NYC Ferry – 2023 Survey Results

2023 Survey Overview

Survey 2023 Methodology

The 2023 survey was distributed via 3 methods:

- **Email to recent riders**: All riders who activated a ticket were sent an email within an hour of activation. 1,989 responses were received via email link.

- **On-Board QR Codes**: QR codes were available via postcards on seats and digital ads. 1,359 responses were received via on-board QR code.

- **Alternate Mode**: Riders with disabilities or limited internet access who required special accommodations to fill out the survey were able to call a phone number and fill out the survey with assistance from an NYCF team-member. 5 riders filled out their survey by calling into the hotline.

Survey 2023 Methodology

Language: Survey was available in English, Spanish, Chinese, Korean, Polish, Russian, and Yiddish. 26 respondents filled out a survey in a language other than English.

Survey Period: Survey was open for 14 days: Monday, Aug. 28 – Sunday, Sep. 10

8 Routes: Astoria, East River, Governors Island Shuttle, Rockaway (including Rockaway Reserve), Rockaway Rocket, Soundview, South Brooklyn, St. George

Responses Received: ~3,350 (average of 122 per route/time period bin), weighted based on actual observed ridership during survey period. Rockaway Rocket, Rockaway Reserve and Governors Island responses are not broken out by route in summary tables but are included in systemwide measures.

New Questions: This survey added questions on:

- Travel time to/from landing

- Fare type used

- Primary reason for riding NYC Ferry

- Modifications that would motivate more frequent ridership

Purpose: Customer segmentation & demographic information; trip purpose and NYC Ferry usage patterns

Survey Weighting

Since 2019, NYC Ferry weights survey results based on actual observed ridership during the survey period. This helps ensure that totals and percentages are reflective of actual demographics and ridership, rather than survey response rate.
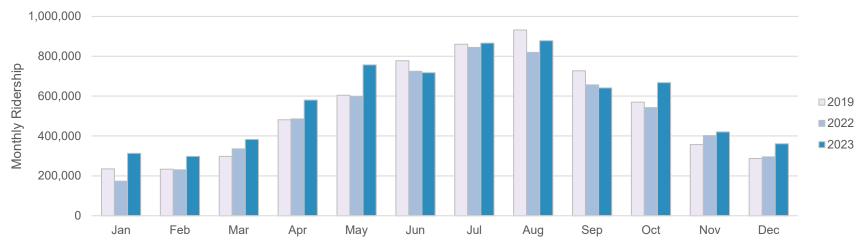
1. Collect survey data and prepare for analysis

2. Categorize responses by both route and time of day. Time period categories are below:

   o AM Peak (Weekdays before 10AM)

   o PM Peak (Weekdays between 4PM & 7PM)

   o Off-Peak (Weekdays between 10AM & 4PM, Weekdays after 7PM)

   o Weekend (All times on Saturdays, Sundays and federal holidays)

3. Separate actual ridership during the survey period into the same route/time period buckets as the survey results

4. Calculate weighted value using following formula for each route/time period bucket:

   o (Total Observed Ridership in Bucket)/(Total Survey Respondents)

      o This weighted value is used so that when survey responses are summed, they are equal to the actual ridership on that route/time period

NYC Ferry in 2023 – Continued Growth and Adapting to Fare Change

September 2022 Fare Changes – NYC Ferry increased one-way base fare from $2.75 to $4.00, introduced a $27.50 ten-trip ticket pack for frequent riders, and created the Ferry Discount Program offering $1.35 one-way tickets to participants in the Fair Fares NYC program, people with disabilities, and senior citizens (65+).

Overall Ridership Growth – NYC Ferry ridership in 2023 was 8% higher than in Nov 2019. Ridership grew strongly through May 2023, slowed down in the summer, and has continued to grow in the final months of 2023.

NYC Ferry Monthly Ridership by Year

NYC Ferry Service Area

For statistical purposes, NYC Ferry's Service Area is defined as the 159 U.S Census Tracts within 0.5 miles of an NYC Ferry landing. The NYCF service area represents ~8% of NYC's total population and ~5% of its total land area.

