

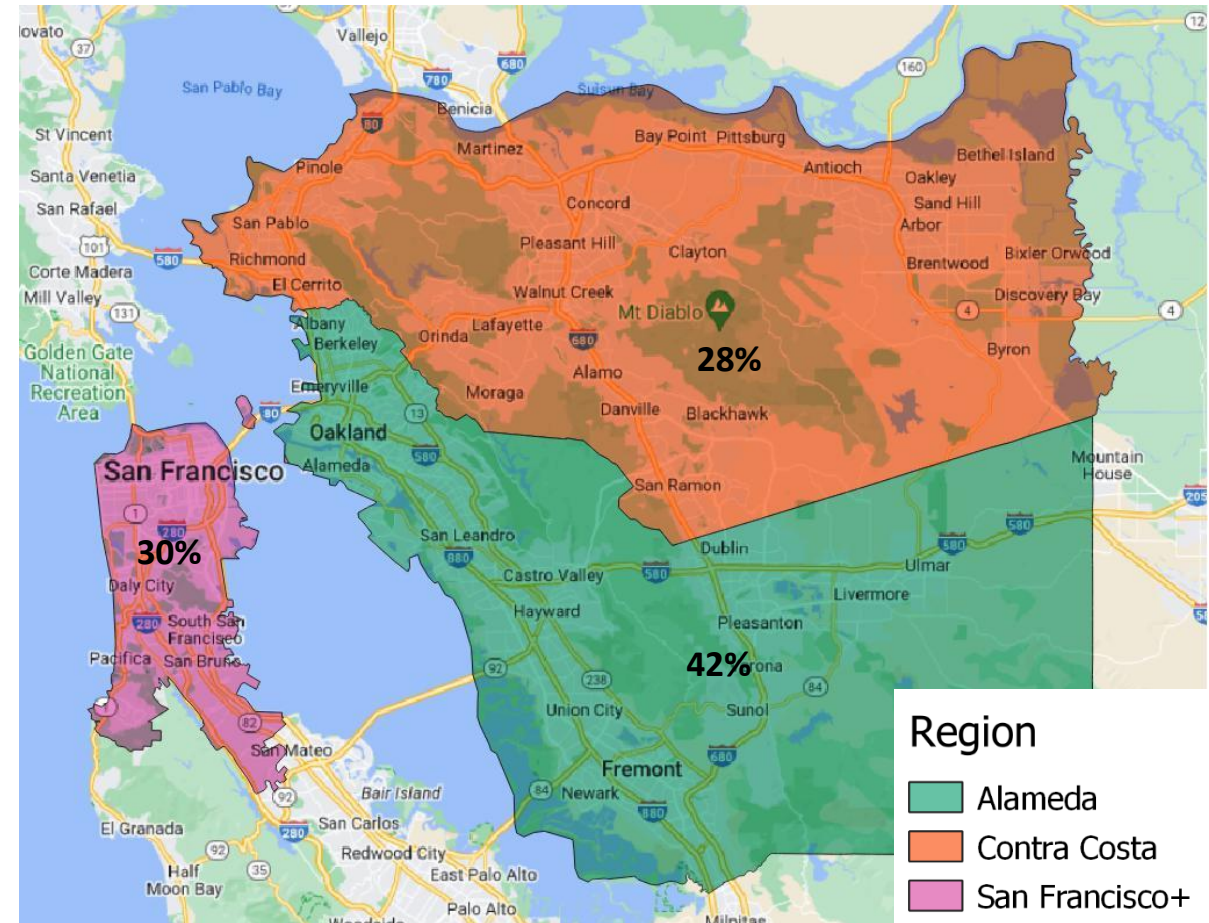


# Survey of BART Service Area Residents

*Conducted for Bay Area Council  
April 2023*

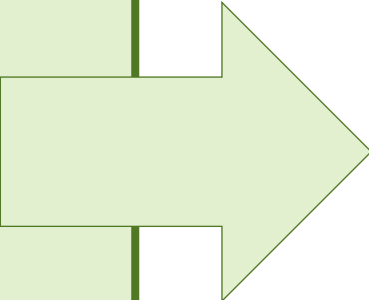
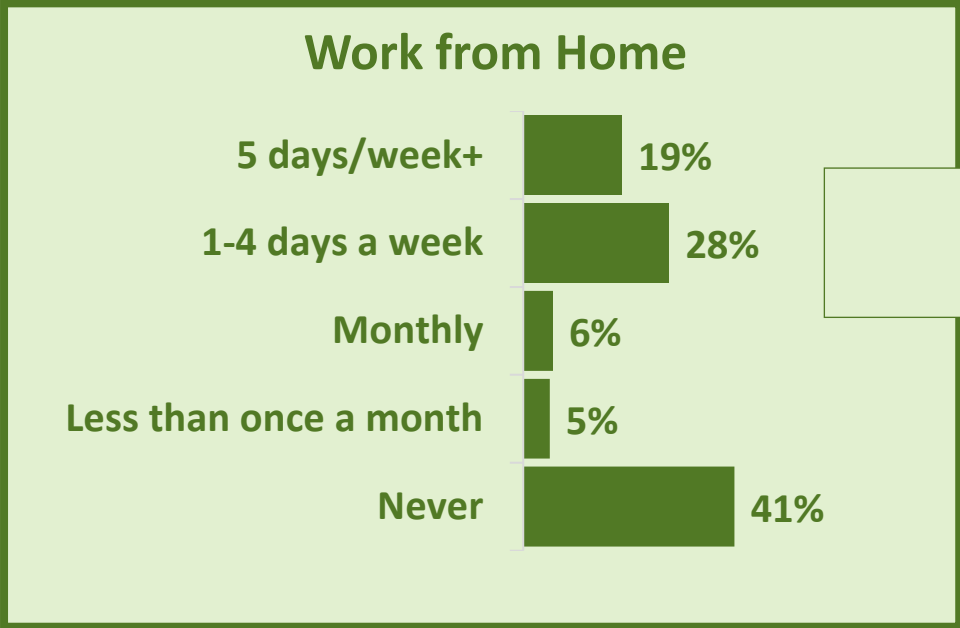
# Methodology

- ▶ Survey of Bay Area residents in Alameda, Contra Costa, San Francisco, and Northern San Mateo counties
- ▶ Email- and text-to-web survey
  - Invitations were sent with link to web survey
  - Survey available in both English and Spanish
- ▶ Survey conducted March 30-April 9, 2023
- ▶ 1,000 interviews; overall margin of error  $\pm 3.1$  percentage points



Please note that due to rounding, some percentages may not add up to exactly 100%.

# Profile of Respondents – Commute Behavior

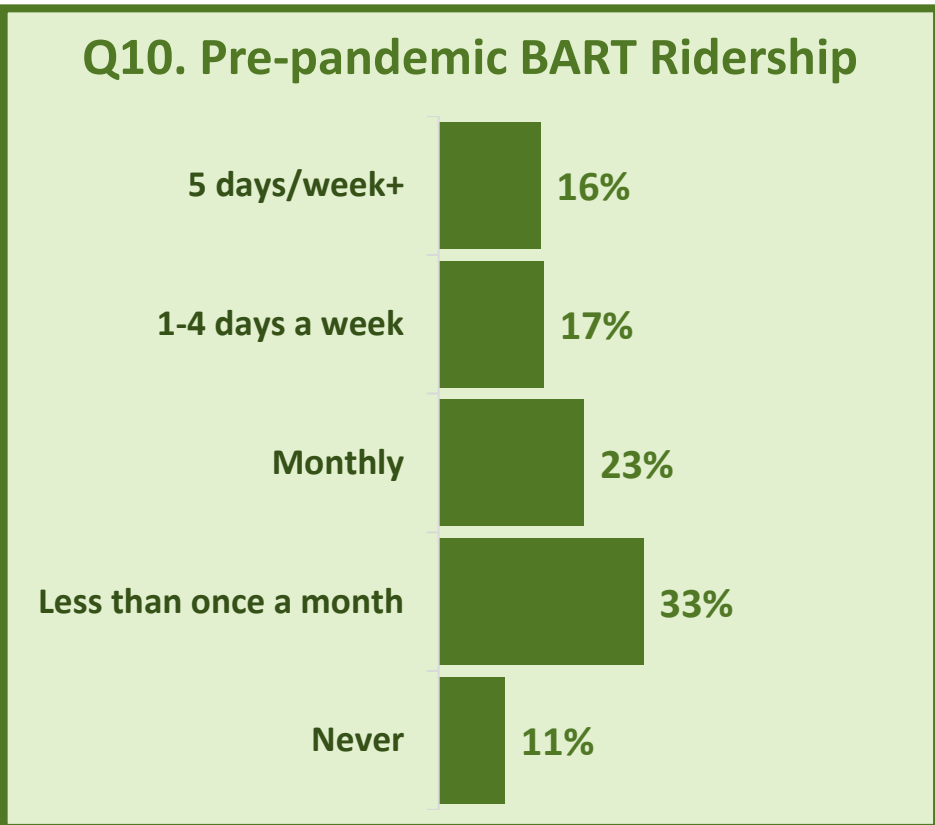
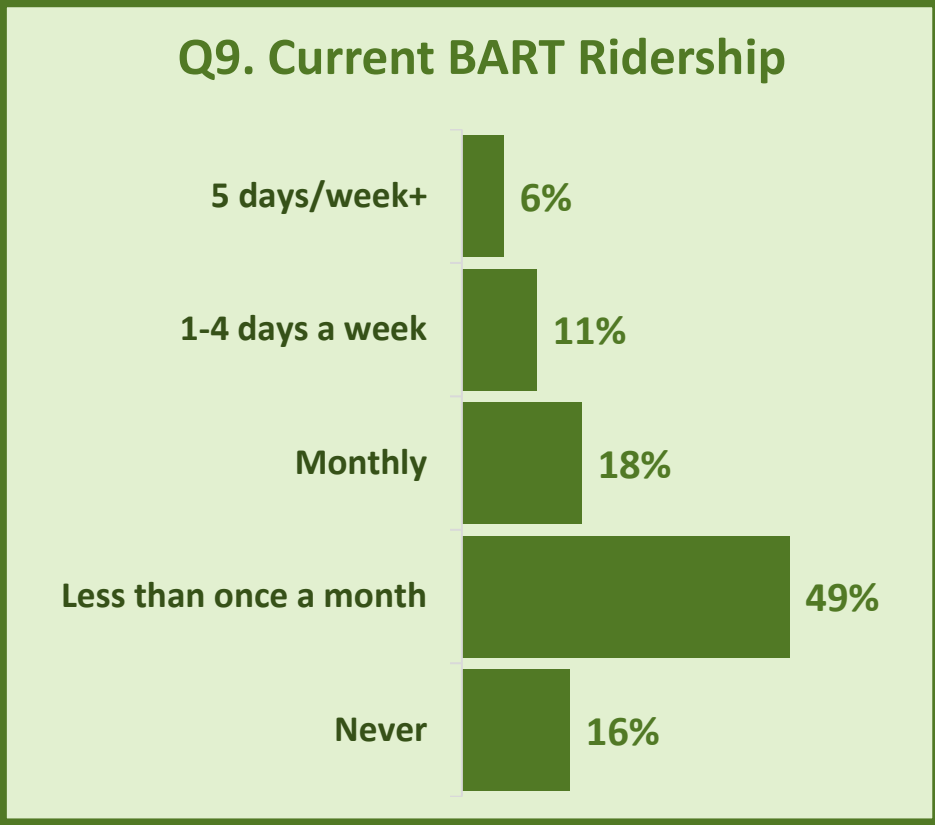


