



Road Safety Action  
International

# “Navigating Cultural Barriers to Car-Free Urban Planning: A Case Study of Monrovia’s CBD”

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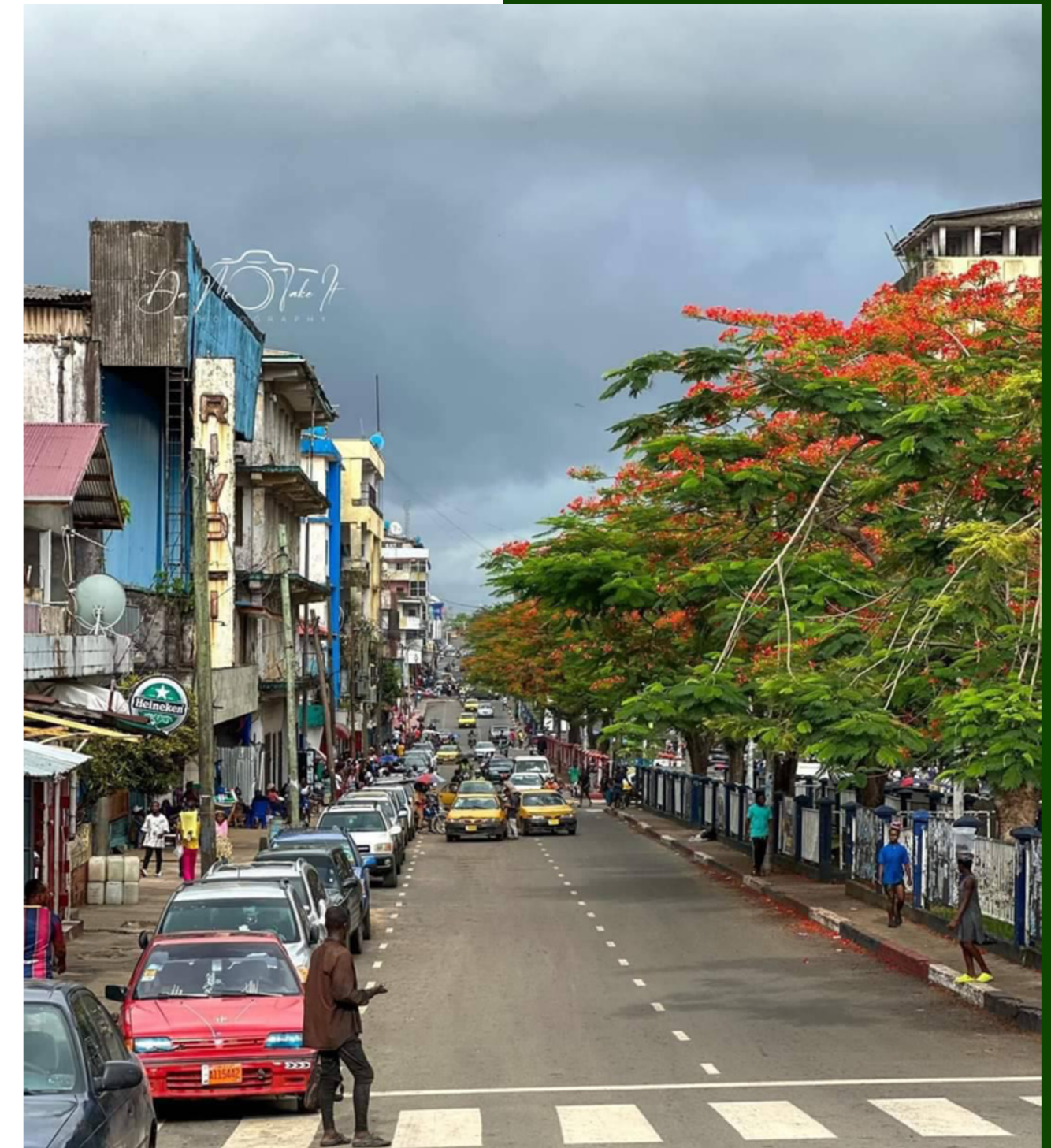
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# ABOUT RSAI

Transportation by road has become the most common mode of movement for people, goods, and services from point to point over the decades. As the world population continues to grow, so does the ownership of cars, especially in high-,medium-income, and developing countries. Cars emit CO2 and other pollutants that contribute to climate change.

