



# VIEWS ON SUPPORT FOR PUBLIC TRANSIT

## GREATER TORONTO AREA (GTA) RESULTS

MAY 2020

AMALGAMATED TRANSIT UNION



PROBE RESEARCH INC.

# KEY FINDINGS

## FOR MORE INFORMATION:

**Mary Agnes Welch**  
Principal

### PROBE RESEARCH INC.

603 – 191 Lombard Ave.  
Winnipeg, MB R3B 0X1  
(204) 470-8862  
maryagnes@probe-research.com

[www.probe-research.com](http://www.probe-research.com)



- More than eight-in-ten Greater Toronto Area (GTA) residents support the federal government providing emergency funding to public transit systems. However, only one-quarter *strongly* support this measure.
  - Support for this measure is quite consistent throughout Canada, with at least seven-in-ten residents of the 12 cities/metropolitan regions included in this survey backing this emergency investment in public transit.
- Nearly all GTA residents recognize the importance of public transit. Eight-in-ten say transit is a “critical” service, with another one-in-five indicating it is at least important.
- Compared to other urban Canadians, GTA residents are the most likely to believe their local and regional transit systems do not receive enough funding, with fewer than one-in-ten saying these services are overfunded and nearly one-half saying they receive the right amount of money.
- Nearly all GTA residents agree that those who need to get to and from their jobs during the pandemic require access to public transit, with a similar proportion of more than nine-in-ten residents agreeing that safe, reliable and affordable public transit is a right that governments must provide to citizens. The views of GTA residents are similar to those in other Canadian cities on these issues.
- More than eight-in-ten urban Canadians (84%) agree that since privately-owned transportation companies, such as airlines, have received emergency federal funding, public transit systems should as well.

# ABOUT PROBE RESEARCH

Based in Winnipeg, Probe Research provides expert public opinion and market research services to a wide range of public, private and not-for-profit organizations. Combining the spirit of both social science and journalistic inquiry, we gather information and craft a narrative that helps our clients make smart, data-driven decisions.

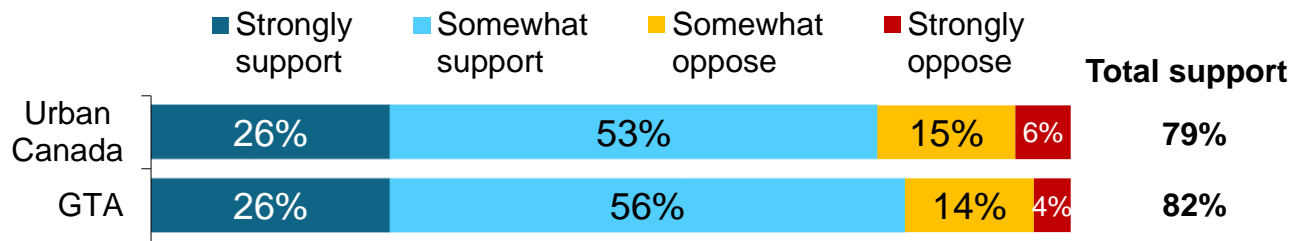
**Vision:** We create knowledge by helping, citizens, consumers and stakeholders better understand one another and the world around them.

**Mission:** We ask the questions and find the answers. We use both proven and emerging market research techniques to gather data and distill stories to reveal what truly matters. We help our clients use this knowledge to make smarter, better decisions.

## METHODOLOGY

- Probe Research was retained by the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Canada to conduct a survey among Canadians in selected urban centres regarding their views on transit.
- Between May 1<sup>st</sup> and May 6<sup>th</sup>, Probe Research surveyed a total of N=1,501 Canadians living in 12 cities/urban regions, including 301 residents of the Greater Toronto Area (GTA).
- Respondents were recruited from a national online panel provider (Dynata). As an online survey is a sample of convenience, no margin-of-error can be ascribed. However, a random and representative non-convenience sample of 1,501 adults would have a margin of error of  $\pm 2.8$  percentage points, 19 times out of 20. A random and representative sample of 301 adults would have a margin of error of  $\pm 5.7$  percentage points, 19 times out of 20.
- Minor statistical weighting by age, gender and city has been applied to this sample to ensure that it corresponds with the characteristics of the populations of these selected cities.
- The questionnaire was designed by Probe Research in consultation with ATU Canada.
- Results of <2% are not shown in the graphs.

# MORE THAN EIGHT-IN-TEN GTA RESIDENTS SUPPORT FEDERAL EMERGENCY FUNDING FOR PUBLIC TRANSIT



C1. "Public transit services in cities throughout Canada have experienced significant decreases in fare revenue because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Transit advocates have asked the federal government in Ottawa for \$5 billion in emergency funding for these public transit services.

