

# SLO Regional Rideshare Transit Bike Survey

August 2008



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## **Purpose of the Survey**

The Bike Transit Survey was initiated by SLO Regional Rideshare in February 2008. The Survey was started in response to concerns raised at the SLOCOG Technical Transportation Advisory Committee and Bike Month Steering Committee Meetings, and during the annual Unmet Transit and Bikeways Needs Hearing. The survey was developed by SLO Regional Rideshare with input from SLO Air Pollution Control District and members of the bicycling community. The Survey was posted on the internet at [www.rideshare.org](http://www.rideshare.org) and made available to riders on SLO Transit, PRCATS, The North County Shuttle, SLO Transit, and SCAT between February 18<sup>th</sup> and March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2008.

Total: 279 Survey Respondents  
68 submitted online  
211 completed paper surveys on buses

## **Survey Findings and Recommendations**

### ***Findings***

Overall, there is evidence from the surveys that many riders who combine bike commuting with transit do experience some difficulties with full transit bike racks. Forty percent of bike rack users have been unable to put their bike on transit at least once, with some indicating it happens up to 80% of the time. When dealing with full racks, bicyclists' response varies among locking their bike at the stop, riding it to the destination, and waiting for another bus. Lack of transit bike rack space happens on all routes of SLO Transit and RTA, but is particularly prevalent on RTA route 10 (between San Luis Obispo and Santa Maria) and SLO Transit route 4 (Madonna/Laguna Lake/Cal Poly).

Respondents identified several locations where they would like to see additional racks. The most frequently identified locations were downtown San Luis Obispo, the Arroyo Grande Halcyon Park & Ride Lot, and Pismo Beach Prime Outlets.

Transit stops where people encountered full transit bike racks were downtown San Luis Obispo, Arroyo Grande Halcyon Park & Ride Lot, Atascadero Historic City Hall, Madonna Shopping Center, Santa Margarita, Margarita Avenue, and Marion Hospital in Santa Maria. Several of these locations have existing bike lockers which respondents either did not know about or did not know how or wish to use.

## ***Recommendations***

### Transit Stop Improvements

All of the above mentioned locations should be assessed for viability of adding bike racks and lockers. However, the following four locations should be specially targeted for additional racks and/or lockers.

#### *Downtown San Luis Obispo*

Given the considerable amount of rack parking that is available in downtown SLO, it is recommended that possible bike locker locations be identified and that Rideshare work with SLO City to identify and provide lockers to these locations.

#### *Arroyo Grande Halcyon Park & Ride*

Rideshare recently moved 4 bike lockers to this location, as requested by Arroyo Grande Public Works. All four of these lockers are currently rented out. It is recommended that Rideshare replace existing broken lockers with additional new lockers.

#### *Atascadero Historic City Hall*

Rideshare should work with the City of Atascadero to identify locations for additional lockers at this site. Rideshare should move up to 4 lockers to this location. The lockers will then be moved to the new Atascadero Bus Center when it is built.

#### *Pismo Beach Prime Outlets*

Rideshare, RTA, and the City of Pismo should identify locations at this site for bike lockers or and a bike rack. Installation of lockers should replace one existing car parking space in the Park & Ride lot.

### Transit bike rack improvements

- All SLO Transit buses should consider upgrading to 3-bike transit racks on the front.
- As of July 23, 2008, RTA has secured all bike racks that were back ordered. All RTA buses have two 3-bike transit racks.

### Informational improvements

The following improvements should be initiated by Rideshare, in cooperation with all transit operators.

1. A list of bike-friendly transit stops should be identified. "Bike-Friendly" transit stops will be those transit stops with easily accessible bike lockers and/or bike racks. These stops should be well spaced throughout each bus route.

2. All buses should have informational materials that identify the location of bike-friendly transit stops. This should be in the form of a brochure with map showing the bus routes and bike-friendly transit locations.
3. Buses should also have brochures or other materials displaying a list of bike-friendly bus stops, Rideshare contact information, and instructions on how to check out a bike locker.
4. All drivers should be aware of nearest bike-friendly transit stops so that they can direct bicyclists where to board when transit bike racks are full.
5. More comprehensive information about bike lockers and how to use them should be included in all materials. SLO Regional Rideshare should put new identifying stickers on bike lockers with information about free rental of lockers.

