

# Appendix 2-B: Environmental Justice Survey

## Introduction

The *Wisconsin Rail Plan 2030* Environmental Justice Survey was conducted to provide the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) with an understanding of the issues and needs of minority, elderly and low income populations statewide.

### ***Research Objectives***

The goal of this survey was to identify issues and needs related to freight, intercity passenger and commuter rail for *Wisconsin Rail Plan 2030*. Specifically, this survey addresses the following issues:

- Gauge the importance of passenger rail travel in Wisconsin among minority, elderly and low income demographic groups
- Determine what barriers play a role in keeping minority, elderly and low income groups from traveling by train in Wisconsin
- Gauge perceptions of rail freight traffic in Wisconsin by minority, elderly and low income groups
- Look into what financial role the state should play in supporting rail traffic in Wisconsin

Data from the survey will be used by WisDOT to better understand how Wisconsin's minority, elderly and low income groups perceive freight, intercity passenger and commuter rail issues and needs in the state, as well as their tendency to use passenger rail service and what barriers may keep them from utilizing it. Additionally, the results will assist WisDOT in assessing the overall picture of rail perceptions when combined with the general population web survey results. The survey questions are included in this report, following the analysis of the results.

### ***Methodology***

The St. Norbert College Survey Center operated by Wegge Strategic Research, Inc. of De Pere, Wisconsin, conducted the Environmental Justice Survey with adult Wisconsin residents age 18 and older and who belonged to various specific demographic groups.

A total of 511 telephone surveys from targeted demographic groups of Wisconsin residents were completed for this study. Six specific targeted demographics were used in this study which included African Americans (n=101), Hispanics (n=101), Asians (n=103), urban low income (<\$25,999/year household income) (n=100), rural low income (<\$25,999/year household income) (n=50) and respondents age 65 and over (n=103)<sup>1</sup>. Three respondents did not indicate certain specific criteria and are therefore not included in the quota specific results. The interviews were conducted between May 17 and May 29, 2010, by Management Decisions, Inc. of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Respondents were selected using a targeted sampling strategy in census tracts with high proportions of the subgroup populations to fill the goal of contacting and receiving responses from a predetermined number of

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<sup>1</sup> "n" represents the number of respondents in each group. Since the goal of this survey was to gauge the opinions of minority, elderly and low income populations, a quota, or minimum number of respondents from each group, was established.

respondents for African-Americans, Asians, Hispanics, low income groups and the elderly (those aged 65 and older).

The margin of error for the Environmental Justice Survey is +/- 4.3 percent. With 511 completions we can be 95 percent confident that the survey results mirror those of the Wisconsin minority population based on the quotas set in the survey. This means that since 53 percent of all respondents said trains go through the community in which they live, using the margin of error we can be 95 percent confident the actual population percentage among those groups would be between 49 percent and 57 percent who have trains going through their community. The margin of error for individual quota subgroups will be greater, approximately +/- 9.8 percent. Please note: not all quota groups are mutually exclusive to each other and the total sample size will not reflect the sum total of all subgroups due to varying sample sizes in each subgroup as well as varying exclusiveness in each group's membership.

The report contains percentages that are rounded up at the .5 level and down for levels below .5, thus leading to some overall percentages not equaling 100 percent. Decimal point reporting for percentages is not necessary because this level of precision does not significantly impact the percentage rates and can affect figure and chart readability.

The questionnaire was based on input from Short Elliott Hendrickson, Inc. (SEH) and WisDOT as well as by the St. Norbert College Survey Center. Modifications of the draft questionnaire, including additional questions and deletions, were made by the St. Norbert College Survey Center in consultation with SEH and WisDOT. The final questionnaire was based on feedback from interviewers, supervisors and project staff in collaboration with SEH and WisDOT.

## Key Findings

1. When looking at the overall results of the survey, males and females are equally represented (50 percent each). While Caucasians hold the plurality (the largest percentage but not a majority) of responses (39 percent) they are followed by equal numbers of minorities (20 percent each of African Americans, Hispanics and Asians). This is a result of the elderly and low income quota groups including minorities and non-minorities. Total household income is almost evenly distributed across all levels, while the majority of respondents (65 percent) live in an urban setting. Overall age distribution is slightly weighted to the older cohorts due to the 65 and older group. Results for individual quotas are represented in the tables below.
2. Travel by automobile for a distance of 200 miles holds the highest level of intensity (those that definitely would use this type of transportation) across almost all surveyed groups. Travel by air comes in a close second, with trains as a third choice followed by bus. It should be noted, however, when including those that “probably would use” with those that “definitely would use” certain modes of transportation, trains garner a majority usage across all cohorts except for those in the rural low income group. This shows that many people would choose train travel, if given the opportunity.
3. There is a very high level of support for expanding Wisconsin’s passenger rail system among all surveyed groups. However, the level of importance does not currently mirror this high support concerning personal access to a passenger rail system now or in the future. The level of importance can be expected to rise as more passenger rail services become available to more of the state’s population.
4. Overall, the two most prevalent barriers to respondents using trains for travel are the lack of rail service close by and the lack of having a vehicle for their use when arriving at their destination. Different surveyed groups had various levels of agreement as to which barriers proved the most difficult. Other barriers mentioned also included lack of stops, lack of accessibility for persons with disabilities and the general safety of train operations.
5. Overall, most surveyed groups feel the biggest benefits of moving goods by rail are to reduce highway truck congestion and take advantage of the energy efficiency of trains compared to trucks. The majority of groups also agree that the state should increase assistance so that more freight can be carried by rail.
6. Most survey participants from the majority of surveyed groups do not feel commuter rail service is very important to them personally. The exception to this are African Americans and urban low income members who would be the most interested in this type of service. Overall, however, most respondents agree the state will have to provide assistance to make any commuter rail service viable.
7. About half of all respondents live in communities in which trains travel through, with Hispanics, those age 65 and older and Asians living near rail lines the most and African Americans and rural low income respondents living near rail lines the least. Very few respondents indicated any concerns about trains in their communities; however, of those that did, safety and noise are the most noted concerns. This was asked to see if environmental justice populations were experiencing negative community impacts from freight rail traffic.

## Characteristics of the Survey Sample Group

### Key Finding #1

As mentioned previously, 511 telephone surveys from targeted demographic groups of Wisconsin residents were completed for this study. The following provides a summary of some of the key results. Tables 1-5 depict the responses to the survey questions.

