


2015

Life in Hampton Roads Survey Press Release #4: Transportation

Social Science Research Center, Old Dominion University

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Repository Citation

Social Science Research Center, Old Dominion University, "Life in Hampton Roads Survey Press Release #4: Transportation" (2015). *Life in Hampton Roads Survey Report*. 19.
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Life in Hampton Roads Survey Press Release #4

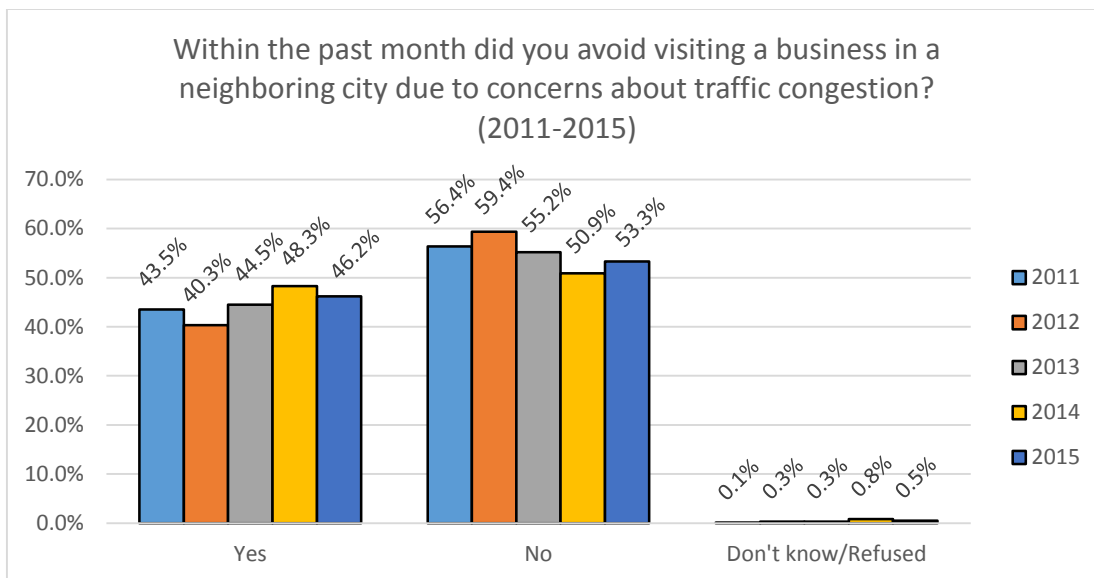
Transportation

This report examines regional and sub-regional perceptions of transportation related issues from the 2015 Life In Hampton Roads survey (LIHR 2015) 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 2015 Life in Hampton Roads survey asked 883 residents of the Hampton Roads area about their driving habits, opinions on bridge and tunnel tolls, and views on alternative transportation.

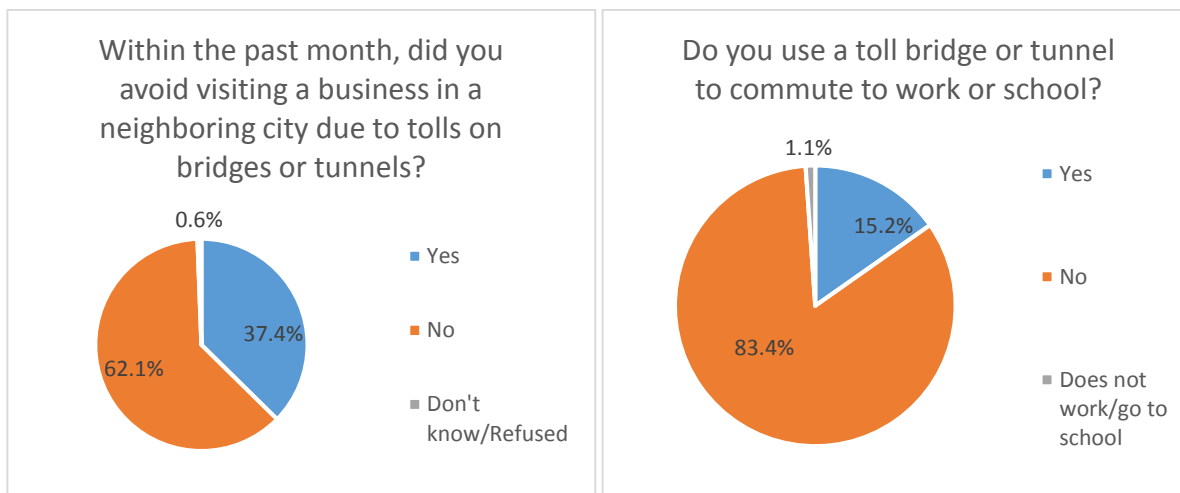
Hampton Roads residents report systematic declines in average commute times to work or school. From a high of 27 minutes in 2011, to levels hovering around 24 minutes in 2012-2014, to a new low of 20 minutes in 2015. Additionally, in the past month, 46.2 percent of residents avoided visiting a business in a neighboring city due to concerns about traffic congestion. Although this percentage is down 2.1 percent from last year (48.3%), it is still higher than all other years (44.5% in 2013, 40.3% in 2012, and 43.5% in 2011). Despite the percentage being slightly lower than last year, Hampton Roads residents are avoiding visiting businesses that require them to drive through traffic congestion at fairly high rates.

