3. Community Engagement

Frankston City Council undertook an online survey with the Frankston community between 10th November and the 13th December 2021.

The survey asked questions about peoples' current movement patterns, their travel mode preferences, and questions about the factors that would encourage them to use other modes of transport. An online map allowed people to locate specific issues they considered important, for different modes of transport.

This section provides a synthesis of the key findings of relevance to the 2022 Frankston Integrated Transport Strategy. Despite the high car dependency, respondents were clear in their desire for better bus services, in particular increasing service coverage and frequency. Active transport is more utilised during the weekends with respondents citing missing links and the lack of buffers as deterrents for greater participation.

3.1   Overview

Walking was by far the most popular mode of active transport, and cycling was more of a recreational activity conducted on weekends. As a result, there were recurrent concerns regarding safety for pedestrians and cyclists throughout the online survey and social map. Recreational cyclists prefer separated and buffered cycle lanes, and along with pedestrians, wanted more lighting on shared paths for personal safety. Even commuters raised safety issues while waiting and travelling on public transport. Respondents also cited gaps in infrastructure that added additional distance and duration to their travels as a reason for a preference to car use. Key themes established in the analysis from the community engagement are:

- Low perception of safety

- Poor public transport (service coverage and frequency).

- Missing gaps in bike trails and footpaths.

- Frustration with parking availability and rates in and around the City Centre.

There were 73 respondents to the online survey. The mapping component of the survey drew 199 individual points, from 64 contributors. The majority of responses identified a dissatisfaction with the coverage and reliability of public transport. Most respondents seem keen on taking public transport if the service was located closer to them, and transported them to key destinations (i.e., local shopping strips, Dandenong South, Mount Eliza, etc).

3.2   Demographic of contributors

Of the 73 respondents, 40 were female and 29 male. Most were in the 40-49 age bracket (20 people) and 60-69 age bracket (20 people). There is an under-representation from young people, with no one under the age of 18 participating in the survey, and only two responses from people aged 18-29. The survey is therefore slightly skewed towards adults with families and those about to retire. Respondents were allowed to make multiple selections and the breakdown is as follows:

- Residents of the Frankston LGA (97.6%)

- Those employed within Frankston LGA (13.7%) and;

- Business owners (6.6%).

Figure 21 shows participants residential suburb. Most respondents live in Frankston (34.7%), followed by Frankston South (22.2%), then Seaford (15.3%). Carrum Downs, Karingal and Langwarrin each had some contributors. The only respondents living outside the LGA were from Safety Beach and Beaumaris.
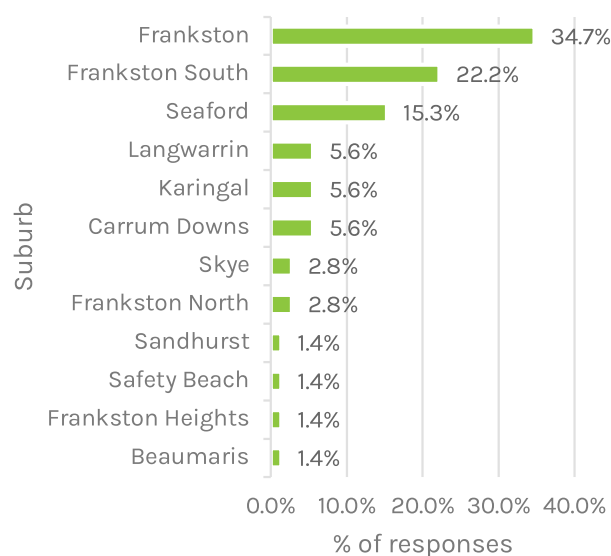

Figure 21 Place of residence

Many respondents who were in the labour force work in Frankston CBD. Figure 22 shows the breakdown of where respondents worked when grouped into regions. The majority of respondents work in and around the municipality.
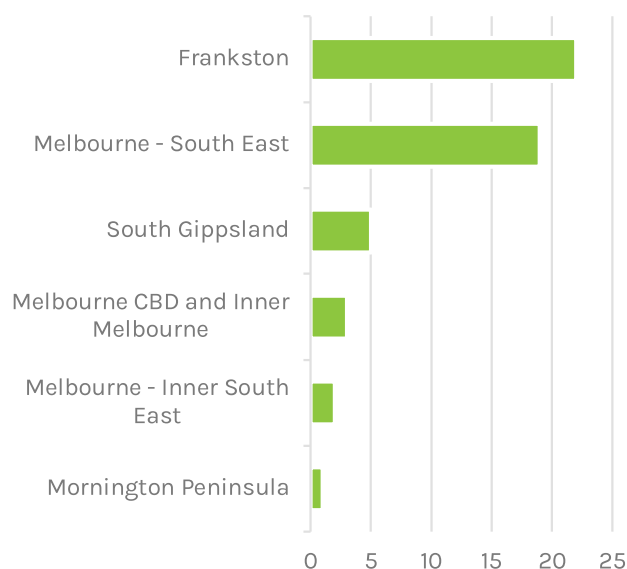

Figure 22 Place of work

3.3 Results

This section provides a description of the results, drawing out the findings most pertinent to the Frankston Integrated Transport Strategy.

3.3.1 Travel modes

Participants were asked what mode of transport they used for travel during the week to the various destinations for trips under 3km and over 3km, shown in Figure 23 and Figure 24, respectively.