When looking at the overall results of the survey, males and females are equally represented (50 percent each). While Caucasians hold the plurality (the largest percentage but not a majority) of responses (39 percent) they are followed by equal numbers of minorities (20 percent each of African Americans, Hispanics and Asians). This is a result of the elderly and low income quota groups including minorities and non-minorities. Total household income is almost evenly distributed across all levels, while the majority of respondents (65 percent) live in an urban setting. Overall age distribution is slightly weighted to the older cohorts due to the 65 and older group. Results for individual quotas are represented in the tables below. The tables only list quota groups, so you will not find Caucasian or Native American responses listed with the others. WisDOT implemented a separate tribal consultation process and a web-based survey as part of the *Wisconsin Rail Plan 2030* public involvement process.<sup>2</sup>

- Overall, the gender breakdown for the survey (Table 1) is 50 percent female and 50 percent male. When looking at the individual surveyed groups, a majority of female responders are represented for African Americans and low income urban and rural participants. A majority of male responders is recorded for Hispanic and Asian groups. Those age 65 and over have an equal number of male and female respondents (50 percent each).

**Table 1 - Respondent Gender by Sample Groups**

Gender	Total Sample	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Low Income Urban	Low Income Rural	65 and Over
Male	50%	38%	59%	64%	37%	46%	50%
Female	50%	62%	41%	36%	63%	54%	50%

- The overall ethnicity breakdown for the survey (Table 2) is 39 percent Caucasian (a portion of the elderly and low income group), 20 percent African American, 20 percent Hispanic, 20 percent Asian and one percent Native American. For each of the groups of African American, Hispanic and Asian there is 100 percent inclusion. For the breakdowns based on low income groups and those age 65 and over, respondents who are African American make up the plurality of those in the urban low income group (40 percent), compared to Caucasians who make up the plurality (the largest percentage but not a majority) in the rural low income group (36 percent). For those age 65 and over the plurality is made up of Caucasians (48 percent).

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<sup>2</sup> Go to [www.wisconsinrailplan.gov](http://www.wisconsinrailplan.gov) for information about WisDOT's public involvement process and results from the web survey.

**Table 2 - Respondent Ethnicity by Sample Groups**

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Total Sample</b>	<b>African American</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>Asian</b>	<b>Low Income Urban</b>	<b>Low Income Rural</b>	<b>65 and Over</b>
Caucasian	39%	0%	0%	0%	24%	36%	48%
African American	20%	100%	0%	0%	40%	22%	20%
Hispanic	20%	0%	100%	0%	24%	24%	14%
Asian	20%	0%	0%	100%	11%	16%	16%
Native American	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	2%	2%

- A very even distribution of income groups is witnessed when looking at the total respondent sample (Table 3). When looking at specific cohorts, the plurality (30 percent) of the African American group is considered low income (under \$15,000 per year), while the plurality (24 percent) of Hispanics have yearly incomes of \$26,000-\$35,999, and the plurality (32 percent) of Asians indicate household incomes of \$100,000 or more. The plurality (28 percent) of those age 65 and over has incomes of \$15,000 to \$25,999 per year.

**Table 3 - Respondent Income by Sample Groups**

<b>Income</b>	<b>Total Sample</b>	<b>African American</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>Asian</b>	<b>Low Income Urban</b>	<b>Low Income Rural</b>	<b>65 and Over</b>
Under \$15,000	15%	30%	21%	6%	57%	38%	18%
\$15,000 to \$25,999	14%	21%	15%	13%	43%	62%	28%
\$26,000 to \$35,999	15%	19%	24%	10%	0%	0%	15%
\$36,000 to \$50,999	17%	14%	15%	17%	0%	0%	14%
\$51,000 to \$75,999	15%	11%	14%	13%	0%	0%	8%
\$76,000 to \$99,999	9%	2%	4%	9%	0%	0%	5%
\$100,000 or more	15%	4%	8%	32%	0%	0%	12%

- The majority of total sample respondents live in an urban setting (65 percent) as shown in Table 4. African Americans record the highest number of urban dwellers (83 percent), while almost equal numbers of Hispanics, Asians and those age 65 and over live in an urban setting (65 percent -67 percent).

**Table 4 - Respondent Location by Sample Groups**

Residence	Total Sample	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Low Income Urban	Low Income Rural	65 and Over
Urban	65%	83%	65%	67%	100%	0%	66%
Rural	35%	17%	35%	33%	0%	100%	34%

- Within the total sample, there is a slight lean toward the older cohorts as necessitated by the quota group of those age 65 and over as shown in Table 5. Sixty-three percent (63 percent) of the African Americans are age 45 and older, while 45 percent of the Hispanics are age 34 and younger, compared to 44 percent of Asians age 35 to 54. The plurality of both urban and rural low income respondents are age 65 & over (35 percent & 26 percent, respectively).

**Table 5 - Respondent Age by Sample Groups**

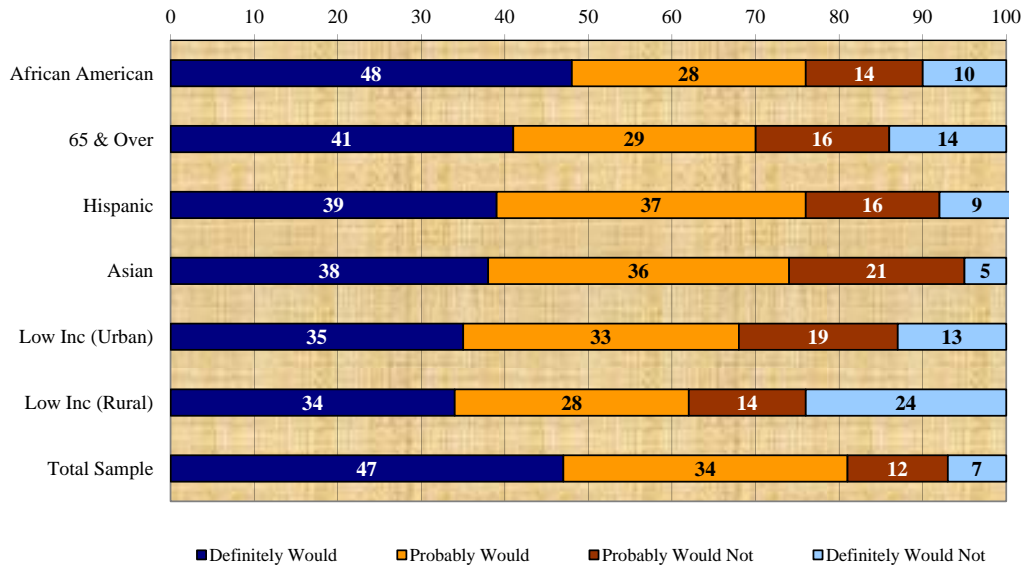
Age	Total Sample	African American	Hispanic	Asian	Low Income Urban	Low Income Rural	65 and Over
18 to 24	10%	6%	21%	14%	10%	16%	0%
25 to 34	13%	12%	24%	11%	12%	12%	0%
35 to 44	18%	20%	14%	23%	10%	12%	0%
45 to 54	22%	22%	15%	21%	22%	16%	0%
55 to 64	17%	20%	13%	15%	11%	18%	0%
65 and over	20%	21%	14%	16%	35%	26%	100%

