

A large, dark blue stylized letter 'W' graphic that spans the right side of the page. Inside the 'W', there is a glowing, intricate network pattern resembling a city's transportation system or a neural network, with bright points and connecting lines.

Understanding transportation perception and behaviours in the City of Merri-bek: Research report

Prepared for the Merri-bek City Council

May 2023



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Background, objectives and methodology



Background and research objectives

The City of Merri-bek covers approximately 50.9 square kilometres and is one of Melbourne's most populous municipalities, with more than 173,000 residents.

Merri-bek's population is diverse, comprising a wide range of cultures, household types, tenures, incomes, skills and occupations. The City also has a diversity of land uses, including significant areas of residential, industrial and commercial zoned land.

Merri-bek Council is developing a new transport strategy. The aim of the strategy is to enable Council to adequately plan for future transport usage within Merri-bek including through supporting people to use more sustainable modes of transport.

Council's new transport strategy needs to consider current attitudes to travel, as well as local and global changes that affect transport such as:

- COVID-19 and its impact on people movement
- the potential for an increase in ownership of electric vehicles (EVs) (as affordability increases)
- the rise of rideshare and carshare such as Uber and Car Next Door.

It is crucial that Merri-bek residents are consulted and involved in the decision-making processes related to the strategy.

JWS Research was commissioned to conduct research to provide Council with a comprehensive analysis of:

- how residents currently live, work and move around Merri-bek including for what purpose, and their attitudes towards various modes of transport
- the choices Merri-bek residents make for their mode of transport
- the impact of COVID-19 on travel choices
- future aspirations for transport around Merri-bek
- barriers to using sustainable transport more often
- preferred communication channels to inform residents about transport matters.

Findings from the research will inform strategic planning around:

- behaviour change and communications programs to support future implementation of the strategy
- Council's target setting and future evaluation of the transport strategy implementation by setting a baseline against which changes in community views towards sustainable transport choices can be measured.



Research methodology



Qualitative Focus group discussions

n=6 group discussions conducted via video conferencing

- Among residents of the City of Merri-bek.
- Seven to eight people took part in each group discussion.
- Two group discussions conducted in each of three age groups: 18-34 years, 35-54 years, and 55+ years.
- Mix of gender, ages and residential locations within each age group. Representation of socio-economic status, people from CALD backgrounds and those with medical or accessibility needs across the groups.
- 2 hours in duration.

Conducted 24th January to 2nd February 2023.



Quantitative CATI survey

n=600 residents of the City Merri-bek aged 18 years and over

- Survey quotas on age, gender and location, and weighting applied at the analysis stage to actual age/gender/location proportions based on ABS census data.
- The maximum margin of error on the total sample of n=600 is +/-4.0% at the 95% confidence level.
- Differences of +/-1% for net scores are due to rounding.
- 12 minutes in length.

Conducted 2nd to 16th March 2023.

*Note: Qualitative research is exploratory in nature, and so the qualitative findings within this report are indicative only and are not necessarily fully representative of the target populations.
The research was conducted in compliance with AS-ISO 20252.*



Reporting notes: Segment definitions

The following table shows the definitions of sub-sample segments described throughout the report:

Label	Description
Southern	Includes Brunswick, Brunswick East, Brunswick West
Eastern	Includes Coburg and Coburg North
Western	Includes Oak Park, Pascoe Vale and Pascoe Vale South
Northern	Includes Fawkner, Hadfield, Glenroy and Gowanbrae
Ride bike regularly	Those who report using a bicycle 'at least once a month' to travel in and around the City of Merri-bek
Walk regularly	Those who report walking 'at least once a month' to travel in and around the City of Merri-bek
Use public transport regularly	Those who report using tram, bus or train 'at least once a month' to travel in and around the City of Merri-bek
Very likely to increase use	Those who claim they are 'very likely' to increase their use of sustainable transport in the future
Unlikely to increase use	Those who claim they are 'not at all likely' or 'not very likely' to increase their use of sustainable transport in the future
CALD	People from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds
Medical condition	Those who have a medical condition or disability, or who have someone in their household who has a medical condition or disability that impacts accessibility and/or mobility
EV	Electric vehicle

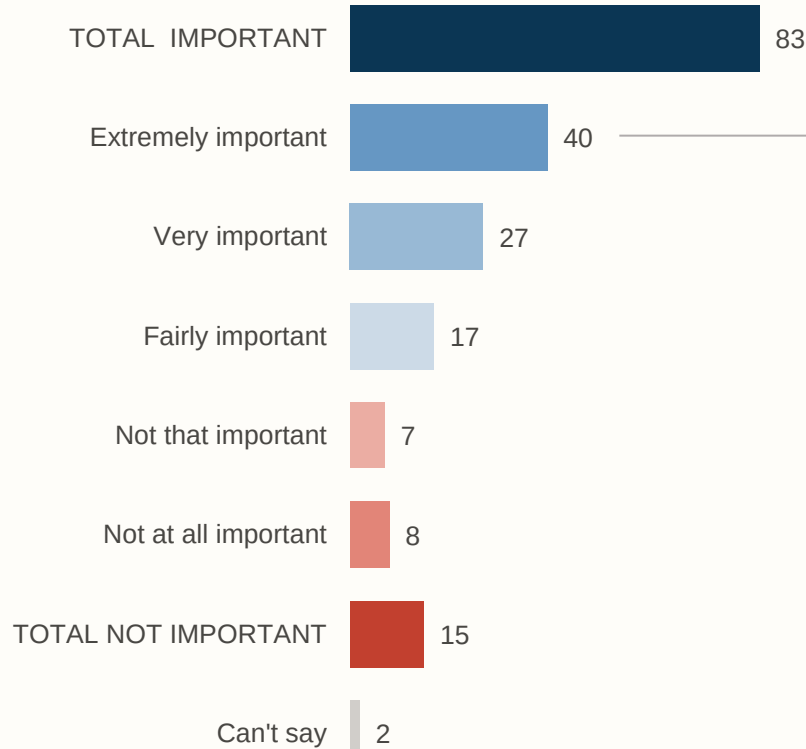


Reporting notes: How to read charts in this report

Importance of working towards a future where people use more sustainable forms of transport (%)

Chart title explains the data represented in the chart.

Main chart shows the results among the **total sample of Merri-bek residents**.



Ride bike regularly: **62**
 Walk regularly: **53**
 Use public transport regularly: **52**
 35-49 years: **50**
 Southern: **49**

Where relevant, significant differences among the key target audiences and other sub-groups, compared to the overall result, are coloured. **Green text** indicates significantly higher than the overall figure, **red text** indicates significantly lower than the total, at the 95% confidence interval.

Note on significant differences, question asked and the number of respondents who answered the question.

Significantly **higher** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

Q8. Merri-bek Council is committed to reducing carbon emissions in the City of Merri-bek by 75% by 2030.

Sustainable transport refers to any form of transport that has low or zero carbon emissions, or is more fuel-efficient. Examples of sustainable transport include walking, bike riding, public transport, electric and hybrid vehicles, e-scooters and e-bikes. How important is it that we work towards a future where people use more sustainable forms of transport?

Base: All respondents (n=600).

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Executive summary



Living and travelling in the City of Merri-bek:

Positive and negative experiences

Key positive experiences of living in Merri-bek:



Diversity. Merri-bek is seen as a melting pot of different cultures and ethnicities, giving the City its unique character, and bringing a variety of cultural experiences, such as restaurants and cafes offering cuisines from all over the world.



Accessibility. Merri-bek residents enjoy easy access to amenities, often having shopping/retail precincts, bar and dining options and public transport within walking distance. They also value the ease at which they can get to the city.

Key negative experiences of living in Merri-bek:



Safety. Some areas seen as more dangerous than others, particularly poorly-lit back streets.



Population growth. Future planning is concerning to many residents, with increasing residential development and traffic congestion arising from greater numbers of people living in Merri-bek.



Lack of accessibility. Northern and Western residents travel larger distances to reach amenities, public transport and the city. They rely on driving and do not enjoy the convenience of having amenities and facilities they may require in close proximity that other locations do.

Key experiences of travelling in Merri-bek:

Public transport



Southern and Eastern residents enjoy easy access to multiple options.



Northern and Western residents have fewer public transport options (i.e. no trams) and rely more on driving due to needing to travel longer distances.

Roads



Upgrades (e.g. removal of Glenroy Road level crossing) improve travel times and driving experiences.



Congestion on main roads, narrow streets, limited parking and reduced (40km/h) speed limits are common complaints.

Bike paths



Many bike riders feel sufficiently catered for with infrastructure, and welcome more dedicated bike lanes to improve safety.



At the same time, other bike riders report a lack of infrastructure and poor design of some existing bike lanes (i.e. dangerous for riders and cars).

Travelling in and around the City of Merri-bek:

Profile of transport modes



	 Car	 Walking	 Bike riding	 Public transport
Regular users (at least once a month)	85% (of these, 95% drive their own car)	24%	19%	44%
Frequency (among those who use regularly)	75% drive own car everyday or most days	84% everyday or most days	52% everyday or most days	66% use trams weekly 58% use trains weekly 46% use buses weekly
Duration of local trips	N/A	47% up to 20 minutes 9% do not consider	25% up to 30 minutes 56% do not consider	44% up to 30 minutes 31% do not consider
Cohorts more likely to use regularly	With children or those aged 35 to 49 years	50 to 59 years	Southern	Southern
Cohorts less likely to use regularly	N/A	Northern	Northern Western	Northern Western
Key activities undertaken	Shopping, running errands	Visiting parks, gardens, cafes, restaurants, bars	Running errands, visiting parks and gardens, pool, gym or recreation centres, getting to work	Getting to work, visiting cafes, restaurants, bars
Key benefits	Convenience, efficiency, practicality Safety, control	Exercise Avoids driving and PT pain points	Exercise, avoids driving and PT pain points Cost savings	Multiple options, easy access (for some) Cost-effective
Key barriers	Congestion Costs	Age, injury, poor mobility Capacity limitations Limits on distance	Safety, inadequate infrastructure Limits on distance	Reliability, travel time, safety Few options (for some)



Perceptions and benefits of sustainable transportation

83% Of residents feel it is important to work towards a future where people use more sustainable transport
Including **40%** who feel it is *extremely* important

66% Of residents claim they are **likely to increase their use** of sustainable transport in the future

30% Are **not likely** to increase their use. Significantly higher among:

- Those aged 60 years and over
- Those with medical conditions
- Western residents
- Men

 Residents interpret 'sustainable transport' as modes that minimise carbon footprint, or have zero carbon emissions



Public
Transport



Walking,
bike riding



EVs



Carsharing

...are commonly thought of as sustainable transport



Rideshare is **not considered** sustainable transport, due to perceptions of:

- No real reduction in emissions
- Being used instead of walking, bike riding and public transport

Rideshare may **support public transport use**, due to higher use among regular public transport users.

Residents resonate with the benefits of increasing sustainable transport use

Having **options other than driving** and **health benefits** are highly motivating:

- **Good to have options other than a car to get around** (88% total agree, including 59% who *strongly* agree).
- **Provides physical and mental health benefits** (84% agree, including 59% who *strongly* agree)
- **Reduces health impacts from vehicle emissions** (80% agree, including 51% who *strongly* agree).

Reducing environmental pollution and having an **ethical conscience** are also compelling:

- **Reducing transport emissions such as local pollution and greenhouse gases** (82% agree, including 57% who *strongly* agree).
- **Making a personal choice to be more socially and ethically responsible** (78% agree, including 45% who *strongly* agree).

Cost savings and tackling **congestion** are also motivating:

- **Saving on petrol or diesel costs or maintenance costs on car** (73% agree, including 44% who *strongly* agree).
- **Reducing traffic congestion by having less cars on the road** (76% agree, including 50% who *strongly* agree).

'Reducing car parking demand and associated costs' has lower relative resonance (59% agree).



Barriers to using more sustainable modes of transport

Strong barriers

Driving and the cost of EVs are the most significant and widespread barriers to raising sustainable transport use.

82% agree 'using a car is a more convenient and efficient way to get around and run errands' – including 58% who *strongly* agree.

79% agree 'the vehicles that are considered sustainable are too expensive to buy and maintain (e.g EVs)' – including 47% who *strongly* agree.

68% agree 'it is difficult to travel within a reasonable timeframe if I don't drive' – including 39% who *strongly* agree

The highest levels of *strongly* agree are **cars being more convenient and efficient**, and **EVs being too expensive to buy and maintain**, suggesting these are the **strongest barriers** to increasing sustainable transport use.

- Residents consider driving to be the easiest, most direct and time-efficient mode of transport (in most situations).
- While there is a willingness to consider EVs, they are beyond the price range of most residents. Low awareness of charging stations, and confusion over whether the electricity provided is free, compounds perceptions of EVs being expensive.

Poor reliability of some forms of public transport (e.g. buses) and difficulty travelling east to west, or west to east via public transport are also major barriers.

74% agree 'some forms of public transport are less reliable than others (e.g. buses)' – including 39% who *strongly* agree

65% agree 'travelling from east to west, or west to east in Merri-bek is difficult via public transport' – including 39% who *strongly* agree

Close to two in five residents *strongly* agree with these issues, suggesting they are **considerable barriers to increasing sustainable transport use (in this case, using more public transport)**.

- Buses are seen as less reliable than trains and trams, with residents reporting frequent delays due to traffic congestion. There are also perceptions that there are not enough bus routes in Merri-bek.
- Travelling across Merri-bek by public transport is considered difficult and time-consuming, due to routes only being serviced by buses.



Recommendations

Communicate the value of sustainable transport over driving

Having options other than driving, health benefits and reduced pollution are powerful motivators to use more sustainable transport. Anchoring messaging in these contexts and exploiting benefits of opting for sustainable modes over driving, is the best opportunity to promote uptake and increased use of sustainable modes.

Advocate for improved public transport, but focus on certain issues

Improved access to public transport is a top priority. Specifically, travel between the east and west of Merri-bek is difficult due to a general lack of public transport options. Poor bus reliability is a disincentive. Real-time updates via an app like tramTRACKER would enable better planning and propensity to use buses.

Strongest resistance among Northern and Western residents

Northern and Western residents are significantly more likely to agree that using a car is more convenient and efficient, and are significantly less likely to walk, cycle or use public transport. Raising sustainable transport use with these residents is a big challenge, due to larger distances travelled and fewer public transport options.

Targeted action can help increase sustainable transport modes

Improved maintenance and safety (e.g. more lighting) may encourage more walking and should be a priority. There is also a strong desire among regular bike riders and Southern residents (where there is a higher incidence of regular bike riding) for Council to improve dividers of bike paths and cars, and build more bike paths.

Raise awareness of EV charging stations

EVs are recognised as key to sustainable transport, but they remain too expensive for most. It is likely they will become more affordable over time, creating potential for increased usage. In the meantime, there is opportunity to promote charging stations currently available on Council premises and around the City of Merri-bek.



Detailed findings

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Living in the City of Merri-bek

The array of facilities and activities on offer in Merri-bek are valued by residents



Residents share a sense of pride for what Merri-bek has to offer.

The community camaraderie and acceptance of multiculturalism and diversity are among the key attributes that make people proud to call this city home.

Many amenities within the City are valued:



Restaurants and cafes, many being open late into the night



Parks and recreation, including those safe for children and ones that are dog friendly



Sports clubs and facilities, which cater to a variety of groups.

Additionally, Merri-bek is within easy access of the Melbourne CBD.

Merri-bek is seen to cater well for children. Parents point to the many services and facilities available in Merri-bek that help in supporting their children.

"I notice that the services like child health and maternal services are placed closer to the schools, primary schools. And there is a newly built library there which combines a lot of different facilities. Next to that, there is a kindergarten and I think it's a welcoming change since the new Council of Merri-bek came to. I think there is a new library in Glenroy and it combines a lot of other facilities in one central point and that's another main attraction." (35-54 years)

"I can think of anything in the world, and it will be within walking distance. It keeps my week interesting, and I get to enjoy a wide variety of things that I feel is quite particular to the suburbs that we live in." (18-34 years)

"I love that we can have so many choices with food restaurants. Kebabs, 24 hours. We got a bakery in Hadfield. If I want a donut at 2:00 in the morning, I can go grab a donut. I was involved in Merri-bek Health, the community health centre, just has great support for the community." (35-54 years)

"The multicultural aspect of the area, the food, the restaurants, the tolerance. There's a lot of tolerance for all nationalities, all differences. I think Merri-bek does very well with their parkland, their football clubs, cricket clubs, what have you, because I have a bit to do with that. So I think that they seem to throw a bit of money at that and make them attractive." (55+ years)

"There's lots of restaurants, different types, plenty of places. Sporting facilities around the area. Lots of football clubs, soccer clubs. Lots of clubs to go to. And everyone sort of enjoys it. And I like the closeness of the city." (55+ years)

"It's so nice just to walk to Merri Creek. Some days I feel like everything is at your doorstep. And I feel like in Brunswick East, there's a real community vibe. I know everyone on my street and all my neighbours." (18-34 years)



Safety and population growth are key concerns

Safety is an issue, with some areas considered more dangerous than others:

- back streets, especially those that are poorly lit, feel less safe; some residents call for better lighting
- busy, well-lit thoroughfares such as Sydney Road and Lygon Street are areas where people feel safer.

