

MOVING TOWARD 2050

LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

DRAFT PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT REPORT

Charlottesville/Albemarle Metropolitan Planning Organization

October 11, 2023



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A photograph of a tree-lined street with brick buildings and outdoor seating. The scene is captured from a low angle, looking down a brick-paved sidewalk. Large, mature trees with dense green foliage line the street, casting shadows on the ground. In the background, there are brick buildings with storefronts. One building on the left has a sign that says "Evile" and the number "308". Another building on the right has a sign that says "Kilwins" and a red awning. Outdoor seating with tables and chairs is visible under the trees. A few people are walking on the sidewalk. The sky is blue and clear.

Throughout the engagement process, MPO staff reached nearly 600 individuals and attended sixteen community events.

1. INTRODUCTION

Throughout the calendar year, MPO staff collected stakeholder and public comments to help shape the Moving Toward 2050 planning effort's Goals and Needs Identification phase. This report consolidates those responses into an analysis that will guide next steps and outcomes for Moving Toward 2050.

Engagement Goals

The objectives of this engagement process were to:

- Set and prioritize goals;
- Identify travel needs; and
- Inform the travel need and project selection prioritization process

Engagement Statistics

Throughout this phase of the engagement process, MPO staff reached nearly **600 individuals** and attended **sixteen community events**.



2. OVERVIEW OF PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER EFFORTS

Stakeholder Meetings

Public engagement efforts began in February 2023 when MPO staff and consultants from EPR, P.C. facilitated three stakeholder meetings representing major employers, public safety departments, and other community partners. A total of 25 people attended these initial meetings. The objectives of these meetings were to evaluate draft goal language, finetune objectives, build partnerships for future engagement, and begin to identify transportation concerns and needs.



Virtual Public Meeting

On June 20, 2023, MPO staff conducted a virtual informational meeting, which was recorded and placed on the project website as a reference resource. The meeting's objectives were to explain the Moving Toward 2050 process, answer attendees' questions, and prepare the community for upcoming engagement opportunities.



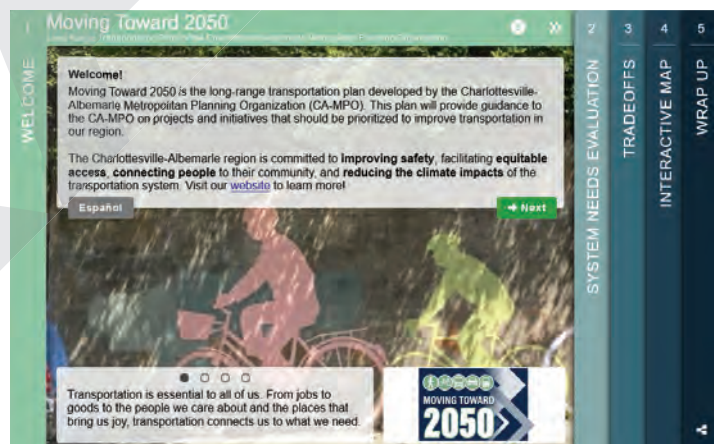
Open House Event

On June 21, 2023, MPO staff held an open house event at the Water Street Center in Charlottesville. Staff set up informational posters and began engaging with and collecting feedback from the public at this event.



MetroQuest Community Survey

On June 13, 2023, MPO staff launched an online survey via the MetroQuest platform. The survey collected **334 responses** and over **1,100 comments** through an interactive map. It closed on August 31, 2023.



Public Intercepts

Staff attended several in-person community events in July and August 2023 to reach groups underrepresented in the online survey responses, including two of the Charlottesville Redevelopment and Housing Authority's (CRHA) regular meetings with residents.



Additionally, staff set up booths at the Charlottesville Transit Center, a table at the Charlottesville National Night Out event, and attended Albemarle County's National Night Out event. The full list of public intercept events is below.

- Charlottesville Transit Center – July 25 & 26, 2023
- CRHA Meeting (Sixth Street) – July 26, 2023
- Charlottesville National Night Out – August 1, 2023
- Albemarle National Night Out – August 1, 2023
- The Center at Belvedere – August 2, 2023
- CRHA Meeting (Westhaven) – August 10, 2023
- Charlottesville Albemarle Convention & Visitors Bureau – August 28, 2023



Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Meetings

Staff attended the following Albemarle County CAC meetings to collect additional feedback:

- Crozet CAC Meeting – August 9, 2023
- Places29-North CAC Meeting – August 10, 2023
- 5th & Avon CAC Meeting – August 17, 2023
- Places29-Rio CAC Meeting – August 24, 2023
- Places29-Hydraulic CAC Meeting – September 11, 2023
- Pantops CAC Meeting – September 25, 2023

Online Materials & Social Media


Staff launched a project website in 2022 and continues to use social media to advertise engagement opportunities. Additionally, staff launched an interactive ArcGIS StoryMap site in July 2023.



Past Feedback

To complement Moving Toward 2050 engagement efforts, MPO staff and consultants from EPR created a log of comments from previous transportation-related engagement efforts, including comprehensive plan update and transit visioning surveys, as those results are still valid. The log incorporates feedback received from the following engagement efforts:

- Cville Plans Together Survey
- Albemarle County 2044 Survey
- Charlottesville Area Transit Vision Plan Survey



***The online MetroQuest
Community Survey ran
from June 13 to August
31, 2023. It collected 334
responses and over 1,100
interactive map markers.***

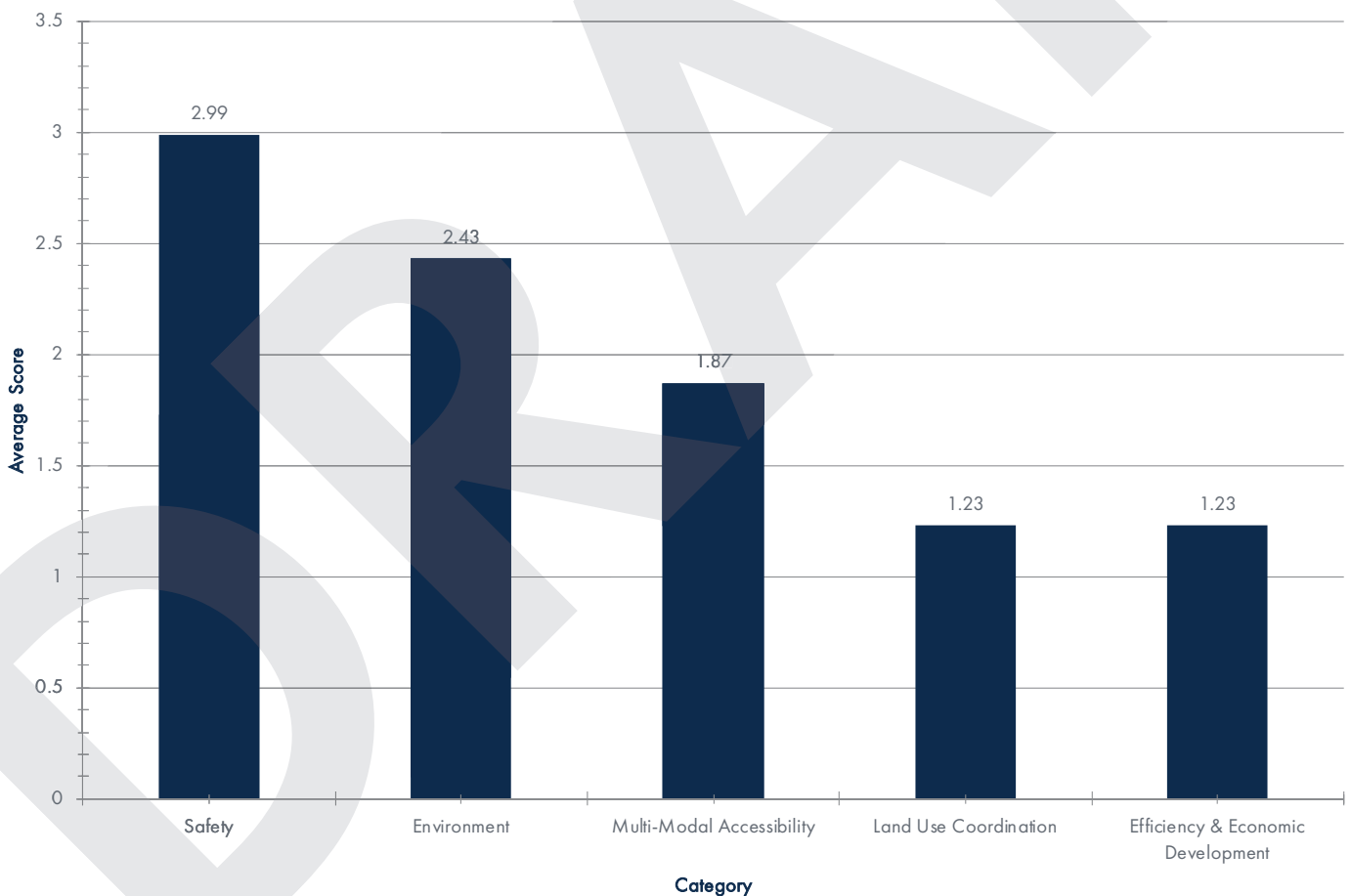
3. METROQUEST COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

MetroQuest Survey Overview

The online MetroQuest Community Survey, which ran from June 13 to August 31, 2023 and collected 334 responses, was organized into the following sections:

Scoring Priorities

In this section, participants ranked the following transportation need categories on a scale of 1 (least important) to 5 (most important): **Safety**, **Environment**, **Multi-Modal Accessibility**, **Land Use Coordination**, and **Efficiency & Economic Development**. The results of this section are displayed below.



Trade Offs

In this section, participants indicated their positions on trade offs between two scenarios each for Mode Choice, Access, and Climate Action. The results of this section are on the following pages.

Trade Offs: Mode Choice

Mode Choice Access Climate Action


How should we balance between prioritizing roadway improvements and multi-modal system improvements?
Choose the option that best shows which tradeoff you prefer

Prioritize Roadway Improvements **Prioritize Multiple Modes**

Navigation: << < Neutral > >>


Prioritize Roadway Improvements

- Cars and trucks make up the majority of the trips in the region. Therefore, focusing on roadway improvements is most important.
- Bicycle, pedestrian, and transit improvements should be integrated where feasible, but should not be the primary consideration.

