

2011-15 SRTDP
Summary of
Findings



for
Mendocino
Transit
Authority



Volume 1:
Key Themes
Passenger Survey
Community Outreach

Prepared by:

TRANSIT  marketing LLC



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Summary of Findings: Volume 1

Introduction

To provide input to MTA's 2011-15 Short Range Transit Development Plan, community input was solicited in several ways:

- A formal passenger survey was conducted on all local fixed routes with customized questionnaires for Coast and Inland Routes.
- A mail-back passenger survey on Dial-a-ride and long distance routes.
- Passenger counts were conducted on local fixed routes.
- Public meetings were held in Ukiah, Willits, Ft. Bragg, Pt. Arena and Boonville.
- In-depth interviews were conducted with a wide variety of stakeholders in communities throughout Mendocino County.
- Interviews were conducted with MTA bus operators and other operations staff.
- Informal passenger interviews were conducted by the consultants on-board both coast and in-land fixed routes.



Volume 1 of this working paper will report the findings of these various efforts and summarize by theme the implications for the SRTDP. This volume is organized as:

- Key Themes
- Passenger Survey
 - Key Findings
 - Detailed Reports for Coast, Inland and Dial-a-Ride surveys
- Summary of Outreach Findings

Volume 2 will report the findings of the ride check and a review of performance data for all MTA services.

Key Themes within Findings

Following are key themes which surfaced during the outreach, market research and service review efforts. These will be addressed in detail in the alternatives assessment and marketing plan.

MTA Ridership

- *MTA serves a diverse mix of riders with large segments of work commuter and students.*

On Coast routes, 23% of riders surveyed were making work trips and 16% were making school trips (primarily secondary school) when surveyed. On Inland routes 26% of riders were making work trips and 31% were traveling to or from school/college (primarily Mendocino College). Even among DAR users, 26% say they use Dial-a-Ride to commute to work.

All MTA routes and DAR serve a broad mix of age groups. Inland routes have the most young riders (42% are under 25) while Dial-a-Ride has the most elderly riders (17% are 75+).

- *Most MTA riders are dependent on public transportation.*

Most riders lack a driver's license, a vehicle or both. Only 17% of Coast riders and 6% of Inland riders said that they have a driver's license and had a car available for the trip on which they were surveyed. While most riders on all services would get a ride with someone else, many say they would not make the trip if MTA were not available - DAR (30%), Coast (21%) and Inland (9%).

- *Ridership includes a mix of new and long term users. Long distance routes serve many infrequent and one-way riders.*

Just over 20% of MTA riders are new to the system in the past year, while most riders have been riding for two years or longer. The local routes tend to have large segments of regular riders, while the long distance routes (especially 95 and 65) have many infrequent, even one-time, riders.

- *MTA riders are highly satisfied, especially with the quality of customer service.*

MTA riders rate all aspects of service quite highly, particularly driver courtesy. Coast riders give the system an overall rating of 6.10, while Inland riders give it a 5.99 (on a 7 point scale). DAR users rate that service extremely highly (6.6). While there are aspects of service that can be improved and some pockets of dissatisfaction, riders are generally quite happy.

General Performance Issues

- *The Great Recession has created additional demand for the important mobility services that MTA provides, but has reduced the resources available.*

At the same time that the down economy has increased transit needs, reductions in Transportation Development Act funds, generated from sales taxes, declined from \$2,316,646 in FY 2007/08 to \$2,165,119 in FY 2009/10. Coupled with an 8.6% decline in Federal FTA 5311 funding from budgeted amounts during this same time period, this created a revenue shortfall. With rising operating costs such

as increased fuel costs, MTA needed to raise fares and strategically reduce services to balance the budget. Two fare increases in June 2009 and June 2010, increased the base fare from \$0.75 to \$1.25 for a single zone fare. To mitigate the impact on regular riders, deep discounts on punch passes and monthly passes were made available. Vehicle service hours were reduced from 46,632 in FY 2008/09 to 42,288 vehicle service hours in FY 2010/11. This was accomplished by eliminating unproductive routes and selectively eliminating Saturday service on some routes which were also less productive. This provides important context to a 9.9% drop in MTA ridership over the past three fiscal years.

- *The economic driving forces described have made it increasingly difficult for MTA to achieve required performance standards.*

The State and Mendocino Council of Government (MCOG) have established performance standards for farebox recovery, passengers per vehicle service hour, cost per passenger and cost per hour that have been challenging to meet under current economic conditions. Even Routes 20/21 that is serving a vital intercommunity function and often has full buses did not meet any of the four MCOG performance standards. Most California rural transit systems are only required to achieve a 10% farebox recovery ratio. However, under TDA regulations, MTA must achieve a 14.7 percent minimum farebox recovery ratio, based on the ratio achieved in the TDA mandated “base year” of FY 1978-79. Systemwide, the farebox recovery ratio increased from 14.5% in FY 2008/09 to 16.1% in FY 2010/11. Unfortunately, after two fare increases, this does not leave a substantial “cushion” in fare revenues in order to stay above 15% over the five year planning horizon of the Short Range Transit Development Plan (SRTDP). Alternative fare policy strategies to stay above the 15% farebox recovery ratio will be addressed in the alternatives working paper.

- *MTA provides general public dial-a-ride (DAR) in the Ukiah and Ft. Bragg areas at annual cost of \$893,793 in FY 2010/11.*

According to the onboard survey about half of DAR users also ride fixed route buses at least once a week. Only 38% of DAR passengers surveyed reported a disability that prevents them from getting to a bus stop, though 55% said they were certified as ADA Paratransit eligible. The subsidy per passenger trip for Route 9 in Ukiah was \$3.25 in FY 2010/11 and the corresponding subsidy per passenger for DAR in Ukiah was \$19.88. It is policy choice of the MTA Board in going beyond what is required by ADA Paratransit regulations in providing DAR service. The alternatives working paper will explore 1) the potential benefits of better coordination between MTA-provided and senior center provided DAR services and 2) potential policy alternatives and estimated benefits and down-sides of only providing ADA Paratransit service to certified ADA Paratransit eligible individuals. Before the analysis commences, further discussions will be held with MTA management to refine the analysis parameters.

Inland Routes

Despite two fare increases and service reductions, overall ridership in the Inland Valley only declined by 2.9%. Route 9 provides about 44% of the vehicle service hours in the Inland Valley, but almost 70% of the total ridership. Route 9 provided 202,032 trips in FY 2010/11 and ridership increased by 3.4% over the past three fiscal years. With the City of Ukiah having a population of about 15,000, this is 13.5 annual MTA transit trips per capita for Route 9 alone. Route 20/21 is a long inter-community route with a freeway segment and still generates 12.2 passengers per vehicle service hour. This is excellent productivity for such a route in a rural environment.

- *Routes 9 and 20/21 are working very well.*

These routes, which service local trips within Ukiah and trips between Willits and Ukiah, are used by a diverse ridership. About half of riders are making commute trips – to work (26%), to college (23%) or to school (8%) – while the rest are shopping, running errands, going to medical appointments – making all of the types of trips that a good local transit service should facilitate.

The transfer connection at Mendocino College appears to be well timed and convenient for passengers, especially the large number of Mendocino College students using MTA.

Suggestions were made for minor route changes which will be considered as part of the alternatives analysis. For example: a closer stop to the hospital in Ukiah and changes to Route 20/21 within Willits which would reduce the impact of the cutback in Willits Rider service (e.g. serving the Little Lake Clinic).

- *One third of Ukiah/Willits Riders are Mendocino College Students.*

MTA provides excellent service to the Mendocino College campus north of Ukiah, including service to evening classes. This has resulted in a high level of utilization by students. There may be the opportunity to expand ridership further through increased availability of transit information on campus and the implementation of a pre-paid fare program or a semester pass program. These opportunities will be discussed in the marketing plan and fare analysis.

- *Opportunity to make Willits Rider more attractive and functional by expanding stops and eliminating or reducing need for flex.*

Current productivity for the Willits Rider is below that of Dial-a-Ride. This has resulted in the recent reduction of service hours making the system even less attractive to riders.

Meetings with Willits stakeholders and bus riders identified a variety of possibilities for increasing the attractiveness and productivity of the service. These included adding key “flex” stops to the route in order to minimize the need to call for or pay for a flex, coordinating service with the high school bell times (since school bus service is no longer provided within Willits) and more aggressively promoting the service by working with gatekeeper organizations such as Little Lake Clinic, Nuestra Alianza and apartment complexes.

The Alternatives Working Paper will include a complete analysis of options for the Willits service.

- *Weekend service is the most desired service improvement among Inland riders.*

Based on input received in stakeholder interviews and informal passenger discussions, the survey asked riders to rate various potential service improvements. Inland riders clearly prioritized weekend service. Riders who are residents of Ukiah are most interested in local Sunday service within Ukiah, while Willits residents are most interested in Saturday service between Willits and Ukiah.

North Coast Routes

In FY 2010/11, MTA provided 73,151 passenger trips in the North Coast with 12,041 annual vehicle service hours. The overall cost of providing the North Coast service, including Routes 5, 60, 65 and Dial-A-Ride service, was just under \$1 million in FY 2010/11. For all services, the two fares increases and service reductions resulted in a 52.6% increase in the average fare and a 10.1% reduction in vehicle service hours over the past three fiscal years. The overall ridership decline in the North Coast was by far the most of any subarea with a 19.9% decline over the past three years. However, the overall farebox recovery ratio in the North Coast for all services combined was 21.2%, significantly higher than the required 15% MCOG performance standard. The farebox recovery is bolstered by a 36% farebox recovery on Route 65.

- *Opportunity to reallocate some dial-a-ride resources to enhance local fixed route in Ft. Bragg.*

The DAR service in Ft. Bragg is used primarily in the morning and afternoon to transport individuals with developmental disabilities. Midday utilization is very light. There may be an opportunity to shift some resources to the BraggAbout. Interviews with stakeholder suggested the advantage of increasing mid-day frequency from every 60 to every 30 minutes. However, the results of the passenger survey and ridership counts suggest that reintroducing Saturday service might be a more effective strategy.

- *Weekend service is highest priority among North Coast riders.*

During outreach efforts, the desire for Saturday service on Routes 5 and 60 came up repeatedly among transit users (due to the much higher cost of using DAR). It was rated as the most desired service improvement in the on-board survey with 44% of Northcoast riders saying it would be very important (rating of 7 on a 7 point scale) to have Saturday service on BraggAbout and 40% giving a rating to 7 to Saturday service on Rt. 60.

South Coast Routes

Service is provided in the South Coast on Routes 75 and 95, with an annual total of 6,268 annual service hours. MTA spent \$481,679 on South Coast services in 2010/11. Over the past three years, there have been no service reductions to South Coast routes, but the two fare increases and economic factors did lead to an overall 7.2% decrease in ridership over the past three years. The overall farebox recovery ratio is 13.0%, below the required MCOG standard of 15%.

- *Senior Center – only DAR in South Coast area – growing usage, limited funding.*

The Point Arena Senior Center transportation program provides the only demand response transit service in the area, operating two days a week. Their ridership is growing and is now approximately 500 trips per month. The manager fears they are outgrowing their funding, saying that they are “\$15,000 in red and teetering on survival.”

- *Non emergency medical trips are the primary unmet need in South Coast area.*

A 2006 CTAA study identified medical and dental trips by residents in remote areas as the primary unmet transportation need in the South Coast area. This is clearly a need that must be met by a mobility management strategy, rather than a transit strategy.

- *More frequent service between Coast and Ukiah is most desired improvement.*

Given the remote location and the sparse population, the South Coast area has a relatively high level of transit service. Residents are able to travel north to Ft. Bragg, south to Santa Rosa or inland to Ukiah to access services. Asked about various service improvements, South Coast riders said they would most like more frequent service between the Coast and Ukiah. However, only one third of riders rated this as “very important” – (7 on a 7 point scale).

Inter-community Routes

- *How to increase frequency between Coast and Ukiah?*

We heard from a number of sources (stakeholders, bus operators and riders) about a desire for increased service frequency between the Coast and Ukiah that would accomplish objectives such as allowing Coast residents to perform jury duty in Ukiah and Ukiah residents to go to the Coast and back in a day. One suggestion was to break the Route 65 in Ukiah (and have it make two or three round trips per day) and have a second route to provide service to Santa Rosa. This, of course, has significant cost ramifications.

- *How to improve Santa Rosa circulation?*

Currently, routes 65 and 95 make stops at the Transit Mall and a few other locations in Santa Rosa and then have about four hours before the return trip. During this time riders can pay an extra dollar fare to be dropped or off picked up within a 3 mile radius of the Transit Mall on a “first-come, time-permitting” basis. This policy is not broadly known nor understood. And while it would seem to make it possible for individuals to use the service for medical or other appointments in Santa Rosa, the “iffy” nature of the “first-come, time permitting” qualifier prevents that from being a viable option. One stakeholder said that if seniors could call in advance to reserve a pick up and drop off during the Santa Rosa window, the bus might provide a means of serving some out of area travel requirements.

Senior Center Dial-A-Ride

- *Senior Center programs provide valuable door-through-door transportation service.*

MTA has contracts with five Senior Centers to provide dial-a-ride (DAR) services in the Anderson Valley, Ft. Bragg area (Redwood Coast Senior Center), South Coast, Willits and Ukiah. The DAR programs serve an important mobility needs among frail seniors and disabled, that MTA would not be able to meet using traditional dial-a-ride or paratransit services. Collectively, these programs are providing very cost-effective service at a cost of \$11.28 per passenger in FY 2010/11.

- *Senior Centers sometimes in competition with MTA Dial-a-Ride services.*

In FY 2010/11, the five senior centers received \$304,725 in Transportation Development Act (TDA) funds to help subsidize the DAR operations. The Senior Centers also collected \$84,000 in fares and utilized approximately \$78,500 in senior center and other revenue to support the DAR program. However, the need to maintain ridership levels and justify funding have put the senior center transportation programs and MTA's DAR services into competition. The senior centers often charge lower fares than MTA (e.g. Redwood Coast Transit Center charges \$1.00 for a trip within Ft. Bragg (with punch pass) that would cost \$2.50 on DAR), or simply ask for donations. However, they offer limited hours of service (seldom matching fixed route hours) and often give priority to trips to senior center nutrition or day programs.

Mobility Management Strategies and Opportunities

- *MTA has strategically implemented mobility management programs, in partnership with collaborating agencies, that cost effectively match mobility needs with mobility solutions.*

The Senior Centers are a mobility management strategy that MTA has been using for years without viewing it as such and there may be opportunity to expand on this strategy. Because the senior centers are in regular communication with this population, they are uniquely positioned to meet the needs of seniors and persons with disabilities.

The contract with the Regional Center is also an excellent example of how MTA has matched service options to market segment needs. Similarly, MTA has partnered with the Boys and Girls Club to transport youth after school in a cost-effective manner. The latest grant based efforts at agricultural worker vanpools and now general vanpools, as well as the E-Ride program in Laytonville are really extensions of MTA's mobility management ethos.

- *The incentive currently provided the e-Ride program may be insufficient to attract and retain volunteer drivers.*

Because many of the potential volunteer drivers may be nearly as low-income as the people they are transporting in the Round Valley area, a \$10 voucher may not be sufficient to allow interested volunteers to participate. At under \$.12 per mile for the 84 mile round trip, this is likely less than the cost of gas. Other volunteer driver programs pay mileage reimbursement rates of \$.20 to \$55.5 per mile. For example, a highly successful program in San Bernardino County pays \$.48 per mile with a monthly limit of

350 miles per individual rider. The reimbursement is paid to the qualified rider who then reimburses their driver.

- *There may be an opportunity to expand the e-Ride program to address medical transportation outside Mendocino County.*

Several stakeholders identified medical transportation to destinations outside Mendocino County as the most significant unmet need in Mendocino County. This need would be extremely costly to serve with traditional transit and can best be addressed through mobility management strategies such as e-Ride. The South Coast area would be a good pilot program effort and will be explored further in alternatives working paper.

- *There is the opportunity to use the mobility management function to provide transit travel training to gatekeepers and key potential rider segments.*

A common function of mobility managers is travel training – educating potential users about how to use transit services that are available to meet their mobility needs. Sometimes this involves presentations to potential users such as groups of students, seniors, job seekers, social service clients and such. Other times it involves educating “gatekeepers,” such as social service managers and case workers, who can in turn educate their own constituents.

Interviews with social service providers who work with seniors, low income families and Latinos made it clear that these individuals do not have a good understanding of MTA’s services or how they work. However, they are open to and eager for more information about the system that they can use to benefit their own clients. This issue will be addressed in detail in the alternatives analysis and marketing plan.

Communications

- *MTA can improve the visibility of rural routes through improved signage.*

While MTA has done an excellent job of signing and branding routes within Ukiah and Ft. Bragg, the signage on rural routes, particularly along the South Coast, needs to be improved. Few of these stops have route and schedule information or any amenities, and many have no signage or designation at all.

In rural areas, such as the South Coast, bus stop signage can be MTA’s most effective marketing tool for increasing visibility of the bus service and can be an important channel for making information available to potential users. The market research has shown that riders on routes 65, 75, 95 are more likely to be infrequent, even one-time, riders, and hence less familiar with the service. This makes signage and information at the stop more critical.

- *MTA should increase ease of use of the system for new and transient riders through enhanced printed and on-line information tools.*

MTA’s long time riders are familiar with the printed schedules and use them as their primary information source. However, new riders to the system and non-riders trying to understand the service find the

schedules cryptic and difficult to interpret. Bus operators are often challenged to explain the schedules to these individuals.

Likewise, some stakeholders said they found the MTA website difficult to navigate and wished for an easier way to get information. They were not aware of the Google Transit trip planner which is now available on the website. The passenger survey identified small but distinct pockets of dissatisfaction with various information channels.

Easy-to-use passenger information tools – printed, on the internet and at the bus stop – serve a promotional as well as educational purpose. They are often the first aspect of a passenger’s experience with MTA. The marketing plan will address specific strategies for making MTA easier for new and existing riders to understand and use.

■ *Automated phone system still used by many riders.*

There has been consideration of eliminating MTA’s automated schedule information phone system. Riders were asked to what extent they use this system. The phone system is used at least once a month by 19% of Inland riders and 17% of Coast riders. By comparison, the website is used at least once a month by 12% of both Inland and Coast riders and one third of riders say that they do not have internet access.

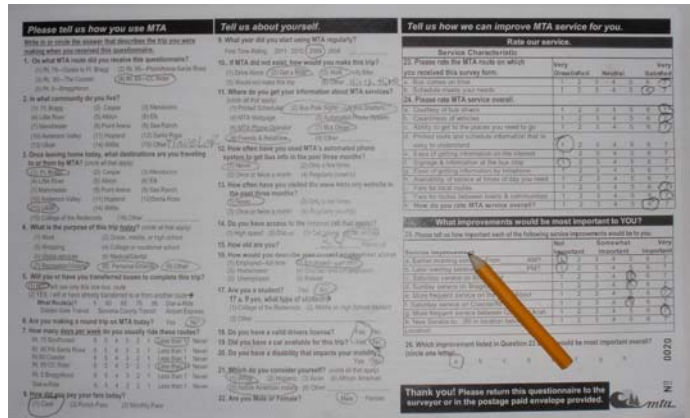
The broad usage of the automated phone system and the lack of internet access among a large segment of the ridership likely indicate that an on-going effort to shift riders to website usage will be needed before the automated phone system can be eliminated.

Passenger Survey

Survey Methodology

A passenger survey of MTA riders was conducted using three customized questionnaires:

- Fixed Route Questionnaire for Coastal Routes (5, 60, 65, 75 and 95)
- Fixed Route Questionnaire for Inland Routes (1, 7, 9, 20 and 21)
- Dial-a-Ride Questionnaires (All Dial-a-Ride services)



While the three questionnaires included many of the same questions, they were customized to capture specific information relevant to the particular service type and area. All questionnaires were bilingual (English on one side, Spanish on the other).

The survey resulted in a total sample of 572 responses distributed as follows:

- Coastal - 188
- Inland - 334
- Dial-a-Ride – 50

Sixty-seven respondents (12% of the total sample) completed the Spanish version of the questionnaire.

The detailed results will be reported separately for each data set, with comparisons drawn in the summary of key findings. In 2005, an on-board survey collected information from 282 passengers, with 15% completed in Spanish. Where possible, the summary of key findings will include comparisons with the previous survey.

Key Survey Findings

This section will briefly summarize survey findings, comparing data from the Coast, Inland and Dial-a-Ride surveys. Where possible, data will be compared to findings of the 2005 *passenger survey*. However, it should be noted that data from that survey is not broken down by route or service area, but is rather for the entire passenger base.

Trip Characteristics

Trip Purpose

MTA fixed route riders use the bus for a variety of trip purposes including commuting to work and school. On Coast routes, 23% of riders were making work trips and 16% were making school trips (primarily secondary school) when surveyed. On Inland routes 26% of riders were making work trips and 31% were traveling to or from school/college (primarily Mendocino College). *The 2005 survey reported 22% work trips and 26% school trips for the system overall.*

Dial-a-Ride users were similarly likely to be making work trips – 26% gave this as their trip purpose, however, only 4% were making school/college trips. DAR passengers were more likely to be making medical/dental trips (19%) than fixed route riders either on the Coast (9%) or Inland (6%). *The 2005 DAR survey reported 27% work trips and 23% medical/dental trips.*

Fare Payment

On the Coast routes, most riders pay their fare in cash (69%), while 29% use a punch pass and only 2% use a monthly pass. This is consistent with the high number of occasional riders.

On Inland routes, 44% pay cash while 42% use a punch pass and 14% use a monthly pass.

The 2005 survey found that overall 46% of riders surveyed paid cash, 40% used a punch pass and 15% used a monthly pass.

Round Trip/One Way

Because of the long-distance nature of the Coast routes, riders were asked if they were making a round trip or one-way trip on the day surveyed. More than half of Coast riders were making one-way trips. This was particularly common on Rts. 95 and 65 which are dominated by one-way riders.

Usage Characteristics

Frequency of Use

Frequency of use on the fixed routes varies significantly by route. On the routes which provide primarily local service there are large segments of regular users. For example, on routes 9/7, 50% of riders ride very frequently, five or more days a week. However the longer distance routes (65, 75 and 95) have much larger

numbers of occasional riders. For example, on Rt. 95, 62% of riders ride one day a week or less and many are making one-way trips. Route 75, tends to serve a more balanced clientele, with both regular and occasional user groups – 32% ride three or more days per week, while 54% ride one day or less.

The 2005 survey found that 45% of riders ride five or more days per week. This number is clearly weighted by the heavier ridership on the local routes – particularly Rt. 9.

About 8% of fixed route riders also use Dial-a-Ride, though most use it only occasionally. *The 2005 survey found that 6% of fixed route riders used Dial-a-Ride regularly and only 75% said they never used it.*

DAR users tend to use the demand response service regularly with half riding four days a week or more. About half of DAR users also use fixed route buses one day a week or more. *The 2005 survey found that 34% of DAR users used fixed route buses at least occasionally.*

Duration of Use

About one in five MTA riders has started using the system during 2011 (20% on Coast routes and 22% on Inland routes), while most riders have been riding for two years or more.

The 2005 survey found that 35% of riders had been riding for less than one year.

Transit Dependence

If MTA did not exist, most riders would need to rely on getting rides from other people or walking/biking. On Coast routes 11% of riders say they would drive alone, on Inland routes on 4% give this answer and on DAR 6%. Some riders say they would simply not make the trip – DAR (30%), Coast (21%) and Inland (9%).

The 2005 fixed route survey findings were similar with 10% saying they would drive alone and 19% saying they would not make the trip. In the 2005 DAR survey, 32% said they would not make the trip.

Most riders lack either a driver's license, a vehicle or both. Only 17% of Coast riders and 6% of Inland riders said that they have a driver's license and had a car available for the trip on which they were surveyed.

The 2005 study stated that most riders are "choice riders" noting that 71% had a driver's license and 82% had a car available. Given the prior finding that only 10% said they would drive alone if MTA did not exist, this finding does not ring true and is clearly not true today.

Information Sources

The printed schedules continue to be the most used information source by both Coast (52%) and Inland (67%) riders. Among Coast riders, bus drivers are the second most cited information source (12%), while Inland riders rely on bus pole signs (11%).

Small segments of the ridership make regular use of the Automated Phone System and MTA website. The phone system is used at least once a month by 19% of Inland riders and 17% of Coast riders. The website is used at least once a month by 12% of both Inland and Coast riders.

While most MTA riders have internet access, about a third do not (38% Coast, 34% Inland). Another third of riders have high speed access (30% Coast, 38% Inland) and about one-fifth have internet access on their cell phones (18% Coast, 22% inland).

Passenger Demographics

Age

The age distribution of riders varies between the Coast and Inland. Coast riders are evenly distributed throughout the age spectrum, with 29% under 25, 58% between 25 and 64 and 14% 65 or older. Inland riders are younger, with 42% under 25 years of age and only 5% 65 or older.

The 2005 survey found that 55% of riders were 23-61. In this sample, that age range includes 58% of Coast riders and 56% of Inland riders.

DAR users also cover the age spectrum. Most (58%) are 24-54, 23% are 55-64 and 19% are 65+. Among the 65+ group, the majority (17%) are 75 or older.

In the 2005 DAR survey, 62% of respondents were 23-61 and 18% were 71 or older.

Employment and Student Status

Among Coast riders, 44% are employed full-time (17%) or part-time (27%). Among Inland riders, 48% are employed full-time (21%) or part-time (27%). Among Dial-a-Ride users 37% are employed full-time (19%) or part-time (18%).

Each fixed route ridership group includes a significant group which describes itself as disabled and not employed (Coast 23%, Inland 13%) and a smaller number of retirees (Coast 11%, Inland 5%). Among DAR users, these groups form the majority – Disabled and not employed (41%) and retired (12%).

The 2005 survey found 34% of the sample to be employed full or part-time.

All ridership groups include segments of students. On the Coast routes, students made up 28% of the sample with most saying they were grade, middle or high school students (5% were college students). On the Inland routes, students make up nearly half of the sample (47%) with most of those being Mendocino College students (34%). On DAR, 13% of riders are students – 9% at Mendocino College and 2% at College of the Redwoods.

The 2005 fixed route survey sample included 35% students.

Ethnicity and Gender

The majority of riders in all three surveys describe themselves as white (Coast 63%, Inland 53%, DAR 72%). More than a quarter of riders on fixed route are Hispanic (Coast 26%, Inland 27%), while there are also significant pockets of Native Americans (Coast 6%, Inland 12%). On DAR, 10% of riders are Hispanic and 10% Native American.

Coast riders are more likely to be male (57%), while Inland riders include more females (58%). Two thirds of DAR riders are female (64%).

The 2005 survey included 60% females for both fixed route and DAR surveys.

Satisfaction

Riders were asked to rate MTA on a variety of aspects of service on a scale of 1-7. All ratings were quite high in both service areas, with no aspect of service receiving an average rating lower than 5.

Coast riders give the system an overall rating of 6.10, while Inland riders give it a 5.99 (on a 7 point scale). DAR users rate that service extremely highly (6.6).

The highest rated aspect of service on all three surveys was driver courtesy. A full discussion of the satisfaction findings is included on pages 61 (Coast), 37 (Inland) and 72 (DAR).

Desired Improvements

Fixed route riders were asked to rate the importance of a variety of service improvements relevant to their particular service area.

Coast riders gave the highest ratings to Saturday service on BraggAbout and the Coaster. Inland riders also prioritized weekend service giving highest ratings to Sunday service within Ukiah and Saturday service between Ukiah and Willits.

