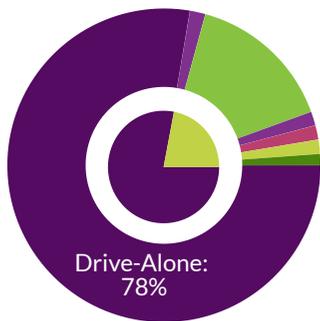
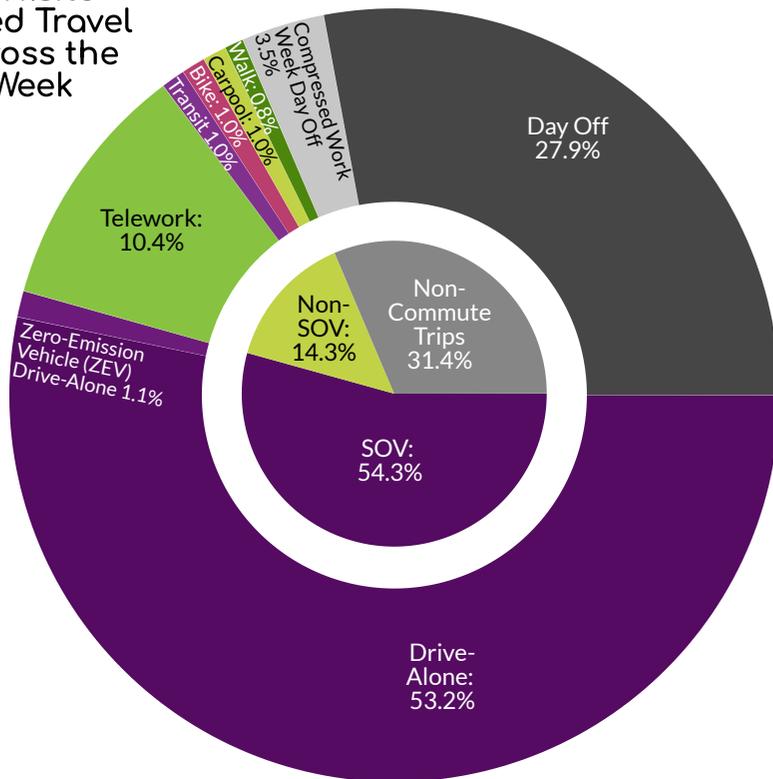
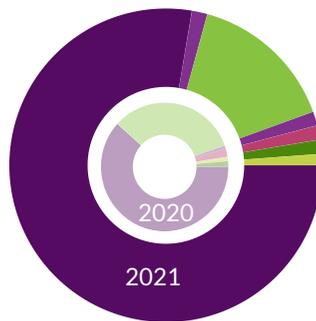




Worksite-Based Travel Across the Week



Working Days Only (Conventional SOV Rate)



2021 vs 2020 SOV Rate Increase of 17%

Average One-Way Trip in Miles



26% Chauffeur Children



2.3% Drive a ZEV  
4.7% Drive a Hybrid



13% Work a CWW



41% Drive I-25



23% Have Tried the N Line

Smart Commute collected responses to the fourth annual North Metro Commuter Survey in September 2021. A total of 2,343 individuals completed the survey.

Insights

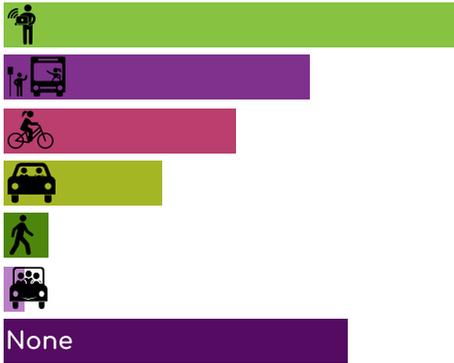
1: In 2021, Smart Commute collected, analyzed, and visualized our survey data in a new way. Earlier this year, the Air Pollution Control Division had submitted a Proposed ETRP (Employee Traffic Reduction Program) Rule to the Air Quality Control Commission. This proposed rule would have implemented an employer-based commuter trip reduction goal and included new requirements for data collection, as well as a new definition of "SOV Drive Rate." While this rule was ultimately withdrawn, in order to understand the risks such a rule would present to employers, Smart Commute aligned our process to the proposed rule's process. The ultimate result was a better understanding of worksite-based travel across the week, as well as the net effects of "non-commute" behavior from days off and compressed work week policies.

2: In 2021, the "conventional" SOV Rate climbed substantially compared to the 2020 number. However, the conventional 2021 SOV rate of 78% is still far below the SOV rates seen pre-pandemic (88% in 2019, and 89% in 2018). This indicates that we are making progress.

3: The average driving distance (12.8 miles this year) is the most consistent survey figure from year to year, and year-to-year deviation is never more than a mile (the average deviation is less than a half mile).

# Workplace

What one travel option would you be most interested in learning more about?



