
Pierce County Transportation Plan Update



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Presentation to the Council EIDC
March 25, 2008

Presentation Overview

- I. **Background and Reasons to Update the Plan**
- II. **Basis of the New Plan**
- III. **What the New Plan Looks Like**
- IV. **Work Performed to Date**
- V. **Public Involvement Activities**
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Background and Reasons to Update the Plan

- Transportation Plan Adopted in 1992
- Merged into Comprehensive Plan in 1994 as the Transportation Element
- Administrative Update to Plan in 1999
- Many Changes to State, Regional and Local Plans
- Adoption of Community Plans
- Need to Consider all Transportation Costs
- Ordinance 2005-121s4 Adjusted Transportation Plan Update Timing
 - Fall 2008 Submittal to Planning Commission

Basis of the New Plan

- Meet GMA requirements
- Meet Comprehensive Plan requirements
- Twenty Year Plan (2030 horizon)
- MOPIA (1992 Plan only addressed “I”)
- Service Levels
- Financially Constrained

What the New Plan Looks Like

- Considers the full cost of future transportation system
 - Maintenance
 - Operations
 - Preservation
 - Improvement
 - Safety
 - Congestion
 - Corridors and connections
 - Economic development
 - Nonmotorized
 - Administration

What the New Plan Looks Like

- Financially Constrained to 20 Year Funding
- Each Service Within Each Area of MOPIA Includes:
 - Scope or definition of the service
 - Proposed service level goals or requirements
 - Proposed solutions to meet the service levels
 - Programs and/or
 - Projects
 - 20 year costs (in 2006 dollars) to meet the service levels
 - Policies that need to be implemented to meet the service levels

Work Performed to Date

- Subject white (technical) papers
 - Data driven
 - Policy discussions
- Travel Demand Model Updated
- Public Involvement (outreach and input)

Subject White Papers

- Maintenance and Operations (roads, ferry)
- Preservation (roads, ferry)
- Safety (traffic, pedestrian, bicycle, ferry)
- Congestion (traffic)
- Economic Development (economic centers, corridors)
- New Roadway Corridors/Connections
- Ferry System (improvement and funding)
- Nonmotorized (pedestrian/bicycle)
- Land Use and Transportation Integration
- Sustainability
- Funding

Public Involvement Activities

May 2007 – March 2008

- I. Interviews with Public Officials and Private Stakeholders
- II. Phone Survey of County Voters (Random)
- III. Online Wed Survey (Non-Random)

Interviews

- May - July 2007
- 33 officials and interest groups

| Interview Participants (#) |
|---|
| Pierce County Executive and Council (8) |
| Mayors (8) – Bonney Lake, Gig Harbor, Lakewood, Orting, Puyallup, Sumner, Tacoma, UP |
| Agencies (4) – Mount Rainier National Park, Pierce Transit, Port of Tacoma, WSDOT |
| Industry/Business (6) – AGC, Boeing, Cascadia, EDB, MBA, Tacoma-Pierce Co. Chamber |
| Pierce County (3) – Sheriff, Public Works and Utilities, Planning and Land Services |
| Non-profit/Other (4) – Bicycle Alliance of Washington, Friends of Pierce County, Tahoma Audubon Society, Transportation Choices Coalition |
| Tribes (1 attempted) – Puyallup Tribe of Indians |

Interviews

General Transportation Questions

Q. In terms of countywide issues, how important is transportation?

- ▣ Most said transportation is “very important”

Q. What is your general opinion of the transportation system in unincorporated Pierce County?

- ▣ A majority expressed “unfavorable” opinions

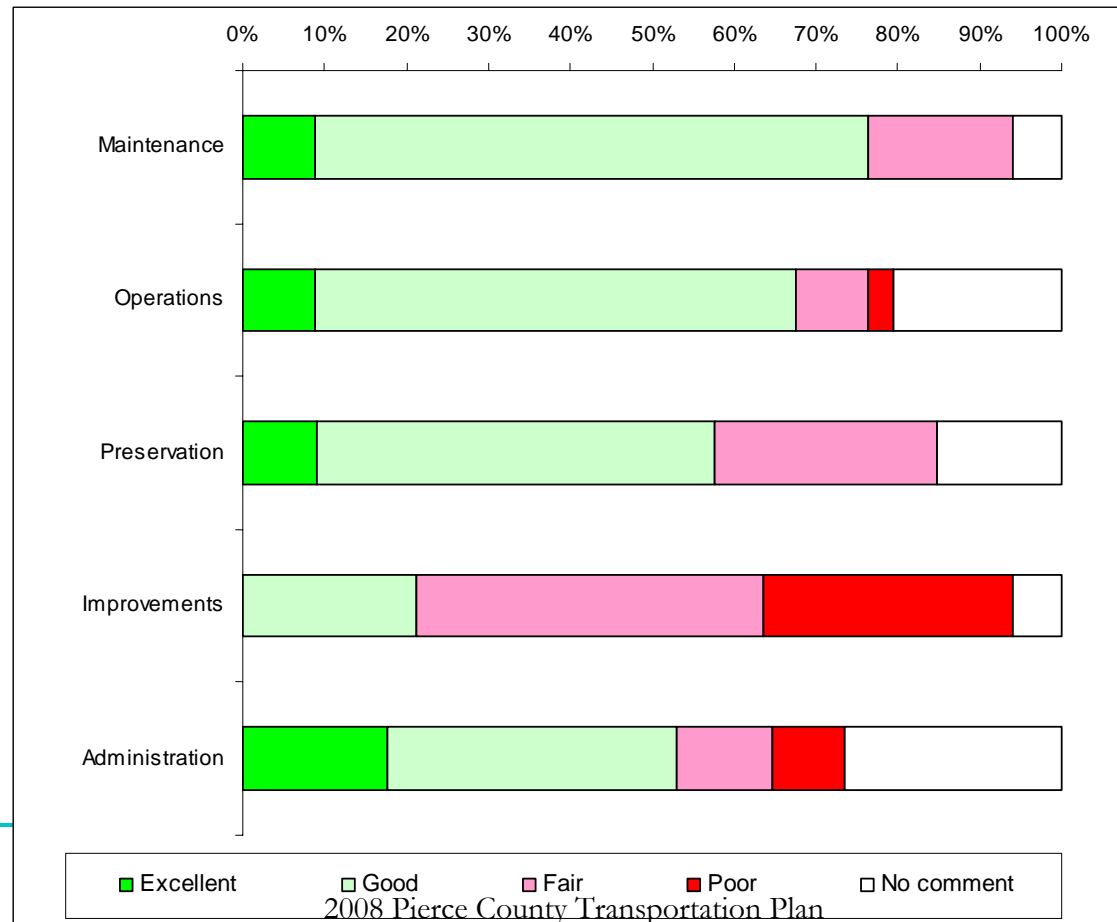
Q. What is the most important transportation issue in the county?