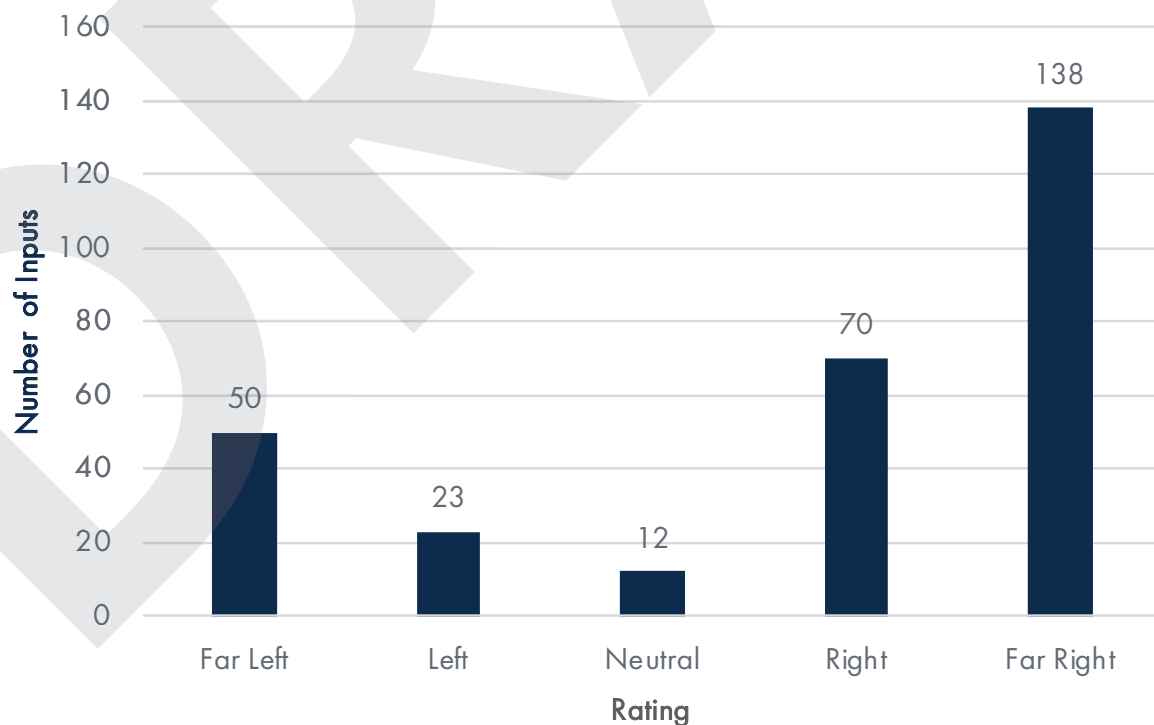


Prioritize Multiple Modes

- A robust multi-modal transportation system is essential to achieve identified climate action goals and promote equitable access to jobs and opportunities.
- Bicycle, pedestrian, and transit improvements should be primary considerations.



Reset Next



Mode Choice | **Access** | Climate Action

Is it more important for transportation projects to improve access to jobs or access to non-work destinations?
Choose the option that best shows which tradeoff you prefer

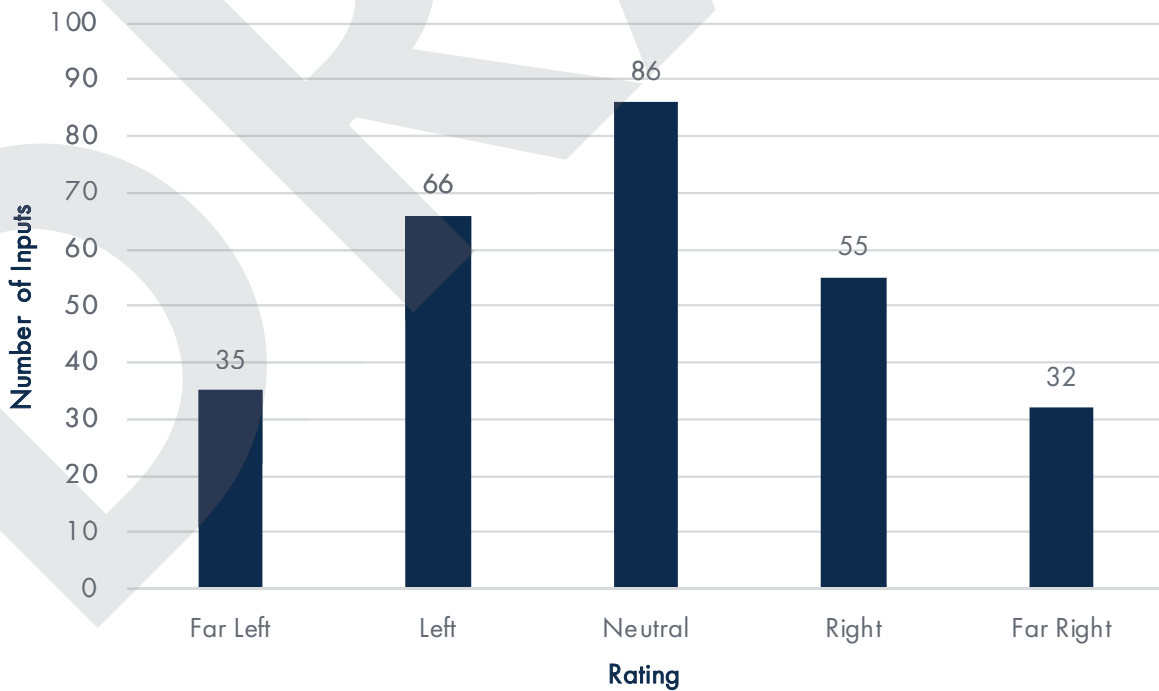
Access to jobs ← [<< | < | Neutral | > | >>] → Access to non-work destinations

Access to Jobs

- Lack of reliable transportation options can be a barrier to employment.
- Transportation improvements that increase affordable and equitable access to job opportunities should be prioritized.

Access to Non-Work Destinations

- The majority of trips taken are for non-work purposes.
- Transportation improvements that provide better connections to non-work community destinations should be prioritized.



Trade Offs: Climate Action

Mode Choice Access **Climate Action**

To achieve carbon reduction goals, is it more important to decrease congestion or increase use of active/public transportation?
Choose the option that best shows which tradeoff you prefer

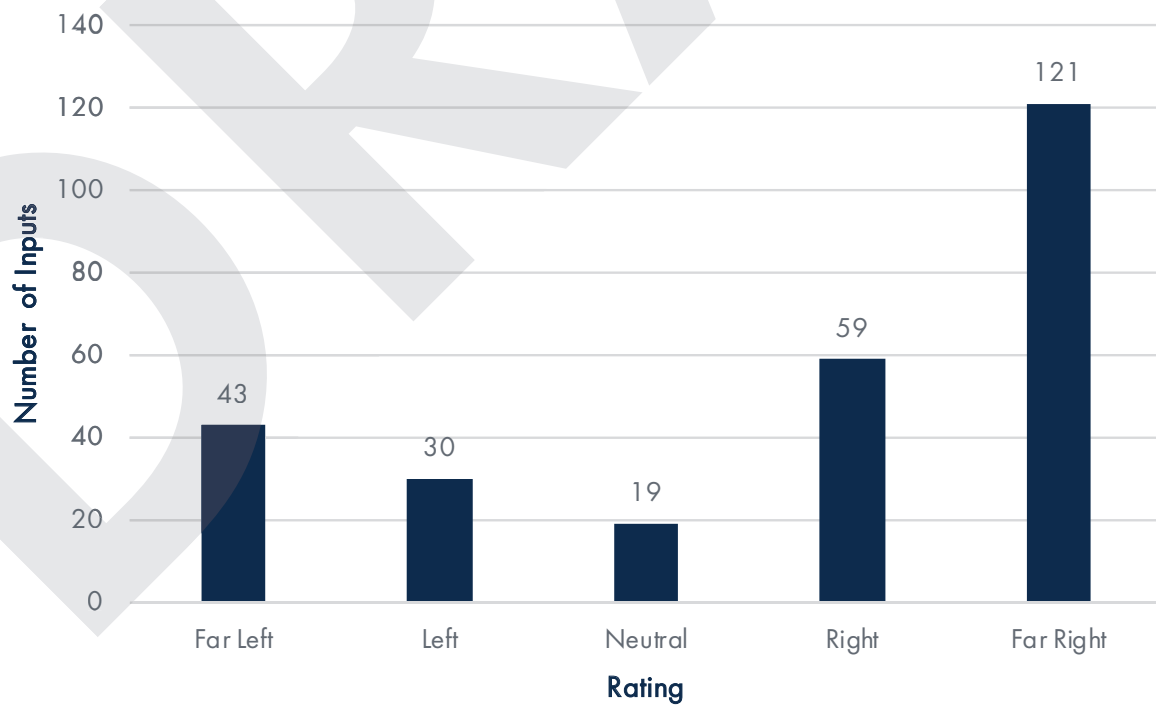
Prioritize congestion reduction << < Neutral > >> Prioritize active/public transportation

Congestion Reduction

- Relieving traffic congestion would reduce travel delays, engine idle time, and unproductive fuel consumption.
- Improving system capacity at identified bottlenecks is the most important factor in achieving identified climate action goals.

