

# Shared Rides, Shared Wealth

Prosperity Report 2022  
Australia





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## Foreword

**It's no surprise that micromobility has been growing rapidly in popularity over the last few years as cities around the world adapted to the impacts of climate change, COVID-19 and rising costs of living.**

People across Australia have embraced shared e-scooters as an affordable, sustainable and socially-distanced way to travel. Micromobility operations like Neuron's have become embedded in many local ecosystems, and cities are increasingly realising the value that a well-run and responsibly operated e-scooter program can bring to their economies.

Since our founding in 2016, Neuron has been partnering with cities to build a more prosperous and sustainable future. During the COVID-19 pandemic, we were proud to work with local councils to support our cities through initiatives such as offering free ride passes to essential workers and individuals heading for their vaccination appointments.

As we continue to expand globally, we see ourselves continuing to play an important role in boosting local economies to help cities get back on their feet in the wake of the pandemic.

Neuron is committed to supporting the prosperity of the cities in which we operate. We remain focused on developing new partnerships, technologies and business models to respond to the needs of our cities and improve their liveability to help them thrive.



# Executive Summary

In compiling this report, we analysed responses to rider surveys conducted in 2021 and 2022 in the 12 Australian cities where we operate e-scooter programs: Adelaide, Ballarat, Brisbane, Bundaberg, Canberra, Darwin, Hobart, Launceston, Melbourne, Perth, Rockhampton and Townsville. We asked riders a range of questions about how they use our e-scooters and what they gain from using them.

We conducted further rider research in August and September 2022 to ask riders in Brisbane, Canberra and Darwin how much they spend during their trips and where this money is spent to gain deeper insights into the positive economic impact our programs bring to cities. We also analysed our riders' trip data which shows where journeys start and end, how long they last, distance covered and preferred routes.

Our data, which includes over 5,000 responses to our rider surveys, shows that Neuron's e-scooters in Australia have been directly responsible for growing local economies by making it easier for shoppers to reach businesses, especially those in city centres and hospitality districts which rely heavily on foot traffic. They also boost tourism spending by making it more convenient for visitors to explore the cities.

We also provided anonymised data to economist Nick Behrens of Queensland Economic Advocacy Solutions (QEAS), who **analysed our operations in Brisbane**. He independently concluded that our

e-scooters contributed **\$116.6 million** in direct, indirect and enabled economic activity in Brisbane during the 2021-2022 financial year.

With the cost of living on the rise, users are increasingly leaving their cars at home to avoid paying higher fuel prices, and many are hopping on an e-scooter instead. This helps reduce the number of cars on the road, especially during large scale events, which lowers congestion and air pollution and makes the cities more attractive places to live and work.

**Our e-scooters also offer riders an affordable and easily accessible transport option around the clock, which is particularly important at night when public transport is not readily available.**

Many of these trips support workers in the night-time economy such as those in the hospitality industry and healthcare workers who start and end their shifts late.

We are encouraged that an overwhelming majority of our riders believe we have made a positive impact on their cities and will work to enhance our services further to meet and exceed expectations.

## 8 Key Figures



**10%** of trips would not have happened if a Neuron e-scooter was unavailable

**66%** of trips result in a direct purchase from a local business

**\$65** spent at local businesses by Neuron riders per e-scooter trip

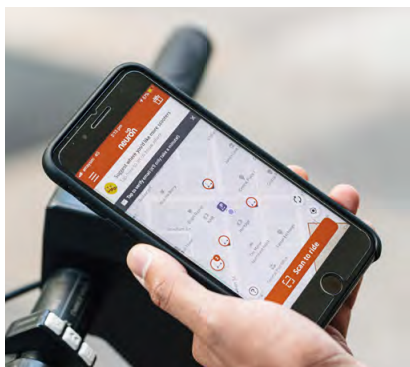
**\$70,000** spent at local businesses each year by Neuron riders per e-scooter deployed

**\$448 M** spent at local businesses each year by Neuron riders in Australia

**20%** of trips support the night-time economy (10pm to 6am)

**46%** of trips replace a car journey

**95%** of users believe Neuron has created a positive impact on their city



# Introduction

As cities expand, they inevitably face challenges which threaten to stifle their growth and prosperity. According to figures released in March 2022 by the **Australian Bureau of Statistics**, the populations of capital cities like Sydney, Melbourne, Hobart and Darwin declined for the first time ever from 2020 to 2021 as more Australians moved to regional areas during the pandemic.