***Of those working from home:***

- 62% expect to continue as they are***
- 27% anticipate commuting more in the future***

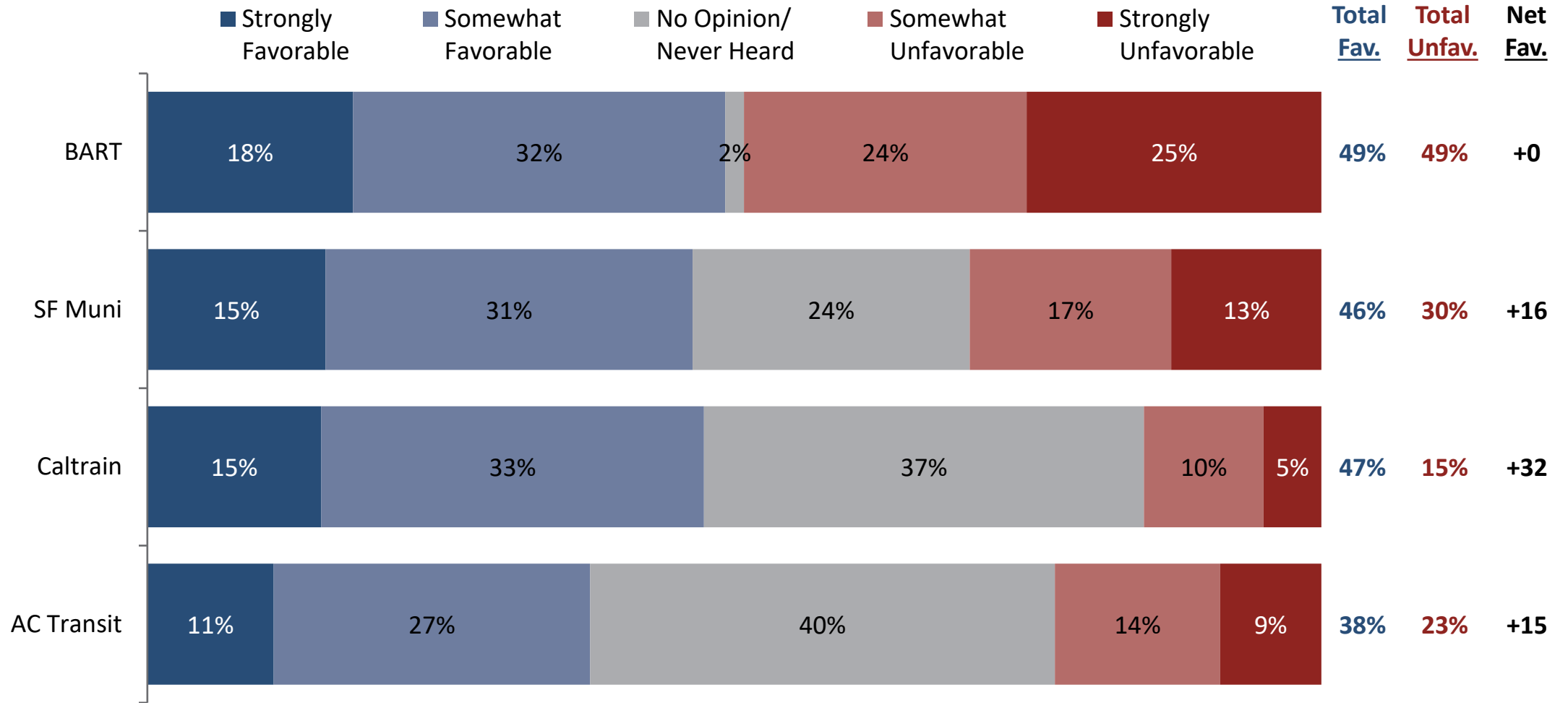
# Profile of Respondents – BART Ridership

**35%** of area residents ride BART monthly or more  
**7%** of area residents consider BART their primary mode of transportation



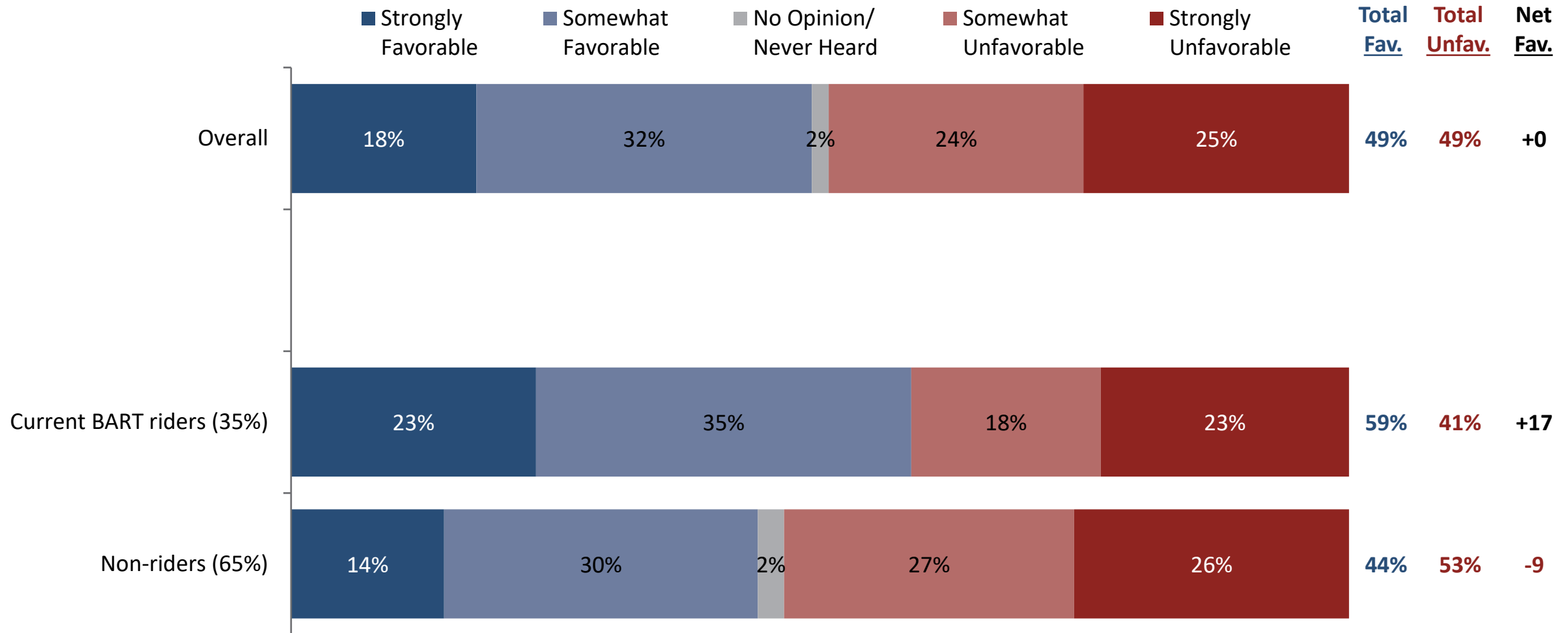
# Transit Agency Brand Ratings

*BART is the best-known transit agency in the service area, but opinion on the agency is split, with a quarter strongly unfavorable.*



# BART Brand Rating – Riders vs Non-Riders

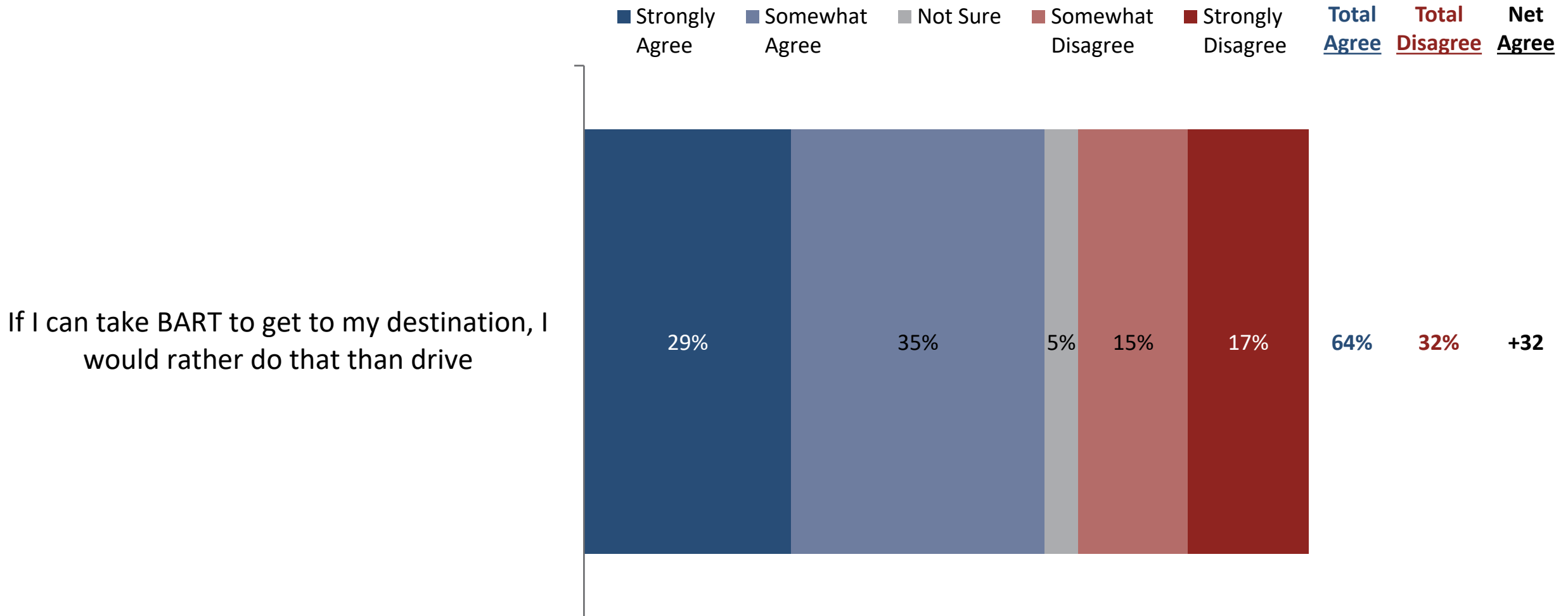
*BART riders feel more positive about BART, but a quarter of riders hold a strongly negative opinion.*





# BART Preference

*Two in three area residents agree they would prefer to take BART if they could to get to their destination.*



Q38-42. Whether you ride BART yourself or not, please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

# Reasons For Not Riding BART

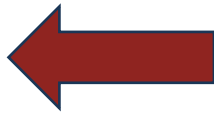
Concerns about safety, fear, and cleanliness, are the top-cited reasons not to ride BART more often.

