

# City of Kelso Allen Street Corridor Transportation Study

**Community Engagement Summary**  
July 17, 2023



# Allen Street Corridor Transportation Study Community Engagement Summary

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# Allen Street Corridor Transportation Study Community Engagement Summary

## Introduction

The City of Kelso (City) is studying potential improvements to Allen Street to reduce congestion and improve safety and mobility. As part of the study, the City worked with WSDOT, local businesses, stakeholders, and the traveling public to determine the causes of congestion, analyze potential alternatives to alleviate it and improve safety, and recommend a vision for the Allen Street corridor that meets the needs of people that live, work, and travel through the study area. The project team has been committed to involving the public in the study to ensure their needs, experiences, and vision are reflected in our work.

## Engagement Overview

Community engagement was a central piece of the Allen Street Corridor Transportation Study. The project team committed to including community members in this process, with an emphasis on reaching and involving people who have been historically underrepresented in planning processes. The engagement activities and input outlined in this summary will inform the development of potential alternatives that improve safety and create an Allen Street corridor that meets the needs of the Kelso community.

The City used a suite of engagement tools to inform the study, including stakeholder interviews, targeted business outreach, online surveys, a public open house, a fact sheet, and a mailer. The public's collective experiences, challenges, and goals will be considered alongside the technical analysis. Together, they are being used to understand existing conditions, develop alternatives that address the challenges, and identify a preferred alternative that meets the needs of the City of Kelso and the community.

## Engagement Tools and Tactics

The engagement strategies outlined below were used to understand existing conditions and solicit input from the community about the project area. These tools supported an effort to reduce barriers to participation and empower the community.

Engagement Strategies	Objectives	Outcomes
Community Engagement Plan	Developed a plan to involve the community in the project that included project overview, engagement goals, stakeholders and audiences, key messages, and outreach tools.	N/A
Stakeholder Interviews	Identified key stakeholders to hear their experiences and gathered input and perspectives on the conditions, engagement strategies, and potential solutions.	Six stakeholders engaged, consisting of emergency services, the chamber of commerce, school representatives, a transit agency, a grocer, and a mall.
Corridor Business Outreach	Engaged directly with businesses in the project area to share information and gather their input and perspective on	Approximately 40 businesses engaged, of a variety of business types, ranging from dropping off fact sheets to conversations

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	the traffic congestion and potential solutions.	about challenges and suggestions for Allen St.
Online Survey	Conducted an online survey to gather input and feedback from community members and stakeholders.	96 responses from community members who live, work, and recreate around the corridor.
Open House	Hosted an in person open house to provide information about the project and gather input from the community.	Approximately 8 attendees, including people who live, work, and recreate in Kelso.
City Council meetings	Present information on the project and solicit input, feedback, and guidance from the City Council	Level of project understanding and concurrence with City Council members
Fact Sheet	Provided a basic overview of the project was left behind after interviews, business outreach, and open house.	N/A
Mailers	Written updates about project progress, survey, and open house that were mailed to project neighbors. This provided a means of keeping stakeholders informed and may have reached stakeholders did not participate in events or public meetings.	2,268 mailers distributed to addresses in Kelso near the study area.
Project Website	Provided a basic overview of the project for the community. Included findings to date, concept drawings and animations of possible alternatives, and descriptions of the alternatives.	N/A

# **Allen Street Corridor Transportation Study Community Engagement Summary**

## **Community Input Overview**

The Allen Street Corridor Transportation Study conducted extensive outreach efforts and gathered feedback from a wide range of stakeholders, including residents, emergency services, the Chamber of Commerce, schools, public transit, businesses, and the City Council. The feedback highlighted several key themes, including concerns about congestion during peak hours, safety issues, inefficient signal timing, and the need for improvements to accommodate diverse transportation options. Stakeholders recommended various measures such as enhancing traffic signal timing, improving pedestrian safety measures, and adjusting traffic patterns to address these issues. Specific recommendations included incorporating opticoms for emergency response vehicles, widening roads, adopting a Complete Streets approach, and adding bus stops and transit-priority signals.

The online survey further emphasized the importance of reducing congestion and improving safety along Allen Street. Respondents expressed a desire for better coordination of traffic signal timing as the primary improvement. The survey also revealed that most respondents traveled along Allen Street daily by car for commuting, recreational activities, and everyday errands. Overall, the study's findings and stakeholder input emphasized the significance of addressing congestion, improving safety, and implementing effective traffic signal timing strategies to enhance transportation along the Allen Street corridor.

## **Key Themes**

Key themes heard across all outreach efforts included:

- Residents use Allen Street for a variety of reasons, including commuting for work, and for everyday activities like shopping and running errands, recreational activities, and medical appointments.
- The most congestion occurs in the morning and afternoon, during school pick-up and drop-off times.
- Most residents travel on Allen Street via car.
- Allen Street is a major emergency route, school bus route, and transit corridor.
- There are concerns about inefficient signal timing along the corridor leading to congestion and delays.
- There are concerns about safety due to congestion and traffic.
- Recommendations for improved signal timing, pedestrian safety/visibility improvements, and adjustments to traffic patterns/lanes along the corridor to accommodate diverse transportation options and high traffic flows.

## **Stakeholder Interview Feedback**

### **Overview**

The Allen Street Corridor Transportation Study team interviewed six key stakeholders within the study area vicinity between February and March 2023. These conversations helped the team gain insights on the experiences of major businesses, community service providers, schools, and community organizations along the corridor. The input shared during these interviews supplemented the data and technical analysis by exploring how stakeholders and the community experience and use the Allen Street corridor, what the existing conditions and challenges are, and what ideas and considerations the community had for potential solutions.

# Allen Street Corridor Transportation Study

## Community Engagement Summary

Key feedback from each stakeholder group interviewed is summarized below.

### **Cowlitz 2 Fire & Rescue**

- Allen Street is an important route for emergency response and is used multiple times a day by Cowlitz 2 Fire & Rescue.
- Traffic congestion during peak times, specifically during school pick-up and drop-off hours, adversely impacts the department's response times, and there are limited alternative routes.
- Key challenges for the department on Allen Street include traffic congestion, inefficient traffic signal timing, and the absence of opticoms – a traffic control system that provides a green light and therefore intersection right-of-way to emergency vehicles – to help expedite emergency responses.
- The department recommended improving traffic signal timing/coordination, incorporating opticoms, and increasing pedestrian safety measures to enhance travel along Allen Street.

### **Kelso Longview Chamber of Commerce**

- Chamber of Commerce staff typically choose alternate routes to get to and from the office to avoid delays on Allen Street and Minor Road.
- Traffic congestion during peak times, particularly school pick-up and drop-off hours, causes backups in front of the chamber. The afternoons are the worst times for congestion.
- Key challenges for the chamber include traffic signal timing, traffic congestion, confusing lane layouts and road signage, and unsafe conditions because of frustrated drivers. People driving consistently wait 3-4 signal cycles, and they get frustrated and will run red lights when turning off of Allen St during peak times, causing unsafe conditions.
- The chamber specifically noted signal timing as the biggest issue, citing the two traffic signals east of I-5 at the on- and off-ramps and N Minor Road/S Kelso Drive as the biggest issues.
- The chamber recommended improving traffic signal timing and introducing additional pedestrian infrastructure to prioritize safety in the area.

### **Kelso School District**

- The busiest times for the Kelso High and Coweeman Middle School are before (~7:30 a.m.) and after school (~2:45 p.m.).
- Most students travel to school via car or bus, but there is a good amount of foot traffic, cycling and skateboarding around the school and surrounding areas.
- Key challenges for the district include inefficient traffic signal timing, backups due to school traffic, and visibility for pedestrians and cyclists around the schools.
- The district recommended looking into the potential benefits of widening Minor Road and the road leading to the schools to allow higher traffic flow, improving traffic signal timing/coordination in the corridor, improving traffic flows and infrastructure on Tam O'Shanter Way to accommodate travelers, and increasing pedestrian safety through visibility enhancements (i.e., crosswalk improvements, increased lighting, etc.).

### **River Cities Transit (RCT)**

- RCT does not currently have bus stops along Allen Street but would like to use it more. Three routes pass through Allen Street.
- RCT recommended a bus stop just west of South 8th Avenue for Route 45 as it would provide better access to the social services office, businesses and homes in the area.

