



# **Millwood Road Safety Improvements**

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**Public Consultation Report**  
April 2023

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## Consultation Summary

Public and stakeholder consultation for the Millwood Road Safety Improvements project took place from January 25 to February 21, 2023. Property owner meetings were held in November 2022. Additional community pop-up events were held in March 2023.

Consultation activities included a virtual stakeholder meeting, a virtual public meeting, five (5) community pop-up events at public locations in the project area, meetings with 11 property owners, a feedback survey and comment tracking. Over 160 people attended the public meeting and 2,801 survey responses were received, along with 60 people providing comments by phone and email.

Communications to inform the public and stakeholders about the project and opportunities to participate included a project web page; over 50 targeted emails and phone calls to key local stakeholders; 26,828 notices with Greek and Urdu translation distributed by Canada Post throughout the project area; three roadway signs installed at key intersections in the project area; online and social media advertisements geo-targeted to the project area, including advertisements translated into Arabic, Farsi, Greek, Pashto, Serbian and Urdu; and posters and postcards distributed at key community destinations and during community pop-up events.

Overall, a majority of public and stakeholder respondents support or feel neutral about the proposed changes. Some 65 per cent of survey participants support or feel neutral about the proposed design at Overlea Boulevard, 62 per cent support or feel neutral about the proposed design for the Leaside Bridge and 68 per cent support or feel neutral about the proposed design at Pape Avenue & Donlands Avenue.

The main reason participants support the proposed design are the safety benefits. Many of those who support the proposed changes note that existing conditions are difficult to navigate and unsafe, regardless of typical travel mode through the project area. Many also shared concerns about excess vehicle speeds in the project area. Popular safety features that are important to participants include physical separation to protect vulnerable road users from high-speed vehicles, visually distinct spaces for different road users and improved crossings for pedestrians and people cycling at intersections. The majority of property owners at the Pape Avenue & Donlands Avenue intersection support the proposed design. Regardless of the level of support for the project, many participants desire to see safety fences added to the Leaside Bridge.

A common view among people who disagree with the project is that there are currently no safety or traffic issues in the project area, and funds should be allocated towards maintaining other road infrastructure or improving other City services instead. Many participants also feel the existing configuration of the Leaside Bridge meets current mode share demands, and that the space should not be reallocated for vulnerable road users who do not use the roadway today. A few property owners located on Donlands Avenue express concern regarding removal of off-peak on-street parking spaces in front of their property, even with spaces available on Donlands Avenue further down the block and on nearby side streets.

Many participants who are opposed to the project have concern around possible construction delays and consequent community disruptions that have been experienced through other Metrolinx-led initiatives. Additionally, some participants fear that lowering speed limits and reducing vehicle lanes will increase or lead to traffic congestion.

The feedback gathered through this consultation will inform staff recommendations to City Council in April 2023. More information about this project can be found at [toronto.ca/Millwood](https://toronto.ca/Millwood).

## Project Overview

The City of Toronto is planning state-of-good-repair work on Millwood Road, Pape Avenue and Donlands Avenue due to the poor condition of the roads. Separately, Metrolinx is planning construction work at the Millwood Road and Overlea Boulevard intersection.

Millwood Road provides a vital connection between Thorncliffe Park, Flemingdon Park and Leaside neighbourhoods and Downtown. The upcoming projects provide an opportunity to redesign the street and make improvements.

The project's goals are to:

- improve safety for everyone
- extend and connect the cycling network
- maintain roadway uses for public transit, emergency services, trucking and driving
- enhance green spaces

Public feedback, along with technical considerations and City policies and guidelines, will be considered in decisions to be made by staff and City Council in April 2023. Subject to approval, installation would be carried out in phases, with the first phase of construction starting in 2023 and into 2024.

