Traffic Calming Policy: What We Heard Report

Transportation and Development Services, Engineering

June 20, 2025

Saanich

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By the numbers

Visitors to website

1,382

Pop Up Event Interactions

153

Survey Respondents

338

Workshop attendees

33

Engagement Activities

The engagement was comprised of the following activities:

Activity	Overview / Objectives	Timing
Website	To provide clear and up-to-date information about the Policy	Website launched April 17, 2025
Presentation to Transportation Advisory Committee	To inform the committee about the Policy and consult on the contents of the draft Policy and engagement strategy	March 27, 2025

Internal Consultation	To inform stakeholders about the Policy and to consult on the contents of the draft Policy	April 2025
External Workshops	To inform stakeholders about the Policy and to consult on the contents of the draft Policy	May 2025
Online Survey	To gather input on the draft Policy to inform and to consult on the contents of the draft Policy	April 17 to May 31, 2025
Pop Up Public Engagement	Four events took place to inform the public about the Policy and consult on the contents. The following locations were used: - Gordon Head Recreation Centre - Uptown shopping area - Lochside Trail by McKenzie Avenue - G. R. Pearkes Recreation Centre	April 29 to May 20, 2025
Presentation to Accessibility and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Advisory Committee	To inform the committee about the Policy and consult on the contents of the draft Policy	May 7, 2025

Internal Consultation

Internal feedback was received from Water Resources, Parks, Public Works, Current Planning and the Saanich Police Department. The Fire Department, Community Services and Recreation Services were also circulated.

External Workshops

Thirty-three representatives attended the workshops for external stakeholders, which included Community Associations; provincial agencies such as BC Transit, Road Safety BC and Insurance Corporation of British Columbia; the Royal Canadian Mounted Police; advocacy groups such as the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, Livable Roads for Rural Saanich, and Capital Bike; and post-secondary institutions such as the University of Victoria and Camosun College.

Polls were conducted during the workshops and the results, as well as comments received, are shown below.

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Do the goals of the policy make sense?

### Responses regarding whether the goals make sense
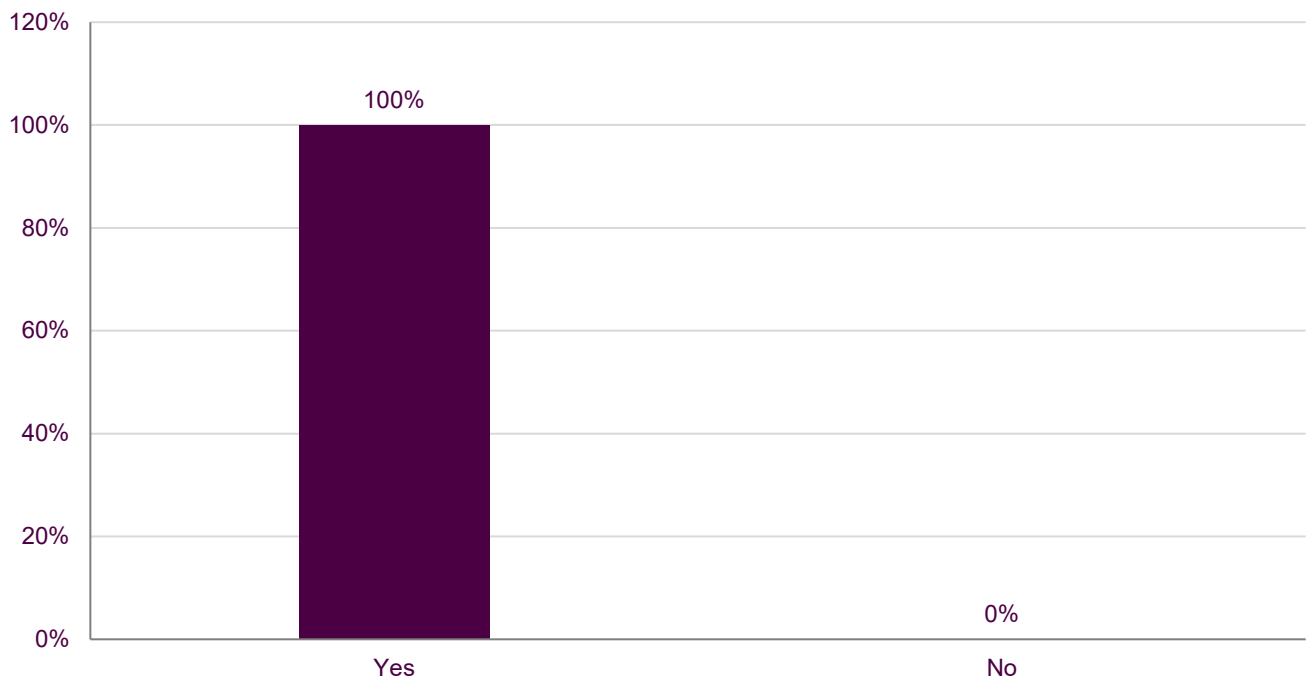
Comments Received

Several new goals were suggested, including rebuilding roads, ensuring safe journeys for all, improving accessibility (especially for the blind and those with mobility challenges), and better driver alignment with surrounding land uses.

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Are the two types of project clear?

