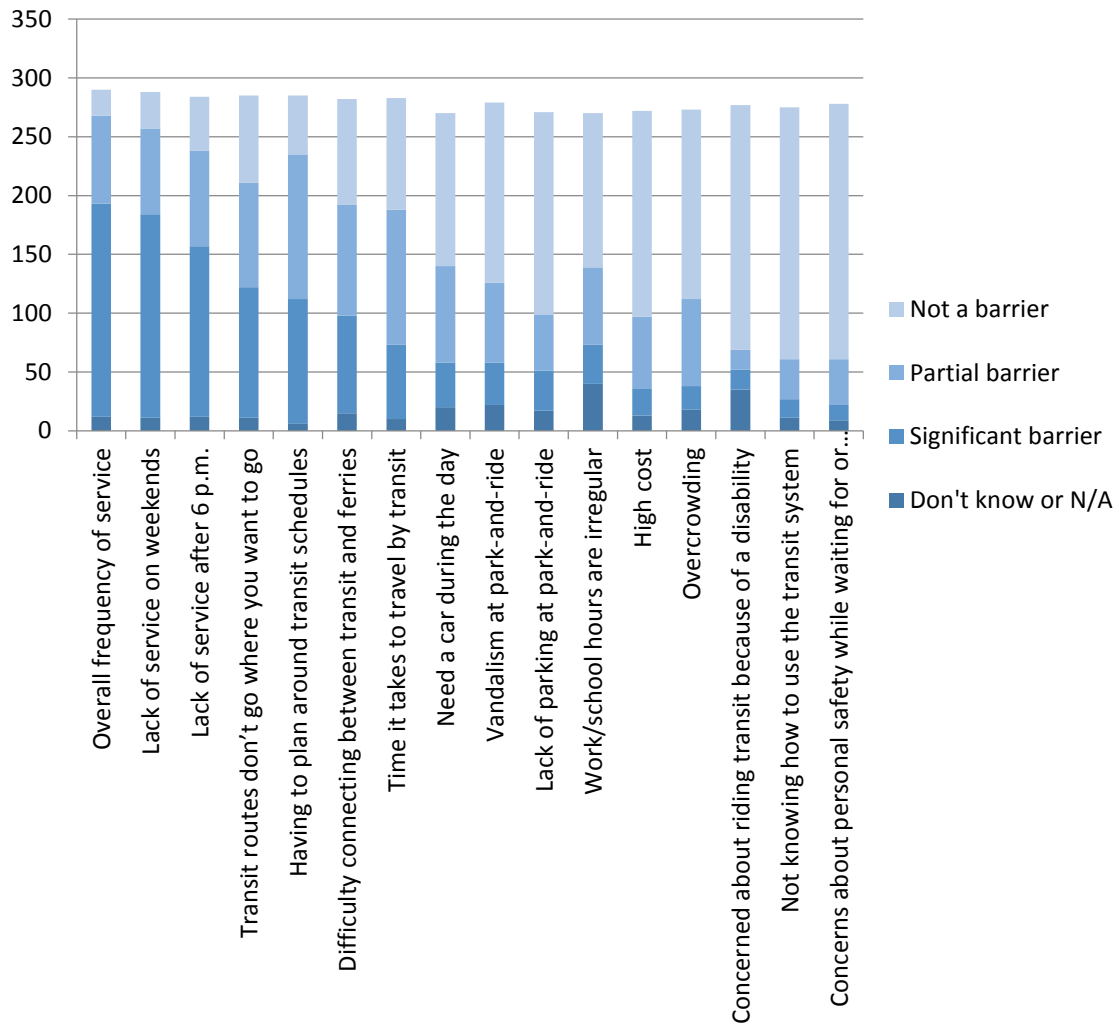
Selected comments:

