

MASON COUNTY



TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM CITIZENS ADVISORY PANEL

2006
CITIZENS SURVEY

SUMMARY REPORT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
MAY 15, 2006

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM CITIZENS ADVISORY PANEL

"The mission of TIP-CAP is to act in an advisory role that will assist Mason County and the project team in balancing community needs and financial concerns during the process of developing the 6-Year Transportation Improvement Program."

In 1999, the Board of Mason County Commissioners directed the County Engineer to actively solicit citizen input to help prioritize future transportation projects. To do this, the Commissioners and the County Engineer formed a Citizen Advisory Panel to review proposed projects, suggest new projects, and actively solicit input from other citizens regarding Mason County's transportation needs.

The TIP-CAP consists of 12 members with diverse backgrounds living throughout the County. Some have worked with public transportation, some had an interest in transportation's affect on growth and real estate, and some were citizens interested in how future projects' impact quality of life. This group posed a wide variety of issues to the public works staff. Most beneficial of these issues were ideas on how Mason County can better communicate with and solicit ideas from the public regarding transportation issues. During the TIP-CAP process, the members were introduced to the County's methods of identifying and prioritizing needed road construction and maintenance. Public Works staff presents information on road projects and other county activities for discussion among the panel, and responds to the panel's questions and concerns.

THE CITIZENS SURVEY

In late 2005 TIP-CAP began discussing methods of obtaining the opinion of the citizens of Mason County about their County Road system. TIP-CAP believed that knowledge of what the citizens felt the future of the County Road system should be would help them in understanding their desires and assist in the development of the Transportation Improvement Program. With the help of Public Works staff, they developed a questionnaire that would provide information on eight concerns.

The questionnaire was made available to Mason County Residents in several ways: at the Timberland Regional Libraries in Belfair, Hoodsport and Shelton; at the Mason County offices of the County Commissioners and Public Works Department; as an insert in the March 30th issue of the Shelton-Mason County Journal; on the Mason County website; and from the individual TIP-CAP members. The deadline for submitting the completed questionnaires was April 28th.

THE RESPONSES

The responses started coming in to the Public Works Office on Friday, March 31st! Each response was given a serial number, and then the responses and comments entered into a spreadsheet. The boxes of completed questionnaires were picked up from the three Timberland Regional Libraries on Monday, May 1st. Once the information was entered, the totals were calculated and included in Volume 1 of this report. Volume 2 includes all the comments made on the questionnaires. We received 628 responses; they are summarized in the tables and graphs following.

THE COMMENTS

229 of the respondents added comments. Most were in the "Additional Comments" box; many made specific comments for one or more of the questions. Every questionnaire with comments has the comments as written in the companion report, "CITIZENS COMMENTS". Many of the comments were about the State Highways and City of Shelton Streets. It must be noted that Mason County has no control over State Highways and City Streets.

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

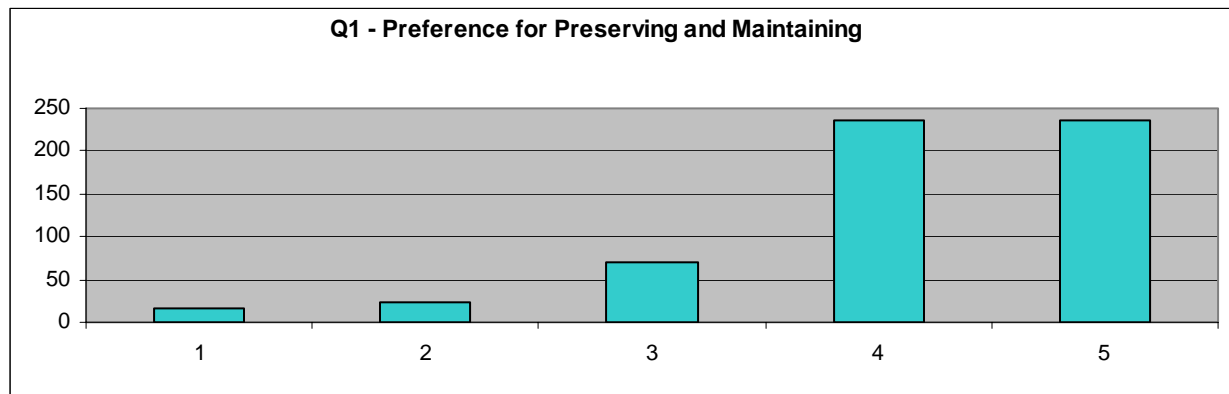
We received several comments that the description of response number 3, "Somewhat Disagree" created a biased questionnaire. They stated a response of 3 should be "Neutral" or "Neither Agree Or Disagree", which would provide an answer that was not biased, and therefore a non-biased questionnaire. We concur and will do this in future questionnaires.

