



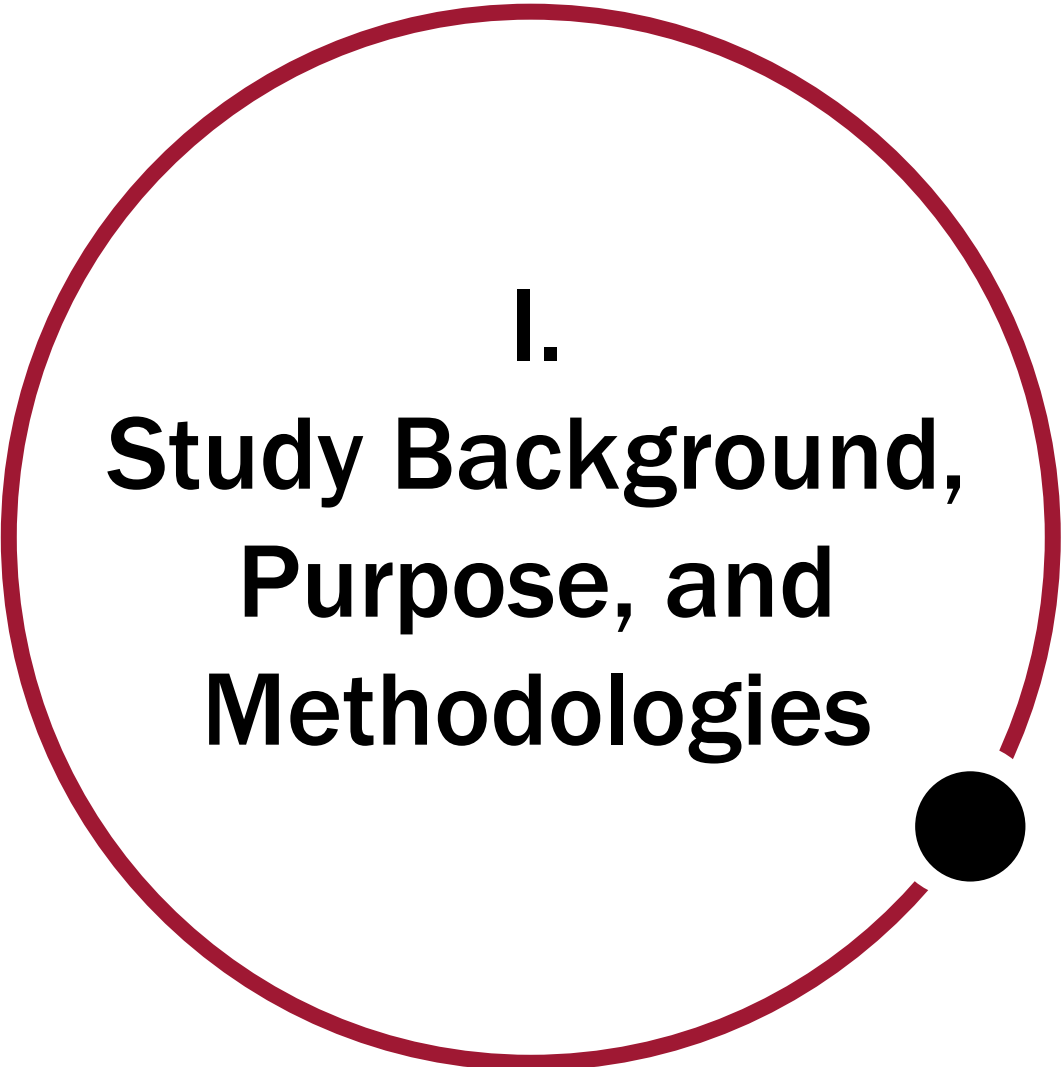
HRT Connecting Chesapeake Community Survey Research Report

February 1, 2024

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**I.
Study Background,
Purpose, and
Methodologies**

Objective and Methodology

Survey Objectives

Explore perspectives around transit among those who live, work, travel, and receive services in and near the City of Chesapeake.

Gauge the degree of support for:

- New transit service
- Perceived benefits to community
- Potential ridership in the area

Methodology

- 5-to-7-minute online convenience survey
- Respondents live, work, shop, travel, attend school, or attend healthcare in the region
- Survey link distributed through HRT organic posting, as well as paid promotions on social media
- Survey fielded between December 15, 2023 and January 16, 2024
- 1,164 complete responses recorded and analyzed after data cleaning



II. Executive Summary

Executive Summary: Three Key Survey Insights

1. Strong support for high-capacity transit as a valuable benefit for the community.
2. 50+ percent are likely to use the new transit option.
3. Open-end responses confirm the statistical data of support.





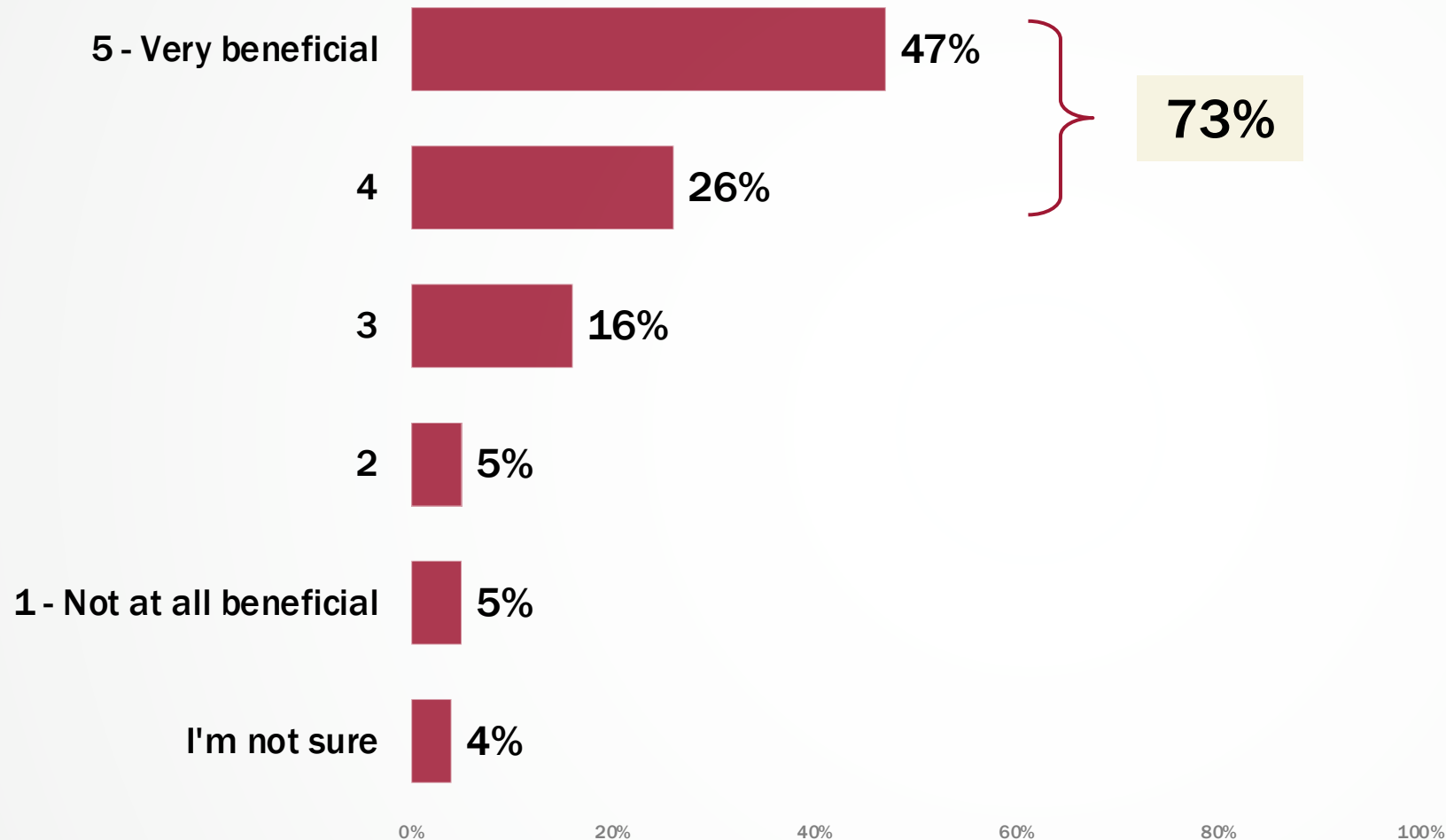
**III.
Key Findings**

SUPPORT FOR POTENTIAL TRANSIT SERVICE

1

A significant majority of respondents support a new transit option, and feel that high-capacity transit would benefit the community by: reducing congestion, increasing connectivity, and offering a convenient alternative to autos.