Even as more people choose to live outside major metropolitan areas, car ownership is becoming prohibitively expensive with costs of living soaring globally, including fuel prices. Experts and local authorities are also becoming increasingly aware of the detrimental economic effects of road congestion and pollution associated with private car use.

Our data shows shared micromobility can be a part of the solution to some of these challenges. In this report, we zoom in on four areas where Neuron has helped to give urban prosperity a boost.



## Accelerating the local economy



## Expanding affordable transport options



## Supporting sustainable urban living



## Investing in future growth



# Accelerating the local economy

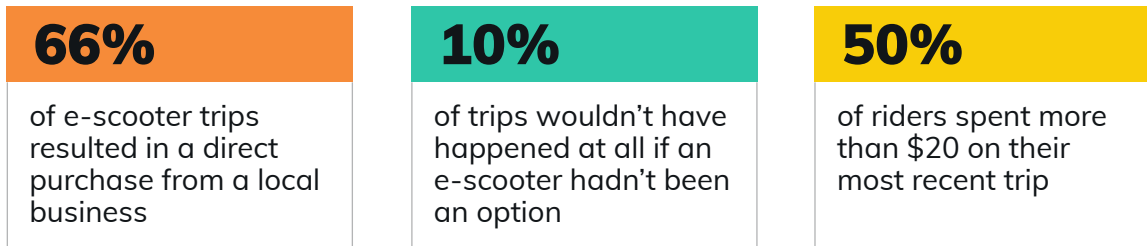
## Bringing consumers back to city centres and hospitality districts

Even before the pandemic, traditional brick-and-mortar retailers were struggling with increasing consumer adoption of e-commerce and rising real estate prices and rents. These trends were worsened or accelerated by further changes to consumer behaviour as a result of COVID-19.

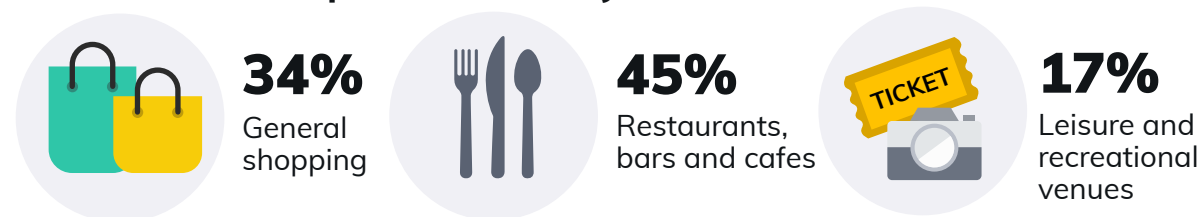
Activity in the Central Business Districts (CBDs) of many major Australian cities have not recovered to pre-pandemic levels despite the easing of restrictions, causing concern among CBD businesses as many are reliant on foot traffic.

The increasing popularity of e-scooters offers a helping hand. E-scooters make it easier for residents, visitors and workers alike to get to and from activity centres like CBDs and other shopping or hospitality precincts, especially those that are difficult to get to by car or underserved by existing transport networks. In Melbourne, more than half (52%) of all our e-scooter trips started and ended within the CBD.

### According to our rider survey:



### Where our riders spend their money\*:



### Why our riders use our e-scooters\*:



\* Respondents could select more than one option

## Our e-scooters have enabled\*:



**\$65**

spent at local businesses by Neuron riders per e-scooter trip



**\$70,000**

spent at local businesses each year by Neuron riders per e-scooter deployed



**\$448 M**

spent at local businesses each year by all Neuron riders in Australia

\* These figures were calculated by applying weighted averages based on our national ridership to representative spending data collected in Brisbane, Canberra and Darwin

## Queensland Economic Advocacy Solutions says:

In an **independent report**, QEAS said that during the 2021-2022 financial year, Neuron contributed an estimated \$116.6 million in direct, indirect and enabled economic activity to Brisbane's economy. The report added that Neuron's services contributed 6.4 cents in every \$100 of economic activity in Brisbane by enabling affordable, rapid and easily accessible transport options for Brisbane tourists, residents and business community members.

