

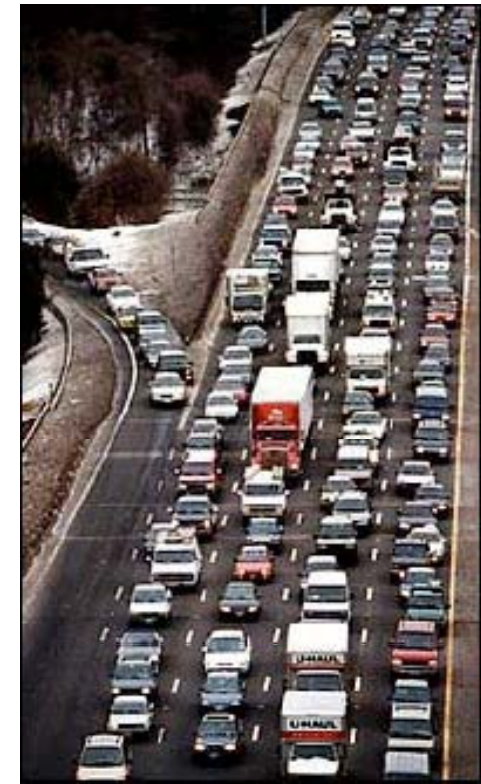
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ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENSE FUND

finding the ways that work

VMT Perceptions and Demand Survey Central Texas 2009

June 3, 2009



collective
strength 

Austin is Under-Performing

Top ranked metro cities VMT per person, per day

1.	New Orleans, LA	15
2.	New York, NY	16
3.	Sacramento, CA	18
4.	Portland, OR	19
5.	Philadelphia, PA	19
6.	Buffalo, NY	20
7.	Chicago, IL	21
8.	Pittsburg, PA	22
9.	Providence, RI	22
10.	Salt Lake City, UT	23
35.	San Antonio, TX	27
38.	Dallas, TX	28
41.	Austin, TX	30
51.	Houston, TX	37

Austin VMT per capita (30 vehicle miles traveled per day per person) ranks #41 among top 100 large cities in the US.

San Antonio and Dallas have a smaller VMT than Austin.

Green Dividend of Lowering VMT

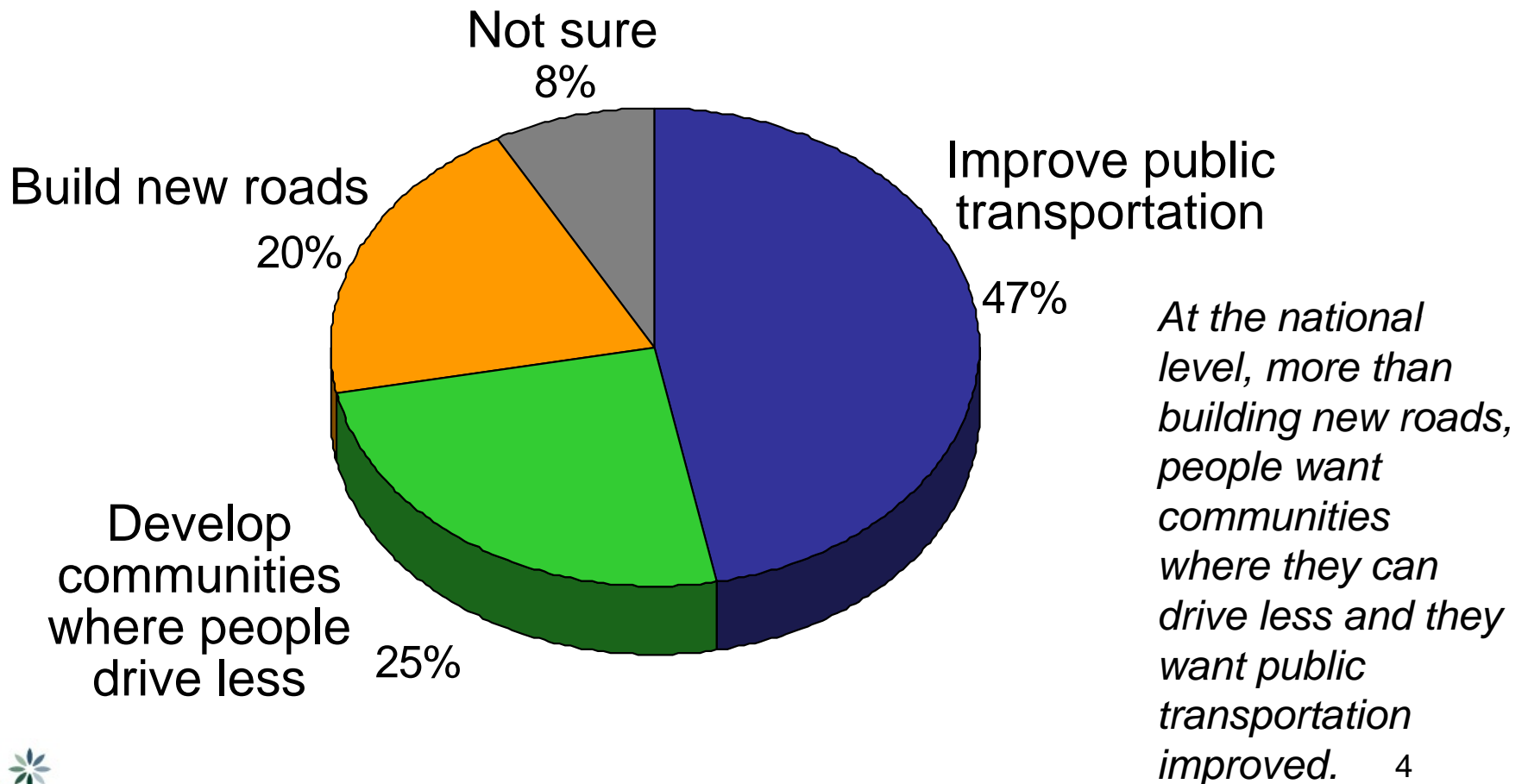
- Green dividend
 - Reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per person by one mile per day in each of the 51 largest metro areas would produce an aggregate annual household savings of \$29 billion annually
- What can Austin's share of this be?