However, some European countries are fast adopting a non-motorized culture of transportation known as car-free streets. Although still not popularly known and accepted yet, many pieces of research have shown that a car-free society is climate-friendly and promotes the environment.





# INTRODUCTION

Transportation by road has become the most common mode of movement for people, goods, and services from point to point over the decades. As the world population continues to grow, so does the ownership of cars, especially in high-,medium-income, and developing countries. Cars emit CO<sub>2</sub> and other pollutants that contribute to climate change.

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# OBJECTIVES



- **Primary Objective:**
  - **Navigating cultural barriers to implementing a car-free street in Monrovia's CBD, specifically on Broad Street.**
- **Specific Goals:**
  - **Explore the cultural, historical, and social perspectives influencing the perception of car-free zones.**
  - **Understand public attitudes and the role of traditions in shaping urban transportation.**
  - **Investigate the potential opportunities for leveraging Monrovia's historical and cultural values to support car-free initiatives.**



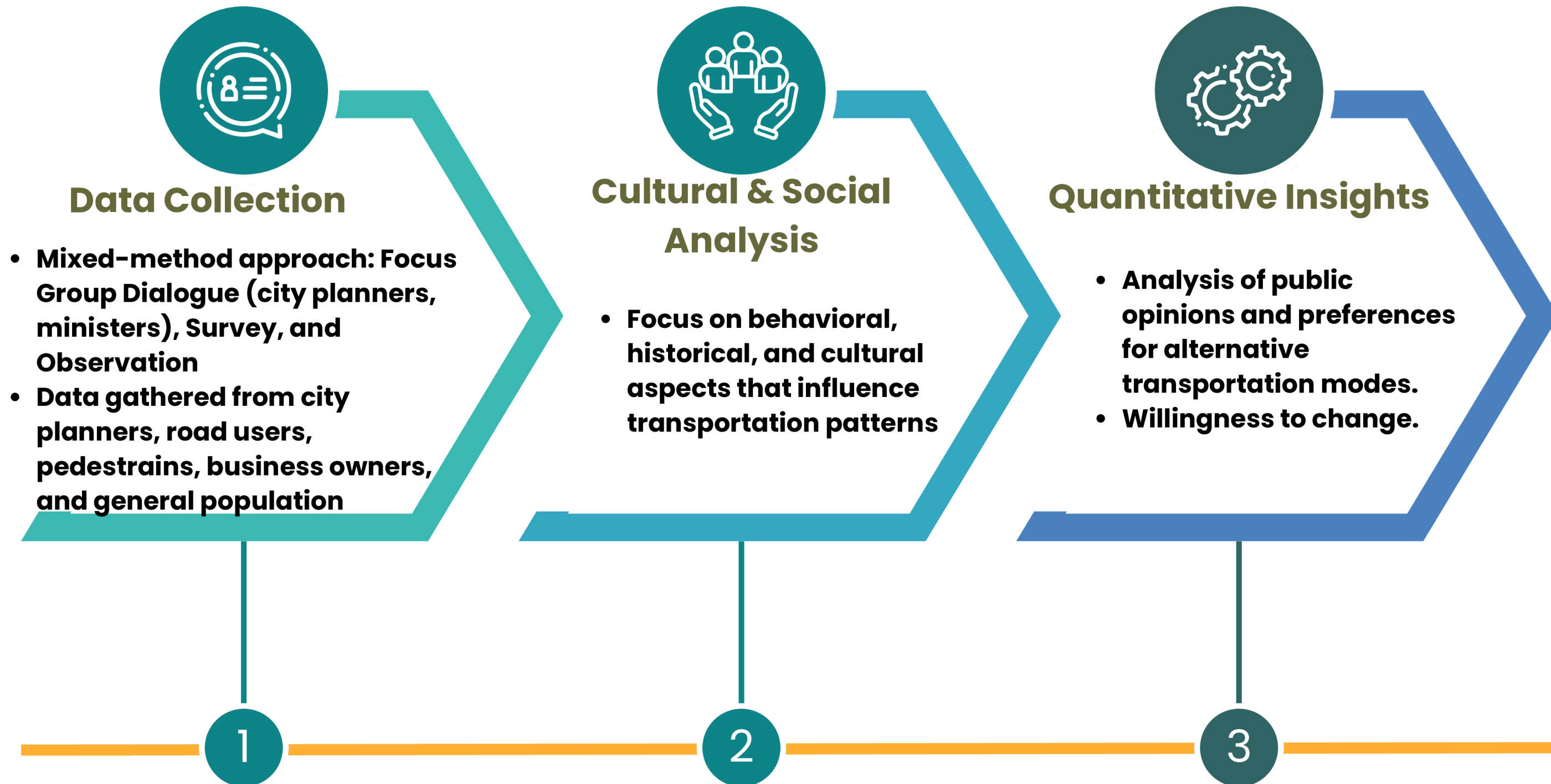
# CASE STUDY: BROAD STREET, MONROVIA



- **Monrovia, Liberia's capital and most populated city, functions as the nation's administrative and economic center. Originally designed for fewer than 100,000 inhabitants, the city now accommodates a population of 1.8 million, representing 33.5% of Liberia's total population (LISGIS, 2023).**
- **A key feature of the CBD is the 1.07 km Broad Street, a dual-carriageway flanked by vegetation, which runs from McDonald Street to Ducor Hill. Along Broad Street, notable landmarks include the Providence Baptist Church, the National Museum, and several government ministries. Despite the prominence of such historic sites, Liberia lacks a designated car-free zone, a concept yet to take hold in West Africa, although it has been embraced in various parts of the developed world.**



# METHODOLOGY





# RESULTS



## Public Survey

67 participants

- Males (75.3%), Females (24.7%)