Active/Public Transportation

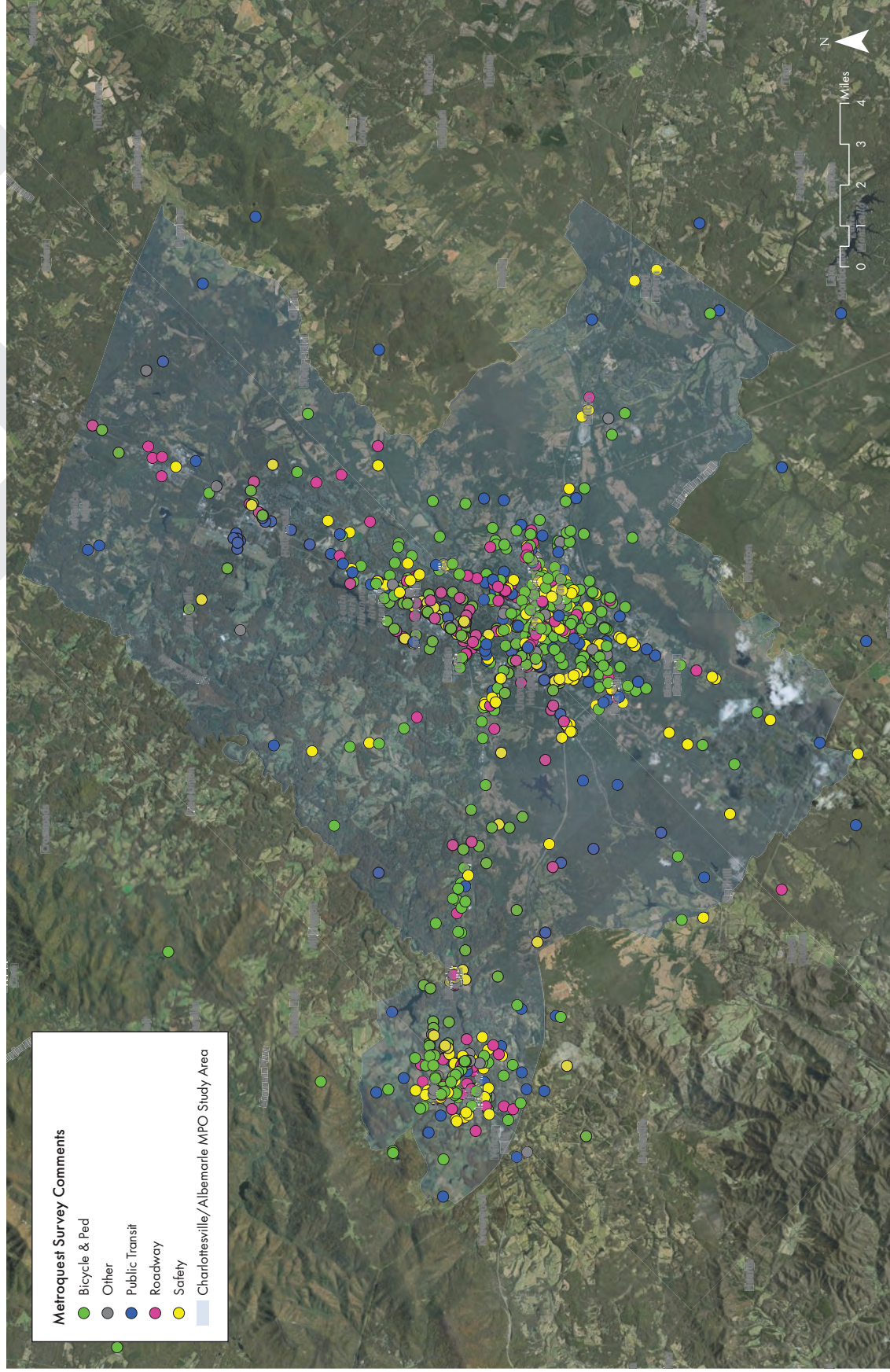
- Reducing congestion may encourage more people to drive instead of using active or public transportation options.
- Encouraging greater use of active and public transportation options is the most important factor in achieving identified climate action goals.



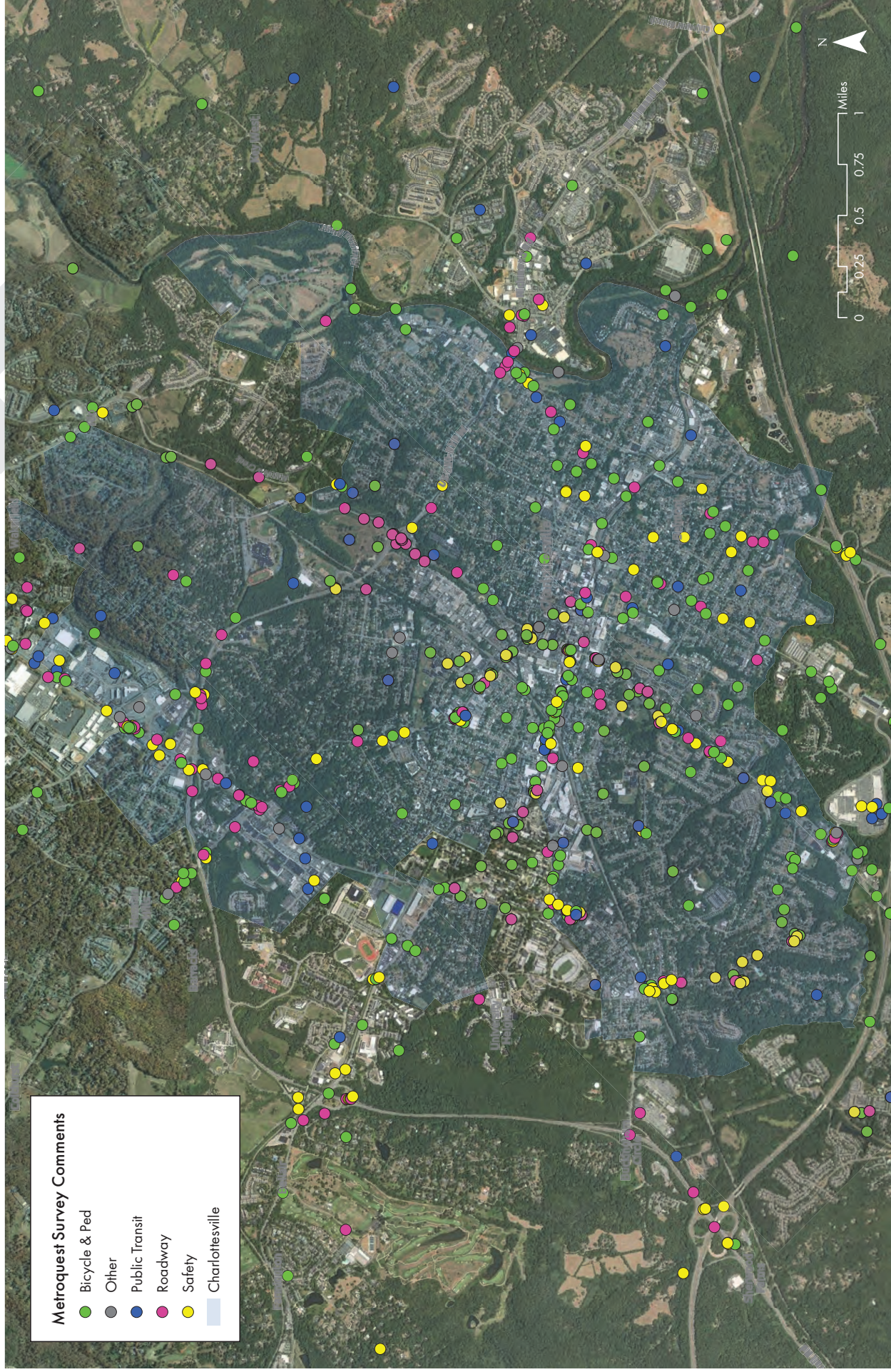
Interactive Map

In this section, participants had the opportunity to add markers identifying existing concerns or where they would like to see improvements on an interactive map of the region. Markers represented the following categories: **Public Transit, Bicycle & Ped, Roadway, Safety, and Other**. In total, survey participants left over 1,100 markers on the interactive map.

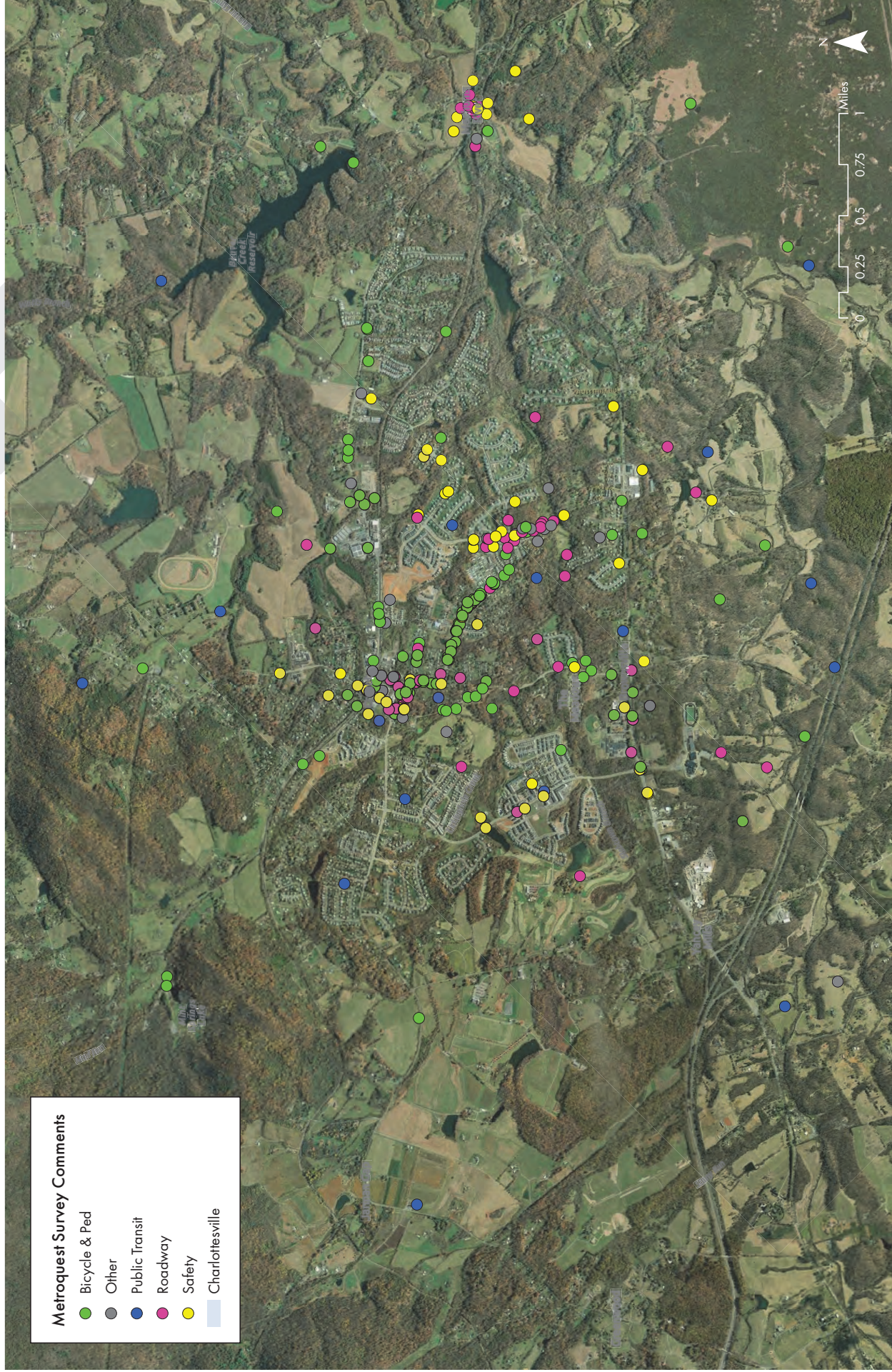
The following map shows an overview of MetroQuest survey interactive map comments for the entire MPO area.