- ▣ Congestion/concurrency concerns (12 interviewees)
- ▣ Mobility options/transit (7 interviewees)

Interviews

How do you rate the County's current MOPIA efforts?

- Maintenance (M) and Operations (O) received overall positive ratings
- Improvements (I) received overall low ratings



Interviews

What is the most important MOPIA priority?

- Elements rated as highest priority:
 - Improvements (13 interviewees)
 - Maintenance (10 interviewees)
 - Preservation (4 interviewees)

- Nearly equal support for Improvements and for Maintenance/Preservation (combined)

Interviews

Funding Choices

- Overwhelming support for increasing revenue to facilitate transportation improvements instead of methods for cutting spending
- Some either could not or chose not to answer funding questions
- A few thought better use of existing funds could solve funding issues

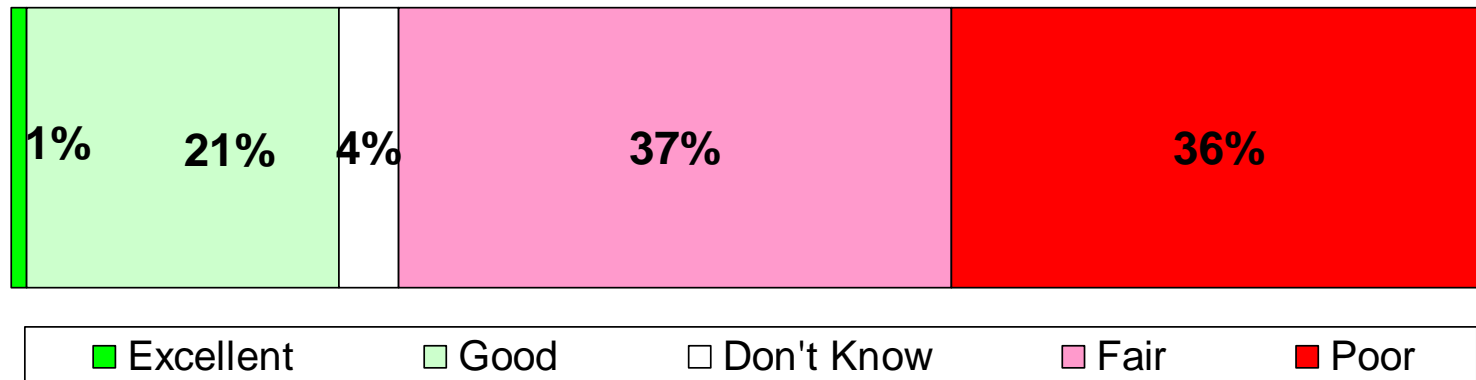
Phone Surveys

- November 8-19, 2007 (after the ST/RTID Proposition 1 vote)
- 550 County voters (proportional to Council district populations)
- ~15 minute survey (margin of error = $\pm 4.2\%$)

| District | Unincorporated Voters | % of Total Unincorporated Voters | Total survey participants |
|----------|-----------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 | 34,442 | 24% | 134 |
| 2 | 17,304 | 12% | 68 |
| 3 | 43,118 | 30% | 167 |
| 4 | 0 | 0% | 0 |
| 5 | 8,642 | 6% | 33 |
| 6 | 6,234 | 4% | 19 |
| 7 | 32,424 | 23% | 129 |
| Total | 142,164 | 100% | 550 |

Phone Surveys

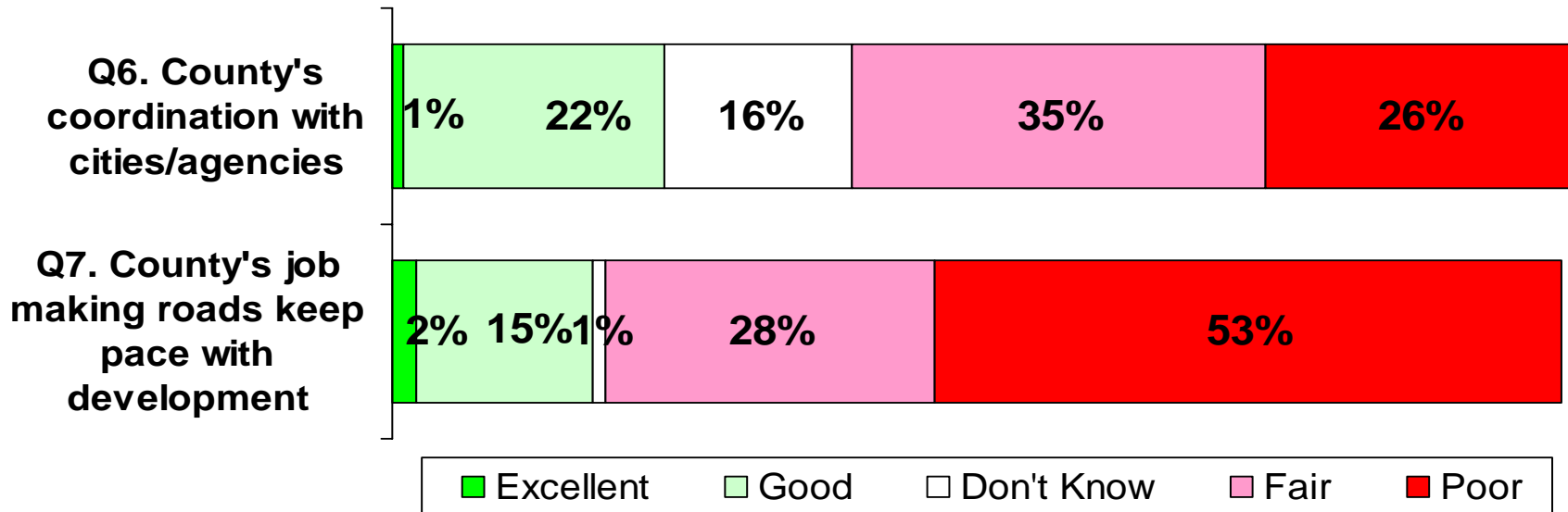
Q5. What is the general opinion of the unincorporated Pierce County transportation system?