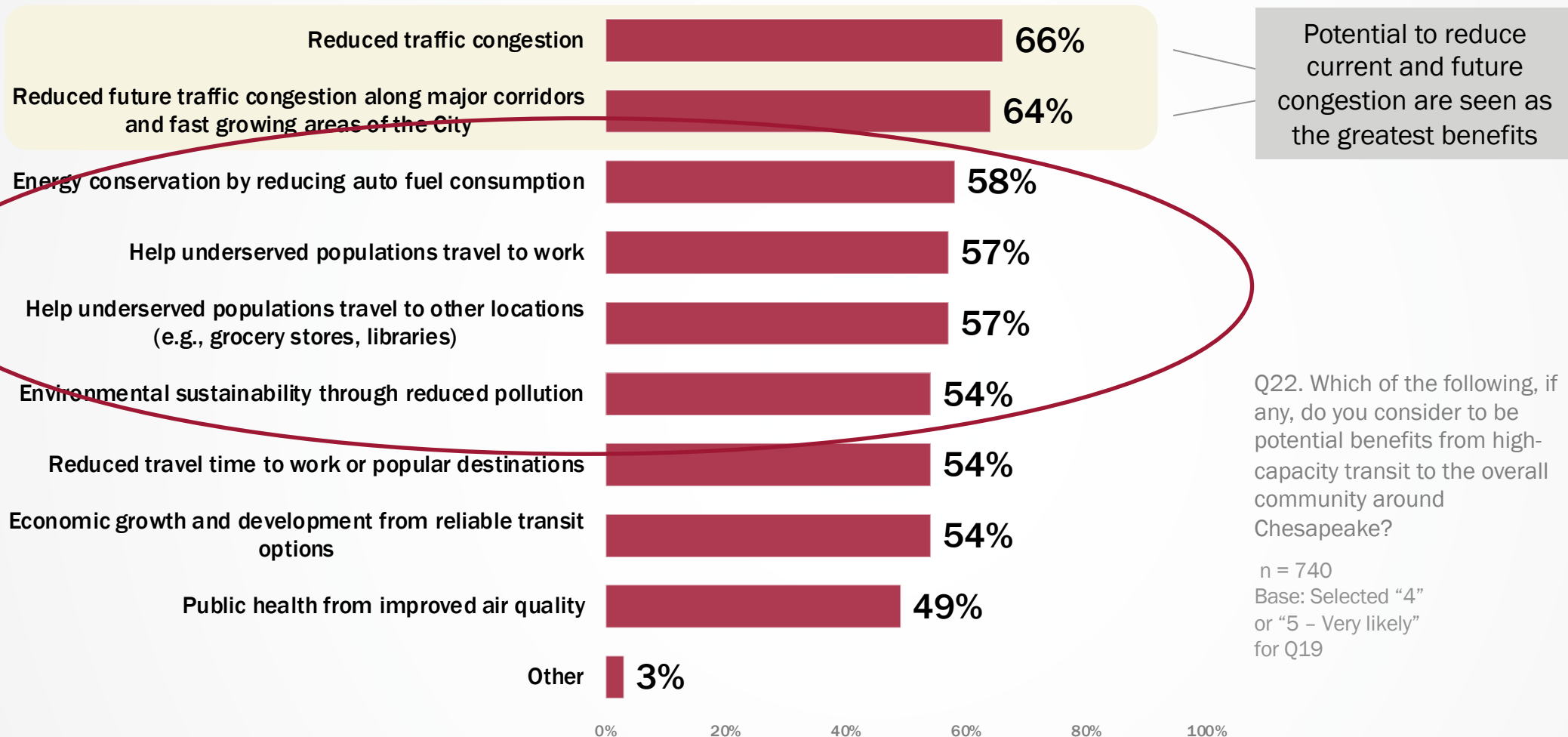
Nearly three quarters feel a high-capacity transit option would be beneficial to the overall community around Chesapeake.



Q20. Even if you are personally unlikely to use public transit, how beneficial do you feel high-capacity transit would be to the overall community around Chesapeake?

n = 1,164

When presented with a list of benefits, reducing current and future traffic congestion was most popular among those most likely to use a new transit option.



What appeals to you the most about potential high-capacity transit in Chesapeake?

In open-end responses, the number one top-of-mind appealing aspect of a potential transit service is ease and convenience (about 12% of responses), followed by speed and time saving aspect (10%), and the ability to avoid traffic and reduce congestion (10%).

Ease, Convenience

“Ease of getting to work with multiple schedule availability. Express buses do not work into my schedule so I must drive. LRT with a 15 minute between trains during peak times and less than 30 minute travel from Greenbrier area to NOB and NAS I would use daily.” – Resident

Fast, Time-Saving

“The time saved on commute excites me the most.” – Resident

“A faster commute means more time for personal activities.” – works in City of Chesapeake

Reduce Congestion, Avoid traffic

“I don’t go places after work just due to traffic. I go to eat close to my house due to traffic. It’s a joy to get up on Sunday morning early and drive around with no traffic. We have good roads. The traffic lights do not work together to keep traffic flowing. They stop you more then let you through, causing more traffic. If there was high-capacity transit I would eat and shop more after work. ” - Resident

“I don't have to deal with the stress of traffic. I can just sit down and enjoy a book or the scenery.” - Resident

What appeals to you the most about potential high-capacity transit in Chesapeake?

Reducing travel time means opportunities to visit places that were previously out of reach, **spending less time commuting** and having more time for leisure, work, or other activities. **Reduced reliance on cars** means more inclusive, forward-thinking transit options

Increased Connectivity

*“I am discouraged from visiting destinations in Norfolk and Virginia Beach because of the **considerable time commitment**. Express service would widen my horizons.” - Resident*

“The ability to travel and see new places.” - Resident

“Lessening travel time. Able to travel and enjoy more because transportation is affordable.” - Resident

Less Reliance on Cars

“We need LRT to make this region less car dependent.”

“Reduce dependence on cars and shorten journey times.”

“LRT - connecting the cities, reducing congestion. Being more like the rest of the world and getting on board with traveling any way but a car.”

