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Western Australia.*

Swan River Crossings My Say Transport

Online Survey Outcomes Report

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Introduction

Main Roads launched the MySay Transport consultation for the Swan River Crossings Project on 6 August 2020. The consultation utilised a digital engagement platform to share information on the project, frequently asked questions, a project update and encouraged visitors to subscribe for email project updates.

The My Say Transport Swan River Crossings Project page recorded more than 3,800 visits.

A key feature of the consultation was the Swan River Crossings online survey. The survey was promoted via a range of channels including:

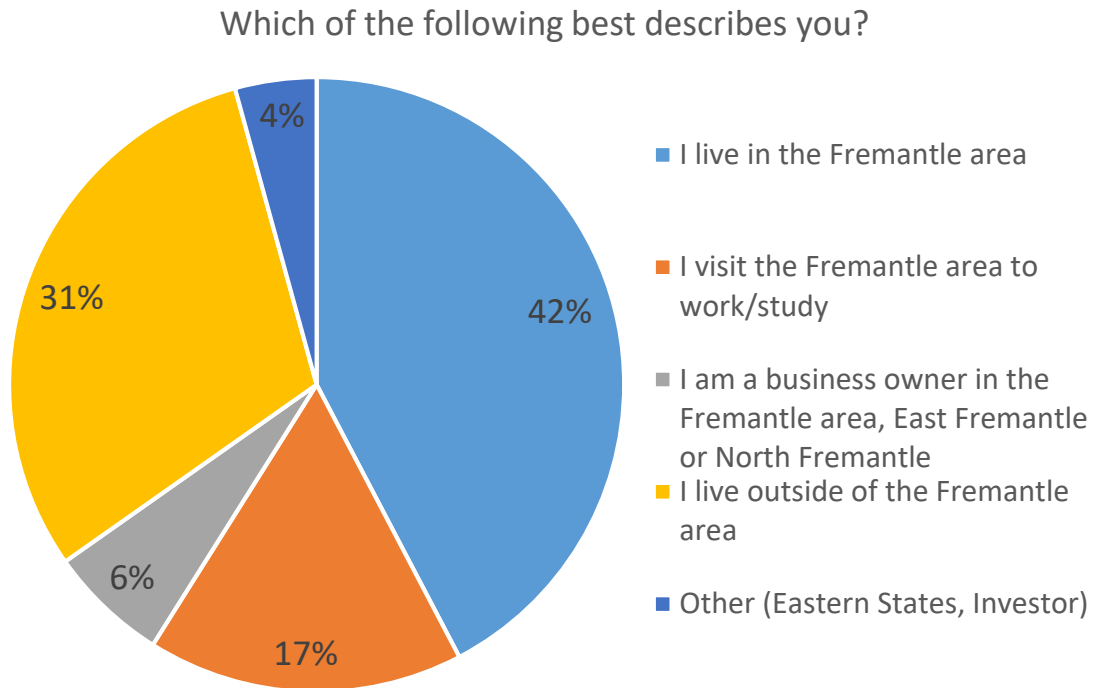
- Minister for Transport media release 6 August 2020
- Shared digitally by the City of Fremantle, Fremantle Ports, and Westcycle.
- Promoted on the Main Roads Facebook page and Instagram.

The MySay Transport Swan River Crossings survey page was visited over 3,000 times. 309 survey responses were received over 7 weeks.

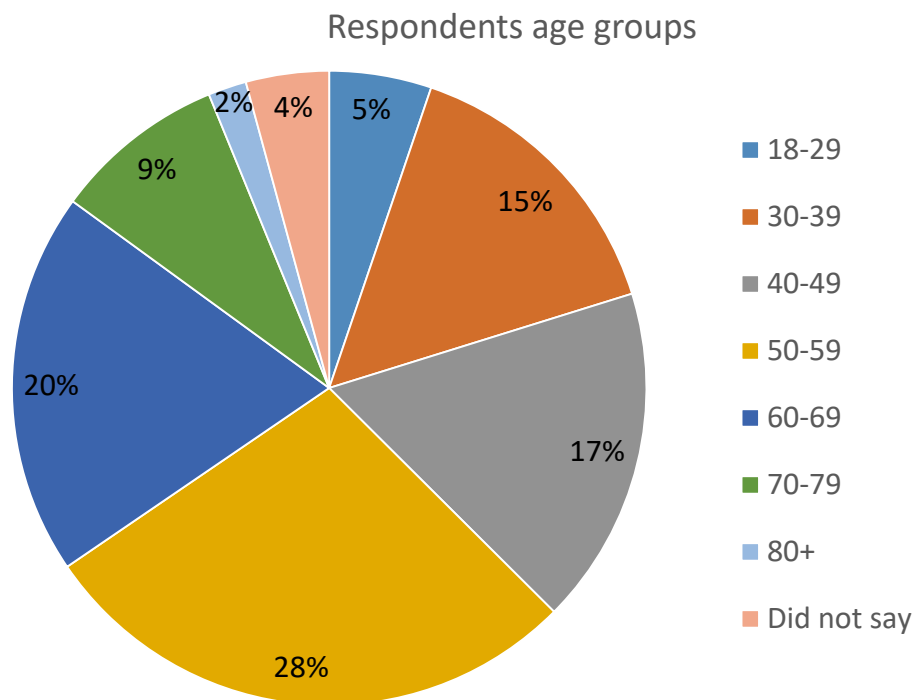
The key findings are examined below.