## Focus Group

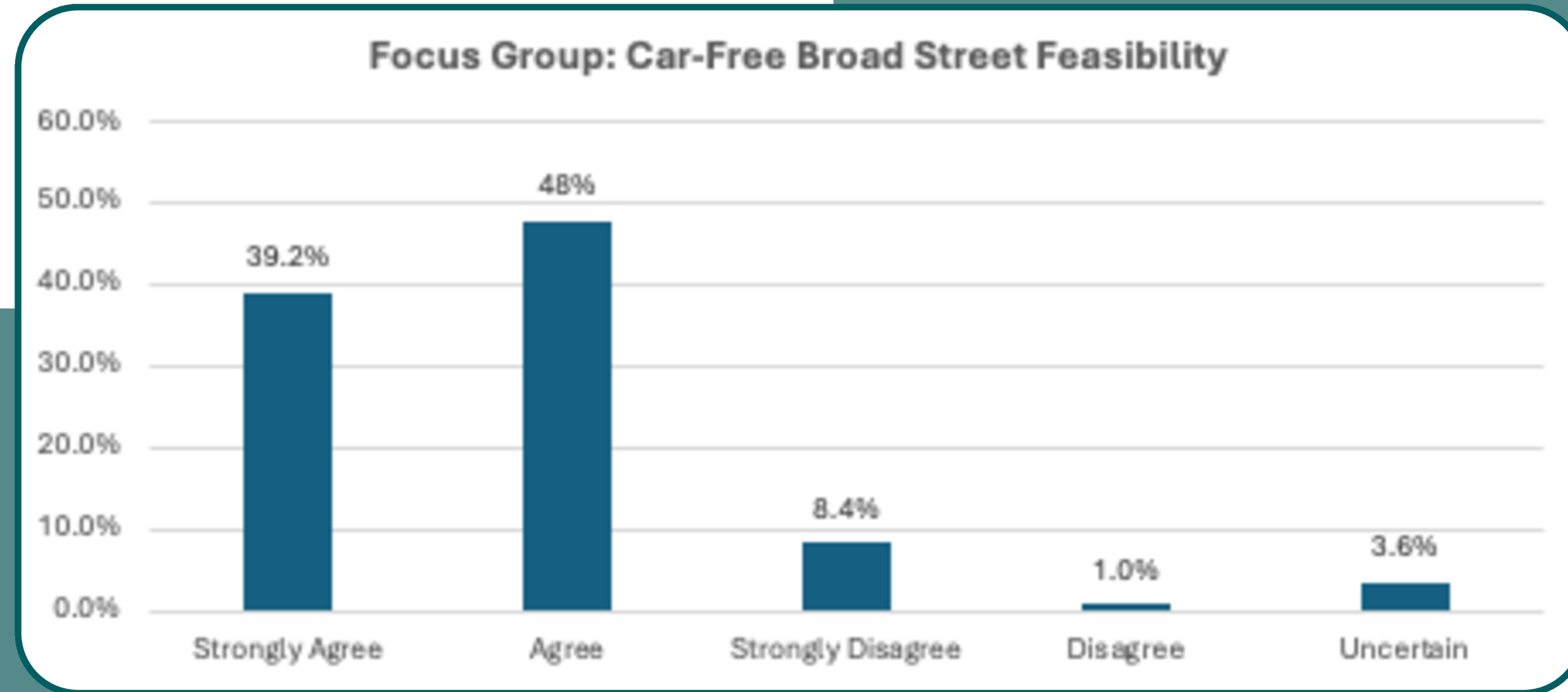
36 participants

Technical professionals  
Urban Planners  
Government Ministers



# FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

## Technical Focus Group Dialogue on Navigating Cultural Barriers to Car-Free Broad Street

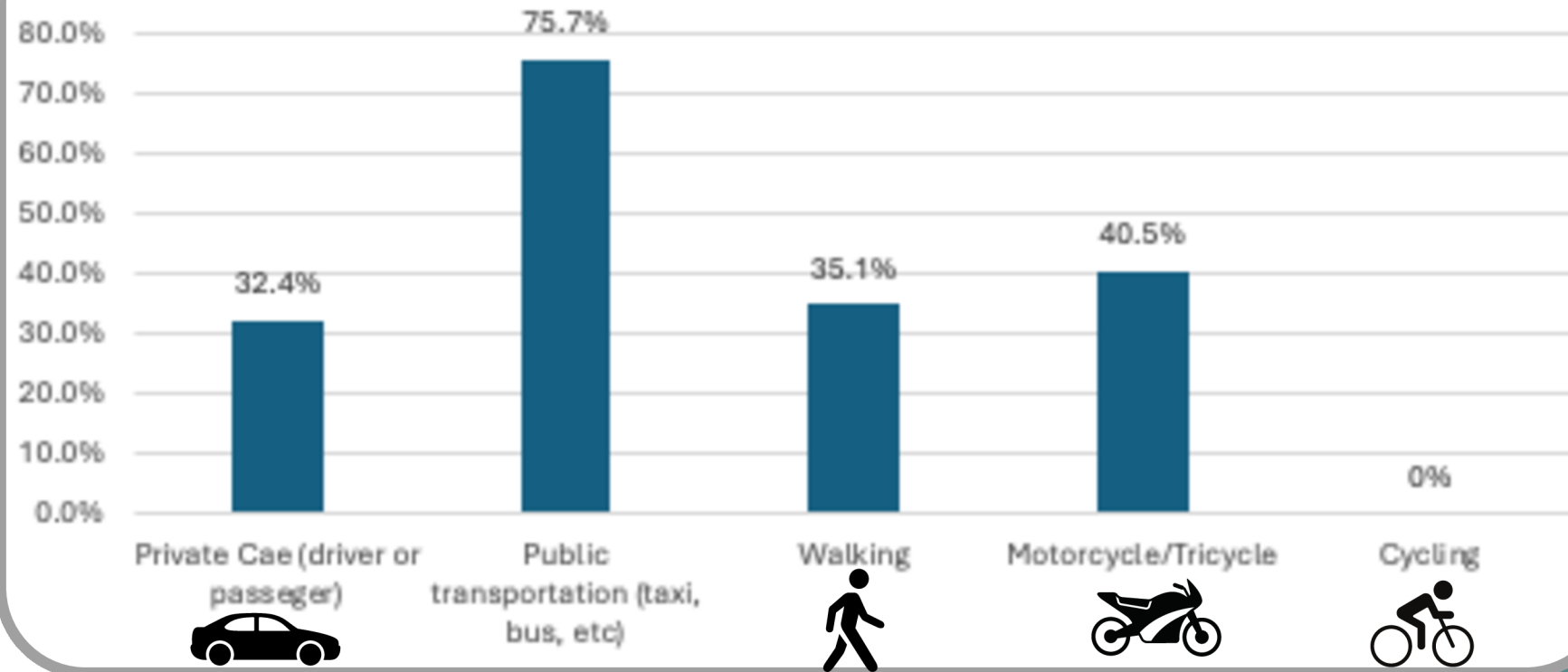




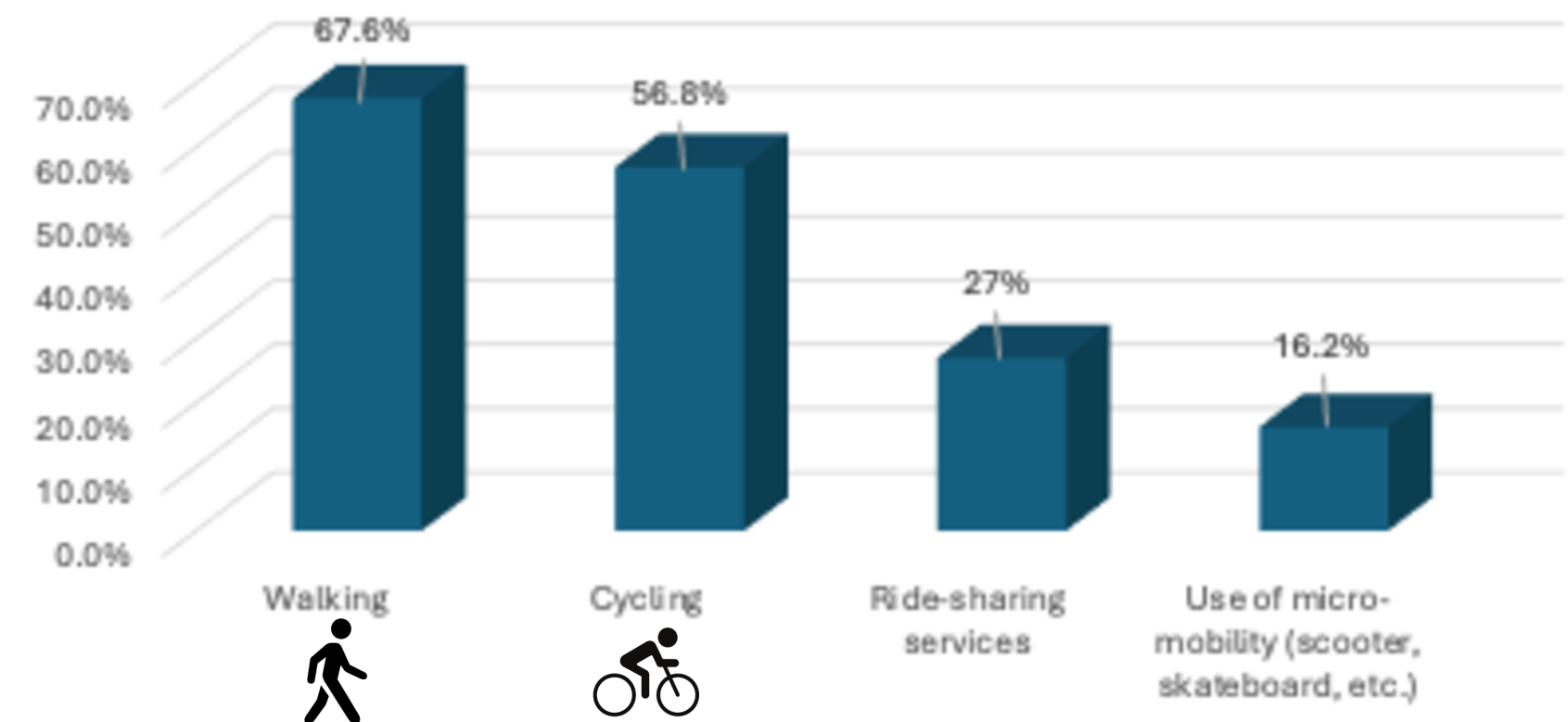
# FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

