

RapidTO: Bus & Streetcar Priority

Phase 2: Identifying Top Roadways
Consultation Report



August 2022

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Executive Summary

RapidTO: Bus & Streetcar Priority (RapidTO)'s Phase 2 consultation took place over a four-week period from March 23 to April 20, 2022. During the consultation period, the City of Toronto (City) and Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) engaged with members of the public and stakeholders to:

- report back on what was heard during Phase 1 consultation, including the online survey results, and following evaluation process and results
- seek feedback on the top roadways identified through the evaluation process
- share timing of Phase 3 studies, subject to approval of the RapidTO Plan by City Council

Public consultation activities engaged more than 1,900 individuals through an online survey and five (5) virtual public meetings. Stakeholder consultation included a presentation to the TTC's Advisory Committee on Accessible Transit (ACAT). Extensive advertising and promotional tactics were used to engage people from across the city, especially those living in equity-deserving neighbourhoods or whose preferred language is not English.

In Phase 2, feedback from stakeholders and members of the public provided the following key insights and priorities:

- **Overall support for the top 20 roadways:** The majority of participants expressed support for the top 20 roadways, as well as strategies to improve public transit reliability and trip times so it's a more attractive and viable transportation option.
- **Concerns about the distribution of roadways across the city:** Some survey respondents would like to see the Plan include all east-west streetcar roadways, north-south roadways in Etobicoke, north-south roadways between Eglinton Avenue and Bloor Street and roadways with planned developments but limited public transit options.
- **Support for quicker implementation timelines:** Some survey respondents would like to see implementation timelines shortened. Survey respondents expressed frustration with the need for more studies, but also reflected an assumption that implementation only involve placing red pavement paint to create dedicated bus lanes over 10 years.
- **Support for improved connectivity in the public transit network:** While out of scope for this project, feedback included a wide range of ideas on how to improve gaps in the TTC's network and service, which included new routes and loops to provide better connections within the TTC network, geographic areas that need more TTC options, more on-demand transit options post-COVID-19 and more continuous (non-linear) bus routes that would reduce transfers.

Feedback received will be used to recommend the top 20 roadways in the staff report to City Council in 2023.

Overview

The City and TTC are enhancing bus and streetcar transit across Toronto by studying and implementing transit priority solutions that improve service reliability. RapidTO will guide the study, design and delivery of bus and streetcar service improvement projects in Toronto over the next 10 years and beyond.

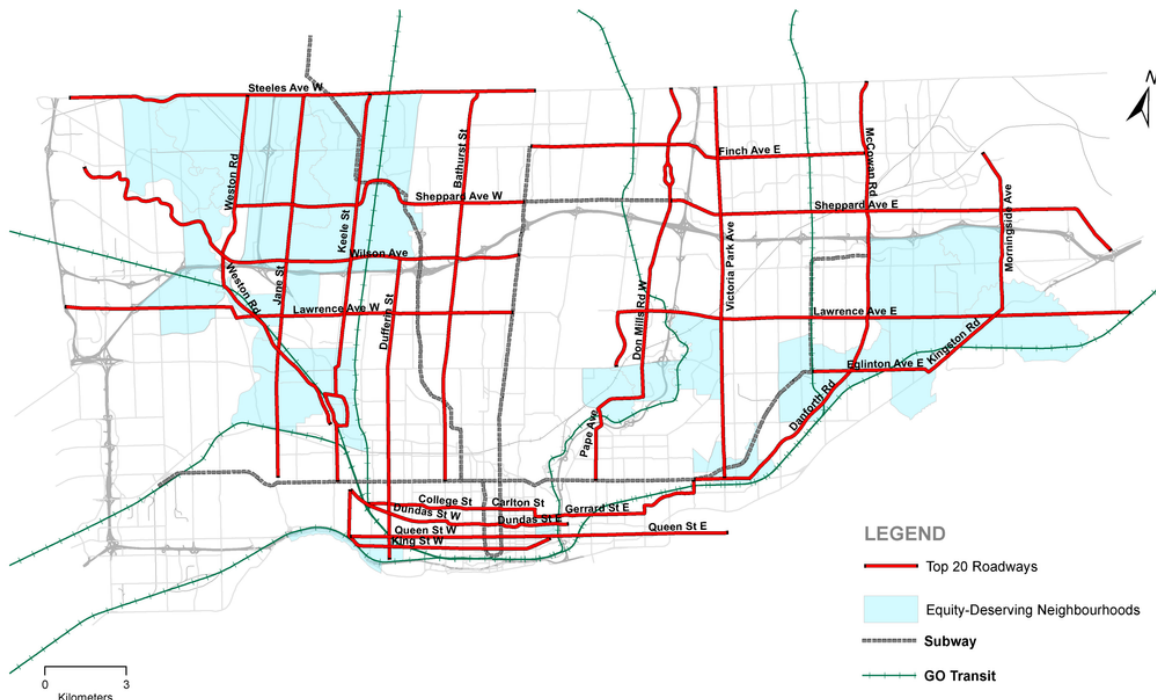
Engagement Process

The City and TTC are engaging the public through a three-phased consultation strategy to inform the development and delivery of RapidTO projects. Technical analysis, along with public feedback, will guide the identification of the top 20 roadways prioritized for transit priority solutions in the RapidTO Plan.



Phase 1: Understanding Your Priorities

During Phase 1 consultation, the City and TTC received public feedback from 5,200 survey respondents identifying priorities for improving bus and streetcar service. Feedback helped determine which criteria should be used to evaluate and identify the top 20 roadways that would benefit most from transit priority, as shown below in the map and listed on the following page:



- **Bathurst Street (North)** – Steeles Avenue West to Bloor Street West
- **College Street-Carlton Street-Gerrard Street** – Dundas Street West to Main Street Station
- **Don Mills Road** – Steeles Avenue East to Danforth Avenue
- **Dufferin Street (South)** – Wilson Avenue to Dufferin Gate Loop
- **Dundas Street** – Roncesvalles Avenue to Broadview Avenue
- **Eglinton Avenue East-Kingston Road-Morningside Avenue** – Kennedy Station to Ellesmere Road
- **Finch Avenue East** – Yonge Street to McCowan Road
- **Jane Street** – Steeles Avenue West to Bloor Street West
- **Keele Street** – Steeles Avenue West to Bloor Street West
- **King Street** – Roncesvalles Avenue to Don Valley Parkway
- **Lawrence Avenue East** – Don Mills Road to Starspray Loop
- **Lawrence Avenue West** – Highway 27 to Yonge Street
- **McCowan Road** – Steeles Avenue East to Danforth Avenue
- **Queen Street** – Roncesvalles Avenue to Victoria Park Avenue
- **Sheppard Avenue East** – Don Mills Station to Kingston Road
- **Sheppard Avenue West** – Weston Road to Yonge Street
- **Steeles Avenue West** – Steinway Boulevard to Yonge Street
- **Victoria Park Avenue** – Steeles Avenue East to Victoria Park Station
- **Weston Road** – Steeles Avenue West to St. Clair Avenue West
- **Wilson Avenue** – Humber College to Yonge Street

Phase 2: Identifying Top Roadways

In Phase 2 consultation, the City and TTC asked for public feedback on the list of top 20 roadways.