CEOs for Cities prepared the Green Dividend Report for Portland and Chicago, illustrating more than \$2.6 billion in savings for Portland.



National Opinion Re: Solutions for Traffic Congestion

Which is the best long-term solution to reducing traffic?



Survey Findings on VMT in Central Texas 2009



Objectives and Methodology

- 800 interviews conducted March 17 thru March 22, 2009
- 400 in Travis County plus 400 evenly split between Hays, Williamson, Caldwell and Bastrop County; survey not designed to compare counties
- Goals:
 - Determine regional understanding of, and demand for, VMT reduction strategies
 - Understand awareness and perceptions of transportation issues for purposes of messaging and increasing usage of transportation alternatives

County Differences Are Minimal

Although the survey was not designed to compare responses from county to county there are very little differences between Travis County and the rest of the region - Bastrop, Williamson, Hays and Caldwell

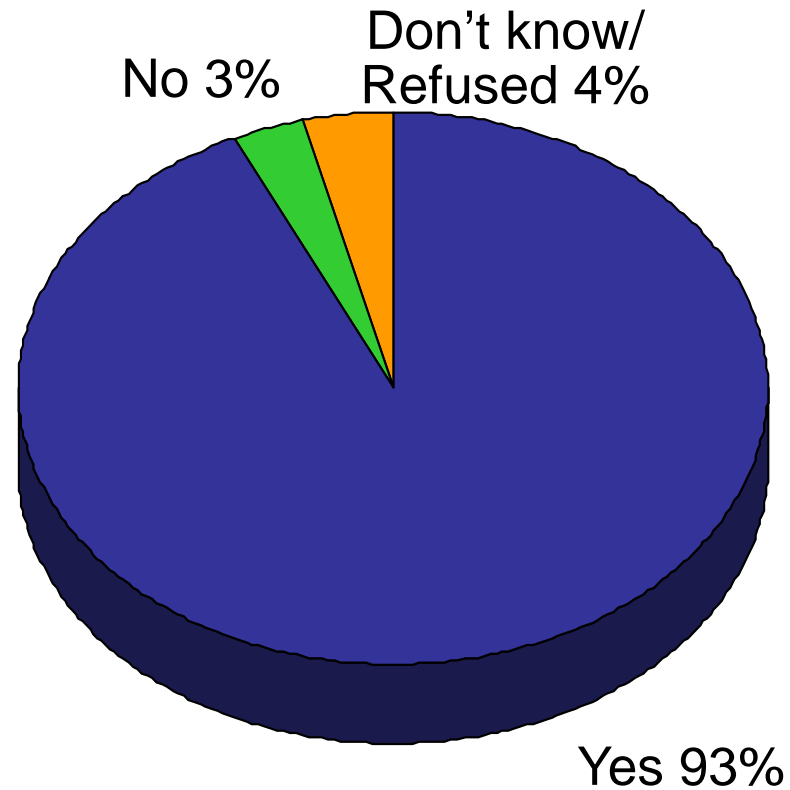
- All major findings are consistent across the five county region, only slight variations exist in the data
- Gap analysis is stronger in outlying counties where average commute times are longer
- Key messaging resonates in Travis as well as other four counties.

