



## CHAPTER 4. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

### COMMUNITY OUTREACH PLAN (COP)

The NWARPC has established a proactive community involvement process in the planning of regional transportation projects. The Public Participation Plan (PPP) was adopted in 2007, with an update approved in September 2014, and sets out the process by which the MTP, and other documents, will accomplish public outreach throughout the development process. The PPP outlines procedures that are designed to promote and encourage public participation and involvement in the transportation planning process. The COP incorporates the PPP procedures and provides an outline for community outreach and engagement specific to the MTP update.

The TAC was actively involved in the COP and in the many community outreach events that took place during the development of the MTP. The TAC met in advance of community outreach sessions to understand what information would be shared, attended the community outreach sessions to hear the issues and concerns of the citizens first hand and finally, met after the community meetings to make technical recommendations, which reflected the input of the meeting participants. Additionally, the TAC tackled many projects during the spring 2011 to fall 2015 time frame, meeting virtually every month. All TAC recommendations were forwarded to the RPC/Policy Committee for formal approval or adoption.

The 2040 MTP COP was developed to guide the community outreach efforts throughout the development of the MTP. Because the COP is a guide, it contains suggestions for community outreach and tentative dates to fulfill the outreach efforts. Community outreach and engagement is necessary as a way to gauge public sentiment and to mold and inform the development of MTP goals and recommendations.

The initial COP was developed in late summer 2014 as a beginning to the MTP update process. As time progressed and the process of MTP developed, the COP changed slightly with respect to specifics, such as exact outreach efforts and dates. Additionally, although the COP as it appears in the MTP begins in 2014, many public outreach opportunities were realized through other plan development processes. All plans and studies that NWARPC was involved in from 2010 through 2015 included community outreach and input and have been documented in the Community Outreach Log.

*“Transportation alternatives should be taken seriously now, and ways to make our communities easier and safer for walking and biking become critical as the area population grows and our communities become denser. Simple projects like building sidewalks or safe road crossings where none existed before lessen the reliance on cars and lead to better urban growth where cars and parking are not needed for every trip outside of the house.*

*Finally, NWA needs to become serious about public transportation and what our needs will be in 20 to 30 years. I am not at all opposed to car traffic, but we cannot continue to develop in NWA with only car transportation in mind as we will only be creating greater and greater transportation problems to solve in the future, and also will only be making less livable and enjoyable communities as a result” - Public Comment*

For the complete COP please see Appendix A: Community Outreach Plan, 2040 MTP Public Opinion Survey and Public Comments.

## SUMMARY, ANALYSIS, AND REPORT ON COMMUNITY OUTREACH

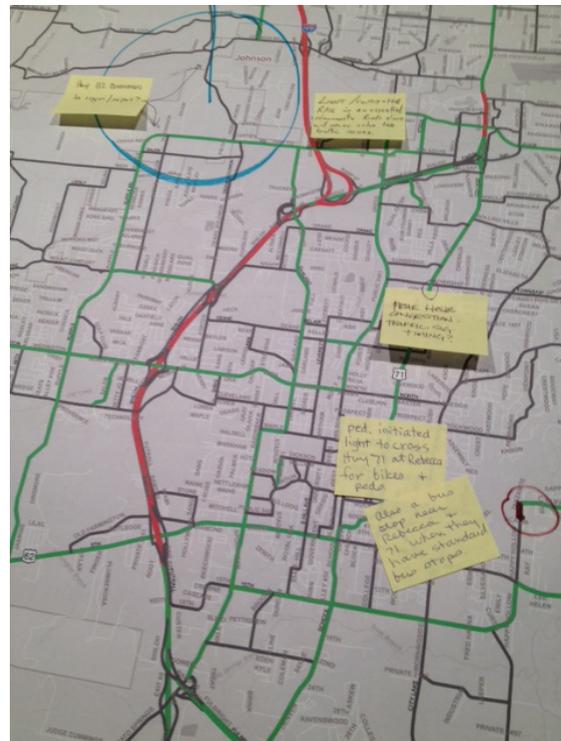
In this section community outreach notifications, activities, and events are summarized and analyzed. Also, a report on public comments, as well as comments received during the final review of the document by the TAC and RPC/Policy Committee, are included here.

A number of public relations tools were used to communicate with the public, provide information on the progress of the MTP, and generate public input into the MTP in an effort to develop consensus and direction. The following tools focus on notifications and communications:

- Legal Notification
- Newspaper articles, photos, and TV/radio interviews
- Website – Interactive online map, survey, and email comments
- Email broadcasting
- Community events, activities, and meetings
- Interactive public input forums

In addition to reaching out to the public at-large, the existing professional knowledge base was maximized by taking advantage of local staff and elected officials throughout the development process.

MTP updates were provided to the TAC and the RPC/Policy Committee throughout the process, and member comments were integrated into the document.



Public Input meeting at the Fayetteville Public Library

**COMMUNITY OUTREACH LOG**

Staff kept a detailed Community Outreach Log. Dates, type of outreach, locations, and attendance were among the items tracked. The following tables and text summarize the Community Outreach Log.

- LEGAL NOTIFICATION** – Legal notification, per the PPP, was provided to the Northwest Arkansas Democrat Gazette (NWADG) and the La Prensa Libra newspapers. Table 4.1 reflects the dates of all published legal notifications.
- NEWSPAPER ARTICLES, PHOTOS AND TV/RADIO INTERVIEWS**  
 The public outreach effort was greatly aided by the numerous articles and photos in the NWADG pertaining to many of the activities that NWARPC was involved in through the MTP development process. For example, many articles or photos concerned highway/roadway projects; trails; bicycle and pedestrian plans; transit; open space planning; and the Cave Springs Area Karst study. Over 60 articles and photos were printed over the course of the MTP community outreach period. One article appeared in the McDonald County Press. Other methods of informing the public included TV and radio interviews, as well as national publications featuring the Razorback Regional Greenway.
- INTERACTIVE PUBLIC INPUT FORUMS**  
 Eighteen public forums were conducted throughout the MTP community outreach process. Generally, these forums were open house style, held from late afternoon to early evening, and located on a bus route whenever possible. Presentations at the forums included a presentation featuring NWARPC plans, studies, and the MTP process; posters highlighting such things as the 2035 Arterial map, current long range plan recommendations; demographics; Alternatives Analysis Study findings and Local Preferred Alternative; Northwest Arkansas Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan displays and a map of Razorback Regional Greenway; FFY 2013-2016 TIP projects and map; Connecting Arkansas Program map and current status; STBGP-200K and TAP status of projects; CMP map and explanation; MPA boundary, UZA boundary, and MSA boundary maps; and Open Space Plan displays and maps. The hard copy Public Opinion Survey was available in English and Spanish, and comment cards contained information on how to go online to complete the survey or use the Wiki map, or could be used to write comments on and leave with staff at the forum. At each meeting the public had the opportunity to ask questions and comment on what they would like to see in the future for the region, while staff kept track of verbal comments expressed. At the Final Public Input Forum, the public had the opportunity to comment on the Draft 2040 MTP. Posters were displayed illustrating highlights from each of the 12 chapters. Comments forms were available as was staff to answer questions and take comments.

