

TranPlanMT 2025

Public Involvement Survey



MONTANA
Department of Transportation

VOLUME 1
Survey Analysis
December 2025

State of Montana Department
of Transportation

Bureau of Business and Economic Research
University of Montana—Missoula

This page is left blank intentionally.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the TranPlanMT 2025 Public Involvement Survey is to examine Montanans' perceptions and opinions regarding:

1. The current condition of the state transportation system;
2. Possible actions that could improve the state transportation system; and
3. The quality of service the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) provides to its customers.

The survey was conducted by the Bureau of Business and Economic Research (BBER) at the University of Montana–Missoula. BBER obtained 1,063 responses to questionnaires sent between September 8, 2025, and December 1, 2025.

2025 SNAPSHOT

Montanans reported improvements across many aspects of the transportation system in 2025. Montanans' overall satisfaction with the transportation system improved, as did their grades for MDT's quality of service and highway maintenance and repair.

In 2025, Montanans were:

- Moderately satisfied with the state's overall transportation system;
- Most satisfied with the physical condition of Montana's airports; and
- Least satisfied with the physical condition of the state's local transit buses and pedestrian walkways.

In terms of service availability, Montanans were:

- Most satisfied with availability of air transportation to destinations outside of Montana; and
- Least satisfied with the availability of passenger rail service.

Regarding transportation system problems:

- Road pavement conditions and traffic congestion are considered problems by the largest proportion of Montanans; and
- Adequate road signage and too many access points onto major roads are considered problems by the fewest respondents.

Montanans gave the highest priority to the following for their potential to improve the state's transportation system:

- Road pavement conditions
- Wildlife crossings and barriers
- Keeping the public informed
- Interstates and major highways

70% of Montanans feel they receive \$260-\$320 or more per year in value from the state transportation system. If overall funding for MDT were to decrease, survey respondents prioritized the following for budget cuts:

- Bicycle pathways
- Pedestrian walkways
- Local transit buses
- Rest areas

Among the communications tools used by MDT, the following were deemed the most useful:

- Variable message highway signs
- Websites, social media, mobile apps
- Maps; pictures and graphics; and radio and television (tied for third in terms of their mean usefulness score)

Other findings include:

- 62% of respondents think a primary seat belt law in Montana has the potential to save lives.
- 78% of respondents think that speed limits in work zones are just right.
- Overall, the mean grades MDT received for customer service and performance in 2025 ranged from a B- to a C.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	i
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER 2 ATTITUDES ABOUT MONTANA’S TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM	4
“How would you rate your satisfaction with the overall transportation system in Montana?”	4
“How would you rate the physical condition of the following items in Montana?”	5
“How would you rate your satisfaction with the availability of service for the following items?”	9
“How much of a problem in Montana, if at all, are the following?”	13
“What priority should MDT assign the following actions?”	17
CHAPTER 3 MDT SYSTEM FUNDING PRIORITIES	22
“What value do you perceive getting from Montana’s transportation system?”	22
“Which of the following transportation system items, if any, should be funded at a lower level?”	23
CHAPTER 4 COMMUNICATION TOOLS	28
“How useful are each of the following tools to help learn about MDT activity in local communities?”	28
“Have you felt informed about MDT’s business in recent years?”	32
CHAPTER 5 OVERALL MDT CUSTOMER SERVICE AND PERFORMANCE	33
“What grade would you give MDT on the quality of service it provides in each of the following areas?”	33
“In your opinion, which element is most important in delivering excellent customer service?”	37
CHAPTER 6 OTHER ISSUES	38
“Would a primary seat belt law save lives?”	38
“Are speed limits in work zones...?”	39
CHAPTER 7 DISTRICTS	40
<i>District 1—Missoula</i>	41
Satisfaction with Physical Condition of Transportation System (District 1)	41
Grading Aspects of MDT’s Functions (District 1).....	42
Priority of Actions for Improving Montana’s Transportation System (District 1).....	43
Ranking of Issues Seen as Problems with the Montana Transportation System (District 1).....	44
Areas Favored for Decreases in Funding (District 1).....	45
<i>District 2—Butte</i>	46
Satisfaction with Physical Condition of Transportation System (District 2)	46
Grading Aspects of MDT’s Functions (District 2).....	47
Priority of Actions to Improve Montana’s Transportation System (District 2).....	48

Ranking of Issues Seen as Problems with the Montana Transportation System (District 2).....	49
Areas Favored for Decreases in Funding (District 2).....	50
District 3—Great Falls.....	51
Satisfaction with Physical Condition of Transportation System (District 3)	51
Grading Aspects of MDT’s Functions (District 3).....	52
Priority of Actions to Improve Montana’s Transportation System (District 3).....	53
Ranking of Issues Seen as Problems with the Montana Transportation System (District 3).....	54
Areas Favored for Decreases in Funding (District 3).....	55
District 4—Glendive.....	56
Satisfaction with Physical Condition of Transportation System (District 4)	56
Grading Aspects of MDT’s Functions (District 4).....	57
Priority of Actions to Improve Montana’s Transportation System (District 4).....	58
Ranking of Issues Seen as Problems with the Montana Transportation System (District 4).....	59
Areas Favored for Decreases in Funding (District 4).....	60
District 5—Billings.....	61
Satisfaction with Physical Condition of Transportation System (District 5)	61
Grading Aspects of MDT’s Functions (District 5).....	62
Priority of Actions to Improve Montana’s Transportation System (District 5).....	63
Ranking of Issues Seen as Problems with the Montana Transportation System (District 5).....	64
Areas Favored for Decreases in Funding (District 5).....	65
Chapter 8 Survey Methods	66
Survey Administration	66
Questionnaire Design.....	66
Sampling	66
Weighting	66
Data Set Preparation.....	67

LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

Table 1.1 2025 Survey Respondent Demographic Characteristics	2
Table 2.1 Level of Satisfaction with the Overall Transportation System in Montana	4
Table 2.2 Satisfaction with Physical Condition of Transportation System Components	5
Table 2.3 Satisfaction with Availability of Services	9
Table 2.4 Montana Transportation System Problems	13
Table 2.5 Prioritization of Actions for Improving the Montana Transportation System	17
Table 3.1 Perceived Value from Montana’s Transportation System	22
Table 3.2 Funding Priorities by Transportation System Component	23
Table 3.3 Other Areas Suggested for Reduced Funding	24
Table 4.1 Usefulness of MDT’s Communication Tools	28
Table 4.2 Feeling Informed About MDT’s Business in Recent Years	32
Table 5.1 Overall Performance and Customer Service Grades	33
Table 5.2 Most Important Element in Delivering Excellent Customer Service	37
Table 6.1 Opinions Regarding Outcome of a Primary Seat Belt Law	38
Table 6.2 Opinions Regarding Speed Limits in Work Zones	39
Figure 1.1 MDT’s Transportation Districts	3
Figure 2.1 Trends in Satisfaction with Physical Condition of Transportation System Components	6
Figure 2.2 District Comparison of Satisfaction with the Physical Condition of Transportation System Components	8
Figure 2.3 Trends in Satisfaction with Availability of Services	10
Figure 2.4 District Comparison of Satisfaction with Availability of Services	12
Figure 2.5 Trends in Ranking of Transportation System Problems	14
Figure 2.6 District Comparison of Ranking of Transportation System Problems	16
Figure 2.7 Trends in Priority of Actions for Improving Transportation System	19
Figure 2.8 District Comparison of Priority of Actions for Improving Transportation System	21
Figure 3.1 Trends in Preferred Areas of Funding Decreases	26
Figure 3.2 District Comparison of Preferred Areas of Funding Decreases	27
Figure 4.1 Trends in Usefulness of MDT’s Communication Tools	29
Figure 4.2 District Comparison of Usefulness of MDT’s Communication Tools	31
Figure 5.1 Trends in Performance and Customer Service Grades	34
Figure 5.2 District Comparison of Performance and Customer Service Grades	36
Figure 7.1 Satisfaction with Physical Condition of Transportation System Components (District 1)	41
Figure 7.2 Performance and Customer Service Grades (District 1)	42
Figure 7.3 Priority of Actions for Improving Transportation System (District 1)	43
Figure 7.4 Ranking of Transportation System Problems (District 1)	44
Figure 7.5 System Components Where Respondents Prefer Decreased Funding (District 1)	45
Figure 7.6 Satisfaction with Physical Condition of Transportation System Components (District 2)	46
Figure 7.7 Performance and Customer Service Grades (District 2)	47
Figure 7.8 Priority of Actions for Improving Transportation System (District 2)	48
Figure 7.9 Ranking of Transportation System Problems (District 2)	49
Figure 7.10 System Components Where Respondents Prefer Decreased Funding (District 2)	50
Figure 7.11 Satisfaction with Physical Condition of Transportation System Components (District 3)	51
Figure 7.12 Performance and Customer Service Grades (District 3)	52
Figure 7.13 Priority of Actions for Improving Transportation System (District 3)	53

Figure 7.14 Ranking of Transportation System Problems (District 3) 54

Figure 7.15 System Components Where Respondents Prefer Decreased Funding (District 3) 55

Figure 7.16 Satisfaction with Physical Condition of Transportation System Components (District 4)..... 56

Figure 7.17 Performance and Customer Service Grades (District 4)..... 57

Figure 7.18 Priority of Actions for Improving Transportation System (District 4)..... 58

Figure 7.19 Ranking of Transportation System Problems (District 4) 59

Figure 7.20 System Components Where Respondents Prefer Decreased Funding (District 4) 60

Figure 7.21 Satisfaction with Physical Condition of Transportation System Components (District 5)..... 61

Figure 7.22 Performance and Customer Service Grades (District 5)..... 62

Figure 7.23 Priority of Actions for Improving Transportation System (District 5)..... 63

Figure 7.24 Ranking of Transportation System Problems (District 5) 64

Figure 7.25 System Components Where Respondents Prefer Decreased Funding (District 5) 65

CHAPTER 1 | INTRODUCTION

METHODS SUMMARY

The TranPlanMT 2025 Public Involvement Survey is a household survey that has been conducted biennially since 1997. Its purpose is to examine Montanans' perceptions and opinions regarding:

- The current condition of the state transportation system;
- Possible actions that could improve the state transportation system; and
- The quality of service the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) provides to its customers.

The survey is designed to help MDT policymakers and planners examine the efficiency, capacity and flexibility of Montana's transportation system to meet current needs and future demands.

The mail-administered survey is one of several MDT public involvement processes. Based on a representative sample of Montana residents, MDT staff can assess public opinion and, thanks to availability over time, monitor trends.

This report constitutes Volume 1 of the 2025 Public Involvement Survey report. It contains the complete survey analysis of all questions on the survey questionnaire.

The Respondents

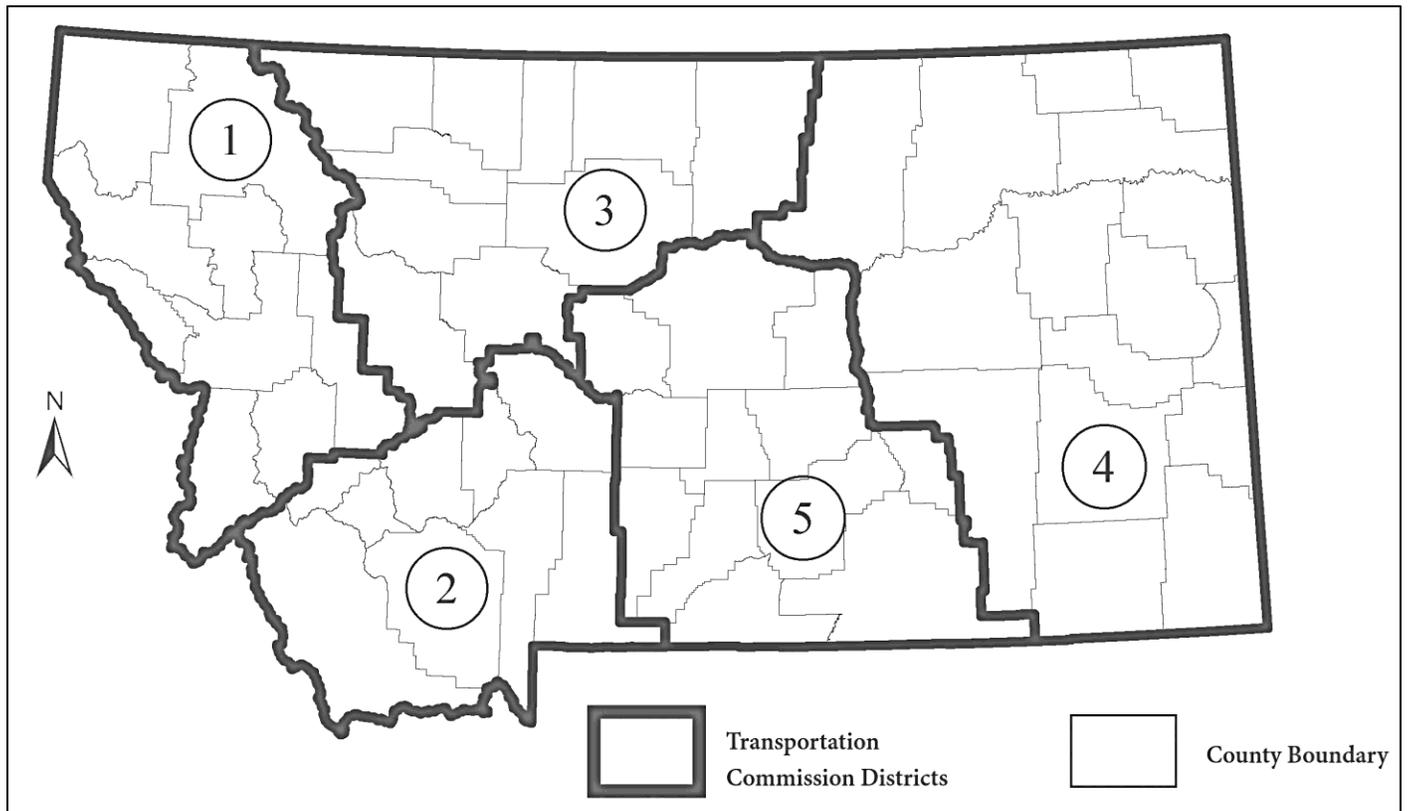
Table 1.1 describes the survey respondents. Readers may note that the weighted response frequencies refer to the total Montana population 18 or older represented by the survey responses. Referring to the total population represented by the survey results helps readers understand the meaning of the findings and makes it easier for readers to compare the weighted proportions of survey respondents to proportions reported by an outside “gold standard” estimate like the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey.

Table 1.1 2025 Survey Respondent Demographic Characteristics

Characteristic		Unweighted Responses		Weighted Responses	
		Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Sex	Male	540	51%	438,910	50%
	Female	523	49%	431,220	50%
Age	18-34	69	6%	242,049	28%
	35-49	159	15%	201,382	23%
	50-64	270	25%	209,034	24%
	65+	565	53%	217,665	25%
Region	Missoula	221	21%	284,788	33%
	Butte	212	20%	182,913	21%
	Great Falls	232	22%	168,097	19%
	Glendive	204	19%	59,822	7%
	Billings	194	18%	174,510	20%
Race	White	959	90%	761,866	88%
	American Indian only	64	6%	42,111	5%
	Other only	12	1%	22,281	3%
	Two or more races	28	3%	43,872	5%
Household Income	< \$50,000	277	26%	311,798	36%
	\$50,000 - \$99,999	431	41%	274,381	32%
	\$100,000+	355	33%	283,951	33%
Educational Attainment	High school or less	219	21%	306,284	35%
	Some college or 2-year degree	368	35%	286,783	33%
	Bachelor’s degree or higher	476	45%	277,063	32%

Note: Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Figure 1.1 MDT's Transportation Districts



District	Unweighted Responses	Weighted Responses
District 1: Missoula	221	284,788
District 2: Butte	212	182,913
District 3: Great Falls	232	168,097
District 4: Glendive	204	59,822
District 5: Billings	194	174,510

This page is left blank intentionally.

CHAPTER 2 | ATTITUDES ABOUT MONTANA'S TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

“HOW WOULD YOU RATE YOUR SATISFACTION WITH THE OVERALL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM IN MONTANA?”

Montana’s transportation system was ranked on a scale from 0 to 10, with 0 representing *very unsatisfied* and 10 representing *very satisfied*. The psychological midpoint of the 0-10 scale is 5. The distance of the mean score above or below 5 is a measure of the strength of satisfaction or dissatisfaction. When asked about satisfaction with the overall transportation system, the mean response was 5.8, indicating moderate satisfaction (Table 2.1).

Table 2.1 Level of Satisfaction with the Overall Transportation System in Montana

	Mean	95% Confidence Interval		N
		Lower Limit	Upper Limit	
Overall Transportation System	5.8	5.6	6.0	1,046

“HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE PHYSICAL CONDITION OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS IN MONTANA?”

Each component of Montana’s transportation system was rated using the same 0-10 scale. Table 2.2 shows the mean score for each system component with an upper and lower bound. Differences in satisfaction between components are statistically significant when confidence levels do not overlap.

- With a mean score of 7.4, airports ranked the highest in terms of satisfaction.
- Interstate highways and rest areas with mean scores of 6.8 and 6.6, respectively, also ranked high in terms of satisfaction.
- Montanans reported the least satisfaction with local transit buses (5.5) and pedestrian walkways (5.5).

All items have mean satisfaction scores above 5, indicating the majority of Montanans are satisfied with the physical condition of transportation system components.

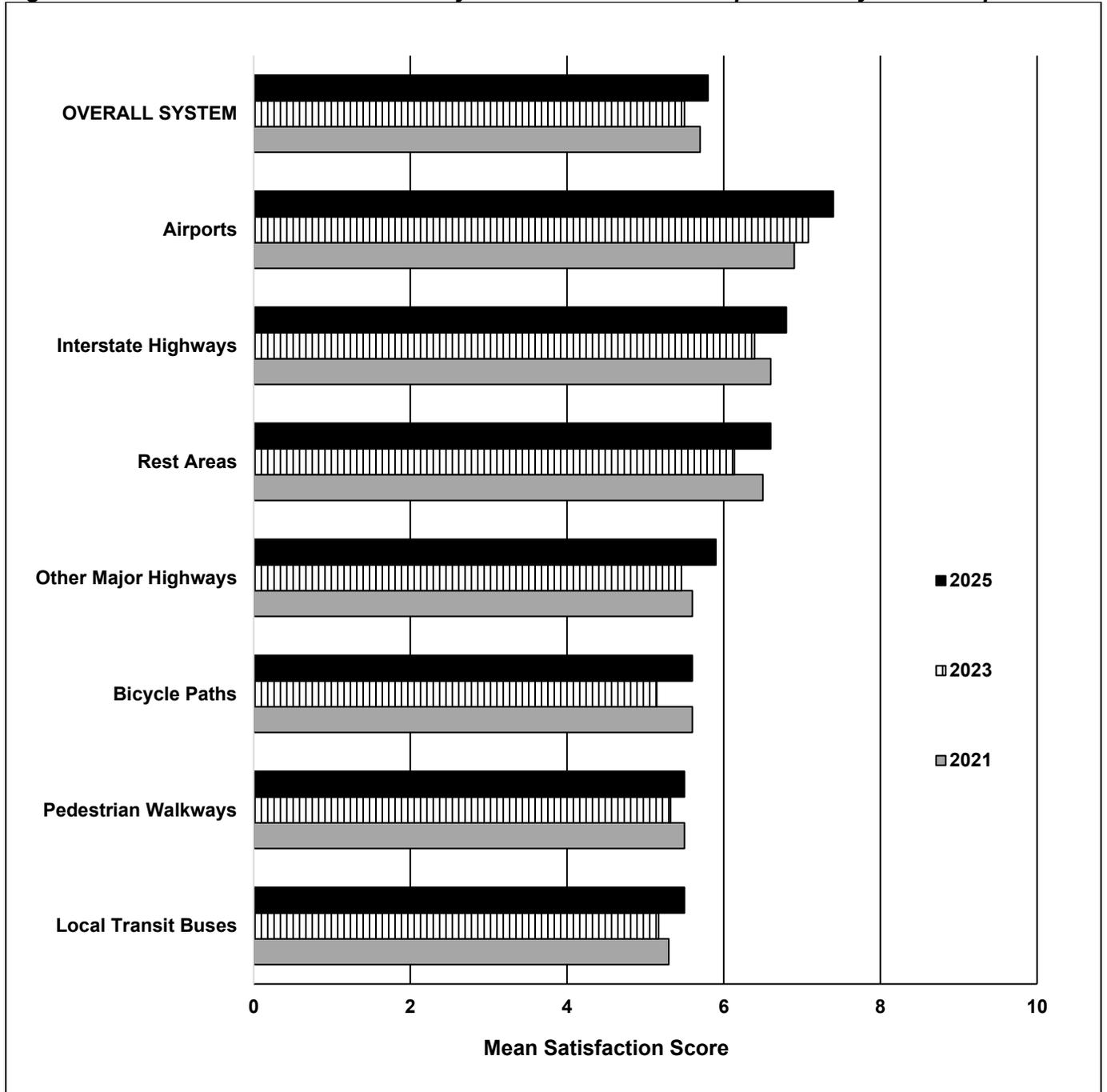
Table 2.2 Satisfaction with Physical Condition of Transportation System Components

	Mean	95% Confidence Interval		N
		Lower Limit	Upper Limit	
Airports	7.4	7.2	7.6	1,030
Interstate Highways	6.8	6.5	7.0	1,044
Rest Areas	6.6	6.4	6.9	1,042
Other Major Highways	5.9	5.7	6.1	1,045
Bicycle Paths	5.6	5.3	5.9	1,010
Pedestrian Walkways	5.5	5.3	5.8	1,037
Local Transit Buses	5.5	5.2	5.8	756

Trends

As shown in Figure 2.1 below, there were improvements in all satisfaction levels between 2023 and 2025. None of the changes exceeded the margin of sampling error. In all three survey years represented, satisfaction with the physical condition of airports was rated the highest. Satisfaction with the physical condition of local transit buses and pedestrian walkways rated the lowest in 2025.

Figure 2.1 Trends in Satisfaction with Physical Condition of Transportation System Components

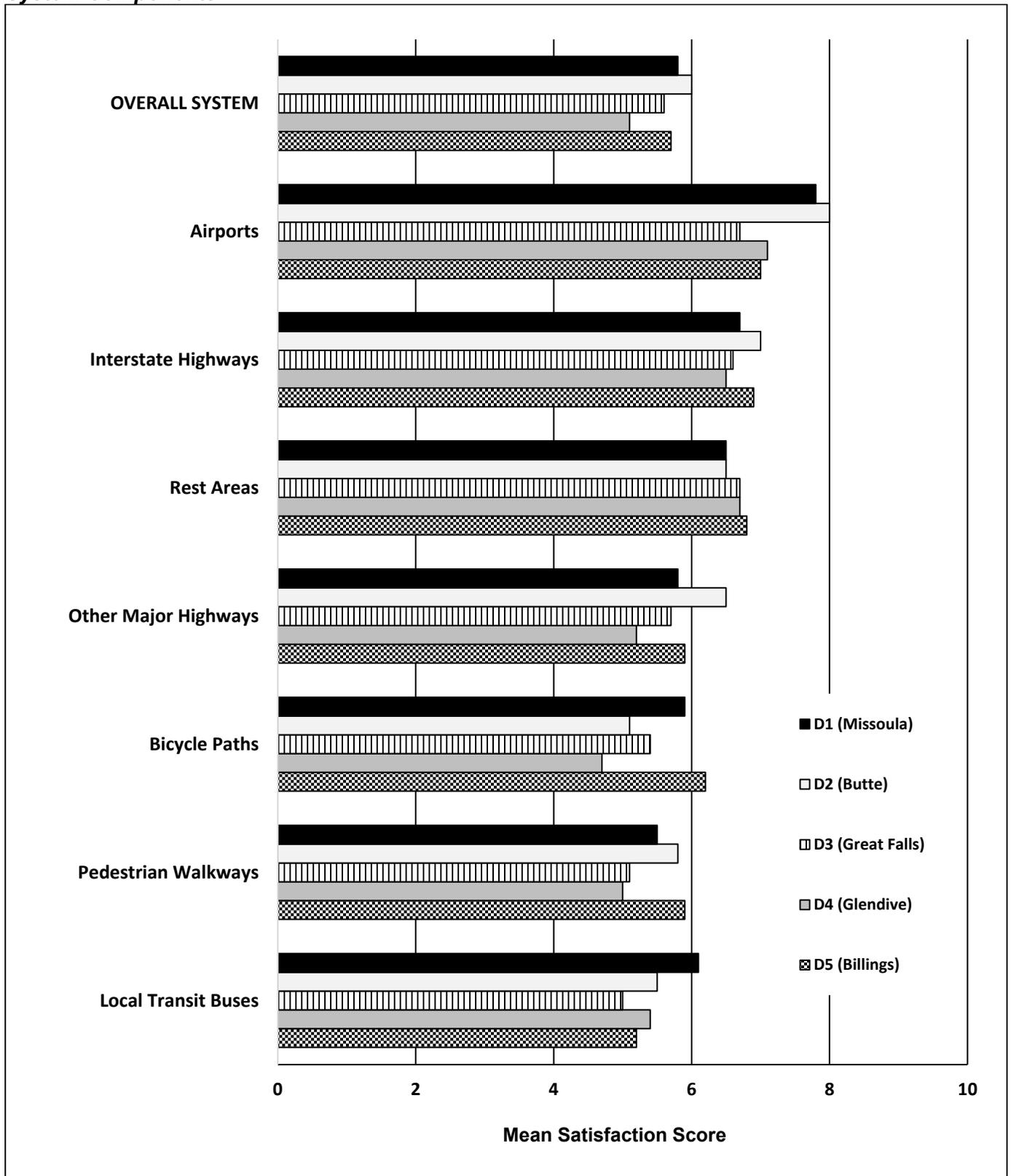


Districts

The means presented in Figure 2.2 compare rates of satisfaction across MDT's Districts. Generally, there is relative consensus in ranking between the Districts regarding specific aspects of the physical condition of the transportation system.