QUESTION 1

Not including State highways and City streets, Mason County Public Works operates and maintains 620 miles of county roads. Priority should be given to preserving and maintaining the existing county roads over building new county roads.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Average
1	16 2.7%	23 4.0%	69 11.9%	237 40.7%	237 40.7%	4.1

Disagree – 18.6% Agree – 81.4%



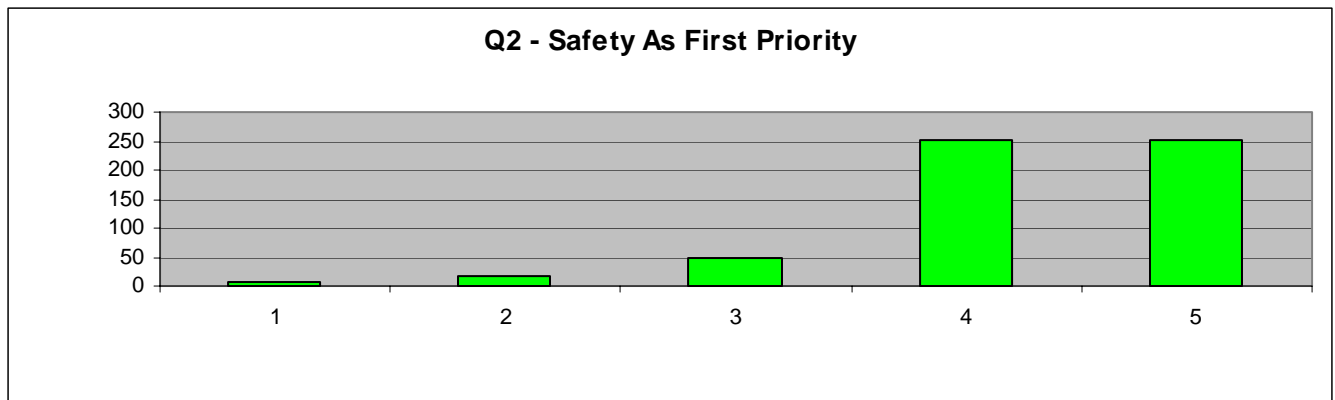
The majority of respondents feel that preserving and maintaining the existing county roads is important. We have a large investment in our county road network. Allowing our county road system to deteriorate over time by spending our limited resources to provide new roads that will also deteriorate over time did not seem like a reasonable practice. Preserving and maintaining our existing roads in order to provide the safest and best possible road system did make sense.

QUESTION 2

Safety should be the first priority when considering future county road projects.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Average
2	8 1.4%	17 3.0%	48 8.3%	251 43.6%	252 43.8%	4.3