DATE	LEGAL NOTICE NWADG	DISPLAY AD NWADG	LA PRENSA AD
9.07.14		X	
9.10.14	X		
11.13.14	X		
1.08.15			X
1.13.15	X		
1.15.15			X
1.18.15		X	
3.11.15	X		
3.12.15			X
4.9.15	X		X
5.14.15	X		X
5.17.15		X	
6.04.15			X
6.14.15		X	
8.13.15			X
8.16.15		X	
8.20.15	X		
9.10.15			X
9.10.15	X		
10.08.15	X		X
11.12.15			X
11.12.15	X		
1.14.16	X	X	X
1.22.16	X		
2.11.16	X		X
3.10.16	X		X

Table 4.1 - Legal Notifications Dates



Public Input Meeting at the Bentonville Public Library



Public Forum at the Fayetteville Public Library

The public forums, as shown in Table 4.2, were advertised in a variety of ways. The NWARPC website and calendar listed each forum. A press release was sent out ahead of each meeting to both the English and Spanish speaking newspapers, along with email notifications to State press; State and local governmental agencies; State legislators and U.S. Senators; and current and previous public input participants.

DATE	OUTREACH	LOCATION	ATTENDANCE
4.11.13	Alternatives Analysis Study Forum	Jones Center, Springdale	75
9.12.13	Alternatives Analysis Study Forum	Bentonville Public Library, Bentonville	22
9.18.14	MTP Kick-Off Public Input Forum	NWARPC, Springdale	33
1.21.15	Open Space Plan Public Forum	Fayetteville Public Library, Fayetteville	84
1.22.15	Open Space Plan Public Forum	Bentonville Public Library, Bentonville	76
5.21.15	MTP Public Input Forum	Fayetteville Public Library, Fayetteville	33
5.26.15	MTP Public Input Forum	Siloam Springs City Hall, Siloam Springs	45
5.28.15	MTP Public Input Forum	Bentonville Public Library, Bentonville	13
6.8.15	MTP/Open Space Public Forum	Garfield Community Center, Garfield	26
6.9.15	MTP/Open Space Public Forum	Jones Center, Springdale	46
6.10.15	MTP/Open Space Public Forum	Prairie Grove Battlefield State Park, Prairie Grove	29
6.11.15	MTP/Open Space Public Forum	Gentry City Library, Gentry	54
6.17.15	MTP/Open Space Public Forum to include this area of the MTP; held from 11:00 am until 1:00 pm	McDonald County Coalition Building, Pineville, Missouri	43
6.18.15	Karst Study Public Input Forum	Darr Elementary School, Rogers	108
7.20.15	MTP/Open Space Public Forum	Community Building, Siloam Springs	21
9.23.15	Open Space Plan Public Forum	Rogers Public Library, Rogers	27
9.23.15	Open Space Plan Public Forum	Fayetteville Public Library, Fayetteville	36
1.21.16	MTP Final Public Forum	NWARPC, Springdale	31

Table 4.2 - Public Forums

NWARPC took advantage of the numerous public input forums and public opinion surveys conducted in conjunction with the Northwest Arkansas Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, the Open Space Plan, the Cave Springs Area Karst Resource Conservation Study, and the Northwest Arkansas Alternatives Analysis Study. Valuable input from concerned citizens was gathered at each of these forums and through the surveys. A list of comments and suggestions from the public can be found in Appendix A.

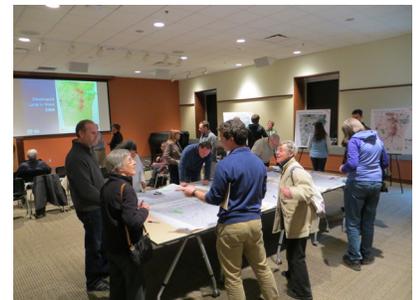
• **COMMUNITY EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES**

Table 4.3 illustrates the dates and locations of the community events and activities that contributed to community outreach.

DATE	PROJECT	LOCATION	ATTENDANCE
1.28.15	MTP/Open Space/Bike-Ped Plan	Lincoln Kiwanis	28
3.16.15	Open Space Plan	Illinois River Watershed Partnership	18
3.15.15	Open Space Plan – Outreach focus group	NWARPC	7
3.16.15	Open Space Plan – Built Environment focus group	NWARPC	6
3.17.15	Open Space Plan – Heritage focus group	NWARPC	8
3.18.15	Open Space Plan – Natural Environment focus group	NWARPC	8
3.18.15	Benton County AG Day	Benton County Extension Service Building, Bentonville	19
3.19.15	Open Space Plan – Built Environment focus group	NWARPC	5
3.20.15	Open Space Plan – Implementation focus group	NWARPC	7
3.30.15	MTP/Open Space/Bike-Ped Plan	Shiloh Museum, Springdale	11
4.2.15	MTP and Open Space Plan surveys	Washington County Regional Library System	50
4.12.15	MTP/Open Space/Bike-Ped Plan	Siloam Springs Kiwanis	22
4.14.15	MTP and Open Space Plan surveys	AR Natural Resources Commission Floodplain training at NWARPC	16
4.20.15	MTP and Open Space Plan surveys	AR Dept of Parks and Tourism Outdoor Recreation Grant workshop at NWARPC	14
4.23.15	MTP Public Forum information	Info signs posted on ORT buses throughout the region	Everyone on routes
4.24.15	MTP and Open Space Plan	Univ. of Arkansas Architecture students	14
4.30.15	MTP and Open Space Plan	NWA Tourism Association, Fayetteville Chamber of Commerce	26
5.2.15	MTP and Open Space Plan	Razorback Regional Greenway Grand Opening, Springdale	1,000
5.18.15	MTP and Open Space Plan	Environmental Action Committee, Fayetteville	12
6.25.15	MTP and Open Space Plan	Benton County Health Coalition, Bentonville	14
7.16.15	MTP outreach to freight industry	NWARPC	5
7.25.15	MTP outreach to rail industry	Arkansas and Missouri RR, Springdale	3
7.28.15	MTP outreach	Rogers Rotary	50
7.31.15	MTP outreach to aviation industry	NWA Regional Airport, Highfill	3
8.4.15	MTP outreach to transit agencies	NWARPC	6
8.13.15	Open Space Plan	Beaver Watershed Alliance, Rogers Library	31

Table 4.3 - Community Events and Activities

*“The choices we make today are affecting who we become tomorrow. Compare communities with active cycling communities (practical, real transportation - NOT just recreation) and look at the quality of life. Who do we want to be?” - Public Comment*



Community Meetings in Siloam Springs, Fayetteville and Bentonville

• **COMMUNITY MEETINGS**

Additional public input was gathered at the community meetings listed in Table 4.4.

DATE	PROJECT	LOCATION	ATTENDANCE
1.30.13	Alternatives Analysis Study Stakeholder meeting	Jones Center, Springdale	26
6.13.13	Alternatives Analysis Study Stakeholder meeting	Northwest Arkansas Community College, Bentonville	27
12.15.14	Bike-Ped Plan	City Council, Elm Springs	15
12.16.14	Bike-Ped Plan	City Council, Fayetteville	40
12.16.14	Bike-Ped Plan	City Council, Lowell	20
12.18.14	Bike-Ped Plan	City Council, Elkins	10
12.30.14	Bike-Ped Plan	City Council, Tontitown	10
1.6.15	Bike-Ped Plan	Board of Directors, Siloam Springs	25
2.2.15	Bike-Ped Plan	Planning Commission, Greenland	10
2.3.15	Bike-Ped Plan	City Council, Goshen	10
2.24.15	Bike-Ped Plan	Planning Commission, Centerton	12
3.12.15	Bike-Ped Plan	City Council, Gravette	19
3.12.15	Bike-Ped Plan	Committee of the Whole, Centerton	25
3.12.15	Bike-Ped Plan	City Council, Centerton	15
3.19.15	MTP/Open Space/Bike-Ped Plan	TAC meeting, NWARPC	40
4.23.15	MTP outreach	ORT Board of Directors meeting at NWARPC	14
5.20.15	MTP and Open Space outreach	NWA MS4 Stormwater Compliance Group meeting	21
5.21.15	MTP/Open Space/Bike-Ped Plan	TAC meeting, NWARPC	35
6.9.15	Open Space Plan	Elected Officials Resource Group, NWARPC	17
7.1.15	MTP/Open Space/Bike-Ped Plan	NWA Council-Infrastructure Work Group, Springdale	14
8.20.15	MTP/Open Space/Bike-Ped Plan	TAC meeting, NWARPC	43
9.17.15	MTP/Open Space/Bike-Ped Plan	TAC meeting, NWARPC	42
10.15.15	MTP/Open Space/Bike-Ped Plan	TAC meeting, NWARPC	31
11.19.15	MTP/Open Space/Bike-Ped Plan	TAC meeting, NWARPC	28
1.21.16	MTP/Open Space/Bike-Ped Plan	TAC meeting, NWARPC	24
2.18.16	MTP/Open Space/Bike-Ped Plan	TAC meeting, NWARPC	35
3.17.16	MTP/Open Space/Bike-Ped Plan	TAC meeting, NWARPC	39