## Overview of Communications & Consultation Activities

### Communication Activities

A variety of methods were used to notify people of the project and opportunities to participate:

- Project web page: [toronto.ca/Millwood](https://toronto.ca/Millwood) (19,415 unique visits)
- Notice, with Greek and Urdu translation, delivered through Canada Post (26,828 addresses)
- E-notification to project subscribers (12 contacts)
- Emails to stakeholders, including residents' associations, community groups, organizations, institutions and elected officials (48 contacts)
- Social media posts by @TO\_Cycling\_Ped
- Roadway signs at Overlea Boulevard (1 sign) and Pape Avenue & Donlands Avenue (2 signs)
- Online, mobile online and social media ads, including ads translated into Arabic, Farsi, Greek, Pashto, Serbian and Urdu
- Posters, with Greek and Urdu translation, posted at Leaside Memorial Community Gardens, The William Lea Room, Toronto Public Library (Thorncliffe Branch), Jenner Jean-Marie Community Centre, East York Community Recreation Centre, Stan Wadlow Clubhouse and East York Memorial Arena
- Postcards, with Greek and Urdu translation, distributed at community pop-up events and at The Neighbourhood Organization (TNO) Food Collaborative

## Consultation Activities

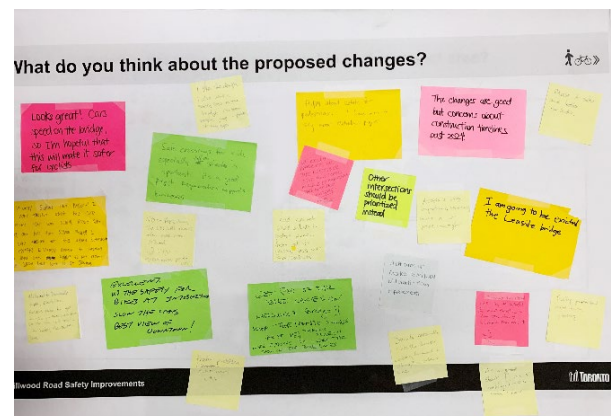
The public and stakeholders were invited to comment on the project and provide feedback through the following activities:

Activity	Date	Participation
Virtual Stakeholder Meeting	January 30, 2023	15 attendees (44 invited)
Virtual Public Meeting	February 6, 2023	161 attendees
Feedback Survey	January 30–February 21, 2023	2,801 responses
Community Pop-up Events	February 13, 16, 17, and March 24, 25, 2023	175+ people engaged
Property Meetings	November 8, 2022	11 properties at Pape Avenue & Donlands Avenue intersection
Email/Phone	January 30–February 21, 2023	Comments received from 60 individuals

**Figure 1:** Five community pop-up events were held to ensure Thorncliffe Park residents had opportunities to learn about the project and ask questions and provide feedback to City staff.



**Figure 2:** Community pop-up events were encouraged to provide written feedback on the project as well.



**Figure 3:** Three large roadway signs were installed at key intersections to bring awareness of the project to those who frequently travel in the project area.

