

Civic Issues and Mayoral/Council Approval

September 2024 Probe Omnibus Survey

 The
Free Press

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The Story

Winnipeg, like other major Canadian cities, faces some serious social and economic challenges today. And when it comes to the state of downtown, how affordable it is to live here, how easy it is to get around and how safe Winnipeggers feel, anywhere from one-half to two-thirds of residents feel things are getting worse. Relatively few believe things are trending in the right direction on these issues.

With Winnipeg Mayor Scott Gillingham and the rest of City Council approaching the midway point of their current term, they are earning average marks from Winnipeggers for their job performance. Citizens have relatively little confidence the mayor and council will be able to fix these problems. As the 2026 civic election approaches, one key question will be whether Winnipeggers expect more from the current group of municipal officials and hold them accountable if things continue to worsen, or if Winnipeggers place the blame on other levels of government.



Key Findings

On five major issues, most Winnipeggers think things are getting worse in their city. This includes:

- Two-thirds who say it's less affordable to buy or rent a place to live, and that the city is becoming less safe.
- Six in ten who think downtown is getting worse (compared to three in ten who think things are staying the same and less than one in ten who think downtown is improving).
- About one-half who think traffic in the city is getting worse, along with the overall condition of streets and roads.

Winnipeggers have little confidence that their elected municipal officials will make headway on solving these problems. Four in ten express some degree of optimism, but only three per cent are very optimistic that this will happen. Six in ten are pessimistic that Winnipeg Mayor Scott Gillingham and his council will fix these issues, including one in five who are very pessimistic.

Although confidence in the ability of the mayor and council to solve the city's social and economic challenges is weak, these officials do enjoy modest approval ratings as they reach the midway point in their term.

- One-half (49%) approve of Mayor Gillingham's job performance, compared to 35 per cent who disapprove and 16 per cent who are unsure.
- A slightly lower proportion (45%) approve of the job their local councillor is doing, with three in ten (31%) expressing disapproval. One-quarter of Winnipeggers are unable to provide a rating for their councillor. Residents who live in Winnipeg's outer suburbs (52%) are more likely than those living in inner-city wards to be satisfied with the performance of their councillor.

Methodology

Probe Research surveyed a random and representative sampling of 600 adults residing in Winnipeg between September 5th and 17th, 2024.

With a sample of 600, one can say with 95 percent 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 259 Winnipeggers randomly recruited via live-agent operator; 205 Winnipeggers randomly recruited via Interactive Voice Response (IVR) and 136 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 done 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.

