

SALEM-KEIZER AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY'S METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION SAFETY ACTION PLAN

SPRING 2023 OUTREACH SURVEY SUMMARY

Prepared for:

Salem-Keizer Area Transportation Study MPO



Prepared by:

JLA Public Involvement



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction..... 2

 Project Overview 2

 Overall Participation and Notifications 2

Online Open House 3

 Key Takeaways..... 3

 Survey Results..... 4

 Comment Map 12

 Demographics..... 14

Focus Groups..... 18

 Key Takeaways..... 18

Appendix A: ZIP Codes 20

Appendix B: Focus group participants 21

INTRODUCTION

Project Overview

The jurisdictions in the SKATS MPO wish to develop a Metropolitan Transportation Safety Action Plan (MTSAP) that will evaluate crash data in the MPO area using a data driven approach, understand the multi-modal safety issues in the area, develop safety goals, recommended strategies and actions to reduce fatal and serious injury crashes for all modes of travel, and establish safety performance measures to help monitor implementation of strategies and crash countermeasures.

Feedback from the online open house and community meetings will inform the development of the draft MTSAP. The project team will present the final draft plan in a second online open house in summer of 2024. A second online open house will be available for the community to share their feedback. A final MTSAP is planned to be adopted in by September 2024. Key recommendations from the final MTSAP will be incorporated into the next update of the SKATS Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP).

Overall Participation and Notifications

796 community members participated in the online survey (including five [5] from the Spanish-language version of the survey site). Of those 796 participants, 254 shared their stories about transportation safety concerns and experiences in the open-ended prompt. During the online open house, 1,166 comments were collected on the Safety Concern Comment Map. The MPO also hosted three (3) focus group meetings with a total of twenty-one (21) participants.

The project team informed the community about the online open house through the following outreach efforts:

- 30,000 full-color postcards (in both English and Spanish) mailed to residential households, with oversampling of Census Tracts of lower-income populations and higher minority populations within the MPO area
- Stories about the study and open house in four area newspapers: Statesman Journal, Keizer Times, Salem Reporter (online paper) and Westside News
- Half-page ads in two local area newspapers: Westside News, Keizer Times
- Radio interview on KМУZ that was broadcast 3 times and posted on their podcast.
- Created eight 1-minute videos featuring Mayor of Salem, Mayor of Keizer, three Salem city councilors, two transit district board members, and one school board member to promote the MTSAP open house and ask persons to share their views. Two of the videos were in Spanish
- Posted the videos and static image information about the open house to Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Nextdoor, LinkedIn.
- Emails sent to key stakeholders
- Open House information shared in Community Newsletters (e.g. City of Salem's "Salem Connection")
- Persons completing the survey were entered in a drawing to win one of ten \$25 VISA gift cards.

ONLINE OPEN HOUSE

SKATS and JLA hosted the online open house from March 8 to April 5, 2023. The purpose of the online open house and survey was to share information about the project and to understand the community's experience and safety concerns when travelling in the Salem-Keizer area whether driving, walking, biking, and rolling. The online open house included project information, a survey, and an interactive comment map. Below is a summary of the key takeaways and survey results.

Key Takeaways from the Survey

- **Top four concerns:** Safety at intersections, speeding, distracted driving, and safety while walking/rolling.
- **People were split on whether they feel safe walking/rolling.** (33% feel safe or very safe, 42% said they feel unsafe or not safe at all, and 12% feel neither safe nor unsafe)
- **People feel unsafe riding a bicycle** (52% feel unsafe compared to 10% feel safe). 28% said they do not bicycle at all.
- **People feel unsafe crossing a busy intersection when walking/biking/rolling.** The majority (65%) feel somewhat unsafe or not safe
- **People generally feel safe when driving or riding in a vehicle:** 66% feel safe/very safe compared to 19% unsafe.
- **People generally feel safe riding the bus but were split about their level of safety about getting to and waiting for transit.**
- **People feel unsafe traveling through intersections.** (52% unsafe versus 27% safe).
- **People feel unsafe when traveling at night (53% unsafe) and during bad weather (60% unsafe).**
- **Top four potential strategies:** Proved sidewalks where there are none, more enhanced crosswalks, make intersections safe for everyone, and more bike lanes or separated bike paths.

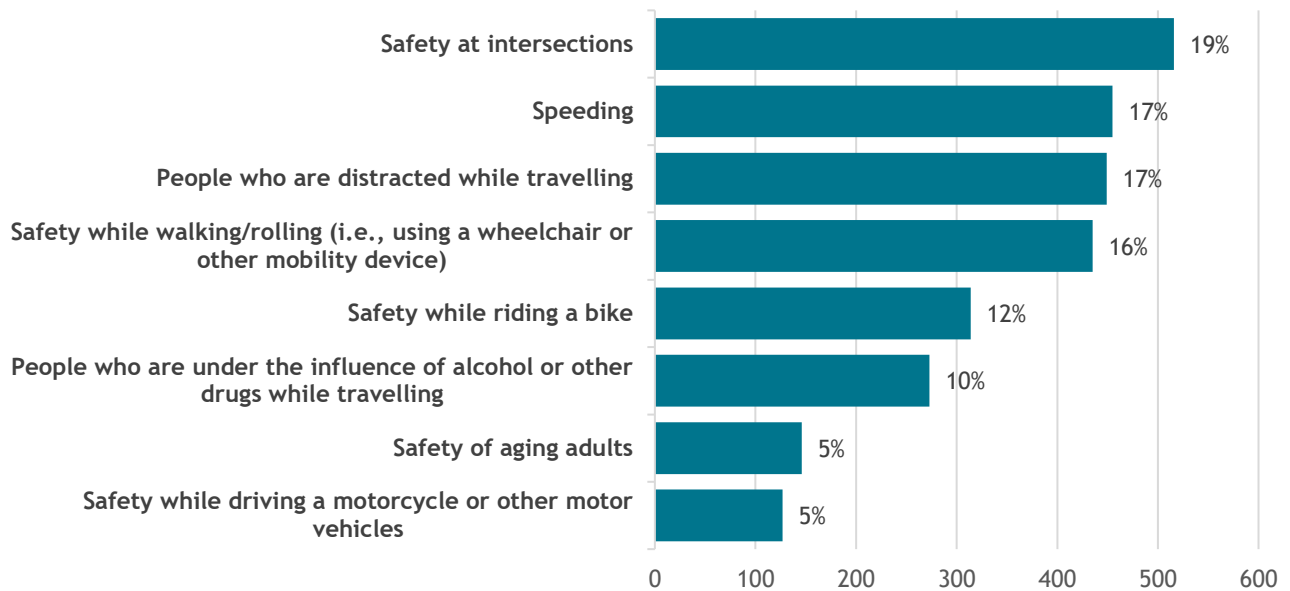
Survey Results

796 community members participated in the online open house, which includes five (5) participants for the Spanish online open house. The survey had 14 questions, plus an opportunity to share a personal story about transportation safety in the Salem-Keizer area. Below is a summary of the responses to the online survey questions.

1. Of the following focus areas, which are most important to you? (Please choose your top 4.)

Based on the results (see chart below), the following four focus areas are considered most important to the survey participants:

1. Safety at intersections.
2. Speeding.
3. People who are distracted while travelling.
4. Safety while walking/rolling (i.e., using a wheelchair or other mobility device).

