

# Why Do A Survey?

The survey provides the visioning steering committee with objective, representative information for the goal-setting phase of community visioning. The quantitative data collected from survey responses complements the qualitative information gathered from the focus groups at the transportation assets and barriers workshop.

The modes of transportation that residents use and the routes they take suggest suitable types of transportation enhancements in these areas. Having a sense for people's willingness to help either financially or with their time is important because many transportation enhancements are funded from multiple sources, including grants, private donations, in-kind contributions, and volunteers. Understanding what types of improvements are important to residents gives the committee insight into how to prioritize projects.

# How Is It Done?

With assistance from Iowa State University's Survey Research Services staff in the Center for Survey Statistics and Methodology (CSSM-SRS), ISU visioning program staff conducted a survey to better understand the transportation patterns, behaviors, needs, and desires of Waukon residents. Surveys were mailed to 500 randomly selected residents living in Waukon and the surrounding area. To increase the response rate, the study was publicized through the local media and follow-up packets were mailed to nonrespondents. With adjustments for ineligible respondents (e.g., incorrect addresses, no longer living in the community), the final sample size was 461. A total of 153 people returned surveys, for a response rate of 33.2%. (A response rate of 20% is considered valid.)

# What Did We Find Out?

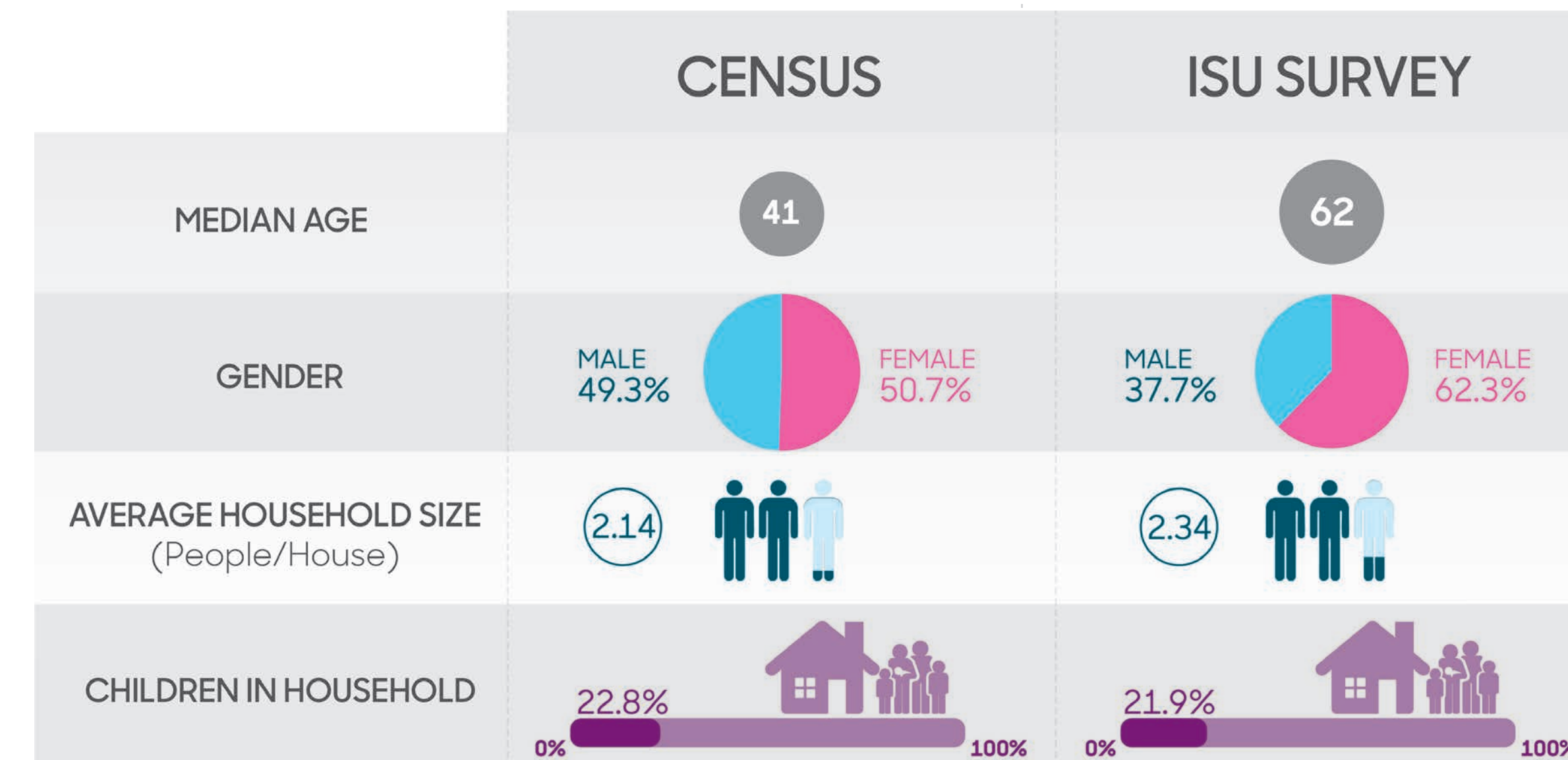
We asked survey recipients what routes they use most often for going to work, walking, and biking. In addition, we asked what qualities and features are important to trail users. We also discovered what residents think is most important in terms of transportation enhancements that address issues such as accessibility, mobility, and safety. Finally, we learned whether or not residents are willing to contribute their time or their financial resources to making enhancements to Waukon. This series of boards summarizes the results of the survey as follows:

- Willingness to Help
- Enhancement Priorities
- Commuting Routes
- Walking Routes
- Biking Routes
- Desired Trail Features

