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APPENDIX B: STRATEGIES & PRIORITIES PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

RECAP OF DRAFT STRATEGIES AND PRIORITIES TOWN FORUM

On December 14th, 2020, the Town hosted a second and final virtual community forum to recap the planning findings to date and to present and seek feedback on draft strategies and priorities for Connect Arlington. About 30 members of the community attended and provided feedback. An online survey component was created as an extension of the online forum to provide multiple means of garnering input.

At the forum, an introduction was delivered which:

- framed the goals of the planning process;
- summarized the key findings informing the development of draft strategies;
- recapped the plan vision and goals developed through the first survey and guidance from the Sustainable Transportation Plan Advisory Committee; and
- presented a new approach to thinking about the modal hierarchy of planning movement and transportation-related investments, which prioritizes the most vulnerable users of the roadway first.

The heart of the forum was focused on presenting and recording a definition of the draft set of sustainable transportation strategies, what they involve, and how they would work and help in a context like Arlington. The forum helped field and respond to questions around each of the strategies.

PRIORITIZATION SURVEY SUMMARY

A final survey was open to the public from November to December 2020 to provide an opportunity for Arlington’s residents, workers, and visitors to rank and prioritize plan goals and objectives, as well as potential avenues of improvement for the transportation network. This survey was created with SurveyMonkey and publicized through a variety of communication platforms.

Survey Respondents

About 280 participants answered this final survey. As shown in Figure B-1, survey respondents encompass both newer residents and those who have lived in Arlington for over 20 years. 81% of survey respondents own their home (Figure B-2), which is a rate that is slightly greater than those who answered the Annual Town Survey (78%), and much greater than data on the owner-renter breakdown for the area from the 2017 American Community Survey (61%).

Figure B-1 Years in Arlington

How long have you lived in Arlington?

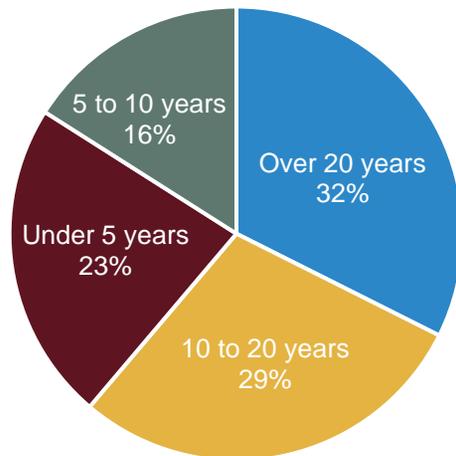
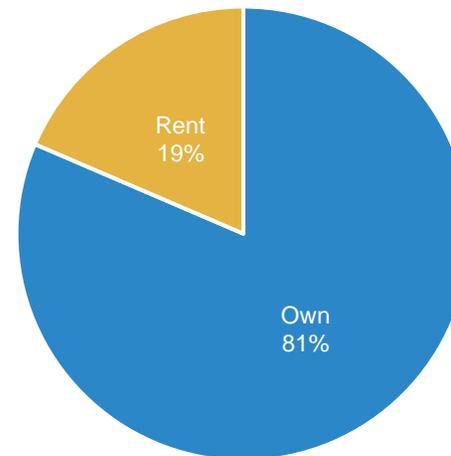


Figure B-2 Home Ownership

Do you rent or own your home?



Households with members of all ages participated in the survey. The largest group of age cohorts in respondents’ homes were adults ages 40 to 64 years (Figure B-3). As shown in Figure B-4, There were high levels of participation from Arlington’s higher income households, with

nearly 60% of survey respondents with an annual household income of over \$150,000. Though Arlington is a relatively high-income town, survey respondents tended to have a greater income than the general population (based on 2017 ACS data).

Figure B-3 Age Groups

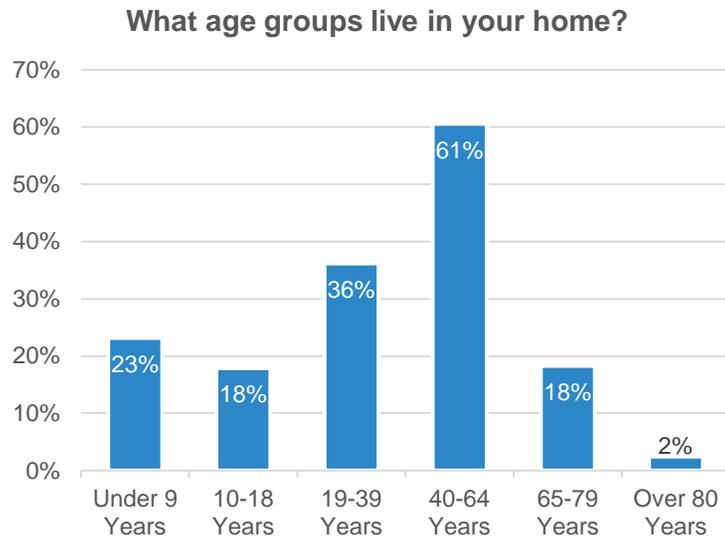
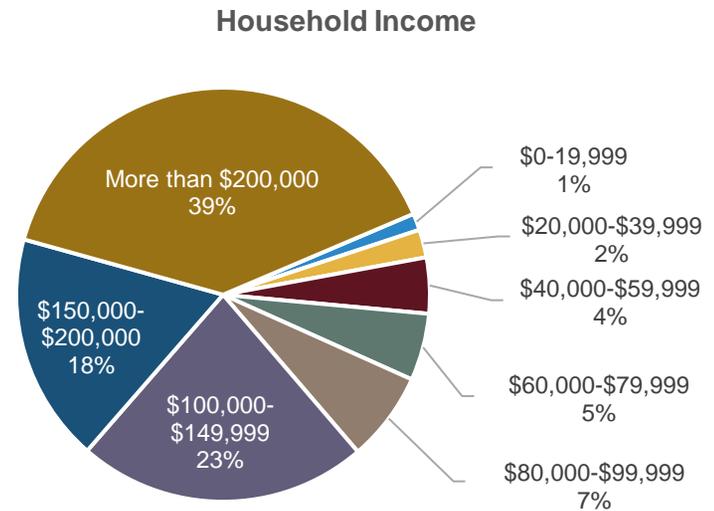