## Forms of Transportation

### ***Key Finding #2***

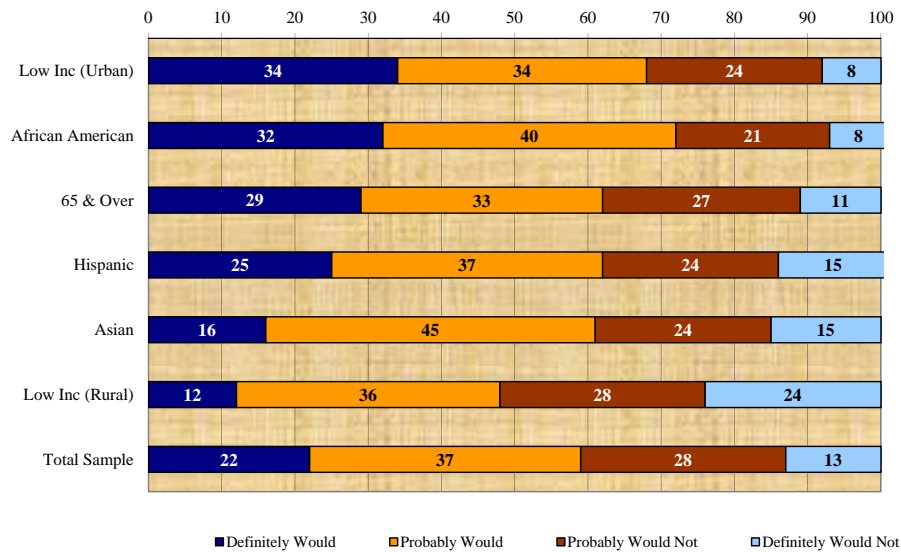
Travel by automobile for a distance of 200 miles holds the highest level of intensity (those that definitely would use this type of transportation) across almost all surveyed groups. Travel by air comes in a close second, with trains as a third choice followed by bus. It should be noted, however, when including those that “probably would use” with those that “definitely would use” certain modes of transportation, trains garner a majority usage across all cohorts except for those in the rural low income group.

**Figure 1 - How Likely Would You be to Use a Personal Automobile to Travel More Than 200 Miles?**



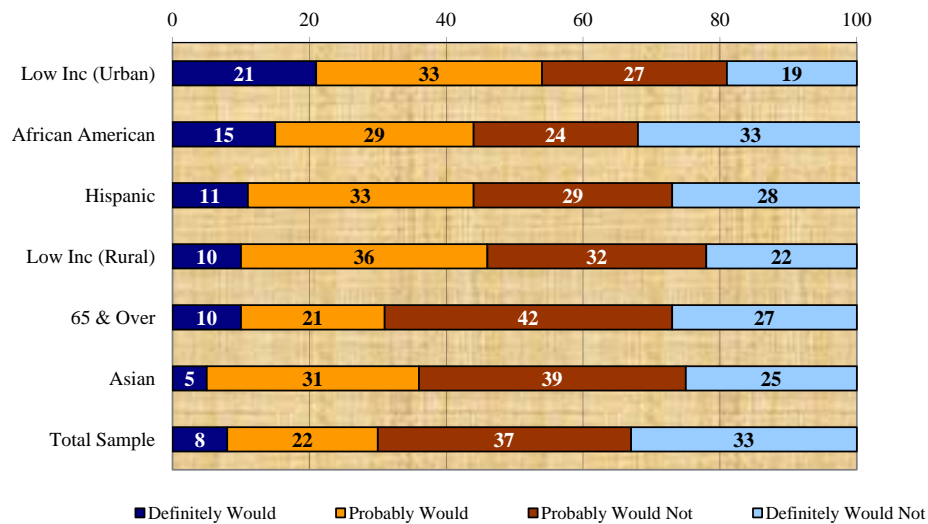
- Overall, 47 percent of the total sample “definitely would” use a car to travel more than 200 miles and when combined with those who “probably would” (34 percent) this constitutes 81 percent of the sample (Figure 1). African Americans are the most likely to use a car to travel 200 miles (48 percent “definitely would”) while both those urban and rural low income respondents would use a car the least (35 percent and 34 percent respectively said they “definitely would”).

**Figure 2 - How Likely Would You be to Use a Train to Travel More Than 200 Miles?**



- While only 22 percent of the total sample said they would definitely use a train to travel over 200 miles, 34 percent of urban low income respondents, 32 percent of African Americans, 29 percent age 65 and over and 25 percent of Hispanics said they would definitely use a train (Figure 2). When combining those that “definitely would” and those that “probably would” use a train, the majority across all quota groups indicated they would travel by train, with the exception of rural low income respondents registered 48 percent.

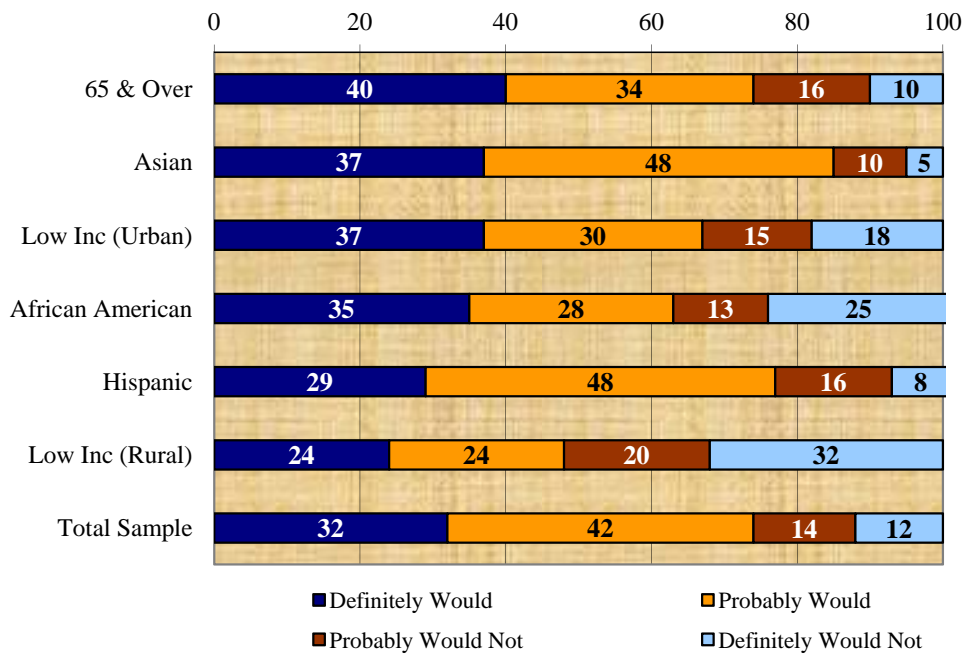
**Figure 3 - How Likely Would You be to Use a Bus to Travel More Than 200 Miles?**



