

# Online Survey Summary Report

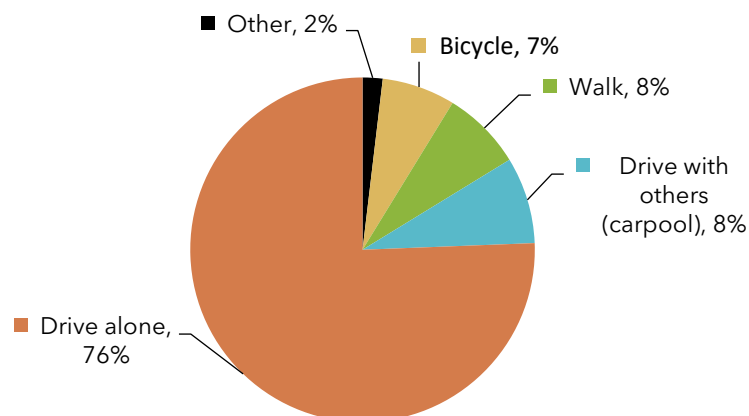
As part of the Active Transportation Plan engagement process, City of Merritt residents were invited to provide input on the challenges they face when using active modes of transportation in Merritt as well as the opportunities for improvements. The online survey was available through the City's website and promoted heavily through social media and other marketing tactics from June 19 to July 8, 2020. In total, 164 responses were collected.

Because of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, many of the questions asked participants to consider their transportation before the pandemic began as many residents are now working/studying from home or not currently working/attending school. The following is a summary of what we heard from those who participated in the online survey.

## 1.1 Typical mode of transportation

Respondents were asked to specify their typical mode of transportation for commuting purposes, such as going to work, school, an appointment or picking up groceries before the pandemic. As shown on the graph below, more than 75% of respondents drive alone as their main mode of transportation. Transit was also provided as an option, however those who participated in the survey did not indicate this mode of transportation as their typical mode. Respondents who answered "Other" specified that they are dependent on others to drive (x2) or they have an equal division between walking and driving.

*Before the COVID-19 pandemic, on a typical day, what was your usual mode of transportation for commuting purposes?*

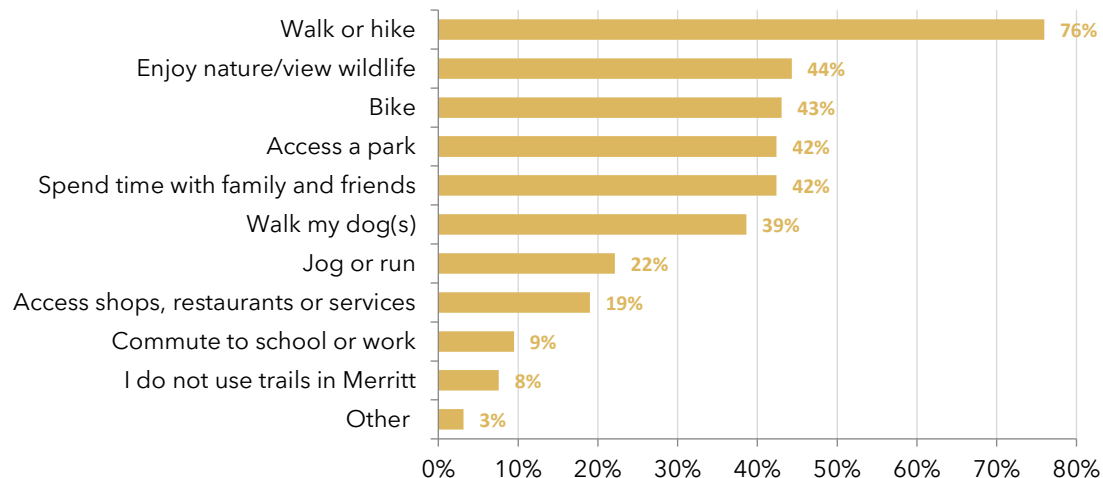


Weather is a factor known to influence what mode of transportation is used when commuting. This question was put to respondents with more than half (58%) indicating that weather does not influence what mode of transportation they use. This result reflects the high percentage of respondents that typically drive along as their main mode of transportation.

