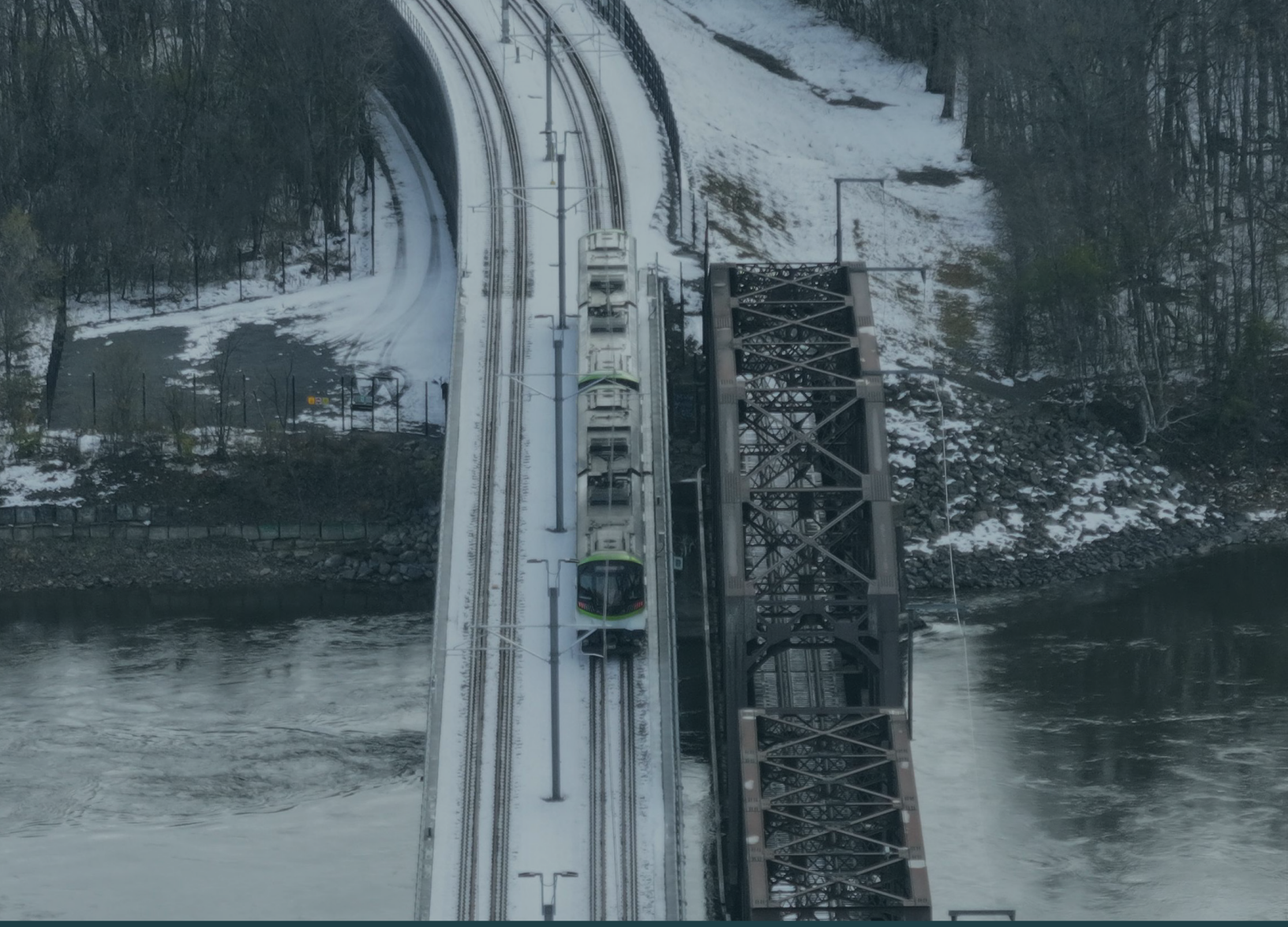

Riding the expansion: Impacts of the REM across six waves of the Montréal Mobility Survey

Progress Report 2019–2026

TRAM TRANSPORTATION RESEARCH AT MCGILL

McGill

Produced by Hongying Wu, Rim Anabtawi, Thiago Carvalho, Hisham Negm, Meredith Alousi-Jones, Yu Zhang, Matias Perinetti-Paniagua, Clara McCool, Neil Choudhury, Pia Douliery, Mark Moutter, Evan Roncace, Mathew Page, and Ahmed El-Geneidy.

All photos and maps used in this report have been sourced from the Transportation Research at McGill (TRAM) lab.

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Territorial Acknowledgment

We would like to acknowledge that McGill University is located on unceded Indigenous lands. Tiohtià:ke/Montréal has long served as a site of meeting and exchange amongst Indigenous peoples, including the Kanien'kehaì:ka of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, Huron/Wendat, Abenaki, and Anishinaabeg, among others. TRAM recognizes and respects these nations as the traditional stewards of the lands and waters. We respect the continued relationship these diverse Indigenous peoples have with the territory upon which we now gather.

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Summary

The first branch of the Réseau express métropolitain (REM), a new light rail system in Montréal, began service in the summer of 2023, connecting the South Shore to downtown. The Deux-Montagnes branch followed in November 2025, and the Anse-à-l'Orme branch opened in May 2026, bringing the network to 23 operational stations across three branches. The final segment, connecting downtown to Montréal-Trudeau International Airport, is scheduled to enter service by the end of 2027. The 67-km light rail network is expected to have major impacts on residents across the Montréal metropolitan region, providing a unique opportunity to study the outcomes of a major public transport investment in the Canadian context. This report follows a previous report published in 2025 [1], which provided an overview of the results of the first five waves of an ongoing survey conducted by the Transportation Research at McGill (TRAM) Group and Sphere lab in the fall of 2019 (wave one), 2021 (wave two), 2022 (wave three), 2023 (wave four), and 2024 (wave five). This report integrates data from the sixth wave of the survey, conducted in the winter of 2026, a few months after the opening of the Deux-Montagnes branch and before the opening of the Anse-à-l'Orme branch, providing an overview of changes in travel patterns and quality of life for Montréalers. The surveys are part of the multiyear project titled "Measuring the impacts of the Réseau Express Métropolitain (REM) on health, mobility, and equity: A longitudinal study" funded through the federal government's Collaborative Health Research Projects (CHRP) program. This report documents the methodology used for the surveys and provides a summary of the findings from wave one (N= 3,520), wave two (N= 4,058), wave three (N= 4,065), wave four (N= 5,312), wave five (N= 7,428), and wave six (N= 5,353).

Key findings

REM users consistently show stronger loyalty to public transit compared to non-users. Across all three branches, over 85% of REM users plan to continue using transit and at least 65% would recommend public transit, compared with roughly 50% and 40% respectively among car users.

Travel time savings are the primary reason that REM users choose the service. 70% of REM users identified short travel times as an important factor. Other factors such as comfort (29%), environmental friendliness (27%), affordability (22%), health (22%), and destination connectivity (18%) were all reported as important factors to a lesser extent.

Following its opening, the **REM attracted users** who had not originally planned to use it. Among panel survey respondents, 8% of those in the North Shore who had not intended to use the REM ultimately did, compared to 13% along the Central Branch and 17% in the South Shore. This indicates the network attracted a significant portion of initially uninterested respondents once it became operational.

Affordability concerns rose across the Greater Montréal region across all 6 waves. These concerns were consistently more prominent near REM stations. Concern about affordability rose from 36% in 2019 to 46% in 2026 among those living within 2.5 km of a station, compared with 30% to 39% for those living elsewhere in the region.

Sommaire

La première branche du Réseau express métropolitain (REM), un nouveau système de train léger sur rail à Montréal, a commencé ses opérations à l'été 2023, reliant la Rive-Sud au centre-ville. La branche Deux-Montagnes a suivi en novembre 2025, et la branche Anse-à-l'Orme a ouvert en mai 2026, portant le réseau à 23 stations opérationnelles réparties sur trois branches. Le dernier tronçon, reliant le centre-ville à l'aéroport international Montréal-Trudeau, devrait entrer en service d'ici la fin de 2027. Le réseau de train léger de 67 km devrait avoir des répercussions majeures sur les résidents de la région métropolitaine de Montréal, offrant une occasion unique d'étudier les retombées d'un investissement important en transport en commun dans le contexte canadien. Ce rapport suit celui publié en 2025[1], qui résumait les cinq premières vagues d'une enquête menée par le groupe de recherche en transport de l'Université McGill (TRAM) et le Sphere Lab à l'automne 2019 (première vague), 2021 (deuxième), 2022 (troisième), 2023 (quatrième) et 2024 (cinquième). Ce rapport intègre les données de la sixième vague de l'enquête, menée à l'hiver 2026 quelques mois après l'ouverture de la branche Deux-Montagnes et avant l'ouverture de la branche Anse-à-l'Orme, donnant un aperçu des changements dans les comportements de déplacement et la qualité de vie des Montréalais. Les sondages font partie d'un projet continu intitulé « Les impacts du nouveau Réseau express métropolitain (REM) sur la mobilité, la santé et l'équité : une étude pré- et post intervention » financé par le programme de Projets de recherche concertée sur la santé (PRCS) du gouvernement fédéral. Ce rapport documente la méthodologie utilisée pour les enquêtes et fournit un aperçu des résultats tirés des vagues un (N= 3520), deux (N= 4058), trois (N= 4065), quatre (N= 5312), cinq (N= 7,428) et six (N= 5,353).

Principaux résultats

Les usagers du REM font systématiquement preuve d'un engagement plus fort envers les transports en commun que les non-usagers. Plus de 85 % prévoient continuer à utiliser les transports en commun et au moins 65 % les recommanderaient, contre environ 50 % et 40 % respectivement chez les automobilistes.

Les gains de temps de déplacement sont la principale raison pour laquelle les usagers du REM choisissent ce service. 70 % des usagers du REM ont identifié la rapidité des déplacements comme un facteur important. D'autres facteurs tels que le confort (29 %), le respect de l'environnement (27 %), l'abordabilité (22 %), la santé (22 %) et la connectivité des destinations (18 %) ont été signalés comme des facteurs importants, mais dans une moindre mesure.

Depuis sa mise en service, le REM **a attiré de nombreux usagers** qui ne prévoyaient pas l'utiliser initialement. Parmi les répondants, 8 % sur la Rive-Nord, 13 % sur la branche Centrale et 17% sur la Rive-Sud ont finalement adopté le REM malgré une intention initiale contraire.

Les **préoccupations liées à l'abordabilité** ont fortement augmenté dans la région de Montréal au cours des sept dernières années, particulièrement à proximité des stations du REM. Chez les personnes vivant à moins de 2,5 km d'une station, elles sont passées de 36 % en 2019 à 46 % en 2026, contre 30 % à 39 % ailleurs dans la région métropolitaine.

1 Introduction

In 2018, the Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec (CDPQ) began constructing the Réseau express métropolitain (REM), a fully automated, 67-kilometer light-rail network in the Montréal region. When complete in 2027, the $9.4 billion project will link numerous suburbs and the Montréal-Trudeau International Airport to downtown Montréal with frequent, high-speed rail service (Figure 1.1). The first segment, linking Brossard on the South Shore to Gare Centrale, opened in July 2023. The Deux-Montagnes branch began service in November 2025, extending REM operations from the South Shore through downtown Montréal to the North Shore. The Anse-à-l'Orme branch began service in May of 2026, leaving only the airport branch still to open. As of the latest commissioning schedule, this final branch is expected to begin service in 2027.

As one of the largest public-transit investments currently being built in North America, this state-of-the-art, universally accessible light-rail network is expected to fundamentally alter travel and land-use patterns across the Montréal region. The construction of the REM has significantly impacted local built environments and travel behaviour [2–4], with further effects on residents' health and wellbeing expected over the coming decades. In addition to positive effects on population health [5–8], public transit improvements have been associated with a range of broader benefits, including environmental [9,10], social [11–13], and economic outcomes [14,15].

The scale and phased implementation of the REM provide an important opportunity to examine how major transit investments influence residents' perceptions, travel behaviours, and everyday mobility patterns over time. For this purpose, the Montréal Mobility Survey (MMS) has been implemented as a multi-wave data collection process, intending to provide longitudinal insights into respondents' perceptions of the REM's impact and improving overall understanding of the development of such infrastructure. A total of six waves of survey data have been collected so far in Fall 2019, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, and Winter 2026. Wave 6 was conducted in winter rather than fall to capture the initial operation of the Deux-Montagnes branch, before the Anse-à-l'Orme branch enters service in May 2026.

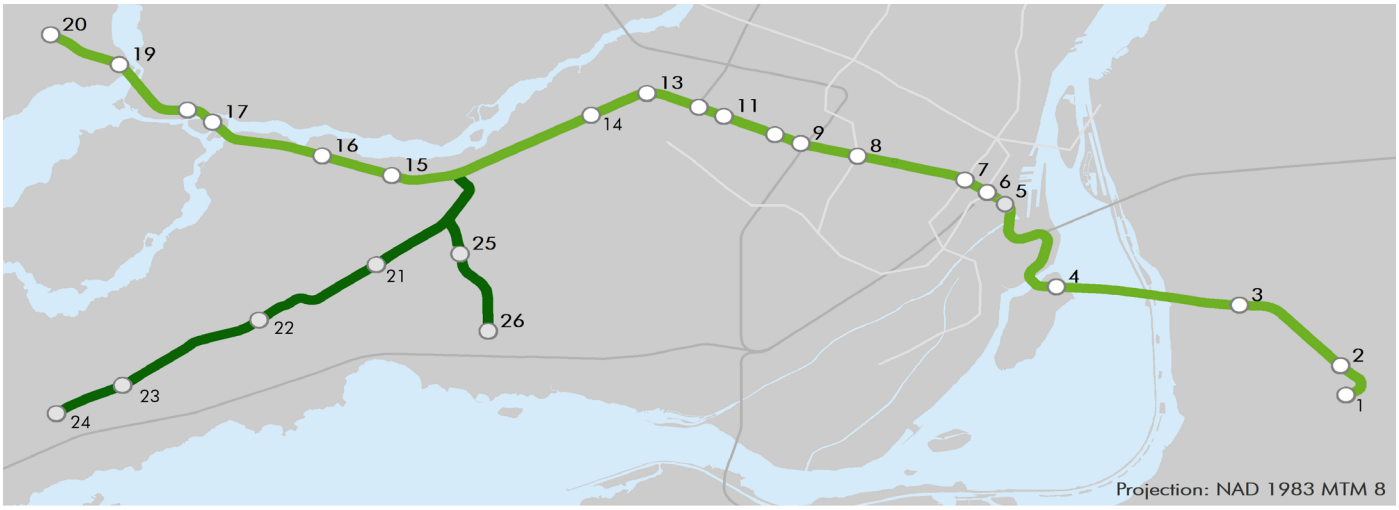
The surveys were administered in the Montréal Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) to residents aged 18 years and older, yielding 3,520 valid responses in Wave 1, 4,058 in Wave 2, 4,065 in Wave 3, 5,312 in Wave 4, 7,428 in Wave 5, and 5,353 in Wave 6. Recruitment for each wave was done directly by the TRAM team through online and in-person methods, and additional recruitment was undertaken by the Leger market-research agency. In addition to collecting multiple waves of data, the Montréal Mobility Survey includes the collection of a panel dataset, which includes people who answered at least two waves of the survey.

The longitudinal and panel design of the Montréal Mobility Survey has become particularly relevant since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. This report makes use of the substantial data collected by the team before (2019), during (2021-2022), and after (2023-2026) the COVID-19 pandemic to control for the effects of the pandemic on travel behaviour. Due to construction delays, the opening of the first branch of the REM was postponed from 2021 to

2023. Construction impacts, perceptions, and intentions to use the REM were the main focus of waves 2 and 3 of the survey. The collection of waves 4 and 5 following the opening of the first REM branch linking downtown Montréal to the South Shore, allowed for assessment of the REM's actual operational impacts on users' health, wellbeing, and travel behaviour. Wave 6 builds on this longitudinal assessment by examining the impacts of the network's expansion after the opening of the Deux-Montagnes branch, while continuing to track how the South Shore branch has shaped residents' mobility, experiences, health, wellbeing, and broader concerns over time (Figure1.1).

This report focuses on the collection, validation, and analysis of waves one to six of the Montréal Mobility Survey. Section two presents a detailed description of the survey methods, including the recruitment, data-cleaning, and validation processes. Section three presents the sample's demographic characteristics and spatial distribution. Section four details general travel behaviour and telecommuting patterns. Section five examines the travel behaviour of REM users, particularly those located in the South Shore, North Shore, and Central Branch areas where the REM was operational at the time of wave 6 of the survey. Section seven presents the impact of the REM on users' health, quality of life, workplace outcomes, physical activity, and concerns about neighbourhood affordability.

The evidence generated from these longitudinal assessments will inform policy in the Montréal CMA, where additional REM extensions are being studied and considered, as well as in other regions evaluating similar major investments aimed at advancing a combination of health, travel behaviour, environmental, social, and economic objectives.