NYC Ferry Service Area Fast Facts

Based on U.S Census American Community Survey 2017-2021 5-year Estimates

- Land Area: 15 mi^2

- Total Population: ~670,000

- Median Household Income: ~$108,000

- % Minority: 47%

Summary of Results

New results (new questions or new analysis)

- Frequent riders are a more diverse group than non-frequent riders – 44% of frequent riders (3+ days/week) are non-white while 30% of infrequent riders (< once/week) are non-white.

- 54% of all riders indicated that they ride NYC Ferry because it has a better rider experience than other modes, an additional 19% ride because it has a faster travel time than other modes.

- 31% of riders would be motivated to ride more if more frequent service was operated. An additional 18% would ride more if additional destinations are served.

Results changing from previous surveys

- 71% of peak riders use NYC Ferry to get to/from work and school, the highest since 2019 and matching pre-pandemic levels.

Results consistent with previous surveys

- 90% of riders live in New York City

- Median Household Income for NYCF riders is $100,000-$149,999, which is consistent with NYC Ferry's service area (defined as all US Census Tracts within .5 miles of a ferry landing).

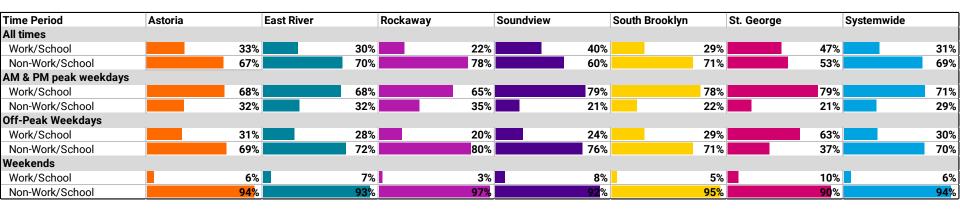- 35% of all riders are non-white or multiracial.
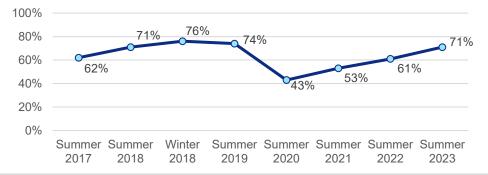
2023 Survey – Travel Patterns

Trip purpose by route and time period

71% of peak period riders are commuting to work or school. During all time periods, 31% of riders are commuting to work or school.

Time Period	Astoria	East River	Rockaway	Soundview	South Brooklyn	St. George	Systemwide
All times							
Work/School	33%	30%	22%	40%	29%	47%	31%
Non-Work/School	67%	70%	78%	60%	71%	53%	69%
AM & PM peak weekdays							
Work/School	68%	68%	65%	79%	78%	79%	71%
Non-Work/School	32%	32%	35%	21%	22%	21%	29%
Off-Peak Weekdays							
Work/School	31%	28%	20%	24%	29%	63%	30%
Non-Work/School	69%	72%	80%	76%	71%	37%	70%
Weekends							
Work/School	6%	7%	3%	8%	5%	10%	6%
Non-Work/School	94%	93%	97%	92%	95%	90%	94%

% Peak School/Work Trips by Survey

Summer 2017	Summer 2018	Winter 2018	Summer 2019	Summer 2020	Summer 2021	Summer 2022	Summer 2023
62%	71%	76%	74%	43%	53%	61%	71%

⟷ This is consistent with pre-pandemic survey results.

Trip frequency

32% of all riders use NYC Ferry 3+ days per week. AM & PM peak riders are more likely to be frequent riders, with 60% riding more than 3 days per week.

Time Period	Astoria	East River	Rockaway	Soundview	South Brooklyn	St. George	Systemwide
All Times							
Seldom	46%	49%	66%	46%	47%	33%	50%
1-2 days per week	20%	19%	14%	16%	20%	25%	19%
3+ days per week	34%	32%	20%	38%	33%	42%	32%
AM & PM peak weekdays							
Seldom	19%	22%	29%	19%	18%	12%	20%
1-2 days per week	21%	21%	15%	17%	21%	22%	20%
3+ days per week	60%	58%	56%	64%	62%	66%	60%
Off-Peak Weekdays							
Seldom	49%	48%	70%	47%	48%	32%	50%
1-2 days per week	19%	23%	14%	21%	22%	18%	20%
3+ days per week	32%	29%	15%	32%	31%	49%	30%
Weekends							
Seldom	68%	71%	82%	76%	63%	52%	71%
1-2 days per week	19%	14%	14%	13%	19%	33%	16%
3+ days per week	13%	15%	5%	11%	18%	15%	13%

This is consistent with previous surveys

NYC/EDC

Started Riding NYC Ferry

74% of all riders started riding NYC Ferry more than a year ago. St. George, NYC Ferry's newest route, has the highest share of new riders.