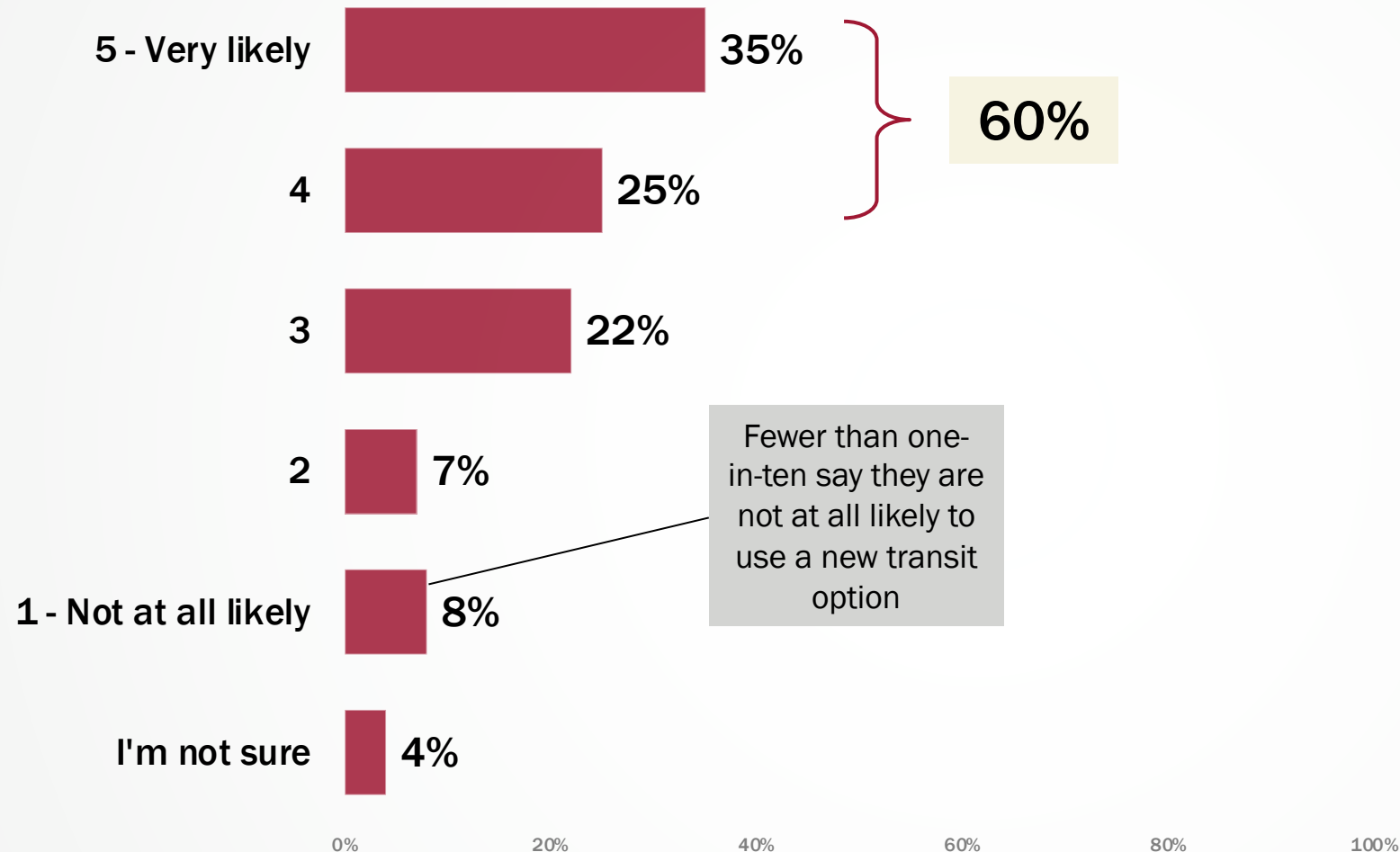
“We need to plan for options beyond our dependence on our cars. The congestion in Chesapeake is growing increasingly worse.”

FUTURE/POTENTIAL TRANSIT USERS

2

More than half of all respondents say they are likely to use the new transit option, mainly to commute to work or travel for leisure. High-quality, accessible, reliable service are non-negotiables for ridership.

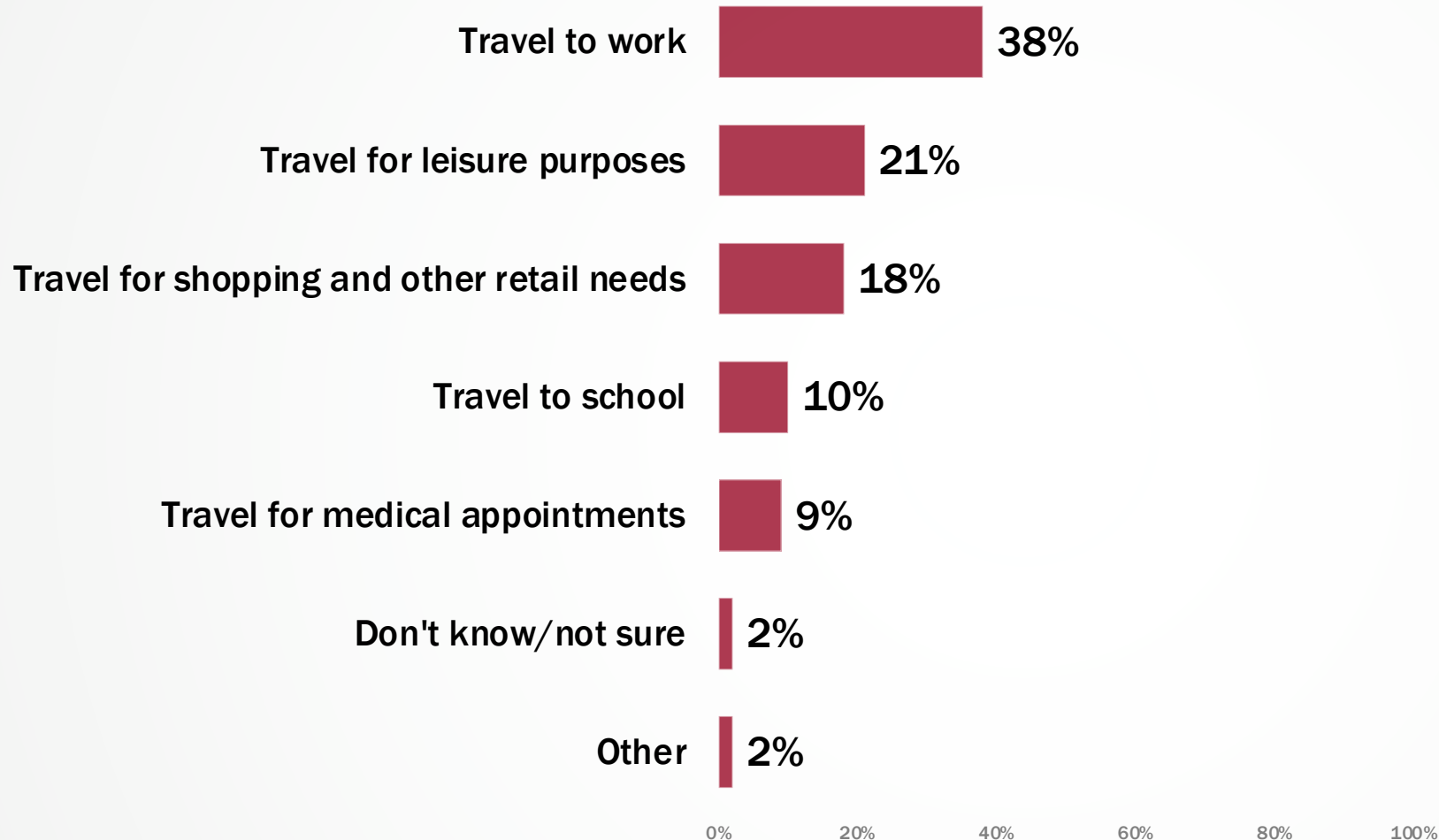
Six-in-ten respondents feel they would be likely to use a high-capacity public transit option if it became an option.



