

Bee-Line System Onboard Survey

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2007

A survey was conducted onboard Bee-Line buses between November 28 through December 15, 2007. Temporary workers were trained and then used for data collection under the direction of CJI Research Corporation. The total “effective distribution,” defined as a rider accepting the survey materials and agreeing to complete a survey form, was 12,823. Of these, 9,243 returned a survey form that was sufficiently complete to be included in the analysis—resulting in for an effective return rate of 72%. A similar survey was conducted in 2003 with 9,781 riders, and is used here for comparison.

SUMMARY

- Bee-Line is used intensively. In 2007, 76% of riders used the bus five or more days each week. This is statistically unchanged from 2003, when 75% of riders used Bee-Line that frequently.
- Almost two-thirds of Bee-Line riders (63%) have no vehicle and are dependent upon transit. Conversely, 37% have a vehicle but choose to use the bus. This, too, is statistically unchanged from 2003.
- Sixty-one percent (61%) use Bee-Line for work-trips. This is identical to the 2003 result and is also similar to the percentages of work-trips reported in comparable transit systems.
- The greatest change in the survey results between 2003 and 2007 relates to fare payment. In 2003, 61% paid the fare in cash, while 39% used a prepaid fare medium. In 2007, only 34% used cash while 66% used a prepaid fare medium. This was a result of Bee-Line’s acceptance of MetroCard.
- More riders in 2007 (66%) compared to 2003 (61%) said they transferred, whether within the Bee-Line system or between Bee-Line and another system. One consequence of the introduction of the MetroCard to Bee-Line has been an increase from 10% to 21% of riders who said that they had transferred to their Bee-Line bus from the New York City Subway.
- More than half of Bee-Line trips originate in Yonkers (30.2%) or in New York City (21.6%). Most of the New York City trips originate in the Bronx (specifically, 17.8% of all riders).
- Bee-Line riders, like those of most transit systems in the United States, tend to be young. In 2003, 67%, and in 2007, 62% were 39 or younger.
- In 2007, most riders identified themselves as either African-American (42%) or Hispanic (34%). While the percentages of other ethnic/cultural groups decreased only slightly, the offsetting increase of 4% was concentrated among Hispanic riders whose percentage rose from 30% in 2003 to 34% in 2007.
- The income distribution of rider households is fairly typical of transit ridership nationally. In 2007, almost one-fourth (23%) of riders reported household incomes of less than \$10,000.
- Bee-Line riders continue to give the service high marks for quality. A total of 66% rated service as good or excellent in 2007, up somewhat from the 63% who rated it similarly in 2003.



the *bee-line* system

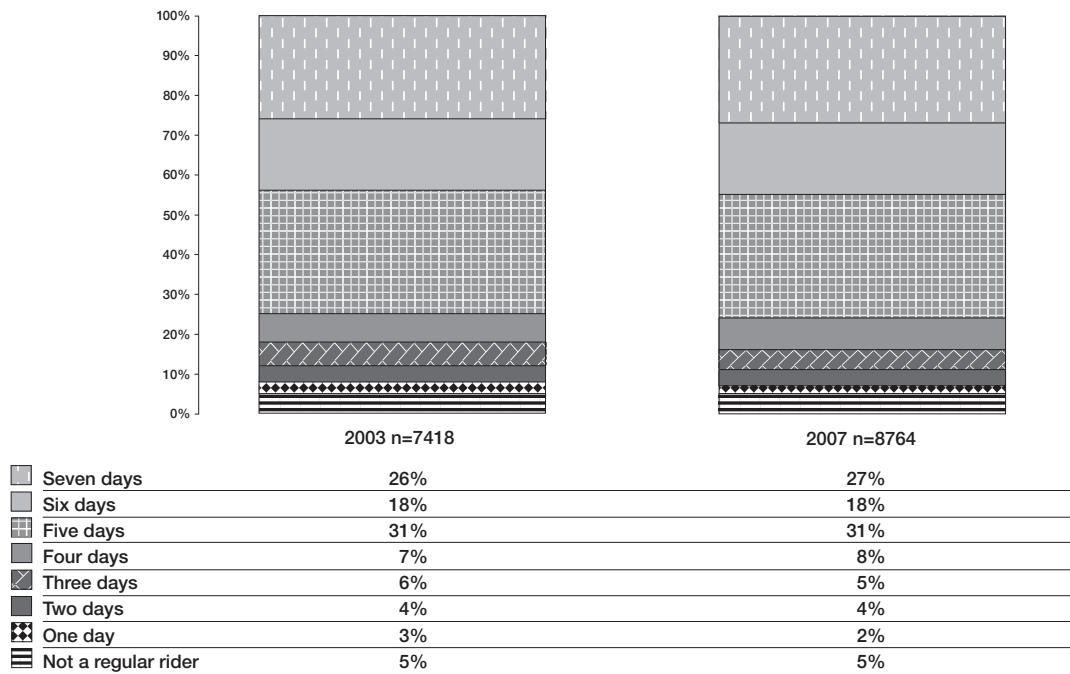
Andrew J. Spano, Westchester County Executive
County Board of Legislators
Lawrence C. Salley, Commissioner



