

# KATAHDIN REGION TRANSPORTATION SURVEY [ REPORT ]

April - July 2019



Prepared for Thrive Penobscot by  
Asiya Sbayi, MPH CANDIDATE and the  
UMaine Center on Aging



**THRIVE PENOBSCOT IS COMMITTED TO INCREASE KNOWLEDGE AND RESOURCES FOR TRANSPORTATION SO PEOPLE CAN THRIVE IN PLACE. THE RESULTS OF THIS SURVEY AND OTHER LOCAL DATA WILL BE USED TO BUILD A VOLUNTEER TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE REGION.**

Thank you to Thrive Penobscot partners and peer interviewers for helping to implement this study

# [ SURVEY PARTICIPANTS ]



**156** people  
18-95 Years Old



from **7** towns  
75% Millinocket Residents

participated in our

## 14-QUESTION SURVEY



**69.7%**  
Females



**38.7%**  
Retired



**61.9%**  
Income  
between  
\$0 - \$20,000



**50.3%**  
Disability or  
health issue



**51.6%**  
Rate health  
as 'good'



**80% USE  
PERSONAL CAR**

**WHEREAS**

**3% USE  
PENQUIS LYNX**

# [ SURVEY FINDINGS ]

**35.4%**

WERE UNABLE TO GET TO THE FOOD PANTRY, TO PICK UP SENIOR COMMODITIES, TO GET TO A FOOD BOX OR WIC APPOINTMENT 1-2 TIMES A MONTH OR MORE AS A RESULT OF NOT HAVING ACCESS TO TRANSPORTATION (FIGURE 3)

**32.9%**

REPORTED THAT AFFORDABILITY IS A MAJOR BARRIER TO GETTING OUT AS OFTEN AS THEY WOULD LIKE (FIGURE 4)

**76.6%**

DID NOT USE THE PENQUIS LYNX SERVICE DURING THE PAST SIX MONTHS BECAUSE THEY DID NOT NEED IT (FIGURE 5)

**53.7%**

ARE SOMEWHAT TO VERY LIKELY TO USE A LOW COST LOCAL TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM WITH A LOCAL NUMBER TO CALL TO LINE UP A RIDE WHEN NEEDED IN THE NEAR FUTURE IF THEY ARE NO LONGER ABLE TO DRIVE (FIGURE 6)

# [ SURVEY FINDINGS ]

WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE BIGGEST NEEDS IN YOUR TOWN FOR MAKING SURE THAT PEOPLE ARE ABLE TO GET WHERE THEY WANT TO GO?



Affordable  
transportation



Public  
transportation



Volunteer  
drivers

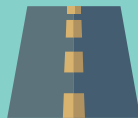


Advertising

PLEASE SHARE ANY IDEAS ABOUT WAYS THAT  
TRANSPORTATION IN YOUR TOWN CAN BE IMPROVED



Increasing  
transportation  
options



Improving road  
and sidewalk  
conditions



Increasing  
awareness of  
available  
services



Advertising and  
educating to  
support more  
Lynx ridership

# [ DISCUSSION ]

## KEY FINDINGS

Slightly less than a third of people surveyed had a transportation challenge in the last six months. For those with transportation challenges, expenses for personal vehicles and taxis were the biggest factor.

Aside from not needing the service, the most common reasons for not using Penquis Lynx were concerns about being eligible for the service, or feeling that too much advance notice was necessary to get a ride.

Future transportation options that were found to be appealing to community members included those that provided a sense of familiarity – in which passengers knew each other or the driver.

Penquis Lynx is important in filling gaps in transportation availability for the Katahdin Region. Continued advertising and outreach to community members and service providers may help to build ridership and address eligibility misconceptions. Addressing community members concerns about safety and comfort may be an additional step for further building ridership.

## FURTHER RESEARCH

To better understand the impact Penquis Lynx has on addressing transportation challenges, another survey should be undertaken. The target population of this subsequent survey would have to be individuals who utilize Penquis Lynx as their primary method of transportation in their respective town. This will help gauge the effect Penquis Lynx is having for its users and determine how it can be improved to better meet users' needs.

