



# Use of Ride-Hail and Car-Share Services in the Region



Ride-hail services include Lyft and Uber.

## Survey asked questions about uses of ride-hail and car-share services

The Puget Sound Regional Council conducts household travel surveys to understand how people in the region use the transportation system. The travel survey collects day-to-day information from local households about how and where we travel.

More than 6,300 households in King, Pierce, Snohomish, and Kitsap counties participated in the 2017 and 2019 Household Travel Surveys.

The travel survey asked respondents 16 and older to identify how frequently they use ride-hail and car-share services.

**Ride-hail** services include Lyft and Uber. They are also known as Transportation Network Connected services (TNCs).

**Car-share** is a service that allows subscribers to search for and borrow cars nearby. Turo, Zipcar, and ReachNow are examples of these services.

### 2019 survey question about uses of ride-hail and car-share services:

“In the past 30 days, how often have you traveled in each of the following ways?”

#### Response options:

5-7 days/week

1-4 days/week

1-3 times in the past 30 days

I do this, but not in the past 30 days

I never do this

The travel survey asked several questions of households about these mobility options, including:

- How often do people use ride-hail and car-share services?
- What kinds of trips do they make with ride-hail and car-share services?

## Number of Trips Made

This section describes ride-hail and car-share trips in the region. On every trip a person took, they could select whether the mode used was ride-hail or car-share.

Ride-hail services accounted for about 72,200 trips in the region for an average weekday in 2019. This surpassed use of urban rail (Link light rail, monorail; 54,500 trips), ferry or water taxi (36,000 trips), or commuter rail (Sounder, Amtrak; 22,600 trips). The number of ride-hail trips in 2019 was almost 10 times greater than the number of taxi trips (7,500 trips).

Regionally, use of ride-hail service represents a small, albeit increasing, proportion of the overall mode share at 0.3% of trips. Transit and active transportation modes play a much more significant role in how people travel.

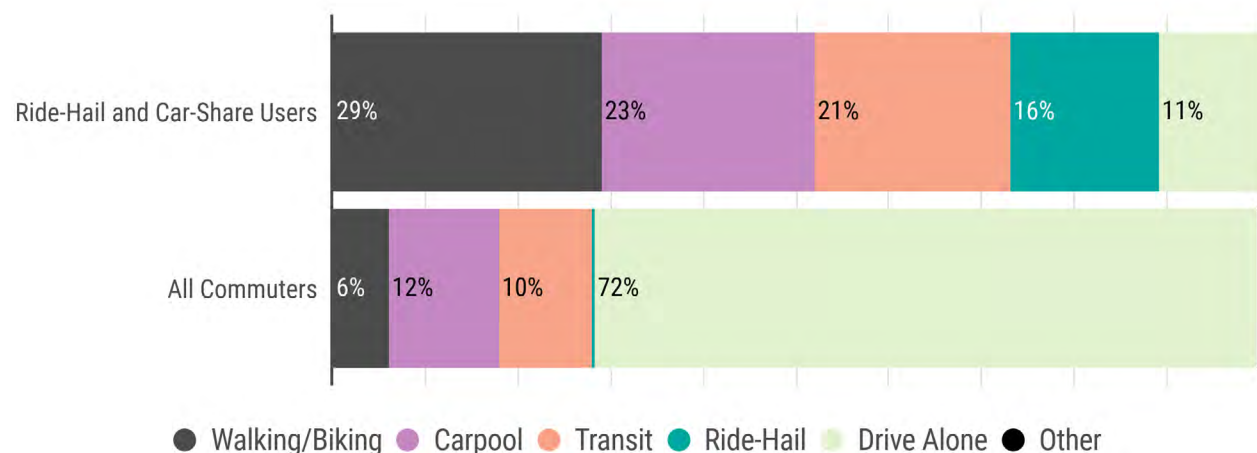
The number of trips increased from 2017 to 2019 but we cannot measure the magnitude of the increase because of issues with the 2017 estimate.<sup>1</sup>

The 2019 travel survey indicates that most ride-hail and car-share trips were primarily for errands, shopping, and meals, rather than for commuting or school purposes.

