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PUBLIC FEEDBACK AND ONLINE SURVEY RESULTS

Union County Master Transportation Plan

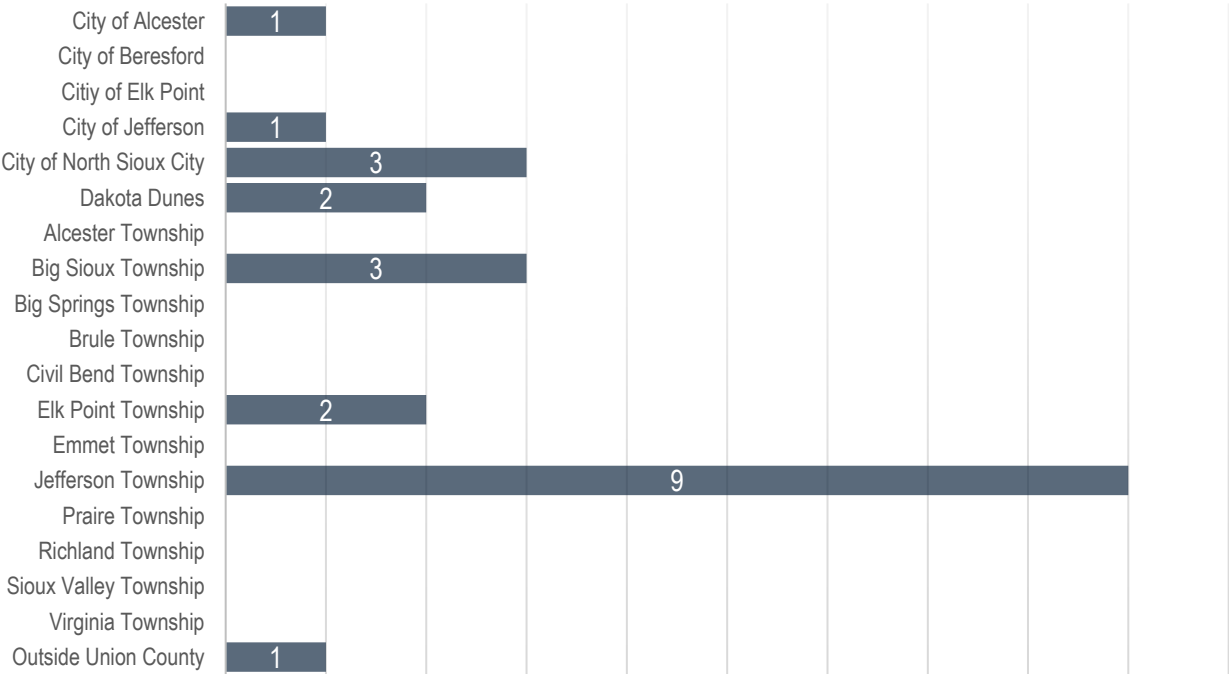
Public Meeting #1 (virtual) and an internet-based public survey were open for public comment from June 3 through July 21, 2021. Due to Covid-19 Pandemic precautions set by SDDOT (following CDC guidance), Public Meeting #1 was presented in an entirely virtual format. Stakeholders identified by the Study Advisory Team were emailed direct invitations for Public Meeting #1, and public advertisements were posted in the following official Union County newspapers on June 3 and June 10, 2021:

- *Alcester Union & Hudsonite*
- *Beresford Republic*
- *Dakota Dunes / North Sioux City Times*
- *The Leader-Courier*

The public survey posed 37 questions relating to the existing transportation network in Union County. There were opportunities for participants to provide feedback relating to their usage of the transportation network, overall performance, issues and concerns, budgetary perceptions, prioritization of specific types of improvements, and general comments.

A total of 22 surveys were completed and 2 individual comments were submitted outside of the survey. The results of the survey questions, comments, and analysis are shown below. With 22 total responses, it will be difficult to draw definitive conclusions, but the results and comments are helpful in identifying transportation issues and opportunities in Union County, as well as gain an understanding on where people stand regarding funding and performance of the transportation network.

Q1. Where in Union County do you live?