Disagree – 12.7% Agree – 87.4%



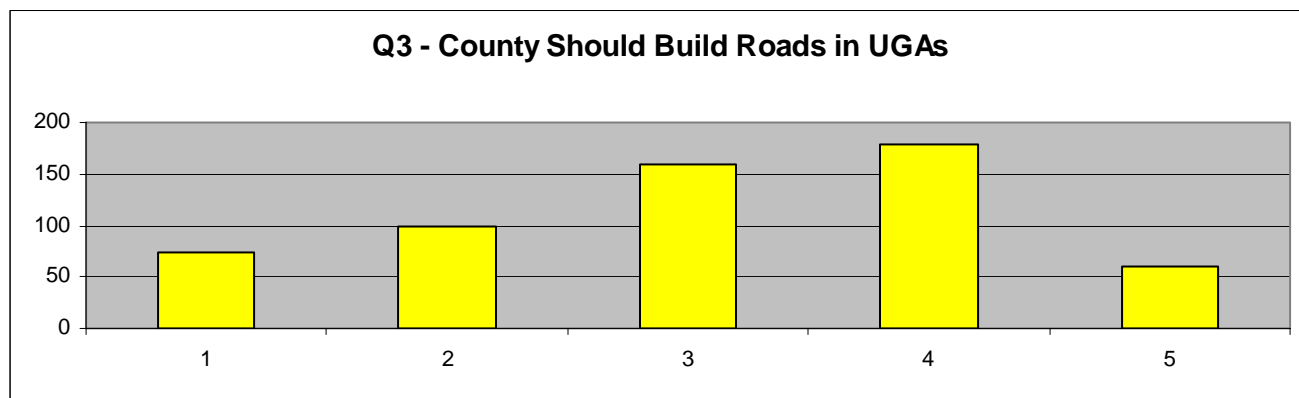
The comments indicated that: (1) safety was very important, and should be considered in every project we undertake; (2) safety should be a factor in selecting which projects of equal priority should be done first; but (3) safety should not be the first and highest priority.

QUESTION 3

A portion of the County road budget should be dedicated to building new roads in the Urban Growth Area to stimulate economic development.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Average
3	73 12.8%	100 17.5%	159 27.8%	179 31.3%	61 10.7%	3.1

Disagree – 57.1% Agree – 42.0%



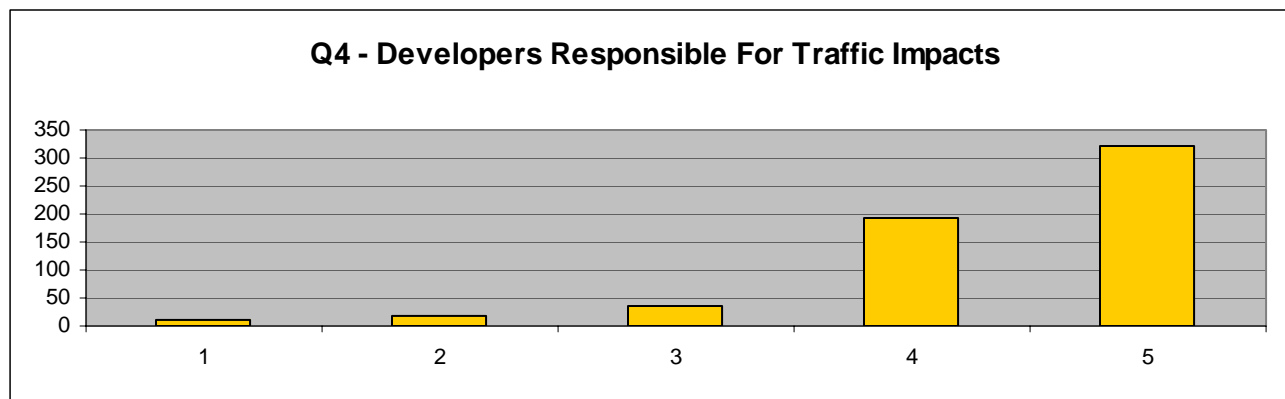
Respondents indicated there are too many needs on existing roads that need addressed with our limited funds, and that they should take precedence over building roads on the premise “build roads and economic development will come”. They also indicated that when an economic development is being proposed or planned, the county should assist by providing funding for adequate roads.