## **Allen Street Corridor Transportation Study Community Engagement Summary**

- Key challenges for RCT include congestion during peak traffic hours, inefficient signal timing, a lack of alternative routes and poor safety (limited crosswalk, gaps in the sidewalks, curbs that are not ADA-compliant, etc.) for riders. RCT specifically noted these issues are the worst during peak school traffic times and adversely impact bus service reliability in the corridor.
- RCT recommended improving pedestrian safety in the area through ADA upgrades, increased lighting, clearly marked pedestrian crossings, and an overall adoption of the Complete Streets approach in the corridor.
- RCT also recommended looking into adding bus-only lanes, transit-priority signals and additional bus stops along Allen Street to improve service reliability and safety for riders.

### **Safeway**

- The busiest times for the store are 2-7 p.m.; Friday, Saturday and Sunday having the most customer traffic.
- The store typically receives deliveries overnight through mid-morning throughout the week. This can include ~44-foot-long delivery vehicles that travel along Allen Street.
- Congestion along Allen Street does not typically impact the store's operations.

### **Three Rivers Mall**

- The busiest times for the mall are weekends and afternoons.
- Key challenges for the mall include backups onto Three Rivers Drive during peak congestion times along Allen Street.
- Three Rivers Mall could not speak to specific suggestions for improvements as the mall's proximity to other major retailers and schools presents a perceived challenge. However, the mall did recognize the previous installation of flashing yellow turn lights on Allen Street has improved traffic conditions.

## **Corridor Business Outreach Feedback**

### **Overview**

The Allen Street Corridor Transportation Study team performed business outreach on March 30, 2023. These conversations were informal and involved businesses within the study area vicinity. Business stakeholders were asked to share input on their challenges with the corridor, and any potential solutions. The team shared a fact sheet with all businesses and collected emails to invite them to the future open house.

Many businesses did not share feedback but welcomed additional information. Key feedback from businesses that were interested in sharing is summarized below.

### **Chevron**

- Congestion is worst in the mornings before school, and the afternoons when school gets out
- People sometimes make a right at the intersection (S Kelso Drive and Allen Street) so that they can U-turn immediately and take another right to go straight through the intersection quicker.

### **Dutch Bros**

- The intersection (S Kelso Drive and Allen Street) gets very hectic during school drop off and pick up times.

### **Kelso Library**

## **Allen Street Corridor Transportation Study Community Engagement Summary**

- The intersection (S Kelso Drive and Allen Street) congestion is very frustrating for residents.
- Suggestion to be in contact with Kelso Police Department

### **Edward Jones**

- At the intersection of Allen Street and S Kelso Drive, the right lane should allow people to go straight through as well.

### **HR Block**

- It's very difficult to make a right turn onto Allen Street because of how backed up it gets.

### **One Main Financial**

- Frustration with traffic signal timing and suggestions to improve.

## **Online Survey Feedback**

### **Overview**

The City of Kelso hosted a public input survey in its efforts to identify potential improvements to the Allen Street corridor. The survey asked respondents to give feedback on how they use the corridor, preferences for travel and facilities, and overall travel observations in the area.

The input shared from this survey will help the consultant team understand what challenges users in the corridor face and identify potential ways to improve conditions. The survey ran from May 2 to June 14 and garnered 96 responses from community members who live, work and recreate around the corridor. The survey was advertised through City of Kelso and WSDOT social media channels, stakeholder emails, the City of Kelso project webpage and in-person outreach.

### **Key themes**

- Overall, respondents feel Allen Street does not fulfill core functions well. Respondents regularly experience traffic congestion, accessibility and visibility issues, and safety concerns as drivers and pedestrians.
- Most (70%) respondents travel along Allen Street daily, and 97% of respondents travel via car.
- Most (89%) respondents use Allen Street for everyday activities like shopping and running errands.
- Overall, respondents experience traffic congestion the most on Allen Street during the mornings and afternoons, specifically during school pick-up and drop-off times. Respondents experience congestion the least during the early mornings and at nights.
- Reducing congestion was the number one priority for respondents, followed by improving safety.
- The most common suggestion for improving Allen Street was to better coordinate traffic signal timing. Improving facilities for public transit and cyclists were lower priorities for respondents.

## **Open House Feedback**

### **Overview**

The Allen Street Corridor Transportation Study team hosted an in-person open house on May 23, 2023, in the City of Kelso's council chambers to provide information about the project and gather input from the community. Approximately eight community members attended, including people who live, work, and recreate in Kelso.



## **Allen Street Corridor Transportation Study Community Engagement Summary**

Study details and community engagement efforts were shared, and the community shared a variety of questions and comments with the team. Below are the main topics raised by attendees.

### **Key themes**

- How long can the community participate in the online survey?
- One of the study objectives should be business needs.
- How will construction impact the community?
- What is the timeline for project construction?
- Neighborhoods surrounding Allen Street can provide valuable insight.

## **City Council Feedback**

### **Overview**

The Allen Street Corridor Transportation Study team provided a briefing to the City Council on May 2, 2023. Study information was shared with the Council via presentation and feedback was collected and discussed. City staff did not think any major changes to the direction of the study were necessary.

### **Key themes**

- One of the study objectives should be economic needs.
- How long will construction impact the community?
- What is the WSDOT ICE process?
- What does multimodal mean?
- The metrics used as part of the study should be more concrete.

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## Appendix A | Stakeholder Interview Summary

### Overview

The Allen Street Corridor Transportation Study team interviewed key stakeholders within the study area vicinity between February and March 2023. These conversations helped the team gain insights on the experiences of major businesses, community service providers, schools, and community organizations along the corridor. The input shared during these interviews supplemented the data and technical analysis by exploring how stakeholders and the community experience and use the Allen Street corridor, what the existing conditions and challenges are, and what ideas and considerations the community had for potential solutions.

### Key Themes

Key themes shared across all stakeholder interviews included:

- Stakeholders experience the most congestion during school pick-up and drop-off times.
- Stakeholders consistently expressed concerns about inefficient signal timing along the corridor, which leads to congestion and delays.
- Recommendations for potential solutions included improved signal timing, pedestrian safety/visibility improvements, and adjustments to traffic patterns/lanes along the corridor to accommodate diverse transportation options and high traffic flows.

### Stakeholder Feedback

Key feedback from each stakeholder group interviewed is summarized below.

#### *Cowlitz 2 Fire & Rescue*

- Allen Street is an important route for emergency response and is used multiple times a day by Cowlitz 2 Fire & Rescue.
- Traffic congestion during peak times, specifically during school pick-up and drop-off hours, adversely impacts the department's response times, and there are limited alternative routes.
- Key challenges for the department on Allen Street include traffic congestion, inefficient traffic signal timing, and the absence of opticoms – a traffic control system that provides a green light and therefore intersection right-of-way to emergency vehicles – to help expedite emergency responses.
- The department recommended improving traffic signal timing/coordination, incorporating opticoms, and increasing pedestrian safety measures to enhance travel along Allen Street.

#### *Kelso Longview Chamber of Commerce*

- Chamber of Commerce staff typically choose alternate routes to get to and from the office to avoid delays on Allen Street and Minor Road.
- Traffic congestion during peak times, particularly school pick-up and drop-off hours, causes backups in front of the chamber. The afternoons are the worst times for congestion.
- Key challenges for the chamber include traffic signal timing, traffic congestion, confusing lane layouts and road signage, and unsafe conditions because of frustrated drivers. People driving consistently wait 3-4 signal cycles, and they get frustrated and will run red lights when turning off of Allen St during peak times, causing unsafe conditions.
- The chamber specifically noted signal timing as the biggest issue, citing the two traffic signals east of I-5 at the on- and off-ramps and N Minor Road/S Kelso Drive as the biggest issues.

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- The chamber recommended improving traffic signal timing and introducing additional pedestrian infrastructure to prioritize safety in the area.

### *Kelso School District*

- The busiest times for the Kelso High and Coweeman Middle School are before (~7:30 a.m.) and after school (~2:45 p.m.).
- Most students travel to school via car or bus, but there is a good amount of foot traffic, cycling and skateboarding around the school and surrounding areas.
- Key challenges for the district include inefficient traffic signal timing, backups due to school traffic, and visibility for pedestrians and cyclists around the schools.
- The district recommended looking into the potential benefits of widening Minor Road and the road leading to the schools to allow higher traffic flow, improving traffic signal timing/coordination in the corridor, improving traffic flows and infrastructure on Tam O'Shanter Way to accommodate travelers, and increasing pedestrian safety through visibility enhancements (i.e., crosswalk improvements, increased lighting, etc.).

