Appendix D - Public Involvement

WHATCOM COUNTY

ADA TRANSITION PLAN

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND FEEDBACK

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CC: Ryan Peterson, Transpo Group

DATE: December 2, 2019 FINAL

Introduction

In developing an ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) Transition Plan for Whatcom County, a key initial step is outreach to people with disabilities or those who support people with disabilities. The goal of this outreach is to gain feedback on current pedestrian facilities within the public right-of-way in Whatcom County, specifically those not in the incorporated areas of Cities like Bellingham, that provide access to community and government services. This draft memo outlines the community outreach process used to support development of the ADA Transition Plan and feedback we have received to date.
This memo summarizes outreach efforts through a public meeting, survey, and more in-depth focus groups.

Promotion and advertising for outreach

Outreach to solicit participants and encourage input at the open house, online open house, and survey included outreach to local community service providers and advocacy groups. Specific outreach to organizations serving and advocating for individuals with disabilities included:

- Whatcom County Main Web Page
- Whatcom County Public Works Page
- KGMI Radio
- Attendees and speakers at Whatcom County Hearing on June 18, 2019

An invitation to participate in a more in-depth focus group was solicited at the open house, through the online survey, and personal outreach. This focus group reviewed this summary and provided comments. Part of the focus group feedback was to seek input on ADA issues at bus stops from the school districts. This summary includes feedback from the transportation services of the Blaine, Lynden and Bellingham School Districts.

How were members of the public involved?

To garner feedback from the community, Whatcom County hosted an in-person Open House on July 30, an online survey that was available to the public from July 30 through August 31, and two focus group meetings for interested community members held on October 1 and 3.

Feedback for each element of outreach resulted in the identification of general and specific issues. Community members were also asked about priorities and which issues and areas are most important to them.

Public Meeting July 30, 2019

A community public meeting was held on July 30 at St. Luke's Community and Education Center from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. The room is accessible using elevators and the library is centrally located in Bellingham with good transit service. Sign language interpreters were on hand and staff engaged members of the community to provide feedback on maps and boards. Outreach boards were provided to help educate the public on ADA at the meeting. Images of the open house boards are provided in **Attachment A**. While the meeting was broadly advertised, less than 10 people attended the public meeting with very limited feedback. It should be noted that the City of Bellingham, located within Whatcom County is also updating their ADA Transition Plan with their outreach activities, including an open house, occurring roughly one month ahead of this meeting.

On-Line Survey June 30 through August 30, 2019

A 19-question survey was open from the time of the open house meeting on July 30 through August 30, 2019.

The survey was accessed 93 times and asks respondents how they travel, where they live, why they travel in Bellingham, whether they had a disability or support someone with a disability, and whether an accessibility issue ever prevented them from being able to participate or obtain services in Bellingham. Questions regarding demographics were optional. The survey did not specifically ask where respondents live but did request a ZIP code for each respondent. Of those responding to the survey, roughly one third were located largely within the City of Bellingham ZIP codes, one third were located in ZIP codes shared by the City and County unincorporated areas and one third were in the County and outside of Bellingham

The survey also asked for specific feedback on the types of pedestrian facility barriers people experience, the types of public services where access is most important for them, and specific locations where there are barriers or other accessibility issues.

It was also possible to discern differences between the priorities of those with disabilities, those that support people with disabilities, and those who do not have disabilities. Specifically, the top-line survey summary suggests that those with disabilities or supporting someone with a disability clearly experience more barriers in pedestrian facilities than those without disabilities. Those with disabilities and supporting those with disabilities noted priority locations as hospitals and city parks, while those without disabilities prioritized community services and hospitals slightly higher. Access to city parks was

notably a higher priority for those with disabilities as compared to those without disabilities or those supporting people with disabilities.

The survey questions are provided in **Attachment B**. Top-line summaries breaking down respondent types, demographics, and transportation patterns are provided in **Attachment C**.

Respondents reported issues at 100 locations including sidewalks, curb ramps, crosswalks at signals, ADA parking and with access to transit. **Attachment D** provides a list of issues collected through the surveys.

Focus Group Meetings October 1 and 3, 2019

Purpose

Two focus group meetings each 90 minutes long were held on October 1 and 3 in different areas of the County. The focus group meetings were offered to interested members of the community to review the initial comments received to date through the open house and survey as well as provide deeper feedback on aspects of accessibility in the County including specific locations, types of issues, and priorities.

Meetings Attendees and Locations

The first meeting was held at the Whatcom County Civic Annex, 332 N. Commercial Street on Tuesday, October 1 - 3:30 – 5 p.m. This location is located within the City of Bellingham, near transit services and the building is accessible. In addition to a sign language interpreter, five members of the public participated. The group included people with disabilities, people that support others with disabilities or work on infrastructure projects.

The second meeting was held in unincorporated Whatcom County at the Whatcom County Planning and Public Works offices at 901 W. Smith Road on Thursday, October 3 - 3:30 – 5 p.m. This location is an older building but is accessible and transit is provided nearby. In addition to a sign language interpreters and representative from Whatcom Transit (Janet Malley), five members of the public participated. The group included people with disabilities, and people that support those with disabilities.

Different locations were offered to provide opportunities for broader outreach and in different areas of the County. Whatcom County staff (Jim Karcher and David Hower), as well as members of the consultant team (Ryan Peterson and Jeanne Acutanza) also attended.

Meeting agenda

The focus group was facilitated by County and consultant staff. A draft focus group guide is included in **Appendix E**. Comments and discussion were recorded for all participants.

The focus group agenda is described below:

- **Welcome and acknowledge participants and provide brief purpose of meeting**
- **Review Ground Rules**
- **Self-Introductions**

- **Discussion of the survey results and review of materials**
- **Workshop and in-depth discussion**

Background and survey results

This ADA transition plan is heavily reliant on public perspectives and feedback, particularly by those with disabilities or supporting those with disabilities. This plan will be focused on identifying barriers in pedestrian facilities in the public right-of-way and prioritizing, scheduling and identifying funding for the removal of those barriers.

Discussion

After the review of survey top-line results, the group discussed issues and comments. These comments are transcribed from the recording and were summarized and categorized below in four areas:

1. Comments and issues on specific topics
2. Comments and issues at specific locations
3. Comments and issues that may not be addressed by the plan and
4. Priorities

General Comments and issues on specific topics

Some comments were raised related to specific issues. Where they overlapped, they were combined into the topics below:

Additional outreach – Additional outreach at schools or with bus drivers was suggested to gain specific feedback about students with disabilities and at facilities that serve those with disabilities, specifically Spinal Cord Injury support groups.

Less Walking, Limited Sidewalks, and More Driving in the County – Because of the rural nature of most of the County, a more significant portion of travel is done through driving and parking. In some urbanizing or growth areas, sidewalks and crosswalks are not available but should be considered. Speeds in rural, even urbanizing areas are a challenge for pedestrians, especially for crossing roadways. The County maintains few traffic signals, and signal-controlled crosswalks are infrequent. Because driving is an important mode of travel, the number of ADA parking spaces and the design are essential for providing access to community services and government buildings.

Schools – Walking to schools in the unincorporated counties can be challenging and not safe, where there are few sidewalks, and crosswalks. Because there are limited sidewalks, curb ramps are not a challenge. While a safe route to school programs should be part of all school plans, many schools may not have them because walking to school is considered unsafe. There have been cases of pedestrian fatalities near schools. If safe routes are developed, even off-road, they should be developed as accessible, especially where there are specific programs that serve children with disabilities. Places that might be promoting trails with uneven surfaces would not accommodate those with disabilities.

Based on comments from the Focus Groups. Specific outreach to the Blaine, Lynden and Bellingham school districts was conducted to gain feedback on how bus services work with children with disabilities, specifically if they are picking up students at curbside from sidewalks. Blaine School District noted their specialized school buses go door-to-door. Bellingham also noted most students with disabilities use specialized transportation.

Growth Areas – Whatcom County has unincorporated urban growth areas, including Columbia Valley / Kendall, Birch Bay, and Cherry Point. These areas are expected to accommodate more active and intense land uses, potentially resulting in a greater desire for people to walk and bike.
Signals and Crosswalks – Traffic signals at intersections provide opportunities to cross roadways safely. Whatcom County maintains relatively few traffic signals. In addition to a few signal-controlled crosswalks, few crosswalks are crossing potentially higher speed or busy arterial roads. Some signals in the County are maintained by other agencies, specifically WSDOT on state routes, and require coordination to coordinate ADA improvements.
Transit – Transit service in the unincorporated County generally only operates on arterial roadways and does not provide access on many secondary streets that serve residential areas. Paratransit is also limited to 3/4 of a mile from established routes. Transit for many in the disabled community is critical for mobility. Issues for transit include stops that don't have adequate landing pads or weather protection.

Governance and Partnerships – Responsibility to improve pedestrian facilities that provide access to services in Whatcom County are shared with many agencies, including incorporated cities, Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), Whatcom Transit Authority (WTA), other government institutions and private businesses. Improving access seamlessly, specifically for those with disabilities, may require coordination with different agencies.
County Parks – County Parks like Birch Bay, was not mentioned often; however, county parks provide recreational opportunities for all. For those with disabilities, access may be inhibited
Design Practices and Model Communities – Consider communities worth emulating that have implemented universal design. Ramps, rather than ramps and stairs, can serve as a universal design rather than building both.

Comments and issues at specific locations

Some comments were discussed with reference to specific areas as described below:

Birch Bay Blaine - There are older populations living here, and communities should provide sidewalks and ramps at all locations.
Hannegan Road - Transit and the park along Hannegan Road are not accessible. The grange hall located at Smith Road / Hannegan Road is not accessible.
Lynden – Consider a roundabout and improve for accessibility.
Sudden Valley Area – The Sudden Valley area lacks safe crosswalks by the firehouse crossing Lake Whatcom Boulevard.
Kendall Area

- Kendall Elementary and Mt Baker Library need to be improved with crosswalks and lighting. This is a location that may serve disabled and foster kids. There are uneven sidewalks, and

the inclines do not function well. Sidewalks or crosswalks do not serve the elementary school on SR 542/547. Students are advised not to walk to school. Sidewalks and crosswalks would need to be coordinated with the State.