*What is the main thing that keeps you from riding BART more often than you are now, if anything? (open-ended question, responses coded for analysis)*

**45% cite safety concerns, fear, or cleanliness**



**19% cite lack of a commute or working from home**

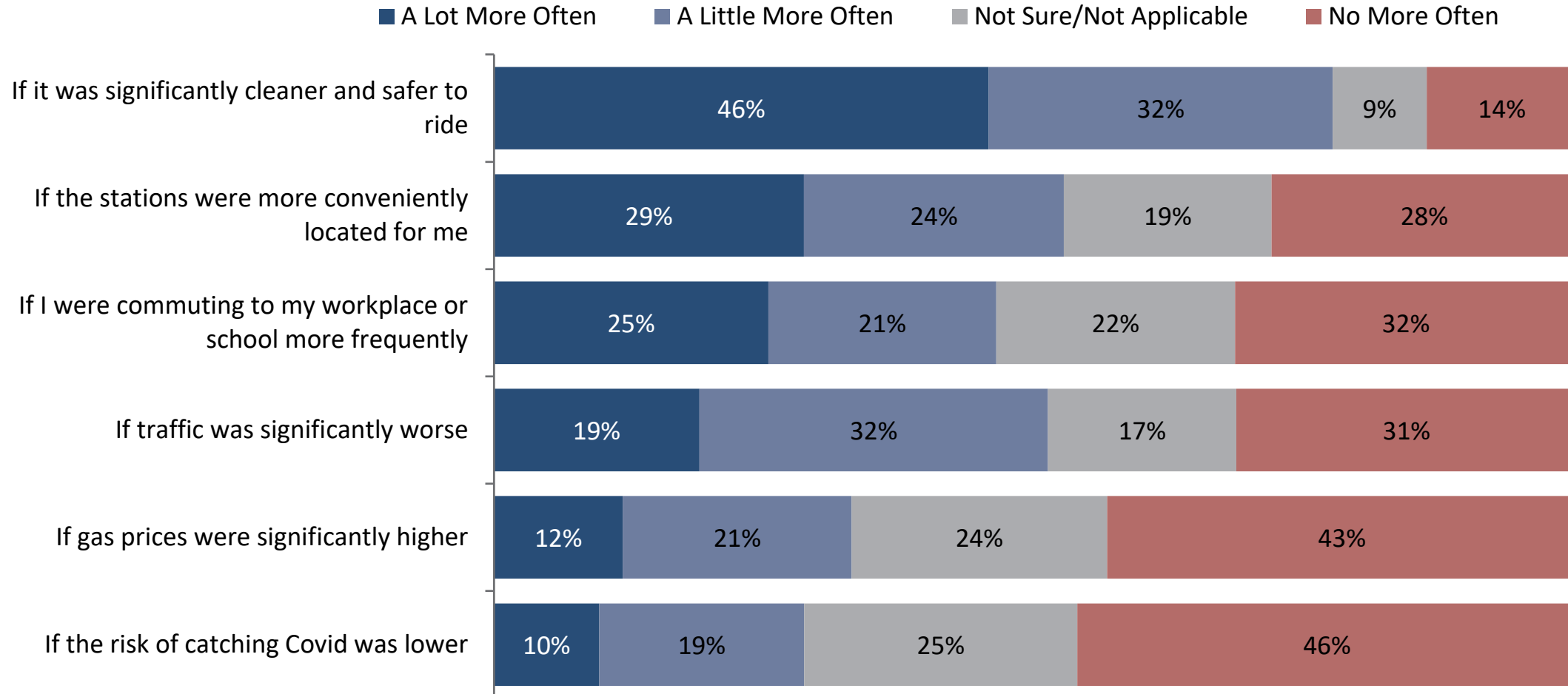


Response	%
Safety concerns/Dangerous/Lack of security/Fear	22%
No need/No commute/Retired/Don't go to SF	16%
Convenience/Frequency/Reliability/Time/Schedule	9%
Dirty/Cleanliness concerns/Disgusting/COVID-19	9%
Crime/Fare evaders	8%
Own a car/Use other transportation/Muni rider	6%
Location/Station too far away/Distance/Limited reach	6%
Price/Too expensive/Cost	5%
Homeless	4%
Work from home/Remote work	3%
Bad service/Old infrastructure/Disability/Mismanagement	2%
Drugs/Mentally ill passengers	2%



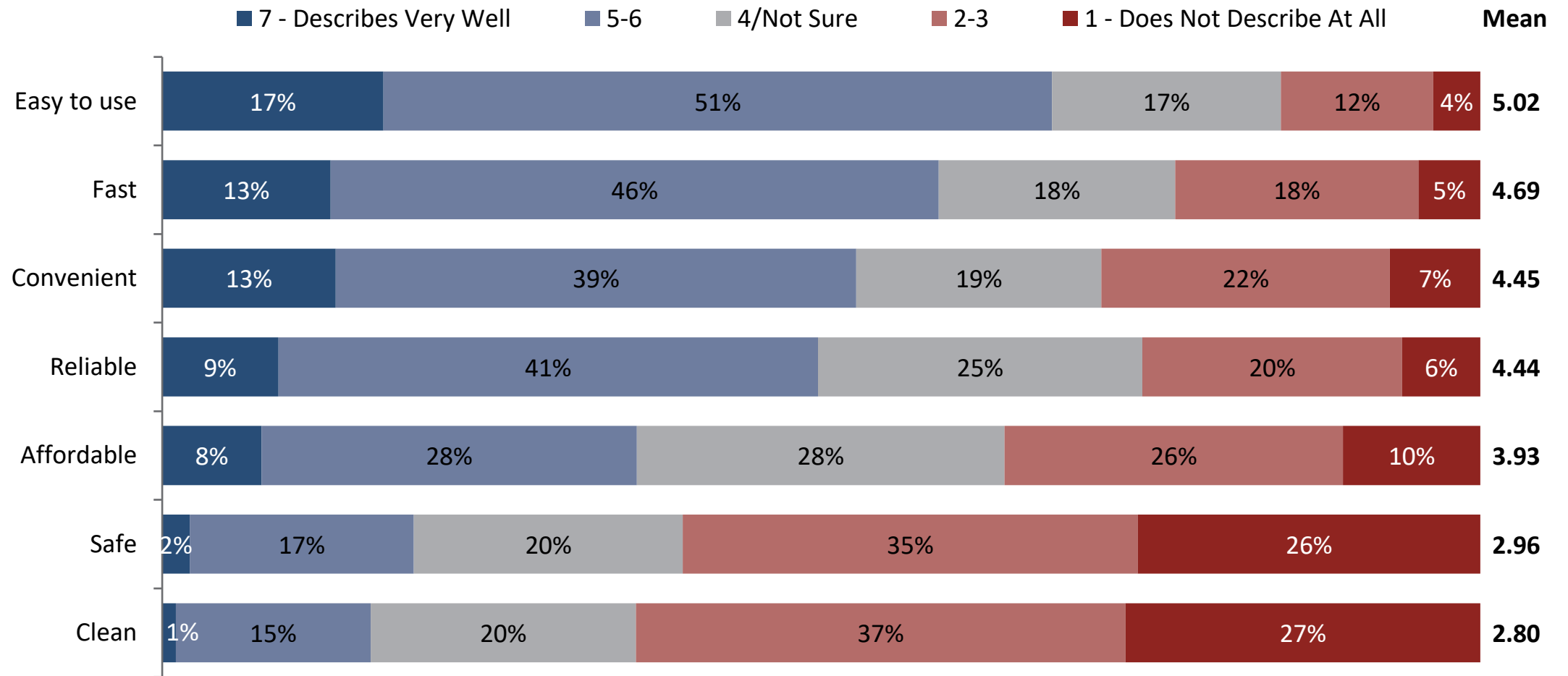
# What Would Make You Ride More Often

*A wide majority say they would ride BART more often if it was significantly cleaner and safer to ride.*



# BART Attribute Ratings

*While a majority would describe BART as easy to use, fast, and convenient, fewer than one in five residents describe BART as safe or clean.*