## 1.2 Using Merritt's Trail Network

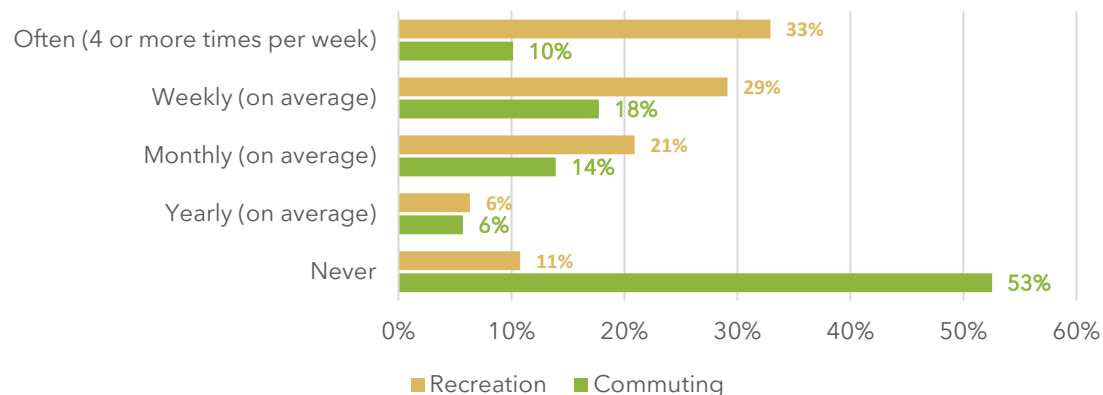
Next, respondents were asked how they currently use Merritt's existing trail network. Ten options were presented with the opportunity to list other uses. Participants were able to select as many options that apply to them. As shown on the graph below, to walk or hike is the most popular reason why respondents use Merritt's trail network (76%). Enjoying nature/wildlife (44%), biking (43%), accessing a park (42%), and spending time with friends and family (42%) were also popular activities among respondents. Of the respondents who answered "Other", the majority commented that they do not believe a trail network exists in Merritt.

*Before the COVID-19 pandemic, how did you use Merritt's existing trail network?*



Respondents were asked how often they use trails in Merritt for both commuting and recreation purposes. When it comes to commuting, the majority of respondents (53%) indicated they do not use the trail network for this purpose. The survey found trails were used more frequently for recreation purposes, as shown on the graph below.

*Before the COVID-19 pandemic, how often did you use the trails in Merritt for recreation and commuting purposes?*

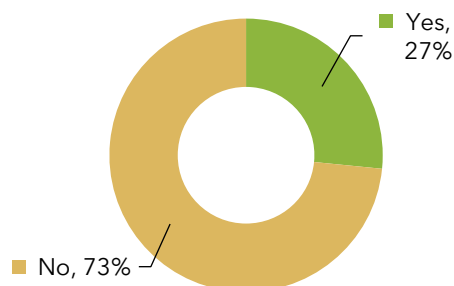


### 1.3 COVID-19 Impacts of Transportation

With COVID-19 impacting individuals in different ways, it was important to understand whether Merritt residents have changed their transportation habits because of the pandemic. The majority of those who participated in the survey (73%) indicated that their typical transportation habits have not changed because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Those who answered yes, were asked to specify how their transportation habits have changed. In total, 44 respondents provided a response, with 45% indicating that they are driving and commuting less due to working at home. Respondents also noted they have been walking, running, hiking, and cycling more (36%), and others have limited their travel outside of their home to only necessary trips (16%).

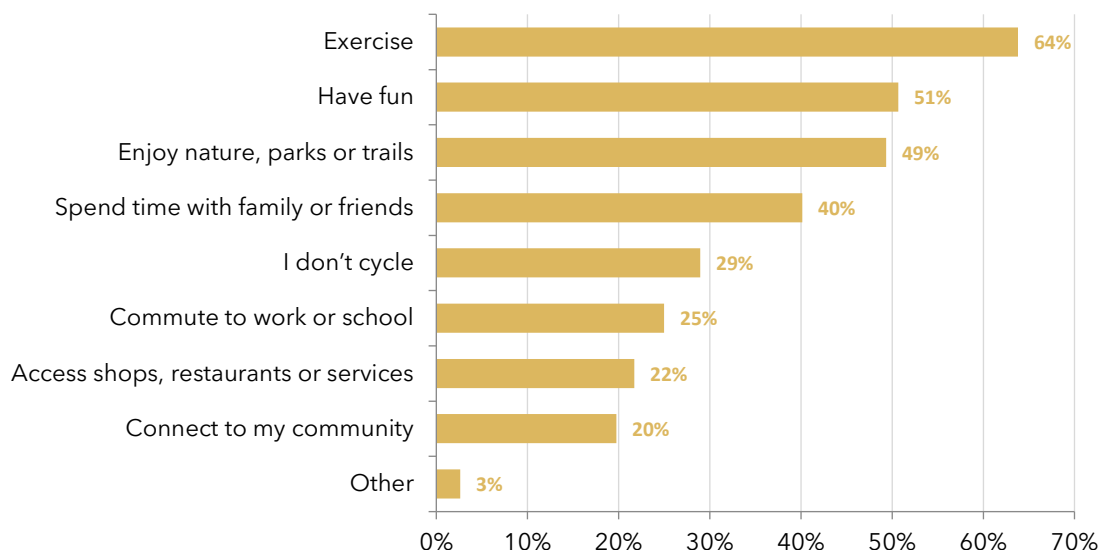
*Since the COVID-19 pandemic, have your typical transportation habits changed?*