"I know someone in my office who could answer questions about transportation."



31%

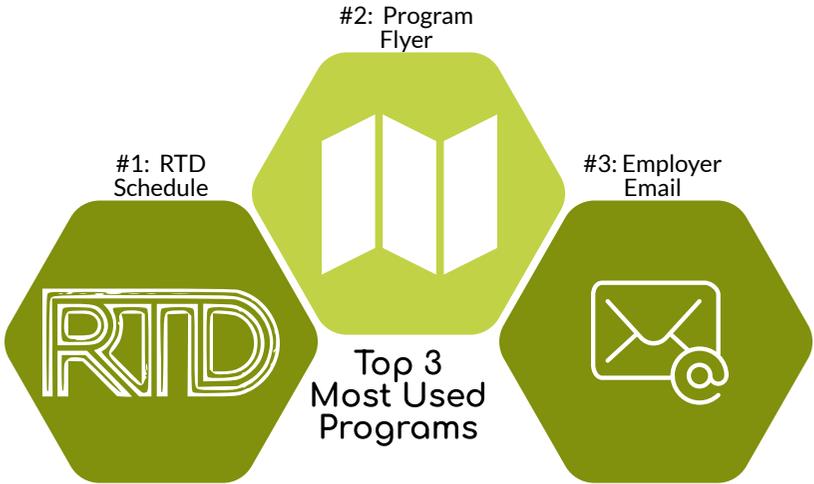
## Insights

4: Most respondents are interested in learning more about teleworking. In past years, teleworking has never held the "#1" spot on this chart, with "Transit" or "Biking" typically leading. **With "return to work" policies coming into play in 2021, respondent interest in remote working options reflect an appetite for the flexibility and work-life balance intrinsic to telework policies** (which focus on part-time remote work rather than full-time remote work, and encourage employees to commute to the office for strategic purposes rather than by default). *Contact Smart Commute for telework policy template documents.*

5: On average, respondents are not confident of internal transportation expertise. **Smart Commute strongly recommends employers identify and promote an internal "employee transportation coordinator" to help provide an intermediary to access transportation information.** *Smart Commute provides expert support to this person so they do not have to have expertise themselves.*

6: Similar to past years, employees are using "passive" communication tools most consistently, with RTD Schedules, Program Flyers, and Employer Emails being the most used programs. **This indicates an opportunity for more active communication and support to commuters.**

7: As usual, employees are most interested in Flexible Work Schedules, Compressed Work Week policies, and Transit Pass Programs. These are the "trinity" of desired commuter programs, and are generally in the top three in every year's survey results. **This indicates an enduring desire for these programs, and a corresponding lack of implementation.**



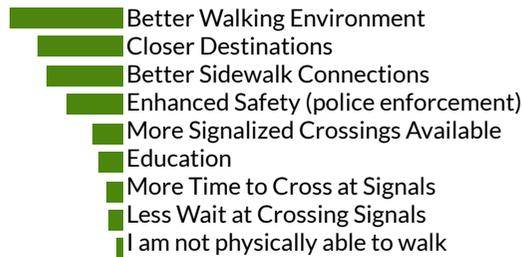
# Infrastructure

## What improvements would encourage you to...

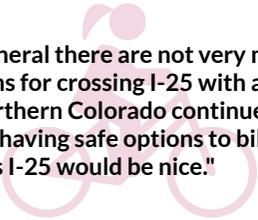
"I think I might feel more comfortable walking if I saw other people walking as well."



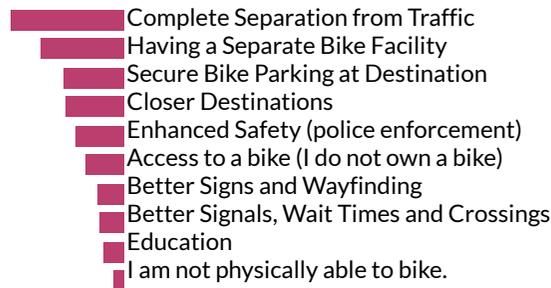
WALK more?



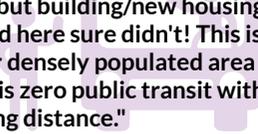
"In general there are not very many options for crossing I-25 with a bike. As northern Colorado continues to grow, having safe options to bike across I-25 would be nice."



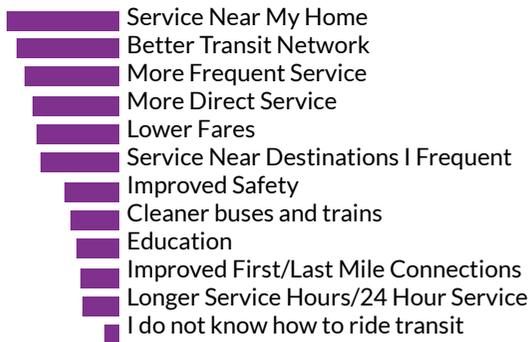
BIKE more?



