INTRODUCTION

The focus of this report is consumer usage of and opinions on new transportation modes. In September-October 2019, Consumer Reports conducted a nationally representative survey of 2,007 U.S. adults about their current habits, needs, and preferences for getting around on a daily basis for their commute, running errands, and when on vacation. This report focuses on the results of the survey related to consumer preferences and attitudes towards ‘new mobility’ modes, such as ridehailing and electric scooters. Based on results, it is clear that consumers feel more can be done to protect their safety when using new modes of transportation.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- The most common modes of transportation Americans say they have used at all in the past two years include walking (87%), their own car or truck (86%), traditional rental cars (57%), carpooling (52%), and ridehailing services like Uber or Lyft (48%).

- A majority of Americans are in favor of laws in cities about the use of electric scooters. More than eight out of 10 Americans (81%) think there should be laws on where electric scooters can be used, such as on the sidewalk or in a bike lane. Nearly three-quarters (73%) think there should be laws regarding helmet usage.

- There is overwhelming support (90%) for mandatory background checks of drivers for ridehailing services. And, over eight out of 10 Americans (82%) think there should be mandatory car inspections.
FINDINGS

When it comes to modes of—and services for—transportation, such as driving your own car, taking a ridehail like Lyft or Uber, riding a bike or electric scooter, or taking public transit, consumers have many different choices.

MODES OF TRANSPORTATION USED MOST REGULARLY

That graph below shows the percentage of Americans who have used some common modes of transportation in the past two years.
Policies and Regulations

We asked about laws and regulations regarding the use of electric scooters and ridehailing services.

As seen in the graphs below, a majority of Americans are in favor of laws in cities about the use of electric scooters. More than eight out of 10 Americans think there should be laws on where electric scooters can be used, such as on the sidewalk or in a bike lane. Nearly three-quarters think there should be laws regarding helmet usage.

Among individuals who say they have used an electric scooter in the past two years, fewer are supportive of these types of regulations, especially among frequent riders. For example, only 46% of people who have used an electric scooter say they think there should be laws regarding helmet usage. Younger individuals are also generally less likely to be in favor of electric scooter regulations compared to older individuals.

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT CITIES SHOULD HAVE LAWS REGARDING THE USE OF ELECTRIC SCOOTERS, SUCH AS:

WHERE TO RIDE

- Yes: 81%
- No: 9%
- Unsure: 10%

HELMET USAGE

- Yes: 73%
- No: 16%
- Unsure: 11%

WHERE TO PARK

- Yes: 68%
- No: 15%
- Unsure: 17%

AGE LIMITS

- Yes: 66%
- No: 19%
- Unsure: 15%

RIDING AT NIGHT

- Yes: 64%
- No: 19%
- Unsure: 17%
Below, graphs show the percentage of Americans who think there should be laws for ridehailing services. There is overwhelming support for mandatory background checks of drivers. And, over eight out of 10 Americans think there should be mandatory car inspections. More Americans are more unsure about whether or not there should be laws regarding where ridehailing pick-ups and drop-offs can take place.

**DO YOU BELIEVE THERE SHOULD BE LAWS FOR RIDEHAILING SERVICES LIKE UBER OR LYFT, SUCH AS:**

**MANDATORY BACKGROUND CHECKS OF DRIVERS**
- Yes: 90%
- No: 6%
- Unsure: 4%

**MANDATORY CAR INSPECTIONS**
- Yes: 82%
- No: 10%
- Unsure: 8%

**ACTIONS FOR VEHICLE RECALLS**
- Yes: 73%
- No: 10%
- Unsure: 17%

**PICK-UP/DROP-OFF LOCATIONS**
- Yes: 47%
- No: 35%
- Unsure: 18%
**Disabilities and Special Needs**

Fourteen percent of Americans say they have a disability or special need that may require accommodation when traveling. Among this group, a quarter say they have experienced a barrier to using a form of transportation they would have liked to use because of their disability, such as inadequate elevator access or a ridehail driver refusing to pick them up.

We asked those with a disability or special need who told us they had experienced a barrier to using a form of transportation to tell us about their experiences. Here are some quotes:

- *When traveling some subways didn’t have elevators*
- *I sometimes need to bring with me an emotional support animal and not everyone wants dogs in their car*
- *Vehicle was unable to accommodate a wheelchair. Driver not qualified to handle handicapped person.*
- *My niece requires a special kind of car seat that is molded to fit her body, weight, width, and height. She is 15 and can not walk. Most vehicles do not have the proper hook ups that are needed for her car seat.*
- *Due to a mobility issue, we have had to refuse/be refused an Uber ride because my husband was too tall and his crutch and his leg braces would not fit in the smaller cars that were available. I find it ridiculous that we be charged more for a larger car because of disability.*
- *Rented a vehicle and it wouldn’t accommodate our wheelchair. When we returned the vehicle, the clerk said it would have only cost 5 dollars more to have a better car that would accommodate my wheelchair.*
- *Spinal injuries make it painful to ride with drivers not accustomed to transporting someone in chronic pain*
- *Too wide a gap to board trains and lack of space on buses*
- *Not having adequate Handicapped Parking Spaces*
**Respondent Stories**

