

What We Did

To supplement the data collected from adult residents, Community Visioning Program staff at Iowa State University conducted focus groups and a survey at Central CSD Middle School/High School in January 2020.

ISU design interns held focus groups with five 9th graders and seven upperclassmen to understand the factors and conditions that affect transportation use among these unique users. The high school focus groups employed small-group conversations, mapping, and photos of the best and worst to understand local transportation.

The survey addressed high school students' experiences and needs as drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists. The questionnaire was similar to that used in the random-sample survey mailed to adult Madrid-area residents. Respondents were asked to identify routes to school, walking routes, and biking routes. In addition, we asked what qualities and features are important to youth when they engage in these activities. Survey respondents were self-selected; a total of three students completed the questionnaire.

Focus Groups: What They Said

High school focus-group participants drive, walk, and bike to local destinations in town. They also skateboard and run. Students frequently walk, bike, and run on the High Trestle Trail, and Grant's Woods is a popular destination. Their concerns include the conditions of the sidewalks, rough streets, lighting and visibility, and flooding. Traffic flow into and out of the high school is a significant barrier to students, as well as congestion on Highway 17 at the trail crossing. Participants would like to have a second entrance to the high school to relieve congestion.


"What I would do is definitely put another entrance into the high school...because...it's so hard to get out and in at the end of the school day. [After] basketball games...track meets, concerts, you always have a police escort outside...stopping traffic from the north..."

"...there [are] no sidewalks. There's one area that just completely ends and - it's not safe. The sidewalk stops so we just keep walking...on the side of the road. On the highway."

"[I like the High Trestle Trail.] You can walk or bike or whatever."

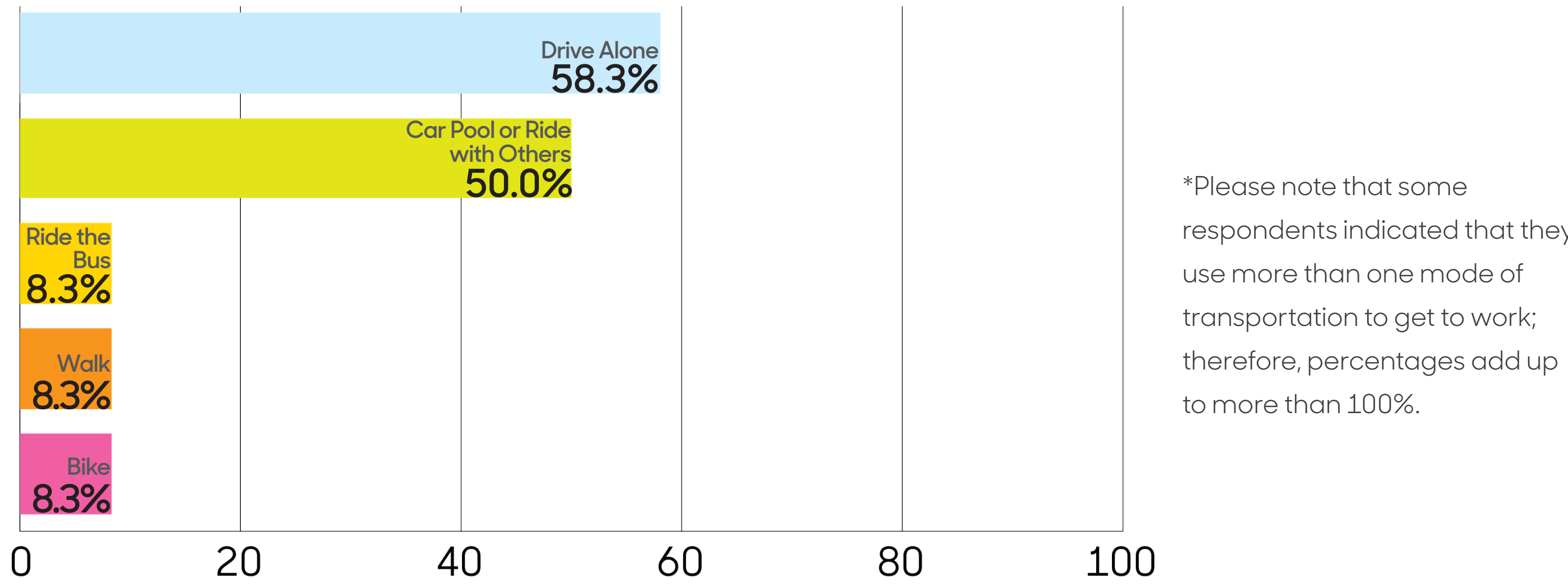
"I don't like the wooden bridge [on the trail] because I'm afraid... with us running- it's going to one day just crumble."

"Lighting is big because if I have to run when it's dark outside, it sometimes gets really tricky, especially in winter, because then there's ice and [I] can't see it sometimes."



How They Travel

Most high school survey participants drive alone to local destinations (58.3%). Fifty percent car pool, and 8.3% ride the bus, walk, and bike.



Why They Go That Way

High school survey respondents were asked to draw the routes that they take to school on a map. These routes are included with the commuting routes identified by Madrid residents, shown on board 4d. They were also asked to rank characteristics and features that factored into their choice of route to school on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the most important. Among high school survey participants, avoiding weather-related issues such as snow and ice is the most important factor, with a mean value of 4.33. Time to destination (3.58) is the second most important factor determining routes to school. Avoiding busy intersections (3.00) and vehicular traffic (2.91) are somewhat important, and avoiding scary dogs, seasonal beauty, and lighting are not considered important.