Additionally, more research needs to be completed to better understand ways in which affordable transportation options can be made available to all residents of the Katahdin Region. In doing so, we can acquire a better sense of what 'affordable' means to residents and what type of transportation would satisfy their needs.

# [ INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS ]



**50** people dependent on others for transportation  
Averaging 50.4 years old



from **4** towns

Millinocket (31), E. Millinocket (11),  
Medway (7), and Mattawamkeag (1)

participated in our

## IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW



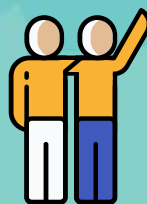
**64%**

Women



**19-84**

Age Range



**60%**

Had friends as a transportation resource in the past year



**48%**

Had family as a transportation resource in the past year



**28%**

Have used Penquis Lynx in the past year

# [ SURVEY FINDINGS ]

**80%**

DIDN'T GO SOMEWHERE DUE TO LACKING TRANSPORTATION IN THE LAST YEAR.

**20%**

DON'T KNOW OF ANY FORMAL TRANSPORTATION RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO THEM.

**64%**

SAID IT WAS DIFFICULT TO LIVE IN THE COMMUNITY WITHOUT BEING ABLE TO DRIVE.

**57%**

SAID THE WINTER IS THE MOST CHALLENGING TIME TO NOT HAVE TRANSPORTATION.

**80%**

OF PARTICIPANTS FELT THEIR LIVES WOULD BE IMPROVED BY HAVING BETTER ACCESS TO TRANSPORTATION.



# [ INTERVIEW FINDINGS ]

## WHAT ARE THE CHALLENGES FACED USING ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION?



Taxis:

Cost



Lynx:

Scheduling lead time

Concerns about reliability

Concerns about other passengers  
(safety, smoke exposure)



Friends and Family

Cost (gas  
contribution)

Concerns about  
being a burden

## HOW IS NOT HAVING ACCESS TO TRANSPORTATION IMPACTING COMMUNITY MEMBERS?



Lack of freedom



Loneliness and  
Isolation



Feeling of living  
an overly  
scheduled life

# [ DISCUSSION ]

## KEY FINDINGS

- Transportation access is very dependent on social networks. Community members who are socially isolated lack access to even the informal transportation options open to socially connected community members,
- Even for people who have transportation available to them through friends and family, barriers are faced. Not being able to make gas contributions to family or friends or worrying about being a burden can make informal sources of transportation unreliable.
- Flexibility is key to establishing a useful volunteer transportation network. On-demand, or nearly on-demand services are hard to provide, but addressing these spur of the moment rides are key to reducing transportation gaps.
- Continued outreach is necessary to educate about Lynx and other subsidized services. There were participants who felt the service was not available to them because they were not MaineCare recipients. This may indicate that there is continued need to highlight the General Public aspect of Lynx which is open to the broader public.
- Winter is the time of highest need- people who may otherwise have access to a vehicle may be uncomfortable driving in the snow or the people they rely on are.

# [ APPENDIX ]

**Table 1: Town of Residence (N = 152)**

<i>Millinocket</i>	75.0%
<i>East Millinocket</i>	10.5%
<i>Medway</i>	9.2%
<i>Lincoln</i>	2.0%
<i>Molunkus Township</i>	2.0%
<i>Mattawamkeag</i>	0.7%
<i>Sherman</i>	0.7%

**Table 2: Survey Sample Demographics**

<i>Age Range</i>	18-95 years
<i>Median Age</i>	60 years
<i>Gender (F/M)</i>	69.2%/30.1%
<i>Median Household Income</i>	\$10,000 - \$20,000
<i>Median Household Size</i>	2-persons

**Table 3: Household Size (N = 154)**

	Number of Respondents
<i>1-person</i>	49
<i>2-person</i>	65
<i>3-person</i>	18
<i>4-person</i>	16
<i>5-person</i>	3
<i>6-person</i>	1
<i>7-person</i>	1
<i>10-person</i>	1