# Waukon Overview

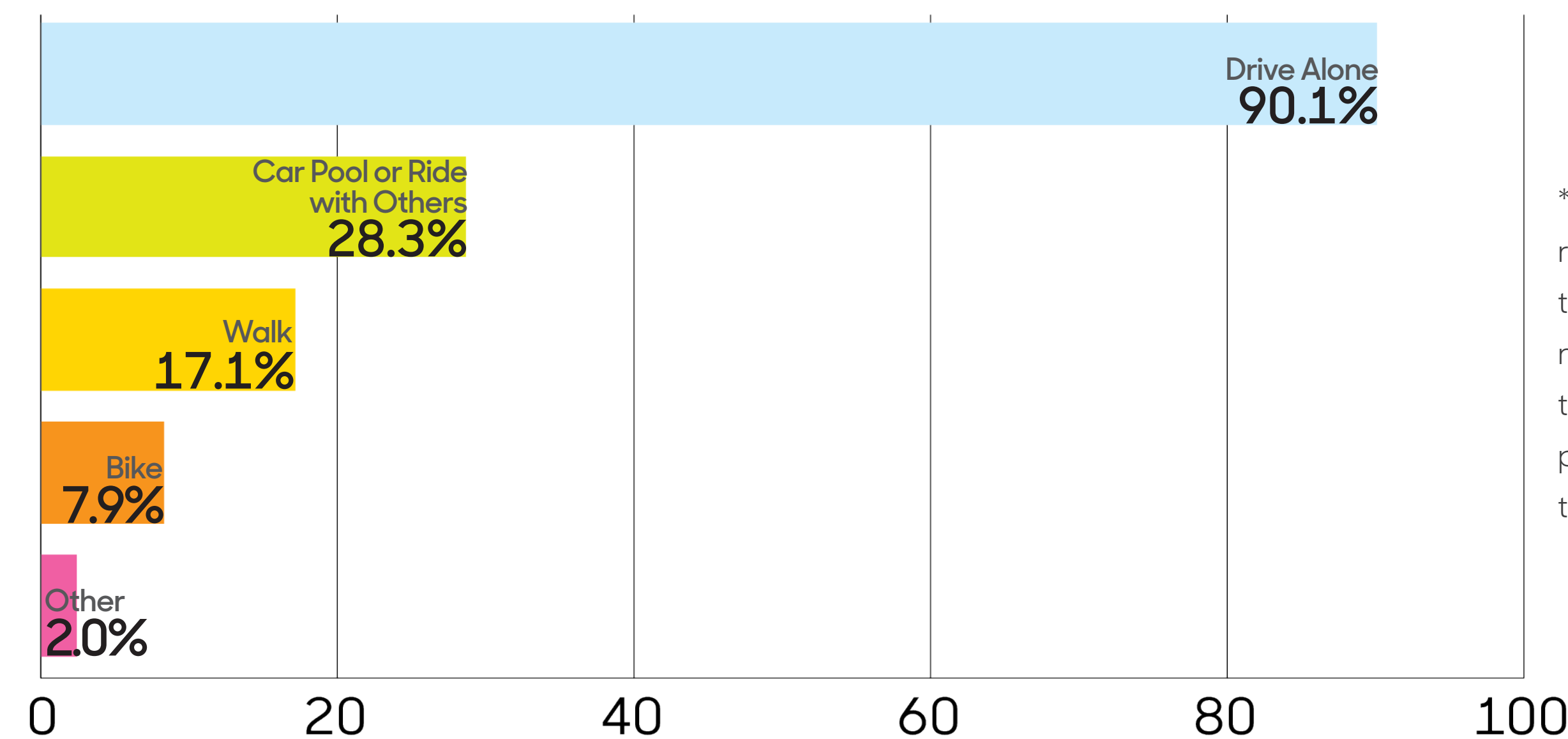
# How Did We Do?

The demographics of the respondents are somewhat different from those obtained from the 2022 American Community Survey (ACS). For example, the survey respondents median age of 62 is significantly older than the ACS estimated average age for Waukon residents of 41. In terms of gender, the percentage of female survey respondents is more than 10% higher than that of 2022 ACS estimates. Average household size among survey respondents is somewhat lower than the 2022 ACS estimates, and the percentage of households with children among survey responses is similar to that of the ACS.



# How Do Waukon Residents Travel?

Most survey respondents drive to important destinations such as the convenience store, the post office, school, and church (90.1%). More than 28% car pool or ride with someone else. Some people indicated that they walk (17.1%) and/or bike (7.9%), but the primary mode of transportation in Waukon is by vehicle. Other modes of transportation are electric scooter and horse and buggy.



\*Please note that some respondents indicated that they use more than one mode of transportation to get to work; therefore, percentages add up to more than 100%.

## Transportation Behavior and Needs Survey

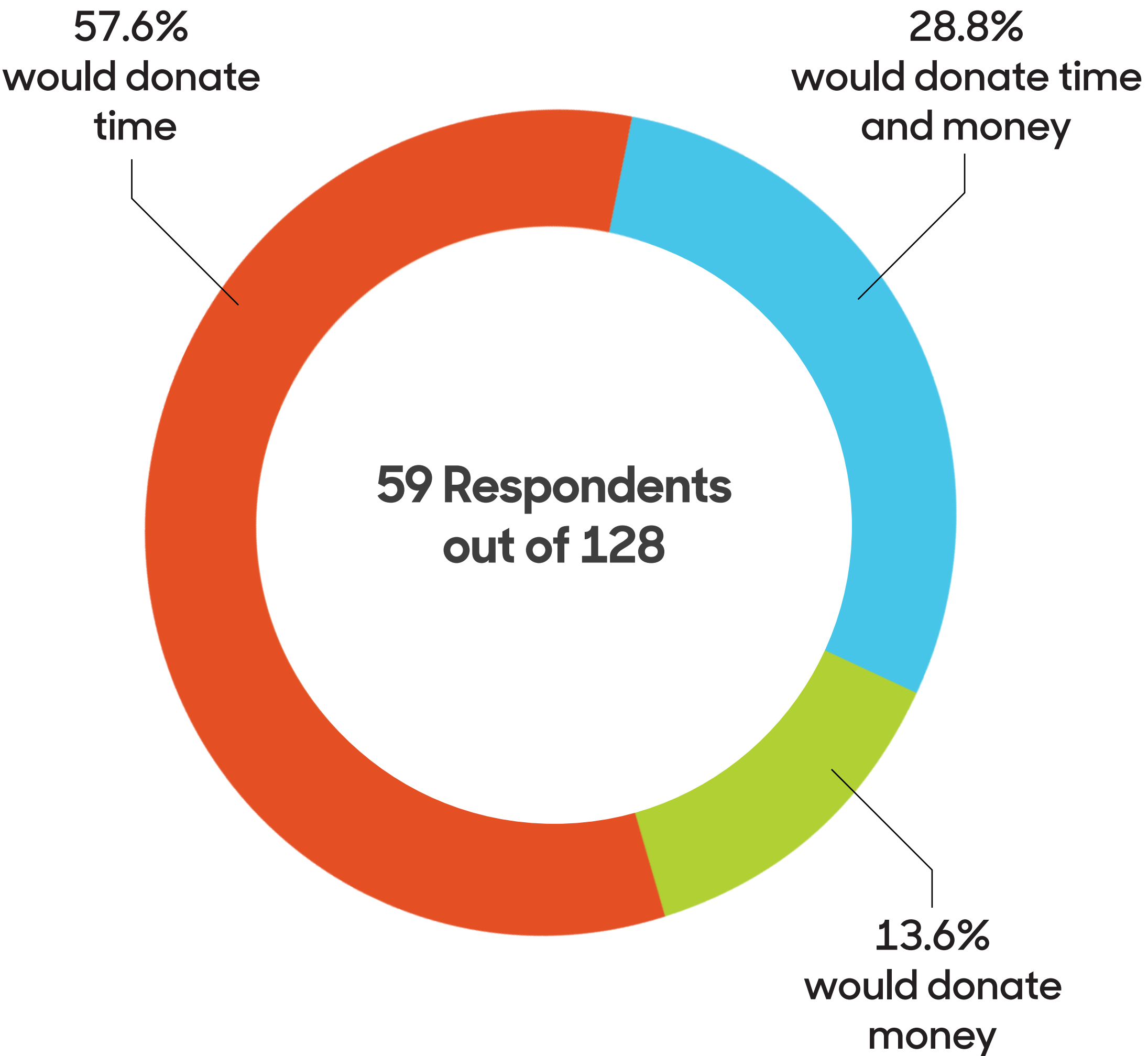
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### ARE PEOPLE WILLING TO HELP?