Table 4.4 - Community Meetings

**COMMUNITY OUTREACH SUMMARY**

- » Over 2,700 individuals attended the community outreach activities. Input was gathered throughout the region and regardless of where the outreach took place, many comments at each meeting addressed transportation issues for the entire region, in addition to those community-specific concerns.
- » In addition to numerous outreach activities and events, one-on-one meetings/briefings were held with local representatives from the aviation, rail and trucking industries, as well as local transit operators.
- » The first Draft MTP was posted online December 31, 2015. The TAC and RPC/Policy Committee were invited to review and comment on the Draft.
- » Community outreach and input continued throughout the entire MTP development process, culminating in a Final Public Forum held January 21, 2016 at NWARPC. The purpose of this session was to present the Draft MTP through posters, maps, and interaction with staff, and receive comments from the public.
- » After a 30-day public comment period, running from January 23, 2016 through February 21, 2016 the RPC/Policy Committee met on March 23, 2016 and adopted the MTP.
- » Notice for the meetings were published through advertisement with the local newspapers and press releases were developed and distributed to all local media outlets, which attracted great interest for the plan. In addition, email notification was given to government agencies, special interest groups, local officials, business leaders, NWARPC committees, news media, and other interested citizens.
- » The COP provided the opportunity for public involvement and comment throughout the MTP development process.

## SUMMARY, ANALYSIS AND REPORT ON COMMUNITY INPUT THROUGH THE PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY AND ONLINE MAP

This section summarizes the community input that took place during the development of the MTP through hard copy and online survey solicitations and online Wiki map input. 444 total survey responses were received, while the Wiki map had 235 visits with 105 comments.

### SURVEY RESULTS

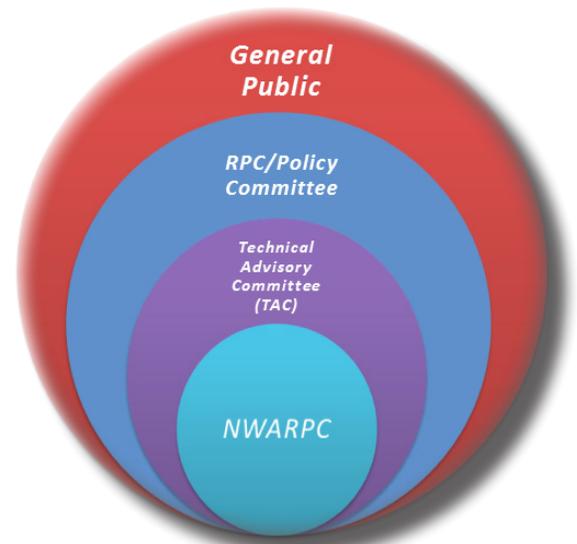
The 2040 MTP Public Opinion Survey was made available between September 11, 2014 and October 1, 2015 with links to the online version from the NWARPC website, the NWARPC Facebook page, and also by providing the link through emails, media, newspaper articles, etc. A paper copy of the survey was also made available at open houses, public input meetings and presentations. Both the online and paper surveys were published in both English and in Spanish. 444 surveys were received in English and 7 surveys were received in Spanish.

The following questions were answered by survey participants. The graphics represent the weighted average for each question. A copy of the English and Spanish surveys can be found in Appendix A: Community Outreach Plan, 2040 MTP Public Opinion Survey, and Public Comments.

**The first question** asked the responders to weigh the following options on a scale from 1 (unacceptable) to 5 (excellent):

- Commute time to work (length of time)
- Reliability of commute (same length of time every day)
- Other trips, such as shopping (length of time)
- Traffic congestion on Northwest Arkansas roadways
- Availability of transit in Northwest Arkansas
- The safety of Northwest Arkansas roadways
- Availability of sidewalks
- Availability of multi-use trails
- Availability of on-road bicycle facilities
- Safety of on-road bicycle facilities
- Traffic signals and signage
- Northwest Arkansas efforts to improve transportation

434 people answered this question (See Figure 4.1). The options with the most unacceptable choices were the availability of transit and the traffic congestion in Northwest Arkansas. The choices that were highly rated were the commute time to work (length of time) and the reliability of commute (same length of time every day).



*"The streets are far more congested than they have ever been due to population growth here. Thank you for trying to ask people what their ideas and opinions are about the needed changes and updates."*  
- Public Comment

*"Investment in other forms of transport is far past due. These would give citizens options. Right now, nearly everyone must drive."*  
- Public Comment