## Mode Choices and Preferences

Current Mode of Travel Ranking Within the CBD



Preferred Mode of Transportation in a Car-Free Broad Street



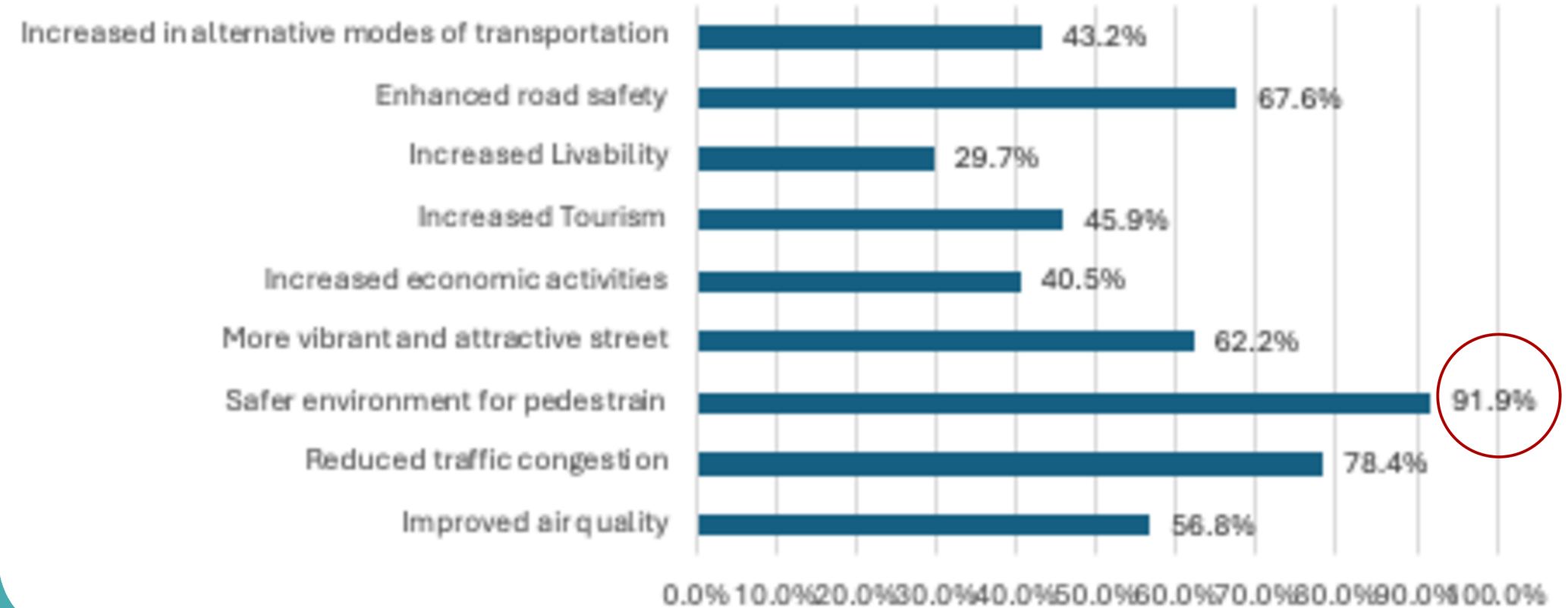


# FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

## Opportunities and Benefits



Potential Benefits of a Car-Free Broad Street



- Leveraging Historical & Social Values
- Environmental & Health Benefits
- Economic Revitalization