## More than 46% said YES!



**Willingness to implement change**  
 Most survey participants who answered "Yes" to this question are willing to contribute their time to community improvements (57.6%), while 28.8% would help financially and contribute their time. More than 13% of respondents indicated that they would be willing to contribute financially.

Compared to other small towns in Iowa, Waukon residents are somewhat more willing to become involved in improving their community. In 2014, on average, 43% of residents in small, rural towns volunteered to help with a community project.<sup>1</sup> The percentage of Waukon residents willing to be involved is more than 3% higher than this average.

<sup>1</sup> Sigma: A Profile of Iowa Small Towns 1994 to 2014 (Ames, IA: Iowa State University College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, 2015).

### WHAT DID PEOPLE SAY?

## Survey Participants Said...



"As the survey went on, the possibility of a trail seemed to become more real. Envisioning a trail through the countryside became very appealing."

"[We should] create a walking trail with signage to give history of local landmarks as you pass by. This should be a loop and could use existing sidewalks."



"Waukon is a small, growing community. If we want to continue to grow, we need to have accessibility for our seniors and those who don't have reliable transportation so they can get to and from surrounding communities. Our seniors especially need this resource."

### HOW DO YOU GET PEOPLE TO HELP?

## Ask, Show, and Advertise Opportunities

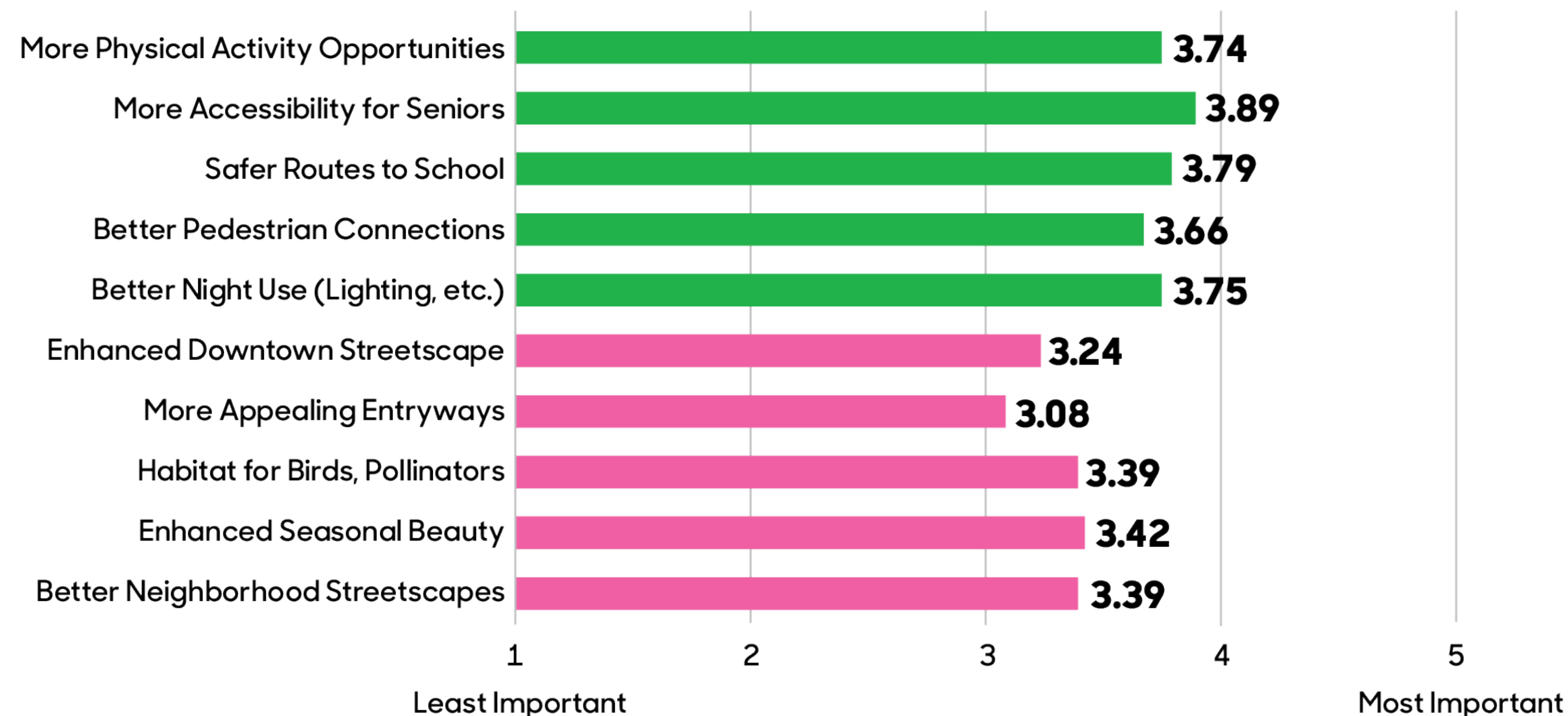
In 2014, the most common reason residents in small-town Iowa said they didn't become involved in community projects is that no one asked them (34%). Twenty-eight percent on average said that they don't have time, which is significantly lower than the 2004 average of 59%. Sixteen percent indicated that they didn't know how to become involved, and 7% said that no community project needed volunteers.<sup>1</sup> These results indicate that the best ways to get people involved in community projects is to simply ask, along with advertising opportunities through traditional and social media outlets.