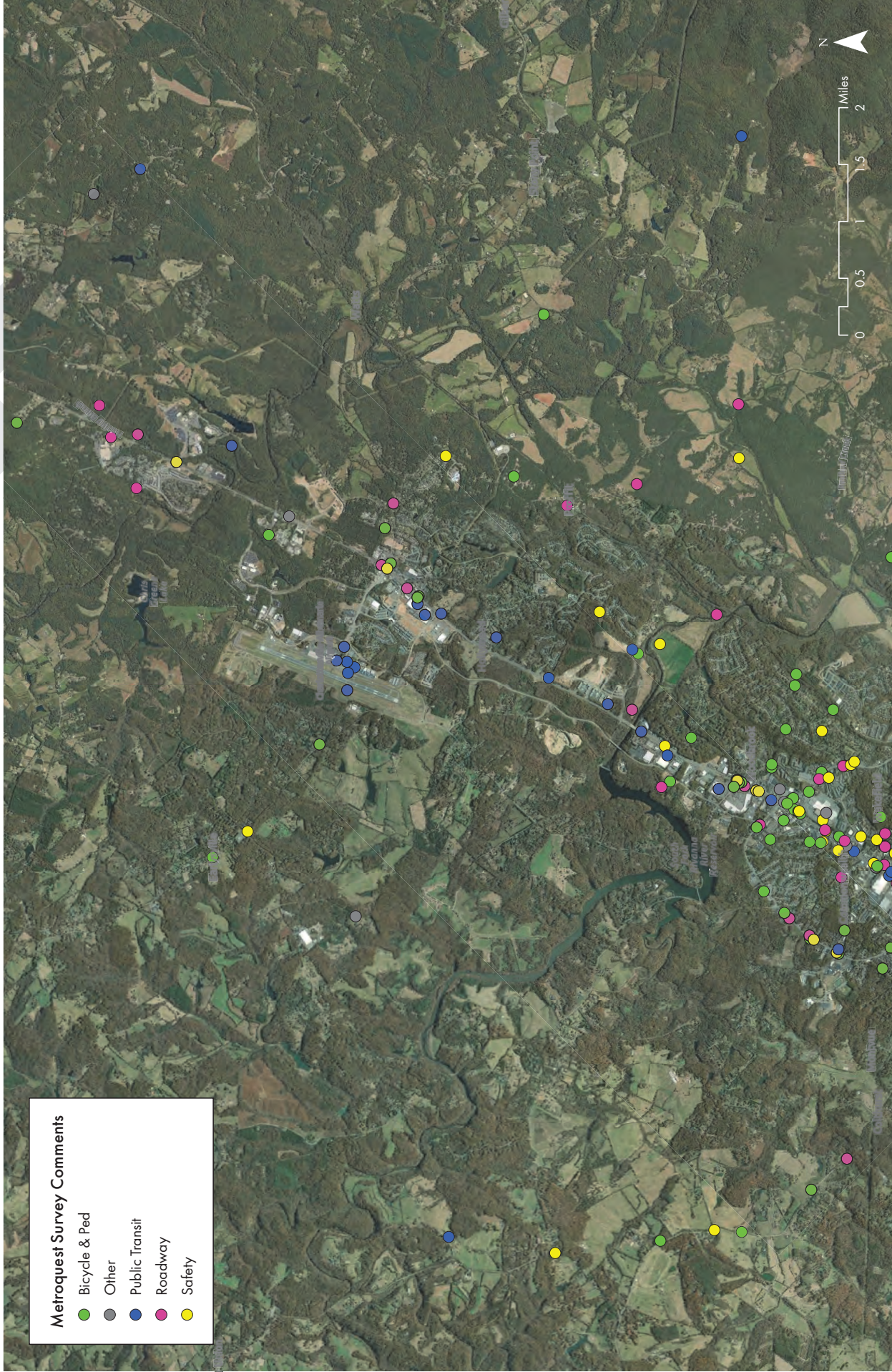
The following map shows MetroQuest survey interactive map comments for the Charlottesville area.



The following map shows MetroQuest survey interactive map comments for the Crozet area.



The following map shows MetroQuest survey interactive map comments for the Route 29 corridor north of Charlottesville.



Demographics

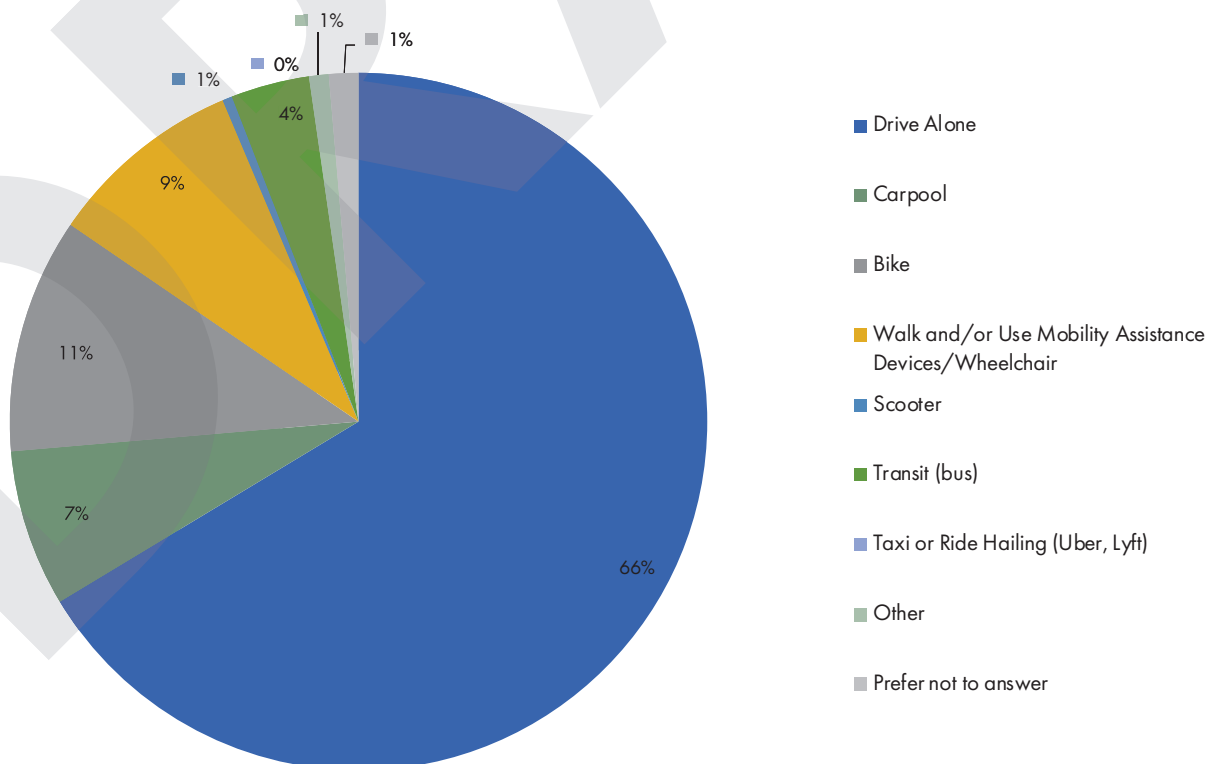
In addition to the main survey sections, participants had the option to provide the following demographic information:

- Primary mode of transportation
- Race
- Age
- Household income
- Gender identity

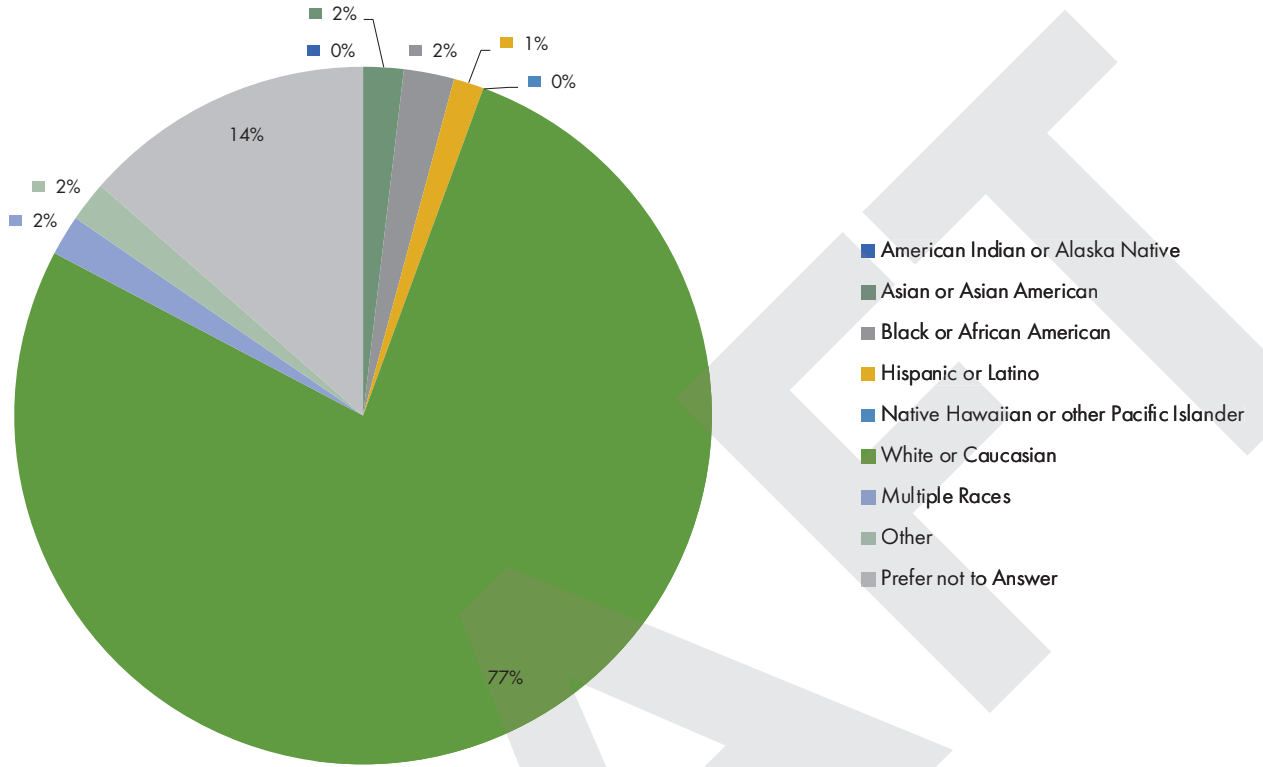
The following pages contain graphs summarizing demographic information from the MetroQuest survey.

