

A close-up photograph of a car's interior. A Canadian flag air freshener is hanging from the rearview mirror. The air freshener is rectangular with a red maple leaf in the center and red vertical stripes on either side. The background is blurred, showing the car's dashboard and steering wheel.

TURO

The State of Car Ownership in Canada '26

An annual research study on the costs, behaviours, and shifting attitudes shaping car ownership in Canada.



In 2026, car ownership isn't a choice, it's a necessity Canadians are starting to resent.

Rising costs, growing frustration with the buying experience, and new uncertainty driven by tariffs and trade relations are changing how Canadians feel about owning a car. While ownership remains essential for most Canadians, fewer and fewer people are feeling good about it.

What was once associated with freedom and independence now feels, for many, like a financial obligation they can't easily escape. Confidence in ownership is eroding and an openness to alternatives is growing.

Car ownership remains the default, not the desire.

For the vast majority of Canadians, owning a car is still the necessary default. In 2026, 85% of Canadians own or lease a vehicle, a figure that has remained steady over the past three years. But this stability masks a deeper shift. Canadians may still be keeping their cars, but many wish they didn't need them. Ownership is no longer an active choice, it's a reluctant one.

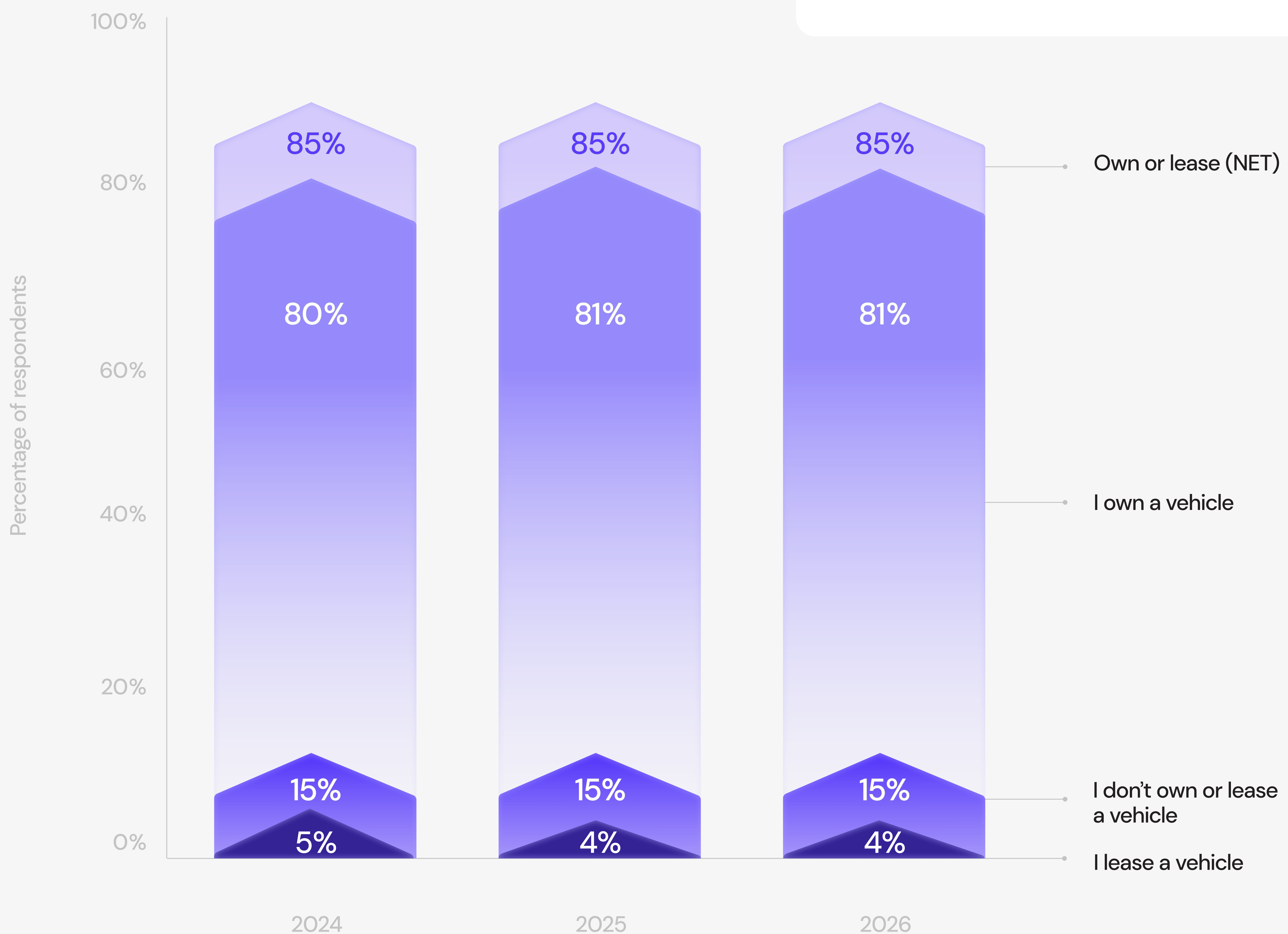


45%

Of Canadians

say they wish they had better transportation options so they wouldn't need a car.

Car ownership has remained flat for the past 3 years

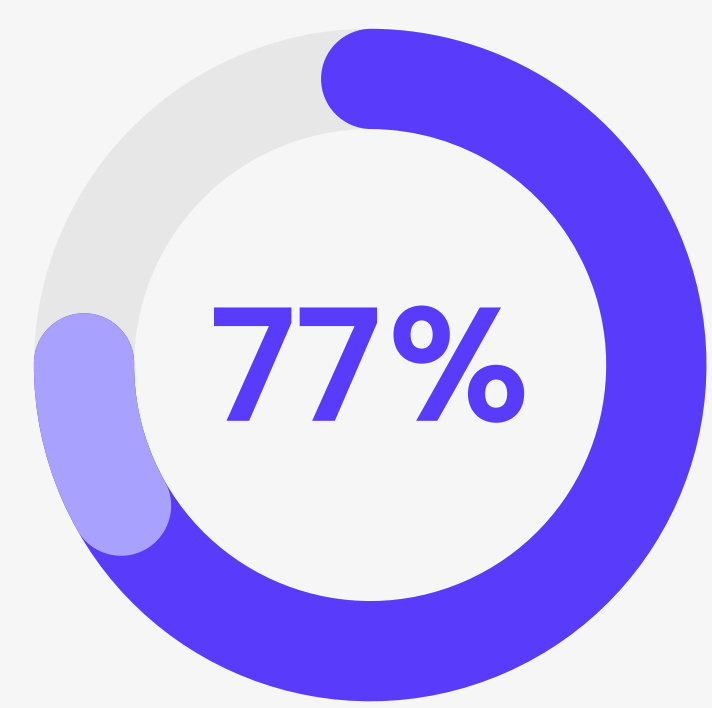


"My life requires a vehicle, but if I'm honest, I'd rather not own one at all. My wife and I are spending much more than we'd like to on our cars, and yet it feels like we don't really have a choice."

Shaun St-Amour, 46, Vancouver, BC

Despite a dip in costs, car ownership remains a growing financial burden for everyone.

Although average annual costs are seeing a modest decline, car ownership continues to feel deeply unaffordable. In 2026:



of Canadians say their monthly car expenses are more than they can afford.



of those who don't own a car say it's simply too expensive.