Time Period	Astoria	East River	Rockaway	Soundview	South Brooklyn	St. George	Systemwide
Started Riding - AM & PM peak weekdays							
More than a year ago	71%	72%	83%	80%	89%	68%	75%
7-12 months ago	10%	7%	8%	6%	4%	11%	8%
3-6 months ago	10%	8%	4%	9%	2%	12%	8%
1-2 months ago	4%	5%	3%	1%	2%	5%	3%
Less than a month ago	2%	3%	0%	2%	0%	1%	2%
This is my first ride	3%	5%	2%	2%	3%	3%	4%
Started Riding - Off-Peak Weekdays							
More than a year ago	72%	70%	86%	76%	72%	59%	72%
7-12 months ago	7%	11%	2%	5%	5%	11%	8%
3-6 months ago	8%	9%	3%	3%	4%	11%	7%
1-2 months ago	3%	1%	4%	5%	3%	7%	3%
Less than a month ago	5%	3%	2%	3%	3%	3%	3%
This is my first ride	5%	7%	3%	6%	13%	8%	7%
Started Riding - Weekends							
More than a year ago	72%	74%	78%	78%	75%	60%	74%
7-12 months ago	7%	5%	4%	5%	3%	16%	6%
3-6 months ago	7%	5%	5%	4%	3%	10%	5%
1-2 months ago	3%	0%	2%	1%	3%	2%	2%
Less than a month ago	0%	4%	2%	4%	0%	0%	3%
This is my first ride	11%	12%	8%	7%	16%	13%	12%

This is the first time NYC Ferry has asked this question.

Primary Reason for Choosing NYC Ferry

54% of riders said they chose to ride NYC Ferry because it has a better rider experience than other transportation options. An additional 19% of riders chose NYC Ferry because it is faster than other transportation options.
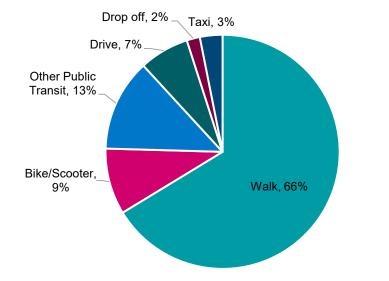
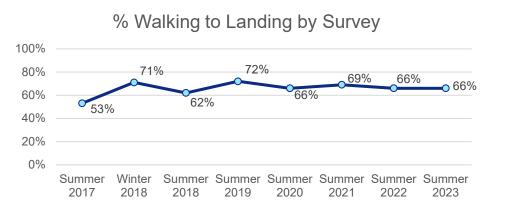| Reason for Riding - All Times	Astoria	East River	Rockaway	Soundview	South Brooklyn	St. George	Systemwide
Better rider experience than other transportation options	56%	58%	57%	55%	54%	30%	54%
Faster than other transportation options	18%	17%	19%	20%	17%	41%	19%
Other	12%	12%	12%	13%	18%	10%	13%
Good value for the money	3%	5%	6%	5%	4%	7%	5%
Requires fewer transfers than other transportation options	6%	4%	1%	3%	2%	8%	4%
Does not require the use of stairs	3%	2%	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%
More reliable service	2%	1%	2%	1%	2%	2%	1%
Better for the environment	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%

This is the first time this question has been asked.

Mode/travel time TO landing

66% of riders walked to the ferry. 79% of riders travel no more than 20 minutes to get to their ferry landing.

Pie chart:
- Walk, 66%
- Bike/Scooter, 9%
- Other Public Transit, 13%
- Drive, 7%
- Drop off, 2%
- Taxi, 3%

% Walking to Landing by Survey

Summer 2017	Winter 2018	Summer 2018	Summer 2019	Summer 2020	Summer 2021	Summer 2022	Summer 2023
53%	71%	62%	72%	66%	69%	66%	66%

Time Period	Astoria	East River	Rockaway	Soundview	South Brooklyn	St. George	Systemwide
All Times - Travel Time to Origin Landing							
10 minutes or less	52%	53%	30%	43%	41%	40%	46%
11-20 minutes	31%	29%	33%	40%	34%	37%	33%
21 minutes - 30 minutes	10%	11%	19%	11%	14%	14%	12%
31 minutes - 45 minutes	4%	4%	12%	5%	8%	6%	6%
Over 45 minutes	4%	3%	5%	2%	4%	3%	3%

⬅➡ % walking is in-line with previous surveys. Travel time was asked for the first time in this survey.