**Table 4: Respondent's Rating of Health Status Compared to Others of their Own Age (N = 155)**

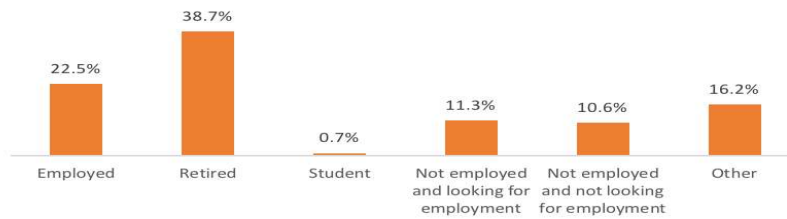
<i>Poor</i>	7.1%
<i>Fair</i>	27.7%
<i>Good</i>	51.6%
<i>Excellent</i>	13.5%

**Table 5: Respondents with a Disability or Health Issue (N = 153)**

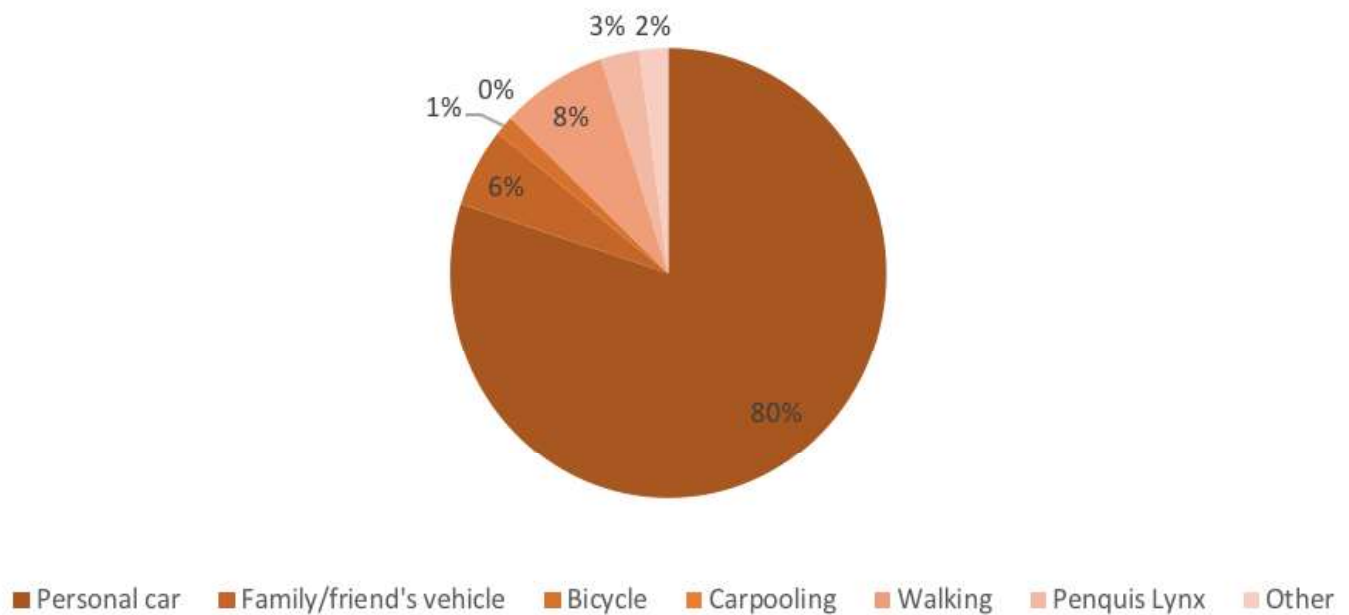
<i>Respondents who have a disability or health issue</i>	50.3%
<i>Respondents who do not have a disability or health issue</i>	49.7%