Car ownership costs by province



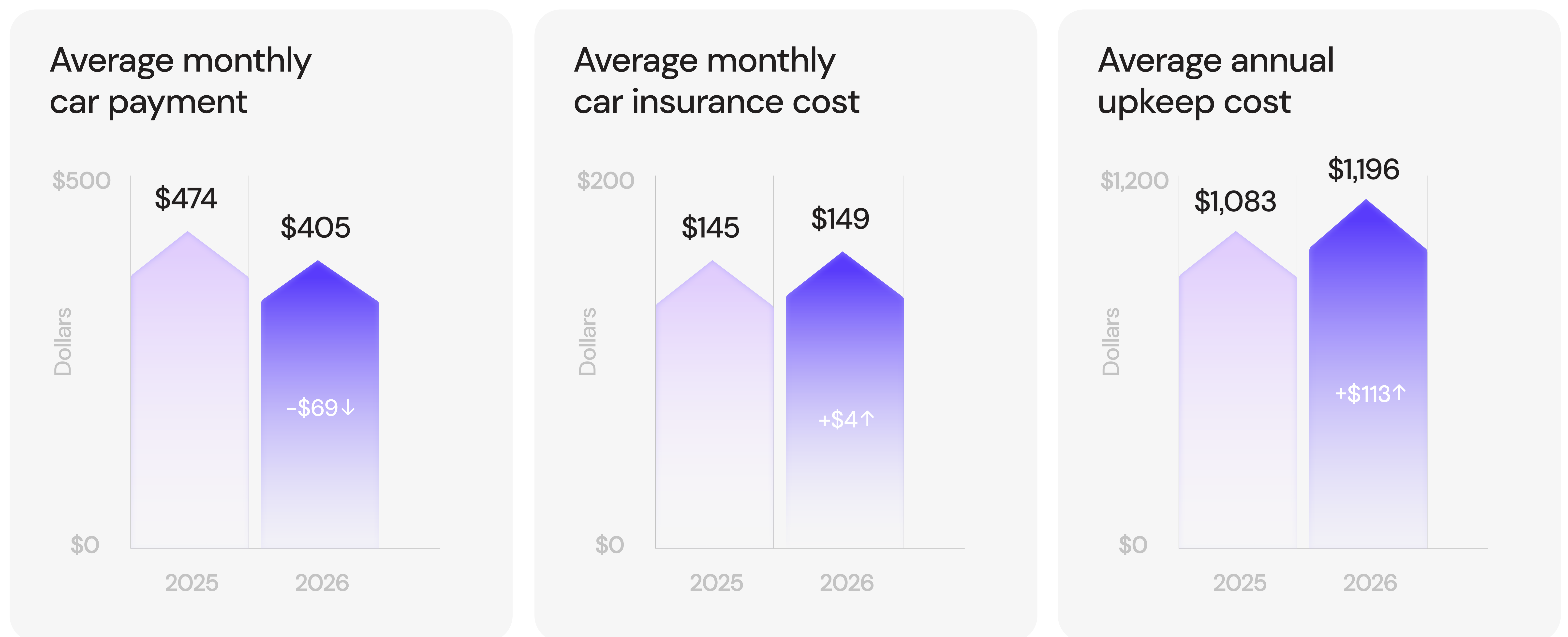
\$4,999

▼9%

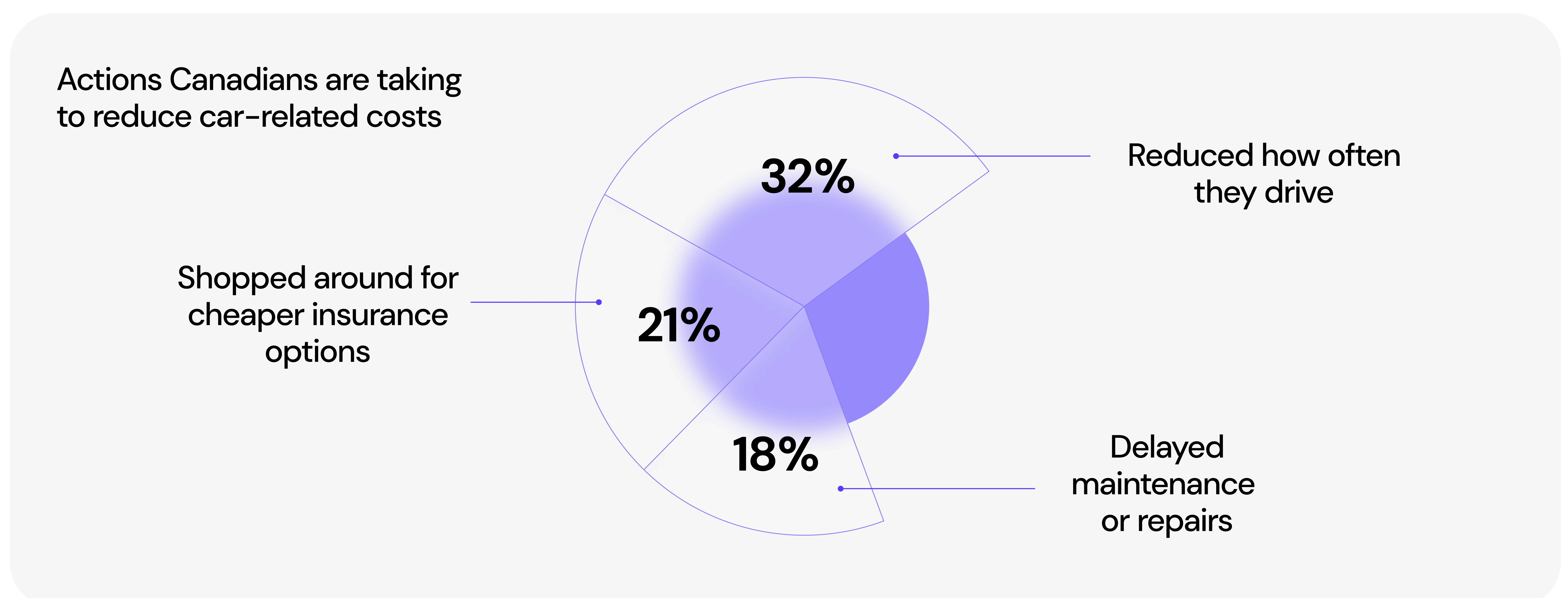
*The average annual cost of car ownership for Canadians in 2026.

Maintenance and insurance costs are up in 2026.

While average monthly car payments may be easing slightly, other costs associated with ownership, including maintenance and insurance, continue to weigh heavily on Canadian car owners.