Feedback received from Phase 2 will inform the recommendations made in the staff report that will be presented to City Council in early 2023.

About this Report

This report summarizes the Phase 2 consultation activities and feedback received from March 23 to April 20, 2022.

How We Engaged

From March 23 to April 20, 2022, the following promotional and consultation activities were used to drive public participation. Emphasis was placed on ensuring that all aspects of the consultation process were accessible to residents whose primary language was not English.

Notification Activities

City of Toronto Website

- Project web page (toronto.ca/RapidTO) – 52,827 views from 44,230 unique devices
- Briefing video – 493 views from 438 unique viewers
- Presentation – 368 downloads
- Call-to-action on "What's New" section of the toronto.ca home page

Digital Billboard Ads

- Ads along major roadways (e.g. Gardiner Expressway)

Mobile App Ads

- Ads in navigation, cycling, transit and gas apps – 300,000 impressions
- Ads in apps in 13 non-English languages – 800,000 impressions

Newspaper Ads

- Print ad – one (1) ad in 13 non-English publications

Online Ads

- Ads on news & weather websites – over 1.45 million impressions

Radio Spots

- 10-second announcer-read spots on 19 stations – heard on average 2.9 times by 1.36 million listeners
- 15-second announcer-read spots on CHIN FM 100.7 FM in eight (8) non-English languages

Stakeholder Outreach

- E-blasts to stakeholder list and shared by City divisions' networks – 400+ contacts

Social Media

- Newsfeed ads on the City's Twitter, Facebook and Instagram accounts
- Organic posts on Twitter on the City's Twitter, Facebook and Instagram accounts – 5,000+ impressions

TTC Communications

- Transit shelter ads in Neighbourhood Improvement Areas – 86 ads
- TTC transit stops – 1,116 stop pole cards
- TTC digital platform displays – ad played once every third loop
- Advertising on TTC's Wi-Fi on 35 Jane and 102 Markham Road bus routes

Consultation Activities

Online Survey

A total of 2,164 respondents provided feedback through an online survey. Participation was anonymous and results were reviewed for duplicate and invalid responses before being analyzed for this report.

The survey included background information on the project and evaluation process, and asked the six (6) questions below:

1. To what extent do you support the proposed top 20 roadways proposed?
2. Do you have any comments to share about the top 20 roadways?
3. Are there any roadways listed below that you think should be added to the top priority list?
4. Do you support interim transit priority projects?
5. How would you like us to communicate information about RapidTO studies?
6. How would you like to participate in RapidTO studies?

Virtual Public Meetings

Five virtual public meetings were held and attended by a total of 16 participants:

- March 30, 2022: Toronto & East York – 3 participants
- March 31, 2022: Etobicoke-York – 2 participants
- April 4, 2022: Scarborough – 2 participants
- April 5, 2022: North York – 3 participants
- April 11, 2022: City-wide – 6 participants

Advisory Committee Meeting

A virtual presentation was made by Stephanie Simard Craig, Senior Planner, TTC, to the Service Planning Subcommittee of the Advisory Committee on Accessible Transit (ACAT) on April 6, 2022. Opportunities for questions and feedback followed the presentation.

Stakeholder & Public Email Comments

Stakeholder representatives and members of the public were invited to share comments and ask questions via phone, email, written letter or petition. A total of one (1) stakeholder submission and nine (9) emails were received. All comments were recorded and reviewed for consideration and response by the City and TTC.

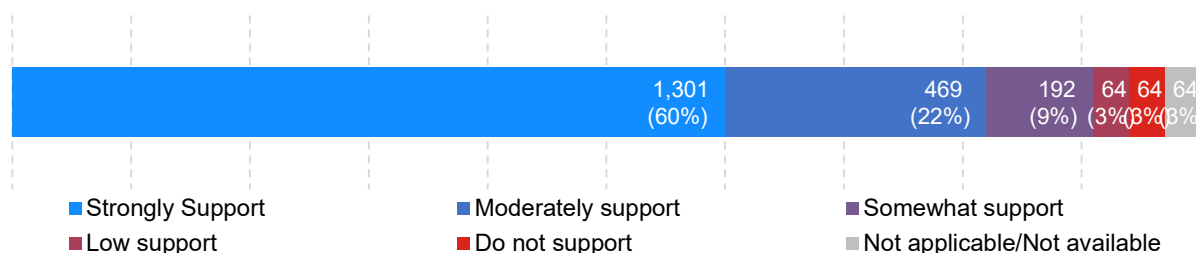
What We Heard

Online Survey

Responses received to each question in the online survey are described in this section, including the responses from 45 translated surveys in nine (9) languages. All questions were optional.

1. To what extent do you support the proposed top 20 roadways proposed?

Of the 2,164 responses received, 60 per cent strongly support the proposed list of 20 roadways; 22 per cent moderately support it; 9 per cent somewhat support it; 3 per cent had low support of it; 3 per cent do not support it; 1 per cent said the question was not applicable and a response was not available for 2 per cent.



2. Do you have any comments to share about the top 20 roadways?

There were 634 responses received, with most frequent comments summarized below:

Topic	Question & Comment Summary
Support of top 20 roadways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top 20 roadways are good candidates for transit priority and will improve travel times • More than 20 roadways need to be on the list • This should have already been done and can't take more time to complete due to studies • Public transit makes it hard to get to a destination on time • Streetcars and buses are often crowded, with long wait times • Development-led density makes transit priority essential • Transit priority can relieve congestion and reduce emissions • Wide roadways should include dedicated bus lanes • Dedicated bus lanes should be delivered with separated bikeways and/or active transportation options • Portions of roadways should be pedestrianized, with access to transit vehicles only • The Plan will need to be re-evaluated after Line 5 Eglinton and Line 6 Finch West open