Q19. If a high-capacity public transit option (express bus, BRT, or LRT) were an option in Chesapeake, how likely would you be to use it, assuming available options met your needs?

n = 1,164

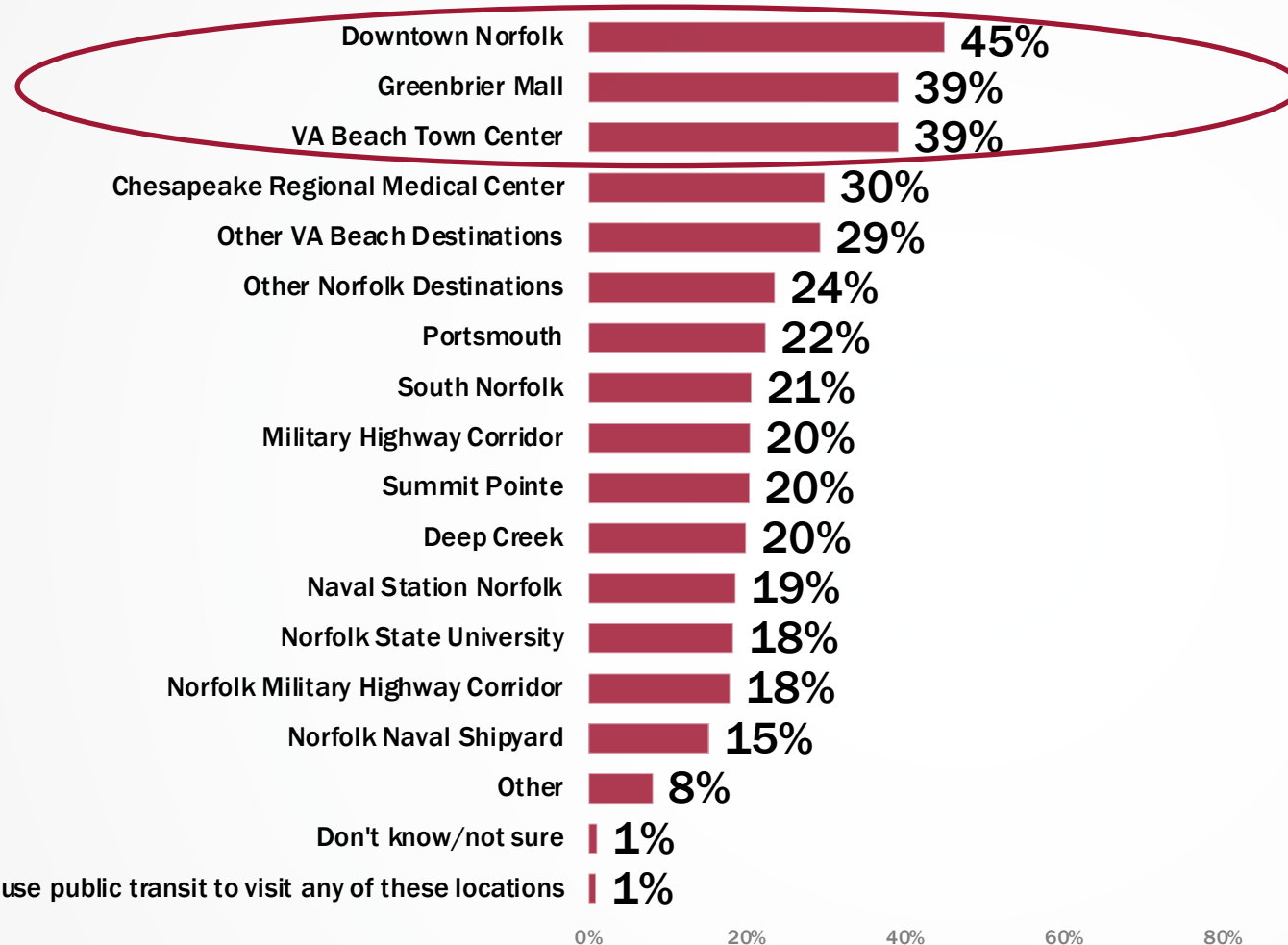
Among those who are likely to use high-capacity transit if it were available, nearly four-in-ten would use it to travel to work.



Q23. What would be your primary reason for using high-capacity transit in Chesapeake if it were available?

n = 740
Base: Selected "4" or "5 - Very likely" for Q19

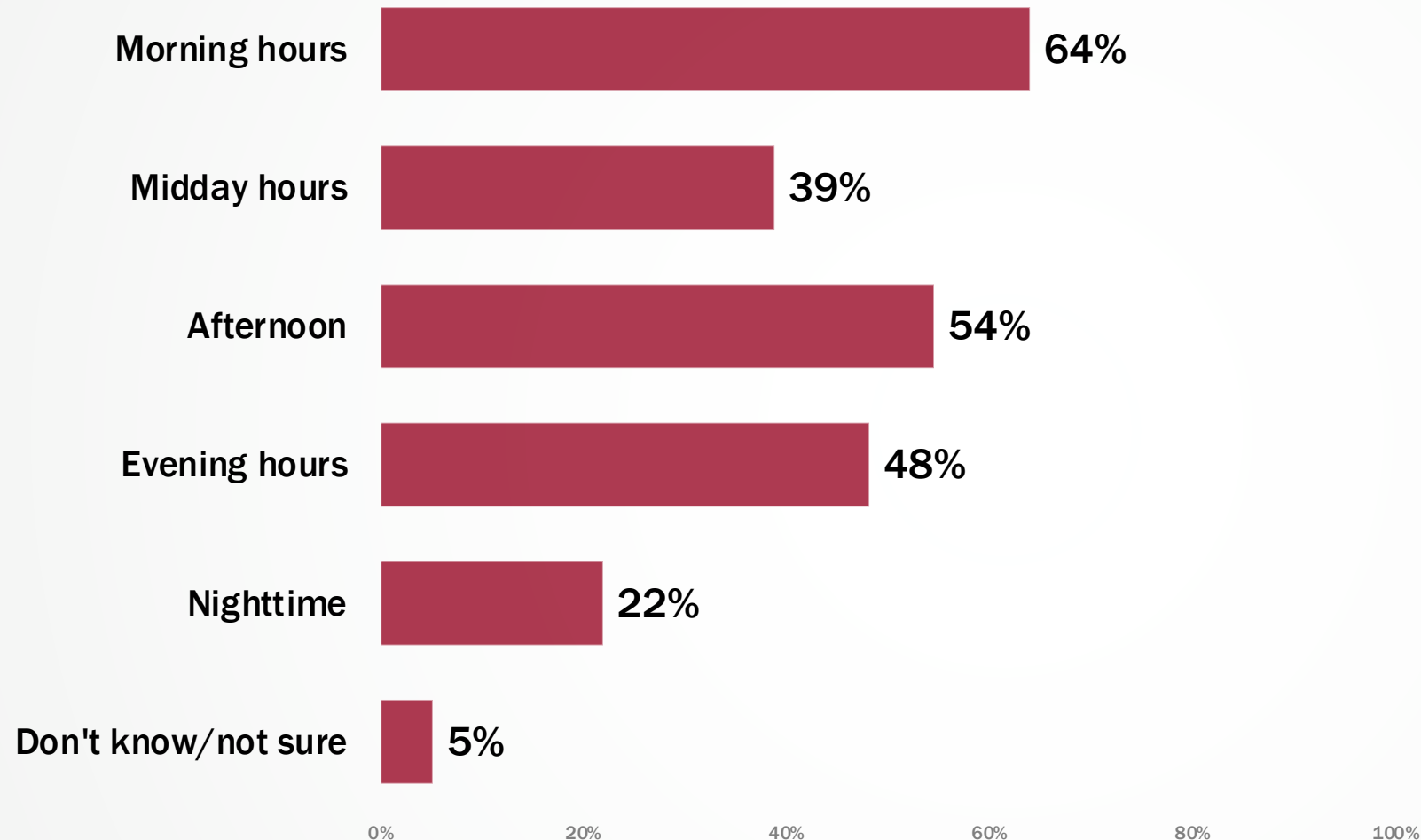
Among those likely to use high-capacity transit if it were available, Downtown Norfolk would be a top destination.



Q24. If a high-capacity transit corridor was made available to you, what would your final destination(s) be? Select all that apply.

n = 740
Base: Selected "4" or "5 - Very likely" for Q19

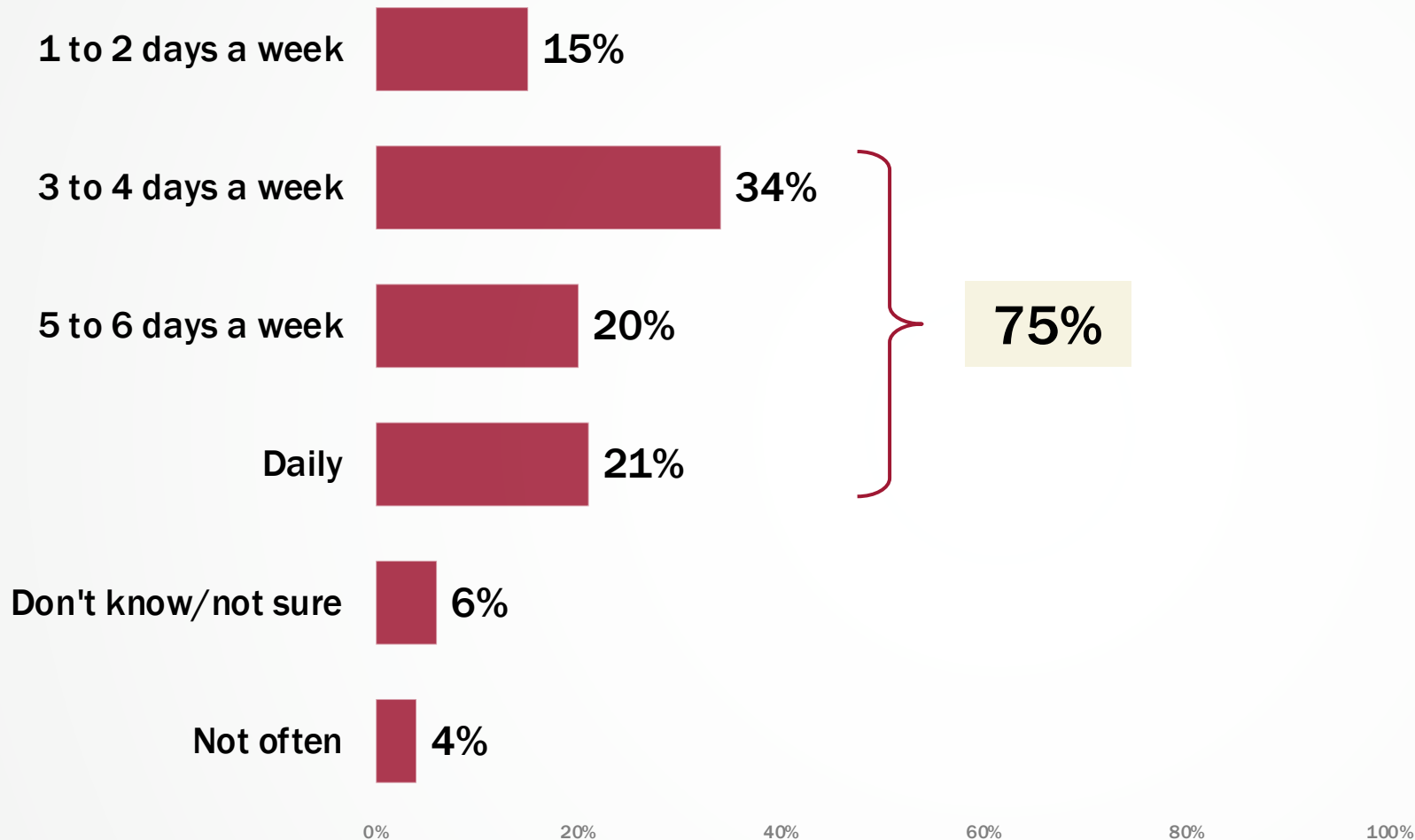
Potential future riders would most likely use high-capacity transit in the morning, afternoon, or evening hours.



Q25. At what time(s) of the day would you primarily use high-capacity transit in Chesapeake? Select all that apply.

n = 740
Base: Selected "4" or "5 - Very likely" for Q19

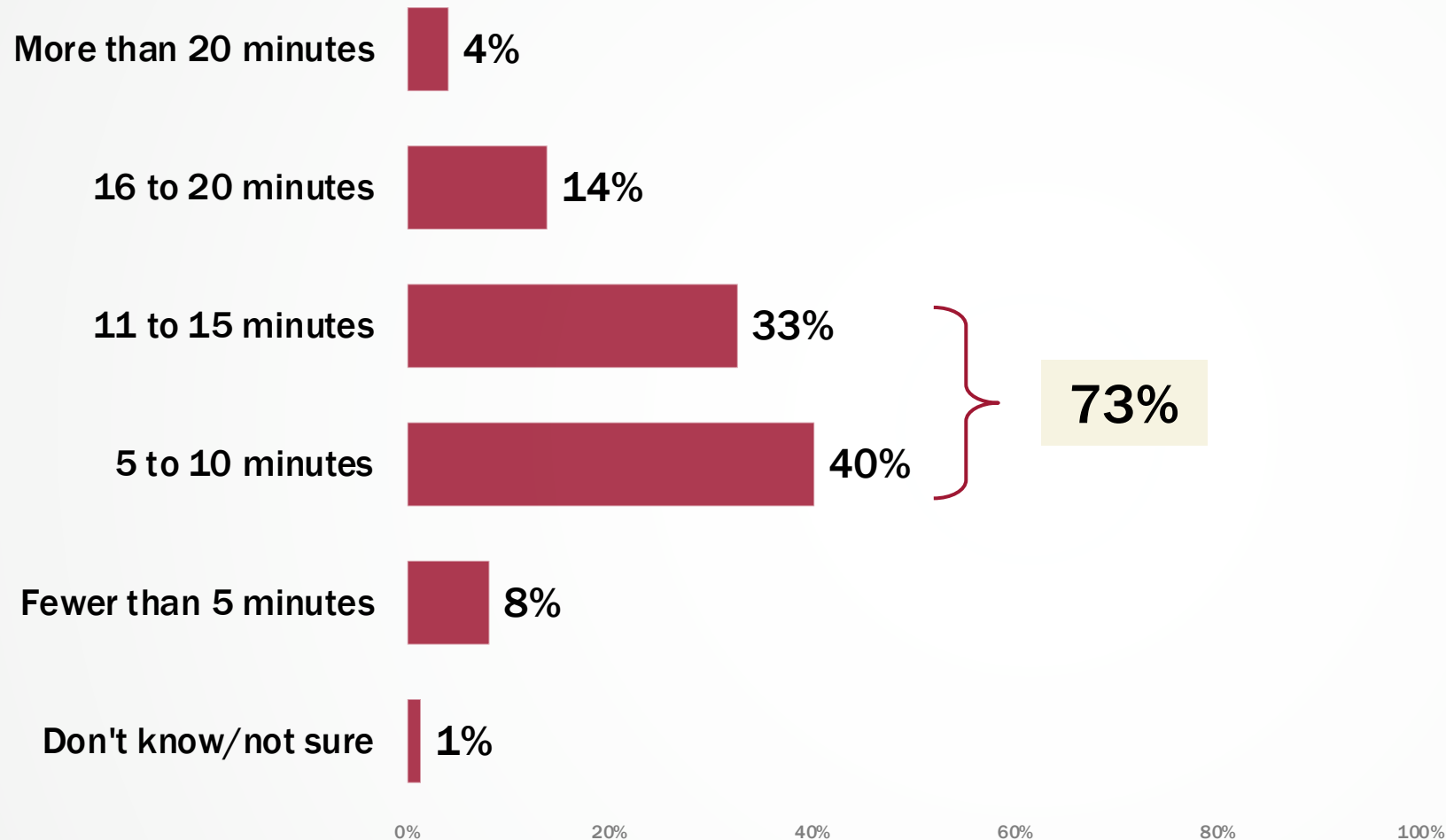
Three-quarters of potential riders would use high-capacity transit between 3-7 days a week.