### Procedural improvements

All bicyclists should know that transit bike rack availability is not guaranteed. However, all transit operators should try to accommodate bicyclists whenever possible. Buses should always give bicyclists the option of locking up their bike, and should allow them time to do so.

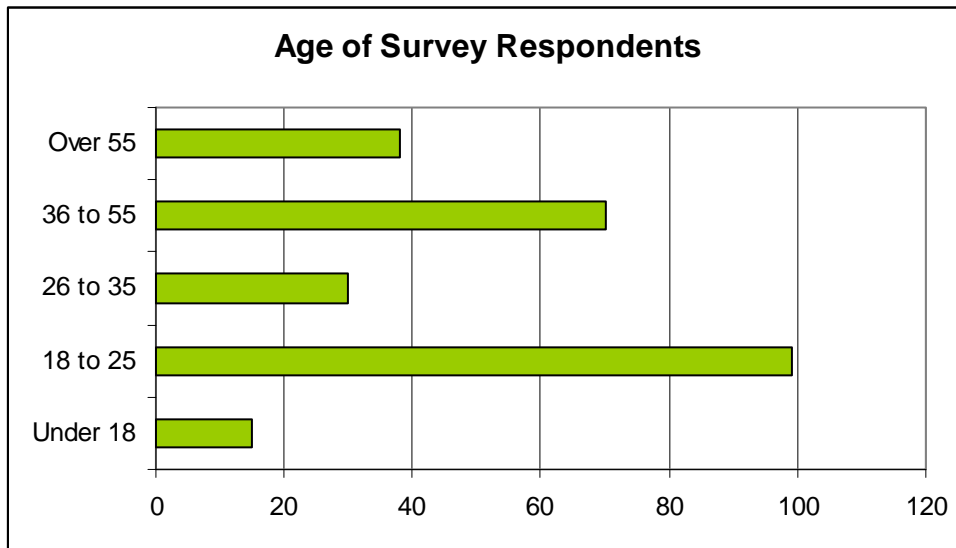
Transit operators should instruct drivers to keep records of where bicyclist are encountering full transit bike racks and report this information back to Rideshare. Rideshare can then work to accommodate more bike racks and/or lockers at that location. Riders should also be able to call dispatch to find out if the transit bike rack is full so they can ride ahead to a bike-friendly transit stop and lock up their bike.

## General Information

Respondents were asked to choose an age range, commute time, and commute purpose. Respondents were encouraged to check all that apply for commute time and commute purpose.

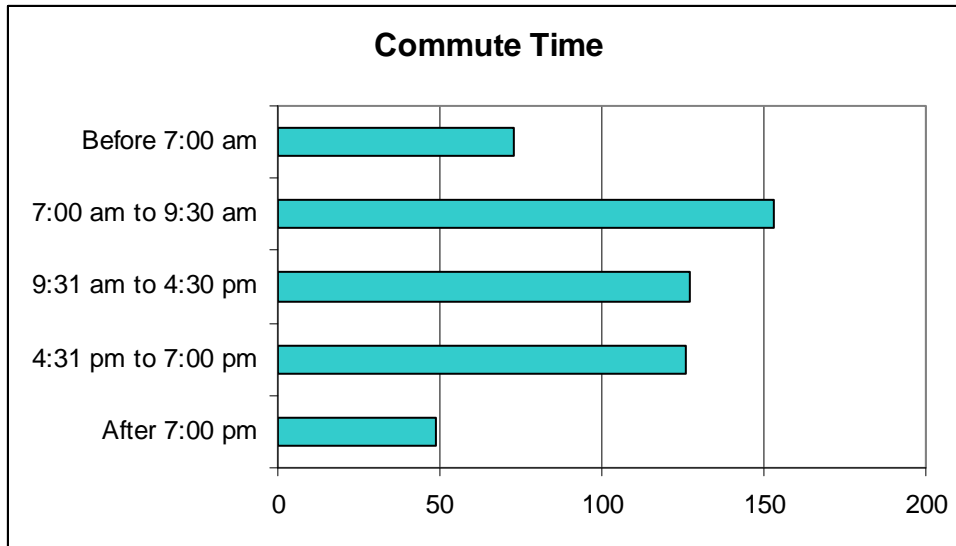
### Rider Age

The majority of survey respondents were between the ages of 18 and 25. Most respondents in this age group indicated that they use transit for their college commute (75 out of 99 respondents). The second highest use was among those 36-55. This age range primarily used transit for work commutes (49 out of 69).



