

Views on Winnipeg Transit

The Free Press

December 2023 Probe Omnibus Survey

The
Free Press

PROBE
RESEARCH INC.

Photo Credit: Ruth Bonneville, Winnipeg Free Press

Contact:

Curtis Brown
Principal



204-894-3298



curtis@probe-research.com

Probe Research is working to ensure its documents exceed modern accessibility and screen-readability standards. If you encounter any barriers to accessing this content or if you require this document in an alternative format, please contact probe@probe-research.com or 204-926-6565.

PROBE RESEARCH INC.



603 – 191 Lombard Ave.
Winnipeg, MB R3B 0X1



(204) 926-6565



www.probe-research.com



Key Findings

Relatively few Winnipeggers rely on their city's public transit system to get around, but a significant share – nearly one-half – take Winnipeg Transit now and then. One thing that unites regular users, infrequent users and non-users of Winnipeg Transit is that they want to see better safety and security on city buses, as they feel this will encourage more people like them to take the bus rather than rely on their cars.

When asked what is the one thing Winnipeg Transit could do to improve this service, nearly one-quarter of transit users pointed to improving safety and security on buses. Fifteen per cent advocated for creating better connections between routes, with a similar proportion wanting to see the City of Winnipeg build light rail transit (LRT) lines. Older and less regular riders are most likely to want to see these improvements to safety, while more regular transit users are more likely to prioritize better connections between routes.

Even among those who never use transit, there is a clear preference for improvement to safety being a potential way of encouraging them to use this service now and then. Nearly one-half indicate improvements to transit safety would make them more likely to consider taking transit, including one-third who say it would make them a lot more likely to do so. While infrequent and non-users of transit seem to be more enticed by the idea of building LRTs in the city, those who rely on the service tend to be more focused on measures that will improve their day-to-day experience taking the bus, including better connections, more frequent service, better payment technology and the ability to track where buses are at any given time.

Key Findings (cont'd)

Overall, only 12 per cent of city residents use Winnipeg Transit as their main method of transportation, compared to 81 per cent who rely on a private vehicle and six per cent who either walk or bike to get around. Not surprisingly, older adults and those who live in outlying suburban areas tend to be more car-dependent, with younger adults and those in the inner city more likely to turn to other transportation options. Even then, however, two-thirds of those living in inner-city neighbourhoods and three-quarters of those aged 18-34 rely on private vehicles for most of their day-to-day travel.

While slightly more than one-half of Winnipeg adults never use transit, one-quarter use it at least once per month and a similar proportion take it infrequently – maybe a few times per year. This includes nearly one-third of those aged 18-34 who use transit at least once per month or more often.



Photo Credit: Jessica Lee, Winnipeg Free Press

Methodology

Probe Research surveyed a random and representative sampling of 600 adults residing in Winnipeg between November 22 and December 1, 2023.

With a sample of 600, one can say with 95 per cent certainty that the results are within ± 4.9 percentage points of what they would have been if the entire adult population of Winnipeg had been surveyed. The margin of error is higher within each of the survey's population sub-groups.

The sample consists of 271 Winnipeggers randomly recruited via live-agent operator; 188 Winnipeggers randomly recruited via Interactive Voice Response (IVR) and 141 members of Probe Research's online panel. All respondents completed the survey on an online platform.

Modified random digit dialing, including both landline and wireless numbers, ensured all Winnipeg adults had an equal opportunity to participate in this Probe Research survey.

Minor statistical weighting has been applied to this sample to ensure that age, gender and regional characteristics properly reflect known attributes of the city's population. All data analysis was performed using SPSS statistical analysis software.

About the Probe Research Omnibus

For more than two decades, Probe Research Inc. has undertaken quarterly omnibus surveys of random and representative samples of Manitoba adults. These scientific telephone surveys have provided strategic and proprietary insights to hundreds of public, private and not-for-profit clients on a range of social, cultural and public policy topics. The Probe Research Omnibus Survey is the province's largest and most trusted general population survey.