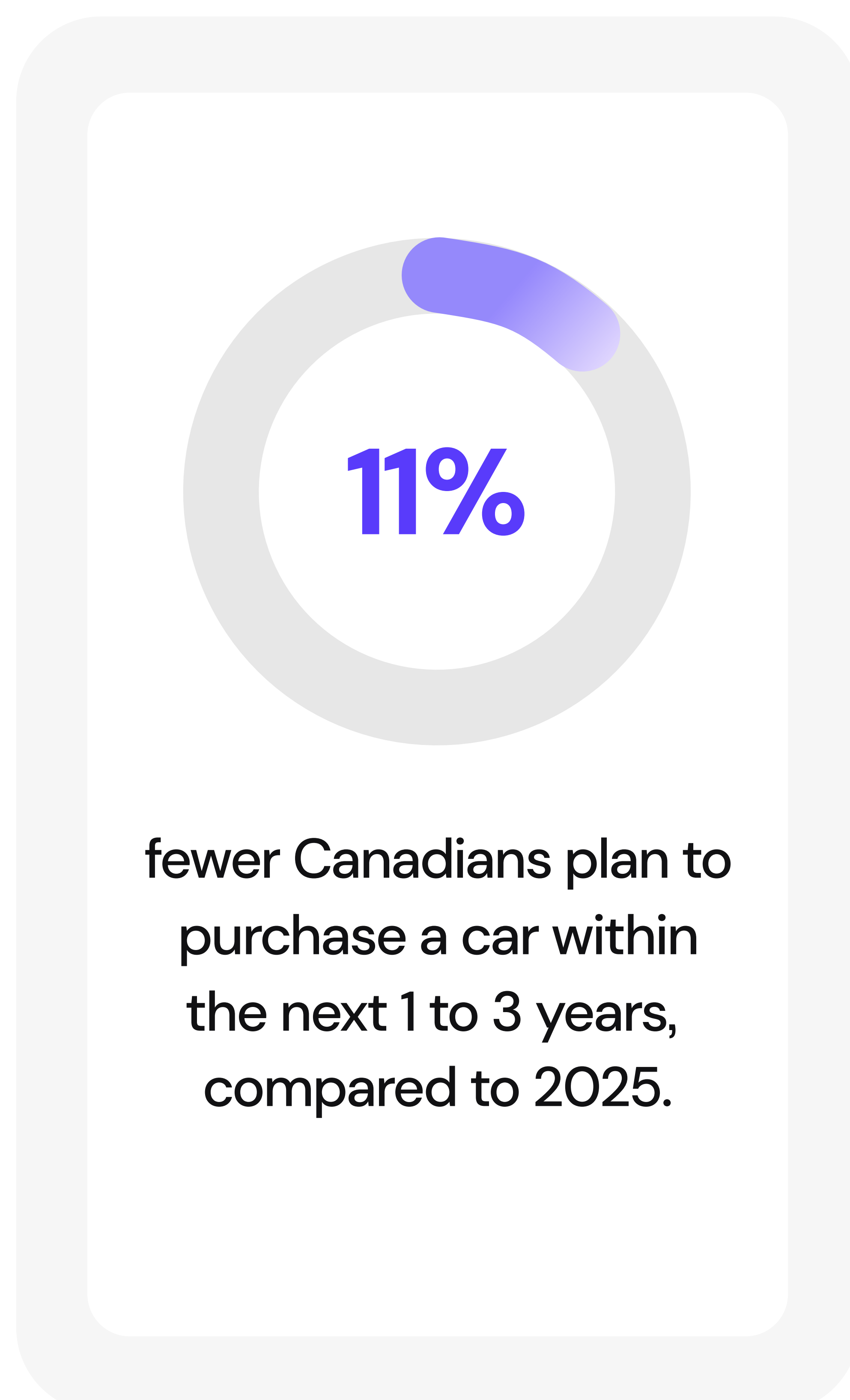
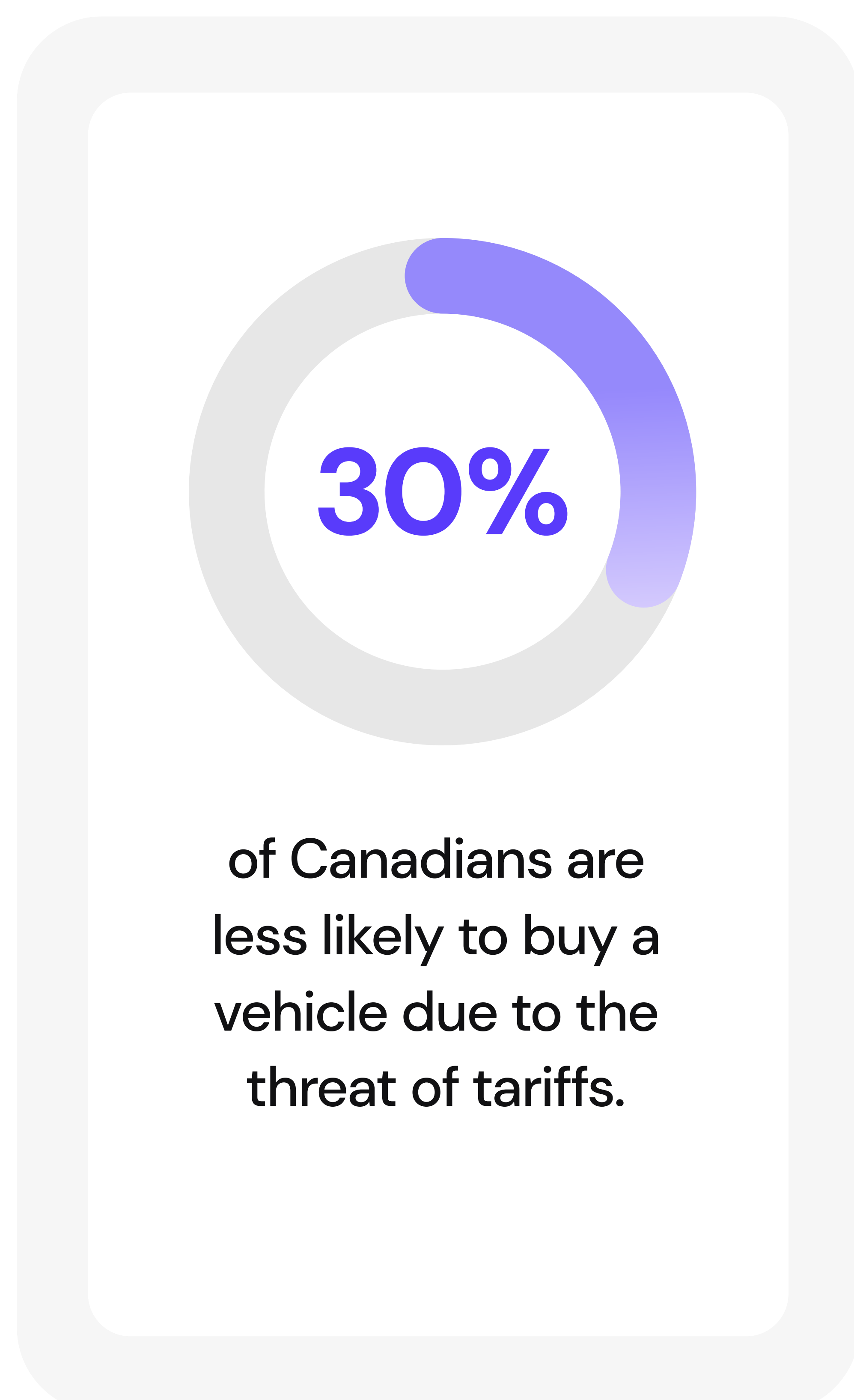
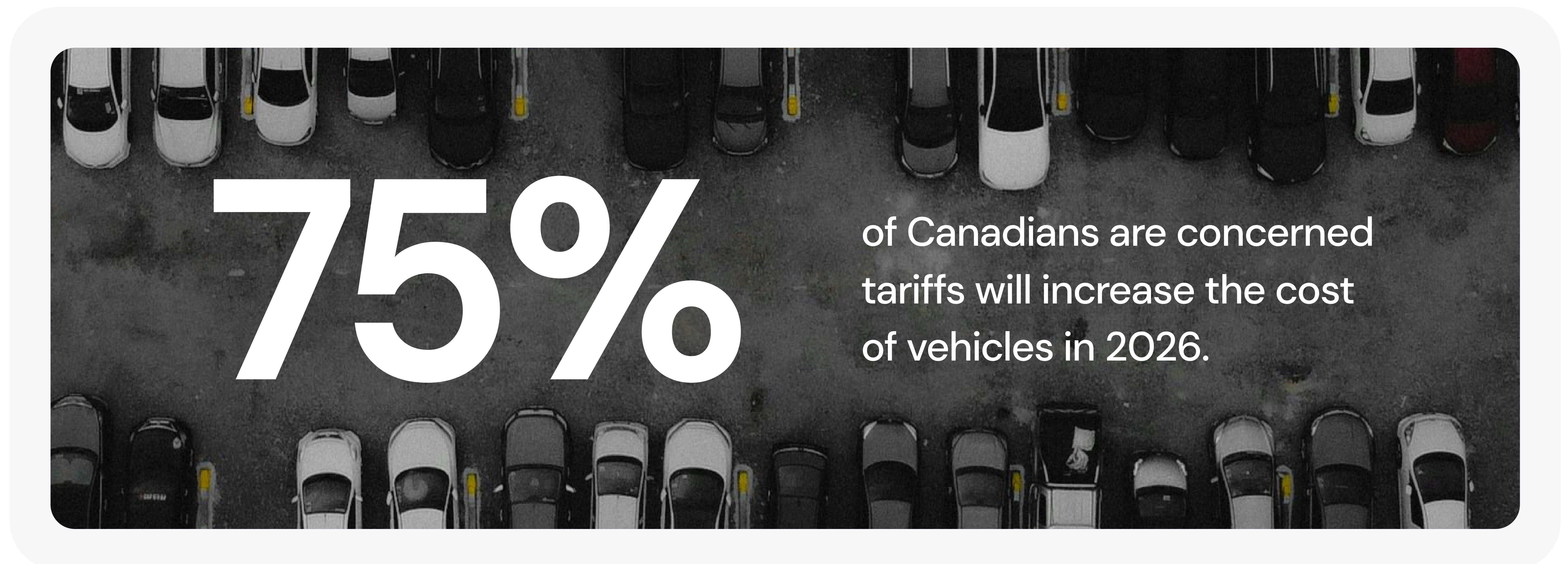


More than half of Canadians are changing their behaviour to cope.



Trade tensions are pushing Canadians to delay car purchases.

In 2026, the introduction of tariffs created a new kind of cost: uncertainty. Canadians are increasingly concerned that strained Canada–U.S. relations will push vehicle prices even higher, making ownership feel riskier and less predictable.