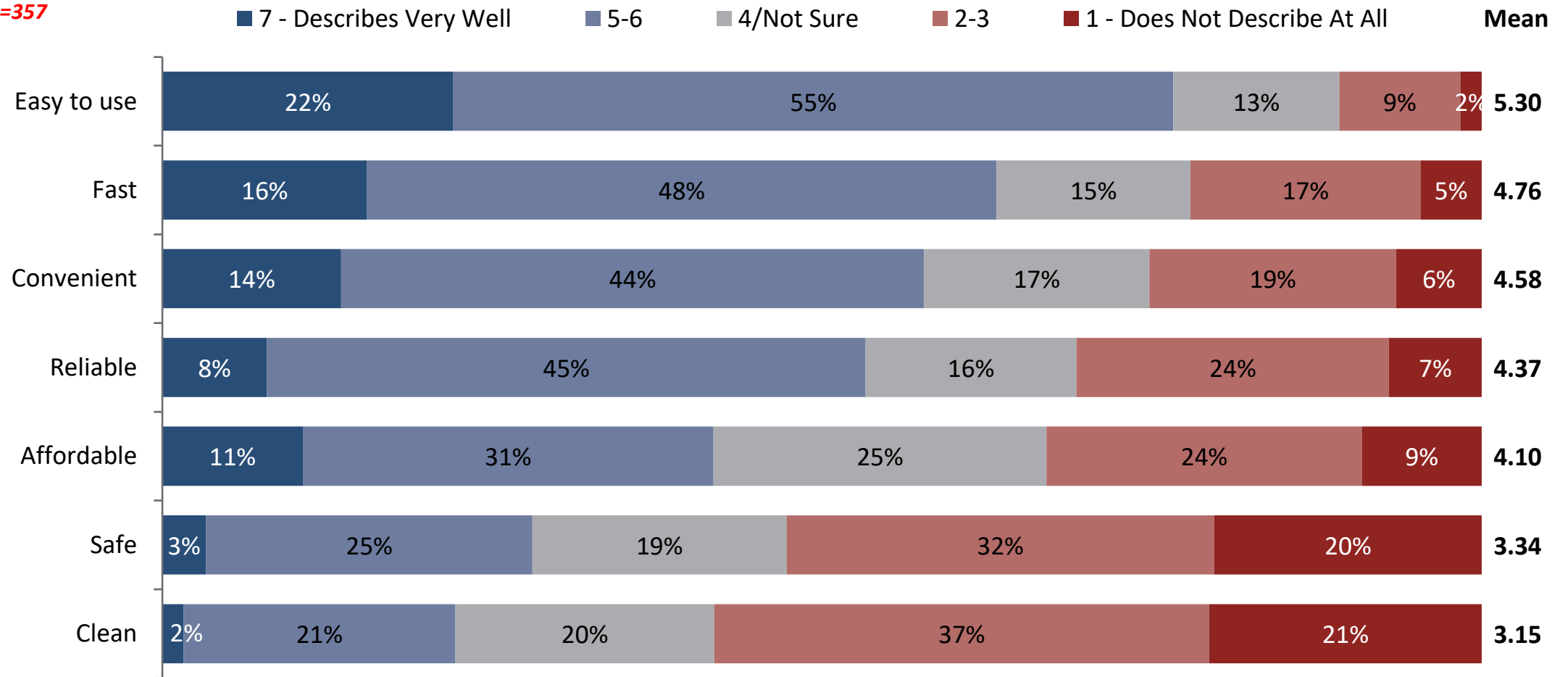


Q18-24. Whether you ride BART yourself or not, please rate how well you feel each of the following describes BART. Please use a scale from 1 to 7 where 1 means does not describe at all, and 7 means describes very well.

# BART Attribute Ratings – Among BART Riders

*BART riders give somewhat more positive attribute ratings than the general public.*

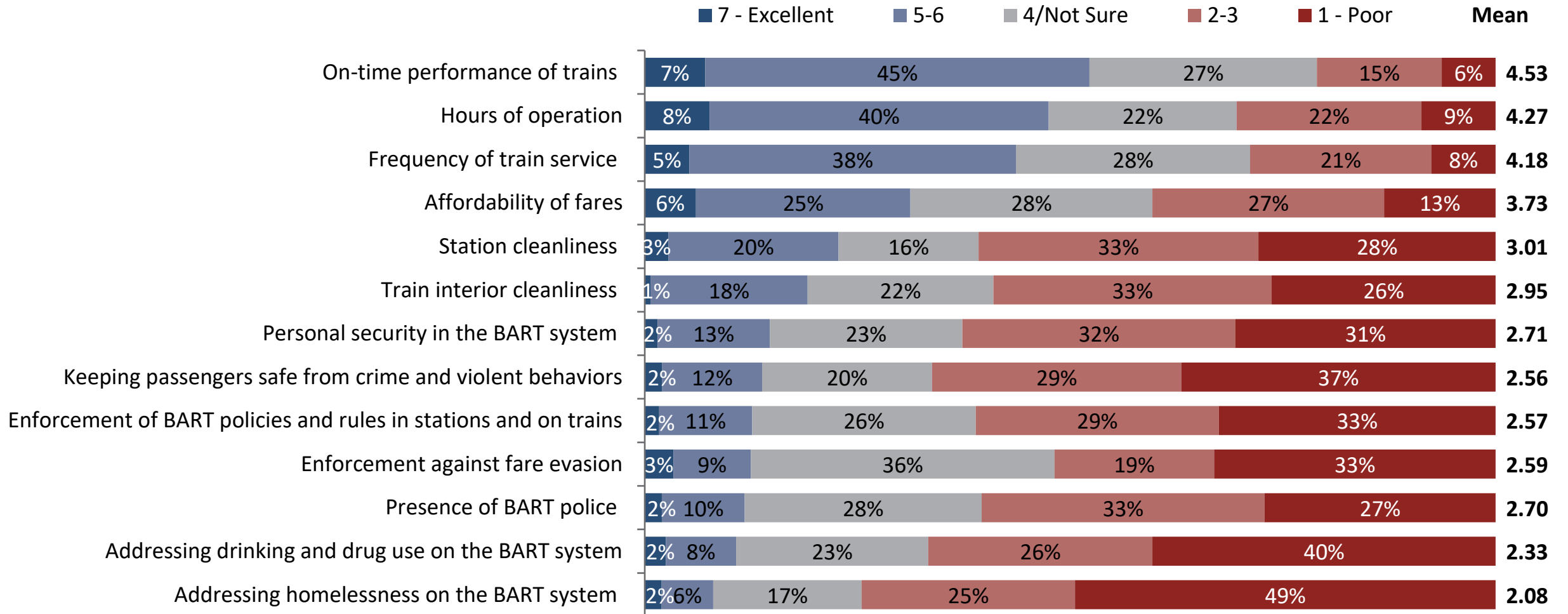
**BART riders only; n=357**



Q18-24. Whether you ride BART yourself or not, please rate how well you feel each of the following describes BART. Please use a scale from 1 to 7 where 1 means does not describe at all, and 7 means describes very well.

# BART Performance Ratings

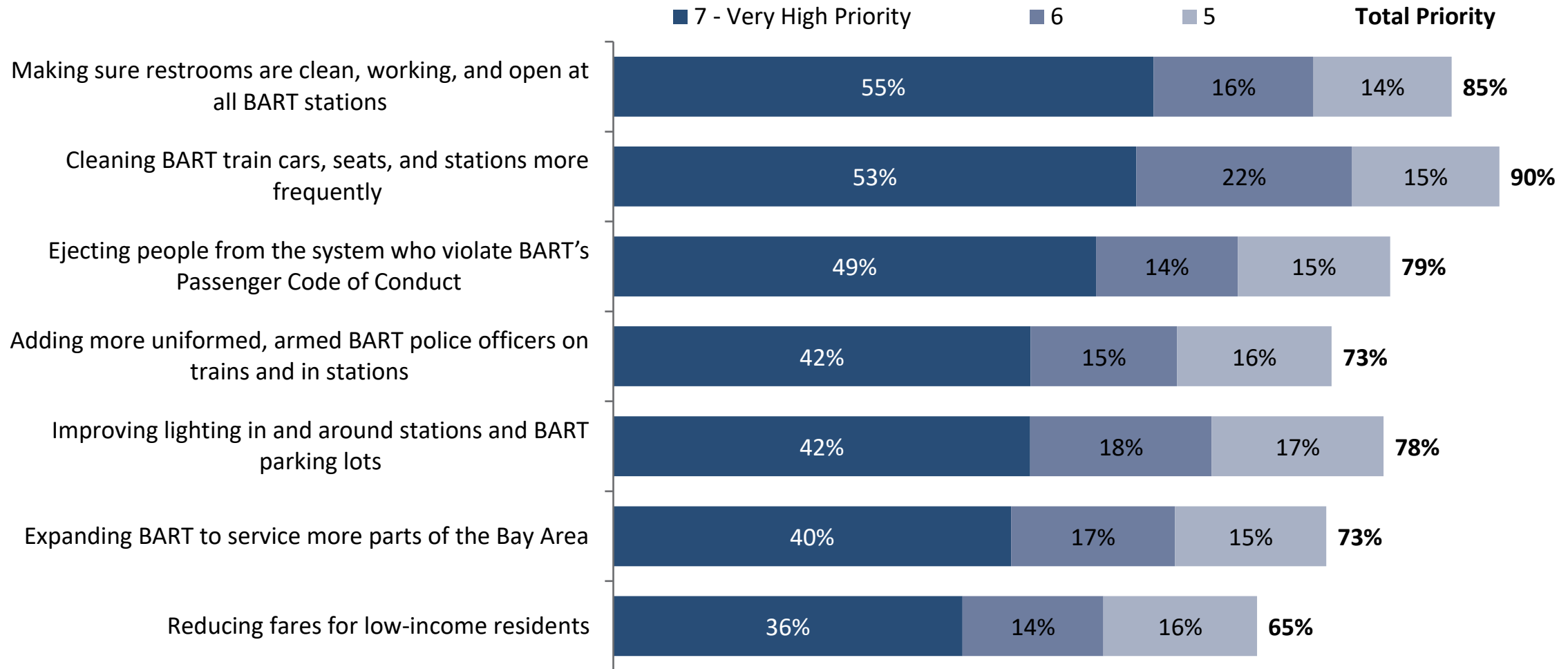
*Residents feel BART is doing a particularly poor job with addressing homelessness on the system, dealing with drinking, drug use, and fare evasion, and keeping passengers safe from crime and violence.*



Q25-37. Whether you ride BART yourself or not, on a scale from 1 to 7 where 1 means poor and 7 means excellent, how would you rate BART on each of the following?

