



METROPOLITAN  
TRANSPORTATION  
COMMISSION

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## *Memorandum*

TO: Programming and Allocations Committee

DATE: June 13, 2007

FR: Executive Director

RE: Phase 1 Results of MTC's Transit Passenger Demographic Survey

Last fall, MTC initiated a Transit Passenger Demographic Survey of the region's fixed route transit riders. The purpose of this study was to better understand the demographic characteristics (age, gender, income, household size, and ethnicity) of transit passengers who use the fixed route services provided by thirteen major transit providers as well as seven additional smaller operators within our region. This survey included the collection of data on a variety of transit modes (such as bus, ferry, and train) during various on and off-peak times, from a diverse cross section of transit users, including those who do not speak English. Godbe Research, a market research consulting firm, was hired to conduct the surveys and compile the results.

The first phase of this endeavor, now complete, covers transit riders during the period between 6 am and 9 pm, which is when most transit users make their trips. The fieldwork for Phase 1 began on October 24th and was completed on March 31st. The second phase, now underway, is surveying nighttime transit riders who use the system between 9 pm and 6 am.

Since April, MTC staff has made presentations on study progress, including the sampling plan, fieldwork, and the tabulations, to our Minority Citizens Advisory Committee, Elderly and Disabled Advisory Committee, and Transit Finance Working Group. These same three advisory groups had also provided comments on the study design and survey wording during the project's initial tasks.

The full final report for Phase 1, available upon request, covers the following areas:

- Research method and survey protocol used;
- Demographic profile of the region's transit users;
- Disaggregated demographic data by geographic sub-region, and by transit system;
- Detailed responses by individual transit system;
- Appendices include comprehensive tables of all of the project's sampling and cross tabulations.

Attached is a summary of the report findings as well as some analysis prepared by MTC staff that puts the demographic survey results within the context of the Bay Area's total population and ongoing Lifeline programming efforts. Godbe staff will also be in attendance at the June 13th meeting and they can respond to any questions that you may have about the study.

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Steve Heminger

# Metropolitan Transportation Commission Transit Passenger Demographic Survey

Survey Produced by Godbe Research  
Analysis Developed by MTC staff

June 2007



# Presentation Overview

- **Overview of Research Objectives**
- **Methodology Overview**
- **Key Findings**

# Overview and Research Objectives

- To collect statistically valid information about users of regional transit systems
  - **Demographics:** gender, age, ethnicity, household income and location of residence
  - **Regional transit use:** trip origin and destination, travel time, trip frequency, fare payment method and category, and public transit dependency

# Methodology Overview

- **Data Collection** Intercept Interviewing
- **Universe** Users of 21 Public Transit Systems in the Region
- **Fielding Dates** October 24, 2006 to March 31, 2007
- **Survey Length** 17 Questions
- **Sample Size** 14,505
- **Margin of Error**  $\pm 0.83\%$

# Transit Systems Included In Survey

## Large Operators (7)

AC Transit

BART

Caltrain

Golden Gate

MUNI

Samtrans

VTA

## East Bay Small Operators (7)

LAVTA, CCCTA, Tri-Delta Transit,  
WestCAT, Union City, Alameda Ferry,  
ACE

## Solano Operators (4)

Fairfield-Suisun Transit, Vacaville  
City Coach, Vallejo Transit, Benicia  
Breeze