Q27. How often would you use high-capacity transit in Chesapeake if it were provided?

n = 740
Base: Selected "4" or "5 - Very likely" for Q19

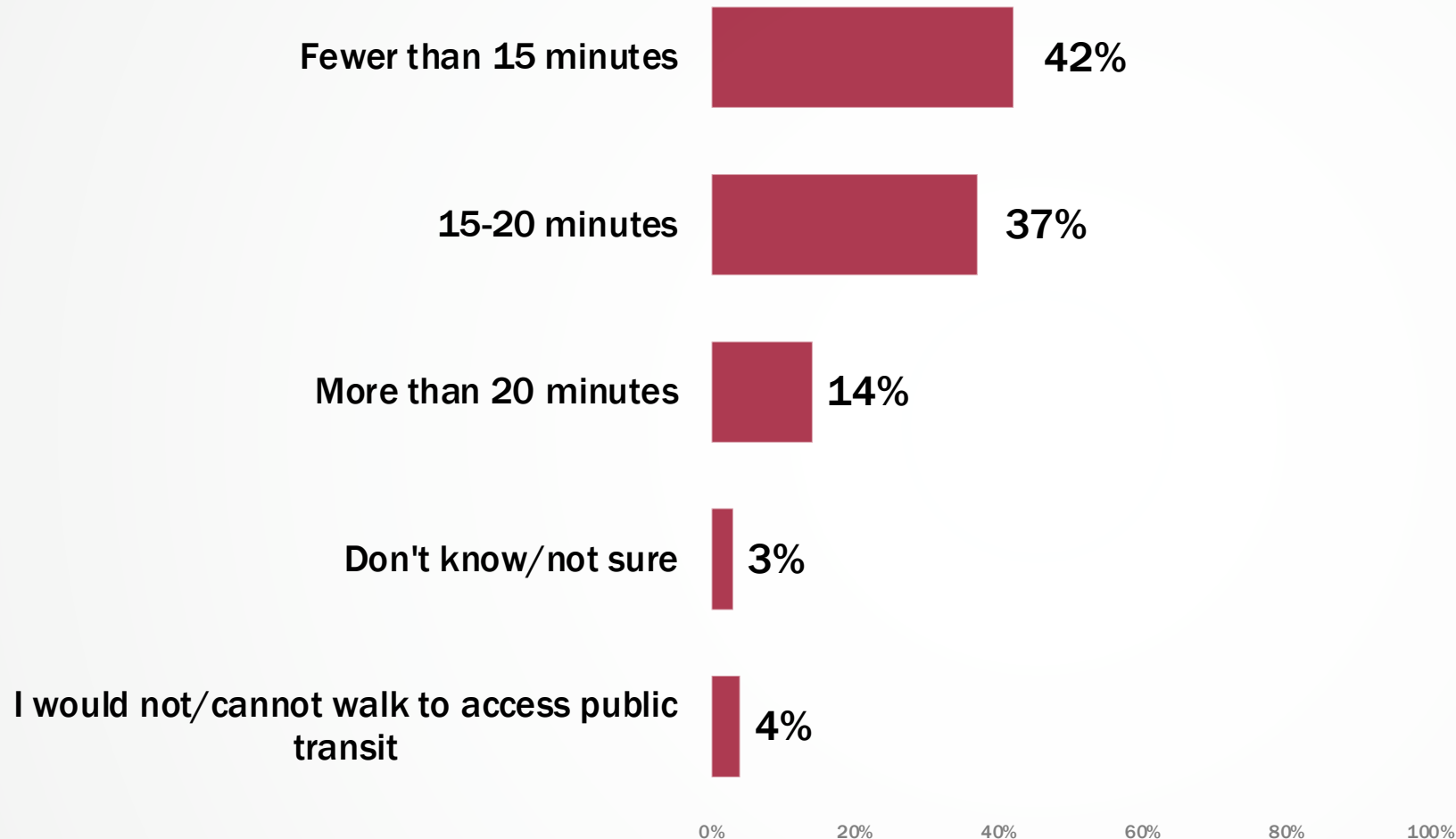
Most potential riders would be willing to wait between 5-15 minutes waiting for transit service.



Q29. How long would you be willing to wait for high-capacity transit service?

n = 740
Base: Selected "4" or "5 - Very likely" for Q19

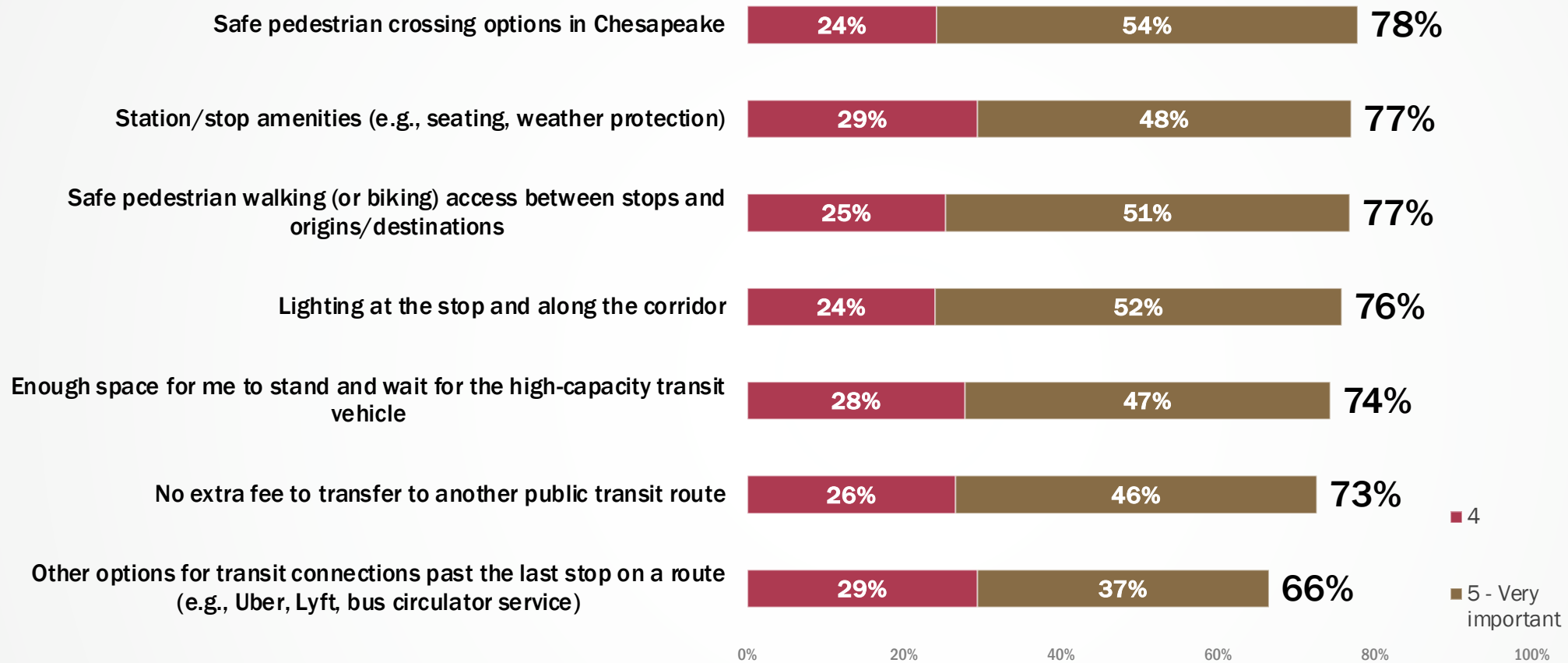
Four in ten potential riders would be willing to walk fewer than 15 minutes from their home to access high-capacity transit.