Respondents overwhelmingly use the car for all purposes during the week regardless of distance. The survey found that those visiting parks, sports and recreation facilities, typically travelled less than 3km and yet the car continued to be the dominant form of transport.

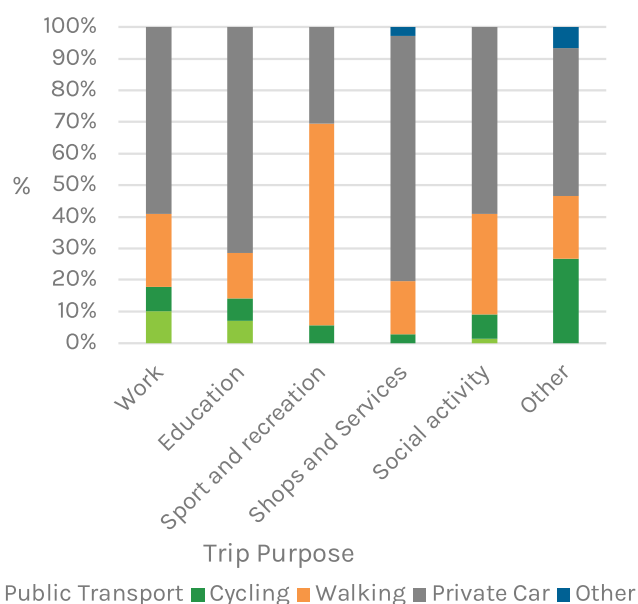For trips under 3km walking was more common than cycling.

Figure 23 Usual mode of transport taken by trips under 3km, by destination type, on weekdays
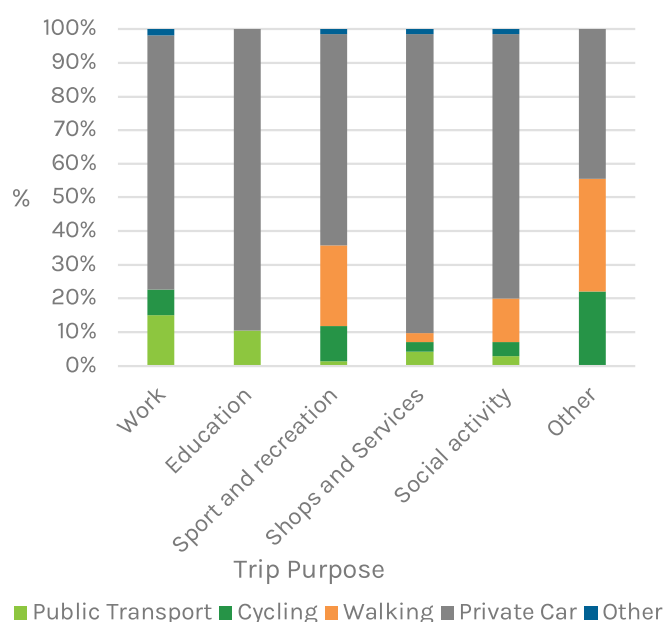

Figure 24 Usual mode of transport taken by trips over 3km, by destination type, on weekdays

To better understand people's mode of transport during different times, participants were asked which mode they used for the same set of destinations on the weekend, as shown in Figure 25.

The proportion of cyclists increased significantly on the weekend compared to the weekday. There were fewer people walking and using public transport, and the shift suggests more casual and

recreational bicycle riders amongst the respondents.

Despite the survey showing a high car dependency for all trip purposes, respondents were also consistent in wanting improvements to the current public transport network for rail and bus, with greater service coverage and increased frequency. There was clear indication that a significant proportion of respondents wanted to use public transport but were frustrated with the service quality.
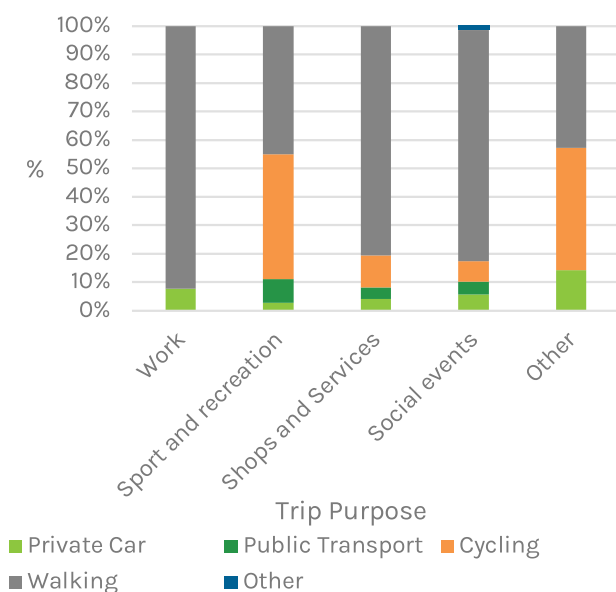

Figure 25 Results for mode share of travel on weekends

'*Services radiate from the train station and frequency of connections often do not align. Many services are only hourly and the bus timetables are aligned to the needs of students and city workers rather than residents needing to get around the municipality. Need to be more radial services connecting principal activity centres.*'

- resident from Frankston

3.3.2   Driving habits

Participants were asked how frequently they travelled by car to various locations, shown in Figure 26. The most common trip purpose was employment, with over 40% travelling to work 3 or more times per week.