## Sonoma-Napa Operators (3)

Sonoma County Transit, Santa Rosa  
CityBus, VINE

# Key Findings

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# Summary: Demographics

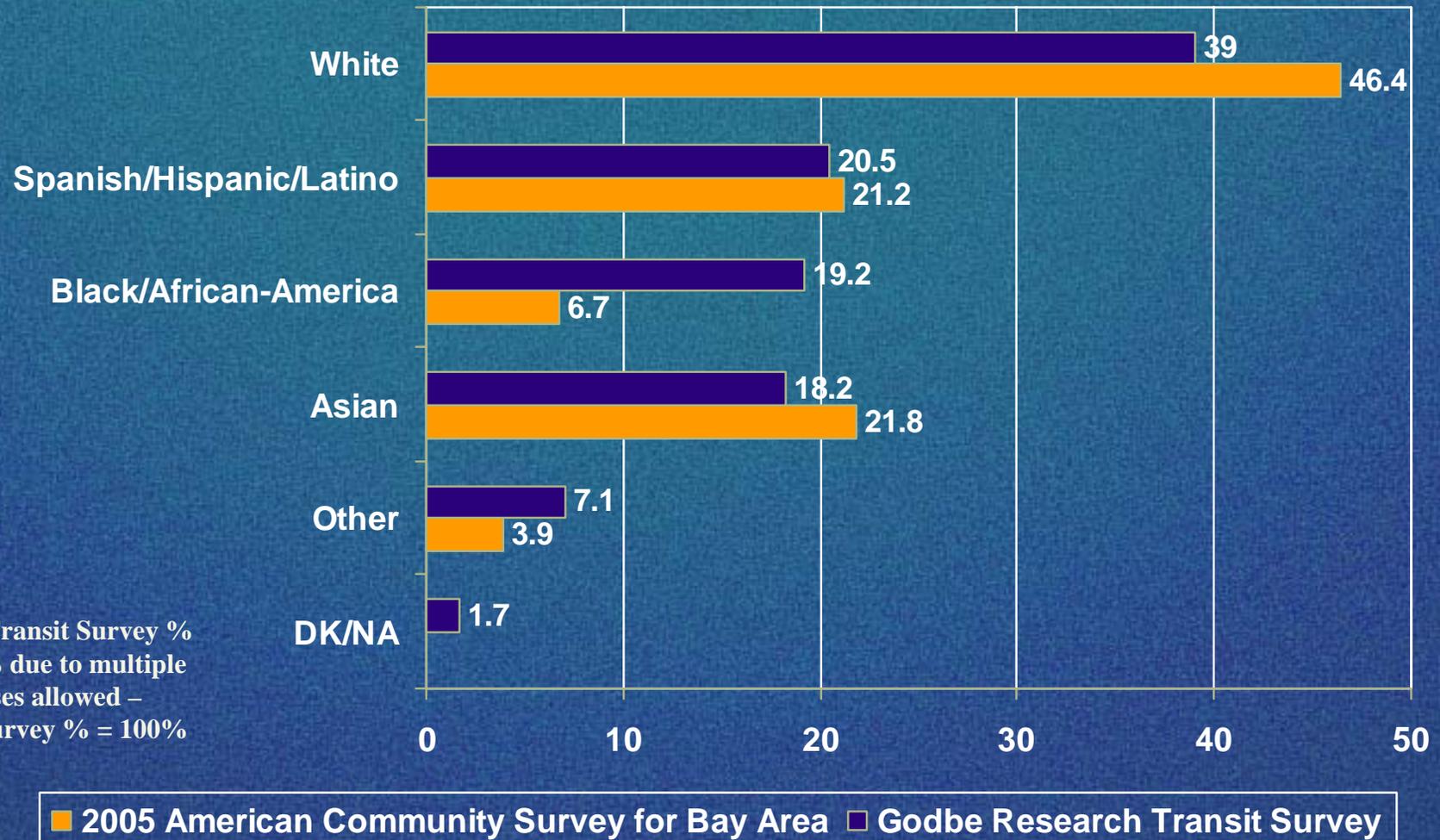
## Gender

- 51 percent male and 48 percent female

## Age

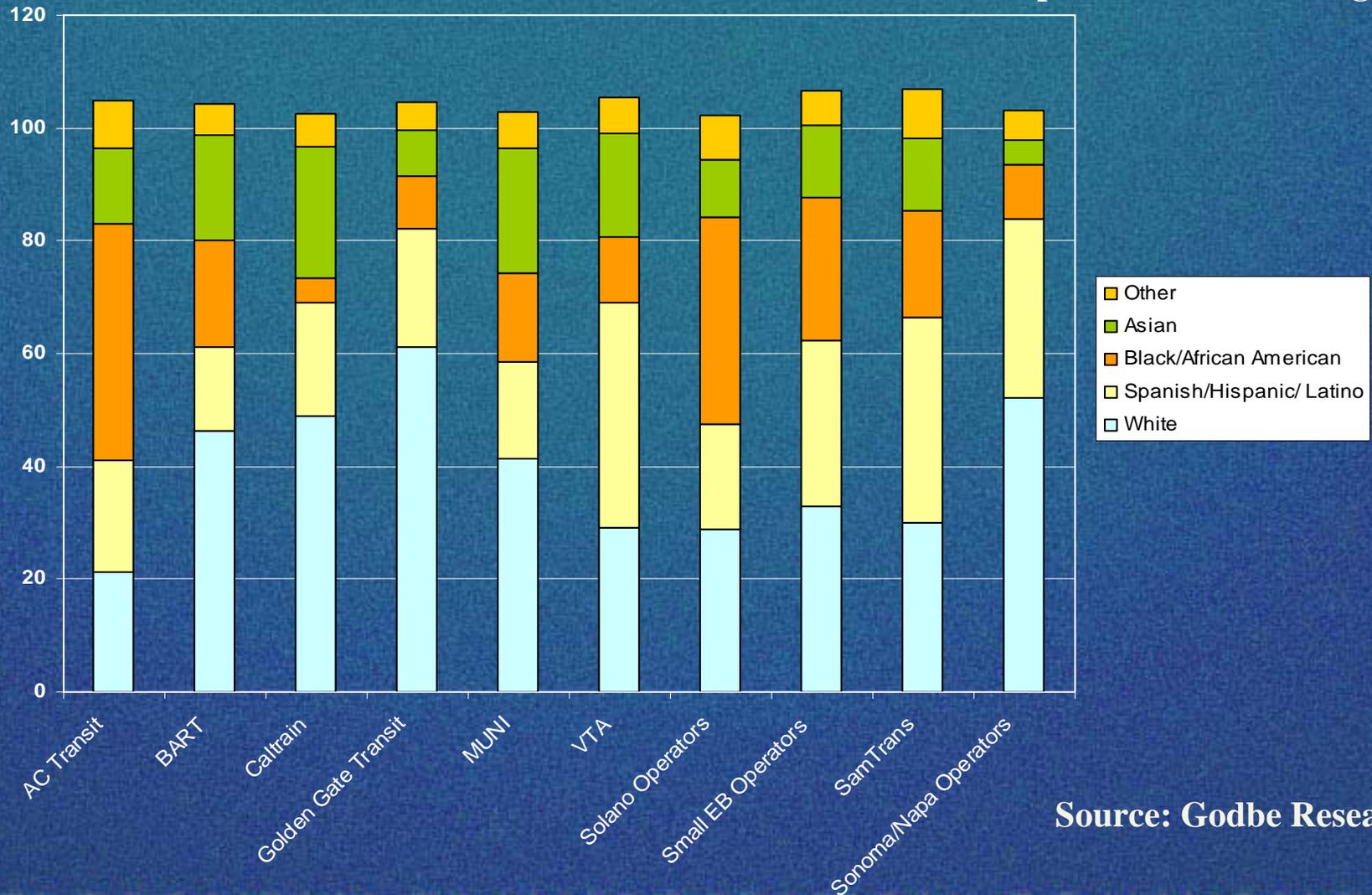
- Majority fell within the adult working ages of 18 to 64
  - 26% reported being 25 to 34 years
  - 20% each of 18 to 24 and 35 to 44
  - 9% minors and 3% seniors