What do you think? Do you support or oppose the federal government providing this emergency funding for public transit services?"



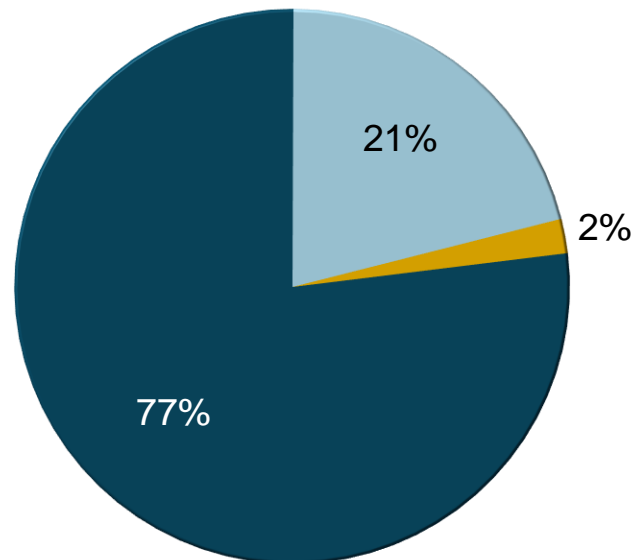
Base: All respondents (N=1,501)

# EIGHT-IN-TEN GTA RESIDENTS VIEW TRANSIT AS A CRITICAL PUBLIC SERVICE

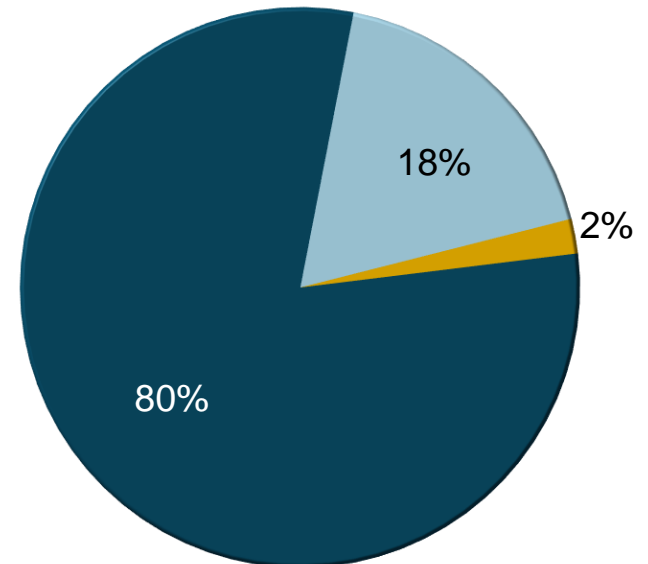
B1. "Governments provide many different types of services to the public. Thinking about public transit for a moment, which of the following statements best describes your view of this service?"

- Public transit is a critical service
- ▣ Public transit is an important service, but not critical
- Public transit is not an important service

Urban Canada (N=1,501)