Motivation to Ride More Often

33% of riders would ride more often if service operated more frequently. An additional 20% indicated they would ride more often if NYC Ferry served more destinations.

	Ride less than once per week	Ride 1-2 days per week	Ride 3-4 days per week	Ride 5+ days per week	All riders
Motivation to Ride - All Times					
Add more frequent service	25%	29%	38%	43%	33%
Serve more destinations	23%	24%	22%	8%	20%
Reduce ticket price or offer more discounts	11%	12%	7%	11%	10%
Add a landing closer to my home/workplace	12%	8%	6%	3%	8%
Provide a more convenient connection to my final destination	7%	6%	8%	3%	6%
Other (please specify)	7%	7%	4%	4%	6%
Run express service	4%	3%	4%	7%	5%
Improve on-time performance	3%	4%	4%	6%	4%
Reduce travel times	3%	3%	3%	5%	3%
Make real-time transit information more accessible	3%	3%	2%	2%	2%
Extend hours of service	1%	1%	2%	4%	2%
Improve on-board cleanliness	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%
Improve safety on-board or at the landings	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

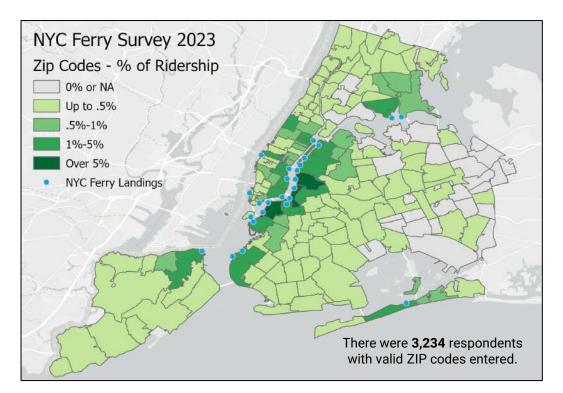This is the first time this question has been asked.
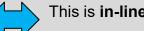
2023 Survey – Demographic Data

All routes – home ZIP codes

90% of riders reside in New York City. The top 5 zip codes were located closest to the **East River**, **South Brooklyn**, and **Astoria** routes

NYC Ferry Survey 2023
Zip Codes - % of Ridership

- 0% or NA
- Up to .5%
- .5%-1%
- 1%-5%
- Over 5%
- NYC Ferry Landings

There were **3,234** respondents with valid ZIP codes entered.

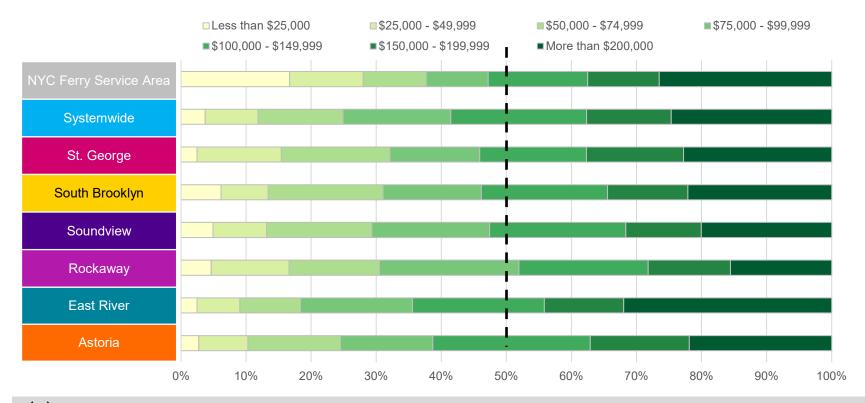| Top 5 Ridership Zip Codes		
Zip Code	**% of Ridership**	**Closest Ferry Landing**
11201	5.5%	DUMBO/BBP Pier 6
11222	5.2%	Greenpoint
11249	5.2%	North Williamsburg/South Williamsburg
11101	5.0%	LIC/Hunters Point South
11102	3.8%	Astoria

This is **in-line** with previous surveys.