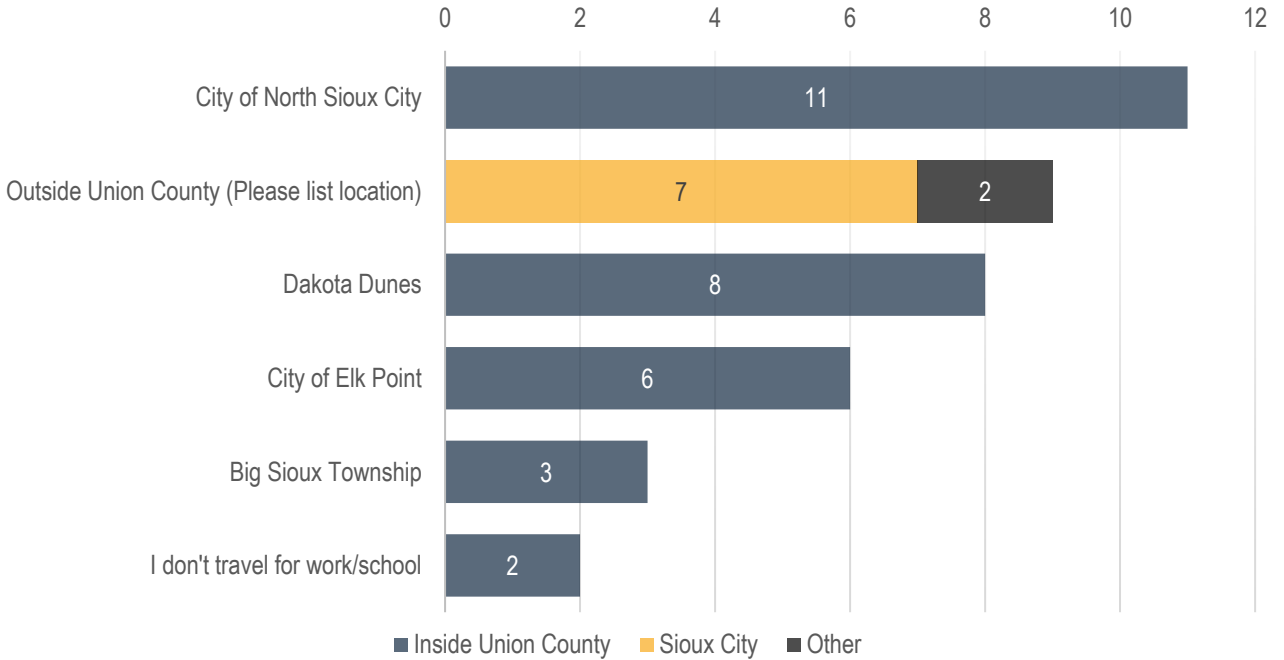


Comments:

- *Outside Union County – Georgia*
- *Jefferson Township – Wynstone community*
- *Jefferson Township – Wynstone*
- *City of Jefferson – Wynstone*
- *Jefferson Township – Wynstone*
- *Elk Point Township – City of Elk Point*

The majority of survey respondents live in Jefferson Township, with Big Sioux Township and North Sioux City registering the second most responses.

Q2. Where do you travel for work/school in Union County? Select all that apply.

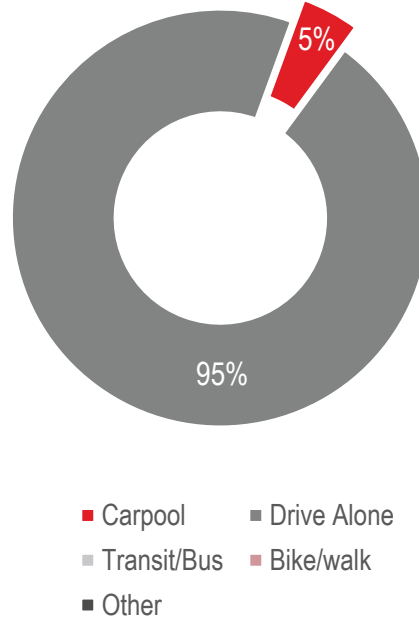


Comments:

- Outside Union County – Sioux City
- Outside Union County – Sioux City, Iowa
- Outside Union County – Sioux City, Iowa
- Outside Union County – Sioux City
- Dakota Valley Elementary School (myself); husband – north to Sioux Falls and west
- Outside Union County – Sioux City, IA
- Outside Union County – Sioux City

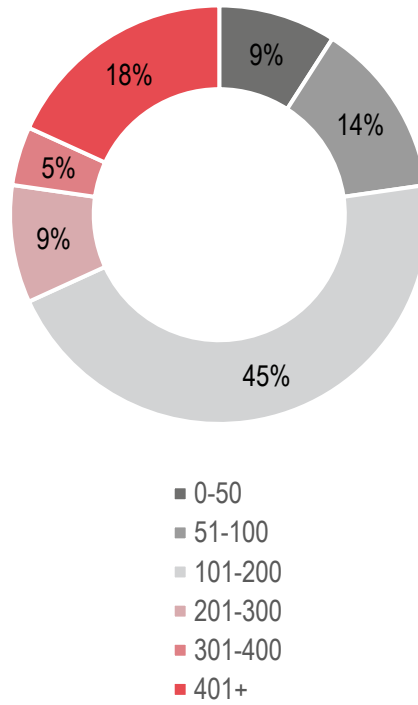
The majority of survey respondents commute to the Sioux City metropolitan area for school or work, including Sioux City, IA, North Sioux City, and Dakota Dunes.

Q3. How do you typically travel to destinations from your home?



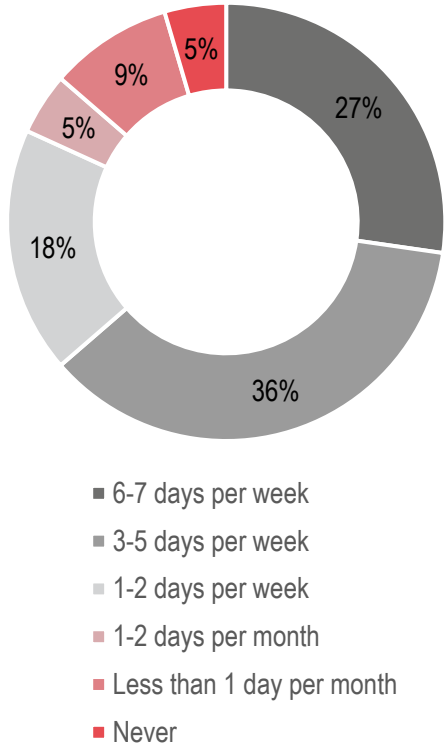
The majority of survey respondents typically drive alone when travelling to outside destinations. This number does not reflect the true number of occupants per vehicle for the majority of trips, as many trips in Union County would be expected to involve family members driving spouses and children, which would technically qualify as a carpool.

Q4. How many miles do you travel in a typical week?



Survey respondents most frequently responded that they drive between 100 to 200 miles in a typical week, with the second largest cohort driving over 400 miles per week. This travel behavior is normal for a rural population.

Q5. During warmer months, how often do you walk/bike outdoors in Union County?