Inland Survey

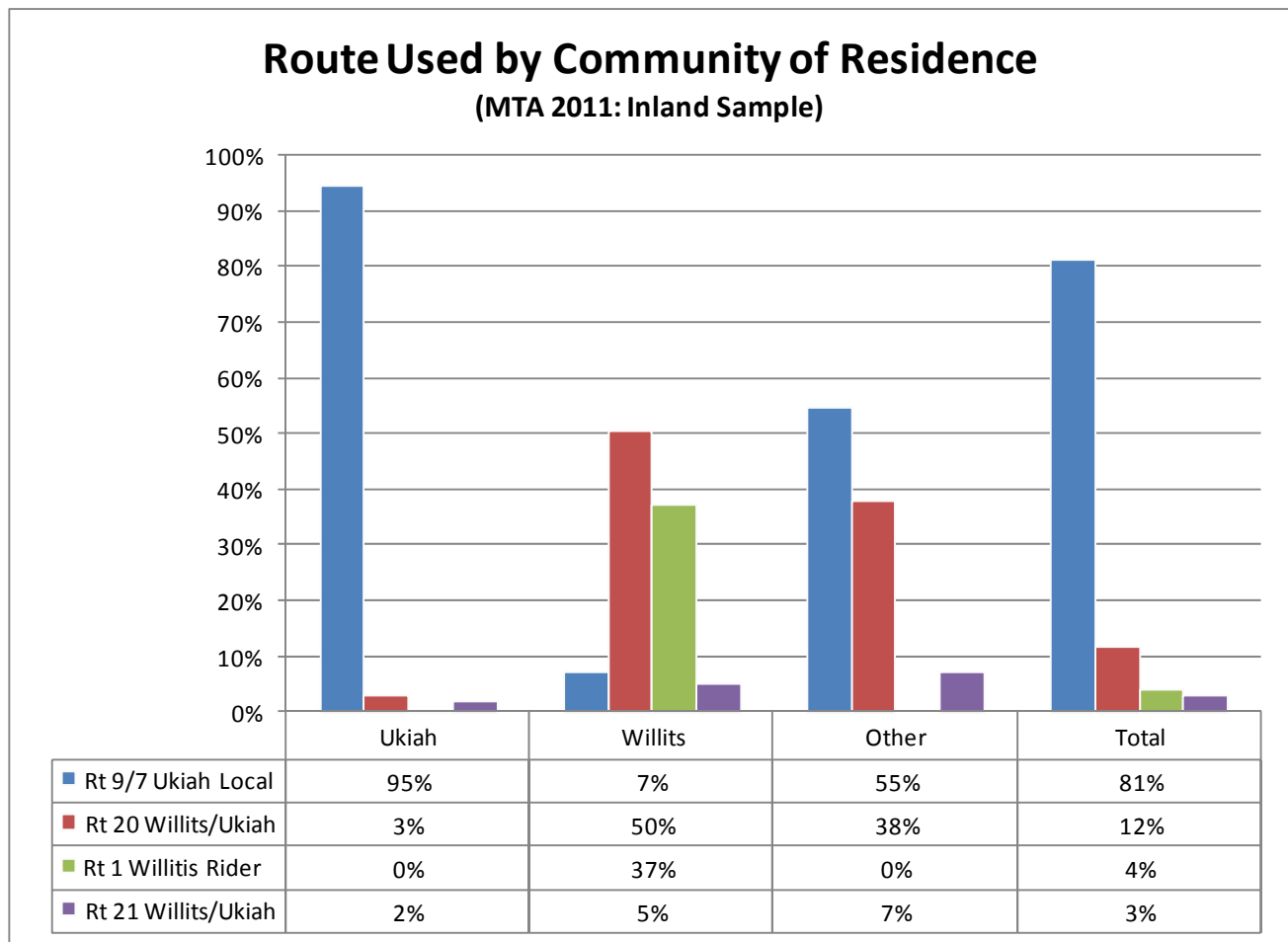


Figure 1 Route & Community of Residence – Inland

Route Used by Community of Residence

The inland survey was distributed on Routes 1, 7, 9, 20 and 21. The chart at the right shows the number of questionnaires completed on each route. For analysis, the sample was weighted to reflect the actual ridership of each route.

Route	N
Rt. 1 Willits Rider	12
Rt. 7 Ukiah Jitney	11
Rt. 9 Ukiah Local	231
Rt. 20 Ukiah-Willits	60
Rt. 21 Ukiah-Willits	20

Respondents were asked the community in which they live. Most respondents (244) lived in Ukiah, while 43 lived in Willits. The remaining 47 respondents lived in various inland communities including Redwood Valley (15) and Calpella (7). The chart above shows for each major community, which route the respondent was riding when surveyed. Community of residence will be used as the primary segmenting factor for the Inland sample. Charts will show specific findings for Ukiah residents, Willits residents and the total sample.

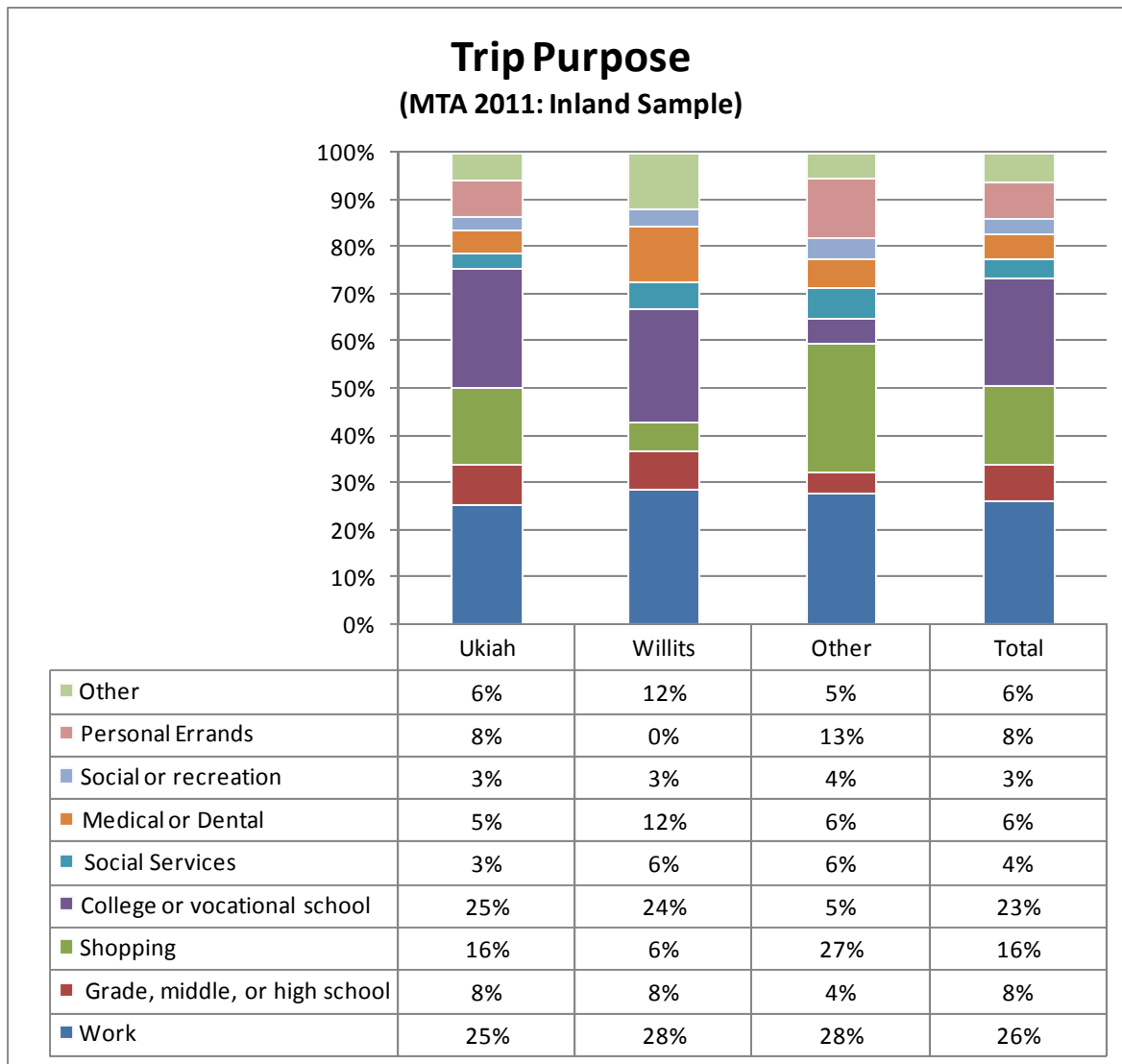


Figure 2 Trip Purpose – Inland

What is the purpose of this trip today?

About one quarter (26%) of riders were traveling to or from work when surveyed. A similar number (23%) were making trips for college or vocational school and 8% for grade, middle or high school. Hence, more than half of all Inland riders (57%) were making commute trips when surveyed. The distribution of commute trips is virtually identical between Ukiah and Willits residents. Residents outside these areas were less likely to give school or college as a trip purpose.

Shopping was the next most common trip purpose, particularly among residents outside Ukiah and Willits (27%). Within Ukiah 16% of respondents gave shopping as their trip purpose. Within Willits, only 6% said shopping but 12% said medical or dental appointments were their trip purpose.

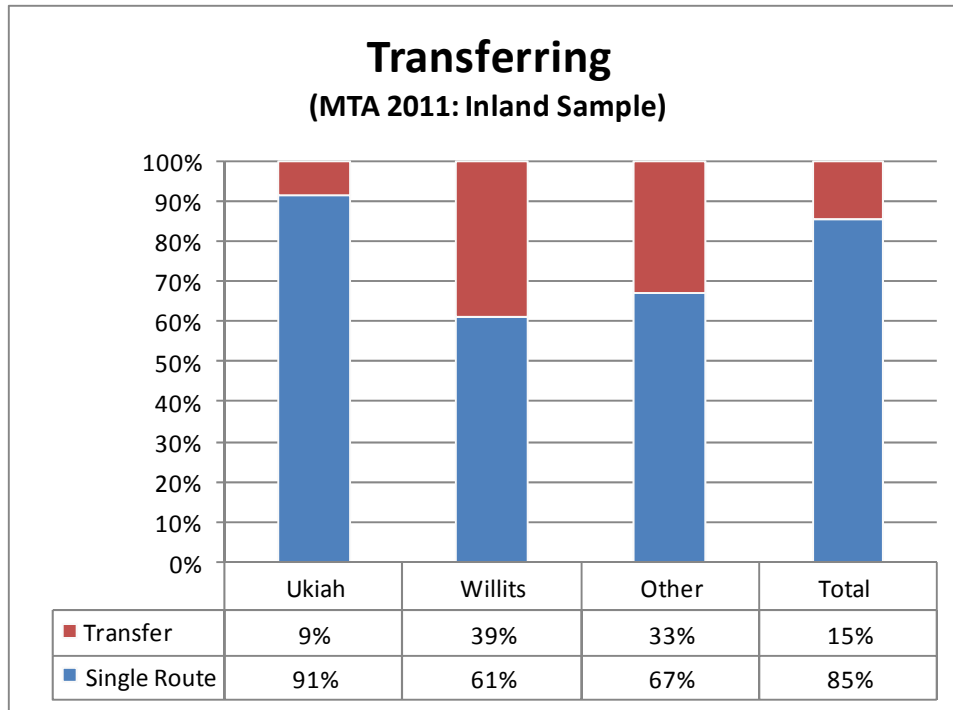


Figure 3 Transferring – Inland

Will you or have you transferred to complete this trip?

The vast majority of Ukiah residents (91%) can get where they are going on a single route. Among Willits residents, 39% say that they transfer, while among other riders 33% transfer.

The chart at the right shows, for the total sample, the community where people live and where they are traveling to or from. Eighty-three percent of all riders both live in Ukiah and are traveling within Ukiah or to Mendocino College, resulting in the low transfer rate

among that group. By comparison, 5% of riders live and are traveling within Willits, while 7.7% of respondents live in Willits but are traveling to Ukiah (3.5%), Mendocino College (2.3%) or other destinations.

Q3 Where are you traveling to or from?	Q2 In what community do you live?				
	Ukiah	Willits	Calpella	Redwood Valley	Other
Ukiah	63.2%	3.5%	1.0%	2.4%	2.3%
Willits	4.7%	4.9%	.3%	.5%	1.3%
Calpella	2.6%	.3%	1.0%	.0%	.3%
Redwood Valley	1.8%	.5%	.3%	1.5%	.3%
Mendocino College	19.8%	2.3%	.4%	.3%	.4%
Other	1.8%	1.1%	.3%	.0%	.6%

Figure 4 Residence & Destination

Percentages are for total sample, multiple destinations allowed

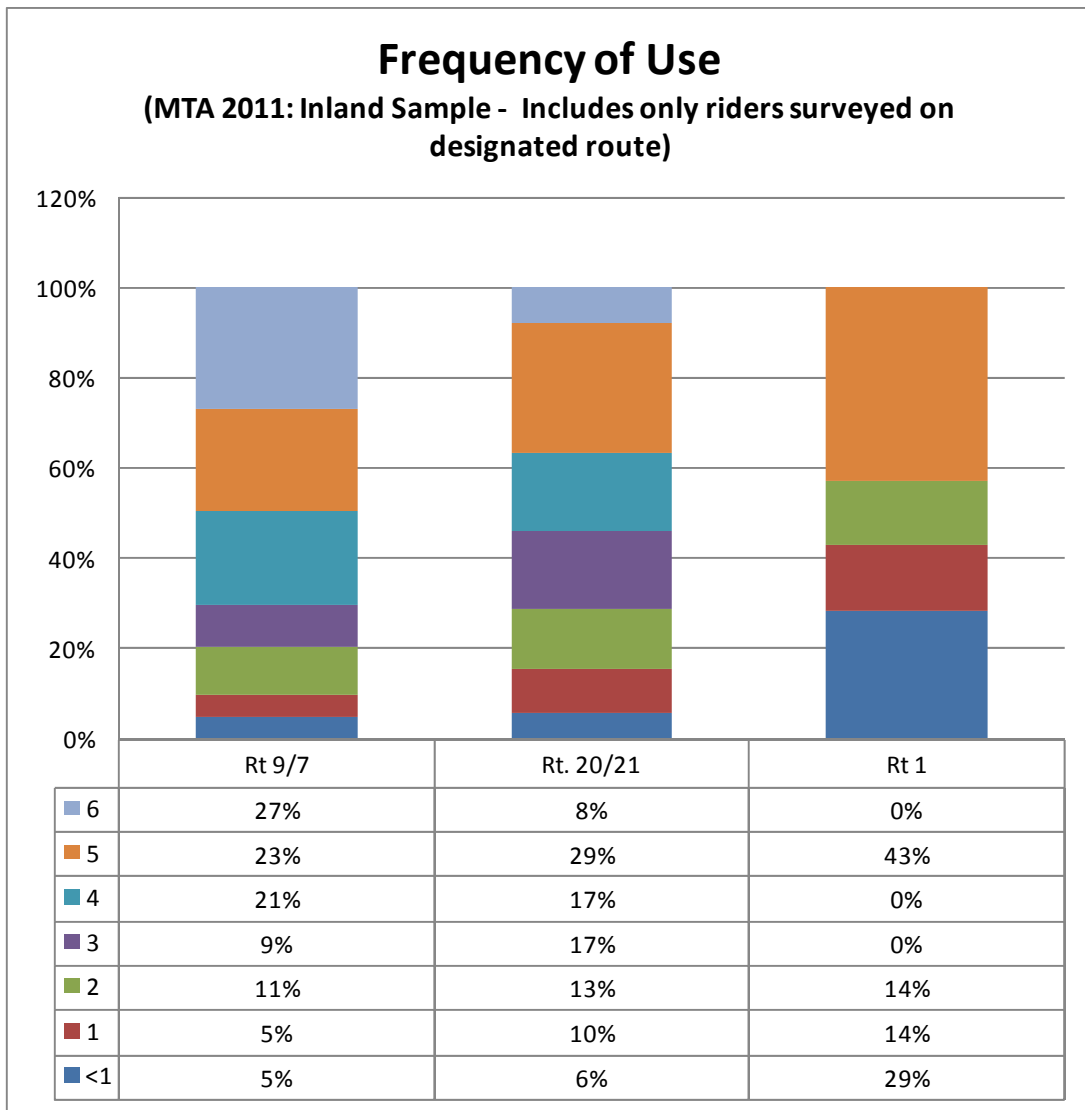


Figure 5 Frequency of Use by Route

How many days per week do you usually ride these routes?

Riders were asked to give the number of days per week that they usually ride each of the MTA routes in their service area. Many riders only answered this question for one or two of the routes listed. The chart above shows only the responses for the riders surveyed on the designated route(s).

The local Ukiah routes (9 and 7) serve highly regular riders. Eight of ten riders (80%) say they ride three or more days a week. The routes between Ukiah and Willits serve many regular riders (71%), but also a significant number of occasional riders (16% ride one day a week or less.)

The number of Rt. 1 Willits Rider passengers who responded to this question was very small. However, it appears that the route serves a mix of regular and occasional users.

About 9% of Inland rider said that they also use Dial-a-Ride. Half of these use it one day a week or less.

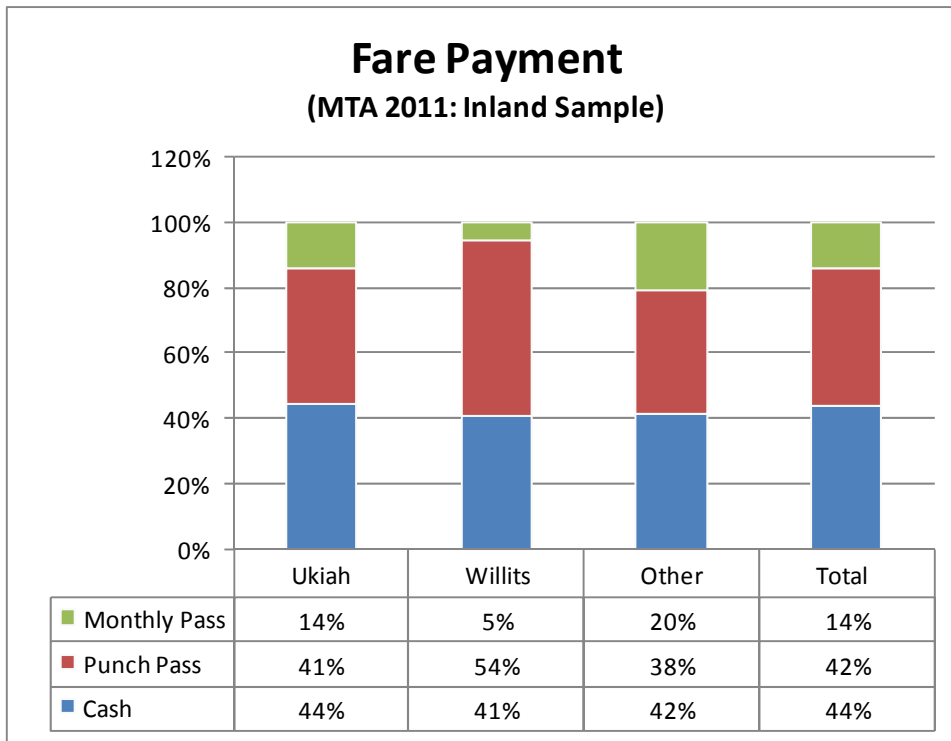


Figure 6 Fare Payment – Inland

How did you pay your fare today?

There is a much higher level of pass usage on Inland routes than on Coast routes. Overall, 56% of riders use a monthly (14%) or punch pass (42%), while 44% pay cash. Monthly passes are more popular in Ukiah where there is more frequent service. Punch passes are most popular in Willits.

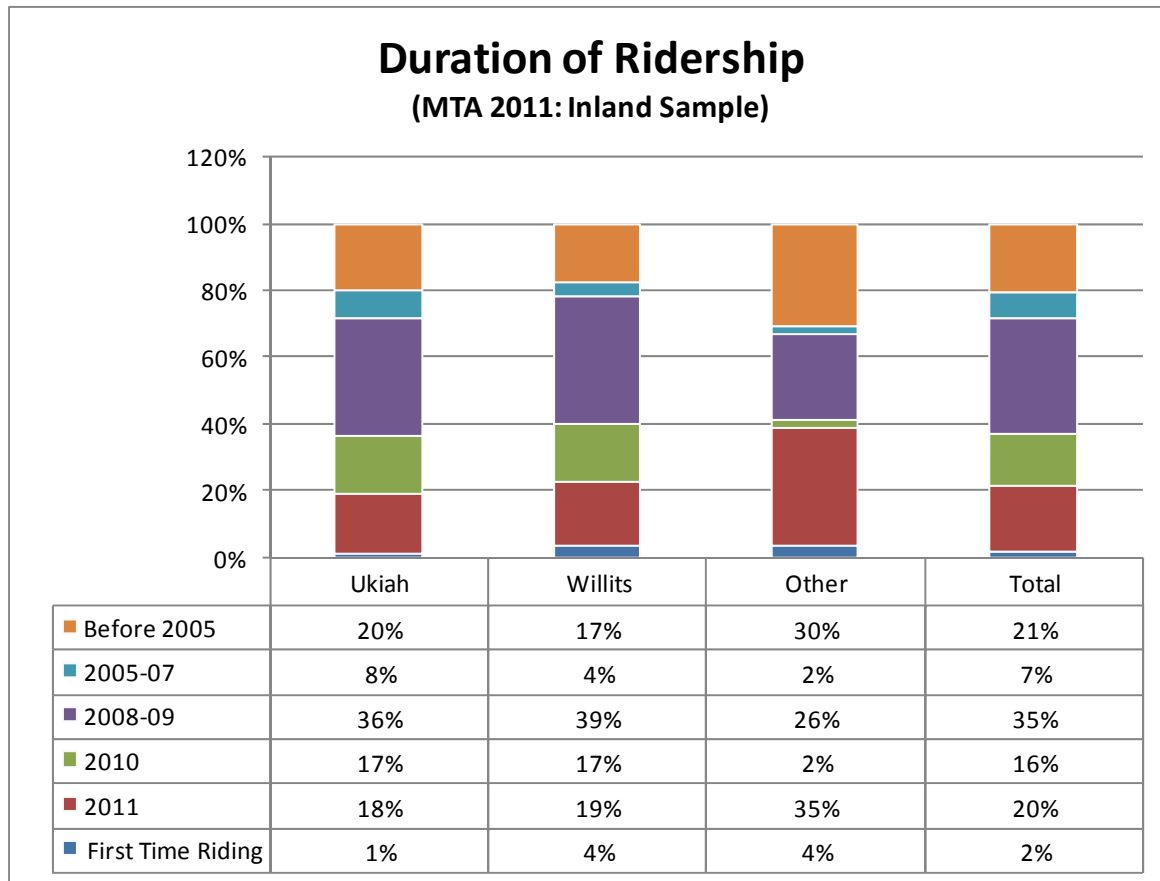


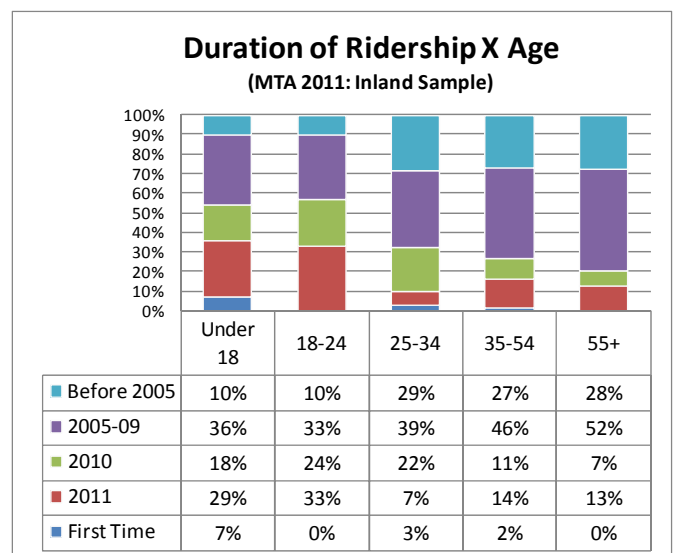
Figure 7 Duration of Ridership – Inland

What year did you start riding MTA regularly?

Over 20% of the riders surveyed on the Inland routes had started riding MTA during 2011 and another 16% in 2010. High turnover is typical among transit users, particularly where there are large segments of young riders as there are on the Inland routes. This increases the importance of effective passenger information and on-going marketing efforts.

Note, however, that MTA’s turnover is relatively low compared to many similar systems. Almost two thirds of riders (63%) have been riding since 2009 or before – indicating a highly stable ridership.

The groups mostly likely to be new to the system are young riders, particularly the 18-25 age group, indicating that many people start riding when they go to College.



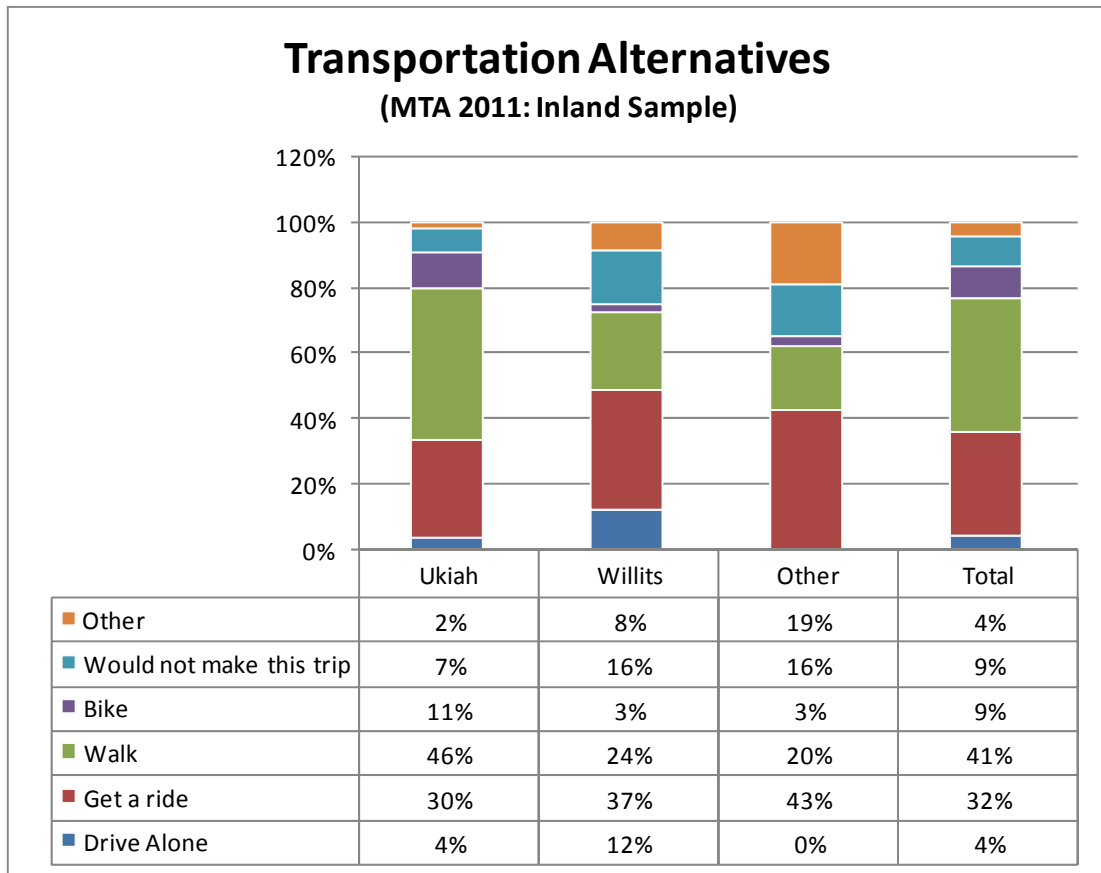


Figure 8 Transportation Alternatives – Inland

If MTA did not exist, how would you make this trip?

If MTA did not exist, riders would have limited transportation options. Most would get a ride with someone or walk to their destination. Only 4% would drive themselves.

Riders who live in Willits are more likely to say they would drive alone (12%) and less likely to say they would walk or bike. Among riders in other communities, none said they would drive themselves.

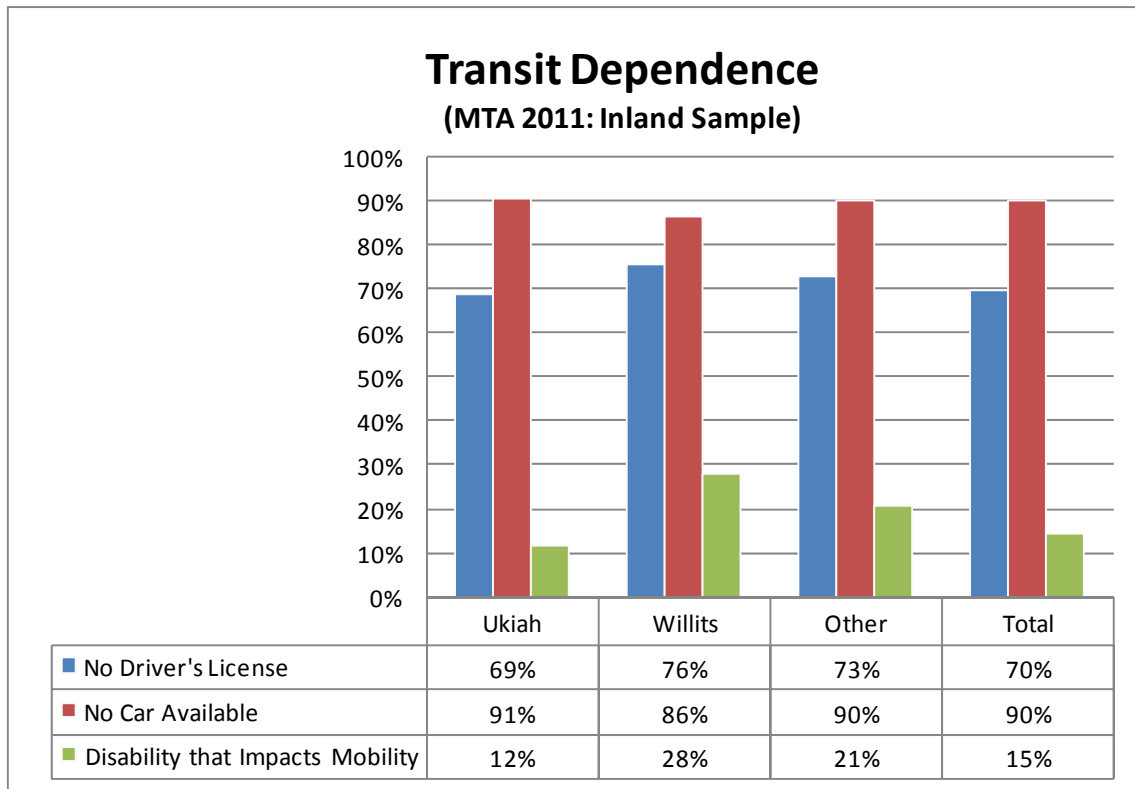


Figure 9 Transit Dependence – Inland

Transit Dependence Factors

Most Inland riders lack either a driver’s license, a vehicle or both. Only 5.6% of respondents say they have a driver's license and had a vehicle available for the trip on which they were surveyed.

Fifteen percent of Inland riders say they have a disability that limits their mobility. This percentage is significantly higher among residents outside of Ukiah – Willits (28%), other communities (21%).