Respondent demographics

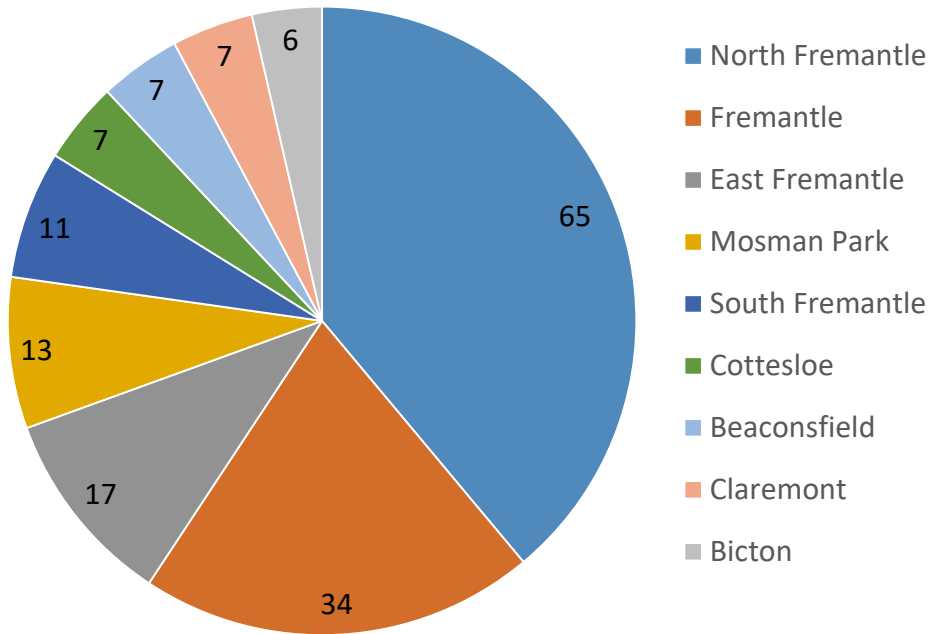
As expected, the majority of survey respondents identified as living in the Fremantle area and visited the area either to work and study or as a business owner.



The age range of respondents was well balanced and covers a suitable cross-section of groups typically expected to respond to a survey on this topic.



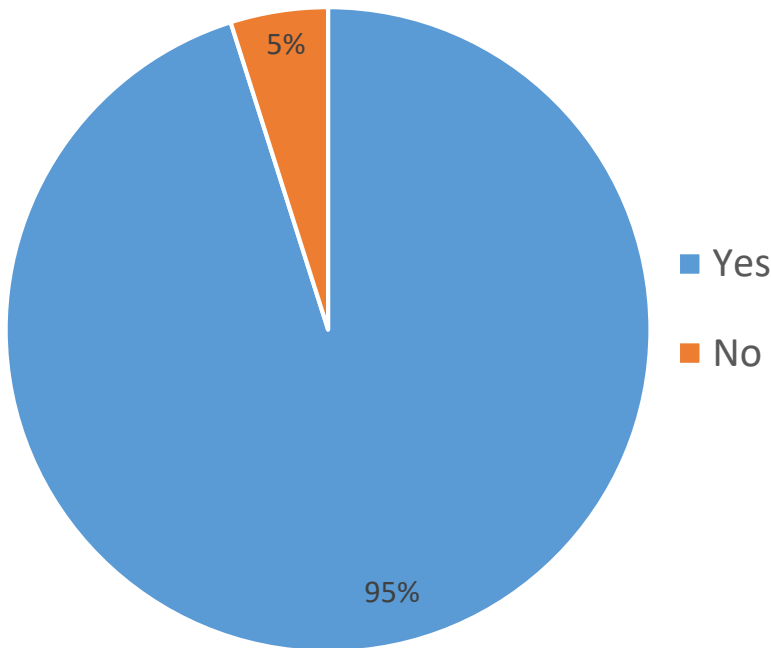
The top 9 suburbs where respondents live (representing 54% of total respondents)