- Once I am off-island, they're great. But on-island the routes and schedules aren't useful to me.
- Not enough buses per hour which makes the service less than useful if you need transportation during off hours, or on the weekend.
- Very limited service to Gold Beach area, and only a few 119s even go to Gold Beach at all and a lot of people live out there. It's hard to even find a real bus stop to wait at, plus there is no weekend service and if you miss a certain ferry you're totally screwed if you are relying on the bus!
- Would like more bus runs on the weekend and the evening
- On the island they are not frequent enough and need to run on Sunday. Going to work in the am is very simple. Returning to Fauntleroy by bus from Sodo is a nightmare. Would use the water taxi more if it ran all day and on weekends like the West Seattle boat. At any rate, more frequent runs on island and a more efficient route from Sodo back to Fauntleroy needed.
- Routes are great, but more often than not there is not a bus at the time I need it. I would use it way more often if it ran more frequently. For example, the last 3 times I've come back from Seattle on the ferry, there was no bus running to the south end of the island for over an hour so I had someone pick me up. Likewise, I never take the bus into town to run errands. However, I would if it ran more frequently and was more convenient that way. When I can catch a bus, it works great. A regular schedule you could rely on, say on the hour, would be great!
- I wish I could get to the HWY without a car.
- Nice drivers...nice passengers.
- More frequent buses need mid-day and after 8 pm from ferry to town.
- Bus too crowded
- Very satisfied with the route and generally wonderful Vashon drivers. Dissatisfied with the very limited numbers of non-commute-hour runs especially on weekends and in the evening although mid-day is also a problem.
- Need to drive to get to public transit. Seems to defeat the purpose.
- Because I live on Vashon Hwy SW and the Metro System is convenient for me.
- There needs to be daily service including nights and weekends. Need one bus per ferry running nights and weekends.

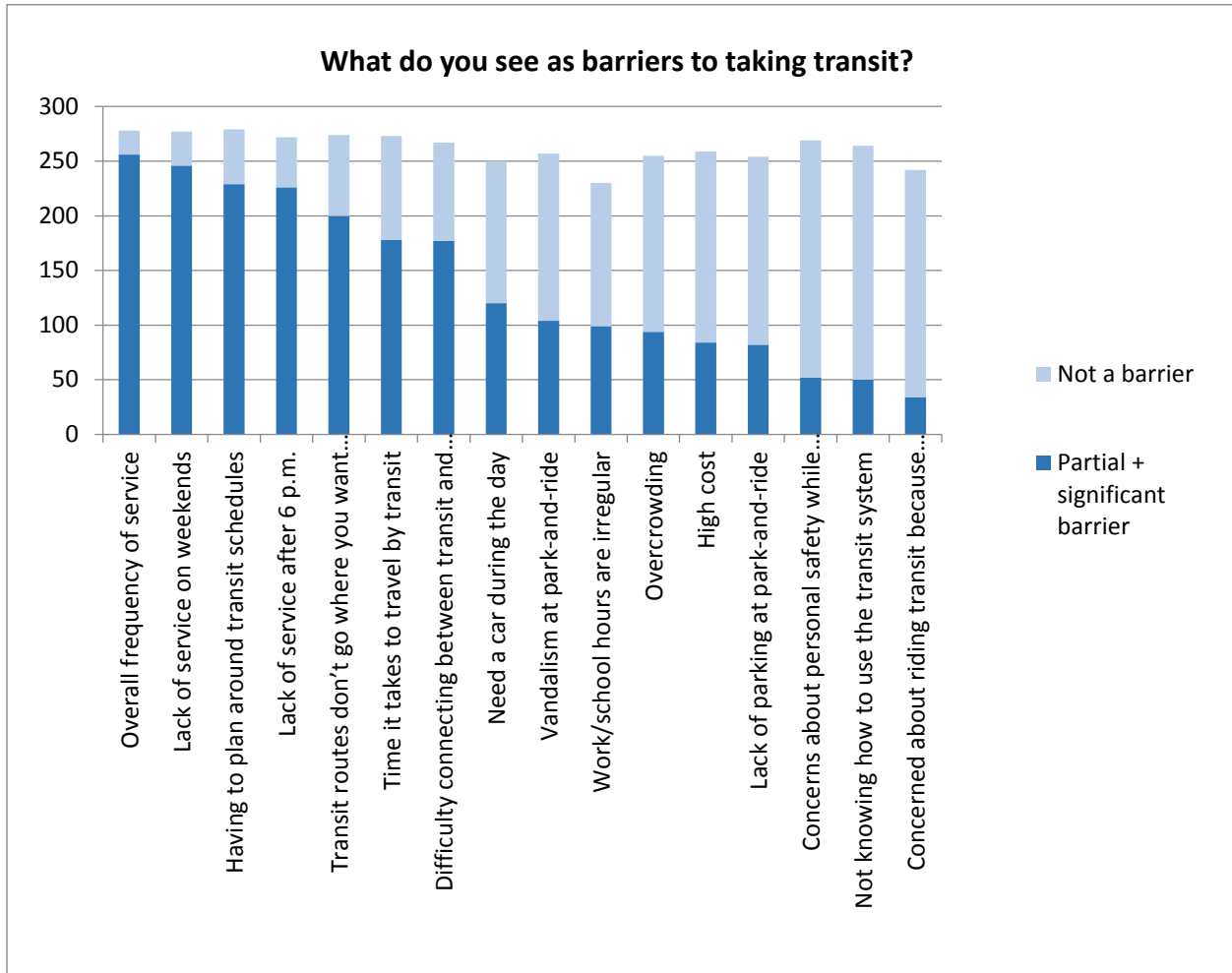
What do you see as barriers to taking transit?