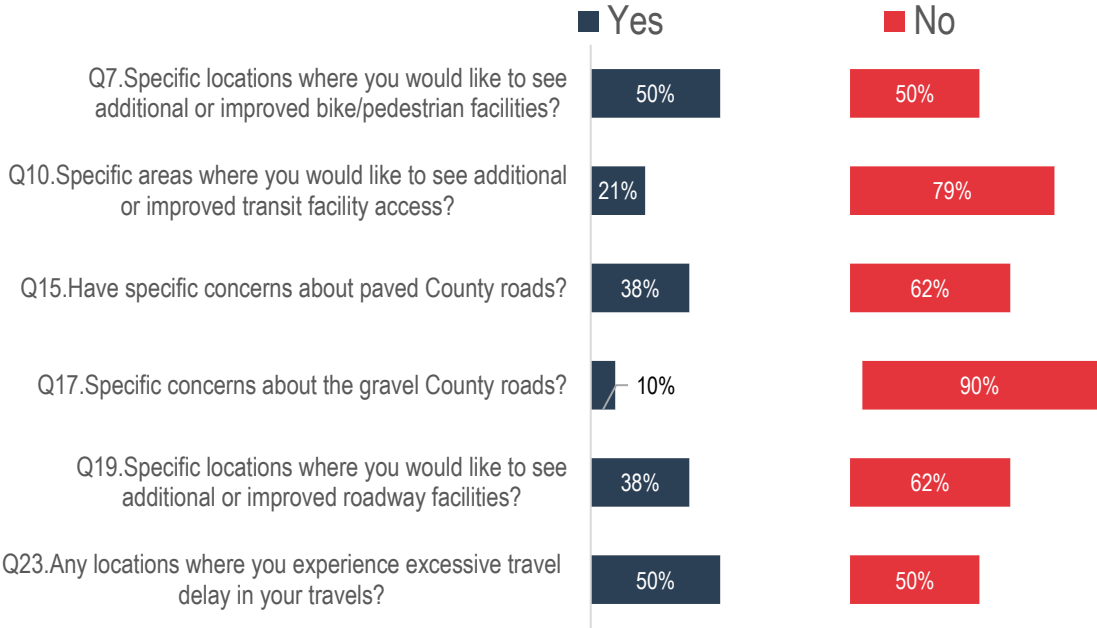
36% of survey respondents report walking or biking 3-5 days per week, while 27% reported walking and biking 6-7 days per week, a great baseline number for active living and active transportation in Union County.

Q6. What prevents you from walking/biking outdoors more often than you do? Please explain and identify issues regarding pedestrian facilities and safety within Union County.

- Weather, other commitments.
- Nothing prevents me from walking.
- There are no sidewalks or bike lanes. I utilize Adam's Nature Area to walk and bike ride.
- Safe place to walk/bike not readily available.
- No Sidewalk in Wynstone.
- No shoulders on county roads, specifically on Hwy 23 (334th St.).
- No biking trails/paths--must ride on a fairly heavily trafficed highway.
- There is no walking path near me. (Deer Run Circle) The county road is too busy to walk safely.
- The road from the Dakota Valley Middle School to Deer Run is NOT pedestrian/bike friendly; cars traveling west after work have sun in their eyes, cars traveling east have the morning sun in their eyes, no shoulders on the road, and people are traveling MUCH faster then the speed limit.
- Conditions excellent for walking/biking McCook Lake Area and Dakota Dunes. Could use bike lanes up to Jefferson and also out to Wynstone on county Roads.
- Connectors to neighboring communities.
- Weather or personal schedule keep me from walking each day. I sometimes walk on the school track or on the golf course. Few other locations have sidewalks or walk paths.
- No place to ride.

Lack of bike and walking infrastructure (trails, sidewalk, paved shoulders, and bike lanes) are frequently mentioned as the main obstacles preventing Union County residents from walking and biking more often. Weather conditions were also frequently mentioned.

Summary of Responses for Q7, Q10, Q15, Q17, Q19, & Q23 (Comments are shown in the following sections)



The details of these questions are provided later in the document. By comparing side by side, there is an opportunity to discern where survey respondents are identifying specific concerns and opportunities for improvement rather than simply generalizing them.

Q7. Are there specific locations where you would like to see additional or improved bike/pedestrian facilities in Union County?



If Yes, please explain:

- Bike/Walk trail to Adam's Nature to Dakota Dunes.
- Along 334th St a bike/walking trail connecting Wynstone to McCook/N Sioux City bike/walk trail
- Wynstone
- Hwy23/Northshore drive.
- Sidewalk along the south side of Deer Run, walk way to Adams Nature Preserve from Deer Run along the buffalo fence/pasture, sidewalk/bike path along road from Deer Run to Dakota Valley Middle School.
- Nice bike paths in Adams Homestead Nature Preserve
- Along MO River
- SD side of Big Sioux fm Dunes to the strip in North Sioux City & bridge to Sioux City, IA
- If the railroad line between Hawarden and Beresford was ever abandoned that might make a good walking trail.
- County rd 1b needs a bike lane

The respondents identified a variety of ideas for improved bike/pedestrian facilities. These suggestions will be incorporated into the Draft Union County Master Transportation Plan where applicable.

Q8. How often do you use public transit (e.g. buses, paratransit, etc.)?



This is an expected response for many rural residents. The inconvenience of utilizing public access and/or the lack of access to public transit could be factors in this heavily weighted response. However, 21% of respondents (Q10) indicated they have specific areas where they would like to see additional or improved transit facility access.

Q9. Why do you use public transit? Select all that apply.



- A bus from NSC w/bike rack would be great.

The inconvenience of utilizing public access and/or the lack of access to public transit could be factors in this heavily weighted response. However, 21% of respondents (Q10) indicated they have specific areas where they would like to see additional or improved transit facility access. A recommendation for bicycle accommodations on buses has been incorporated into the Draft Union County Master Transportation Plan.

Q10. Are there specific areas where you would like to see additional or improved transit facility access in Union County?