# What We Heard

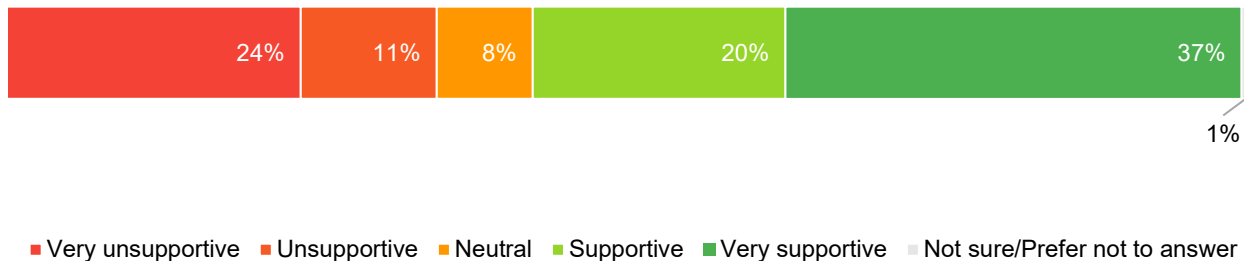
## Key Highlights

- **Members of the public and stakeholders feel divided about the project.** Overall, about two-thirds of participants support or feel neutral about the proposed changes for each project segment, while one-third of participants do not support the proposed changes. Among those who do not drive in the project area (15 per cent of participants), at least 82 per cent of participants support or feel neutral about the proposed changes for each project segment.
- **While public and stakeholder feedback identify safety as a key priority, many participants express opposition to the need for state-of-good-repair or safety improvements in the project area.** Many participants who oppose the project feel the existing conditions work well and disagree with the need for state-of-good-repair works. Many participants also feel that funds should be reallocated to other City initiatives, like housing or other state-of-good-repair projects. However, some survey respondents are unsupportive of the proposed changes, not because they disagree with the project overall, but because they would like to see the project area extended or more improvements for vulnerable users considered.
- **Participants are concerned about traffic congestion.** At Overlea Boulevard, participants would like to ensure that the proposed changes can address the existing queue of vehicles turning left from Millwood Road onto Overlea Boulevard. On the Leaside Bridge, many participants may not have understood that the southbound lane from Overlea Boulevard to Pape Avenue & Donlands Avenue would remain as three lanes, and they feel that reducing speed limits and removing vehicle lanes will create congestion. At Pape Avenue & Donlands Avenue, a few participants are concerned that because the slip lane heading southbound on Millwood Road to turn right onto Pape Avenue will be removed and replaced with a traffic signal, the existing flow of traffic flow would be affected.
- **Many participants would like to see the project scope expanded.** Many survey respondents would like to see the scope of the project include a safety fence or structural improvements to the Leaside Bridge, and for the project area extended north to Redway Road.

## Feedback Survey

The survey was available online and in print format and included background information on the project. The questions included multi-choice or multi-select responses, in addition to open ended comment boxes and optional demographic questions. Participation in the survey was anonymous. See the Appendix for survey participant profile.

**Question: Are you supportive of the proposed changes to the Overlea Boulevard intersection? In a few words, please explain why.**



Of the 2,568 respondents, 65 per cent support or feel neutral about the proposed design, 35 per cent oppose the proposed design and 1 per cent are not sure or prefer not to answer. Of the 437 respondents who live near the Overlea Boulevard intersection, 57 per cent support or feel neutral about the proposed design, 42 per cent oppose the proposed design and 0.4% are not sure or prefer not to answer.

The most common reason for supporting the proposed changes included:

- Improved safety by addressing existing issues such as dangerous road crossings, bicycle lane collisions and high-speed traffic
- Improved accessibility for all vulnerable road users, including public transit riders
- Roadway space is better defined for all road users, improving functionality and safety for all
- Physical barriers would make cycling a more attractive transportation option and help reduce motor vehicle reliance and traffic congestion in the area

The most common reasons for not supporting the proposed changes included:

- There is nothing wrong with the existing intersection design, and no need to make any changes
- Reducing speed limits and vehicle lanes southbound on Millwood Road, approaching Overlea Boulevard, would increase traffic congestion and negatively impact traffic flow
- Opposition to reallocating more space for people cycling and pedestrians because there is no demand for improved infrastructure
- Concerns about Metrolinx's track record of potential delays to construction timelines and impacts to traffic movement and businesses

**Question: Are you supportive of the proposed changes to the Leaside Bridge? In a few words, please explain why.**



■ Very unsupportive ■ Unsupportive ■ Neutral ■ Supportive ■ Very supportive ■ Not sure/Prefer not to answer

Of the 2,429 respondents, 62 per cent support or feel neutral about the proposed changes, 38 per cent oppose the proposed changes and 1 per cent are not sure or prefer not to answer.