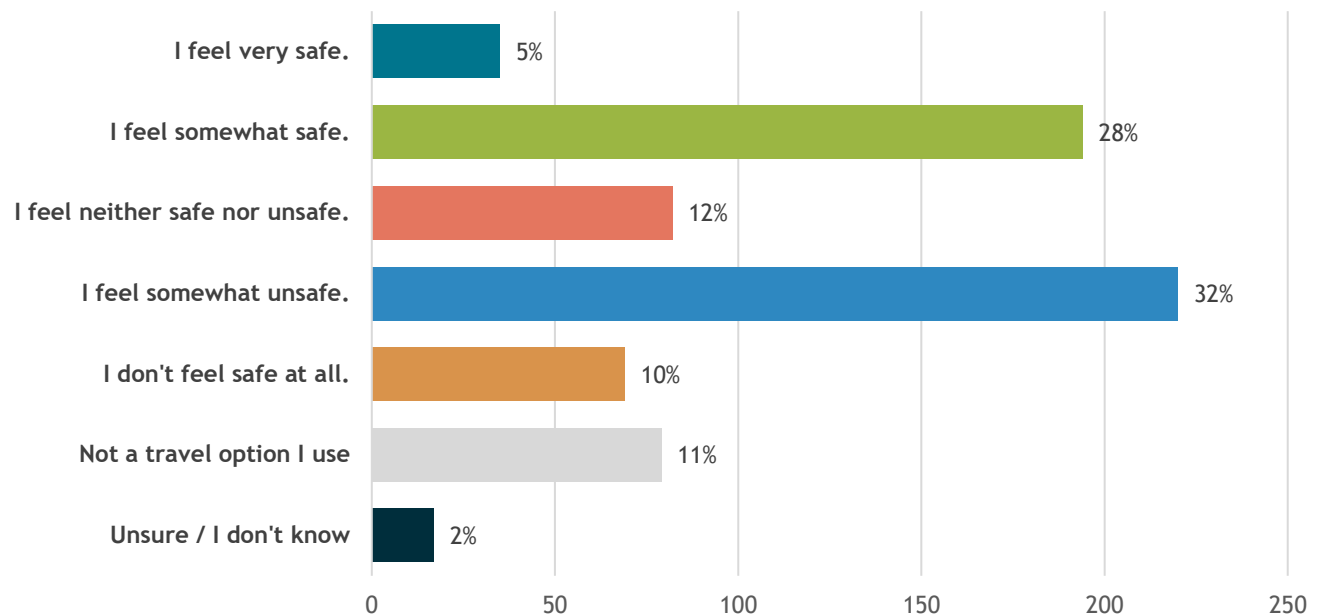


2. Is there another focus area you think should be addressed? If so, please describe.

307 participants responded. Some of the main themes from participants include **improving safety in school zones** or for school-aged children who are walking, **specific location improvements**, **increase law enforcement**, requests to **improve user behavior**, and request for **safety/driver education**. Some respondents mentioned confrontations with people experiencing homelessness. Many of the open-ended comments reinforced the given choices in the first question. One participant wrote, "If you design streets for the most vulnerable, safety will improve for all users." For a full list of comments, see data appendix in separate Excel spreadsheet.

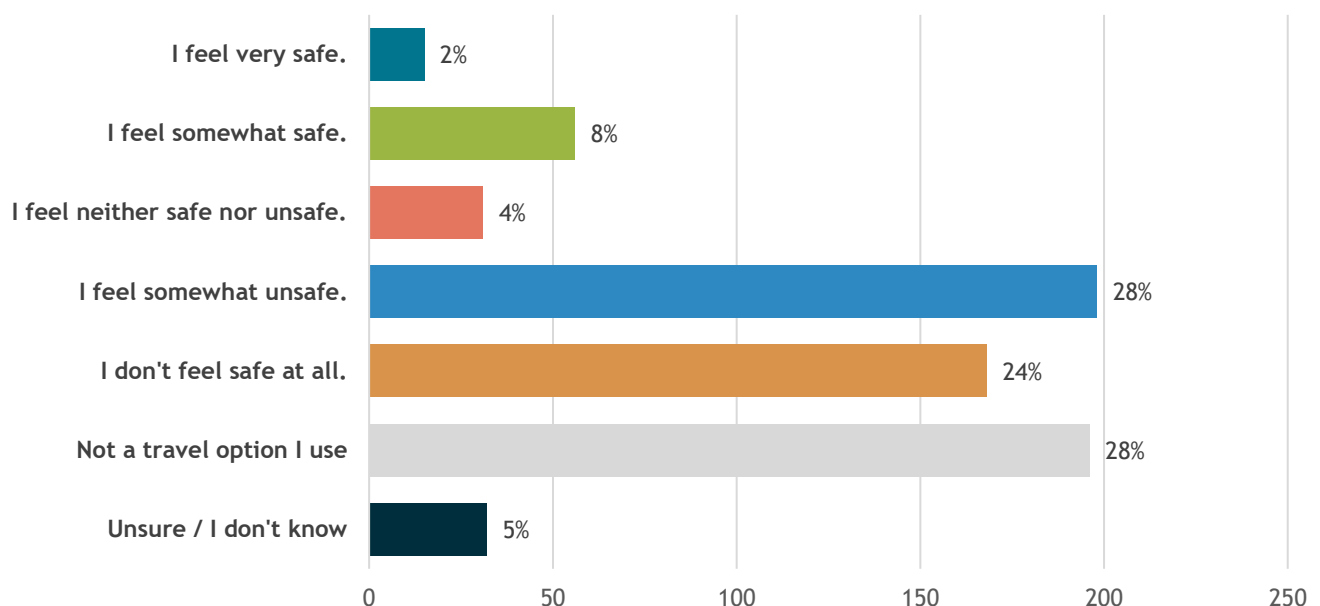
3. When you or others are travelling, how safe do you feel when walking/rolling?

The majority feel somewhat unsafe while walking or rolling (32%) and others said they feel somewhat safe (28%). Eleven percent (11%) said they do not walk or roll for travelling around the Salem-Keizer area.



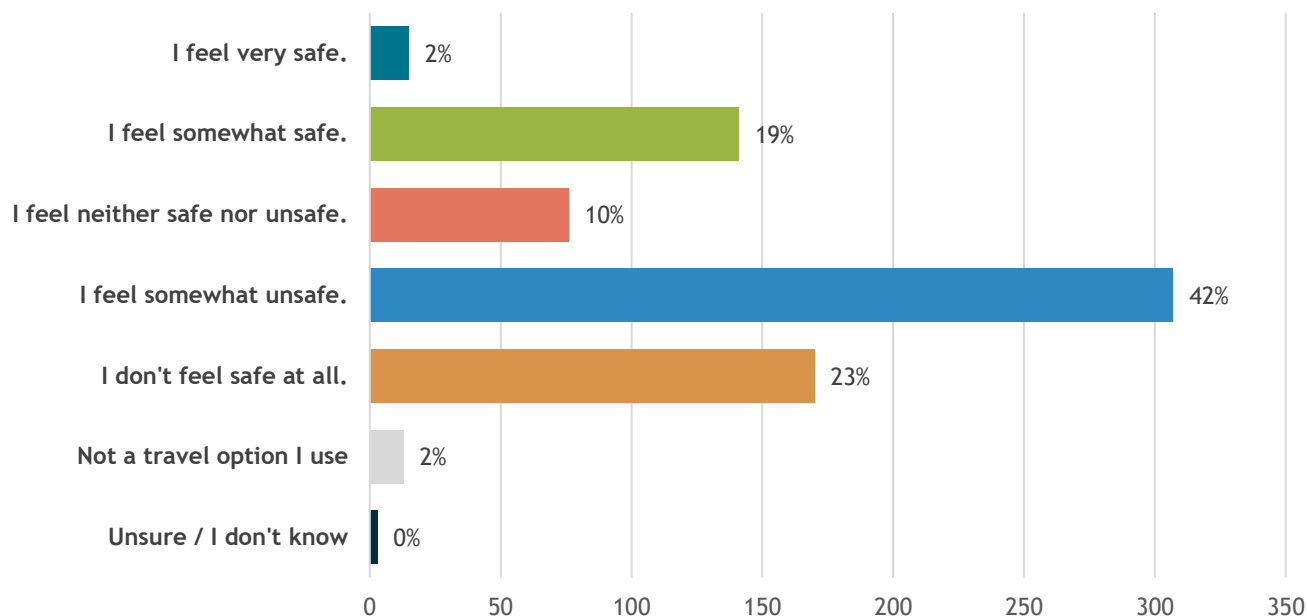
4. When you or others are travelling, how safe do you feel when riding a bicycle?

The majority (52%) feel somewhat unsafe or don't feel safe at all while riding a bicycle. Twenty-eight (28%) said they do not bike to travel around the Salem-Keizer area.



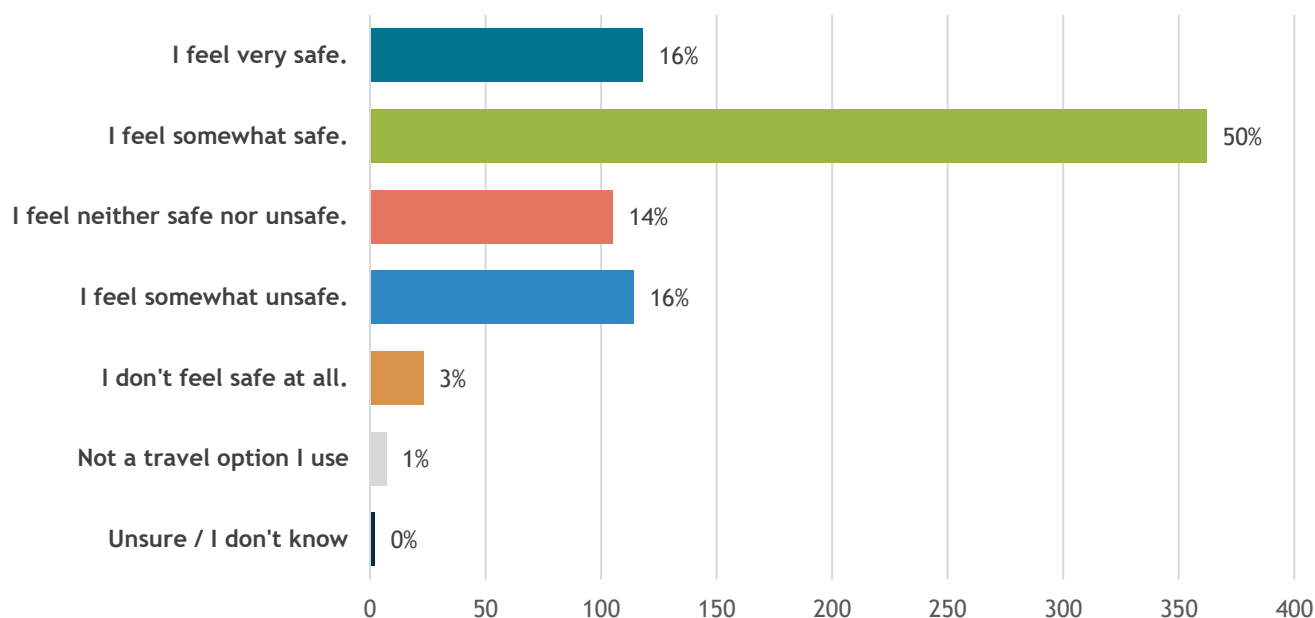
5. When you or others are travelling, how safe do you feel when crossing a busy street when walking, biking, or rolling?