- Mt Baker Roundabout is not accessible could be better for providing safe and protected pedestrian access for all. Provides access to the library
- Sidewalks are missing at the East Regional Community Center and connecting crosswalks across Kendall Sumas Highway (SR 547). This community center serves a broad community, and access for all users (not just auto) is essential.
- Kendall Trail is a high priority for the pedestrian bicycle advisory committee and could serve the elementary school. A trail should consider accessibility for all users. A path may be good for some users, including cyclists but not ADA.

Birch Bay/Blaine – The area serves many seniors and has mobility issues and limited sidewalks.

Northside of Lakeway Drive - There is missing sidewalk on the north side between Lowe Street and just past Euclid.

County Wide

- Sr. Centers – Senior Centers located in Sumas, Everson, Blaine, and Lynden may not be accessible
- Consider connecting sidewalks in higher population areas of the County. Bicycle systems are not interconnected.

Routine Sidewalk Maintenance - Overhanging brush blocking the sidewalks should be maintained

Comments and issues that may not be addressed by the plan

Some problems identified may not be treated as part of the Whatcom ADA Transition Plan. These are described below:

Facilities on State Routes – Urbanizing areas are often served by State Routes like SR 542 and SR 547. Crosswalks and sidewalks are not often identified as part of a state design standard in rural to urbanizing areas. Whatcom County would need to coordinate improvements on state routes with WSDOT.

Transit and Paratransit – More frequent service is desirable to serve more of the County. More paratransit that is more frequent is desirable. Transit shelters are not provided in areas where many people wait, specifically the WinCo in Bellingham.

ADA parking – There is inadequate ADA parking at private businesses

Incorporated Areas – Within incorporated areas like Bellingham, scooters that are being considered may create another obstacle in addition to sandwich boards on sidewalks. Businesses on the Guide Meridian (like Starbucks) don't have good crosswalk access and signals to protect crosswalks

Priorities

As a final topic, the group discussed priorities and what should be fixed first. Notes from that discussion are provided below:

> Urbanizing or growth areas – Urbanizing areas, where pedestrian activity is expected to increase, currently lack pedestrian facilities that are adequate for all users and specifically those with disabilities. Specific areas mentioned include Kendall, Birch Bay, and Sudden Valley.
> Schools – Improving walkability to local schools and specifically addressing those with disabilities could be a partnership with the schools to create safe routes to school.
> Jurisdictional coordination – Management or maintenance of pedestrian facilities can be made more challenging if agencies have shared jurisdiction. Coordination between agencies should be addressed. If the State (WSDOT) has jurisdiction, but the City identifies a need for a change, there should be mechanisms for coordination and collaboration specifically to address ADA concerns.
> Additional and on-going outreach – Some mentioned the need to continue outreach and keep the plan dynamic as new issues are raised.

ATTACHMENT A – OPEN HOUSE BOARDS

Mobility for All

Whatcom County ADA Transition Plan

Improving Access to Whatcom County's Public Rights-of-Way

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WHAT TRANSPORTATION CAN BE.

What is ADA?

The Americans with Disabilities Act

- Signed into law in 1990
- Protects the rights of citizens with disabilities

ADA Title II

- Governments must provide accessibility for everyone
- Sidewalks
- Curb Ramps
- Policies/Procedures

Pedestrian Facilities

Well- developed and-maintained pedestrian facilities are critical for providing access to county services and resources.

Cracked and Uneven Sidewalks

Sidewalks that have fallen into disrepair present a challenge for many, especially those using walkers, wheelchairs, or canes, pushing strollers, etc.

Curbs at Intersections Without Ramps

Curbs not equipped with adequate ramps create a potentially significant impediment for the mobility-challenged, and are inaccessible for those using wheelchairs.

Obstructions in Sidewalks

Sidewalk obstructions such as telephone poles or tree roots, present a significant obstacle to pedestrian travel, especially for sight-and/or mobility-impaired populations.

Pedestrian Facilities

Well- developed and-maintained pedestrian facilities are critical for providing access to county services and resources.

Curb Ramps Without Detectable Warning Surfaces

Ramps not equipped with a means of detection present a basic safety concern for those with sight impairments.

Inaccessible/Inaudible Pedestrian Pushbuttons

Inaccessible and/or inaudible crosswalk push-buttons a basic challenge for users in wheelchairs, as well as those with sight impairments.

Lack of Available ADA Parking Spaces

Insufficient or nonexistent ADA parking spaces prevent access to government offices and other service-provider locations.

City vs County Planning

How is Whatcom County's ADA Transition Planning different from Bellingham's?

City

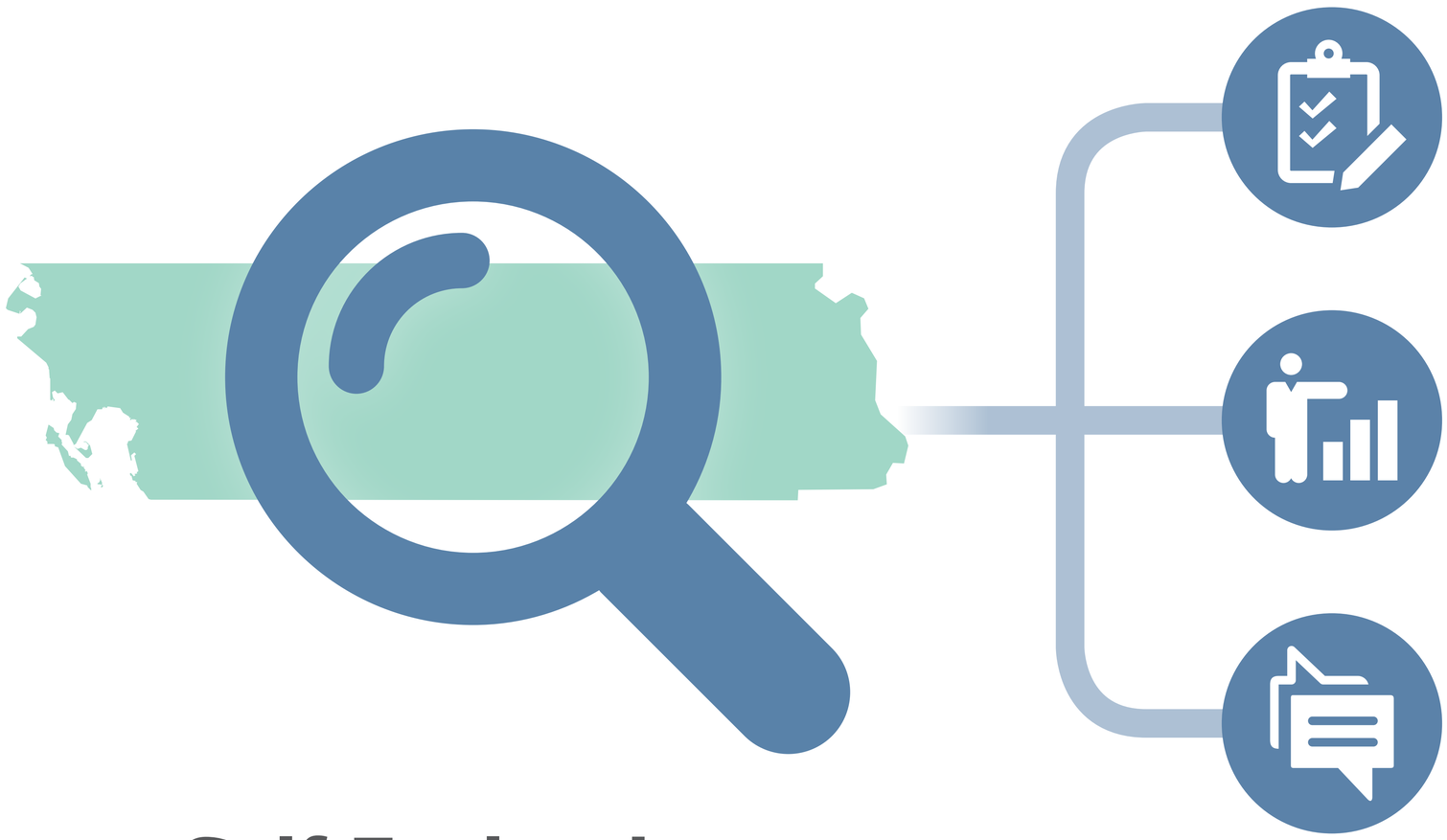
Focuses on services within the city of Bellingham

Both examine gaps and barriers to pedestrian facilities

County

- Focuses on services outside the city of Bellingham
- County Plan prioritizes access to services

Conducting an ADA Inventory



Self-Evaluation

Physical Inventory

Prioritize for Greatest Impact

Utilize Public Feedback

Asking the Community

Where do you encounter gaps and barriers?

What areas are most important to you?

Take the Survey!

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WhatcomCo

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WHAT TRANSPORTATION CAN BE.

Outreach

Online Survey

Ask the public for input identifying gaps and barriers

Focus Group

Gather firsthand accounts, experiences, and plan input

Plan Adoption

Review and adopt final Whatcom County ADA Plan

Take the Survey!

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WhatcomCo

Timeline

Aug-Sept 2019

- Survey & Community Outreach
- Barrier Removal Evaluation

Fall 2019

- Focus Group
- Prioritization
- Cost Estimating
- Transition Schedule

Q1 2020

Draft & Final Plan

Thank You

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WHATCOM COUNTY WASHINGTON

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WHAT TRANSPORTATION CAN BE.

ATTACHMENT B – ONLINE SURVEY

Whatcom County ADA Transition Plan

Whatcom County seeks to create an inclusive and welcoming environment accessible to all.
Whatcom County is beginning the process to address the accessibility of pedestrian facilities in the public right of way including sidewalks, curb ramps, and pedestrian crossings.
The County work is similar to planning being done by the City of Bellingham but is focused on areas *outside of the City limits*.