<sup>2</sup> Sigma: A Profile of Iowa Small Towns 1994 to 2014 (Ames, IA: Iowa State University College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, 2015).

### WHAT TYPES OF ENHANCEMENTS ARE IMPORTANT?

# Mobility, Safety, and Health!

Transportation Enhancement Issues  
■ Pedestrian Mobility, Safety, and Health  
■ Quality of the Built Environment



#### Importance of transportation enhancement by type (127 responses)

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the most important, participants in Waukon ranked providing more accessibility for seniors as most important, with a mean value of 3.89. Other types of transportation enhancements that address pedestrian mobility, health, and safety are also considered important, such as developing safer routes to school (3.79), improving night use (3.75), and providing more opportunities for physical activity (3.74). In terms of quality of the built environment, survey respondents consider enhancing seasonal beauty as most important (3.42), followed by improving neighborhood streetscapes and creating habitat for birds and pollinators (3.39 each). These findings are consistent with the views expressed by focus group participants during the Transportation Assets and Barriers workshop held in February 2024.

### WHAT DID THEY SAY?

# Survey Participants Said...



"Roads are extremely bumpy [because of] potholes. Some streets don't have consistent sidewalks. There should be a crosswalk by the entrances to the hospital. It's actually a very frequent crossing place on the main road."

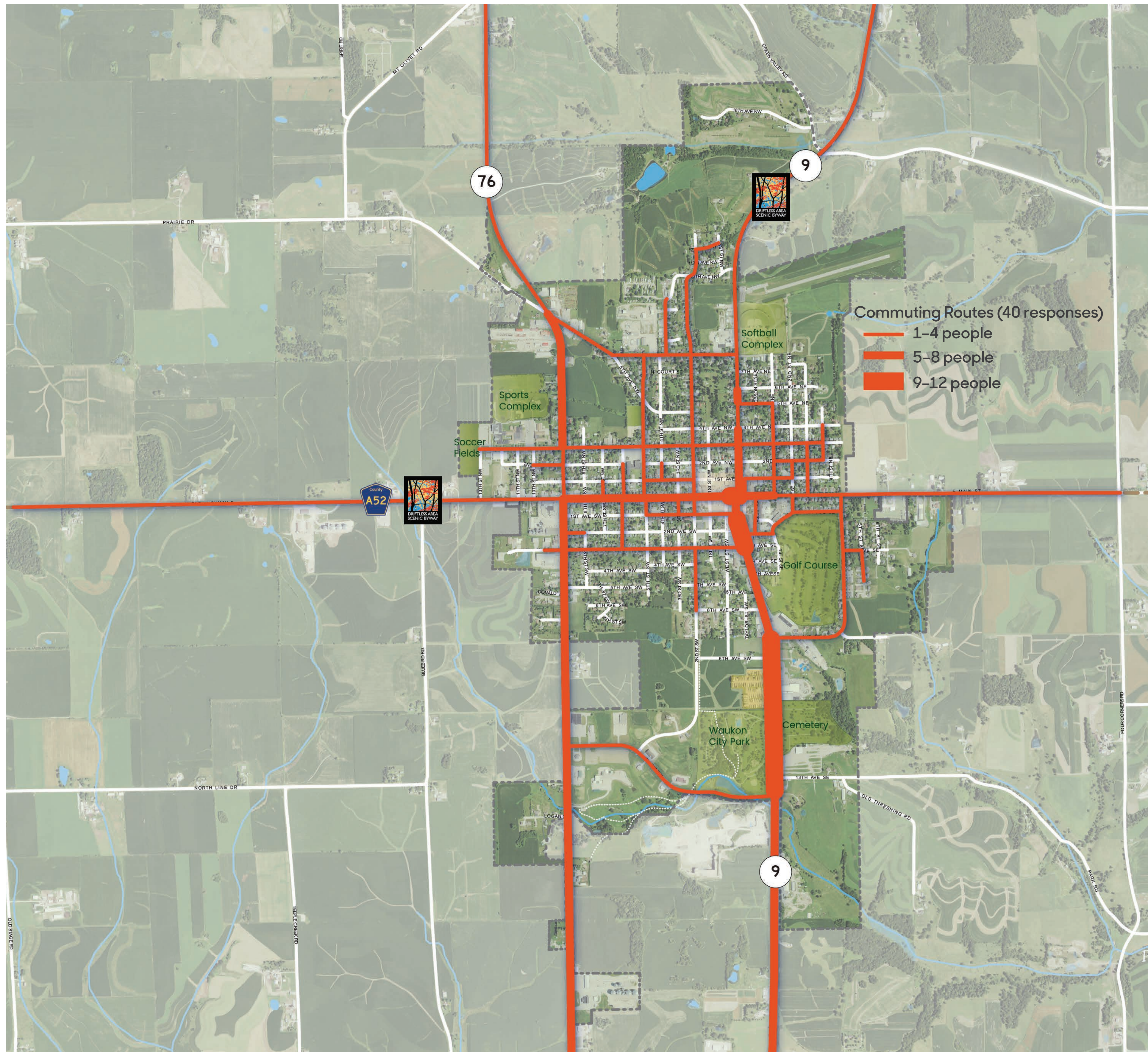
"[We need] to make it easier to be able to use a wheelchair and maybe to push one."



"Sometimes, some areas are poorly lit/trafficked, making them feel less safe when walking alone."

"...[we] could use sidewalks/better streets in areas as we walk with our kids to/from daycare any day that we can. Not all areas have well maintained sidewalks/streets."





Map Source: Iowa Department of Natural Resources, "Natural Resources Geographic Information Systems Library," <http://www.igsb.uiowa.edu/nrgislibx/>.