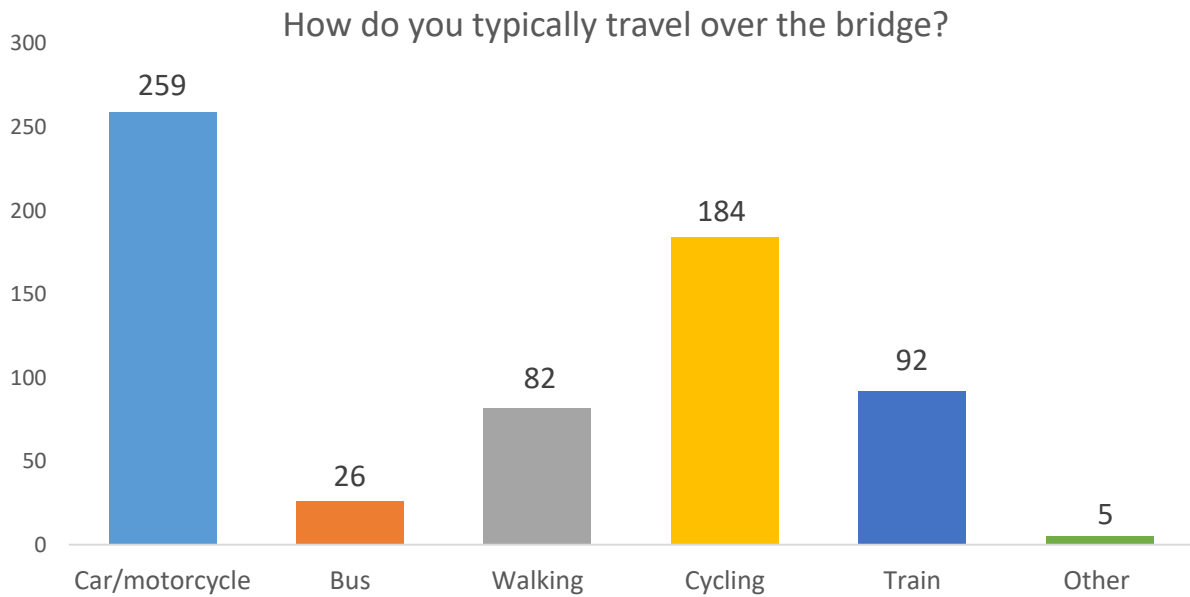
Relationship to the bridge

Almost all respondents had travelled over the Fremantle Traffic Bridge or Rail Bridge in the month prior to the survey.

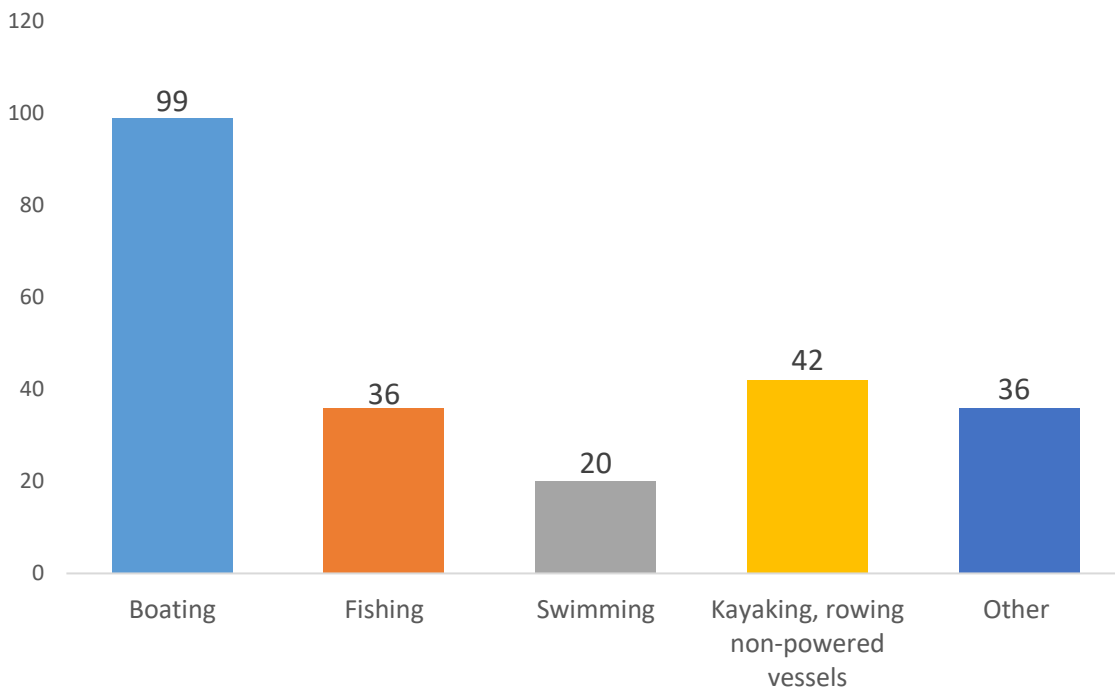
Have you travelled over the Fremantle traffic bridge or rail bridge in the last month?



The majority of the respondents typically travel over the bridge by car or motorcycle, with a large number also cycling across the bridge. (Respondents could select multiple answers.)

