


2017

Life in Hampton Roads Survey Press Release #4: Transportation

Social Science Research Center, Old Dominion University

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Life in Hampton Roads Survey Press Release #4

Transportation

This report examines regional perceptions of transportation related issues from the 2017 Life In Hampton Roads survey (LIHR 2017) conducted by the Old Dominion University Social Science Research Center. Data from prior years is also provided when available to show comparisons in responses over time. Responses were weighted by city population, race, age, gender, and phone usage (cell versus land-line) to be representative of the Hampton Roads region. For additional information on survey methodology, and analyses of other issues, please see the SSRC website at www.odu.edu/ssrc.

Every day, people traverse the eleven bridges and five tunnels in the Hampton Roads area, commuting for work, family and other activities. The 2017 Life in Hampton Roads survey asked 908 residents of the Hampton Roads area about their driving habits, opinions on bridge and tunnel tolls and views on alternative transportation.

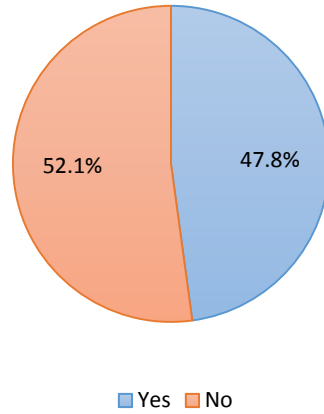
Hampton Roads residents report fairly consistent declines in average commute times to work or school. From 2013 to 2014, average commute times hovered around 24 minutes, then decreased to an average commute time of 20 minutes in 2015, and decreasing even further to 18.1 minutes in 2016, the lowest reported commute time of the survey. This year, the reported commute time to school or work was 19.2 minutes, a slight increase over last year.

Commute	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Average one-way commute, in minutes, to work or school.	24.8	24.4	20.0	18.1	19.2

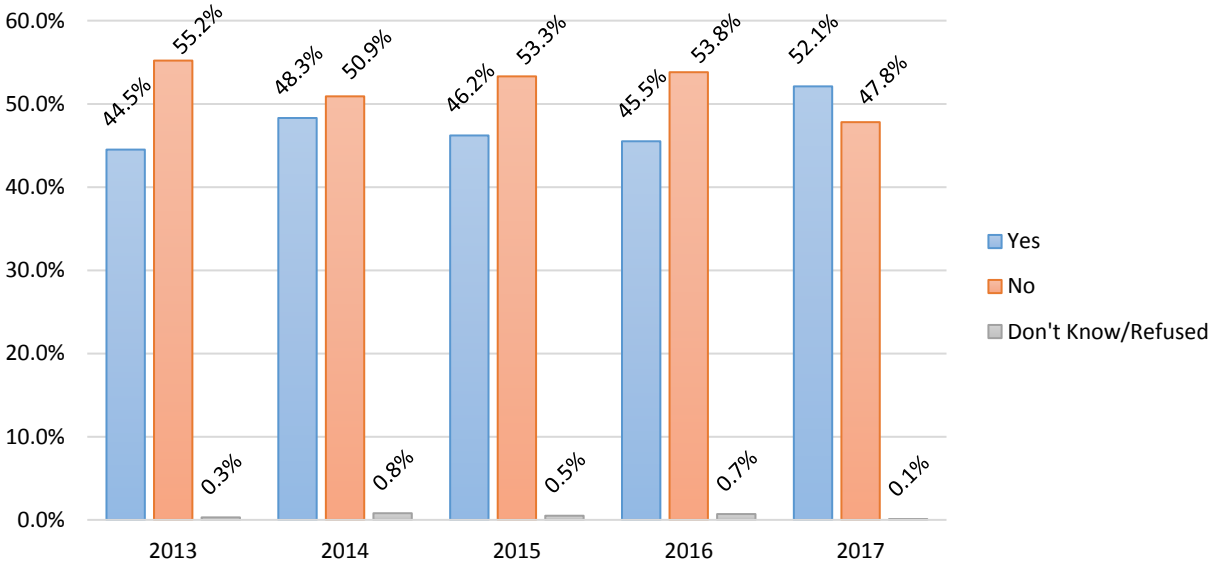
Traffic Congestion

The Life in Hampton Roads survey asked residents, within the past month, did they avoid visiting a business in a neighboring city due to concerns about traffic congestion? The responses were almost split down the middle. Just under half (52.1 percent) of respondents said they did not avoid visiting neighboring cities due to congestion, while 47.8 percent did, a 2.3 percent increase from 2016.