- Majority of voters are on the “negative” side of the scale (73% fair or poor)
- Disproportionately large concentration (36%) of voters give the weakest rating (poor)
- However, using another grouping, a majority of ratings are concentrated in the middle of the scale (58% good or fair)

Phone Surveys

Specific ratings

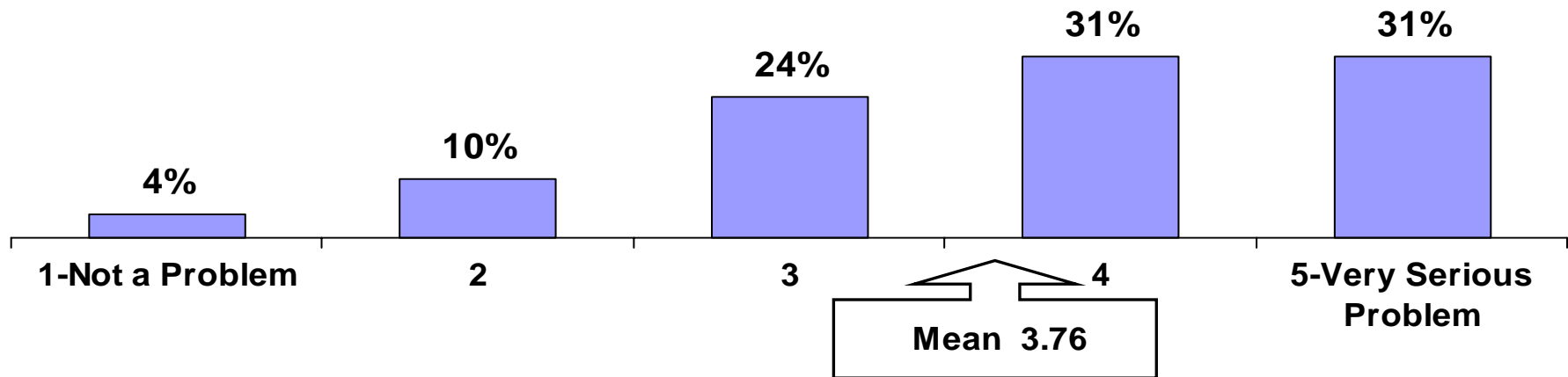


- Coordination ratings concentrated near the middle (57% good and fair), although 26% gave a “poor” rating
- Majority of voters (53%) believe the County is doing a “poor” job of making sure that roads keep pace with development

Phone Surveys

Congestion

Q8. Using a scale of 1 to 5, how much of a problem is traffic congestion?

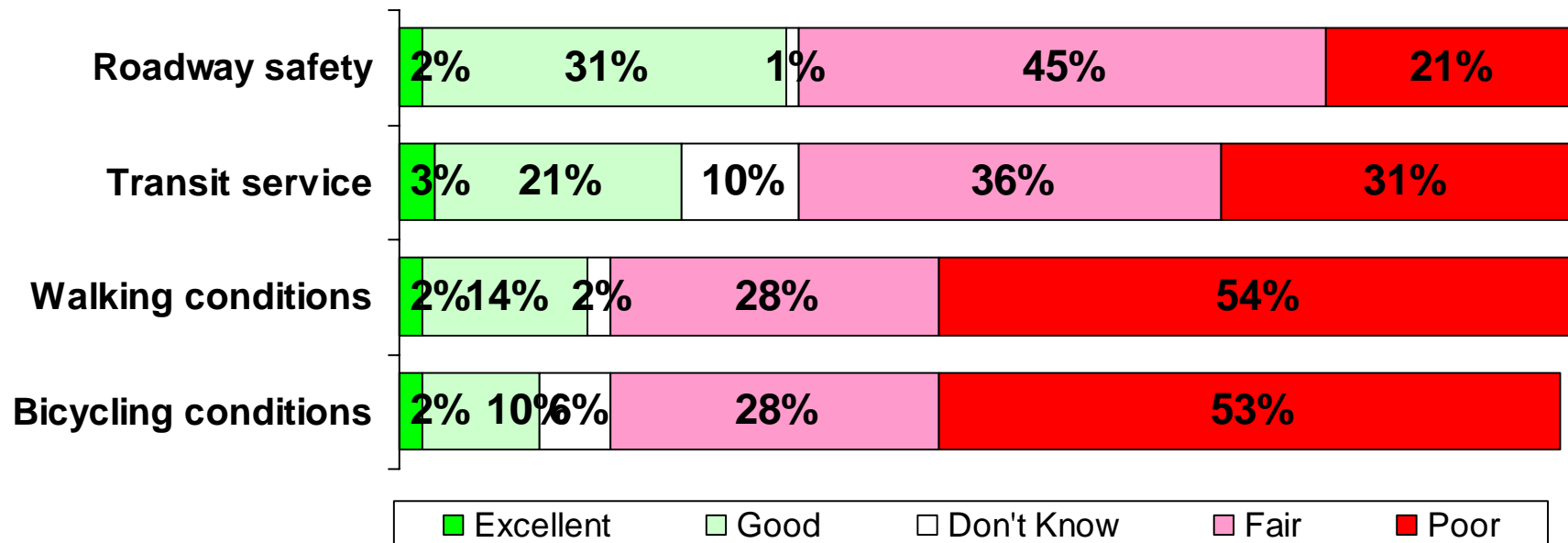


- Strong majority of voters (62%) rate traffic congestion as a “4” or “5”, indicating a larger proportion believe congestion is a problem