The most common reason for supporting the proposed changes included:

- The bridge currently feels unsafe for vulnerable road users because of speeding motor vehicles and insufficient bikeways
- The bridge is underused, including at peak hours
- Physical barriers are a needed upgrade and will encourage more people to cycle and walk across the bridge, while ensuring safety for all road users
- Narrower lanes and physical barriers help reduce speeding and aggressive driving

The most common reasons for not supporting the proposed changes included:

- There are no concerns with the existing configuration, so the project and costs are unwarranted
- Existing configuration supports how the bridge is used by different modes of transportation
- Reducing speed limits and reducing northbound vehicle lanes will create gridlock that doesn't currently exist
- Narrowing vehicle lanes will increase potential for collisions

**Question: Are you supportive of the proposed changes to the Pape Avenue & Donlands Avenue intersection? In a few words, please explain why.**



■ Very unsupportive ■ Unsupportive ■ Neutral ■ Supportive ■ Very supportive ■ Not sure/Prefer not to answer



Of the 2,366 respondents, with 68 per cent support or feel neutral about the proposed changes, 30 per cent oppose the changes and 2 per cent are not sure or prefer not to answer. Of the 1,125 respondents who live near the Pape Avenue & Donlands Avenue intersection, 63 per cent support or feel neutral about the proposed design, 37 per cent oppose the proposed design and 0.01% are not sure or prefer not to answer.

The most common reason for supporting the proposed changes included:

- Protected intersections and bus/bike stops provides clarity on how to use the intersection and would improve safety for all road users
- Proposed changes will slow vehicle speeds approaching the intersection
- Improved safety for vulnerable road users, as motor vehicles often make high-speed turns at the intersection
- Existing on-street parking is unnecessary, and adds to congestion and sightline issues during peak hours

The most common reasons for not supporting the proposed changes included:

- City funding is needed more elsewhere
- Adding more features and pavement markings to a complex intersection will be confusing and dangerous for road users

**Question: Please share any comments, concerns or suggestions related to Millwood Road Safety Improvements.**

The most common comments, concerns or suggestions included:

- Funds for this project should be used towards improving safety and congestion in other areas of the city, repair roadways or diverted to other City service areas (e.g. TTC, support for people experiencing homeless)
- Concerns about Metrolinx's ability to complete the project on time and within budget
- Concerns about bikeways ending abruptly after intersections and a desire to see bikeways go further than the project limits
- Clarification needed about how construction impacts would be mitigated
- Clarification needed for how bus/bike stops would work
- Suggestions to extend sidewalks and cycle tracks north of Overlea Boulevard to the rail underpass
- Suggestions for other safety improvements to the Leaside Bridge, such as widening sidewalks and installing safety fence and crisis phone lines
- Suggestions to remove local road on Pape Avenue
- Suggestions to add red light cameras and right on red lights at intersections

## Virtual Public Meeting

The virtual public meeting held on February 6, 2023, included a presentation followed by a Question & Answer period. Key participant comments are summarized below:

Theme	Comment Summary
Overlea Boulevard intersection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarification needed on why a pedestrian crossing isn't being considered on the south side of the intersection</li> <li>• Concerns about long queues when heading southbound and turning left from Millwood Road, and some suggestions for two left-turn lanes</li> <li>• Mixed feedback on no right-turn on red light that is proposed when heading northbound on Millwood and turning right onto Overlea Boulevard</li> </ul>
Leaside Bridge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concerns about increasing the number of bike lanes from two to three and whether this proposed change is warranted based on current use</li> <li>• Some support for reallocating roadway space for people cycling if the vehicle lanes are generally underused during off-peak hours</li> <li>• Some support for proposed changes because high volumes of motor vehicle traffic during peak hours make it uncomfortable and dangerous for people cycling</li> <li>• Concerns that Emergency Services would not be able to reach residents at the intersections with the loss of a vehicle lane</li> </ul>
Pape Avenue & Donlands Avenue intersection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concerns that the addition of a traffic light for right turns from Millwood Road onto Pape Avenue would create congestion</li> <li>• Concerns that the removal of traffic islands would mean longer, uncomfortable crossings for pedestrians</li> <li>• Clarification on whether a roundabout was considered for the intersection</li> </ul>
Scope of work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suggestion to extend the project area further north to include the Redway Road intersection</li> <li>• Suggestion to add safety barriers and other structural improvements to reduce vibrations on the Leaside Bridge</li> </ul>
Metrolinx	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concerns about Metrolinx's involvement, based on delays and disruptions experienced through other initiatives</li> <li>• Concerns about the removal of the centre median (and community's only green space) to make way for the elevated guideway as part of the Metrolinx design</li> <li>• Clarification needed on whether Metrolinx needs City Council approve to proceed with work</li> </ul>
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarification needed on project costs and where the project ranks amongst other City priorities</li> </ul>
Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concerns about construction timelines, lane restrictions and community impacts</li> </ul>

