

REGIONAL SAFETY ACTION PLAN SURVEY SUMMARY

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Project #: 29061.0

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From: Doug Self and Natalie Haskell, Atlas Strategic Communications
CC: Project Management Team
RE: Regional Safety Action Plan Spring Survey Key Findings and Analysis

Understanding public perception of transportation safety in the Treasure Valley is integral to the success of the COMPASS Regional Safety Action Plan (RSAP) and ensuring its strategies meet the needs of travelers in the region. To gauge opinion on the safety of the region's streets and roads, the RSAP Public and Stakeholder Involvement team conducted a transportation safety survey across Southwest Idaho from March 5 to April 12.

The survey asked community members how safe they feel traveling on regional streets and roads by various modes, what safety priorities matter most to them and other transportation safety concerns to consider in the RSAP. In total, 423 people responded to the survey from nearly every zip code in the Treasure Valley. The findings gleaned from the survey responses are explored further in the following summary, diving into survey highlights and key themes to integrate into the developing RSAP.

PERCEIVED TRANSPORTATION SAFETY IN THE TREASURE VALLEY

The following section highlights key findings of the survey and provides further analysis of the qualitative results to help inform the RSAP strategies.

KEY FINDINGS

The survey findings indicate broad support for the goal and purpose of the RSAP while underscoring the urgent need to improve transportation safety in the Treasure Valley. Roughly 50 percent of survey respondents reside in Boise and community members ages 25 to 54 comprise more than 50 percent of all respondents.

The vast majority agree that zero deaths or serious injuries is both the correct goal for the RSAP and the appropriate annual acceptable threshold on roadways in Ada and Canyon Counties. Most respondents support adding some amount of time to their regular commutes for safety enhancements. On average, respondents provided a 2.9 rating (1-5 rating, 1 = not safe, 5 = very safe) when asked how safe they feel on roadways and shared that they feel safest traveling via public transit, driving their personal vehicle

and carpooling. Intersection safety, walking safety and biking safety were identified as the top three priorities for the RSAP, respectively.



DIVING DEEPER

The survey asked multiple open-ended questions and provided opportunities for additional commentary to gain a qualitative understanding of safety priorities and concerns that community members share in Southwest Idaho. The consensus demonstrates a clear recognition that there is both a significant desire and critical need to improve transportation safety in the Treasure Valley. However, safety priorities vary as some respondents place greater emphasis on the need for pedestrian and cyclist-friendly roadways while others focus on vehicle safety and driver behavior, with many falling somewhere in-between.

SAFETY CONCERNS

Additional safety concerns were raised in the survey responses – from the need for improved infrastructure planning to better accommodate transportation needs and regional growth to enhancing school zone safety and mitigating the impact of active construction projects. Several respondents specifically identified skateboards as a write-in mode of transportation where safety lacks significantly, and others noted traveling along the Greenbelt or walking with their children as areas of concern. Ada County residents expressed feeling safer traveling by personal vehicle, walking, and biking than Canyon County residents.

Many respondents emphasized that pedestrian and cyclist safety is essential, namely calling for additional sidewalks and bike lanes, better maintenance of existing bike lanes and educating drivers about the cyclist rules of the road. General maintenance of roadways and shoulders (e.g., regular cleaning/sweeping, fixing potholes, striping and effective snow removal) was also flagged as a key strategy to improving safety for cyclists and drivers alike. Driver education came up repeatedly as an integral element to transportation safety in the valley, specifically educating drivers about rules of the road for bicyclists and how to navigate roundabouts and four-way stop signs.

Respondents also frequently commented on intersection safety, specifically sharing instances of drivers frequently running red lights or not treading cautiously on yellow lights. Speeding and speed limit enforcement were often raised as concerns that must be addressed to effectively improve safety on regional streets and roads. Stricter enforcement of traffic laws in general and considering new policies to mitigate safety issues could also be critical to addressing poor driver behavior and enhancing overall transportation safety.