### *River Cities Transit (RCT)*

- RCT does not currently have bus stops along Allen Street but would like to use it more. Three routes pass through Allen Street.
- RCT recommended a bus stop just west of South 8th Avenue for Route 45 as it would provide better access to the social services office, businesses and homes in the area.
- Key challenges for RCT include congestion during peak traffic hours, inefficient signal timing, a lack of alternative routes and poor safety (limited crosswalk, gaps in the sidewalks, curbs that are not ADA-compliant, etc.) for riders. RCT specifically noted these issues are the worst during peak school traffic times and adversely impact bus service reliability in the corridor.
- RCT recommended improving pedestrian safety in the area through ADA upgrades, increased lighting, clearly marked pedestrian crossings, and an overall adoption of the Complete Streets approach in the corridor.
- RCT also recommended looking into adding bus-only lanes, transit-priority signals and additional bus stops along Allen Street to improve service reliability and safety for riders.

### *Safeway*

- The busiest times for the store are 2-7 p.m.; Friday, Saturday and Sunday having the most customer traffic.
- The store typically receives deliveries overnight through mid-morning throughout the week. This can include ~44-foot-long delivery vehicles that travel along Allen Street.
- Congestion along Allen Street does not typically impact the store's operations.

### *Three Rivers Mall*

- The busiest times for the mall are weekends and afternoons.
- Key challenges for the mall include backups onto Three Rivers Drive during peak congestion times along Allen Street.
- Three Rivers Mall could not speak to specific suggestions for improvements as the mall's proximity to other major retailers and schools presents a perceived challenge. However, the

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mall did recognize the previous installation of flashing yellow turn lights on Allen Street has improved traffic conditions.

### Stakeholder Interview Notes

#### Cowlitz 2 Fire & Rescue Interview Notes

Interviewee Name: **Jeremy Huff, Deputy Chief of Planning**

Stakeholder (business/org/etc.): [Cowlitz 2 Fire & Rescue Headquarters Station 21](#)

Email address: [Jeremy.huff@c2fr.org](mailto:Jeremy.huff@c2fr.org)

Date/time: **March 14, 2023**

#### *Business/Organization Information:*

- Cowlitz 2 Fire & Rescue is responsible for serving 150 square miles, including the Kelso and Allen Street areas, responding to approximately 3,000 emergency calls per year originating from Kelso.
- Allen Street is an important route for emergency response and is used multiple times daily by Cowlitz 2 Fire & Rescue.
- Traffic congestion during peak times, specifically during school pick-up and drop-off hours, adversely impacts the department's response times.
- The limited availability of alternative routes poses additional challenges for the emergency response team.

#### *Existing Conditions and Challenges:*

- Key challenges for Allen Street include traffic congestion, inefficient traffic signal timing, and the absence of opticoms to help expedite emergency response.
- The crosswalk at Three Rivers Drive and Allen Street poses a safety concern, and Jeremy suggests the implementation of a HAWK signal to provide pedestrians with a safer crossing experience.
- The existing bike lanes on Grade Street restrict space, and there is more foot traffic than cycling traffic in the area, indicating a need to reconsider their layout.

#### *Potential Solutions:*

- Improving traffic signal timing and integrating opticoms into the system could enhance traffic flow and enable more efficient emergency response.
- Restricting left turns at the traffic signal in front of Red Canoe may help reduce the backup at Grade Street and Allen Street.
- Better coordinating the signals at Three Rivers Drive and Allen Street could improve overall traffic flow in the area.

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## Kelso Longview Chamber of Commerce Interview Notes

Interviewee Name:

- **Bill Marcum (former CEO)**
- **Karen Sisson (Interim CEO)**
- **Julie Rinard (Project Manager)**

Stakeholder (business/org/etc.): **Kelso Longview Chamber of Commerce**

Email address: **ksisson@kelsolongviewchamber.org**

Date/time: **March 31, 2023**

### *Business/Organization Information:*

- The Chamber of Commerce staff typically drive alternate routes to get to and from their office on Minor Road to avoid the delays along Allen St - Karen Sisson travels north. People do use Allen St to get to and from the Kelso downtown center. Most of the traffic happens in the afternoon.

### *Existing Conditions and Challenges:*

- School pick-up and drop-off times cause the worst traffic. Left turns cause backups, and merging with unclear signage and lane striping creates unsafe conditions. Peak times are between 7:30 and 8am and 2-3:30pm, with the afternoon being far worse than the morning.
- The lane layout at the freeway onramps and offramps is confusing for people; some lane striping is worn or missing, and the corridor is not well marked or signed. Signal timing is the biggest perceived challenge. Signal timing seems to be the driver of all of the issues - especially with the two signals on the east side of I-5. The first week of school is when traffic is the worst as kids are new to the area and all want to drive.
- Businesses along Allen St west of the project area do rely on Allen St being a main route to get people to and from their businesses. People driving consistently wait 3-4 signal cycles, and they get frustrated and will run red lights when turning off of Allen St during peak times, causing unsafe conditions.
- When the power goes out, the conditions become significantly worse. Backups are huge. That happens 4-5 times per year.

### *Potential Solutions:*

- More people would walk if there was additional pedestrian infrastructure and better crossings. Currently, people have to take their life in their hands if they choose to walk along Allen St.

## Kelso School District Interview Notes

Interviewee Name(s):

- **Scott Westlund: 360-501-1903, [scott.westlund@kelsosd.org](mailto:scott.westlund@kelsosd.org)**
- **Sheri Walker: 360-501-1800, [sheri.walker@kelsosd.org](mailto:sheri.walker@kelsosd.org)**

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## Community Engagement Summary

Stakeholder (business/org/etc.): **Kelso School District**

Date/time: **March 24, 2023**

### *Business/Organization Information:*

- Kelso High School serves 1,350-1,400 students. Transportation during the school day is limited as most students remain on campus all day.
- Buses access the school through one entrance to the south of the school. Students/parents access the school through the one front entrance off Allen Street.
- Most students/visitors come by car, but there is also a good amount of foot traffic, cycling and skateboarding around the school. An estimated 100 skateboarders frequent the school and use it as a mode of transportation.
- Some students/visitors may use Tam O'Shanter Way to access the school, but it is not as common.
- Allen Street is a main thoroughfare for students and parents getting to school. School buses typically use only portions of Allen St and route into surrounding neighborhoods. Smaller, specialty school buses (like those for students with disabilities) regularly travel on Allen Street. Buses from other schools may travel on Allen Street to get to Kelso.
- There is frequent foot traffic around the school. This includes traffic to and from the Family and Community Resource Center, walks for physical education classes and more. Students frequently cross Allen Street by foot.
- Some students use public transit to reach the school.
- Busiest before (~7:30 a.m.) and after school (~2:45 p.m.).
- During the arrival and departure times of the school people have discovered that if they come down Bates Road they get quicker access into the school parking lot. When Allen St. traffic is stopped to allow them into the school it compounds the delays we see with vehicles traveling east and west on Allen St. It also stops the flow of vehicles trying to exit the parking lot of KHS and Coweeman.
- We only have one big bus that travels Allen St. during the secondary release time. There are 2 large buses that travel through on elementary runs but there is very little traffic at that time. However, during the 2:30 release there are 6 Special Education busses that must leave the parking lot and travel west on Allen St. There are also 14 large busses that must exit Tam O'Shanter and travel through the Allen St. / Kelso Dr. intersection. These buses cause quite a disruption in traffic flow due to their size and going through multiple traffic signals.
- Extensive school busing program – some riders have 45-minute commutes. Most students are dependent on school transportation.

### *Existing Conditions and Challenges:*

- There is a bus stop across Tam O'Shanter Way (by the AM/PM) that is not well lit.
- Traffic signal timing issues at Allen Street and N Minor Road. Not enough vehicles pass through the intersection on each cycle. This causes backups along Allen Street during high-traffic times.
- There are backups on the road that splits Kelso High and Coweeman Middle (entrance to the parking lots). This can extend to Allen Street and cause backups there.
- Backups have caused students to be late – this is true for parents, student drivers and buses.

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- Crosswalks don't have appropriate lighting or indicators. At least one student has been hit by a car crossing on Allen Street coming to/from school.
- Visibility around the school is a major issue for pedestrians and cyclists, especially during winter months.
- Turn lanes from Allen Street to I-5 on-ramps are short and difficult to manage when much of the traffic is going straight.
- NB off-ramp (exit 39) difficult to navigate.  
The district is considering implementing a plan to allow traffic to exit onto Tam O'Shanter Way on the south end of the school.
- The district has considered adding a traffic signal to the school entrance/exit.
- No issues around the school between school start/end times.
- The on-ramps to I-5 work well.

