



Public Opinion of Waterloo Region Rapid Transit Proposal May 2011

Methodology

- From May 23 to May 25, 2011, Angus Reid Public Opinion conducted an online survey among a residents of Waterloo Region on behalf of Machteld Faas Xander.
 - The purpose of the study was to measure levels of familiarity with and attitudes toward the proposal to build a rapid transit system between Kitchener, Waterloo and Cambridge. The preferred option (L3) includes both light rail transit and rapid buses.
- The following table outlines sample composition and the margin of error:

| Sample | Sample Size | Margin of Error (19 times out of 20) |
|-----------|-------------|--------------------------------------|
| Kitchener | n=155 | +/-7.9% |
| Waterloo | n=152 | +/-8.0% |
| Cambridge | n=149 | +/-8.0% |
| Total | n=456 | +/-4.6% |

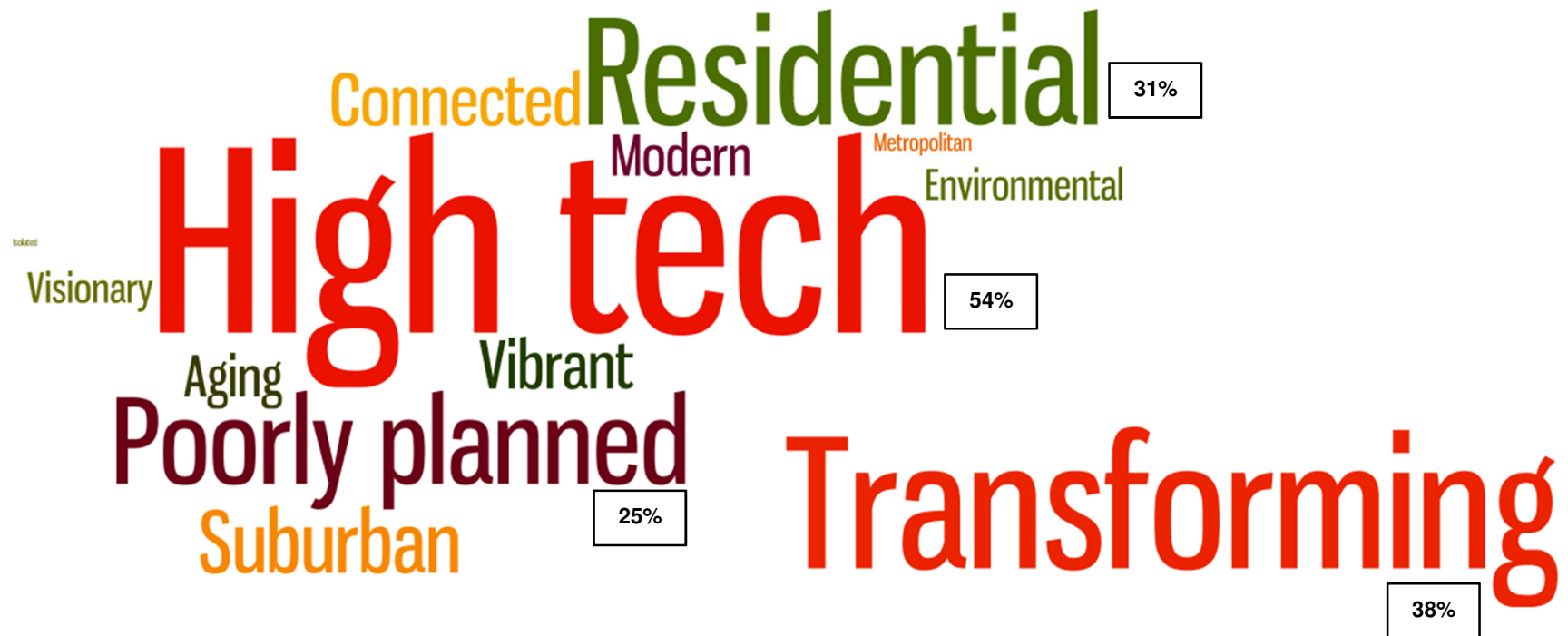
- Respondents were 18+ years old, recruited using the Angus Reid Forum.
- Results reported have been statistically weighted according to the most current age, gender and region Census data to be representative of residents of Waterloo Region. Discrepancies in or between totals are due to rounding.
- Note: ○ represents a statistically significant difference.

Detailed Findings:

i. Waterloo Region and Public Transit

Waterloo Region perceived to be *high tech*; residents also choose *residential*, *poorly planned* and *transforming* as words to describe the region

Words that best describe Waterloo Region



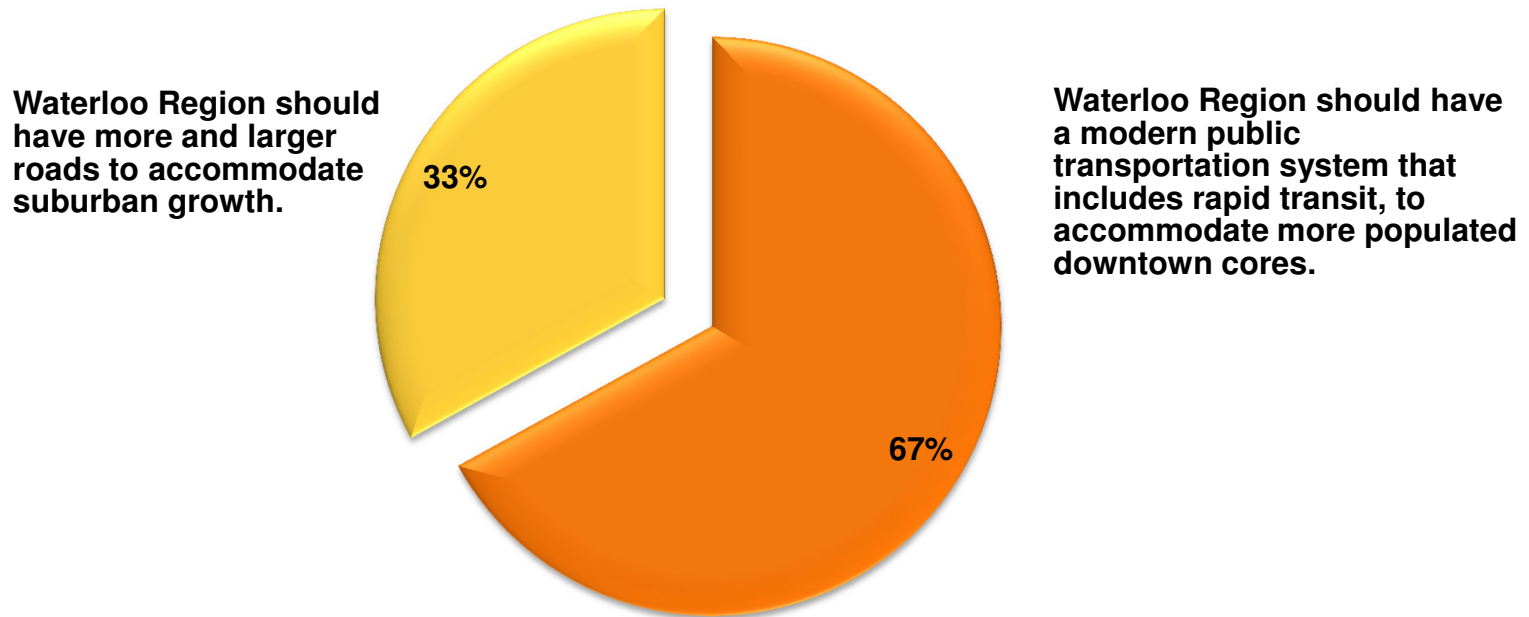
Residents would like to see Waterloo Region be *high tech* in ten years, but also *vibrant, environmental, connected, and modern*

Words that best describe an 'ideal' Waterloo Region ten years from now



Two-in-three would like to see Waterloo Region with a modern transportation system that includes rapid transit ten years from now

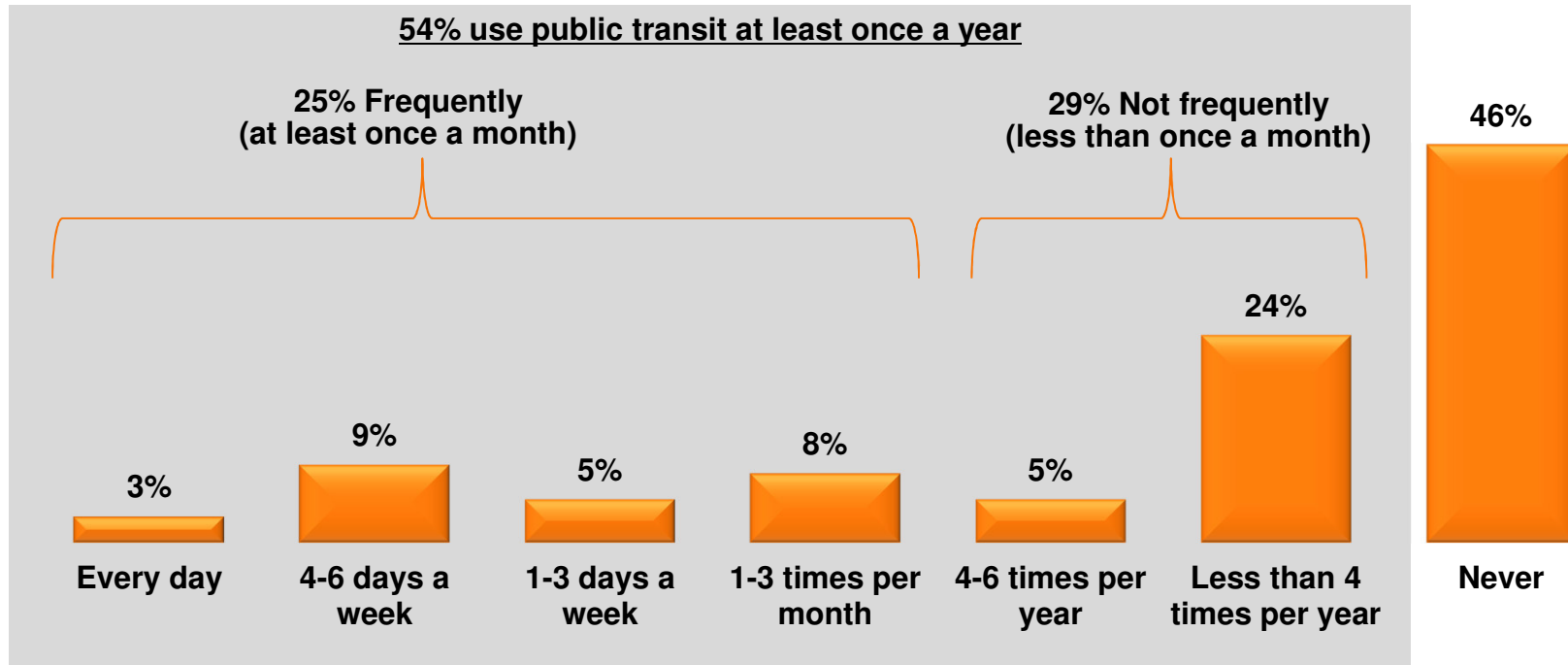
Preferred transportation system ten years from now