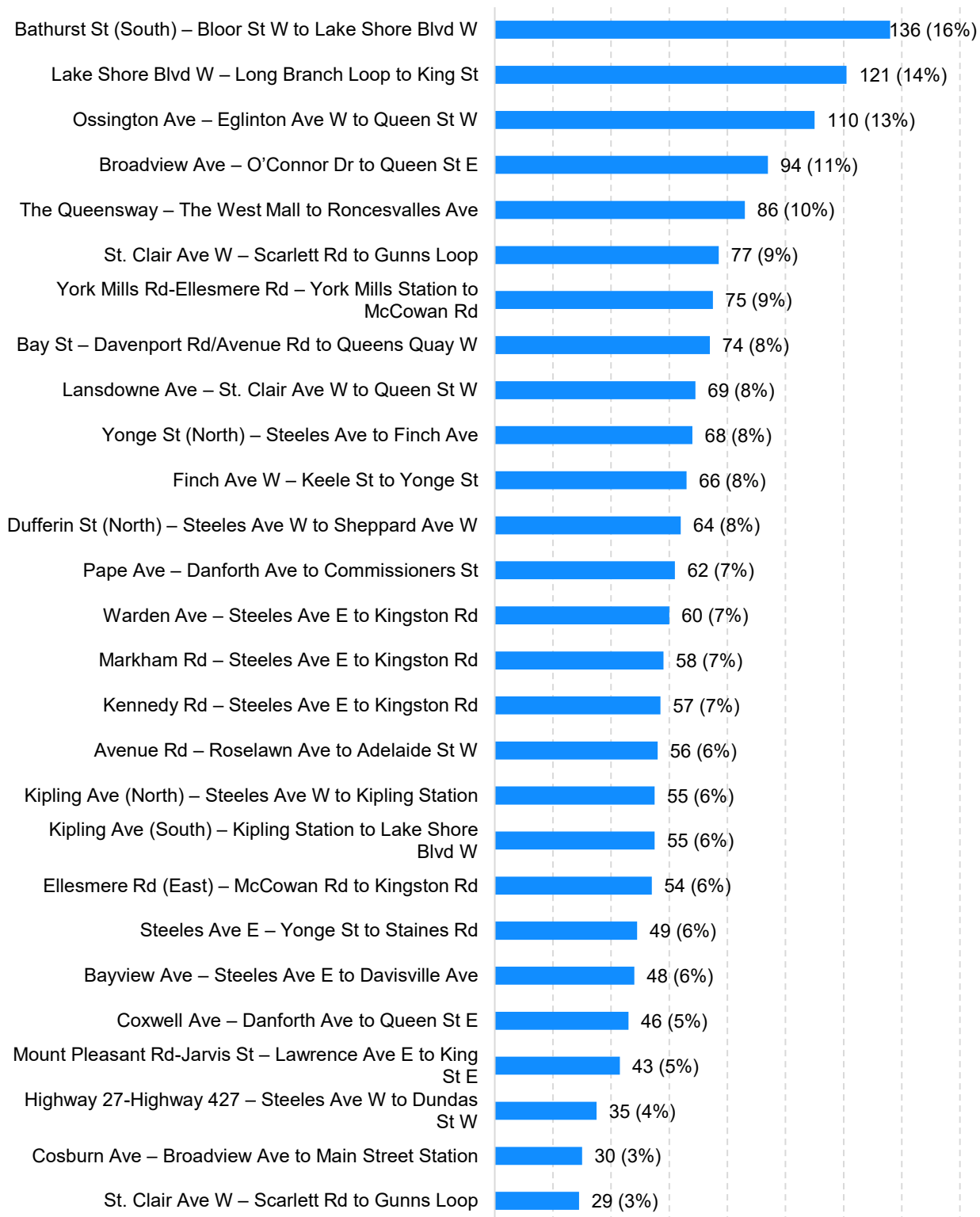
Topic	Question & Comment Summary
Opposition of top 20 roadways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This project is unnecessary and focus should be turned to other transportation priorities (e.g. snow clearing, removing bicycle lanes, adjusting traffic signal timing, increasing speed limits back to previous levels) • Need to stop creating gridlock with constant construction and lane reductions • Subway service should be prioritized over bus service • Existing RapidTO interventions have made commutes longer • There are high costs for other road users. There will be minimal travel time savings for one public transit vehicle, yet increase travel time for many motor vehicles • Dedicated bus lanes will divert traffic onto other streets • There is transit planning redundancy with planned transit lines, like the Ontario Line • Many roadways are not congested enough to the point that transit priority is necessary

Topic	Question & Comment Summary
Roadways/areas missing from the RapidTO Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balance of east-west and north-south options in each district are needed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Priority needs to be given to north-south options in areas like Etobicoke, especially those that are in the suburban areas further from subways first ○ There needs to be more focus on roadways with north-south downtown routes ○ There aren't a lot of routes between Eglinton Avenue and Bloor Street ○ There needs to be more east-west roadways included ○ Stop focusing so heavily on the west end ○ More transit priority in the east end/Beaches would open up the waterfront to many more families. • Other commonly-suggested roadways that were not part of the 47 roadways analyzed include: Birchmount Avenue, Dupont Street, Midland Avenue, Spadina Avenue and Victoria Park Avenue • Any neighbourhood going under major redevelopment should be included, (e.g. Park Lawn, Regent Park, Don Lands, the Entertainment District, Parkdale, etc.) • More focus needed on equity-deserving areas of Toronto • Roadways in Scarborough need to be prioritized, with the decommissioning of Line 3 Scarborough • Areas in Etobicoke, like The West Mall/The East Mall and Humber Bay Shores, will have new developments and high population growth soon and need more public transit options • The Plan needs to include all mixed-traffic streetcar routes, especially east-west routes, St. Clair Avenue and Spadina Avenue • Any schools that are in the vicinity of a major road should be priority for the appropriate time/place • It would be better for city connectivity if some of the roadways proposed extended south of Bloor Street/Danforth Avenue, rather than terminating there • The study areas should be extended • The top 20 roadways already have extensive coverage. Other roadways would lift the pressure off the top 20 roadways. • Concerns that some roadways are not wide enough for dedicated bus lanes • All streetcars should have their own right-of-way with transit signal priority

Topic	Question & Comment Summary
<p>Suggestions for bus/streetcar service improvements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to consider more continuous (non-linear) routes and loops to reduce the amount of transfers and travel time for public transit riders • Less short turn vehicles streetcars • Frequent service should be less than 20 minutes • Since more workplaces are turning to a hybrid work model for employees, more investment is needed for on-demand public transit models rather than bus or streetcar service • Traffic enforcement needed for illegally parked cars during peak hours • Streetcar stops need to be made accessible, since they are currently too high without a ramp • TTC stop poles need to reapply the blue and red stripes to identify from a distance if it is a night bus • Bus stops should be placed after the intersections to improve traffic for all road users • Consider articulated buses to alleviate constant crowding
<p>Other suggestions/ comments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invest in parallel subway, GO Transit and LRT expansion, as roadways are currently saturated by vehicles • Eliminate on-street parking on major roadways and streetcar roadways in the downtown core • Prioritize the Line 5 Eglinton work so that it can be completed • Homeless and those who earn low incomes should be able to ride for free. With the expansion of these top roadways, prices will continue to increase and become less affordable to those who really need it. • Offer day passes or other incentives on the Presto card to encourage ridership • More should be spent on electric buses than streetcars • Introduce carless days in Toronto • Evaluation criteria should prioritize density and new developments • Clarification needed about evaluation process to identify top roadways (e.g. by volume, riders, area needs for access) • Clarification needed about how traffic delays will be mitigated for people who drive

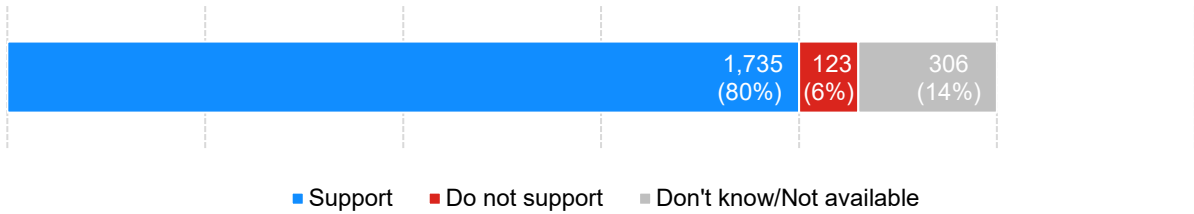
3. Are there any roadways listed below that you think should be added to the top priority list?