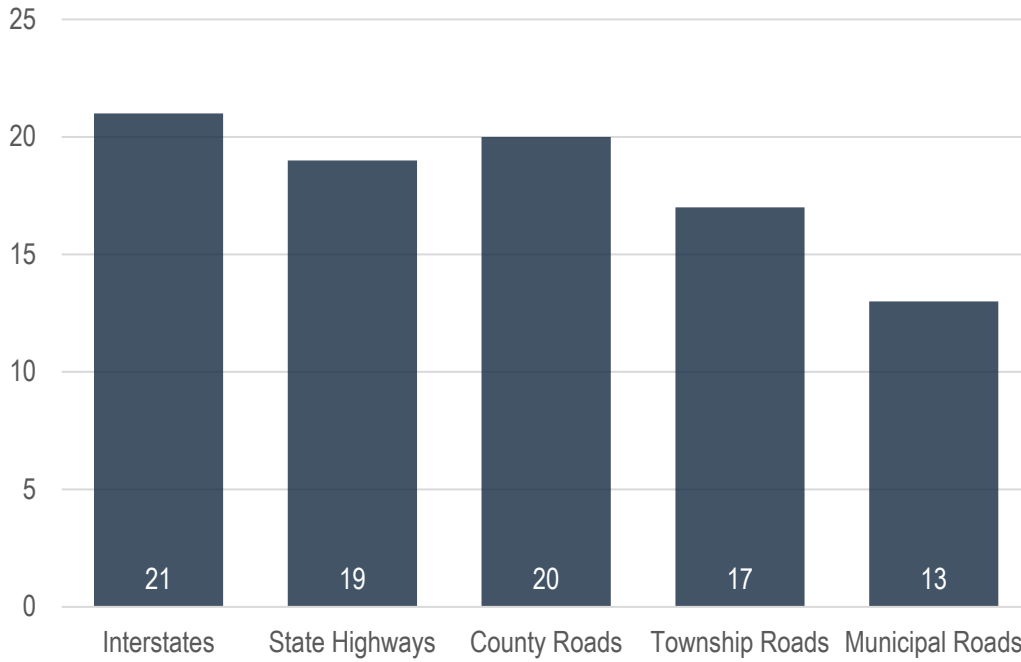


If Yes, please explain:

- Much better bus service.
- Around Dakota Valley schools
- Bus to Sioux City.
- Access within cities, public transit is not advertised very well.

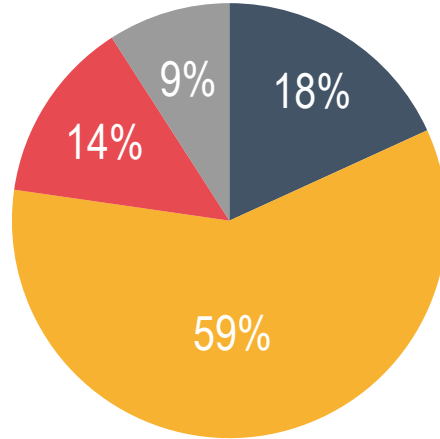
Recommendations for transit service have been incorporated into the Draft Union County Master Transportation Plan.

Q11. Which types of roadway do you depend on to be maintained? Select all that apply.



All roadway types are mentioned; however, Interstates, State Highways, and County Roads have the highest maintenance priority.

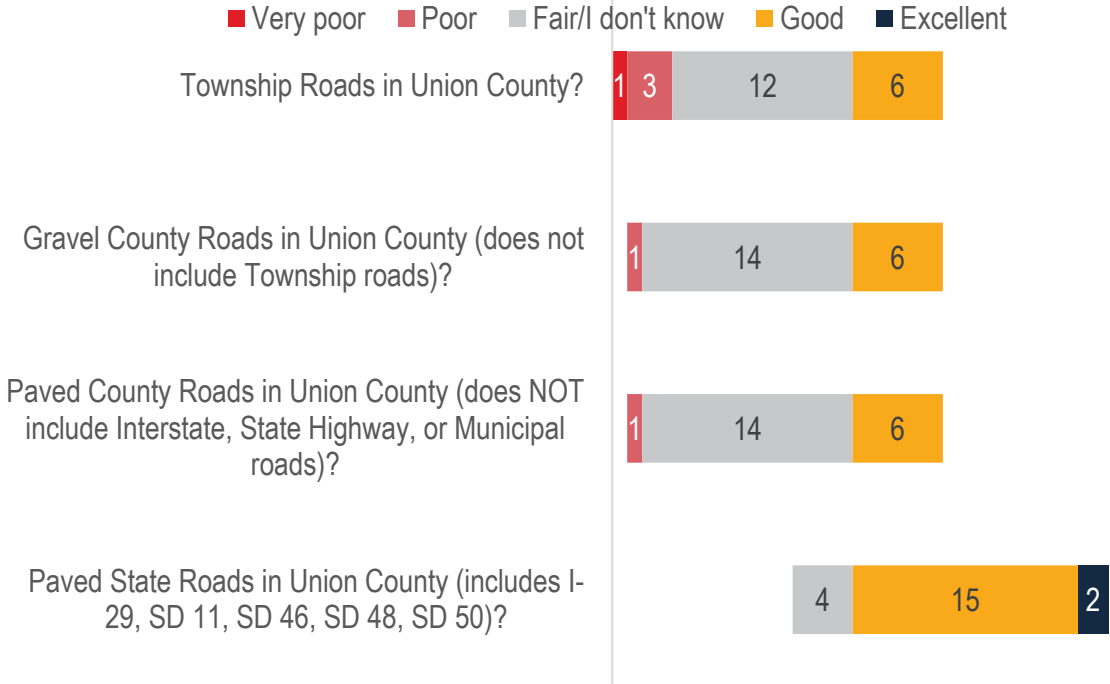
Q12. How would you rate the quality of Union County transportation infrastructure compared to 5 years ago?



