Active Transportation Strategy

General Population Survey **2019**

BRITISH COLUMBIA | Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

BRITISH COLUMBIA | BCStats

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Acknowledgements

All of those who participated in the development of the survey, including several ministries (Transportation and Infrastructure, Municipal Affairs and Housing, Health, Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources, Environment and Climate Change Strategy), Dr. Faye Schmidt of Schmidt & Carbol Consulting Group, Advanis and all the British Columbians who participated in the survey.

Publish Date

May 28, 2020

01 Executive Summary

Active transportation (AT) is all forms of human-powered transportation, most common being walking and cycling. B.C.'s active transportation strategy, Move. Commute. Connect., is about building a cleaner and greener future for all British Columbians by making active transportation safer, more accessible and convenient for all ages and abilities.

As part of the strategy, the Active Transportation Strategy General Population Survey was conducted by telephone between November 6th and December 17th, 2019 to identify how British Columbians are travelling and the influences on future travel mode use.

The goal of this survey was to establish a set of baseline data that can help the provincial government and key partners assess progress in achieving Move. Commute. Connect.'s goal of doubling the percentage of trips taken by active transportation by 2030. The information collected will be used to make evidence-based decisions designed to meet AT strategy goals. It will both measure our progress towards a healthier and more sustainable future and assist us to develop effective strategies for increasing active transportation use across B.C.

Key Measures and Results

The age and gender distribution of respondents closely matched the characteristics in the adult population of B.C.[1] A total of 3,800 completed surveys were collected, with 400 coming from each region except for the Mainland/Southwest Provincial economic region, which contributed 1,000 completed surveys due to its larger size.

Margins of Error

±1.6% for provincial results, 19 times out of 20

- *±3.1% for Mainland/Southwest Coast results, 1 times out of 20*
- *±4.9% for results for all other regions, 19 times out of 20*

Methods of Analysis

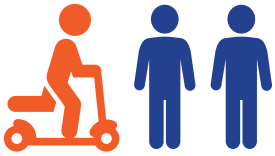
- Statistical testing of differences in active transportation use by region, gender and age

Typical users of Active Transportation in B.C.

Respondents identified their primary travel mode for typical destinations:

- School-aged children: 33% of households having at least one child who usually walked or cycled to school.
- Employed workers: 10% of respondents usually used AT to get to and from work.
- Adult students: Of those surveyed, 8% usually used AT to get to school.
- Community activities: 9% of those surveyed used AT for trips to community activities (groceries, appt, etc.).

People who primarily use AT to typical destinations



33% School-Aged Children

primarily use active transportation for trips to/from school

10% Work

8% School (Adult Students)

9% Community Activities

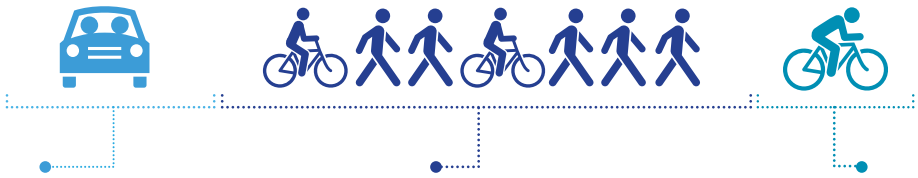
[1] *Completion quotas and weighting were used to ensure the results reflect the same regional, gender and age group distributions as the B.C. population in 2018.*

Active Transportation Usage in B.C.

Respondents estimated how much of their travel time they walked or cycled over the past year:

- Based on this measure, three AT user types were identified:
  - One in five respondents were **Non-AT Users** (22%) since they did not use any AT in the past year.
  - The largest group of respondents were **Occasional AT Users** (67%) as they used AT less than half the time.
  - **Frequent AT Users** (11%) spent at least half their travel time over the past year, either walking or cycling.
- Overall Average AT Usage amongst British Columbians was 17% of their travel time in the past year.

Active Transportation user types



NON-AT USERS
22% spent no travel time using AT

OCCASIONAL AT USERS
67% spent less than 50% of travel time using AT

FREQUENT AT USERS
11% used AT modes more than 50% travel time

Ease of access impacts overall Active Transportation Usage

- Availability and ease of access to different modes of transportation appear to have a substantial influence on regular AT use to work and community destinations. The Northeast and Nechako regions had the lowest proportion of regular AT users in the province and the highest proportion of respondents with no access to transit.
- Overall AT Usage was significantly higher among those with no valid driver's licence or no easy access to a motor vehicle.
- Overall AT Usage was significantly higher for those with access to a bicycle and for respondents who lived within walking distance of a transit stop.
- Overall AT Usage was significantly lower among the employed, respondents between ages 35 and 54, and persons with a disability (self-identified).

Future Active Transportation Use

- Most of the respondents assume their future AT use will stay the same (69%) because they did not foresee any changes in their lifestyle, place of residence, workplace and/or school.
- Other common reasons for future AT use to remain the same were living remotely or not having access to services to facilitate high AT use.

Predicted increase in Active Transportation use due to Fitness

- 24% of respondents predict AT use to increase in the future.
- The most common reason for expecting increased future AT use was plans to use AT as a way to get exercise or improve health.
- Other commonly cited reasons for increased future AT use included moving to a more central location or the end of caregiving responsibilities.

Predicted decrease in Active Transportation use due to Age and Health

- Only 7% of respondents expect that their AT use will decrease in the future.
- Of those that predicted a decrease in future AT use, 77% thought that getting older or a physical health-related condition would limit their ability to walk or cycle.

Conclusion

The availability and ease of access to different modes of transportation (such as public transit) appear to have a substantial influence on Overall AT Usage in B.C. Two in five respondents typically used a motor vehicle or multiple modes of travelling to and from activities in their communities and overall AT Usage was significantly higher for those who had access to a bicycle and those who lived within walking distance of a transit stop. Of those surveyed, 8% usually used AT to get to school. 10% of respondents usually used AT to get to and from work.

The Active Transportation Strategy General Population Survey results indicate that more than half of British Columbians used AT occasionally in the past year. However, there is a substantial gap between the AT Usage of Occasional and Frequent AT Users. Overall Average AT Usage amongst British Columbians was 17% in the past year.

The majority of respondents assume their future AT use will remain the same. One in four predicts their AT use to increase in the future, most commonly because of expected plans to use AT as a way to exercise or improve health. Only a small fraction of respondents expect their AT use to fall in the future, most commonly due to ageing or physical health-related conditions.

Impact of COVID-19 on travel behaviour and perceptions

The Active Transportation Strategy General Population Survey was administered from November to December 2019. Since then, the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic including the state of emergency and physical distancing recommendations came into effect. With the pandemic still affecting many parts of the country, travel behaviours and perceptions have changed drastically.

Since the middle of March 2020, job losses, facility closures, travel restrictions and people working from home has resulted in low vehicle traffic volumes and public transit ridership in BC. Communities in the province have also seen an increase in recreational active transportation.

The Public Health Officer has recommended active transportation as a safer and healthy way to travel and get exercise for physical and mental health during this time. There is significant interest in the short- and long-term impacts that the COVID-19 pandemic will have on our future transportation behaviour and perceptions.

01 Key Findings

1.1. Introduction

Active transportation (AT) is all forms of human-powered transportation, most common being walking and cycling. Other human-powered modes of travel are modes with wheels (for example, longboards and kick-scooters) or modes that helped to traverse water or snow (for example, canoes, kayaks, and snowshoes).

B.C.'s active transportation strategy, Move. Commute. Connect., is about building a cleaner and greener future for all British Columbians. This strategy details the plan to make active transportation safer, more accessible and convenient for all ages and abilities, as well as doubling active transportation mode share in B.C.

> **"Active transportation (AT) is all forms of human-powered transportation, most common being walking and cycling."**

As part of the strategy, the province committed to conducting research and data collection to identify opportunities and possible barriers to public active transportation participation. The goal was to identify a set of baseline data on how British Columbians are travelling and influences on future travel mode use.

Representatives from both internal and external stakeholder groups were consulted to establish clear research objectives and questions. Their input helped BC Stats and the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure design a survey to collect baseline data on the transportation patterns of British Columbians. For the purpose of this research, active transportation is defined as human-powered transportation (including modes with electric assist) to work, school, and community services and activities.