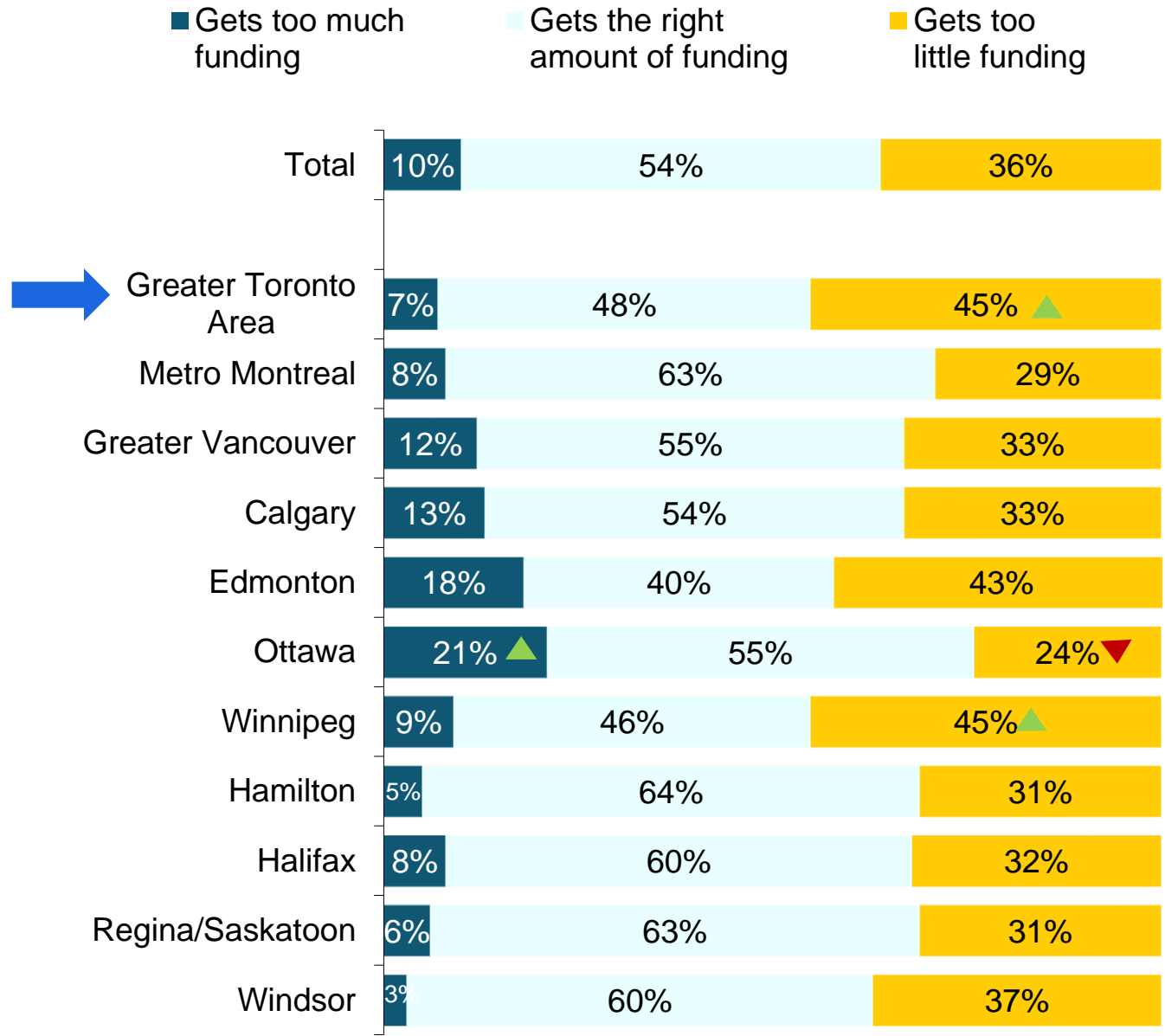
Greater Toronto Area (N=301)



Base: All respondents

# GTA MOST LIKELY TO BELIEVE TRANSIT IS UNDERFUNDED

B4. "In general, do you think the public transit service in your city...?"



