

What Australia Wants

National summary and Northern Territory results



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Methodology

What Australia Wants presents results from a Heart Foundation survey measuring community sentiment around qualities of active neighbourhoods and support for initiatives to increase infrastructure for physical activity in and around neighbourhoods.

The survey covered several themes of active living and healthy neighbourhoods, using seven key questions asking:

1. What individuals want in a neighbourhood/suburb in general (unprompted).
2. What level of importance people give to a list of neighbourhood design elements, based on the seven Healthy Active by Design features.
3. How individuals rank these design elements from most to least important in deciding where to live.
4. How individuals rate the availability of active living elements in their current neighbourhood.
5. What level of support individuals have for governments' funding for active living infrastructure.
6. What level of support individuals have for a National Physical Activity Strategy for Australia.
7. What level of knowledge individuals have about the connection between physical activity and health and wellbeing.

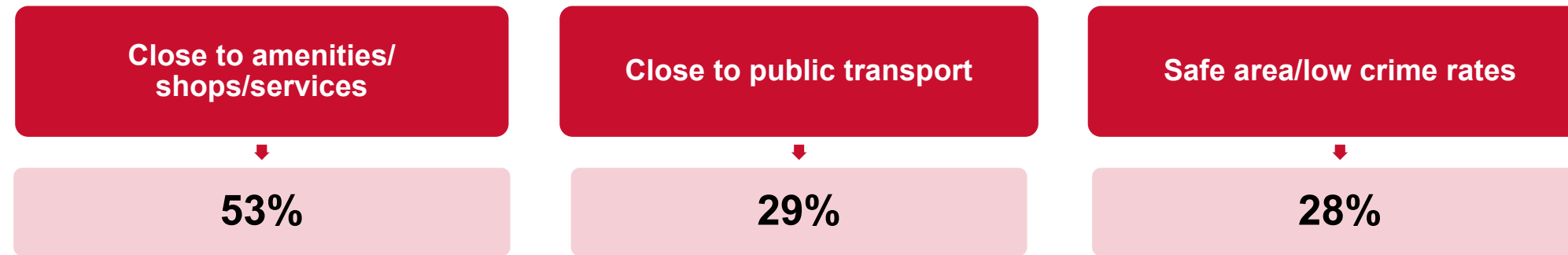
Surveys were conducted online over a three-week period. Survey results are based on a pool of 2,895 total respondents, weighted to be nationally representative of the population in terms of age, gender and location. This included 55 participants in the NT, compared to 274 in Tasmania and 217 in the ACT.



Summary of National results

What Australians want

Most important elements when thinking about moving to a new area (unprompted)



Top three important design features when deciding where to live (prompted)



When deciding where to live, participants overwhelmingly indicated their desire for **proximity to fresh food and services, neighbourhood safety** and **access to public outdoor and open areas**.

‘Housing diversity’ was mentioned when asked to prioritise some features over others but did not feature when broken out into individual elements. This suggests that **the right type of house in the right area is more of an essential need and will be prioritised over elements such as parks and open spaces if necessary**.

Neighbourhood analysis

Quality of active elements in participants' current neighbourhoods

Best performers
(percentage who
rated
excellent/good)

Public parks, open spaces,
reserves, gardens
76%

Natural elements,
vegetation
76%

Facilities in convenient,
accessible areas
75%

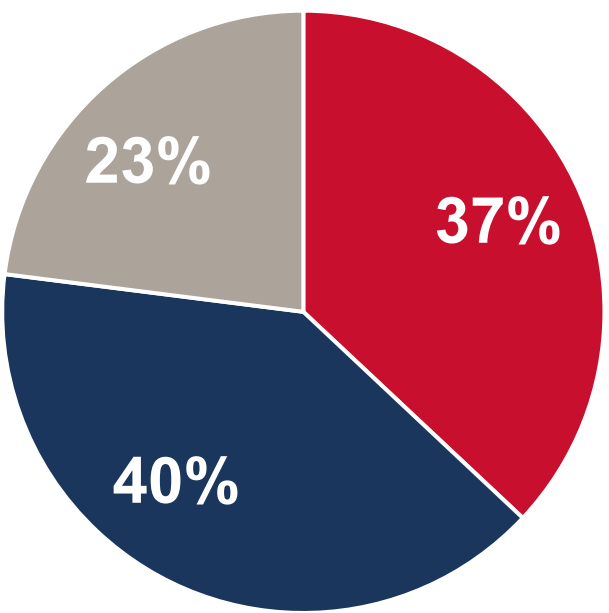
Worst performers
(percentage who
rated poor/area
does not have)