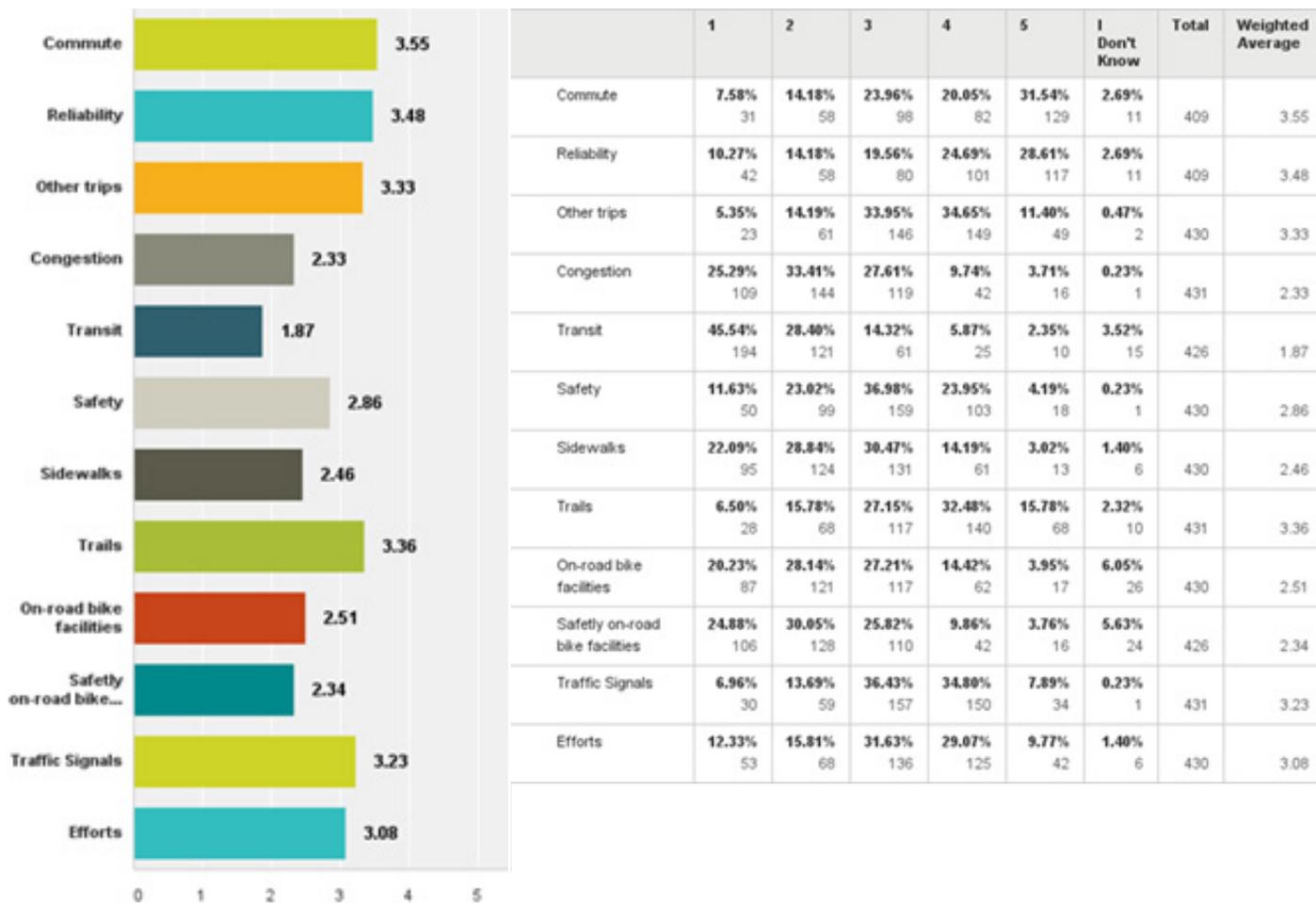


Figure 4.1 - Question 1

The second question asked the responders to weigh the following options on a scale from 1 (not important) to 5 (very important):

- Adding lanes to I-49
- Adding interchanges to I-49
- Improving I-49 interchanges
- Adding overpasses to I-49
- Building new roads
- Improving road safety
- Expanding the bus system
- Adding lanes to other roadways
- Completing a 4 and 5 lane regional grid network
- Providing transportation for people with disabilities
- Building sidewalks
- Building multi-use trails
- Providing bicycle lanes
- Providing bicycle facilities
- Developing rideshare/carpool programs
- Planning/developing a commuter rail system
- Using technology to improve congestion (changeable highway message signs, signal coordination, etc.)

434 people answered this question. The transportation improvements that were considered the least important were adding interchanges to I-49, adding overpasses to I-49 and also building new roads. The improvements that were considered most important were using technology to improve congestion, improving road safety, building sidewalks, building multi-use trails and expanding the bus system (See Figure 4.2).

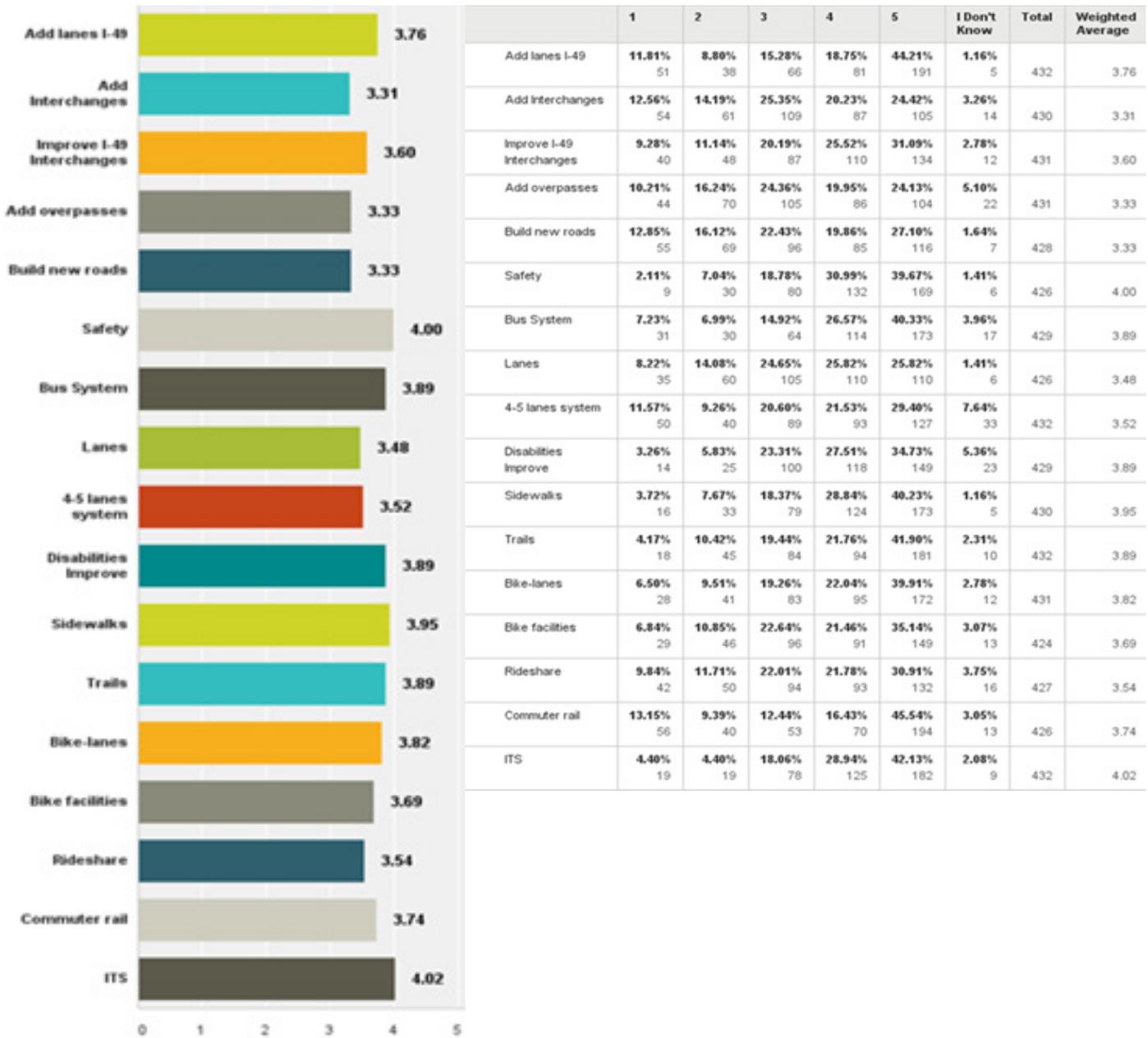


Figure 4.2 - Question 2

The third question asked the responders to rank the following options from 1 (unacceptable) to 5 (acceptable) as strategies to improve transportation in Northwest Arkansas:

- Increase gas tax
- Increase sales tax
- Build toll roads
- Improve public transportation
- Maintain the status quo (no change to current progress)

430 people answered this question. Maintaining the status-quo was the option that most respondents considered unacceptable. The majority of the respondents also selected to improve public transportation as the most acceptable strategy to improve transportation, followed by the gas tax increase strategy. See Figure 4.3.