# Race/Ethnicity: Comparison of Transit Riders and Bay Area Population



# Race/Ethnicity by Transit System

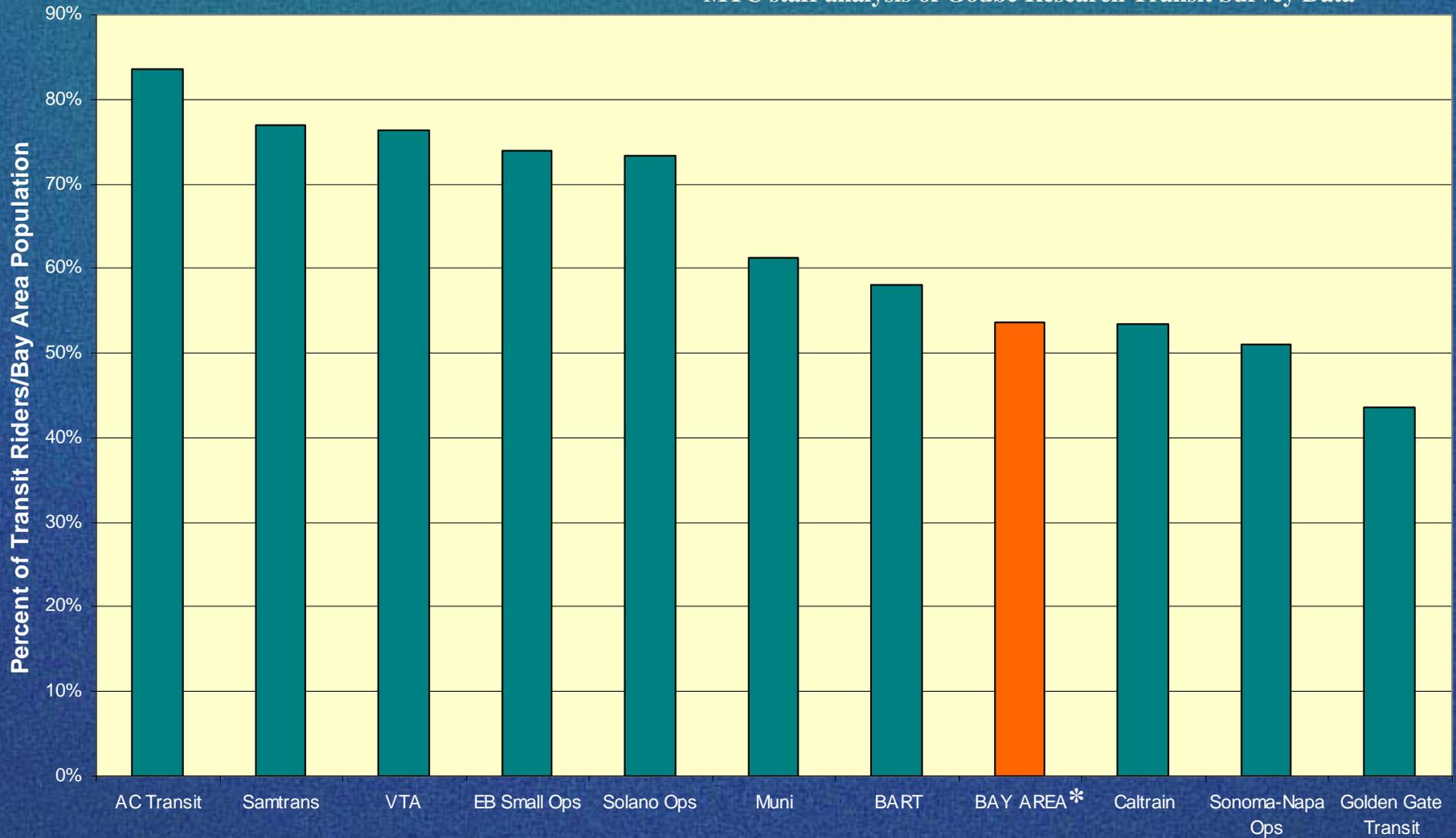
Note: totals add to more than 100% due to allowance for multiple racial/ethnic categories