BASIC PASSENGER CHARACTERISTICS

Weekly Frequency of Riding Bee-Line Buses

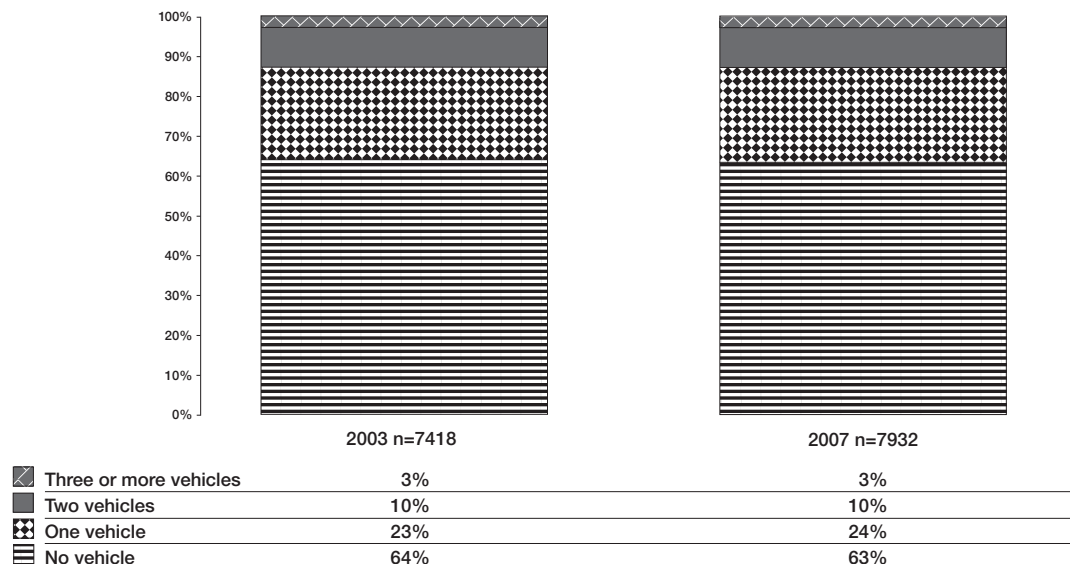
The weekly frequency of using Bee-Line has not changed significantly since 2003. For example, most riders in 2007, as in 2003, said they use Bee-Line fairly intensively, five or more days per week. In 2003, the total using Bee-Line this frequently was 75% and in 2007, it was 76%, not a statistically significant change.



(Source: Question #1. In a typical week, how many days do you usually use the Bee-Line System?)