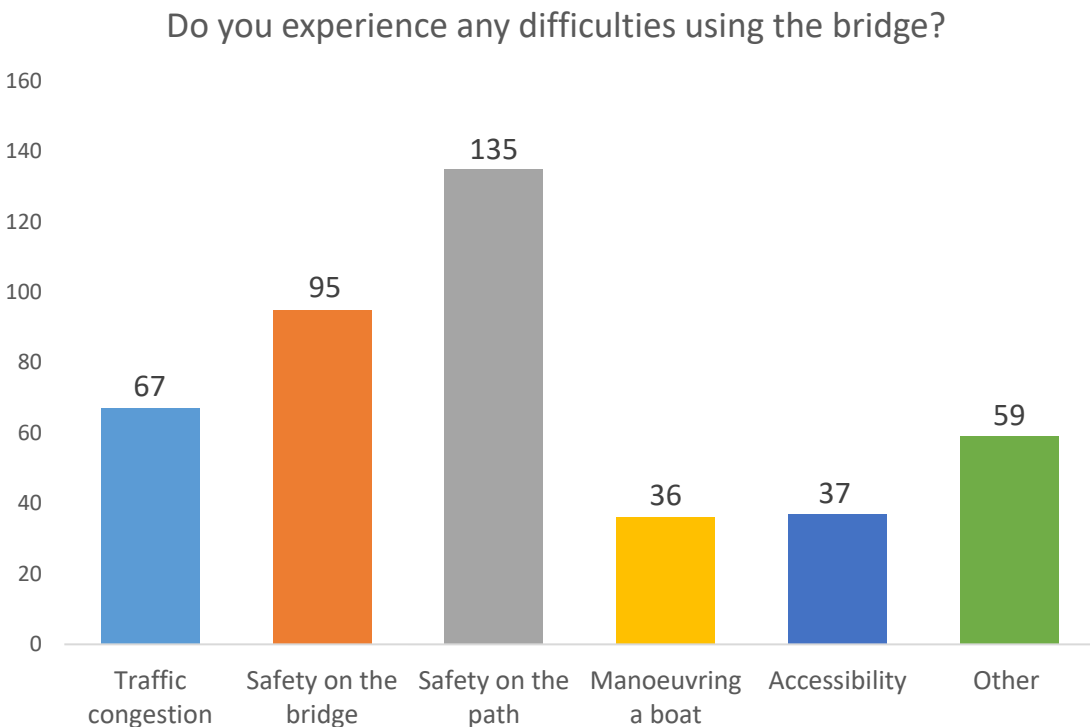
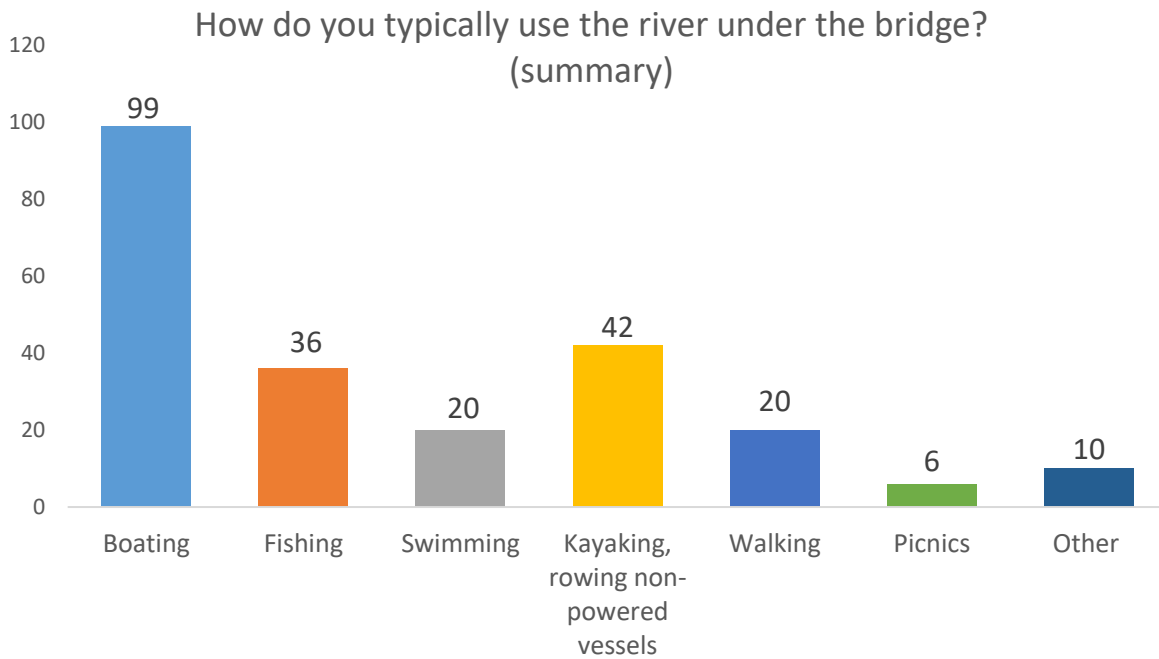


How do you typically use the river under the bridge?



The majority of the respondents typically use the river under the bridge by boat, with some kayaking, rowing or using non-powered vessels, indicating a strong recreational use of the waterway. (Respondents could select multiple answers.)