- Bus travel garnered a very low acceptance by the total sample. Only eight percent of the total sample said they “definitely would” use a bus to travel more than 200 miles, while 22 percent indicated they “probably would” for a total of 30 percent usage (Figure 3). However, this number jumps to 54 percent (21 percent “definitely would” use and 33 percent “probably would” use) for those in the urban low income cohort. This group is the only group that registered a majority that would use the bus. The lowest total level of usage comes from those age 65 and over at 31 percent total likelihood of usage.
- A large majority (74 percent, 32 percent “definitely would” and 42 percent “probably would”) of the total sample indicate they would use an airplane to travel more than 200 miles (Figure 4). While those age 65 and over, Asians, urban low income respondents and African Americans hold the highest level of intensity (definitely would) for using airplanes (35 percent to 40 percent “definitely would” use them to travel more than 200 miles), Asians hold the highest percentage of total likelihood of usage (85 percent combined “definitely” and “probably use”).



**Figure 4 - How Likely Would You be to Use an Airplane to Travel More Than 200 Miles?**



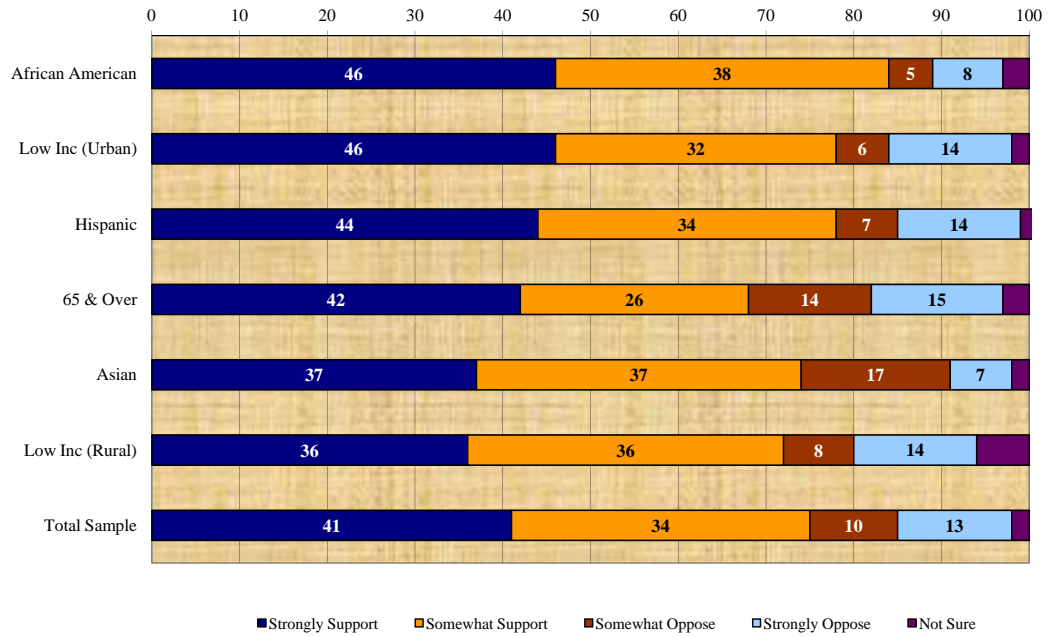
## Intercity Passenger Rail

### Key Finding #3

There is a very high level of support for expanding Wisconsin’s passenger rail system among all surveyed groups. However, the level of importance does not currently mirror this high support concerning personal access to a passenger rail system now or in the future. The level of importance can be expected to rise as more passenger rail services become available to more of the state’s population.

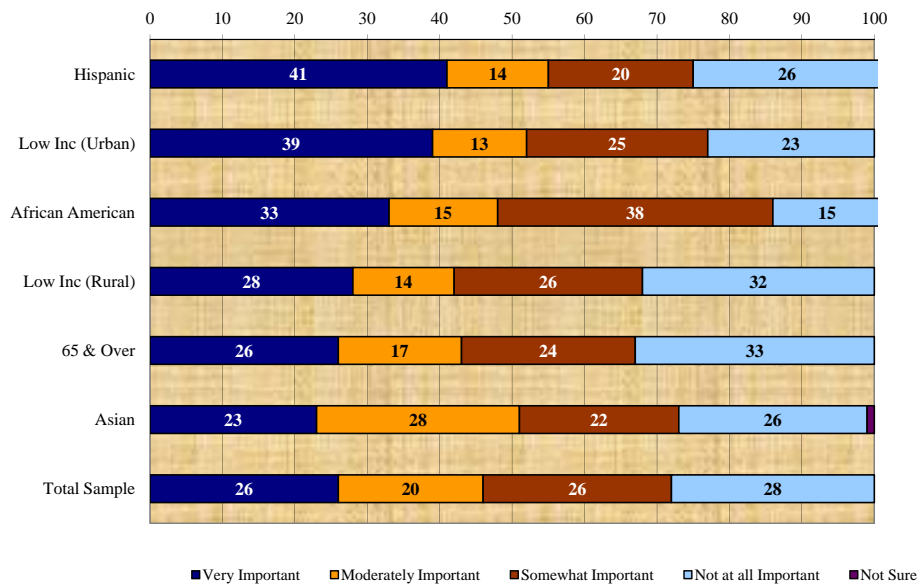
- There is an overwhelming level of support for expanding Wisconsin’s passenger rail system (Figure 5). When looking at the total sample, 41 percent strongly support expanding the system followed by 34 percent who somewhat support it for a combined 75 percent level of support. African Americans, urban low income respondents and Hispanics are the most in favor of expanding the passenger rail system in Wisconsin (44 percent to 46 percent strongly support it and 32 percent to 38 percent somewhat support it for an overall level of support between 78 percent and 84 percent). Keep in mind total majority support does not come from just these cohorts, but from all surveyed groups.

**Figure 5 - How Much Would You Support or Oppose Expanding Wisconsin's Passenger Rail System?**



- Even though there is strong support for intercity passenger rail expansion, only a majority of Hispanics, urban low income respondents and Asians feel intercity passenger rail service is very or moderately important to them personally, now or in the future (Figure 6). If the high level of support is there for expansion, this may spill over into creating a higher level of importance once it is established.