| | Kitchener | Waterloo | Cambridge |
|---|-----------|----------|-----------|
| A modern public transportation system that includes rapid transit | 65% | 71% | 67% |
| More and larger roads | 35% | 29% | 33% |

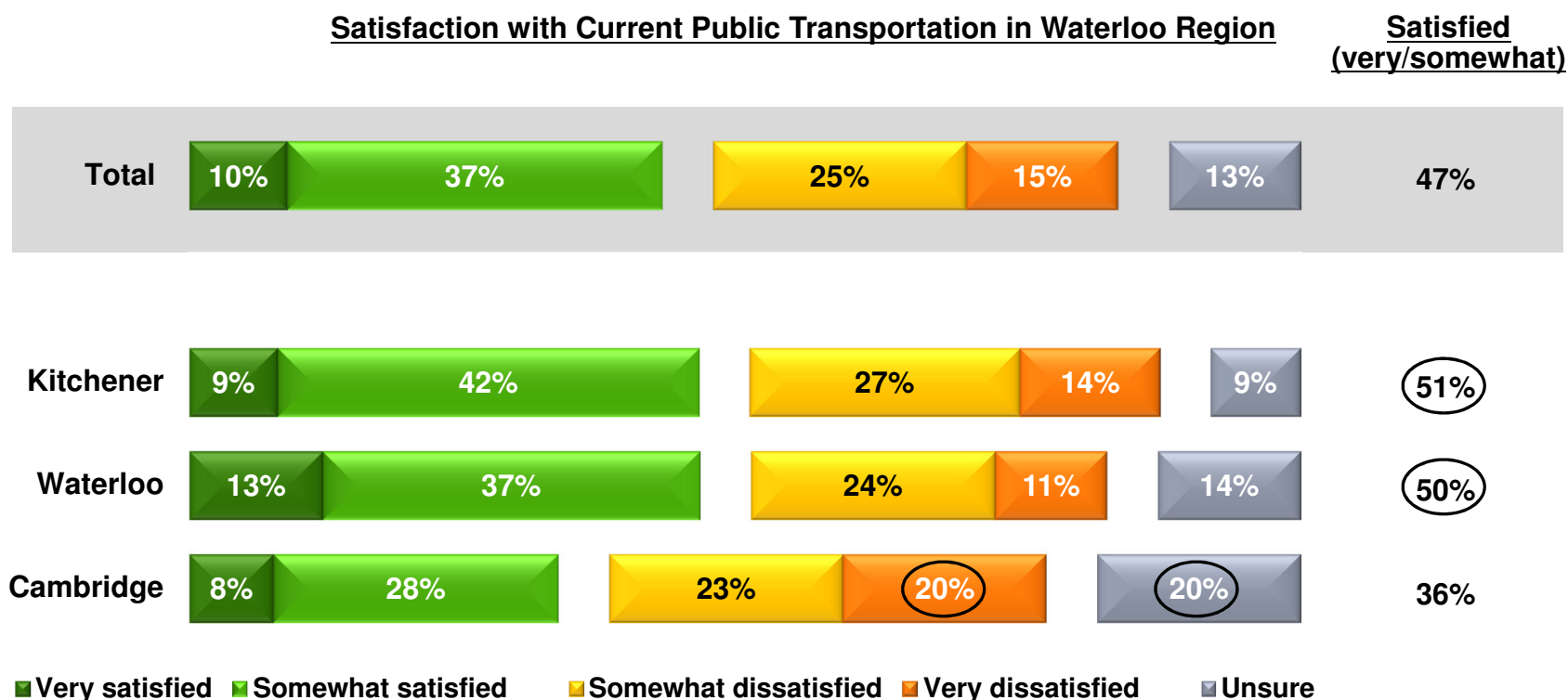
One-in-two Waterloo Region residents use public transit at least once a year; fewer, one-in-four use it frequently

Use of public transportation



| | Kitchener | Waterloo | Cambridge |
|----------------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| Frequently | 28% | 29% | 17% |
| Not frequently | 29% | 27% | 30% |
| Never | 43% | 44% | 53% |

Satisfaction with the current public transportation is mixed, Cambridge residents are least satisfied

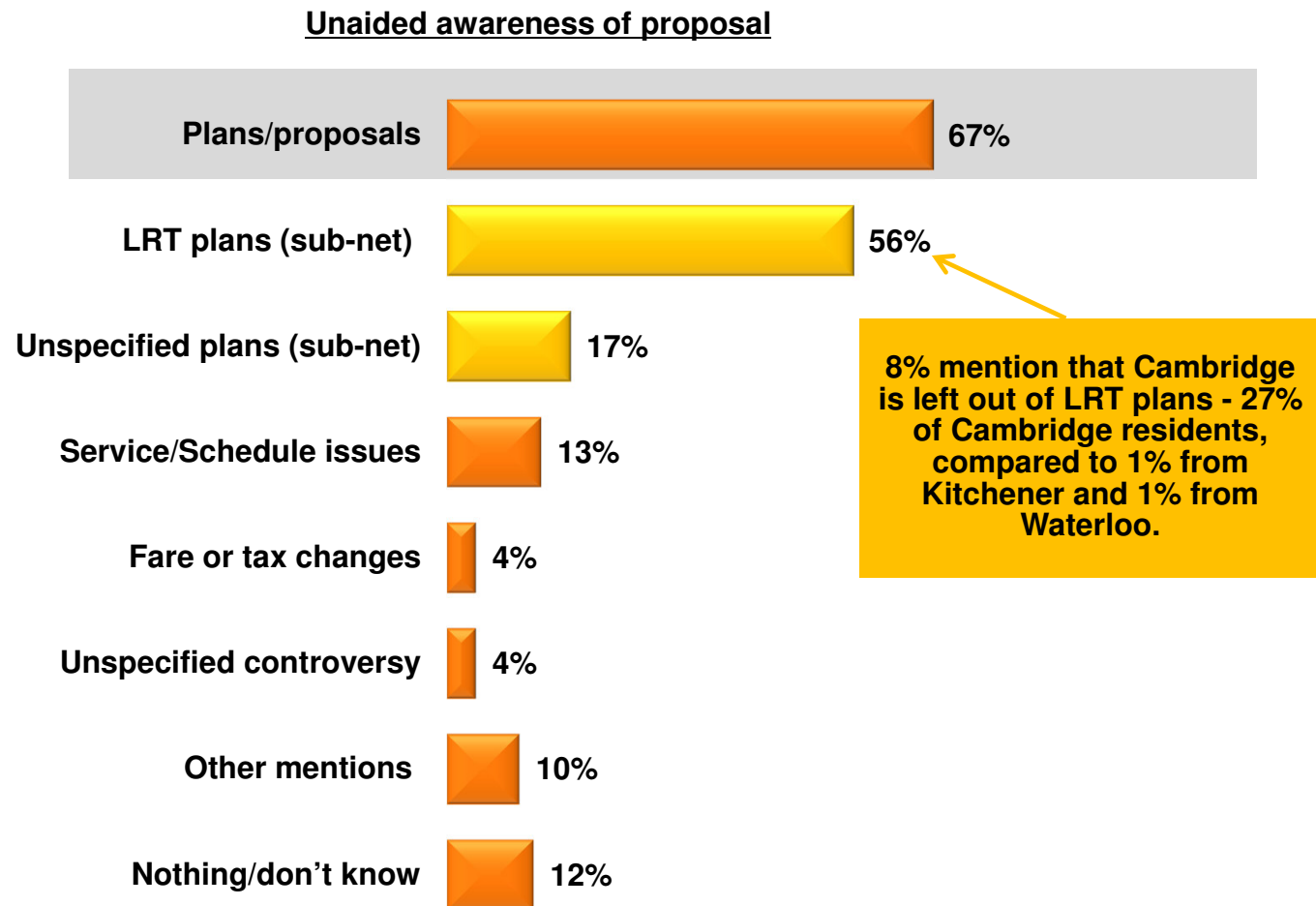


Those who use public transportation frequently (at least once a month) are most likely to say they are satisfied with public transportation (59%), compared to 49% of non-frequent users and 38% of residents who never use public transportation.

