

## BACKGROUND

The information in this report was developed from a separate analysis of the findings of the 1978 SCRITD Service Awareness Study. A total of 1,308 in-home interviews were conducted throughout Los Angeles County with persons age 16 and over who had taken two or more trips farther than walking distance away from their homes within the past seven days. Households in the sample were randomly selected in proportion to population distribution throughout the County, using an area probability sampling method.

## DATA COLLECTION

Both English and Spanish versions of the questionnaire were used. An incentive of \$1.00 was paid to respondents for each completed questionnaire. All data collection was performed between February 28 and April 10, 1978. The primary report of findings was completed early in June. Copies of the questionnaire and other materials used in the study can be found in the Appendix of the original report.

This study, just as any investigation using sampling techniques, has certain limitations based on predictable levels of sample error. In this case, with a total sample of 1,308, the response received would be within +2.7% of the true population percentage. For the somewhat smaller TRANSIT DISCRETIONARY population segment, which is the subject of this report, the comparable figure is +5.2%.

## SUMMARY

This report draws a comparison between the 31% of public transit users defined as TRANSIT DEPENDENT as a consequence of having either no access, or only occasional access, to any form of personal transportation, and the remaining 69% of users defined as TRANSIT DISCRETIONARY.

In general, the TRANSIT DISCRETIONARY were more often found to have the following characteristics:

- They travel more — a median of 7.7 trips per week versus 5.8 for the transit dependent.
- Their use of public transit is proportionally greater for trips to and from work or business.
- However, they use public transit less frequently than the transit dependent group.
- They are more likely to be employed and to have a need for an automobile during their work day.
- Demographically, they tend more to be in the 20 to 29 year old age group, although there are substantial numbers in their 30's and 40's; their incomes are higher with over one-third at the \$10,000 per year or more level; they are about equally divided between men and women; somewhat more likely to be in management, proprietor, or skilled labor categories; are predominantly (61%) Caucasian with equal representation of Blacks and Hispanics at 17%; and they tend to have more formal education.
- Attitudinally, they appear to be somewhat more receptive to public transit appeals that are related to energy conservation and various environmental concerns.
- Appropriate to their age and employment status, they tend to view themselves as more physically active and psychologically ascendant (i.e., as leaders rather than as followers).
- In terms of media exposure, they are generally less exposed to the broadcast media, and relatively more exposed to magazines and newspapers, particularly the Los Angeles Times.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- As the results of this analysis demonstrate, the substantial population segment identified as TRANSIT DISCRETIONARY are identifiably different from their opposite members in the TRANSIT DEPENDENT group.
- Although their use of public transit has been somewhat limited by both the occasional need for an automobile in their employment as well as by the appeal of the private automobile in terms of its speed, comfort, and convenience, they do demonstrate some commitment to public transit particularly for work related trips.
- The positive attitudes of the discretionary transit user are clustered about concerns for energy conservation and environmental quality, as well as the practical aspects of cost, and the opportunity to do other things with the time required for commuting to and from work.
- This potential rider does not appear to be as easily reached by the usual mass media mix as his transit dependent counterpart. By contrast, he is more likely to be influenced by a print campaign than through the broadcast media.
- It seems likely that, if there is ever to be any broad based shift in public attitudes about transit in Los Angeles, it should extend outward from its current nucleus of discretionary users to other less receptive segments of the population. The youth, education, and philosophical orientation of the transit discretionary group would appear to make them a good vehicle for stimulating greater acceptance of public transit.
- We believe that a well designed and adequately financed marketing and advertising campaign aimed at encouraging and expanding public transit use in this segment of the population would bring tangible benefits to SCRID over both the short and long term.

## 1978 SERVICE AWARENESS STUDY

### TRANSIT DEPENDENT VS. TRANSIT DISCRETIONARY RIDERS

#### DETAILED FINDINGS

A total of 1,308 individuals were interviewed in the 1978 SCRITD Service Awareness Study, of whom 40% were classified as transit bus users. This 40% was further divided into heavy users (7%), moderately heavy users (11%), and light users (22%).

One of the questions used to further classify the transit user group was the frequency that respondents had access to any form of personal transportation: whether "regular," "occasional," or "none." On this basis, just under one-third (31%) of the transit users having only occasional or no access to personal transportation were identified as TRANSIT DEPENDENT riders, and the remaining 69% with regular access to personal transportation were identified as TRANSIT DISCRETIONARY.