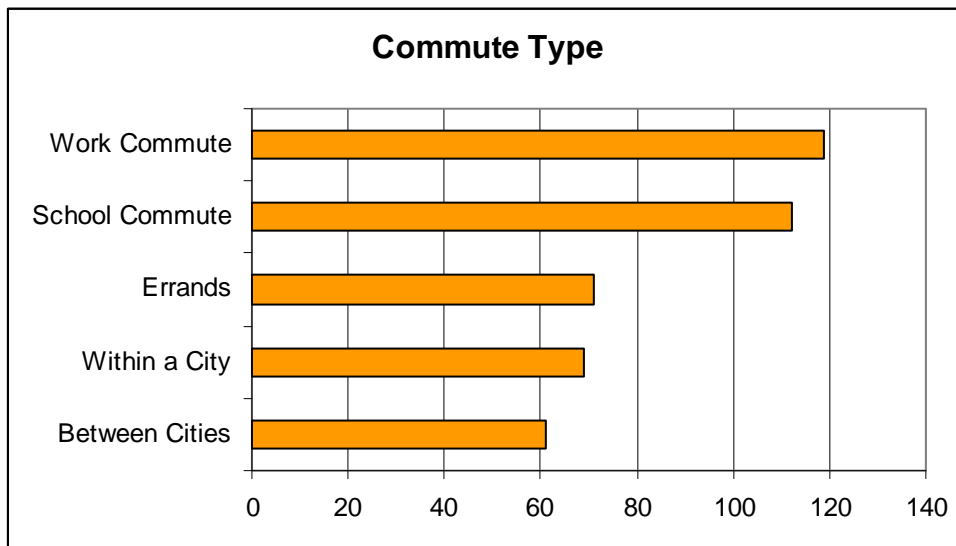
### ***Transit Commute Time of Day***

Respondents were asked to choose the times of day that they ride use the transit service. The most common response was during the Morning Rush (between 7 and 9 am).



### ***Transit Commute Purpose***

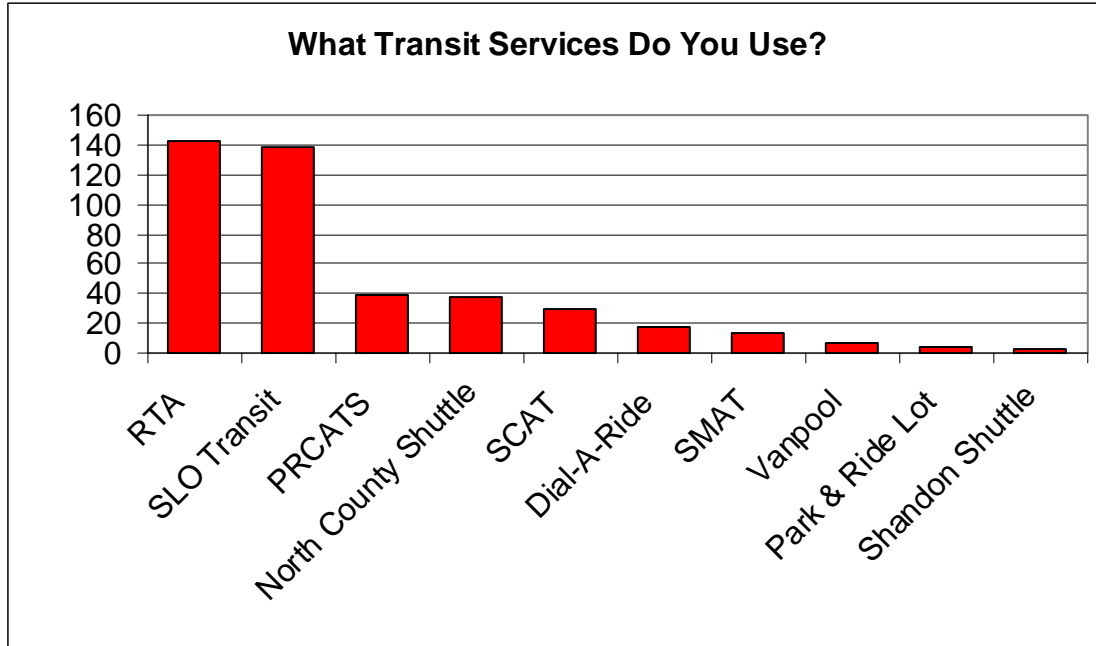
As with the previous question, respondents were asked to choose all responses that applied to their commute habits. The most common commute purpose was for work, followed by school commutes. Commute location was identified 130 times, of those 130, 69 responses were commutes within a city, 61 were commutes between cities.