REM stations

1 - Brossard
2 - Du Quartier
3 - Panama
4 - Île-des-Soeurs
5 - Griffintown-Bernard-Landry
6 - Central Station
7 - McGill
8 - Édouard-Montpetit
9 - Canora
10 - Ville de Mont-Royal
11 - Côte-de-Liese
12 - Montpellier
13 - Du Ruisseau
14 - Bois-Franc
15 - Sunnybrooke
16 - Pierrefonds-Roxboro
17 - Île-Bigras
18 - Sainte-Dorothée
19 - Grand-Moulin
20 - Deux-Montagnes
21 - Des Sources
22 - Fairview-Pointe-Claire
23 - Kirkland
24 - L'Anse-à-l'Orme
25 - Marie-Curie
26 - YUL-Aéroport-Montréal-Trudeau

REM - operating
REM - under construction
Metro
Commuter train
Data Sources: CDPQ Infra, STM
0 2.5 5 10 Km
N

Figure 1.1 Réseau express métropolitain (REM) network and stations as of February 2026.

2 Recruitment and Validation Methods

2.1 Recruitment

Recruitment of wave 6 participants was undertaken between February and March 2026. Consistent with the first five waves of the survey, various recruitment techniques recommended by Dillman et al. [16] were employed to reduce sampling bias. Two URLs were used to circulate the survey and recruit participants in English and French: www.mobility-montreal.ca and www.mobilite-montreal.ca. All respondents completed the survey online. Recruitment included paid advertisements on Facebook and Instagram targeting residents of the Montréal CMA. Figure 2.1 shows the digital flyers used to advertise on these platforms. Additionally, recruitment of the panel sample was done by contacting all participants of previous waves who provided their e-mail addresses to invite them to participate in wave 6. As in all previous waves, additional recruitment was conducted by Leger, a Canadian public opinion and survey firm, to complement recruitment done directly by the TRAM team. The company contacted respondents from its proprietary panel of survey respondents who live in areas surrounding existing and future REM stations. Panel sample recruitment was also conducted by Leger through recontacting respondents who had participated in at least one previous survey wave. Since emails from Leger respondents were not available to the TRAM team, a unique identifier (or "token") was created for each respondent and was used to link responses from panel respondents. Table 2.1 summarizes pre-validation recruitment across all six waves.

Table 2.1 TRAM and Leger total recruitment (pre-validation)

Source	TRAM	Leger	Total
Wave 1	3,675	2,267	5,942
Wave 2	4,670	2,317	6,987
Wave 3	4,147	2,275	6,422
Wave 4	7,281	1,613	8,894
Wave 5	11,103	2,207	13,310
Wave 6	8,579	597	9,176

In keeping with best practices for survey recruitment [16], incentives were used to encourage participation and help improve respondent engagement. Participants were informed that they would be eligible to enter a prize draw upon completing the survey. The following prizes were advertised to respondents and distributed through a random draw after the completion of data collection:

- 1 x iPad Air
- 1 x Nespresso Virtuo
- 1 x Philips Airfryer
- 1 x Bluetooth Projector
- 1 x Fujifilm Instax
- 1 x Apple Watch
- 4 x Bluetooth speakers
- 2 x Fitbit fitness trackers
- 4 x noise-cancelling headphones
- 2 x Anker Powerbank
- 5 x $50 Gift Cards
- 5 x $10 Gift Cards

To further support panel retention, additional incentives were offered to selected respondents based on their participation in more than three survey waves and their spatial relevance to the REM network. This approach was designed to maintain continued participation from respondents who are especially important for monitoring longitudinal changes resulting from the REM's phased implementation. Eligible respondents received gift cards from retailers of their choice.

2.2 Data validation

A thorough data-cleaning procedure was applied to the six waves of the Montréal Mobility Survey. The cleaning process was subdivided into sequential steps, each constituting a filter that modified the number of valid responses. Some steps were cross-sectional, meaning each wave was cleaned and validated using only information from that wave, while others used panel data, allowing additional validation by comparing respondents' answers across multiple waves. The same procedure was applied to all six waves to ensure consistency in the exclusion criteria for unreliable responses.

Survey weights were introduced to improve sample representativeness. Two sets of weights are used: a demographic and mode share weight and a commute-specific weight calculated for commuters. Weighted results are noted where applied in this report. Sample sizes for some waves may differ slightly from previous reports due to updates in data processing.

A total of 3,593 respondents participated in two waves, 1,458 in three, 699 in four, 300 in five, and 73 were present across all six waves. What follows is a description of each step of the cleaning process, applied sequentially in the order presented:

Figure 2.1 Digital flyers used to advertise on Facebook and Instagram

1. Incomplete answers: All surveys that were not answered to completion were dropped.

2. Multiple IP addresses 1: If more than two surveys were submitted from the same IP address, all observations from this IP were dropped.

3. Repeated e-mail: If the same e-mail was submitted for more than one survey, all observations from this address were dropped.

4. *Multiple IP addresses 2: If more than one survey was submitted from the same IP address, and at least one of these came from the survey company Leger, all observations from this IP were dropped.*

5. Age above 90: If a person indicated that they were born more than 90 years prior to the survey year, their response was dropped.

6. Invalid home location: If home location was either not provided, outside of the Montréal CMA, or located in an invalid location (e.g., on water or on a bridge), the observation was dropped.

7. Work or school outside of CMA: If a work or school location was outside of the Montréal CMA, or located in an invalid location (e.g., on water or on a bridge), the observation was dropped.

8. Project awareness: If the person said that they were aware of the REM project in a previous wave but not in a subsequent wave, the observation was dropped. This filter is only for people who participated in multiple waves.

9. Answer speed: Surveys in the top 5% of speed of completion were dropped. It must be noted that different groups of respondents, depending on their answers, got different sets of questions. Each of these groups were cleaned according to their own respective top 5% speed.

10. Age and height change: If a person's reported age changed inconsistently across waves, or if their height changed more than 3cm from one wave to another, the observation was dropped. This filter is only for people who answered multiple waves.

11. Multi-source repetition: In wave 6, this check was introduced for the first time. Respondents who submitted duplicate entries through multiple recruitment sources, such as the Facebook link and panel email, were flagged and removed.

The results of the cleaning process are summarized in Table 2.2, showing how many observations were dropped in each step.

Table 2.2 Number of dropped and validated observations by filtering step

Step	2019		2021		2022		2023		2024		2026	
	Dropped	Remaining	Dropped	Remaining	Dropped	Remaining	Dropped	Remaining	Dropped	Remaining	Dropped	Remaining
0	-	5,942	-	6,987	-	6,422	-	8,894	-	13,271	-	9,141
1	1,794	4,148	1,862	5,125	1,575	4,847	2,655	6,239	4,457	8,814	2,568	6,573
2	67	4,081	67	5,058	43	4,804	103	6,136	246	8,568	320	6,253
3	10	4,071	74	4,984	24	4,780	32	6,104	118	8,450	72	6,181
4	180	3,891	212	4,772	140	4,640	109	5,995	169	8,281	38	6,143
5	2	3,889	3	4,769	1	4,639	0	5,995	4	8,277	1	6,142
6	53	3,836	124	4,645	64	4,575	99	5,896	108	8,169	75	6,067
7	37	3,799	35	4,610	63	4,512	67	5,829	97	8,072	54	6,013
8	0	3,799	243	4,367	149	4,363	64	5,765	86	7,986	233	5,780
9	196	3,603	229	4,138	227	4,136	305	5,460	411	7,575	309	5,471
10	83	3,520	80	4,058	71	4,065	148	5,312	175	7,400	115	5,356
11	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	5,353

3 Sample Characteristics

3.1 Demographic characteristics

Across the six waves, the samples' demographic characteristics show a fairly representative distribution of different genders, age groups, income brackets, visible-minority statuses, and employment types (Table 3.1) compared with the 2021 population census of the Montréal CMA (Statistics Canada, 2023). Figure 3.1 shows the distribution of the wave 6 sample's home, work, and school locations across Montréal.

Table 3.1 Demographic characteristics for the six waves compared with Montréal CMA census

		wave 1 (2019)	wave 2 (2021)	wave 3 (2022)	wave 4 (2023)	wave 5 (2024)	wave 6 (2026)	Montréal CMA
Total N		3,520	4,058	4,065	5,312	7,428	5,353	4,291,635*
Gender	Man	45.34%	59.51%	52.72%	46.03%	44.59%	45.77%	49.04%
	Woman	53.07%	38.37%	45.66%	51.17%	52.13%	50.38%	50.96%
	Other	1.59%	2.12%	1.62%	2.80%	1.87%	2.24%	-
Age group	18 to 24	12.59%	5.35%	4.23%	9.71%	10.37%	14.01%	8.14%
	25 to 44	42.27%	36.42%	36.21%	34.96%	37.40%	34.21%	27.70%
	45 to 64	33.10%	38.02%	39.11%	35.94%	34.50%	32.13%	26.17%
	65 to 74	9.66%	15.67%	15.65%	14.91%	13.54%	14.46%	9.90%
	75 and over	2.39%	4.53%	4.80%	4.48%	4.19%	5.19%	8.10%
Income bracket (in CAD)	Under $30k	14.91%	9.68%	8.83%	8.13%	6.91%	5.51%	14.44%
	$30k to $59.9k	27.47%	21.51%	22.61%	21.29%	14.01%	12.24%	24.20%
	$60k to $89.9k	20.99%	22.08%	21.08%	21.91%	16.22%	14.72%	20.25%
	$90k to $149.9k	25.68%	28.98%	29.32%	30.06%	25.59%	24.32%	24.41%
	$150k and over	10.94%	17.74%	18.15%	18.60%	21.53%	24.57%	16.69%
Migrant status	Non-immigrant	76.39%	76.79%	78.70%	75.96%	74.53%	73.58%	71.84%
	Immigrant	22.87%	22.45%	20.47%	22.87%	24.11%	25.07%	28.16%
Visible minority	Visible minority	19.86%	14.14%	14.76%	19.09%	19.80%	21.67%	27.19%
	Not a visible minority	80.14%	85.86%	85.24%	80.91%	80.20%	78.33%	72.81%
Work status	Employed	66.42%	62.96%	65.76%	65.85%	68.13%	64.41%	60.75%
	Unemployed	5.43%	3.67%	2.95%	3.54%	3.37%	3.96%	5.54%
	Not in the workforce	15.99%	23.44%	23.12%	20.41%	18.00%	18.68%	33.71%
	Student	16.56%	8.33%	6.45%	12.18%	12.68%	18.05%	-

*Population of Montréal in 2021 (over 18-years old)

3.2 Sample spatial distribution

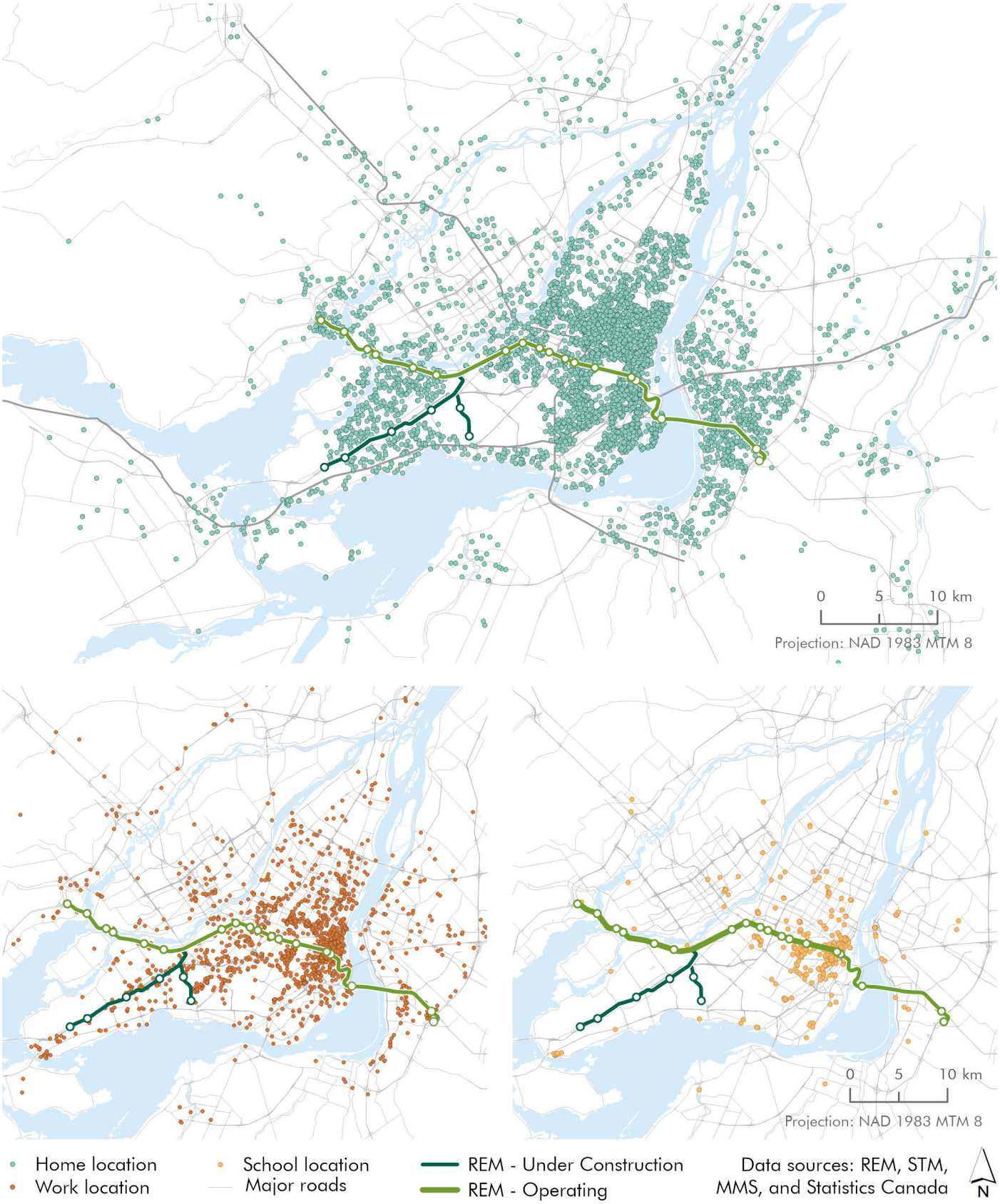


Figure 3.1 Home, work, and school locations of respondents for the sixth wave of the survey

4 Travel Behaviour

4.1 Weekly travel

Across the six waves, participants reported their trips from the previous week for four purposes: work, school, shopping, and healthcare, and across three modes: car, transit, and active travel. Figure 4.1 presents the weighted average trip frequency by mode. Demographic and mode-share weights were applied to improve cross-wave comparability. Results from 2026 show slight decreases in active and car travel and a slight increase in transit use compared to Fall 2024. Average trip frequency also declined slightly from 2024, likely reflecting the winter timing of Wave 6; however, weekly trips remain below 2019 levels, even as the 2026 results suggest continued recovery from COVID-19-related disruptions observed in earlier waves.

Figure 4.2 presents the changes in panel respondents' dominant transport modes from 2024 to 2026 (N = 1,673) for all reported purposes. A respondent's dominant mode is that being used for more than 50% of reported trips. Respondents without a dominant mode were classified as multimodal. To ensure comparability, these results were weighted to match 2024 mode shares to the 2018 Montréal Origin-Destination Survey. Results indicate that in 2026, active modes have increased their share as a dominant mode, whereas driving has slightly declined. These panel results also show that there has been a decrease in transit as a dominant mode in 2026 compared to the last wave of the survey. A substantial portion of new active and multimodal commuters shifted from transit and car trips.