The majority (65%) feel somewhat unsafe or not safe at all when crossing a busy street when walking, biking, or rolling.



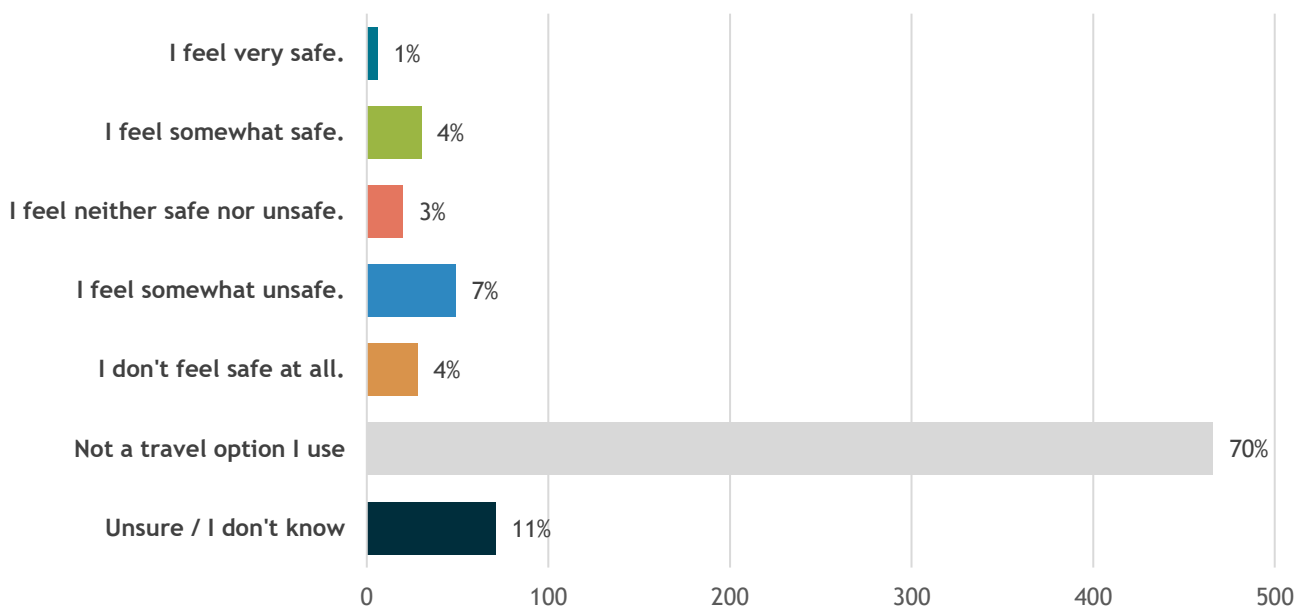
6. When you or others are travelling, how safe do you feel when driving or travelling in a vehicle?

The majority feel somewhat safe or very safe (66%) while driving or travelling in a vehicle.



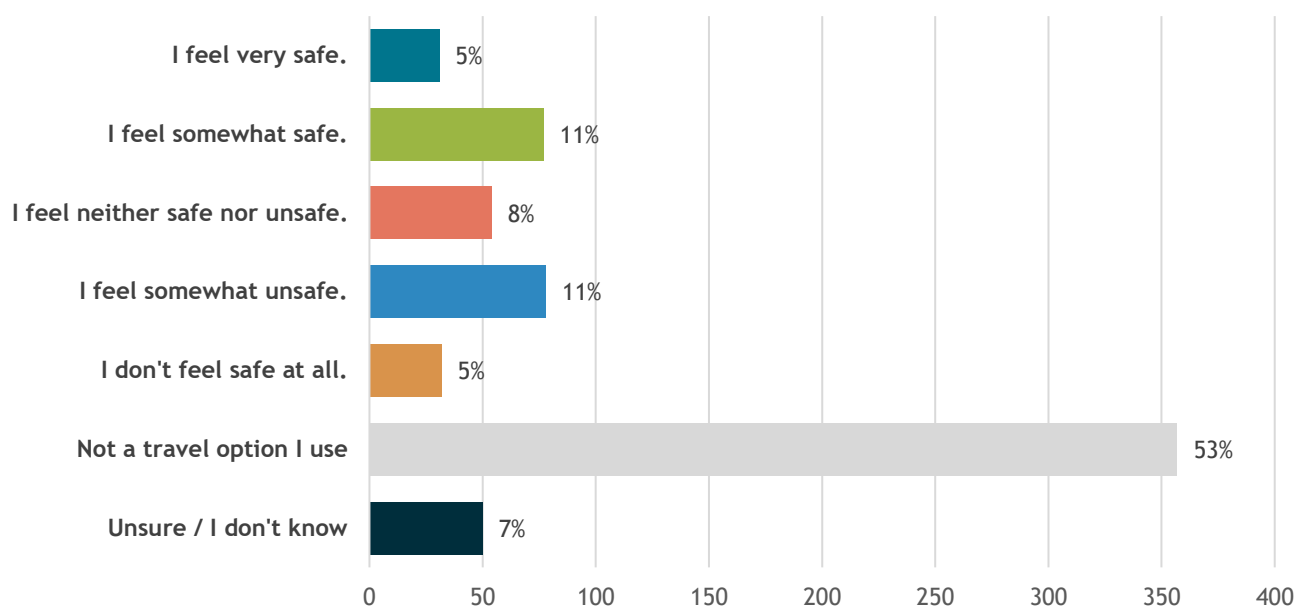
7. When you or others are travelling, how safe do you feel when driving or riding on a motorcycle?

The majority (70%) do not use a motorcycle for travelling. Of those who do, there were mixed results of feeling safe or unsafe while driving or riding a motorcycle.



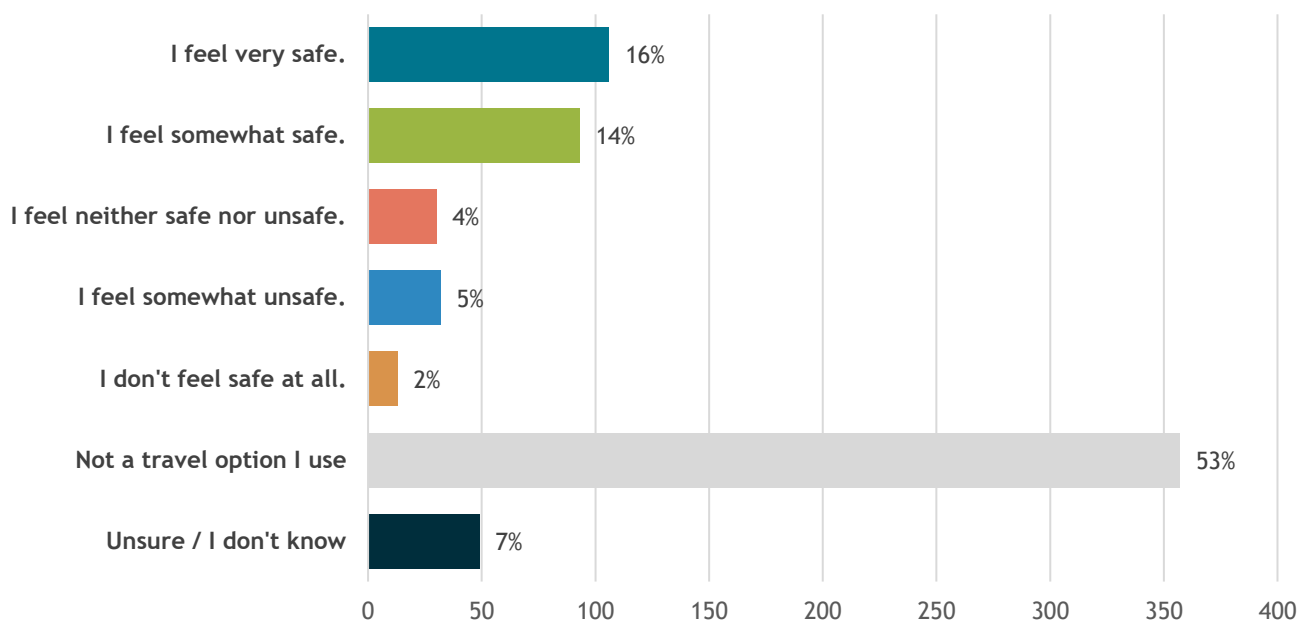
8. When you or others are travelling, how safe do you feel when getting to and waiting for transit?

