

***The Role of Public Transportation  
as a Job Access Mode:  
Lessons from a Survey of  
Persons with Disability in New Jersey***

**DiscoverAbility Webinar  
October 18, 2011**

**Andrea Lubin  
Senior Research Specialist  
Alan M. Voorhees Transportation Center**

## Voorhees Transportation Center (VTC)

One of 17 research centers at the Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning & Public Policy at Rutgers University, New Brunswick

Leader in the research and development of innovative transportation policy in:

- Transportation equity and options for transportation disadvantaged populations
- Interrelationship between land use and transportation
- Transportation Security
- Climate change/environment
- Transportation policy and finance
- Pedestrian and bicycle mobility and safety

# VTC Transportation Equity Work

VTC five-year transportation action plan: “Meeting the Employment Transportation Needs of People with Disabilities in New Jersey”

[http://policy.rutgers.edu/vtc/documents/TransEq.DDS\\_Final\\_Report.pdf](http://policy.rutgers.edu/vtc/documents/TransEq.DDS_Final_Report.pdf)

Plan recommendations pursued by VTC:

- *NJ Find A Ride transportation information website*
- *Travel Concierge Pilot*
- *NJ Community Transportation:  
Expanding Resources to Improve Services*



# Today's Focus: Presentation Outline

## **I. Survey Purpose and Administration**

## **II. Findings**

- a. Who are our respondents?
- b. What did they tell us about their employment history?
- c. What did they tell us about their experiences/thoughts on work-related transportation?

## **III. What can we learn from these findings?**

# Research Background

## Research Need

- 11% of working age adults in the U.S. report one or more disabilities
- Civilian labor force participation rate in U.S. for persons with disability: 22% compared to 71% for those without disability
- Unemployment rate in U.S. for person with disability: 15% compared to 9% for those without disability

## Impacts of these Findings

- Both PERSONAL & SOCIETAL costs

## Study Goals

1. What are the transportation barriers to job seekers with disabilities in New Jersey?
2. What are the specific issues/obstacles people with disabilities in New Jersey experience with taking public transportation to/from work?



Photo credit: NJ Transit

# Survey Development

## Survey Target Audience

- NJ Persons with Disability
- Age 18 and older
- Actively seeking employment

## Final Survey Details

- About 50 questions
- Available both in paper version and online

A black rectangular box with white text centered inside. The text reads "Survey of Persons with Disability Seeking Employment".

### Survey of Persons with Disability Seeking Employment

**RUTGERS**

Edward J. Bloustein School  
of Planning and Public Policy

**Alan M. Voorhees Transportation Center**  
Edward J. Bloustein School for Planning and Public Policy  
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey  
33 Livingston Avenue  
New Brunswick, New Jersey 08901

# Survey Dissemination

## Reaching Population Required Multi-Prong, Creative Approach

- ✓ NJ DVRS
- ✓ NJ County Offices of the Disabled
- ✓ NJ Centers for Independent Living
- ✓ NJ Division of Disability Services
- ✓ NJ Council on Developmental Disabilities
- ✓ ARC
- ✓ Jewish Vocational Service of MetroWest New Jersey
- ✓ Saint Clare's Career Services
- ✓ MOSAIC Center for Disability Employment
- ✓ NJ TRANSIT
- ✓ And others





## Who Participated?

489 responses

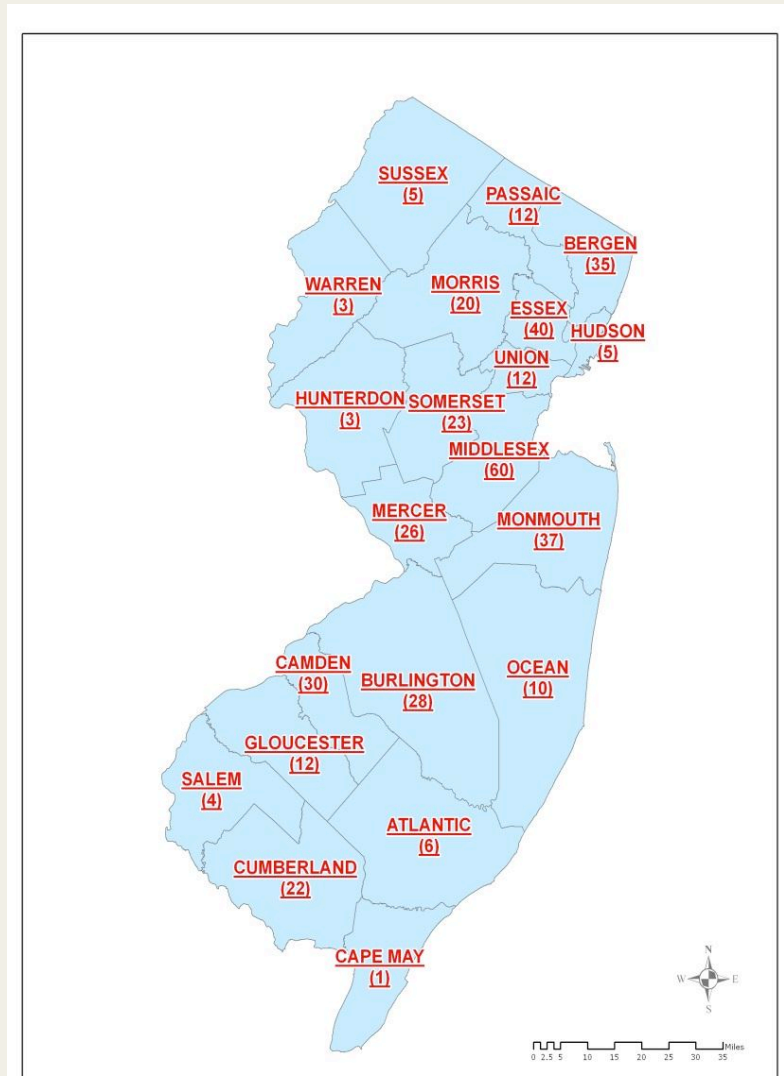
- 145 returned the mail-back survey
- 344 completed the online survey

14.1% indicated they received assistance from a friend/family member or other person