Within the past month, did you avoid visiting a business in a neighboring city due to concerns about traffic congestion?

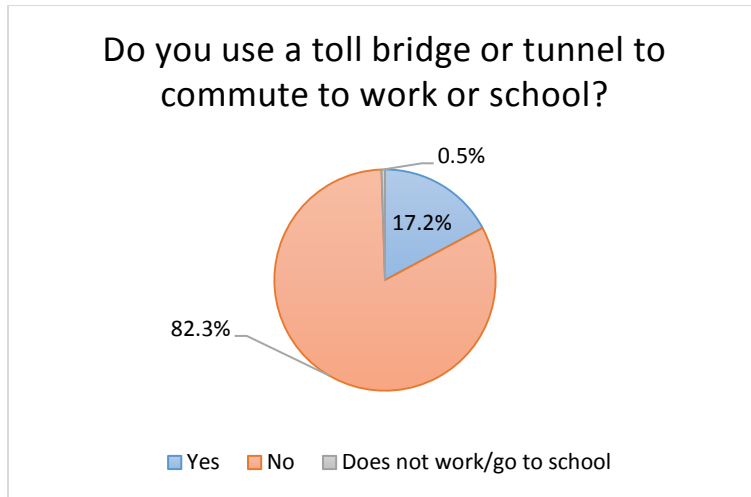


Within the past month, did you avoid visiting a business in a neighboring city due to concerns about traffic congestion?

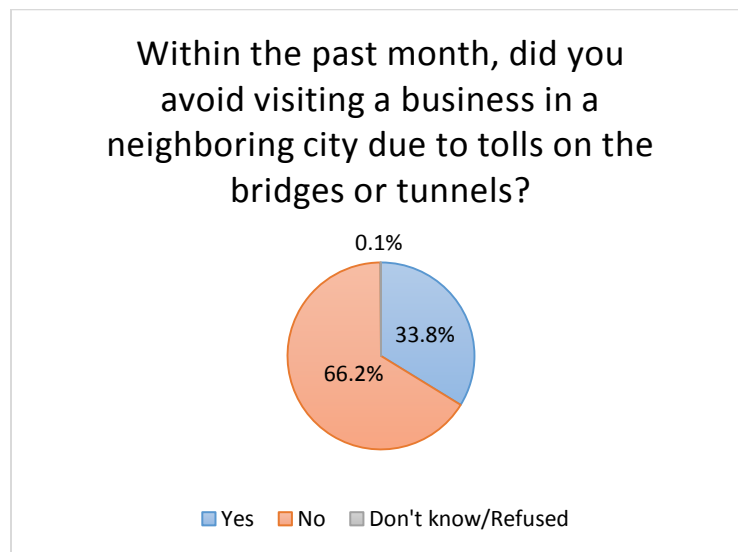


Tolls Bridge & Tunnels

Wanting to get a sense of the role that bridges and tunnels play in Hampton Roads residents' everyday life, we asked survey respondents if they used a toll bridge or tunnel to commute to work or school. Surprisingly, more than three-fourths (82.3 percent) of respondents said they do not use a toll bridge or tunnel to commute to work or school.