- Better
- Same
- Worse
- I don't know

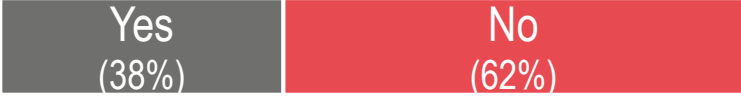
The majority of survey respondents have listed the quality of Union County transportation infrastructure as the same compared to 5 years ago.

Q13,14,16 and 18. How would you rate the condition of ... ?



Survey respondents indicated Township Roads, Gravel Roads, and Paved County Roads are mostly Fair to Good condition, while Paved State Roads are mostly in Good condition.

Q15. Do you have specific concerns about paved County roads in Union County (does NOT include Interstate, State Highway, or Municipal roads)?



- Exit 4 overpass bridge and approach on each side there's bad washboarding and bumps
- Asphalt roads are rough, too many tar joints (dangerous when on motorcycle) ditches aren't mowed frequently enough (concern on watching for wildlife) and some of the concrete roads buckle with heat (not enough expansion joints) the road at hwy 23 near exit 4 from I-29 is very rough, needs repair.
- but wish county still maintained Northshore Drive as they did better job
- Speed limit on County Road 23 between Dakota Valley School and Wynstone should be at least 45 mph not 35 mph
- When pink rock goes down the excess is never tended to; leaving a hazard for motorcycles and bicycles.
- I am concerned Union Co will spend money needlessly on road construction to correct a problem that doesn't exist.
- County Road 1B.
- County road 1B between Jefferson and Elk Point
- Some of the county asphalt roads are starting to show there age from local traffic

These concerns will be incorporated into the Draft Union County Master Transportation Plan and Maintenance Plan section, where applicable.

Q17. Do you have specific concerns about the gravel County roads in Union County (does not include Township roads)?



- Washerboard.
- Some of the gravel roads that are exposed to recent floods and truck traffic show signs of deteriorating

Routine scheduled grading will alleviate most maintenance concerns. If flooding and truck traffic are expected to continue on certain routes, an improvement plan beyond routine grading may need to be considered. There will be an attempt to identify specific locations as part of the plan.

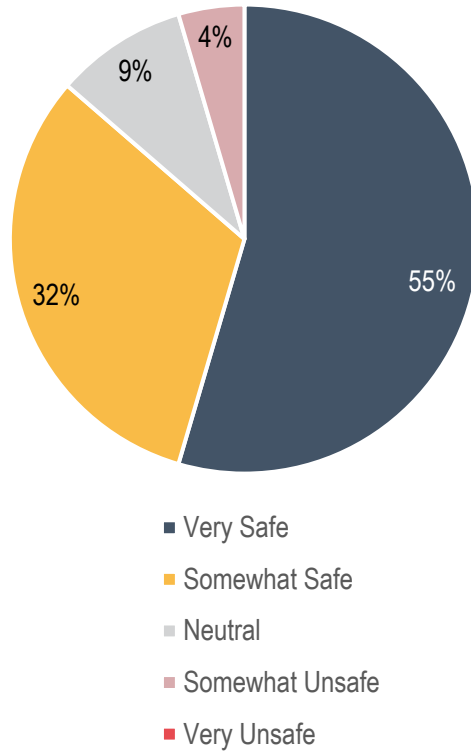
Q19. Are there specific locations where you would like to see additional or improved roadway facilities (beyond typical maintenance and resurfacing) in Union County?



- big siux township roads in general.
- Around Dakota valley schools.
- Northshore Drive needs to be 3-lane or with school turning lanes and also need surface improvement. Few years ago new wide concrete street with curb and gutter south on Westshore to Adams and beyond and Northshore needs same.
- In front of Dakota Valley School
- Again, pick up the excess pink gravel after application.
- Henke Rd. Some bus route gravel roads north of Richland. 471st St to Burbank Beach.
- New bridge on I29 exit 4 moved north of existing bridge for safety and economic development. Noisy interstate pavements going thru North Sioux City and Dakota Dunes
- Heavy traffic highways 330th 480th

These suggestions for additional or improved roadway facilities will be considered for future enhancement project planning, where applicable.

Q20. How safe do you feel driving or riding in automobiles in Union County?



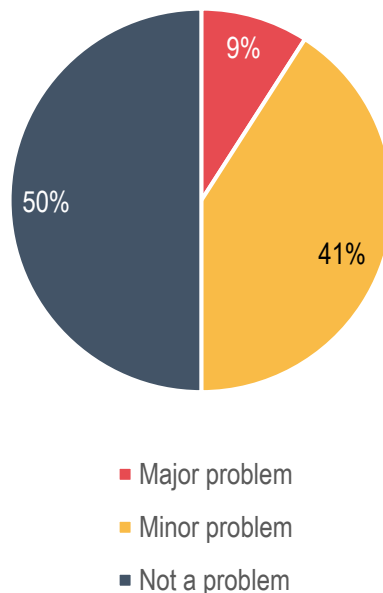
A majority of survey respondents feel very safe to somewhat safe driving or riding in automobiles in Union County.

Q21. Identify general or specific safety issues that you are most concerned about in Union County.

- other drivers
- I don't have an issue.
- View for pulling out and merging with traffic on Exit 4 overpass is horrible and very dangerous. Site lines blocked by bridge.
- Traffic around Dakota Valley schools
- Ditches need to be mowed better, as a motorcyclist, too many chances for deer to run out. Also, need to enforce the law that grass clippings are not to be spread onto the road way, that is like ice to a motorcycle
- people do NOT know the rules for riding bikes, scooters, skateboards, walking on roads - wheels go with the cars not against traffic, pedestrians go against the traffic so you can make eye contact with the driver. Educate the public!
- No safety issues
- Difficulty going from Wynstone on County Road 23 to Interstate 29 in front of Dakota Valley School; road design is not able to accommodate such a HIGH volume of traffic.
- Speeding, texting/calls on cell phones.
- Steep ditches in places. Small shoulders.
- Distracted drivers and wild animals on the roads.