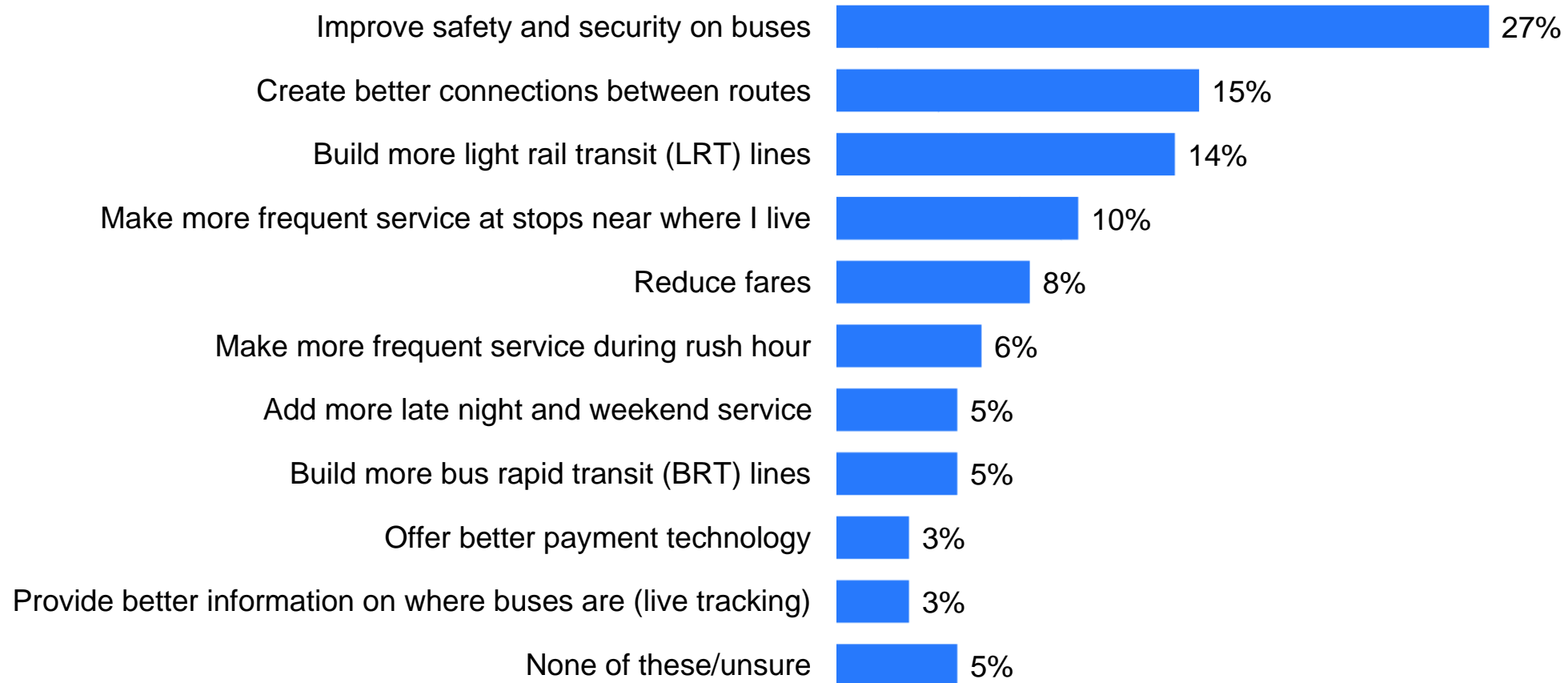
Survey Instrument

The survey instrument was designed by Probe Research in close consultation with the *Free Press*.

Most Important Improvement to Winnipeg Transit

Improved safety and security on buses would have the biggest impact on increasing ridership

4. What would you say is the most important improvement Winnipeg Transit could make to this service? Please select one option from the list provided below. (Base: Anyone who has used Winnipeg transit, N=280)



Most Important Improvement to Winnipeg Transit: By Subgroup

Fixing safety is most important to older and less frequent users of public transit

4. What would you say is the most important improvement Winnipeg Transit could make to this service? Please select one option from the list provided below. (Base: Anyone who has used Winnipeg transit, N=280)



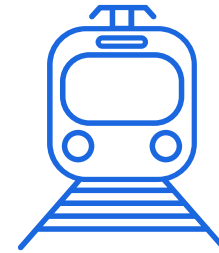
Those most likely to prioritize **improving safety and security on Transit** include:

- Those over the age of 35 (31% among those aged 55+ and 33% among those aged 35-54 vs. 17% among those aged 18-34).
- Less frequent riders (33% vs. 20% among those who use transit monthly).
- Progressive Conservative supporters (41% vs. 24% among NDP supporters).
- Indigenous residents (35%).