- District 1 (Missoula) was more satisfied with local transit buses than Districts 2, 3, 4, and 5.
- District 2 (Butte) was more satisfied with the condition of airports and other major highways than the other four Districts.
- Among all system components provided, District 3 (Great Falls) was most satisfied as a District with airports and rest areas.
- District 4 (Glendive) was less satisfied with the overall system than the other four Districts. District 5 (Billings) was more satisfied with bicycle paths, pedestrian walkways, and rest areas than the other four Districts.

Figure 2.2 District Comparison of Satisfaction with the Physical Condition of Transportation System Components



“HOW WOULD YOU RATE YOUR SATISFACTION WITH THE AVAILABILITY OF SERVICE FOR THE FOLLOWING ITEMS?”

Respondents were asked to use the same 0-10 scale to rank their satisfaction with the availability of several transportation system service components, as presented in Table 2.3. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, 0 represents *very unsatisfied* and 10 represents *very satisfied*.

- The availability of air transportation to destinations outside of Montana ranked the highest, with a mean satisfaction score of 6.1.
- The availability of freight rail services ranked second with a score of 5.5.
- The availability of inter-city bus services (4.1) and passenger rail service (3.6) all ranked below 5, indicating varying levels of dissatisfaction. It should be noted that MDT has limited to no authority over these services.

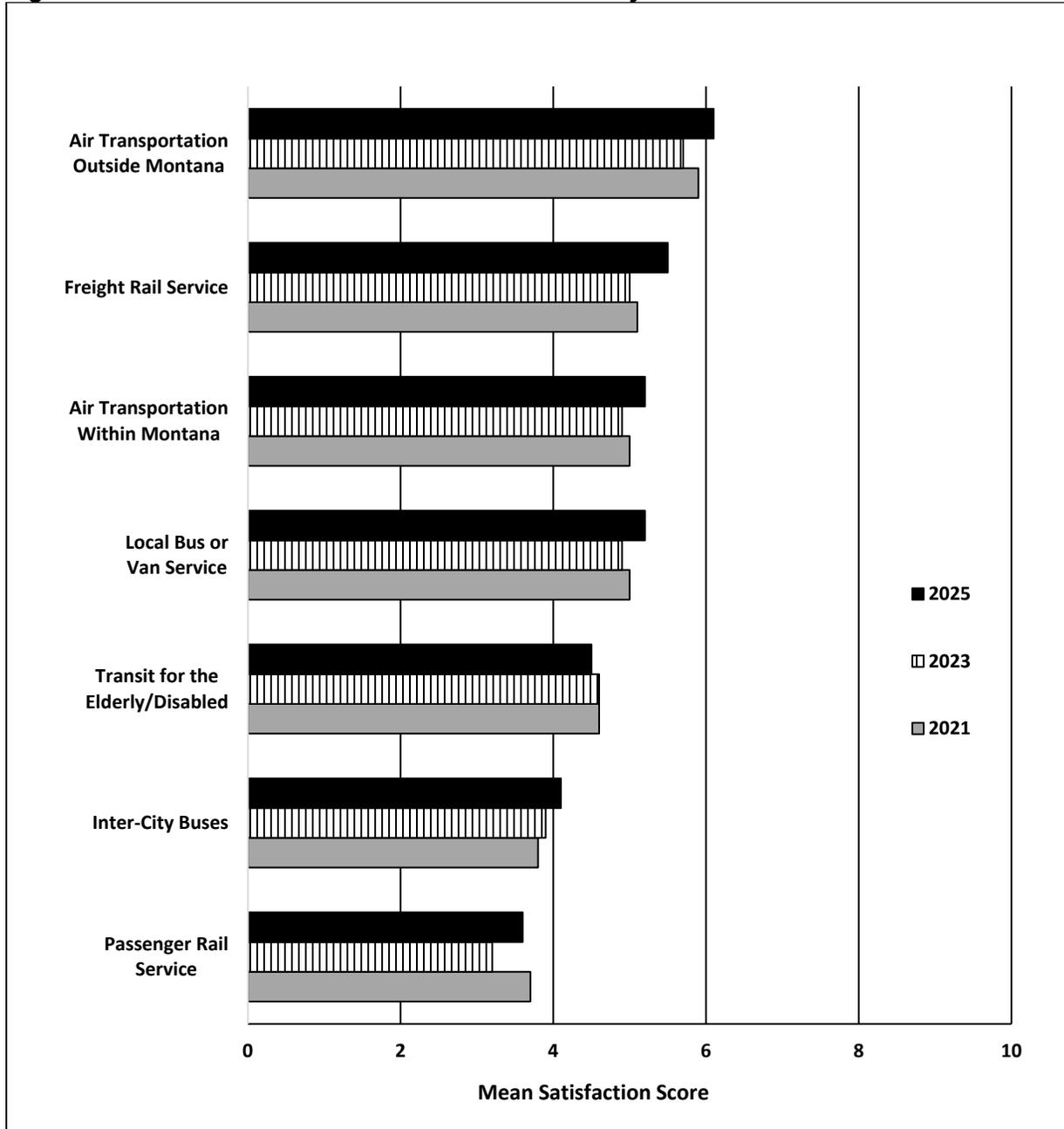
Table 2.3 Satisfaction with Availability of Services

Service Component	Mean	95% Confidence Interval		N
		Lower Limit	Upper Limit	
Air Transportation Outside Montana	6.1	5.8	6.4	959
Freight Rail Service	5.5	5.2	5.9	595
Air Transportation Within Montana	5.2	4.9	5.5	839
Local Bus or Van Service	5.2	4.8	5.5	724
Transit for the Elderly or Disabled	4.5	4.2	4.9	709
Inter-City Buses	4.1	3.8	4.4	681
Passenger Rail Service	3.6	3.3	3.9	763

Trends

When satisfaction levels with the availability of services are compared over time, there was improvement in most scores in 2025 (Figure 2.3). None of the 2025 changes exceeded the margin of sampling error. The rating of transit for the elderly or disabled declined slightly in 2025. The rating of passenger rail services improved slightly in 2025 over 2023 but did not reach the 2021 level.

Figure 2.3 Trends in Satisfaction with the Availability of Services

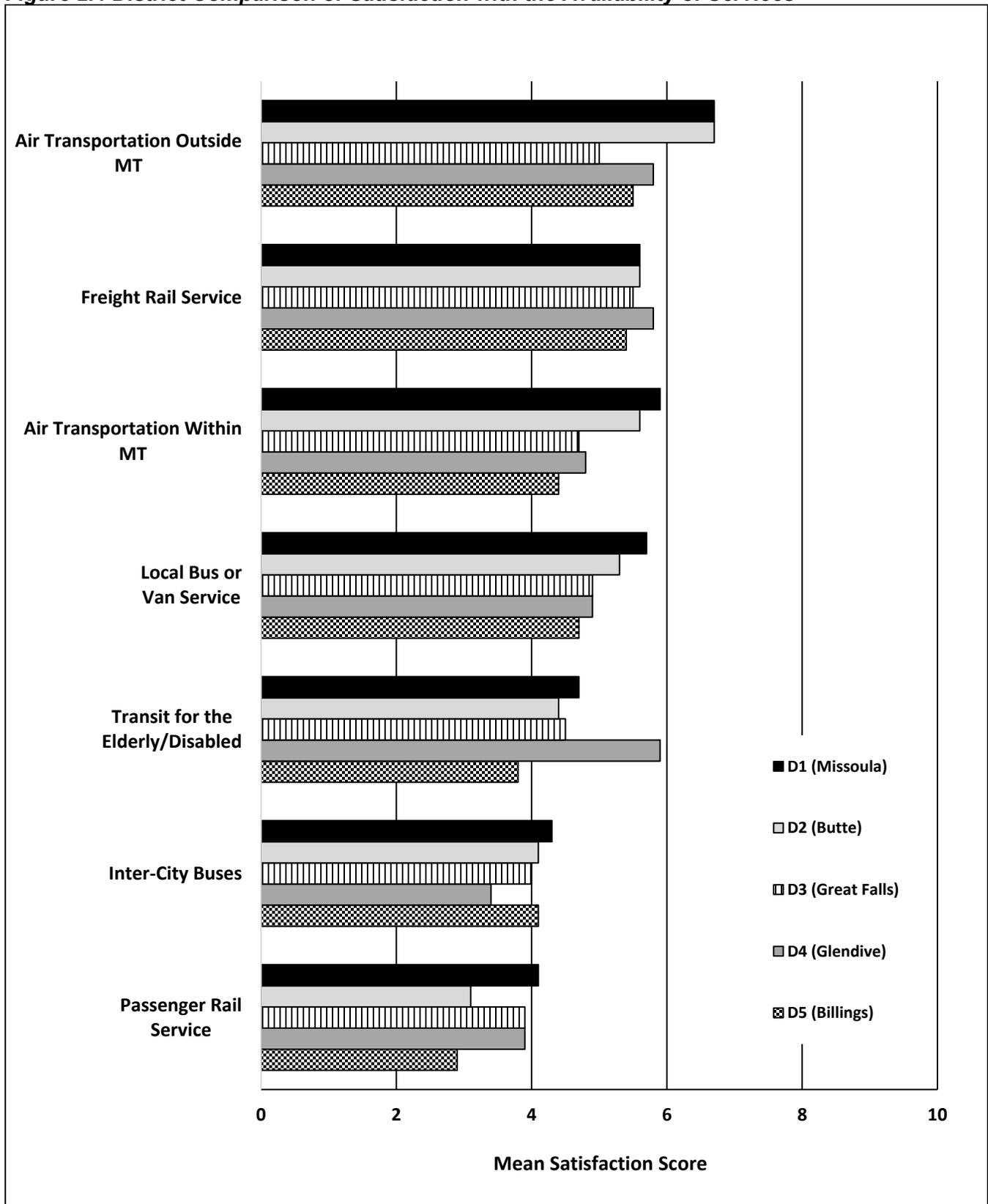


Districts

Figure 2.4 shows the mean levels of satisfaction with the availability of Montana's transportation services by MDT District.

- District 1 (Missoula) and District 2 (Butte) were tied in being more satisfied with air transportation outside Montana than the other Districts. This was also the service that both Districts were most satisfied with in 2025, compared to the other services that were ranked by respondents.
- Among all services provided, District 3 (Great Falls) was most satisfied with freight rail service but was least satisfied with inter-city buses and passenger rail service.
- District 4 (Glendive) was more satisfied with transit service for the elderly or disabled than any other District.
- District 5 (Billings) was slightly less satisfied with the availability of most services ranked, compared to other Districts. One exception to this trend is that District 5 was tied with District 2 for satisfaction with inter-city bus service.

Figure 2.4 District Comparison of Satisfaction with the Availability of Services



“HOW MUCH OF A PROBLEM IN MONTANA, IF AT ALL, ARE THE FOLLOWING?”

Montanans rated possible problems with aspects of the state transportation system on a scale from 1 to 4, where 1 represented *not a problem* and 4 represented a *serious problem* (Table 2.4).

- None of the problems provided received a mean rating designating them as more than a *moderate problem*.
- Road pavement conditions were rated as a *serious problem* by 20% of respondents, remaining the highest ranked problem within the transportation system.

Table 2.4 Montana Transportation System Problems

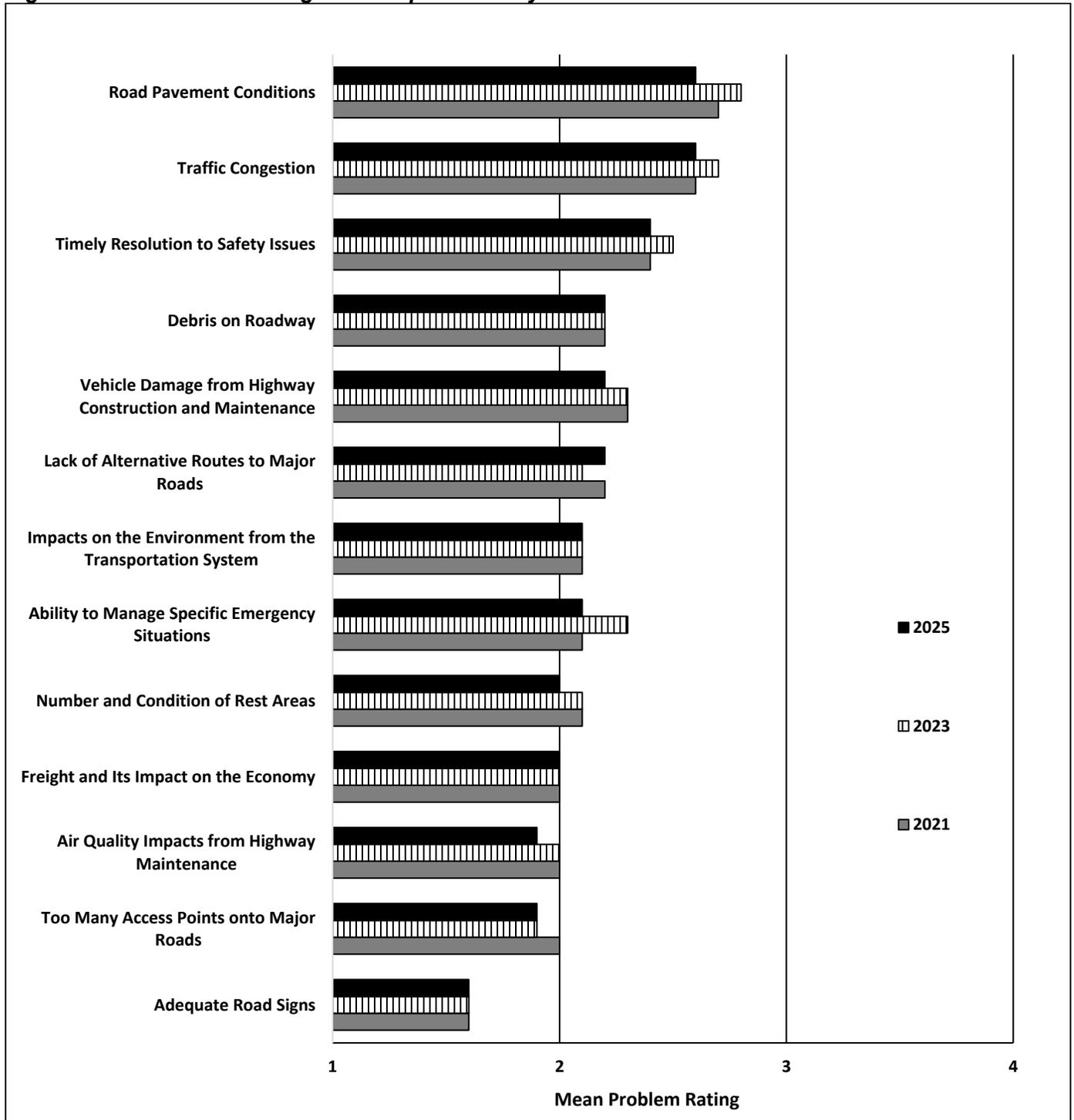
Problem Areas	Serious Problem	Moderate Problem	Small Problem	Not a Problem	Don't Know	Mean	N
Road Pavement Conditions	20%	34%	33%	12%	2%	2.6	1,043
Traffic Congestion	15%	42%	29%	11%	3%	2.6	1,040
Timely Resolution to Safety Issues	8%	27%	22%	16%	26%	2.4	1,029
Debris on Roadway	10%	22%	44%	20%	4%	2.2	1,046
Vehicle Damage from Highway Construction and Maintenance	10%	23%	37%	22%	9%	2.2	1,038
Lack of Alternative Routes to Major Roads	9%	28%	30%	26%	6%	2.2	1,044
Impacts on the Environment from the Transportation System	11%	17%	24%	29%	18%	2.1	1,047
Ability to Manage Specific Emergency Situations	6%	17%	22%	23%	32%	2.1	1,042
Number and Condition of Rest Areas	7%	21%	27%	33%	13%	2.0	1,048
Freight and Its Impact on the Economy	3%	16%	22%	23%	36%	2.0	1,048
Air Quality Impacts from Highway Maintenance	5%	19%	33%	34%	9%	1.9	1,042
Too Many Access Points onto Major Roads	5%	17%	28%	39%	12%	1.9	1,044
Adequate Road Signs	3%	13%	28%	53%	2%	1.6	1,045

Note: Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Trends

When ranking the degree to which transportation system components constitute a problem, 2025 survey respondents rated 54% of the potential problems examined as *less* of a problem (Figure 2.5). Only the lack of alternate routes to major roads increased its problem severity rating over 2023.

Figure 2.5 Trends in Ranking of Transportation System Problems

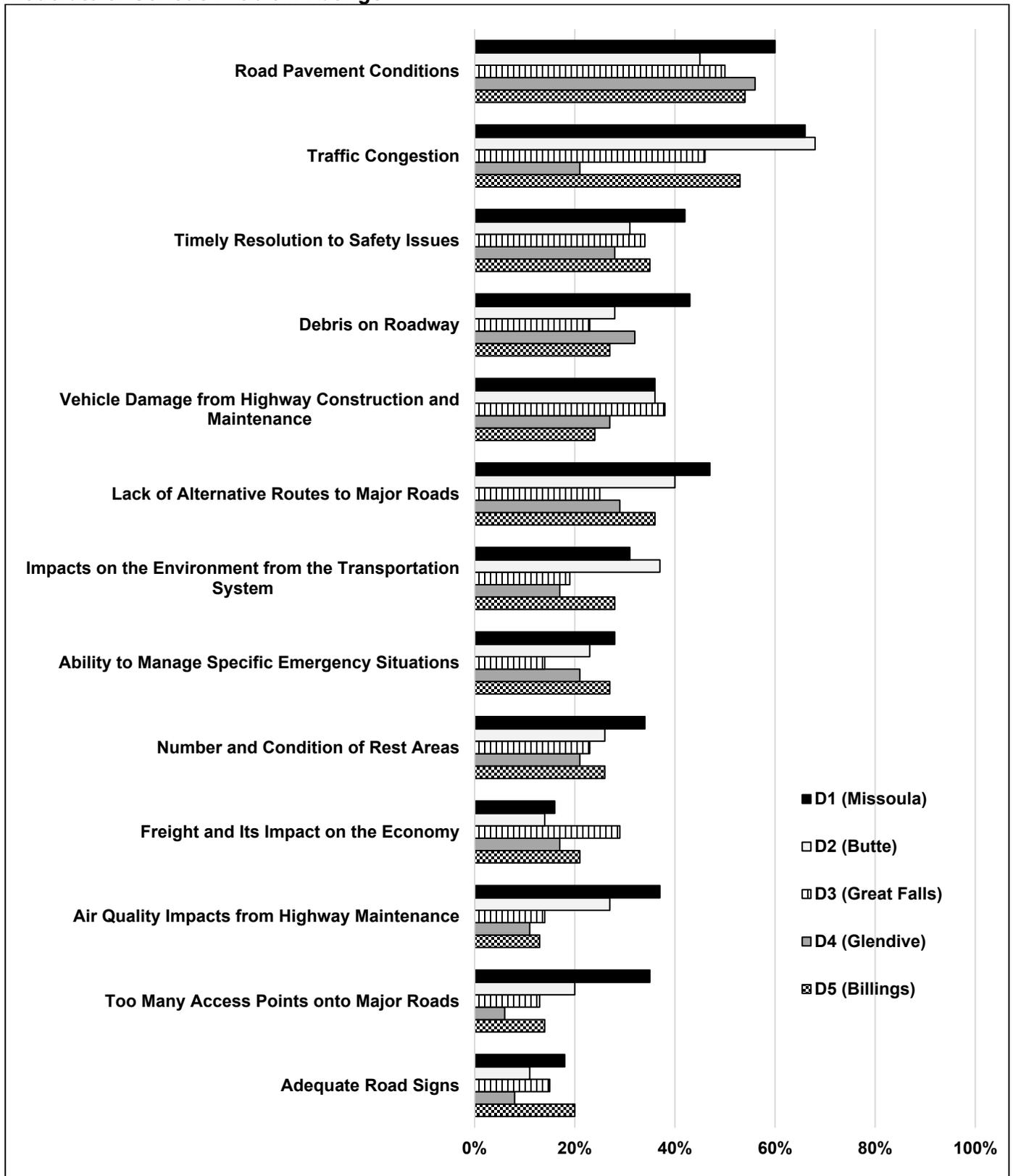


Districts

When compared across MDT's Districts, there is variation in the problem ranking of various system components (Figure 2.6). However, road pavement conditions and traffic congestion were the greatest problems across the Districts, with the exception of District 4 (see bullet below).

- In District 1 (Missoula), the greatest problems were thought to be traffic congestion (rated as a *moderate problem* or *serious problem* by 66% of respondents) and road pavement conditions (60%).
- In District 2 (Butte), the greatest problem was also thought to be traffic congestion (68%), again followed by road pavement conditions (45%).
- In District 3 (Great Falls), the greatest problem was thought to be road pavement conditions as well (50%), followed by traffic congestion (46%).
- In District 4 (Glendive), the greatest problem was also road pavement conditions (56%), followed by debris on the roadway (32%).
- In District 5 (Billings) as well, the greatest problem was road pavement conditions (54%), followed by traffic congestion (53%).

Figure 2.6 District Comparison of Ranking of Transportation System Problems – Percentage Moderate or Serious Problem Ratings



“WHAT PRIORITY SHOULD MDT ASSIGN THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS?”

Respondents were asked to use a scale from 1 to 5 to prioritize 15 possible actions that could be taken to improve Montana’s transportation system (Table 2.5). A value of 1 represented *very low priority* while a value of 5 represented *very high priority*. As indicated previously in Table 2.4, most transportation system issues are considered small problems. However, a larger percentage of Montanans assign a medium or higher priority to addressing these problems.

Table 2.5 Prioritization of Actions for Improving the Montana Transportation System

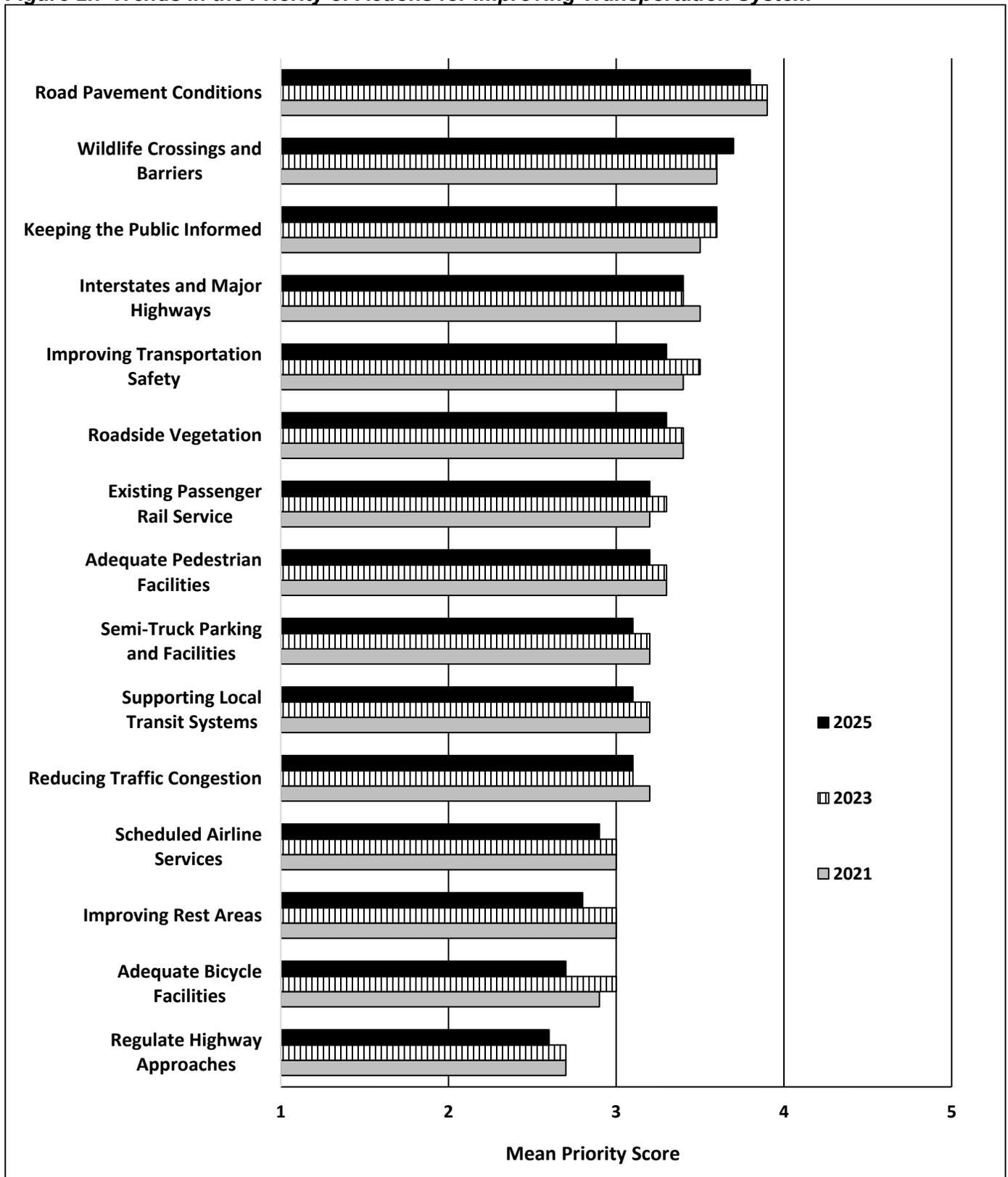
	Very High Priority	Somewhat High Priority	Medium Priority	Somewhat Low Priority	Very Low Priority	Mean	N
Road Pavement Conditions	28%	39%	25%	5%	4%	3.8	1,036
Wildlife Crossings and Barriers	32%	28%	25%	9%	6%	3.7	1,037
Keeping the Public Informed	24%	33%	29%	9%	5%	3.6	1,030
Interstates and Major Highways	14%	31%	39%	10%	5%	3.4	1,037
Improving Transportation Safety	20%	25%	34%	13%	9%	3.3	1,039
Roadside Vegetation	19%	25%	35%	12%	9%	3.3	1,040
Existing Passenger Rail Service	20%	20%	32%	15%	12%	3.2	1,037
Adequate Pedestrian Facilities	19%	23%	28%	21%	10%	3.2	1,041
Semi-Truck Parking and Facilities	13%	24%	37%	19%	8%	3.1	1,035
Supporting Local Transit Systems	13%	23%	37%	17%	10%	3.1	1,034
Reducing Traffic Congestion (by Increasing Highway System Capacity)	12%	26%	35%	13%	14%	3.1	1,034
Scheduled Airline Services	13%	19%	30%	24%	15%	2.9	1,032
Improving Rest Areas	7%	17%	37%	27%	12%	2.8	1,035
Adequate Bicycle Facilities	16%	15%	20%	24%	24%	2.7	1,036
Regulate Highway Approaches	4%	15%	37%	28%	16%	2.6	1,035

Note: Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Trends

Results for the 2025 survey were consistent with those from the 2023 survey. However, priority of action declined slightly in 13 of 15 actions studied. As was the case in previous years, road pavement conditions received the highest priority ranking of all the items listed, followed by wildlife crossings and barriers, keeping the public informed, and interstates and major highways. Regulation of highway approaches saw the lowest priority ranking, followed by adequate bicycle facilities. Improving wildlife crossings and barriers was the only action that increased in priority in 2025 (Figure 2.7).