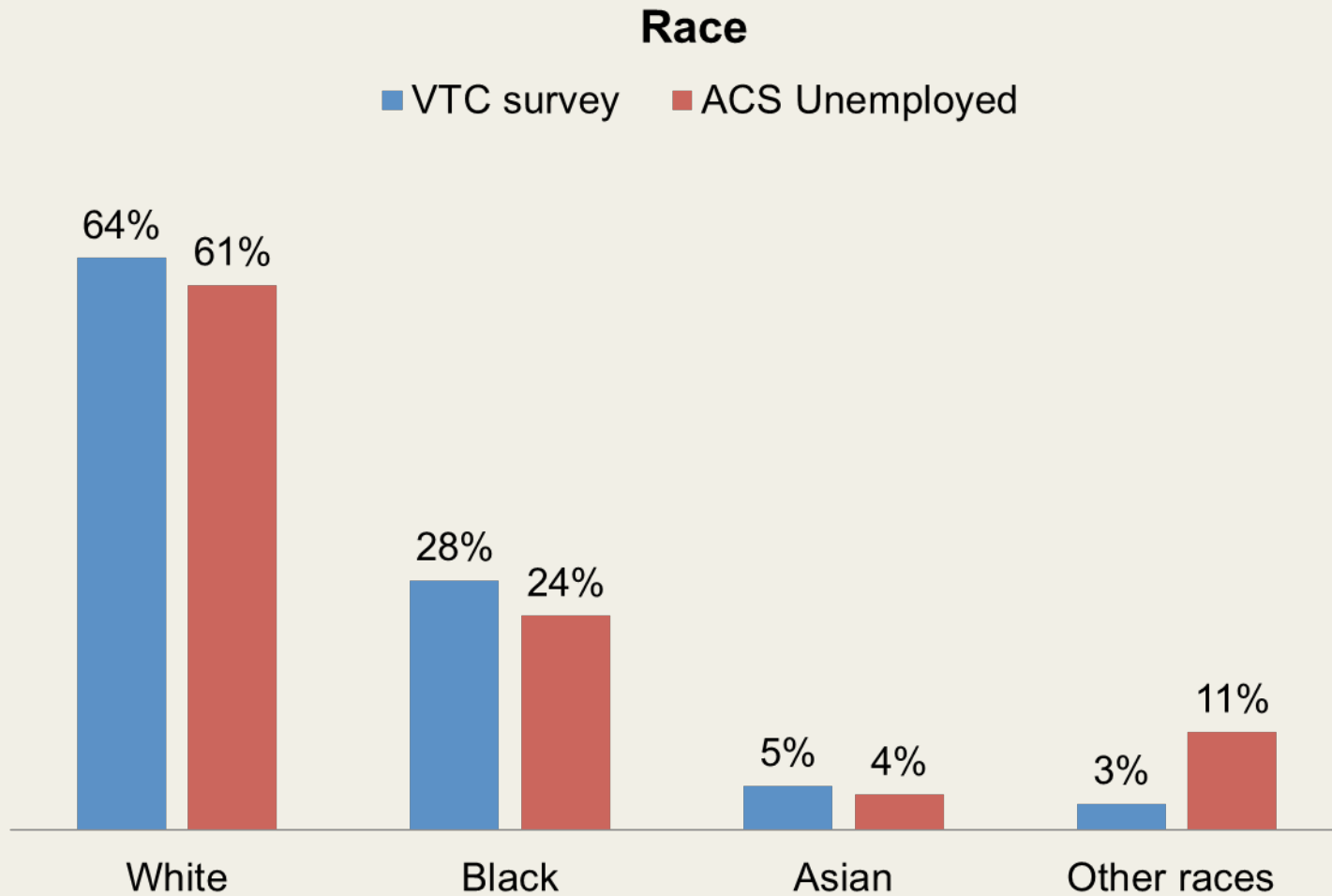


# Where Are They From?

## Survey Respondents by County



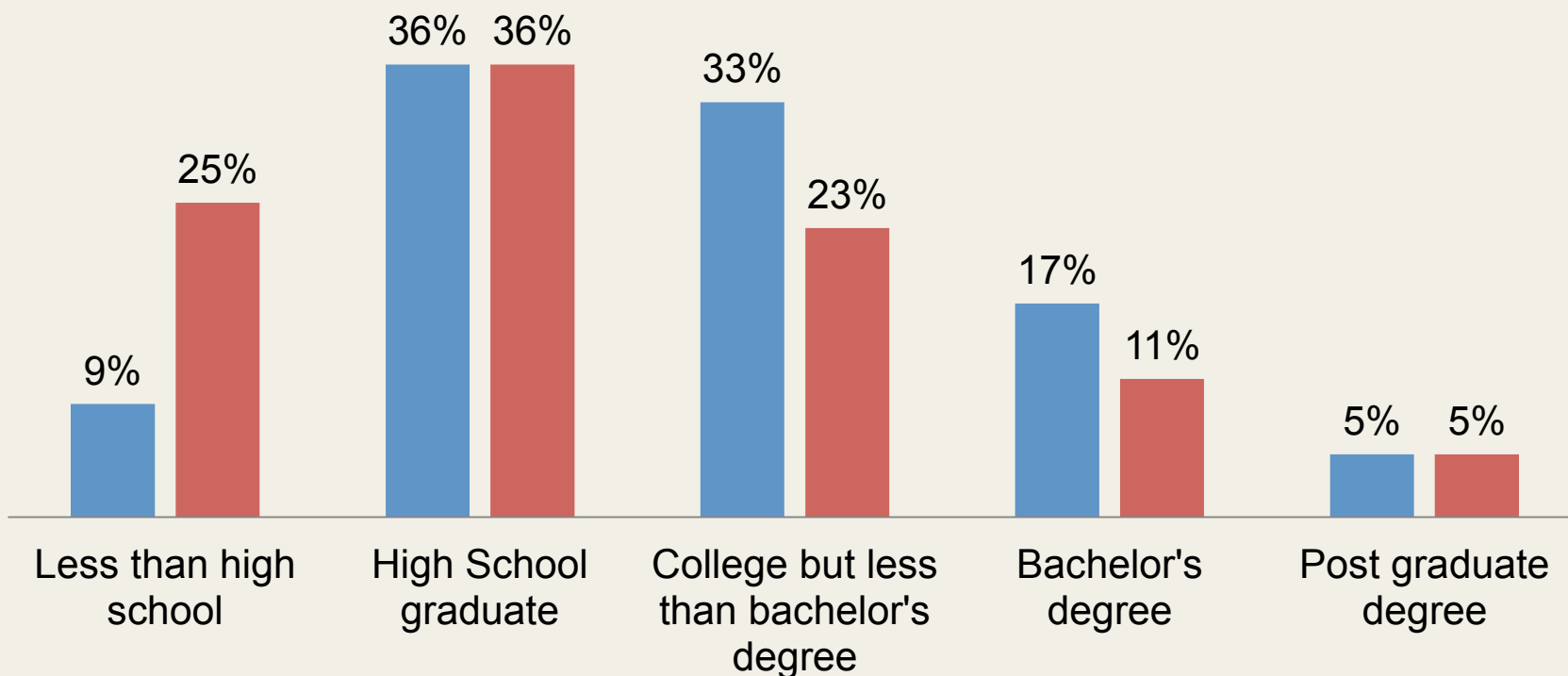
# Survey Respondents vs. ACS NJ Data



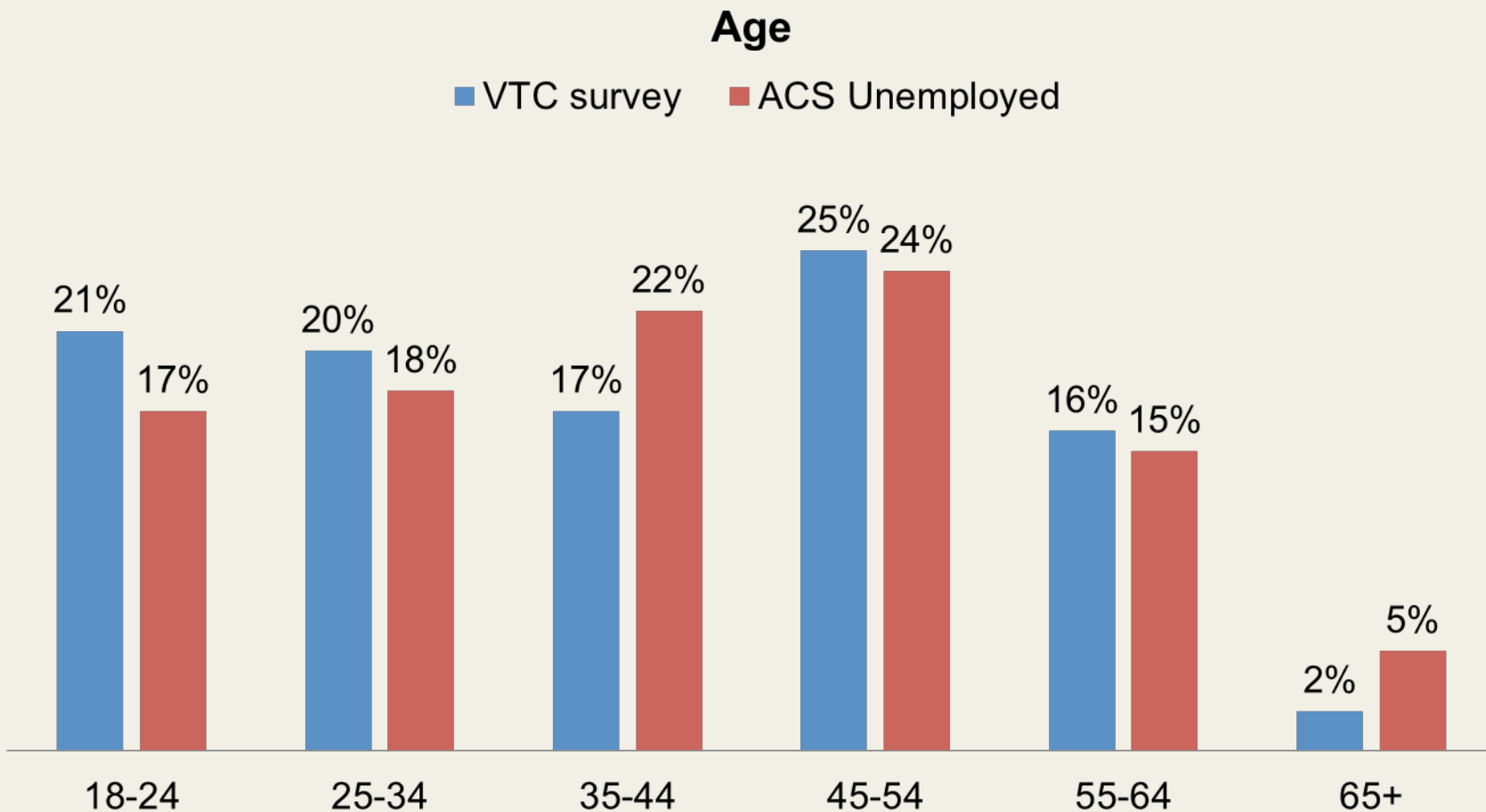
# Survey Respondents vs. ACS NJ Data

## Highest Education Level

■ VTC survey ■ ACS Unemployed



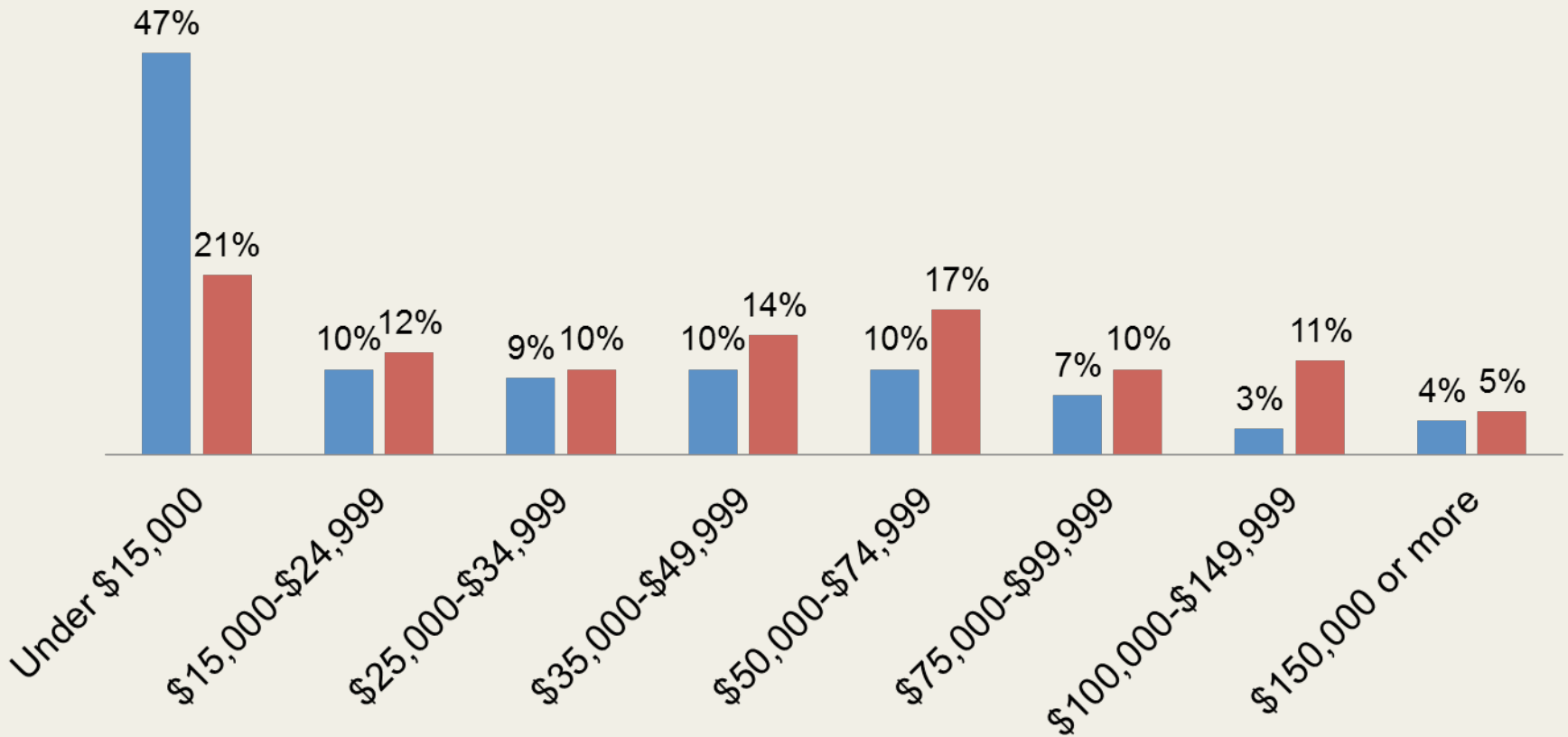
# Survey Respondents vs. ACS NJ Data



# Survey Respondents vs. ACS NJ Data

## Household Income

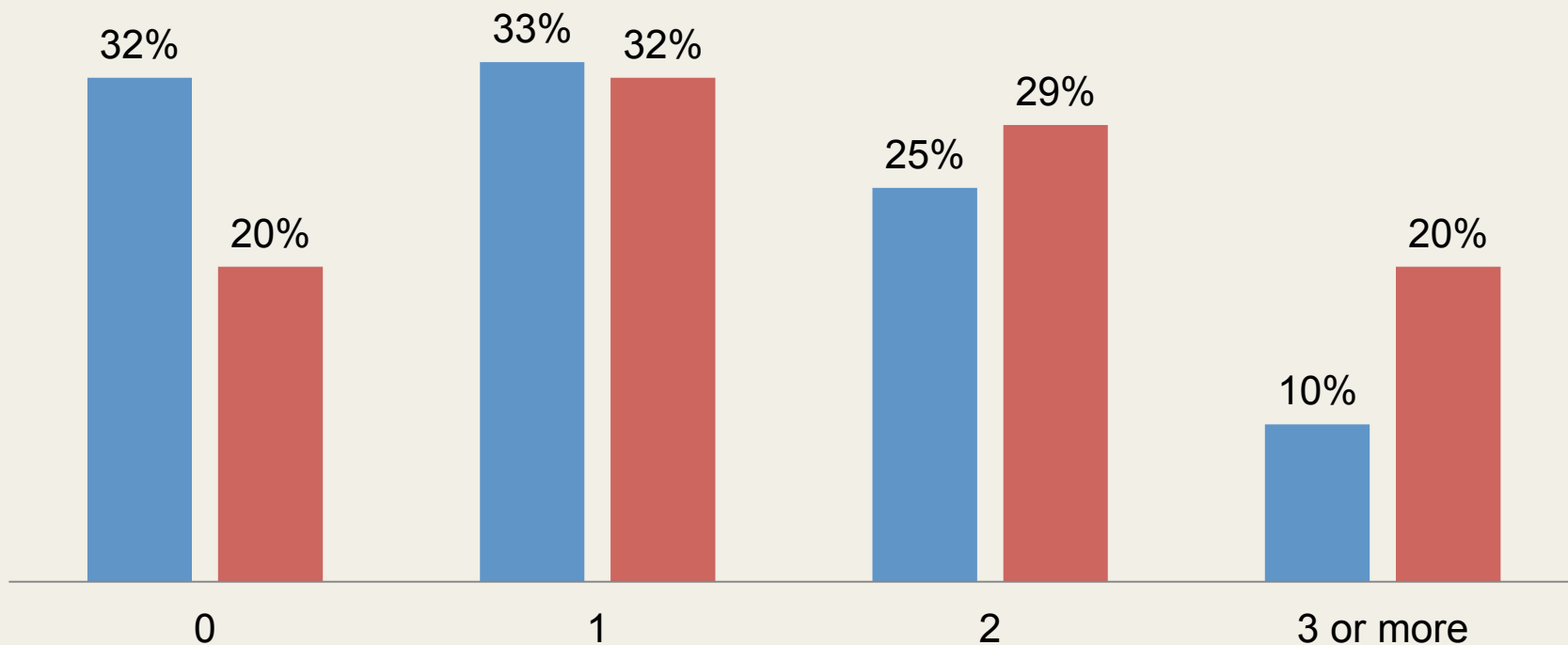