Those most likely to prioritize **better connections between routes** include:

- Younger adults (19% aged 18-34 vs. 10% among those aged 35-54).
- Women (19% vs. 9% among men).
- Those who use transit at least once per month (19% vs. 10% among less frequent users).



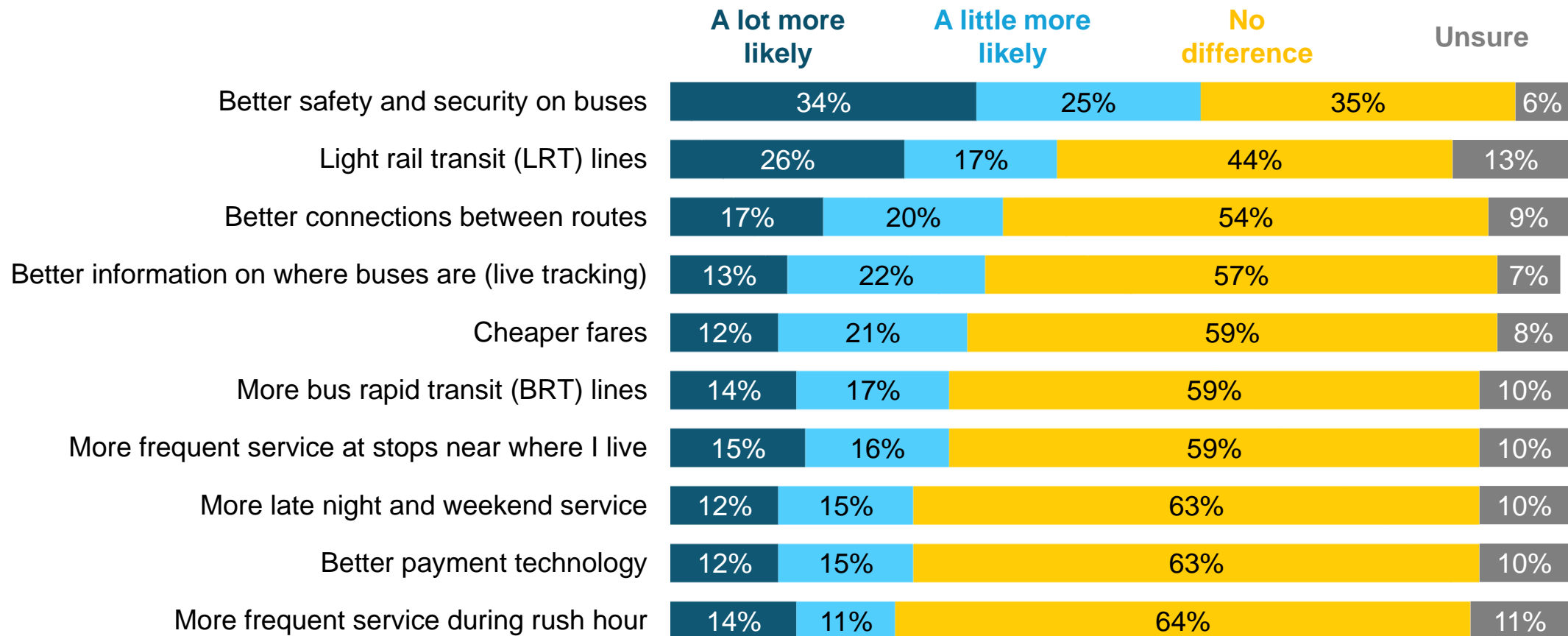
Those most likely to prioritize **building LRT lines** include:

- Men (20% vs. 9% among women).
- Residents of the outer suburbs (16% vs. 8% among those in the inner city).
- PC party supporters (21% vs. 12% among NDP voters).