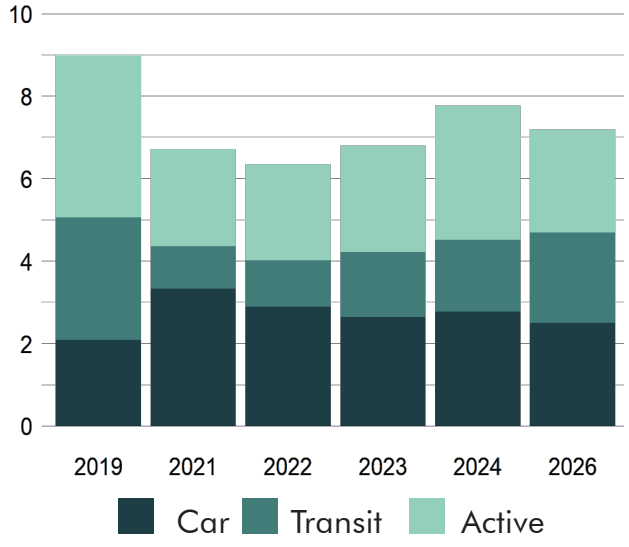


Figure 4.1 Average weekly trip frequency by mode and year (weighted)

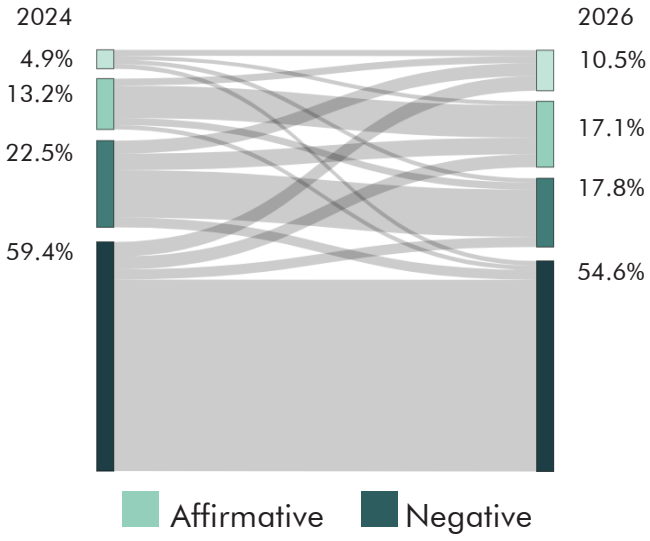


Figure 4.2 Change in dominant modes (N= 1,673, weighted)


Île-des-Sœurs
900, boul. René-Lévesque

4.2 Commute modal share

Across the six waves, respondents were grouped according to their main commute mode, defined as the mode used for the longest distance in their reported commute trip. These groups capture car-, public transit-, and active travel-based commutes. Results were weighted using the 2021 Canadian Census for commuters to ensure cross-wave comparability. Car remained the dominant commute mode throughout the period, with public transit in second and active travel in third (Figure 4.3).The clearest deviation appears in wave 2 (2021), where the car share rose and transit share fell relative to wave 1 (2019), consistent with broad pandemic-era avoidance of shared transport. From wave 3 (2022) onward, transit shares recovered gradually, while active commuting remained relatively stable. Wave 6 (2026) shows commute modal shares that have remained stable since wave 5 (2024) and that no longer differ clearly from pre-pandemic levels, suggesting that post-COVID commuting patterns have stabilized. It's important to note that wave 6 was conducted in winter rather than fall, which may have lowered the share of active commuting and slightly raised the share of car and transit use compared with what a fall survey would have captured. Moreover, this aggregate measure does not yet reflect specific mode shifts toward the REM, which are examined in Section 5. The network's full impact on commute mode is expected to become more visible once the remaining branches become operational.

4.3 Telecommuting

The six waves of the survey span periods before (2019), during (2021), and after (2022 to 2026) COVID-19 pandemic-related travel restrictions, providing an opportunity to examine how telecommuting (working from home) and hybrid work (combined workplace and remote work) evolved across this period. In 2019, telecommuting was uncommon: approximately three quarters of workers reported not telecommuting at all in a typical week. The pandemic dramatically shifted this pattern. By 2021, telecommuting five days per

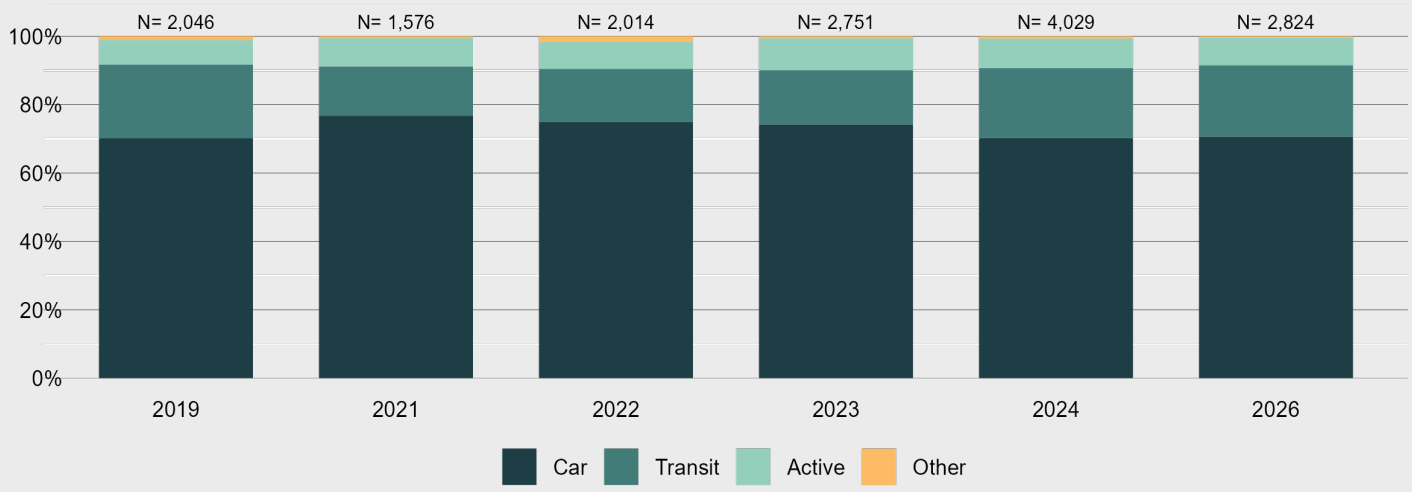


Figure 4.3 Commute modal share (weighted)

week became the most common arrangement, and the share of workers not telecommuting fell to around 40% (Figure 4.4). This share remained roughly stable through 2024, while the distribution within telecommuters gradually shifted toward hybrid schedules. Wave 6 (2026) shows the most pronounced change in telecommuting since the pandemic surge. The share of workers not telecommuting fell well below 20%, while telecommuting 1 or 2 days per week emerged as the most common pattern. Full-time remote work, which dominated in 2021, has since become less prevalent than hybrid arrangements, indicating that workplaces have largely settled into mixed schedules rather than fully returning to in-person work or remaining fully remote. As wave 6 was conducted in winter rather than fall, the share of workers telecommuting may appear higher, particularly for workers with flexible arrangements, who may use telecommuting more often during periods of severe weather. The magnitude of the shift observed between 2024 and 2026 is large enough to suggest a genuine change, although the precise share may overstate the structural level by a few percentage points.

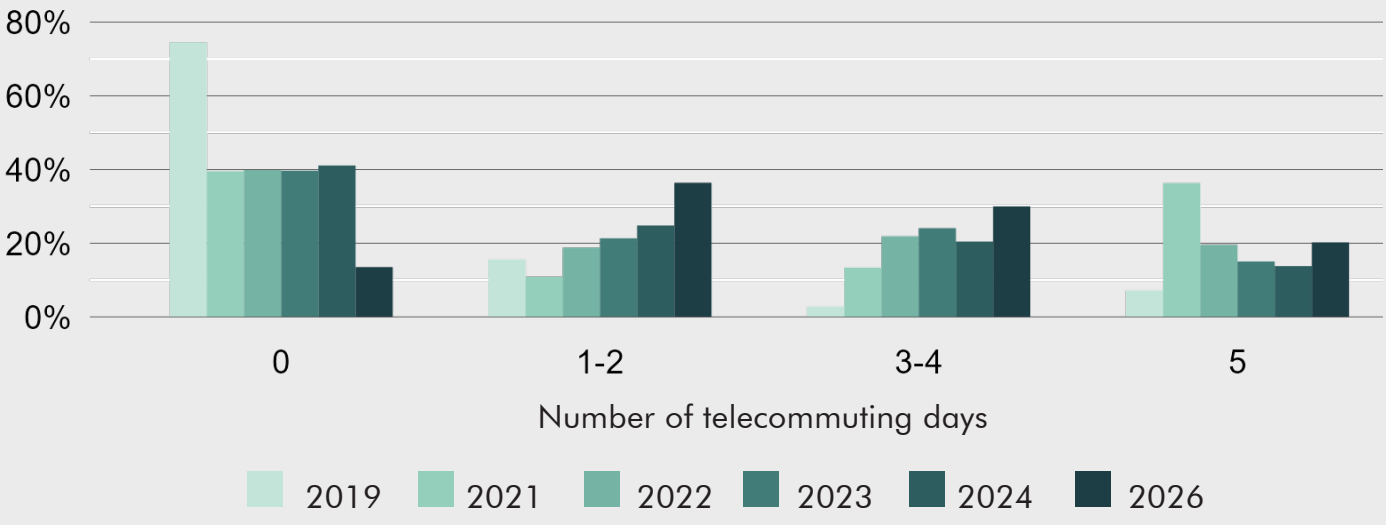


Figure 4.4 Share of workers by telecommuting frequency

5 REM Usage

5.1 REM Use by Branch

To understand travel behaviour and usage patterns across the REM network, all respondents were assigned to a REM branch using methods adapted to the data available for each group: REM users were assigned to the stations they reported using, while non-users were assigned based on proximity to the nearest REM station. This approach allows each branch to be examined separately for both groups. In previous reports, branch assignment relied on spatial polygons covering south Montréal and was based only on respondents' home locations, which did not capture station-use patterns.

As shown in Figure 5.1, operational stations were classified into three branches: the South Shore, the Central branch, and the North Shore. REM users were assigned to a branch based on the boarding and alighting stations reported for their most recent trip. Assignment was prioritized by the station accessed from home; if home was not part of the trip, work was used, followed by school. Trips without home, work, or school at either end were excluded, as location data are not available for other origins and destinations, such as shopping or recreational activities. For non-users, who do not have REM trip data, network distance from home to each REM station was calculated, and respondents were assigned to their nearest station. Non-users were matched with all REM stations, including future West Island and airport stations, to capture potential future use.

REM use varies by branch, as shown in Figure 5.2. Users are more common on the North and South Shore branches, while the Central branch has more non-users, likely reflecting the availability of more alternative transport options on the Island of Montréal.

With the opening of the new REM branche, survey results show a mostly even gender split among users of the North Shore and Central branches, while the South Shore has a higher proportion of women, who represent 56% of respondents, as shown in Figure 5.3.

Comparing intended REM use in 2019, 2021, and 2022 with actual use in 2023, 2024, and 2026, as shown in Figure 5.4, indicates that many respondents used the service despite not initially anticipating doing so. On the South Shore, 15% of women and 19% of men who had not originally intended to use the REM eventually used it. In contrast, 18% of women and 18% of men who had intended to use it did not, suggesting that women were more likely than men to adhere to their initial intention. Along the Central branch, among respondents who had not intended to use the REM, 25% of men and 19% of women eventually used it. On the North Shore, 8% of men and 9% of women who had not intended to use the REM eventually did. Conversely, 13% of men and 11% of women who had intended to use it did not. These findings suggest that the REM became more relevant to daily travel than some respondents had expected during its construction.

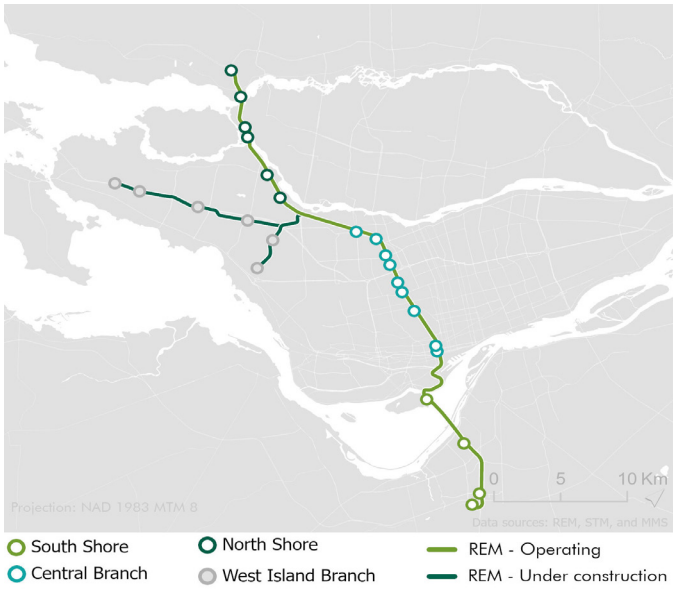


Figure 5.1 REM line and stations by branch operational status

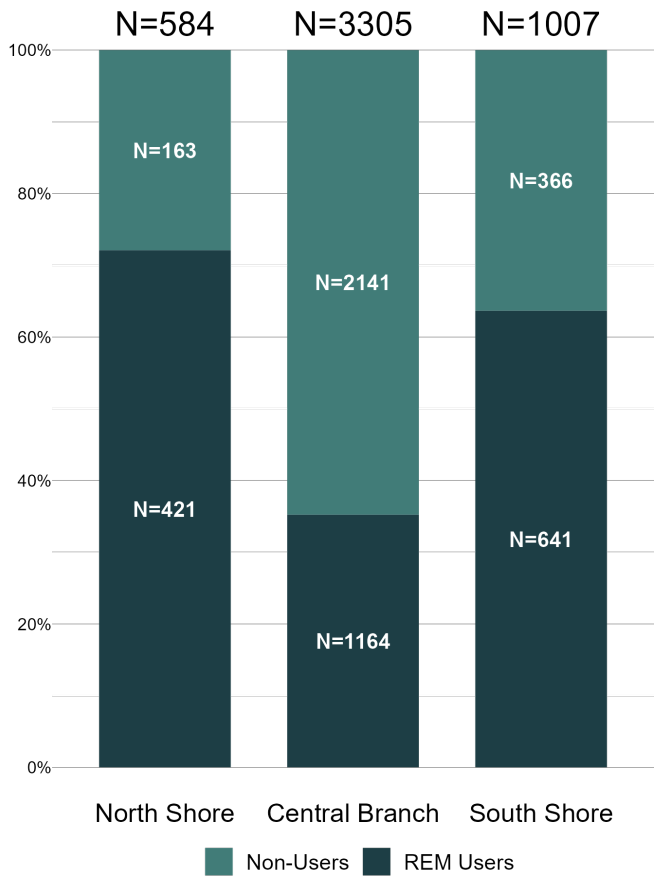


Figure 5.2 Respondent distribution by REM user and non-user (2026)

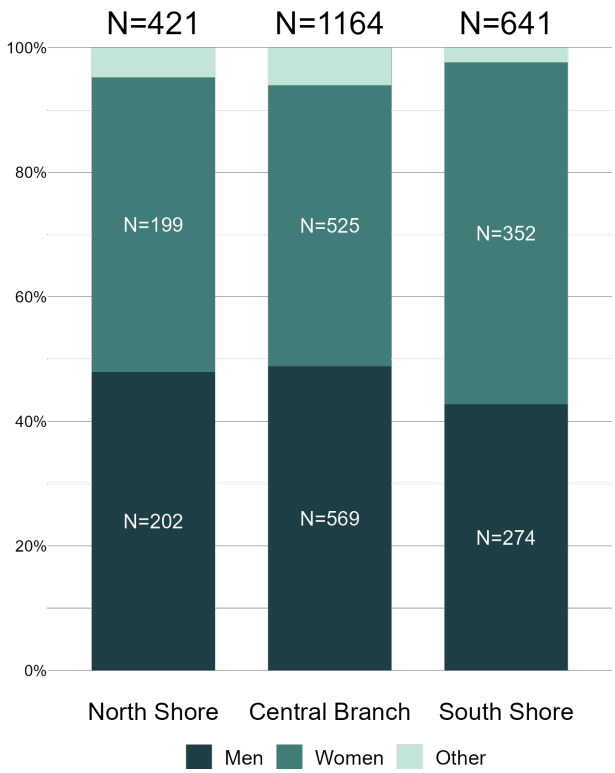


Figure 5.3 REM user distribution by gender and branch (2026)