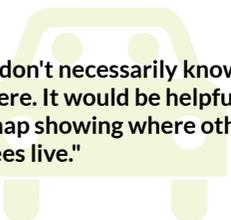
"There is no transit up to 144th and none across 144th & I-25?! During COVID, public transit had to scale back, but building/new housing around here sure didn't! This is a rather densely populated area and there is zero public transit within walking distance."



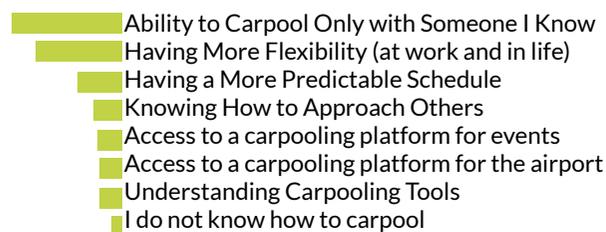
RIDE TRANSIT more?



"People don't necessarily know who lives where. It would be helpful to have a map showing where other employees live."



CARPOOL more?



## Insights

Smart Commute read over 2,200 unique write-in comments in order to understand concerns for Biking, Walking, Riding Transit, and Carpooling.

Write-in walking comments included frequent mentions of **perceived safety concerns**, especially related to unhoused people.

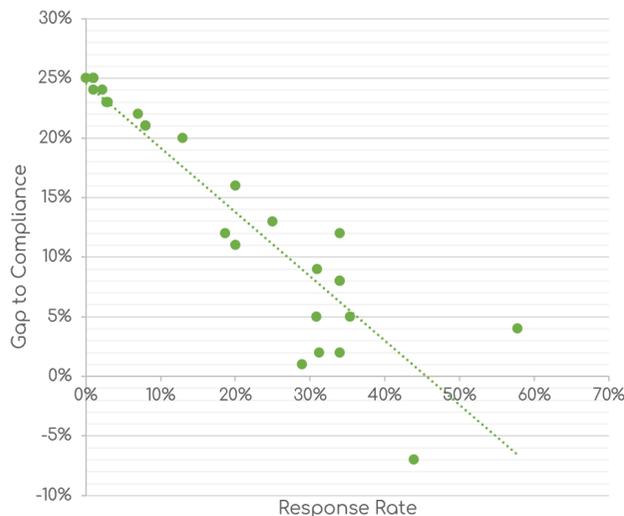
Write-in biking comments frequently indicated **gaps in the biking network** as a major concern, and requested better inter-community connections.

Write-in transit comments highlighted the ramifications of the significant service reductions that resulted from the COVID pandemic, citing specific drive vs. transit times in order to **explain that transit was not a tenable option with the existing transit network and service frequencies**.

Write in carpool comments mostly related to **concerns about carpooling in a pandemic**, as well as concerns over the perceived loss of personal freedom resulting from a carpool.

# ETRP Analysis

The Denver Region has been out of compliance with National Ambient Air Quality Standards since 1978. In 2020, the region was reclassified to "serious" nonattainment.



While not perfect, Smart Commute saw a strong, inverse correlation between response rate and the "compliance gap" (the gap between the weighted SOV Rate and the 75% "Drive Alone SOV" goal proposed in the rule).

In 2021, in response to a proposed Employee Traffic Reduction Program (ETRP) rule, Smart Commute conducted our survey analysis in a manner so as to conform with the process and outcome the proposed rule would have required. The end result was a substantially better understanding of how the proposed ETRP rule would effect large employer worksites.

**Ultimately Smart Commute learned that compliance with the proposed and withdrawn rule would likely have been possible with exurban employers, given a high enough response rate.** Final analysis evaluated 27 "large employer" worksites.

For a full explanation of our ETRP Analysis, please contact Smart Commute.

- North
- Metro
- Commuter
- Survey



## What do these results tell us? Why are they important?

Smart Commute conducts an annual regional survey in order to track changes in commuting behavior and interests over time. This information is important, and not only helps us to evaluate programmatic effectiveness, it also helps us to make the case to decision makers for increased investment in transportation.

The North Denver Metro includes the communities of Adams County, Brighton, Broomfield, Commerce City, Dacono, Erie, Federal Heights, Firestone, Frederick, Lafayette, Longmont, Northglenn, Thornton, and Westminster.

## Would you like to get more involved? There are three ways to help:

**One: Become a Transportation Coordinator where you work, volunteer or live.** We will provide you with education and support to help you help others where you work and live to connect to our transportation network.

**Two: Write for Smart Commute.** We love to feature real stories from commuters highlighting the benefits, and challenges, in commuting by RTD, carpool, bike, etc.

**Three: Join Smart Commute's newsletters and social media,** and help forward on information and news that is pertinent to your network.



[SmartCommuteMetroNorth.org](http://SmartCommuteMetroNorth.org)

Prepared: 12/10/2021