### *Potential Solutions:*

- Widen intersection at Minor Road to allow higher traffic flow.
- Widen road leading to Kelso High and Coweeman Middle School (these are school property).
- Add bike lanes near school/on high-traffic bike routes for students.
- Improve signal timing at intersections along Allen Street.
- Improve lighting at bus stops and around crosswalks to increase visibility. Consider additional ways to improve visibility for pedestrians and travelers around the area.
- Improve cohesiveness and availability of crosswalks so pedestrians don't have to go out of their way to find a marked crosswalk.
- Improve traffic flows and infrastructure of Tam O'Shanter Way to accommodate traffic.

## River Cities Transit (RCT) Interview Notes

Interviewee Name:

- **Tabitha Hayden-Mobility Supervisor**
- **Michael Richards- Operations Supervisor**

Stakeholder (business/org/etc.): **River Cities Transit**

Email address: [tabitha@rctransit.org](mailto:tabitha@rctransit.org), 360-442-5662

Date/time: **March 23, 2023**

### *Business/Organization Information:*

- RCT doesn't put bus stops on Allen St, but would like to be able to use it more
- There are three bus routes that drive through Allen Street. Routes that pass-through Allen St: 57, 44, 45.
- The buses get stuck in this area- even without a stop there, especially when there is school traffic. This impacts the reliability of their service, and causes lower ridership, and they often get phone calls from riders complaining about the speeds.

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- Their only bus stop in the corridor is at N Minor Rd (Route 46) at the visitor's center. It's not the most ideal spot- the shoulder is harsh and doesn't meet ADA standards. They don't like having to send people all the way to the mall.

### *Existing Conditions and Challenges:*

- Biggest issue is the lack of alternative routes. They struggle with detours when they are needed in the area given buses are 35 feet long and difficult to turn around on alternative routes.
- The traffic signals are causing a huge issue- worst in the morning and afternoon for school drop offs/pick ups
- People walking to the existing stops face safety issues as sidewalks/crosswalks/curbs are not ADA compliant. The crosswalks are poorly marked.
- There's no good place to bike. They get a lot of people biking to bus stops and putting bikes on buses.
- Neither Tabitha nor Michael could think of anything that works well. Things continue to worsen as the town grows

### *Potential Solutions:*

- Being able to place a bus stop on the corridor would make conditions better. They recommend just west of S 8th Ave- people would have to walk shorter distances to access amenities. There is parking there now, but this would be an excellent spot for 45 to stop. It would give people access to the social services office, businesses, as well as the homes on the north side of the road. This would require improvements to the crosswalk and better pedestrian safety zones.
- To RCT, safety means:
  - Passenger's ability to access the stop
  - Safe passing to get to the stop
  - Buses able to safely get to the riders, and merge back into traffic
  - Line of sight- how far in advance can bus drivers see someone standing at a stop
  - Lighting street lighting is very important, their service runs early mornings and late nights
- RCT recommends anything that eases up congestion and keeps traffic flowing.
- Use complete streets approach so that Allen St is accessible for everybody
- Always hoping for bus only lanes- if buses can move freely from traffic it would relieve a lot of problems.

## **Safeway Interview Notes**

Interviewee Name: **Eric, store director**  
Stakeholder (business/org/etc.): **Safeway**  
Email address:  
Phone: **360-636-4548**  
Date/time: **March 7, 2023**

### *Business/Organization Information:*



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- Busiest times of day for deliveries, gas station, store
  - Deliveries
    - For vendors, receiving hours are 6 to 11:30 a.m, Monday through Friday. They typically get 10 vendors a day who unload behind the store.
    - Safeway corporate deliveries are twice a day typically. One comes late at night and the other in the morning by 5 a.m.
    - Fuel delivers as needed, about one tanker per day, but can vary.
  - Shopping
    - The busiest shopping times are 2 to 7 p.m. on most days. The busiest days are Friday, Saturday and Sunday.
- Most sales 2-7 p.m. – but weekends pretty busy all day long.
- Fuel trucks and Safeway deliveries come off Allen Street through the fuel station entrance and wrap around the store. Trucks are typically 22-pallet (about 44-feet)
- Vendor routes vary depending on where they come from. They could use Allen Street or come along Grade Street to the west.
- There is cash pickup once a day for the gas station and store.
- There is a bus stop adjacent to the store along the east side (Three Rivers Mall & Safeway stop). They receive decent traffic from bus riders.
- Allen Street traffic/congestion doesn't really impact the business.

### *Existing Conditions and Challenges:*

- Eric doesn't have many personal challenges getting to and from work.
- There aren't traffic-related safety concerns. Eric noted transient activity behind the building, in the parking lot and around the bus stop. RVs/campers occasionally show up in the parking lot for overnight/long stays despite signage about no overnight parking.

### *Potential Solutions:*

- Eric didn't have specific improvements in mind.

## Three Rivers Mall Interview Notes

Interviewee Name: **Three Rivers Mall**

Stakeholder (business/org/etc.): **Three Rivers Mall**

Email address: **info@threeriversmall.com**

Date/time: **March 30, 2023**

### *Business/Organization Information:*

- The mall serves many students walking to and from school.
- Customers, employees and vendors for the mall constantly travel on Allen Street using the main entrance from Allen Street to Three Rivers Drive. Both turn lanes are used frequently.
- When Allen Street is congested, it causes backups onto Three Rivers Drive as mall visitors exit or enter the shopping area. This is a major traffic/congestion impact to the mall.

### *Existing Conditions and Challenges:*

- The busiest times for visitors are weekends and afternoons.

## **Allen Street Corridor Transportation Study Community Engagement Summary**

- All the schools and major retailers in one spot adds to the congestion experienced by the mall and increases the likelihood of backups at peak times of day.
- The yellow left turn signal on Allen Street near the mall has made a noticeable difference for mall patrons accessing the space.

### *Potential Solutions:*

- Three Rivers Mall identified little solutions – there is a challenge with all the major retailers and schools located in such proximity.

# Allen Street Corridor Transportation Study Community Engagement Summary

## Appendix B | Survey Summary

### Overview

The City of Kelso hosted a public input survey in its efforts to identify potential improvements to the Allen Street corridor. The survey asked respondents to give feedback on how they use the corridor, preferences for travel and facilities, and overall travel observations in the area.

The input shared from this survey will help the consultant team understand what challenges users in the corridor face and identify potential ways to improve conditions. The survey ran from May 2 to June 14 and garnered 96 responses from community members who live, work and recreate around the corridor. The survey was advertised through City of Kelso and WSDOT social media channels, stakeholder emails, the City of Kelso project webpage and in-person outreach.