■ VTC survey ■ ACS Unemployed



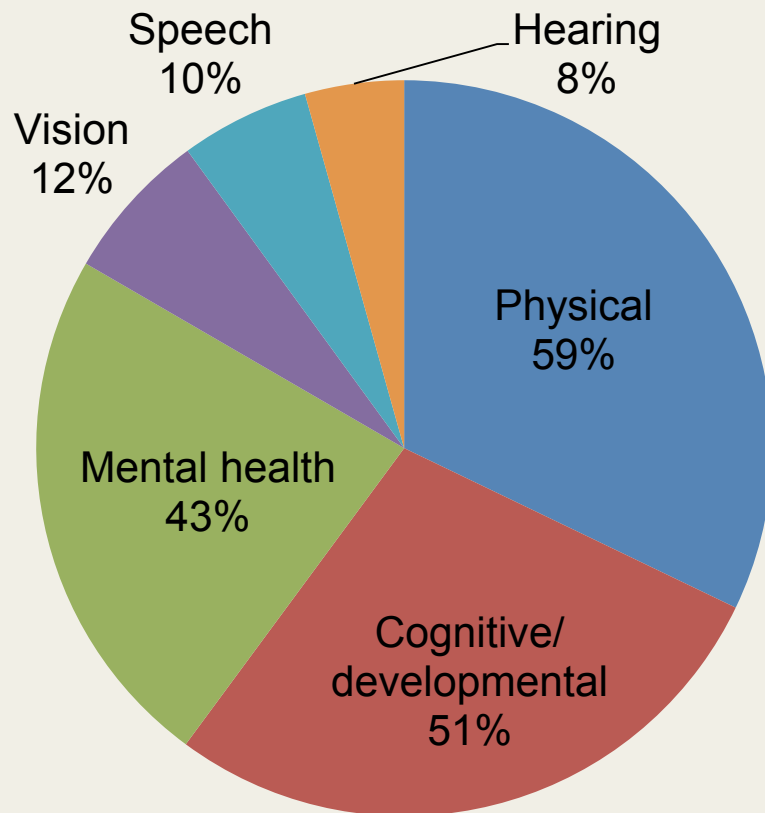
# Survey Respondents vs. ACS NJ Data

## Vehicles in Household

■ VTC survey ■ ACS Unemployed



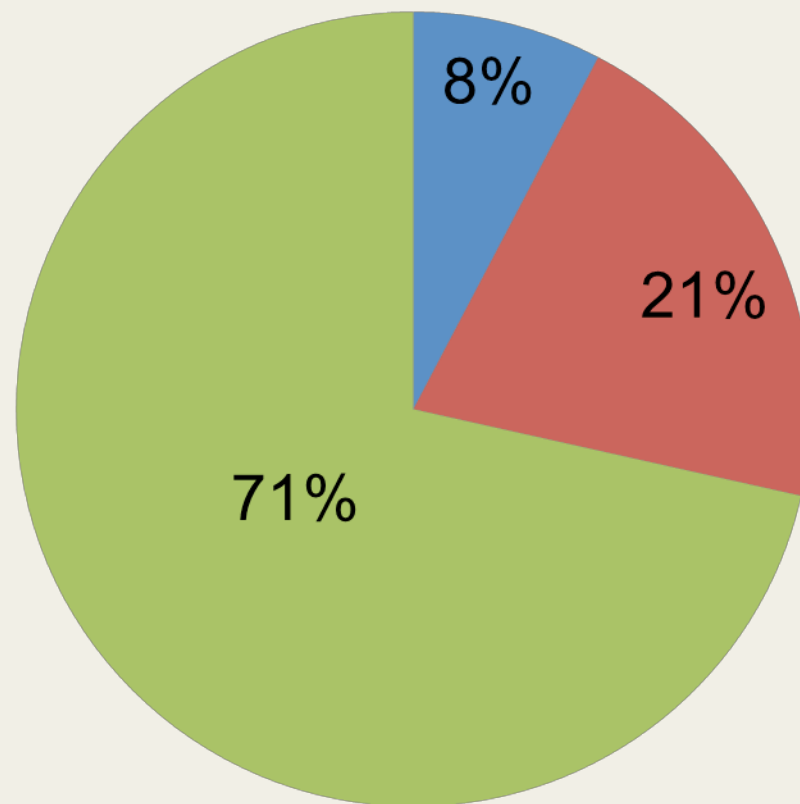
# Type of Disability





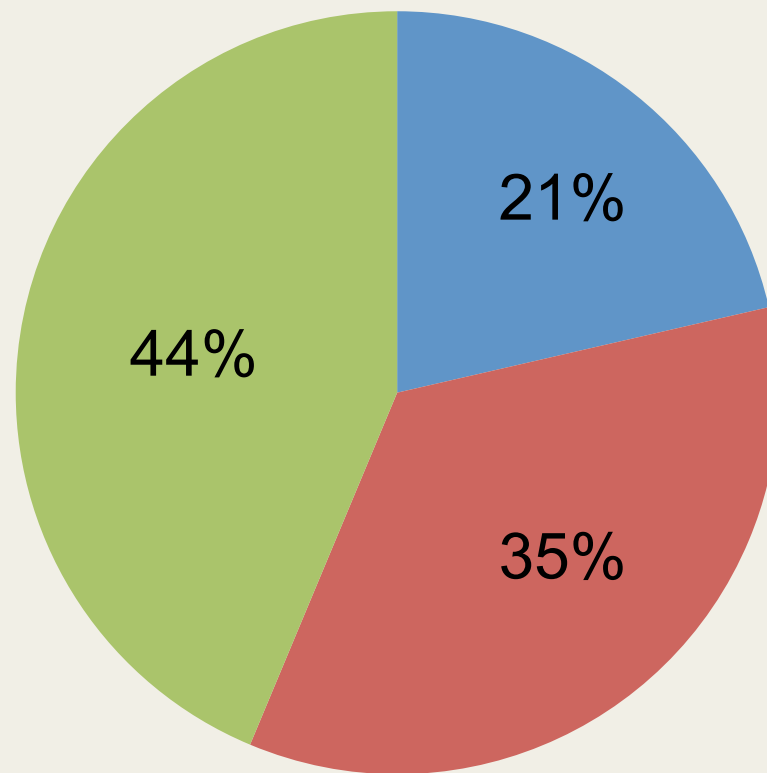
# Current Employment Status

■ Full time ■ Part time ■ Unemployed

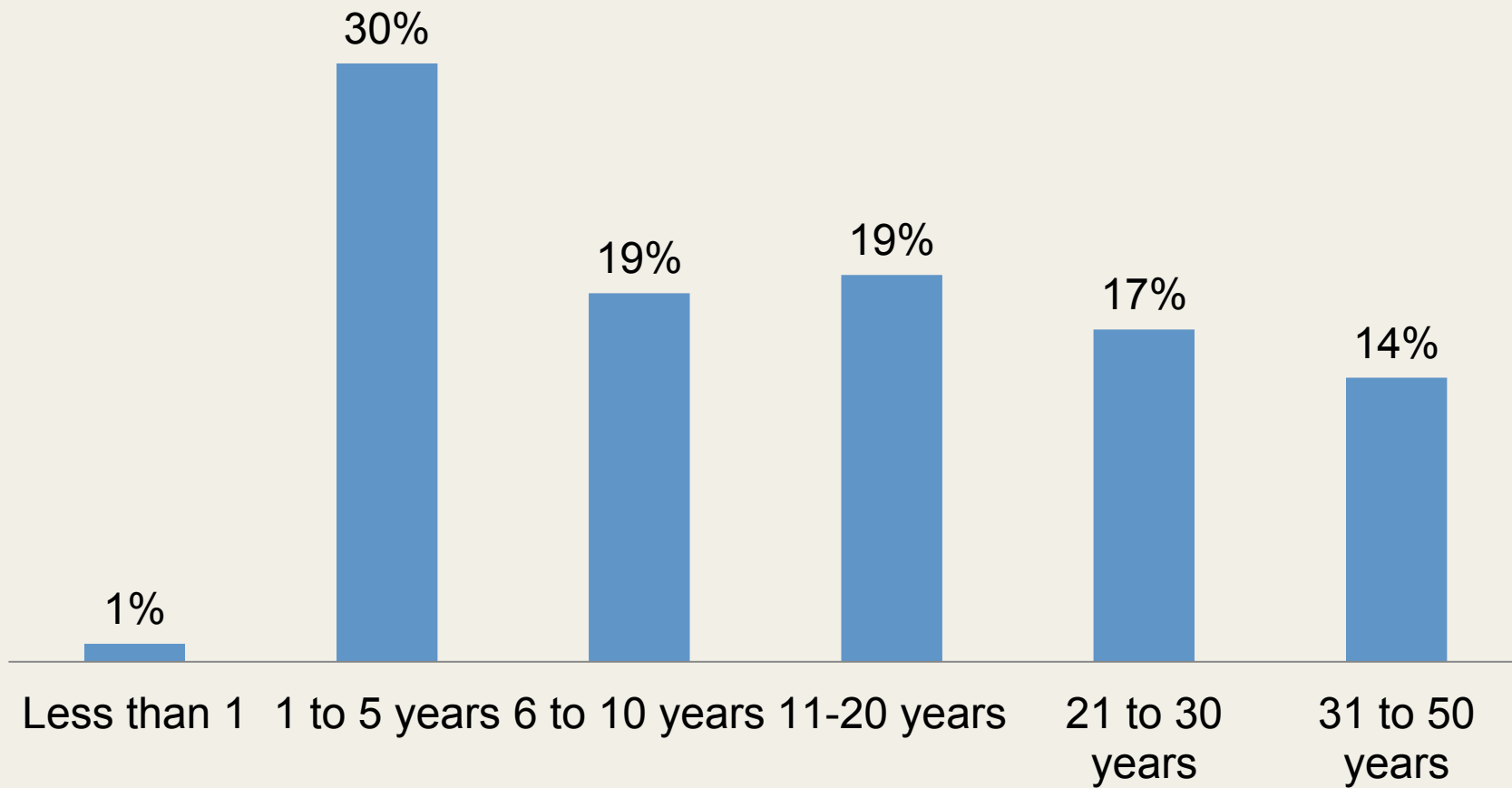


## Full or Part Time Position

■ Full time   ■ Part time   ■ Either full or part time