Transit Dependence

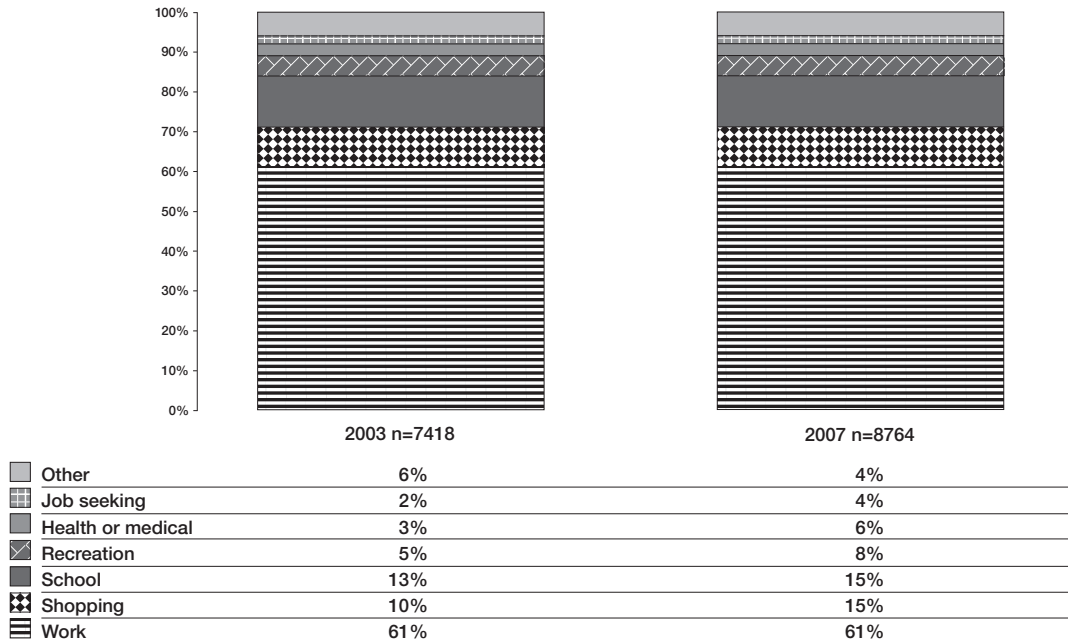
In 2007, 63% of Bee-Line riders reported that they lacked a vehicle. This percentage of transit dependency is characteristic of many transit systems in the United States that rely only on buses. Conversely, more than one-third of Bee-Line riders (37%) indicated that they have one or more vehicles, an indication that many of them use Bee-Line by choice, rather than necessity.



(Source: Question #28. How many cars or other motor vehicles are available for you to use?)

Trip Purpose

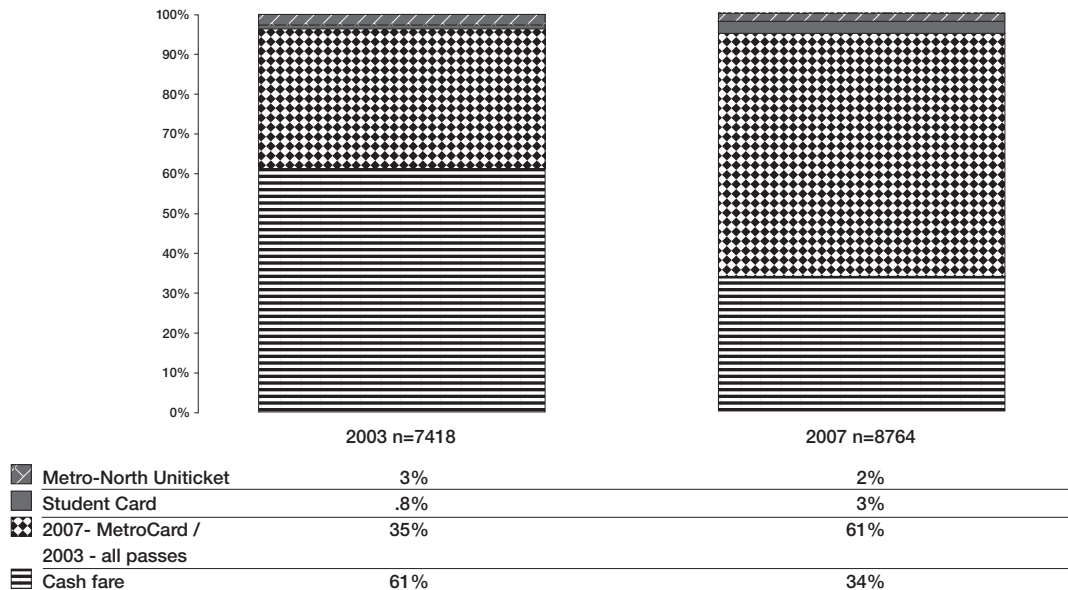
The dominant trip purpose in 2007, as in 2003, was to get to or from work (61% in both years). In 2007, 4% were “job-seeking,” and 15% going to or from school. This means that Bee-Line services have a major economic impact through providing mobility for labor force, especially for those who are dependent on transit. Moreover, Bee-Line services play an increasing role with job-seeking in a faltering economy and for those riders who go to school in preparation for entering the workforce.