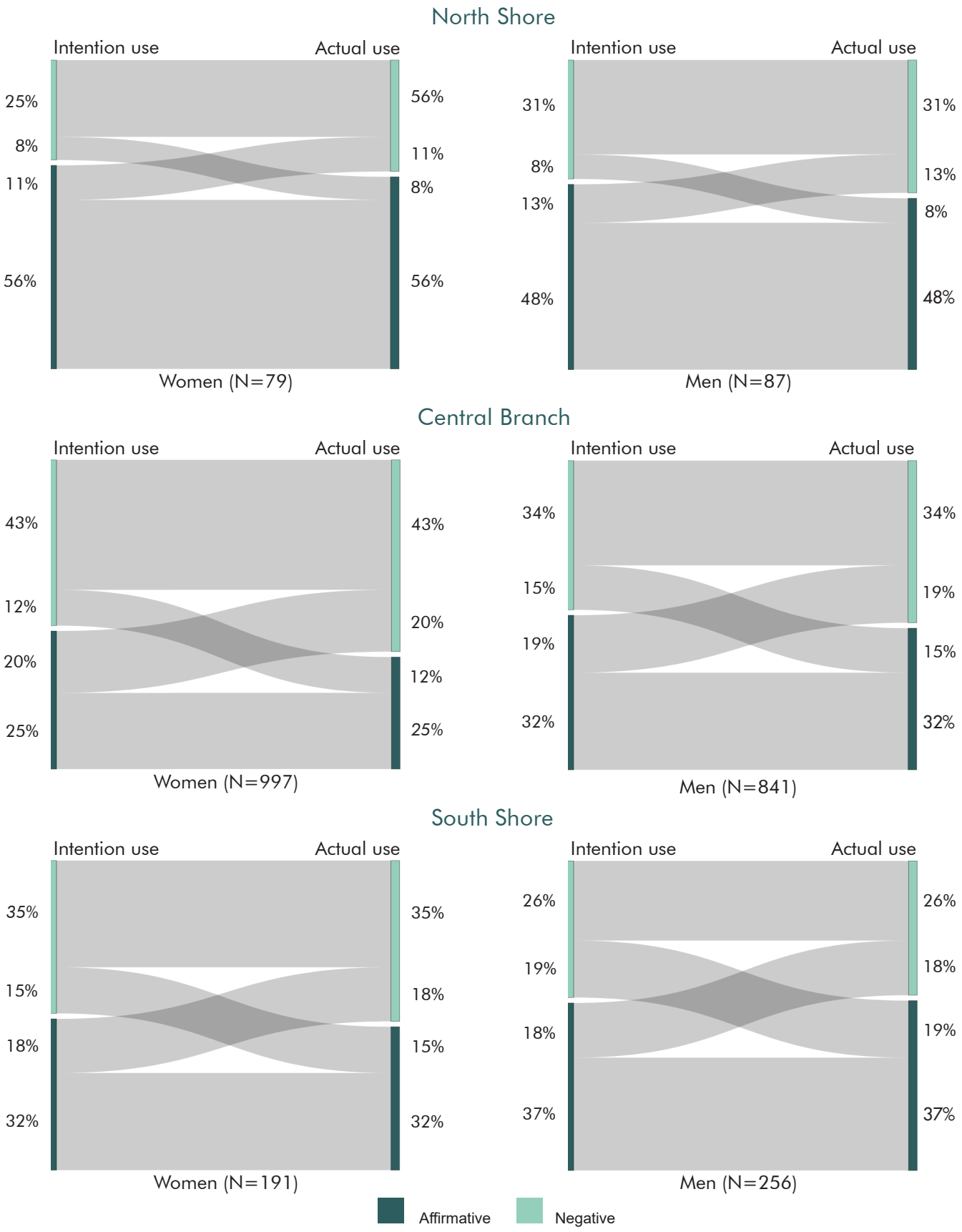


Figure 5.4 REM use intention and actual use by branch: Central and North Shore intention in 2019–2024 and actual use in 2026; South Shore intention in 2019, 2021, or 2022 and actual use in 2023, 2024 or 2026

5.3 Travel frequency and purpose

REM ridership data provide valuable insight into how effectively the system reaches and serves nearby populations. In the 2026 survey wave, participants were asked how frequently they used the REM, regardless of trip purpose. Using the branch classification described earlier, responses were grouped into South Shore, Central, and North Shore users. Respondents were allowed to select multiple travel purposes, including commuting, shopping, leisure, or other activities, reflecting the wide range of activities for which the REM can be used.

Travel frequency varies by branch, with the North and South Shore branches showing higher shares of frequent users, defined as those using the REM more than once a week, up to daily (Figure 5.5). In contrast, the Central branch has lower daily use and a higher share of respondents who use the REM less than once a month. This pattern may reflect differences in travel context across branches. The North and South Shore branches may serve a stronger regional connectivity role, while the Central branch is located in an area with more established rapid transit alternatives, including the metro network.

Travel purposes in 2026 also vary by branch (Figure 5.6). Work, school, and healthcare trips are more common among North and South Shore users than among Central branch users. Shopping is nearly as common among Central and South Shore users, while North Shore respondents display lower odds of using the REM for shopping. Recreation remains the most common travel purpose overall, with the South Shore showing the highest share. Visiting friends and family is the only category where Central branch users have the highest proportion, at just under 40%, nearly double the share observed in the two suburban branches. This suggests that the Central branch may currently be used more for occasional trips, while the North and South Shore branches appear more closely linked to regular travel needs. Areas farther from operating branches continued to show higher

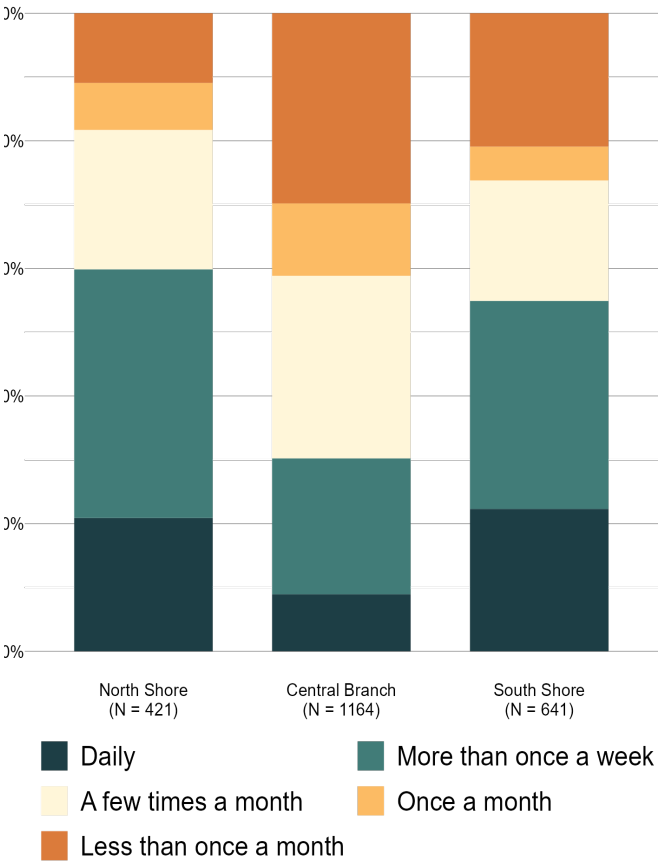


Figure 5.5 Frequency of REM use across North, Central, and South branches (2026)

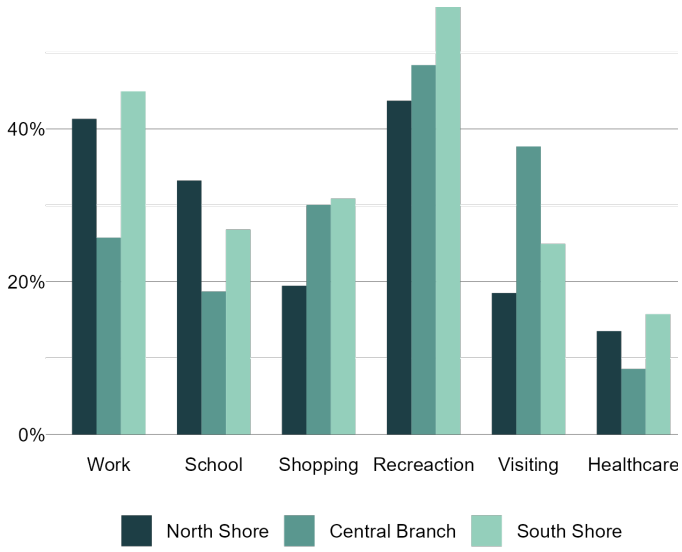


Figure 5.6 REM travel purposes by branch of respondent (2026)

Focusing on the South Shore, the evolution of reported travel purposes since the REM opened in 2023 shows an increase in trips to work, school, shopping, and healthcare (Figure 5.7). Across the three years of operation, recreation remained the most commonly reported purpose, increasing from about 54% in 2023 to 57% in 2024, before slightly declining to 55% in 2026. Work-related travel also remained important, increasing from approximately 42% in 2023 to 43% in 2024 and 45% in 2026.

By 2026, the REM was being used for a broader range of activities. School trips increased from about 17% in 2023 to 27% in 2026, while shopping rose more substantially, from around 11% to 31%. Healthcare-related trips also increased from approximately 9% to 15%. Visiting-related trips rose from about 18% in 2023 to 26% in 2024, before stabilizing at 25% in 2026.

The spatial distribution of REM use also changed across survey waves (Figure 5.8). In 2023 and 2024, use was concentrated mainly along the South Shore, reflecting the first operational segment. By 2026, following the opening of the Central and North Shore branches, REM use became more spatially distributed, with new concentrations around newly opened stations. This suggests that network expansion broadened the geographic reach of REM use, while areas farther from operating branches continued to show higher non-use.

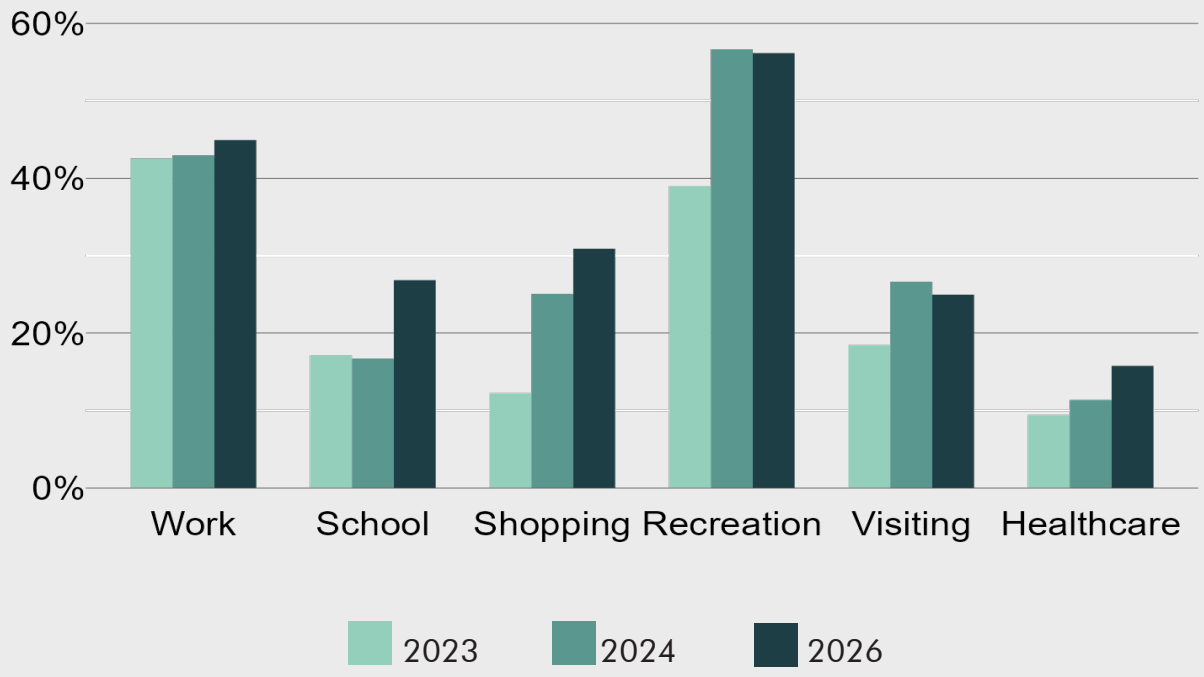


Figure 5.7 Purposes for which the REM was used among South Shore residents (2023- 2026)

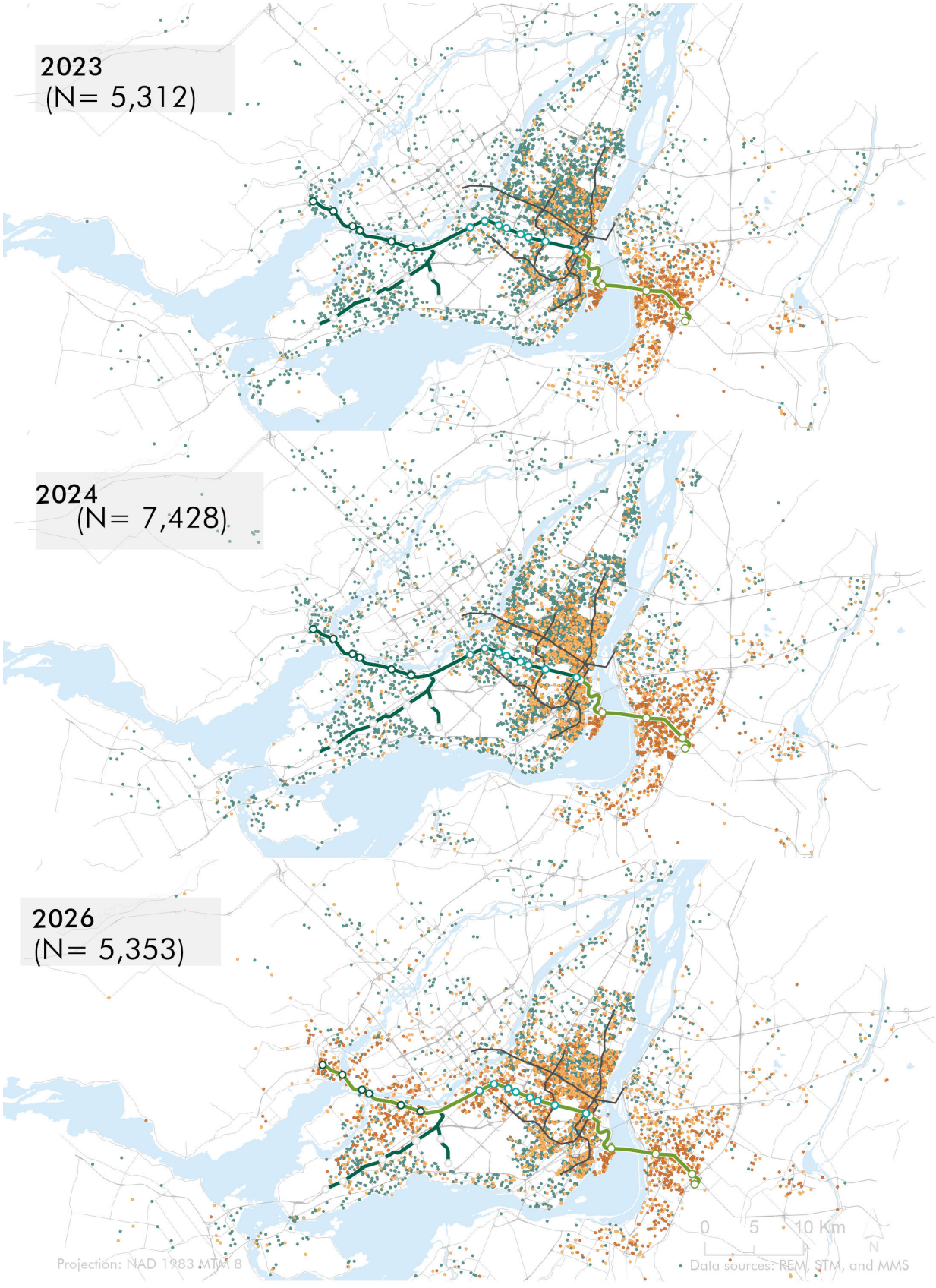


Figure 5.8 Distribution of home locations by frequency of REM use (2023, 2024 vs 2026)

5.4 Commute mode

Repondents' main mode of commuting was also examined using commute weights, with responses seperated by REM branch to assess the extent to which the REM has been integrated into daily travel patterns across the network (Figure 5.9). This follows a similar approach to Figure 4.3, but further disaggregates results by branch using only 2026 responses, focusing on differences in modal share across the North Shore, South Shore, and Central Branch.

Approximately 10% of the North Shore respondents reported using the REM as their main mode of commuting, while car use remains the dominant mode at 85%. Along the South Shore, the REM accounts for roughly 10% of commute trips, with other transit services representing 10%.

In contrast, REM usage as a main commute mode along the Central Branch remains at approximately 2%, while other transit modes account for 22%. It should be noted that branch assignment is based on the REM station most recently used by respondents, which may not fully capture variability in their commuting patterns or multi-station use, particularly for respondents with more flexible or multimodal travel behaviour.

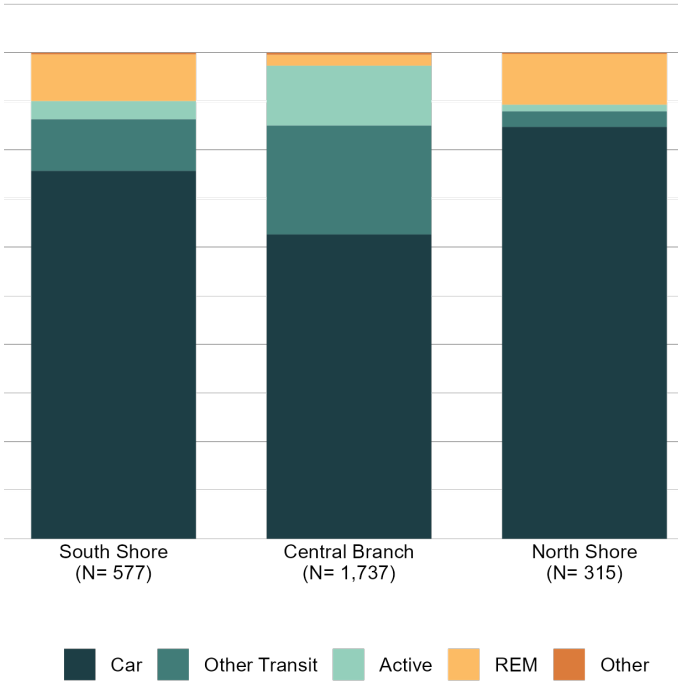


Figure 5.9 Commute modal share by branch (weighted)

5.5 Likelihood of future use

Intentions to use the REM in the future were analyzed based on participants' current usage patterns (Figure 5.10). The results show a clear relationship between past use and future intention: more frequent users are more likely to continue using the service.

