



EMPLOYER SURVEY DATA REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2023





PROJECT BACKGROUND

Valley Vision, in partnership with the **Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG)** and **local transportation agencies**, sought to implement an ongoing series of surveys to understand the transportation and ongoing needs of the Capital Region's employers. In August 2022, the first survey of this series was launched to measure the changes in location-based work, hiring and onboarding challenges, and training opportunities.

This data was collected through an online survey released in May of 2023, which consisted of 26 questions and remained live for nine weeks. The Employer Survey was distributed via email to industry partners, regional employers, chambers of commerce, and workforce boards to outreach to their respective channels. The geographic reach of this survey included seven counties: Sacramento, Sutter, Placer, El Dorado, Yuba, Yolo, and Solano.

The questions were centered around two major themes: workplace structure trends and transportation needs. All of these results, coupled with the findings from the 2022 Employer Survey, serve as a baseline for addressing our region's transit needs.

For more than 25 years, Valley Vision has used research to help governments, businesses, foundations, and community groups better understand the issues facing our region. We believe that knowing and understanding the facts is the best way to establish a common working foundation for collaborative problem-solving. That's why Valley Vision conducts, produces, and interprets research including scientific public opinion polls, focus groups, community needs assessments, best practice studies, and other research tools to bring to light the information local leaders need to improve our communities.

SURVEY KEY FINDINGS

Conducting an ongoing analysis of transportation and workplace trends in the Sacramento region is crucial for a number of reasons. By monitoring employers' needs on a consistent basis, we can identify areas of improvement and make informed decisions that will impact transportation accessibility and workplace structures for the better.

The 2023 Employer Survey, a follow-up to the 2022 study by Valley Vision and the Sacramento Area Council of Governments, reveals the following key trends:

- **More employees are coming into the workplace.** Nearly three-fourths of all respondents (**68%**) indicated that 76 - 100% of their workforce comes into the workplace at least once a week. This is a steep increase from the 2022 Employer Survey, where **50%** of respondents said that 76 - 100% of their workforce comes in at least once a week.
- **More employees are worried about commutes interfering with family or other obligations.** In 2022, **17%** of respondents said that commuting interferes with familial obligations. This number increased to **26%** in this iteration of the Employer Survey.
- **Employers are offering fewer transportation-related incentives.** **63%** of survey respondents said that their workplace does not offer any transportation-related incentives for their employees, which means that this number nearly doubled from last year's **35%**.
- **The use of coworking spaces has dramatically decreased post-pandemic.** Only **3%** of respondents supported employees utilizing co-working spaces compared to **31%** in 2022.

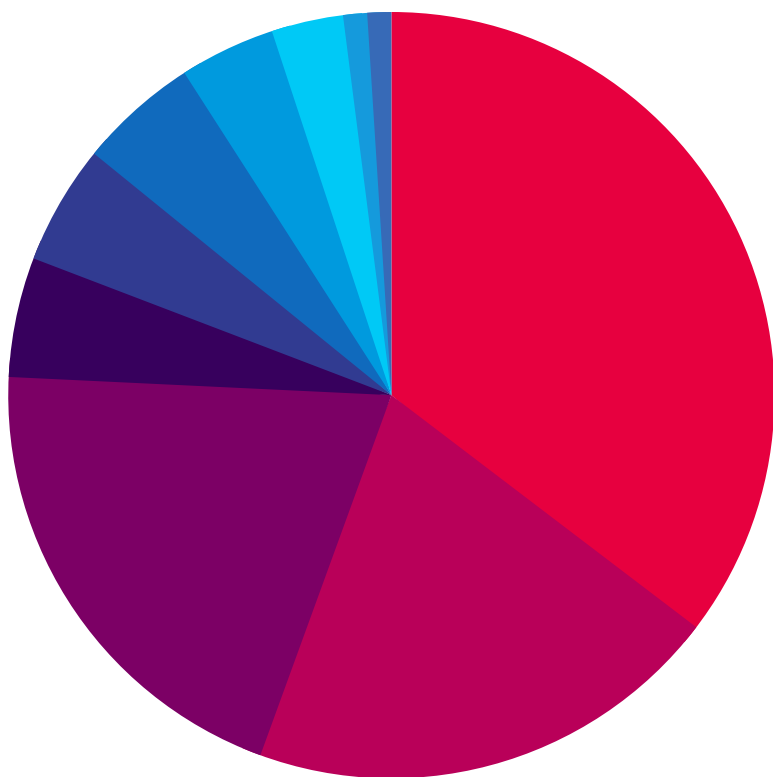




RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

INDUSTRIES REPRESENTED

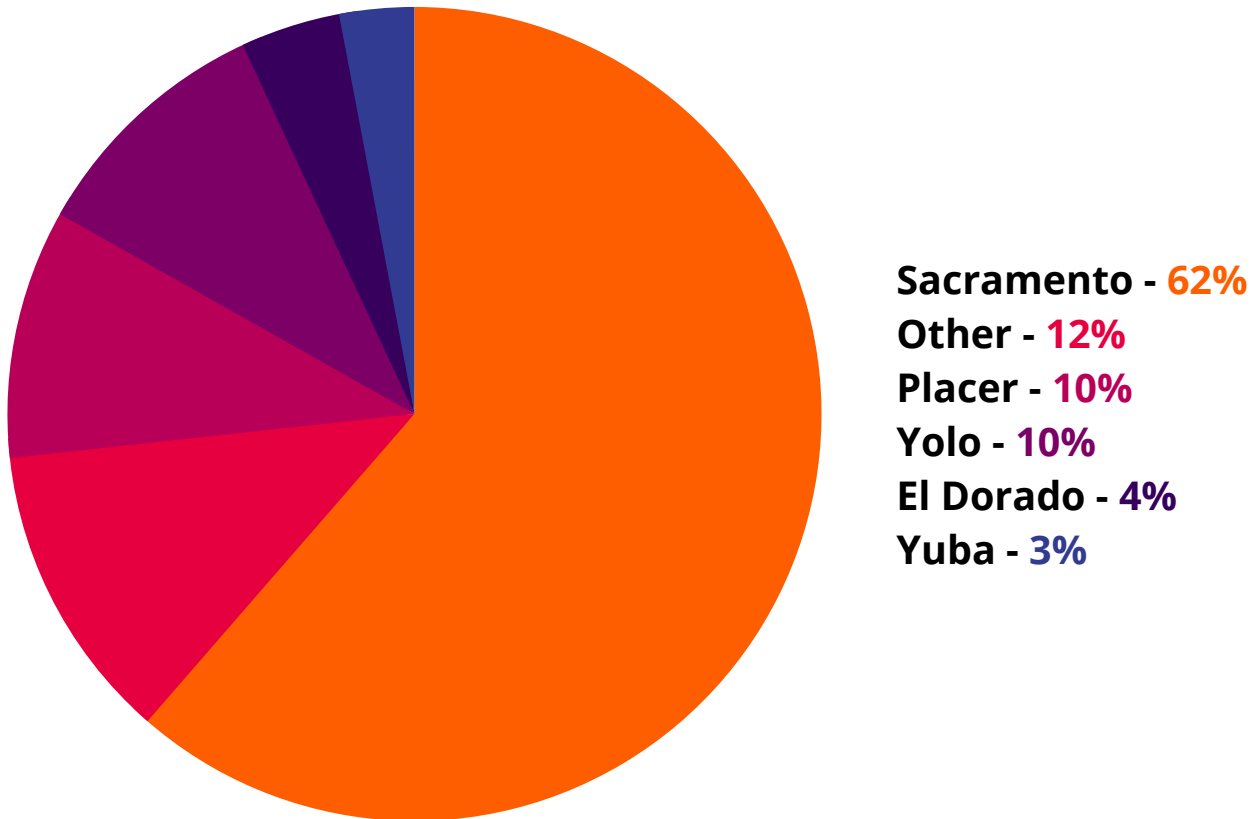
Industry representation from respondents included the occupation groups shown in the graph below. The majority of respondents were from the **Nonprofit**, **Government**, and **Other** sectors.