**Figure 6 - How Important is Access to Intercity Passenger Rail to You Personally Now or in the Future?**



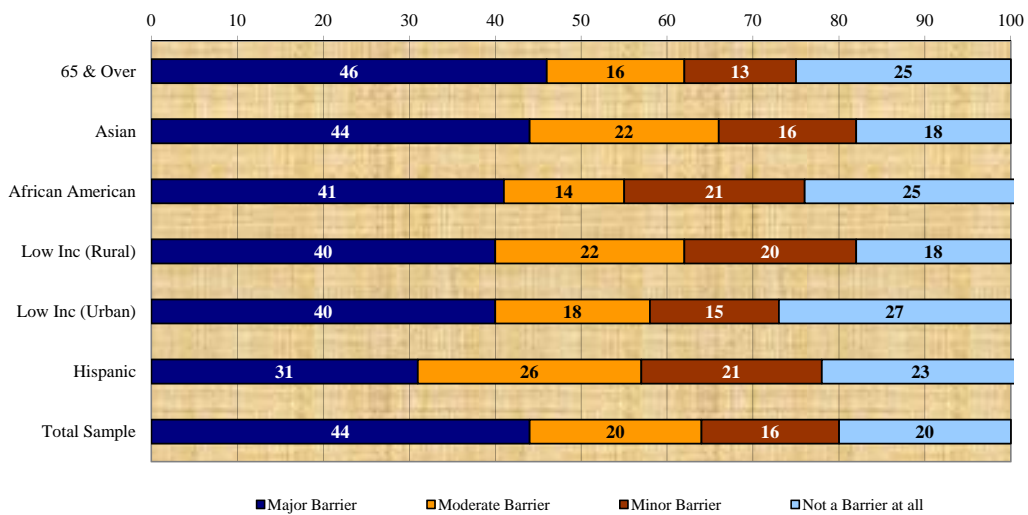
## Barriers to Passenger Rail Travel

### Key Finding #4

Overall, the two most prevalent barriers to respondents using trains for travel are the lack of rail service close by and the lack of having a vehicle for their use when arriving at their destination. Different respondent groups had various levels of agreement as to which barriers proved the most difficult. Other barriers mentioned also included lack of stops, lack accessibility for persons with disabilities and the general safety of train operations.

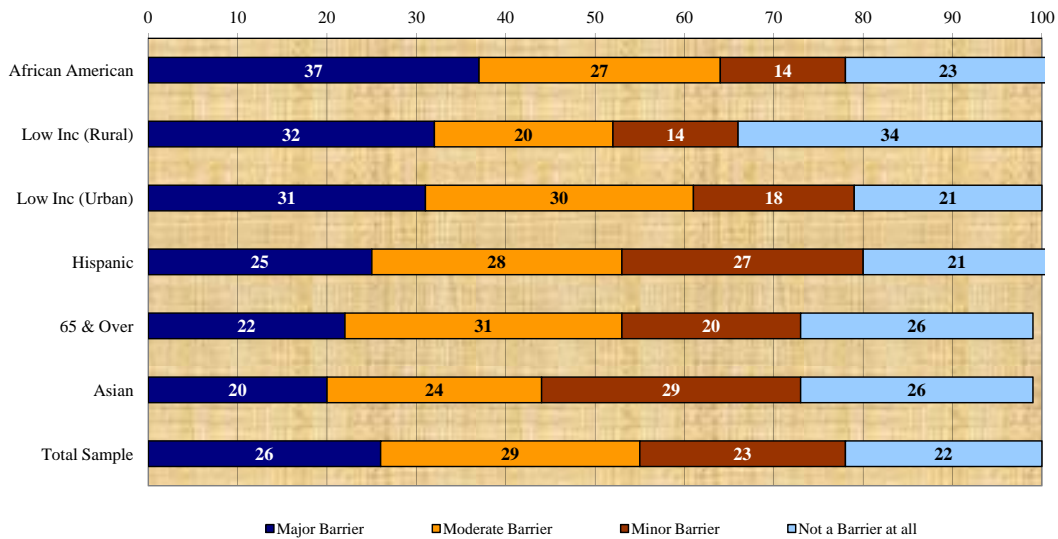
- When asked about the proximity of passenger rail service, 40 percent or more of almost all surveyed cohorts agreed that passenger rail service not being available close to where they live is a major barrier to traveling by train (Figure 7). Only those of Hispanic background agreed less (31 percent). Only a quarter (25 percent) or less of most cohorts said not having passenger service close to them was NOT a barrier to traveling by train. Therefore, a great majority of respondents indicate that proximity to a passenger service plays a major role in their not using train travel more often.

**Figure 7 - How Much of a Barrier is "Passenger Rail Service is Not Available Close to Where I Live" to You for Traveling by Train?**



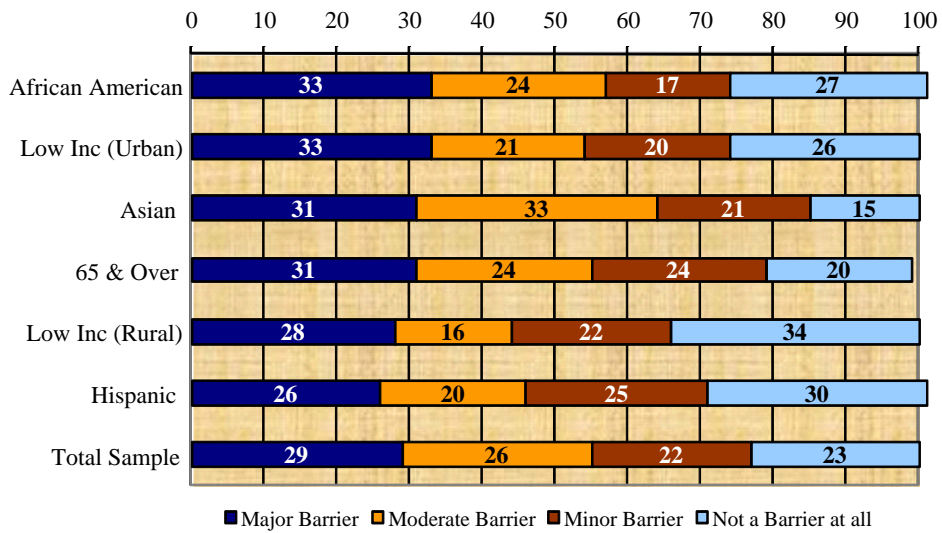
- Cost is not nearly as much of a factor when asked about barriers to traveling by train compared to proximity to rail service (Figure 8). Only 26 percent of total sample members indicated cost is a major factor of why they do not travel by train. Thirty-seven percent (37 percent) of African Americans feel cost is a major barrier compared to only 20 percent of Asians. Respondents in the rural low income group hold the highest percentage (34 percent) who do NOT feel cost is a barrier to rail travel.