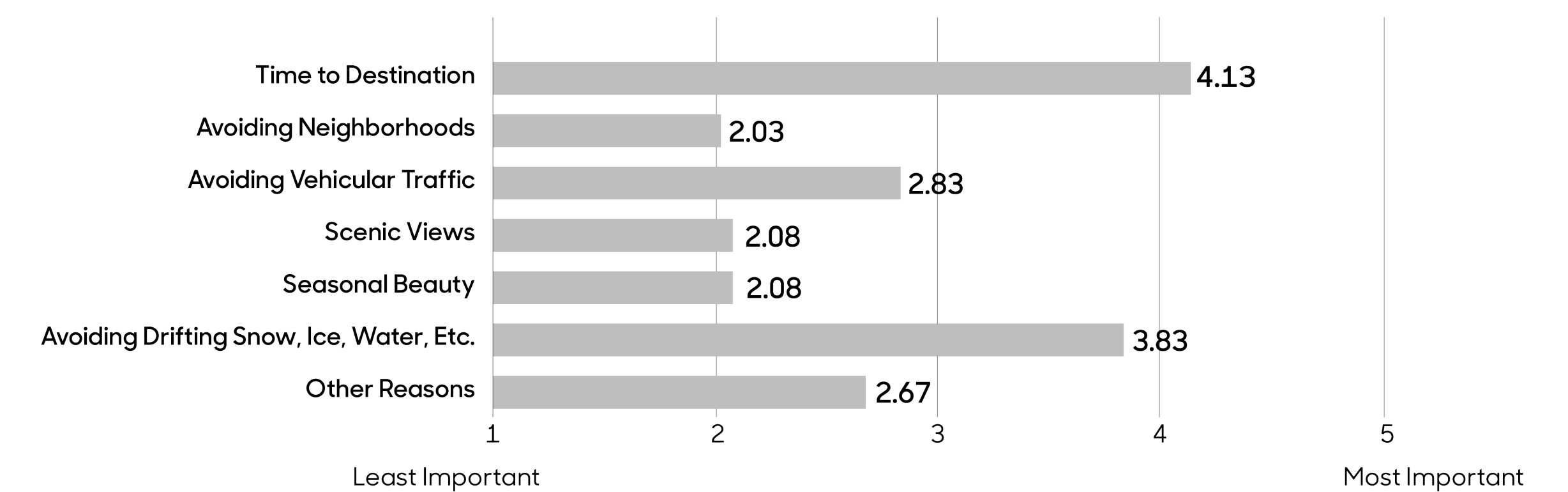
# How They Get There

This map shows the commuting routes identified by 40 survey respondents. The frequency that the routes are used is depicted by their width, with the routes used most often being the thickest. The primary commuting corridors into and out of Waukon are Highways 9 and 76, with commuters leaving and entering town mainly from the south. Some commuters take County Road A52. The most heavily used corridors in town are Rossville Road from City Park to Main Street, Allamakee Street NW from Main Street to 6th Street NE, and 9th Street from Highway 9 through town to Prairie Avenue NW.

The circulation patterns that emerge when routes for biking, walking, and commuting are overlaid suggest suitable types of transportation enhancements. For example, where pedestrian and vehicular traffic intersect, such improvements could include creating better visibility, defining crossing points, or improving signage.

# Why They Go That Way

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the most important, survey participants ranked the characteristics and features that factored into their choice of commuting route. Among Waukon participants, time to destination is the most important factor in determining commuting routes, with a mean value of 4.13. Avoiding weather-related issues such as snow and ice is also somewhat important (3.83). Avoiding vehicular traffic is not as significant (2.83). Scenic views, seasonal beauty, and avoiding neighborhoods are not critical factors in determining commuting routes.