Q28. What is the farthest you would be willing to walk from your home to access high-capacity transit?

n = 740
Base: Selected "4" or "5 - Very likely" for Q19

Pedestrian safety is a top concern; transit stop amenities, limiting extra fees, and transit connections are also very important.



Q30. Assuming high-capacity transit was provided in Chesapeake, how important to you are the following items:

n = 1,164

Community Benefit and
Regional Connectivity

Open-end participant responses are overwhelmingly positive, from residents, workers, and frequent visitors who see better transit options as a vital improvement, beneficial for the wider community, and a step towards a more connected future for the region.

“Reliable public transportation is needed in this region.” – Resident

“Thank you for the work you do- people might say transit is too expensive to implement here and not enough people are interested, but this would improve my quality of life so much and I know it would others too. We just need the opportunity!” - Resident

“I love this idea. The extremely lacking public transportation infrastructure in the Suffolk, Chesapeake, and Norfolk area are one of my biggest complaints coming from CA where it’s more widely utilized. This is a fantastic step in the right direction to serving the community and I fully support it.” – Resident

“I would love to move to the Hampton Roads area, especially if the transit options improve.”- travels for leisure in City of Chesapeake

“I would LOVE to see this. Chesapeake tends to feel disconnected from the other cities and this would help it mesh!” – Resident

“I’m very excited to see this study! This could be great for the citizens who may not have transportation access.” - Resident

Preferred Destinations

Many open-end responses (about 7% overall) from residents call out specific areas that should be included, such as southern Chesapeake, Greenbriar/Battlefield, Norfolk, Virginia beach, and military bases.

“Add some service to southern Chesapeake, if even twice a day.” – Resident

“Also travel to all areas in Chesapeake everyday, like Edinburgh, Greenbrier Park, Centerville , Mt. Pleasant and Butts Road.” – Resident

“I feel this will be most effective if it is integrated with public transit across Hampton roads. I would love to see rapid public transit extended to Virginia Beach and into more parts of Norfolk as well as Chesapeake so the whole region can be connected.” - Resident

“Any potential improvements should focus on the Greenbrier/Battlefield areas. The volume of traffic in these areas is dangerous, especially with how aggressively people drive coming on and off the interstate.” – Resident

“Connect it to the bases, and you can change public transit in this area.” – Resident

“From viewing the map I do not think that public transit would reach the area that I live in (Battlefield at Hillwell). Therefore, it would be useless to me.” - Resident

Expectations of High Quality Transit Services

Many (about 5% of all open-end responses) have high expectations of a new transit system, emphasizing it would need to be of excellent quality, highly reliable, fast, and efficient, otherwise people will not use it.

“If the HRT system is not reliable, timely and consistent don't bother expanding it.” – Resident

“Increase service frequency and coverage, improve service quality, optimize interchange design, reasonable pricing.” – Resident

“Fewer buses with no one on them, more buses with more people on them.”

“I would take public transit if the timing was predictable and the travel time was faster than it is now. When there is no traffic, I arrive at other HR cities in 20-30 min. By bus I would expect to arrive in 30 to 50 minutes.” – Resident

“Increasing the frequency and reliability of public transport services is the key to improving passenger satisfaction and utilization. Ensure that buses or light rail trains arrive on time and provide enough vehicles to meet peak and rush hour demand.” – Resident

“People will use public transit when it is both reliable and convenient.” - Resident

Transit Opposition

While the majority of open ends express support, a few (about 4%) voice opposition to the idea of a new public transit option, citing the financial/tax burden on residents, overdevelopment that could impact the rural quality of life, desire for other projects to get priority, and concerns around crime and safety.

“LRT are extremely expensive to tax payers and estimates of how many people will use LRT are always exaggerated. Please do not do this.” – Resident

Chesapeake is supposed to be a down home more rural area with a better quality of life. Mass transit is NOT for us.” – Resident

“More important transportation infrastructure needs than light rail. What is the current bus usage and does it justify more routes?” - Resident

“Chesapeake would not benefit from additional high capacity public transit options. Current offerings in other cities managed by HRT are poorly managed and maintained. We do not want or need that in Chesapeake.” – Resident

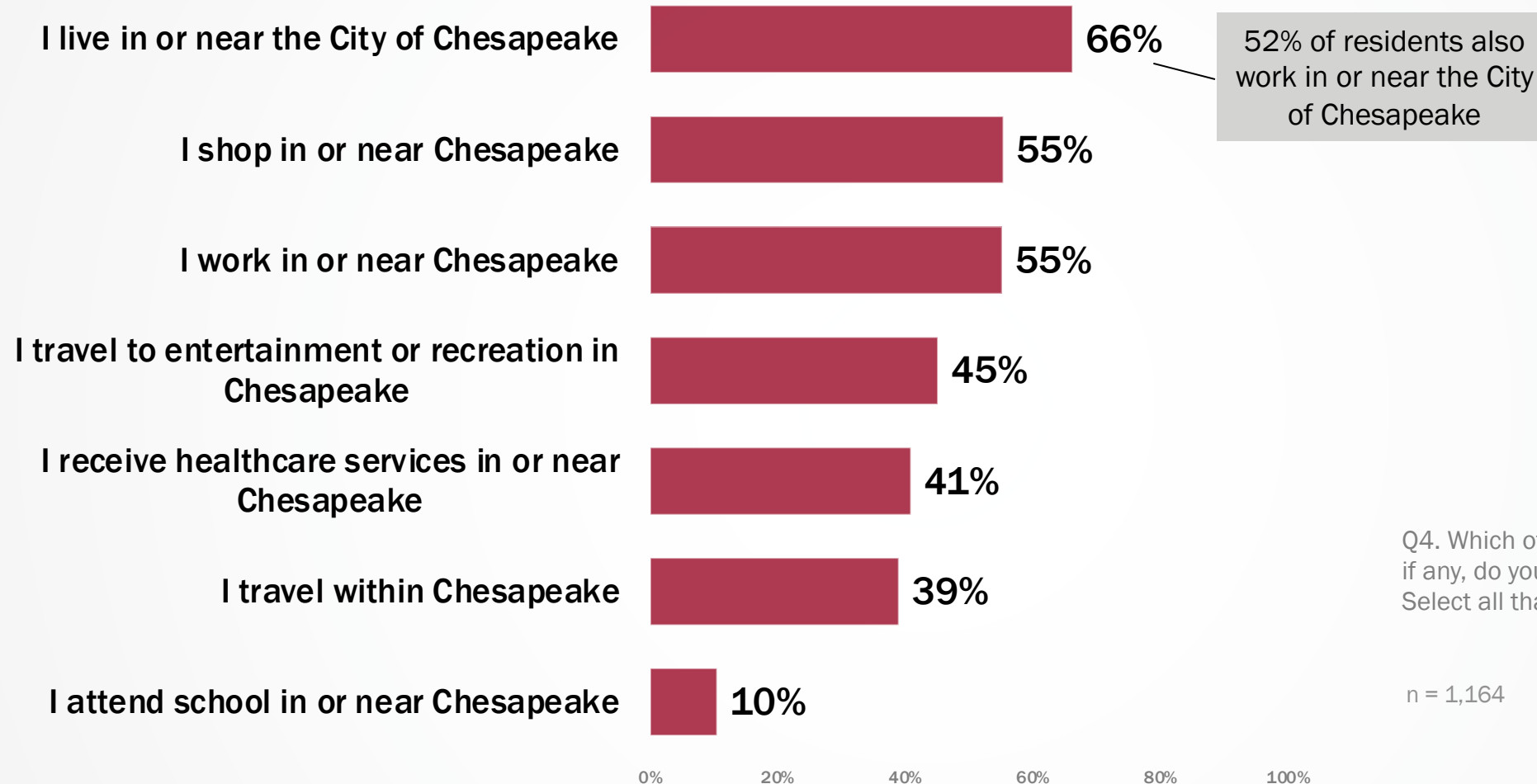
“I live in Great Bridge and love it because we have hardly any public transit. We in Great Bridge want it to stay that way. Keep the riff raf out of Great Bridge.” – Resident

CURRENT TRANSPORTATION

3

Current ridership and familiarity are high among respondents in this sample, with more than half of residents using public transportation at least once a week, likely due to the self-selection effect of a convenience survey.