Phone Surveys

Other Transportation Elements

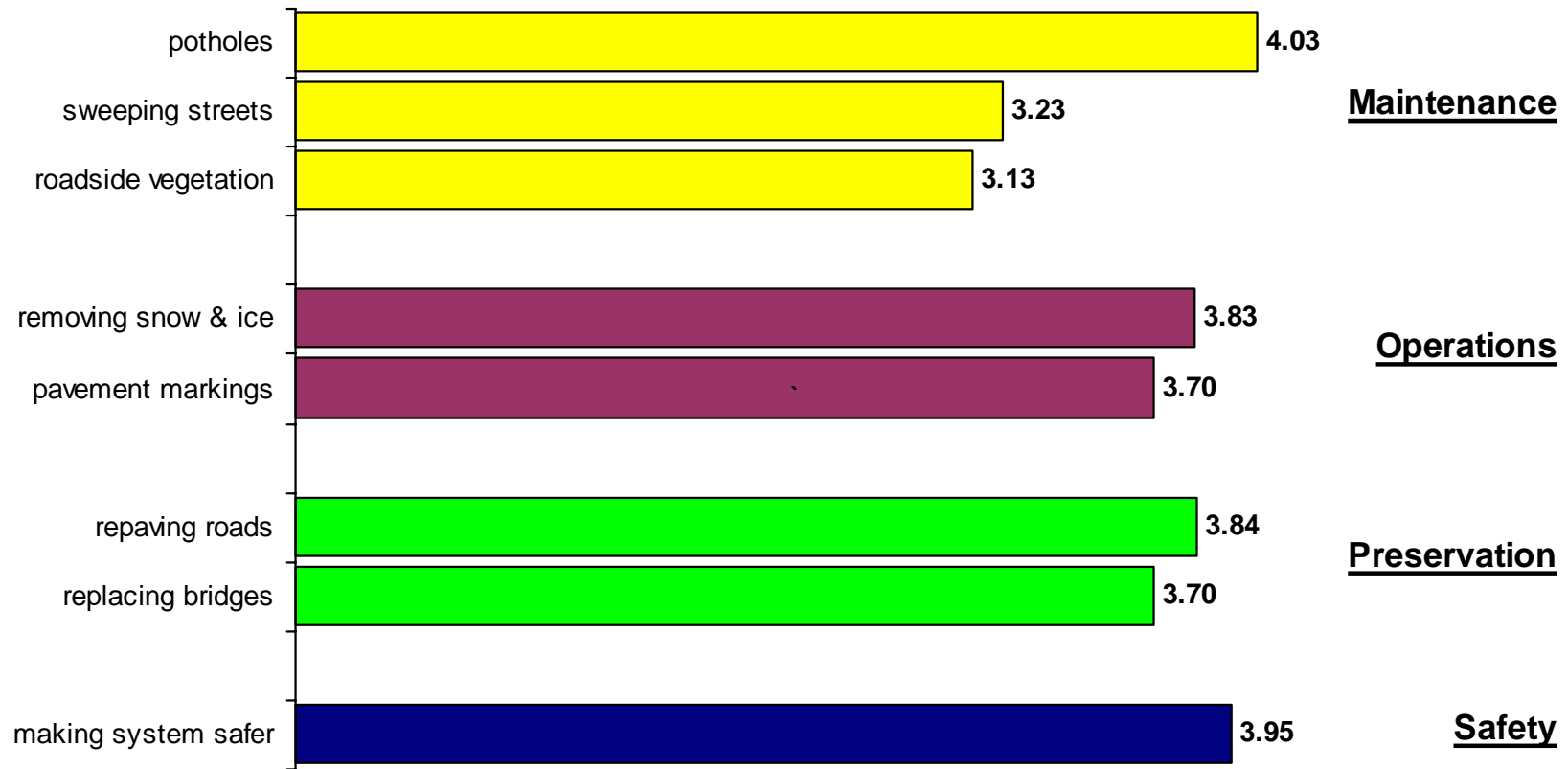
Q9-Q12. Please rate each of the following elements in the unincorporated areas of Pierce County



- Plurality of voters rate roadway safety and transit service as “fair”
- Majority of voters rate walking and biking conditions as “poor”

Phone Surveys

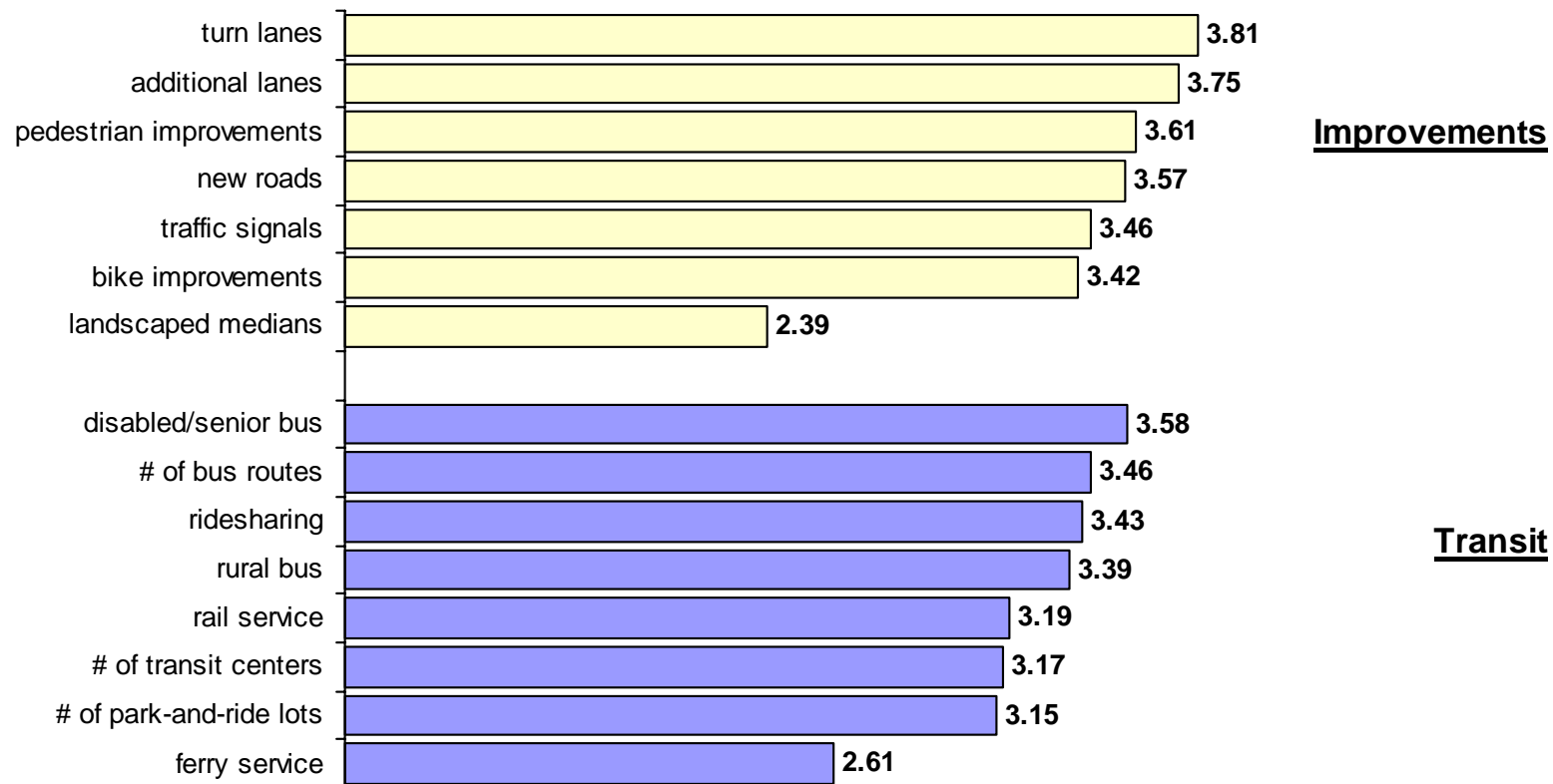
Relative Importance: Maintenance, Operations, Preservation and Safety