Source: Godbe Research

# % Minority Riders by Transit System and Compared to Bay Area

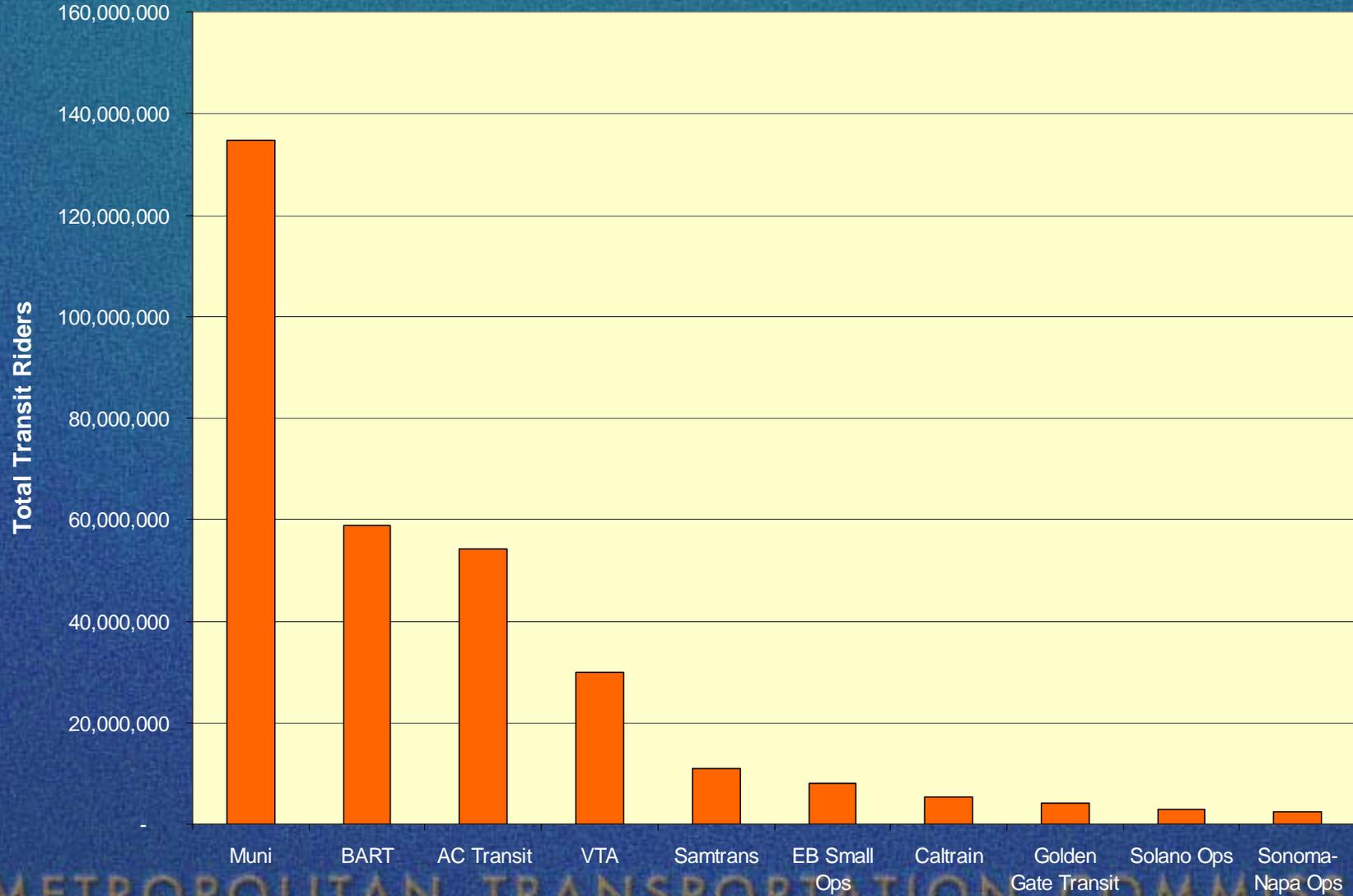
MTC staff analysis of Godbe Research Transit Survey Data



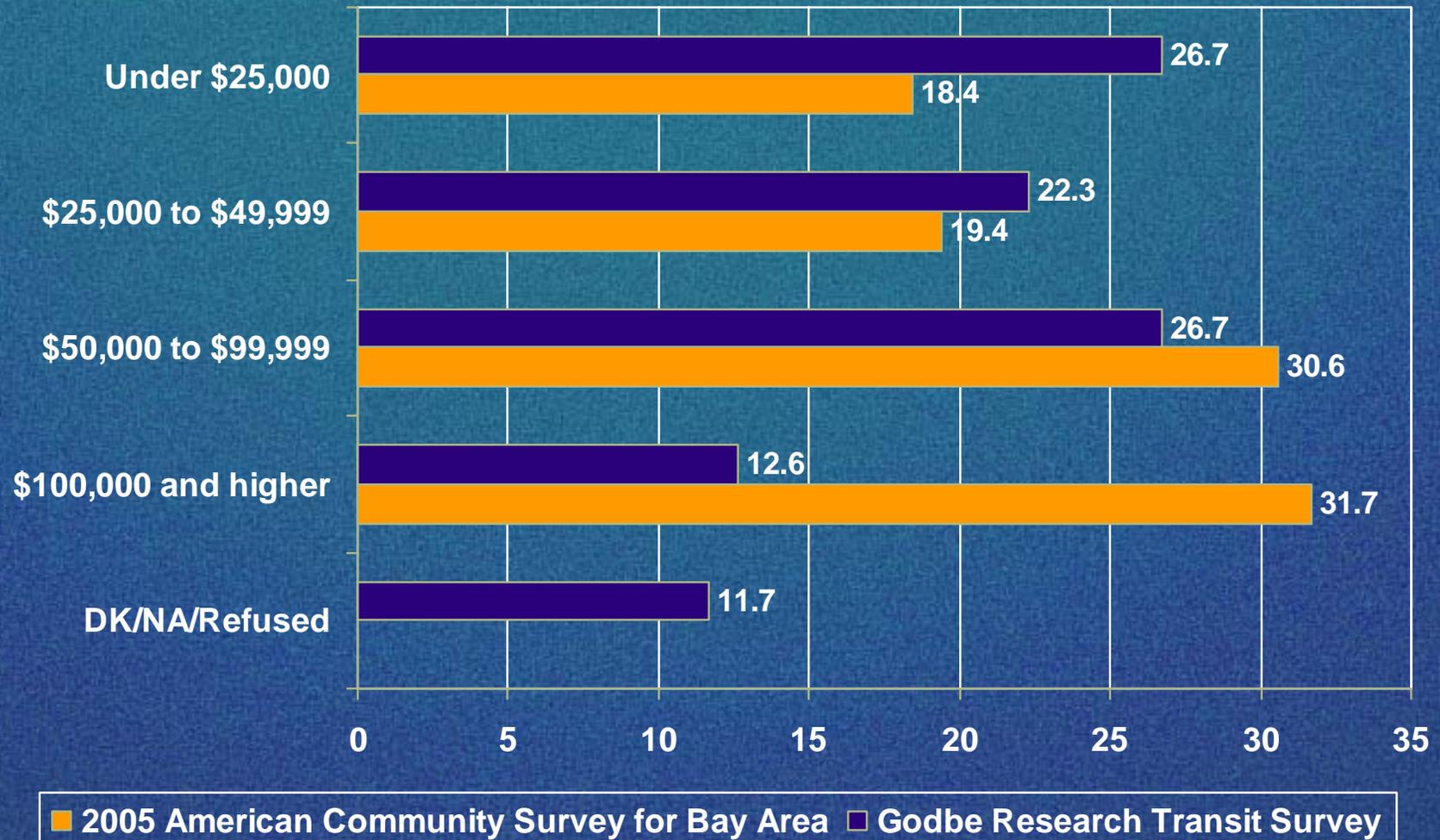
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\* source: 2005 American Community Survey: estimate of minority residents as percent of total Bay Area population