Impact of Improvements to Transit on Ridership: Non-Riders

Better safety and security on buses may make non-users consider taking transit

3. Please review the following list and indicate whether these improvements to Winnipeg Transit would get you to use this service more often. (Base: Those who never use Winnipeg Transit, N=320)

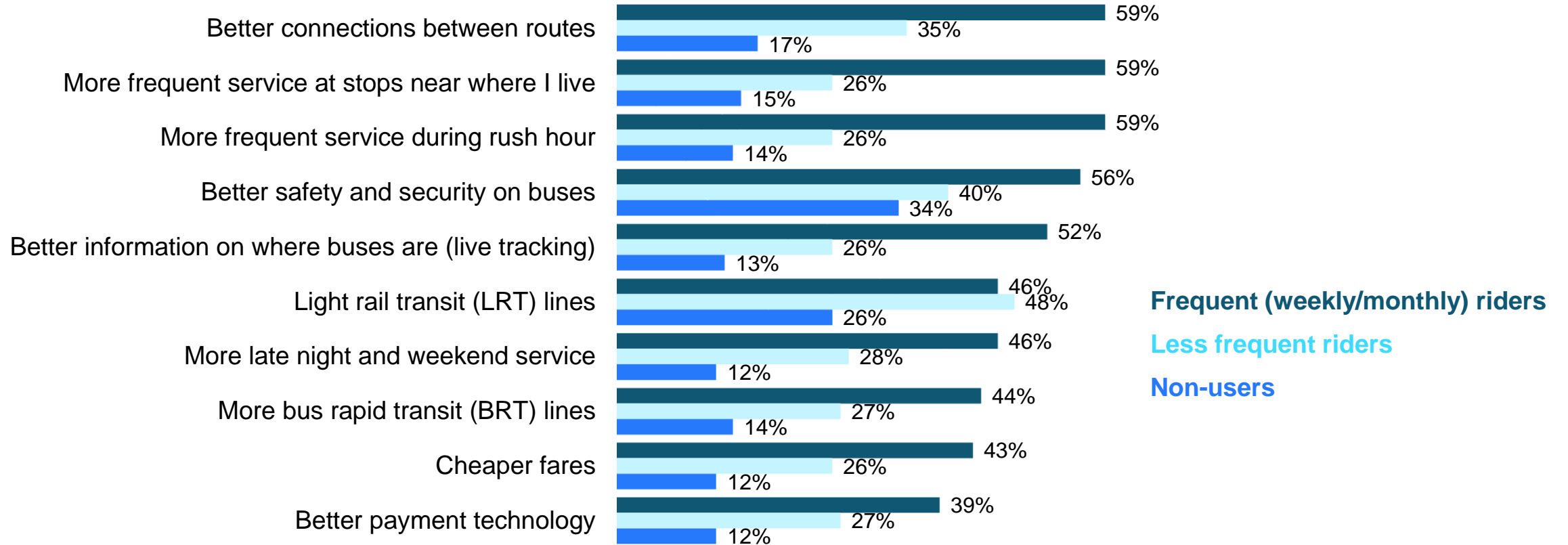


Impact of Improvements to Transit on Ridership: Rider Comparison

Frequent riders are more likely to value better connections, information and technology

3. Please review the following list and indicate whether these improvements to Winnipeg Transit would get you to use this service more often. (Base: All except daily transit users, N=582)