Through this brief survey, we'd like you to identify the locations and deficiencies you consider most important.
You may also provide your contact information to receive updates or participate in a future focus group.

* 1. First, please tell us why you travel in Whatcom County? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Live in Whatcom County
- ☐ Work in Whatcom County
- ☐ Attend school / college
- ☐ Recreation / Recreational Activities
- ☐ Other (please specify)
- ☐ Medical Appointments
- ☐ Shopping
- ☐ Other community and social services

* 2. Please tell us about yourself. (Check all that apply)

- ☐ I have a disability that impacts how I travel (please describe that disability in question 3)
- ☐ I support a person with disabilities (please describe that disability in question 3)
- ☐ I have no disability
- ☐ I prefer not to say

3. If you indicated you have a disability or support someone with a disability, please select from the following list. (Check all that apply)

- [ ] Physical, mental or emotional condition that limits learning, remembering or concentrating
- [ ] Blindness or serious difficulty seeing when wearing glasses
- [ ] Condition that substantially limits one or more physical activities such as walking, or climbing stairs
- [ ] Deafness or hearing difficulty
- [ ] Use a mobility device
- [ ] Other (please specify)
- [ ] Use a wheelchair
- [ ] Use assistive software technology such as a screen-reader
- [ ] Use hearing aids or hearing assistive devices
- [ ] Use a service animal

4. What resources do you use to find information on ADA issues? (Check all that apply)

- [ ] Washington State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS)
- [ ] Washington State Department of Services for the Blind (DSB)
- [ ] Whatcom Transit
- [ ] United Blind of Whatcom County
- [ ] Other (please specify)

5. Please provide us with your home ZIP code? (enter 5-digit ZIP code; for example, 00544 or 94305)

6. How often do you travel in Whatcom County? (Select one)

- ◯ 5-7 days per week
- ◯ 3-4 days per week
- ◯ 1-2 days per week
- ◯ less than weekly

7. How do you travel within Whatcom County? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Drive and park
- ☐ Take transit or paratransit shuttles
- ☐ Wheel (use a wheelchair)
- ☐ Walk with assistance like a cane or walker
- ☐ Walk with a service animal
- ☐ Walk
- ☐ BIke
- ☐ Other (please specify)

8. If you use transit, how often do you use it in a typical week? (Select one)

- ◯ 4 or more days per week
- ◯ 2-4 days per week
- ◯ 1 day or less per week
- ◯ less than weekly

Access to Whatcom County services

9. Are you now or were you ever unable to participate or obtain services in Whatcom County***(Excluding facilities in the City of Bellingham)***?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

10. What was the reason you could not participate? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Facility not accessible
- ☐ Website not accessible
- ☐ Materials not provided in an alternative format
- ☐ Transportation or parking not available
- ☐ Sign language interpreter not provided
- ☐ Assistive listening devices not provided
- ☐ Program not accessible
- ☐ Other (please specify)

11. Which of the following pedestrian facility issues are reasons you could not participate? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Sidewalk barriers
- ☐ Pedestrian signal issues including access to push buttons
- ☐ Curb ramp barriers
- ☐ ADA parking not available
- ☐ Pedestrian crosswalk issues
- ☐ Other (please specify)

Priorities for pedestrian facilities

Excluding facilities inside the City of Bellingham, **please give us your top two priorities where pedestrian facilities need to be improved.**

* 12. Of the six types of locations below, which one would be your HIGHEST priority? (Select one)

- ◯ Government buildings that provide human services
- ◯ Other government buildings
- ◯ County parks
- ◯ Community services
- ◯ Schools and institutions
- ◯ Transit facilities (examples are transit stops)

* 13. Of the six types of locations below, which one would be your SECOND HIGHEST priority? (Select one)

- ◯ Government buildings that provide human services
- ◯ Other government buildings
- ◯ County parks
- ◯ Community services
- ◯ Schools and institutions
- ◯ Transit facilities (examples are transit stops)

Specific Problem Areas in Whatcom County

For these open-ended questions please provide locations where you have experienced challenges with pedestrian facilities including sidewalks, curb ramps, crosswalks, and buttons for activating walk signals.Please note areas outside *the City of Bellingham.*

14. Where have you experienced challenges in Whatcom County? Please list up to three locations and the problem. Be as specific as possible about the location and the type of barrier (sidewalk, curb ramp, pedestrian crossings, pedestrian push buttons)

Location 1 (Street address or cross street)	
Problem 1	
Location 2 (Street address or cross street)	
Problem 2	
Location 3 (Street address or cross street)	
Problem 3	

Demographic questions

We would like to better understand the audience taking our survey. Providing information is optional and your responses are confidential.

15. What is your age? (optional)

- ◯ under 18
- ◯ 18 to 24
- ◯ 25 to 34
- ◯ 35 to 44
- ◯ 45 to 54
- ◯ 55 to 64
- ◯ 65 or older

16. How do you identify yourself? (optional)

- ◯ African American/Black
- ◯ Asian
- ◯ Caucasian/White
- ◯ Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- ◯ Native American
- ◯ Some other race or combination of races

17. Are you of Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino origin or descent? (optional)

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

Thank you and next steps

Thank you for participating in this survey. Work on the plan will continue throughout the year. If you would like to stay in touch or participate in future phases, please provide your contact information below.

If you have additional question, please contact Dave Hower, Whatcom County Engineering Technician at (360) 778-6268 dhower@co.whatcom.wa.us

18. Please provide your contact information to receive updates on the plan.

Name	
Email Address	
Phone Number	

19. Would you be willing to participate in a focus group related to the plan?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No

ATTACHMENT C – SURVEY TOPLINE RESULTS

Whatcom County
ADA Transition Plan
Outreach Top Line Results

Open House July 30

Survey July 30 through August 30, 2019

Transpo Group/Acutanza STS

Overview of Outreach

- Public Meeting July 30 at St. Luke's Community and Education Center
  - Provided educational information on ADA Transition Plans
  - Alternative services / sign language interpretation provided
  - Low turnout (<10)
- Survey open July 30 through August 30
  - Advertised on County Website
  - Promoted through County Social Media Channels

Survey Summary

1. Respondents and demographics
2. Issue areas
3. Priorities

1. Respondents and demographics

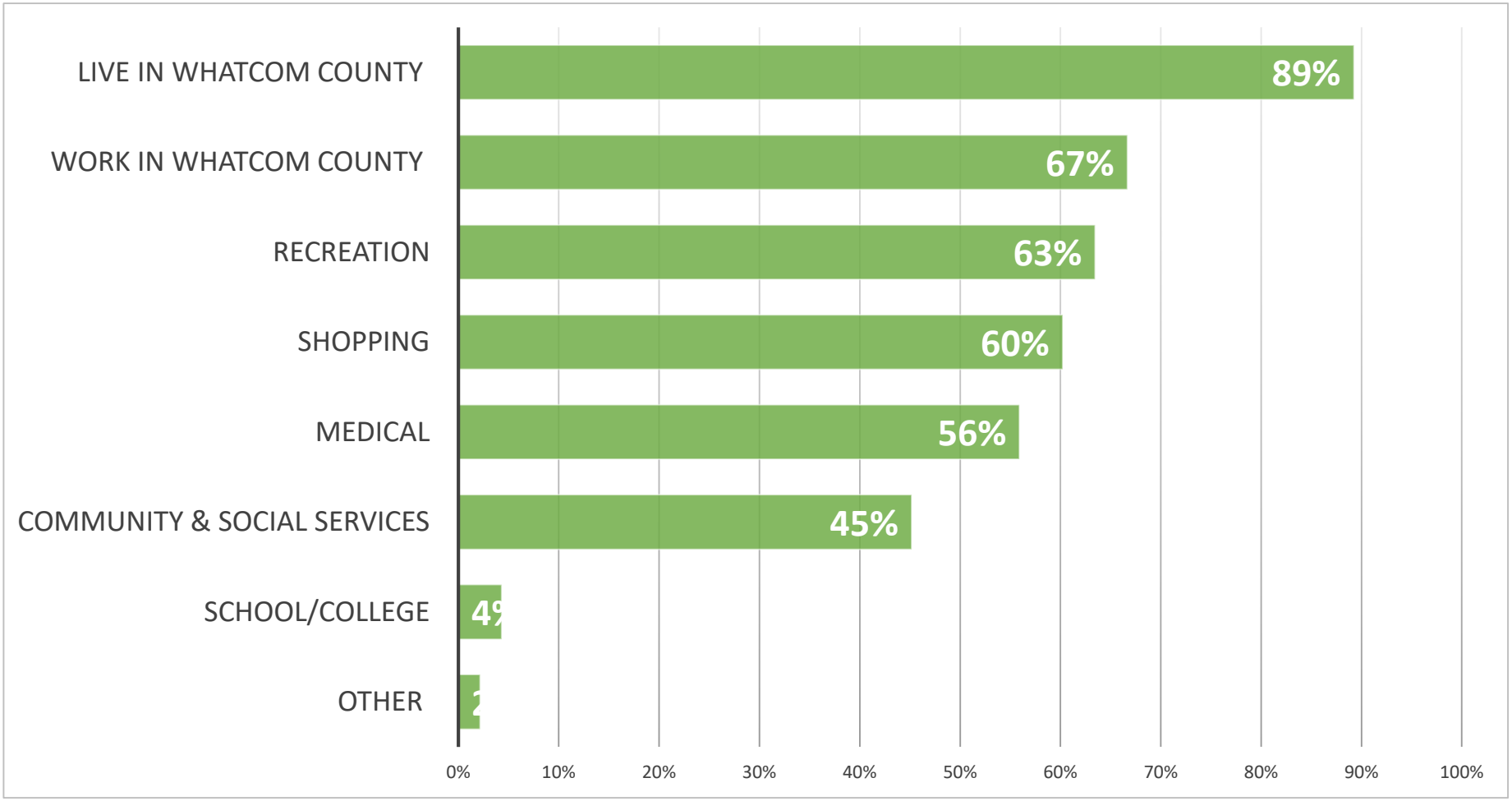
1. Demographics and Respondents

- 93 attempts 9 did not substantially complete
- Most live in Whatcom County
- Many work, recreate, and shop.
- Top three modes are driving/parking, walking and biking