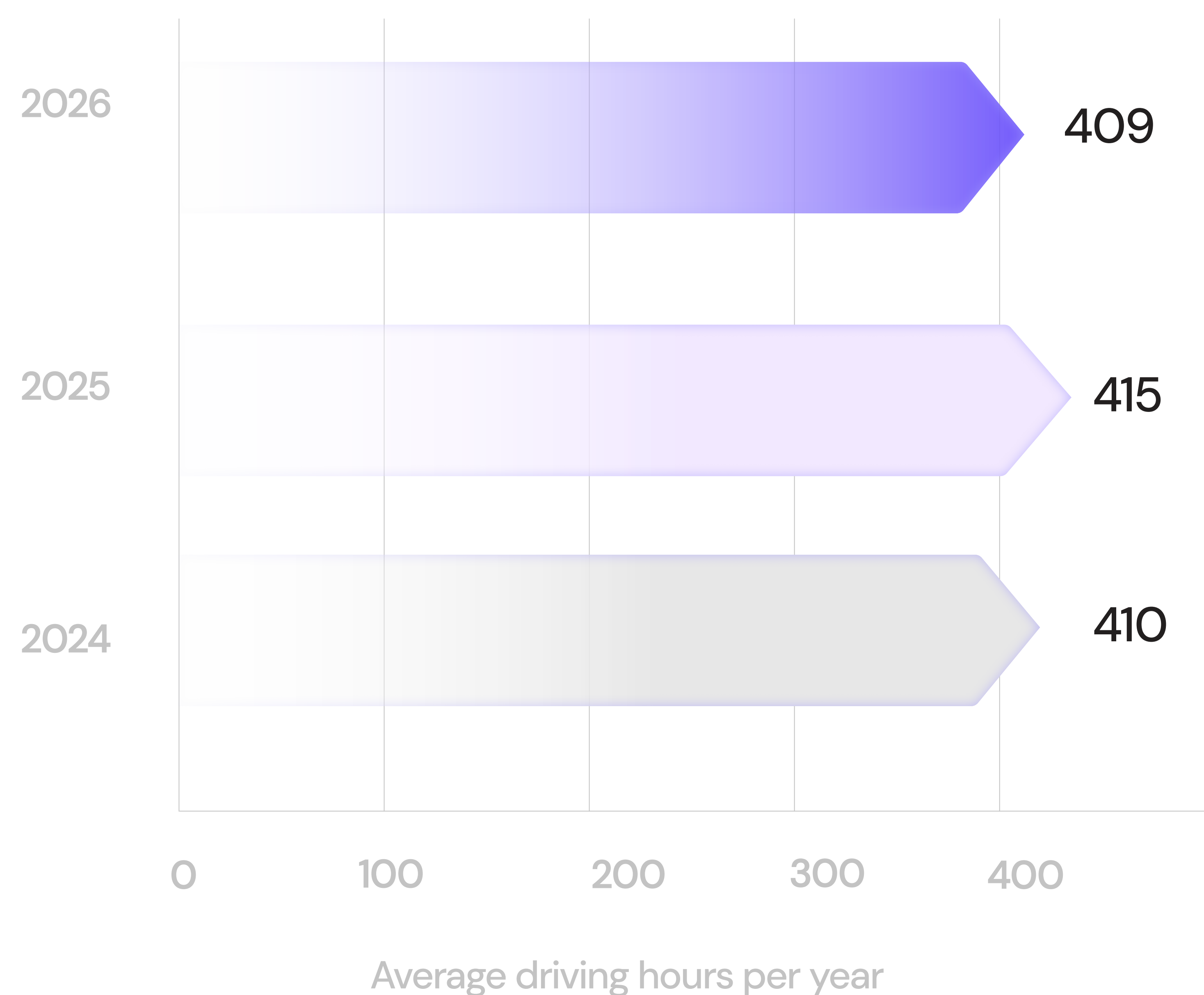


Driving hours are at an **all-time low** in 2026, making the cost of ownership hard to justify.

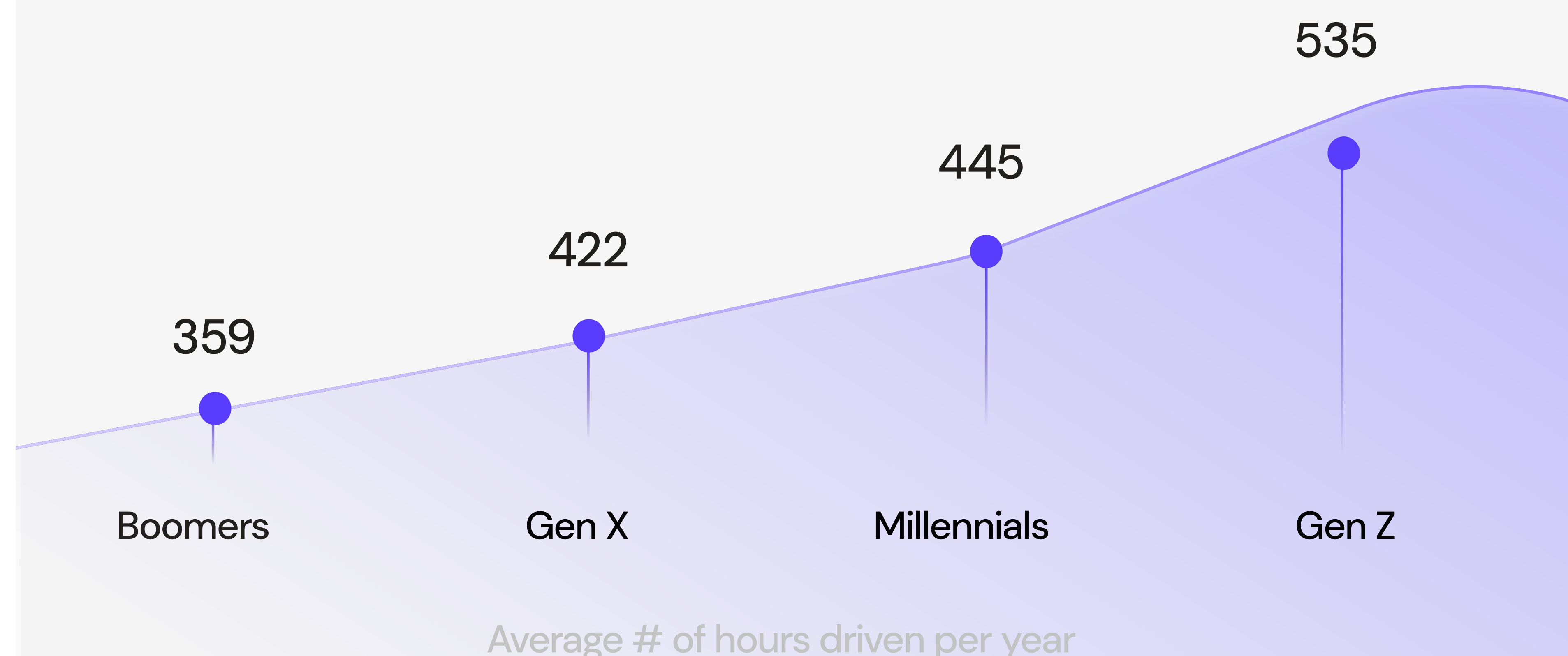
In 2026, Canadians are spending less time behind the wheel than ever before. The average Canadian car sits parked* for 22.6 hours a day — making up nearly 95% of the year.

*Based on self-reported driving time, vehicle use may vary when shared among multiple drivers.

Canadians are driving fewer hours in 2026

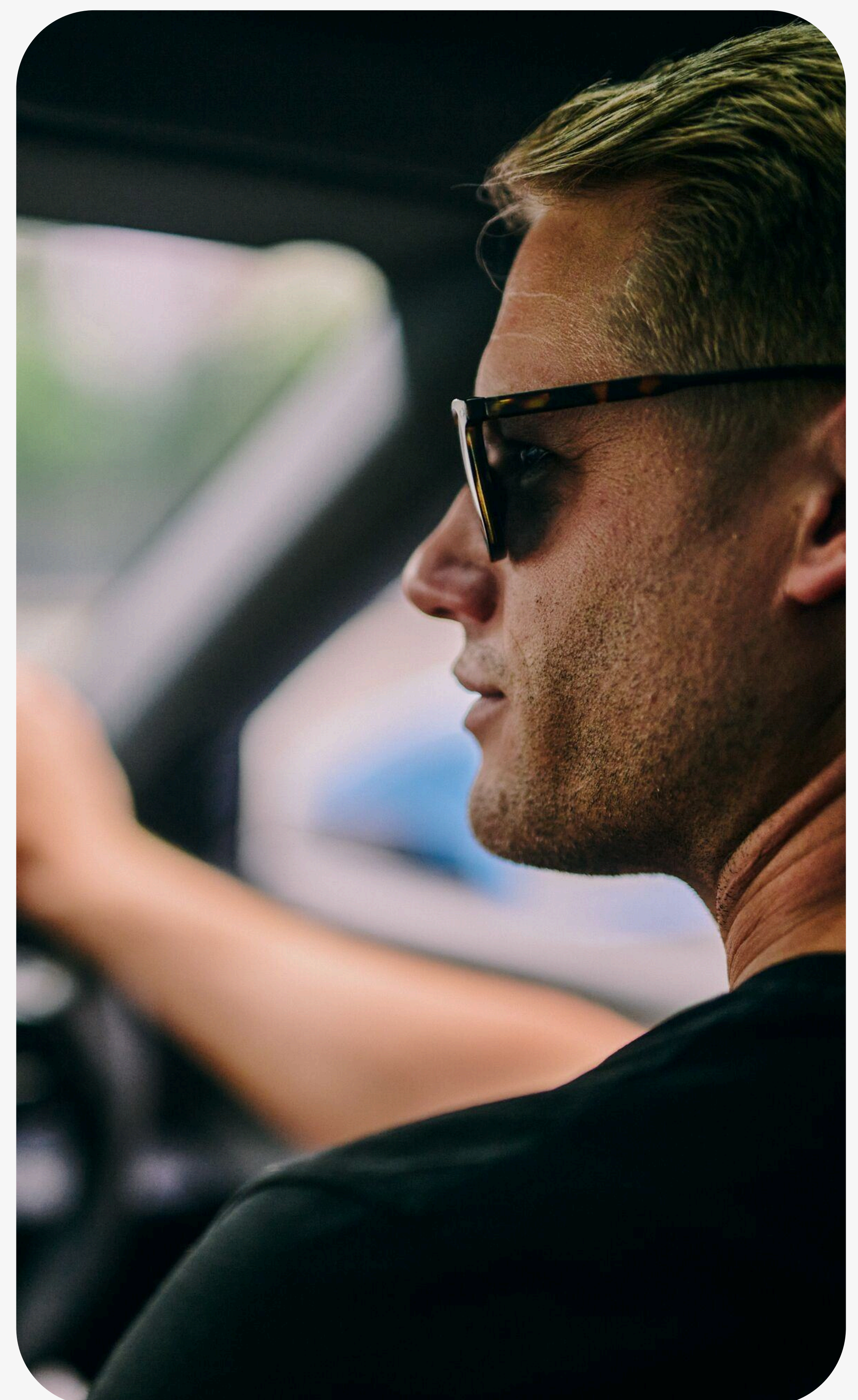


The older the Canadian, the fewer hours they drive



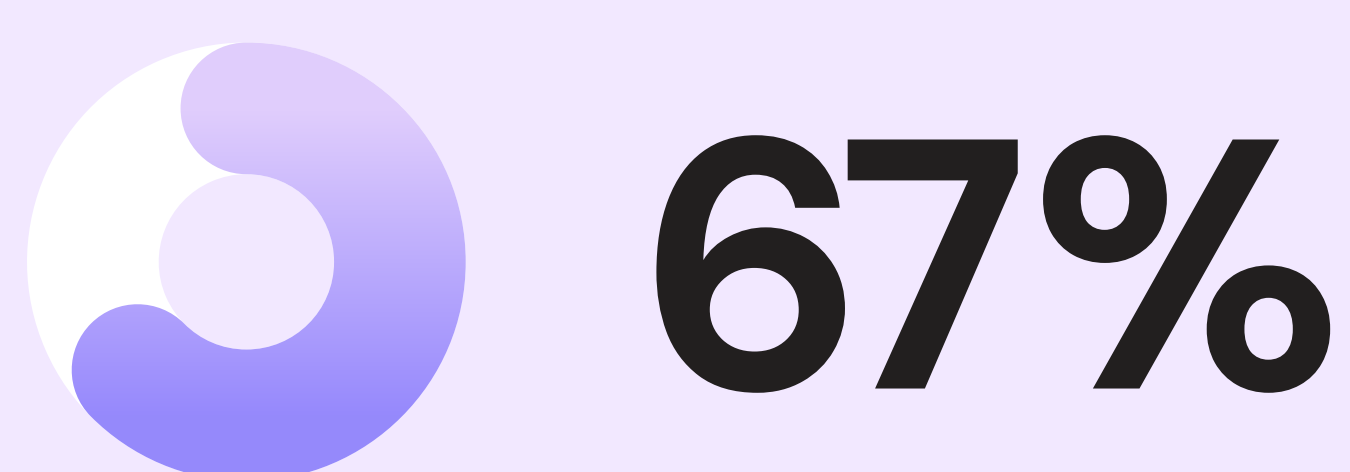
Commuting is the exception. With more Canadians back in the office, driving to work now averages **4.1 days per week in 2026, up from 3.7 last year.**

This puts younger Canadian car owners behind the wheel more than older generations, with Gen Z and Millennials spending the most time on the road.



Buying a car is a negative experience, and Millennials are particularly tired of it.

Millennials report high levels of frustration with the car-buying process, citing fees, time commitment, and sales pressure.



of Millennials say the fees and upsells are what makes the experience unpleasant.



of Millennials dislike the time-consuming process of researching and buying a car.



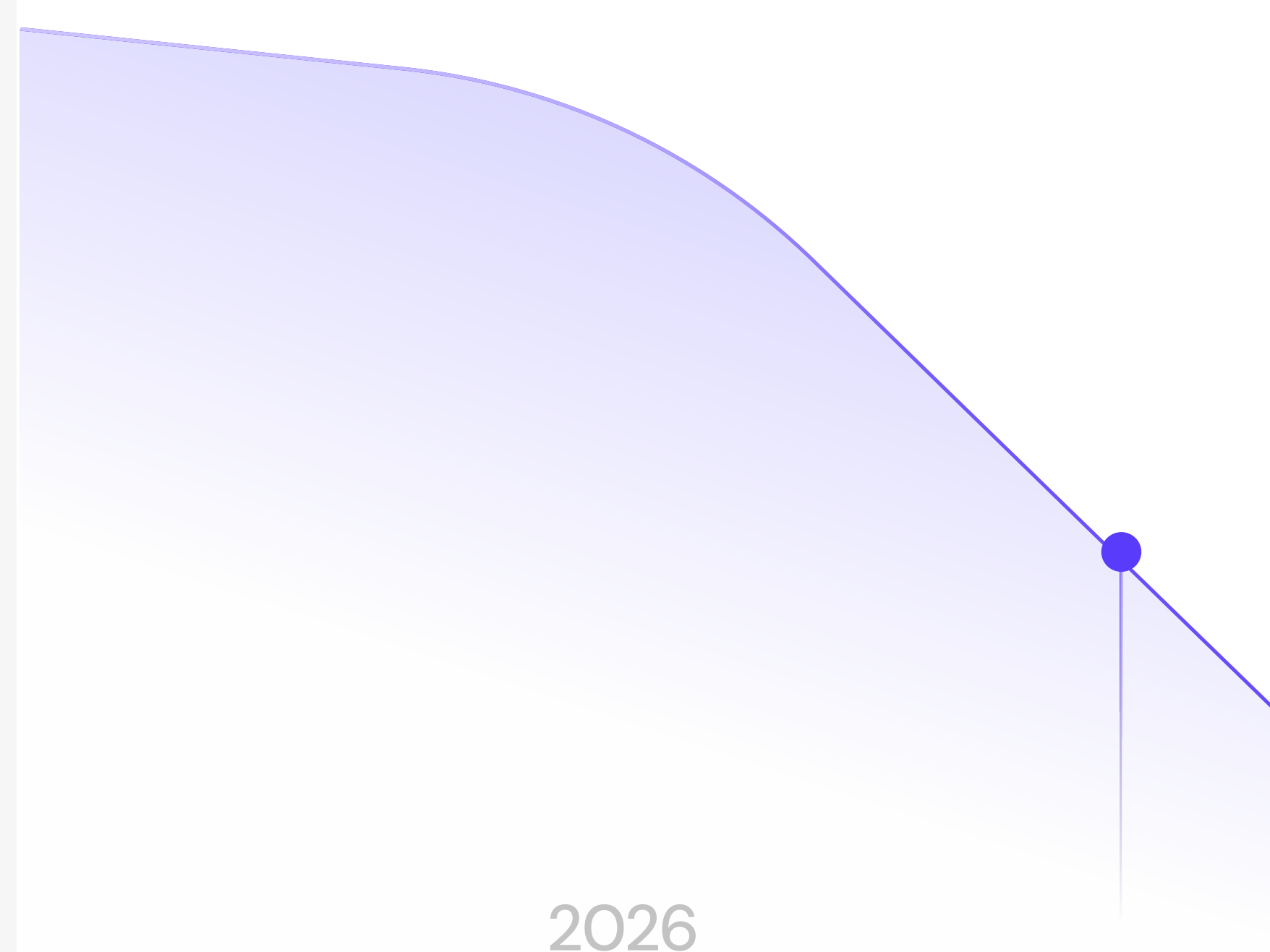
of Canadians across all generation are fed up with pushy and high-pressure sale tactics.

EV adoption is improving, but intent to buy remains low.

Among Canadians who plan to buy a new vehicle, nearly 15% plan to buy an EV — up 17% since last year.