QUESTION 4

Developers should be required to pay fees to off-set the cost of county road improvements due to the impact of additional traffic

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Average
4	9 1.6%	18 3.1%	37 6.4%	193 33.3%	323 55.7%	4.4

Disagree – 11.1% Agree – 88.7%



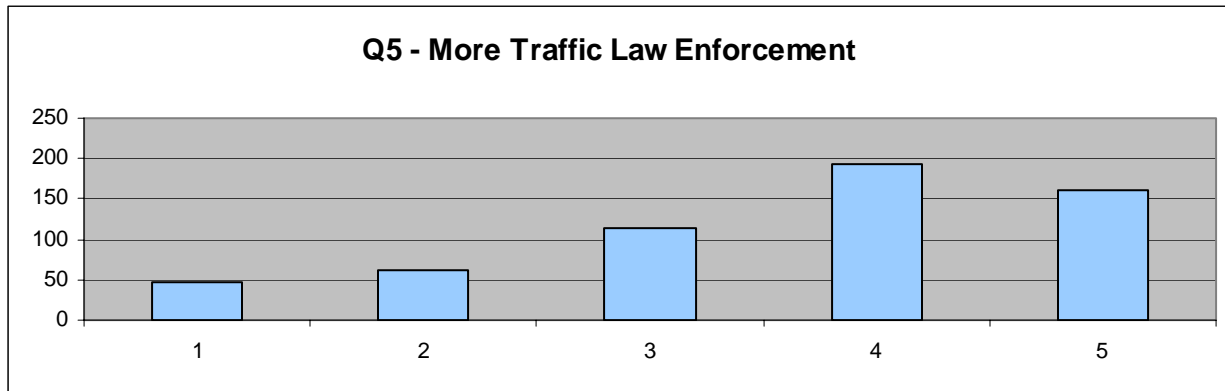
Respondents agreed that developments need to be responsible for the impacts on county roads that are the result of the increased traffic volumes created by their development. Comments varied in how the development should mitigate their responsibility, ranging from improving all the impacted roads to providing some funds to be used when the impacted roads are improved.

QUESTION 5

Driving in excess of the posted speed limit is a countywide issue. More resources should be dedicated to traffic enforcement before building traffic calming features on county roads such as speed humps and traffic circle

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Average
5	48 8.3%	63 10.9%	114 19.7%	192 33.2%	161 27.9%	3.6

Disagree – 14.7% Agree – 85.3%



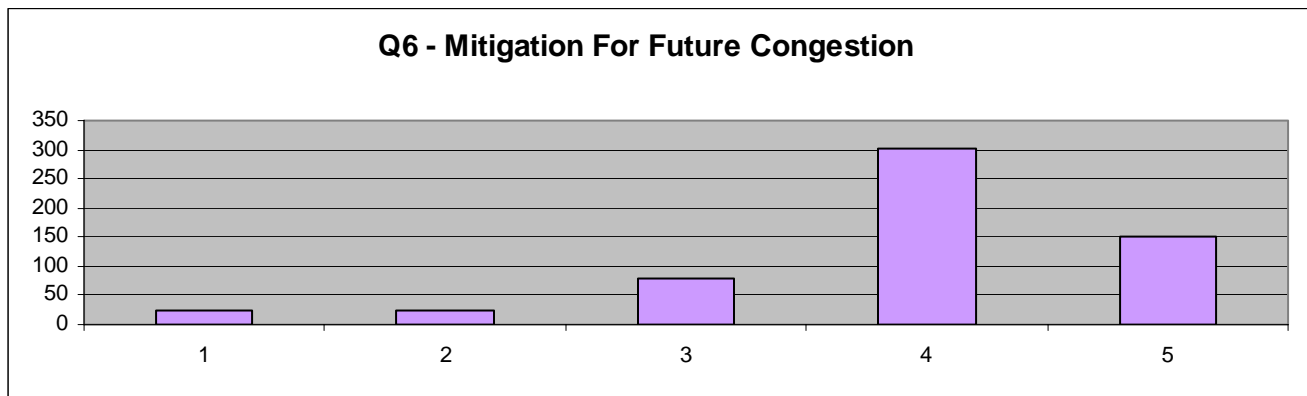
Respondents realized that there are not enough law enforcement personnel available to provide adequate speed enforcement to make a major change in driver's personal behavior, given all the other priorities of the Sheriff's Office. They realized that there is a speeding problem, and provided several suggestions: as much enforcement as possible; passive speed controls like speed humps and traffic circles; reviewing and possibly increasing the speed limits on major roads.