Nonprofit	- 35%
Government	- 20%
Other	- 20%
Construction	- 5%
Finance	- 5%
Manufacturing	- 5%
Health Care	- 4%
Accommodations	- 3%
Restaurants/Food Service	- 1%
Transportation	- 1%

Note: Industries that fell under the "Other" category included Education, IT Consulting, Design, etc.

GEOGRAPHIC REACH



The survey's primary distribution was centered in the Capital Region, which consists of the following counties: **Sacramento**, **El Dorado**, **Placer**, **Sutter**, **Yolo**, and **Yuba**. Additional survey responses came from **Solano** and **Nevada** counties.

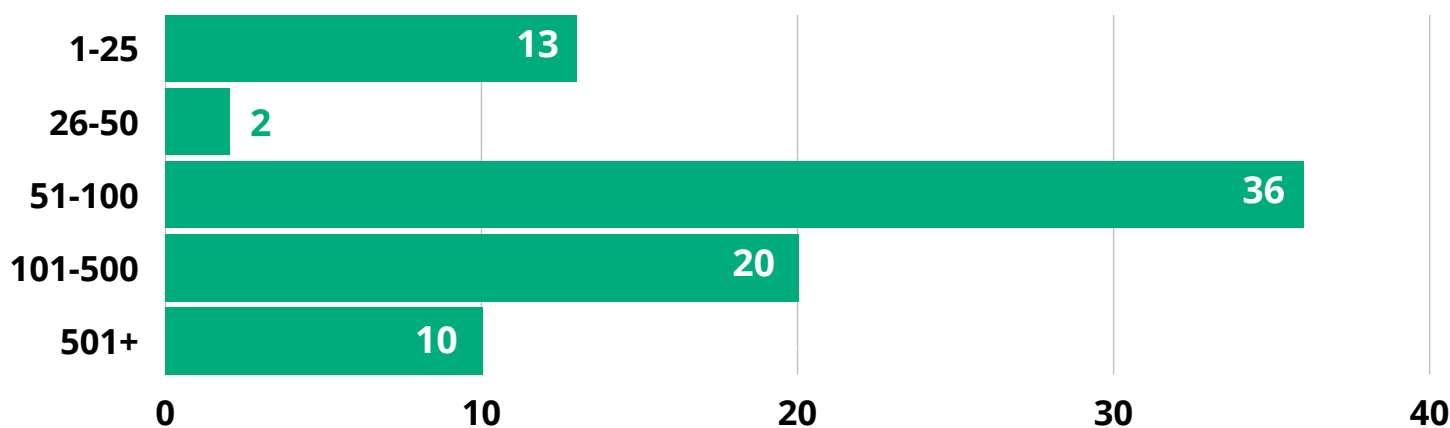




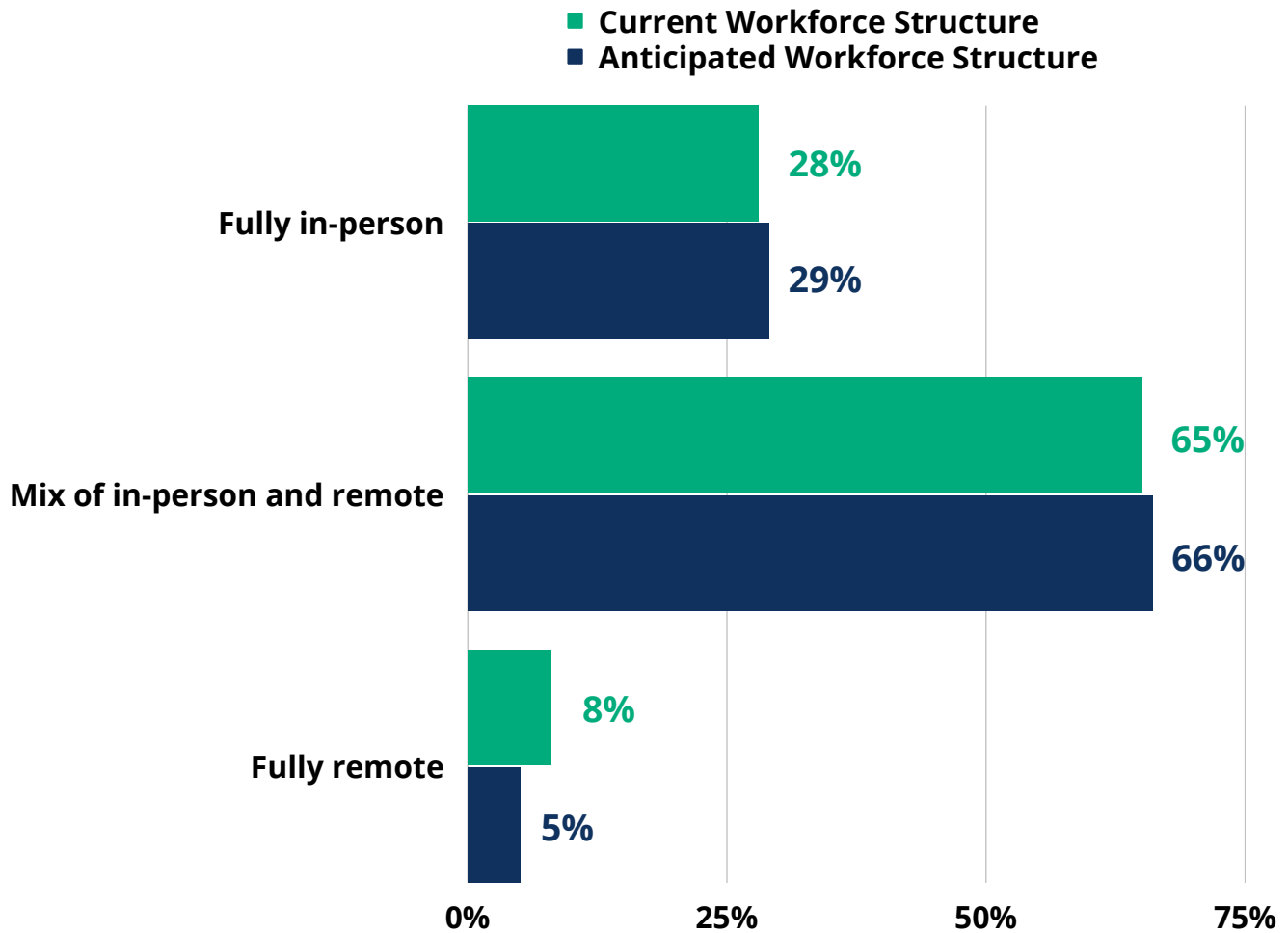
BUSINESS/ ORGANIZATION SIZE

Most respondents came from small to medium sized businesses or organizations, as shown by the chart below. However, the data also includes larger entities, which ensures that the survey is not skewed too heavily towards a specific demographic.