Among frequent REM users, approximately 94% reported that they were likely to keep using it. A similarly high share of infrequent users, around 83%, also expressed positive intentions to use the REM in the future. In contrast, among those who have never used the REM, only 42% indicated that they intended to use it going forward, suggesting a substantial gap in uptake between users and non-users.

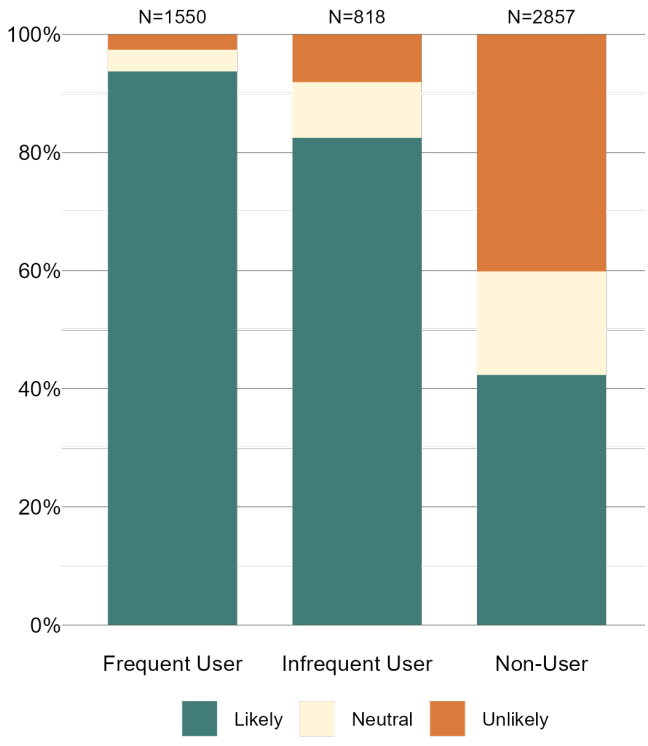


Figure 5.10 Intentions to use the REM by current use patterns

5.6 Willingness to recommend

Respondents' willingness to recommend the REM provides a broader measure of service perception, reflecting overall satisfaction and public endorsement. Responses were segmented by frequency of use and by user type, distinguishing between frequent users, infrequent users, non-users who primarily use other transit modes, and non-users who primarily drive.

For the South Shore, willingness to recommend was examined over time, as this branch has been operating since 2023 (Figure 5.11). For all branches, results were compared for 2026 to allow a cross-sectional comparison (Figure 5.12).

Among South Shore users, willingness to recommend the REM declined between 2024 and 2026. The share of frequent users willing to recommend the service decreased from 71% to 67%, while willingness among infrequent users declined from 80% to 68%. Unwillingness to recommend increased from 18% to 23% among frequent users and from 11% to 17% among infrequent users. This decline may reflect service disruptions, inadequate replacement bus service, and limited alternative transit options on the South Shore.

In 2026, willingness to recommend varies by both branch and user type (Figure 5.12). The Central Branch shows the highest agreement, with approximately 90% of both frequent and infrequent users willing to recommend the service. The North Shore follows at around 85% for frequent users and 80% for infrequent users. The South Shore shows the lowest agreement among riders, with both frequent and infrequent users at around 65%. A clear difference appears across user types within each branch. Non-users who primarily use other transit modes and non-users who primarily drive both report willingness to recommend at around 40% to 50%, compared with 65% to 90% among riders. This 30 to 40 percentage point gap is consistent across branches and suggests that direct experience with the REM is strongly associated with a more positive view of the service.

The pattern holds even on the South Shore, where overall recommendation is lower but users remain substantially more positive than non-users. These findings indicate that the REM is changing how people perceive it as they use it, reinforced by the unexpected user pattern reported earlier, as a substantial share of respondents who had not intended to use the REM ended up doing so. Branch-level differences also reflect the maturity of each operation: the Central Branch and North Shore opened more recently and may still benefit from early positive impressions, while South Shore users have had more time to use the REM and encountered more service disruptions.

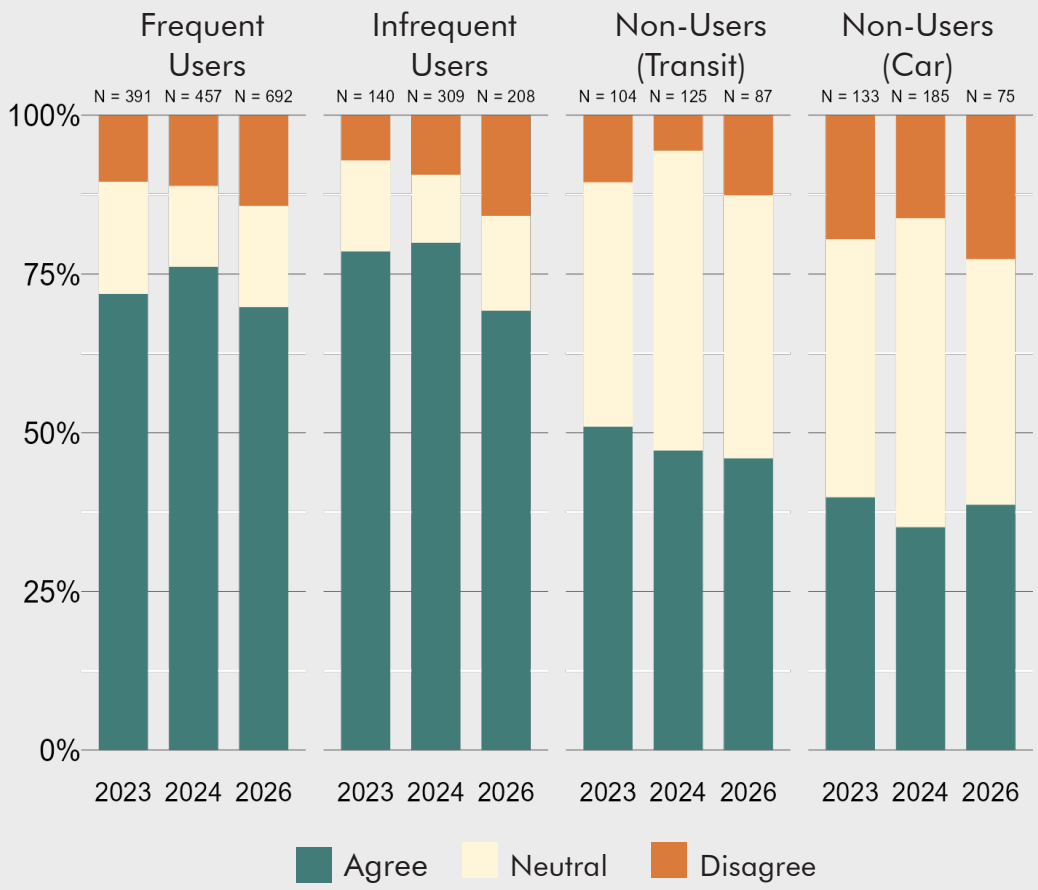


Figure 5.11 Willingness to recommend the REM among South Shore users (2023,2024,and 2026)

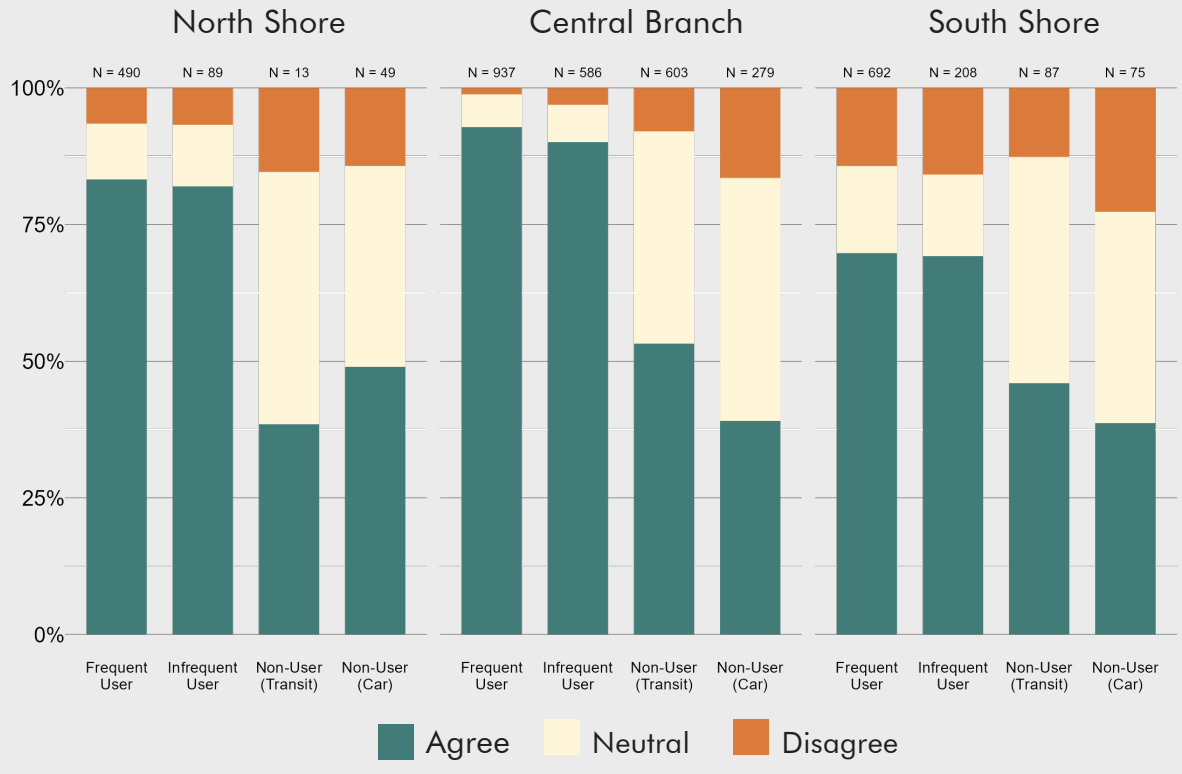


Figure 5.12 Willingness to recommend the REM among users of branches (2026)

5.7 Satisfaction with service

Satisfaction with the REM service was analyzed by frequency of use to examine how different user groups evaluate the system. For the South Shore, satisfaction was assessed over time, as this branch has been operating since 2023 (Figure 5.13). For the North Shore and Central branches, results reflect 2026 only and provide an early comparison across branches (Figure 5.14).

Among South Shore users, satisfaction declined in 2026 among both frequent and infrequent users. Frequent users reported the lowest satisfaction, with less than 70% indicating that they were satisfied with the service. Infrequent users also showed a decline compared with previous waves, suggesting that perceptions of the South Shore service have become more mixed over time.

In 2026, satisfaction was higher on the North Shore and Central branches, where both frequent and infrequent users reported satisfaction levels at or above 75% (Figure 5.14). This contrast suggests that perceptions are more positive on the newly opened branches, while South Shore users may be more affected by reliability concerns, service disruptions, and a longer period of exposure to operational issues. Satisfaction was also examined for other transit services used by REM users, including bus, metro, and train services (Figure 5.15). Across these services, satisfaction remains generally positive, with user groups showing satisfaction levels of roughly 70% to 90%. This suggests that users' overall satisfaction and experience is not only shaped by the REM.

Satisfaction levels are notably lower when users were asked about the replacement bus service provided during REM service interruptions. This substitute service is intended to maintain connectivity during planned and unplanned disruptions, yet it receives more critical feedback than for the REM itself. According to the survey results, more than 50% of frequent users on both the North Shore and South Shore reported dissatisfaction with the replacement shuttles. Dissatisfaction was lower among infrequent users, with less than 50% reporting negative perceptions (Figure 5.16). These findings suggest that although perceptions of the REM itself remain generally positive, service disruptions have a significant effect on user experience. The low satisfaction with replacement buses highlights the need for a more reliable, convenient, and clearly communicated alternative transportation plan during REM interruptions.

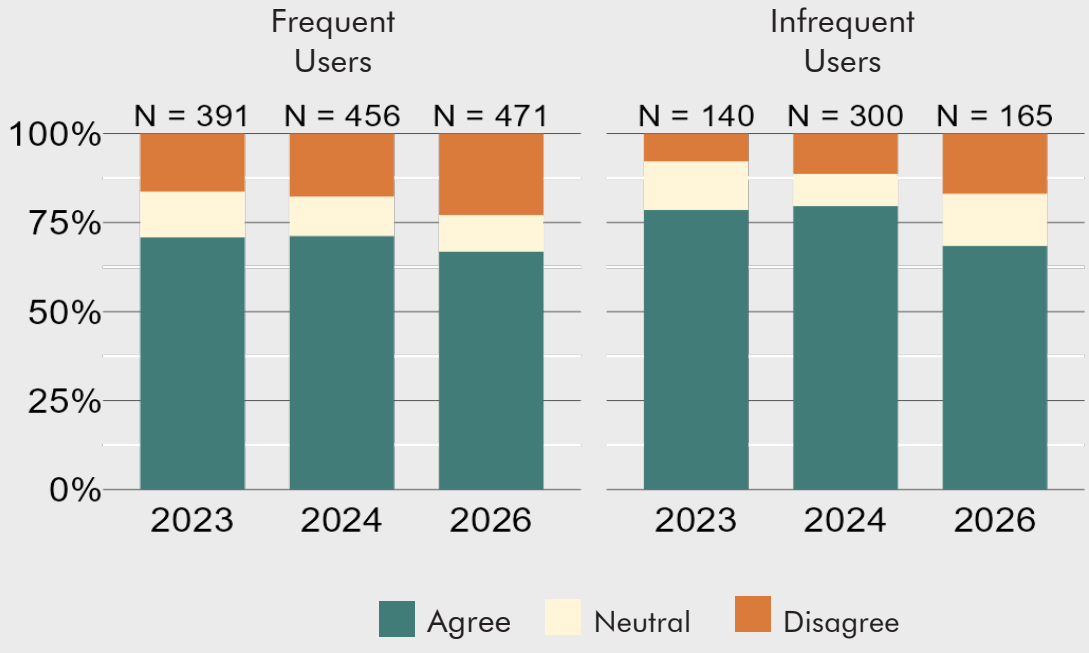


Figure 5.13 Satisfaction with REM services among South Shore users (2023-2026)

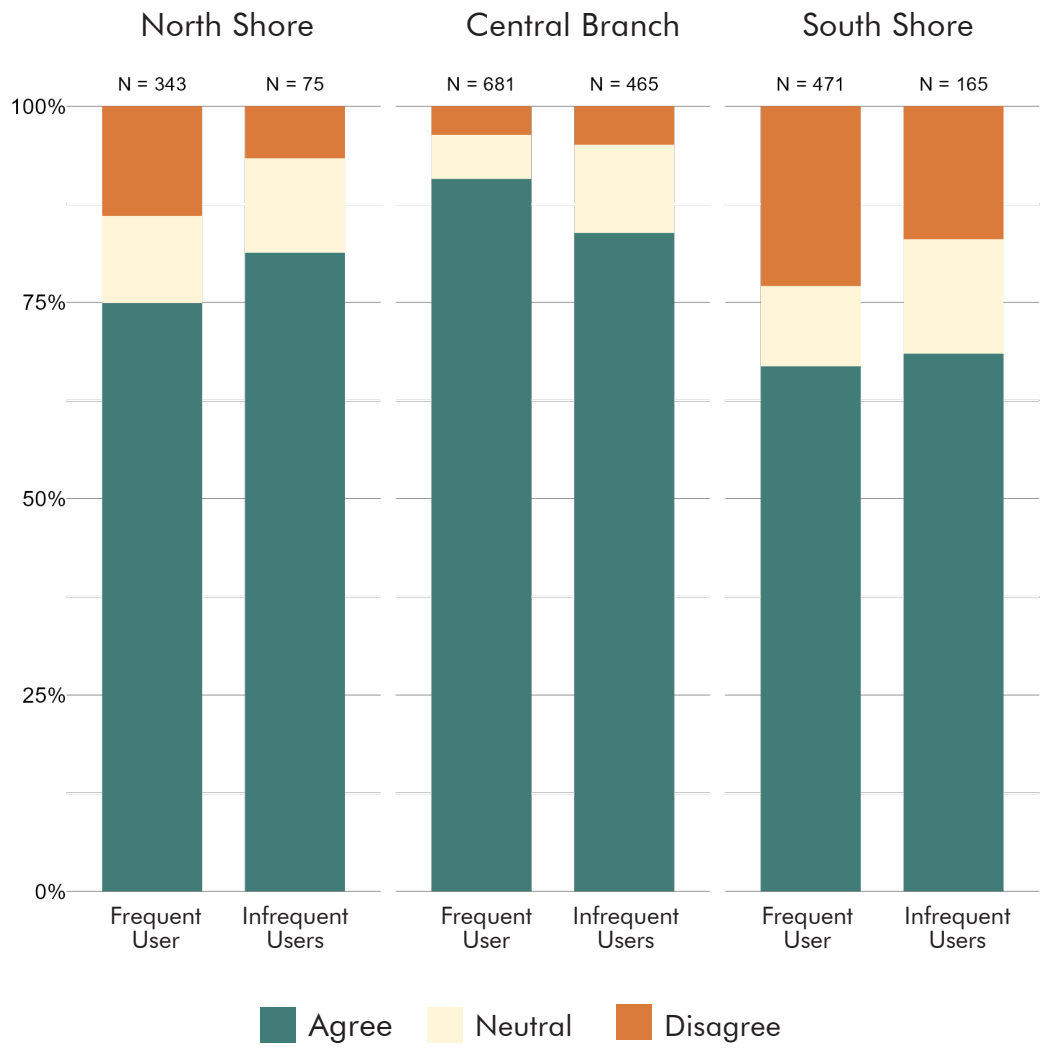


Figure 5.14 Satisfaction with REM services among branches users (2026)