### ***Operator Information***

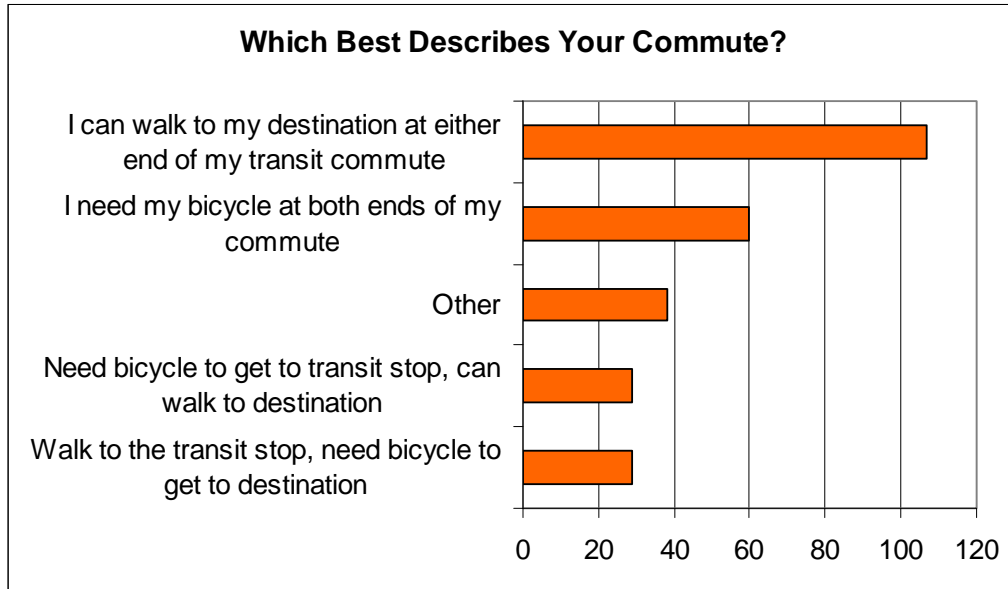
Survey respondents were asked which of the following services they used. Respondents were able to choose all services that apply to them. The most common services used were SLO Regional Transit Authority (RTA) and SLO

Transit, followed by (Paso Robles City Area Transit System) PRCATS and the North County Shuttle, an intercity service between Paso Robles and Atascadero.