A major objective of this analysis has been a description of those differences that exist between DEPENDENT and DISCRETIONARY groups that may contribute to the development of marketing plans and programs aimed at increasing public transit usage within the broad transit discretionary segment of the population.

TRAVEL ACTIVITY

Number of Trips Away From Home Within the Past Week

As would be expected, those individuals with regular access to personal transportation were substantially more mobile than were the transit dependent. The median number of trips in the past seven days reported by the transit dependent group was 5.8, compared with a median of 7.7 for discretionary riders. Further, about two out of five (40%) of the discretionary group reported taking ten or more trips away from home in the past seven days as compared to less than a third (29%) of the transit dependents.

TABLE I

	Total Transit Users	
	Transit Dependent	Transit Discretionary
N =	<u>158</u>	<u>358</u>
<u>Number of Times Have Gone Away From Home in Past Seven Days:</u>	%	%
2	12	7
3	14	7
4	10	7
5	11	13
6	7	5
7	7	15
8	3	4
9	5	3
10 or more	29	40
Median number of trips	<u>5.8</u>	<u>7.7</u>

Travel Away From Home by Private Automobile

In total, about 95% of the respondents interviewed reported some travel by automobile within the last seven days. Of these, about 9% were classified as transit dependent, 28% as transit discretionary, and the remaining were not transit users.

Analysis by transit dependent versus discretionary groups showed a somewhat higher percentage of discretionary bus riders using the bus for work or business and to or from shopping. A third major class of trip purpose was social/recreational, where the transit dependent group had almost twice as high an incidence (31%) as the transit discretionary (15%).

TABLE II

	<u>Total Transit Users</u>	
	<u>Transit Dependent</u>	<u>Transit Discretionary</u>
N =	<u>158</u>	<u>358</u>
<u>Trip Purpose/Private Auto</u>	%	%
To/from work or business	23	39
To/from school	13	9
To/from shopping	27	33
Social/recreational	31	15
Other	15	13

Travel Away From Home by Public Transit Buses

About 19% of the total sample reported having taken at least one trip by public transit bus within the past seven days. Of these, about 55% were classified as transit dependent and 45% as transit discretionary. Among this group, trips to or from work or business and to or from shopping were still the most frequent trip purposes. Further analysis by transit dependent versus discretionary groups showed that a somewhat higher proportion (42%) of the discretionary group reported using the bus to or from work or business than the transit dependent (31%).

TABLE III

	Total Transit Users	
	Transit Dependent	Transit Discretionary
N =	<u>158</u>	<u>358</u>
<u>Trip Purpose/Transit Bus</u>	%	%
To/from work or business	31	42
To/from school	15	13
To/from shopping	26	22
Social/recreational	14	11
Other	20	16

### Duration and Frequency of Transit Bus Trips

In terms of the duration of the last transit bus trip, the median for the population as a whole was approximately 28 minutes one way. There were no differences in trip length between the transit discretionary and transit dependent groups.

In terms of frequency of travel by bus, the transit dependent group was, as would be expected, found to be substantially heavier users of public transit. Specifically, about 40% of the transit dependent group reported having taken 20 or more trips using public transit within the past month, compared to only about 8% of the transit discretionary group.

TABLE IV

	<u>Total Transit Users</u>	
	<u>Transit Dependent</u>	<u>Transit Discretionary</u>
	N= <u>158</u>	<u>358</u>
<u>Number of Transit Bus Trips Within Past Month</u>	%	%
None	10	48
1-3	6	24
4-9	19	13
10-14	13	5
15-19	12	2
20-29	17	5
30 or more	23	3

### Summary of Public Transit Usage

As would be expected, when classified into heavy, moderate and light ridership groups, a high proportion of transit dependent riders were classified as "heavy" or "moderately heavy" users of public transit and a correspondingly high percentage of the transit discretionary group were found in the "light" user group.

This greater frequency of transit usage by the transit dependent group, although the proportionally smaller of the two groups, results in a greater representation of transit dependents on a given day. Thus, by taking frequency of transit use and the number of transit trips taken, it is possible to estimate that about 66% of public transit riders on a given day are transit dependent while the remaining 34% are transit discretionary.