Figure B-4 Number of Age Groups



Many neighborhoods were represented in survey responses, as shown in Figure B-5, though nearly two-thirds of respondents live in East Arlington or Arlington Heights. Pre-pandemic work locations of participants were spread widely throughout the greater Boston area and beyond, as seen in Figure B-6, and only 7% of respondents work in Arlington. Of note, 16% of respondents were already working remotely and not commuting before the onset of the pandemic, which does not include the further 11% of respondents that do not work, either through retirement, unemployment, or any other reason.

Figure B-5 Home Neighborhood of Respondents

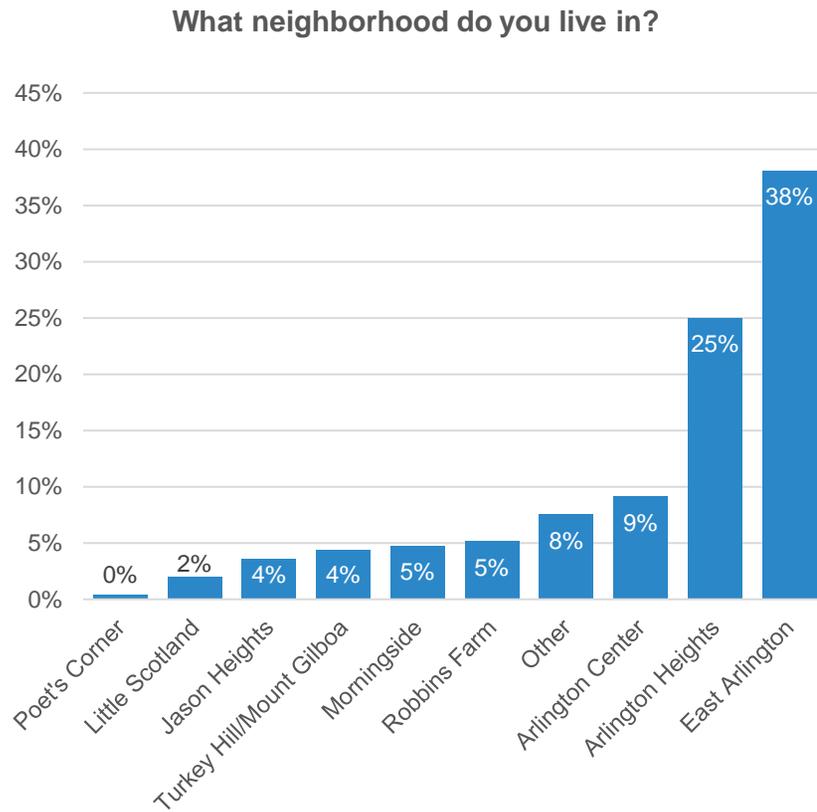
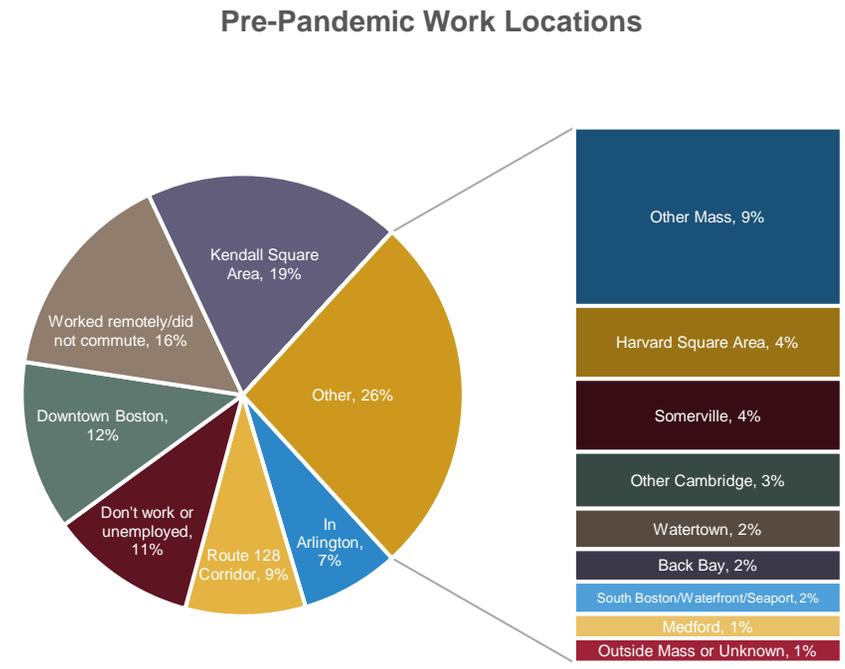