## Travel to Work

People who use ride-hail and car-share services have strikingly different commuting behavior than the general Puget Sound population. Around 73% of ride-hail and car-share users commute by walking/ biking (29%), carpool (23%), or transit (21%). This is very different from the region's overall commute mode shares that show 70% of the region's workers driving alone.

### Commute Mode Shares for Ride-Hail and Car-Share Users compared to All Commuters, 2019



<sup>1</sup> - The estimated number of 2017 ride-hail trips (around 15,000) appears too low as compared to other data sources. The problem is most likely due to insufficient samples. A [Seattle Times article](#) reported around 91,000 trips on an average day, including weekends.

# Ride-Hail

Pre-COVID, ride-hail companies were providing a significant transportation service for some segments of the population, such as young adults and people with no cars. They were also frequently used for trips to central parts of Seattle and Sea-Tac International Airport.

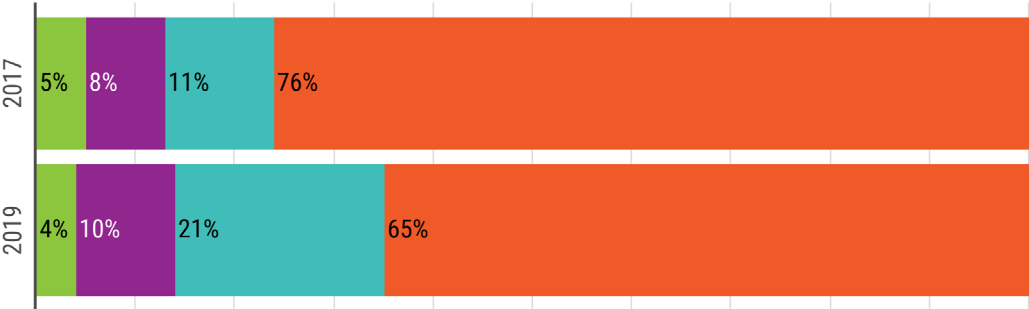
Some survey findings about ride-hail services include:

- From 2017 to 2019, the share of adults in the region who had traveled by ride-hail went up from 24% to 35%.
- Over half of adults in the City of Seattle used ride-hail service in 2019, which is substantially higher than the region as a whole.
- African Americans and Asians were more likely to be frequent users of ride-hail service (one or more days per week) than people of all other racial/ethnic groups. People of color other than African Americans and Asians were more likely to have never used ride-hail services.

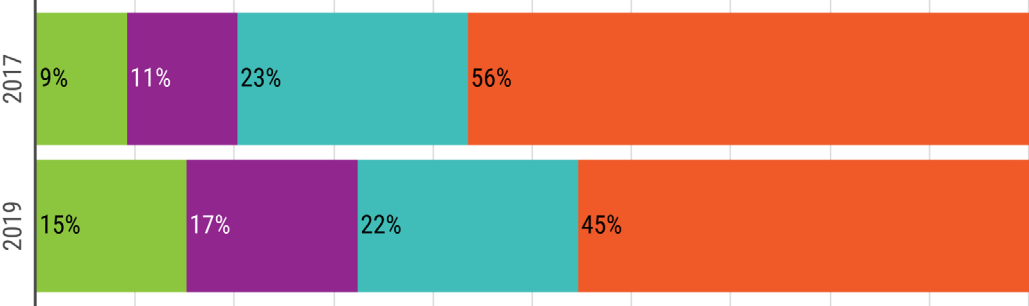
## How Often People Use These Services

In 2019, 14% of the region’s adults used a ride-hail service in the last 30 days. The corresponding share for adults in the City of Seattle is more than double, at 32%. From 2017 to 2019, the share of adults who had ever booked a ride-hail service jumped from 24% to 35% for the region. The leap in Seattle was from 44% to 55%, which means over half of Seattle adults have experience with ride-hail.