Figure 2.7 Trends in the Priority of Actions for Improving Transportation System

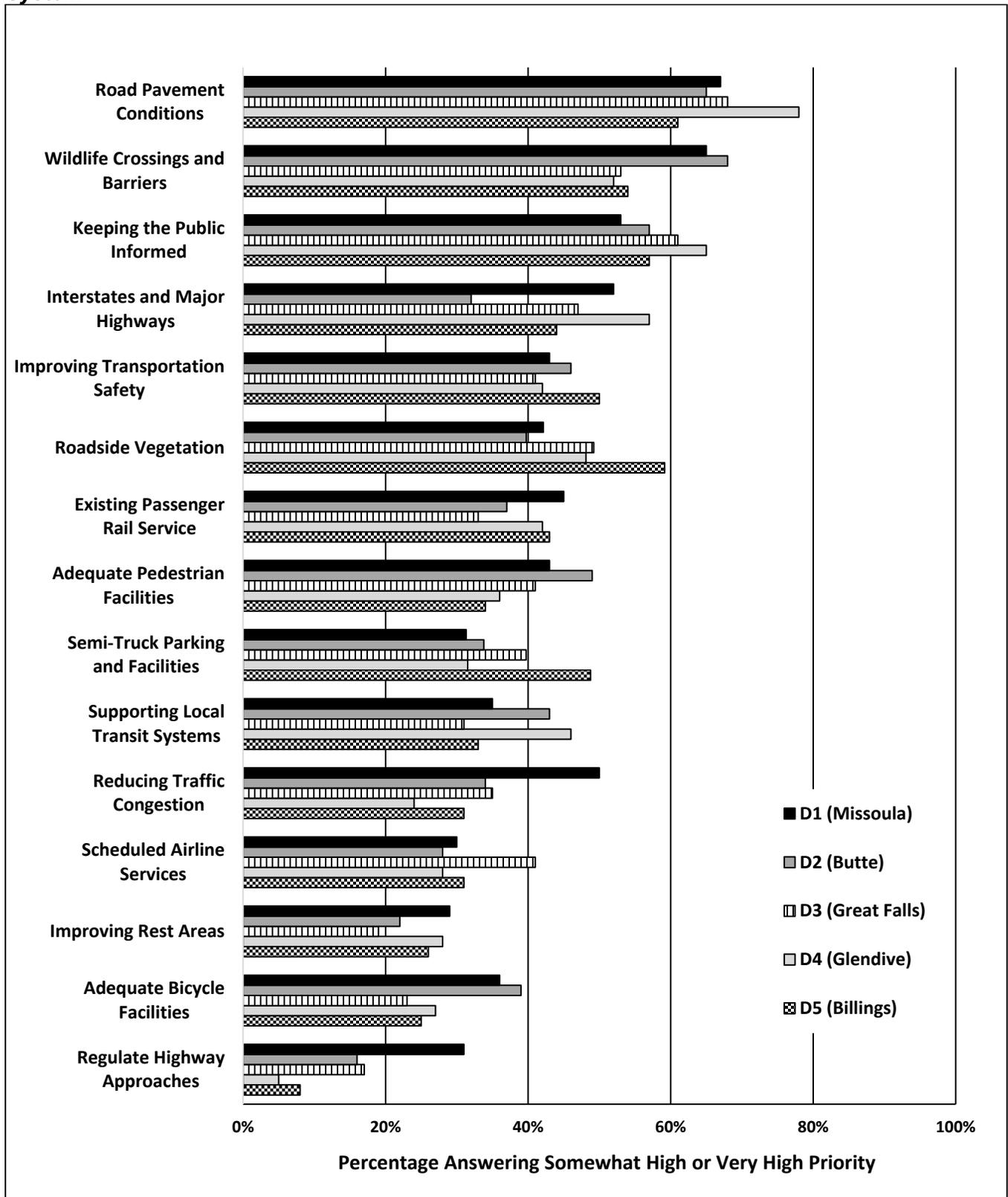


Districts

When compared across MDT's Districts, there is consensus on some items while others see greater divergence. For example, keeping the public informed received a relatively uniform priority score across Districts compared to the greater variation between Districts for interstates and major highways, adequate pedestrian facilities and roadside vegetation (Figure 2.8).

- Within District 1 (Missoula), the highest priority was given to maintaining road pavement conditions (67% ranked this item as *somewhat high priority* or *very high priority*), followed by wildlife crossings and barriers (65%), keeping the public informed (53%), and interstates and major highways (52%).
- In District 2 (Butte), the highest priority was given to wildlife crossings and barriers (68%), followed by maintaining road pavement conditions (65%) and keeping the public informed (57%).
- Respondents in District 3 (Great Falls) gave the highest priority to maintaining road pavement conditions (68%) as well, followed by keeping the public informed (61%), and wildlife crossings and barriers (53%).
- Within District 4 (Glendive), the highest priority was also given to maintaining road pavement conditions (78%), followed by keeping the public informed (65%), interstates and major highways (57%), and wildlife barriers and crossings (52%).
- Respondents in District 5 (Billings) also gave the highest priority to maintaining road pavement conditions (61%), followed by roadside vegetation (59%), keeping the public informed (57%), wildlife crossings and barriers (54%), and transportation safety (50%).

Figure 2.8 District Comparison of the Priority of Actions for Improving the Transportation System



CHAPTER 3 | MDT SYSTEM FUNDING PRIORITIES

“WHAT VALUE DO YOU PERCEIVE GETTING FROM MONTANA’S TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM?”

The average Montanan pays between \$260 and \$320 per year in state and federal fuel taxes to support transportation infrastructure in the state. Using that range, survey respondents were asked if they felt they received more value, about equal, or less value per year from the Montana transportation system (Table 3.1).

- Overall, 70% of respondents (70%) indicated they receive value equal to or greater than their annual fuel tax contributions of \$260-\$320.
- In District 2 (Butte), 24% of respondents indicated they get more in value from the transportation system than they pay in annual taxes.
- More respondents (38%) in District 3 (Great Falls) feel they get less value than their annual taxes, compared to any of the other Districts.

Table 3.1 Perceived Value from Montana’s Transportation System

	More Value	About \$260-\$320	Less Value	N
Total Sample	18%	52%	30%	1,010
District 1: Missoula	17%	57%	25%	210
District 2: Butte	24%	52%	24%	200
District 3: Great Falls	18%	44%	38%	225
District 4: Glendive	14%	51%	35%	188
District 5: Billings	15%	52%	33%	187

Note: Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

“WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM ITEMS, IF ANY, SHOULD BE FUNDED AT A LOWER LEVEL?”

Respondents were also asked which aspects of the Montana transportation system, if any, they would like to see funded at a lower level if overall funding for MDT were to decrease (Table 3.2).

- With the exception of bicycle pathways and pedestrian walkways, the majority of respondents think the listed items should be funded at the same level as they are currently.
- The greatest percentage of respondents (59%) think bicycle pathways should be funded at a lower level.
- 34% of respondents ranked maintenance as a priority for increased funding.

Table 3.2 Funding Priorities by Transportation System Component

System Components	Fund at Lower Level	Fund at Same Level	Fund at Higher Level	N
Bicycle Pathways	59%	25%	16%	1,015
Pedestrian Walkways	41%	40%	19%	1,011
Local Transit Buses	31%	56%	13%	1,003
Rest Areas	31%	60%	9%	1,015
Interstate Highways	11%	70%	19%	1,004
Other Major Highways	8%	66%	26%	1,000
Maintenance	6%	60%	34%	998

Note: Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Survey respondents had the option to suggest additional areas where they prefer reduced funding in the event that MDT faces overall funding reductions. About 4% of respondents suggested areas for reduced funding. The suggestions were not necessarily related to the Montana transportation system. (Table 3.3).

Table 3.3 Other Areas Suggested for Reduced Funding by Respondents

Suggested Areas for Reduced Funding	Unweighted number of responses
<i>Non-Transportation Related Items *</i>	19
<i>MDT Administration</i>	16
<i>Other Transportation-Related Items **</i>	9
<i>Passenger or Freight Rail</i>	4
<i>New Road Construction</i>	3
<i>Airports, Air Travel</i>	2
<i>Winter Sanding, Plowing or De-Icing</i>	1

* Variety of comments not related to MDT or its efforts.

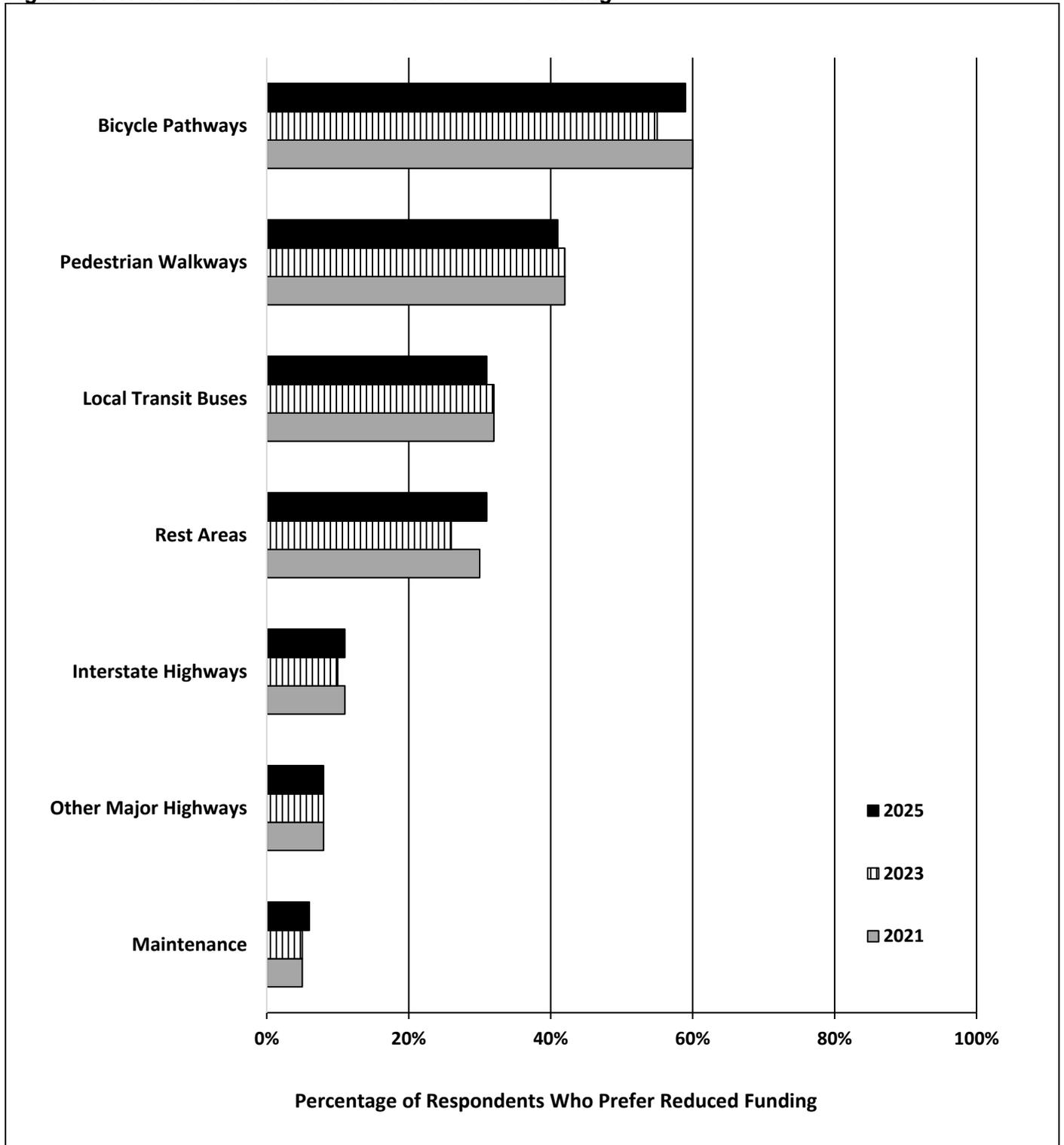
** Variety of transportation-related comments but unrelated to the question asked.

Trends

Historically, the relative order of preference for the various areas in which to decrease funding has not changed significantly. However, while 2025 survey respondents had opinions that were broadly similar to those in 2023 and 2021, the proportion of Montanans who favor decreased funding for bicycle pathways and rest areas (Figure 3.1) has slightly increased.

- Since the 2021 survey, bicycle pathways have been favored for decreased funding by the greatest percentage of respondents.
- Also, since the 2021 survey, pedestrian walkways have remained the second highest ranked choice for decreased funding.
- When comparing results from the 2025, 2023 and 2021 surveys, decreasing funding for interstate highways, other major highways and maintenance has consistently been favored by less than 12% of Montanans.

Figure 3.1 Trends in Preferred Areas for Reduced Funding

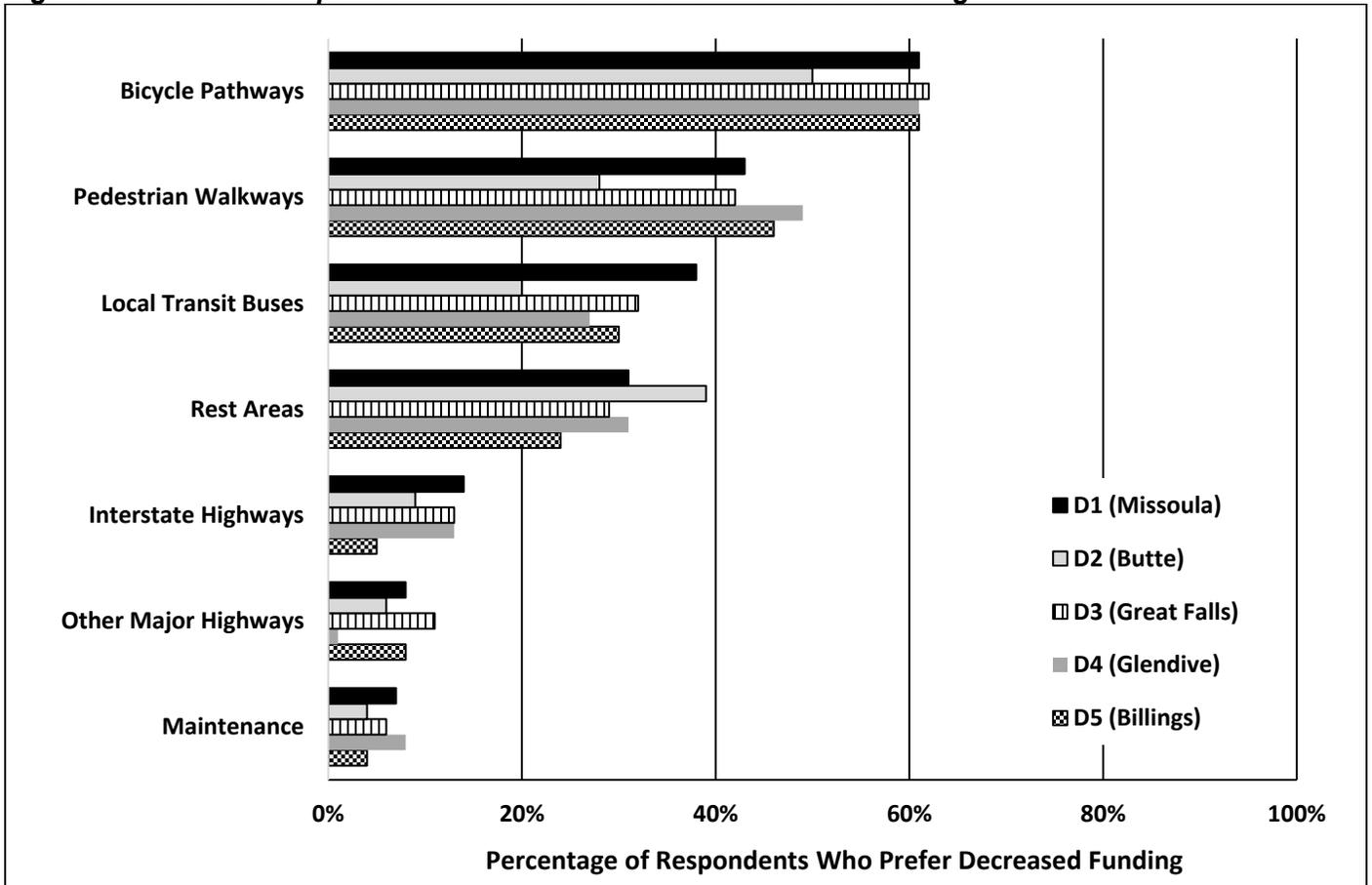


Districts

When comparing MDT's Districts, the relative order of preference for where to decrease funding is largely consistent across the five Districts (Figure 3.2).

- District 1 (Missoula) had the highest percentage of respondents who favored funding decreases for local transit buses (38%) and interstate highways (14%).
- District 2 (Butte) had the lowest percentage of respondents who favored funding decreases for bicycle pathways (50%), pedestrian walkways (28%), and local transit buses (20%).
- District 3 (Great Falls) had the highest percentage of respondents who favored reduced funding for bicycle pathways (62%), and the highest percentage of respondents who favored decreased funding for other major highways (11%).
- District 4 (Glendive) had the lowest percentage of respondents who favored decreased funding for other major highways (1%), and the highest percentage of respondents who favored decreased funding for pedestrian walkways (49%).
- District 5 (Billings) had the lowest percentage of respondents who wanted funding decreases for rest areas (24%) and interstate highways (5%).

Figure 3.2 District Comparison of Preferred Areas for Reduced Funding



CHAPTER 4 | COMMUNICATION TOOLS

“HOW USEFUL ARE EACH OF THE FOLLOWING TOOLS TO HELP LEARN ABOUT MDT ACTIVITY IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES?”

Montana residents were asked to rate the usefulness of selected public communication tools used by MDT. Each tool was rated on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 represented *not at all useful* and 5 represented *extremely useful* (Table 4.1).

- Overall, out of the 10 tools listed, respondents ranked variable message highway signs and websites as the most useful, with 52% rating them as *very useful* or *extremely useful*.
- Maps, pictures and graphics, radio and television, special mailings and computer simulated displays were also found overall to be *moderately useful*.
- A toll-free call in number and newspapers ranked the least useful, with over half of respondents deeming them only *slightly useful* or *not at all useful*.

Table 4.1 Usefulness of MDT’s Communication Tools

Tools	Extremely Useful	Very Useful	Moderately Useful	Slightly Useful	Not at All Useful	Mean	N
Variable Message Highway Signs	20%	32%	29%	14%	6%	3.5	1,027
Websites, Social Media, Apps for Mobile Devices	22%	30%	25%	14%	9%	3.4	1,020
Maps	12%	23%	31%	22%	13%	3.0	1,021
Pictures and Graphics	11%	22%	34%	23%	11%	3.0	1,011
Radio and Television	9%	25%	30%	24%	12%	3.0	1,022
Special Mailings	9%	22%	32%	23%	13%	2.9	1,019
Computer Simulated Displays	11%	16%	30%	27%	16%	2.8	1,002
Public Meetings in Local Communities	4%	14%	33%	32%	17%	2.6	1,017
Toll-Free Call In Number	9%	13%	22%	28%	28%	2.5	1,020
Newspapers	2%	11%	23%	29%	35%	2.2	1,017

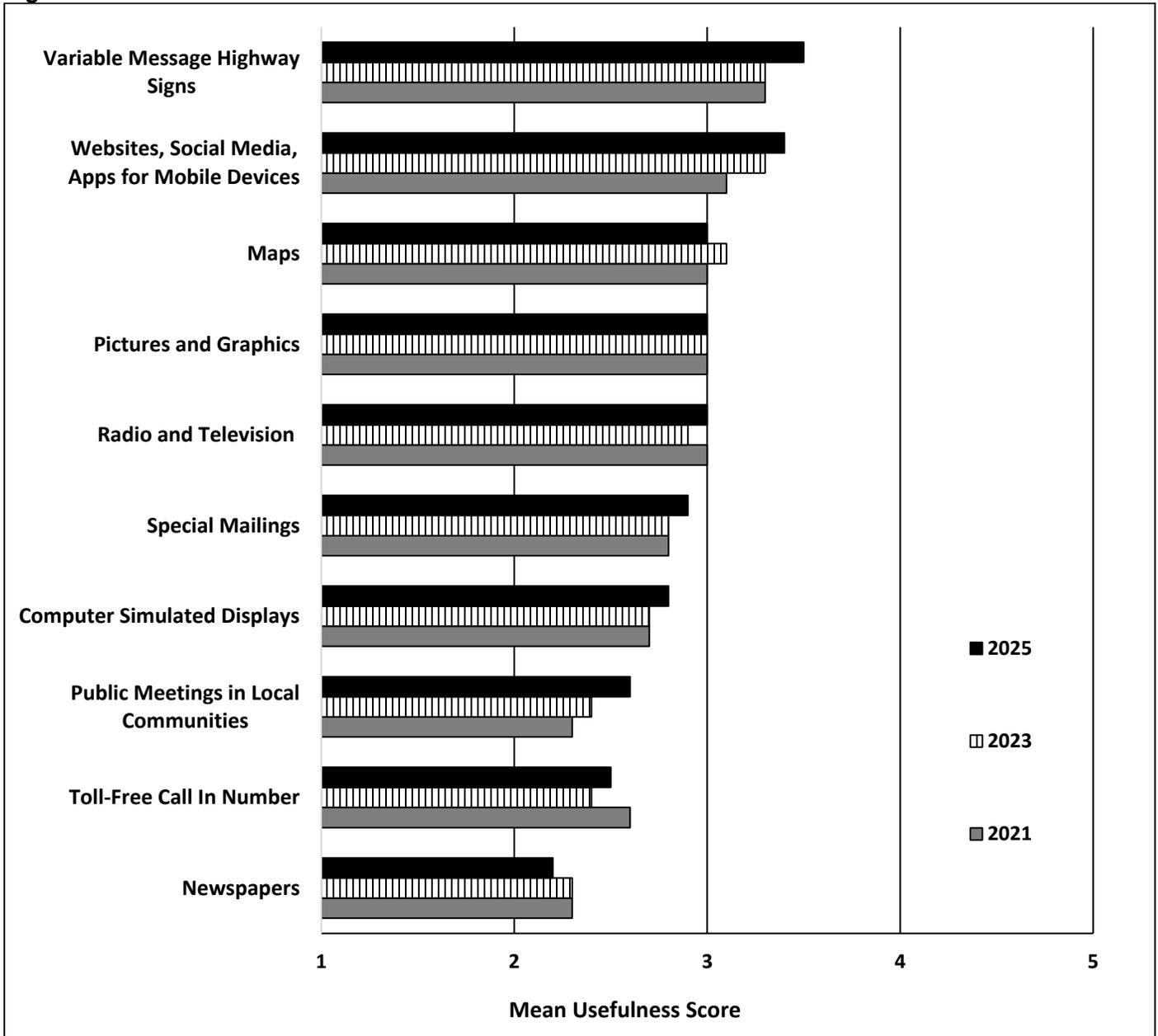
Note: Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Trends

Since 2013, each iteration of this survey has asked respondents to rate the usefulness of a variety of public communications tools. Figure 4.1 below compares the mean ratings provided by the public in the 2021, 2023 and 2025 surveys.

- Variable message highway signs remain the most useful tool in MDT's communications arsenal.
- Websites, social media, and apps for mobile devices continued to climb in their usefulness rating in 2025.
- Newspapers continued to decline in usefulness in 2025. Compared to all other communication tools, newspapers saw steady decline in rated usefulness between 2021 and 2025.