Answer Options	Answer Options	Not a barrier	Partial barrier	Significant barrier	Don't know or N/A	Response Count
Overall frequency of service		22	75	181	12	290
Lack of service on weekends		31	73	173	11	288
Lack of service after 6 p.m.		46	81	145	12	284
Transit routes don't go where you want to go		74	89	111	11	285
Having to plan around transit schedules		50	123	106	6	285
Difficulty connecting between transit and ferries		90	94	83	15	282
Time it takes to travel by transit		95	115	63	10	283
Need a car during the day		130	82	38	20	270
Vandalism at park-and-ride		153	68	36	22	279
Lack of parking at park-and-ride		172	48	34	17	271
Work/school hours are irregular		131	66	33	40	270
High cost		175	61	23	13	272
Overcrowding		161	74	20	18	273
Concerned about riding transit because of a disability		208	17	17	35	277
Not knowing how to use the transit system		214	34	16	11	275
Concerns about personal safety while waiting for or riding transit		217	39	13	9	278
Other (please specify)		Other (please specify)	Other (please specify)	Other (please specify)	51	51
					<i>answered question</i>	301
					<i>skipped question</i>	23

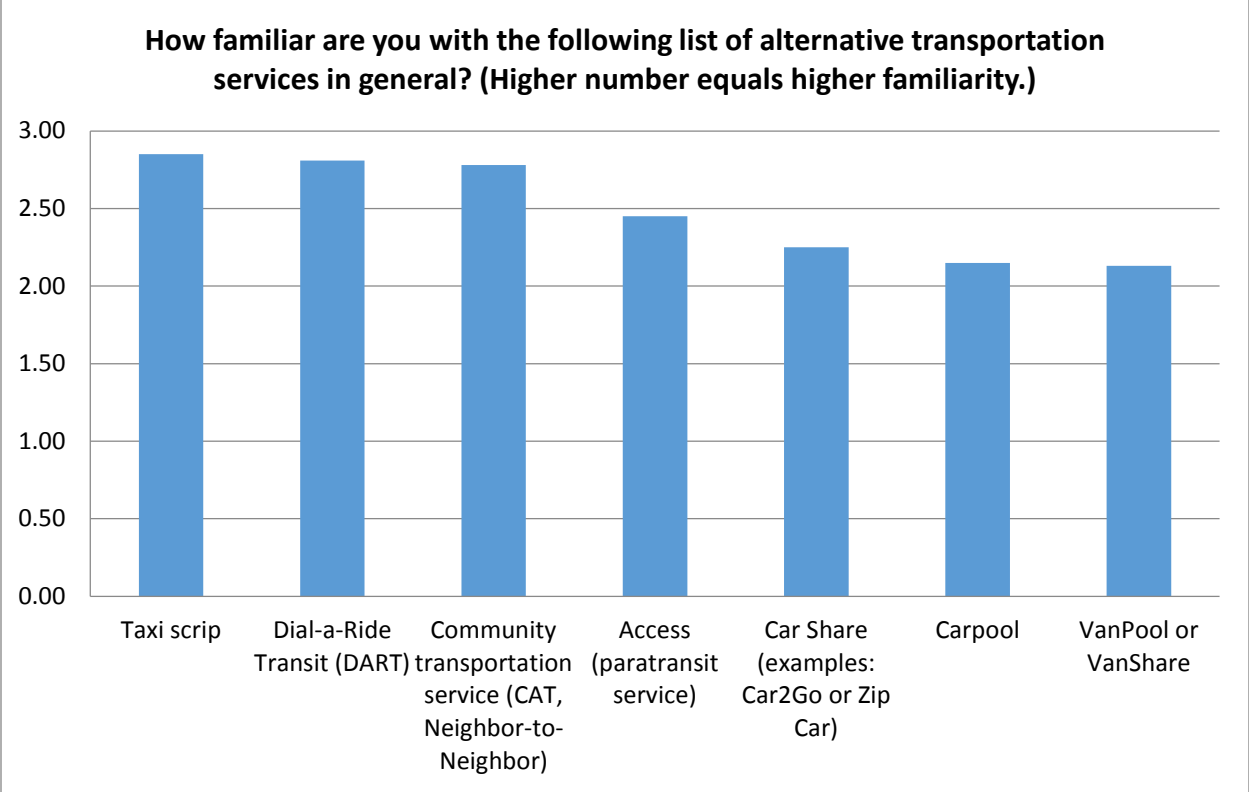
What do you see as barriers to taking transit?



Here's a second way of visualizing the answers to this question. In the chart below, the "Don't know or N/A" answer has been removed and the "Partial barrier" and "Significant barrier" answers have been combined. This view shows the number of people who said the choice was a barrier and the number who said it wasn't.

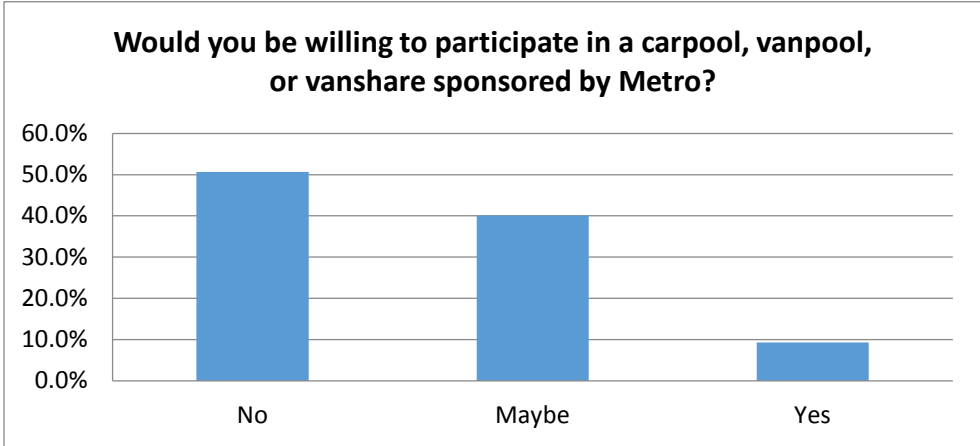


How familiar are you with the following list of alternative transportation services in general?					
Answer Options	Very familiar	Somewhat familiar	Not familiar	Rating Average	Response Count
Taxi scrip	6	34	257	2.85	297
Dial-a-Ride Transit (DART)	7	42	249	2.81	298
Community transportation service (CAT, Neighbor-to-Neighbor)	14	39	246	2.78	299
Access (paratransit service)	29	107	163	2.45	299
Car Share (examples: Car2Go or Zip Car)	46	131	120	2.25	297
Carpool	58	136	103	2.15	297
VanPool or VanShare	55	148	94	2.13	297
answered question					301
skipped question					23