**Frequency of Ride-Hail Use in the Region, 2017 vs. 2019**



**Frequency of Ride-Hail Use in the City of Seattle, 2017 vs. 2019**



- Weekly or more often
- 1-3 times in the past week
- I do this, but not in the past 30 days
- I never do this

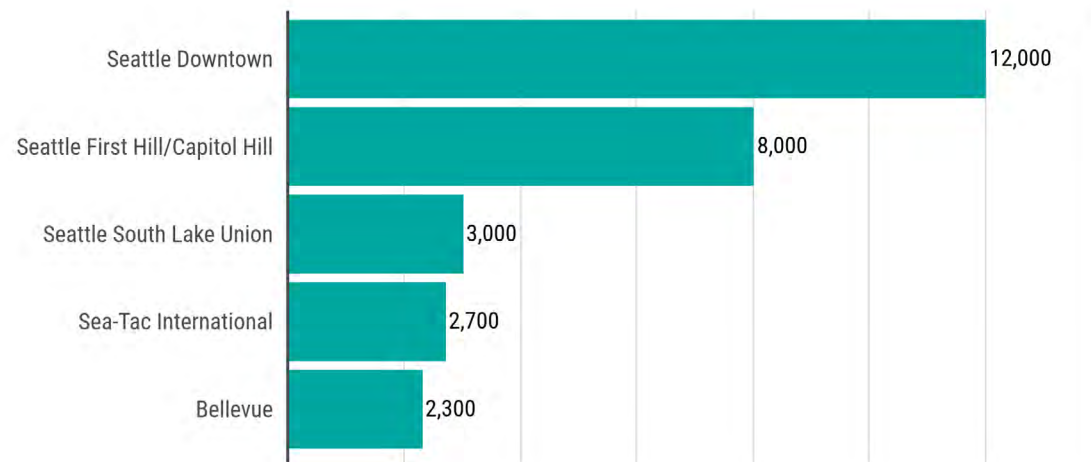
## Where Ride-Hail Users Go

The 2019 travel survey indicates that most ride-hail and car-share trips were for errands, shopping, and meals, rather than for commuting or school purposes.

The most popular reasons for ride-hail trips include returning home (39%), running errands (21%), and taking work-related trips (12%).

More ride-hail trips in 2019 were made to Downtown Seattle than any other regional destination: 13,000 on an average weekday. The next two most popular destinations were also in Seattle: First Hill/Capitol Hill (8,000 trips) and South Lake Union (3,000 trips).