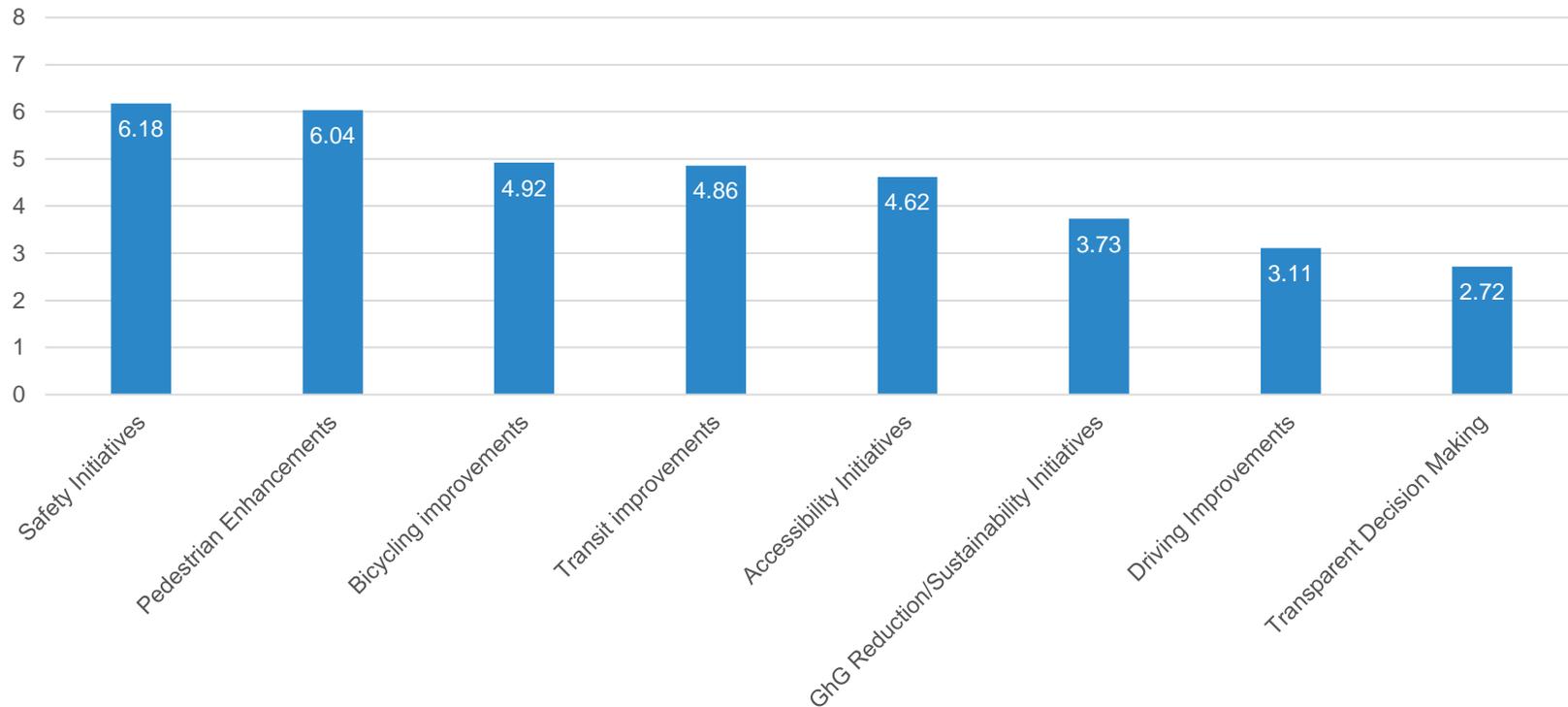
Figure B-6 Pre-Pandemic Work Locations of Respondents



Transportation Initiatives Prioritization

The survey asked respondents to prioritize (rank) the plan’s initiatives to improve Arlington’s transportation system. Results are shown in Figure B-7, with “Safety Initiatives” and “Pedestrian Improvements” achieving the highest-ranking score. The “Transparent Decision Making” initiative had the lowest ranking score, indicating a high level of trust in the process among respondents, followed by “Driving Improvements,” indicating the desire to create a diverse, quality mobility environment over continued focus on car travel.