(Source: Question #3. What is the main purpose of your bus trip today?)

How the Fare Was Paid

The policy of accepting the MetroCard as fare payment on Bee-Line has dramatically increased the use of prepaid fares (i.e., passes) from 35% in 2003 to 61% in 2007. This change carries many advantages, including the obvious one of reducing cash handling. It also includes the more subtle advantages of encouraging passenger loyalty because MetroCard is a convenience and because it helps integrate Bee-Line better into the regional transit system, making regional travel more nearly seamless.



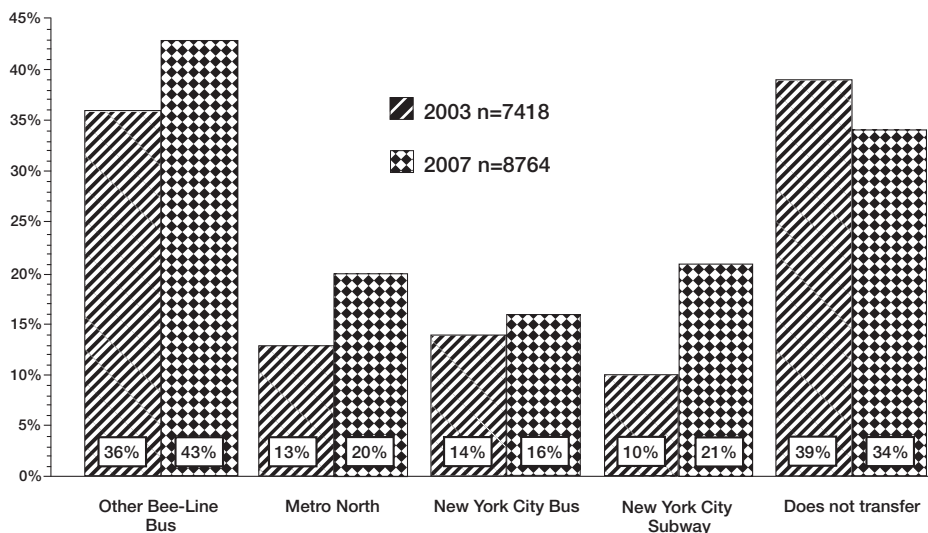
(Source: Question #5. How did you pay for your bus fare today?)

Transfers

Besides being asked how they got to their bus, riders were also asked specifically if they had made or would make any transfer during their trip.

The percent of riders making any transfer (not just to get to Bee-Line buses but at any point in the trip) rose from 61% to 66% between 2003 and 2007, with the New York City Subway showing the largest increase, from 10% in 2003 to 21% in 2007, probably because of MetroCard.