The Active Transportation Strategy General Population Survey was conducted by telephone between November 6th and December 17th, 2019.

After a brief overview of the demographic characteristics of the respondents, the survey results are examined in the following order.

- Transportation used by school-aged children
- Transportation to work, school and other community activities
- Overall travel patterns and AT Usage in past year
- Ease of Access to transportation mode
- Expectations around future AT use
- Overview of regional differences

1.2. Methodology

Survey design

A facilitated research objectives workshop attended by ten internal government stakeholders from four ministries established the key objectives for this project. The result was a focus on answering the following three research questions:

1. **Who has access to AT and what is the demographic profile of AT users?**
2. **What is the current AT use in B.C.?**
3. **What are the challenges to using AT or opportunities for increasing AT use among British Columbians?**

Sample and weighting

Sampling quotas and weighting ensure the survey results match the 2018 region, age, and gender population estimates for British Columbia and by phone type ownership. Quotas were set to ensure we obtained a total of 1,000 surveys from people living in the Mainland/Southwest Coast region, and 400 surveys from each of the remaining economic development regions. Quotas ranges were also set within each region by age and gender.

With a total of 3,800 completed surveys, we can be confident that the survey results are representative of the travel patterns of residents in the province. The results in this report were weighted to reflect the region, age group and gender composition of the province.

Survey administration

To prepare the sample, the data collection vendor purchased landline calling lists and generated a random list of working cell phone numbers in British Columbia. The vendor administered the telephone survey between November 6th and December 17th, 2019. This included a pre-test period during which 50 interviews were monitored to ensure the survey was performing as expected.

Reporting of the results

Results for quantitative questions are shown as counts and percentages. Percentages represent the proportion of all respondents who provided a valid answer to a given question. The exception was Average AT Use, in which the percentage represents the proportion of time each transportation mode was used rather than a proportion of respondents.

Overall AT Usage is calculated from respondents' estimates of the time they spent walking or cycling to work, school and community activities over the past year. For respondents who did not go to work or school, Average AT Usage to community activities was used.

Details on the methodology of this research are available in **Appendix A: Full Methodology**.

1.3. Respondent characteristics

The age and gender distribution of respondents closely matched the characteristics in the adult population of B.C [2]

Two out of three respondents were working at the time of the survey and 9% were going to school.

Most respondents completed post-secondary education (63%) and approximately a third of respondents indicated household incomes in each of the following three categories:

- $50,000 (32%)
- $50,000 to less than $100,000 (35%)
- $100,000 or more (34%).

The wide range of different education levels and household incomes confirms a diverse range of respondents completed the survey.

[2] Completion quotas and weighting were used to ensure the results reflect the same regional, gender and age group distributions as the B.C. population in 2018.

Almost 5% of respondents identified as Indigenous (First Nations, Metis, Inuk) and 28% of respondents immigrated to Canada. Almost three-quarters of these immigrants have lived in the country for 10 or more years.

One in ten respondents self-identified as a person with a disability.

Most respondents had a valid driver's licence (90%) and of these respondents, 96% had access to a motor vehicle, and 85% had access to a transit stop.

1.4. Active Transportation (AT)

For the purpose of this research, Active Transportation (AT) is defined as walking or cycling (pedal or electric) to work, school or local services and activities. 9% of respondents had access to other human-powered modes of travel in addition to walking or cycling. The most common types mentioned were modes with wheels (for example, longboards and kick-scooters) or modes that help to traverse water or snow (for example, canoes, kayaks, and snowshoes). Two in five (41%) adults surveyed had no access to a working bicycle.

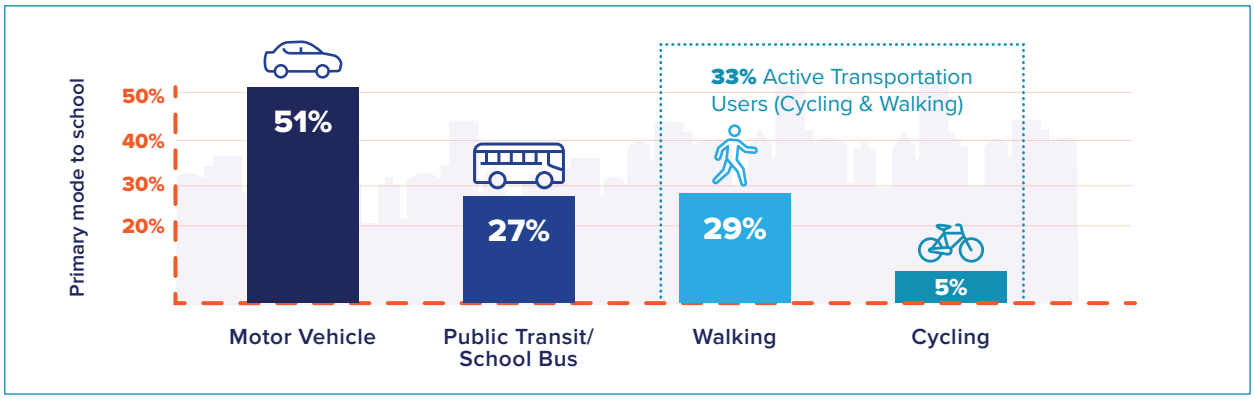
1.5. Transportation used by school-aged children

A quarter of respondents (24%) were the guardians or parents of school-aged children. Most of these respondents had one or two children (87%) and the rest had between three and seven children (13%). This group of respondents were asked how their children usually got to and from school.

Some respondents indicated that each child used a different mode of transportation to get to school, so the following analysis is based on the proportion of all family households surveyed where at least one child primarily used each mode of transportation to get to and from school.

As shown in Figure 1 below, motor vehicles are the most prevalent method of transportation with just over half of all households usually driving children to school (51%). Almost a third of households had at least one child who typically walked to and from school (29%). Some respondents indicated their children were driven to school in the morning, but they walked home afterwards when they were less pressured for time. For other AT modes of travel, cycling was the usual mode used to get to and from school by 5% of households with school-aged children.

Figure 1 - Proportion of households with at least one child who usually took this mode of transportation to school

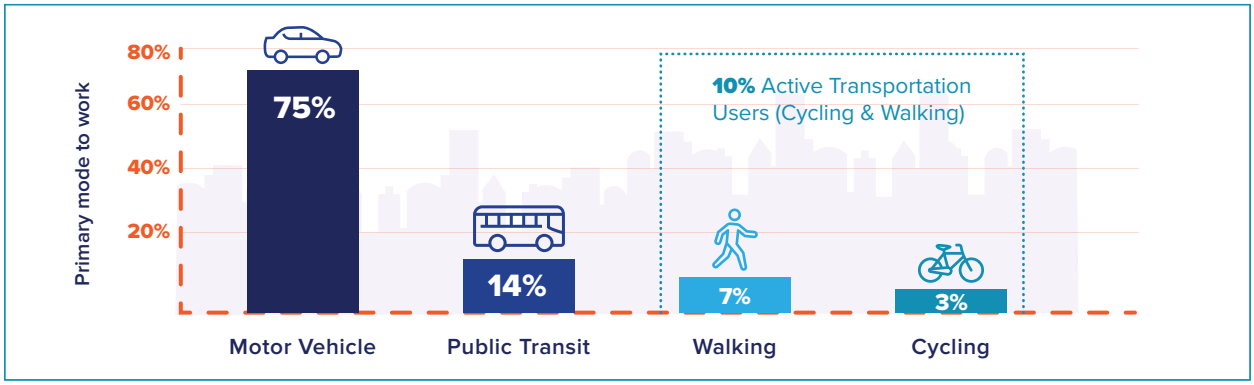


Note: Results from the survey question "How does your child usually get to and from school?" Percentages do not total 100% because many households had more than one child, who each primarily used a different mode.

1.6. Primary transportation used to typical places

Respondents who were currently working (63% of total) and/or attending school (9% of total), were asked how they usually got to and from these places. All respondents were also asked how they were getting to and from other activities in their community, such as shopping, visiting friends, relatives, and accessing local services or recreation.