# Total Minority Riders by Transit System

MTC staff analysis of Godbe Research Transit Survey Data (2005-06 Ridership Data from Statistical Summary)

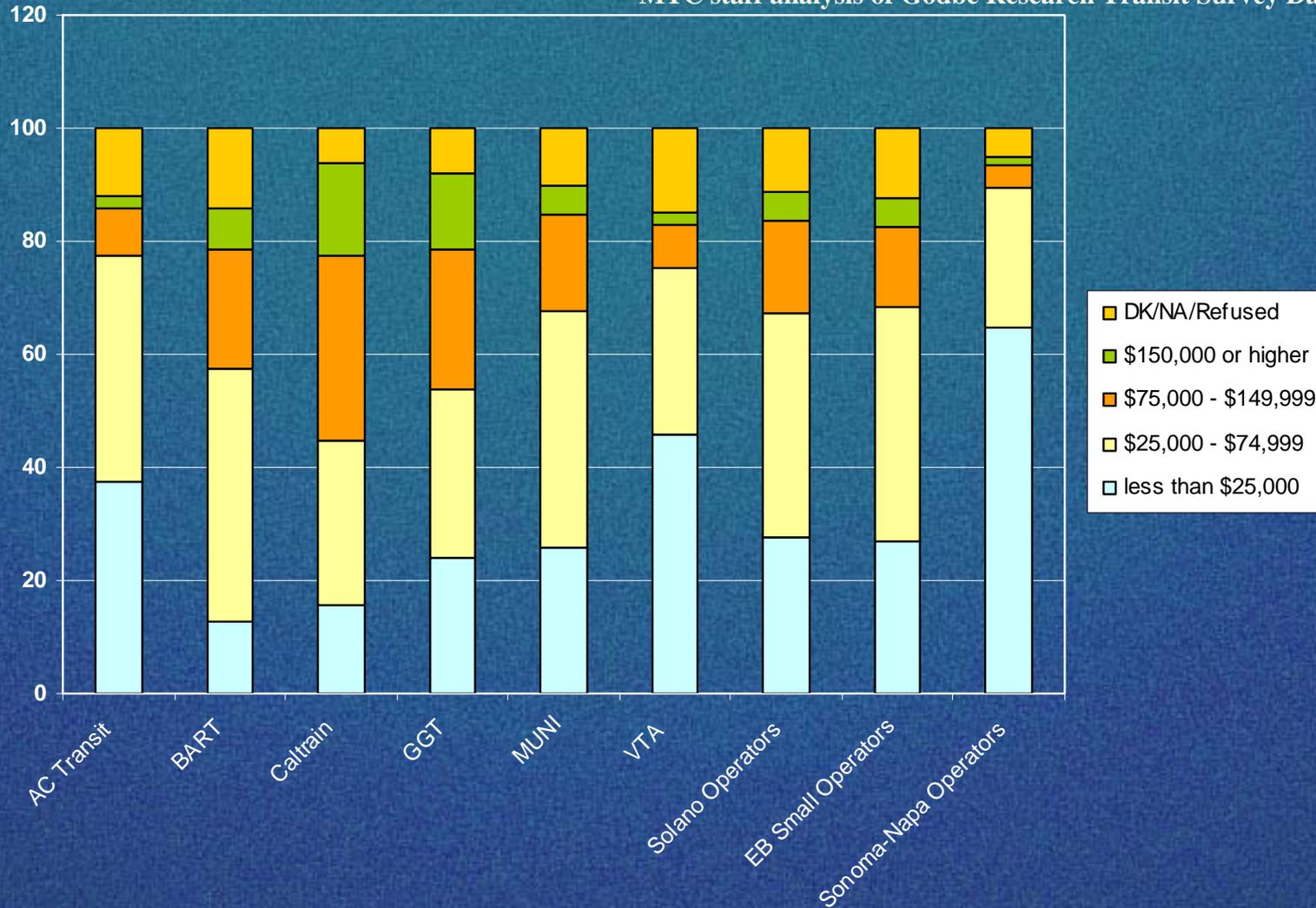


# Annual Household Income: Comparison of Transit Riders and Bay Area Population



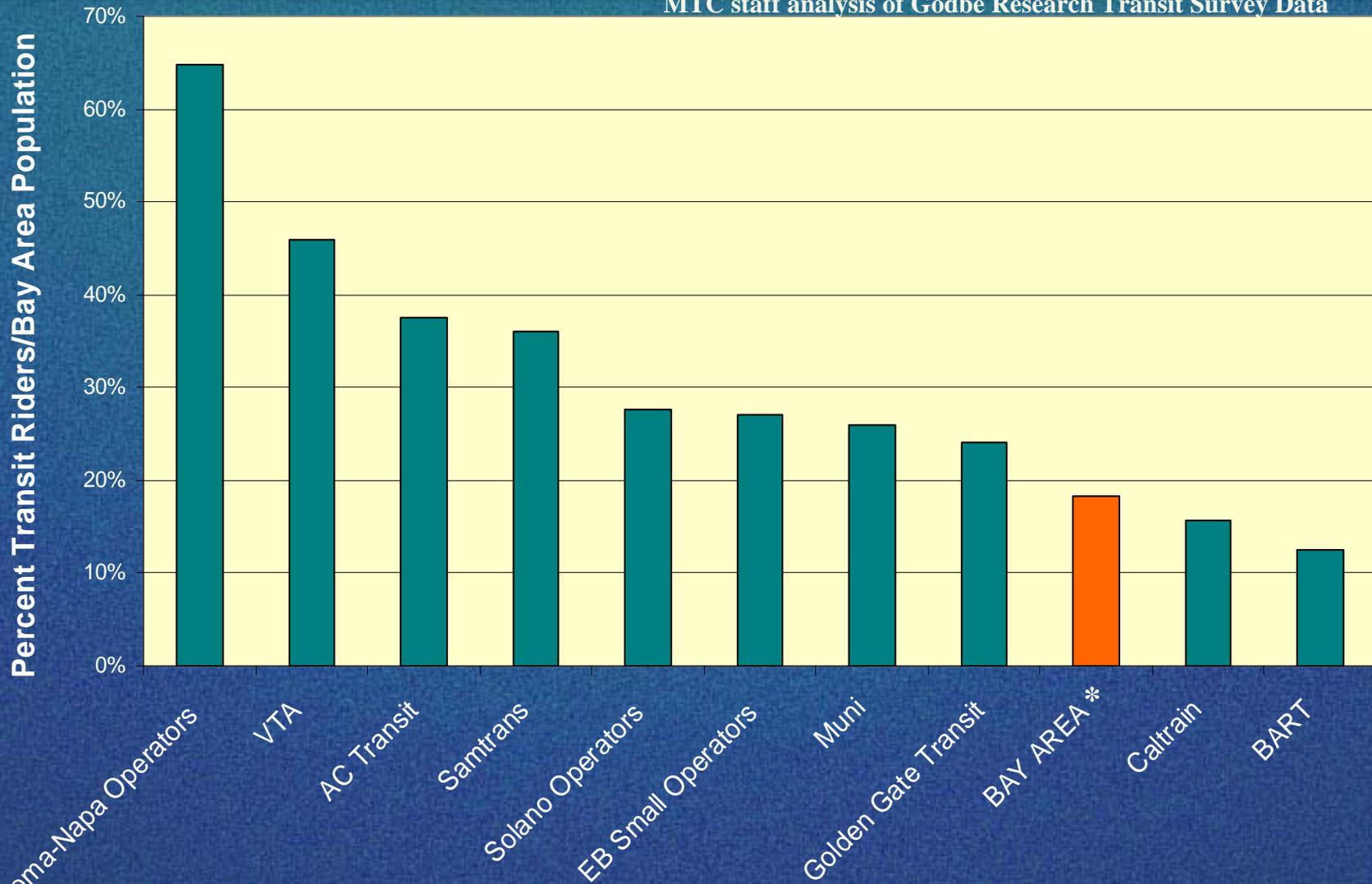
# Household Income by Transit System

MTC staff analysis of Godbe Research Transit Survey Data



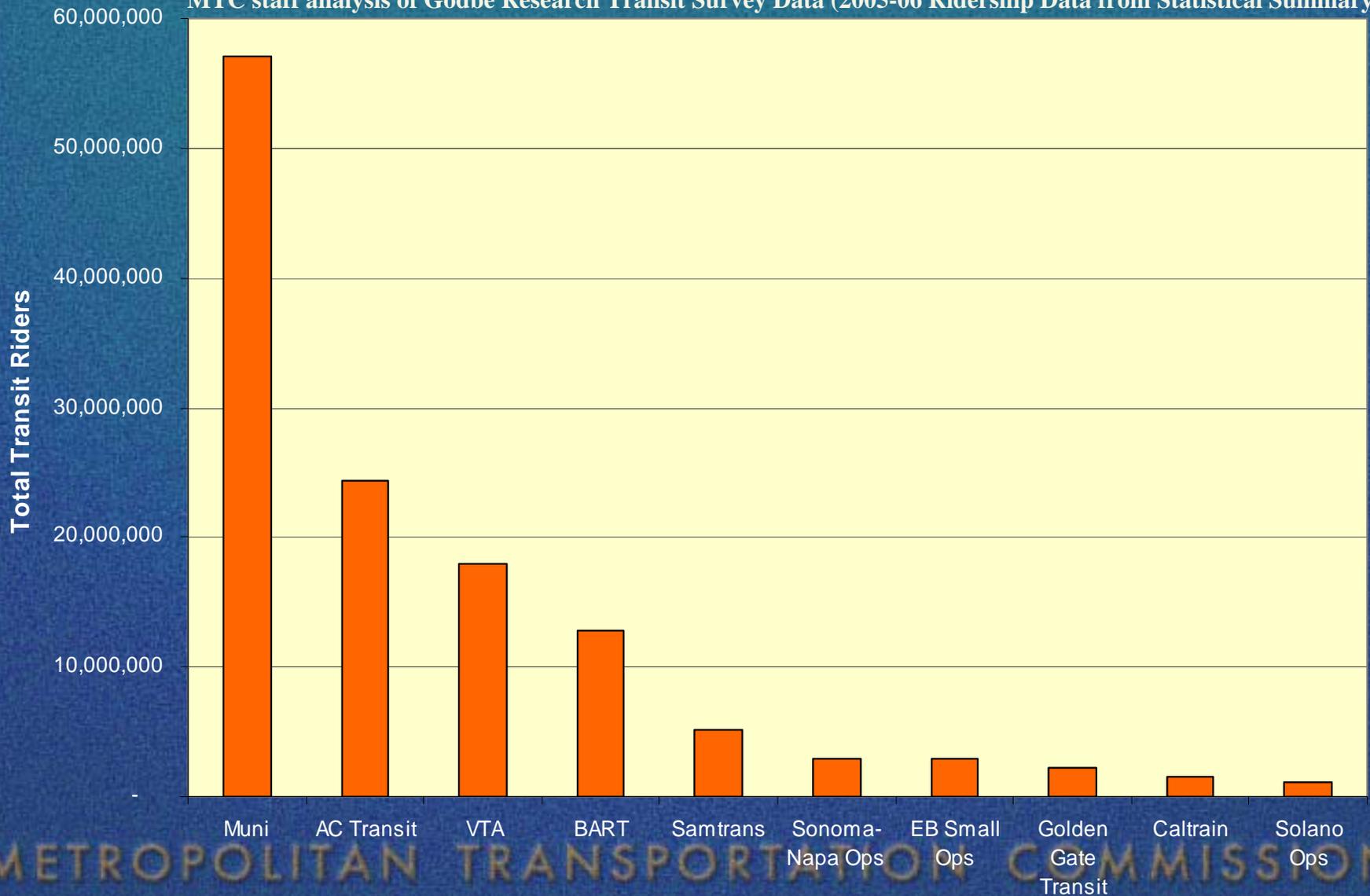
# Households Earning < \$25K Annually: Percent by Bay Area Operators

MTC staff analysis of Godbe Research Transit Survey Data



# Total Riders with Households Earning < \$25K Annually: By Transit System

MTC staff analysis of Godbe Research Transit Survey Data (2005-06 Ridership Data from Statistical Summary)

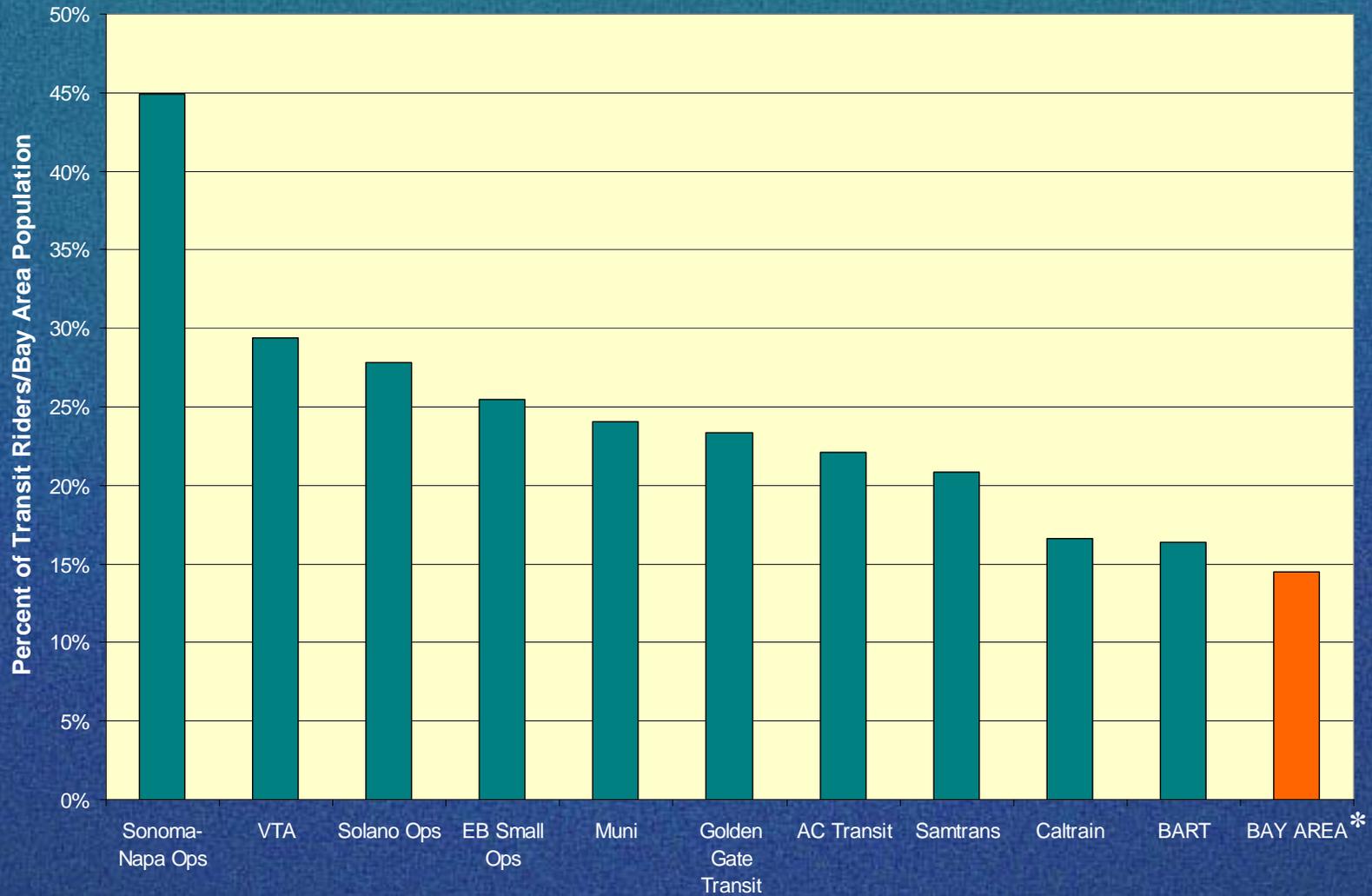


# Transit Dependency

- 23% of the passengers were transit-dependent
  - 34% took public transit on the survey day because they did *not* have an automobile available to them
  - Within this group, 67% normally do *not* have an automobile available to them to take the trip in question
- 85% did *not* have any public transit-dependent children living at home

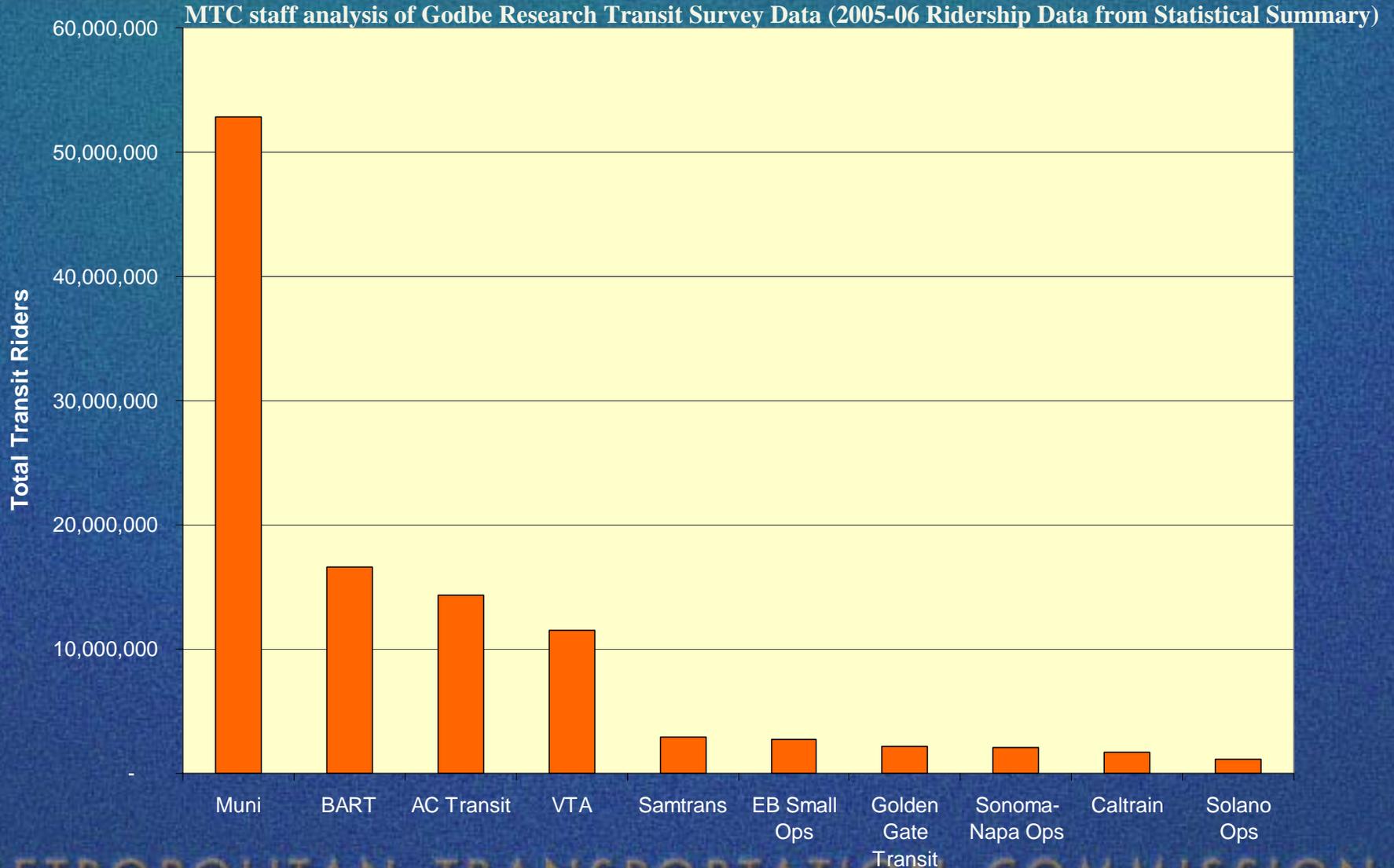
# % Transit Dependent Riders by Transit System

MTC staff analysis of Godbe Research Transit Survey Data



\* MTC staff estimate based on 2000 Bay Area Travel Survey

# Total Transit Dependent Riders by Transit System



# Trip Characteristics

## Trip Origin and Destination

- Most trips were taken between home and work
  - 47% came from home and 21% from work
  - 34% percent going home, while 29% going to work

## Trip Length and Frequency of Travel

- Two-thirds of the trip lengths fell within 10 to 49 minutes
- 42% 4 to 5 days a week; 17 percent 6 to 7 days a week

## Fare Category

- 53% Cash; 31% “Daily, weekly, monthly, or multiple ride ticket or pass”
- 80% “Adult” fare and 13% “Youth or Student” fare

# Trip Frequency Differences by Transit System

	AC Transit	BART	Caltrain	Golden Gate Transit	MUNI
6 to 7 days a week	24.3%	9.0%	6.0%	12.1%	17.5%
4 to 5 days a week	45.6%	41.2%	50.0%	57.9%	40.5%

	VTA	Solano Operators	East Bay Operators	SamTrans	Sonoma-Napa Operators
6 to 7 days a week	26.0%	16.0%	14.8%	28.3%	18.7%
4 to 5 days a week	37.7%	44.0%	54.4%	37.5%	43.0%

# Fare Category Differences by Transit System

	AC Transit	BART	Caltrain	Golden Gate Transit	MUNI
Adult	65.9%	<b>92.4%</b>	<b>82.4%</b>	<b>81.5%</b>	<b>79.6%</b>
Youth or student	<b>24.4%</b>	<b>3.4%</b>	7.4%	9.8%	12.9%

	VTA	Solano Operators	East Bay Operators	SamTrans	Sonoma-Napa Operators
Adult	71.4%	75.8%	<b>75.9%</b>	67.0%	60.7%
Youth or student	<b>16.8%</b>	15.0%	<b>15.5%</b>	<b>22.3%</b>	<b>20.0%</b>