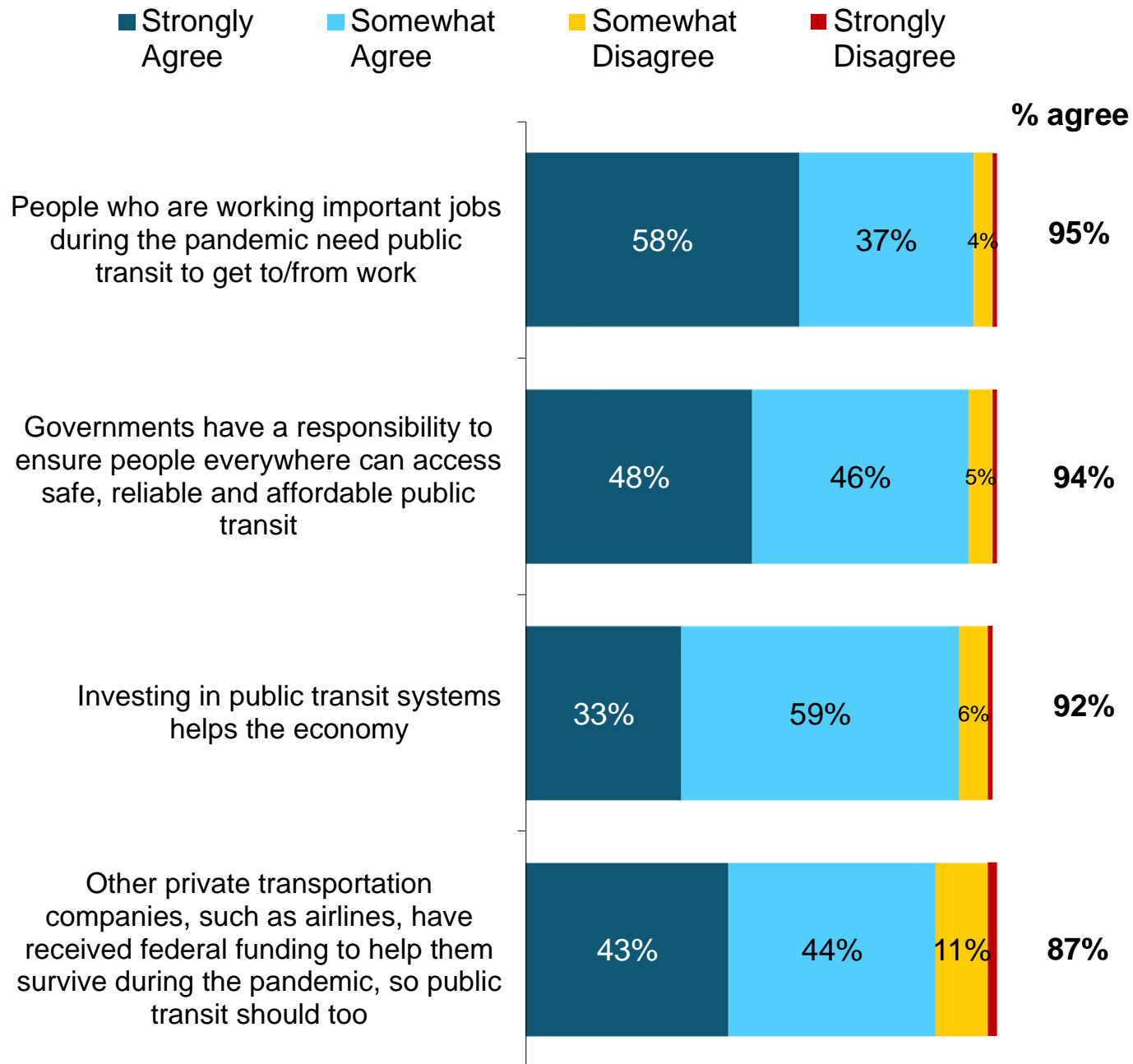
▲ Higher than average  
▼ Lower than average

Base: All respondents (N=1,501)

# NEARLY ALL GTA RESIDENTS AGREE THOSE WORKING DURING THE PANDEMIC NEED ACCESS TO TRANSIT

C3. "Please read the following statements and indicate if you agree or disagree."

Base: GTA residents (N=301)