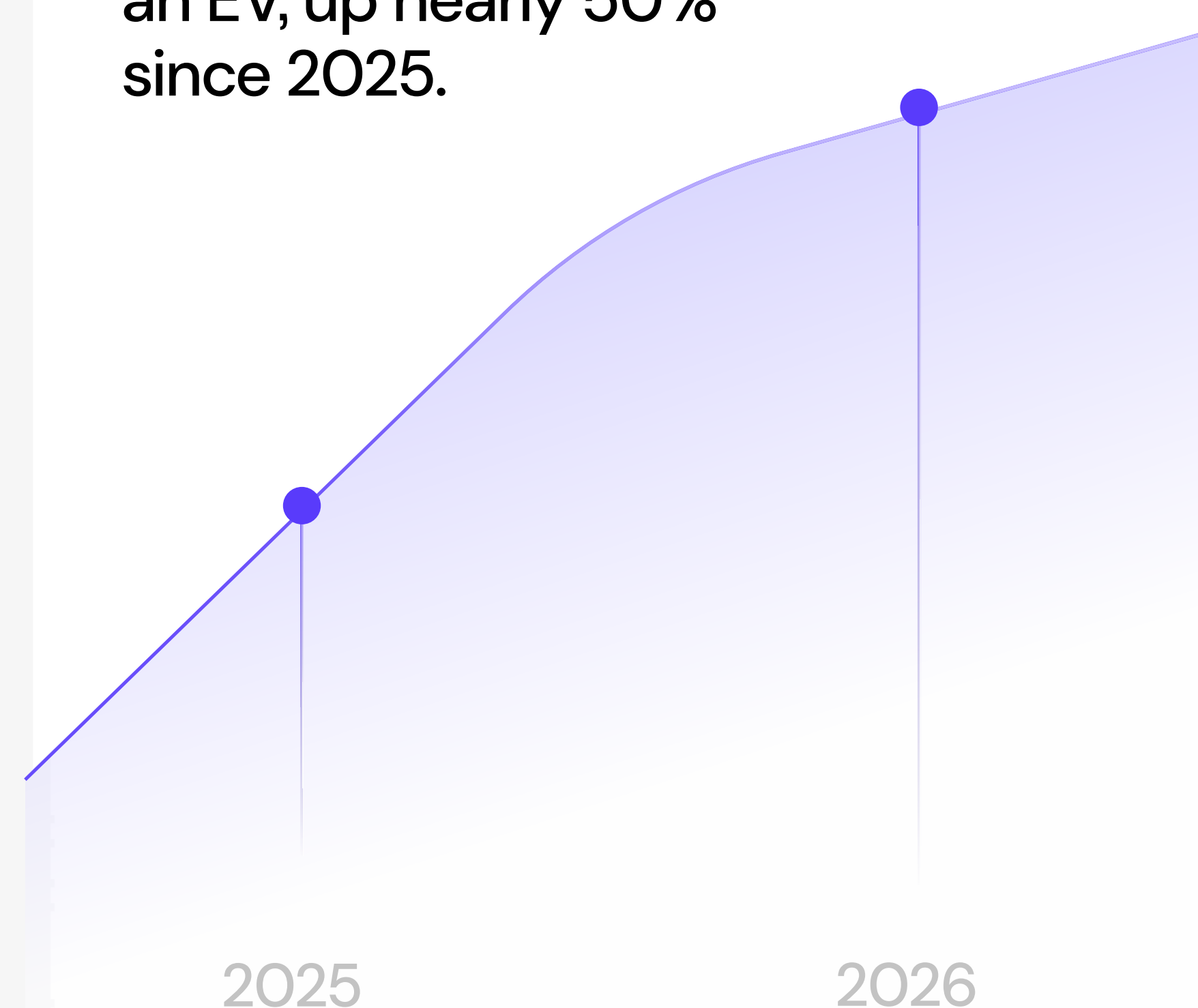
11%

fewer Canadians in 2026 say cost is a barrier to purchasing an EV.



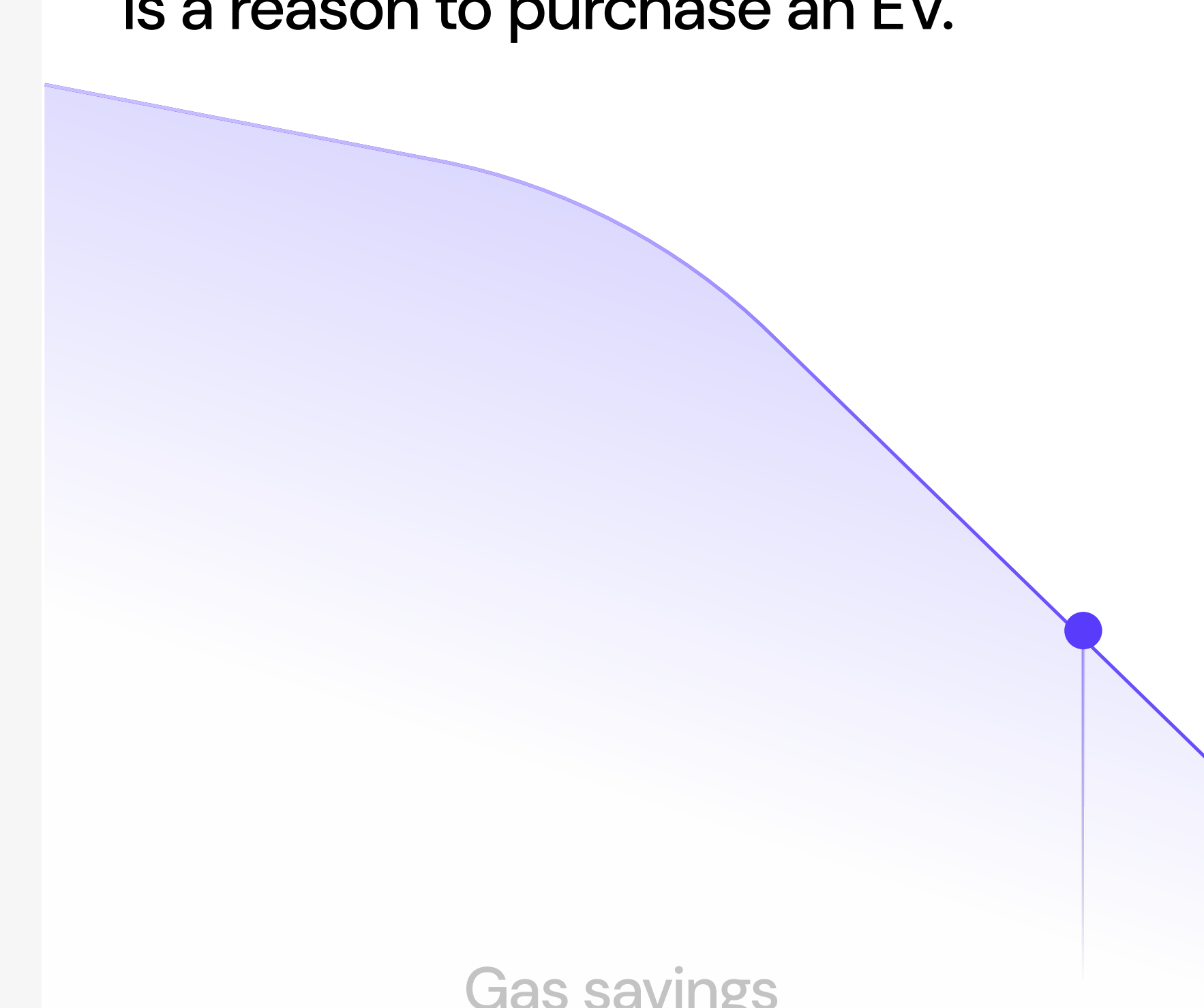
31%

of Canadians have driven an EV, up nearly 50% since 2025.



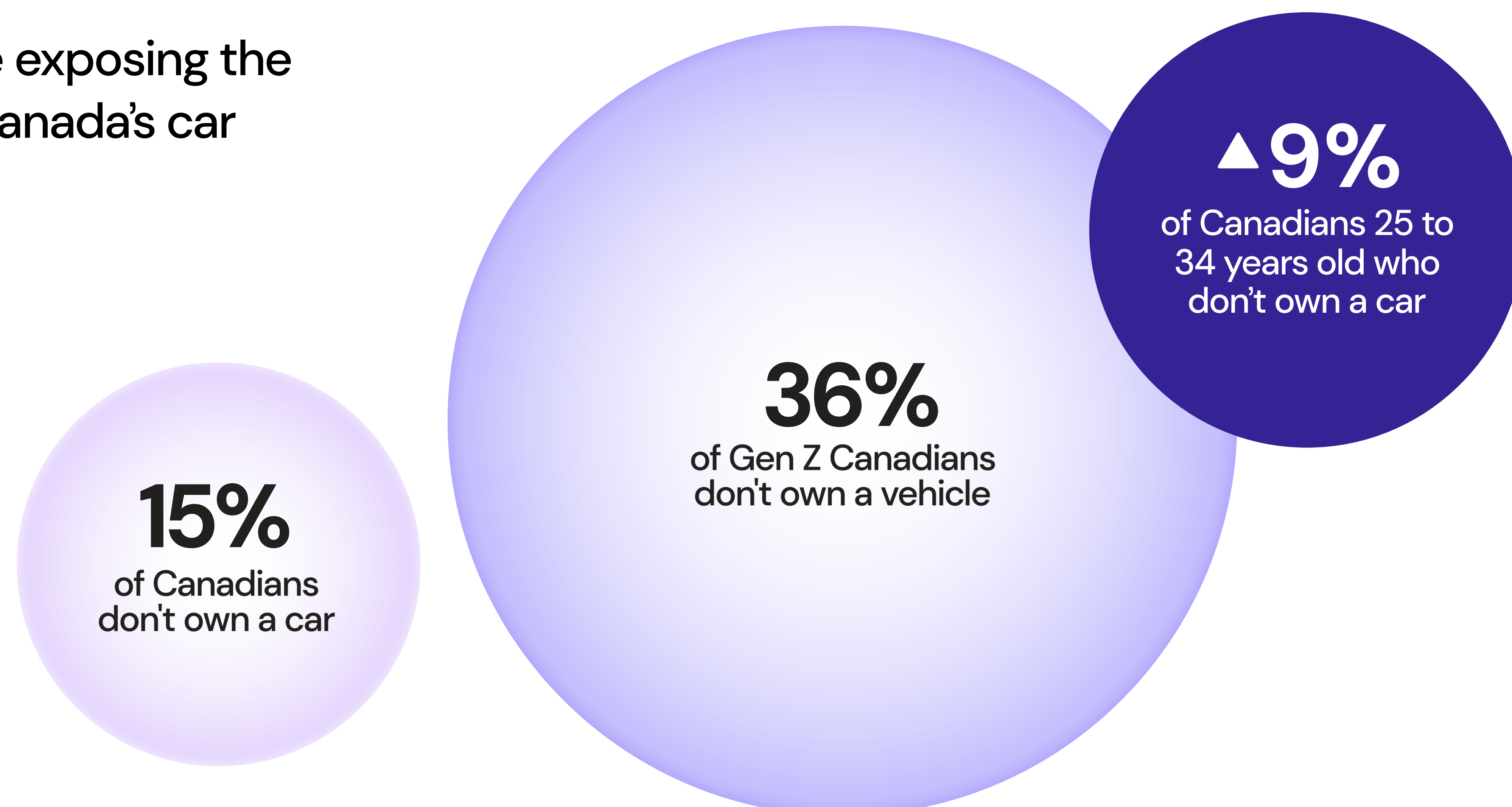
17%

fewer Canadians say gas savings is a reason to purchase an EV.