Of the 872 responses received, the top roadways receiving support included Bathurst Street (South), Lake Shore Boulevard West, Ossington Avenue, Broadview Avenue and The Queensway.



4. Do you support interim transit priority projects?

Of the 2,164 responses received, 80 per cent said they support interim transit priority projects; 6 per cent said they do not support interim transit projects; 11 per cent did not know and a response was not available for 4 per cent.

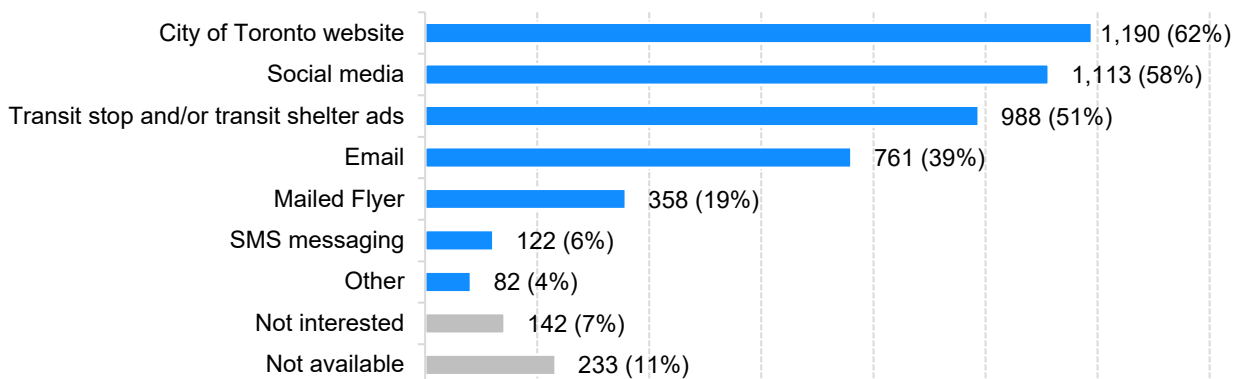


Of those who do not support interim transit priority projects, common reasons included:

- they often become permanent and irreversible
- negative impact on traffic and other road users (e.g. increase in congestion and travel times, lack of enforcement, disruptive and non-stop construction and changes)
- they are usually subpar, short-term fixes instead of long-term solutions
- permanent transit priority solutions, instead of interim transit priority projects, are needed immediately
- construction will take too long and be too costly; City should focus on other needs
- overall opposition to RapidTO
- support for building subways over surface transit improvements
- lower ridership and shift to work-from-home makes these projects financially unsound; focus should be redirected to on-demand transit
- neighbourhoods should be polled about transit changes before implementation

5. How would you like us to communicate information about RapidTO studies?

Of the approximately 4,756 responses received from 2,164 respondents, 62 per cent said they would like to be informed through the City of Toronto website; 58 per cent said by social media; 51 per cent said at transit stops or through transit shelter ads; 39 per cent said by email; 19 per cent said by a mailed flyer; 6 per cent said by SMS messaging; 4 per cent suggested another method; 7 per cent said they were not interested and a response was not available for 11 per cent.

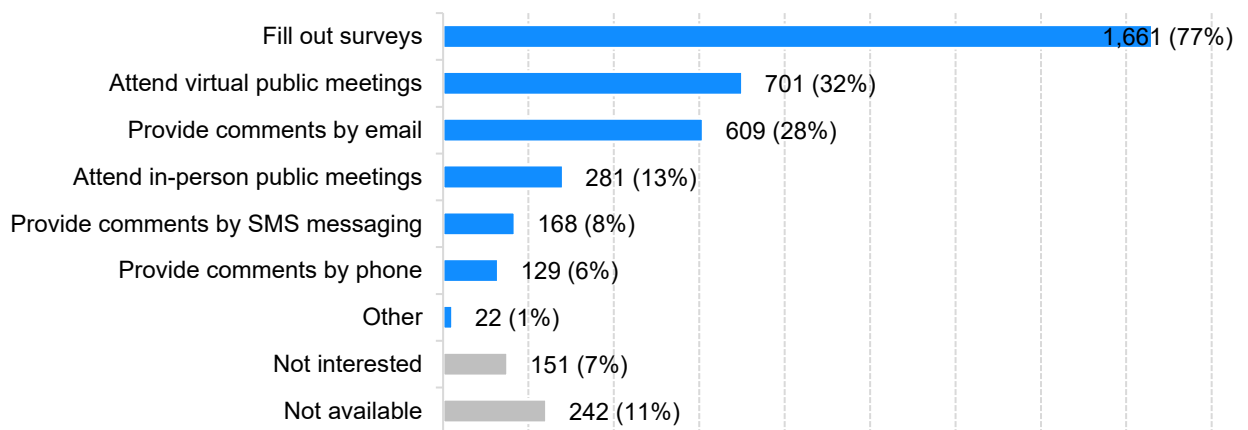


Other suggested communication methods included:

- news and media outlets (e.g. TV, websites)
- Reddit
- Instagram & TikTok
- elected officials/Councillor e-updates
- on/in buses and streetcar routes where changes would happen
- TTC website
- talk shows
- neighbourhood events
- business associations
- residents associations
- radio
- public notice boards
- pop-ups at high school and university campuses
- 311 app
- RapidTO-focused newsletters
- third-party transit apps
- subway displays
- road signs
- newspaper ads
- TV commercials
- TTC station's Wi-Fi Terms & Conditions page
- billboards
- Facebook groups

6. How would you like to participate in RapidTO studies?

Of the 2,164 responses received, 86 per cent of respondents would like to participate in future studies by filling out surveys; 36 per cent would like to attend virtual public meetings; 32 per cent would like to provide comments by email; 15 per cent would like to attend in-person public meetings; 9 per cent would like to provide comments by SMS message; 7 per cent would like to provide comments by phone; 1 per cent suggested another method; 8 per cent were not interested in participating and a response was not available for 11 per cent.



Other suggested feedback methods included:

- focus groups
- pop-ups (i.e. handing out flyers, survey booths along route) that are promoted through social media
- Facebook
- interactive map
- trial routes
- walking tours with Councillors

Virtual Public Meetings

During the five (5) virtual public meetings from March 30 to April 11, 2022, participants expressed questions and comments summarized below:

Topic	Question & Comment Summary
Consultation process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Concerns that commuters are not being consulted• All roads with six lanes should be changed to HOV lanes or dedicated bus lanes
Timelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Concerns that Phase 3 timelines are too long• Clarification needed about when Phase 3 timelines will be announced
Top roadway suggestions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Finch Avenue, between McCowan Road and Morningside Avenue should be considered• With the closing of Line 3 Scarborough<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Accelerate work on Lawrence East or Ellesmere Road○ Additional transit priorities for Kennedy Road or Midland Avenue
Other questions/comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Faster buses mean more people would take the bus, and therefore reduce emissions for everyone.

