



Ipsos Reid

LRT and Public Opinion in Waterloo Region

May 2011



Nobody's Unpredictable



Methodology

- These are the findings of an Ipsos Reid poll conducted on behalf of Taxpayers for Sensible Transit.
- A sample of 1,025 residents of Kitchener-Waterloo and Cambridge were sampled by telephone (and cellphone), including:
 - 412 completes in Kitchener
 - 311 completes in Waterloo
 - 302 completes in Cambridge
- Results were weighted according to the demographic composition of the Region
- A sample of this size would yield a margin of error of +/- 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what the results would have been had all residents of Kitchener, Waterloo and Cambridge been polled. Margins of error within the population subgroupings will be smaller, including city, age and gender. The cities are as follows:
 - Kitchener (+/- 4.8 points)
 - Waterloo (+/- 5.6 points)
 - Cambridge (+/- 5.6 points)



Key Findings

- While a majority (63%) of residents are at least somewhat familiar with the Region's proposed rapid transit system for Kitchener, Waterloo and Cambridge, just 17% say that they're very familiar with the plan. Four in ten say they're either not very familiar (20%) or not at all familiar (16%) with it.
- One in three (32%) say they actually prefer the transit system the Region currently has. Those that want change are not agreed on which system would be best for the Region: full light rail system from Waterloo to Cambridge (26%), a combination of rail and buses as proposed (23%), or a full rapid bus system across all three cities (15%). No consensus has been built for any outcome.
- One half (50%) of residents support in principle the current plan, with residents of Kitchener (54%) being the most supportive. Support drops to 44% in Cambridge. Two in ten (18%) neither support nor oppose the plan, while one in three (31%) outright oppose the plan in principle.
- After being informed of the cost to the Region and the implications for taxpayers in the Region, more residents oppose (48%) the plan than support it (39%), while 12% don't have an opinion either way.
 - Even in Waterloo where support is highest at 46%, an equal proportion (47%) opposes it.
 - In Kitchener, more oppose (45%) than plan than support it (39%).
 - In Cambridge, six in ten (57%) oppose it, compared to one in three (33%) who support it, knowing the cost implications.
- Eight percent (8%) of residents say that if this plan goes forward they would use this form of rapid transit on a daily basis, with another 11% using it on a weekly basis. Currently 8% of residents say they use GRT buses on a daily basis, while 7% use them weekly. Conversely, while 51% of residents say they never use GRT currently, it drops to 36% who would never use the newly-proposed system.
- Residents of the Region overwhelmingly (83%) agree (59% strongly/24% somewhat) that the Region should hold a referendum on its proposed light rail transportation system before making a final decision. Just 16% 'disagree' (9% strongly/7% somewhat) with this prospect.