Executive Summary

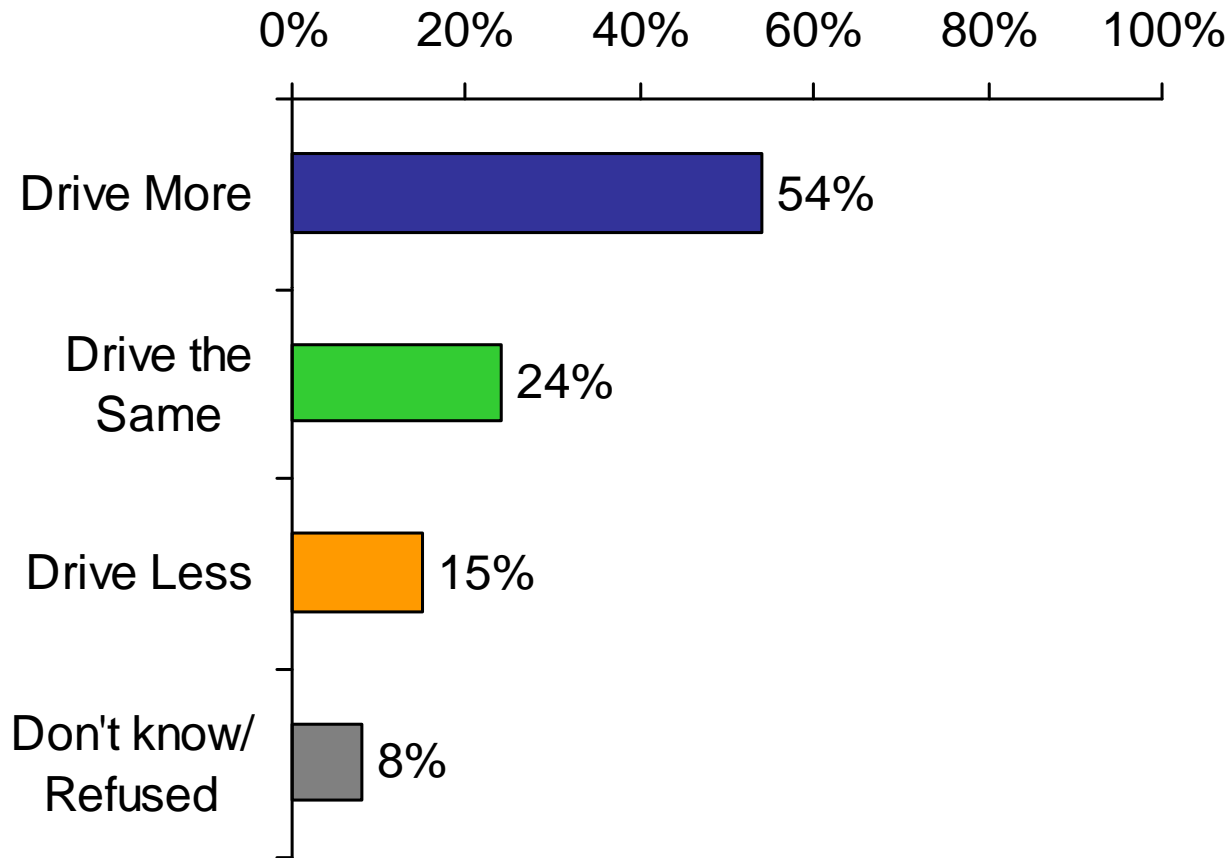
- Strong Demand exists for VMT reduction in all five counties
- Central Texans are concerned about rising cost of transportation, air pollution, and traffic congestion
- People want to drive less to save time and money
- They are interested in alternatives - but not using them

- Questions for Central Texas
 - Why is That?
 - What Can Be Done -- Now -- to Reduce VMT and Meet the Demand?
 - What is the Role that Major Employers Have Played -- and What Should it Be Going Forward?

General Public Does NOT Know What VMT Is



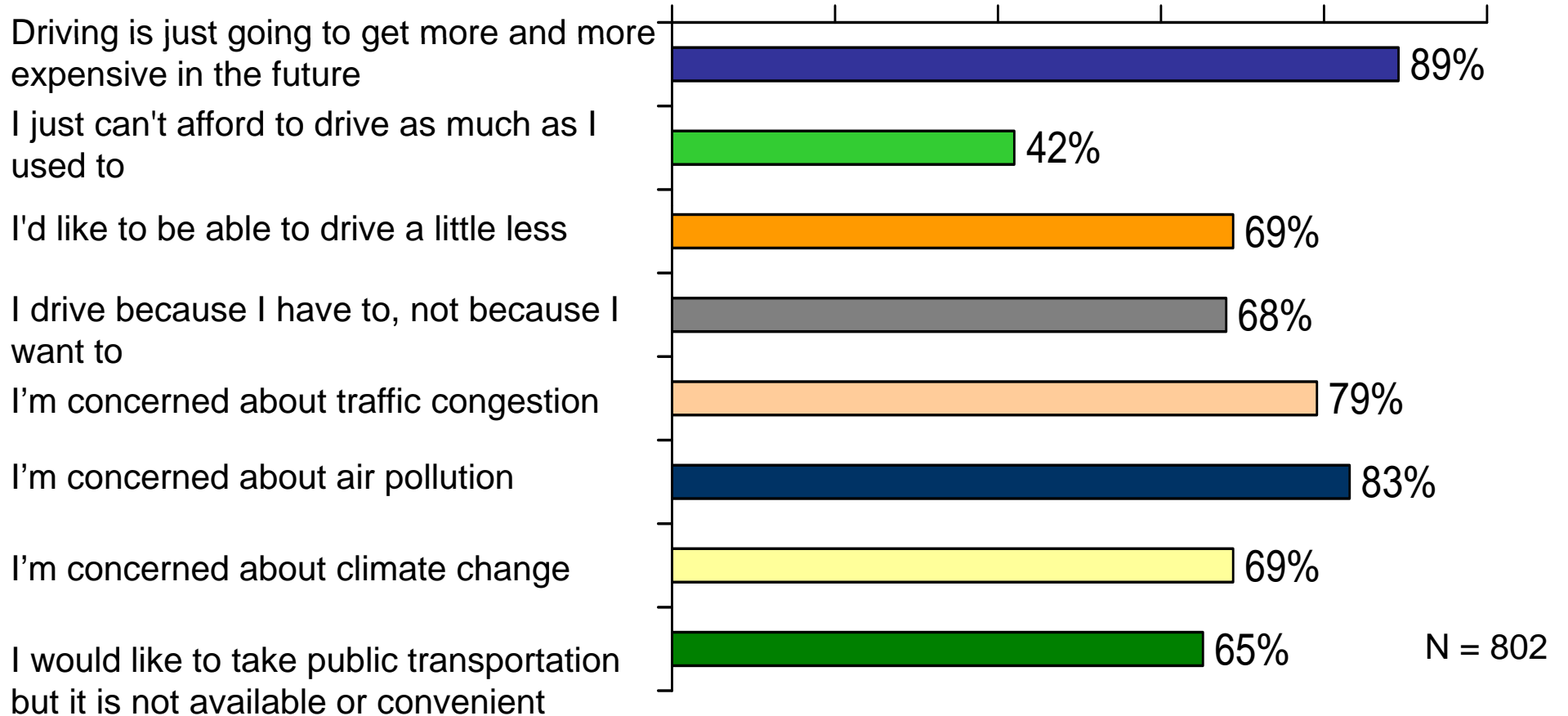
But They Know We Drive More Than Other Places