Advisory Committee Meeting

During the TTC's ACAT Service Planning Subcommittee meeting on April 6, 2022, committee members expressed questions and comments summarized below:

Topic	Question & Comment Summary
Transit priority solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clarification needed on whether buses will receive dedicated traffic signals• Clarification need on how priority be implemented on downtown streetcar routes

Stakeholder Email Comments

A total of one (1) comment submission was received via email from the Humber Bay Shores Residents Association and summarized below:

Topic	Question & Comment Summary
Need for improved rapid transit in Humber Bay Shores community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns that challenges and opportunities in the Humber Bay Shores area are shown in the consultation materials, but no bus/streetcar roadways identified in the top 20 roadways Concerns that even with expected development-led population growth in the area because of the Christie's Planning Study, there is no commitment to the Waterfront West LRT or future rapid transit in the area

Public Email Comments

Questions and comments received via email from members of the public are summarized below:

Topic	Question & Comment Summary
Top roadway suggestions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bus routes parallel to Yonge Street to avoid crowding on Line 1 Yonge-University: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avenue Road route that runs from Highway 401 to Front Street in order to bypass Eglinton TTC Station Mount Pleasant Road
Additional congestion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns that previous projects, like the King Street Transit Priority Corridor, have are increasing pollution by diverting traffic to other streets and increasing congestion
Reduce bunching & shorten time between vehicles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce off-peak time between vehicles at stops from 20 to 30 minutes to 10 to 20 minutes Lower ridership does not justify infrequent service
Suggestions for transit priority solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use express buses or implement transit priority solutions during peak hours Need to implement transit signal priority for streetcars operating in a dedicated right-of-way (e.g. 510 Spadina or 512 St. Clair)
Other comments & suggestions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarification on whether TTC vehicles would be powered by hydrogen in the near future Fare inspectors should be brought back The Humber College LRT terminal should connect to the LRT line with stations at Woodbine Casino, Eglinton Avenue and Kipling Station Concerns about impacts to businesses and construction phasing Suggestion for a streetcar route that connects Regent Park to the Financial District (i.e. King and Union TTC stations)

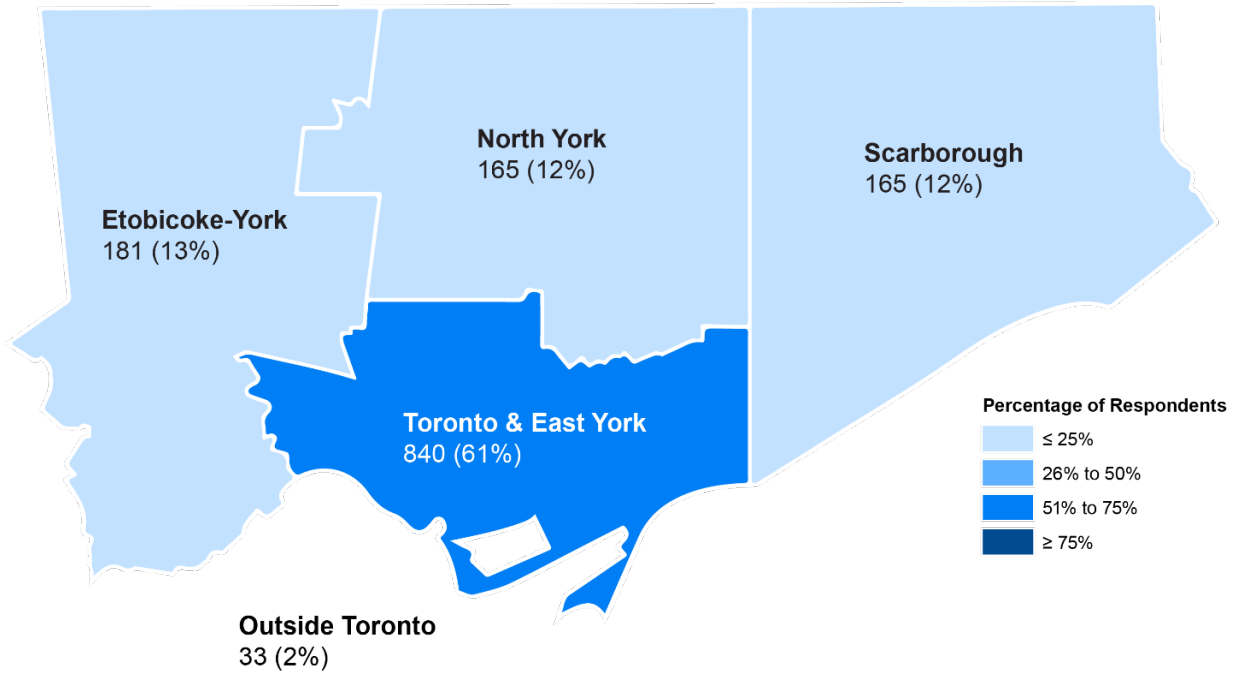
Appendix A: Online Survey Participant Demographics

Out of the 2,164 respondents, almost 1,900 respondents (about 88 per cent) provided optional demographic information described below.

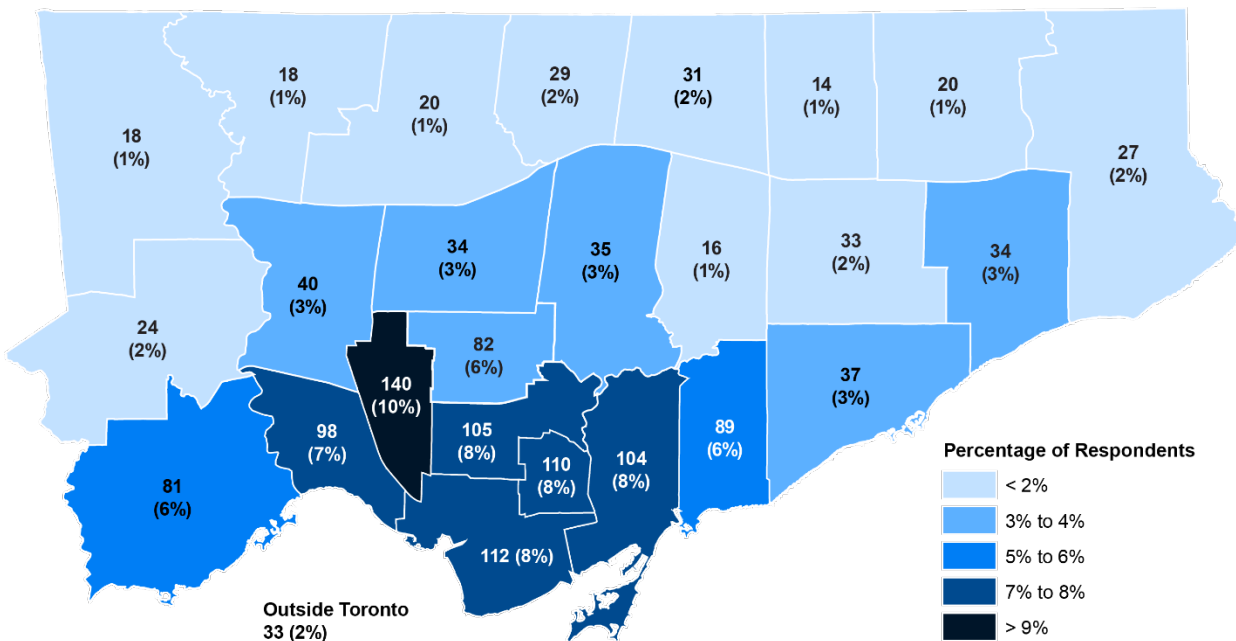
Please provide your postal code.