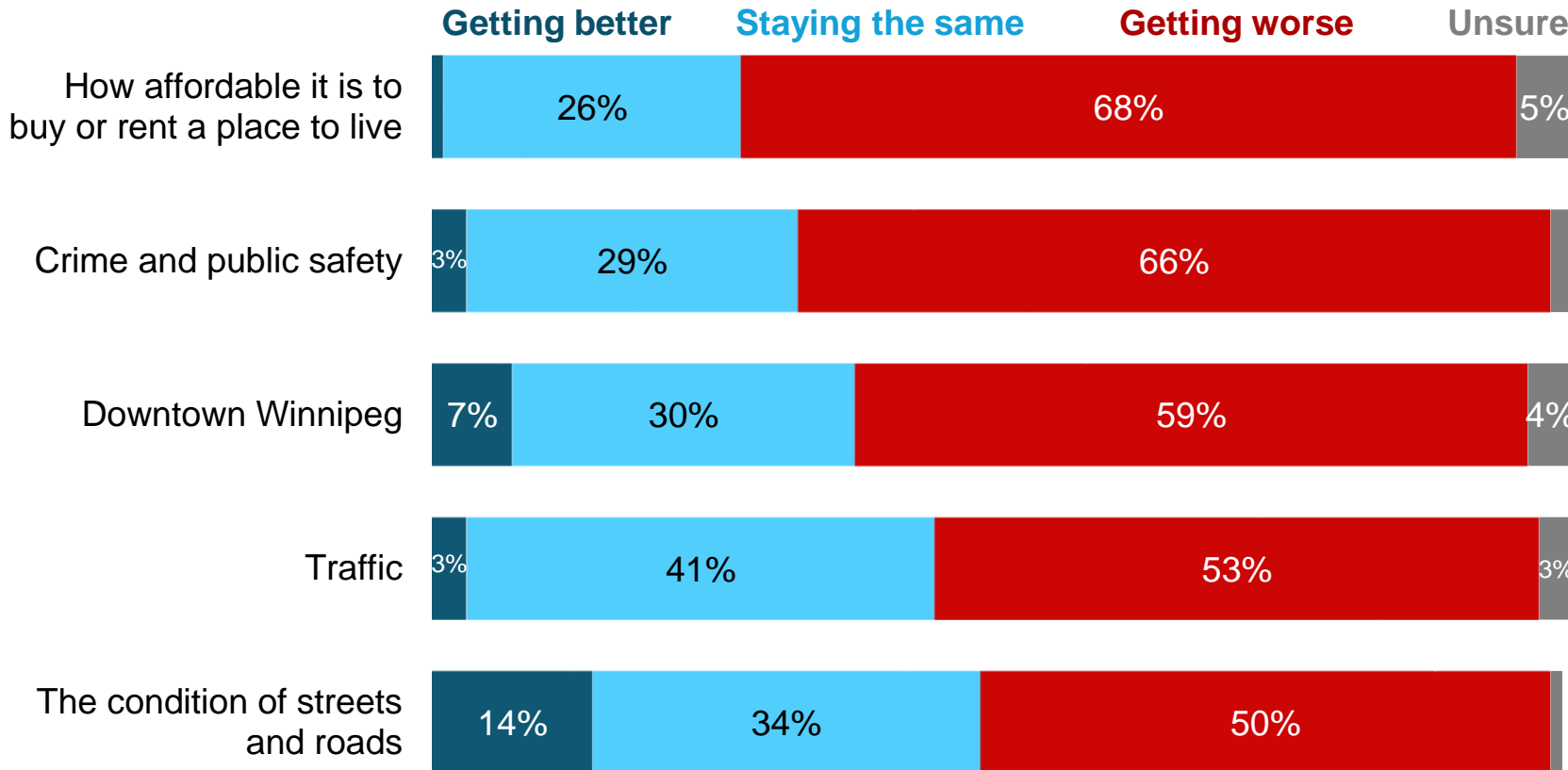
Survey Instrument

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

Perceptions of Winnipeg's Key Challenges

On several issues, majorities of Winnipeggers think things are getting worse

WFP2. When it comes to the following things in Winnipeg, would you say that compared to one year ago, things are getting better, getting worse or staying about the same? (Base: All respondents, N=600)



Those under the age of 55 (74% aged 35-54 and 72% aged 18-34 vs. 60% 55+) and those with lower incomes (77% <\$50K vs. 58% \$100K+) are more likely to think affordability is **getting worse**.