Future planning is also a concern. Some residents are concerned about the impacts of population growth in Merri-bek:

- while the need to meet housing demand is acknowledged, some residents feel the rate of residential development (e.g. apartments) is excessive
- traffic congestion and parking availability causes frustration
- while more bike lanes are welcomed, they are seen by some people to exacerbate traffic congestion.

Other areas of concern include:

- increasing homelessness
- poor bin collection services including in public spaces
- low (40km/h) speed limits which are considered unnecessary outside of peak periods (e.g. at night)
- poor maintenance of some public areas (e.g. graffiti).

“Some parts of it is quite family friendly, but then there's still parts where it is very poorly lit, quite dark and kind of dingy. I would not want to be walking at night. I feel like there could be more lights in some suburbs and stuff. Just for my own safety and everyone else's.” (18-34 years)

“The speed limits, they're changing them to 40, which is absolutely ridiculous. On some roads, to allow for bike paths, they're making the roads a lot narrower, which make it more difficult for traffic to move through.” (55+ years)

“The graffiti around the area is a shocker. You've got so much tagging and vandalism going on, it's just not funny. Council just doesn't seem to want to know about it.” (55+ years)

“Even just the bins at the community parks and things like that are always overflowing.” (35-54 years)

“Unfortunately, they're going to make a bike path on Sydney Road, which is not a good idea. I don't know why they need to make Sydney Road an extra bike lane. They'll take away from the shoppers parking and stuff.” (55+ years)

“But there's so much development in this space in the last 20 odd years and whether the transport infrastructure can support it is really a key concern, and particularly for driving. Less cars on the road, great, love it. But there are people who drive and it clogged up the trams, it clogs up everything and it gets quite dangerous.” (35-54 years)

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Travelling around the City of Merri- bek



Section summary: Travelling around the City of Merri-bek

Driving is the main mode of transport in Merri-bek

Driving is ubiquitous, with nearly all residents (95%) regularly (at least once a month) using a car to get around Merri-bek. Among these residents, the vast majority (85%) drive their own car and do so every day or most days (75%). Convenience, efficiency and practicality (e.g. ability to carry groceries) are key motivators to drive over other forms of transport. Driving is the main mode used for most activities, apart from visiting parks and gardens, where walking is most prevalent.

Use of public transport, walking and bike riding are less common modes of travel

Less than half (44%) of residents regularly (at least once a month) use public transport, with tram the dominant mode (31%, 22% for train, 14% for bus). While walking is less common (24% do it regularly), those who do walk do so frequently (84% of those who walk regularly, do it every day or most days). Just under one in five residents (19%) ride their bike regularly, with over half of these residents (52%) riding every day or most days. Southern residents are significantly more likely than average to regularly use public transport or ride a bike.

Location impacts travel experiences

Southern residents enjoy easy access to public transport and amenities, often within walking distance. Northern residents say they are serviced less well by public transport and rely more on driving to get around and access amenities. Congestion, parking, narrow streets and design of existing bike lanes are key pain points. Traveling east to west (or vice versa) in Merri-bek is considered difficult relative to traveling north to south (or vice versa).

Travelling experiences: Public transport access is mixed, congestion is a key issue and bike infrastructure is lacking



Public transport



Multiple options for some residents. Parts of Merri-bek are seen to be well serviced by largely reliable public transport. Southern and Eastern residents claim they are able to easily access various tram routes, train lines and buses, often within walking distance.



Roads



Upgrades. Can improve travel times and driving experiences, especially for residents who drive at peak times and endure bottlenecks. The removal of the level crossing on Glenroy Road, for example, is seen to have markedly improved traffic congestion, particularly during peak times.



Bike paths and lanes



Sufficient infrastructure. Many bike riders feel well catered for, pointing to numerous bike paths and bike lanes on major roads that they can access. The development of more dedicated bike paths throughout Merri-bek is welcomed, to improve safety and increase opportunities for bike riding.



Fewer options in Northern areas. Driving is the dominant form of transport in this area, due to suburbs, infrastructure and amenities being spread over larger distances. Residents in this area report having fewer public transport options, saying they lack access to trams, and are reliant on buses and trains. Buses are seen to be less reliable than trams, and some residents have difficulty accessing train stations, due to how far they live from them (e.g. a 20-minute walk is not possible for some).



Congestion. Main roads (e.g. Sydney Road, Lygon Street) are seen as increasingly busy and congested at all times of the day.



Narrow streets. Can limit parking, inhibit traffic, and are difficult to navigate. It is felt these (typically older) streets are not designed to manage high volumes of traffic.



Parking limitations. Lack of off-street parking options are seen to impact traffic congestion.



Reduced speed limits. Some 40km/h limits are seen as unnecessary and to cause congestion.



Poor design. It is felt that some existing bike lanes are dangerous for both riders and drivers. The constant stream of moving cars on congested roads, frequently stopping trams, car doors opening, and poor separation from pedestrians, are dangers bike riders face using some bike lanes.



Not enough infrastructure. Some residents report a lack of bike paths and lanes in their area, which can result in poor experiences and act as a disincentive to ride a bike.



Travelling experiences: Select verbatim comments



Public transport

"Easy to get anywhere on PT. Bus goes to the train station, trains and trams to the city." (18-34 years)

"I live near two main train lines, they're quite accessible. And there are buses everywhere, I never have any trouble." (18-34 years)

Public transport is fantastic. Everything is in walking distance." (55+ years)



Roads

"Driving has been improved with the removal of one of the rail crossings on Glenroy Road. So now there's no traffic getting jammed there. That's a big improvement." (55+ years)

"The new roads, the bypass and new freeway, and Glenroy Road level crossing removal...those upgrades have made it a bit easier traffic wise." (55+ years)



Bike paths and lanes

"I can go east and west easily on a bike path, which is safe." (35-54 years)

"So they're separating the pedestrians from the bikes, which is really great because some of those bikes really do travel. So they're going to take it all the way down to Princess Park right down to the end, which will be a help." (55+ years)

"Further out in Merri-bek, transport becomes more difficult. I don't have the option of a tram." (18-34 years)

"Lots more driving required in Glenroy, Hadfield and Pascoe Vale, can be difficult accessing train station." (55+ years)

"Buses aren't well connected, especially to shopping centers." (35-55 years)

"Congestion, so many more cars on the road. My daughter waits 40 minutes for a bus outside of school because all the streets have got parked cars. The bus can't get through during all that traffic and it's always running late." (35-55 years)

"Narrow streets, you can't parallel park, they weren't designed for the volume we have today." (55+ years)

"40km/h limits are ridiculous." (55+ years)

"Narrowing roads for bike paths makes it difficult for traffic to get through." (55+ years)

"You have to have a bit of a death wish to ride down the main streets like Nicholson Street and Sydney Road." (18-34 years)

"With the bike lanes, they've tried to create a barrier, with a massive concrete curve between the bike path and the road. That barrier is too big, dangerous." (18-34 years)



Travelling experiences: Proximity to amenities is a major drawcard; travelling east to west is difficult



Accessibility



Proximity. Ease of access to amenities is a key reason for favourable travel experiences in Merri-bek, particularly among residents in the Southern and Eastern areas. Many enjoy the closeness of shopping/retail precincts, bar and dining options, public transport, and the ease at which they can reach the CBD.

"I do a lot of walking because everything is within walking distance." (55+ years)

"Getting to work in the city is a dream. If you want to go north and south, it's amazing." (18-34 years)

"Everything I need is within a five or 10 minute walking distance. I live near Barkley Square, so I don't really need to use a car unless I'm driving out of Brunswick. Proximity to the city is great. There are the parks across the road, the shopping, the public transport, it's a fairly convenient area." (55+ years)



Difficulty travelling east to west.

Travelling east to west (or vice-versa) in Merri-bek is felt to be more difficult than going north to south (or vice-versa). This is due to perceptions of poor public transport (buses only, no trains and limited trams), and frustration at lengthy travel times from having to drive on congested roads.

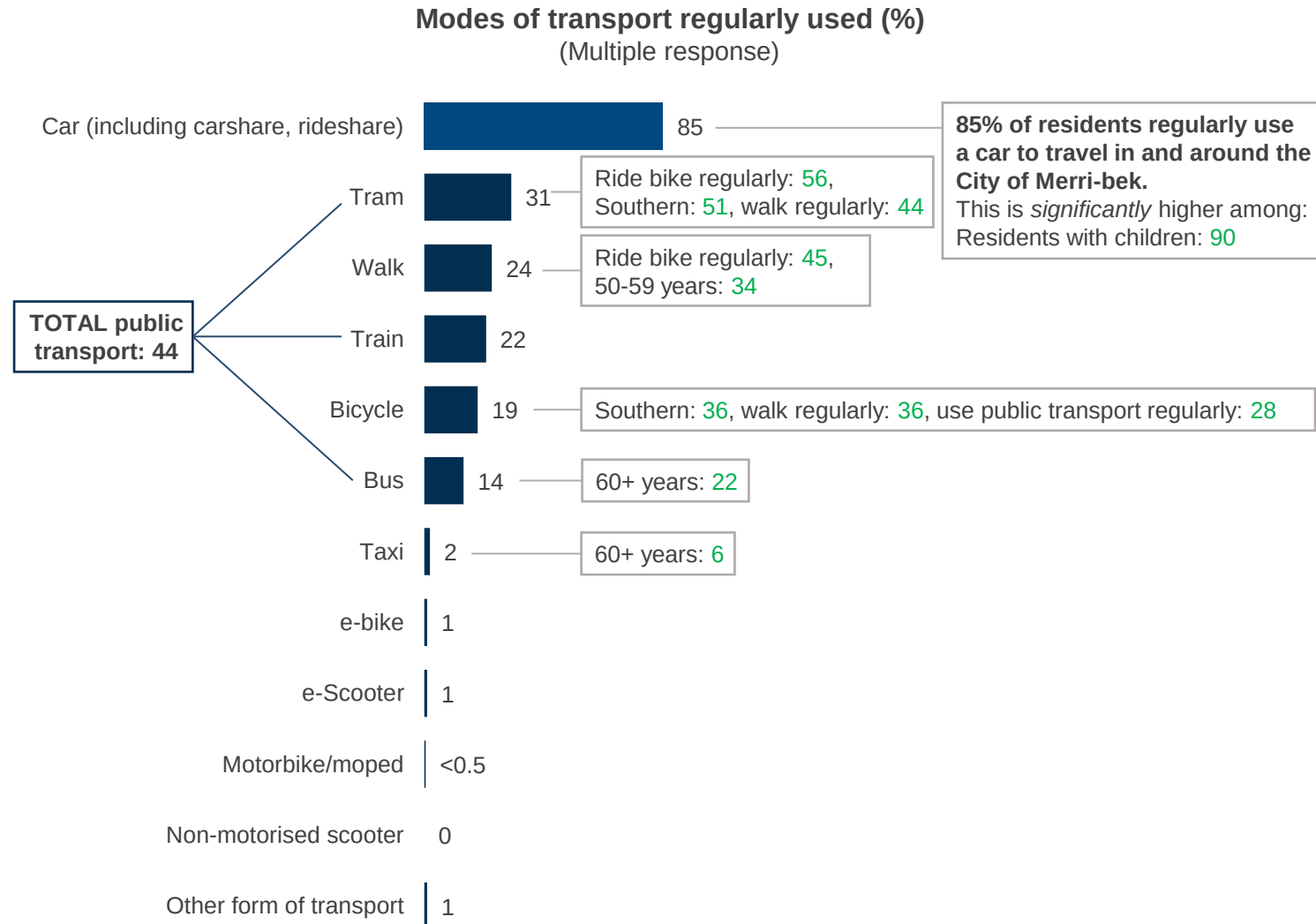
"If I wanted to go from the west side of Merri-bek to the east, that is really difficult. I don't think I would ever live in Brunswick West without a car." (18-34 years)



Population density. Increasing residential development is bringing more people to Merri-bek and exacerbating pressures on roads (congestion, parking) and public transport, making accessibility in and around Merri-bek more difficult.

"When apartment buildings go up, it puts pressure on public transport and the roads. Not a Merri-bek issue, but they need to increase the number of trains and trams. And moving around on a Saturday morning, I barely use my car, I don't go near Brunswick Road, you're just stuck." (35-55 years)

More than eight in 10 residents travel in and around Merri-bek by car at least once a month



Significantly higher than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

Q2. What modes of transport do you regularly use at least once a month, to travel in and around the City of Merri-bek? Any others?

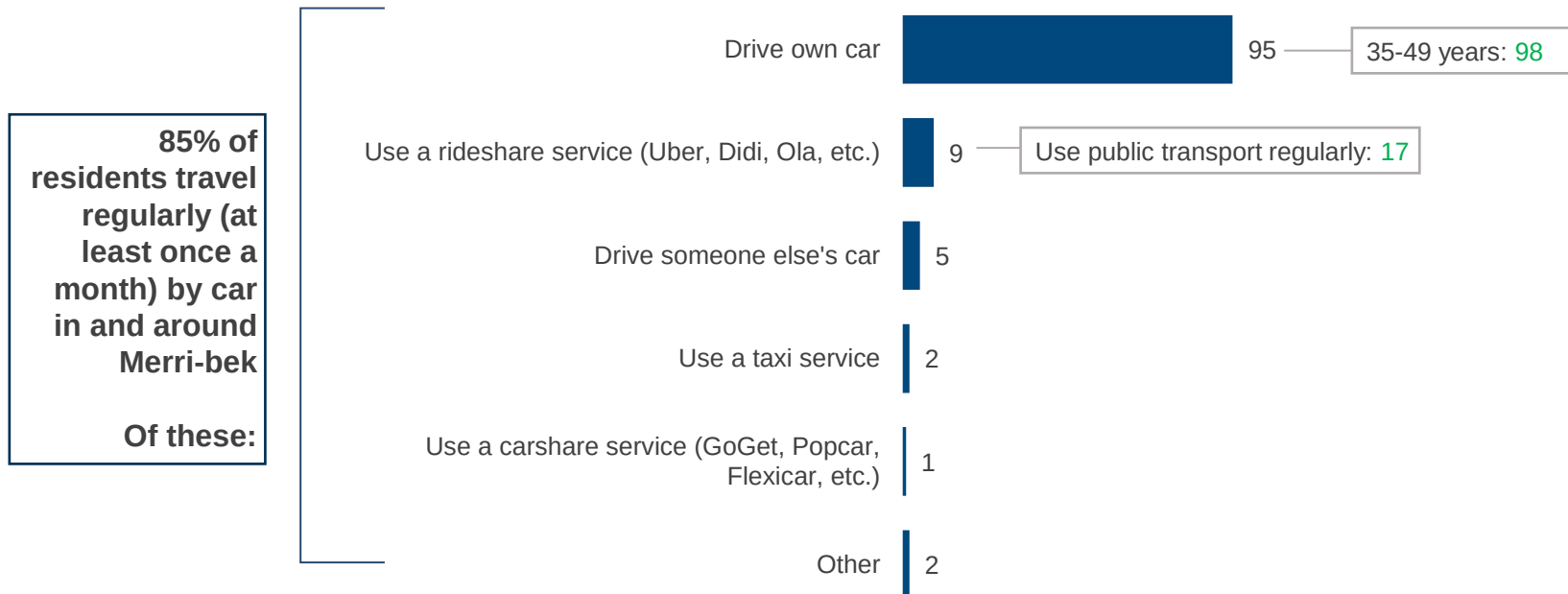
Base: All respondents (n=600).