QEAS estimated Neuron's economic direct contributions (\$9 million) through its supply chain, and its indirect contributions (\$8.7 million) through its expenditure of employee wages. It also used an economic model to estimate the value of economic activity enabled by Neuron's e-scooters (\$98.9 million) through the movement of goods and people as well as their resulting spend.

The report added: **“QEAS analysis indicates Neuron Mobility’s estimated economic contribution towards Brisbane’s economy will rise from \$116.6 million in 2021-22 to \$160.5 million by 2026-27.”**



## Spreading out the spend

In many cities, e-scooters are helping riders get to hospitality and shopping strips that lie outside of the city centres, in places that are not as easily accessible by public transport or walking, or are traditionally reached by car.

E-scooters can also help bring more traffic to businesses in areas which would normally be explored on foot. The data shows that **57% of our riders value e-scooters** as they are a faster way to get around and can extend how far they can travel in a given amount of time.

Neuron’s **Neighbourhood Connect** program further supports local businesses by connecting our riders with local shops, venues and attractions. We work closely with businesses in the cities we operate in to bring our riders to their doors through in-app promotions, designated parking locations, rider rewards and more.

## Boosting tourism spending in Townsville

In 2021, Griffith University’s Cities Research Institute partnered with Neuron Mobility to conduct a **survey** of Townsville e-scooter users between December 2020 and February 2021. The study analysed the shopping and travel patterns of 140 visitors as well as 80 residents.

- The most avid e-scooter riders, who were in the top third of users by distance travelled, spent **42% more per day** than the least active users in the bottom third
- Avid users travelled **up to 26km** on the e-scooters and were able to see more and do more during their visit
- Many users said they enjoyed using the e-scooters to travel to places they would not have had time to walk to or would have needed a car to get to

### “I travelled to more destinations”

Responses on how using Neuron e-scooters impacted the respondent's visit to Townsville

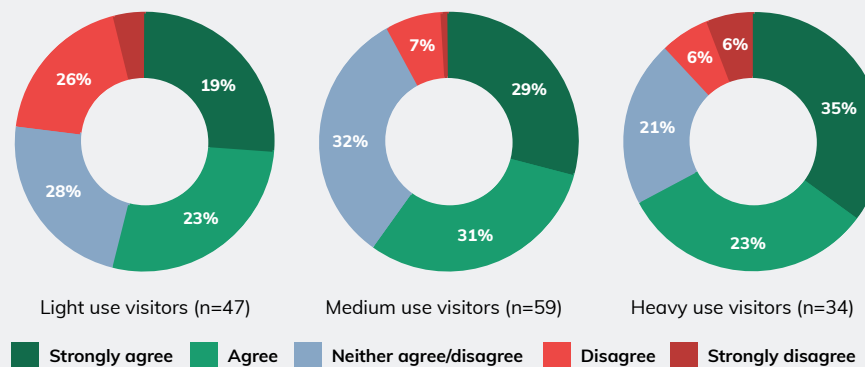


Chart: Dr Abraham Leung, Griffith University • Source: Neuron E-scooter and Tourist Dispersal Survey

**“We surveyed tourists in Townsville as part of a study with Neuron and we found that the riders that used the e-scooters more, spent more,”**

said Professor Matthew Burke, Deputy Director, Cities Research Institute, Griffith University.

**“Judging by the destinations they were travelling to, a lot of that money was also spent in smaller local businesses – cafes, restaurants and others.”**

## Improving accessibility in Darwin

The City of Darwin was an early adopter of micromobility. Darwin was the second Australian city to implement a rental e-scooter program when it launched Neuron’s e-scooters in January 2020. The service has been extremely well received, partly due to the hot and humid climate in the city. Riders have cumulatively travelled over 3.5 million km since launch. Many of our riders use our e-scooters to get to and from places that were previously mostly accessible by car.

### Darwin Waterfront

The Darwin Waterfront Precinct is a bayside development and tourist destination that comprises more than 25 places to eat, drink and shop as well as two popular swimming locations. Over the last three years, close to 360,000 Neuron e-scooter trips were started from the historic maritime hub.

### In Financial Year 2021-2022:

- **27% of all trips in the city** started or ended at Darwin Waterfront
- Neuron riders spent an **estimated \$25 million<sup>1</sup>** at Darwin Waterfront businesses
- Trips starting at Darwin Waterfront increased by **4.3%** compared with 2020-2021

### Mindil Beach Markets

The Mindil Beach Markets host around 200 specialty stores and food vendors each Thursday and Sunday from May to October. Located 3.5km from the city centre, the must-have market experience for both residents and visitors was most often visited by car before the introduction of e-scooters.

### In the 2021 Market Season (April to October):

- Trips to and from Mindil Beach **increased by 55%** on market days
- Riders going to or from the markets made up **9% of daily trips** on Thursdays and **11%** on Sundays
- An estimated **17,000 car trips** were avoided by people riding to Mindil Markets on a Neuron vehicle instead

**“Neuron e-scooters are a bonus to the city, tourism and the community in general. Many people use e-scooters to make their way to the market, which means they can avoid the congestion of the car park,”** said Howard Halter, General Manager, Mindil Beach Sunset Market Association.

“Having the parking area, no-go and slow zones throughout the Market service area allows for a much safer event. We don’t have to worry about using our resources to police e-scooter use, which is a huge bonus.”



Darwin Waterfront



Mindil Beach Markets

<sup>1</sup> This figure was calculated using Darwin rider spending habits obtained via our 2021 September rider survey

# Expanding affordable transport options

## Helping commuters save on fuel

Car ownership and usage is quickly becoming financially difficult for millions of Australians, with many looking at new ways of travelling for some, or all, of their journeys.

Costs of living are soaring around the globe, and Australia has not been spared. In August 2022, the Australian Automobile Association (AAA) reported that Australian households spent a weekly average of \$100.39 on fuel between April and June 2022. This figure was an all-time high on its Transport Affordability Index and a 26.4% increase compared with the January to March 2022 period.

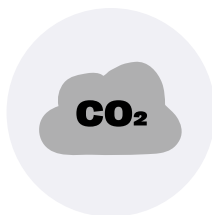
Many commuters are opting to leave their cars at home to avoid paying inflated prices for fuel in favour of affordable alternatives like public transport or e-scooters instead.

### According to our rider survey:



**46%**

of trips replaced a car journey



**1,553**

tonnes of CO<sup>2</sup> avoided

## Getting night-time economy workers around the city

Public transportation is a great way to get around the city without a car, but most bus and train routes don't run late into the night. Neuron e-scooters are available around the clock, providing a vital alternative.

The night-time economy is a key driver of business recovery in CBDs. A report commissioned by the Council of Capital City Lord Mayors observed strong year-on-year growth in night-time businesses from 2020 to 2021 in the food (10%), drink (5%) and entertainment (7%) sectors as Australia recovered from the worst effects of the pandemic, even as the return of office workers stalled.

Night-time economy workers, including those in the hospitality and healthcare sectors, are increasingly using e-scooters to get to and from their places of work instead of relying on their own cars or taxis.



### Our data shows:

**20%**

of trips happen between 10pm and 6am to support the night-time economy

**In Adelaide:**

**24%**

of trips that start and end at Royal Adelaide Hospital occur at night, especially between 10pm and 12am when healthcare workers' shift changes tend to occur



## Bridging public transport gaps

Even while public transport is in operation, not everyone lives near a bus stop or train station. Those who live in “transport deserts” may have limited opportunities and a reduced level of economic productivity due to poor access to public transport.

Our data allows us to detect and respond to higher demand by deploying more e-scooters where they are needed most, and can help make existing public transport networks in bigger cities like Melbourne easier to access.

### Our data shows:



**21%**  
of trips  
connected to  
public transport



**37%**  
of trips  
were for  
commuting

In smaller cities and their outer suburbs, some residents may have very limited or no public transport options at all. Our e-scooter programs can drastically improve accessibility, offering them a way to get to and from city centres without a car.