The majority (53%) do not use transit as a travel option. Of those who do, there were mixed results of feeling safe or unsafe when getting to and waiting for transit.



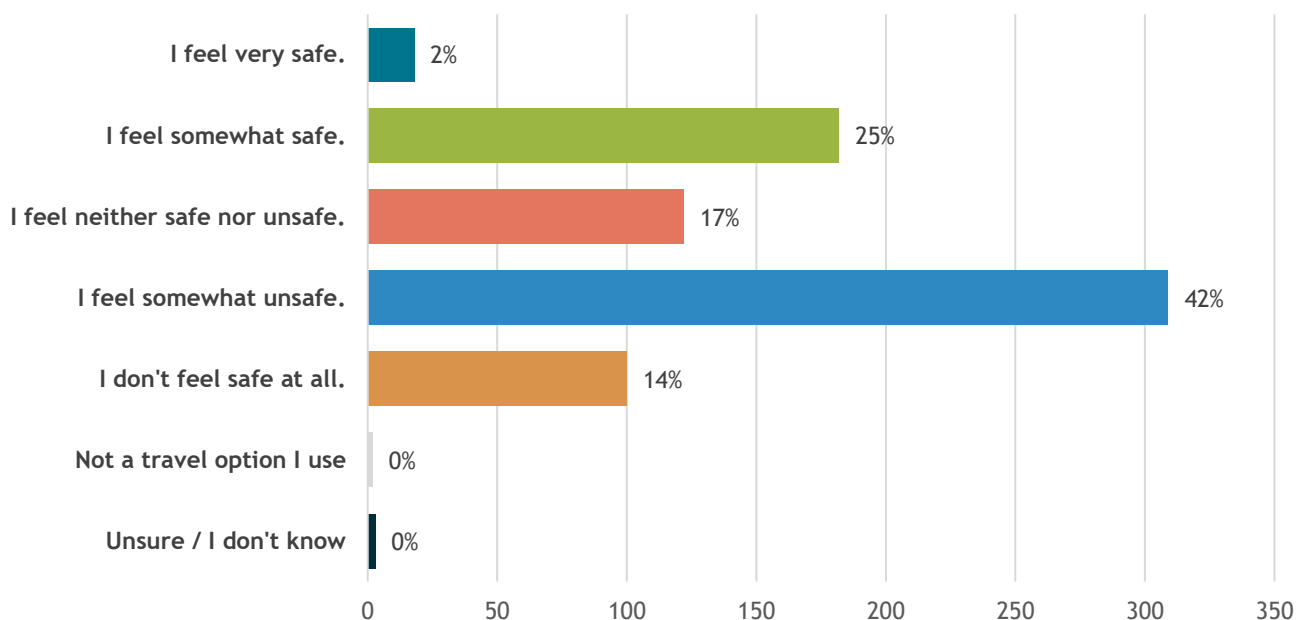
9. When you or others are travelling, how safe do you feel when riding in a transit vehicle?

The majority (53%) do not use transit as a travel option. Of those who do, most feel very safe or somewhat safe (30%).



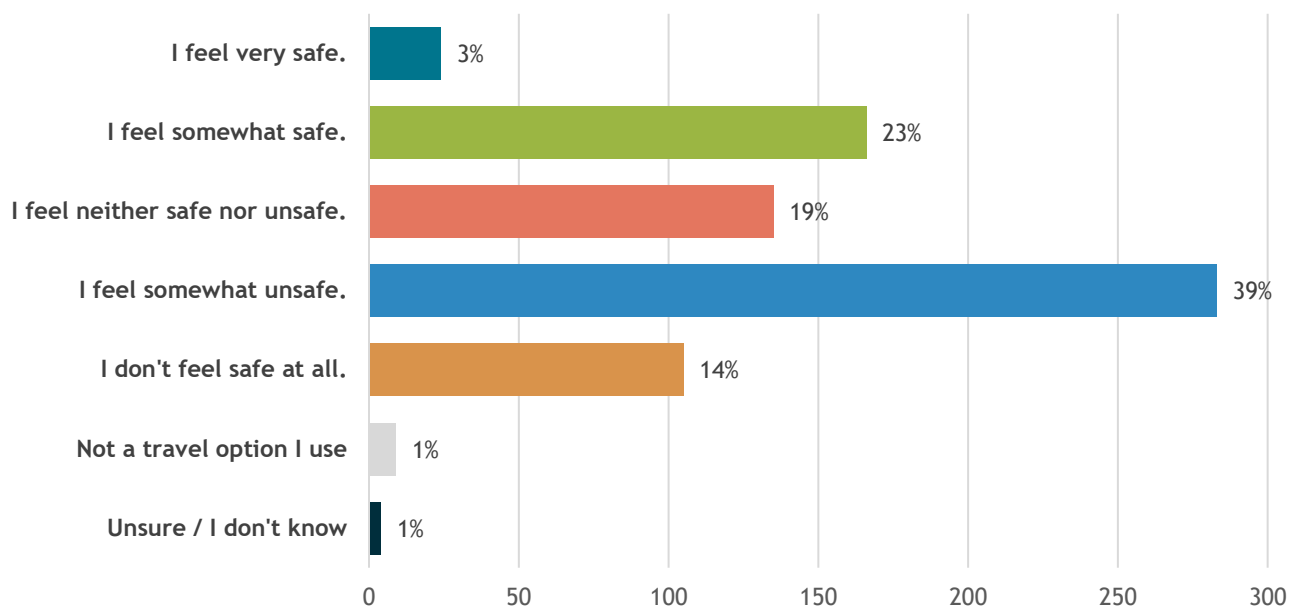
10. When you or others are travelling, how safe do you feel when travelling through intersections?

The majority (56%) feel somewhat unsafe or not safe at all when travelling through intersections.



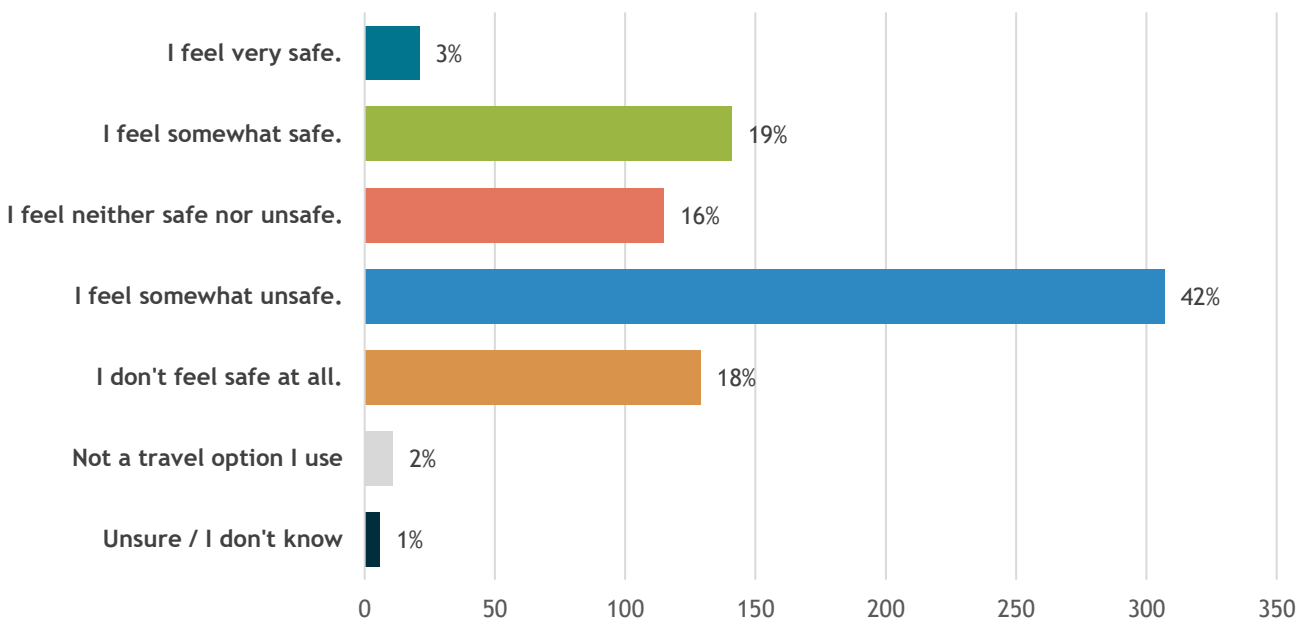
11. When you or others are travelling, how safe do you feel when travelling at night?

The majority (53%) feel somewhat unsafe or not safe at all when travelling at night.



12. When you or others are travelling, how safe do you feel when travelling during bad weather?

The majority (60%) feel somewhat unsafe or not safe at all when travelling during bad weather.