Note: 'Total public transport' includes residents who travel regularly (at least once a month) by bus, tram and train

Of residents who travel regularly in and around Merri-bek by car, nearly all drive their own car



Modes of car transport used (%)
(among the 85% of residents who regularly travel by car)
(Multiple response)

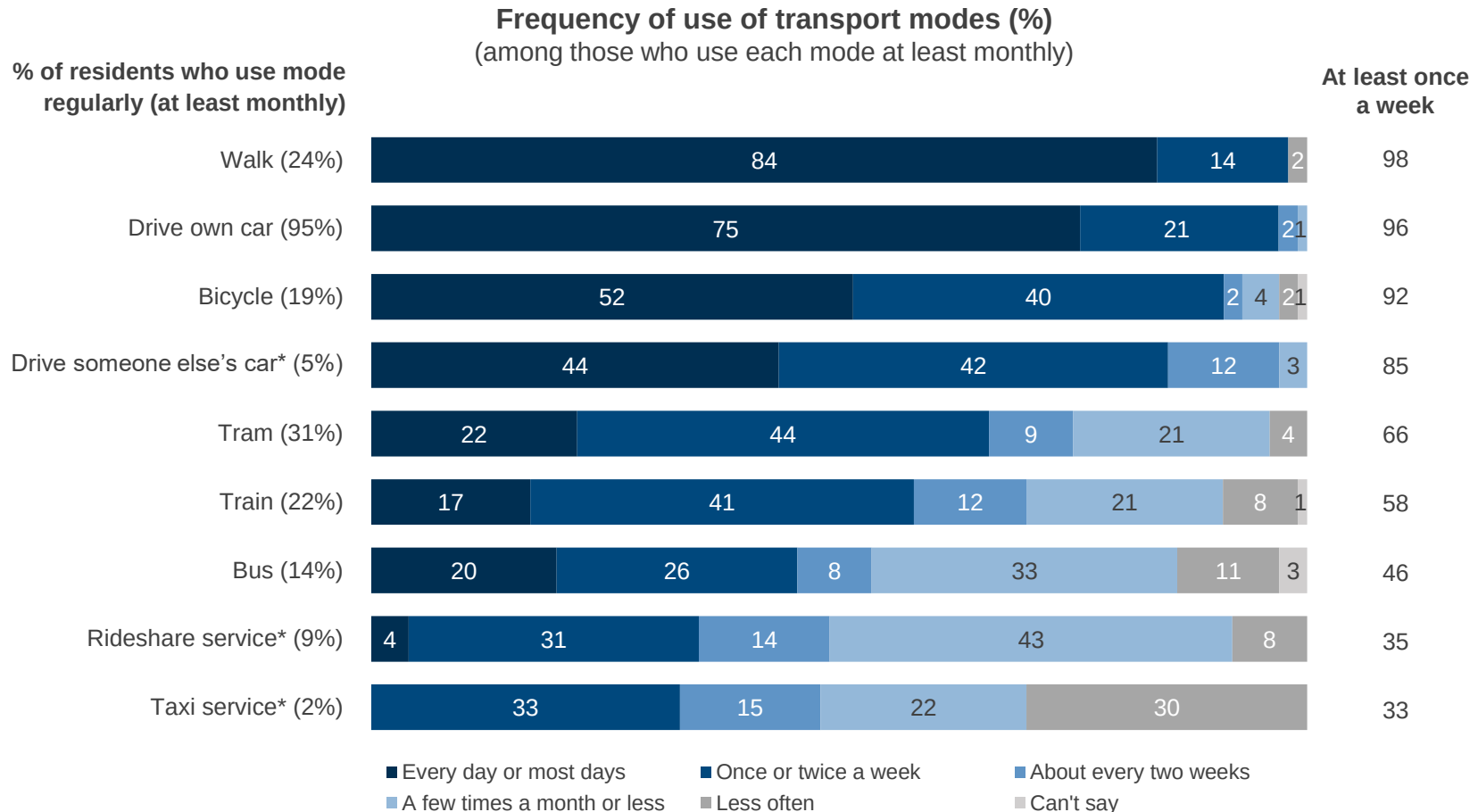


Significantly **higher** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

Q3. You mentioned that you travel in and around Merri-bek by car. Do you ...

Base: Respondents who regularly use a car to travel in and around the City of Merri-bek (n=510).

Southern residents, and those who regularly walk or cycle, drive their own car less frequently



Southern residents (64) and those who walk (64) or ride their bike (49) regularly are *significantly* less likely to **drive their own car everyday or most days** to travel in and around Merri-bek. Northern residents (86%) are significantly more likely than average to do so.

Residents with children (11) are *significantly* less likely to **use a tram everyday or most days** to travel in and around Merri-bek.

Significantly *higher* / *lower* than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

Q4 How often do you [CODES FROM Q3 THEN Q2] to travel in and around the City of Merri-bek?

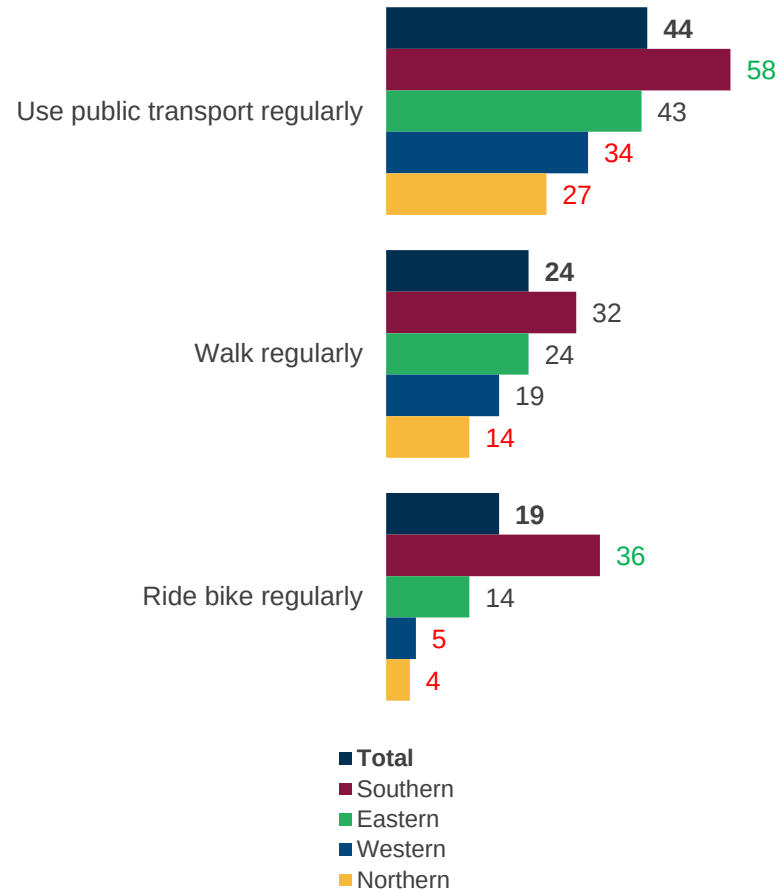
Base: Respondents who regularly use each mode to travel in and around the City of Merri-bek (n=19-489).

*Caution: small sample size (n<50).

Southern Merri-bek residents are significantly more likely to use public transport and ride a bike regularly



Regular (at least monthly) use of sustainable transport (%)



Significantly **higher** / **lower** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

Note: Location recorded automatically.

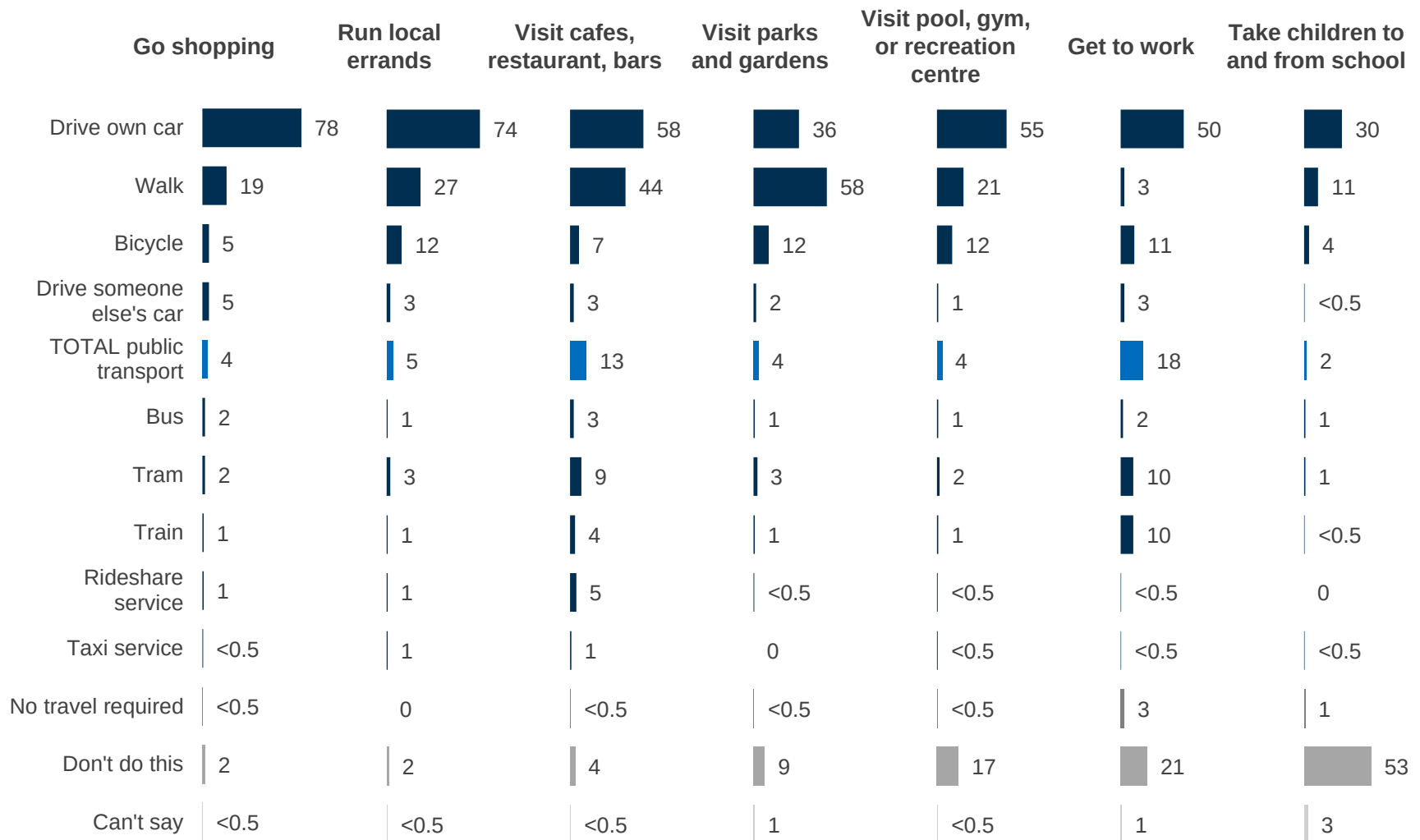
Q2. What modes of transport do you regularly use at least once a month, to travel in and around the City of Merri-bek?

Base: All respondents (n=600).

Driving own car is the most common way to get to activities, except when visiting parks and gardens



Modes of transport used for activities (%)



Q5. Which modes of transport do you typically use to [INSERT FIRST STATEMENT]?

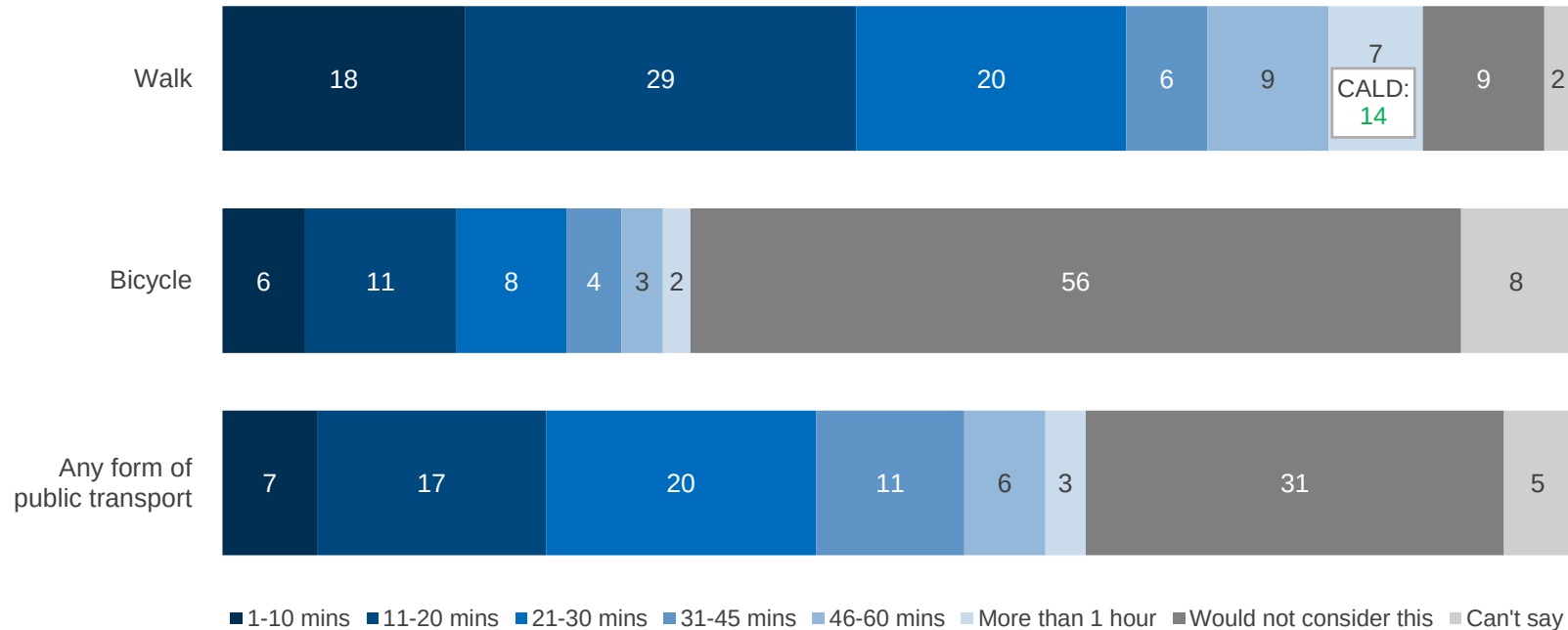
Base: All respondents (n=600).

Note: 'Total public transport' includes residents who travel regularly (at least once a month) by bus, tram and train

Residents generally spend more time walking than using public transport or cycling



Average duration of trips in local area by mode of transport (%)



Residents aged 60 years and over (16) and those with a **medical condition** in their household (17) are *significantly* more likely than average to say they **would not consider walking** around their local area.

Western (69) and Northern (68) residents, those aged 60 years and over (67), and those with no children (64) are *significantly* more likely than average to say they **would not consider cycling** around their local area.

Western residents (44) are *significantly* more likely and Eastern residents (30) are *significantly* less likely than average to say they **would not consider using public transport** around their local area.

Significantly *higher* than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

Q6. Thinking about trips that you do in and around your local area. For example, these might be to run errands, get to work, visit retail precincts, do grocery shopping, meet friends or drop children at school. These do not include trips you might do for exercise. On average, for how long would you [INSERT A, B, C IN TURN] from one destination to another?

Base: All respondents (n=600).



Profile of transport mode: Driving



Driving

85% of residents use a car regularly (at least once a month)

Of those who use a car regularly, **95%** drive their own car

- **Three quarters (75%) of those who regularly travel by car** drive their own car everyday or most days – significantly lower among Southern residents (64%)
- **Residents with children** significantly more likely to use a car to get around Merri-bek (90% versus 85%)
- **Residents aged 35 to 49 years** significantly more likely to drive their own car (98% versus 95%).
- **Shopping** (78%) and **running errands** (74%) are the dominant activities undertaken when driving a car.

The further residents need to travel, the more likely they are to drive. For some, limited public transport options are integral to the decision to drive. Some residents always take their car, no matter how short their trip, even if other options are available.

Key benefits of driving:

- Convenience, efficiency and reliability (benefits that justify higher costs, relative to other modes)
- Practical for routine trips (e.g. grocery shopping, to and from work)

- Safety; avoids perceived dangers of bike riding and public transport
- Protection from bad weather
- More control, comfort and personal space (relative to other modes, particularly public transport).

Key barriers to driving:

- Congestion (during peak times and on main roads)
- Lack of parking at destination
- Costs (petrol, maintenance, registration).

“Convenience, quicker to get to where I want to go, better to rely on my car than public transport.” (55+ years)

“If running errands, I wouldn’t catch public transport, I’d drive. I don’t want to carry my shopping everywhere.” (35-54 years)

“When I work in Sunshine, I can drive and be there in 20 minutes. Public transport would take an hour.” (35-54 years)

“I like to enjoy my own space, play my music. I can control my time, check Google for traffic congestion, work out where to park, rather than wait for a train or a bus which can be delayed. Driving, my life is much easier.” (18-34 years)

“Hate driving in Brunswick East, streets are too small, there’s so much human traffic, and you’ll never find a park anywhere. You arrive and spend 10 minutes trying to find a park.” (18-34 years)



Profile of transport mode: Walking



Walking

24% of residents walk regularly (at least once a month)

Of those who walk regularly, **84%** do it every day or most days

- **Visiting parks and gardens** (58%), and **cafes, restaurants, bars** (44%) are the dominant activities undertaken via walking.
- **47% walk for up to 20 minutes** undertaking local trips (that does not include exercise).
- **Northern residents** are significantly less likely to walk regularly (14% versus 24% overall)
- **Those with medical conditions are** significantly less likely to **consider walking** for local trips.

Proximity of amenities raises likelihood of walking.