46% OF RESPONDENTS INDICATED THAT THE SIZE OF THEIR WORKFORCE DID NOT CHANGE SIGNIFICANTLY AS A RESULT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC.

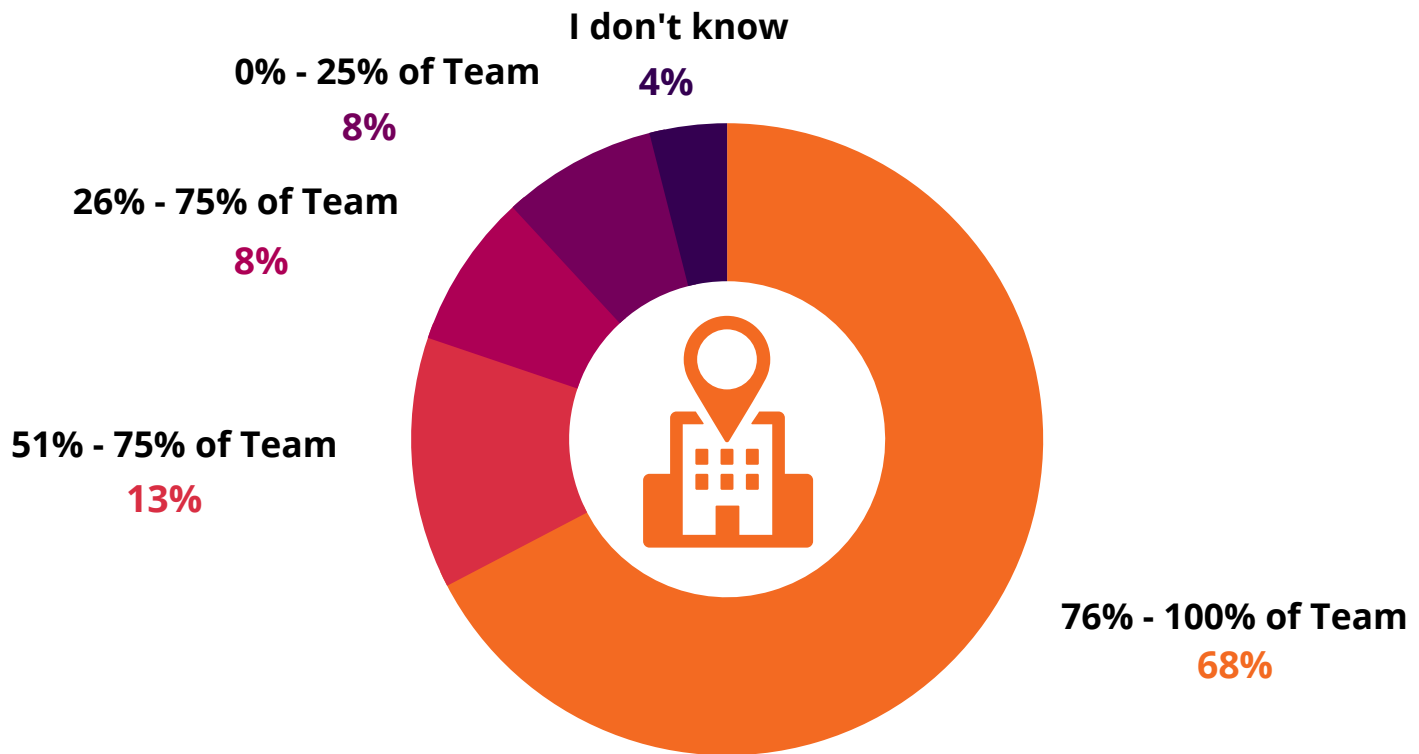


WORKPLACE STRUCTURES



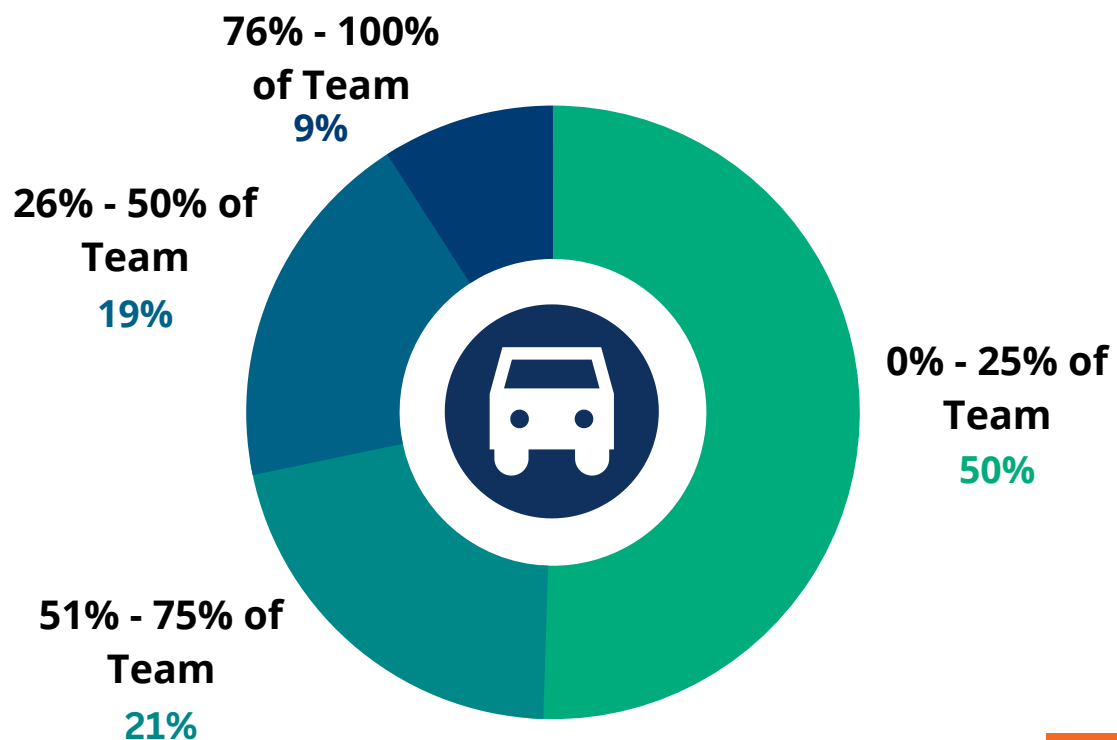
The bar chart above measures the **current workplace team structures** and the **anticipated structure 12 to 24 months from the survey's distribution**. This indicates that hybrid work is the most popular option, and employers plan to stay with this structure for at least the next 12-24 months. In comparison to the 2022 Employer Survey Report, relatively the same percentage of respondents indicated that they expect to maintain a hybrid model (68% versus 66% in 2023). The percentage that anticipate having a fully-remote work structure **decreased** slightly from 8% in 2022 to 5% in 2023.

COMMUTE STATISTICS



68% of respondents said that most of their team came into the office at least once a week. This is an increase from 2022, in which 50% of respondents said the same thing.

The graph to the right depicts an estimate of the percentage of positions in respondents' organizations that require employees to utilize a vehicle during work hours. Last year, 50% to 75% of employers surveyed had this requirement at their business or organization. In this most recent survey, half (50%) of all respondents indicated only 0% to 25% of their team were required to utilize a vehicle.