# Priorities for BART

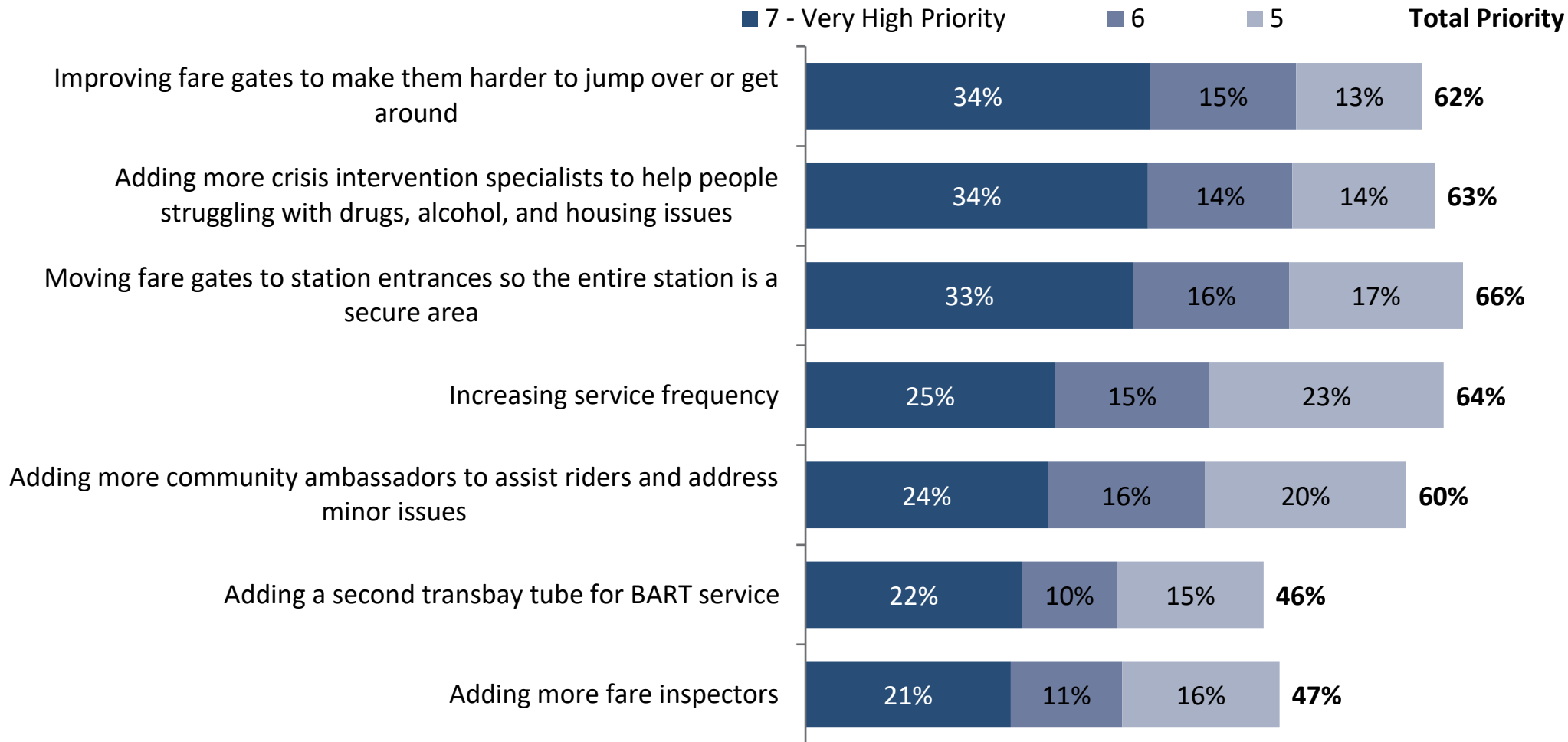
*Cleanliness, ejecting violators, adding more police, and improving lighting are seen as high priorities for BART.*



Q43-56. Whether you ride BART yourself or not, please indicate how high a priority you think each of the following should be for BART to do.

# Priorities for BART Cont.

*Other improvements are lower priority.*



Q43-56. Whether you ride BART yourself or not, please indicate how high a priority you think each of the following should be for BART to do.

# People in Crisis on BART

*When asked to choose, more than six in ten local residents prefer BART focus on running a clean, safe transit system and allow other public agencies to handle people in crisis, as opposed to feeling BART should be connecting people to supportive services.*

## ***Which of the following statements is closer to your opinion?***

**BART should focus only on running a clean, safe, and reliable public transit system, and let other public agencies deal with the problems of people in crisis.**  
65%

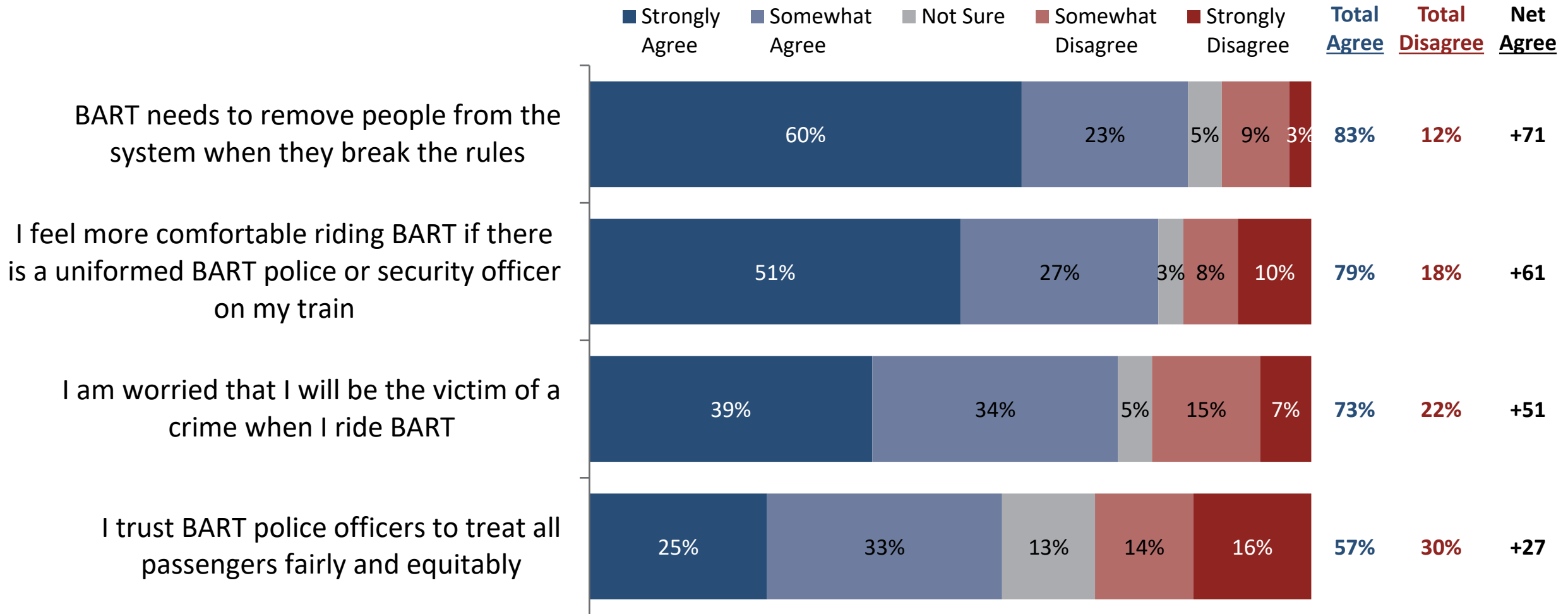
**BART should connect people in crisis on their system to supportive services such as shelters, drug clinics, and emergency medical services.**  
26%

**Not Sure**  
9%



# Crime and Policing on BART

*There is strong agreement that BART needs to remove rule-breakers from the system, and most feel more comfortable when there is an officer on their train.*



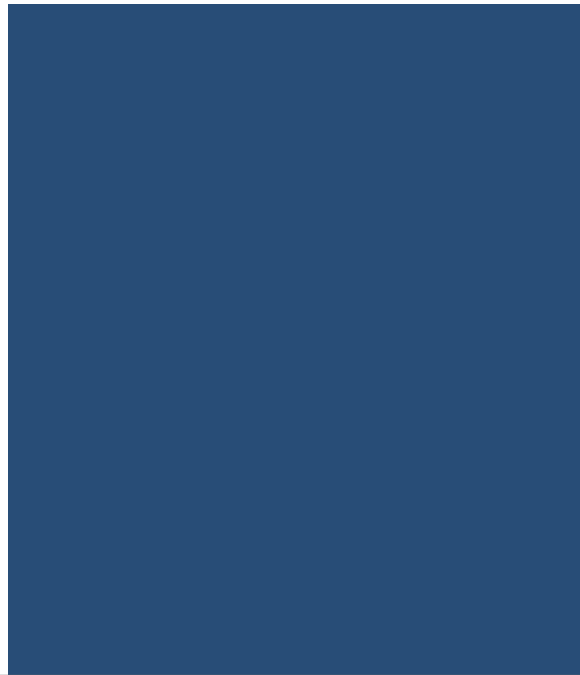
Q38-42. Whether you ride BART yourself or not, please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

# BART Police Officers and Safety

*Seven in ten feel safer when they are around uniformed BART police officers.*

***Which of the following statements is closer to your opinion?***

**Being around uniformed BART  
police officers makes me feel more safe**  
72%



**Being around uniformed BART  
police officers makes me feel less safe**  
15%



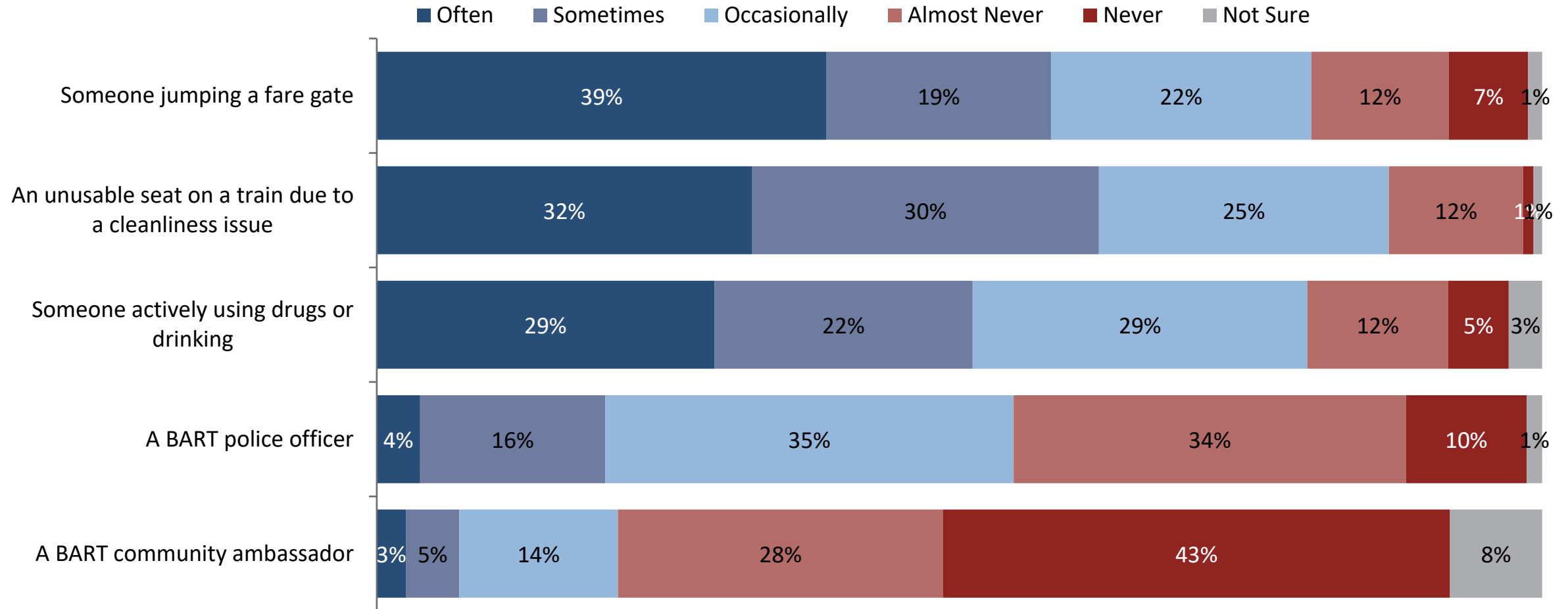
**Not Sure**  
13%



# BART Observations

*Most people who ride BART say they have at least occasionally seen fare gate jumping, unusable seats, and drinking or drug use, but many report rarely or never seeing police officers or community ambassadors on BART.*

**BART riders only; n=357**



Q60-64. Thinking about the times you have ridden BART in the last couple of years, how often do you see each of the following?