TABLE V

	<u>Total Transit Users</u>	
	<u>Transit Dependent</u>	<u>Transit Discretionary</u>
N=	<u>158</u>	<u>358</u>
<u>Ridership Groups</u>	%	%
Heavy ridership (20+/mo.)	40	8
Moderate ridership (4-19/mo.)	45	20
Light ridership (3 & under/mo.)	15	72

Need For an Automobile in Employment

In general, the transit discretionary group indicated a substantially greater need for an automobile during the day for business purposes than the transit dependent group. While this difference may be explained to a certain extent by differing occupational characteristics of the two groups, the occasional but real need for an automobile during the work day undoubtedly makes a contribution to the lower frequency of public transit usage among discretionary riders.

TABLE VI

	Total Transit Users	
	<u>Transit Dependent</u> N= 158	<u>Transit Discretionary</u> 358
<u>Automobile Use In Employment</u>	%	%
Never/not employed	70	47
Never/don't go anywhere on business during the day	9	11
Occasionally/less than once a week	5	5
Once or twice a week	3	4
Three or four times a week	2	5
Almost every day of the week	9	26

In total, slightly more than a third (35%) of the transit discretionary group indicated the need for a car during the course of the business day, at least once a week.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

In terms of comparative age distributions, there is little difference between the transit discretionary and transit dependent groups, except in the two lowest categories where a somewhat higher proportion of transit dependent riders appear to fall in the 16 to 19 year old age group and a somewhat higher proportion of transit discretionary into the 20 to 29 year old age group.

TABLE VII

	N=	Total Transit Users	
		<u>Transit Dependent</u> <u>158</u> %	<u>Transit Discretionary</u> <u>358</u> %
<u>Age</u>			
16 to 19 years		17	11
20 to 29 years		20	26
30 to 39 years		14	14
40 to 49 years		12	12
50 to 61 years		13	16
62 years or more		23	21

The reported personal annual income of the transit dependent group was substantially lower than the discretionary group. Within the transit dependent group almost three-quarters (73%) reported personal annual incomes of less than \$5,000 compared to only 43% of those in the transit discretionary group.

TABLE VIII

	Total Transit Users	
	Transit Dependent	Transit Discretionary
N=	<u>158</u>	<u>358</u>
<u>Annual Personal Income</u>	%	%
Under \$5,000	73	43
\$5,000 to \$9,999	20	21
\$10,000 to \$19,999	4	17
\$20,000 and over	1	13

When analyzed by sex of the respondent, a substantially higher proportion of transit discretionary riders were males (51%) than among the transit dependent group (35%).

TABLE IX

<u>Sex</u>	Total Transit Users	
	Transit Dependent	Transit Discretionary
N=	<u>158</u>	<u>358</u>
	%	%
Male	35	51
Female	65	49

Transit discretionary riders tended to be more heavily represented in the Management, Proprietor, Professional, and Skilled/Semi-Skilled occupational groups than did transit dependent riders. Conversely, the transit dependent were substantially more likely to be either Retired (22%) or Not Employed (38%).

TABLE X

	N=	Total Transit Users	
		<u>Transit Dependent</u> <u>158</u>	<u>Transit Discretionary</u> <u>358</u>
<u>Occupation</u>		%	%
General office/Clerical		7	7
Management/Proprietors		1	6
Professional		3	13
Sales		5	2
Skilled/Semi-skilled		4	11
Technical		2	5
Service worker/Unskilled labor		4	5
High school/College student		13	10
Retired		22	15
Not employed		38	25

An analysis of transit dependent and transit discretionary groups by ethnic group indicates that a substantially higher portion of transit dependent riders are black than among the transit discretionary group. Conversely, a comparably greater proportion of transit discretionary riders are Caucasians.

TABLE XI

	N=	Total Transit Users	
		<u>Transit Dependent</u> <u>158</u>	<u>Transit Discretionary</u> <u>358</u>
<u>Ethnic Group</u>		%	%
Caucasian/White		38	61
Negro/Black		33	17
Spanish surname/Hispanic		20	17
Asian		3	2
Other		*	1

\* = Less than 1%

In terms of geographic area of residence, a somewhat higher percentage of transit dependent riders were found to reside in the Western, South Central, and South Bay areas of the county. The San Fernando Valley Area was the only one with a greater proportion of discretionary riders than transit dependent riders.