SURVEY RESULTS OVERVIEW

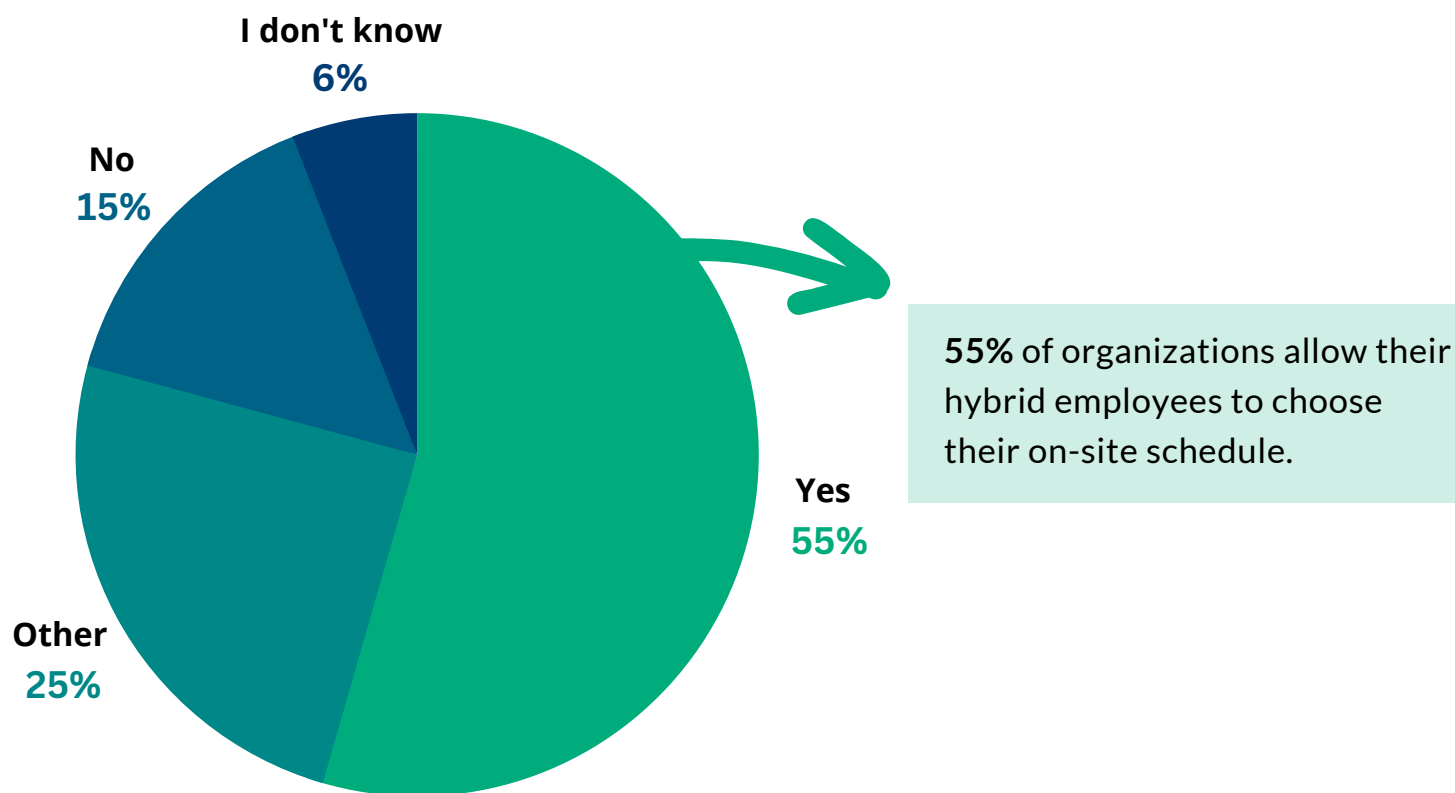
The following questions provide additional in-depth information pertaining to transit demand. To provide the full context behind these next few graphs, they will be accompanied by their corresponding question from the survey.

STRUCTURE EXAMPLE:

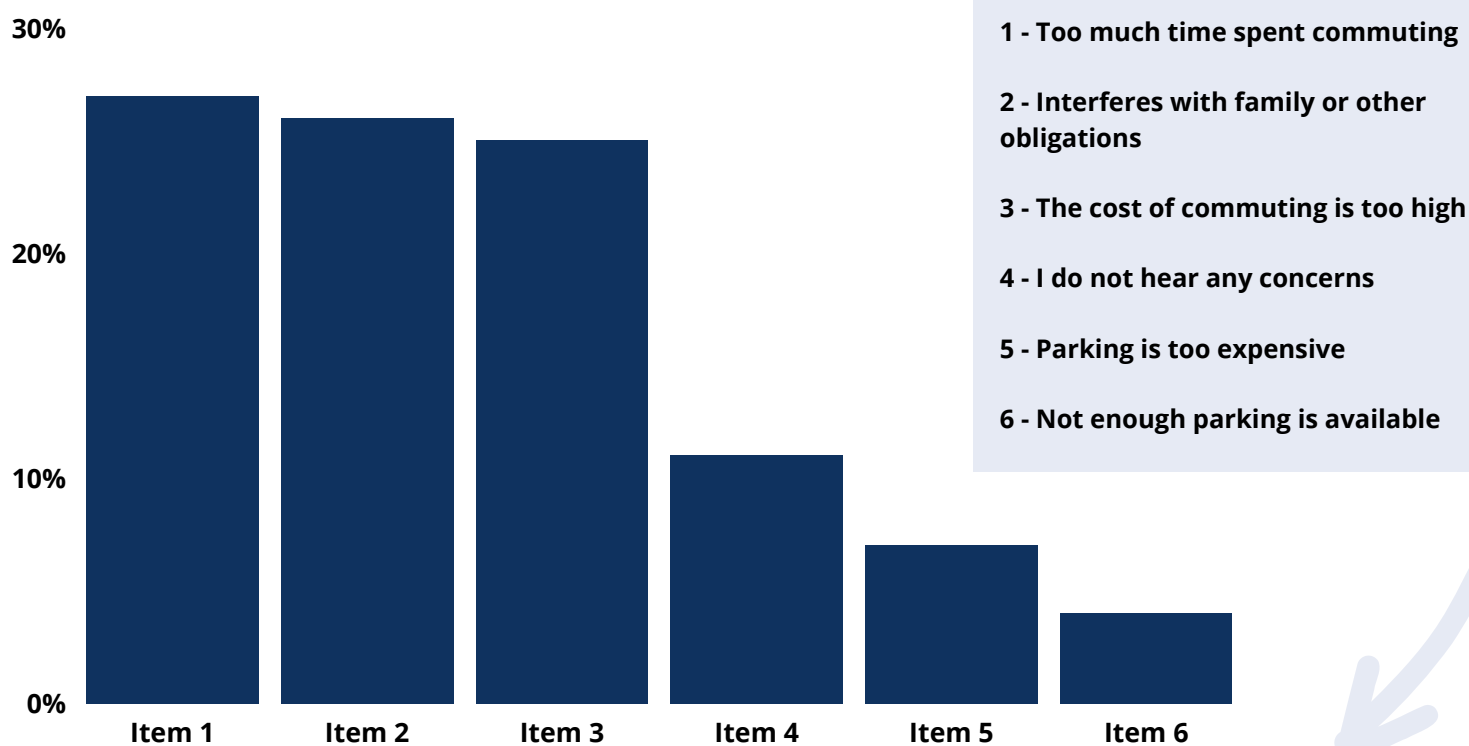
Question



Thinking about your employees who work hybrid (part-time remotely and part-time in-person), does your business/organization currently allow them to choose their on-site schedule?