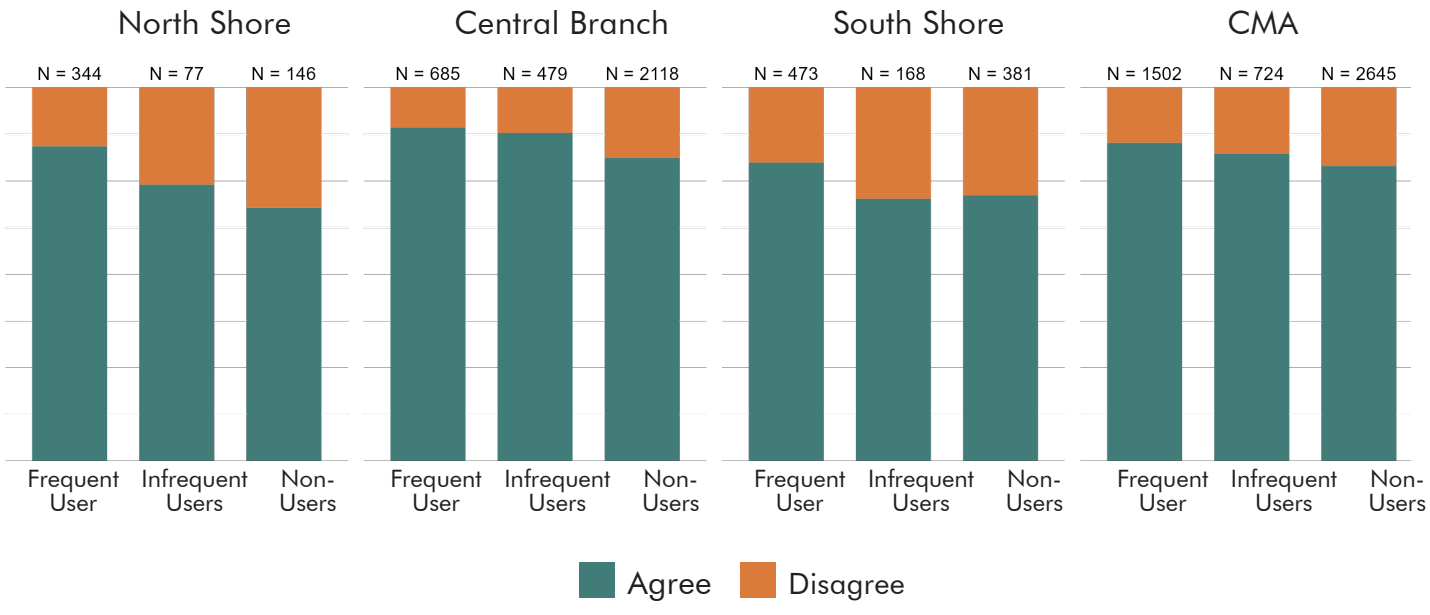


Figure 5.15 Transit Satisfaction in General within the Greater Montreal Area (2026)

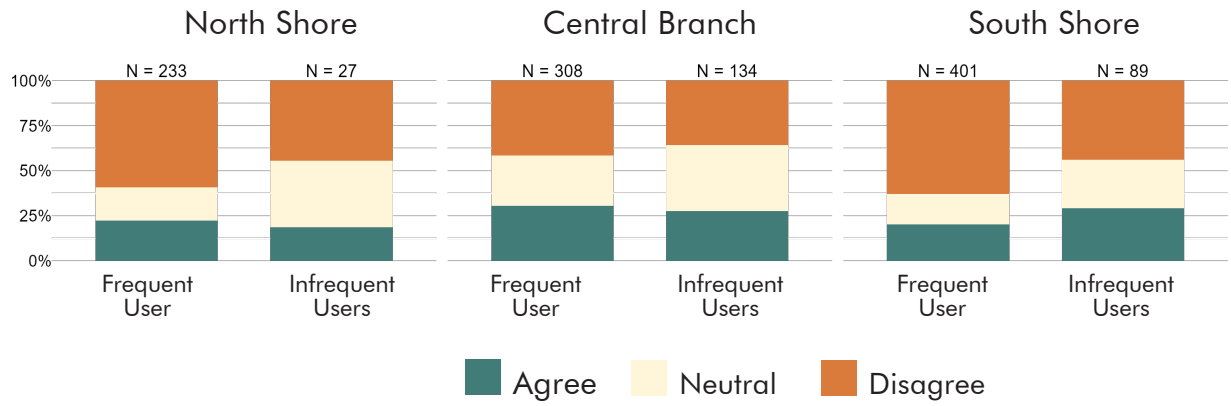


Figure 5.16 Satisfaction with REM shuttle bus service across North, Central, and South branches

5.8 Intention to Use Transit

Respondents were asked whether they planned to continue using public transit or begin using it within the next year. Transit users showed very high levels of agreement (Figure 5.17), with 94% of frequent REM users on both the South Shore and North Shore, and 99% on the Central Branch. Infrequent users showed a similar pattern, ranging from 81% on the North Shore to 98% on the Central Branch. Non-REM transit users also reported high agreement across all branches (above 93%). Car users were less likely to intend to use transit, with agreement at 69% on the Central Branch, 56% on the North Shore, and 50% on the South Shore.On the South Shore, intentions to use transit remained stable between 2023 and 2026 (Figure 5.18). More than 85% of both frequent and infrequent users continued to plan to use public transit, while car users remained around 50%, with a slight upward trend. This sustained commitment among REM users is notable given the decline in reported satisfaction with REM services since the start of operations (Section 5.7).

Combined with willingness to recommend and satisfaction with REM services, REM users show stronger commitment to public transit than non-users. Together with intentions of future use, this suggests a generally high level of transit loyalty, particularly among REM users.

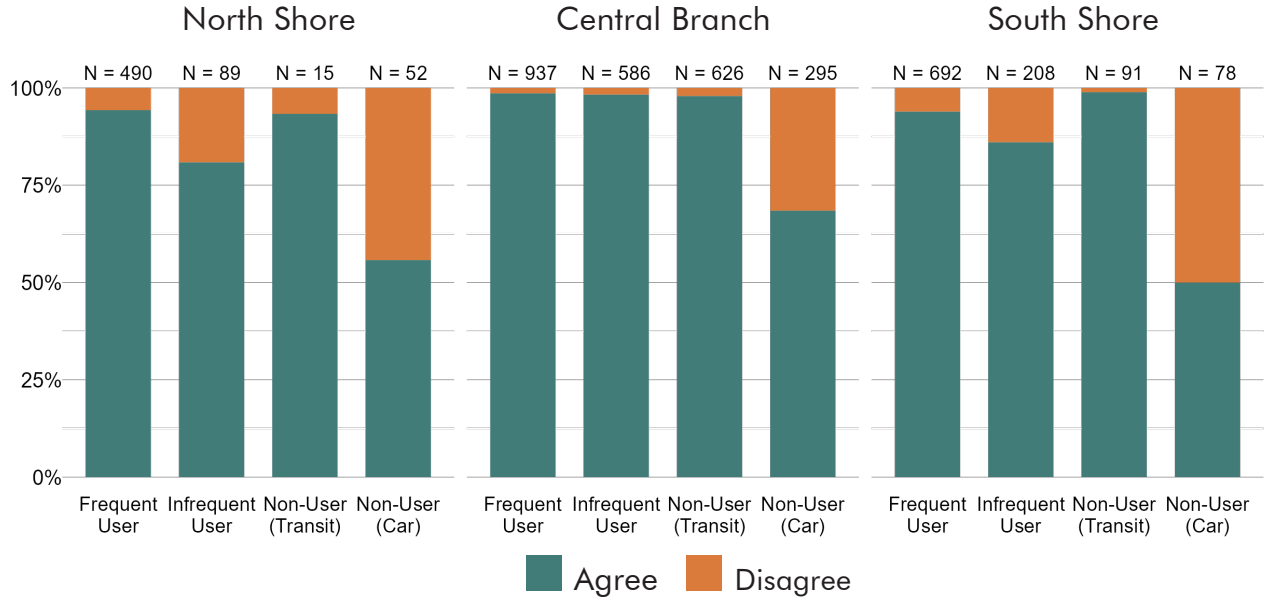


Figure 5.17 Intention to continue using transit across branches (2026)

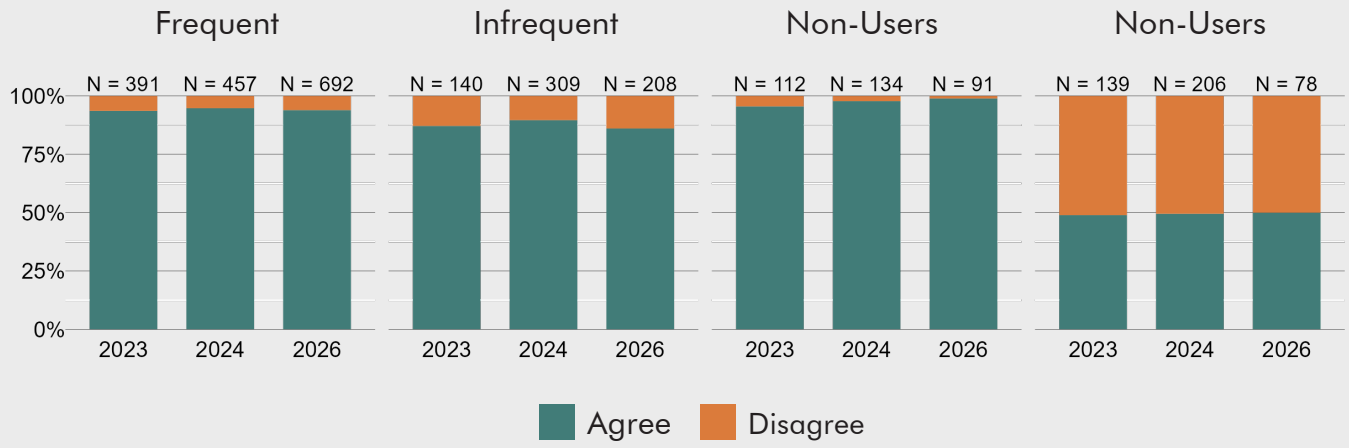


Figure 5.18 Intention to continue using transit among South Shore respondents

5.9 Perceived Regional Benefit

Respondents were also asked whether they believed the REM to be beneficial for the Greater Montréal region. Perceptions of the REM's broader regional benefit remained generally positive. On the South Shore, most respondents continued to agree that the REM is beneficial, although agreement was slightly lower in 2026 compared with earlier waves (Figure 5.19).

Across all branches in 2026, most respondents agreed that the REM is beneficial for Greater Montréal, but agreement varied by branch (Figure 5.20). Agreement was highest among Central and North Shore users, at approximately 90%, while South Shore users showed a lower level of agreement, at around 75%. South Shore users also had the highest share of disagreement, at approximately 10–15%, compared with only a small share among Central and North Shore users. Together, these findings suggest that users generally recognize the REM's regional benefits, even when satisfaction with day-to-day service varies by branch. This distinction is important because respondents may view the REM as valuable for the metropolitan region while still expressing concerns about reliability, disruptions, or service quality in their own travel experience.

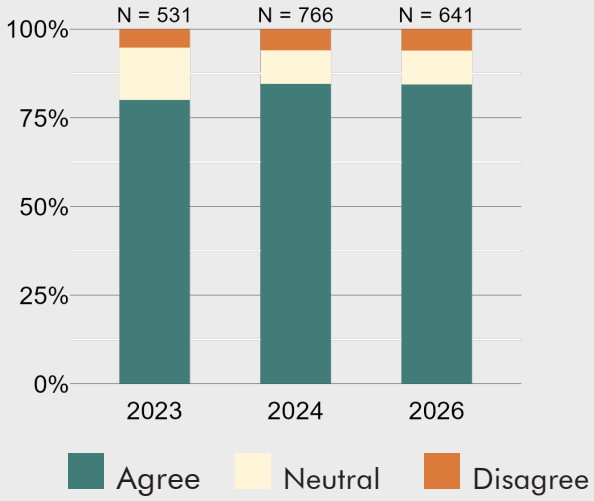


Figure 5.19 Belief that the REM is beneficial to Montréal among South Shore respondents (2023, 2024, and 2026)

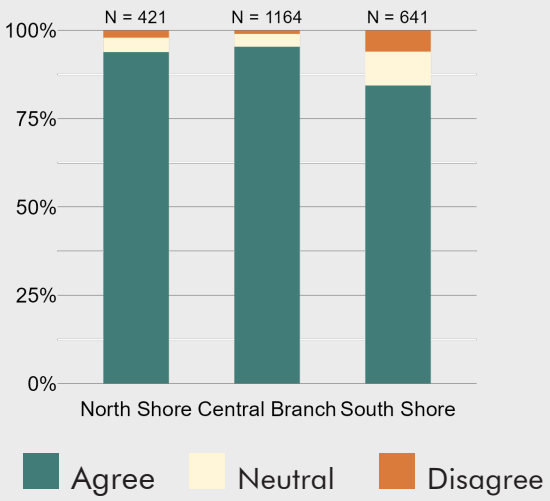


Figure 5.20 Belief that the REM is beneficial to Greater Montréal across North, Central, and South branches(2026)

5.10 Parking Pressure

To understand how people reach REM stations, home-origin trips were extracted from the survey data (N = 1,343). When respondents reported only one mode in addition to the REM, that mode was assigned as the access mode. For multimodal responses, access mode was inferred using modeled travel times, parking availability, and self-reported main mode. Travel times from each respondent's home to their access REM station were calculated using the r5r package in R for a Tuesday morning peak period at 8:00 AM. Walking and cycling were grouped as active modes.

Overall, transit was the most common station access mode, used by 55% of respondents, followed by driving (25%) and active modes (20%) (Figure 5.21). Drivers had the shortest average access time, at 13 minutes, compared with 20 minutes for active users and 29 minutes for transit users. Parking difficulty was a major issue for drivers. Among all drivers, 52% reported that finding parking at REM stations was difficult. Of these dissatisfied drivers, 97% either lived more than a 20-minute walk from their nearest REM station or reported a disability, suggesting that most parking complaints reflect real access constraints rather than convenience preferences. Only five dissatisfied drivers lived within realistic walking distance of a station without reporting a mobility limitation. Parking complaints were concentrated at Brossard (27%), Panama (19%), Pierrefonds-Roxboro (18%), Sainte-Dorothée (8%), and Deux-Montagnes (7%). Together, these stations accounted for 79% of all dissatisfied drivers. For these users, transit alternatives would take 2.4 to 8.3 times longer than driving, adding approximately 38 minutes on average to each station-access trip.

By branch, the South Shore had 406 home-origin trips. Transit was the most common access mode (50%), followed by driving (37%) and active modes (13%). Parking dissatisfaction was highest on this branch, with 60% of drivers reporting difficulty finding parking. Complaints were concentrated at Brossard (52%) and Panama (36%), together accounting for 88% of dissatisfied South Shore drivers. For these users, transit alternatives would add about 42 minutes on average to the station-access trip. Central branch had the largest number of home-origin trips (N = 671). Transit dominated access (68%), followed by active modes (23%) and driving (9%). Parking dissatisfaction was relatively low, with only 22% of drivers reporting difficulty. Most complaints were concentrated at Bois-Franc (58%), while Du Ruisseau accounted for only 8%. Given its large parking supply, Du Ruisseau may serve as a viable alternative for some car-access users. The transit time penalty for dissatisfied drivers was also the lowest of the three branches, averaging 30 additional minutes. The North Shore had 266 home-origin trips. Driving was the main access mode, used by 45% of respondents. Parking dissatisfaction was high, with 57% of drivers reporting difficulty finding parking. Complaints were concentrated at Pierrefonds-Roxboro (45%), followed by Sainte-Dorothée (19%), Deux-Montagnes (16%), and Sunnybrooke (12%). Transit access would take these drivers 2.5 to 8.2 times longer than driving, adding roughly 34 minutes on average.