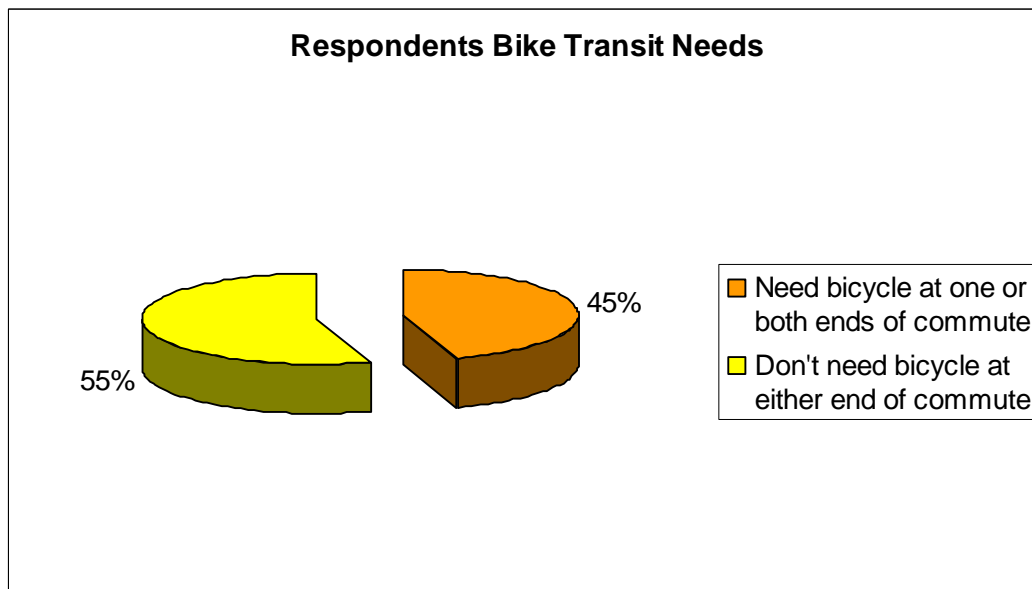


### Commute Bike Needs

To determine how many riders were combining bikes with their transit commute, respondents were asked to choose from a list of bike/walk/other commute options. The following table shows that the majority of respondents can walk to the transit stop on either end of their commute. Respondents who chose the option “other” primarily indicated they were driving to one or the other end of their commute. However, 7 of the 38 “other” responses wrote in that they use transit to get to their destination and ride their bike home.



The following chart shows that 45% of respondents need a bike at one or both ends of their commute. Respondents self selected for the survey, so it is likely that the survey results represent more of the biking population that regular ridership.



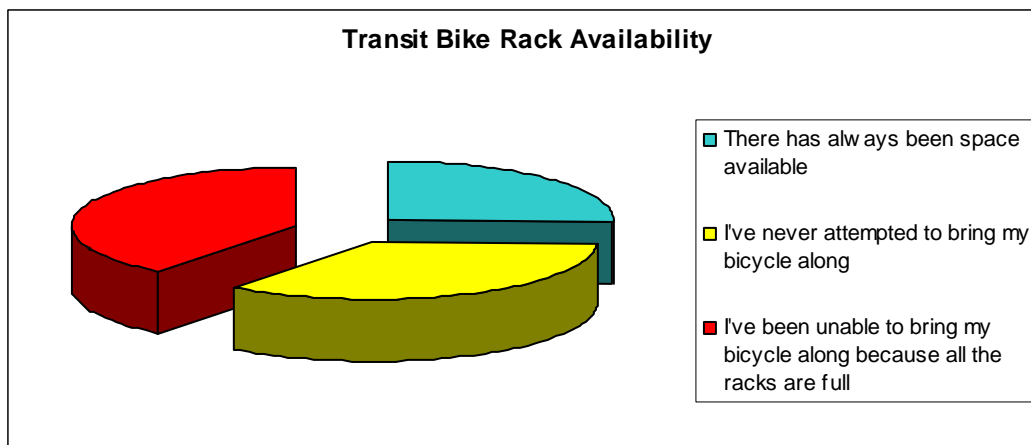
## Commute Bike Problems

Respondents were asked to indicate whether they had encountered problems trying to bring their bike on the transit service, what service they were using, and what they did when they were unable to bring their bike because of full transit bike racks.

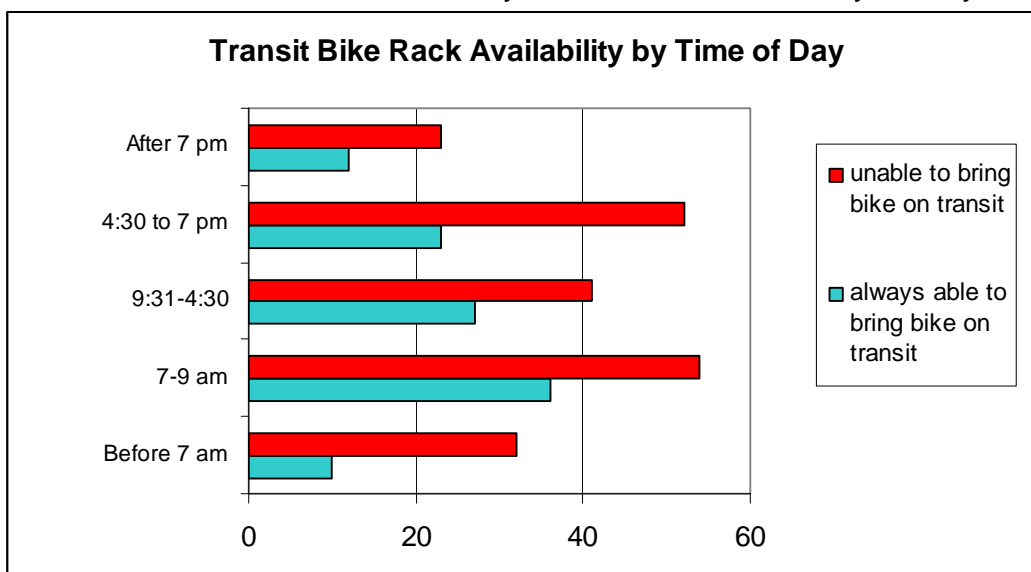
One question on the survey asked: "Have you ever wanted to bring your bike on a trip, but found the racks unavailable?"

