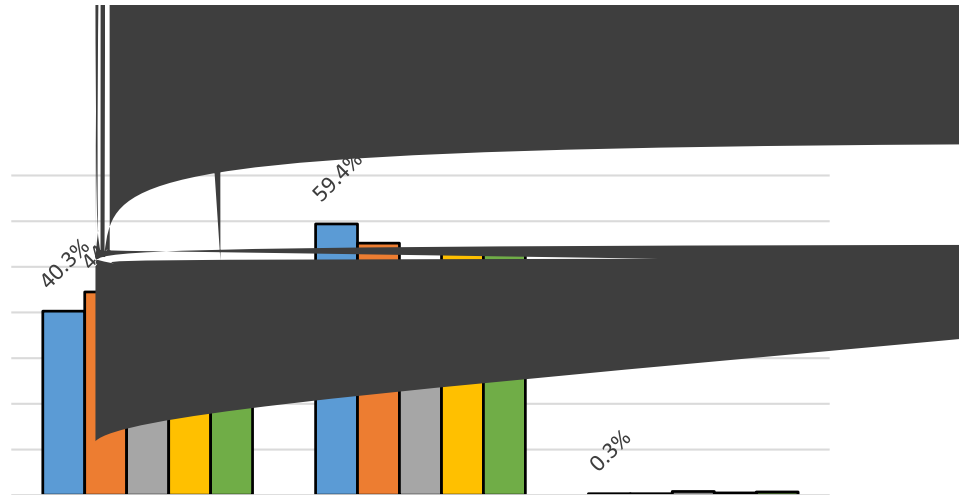


**Life in Hampton Roads Survey Press Release #4**  
**Transportation**

*This report examines re*



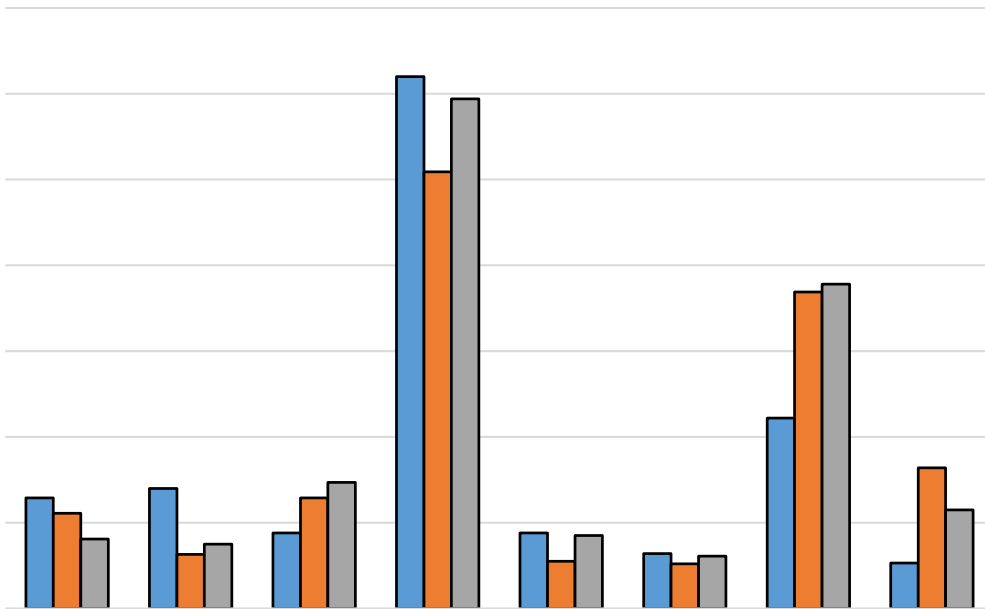
### Bridge and Tunnel Tolls

The 2016 Life in Hampton Roads survey asked several questions to help gauge opinions about the recently implemented tolls. When asked, 34.5 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 17.6 percent said they use a toll bridge or tunnel to commute to work or school.

Respondents were asked how many times in a typical week they use a toll bridge or tunnel. A majority of respondents (71.7%) said they use a toll bridge or tunnel less than once a week. A percent said they use a toll bridge or tunnel once or twice a week and only 14 percent said they use a toll bridge or tunnel more than three times in a typical week.