Around one quarter of respondents travel to visit friends or relatives or to the Frankston CBD at least once a week by car. These two destinations are the most travelled to, albeit less frequently, with only a few people never travelling to these locations by car.
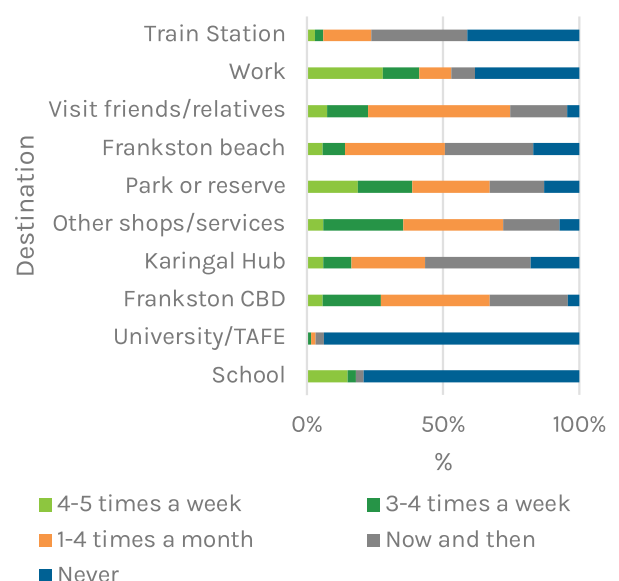

Figure 26 Most frequented destinations when travelling by car

The railway station was one of the least frequented destinations by car; this may be an indication that people are more willing to drive to work directly than to use public transport. Many respondents who did take the train, parked at Frankston Railway Station (15) and Kananook Railway Station (5).

It should be noted that there was a high number of respondents who never travel to School or University, likely a result of low participation from youth in this survey.

3.3.3   Transport barriers

3.3.3.1 Walking

People were asked what they felt were barriers discouraging them from walking for trips under 1km. Figure 27 shows the results to this question indicating that gaps in infrastructure, feeling

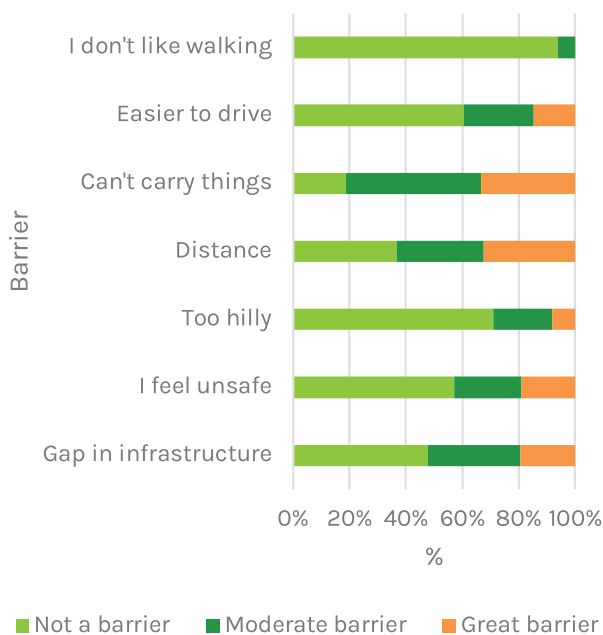unsafe, and distance, were the most common *significant* barriers.

Figure 27 Barriers that discourage respondents from walking a trip under 1km in Frankston City

> *'I would walk a lot more to my destinations if there were more connected shared paths.'*
>
> **– resident from Seaford**

There were 21 contributions when asked for additional comments, and some site-specific quotes of interest to the integrated transport strategy have been summarised below:

- '*Pedestrian crossing at Wells St and Young St is safer as the roundabout slows down traffic.*'
- '*Langwarrin has no places of interest to walk to.*'
- '*Nepean Hwy is impossible to cross during peak hour near Oliver's Hill.*'
- '*The Seaford Wetlands Armstrongs Road and Wilson Grove lacks a safe space to connect back the Seaford Wetlands track.*'
- '*No ground level crossing at Kananook Railway Station makes it hard for mums and disabled.*'

3.3.3.2 Cycling

Figure 28 describes respondents stated barriers to cycling for trips less than 3km. *No access to a bike* and *the need to carry things* were the most common barriers.
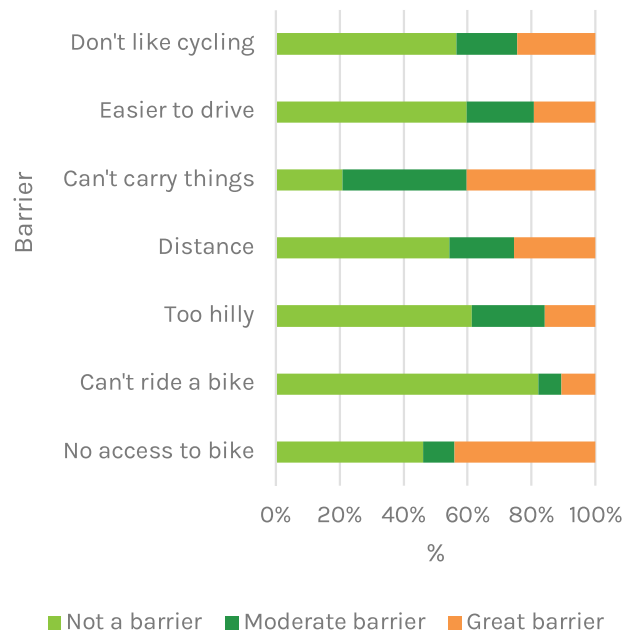

Figure 28 Barriers that discourage cycling for trips under 3km

A limitation to this survey was *safety concerns* had not been offered to respondents as an option. Previous surveys in Australia have found safety concerns are the most common reason people choose not to cycle. However, the issue of safety was a consistent theme in the feedback where respondents contributed further comments.