COVID-19 lockdowns have increased tendency to walk.

Key benefits of walking:

- Exercise, improved physical and mental health
- Being outdoors; scenery, exploring local areas
- Conducive to social activities and interaction
- Avoiding 'headaches' of driving and public transport (e.g. parking, congestion, delays, indirect travel).

Key barriers to walking:

- Physical health; age, injury, poor mobility, disability
- Laziness; considered a 'chore'
- Capacity limitations (carrying multiple/heavy items)
- Threats to safety (especially women walking at night)
- Distance; limits to how far people will walk.

"If I need to go two suburbs west, it's too far, an hours walk." (35-54 years)

"As a woman coming home from events, walking at night, I don't feel safe." (35-54 years)

"I've got rotten knees, walking is a problem." (55+ years)

"Depends on what I'm doing at the other end. If I'm doing a big shop, I'll drive, even if it's 5 to 10 minutes, if it's a small task, I'll happily walk for half an hour." (18-34 years)

"I'm very close to the shops and supermarket, I walk there every day." (55+ years)

"Takes me 20 minutes to walk to the train station and I don't have to worry about parking my car. Within half an hour is a reasonable walking distance." (35-54 years)

"Walking has become more of a hobby than a necessity, as it was pre-lockdown." (35-54 years)



Profile of transport mode: Riding a bike



Riding a bike

19% of residents ride a bike regularly (at least once a month)

Of those who ride a bike regularly, **52%** do it every day or most days

- Bikes used for a range of activities: **running errands** (12%), **visiting parks and gardens** (12%) and **pool, gym or recreation centres** (12%), and **getting to work** (11%).
- 25% ride a bike for up to 30 minutes** undertaking local trips (that does not include exercise).
- Southern residents** are significantly more likely to ride a bike regularly (36% versus 19% overall).
- Northern and Western residents** are significantly less likely to ride a bike regularly (4% and 5% respectively versus 19% overall)
- A majority (56%) of residents would not consider a bike for local trips** – significantly higher among Western and Northern residents (69% and 68% respectively), residents aged 60+ years (67%), and those without children (64%).

Key benefits of riding a bike:

- Agile; avoids driving and public transport 'headaches'
- Cost savings (i.e. petrol, Myki fares)
- Exercise, improved physical and mental health

- Freedom to use whenever needed
- Recreation and social element.

Key barriers to riding a bike:

- Perceived safety; dangers of busy roads, riding at night
- Bad weather
- Inadequate infrastructure
- Limited range; most will drive or take public transport to travel longer distances
- Requires more planning (e.g. routes taken, change of clothes, bike storage/locking up).

"Not comfortable with cars going past. If I have a bike path, I'll do it, but I won't go on the road." (55+ years)

"If I'm staying on this side, I use my bike. If I go further, say to work, I drive." (18-34 years)

"In lockdown, my friends and I all bough bikes. Now we ride together when the weather is good. I didn't have a bike prior to lockdown." (35-54 years)

"Fitness, exercise, a workout for the day." (18-34 years)

"Freedom, not relying on a system. I can get home safely at night when trams and trains stop. Also I ride for free, don't have to tap on, or pay for petrol." (18-34 years)



Profile of transport mode: Public transport



Public transport

44% of residents use public transport regularly (at least once a month)

Of those who use public transport regularly:

66% use trams weekly

58% use trains weekly

46% use buses weekly

- **Getting to work** (18%), and visiting **cafes, restaurants, bars** (13%) are the primary activities undertaken via public transport.
- **44% travel for up to 30 minutes on public transport** undertaking local trips.
- **Southern residents** are significantly more likely to use public transport regularly (58% versus 44% overall).
- **Northern and Western residents** are significantly less likely to use public transport regularly (27% and 34% respectively versus 44% overall).
- **A third (31%) of residents would not consider public transport for local trips** – significantly higher among Western residents (44%).

COVID-19 driven anxiety to use public transport lingers (29% agree they prefer not to use it to avoid exposure).

Key benefits of using public transport:

- More cost-effective than driving a car

- Easy access to multiple options for some residents
- Efficient; quicker than car at certain times and on certain routes.

Key barriers to using public transport:

- Variable reliability (i.e. buses less reliable than trains)
- Excessive travel time; in some cases, less direct routes, delays changing modes
- Safety and hygiene concerns
- Cost
- Lack of options; Northern area considered poorly serviced.

"Not door to door. A trip that takes 11 minutes in the car, can take an hour by public transport." (55+ years)

"I feel safer in my car than I do on public transport, especially on weekends and at night." (55+ years)

"Prices go up every year. We're a family of five, cost comes into it." (18-34 years)

"Outer suburbs in Hume have terrible public transport." (35-54 years)

Supporting increased bike and public transport use is key to reducing future reliance on cars



When asked about the ideal ways to travel in and around Merri-bek, residents recognise the need to move away from cars. They point to the key short and longer-term benefits of doing so:

- **Reducing traffic congestion** stemming from population growth in Merri-bek
- **Reducing vehicle emissions to support long-term environmental sustainability.**

Increased use of bikes and public transport is seen as integral to a shift away from cars. Encouraging this is seen to require a number of measures.

Public transport:

- Upgrade infrastructure and systems, so it is more efficient and reliable (some parts of Western Europe, such as Austria and Amsterdam, are seen as the high standard)
- Decrease costs, particularly for short trips.

Usage of bikes:

- Develop more bike paths and lanes
- Widen existing lanes to reduce danger (e.g. potential for accidents between bikes and cars).

"If public transport was cheaper or free, I'd use it more often. The trams are pretty reliable and frequent, so making it cheaper or free would be an incentive for me to take the tram more if I was just traveling a short distance." (35-54 years)

"Faster travel, like the fast train in Europe, they have the slow train and the fast train, the one that stops at 20 stops, and the one that stops at three. And people get to know if they go at a certain time, they'll be on the fast train." (55+ years)

"I would love to see more people on bikes, but ideally there needs to be more bike lanes. More like Denmark, Holland, loads of people on bikes, having it fully ingrained into the culture, that you ride your bike around everywhere and there are places to leave your bike safely." (18-34 years)

"I find cycling, even driving around Brunswick difficult, because of the narrow streets. Trying to get cars parked off major thoroughfares will give more space, feel safer riding a bike, rather than being swiped with a car door. Getting the cars off Sydney Road and Lygon Street, and utilising more car parks off the main roads would make me feel safer about using sustainable transport." (35-54 years)

Public transport enables people to do more than just listen to music or podcasts



Residents share what they typically do when in transit, depending on the mode of transport they are using.



In general, people tend to **listen to music** or **podcasts** when driving or walking.



Those taking public transport tend to do the same, but admit that this mode of transport also enables them to **watch videos**, **catch up on work or life admin** or even take a **nap**.

"I do like catching the train because I can catch up on some videos, which I can't do if I was to drive or ride." (35-54 years)

"Well, if I'm on the train, I just get a book out, read during my during the travel time." (18-34 years)

"In the car, I like listening to radio music, but taking a train, I can just look at the window and look at the view and sometimes just maybe take a nap." (18-34 years)

"In the Uber, you're definitely on your phone, whereas on public transport, it's so quick for me that I'm not sort of reading a book or anything like that." (35-54 years)

"I love getting public transport because I feel like I can switch off. I know where I'm going, I know exactly when to get off, so I can just catch up on admin. Sometimes, I'll use my laptop on the tram and just get some bits done, read, listen to stuff. Whereas in the car yet it's kind of like musical, audiobooks and that's it. If I'm cycling, I'm not game enough to listen to anything in my ear. People do it and it's so impressive, but I need to hear everything that's going on." (18-34 years)

"On the tram, I listen to podcasts. If I'm in the car, I talk to the people I'm with in the car. Or if I'm on the tram with my husband, we usually talk, or we talk with my kids, or whoever. It just depends. If I'm by myself, the headphones go in and I listen to a podcast or music." (35-54 years)

"If you're on a crowded train, you can't do too much, really. If you're squashed up against the door, suppose you can listen to a podcast or whatever." (55+ years)



Perceptions of sustainable transport



Section summary: Perceptions of sustainable transport

Residents value a future where people use more sustainable transport

Most residents (83%) find it important ('extremely', 'very' or 'fairly') to work towards a future where people use more sustainable forms of transport – including 40% who consider it *extremely* important. Southern residents (49%) and those aged 35 to 49 years (50%) are significantly more likely to rate increased sustainable transport use as *extremely* important. Not surprisingly, regular bike riders, walkers and public transport users are also significantly more likely to consider this *extremely* important.

Walking, bike riding, public transport and EVs typically thought of as sustainable transport

Transport with zero or reduced carbon emissions is regarded as sustainable. Walking, bike riding, electric vehicles and public transport (trains and trams, less so buses), are the most commonly mentioned. Rideshare is not typically thought of as sustainable, due to perceptions of there being no significant reduction in emissions. However, there is evidence it supports public transport use (regular rideshare use is significantly higher among residents regularly using public transport). E-scooters and e-bikes are seen fun and ideal for short trips (e.g. where there is no public transport), but safety, legality and cost are barriers.

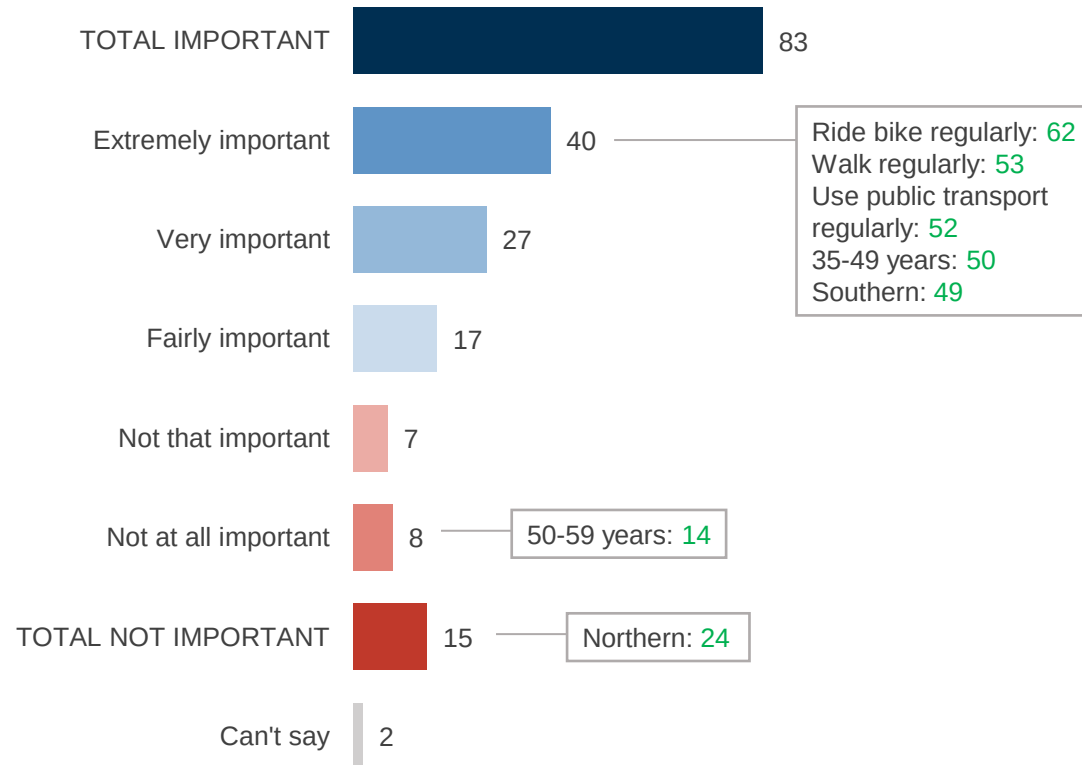
Having options beyond driving, and health and environmental benefits are key arguments

Having options other than driving, physical and mental health benefits, and reducing environmental damage are the most compelling reasons for increasing sustainable transport use. Economic arguments (i.e. saving on car costs) are considered important, but carry less relative weight against these factors. Reducing car parking demand and associated costs is the least motivating of all reasons to use more sustainable modes of transport.

The vast majority of residents consider it important to work towards greater use of sustainable transport



Importance of working towards a future where people use more sustainable forms of transport (%)



Significantly **higher** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

Q8. Merri-bek Council is committed to reducing carbon emissions in the City of Merri-bek by 75% by 2030.

Sustainable transport refers to any form of transport that has low or zero carbon emissions, or is more fuel-efficient. Examples of sustainable transport include walking, bike riding, public transport, electric and hybrid vehicles, e-scooters and e-bikes.

How important is it that we work towards a future where people use more sustainable forms of transport?

Base: All respondents (n=600).

Public transport, walking, bike riding and electric vehicles are commonly recognised as sustainable transport



Residents understand sustainable transportation to refer to modes that minimise carbon footprint, or have zero carbon emissions. Public transport, bike riding, and electric vehicles are commonly mentioned.

Public transport

Commonly thought of as sustainable transport – chiefly **electric powered trains and trams**.

Petrol/diesel buses are seen as less sustainable (but still better than a car, due to carriage of more people).

Increasing use of public transport is thought to be integral to raising sustainable transport use.

Residents point to the following to improve the sustainability of public transport:

- Using renewable energy (e.g. recycled carbon fuels) as power source
- Electric powered buses (already operating in some municipalities, including Merri-bek).

Walking, bikes

Seen as the **most sustainable forms of transport** (due to absence of motors), but residents note they are suited to small trips, due to peoples' physical limitations and time pressures.

It is felt that Merri-bek (and wider Melbourne) **lacks the infrastructure to support a widespread increase in bike riding**. Moreover, driving remains the dominant mode.

Amsterdam (Holland) is referenced as a bike and pedestrian-friendly city – and in this sense a potential aspiration for Melbourne – whose infrastructure and culture accommodates widespread use of both.

Electric Vehicles

Automatically thought of as sustainable transport.

Cost to purchase is considered a significant barrier to uptake (i.e. not yet at price points which are affordable for the majority).

Some residents are **cynical about the extent to which Electric Vehicles (Evs) are 'sustainable'**, suggesting:

- The source of electricity used to power them is more often carbon-based/not renewable
- The sourcing, replacement and disposal of lithium-ion batteries still harms the environment
- Materials and processes used to manufacture them are not sustainable.

Carshare

Little awareness and use, but is recognised as a form of sustainable transport.

Use driven by economics not environmental concerns – i.e. avoiding costs of owning a car (purchase, fuel, upkeep).

Use of carshare tends to be premeditated, e.g. for longer journeys and/or for carrying large items where a car or van is needed.

The few residents who use carshare report favourable experiences; cars are easily accessible and available when they need them, and rates charged are reasonable.

Very limited appeal, due to most residents owning their own cars.



Understanding of sustainable transport: Select verbatim comments

"I guess be more conscious about your carbon emissions. Use public transport or bicycle riding, at least with public transport you get more people using the same transport, so less emissions." (18-34 years)

"First one for me is always cycling, and obviously the trains and trams use electricity, which I believe is going to be 100% solar soon, so also that feels good." (35-54 years)

"Well, people powered, using our legs, using our bikes, but also, it's how transports are powered. If I ever got a car again, it would be an EV." (55+ years)

"What do you classify as sustainable? Sustainability is an almost impossible definition. Obviously, it's better for the environment and we're cutting down emissions, but there's still an aspect of unsustainability in the manufacturing and power sources." (18-34 years)

"Less petrol polluting the environment and things like that." (18-34 years)

"I think of cities being redesigned to be optimised for bikes and walking." (18-34 years)

"Public transport is the default reaction to what's more sustainable. Carsharing, things like GoGet, are pretty good – there's no need to have everyone having their own personal car sitting there 95% of the time, doing nothing. Having a carsharing option can be a better alternative both financially and from a sustainability perspective." (35-54 years)

"I think of public transport that's fueled by more sustainable fuel, or recycled fuel." (18-34 years)

"When we say sustainable transport, we automatically think public transport. People think of public transport as sustainable." (35-54 years)

"I've used carshare extensively here, and used them all the time when I lived in a Europe. The only drawback is they have to be returned to point of origin." (55+ years)

"I've had car share for seven years, never owned a car in my life, I'm in my 40s. You don't pay for insurance, fuel or servicing. If you live in the inner city of Melbourne, you can pretty much drive wherever you want. It's really convenient." (35-54 years)

"No drawbacks with carshare. I don't like owning a car, an unnecessary expense." (55+ years)

Rideshare is not thought of as sustainable transport, and less than one in ten residents use it regularly



Residents do not spontaneously consider rideshare as a sustainable form of transport

Residents question the extent to which rideshare can be considered sustainable, and whether it is more sustainable than driving one's own car. They suggest:

- No significant reduction in car emissions, especially if one person is using it (as opposed to car pooling)
- People may use rideshare in place of walking, bike riding and public transport.

Yet there is some recognition that it may reduce reliance on one's own car for transport.