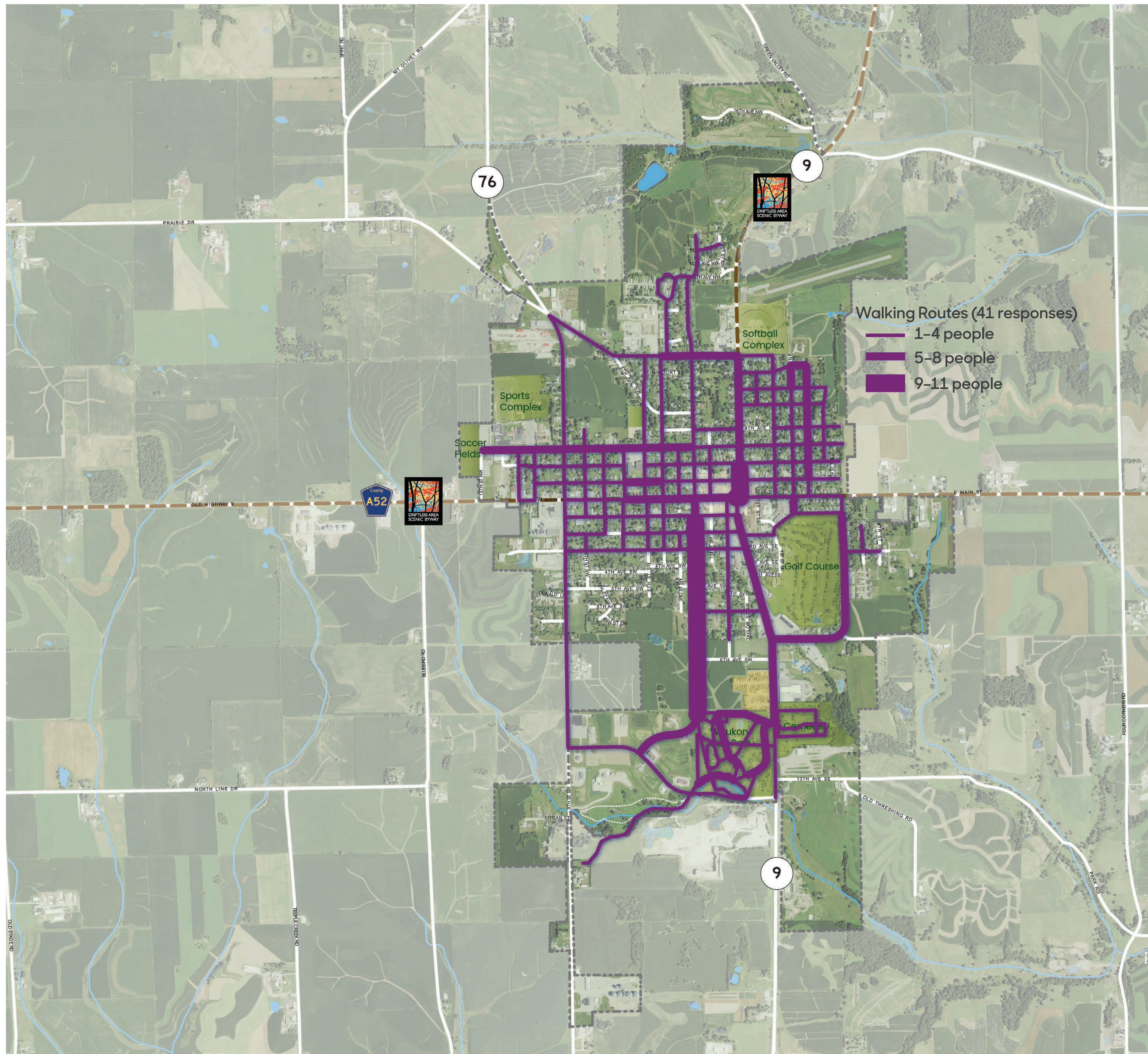
# Waukon Commuting Routes

## Transportation Behavior and Needs Survey

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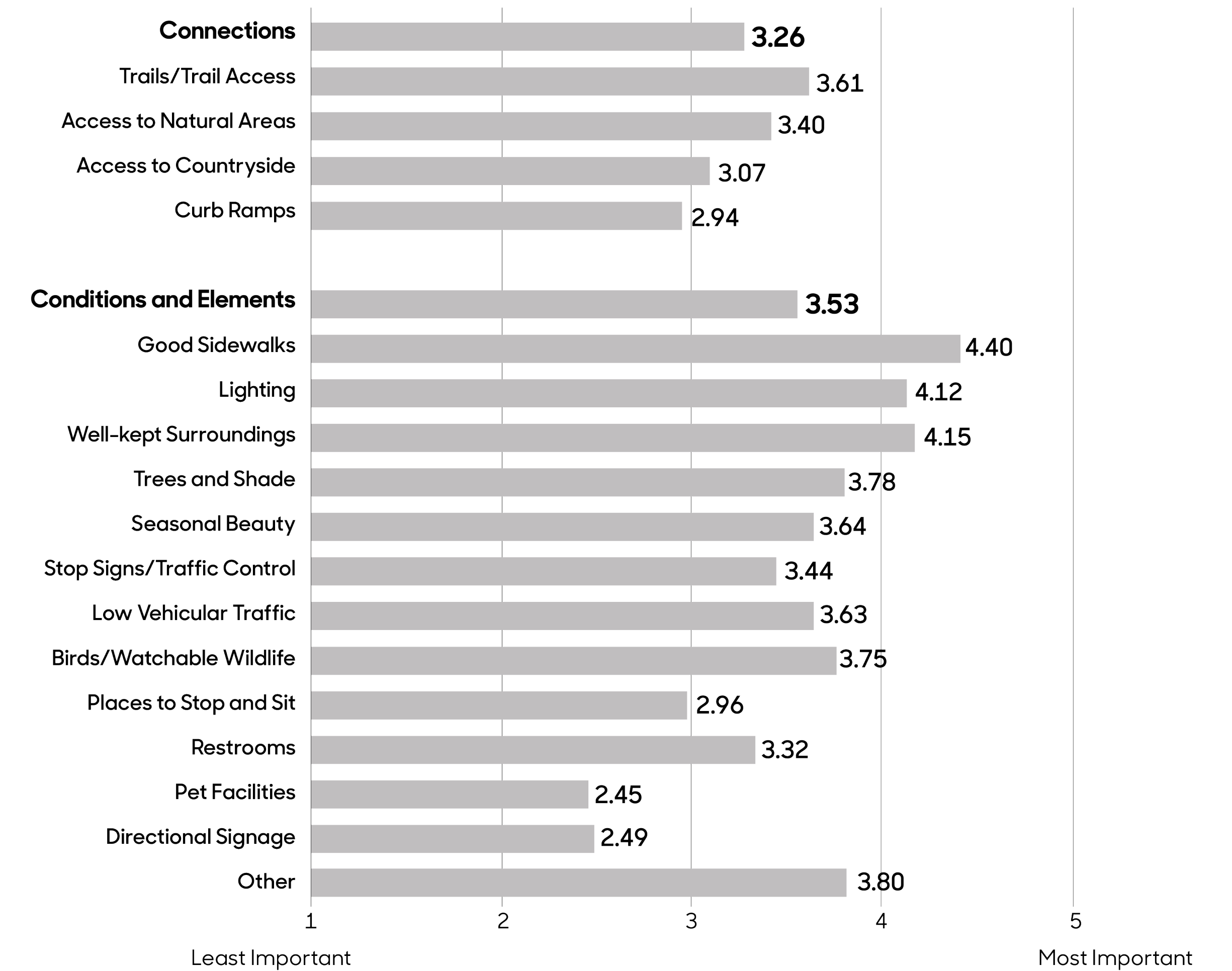
Map Source: Iowa Department of Natural Resources, "Natural Resources Geographic Information Systems Library," <http://www.igsb.uiowa.edu/nrgislib/>.

## Where They Walk

This map shows the walking routes identified by 41 survey respondents. The frequency that the routes are used is depicted by their width, with the routes used most often being the thickest. Oakland Cemetery, Waukon City Park, and Five Bridges Trail are popular places to walk among survey respondents. People also walk along city streets; the most heavily traveled of those include 2nd Street SW from 1st Avenue SW to Waukon City Park, and the streets that constitute the "golf-course loop": Rossville Road, 2nd Avenue SE, 1st Avenue SE, 4th Street SE, and 7th Avenue SE. Other often-walked streets include Allamakee Street NW, 3rd Street NE, 8th Avenue NW, and 3rd Avenue NW.

## Why They Go That Way

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the most important, survey participants ranked the characteristics and features that made their walking experience better. These features are categorized as either "connections" or "conditions and elements." Waukon participants consider conditions/elements to be more important than connections, with mean values of 3.53 and 3.26, respectively. In terms of connections, access to trails is most important with a mean value of 3.61. Good sidewalks (4.40) are the most important condition/element to walkers, followed by well-kept surroundings (4.15) and lighting (4.12). Other elements such as quiet areas with fewer people, traffic levels, and level terrain affect walkers' route choices (3.80).