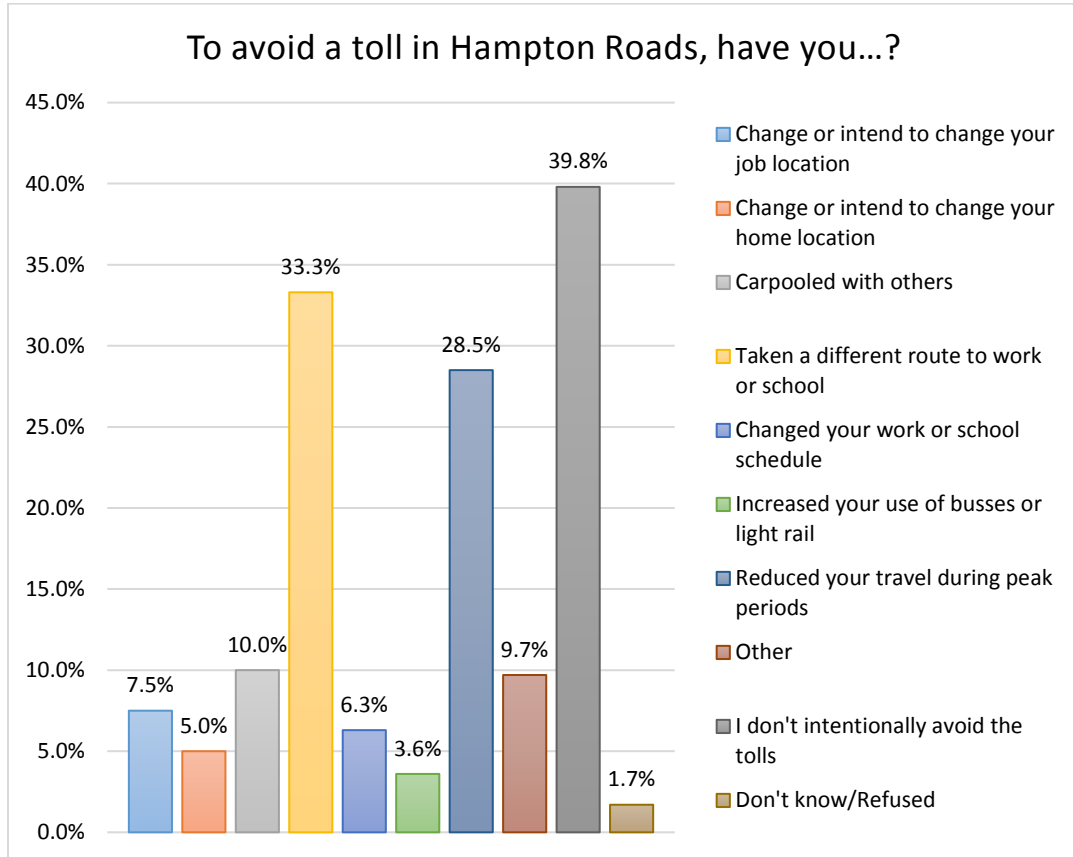


We subsequently asked, within the past month, did they avoid visiting a business in a neighboring city due to tolls on the bridges or tunnels. Over 66 percent of respondents stated they did not avoid business due to bridges or tunnels, while 33.8 percent of respondents said they do avoid businesses because of bridges and tunnels. These numbers were about one percentage point different from last year’s numbers.