QUESTION 6

Not including State highways and City streets, traffic congestion on county roads is projected not to be a problem for the next 20 years. Improvements to county roads should be planned now to reduce potential bottlenecks and choke points in the future

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Average
6	25 4.3%	23 4.0%	78 13.4%	303 52.2%	151 26.0%	3.9

Disagree – 21.7% Agree – 78.2%



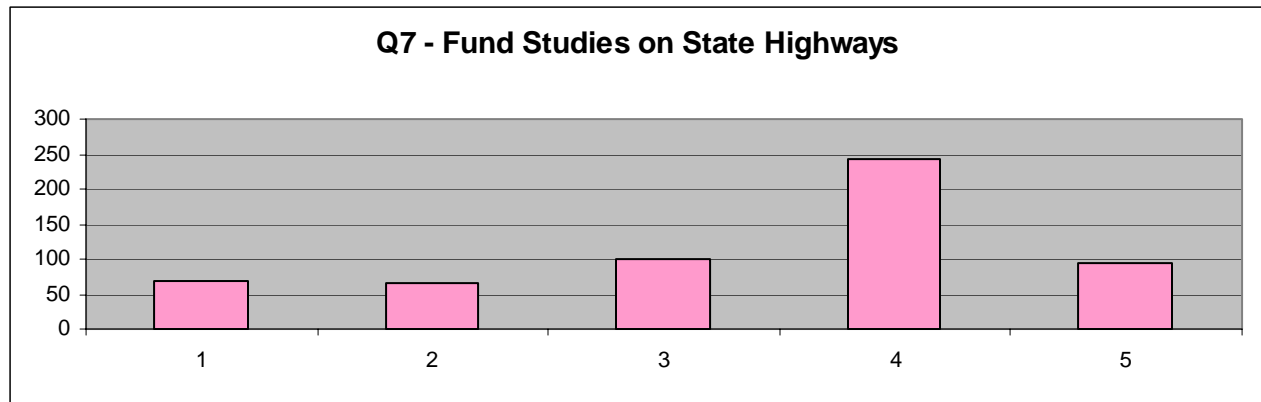
Comments suggested that future congestion will be a problem and any road improvement project should consider future traffic volumes in the design so that future projected traffic volumes would be handled adequately and safely. They also suggested that future congestion should not be the main factor in selecting which road improvement projects to undertake.

QUESTION 7

Mason County has dedicated funds to study the widening of SR 3 in Belfair and the construction of the Belfair By-pass. Both projects were ultimately funded by the State legislature. Mason County should continue to fund studies to address traffic issues on State Highways if it is necessary to improve the transportation system within the County.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Average
7	68 11.9%	67 11.7%	100 17.5%	243 42.6%	93 16.3%	3.4