**Figure 8 - How Much of a Barrier is "Cost" to You for Traveling by Train?**



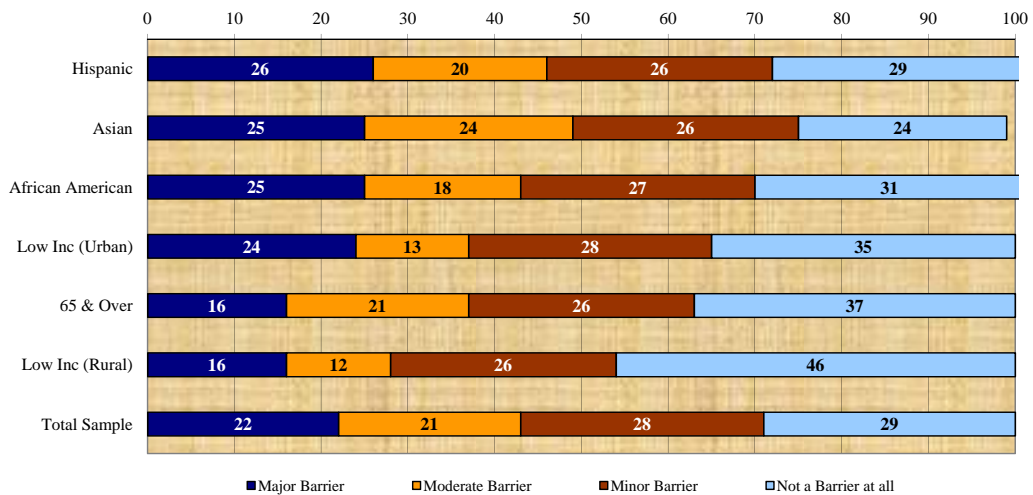
- Almost one third (29 percent) of the total sample feel a lack of departure times creates a major barrier to rail travel (Figure 9). Overall, there is little variation among quota cohorts for those who feel “there are not enough departure times to choose from” as a major barrier to rail travel (26 percent to 33 percent feel it is a major barrier). Rural low income respondents hold the highest percentage of those who feel this is NOT a barrier at all to their traveling by rail (34 percent).

**Figure 9 - How Much of a Barrier is "Not Enough Departure Times to Choose From" to You for Traveling by Train?**



- Similar to departure times, the length of time a rail trip takes is very low on the list of items that pose a major barrier to respondents traveling by train (Figure 10). Overall, only 22 percent of the total sample indicated this to be a major barrier to their traveling by rail. When looking at each individual minority cohort, Hispanic respondents felt the strongest that time is a major barrier (26 percent) compared to only

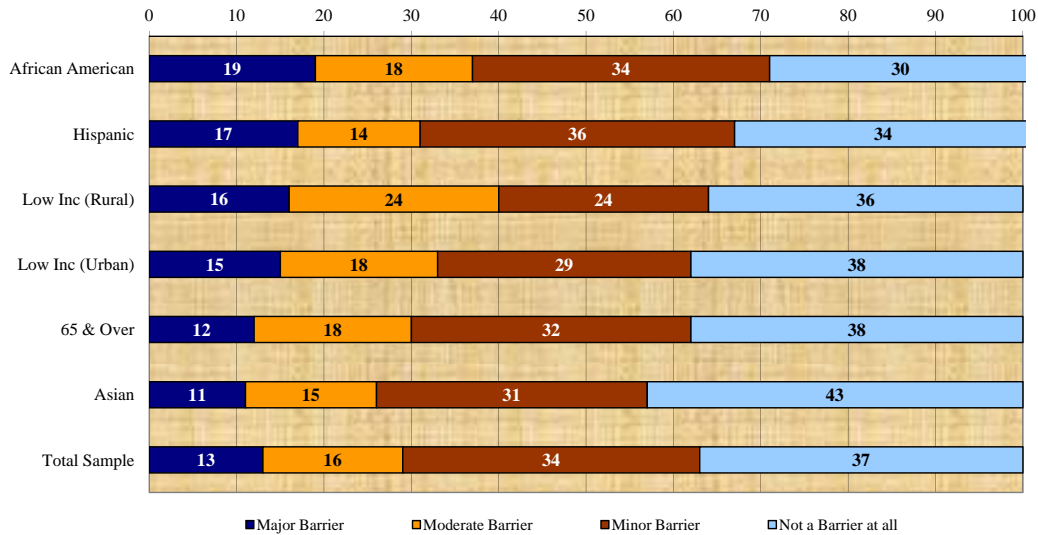
**Figure 10 - How Much of a Barrier is "Rail Trips Take Too Long" to You for Traveling by Train?**



16 percent of those age 65 and over and rural low income respondents.

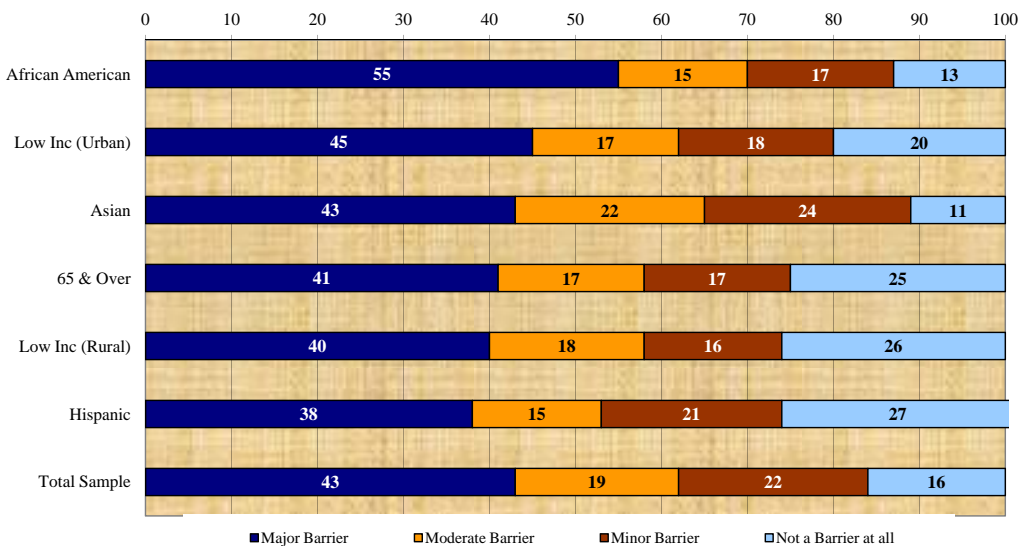
- Lack of amenities on a train is recorded as the least major barrier to travel by train (Figure 11). Only 13 percent of the total sample currently feel this is a major barrier, with the majority of minority cohorts indicating 11 percent to 19 percent.

**Figure 11 - How Much of a Barrier is "The Lack of Amenities on Trains" to You for Traveling by Train?**



- The preference of having a car available at their destination is also a major barrier for many respondents when it comes to train travel (Figure 12). Overall, 43 percent of all respondents feel this is a major barrier. When reviewing specific cohort responses, African Americans feel this is a major barrier the most (55 percent) while Hispanics feel it is a major barrier the least (38 percent).