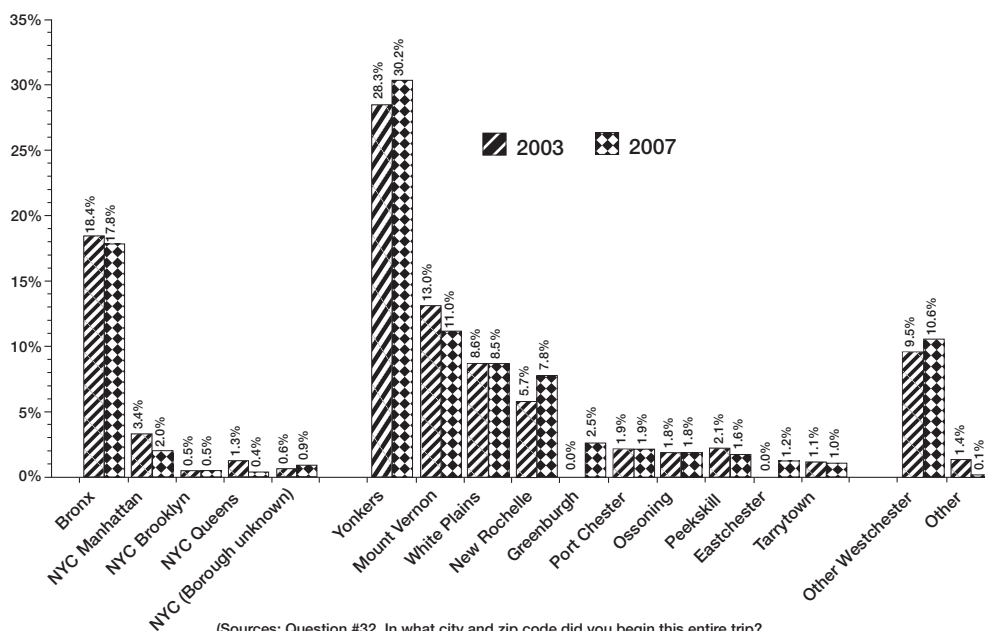
Conversely, the percent of riders making no transfer at all declined to 34% in 2007 from 39% in 2003.



(Sources: Question #34. Did you or will you transfer to or from another service during this trip?)*
 *The sum of percentages exceeds 100% because some riders transfer more than once.

Point of Origin of Entire Trip

In 2007, as in 2003, Yonkers and the Bronx dominated the points of trip origin among Bee-Line riders with a total of 48% of the riders, up only slightly from 46.7% in 2003. Among the lesser sources of ridership, Manhattan (2%) and Mt. Vernon (11%) both showed a slight percentage decline as sources of riders. On the other hand, riders originating in New Rochelle increased as a percentage of all Bee-Line riders (from 5.7% to 7.8%).

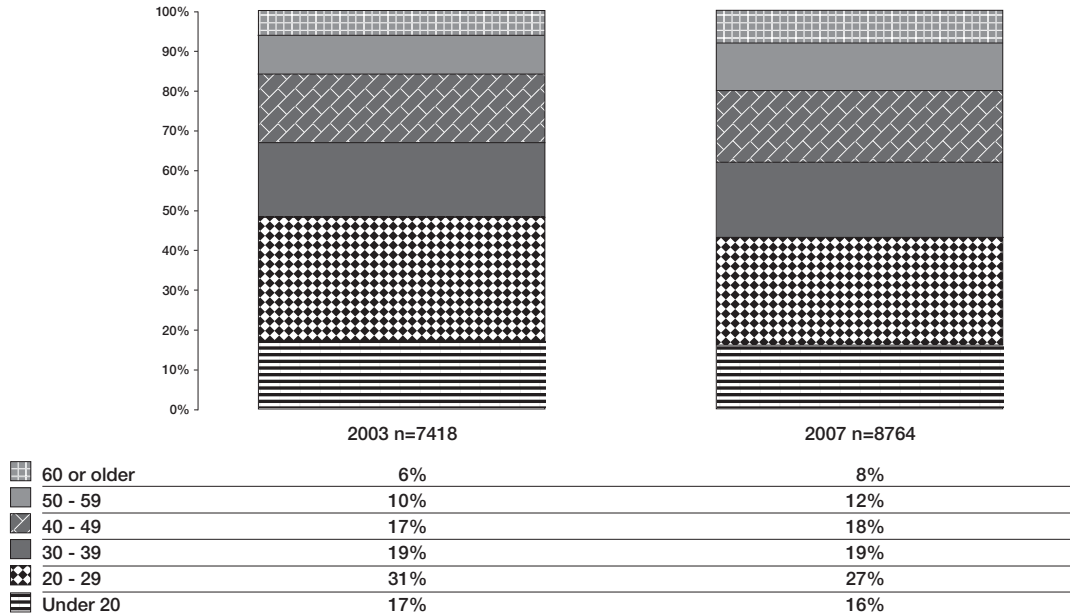


(Sources: Question #32. In what city and zip code did you begin this entire trip? (where you started, even if you have transferred))