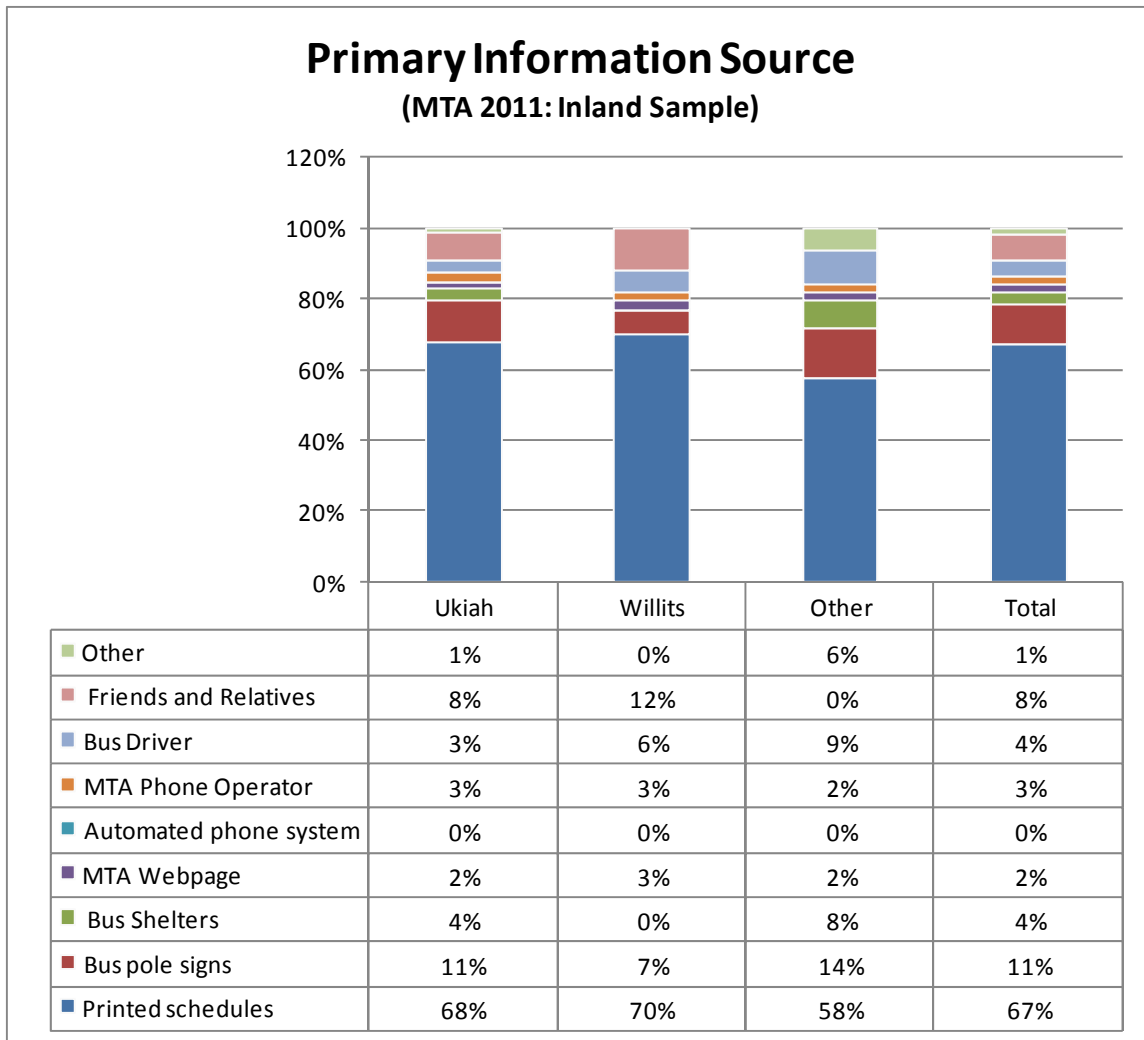


Figure 10 Primary Information Source – Inland

Where do you get your information about MTA services?

Inland riders rely heavily on the printed schedules for information – two-thirds cite it as their primary source of information. Information on bus poles (11%) and in shelters (4%) is the second most used source of information.

The low percentage of riders (2%) who use the MTA webpage as a primary information source is very surprising, especially considering the large number of college students included among the ridership.

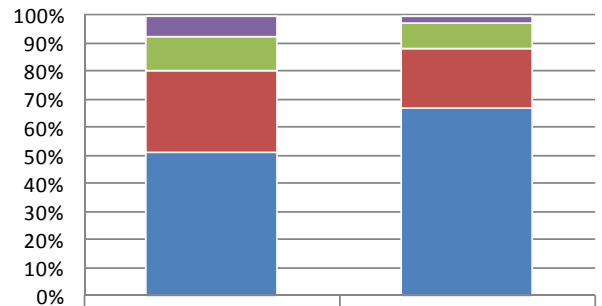
Use of Specific Information Tools

Riders were asked about their frequency of using the automated phone system and the MTA website. Half of riders had never used the automated system, while two thirds of riders have never visited the website. As the chart at the top right shows, 19% of riders use the automated phone system at least once a month and 7% use it regularly. For the website, 12% use it at least monthly and 3% use it regularly.

Asked about their internet access, 38% of riders say they have high speed access and 22% have access on their cell phones. However, a third (34%) say they do not have access to the internet.

When we crosstab these information questions by age, we would expect to find a much higher reliance on the website among the college age population. However, this is not the case. Young riders use the MTA website only slightly more than the older populations.

Use of Phone and Website (MTA 2011: Inland Sample)



	Automated Phone System	Website
Regularly (weekly)	7%	3%
Once or twice a month	12%	9%
Only a few times	29%	21%
Never	51%	67%

Internet Access (MTA 2011: Inland Sample)

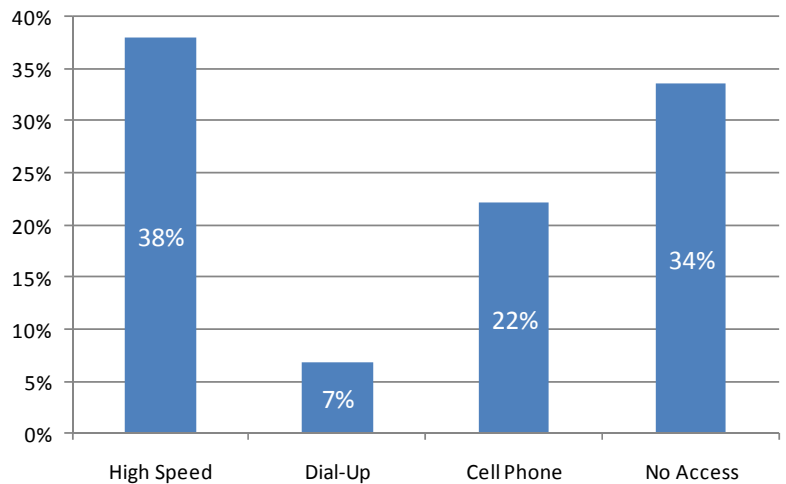


Figure 11 Automated Phone & Internet Usage - Inland

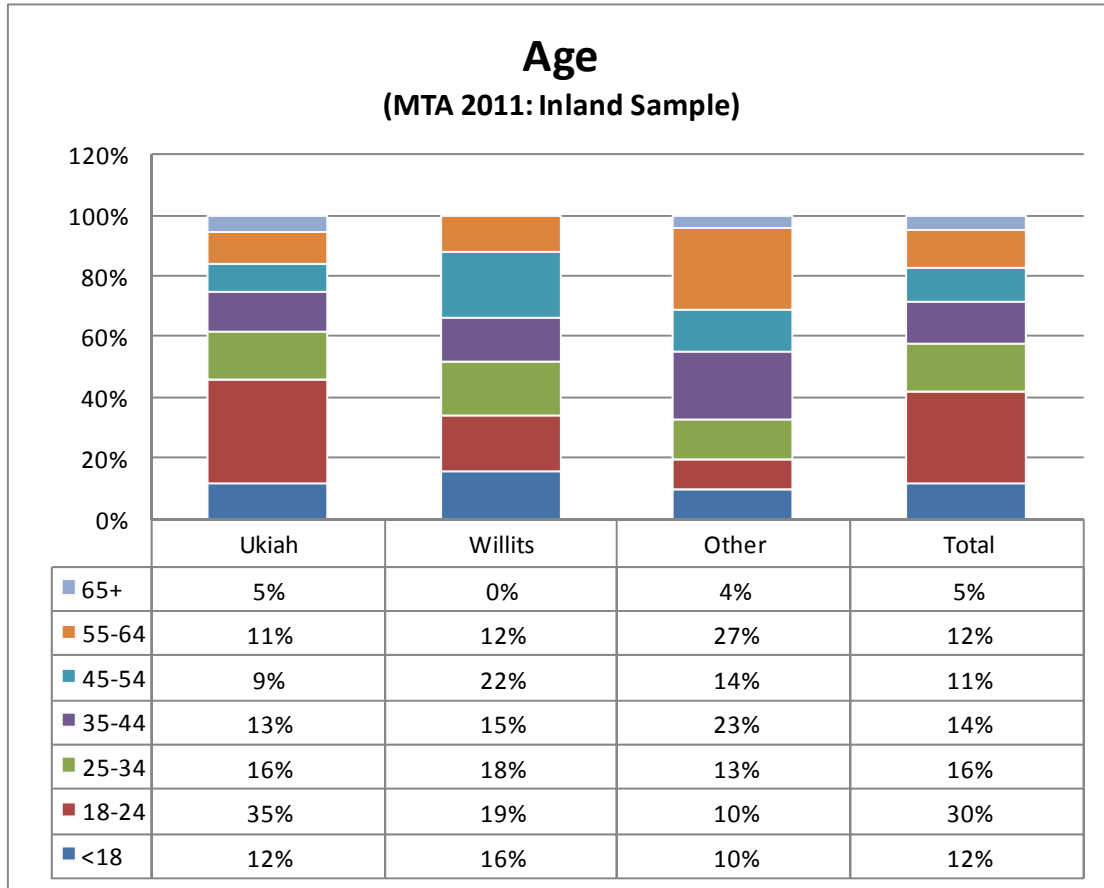


Figure 12 Age – Inland

Rider Demographics – Age

Inland riders are a young group – 42% are under the age of 25. In Ukiah, 47% are under 25 reflecting a large number of secondary and college students among the ridership. Riders in Willits are somewhat older (only 35% are under 25) and riders in other communities are a good bit older (only 20% under 25) than those in Ukiah.

The remainder of riders are largely working aged adults – 53% are 25-64. Only a small portion of the ridership (5%) gave their age as 65 or older.

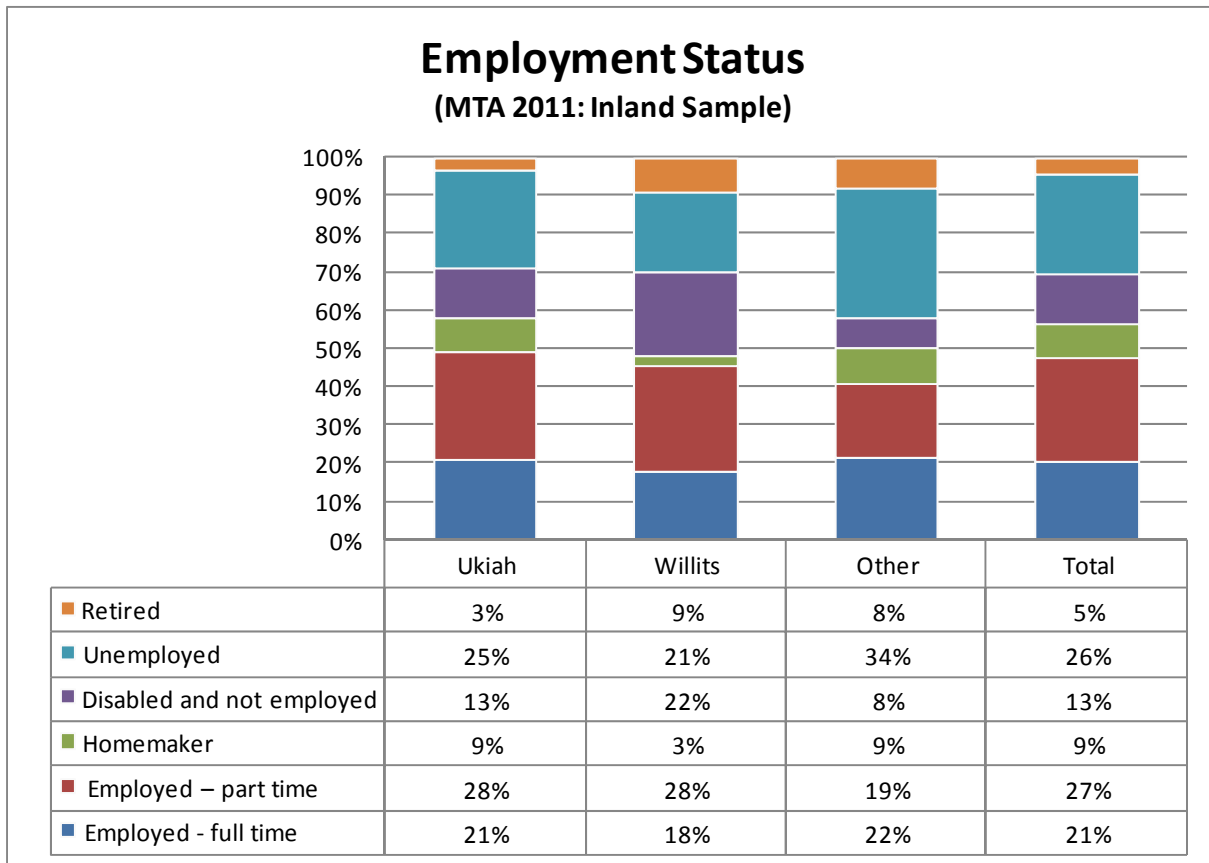


Figure 13 Employment Status – Inland

How would you describe your current employment status?

About half of inland riders are employed either full (21%) or part time (27%). Another quarter are unemployed (26%). Smaller segments describe themselves as disabled and not employed (13%), homemakers (9%) and retired (5%).

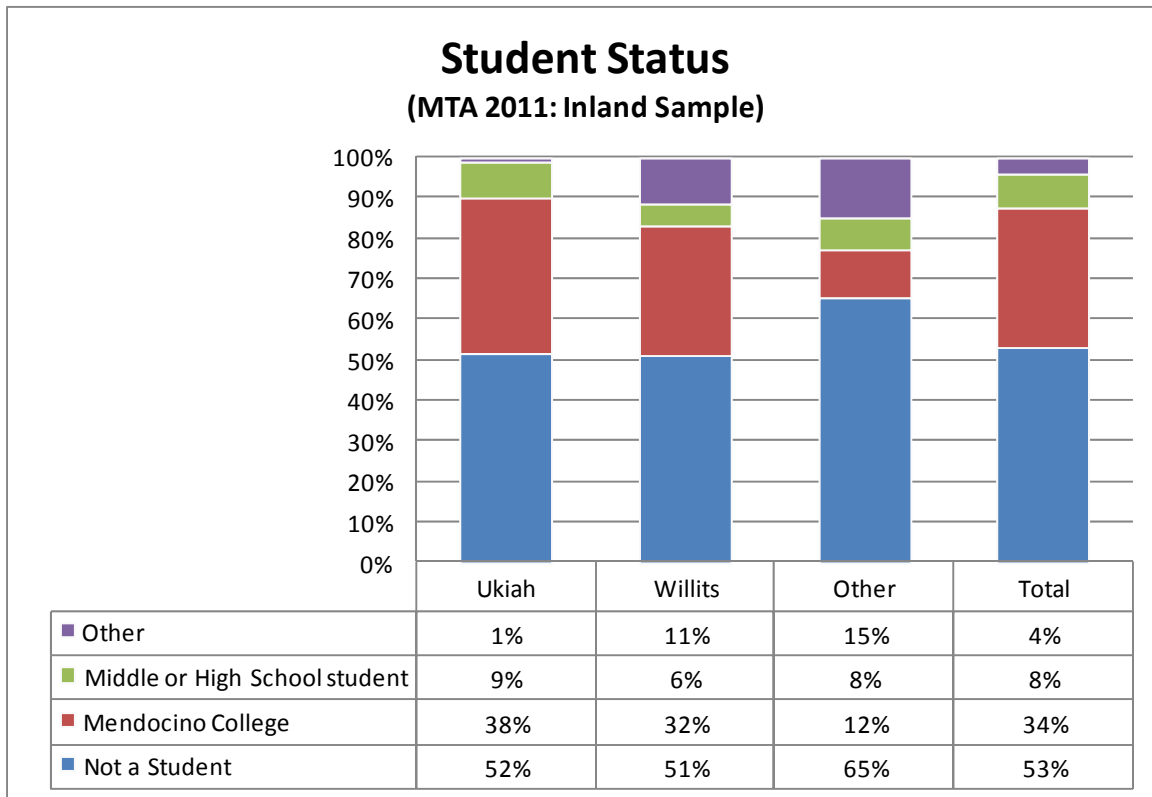


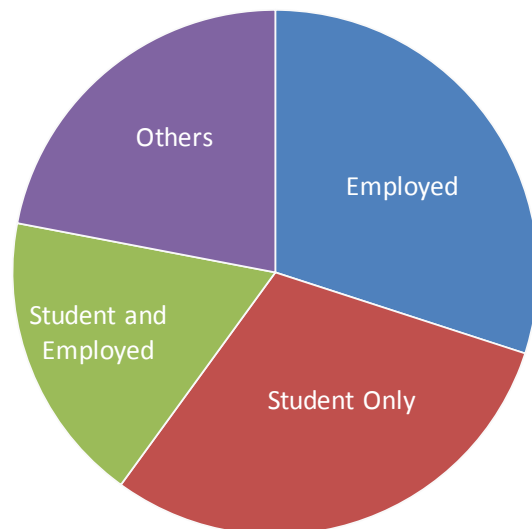
Figure 14 Student Status – Inland

Are you a student?

Students make up nearly half of MTA’s inland ridership, with Mendocino College students representing a full third (34%) of the riders included in the survey. Secondary, vocational and other students make up another 12% of the ridership.

Note that 18% of all participants in the survey were both students and employed. Hence the ridership can be roughly segmented as shown in the pie chart at the right.

Ridership Segments (MTA 2011: Inland Sample)



Ethnicity and Gender of Ridership

MTA’s Inland ridership, like the Coast ridership, is made up primarily of a mix of Caucasian (53%) and Hispanic riders (27%), with the greatest concentration of Hispanic riders in Ukiah (31%). Native Americans make up 12% of the Inland ridership.

The ridership is somewhat more female (58%) than male (42%), just the opposite of what was seen on the Coast routes.

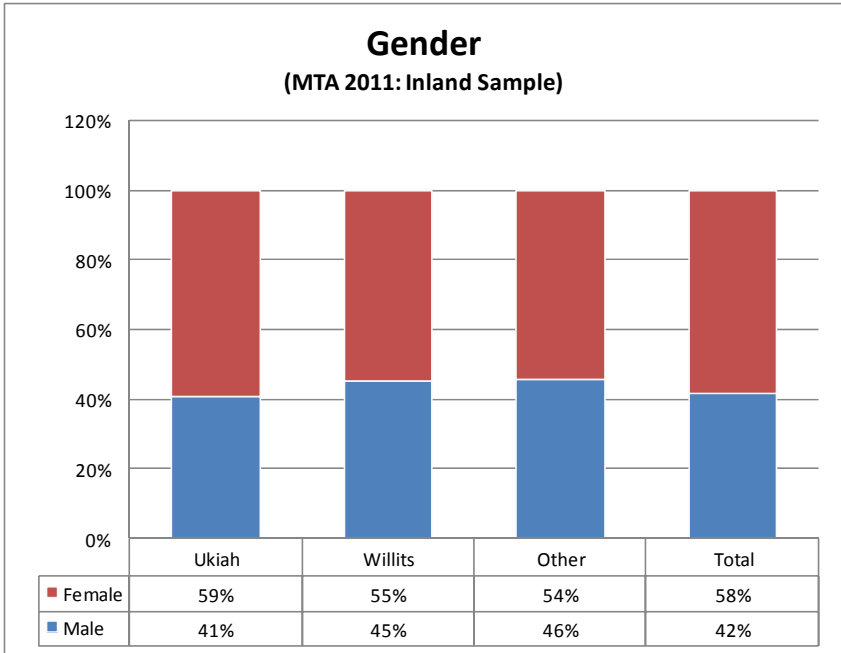
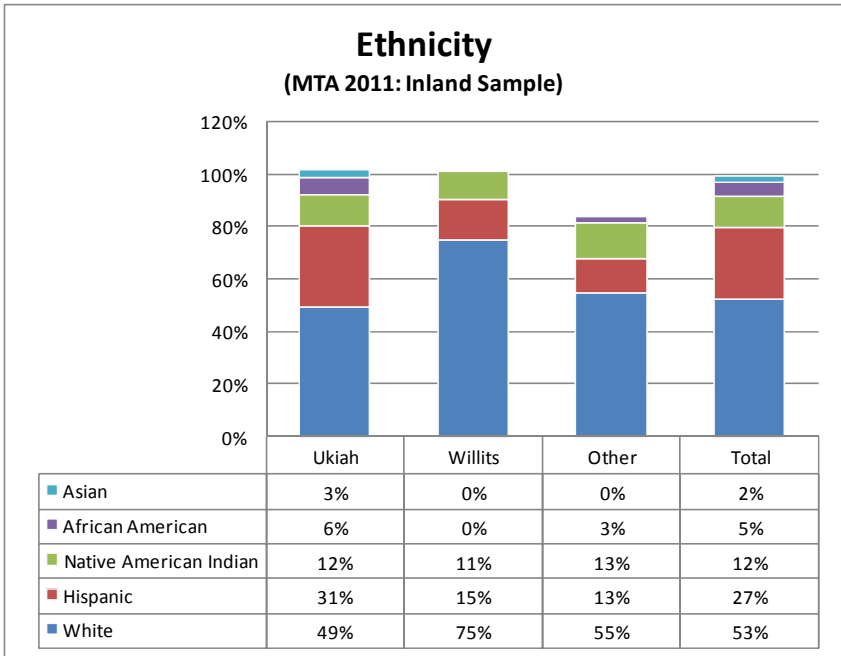
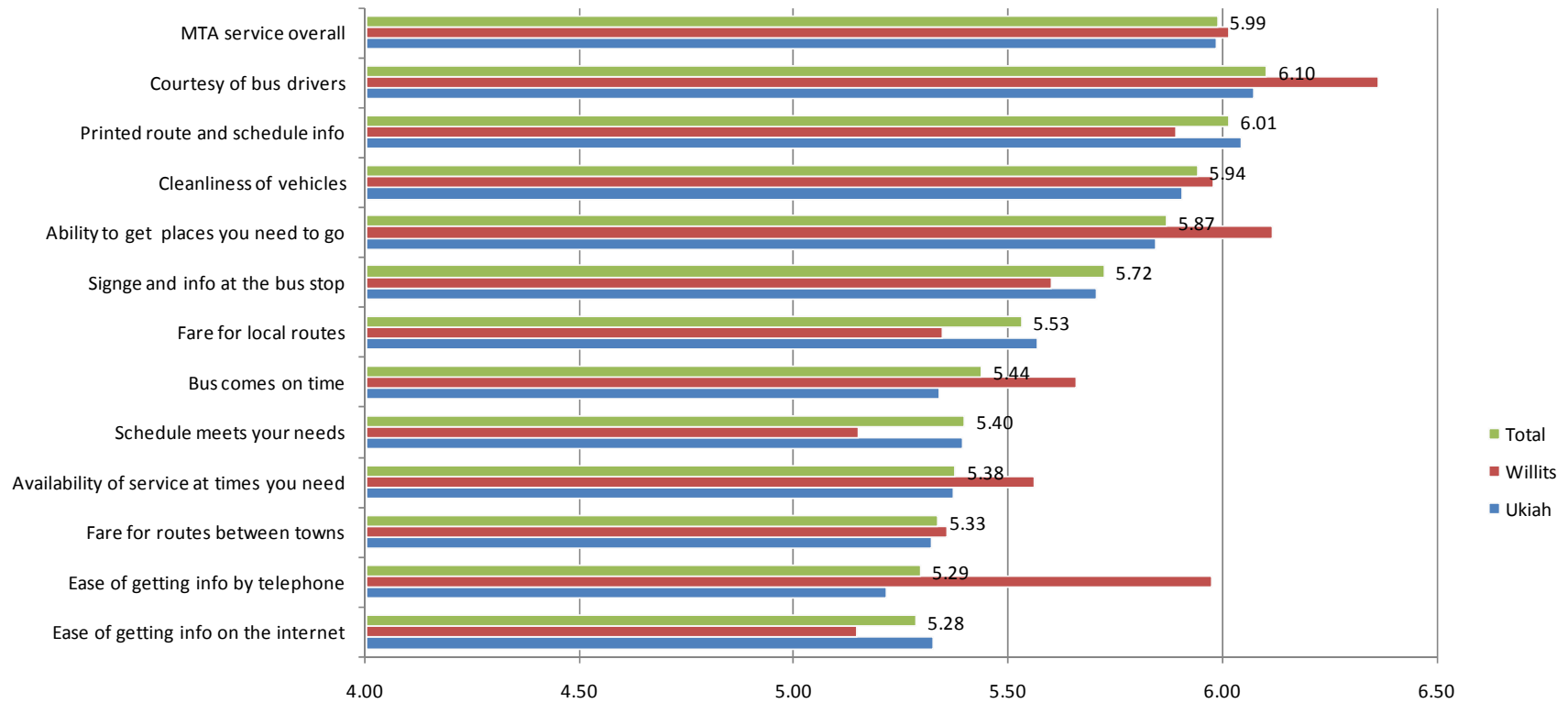


Figure 15 Ethnicity & Gender - Inland

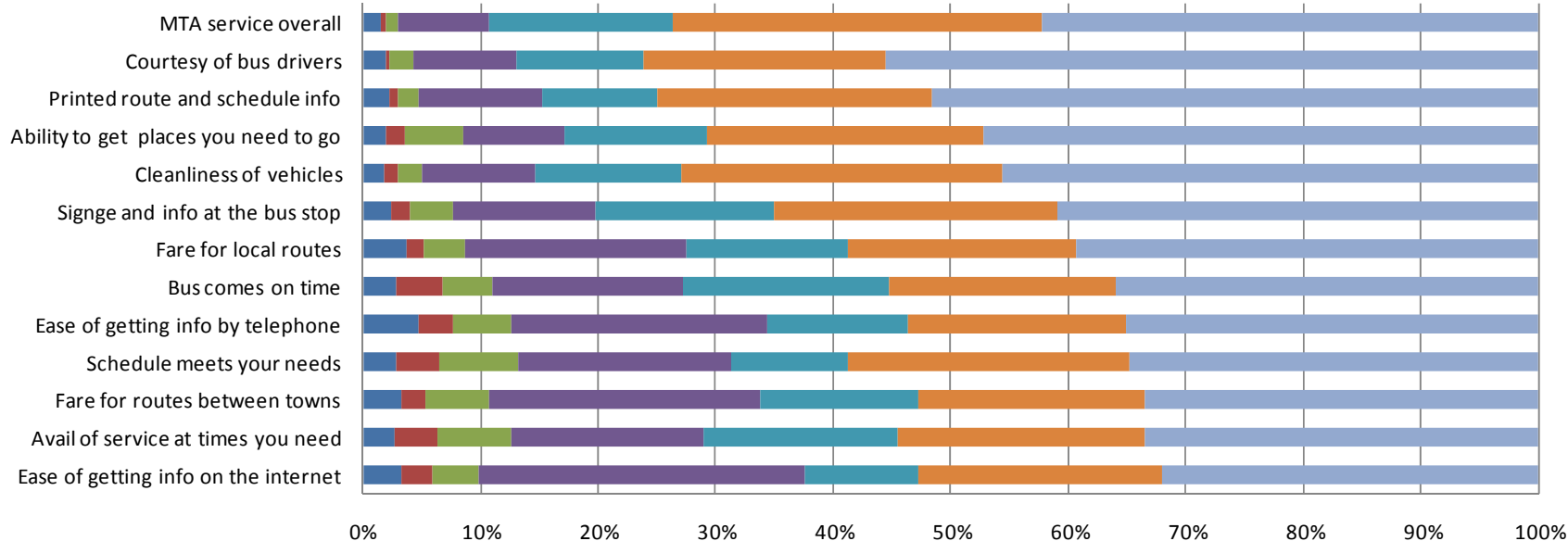
Satisfaction
Mean on Scale of 1 to 7
(MTA 2011: Inland Sample)



	Ease of getting info on the internet	Ease of getting info by telephone	Fare for routes between towns	Availability of service at times you need	Schedule meets your needs	Bus comes on time	Fare for local routes	Signage and info at the bus stop	Ability to get places you need to go	Cleanliness of vehicles	Printed route and schedule info	Courtesy of bus drivers	MTA service overall
Total	5.28	5.29	5.33	5.38	5.40	5.44	5.53	5.72	5.87	5.94	6.01	6.10	5.99
Willits	5.15	5.97	5.36	5.56	5.15	5.66	5.35	5.60	6.12	5.98	5.89	6.36	6.01
Ukiah	5.32	5.21	5.32	5.37	5.39	5.34	5.57	5.70	5.84	5.90	6.04	6.07	5.98

Figure 16 Mean Satisfaction Ratings - Inland

Satisfaction Ratings (MTA 2011: Inland Sample)



	Ease of getting info on the internet	Avail of service at times you need	Fare for routes between towns	Schedule meets your needs	Ease of getting info by telephone	Bus comes on time	Fare for local routes	Signge and info at the bus stop	Cleanlines of vehicles	Ability to get places you need to go	Printed route and schedule info	Courtesy of bus drivers	MTA service overall
■ 1 - Very Dissatisfied	3%	3%	3%	3%	5%	3%	4%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
■ 2	3%	4%	2%	4%	3%	4%	1%	2%	1%	2%	1%	0%	0%
■ 3	4%	6%	5%	7%	5%	4%	4%	4%	2%	5%	2%	2%	1%
■ 4	28%	16%	23%	18%	22%	16%	19%	12%	10%	9%	10%	9%	8%
■ 5	10%	17%	13%	10%	12%	18%	14%	15%	12%	12%	10%	11%	16%
■ 6	21%	21%	19%	24%	18%	19%	19%	24%	27%	24%	23%	21%	31%
■ 7 - Very Satisfied	32%	33%	34%	35%	35%	36%	39%	41%	46%	47%	52%	56%	42%

Figure 17 Satisfaction Ratings – Full Distribution of Responses - Inland

Satisfaction Ratings

The charts on the two previous pages illustrate the responses to a battery of satisfaction ratings. Riders were asked to rate various aspects of MTA service on a scale of 1 to 7 where 1=very dissatisfied and 7=very satisfied.