### Top Regional Destinations, Daily Weekday Trips, 2019

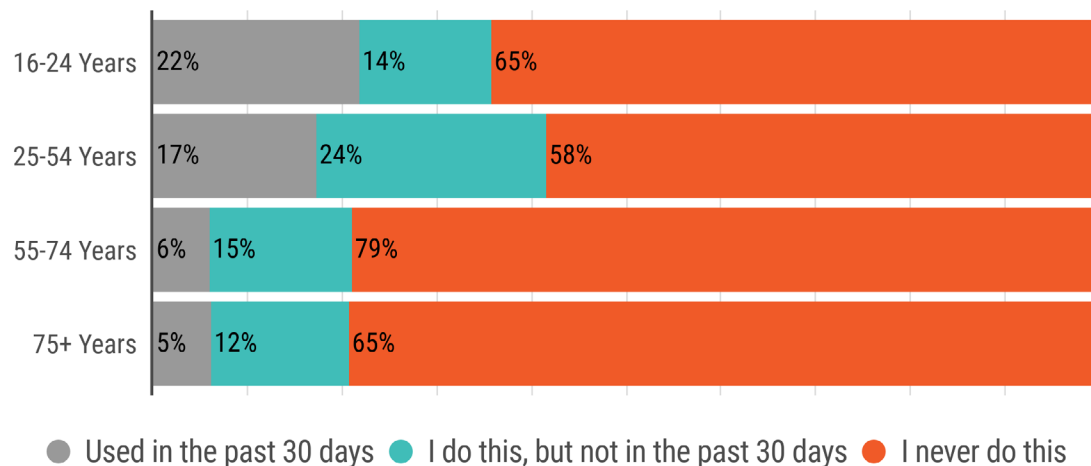


## Who Uses Ride-Hail

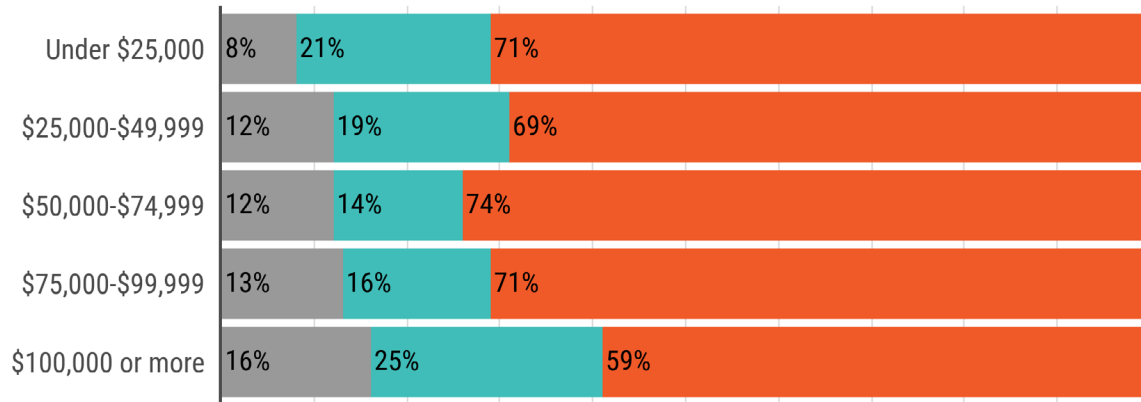
Younger people are much more likely to be ride-hail users than older adults. The group most likely to have used ride-hail services in the last 30 days was 16- to 24-year-olds.

In 2019, 42% of adults aged 25 to 54 had ever used ride-hail services, compared with 21% of 55- to 74-year-olds.

### Frequency of Ride-Hailing Use by Age, 2019



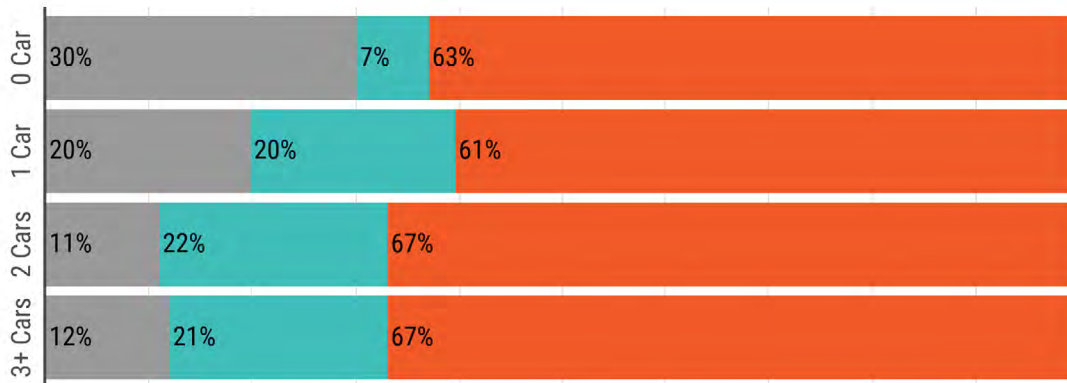
### Frequency of Ride-Hail Use by Household Income, 2019



● Used in the past 30 days ● I do this, but not in the past 30 days ● I never do this

Lower auto ownership has a strong correlation with greater frequency of ride-hail use. People with no cars in their household were the most likely to use ride-hailing services within the last 30 days. Among carless households, 30% had used ride-hail services in the past 30 days, as compared with 11% of two-car households.

### Frequency of Ride-Hail Use by Auto Ownership, 2019



● Used in the past 30 days ● I do this, but not in the past 30 days ● I never do this

Racial groups have been organized into four broad categories for statistical significance:

- African American/Black
- Asian
- Hispanic/Latinx or Other Race
- Non-Hispanic White
- Because of low sample size, 2017 and 2019 were pooled together for statistical significance.