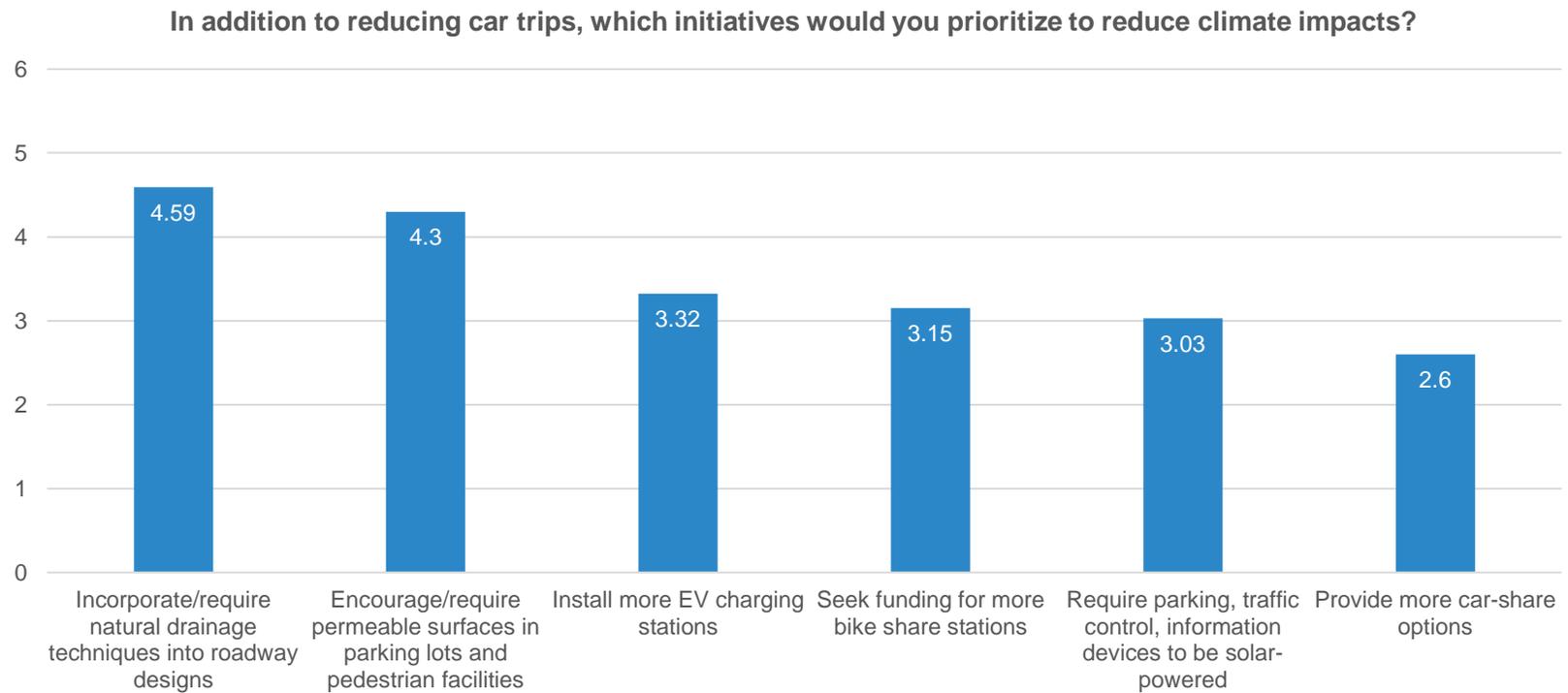
Figure B-7 Transportation Improvement Initiatives Prioritization



Recognizing that climate impact mitigation is a key Arlington goal, and that reductions in automobile trips and vehicle miles traveled are the most effective transportation-related tools towards this goal, survey participants were asked to prioritize (rank) additional measures to reduce

climate-related impacts in the Town. The top-ranking initiatives were incorporating or requiring natural drainage techniques in roadway designs (such as rain gardens, bioswales and other stormwater retention) in all roadway and development projects to protect waterways and wetlands by reducing stormwater outflows during storm events, and encouraging or requiring permeable pavement or surfaces in parking lots and pedestrian facilities to reduce stormwater runoff and erosion.