The responses were varied and valid. These concerns will be incorporated into the Draft Union County Master Transportation Plan and Safety section, where applicable.

Q22. Rate the overall level of traffic congestion in Union County?



A majority of survey respondents feel that traffic congestion is Not a problem or a Minor problem in Union County.

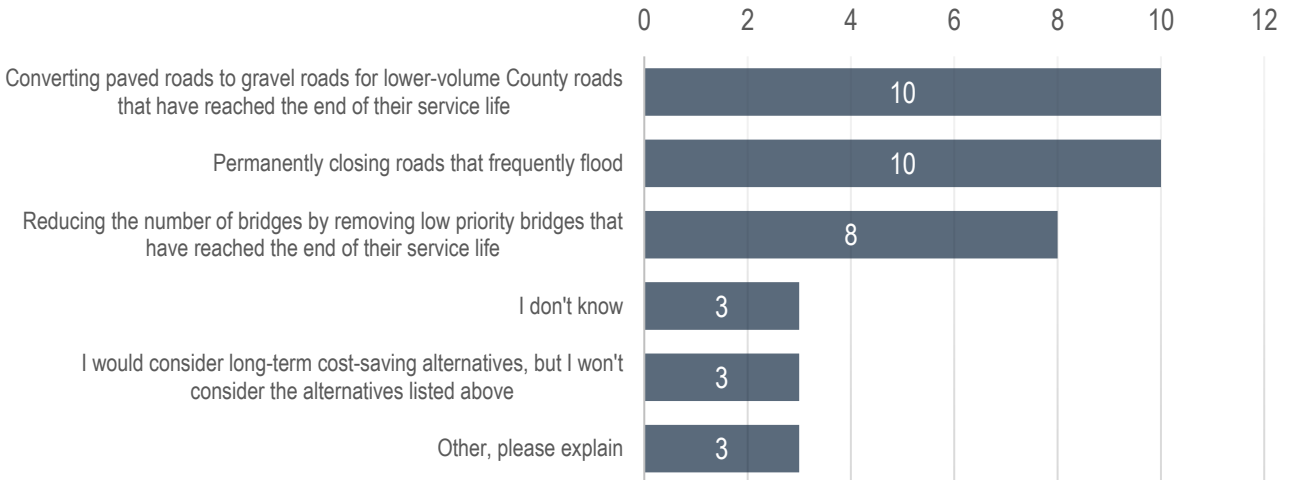
**Q23. Are there any locations in Union County where you experience excessive travel delay in your travels?
Please list the location and when excessive travel delays occur.**



- Dakota Dunes Blvd
- Dakota Valley School Area in 8am and 3pm when school is in session.
- Road in front of Dakota Valley school AND the Exit 4 ramps due to school traffic
- McCook Lake
- Dakota Valley schools
- Northbound Exit 4 gets backed up in the morning during school and then in the evenings. Intersection with Hwy 23/Northshore and that exit can be bad. If you are sitting at that exit, it is very hard to see eastbound traffic on northshore coming over the bridge.
- DV schools
- In front of Dakota Valley schools in the morning and mid-afternoon
- NORTH SHORE DRIVE @ 8:00am and 3:15pm - school arrival time and school dismissal time; during sporting events
- twice daily during school year on school days at drop off and pick up minor traffic delay due to no turning lanes and 6 separate school entrances off northshore drive. School could connect elementary and high school parking lots so that middle school exiting traffic could exit through high school lot to Westshore and left turning lanes into the lots would totally alleviate issues.
- Dakota Valley School

Comments on travel delays were overwhelmingly represented in the vicinity of Northshore Drive, Dakota Valley Schools, and Exit 4 at Interstate 29, though Union County has transferred jurisdiction of North Shore Drive to North Sioux City between Westshore Dr/CR 1 and Interstate 29. Survey respondents list school drop-off and pick-up times as places where they experience excessive travel delay. Mitigation strategies include Safe Routes to School programs that encourage walking and biking, carpooling, walking school busses, and development of school access plans. A planning study along this corridor may be beneficial, as travel delays will increase as the area develop.

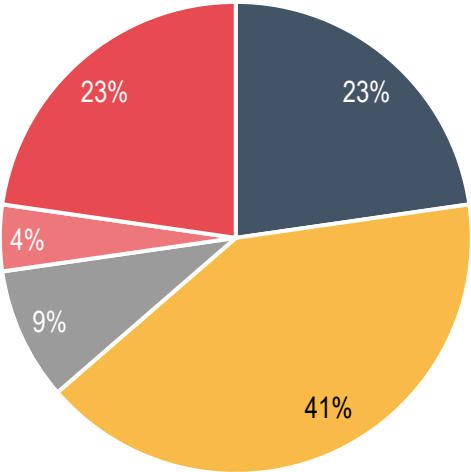
Q24. Which long-term cost-saving alternatives would you consider if funding is not adequate to maintain existing transportation infrastructure in Union County? Select all that apply.



- Otherwise, what about a higher tax on things that damage the roads more (Semis, tractor trailers, farming equipment, etc.) cars and motorcycles are creating issues on the roads, it's the heavier equipment. There has to be a way to increase funding by charging those that damage the road more.
- I would need more information and time to consider.
- Would rather fix above vrs \$16 million to divert traffic from lake near DV.
- Would consider these cost saving options if it does not severely alter our bus routes for the school.

There was not one particular response that stands out, though most survey respondents are willing to consider long-term cost-saving alternatives. These alternatives will be considered in the Draft Union County Master Transportation Plan, Maintenance Plan section and revenue assessments. Union County has indicated they would prefer not to implement any of these cost-saving strategies if the network can be maintained without these measures.