Detailed Findings:

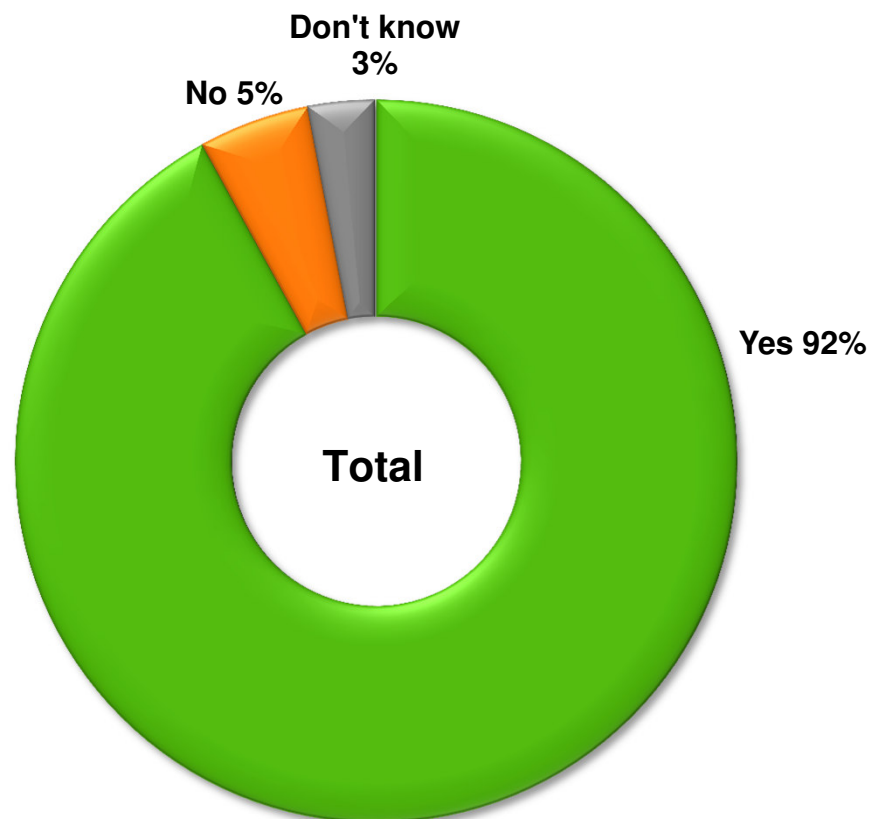
ii. Rapid Transit Plans

Unaided awareness of plans to change the transportation system is high; one-in-two mention LRT plans specifically

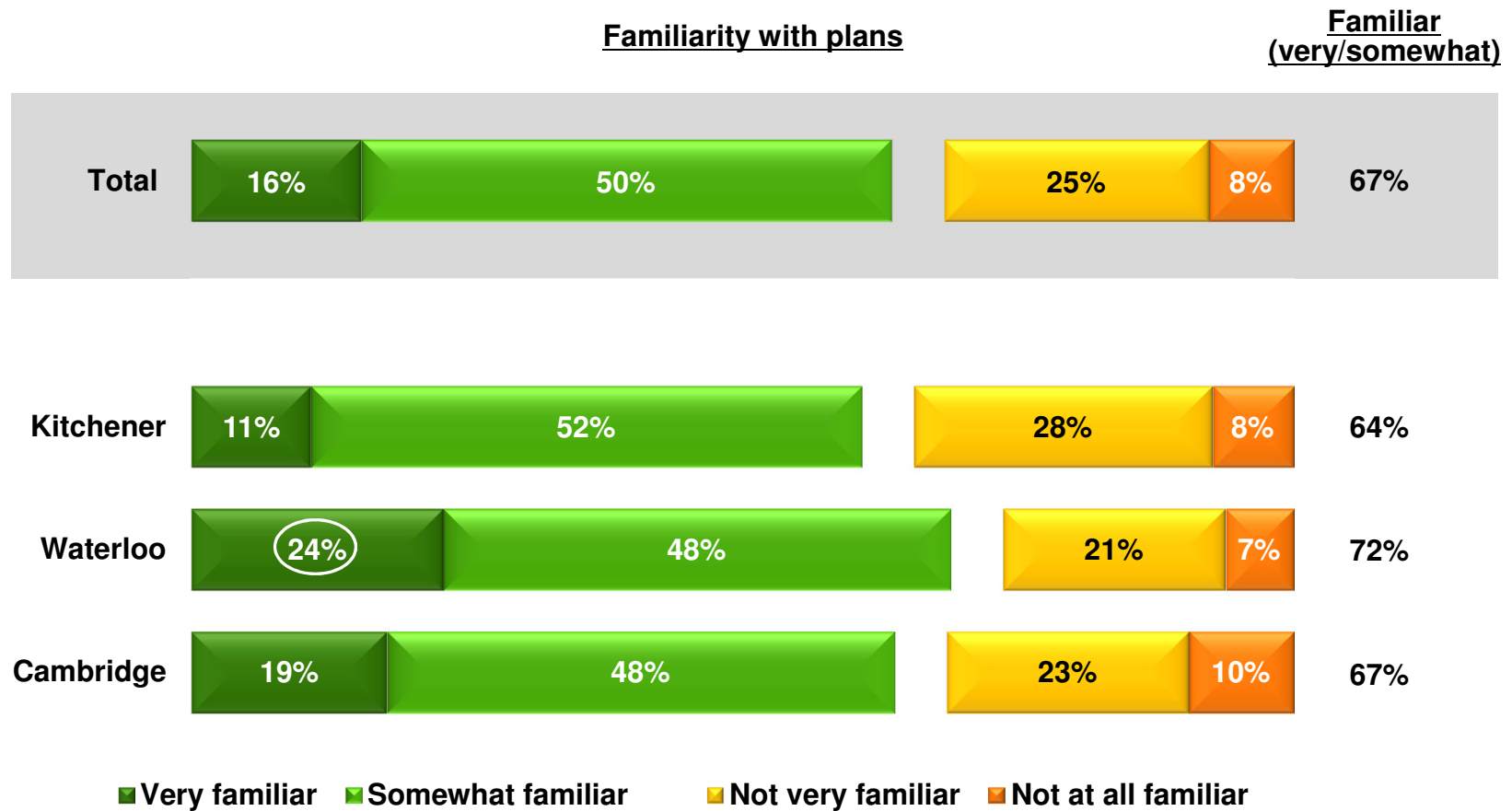


Aided awareness among residents is also high; nearly all are aware that a proposal is before Waterloo Region Council to develop a rapid transit system

Aided awareness of proposal:

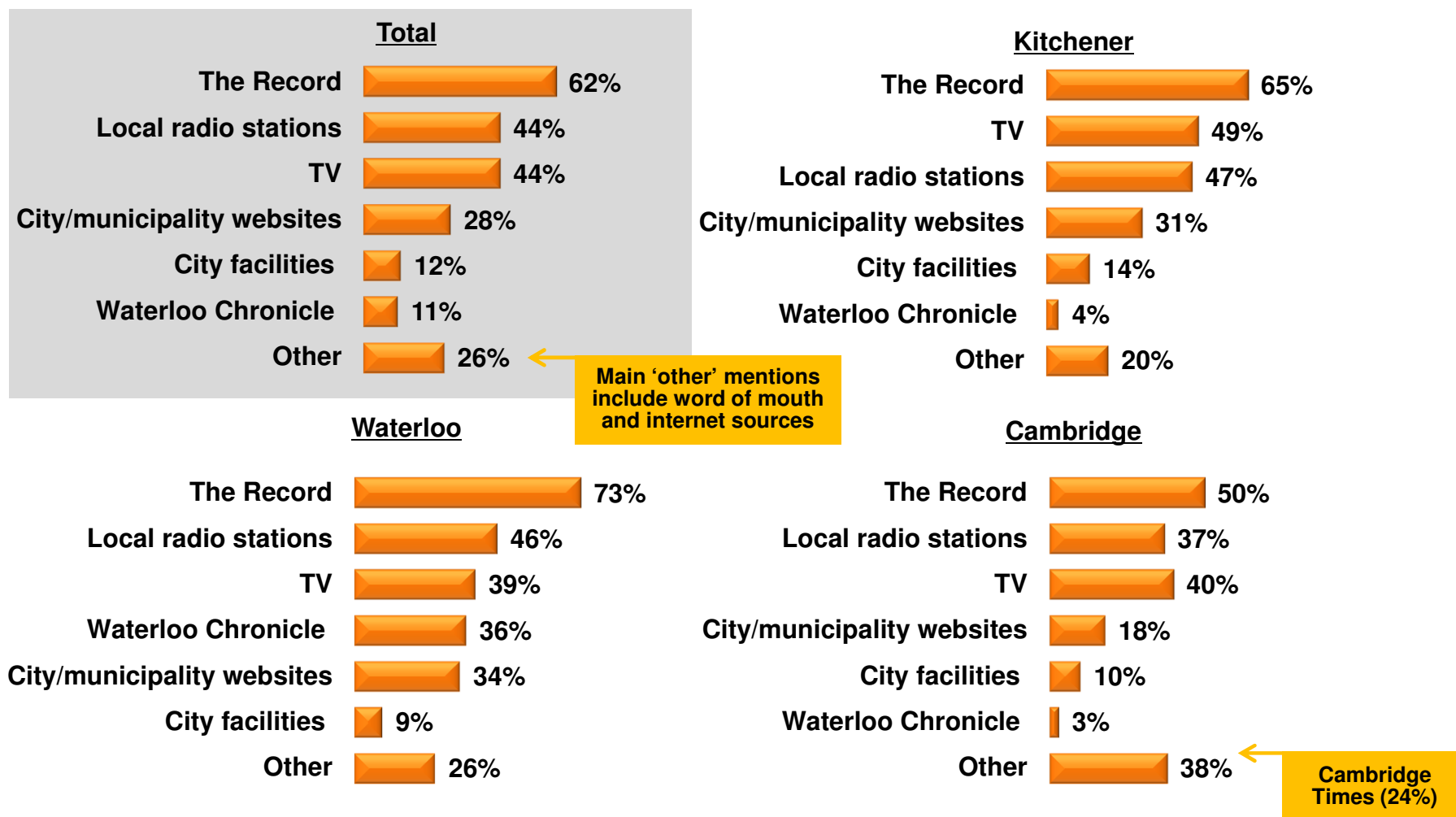


Two-in-three are familiar with plans, though familiarity is limited

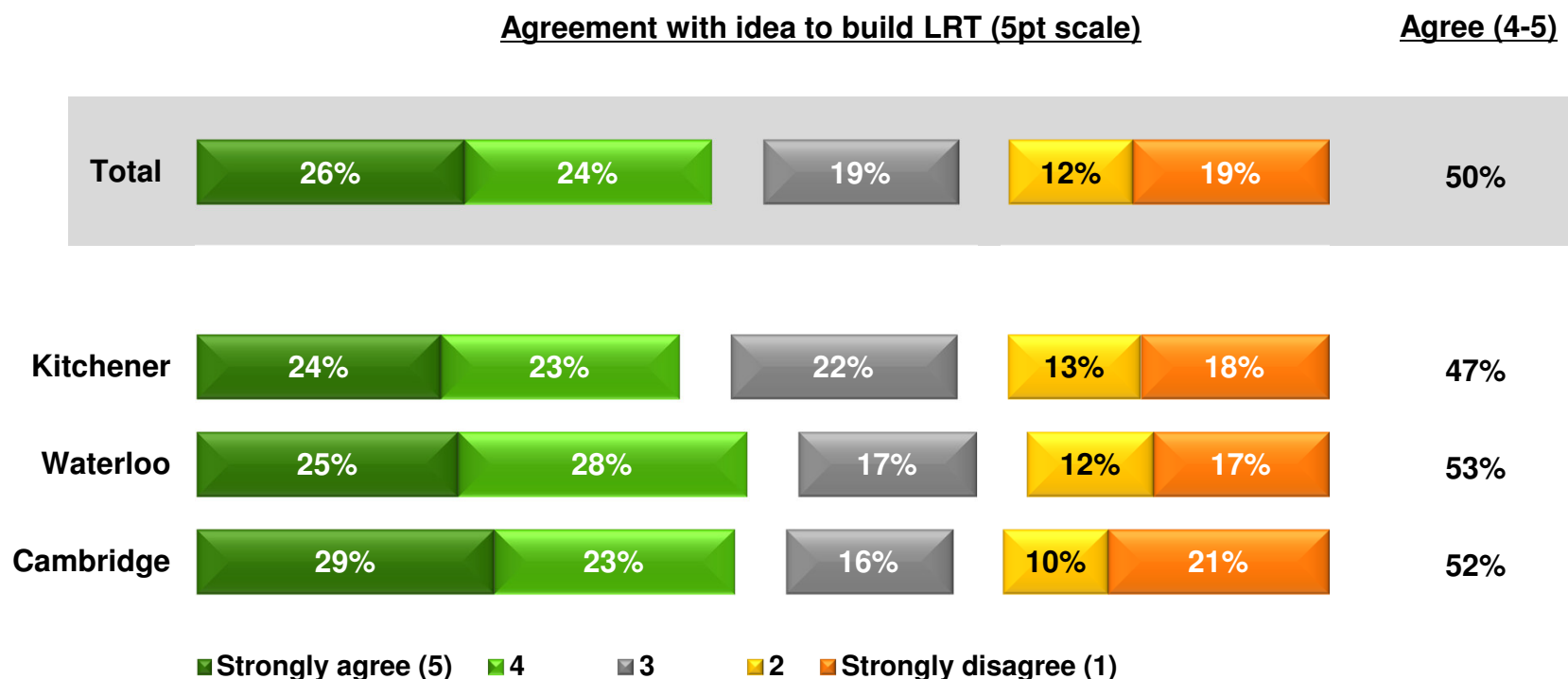


The Record is the top source for information about public transportation in Waterloo Region

Sources of information about public transportation in Waterloo Region

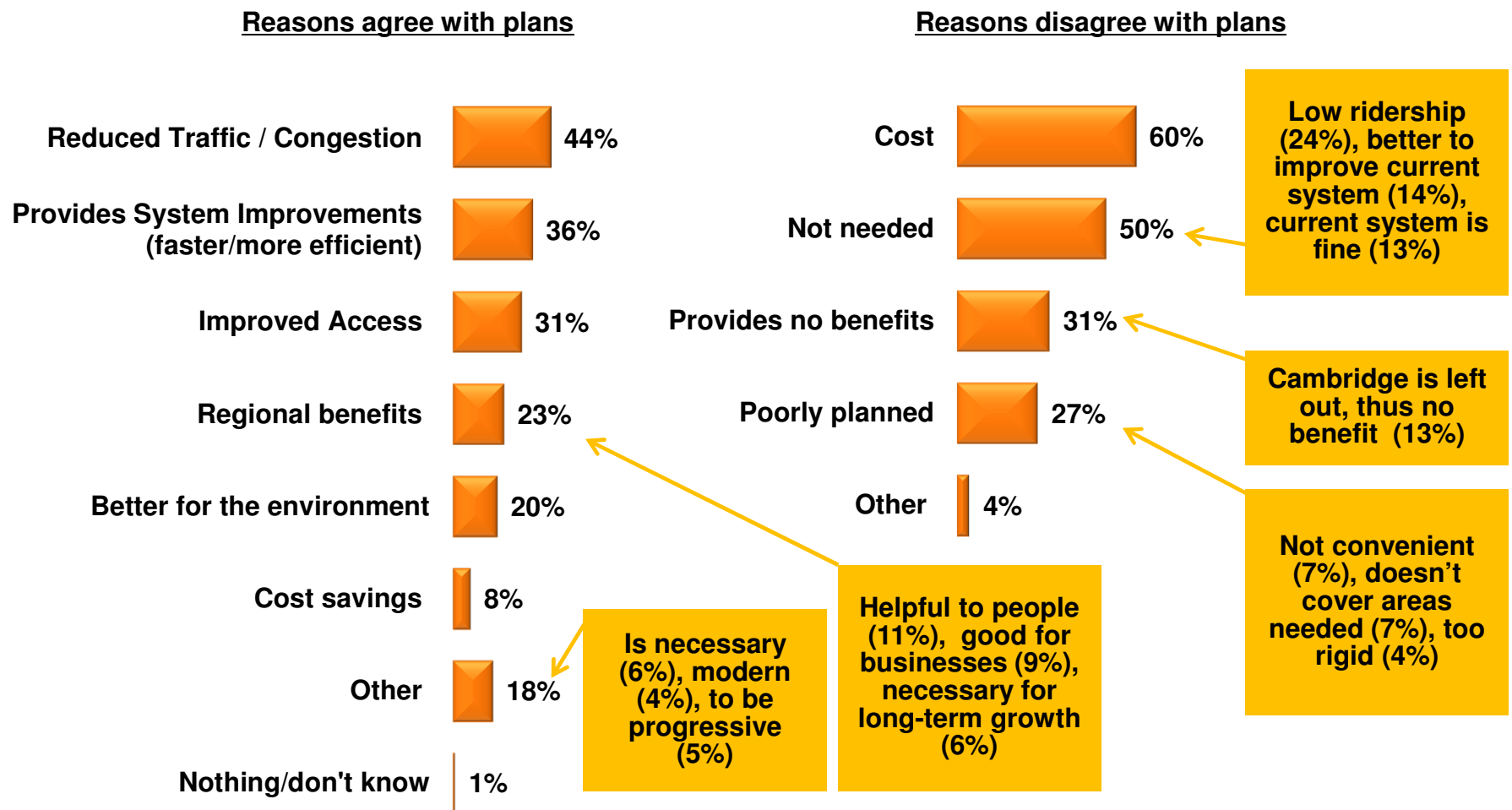


One-in-two residents agree with the idea of adding LRT to public transit; one-in-three disagree with the idea