### Key Themes

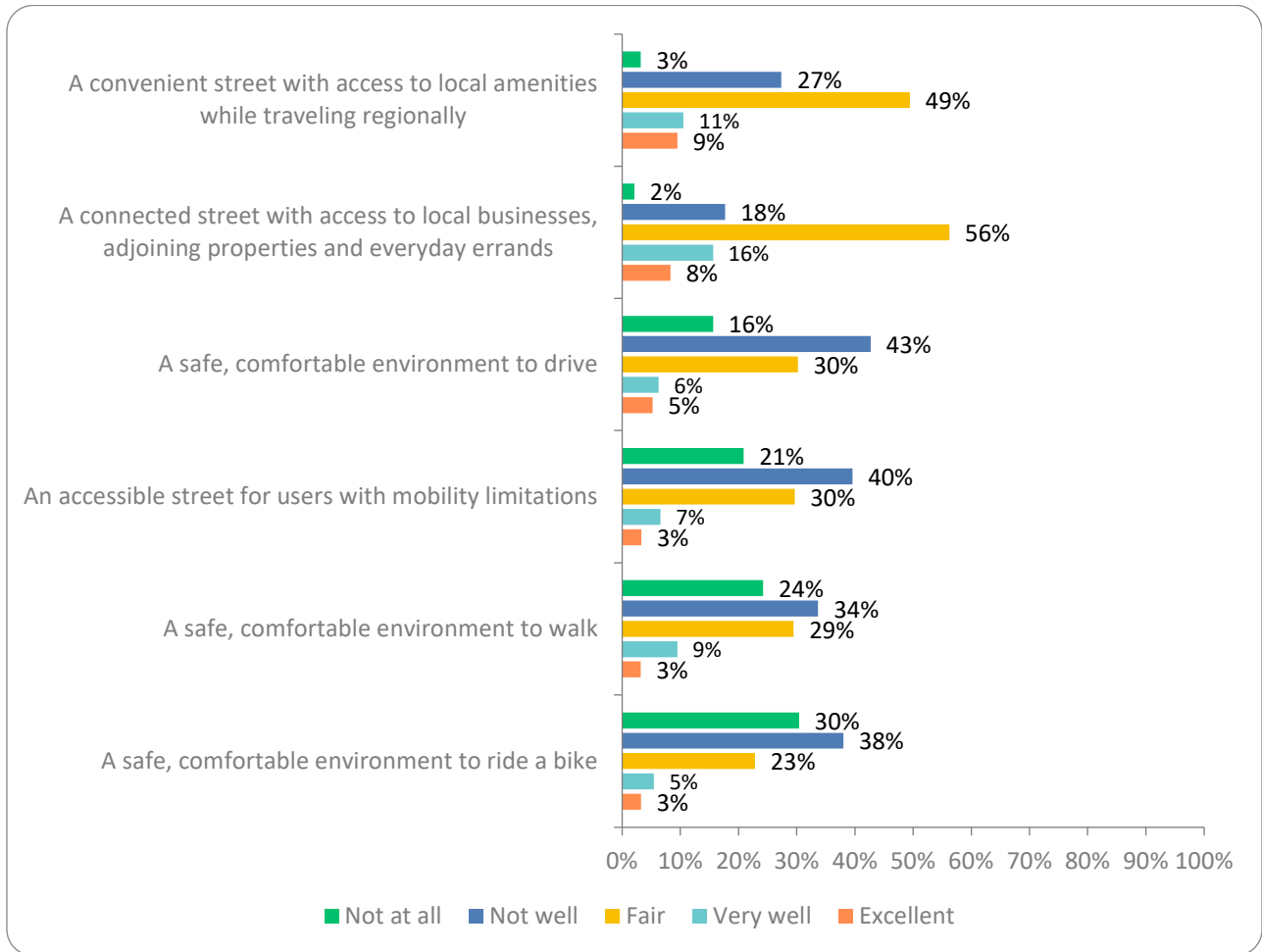
Key themes shared across survey respondents included:

- Overall, respondents feel Allen Street does not fulfill core functions well. Respondents regularly experience traffic congestion, accessibility and visibility issues, and safety concerns as drivers and pedestrians.
- Most (70%) respondents travel along Allen Street daily, and 97% of respondents travel via car.
- Most (89%) respondents use Allen Street for everyday activities like shopping and running errands.
- Overall, respondents experience traffic congestion the most on Allen Street during the mornings and afternoons, specifically during school pick-up and drop-off times. Respondents experience congestion the least during the early mornings and at nights.
- Reducing congestion was the number one priority for respondents, followed by improving safety.
- The most common suggestion for improving Allen Street was to better coordinate traffic signal timing. Improving facilities for public transit and cyclists were lower priorities for respondents.

# Allen Street Corridor Transportation Study Community Engagement Summary

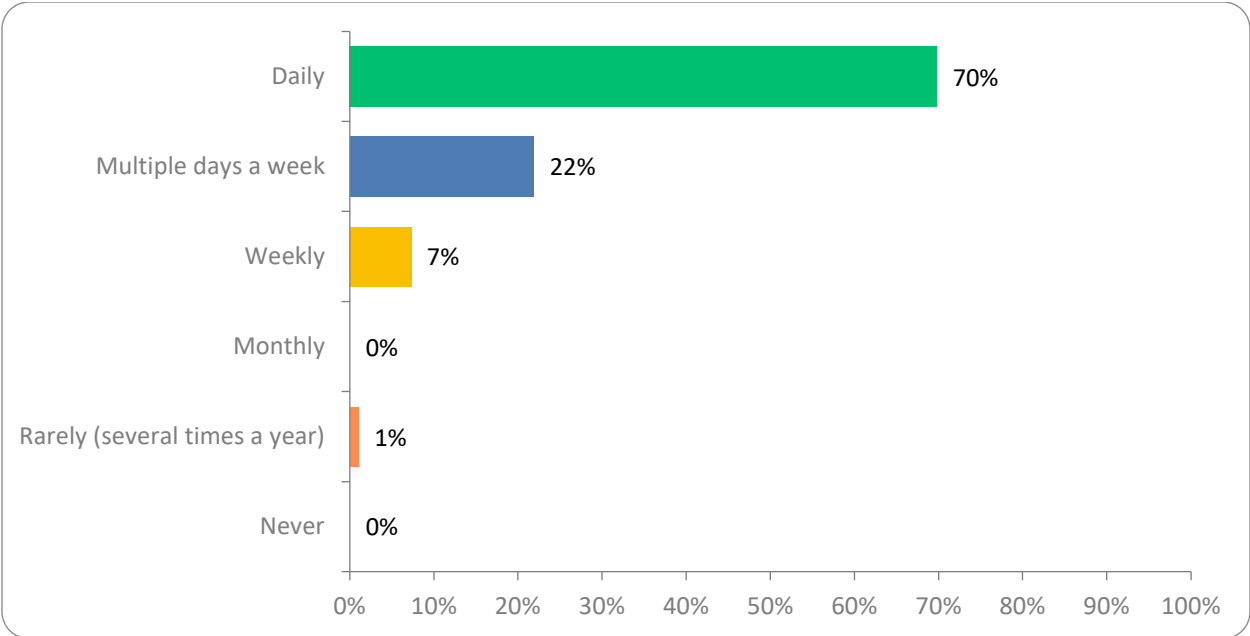
## Survey Results – Transportation Questions

Q1: How does Allen Street between South 8th Avenue and North 17th Avenue fulfill the following functions?



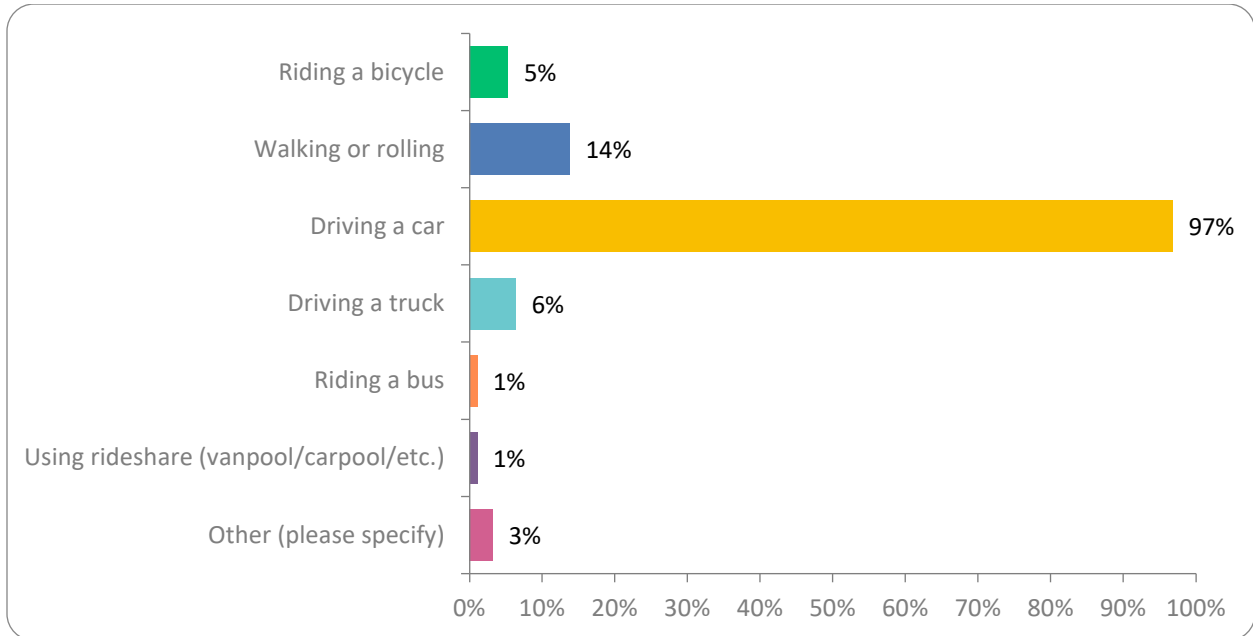
# Allen Street Corridor Transportation Study Community Engagement Summary

Q2: How frequently do you travel along Allen Street between South 8th Avenue and North 17th Avenue?