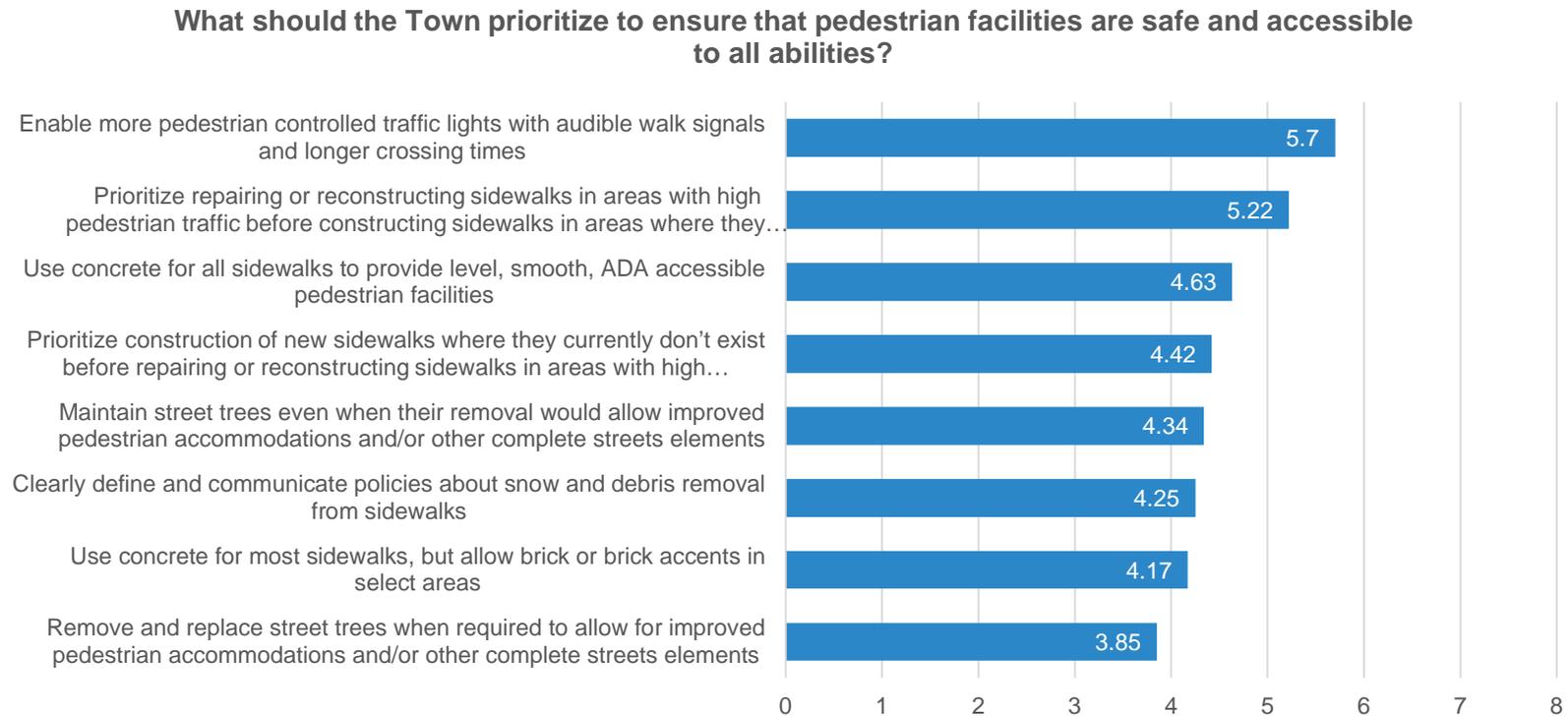
Figure B-8 Climate-Impact Initiative Prioritization



Pedestrian and Bicycle Priorities

The survey asked respondents a series of questions pertaining to pedestrian and bicycle safety and access initiatives. As shown in Figure B-9, improving the crossing infrastructure and operations at signalized intersections and prioritizing repairing or reconstructing sidewalks in areas with high pedestrian traffic before constructing sidewalks in areas where they don't exist were the top-ranking priorities. Outside of these two initiatives, all but one of the remaining initiatives had scored above the mean, indicating that most initiatives were similarly favorably ranked. The remaining initiative, removing and replacing street trees to provide space for projects, was the only initiative to score below the mean.

Figure B-9 Pedestrian Safety and Accessibility Improvement Priorities



In terms of crossing safety initiatives, as shown in Figure B-10, installing pedestrian-oriented lighting was the top scoring initiative, but the other two projects were similarly scored to each other, with both scoring at nearly the mean, indicating that they were similarly favorably ranked.

As shown in Figure B-11, establishing “bike boulevards” to serve as the primary bicycle routes was the clear top-ranking priority for growing the town-wide bicycle network, followed by building more bicycle lanes even if it requires the removal of parking on one or both sides of a given street, and providing high-quality connections to the Minuteman Bikeway whenever possible, which had nearly the same score. Participants clearly prioritized building additional bicycle lanes over retaining on-street parking lanes if right-of-way space would allow for only one or the other, as retaining parking over building bike lanes was both the lowest scoring initiative and the only initiative to score below the mean.