**Figure 12 - How Much of a Barrier is "I Prefer to Have a Car Available When I Get to My Destination" to You for Traveling by Train?**



- When asked if there are any other barriers that prevent people from using trains for travel, 80 percent of all respondents indicated there are no other barriers. However, of those who did indicate additional barriers, no more than four percent indicated any one issue. Of the top three additional barriers indicated, four percent said the lack of stops/stations is a barrier, three percent indicated a lack of handicap accessibility and three percent are worried about the safety of trains (accidents/derailments).

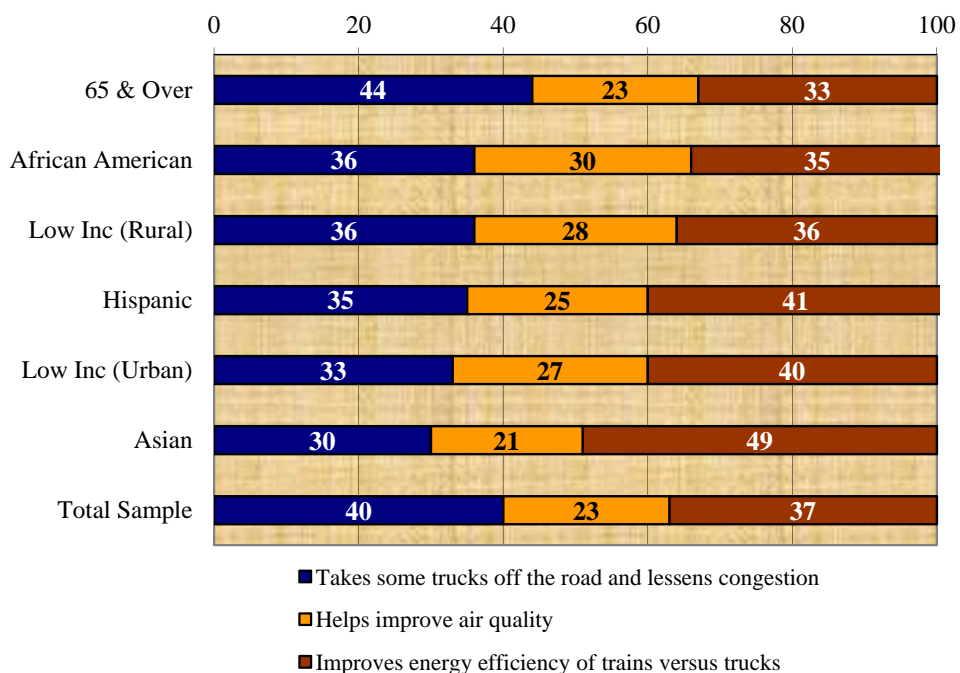
## Rail Freight Service

### Key Finding #5

Overall, most surveyed minority groups feel the biggest benefits of moving goods by rail are to reduce highway truck congestion and take advantage of the improvement in energy efficiency of trains compared to trucks. The majority of groups also agree that the state should increase assistance so that more freight can be carried by rail.

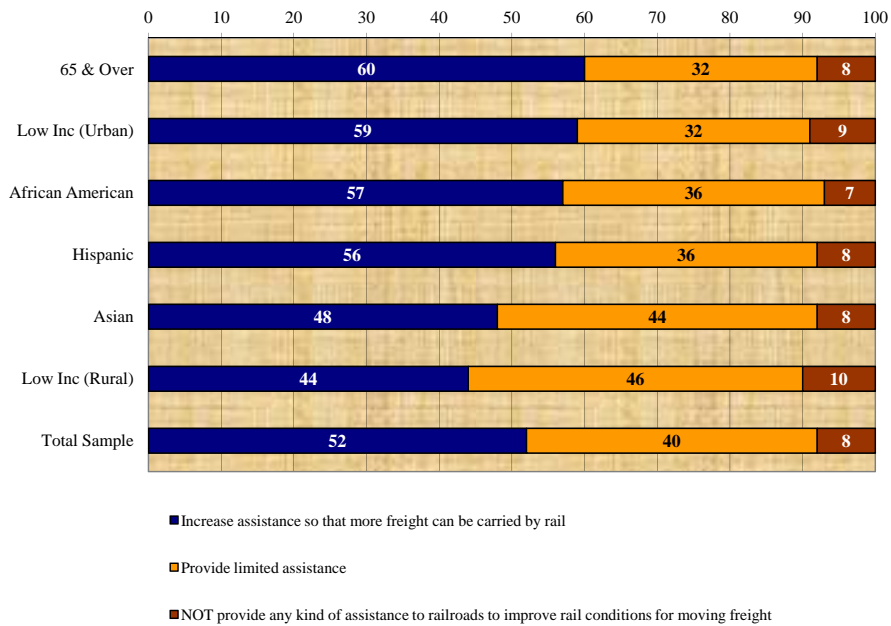
- Overall, the total sample believes taking trucks off the road to lessen congestion is the biggest benefit of moving goods by rail in the state (Figure 13). However, when looking at each minority segment, only those age 65 and over agree with this the most (44 percent). Fairly equal amounts of African Americans feel the biggest benefits are spread out over lessening congestion (36 percent), improving air quality (30 percent) and improving energy efficiency (35 percent). Those respondents from the rural low income group equally feel lessening congestion (36 percent) and improving energy efficiency (36 percent) are the biggest benefits, while the plurality of Asian (49 percent) Hispanic (41 percent), low income urban participants (40 percent) feel energy efficiency is the most important benefit of moving goods by rail.

**Figure 13 - What Do You Think is the Biggest Benefit to the State as a Whole Regarding Moving Goods by Rail?**



- The majority of the total sample believes the state should increase assistance so that more freight can be carried by rail (52 percent) as shown in Figure 14. Overall, this majority feeling is the same sentiment of all minority groups with the exception of a plurality (highest percentage but not a majority) of rural low income respondents who rather feel the state should only provide limited assistance (46 percent). Overall, there are very few respondents across all cohorts who feel the state should NOT provide any type of assistance to railroads to improve rail conditions for moving freight.