Please note that demographic information in this report only applies to those who took the online MetroQuest survey. Demographic information was not collected for in-person engagement efforts, which were specifically designed to collect feedback from community members whose demographic profile differs from those who took the MetroQuest survey. The results of in-person engagement efforts are discussed in Section 4 of this report.

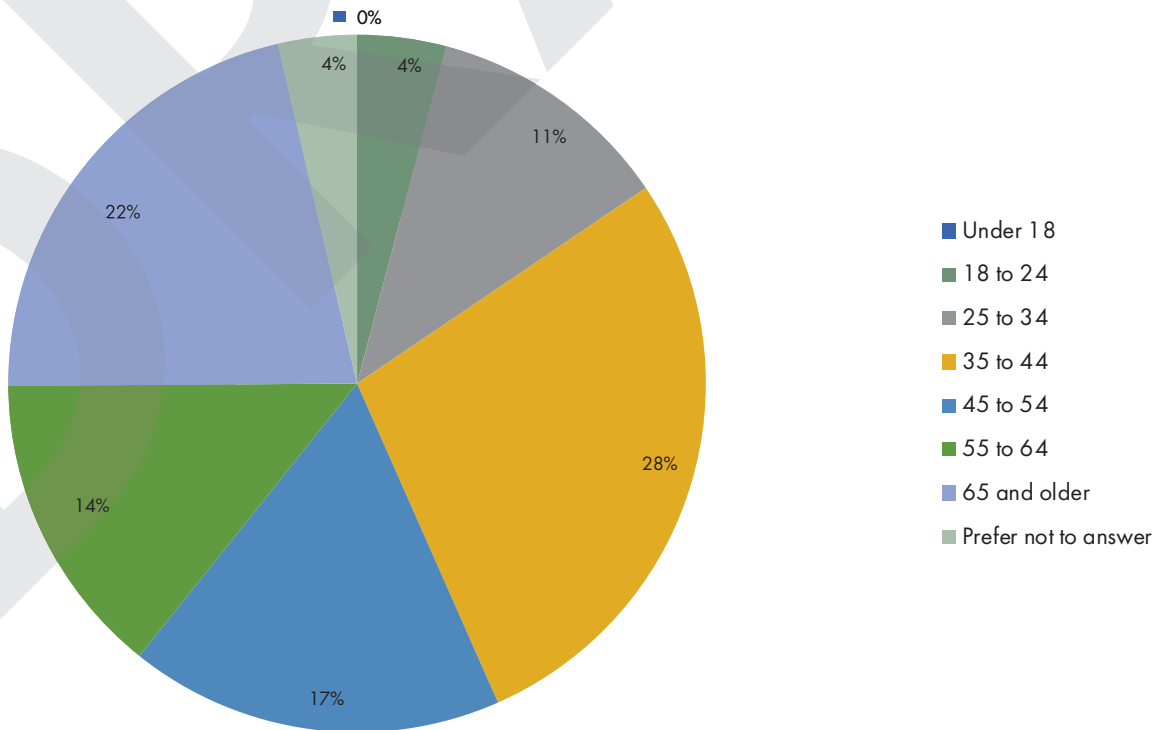
Primary Mode of Transportation



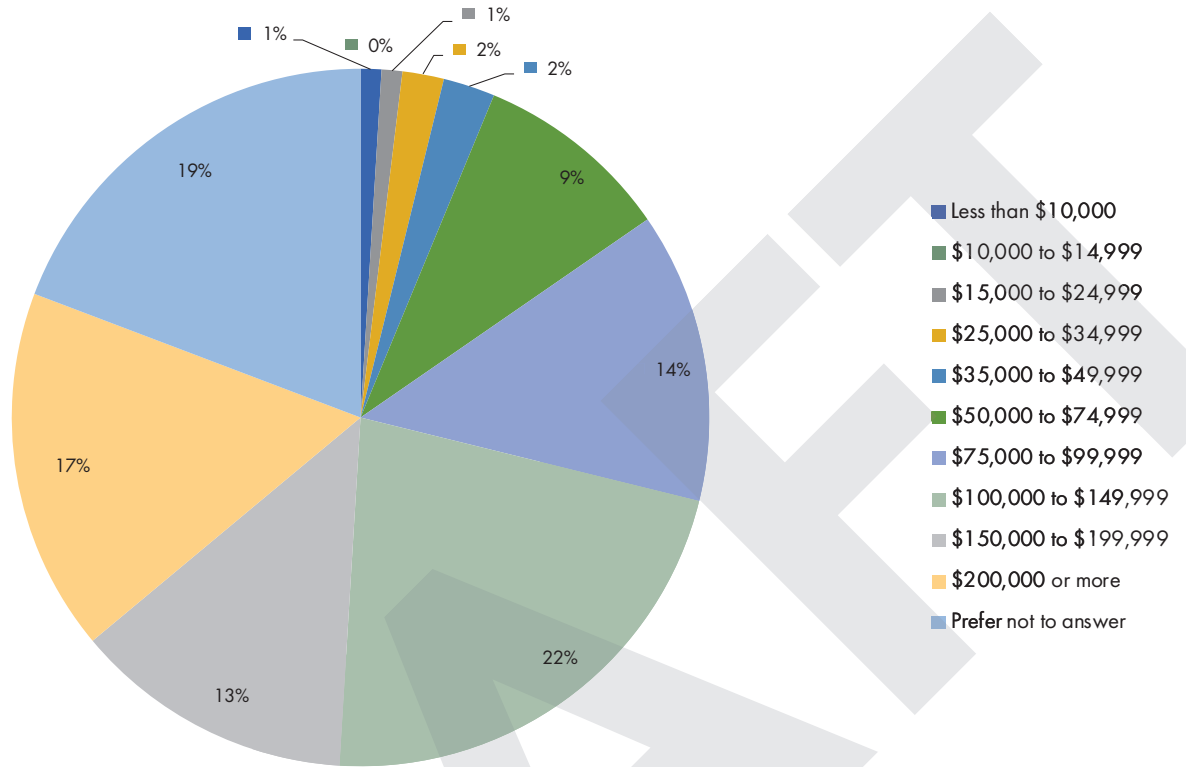
Race



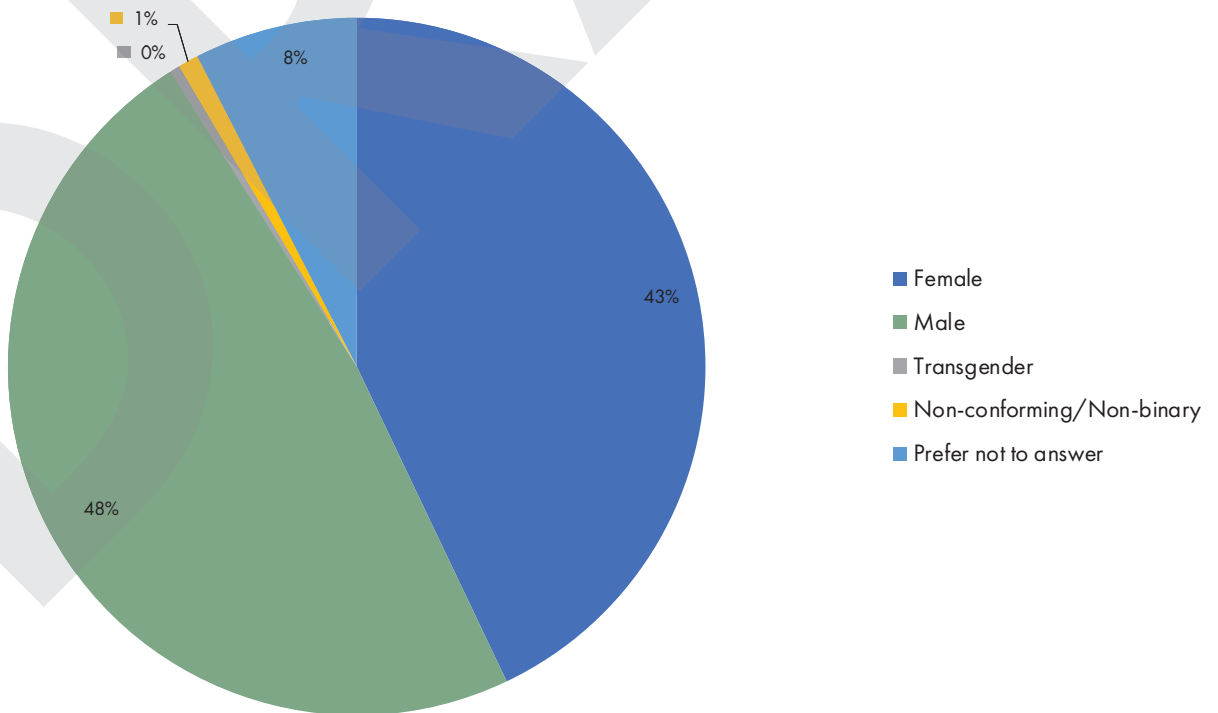
Age



Household Income



Gender Identity



Summary of MetroQuest Survey Results

Scoring Priorities

Safety was the highest-ranked priority with an average score of 2.99, followed by Environment with an average score of 2.43 and Multi-Modal Accessibility with an average score of 1.87. Land Use Coordination and Efficiency & Economic Development were the lowest-ranked priorities, both having an average score of 1.23.

Trade Offs

In terms of Mode Choice trade offs, most participants favored prioritizing multi-modal system improvements over roadway improvements.

In terms of Access trade offs, support was fairly evenly split between access to jobs and access to non-job destinations.

In terms of Climate Action trade offs, most participants favored prioritizing active/public transportation over congestion reduction.

Interactive Map

481 map comments were related to **bicycle and pedestrian needs**, which was the most prominent response category.

248 map comments were related to **safety**.

234 map comments were related to **roadway improvements**.

139 map comments were related to **public transit**.

63 map comments were marked as "other".

Demographics

Please note that demographic information in this report only applies to those who took the online MetroQuest survey. Demographic information was not collected for in-person engagement efforts, which were specifically designed to collect feedback from community members whose demographic profile differs from those who took the MetroQuest survey. The results of in-person engagement efforts are discussed in Section 4 of this report.

Primary Mode of Transportation: 66% of participants indicated that driving alone was their primary mode, followed by biking at 11%, walking or using mobility assistance devices at 9%, and carpooling at 7%.

Race: 77% of participants indicated White or Caucasian as their race. People who indicated their race as Black or African American, Asian or Asian American, Multiple Races, or Other each represented 2% of participants who answered this question. 1% of survey participants who answered this question identified as Hispanic or Latino. American Indian or Alaska Natives and Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islanders represented 0% of survey participants who answered this question. 14% of survey participants preferred not to indicate their race.