Figure 16 Mean Satisfaction Ratings - Inland shows the average ratings given by each sub-segment and by the Inland riders overall. All mean ratings are 5 or above indicating a high level of satisfaction with the service. However, it is important to note that regular users of a service seldom rate it negatively. The distinctions tend to come in the top half of the rating scale – 4 to 7.

The highest ratings overall, above 6, are for:

- Courtesy of bus operators (6.10)
- Printed route and schedule info (6.01)

The lowest ratings, under 5.5, are for:

- Ease of getting information on the internet (5.28)
- Ease of getting information by telephone (5.29)
- Fare for routes between towns (5.33)
- Availability of service at times you need (5.38)
- Schedule meets your needs (5.4)
- Bus comes on time (5.44)

Figure 17 Satisfaction Ratings – Full Distribution of Responses - Inland shows the percent of all respondents who gave each rating level to each aspect of service. Looking at the full distribution, allows you to see where there are pockets of dissatisfaction (ratings of 3 or lower). These include:

- Schedule meets your needs (14%)
- Availability of service at times of day you need (13%)
- Ease of getting information by phone (13%)
- Bus comes on time (11%)
- Fare for routes between towns/communities (10%)
- Ease of getting information on the internet (10%)

Inland riders give MTA service overall a very positive rating of 5.99. Forty-two percent of riders give the system a top score of 7.

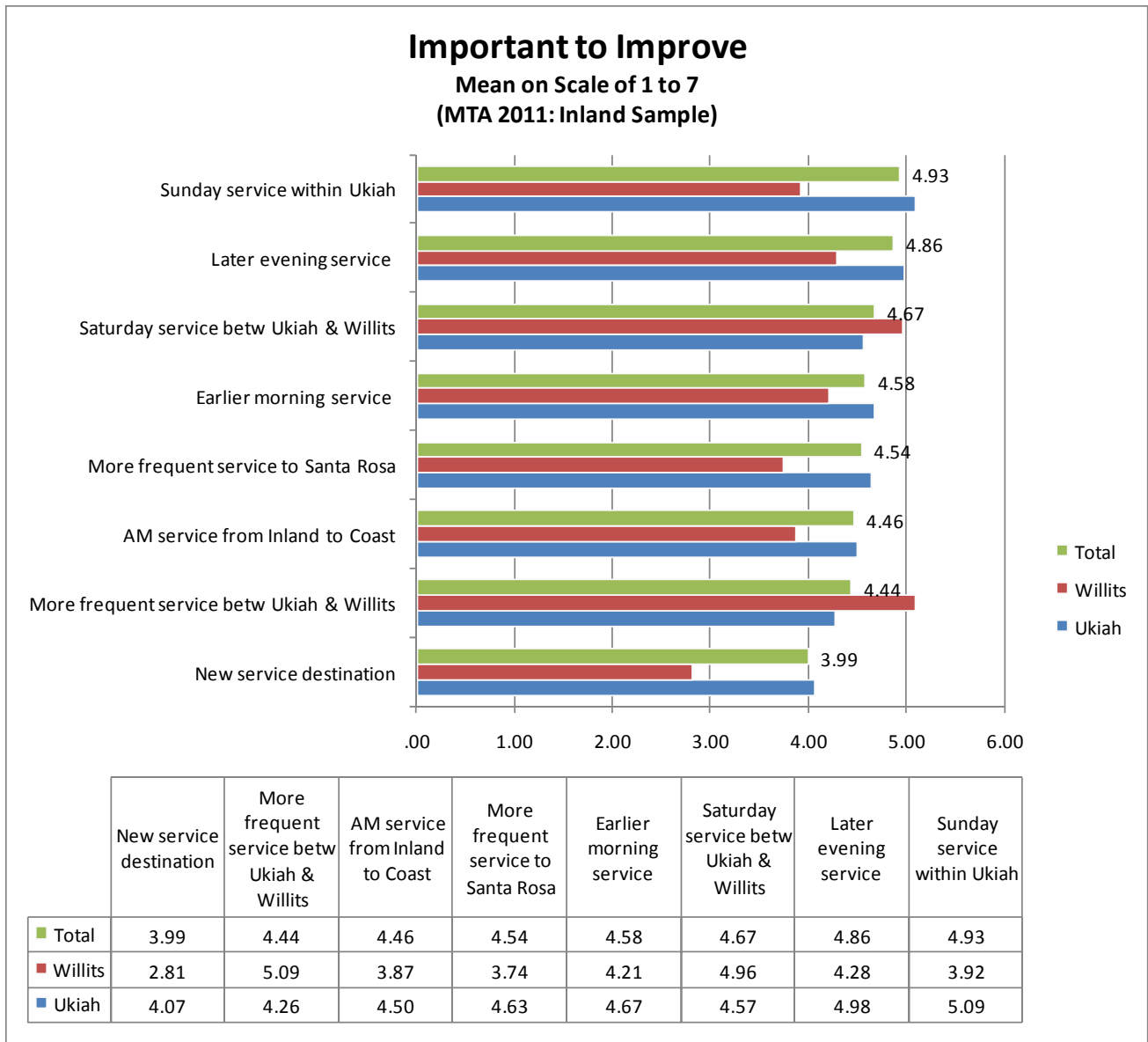


Figure 18 Important to Improve – Mean Ratings – Inland

How important this service improvement would be to you?

Riders were asked to rate the importance of various service improvements on a scale of 1 to 7 with 1=not important and 7=very important. The chart above shows the mean ratings given by Ukiah residents, Willits residents and the total Inland sample.

The improvements perceived as most important by Ukiah residents are:

- Sunday service within Ukiah (5.09)
- Later evening service (4.98)

Willits residents are most interested in:

- More frequent service between Ukiah and Willits (5.09)
- Saturday service between Ukiah and Willits (4.96)

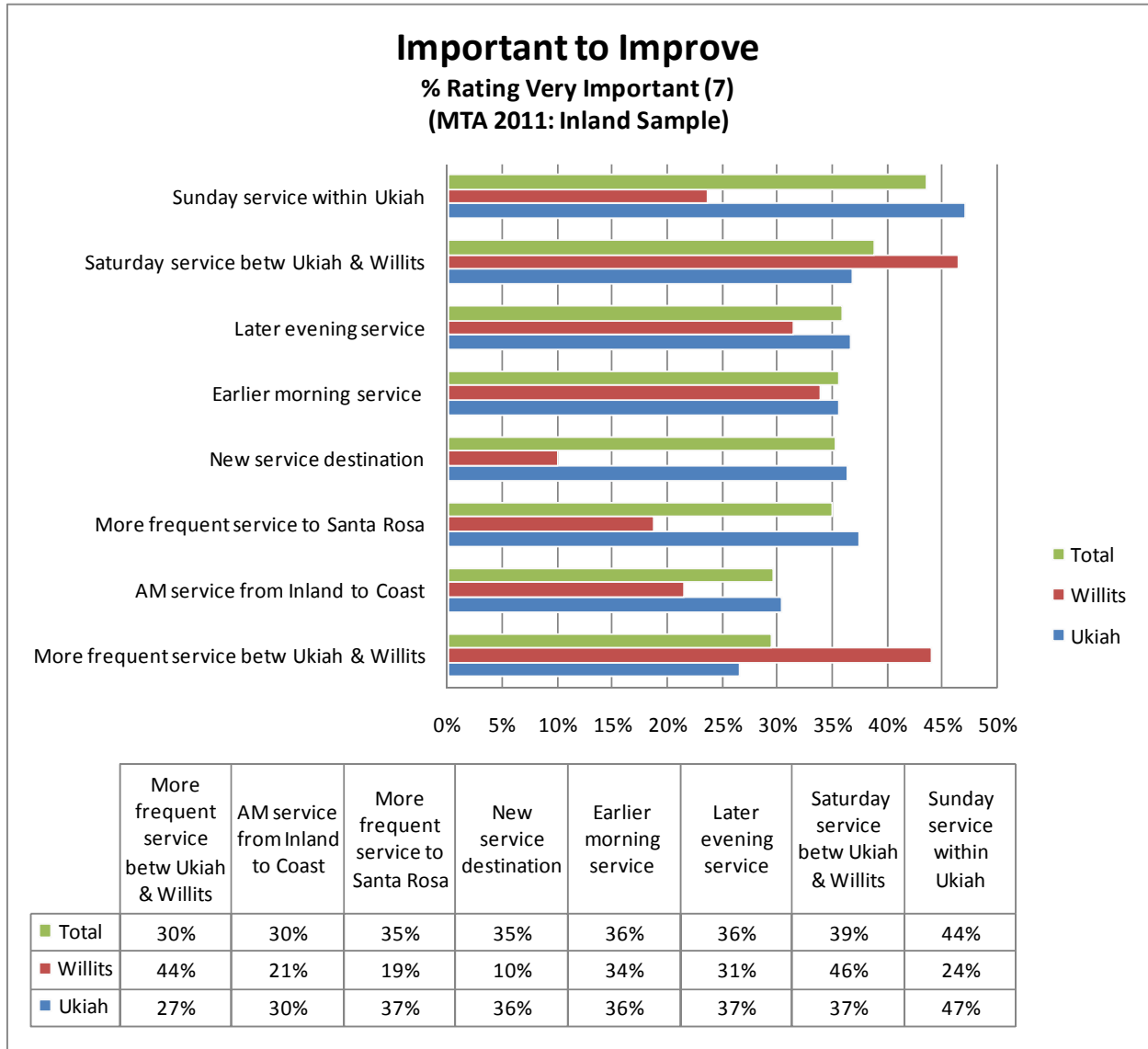


Figure 19 Very Important to Improve – Inland

Very Important to Improve – Ratings of 7

The chart above includes only those individuals who said a particular service improvement was very important to them (rating of 7). This results in the same priorities as indicated by the mean ratings. Ukiah residents want Sunday service within Ukiah, while Willits residents very much desire more frequent and Saturday service between Ukiah and Willis.

Coast Survey

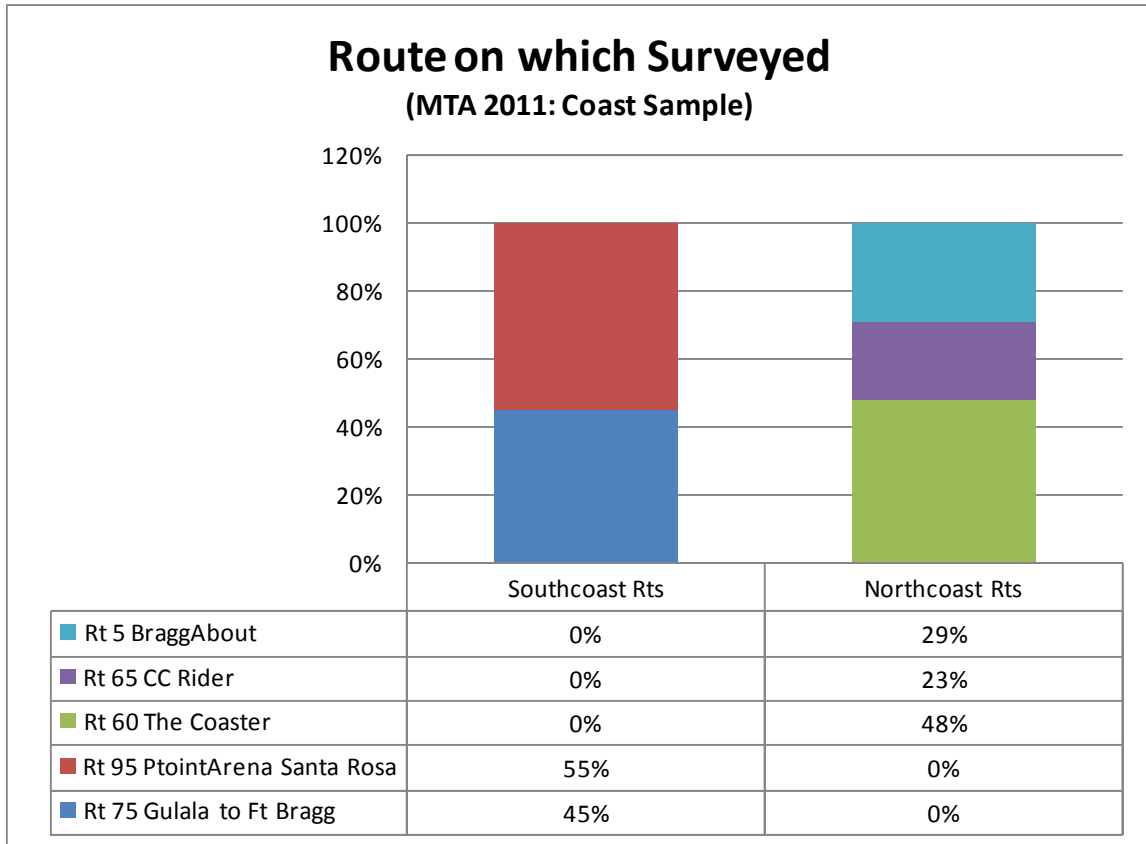


Figure 20 Route on which Surveyed – Coast

Route on which survey was taken

The Coast survey was distributed on Routes 5, 60, 65, 75 and 95. The table at the right shows the number of questionnaires completed on each route. The findings were weighted to reflect the actual ridership contributed by each route. The chart above shows the distribution of the sample after weighting.

Route	N
Rt 75 Gulala to Ft Bragg	37
Rt 95 PpointArena Santa Rosa	46
Rt 60 The Coaster	36
Rt 65 CC Rider	57
Rt 5 BraggAbout	28

Throughout this report, we will segment the Coast sample into the two route groups illustrated here – allowing us to see difference between the Southcoast and Northcoast riders.

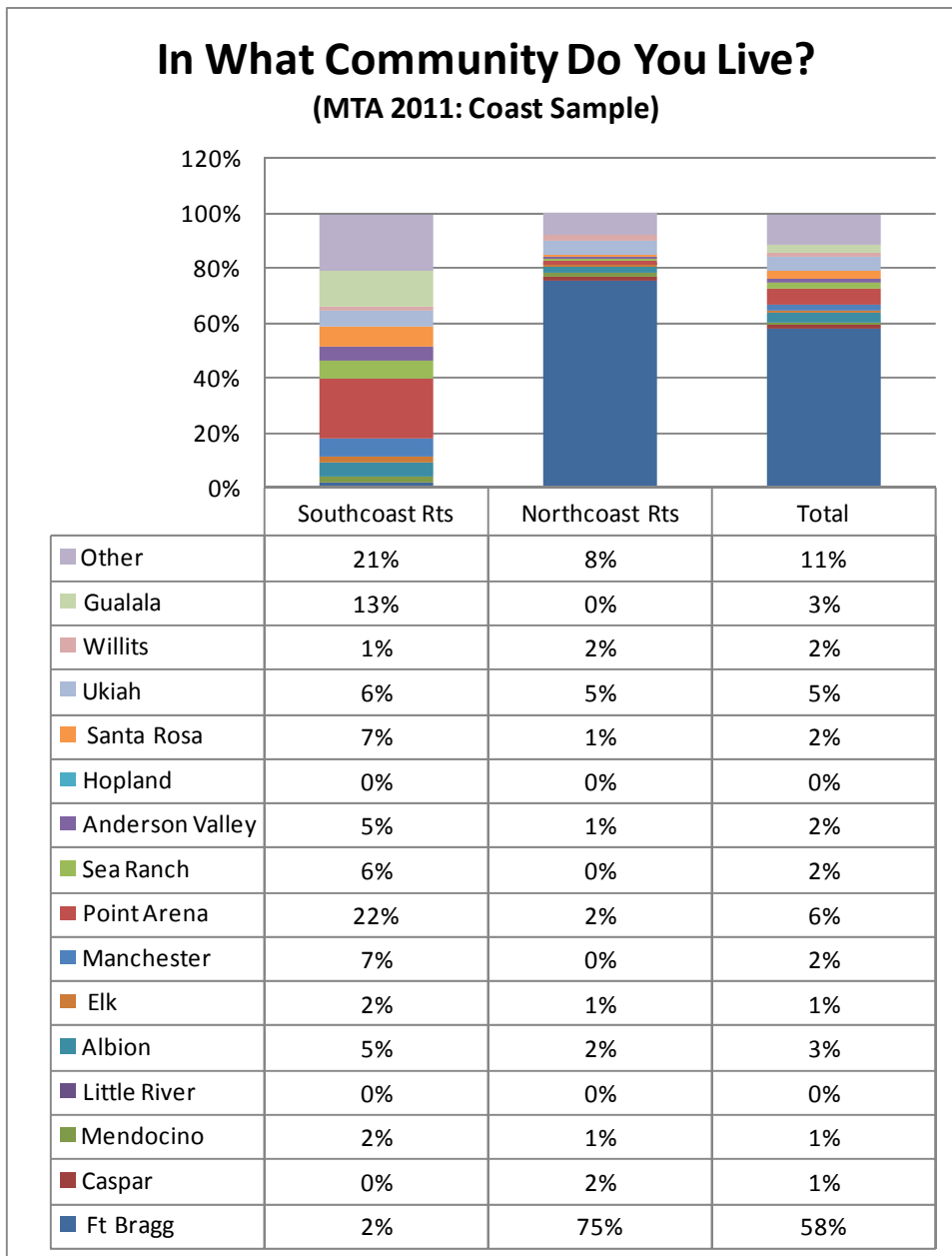


Figure 21 Community of Residence – Coast

Community of Residence

On the Southcoast routes, riders live in a variety of communities with concentrations in Point Arena and Gualala. On the Northcoast routes, three quarters of riders say they live in Ft. Bragg with the rest broadly dispersed.

Seventeen (17) of the 204 respondents (8%) provided communities of residence that are clearly outside of the service area, clearly identifying them as visitors.

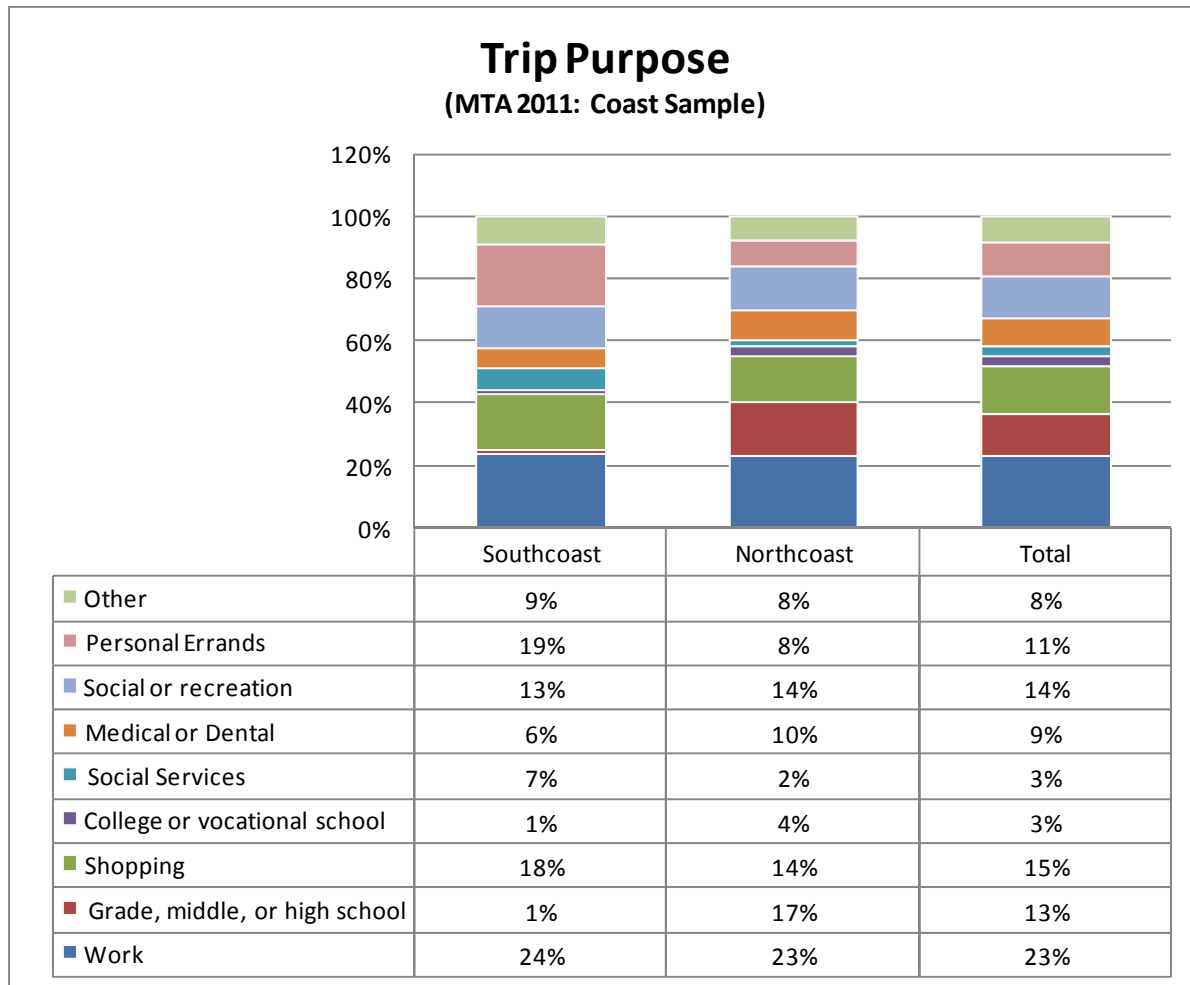


Figure 22 Trip Purpose – Coast

What is the purpose of this trip today?

Coastal riders use MTA for a variety of trip purposes, including commuting. Just under a quarter of riders on both the Southcoast and Northcoast routes said their trip was a work trip. On the Northcoast, 21% of riders were traveling for school or college, while on the Southcoast only 2% gave this as their trip purpose. Overall, about 39% of riders were making commute trips.

Non-commute trip purposes make up the majority of trips on MTA’s Coast routes. Shopping (15%), social/recreation (14%), personal errands (11%) and medical/dental trips (9%) combine to represent about half of all trips.

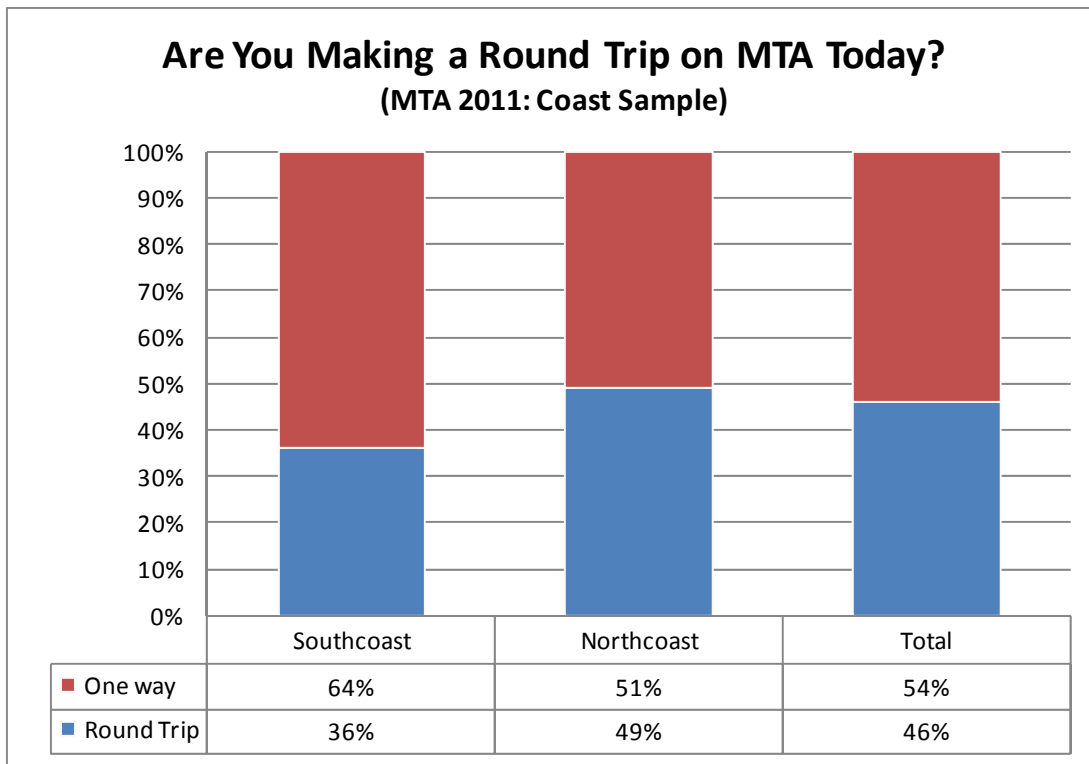


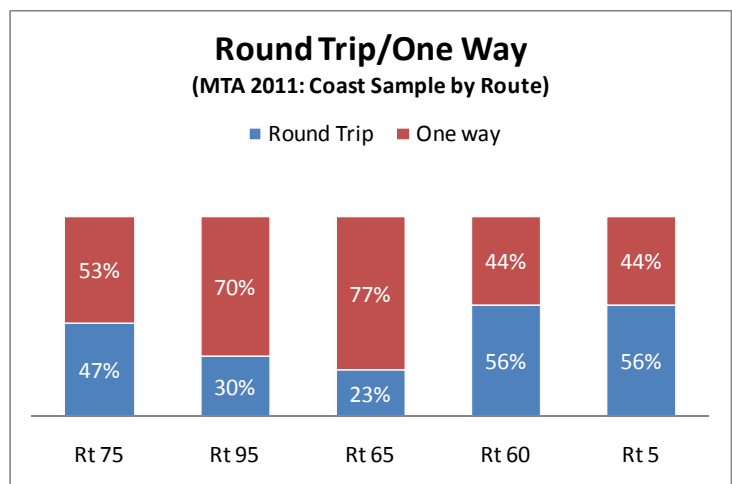
Figure 23 Round Trip/One Way – Coast

Are you making a round trip on MTA today?

This question was asked on the Coast routes because of the long distance nature of many of the routes. The majority of riders, particularly on the Southcoast routes, said they were not making a round trip.

The chart at the right breaks the data down by route, showing that routes 95 and 65 are dominated by one-way travelers.

About 12% of all Coast respondents said they were traveling to Santa Rosa, while fourteen percent are traveling between the Coast and Ukiah. Both of these groups likely include many individuals who are staying overnight or traveling on via other modes.



Another component of the one-way travelers is likely individuals who are using local routes to travel in one direction but getting a ride home or biking the other direction.

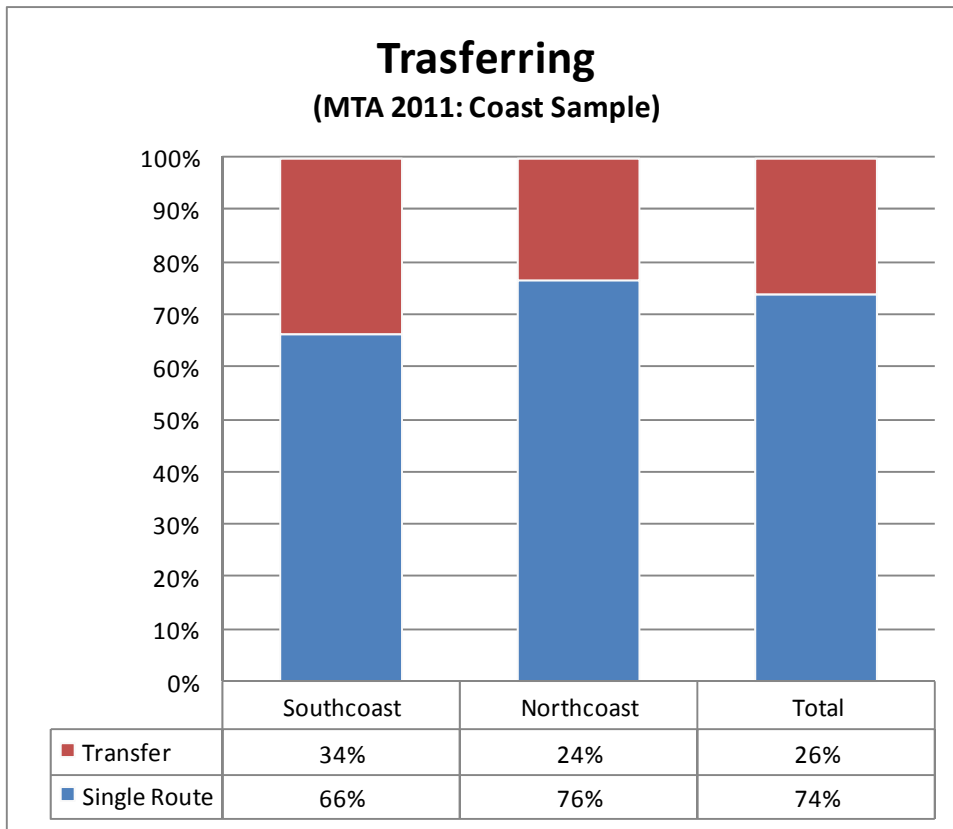


Figure 24 Transferring - Coast

Will you or have you transferred to complete this trip?