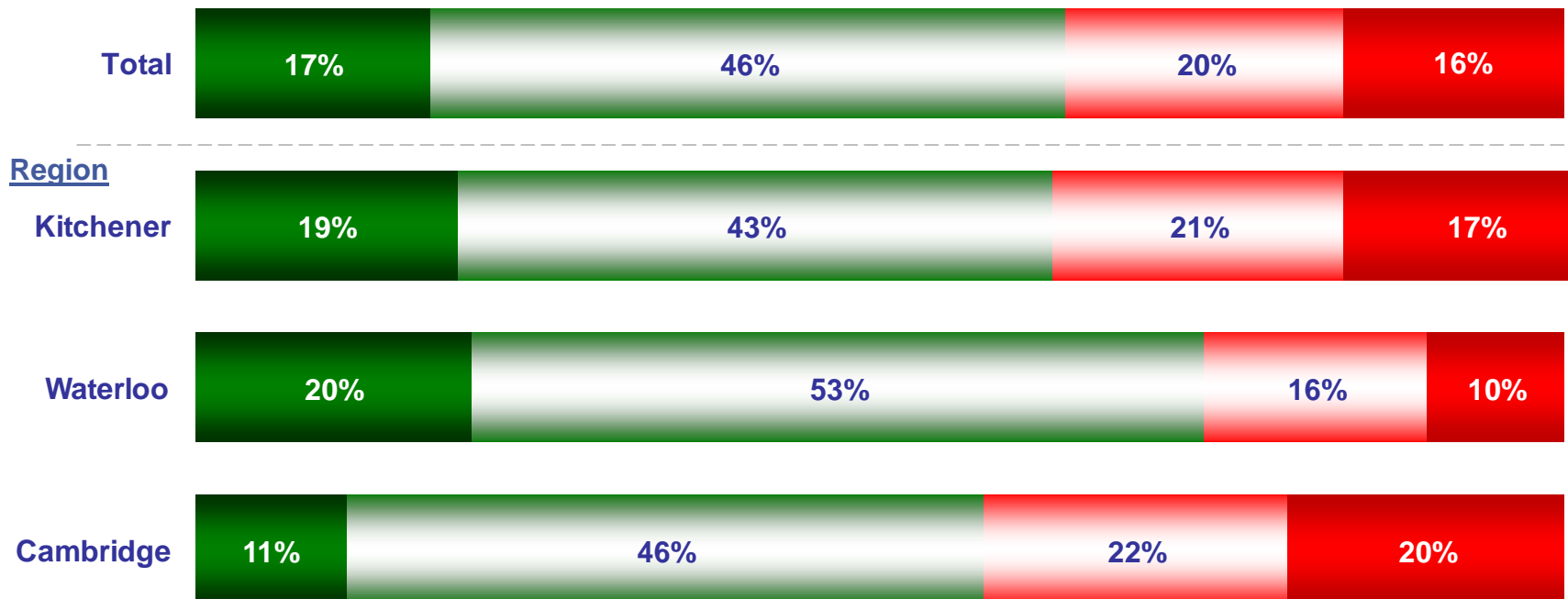


Detailed Findings



Familiarity of Residents with Region's Transit Plan

■ Very familiar ■ Somewhat familiar ■ Not very familiar ■ Not at all familiar

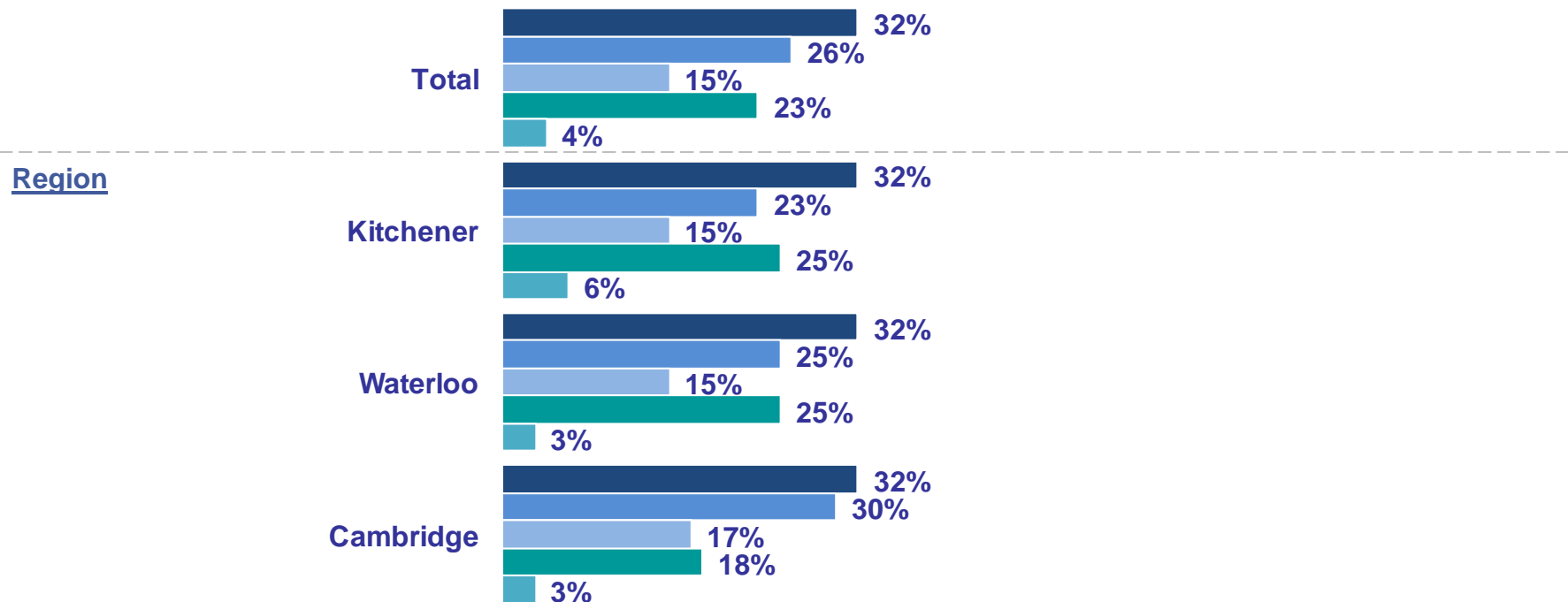


Q1. In April, the Region of Waterloo regional government announced its proposal for a rapid transit system in Waterloo, Kitchener and Cambridge. How would you describe your familiarity with this proposal? Are you... Base: All respondents n=1,025