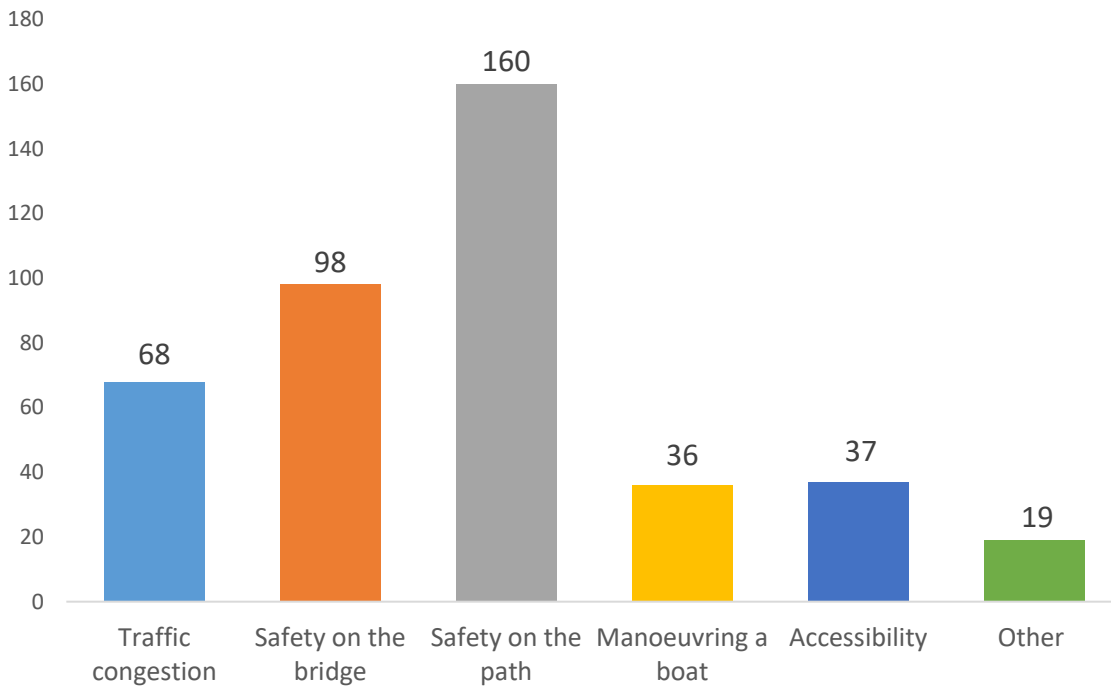
Below is a summary graph of the 'other' option, which identified walking and picnics by the river as another typical use under the bridge.



A strong response from respondents regarding safety on the bridge and safety on the pedestrian and cycle path of the bridge indicates the need for a safer option. Some respondents commented about the difficulties crossing the main roads to the pedestrian path. Other issues was the height clearance for vessels using the river.

Below is a summary graph with a breakdown of the 'other' option, where similar answers have been included within the graph options.

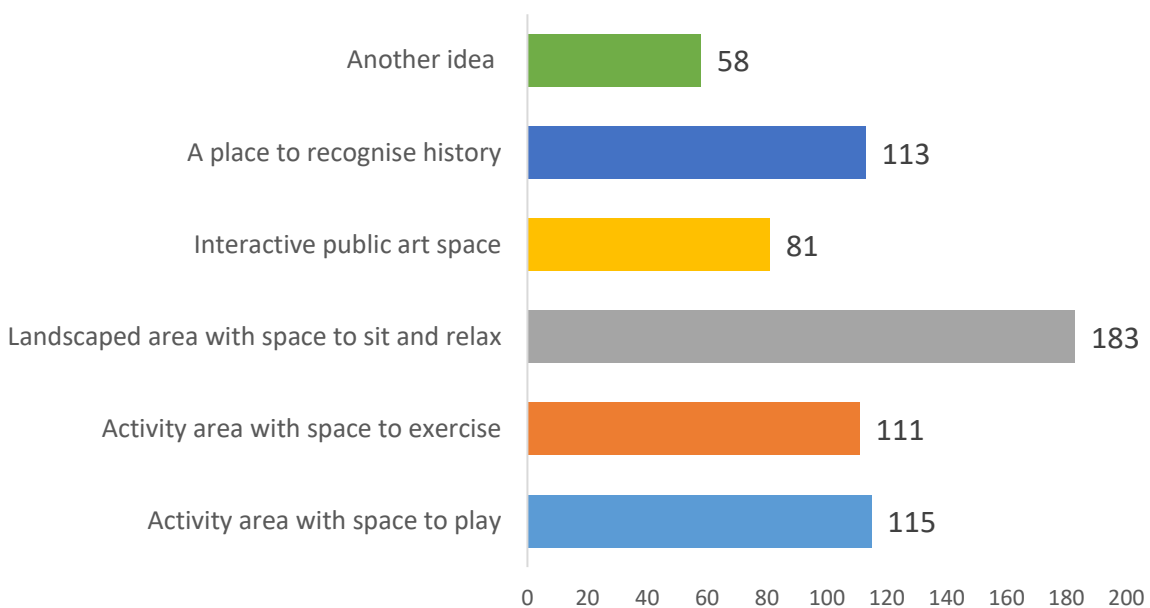
Do you experience any difficulties using the bridge?
(summary)