All respondents either live, shop, work, travel, or receive services in or near Chesapeake.



Q4. Which of the following connections, if any, do you have to Chesapeake?
Select all that apply.

n = 1,164

While driving oneself is most frequently used, nearly two-thirds of all respondents use public transit at least one day a week.

Overall	Everyday	5-6 Days	3-4 Days	1-2 Days	Never
Drive myself	24%	17%	21%	23%	14%
Walk	7%	10%	17%	27%	40%
Public transit (i.e., HRT)	7%	12%	21%	23%	37%
Ride with someone else as the driver (i.e., family member, friend, co-worker)	4%	9%	19%	36%	32%
Bicycle	3%	8%	13%	28%	48%
Uber, Lyft, or taxi	3%	9%	17%	26%	45%
Ridesharing (i.e., vanpool, carpool)	2%	7%	14%	24%	52%

Modes of Transportation: Residents

Residents only	Everyday	5-6 Days	3-4 Days	1-2 Days	Never
Drive myself	31%	18%	20%	19%	12%
Walk	7%	10%	16%	25%	42%
Public transit (i.e., HRT)	6%	9%	18%	19%	47%
Ride with someone else as the driver (i.e., family member, friend, co-worker)	4%	8%	17%	36%	34%
Bicycle	3%	8%	12%	25%	52%
Uber, Lyft, or taxi	3%	8%	14%	24%	51%
Ridesharing (i.e., vanpool, carpool)	2%	6%	12%	21%	58%



Among those who use the same type of transportation at least five days a week, more than half drive themselves most often while one-in-five use public transit.

TYPE OF TRANSPORTATION	MOST OFTEN	BACKUP
Drive myself	51%	8%
Public transit (i.e., HRT)	19%	20%
Uber, Lyft, or taxi	8%	20%
Bicycle	6%	9%
Ride with someone else as the driver (i.e., family member, friend, co-worker)	6%	28%
Walk	6%	4%
Ridesharing (i.e., vanpool, carpool)	4%	9%
Other	2%	2%

Other types of transport	%
E-bike	10%
Scooter	5%
Light Rail	2%
Motorcycle	2%
Commuter Rail/Train	1%
Electric Vehicle	1%

Q11: Is there any other way you like to travel to and/or around Chesapeake that was not listed above (e.g., scooter, electric bike)?

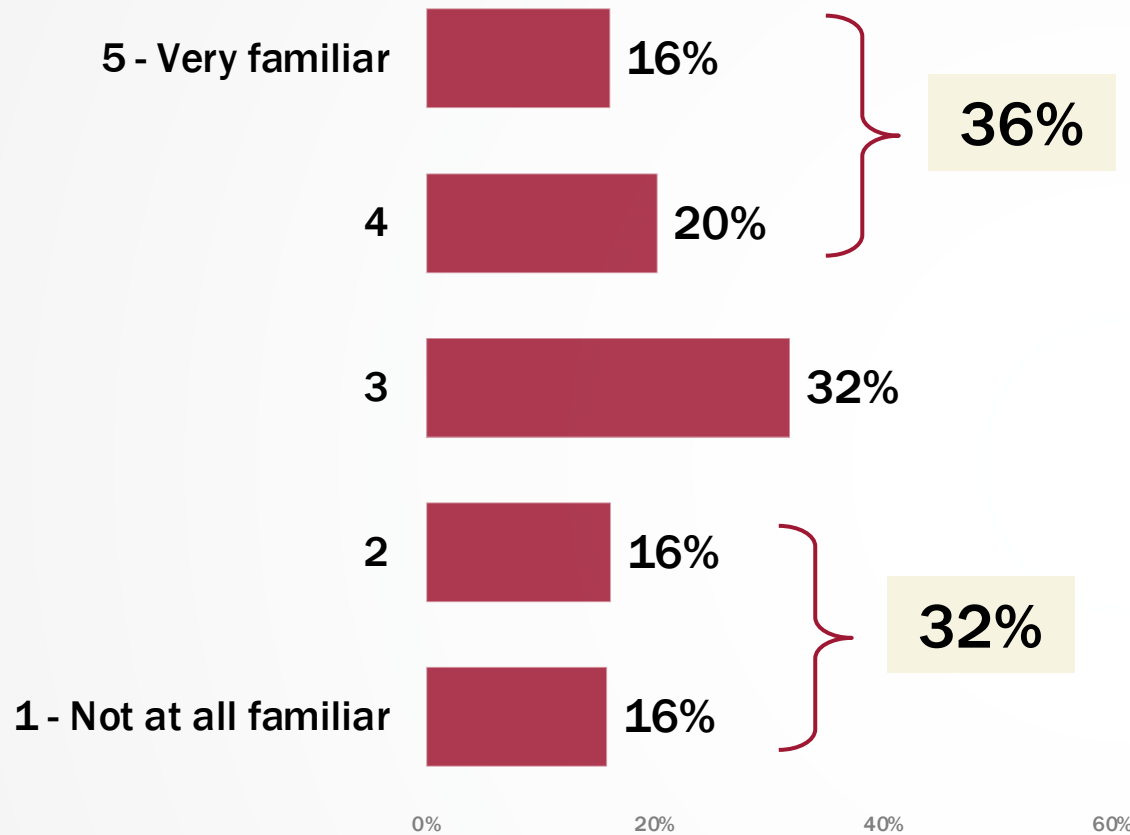
Q12: Which of the following transportation modes do you use most often? Please select one.

Q14: If your first choice of transportation wasn't available, which type of alternative transportation would you use?

Q12 and Q14 BASE: "Everyday" or "5-6 Days" was selected

n = 824

Over one-third consider themselves familiar with public transit in the area; another third are unfamiliar.



	% Aware
Hampton Roads Transit (HRT)	78%
Transit Network Companies (e.g., Uber, Lyft)	65%
Traffic (Carpool/Vanpool)	40%
None of the above	2%

Q15. How familiar are you with public transit in the Chesapeake area?

Q16. Which of the following transit providers, if any, are you aware of? *Select all that apply.*

n = 1,164

DEMOGRAPHICS

Demographic Information

DEMOGRAPHIC	GROUP	SAMPLE PROPORTION
Are you?	Male	40%
	Female	55%
	Non-binary or gender non-conforming	1%
	Prefer not to answer	4%
Generation	Silent (born prior to 1946)	1%
	Boomer (born 1946-1964)	13%
	Gen X (born 1965-1980)	16%
	Millennial (born 1981-1996)	55%
	Gen Z (born after 1996)	16%
Children under 18 in household	Yes	55%

Demographic Information

DEMOGRAPHIC	GROUP	SAMPLE PROPORTION
Which of the following best describes your race? Select all that apply.	Asian	3%
	Black or African American	20%
	White	66%
	Other race	7%
	Prefer not to answer	7%
Do you consider yourself to be of Hispanic or Latino origin or descent?	Yes	17%
	No	77%
	Prefer not to answer	6%

Demographic Information

DEMOGRAPHIC	GROUP	SAMPLE PROPORTION
Which of the following best represents your total annual household income?	\$150,000 or more	11%
	\$100,000 to \$149,999	24%
	\$50,000 to \$99,000	38%
	\$25,000 to \$49,999	16%
	Less than \$25,000	4%
	Not sure/Prefer not to answer	6%