N = 802

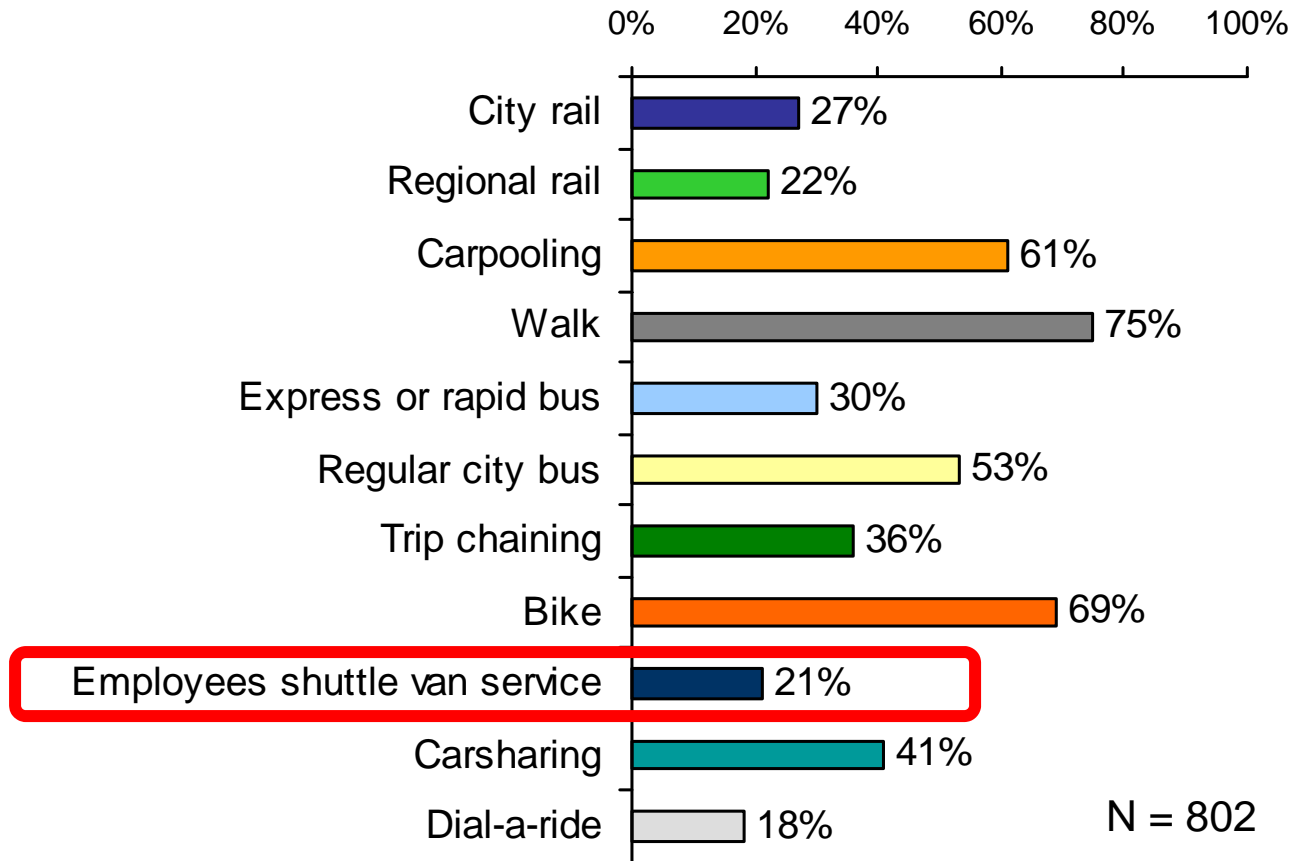
Central Texas Core Beliefs

0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