Respondents raised the lack of bike lanes and shared paths, as well as missing links and connections to cycling trails in other municipalities.

> **'Many people seem to think cycling is unsafe. So the point is to make cycle lanes/shared paths which will encourage them. The demand is there.'**
>
> **- resident from Frankston**

3.3.3.3 Public Transport

Participants were asked about their barriers to public transport use. The results are shown in Figure 29. The two greatest barriers were that public transport services take too long to arrive and are too slow. Many also responded that driving was simply quicker and more convenient.
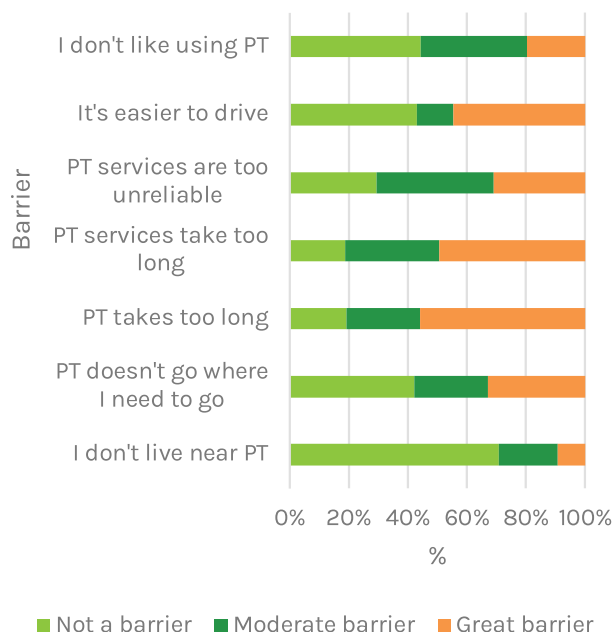

Figure 29 Barriers discouraging use of public transport

'My son is not quite old enough to take the bus to school alone. But even if he was it would take him 3-4 times longer by bus/walking than if I drive him. That makes no sense for a trip of approximately 6km…'

– resident from Frankston South

Respondents were unhappy with the frequency and coverage of public transport services. The need for more direction connections to destinations such as Chisholm TAFE, Mount Eliza, services and shops was a consistent theme. Safety while waiting and when taking public transport was also a recurrent theme. The inconsistent pricing and lack of car

parking at the train stations were also raised as deterrents to the usage of public transport.

COVID-19 has also made public transport less appealing, with a number of respondents stating they were uncomfortable with taking public transport during the pandemic.

3.3.4 Transport facilitators

Participants were asked what factors might act as *facilitators* for them to use different modes of transport.

3.3.4.1 Walking

Participants were asked what factors would encourage them to walk more. The results are shown in Figure 30, with *better street lighting* and *More direct walking routes* and *improved surfaces* rating the highest. These factors can all broadly be captured under a *need for greater levels of safety* theme. As suggested in Section 3.3.3.1, gaps in existing footpaths may be increasing the total distance residents have to walk, therefore increasing direct walking routes will result in higher participation for walking.
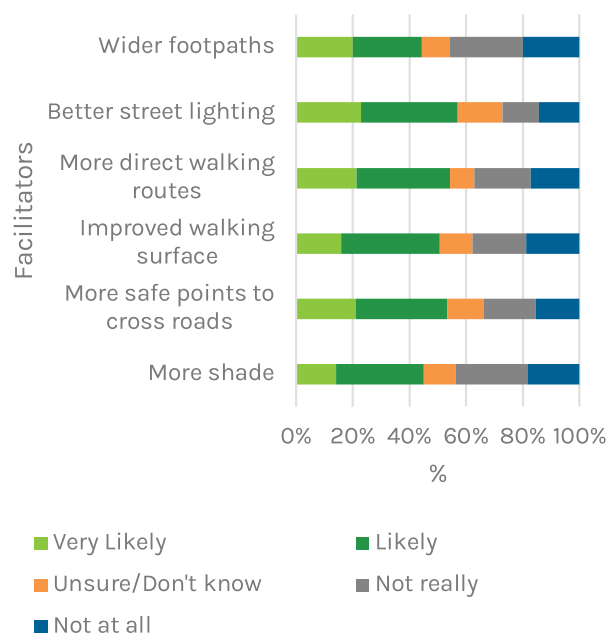

Figure 30 Facilitators to encourage walking

Respondents were able to provide open text responses as part of the survey. There were contributions from respondents specifically raising the issue of bikes on footpaths.

Other contributors commented they would like to see more water refill stations and benches. There were also responses suggesting better signposting and wayfinding, and more bush trails. One contributor highlighted that accessibility for people with physical disabilities may be lacking and further engagement with the differently abled community should be sought.