# [ APPENDIX ]

**Figure 1: Respondent's Employment Status (N = 142)**



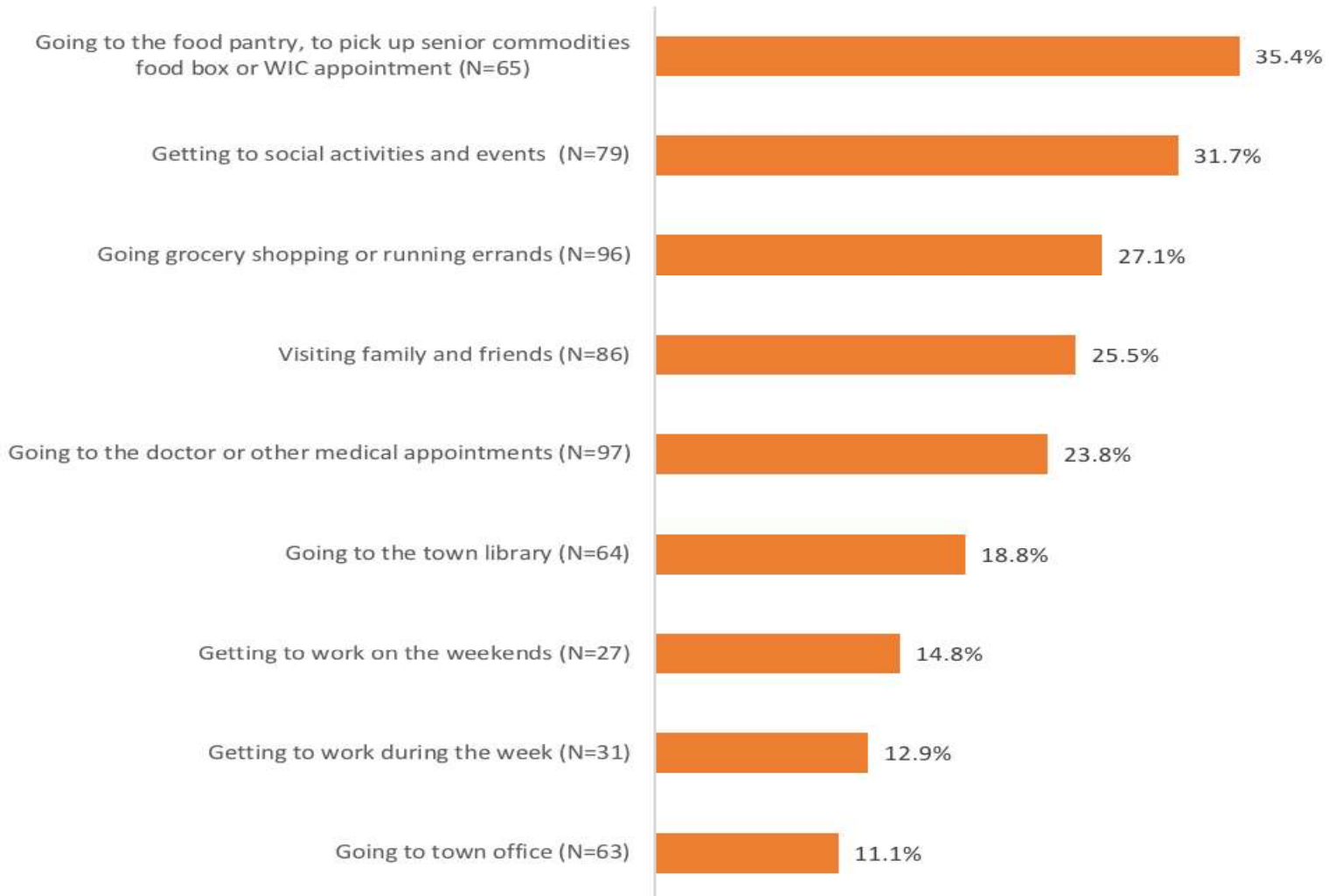
**Figure 2: Method of Transportation Used Most Often by Respondents (N = 140)**