Responses: 138

40% of respondents who wanted to bring their bike on transit were unable to do so because racks were full. 25% of respondents said that there is always space available, another 35% have never tried to load their bikes on the transit service.



Respondents to the above question were also asked what time of day they use transit facilities. The chart below does not indicate the time of day respondents encountered a full transit rack, it only indicates what time they usually ride.

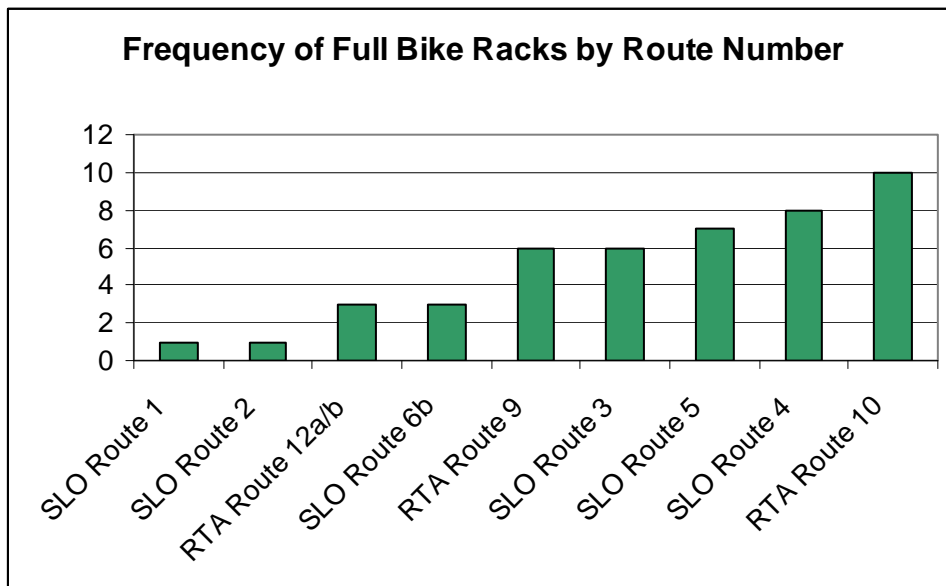


Respondents who had difficulties bringing their bikes on transit were asked to specify the percent of time that the racks were full. They were also asked to specify the route and stop. Because not all respondents identified the frequency, route, and stop location; it is difficult to identify the actual frequency of full transit

bike racks at any location. Additionally the percent of time that racks are full is based on perception not actual experience. However, the table below show that respondents are experiencing full transit bike rack infrequently (15% of the time or less) or relatively frequently (40% or more) this may indicate that certain routes are more impacted than others.

What percent of time are the racks full?	
0-15%	27
16-39%	12
40% or more	21

39 respondents identified when and/or where the transit racks were full. Of the 39 responses the following routes and services were listed. Some respondents indicated more than one route and/or service; this explains why the totals do not equal 39.