Figure 2 - Mode of transportation usually used to get to work



Note: The percentages do not total to 100% due to rounding and the exclusion of the respondents who selected other (<1%).

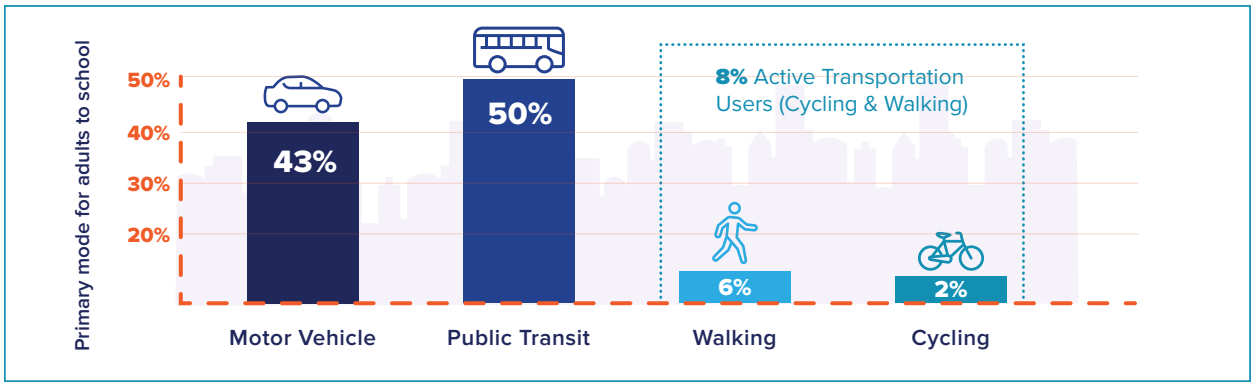
1.6.1. Usual transportation to and from work

Three in four respondents usually used a motor vehicle to get to work (including cars, trucks, vans, commercial vehicles, car share vehicles, motorcycles or mopeds). Public transit was the next most popular transportation mode (used by 14%). One in ten employed respondents typically used active transportation (walked or cycled) to and from the workplace (10%). Less than 1% used other modes such as taxis, ferries, planes, ATVs and snowmobiles as their primary mode of transport.

1.6.2. Usual transportation used by adults to and from school

A total of 9% of those surveyed were attending school at the time of the survey. As shown in Figure 3 below, half of these students usually took public transit (50%), while motor vehicles were the next most popular mode of transportation to school (used by 43%). The remainder usually walked (6%) or cycled (2%) to and from their educational institutions.

Figure 3 - Percentage of adults that usally used AT to get to and from school

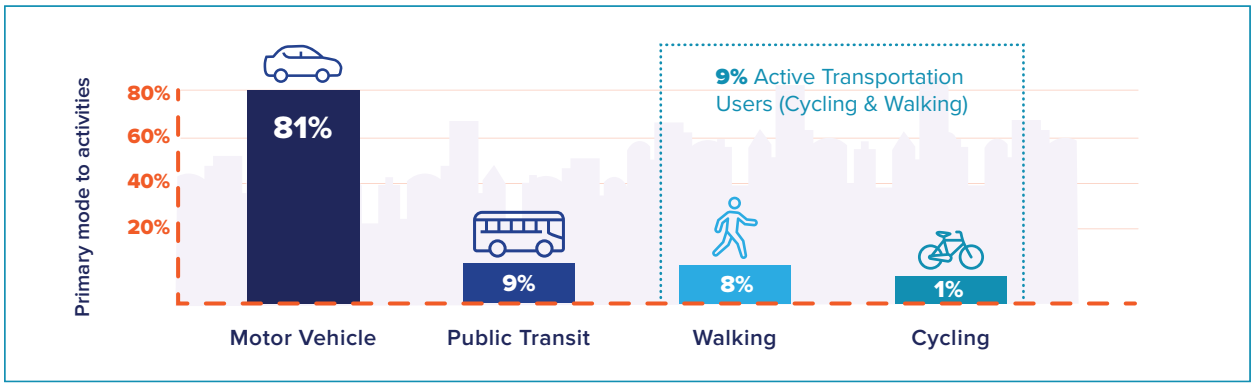


Note: The percentages do not total to 100% due to rounding and the exclusion of the respondents who selected other (<1%).

1.6.3. Usual transportation to and from community activities

To find out more about what modes of transportation British Columbians use to go shopping, visiting, or accessing local services, respondents were asked how they usually got to these places in their communities. As shown below in Figure 4, the proportion of respondents who usually use active transportation to all their activities in the community (9%) is similar to the percentage that used AT to get to work and school.

Figure 4 - Transportation usually used to get to activities in their community



Note: The percentages do not total to 100% due to rounding and the exclusion of the respondents who selected other (<1%).

1.6.4. Multiple modes of transportation utilized for travelling

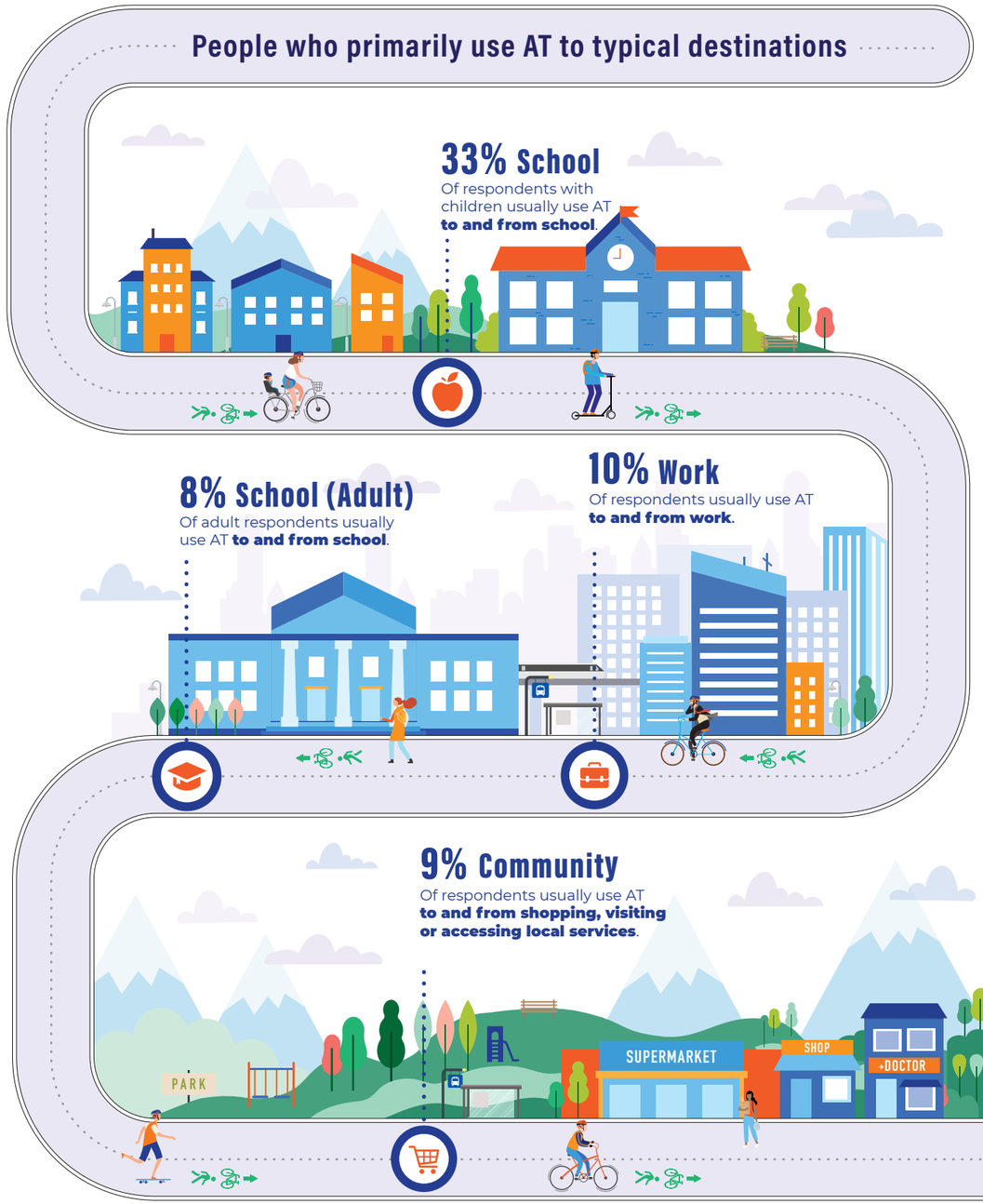
The proportion of respondents who used an additional mode or modes of transportation varied for each situation. One in four employed respondents typically used a secondary mode of transportation to get to work. Of these respondents, one in ten either walked or cycled as a part of their usual trips to and from work.