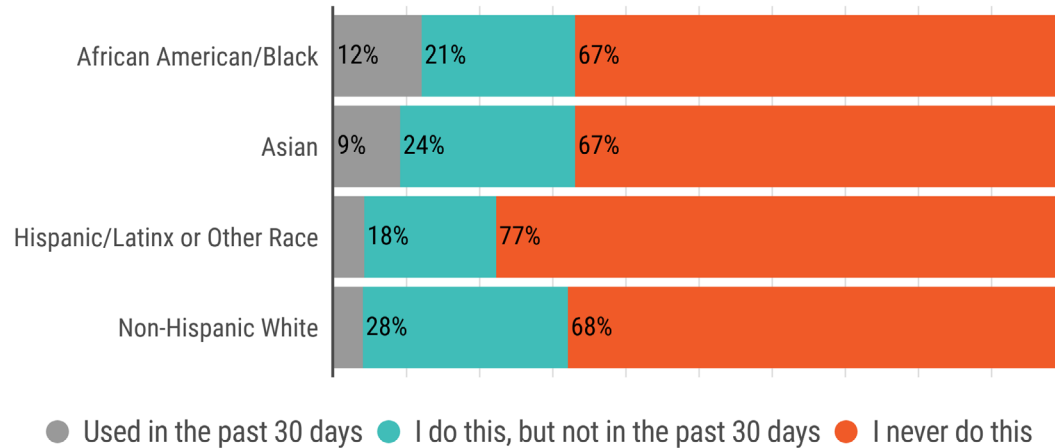
African Americans, Asians and non-Hispanic whites are about equally likely to ever have used a ride-hail service (around 30%). Hispanics or people of other races are less likely to have ever used ride-hail services than those groups (23%).



People in the African American and Asian racial groups are more likely to be frequent ride-hail users (one or more days per week) than non-Hispanic whites, Hispanics, or people of other races. As African Americans and Asians are more likely to have no cars in their households, ride-hail services may help fill a mobility gap for them.

Non-Hispanic whites and Asians are more likely to be infrequent users of ride-hail services (less than one day per week) than African Americans, Hispanics or people of other races. These infrequent ride-hail users may depend on the service for special occasions such as travel or special events.

**Frequency of Ride-Hail by Race/Ethnicity, 2017 and 2019 Combined**



## Car-Share

In 2019, 9% of adults in the region had used car-share services. In Seattle, the share was double that of the region at 19%.

There was no measurable change in these numbers between 2017 and 2019.

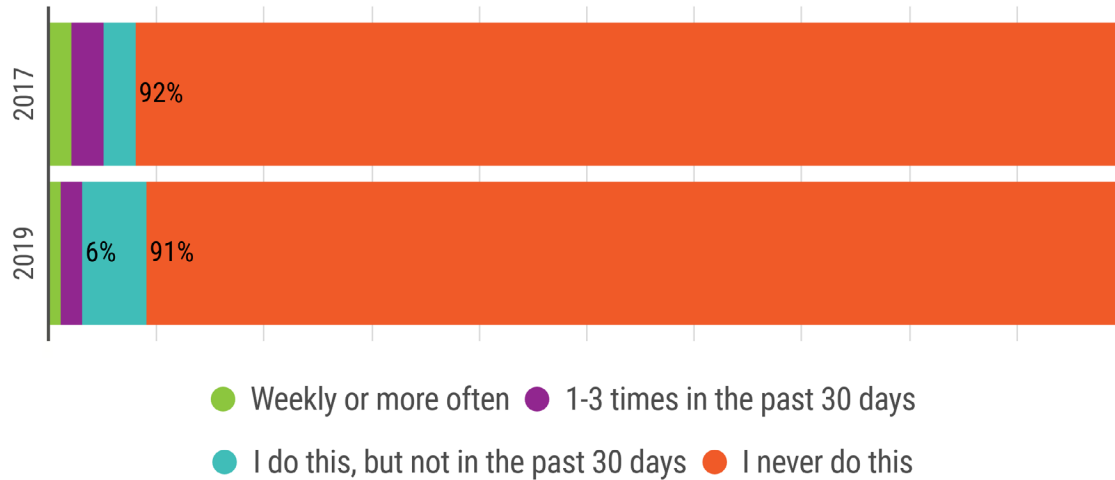
Car-share fills a mobility gap for zero-car households. Some findings from the survey about car-share include:

- Car-share was more popular within the younger age groups than older adults: 7% of 16- to 24-year-olds used a car-share service in the last 30 days.
- People of color are more likely to car-share than non-Hispanic whites. African Americans are the racial group most likely to car-share.
- The top reasons to car-share were social purposes or to eat a meal.
- The highest share of people who car-share at least monthly are those who live in zero-car households (14%).