Preferences for Rapid Transit in Waterloo Region

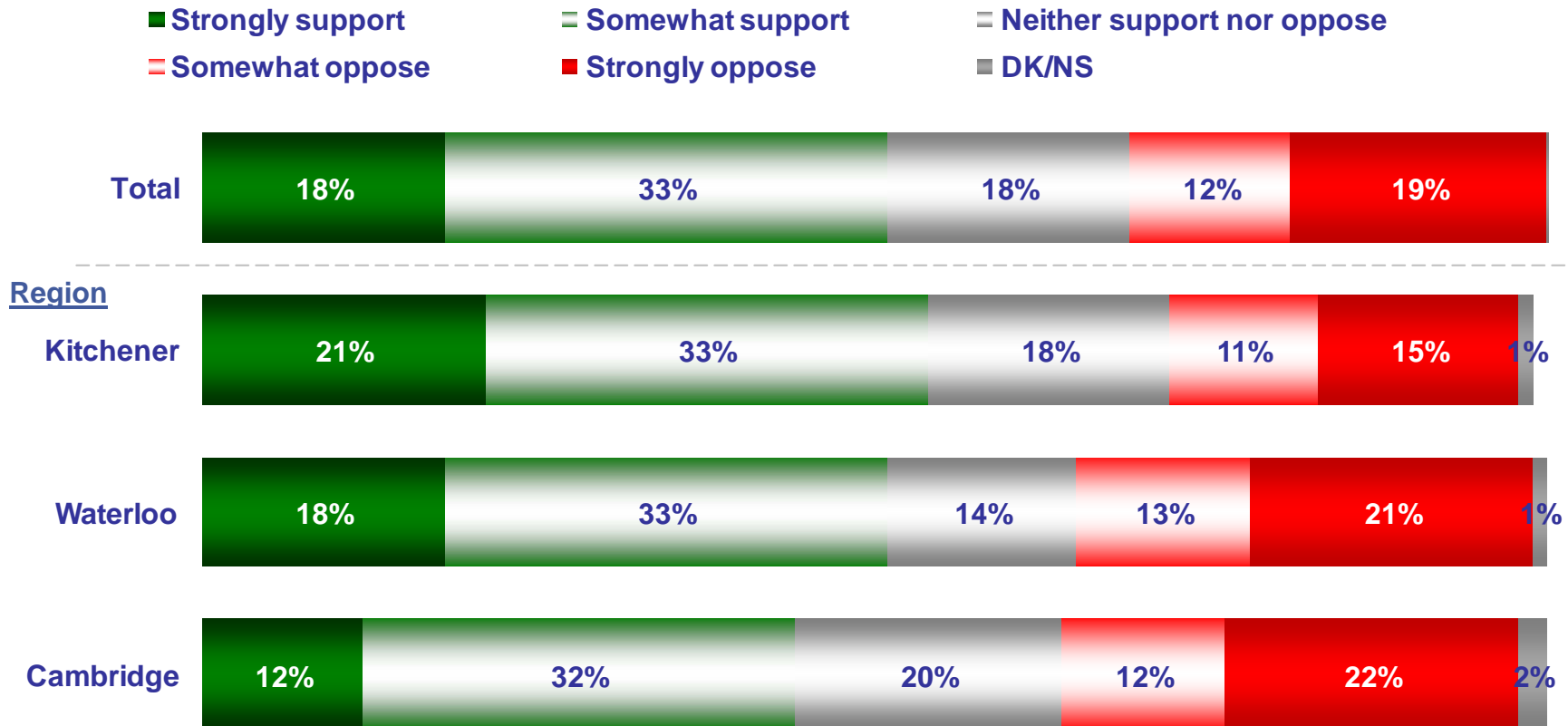
- The transit system we currently have in place, with gradual improvements to the existing bus and road system
- Full light rail system from Waterloo to Cambridge
- Full rapid bus system from Waterloo to Cambridge
- Some combination of light rail in Kitchener and Waterloo and rapid buses in Cambridge
- DK/NS