Disagree – 41.1% Agree – 58.9%



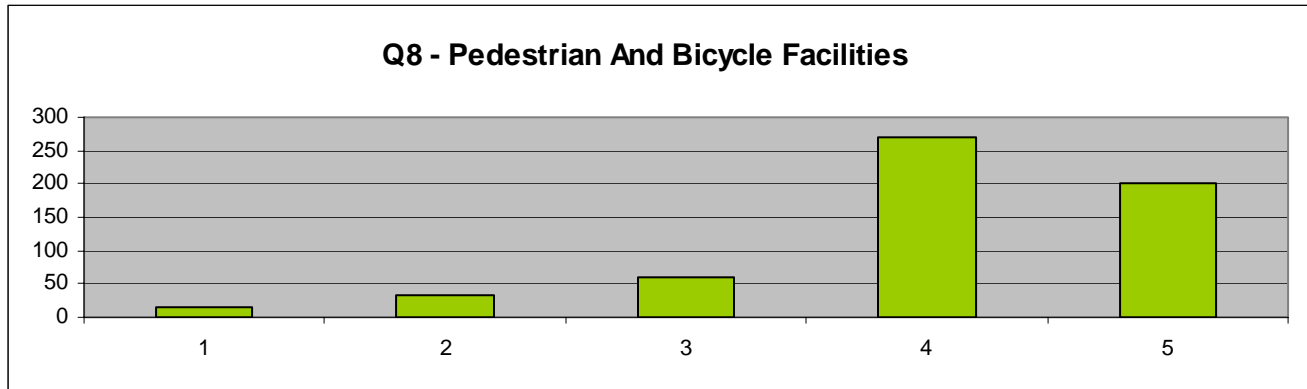
This question brought on two distinct responses. One was that we should not be spending county funds on studies because studies did not provide better transportation, just a lot of paperwork. Even more so was the uselessness of studies on state highways that are the responsibility of the state, we have enough problems on the county roads that we don't have enough money to take care of. The other was that we should be involved in studies on state highways, but as a cooperative interested party working with the state, not as the only agency involved in the study.

QUESTION 8

The County's Transportation Improvement Program should include projects to provide a means of safe travel for pedestrians and bicyclists

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Average
8	15 2.6%	32 5.5%	61 10.5%	271 46.8%	200 34.5%	4.1

Disagree – 18.6% Agree – 81.3%



Respondents agreed that provisions should be provided in all projects for non-motorized vehicles: pedestrians, bicycles, and horses. The roads will be safer when separate facilities or wider shoulders adequately provide for non-motorized uses. Many stated that providing facilities for non-motorized uses should not be the priority, but should be included when a project is undertaken.

TIP CAP CITIZEN SURVEY RESULTS 2006		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Average
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2	Safety should be the first priority when considering future county road projects.	8 1.4%	17 3.0%	48 8.3%	251 43.6%	252 43.8%	4.3
3	A portion of the County road budget should be dedicated to building new roads in the urban Growth Area to stimulate economic development.	73 12.8%	100 17.5%	159 27.8%	179 31.3%	61 10.7%	3.1
4	Developers should be required to pay fees to off-set the cost of county road improvements due to the impact of additional traffic.	9 1.6%	18 3.1%	37 6.4%	193 33.3%	323 55.7%	4.4
5	Driving in excess of the posted speed limit is a countywide issue. More resources should be dedicated to traffic enforcement before building traffic calming features on county roads such as speed humps and traffic circles.	48 8.3%	63 10.9%	114 19.7%	192 33.2%	161 27.9%	3.6
6	Not including State highways and City streets, traffic congestion on county roads is projected not to be a problems for the next 20 years. Improvements to county roads should be planned now to reduce potential bottlenecks and choke points in the future.	25 4.3%	23 4.0%	78 13.4%	303 52.2%	151 26.0%	3.9
7	Mason County has dedicated funds to study the widening of SR 3 in Belfair and the construction of the Belfair By-pass. Both projects were ultimately funded by the State legislature. Mason County should continue to fund studies to address traffic issues on State Highways if it is necessary to improve the transportation system within the County.	68 11.9%	67 11.7%	100 17.5%	243 42.6%	93 16.3%	3.4
8	The County's Transportation Improvement Program should include projects to provide a means of safe travel for pedestrians and bicyclists.	15 2.6%	32 5.5%	61 10.5%	271 46.8%	200 34.5%	4.1

TIP-CAP CITIZEN SURVEY - 2006



1 - Strongly Disagree 2 - Disagree 3 - Somewhat Disagree 4 - Agree 5 - Strongly Agree

Table A

Table B