Commute	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Average one-way commute, in minutes, to work or school.	27.0	23.9	24.8	24.4	20.0



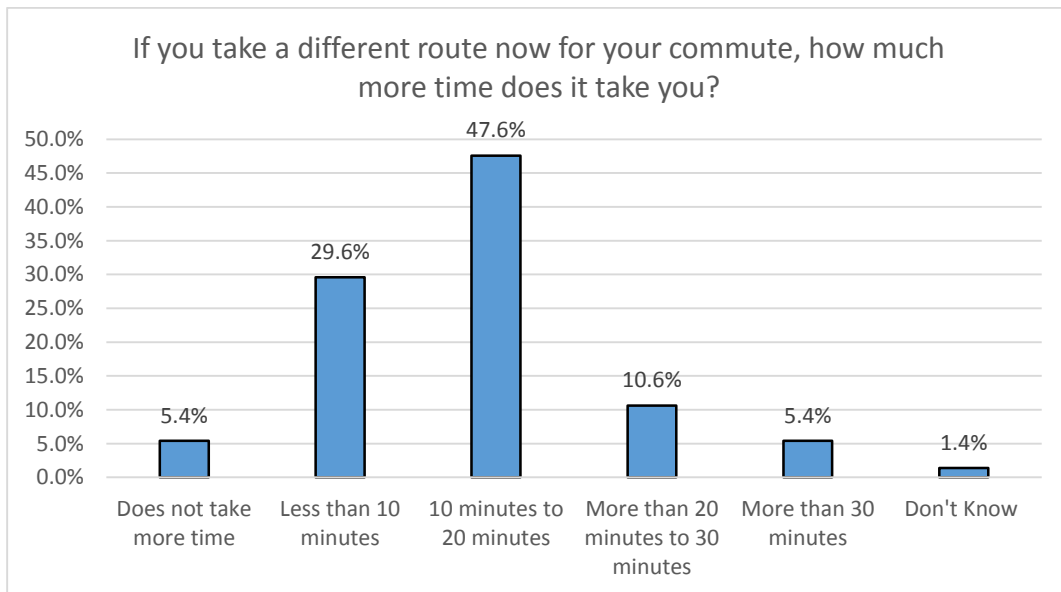
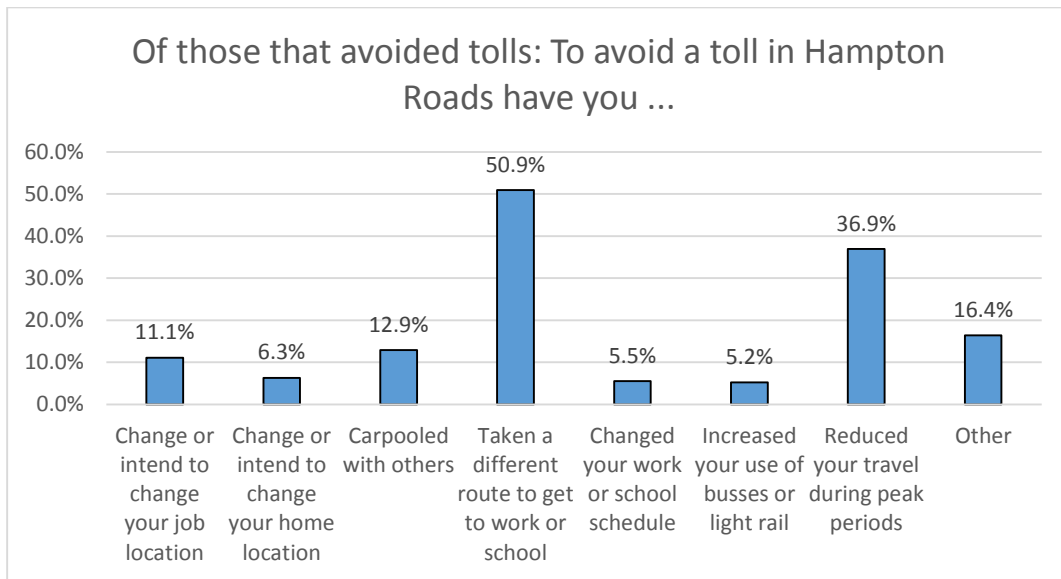
Bridge and Tunnel Tolls