- Pothole repairs and safety improvements received the highest mean scores among these activities on a scale of 1 (Not important) to 5 (Extremely important)

Phone Surveys

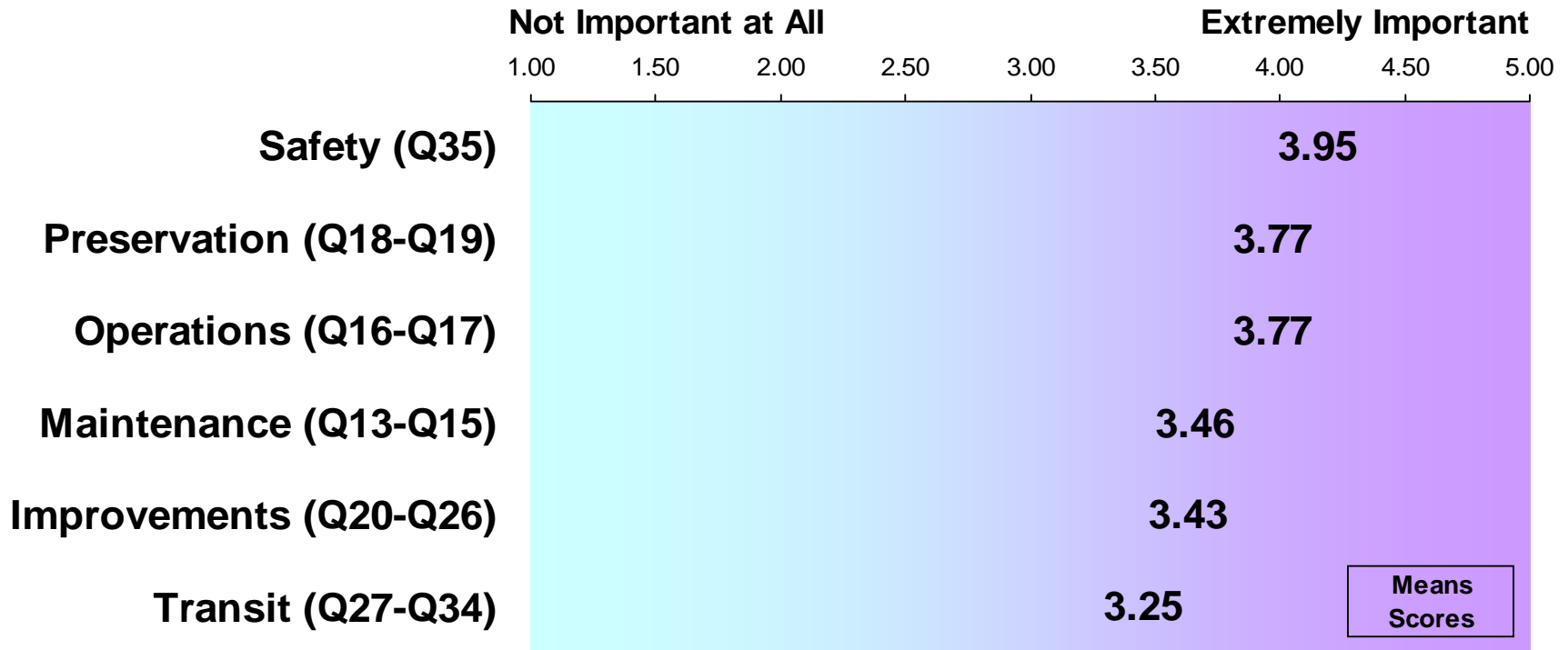
Relative Importance: Improvements and Transit



- Capacity improvements (adding turn and through lanes) received the highest mean scores while roadway landscaping received the lowest mean score on a scale of 1 (Not important) to 5 (Extremely important)