Figure 4.1 Trends in Usefulness of MDT's Communications Tools

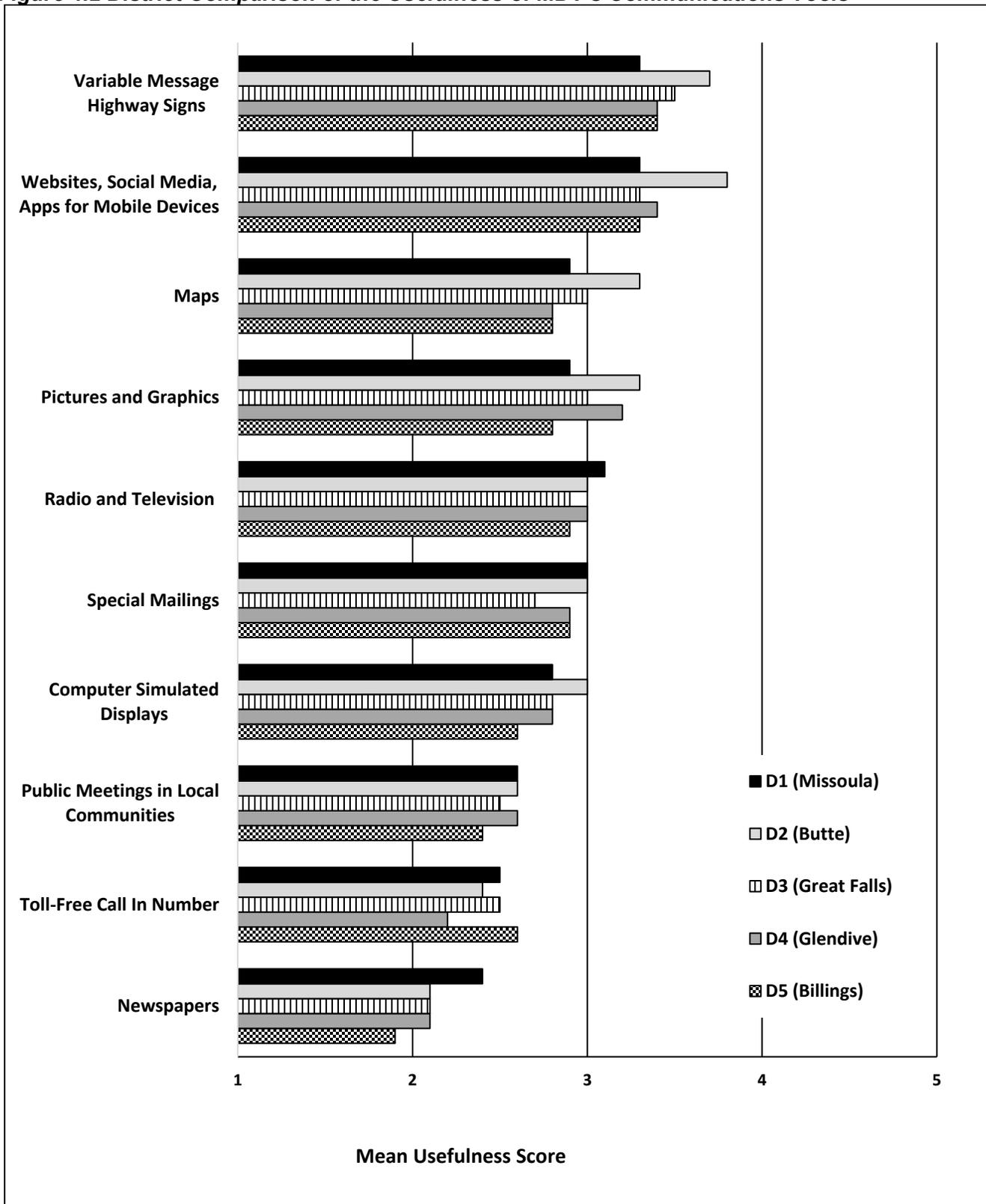


Districts

When comparing responses across MDT's Districts, there is significant variation in how useful each communication tool is perceived to be (Figure 4.2):

- District 1 (Missoula) residents found radio and television and newspapers more useful than other Districts.
- District 2 (Butte) residents found variable message highway signs and websites, social media, and mobile apps more useful than other Districts.
- District 3 (Great Falls) residents saw special mailings as less useful than residents of other Districts.
- District 4 (Glendive) residents considered a toll-free call in number less useful than did residents of other Districts.
- District 5 (Billings) residents considered several communication tools, including newspapers, as less useful than did residents of the other Districts.

Figure 4.2 District Comparison of the Usefulness of MDT's Communications Tools



“HAVE YOU FELT INFORMED ABOUT MDT’S BUSINESS IN RECENT YEARS?”

When asked whether they have felt informed about MDT business more, about the same, or less in recent years, more than two-thirds of respondents (71%) answered that they felt they were informed at about the same level (Table 4.2). There was no statistically relevant change in feeling informed from 2023 to 2025.

- District 4 (Glendive) had the greatest percentage of respondents (23%) who indicated they felt *more informed* in recent years.
- District 1 (Missoula) had the greatest percentage of respondents (17%) who indicated they felt *less informed* in recent years.

Table 4.2 Feeling Informed About MDT’s Business in Recent Years

	More Informed	About the Same	Less Informed	N
Total Sample	14%	71%	15%	1,032
District 1: Missoula	11%	73%	17%	212
District 2: Butte	21%	63%	15%	206
District 3: Great Falls	14%	77%	9%	226
District 4: Glendive	23%	66%	11%	200
District 5: Billings	9%	75%	16%	188

Note: Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

This page is left blank intentionally.

CHAPTER 5 | OVERALL MDT CUSTOMER SERVICE AND PERFORMANCE

The 2025 Public Involvement Survey included a number of questions regarding overall MDT performance and responsiveness to public input. Respondents were asked to grade MDT on a scale from F (0) to A (4).

“WHAT GRADE WOULD YOU GIVE MDT ON THE QUALITY OF SERVICE IT PROVIDES IN EACH OF THE FOLLOWING AREAS?”

Overall, the mean grades that MDT received for performance and customer service in 2025 ranged from a B- to a C (Table 5.1).

- At least 50% of respondents graded the quality of service provided by MDT, highway maintenance and repair, and convenience of travel through work zones as an A or B.
- MDT’s quality of service received the highest percentage of A and B grades in 2025 (63%).

Table 5.1 Overall Performance and Customer Service Grades

Performance/Service Component	A	B	C	D	F	Don't know	Mean	N
Quality of Service Provided by MDT	11%	52%	32%	4%	1%	N/A	2.7	1,027
Highway Maintenance and Repair	14%	43%	30%	10%	3%	N/A	2.6	1,030
MDT’s Sensitivity to Environment	13%	35%	40%	9%	4%	N/A	2.4	1,015
Convenience of Travel Through Work Zones	13%	37%	34%	12%	3%	N/A	2.4	1,033
Public Notification About Local Construction Projects	12%	35%	31%	16%	6%	N/A	2.3	1,029
Responsiveness to Ideas and Concerns from the Public	5%	14%	23%	10%	3%	45%	2.2	1,027

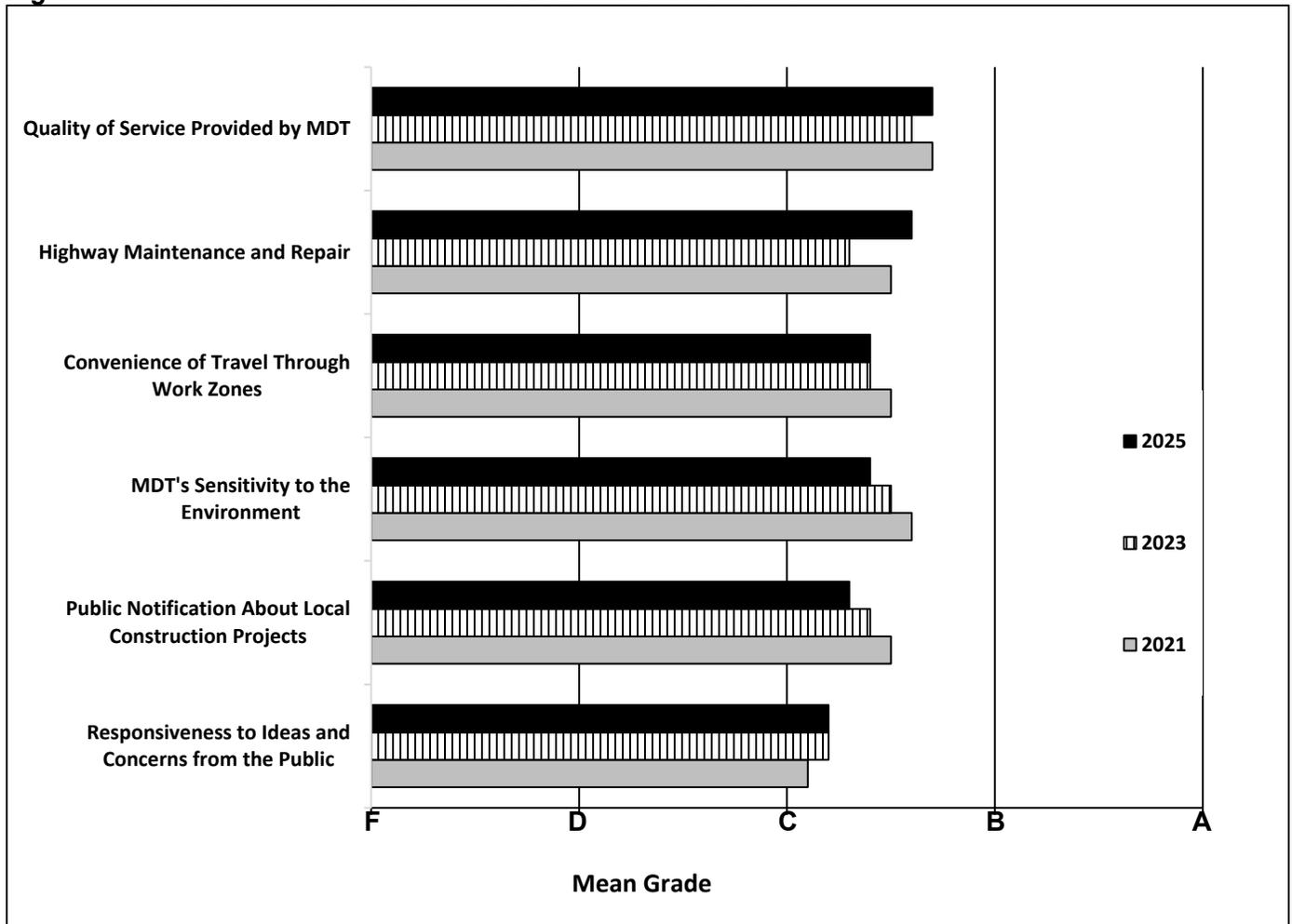
Note: Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Trends

When comparing the grades MDT has received for its performance and customer service over time, there have been very few changes between 2021 and 2025. Mean grades are consistently between B- and C (Figure 5.1). None of the small changes displayed below in Figure 5.1 are statistically significant.

- The overall quality of service that MDT provides continues to be most highly rated, with a mean grade of B- given in 2025.
- MDT’s performance of highway maintenance and repair was relatively highly rated in 2025, also with a mean grade of C+.
- Convenience of travel through work zones, sensitivity to the environment, and public notification about local projects each received a C+ mean grade.
- Responsiveness to public input continues to receive the lowest rating, a C.

Figure 5.1 Trends in Performance and Customer Service Grades

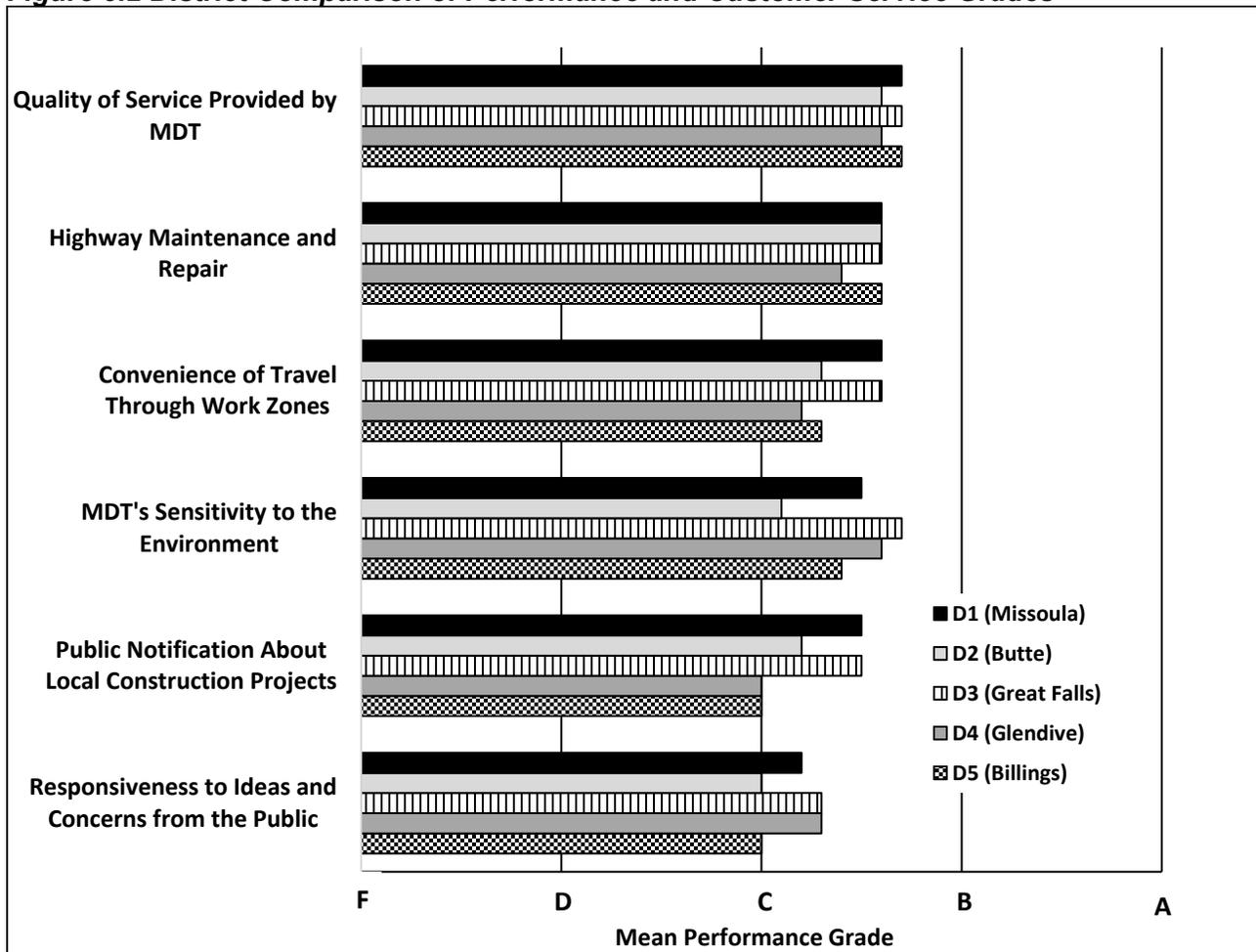


Districts

There are some differences between Districts in terms of public respondents grading MDT's performance and customer service (Figure 5.2). MDT's Districts are nearly unanimous in their relatively high grades (B- to C+) for MDT's quality of service provided and highway maintenance and repair.

- District 1 (Missoula) received its highest mean grade for the quality of service provided by MDT.
- District 2 (Butte) residents graded MDT's sensitivity to the environment lowest compared to the other Districts.
- District 3 (Great Falls) residents graded the highest among the Districts.
- District 4 (Glendive) received its lowest mean grade for MDT's public notification about local construction.
- District 5 (Billings) received its highest mean grade for the quality of service provided by MDT.

Figure 5.2 District Comparison of Performance and Customer Service Grades



“IN YOUR OPINION, WHICH ELEMENT IS MOST IMPORTANT IN DELIVERING EXCELLENT CUSTOMER SERVICE?”

In 2021, the Public Involvement Survey added a question about the most important elements in delivering excellent customer service. Respondents were given a choice between five elements: communication, accuracy, speed, consistency, or something else that they specified.

Overall, the majority of respondents in 2025 (53%) said that communication is the most important element in delivering excellent customer service (Table 5.2). Consistency (19%) and accuracy (18%) were the next most often mentioned elements.

Table 5.2 Most Important Element in Delivering Excellent Customer Service

	Communication	Accuracy	Speed	Consistency	Other	N
Total Sample	53%	18%	8%	19%	2%	976
District 1: Missoula	55%	21%	9%	14%	2%	201
District 2: Butte	56%	15%	10%	18%	1%	197
District 3: Great Falls	58%	11%	7%	21%	3%	218
District 4: Glendive	36%	15%	12%	37%	1%	183
District 5: Billings	49%	22%	5%	19%	4%	177

Note: Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Fewer District 4 (Glendive) respondents answered communication (36%), when compared to the other MDT Districts. The dominant responses to the “Other” category were “All of the above,” or combinations of two or three of the response choices. Overall, the 2025 responses to this question remained consistent with those received in 2023.

This page is left blank intentionally.

CHAPTER 6 | OTHER ISSUES

“WOULD A PRIMARY SEAT BELT LAW SAVE LIVES?”

When asked if a primary seat belt law in Montana had the potential to save lives, 62% of respondents indicated that they think it would (Table 6.1).

- District 1 (Missoula) had the largest percentage of respondents thinking a primary seat belt law would save lives (67%).
- District 4 (Glendive) had the largest percentage of respondents thinking a primary seat belt law would not save lives (56%).

Table 6.1 Opinions Regarding Outcome of a Primary Seat Belt Law

	Law Would Save Lives	Law Would Not Save Lives	N
Total Sample	62%	38%	1,027
District 1: Missoula	67%	33%	211
District 2: Butte	58%	42%	204
District 3: Great Falls	62%	38%	223
District 4: Glendive	44%	56%	198
District 5: Billings	66%	34%	191

Note: Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

“ARE SPEED LIMITS IN WORK ZONES ...?”

Overall, a very large majority of survey respondents (78%) considered speed limits in work zones on Montana roads to be just right (Table 6.2).

- District 4 (Glendive) had the highest percentage of respondents who think work zone speed limits are too slow (20%).
- District 5 (Billings) had the highest percentage of respondents who think work zone speed limits are too fast (9%).

Table 6.2 Opinions Regarding Speed Limits in Work Zones

	Speed Limit Too Slow	Speed Limit Just Right	Speed Limit Too Fast	N
Total Sample	17%	78%	5%	1,033
District 1: Missoula	17%	78%	4%	214
District 2: Butte	14%	83%	3%	205
District 3: Great Falls	16%	81%	3%	224
District 4: Glendive	20%	77%	3%	200
District 5: Billings	19%	72%	9%	190

Note: Totals may not add to 100% due to rounding.

CHAPTER 7 | DISTRICTS

District 1 – Missoula	Page 41
District 2 – Butte	Page 46
District 3 – Great Falls	Page 51
District 4 – Glendive	Page 56
District 5 – Billings	Page 61

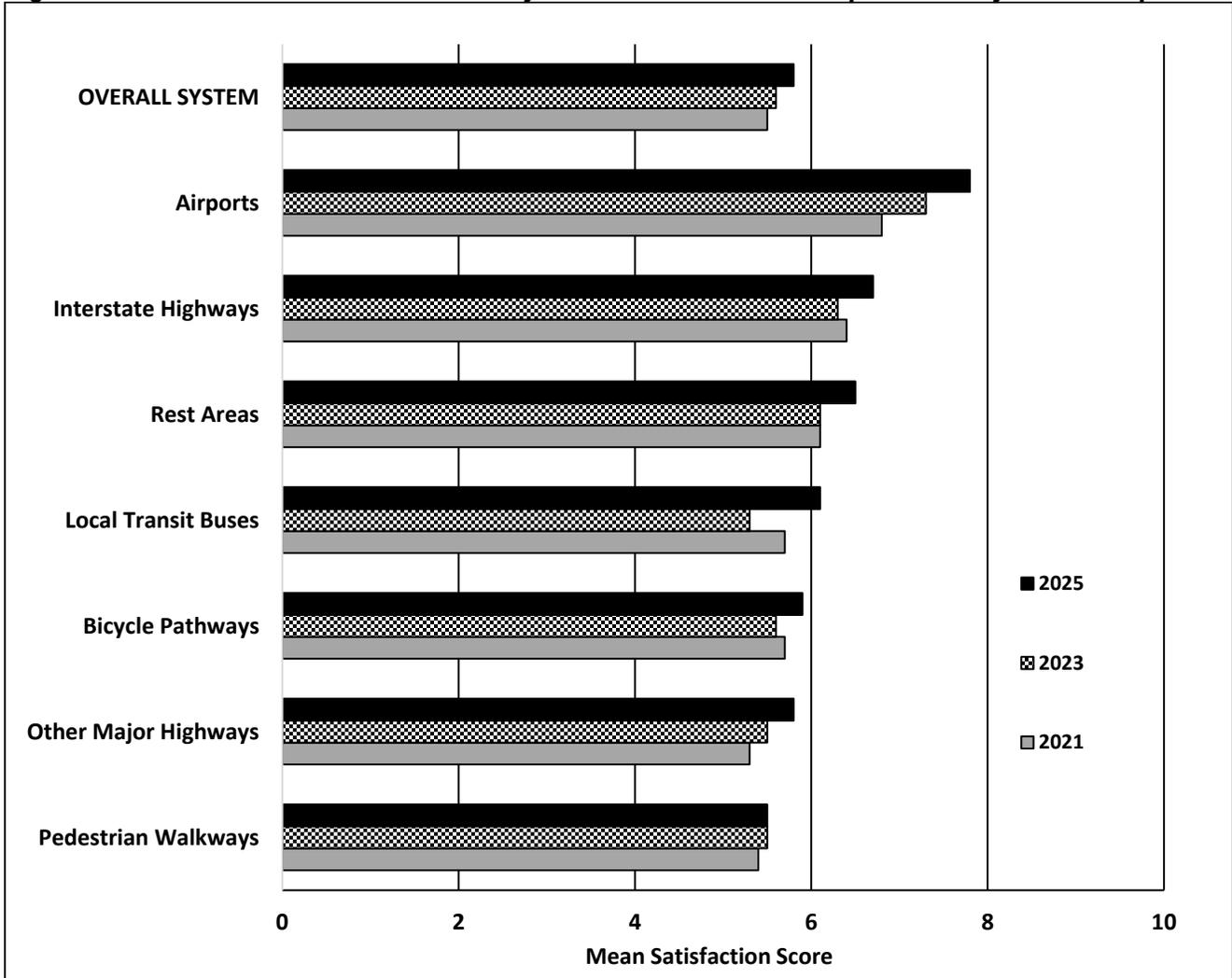
DISTRICT 1—MISSOULA

Satisfaction with Physical Condition of Transportation System

With a mean score of 5.8, residents of District 1 (Missoula) indicated that they were somewhat satisfied with the physical condition of the overall transportation system (Figure 7.1).

- Respondents were the most satisfied in 2025 with the physical condition of airports (7.8) followed by interstate highways (6.7) and rest areas (6.5).
- In terms of transportation system components, respondents were the least satisfied with the physical condition of other major highways (5.8) and pedestrian walkways (5.5).
- The greatest difference between the 2023 and 2025 surveys was seen in the satisfaction with the physical condition of local transit buses, which showed an increased score (6.1) in 2025.

Figure 7.1 District 1 Satisfaction with Physical Condition of Transportation System Components

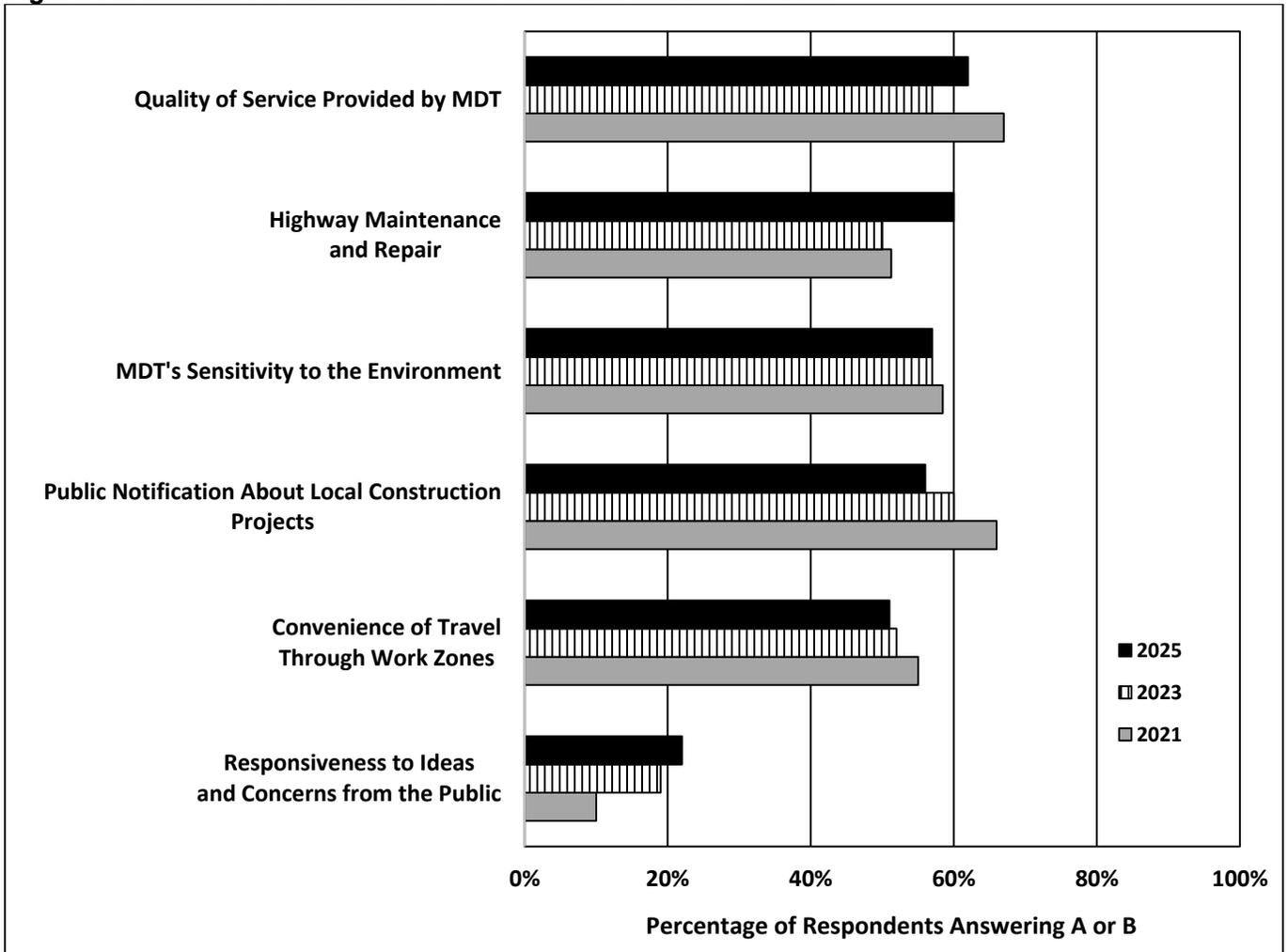


Grading Aspects of MDT's Functions

Respondents in District 1 graded MDT's performance in a number of transportation system areas (Figure 7.2).