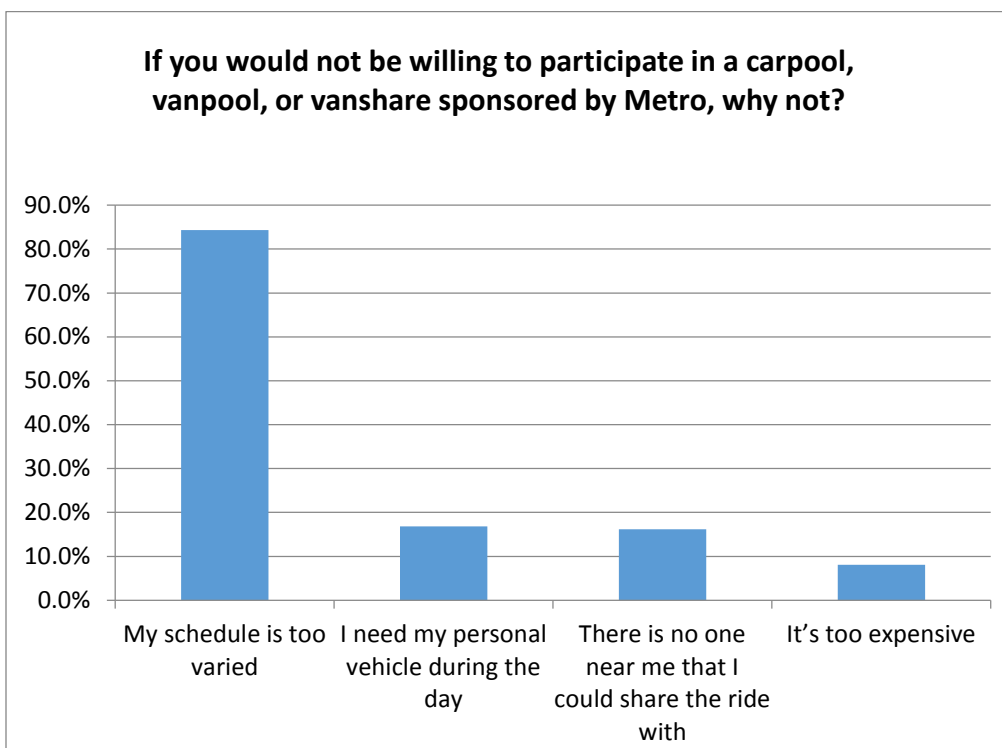
Would you be willing to participate in a carpool, vanpool, or vanshipare sponsored by Metro?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
No	50.7%	153
Maybe	40.1%	121
Yes	9.3%	28
<i>answered question</i>		302
<i>skipped question</i>		22



If you would not be willing to participate in a carpool, vanpool, or vanshare sponsored by Metro, please tell us why. (check all that apply)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
My schedule is too varied	84.3%	156
I need my personal vehicle during the day	16.8%	31
There is no one near me that I could share the ride with	16.2%	30
It's too expensive	8.1%	15
Other (please specify)	83	83
answered question		185
skipped question		139



Where would you like to go on public transportation that you can't go now?

166 participants answered this question, with the top four choices for destination 1 being:

- Vashon Westside;
- Vashon Town;
- SeaTac Airport;
- Sunrise Ridge.

The next set of destinations by popularity was:

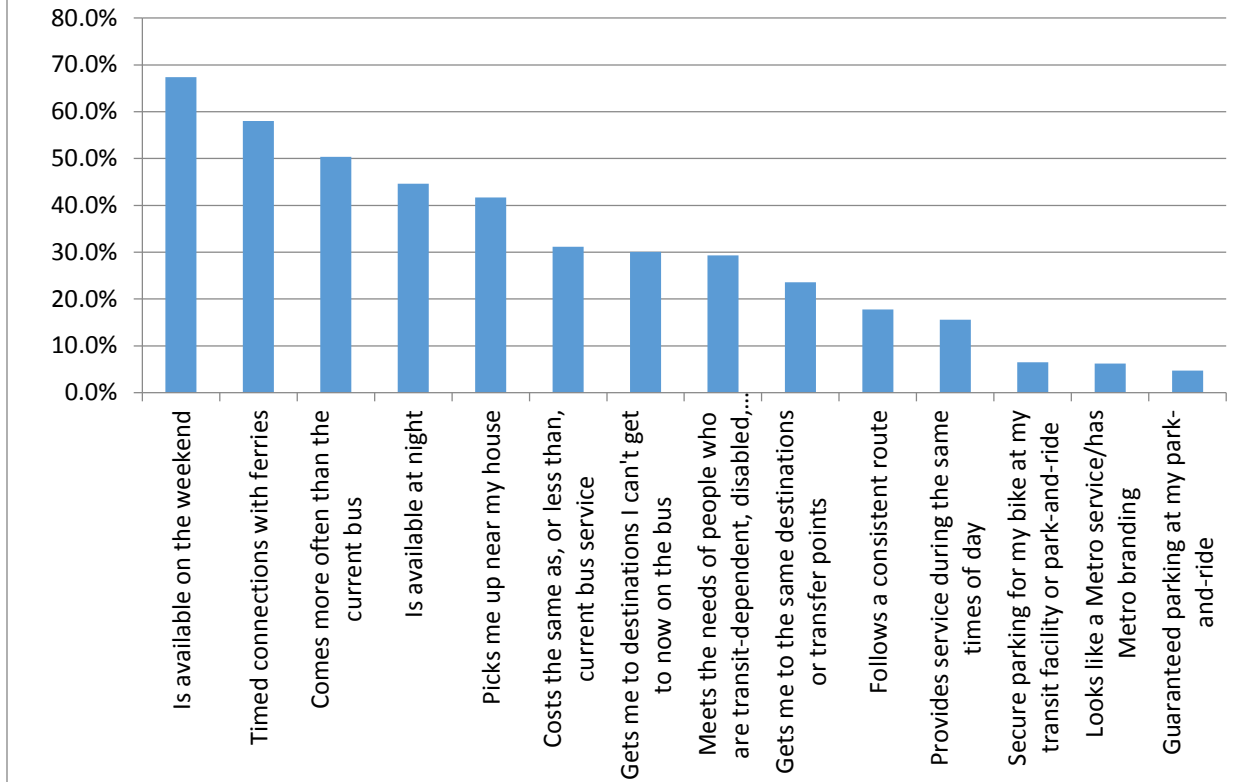
- Downtown Seattle;
- Point Robinson;

- Vashon school area;
- Burton;
- Vashon ferry dock.

If bus service in your community were changed or supplemented with a new transportation service, what would be most important to you for using the new service? (please indicate your top three choices)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Is available on the weekend	67.4%	186
Timed connections with ferries	58.0%	160
Comes more often than the current bus	50.4%	139
Is available at night	44.6%	123
Picks me up near my house	41.7%	115
Costs the same as, or less than, current bus service	31.2%	86
Gets me to destinations I can't get to now on the bus	30.1%	83
Meets the needs of people who are transit-dependent, disabled, elderly, or low-income	29.3%	81
Gets me to the same destinations or transfer points	23.6%	65
Follows a consistent route	17.8%	49
Provides service during the same times of day	15.6%	43
Secure parking for my bike at my transit facility or park-and-ride	6.5%	18
Looks like a Metro service/has Metro branding	6.2%	17
Guaranteed parking at my park-and-ride	4.7%	13
	<i>answered question</i>	276
	<i>skipped question</i>	48

If bus service in your community were changed or supplemented with a new transportation service, what would be most important to you for using the new service?



Is there anything else you'd like to share with us, such as possible ways to improve public transportation in your community?