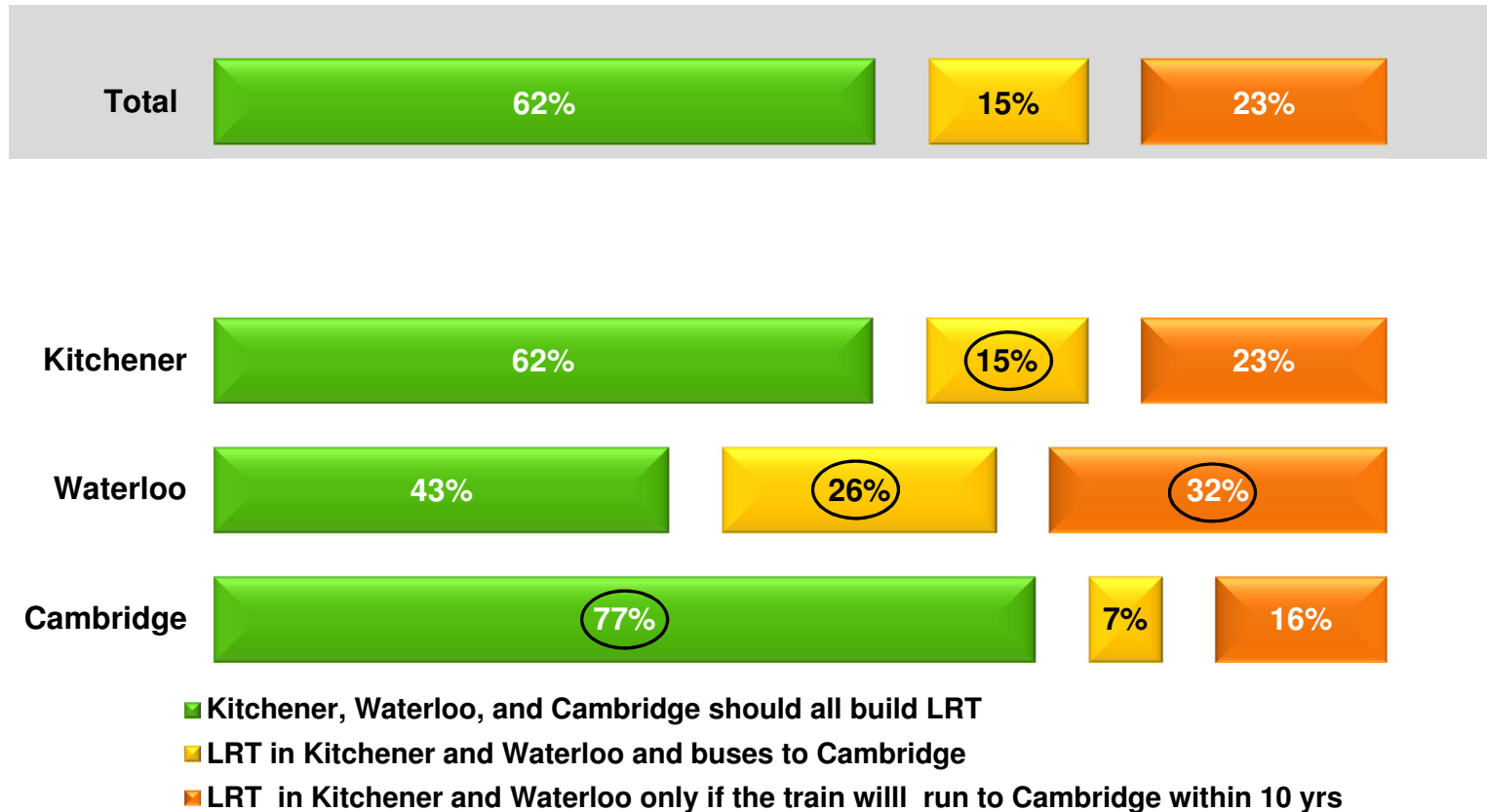
Use of public transportation breeds affinity for the idea to build LRT in Waterloo Region: 65% of frequent users agree, 53% of non-frequent users agree, compared to 40% of residents who never use public transportation.

Benefits mentioned by supporters of LRT plans include reduced traffic, improved system and access; consequences mentioned include costs and lack of need

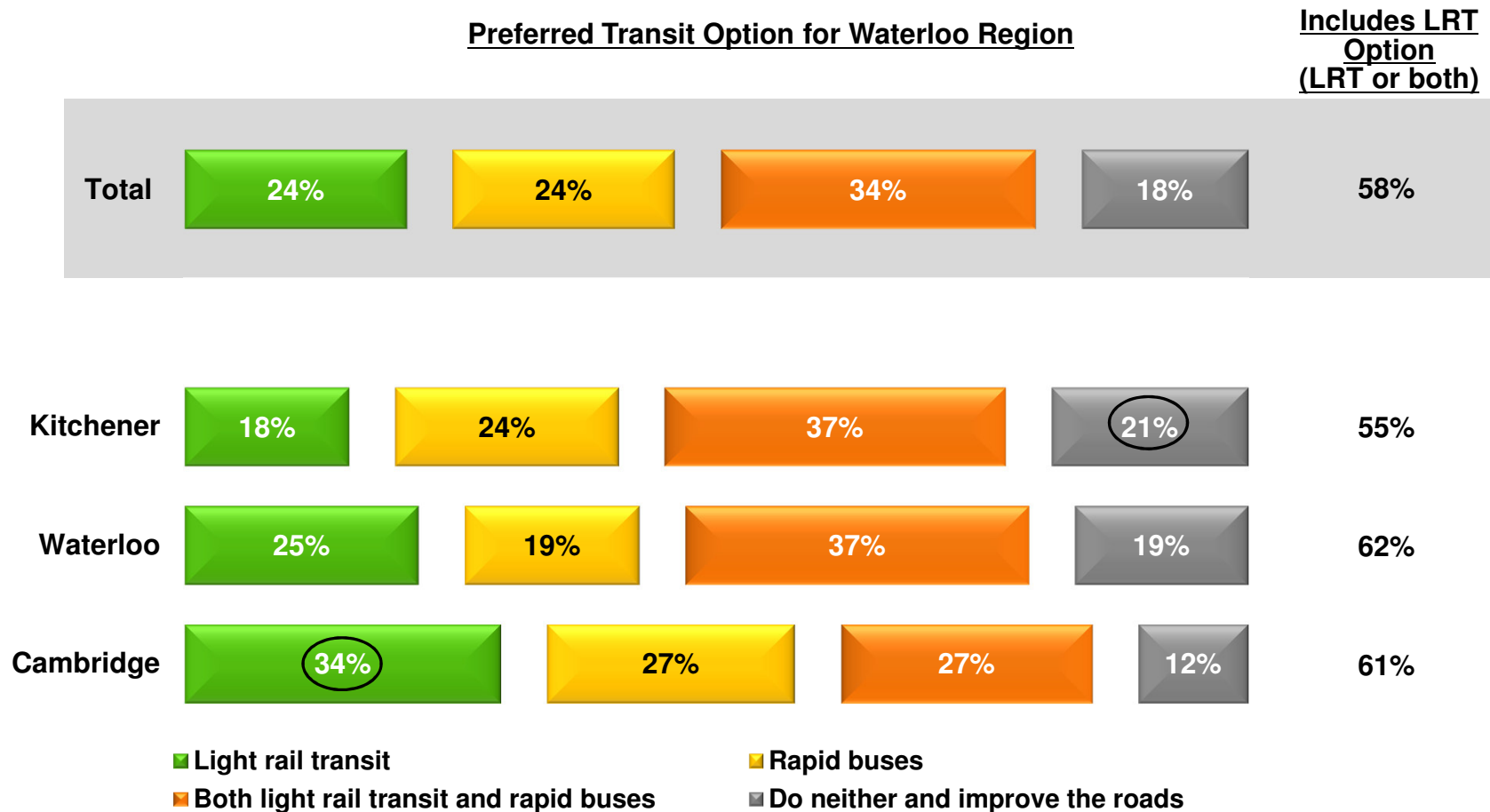


Two-in-three prefer all three cities get trains if LRT is built, Cambridge residents are most likely to prefer this option

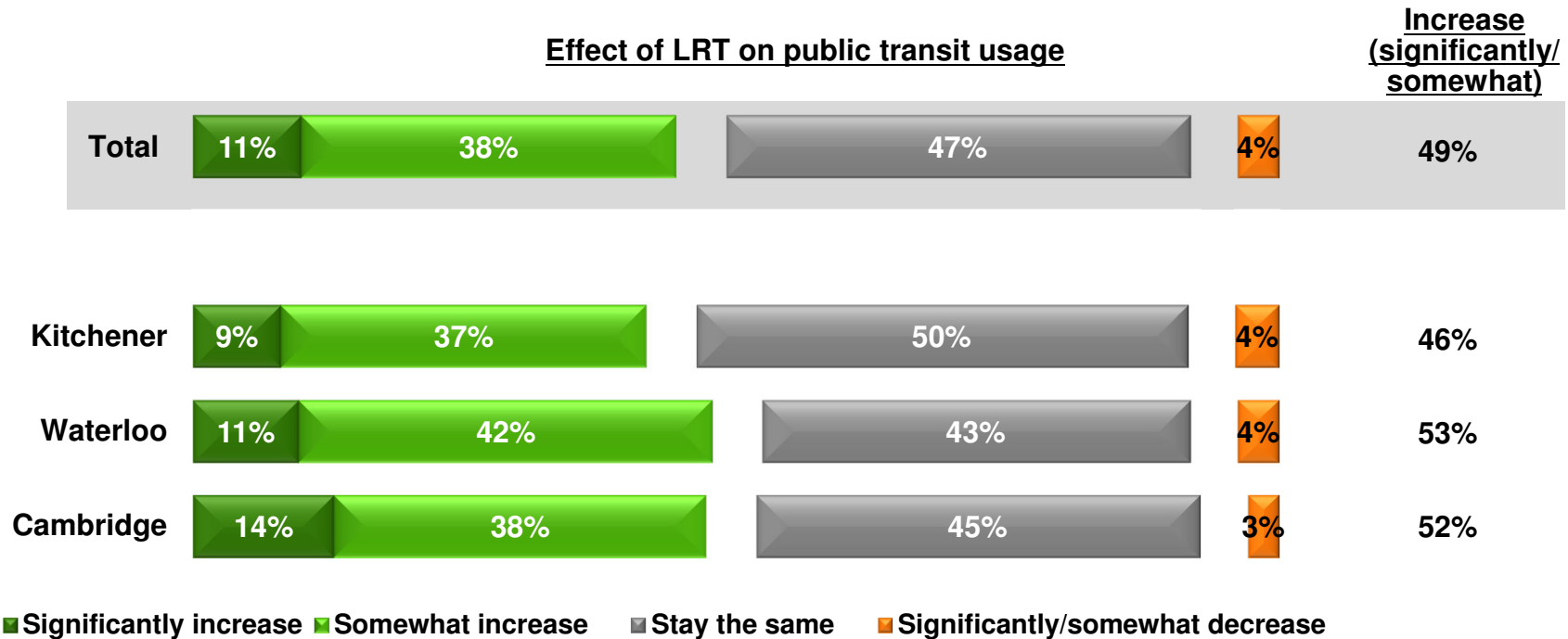
Preferred Transit Plan for Waterloo Region if LRT is Built



