



COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS AND SUMMARY

LACEY | NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL DISTRICTS

CITY OF LACEY, WASHINGTON
January, 2023



DISTRICT BACKGROUND

First adopted in 1980, Neighborhood Commercial Districts were created to allow for convenience stores and gas stations with a limited number of pumping nozzles.

In the years since, these districts have been reviewed and updated to reflect changing needs and community priorities.

Major reviews and updates over the last 35 years:

- 1995: *Dimensional and design requirements*
- 2004: *Landscaping and parking standards*
- 2008: *Lacey Comprehensive Plan Update*
- 2013: *Sustainable Thurston Plan*
- 2015: *Community Market Study*
- 2016: *Pedestrian accessibility and access*

Each of these reviews and updates included significant participation and guidance from the Lacey community.

Based on this community guidance, the Neighborhood Commercial Districts have evolved into the districts we see today.

Intent section of the Neighborhood Commercial Districts (LMC 16.36.010):

- A) Provide opportunity for commercial uses in residential areas catering to day to day needs of consumers for a limited range of convenience goods and services;
- B) Limit commercial facilities size, bulk, and locations as to serve a large number of persons in a relatively small geographic area.
 - *Pedestrian accessibility shall be a major criterion in the location of neighborhood commercial facilities;*
- C) Limit such development to areas where local economic demand, citizen acceptance and appropriate design solutions assure compatibility with the neighborhood.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

A successful engagement process harnesses the community's energy and inspires community ownership, while adapting to new insights and feedback. Stakeholders and community members supply the local knowledge, context, and information necessary to make informed project decisions. Engagement of the residents and businesses who regularly visit and operate within these districts will be a key factor in the success of this update.

While the current public health situation limits the ability to meet in person, the City values community feedback and wants to develop a plan that meets the needs of our community. As part of this engagement process, the City hosted a hybrid workshop accessible in person and online through the City website. The goal of these workshop events was to connect with the community, share information, and collect public comment via an online survey.

The project team will use the collected input to inform and drive project tasks moving forward.

Online Survey

The survey consisted of both multiple-choice (MC) and open-ended (OE) questions focusing on community characteristics and the role of Neighborhood Commercial Districts within the community. A total of 849 people participated in the survey. The survey questions are listed below, with a summary of the responses to each question provided on the following pages.

RESPONDENT INFORMATION/DEMOGRAPHICS

1. What best fits where you are at in life? (MC)
2. In which decade were you born? (MC)
3. What is your gender? (MC)
4. What is your race or ethnicity? (MC)
5. Do you live or work within Lacey? (MC)
6. What is your annual household income? (MC)

CITY CHARACTERISTICS & SHOPPING CHOICES

7. Are you a member of an HOA? (MC+OE)
8. How often do you travel outside Lacey for shopping and service related needs? (MC)
9. What are some of the most frequent retail or service related businesses you seek out in other communities? (OE)

COMMERCIAL DISTRICT PROXIMITY & ACCESS

10. Do you live within a 15-minute walking distance of a commercial or retail center? (MC)
11. What are some of the limiting factors, that currently prevent you from walking or biking to existing commercial or retail districts? (MC+OE)
12. What Neighborhood Commercial District do you live closest to? (MC)

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL DISTRICT VALUES

13. In what ways can Neighborhood Commercial Districts support and strengthen neighborhood communities and businesses (OE)
14. What types of stores or businesses would you like to see in these neighborhood districts? (OE)
15. Please identify your level of agreement with the following statements as they relate to Neighborhood Commercial Districts? (MC)
16. Can you think of any example areas or districts that you would like to see our Neighborhood Commercial Districts modeled after? (OE)

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL DISTRICT NEEDS

17. What do you see as the barriers to neighborhood commercial development in Lacey? (OE)
18. Should any of these districts be re-designated or converted to another use? (MC+OE)
19. Are there any locations that should be considered for a new Neighborhood Commercial District? (OE)

OTHER IDEAS OR COMMENTS FOR THE UPDATE

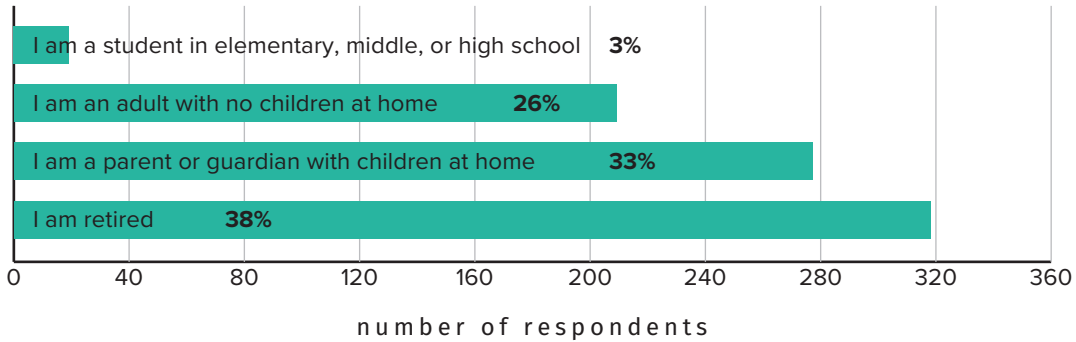
20. An open field for anything else participants may wish to share with the project team (OE)

RESPONDENT INFORMATION/DEMOGRAPHICS

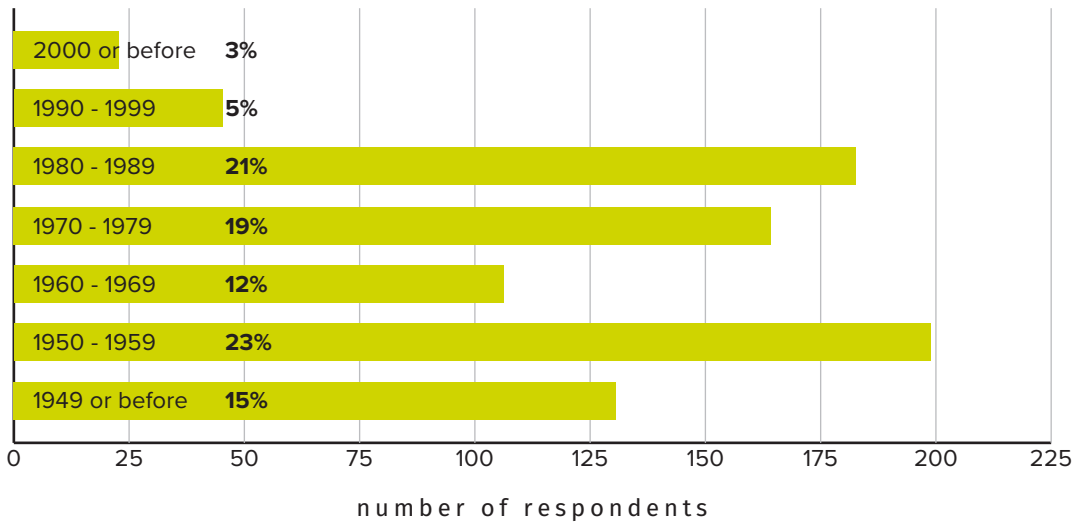
Demographic information helps ensure responses are representative of the community and updates are tailored to patrons and residents. All responses were collected anonymously.

Life Stage & Age Range

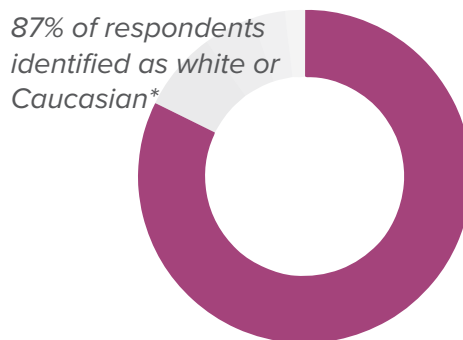
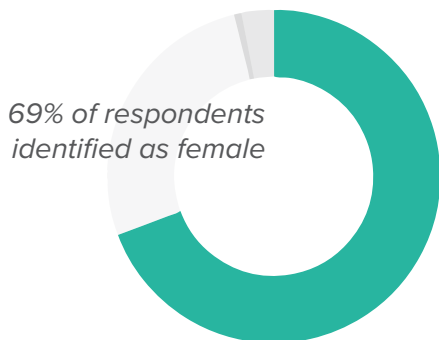
Of the 826 respondents who answered the question, “Which of the following best describes where you are currently at in life?” the largest percentage (38%) identified as retired.



Of the 841 respondents who answered the question, “In which decade were you born?” the largest percentage (23%) selected 1950 to 1959.



Additional Demographic Questions



*Respondents were able to identify as more than one race or ethnicity. 175 Participants (21%) identified as multi-racial or something other than white or Caucasian.

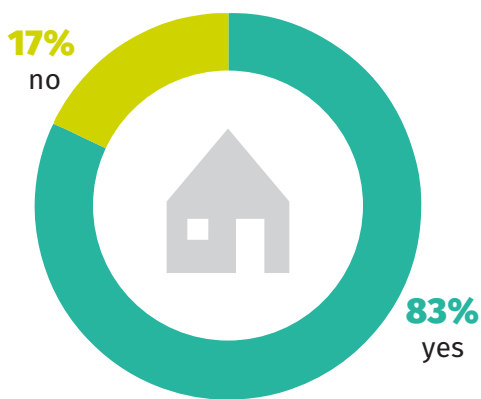
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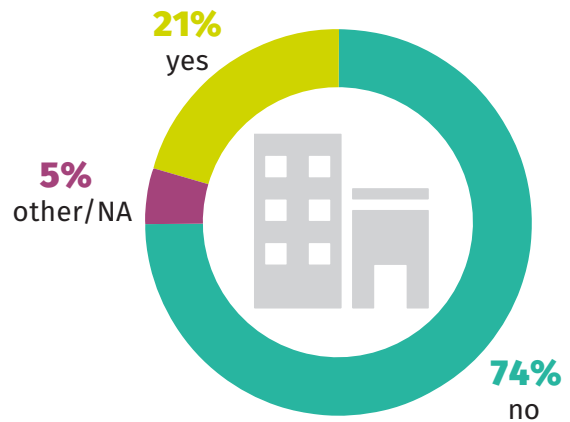
Home/Work Location

842 survey participants answered the question, “Do you live or work within the City of Lacey?” with the highest percentage (60%) stating that they live (but do not work) within the City of Lacey. This can partially be attributed to the high percentage of participants that identified as retired.

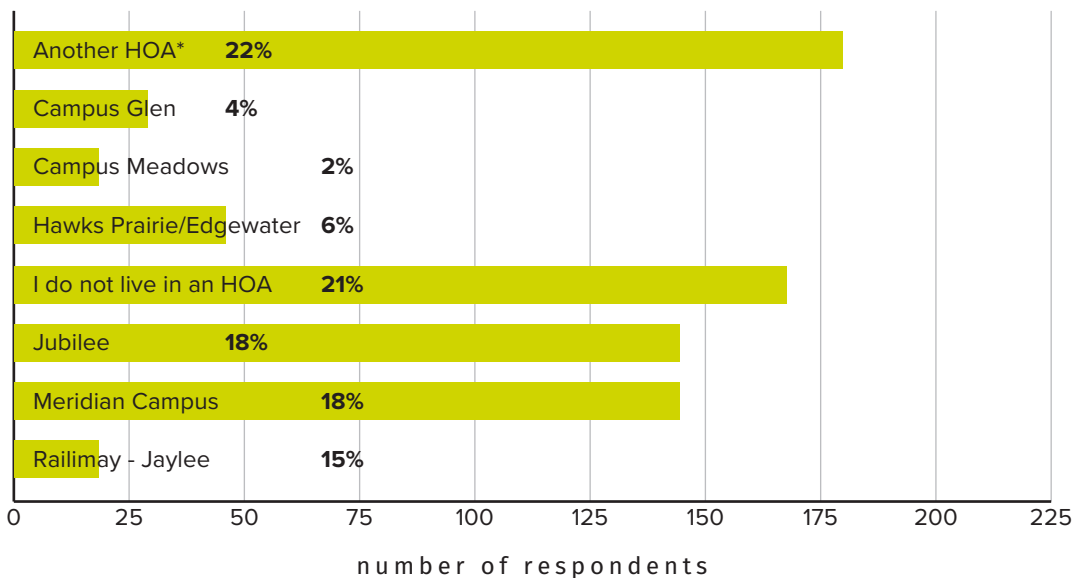
DO YOU LIVE IN THE CITY OF LACEY?



DO YOU WORK IN THE CITY OF LACEY?



Of those who identified as living within the City of Lacey, a follow up question was asked about if they live within a Home Owners Association (HOA). A majority of question respondents stated they live within an HOA. Of the HOAs Identified, a majority are located within north-east Lacey.



*A full list of identified HOAs can be found within Appendix A

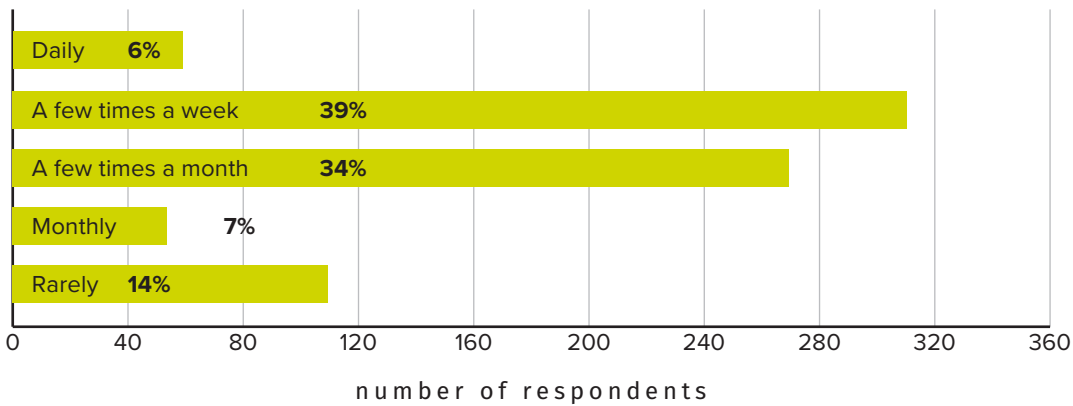
CITY CHARACTERISTICS & SHOPPING CHOICES

To gain a better understanding of current patterns and how participants meet their general shopping and service related needs, questions were asked about what is currently missing within the community.

Shopping & Service Related Gaps

803 survey participants answered the question, “How often do you travel outside the City of Lacey for your shopping and service-related needs?” 39% of participants selected “A few times a week”.

It is worth noting that 55% of participants indicated a frequency of “A few times a month” or less.



To further identify the types of goods and services currently unavailable within the City, participants were asked: “What are some of the most frequent retail or service related businesses you seek out in other communities?” A word cloud of responses representing the greater sentiment is included below:



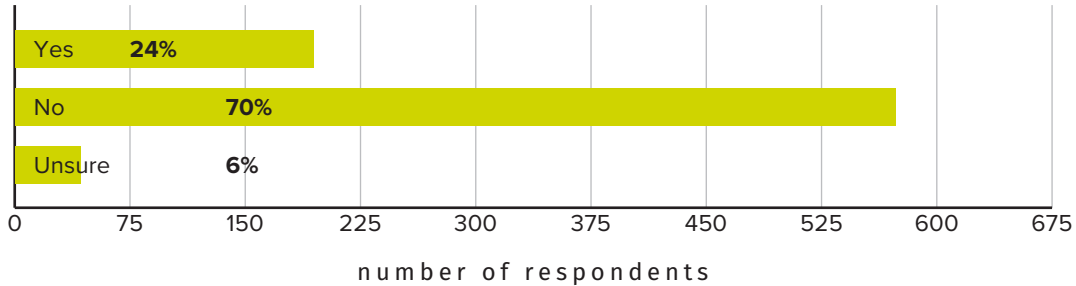
Of the 686 answers submitted, grocery stores and supermarkets were referenced 336 times (49% of comments). This ranged from generic statements to specific destinations being identified including Spuds, Trader Joe’s, Whole Foods, and the CO-OP. Other common topics included cafés and restaurants (39%), mall/department stores (17%), and medical or health destinations (9%).

*Full comment results can be found starting on page 16 of Appendix A

COMMERCIAL DISTRICT PROXIMITY & ACCESS

PROXIMITY & MODE OF TRAVEL

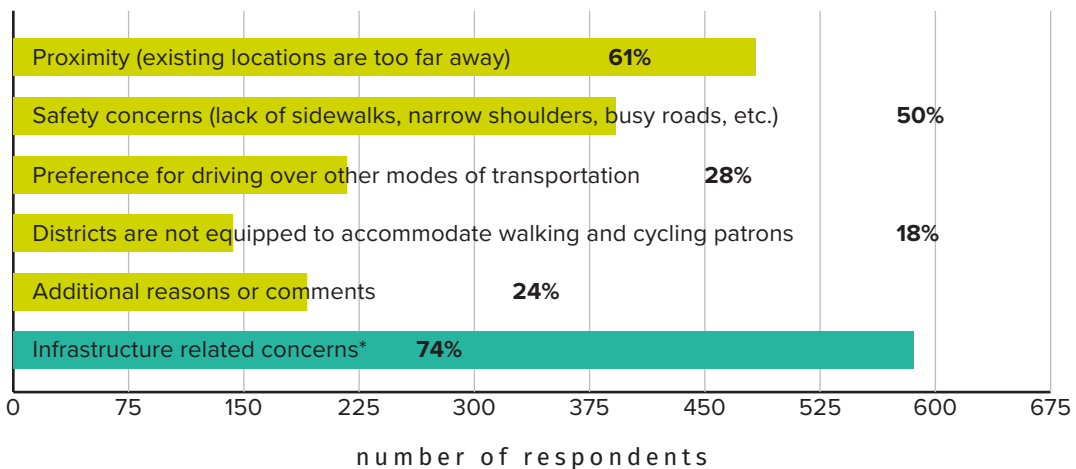
Respondents were asked if they “live within a 15-minute walking distance of a commercial or retail center?”. In total 801 participants responded to this question with 70% indicating they do not.



In line with the goals of the Sustainable Thurston Plan (2013) and Community Market Study (2015), many of these commercial centers and nodes represent opportunities to promote more walkable neighborhoods and communities. By 2035, Sustainable Thurston set a goal for 72% of households to live within a half-mile (15 minute walk) of an urban center, corridor, or neighborhood commercial district.

To better understand where current barriers exist, participants were asked “What are some of the limiting factors, that prevent you from walking or biking to existing commercial or retail districts?”.

Consistent with the results from above, 61% of respondents identified “Proximity (existing locations are too far away)” as the primary reason for not walking to existing commercial districts and centers.



In total, 782 individuals responded to this question with 191 providing additional comments and limiting factors that discourage non-motorized travel. While a general proximity and preference for driving were listed reasons, missing infrastructure to support other modes of travel and safety concerns related to transportation use/mode conflicts, unauthorized encampments, and crime were common themes.

Approximately 74% of participants referenced infrastructure related concerns as a primary reason for being unable or unwilling to walk or bike to existing commercial districts and centers.

COMMERCIAL DISTRICT PROXIMITY & ACCESS

EXISTING BARRIERS TO ACCESS

Based on the listed options provided within the previous question, survey participants were asked to expand upon initial feedback with additional ideas or justification for their views. A snapshot of responses that represent the greater sentiment is captured in the word cloud below; the relative size of each word indicates how frequently those words showed up in open-ended responses. Below the word cloud are some representative quotations from the pool of responses that illustrate the range of sentiments expressed.



TRANSPORTATION/USE RELATED RESPONSES

- I walk frequently, but the nearest bus stop is over half a mile away and everything is over 1.5 miles from my house...
- I would DEFINITELY bike, and really wish I felt safe to do so, if there were safe bike lanes or sidewalks
- City doesn't care for bike lanes and doesn't prioritize completing sidewalks and street improvements and assure safe travel by alternate forms of transportation

- Neighborhood is not accessible to public transportation
- Lack of periodic shelters from weather when walking ...
- Lack of safe bike lanes/ connected sidewalks and paths

CRIME/UNHOUSED RELATED RESPONSES

- Safety concerns with transient camps. Not going to walk my family through one to get somewhere
- Safety issues also would include wooded and unlit areas and occasional homeless population

- Homelessness and crime. It's unsafe...

OTHER REPRESENTATIVE RESPONSES

- Grocery stores are so needed in Hawks Prairie... something closer with such a large and growing population...
- We have amenities within an easily walkable distance. It makes life much sweeter
- Prefer driving to transport purchases
- There aren't as many shopping centers around me or id happily walk

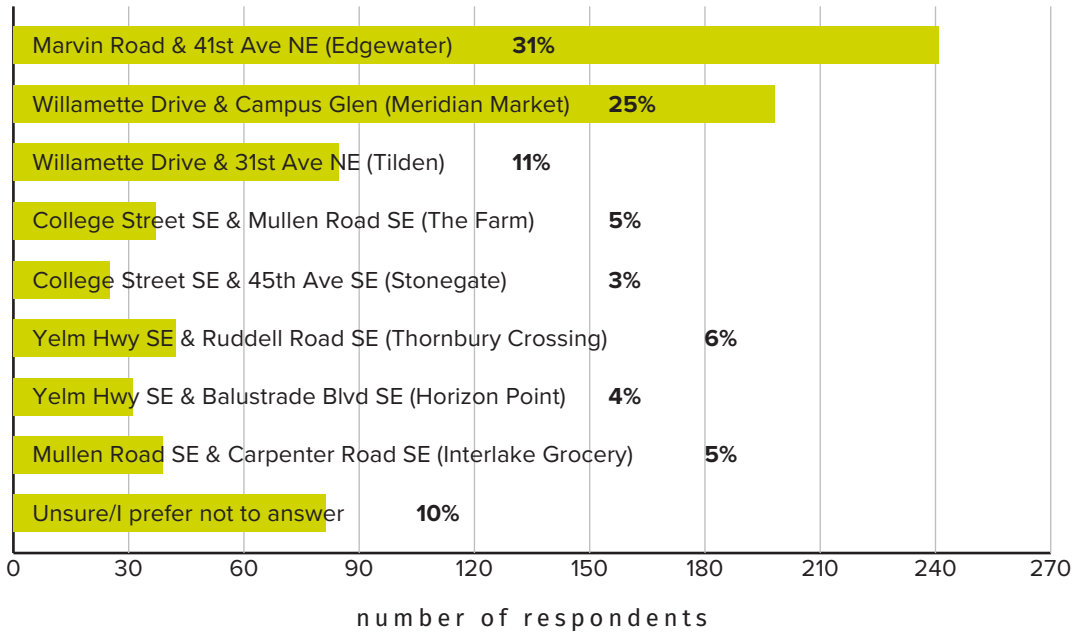
*Full comment results can be found starting on page 39 of Appendix A

COMMERCIAL DISTRICT PROXIMITY & ACCESS

DISTRICT LOCATIONS & POPULATION

Of the 783 respondents who answered the question, “What Neighborhood Commercial District do you live closest to?” the largest percentage (31%) selected Marvin Road & 41st Ave NE (Edgewater).

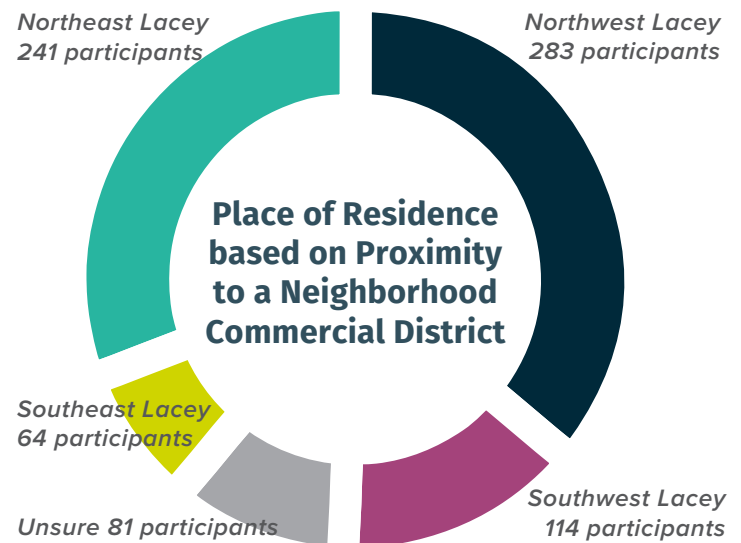
It is worth noting that some of these locations are currently undeveloped, and in some instances, not commonly known or recognized within the community as Neighborhood Commercial Districts. A map accompanied this question to help participants better identify their closest district.



The majority of participants selected locations north of Interstate 5. These results are consistent with question 7, where individuals were asked to identify their Home Owners Association (when applicable).

While the survey was widely distributed (in a range of printed and digital formats), the strong response rate from northern residents may be linked to a heightened public interest surrounding the Neighborhood Commercial District at the corner of Willamette Drive and Campus Glen.

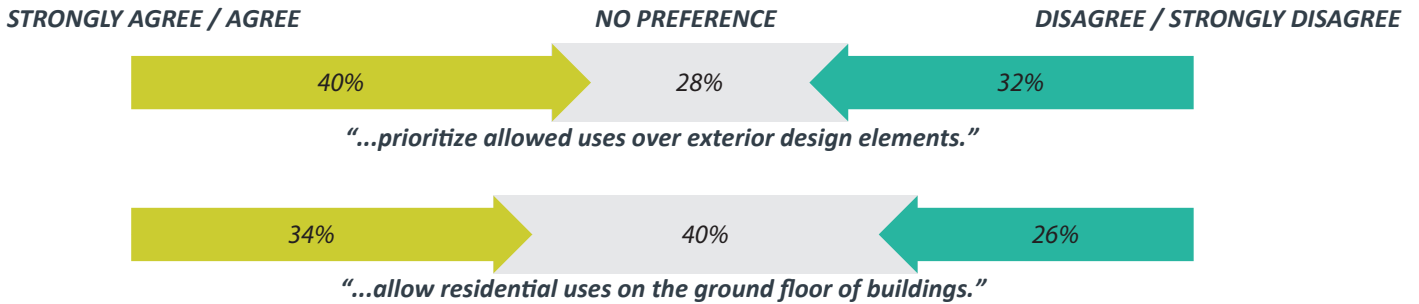
By intent, Neighborhood Commercial Districts are located near the periphery of the City. This may account for some of the uncertainty within the responses to this question (10%), as participants living within central Lacey may have struggled to identify their closest District.