The 2015 Life in Hampton Roads survey asked several questions to help gauge opinions about the recently implemented tolls. When asked, 37.4 percent of respondents said they avoided visiting a business in a neighboring city due to tolls on bridges or tunnels in the past month. Only 15.2 percent said they use a toll bridge or tunnel to commute to work or school.

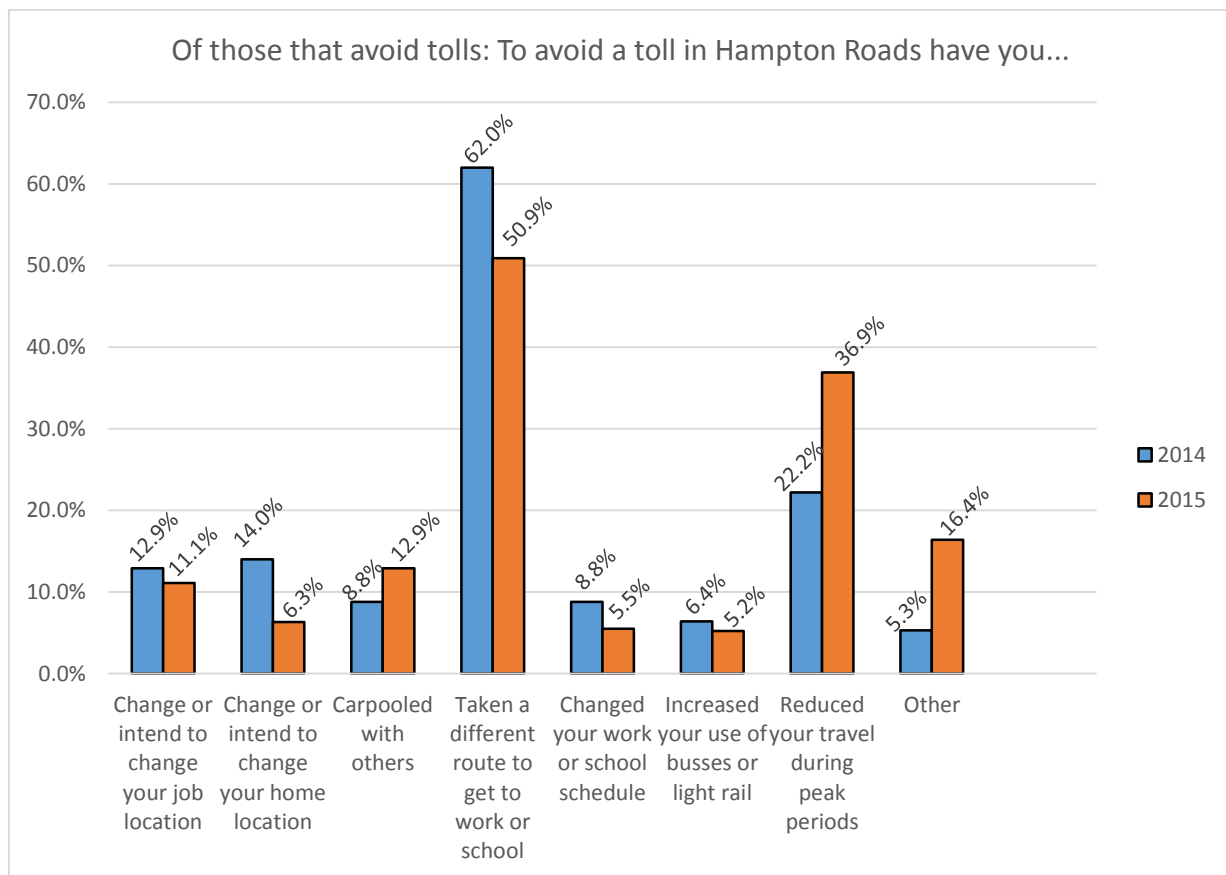


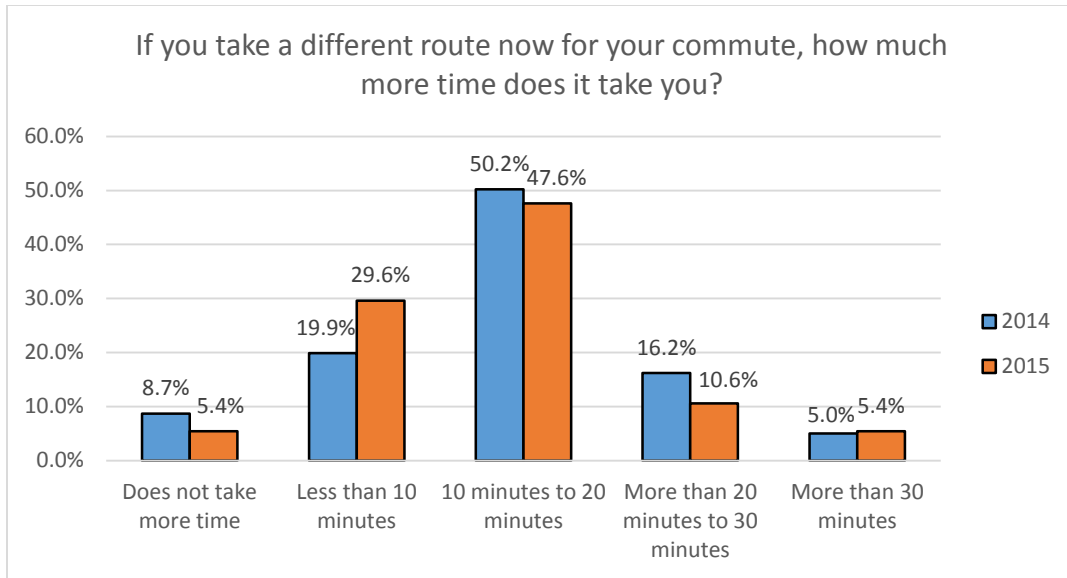
Respondents were also asked about whether they avoid tolls and the different methods used to avoid toll bridges and tunnels. Almost half (48.1%) said that they did not intentionally avoid the tolls. For those respondents who reported that they intentionally avoid tolls, two of the most commonly cited

alternatives include taking a different route to work or school (50.9%) and reducing travel during peak hours (36.9%). Those who indicated that they took a different route to get to work or school were asked how much more time their commute took; 5.4 percent indicated their alternate route did not take more time. Under one-third (29.6%) indicated that their alternate route took less than 10 minutes more, 47.6 percent indicated their alternate route took 10 minutes to 20 minutes more, 10.6 percent took more than 20 to 30 minutes more, and 5.4 percent reported that their alternate route took more than 30 minutes.



Almost half (48.1%) of the respondents reported not intentionally avoiding tolls, an 8.6 percent increase since last year (39.5%), indicating that some respondents are adjusting and adapting their commutes and/or travel budgets to encompass the tolls. Of those respondents who avoid tolls, there was an 11.1 percent drop in those who took different routes from 2014 to 2015. Additionally, of those respondents who avoid tolls, there was a 14.7 percent increase in those respondents who reduced their travel during peak periods from 2014 to 2015. Overall, these results point toward the major effect tolls have had on regional commute and travel patterns.





The 2015 LIHR survey reveals a region with ongoing and substantial transportation challenges. The imposition of tolls on regional bridges and tunnels has led to substantial changes in traffic and commute patterns. However, the average one-way commute reported (20 minutes) was the lowest reported average one-way commute time in the last five years.

All Life in Hampton Roads Data Analyses 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 2015 Life in Hampton Roads survey should be addressed to:

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