Annual Household Income by Route

The systemwide median annual household income is $100,000-149,999, in line with previous surveys and matching the median income of areas surrounding NYCF landings. The median household income in the NYCF service area is $107,877 per 2017-2021 ACS 5-year estimates.
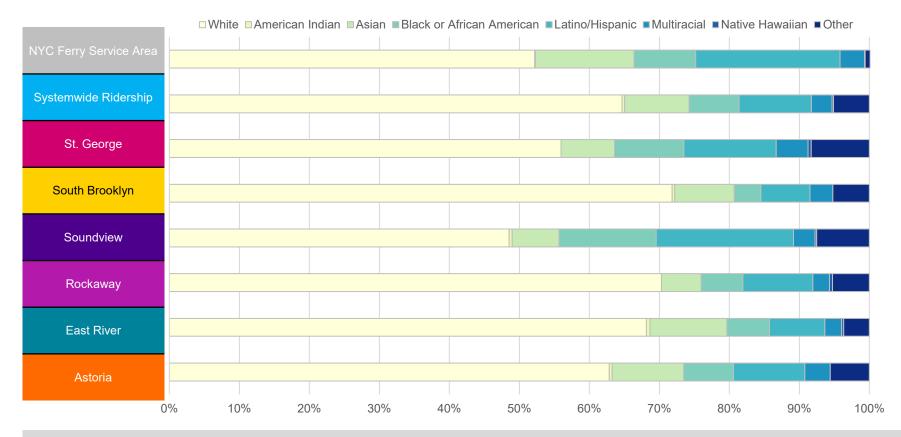

Legend: Less than $25,000 | $25,000 - $49,999 | $50,000 - $74,999 | $75,000 - $99,999 | $100,000 - $149,999 | $150,000 - $199,999 | More than $200,000

Routes: NYC Ferry Service Area, Systemwide, St. George, South Brooklyn, Soundview, Rockaway, East River, Astoria

This is consistent with previous surveys. NYCF's Service Area is defined as all Census Tracts within a .5 mile radius of an NYCF landing.

Race/Ethnicity by Route

System-wide, 35% of riders identified as non-white or multiracial. In NYCF's service area, 47% of riders identified as non-white or multiracial

Legend: White, American Indian, Asian, Black or African American, Latino/Hispanic, Multiracial, Native Hawaiian, Other

Routes (top to bottom): NYC Ferry Service Area, Systemwide Ridership, St. George, South Brooklyn, Soundview, Rockaway, East River, Astoria
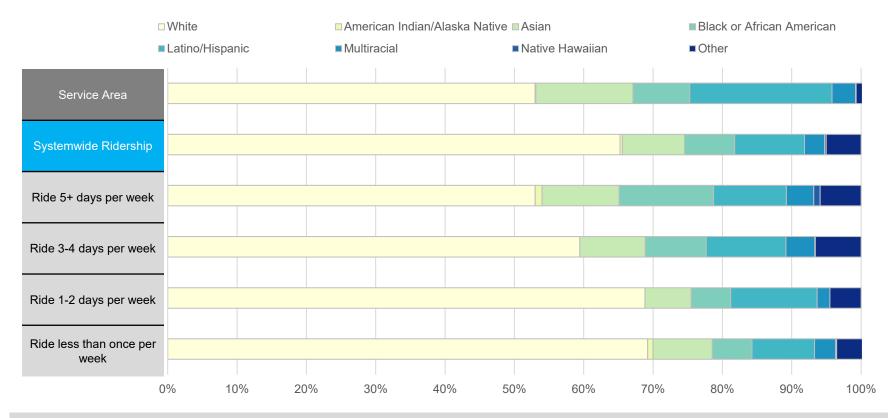
Percentage of non-white riders is **in-line** with previous surveys.

N = 2613
No response/prefer not to answer = 735

Race/Ethnicity by Frequency of Use.

Weekly riders are more diverse than monthly riders. Riders who use the ferry 5 days per week are 47% non-white. Riders who ride less than once per week are 31% non-white.

This is the first time this analysis has been done.