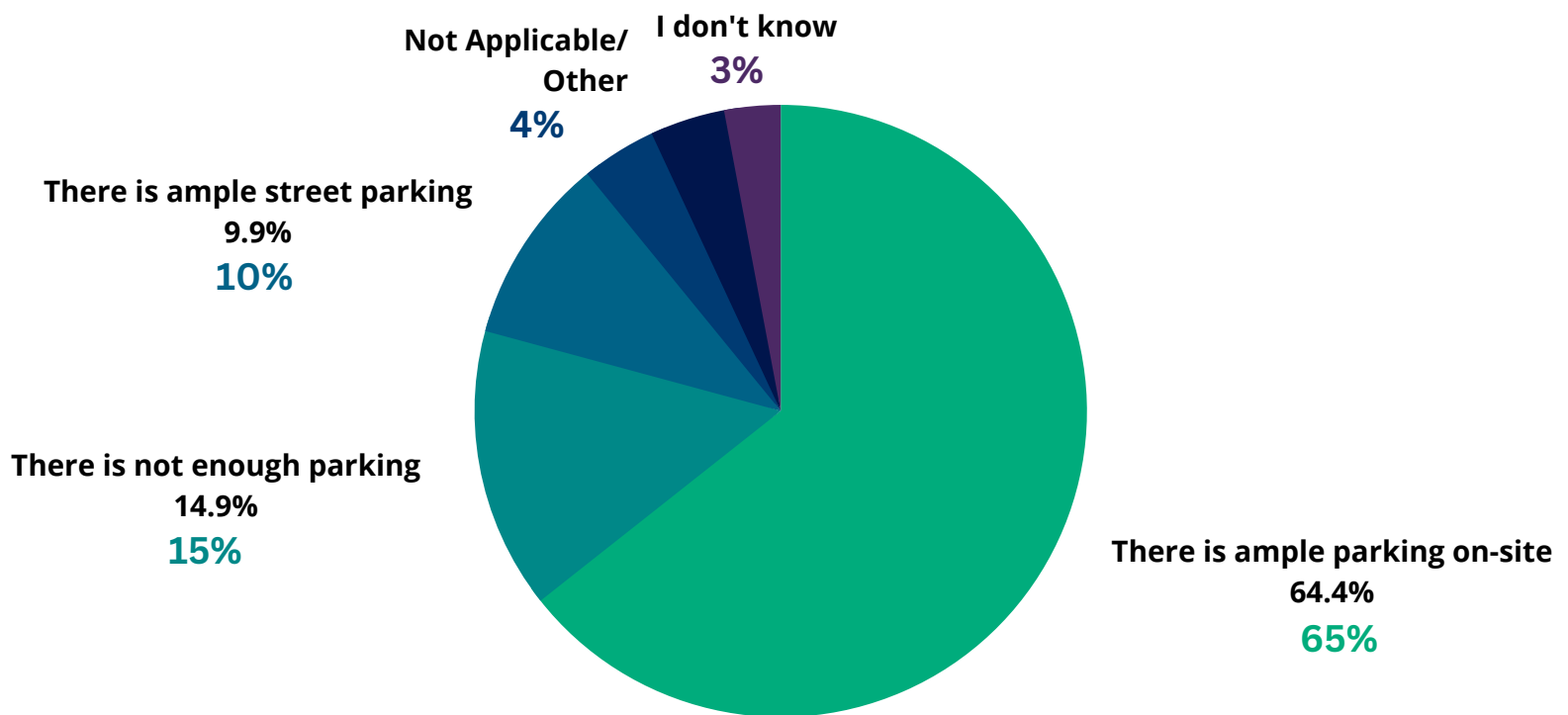


What, if any, are the most common concerns you hear from your employees about their commutes to work? *[Check all that apply]*

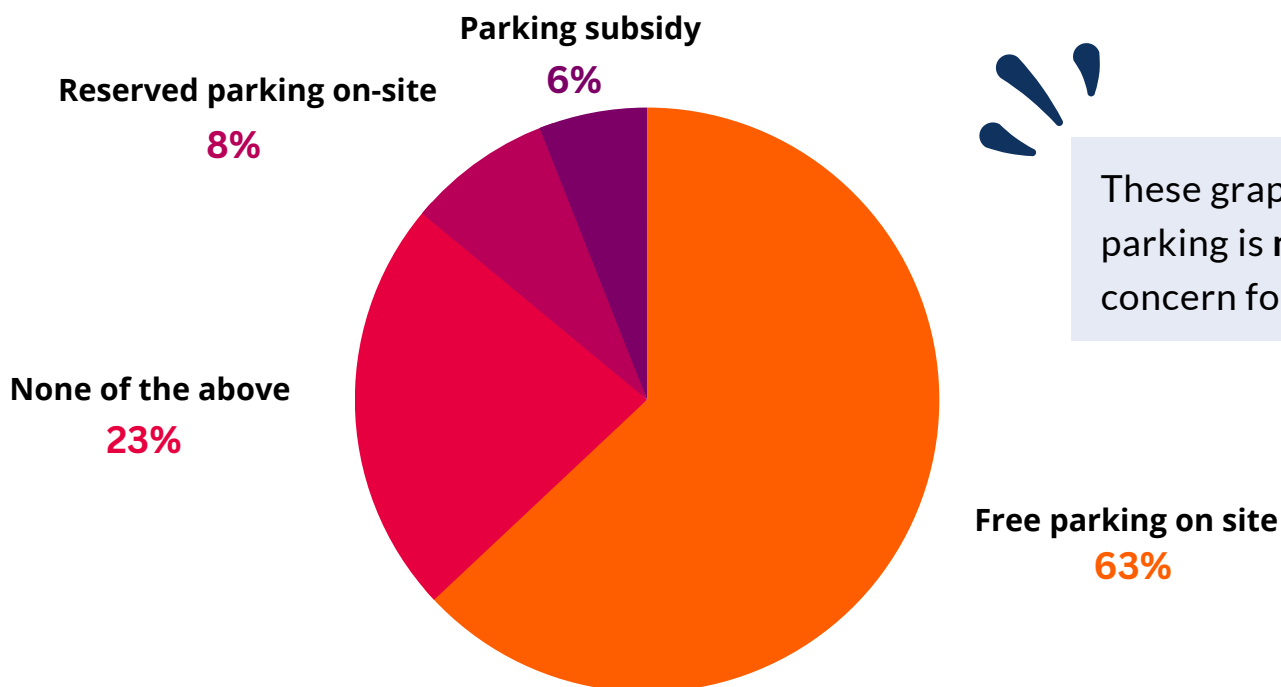


60% of respondents indicated that the concerns above were taken into account when determining their current fully-remote or hybrid work structure.

How would you describe the **availability of employee parking** at your business/organization's location?