Figure B-10 Pedestrian Crossing Initiative Priorities

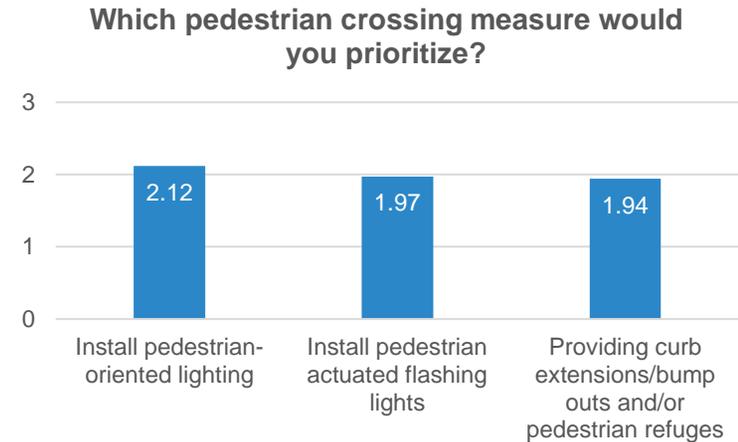
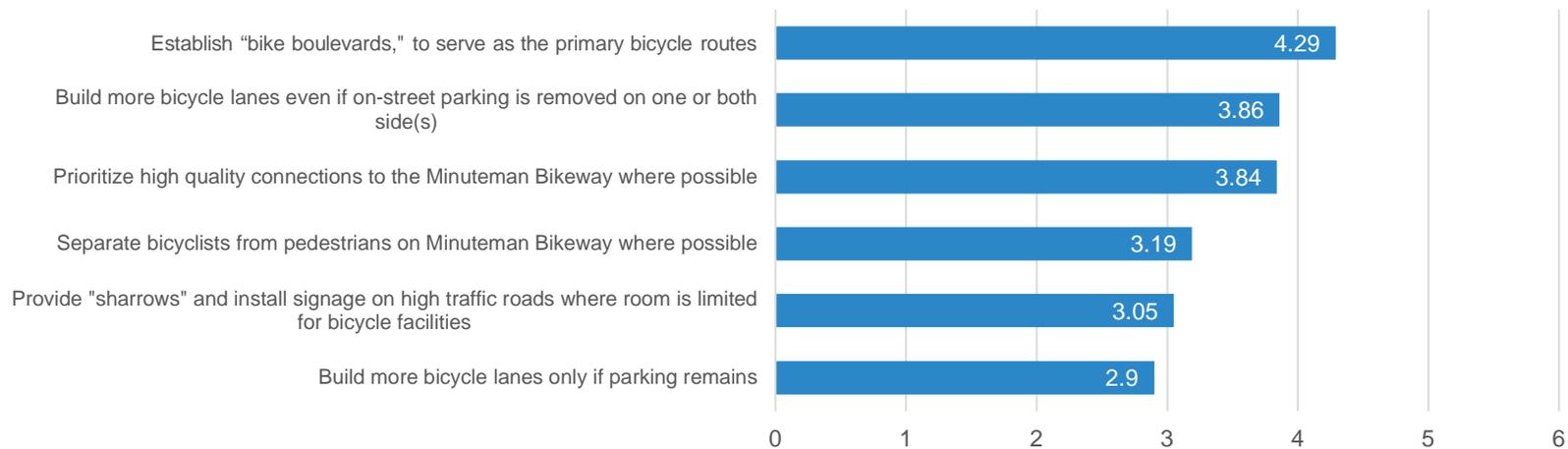


Figure B-11 Bicycle Network Growth Prioritization

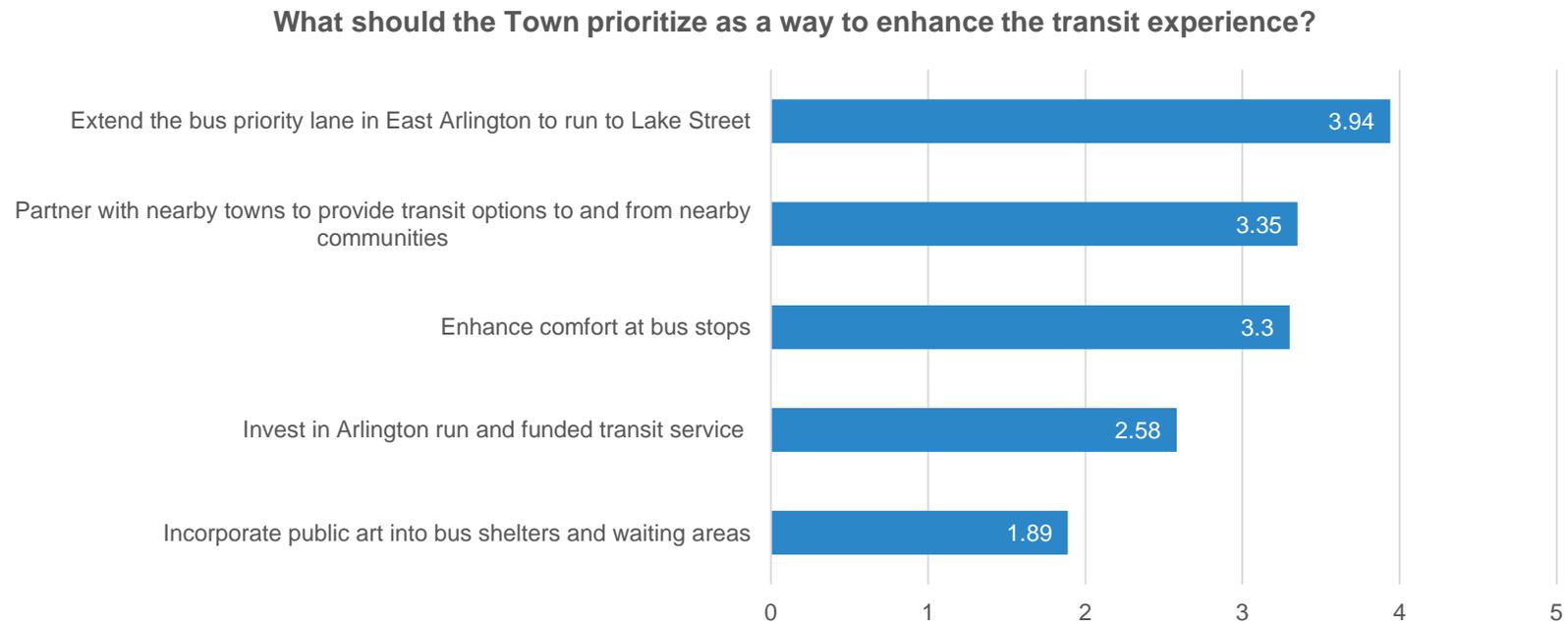
What would you prioritize to grow a safe town-wide bicycle network?