- 62% of respondents gave MDT the grade of A or B with respect to the quality of the service the Department provides.
- 22% gave MDT the grade of A or B with respect to MDT's responsiveness to the public's ideas and concerns.
- The greatest differences between the 2023 and 2025 surveys occurred in the area of highway maintenance and repair, which saw an improved grade in 2025.

Figure 7.2 District 1 Performance and Customer Service Grades

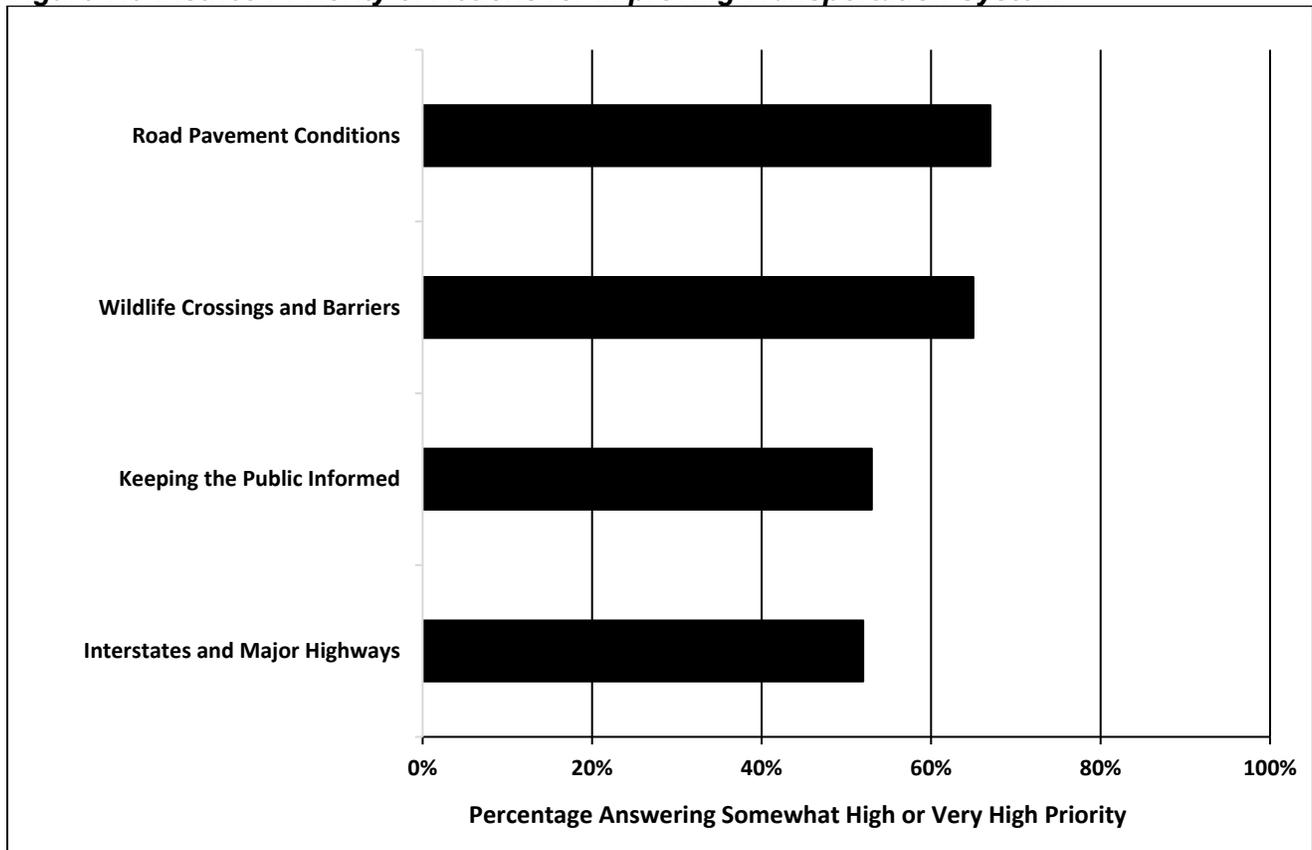


Priority of Actions to Improve Montana's Transportation System

From a list of possible actions that can be undertaken to improve the transportation system in the state, respondents in District 1 ranked the following four the highest (Figure 7.3):

- Maintaining road pavement conditions received the highest priority rating, with 67% deeming it either a *somewhat high priority* or a *very high priority*.
- Including wildlife crossings and barriers in roadway projects ranked second (65%).
- Keeping the public informed was rated as a *somewhat high priority* or a *very high priority* by 53% of respondents.

Figure 7.3 District 1 Priority of Actions for Improving Transportation System

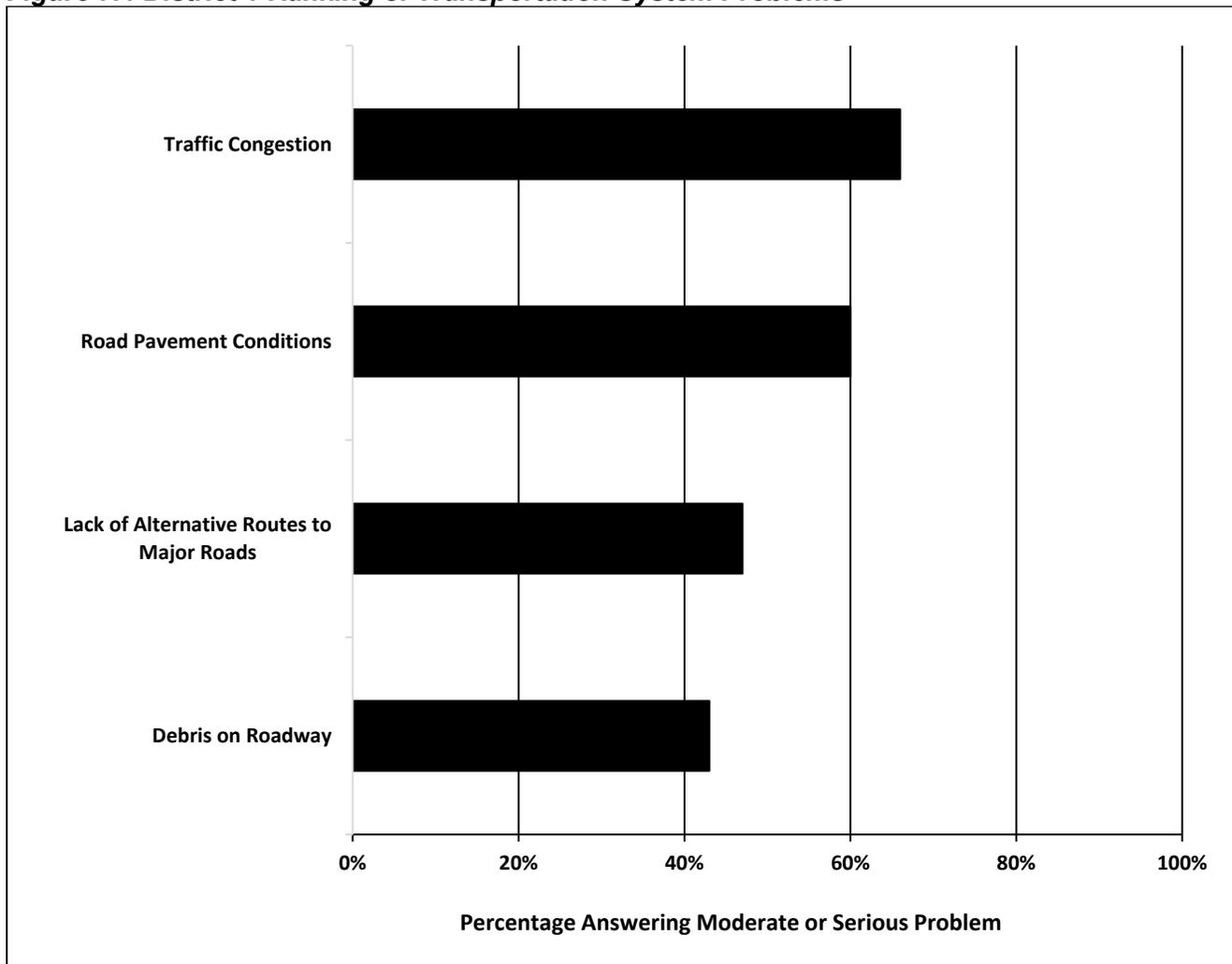


Ranking of Issues Seen as Problems with the Montana Transportation System

Survey respondents in District 1 also considered a list of issues that might be seen as problems with the state's transportation system. This section focuses on the top four rated problems for this District (Figure 7.4).

- Traffic congestion was considered to be either a *moderate problem* or a *serious problem* by the greatest percentage of District 1 respondents at 66%.
- Road pavement conditions (60%) came second, followed by the lack of alternate routes to major roads (47%), and debris on the roadway (43%).

Figure 7.4 District 1 Ranking of Transportation System Problems

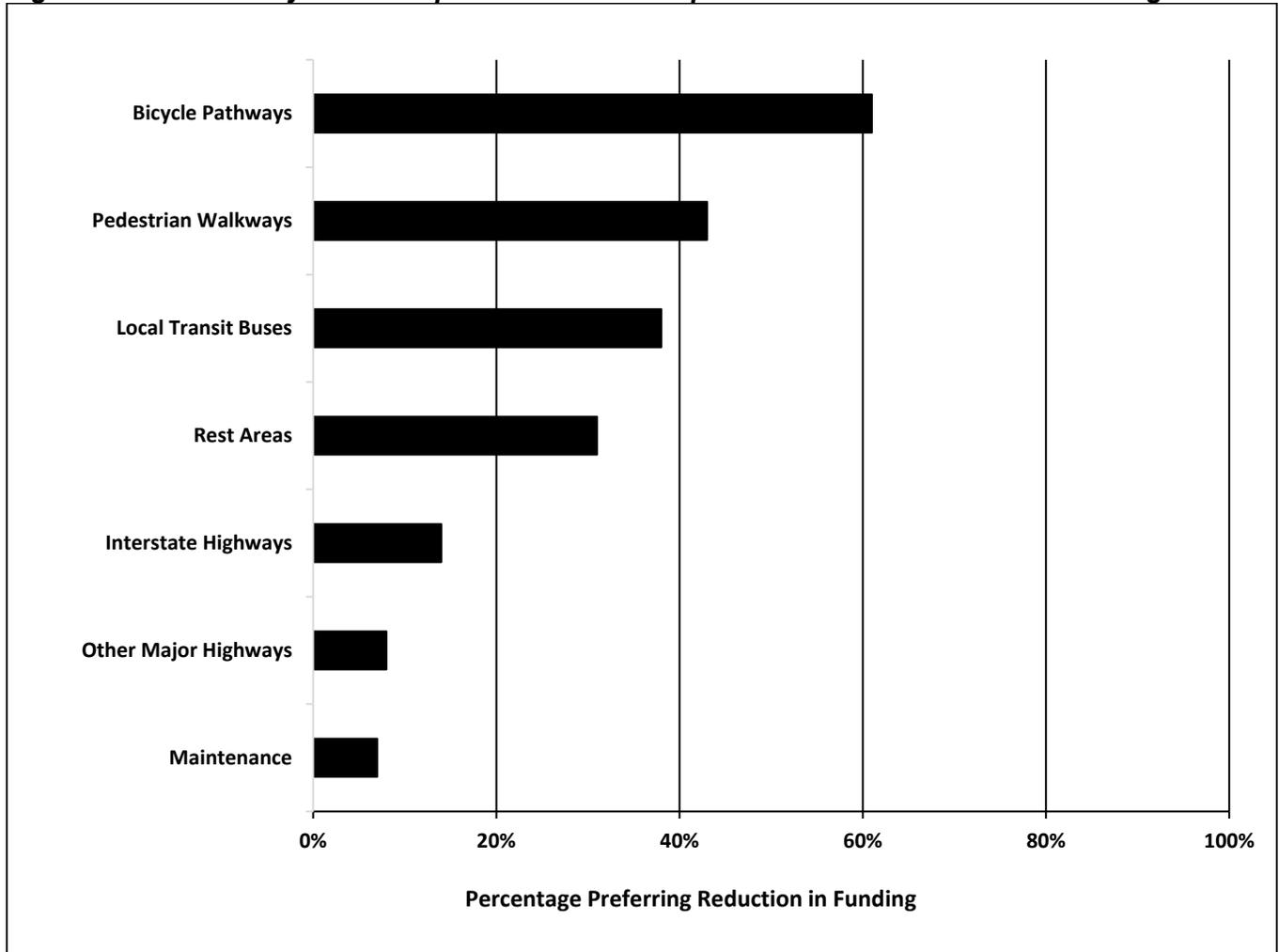


Areas Favored for Decreases in Funding

In the event of future decreases in the MDT budget, District 1 survey respondents indicated the areas within the Montana transportation system where they preferred funding to be reduced (Figure 7.5).

- The majority (61%) indicated they would prefer to see reduced funding for bicycle pathways.
- Transportation system maintenance was favored for reduced funding by only a small percentage (7%).

Figure 7.5 District 1 System Components Where Respondents Prefer Decreased Funding



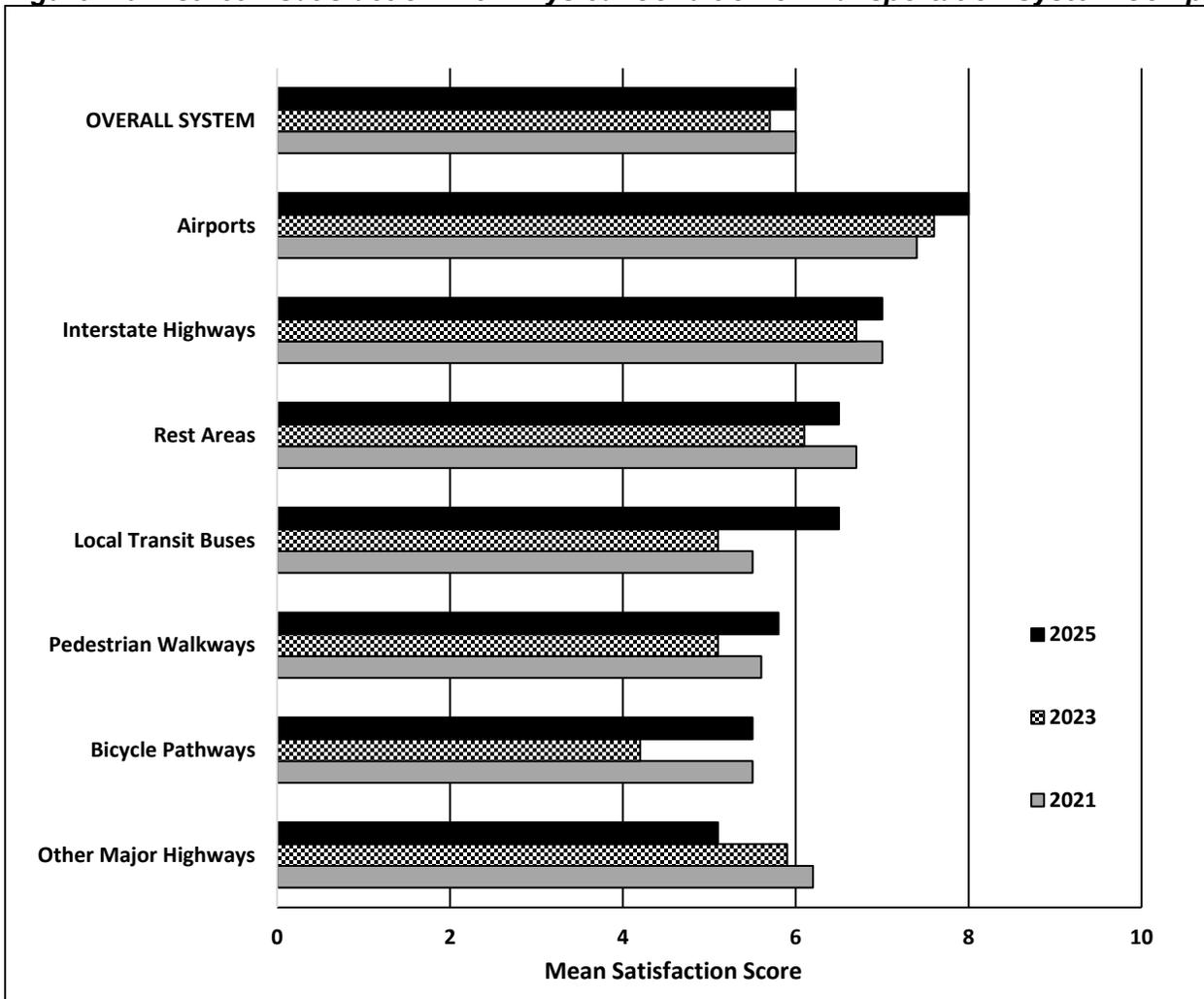
DISTRICT 2—BUTTE

Satisfaction with Physical Condition of Transportation System

With a mean score of 6.0, residents of District 2 (Butte) indicated that they were somewhat satisfied with the physical condition of the overall transportation system (Figure 7.6)

- Respondents were the most satisfied with the physical condition of airports (8.0), followed by interstate highways (7.0) and rest areas (6.5).
- Respondents were the least satisfied with the physical condition of other major highways (5.1), bicycle pathways (5.5), and pedestrian walkways (5.8).
- The largest change in satisfaction scores between the 2023 and 2025 surveys was for local transit buses, which showed a notable increase in satisfaction (6.5) in 2025.

Figure 7.6 District 2 Satisfaction with Physical Condition of Transportation System Components

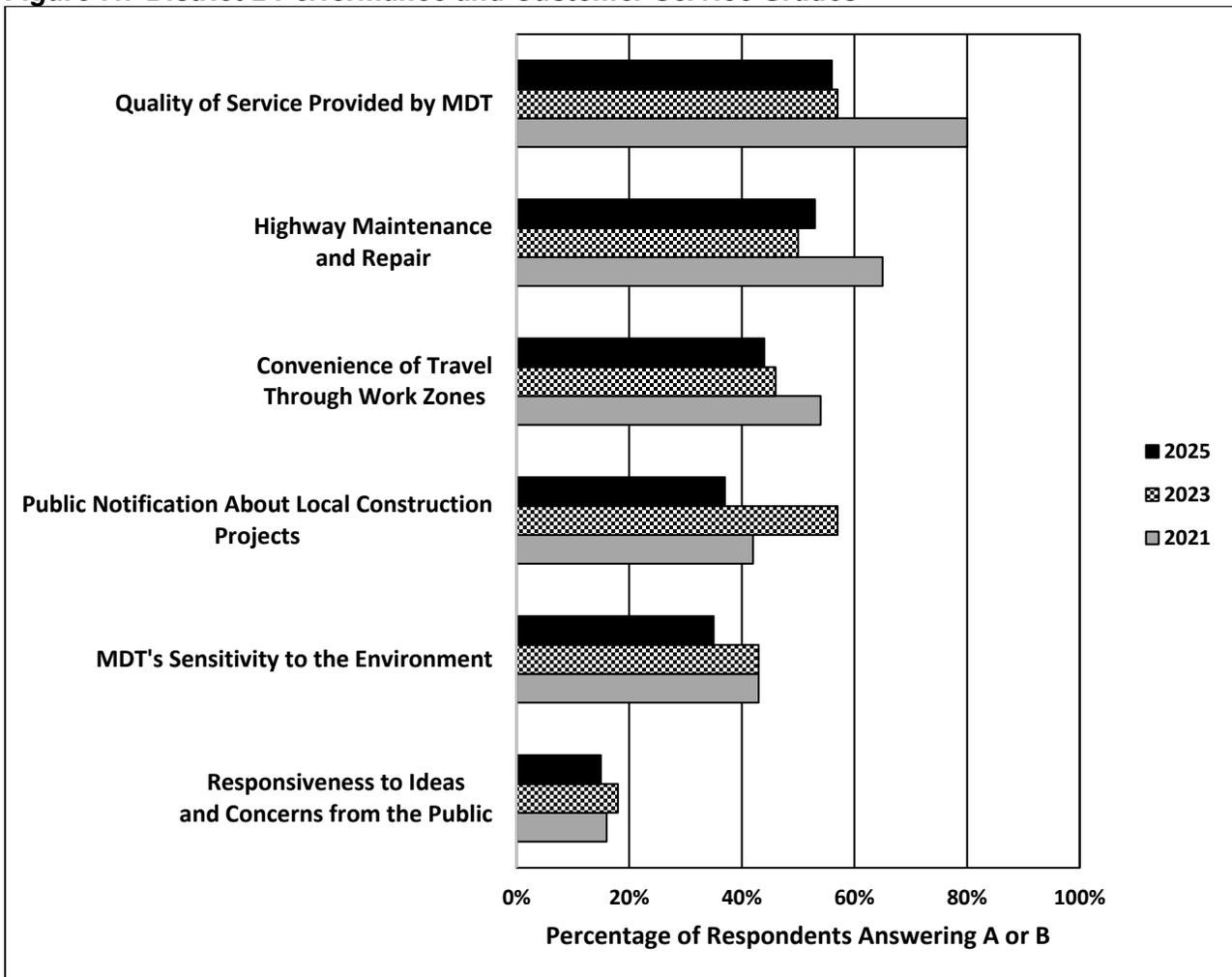


Grading Aspects of MDT's Functions

Respondents in District 2 graded MDT's performance in a number of transportation system areas (Figure 7.7).

- 56% of respondents gave MDT the grade of A or B with respect to the quality of the service the Department provides.
- 15% gave MDT the grade of A or B with respect to MDT's responsiveness to the public's ideas and concerns.
- The greatest difference between the 2023 and 2025 surveys occurred in the area of the public notification process, which saw a decrease in grade in 2025.

Figure 7.7 District 2 Performance and Customer Service Grades

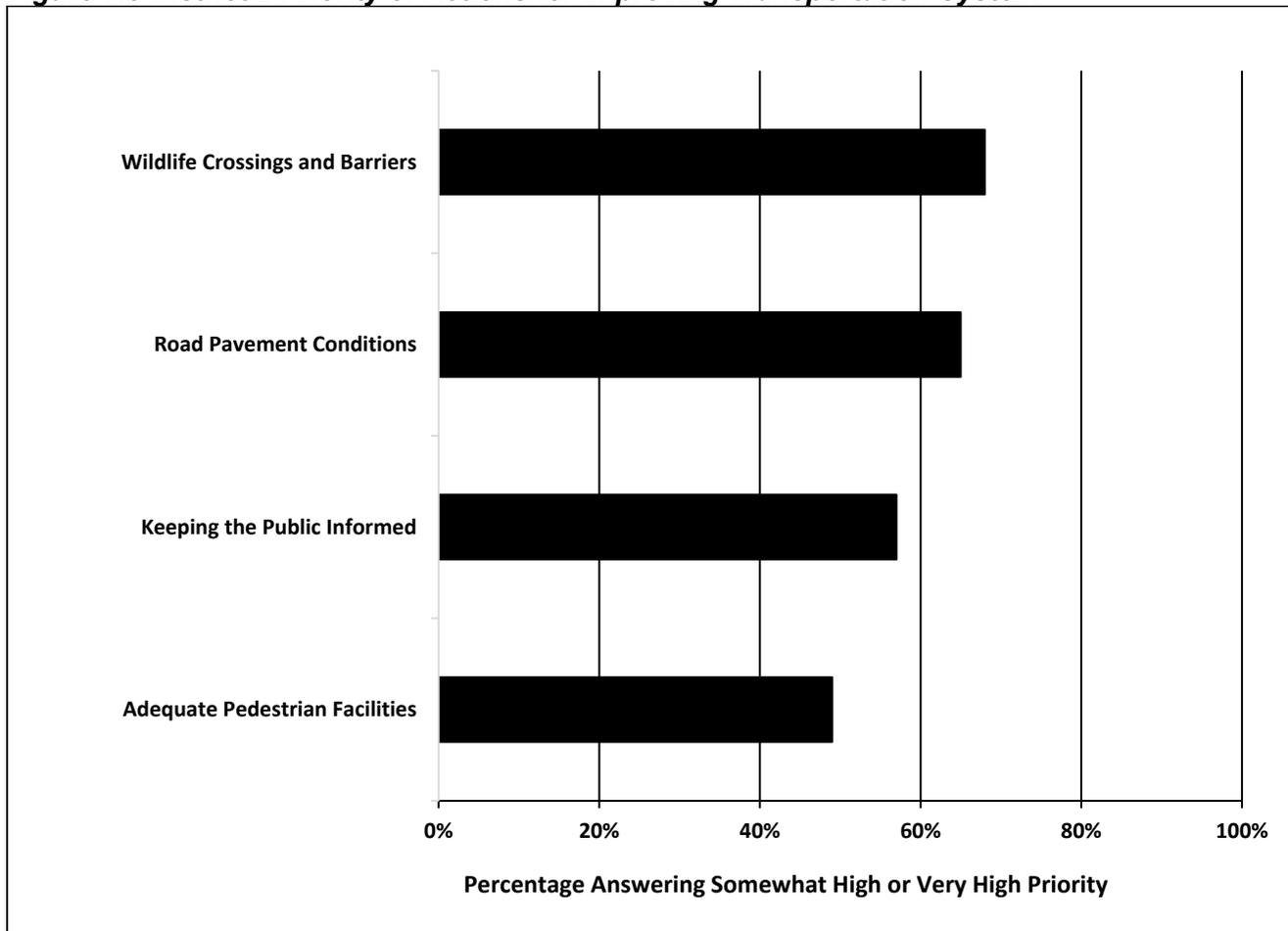


Priority of Actions to Improve Montana's Transportation System

From a list of possible actions that can be undertaken to improve the transportation system in the state, respondents in District 2 ranked the following four the highest (Figure 7.8):

- Including wildlife crossings and barriers in roadway projects received the highest priority ranking with 68% giving either a *somewhat high priority* or a *very high priority*.
- Maintaining road pavement conditions was the next ranked priority at 65%.
- Keeping the public informed ranked third at 57%.