Preferences split for transit options, though majority choose an option that includes LRT

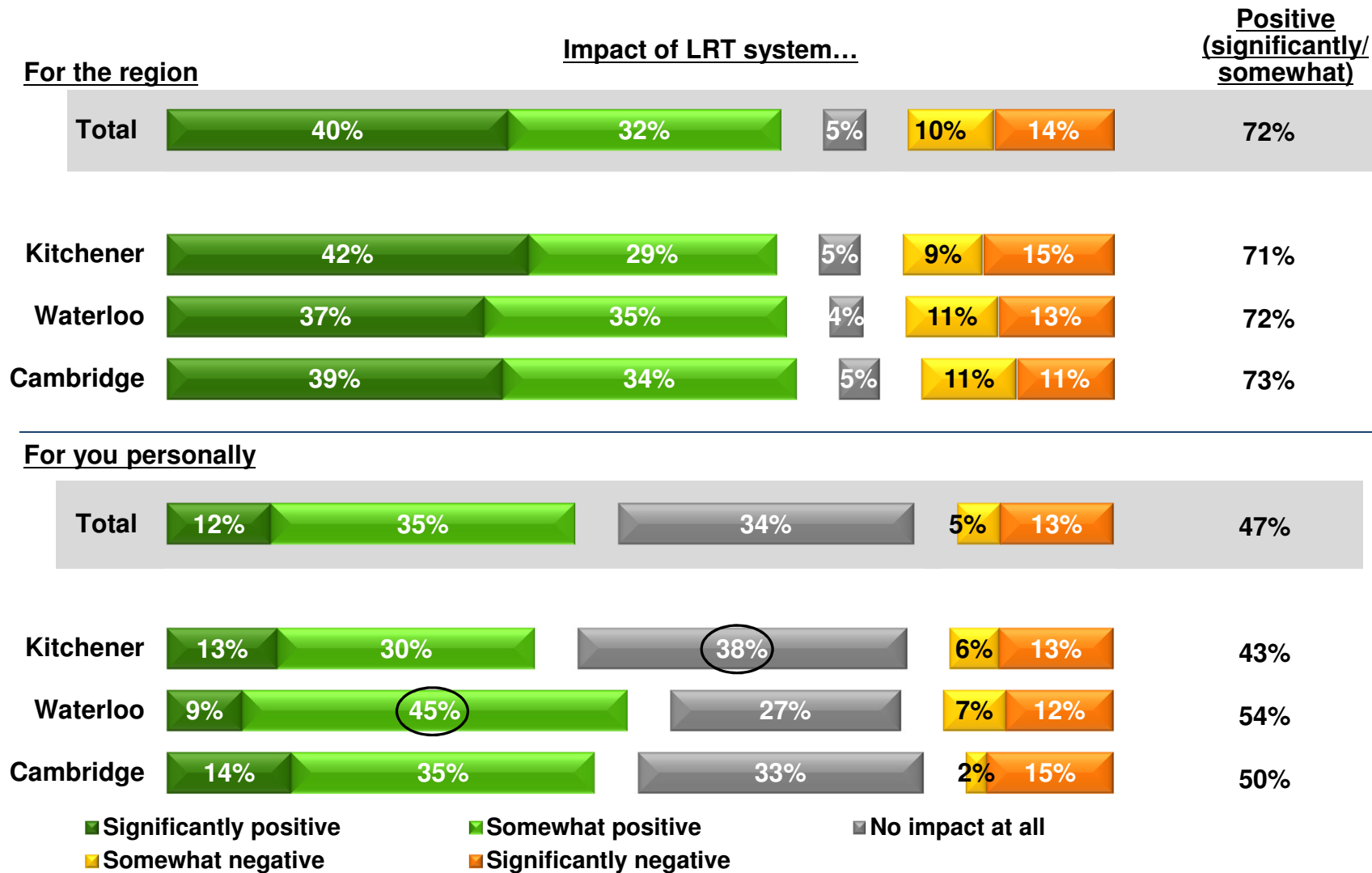


One-in-two residents report that their ridership would increase if the LRT is built; others believe it will not affect their usage



| | Use of Public Transportation | | |
|------------------------|------------------------------|--------------|-------|
| | Frequent | Non-frequent | Never |
| Significantly increase | 20% | 9% | 7% |
| Somewhat increase | 48% | 48% | 28% |
| Stay the same | 31% | 37% | 62% |

Nearly three-in-four foresee a LRT system having a positive impact for the region; fewer believe it will have a positive impact for them personally



Detailed Findings:

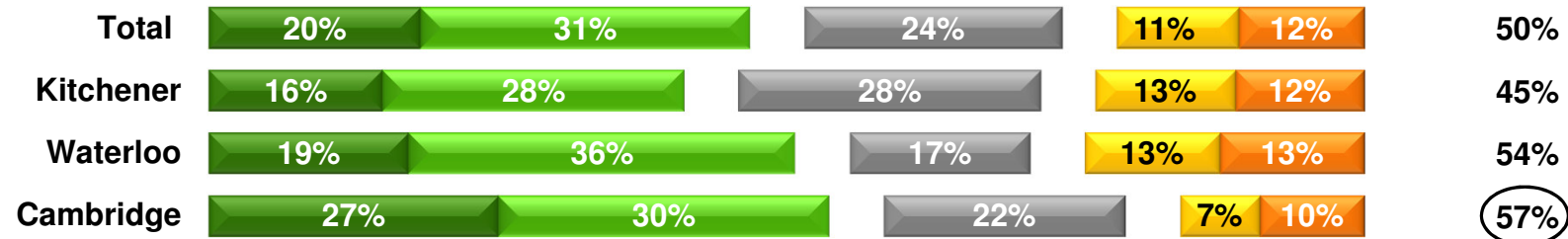
iii. Attitudes

One-in-two residents agree that rapid transit will help with traffic congestion; though nearly one-in-three agree that bigger roads would ease congestion better than LRT

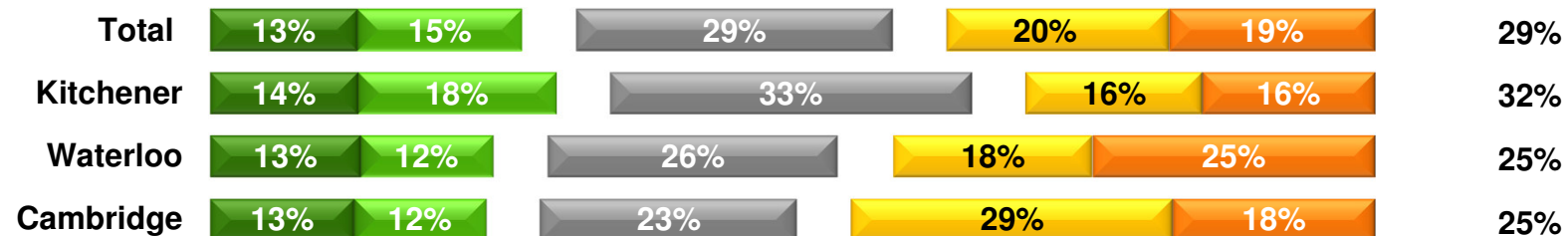
Agreement on Statements about Impact of LRT system (5pt scale)

Agree (4-5)

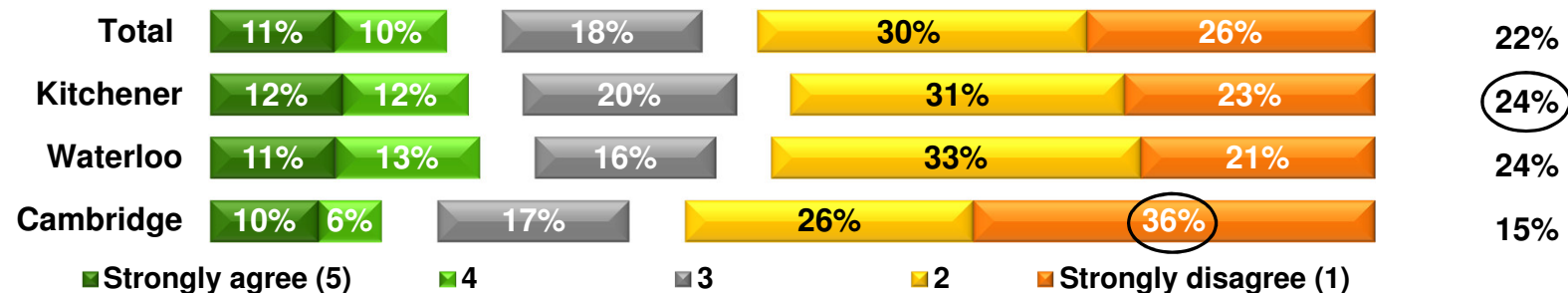
Rapid transit will help ease congestion.



Bigger roads would ease congestion better than LRT.



Building an LRT will make traffic congestion in the Waterloo Region much worse.