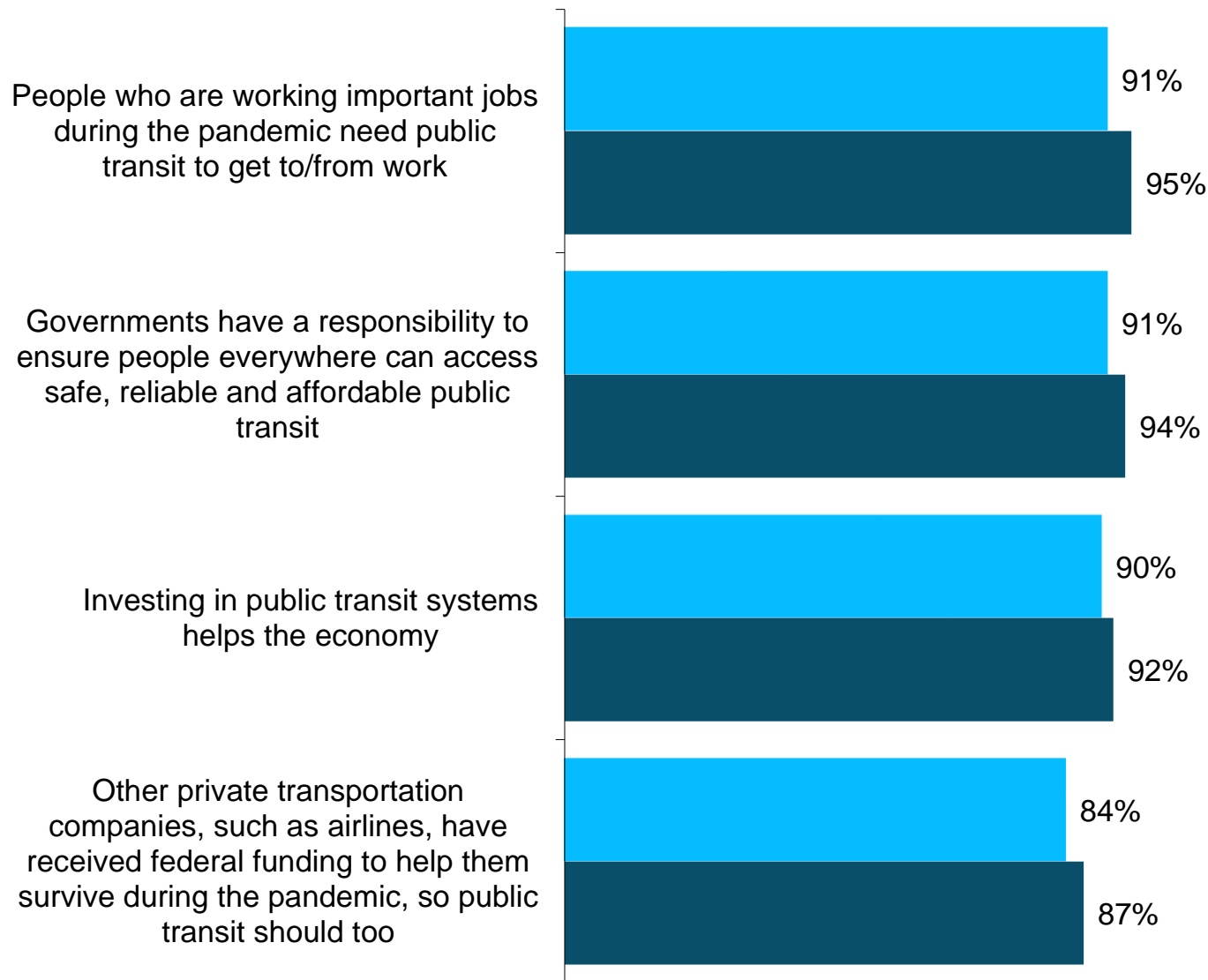
# GTA RESIDENTS HOLD SIMILAR VIEWS TO URBAN CANADIANS

C3. "Please read the following statements and indicate if you agree or disagree."

Base: All respondents

% who strongly or somewhat agree

■ Urban Canada (N=1,501) ■ GTA (N=301)





# PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS



# PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

### PRIMARY COMMUTING METHOD

	TOTAL	Private vehicle	Public transit	Other
(Unweighted)	(N=1,501)	(N=971)	(N=334)	(N=196)
(Weighted)	(N=1,501)	(N=901)	(N=360)	(N=240)

(%)

City/Region				
Greater Toronto Region	33	30	31	46
Metropolitan Montreal	23	21	30	19
Greater Vancouver Area	14	14	17	12
Calgary	7	8	5	4
Edmonton	5	6	4	3
Ottawa	5	5	4	6
Winnipeg	4	4	3	3
Hamilton	3	3	2	2
Halifax	2	2	2	3
Regina/Saskatoon	3	3	1	2
Windsor	1	1	1	1

DK/NS removed; numbers may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

# PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS (CONT'D)

## PRIMARY COMMUTING METHOD

	TOTAL	Private vehicle	Public transit	Other
(Unweighted)	(N=1,501)	(N=971)	(N=334)	(N=196)
(Weighted)	(N=1,501)	(N=901)	(N=360)	(N=240)
				(%)

### Employment

Employed full-time/part-time/casual	68	69	73	55
Student	7	3	17	6
Retired	19	22	5	28
Other	6	5	6	11

### Education

High school or less	16	18	15	13
Some post-secondary	15	15	17	15
University graduate				

### Household Income

<\$50K	32	26	39	42
\$50K-\$100K	41	42	36	42
\$100K+	27	31	25	15

# PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS (CONT'D)

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(%)

Gender				
Male	49	52	52	33
Female	51	48	48	67
Age				
18-34	30	24	49	20
35-54	36	38	34	29
55+	34	37	17	51
Union Household				
Yes	21	16	20	28
No	79	84	80	72
Born in Canada				
Yes	74	71	76	63
No	26	29	24	37

DK/NS removed; numbers may not add up to exactly 100% due to rounding.

# PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS (CONT'D)

## PRIMARY COMMUTING METHOD

	TOTAL	Private vehicle	Public transit	Other
(Unweighted)	(N=1,501)	(N=971)	(N=334)	(N=196)
(Weighted)	(N=1,501)	(N=901)	(N=360)	(N=240)
				(%)

### Primary Commuting Method

Driving alone	57	96	-	-
Carpool/vanpool	3	4	-	-
Public transit	24	-	100	-
Walk/jog	13	-	-	80
Taxi/Uber	2	-	-	12
Bicycle	1	-	-	8

### % of All Trips Taken Using Public Transit

Less than 25%	60	82	6	60
25%-49%	19	14	26	29
50%-74%	11	3	31	10
75% or more	10	1	37	1