### 1.4 Cycling in Merritt

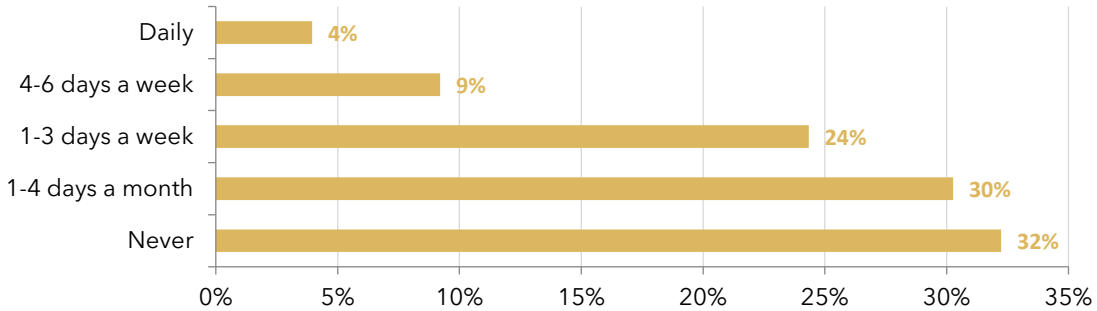
Respondents were presented with a series of questions focused on biking in Merritt. The first question provides a snapshot of the reasons why survey respondents choose to bike. Respondents were presented with nine options and were able to select more than one option. Biking for exercise (64%) and to have fun (51%) were the most popular reasons why respondents bike. Respondents who selected "Other" said that they would like to cycle more, but do not feel safe cycling in Merritt.

*When I cycle, it's to:*



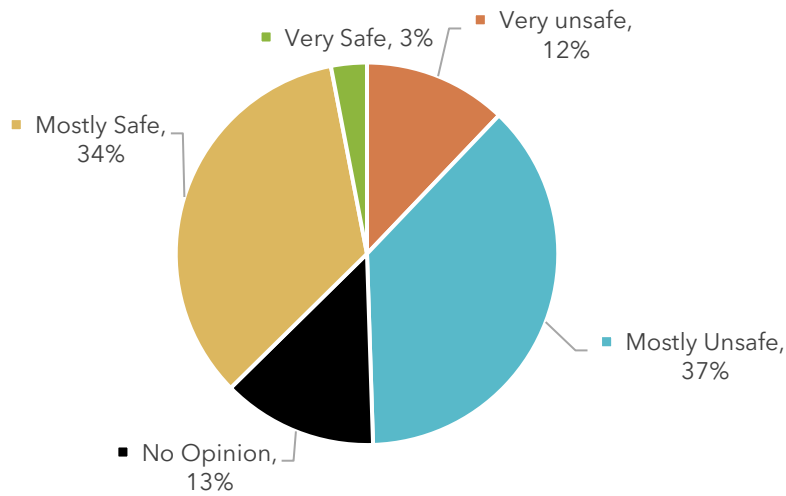
Respondents were then asked to indicate how frequently they ride a bike in a typical month. The survey found 30% of respondents ride a bicycle 1-4 days a month, while only 4% of respondents identified as daily bicycle riders.