Phone Surveys

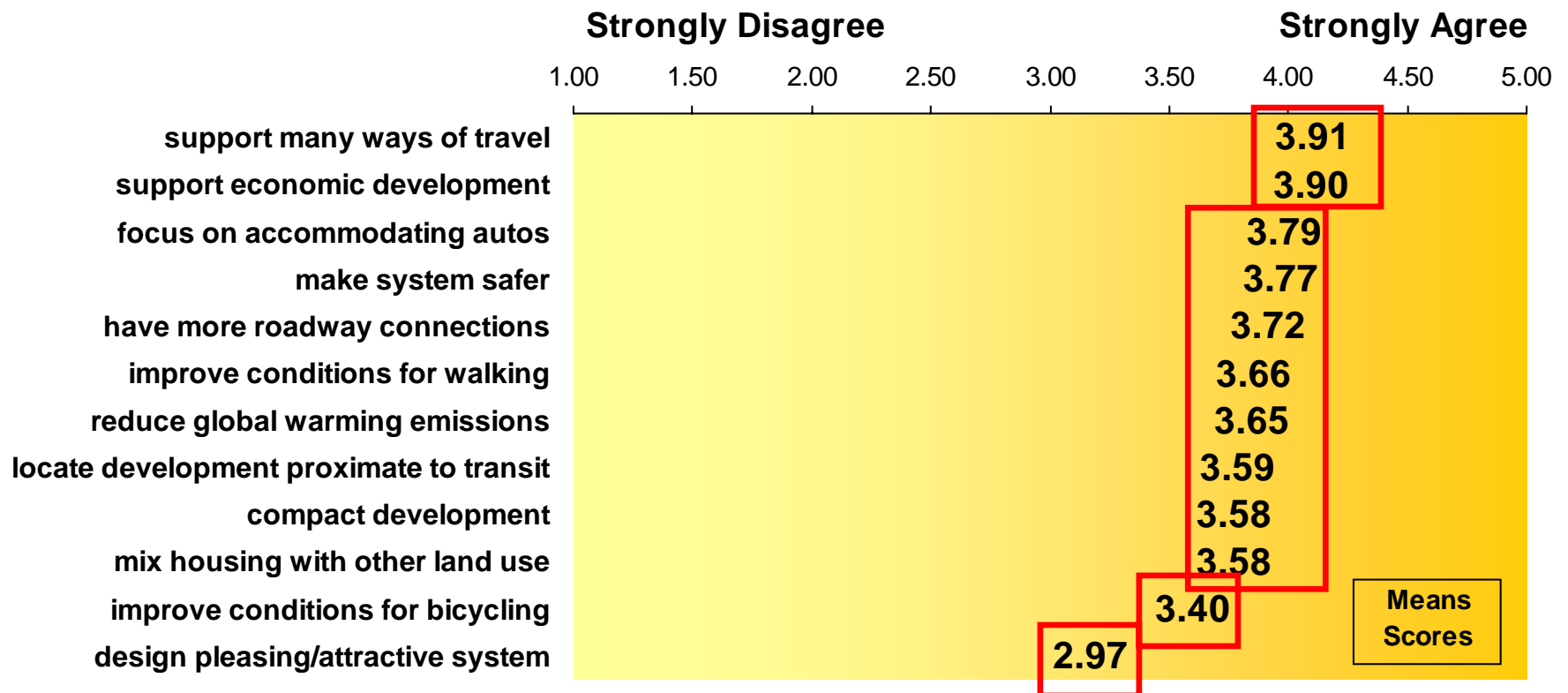
MOPIA Categories: Average Ratings



- Average ratings for Maintenance, Operations and Preservation were slightly higher than ratings for Improvements (Non-Safety) and Transit

Phone Surveys

Q36-47. What should the future transportation system and land uses look like?

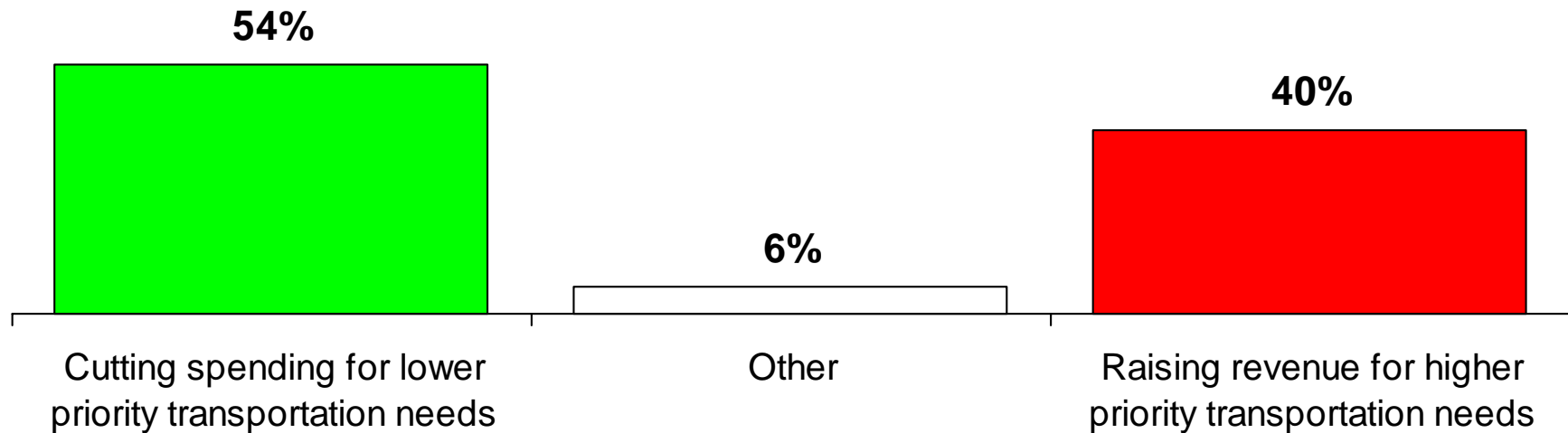


- Highest ratings were for improvements supporting mobility options and economic development
- Differences of ~ 0.5 can be considered significant
- Data can be compared in four groups based on similar ratings

Phone Surveys

Funding Choices

Q48. Given the County's limited funding resources, which of the following is more favorable to you?

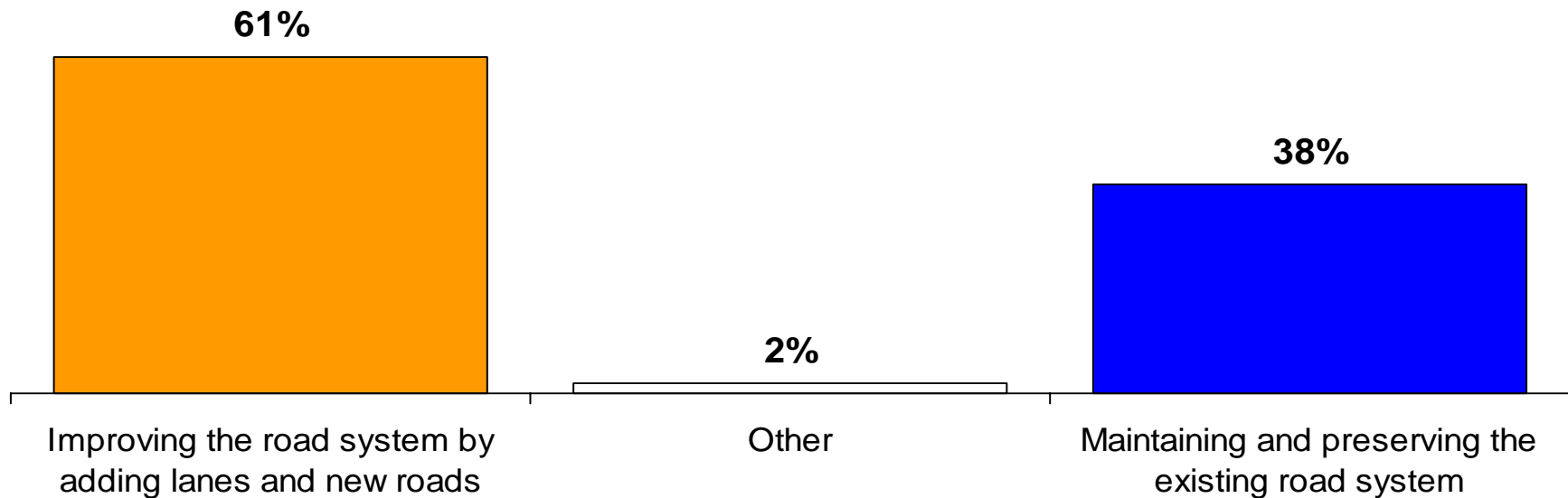


- A majority selected cutting spending for lower transportation needs over raising revenue for higher transportation needs

Phone Surveys

Funding Choices

Q49. Which of the following spending priorities is more favorable to you?