While most riders say they will use only a single route, a third of Southcoast riders and a quarter of Northcoast riders say they will transfer to complete their trip.

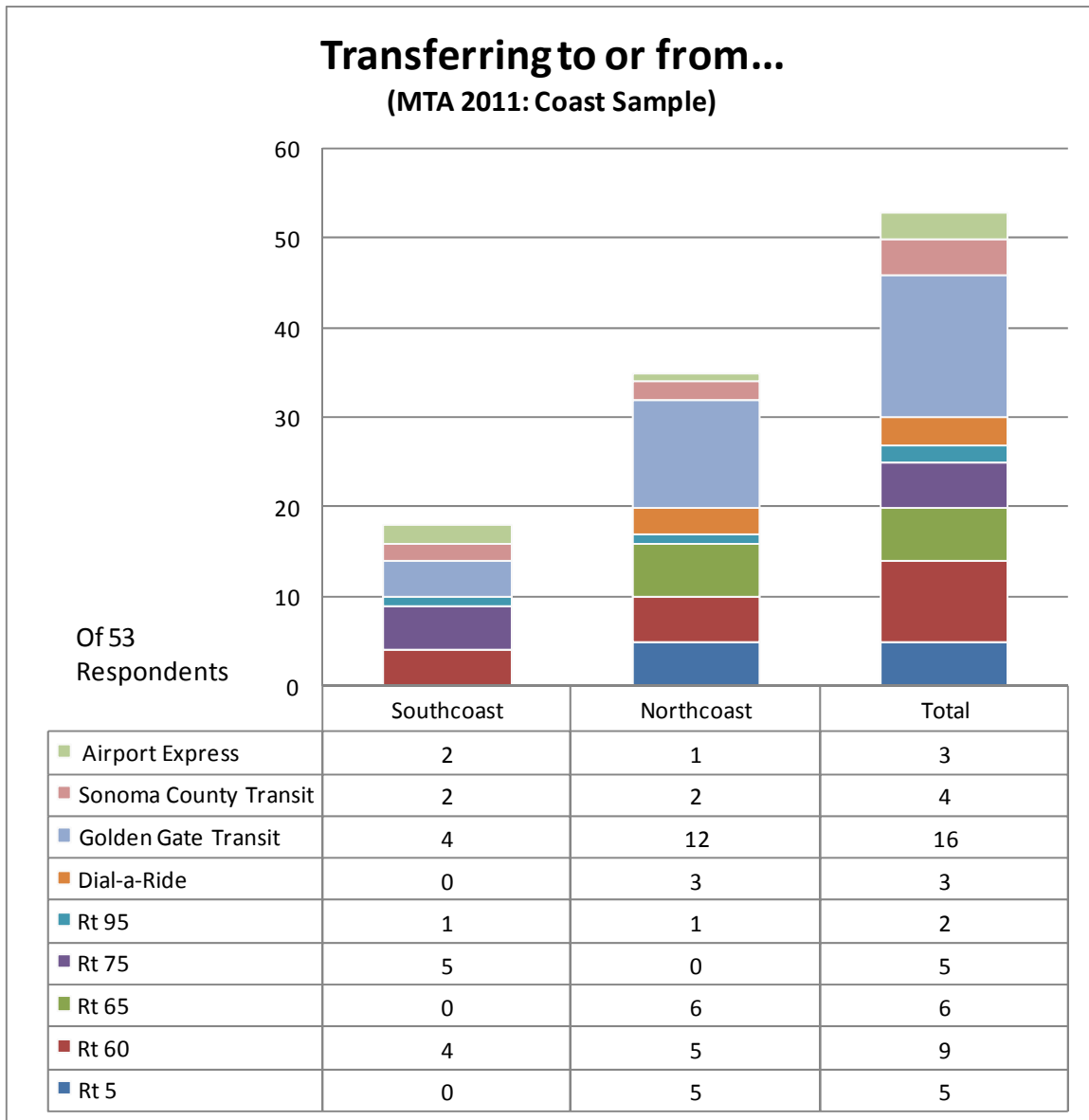


Figure 25 Transfer Routes - Coast

Routes Riders are transferring to or from

Of the individuals who said they transfer to complete their trip, 53 provided information about the service they will transfer to. Those responses are shown above. The largest number (28) said they were transferring to another MTA route or Dial-a-Ride, while 16 were transferring to or from Golden Gate Transit. Smaller numbers were transferring to Sonoma County Transit (4) or the Airport Express (3).

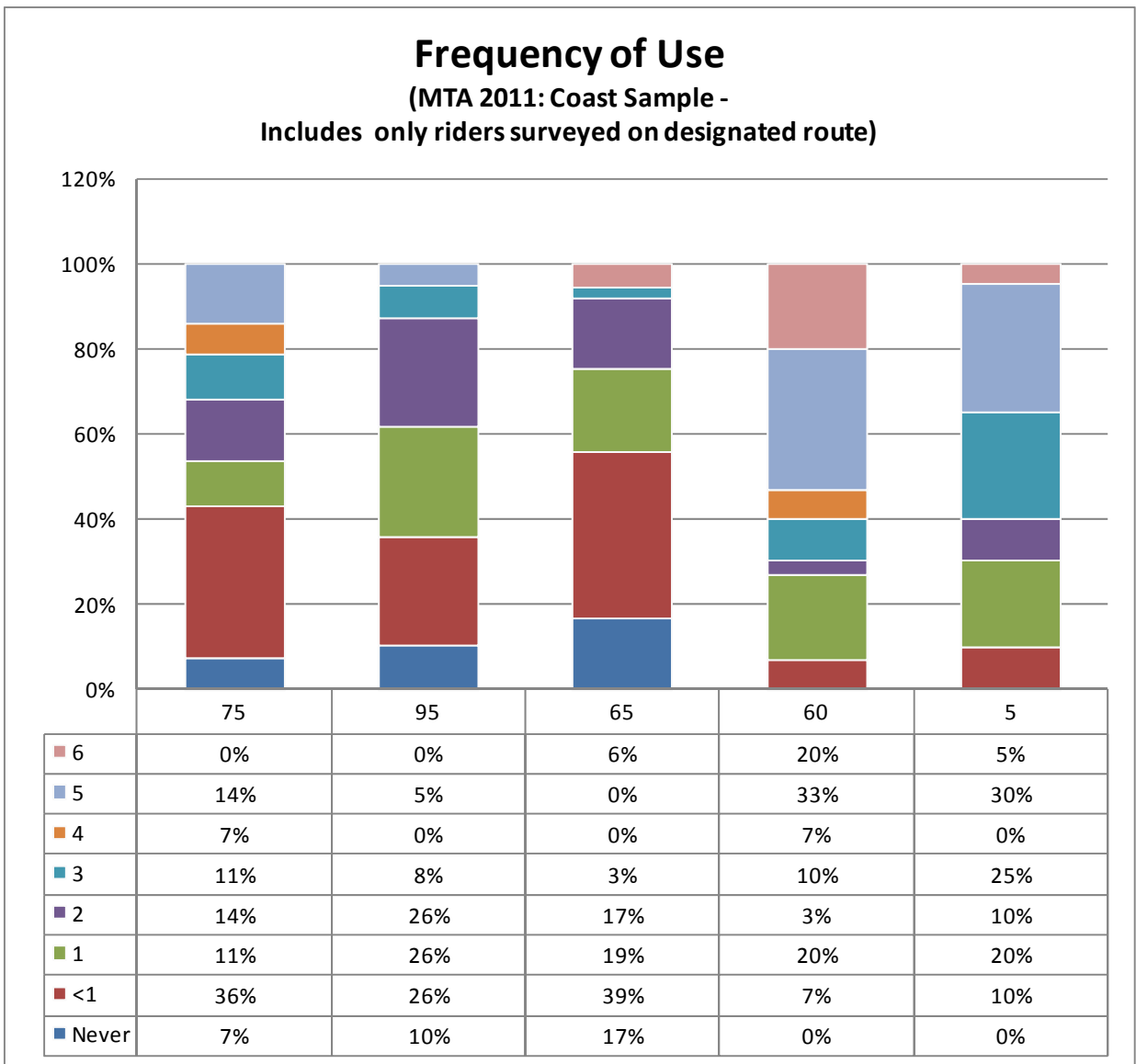


Figure 26 Frequency of Ridership by Route – Coast

How many days per week do you usually ride these routes?

Riders were asked to give the number of days per week that they usually ride each of the MTA routes in their service area. Many riders only answered this question for one or two of the routes listed. The chart above shows the answers for riders surveyed onboard each specific route. (For example, the percentages for Rt. 75 are for just that set of riders surveyed on Rt. 75 and hence provides a reasonable representation of how often Rt. 75 riders use that route).

MTA's Coast ridership includes a broad mix of regular and occasional users.

Routes 65 and 95, and to a lesser extent route 75, are used largely on an occasional basis. On Rt. 65, 75% of respondents said they ride the route one day per week or less and on Rt. 95, 62% said this. (Note that on each route there is a small percent of riders who say they "never" ride the route. A review of these questionnaires finds that these are primarily tourists or other one time riders.) On Rt. 75, 54% of riders say they ride once a week or less.

Unlike routes 95 and 65 which are dominated by occasional users, Rt. 75 also has a significant segment of regular riders - one third (32%) of riders use the bus 3 or more days a week. On Rt. 95 only 13% say they ride this frequently and on Rt. 65 only 9%.

Routes 60 and 5 have high percentages of regular users. On Rt. 60, 70% say they ride three days a week or more and on Rt. 5, 60% ride this regularly.

The large numbers of occasional, even one-time, riders on MTA's coast routes increases the importance of signage and passenger information tools that are easy to use and readily available.

NOTE: While it is not included on the chart above, a small number of fixed route riders (8%) said that they also use Dial-a-Ride – most indicating they use it once a week or less.

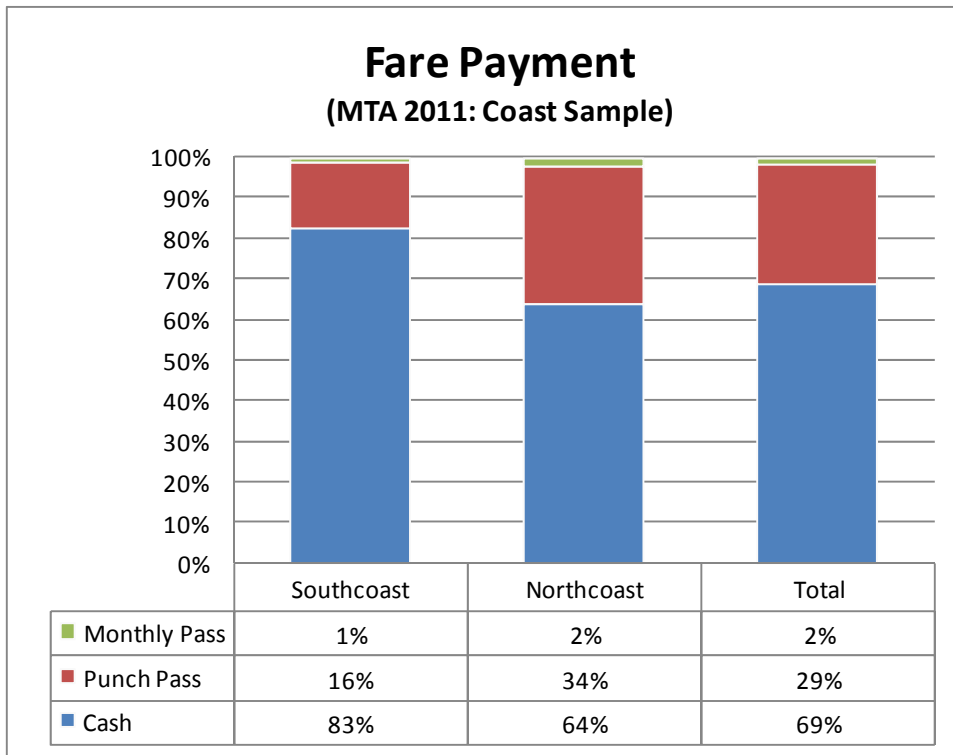


Figure 27 Fare Payment – Coast

How did you pay your fare today?

The majority of riders pay their fare in cash (69%). This is particularly true on the Southcoast routes (83%) which is also where riders are most likely to be making one-way, probably infrequent trips.

Only 2% of riders pay with a monthly pass, while 29% use a punch pass. This is quite a low level of pass usage, but likely reflect the infrequent use of the bus by many riders.

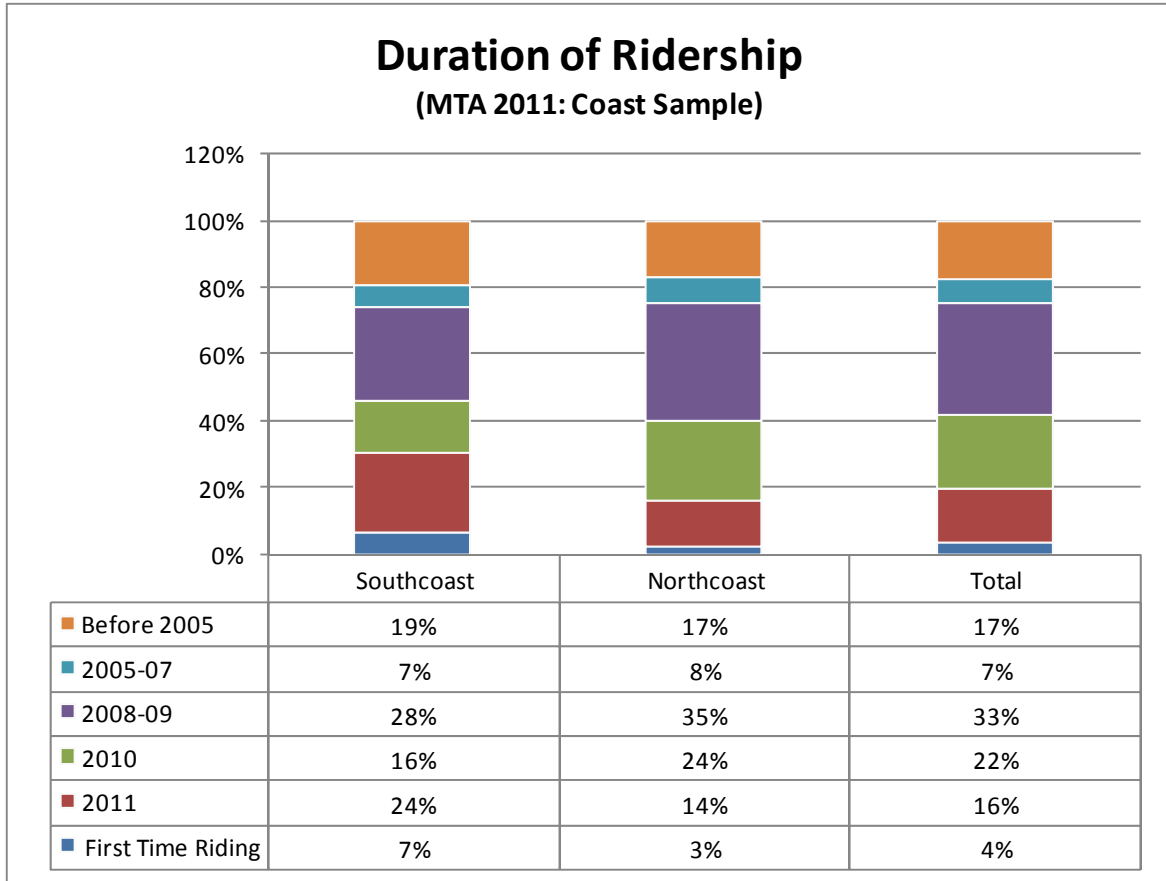


Figure 28 Duration of Ridership – Coast

What year did you start riding MTA regularly?

MTA serves a mix of new and long time riders. About 20% of riders said they had started riding in 2011. This group included a significant segment who were making their first trip on the system when surveyed. These first time riders are an important target for marketing and passenger information efforts.

Southcoast riders are more likely to be new to the system (31%) than Northcoast riders (17%)

Overall, about 57% of riders have been riding for two years or more. This is actually quite a stable ridership.

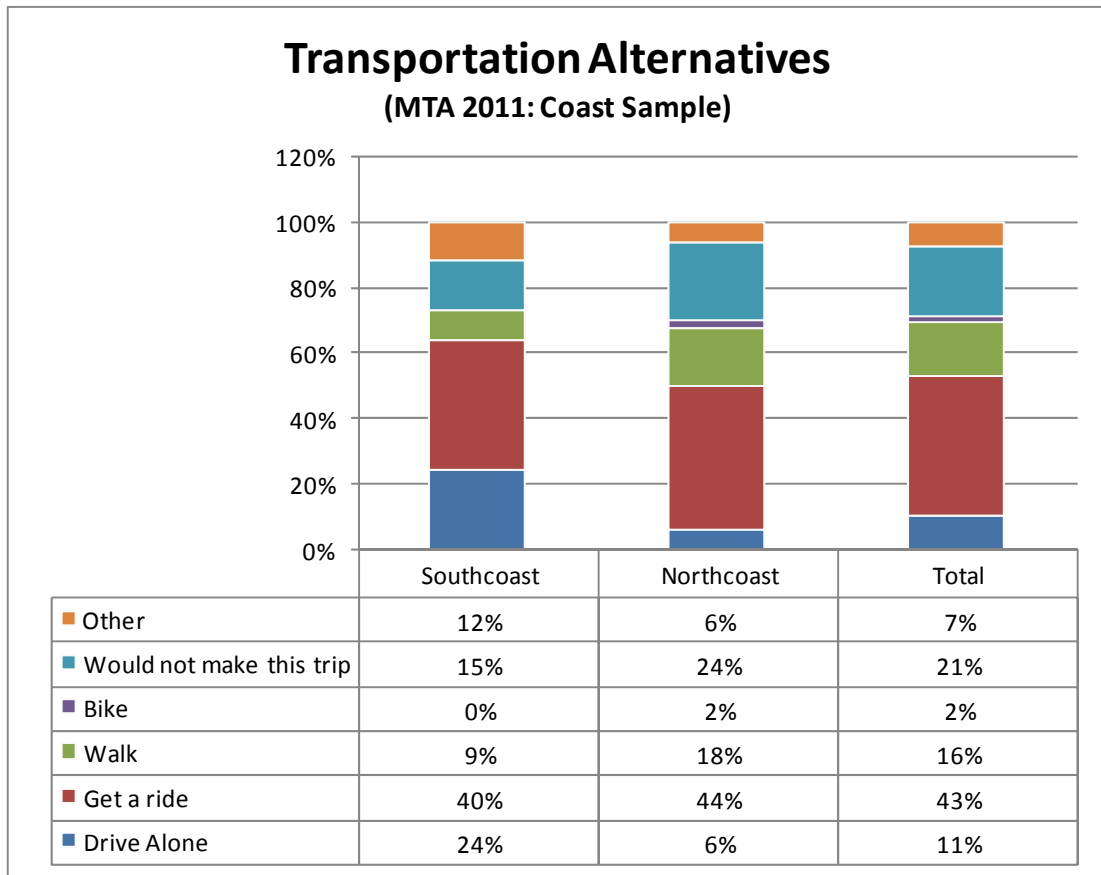


Figure 29 Transportation Alternatives – Coast

If MTA did not exist, how would you make this trip?

If bus service were not available, most Coast riders would need to rely on others for transportation (43%) or would be unable to make their trip (21%).

Southcoast riders (24%) are more likely than Northcoast riders (6%) to say they would drive themselves and less likely to say they would walk, bike or be unable to make the trip.

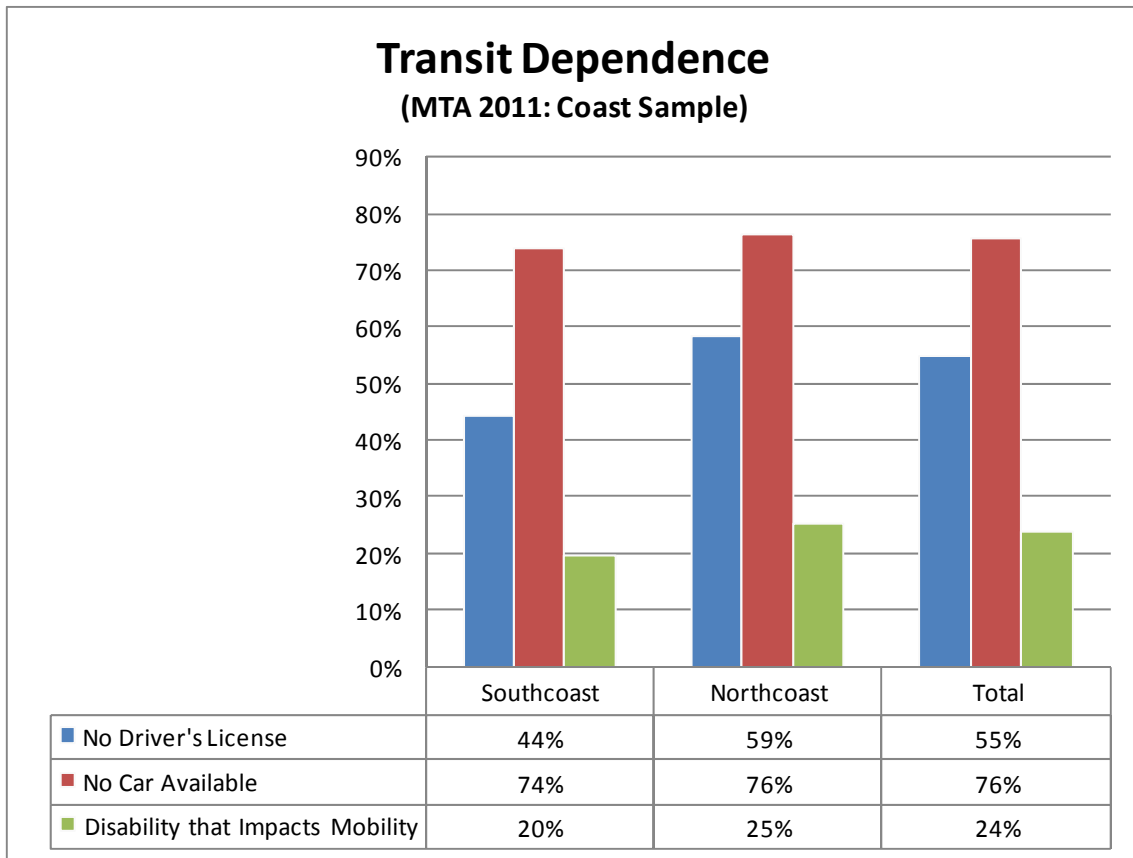


Figure 30 Transit Dependence – Coast

Transit Dependence

Most Coast riders rely on MTA for transportation because they lack a driver’s license, a vehicle or both. Only 17% of respondents reported having both a driver’s license and car available for the trip on which they were surveyed.

About a quarter (24%) of riders said that they have a disability that impacts their mobility.

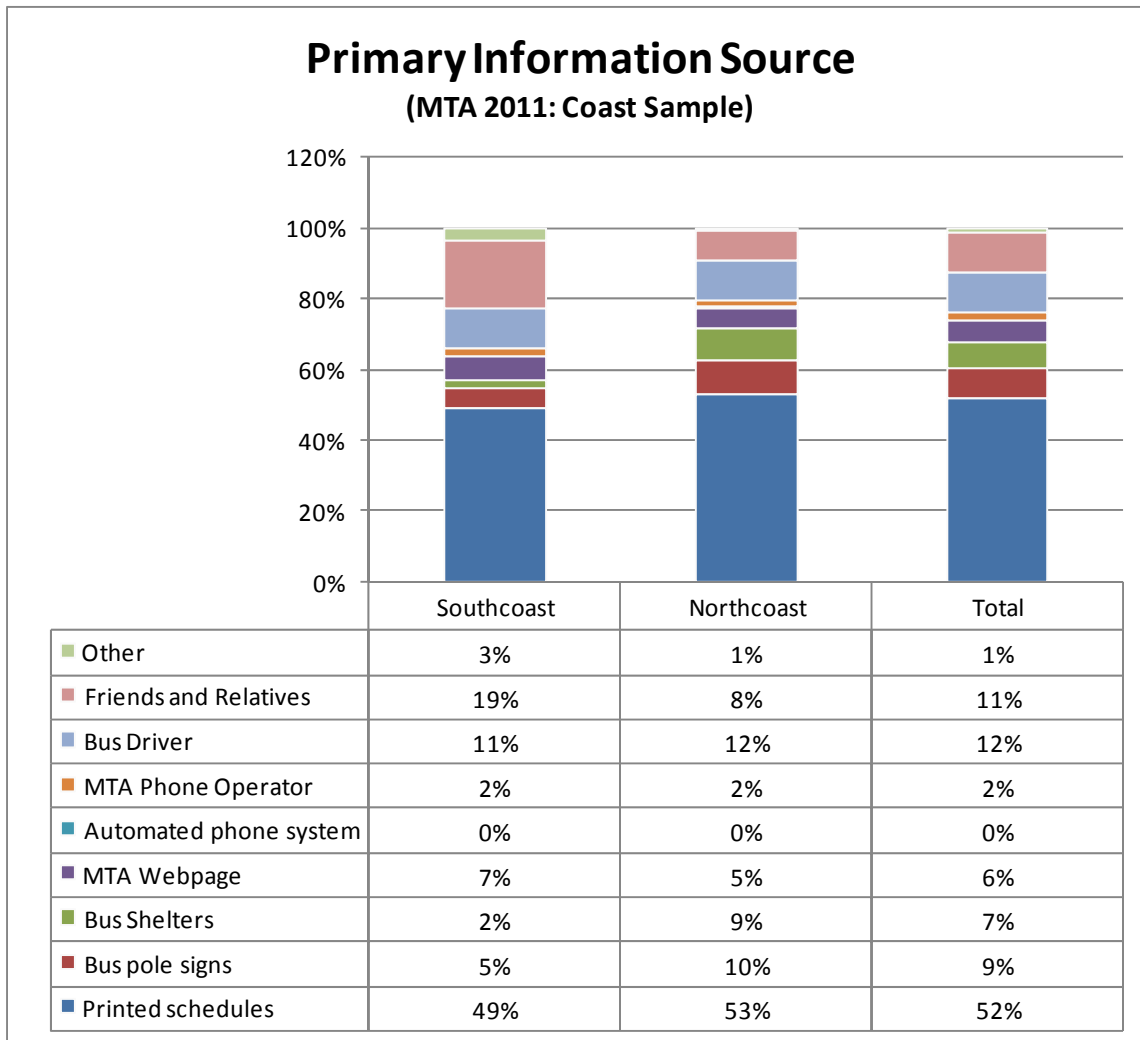


Figure 31 Primary Information Source – Coast

Where do you get your information about MTA services?

Printed schedules are the primary source of information for most Coast riders (52%), while 16% rely on information at the bus stop or shelter. The other most used sources of information are bus drivers (12%) and friends and family (11%). Six percent of respondents said the website is their primary information source.

Southcoast riders are more likely to rely on friends and family or the internet for information and less likely to use information at the bus stop.

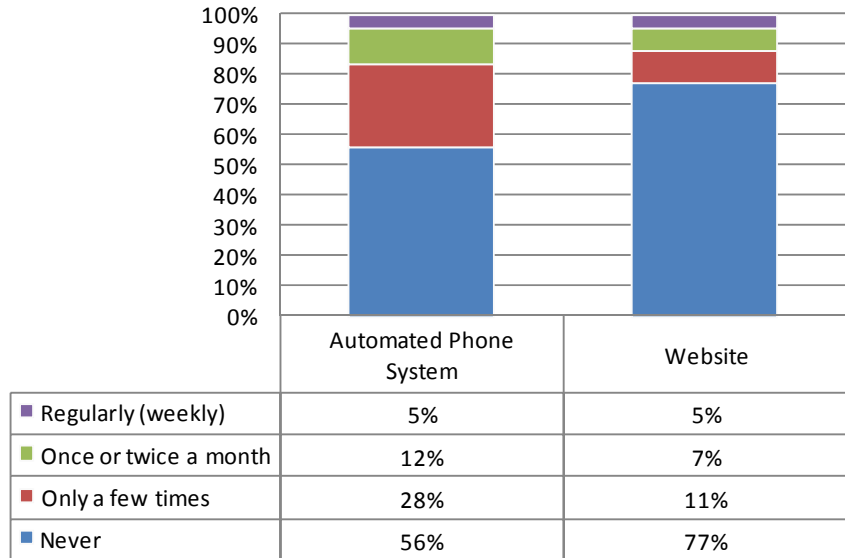
Use of Specific Information Tools

Riders were asked about their usage of the automated phone system and the MTA website. The chart at the top right shows the frequency with which riders use each information tool. Each is used regularly by about 5% of riders. The phone system is used occasionally by another 40% of riders, while the website is used occasionally by only 18% of respondents.