## Allen Street Corridor Transportation Study Community Engagement Summary

Q3: How do you typically travel on Allen Street between South 8th Avenue and North 17th Avenue?  
[Check all that apply]

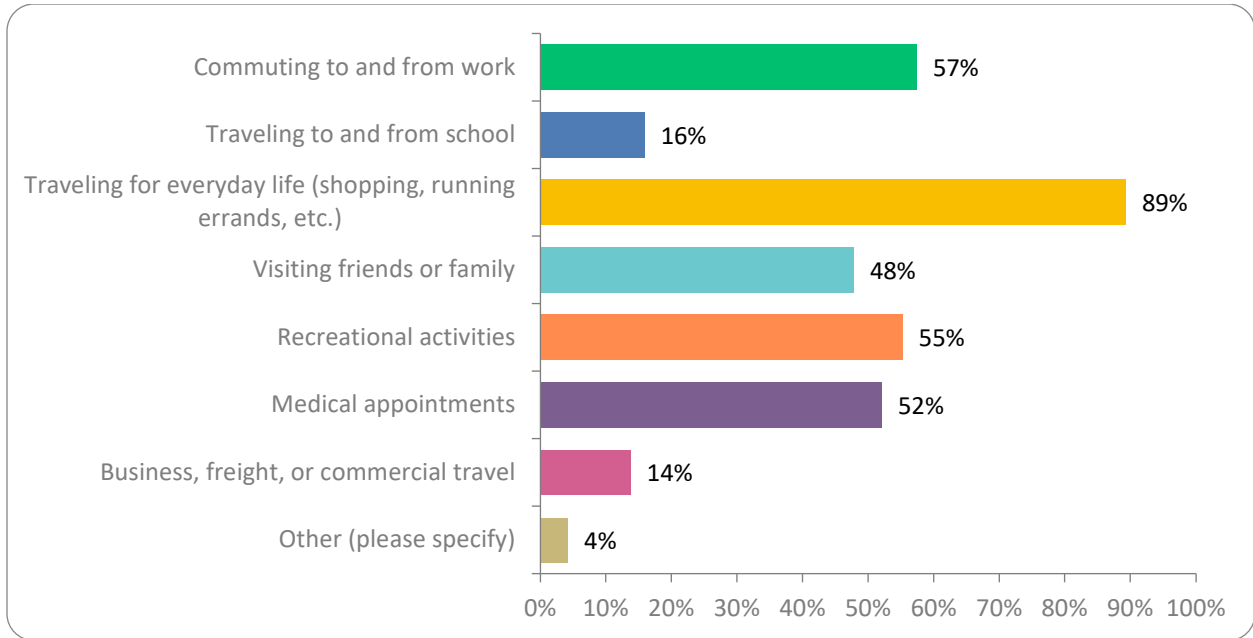


Other (please specify):

- Driving a school bus
- Driving a bus
- Riding a motorcycle

## Allen Street Corridor Transportation Study Community Engagement Summary

Q4: Why do you use Allen Street between South 8th Avenue and North 17th Avenue? [Check all that apply]

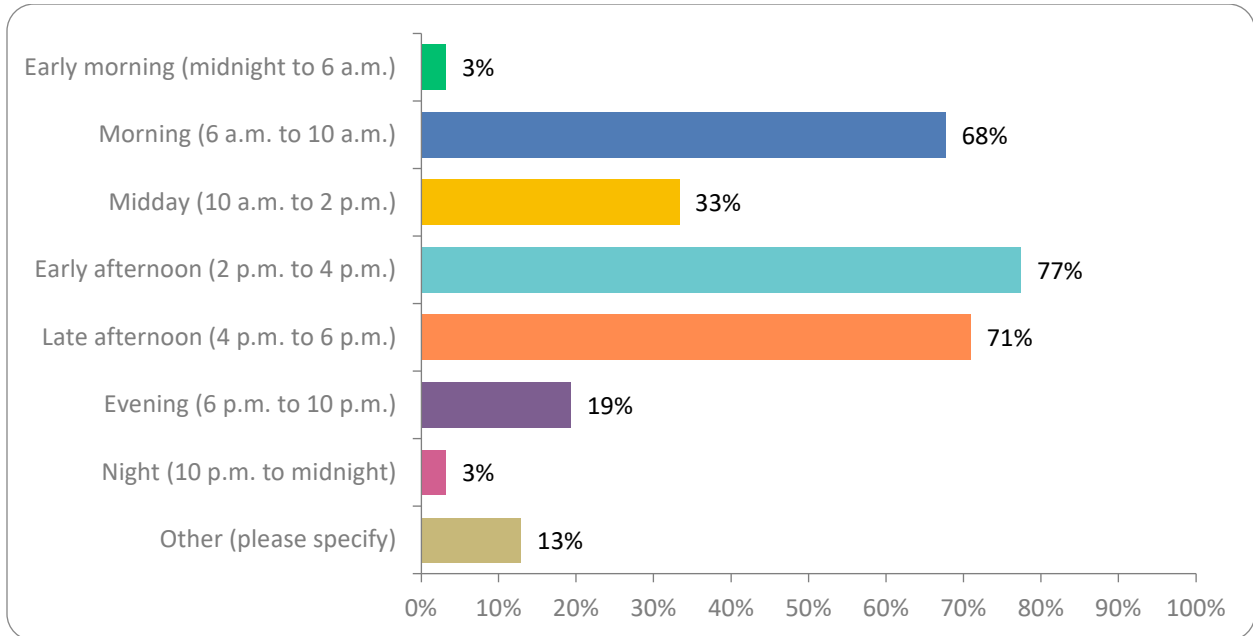


Other (please specify):

- Going to church
- Picking up students from school
- Getting to Tam O'Shanter
- I have a rental home on Allen Street

## Allen Street Corridor Transportation Study Community Engagement Summary

Q5: During what times of day do you encounter poor traffic conditions on Allen Street between South 8th Avenue and North 17th Avenue? [Check all that apply]



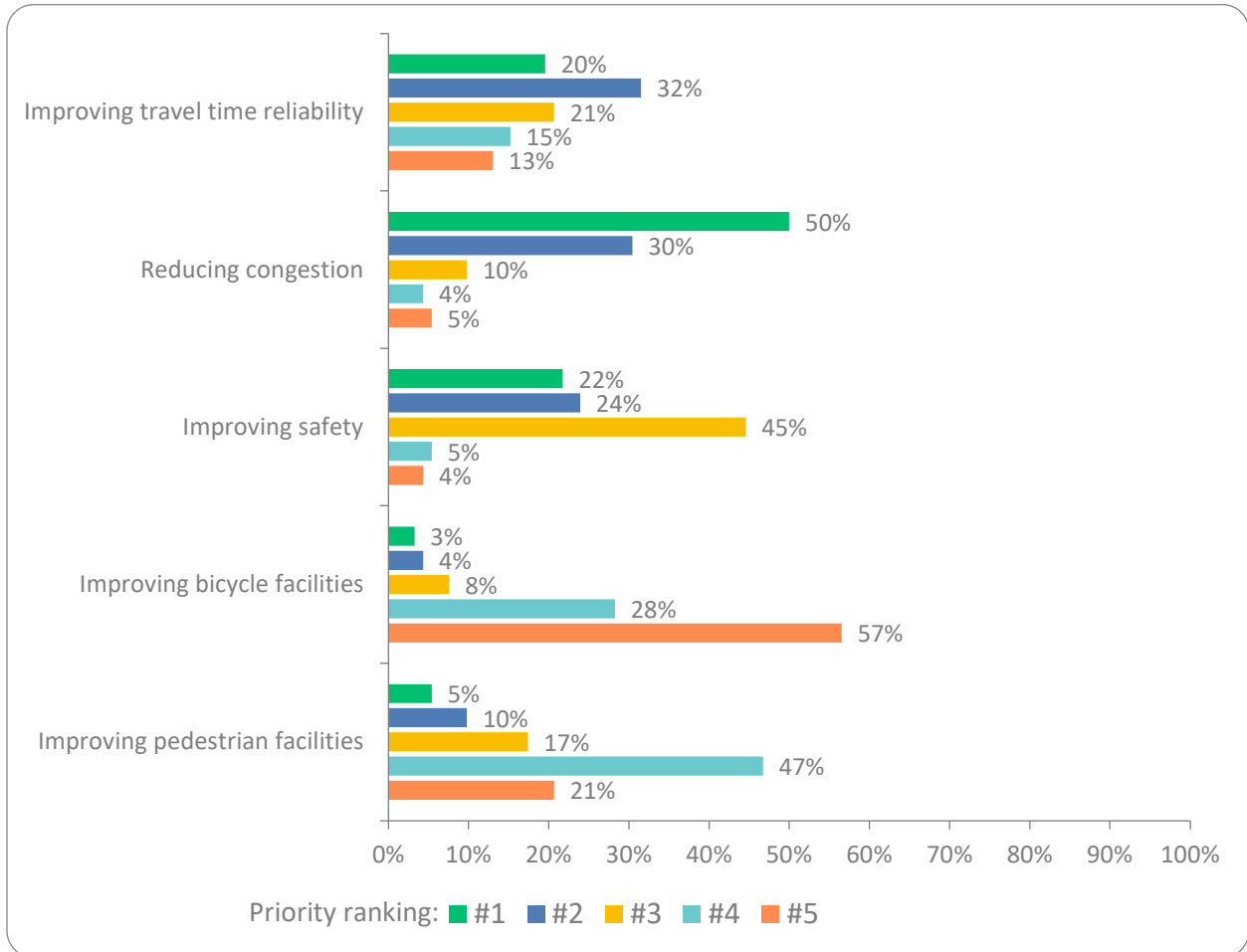
Other (please specify):