## How Often People Use These Services

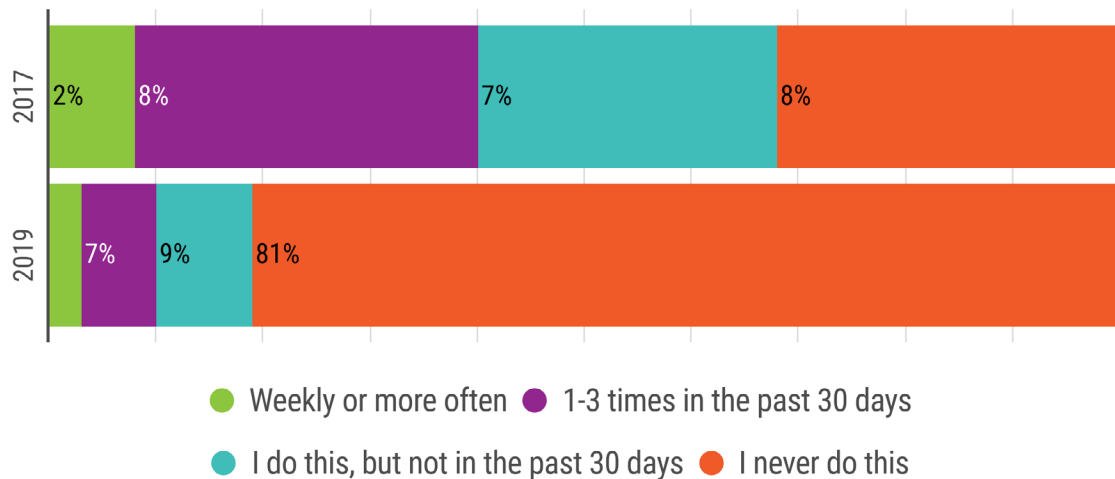
In 2019, 4% of the adult population in the region used car-share services within the past month. There was not a measurable change in car-share behavior from 2017 to 2019.

### Frequency of Car-Share Use in the Region, 2017 vs. 2019



In Seattle, car-share is more commonly used than in the region as a whole. In 2019, 19% of Seattle adults had used car-share services, more than double the share of residents in the four-county central Puget Sound region. The survey found 10% of Seattle adults were car-share users in the past 30 days.

### Frequency of Car-Share Use in the City of Seattle, 2017 vs. 2019



## Where Car-Share Users Go

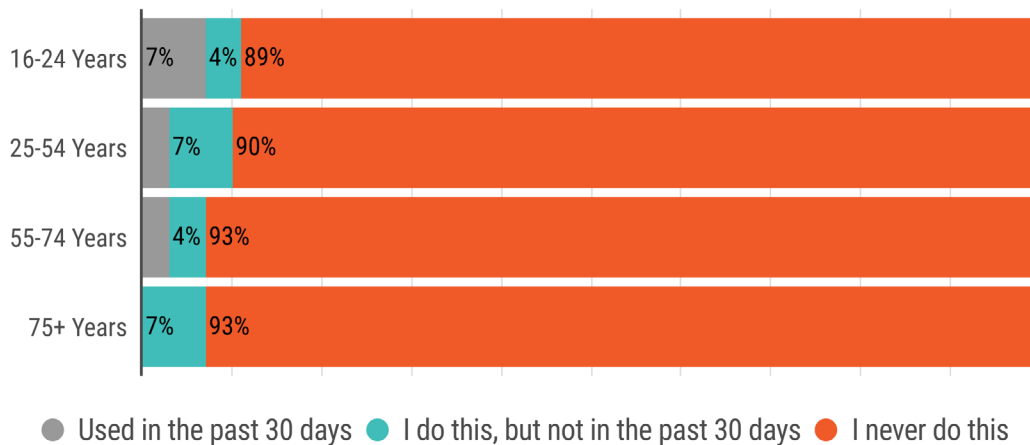
The 2019 travel survey indicates that most ride-hail and car-share trips were for errands, shopping, and meals rather than for commuting and school purposes.