TABLE XII

	N=	Total Transit Users	
		<u>Transit Dependent</u> <u>158</u>	<u>Transit Discretionary</u> <u>358</u>
<u>Area of Residence*</u>		%	%
San Fernando Valley		6	14
Western		37	26
South Central Los Angeles		35	20
San Gabriel Valley		31	28
South Bay		62	47
East Los Angeles		13	10
Mid-Cities		15	10

\* = Totals add to more than 100% due to overlapping areas

Analysis of the transit discretionary versus dependent groups by education showed the transit dependent riders to be substantially more concentrated among those with only grade school or high school educations. Transit discretionary riders conversely were more prevalent in the college educated and post-graduate educational groups.

TABLE XIII

	N=	Total Transit Users	
		<u>Transit Dependent</u> <u>158</u>	<u>Transit Discretionary</u> <u>358</u>
<u>Last School Attended</u>		%	%
Grade School		21	9
High School		47	35
Trade School		7	6
College (1 to 3 years)		16	31
College (4 years or more)		6	9
Post-Graduate		1	9

Only about one out of twenty (5%) of transit dependent riders are members of a labor union, compared to about one out of eight (15%) of the transit discretionary group.

TABLE XIV

	N=	Total Transit Users	
		<u>Transit Dependent</u> <u>158</u>	<u>Transit Discretionary</u> <u>358</u>
<u>Member of Labor Union</u>		%	%
Yes		5	15
No		95	84

MEDIA EXPOSURE

In terms of media exposure, transit dependent riders generally reported higher levels of exposure to both print and broadcast media with the possible exception of magazines. Members of the transit discretionary group more often read the Los Angeles Times at 50%, compared to 34% for transit dependent riders.

TABLE XV

	N=	Total Transit Users	
		<u>Transit Dependent</u> 158	<u>Transit Discretionary</u> 358
<u>FM Radio Listening</u>		%	%
None		27	26
Under 1 hour		25	27
1 to 2 hours		16	20
More than 2 hours		31	24
 <u>AM Radio Listening</u>			
None		26	27
Under 1 hour		26	34
1 to 2 hours		20	20
More than 2 hours		27	16

TABLE XV-CON'T

	Total Transit Users	
	Transit Dependent	Transit Discretionary
N=	<u>158</u>	<u>358</u>
<u>Watching Television Programs</u>		
	%	%
None	7	4
Under 1 hour	8	13
1 to 2 hours	18	29
More than 2 hours	66	53
<u>Reading Newspapers</u>		
None	20	16
Under 1 hour	50	51
1 to 2 hours	23	28
More than 2 hours	6	4
<u>Fairly Often/Almost Every Day</u>		
Los Angeles Times	34	23
Herald Examiner	21	17
<u>Reading Magazines</u>		
None	35	23
Under 1 hour	43	48
1 to 2 hours	12	20
More than 2 hours	7	7

ATTITUDES TOWARDS SCRID VERSUS AUTOMOBILE

Among transit discretionary riders, SCRID's major advantages over the automobile are in "energy conservation", "use travel time to do other things", a decrease in "air pollution" and being "good for the environment". Within this group, SCRID travel is viewed as being relatively inexpensive and somewhat safer than travel by automobile, which is acknowledged to be time saving, convenient, allowing flexible travel times and comfortable when compared to travel by SCRID bus.

Among transit dependent riders, the major advantages of SCRID travel over travel by private automobile are the fact that it is inexpensive, safe, saves energy and offers an opportunity to use travel time to do other things.

TABLE XVI

<u>Mode Characteristics</u> <u>Public Transit</u>	N=	Respondents Agreeing Strongly (% SCRID Advantage)	
		<u>Total Transit Users</u>	
		<u>Transit Dependent</u>	<u>Transit Discretionary</u>
		<u>158</u>	<u>358</u>
		%	%
Saves energy		+20	+26
Inexpensive		+29	+20
Use travel time to do other things, work, read, etc.		+17	+19
Decreases air pollution		+ 9	+16
Good for environment		+12	+15
Safe		+20	+ 9
Relaxes me		- 2	- 6
Simple		+ 7	- 9

## ATTITUDINAL PROFILES

In the section of the questionnaire which included some 60 attitudinal statements, members of the transit discretionary group had a different pattern of response from the transit dependent group on approximately one-fourth of the items.

In general, the transit discretionary group tend more often to agree with statements such as, "I've taken the lead in organizing a project for a group of some kind more than once"; more often tended to agree that "I am the kind of person who is on the go all the time"; were generally among the higher income groups and less likely to indicate that their "Income is not high enough to save any money"; were more likely not to agree that you "Can always depend on the bus getting you there on time"; were less likely to agree that bus service should be funded by taxes; were more likely to disagree that it seems improper for someone in a top job to commute by bus; and were substantially less likely to agree that they would "take public transportation to work if gasoline were one dollar per gallon".