- During and after school events
- During peak school drop off and pickup times
- Weekends
- None



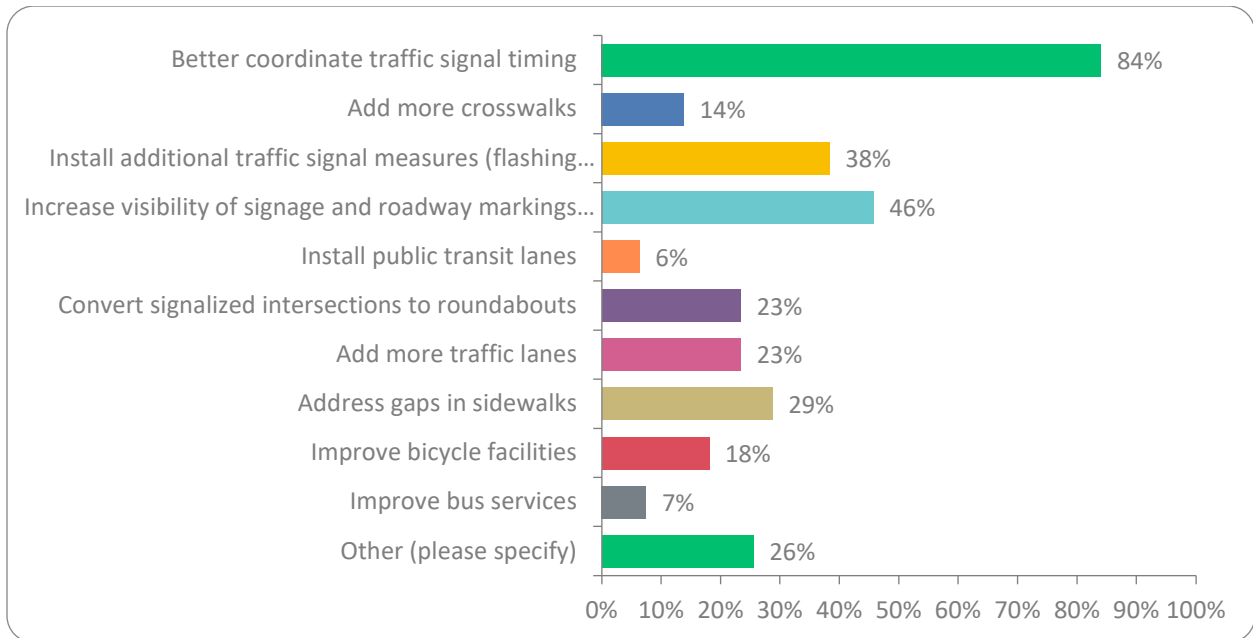
## Allen Street Corridor Transportation Study Community Engagement Summary

Q6: What are your most important priorities for improving Allen Street between South 8th Avenue and North 17th Avenue? Please rank the following priorities, with #1 being the most important and #5 being the least important.



## Allen Street Corridor Transportation Study Community Engagement Summary

Q7: Which ideas do you think would improve Allen Street between South 8th Avenue and North 17th Avenue? [Check all that apply]

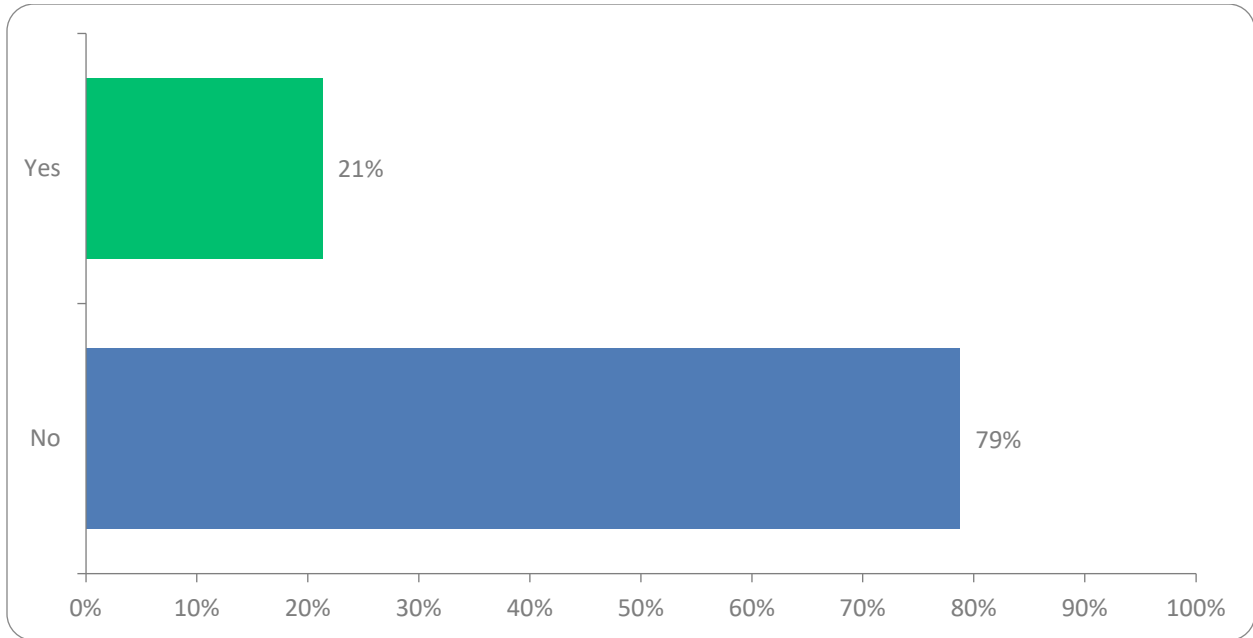


Other (please specify):

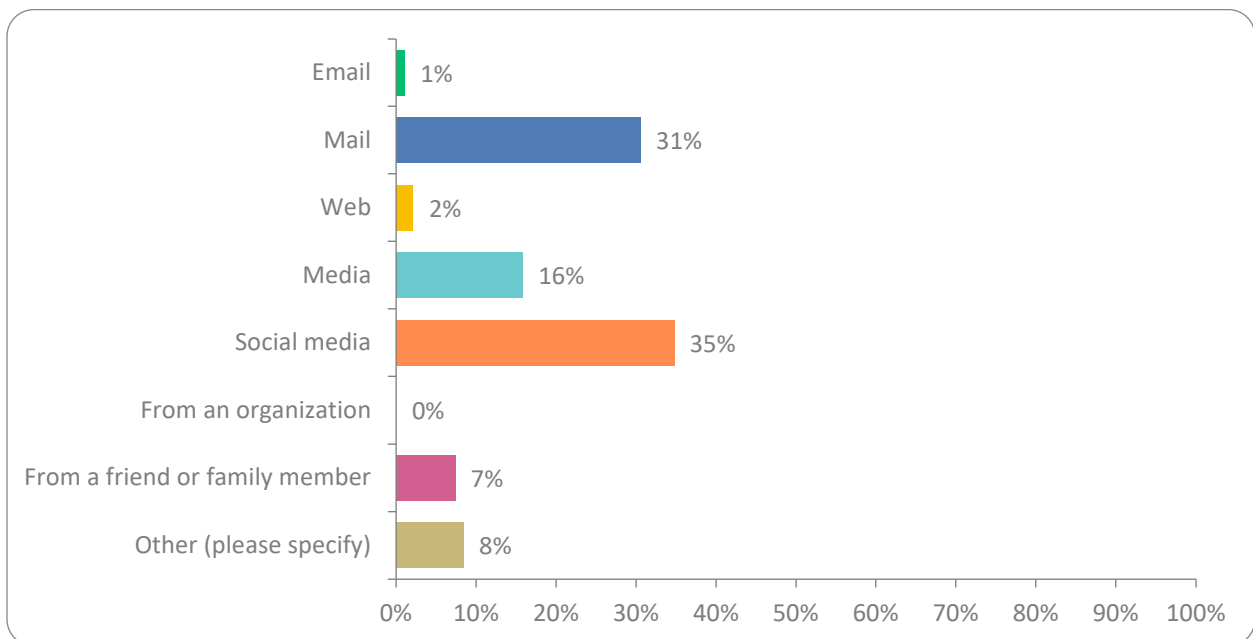
- Install a median to block left turns in busy areas
- Relocate street parking
- Better coordinate on-/off-ramp traffic
- Improve access to downtown and local businesses
- No roundabouts
- No improvements needed

## Allen Street Corridor Transportation Study Community Engagement Summary

Q8: If improved bicycle facilities were available along Allen Street between South 8th Avenue and North 17th Avenue, would you use them?