The most popular reasons for car-share trips include returning home (32%), social/recreation purposes (21%), and getting a meal (17%).

## Who Uses Car-Share

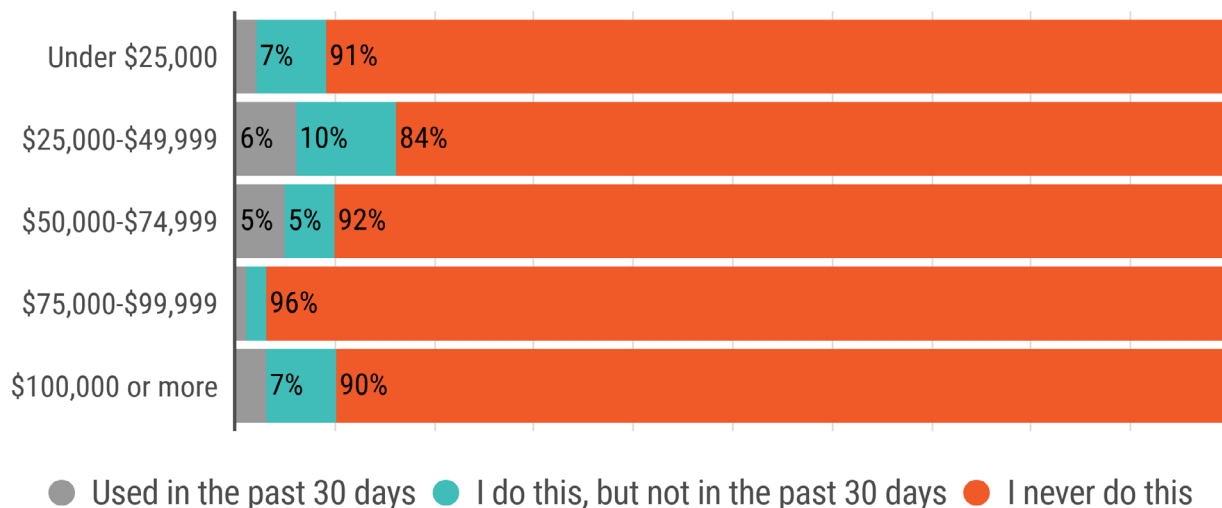
Car-share services are most popular within the younger age groups; 7% of 16- to 24-year-olds used them in the last 30 days.

### Frequency of Car-Share Use by Age, 2019



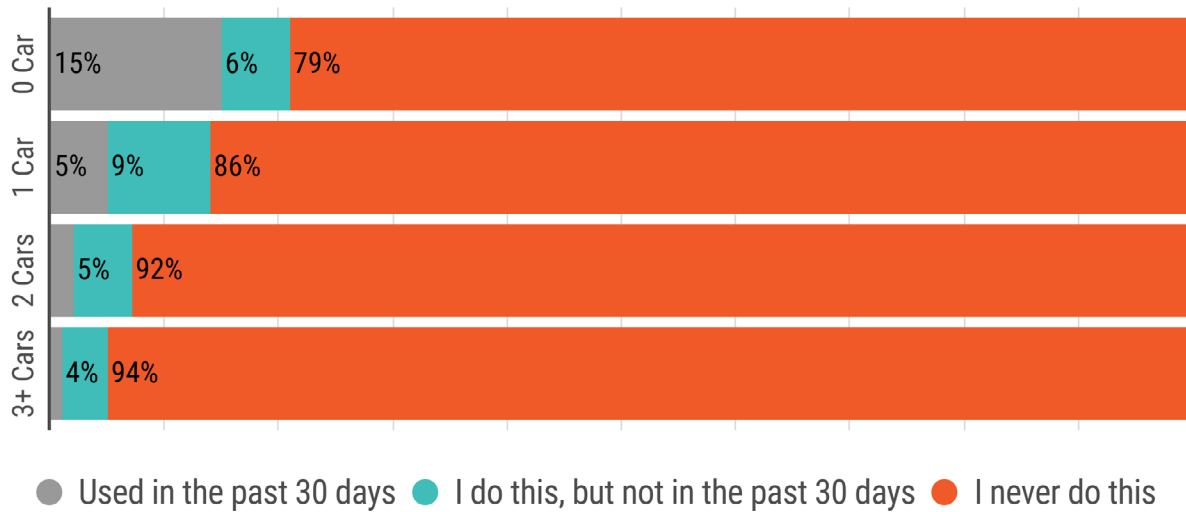
In 2019, people with incomes between \$50,000 and \$100,000 were the least likely to car-share. People in households with incomes of \$25,000 to \$50,000 were the most likely to car-share.