These results, together with those of the previous section, appear to describe the transit discretionary rider as an individual, with somewhat more than the average amount of educational and financial success, who views travel by public transit as a reasonable alternative to the use of a private automobile under certain circumstances, and whose approval of public transit is based primarily on his or her perception that public transit is an energy saving alternative which decreases air pollution, is good for the environment, and is relatively inexpensive.

TABLE XVI-CON'T

Respondents Agreeing Strongly  
(% SCRTD Advantage)

	N=	<u>Total Transit Users</u>	
		<u>Transit Dependent</u> 158	<u>Transit Discretionary</u> 358
<u>Mode Characteristics</u>			
<u>Public Transit</u>		%	%
Quiet		-16	-13
Reliable		- 9	-23
Pleasant		-19	-23
Gives me a chance to be alone		-15	-25
Modern		-23	-27
Fast		-27	-34
Comfortable		-20	-37
Flexible travel times		-31	-40
Convenient		-29	-41
Saves time		-33	-48

TABLE XVII

	<u>Total Transit Users</u>	
	<u>Transit Dependent</u>	<u>Transit Discretionary</u>
	<u>158</u>	<u>358</u>
<u>Attitude Statements</u>	%	%
I've taken the lead in organizing a project for a group of some kind more than once	15	32
The thought of making a speech frightens me	38	23
I'm the kind of person who is on the go all the time	33	41
My family income is high enough to satisfy nearly all my important needs	23	36
No matter how fast my income goes up, I never seem to get ahead	50	31
My income is not high enough to save any money	55	29
The Government should guarantee everyone \$5,000 a year whether they work or not	25	14
I don't like sitting next to someone who smokes	37	44
Even in bad weather you can always depend on the bus getting you there on time	38	29

TABLE XVII-CON'T

	<u>Total Transit Users</u>	
	<u>Transit Dependent</u> <u>158</u>	<u>Transit Discretionary</u> <u>358</u>
<u>Attitude Statements</u>	%	%
It just takes too long to get anywhere by bus	22	35
Bus service is a public utility and should receive funds from taxes	47	35
Bus fare should be kept low so that more people will ride them	71	62
It hardly seems proper for some- one in a top job to commute by bus (DISAGREE)	(45)	(63)
If gas were one dollar per gallon I would take public transpor- tation to work	63	42

Note: Only statements with significant differences are shown.

TRANSIT AWARENESS

Of the 17 RTD services for which awareness information was collected, the transit discretionary group had a higher level of awareness for "Free RTD time tables and section maps" and the "Monthly pass". Conversely, usage of the various RTD services was higher among the transit dependent group for "Free RTD time tables and section maps", the "Monthly pass", the RTD "Bus System Guide", sales of RTD passes at department stores, and the "Senior Citizen's Pass". Awareness of the Handicapped persons \$4.00 pass was higher among the transit dependent.

TABLE XVIII

	Total Transit Users			
	Transit Dependent		Transit Discretionary	
	158		358	
N=	Aware	Used	Aware	Used
<u>Service Awareness</u>	%	%	%	%
Senior Citizen's Pass	70	17	76	10
Reduced Student Monthly Pass	64	14	69	8
Monthly pass	63	24	72	10
Service to Special Attractions	62	15	59	13
Airport Express Service	60	15	60	18
Downtown L.A. Minibus Service	55	20	59	21
Minibus Service to L.A. International Airport	52	6	51	8
Park and ride Service	50	3	55	3
Handicapped Person's \$4.00 Pass	45	1	37	1
RTD Bus System Guide	41	20	44	13

TABLE XVIII-CON'T

	N=	Total Transit Users			
		Transit Dependent		Transit Discretionary	
		158		358	
		Aware	Used	Aware	Used
<u>Service Awareness</u>		%	%	%	%
El Monte Busway		33	6	35	5
Telephone Information Service		31	45	29	45
Free RID Time Tables and Section Maps		30	46	41	36
Sales of RID Passes at Depart- ment Stores		27	10	27	1
Sales of RID Passes at Boy's Supermarkets		24	4	18	*
Time Tables at Post Office and Thrifty Drug Stores		24	18	27	11
Sales of RID Passes at Auto Club Offices		23	*	22	*
Subscription Bus Service		14	*	15	*

\* = Less than 1%