## Work Experience



# What Jobs Are They Searching For? What Jobs Did They Previously Hold?

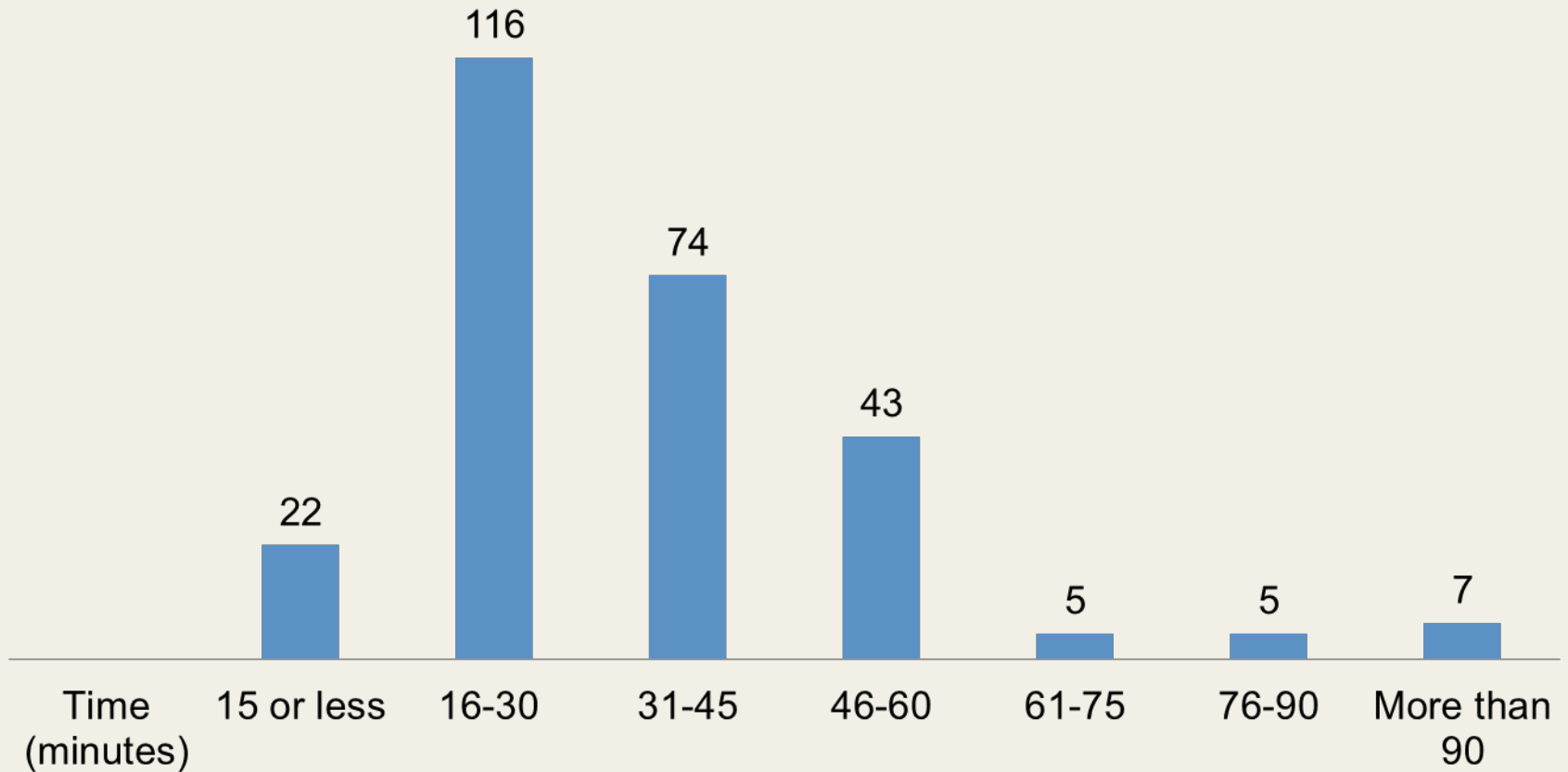
## Top 5 Categories Seeking Job In Now

- Administration – 21%
- Sales – 21%
- Care – 11%
- Food – 11%
- Service – 10%

## Top 5 Categories Previous Employment

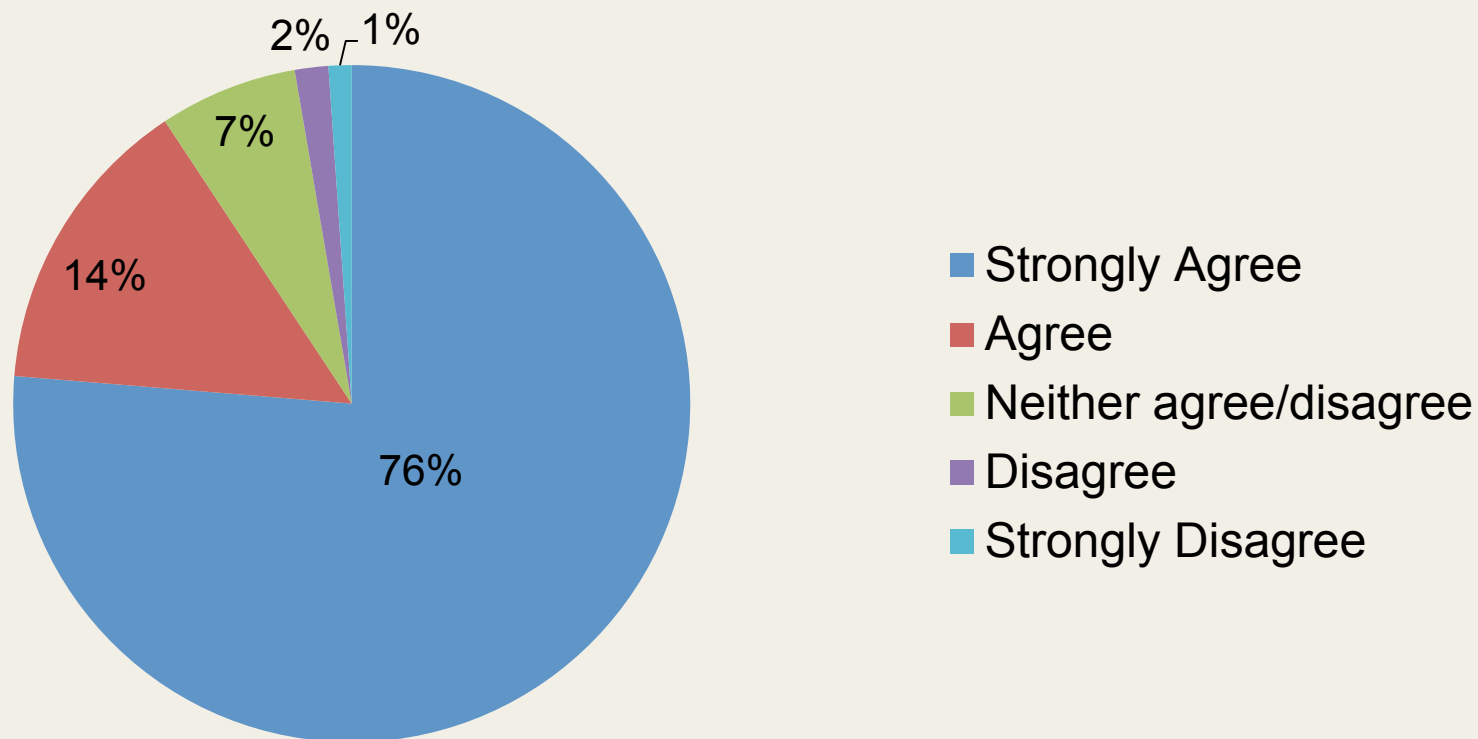
- Administration – 17%
- Sales – 15%
- Food – 14%
- Service – 14%
- Construction – 13%

## How Far Will They Commute?



# How Important is Transportation for Job Seekers?

Q: "Transportation is important to my Job Search"



# Mobility Options In New Jersey

## Public Transit: NJ TRANSIT

- Bus
- Rail
- Light Rail



# Mobility Options In New Jersey

## Public Transit: NJ TRANSIT Access Link

- ADA accessible service
- Mirrors local fixed bus routes
- Curb to curb
- Shared ride
- Eligibility process



Photo credit: NJ Transit



# Mobility Options In New Jersey

## County Paratransit

- 21 systems, one in each county
- Service to people with disabilities, the elderly & other transportation disadvantaged



# Mobility Options In New Jersey

## Other Potential Accessible Options

- Municipalities
- NGO/Non-profits
- Taxis
- Volunteer drivers
- Walking



# Survey Respondent Travel Mode Use Patterns

Mode	Frequently used mode for commuting	Frequently used mode for all purposes
Car passenger	29%	31%
Drive personal vehicle	26%	18%
Bus	22%	20%
Paratransit by county, city or non-profit	17%	9%
Access Link	13%	12%
Commuter rail	9%	12%
Taxi	9%	8%
Light rail	5%	2%
Car/vanpool	5%	3%
Walk	15%	24%
Bicycle	4%	5%
N	100	489