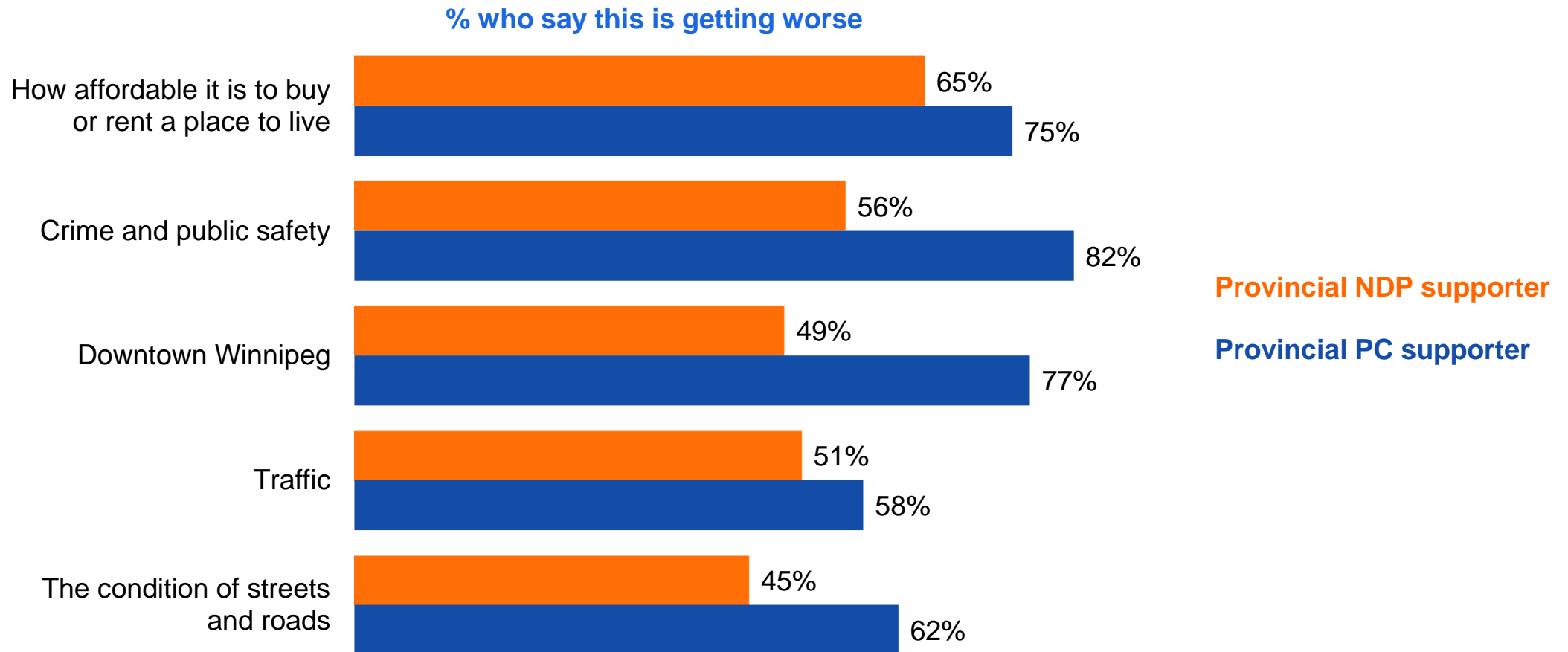
Overall, those who disapprove of Scott Gillingham's performance are significantly more likely than those who approve of his performance to feel all these issues are **getting worse**.

Older Winnipeggers are more likely to think roads are **getting worse** (58% vs. 41% among those aged 18-34).

Perceptions of Winnipeg's Key Challenges: By Party Preference

Progressive Conservative supporters are more pessimistic about the condition of their city

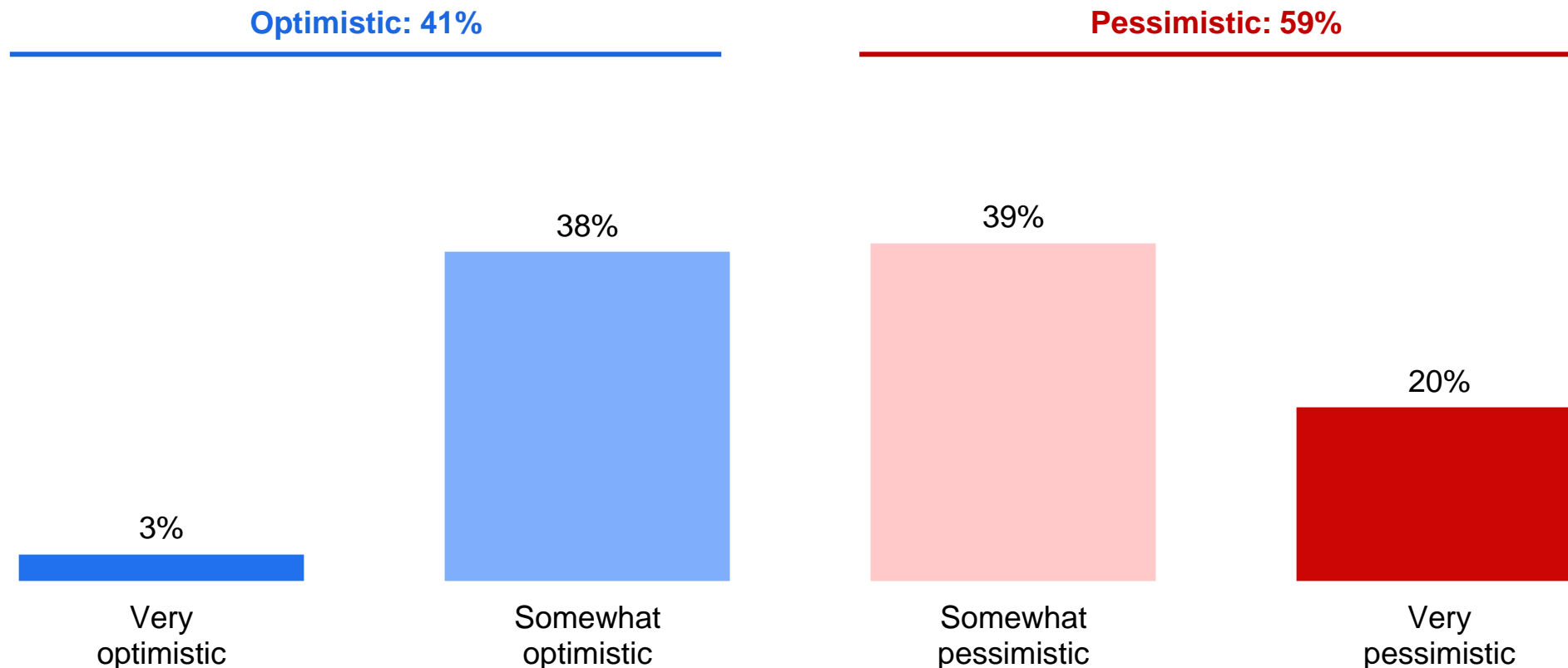
WFP2. When it comes to the following things in Winnipeg, would you say that compared to one year ago, things are getting better, getting worse or staying about the same? (Base: All respondents, N=600)