The chart at the bottom shows the type of internet access which respondents have. Thirty eight percent have no internet access.

The broad usage of the automated phone system and the lack of internet access among a large segment of the ridership likely indicates that an on-going effort to shift riders to website usage will be needed before the automated phone system can be eliminated.

Use of Phone and Website (MTA 2011: Coast Sample)



Internet Access (MTA 2011: Coast Sample)

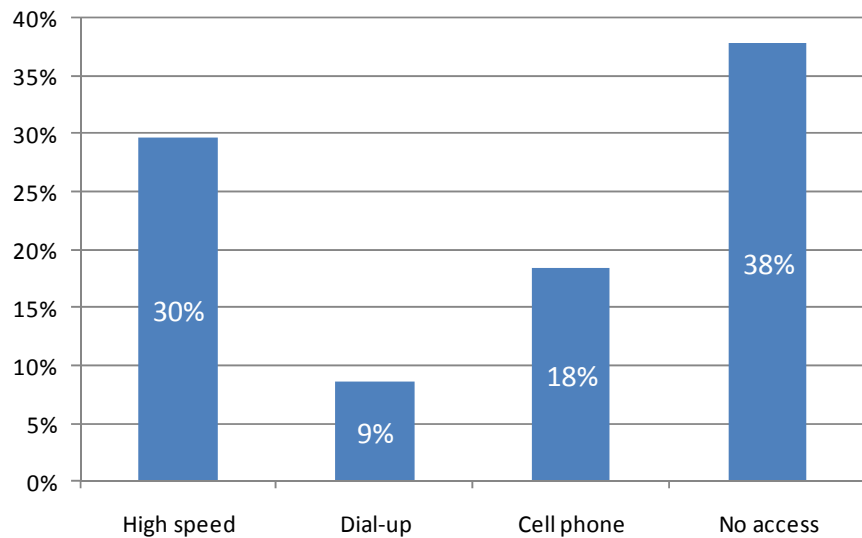


Figure 32 Use of Automated Phone & Website - Coast

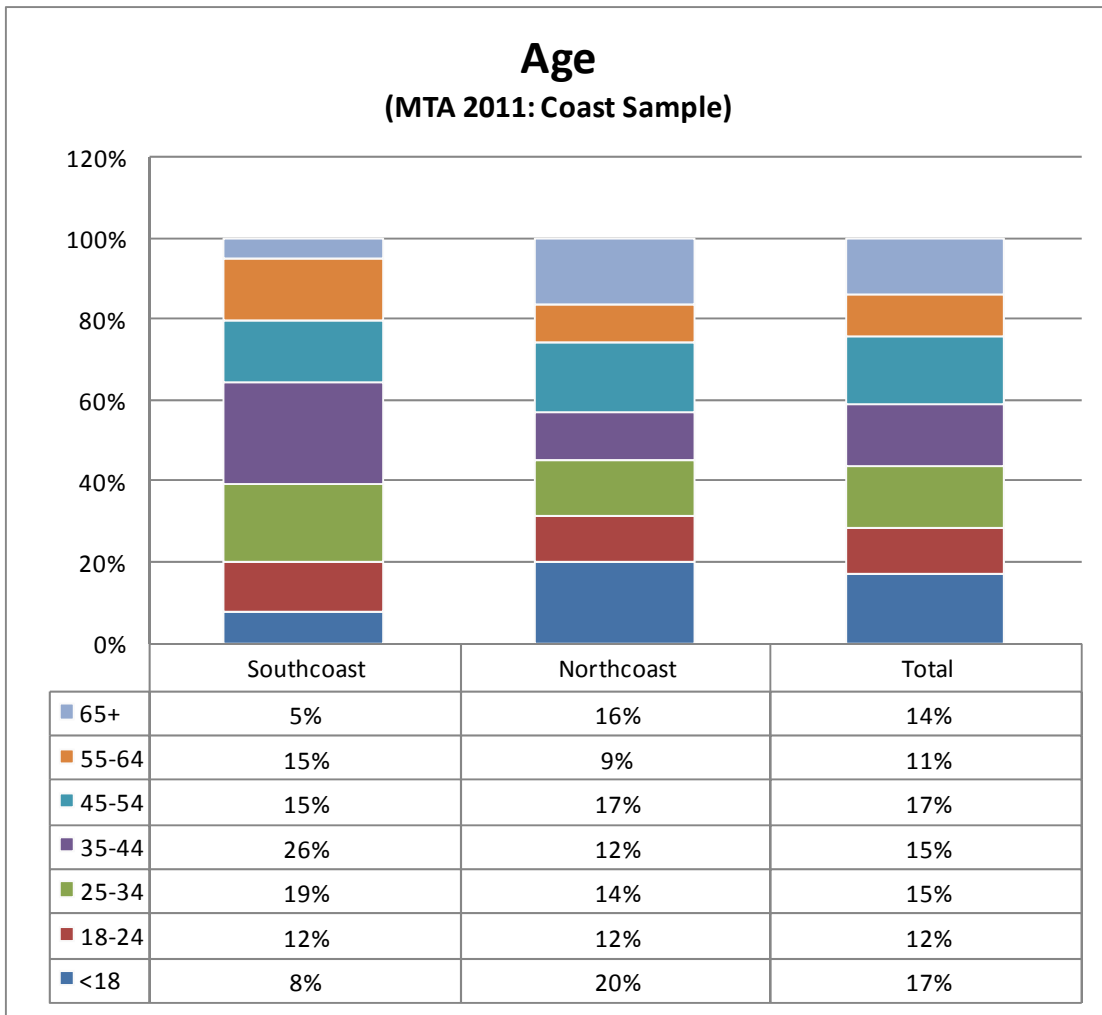


Figure 33 Age – Coast

Rider Demographics – Age

Coastal riders are evenly distributed throughout the age spectrum. Northcoast routes tend to carry somewhat more young (<18) and senior (65+) riders than the Southcoast routes.

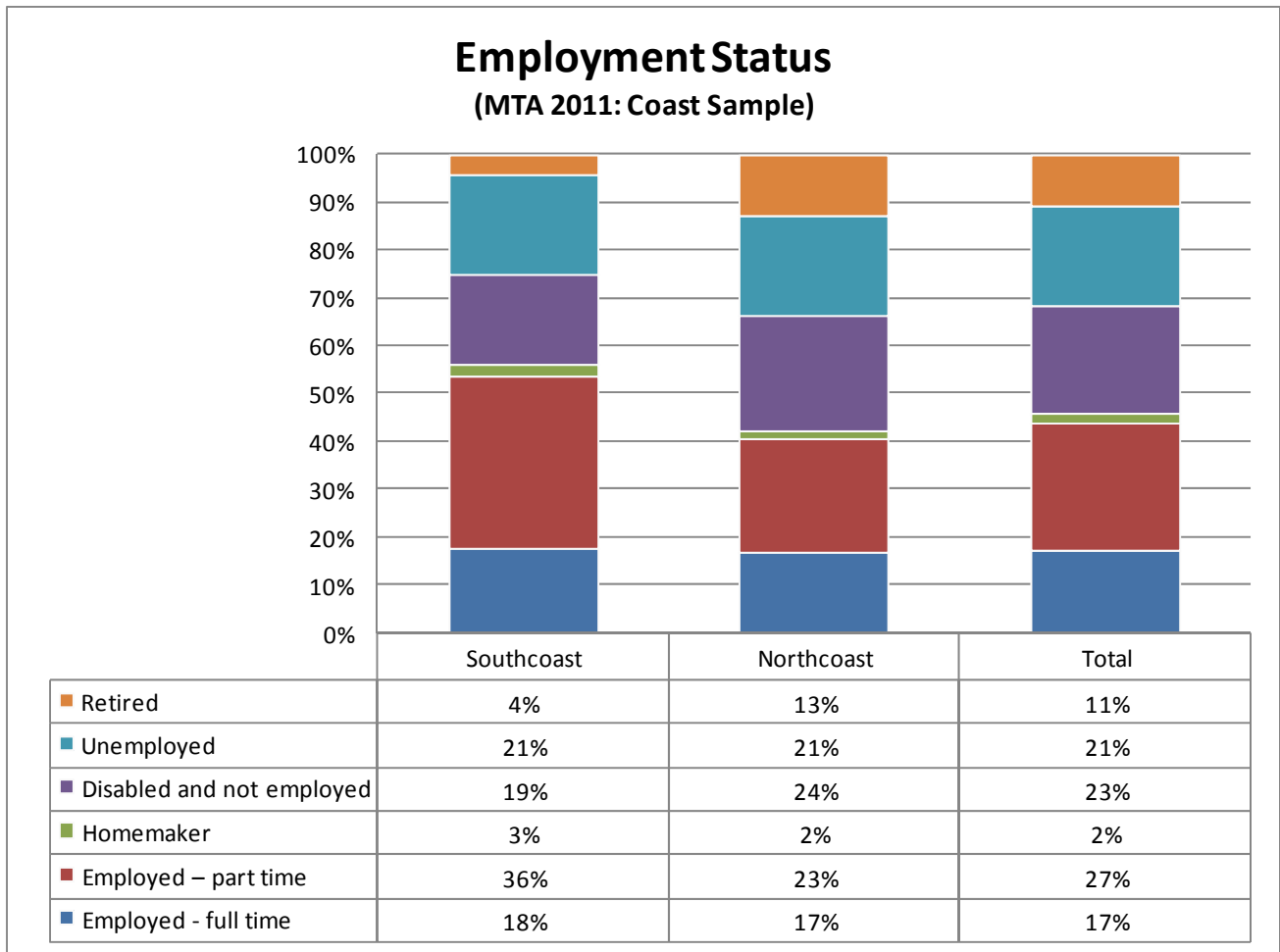


Figure 34 Employment Status – Coast

How would you describe your current employment status?

Forty-four percent (44%) of Coast riders are employed either full time (17%) or part time (27%). Nearly a quarter of riders describe themselves as disabled and not employed, while 21% are unemployed and 11% are retirees.

There are more senior and disabled riders on Northcoast routes, more employed riders on Southcoast routes.

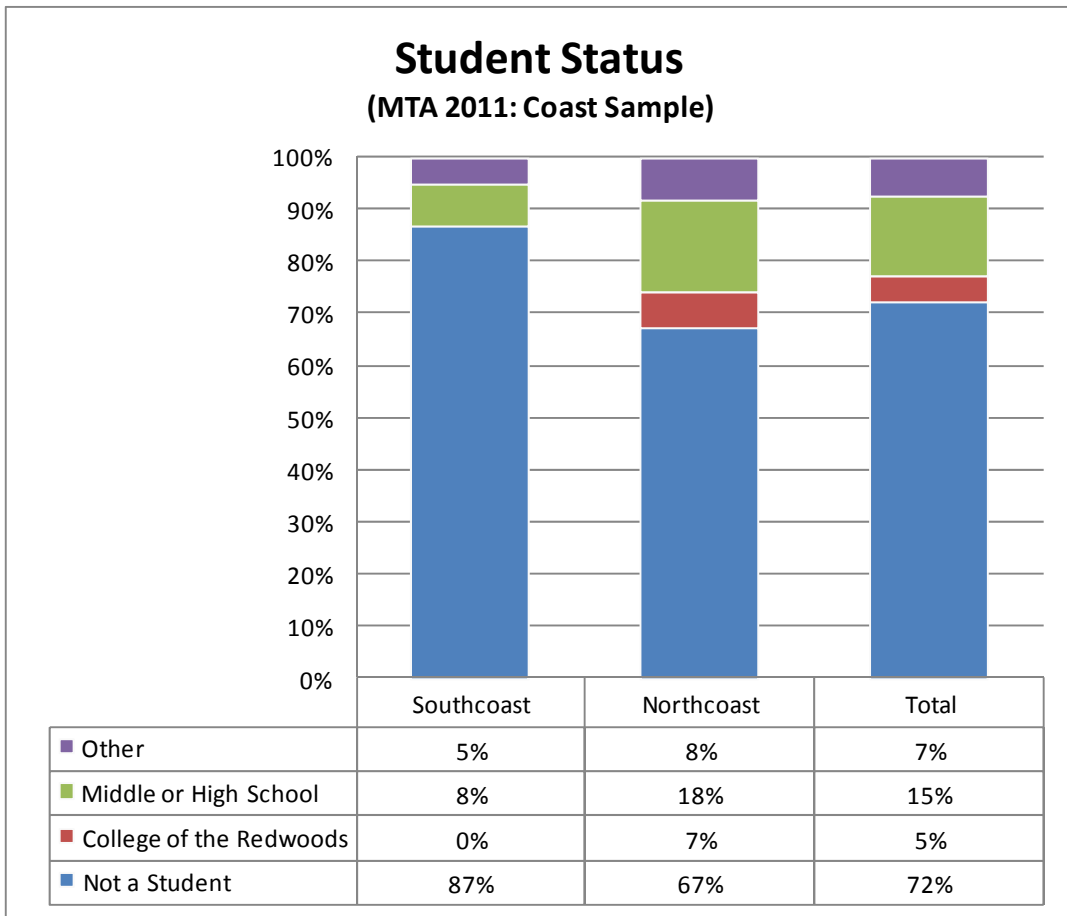


Figure 35 Student Status – Coast

Are you a student?

One third of riders on the Northcoast routes are students at middle and high schools (18%), College of the Redwoods (7%) or other schools (8%). The Southcoast routes have a smaller number of students among the ridership (13% total).

Ethnicity and Gender of Ridership

MTA's Coast ridership is made up primarily of a mix of Caucasian (63%) and Hispanic riders (26%). There is a small segment of Native Americans (6%), which are concentrated on the South Coast routes (16%).

The ridership is somewhat more male (57%) than female (43%), particularly on the Northcoast routes.

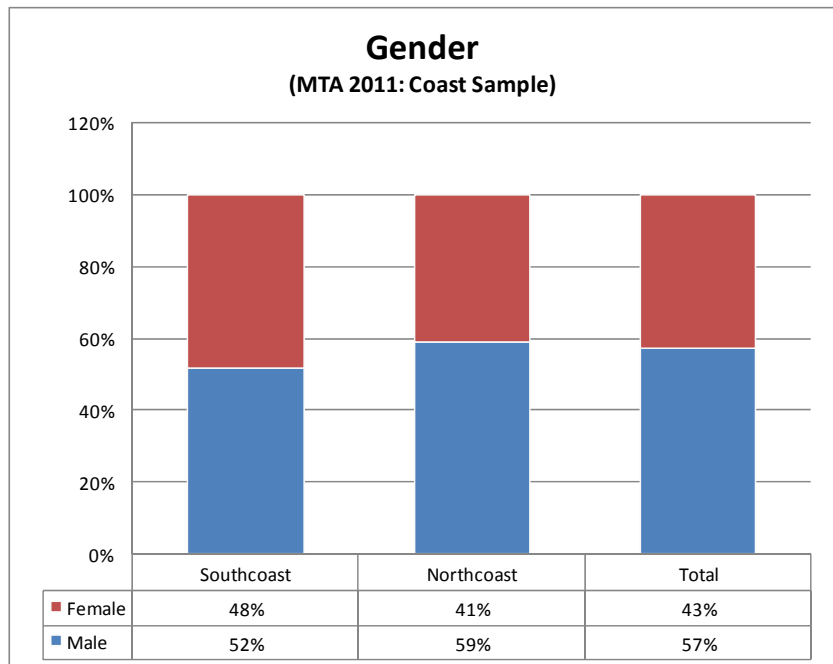
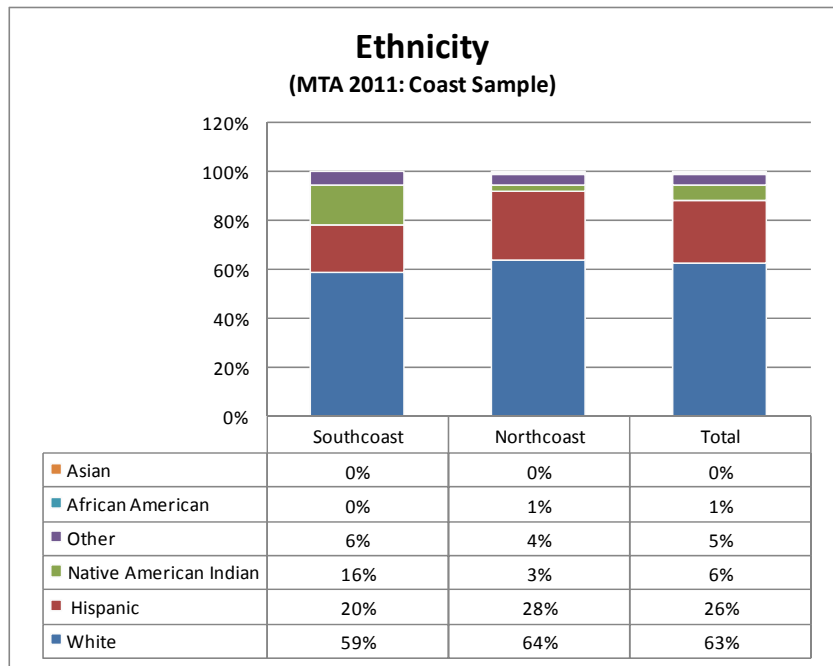
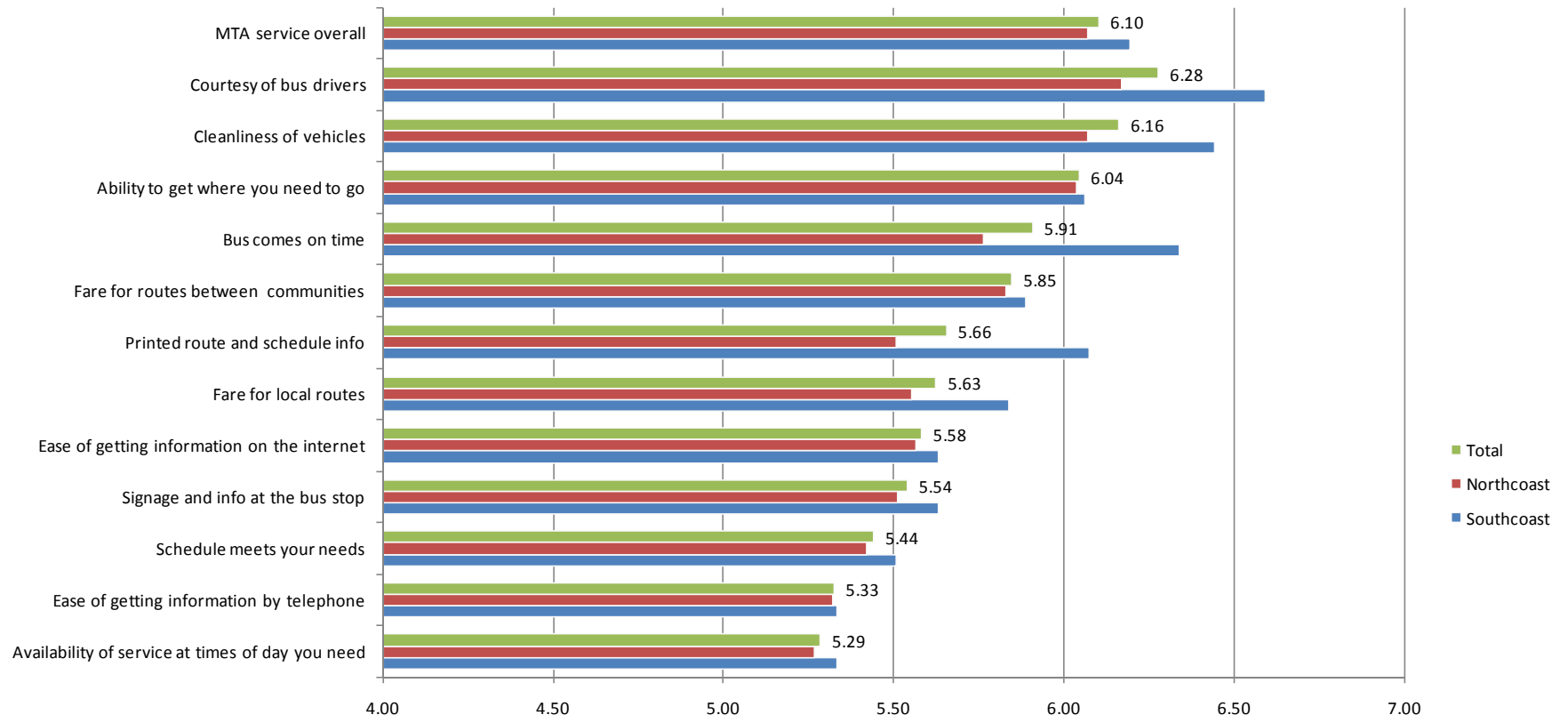


Figure 36 Ethnicity & Gender - Coast

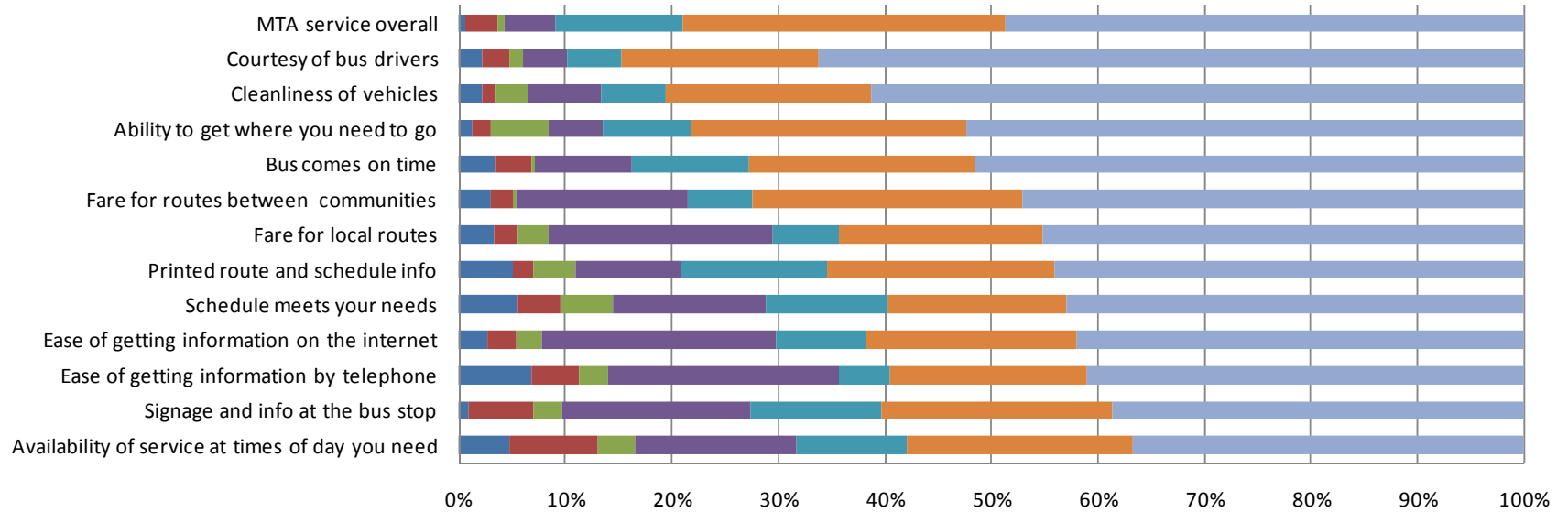
Satisfaction
Mean on Scale of 1 to 7
(MTA 2011 :Coast Sample)



	Availability of service at times of day you need	Ease of getting information by telephone	Schedule meets your needs	Signage and info at the bus stop	Ease of getting information on the internet	Fare for local routes	Printed route and schedule info	Fare for routes between communities	Bus comes on time	Ability to get where you need to go	Cleanliness of vehicles	Courtesy of bus drivers	MTA service overall
Total	5.29	5.33	5.44	5.54	5.58	5.63	5.66	5.85	5.91	6.04	6.16	6.28	6.10
Northcoast	5.27	5.32	5.42	5.51	5.57	5.55	5.51	5.83	5.77	6.04	6.07	6.17	6.07
Southcoast	5.34	5.33	5.51	5.63	5.63	5.84	6.08	5.89	6.34	6.06	6.44	6.59	6.19

Figure 37 Mean Satisfaction Ratings – Coast

Satisfaction Ratings (MTA 2011: Coast Sample)



	Availability of service at times of day you need	Signage and info at the bus stop	Ease of getting information by telephone	Ease of getting information on the internet	Schedule meets your needs	Printed route and schedule info	Fare for local routes	Fare for routes between communities	Bus comes on time	Ability to get where you need to go	Cleanliness of vehicles	Courtesy of bus drivers	MTA service overall
■ 1 - Very Dissatisfied	5%	1%	7%	3%	6%	5%	3%	3%	3%	1%	2%	2%	1%
■ 2	8%	6%	5%	3%	4%	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%	1%	3%	3%
■ 3	3%	3%	3%	2%	5%	4%	3%	0%	0%	5%	3%	1%	1%
■ 4	15%	18%	22%	22%	14%	10%	21%	16%	9%	5%	7%	4%	5%
■ 5	10%	12%	5%	8%	12%	14%	6%	6%	11%	8%	6%	5%	12%
■ 6	21%	22%	19%	20%	17%	21%	19%	25%	21%	26%	19%	19%	30%
■ 7 - Very Satisfied	37%	39%	41%	42%	43%	44%	45%	47%	52%	52%	61%	66%	49%

Figure 38 Satisfaction Ratings – Full Distribution of Responses – Coast

Satisfaction Ratings

The charts on the two previous pages illustrate the responses to a battery of satisfaction ratings. Riders were asked to rate various aspects of MTA service on a scale of 1 to 7 where 1=very dissatisfied and 7=very satisfied.

Figure 37 Mean Satisfaction Ratings – Coast shows the average ratings given by each sub-segment and by the Coast riders overall. All mean ratings are 5 or above indicating a high level of satisfaction with the service. However, it is important to note that regular users of a service seldom rate it negatively. The distinctions tend to come in the top half of the rating scale – 4 to 7.

The highest ratings overall, above 6, are for three core elements of service:

- Courtesy of bus operators (6.28)
- Cleanliness of vehicles (6.16)
- Ability to get to the places you need to go (6.04)

The lowest ratings, under 5.5, are for:

- Availability of service at times of day you need (5.29)
- Ease of getting information by telephone (5.33)
- Schedule meets your needs (5.44)

Overall, Southcoast ratings were slightly higher than Northcoast ratings, despite the lower level of service in this area. This may represent an appreciation among this very rural population for the fact that they have public transit service.

Figure 38 Satisfaction Ratings – Full Distribution or Responses – Coast shows the complete distribution of responses for the total sample for each aspect of service. Looking at the full distribution, allows you to see where there are pockets of dissatisfaction (ratings of 3 or lower). These include:

- Availability of service at times of day you need (16%)
- Ease of getting information by phone (15%)
- Schedule meets your needs (15%)
- Printed route and schedule info (11%)
- Signage and schedule information at the bus stop (10%)

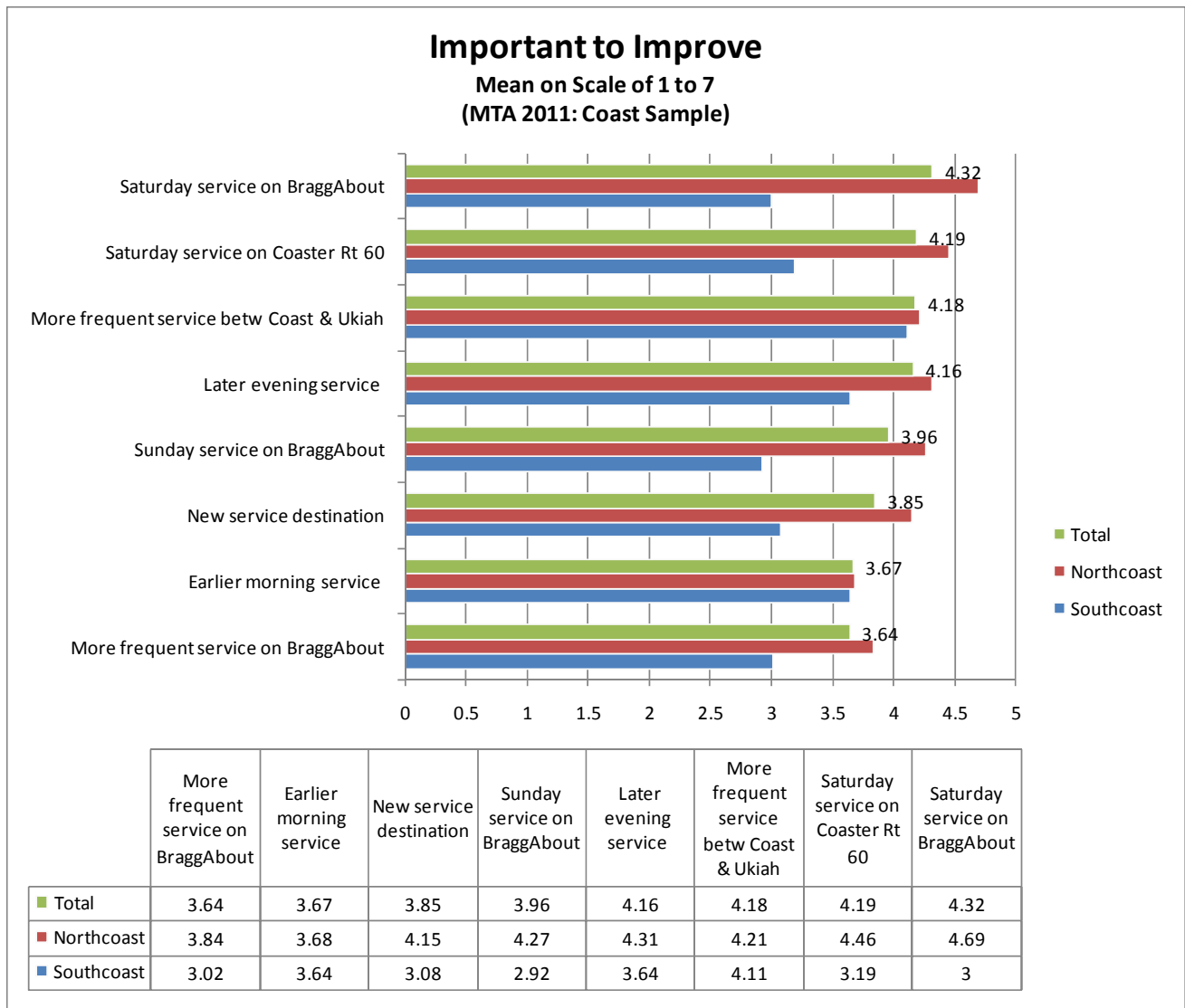


Figure 39 Important to Improve – Mean Ratings – Coast

How important this service improvement would be to you

Riders were asked to rate the importance of various service improvements on a scale of 1 to 7 with 1=not important and 7=very important. The chart above shows the mean ratings given by Southcoast riders, Northcoast riders and the total Coast sample.