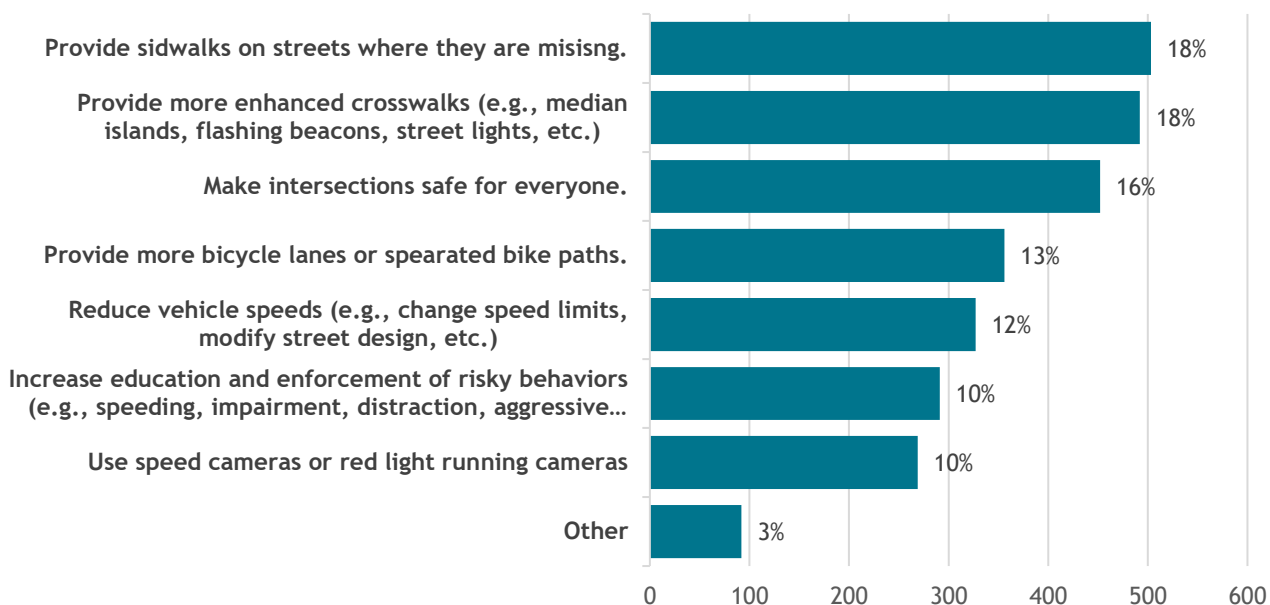
13. When thinking about safety, which potential strategies should be prioritized?

Please choose your top 4. (Seven choices given plus “other”)

Overall, the following four focus areas are considered most important to the survey participants:

1. Provide sidewalks on streets where they are missing.
2. Provide more enhanced crosswalks.
3. Make intersections safe for everyone.
4. Provide more bicycle lanes or separated bike paths.

For those who selected “other” (92 responses), some of the responses included **improved maintenance** and **removal of debris**, **road improvements** (e.g., striping, lighting), installment of **traffic control facilities** (e.g., speed bumps, traffic circles), **driver education**, and improved **visibility**. Many of the responses reflected support for the given options. For a full list of comments, see data appendix in separate Excel spreadsheet. Note for graph below



14. Do you have anything else to add?

Of the 293 responses, the following themes arose. For a full list of comments, see data appendix in separate Excel spreadsheet and **Appendix A** to this report.

Several people mentioned needing **additional time to use crosswalks** – especially for families travelling with kids and the elderly. Many people commented on the need to **reduce speeding**, especially in neighborhoods and near schools. Many people suggested **increasing law enforcement** of traffic laws and ticketing for speeding as a solution. Others expressed desire to **improve safety in school zones**.

Many people expressed interest in complete networks for those who are walking and biking such as **pedestrian crossing improvements, more sidewalks, and protected bike lanes**. Maintenance of bike lanes was also noted as a concern.

Other comments included desire for additional driver education, improvements to street infrastructure (e.g., red light cameras, flashing speed limit signs, speed bumps, more lighting, re-painting striping), trim vegetation to increase visibility, and addressing traffic congestion.

MPO staff did a deeper analysis of the responses to this survey question, assigning from 1 to 3 categories for each response. Categories included Enforcement, Infrastructure needs, Speeding, Unsafe Driving, etc. This analysis is provided as an **Appendix A** to this report, with a summary of the analysis and the comments grouped by these categories. By reading the groups of comments for each category, we get a better understanding of the transportation concerns, opinions and suggestions expressed in their own words. A few of these comments are shown in the boxes on this page

Quotes from the participants

“The intersection near the Broadway and MLK parkway has been deemed unsafe for the blind. Perhaps put a yield to pedestrians on red sign.”

“I have had vehicles pull around corners while I am crossing with my children (when it is our right of way). I have had to teach my children to NEVER trust the crosswalks.”

Quotes from the participants cont.

“I’m excited that this effort might bring more equity in how we spend transportation funds. Most dollars go to vehicle transportation (because it is the most expensive way to travel on the ground). It’s unfair to those who can’t afford a car to spend such a disproportionate amount of funding on vehicular transportation.”

Speeding on regular city streets and on the highways (including I-5) has gotten out of control-there seems to be no enforcement anymore and the majority of drivers are not only not following speed limits but are aggressively speeding well over the limits at all times-even in neighborhoods & school zones; it needs to get under control.

15. We want to make sure that the MTSAP reflects how you drive, walk, bike and roll in the Salem-Keizer area. Would you be willing to share a story about a time you or someone you know felt unsafe (or experienced unsafe conditions) while getting around the Salem-Keizer area and/or why improving transportation safety in the Salem-Keizer area is important to you? Please tell us your story.

234 participants shared their stories. Below are the major themes:

- Speeding is a problem.
- Need (various) pedestrian infrastructure improvements/missing sidewalks.
- People bike/walk even though it feels unsafe/dangerous.
- Story about walking and being almost struck by a vehicle.
- Reckless or distracted drivers is a problem; a few noted intoxicated drivers.
- Road rage or aggressive driving behavior is a problem.

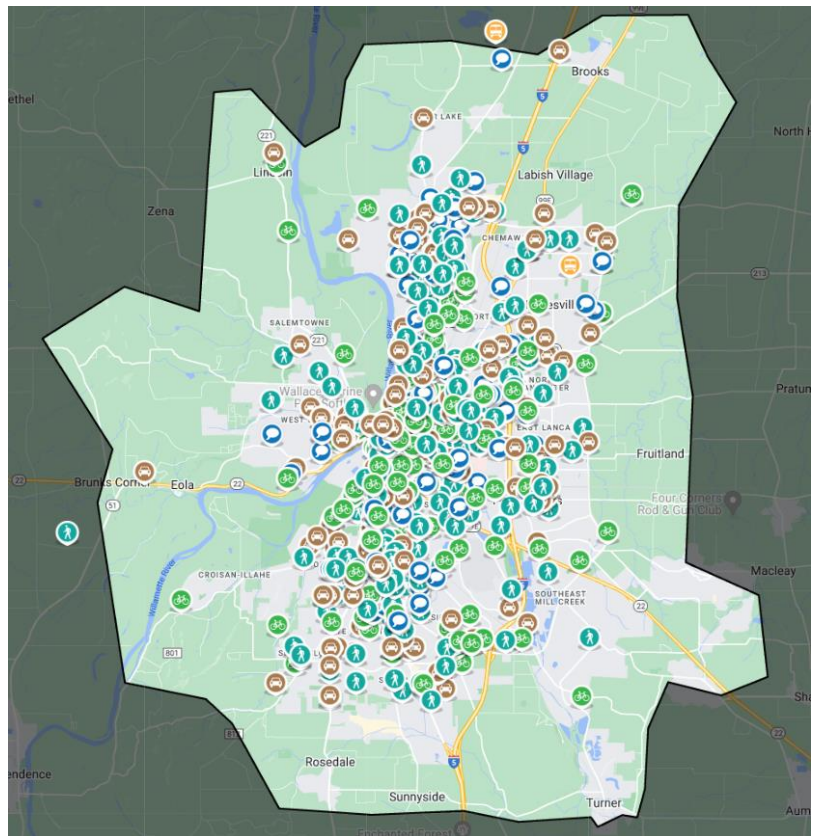
Comment Map

The open house also included the comment map (see below) where participants could select a geographic location and a category then write a comment or state an area of concern. During the open house, 1,166 comments were collected from 384 persons..

Of the over 1100 comments on the map, more than a third (39%) were about walking (see graph below). **Based on the majority of comments, people do not feel safe travelling on bike or walking due to high speeds, aggressive drivers, and poor conditions or overall lack of active transportation infrastructure (bike lanes, sidewalks, and crossings).** Below is a summary of other major themes by categories.

Walking

The majority are interested in more sidewalks and crosswalk improvements (such more marked crosswalks and flashing lights to improve safety). There were also several comments that these infrastructure improvements are needed in school zone areas. Others mentioned uneven sidewalks that need maintenance.



Many people mentioned speeding as a major safety concern when walking, and others cited drivers not yielding to pedestrians who are using a crosswalk. Other infrastructure improvements include requests for more night lighting, stop signs, speed bumps, road diets, and various traffic calming measures.