*In a typical month, how many times do you ride a bicycle?*



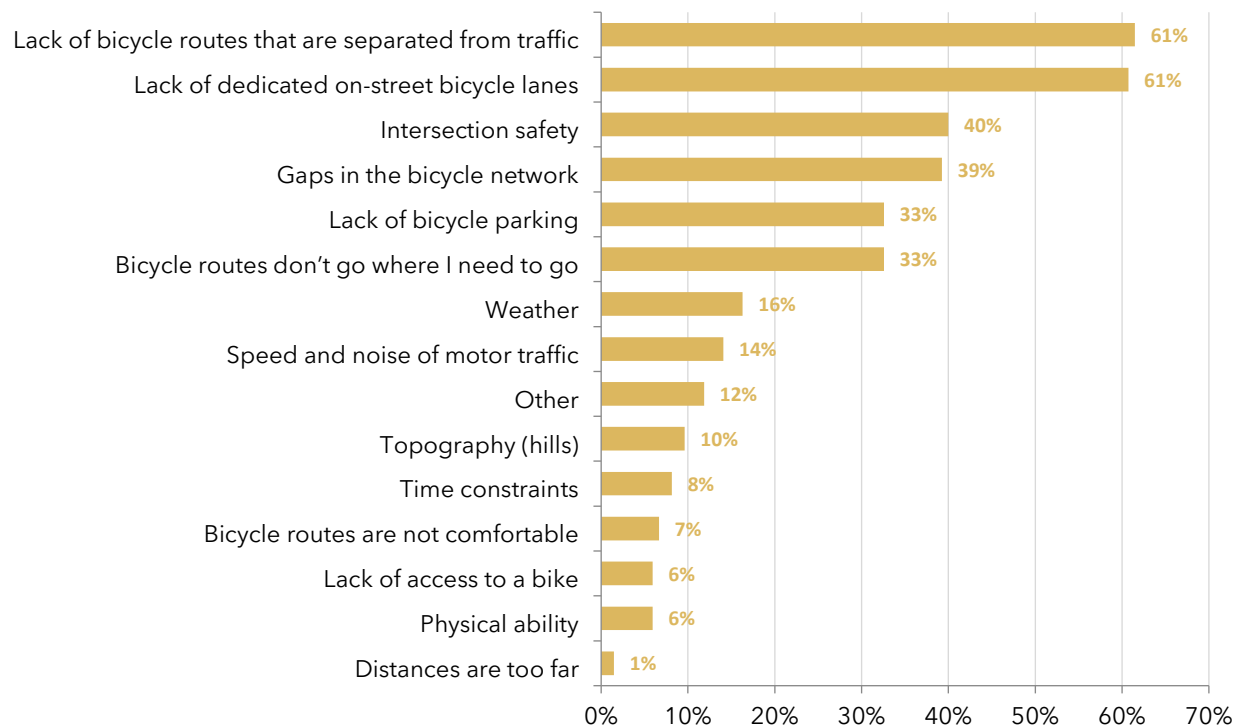
The next question focused on gaining a better understanding of how safe Merritt residents feel when biking in their community. Half of respondents shared they feel (very to mostly) unsafe when cycling in Merritt, compared to 37% of respondents who feel (mostly to very) safe cycling in Merritt.

*How safe do you feel cycling in Merritt?*



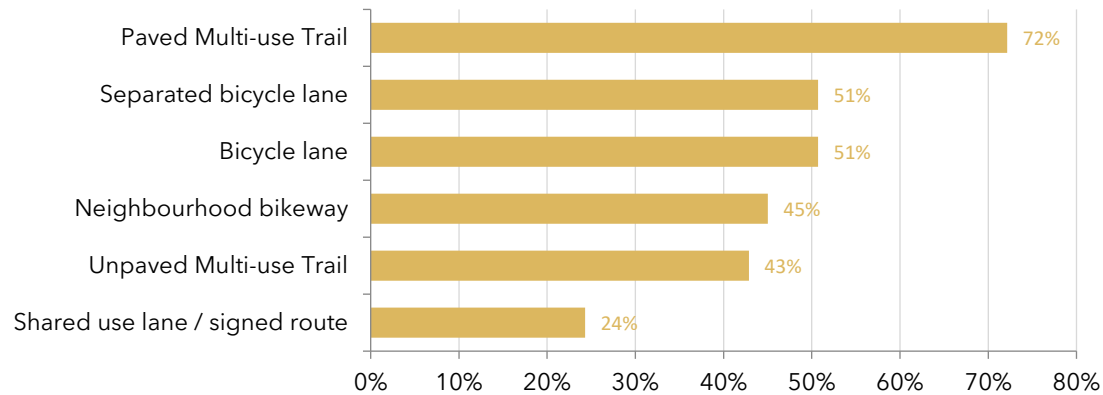
Survey respondents were asked to identify what the main issues or challenges are when it comes to cycling in Merritt. A list of possible issues/challenges were displayed with participants able to select more than one or add additional issues/challenges not listed. Lack of bicycle routes separated from traffic and dedicated on-street bicycle lanes were identified by more than half of respondents (61%) as a main issue/challenge. Of those who selected 'other', theft and a lack of cycling knowledge from drivers and cyclists were identified as additional issues/challenges.

*What are the main issues or challenges for cycling in Merritt?*



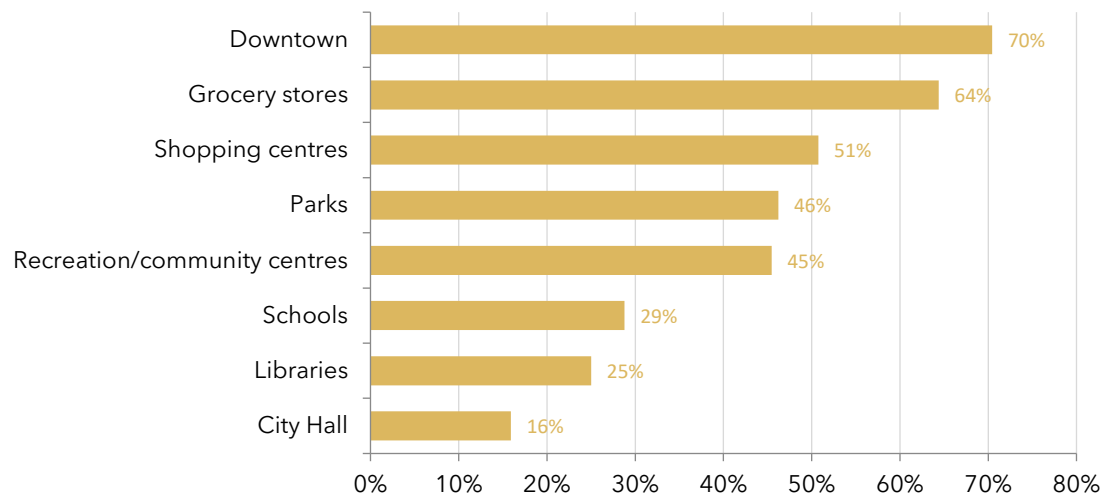
The next question focused on understanding the type(s) of cycling facilities that would make cycling in Merritt more comfortable. Six facility types were displayed with participants able to select more than one option. Paved multi-use trails (72%), bicycle lanes (51%), and separated bicycle lanes (51%) were found to be the most popular facility types among respondents.