A third of adult students regularly used multiple modes to get to school (34%). Students were much more likely to indicate they used active transportation as part of their trip to school (55%) compared to that of employed individual's trips to work. Two in five respondents typically used multiple modes when travelling to and from activities in their communities. For running errands and other activities in the community, three out of every five respondents either walked or cycled as part of these regular trips.

Move. Commute. Connect.

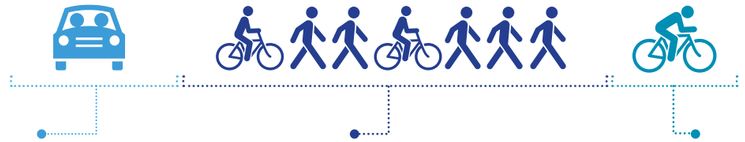
Goal: Double the percentage of trips taken by active transportation (AT) by 2030.

Active transportation (AT) is all forms of human-powered transportation, most common being walking and cycling.



Active Transportation (AT) User Types

Overall Average AT Usage to typical places amongst British Columbians was **17% of their travel time to work, school, and community activities in the past year.**



NON-AT USERS

22% spent no travel time using AT

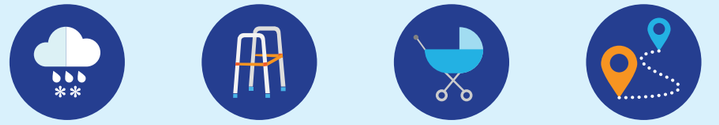
OCCASIONAL AT USERS

67% spent less than 50% of travel time using AT

FREQUENT AT USERS

11% used AT modes more than 50% travel time

Barriers in Increasing A.T. Use



Inclement Weather

Age and Disability

Transporting Children

Distance to Destinations

Opportunities in Using AT

Infrastructure

We're hoping to get a bicycle route on the highway from our town to the next town where the kids go to school. If that should happen, I would expect the kids to ride their bikes more.

Health & Fitness

I think walking and cycling is good for health andand I don't want my daughter to depend on a motor vehicle to go somewhere.

Environment

I would prefer to walk for health benefits and less vehicle emissions.

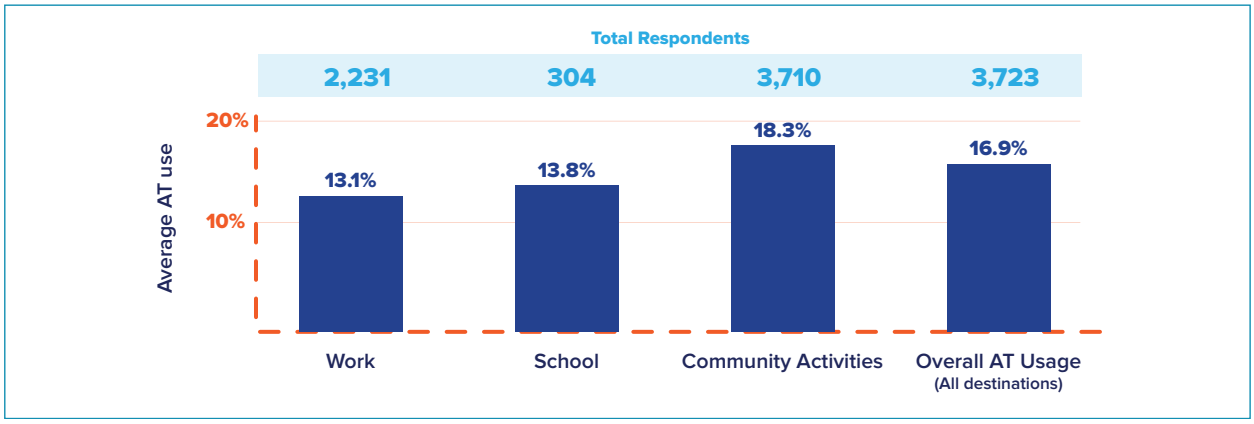
1.7. Overall travel patterns and AT Usage

Since the above measure is limited to primary mode and may be influenced by time of year, the survey also measured how often respondents used each mode of transportation over the past year, when travelling to work, school and other activities in the community.

1.7.1. Average AT use in the past year

Average AT Usage is calculated from the respondents' estimates of the portion of travel time they walked or cycled to and from the following three destinations over the past year (out of 100, an Average AT Usage value of 100 would indicate full AT Usage by respondents in the past year). In other words, walking or cycling being the only form of transportation for respondents to travel to and from the following three destinations. As shown in Figure 5, Average AT Usage was similar for travel to work and school (13.1 and 13.8 respectively), but somewhat higher when travelling to and from community activities (18.3). From these statistics, we can determine that British Columbians spent on average 17% of their total travel time to these three destinations using AT modes (Overall AT Usage).

Figure 5 - Estimated average AT usage in the past year by designation



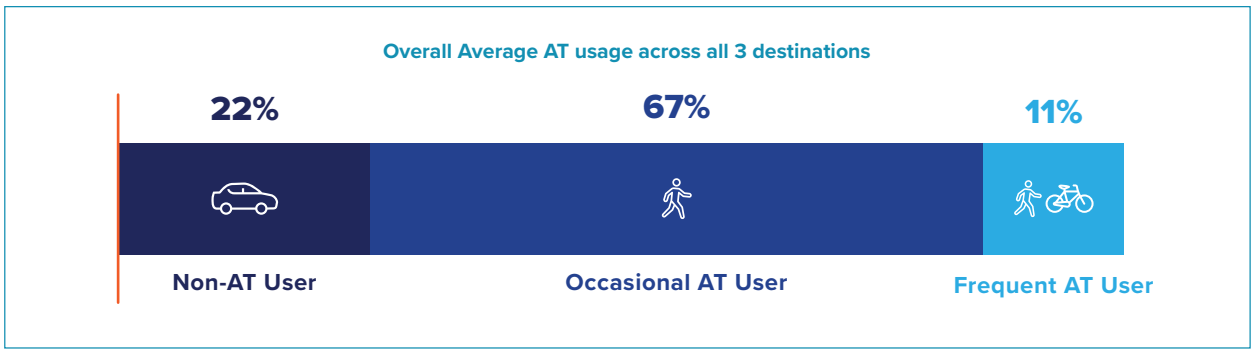
**Note: Average AT Usage refers to the average portion of time that survey respondents estimate they spent using AT to travel in the past year (a value of 100 being full AT usage for all travelling in the past year). Overall AT Usage is calculated by summing the Average AT Usage for each destination and dividing this by the number of estimates provided. The total respondents for each column differ because not all respondents were working or attending school. Average AT Usage for community activities was used for those who did not go to work or school.*

Based on Overall AT Usage, three distinct AT User Types were identified. One in five respondents can be considered **Non-AT Users** (22%) since they did not spend any of their travel time in the past year using AT modes. Two out of three respondents were **Occasional AT Users** (67%) averaging less than half of their time using AT to get to the places they needed to go. The smallest group was classified as **Frequent AT Users** (11%) since they used AT modes more than half of the time to get to these destinations over the course of the past year.

Figure 6 shows the distribution of AT User types varies across the three destinations (based on estimated walking and cycling in the past year).