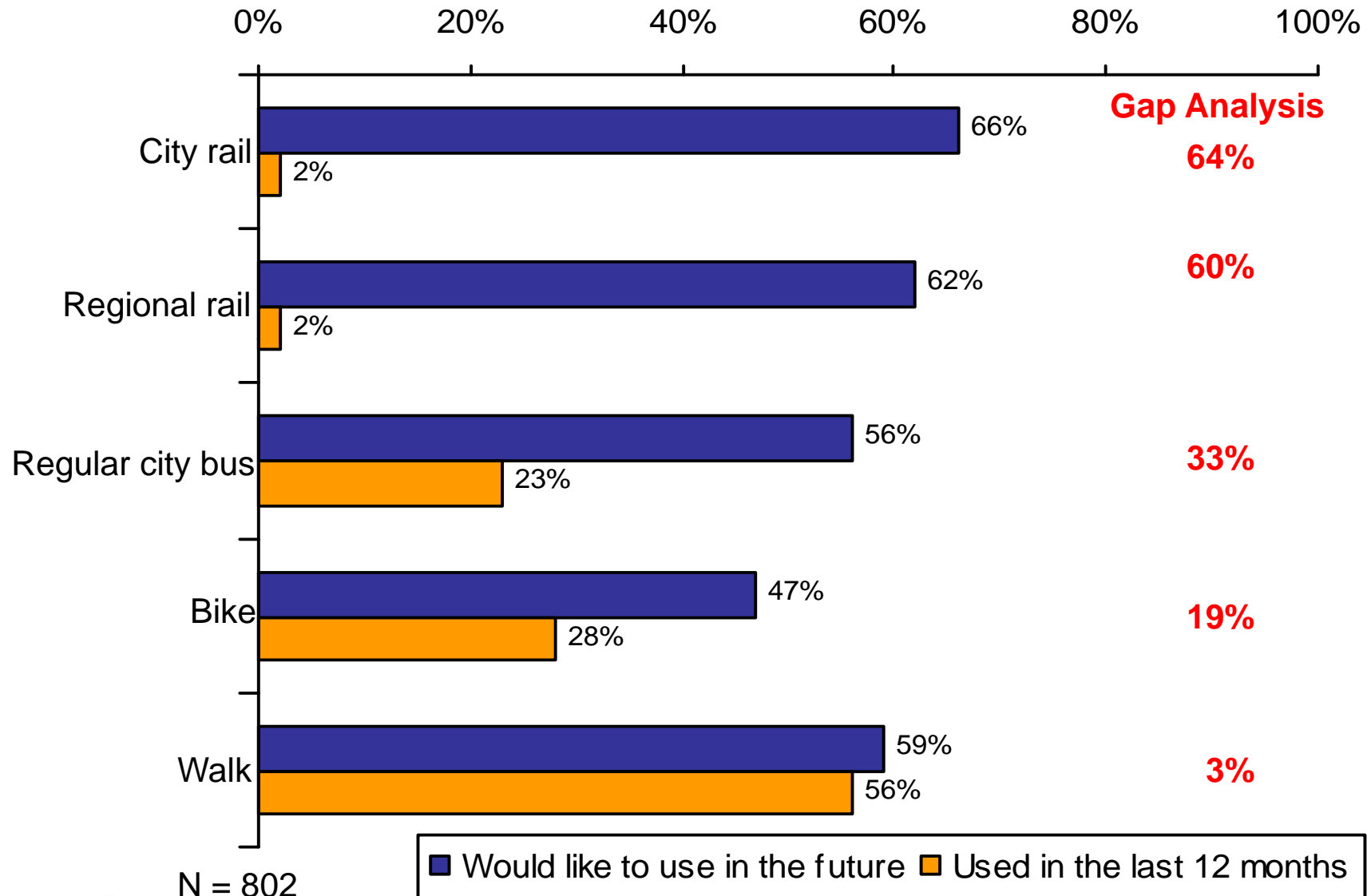


Transportation Alternatives

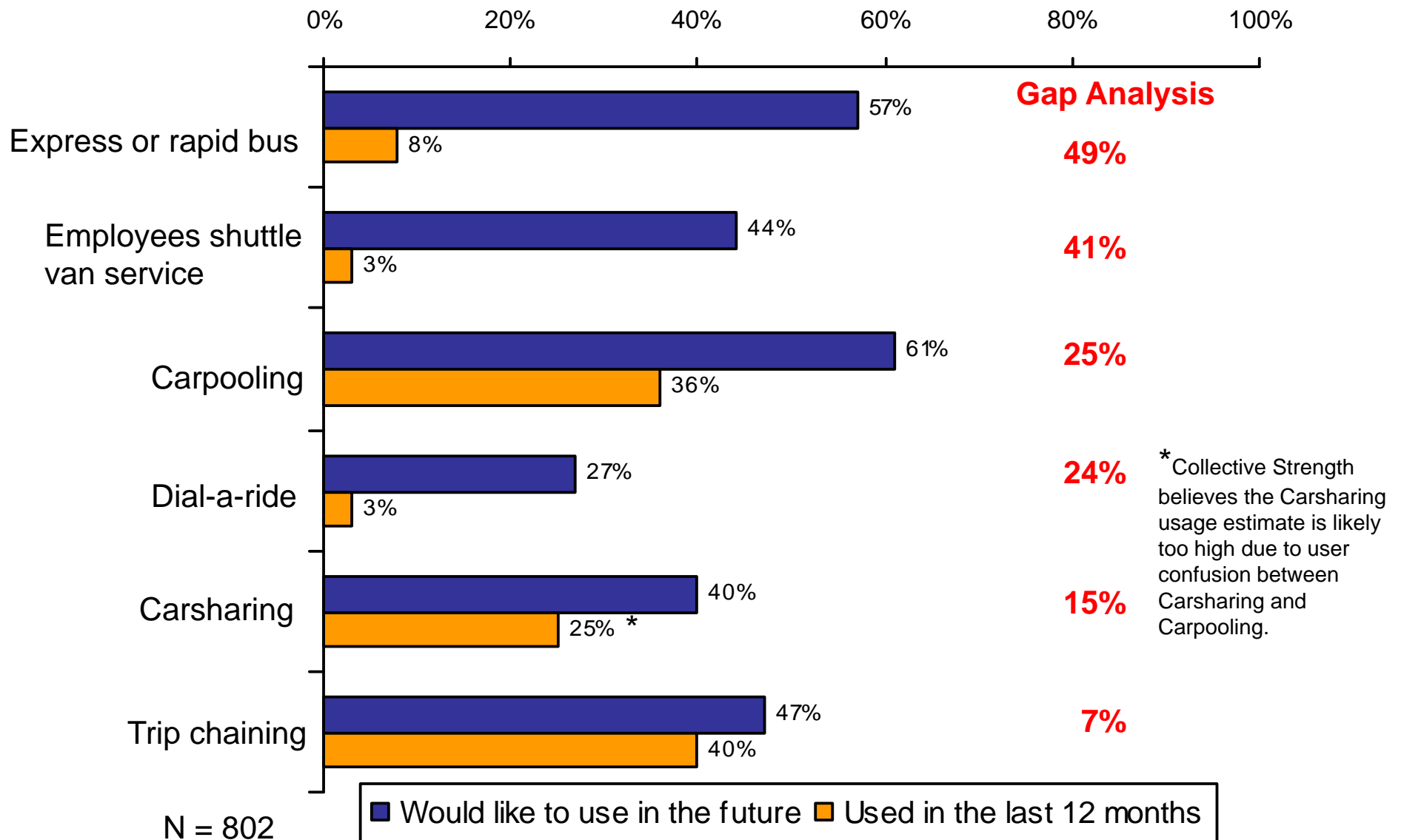
- Aware of these? Yes



Transportation Alternatives cont.