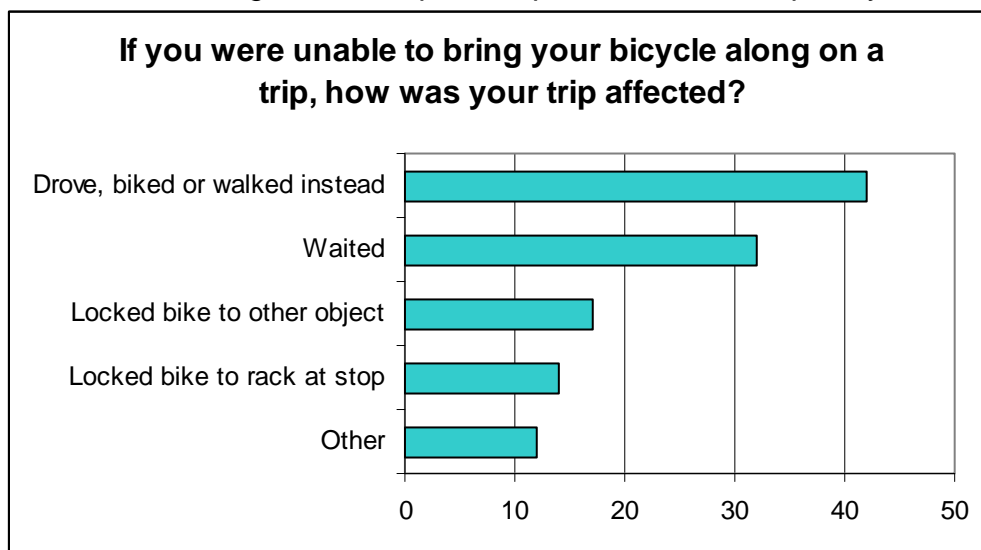


The following is a list of locations where respondents encountered full transit bike racks and what service they were using. Note: the direction they were going on the particular service was not identified.

Number of times location was identified	Location	Existing Lockers/ Racks	Route number*
8	Downtown SLO	No lockers, multiple racks	All routes
2	Arroyo Grande Park & Ride Lot	4 rented lockers, 4 broken lockers	10
2	Atascadero City Hall	2 day use lockers	9
2	Madonna Plaza		4, 5
2	Margarita Avenue, South SLO		9
2	Marion Hospital		10
2	Santa Margarita	4 lockers at Park and Ride lot, not served by Transit	9
1	Blarney St		4
1	LOVR	Insufficient data	4
1	Morro Bay	Insufficient data	12 a/b
1	O'Connor at Foothill	No lockers or bike racks	5
1	Pismo Beach Prime Outlets	No lockers or bike racks	10
1	Prado Road	Insufficient data	2
1	Santa Barbara at Chorro St	Insufficient data	4
1	SLO Greyhound Station	No lockers or bike racks	10

\*Route number identified by survey respondent. Some locations serve additional routes not listed.

Respondents were asked what they did when they encountered a full transit bike rack. The following shows response options and the frequency of that response.



When asked to choose from a list of improvements for their bike/transit commute, respondents indicated the following: The majority would like to see more transit bike racks when possible (SLO Transit buses have 2 front racks, RTA buses have 3 front and 3 back racks), followed by additional racks and/or lockers. City and county-wide bike loan programs were almost equally appealing to respondents.

What improvements would facilitate your use of a bike with your transit commute?	
Installation of a rack or upgrading to a 3-position rack	116
Additional bicycle racks or lockers	49
A county-wide bicycle loan program	24
A bicycle loan program in downtown San Luis Obispo	23

The following is a list of locations where respondents would like to see additional racks or lockers. Each location was listed only once, aside from SLO downtown (mentioned 4 times), Arroyo Grande Park & Ride Lot (3 times) and Pismo Beach Prime Outlets (2 times).

North County	Central County	South County
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paso Robles Wal-Mart Parking Lot</li> <li>• Highway 41 Park and Ride Lot</li> <li>• Saint Williams Church in Atascadero</li> <li>• Atascadero Historic City Hall</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Downtown San Luis Obispo</li> <li>• SLO Airport</li> <li>• Marigold Center</li> <li>• North Monterey Street</li> <li>• Oceanaire Street</li> <li>• Foothill Blvd at Casa</li> <li>• Prado Day Center</li> <li>• Higuera Street at South</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pismo Beach Prime Outlets</li> <li>• Arroyo Grande Park &amp; Ride Lot</li> <li>• Nipomo</li> </ul>



## Bicycle & Transit Questionnaire

SLO Regional Rideshare is interested in determining ways to improve the use of bicycles as part of your commute when you use local and regional transit systems. Understanding what works and what must be improved will ensure the continued viability of the bike/bus option for transit users who need a bicycle as part of their transit oriented commute.