Use is marginal; just 9% of those who use a car regularly in Merri-bek are using rideshare, with most using it infrequently (43% use it a few times a month or less). Notable characteristics of rideshare include:

- **Evidence of it supporting public transport use**, with residents who regularly use public transport significantly more likely to use rideshare (17%, versus 9% overall)
- It is often a **preferred mode for travelling at night**, due to perceptions of it being safer than public transport
- **Older, less technologically-literate residents are less likely** to use rideshare (often preferring taxis)

- **Parents travelling with young children are less likely** to use rideshare, due to the lack of availability of cars with child seats
- **Some residents are uncomfortable using rideshare**, due to having no control over who you share a car (both driver and other passengers if pooling).

"I've never really thought about these being sustainable because you're still using a car, but I guess it is in the long term. You're not having a car parked outside your house, using it for things that maybe you wouldn't do if you didn't have a car at all. So, you're only using [a car] for the times you actually need it. Also, I guess it's also more sustainable than each of us driving individually." (18-34 years)

"Rideshare is obviously not for everyone. I travel with my son and I don't want to get in a car with a nutter." (35-54 years)

"I would never use an Uber. I don't use apps. The few times where I've needed a service, I get a taxi." (55+ years)



There is interest in using e-scooters and e-bikes, but safety and cost are barriers

E-scooters and e-bikes are fun and great for short trips, but safety is a primary concern

Use of e-scooters and e-bikes is negligible (just 1% report regular use of both), likely due to the fact that Merri-bek is not part of the trials that have been underway in other municipalities since late 2021.

Some (mostly younger) residents report using both in areas outside Merri-bek, and have had largely favourable experiences.

In terms of benefits, they are seen as:

- Ideal for short trips, where there is no (or indirect) public transport, and where driving is difficult/ congested (e.g. between public transport stops, going east to west across Merri-bek)
- Easily accessible and faster than walking
- More economical than rideshare
- Fun and exhilarating (mainly e-scooters).

However a number of issues and concerns are raised:

- **Safety:** e-scooters are seen to pose dangers to riders (e.g. not wearing helmet, from cars if ridden on roads) and pedestrians (if ridden on footpaths)
- **Legality:** confusion over e-scooter laws, e.g. where they can be ridden (roads, footpaths, bike lanes), speed limits, and whether helmets are compulsory

- **Cost:** some see them as expensive (to buy and rent), not necessarily a cheaper alternative to public transport.

"E-scooters are fun, you use bike lanes when you're on them. Really good if you travel sideways, as opposed to going straight north or south, or into the city." (18-34 years)

"People ride them on footpaths, on roads, they ride them all over the place." (55+ years)

"I use e-scooters to fill in the gaps, those blind spots for public transport, e.g. getting to Fitzroy from Brunswick without Uber-ing, or when driving is a bit awkward." (18-34 years)

"The e-bike, e-scooter thing, being further out from the city, they're not accessible. If they were, I'd be more inclined to use them." (18-34 years)

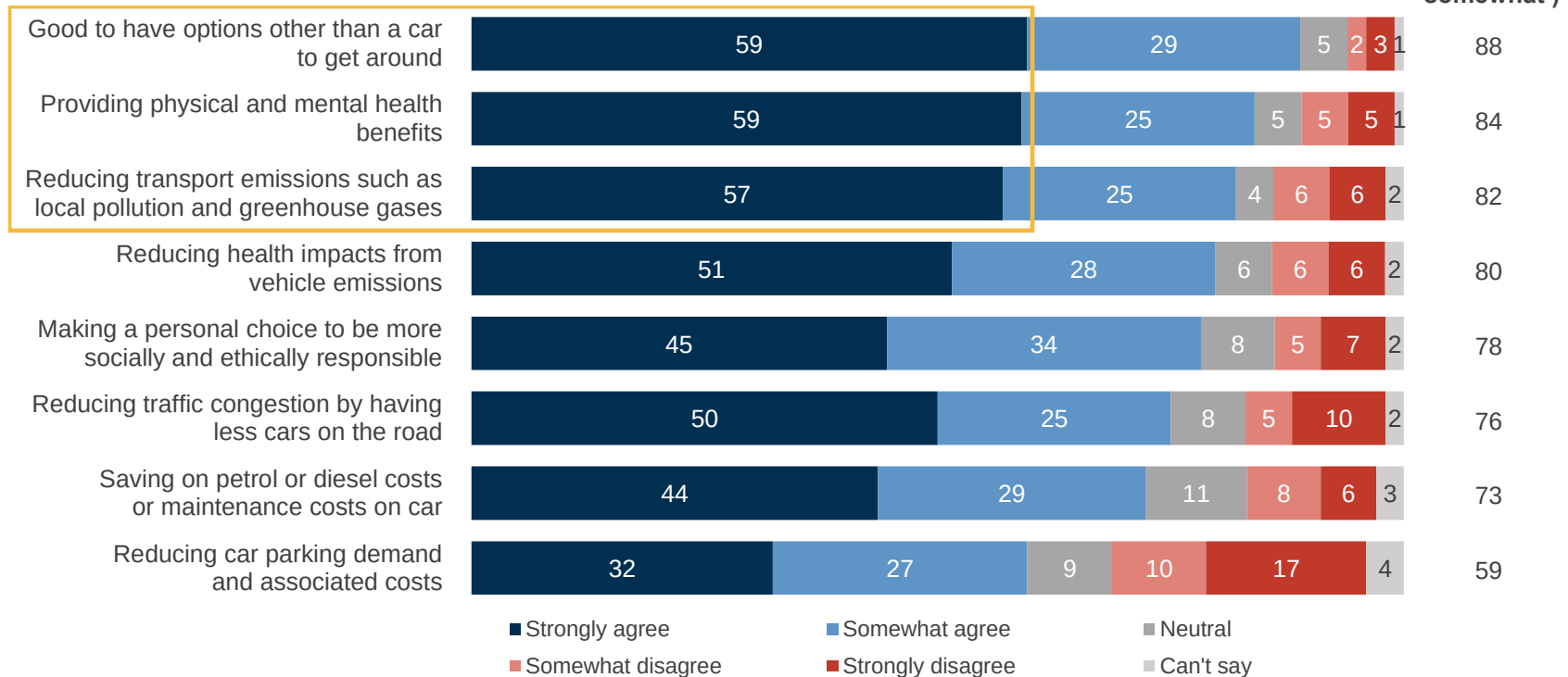
"I'd be curious to get the e-bike once it's come down a bit in price. I do a 15 km/h trip to CBD, and it would mean I don't get there too gross and sweaty." 35-54 years)

"E-bikes. I've put my kid on the back and the groceries, awesome. A bit expensive, I couldn't sustain as an ongoing thing. But they're fun and really convenient. I'd probably use it more than I would drive, if I owned one, but they're super expensive to buy." (35-54 years)

Increased options, health benefits and reduced emissions are considered key benefits of sustainable transport



Agreement with reasons to use more sustainable transport (%)



Southern residents (68) and women (67) are significantly more likely to strongly agree that **having options other than a car to get around** is a reason to use more sustainable modes of transport.

Residents aged 50 to 59 years (10) are significantly more likely to strongly disagree that **providing physical and mental health benefits** is a reason.

Southern residents (66) are significantly more likely to strongly agree that **reducing transport emissions such as local pollution and greenhouse gases** is a reason.

Residents aged 50 to 59 years (55) are significantly more likely to strongly agree that **making a personal choice to be more socially and ethically responsible** is a reason.

Significantly higher than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

Q11. I am going to read out some statements some people have said are reasons to use more sustainable modes of transport.

Firstly, do you agree or disagree that [INSERT FIRST REASON] is a reason for using more sustainable modes of transport?

Base: All respondents (n=600).

There is strong validation among the Merri-bek community of the value of increasing sustainable transport use



Around three quarters or more residents agree with most reasons to use more sustainable transport.

Having options other than driving resonates strongly

Of all reasons, the highest level of agreement is with:

- **Good to have options other than a car to get around** (88% total agree, including 59% who *strongly* agree).
 - Southern residents and women are significantly more likely to *strongly* agree with this statement (68% and 67% respectively, versus 59% overall).

This reflects existing patterns of transport use. Regular use of transport modes other than driving is relatively prevalent – chiefly public transport (44%), and to a lesser extent walking (24%) and bike riding (19%).

Bike riding and using public transport among Southern residents is significantly higher – around three in five (58%) use public transport regularly, and more than a third (36%) ride a bike regularly.

“When our car was stolen, we went through withdrawal and had to rethink everything. We learnt to catch the train and tram, and now walk to Queen Victoria market to shop. We’re lucky where we live, public transport is fantastic. No plans to buy another car.” (55+ years)



Health benefits are also highly motivating

Around four in five residents agree that using more sustainable transport:

- **Provides physical and mental health benefits** (84% agree, including 59% who *strongly* agree)
- **Reduces health impacts from vehicle emissions** (80% agree, including 51% who *strongly* agree).

Improving physical and mental health is a compelling reason to increase sustainable transport use. This reflects earlier findings, where exercise and improved mental health are seen as key benefits of walking and bike riding. The benefit of reducing health impacts of vehicle emissions is also widely supported.

“A Council run campaign on the benefits of walking instead of driving, show what the health benefits are. Push the benefits for the individual. Scare tactics could work, like childhood obesity. People need something in it for them.” (18-34 years)

“Less air pollution in general. A few cities in Europe, they have more or less have forbidden cars in their city centres, due to smog/pollution being a major problem. Now the air is cleaner, visibly cleaner after a few years.” (18-34 years)

The role that individuals can play in reducing emissions by driving less is a powerful motivator



Environmental benefits are equally compelling

Reducing environmental damage and social and ethical conscience are strong motivators to use more sustainable transport:

- **Reducing transport emissions such as local pollution and greenhouse gases** (82% agree, including 57% who *strongly* agree).
- **Making a personal choice to be more socially and ethically responsible** (78% agree, including 45% who *strongly* agree).
 - Residents aged 50 to 59 years are significantly more likely to *strongly* agree that this is a reason to increase sustainable transport use (55% versus 45% overall).

Reducing emissions sits alongside key personal benefits – ‘good to have options other than a car to get around’ and ‘provides physical and mental health benefits’ – as a leading reason to use more sustainable transport (all three attract the highest levels of ‘strong’ agreement).

The belief that individuals can make personal choices that contribute positively to the environment (and by extension, the longer-term collective good) also resonates widely in Merri-bek.



Addressing a major pain point is also a strong reason

- **Reducing traffic congestion by having less cars on the road** (76% agree, 50% *strongly* agree).

Traffic congestion is major complaint among both drivers and bike riders, who feel less safe riding on busy roads. Most residents support reduced traffic congestion as a reason to use more sustainable transport.

“Raising awareness on sustainability, the negative effects of carbon emissions, the rapid increase of global warming and where that’s heading over the next 20, 50 years is vital. Especially among older generations.” (18-34 years)

“Obviously reduce carbon dioxide emissions is a major benefit.” (18-34 years)

“Reducing impact on the environment is definitely important and something I try and do in my life.” (18-34 years)

“You’re going to reduce traffic on roads, making it quicker and easier for people who are using them to get around. There will be less maintenance on roads, less maintenance on cars.” (18-34 years)



Car-related cost savings are important, but reducing car parking demand is a less robust argument



Economics play an important role

- **Saving on petrol or diesel costs or maintenance costs on car** (73% agree, including 44% who strongly agree).

For many residents, cars are a significant and ongoing expense (fuel, upkeep, registration). The opportunity to lessen or remove these costs by not driving, driving less, and raising sustainable transport use, is an attractive proposition for close to three quarters of residents.

Car parking issues have lower impact

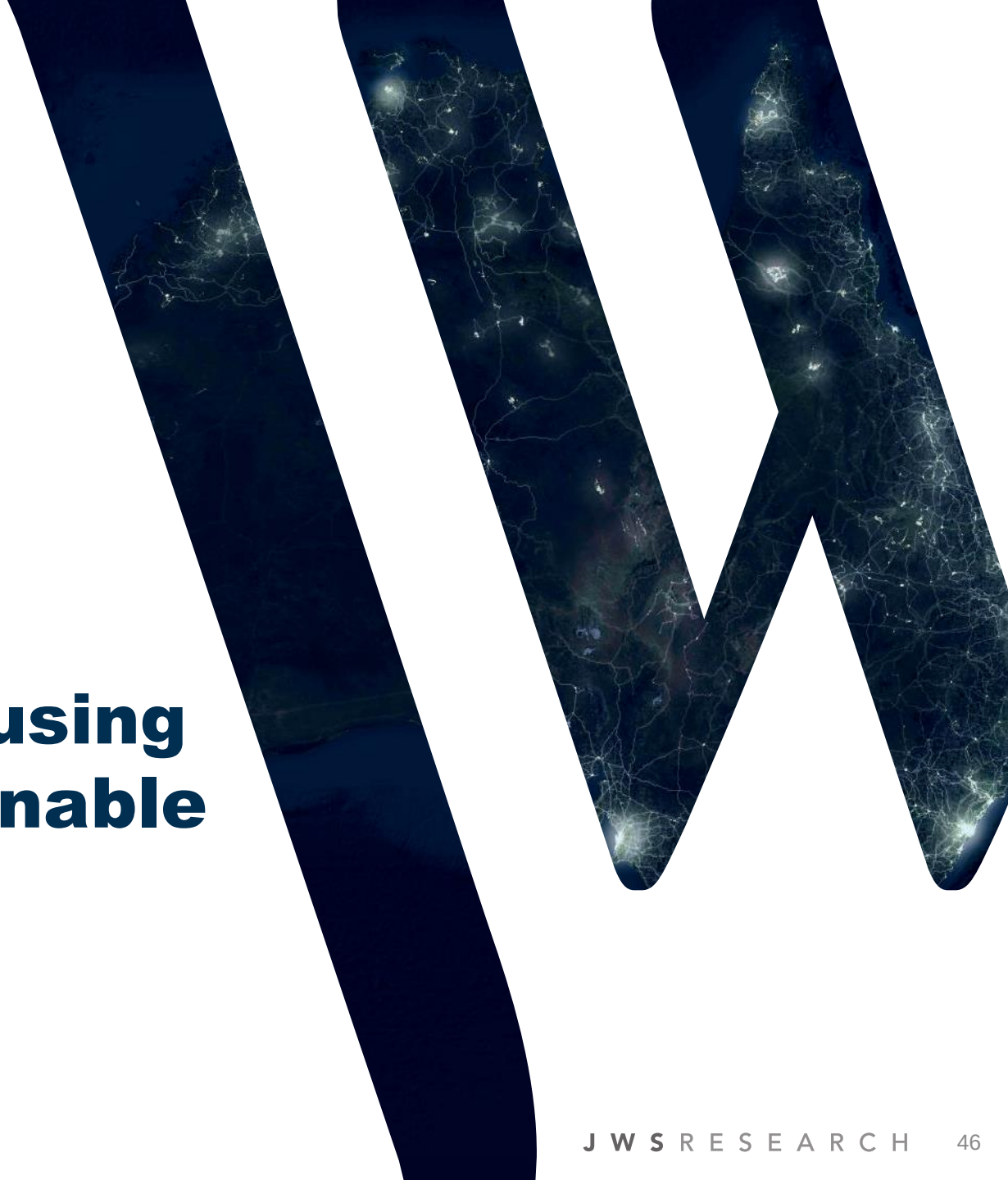
- **Reducing car parking demand and associated costs** (59% agree; 32% strongly, 27% disagree).

Residents complain about car parking difficulties in and around major roads, and in narrow streets. There is a need for car parking to enable the use of public transport (e.g. being able to park at train stations). Optimal and affordable parking also enables efficient use of time and completion of errands. That said, addressing the cost and availability of car parking is not considered as high a priority as other areas in facilitating the uptake of sustainable transport.

“Economic impacts. Reducing the costs of running a car.” (18-34 years)

“It doesn't make sense – wanting people to use less fossil fuels by not driving, but then giving them no opportunity to get there to do that. They should build more car parks, make them free, similar to the back streets of Coburg, where Woolies and the library is, where there's three different adjacent car parks. You go there, do your shopping, go to library, post office, all your errands done, without having to drive around.” (35-54 years)

“At Glenroy station, they've taken away all car parking ... now it's overwhelmed with cars on the street and nowhere to park. I can't even use the train station, because it doesn't make sense for me to get there. If you want people to stop driving, give them somewhere to park their cars.” (35-54 years)

A large, dark blue, stylized letter 'W' that serves as a background element. It is filled with a glowing, intricate pattern of white and yellow lines, resembling a night-time aerial view of a city or a complex network of roads and lights.

Barriers to using more sustainable modes of transport



Section summary: Barriers to using more sustainable modes of transport

Most residents are likely to increase their use of sustainable transport

A clear majority of residents claim they are likely to increase their use of sustainable transport in the future (66% likely). The strongest resistance comes from men, Western residents, those aged 60 years and over, and residents who have (or who have someone in their household with) a medical condition or disability that impacts mobility. All these groups record a significantly higher level of **not being likely** to increase sustainable transport use.