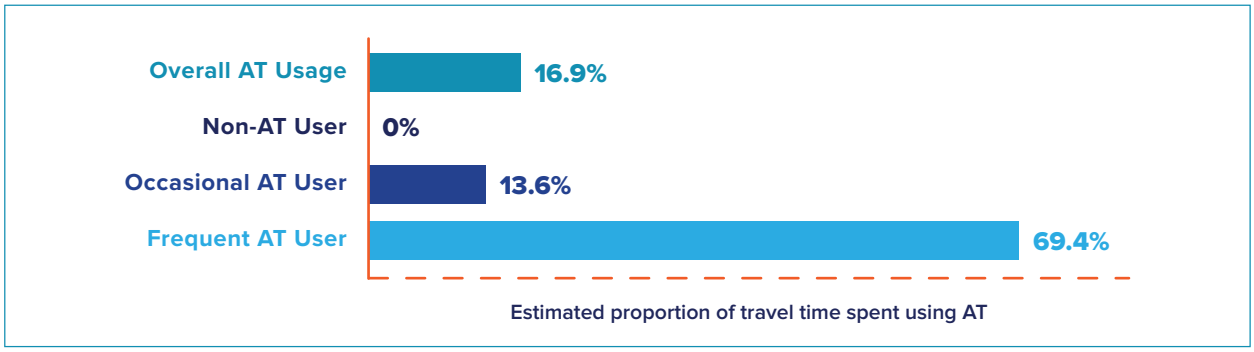
> **Overall AT Usage** = The average proportion of travel time spent walking or cycling to work, school or other activities in the community in the last year.

Figure 6 - The proportion of respondents by AT User Type



This finding allows us to compare groups and identify significant differences in Overall AT Usage. Significance testing is a statistical method used to confirm that differences between groups are not merely due to chance.

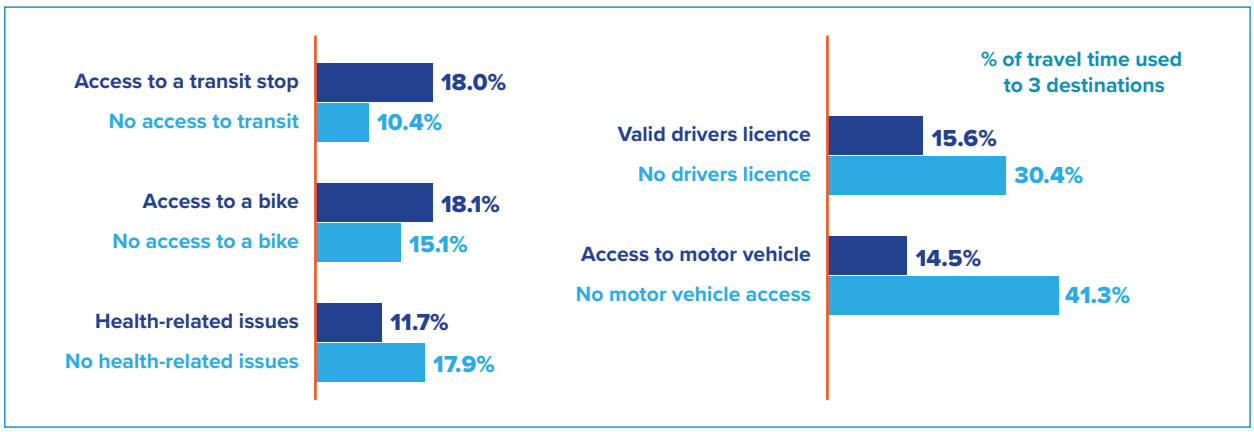
Figure 7 - Average Overall AT Usage by User Type



1.7.2. Ease of Access to transportation modes

Availability and ease of access to different modes of transportation appears to have a substantial influence on Overall AT Usage in British Columbia. Overall AT Usage was significantly higher among those with no valid driver's licence or no regular access to a motor vehicle (see Figure 8). Overall AT Usage was also significantly higher for those who had access to a bicycle and those who lived within walking distance of a transit stop.

Figure 8 - Access to other modes of transportation influences overall AT usage



Note: Overall AT Usage is calculated from the estimated amount of walking or cycling to work, school and community activities. Average AT Usage for community activities was used for those who did not go to work or go to school.

The difference in AT Usage between those with and without a health-related issue was relatively small at 6.2%. However, Overall AT Usage was significantly lower for respondents with health-related issues that made it unrealistic to walk or cycle to nearby places.

Gender did not make a significant difference to Overall AT Usage, except for in the Kootenays and Mainland Southwest regions where Overall AT use was significantly higher among females than males. Those with a graduate degree or higher used AT significantly more than all other education levels.

Further analysis demonstrates that Overall AT Usage is significantly lower among the employed, respondents between ages 35 and 54, and persons with a disability (self-identified). Average AT use was also significantly lower among long-term residents (10 years or longer), and for those with incomes greater than $100,000.

1.8. Expectations around future AT use

This section of the report focuses on British Columbians' expectations about using AT in the next few years. As Table 1 illustrates, most of the British Columbians surveyed assume their future AT use will stay the same (69%), while 7% expect that their AT use will decrease in the next few years. A quarter of respondents predict their AT use to increase in the future (24%).

Table 1 - Current and predicted future AT use by user types

	Distribution of respondents by direction of estimated future AT use			
User types (Based on AT usage over the past year)	**Decrease**	**Stay the same**	**Increase**	**Total**
Non-AT Users	7%	81%	12%	795
Occasional AT Users	6%	65%	29%	2,454
Frequent AT Users	9%	71%	20%	405
All Respondents	7%	69%	24%	3,654

A similar proportion of all three AT User Types predicted a decrease in AT use over the next few years. However, **Non-AT Users** (81%) were the most likely to predict AT use to stay the same and **Occasional AT Users** (29%) were most likely to predict an increase in future AT use.

By exploring the reasons for predictions about future AT use, we may be able to identify situations that can be changed with programs or initiatives, and those that are unlikely to be influenced. The next section describes the themes and subthemes revealed from the most common reasons for respondents' predictions about their future AT use.

1.8.1. Top reasons for predictions about future AT use

A definition of AT was provided to survey participants followed by a question asking if they expected their use of AT to decrease, stay the same, or increase in the next few years. Respondents' comments were themed and counted and presented below in descending order from the most to least commonly mentioned overall. Six themes emerged when respondents were asked why they predicted their AT use to change or stay the same.

Table 2 - Distribution of respondents by reasons for estimated future AT use

	Total
1. Individual Circumstances	**30%**
• Age, health or physical ability	
• Family situation (have young children, children grown, caregiver)	
• Move to a different area	
• Not practical due to nature of work or transport of items	
• Change in workplace or school situation	
• Retirement or change in available time	
• Other	
2. Personal Choices	**24%**
• Want to get fit or exercise	
• Convenience (saves time)	
• Habit or routine, dislike alternatives	
• To help the environment	
• Preferred mode or for enjoyment	
• Lifestyle change (walk more or buy e-bike)	
• Plan to get license, car or join a car share	
3. Geography	**22%**
• Too far from amenities, work, school	
• Remote or rural community	
• Centrally located/close to everything	
• Difficult terrain (too hilly, etc.)	
• Climate (rain, snow, cold, etc.)	
4. No changes expected, no other options	**21%**
• Not expecting current lifestyle/workplace/school/home to change	
• No other options	
5. Services, infrastructure or equipment	**14%**
• Availability of services (bus routes, schedules, many users)	
• Safety	
• Accessibility of bike paths, sidewalks	
• Availability of AT equipment or infrastructure (e-bike, bike storage)	
• Other (traffic, pollution or loss of car)	
6. Financial Reasons	**5%**
• Cost of a car (including gas, parking, insurance and maintenance)	
• To save money	
• Cost of AT equipment	

1.8.2. Decrease in future AT use

Respondents who predicted a decrease in future AT use were classified as Occasional or Frequent AT Users at the time of the survey which makes sense since Non-AT Users could not decrease their use any lower than zero. Since 96% of those who believed their future AT would decrease identified reasons that fell into one of two themes. The following example comments from these respondents provide a good sense of why they made this prediction.

Individual circumstances

Individual circumstances were mentioned by 77% of those who predicted a decrease in future AT use. The top subtheme for these respondents related to increasing age and deteriorating health or physical abilities as the reasons for this predicted decline in future AT use.

> *"I have mobility issues and I'm getting older. I'm on oxygen 24/7 so I can't really walk too far."*

Relocation or changing a workplace or school situation were other common subthemes.