Age: 28% survey participants were aged 35 to 44, followed by 22% aged 65 or older, 17% aged 45 to 54, 14% aged 55 to 64, and 4% aged 18 to 24. 11% of participants preferred not to answer this question.

Income: 52% of participants reported annual household incomes of at least \$100,000. 14% reported annual household incomes between \$75,000 and \$99,999 and 9% reported annual household incomes between \$50,000 and \$74,999. 6% of participants reported annual household incomes below \$50,000.

Gender Identity: 48% of participants identified as male and 42% identified as female. 1% identified as gender non-conforming or non-binary. 8% of participants preferred not to answer this question.





Staff received nearly 300 comments from in-person engagement efforts.

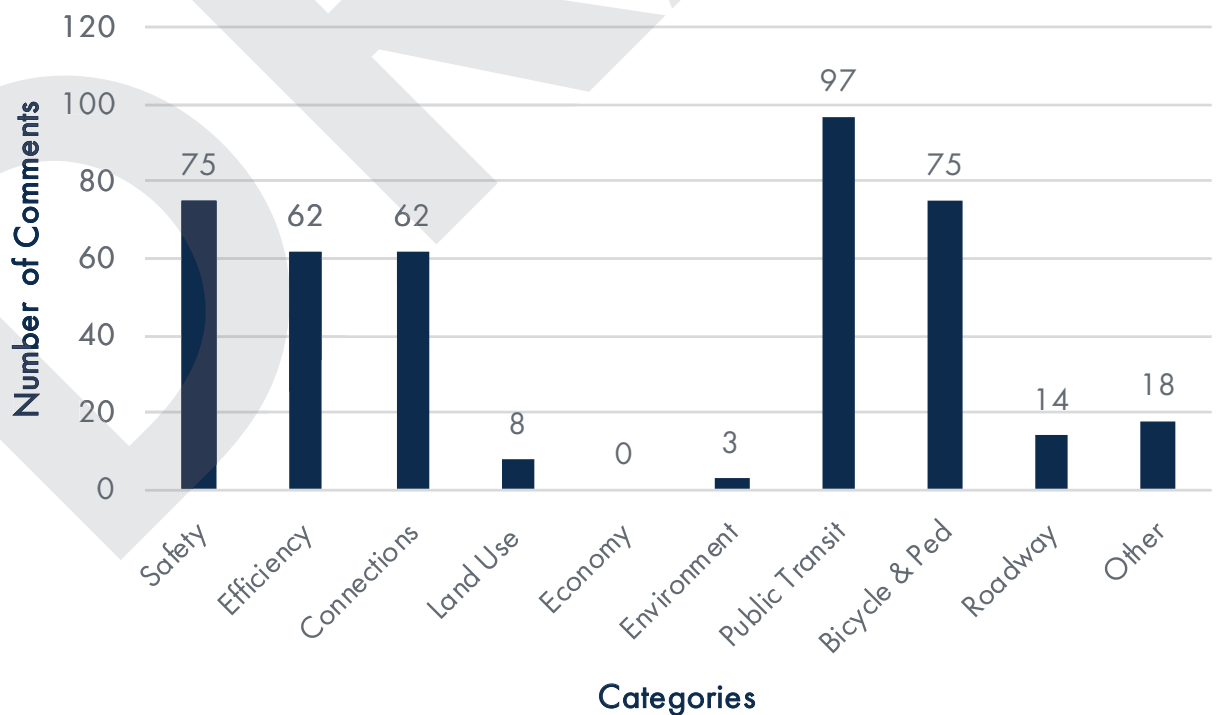
4. IN-PERSON ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

In-Person Engagement Overview

Staff compiled all comments received from in-person engagement efforts (public meetings and intercepts) and manually sorted each comment into one or more of the following categories:

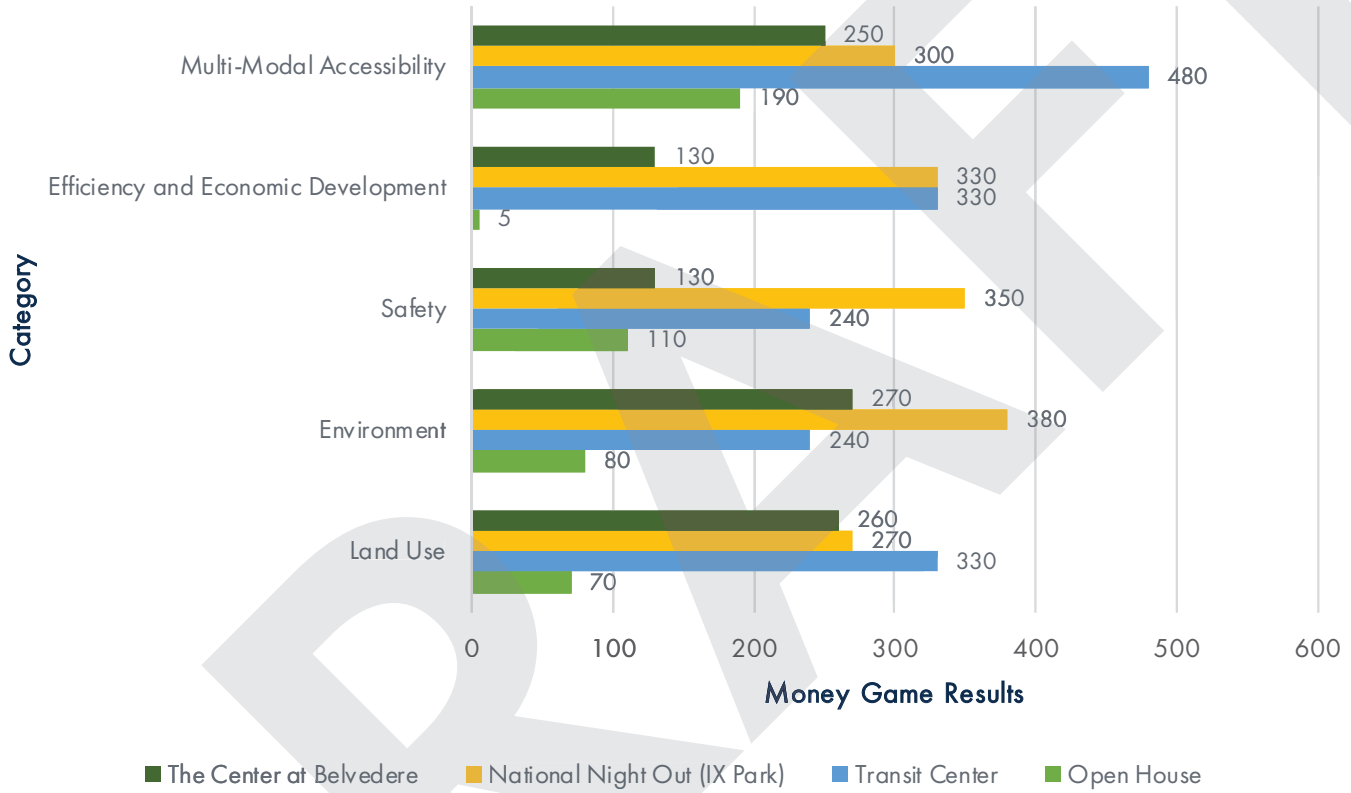
- Safety
- Efficiency
- Connections
- Land Use
- Economy
- Environment
- Public Transit
- Bicycle & Ped
- Roadway
- Other

The following chart depicts a breakdown of the number of comments per category for all in-person engagement efforts. *Note that while staff received nearly 300 comments from these efforts, the total number of comments represented in the chart is much higher because most comments fell into more than one category.*



Money Game

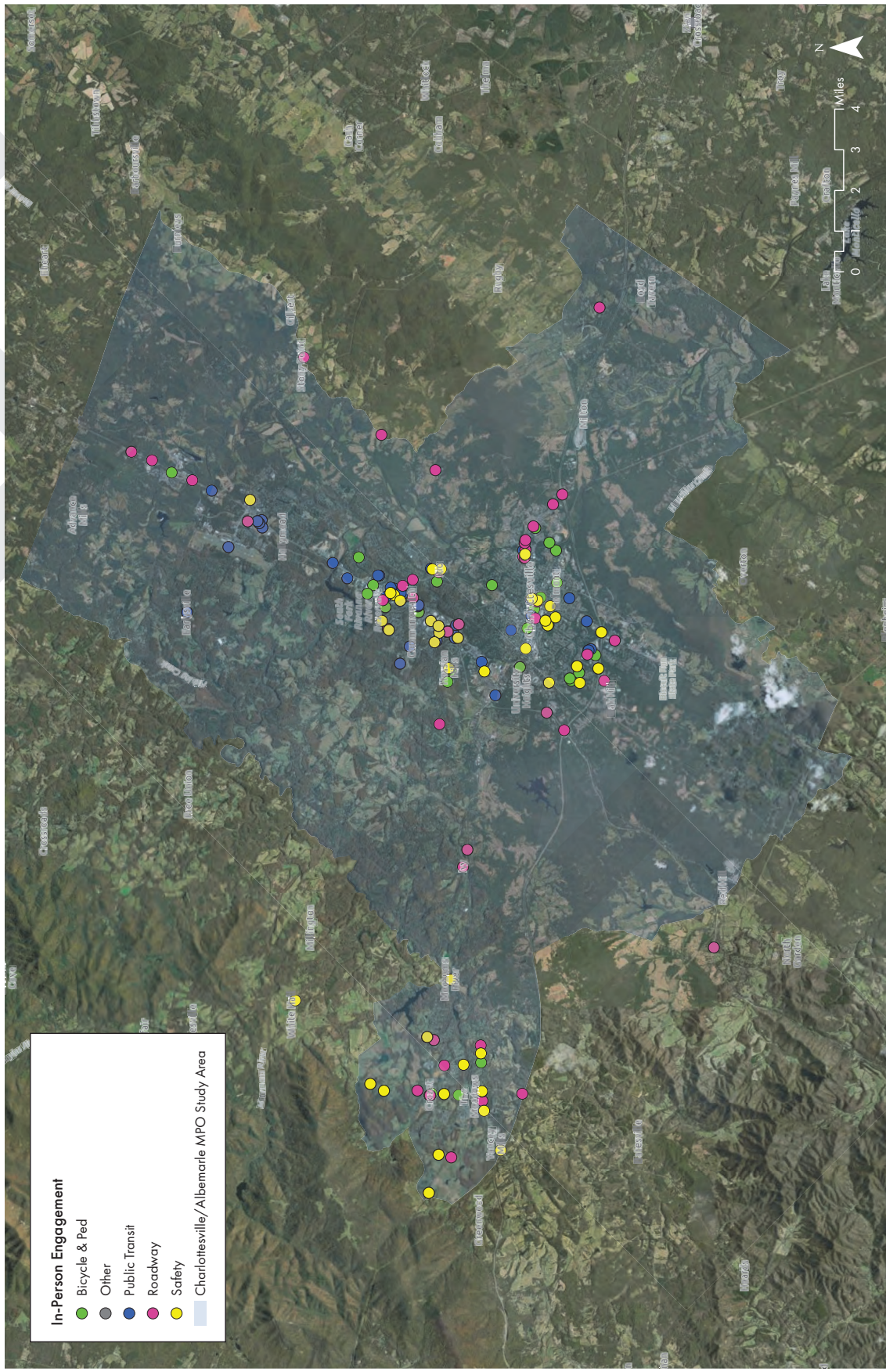
To replicate the Scoring Priorities activity from the online MetroQuest survey, staff set up a “money game” for participants at the Center at Belvedere, National Night Out, Transit Center, and Open House events. Those who participated in this activity were asked to allot “dollars” towards five priority categories: **Safety, Environment, Multi-Modal Accessibility, Land Use Coordination, and Efficiency & Economic Development.** The results of the activity are summarized in the chart below.