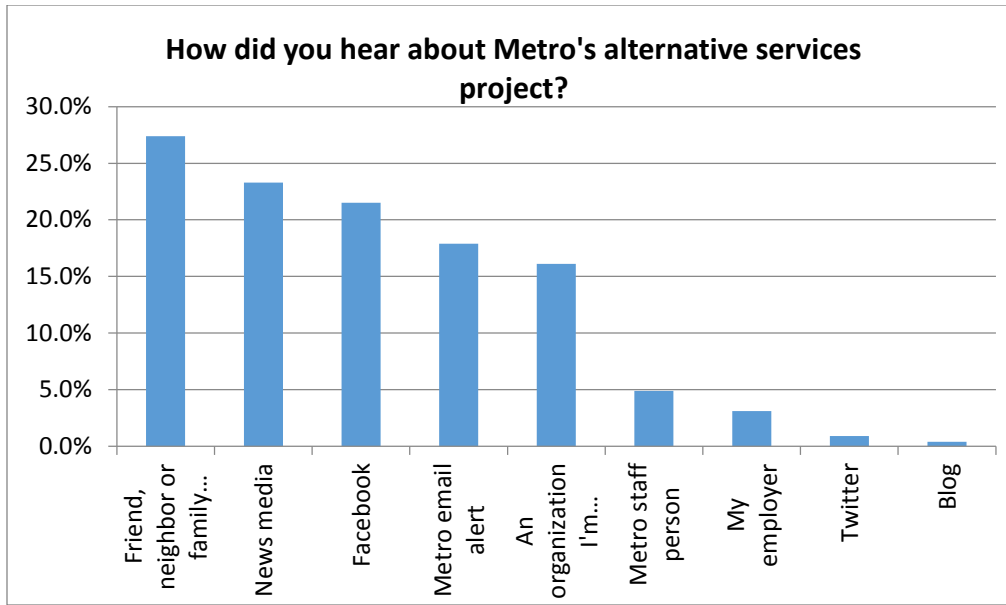
Selected comments:

- Smaller busses for non-peak hours
- I'm blind and using public services are problematic
- For above question -- ability to transport bikes is important.
- Having a smaller bus that travels along the periphery routes on the island not currently served. Sunday service.
- Wi-Fi on the buses. An extra bus at the water taxis in the evening, because it's very crowded on the way home.
- Need more buses going to and from the south end.
- Local- Vashon-only frequent bus service would help serve our community in a different way than catering to the commuters. Some of us live AND work on the island. Some of us work weekends and nights. Working class people cannot afford to live on Vashon as it is. Help us get to work.

- We are not currently able to use public transportation because it does not come to our neighborhood - which is Westside/Colvos. I would like my children to be able to get a ride home from after school activities in a bus or van.
- Please do not get rid of our buses during commute times! That would not be an improvement! However, I appreciate that you are considering alternative services for other routes and additional hours as this will benefit islanders. It would also help if there are discounts for low income residents. Many of our store cashiers, restaurant workers and contractors are living near poverty and cannot absorb higher costs for transportation.
- Work with Chamber of Commerce for bus service during peak tourist periods, maybe small bus flexibility
- Covered by Orca passport
- We need a taxi for off-hours or some alternative. Currently the airport requires driving from my house; bus schedule doesn't work. Likewise, if I need an unplanned ride – injury, illness, drinking. Today I have to hitch hike
- Westside needs a bus into town and to ferries. Please make it so.
- Run more often on Maury
- I like the idea of the "Community Info" service, being piloted under the Alternatives program.
- 1. Start a new taxi service that encourages carpooling; 2. Provide self-employment through grant opportunities to purchase or lease multiple cars that qualify for Lyft, Uber-type franchises, etc.; make sure the operator of these cars are coordinated fairly and required to provide services all over the island
- More passenger ferry only service (not just commuting hours), but weekends, middle of the day and evening. Bus service that coordinates with passenger only ferry.