> *"As I graduate from university, I will need to purchase a vehicle to get to and from work."*

Personal choices

One in five predicted a decrease in AT use that related to a personal choice they made. For example, some respondents decided to get licenced or obtain a vehicle, or just really enjoyed driving. Others decided to use Non-AT modes of transport for convenience or to save time.

> *"My time is more valuable, and I can't waste time cycling or walking."*

1.8.3. Future AT use to remain the same

Most of the respondents surveyed predicted no change to their future AT use and the reasons this group provided clustered around three different themes. Examples from each are explored from the perspectives of Non-AT Users, Occasional AT Users and Frequent AT Users to describe why this group anticipated no change to existing AT use in the future.

No alternatives or changes expected

The number one ranked reason for those expecting AT use to remain the same was the modes they usually used was just a habit or routine, while others said they lacked alternatives. This theme is best described by the following examples from respondents.

> **From Non-AT users**
>
> *"The truck is my only means of transportation."*
>
> **From Occasional AT users**
>
> *"My needs will be the same, my health will be the same, and the distance to the places I go will be the same, so it will probably be the same."*
>
> **From Frequent AT users**
>
> *"I've been cycling and walking my entire life, and I don't see that changing. And I live in a community, where my office is close to my house, and daycare is close to my house. A very active transportation-oriented lifestyle."*

Geography

Almost equally common reasons for expecting future AT use to stay the same related to geography. The most common responses were from Non-AT users who felt they lived too far from amenities, work or school to be able to use AT, or they identified the climate as a barrier to using AT in the future.

From Non-AT users

"I live in the North and it is not realistic to walk or ride my bike to anywhere I need to go. I live in a town that is very spread out and it is not convenient in any way to walk or bike. Why would I take a bus when it would take me twice as long to get anywhere to where I would like to go, considering the discomfort of the rain and cold?"

From Occasional AT users

"Where I live there is no public transportation, so you can walk and bike in the summer to get exercise, and in the winter, you jump in the truck."

From Frequent AT users

"Most of services I require (banking, restaurants, etc.) are within walking distance from where I live."

Individual circumstances

Age and health-related issues were prominent reasons for Non-AT Users to expect no uptake of AT modes in the future. Others focused on how the nature of work, or the need to transport goods or people, made AT use impractical.

From Non-AT users

"I have a back injury so I can't walk or cycle."

From Occasional AT users

"I hope to still be fit enough to walk and cycle to nearby places."

From Frequent AT users

"I only need a vehicle for transporting large loads and going long distances."

1.8.4. Increase in future AT use

For those who predicted increased AT use in the future, reasons that related to the Personal Choice theme or Individual Circumstances were the most common. A third theme related to Services, Infrastructure or Equipment was also evident in the comments from those expecting to use AT more. Examples from the top subthemes best describe why respondents predicted future AT use to increase.

Personal choice

Personal choice was the number one reason given for increased AT use in the future. A desire to improve personal fitness and help our environment were common subthemes as shown in the examples below.

"Concern about the environment and a desire to walk longer distances to improve health."

Other subthemes related to convenience, personal preferences or plans for a lifestyle change or an expected change in the ease of access to their transportation mode.

"It's just easier to get around walking and using public transit rather than driving."

Individual circumstances

A change in caregiving responsibilities or age, health, physical abilities was also a common subtheme for those predicting no change to their future AT use.

> *"My kids depend on me to drive them to school. As they get older, they can walk to school, and I can ride my bike more."*

Retirement, or some other event that increased their available time, made up another common subtheme.

> *"Age and driving ability. When I retire, maybe I won't need to drive all over the place."*

Services, infrastructure and equipment

The third most common reason for predicted increases in future AT use was the availability of buses, suitable routes or schedules, or buses being "too packed'". Other subthemes focused on the ease of access to bike paths, and/or sidewalks, or changes to the safety of using active transportations in their specific environments. A small group mentioned the availability of AT equipment or infrastructure (such as E-bikes, bike storage, electric charging stations or other comments relating to wanting to avoid traffic and congestion) as the reasons for future AT to increase.

From Non-AT users

> *"Because I live in streets that are industrial areas, one lane roads, they have semis, you can't walk safely down the street. "*

From Occasional AT users

> *"We're hoping to get a bicycle route on the highway from our town to the next town where the kids go to school. If that should happen, I would expect the kids to ride their bikes more."*

From Frequent AT users

> *"More availability. Better bike lanes. It's becoming more acceptable and feels safer. I was nervous riding in the city and now it feels much safer with bike lanes and accommodation for bikes. It makes sense for environment and similar issues. E-bikes are something we are investing in."*

1.8.5. Financial reasons (5% of all respondents with various AT use predictions)

And finally, a small group of respondents identified the cost of a car or a desire to save money as the primary factors influencing their transportation choices.

> *"I just don't foresee me being able to afford a car or anything like that in the real near future. It's an affordability thing."*

> *"The primary reason I mostly walk is due to my income."*

02 Regional Profiles

A total of 3,800 completed surveys were collected, with 400 coming from each region except for the Mainland/Southwest region, which contributed 1,000 completed surveys due to its larger population size.

The percentage of residents that usually use AT to get to work and community activities varies by region. Two regions, Vancouver Island/Coast and the North Coast, stand out from the rest as having the highest proportion of residents who usually use AT for transportation to work and community activities. These two regions and the Mainland/Southwest have a similar proportion of respondents regularly using AT to both places.

All the other regions have a much larger gap between destination types with substantially lower proportions using AT regularly to places within their communities.

Table 3 - Proportion of respondents who usually use AT to work and school*

Region	% that usually use AT to work	% that usually use AT to community activities
Vancouver Island/Coast	11.6%	10.0%
North Coast	11.5%	9.5%
Nechako	10.9%	6.5%
Mainland/Southwest	9.5%	9.5%
Thompson-Okanagan	9.2%	6.6%
Cariboo	9.1%	5.0%
Kootenay	8.2%	5.7%
Northeast	5.2%	4.6%
Total respondents	2,280	3,791

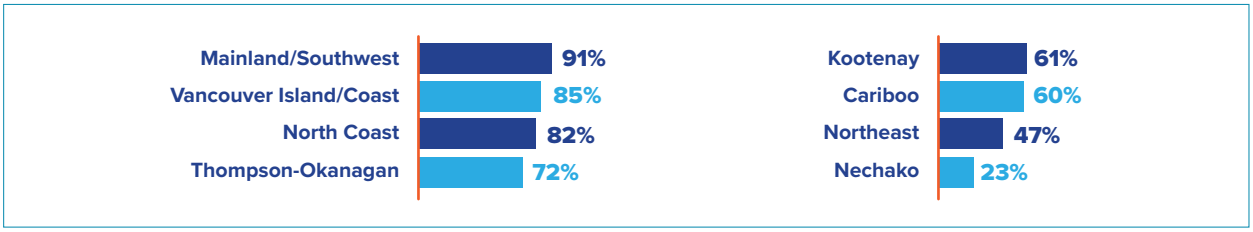
** The number of students that usually used AT to school was too small across regions for meaningful comparisons*

In response to the question that asked why they predicted their future AT use to decrease, stay the same or increase, one in five respondents mentioned geography as the reason for their answer. The distance between home and work or the closest amenities was the biggest barrier to using AT to these places, with rural regions showing lower rates of regular AT use to work and community activities with the exception of Nechako.

Bicycle access was relatively consistent across the regions, with over half of all respondents in every region saying they had access to a bicycle (ranging from a low of 53% in the Northeast region to a high of 65% in the Kootenay region).

Access to public transit varied by region, and regions where respondents had access to public transit from their home also saw the highest regular AT use to work and community destinations (see Figure 9). This trend is also reflected in the comments about future AT use. One in six respondents indicated the ease of access to services, infrastructure or equipment as key determinants of their ability to use AT regularly to work and community activities.