Transit and Access Priorities

The survey presented participants with initiatives to improve transit and services, including for people who are mobility challenged due to age or disability or other reasons. As shown in Figure B-12, an extension of the East Arlington bus priority lane from its current position to Lake Street was clearly the top priority, followed by partnering with nearby towns to provide, expand, or improve transit connections to and from Arlington and nearby communities, and enhancing comfort at bus stops. However, incorporating public art into bus stops and waiting areas was by far the lowest scoring initiative, suggesting that bus stop comfort initiatives need be of substance, and not merely cosmetic.

Figure B-12 Transit-Experience Initiatives Priorities



While enhancing comfort at bus stops proved a well-scoring initiative for improving the transit *experience*, it was the least ranked initiative for improving transit *service*. As shown in Figure B-13, increasing the frequency of transit services on high-ridership routes and adding bus priority lanes wherever possible are the top scoring initiatives, with improving bus stop amenities falling much further behind.

In terms of transportation access programs for people with mobility challenges, as shown in Figure B-14 seeking opportunities to expand on the existing services currently being offered by the Council on Aging (COA) was easily the top scoring option, followed by initiatives that take advantage of emerging mobility opportunities, with Micro Transit options and TNC programs and partnerships both scoring above the mean. Continuing COA service operations as currently constructed was the lowest scoring initiative, and the only one to score below the mean.

Figure B-13 Transit Service Improvement Priorities

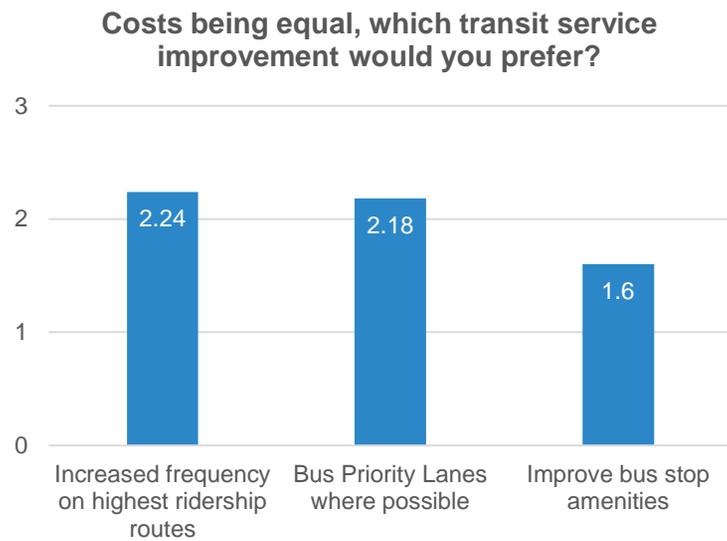
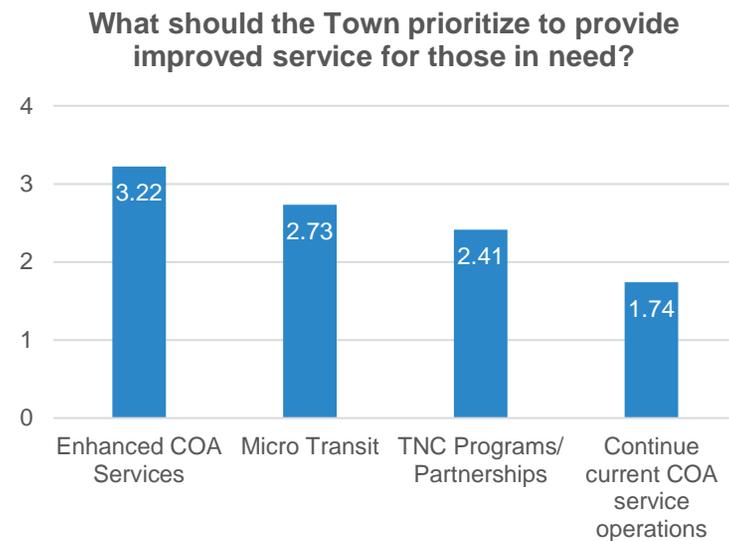


Figure B-14 Mobility/Access Service Prioritization



Right-of-Way Allocation and Curbside Management

Given the realities of space constraints in the right-of-way on many town streets, as well as the realities of competing uses at the curb, the survey asked participants to prioritize trade-offs associated with initiatives when they occur on space constrained roads or as they may conflict with activity at the curb. As seen in Figure B-15, participants prioritized pedestrian improvements in particular, but also bicycle improvements, over motor vehicle movement when considering transportation initiatives on space-constrained roads. In terms of curbside use prioritization, as seen in Figure B-16, if on-street parking were to be removed or repurposed, providing bus-priority lanes take priority over providing bike lanes, and providing bike lanes takes priority over establishing pick-up/drop-off zones for TNC's or commercial deliveries.