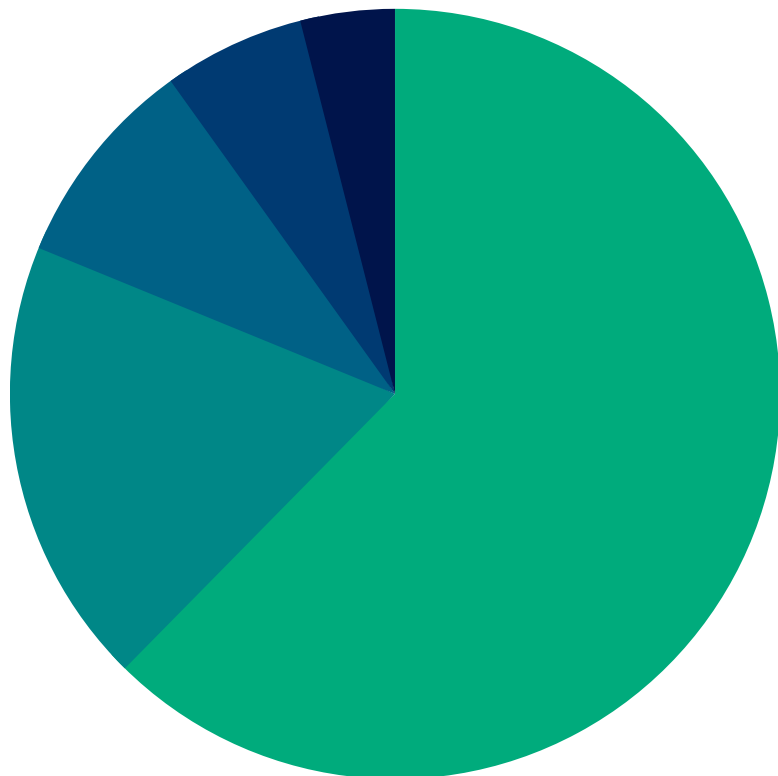


Currently, is your business/organization offering any of the following **vehicle-related incentives** to employees?



These graphs show that parking is **not** a primary concern for respondents.

Currently, is your business/organization offering any of the following transportation-related incentives? *[Check all that apply]*



None of the above - 63%

Free bus or light rail passes, or a subsidy to purchase bus or light rail passes - 19%

Gas subsidy - 9%

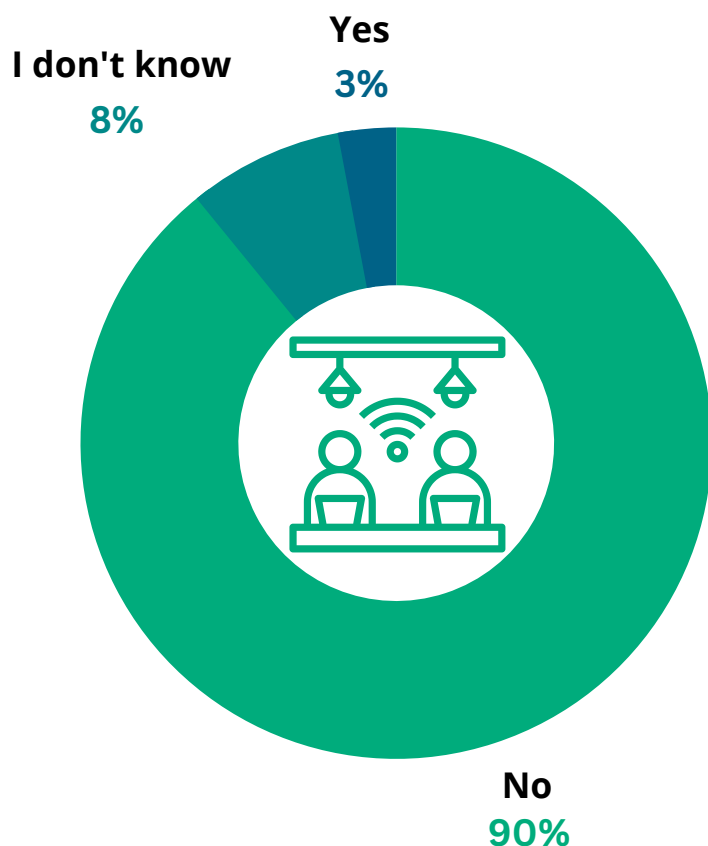
Vanpooling - 6%

Lyft, Uber, or other rideshare subsidy - 4%

The majority of respondents (63%) indicated that they are not currently offering any transportation-related incentives. This is a **steep increase** from 2022's 38%.



Are any of your business/organization's employees currently using co-working spaces (e.g., WeWork, the Urban Hive, or others)?



90%

of respondents said that their organizations are **not** utilizing co-working spaces.

When asked whether their business or organization supports employees' use of co-working spaces or not, respondents indicated...

Yes - 6%

No - 79%

Other - 3%

I don't know - 12%

And for the respondents who indicated "No" to this question, they were asked if their business or organization would consider supporting the use of co-working spaces (via subsidies or renting out spaces) if interest was expressed.

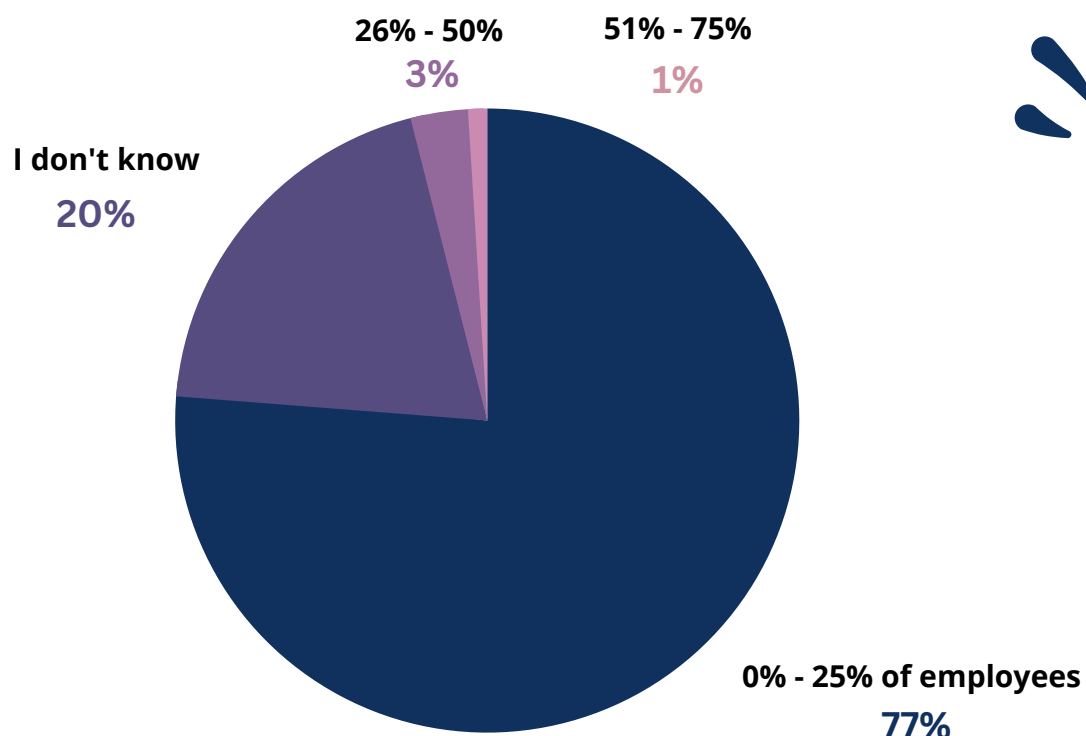
Yes - 18%

No - 46%

Other - 7%

I don't know - 31%

What percentage of employees are currently relying on public transit to commute to and from work?