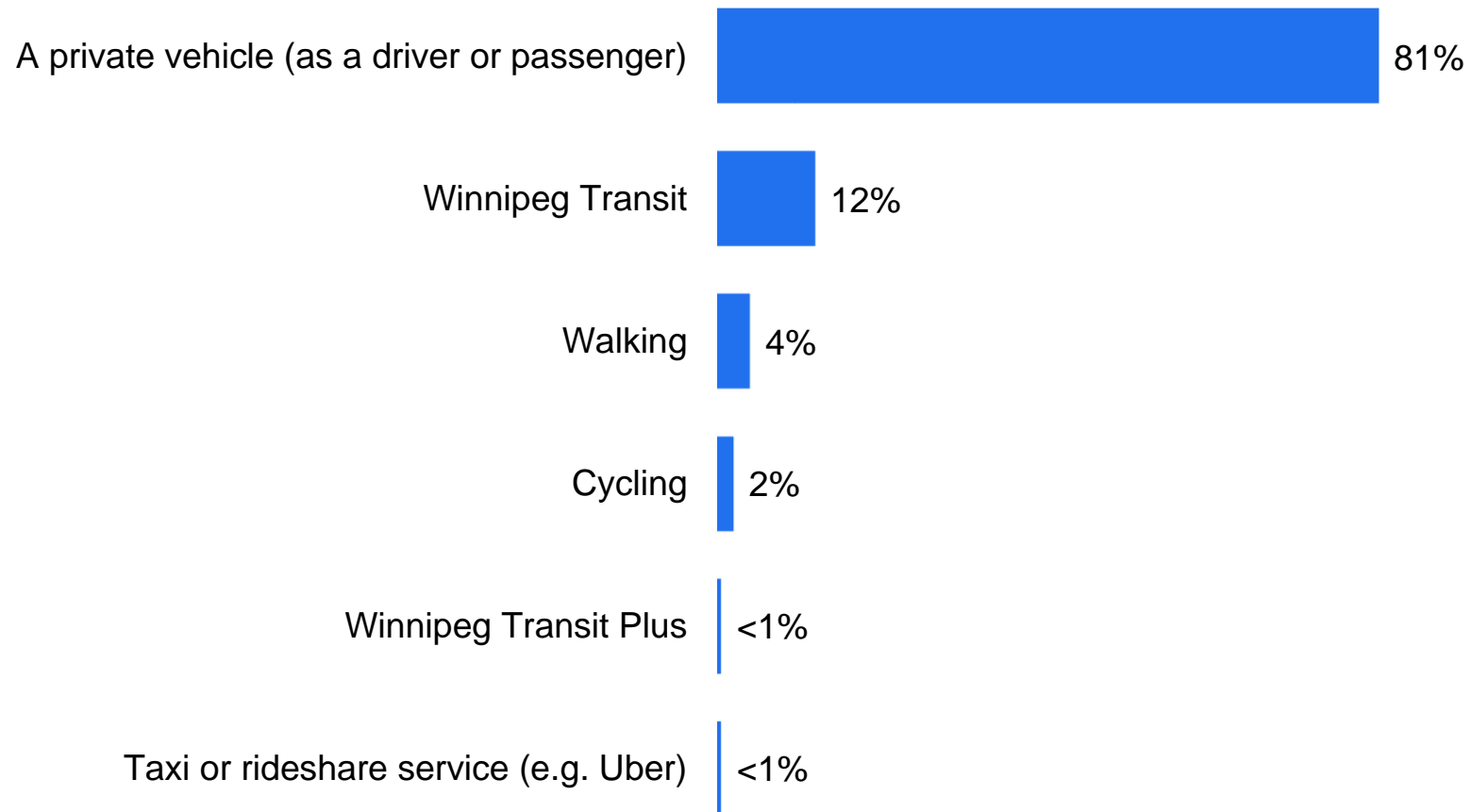
% who say this improvement would make them a lot more likely to use Winnipeg Transit



Winnipeggers' Main Transportation Method

Only one in ten Winnipeggers regularly use Winnipeg Transit to get around the city

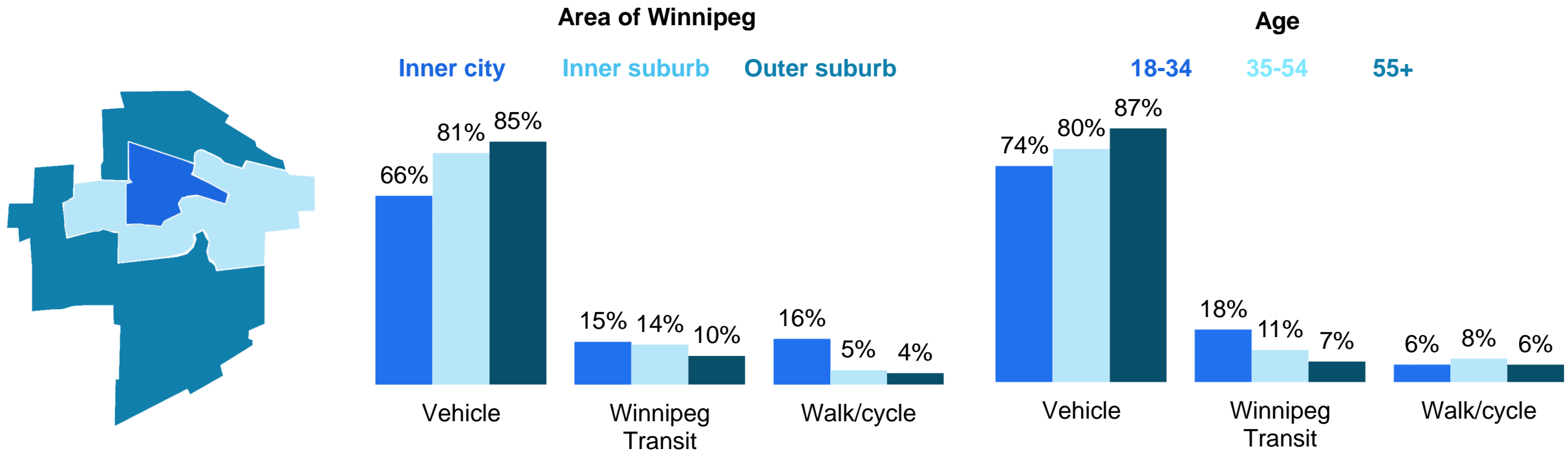
1. What is the main method that you use to travel to places in your day-to-day life? Base: All Winnipeg respondents (N=600)