Figure 7.8 District 2 Priority of Actions for Improving Transportation System

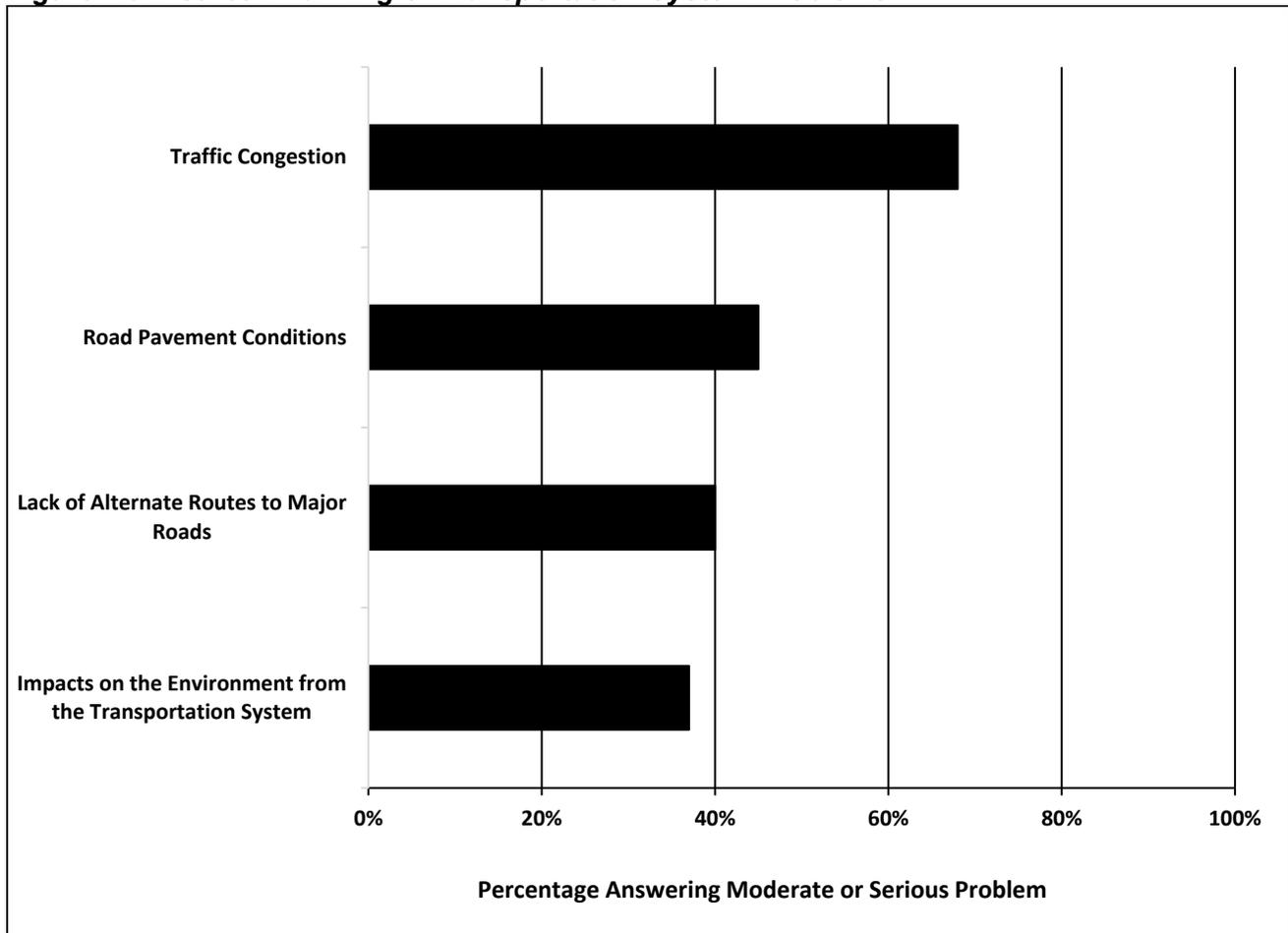


Ranking of Issues Seen as Problems with the Montana Transportation System

Survey respondents in District 2 also considered a list of issues that might be seen as problems with the state's transportation system. This section focuses on the top four rated problems for this District (Figure 7.9).

- Traffic congestion was considered to be either a *moderate problem* or a *serious problem* by the greatest percentage of District 2 respondents at 68%.
- Road pavement conditions was an area seen as a *moderate problem* or a *serious problem* by 45% of respondents, followed by lack of alternate routes to major roads (40%) and impacts on the environment from the transportation system (37%).

Figure 7.9 District 2 Ranking of Transportation System Problems

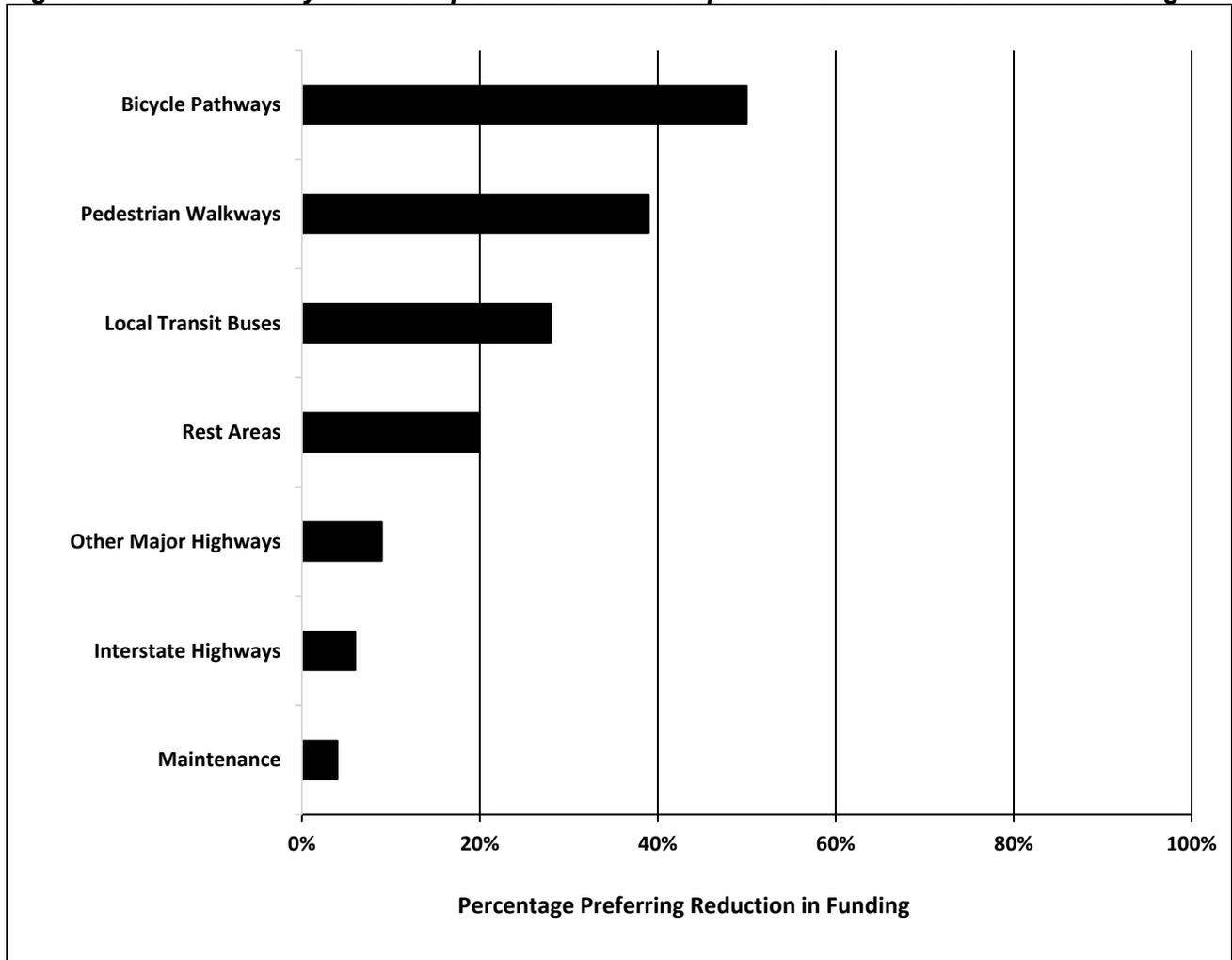


Areas Favored for Decreases in Funding

In the event of future decreases in the MDT budget, District 2 survey respondents indicated the areas within the Montana transportation system where they preferred funding to be reduced (Figure 7.10).

- For residents of District 2, 50% indicated that they would prefer to see reduced funding for bicycle pathways.
- Transportation system maintenance was favored for receiving reduced funding by only a small percentage (4%).

Figure 7.10 District 2 System Components Where Respondents Prefer Decreased Funding



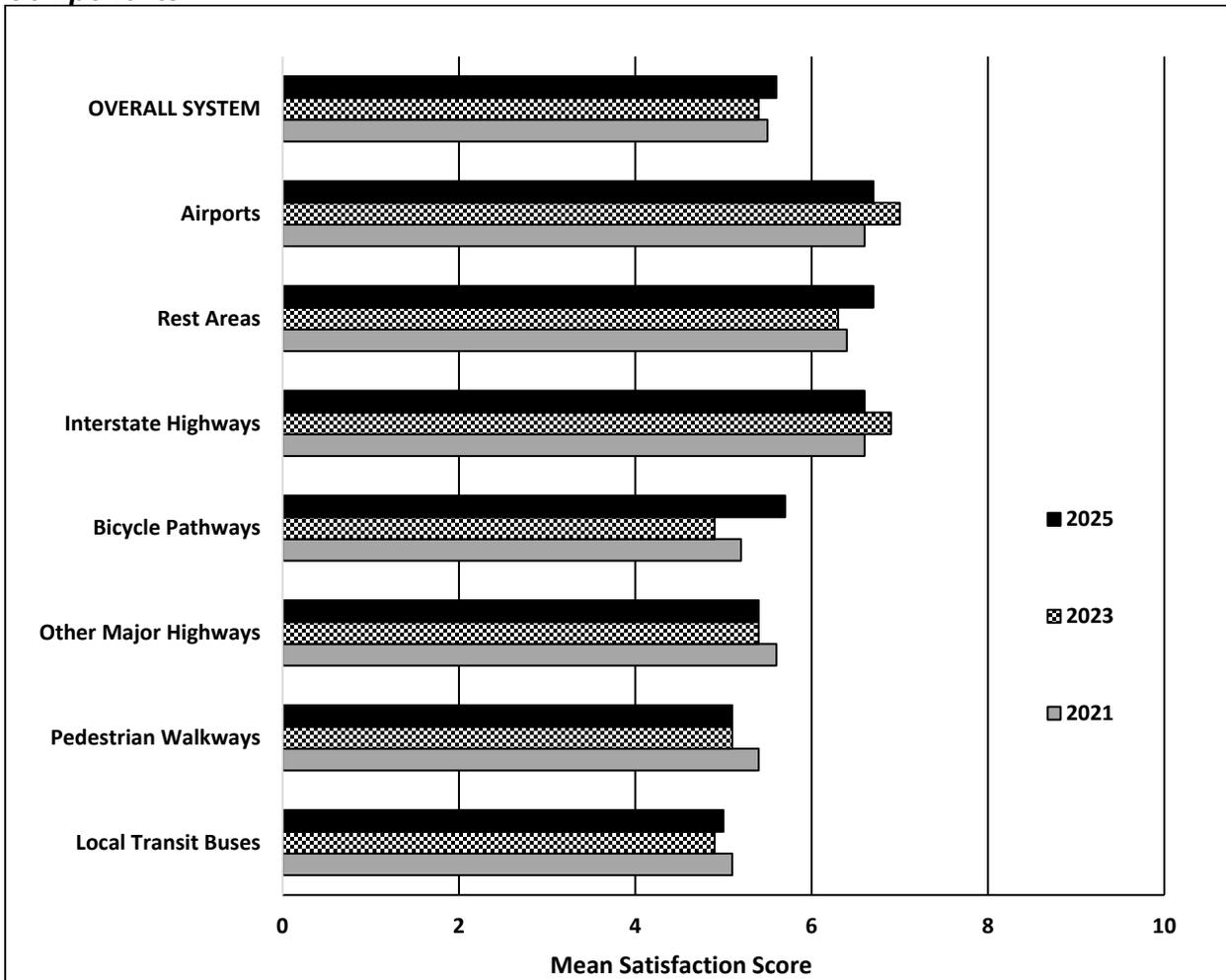
DISTRICT 3—GREAT FALLS

Satisfaction with Physical Condition of Transportation System

With a mean score of 5.6, residents of District 3 (Great Falls) indicated that they were somewhat satisfied with the physical condition of the overall transportation system (Figure 7.11).

- Respondents were the most satisfied with the physical condition of airports (6.7), and rest areas (6.7).
- Respondents were the least satisfied with the physical condition of local transit buses (5.0) and pedestrian walkways (5.1).
- Between 2023 and 2025, satisfaction scores for airports and interstate highways decreased slightly, while the remainder increased or stayed the same.

Figure 7.11 District 3 Satisfaction with Physical Condition of Transportation System Components

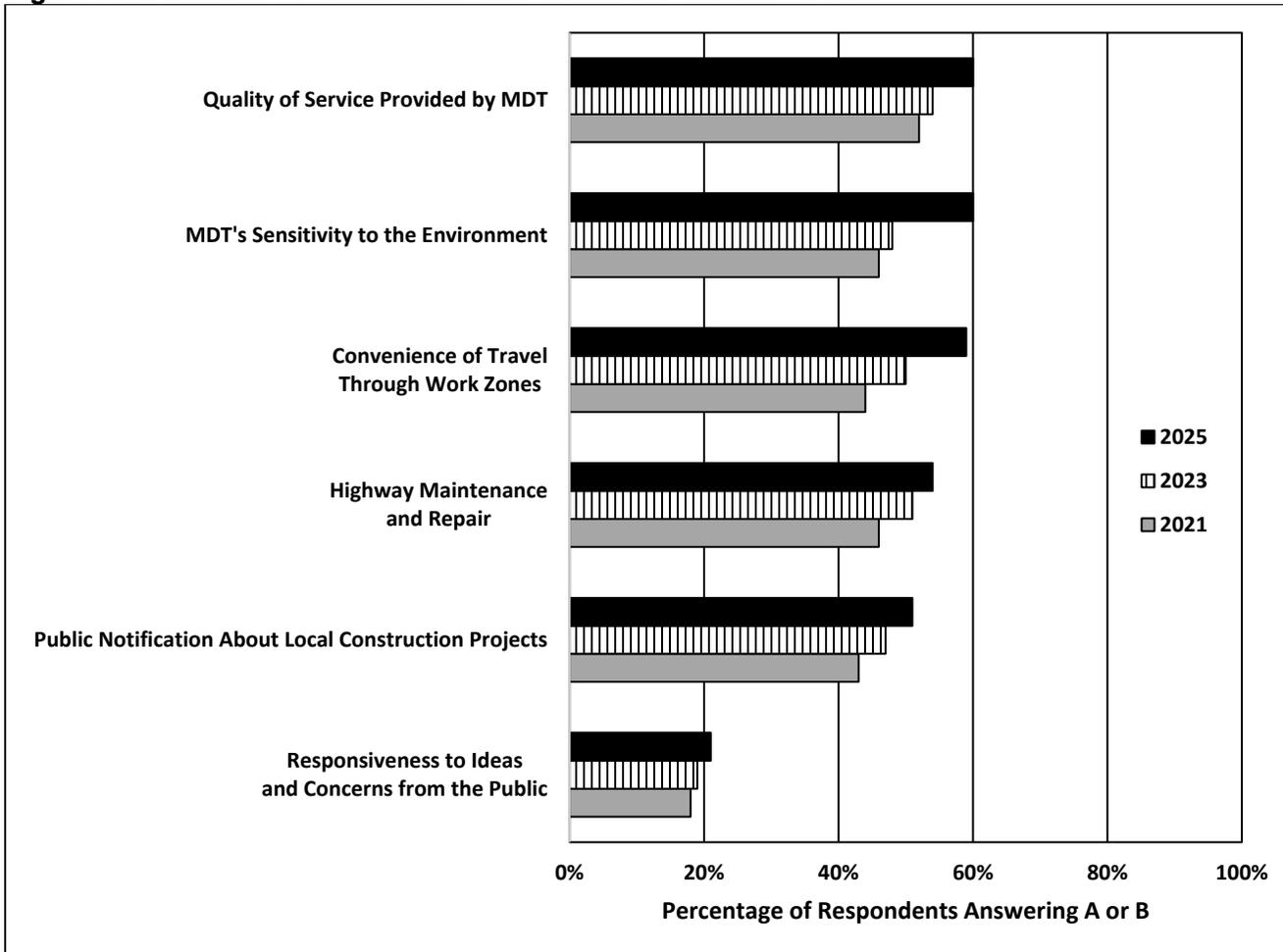


Grading Aspects of MDT's Functions

Respondents in District 3 graded MDT's performance in a number of transportation system areas (Figure 7.12).

- 60% of respondents gave MDT the grade of A or B with respect to the quality of service the Department provides.
- 21% gave MDT the grade of A or B with respect to MDT's responsiveness to the public's ideas and concerns.
- Between the 2023 and 2025 surveys, grades increased in all areas for District 3.

Figure 7.12 District 3 Performance and Customer Service Grades

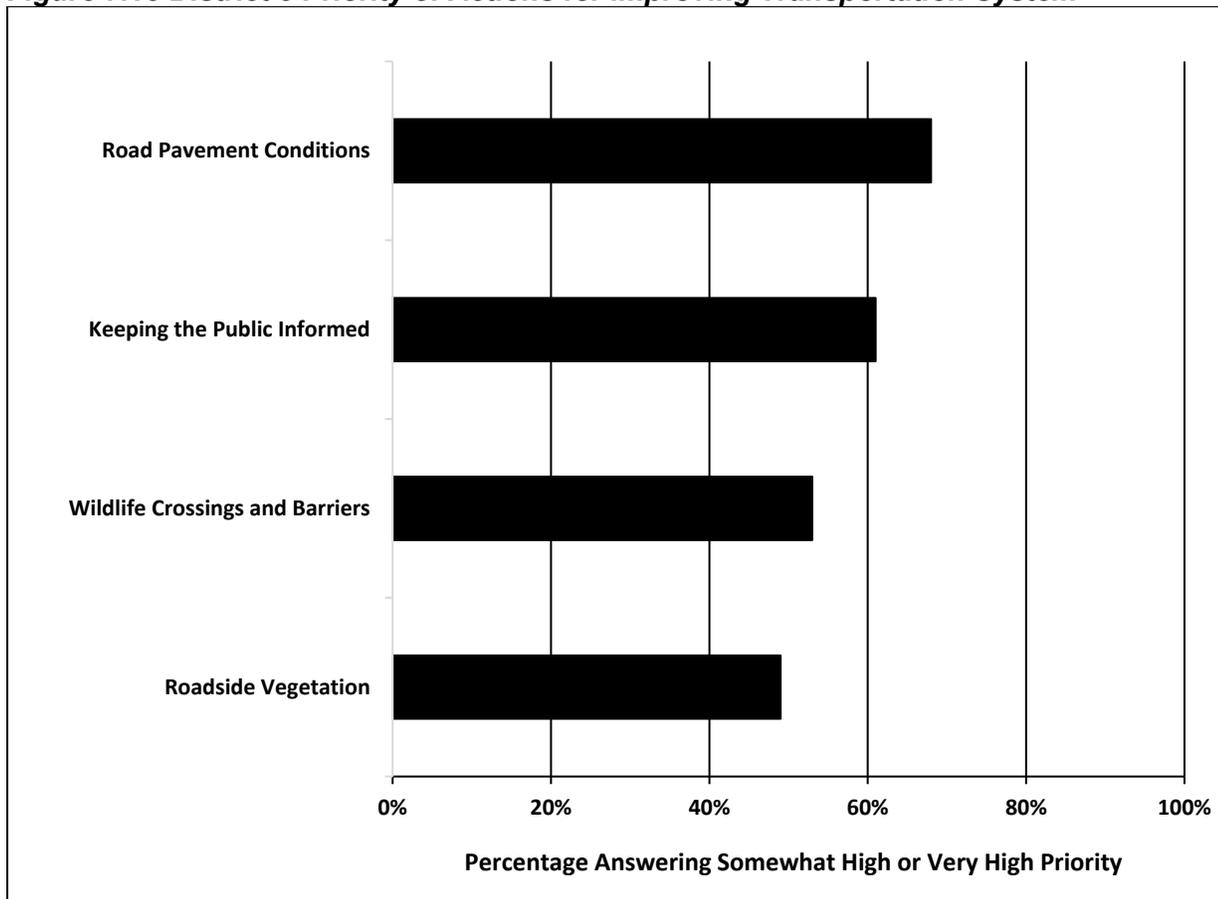


Priority of Actions to Improve Montana's Transportation System

From a list of possible actions that can be undertaken to improve the transportation system in the state, respondents in District 3 ranked the following four the highest (Figure 7.13):

- Maintaining road pavement conditions received the highest priority ranking with 68% seeing it as a *somewhat high* priority or a *very high* priority.
- Keeping the public informed about transportation issues received the second-highest priority rating at 61%.
- Including wildlife crossings and barriers in projects and roadside vegetation received ratings of 53% and 49%, respectively.

Figure 7.13 District 3 Priority of Actions for Improving Transportation System

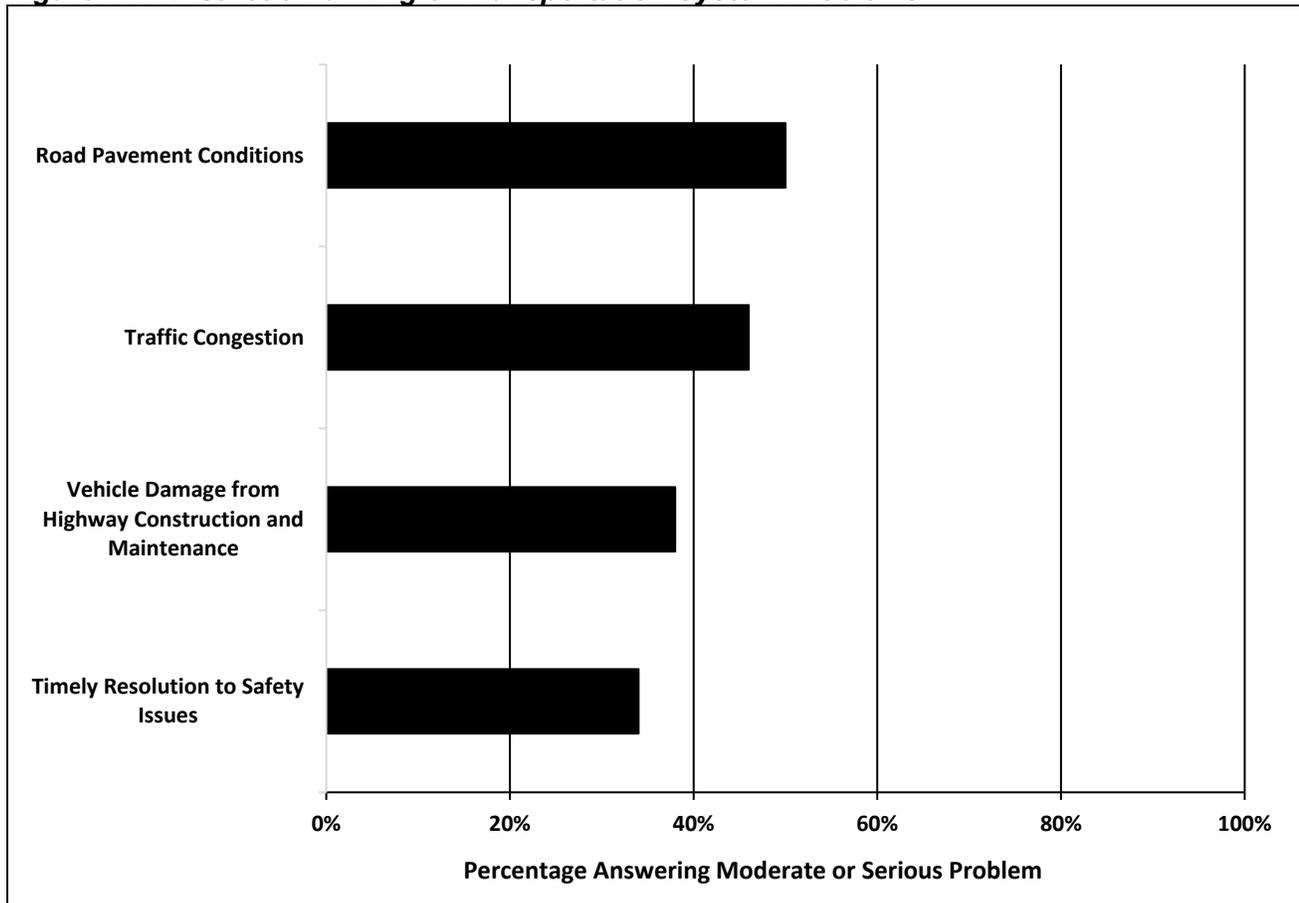


Ranking of Issues Seen as Problems with the Montana Transportation System

Survey respondents in District 3 also considered a list of issues that might be seen as problems with the state's transportation system. This section focuses on the top four rated problems for this District (Figure 7.14).