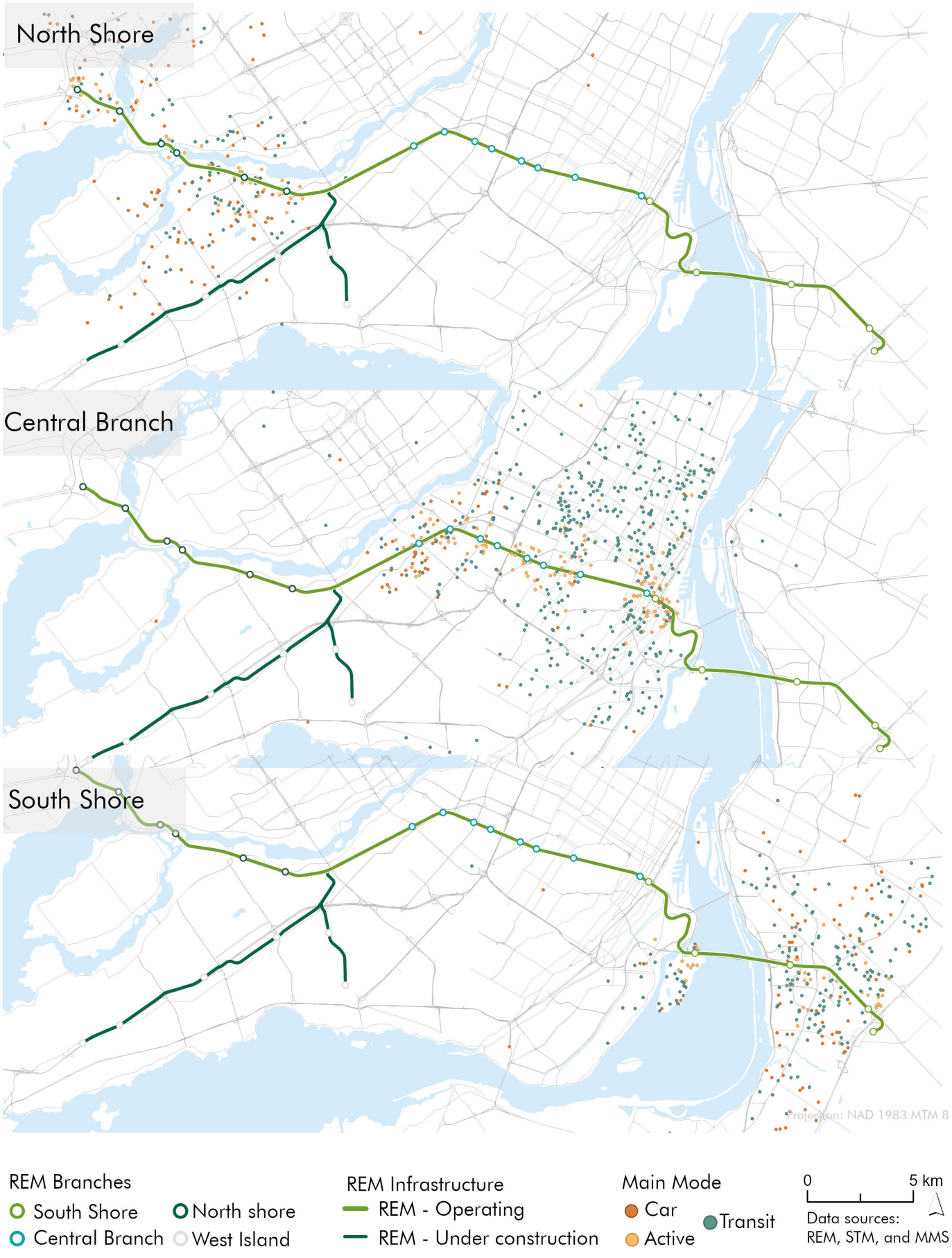


Figure 5.21 Main access mode to REM stations by branch

6 Intention to Use

Commuting patterns in the West Island provide important context for understanding future intentions to use the REM, particularly as the network expands with the remaining West Island stations opened in May 2026 and the airport branch planned for 2027.

In early waves of the survey, all respondents were asked about their intention to use the REM. However, in waves 4 through 6, only irregular and non-users (i.e., those using the REM once a month or less) were asked about intention for future use.

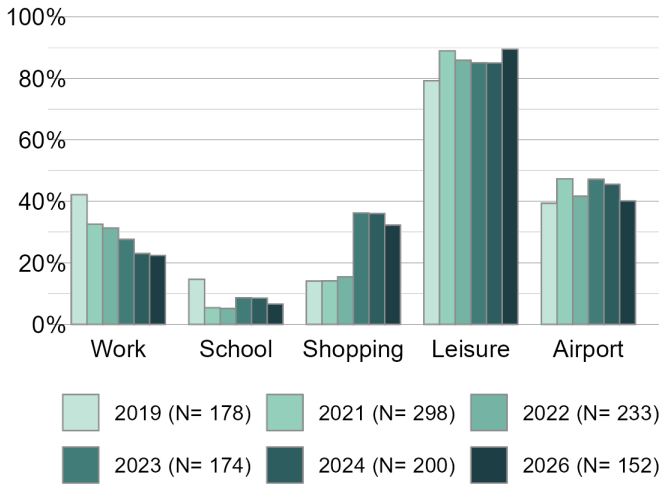


Figure 6.1 Intentions to use the REM by purpose of travel

This section looks at respondents whose primary residence is in the West Island, an area with a higher concentration of non-users.

The survey asked respondents whether they intended to use the REM for work, school, shopping, leisure, or airport trips (Figure 6.1). Across all waves, leisure was the primary intended trip purpose for residents of the West Island. Airport-related intentions remained relatively stable, although they declined slightly between waves 5 and 6.

Since wave 4, intentions to use the REM for shopping have remained high, around 30%. By contrast, intentions to use the REM for commuting have declined across all six waves, from 42% in wave 1 to 33% in wave 2 and 22% in wave 6. This 20% decrease may be linked to increased teleworking. The share of employed respondents teleworking at least once per week rose from about 30% in wave 1 to 56% in wave 6.

For the West Island, the REM's long-term success will depend not only on its ability to attract commuters, but also on whether it can serve as a credible alternative to car travel that shapes residents' daily mobility. With the opening of the West Island branch, the REM provides residents with a closer transit option, creating an opportunity to translate intention to actual usage over time.

7 Health, and Quality of Life

7.1 Commute choices

Relevant factors influencing commuting mode choice were identified to examine the role of health and quality of life in travel decision-making. Respondents selected the factors important to choosing their main work-related travel mode, including health, environmental benefits, affordability, shorter travel time, comfort, and destination accessibility.

Figure 7.1 shows that 70% of REM users selected shorter travel times as an important factor behind their mode choice. Open-ended responses support this finding: one respondent described the REM as "the only way for us to get easily to Montréal," noting that the bus would take "at least 20 minutes longer on average." Another described the REM as more "consistent," compared with driving times that previously ranged "from 30 minutes to 75 minutes."

Other factors were reported at more moderate levels, including comfort (29%), environmental friendliness (27%), affordability (22%), physical and mental health (22%), and destination connectivity (18%). These secondary motivations were also reflected in comments describing the REM as "the most direct way to get to my workplace," "less stressful than the car and traffic," and "a smooth, easy mode of transportation" (wave 6 respondents).

7.2 Satisfaction with health

Respondents were asked about their satisfaction with their health on a scale from completely dissatisfied (0) to completely satisfied (10). Figure 7.2 explores differences in health satisfaction between REM commuters and those using other modes of travel. Although health was not found to be a primary factor influencing REM users' modal choices, this group was among the most satisfied with their health on average, second only to bike users. REM users reported a median health satisfaction matching the medians for bike and walk commuters and exceeding those of car and other transit users. The upper end of the REM distribution also matched that of active modes, positioning REM commuters closer to cyclists and pedestrians than to car or other transit users in terms of self-reported health satisfaction.

7.3 Quality of life

To assess how quality of life varies with usage frequency, REM users were asked whether the REM positively impacts their life (Figure 7.3). Results reveal the highest levels of agreement among respondents who use the REM a few times a month. Those using the REM less than once a month had the lowest levels. Very frequent users, those riding the REM more than once a week up to daily, reported slightly lower rates of agreement, which likely reflects a habituation effect whereby routine commuters come to view the service as a standard feature of daily life rather than a distinctive improvement to their quality of life. Compared with the previous wave of the survey in 2024, the share of respondents agreeing that the REM positively impacts their quality of life increased by around 15% across every frequency group, indicating a substantial overall improvement in perceived benefit of REM over the past year.

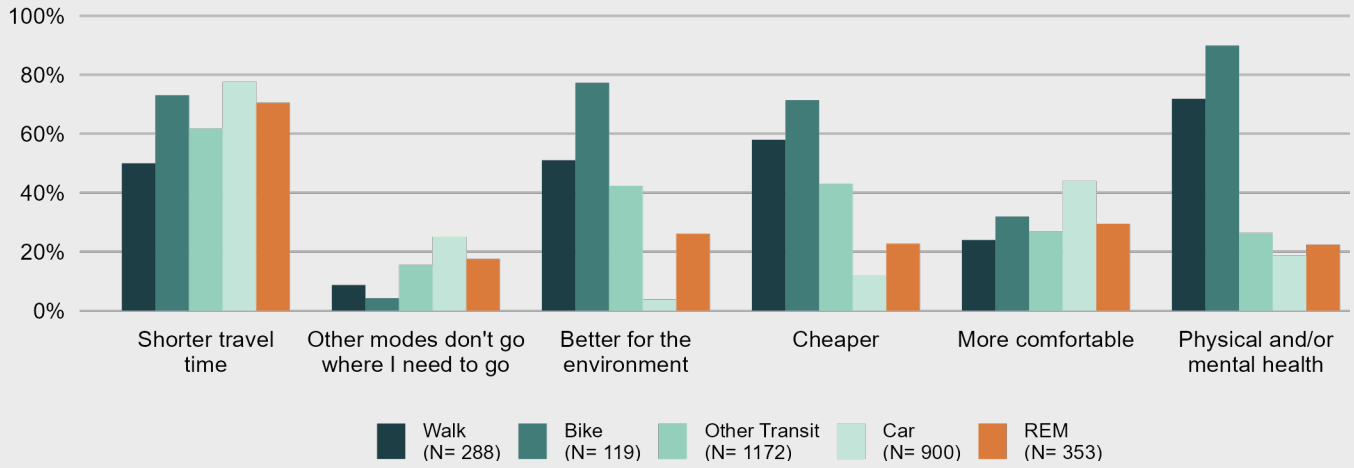


Figure 7.1 Important factors for deciding commute mode (weighted)

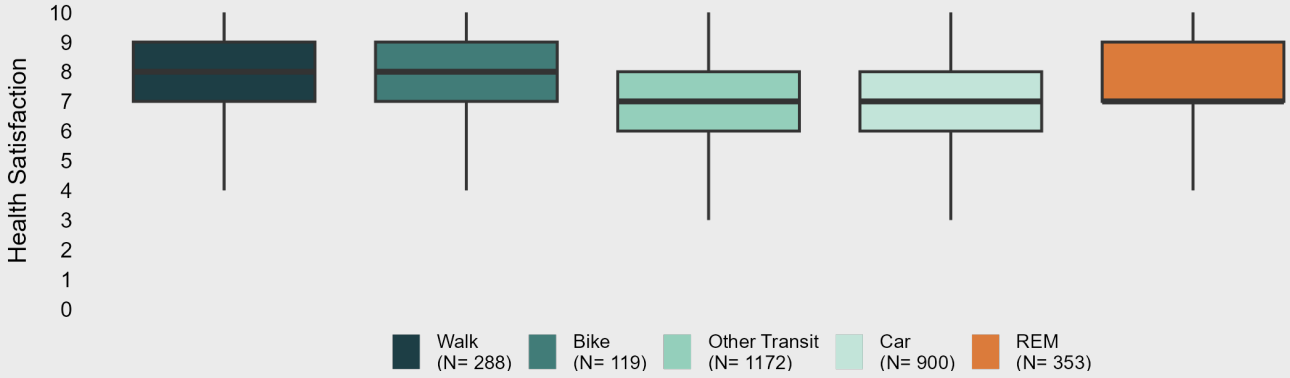


Figure 7.2 Health satisfaction rates among different commute modes (weighted)

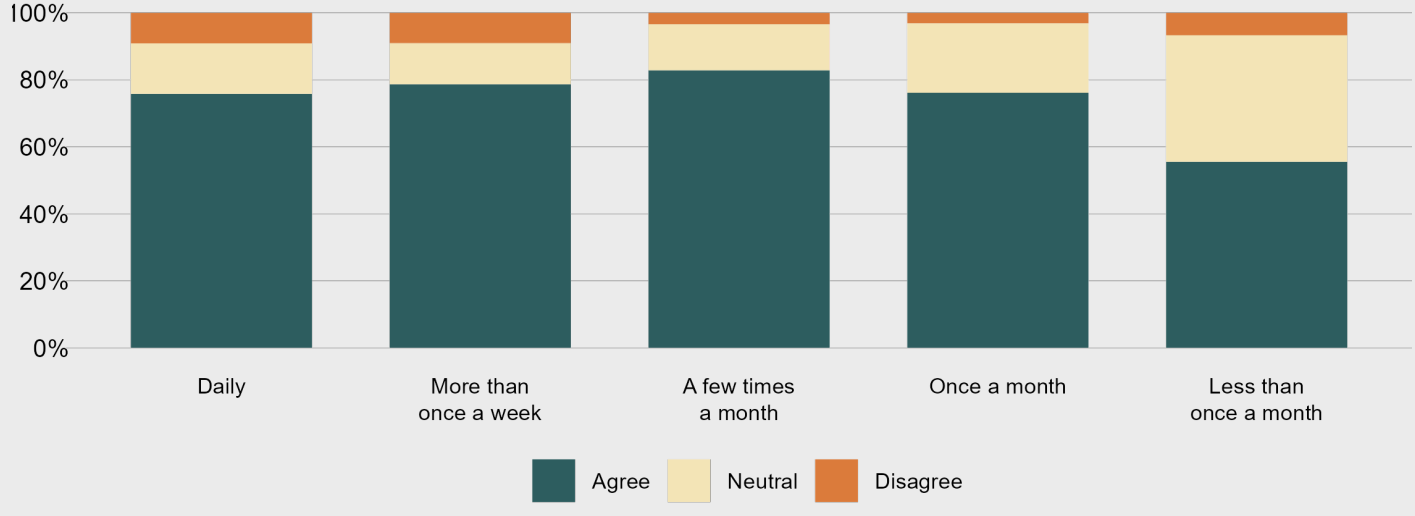


Figure 7.3 Positive impact of the REM on quality of life by frequency of use (weighted)

7.4 Workplace impacts

Respondents in wave 6 were asked to report how their commute mode impacted their workplace performance (Figure 7.4). Around 50% of REM and metro users claimed that their energy levels at work were positively affected by their commute. Agreement decreases for bus users, 37% of which expressed that their commute was beneficial for their workplace energy levels. Only 11% of REM users reported that their commute had a negative effect on their energy levels at work.

Respondents were also asked about the effect their commute mode had on their punctuality at work. 52% of REM commuters reported that their mode of commuting had a “very positive” or “positive” effect on their punctuality. In constrast, over 33% of bus users reported that the mode "very negatively" or "negatively" affects their punctuality. Fewer respondents reported that their commute mode affected their productivity at work, with over 55% of respondents saying their commute has "no impact" on their workplace productivity.

7.5 Rider well–being

In addition to reporting the effects of commuting on their energy, productivity, and punctuality at work, participants were asked to assess the impact of commuting by bus, metro, or the REM on their overall quality of life and their mental and physical health (Figure 7.5). The metro was reported to be the most beneficial to its users’ quality of life in comparison to the REM and the bus. Over 50% of metro and REM users reported that their commute affected their lives either "very positively" or "positively". Results indicated that bus commuting had the least positive effect on quality of life, with nearly 25% of users reporting that it affected their lives "negatively".

The REM and the metro had the most positive impact on mental health, with 47% and 41% of users, respectively, reporting "very positive" or "positive" effects. In contrast, only 35.7% of bus users reported "positive" or "very positive" effects on their mental health. Approximately 20% of respondents reported that their commute affected their lives in a "negative" or "very negative" way. This highlights the potential for mental health vulnerability among those who primarily commute by bus.

Users of all three modes reported more positive impacts on physical health than on mental health, with approximately 50% of bus, metro, and REM users indicating that their primary commute mode affected their physical health positively or very positively. Across all three modes, riders reported broadly similar impacts on overall quality of life, with around 50% indicating positive or very positive effects, although levels remained slightly higher among metro and REM users.