Note: Don't know is not shown because less than 5%

Base: All respondents

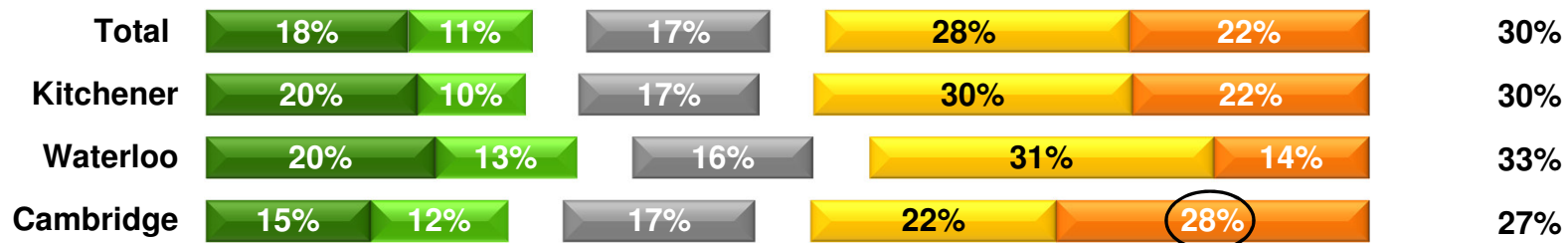
How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements, where 1 means strongly disagree and 5 means strongly agree?

Residents split whether Waterloo Region has enough population to necessitate LRT, but most believe LRT is needed to address population growth

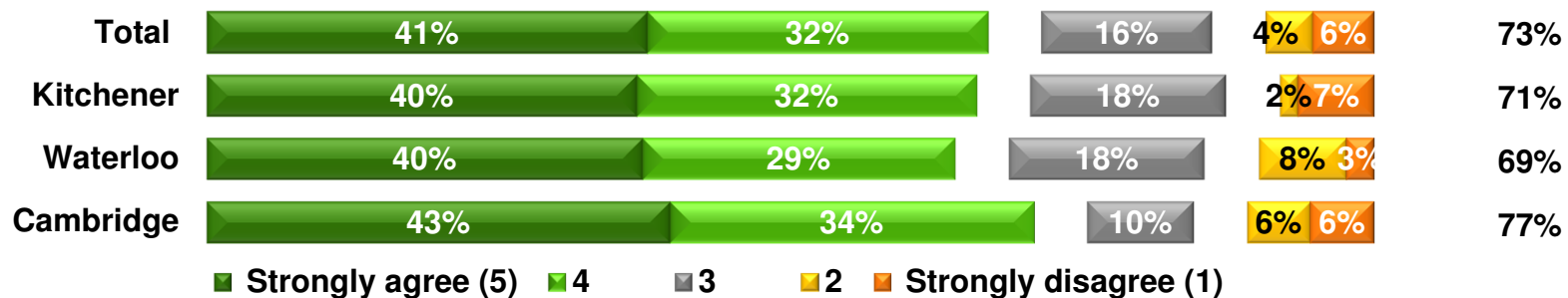
Impact of LRT system (5pt scale)

Agree (4-5)

The Waterloo Region does not have a dense enough population to necessitate building LRT.



The Waterloo Region needs an updated public transit system to address population growth.

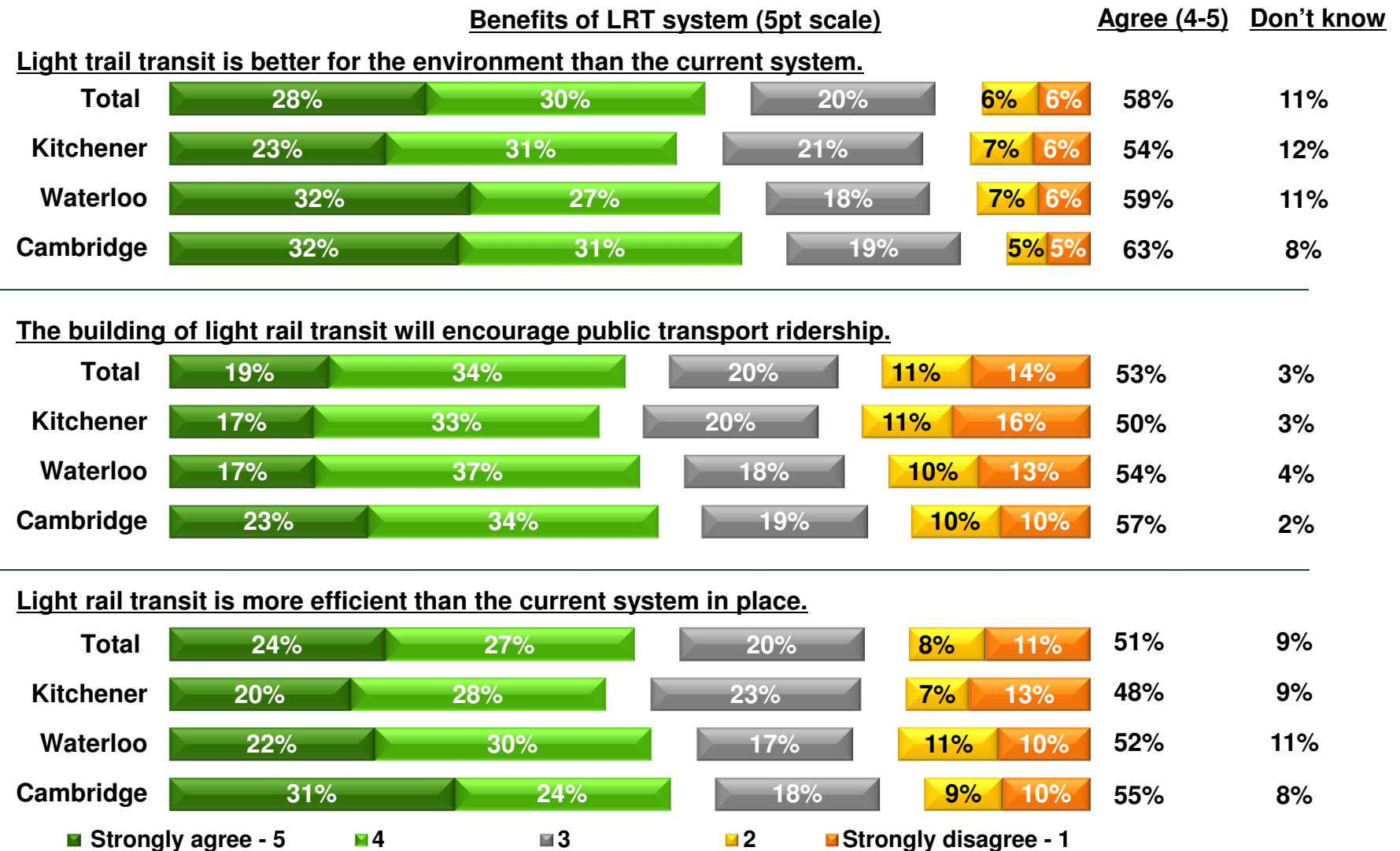


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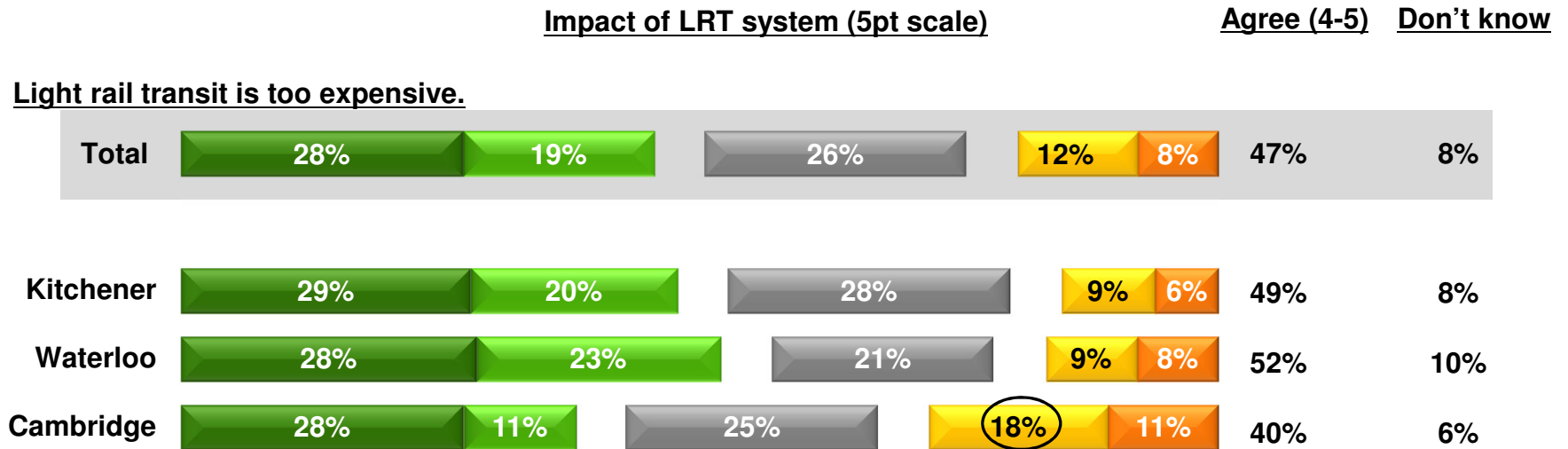
Base: All respondents

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statements, where 1 means strongly disagree and 5 means strongly agree?