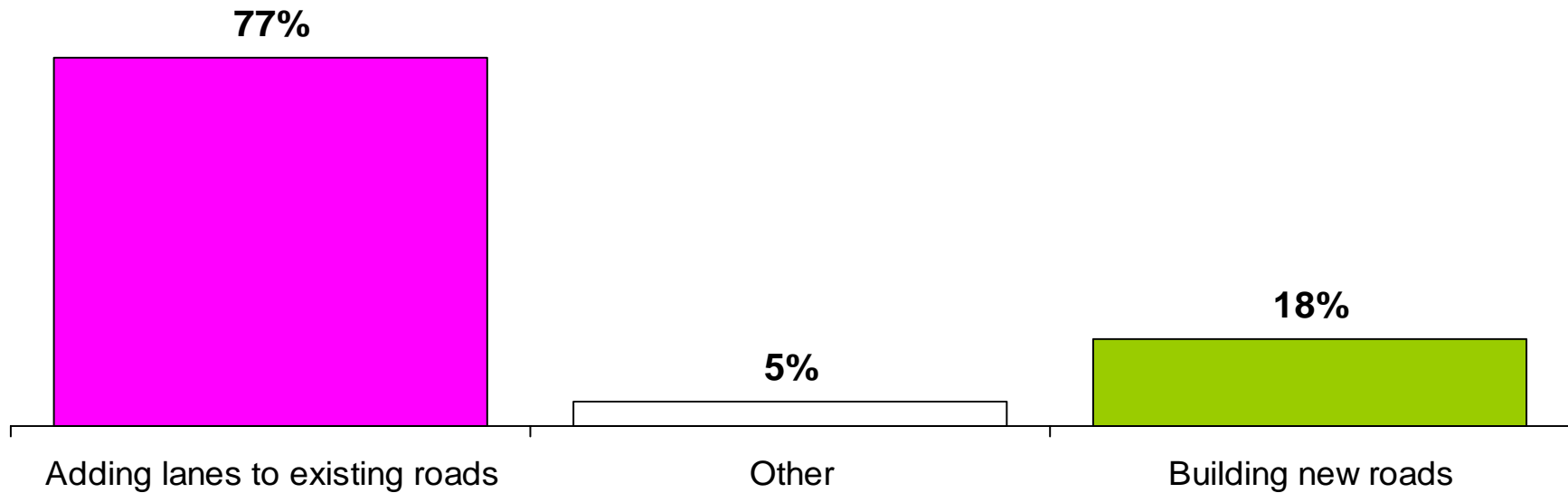


- A majority selected improving the road system over maintaining/ preserving the existing system
- Probably take maintenance, operation and preservation for granted

Phone Surveys

Funding Choices

Q50. Which of the following spending priorities is more favorable to you?

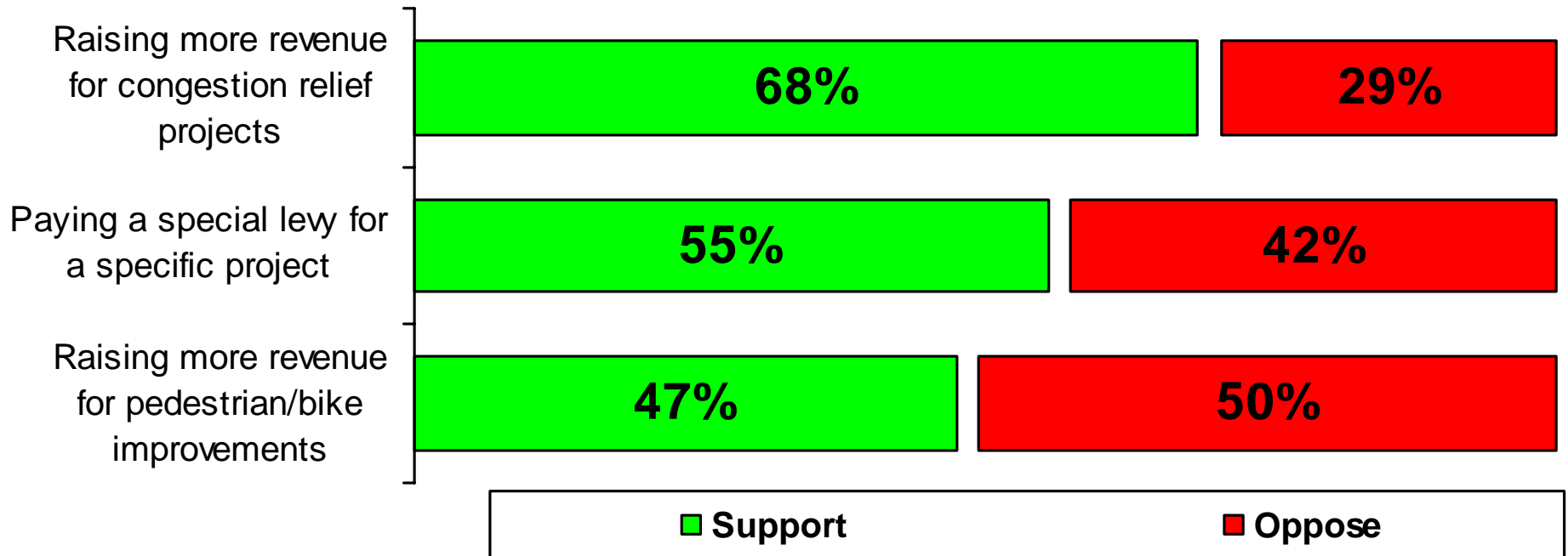


- A clear majority selected adding lanes to existing roads over constructing new roads
- This would guide future solutions

Phone Surveys

Support of Funding Options

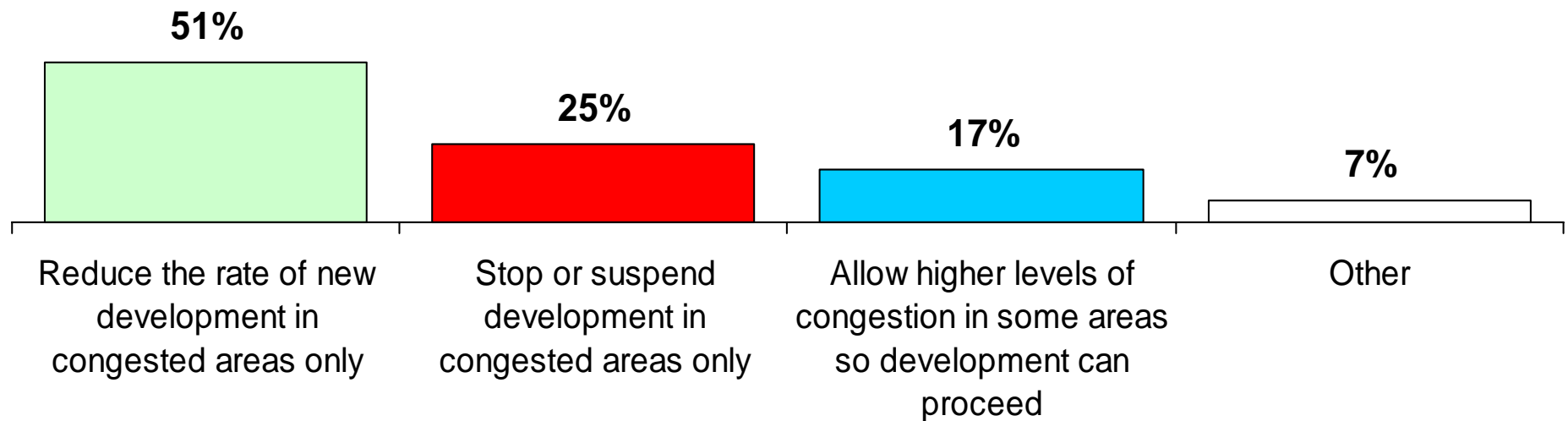
Q56-58. Do you support or oppose the following funding options?