Cars represent the strongest barrier, and EVs are out of reach for most

Using a car is a more convenient and efficient way to get around and run errands (82% agree) attracts the highest agreement of all reasons to **not use more sustainable transport**. A clear majority of residents (68%) also agree that *it is difficult to travel within a reasonable timeframe if I don't drive*. Most also consider the cost of EVs as prohibitive; 79% agree that *the vehicles that are considered sustainable are too expensive to buy and maintain*.

Public transport use limited by poor reliability of buses and poor servicing in some areas

Most agree that *some forms of public transport are less reliable than others (e.g. buses)* (74%), and that *travelling from east to west, or west to east in Merri-bek is difficult via public transport* (65%). Agreement with *public transport is too time-consuming* is less pronounced (59%), and residents are divided on whether *public transport is too expensive* (42% agree versus 42% disagree). Most residents do not consider safety and COVID-19 risks as reasons to avoid public transport.

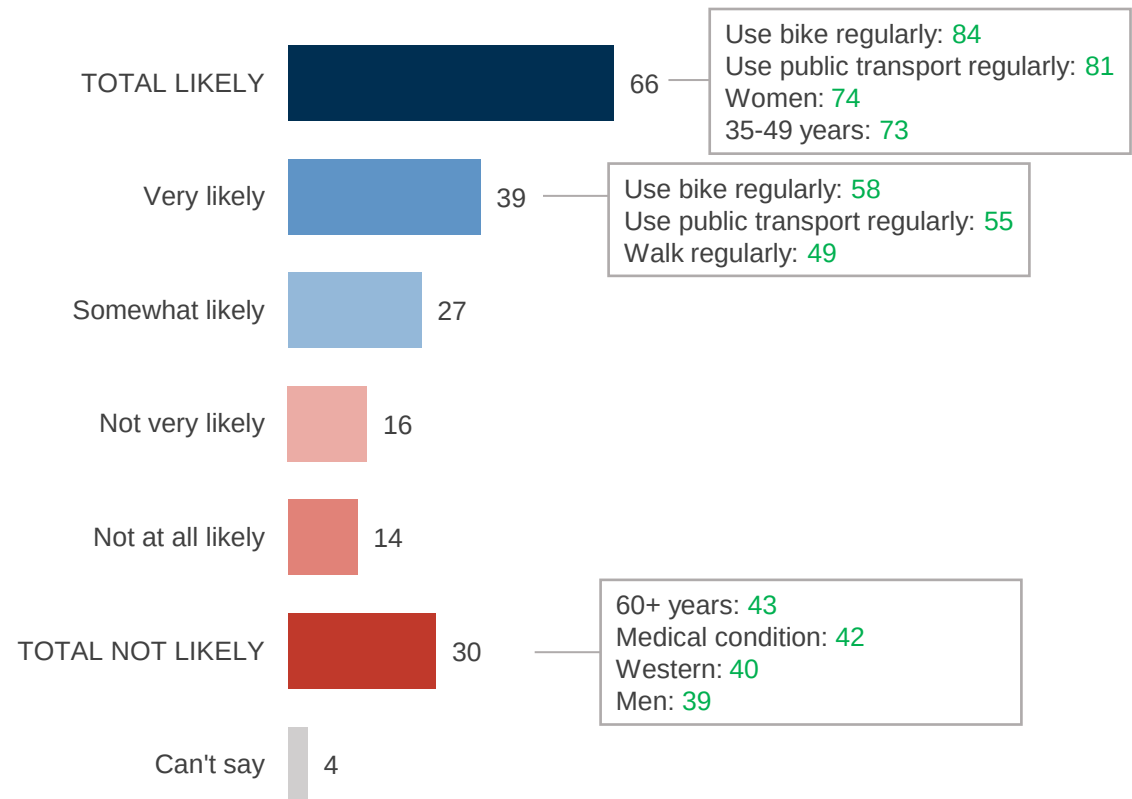
Many residents are concerned about the dangers of bike riding and e-scooters

Three in five residents (60%) agree that *e-scooters are too dangerous*. The safety and legality of using e-scooters are major concerns, particularly among older residents who are anxious about the dangers they pose when ridden on footpaths. A majority of residents also agree that *bike riding is too dangerous* (53%). A lack of infrastructure (bike lanes and paths), busy roads and riding at night heightens risk and can discourage or limit use of bikes.

Men, older residents, and those in Western Merri-bek are more resistant to sustainable transport



Likelihood to increase use of sustainable transport in the future (%)



Significantly **higher** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

Q9. How likely are you to increase your use of sustainable transport in the future?

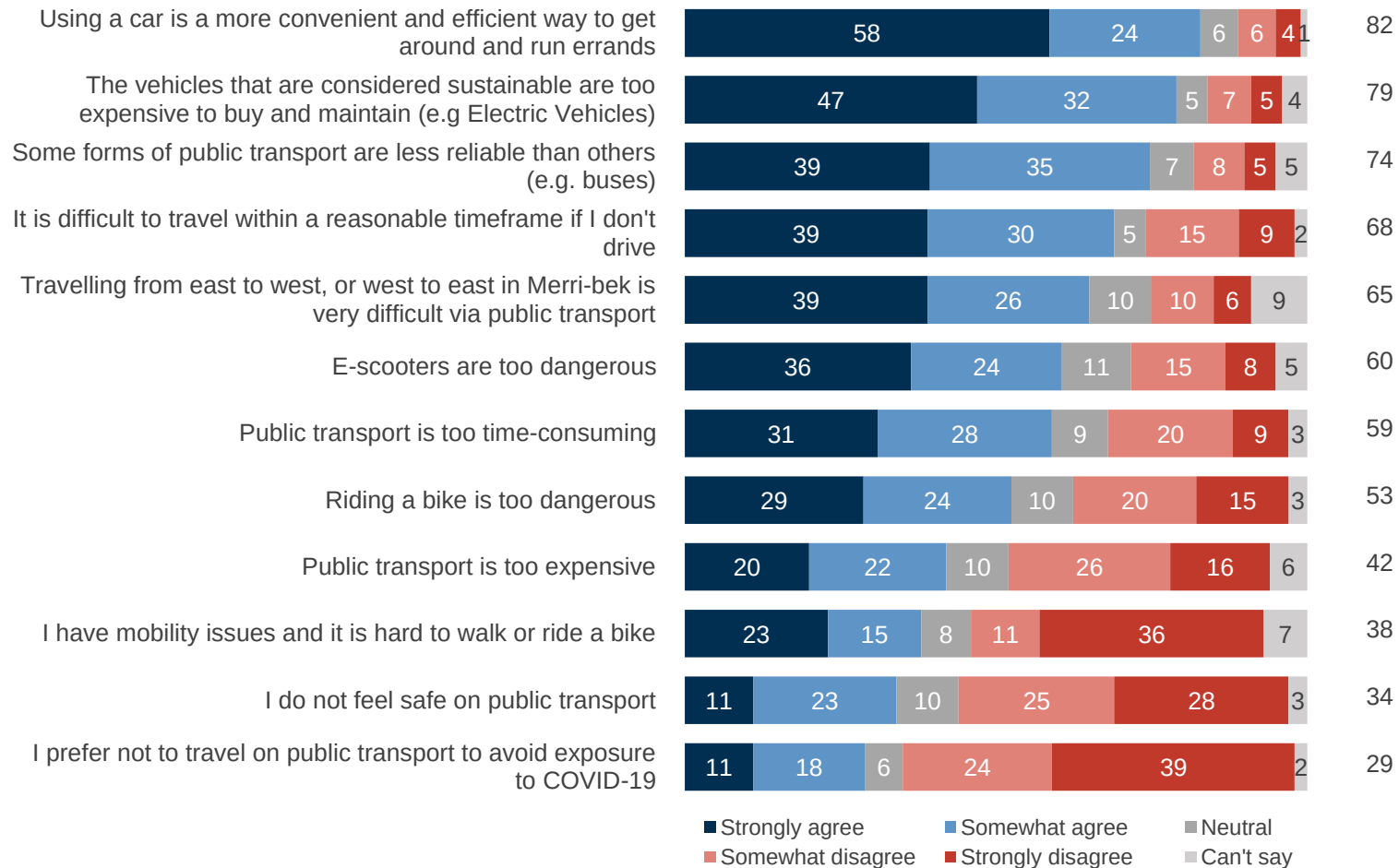
Base: All respondents (n=600).

The convenience of a car, high cost of electric vehicles and poor reliability of public transport are major barriers



Agreement with reasons not to use more sustainable transport (%)

Total agree
(‘strongly’ +
‘somewhat’)



Significantly **higher** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

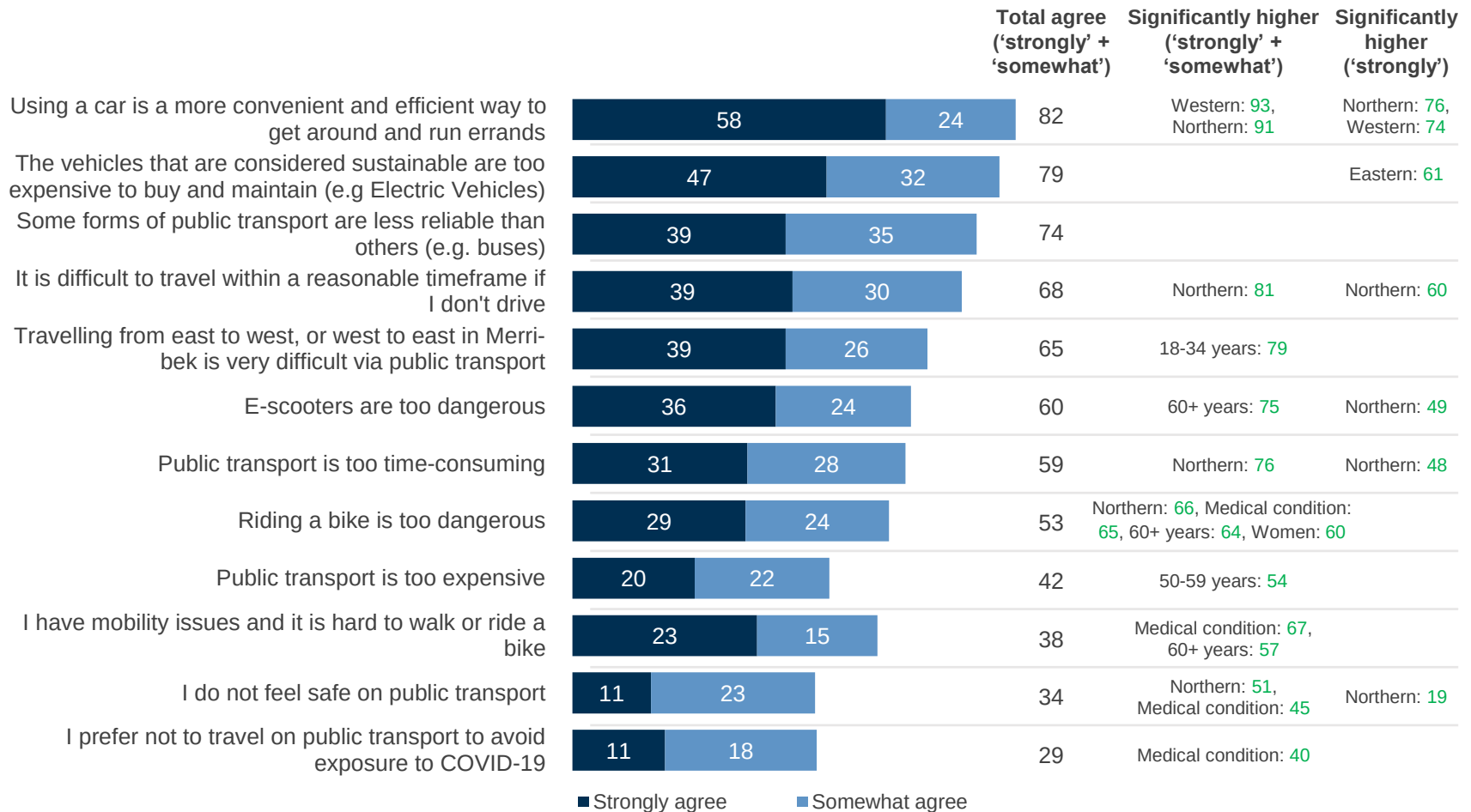
Q10. I am going to read out some statements some people have said are reasons why they do not use more sustainable modes of transport. Firstly, do you agree or disagree that [INSERT FIRST REASON] is a reason for not using more sustainable modes of transport?

Base: All respondents (n=600).

Northern residents more likely to find cars more convenient and enable travel within reasonable timeframes



Agreement with reasons not to use more sustainable transport (%)



Those who ride a bike regularly (49), Southern residents and those who use public transport regularly (both 34) are *significantly* more likely to 'strongly' or 'somewhat' disagree that **difficulty to travel within a reasonable timeframe** is a reason.

Significantly *higher* than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

Q10. I am going to read out some statements some people have said are reasons why they do not use more sustainable modes of transport.

Firstly, do you agree or disagree that [INSERT FIRST REASON] is a reason for not using more sustainable modes of transport?

Base: All respondents (n=600).



Most residents see driving as the most convenient and efficient mode of travel



Cars are a significant and widespread barrier to using more sustainable transport

Over four in five residents agree that:

- **Using a car is a more convenient and efficient way to get around and run errands** (82% agree, including 58% who *strongly* agree).
 - Significantly higher agreement among Western and Northern residents (93% and 91% respectively, compared to 82% overall).

The key advantage of a car is its perceived convenience and efficiency over every other form of transport, particularly public transport. Most residents consider it the easiest, most direct mode of travel, especially given Melbourne's layout and geography.

A majority of residents also agree that:

- **It is difficult to travel within a reasonable timeframe if I don't drive** (68% agree, including 39% who *strongly* agree).
 - Southern residents (34%), those who regularly ride a bike (49%) or use public transport (34%) are significantly more likely than average to disagree.

Residents can find public transport to be more time-consuming than driving, not as direct, involving mode/route changes and sometimes experiencing schedule delays.

Some residents also feel other modes (e.g. walking, bike riding) cannot travel as fast or as far as a car.

However, the strength of agreement with this statement is lower, suggesting it is not an absolute certainty driving gets residents to where they need to go in a reasonable time (especially during peak times), and that other modes of transport enable them to reach their destination in an acceptable timeframe. This is evidenced by significantly higher disagreement with this statement among regular bike riders and public transport users.

It is likely location dependent too, noting Southern residents are significantly more likely to disagree with this statement – due to proximity to amenities, and higher reliance on other modes of transport (bike riding and public transport), relative to other areas within Merri-bek.

"The logistical and topographical layout of Melbourne makes it very difficult to not to have a car, especially when further out from the city." (18-34 years)

"Riding my bike is not the easiest, especially travelling longer distances across Melbourne. Really hard to switch from using a car." (18-34 years)

"I have two trams within 2 minutes walk of my house. Very easy for me to take public transport wherever I'm going." (18-34 years)

Cost of EVs is a significant barrier to sustainable transport use, and there is poor awareness of charging stations



Cost of electric vehicles is a major inhibitor to increased use of sustainable transport

Attracting the second highest level of agreement of all barriers is:

- **The vehicles that are considered sustainable are too expensive to buy and maintain (e.g EVs)** (79% agree, including 47% *strongly* agree).

Cost to purchase is regarded as a key barrier to widespread uptake of EVs. While there is willingness to consider an electric vehicle, they simply remain too expensive for many residents.



Residents know little about Council-provided EV charging stations

Residents' awareness and understanding of EV charging stations in Merri-bek is limited. Some know of one or two public charging stations in different locations, but they are not identified as being provided by Council.

There is confusion as to:

- Whether they are free, or if costs are involved
- Who operates them (private or public/Council)
- How many EVs can be accommodated and how long they need to be charged for.

Residents are generally surprised to learn that Council operates 16 free EV charging stations in Merri-bek, and welcome this as a sound investment in a future that will likely see increasing numbers of EVs on our roads. Some question why there has been no publicity from Council about charging stations.

"The price is off-putting." (18-34 years)

"I know Merri-bek has electric car charging places, but I don't see a lot of electric cars around. Great they've got the infrastructure, but I'd love more encouragement on ways to be able to get an affordable electric car." (35-54 years)

"Alongside Aldi, just off Sydney Road. Do have to pay for them? I think they take a good hour to charge, is that right?" (55+ years)

"The infrastructure for electric vehicles is just not there at the present time." (55+ years)

"You just roll up, park and charge, I'm not sure if there's a cost." (55+ years)

"That's fantastic [that Council operates 16 free charging stations in Merri-bek]. How come we don't know that? Why aren't we told that... you don't know?" (55+ years)

Buses being less reliable, and poor public transport servicing of travel between east and west, are key barriers



Poor reliability of buses, and a lack of public transport services in some areas are barriers

Three quarters of residents agree that:

- **Some forms of public transport are less reliable than others (e.g. buses)** (74% agree, including 39% who *strongly* agree).