The improvements perceived as most important by Northcoast riders relate to weekend service.

- Saturday service on BraggAbout (4.69)
- Saturday service on Route 60 Coaster (4.46)

Southcoast riders are most interested in more frequent service between the Coast and Ukiah (4.11).

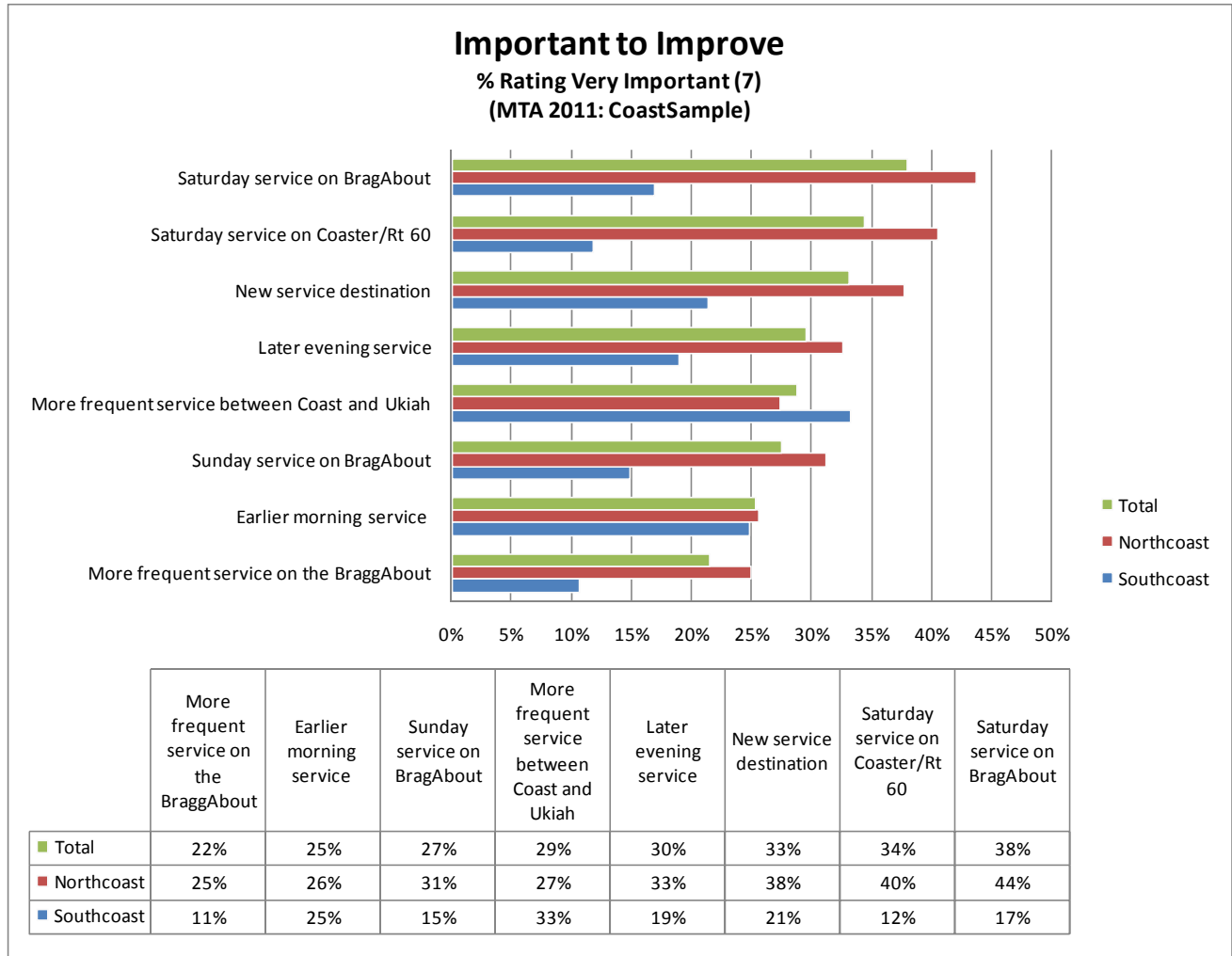


Figure 40 Important to Improve – Coast

Very important to improve

The chart above looks at the same data set in a different way. It includes only those individuals who said a particular service improvement was very important to them (rating of 7).

On Northcoast routes, Saturday service continues to dominate:

- Saturday service on BraggAbout (44% rate as 7)
- Saturday service on Route 60 Coaster (40% rate as 7)

On the Southcoast routes, 33% say that more frequent service between the Coast and Ukiah is very important to them.

Dial-a-Ride Survey

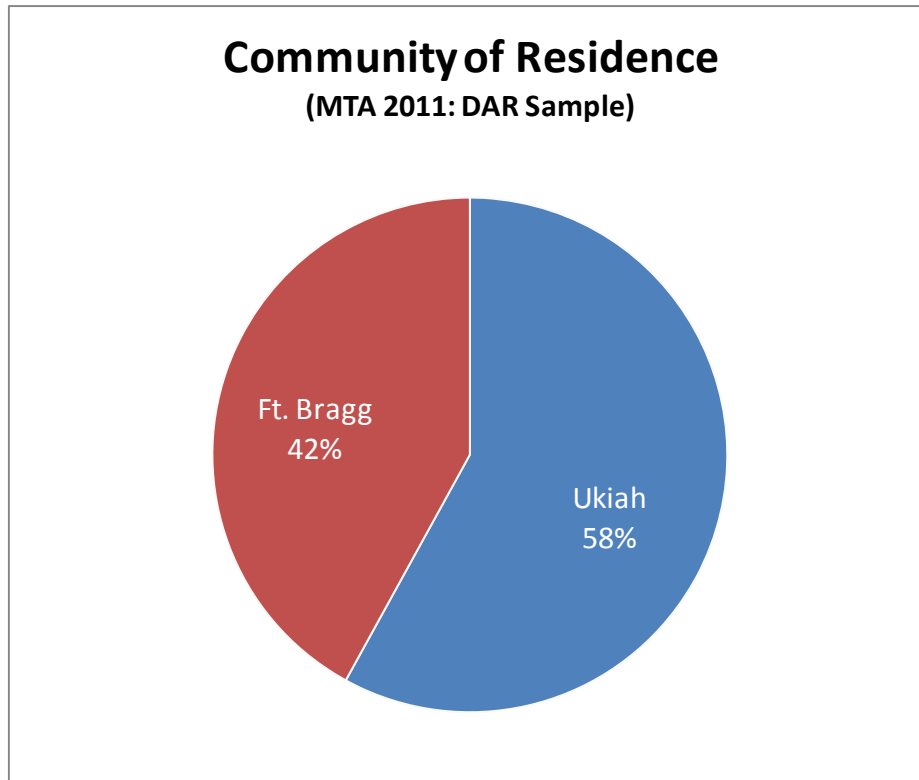


Figure 41 Community of Residence – DAR

Community of Residence

This final section of the passenger survey report will examine the responses of 50 Dial-a-Ride users – 29 from Ukiah and 21 from Ft. Bragg.

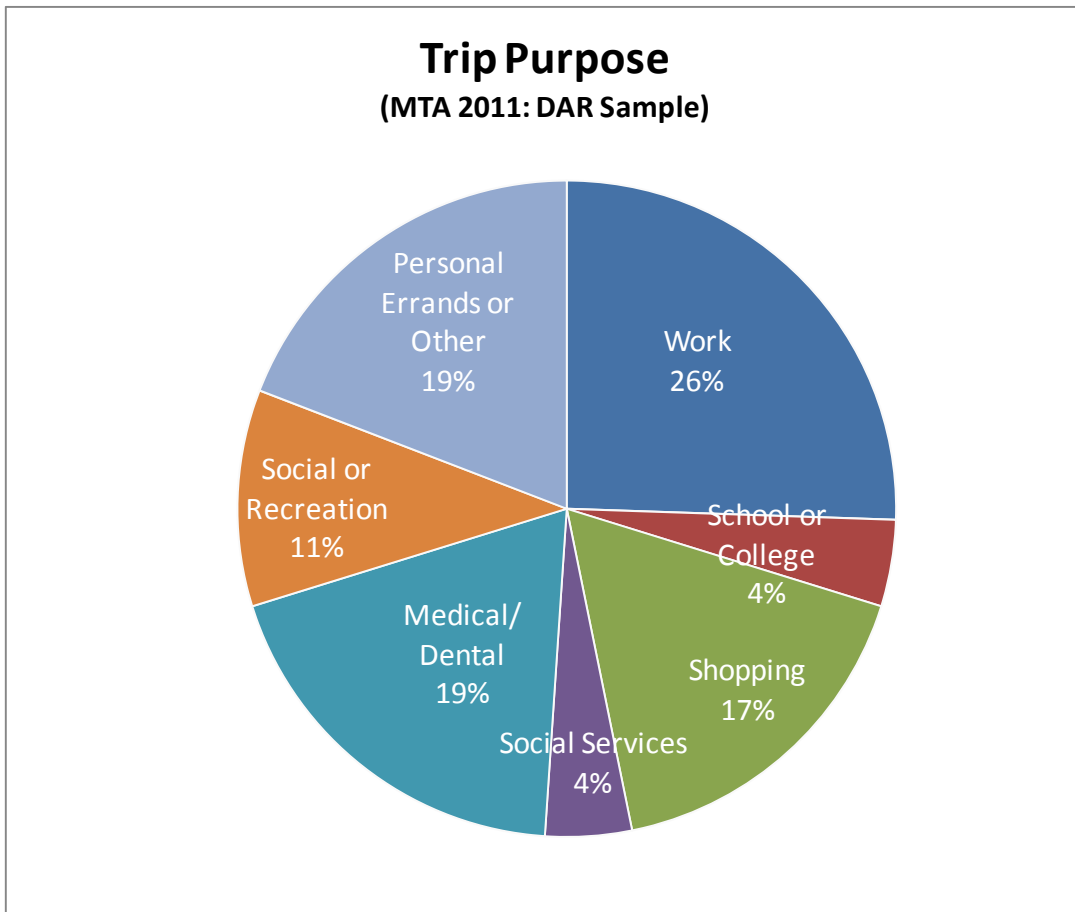


Figure 42 Trip Purpose - DAR

What is the purpose of this trip today?

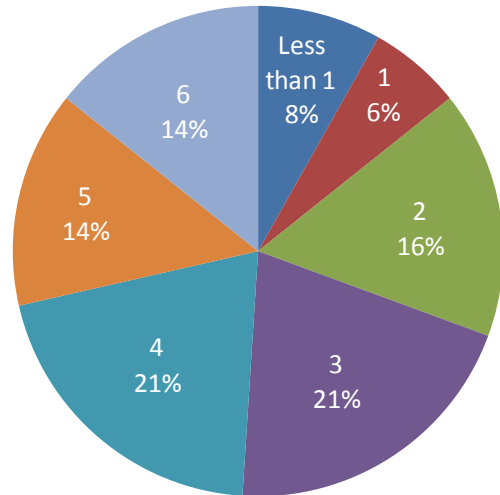
The riders use the DAR service for a variety of trip purposes as shown in the pie chart above. A surprisingly high percentage (30%) said they use the service to go to work (26%) or school/college (4%).

How many days per week do you usually ride?

DAR users were asked how many days per week they use Dial-a-Ride and MTA's fixed route services. Most Dial-a-Ride users ride the service regularly. Seventy percent (70%) ride three more days per week.

About half of Dial-a-Ride users also ride fixed route buses at least once a week. A third (34%) ride the bus regularly - three or more days a week, while a quarter of DAR users (23%) never ride fixed route service and 26% ride infrequently (less than once a week).

Days per Week Using Dial-a-Ride
(MTA 2011: DAR Sample)



Days per Week Using Fixed Route
(MTA 2011: DAR Sample)

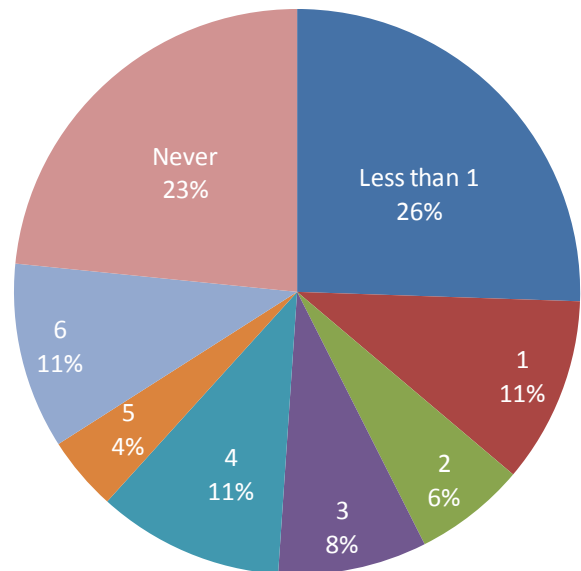


Figure 43 Frequency of Using DAR and Fixed Route

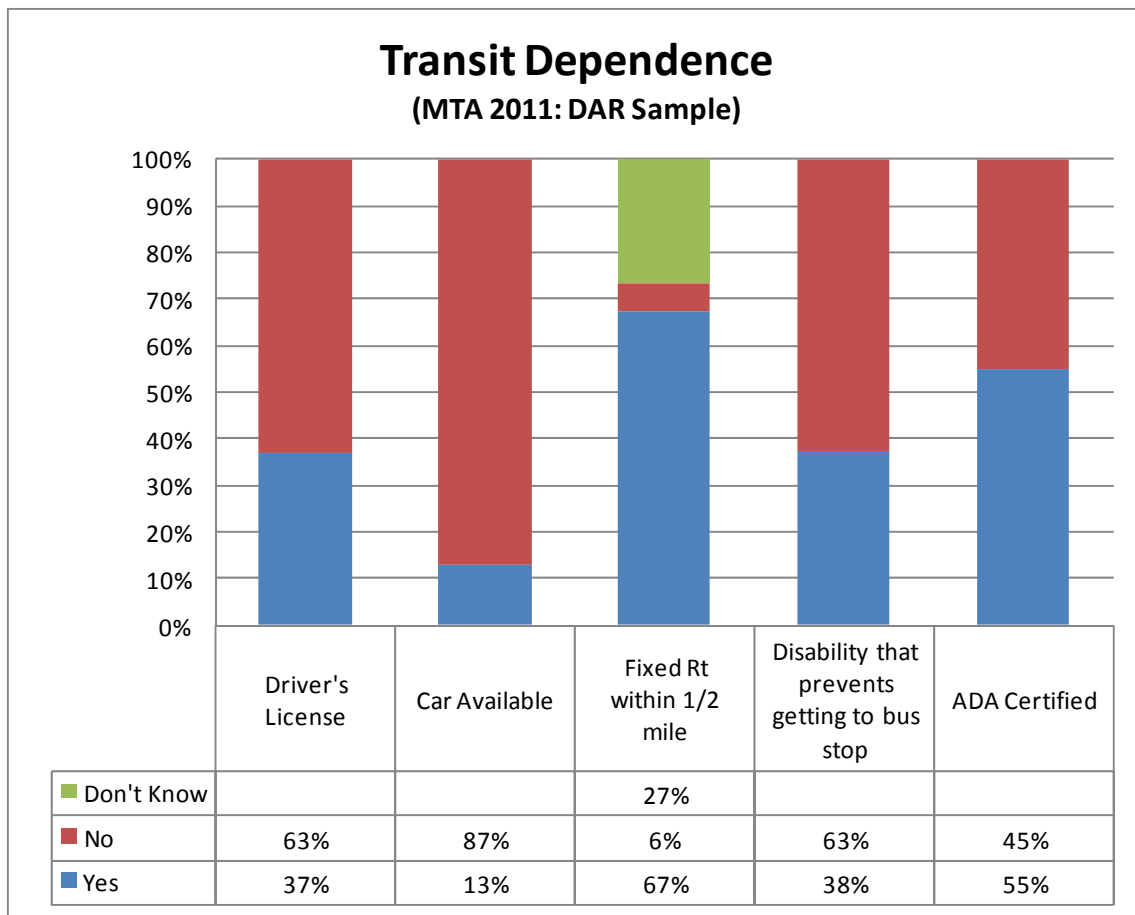


Figure 44 Transit Dependence – DAR

Transit Dependence Factors

Like MTA’s fixed route riders, Dial-a-Ride users are quite dependent on the service. Most do not have a driver’s license or a car available. Only 10% of the respondents said they have both a valid driver’s license and a car available for the trip on which they were surveyed.

Two thirds do, however, have a fixed route bus stop within ½ mile of their home. Another 27% don’t know if they do.

While only 38% percent said they have a disability that prevents them from getting to the bus stop, 55% say they are certified as disabled under ADA guidelines.

About half of the respondents say that they do have a bus stop within a half mile of their home and do not have a disability that prevents them from getting to the bus stop. Hence the implication is that they are using Dial-a-Ride because they prefer it or find it more convenient.

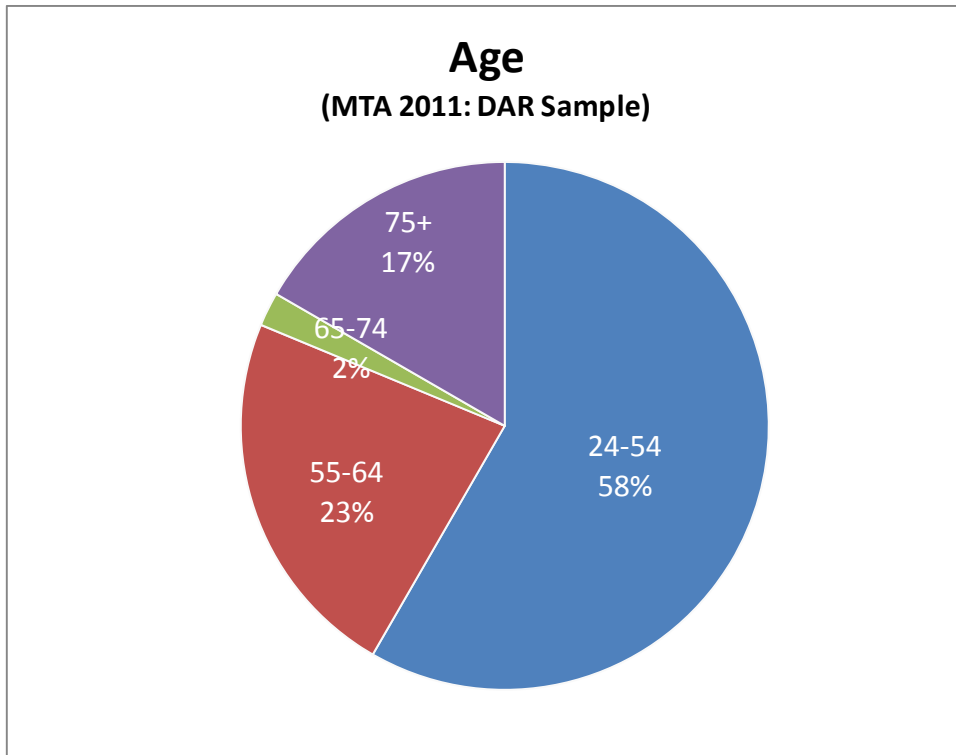


Figure 45 Age - DAR

Age

Dial-a-Ride’s ridership includes a mix of age groups. Most riders are between 24 and 64 (81%). Nineteen percent (19%) of riders are 65 or older. Of this group, most (17%) are 75 or older.

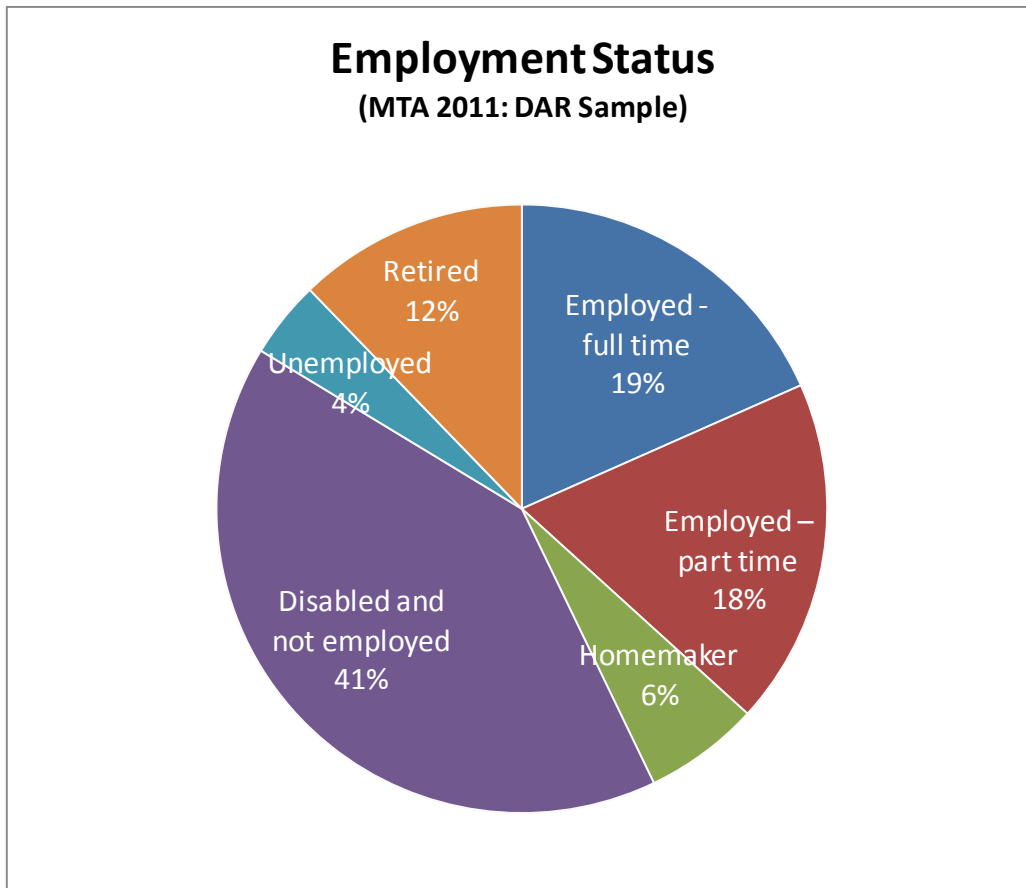


Figure 46 Employment Status – DAR

What is your employment status?

A large segment of Dial-a-Ride users describe themselves as disabled and not employed (41%), another 12% are retired. However, 37% of the users are employed either full or part time.

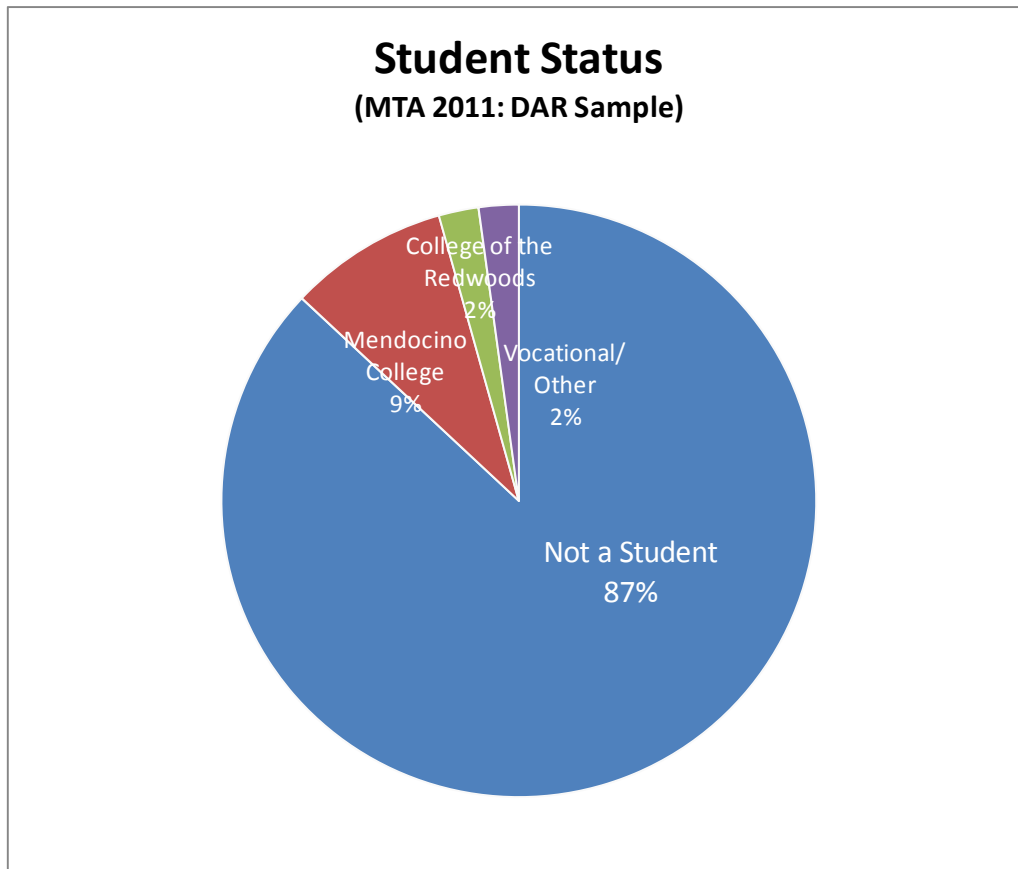


Figure 47 Student Status – DAR

Are you a student?

Only a small segment of the DAR respondents are students (13%). Most of these are college students either at Mendocino College (9%) or College of the Redwoods (2%).

Ethnicity and Gender of Dial-a-Ride Users

Most of the DAR users surveyed are Caucasian. However, there are small segments of Hispanic (10%), Native American (10%) and African American (4%) riders .

Nearly two-thirds of the DAR users are female (64%).