Interest in project elements

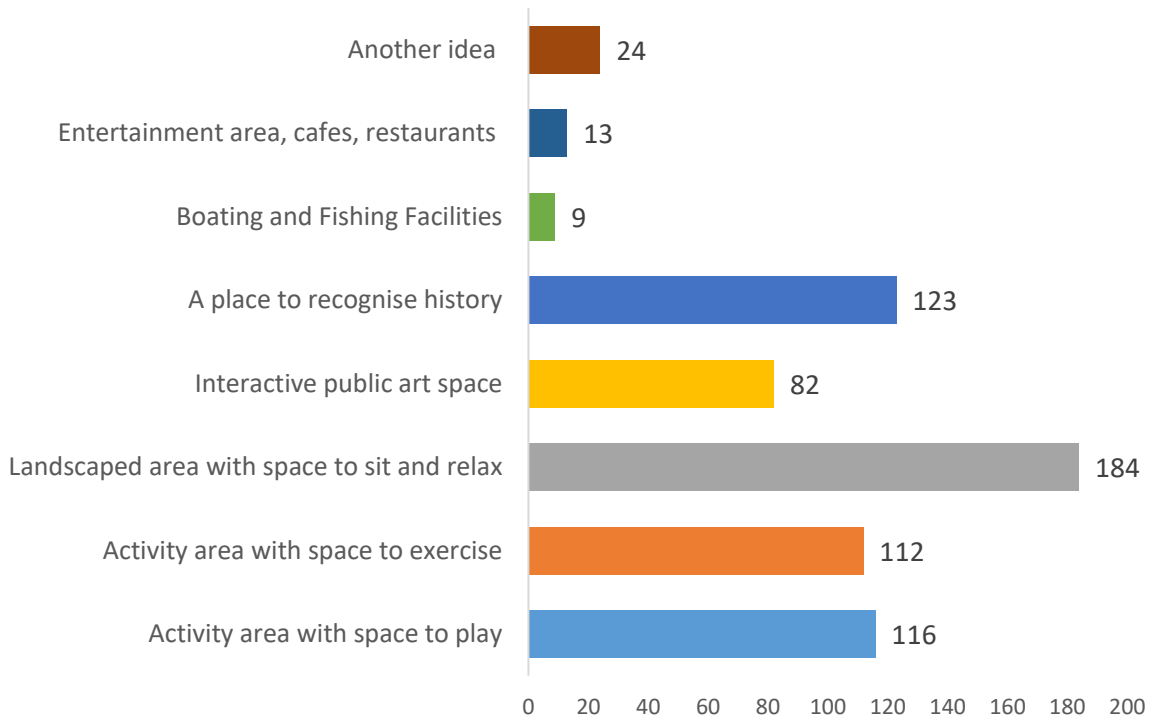
The majority of respondents want to see the foreshore between the bridges landscaped so they can sit and relax, have a secure area to play, and as a place to recognise history. (Respondents could select multiple answers.)

Do you have ideas for the foreshore area between the bridges?

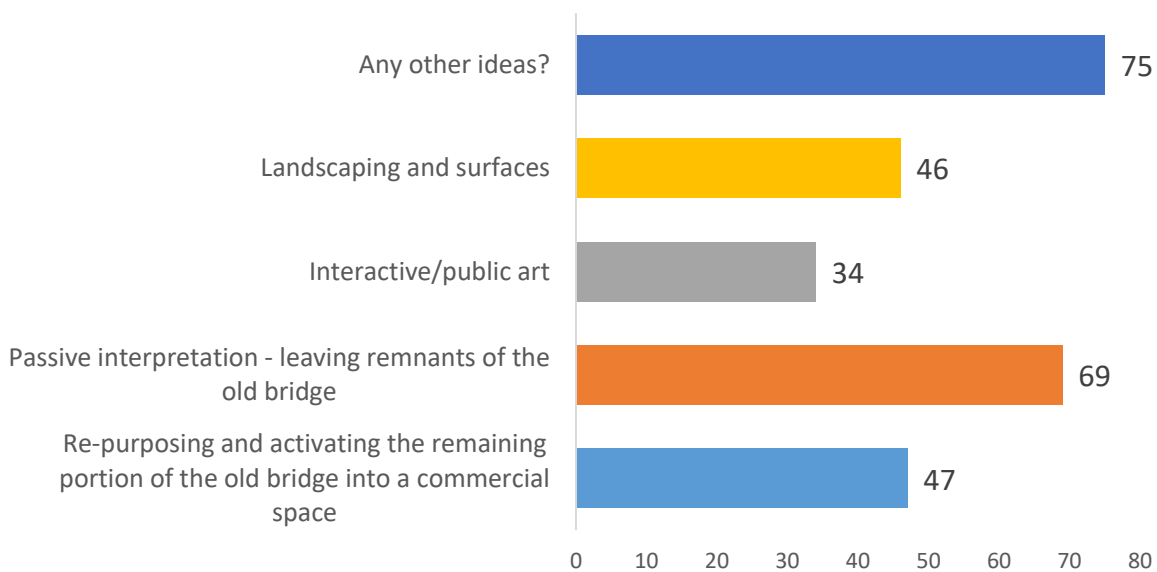


Below is a summary graph with a breakdown of the “Another idea” responses. Similar answers have been grouped in line with the graph options.