# Crime Experience on BART

*Many residents feel they know of crime or have witnessed crime on BART. One-quarter of those who ride BART say they have been a victim of crime on BART.*

## Percent responding “Yes”

	All Residents	BART Riders (35%)
Do you know of someone who has been a victim of any kind of crime on BART, including sexual harassment or other kinds of harassment?	53%	56%
Have you been a witness to any kind of crime on BART, including sexual harassment or other kinds of harassment?	46%	51%
Have you personally been a victim of any kind of crime on BART, including sexual harassment or other kinds of harassment?	18%	24%

Q65-68. The following questions will ask about what, if any, personal experience you have with crime on BART. As a reminder, this survey is being conducted on a scientific and confidential basis. Your individual responses and other personal information will not be shared with anyone.



# Current and Pre-Pandemic Ridership Analysis

# Ridership Segmentation

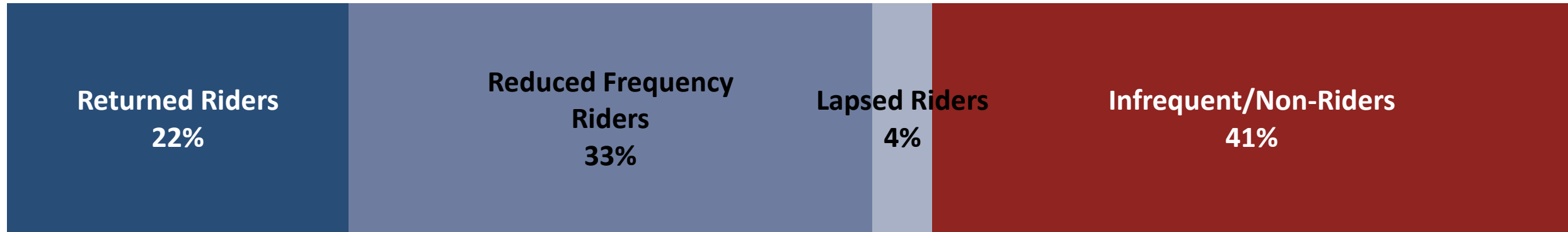
About one in five residents are riding BART at least as much as before the pandemic, while another 37% who rode before the pandemic are riding less frequently or not at all. Most of the reduced/lapsed rider group was riding weekly pre-pandemic.

**Returned Riders:** Rode BART monthly or more before the pandemic, rides the same amount or more frequently now

**Reduced Frequency Riders:** Rode BART monthly or more before the pandemic, still rides but with reduced frequency

**Lapsed Riders:** Rode BART monthly or more before the pandemic, rides occasionally or never now

**Infrequent/Non-Riders:** Did not ride BART monthly before the pandemic, and does not ride monthly now



**37% Total Reduced/Lapsed Riders**  
*65% of this group rode BART weekly before the pandemic;  
16% ride weekly now*

# Reduced/Lapsed Riders: Reasons For Not Riding BART

More than half of reduced and lapsed riders say their top barrier to riding BART more often is safety, fear, or cleanliness.

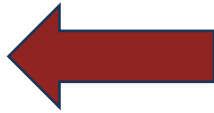
Reduced/Lapsed riders only; n=383

**What is the main thing that keeps you from riding BART more often than you are now, if anything? (open-ended question, responses coded for analysis)**

**55% cite safety concerns, fear, or cleanliness**



**16% cite lack of a commute or working from home**



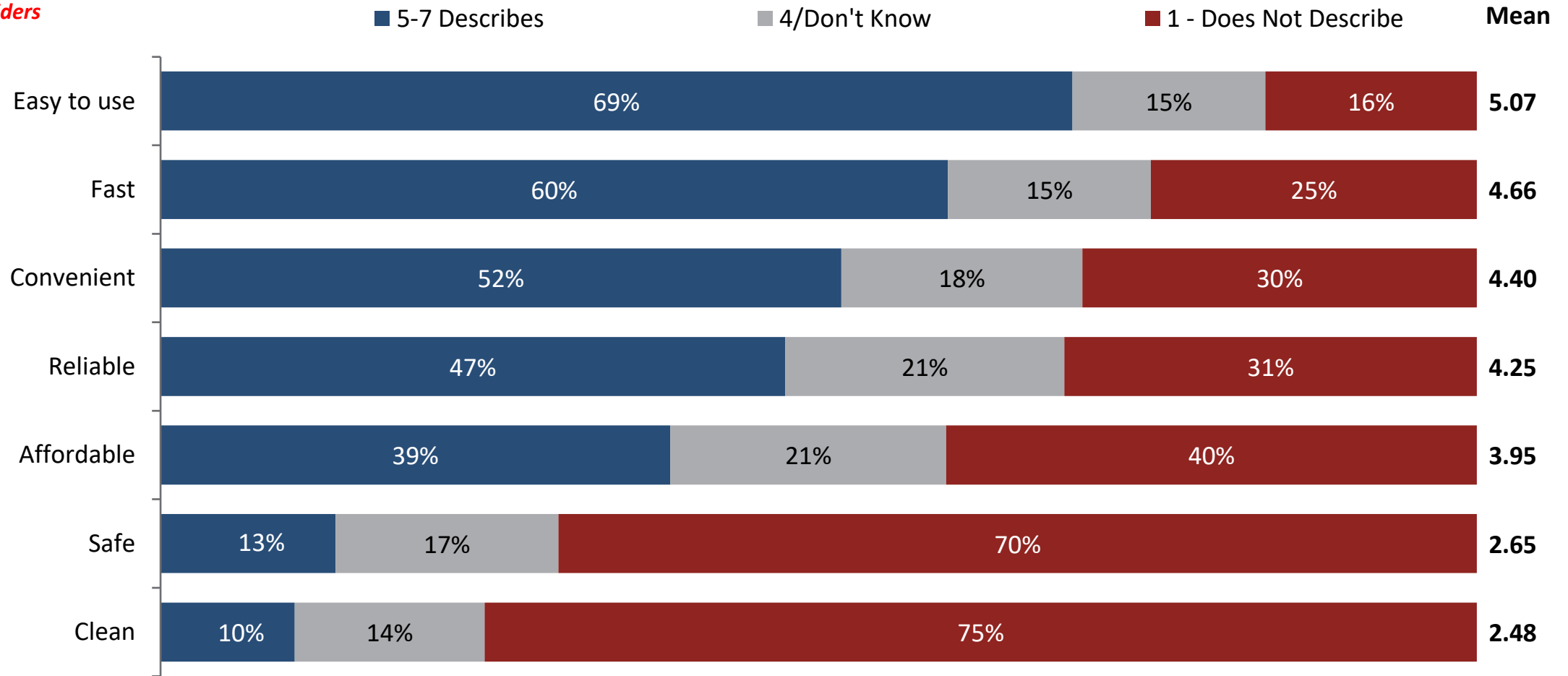
Response	%
Safety concerns/Dangerous/Lack of security/Fear	25%
No need/No commute/Retired/Don't go to SF	10%
Convenience/Frequency/Reliability/Time/Schedule	10%
Dirty/Cleanliness concerns/Disgusting/COVID-19	12%
Crime/Fare evaders	10%
Own a car/Use other transportation/Muni rider	3%
Location/Station too far away/Distance/Limited reach	4%
Price/Too expensive/Cost	4%
Homeless	6%
Work from home/Remote work	6%
Bad service/Old infrastructure/Disability/Mismanagement	2%
Drugs/Mentally ill passengers	2%



# Reduced/Lapsed Riders: BART Attribute Ratings

*Most of those who have reduced or stopped riding BART since the pandemic have negative perceptions of the system's safety and cleanliness.*