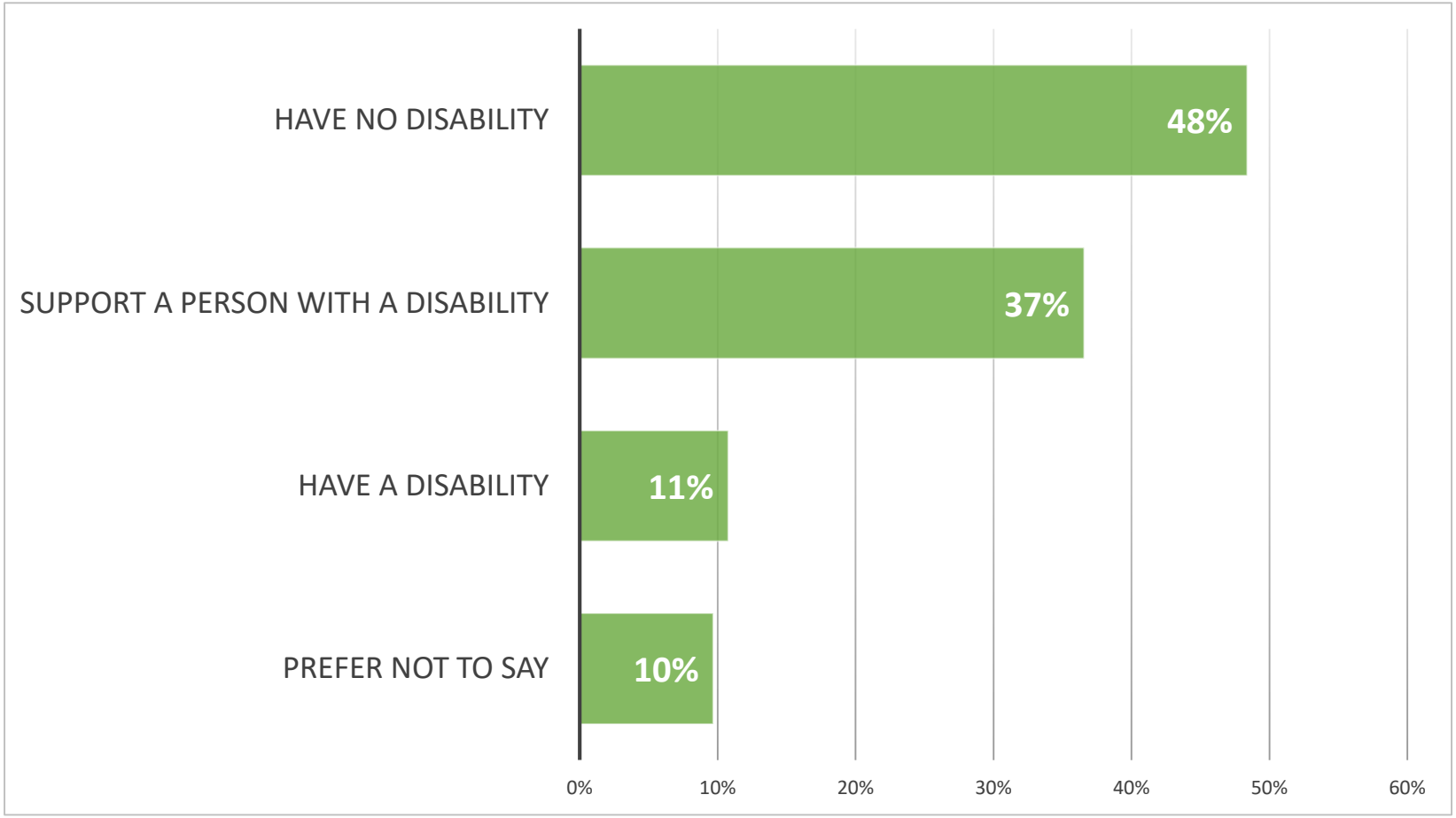
1. Demographics and Respondents

- Majority are 45-54, with most 35 to over 65
- Respondents
  - 10% Report they have a disability
  - 36% Report they support someone with a disability
  - 48% Report they are not disabled
- Disabilities varied with many ranging from those limiting physical activities like climbing, to physical/emotional/mental conditions that limit learning or remembering and using mobility devices and wheelchairs

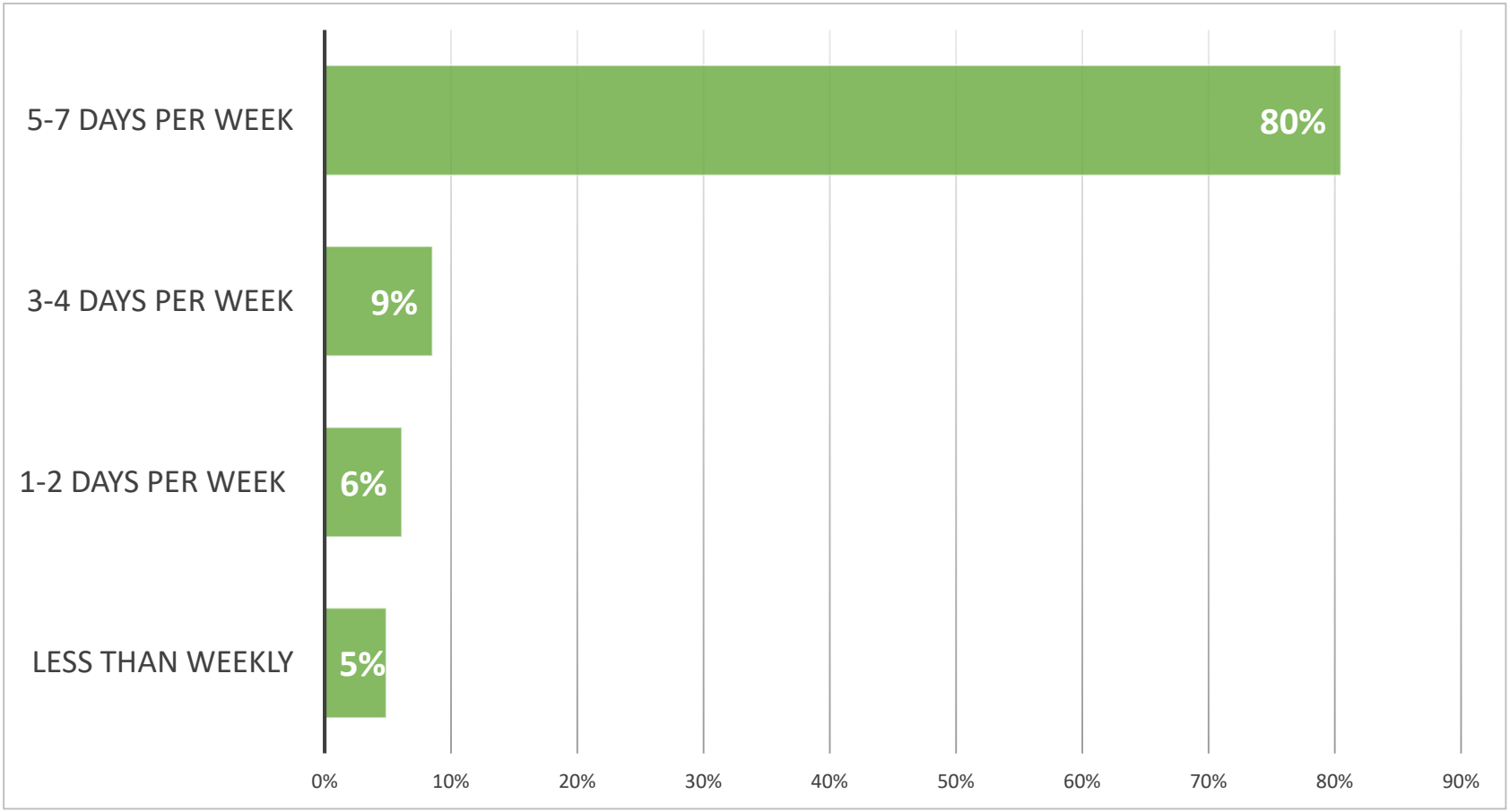
Q1: Why do you travel in Whatcom County? (Choose all that apply)