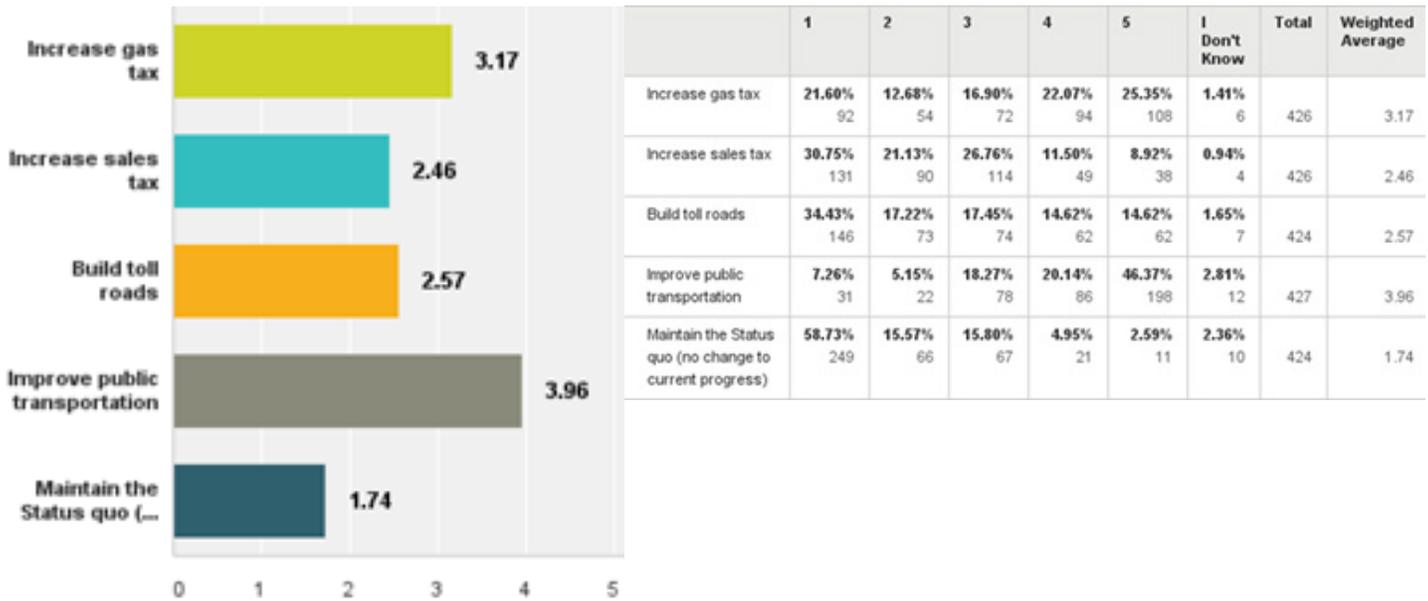


Figure 4.3 - Question 3

Questions four and five asked the respondents to identify three transportation priorities in Northwest Arkansas and also to share any additional comments regarding transportation in the region. In general, the comments were referencing the identified need in the region for a rail system, whether commuter or light rail, adding lanes to I-49, expanding the bus system, adding more sidewalks and continue improving the trail system. These comments can be found at the end of this chapter.

Question six asked the respondents where their residence was. 424 people answered this question. Approximately 96 percent of the respondents live in Northwest Arkansas (with 52 percent in Washington and 44 percent in Benton Counties). There were about 2 percent respondents from McDonald County, Missouri and less than 1 percent from other counties. See Figure 4.4.

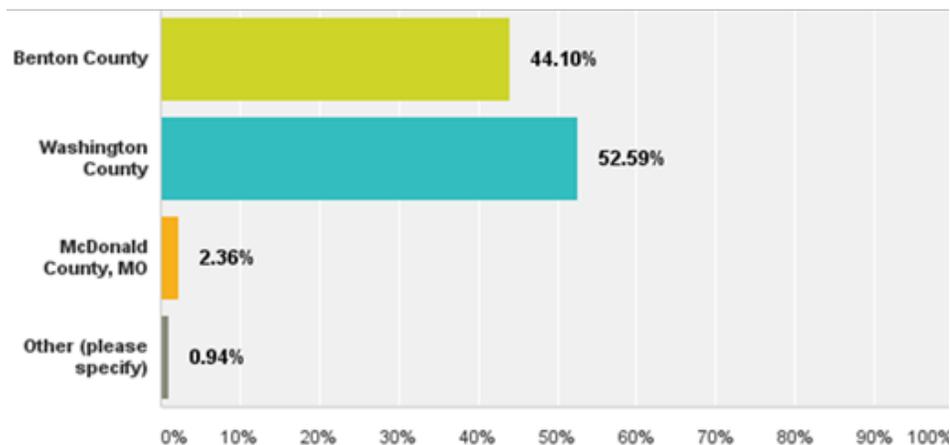
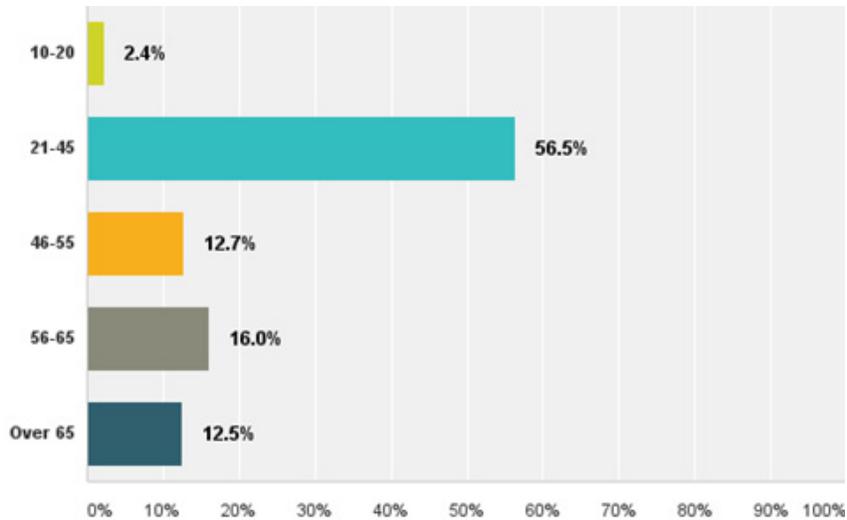


Figure 4.4 - Question 6

**Question seven** asked the respondents to select their representative age group. 425 people answered this question. More than half of the respondents were identifying themselves in the 21-45 age group followed by the 56-65 age group and the 46-55 age group. See Figure 4.7.



*“Begin a campaign and educate everyone in Northwest Arkansas why it is important to vote for an increased gas tax.” - Public Comment*



Figure 4.5 - Question 7

**Questions eight and nine** asked the respondents to identify the ZIP codes of their residence and ZIP codes of their work place. There were 423 respondents for question eight (ZIP code of home) and 386 respondents for question nine (ZIP code of workplace). The tables below illustrate the number of respondents for each ZIP code identified in these two questions. See Figure 4.6 and Figure 4.7

**Question ten** was answered by 414 people. The respondents were asked how far away they lived from I-49. According to the answers, more than 55 percent of the respondents live within 5 miles from I-49 and approximately 19 percent between 5-10 miles from it. Twelve percent of the respondents live within 21-30 miles from I-49. See Figure 4.8

**Question eleven** was completed by 424 persons. The question asked if the respondents used either a bicycle or if they walked to reach their work place or for other types of trips. Sixty two percent of the respondents answered “no” to this question while thirty eight percent answered “yes”. See Figure 4.9.

**Question twelve** was a follow up from question eleven in asking respondents to select how many times they do use either a bicycle or walk to commute or for other types of trips. From the percent of the people who use a bicycle or walk to work approximately 23 percent do so 2-3 times a week and the same percent selected the several times a month option. Also, 22 percent of those bike or walk to work or for other trip purposes on a daily basis. 175 people completed this question. Some respondents though still chose the Other category even if they did not answer “yes” to Question 11. See Figure 4.10.

**Question thirteen** asked if the respondents use public transportation to commute to work or for other types of trips. The overwhelming majority, almost 92 percent of the respondents, answered “no”. 427 people responded to this question. See Figure 4.11.