### Frequency of Car-Share Use by Household income, 2019



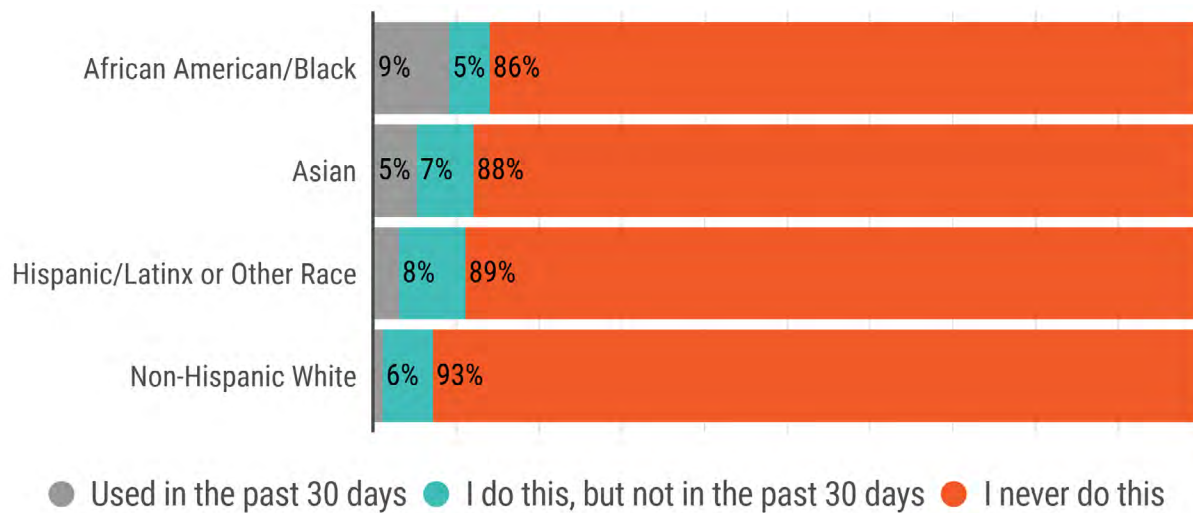


### Frequency of Car-Share Use by Auto Ownership 2019



People of color are more likely to car-share than non-Hispanic whites. African Americans are the most likely to car-share. Data from 2017 and 2019 have been combined in this analysis due to low sample sizes.

### Frequency of Ride-Hail Use by Race/Ethnicity, 2017 and 2019 Combined



# Conclusions

Ride-hail and car-share services were rapidly increasing new modes of transportation prior to the COVID pandemic. Their scope was still relatively limited to highly urban areas and providing service for people without cars and younger adults.

Commute mode data shows ride-hail and car-share services may allow new mobility patterns for people with less reliance on single-occupancy vehicles.

Under the current circumstances, many questions linger about ride-hail and car-share uses. Some of these questions include:

1. How will COVID impact these services long-term? Will there be a continued upward trend?
2. What is the long-term economic viability of these services?
3. Can they fill gaps in the transit network?
4. As younger people age, will they continue to use these services?
5. Can the new modes scale beyond the densest parts of the region?

The 2021 travel survey will give us snapshot of how COVID impacts ride-hail and car-share behavior. The 2023 survey will show the long-term trend of use.

View the 2019 survey data at [psrc.org/household-travel-survey-program](https://psrc.org/household-travel-survey-program).