Theme	Comment Summary
Congestion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concerns that proposed changes would create congestion and increase collisions</li> </ul>
Speed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some opposition to lowering the speed limit to 40 km/h speed and reducing vehicle lanes on the bridge</li> <li>Clarification needed on whether automated speed enforcement would be installed at both ends of the bridge to ensure 40 km/h speeds are maintained</li> </ul>
Environmental impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concerns about the removal of mature trees during construction</li> </ul>
Monitoring & evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarification needed on whether queue times and adjustments could be made after installation</li> </ul>
Project rationale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concerns that the work is not justified, given the number of vulnerable users who use the bridge or collisions in recent years</li> <li>Opinion shared “don’t fix what’s not broken”</li> </ul>

A copy of the virtual public meeting summary notes, which include responses to questions asked, can be found at [toronto.ca/Millwood](https://toronto.ca/Millwood).

**Stakeholder Feedback**

The key comments received through meetings with stakeholders and property owners with affected public right-of-way are summarized below:

Theme	Comment Summary
Overlea Boulevard intersection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concerns that a pedestrian crossing isn’t planned for the south side, so pedestrian will use the bicycle-only crossing instead</li> <li>Clarification needed on TTC bus stop relocations</li> <li>Concerns about sightline obstructions due to the guideway</li> </ul>
Leaside Bridge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarification needed on why a cycle track is needed on the east side if a two-way cycle track is needed on the west side</li> <li>Suggestion to make east side bridge into a multi-use trail to connect to the entrance of Leaside Park</li> <li>Clarification needed on why a safety barrier isn’t being installed</li> </ul>
Pape Avenue & Donlands Avenue right-of-way impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concerns that driveway shortening would make it difficult to park two vehicles on the driveway without touching</li> <li>Concerns about proximity and size of transit shelter relocation and potential accumulation of litter on property</li> </ul>
Construction coordination with Metrolinx	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarification needed on which portion of roadwork will be completed by the City vs. Metrolinx</li> <li>Clarification needed on construction phasing and whether different sections would be tendered separately</li> </ul>
Cost	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarification needed on projected costs</li> </ul>
Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concerns that Thorncliffe Park residents are underrepresented at the stakeholder meeting</li> </ul>

## Additional Feedback

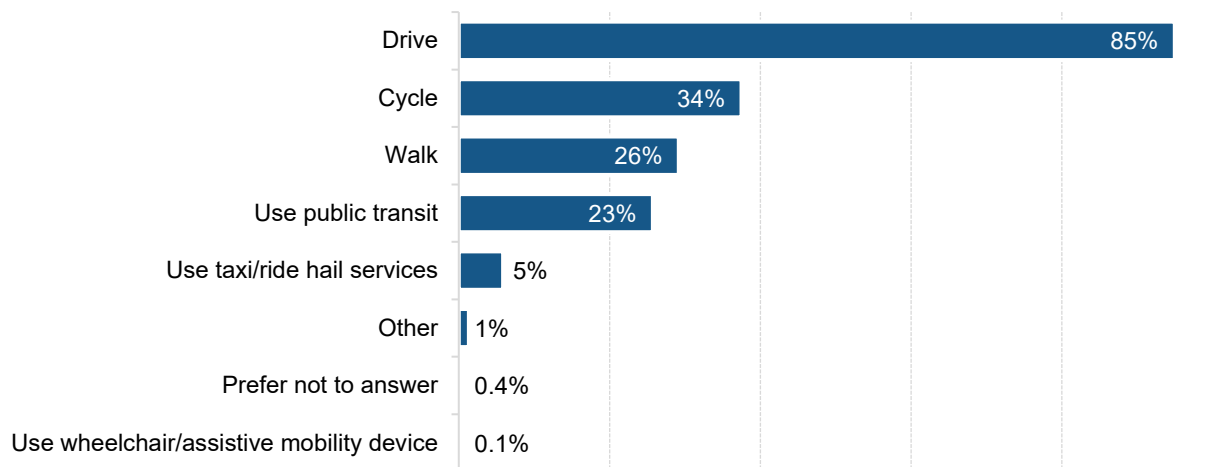
The key questions and comments received through phone and email are summarized by theme below:

Theme	Comment Summary
Support for project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improving cycling connections will help the City meet its climate change goals</li> <li>Improved infrastructure will increase the number of pedestrians and people cycling at both intersections</li> </ul>
Opposition to project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opinion that funds budgeted for this work should be reallocated to other City initiatives (e.g. housing and mental health initiatives, TTC, Gardiner Expressway)</li> <li>Opinion that other roads should be prioritized instead for state-of-good-repair work</li> <li>Opinion that the existing conditions are safe for vulnerable users and the project is unjustified</li> <li>Opinion that narrowing vehicle lanes will make driving conditions more dangerous</li> <li>Opinion that traffic counts being presented in the consultation materials is inaccurate and/or timing of traffic counts over-represents people cycling</li> </ul>
Overlea Boulevard intersection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Suggestion to create two left-turn lanes when turning southeast from Millwood Road to Overlea Boulevard</li> <li>Opinion that there are no significant improvements to pedestrian convenience and safety (i.e. proposed south side crossing is for people cycling only, and pedestrians currently cross there)</li> <li>Support for new sidewalk on the west side of intersection</li> </ul>
Metrolinx	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concerns about the removal of the median and trees on Overlea Boulevard</li> <li>Concerns about impacts for residents due to the Ontario Line construction</li> <li>Opinion that the bus stops would be relocated to more inconvenient locations</li> <li>Suggestion for the City and Metrolinx to coordinate construction the Ontario Line project and work on the Leaside Bridge and Pape Avenue &amp; Donlands Avenue to mitigate impacts</li> </ul>
Leaside Bridge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concerns that reducing vehicle lanes northbound and reducing the speed limit to 40 km/h will create congestion</li> <li>Suggestion for a one-way cycle track on the east side</li> <li>Suggestion to install bollards instead of jersey barriers</li> </ul>
Pape Avenue & Donlands Avenue intersection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two residents on Donlands Avenue who are concerned about the removal of on-street parking during off peak hours in front of their properties</li> <li>Suggestion for residential permit parking in this area</li> </ul>

Theme	Comment Summary
Out-of-scope suggestions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suggestion to add safety barriers on Leaside Bridge</li> <li>• Suggestion to add a sidewalk on the west side from Overlea Boulevard to Redway Road</li> <li>• Suggestion to make conditions for vulnerable users north of the project area on Millwood Road to under rail underpass safer</li> <li>• Suggestion to make aesthetic improvements to the bridge</li> <li>• Suggestion to make structural improvements to reduce vibrations and noise on the bridge when heavy vehicles travel on it</li> <li>• Suggestion to connect bikeways further south to Cosburn Avenue</li> </ul>