Winnipeggers' Main Transportation Method: By Region and Age

Transit usage is higher among younger residents, with inner city residents less reliant on cars

1. What is the main method that you use to travel to places in your day-to-day life? (Base: All Winnipeg respondents, N=600)



Transit usage is highest among:

• Women (15% vs. 8% among men)

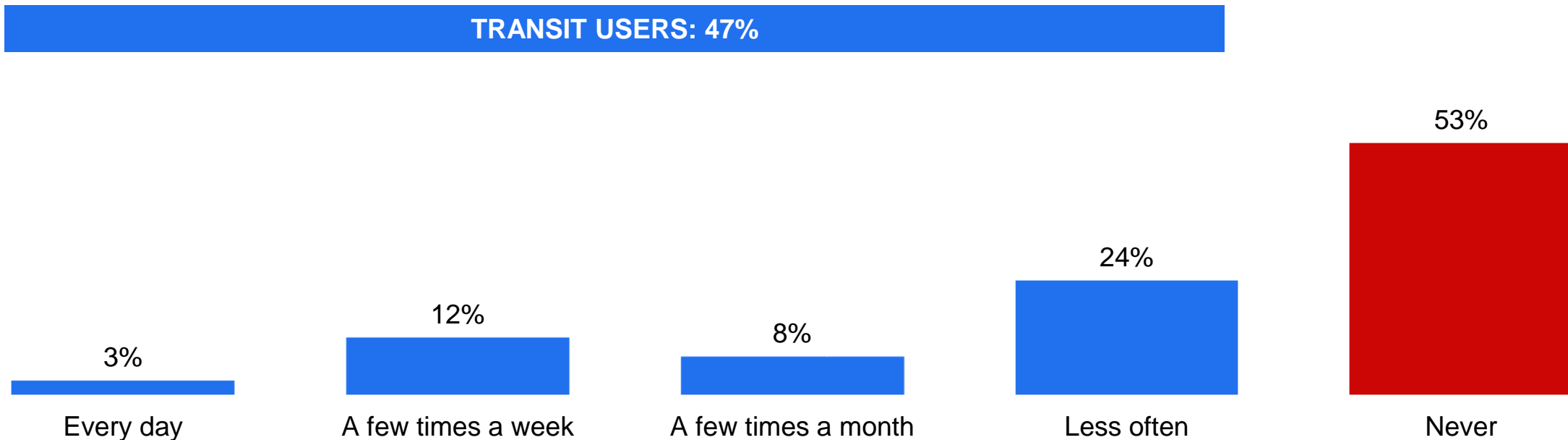
• BIPOC Winnipeggers (18%)

• Those with a disability (21%)

Frequency of Use of Winnipeg Transit

Around one in five are regular bus riders

2. And how often do you use Winnipeg Transit? (Base: All Winnipeg respondents, N=600)



Those who use transit at least once per month or more often include:

- Younger adults (32% among those 18-34 vs. 15% aged 55+)
- Those living in inner city neighbourhoods (31% vs. 22% elsewhere in Winnipeg)
- BIPOC residents (33%)
- Those who have a disability (32%)