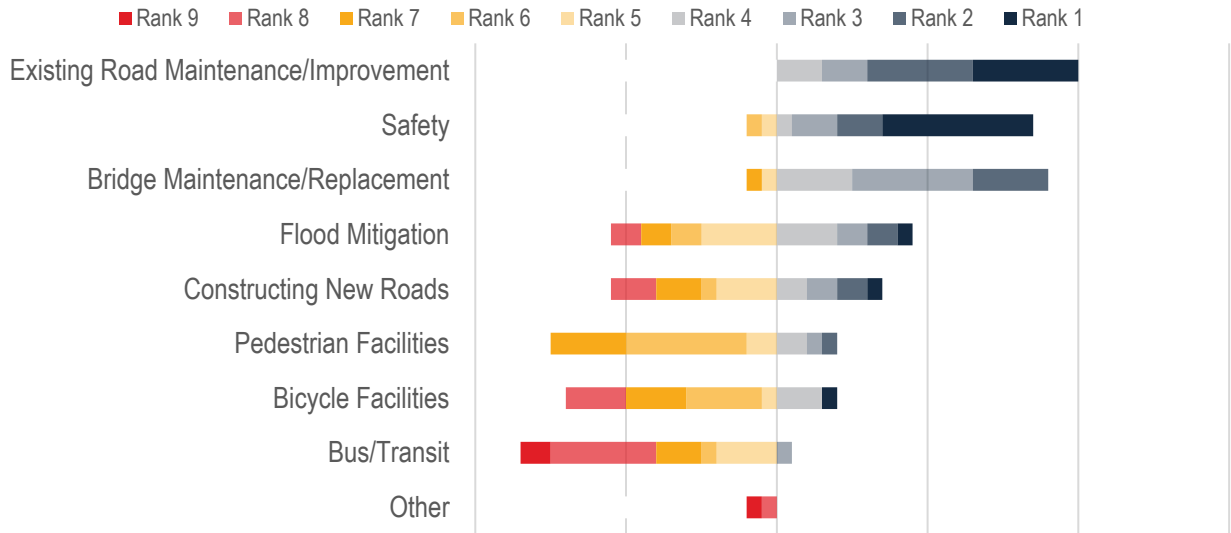
Q25. Are you willing to support potential increases in fees to support transportation maintenance/improvement projects in Union County such as Bicycle, Bridge Maintenance/Replacement, Bus/Transit, Road Maintenance/Improvement, Flood Mitigation, New Road Construction, Pedestrian, and Safety?



- Yes
- I have mixed feelings, but I would consider it
- I don't know
- I have mixed feelings, but I would not consider it
- No

A majority (64%) of survey respondents are willing or would consider supporting transportation fee increases in Union County. 27% of survey respondents are not willing or would not consider supporting transportation fee increases in Union County.

Q26. Rate the following transportation project types in order of importance (For example, an entry of 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 would mean that you think Safety projects are the most important and Bicycle Facilities projects are the least important).

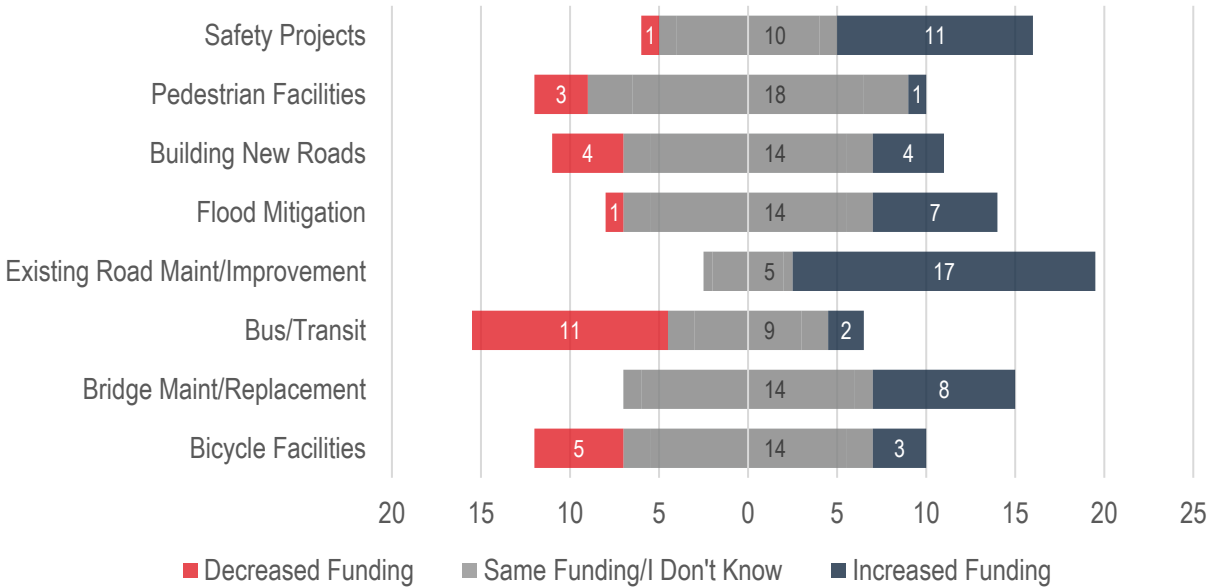


Comments:

- (increase speed limit to rural speed on 334th township road instead of 35--look at all the other roads around are at least 45 just dumb limitation slowing traffic once past McCook) and last would be [Bus Transit] which I don't think should be publicly paid for or funded=it's just a HUGE waste of money review the actual usage and NO ONE uses hardly at all.
- Comfortable with how things are right now except for the traffic in front of the elementary school and high school dismissal time. The elementary made huge improvements with the new parking lot procedure last year, but more needs to be done.
- safety and existing road and bridge conditions go hand in hand
- No way on \$16m to build a four-lane road north and around DV. Seems an exit at 484 would be better.
- Bicycle Facilities, Bus/Transit, Constructing New Roads, Pedestrian Facilities all equal at the lowest level of importance or less.