Safe cycling routes
19%

Traffic calming
measures in place
12%

Sports facilities
11%

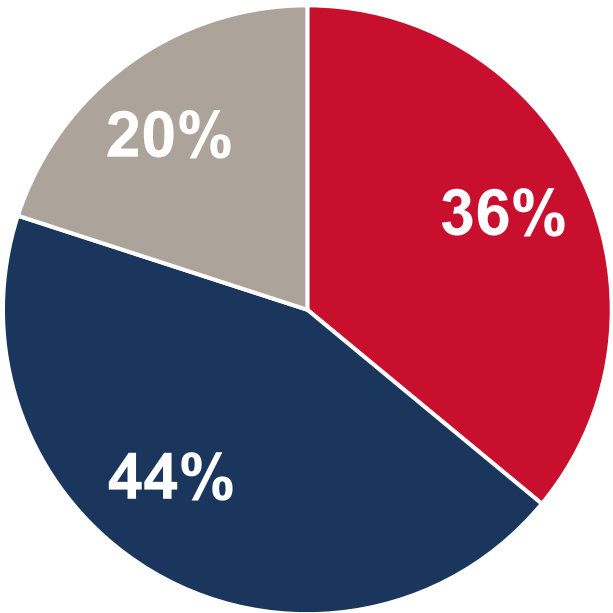
Importance of local area allowing physical activity



■ Very important
■ Somewhat important
■ Neutral/not important

77%
say it is important that
they can be active in
their local area

Whether current neighbourhood helps activity levels

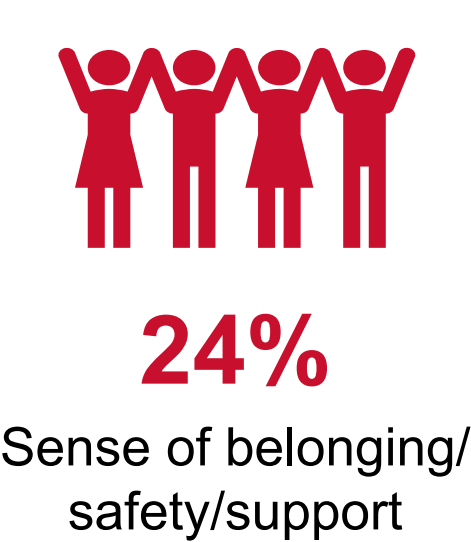


■ Helps a lot
■ Helps a little
■ Doesn't help

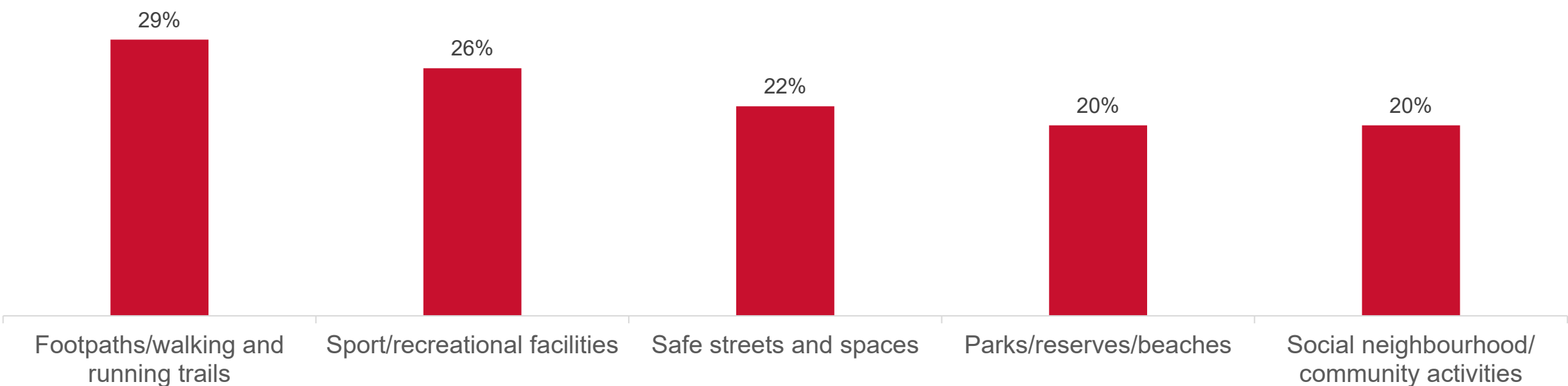
80%
say their
neighbourhood helps
them to be active

Neighbourhood analysis

Reasons active neighbourhoods are important



Elements that could increase physical activity

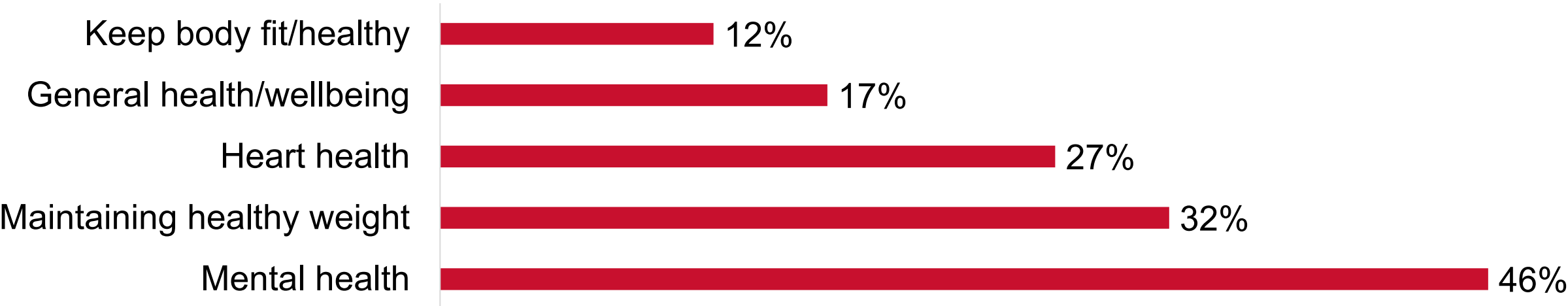


Support for infrastructure funding

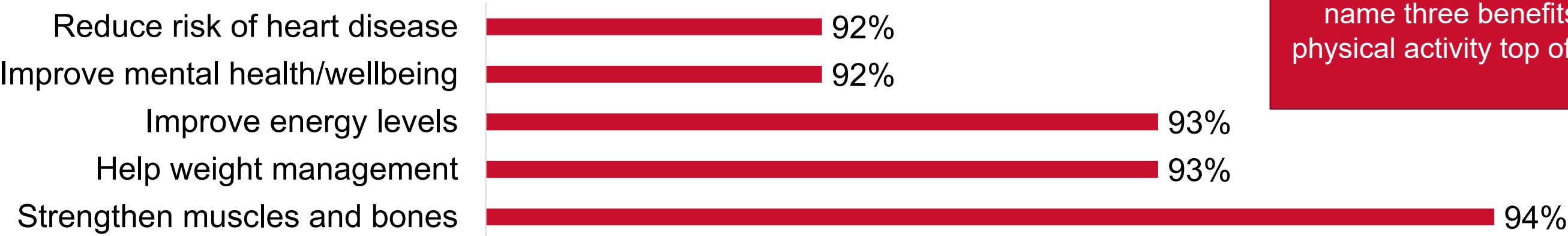
| | | |
|---|---|-------------------|
|  | <p>Support for active infrastructure</p> <p>Strongly/somewhat in favour of government directing more of its roads funding into walking and cycling infrastructure</p> | <p>67%</p> |
|  | <p>Support for public transport funding</p> <p>Strongly/somewhat in favour of government directing more of its roads funding into public transport</p> | <p>68%</p> |
|  | <p>Support for speed limit reductions</p> <p>Very/somewhat supportive of local government reducing speed limits in neighbourhood streets</p> | <p>64%</p> |
|  | <p>Support for a National Physical Activity Strategy</p> <p>Very/somewhat supportive of a national activity strategy aimed at getting people to move more and sit less</p> | <p>78%</p> |

Knowledge of health benefits

Benefits of physical activity (unprompted)



Benefits of physical activity (prompted)



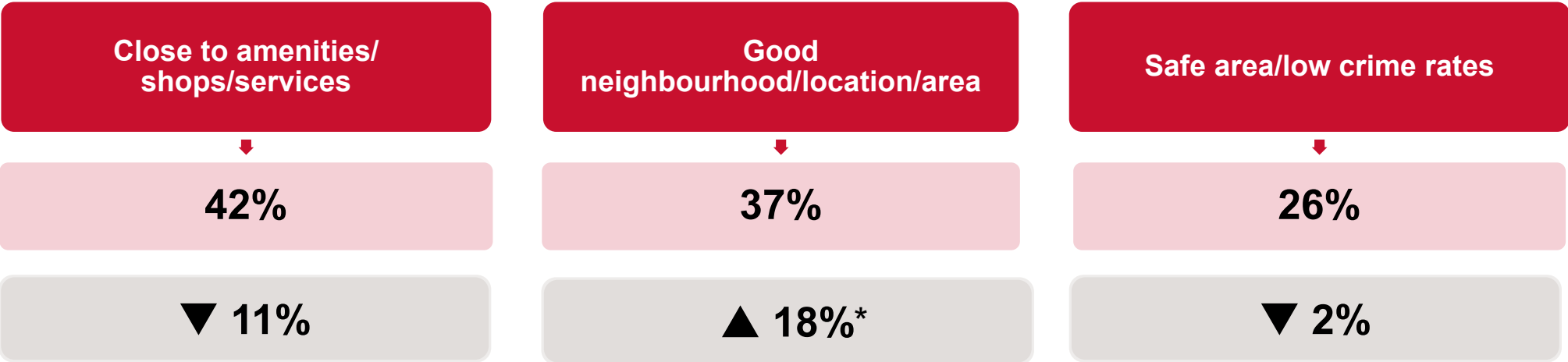
Only **24%** of people can name three benefits of physical activity top of mind

Summary of Northern Territory results



What Northern Territory wants

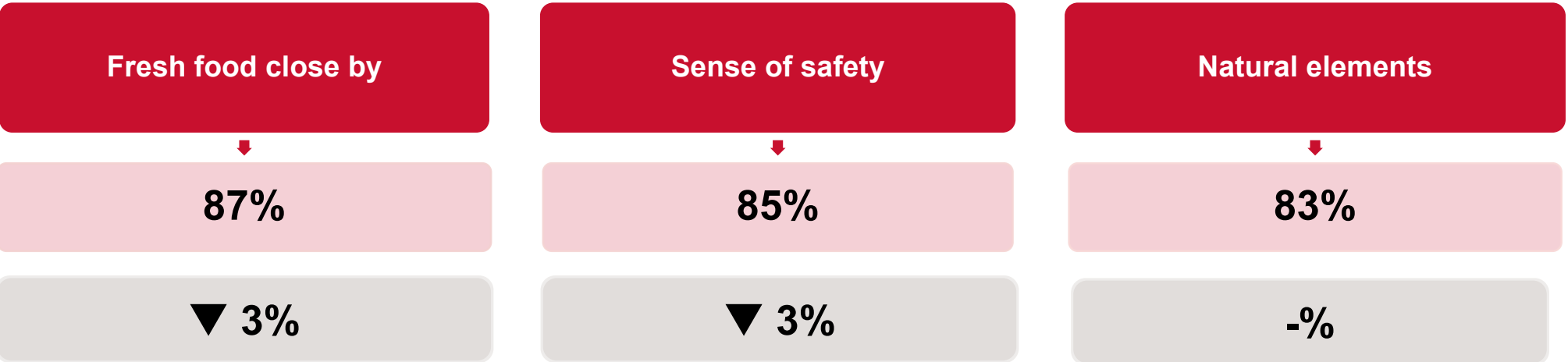
Most important elements when thinking about moving to a new area (unprompted)



* Statistically significant

Compared to national results

Top three important design features when deciding where to live (prompted)



Compared to national results

Top three types of features that are important in deciding where to live (prompted)

Sense of place



Access to healthy food



Housing diversity



Neighbourhood analysis

Quality of active elements in participants' current neighbourhoods

| | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|--|---|
| Best performers (percentage who rated excellent/ good) | Natural elements 74% | Signage to find your way around easily 71% | Public parks, open spaces, reserves 71% |
| <i>Compared to national results</i> | ▼ 2% | ▲ 2% | ▼ 5% |
| Worst performers | Facilities in convenient places | Safe cycling routes | Sports facilities |