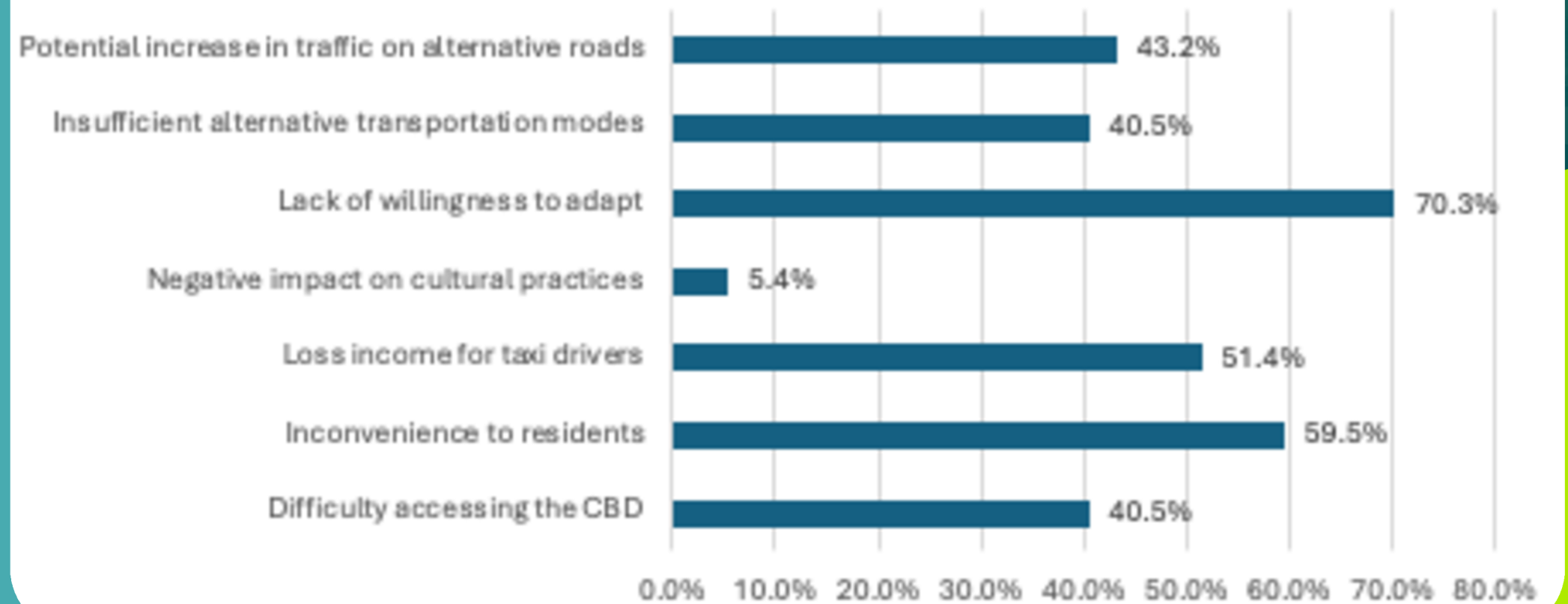


# FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

## Challenges and Barriers



Possible Downsides to a Car-Free Broad Street

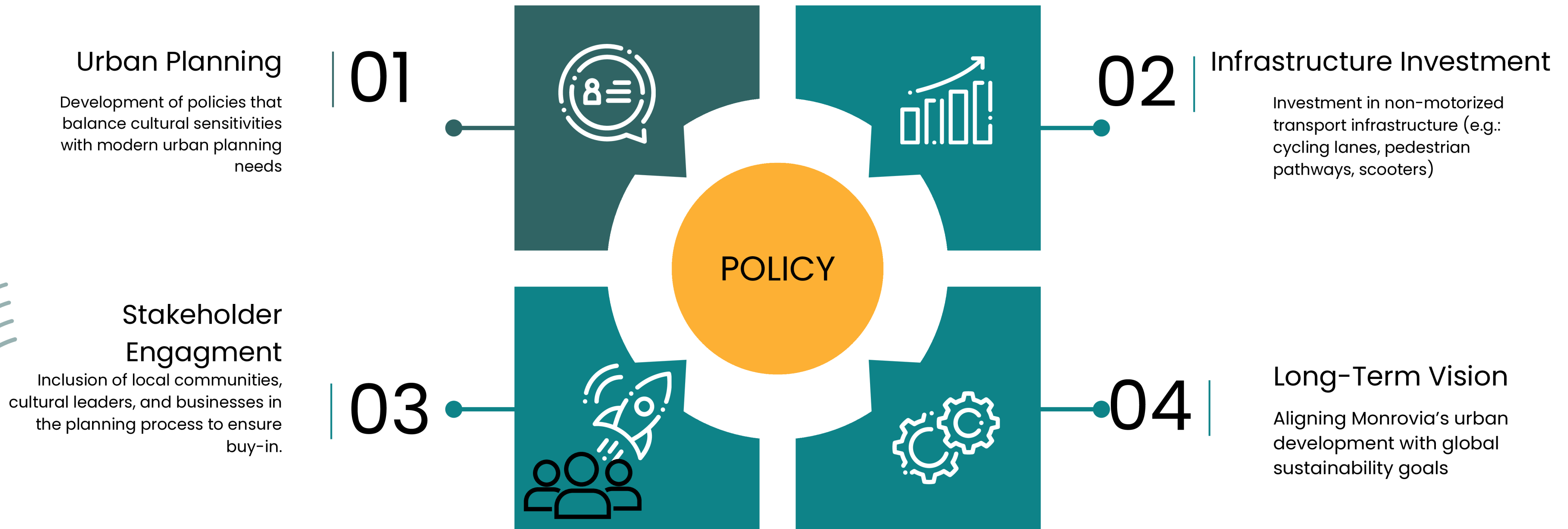


- Cultural Resistance
- Inadequate Public Awareness
- Socio-Economic Factors



# FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

## Policy Implications





# FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

## Other Findings

- **Regular CBD visitors** showed lower support for car-free initiatives, possibly due to reliance on vehicle access
- **87.5%** of respondents believe that Monrovia's rich historical and cultural context should be incorporated into urban planning
- Resistance rooted in **long-standing practices** and the **current transportation culture**







# CONCLUSION

The research sheds information on popular perceptions about a car-free Broad Street in Monrovia, emphasizing the necessity of resolving concerns about everyday disturbances, including cultural and historical features, and promoting possible economic and social advantages.

**87.2%** of **City Planner and Infrastructure Stakeholders** agreed it is workable. The great inclination to use **non-motorized** means of transportation like **walking (87.2%)** and **cycling (67.6%)** indicates a possible transition toward more **sustainable urban mobility** options.





# RECOMMENDATIONS

- Develop targeted campaigns to educate the public about the benefits of a car-free Broad Street, addressing specific concerns of frequent CBD visitors.
- Integrate Monrovia's cultural and historical heritage into the design of the car-free area to foster community pride and acceptance.
- Ensure robust alternative transportation options to minimize disruptions for regular CBD users.
- Focus on improving the perceived safety and cleanliness of the CBD to build broader support for the initiative.
- Highlight the potential economic and social benefits of the car-free initiative to garner support from businesses and the community.







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# Thank you!



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