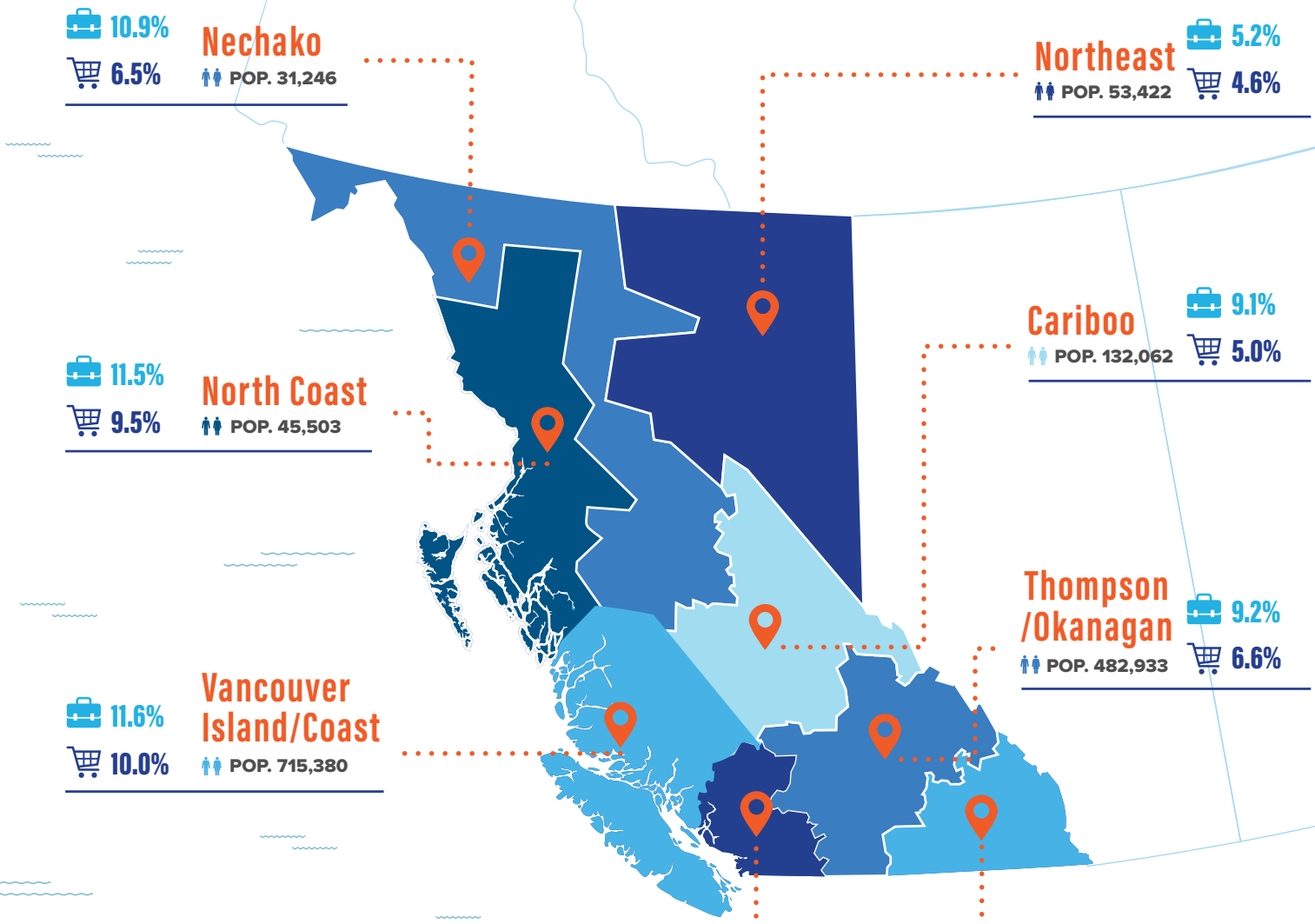
Figure 9 - Proportion of respondents who have access to public transit from their home



BC Regional Profiles

% that usually use AT to work
(total respondents = 2,280)

% that usually use AT to community activities
(total respondents = 3,791)



Nechako
10.9%
6.5%
POP. 31,246

Northeast
5.2%
4.6%
POP. 53,422

Cariboo
9.1%
5.0%
POP. 132,062

North Coast
11.5%
9.5%
POP. 45,503

Thompson /Okanagan
9.2%
6.6%
POP. 482,933

Vancouver Island/Coast
11.6%
10.0%
POP. 715,380

Mainland /Southwest
9.5%
9.5%
POP. 2,475,647

Kootenay
8.2%
5.7%
POP. 131,672

03 Conclusion

Active transportation (AT) is all forms of human-powered transportation, most common being walking and cycling. B.C.'s active transportation strategy, Move. Commute. Connect., is about building a cleaner and greener future for all British Columbians by making active transportation safer, more accessible and convenient for all ages and abilities.

As part of the strategy, the Active Transportation Strategy General Population Survey was conducted by telephone between November 6th and December 17th, 2019 to identify how British Columbians are travelling and the influences on future travel mode use.

The availability and ease of access to different modes of transportation (such as public transit) appear to have a substantial influence on Overall AT Usage in B.C. Two in five respondents typically used multiple modes of travelling to and from activities in their communities and overall AT Usage was significantly higher for those who had access to a bicycle and those who lived within walking distance of a transit stop. Of those surveyed, 8% usually used AT to get to school. 10% of respondents usually used AT to get to and from work.

The Active Transportation Strategy General Population Survey results indicate that more than half of British Columbians used AT occasionally in the past year. However, there is a substantial gap between the AT Usage of Occasional and Frequent AT Users. Overall Average AT Usage amongst British Columbians was 17% in the past year. Based on the respondents' identified primary travel mode for regular destinations, school-aged children and adult students are the two largest groups of regular AT users. With employed individuals coming in as the third-largest group.

The majority of respondents assume their future AT use will remain the same. One in four predicts their AT use to increase in the future, most commonly because of expected plans to use AT as a way to exercise or improve health. Only a small fraction of respondents expect their AT use to fall in the future, most commonly due to ageing or physical health-related conditions.

Appendix A: Full Methodology

Survey design

A facilitated research objectives workshop attended by ten internal government stakeholders from four ministries established the key objectives for this project. The result was a focus on answering the following three research questions:

1. **Who has access to AT and what is the demographic profile of AT users?**
2. **What is the current AT use in B.C.?**
3. **What are the challenges to using AT or opportunities for increasing AT use among British Columbians?**

These questions guided the development of the questionnaire designed in collaboration between BC Stats and the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure.

Sample and weighting

Sampling quotas and weighting ensure the survey results match the 2018 region, age, and gender population estimates for British Columbia and by phone type ownership (landline / wireless / both). Quotas were set to ensure we obtained a total of 1,000 surveys from people living in the Mainland/Southwest Coast region, and 400 surveys from each of the remaining economic development regions. Quotas ranges were also set within each region by age (19 to 34, 35 to 54 and 55 years and older) and gender to ensure a representative sample.

With a total of 3,800 completed surveys, we can be confident that the survey results are representative of the travel patterns of residents in the province (margin of error of ±1.6%, 19 times out of 20). The margin of error was ±4.9% for the Vancouver Island/Coast, Thompson-Okanagan, Kootenay, Cariboo, North Coast, Nechako and Northeast regions and ±3.1%for the Mainland/Southwest Coast region.

The results in this report were weighted to reflect the region, age group and gender composition of the province. The maximum margin of error for provincial results aggregated by gender and age group is ±2.3% and ±3.1% respectively (19 times out of 20). Please note that less than 1% of respondents chose not to provide their gender or provided a response other than male or female and this gender group was too small for analytical purposes.

The table below shows the unweighted and weighted proportions for the variables used to create the aggregate weights.

Table 4: Aggregate weighting scheme

	Unweighted	Weighted
Region	**3,800**	**3,800**
Vancouver Island/Coast	10.5%	17.6%
Mainland/Southwest	26.3%	60.7%
Thompson-Okanagan	10.5%	11.8%
Kootenay	10.5%	3.2%
Cariboo	10.5%	3.3%
North Coast	10.5%	1.2%
Nechako	10.5%	0.8%
Northeast	10.5%	1.4%
Gender		
Male	51.0%	48.9%
Female	48.6%	50.7%
Age		
19 to 34	19.1%	26.9%
35 to 54	32.2%	32.9%
55 or older	48.7%	40.3%

Survey administration

To prepare the sample, the data collection vendor purchased landline calling lists and generated a random list of working cell phone numbers in British Columbia. About a third of the surveys came from landline phone numbers (35%) and 65% from wireless phone numbers. The vendor administered the telephone survey between November 6th and December 17th, 2019. This included a pre-test period during which 50 interviews were monitored to ensure the survey was performing as expected. The average survey time was 10 minutes and 51 seconds.