Biking

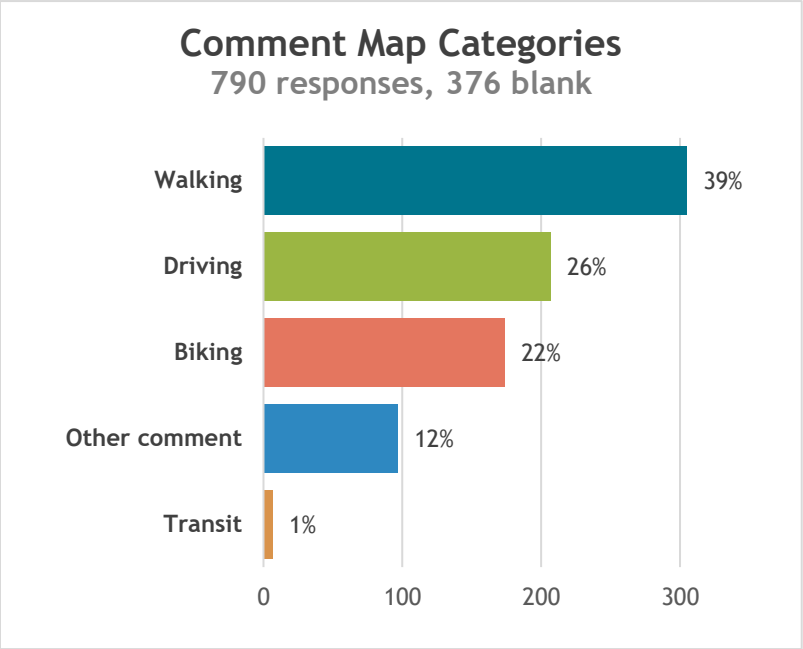
The major request from those who travel by bike is to add more bike routes. Many people expressed not having a safe route from their home to frequented areas of town for shopping, work, etc. Others mentioned bike lanes suddenly ending, making the last leg of the trip unsafe. There were also many comments about feeling unsafe due to fast-moving cars with little or no barriers between them as well as experiencing aggressive driving behavior that feels unwelcoming.

Many people mentioned debris in the bike lanes that causes extra wear and tear on their bikes – many stated they move into the car lane to avoid debris. Other comments included adding more striping, green paint, and sharrows to make bike lanes and routes more prominent. Several mentioned moments of feeling unsafe when they were either almost hit by a car or a driver merged into the bike lane to take right turns.

Driving

Many people noted speeding as a major safety concern, especially around parks and in school zones. Several suggested that the wide roads encourage speeding. Others requested more stop signs at intersections that do not have any, and many people noted stop lights are too short and encourage drivers to run red lights or slam on their brakes. Several people want more visibility and additional street lighting. Traffic calming measures, such as speed bumps and roundabouts, were mentioned frequently. Additionally, many people commented that making left turns and merging across lanes onto interstates/highways can be difficult at many intersections. Several requested changes to traffic signal timing to make crossing intersections easier.

Screenshot of Safety Concern Map with collected comments.



Quotes from the participants

- ❖ “I live less than a mile from this post office, but often choose to drive rather than walk because of how busy the street is with such low vision.”
- ❖ “We need a safe way to get north from downtown Salem to the community college, Roberts HS, the B&G Club, etc. by bike. [...] Fisher St runs parallel and adding a marked bike lane [...] would improve access [...], particularly for underrepresented groups who rely on bicycles for transportation.”
- ❖ “Commercial Street is like this huge walking barrier in South Salem that makes walking any E/W route very hard. There are few places to cross and every one of them makes me feel like I am risking my life. It is like a freeway splitting South Salem.”

Taking transit

Transit was commented on less frequently and there were no major themes. A few specific requests from participants include a request to return the “D” Street Bus route, add sidewalks to both sides of the street from bus stop on Pringle/Fairview to the WESD, and add a Cherriots bus stop on Route 5 for North Salem High School and Parrish Middle School students. Other comments were related to traffic congestion (not necessarily about transit specifically).

Specific locations

Comments on specific intersections were vast and varied. There were no intersections that stood out more than another; however, Commercial and Liberty were the most frequent corridors mentioned across all categories. Additional locations include 24th Street, Broadway Street, Cherry Avenue, Front Street, High Street, and Winter Street (for those who are biking), Center Street, D Street, Market Street, Pringle Road, Ratcliff Drive, and State Street (for those that are walking), and Kuebler Boulevard, Silverton Road, and 12th Street (for those that are driving). A sample of other location specific comments include:

- The bike signal at Chemeketa and 12th Street is very responsive and helps people cross a high-speed corridor.
- 24th Street (between Center and State) is a main bike connection that needs bike infrastructure.
- The bridge on Cordon Road over Highway 22E isn’t safe for people who are biking and needs improvements.
- The bike route on Ellis Avenue is not protected with stop signs and needs a 2-way stop to allow for bike traffic flow.
- D street is a main bike route that doesn’t have bike lanes or facilities.
- Winter Street is a bikeway but poorly maintained.
- 17th Street and Chemeketa Street and 17th Street and Nebraska Avenue need safety improvements for those who are walking.
- The corner of Biegler Lane and Madrona Avenue needs sidewalks, better lighting, more visibility, bike lanes.
- Commercial Street needs more crosswalks and sidewalks to help people walk from their neighborhoods to stores.
- Park Avenue and Silverton Road needs lighting for people who walk there frequently.
- Union Street is a major pedestrian corridor and needs infrastructure improvements.
- Add signage at Liberty Street and Front Street to help drivers avoid going straight into one-way traffic.
- Convert 2-way stop to 4-way stop at Morningside Drive and Bluff Avenue.
- Browning Avenue has a bus stop for school kids that could be improved. It has no shoulder, lighting, or sidewalks.

Demographics

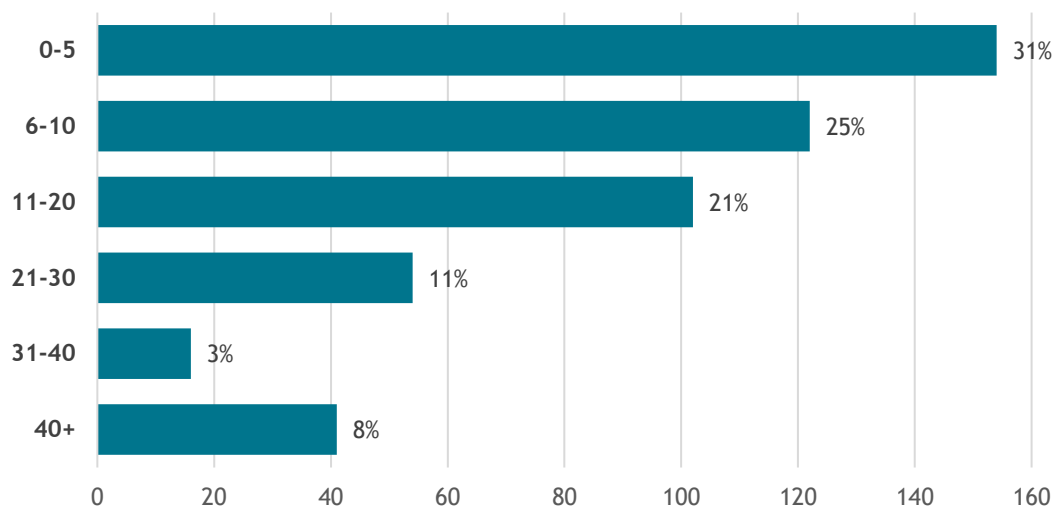
The following section contains information about the participants’ demographics. This section was labeled optional. Therefore, it does not contain demographics for all participants, but rather only those who submitted demographic data. Approximately 62% of all participants submitted demographic data.

What is the ZIP code of your primary residence?

The majority (62%) live in 97302 or 97301, which are the zip codes with the largest populations in the MPO area.. See [Appendix A](#) for a full list of ZIP codes.

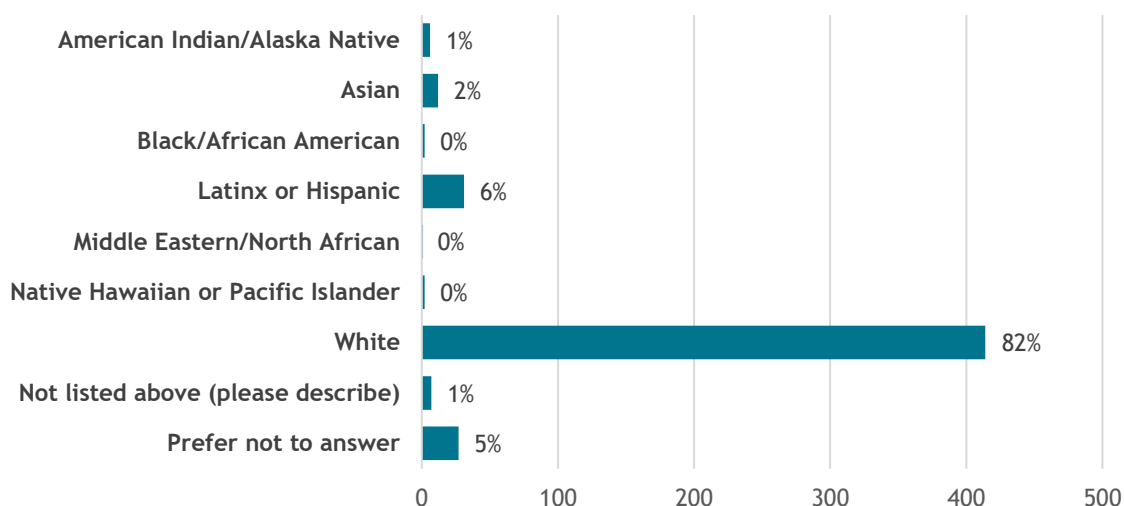
During a typical weekday, how many miles do you drive?