# Waukon

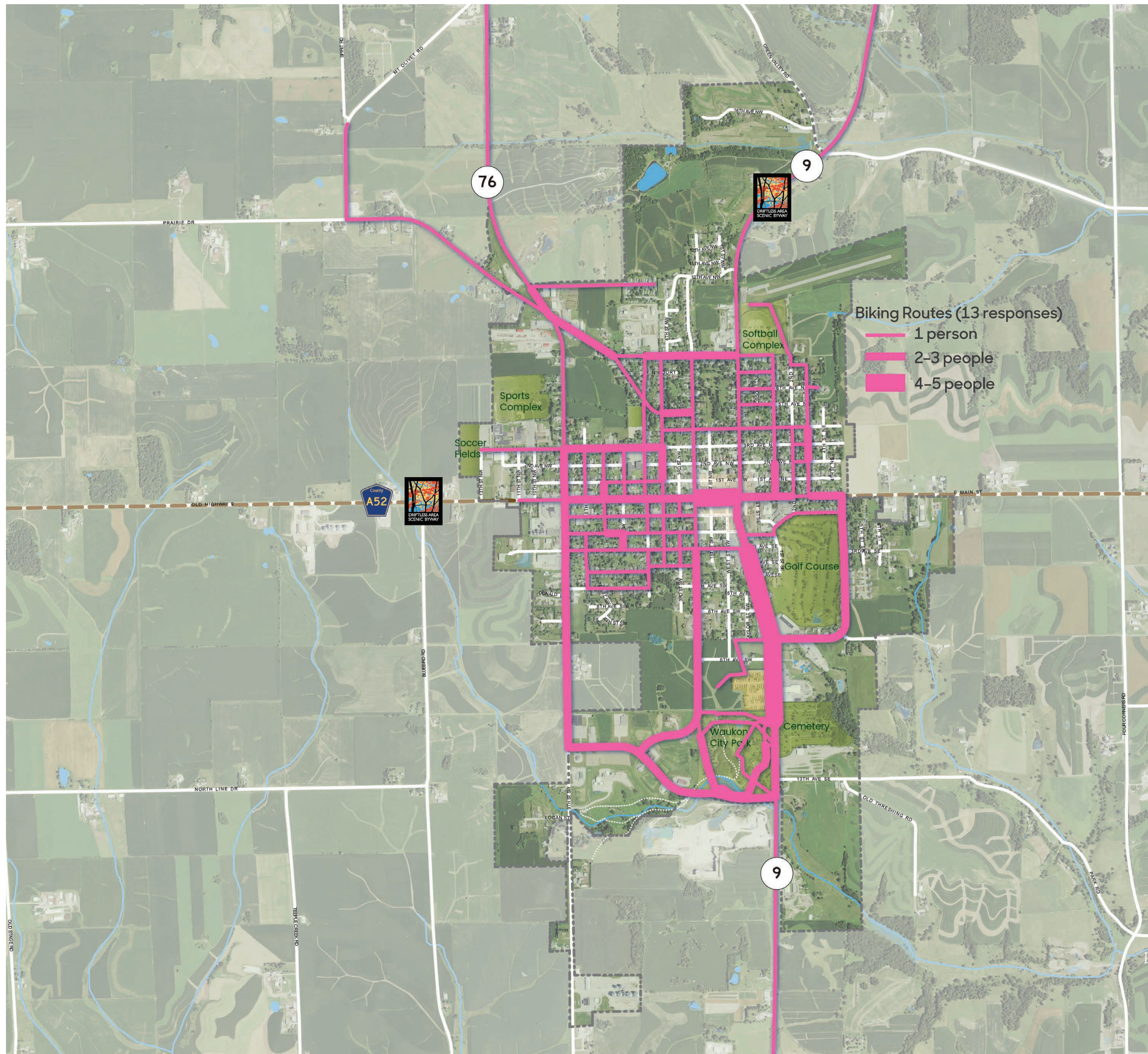
## Walking Routes

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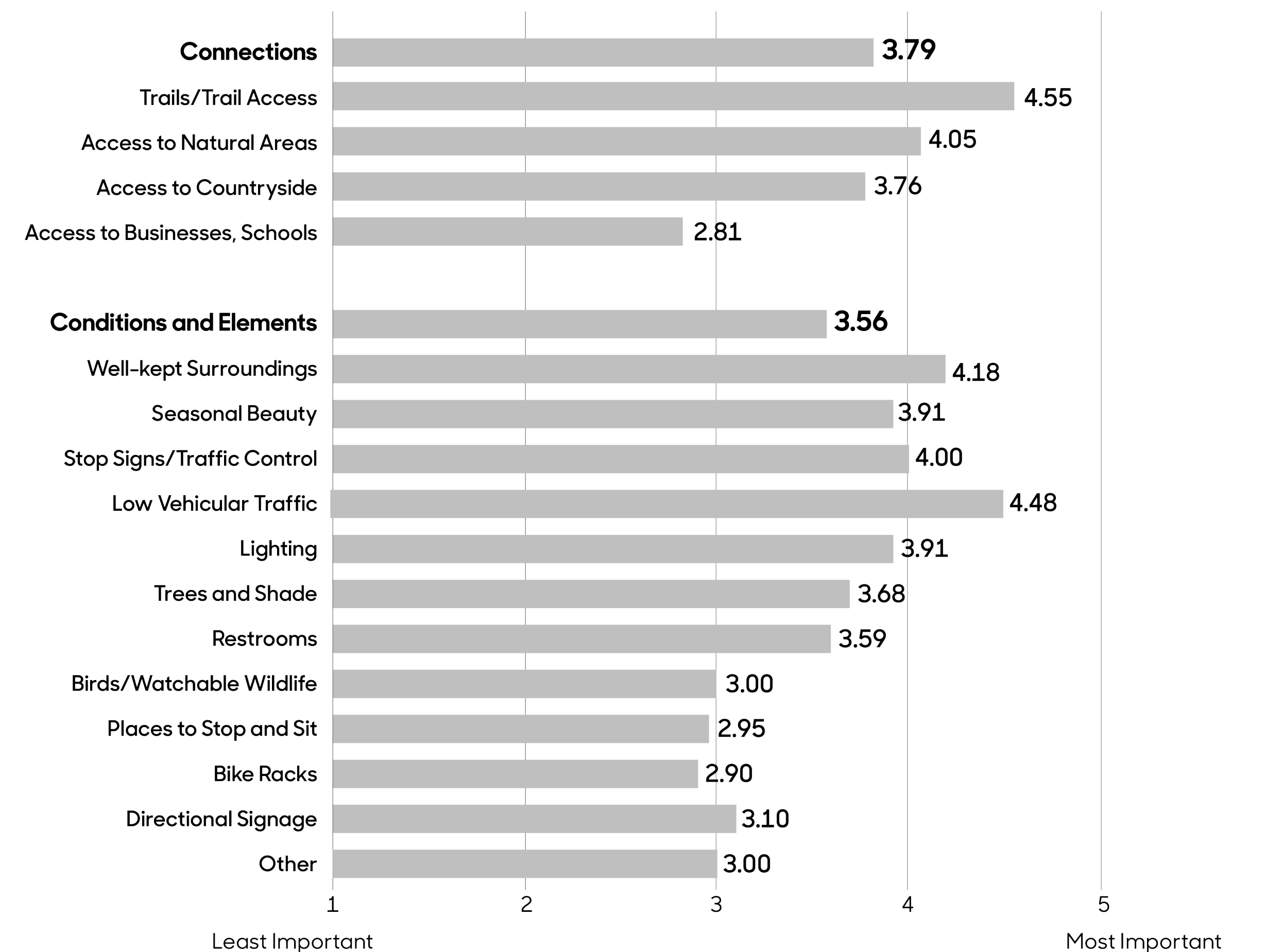
Map Source: Iowa Department of Natural Resources, "Natural Resources Geographic Information Systems Library," <http://www.igsb.uiowa.edu/nrgislib/>.