Q10: How did you hear about this study and survey?



# Allen Street Corridor Transportation Study

## Community Engagement Summary

### Survey Results – Additional Ideas

Q9: Do you have other ideas for improving traffic and safety on Allen Street?

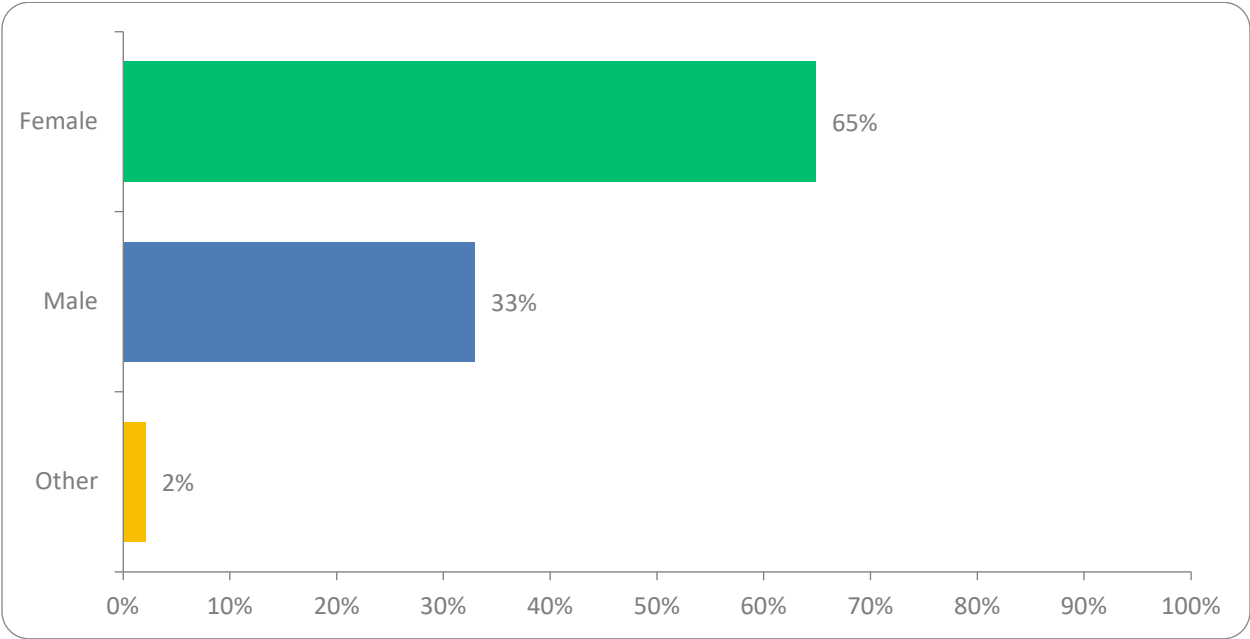
Below is a summary of the 43 recommendations received. We paraphrased and grouped together similar responses where applicable and organized by common themes.

- **Traffic Flow and Intersection Management**
  - Promote using 13th Avenue more to alleviate traffic on South 8th Avenue.
  - Add a right turn lane to access the northbound I-5 ramp.
  - Improve traffic lights on both sides of the I-5 overpass, particularly on the east side.
  - Enhance signage and lane markings to inform drivers about the merging lanes on Allen Street.
  - Reduce congestion by coordinating traffic signals and synchronizing their timing.
  - Consider a stoplight with a crosswalk closer to the schools for better management of school traffic.
- **Safety Measures**
  - Maintain crossing guards at KHS & Coweeman to enhance safety.
  - Address issues with parked cars obstructing visibility at certain intersections.
  - Enforce speed limits and traffic laws to improve safety.
  - Improve patrol presence before and after school to ensure safety.
  - Increase police presence to enforce traffic laws and deter violations.
- **Specific Intersection Improvements**
  - Restrict left turns at the intersection of Kelso Drive.
  - Address blockages caused by business entrances on Kelso Drive.
  - Modify the intersection of Minor Road/Kelso Drive and Allen Street to reduce congestion and stranded drivers.
  - Consider adding a stoplight at the high school or another exit for Kelso High traffic.
  - Implement flashing left arrows or longer signal times at the Kelso Drive intersection.
- **Miscellaneous Suggestions**
  - Evaluate the need for bike lanes and prioritize improvements that alleviate automobile congestion.
  - Address the number of stoplights before, under and after I-5.
  - Implement measures to slow down traffic, especially in residential areas.
  - Evaluate the impact of improving other I-5 crossings on the Allen Street corridor.

# Allen Street Corridor Transportation Study Community Engagement Summary

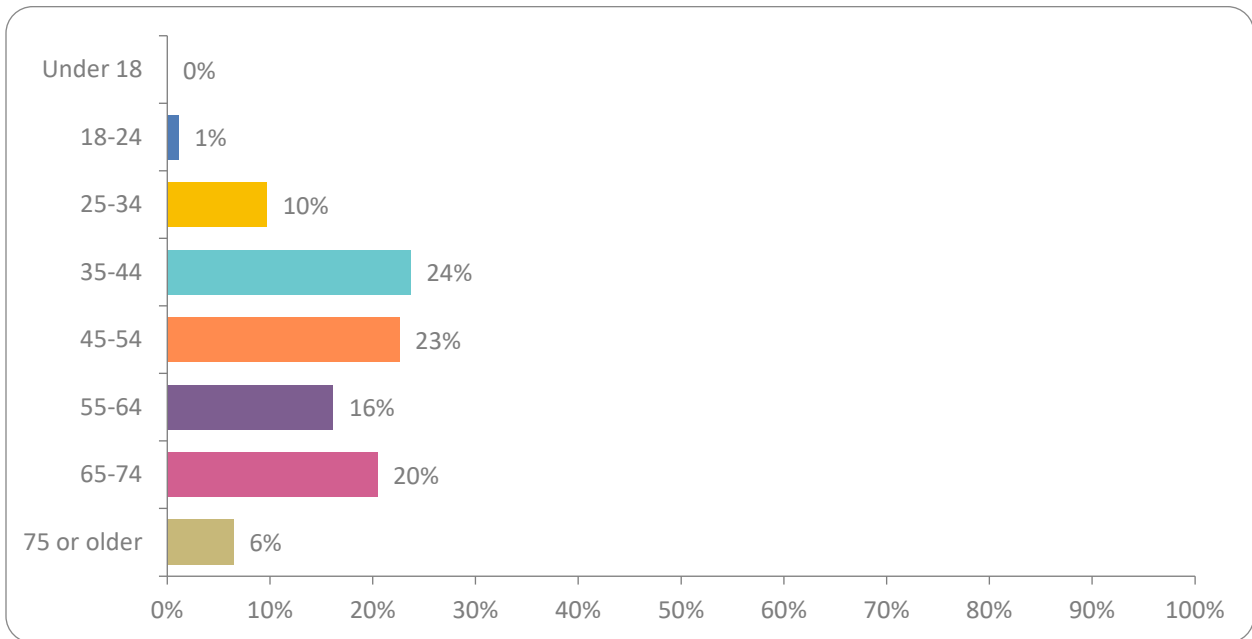
## Demographics

Q11: How do you identify?



# Allen Street Corridor Transportation Study Community Engagement Summary

Q12: What is your age?



Q13: How do you identify? [Check all that apply]