ZIP Code of Residence	Respondents
64831	1
64856	5
64859	1
65730	2
68745	1
72223	1
72661	1
72701	91
72702	1
72703	33
72704	24
72712	30
72714	15
72715	14
72717	1
72718	5
72719	4
72722	2
72727	3
72730	2
72732	7
72734	22
72735	1
72736	4
72739	1
72740	1
72744	1
72745	8
72751	6
72753	2
72756	17
72758	10
72761	38
72762	29
72764	30
72766	1
72774	3
74331	1
76762	1
78701	1
78734	1
84054	1

Figure 4.6 - Question 8

Zip Code of Workplace	Respondents
64831	2
64856	4
71852	1
72209	1
72701	98
72702	6
72703	19
72704	4
72712	50
72714	42
72715	14
72716	2
72718	1
72719	2
72730	2
72732	1
72734	15
72741	2
72745	4
72756	17
72758	6
72761	30
72762	26
72764	26
72765	1
72774	1
75761	1
78756	1
78765	1
84054	1
92136	1

Figure 4.7 - Question 9

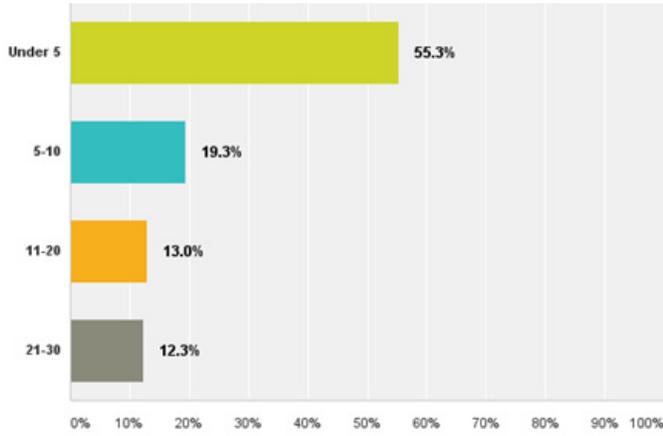


Figure 4.8 - Question 10



Public Forum in Bentonville

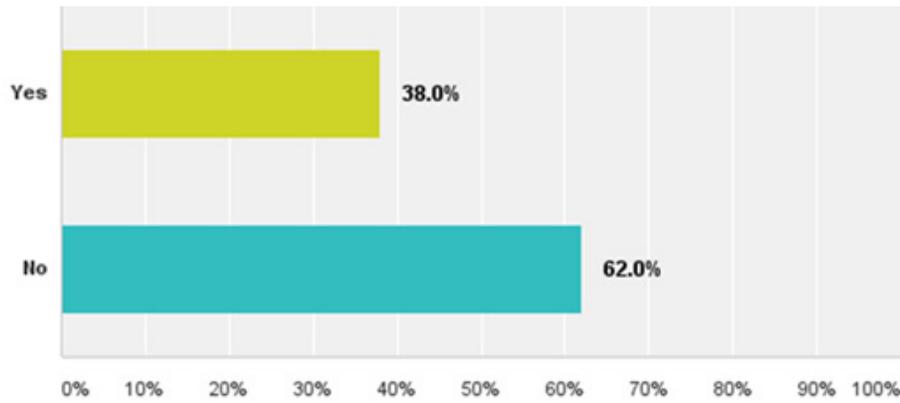
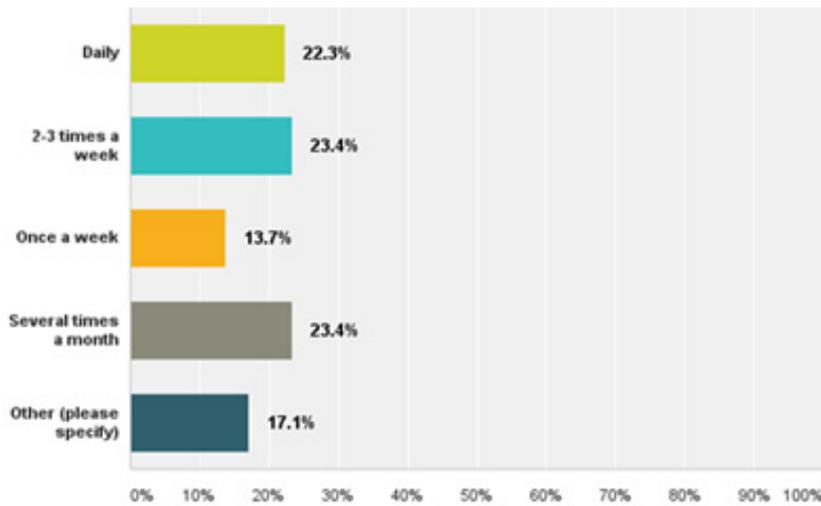
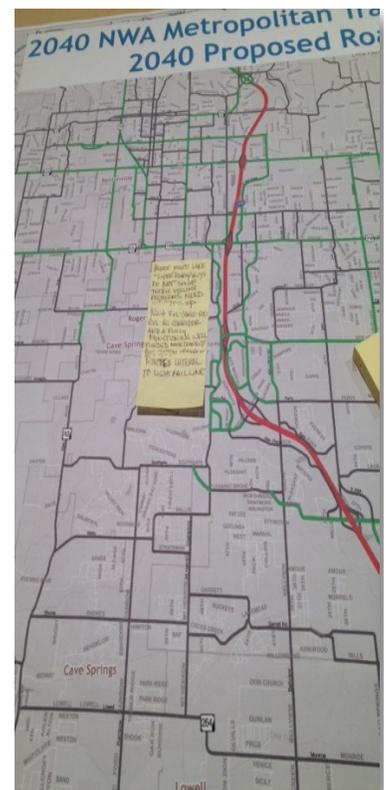


Figure 4.9 - Question 11

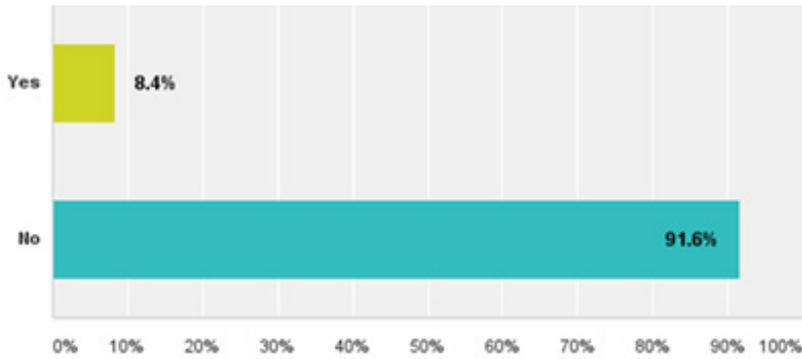


Answer Choices	Responses	Count
Daily	22.3%	39
2-3 times a week	23.4%	41
Once a week	13.7%	24
Several times a month	23.4%	41
Other (please specify)	17.1%	30
<b>Total</b>		<b>175</b>

Figure 4.10 - Question 12



Map Display at Public Input Forum

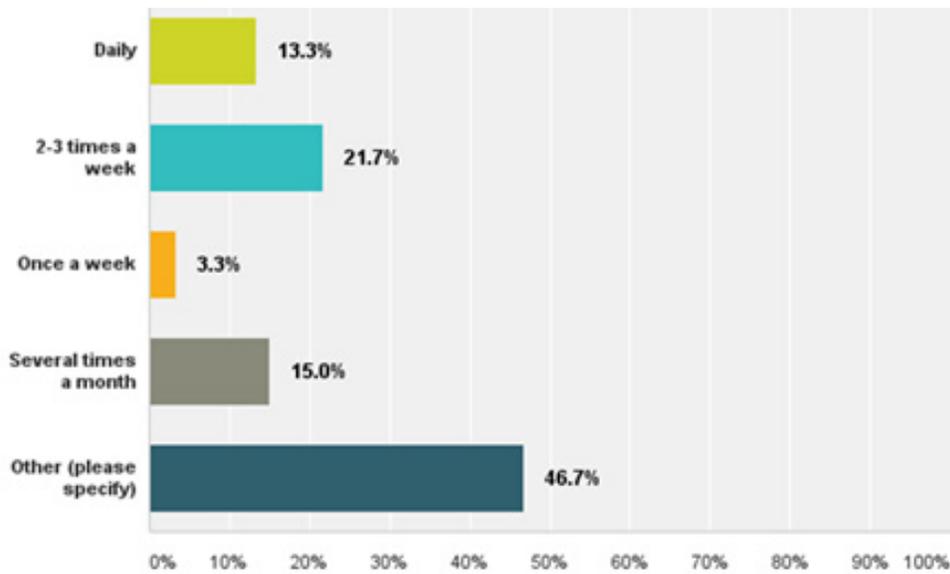


Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	8.4% 36
No	91.6% 391
<b>Total</b>	<b>427</b>