Transportation Alternatives cont.



* Collective Strength believes the Carsharing usage estimate is likely too high due to user confusion between Carsharing and Carpooling.

Employer Transportation Benefits

	Available to you now? Yes	Use it now? Yes	Use it in the future? Yes	GAP ANALYSIS
N = 802				
Cash allowance for not using parking spaces when using alternatives	5%	4%	67%	63
Telecommuting from home one or more days per week	25%	21%	64%	43
Staggered work hours one or more days per week	31%	28%	63%	35
Car pools for employees	20%	10%	62%	52
Van pools for employees	10%	4%	57%	53
Showers available for those who walk, run or bike to work	25%	10%	48%	38

Preliminary Survey Conclusions

- ✓ **Unmet Demand for Transportation Choices is Significant among Residents/Employees.**

Austin Region's VMT is not competitive among 100 (Austin is #41 with a VMT per capita of 30)

What can Central Texas do right now? What can we do to boost the low cost, here and now alternatives? How can we dramatically affect VMT without spending billions that we don't have?

Several Local Government Initiatives Have or are Expected to Have an Impact on VMT Reduction

- S.F. Bay Area Alliance for Sustainable Development. 4.6% reduction in VMT by 2020.
- Baltimore Regional Transportation Board. 8.2% VMT reduction.
- Portland Metro. ~8.8% VMT reduction in 20 yrs (17.6% VMT reduction in 40 yrs).
- Southern California Association of Governments ~10% VMT reduction in 25 yrs
- Denver Regional Council of Governments. 12.5% VMT reduction in 25 yrs.
- Contra Costa County, CA. 17.3% reduction in VMT in 20 yrs.
- EPA, Atlanta, GA. ~38% difference in VMT between worse and best scenarios.
- Envision Central Texas. ~17% VMT reduction compared to current trend.

VMT Reduction Strategies are Divided into Three Main Areas

Land Use

- Policies geared towards development patterns that rely less on the automobile (e.g. land use or transportation plans, urban growth boundaries)

Pricing

- Incentives and/or disincentives for parking or driving (e.g. high priced parking, or parking passes for employees who participate in vanpools)