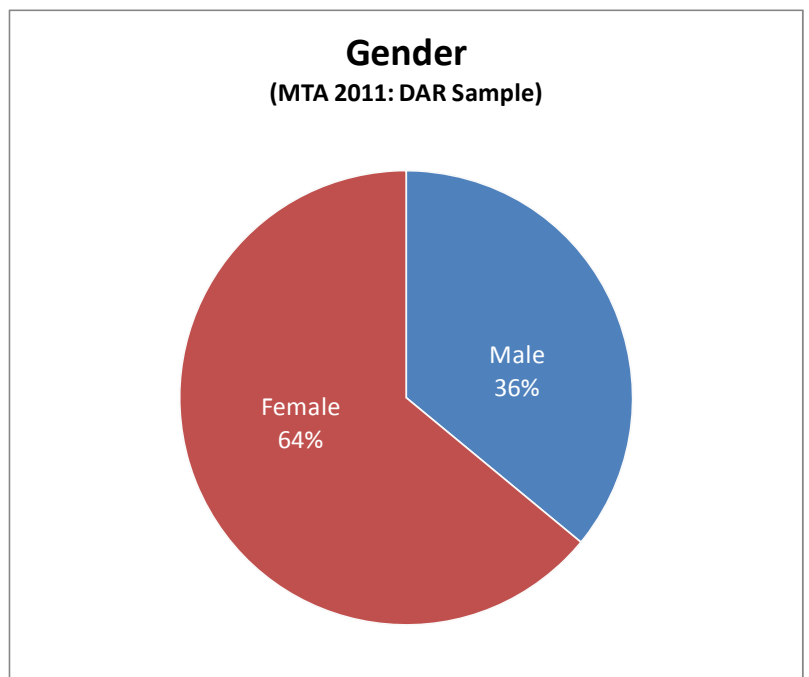
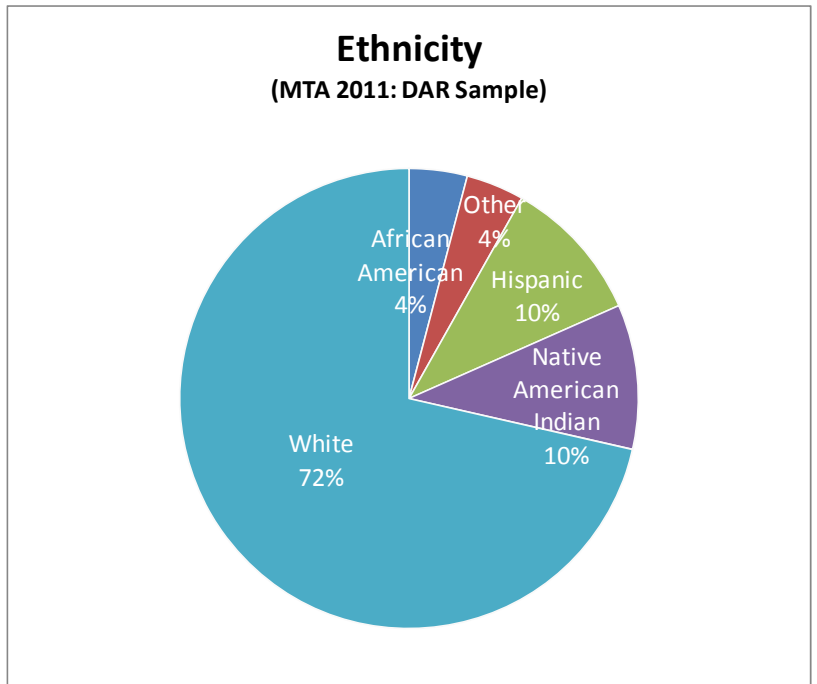


Figure 48 Ethnicity & Gender - DAR

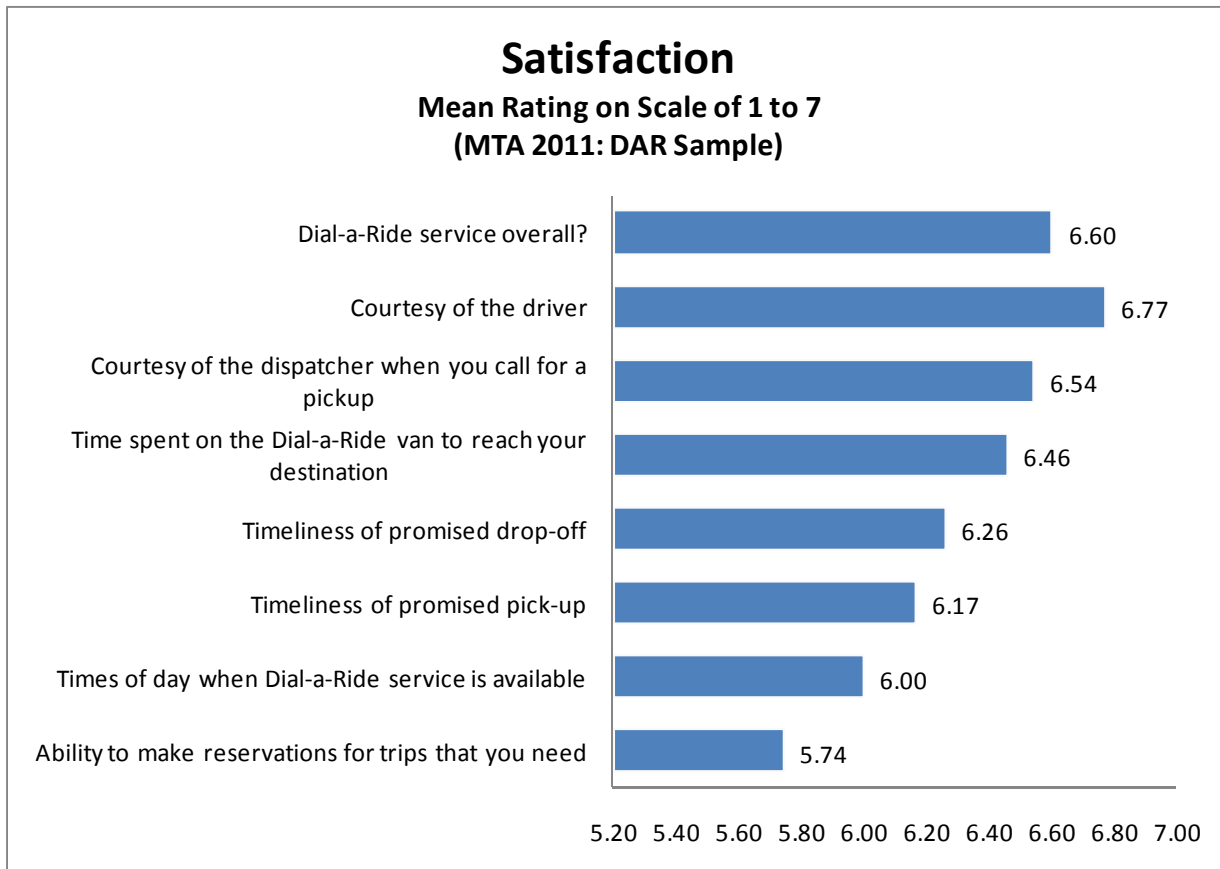


Figure 49 Mean Satisfaction Ratings - DAR

Mean Satisfaction Ratings

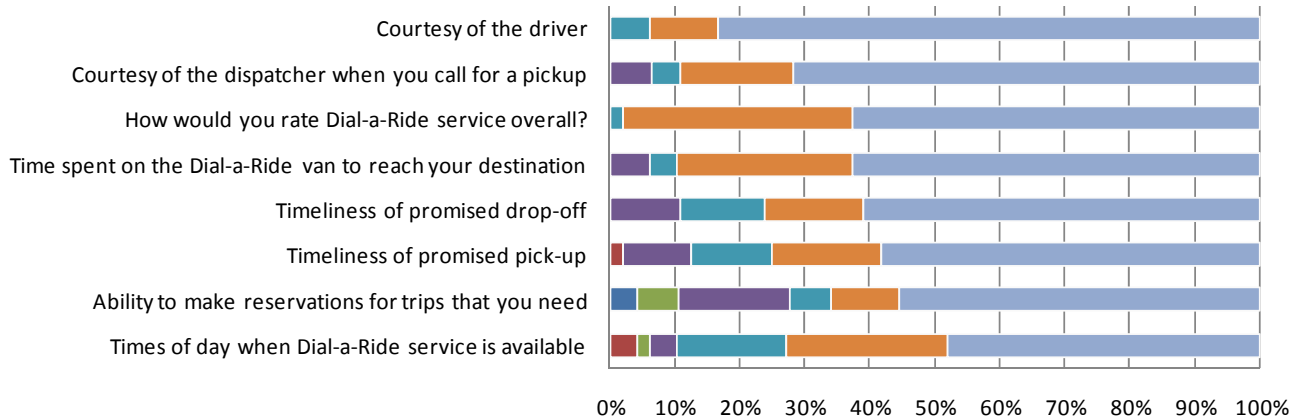
As with the fixed route surveys, DAR users were asked to rate various aspects of the service on a 7 point scale. The specific attributes were customized to reflect the demand response service experience.

As with the fixed routes, courtesy of drivers was the top rated aspect of service (6.77), followed by the courtesy of the dispatcher. Clearly MTA employees provide a high level of service to their customers.

The only aspect of service rated lower than 6 is “the ability to make reservations for trips that you need” (5.74).

Satisfaction

Full Distribution of Ratings (MTA 2011: DAR Sample)



	Times of day when Dial-a-Ride service is available	Ability to make reservations for trips that you need	Timeliness of promised pick-up	Timeliness of promised drop-off	Time spent on the Dial-a-Ride van to reach your destination	How would you rate Dial-a-Ride service overall?	Courtesy of the dispatcher when you call for a pickup	Courtesy of the driver
■ 1	0%	4%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
■ 2	4%	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
■ 3	2%	6%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
■ 4	4%	17%	10%	11%	6%	0%	7%	0%
■ 5	17%	6%	13%	13%	4%	2%	4%	6%
■ 6	25%	11%	17%	15%	27%	35%	17%	10%
■ 7	48%	55%	58%	61%	63%	63%	72%	83%

Figure 50 Satisfaction Ratings – Full Distribution - DAR

Full Distribution of Satisfaction Ratings

The chart above shows the full distribution of responses but continues to indicate a high level of satisfaction.

The only factors which received ANY ratings below 4 are:

- Ability to make reservations for trips that you need (10%)
- Times of day when DAR service is available (6%)
- Timeliness of promised pick-up (2%)

Community Outreach Findings

This section briefly summarizes comments received in public meetings and from personal interviews with stakeholder, MTA employees and passengers.

Ukiah

The local bus routes within Ukiah are highly effective and well regarded by both passengers and most stakeholders. Observation by both consultants found that the buses carry a diverse ridership including students, workers, families and persons with disabilities. Performance data for the routes validates these positive perceptions.

The transfer connections between the Route 9/7 and Routes 20/ 21 appear to be well timed and reliable.

However, it should be noted that awareness of the service and how it works is not universal. In an interview with a representative of Mendocino Works, it was noted that it is difficult for participants from Willits to use the bus. She believed that the schedule back to Willits is not late enough and that they would have to catch the bus on State Street – quite a distance from the facility. (She clearly didn't understand about the need to catch the 9 to the 20.)



At the public workshop, which was lightly attended, there was a desire among a few senior riders to restore the Jitney along the length of State Street. Also a note that the current Saturday routing serves Raley's, but the weekday route doesn't.

Other specific recommendations included:

- Need to serve Plowshares for lunch meals at 11:30 a.m.
- Several stakeholders noted the need for a stop closer to the hospital – Ukiah Valley Medical Center.
- Service from Willits doesn't work for County employees who work in Ukiah as most work a 9 hour day and the bus arrives there at 8:10 a.m.
- Need for better information about the Dial-a-Ride service area and specifics of that service.

Mendocino College is an important destination for Ukiah riders. Campus enrollment is about 3300 in Ukiah and 600-700 in Willits. The PIO for the college (who is an MTA board member) estimates that about 100 students use the bus to commute to college and the system is highly effective for this purpose.

Representatives of area Native American tribes were much less satisfied with MTA service. They expressed a feeling that they have asked MTA for services in the past and the agency hasn't been responsive. They also

say that they do not get updated schedule information and are confused about what services do in fact serve their various programs.

Specific locations where service is desired include:

- Pinoleville facility about ½ mile off State Street.
- Consolidated Tribal Health Center near State and Highway 20 in Calpella which serves members of 9 tribes – primarily very low income individuals.

The executive director of the Consolidated Tribal Health program has been to the MTA website and didn't find it helpful, and suggested that MTA needed a user-friendly trip planner on its website. Cliff showed him Google Transit on his phone and he was thrilled. Has clients who need to go from Ukiah to Santa Rosa and he was not aware of how they could make the trip. Some of the issues with the tribes could possibly be resolved through education and outreach. The executive director was quite interested in DAR service to and from his clinic and would be potentially willing to partially subsidize the trips. There is significant confusion about when the 21 does and does not serve their facility. He is quite interested in the free pass programs that other communities offer to disabled individuals (and according to him low income users) to ride fixed route services.

A number of other specific issues were raised by stakeholder during individual interviews. These included:

- Relocation of Community Transition Program (Joan Duggan). This is part of Ukiah Unified School District. They have 14 developmentally disabled individuals, aged 18-22. Similar program at Ukiah High School, with 20-25 students. Current location on School St. is ideal in downtown area with great access to bus stop, but building is unsafe so they are moving to a city owned building on Observatory Blvd. New location, is about ½ mile from an MTA stop (near Hastings and Washington), but that bus goes to the Walmart area and is not direct for where their clients need to go. Joan strongly advocated for bus service like Route 7 routing on Dora St. Note: Dora St. has several destinations including Public Health, doctors offices and the largest disability workshop (Mayacama Center) .
- AB 104 has been approved and signed into law in June 2011. According to a local Regional Center representative, the new law could increase, demand for MTA services by Regional Center clients.. The law requires the use of generic services by the Regional Center whenever feasible instead of vendors, including transportation. The Regional Center currently pays MTA for special tripper service. According the Regional Center representative, there could be additional demand for use of MTA services (similar to the existing tripper service) that are currently provided by other transportation vendors. The Regional Center is very happy with MTA. Clients do not have unmet needs.

Willits

Not surprisingly, given the recent service reduction on the Willits Rider, Willits is where we received the greatest community input at a well-attended public meeting. In addition, we met with area stakeholders including Nuestra Alianza (a support organization for the Latino community), the senior center manager, and a group home manager.

Participants at the public meeting were primarily individuals who rely on the bus service – either personally as riders or to get their clients to services (e.g. Little Lake Clinic). Many of them use the Route 20/21 and are quite satisfied with it. Most of their comments related to the Willits Rider.

General comments about the service include:

- There is a bus stop right in front of Little Lake Clinic which is well used. The clinic gives people tickets for MTA (even from Ukiah where clinic is more crowded/hostile). They only do dental procedures at 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. The elimination of midday service on the Willits Rider makes it very difficult for people. MTA could possibly have the 20/21 route serve the Clinic in order to reduce the gap in service.
- The new Willits Rider schedule generally didn't make sense to the riders due to the midday gap in service. The question was...will there be more trips in the fall?
- General feeling that the flex nature of route is confusing for many people, especially seniors, and that it makes the service expensive to use.
- While the group was familiar with the senior center service (and some used it), they said it was difficult to get "fit" into the senior center schedule. The service ends about 3:30 and is focused primarily on their own lunch program. (Note: Senior may be operating later now due to reduced hours of Willits Rider). One woman perceived that the senior center focuses on older seniors and "isn't very nice" to young seniors like her mother.
- One participant came to discuss the elimination of school bus service within Willits. High school starts at 8 a.m. and the bus currently gets there at 8:10 a.m. Suggested that schedule be adjusted to accommodate students.
- The Hospital is moving and the route will need to change to serve the new location.

Asked what would increase utilization of the Willits Rider, the group had a number of suggestions. Most centered around adding key "flex" stops to the route in order to minimize the need to call for or pay for a flex. Locations they suggested be added to the route included:

- Senior Center
- Mariposa Market
- Casino
- Holly Heights 1 and 2 (apartments)
- Redwood Meadows (senior apartments next to senior center)
- Bechtel Creek Village (behind Rays)
- Creekside Apartments (by Willits Integrated Center)

An MTA driver of the Willits route who attended the meeting felt that these stops could be added within the current schedule, given that it would minimize the need to flex.

The participants also had a wide variety of recommendations for increasing ridership of the route ranging from going back to a \$1.00 fare, to better educating stakeholder (such as the staff at the Clinic and Hispanic organizations) to offering discounts to high school kids. Several volunteered to do testimonial ads for MTA...the riders love their drivers.

The representatives of the Little Lake Clinic

Nuestra Alianza is an organization that works with the Hispanic community in Willits. They offer English classes at the Grange Building. They serve about 100 people per week, mostly youths 6-18 years old.

According to their representatives:

- People need early morning transportation to take kids to school and buses need to run more often. You can walk most places in Willits, but when it's hot you need the bus.
- They would give out schedules if they had them. He usually goes to the website and prints out info for clients. Raymond didn't know about the flex option – "so other people probably don't know either." Suggested doing presentation in ESL class (contact Dina Hutton).

The manager of a group home in Willits has five developmentally disabled residents who use the bus to commute to jobs in Ukiah. The residents transfer at the college to reach their destination. He is highly satisfied with the service and says the bus drivers are very good with his residents. He drops them off and picks them up at the bus stop at Brown's Corner. The Regional Center buys bus passes for them. Note: He wasn't familiar with the Willits Rider. He thought it was just a Dial-a-Ride service.

North Coast

The North Coast area is served by the Bragg About local service, regional service connecting to the south coast, Santa Rosa and Ukiah and Dial-a-Ride. In addition, the Redwood Coast Senior Center provides demand response service for seniors and persons with disabilities.

It was the general consensus that the area is well served, that the services are effective in meeting the needs and that they are well utilized. Specific recommendations for enhancing services were made by riders, stakeholders and bus operators.

Bragg About

The Bragg About works well for local trips in the Ft. Bragg area. It serves most destinations and according to riders is quite reliable. It is primarily used by local residents. Specific suggestions for improvement included:

- Re-route to High School when it's in session. The MTA supervisor felt that the high school market has not been adequately tapped.
- Use second DAR bus during mid-day to provide 30 minute service on Ft. Bragg. An alternative would be to implement a quasi-express bus serving major destinations during the mid-day.
- Add new stop at Harold and Redwood

- Re-route Bragg About to better serve the Post Office (driver)
- Driver believes it would be better not to go into Safeway parking lot due to safety and time considerations. (During our second visit it appeared that the stop in the parking lot may have been eliminated).
- When money is available bring back Saturday service – this was heard from riders on the bus and at the public meeting.

Ft. Bragg Dial-a-Ride

The Ft. Bragg Dial-a-Ride serves a workshop for the developmentally disabled, Paul Bunyon at 240 N. McPherson. Service is provided between 8 and 10 am, with return trips between 3 and 4:30 pm. There is limited DAR activity during the mid-day. A total of 40-60 trips per day are provided daily. The market during the mid-day is primarily grocery trips and when the Senior Center's "Purple Bus" is not available.

Coaster Route 60

This route connects Ft. Bragg with Mendocino and the Navarro River Junction, and is interlined with the Bragg About It provides a timed connection to the South Coast Route 75 at the Navarro River Junction. It carries an extremely diverse ridership, including residents of various coastal communities and many visitors. On a single trip, the consultant observed five people making the connection between Rt. 75 and 60 including a tourist from Switzerland another from San Francisco (traveling with his bicycle).

Among riders, the primary request was for weekend service on the route. However, the bus operator had some additional suggestions for improvement:

- Schedules are tight. Hard to stay on time. Added big new aquatics center in Ft. Bragg to route but didn't add time.
- Routing in Mendocino – seems redundant. Route goes down same street twice.
- A lot of stops on Coast Route do not have bus stop signs – this was observed by the consultant as well.

South Coast

The South Coast area is remote with limited population. Transportation services available include those provided by the Senior Center and daily public transit service to Ft. Bragg, Ukiah and Santa Rosa. In addition, a stakeholder told the consulting team about Community Resources Connection that reportedly provides free van service once a month to essential appointments in Fort Bragg and to the Santa Rosa area once a week.

At the public meeting and as part of a CTAA funded study conducted in 2006, residents expressed specific transportation needs not met by the current services.

- The Principal from Pacific Community Charter School, Sigrid Hillscan, in Pt. Arena attend the public workshop. A number of their students currently utilize Route 75 to get to school in the morning. Their

students were able to ride the public school bus system in the afternoon when seats are available in the 2010-11 school year. Eight students rode the school bus at 2:15 pm to Anchor Bay and Gualala and another 6 would do the same at 3:15 pm. Budget cuts are eliminating the 2:15 school bus this school year, meaning that no bus service will be available to their students due to seat capacity issues on the 3:15 school bus. She has proposed changes to the schedule so that their students could be served by Route 75. Essentially the proposal is to have the 75 layover in Ukiah for ninety minutes instead of the current approximately 4.5 hours. In the PCCS proposal, Route 75 would arrive at the Pt. Arena schools at 3:25 pm. Clearly, this would impact other trip purposes.

- A study conducted by CTAA and Action Network in 2006 identified the need for medical transportation within the South Coast area. Several stakeholder from the dental and health clinics in the Pt. Arena area stated they have clients living along the Ridge (Old Stage Rd.) between Pt. Arena and Gualala that cannot get to the clinics due to a lack of a car. The dental clinic alone gets 7 calls per month. Cathy Frey from Alliance for Rural Community Health also reiterated this, and also mentioned needs along Mt. View Rd., Boonville and Manchester. This was the key unmet need identified in the 2006 CTAA report.
- A 40 Unit senior housing complex is being built in Pt Arena and if approved, would need service during the 5-year planning horizon according to Hunter Alexander, the Town Administrator.

Connecting Services

CC Rider Route 65

The CC Riders connects the North Coast with Willits, Ukiah and Santa Rosa. Buses arrive in Ukiah at 9 am and return about 4:30 pm. Buses are in Santa Rosa for about four hours. The route serves a variety of needs. Specific suggestions for enhancing it included:

- Suggestion from drivers and supervisor: Instead of having the CC Rider bus go all the way to Santa Rosa, have it go back and forth between Ft. Bragg and Ukiah 3 times a day. Have separate bus go between Ukiah and Santa Rosa. This would address requests from riders and stakeholders for more frequent service between the coast and Ukiah and might also address requests from Ukiah residents for the ability to make a trip to the coast and back in a single day (particularly in Summer).
- It was noted that you cannot get to jury duty on time in Ukiah. The bus could leave earlier, however this would have implications for other riders of this well utilized route.
- The ability to use the bus for circulation within Santa Rosa is not well understood and has not been widely communicated due to the limited time available. A representative of Adult Services in Ukiah felt



the Santa Rosa circulation was to “nebulous.” She thought it needed to be more specific and that you should be able to call ahead to reserve your drop off/pick up within Santa Rosa.

- Other suggestions for the Santa Rosa routing included addition of a stop at the hospital and the potential elimination of some other stops (e.g. Airport stop which can be reached via the Airporter Express from Days Inn).

Senior Center Services

Mendocino County Senior Centers receive about one sixth of the County’s TDA funding to provide transportation services for their constituents. Funding is based on an agreed allocation and is not tied to quantity of service provided. The consultants conducted interviews with each of the senior center managers to profile their transportation programs and users.

Ukiah Senior Center

The Ukiah Senior Center uses a fleet of three buses to serve seniors 55+ and persons with disabilities. They provide approximately 1500 rider per month to seniors and persons with disabilities. There is no disabled certification program. Most passengers (75-80%) use a walker or wheelchair and require assistance (frail elderly). They provide door-through-door service.

Buses operate Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. They will accept advanced reservations 2 months in advance, but also accept on-demand calls. They try to pick up within 15 minutes of call. Few of their riders use MTA Dial-a-Ride – only if their appointments are too late to be served by the senior center.

The transportation service area includes all of Ukiah, south to Talmadge, east to Eastside Road and some of Redwood Valley. Would like to expand services if dollars were available: Return to five day a week service, serve more rural areas, and provide some level of service on weekends.

Fares vary based on location: \$2.00 for Ukiah, \$3.50 for outlying areas and \$5.00 for Redwood Valley. They sell Punch passes for \$20 and \$42 which are good for face value. Caregivers ride for free.

The existing Adult Day Care program is closing due to funding cuts. On a pilot basis, they will continue to serve about 10-15 seniors in the program, down from 20-30 per day. This has resulted in the reduction of transportation service to four days per week.

Willits Senior Center

The Willits Senior Center provides outreach, nutrition and transportation programs. They have two vehicles (wheelchair van and Odyssey minivan) and two drivers. They provide 20-40 round trips per day. They operate Monday thru Friday, beginning at 8-8:15 a.m. and provide service until 3:30 p.m. (return trips only). They



are making some changes in service starting in July. Will be staggering driver's hours to be out later because Willits Rider is eliminating the late run. They use to take riders to late appointments and they could ride Willits Rider home.

They offer same day on-demand service. The center manager has heard that they pick up faster than MTA (deviation of Willits Rider). The service area includes Pine Mountain, Brook Trails, Willits and the Valley. Most riders need door to door help, but a few are ambulatory. Accept disabled 18+. Has one non-senior woman who uses services.

Fares vary by are: In town \$1.50, Brook Trails \$3.50, and the Valley \$2.00. 20-Ride Pass is \$25.00.

Volunteer drivers take seniors to out-of-town appointments in Ukiah, Santa Rosa and San Francisco. The manager is looking for some younger drivers as hers are all quite elderly. Charge \$80 to Santa Rosa, \$25 to Ukiah to cover mileage reimbursement.

Believes that Willits elders don't understand flex service on Willits Rider. Suggests that perhaps the route should come to senior center regularly.

The low level of usage of the senior center buses surprises Allyn, the manager, because she knows the level of need from working in outreach. "But it's hard to promote ridership." She has done free ride offers and is asking for more advertising dollars. Notes that meal participants at the center are down - 10-12 per day for lunch.

Anderson Valley Senior Center

The center serves seniors 60+ and their spouses. While their services are open to persons with disabilities – "we don't get much call - mostly people in wheelchairs." Most transportation users also use the senior centers other services. Most of their users need door to door service and couldn't use MTA. The senior center would take general public riders if asked. For example, seniors sometimes bring a grandchild or caregiver. They charge the same fare.

They generally have 30 people for lunch but only 3 come on the bus. They provided 102 trips in March 2011.

On Tuesday and Thursday, the Senior Center provides dial-a-ride service to their lunch program and to destinations in the local area (post office, market, etc.). They serve from Nashville Road on the east, west to near Navarro. Hours: 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. Fare: \$1.00. Usually have 3 riders per day.

On Monday and Wednesday they provide trips to Ukiah – primarily for doctor's appointments. Occasionally go to Santa Rosa or Ft. Bragg. Hours: 9 a.m. – 3 or 4 p.m. depending on need. Fare \$5.00 for out of valley. Usually have 3-4 riders per day.

The bus driver carries a cell phone and users call the driver directly to schedule trips.

They have one vehicle, 8 passengers plus wheelchair, which was provided by MTA. They also use their bus for fund raising. People rent the bus and driver for events such as weddings, winery tours and brew fest. Charge \$65/hour.

Center manager notes that it is hard to “get the word out.” She includes information about the transportation service in their menu which she mails out and posts information at the clinic and post office. She occasionally puts something in the newspaper.

Redwood Coast Senior Center

Redwood Coast’s transportation program has grown significantly in the past few years under their new manager, Charles Bush. They now provide 800-1000 trips per month, using two buses, up from 370 rides per month 18 months ago. Ridership is a mix of subscription riders coming to the Adult Day Care Program (5-10 per day) and demand response riders, most of whom call the same day. Most riders are 60+. They serve very few non-senior, disabled individuals. About half of trips are to the senior center itself, while others are to medical appointments, Laundromats, hair appointments, etc.

Most of the demand response riders ride “regularly,” but must call in each day to schedule their trip. Response time is generally 10-30 minutes, 60 minutes when busy. The two buses operate between 8 and 4 with the last trip scheduled at 2:30 pm. Adult day trips involve both buses (purple bus and “other”) from 8-9 am and 2-3 pm.

They charge a zoned fare: \$2.00 in Ft. Bragg, \$3.00 outside Ft. Bragg and \$4.00 in the Mendocino/Little River area. However, they sell a half-fare punch pass, such that a one-way trip within Ft. Bragg is \$1.00 (compared to \$2.50 for Ft. Bragg DAR). The pass is sold in \$20 and \$40 denominations. The half fare pass was implemented 18 months ago and “has made a huge difference in ridership.” Note that long distance trips are SUBSTANTIALLY less expensive than MTA DAR and are door through door service.

Senior bus is also serving Casper Charter School - providing 10-15 passenger trips, 3 days a week. They took on this service after MTA said they would be unable to serve.

South Coast Senior Center

Has provided transportation to senior center activities and lunch program since 1996. Service is provided two days a week from Pt. Arena and one day a week from Gualala. Provide approximately 500 trips per month. Serve seniors 60+ and persons with disabilities. Most riders go to the Senior Center but they also serve many trips to grocery store. They serve the area from Irish Beach to Stuart’s Point.

According to the center manager, they receive the same percentage of the senior funding, even though their ridership has grown at a greater rate than other senior program. They rely on fund raising to make up the difference. Currently they are \$15,000 in red and “teetering on survival.” Would like to see bus service five days a week.

Service to Outlying Areas

The representatives from Mendocino Works and Adult Services (both of which serve clients throughout the County) and other stakeholders noted areas where they felt there are unmet transportation needs. These included the following::

- Hopland - People from Hopland need to get to Ukiah.
- No transportation from Covolo/Laytonville. Need an accessible van at least once a week. Social service agencies had not heard about e-Ride. A resident of Laytonville attended the public meeting in Willits to advocate for some level of service from that area to Willits. She had signed up for e-Ride.
- Brook Trails – a lot of Mendocino Works employees live there, but only a small number of their service population. (Meaning transit needs among this population may be limited.)
- East on Talmage – low income apartments, office of education, continuation school. Adult Services rep was not sure if it was served by Dial-a-Ride.
- South Coast – “very difficult.” Mendocino Works generally exempts people who live there from program requirements due to lack of transportation.

Communications

In riding and observing the system, it was noted that MTA has done an excellent job of branding its services. Buses and shelters have a consistent, identifiable look and are easily recognized as part of the transit network. Many bus stops have schedule information posted at the stop.

A key area where it appears branding and information could be enhanced is bus stop signage on the rural routes. Many bus stops are not signed or marked at all, and few have schedule information posted. This was observed by the consultant and noted by drivers and passengers.

MTA provides passenger information in a number of forms – printed guides, on their website and at bus stops. The overall ease of use of the passenger information could be enhanced.

The printed schedules, which often require readers to read from bottom to top, are particularly cryptic for new users. Bus operators note that they are a frequent cause of confusion, and various stakeholders and users echoed this concern.

A stakeholder at County Adult Services found the information brochure to be very confusing. She had difficulty reading schedule, then asked: How is senior defined? How do you get a discount card? Other stakeholders who are gatekeepers for significant market segments were unaware of how the Ukiah and Willits buses connect, how the Santa Rosa service functions or the fact that the Willits Rider can flex.

There is a lack information about the Dial-a-Ride service. Stakeholders were uncertain of the boundaries and it does not appear that a printed guide for this service is available.

Awareness of the Google Transit trip planner on the website appears to be limited. When it was mentioned to stakeholders who are charged with helping their clients identify transportation options, they were surprised and pleased to know such a tool existed.