## Where They Bike

This map shows the biking routes identified by 13 survey respondents. The frequency that the routes are used is depicted by their width, with the routes used most often being the thickest. Like walkers, cyclists use the roads and paths in Waukon City Park and ride the golf-course loop. The streets most heavily traveled by cyclists are Rossville Road, 2nd Avenue SE, 11th Avenue SW, 9th Avenue SW, 8th Avenue SW, Prairie Avenue SW, and Main Street—especially in the downtown district. A few people bike out of town on Highways 9 and 76.

## Why They Go That Way

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the most important, survey participants ranked the characteristics and features that made their biking experience better. These features are categorized as either "connections" or "conditions and elements." Waukon participants consider connections more important than conditions/elements, with mean values of 3.79 and 3.56, respectively. Access to trails is the most important connection to survey respondents with a mean value of 4.55. In terms of conditions/elements, low vehicular traffic is most important (4.48), followed by well-kept surroundings (4.18). Stop signs/traffic control (4.00) and seasonal beauty and lighting (3.91 each) are also of significance.



# Waukon

## Biking Routes

### Transportation Behavior and Needs Survey

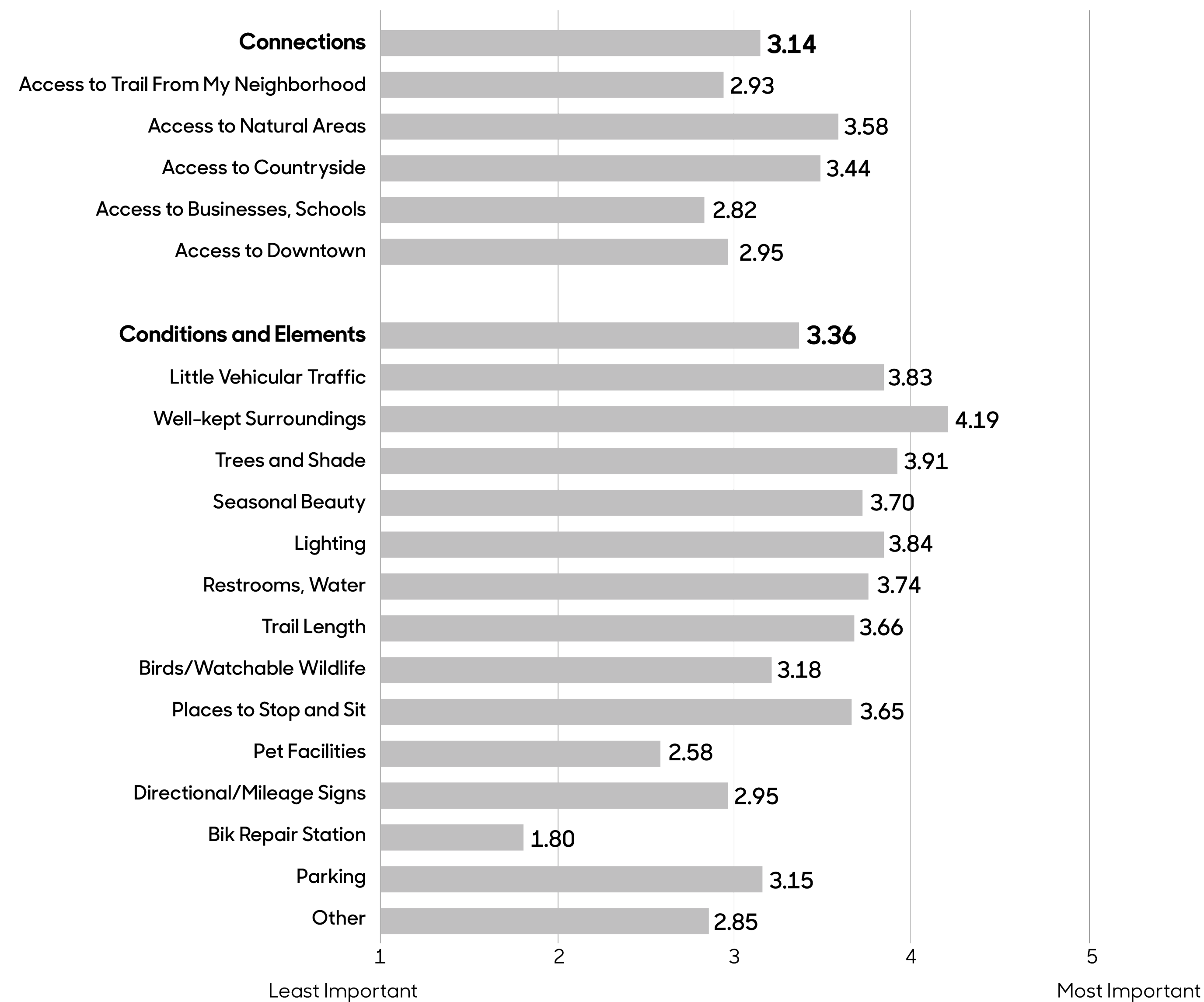
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# Desired Trail Features

Trails are off-street paths that are paved or unpaved and can be used by pedestrians and cyclists. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the most important, survey participants ranked the characteristics and features that made their trail experience better. Like the bike route features, they are categorized as either "connections" or "conditions and elements." Conditions/elements are more important to Waukon trail users than connections, with mean values of 3.36 and 3.14, respectively. Access to natural areas is the most important connection among trail users, with a mean value of 3.58. In terms of conditions/elements, well-kept surroundings (4.19) are most important, followed by Trees and shade (3.91). Lighting (3.84), little vehicular traffic (3.83), access to restrooms and water (3.74), and seasonal beauty (3.70) are also valued by trail users.



"[I] would like to see longer hiking and biking trails. Waukon to Decorah would be great."



"We have a nice walking trail; [adding] better lighting, bathrooms and water, and sitting areas to it would be great."



## Waukon Desired Trail Features

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