Over 75% of respondents said that only a minority (0 - 25%) of their employees are currently relying on public transit for their commutes.



Which of the following best describes your organization's **approach to public transit** for your employees as they return to the workplace?

8%

We are not actively encouraging our employees to take public transit to work, but are still providing employee transit benefits

13%

I don't know

16%

We are actively encouraging our employees to take public transit to work, including providing employee transit benefits

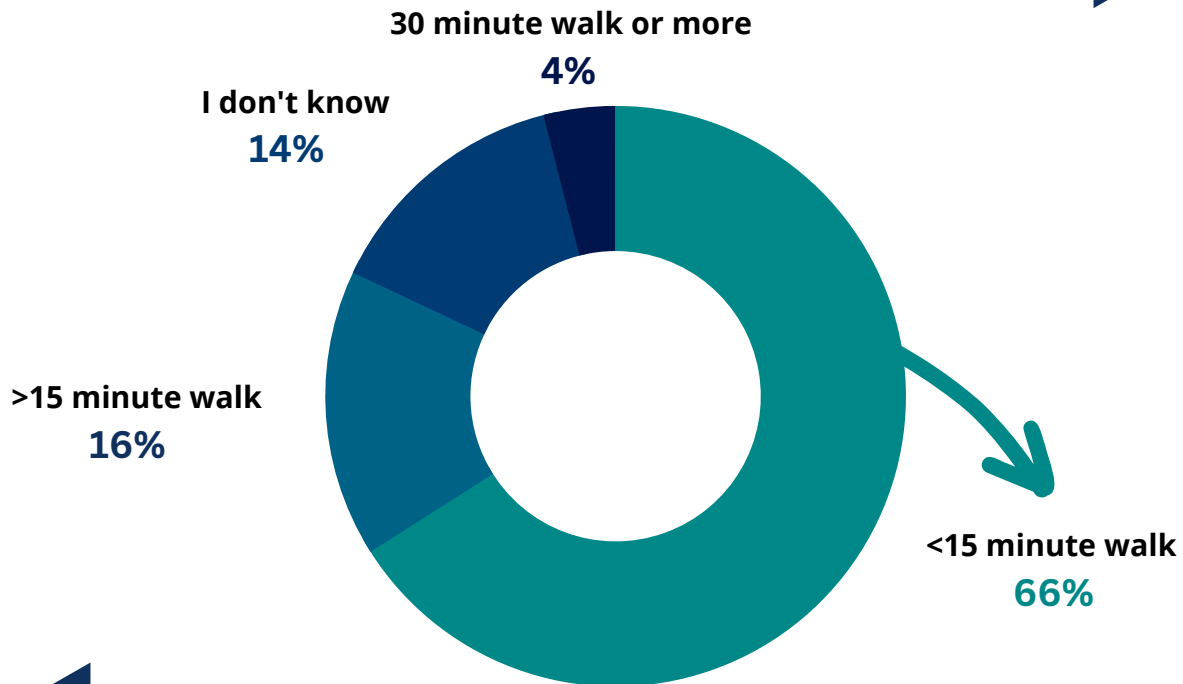
We are fine if employees take public transit to work, but don't have any specific programs to support it

64%

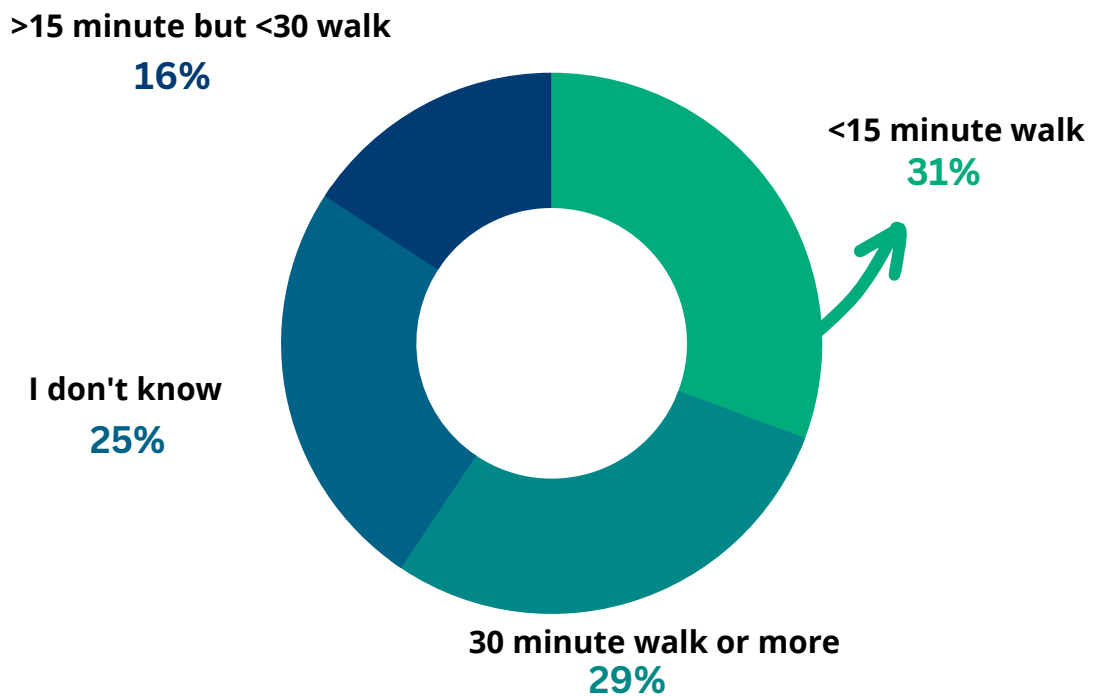
60% of respondents indicated that their business/organization **does not** participate in **regional transportation management**.

75% of respondents **do not** have an **employee transportation coordinator** or someone dedicated to **promoting multimodal transportation on-site**.