# [ APPENDIX ]

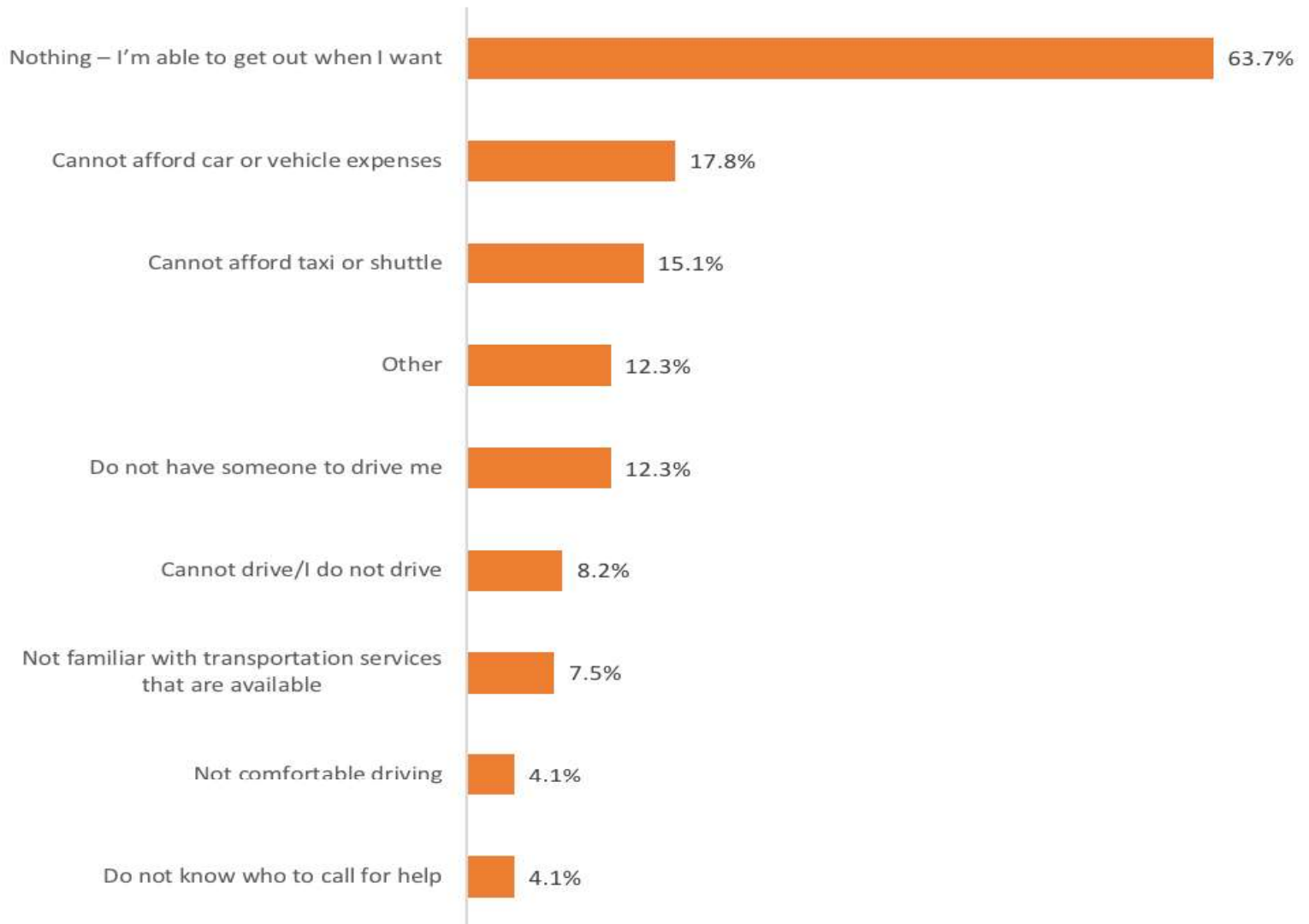
**Figure 3:**

**“In the last six months, roughly, how often have you been unable to do any of the following because you didn’t have transportation?”**