Ideas for the foreshore area between the bridges? (summary)

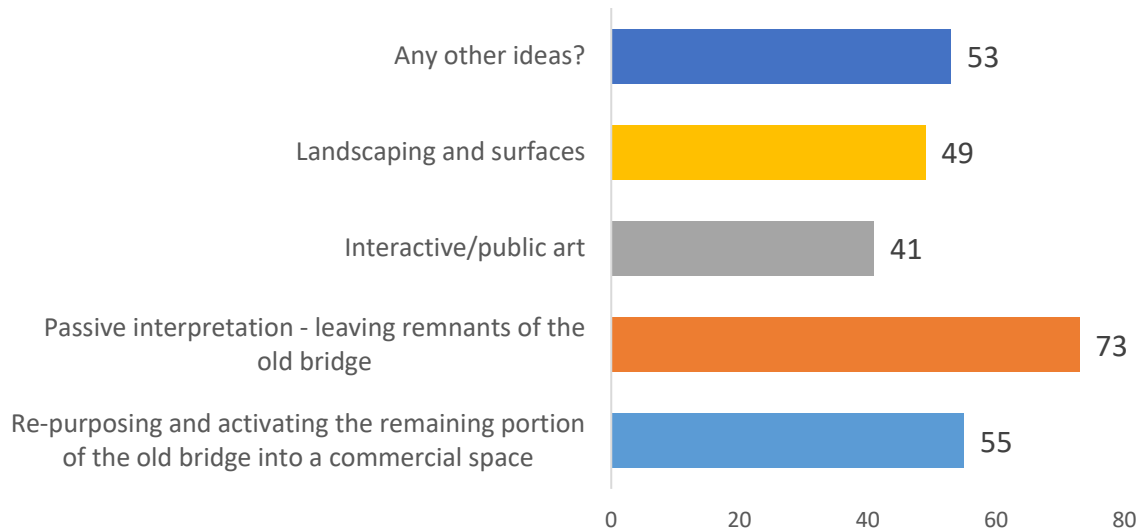


How do you think we can integrate the history of the crossing into the project?



Below is a summary graph with a breakdown of the ‘any other ideas’ responses. Similar answers have been grouped within the graph options.

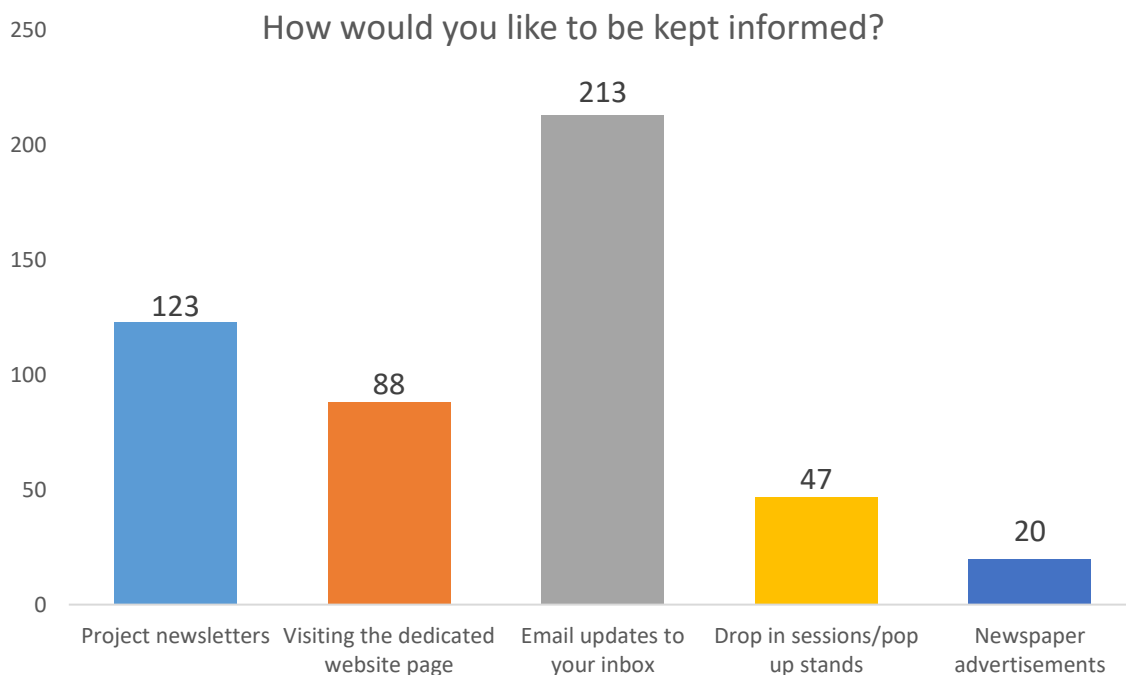
How do you think we can integrate the history of the crossing into the project? (summary)



“Any other ideas?” included incorporating parts of the old bridge into usable space and reusing the timber as well as ease of public access and an activated foreshore.

Preferences for future project information

The majority of participants indicated they wanted to stay informed about the project via email updates, very few expressed interest in newspaper advertisements or attending drop-in sessions.