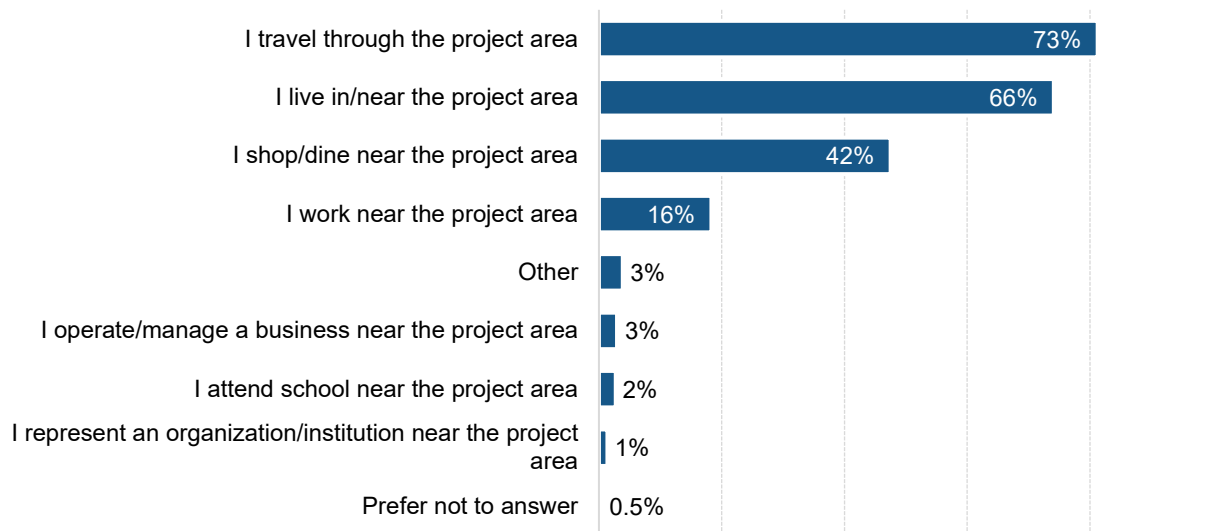


### Typical Ways of Travelling in the Project Area | n=2,801



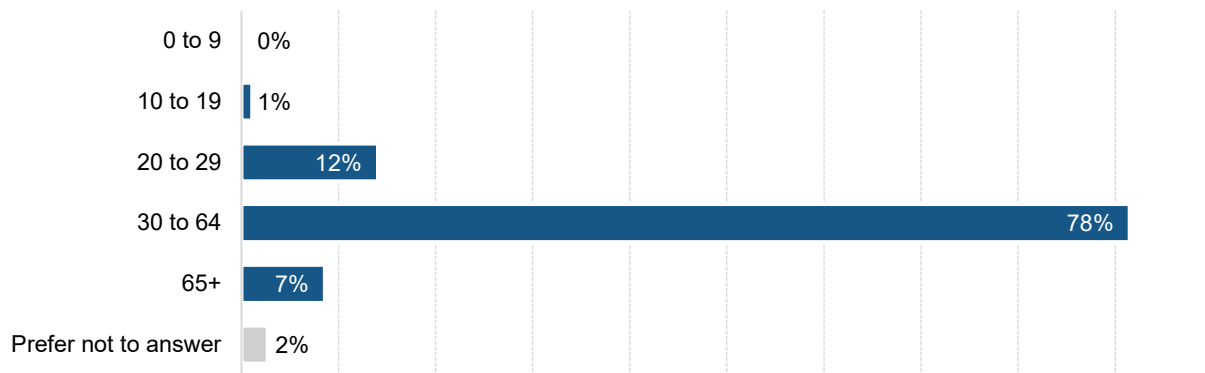
Other common ways of travel include running, e-scooter and carshare.