Responses regarding whether the project types are clear
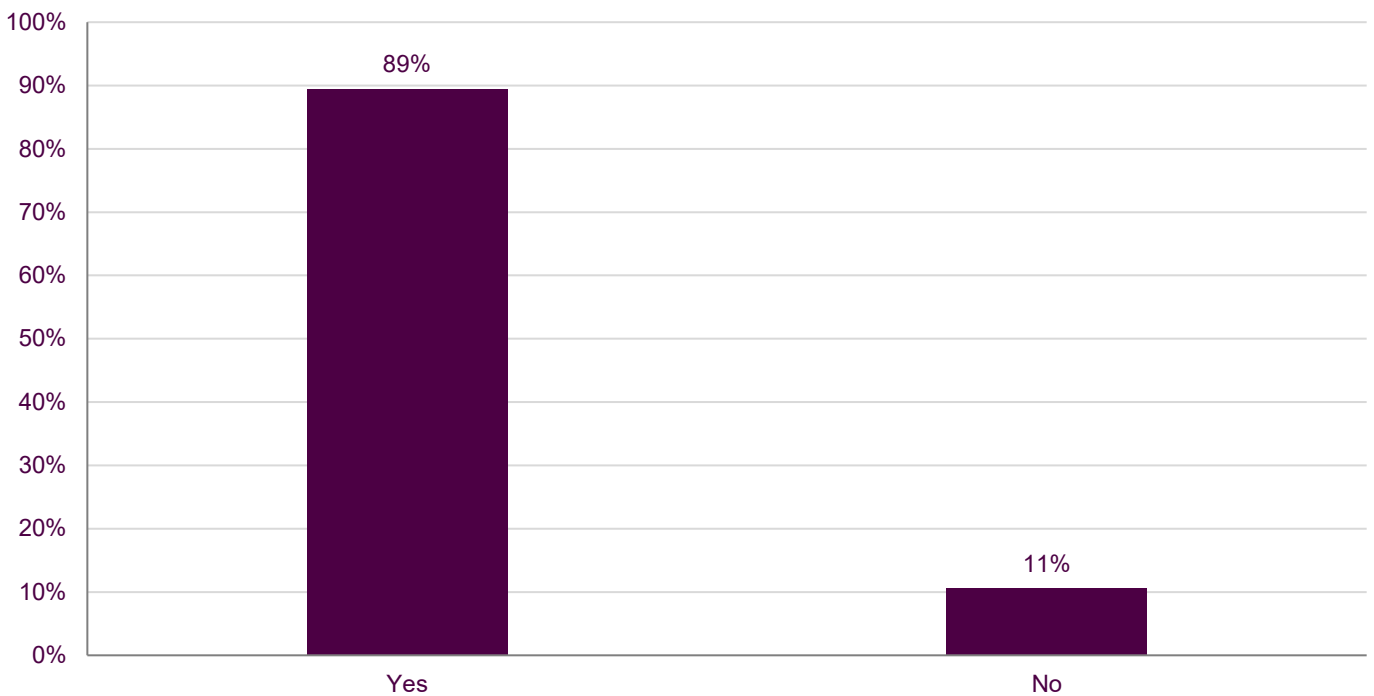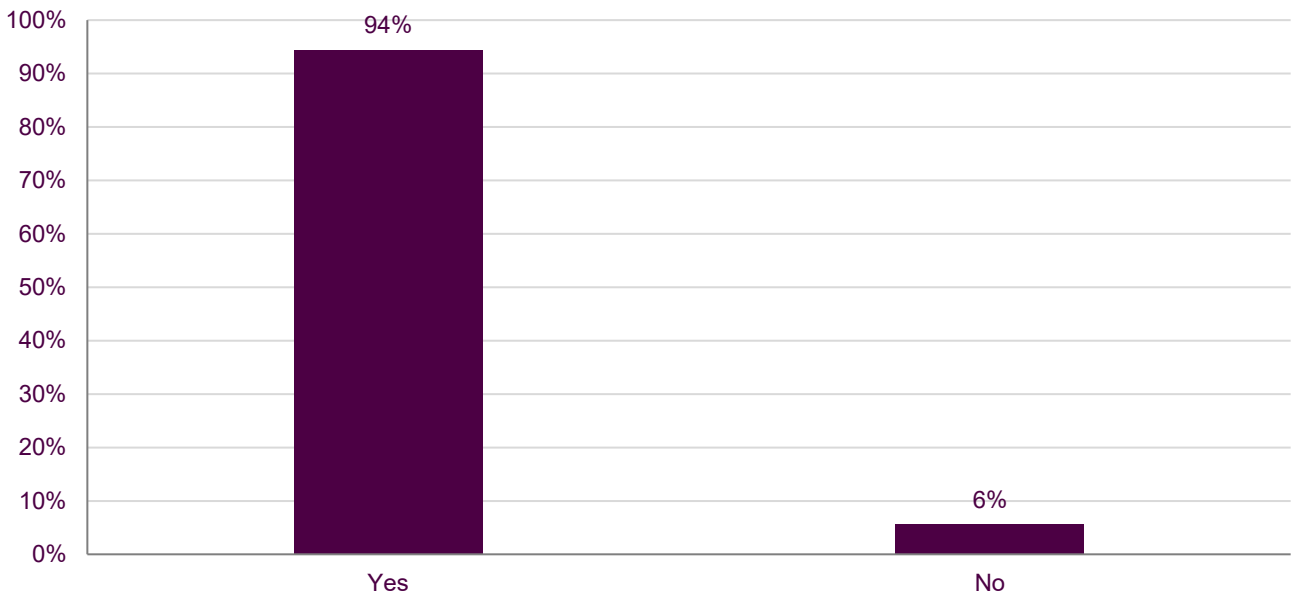

Comments Received

Many responded that the two types of projects were clear, some noted it might not be clear to a layperson. A specific request was made for Type 2 projects to explicitly include collectors outside the Urban Containment Boundary.

Do you agree with the pre-screening metrics?

Responses regarding agreement with the pre-screening metrics
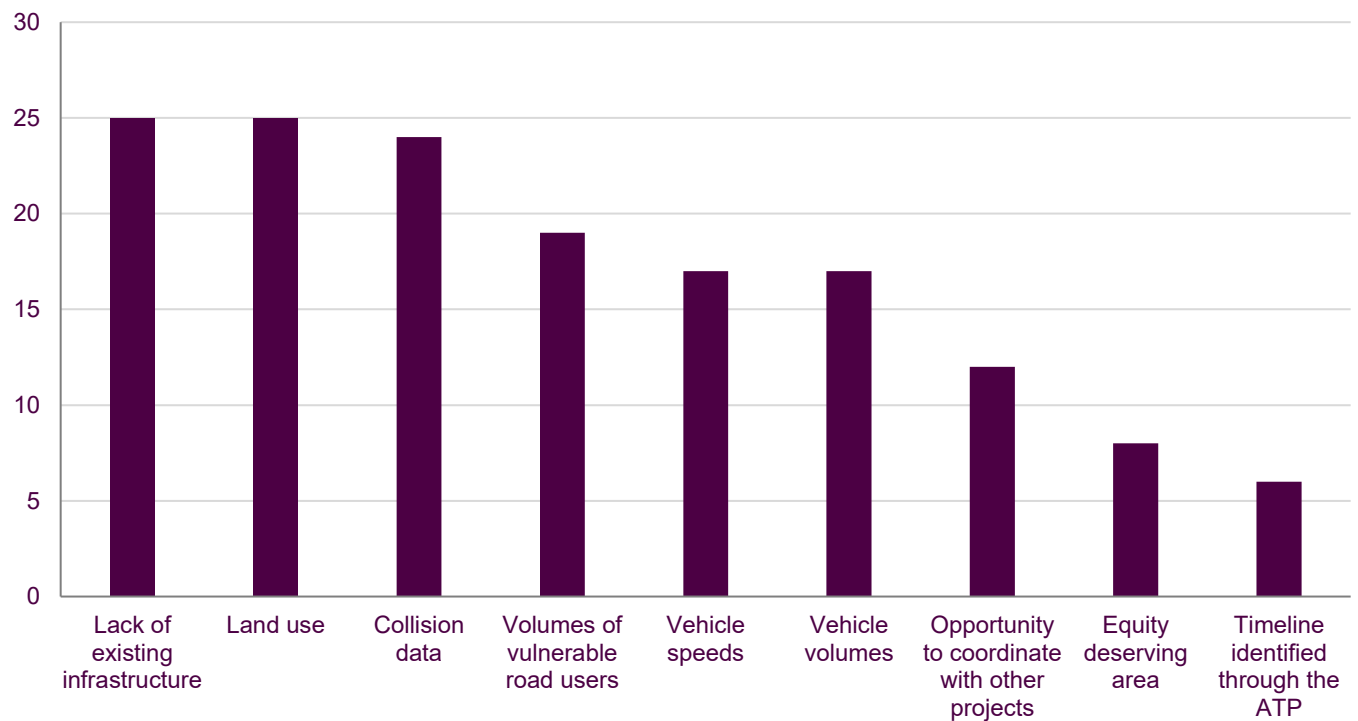

Bar chart showing: Yes 94%, No 6%

Comments received
Suggestion to include:
- prediction of where crashes will occur rather than, or in addition to, relying on collision data
- anecdotal input from residents
- proximity to residential, farming, beach, equestrian stables and market land uses
- number of people who don't drive, but use taxis and uber
- lack of transit in the area
- noise
- external funding availability
- collaboration opportunities with adjacent municipalities
- proximity to schools
- environment
- pedestrians and cyclists counts
- violation tickets
- road speed limit
- near misses
- vehicles per day
- requests and length of time the area has been requested for
- inherently unsafe designs

Rank the prioritization criteria from most to least important

Ranked prioritization criteria

Bar chart showing ranked prioritization criteria values:
- Lack of existing infrastructure: 25
- Land use: 25
- Collision data: 24
- Volumes of vulnerable road users: 19
- Vehicle speeds: 17
- Vehicle volumes: 17
- Opportunity to coordinate with other projects: 12
- Equity deserving area: 8
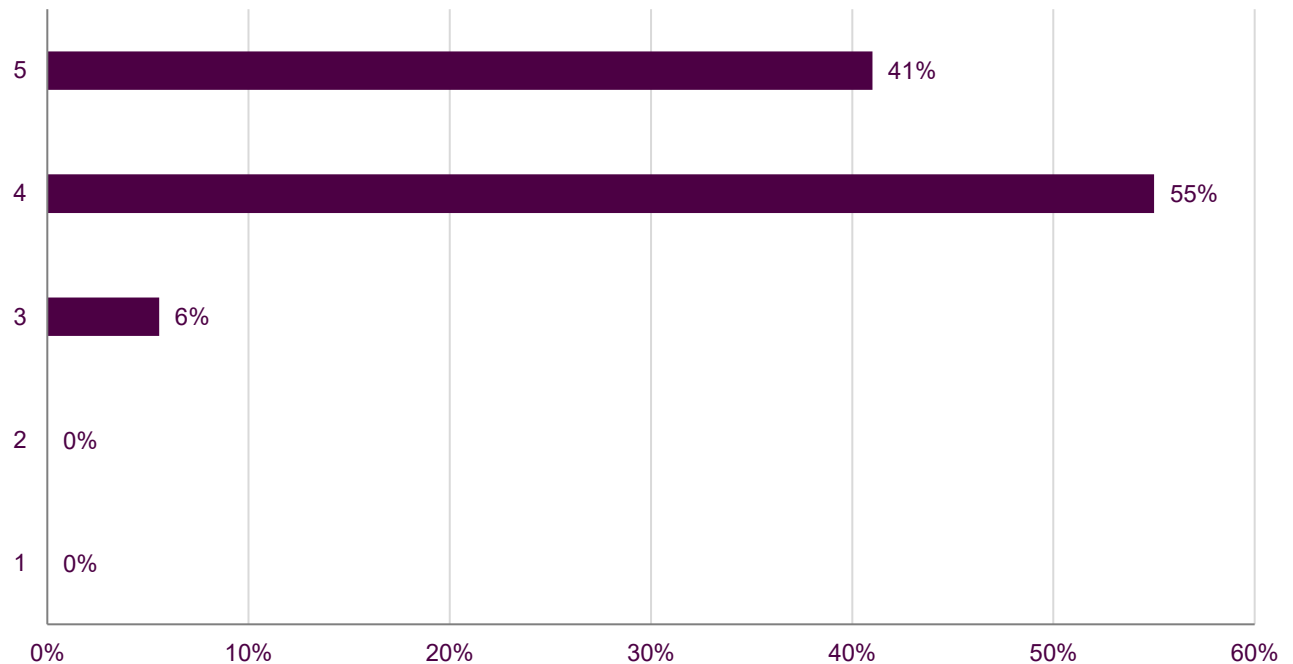- Timeline identified through the ATP: 6

Comments received

Suggestion to include:

- the area
- large scale private development
- proximity to First Nations
- near misses

What is your overall impression of the policy? Give the policy a rating from 1 to 5.

Rating of the overall impression of the policy between 1 and 5

Rating	Percentage
5	41%
4	55%
3	6%
2	0%
1	0%

Do you think the policy will lead to the fair implementation of traffic calming measures?

Rating of whether the policy will lead to fair implementation from 1 to 5

Rating	Percentage
5	20%
4	65%
3	10%
2	0%
1	5%
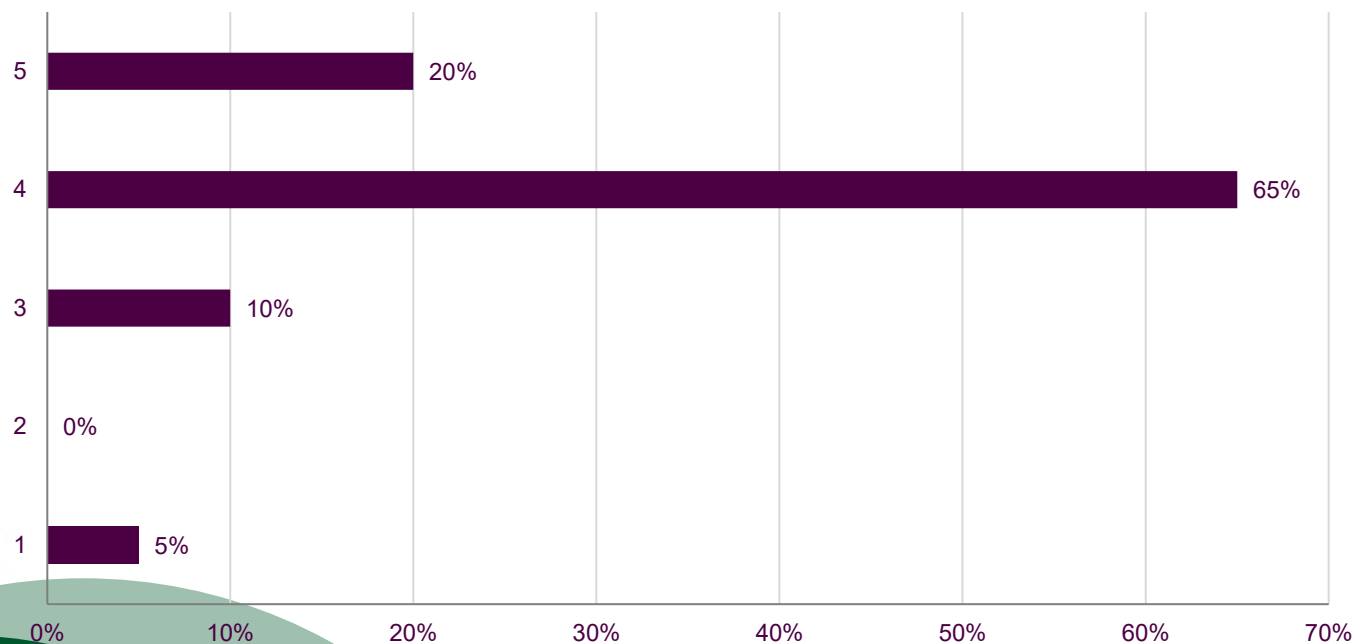
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General comments

- Engage with community section should be expanded
- Appreciation for Saanich's lead on these initiatives, guiding other municipalities
- Traffic calming can negatively impact bus speeds and service frequency, especially on routes with frequent buses. Routes with low frequency are less of a concern. Will need to have discussions on a case-by-case basis for roads with bus routes. Buses can also act as a traffic calming measure.
- Funding and timelines will be key.
- Desire for driver education
- Awareness of ICBC's road improvement program and potential for cost-sharing (especially for sensitive areas like schools) is important.
- A question was raised about the possibility of communities sponsoring or funding projects.
- Low numbers of vulnerable road users may indicate lack of safety, not low need
- Truck use on non-truck routes should be addressed
- Encourage tree retention and planting through the traffic calming process
- Suggestion to add a definition for non-conforming road
- Consider the unique situation of rural roads
- Many comments received were related to design or suggestions for traffic calming at a particular location
- Suggestion to predict where new developments may require traffic calming
- Consider waiting a "settling in" period for traffic patterns to normalize after a new development is constructed

Pop Up Public Engagement

Pop Up Public Engagement was advertised on Saanich.ca/trafficcalming and through Hello Saanich, as well as promoted through Saanich social media channels. The intention behind the Pop Up Engagement was to advise people that the project is underway, let them know about the information on the website, encourage residents to do the survey, and engage in longer conversations when it was desired. Attendance at pop up events was as follows:

Location	Interactions	Long form conversations
Gordon Head Recreation Centre	21	3
Uptown shopping area	18	13
Lochside Trail by McKenzie Avenue	77	9
G. R. Pearkes Recreation Centre	37	22

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Figure 1: A Pop Up Engagement was held at the Uptown shopping area

Figure 2: Rack Cards were distributed throughout the community
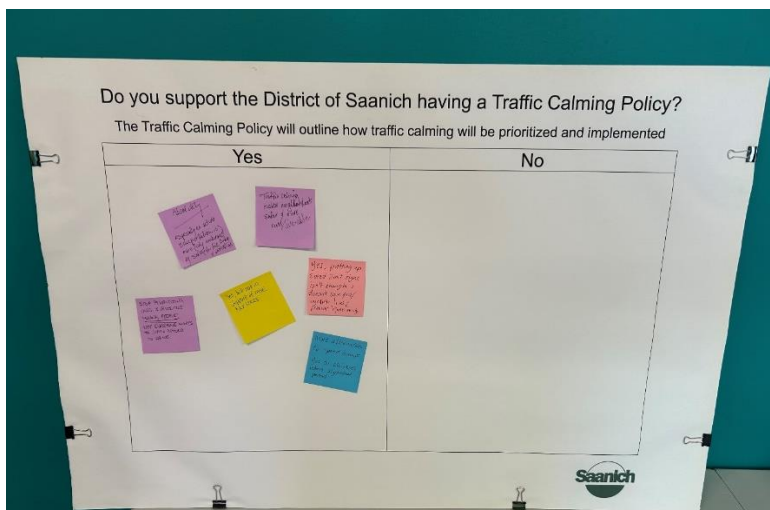

Figure 3: Pop Up participants had the opportunity to indicate whether they support having a policy

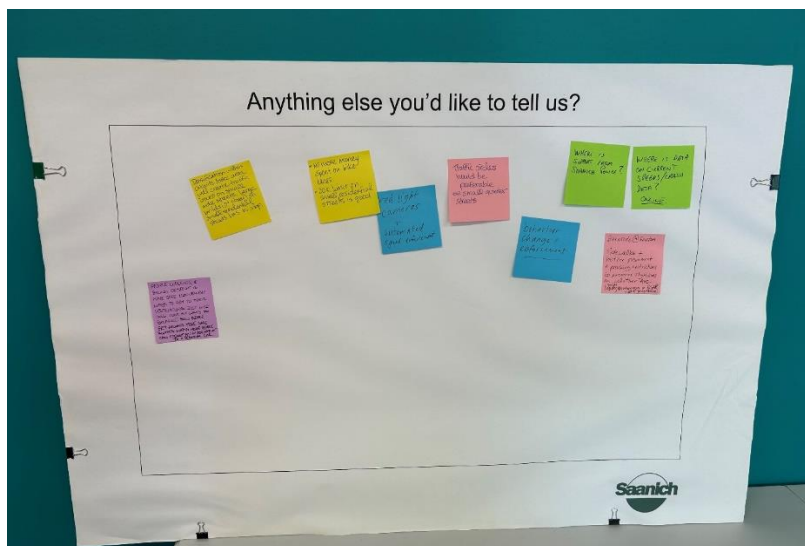Figure 4: Pop Up participants had the opportunity to provide their feedback on the policy

Figure 5: Pop Up participants had the opportunity to provide general feedback
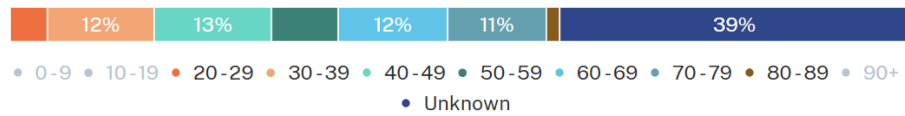
Hello Saanich Survey

Number of Responses
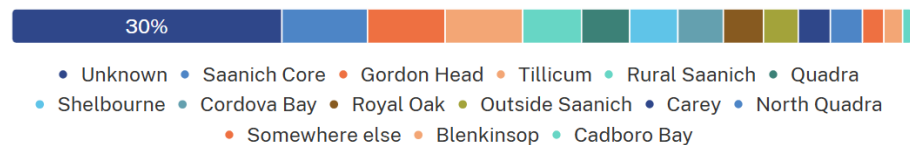338 people completed the survey.

Survey Demographics

Age

Year of birth

| 12% | 13% | 12% | 11% | 39% |

● 0-9 ● 10-19 ● 20-29 ● 30-39 ● 40-49 ● 50-59 ● 60-69 ● 70-79 ● 80-89 ● 90+
● Unknown

Age	Percent of participants
20 – 29	4%
30 – 39	12%
40 – 49	13%
50 – 59	7%
60 – 69	12%
70 – 79	11%
80 – 89	2%

Location

Place of residence

| 30% |

● Unknown ● Saanich Core ● Gordon Head ● Tillicum ● Rural Saanich ● Quadra
● Shelbourne ● Cordova Bay ● Royal Oak ● Outside Saanich ● Carey ● North Quadra
● Somewhere else ● Blenkinsop ● Cadboro Bay

Area of Saanich	Percent of participants
Saanich Core	9%
Gordon Head	9%
Tillicum	9%
Rural Saanich	7%
Quadra	5%
Shelbourne	5%
Cordova Bay	5%
Royal Oak	4%
Outside Saanich	4%
Carey	4%
North Quadra	4%
Somewhere else	2%
Blenkinsop	2%
Cadboro Bay	1%

Survey Results

Do you support the District of Saanich having a Traffic Calming Policy?

- Note: 335 of the 338 respondents answered this question.

## Support for having a Traffic Calming Policy

Yes: 76%
No: 24%
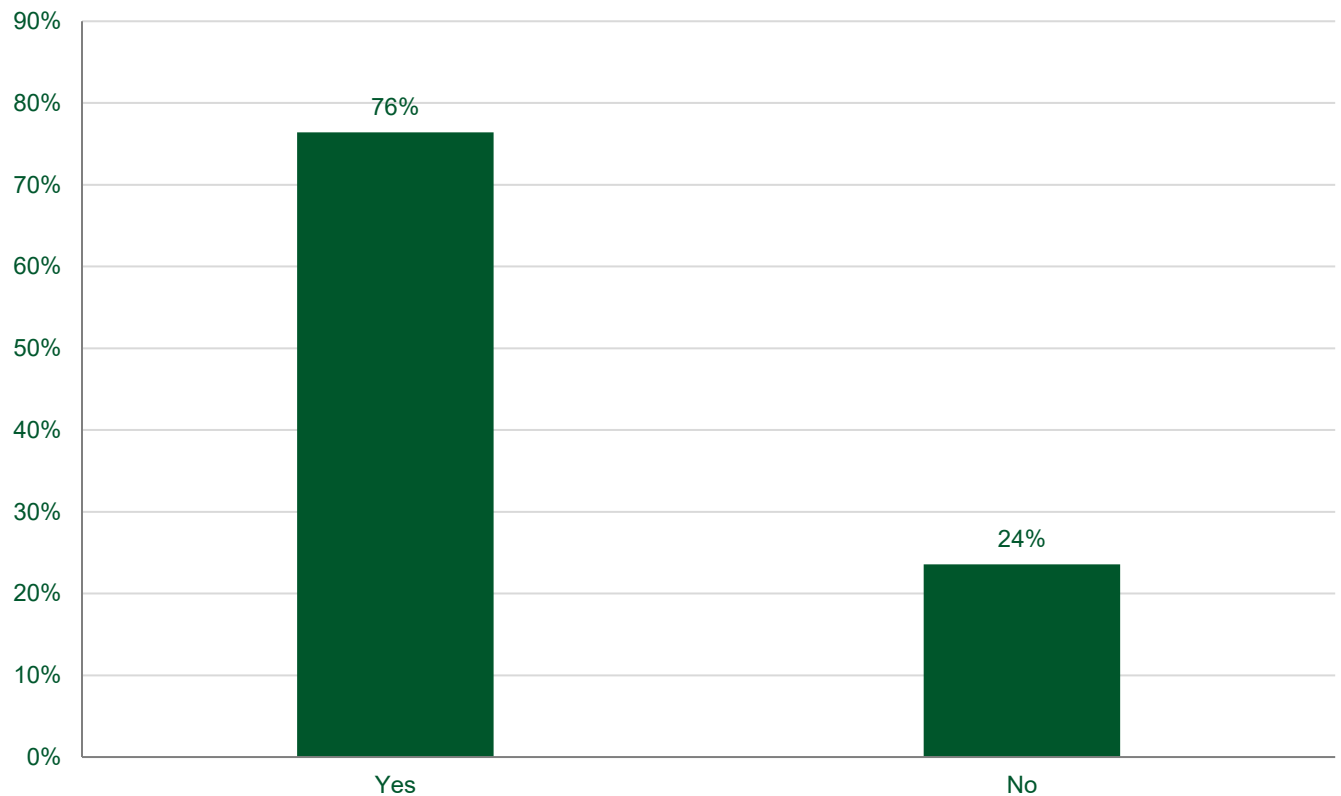
Please explain your choice (yes or no).

- Note: 222 of the 338 respondents answered this question

Supporters emphasize the need for a consistent and transparent policy to guide decisions and manage growing traffic volumes. Those that do not support traffic calming are less supportive of the policy, as they fear it will lead to more traffic calming, which is something they don't wish to see.

The draft policy identifies two types of projects. Are the two types of projects clear and easy to understand?

- Note: 311 of the 338 respondents answered this question.

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Understanding of the two project types
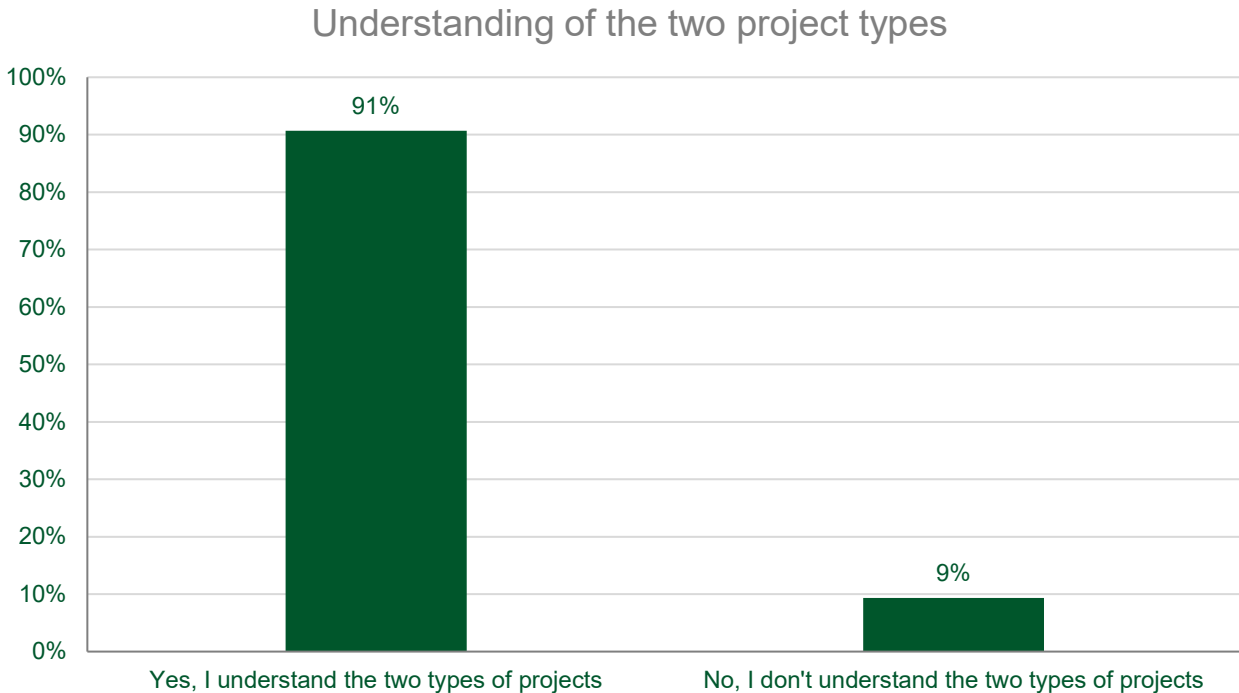
Please explain your choice (yes or no). If they aren't clear, what isn't clear about them?

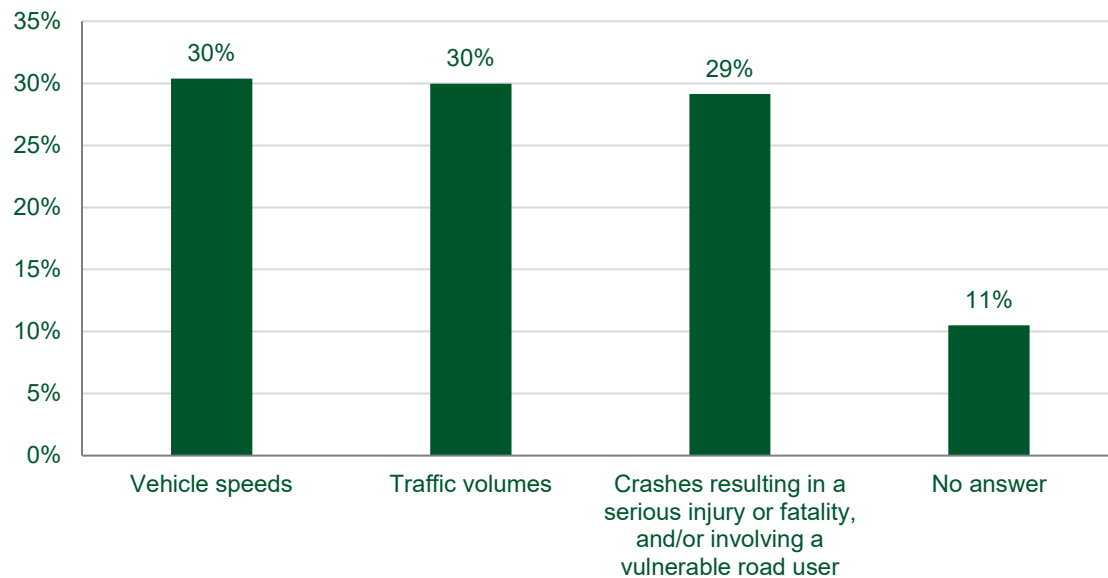- Note: 75 of the 338 respondents answered this question

Many respondents answered that the two types of projects are clear. The vast majority of respondents understand the two project types. Below is a summary of comments from those that found them to be unclear.

- Some stated there was a lack of clarity regarding the difference between residential and non-residential roads, what "neighbourhood bikeways" are and how roads are designated. Questions about why the simpler type of project is limited to individual residential roads and non-residential roads determined to be designed as Neighbourhood Bikeway. Some feel traffic calming on collector or major roads is less desireable.
- Suggestions include adding clear definitions, examples, visuals, and simplified language for better public understanding.
- Questions regarding funding priorities for these two types of projects were raised.

For residential roads and roads that are to be designed as a Neighbourhood Bikeway, the policy outlines metrics to screen which potential projects will be added to a prioritization list. Check the metrics you agree with (check all that apply).

- Note: 263 of the 338 respondents answered this question.

Support for pre-screening metrics

Bar chart showing:
- Vehicle speeds: 30%
- Traffic volumes: 30%
- Crashes resulting in a serious injury or fatality, and/or involving a vulnerable road user: 29%
- No answer: 11%

If there are metrics you don't agree with, why do you disagree? What other metrics would you suggest?

- Note: 125 of the 338 respondents answered this question.

Comments on proposed metrics (Traffic Volume, Vehicle Speed, Crashes)
- Opinions that the thresholds were both too high and too low were provided. Questions were raised about how metrics are measured and reported
- It was noted that if measured daily, may not capture situations where there may be very high traffic only at certain times of the day, such as early morning and the afternoon and commuters are dropping children off at school or heading to work.
- Some suggested that vehicle speeds should be considered at a higher factor than traffic volume as speeding is less safe than high volume.
- Collision data: A theme emerged with respondents mentioning that relying on crash data is reactive, waiting for serious injuries or fatalities before taking action. Some commented that low crash numbers don't necessarily mean a road is safe and a single incident does not indicate a trend. It was raised that minor crashes should also be considered.

Suggested Additional Metrics
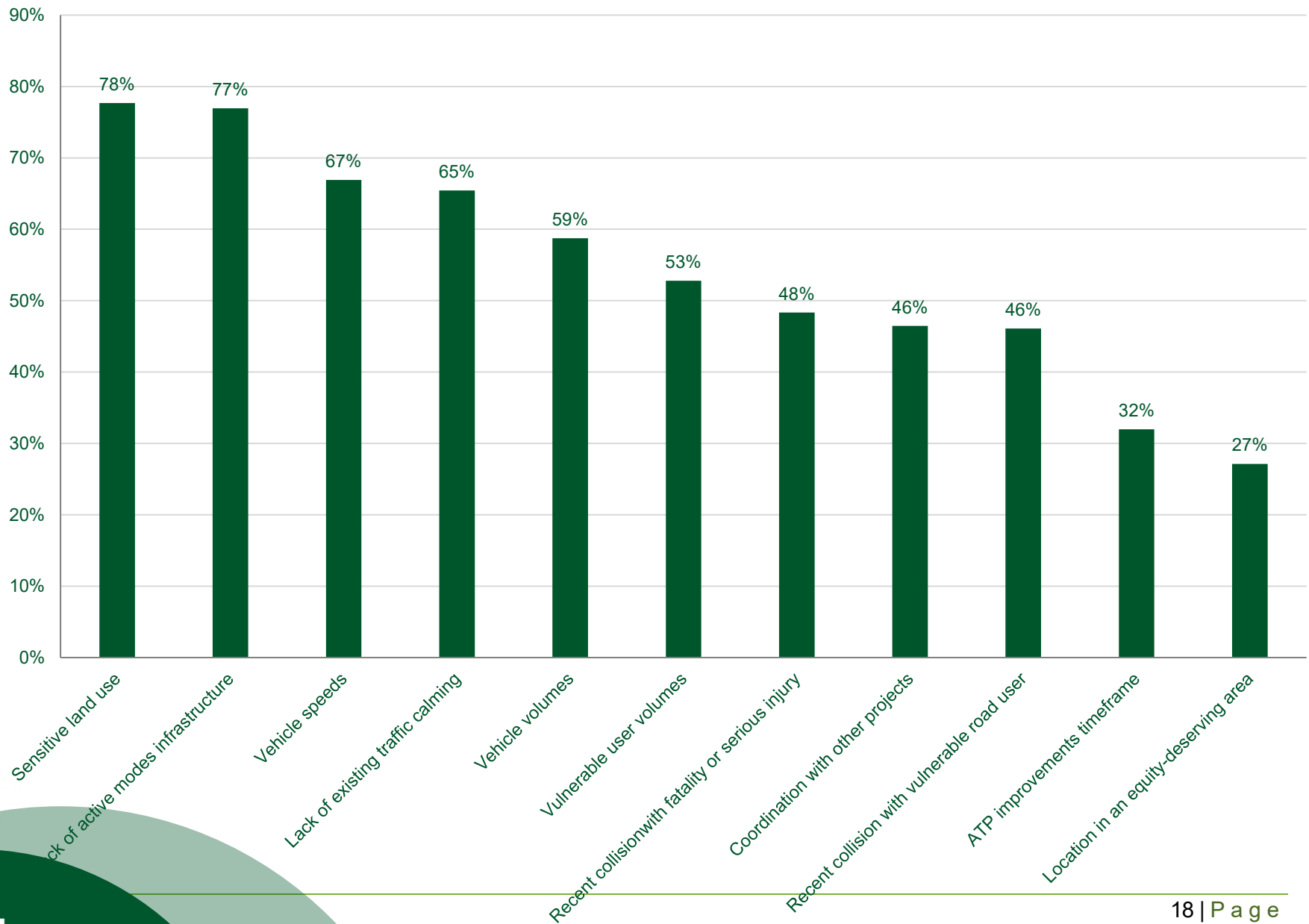A wide range of additional factors were proposed for consideration:
- **Proximity to sensitive areas:** Schools, parks, daycares, playgrounds, seniors' centers, sports fields, commercial districts.
- **Population density** and the **age of typical street users** (e.g., more children, elderly).
- **Availability/lack of sidewalks** and other pedestrian-friendly accommodations (e.g., crosswalks, wheelchair access).
- **Pedestrian and cyclist volume/demand:** Current usage, desire lines, and potential for increased active transportation with improvements.
- **Surveys of comfort levels** and perceived safety from vulnerable road users.

- **Reports of near misses** and minor injuries.
- **Volume of resident complaints**.
- **Road width, straightness, and topography** (e.g., narrow, windy, hilly roads might need calming).
- **Visibility** and other hazards like parked cars.
- **Connectivity** to existing or planned bike networks and services.
- **Noise and light pollution** from traffic.
- **Cut-through traffic:** Roads used as shortcuts to avoid congestion on main arteries, especially those identified by navigation apps.
- **Driver aggression** and speeding.
- **Time-specific traffic volumes** (e.g., school drop-off/pickup times).

The list of potential projects will be ranked according to prioritization criteria. Which of the prioritization criteria do you support? (check all that apply)
- Note: 269 of the 338 total respondents answered this question.

Support for prioritization criteria

Criterion	Support
Sensitive land use	78%
Lack of active modes infrastructure	77%
Vehicle speeds	67%
Lack of existing traffic calming	65%
Vehicle volumes	59%
Vulnerable user volumes	53%
Recent collision with fatality or serious injury	48%
Coordination with other projects	46%
Recent collision with vulnerable road user	46%
ATP improvements timeframe	32%
Location in an equity-deserving area	27%

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If there are criteria you don't agree with, why do you disagree? What other criteria would you suggest?

- Note: 111 of the 338 total respondents answered this question

Comments on proposed criteria

- **Collision data:** Many respondents answered that relying on "recent collisions" is a reactive approach, waiting for incidents to occur rather than preventing them. Many believe that roads, especially those with high speeds or lack of sidewalks, are unsafe even without a recorded collision.
- **Lack of Active Modes Infrastructure:** There's a strong sentiment that walking and cycling infrastructure needs should be evaluated separately, as they cater to different users with distinct needs.
- **Vulnerable User Volumes**: Low pedestrian/cyclist volumes don't mean low need; often these areas are avoided due to safety concerns. An ask to define the term Vulnerable Users was submitted.
- **Equity-Deserving Areas:** Term is unclear and controversial; many confused or skeptical about its meaning and fairness.
- **Support for Prioritizing Pedestrian Safety:** Focus on roads lacking sidewalks
- **Support for focusing on** schools, parks, and community centers,
- **support for focusing on** where pedestrian volumes are high.
- **Speeding:** Support for speeding as a metric

Suggested Additional Criteria:
Residents offered numerous suggestions for additional criteria or modifications to existing ones:

- **Consider Perceived Safety:** Incorporate surveys on residents' comfort levels and feelings of safety, as perceived danger can deter vulnerable road users regardless of collision statistics.
- **Road Characteristics:** Account for road width, curves, hills (which affect speed), and the presence of parked cars.
- **Connectivity:** Prioritize projects that connect existing active transportation networks or provide direct routes to key destinations. Suggestion to emphasize continuous safe routes, to avoid fragmented networks.
- **Proactive Planning:** Use data from cut-through traffic (e.g., from navigation apps),
- Areas with high family presence
- Those where traffic is already slow due to congestion (to avoid compounding issues).
- **Near misses and resident complaints**

Do you think this policy will lead to the fair and transparent implementation of traffic calming in Saanich?

- Note: 254 of the 338 total respondents answered this question

Do you think this policy will lead to fair and transparent implementation?

	Yes	No
	64%	36%
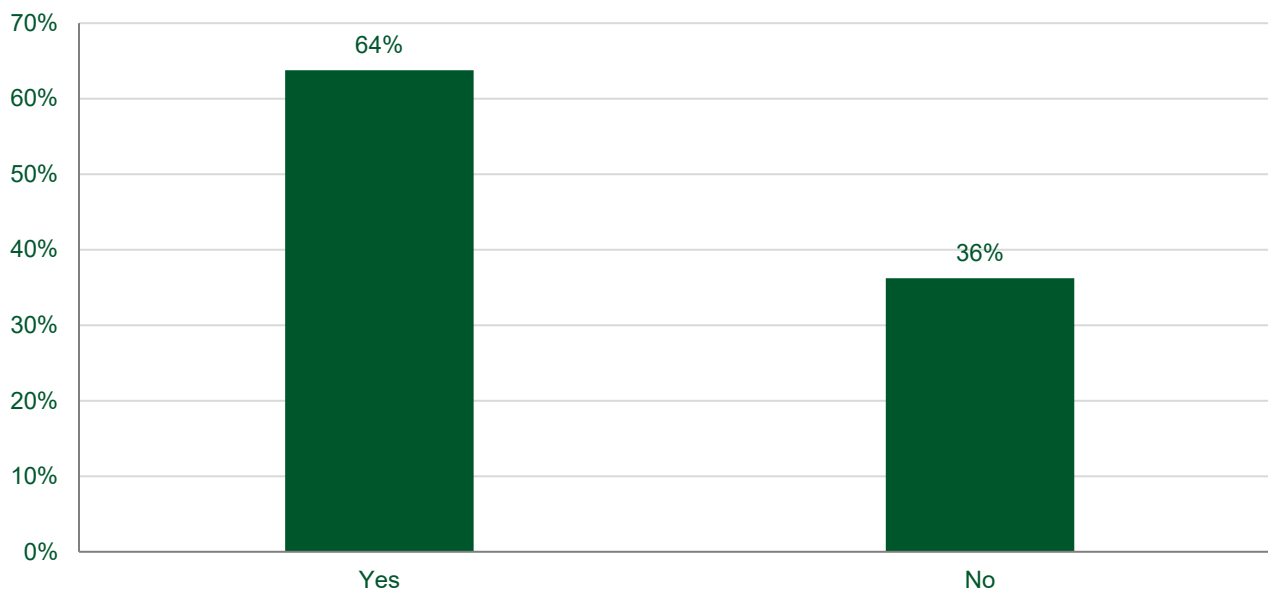
Why or why not?

- Note: 123 of the 338 total respondents answered this question

Hopes and Conditions for Success
- **Fairness and Transparency:** There is value in the process if criteria are clearly defined, weighted appropriately, and evaluations are fair.
- **Data-Driven Decisions:** The policy could be effective with clear metrics and plans.
- **Expedited Implementation:** Supporters hope the policy will streamline the implementation of traffic calming, leading to faster construction of much-needed safety upgrades.
- **Improved Safety and Livability:** If properly executed and enforced, the policy is expected to genuinely improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists, leading to a more livable environment with less pollution.
- **Addressing Local Needs:** There's a desire for the policy to address long-standing local traffic issues and resident requests.
- **Slow Pace and Underfunding:** Supporters acknowledge that the Active Transportation Plan timelines are "atrocious" and "underfunded," leading to worries that implementation will be very slow unless significant budget is allocated.

Key Concerns and Skepticism about Saanich's Traffic Calming Policy

- **Lack of Trust and Transparency:** Many residents have some distrust, believing decisions are predetermined and public input is not genuinely considered. They demand more transparency in decision-making processes.
- **Perceived Anti-Car Agenda:** Some residents view the policy as unfairly penalizing drivers and driven by an "anti-car" agenda, leading to frustration and outright rejection of the policy.
- **Inequitable Planning:** There's concern that rural and suburban areas are not fairly considered, despite facing significant cut-through traffic. A suggestion that more analysis is required on the equity-deserving lens was received.
- **Insufficient Data Reliance:** The prioritization is seen as overly reliant on recent collisions, with calls to incorporate "near-misses," user volumes, and latent demand, for a more comprehensive assessment.
- **Inadequate Communication:** Residents would like to see communication and engagement practices improve, feeling that prioritization is uneven and explanations for decisions are unclear.

Do you have any suggestions for how the Traffic Calming Policy can be improved?

- Note: 143 of the 338 total respondents answered this question

Prioritization Suggestions

- Concentrate on a few key problem areas.
- Instead of focusing on isolated "problem areas," analyze and improve the entire road network to redirect traffic around residential areas and ensure better connectivity for all modes of transport.

Prioritization Criteria

- Prioritization criteria should consider "near misses,"
- If the length of time for ATP implementation is long, this should mean traffic calming received sooner
- Include perceived safety (people may avoid dangerous roads)
- Consider the context of specific areas (e.g., proximity to schools, parks, beaches, hospitals, rural considerations).
- Prioritize pedestrian safety, then cyclists, then vehicles;
- Prioritizing vulnerable users
- Target dangerous roads identified by residents

Traffic Concerns

- Many residents oppose traffic calming on major arterial roads (e.g., McKenzie, Quadra, Shelbourne), arguing it creates congestion and forces traffic onto residential streets.
- Advocates emphasize the need to maintain smooth, efficient vehicle movement on main roads, often suggesting widening roads, adding turning lanes/lights, and appropriate traffic control.

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- Recommendations include adopting broader traffic circulation strategies instead of isolated fixes to improve overall network resiliency and prevent increased congestion.
- While supporting alternative transportation, it's crucial to recognize the ongoing reliance on cars in many areas.
- A notable portion of feedback outright rejects the Traffic Calming Policy, perceiving it as wasteful, anti-car, and ineffective at achieving safety benefits.