Q2. Various options for rapid transit were presented by the Region for consideration. From among these following four plans, which do you prefer in principle? Base: All respondents n=1,025



Support for Proposed Transit Plan in Principle

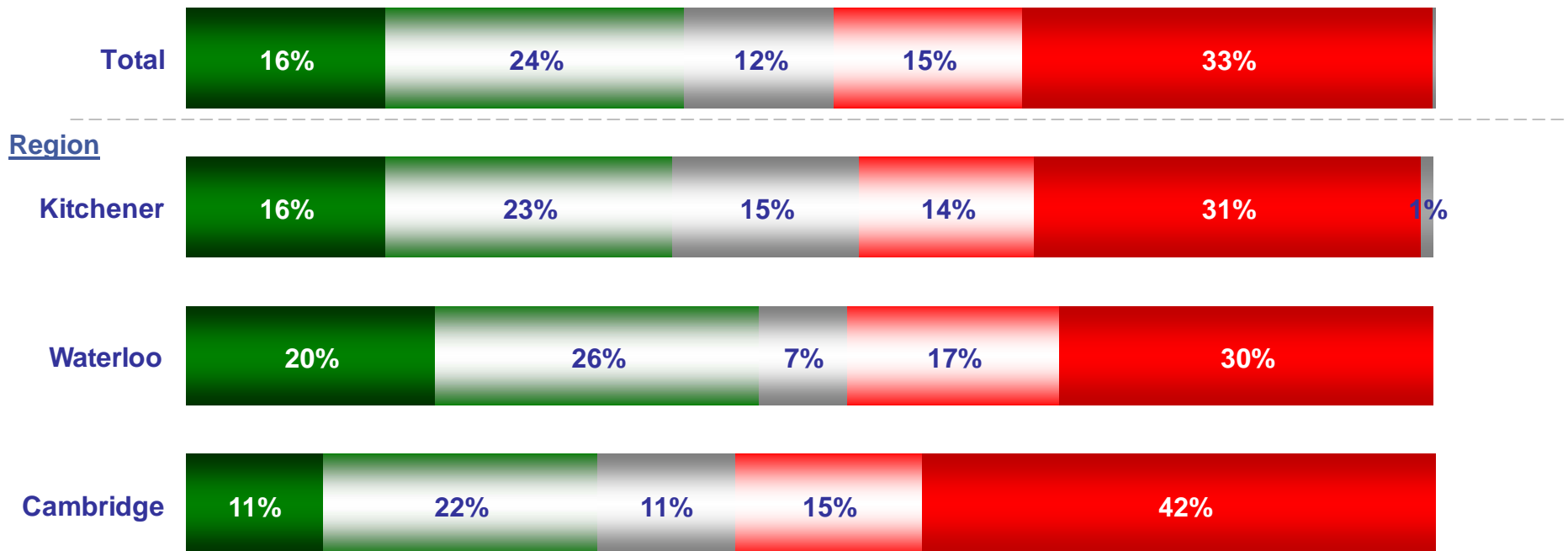


Q3. Regional government's proposed plan is a combination of two separate technologies. It calls for electric trains on dedicated lanes in Kitchener and Waterloo, running between Conestoga Mall and Fairview Park Mall. Buses driving in mixed traffic with features to avoid congestion would run to the Ainslie Street terminal in Cambridge. To what extent do you support or oppose this plan in principle? Do you... Base: All respondents n=1,025