**Reduced/Lapsed riders only; n=383**

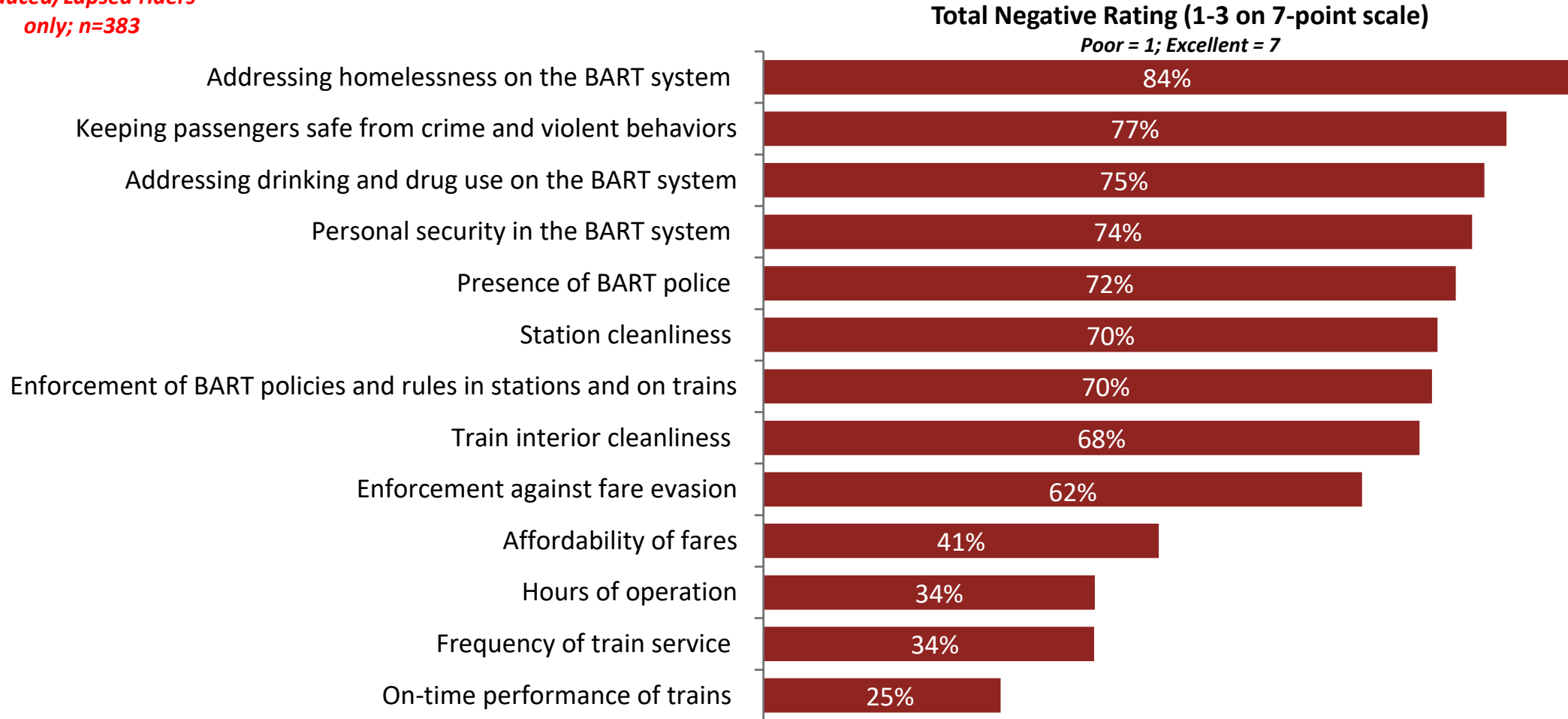


Q18-24. Whether you ride BART yourself or not, please rate how well you feel each of the following describes BART. Please use a scale from 1 to 7 where 1 means does not describe at all, and 7 means describes very well.

# Reduced/Lapsed Riders: BART Performance Ratings

*Most of those who have reduced or ceased ridership give BART the most negative ratings around addressing homelessness on the system, keeping passengers safe, addressing drinking and drug use, and personal security.*

**Reduced/Lapsed riders only; n=383**

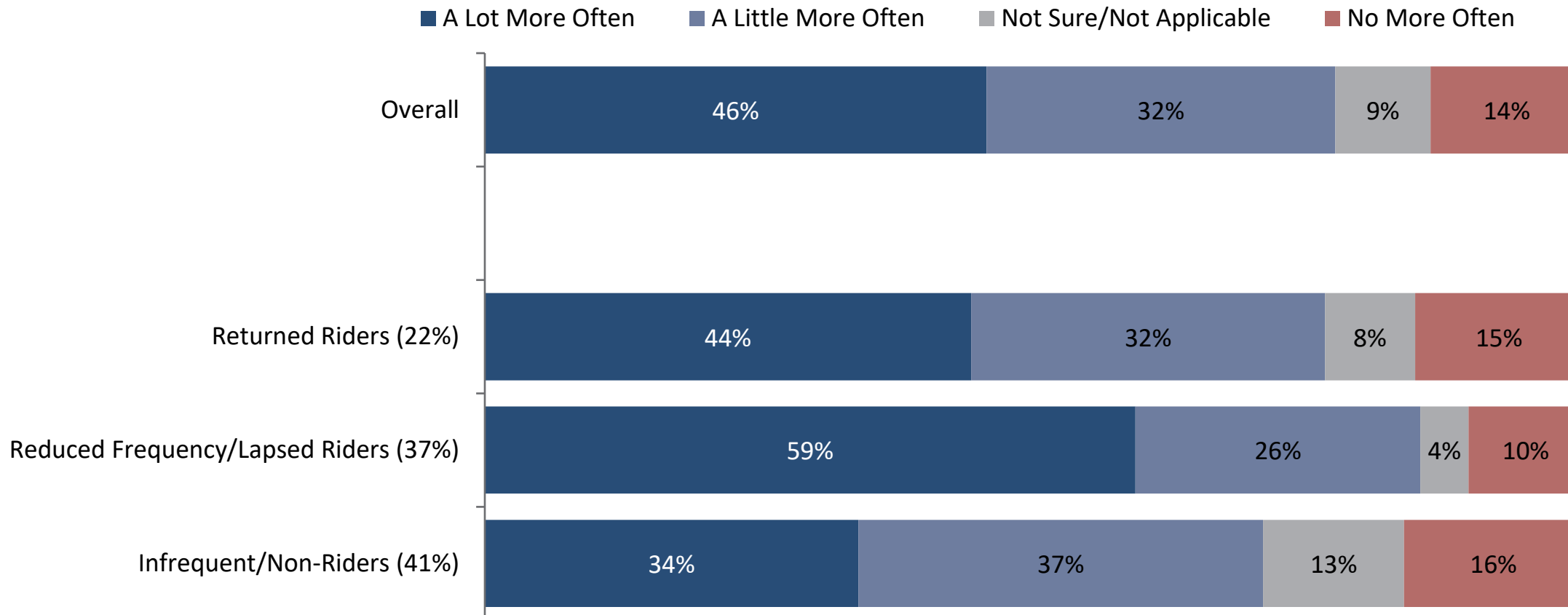


Q25-37. Whether you ride BART yourself or not, on a scale from 1 to 7 where 1 means poor and 7 means excellent, how would you rate BART on each of the following?

# Ridership Frequency: “Cleaner & Safer to Ride”

*Over half of reduced or lapsed BART riders say they would ride BART a lot more often with cleanliness and safety improvements.*

**How often would you ride BART if it was significantly cleaner and safer to ride?**

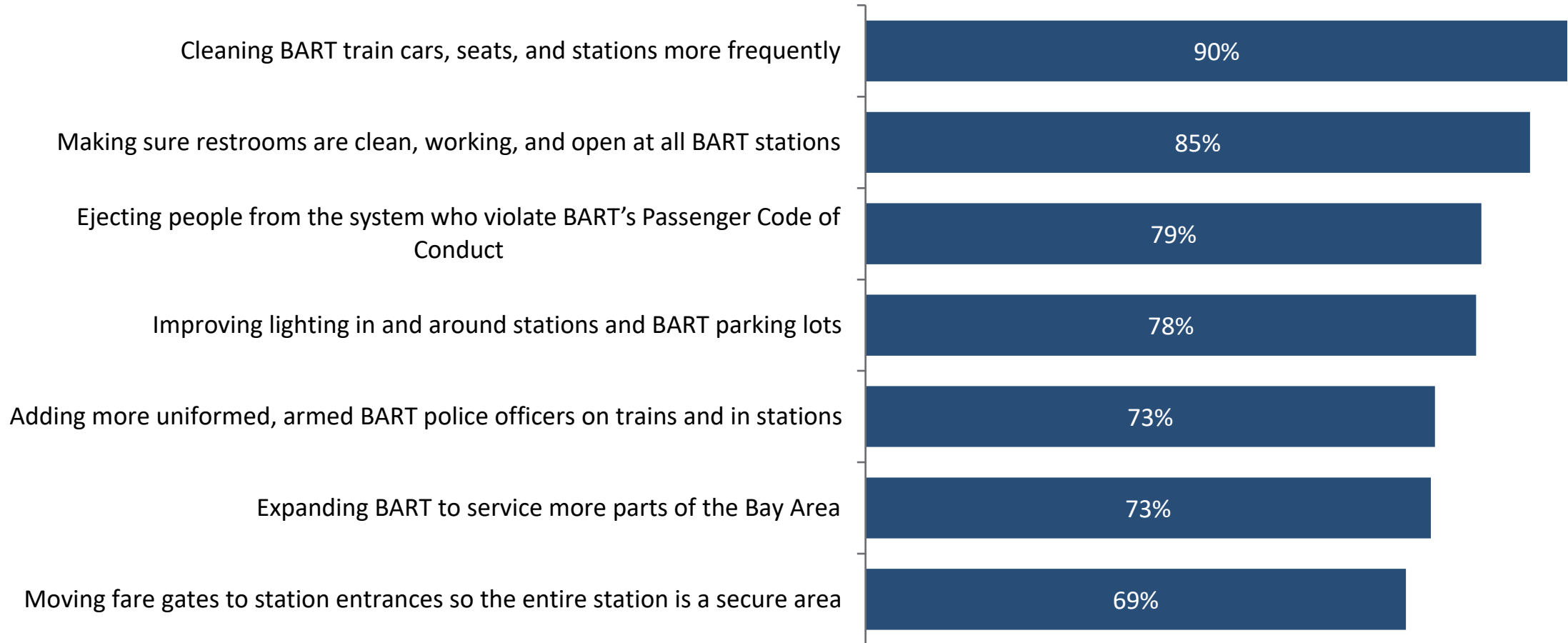


# Reduced/Lapsed Riders: Top priorities for BART

*Those who have reduced ridership are most interested in additional safety and cleaning measures.*