Transparency
- Ensure clear definitions, transparent criteria

Engagement and Communication
- Meet the strong demand for genuine engagement through well-advertised surveys, notices, and continuously tracking community feedback.
- Establish a more accessible, orderly, and fair public input process, potentially via an online portal for suggestions and support.
- Provide transparent reporting to the public, by clearly communicating project updates and outcomes.
- Implement online public feedback platforms and potentially GIS mapping to streamline communication and data collection.
- Conduct public education campaigns for all road users—drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians—to foster safe practices.
- Coordinate with public transit, taxi, and HandyDart services to ensure integrated communication and planning.

Enforcement
- There is a strong emphasis and advocacy for more effective enforcement of traffic laws.
- Support the use of automated enforcement, such as speed cameras and red light cameras, to improve compliance and potentially generate funding.
- Advocate for harsher penalties for traffic violations, citing that current rules are inadequately enforced, leading to risky behavior.

Monitoring and Evaluation
- Develop and utilize clear, quantifiable metrics to evaluate the effectiveness of implemented projects.
- Employ these metrics to continuously monitor and adjust measures after implementation.
- Consider leveraging AI monitoring for enhanced oversight and evaluation of project performance.

General comments
- General support for redirecting traffic from sensitive neighborhoods
- Comments emphasizing including both urban and rural areas;
- Provide mechanisms for residents to appeal or request policy changes.

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Education

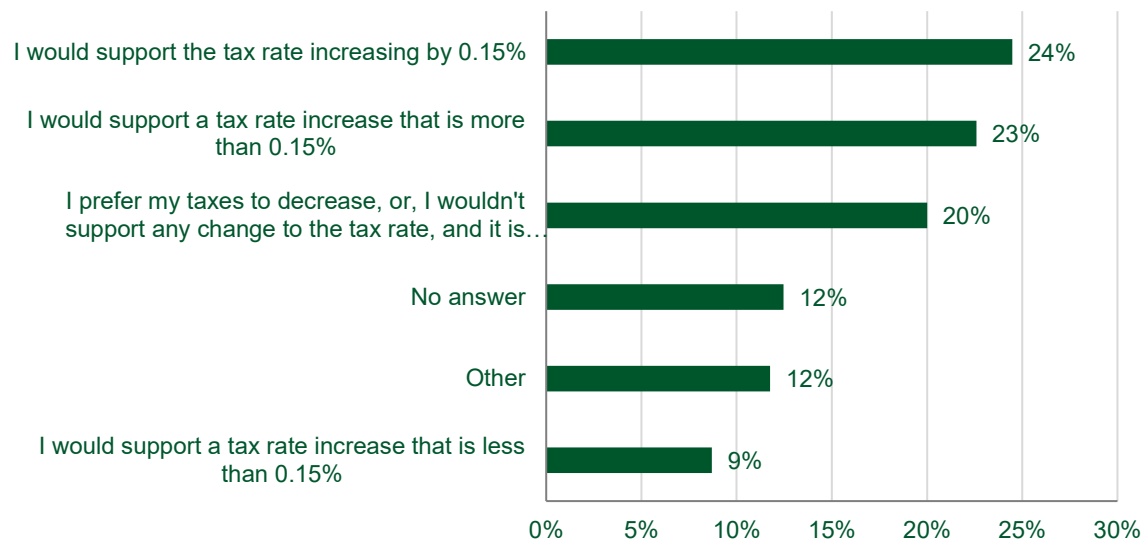- Recommendations for inclusive education

Data-driven decisions
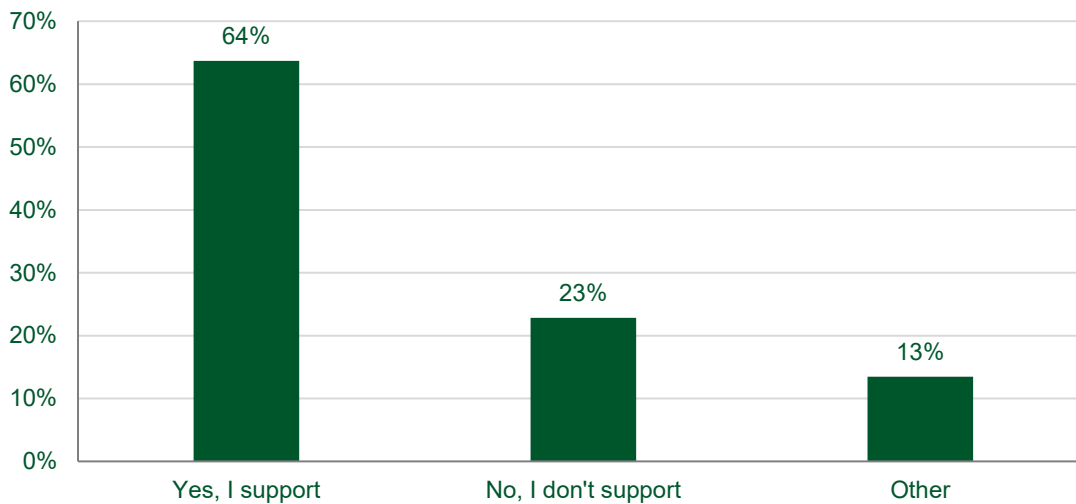- Decisions regarding traffic policies should be based on robust data

Saanich staff are proposing to bring forward a request to Council to fund a traffic calming program. What taxation change would you find acceptable to fund a program? (A 0.15% increase to property taxes could fund a traffic calming program of about $263,000 per year, which would allow about five projects to be implemented annually in Saanich)

- Note: 285 of the 338 total respondents answered this question

What tax rate change would you find acceptable to fund traffic calming?

Response	Percentage
I would support the tax rate increasing by 0.15%	24%
I would support a tax rate increase that is more than 0.15%	23%
I prefer my taxes to decrease, or, I wouldn't support any change to the tax rate, and it is…	20%
No answer	12%
Other	12%
I would support a tax rate increase that is less than 0.15%	9%

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Responses regarding a tax increase to fund a program

Note: of those that answered the question

Comments:
1. **Strong Divergence on Tax Increases**
   - Many **oppose any new tax increases**, citing already high property taxes, rising utility costs, and inflation pressures.
   - Others **conditionally support small increases** (e.g., 0.15% or 0.3%) **if results are tangible**, neighborhood upgrades are timely, and the process is transparent.
   - Some call for **progressive taxation**, where higher-value properties contribute more.

2. **Reallocate Existing Budget First**
   - Numerous respondents want the city to **reprioritize existing funds** before raising taxes.

3. **Alternative Funding Suggestions**
   - Widespread support for **traffic enforcement cameras** (especially speed cameras) to both improve safety and generate revenue.
   - Other ideas include:
     - **Road or fuel taxes**
     - **ICBC surcharges based on vehicle location**
     - **Provincial/federal grants for active transportation**

4. **Proposed Program Budget**
   - Many believe **five projects per year is insufficient** for a municipality of this size.
   - Some advocate **doubling the number of annual projects** to make noticeable progress.

Further Comments

Other feedback received, that was not relevant to the question for which it was submitted, reveals a diverse perspective on traffic calming initiatives. Supporters emphasize enhanced safety for vulnerable road users, alignment with Vision Zero goals, and addressing dangerous driver behavior. Conversely, critics raise concerns about increased congestion, an anti-car bias, the perceived ineffectiveness of past measures, traffic diversion, lack of accountability for non-drivers, and poor design impacting emergency services and excluding diverse needs. Suggestions include road design changes, prioritizing continuous sidewalks, a balanced approach to bike lanes, enhanced enforcement and education, data-driven decisions, flexible and cost-effective solutions, broader planning and coordination, community input, and transparency and accountability. Overarching sentiments include frustration with the pace and funding, and a call for a balanced and inclusive approach that considers all road users, not just vocal minorities.