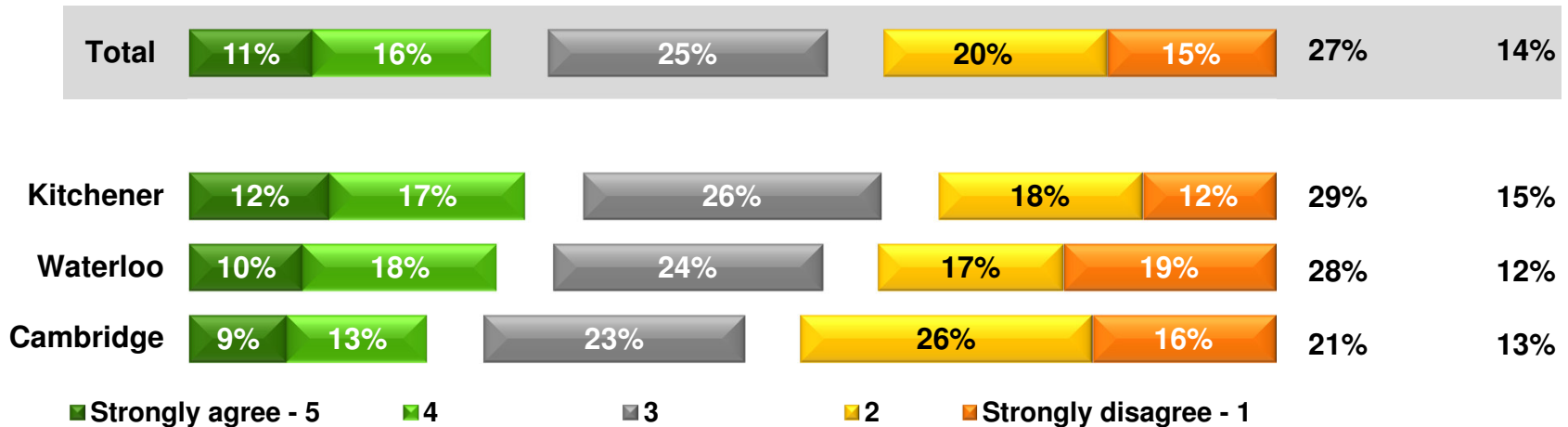
Residents most likely to agree that LRT is more environmental and efficient than the current system, and would encourage use of public transit



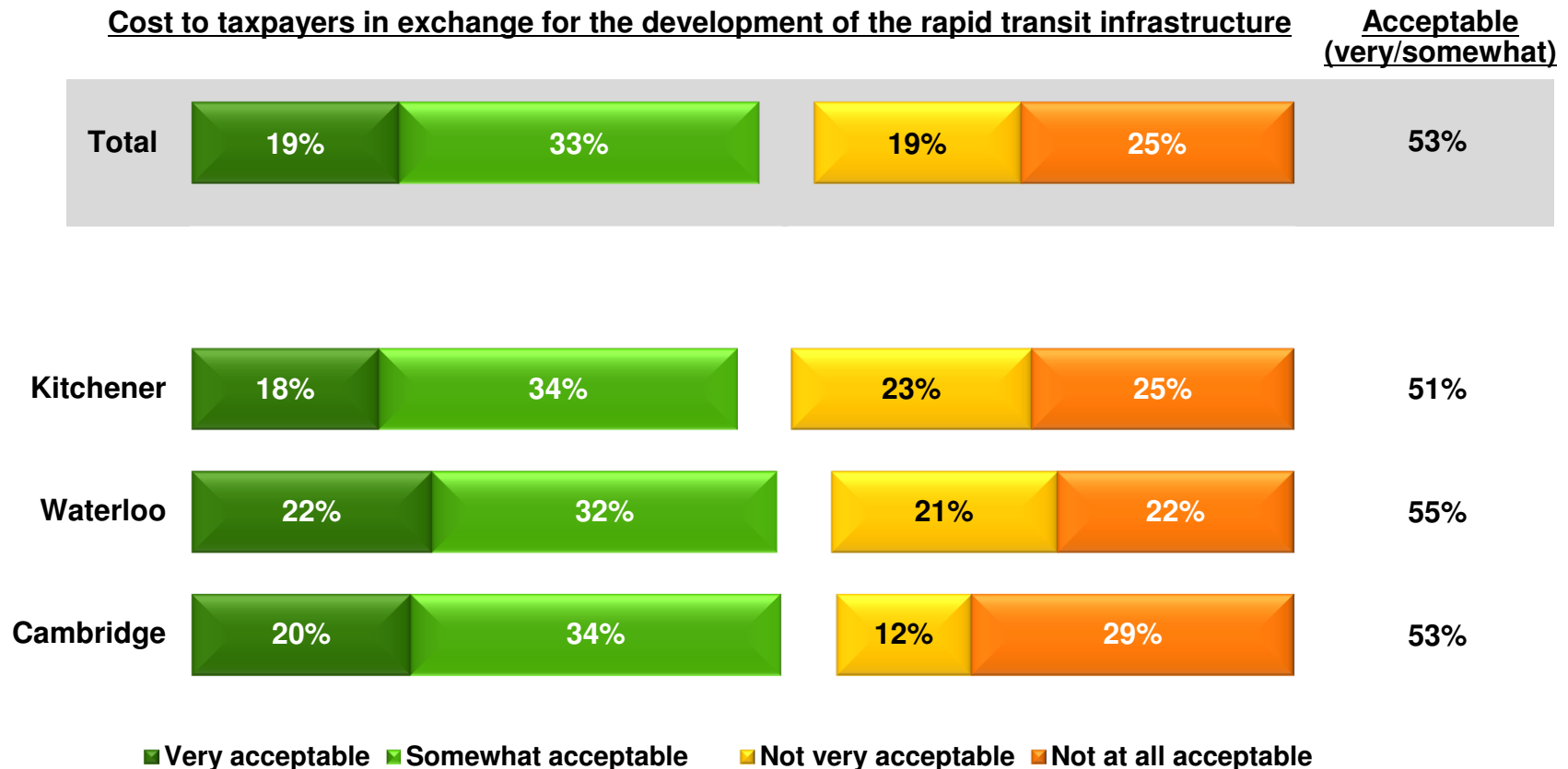
One-in-two agree that LRT is too expensive



LRT infrastructure is generally ugly.



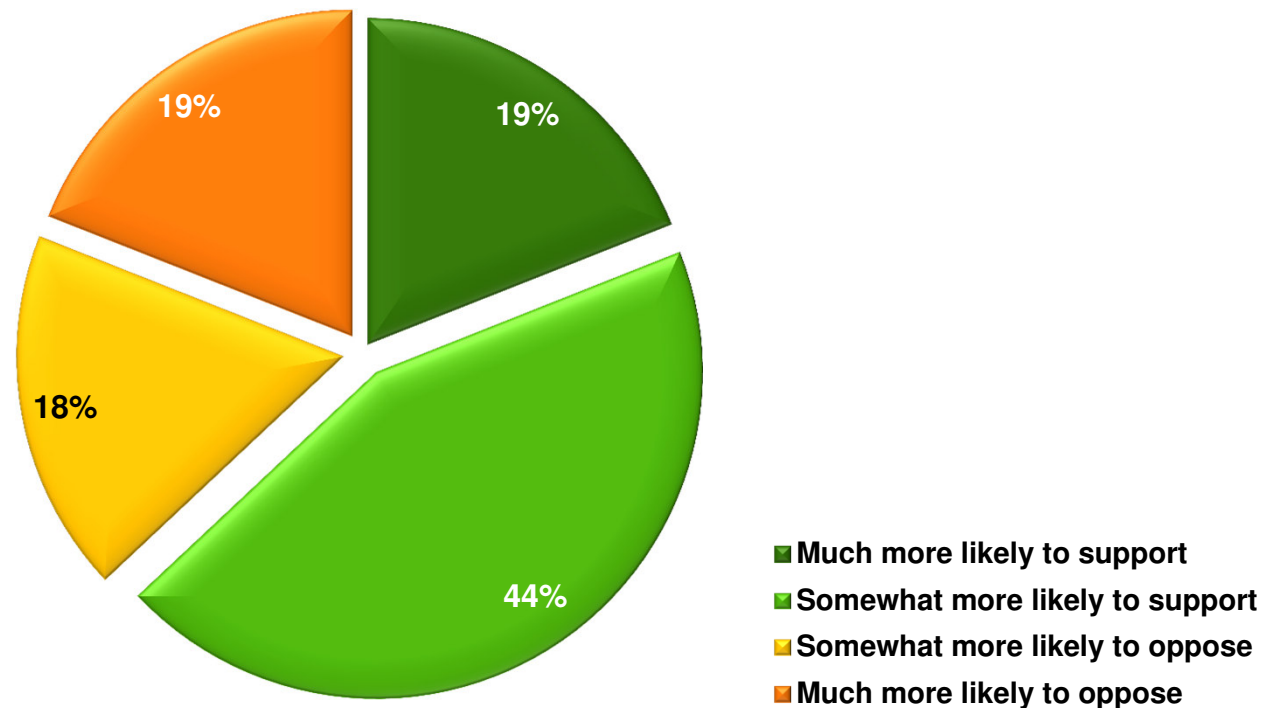
Residents split whether cost is acceptable in exchange for development of rapid transit infrastructure



Description: If the current option being presented is approved, taxes for the average household will increase by about \$25 per year for seven years (representing a possible increase of 10.5 per cent over seven years). Running a rail system to Cambridge would cost an additional \$40 per year.

Cambridge residents generally positive about a show of commitment to build LRT in the future, but effect is not deep in promoting support

Support if LRT commitment made to Cambridge in form of purchasing land for the LRT stops to be built



Description: As previously mentioned, plans to include Cambridge in the rapid transit plan involve a later phase of building once the bus and rail systems are in-place between Waterloo and Kitchener. If Waterloo Region purchased the land for LRT stops as a commitment that trains will be built for the Cambridge portion of the rapid transit at a later date, would you be more likely to support or oppose plans for LRT in Waterloo Region?

Residents more likely to give support to a candidate siding with plans to build LRT in Waterloo Region