The majority (56%) drive between 0-10 miles each day.



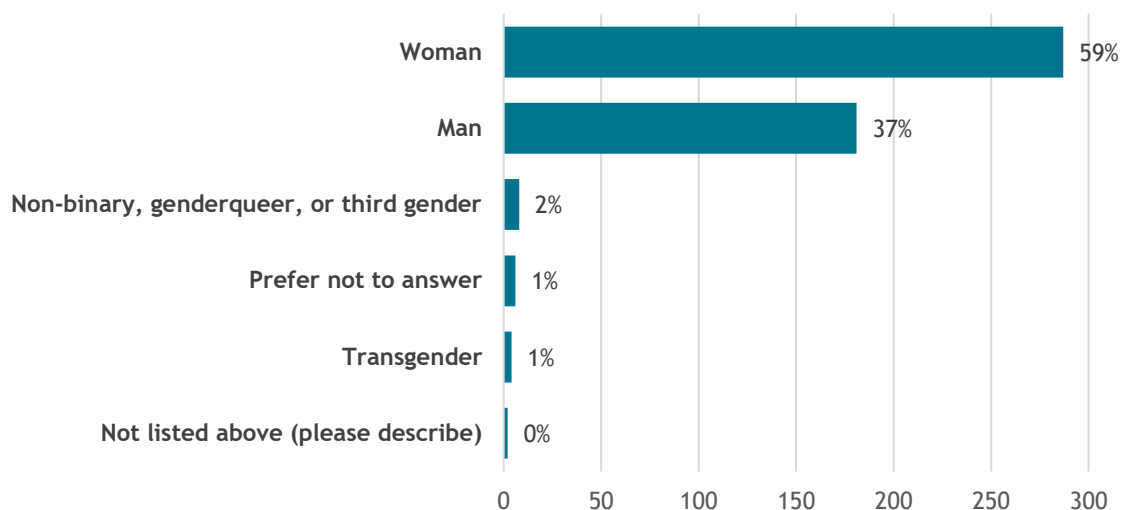
With what racial or ethnic group do you most closely identify? (Select all that apply)

The majority (82%) identified as White. Of those who selected “Not listed above,” they answered: Bicultural (Hispanic/Anglo), Half Asian American Half White, Caucasian and European, Mixed, Chicano/ indigenous, Native North American, and Oregonian.



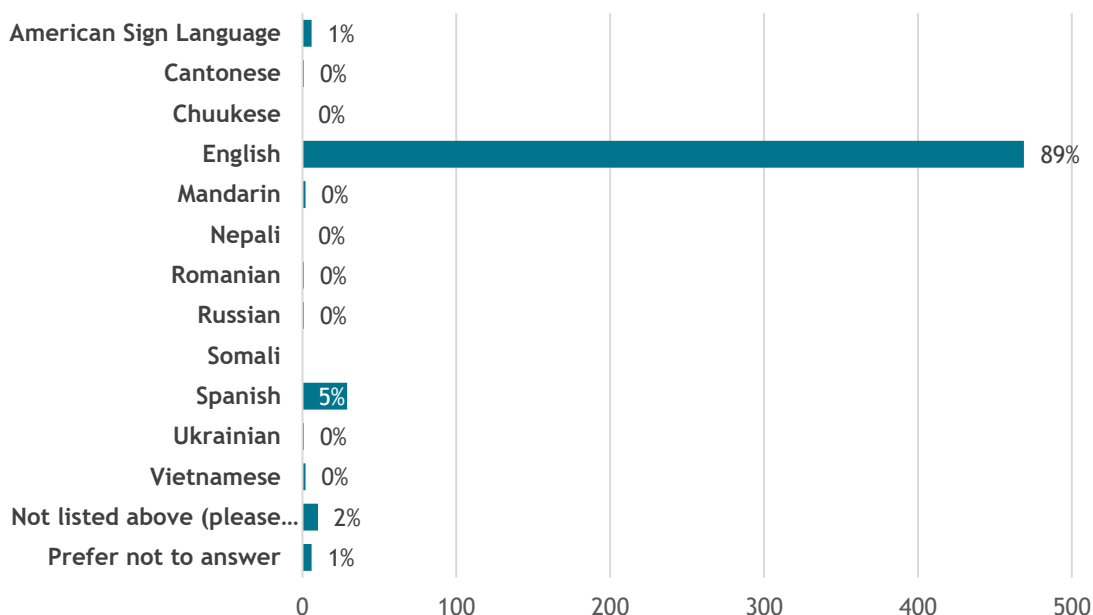
How do you identify your gender?

The majority (59%) identified as a woman. Of those who said “Not listed above,” they answered gender questioning.



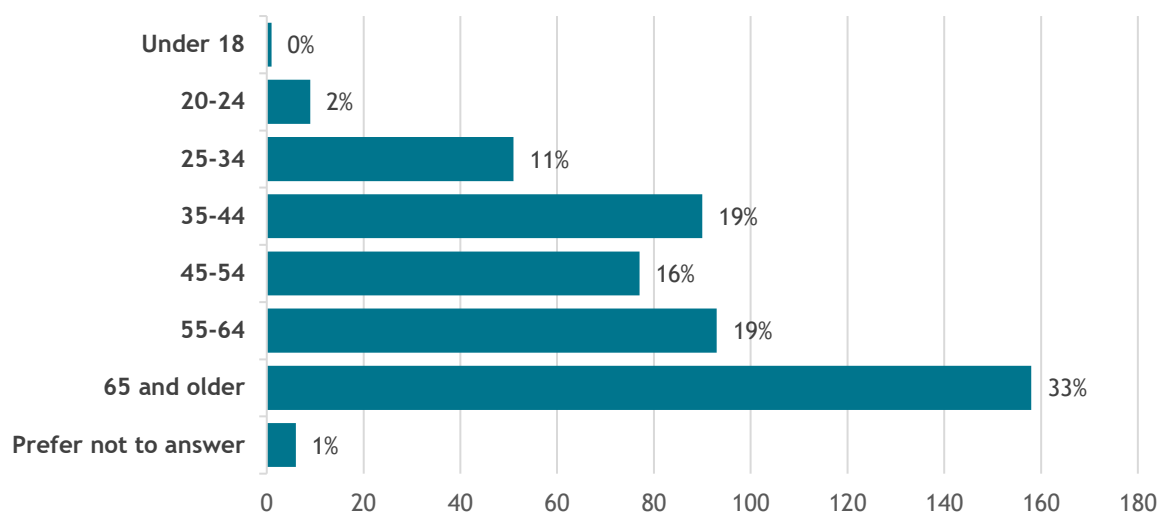
Languages spoken or signed at home: (Select all that apply)

The majority (89%) speak English. For those who selected “Not listed above,” they answered: French, German, Japanese, German/French, German/Klingon, and Persian/Turkish.



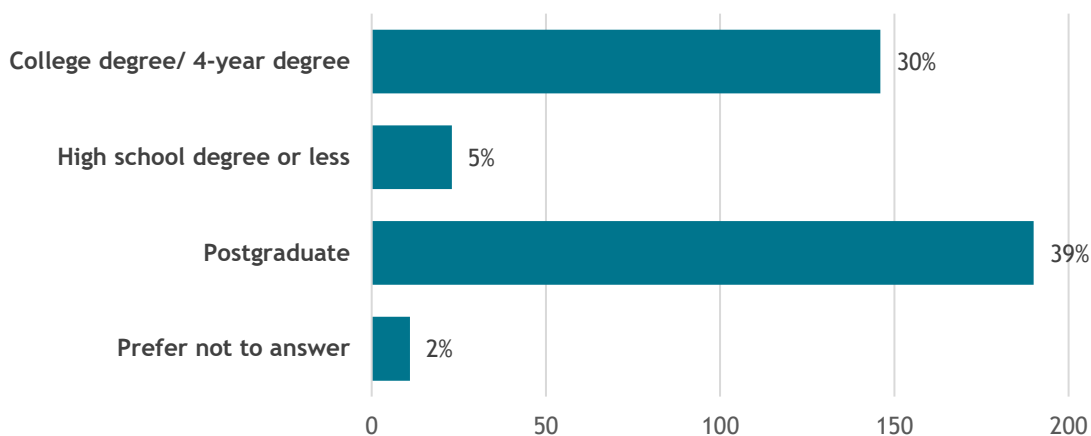
What is your age?