*What facility type(s) would encourage you to cycle more in Merritt?*



End-of-trip facilities is another component to making biking an accessible and convenient form of transportation. The survey asked respondents to identify where bike parking is most needed. Eight options were provided, with survey participants able to select multiple locations. More than half of respondents identified downtown (70%), grocery stores (64%), and shopping centres (51%) as locations in most need of bike parking.

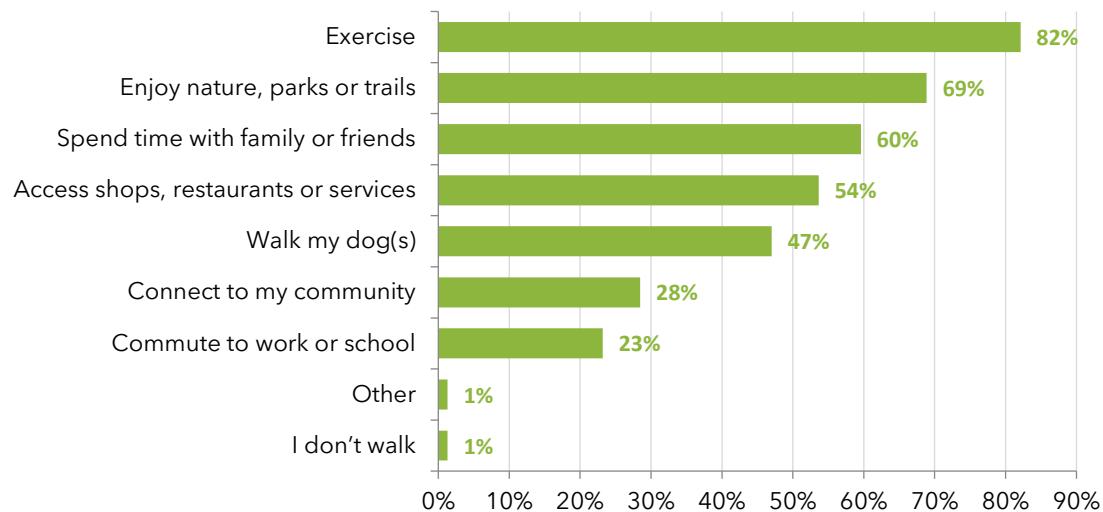
*Where is bike parking most needed?*



## 1.5 Walking in Merritt

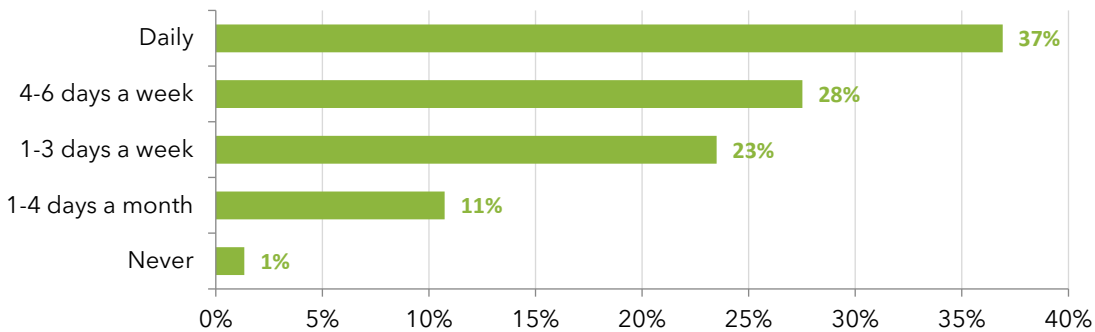
Respondents were presented with a series of questions focused on walking in Merritt. The first question provides a snapshot of the reasons why survey participants choose to walk. Respondents were presented with nine options and were able to select more than one option. Walking for exercise (82%) and to enjoy nature, parks or trails (69%) were the most popular reasons why respondents walk. Respondents who selected "other" said they walk to catch the bus and keep children active.