We have seen first-hand how residents can benefit from having access to e-scooters. In Rockhampton, we saw immediate benefits to local communities when our e-scooter service area expanded from a small area around the city centre into the suburbs in June 2022:

- Significant uplift in number of trips starting and ending in residential areas
- Average trip distance rose from **1.9km to 2.2km**
- Average trip duration increased from **12.58 minutes to 13.26 minutes**



*E-scooter trips ending around Rockhampton's city centre in the month prior to expansion (left) and since expansion (right)*

## Supporting sustainable urban living

### Reducing congestion and pollution, especially for large events

As a city grows, higher demand for transportation could lead to congestion and air pollution if managed poorly, which could reduce its liveability, accessibility and overall success.

Local governments have long recognised the cost of congestion and pollution, with many taking steps to counteract the effects. **Infrastructure Australia** estimates that road congestion and public transport crowding cost the Australian economy \$19 billion in 2016, and this figure is projected to more than double to \$39.8 billion by 2031 if future infrastructure investment does not keep pace with demand.

Even as the authorities adopt measures to mitigate congestion, public transport networks may be strained by periodic spikes in demand, particularly during large-scale events.

E-scooter programs are another way cities can spread out the load and prevent sudden influxes of traffic on the roads, making a city more attractive to investors and event organisers while ensuring it remains comfortable and convenient for those who live and work there.



## Keeping Melbourne moving

Melbourne, considered the events capital of Australia, hosts some of the country’s largest sporting, arts and cultural events. Since launching our e-scooter program in February 2022, we have actively partnered with the city’s event organisers to provide a new option for travel and helped ease public transport demands and traffic congestion.

A notable example is the **Australian Grand Prix** which has been held in Melbourne every year since 1996, except in 2020 and 2021 due to COVID-19. When it made a comeback in April 2022, the event attracted record-breaking crowds.

The event led to an unprecedented number of trips on Neuron e-scooters. Melbourne recorded the most trips taken on a single day in any city across our global operations, with a massive 8,800 trips on race day.

The record was broken a few months later with over 8,900 trips taken on the day of the **AFL Grand Final**. Coinciding with the big game, Melbourne also held the **2022 Footy Festival** at Yarra Park outside of the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG).

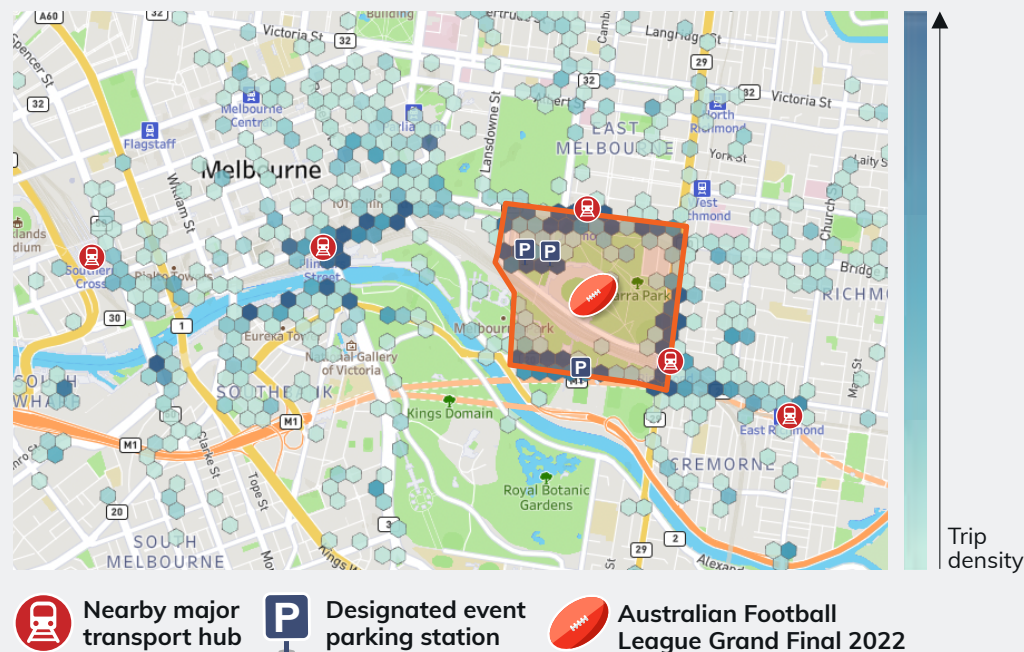
During the two events, our e-scooters provided a convenient way for people to travel to and from the festivities or connect to public transport.