DEMOGRAPHICS

Age of Riders

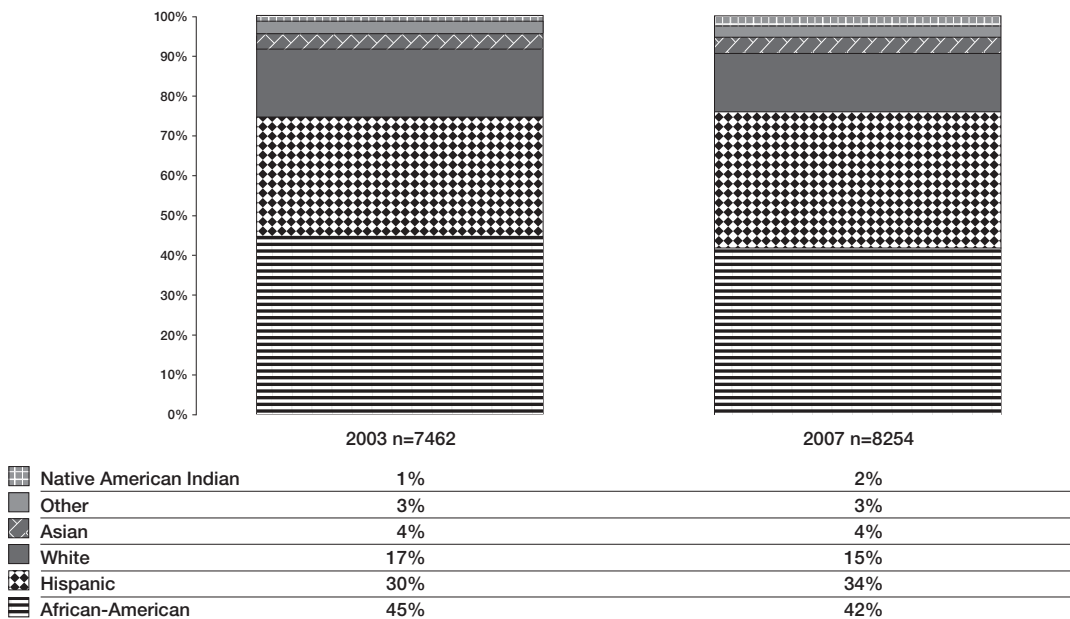
Bee-Line riders, like users of most transit systems in the United States, tend to be young. In 2003, 67%, and in 2007, 62% were 39 or younger. This younger set of riders remained the dominant age groups in 2007 as it had been in 2003. However, there was a 5% increase of riders forty years old or older and a corresponding 5% decrease of riders under forty.



(Source: Question #25. How old are you?)

Ethnic/Racial Self-Identification

In 2007, as in 2003, most Bee-Line riders tended to self-identify as either African-American or Hispanic. The primary change since 2003 has been a 4% increase in the percentage of Hispanic riders, and a commensurate decline in the percentages identifying themselves as African-American or white. Because overall Bee-Line ridership has increased by 11% in that period, this change suggests that African-American and white riders have not necessarily declined in absolute numbers, but clearly Hispanic riders have increased in number.