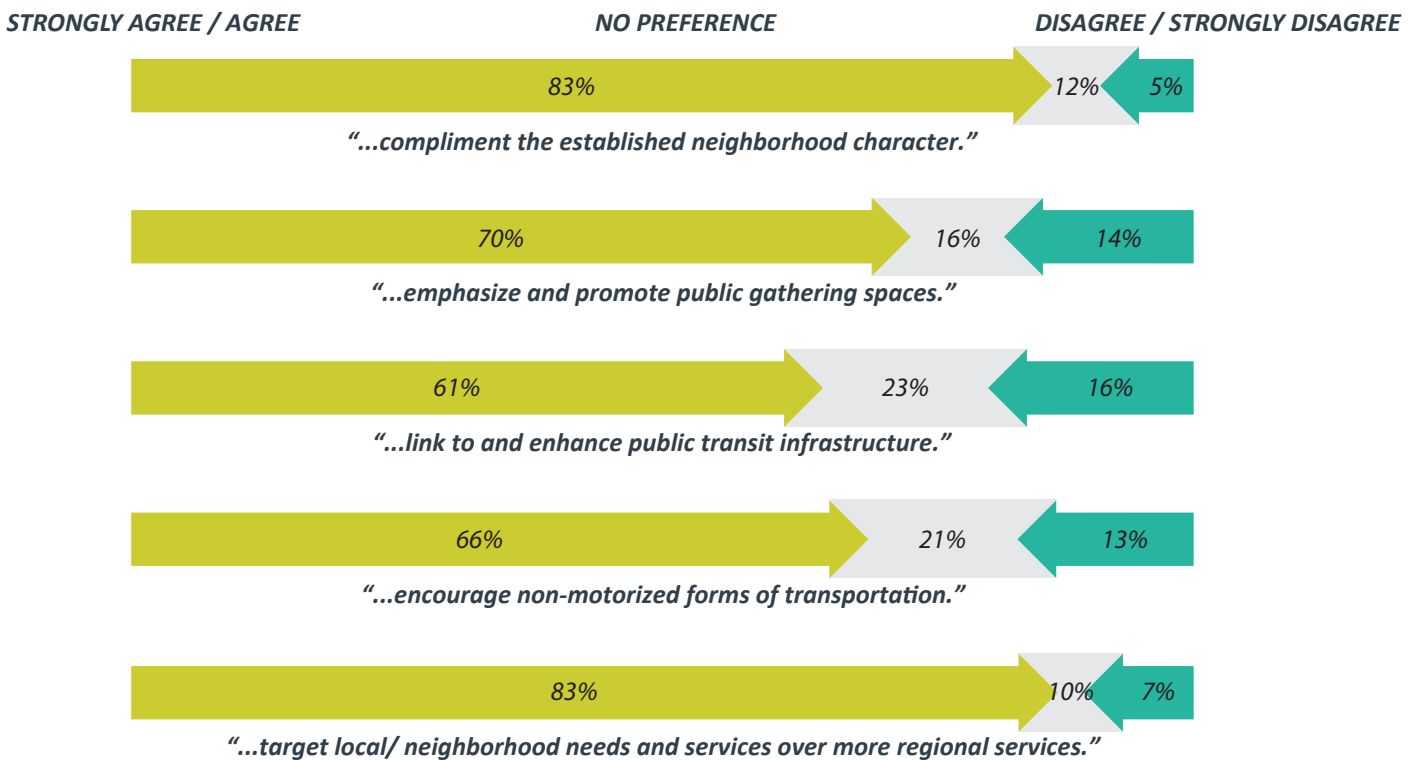
NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL DISTRICT VALUES

EXISTING CODE ELEMENTS

Respondents were asked to “Identify their level of agreement with the following statements as they relate to Neighborhood Commercial Districts.” Participants could select from “Strongly Agree”, “Agree”, “No Preference”, “Disagree”, or “Strongly Disagree”. In total, 630 individuals provided responses to this question.



Results from the first two questions within this section had a comparatively balanced distribution of opinions. This balance of opinions will be worth exploring further within future community outreach and engagement efforts within this update.



Results from the remaining questions within this section align with existing themes as written within the Neighborhood Commercial District Code.