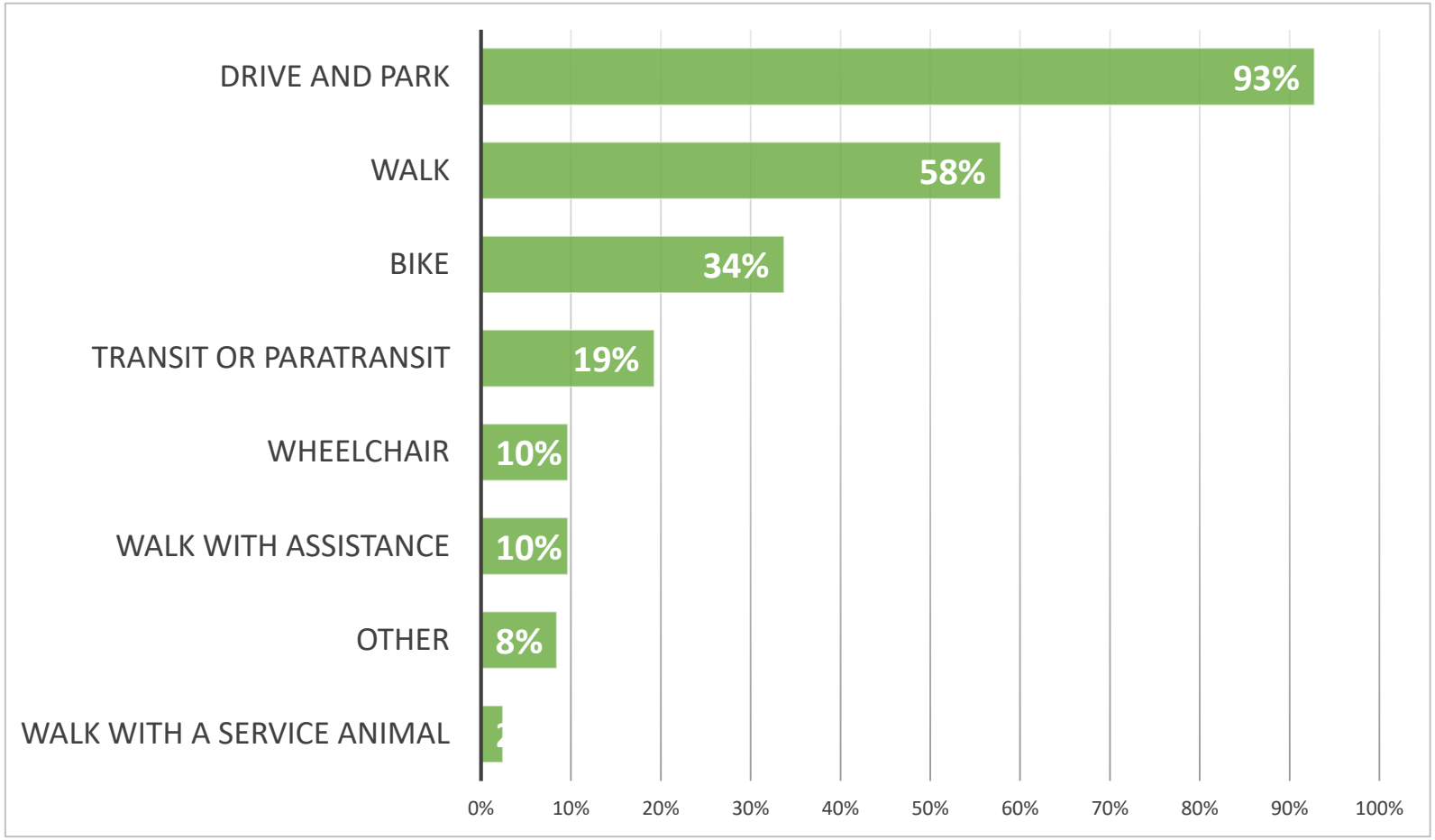
Q2: Please tell us about yourself (Choose all that apply)



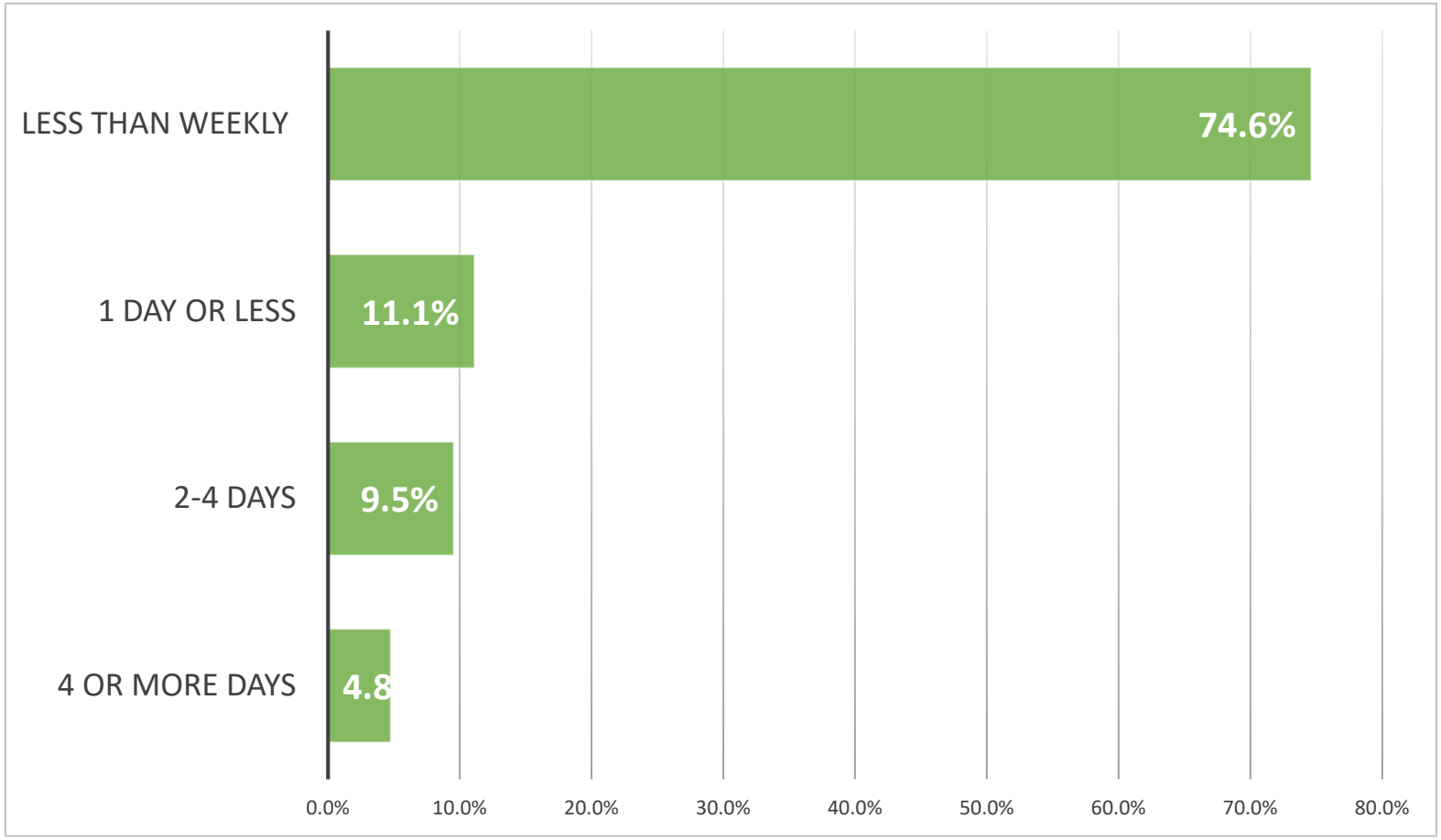
Q6: How often do you travel in Whatcom County (Select one)



Q7: How do you travel within Whatcom County? (Check all that apply)



Q8: If you use transit, how often do you use it in a typical week? (Select one)



2. Issues identified in the survey

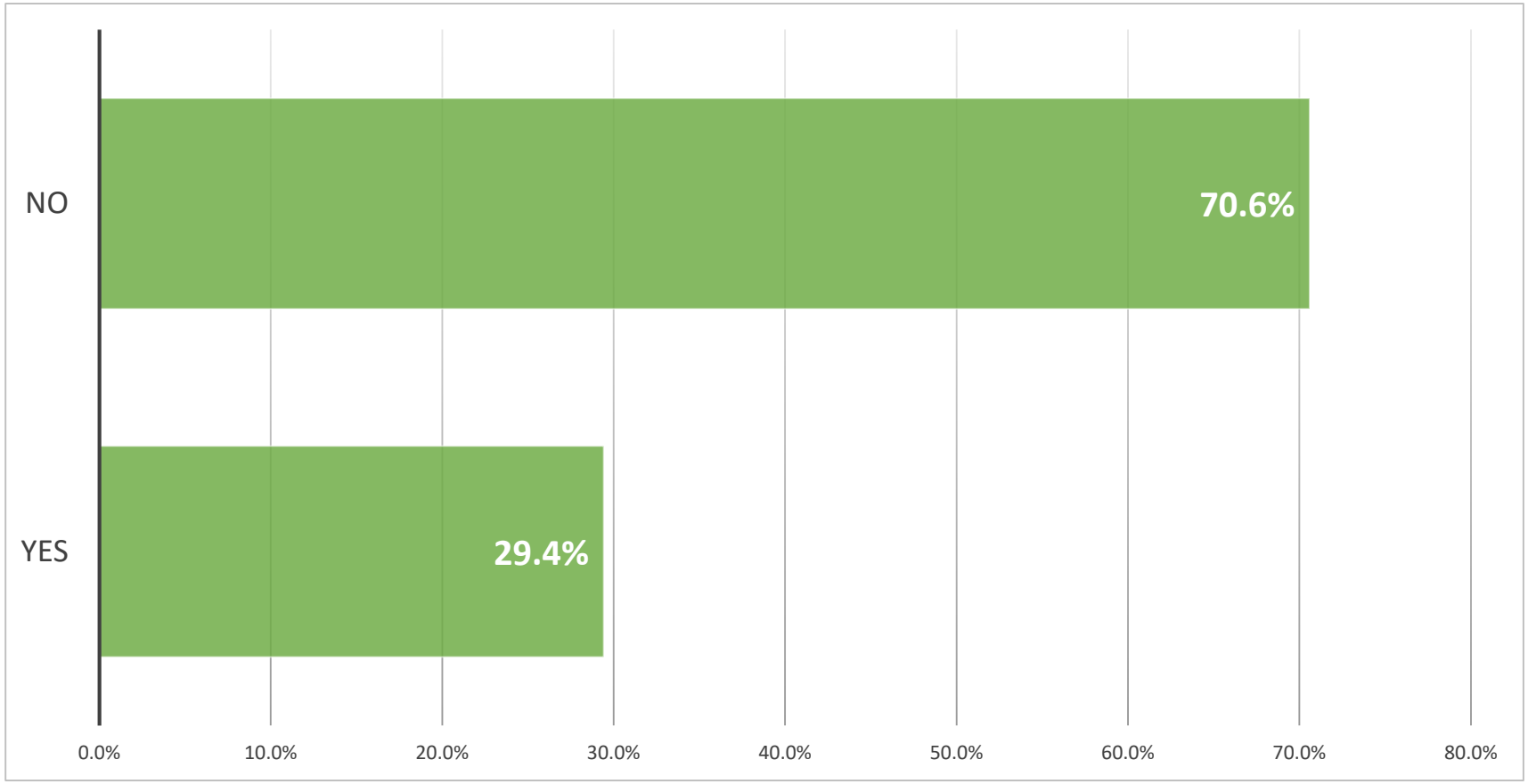
Other reasons people could not participate