Key themes

Many respondents expressed concerns for the safety of pedestrians and cyclists on the bridge and the need for a grade separated Principal Shared Path (PSP) providing the opportunity for a direct route into Fremantle. Several respondents raised concerns about the safety of navigating through the narrow pylons under the bridge and the overhead bridge clearance, which restricts sailing under the bridge.

Some respondents want to retain the bridge as a shared pedestrian/cyclist bridge only, or maintain part of the bridge with its heritage aspects, recognising the Aboriginal and European history.

A summary of key questions and responses is presented in the table below.

<p>Why does Main Roads only have one preferred bridge alignment options? Were other options considered?</p>	<p>The replacement of the traffic bridge has been the subject of consultation for more than 20 years.</p> <p>However, previous planning and options for the Swan River crossings focused on replacing the current Fremantle Traffic Bridge only. In 2019 the State and Federal Governments allocated funding to develop a road and rail solution – addressing the constraints posed by the shared freight and passenger rail bridge.</p> <p>For the past six months Main Roads has worked with key State agencies and Local Government (including the City of Fremantle) as well as technical and design teams to understand the constraints of the site. A range of priorities, arising from environmental, heritage, community, topography and navigational issues, were investigated and then a balance had to be struck in order to develop a feasible solution.</p> <p>Wider community consultation was started in early August and will continue throughout the development, design and construction of the project over the next three years.</p>
<p>Opportunity to create a visually interesting iconic bridge, a gateway to Fremantle.</p>	<p>Main Roads is developing the project in line with the State Planning Policy 7.0 Design of the Built Environment (SPP7.0). A key principle is context and character with a good design, which responds to and enhances the distinctive characteristic of the local area, contributing to a sense of place.</p>

<p>Retain and restore the bridge as a shared pedestrian/cyclist bridge.</p>	<p>The Fremantle Traffic Bridge (FTB) was opened in 1939. It is the fourth crossing at this location. Main Roads has continued to maintain the FTB for many years, well past its intended service life. The required repairs have meant, over time, timber elements of the bridge have been replaced/or strengthened by steel and concrete. The remaining timber elements continue to deteriorate. Many are hidden from view – in particular underwater decay of the bridge supports.</p> <p>Ongoing maintenance will not extend the life of the deteriorating timber elements. Restoring the timber elements like-for-like will not meet bridge design standards and/or durability requirements.</p> <p>The Government has a made a commitment to investigate the opportunity to retain up to 19 metres of the existing bridge over the water. In addition to the current community consultation process Main Roads continues to liaise with the City of Fremantle and the Heritage Council to help inform the most appropriate use for this structure and connectivity to the path network</p> <p>Feedback to date, from the responses to our online survey shows the highest support for passive interpretation (at 30 per cent) – leaving remnants of the old bridge as is.</p>
<p>Maintain the history and heritage of the bridge.</p>	<p>A key feature of the project is Urban Landscape Design (ULD) planning. ULD elements shall reflect the rich heritage of the crossing and guide the creation of a distinctive design outcome. The ULD will be progressed by the Alliance team and include consultation in 2021.</p> <p>The project team is liaising with the Heritage Council of WA, Office of Government Architect and the independent State Design Review Panel throughout project development. An architectural lead and heritage consultant will form part of the alliance team, which is anticipated to be an awarded a contract in early 2021.</p>
<p>Foreshore accessibility, activation and connectivity.</p>	<p>A connectivity assessment is underway to investigate the various options for how any new structures will connect into the existing path and landscape network.</p> <p>Urban landscape and design planning is being carried out in line with State Planning Policy and in liaison with the Office of Government Architect and the State Design Review Panel.</p> <p>Some comments referred to land uses for parcels of land outside the project boundary/the future activation of the wider foreshore area which is outside of the project scope.</p>

<p>Improve integration with PSP grade separation crossings Pedestrian and cyclist safety, dedicated bike path, or seamless dual pathway.</p>	<p>Improving connectivity for people walking and riding is a key project objective.</p> <p>Main Roads is currently extending the PSP from Cottesloe to North Fremantle Station along the Fremantle Line.</p> <p>The Swan River Crossings Project will extend this path from North Fremantle Station to the foreshore and across the Swan River, connecting to Beach Street and Canning Highway.</p> <p>Stage 5 of the Fremantle Rail Line PSP connecting to the Fremantle CBD is outside of this project scope, however the Department of Transport is working with various stakeholders to determine the best alignment and route prior to costing and funding this next stage.</p>
<p>Improve river use and safety, clearance/height of the new bridge.</p>	<p>The bridge has the lowest clearance and narrowest navigation spans of all the Swan River bridges up to the Causeway, which limits the size of vessels that can pass beneath it.</p> <p>The current number 1 risk for the FTB is vessel impact - the bridge piers under the rail and road bridges are not aligned, which significantly increases the risk of vessel impact and possible damage.</p> <p>The project offers Improved river user safety with higher and wider spans for yachts and recreational boats, emergency services (Water Police vessels) and will accommodate new, larger ferries.</p>