Phone Surveys

Concurrency Options

Q **Q59. If additional revenue for congestion relief cannot be raised, which would you support?**

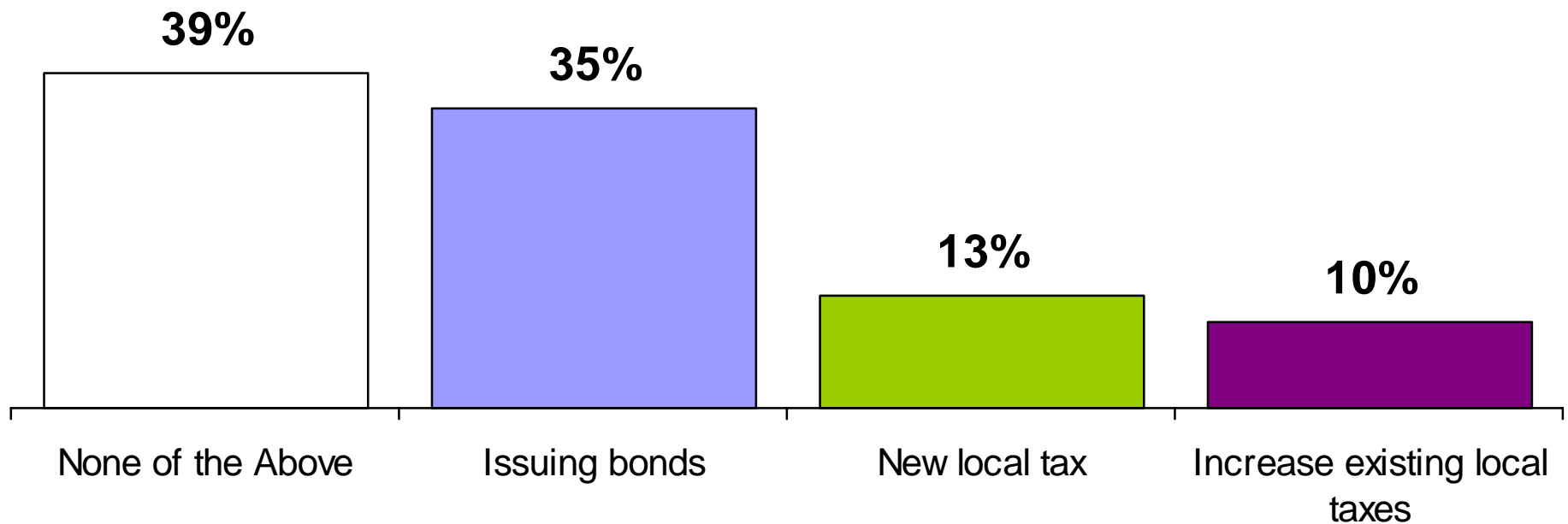


- A slight majority supported reducing (phasing or downsizing) the rate of development in congested areas

Phone Surveys

New Revenue Options

Q60. Which options for raising revenue would you be most willing to support?



Phone Surveys

Interpreting the Ratings/Funding Relationships

- Congestion
 - Although general support for raising revenue for transportation was not high (40%), a strong majority (68%) supported raising revenue to support congestion relief projects given that a high majority (62%) rated congestion as a serious problem
- Maintenance and Preservation
 - Participants consider maintenance and preservation activities to be slightly more important than roadway improvements, although a clear majority (61%) favored spending on roadway improvements over maintaining/preserving the system
- Nonmotorized (Pedestrian and Bicycle) Improvements
 - A majority (~ 54%) rated walking and bicycling conditions as “poor”, yet a plurality (50%) opposed raising revenue for pedestrian/bicycle improvements

Web Online Survey

- A shorter version of the phone survey was made available on the County website in early January 2008 to provide an additional opportunity for public input
- Over 500 online surveys have been completed (Note: Responses were limited to one per household or e-mail address)
- Responses are not considered random and are therefore subject to a larger margin of error
- Web survey participants tended to be predominantly older males (age 45 or older)
- Results are not substantially different than phone survey

Interviews / Phone Surveys / Web Surveys

Comparison of Results

- Transportation is “very important” to interview and phone/web survey participants
- A strong majority of interview and phone/web survey participants rate the current transportation system as “fair” or “poor”
- Apparent agreement that maintenance, preservation and improvements are very important
- Congestion is considered a serious problem by both interview and phone/web survey participants and raising revenue specifically for congestion relief is also supported by a majority of all participants
- However, general support for raising revenue for transportation needs among phone survey participants was not high compared to interview and web survey participants

Additional Activities

- Web page is up (www.piercecountywa.org/tpu) with an online survey (ongoing)
- Postcard announcing web page and online survey mailed to all unincorporated homes, apartments, and businesses
- Outreach events (fairs and festivals) in late Spring/Summer 2008
- Possible focus groups (input from other agency staff and PC/LUAC/CPB members)
- Possible additional interviews and surveys (Phase II)
- Public Meetings, Planning Commission, and Council Hearings

Work Still to be Done

- Analyze funding/financing
 - Finalizing the costs
 - Revenue forecasts
- Consider trade-offs from priorities
 - Not enough revenue for everything
 - Adjust level of service
- Develop plan alternatives for Council Consideration

Council Guidance

- Is the scope of the Plan sufficient?
- Are the priorities we are hearing appropriate?
- Is there additional public involvement you want to see conducted?
- Is the schedule still appropriate?
 - Finalize Subject White Papers – May 2008
 - Draft Plan – June 2008
 - Plan to Planning Commission – October 2008