A few residents shared that school zone safety and accountability of contracted school (or youth camp/activities) bus services need to be top of mind when considering children's safety in transportation as well. Accessibility and ADA compliance in transportation infrastructure and an enhanced public transit system in the region are also crucial strategies respondents raised in their commentary. Construction impacts, access management, and visibility obstructions (e.g., overgrown vegetation and street parking) also require attention.

When asked about specific safety concerns to share with the project team, respondents noted the following roads and/or intersections as routinely challenging locations:

- Amity Road approaching Federal Way in Southeast Boise (speeding)
- 15th & Hill Road intersection (e-bikes and scooters obstructing roadways and sidewalks)
- Bergeson Avenue & Columbia Village (striping)
- Floating Feather between Horseshoe Bend and Eagle Road (bike lane maintenance)
- Glenwood Bridge to Riverside Drive (pedestrian safety)
- SH-44 & Fisher Parkway into Eagle Island State Park (pedestrian/cyclist crossing)
- Federal Way approaching Peace Valley Charter School (school zone safety/speeding)
- Federal Way & Victory Road (railroad crossing)
- Collister Road from Catalpa to State Street (speeding)
- Victory Road Southbound (pedestrian access)
- WB I-84 on ramp at Gowan
- 15th & State Street (congestion)
- Visibility impediments at stop signs along Amity Road and Victory Road
- Kuna Road & SH-69 (intersection safety / lighting)
- Designated right-hand turn lanes on E Amity Road at Meridian Road and S Eagle Rd at Victory Road
- Greenhurst Road at East Valley Middle School (pedestrian access)
- Eagle Road (speeding)
- Bergeson & Gekeler (water accumulation)
- Warm Springs to the foothills (speeding)
- Highway 20/26 from Middleton Road to I-84 (ongoing construction)
- Fairview Avenue / Franklin Road / Orchard Street / Overland Road / Chinden / Broadway / State Street (pedestrian access / sidewalk gaps)
- 12th Avenue at Nampa High School (pedestrian access)
- Caldwell Blvd. (congestion)
- Ustick & Indiana (bike access)

OTHER SAFETY PRIORITIES

In addition to the transportation priorities named in the survey, respondents highlighted a diverse array of other priorities that encompass both behavioral and infrastructure issues and reflect much of the safety concerns raised above.

Key issues include combating inattentive or distracted driving and addressing aggressive driving behaviors, ensuring safer school zones and child transportation, mitigating the impact of active construction projects, and coping with insufficient infrastructure. Roadway maintenance was often identified as a critical area for improvement – spanning from basic upkeep like street cleaning and pothole repair to ensuring proper signage and bike lane maintenance. Implementing a broader public transit system, thoughtful access management and promoting driver education opportunities were also regularly cited as essential strategies to safety. Strengthening enforcement and traffic laws, including cracking down on speeding, and enhancing accessibility rounded out the list of priorities respondents shared, highlighting the multifaceted nature of transportation safety challenges in the Treasure Valley.

COMMUTER TRAVEL

In discussing safer commutes, respondents who commute regularly acknowledged that safety is a critical priority and raised that improving transportation safety could reduce travel times and help ease commuter traffic. For example, adding a strategy to the RSAP like carpool lanes on the interstate could more efficiently move traffic and shorten commute time. When looking at the survey findings by counties, both Ada County and Canyon County residents expressed willingness to add a moderate to significant amount of time to their commutes for safety. Many retirees and remote workers commented on the question to affirm safety as a priority – both on thoroughfares and in residential communities – despite not regularly traveling during those high-traffic hours.

CONCLUSION

Despite varying opinions on where resources should focus, there is a clear understanding from survey respondents that transportation safety needs to be improved in the Treasure Valley. Throughout the survey, respondents demonstrated that regional transportation safety concerns are only worsening and that efforts need to be implemented now to prevent further tragedies on our streets and roads. The survey findings indicate wide support for the RSAP's goal and many of the strategies included in initial plan development. The findings also support an integrated community approach that allows for local municipalities and agencies to collaborate in identifying and executing the strategies that best work for their residents.