When I walk, it's to...

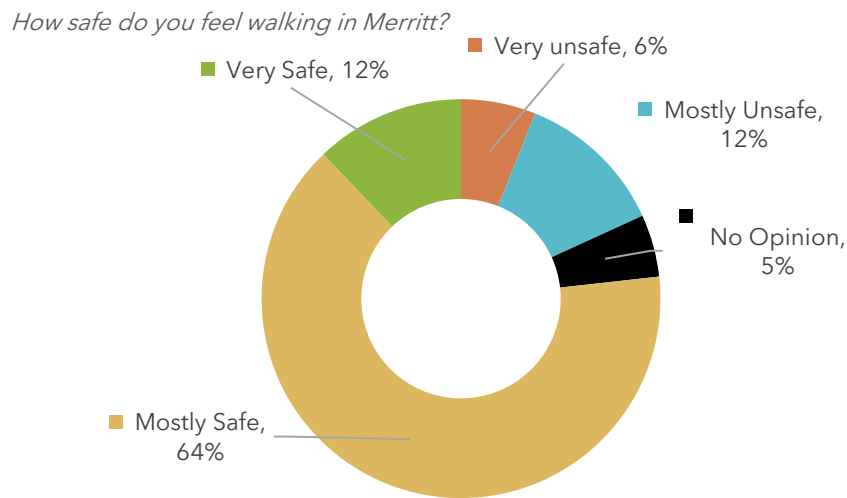


Respondents were asked to indicate how frequently they walk in a typical month. The survey found 37% of respondents walk daily, compared to 12% who either never walk or walk only a few times a month.

*In a typical month, how often do you walk?*



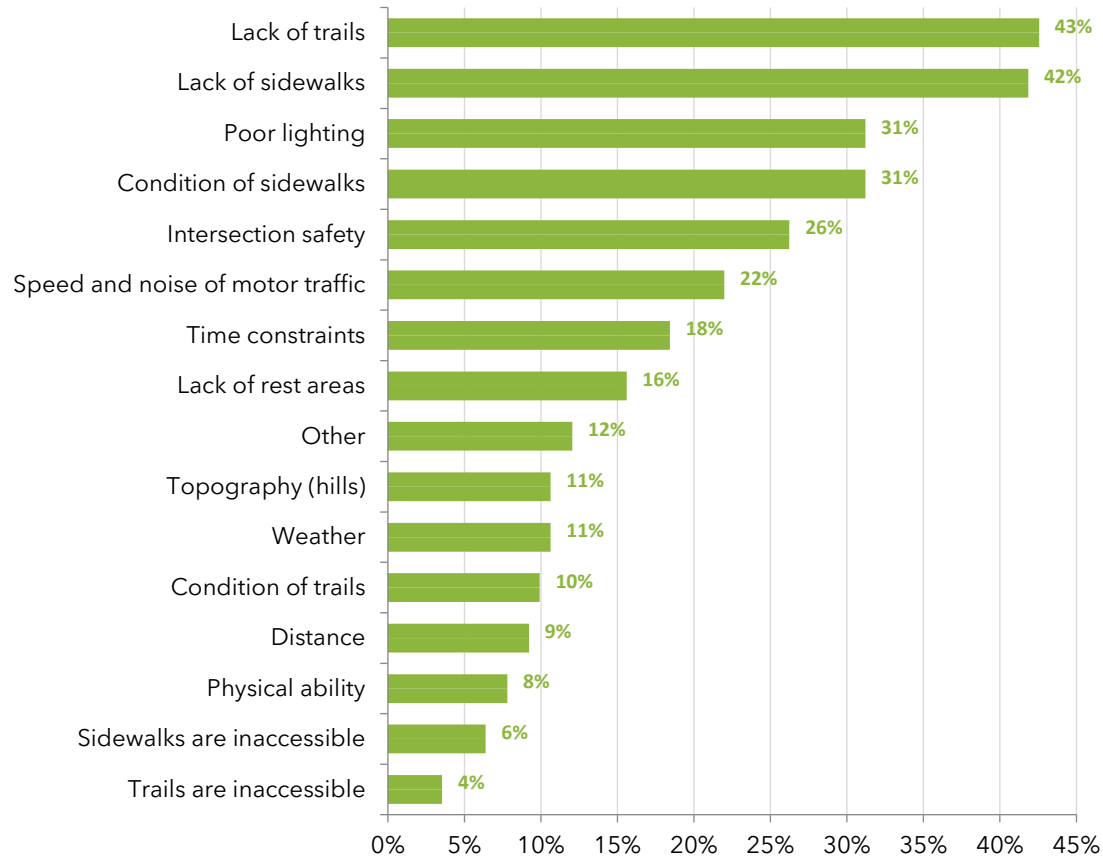
The next question focused on gaining a better understanding of how safe Merritt residents feel when walking in their community. More than half of respondents said they feel mostly safe (64%) or very safe (12%) when walking in Merritt, compared to 6% of respondents who feel very unsafe walking in Merritt.