The majority (33%) are sixty-five (65) or older.



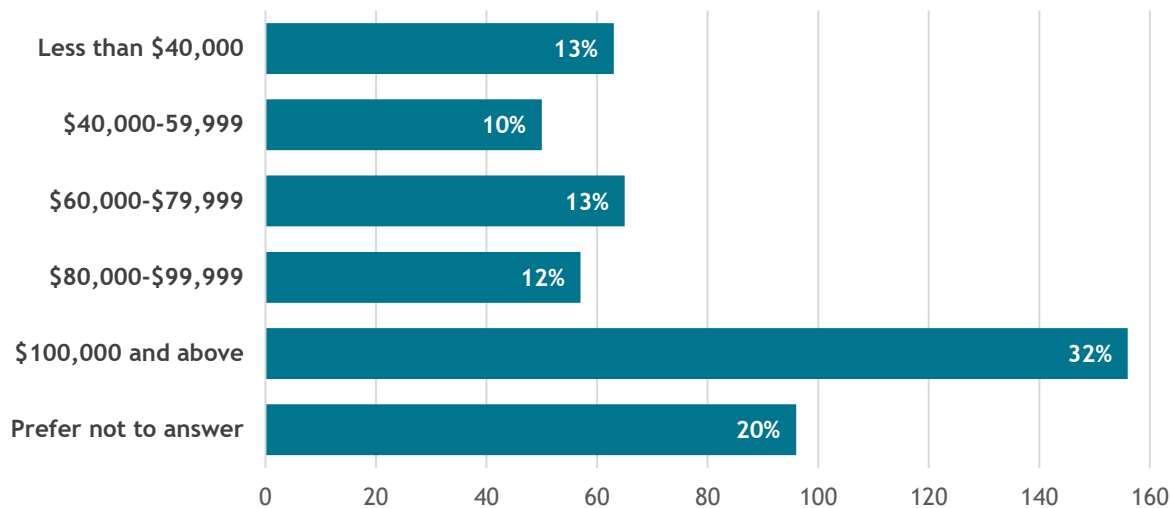
What is your highest level of education?

The majority (69%) have a postgraduate degree or college degree/4-year degree.



What was your total household income last year before taxes? (Select one)

Forty-eight percent (48%) have a total household income under \$100,000 and (32%) have a total household income of \$100,000 or more.



FOCUS GROUPS

SKATS conducted three (3) focus group and facilitated by JLA Public Involvement. Focus groups were held online for one hour each on March 21, March 27, and April 3. Two of the meetings offered translation services in Spanish provided by izo Marketing. Twenty-one (21) people participated in the focus groups from various stakeholder groups such as Just Walk Salem, Salem-Keizer School District, Cherriots Advisory Council, Northwest HUB, Oregon Driver Education Center, Blindskills Inc, Enlace, Mano a Mano Family Center and Salem Bicycle Club. For the full participant list, see [Appendix B](#).

The focus group consisted of introductions, a brief overview of the project and data, and a small group discussion. Mike Jaffe (Project Manager) gave a presentation on the development of a Metropolitan Transportation Safety Action Plan, which is the first of its kind for SKATS MPO. Fatal and serious injuries have doubled in Salem and Keizer over the past ten years. Building a safer system is a priority so the team will focus on safety and crash data (see picture) provided by ODOT and consider public safety projects such as installing red light cameras, medians, protected crossings, and speed feedback signs. Other projects to consider are buffered bike lanes, roundabouts, new sidewalks and bike lanes, and new bike and walking paths.

Below is a summary of the key takeaways from the three focus group discussions.

Key Takeaways

The majority of participants had suggestions for **active transportation improvements** – specifically for people who walk, bike, or roll. Several participants expressed concern with missing or uneven sidewalks as well as the need to add more crosswalks. **Many participants stated they do not feel safe walking or biking in the city.** Additionally, many participants expressed a **desire for a more complete bike network** with the addition of more bike routes, more buffered bike lanes, and improved maintenance of bike lanes (noting debris and garbage cans in the bike lanes).

Participants who represented their respective Latinx communities noted that walking, biking, and taking transit are the main ways their community members get around the city out of necessity, rather than recreation. They highlighted needed **pedestrian improvements such as additional lighting, more frequent bus routes, more sidewalks, and more safety at public transit stops.** Additionally, members who experience disabilities

or low vision brought up accessibility needs while walking. **Uneven sidewalks pose problems for people using wheelchairs or strollers, and the addition of audible guides at intersections would be helpful for those experiencing low vision/blindness.**

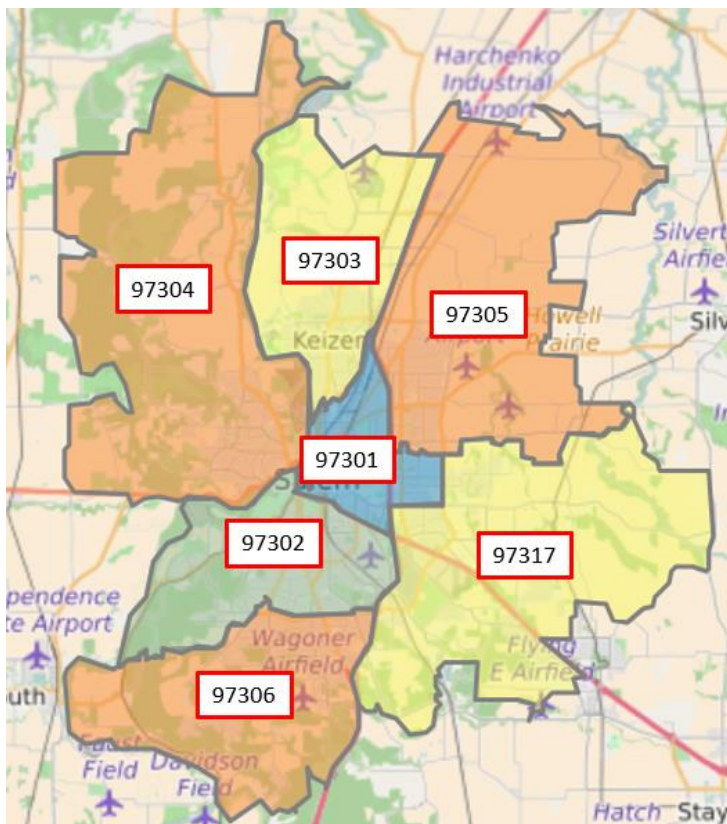
Several participants suggested an educational component to inform drivers how to share the road with people who are biking and what new bike signage means. They noted poor driving behavior such as aggressive or distracted driving as a problem. One participant noted **multilingual information would be ideal**, and others mentioned specific campaigns to consider for the Salem-Keizer area such as *Vision Zero* and *Twenty is Plenty*.

There were some conversations about the need for car infrastructure improvements. One example brought up was making lane changes safer and easier at specific locations (such as merging onto the highway). Additionally, **driver visibility is low in many places.** Improving driver awareness would be helpful as well as improving crosswalk infrastructures. Other conversations included a concern for public safety as a whole and suggested working with law enforcement, neighborhood associations, community-based organizations, and others to solve these problems.

APPENDIX A: ZIP CODES

Below are the responses to the question “What is the ZIP code of your primary residence?”.

| ZIP | Count |
|-------|-------|
| 97302 | 148 |
| 97301 | 144 |
| 97303 | 55 |
| 97306 | 40 |
| 97304 | 39 |
| 97305 | 19 |
| 97317 | 13 |
| 97391 | 2 |
| 97298 | 2 |
| 97338 | 1 |
| 97297 | 1 |
| 97392 | 1 |
| 04 | 1 |
| 97284 | 1 |
| 9730 | 1 |
| 97215 | 1 |
| 97325 | 1 |



APPENDIX B: FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS

(names have been removed for privacy)

March 21, 2023

Participants (7)

- Just Walk Salem Keizer
- Operations Manager | Salem-Keizer School District
- Salem-Keizer School District Transportation
- Router | Salem-Keizer School District 24J
- Salem-Keizer School District Transportation
- Advisory Council for Cherriots
- Community member

Staff (3)

- Mike Jaffe, MWVCOG
- Nicole Metildi, JLA
- Camille Pearce, JLA

March 27, 2023

Participants (9)

- ENLACE Cross-Cultural community Development Project
- Just Walk Salem Keizer
- Just Walk Salem Keizer
- Salem Bicycle Club
- Mano a Mano Family Center
- PCUN
- Marion County Health Department
- Kaiser Permanente
- Kaiser Permanente

Staff (4)

- Mike Jaffe, MWVCOG
- Camille Pearce, JLA
- Nicole Metildi, JLA
- Daniel Franco-Nunez, IZO

April 3, 2023

Participants (5)

- Just Walk Salem
- Student at Willamette University

- Northwest HUB
- ODEC
- Blindskills

Staff (4)

- Mike Jaffe, MWVCOG
- Nicole Metildi, JLA
- Camille Pearce, JLA
- Daniel Franco-Nunez, IZO