- Road pavement conditions was an area considered to be either a *moderate problem* or a *serious problem* by the greatest percentage of District 3 respondents at 50%.
- Traffic congestion (46%), vehicle damage from construction and maintenance (38%), and timely resolution of safety issues (34%) rounded out the list.

Figure 7.14 District 3 Ranking of Transportation System Problems

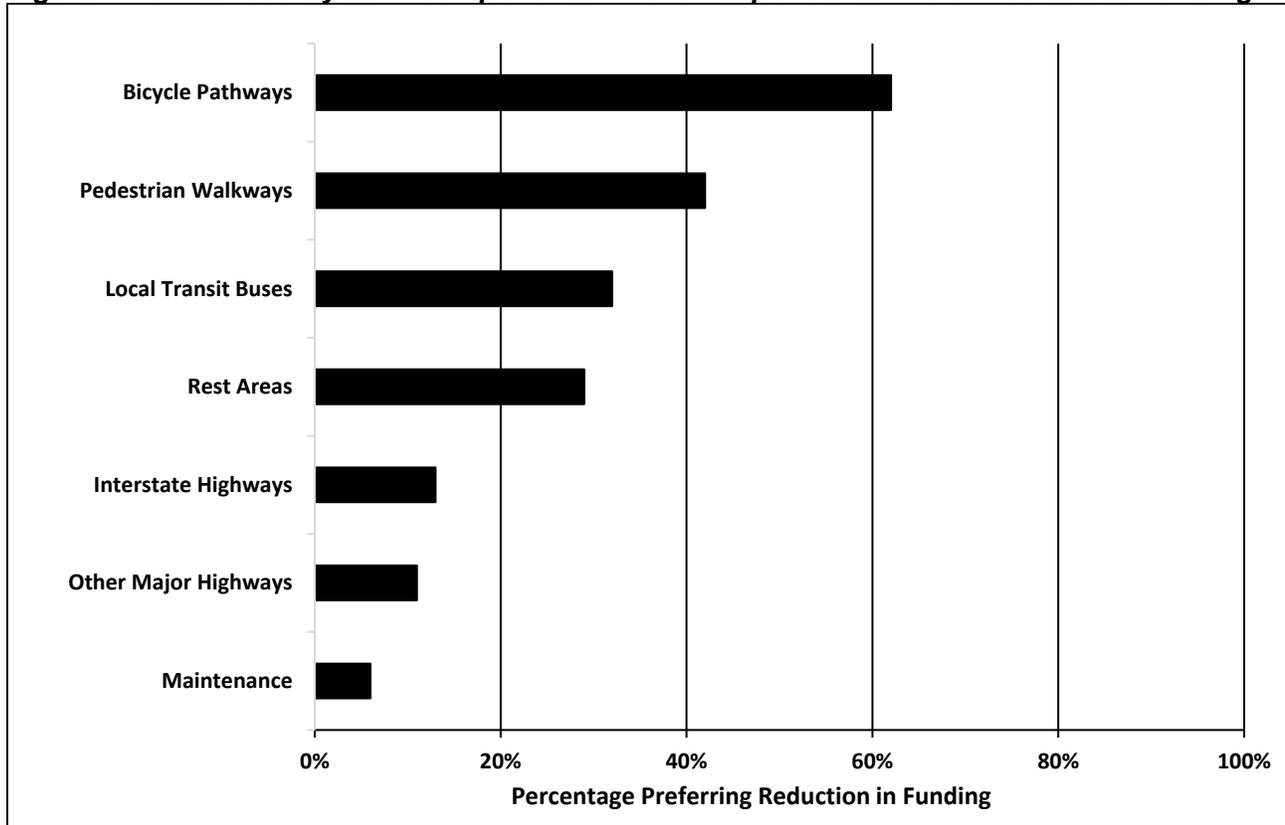


Areas Favored for Decreases in Funding

In the event of future decreases in the MDT budget, District 3 survey respondents indicated the areas within the Montana transportation system where they preferred funding to be reduced (Figure 7.15).

- For residents of District 3, the majority (62%) indicated that they would prefer to see reduced funding for bicycle pathways.
- Transportation system maintenance was favored for reduced funding by only a small percentage (6%).

Figure 7.15 District 3 System Components Where Respondents Prefer Decreased Funding



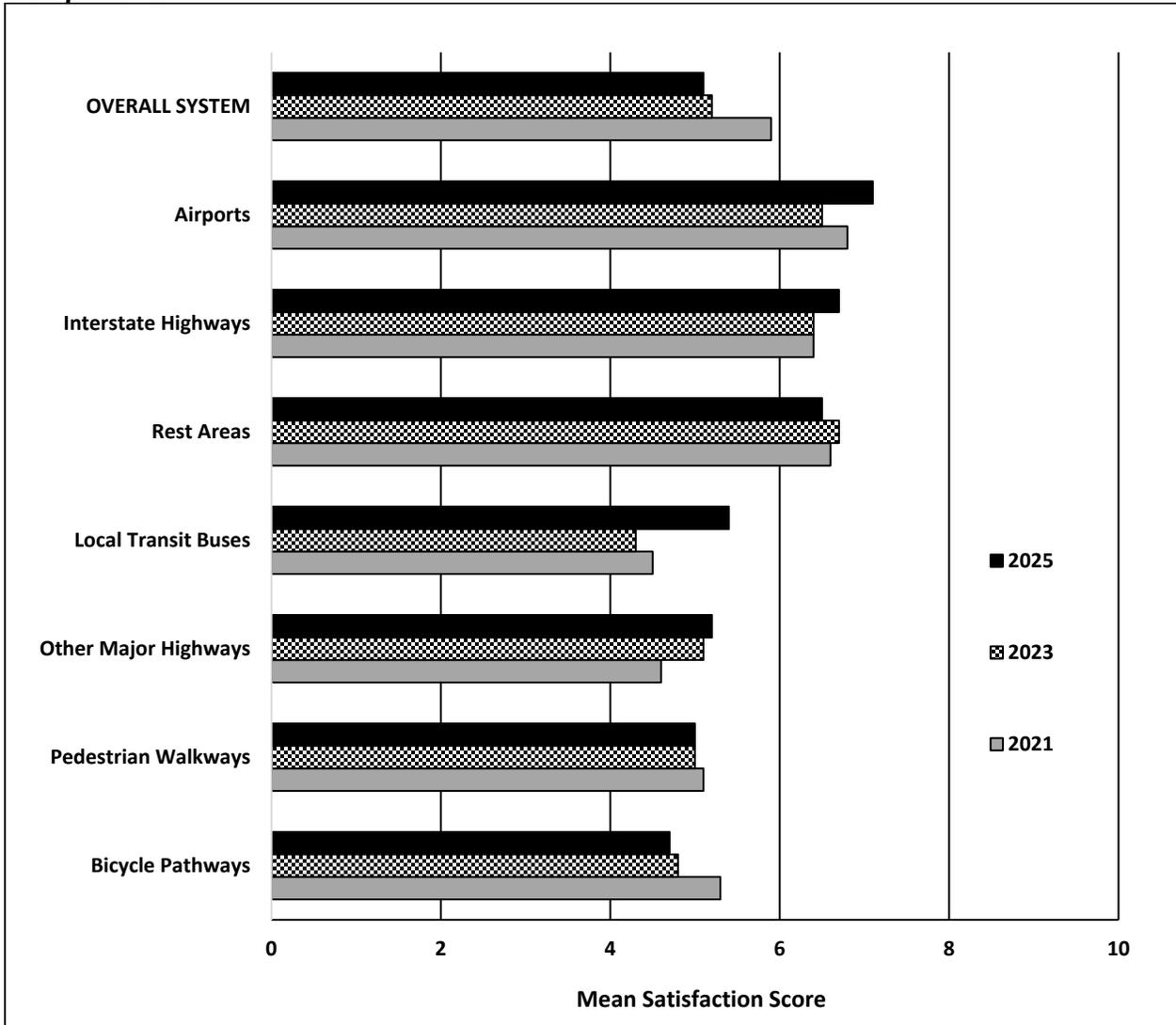
DISTRICT 4—GLENDDIVE

Satisfaction with Physical Condition of Transportation System

With a mean score of 5.1, residents of District 4 (Glendive) indicated that they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the physical condition of the overall transportation system (Figure 7.16).

- Respondents were the most satisfied with the physical condition of airports (7.1), followed by interstate highways (6.7) and rest areas (6.5).
- Respondents were the least satisfied with the physical condition of bicycle pathways (4.7).
- Improvement was seen in satisfaction with the physical condition of local transit buses between the 2023 and 2025 surveys.

Figure 7.16 District 4 Satisfaction with Physical Condition of Transportation System Components

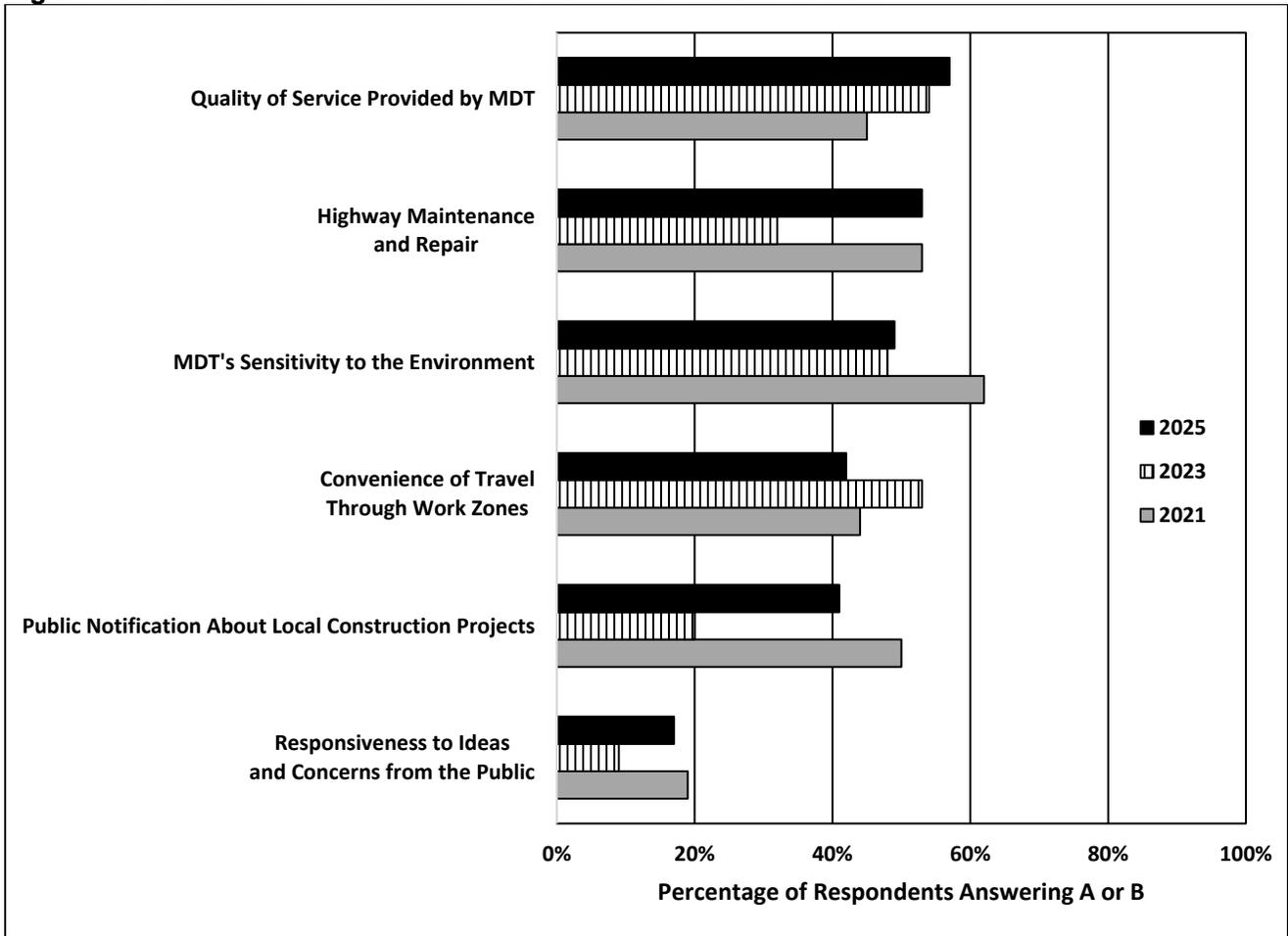


Grading Aspects of MDT's Functions

Respondents in District 4 graded MDT's performance in a number of transportation system areas (Figure 7.17).

- 57% of respondents gave MDT the grade of A or B with respect to the quality of service the Department provides.
- 17% of respondents gave MDT the grade of A or B with respect to the Department's responsiveness to the public's ideas and concerns.
- 2025 saw the greatest improvements in the percentage of respondents giving As or Bs to highway maintenance and repair and the public notification process.

Figure 7.17 District 4 Performance and Customer Service Grades

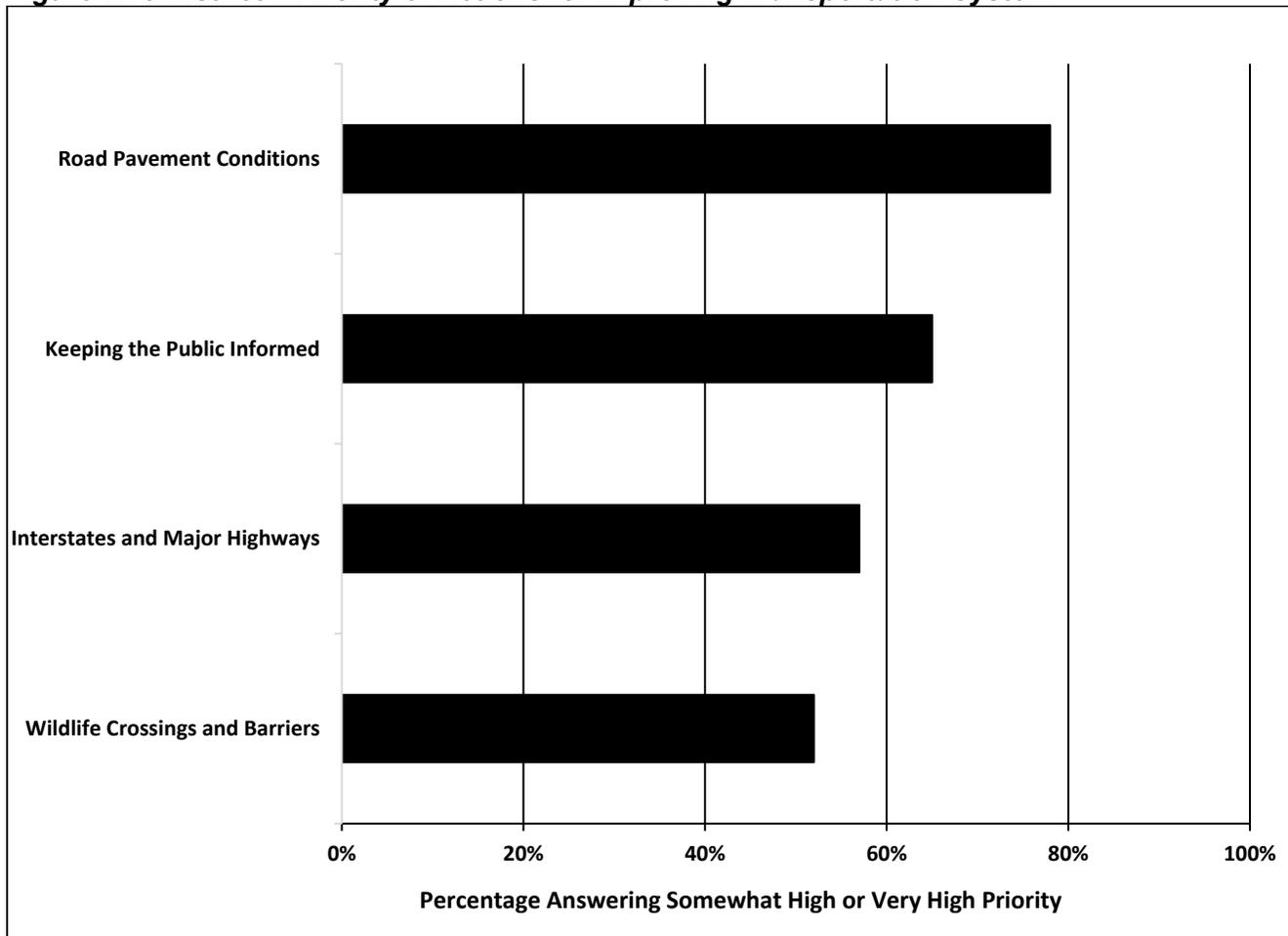


Priority of Actions to Improve Montana's Transportation System

From a list of possible actions that can be taken to improve the transportation system in the state, respondents in District 4 ranked the following four the highest (Figure 7.18):

- Maintaining road pavement conditions received the highest priority ranking, with 78% giving it a *somewhat high priority* or *very high priority*.
- Keeping the public informed was the second highest ranked priority at 65%.
- Interstates and major highways was the third highest ranked priority area at 57%.

Figure 7.18 District 4 Priority of Actions for Improving Transportation System

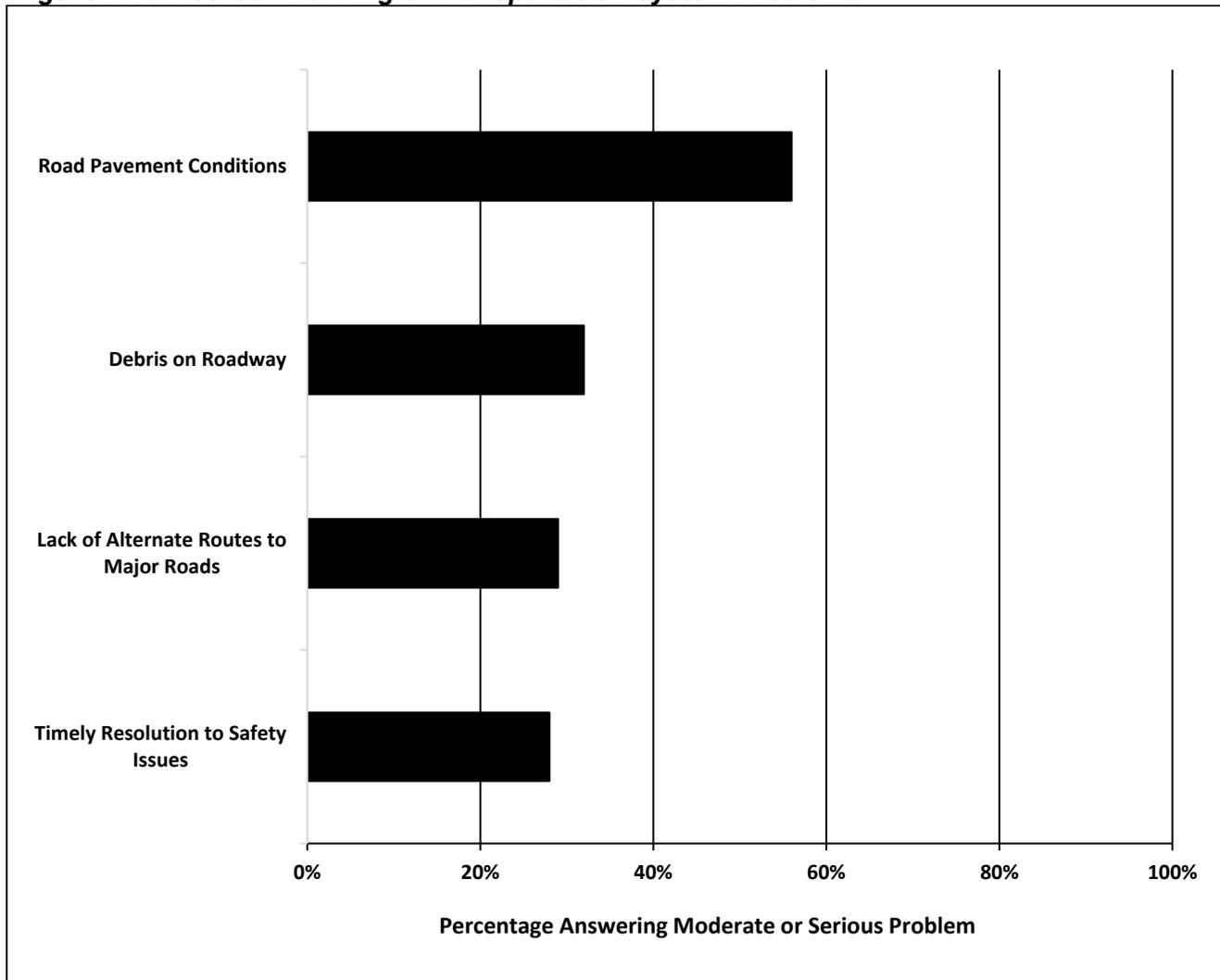


Ranking of Issues Seen as Problems with the Montana Transportation System

Survey respondents in District 4 also considered a list of issues that might be seen as problems with the state's transportation system. This section focuses on the top four rated problems for this District (Figure 7.19).

- Road pavement conditions was considered either a *moderate problem* or a *serious problem* by the greatest percentage of District 4 respondents at 56%.
- Debris on the roadways (32%), lack of alternate routes to major roads (29%), and timely resolution of safety issues (28%) rounded out the list.

Figure 7.19 District 4 Ranking of Transportation System Problems

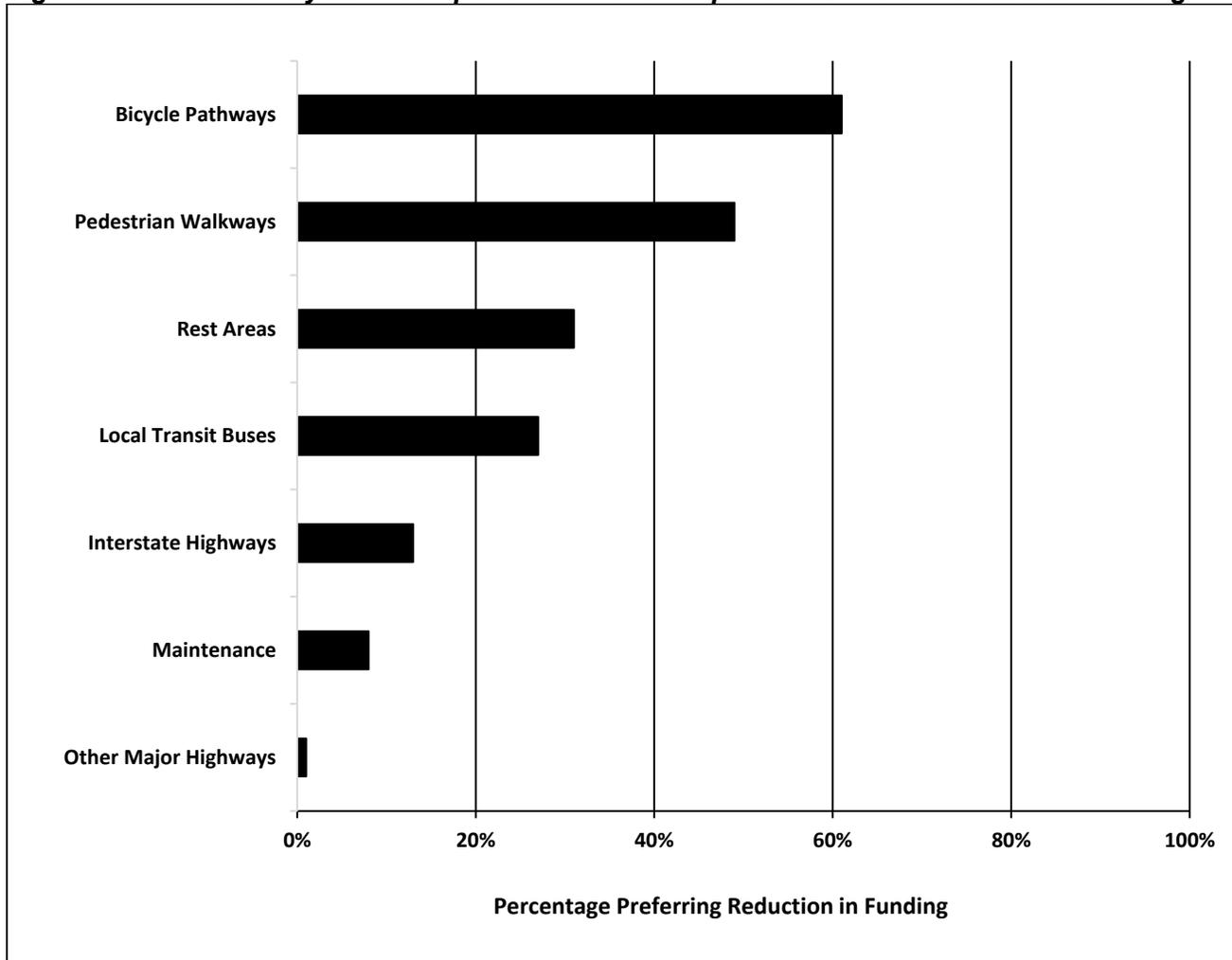


Areas Favored for Decreases in Funding

In the event of future decreases in the MDT budget, District 4 survey respondents indicated the areas within the Montana transportation system where they preferred funding to be reduced (Figure 7.20).