Figure B-15 Prioritization on Space-Limited Roadways

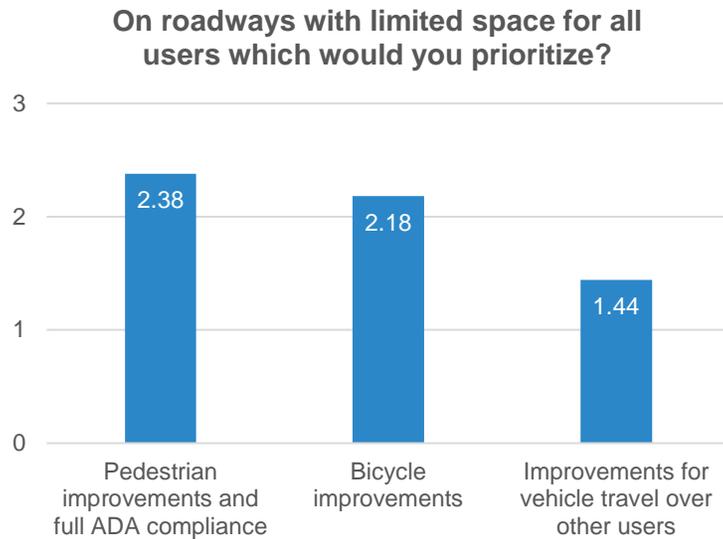
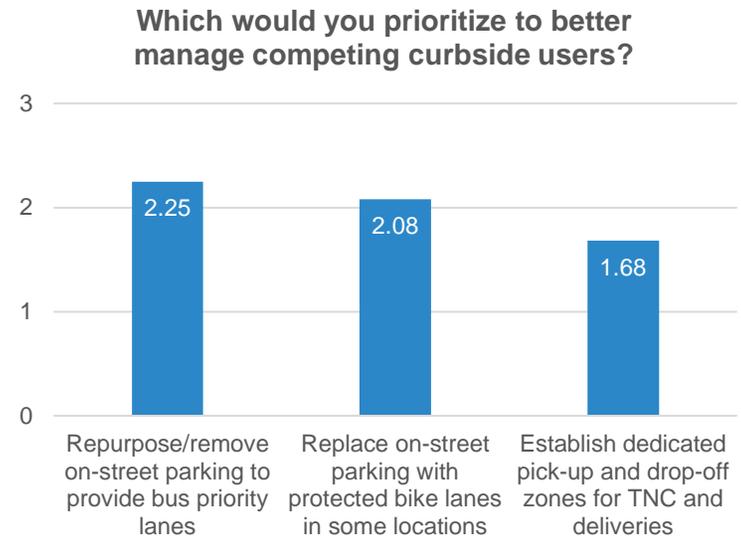


Figure B-16 Curbside Management Prioritization



SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE REVIEW

The Sustainable Transportation Plan Advisory Committee (STPAC) was a guiding body created and appointed by the Select Board to manage this planning process. Each of the meetings hosted by the committee was open to the public to attend, with notices, agendas, and minutes for each posted on the committee page of the Town website. The consulting team kicked off the plan with this group and met with them five times over the course of the plan to vet and see feedback on project process, methods, and draft planning material. The group provided significant guidance throughout the project timeline, providing edits to surveys and to draft reports. The committee met twice before the plan commenced to charter the scope and goals of the plan and the committee met a total of eleven times between and including the plan kickoff and the final presentation of the plan to the Select Board.

The Members of the Sustainable Transportation Plan Advisory Committee

Daniel Amstutz, Department of Planning and Community Development
Heather Barber, Arlington Business Community
Linda Butt, Parking Advisory Committee (served 2019-2020)
Adam Chapdelaine, Town Manager
Darcy Devney, Disability Commission
Lenard Diggins, Transportation Advisory Committee
Phil Goff, East Arlington Livable Streets Coalition
Doug Mayo-Wells, Arlington Bicycle Committee
Mike Rademacher, Department of Public Works
Officer Corey Rateau, Arlington Police Department
Kristine Shah, Health & Human Services Department
Rachael Stark, Walking in Arlington
Ezekiel Wheeler, Arlington Business Community

DRAFT PLAN BOARD AND COMMITTEE REVIEW

To inform and review the draft strategies and implementation of the plan, Town staff from the Department of Planning and Community Development led a series of meetings with advocacy groups and town committees. Once the final draft plan was completed, the Town of Arlington presented the plan and its key contents to a selection of committees including:

- The Arlington Bicycle Advisory Committee (ABAC) in February 2021
- The Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) in February 2021
- East Arlington Livable Streets on March 4th, 2021
- The Master Plan Implementation Committee on April 30th, 2021

Town staff also delivered periodic updates to the Arlington Select Board during the planning process. A presentation on the progress of the plan was provide to the Board at their June 29th, 2020 meeting, which also functioned as a preface before the first town forum. Towards the final months of the planning process, the Department of Planning and Community Development and Town Manager's Office hosted one-on-one meetings with each Select Board member to confirm understanding and comprehension of the plan results, strategies, and its documentation. The Department of Planning and Community Development anticipates presenting the complete plan to the full Select Board in June 2021, at which they will have the chance to vote on the endorsement and adoption of the plan.