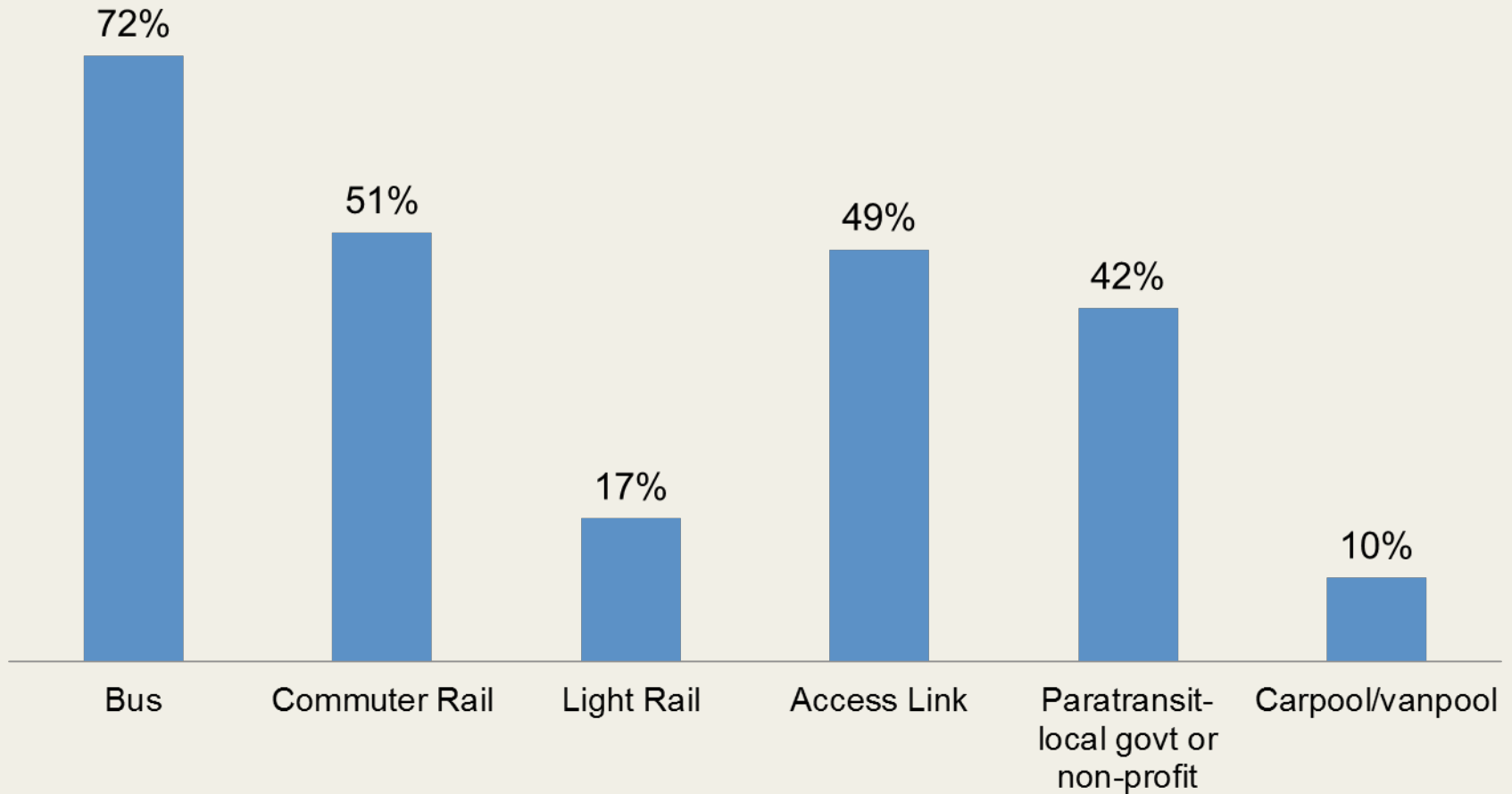
# Importance of Public Transit for Survey Respondents

- 38% find public transportation useful in the job search
- 63% are considering public transit as a travel means for their next job