Views on the Mayor/Council's Ability to Solve Key Challenges

Winnipeggers are not overly confident their civic leaders can successfully address these issues

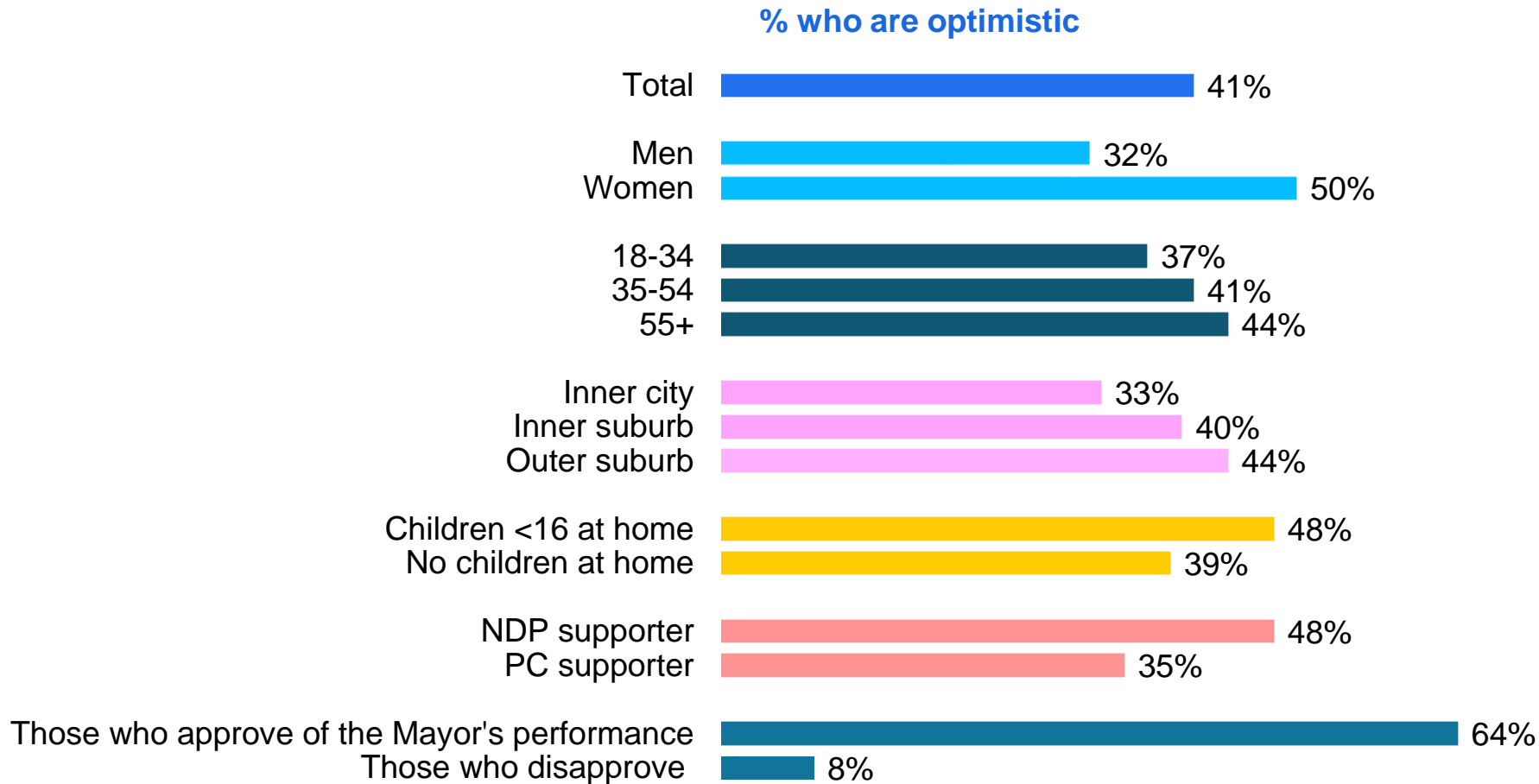
WFP3. How optimistic or pessimistic are you that the current mayor and council will be able to make progress on solving Winnipeg's main challenges? (Base: All respondents, N=600)