- The majority (61%) indicated that they would prefer to see reduced funding for bicycle pathways.
- Other major highways were favored for reduced funding by a very small percentage of District 4 respondents (1%).

Figure 7.20 District 4 System Components Where Respondents Prefer Decreased Funding



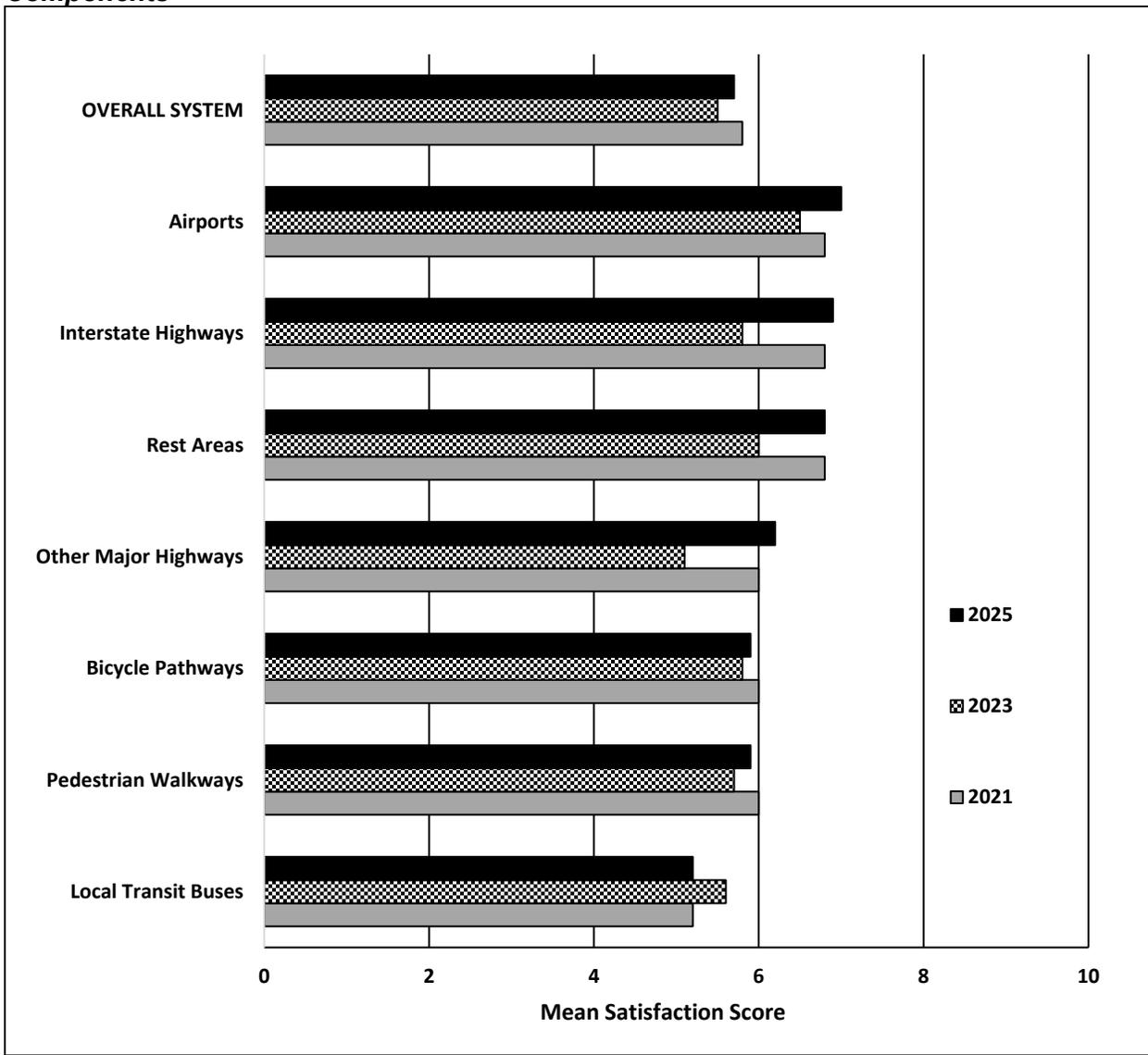
DISTRICT 5—BILLINGS

Satisfaction with Physical Condition of Transportation System

With a mean score of 5.7, residents of District 5 (Billings) indicated that they were somewhat satisfied with the physical condition of the overall transportation system (Figure 7.21)

- Respondents were the most satisfied with the physical condition of airports (7.0), interstate highways (6.9) and rest areas (6.8).
- Respondents were the least satisfied with the physical condition of local transit buses (5.2).
- Between 2023 and 2025, an increase in levels of satisfaction occurred for all physical components, with the exception of local transit buses.

Figure 7.21 District 5 Satisfaction with Physical Condition of Transportation System Components

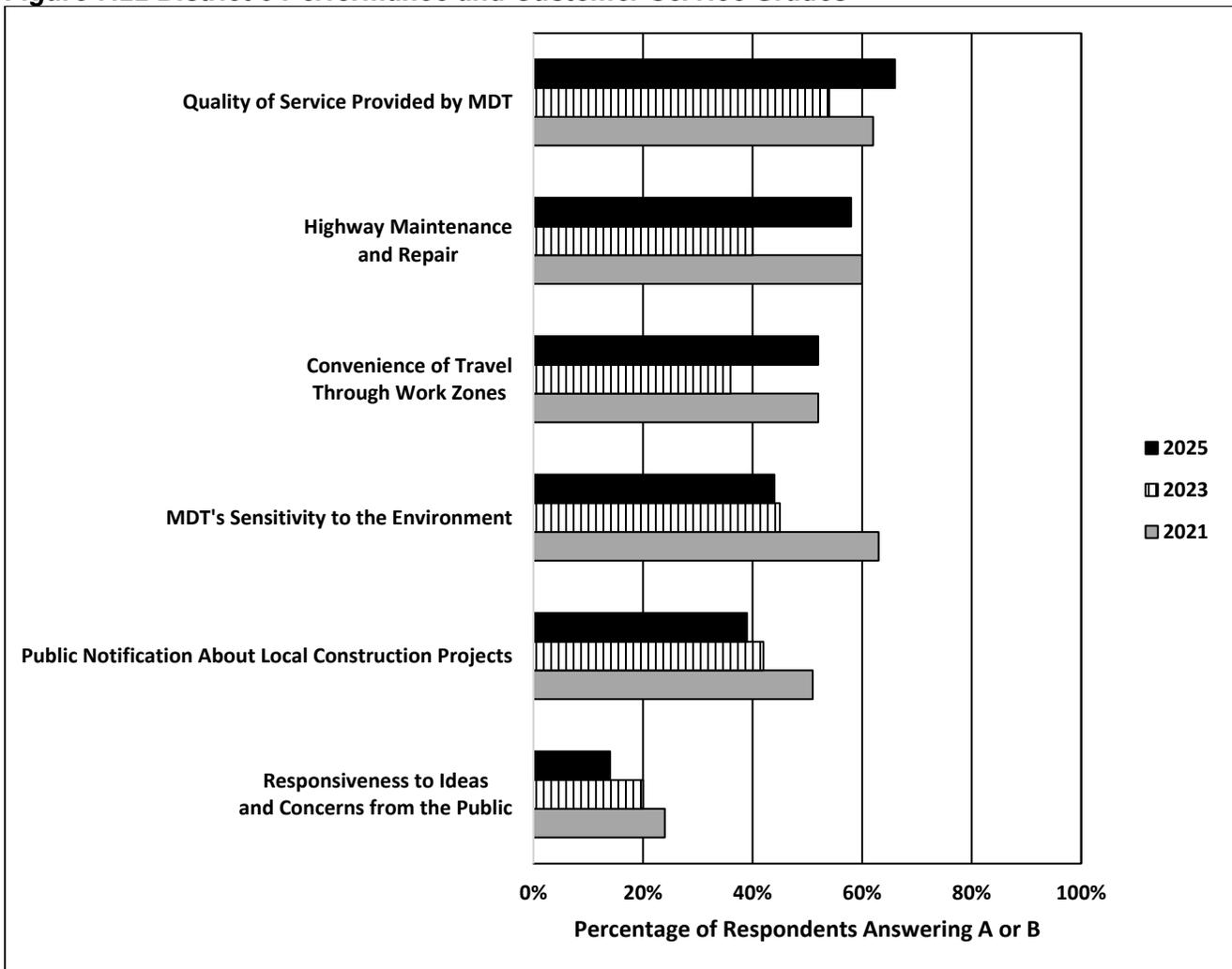


Grading Aspects of MDT's Functions

Respondents in District 5 graded MDT's performance in a number of transportation system areas (Figure 7.22).

- 66% of respondents gave MDT the grade of A or B with respect to the quality of service provided by the Department.
- 14% of respondents gave MDT the grade of A or B with respect to the Department's responsiveness to the public's ideas and concerns.
- In 2025, the percentage of As and Bs given for quality of service provided, highway maintenance and repair, and convenience of travel through work zones increased.

Figure 7.22 District 5 Performance and Customer Service Grades

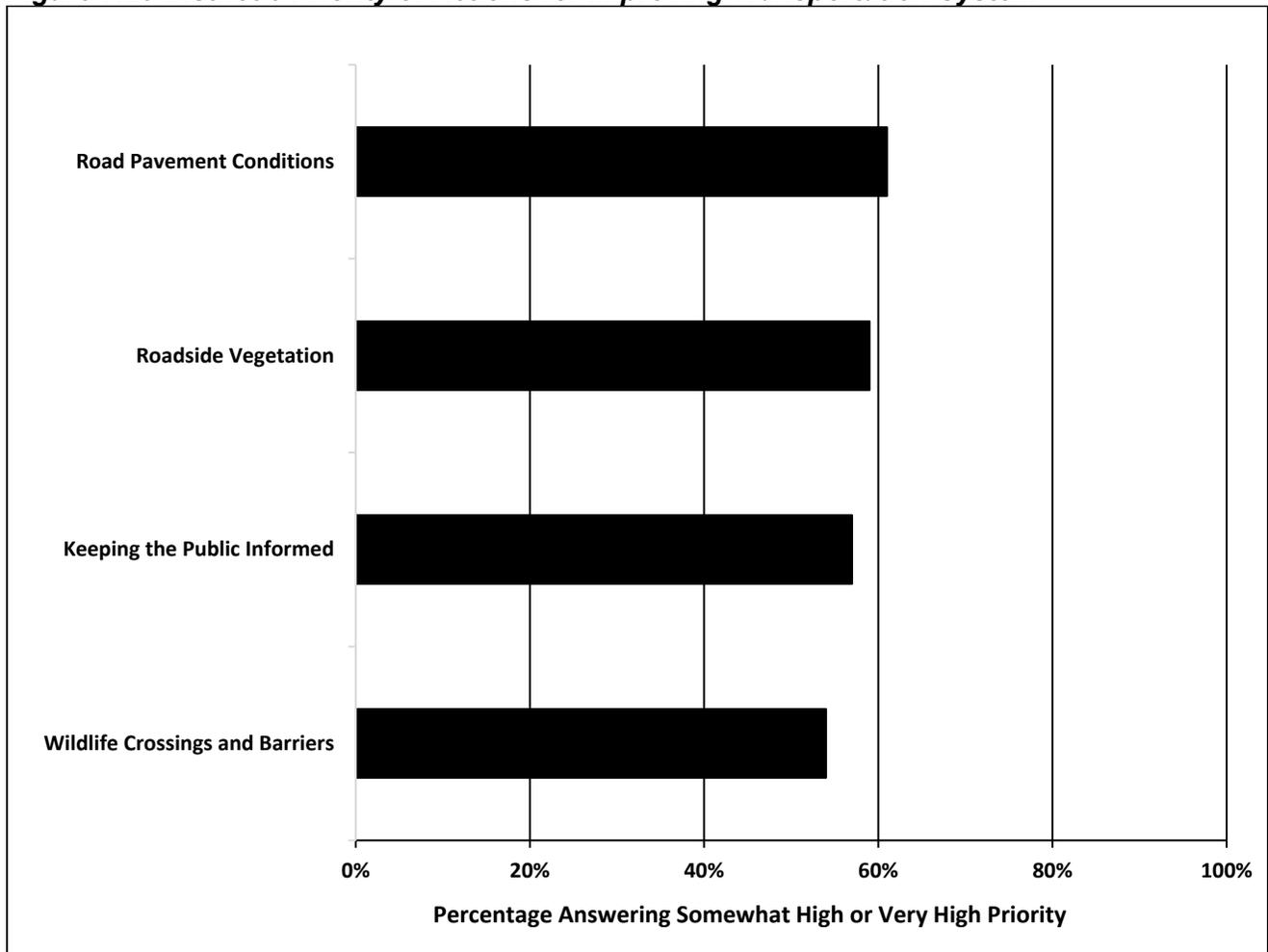


Priority of Actions to Improve Montana's Transportation System

From a list of possible actions that can be undertaken to improve the transportation system in the state, respondents in District 5 ranked the following four the highest (Figure 7.23):

- Maintaining road pavement conditions received the highest priority ranking, with 61% deeming it a *somewhat high priority* or *very high priority*.
- Roadside vegetation was ranked second (59%).
- Keeping the public informed was ranked third (57%).

Figure 7.23 District 5 Priority of Actions for Improving Transportation System

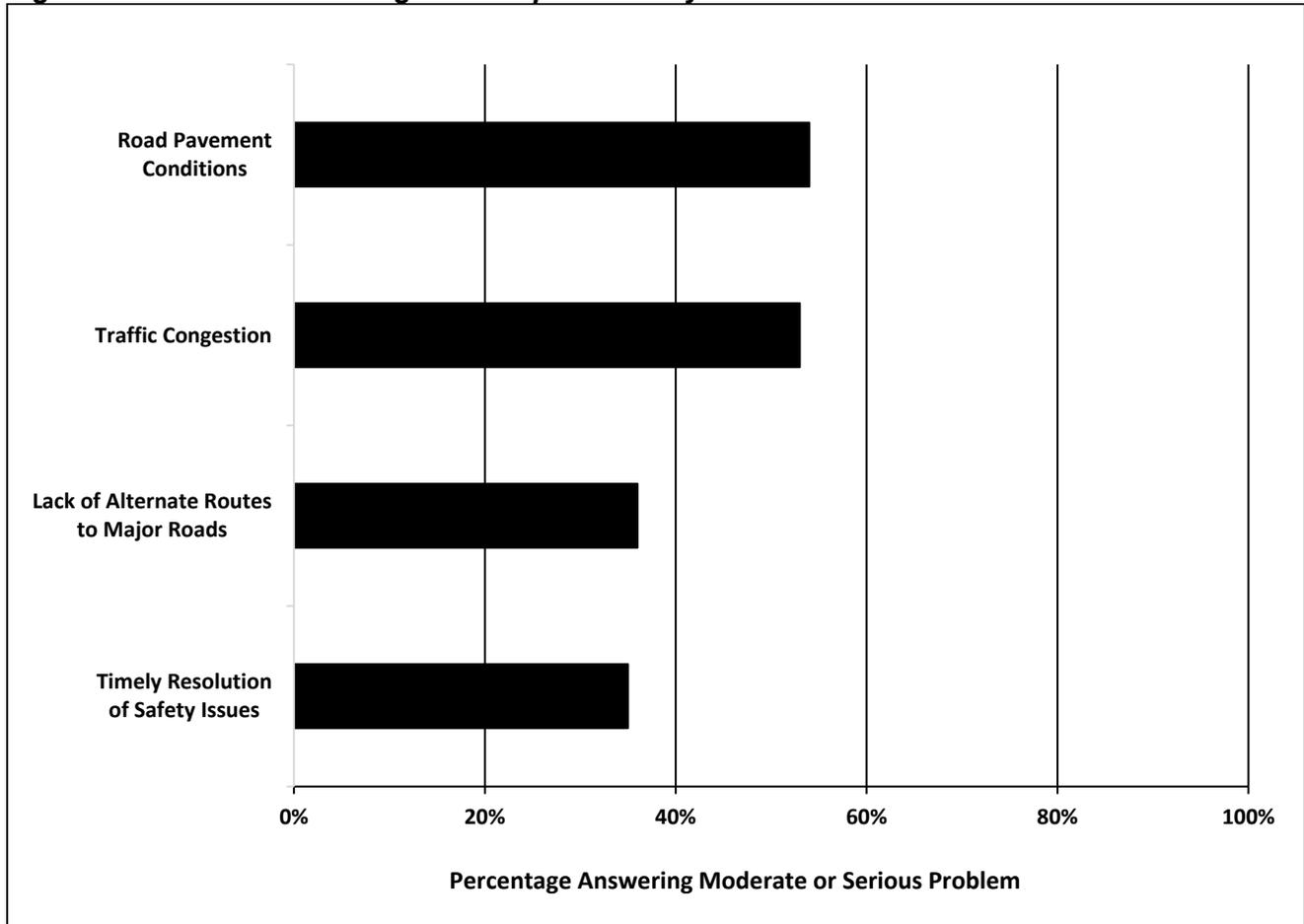


Ranking of Issues Seen as Problems with the Montana Transportation System

Survey respondents in District 5 also considered a list of issues that might be seen as problems with the state's transportation system. This section focuses on the top four rated problems for this District (Figure 7.24).

- Road pavement conditions was an area considered to be either a *moderate problem* or a *serious problem* by the greatest percentage of respondents at 54%.
- Three additional items ranked high on the list of potential problems for District 5 respondents: traffic congestion (53%), lack of alternate routes to major roads (36%), and timely resolution of safety issues (35%).

Figure 7.24 District 5 Ranking of Transportation System Problems

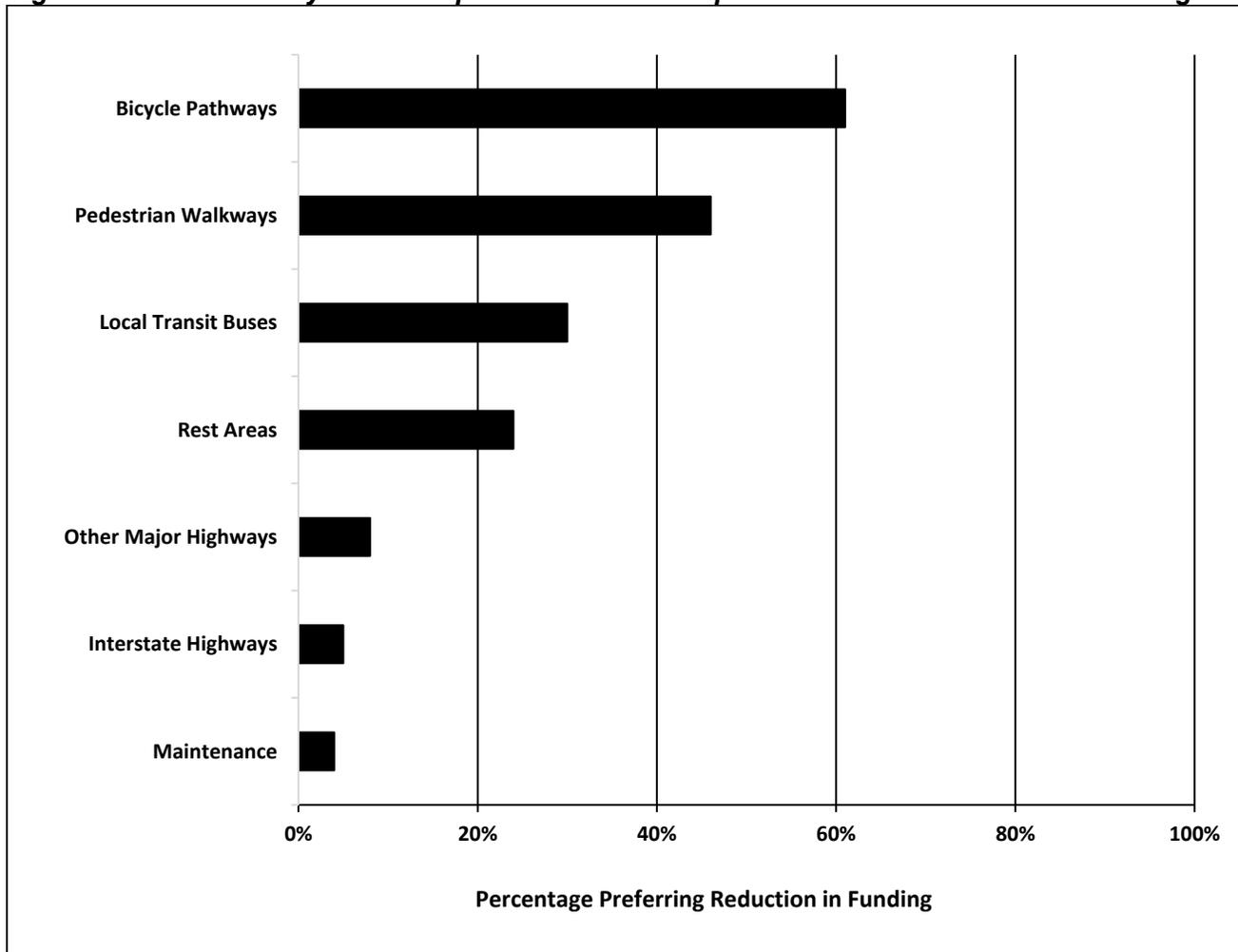


Areas Favored for Decreases in Funding

In the event of future decreases in the MDT budget, District 5 survey respondents indicated the areas within the Montana transportation system where they preferred funding to be reduced (Figure 7.25).

- The majority (61%) indicated they would prefer to see reduced funding for bicycle pathways.
- Transportation system maintenance was favored for reduced funding by only a small percentage (4%).

Figure 7.25 District 5 System Components Where Respondents Prefer Decreased Funding



CHAPTER 8 | SURVEY METHODS

Survey Administration

The 2025 Public Involvement Survey was administered from September 8, 2025, through December 1, 2025. Contacting 3,766 eligible respondents resulted in 1,063 survey participants for a response rate of 28%.¹ This response rate is typical for a rigorously conducted, address-sampled mail survey².

The survey was administered by mail with responses collected either via the Internet or via a hardcopy questionnaire. Sampled potential respondents received up to four mail contacts during the survey administration period:

1. An introductory letter inviting participation via an Internet link provided.
2. An 8.5" x 11" questionnaire packet mailed to non-respondents, inviting them to participate via an internet link provided or by completing a hardcopy questionnaire and returning it in the stamped envelope provided.
3. An 8.5" x 11" second questionnaire packet mailed to non-respondents, inviting them to participate via an internet link provided or by completing a hardcopy questionnaire and returning it in the stamped envelope provided.
4. A third 8.5" x 11" questionnaire packet mailed to non-respondents, again inviting participation via an internet link provided or by completing a hardcopy questionnaire and returning it in the stamped envelope provided.

Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire was authored by MDT, with BBER formatting the hardcopy questionnaire. In addition, BBER programmed and tested the internet version of the questionnaire using software provided by Qualtrics, Inc. MDT was the approving authority for the final questionnaire.

Sampling

The study population consisted of adults ages 18 and older who lived in an occupied dwelling listed in the U.S. Postal Service Delivery Sequence File. BBER sampled 4,000 potential respondents, 800 from each of MDT's five Districts. Sampling was conducted using an addressed-based, random sample of residences purchased from Dynata, Inc. The sample was stratified by MDT District. Within households, random sampling was conducted using the next birthday method. This survey yielded an overall sampling error rate of +/- 5.3%.

Weighting

The data presented in this report is weighted to produce estimates representative of the adult Montana population and adults in each MDT District. Survey weights are required to bridge the sample to the actual population as potential respondents in each sample strata had different probabilities of selection³. Survey weights for each MDT District and the state were calibrated to population totals

¹ This response rate is calculated using American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) formula RR1 which is AAPOR's most conservative formula. Using AAPOR's formula RR3, which makes a very reasonable estimate of how many sampled cases from which BBER received no response were actually ineligible, the response rate was 32%. Source <https://aapor.org/standards-and-ethics/standard-definitions/>.

² Dillman, Smyth, and Christian (2014). *Internet, Phone, Mail, and Mixed-Mode Surveys: The Tailored Design Method, 4th edition*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

³ Heeringa, West and Berglund (2017). *Applied Survey Data Analysis: Second Edition*. Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press.

obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey 2019-2023 data⁴, which include sex, age, educational attainment, MDT District, household income, and race.

Data Set Preparation

Following collection and data entry, 100% of mailed questionnaires were verified for data entry accuracy. Appropriate data labels were added as well as composite variables and flags to facilitate analysis. Missing values for the weighting variables, necessary for calibration to the Census population estimates, were imputed using the multiple imputation method⁵. Data was processed using three statistical software packages: IBM SPSS Statistics Version 29 (2023), SAS Version 9.4 (2012) and Statistics Canada's G-EST Version 2.03 (2019).

⁴ Valliant and Dever (2018). *Survey Weights: A Step-by-step Guide to Calculation*. College Station, TX: Stata Press.

⁵ Rubin, D. B. (1987). *Multiple Imputation for Nonresponse in Surveys*. New York, New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

To request an alternative accessible format of this document, please contact MDT's ADA Coordinator at 406-444-5416, Montana Relay Service at 711, or by email at mmaze@mt.gov.

This page is left blank intentionally.



This document was printed at state expense. Information on the cost of publication may be obtained by contacting the Department of Administration.