### Relationship to the Project Area | n=2,801

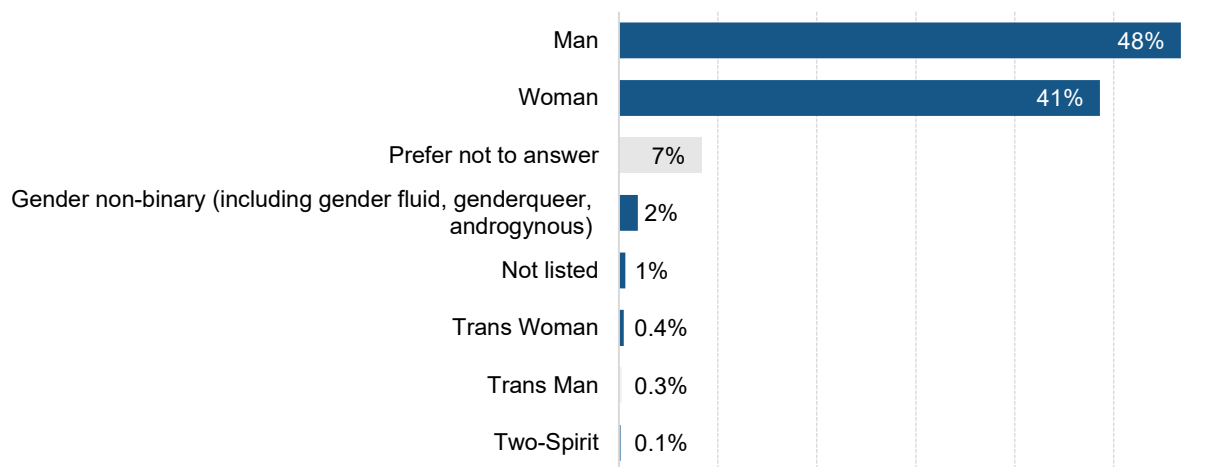


Other common relationships participants have with the project area include visiting family members or friends, driving kids to school, using recreational facilities and faith/community spaces, visiting park facilities and going to medical appointments in the area.

**Age | n=2,359**

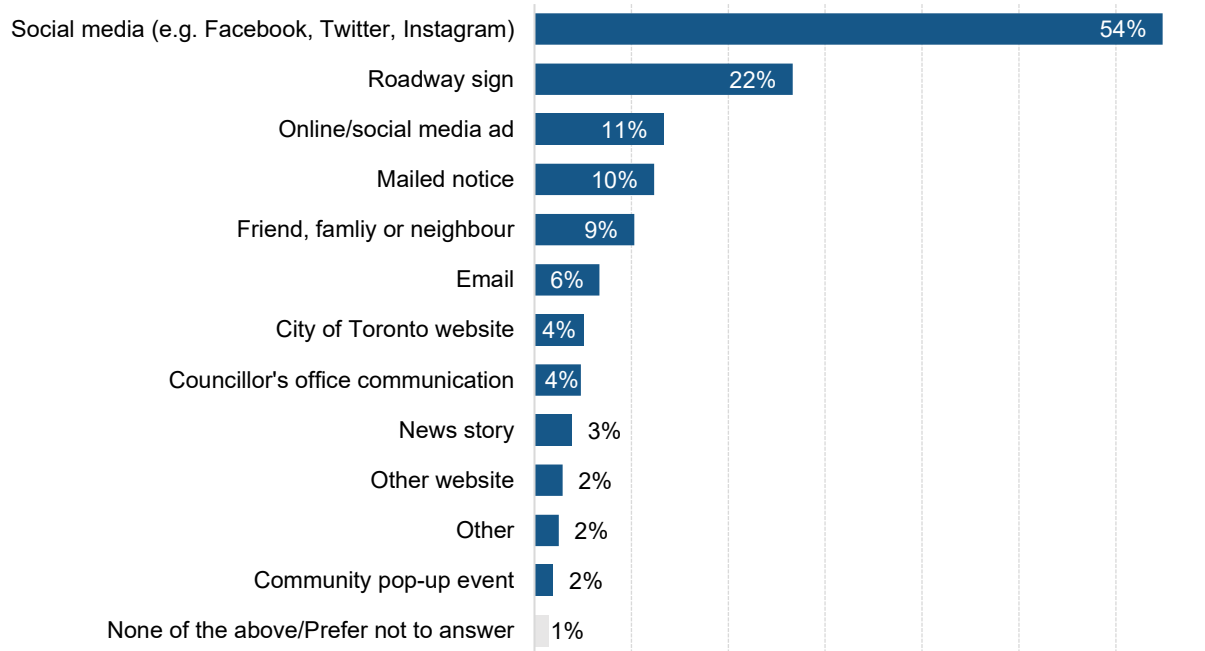


**Gender | n=2,351**





**Point of Engagement | n=2,389**



Other common responses included Reddit and other organization’s mailing lists.

**Virtual Public Meeting Attendance | n=2,351**