Survey respondents ranked Existing Road Maintenance/Improvements as their priority in Union County, though Safety was ranked No. 1 most frequently. Bridge Maintenance/Replacement and Safety were also listed as high priority items, while Bus/Transit was ranked as least important. Flood Mitigation, Constructing New Roads, Pedestrian Facilities, and Bicycle Facilities had mixed priorities Note: All responses were included even if some of the project types were omitted by mistake or on purpose by the respondents.

Q27-34. Compared to now, how do you think future funding should be spent on...?



Survey respondents ranked Existing Road Maintenance/Improvements as their priority for future funding in Union County. Bridge Maintenance/Replacement, Safety, and Flood Mitigation were also listed as high priority items for funding, while Bus/Transit was ranked as least important. Pedestrian Facilities, Building New Roads, and Bicycle Facilities had mixed responses. Note: Survey respondents were not provided with any funding figures, so responses may only be based on perception.

Q35. What is your biggest transportation concern for Union County over the next 20 years? Please describe.

- Public transit and electric vehicle charging
- Mitigation of road flooding
- Maintenance on current roads
- Maintenance on roads and bridges that they have. Growth of new developments.
- traffic congestion around Dakota Valley school and frontage road. Dakota Dunes and N Sioux City continued development needs to assume substantial growth and with it appropriate traffic handling.
- Traffic through McCook Lake
- Increased population thus increased use/travel causing infrastructure concerns.
- Existing Road Conditions, Keeping Ditches Clear, finding a way to increase funding by charging heavy equipment that accelerates the decline of the road conditions
- Maintenance of current roads/bridges
- Northshore Drive; day time travels and school arrival and dismissal
- your question on funding increase, decrease , same or I don't know are difficult to answer since no current information on current levels of spending are provided or how they have changed over the years.
- Fixing traffic congestion by Dakota Valley School
- Bridge maintenance.
- My biggest concern is commissioners spending taxpayers money to fix preceived future problems that don't exist and won't.
- Having adequate electric vehicle charging stations.
- Keeping our roads up to standard with traffic demands

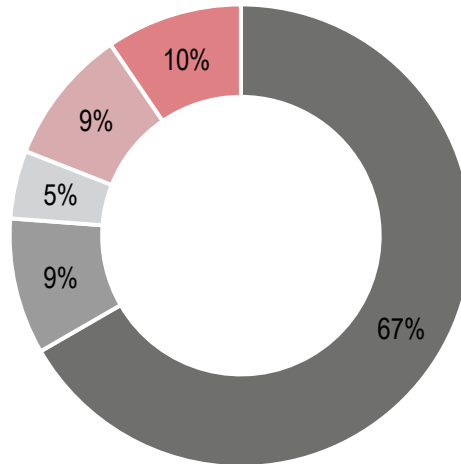
For this fill-in-the-blank response, survey respondents listed general road/bridge maintenance, as well as traffic congestion along Northshore Drive and Dakota Valley Schools as their largest concerns over the next 20 years in Union County. Other concerns were varied, including flooding, electric vehicle charging stations, development growth, ditch maintenance, fee increases for heavy vehicles, and spending.

Q36. Do you have any other comments, concerns, or ideas about the Union County transportation network over the next 20 years that you haven't addressed in any of the previous questions?

- Implementing a roundabout system on exit 4 instead of closing the offramp would cut down on the cost of opening a new exit. I express reservations regarding the fiscal responsibility of financing a completely new, unnecessary road.
- Consider having another exit one mile north after Exit 4 behind the school that would bypass around the back of the school and to the West side of McCook. Also, Sioux Point Rd frontage road from Dakota Dunes to N Sioux City=should be straightened (by N Shay connection) and the stop sign changed to only stop N Shay (through traffic on Sioux Point should not stop) to keep flow of traffic moving through there. It gets very congested there during busy hours or events at the church close by.
- No
- Would be good to reconfigure Exit 4, I don't have an answer, but that should be addressed in some way.
- The City of North Sioux City is proposing a new \$16 million dollar road to the north around the school properties to connect with Westshore. I am opposed to this expenditure when clearly Northshore is in need of replacement / repair with turning lanes and or 3-lane road. I am opposed to closing off access from Northshore Dr. to the I-29 exit 4 by this new proposal. I am in favor of the roundabout concept for the west side of Exit 4 to accommodate the traffic flow from Streeter Drive , Leisure Lane and Northshore..
- Common sense long term planning. Busses or bikes to get people to Sioux City or more jobs up here.
- Union County will assist towns located in Union County that benefits those towns instead looking at what benefits the citizens who live in rural areas of Union Co. Who is watching out for the good of the rural citizens?
- No

Survey respondents listed Traffic and Planning issues at Exit 4 repeatedly, however Exit 4 is a SDDOT owned interchange and does not appear to be a direct County Road issue. However, Exit 4 and potential planned changes to the north and west could certainly impact County Roads and these potential changes will be considered in the Draft Union County Transportation Master Plan. Other specific comments and ideas were shared with the Study Advisory Team and will be included in the plan where applicable.

Q37. How did you learn about this online survey?



- Email
- Newspaper
- Project website
- Word of mouth
- Other, please describe

Other, please describe.

- SDDOT Website
- Home Owner Association President for Deer Run

Individual comments submitted outside of the survey.

- I am against this very unnecessary and expensive plan. which is definitely not a wise use of tax payer dollars which we have entrusted you to be our watch dog of this for us.
- I'm interested in what meetings Union County is having with North Sioux City about road expansions.

At the time comments were being accepted, the Union County Highway Department was not in contact with North Sioux City regarding road expansions and no such plans are included in the 5-year construction plan.