Survey respondents were also asked to identify what the main issues or challenges are when it comes to walking in Merritt. A list of possible issues/challenges were displayed, participants were able to select more than one or add additional issues/challenges not listed. Lack of trails (42%) and lack of sidewalks (40%) were identified as some of the top issues related to walking in Merritt. Those who selected "other" identified feeling unsafe and lack of amenities as additional barriers to walking in Merritt.



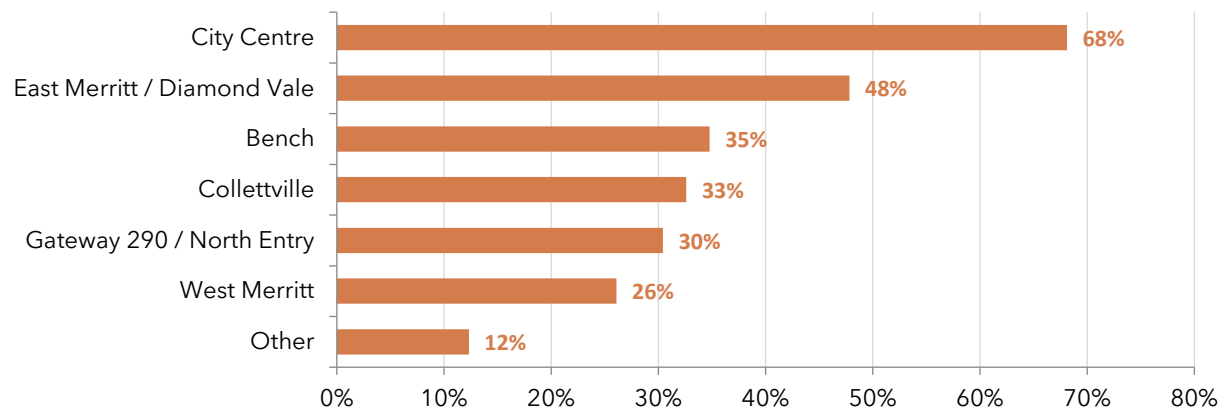
*What are the barriers for walking more often than you do in Merritt?*



## 1.6 Wrap-up Questions

Participants were asked to identify three neighbourhoods where they would like to see active transportation improvements. The City Centre was identified by 86% of respondents, followed by East Merritt / Diamond Vale (48%).

*In what neighbourhoods would you like to see active transportation improvements?*



Of those who selected “other”, the following responses were identified:

- All neighbourhoods (x3)
- Nicola Avenue and Vought Street (x3)
- Sidewalks along Armstrong Street and Ransom Avenue (x3)
- Routes to schools (x2)
- Facilities connecting Diamond Vale to the city centre
- Facilities connecting Bench to the city centre
- Connection from walking bridge at end of Quilchena to the hill by the cement plant
- Lower Nicola
- Lindley Creek

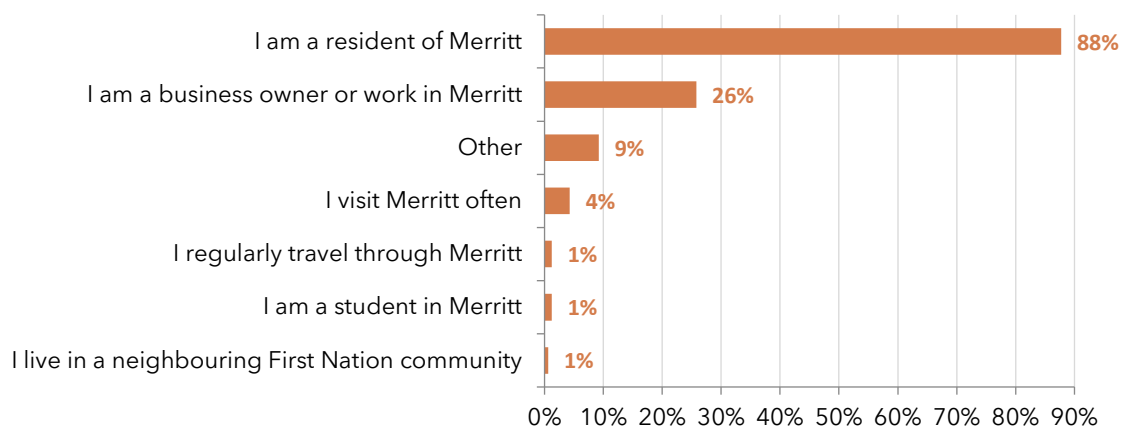
The survey ended with respondents given the opportunity to provide any final comments. In total, 65 comments were received. The following themes emerged from a review of the comments.