3.3.4.2 Cycling

When asked what factors would encourage them to ride more, *rider safety* emerged as a key, consistent theme. In particular, more off-road paths and better lighting were highlighted. The full set of results can be seen in Figure 31.
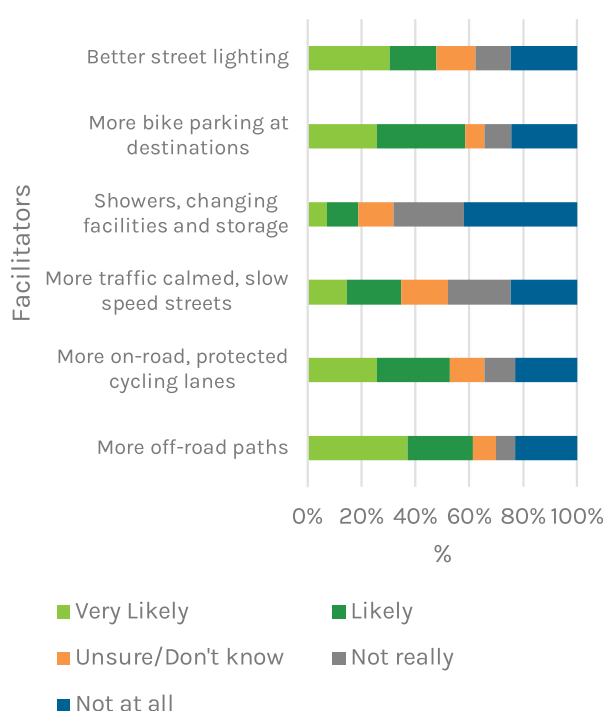

Figure 31 Facilitators to encourage cycling

In the additional feedback provided, contributions centred around safety, with *protected cycling lanes* for less confident cyclists a recurrent theme. Opportunities for an enhanced cycling network in Frankston will be a priority of the 2022 Frankston Integrated Transport Strategy.

'... safe streets are a prerequisite for people using bikes regularly. Paint is not infrastructure and offers no protection whatsoever. ... You need to be designing infrastructure that makes cycling safe for children, and the elderly, and mothers popping to the shops, and people wearing suits on the way into Melbourne, and people with physical disabilities.'

– resident from Frankston South

3.3.4.3 Public Transport

When asked what factors would encourage a shift towards greater public transport use, *faster*, *more frequent and direct services* and *live updates* were common responses. Integration of bus and train services was also important to many respondents. The overall results are shown in Figure 32. The results correspond with the barriers to public transport highlighted earlier.

Respondents were generally consistent in providing feedback regarding the need for better *coverage* and *reliability* of the buses. Listed below are additional feedback contributed by respondents:

- *'Bike parking at bus stops and shops is essential and sorely lacking. Right now there is exactly ONE bike rack at the IGA shops on Towerhill Rd...'*
- *'Frankston bus network has absolutely no appeal to me, it is designed for people who want to "wait around doing nothing"...'*
- *'Way signage. Directions for connecting services.'*
- *'The buses are always running late and early and are very unreliable, buses have frequently replaced trains this year and there is no express service to the city or Moorabbin - this is a huge inconvenience'*
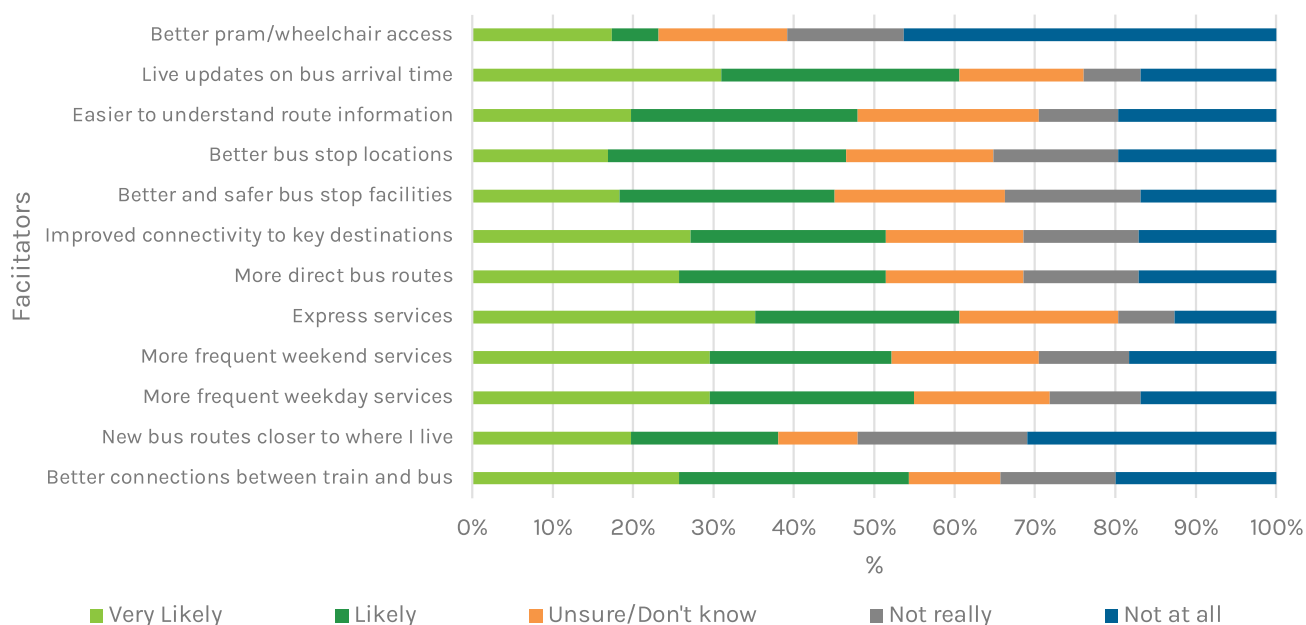
Figure 32 Facilitators to encourage public transport use