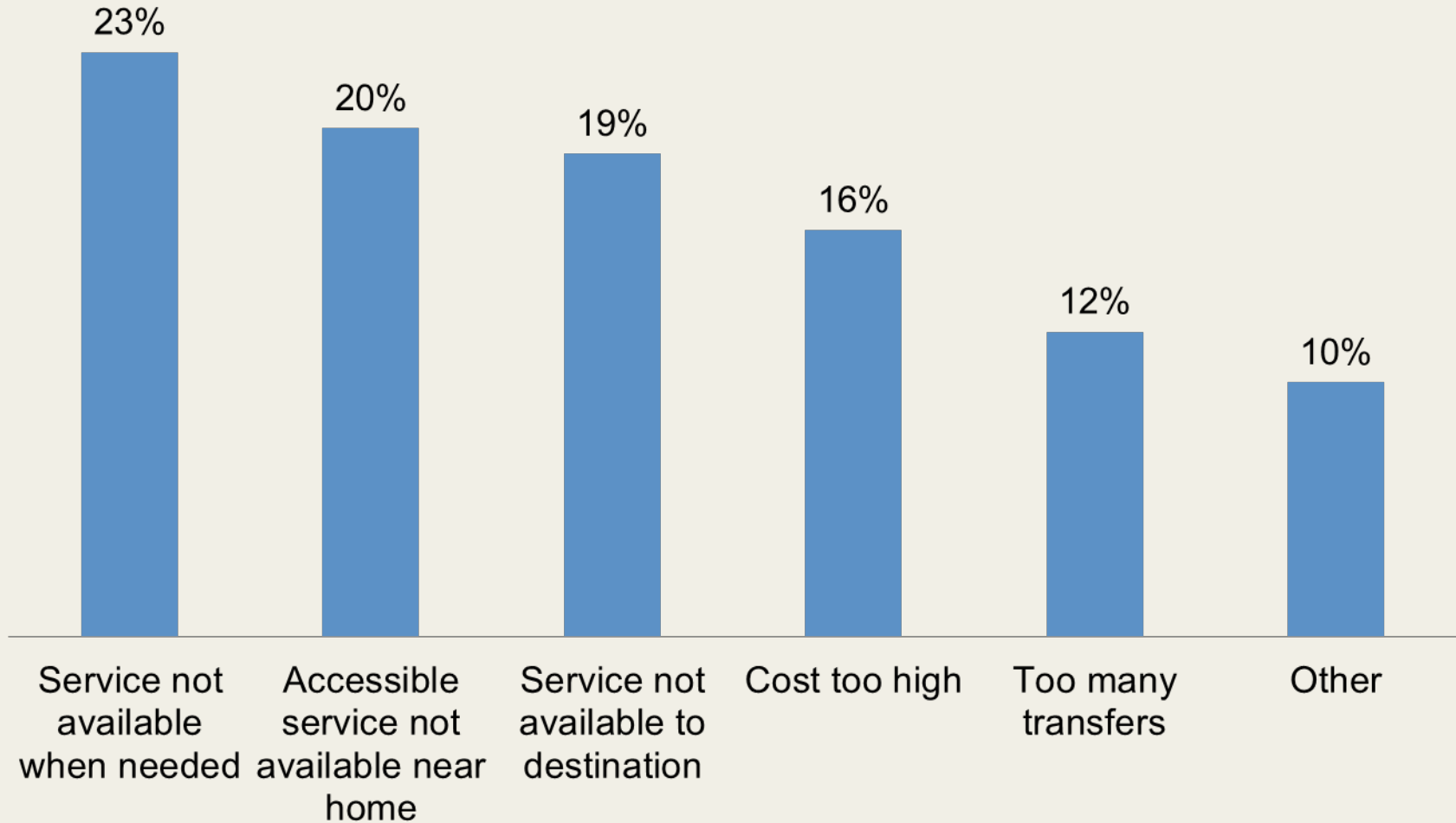


Photo credit: NJ Transit

# Is Public Transit Available Near Home?



# Public Transportation: Why Are They Dissatisfied with Level of Service?



# Public Transportation: How Satisfied Are They With Environmental Conditions?

	Not at all satisfied	Not very satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Very satisfied	N
Sidewalks	27%	17%	21%	16%	19%	308
Street crossings and intersections	26%	20%	24%	16%	15%	302
Street lighting	25%	18%	25%	18%	14%	308



# Public Transportation: How Satisfied Are They With Transit Equipment?

- 89% satisfied with the bus lifts
- 84% satisfied with the bus kneels
- 69% with the train bridge plates

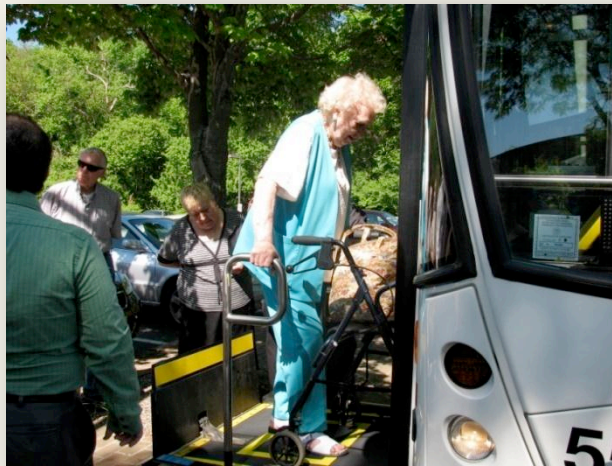


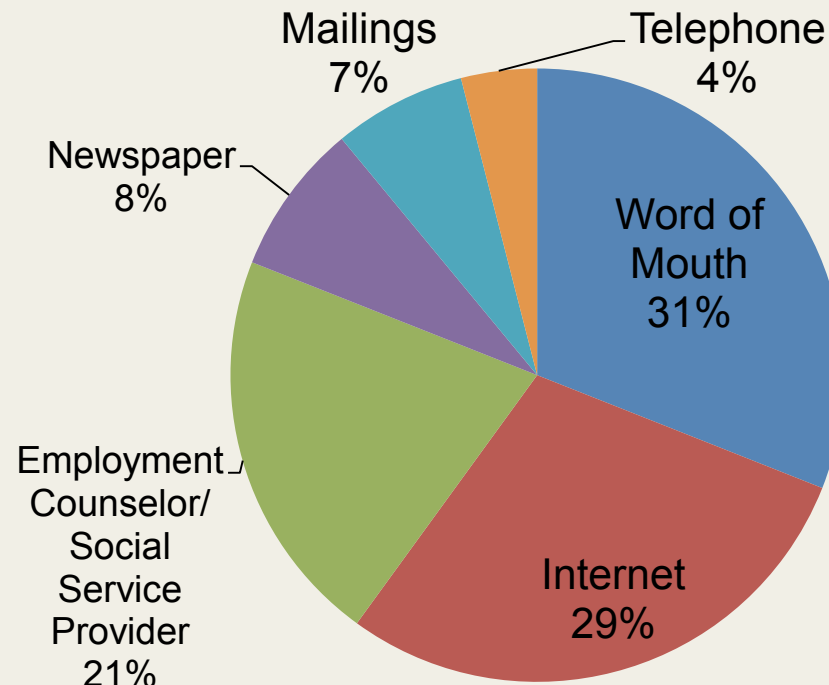
Photo credit above: GMTMA



# Public Transportation: How Safe and Secure Do They Feel?

	Very safe	Somewhat safe	Don't feel safe	Don't feel safe at all	Don't know	N
Safety at bus stop	32%	34%	13%	9%	12%	308
Safety onboard buses	33%	42%	8%	5%	12%	306
Safety at rail station	22%	29%	14%	9%	26%	296
Safety onboard trains	26%	31%	11%	6%	26%	293
Safety traveling to/from bus stop	24%	32%	17%	10%	17%	296
Safety traveling to/from rail station	20%	28%	14%	10%	29%	289
Safety at park and ride	15%	26%	11%	10%	38%	290

# Public Transportation: What Sources Are They Using for Information?



# Public Transportation: What Informational and Familiarity Barriers Are They Facing?



## Concluding Thoughts

### + POSITIVES +

- Transportation has a critical role in enhancing job access for people with disabilities
- Many respondents are currently using public transport; Willingness to consider using it to get to/from employment; And many report public transit has helped w/ job search process

### - NEGATIVES -

- There does remain a variety of environmental, informational and service-related barriers to using public transportation
- Almost half of respondents are dissatisfied with the level of public transit service near their homes

# Concluding Thoughts

## **Environmental barriers**

- Work with municipalities

## **Informational barriers**

- Develop new marketing efforts for public transit services & features
- Promote and expand travel training

## **Service barriers**

- Conduct additional research focused on disability type and associated travel needs/obstacles
- Increase awareness for the variety of transportation options available in the state

# NJ Public Transit Information Sources

## **NJ TRANSIT**

Website: [www.njtransit.com](http://www.njtransit.com)

(800) 772-2287 or TT (800) 772-2287 - *automated 24/7*

(973) 275-5555 - *operator assistance 7am-7pm daily*

(800) 955-ADA1 (2321) or TT (800) 955-6765 - *Access Link Information*

## **NJ County Paratransit Services**

[www.njtransit.com/tm/tm\\_servlet.srv?hdnPageAction=ParaTransitTo](http://www.njtransit.com/tm/tm_servlet.srv?hdnPageAction=ParaTransitTo)

[www.njcost.com](http://www.njcost.com) (email address: [njcost@aol.com](mailto:njcost@aol.com))

## **NJ Transportation Management Associations**

[www.tmacouncilnj.org](http://www.tmacouncilnj.org)

<http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/publicat/Facts/demand.shtm>

## **NJ Online Transportation Information**

[www.njfindaride.org](http://www.njfindaride.org) or Dial 211

## **Travel Training, NJTIP**

Website: [www.njtip.org](http://www.njtip.org)  
(973) 533-1665

## For More Information

**Andrea Lubin, Senior Research Specialist**

Alan M. Voorhees Transportation Center

33 Livingston Avenue, Room 452

732-932-6812, ext. 593

[annlubin@ejb.rutgers.edu](mailto:annlubin@ejb.rutgers.edu)

<http://policy.rutgers.edu/vtc>

<http://www.facebook.com/VTCrutgers>