Gen Z is being priced out of car ownership.

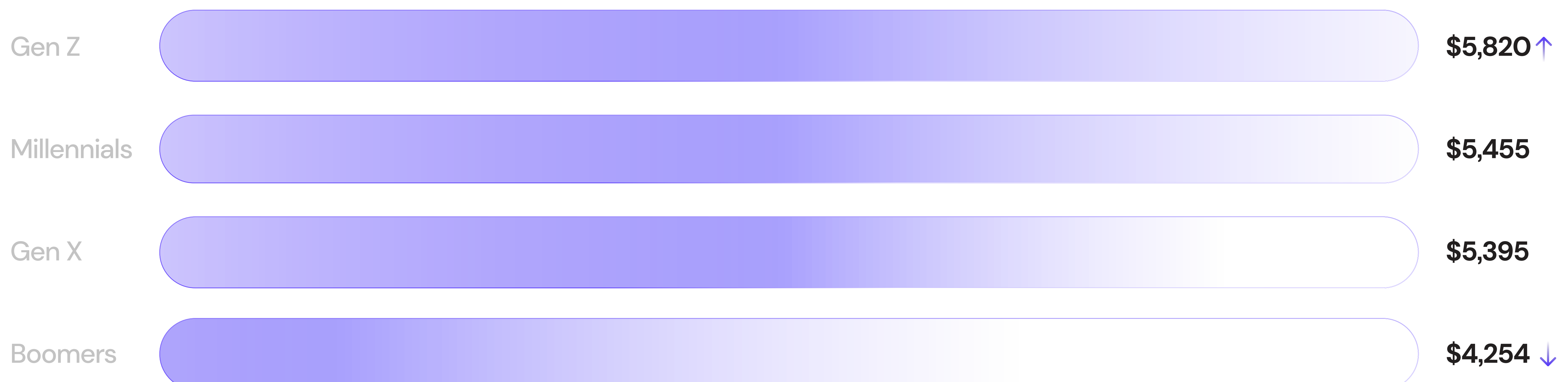
Younger Canadians are exposing the long-term fragility of Canada's car ownership model.



This isn't reflective of a lifestyle preference, but a troubling look at the generation's financial reality. At a moment when all Canadians are feeling the squeeze of income pressures, Gen Z faces the highest car ownership costs of any generation.

What looks like a generational trend today may be an early signal of a broader shift away from long-term car ownership.

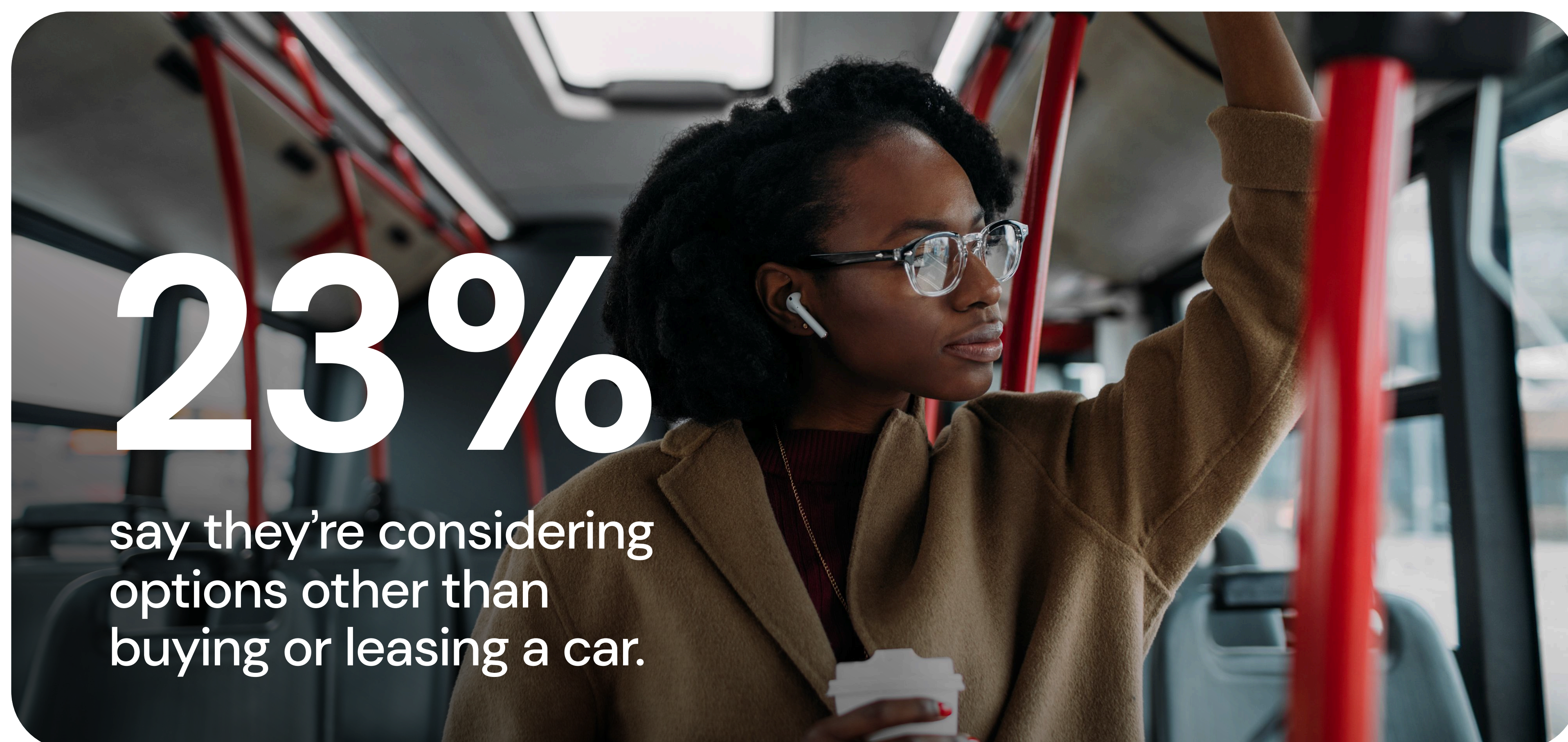
Gen Z pays the most to own a car.



Average annual cost of car ownership by generation.

Canadians are searching for an alternative to traditional car ownership.

As frustrations continue to grow, Canadians are questioning whether owning a car is the only way to access one.



“For decades, car ownership has been the default option in Canada. Now we’re seeing that assumption start to shift. People still need access to a car, but they’re questioning whether they need the financial weight that comes with owning one.”

Bassem El-Rahimy,
Head of Turo Canada



Long-term car rentals are emerging as a compelling solution.

When it comes to alternatives for traditional car ownership, the benefits of long-term vehicle rentals are piquing Canadians' interest.

54%

of Canadians say they would prefer to save money and use a car only when they need it over traditional owning or leasing.

For many Canadians, the appeal of long-term rentals is in the lower costs and flexibility.

52%

like that it allows them to access a car without ongoing costs.

42%

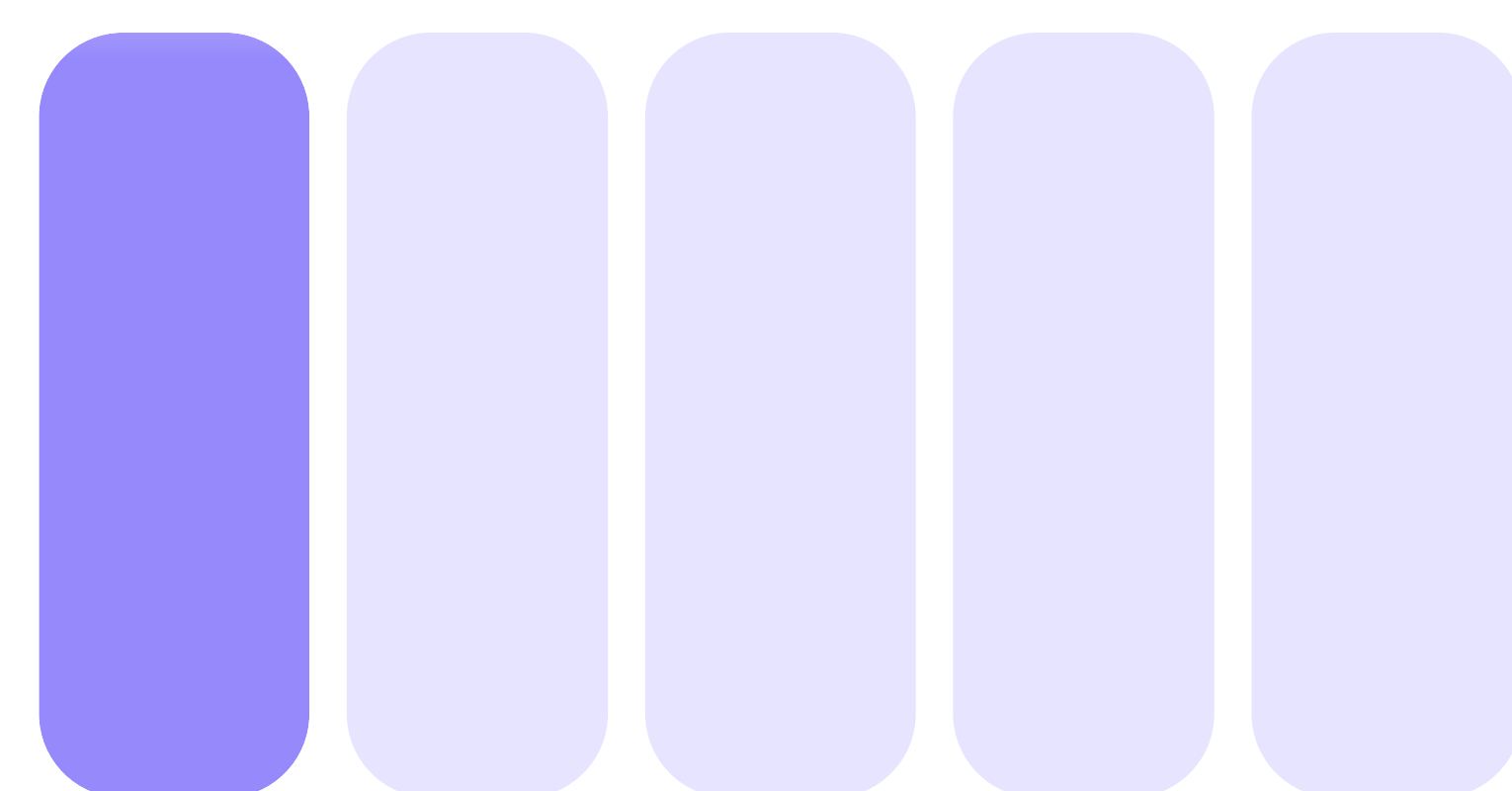
like that it doesn't require the lengthy commitment of a lease.

30%

like the lower monthly costs.

21%

like the ability to rent long term while they decide which car to buy.



1 in 5

Gen Zs like the flexibility it provides when moving to a new city.

“I needed a car for seven months after taking a job that transit couldn't get me to. Buying or leasing felt excessive for something temporary. In a city where I rely on transit most of the time, having a car only when I truly needed one just made more financial sense.”

Aya Hasan, 34,
Vancouver, B.C.

Turo is starting to see this interest turn into real demand.

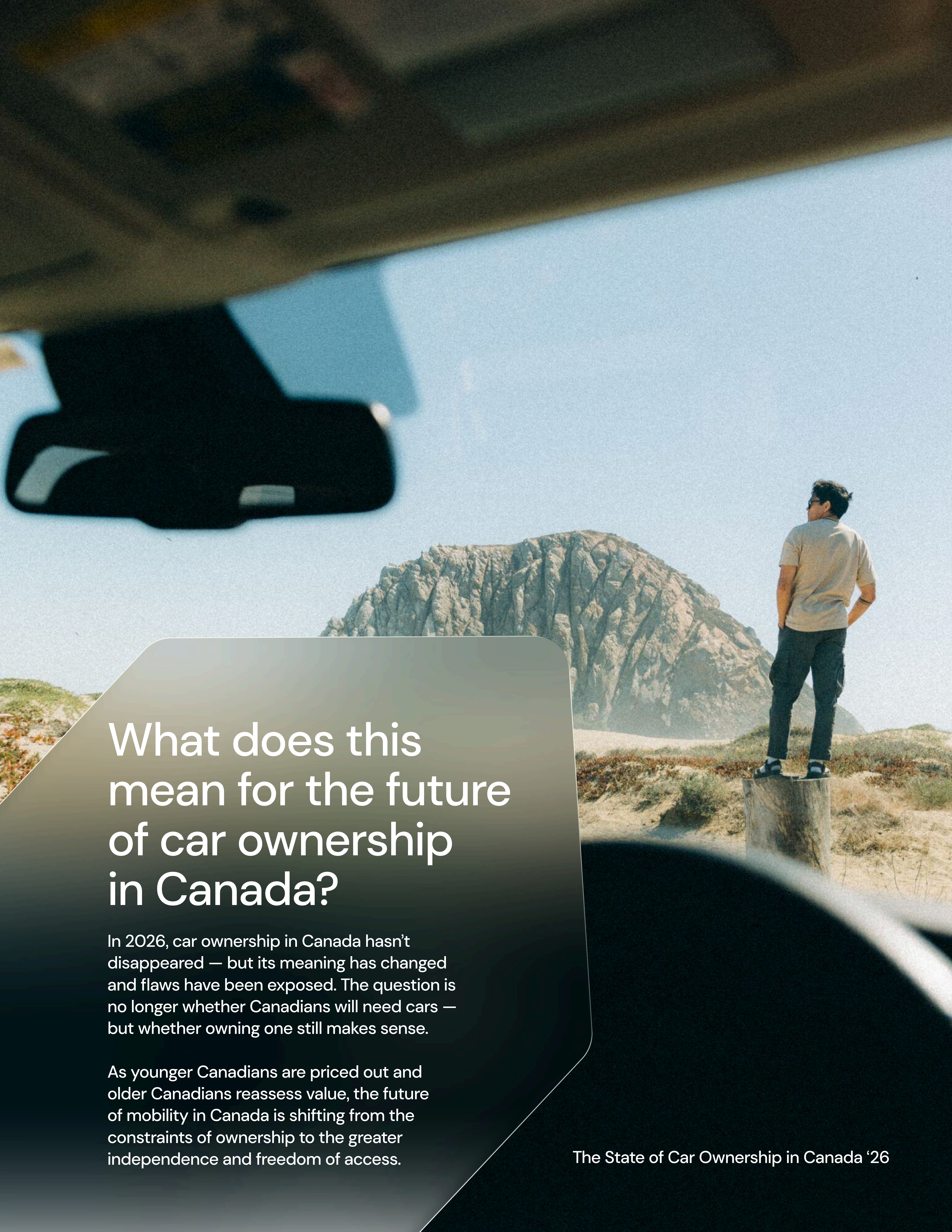
48%

increase in searches for long-term car rentals

100%

increase in long-term car rentals booked in Canada

*based on thousands of searches and bookings on Turo in Canada over the past 12 months.

A man in a light-colored t-shirt and dark pants stands on a tree stump in a coastal landscape, looking out at a large, rocky cliff under a clear blue sky. The scene is viewed through the rearview mirror of a car, with the mirror's frame and a blurry reflection of the man's legs visible in the foreground.

What does this mean for the future of car ownership in Canada?

In 2026, car ownership in Canada hasn't disappeared — but its meaning has changed and flaws have been exposed. The question is no longer whether Canadians will need cars — but whether owning one still makes sense.

As younger Canadians are priced out and older Canadians reassess value, the future of mobility in Canada is shifting from the constraints of ownership to the greater independence and freedom of access.

Experience independence with all of the perks and none of the burdens.

- Enjoy the flexibility of monthly payments.
- Book from carefully selected local hosts instead of dealing with salespeople and dealerships.
- Avoid restrictive insurance contracts but stay covered with Physical Damage Protection options to limit out-of-pocket costs.
- Get up to \$2,000,000 in liability insurance included for every trip.



Methodology

The survey was hosted on the Angus Reid Forum for Turo Canada, between the dates of December 18 to 23, 2025. The web survey was conducted among a representative sample of 1,509 English and/or French-speaking Canadians, 25 years of age or older, Canadian Census representative. To keep consistency with 2024 and 2025 waves, the exact same sampling and weighting schemes were used. For comparison purposes, a probability sample of this size would have a margin of error of plus or minus 2.5 percent, 19 times out of 20. You are welcome to use this data for your own purposes, we just ask that you cite Turo as a source when referencing this information in your content.

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A woman with voluminous curly hair, wearing a light blue short-sleeved button-down shirt, stands in a parking garage. She is smiling and looking at a white smartphone held in her left hand. The background shows a concrete parking structure with a metal fence and some greenery. The lighting is soft, suggesting an indoor or shaded outdoor environment.

Rethink car ownership.

Long-term rentals on Turo offer the benefits of driving the car you want without the commitment.

Skip the dealership and pay monthly, with flexible dates that work for you.

[Try long-term rentals](#)