We were interested in what people say is their “go-to” choice for getting around. In addition to walking (14%), transit options listed below are the most commonly-used methods to commute to work.* We then asked what they like most about this transportation option, what they like least about it, and what they think could make things better for them when trying to get around, in their own words. Below are examples of individual answers, which are not nationally representative:

**CAR - 70% use their own car/truck to commute; 12% carpool to commute**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pros</th>
<th>Cons</th>
<th>Needed Improvements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Readily available</td>
<td>Traffic</td>
<td>Better roads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can come and go as I please</td>
<td>Gas prices</td>
<td>Safer drivers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't have to rely on anyone else</td>
<td>Price of insurance</td>
<td>More fuel efficient vehicles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It holds my stuff</td>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>Better public transportation options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Environmental impact</td>
<td>More parking</td>
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**BUS - 8% use a public bus to commute**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pros</th>
<th>Cons</th>
<th>Needed Improvements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>App tells me when bus is coming</td>
<td>Connections to another bus</td>
<td>Buses stick to schedule better</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low cost</td>
<td>Doesn't always show up</td>
<td>More routes to places I need to go</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't need driver's license</td>
<td>Wait times</td>
<td>Less crowded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can get work done</td>
<td>Don't run very frequently</td>
<td>Better signage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy to use</td>
<td>Buses stop running too early</td>
<td>More frequent buses</td>
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**TRAIN/SUBWAY - 5% use a train/subway to commute**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pros</th>
<th>Cons</th>
<th>Needed Improvements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less stressful to not be driving</td>
<td>Crowded</td>
<td>Train line extend to reach more areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't have to worry about traffic</td>
<td>Delays</td>
<td>More frequent service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doesn't require parking</td>
<td>Lack of cleanliness</td>
<td>Modernize/improve subway lines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fast</td>
<td>Not always reliable</td>
<td>Cheaper fares</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost-efficient</td>
<td>Dependent on train schedules</td>
<td>Less pollution</td>
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</table>

**RIDEHAILING - 5% use ridehailing to commute; 3% use pooled rideshares to commute**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pros</th>
<th>Cons</th>
<th>Needed Improvements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Simple and convenient</td>
<td>Wait times</td>
<td>Cheaper costs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It shows up wherever I am</td>
<td>Cost</td>
<td>Energy efficient cars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They are in more places than taxis</td>
<td>Bad drivers</td>
<td>More privacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drivers are professional</td>
<td>Bad for the environment</td>
<td>Easier app</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very fast</td>
<td>Cars are too small</td>
<td>Drivers keep their vehicle cleaner</td>
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</tbody>
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**BICYCLE - 6% use their own bike to commute; 1% use bicycle-sharing to commute**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pros</th>
<th>Cons</th>
<th>Needed Improvements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I get exercise</td>
<td>Weather</td>
<td>More regulations to car traffic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On my own time</td>
<td>Safety from traffic</td>
<td>More bike lanes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inexpensive</td>
<td>Can only go limited distance</td>
<td>Less traffic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good for the environment</td>
<td>Can’t carry much with you</td>
<td>Cheaper public transit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoid traffic</td>
<td>It’s tiring</td>
<td>Bike only routes/paths</td>
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</tbody>
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*Percentages are among commuters and represent those who say they regularly use this mode on their commute. Respondents could choose multiple types.
SUMMARY

Almost half of Americans have used a ridehailing service (such as Uber and Lyft) at least once in the past two years, with about 5% of commuters using these services regularly on their commute. Nearly all Americans feel more could be done to ensure the safety of customers. There is overwhelming support (90%) for mandatory background checks of drivers for ridehailing services. There is also concern about the quality and safety of the vehicles themselves. Over eight out of 10 Americans (82%) think there should be mandatory car inspections, which could check for open recalls related to the vehicle, and other threats to passenger safety.

In addition, many Americans are in favor of laws that regulate the use of electric scooters. About eight in 10 Americans think there should be laws about where electric scooters can be driven, such as on the sidewalk or in a bike lane. And nearly three-quarters think there should be laws regarding helmet usage.

METHODOLOGY

This multi-mode survey was fielded by NORC at the University of Chicago using a nationally representative sample. The survey was conducted from September 27 – October 14, 2019.

A general population sample of U.S. adults age 18 and over was selected from NORC’s AmeriSpeak Panel for this study, using sampling strata based on age, race/ethnicity, education, and gender. In total, NORC collected 2,007 interviews, 1,849 (92%) by web mode and 158 (8%) by phone mode. The margin of error for the sample of 2,007 is +/- 3.03% at the 95% confidence level. Smaller subgroups will have larger error margins.

To encourage study cooperation, NORC sent email and SMS reminders to sampled web-mode panelists. To administer the phone-survey, NORC dialed the sampled phone-mode panelists throughout the field period. Panelists were offered the cash equivalent of $3. Where appropriate, response answer choices were randomized. Final data is weighted by age, gender, region, race/ethnicity, housing tenure, telephone status, and education to be proportionally representative of the U.S. adult population.

Key demographic characteristics (after weighting is applied) are presented below:

- 52% female
- Median age of 47
- 63% White, non-Hispanic
- 33% 4-year college graduates
- 55% have a household income of $50,000 or more