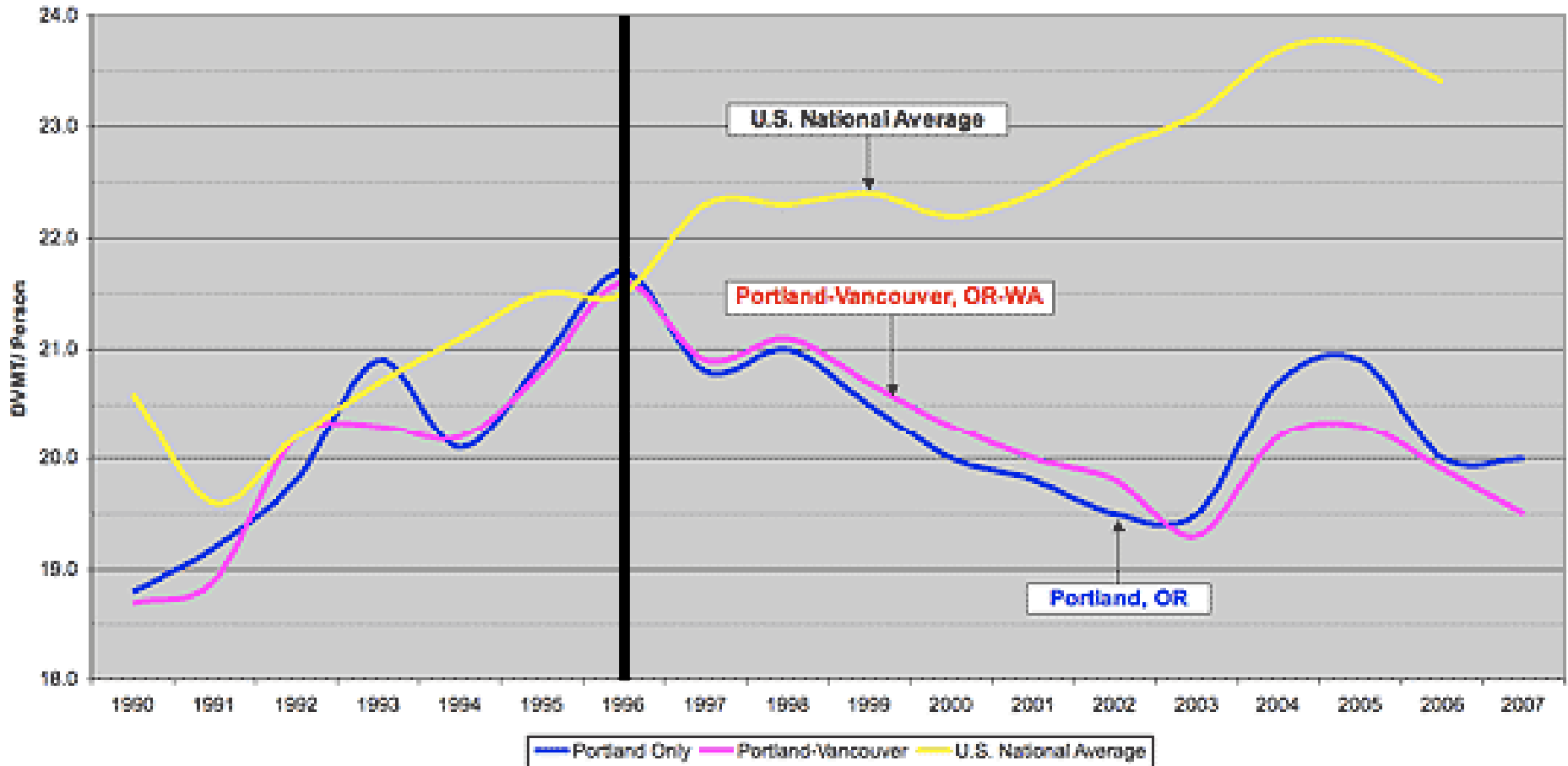
Transportation Efficiency

- Programs such as car share or van pools that create efficiencies in transportation systems

Central Texas can significantly reduce its impact on Air Quality and Ozone Non-attainment by reducing VMTs. CAPCOG estimates that nearly 25-30% of NoX gases and its impact on Central Texas' non-attainment are from mobile sources (not including cargo trucks). Reducing VMT by 1 or 2 miles per person would create a tremendous economic, social, and environmental benefit.

Portland, OR has decreased its VMT / person since 1996

Daily vehicle miles of travel (DVMT)/person *Portland and the US*



Portland is 20 years ahead of us. They started addressing VMT in the early 1990s as part of a larger, holistic air quality program

Portland's "Drive Less" Campaign

Drive less. Save more.



And many other partners...

www.DrivelessSavemore.org

Austin Energy has an internal "Drive Less" campaign for their successful employee commuter program.

Portland -> VMT ROI

- Portland area residents travel about 20% fewer miles every day.
- Average resident of the metropolitan area traveled 20.3 miles per day in 2005.
- Median for the most populous metro areas in the country is 24.3 miles per day (Austin is ~30 miles per day).

24.3 Median commute miles per day for 33 most populous US metro areas

20.3 Average daily miles for Portland area commute

2.9 B Miles saved compared to median

Transportation costs saved compared to median \$1.1B

\$15 per hour Estimated value of time spent commuting

100 million hours less traveled per year saves \$1.5B

Total savings per year \$2.6B

Car Sharing – Bay Area

RESULTS:

- Reduces vehicle ownership
 - (30% sell vehicle within one year)
- Lowers household VMT
- Lowers transportation costs
- Causes travel behavior changes
- Effective in dense areas and near universities



A UC Berkeley study conducted in 2006 showed that their members save 25+ million pounds of CO₂ per year. Each member of City CarShare saves nearly 100 gallons of gasoline each year.

Employer-Sponsored Transportation Programs

Apple

- Lockers/showers/bike tune-up

Merck

- “Preferred Commuters”



- 170 daily bus runs on 50 buses
- Real-time routing
- Pick up as far as 54 miles away

“It’s the most useful Google fringe benefit.” Employee

“Bus system was a factor in turning down job offer from Apple.” Employee



“Google’s aim is to make commuting painless for its pampered workers — and keep attracting new recruits in a notoriously competitive market for top engineering talent.” NY Times, March 10, 2007

Strategic Considerations

- Meet the Demand and Close the Gaps
 - Carshare, vanpool, employer programs – more available and more convenient options are essential
 - Focus on positive incentives instead of penalties?
- Marketing Retooling
 - Unified message that is based on the most relevant framing
 - What is the bold, measurable goal that the whole region can get behind without arguing about light rail and tolls (again)
- Employer and Neighborhood Programs
 - Incentives for employers
 - Incentives for citizens/ neighborhoods

GOAL TO CONSIDER FOR CENTRAL TEXAS-
REDUCE VMT 5 points ASAP... timing depends on you.

Discussion and Thank You

Sean Garretson, AICP

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