Reporting of the results

Results for quantitative questions are shown as counts and percentages. Percentages present the proportion of all respondents who provided a valid answer to a given question.

Please note that totals throughout the report may sum slightly over or under the component parts due to rounding. The total number of valid responses for any given question varied because of skip patterns in the survey or because non-valid responses (i.e., Don't Know/No Response/Not Applicable) have been excluded from the percentages reported.

Overall AT Usage is calculated from respondents' estimates of the time they spent walking or cycling to work, school and community activities over the past year. For respondents who did not go to work or school, Average AT Usage to community activities was used.

A set of data tables showing the survey results for the province and each of the eight regions is also available in excel workbooks.

Appendix B: Factground

High level

Study
Active Transportation Strategy General Population Survey 2019

Project Sponsor
Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

Operations

Data Collection Method
Telephone Survey

Fielding Window / Dates
November 6 to December 17, 2019

Population / Sample

Scope
Random Sample of B.C. Population

Population
B.C. Population Age 19+

Contacted
11,508 B.C. Residents

Survey Completions
3,800 B.C. Residents

Sampling Strategy
Hard quotas set for 8 economic development regions and soft quotas for gender and age

Key Measure

Key Question
Average AT Use to work, school, community is 17% of travel time

Margins of Error
±1.6% for provincial results, 19 times out of 20

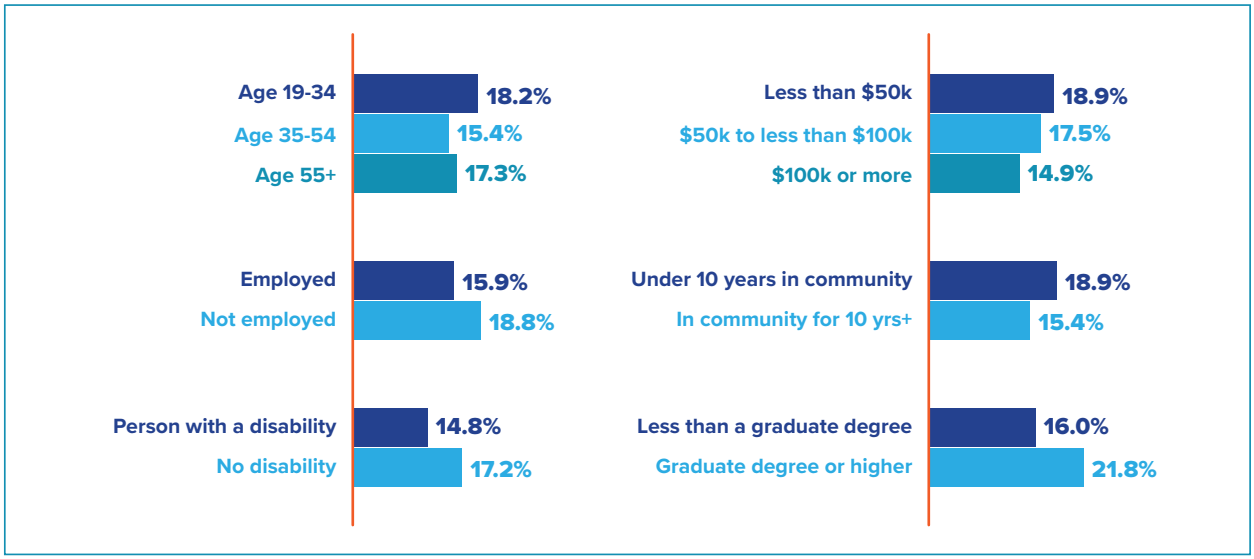
±3.1% for Mainland/Southwest Coast results, 19 times out of 20

±4.9% for results for all other regions, 19 times out of 20

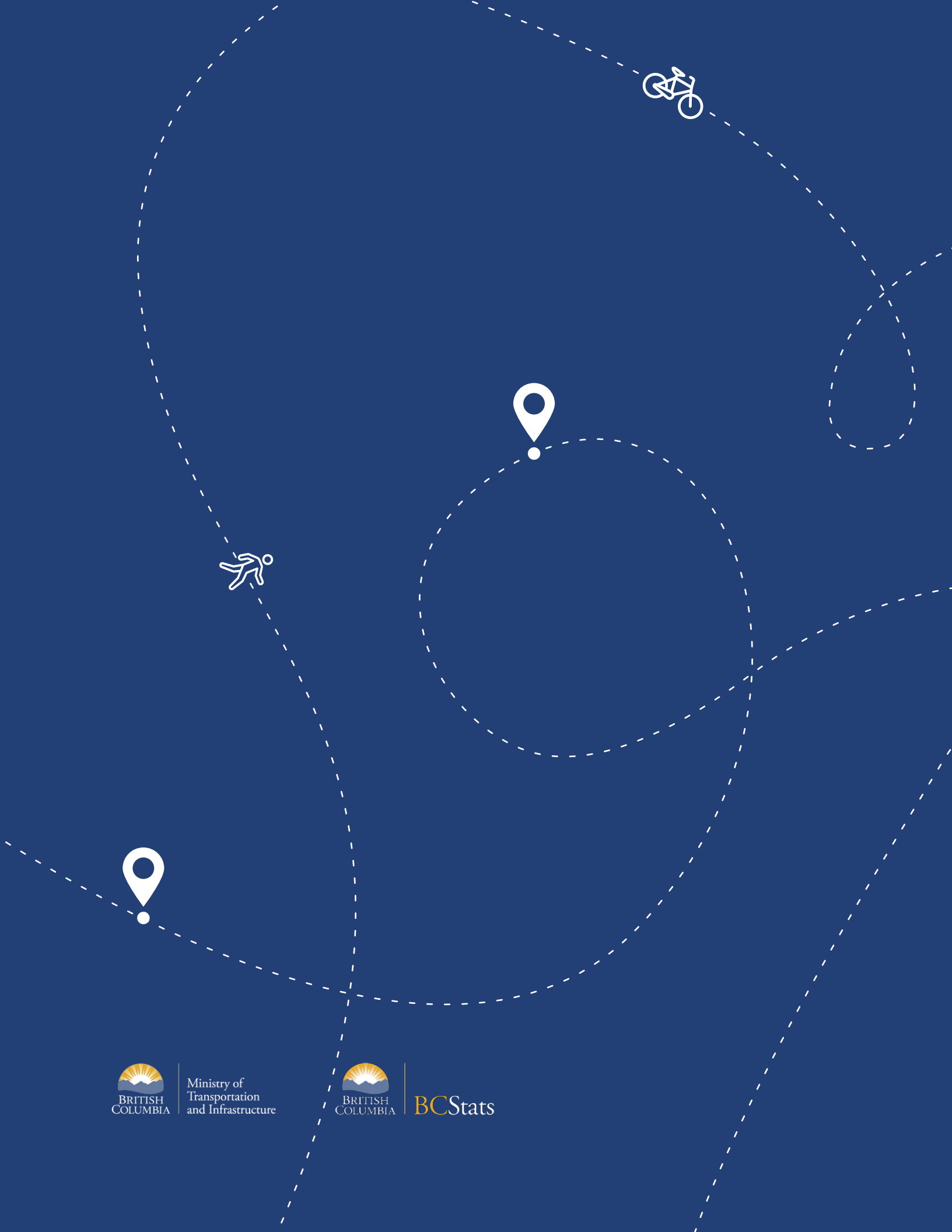
Methods of Analysis
Statistical testing of differences in active transportation use by region, gender and age

Appendix C: Additional Tables

Figure 10 - Variation in overall AT usage by demographics



Note: Overall AT Usage is calculated from the estimated amount of walking or cycling to work, school and community activities. Average AT Usage for community activities was used for those who did not go to work or go to school.



BRITISH COLUMBIA | Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure

BRITISH COLUMBIA | BCStats