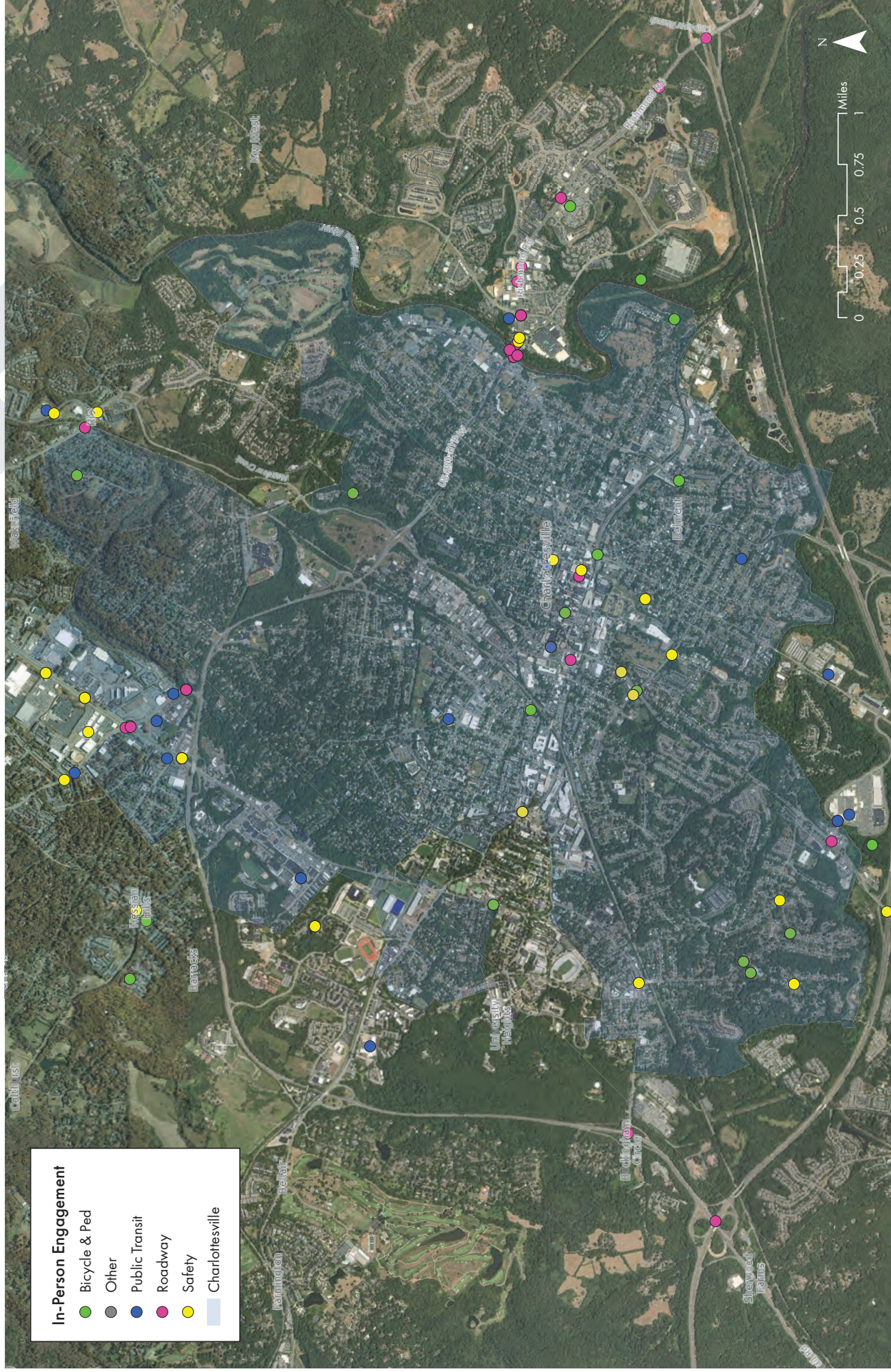
Mapped Comments

In addition to categorizing each comment, staff manually mapped 227 comments that mentioned a specific location. Staff categorized these comments using the same markers at the MetroQuest survey for the sake of consistency and the ability to easily compare sources.

The following map shows an overview of in-person engagement comments for the entire MPO area.



The following map shows in-person engagement comments for the Charlottesville area.



The following map shows in-person engagement comments for the Crozet area.



The following map shows in-person engagement comments for the Route 29 corridor north of Charlottesville.



Summary of In-Person Engagement Comments

97 comments were related to **public transit**, which was the most prominent response category.

75 comments were related to **bicycle and pedestrian needs**.

75 additional comments were related to **safety**.

62 comments were related to **efficiency**.

62 additional comments were related to **connections**.

14 comments were related to **roadway improvements**.

8 comments were related to **land use**.

3 comments were related to **environmental concerns**.

18 comments did not fall under any specific category.





***Staff reviewed over 900
transportation-related
comments from past
engagement efforts.***

DOWNTOWN TRANSIT STATION

CHARLOTTESVILLE
AREA TRANSIT

CHARLOTTESVILLE
VISITOR CENTER

610

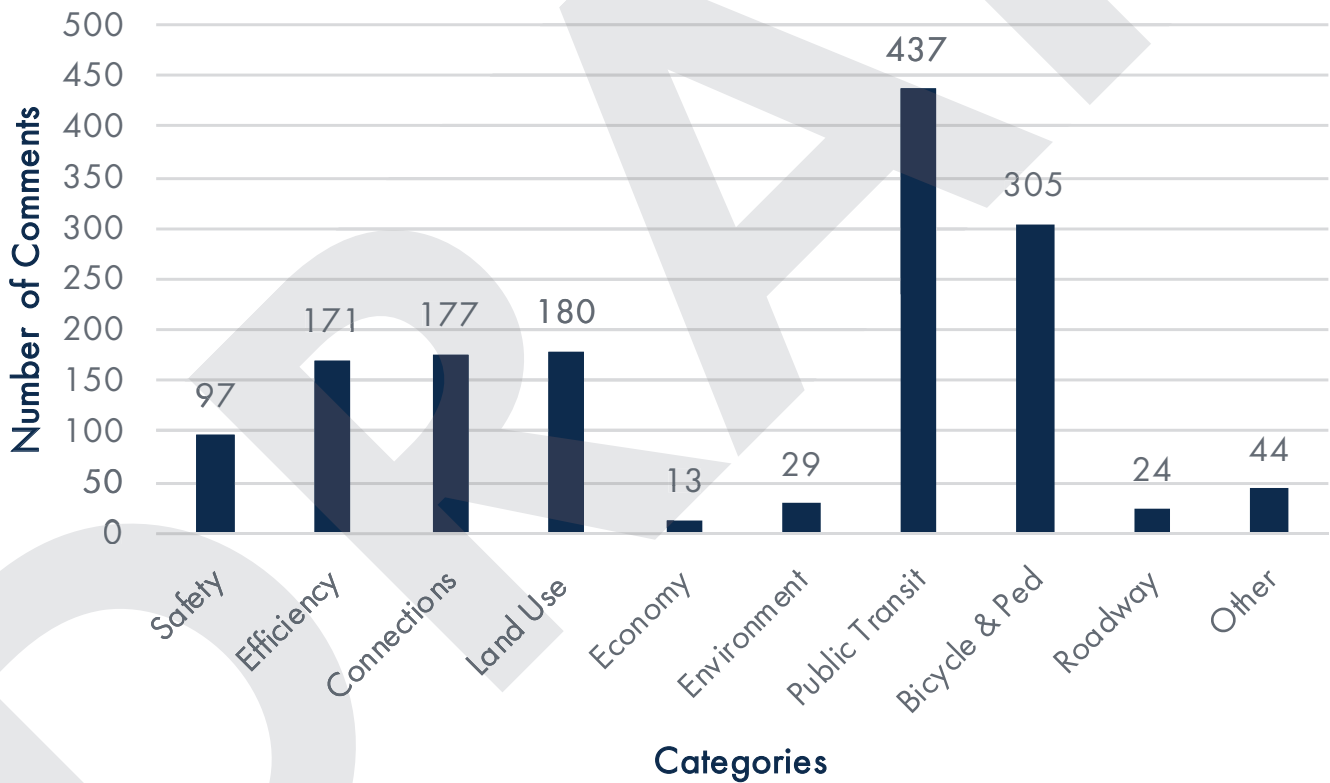
CHARLOTTESVILLE
AREA TRANSIT
VISITOR CENTER

5. PAST ENGAGEMENT RESULTS

Past Engagement Overview

Using the same process as the in-person engagement results analysis, staff compiled all comments received from past engagement efforts (the Cville Plans Together Survey, Albemarle County 2044 Survey, and Charlottesville Area Transit Vision Plan Survey) and manually sorted each comment into one or more of the aforementioned categories.