Buses are generally considered less reliable than trams and trains, due to them being at the mercy of traffic congestion (and being unable to change routes in response). Buses not running on time is a common complaint among residents. It is noted that having an app similar to 'tramTRACKER' (real-time updates of tram arrival times) for buses would reduce frustration over delays and make planning easier.

There is also a view that there are not enough bus routes within Merri-bek, and that some routes do not connect residents to key amenities.

Many residents agree there is a lack of public transport to facilitate travelling across Merri-bek:

- **Travelling from east to west, or west to east in Merri-bek is very difficult via public transport** (65% agree, including 39% who *strongly* agree).
 - Significantly higher agreement among residents aged 18 to 34 years (79% versus 65% overall).

Travelling across Merri-bek (east to west, or west to east) is considered significantly more challenging than going in the north to south, or south to north, direction due largely to fewer public transport options.

"The bus don't go a different route, whereas if you're in your car and it says there's heavy traffic, there's a car accident on this road, here's a quicker route, you'll save 5, or 10 or more minutes. You can kind of go that way." (30-35 years)

"The buses aren't well connected, especially to the shopping centres. I feel they haven't studied the population for that area to see how to connect the bus properly." (18-34 years)

"For trams there's a tram tracker app that's live, but buses don't have anything like that, buses are really inconsistent, it would be really useful to know if there's a delay. At the moment, there's no way to know." (30-35 years)

"Using public transport, it's not door to door. Even when I get off the bus, I have to spend more time walking to the destination. More preparation is required." (30-35 years)

"If you want to go east to west in Merri-bek, you really only have a couple of buses, which isn't great. I avoid travelling that direction on public transport." (35-55 years)



A majority of residents agree public transport is too time-consuming, but experiences differ by location



Northern Merri-bek residents more likely to see public transport as too time consuming

A majority of residents overall consider public transport to be too time-consuming – as a reason for not using more sustainable transport:

- **Public transport is too time-consuming** (59% agree, including 31% who *strongly* agree).

Many residents prefer to drive if they can reach their destination quicker than they would catching public transport.

However, perceptions differ by location. Northern residents are significantly more likely to strongly agree with this statement (48% versus 31% overall), while those in the Southern area are significantly more likely to disagree (strongly or somewhat) (38% versus 29% overall).

- Northern Merri-bek residents need to travel longer distances (e.g. to shopping/retail hubs, the city, other parts of Melbourne), rely more on driving, and have fewer public transport options that are often not as accessible as they are for residents in other locations.

- Southern residents having amenities and public transport in close proximity (often walking distance), and travel shorter distances on public transport to access destinations (e.g. shopping/retail hubs, the city, other parts of Melbourne).

Travelling with young children can also be an issue, with some parents not prepared to use public transport if it involves extended timeframes.

“I would need a really integrated, seamless public transport system that could go to any side of Melbourne pretty efficiently, that’s cost-effective, where I could just jump on and off. It takes hours sometimes to cross town. I’d rather drive for 40, 45 minutes or pay a toll if I have to be somewhere for a certain time, than use public transport.” (18-34 years)

“With young kids, you can’t make them wait 20 minutes for transport. If there’s works, forget it. I can’t have two and four-year-olds on a train for 40 minutes.” (18-34 years)

“There needs to be more frequent trains, especially after a certain time. If I’m trying to get home from the city after 10pm, if I miss a train, I have to wait half an hour for the next one, very frustrating.” (35-54 years)

“I work in Greenvale, outer north suburbs. It doesn’t have public transport. I’d have to get on the Craigieburn train line, get off at Broadmeadows, catch a bus, then it would be like at least a 30 minute walk from the bus up to my kinder. When I drive, it takes me 20 minutes.” (35-55 years)

The issue of whether public transport is too expensive is polarising



Older, concession-eligible residents less likely to see public transport as too expensive

Residents are divided on whether the cost of public transport is a barrier to using more sustainable transport:

- **Public transport is too expensive** (42% agree, versus 42% disagree).

Age and number of dependents can impact perceptions of public transport costs:

- Older residents aged 60 years and over can travel on concession, and as such, are significantly more likely to *strongly* disagree that public transport being too expensive as a reason to not use more sustainable transport (22%, versus 16% overall)
- By comparison, those aged 50 to 59 years are significantly more likely to agree with this statement (54%, versus 42% overall)
- Larger families (e.g. with three or more children) can also find public transport costly if travelling with multiple children and for longer distances.

"They used to give us free regional travel for kids under a certain age." (18-34 years)

"It's got to at least be cheaper than driving if they want people to use it and go through the inconvenience of waiting for it." (35-54 years)

"Cost is an issue. If you're going a short distance, to touch on with your myki, it's almost \$5 these days." (35-54 years)

"If they want to encourage people to catch trains and trams and everything, make it cheaper. Ideally make it free." (35-54 years)

"If the [State] Government wants to go greener, be more sustainable, and encourage people to use public transport, then it might have to bite the bullet and wear some of the cost. \$5 a tap I think it is now. It's actually cheaper to drive if you're going down the road. But there's real bonuses in using it. A few times I've taken my son to Barkley Square, where it's a real pain to find a parking spot. But then you can't buy too much shopping because you have to lug it back home. There are pros and cons with it." (35-54 years)



Safety is not a widespread barrier to using public transport

A majority of residents do not feel safety is an issue on public transport

Over half of residents disagree that:

- **I do not feel safe on public transport** (53% disagree, including 28% who *strongly* disagree, compared to 34% who agree).

Over half of residents (53% disagree) do not see safety as a reason for them to avoid using public transport.

Only a third of residents see safety as an issue (34% agree). Unpredictable, threatening, and potentially violent behaviour from other passengers is at the root of their fear.

While the presence of Protective Services Officers has improved perceptions of safety, traveling at night on trains and trams is seen to increase risks. Children are also seen to be at greater risk, if travelling without an adult.

Residents who have a medical condition or disability that impacts mobility, or who have someone in their household with a medical condition or disability that impacts mobility, are significantly more likely to feel unsafe on public transport (45% agree, versus 34% overall).

"I think getting off at a train station, PSOs, all that sort of stuff makes people feel safe. But the trams are the more daunting ones. I think that they're not very well lit." (35-54 years)

"My oldest is 29 and when he was growing up, there were punch-ons. But now, with my 16 year old, it's very different. He got harassed by a group of boys near Broadmeadows train station and they had a gun and knives. I don't feel safe for my kids to be on public transport." (35-54 years)

"I am concerned for my children on public transport. My daughter uses it a bit and we hear stories about unusual characters, that type of thing. Part of that is just about becoming an adult and learning that everybody doesn't do everything perfectly, and people are very different, they speak and behave differently. There's people you can interact with, and people that you need to avoid. I worry about safety." (55+ years)

"It can be daunting going on public transport when you have a lot of people, especially when you have groups of people, some of their behaviour is ugly. Coming back from the footy, I've seen young girls being taunted and abused on train carriages by groups of men. I can see the point where if you're alone and you're elderly, you might get picked on or robbed." (55+ years)

Most residents do not see COVID-19 as a barrier to using public transport



For most, COVID-19 is no longer a reason to avoid public transport

A clear majority of residents disagree:

- **I prefer not to travel on public transport to avoid exposure to COVID-19** (63% disagree, including 39% who *strongly* disagree, compared to 29% agree).

Most residents do not see COVID-19 as a threat when catching public transport. There is a view that risk of exposure has waned considerably. Many claim to have returned to using public transport after switching to walking and/or driving during lockdowns and periods of higher risk than currently.

Apprehension does still linger, with just under a third of residents (29% agree) preferring to not travel on public transport to avoid exposure to COVID-19.

Residents who have a medical condition or disability that impacts mobility, or who have someone in their household with a medical condition or disability that impacts mobility, are significantly more likely to avoid public transport due to COVID-19 risk (40% agree, versus 29% overall).

"I probably drove a bit more during COVID-19 and now I'm back to catching the tram into the city." (35-54 years)

"We're almost 60. COVID-19 dictated whether we got on the tram. It's why we started walking all the way to the city, to negate risk. But it's not as bad now." (55+ years)

"Now I'm pretty relaxed, I take the train or whatever. At the height of it, I avoided public transport. Although sometimes I still opt for a GoGet and drive instead." (35-54 years)



Safety is a major barrier to using e-scooters

A majority of residents agree:

- **E-scooters are too dangerous** (60% agree, including 36% who *strongly* agree).
 - Significantly higher agreement among residents aged 60 years and over (75%, versus 60% overall).

Safety and legality are seen as the major concerns with e-scooters.

"The riders themselves are confused, they're either on the road or footpath whizzing past. They're unsafe, extremely fast, people think that they can ride them anywhere." (55+ years)

More than half of residents consider the dangers of bike riding as a barrier to sustainable transport use



More than half of residents feel bike riding is too dangerous

For a majority of residents, the dangers of bike riding are a reason to not use more sustainable transport:

- **Riding a bike is too dangerous** (53% agree; including 29% who *strongly* agree, versus 35% disagree).
 - Women, residents aged 60 years and over, and those with, or who have someone in their household with a medical condition or disability that impacts mobility, are significantly more likely to agree with this statement (60%, 64% and 65% respectively, versus 53% overall).

Bike riding is seen to pose safety risks that can discourage or limit use, especially in busier/more congested parts of Merri-bek.

A lack of infrastructure (i.e. not enough bike paths and lanes), busy roads (even when they have bike lanes), and riding at night are seen as barriers to increased bike riding. Even seasoned bike riders indicate they avoid certain roads altogether (e.g. Sydney Road).

"I could take my son on my bike, but it's just not safe. I wouldn't live with myself if he got hurt. If there's not a dedicated bike path that does not have cars on it, I won't take him. A deal breaker." (35-54 years)

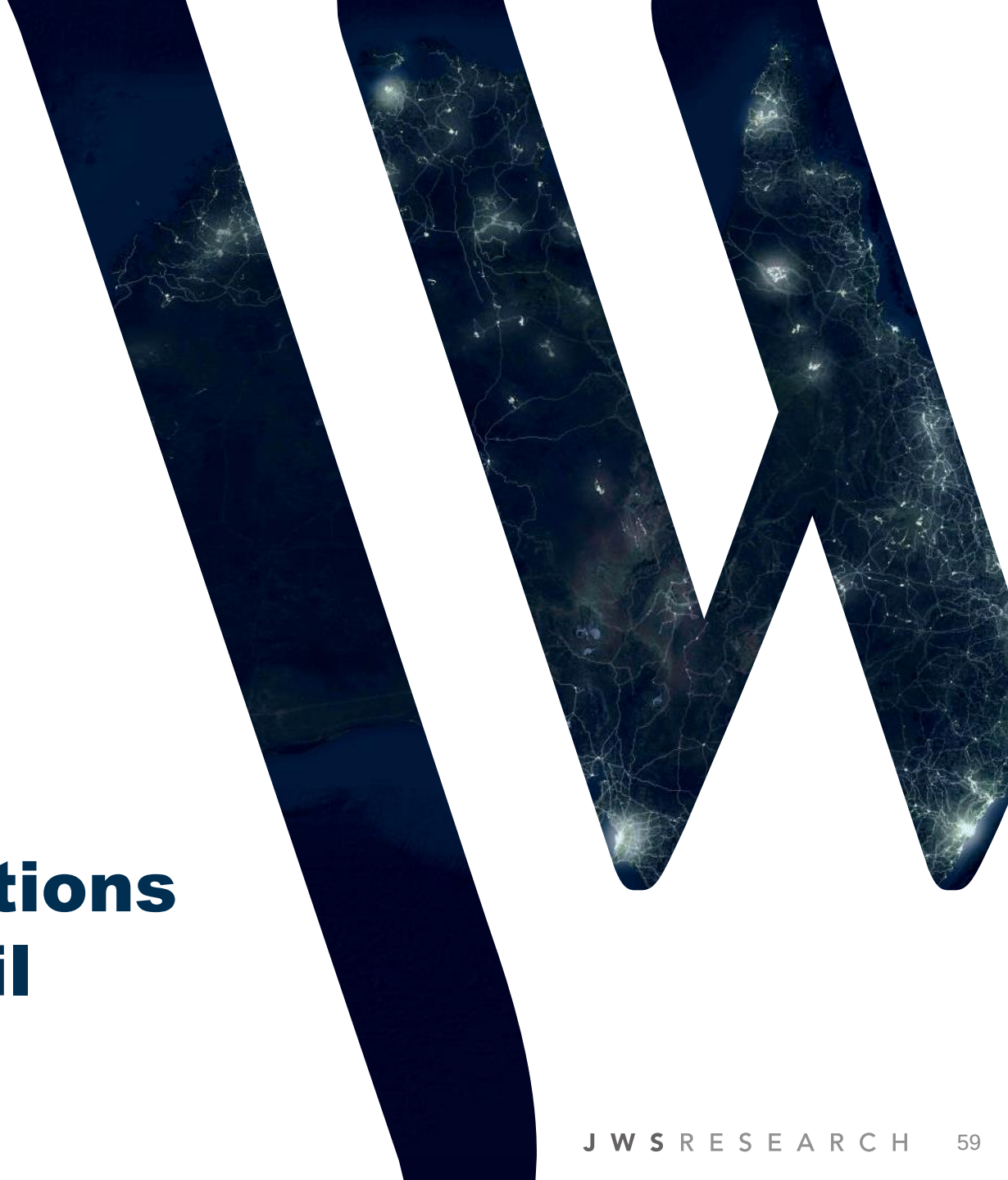


Most residents do not have mobility issues to restrict walking or bike riding

Close to two in five residents agree:

- **I have mobility issues and it is hard to walk or ride a bike** (38% agree; 47% disagree).
 - Residents aged 60 years and over, and those with, or who have someone in their household with a medical condition or disability that impacts mobility, are significantly more likely to agree with this statement (57% and 65% agree, versus 38% overall).

Just under a half of residents overall (47%) do not have mobility issues that restrict their ability to walk or ride a bike.



Actions and communications from Council

Section summary: Actions and communications from Council



Improving access to public transport is a top priority

Most residents (92%) feel it is important that Council improve accessibility to public transport – including more than a third (35%) who see this as *extremely* important. This reflects widespread views of poor public transport travelling east to west/west to east, and in parts of Merri-bek. Advocating for reduced public transport cost is less of a priority; while most (80%) see this as important, only a quarter (26%) feel it as *extremely* important.

Maintenance and safety are also of major importance

Most residents (92%) feel it is important that Council improve visual attractiveness and cleanliness – with close to a third (31%) rating this as *extremely* important. This reflects perceptions that busier, more densely populated areas (e.g. Brunswick) can appear less maintained than other areas. Most see improving safety by adding lighting to footpaths as important (89%) – with 32% rating this as *extremely* important. Women are significantly more likely to rate this as important.