Whether current neighbourhood helps activity levels



69% of people in the Northern Territory believe their neighbourhood helps them to be active

Support for infrastructure funding

| | | | Compared to national average |
|---|--|-----|------------------------------|
|  | Support for active infrastructure Strongly/somewhat in favour of government directing more of its roads funding into walking and cycling infrastructure | 68% | ▲ 1% |
|  | Support for public transport funding Strongly/somewhat in favour of government directing more of its roads funding into public transport | 62% | ▼ 8% |
|  | Support for speed limit reductions Very/somewhat supportive of local government reducing speed limits in neighbourhood streets | 69% | ▲ 5% |
|  | Support for a National Physical Activity Strategy Very/somewhat supportive of a national activity strategy aimed at getting people to move more and sit less | 86% | ▲ 8% |

Knowledge of health benefits

Top three benefits of physical activity mentioned by participants in the Northern Territory



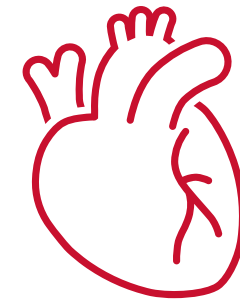
45%

Mental health



22%

Weight management



20%

Heart health

Only **18%** of Territorians can name
three benefits of physical activity top of mind

6% below the national average



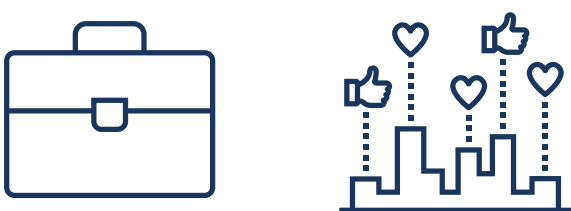
Key areas of comparison between National and Northern Territory results

Points of difference

Territorians have **different priorities** for neighbourhood design elements



Fewer participants value being close to shops (▼11%), open spaces (▼11%) and public transport (▼13%)



More participants value living in a good neighbourhood (▲18%) and being close to the workplace (▲20%)

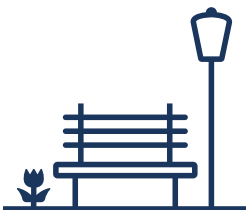
Most Territorians rate their **neighbourhood active living elements** below the national average



Safe, connected footpaths (▼5%)



Sense of safety (▼11%)



Public parks, open spaces, reserves (▼5%)



Sports facilities (▼7%)



Facilities in convenient places (▼14%)

Comparing the findings

Commonalities

- Overall, the results for the Northern Territory compared to the rest of Australia do not differ dramatically.
- Like those in other jurisdictions, participants in the Northern Territory expressed a desire to live close to shops and amenities, and in an area that is safe.
- Like other Australians, Territorians prioritise a sense of place (that is, safety, community, natural elements), access to healthy food and housing diversity as the most important design features.
- Territorians' most important neighbourhood elements were consistent with national responses – fresh food close by, a sense of safety and natural elements were most important, however having facilities accessible by walking/cycling was more important to Territorians.

Differences

- Although broadly more critical of neighbourhood elements – with the perceived sense of safety and sporting facilities among the lowest of any state - Territorians rated the sense of community and quality of cycling routes higher than average (up 5% and 7% respectively).
- Fewer participants in the Northern Territory believed their neighbourhoods helped their activity levels – with only 69% answering affirmatively (11% lower than the national average).
- Support for increased funding for public transport was lower in the Northern Territory (down 6%), however there was more support than average for reduced speed limits and a National Physical Activity Strategy (up 5% and 8% respectively).
- 6% fewer Territorians were able to name three benefits of physical activity top of mind.



Take action for healthier places

The Heart Foundation advocates for policy changes to prioritise physical activity and healthy built environments that enable healthy active lives, because we know that physical inactivity is a leading risk factor for developing heart disease.

We are working in partnership with a range of industry, government, community and academic organisations to create environments that support healthier living through better planning, built environments and transport solutions.

We are creating positive change and are directly influencing healthy active urban planning within our states and territories.

Please share, engage with us and advocate for *What Australia Wants*. Together, we can create a healthier Australia.

Share the link:

<https://healthyactivebydesign.com.au/resources/publications/what-australia-wants-report>