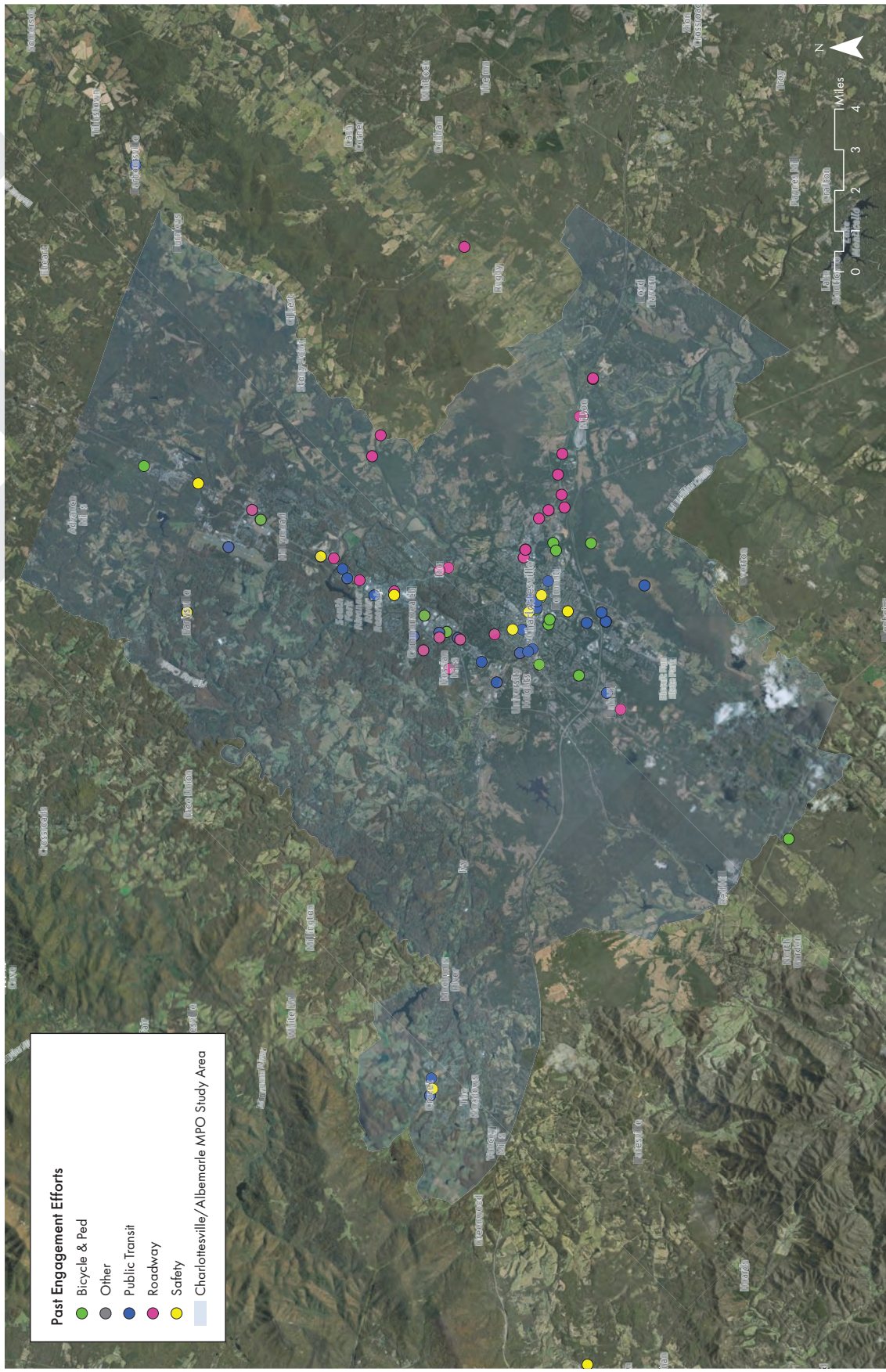
The following chart depicts a breakdown of the number of comments per category for all past engagement efforts. Note that while staff reviewed over 900 comments from these surveys, the total number of comments represented in the chart is much higher because most comments fell into more than one category.



Mapped Comments

In addition to categorizing each comment, staff manually mapped 185 comments that mentioned a specific location. Staff categorized these comments using the same markers at the MetroQuest survey for the sake of consistency and the ability to easily compare sources.

The following map shows an overview of past engagement effort comments for the entire MPO area.



The following map shows past engagement comments for the Charlottesville area.



The following map shows past engagement comments for the Crozet area.



The following map shows past engagement comments for the Route 29 corridor north of Charlottesville.



Summary of Past Engagement Comments

437 comments were related to **public transit**, which was again the most prominent response category.

305 comments were related to **bicycle and pedestrian needs**.

180 comments were related to **land use**.

177 comments were related to **connections**.

171 comments were related to **efficiency**.

97 comments were related to **safety**.

44 comments did not fall under any specific category.

29 comments were related to **environmental concerns**.

24 comments were related to **roadway improvements**.

13 comments were related to the **economy**.



Themes from this phase of the public engagement effort include a need for safer roadways, dedicated and protected bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and an enhanced public transit system.



6. CONCLUSIONS AND NEXT STEPS

This final section of the engagement report synthesizes findings from all engagement efforts to date. Overarching themes from this phase of the Moving Toward 2050 public engagement effort include a need for safer roadways and intersections, dedicated and protected bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and an enhanced public transit system. The community appears eager for solutions that prioritize safety and accessibility over traditional car-centric designs.

Takeaways

Highlights from comments received throughout the public engagement process are below. Note that while this list is not comprehensive, it lists some of the most frequently cited needs and concerns expressed by the community.

Public Transit

- A desire for expanded bus routes and longer operating hours.
- Calls for bus service to specific locations like shopping centers on Route 29 North and the airport.
- Concerns about a lack of benches and proper lighting at some bus stops.
- Concerns about inefficiencies in bus travel time, especially when compared to car travel.
- Concerns about long waits for buses, particularly routes like CAT #6 and #2, which become especially problematic during bad weather.
- Concerns about the cleanliness of buses and public safety.
- Emphasis on the need to connect communities, like Crozet, to jobs in Charlottesville and other parts of Albemarle County, via an expanded public transit network.
- Requests for full schedules on Saturdays and service on Sundays, including night routes.
- Requests for more bus routes connecting specific areas.
- Requests for more bus routes to access Crozet and UVA.
- Suggestions for shuttles to alleviate congestion for areas with many UVA & UVA Hospital employees.
- A suggestion to provide frequent, small bus transit options from high-density housing areas into the city.
- A proposal for a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) line from the airport along Route 29 into the city.
- Suggestions for new bus routes connecting various residential and commercial zones, as well as more direct bus stops at essential businesses such as grocery stores.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure

- A strong demand for protected bike lanes throughout the city, especially on streets like

Jefferson Park Avenue, Ridge St, Preston Ave, Crozet Ave, and 5th St.

- A suggestion to comprehensively plan out a trail and participate in the State Trails Advisory Committee.
- Calls for a funded and built Three Notched Trail.
- Calls for walkway bridges over Route 29 due to safety concerns.
- Challenges with bottlenecks at specific points like train bridges, impacting both vehicular and pedestrian safety.
- Concerns about pedestrian safety, especially when crossing Route 29.
- Concerns about safety for pedestrians and cyclists crossing bridges at Avon and 5th Street over I-64.
- Concerns over ambiguous right-of-way for pedestrians, leading to potentially hazardous situations with vehicles.
- Desire for dedicated paths leading to various landmarks, schools, parks, and shopping centers.
- Emphasis on executing approved projects, like the Cleveland/JPA Extension for bike and pedestrian improvements.
- Emphasis on improving pedestrian and bike safety transitioning from the County into the City.
- Emphasis on promoting alternative transportation methods such as scooters, e-bikes, and walking.
- In neighborhoods like Fifeville, Belmont, and 10th and Page, sidewalks often end abruptly or are broken, unsafe, or blocked.
- Issues with unmarked crosswalks, ADA accessibility, interference between parking and bike lanes, and lack of safety devices at crosswalks.
- Many participants viewed existing infrastructure as inadequate, expressing a desire for more continuous and protected facilities.
- Mention of a need for shared-use paths, specifically along routes like 240 from the east to Park Ridge Drive.
- Numerous calls for protected bike lanes, especially on West Main St. in Charlottesville.
- Numerous suggestions for shared-use paths in various areas, including along Route 20, 5th Street, and between towns like Crozet and Charlottesville.
- Requests for a dedicated bike corridor between Crozet and Charlottesville.
- Sidewalks in certain areas, like Lochlyn Hill to Greenbrier Elementary, end abruptly. Similar concerns about the Crozet trail system which has unpaved sections and gaps where paths run into environmental obstacles.
- Specific suggestions for a tunnel or bridge for bicycle and pedestrian traffic between UVA and Fifeville.
- Suggestions for specific infrastructure projects, like tunnels, bridges, and bypass access ramps, to improve connectivity and safety for both drivers and pedestrians.
- Support for e-bikes and the creation of infrastructure that accommodates them.

- The need for pedestrian crossings with enhanced safety features, like pedestrian-activated Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs).
- The need for sidewalks in areas like Old Ivy and along routes 240 and 250.
- The need for sidewalks is particularly emphasized for areas with increasing home development and schools, like the corridor leading into downtown Crozet.

Land Use

- Calls for greater residential density to reduce commute distances.
- Concerns about the impact of growth on traffic and the need for better road infrastructure planning before allowing growth in an area.
- Suggestions to update zoning policies to prioritize renewable energy systems, restrict parking requirements, and promote solar energy and EV charging stations.

Environmental Concerns

- Concerns about increased greenhouse gas emissions from increased car traffic due to growth without corresponding investments in alternative forms of transportation

Roadway Safety & Efficiency Improvements

- A suggestion to close University Ave to through traffic for pedestrian safety.
- Calls for the redesign or modification of certain roads and intersections such as Preston Ave.
- Calls to widen roads, with several comments emphasizing the inclusion of bike lanes in the widened areas.
- Challenges with intersections, notably visibility issues due to road slopes, parked cars, and street configurations.
- Concerns about the structural soundness of Free Bridge as an important access point between City and County.
- Concerns about traffic disruptions near Main + 5th St area and Cherry Ave due to speed.
- Desire to see alternative routes to 29, with recommendations like Hillsdale and Greenbrier.
- Emphasis on the need to decongest areas like Route 29 and improve general traffic patterns.
- General consensus on slowing down traffic on roads like Rio Road and 29 for enhanced safety.
- General support for traffic circles as a traffic calming measure.
- Observations of excessive speeding on Avon St Extended south of I-64, 5th St., and Park Ridge Drive.
- Several intersections and on-ramps, especially on Routes 29 and 250, are cited as hazardous due to poor design. Suggestions include extending ramps and adding pedestrian crossings.
- Support for a roundabout at the 250/240 intersection in Crozet.

Next Steps

Throughout Fall 2023, MPO staff will use this valuable feedback from the community to:

- Finalize weighting of performance metrics;
- Identify high-priority transportation needs;
- Pare down the transportation candidate project list for consideration; and
- Consider future improvements to the MPO's transportation network.

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