Support for Proposed Transit Plan, Knowing Costs

■ Strongly support ■ Somewhat support ■ Neither support nor oppose
■ Somewhat oppose ■ Strongly oppose ■ DK/NS

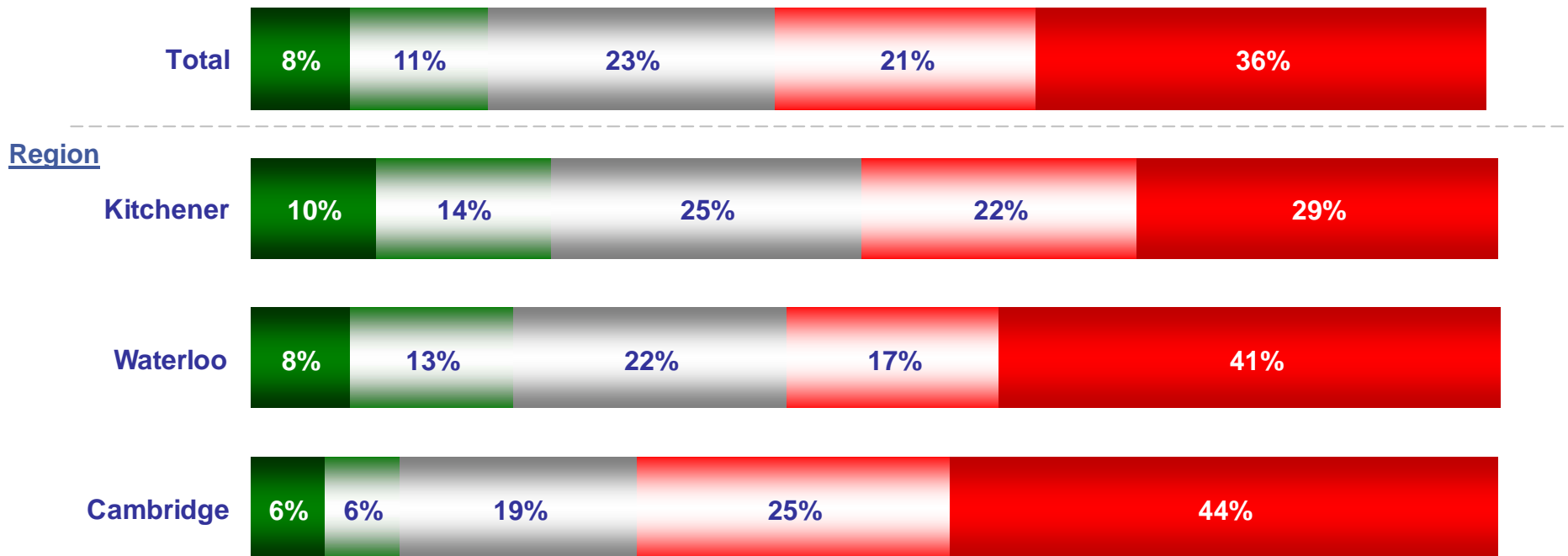


Q4. The estimated capital cost of the region's rapid transit proposal is \$818 million. After contributions from the federal and provincial governments, the cost to the Region is \$253 million. This will require a total tax increase of 10.5 percent over 7 years. For an average household, this would amount to approximately \$700 over those seven years. Knowing the cost to the region, and ultimately to taxpayers in Waterloo Region, to what extent do you support or oppose this plan? Do you... Base: All respondents n=1,025