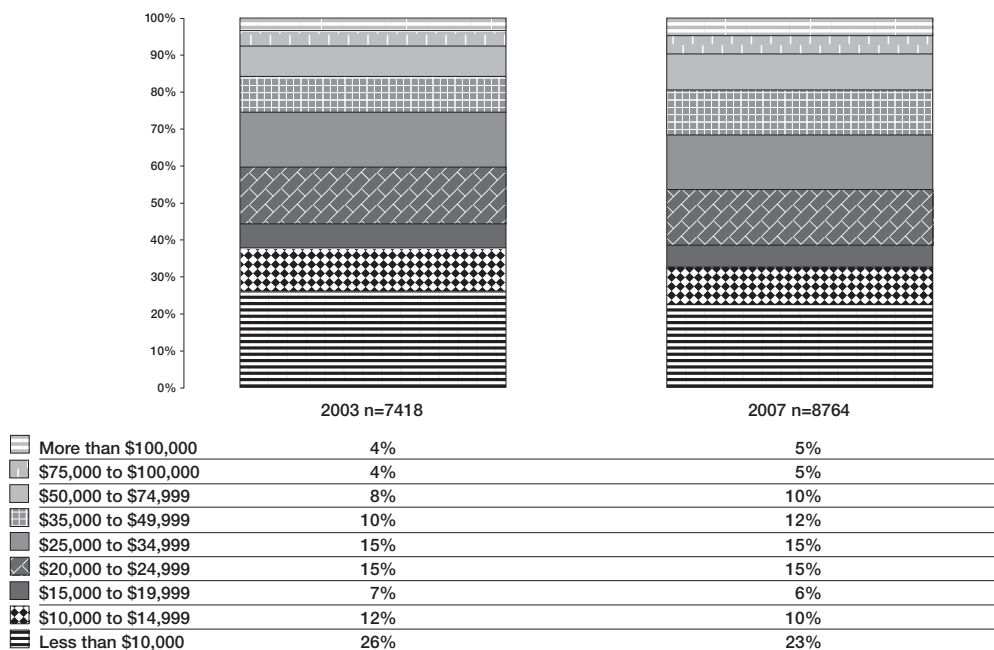


(Source: Question #31. Which do you consider yourself?)

Household Income

In 2007 almost one-fourth (23%) of Bee-Line riders reported household incomes of \$10,000 or less. This tendency of a high percentage of riders to have rather low incomes is fairly typical nationally.

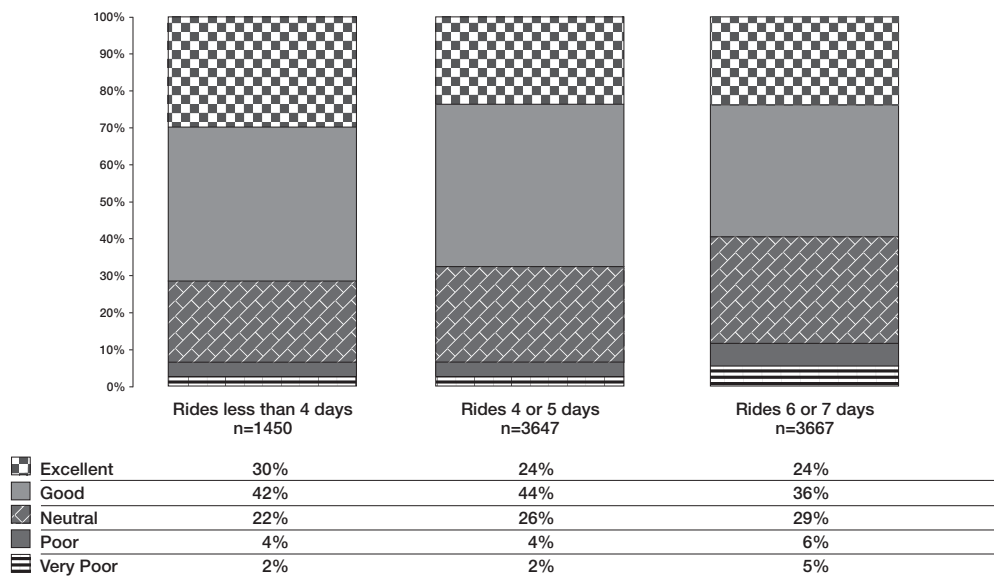
Income reported in the survey increased slightly from the 2003 figures. In 2003, 26% reported incomes of \$35,000 or more, while in 2007, 32% reported incomes of \$35,000 or more. While some of this change is probably due to wage inflation, some change probably also results from Bee-Line attracting more high-income riders.



(Source: Question #31. What is your total household income?)

Rating Overall Quality of Service

Bee-Line riders continue to give the service high marks for quality. A total of 66% rated the service as good or excellent in 2007. That was an improvement from the 63% who rated it similarly in 2003.



(Source: Question #10. Please rate overall quality of Bee-Line service.)

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