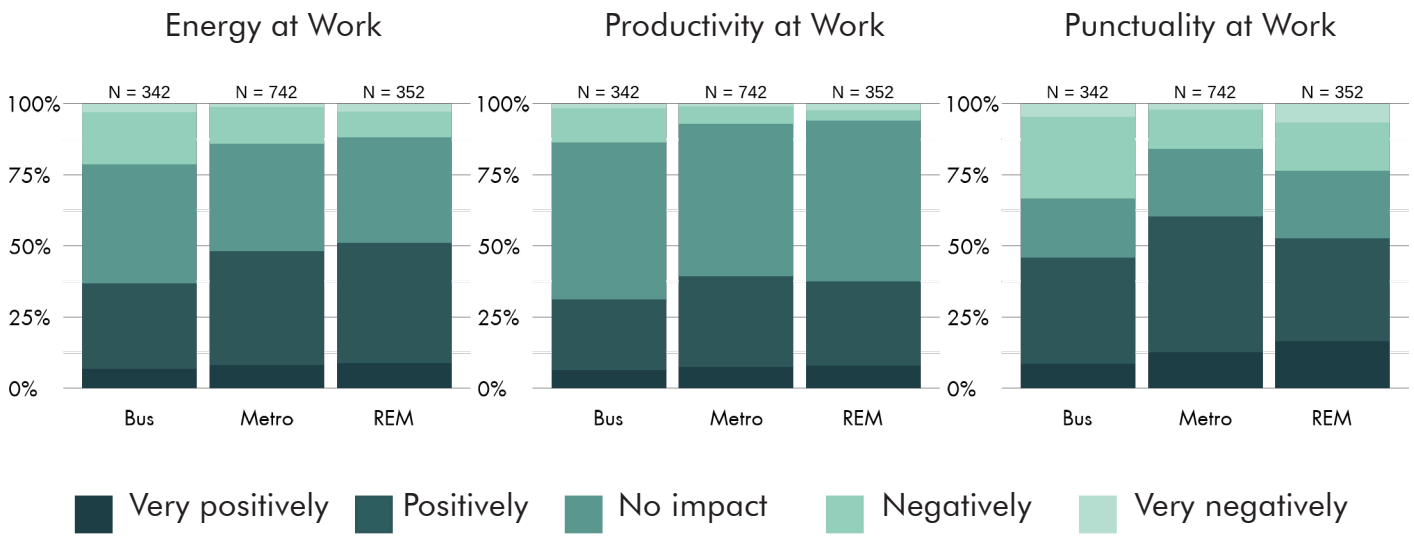


Figure 7.4 Effect of the REM compared to the bus and metro on energy, productivity, and punctuality at work (weighted)

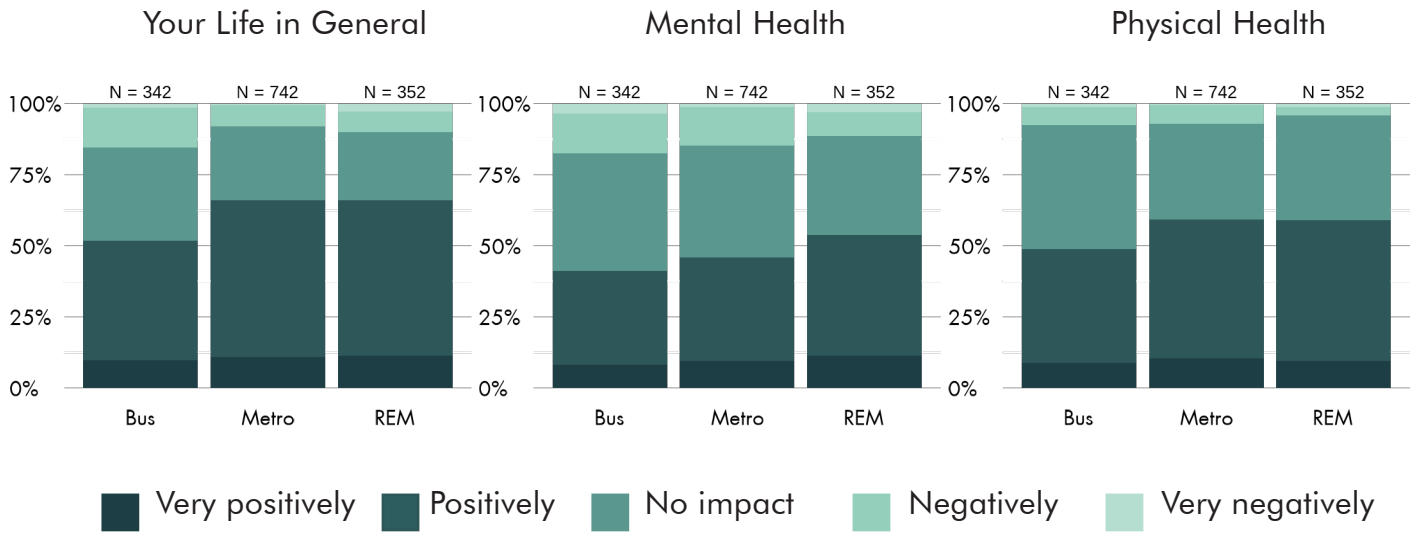


Figure 7.5 Effect of the REM compared to the bus and metro on respondents' life in general and their physical and mental health (weighted)

7.6 Commute and physical activity

Respondents were also asked to report the amount of time, in minutes, that they spent on physical activities, based on the Global Physical Activity Questionnaire developed by the World Health Organization. Figure 7.6 presents the distribution of physical activity categories across commute modes, further disaggregated by commute frequency. In this analysis, low-frequency commuting largely captures respondents who primarily telecommute, while high-frequency commuting reflects those who travel to work more regularly.

For REM users, regular commuting is associated with a higher share of respondents in the high physical activity category, increasing from 56% among those who mostly telecommute to 64% among high-frequency commuters. This shift is accompanied by a decline in the share of respondents classified in the low physical activity category. A similar pattern is observed across public transit modes more broadly, where regular commuters are consistently more likely to report high levels of physical activity compared with telecommuters. Overall, public transit users report relatively high levels of physical activity, with REM users positioned in the middle of the gradient across transit modes. Active commuters, including those who walk or cycle, show the highest shares of high physical activity regardless of commute frequency, which is expected given that the commute itself directly contributes to physical activity. In contrast, drivers show the lowest share of high physical activity among regular commuters, reflecting the more sedentary nature of car-based travel. Among motorized modes, however, physical activity remains relatively higher for metro and REM users, likely due to the walking required to access public transit systems.

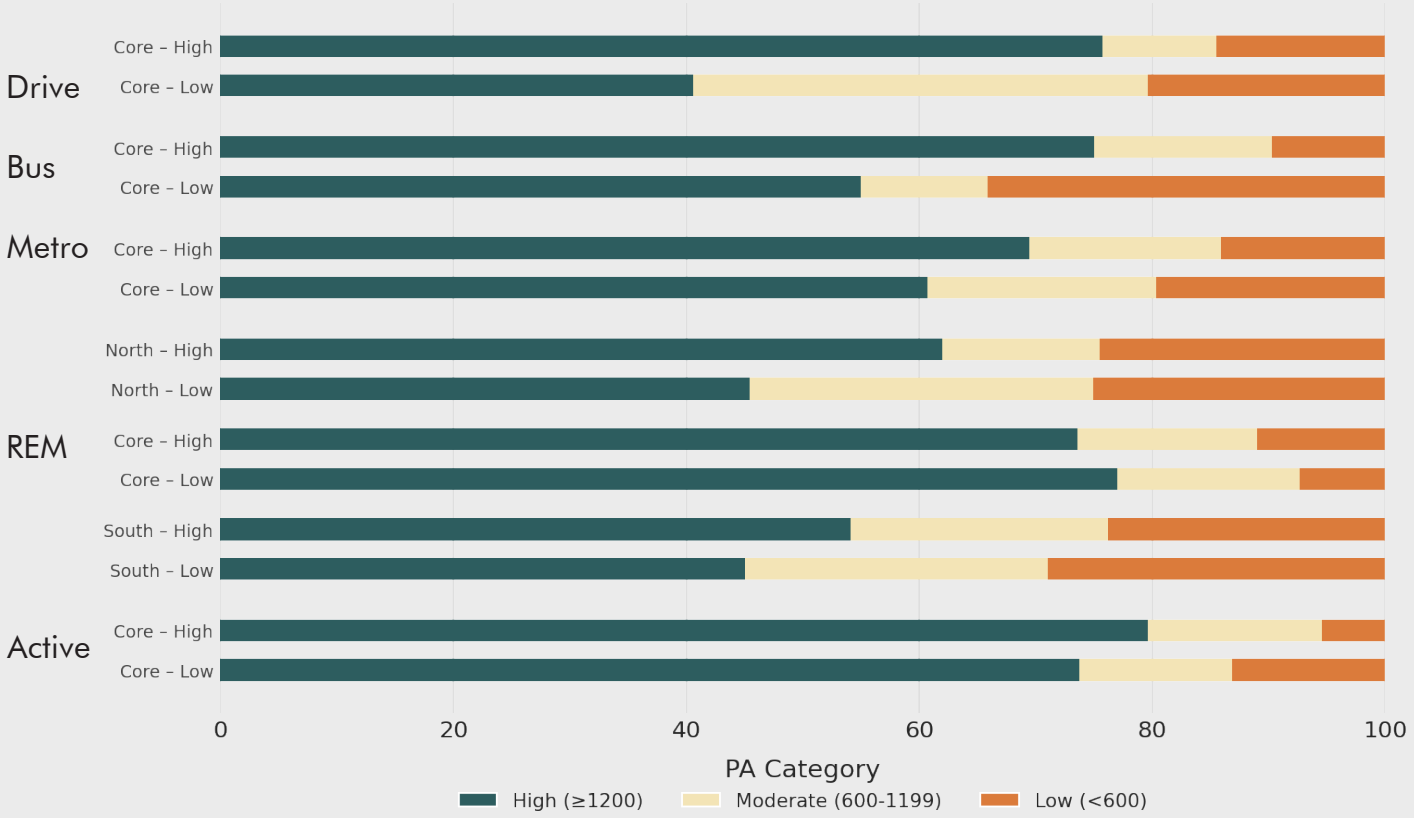


Figure 7.6 Level of physical activity by commute mode and frequency (weighted)

7.7 Rising–cost displacement

Respondents were asked whether they were concerned about remaining in their neighbourhoods due to rising costs. Figure 7.7 compares responses between those living within 2.5 km of a REM station and those living elsewhere in the Montréal CMA, with results weighted to match census demographics and the 2018 Montréal Origin-Destination Survey.

Overall, respondents near REM stations were consistently more likely to express affordability concerns. In 2019, 34.8% of nearby respondents agreed that they were worried about being unable to afford to remain in their neighbourhood because of the project, compared with 30.6% in the rest of the CMA. By 2026, these shares increased to 44.1% and 40%, respectively. These findings suggest that affordability concerns remain higher in proximity to REM stations.

This pattern may also reflect perceived displacement pressure, where improved accessibility and redevelopment around station areas raise concerns that existing residents could be priced out. At the same time, disagreement declined in both groups, from 44.5% to 38.4% in the rest of the CMA and from 39.8% to 32.7% near REM stations. Concern among nearby residents peaked in 2024, possibly reflecting the growing visibility of the REM and redevelopment activity around station areas.

These findings should be interpreted as perceived price-displacement risk rather than direct evidence that the REM has caused displacement. The survey does not measure actual moves due to rising costs or isolate the REM from broader housing market pressures. Overall, Figure 7.7 suggests that REM impacts should be considered beyond accessibility, particularly in relation to housing affordability, neighbourhood change, and equity.

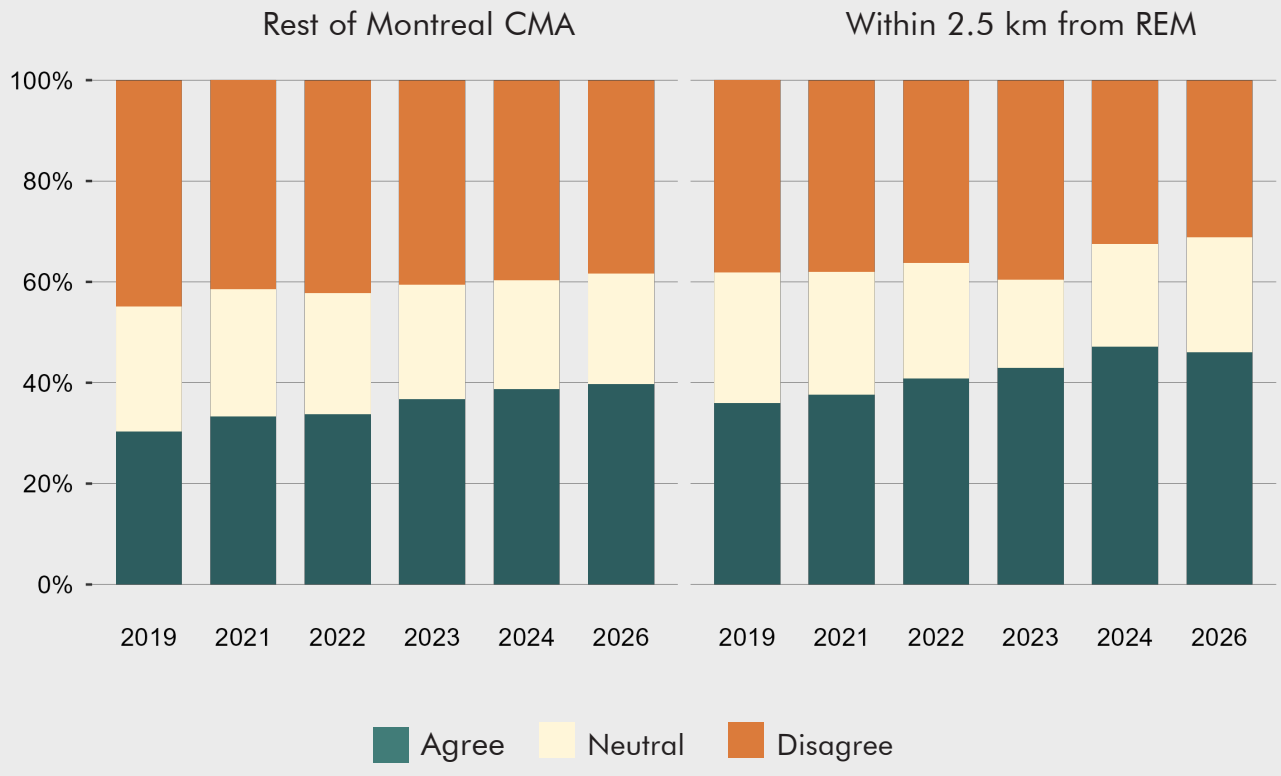


Figure 7.7 Concern about neighbourhood affordability by proximity to REM stations (weighted)

8 Conclusions

The opening and expansion of the REM provides an important opportunity to examine how large-scale public transit investments influence travel behaviour, commuting patterns, health, quality of life, workplace outcomes, and public perceptions across Greater Montréal. This report presents findings from six survey waves collected between 2019 and 2026: wave 1 (N = 3,520), wave 2 (N = 4,058), wave 3 (N = 4,065), wave 4 (N = 5,312), wave 5 (N = 7,428), and wave 6 (N = 5,353). Wave 6, conducted in February 2026, captures conditions a few months after the Central branch and North Shore branch opened in November 2025 and before the Anse-à-l'Orme branch entered service in May 2026. Findings show that post-pandemic mobility patterns are stabilizing, although weekly trip frequency remains below 2019 levels. Telecommuting rose from about 30% in wave 1 to 56% in wave 6, with hybrid arrangements of one or two days per week now the most common pattern. The 2026 results highlight the REM's growing role in the region. REM users show notably stronger loyalty to public transit than non-users: across all three branches, over 85% plan to continue using public transit and at least 65% would recommend it, compared with roughly 50% and 40% among car users. The network also attracted users who had not originally planned to use it, with 8% of panel respondents in the North Shore, 13% along the Central Branch, and 17% in the South Shore adopting the service. Together, these patterns suggest the REM is contributing to a broader shift in transit culture across Greater Montréal, with direct experience reshaping how people relate to public transit. Shorter travel time is the dominant factor influencing REM use (70% of users), followed by comfort, environmental friendliness, affordability, health, and destination connectivity. The service is also associated with positive impacts on quality of life, workplace energy, punctuality, and mental health, with REM users reporting the highest share of positive mental health effects (47%) compared to bus and metro users. On the other hand, satisfaction declined on the South Shore between 2024 and 2026, reflecting service disruptions and low ratings of replacement bus service. Affordability concerns also rose across the Montréal CMA and were consistently more prominent near REM stations, increasing from 36.0% in 2019 to 46.1% in 2026 within 2.5 km of a station, compared with 30.3% to 39.7% elsewhere. While this reflects perceived risk rather than direct evidence of displacement, it points to housing affordability and neighbourhood change as critical equity dimensions to monitor going forward. Future waves will be important for tracking how the REM's impacts evolve as the network reaches its full extent, including the Anse-à-l'Orme branch and the airport connection scheduled for 2027, and for assessing whether the shift in transit culture persists as the system matures. The lessons from this study can inform future transit investments aimed at creating healthier, more resilient, and more equitable urban environments.

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