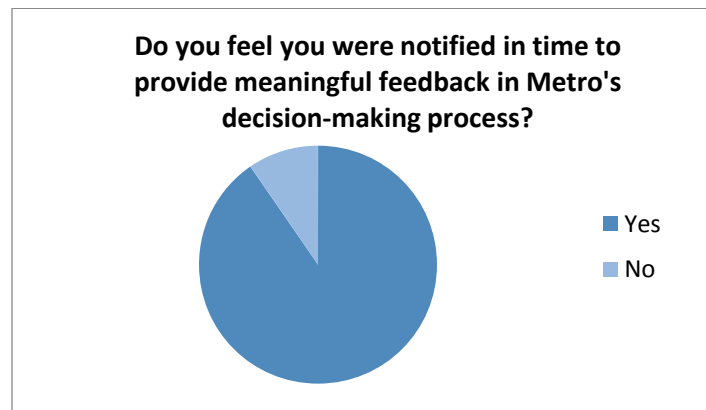
Outreach efforts

How did you hear about Metro's alternative services project?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Friend, neighbor or family member	27.4%	61
News media	23.3%	52
Facebook	21.5%	48
Metro email alert	17.9%	40
An organization I'm involved with	16.1%	36
Metro staff person	4.9%	11
My employer	3.1%	7
Twitter	0.9%	2
Blog	0.4%	1
Other (please specify)	53	53
answered question		223
skipped question		101



Do you feel you were notified in time to provide meaningful feedback in Metro's decision-making process?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	90.4%	236
No	9.6%	25
<i>answered question</i>		261
<i>skipped question</i>		63



Please share any additional feedback you have about our outreach.

Selected comments:

- I appreciate how specific details/items are for Vashon Island
- Vashon is and will remain in a tough situation without specific tailored response by Metro to our aging population and the continuing challenge of our oddly shaped island, with areas that are

usually underserved and left unreached. The lack of any service on Sunday is just one of the deficiencies our community deals with. As someone who has given many people lifts when bus service is not available, it would be great to see Sunday service. I would think that given our small demographic relative to the larger system, that perhaps having more small vans instead of the larger buses which are rarely at capacity would make us leaner and more efficient. Fingers crossed.

- Thank you for doing this!
- Right now, bike racks are almost full sometimes. Tonight, a cold, wet day Dec 7 there were approx 5 spots left when I got on at 525 for the 530 taxi. I imagine that additional bikes will continue to be added.
- The north-end ferry terminal parking lot is consistently filling up in the morning, even before the full rush of folks for the 7:10 Passenger Only ferry crowd arrives. It creates a dangerous situation when people have to hustle to find parking on the street and then run down the steep hill to make the ferry. I think a combination of better lighting and better enforcement of the parking time limits would be useful. Some cars seem parked for weeks in the limited space in the lot. I worry that a hurried driver is going to hit a person who is running through the parking lot in the dark to make the ferry--there are no established pedestrian "paths" through the parking lot, so the winter mornings are a dark, steep, slick free-for-all.
- We have the nicest bus drivers I've met in my entire life.
- Do more to get the message out, including sandwich board signs, church group talks, etc.
- Thank you for listening.
- I didn't know about some of the alternative transportation available. It would be good to advertise those more.
- The elderly losing the ability to drive are of great need.
- Keep asking Islanders what they need! We may be part of King County but we really are our own isolated community when it comes to fitting in to King County services.
- Thank you for helping Vashon brainstorm better transportation solutions. Our family heavily uses Metro in Seattle for both commuting and errands/recreational travel, but we have found it very challenging to incorporate Metro into our weekend plans on Vashon, much as we would like to.
- My main issue with using the bus is that there are no stops within one mile of my house. It would take me a lot longer to drive, park and ride than just to drive.
- We really miss weekend and evening buses to events in Seattle. Parking our car downtown and traffic is a huge negative issue and if there were buses that could go straight from the ferry to sporting games and theatres, (especially on weekends) it would be wonderful.
- I think you are just giving us lip service. You won't provide us with good bus service anytime soon. So do what you can for poor people in the City and quit pretending that you'll ever do anything for us out here.
- Excellent survey. Used a mobile device. Ability to give input much appreciated
- Though I don't use it much on Vashon, I am a strong proponent of public transport and ride sharing, and have relied on these in other locations (around the world) prior to retirement here.