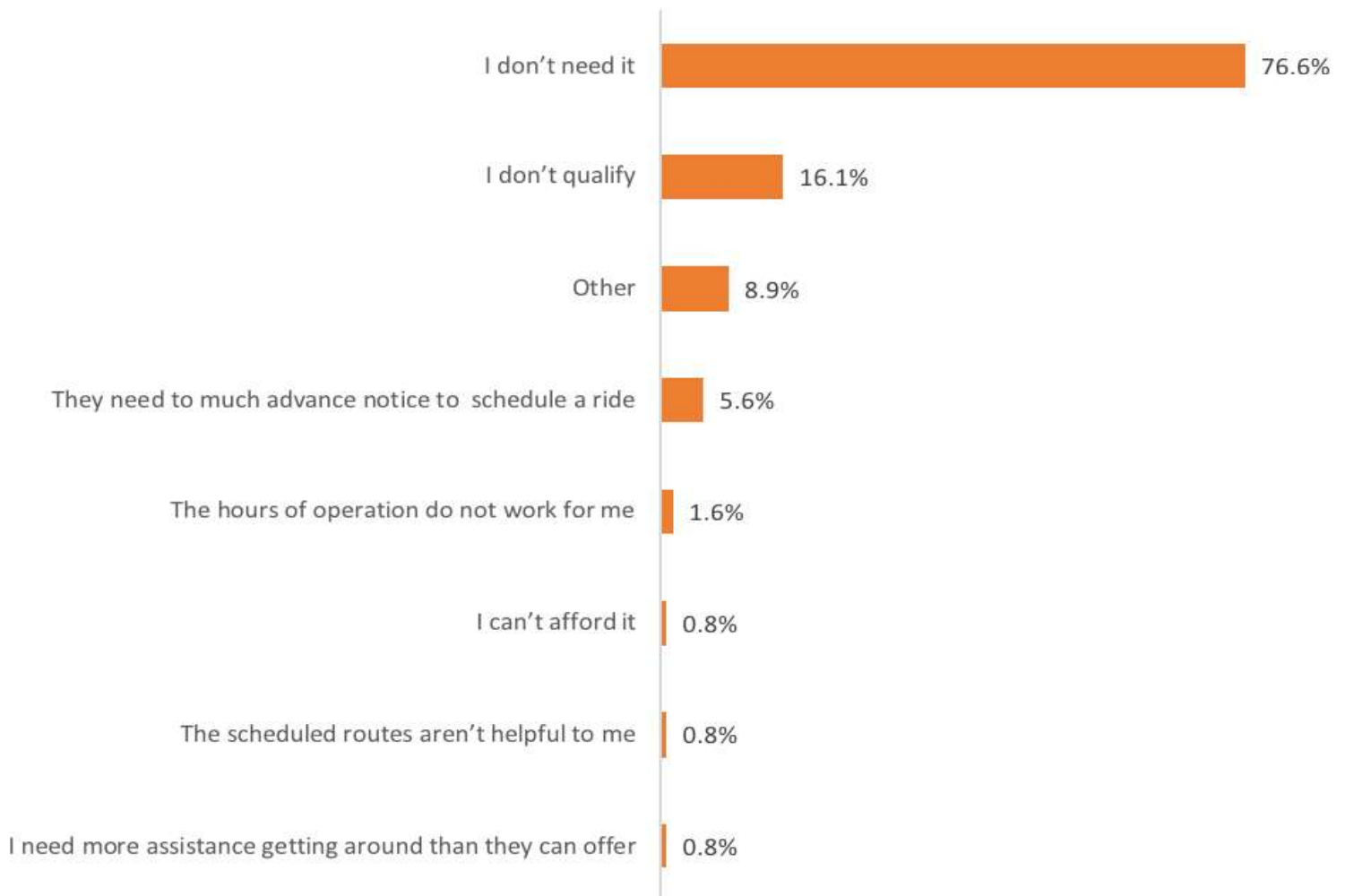
# [ APPENDIX ]

**Figure 4:**  
**“What, if anything, keeps you from getting out as often as you would like?” (N = 146)**



# [ APPENDIX ]

**Figure 5:**  
**“Why have you not used the Penquis Lynx service during the past six months?” (N=124)**





# [ APPENDIX ]

**Figure 6:**

**“If you are not currently driving yourself, or you can imagine a time in the future when you are no longer able to drive, please rate how likely you would be to use the following transportation options.”**