3.3.4.4 Private Vehicles

Participants were asked what would encourage them to drive more. This is an interesting question to include, as the existing Council policies are to *reduce* driving. Nevertheless, the most common facilitator to greater levels of car use was *more parking*.

> ## There is a good amount of parking in Frankston CBD, there may only need some maintenance of it in term of design rather than in number.'
>
> ## – resident from Frankston

If Council wish to achieve their goal of having less people drive, focusing on reducing car parking in the FMAC may be among the most effective means of meeting their mode share targets. If this was to occur, it would be important to provide '*carrots*' as well as '*sticks*', and this might include such things are better public transport, more bike infrastructure and an enhanced environment for walking.
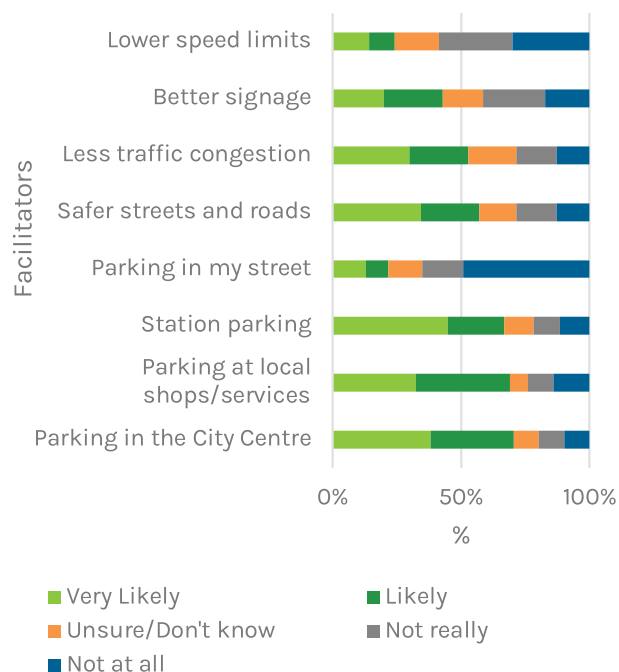

Figure 33 Facilitators to encourage private vehicle use

In general, respondents consistently took issue with the inconsistent pricing between Council-owned and privately-owned carparking. Despite acknowledging Council offered free parking up to three hours, respondents expected more, and were against paid parking at Bayside Shopping Centre. Disabled respondents were also unhappy with parking, providing feedback listed below:

- *'As a disabled person I have also found conflict with parking limitations and my personal needs.'*
- *'More disabled parking bays in streets and shopping centres, and for the bays to be wide enough for larger vehicles, not these 'small' spaces that have been made at Karingal Shopping Centre.'*

3.4   Vision for future

Over 75% of respondents want to see an extensive walking and cycling off-road network in Frankston, with 65% of them also wanting better access and safety for pedestrians and cyclists by then. Disabled access is assumed to get much better, as with the adoption of hydrogen and electric cars. And while more than 70% of respondents expected to see faster and more frequent train services expanding beyond Frankston, there were lower expectations for bus services. In fact, with less than half of the respondents anticipating the adoption of on-demand bus services and car sharing, the majority of respondents may still be inclined to drive as their primary form of transport. Nonetheless, when compared to earlier sections regarding current mode of travel habits, there are more respondents envisioning less reliance on private car usage in future.

'number one is separated bike lanes. There is no need to wait 20 years for that…'

– resident from Frankston South

Respondents took the time to provide their view on what actions should occur to enhance the future of transport, and many of these are of direct relevance to the new Integrated Transport Strategy:

- *'…charging points (EV) on almost every city street.'*
- *'More direct and more operative electric bus services.'*
- *'New direct rail/bus services to major employment centres such as Dandenong Moorabbin and Braeside'*
- *'Solar powered charge stations for electric vehicles.'*
- *'Extension of the Electrified Rail services to at least Baxter is critical to remove driver's changing to trains at Frankston and up the line. We absolutely need PT to the hospital and the Uni.'*
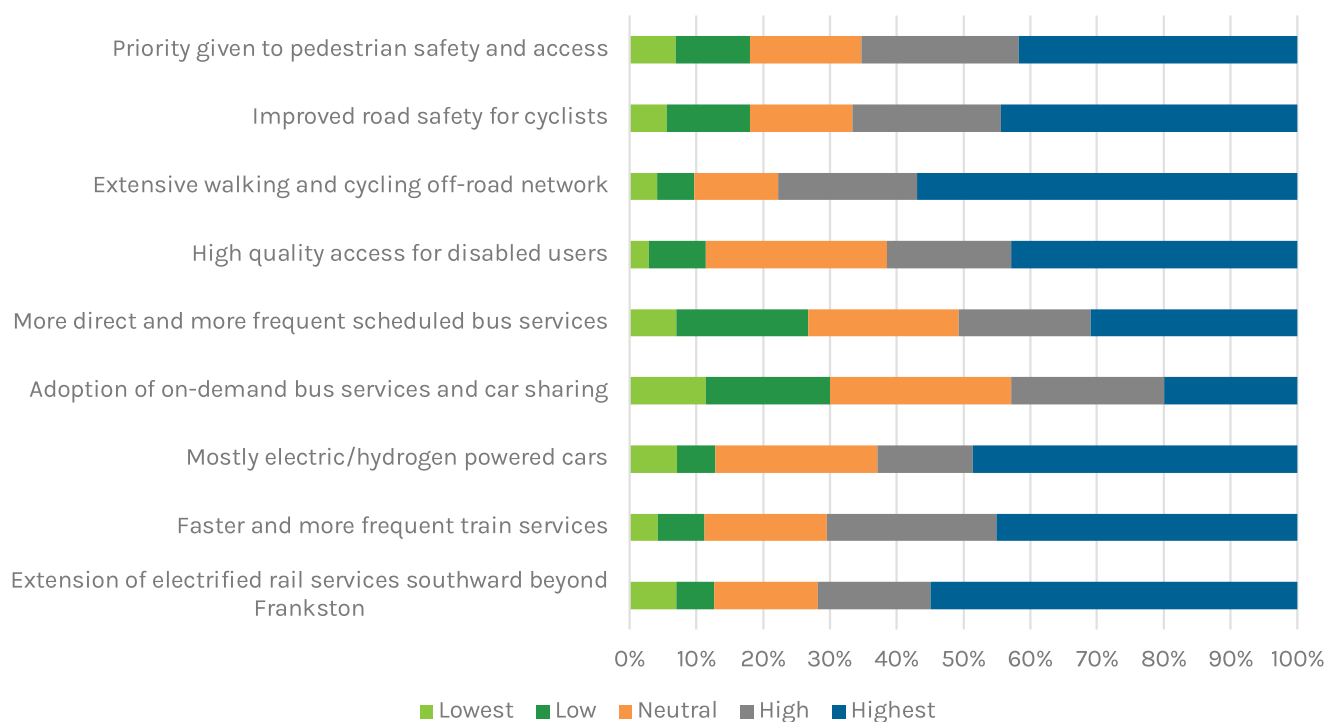

Figure 34 Vision for Frankston city in 20 years

3.5 COVID-19 influence on work travel

Participants were asked about their work from home habits since the emergence of COVID-19. More than half (51.6%) of the respondents started working from home during the pandemic, while 8.1% had already worked from home prior to COVID019. Some 40% identify as essential workers that cannot work from home (see Figure 35).
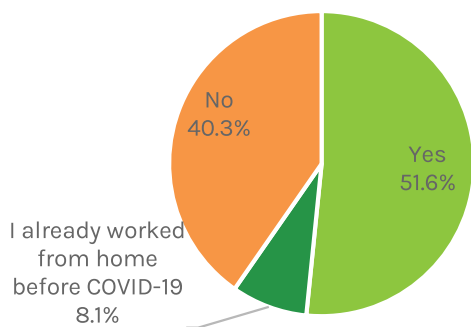

Figure 35 Proportion of respondents who work from home since onset of COVID-19

More than half of all respondents (see Figure 36) expect to work from home at least one day a week after COVID-19, it is likely this will impact traffic patterns considerably. For instance, if half of all workers work from home a day a week, this could potentially drop traffic volumes by 10%. The trend at the time of writing is that for those that do travel, they are less likely to travel by public transport, while there are still high levels of COVID-19 in the community. However, the shift to work from home opens the possibility of lower levels of car use in Frankston and this is an opportunity that should be capitalised on in 2022 Integrated Transport Strategy. For example, beyond the pandemic, community co-working hubs may allow Frankston residents to enjoy an office like environment while remaining closer to home, helping to reduce the amount of time commuting.

More than half of respondents expect to continue working from home at least one day per week after the pandemic.
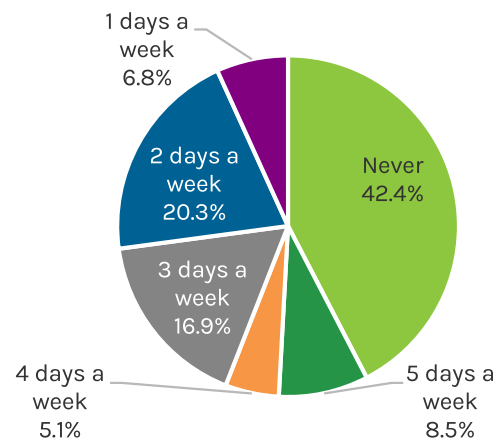

Figure 36 Proportion of respondents expecting to work from home after COVID-19

3.5.1 Additional views on the future of transport in Frankston

Strong concerns over public transport, reducing car dependency and congestion, more electric vehicles and parking were all suggested by respondents. Notable suggestions relevant to the Integrated Transport Strategy are listed below:

- *'A liveable city is one that people live in. Currently, apart from three apartment blocks, Frankston CBD has no housing. This relates to transport policy because the city should be for people to live in, not for cars to drive around and park in. A retail/commercial centre is not liveable. If the building mix were more balanced, more people would reside there. They would walk around and enjoy being there.'*

- *'Frankston needs to embrace its settlement pattern of small local service shops within walking distance as well established in Frankston and Frankston South.'*

- *'It needs to look into retrofitting other suburbs with better local services to make them less car dependent (e.g. Carrum). '*

- *'I envision my use of public transport to increase as I get older (currently 61 yo) which I think is a common experience. We already use the train regularly, but our favoured shopping destination is Mount Eliza and there is not a bus route. '*

- *'I would appreciate ongoing support for schools to manage parking and traffic congestion within the scope of local government influence. This is a challenging issue that affects school communities and nearby neighbours.'*

- *'I would like to use public transport but I don't know where to get information about routes, timetables and how to get a ticket. I also feel unsafe taking my young children. The bus tops always have rubbish, broken glass or graffiti. Always people standing there smoking too.'*

- *'Maybe there could be a large clean designated bus terminal at Carrum Downs Shops which could go direct to the train station. Including myself I know a lot of people who would use that!'*

- *'In addition to these much needed infrastructure improvements, I would like to see a lot more focus on behaviour change, like health promotion, education and incentives.'*

- *'Work with neighbouring councils to properly link bike paths. There is no united plan, it is frustrating, dangerous, and it puts people off changing to cycling as a commuting option.'*

- *'Consider how e-bikes, car share programs, electric vehicles and other forms of transport fit in. Would like to see some innovation and the council being future focused...'.*

3.6 Social Pinpoint Map

Out of 64 contributors to the mapping component, a total of 199 contributions were provided.
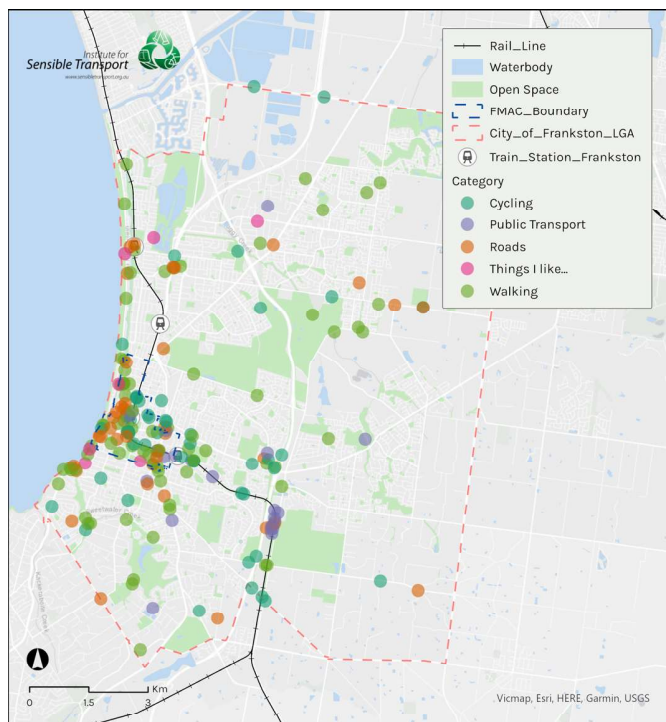

Figure 37 Social Pinpoint Map

Most contributions were concentrated in the FMAC, along the coast and railway line. Contributions were grouped into five broad categories as shown in Figure 38. Respondents showed most concern with the pedestrian environment (39.7%) followed by cycling (25.6%). Issues relating to traffic and electric vehicles were categorised as Roads (19.6%).
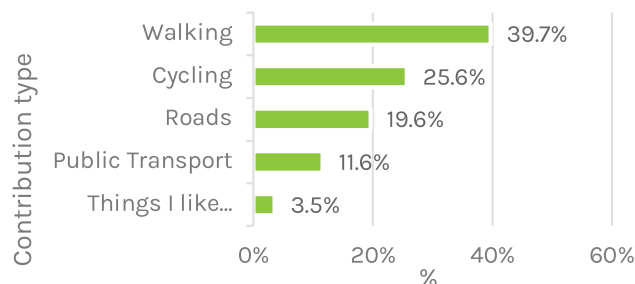

Figure 38 Share of contribution type

Walking had the most contributions in Carrum Downs (41.7%), Frankston South (51.9%), Skye (50%) and Seaford (47.4%). Two contributions were made for specific improvements and consideration for disabled access. Both were related to insufficient access for people using mobility aids and gave examples for the paths between Frankston Reservoir and Frankston Beach, as well as Seaford Train Station and the neighbouring shopping strip.

Cycling was most important in Baxter (100%), Frankston North (100%), and Langwarrin South (75%). Cycling had a 29.7% share of the overall concerns regarding mode of transport in Frankston, 25% in Carrum Downs, 22.2% in Frankston South, 16.7% in Skye, and 15.8% in Seaford.

Public Transport was of the most concern in Langwarrin, accounting for more than half (55.6%) of the contributions. Contributors felt strongly about the lack of public transport services, and specifically recommended the electrification of the Baxter Railway Line.

'The 28k residents of Langwarrin miss out on public transport'

– resident from Langwarrin

Many contributors were already using active transport and highlighted missing links and connections between footpath, shared paths and bike trails.