**Figure 14 - Preferred Level of State Assistance for Freight Rail**



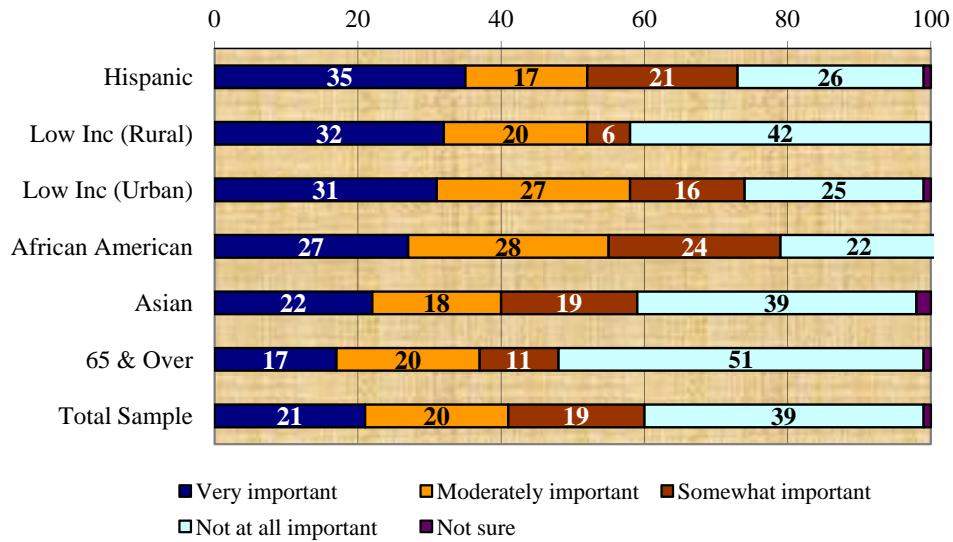
## Commuter Rail Service

### Key Finding #6

Most participants from the majority of surveyed minority groups do not feel commuter rail service is very important to them personally. The exception to this are African Americans and urban low income members who would be the most interested in this type of service. Overall, however, most respondents agree the state will have to provide assistance to make any commuter rail service viable.

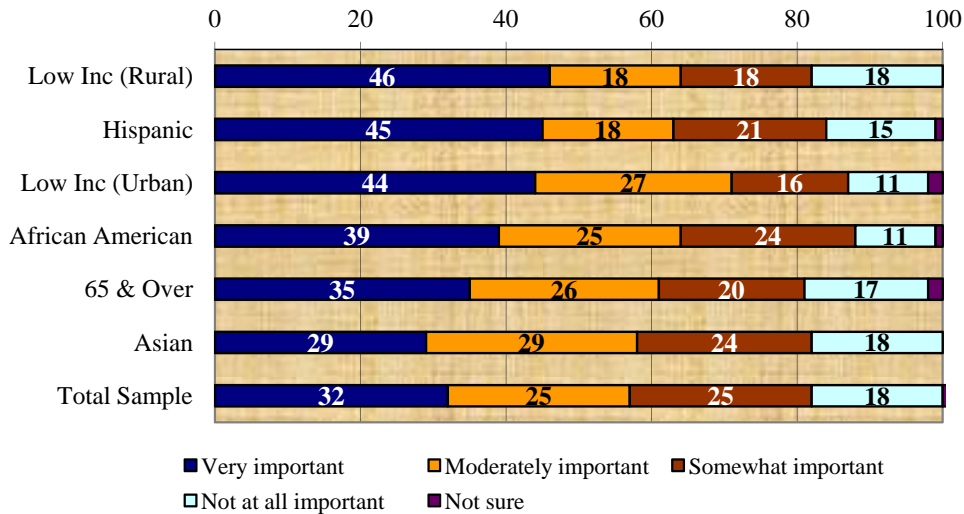


**Figure 15 - How Important is it for You Personally to Have Access to Commuter Rail?**



- The plurality (highest percentage but not a majority) of total sample respondents (39 percent) indicate it is not at all important for them to personally have access to commuter rail service (Figure 15). The plurality of most surveyed minority groups feel access is not important with the exception of Hispanics (35 percent feel it is very important), urban low income respondents (31 percent feel it is very important) and African Americans (28 percent feel access for them is moderately important). When combining those who feel access is very or moderately important however, the majority of both urban and rural low income groups, Hispanics and African Americans agree that commuter rail service would be personally beneficial. Those age 65 and over have the least interest in any commuter rail system.
- Both the total sample (32 percent) as well as all the minority quota groups (29 percent to 46 percent) feels it is very important for the state to provide some financial support to make commuter rail service viable (Figure 16). Rural low income respondents (46 percent), Hispanics (45 percent) and urban low income respondents (44 percent) are the most in agreement, while Asian respondents are the least (29 percent).

**Figure 16 - How Important is it for the State to Provide Some Financial Support to Make Commuter Rail Service Viable?**



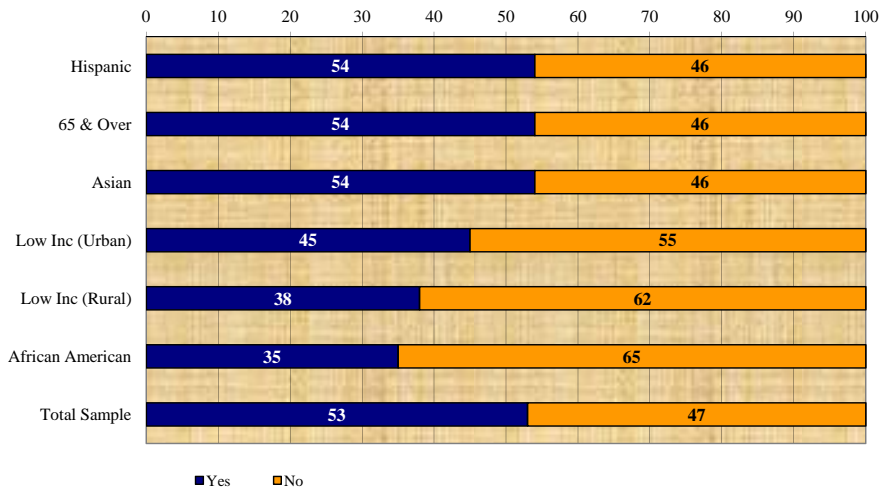
## Community Rail Traffic

### Key Finding #7

About half of all respondents live in communities in which trains travel through, with Hispanics, those age 65 and older and Asians living near rail lines the most and African Americans and rural low income respondents living near rail lines the least. Very few respondents indicated any concerns about trains in their communities, however, of those that did, safety and noise are the most noted concerns. This was asked to see if environmental justice populations were experiencing negative community impacts from freight rail traffic.

- Overall, 53 percent of the total sample lives in communities in which trains travel through them (Figure 17). Of the surveyed minority groups, 54 percent of Hispanics, those age 65 and over and Asians live in communities with rail lines. Only 35 percent of African Americans said trains go through the communities in which they live.

**Figure 17 - Do Any Trains Go Through the Community in Which You Live?**



- Those who indicated trains travel through their communities were asked if they have any specific concerns about those trains. Here, 67 percent indicated no concerns. However, eight percent have concerns about the overall safety, six percent mentioned the noise of the trains, six percent indicated a concern about traffic being stopped when a train is going through, five percent stated the train whistle is a concern to them and five percent are concerned about the lack of gates or lights at certain crossing points. The remaining responses represent one percent or less each.