Figure 4.11 - Question 13

**Question fourteen** was addressed to the respondents who answered “yes” to the previous question. From the percent of the respondents who answered “yes” to the previous question, 13 percent said that they use public transportation on a daily basis, while about 47 percent selected the “other” category. The question was completed by 60 people. Some respondents, though, still chose the Other category even if they did not answer “yes” to Question 13. See Figure 4.12.

**The last question** asked if the respondents had regular access to a motor vehicle for work and other types of trip purposes. The overwhelming majority of 97 percent answered “yes”. The question was completed by 420 people. See Figure 4.13.



Answer Choices	Responses
Daily	13.3% 8
2-3 times a week	21.7% 13
Once a week	3.3% 2
Several times a month	15.0% 9
Other (please specify)	46.7% 28
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>

Figure 4.12 - Question 14

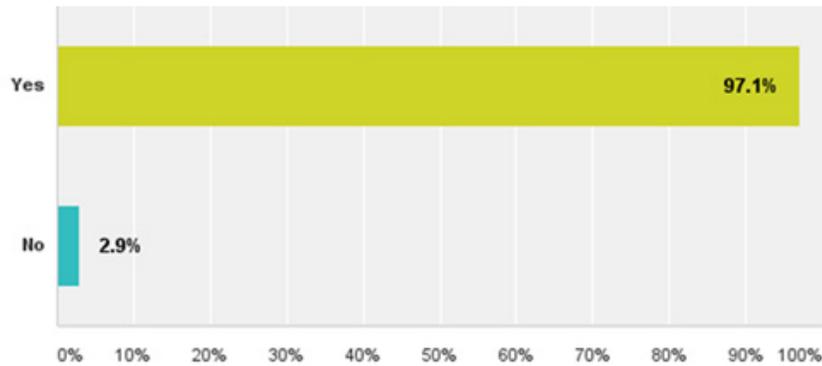


Figure 4.13 - Question 15

The survey was also published online and distributed on paper in Spanish. 7 responses were received. In general, the responses from the Spanish speakers were comparable with the overall English responses. On the first question, the safety of on-road and bicycle facilities was rated by most as unacceptable and the commute time to work (length of time) and the reliability of commute (same length of time every day) the most acceptable. The majority of choices in question 2 were considered of major importance, especially providing bicycle facilities. The respondents were from both Washington (four people) and Benton Counties (three people) and mostly between the 21-45 and 46-55 age groups. They also have regular access to a motor vehicle, with one exception. The comments from these surveys were mainly identifying the need for bicycle facilities, a better public transportation system and adding more lanes on major roads. The comments also mentioned the lack of sidewalks for pedestrians and the fact that the traffic lights are not synchronized in certain areas. The abrupt change in speed limit without adequate signalization was identified as a problem as well.

#### WRITTEN COMMENTS

Written comments were received via public input forums, and paper and online surveys. Sample responses are shown below; all public comments are shown in Appendix A.

- » “NWA is on a good path and I want to see the region become even better and with that come improvements to the roadways and finding new ways to improve public transportation.”
- » “I get to see I-49 at its worst, and regularly take HWY 112 as an alternate route. As I-49 congestion in-creases, more people will start to use State highways as an alternative which will quickly increase the need for repairs.”
- » “There are just too many people for a road system that was made to handle small town traffic. There needs to be drastic changes to allow the continued growth the area has been seeing in the recent years”.
- » “If possible, would like to bike or take public transit to work or other types of trips.”
- » “Top priority is additional funding for transportation facilities.”
- » “I do greatly appreciate the completion and quality of the trail system.”
- » “Encourage cities to adopt "roundabouts" to keep traffic flowing.”
- » “Love, love, love the newly opened Razorback Greenway! Fantastic!”
- » “Driver Education is important, so that vehicle and bicycles can operate together. Education - so texting is stopped, and tailgating is stopped - safe driving is an issue. If people would obey the speed limit, all would arrive in a timely and safe manner. Education - to look out for motorcycles.”
- » “Though it is off the corridor, XNA should certainly be included in any transit plan (bus, commuter rail). This would help thousands of residents and more thousands of visitors (business visitors and tourists).”

## ONLINE INPUT MAP

<http://WIKIMAPPING.COM/WIKIMAP/METROPOLITAN-TRANSPORTATION-PLAN-2040-UPDATE>

The online input map was designed to offer the public the opportunity to make specific comments and suggestions on transportation needs and/or identify locations for improvements. The map was made available in September 2014 and was active until October 2015. Figure 4.14 illustrates the online Wiki Map interface.

People were offered a list of potential improvements or to identify and place a point or draw a line that would identify a transportation problem, as well as the option to write in comments. The following list was available:

For Routes:

- Road Safety Improvement Needed
- Turn Lane Needed
- Road Repair/Maintenance Needed
- Add Lane
- Shoulder Needed
- Crosswalk Needed
- Add Sidewalk
- Add Bike Lane
- Add Multiuse Trail
- Add Transit Route
- Increase Buses Frequency

For Points:

- Add Traffic Signal
- Crosswalk/Sidewalk Needed
- Difficult Intersection
- Bridge Repair Needed
- Parking Near Trail Needed