- Lack of facilities makes active transportation feel unsafe
- Improving active transportation is important
- More sidewalk infrastructure
- Conflicts between people biking and people driving
- Prioritize building the trail network

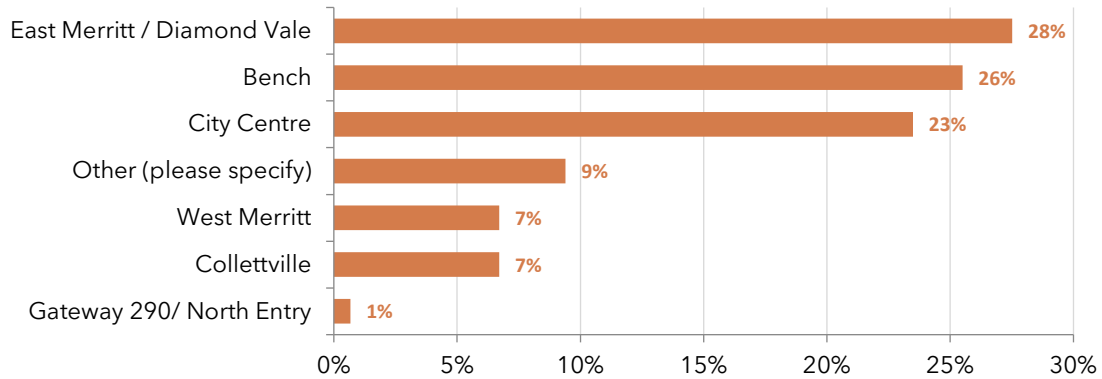
## 1.7 Demographics

Survey participants were asked the following demographic questions to capture who participated in the survey and identify groups we may have missed and need to seek out during later phases of engagement.

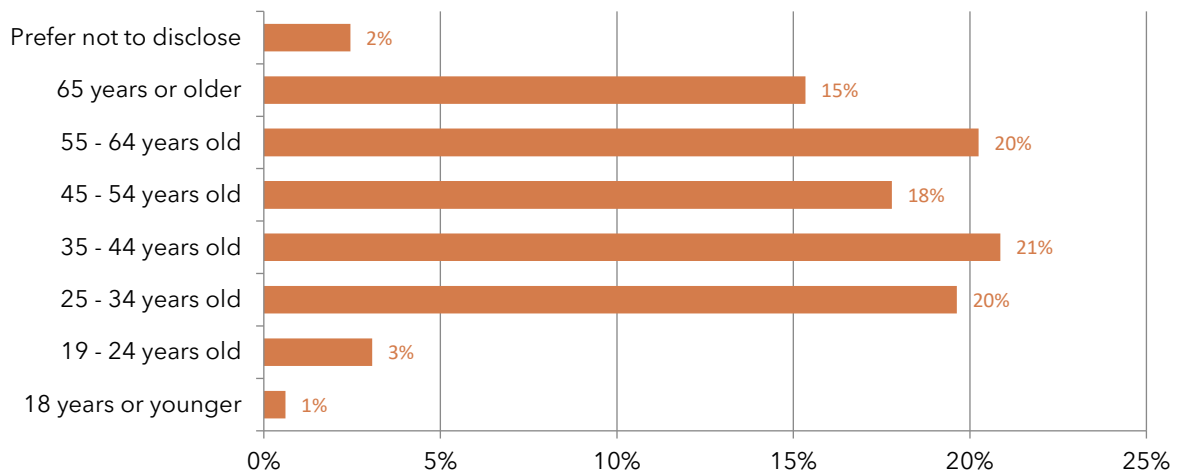
*Which best describes you?*



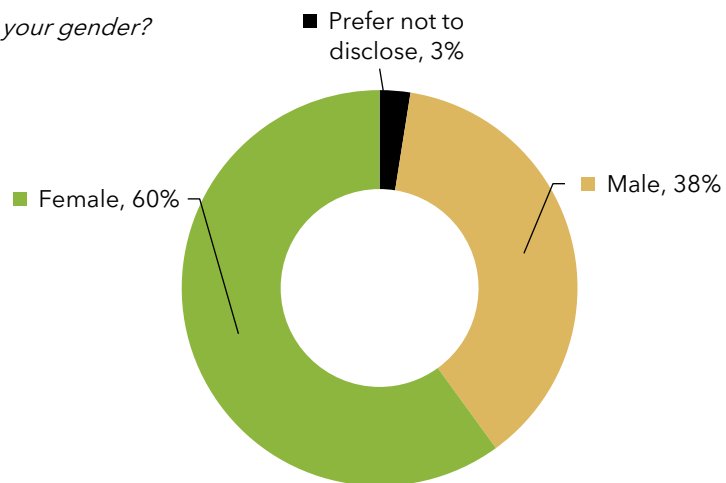
*If you are a resident of Merritt, what neighbourhood do you live in?*



*What is your age?*



*What is your gender?*



*Do you have any limitations?*