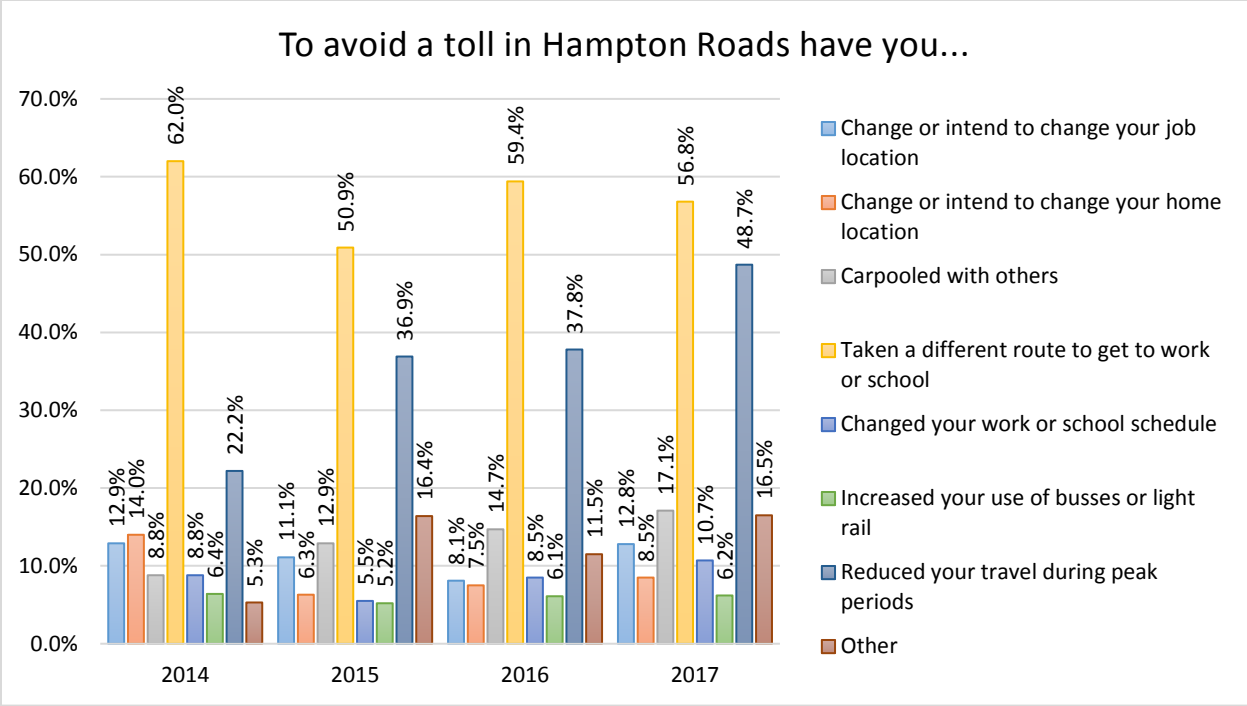


The survey respondents were asked about what actions they have taken, if any, to avoid tolls in Hampton Roads. About 40 percent (39.8 percent) of respondents stated they do not intentionally avoid tolls. The second most common (33.3 percent) response received was that respondents took a different

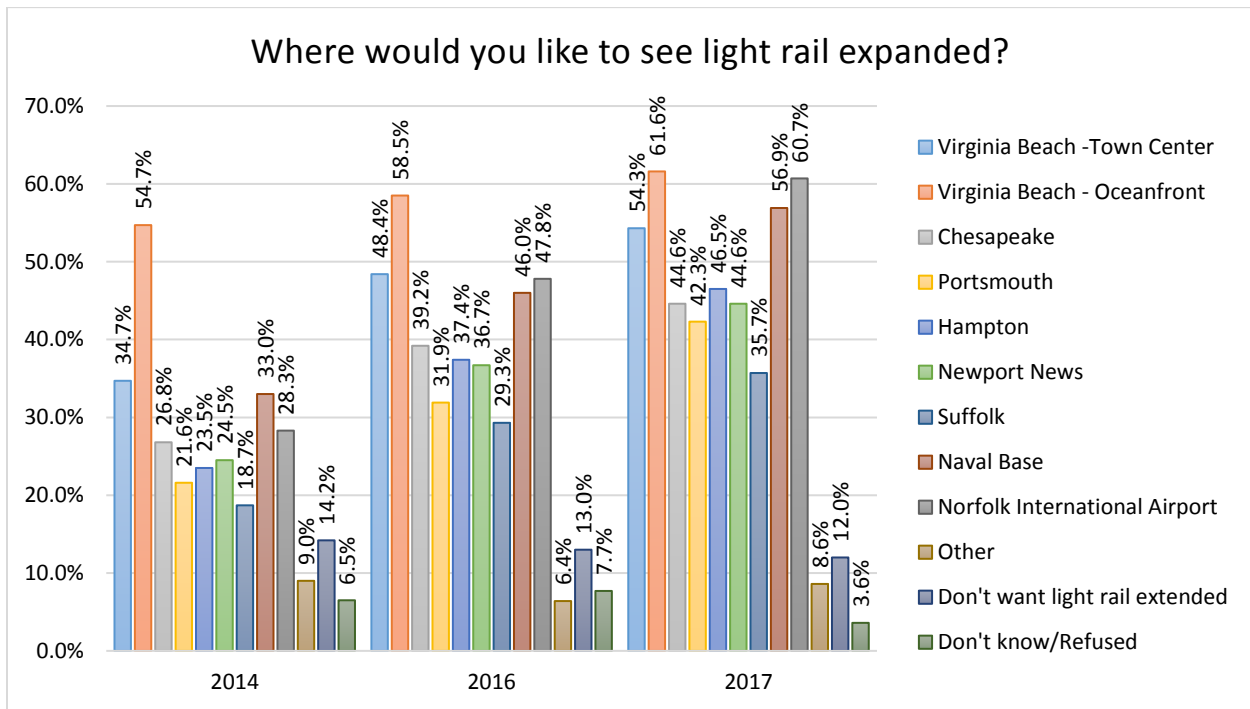
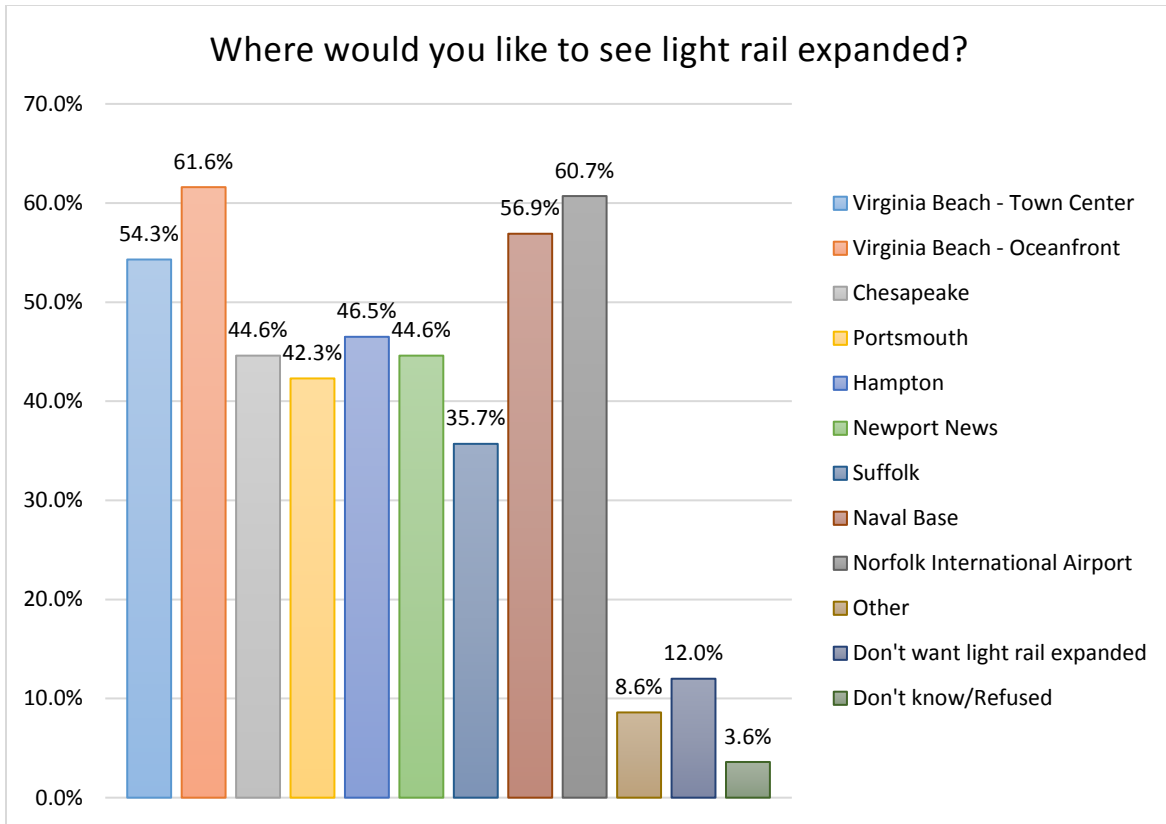
route to school or work. Another measure taken worth noting is that some respondents (28.5 percent) changed their work or school schedule just to avoid tolls. The least common responses were change or intend to change home location (5 percent) and increasing use of busses or light rail (3.6 percent).