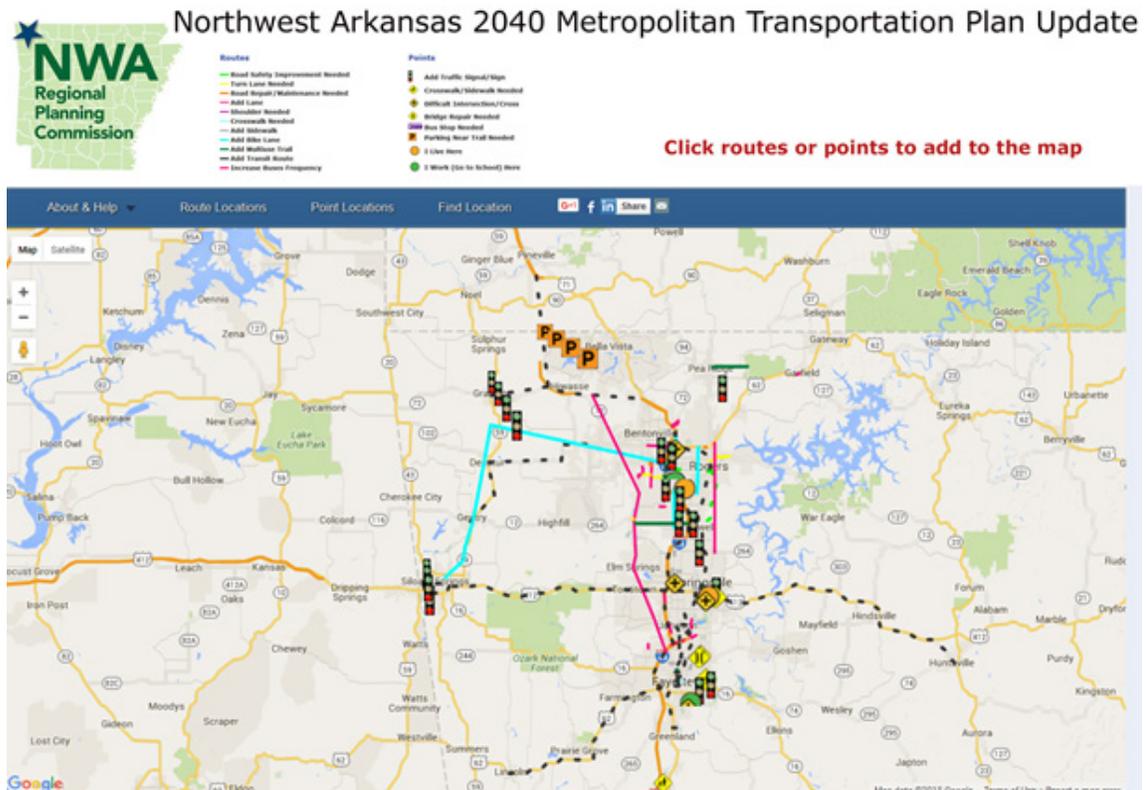


Figure 4.14 - Online Wiki Map Interface

The map provided another way of involving the general public in identifying their areas of concern or where they would like to see a particular type of mobility improvement. Map 4.1 is an illustration of these locations showing all the public input from the online map.

The respondents identified the following number of locations on the interactive map where improvements were needed:

- 16 where a traffic signal/sign is needed
- 3 where a bridge repair is needed
- 1 where a bus stop is needed
- 5 crosswalk/sidewalk is needed
- 7 where difficult intersections/cross are located
- 1 parking near a trail is needed
- 4 where road safety improvements are needed
- 13 where a turn lane is needed
- 3 where a road repair/maintenance is needed
- 22 where adding another lane is needed
- 3 where a crosswalk is needed
- 9 where adding a sidewalk is needed
- 4 where adding a bike lane is needed
- 5 where multiuse trails are needed
- 3 where adding a transit route is needed



Community Input Meeting

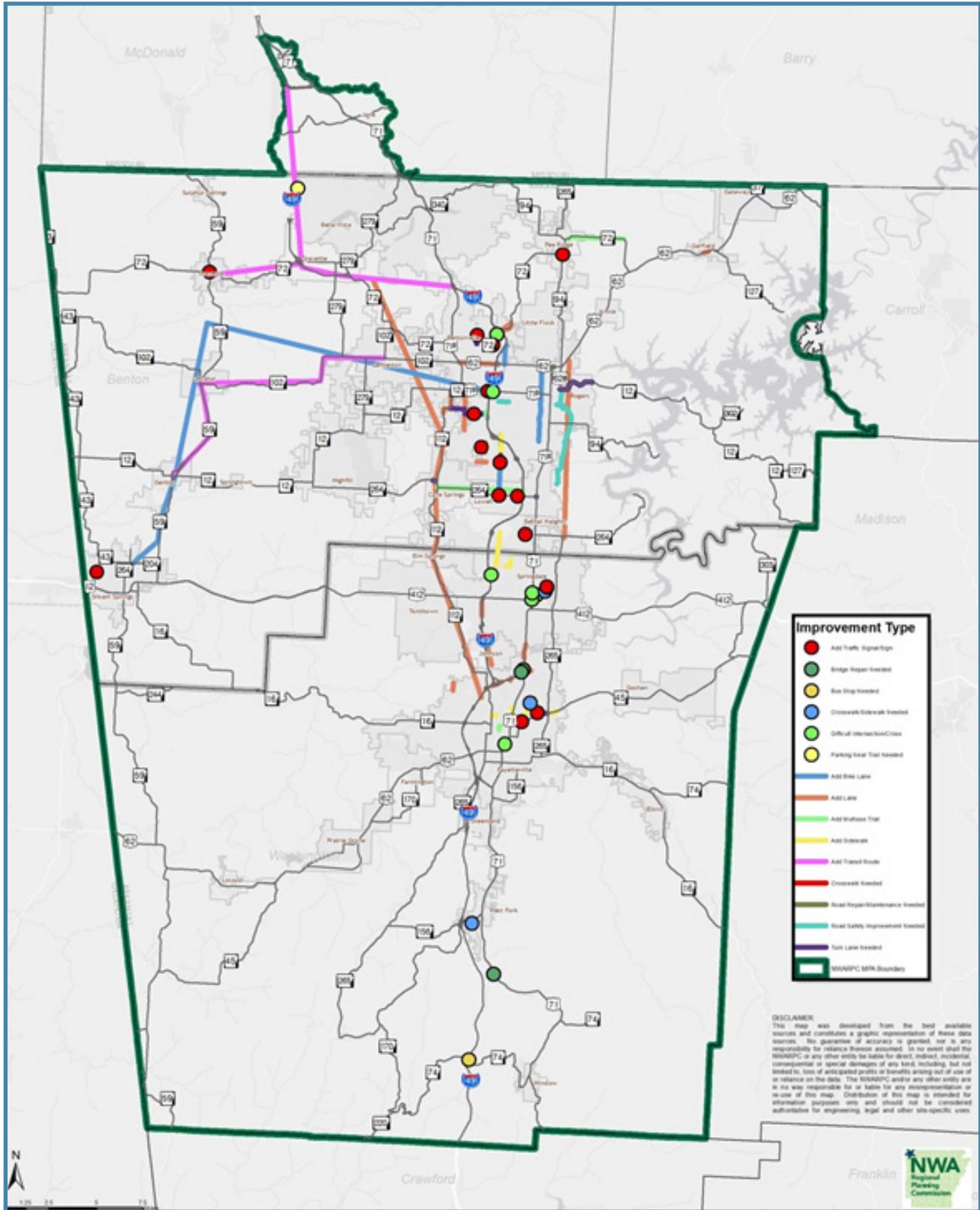
## CONCLUSION

Northwest Arkansas was able to meet the challenge of involving the community during the development of the MTP through regular input sessions in the community as well as regular media attention to engage citizens in the development of a long-range transportation plan. NWARPC has taken effective action in engaging the public in this process and the end result reflects the opinions of those who took the time and effort to provide input.

Involving the public in the decision-making process was an essential part in developing public consensus in the MTP. The public was invited to provide information, offer alternatives, present their interests and opinions, and react to the recommended MTP. This allowed important community concerns and technical issues to be identified and addressed. By using techniques outlined in the Public Participation Plan and the Community Outreach Plan, NWARPC was able to engage the citizens of this region to participate in the development of a transportation blueprint for this region for future generations.

Even as the public indicates its preference for certain types of transportation modes and improvements, the fact remains that as the projected costs and anticipated revenues for the projects in the MTP were analyzed and updated, it became apparent that there were not enough anticipated resources to complete all of the listed improvements. To determine what would be “cost feasible” to build, the projects were evaluated by the TAC from a technical and financial perspective to determine the most crucial regional transportation needs. The RPC/Policy Committee was informed of the project lists as recommended by the TAC and gave its approval to include these in the final MTP. Due to the fact that transportation needs are significantly greater than expected revenues, the issue of adequate funding and alternative funding will remain an issue for the region.

Many of the area’s citizenry highly support expanded transit, especially bus transit. In regards to transit projects, anticipated revenues determine the level of service. These revenues will only maintain the existing service. Without a dedicated funding source, transit service is at risk within the area. With dedicated funds, transit service will not only be preserved but may be expanded to adequately serve the entire region.



Map 4.1 - Online Map Comments