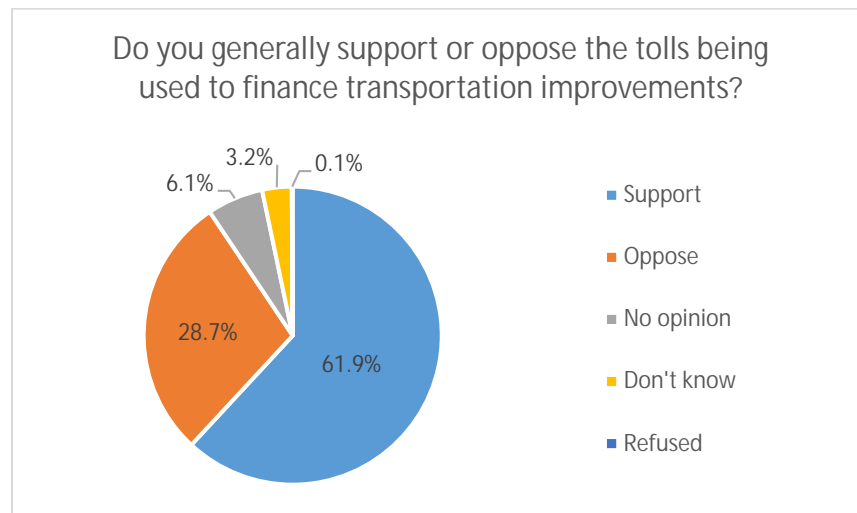


travel budgets to bypass the tolls. However, of those respondents who avoid tolls, there was an 8.5 percent increase in those who took different routes from 2015 to 2016 (50.9% to 59.4%, respectively), returning to a similar percentage reported in 2014 (62.0%). Additionally, of those respondents who avoid tolls, there was a slight increase in those respondents who reduced their travel during peak periods from 2015 to 2016 (36.9% to 37.8%, respectively). Respondents who reported changing their work or school schedule also increased 2.9 percent from 2015 to 2016 (5.5% to 8.4%, respectively). Overall, these results point toward the effect tolls have had on regional commute and travel patterns.



After asking respondents about their toll practices, respondents were asked if they generally support or oppose the tolls being used to finance transportation improvements, such as the Midtown and Downtown tunnel rehabilitation projects. Less than two-thirds of respondents reported they generally support the tolls being used to finance transportation improvements (61.9%), while less than a third of

respondents reported they oppose the tolls being used to finance transportation improvements (28.7%). Another 6.1 percent of respondents reported they had no opinion on the tolls being used to finance transportation improvements and 3.2 percent of respondents reported they did not know if they support or oppose the tolls being used to finance transportation improvements.



Respondents were also asked about where they would like to see light rail expanded in Hampton Roads. More than half of respondents reported that they would like to see light rail expanded to the Virginia Beach Oceanfront (58.5%). To a slightly lesser extent, respondents reported that they would like to see light rail expanded to Virginia Beach Towncenter (48.4%), the Norfolk International Airport (47.8%), and the Naval Base (46.0%). Respondents also reported that they would like to see light rail expanded to Chesapeake (39.2%), Hampton (37.4%), Newport News (36.7%), Portsmouth (31.9%), Suffolk (29.3%), and 6.4 percent to another location. Only 13 percent of respondents reported that they did not want light rail expanded. Another 7.4 percent reported that they did not know where they would like to see light rail expanded.



Additionally, respondents were asked questions about texting and driving. Most respondents indicated that within the past week, they had seen someone who was clearly texting and driving and also going over the speed limit (73.1%), going well under the speed limit (62.2%), changing lanes inappropriately or swerving (72.2%), and not immediately moving through a traffic light after it turned green (72.3%). Only 11.4 percent of respondents reported that they had not seen someone who was clearly texting and driving and committing any of the listed driving infractions.

The 2016 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 with 59.4 percent of those who intentionally avoid tolls reporting taking a different route to work or school. Less than two-thirds of respondents support tolls being used to finance transportation improvements. More respondents report being deterred from visiting neighboring cities due to congestion (45.5%) rather than tolls (34.5%). However, the average one-way commute reported (18.1 minutes) was the lowest reported in the last five years.

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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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