Mayor/Council's Ability to Solve Key Challenges: By Subgroup

Women and parents have more confidence elected officials will solve major issues

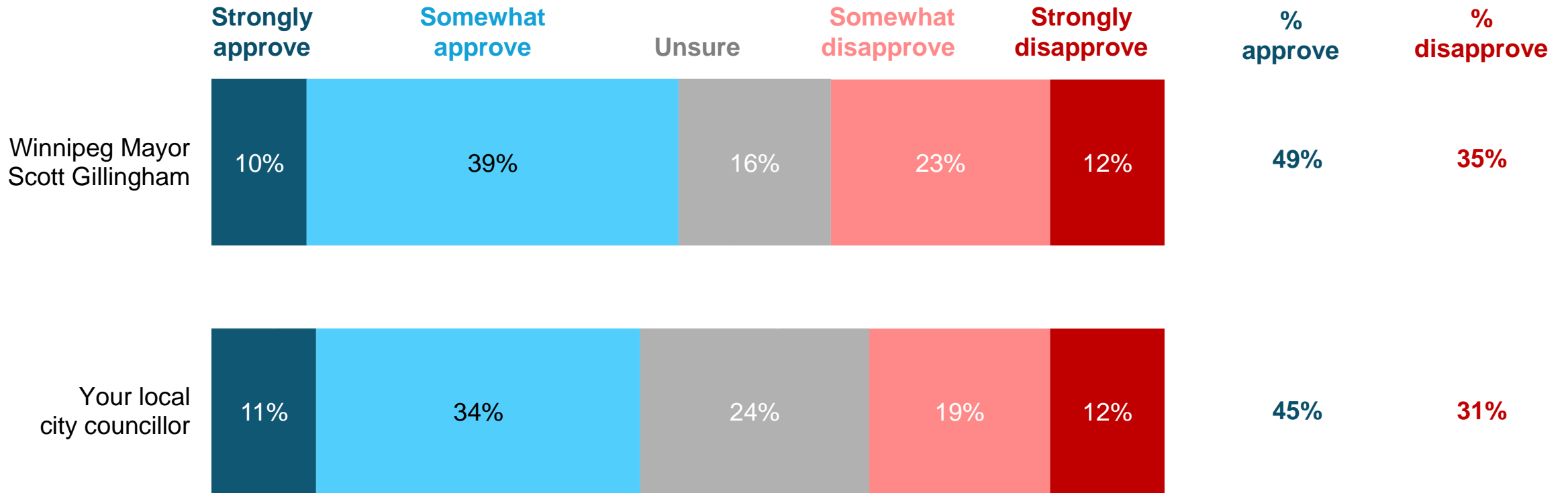
WFP3. How optimistic or pessimistic are you that the current mayor and council will be able to make progress on solving Winnipeg's main challenges? (Base: All respondents, N=600)