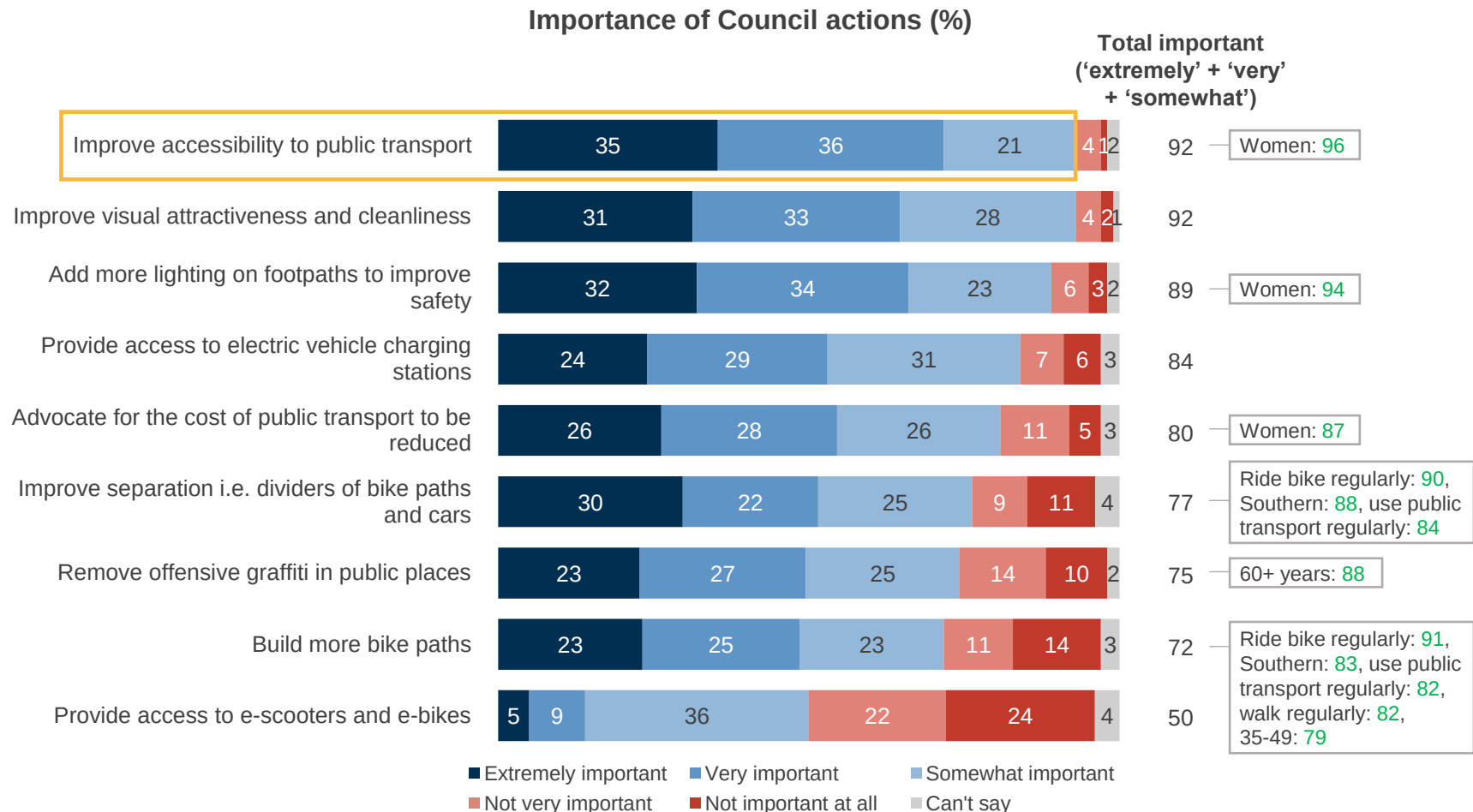
Improving bike infrastructure is more important for certain cohorts

Over seven in 10 residents rate improving separation, i.e. dividers of bike paths and cars (77%) and building more bike paths (72%) as important. More priority is placed on the former; 30% rate this as *extremely* important, compared to 23% for building more bike paths. Regular bike riders, Southern residents and regular public transport users are significantly more likely to rate these issues as important.

Email and leaflets in letterboxes are preferred methods of communication

Email (32%) and leaflets in letterboxes (31%) are preferred ways residents want to hear about transport matters from Council. One in five (21%) prefer social media – Council's Facebook and Instagram pages, significantly higher among those aged 35 to 49 years (29%). Preference for Council newsletters is relatively lower (17%), those aged 60 years and over significantly more likely to prefer this method (26%).

Improving accessibility to public transport is a key action residents believe is important for Council to address



Residents who use public transport regularly (43) and residents/households with medical condition (46) are **significantly** more likely to rate **improve accessibility public transport** as ‘extremely’ important.

Southern residents are **significantly** more likely to rate **build more bike paths** as ‘extremely’ important (32).

Significantly **higher** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

Q12. How important do you believe it is for Merri-bek Council to [INSERT STATEMENT]? Is that very or somewhat important/Is that not very important, or not important at all?

Base: All respondents (n=600).

An overwhelming majority see improved access to public transport as an important issue for Council



Improving accessibility to public transport is at the top of the list, but lowering costs is less important

More than nine in 10 residents (92%) believe it is important that Council improve accessibility (and availability) to public transport. This includes more than a third of residents rating this each as *extremely* (35%) or *very* (36%) important.

Residents who catch public transport regularly, and those who have (or who have someone in their household with) a medical condition or disability that impacts mobility are significantly more likely to rate improved public transport accessibility as *extremely* important (43% and 46% respectively, versus 35% overall).

This reinforces major findings seen across the research:

- A lack of public transport options when travelling across Merri-bek (east to west, west to east)
- Parts of Merri-bek (e.g. the north) having limited access to public transport, and being more dependent on less reliable modes, such as buses.

Lowering public transport costs is seen as less important, relative to improving accessibility.

While a clear majority (80%) feel that it is important that Council 'advocate for the cost of public transport to be reduced', the degree to which this is seen as important is less pronounced – around a quarter of residents rate this as each *extremely* (26%) or *very* (28%) important.

Women are significantly more likely to rate both issues as important.

"Being a bit further out, in Pascoe Vale, it's a little bit different to the inner city. Brunswick and those areas are much more optimised and efficient at having different modes of transport and public transport. Further out, West Brunswick, Pascoe Vale and so forth, it becomes a bit less of a factor." (35-54 years)

"I live in Hadfield and there's good public transport out to here, and you can get around a bit, but you do need a car when you're a little bit further out." (55+ years)

"Public transport, if you want to go east to west in Merri-bek there's really just a bus, just a couple of buses do that, which isn't great." (55+ years)

Improved visual attractiveness and cleanliness and safety are also seen as important priorities for Council



Maintenance and safety are also considered key priorities

More than nine in 10 residents (92%) rate 'improving visual attractiveness and cleanliness' as an important action for Council. This includes around a third of residents rating this each as *extremely* (31%) or *very* (33%) important.

Busier, more congested and densely populated parts of Merri-bek are seen to be a bit 'dirtier' and less well maintained than other, more suburban areas – e.g. some parts of Brunswick and Coburg.

Close to nine in 10 residents (89%) rate 'adding more lighting on footpaths to improve safety' as important. Again, this includes around a third of residents rating this each as *extremely* (32%) or *very* (34%) important.

Women are significantly more likely to rate this as important (94%, versus 89% overall). This reinforces earlier findings where threats to safety is considered a barrier to walking, especially for women walking at night.

Graffiti is seen as somewhat of a priority for Council. Three quarters of residents (75%) feel it is important to remove offensive graffiti in public places.

"Sometimes in Brunswick it's a bit grungy and sometimes I wish there was more rubbish collection, but we've got a lot of people living alongside each other." (55+ years)

"My biggest thing is graffiti. I think if you clean up the graffiti, safety will increase as well." (35-54 years)

"My daughter's a duty manager at a bar and she finishes at 10:00 or 10:30 at night. I don't want my daughter walking late at night. So, she has to drive a car." (35-54 years)

Most see access to EV charging stations as important, but access to e-scooters and e-bikes is a lower priority



Access to EV charging stations is an important but a less pressing issue

While most residents see access to EV charging stations as important (84%), there appears to be less urgency attached to this issue. Fewer than a quarter (24%) see this as *extremely* important, with the bulk seeing this as either *very* (29%) or *somewhat* (31%) important.

These results reflect recognition that EVs are integral to sustainable transport, but may also reflect earlier findings, where:

- Cost of EVs is a barrier to uptake
- There is some awareness of existing charging stations, but confusion over who operates them and whether the electricity they provide is free
- EVs not having great usage penetration.

E-scooter and e-bike access are of lower priority

Residents are polarised on the importance of access to e-scooters and e-bikes in Merri-bek.

Half of residents consider access to e-scooters and e-bikes important (50%), while a comparable proportion (46%) see it as either *not very* or *not important at all*.

"I think about electric vehicles and I think about charging points if I was to ever get one." (55+ years)

"I think there's an app to tell you where they all are, and then they're not in common places, they're all hidden." (35-54 years)

"I've only ever seen one, and that's near the First & Last Hotel. I gather you just plug them in. I don't really know how they work." (55+ years)

"We're going to start getting electric cars and guess what? How many charging stations are there in Melbourne? None. There's a few at Ikea. If they want to be serious about this, they should start planning for the future by putting charging stations at McDonald's and restaurants and places like that. If anything, that will encourage people to eat while they're waiting for their car to be charged. But now is the time to do it because it's going to take so many years for them to put all these stations in." (35-54 years)

"I would totally get an e-scooter, to travel from my house to the train station and then get on the train. But there's not enough bike paths to ride them safely. So, it's really about setting it up, making sustainable transport just a very attractive, easy option, over driving." (18-34 years)



More than seven in 10 residents see bike infrastructure issues (dividers and bike paths) as important

The importance of infrastructure for bike riders heightened among Southern residents

A clear majority of residents see bike infrastructure as important:

- **77% rate improving separation i.e. dividers of bike paths and cars** as important (including 30% rating it as *extremely*, and 22% rating it as *very* important).
- **72% rate building more bike paths** as important (including 23% rating it as *extremely*, and 25% rating it as *very* important).

These issues are of less relative importance to aforementioned issues of public transport (improved accessibility, reduced costs), improving visual attractiveness and cleanliness, improving safety by adding lighting to footpaths, and providing access to EV charging stations.

However, their importance is heightened among certain cohorts. Regular bike riders, Southern residents and regular public transport users are significantly more likely to rate both of these issues as important.

This reflects earlier findings of the Southern area having a higher incidence of regular bike riders, and hence, a greater likelihood of seeing bike infrastructure issues as key priorities for Council.

"Sydney Road can be awful to ride down, a lot of trams, car doors opening. There are bike paths, but it's in between the two major bike paths running north and south that's the problem." (35-54 years)

"There's inadequate bike facilities north of Bell Street." (55+ years)

"Instead of trying to put bike lanes in Sydney Road, fix the bike lane that goes along the train line. Fix that lane, fix that bike track, make it more easier." (55+ years)

"In Pascoe Vale they've put in a bike lane, on Northumberland Road, I don't know a single person who liked it. It takes up a third of the road. It's very difficult now for cars to pass each other, as the road is so narrow." (55+ years)

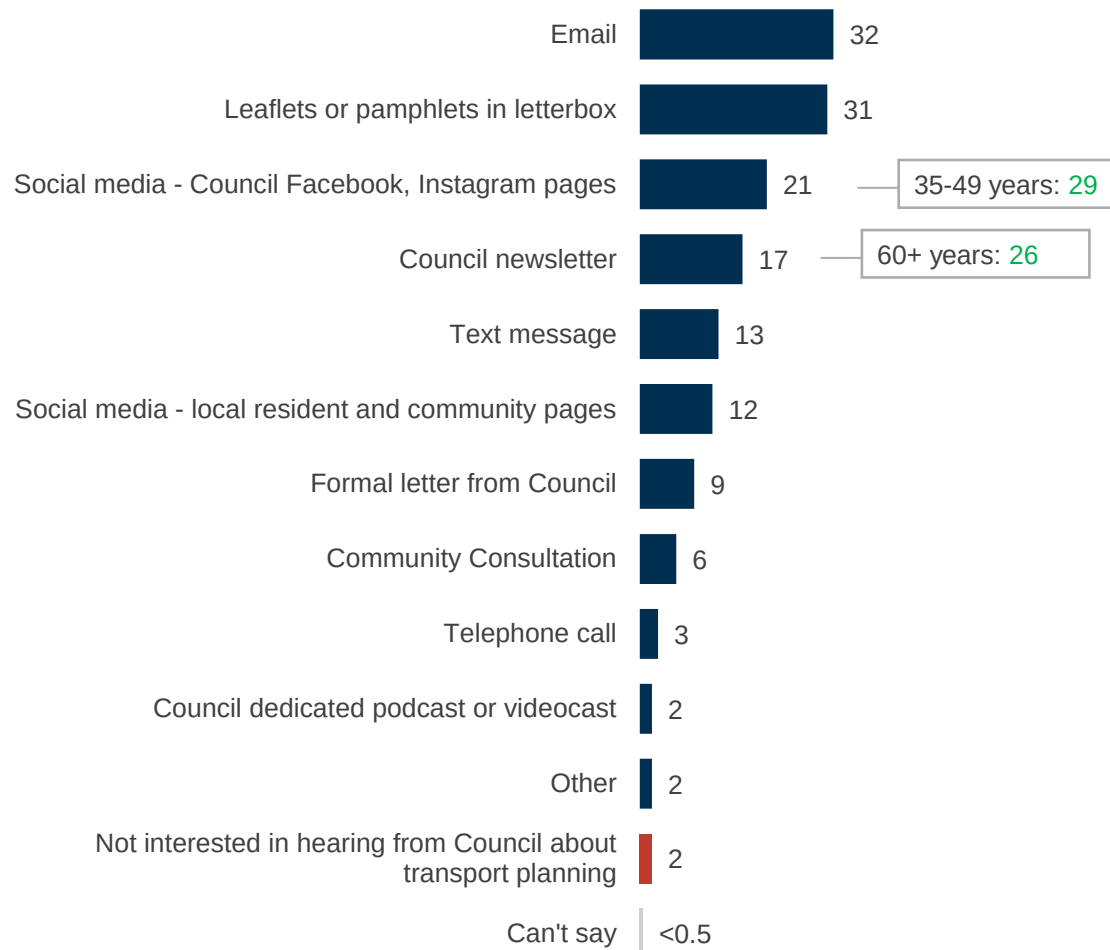
"I ride a bike and the lanes aren't very useful. Some of the lanes they're putting in now are ridiculous as they're in very narrow streets, and the lanes they're putting in are quite generous. Stupid, considering how small a bike is and how big a car is, it's so hard to get through those streets now. Some of these roads where these lanes are being put have heavy traffic." (18-34 years)

"With bike lanes, make them in sections where cars are not allowed, separate side streets almost." (18-34 years)

Email and leaflets in letterboxes are preferred ways for Council to update residents on transport matters



Preferred communication from Council for updates on transport matters (%) (Multiple response)



Significantly **higher** than the total at the 95% confidence interval.

Q13. What is the best way for Council to keep you updated on its transport matters in the City of Merri-bek? Would you prefer to hear about it via...

Base: All respondents (n=600).

Older residents prefer Council newsletters, while social media is more popular among those aged 25 to 49 years



Emails and leaflets or pamphlets in letterboxes are the preferred channels to update residents on transport matters, followed by social media and Council newsletters.



Just under a third of residents (32%) prefer to hear about transport matters via **email**.

Renters recognise they may not be on Council's database, and as such, would require a way to opt-in to email communication.

"Emails are good." (55+ years)

"Council needs to think about how they communicate with both renters as well as house owners." (18-34 years)



Just under a third of residents (31%) nominate **leaflets or pamphlets in letterboxes** as their preferred channel.

Letterbox drops are seen as an optimum way to reach all residents (i.e. homeowners and renters). Leaflet or pamphlets provide for key information to be conveyed in concise form (and therefore more easily digested).

"Put something in our letterboxes. That's how we get a lot of our updates." (18-34 years)



One in five residents (21%) prefer to hear about transport matters via **social media – Council Facebook and Instagram pages**.

Those aged 35 to 49 years are significantly more likely to prefer this method (29%).

Local resident and community social media pages are also utilised by residents as a source of Council information (although there is no way to guarantee the legitimacy of information shared on these pages).

"I get most of my information from Good Karma." (18-34 years)



Council newsletters are relatively less preferred overall (17% prefer this method). Residents aged 60 years and over are significantly more likely to prefer this method (26%).

Some residents recall receiving hard copy delivery of the 'Inside Merri-bek' newsletter. There is also some awareness of the newsletter being available on Council's website, but few proactively read it.

"The newsletter, what's Council doing this month? What actions have they taken?" (55+ years)

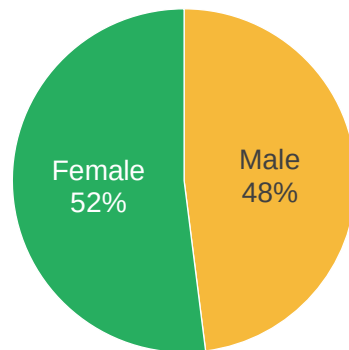
A large, dark blue, stylized letter 'W' that spans the right side of the page. Inside the 'W', there is a glowing, intricate network of white and yellow lines, resembling a neural network or a complex data structure, set against a dark, starry background.

Appendix: Demographics



Appendix: Demographics

Gender



Age	%
18 to 34 years	28
35 to 49 years	30
50 to 59 years	15
60 years and over	26

The data set has been weighted to reflect the demographic makeup (by age, gender and location) of the City of Merri-bek population.

Area	%
Southern	43
Eastern	15
Western	25
Northern	17
Born in Australia	
Yes	74
No	25
Prefer not to say	2
Speak language other than English	
Yes	31
No	69
Prefer not to say	<0.5
Children under 17 in household	
Yes	27
No	70
Prefer not to say	3

Household composition	%
Married or living with partner with children 16 or under at home	31
Married or living with partner, no children	19
Single person living alone	18
Married or living with partner with children but none 16 or under at home	12
Single living with friends or housemates	10
Single living with children 16 or under	5
Single with children but none 16 or under living at home	3
Prefer not to say	3
Medical condition in household	
Yes	21
No	79

**THERE ARE
OVER 170,000
PEOPLE IN THE
CITY OF
MERRI-BEK...**

**FIND OUT
WHAT THEY'RE
THINKING.**



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J W S R E S E A R C H