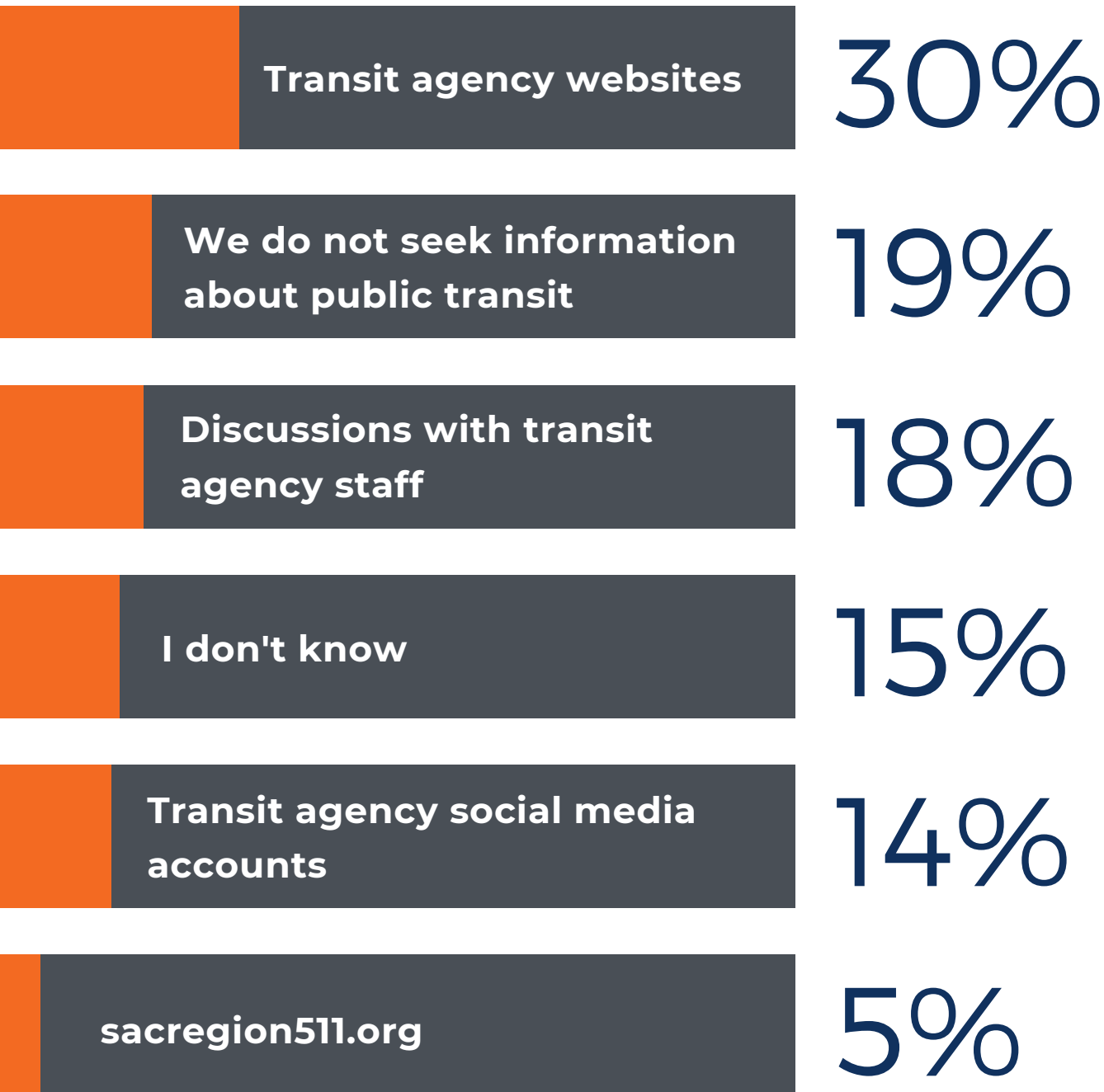
What is the distance between your business/organization's location and the nearest **bus stop**?



What is the distance between your business/organization's location and the nearest **light rail stop**?



Where are employers getting information about public transit options?
[Check all that apply]



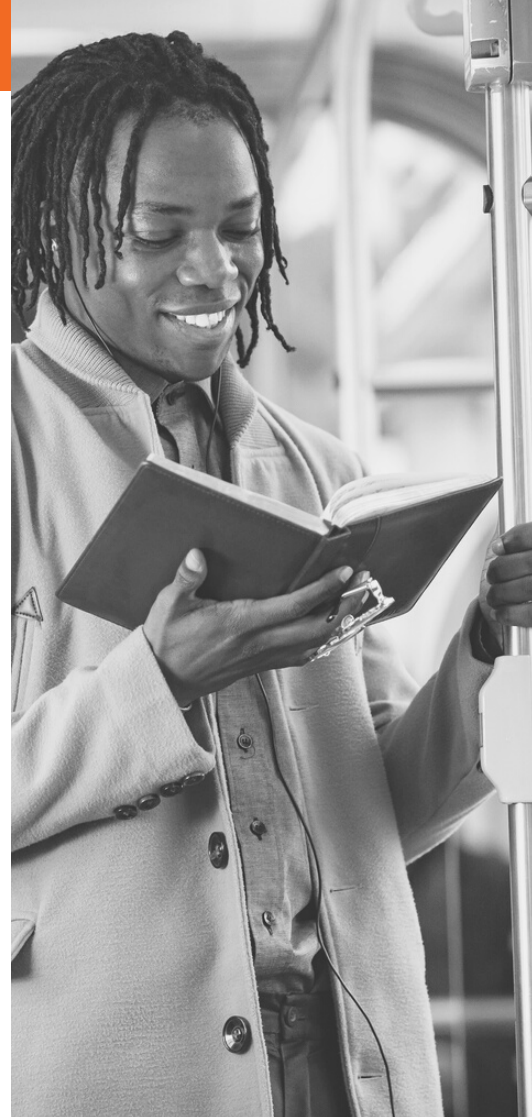
4% more respondents are using transit agency websites (compared to 26% in 2022). However, the amount of respondents who do not seek public transit information at all also **increased by 4%** (from 15% in 2022).

LEASING AGENT & MAJOR EMPLOYER INTERVIEWS

As part of the Employer Survey initiative, Valley Vision conducted in-depth interviews with **seven commercial leasing agents**. All worked within the Greater Sacramento region, and some with scope beyond the region. Leasing agents ranged in operational size from **40 clients** to **1,700**.

Some key takeaways from these conversations are outlined below:

- Leasing agents reported increasing interest rates and inflation, the challenges in obtaining permits, competitive loans, and more.
- Landlords are increasing rent and tenants are unable to meet the new rates.
- Parking in the downtown area is a challenge.
- Office tenants are looking for shorter leases and smaller spaces. The needs are varied across industries. If they are a brick and mortar, it's a smaller operation. Storefronts are not as popular as they were pre-pandemic.
- There is increased interest outside the urban core (i.e. Placer County preference over Sacramento) because tenants are concerned about managing costs.
- Most lessors indicated public transportation was not a priority or concern for prospective tenants, with the exception of nonprofit organizational interest and industries that require high foot traffic for their business model.
- Tenant comments regarding transportation include; buses do not go as far as people need them to, concerns about safety, a need for more efficient public transit trips, and additional efforts needed to educate them about the public transportation system.





IN SUMMARY

The majority of employers continue to utilize a **hybrid work structure** and expect to maintain this structure for the next year. More team members are coming into the office than one year ago, with the **majority able to choose their own schedule**.

Most employers surveyed indicated only a small number of their staff are utilizing public transportation, and the majority are not offering any kind of transportation incentive. Transit agency websites were listed as the best source of information.

Employers surveyed were not interested in utilizing or considering the use of co-working spaces, and on-site parking is not a primary concern.

Leasing agent interviews indicate tenants are looking for shorter leases and smaller spaces, and there is less of a need for storefront properties. Rising rents, interest rates, and inflation are prompting tenants to be more budget-conscious and influencing their decisions.

For Future Consideration:

A myriad of reports has confirmed the relationship between transportation and improved economic outcomes. Lower income households consistently reflect lower vehicle ownership rates. Further research may be beneficial in interviewing low-income individuals to better understand their transportation needs, how they would prioritize those needs, and gain information on strategies that might be beneficial. The resulting data could allow for the opportunity to significantly inform transit decisions by a portion of the populace primarily dependent on its operations as their source of mobility. Surveys should focus on needs related to travel to work, support, and training destinations. The results of this further study have the opportunity to explore improved linkages between transportation operations and regional economic self-sufficiency.