Please take a moment to fill out this survey and return it to any bus driver, or go online to [www.rideshare.org](http://www.rideshare.org) and click on the [Bicycle & Transit Questionnaire](#).

1. How often do you ride the bus?

- Occasionally
- Once a month
- Once a week
- Most Days
- Never

2. What transit services do you use?

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> RTA (Regional Transit Authority)               | <input type="checkbox"/> SCAT (South County Area Transit) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PRCATS (Paso Robles City Area Transit Service) | <input type="checkbox"/> SMAT (Santa Maria Area Transit)  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> North County Shuttle                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Vanpool                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shandon Shuttle                                | <input type="checkbox"/> Dial-a-Ride                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SLO Transit                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Park & Ride                      |

3. Which of these descriptions best describes your commute?

- I can walk to my destination at either end of my transit commute
- I need my bicycle to get to the transit stop near my home, but can walk to my destination at the other end of my commute
- I can walk to the transit stop near my home, but need my bicycle to get to my destination at the other end of my commute
- I need my bicycle at both ends of my commute
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

4. Have you ever used the bicycle racks on the bus or shuttle before?

- Yes
- No

5. If you have never used the bicycle rack on transit, why not?

- Live close enough to the bus stop/Park & Ride to walk
- There is no rack available. Please list the transit service: \_\_\_\_\_
- There is a rack available, but it is often full by the time I get on
- Not comfortable using the rack
- Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

6. How often do you utilize the bicycle racks attached to the bus, shuttle or van that you ride?

- Occasionally
- Once a month
- Once a week
- Most days
- Never
- There are no bicycle racks available

7. Have you ever wanted to bring your bike on a trip but found the racks unavailable?

- I've never attempted to bring my bike on transit
- There has always been space available
- I've been unable to bring my bicycle along because there was not a bicycle rack on the bus/shuttle/vanpool
- I've been unable to bring my bicycle along because all of the bicycle racks were full
  - If yes, what percentage of the time that you need the rack is it full: \_\_\_\_\_ %
  - If yes, what route and stop were you at? \_\_\_\_\_

8. If you were unable to bring your bicycle along on a trip, how was your trip affected?

- Waited until the next bus, van or shuttle
- Locked bicycle to a rack at the transit stop
- Locked bicycle to a fence, post or other object
- Drove, biked or walked instead of taking transit
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

9. What improvement(s) would facilitate your use of a bike with your transit commute?

- Installation of a rack or upgrading to a 3-position bicycle rack
- A bicycle loan program in downtown SLO
- A county-wide bicycle loan program
- Additional bicycle racks or lockers (Please specify transit stop or Park & Ride location) \_\_\_\_\_
- None, I do not have a need nor wish to include a bike with my bus commute

10. Please describe more about yourself and your commute habits. (Check all that apply.)

Bus Commute Time(s)	Bus Commute Reason(s)	Age
<input type="checkbox"/> Early Morning (before 7:00 am)	<input type="checkbox"/> Work Commute	<input type="checkbox"/> Age: Under 18
<input type="checkbox"/> Morning Rush (7:00 am - 9:30 am)	<input type="checkbox"/> School Commute	<input type="checkbox"/> Age: 18 - 25
<input type="checkbox"/> Mid-Day (9:31 am - 4:30 pm)	<input type="checkbox"/> Running Errands	<input type="checkbox"/> Age: 26 - 35
<input type="checkbox"/> Evening Rush (4:31 pm - 7:00 pm)	<input type="checkbox"/> Between Cities	<input type="checkbox"/> Age: 36 - 55
<input type="checkbox"/> Later (after 7:00 pm)	<input type="checkbox"/> Within a City	<input type="checkbox"/> Age: 56 or Older

For additional information about SLO Regional Rideshare, programs such as TripLink & Lucky Bucks, or assistance in planning a trip, please visit us on the web at: [www.rideshare.org](http://www.rideshare.org) or call our office at (805) 541-2277. Please return this survey to your driver, or mail it to: SLO Regional Rideshare - 1150 Osos Street, Suite 202 – San Luis Obispo, Ca 93401