Mayoral and Council Approval Ratings

Both the mayor and councillors receive modest marks from Winnipeggers

WFP1. Do you approve or disapprove of the performance of... (Base: All respondents, N=600)



Mayoral/Council Approval Ratings: By Area of Winnipeg

Local councillors who represent outlying suburban areas receive highest praise from residents

WFP1. Do you approve or disapprove of the performance of Winnipeg Mayor Scott Gillingham/your local city councillor? (Base: All respondents, N=600)

● **Inner City (n=97)***

(Downtown, Wolseley, North End, West End, Elmwood)

- Mayor: 41%
- Councillor: 38%

● **Outer Suburbs (n=206)**

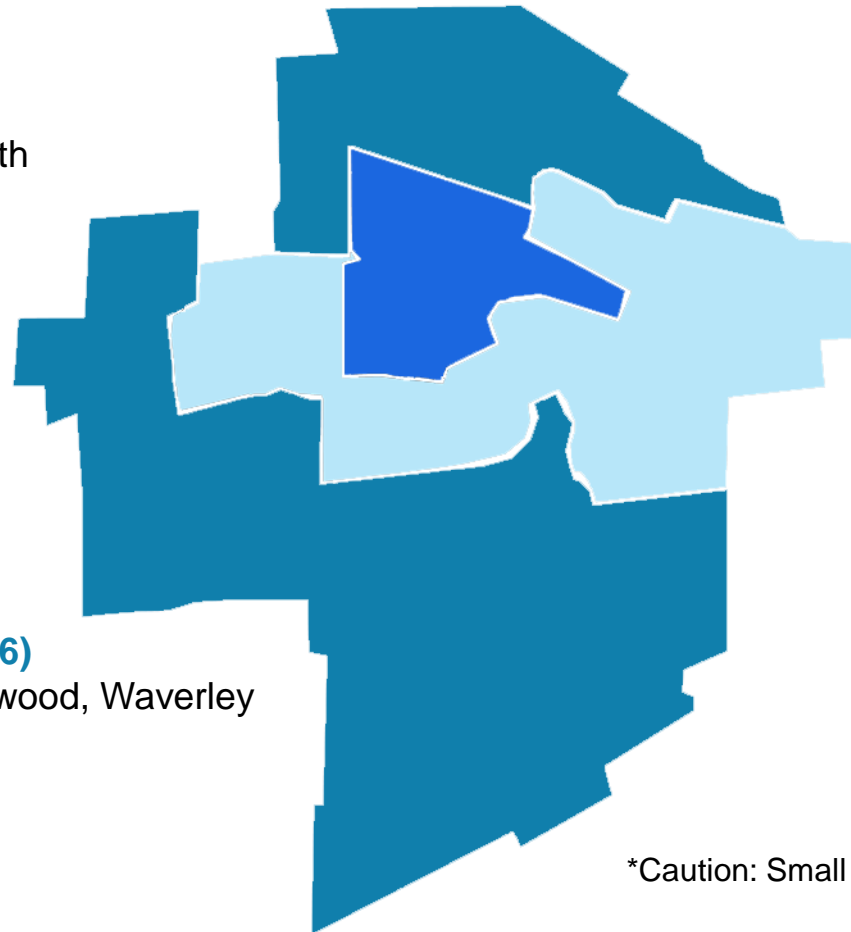
(e.g. St. Vital, Charleswood, Waverley West, North Kildonan)

- Mayor: 53%
- Councillor: 52%

● **Inner Suburbs (n=235)**

(e.g. St. James, River Heights, St. Boniface, Transcona)

- Mayor: 53%
- Councillor: 41%



*Caution: Small base size

Mayoral Approval Rating: By Subgroup

Older residents, women and NDP supporters are more likely to approve of Scott Gillingham's work

WFP1a. Do you approve or disapprove of the performance of Winnipeg Mayor Scott Gillingham? (Base: All respondents, N=600)