The table below reflects the comparison of toll avoiding behavior over time *only for those respondents who said they intentionally avoid tolls*. We can see that the percentage of respondents who are taking a different route to work or school has decreased slightly from last year (59.4 percent to 56.8 percent) while reducing travel during peak periods has increased from last year (37.8 percent to 48.7 percent).



This year’s LIHR respondents appeared to be the most supportive group in regards to seeing light rail expanded since 2014. Over 50 percent of our respondents want light rail expanded to Virginia Beach Town Center (54.3 percent), Virginia Beach Oceanfront (61.6 percent), Naval Station Norfolk (56.9 percent) and Norfolk International Airport (60.7 percent). More than 40 percent of respondents want light rail expanded to Chesapeake (44.6 percent), Portsmouth (42.3 percent), Hampton (46.5 percent) and Newport News (44.6 percent). Only 35.7 percent wished to see the light rail expanded to Suffolk, whereas 12 percent of Hampton Roads did not want the light rail expanded at all.



Traffic does seem to pose a problem when it comes to visiting businesses in other cities within Hampton Roads as 47.8 percent of respondents stated they do avoid going to different cities for business

due to traffic congestion. This is higher than the percentage of respondents who avoid visiting neighboring cities due to tolls (33.8 percent). Most of our respondents stated they did not use a toll bridge or tunnel to get to work or school. About 40 percent also stated they do not intentionally avoid tolls bridges or tunnel. Of those who did avoid the tolls bridges or tunnels, they reported taking a different route to school or work to do so. Having light rail extended to more places had the support of Hampton Roads residents and there were larger percentages of respondents who want light rail to go to Virginia Beach (both Town Center and the oceanfront) as well as the naval base and airport.

All Life in Hampton Roads data summaries will be placed on the Social Science Research Center website as they are released (<http://www.odu.edu/al/centers/ssrc>). Follow-up questions about the 2016 Life in Hampton Roads survey should be addressed to:

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