- Poor bus service in County or denied access to transit
- No Sidewalk
- Gravel pathways not accessible or path too rough for some mobility devices. Specifically events held on grass or gravel.
- Usually buildings that haven't been updated and only have stairs
- Accessible parking spaces not large enough for a van with wheelchair ramp

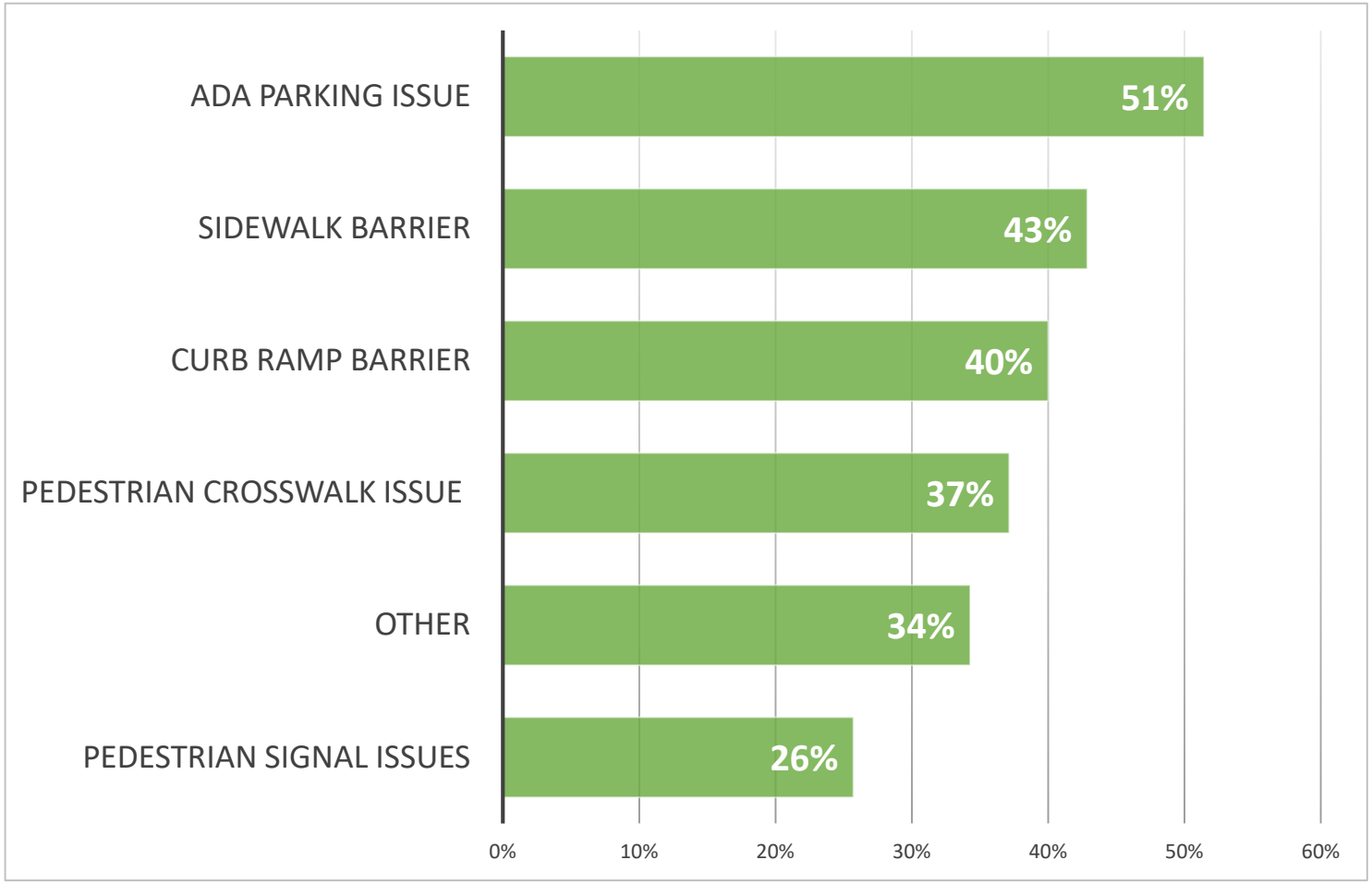
Issues

- Over one quarter indicate they have not been able to participate in or obtain service in Whatcom County
- Most noted were lack of ADA parking, and lack of clear or level sidewalks
- Desire for more and better sidewalks as connections to parks/waterfront, transit and schools

Q9: Are you now or were you ever unable to participate or obtain services in Whatcom County?

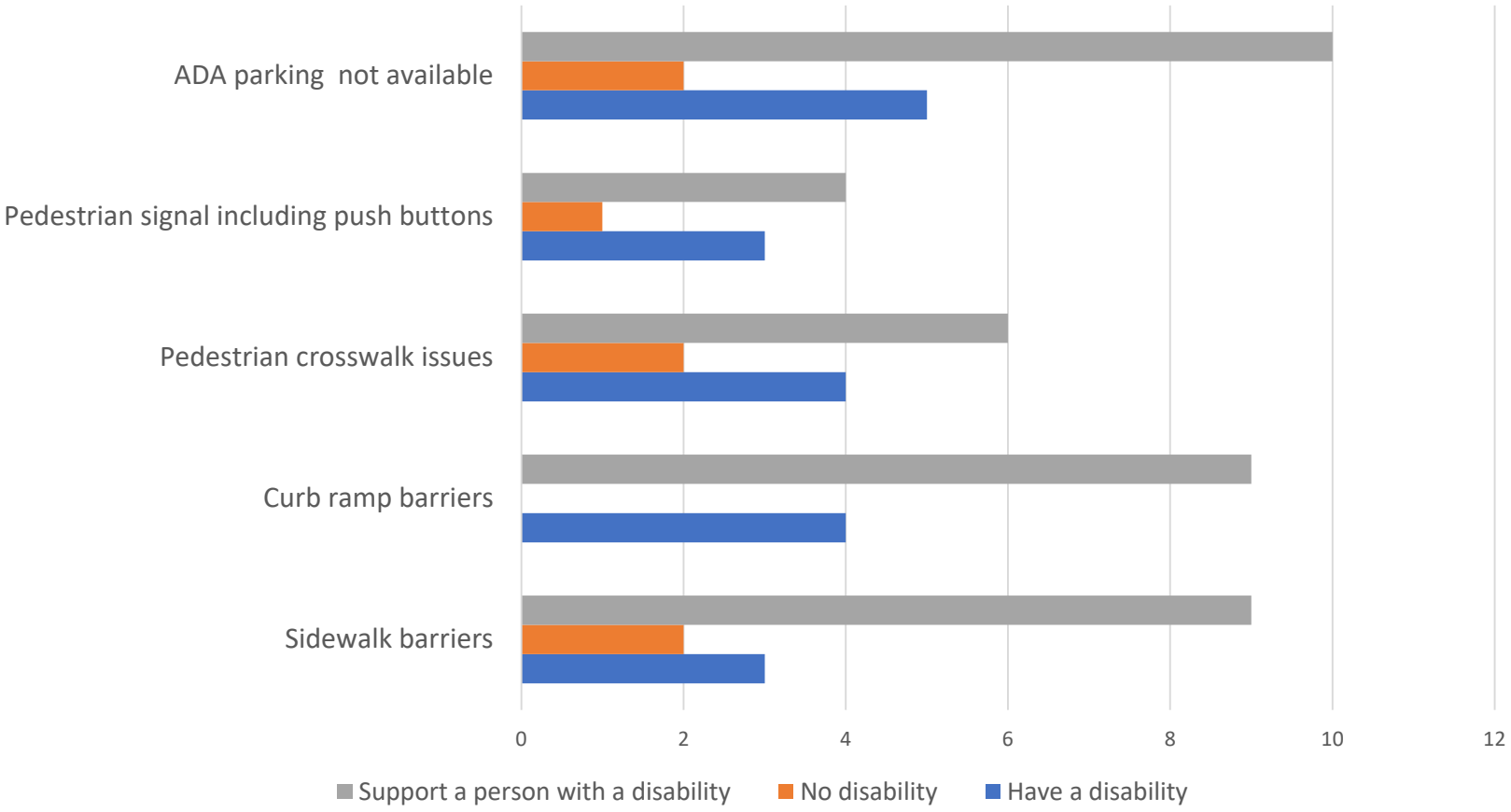


Q11: Which of the following are reasons you could not participate? (Check all that apply)



Contrast - those with disabilities, supporting people with disabilities and without disabilities