N = 2613
No response/prefer not to answer = 735

Age & Disability Status

17% of riders are over the age of 65. 4% of riders self-identified as having a disability. These riders may be eligible to apply for a $1.35 fare under the Ferry Discount Program.

Time Period	Astoria	East River	Rockaway	Soundview	South Brooklyn	St. George	Systemwide
All Times - Rider Age							
Under 18	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%
18-24	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%	3%	2%
25-34	21%	21%	14%	15%	13%	9%	18%
35-44	24%	28%	22%	19%	20%	24%	24%
45-54	18%	19%	17%	22%	22%	25%	20%
55-64	18%	15%	18%	19%	19%	27%	18%
65+	17%	14%	24%	20%	21%	9%	17%
Prefer not to answer	1%	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%	2%

Time Period	Astoria	East River	Rockaway	Soundview	South Brooklyn	St. George	Systemwide
All Times - Rider Disability							
No Disability/Prefer not to answer	95.8%	97.5%	95.8%	94.0%	95.3%	95.6%	96.1%
Blind or Low Vision	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%
Deaf or Hard of Hearing	0.4%	0.0%	0.5%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%
Intellectual/Development Disability	0.2%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.3%	0.1%	0.1%
Mobility Disability	3.1%	1.6%	2.8%	3.5%	2.9%	4.3%	2.7%
Other	0.5%	0.9%	0.7%	2.2%	1.1%	0.0%	0.9%

This is in-line with previous surveys

Appendix A – Survey Questions

Appendix A – Survey Questions

1. On your most recent trip, what route(s) do you take?
- East River
- Rockaway
- Astoria
- Soundview
- South Brooklyn
- Governors Island
- Rockaway Rocket
- Rockaway Reserve
- St. George

2. On this trip, when do you get on the ferry?
- Weekday – Before 10AM
- Weekday – Between 10AM and 4PM
- Weekday – Between 4PM and 7PM
- Weekday – After 7PM
- Weekend/Holiday – Anytime

3. On this trip, where do you get ON the ferry?
- Atlantic Ave / BBP Pier 6
- Astoria
- Battery Park City/Vesey St.
- Bay Ridge
- Brooklyn Navy Yard
- Corlears Hook
- DUMBO / Fulton Ferry
- East 34th St
- East 90th St
- Ferry Point Park
- Greenpoint
- Governors Island
- Hunter's Point South
- Long Island City
- Midtown West/W 39th St-Pier 79
- North Williamsburg
- Red Hook
- Rockaway
- Roosevelt Island
- Soundview
- South Williamsburg
- St. George
- Stuyvesant Cove
- Sunset Park / BAT
- Wall St / Pier 11

Appendix A – Survey Questions

4. **During your most recent trip, where do you get OFF the ferry?**

- o   Atlantic Ave / BBP Pier 6
- o   Astoria
- o   Battery Park City/Vesey St.
- o   Bay Ridge
- o   Brooklyn Navy Yard
- o   Corlears Hook
- o   DUMBO / Fulton Ferry
- o   East 34th St
- o   East 90th St
- o   Ferry Point Park
- o   Greenpoint
- o   Governors Island
- o   Hunter's Point South
- o   Long Island City
- o   Midtown West/W 39th St-Pier 79
- o   North Williamsburg
- o   Red Hook
- o   Rockaway
- o   Roosevelt Island
- o   Soundview
- o   South Williamsburg
- o   St. George
- o   Stuyvesant Cove
- o   Sunset Park / BAT
- o   Wall St / Pier 11

5. **What was your primary mode to get to and from the ferry on this most recent trip?**

	To ferry	From ferry
Walk	☐	☐
Subway	☐	☐
MTA bus	☐	☐
Bike (personal)	☐	☐
Citi Bike	☐	☐
E-bike or E-Scooter	☐	☐
Drive and park	☐	☐
Taxi / Uber / Lyft	☐	☐
Dropped off by friend / family car	☐	☐
Access-A-Ride	☐	☐
NYC Ferry shuttle bus	☐	☐

6. **Using the transportation mode identified in the previous question, estimate your travel time to and from the ferry landing.**

	To ferry	From ferry
10 minutes or less	☐	☐
10-20 minutes	☐	☐
21 - 30 minutes	☐	☐
30 – 45 minutes	☐	☐
Over 45 minutes	☐	☐

Appendix A – Survey Questions

7. **What is the primary purpose of this trip?**
   - o Commute to/from work
   - o Commute to/from school
   - o Social/recreational
   - o Errands/shopping
   - o Medical/Doctor's Visit
   - o Other, please specify: _____

8. **If the ferry service was not available, how would you make this trip?**
   - o Subway
   - o Drive
   - o Walk
   - o Bike
   - o E-bike or E-scooter
   - o MTA Bus
   - o Drive with someone
   - o Taxi / Uber / Lyft / Via
   - o Other, please specify: _____
   - o Would not make this trip

9. **How did you purchase your ticket(s) for this trip?**
   - o NYC Ferry App
   - o Ticket vending machine at one of the ferry landings
   - o In-person from a ticket agent

10. **What type of ticket did you purchase for this trip? (Select only one)**
    - o $4.00 One-way ticket
    - o $2.75 as part of the 10-trip pack for $27.50
    - o $1.35, Senior Discount
    - o $1.35. Harbor School Student Discount
    - o $1.35, Person with Disabilities discount
    - o $1.35 Fair Fares NYC participant discount
    - o $10.00, Rockaway Reserve
    - o $10.00, Rockaway Rocket

11. **When did you first start riding NYC Ferry?**
    - o More than a year ago
    - o 7-12 months ago
    - o 3-6 months ago
    - o 1-2 months ago
    - o Less than a month ago
    - o This is my first ride

12. **How often did you ride NYC Ferry?**
    - o 6-7 days per week
    - o 5 days per week
    - o 3-4 days per week
    - o 1-2 days per week
    - o 1-3 days per month
    - o Less than once per month

13. **What is your home zip code?**
    - o ☐☐☐☐☐
    - o I live outside the U.S.

Appendix A – Survey Questions

14. What is your age?
- o Under 18 18-24
- o 25-35
- o 36-45
- o 46-55
- o 56-65
- o 66+

15. What is your estimated total annual household income before taxes?
- o Less than $25,000
- o $25,000 - $49,999
- o $50,000 - $74,999
- o $75,000 - $99,999
- o $100,000 - $149,999
- o $150,000 - $199,999
- o More than $200,000
- o Prefer not to answer

16. Are you of Hispanic or Latino?
- o Yes
- o No
- o Prefer not to answer

17. What is your race? (Mark all that apply)
- o American Indian or Alaska Native
- o Asian
- o Black or African American
- o Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- o White
- o Other, please specify: _____
- o Prefer not to answer

18. Do you speak a language other than English at home?
- o Yes
- o No

18. If yes, what language other than English do you speak at home?
- o Afrikaans
- o Arabic
- o Bengali
- o Chinese (Mandarin, Cantonese)
- o French
- o German
- o Greek
- o Haitian Creole
- o Hebrew
- o Hindi
- o Italian
- o Japanese
- o Korean
- o Polish
- o Russian
- o Spanish
- o Tagalog
- o Urdu
- o Yiddish
- o Other, please specify: _____

Appendix A – Survey Questions

19. Do you work from home?
- Yes, I work from home full-time
- Yes, I work from home some days a week (hybrid)
- No, I do not work from home
- No, I am not a worker (i.e., student, retired, etc.)

20. Do you have a disability or impairment that effects your mobility?
- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

    20. What type of disability/impairment?
- Deaf or hard of hearing
- Blind or Low Vision
- Intellectual/Developmental Disability
- Mobility Disability
- Other, please specify: _____

21. Why did you use NYC ferry on this trip instead of another way of traveling? (Select only one)
- Faster than other transportation options
- Good value for the money
- More reliable service
  Better for the environment
- Better rider experience than other transportation options
- Requires fewer transfers than other transportation options
- Does not require the use of stairs
- Other, please specify: _____

22. What is ONE item listed below that would motivate you to ride more often? (Select only one)
- Add more frequent service
- Reduce travel times
- Improve on-board cleanliness
- Improve on-time performance
- Improve safety on-board or at the landings
- Make real-time transit information more accessible
- Provide a more convenient connection to my final destination
- Run express service
- Serve more destinations
- Add a landing closer to my home/workplace
- Reduce ticket price or offer more discounts
- Other, please specify: _____

23. Do you have any comments for NYC Ferry?