- **8% of trips** in Melbourne during the Footy Festival started or ended at the MCG precinct
- **55% of trips** connecting to the MCG precinct started or ended at a train station

- On the day of the Grand Final, there were **more than twice as many e-scooter trips** during the **two hours before and after the game**, compared with the same hours on the previous Saturday

We also worked with the organisers of both events to implement temporary no-riding, no-parking and slow zones as well as preferred parking locations to ensure participants’ safety. Our Safety Ambassadors were also on the ground carrying out safety briefings to promote responsible riding behaviour.

*Heat map of trips taken to and from the AFL Grand Final and Footy Festival at the MCG precinct from 22 to 24 September 2022*





# Investing in future growth

## Creating jobs and training opportunities

In an age of increasing digitalisation, there is great demand for talent with skills in areas like data science and programming as well as familiarity with emerging technologies and innovations.

As a responsible micromobility operator, we are focused on delivering long-term benefits for our cities and their people. Part of this effort includes building a strong, highly skilled workforce across the country.

Our operations have created hundreds of high-quality job opportunities to date, which have allowed local residents to gain new skills in emerging fields and future-proof themselves for the digital economy. For instance, some of our staff with previous experience as drivers and mechanics have upgraded their skills and taken on roles like electric vehicle maintenance and data analysis.

We are also an equal opportunity employer and we work closely with organisations like **Workskil Australia**, **Blind Citizens Australia**, the **Killara Foundation** and **Recovery Your Way** to create employment pathways for people from a diverse range of backgrounds.

### Queensland Economic Advocacy Solutions says:

**“Neuron Mobility is estimated to have created and supported 681 Brisbane-based jobs in 2021-22,”** said the QEAS report.

The figure consists of 80 people directly employed by Neuron and 35 jobs indirectly created by Neuron in its supply chain businesses, as well as an estimated 566 jobs enabled and supported by the economic activity generated by Neuron’s e-scooter operations.

Assuming a 20% annual uplift in riders over and above existing business-as-usual growth, QEAS projected that Neuron’s job contributions in Brisbane could rise to **2,331 jobs by 2026-2027**.



## Natasha Noakes

At Neuron, we believe people with a range of different abilities can take on key roles in the workplace. This is exemplified by our Warehouse Support Technician and Safety Ambassador, Natasha Noakes.

Tash has been a popular and valuable member of our warehouse team in Darwin since April 2022 and is in charge of repairing and servicing e-scooters and e-bikes. She also educates riders on safety and responsible riding during our ScootSafe™ events.

We connected with Tash, a Merranunggu Wagiman woman who was born with a disability that limited movement in her legs, through our partnership with Recovery Your Way.

**“When I was provided with the opportunity from Neuron, I was really happy to see that the company was looking for opportunities for people with disabilities, and I was grateful they gave me a chance,”** Tash said.

**“They have kept me on track with what I want to do as a mechanic, and have allowed me to progress and keep reaching my full potential.”**





## Conclusion:

# Partnering with cities to create a prosperous future

We've received tremendously positive feedback from local businesses, riders and our council partners. We're proud of the impact we've made in Australia since we launched in August 2019, but there's so much more we still want to do.

As we continue to expand, we plan to:



**Bring more customers to local businesses** by setting up virtual parking stations nearby, collaborating on promotions and expanding our Neighbourhood Connect program



**Bolster local transport networks** by tailoring our services to better serve the needs and movement habits of local workers and residents



**Help ensure large events run smoothly** by working with organisers to anticipate and cater to increased demand and traffic from participants and visitors



**Promote tourism in our cities** by working with more local destinations so visitors and tourists can do more, and spend more, at key attractions, businesses and economic zones



**Give more locals the chance to level up** by working closely with organisations to support more people with disabilities with employment and skills upgrading opportunities





We are driven to help the world build a more prosperous and sustainable future through new ways of moving and connecting.

[www.rideneuron.com](http://www.rideneuron.com)