**Reduced/Lapsed riders only; n=383**

**Total Priority (5-7 on 7-point scale)**  
Very Low Priority = 1; Very High Priority = 7

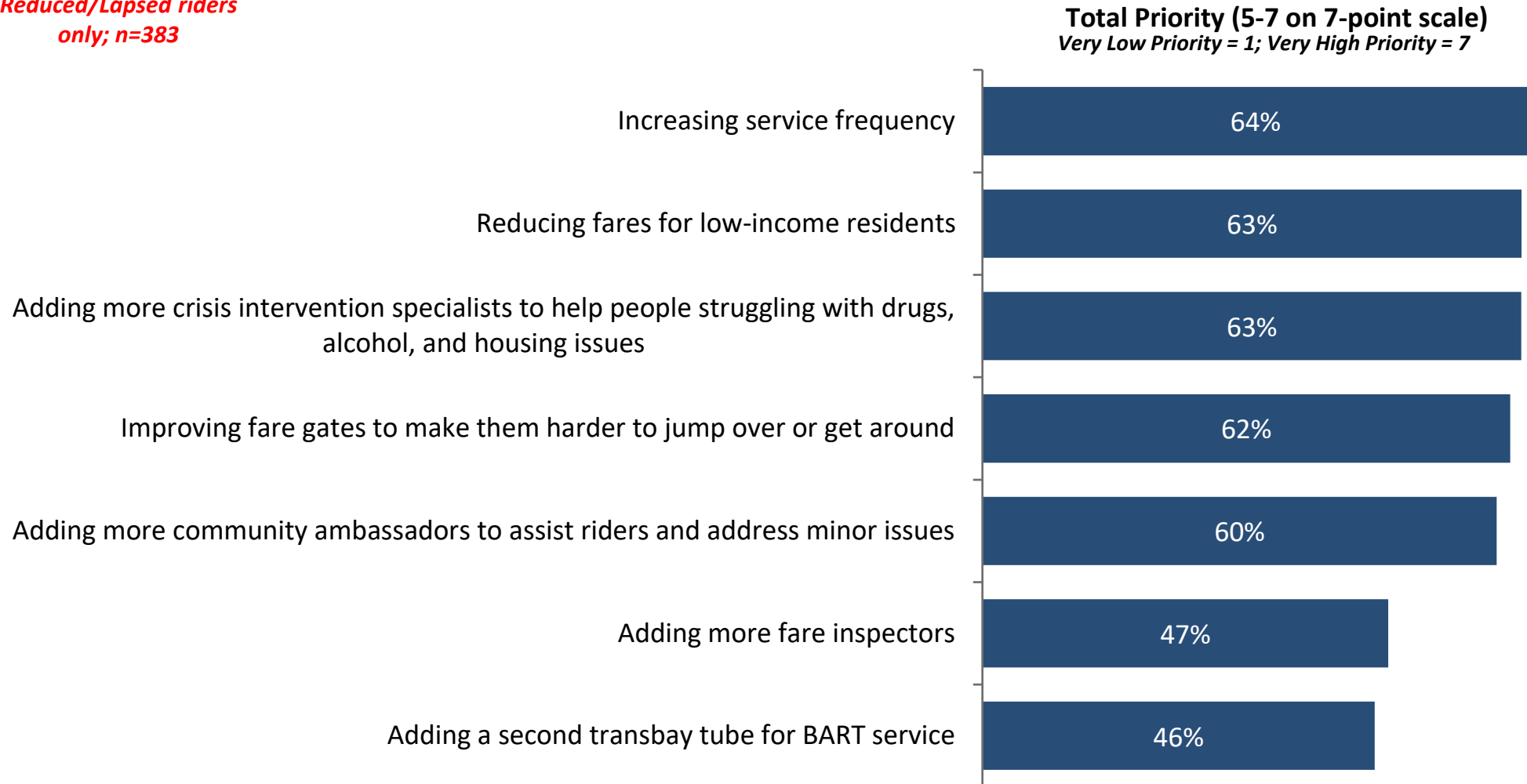


Q43-56. Whether you ride BART yourself or not, please indicate how high a priority you think each of the following should be for BART to do.

# Reduced/Lapsed Riders: Lower Priorities for BART

*Other items are lower priority for this group.*

**Reduced/Lapsed riders  
only; n=383**

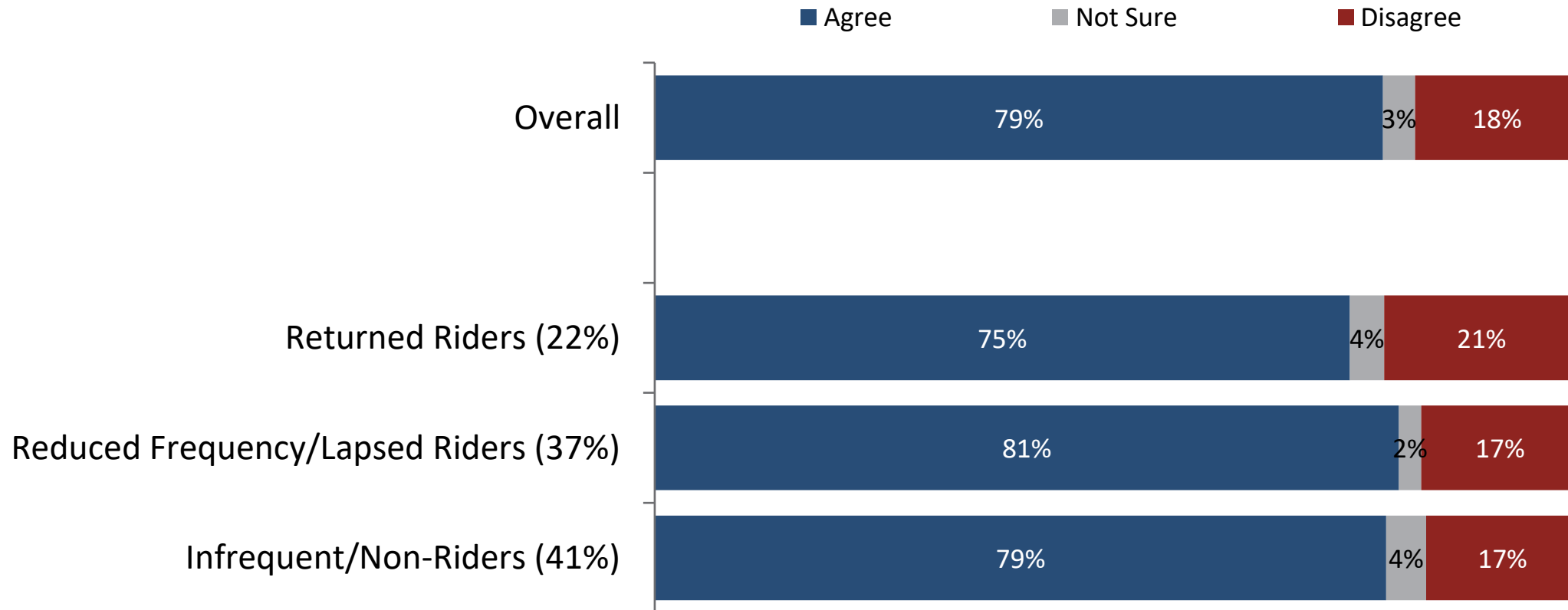


Q43-56. Whether you ride BART yourself or not, please indicate how high a priority you think each of the following should be for BART to do.

# BART Police Sentiments

*All ridership groups feel more comfortable with an officer on their BART train.*

**I feel more comfortable riding BART if there is a uniformed BART police or security officer on my train**

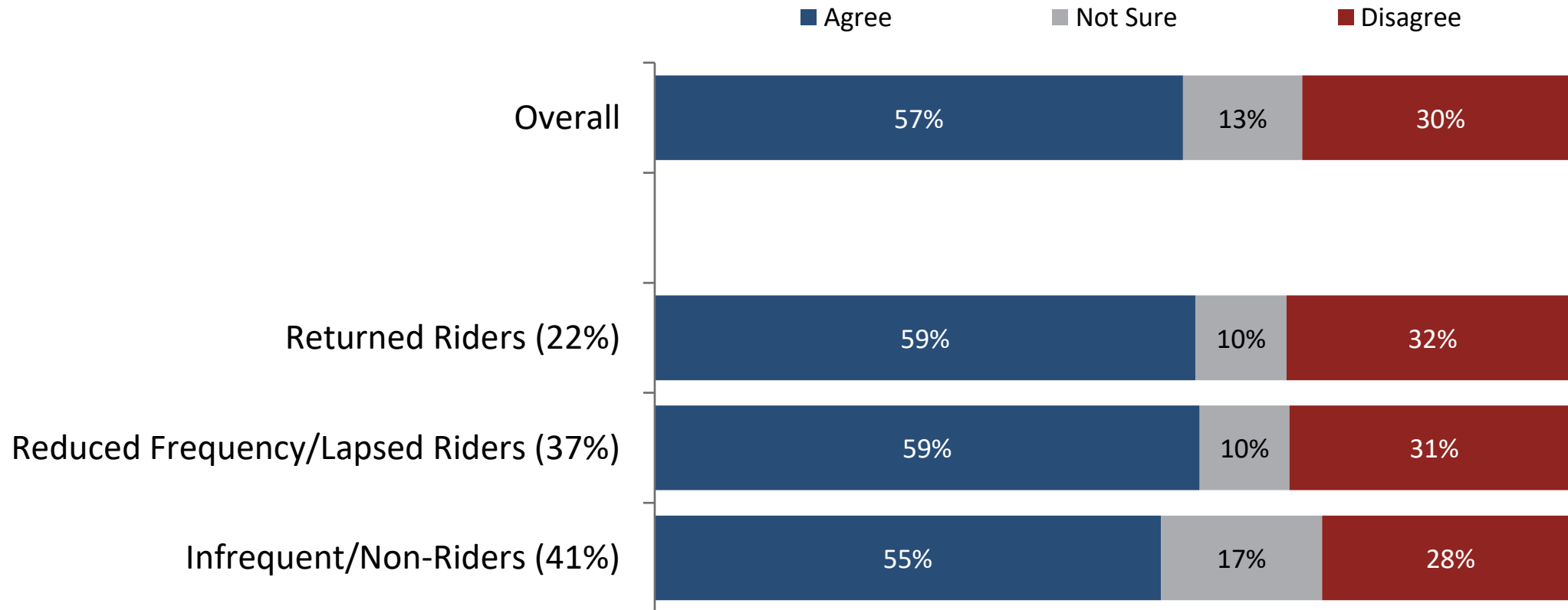


Q38-42. Whether you ride BART yourself or not, please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

# BART Officer Sentiments

*A majority in all ridership groups trust BART police to treat all passengers equitably, although about one-third have some concerns.*

## I trust BART police officers to treat all passengers fairly and equitably



Q38-42. Whether you ride BART yourself or not, please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.



# Key Findings

- ▶ **Feelings about BART are mixed** among service area residents: 49% have a positive opinion, and 49% have a negative opinion
- ▶ **Safety and security** are cited as the top barriers to increased ridership; just 17% describe BART as safe, and 16% describe it as clean.
- ▶ There is **support for additional policing on BART**; Few report seeing officers on BART, and 79% feel more comfortable when there is a police officer present. In addition, 73% feel BART should prioritize adding more uniformed, armed officers on trains and in stations.
- ▶ Most would like BART to **remove rule-breakers** from the system, but many do not feel it's BART's responsibility to support connections to social services.
- ▶ Half report either having **witnessed a crime or been a victim of one** on BART.
- ▶ Among those who have reduced or stopped riding BART since the start of the pandemic, **safety and cleanliness are the greatest barriers** to returning to ridership.



**Ruth Bernstein**  
**ruth@emcresearch.com**

**Sara LaBatt**  
**sara@emcresearch.com**