Barrier Issues



Questions

- Any surprises
- Concurrence or disagreement

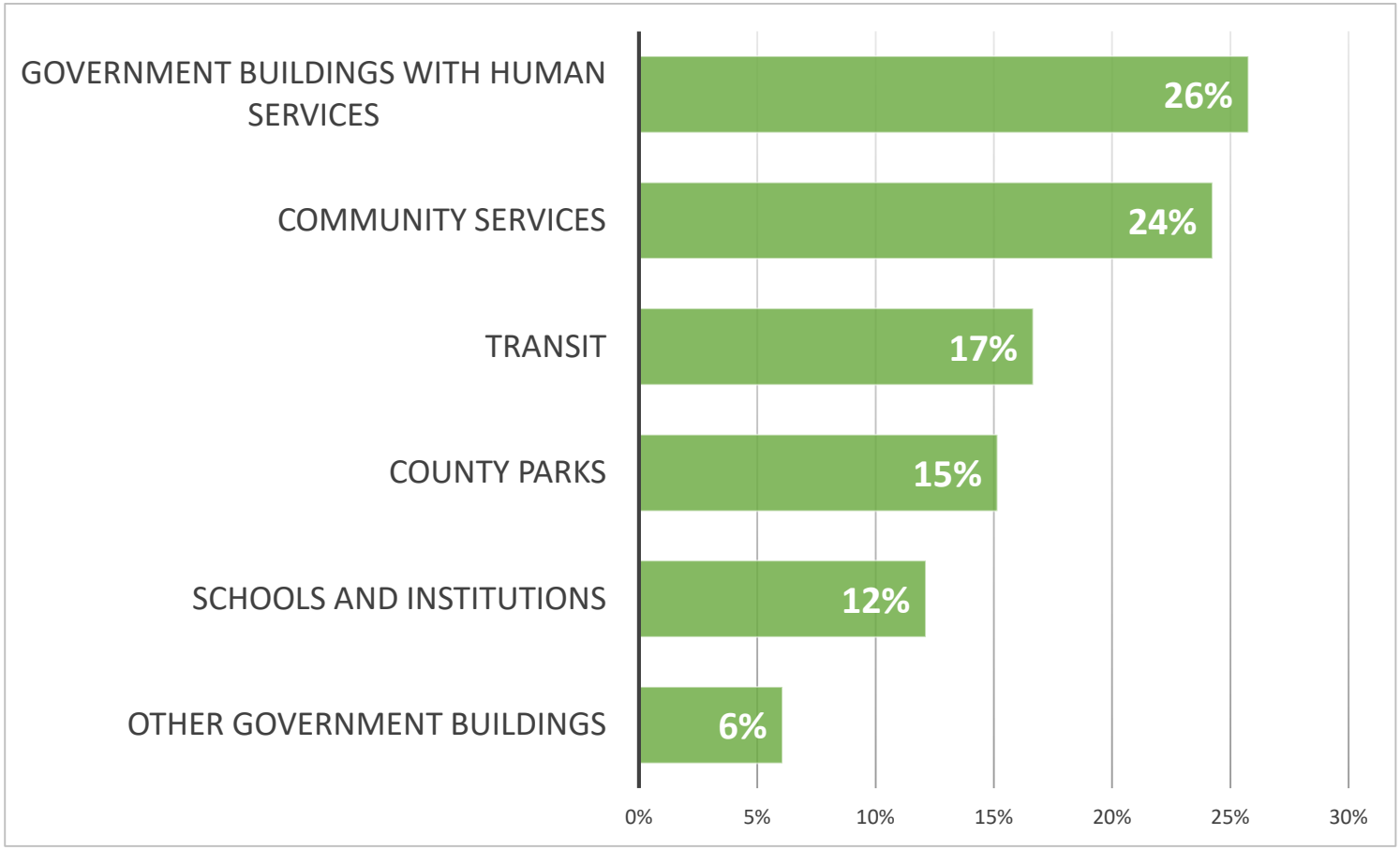
3. Priorities

Priority Destinations and Locations

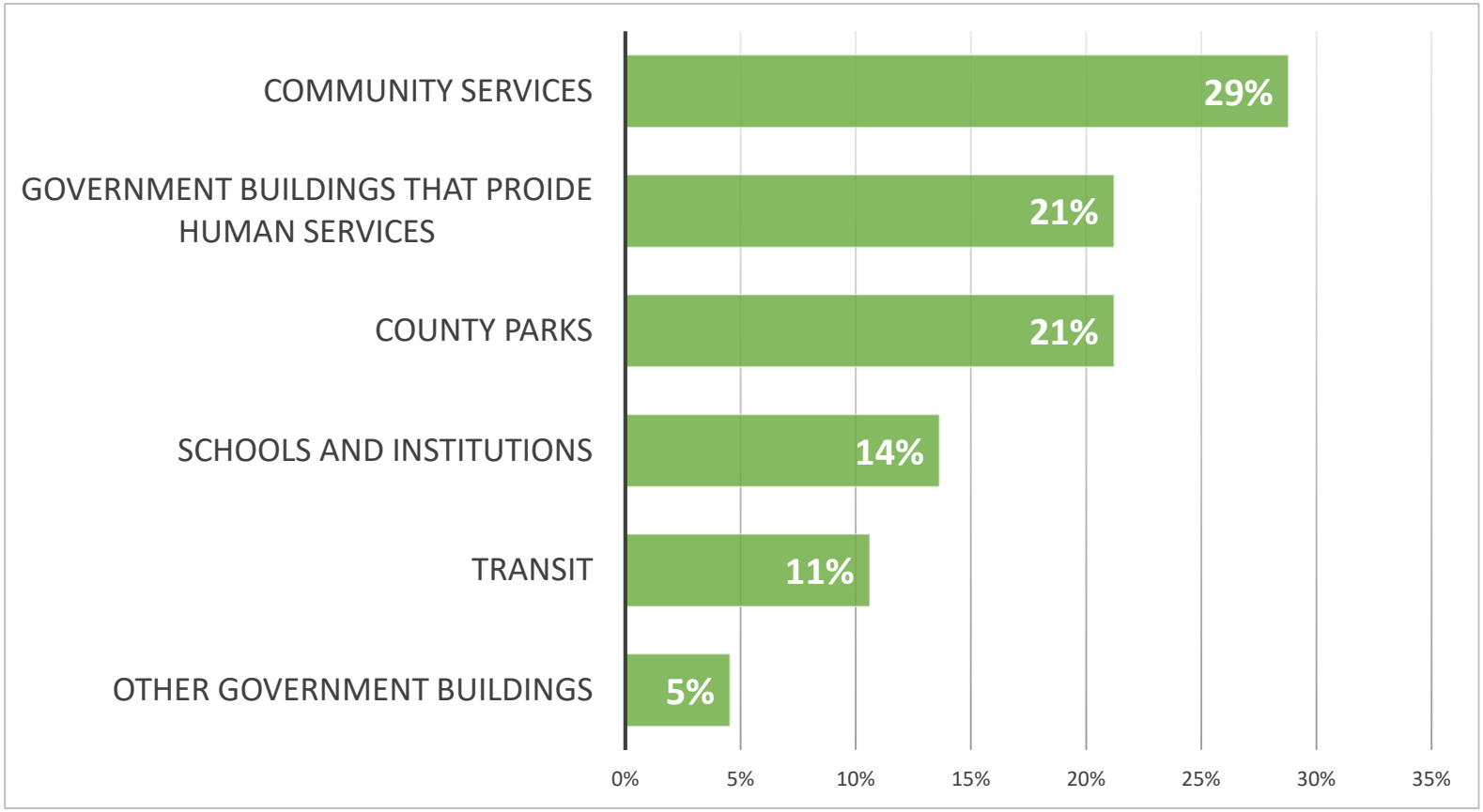
Top destinations were noted in order of preference as:

- Community Services
- Government Buildings
- County Parks
- Transit

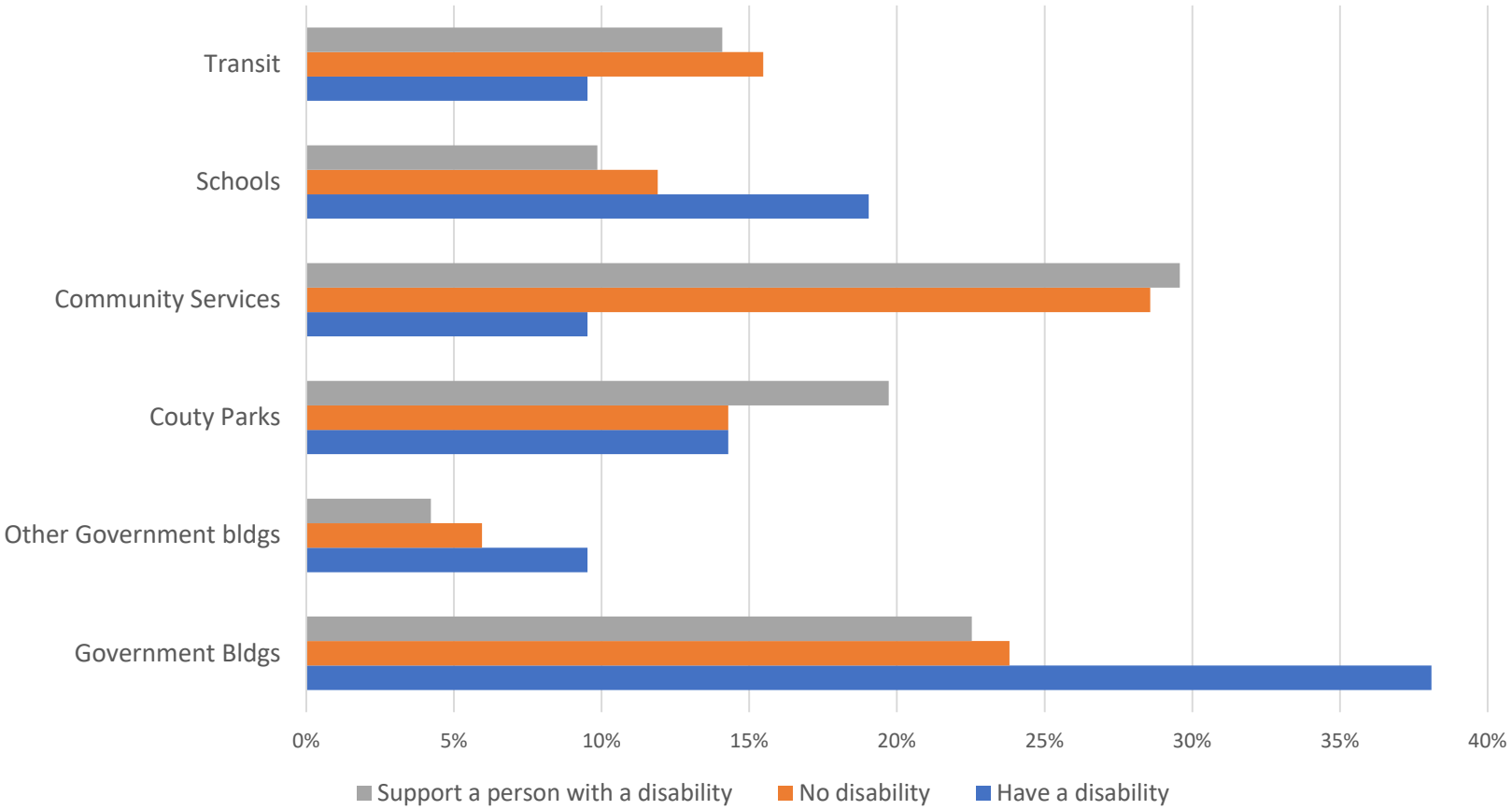
Q12: Of the six types of locations below, which one would be your HIGHEST priority? (Select one)