Anticipated Ridership of Proposed System

■ Daily ■ Weekly ■ Occasionally ■ Rarely ■ Never ■ DK/NS



Q5. If the current plan -- a combination of trains in Kitchener and Waterloo and rapid buses in Cambridge -- goes forward and is implemented, how often do you think you would use this form of rapid transit? Would you say you'd use it...Base: All respondents n=1,025



Desire for Referendum

■ Strongly agree ■ Somewhat agree ■ Somewhat disagree ■ Strongly disagree ■ DK/NS

Total



Region

Kitchener



Waterloo



Cambridge

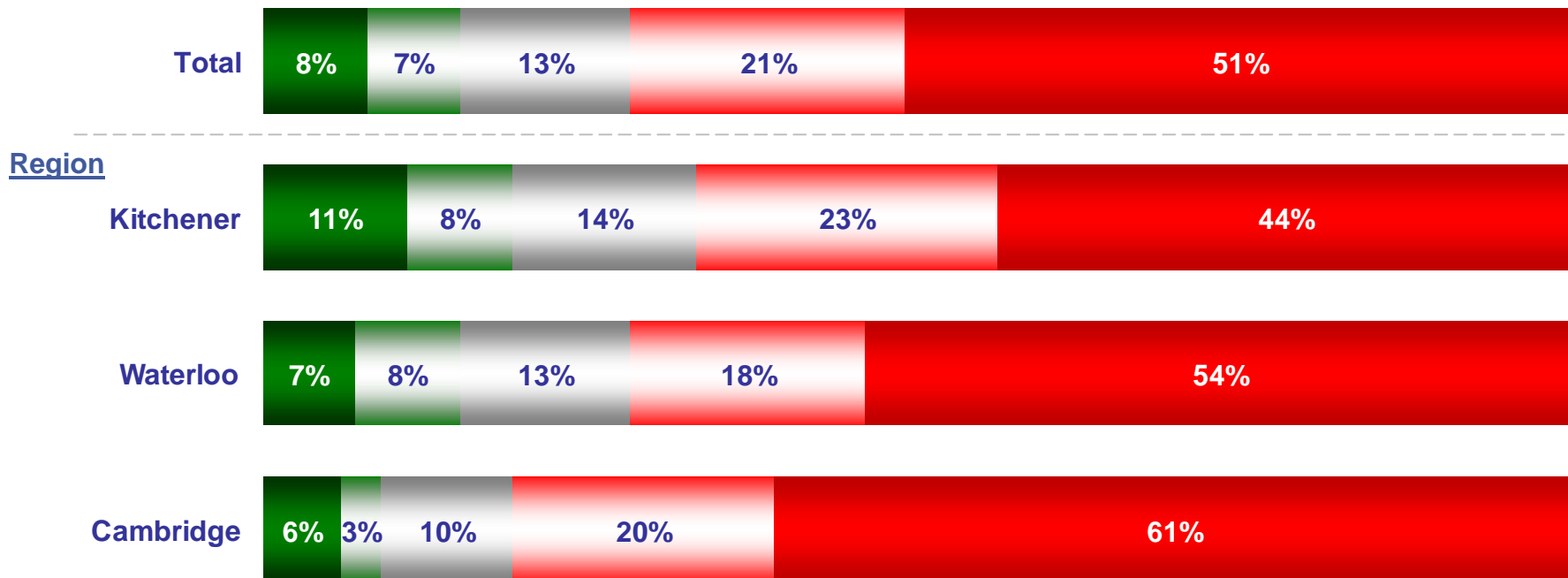


Q6. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Region of Waterloo should hold a referendum on its proposed light rail transit system before making a final decision? Base: All respondents n=1,025



Current Ridership of GRT

■ Daily ■ Weekly ■ Occasionally ■ Rarely ■ Never



Q9. How often do you currently use Grand River Transit buses? Do you use them... Base: All respondents n=1,025