1,384 respondents (64 per cent) provided the valid postal code information below.

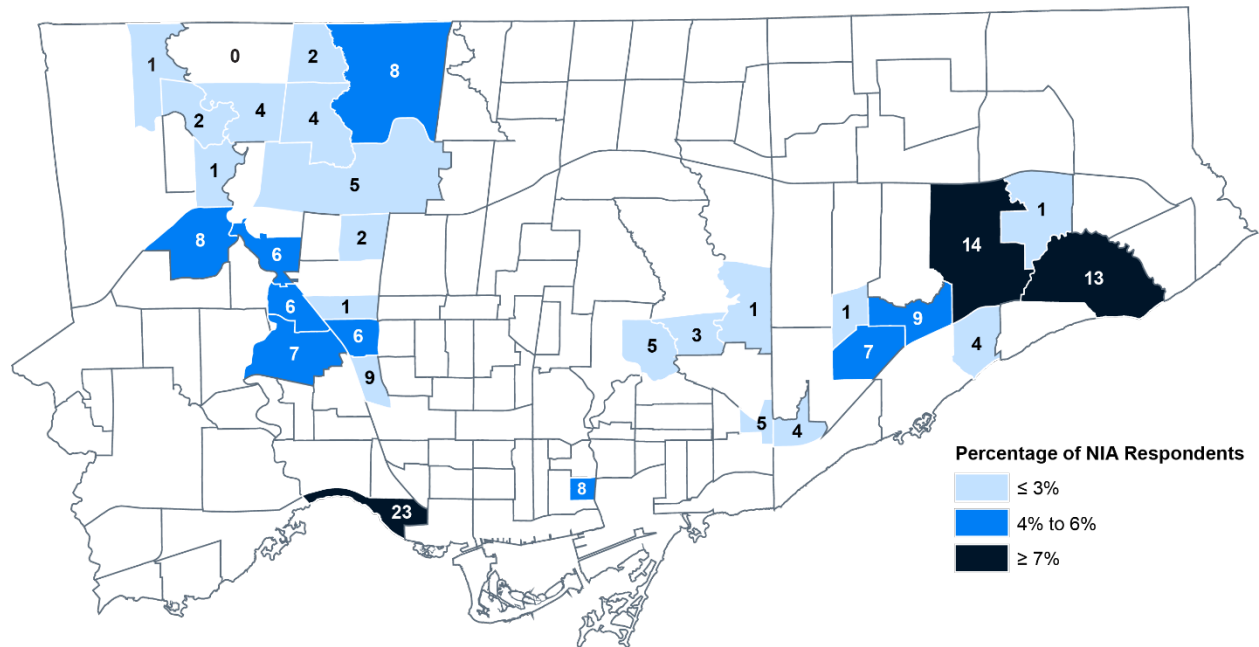
By district:



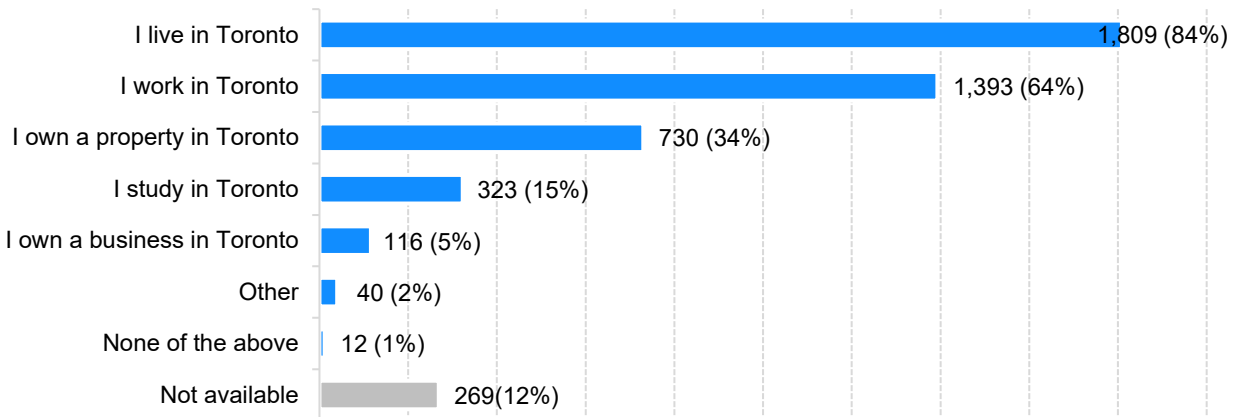
By ward:



By Neighbourhood Improvement Area (NIA)¹:



Please describe your perspective:

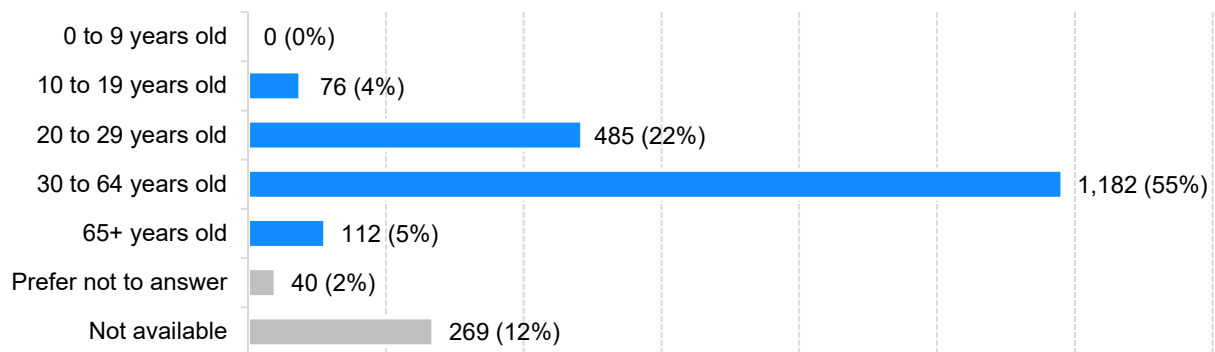


Other perspectives specified included:

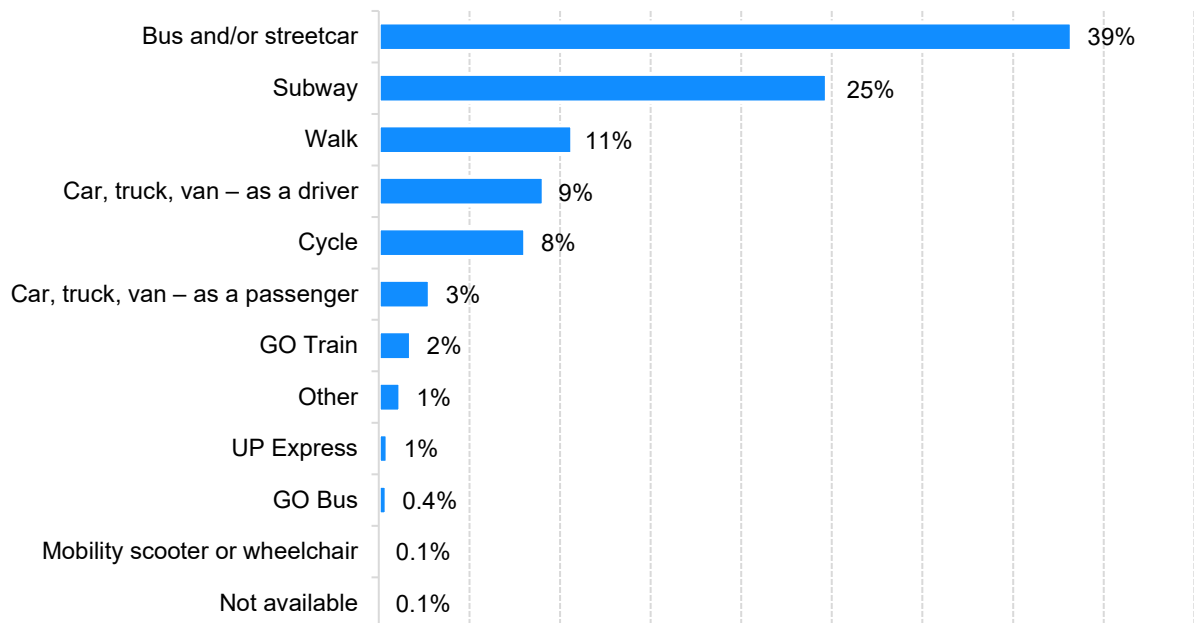
- I live and/or work outside of Toronto
- I hope to live/work in Toronto
- I rent in Toronto
- My children attend school in Toronto
- I volunteer/participate extra-curricular activities in Toronto
- My family lives in Toronto and I visit frequently

¹ Though the NIA profiles were updated in 2022, the [historical 140 NIA profiles \(2016\)](#) are shown to better compare with Phase 1 demographic data.

What is your age?



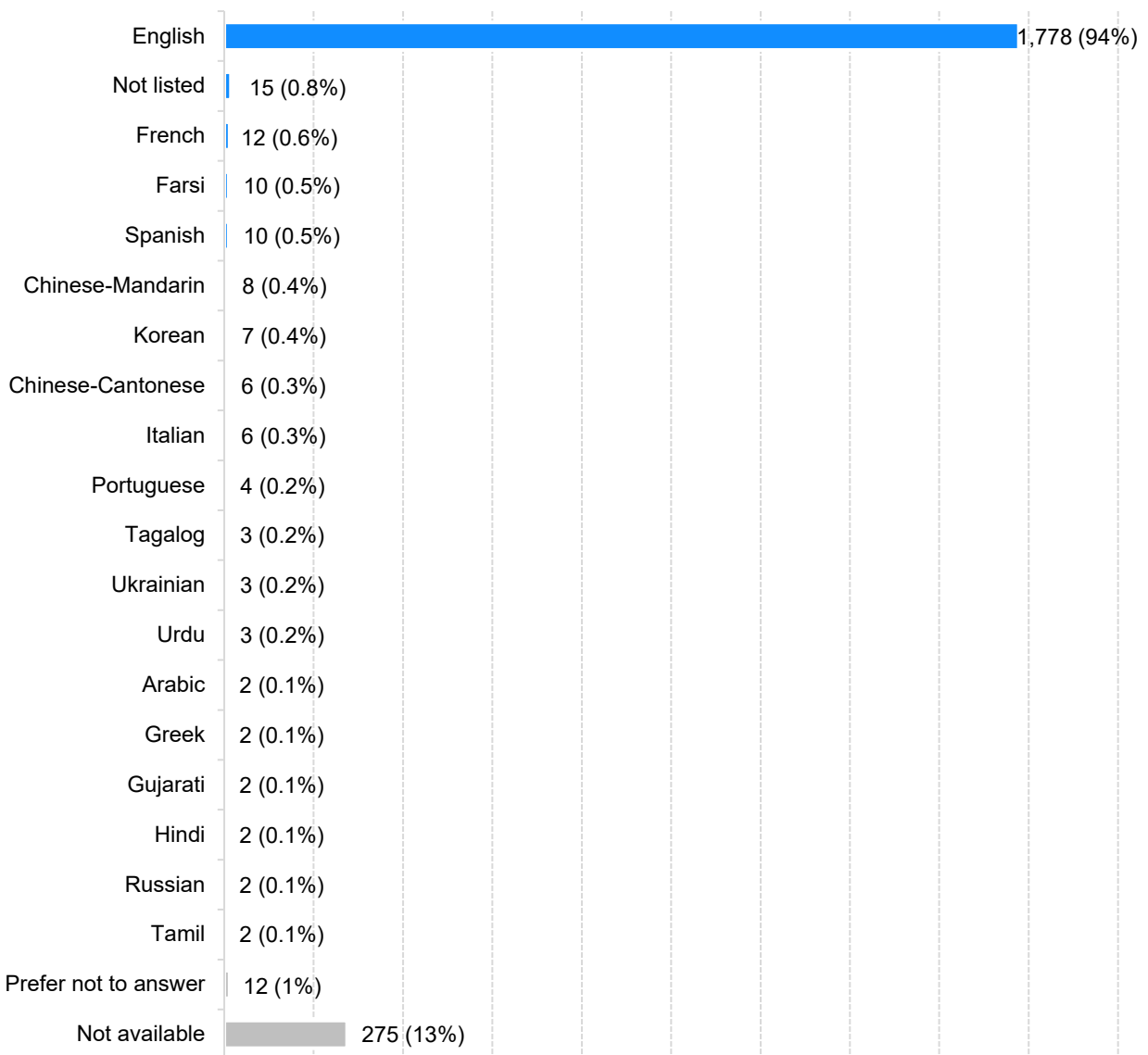
Before COVID-19 (February 2020), how did you travel on a typical weekday? Select your top two ways.



Other ways specified included:

- Combination of modes per trip
- Did not live in Toronto before COVID-19
- Taxi or ride-hail
- Other regional transit systems (e.g. vivaNEXT, York Region Transit)
- Wheel-Trans
- Motorcycle
- School bus
- Electric scooter

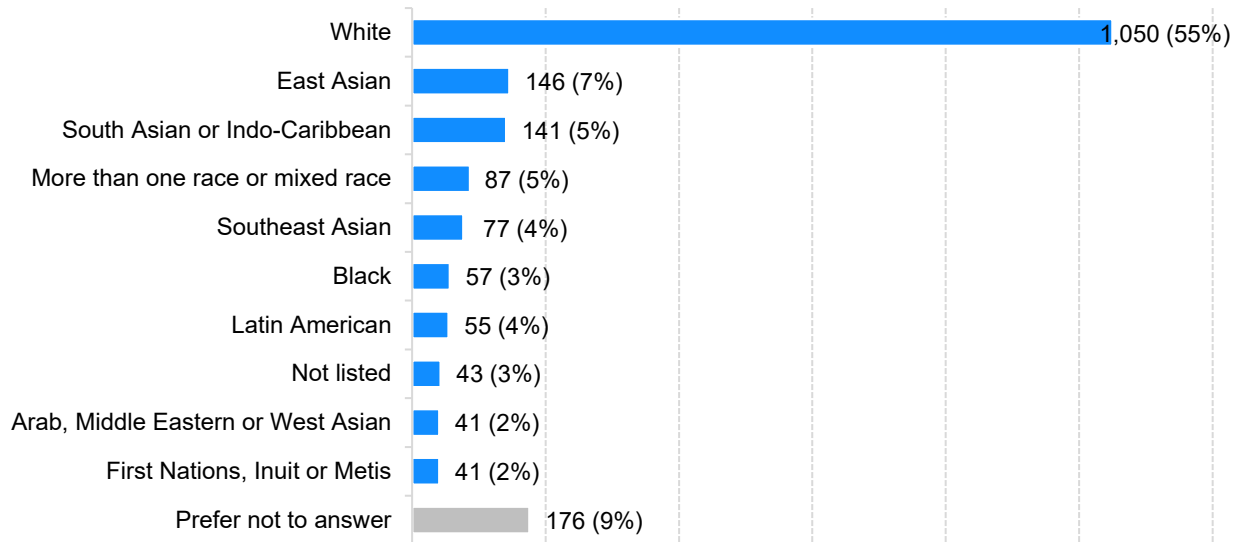
What language do you prefer speaking?



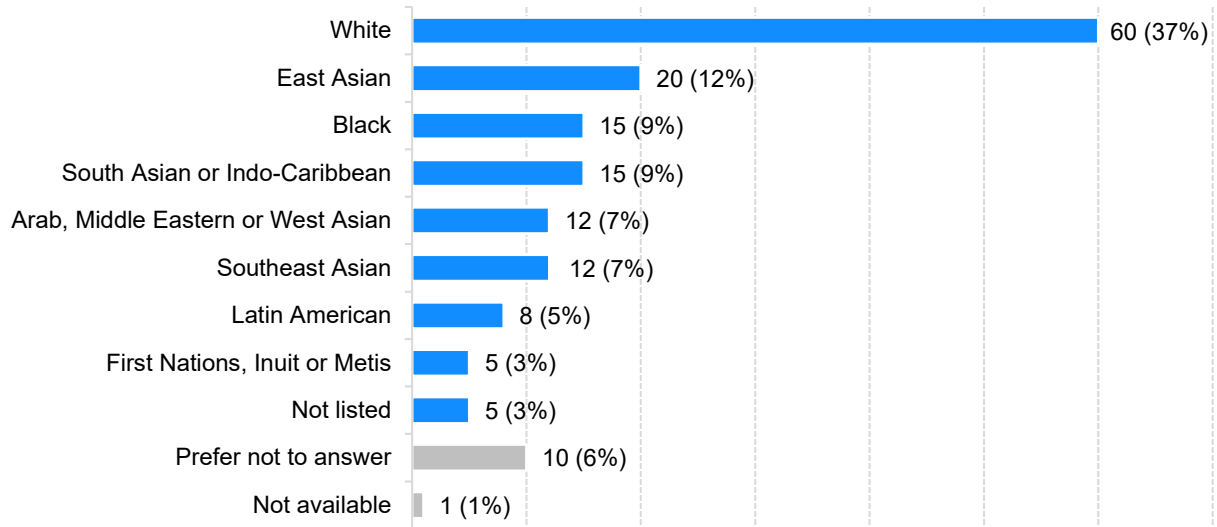
Other languages specified included:

- Azerbaijani
- Bulgarian
- Creole
- Dutch
- German
- Hebrew
- Indonesian
- Jamaican Patois
- Japanese

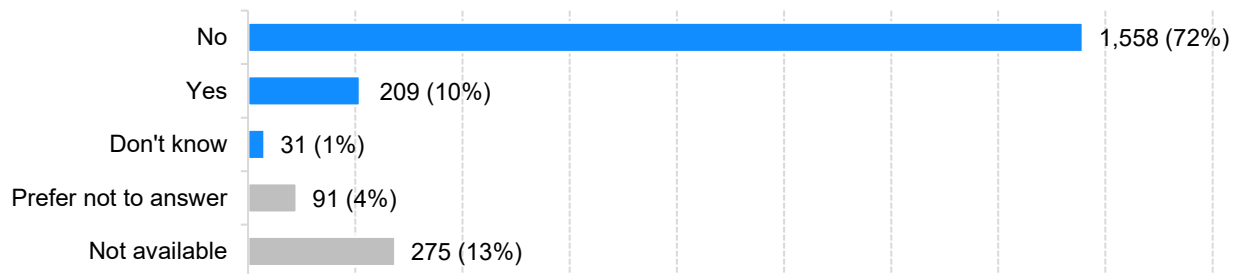
Which race category describes you?



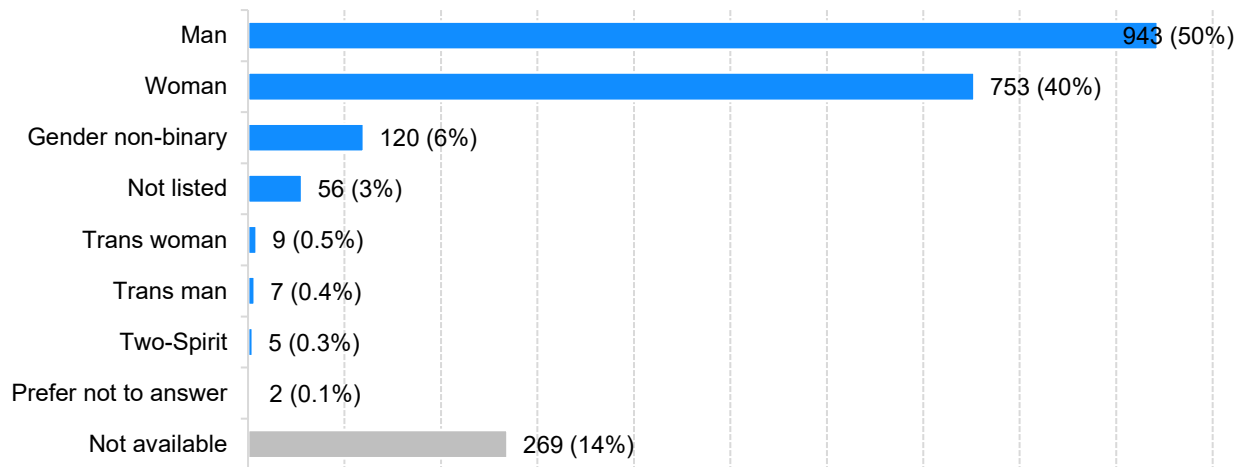
You selected more than one race category or mixed race. Select the race categories that best describe you.



Do you identify as a person with a disability?



What best describes your gender?



Other genders specified included:

- Gender non-conforming
- Queer

What is your approximate average household income?