Q13: Of the six types of locations below, which one would be your SECOND highest priority? (Select one)



Contrast - those with disabilities, supporting people with disabilities and without disabilities **Priorities**



Typical issue types

- Sidewalks – Not provided or missing, missing for providing access to parks, schools and other destinations
- Crosswalks – not protected or not provided, pavement is uneven in them, people feel vulnerable to cars. Lack of high contrast markings
- Curb cuts and ramps – not level, not oriented in the right direction, angled or not high enough to improve visibility. Lack of tactile maps
- Pedestrian buttons and traffic signals – walk times are too short. Needed at more locations
- ADA parking – Parking not provided, not adequate or ramps not provide
- Transit – Pathway to transit stop or connecting destinations is not accessible

Questions

- Any questions?
- Are any results surprising
- Let’s discuss barriers and priorities in greater depth

ATTACHMENT D – ISSUES IDENTIFIED THROUGH THE SURVEY

Location	Issue	Sidewalks	Curbs	Crosswalk	Signals Pushbuttons	ADA Parking	Transit Stops & Pathways
Health Department	Sidewalks in parking area are horrible.	X					
2410 James St. Bellingham	Handicap parking is not made for ramp access vehicles					X	
Birch-Bay Lynden Rd	sidewalk/ bus line	X					
Boulevard Park	transitioning from the pathway to the bridge the surface is not even making it difficult to get a wheelchair over it.	X					
Columbia neighborhood	sidewalk have overgrowth that inhibits walking	X					
Cornwall	pedestrian walkways not lit, not flashing light for traffic to stop				X		
Ellis and Carolina St	I've watched a woman in wheelchair have to go a different way because there are no curbs down so she can cross.		X	X			
Ferry landing at Gooseberry Point	needs more disabled parking					X	
First and Main Street Ferndale	No button and no way to cross anymore.			X	X		
Gulf Road	Dangerous areas with expansive black top with no designated pedestrian path or clear road entrances.	X		X			
Kendall Elementary	Needs to improve the safety of walking to the library and resource center making it accessible to all						
Kendall Elementary School	No sidewalks or pedestrian walkways	X					
Lake Whatcom Boulevard	No sidewalks/bike path	X					
Main St. at Second Ave, Ferndale Ave	ADA parking					X	

Location	Issue	Sidewalks	Curbs	Crosswalk	Signals Pushbuttons	ADA Parking	Transit Stops & Pathways
Solstice Living Center in Bellingham	Stage is inaccessible for wheelchair						
W. Horton	Guide Meridian						
6896 Guide Meridian Lynden wa 98264	Round about a on the Guide need better pedestrian protection (LIGHTS BLINKING)	X			X		
Any beach in Whatcom County	not accessible by w/c	X					
Bellingham Public Library	When their elevator was broken						
Benson Road and Marine Drive	Needs pedestrian paths that are semi permeable ground away from cars.	X					
courthouse and surrounding area (Bellingham)	lots of county employees cheat the system and park their cars with handicap placards in the public handicap spots					X	
Dodsens IGA,	Dangerous to cross highway where the services are			X	X		
Hovander Park	Difficulty with wheelchairs to access most of the park	X					
Marigold Drive	No sidewalks/bike path	X					
Sudden Valley	Resources are only available by bus one way. To get home the route takes over an hour. You must go into town and back to access gate 9 13 5						X
W. Pole Rd.	sidewalk/ bus line	X					X
Downtown (Bellingham)	Wheelchair accessible areas when it snowed this year all over downtown						
4125 Artic Ave Bellingham WA 98226 Costco	Not enough handicap parking					X	
All playgrounds	No fenced in area for kids with disabilities to play safely with a barrier that prevents them from running						
Many Parks in Whatcom County	not accessible by w/c	X					
Tyee Road also needs pathways away from cars	People walking next to speeding cars. Pathways on other side of ditch would be safer.	X					

ATTACHMENT E – FOCUS GROUP GUIDE

Facilitation Guide
Whatcom County ADA Transition Focus Group

Tuesday, October 1, 2019 (3:30-5:00PM) 2nd Floor Conference Room - 322 N Commercial Street

Thursday October 3, 2019 (3:30-5:00PM) Whatcom County NW Annex

Purpose and Goals

Gain deeper insight on ADA issues in the Public Right of Way from the public and expand on a discussion of priorities identified in the online survey.

Recruiting Members

County will recruit from survey respondents and potential other interested parties. County will provide accommodations requested including alternative formats, sign language interpreters etc.

Agenda and Welcome

- Welcome and acknowledge/thank participants and provide brief purpose of meeting– Jim/Dave (5 Minutes)
- Ground Rules – Jeanne (5 Minutes)
- Introductions – All (10 minutes)
- Discussion of the outreach results (via PowerPoint) – Ryan (10 Minutes)
- Workshop – Jeanne and all (up to 60 minutes)
- In depth discussion of the top barrier issues and perspectives on priorities.

Purpose of the Focus Group

Today we are going to take a deeper dive with all of you on different aspects of accessibility including different locations and types of issues. We want to ask you more about your experiences to explore specific issues and priorities identified in the online survey and open house.

Ground Rules:

We have planned this focus group to last 90 minutes hours. During this time, we have several questions that we would like to cover. We want everyone to take part in the discussion; however, you do not have to respond to every question. Also, feel free to respond to what others are saying—whether you agree or disagree. If you have been speaking a lot, wait a bit before speaking again to allow others a turn. We are genuinely interested in your experiences with barriers to pedestrian access; therefore, there are no right or wrong answers. If time begins to run short, it may be necessary to interrupt you in order to complete the questions or move to the next discussion.

We will be using some graphical material, mostly charts, in the PPT you received . We will do our best to describe them, but please feel free to ask questions.

We will treat your answers as confidential. We will not ask for personally identifiable information. While we may use names during this discussion, we will replace names in the transcript after our discussion. We also will not include your names or other personally identifiable information in any reports we write. We ask that each of you respect the privacy of everyone in this room and not share or repeat what is said here in any way that could identify anyone in this room.

Restrooms are down the hall on the left. Please feel free to get up from the table at any time as you need to. We can take a break if we need to roughly at the 1-hour mark.

Introductions:

Please take a few minutes to tell us about yourself and why you are here today. What is your interest in this project?

Survey Summary

PowerPoint to show the summary of the top-line survey results, issues and priorities.

About Transition Plans

The Transition Plan addresses potential deficiencies to improve mobility in the public right of way including access issues along sidewalks, curb ramps, signals, and transit stops within and adjacent to public roadways.

A transition plan will be developed after completing the public outreach process and a review of the County's current processes for improving facilities. This plan will outline a strategy for making improvements considering several factors such as the extent of deficiencies, identified needs, proximity to certain facilities, requests and complaints by the community, available budget and a realistic schedule. This focus group will be an in-depth discussion. Please, set up you name tent or raise your hand if you would like us to repeat anything.

Materials

- Power point presentation of the outreach to date (We will read every slide)

We will spend our time considering the types of issues that people have raised and the impact those issues have on accessing facilities that provide public and community services. Specifically, these services include schools and institutions, parks, government buildings that provide access to community service, other government buildings and transit

We should note that there were a relatively small number of respondents with disabilities; however, we did reach people who support those with disabilities. This is why your responses are also important input.

Series 1 –Let's talk about issues and barriers to access - 15-20 minutes

Facilitator Narrative:
First any surprises in the survey?
Let's talk about the issues to barriers that have been raised to date.

Questions:
Concerns we have heard about:

- Lack of ADA Parking
- Missing or discontinuous sidewalks
- Lack of crosswalks or protection from vehicles
- Short walk times for crossings
- Orientation of curb cuts

What other issues and concerns do you experience when accessing these areas?

Additional probing questions for respondents.
- Which of these barriers do you experience?
- How are they problematic? How often do you experience them and how much does it impact your travel?
- Were you surprised at the different perspectives between those with disabilities and those without as far as barriers?
- Is this a priority or severity of one or some of these issues as compared to others?

NOTES:

Series 2 –Let's talk about locations where access is most important 15-20 minutes

Facilitator Narrative:

Let's talk about locations, and specifically services and resources where there may be barriers to access. Notably from the survey, government buildings that provide public services were most noted as priorities for having good access, specifically by those who indicated they have a disability. They also noted schools and institutions.

Questions:

Were you surprised at the difference between perspectives for those with disabilities as compared to those supporting people or without disabilities?

- Notably access to government buildings and schools was higher for those with disabilities while Community Services, County Parks and transit were more critical for those supporting people with disabilities and without disabilities?
- What services do you have trouble accessing due to barriers?
- Are there specific destinations you have trouble accessing?

What other issues and concerns do you experience?

Additional probing questions.

- Are there barriers or access issues for riding transit? Where are they?

- Which parks, schools, community services and institutions are problems to access?

NOTES:

Series 3–Let's talk about priorities 15-20 minutes
Facilitator Narrative: Part of our task in developing the ADA transition plan will be to identify what to fix first with limited resources? It is likely our needs will outweigh our resources. Where would you invest?
Questions: First what types of issues are most important to fix? • Completing sidewalks • Access to parks • Pathways serving Transit • Signal Timings, signal improvements and crosswalks Where should we focus our energy? • Schools and County Parks • Transit pathways including sidewalks and crosswalks and curb ramps • Improvements to make government buildings that provide community services • Other locations?
NOTES: