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# Martin Way District Survey Analysis

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Thurston Regional  
Planning Council

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## Project Overview

The City of Olympia and Thurston Regional Planning Council are collaborating to support the transformation of the Martin Way District in northeastern Olympia into an area with a richer mix of housing units, services and active transportation choices. The study — made possible by a U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Sustainable Communities Challenge Grant — will:

- Define infrastructure needs;
- Define options for funding needed infrastructure;
- Explore how public funds can leverage improvements consistent with the corridor vision;
- Conduct a market analysis of properties in the district and identify opportunities for development and re-development.

## Existing Conditions

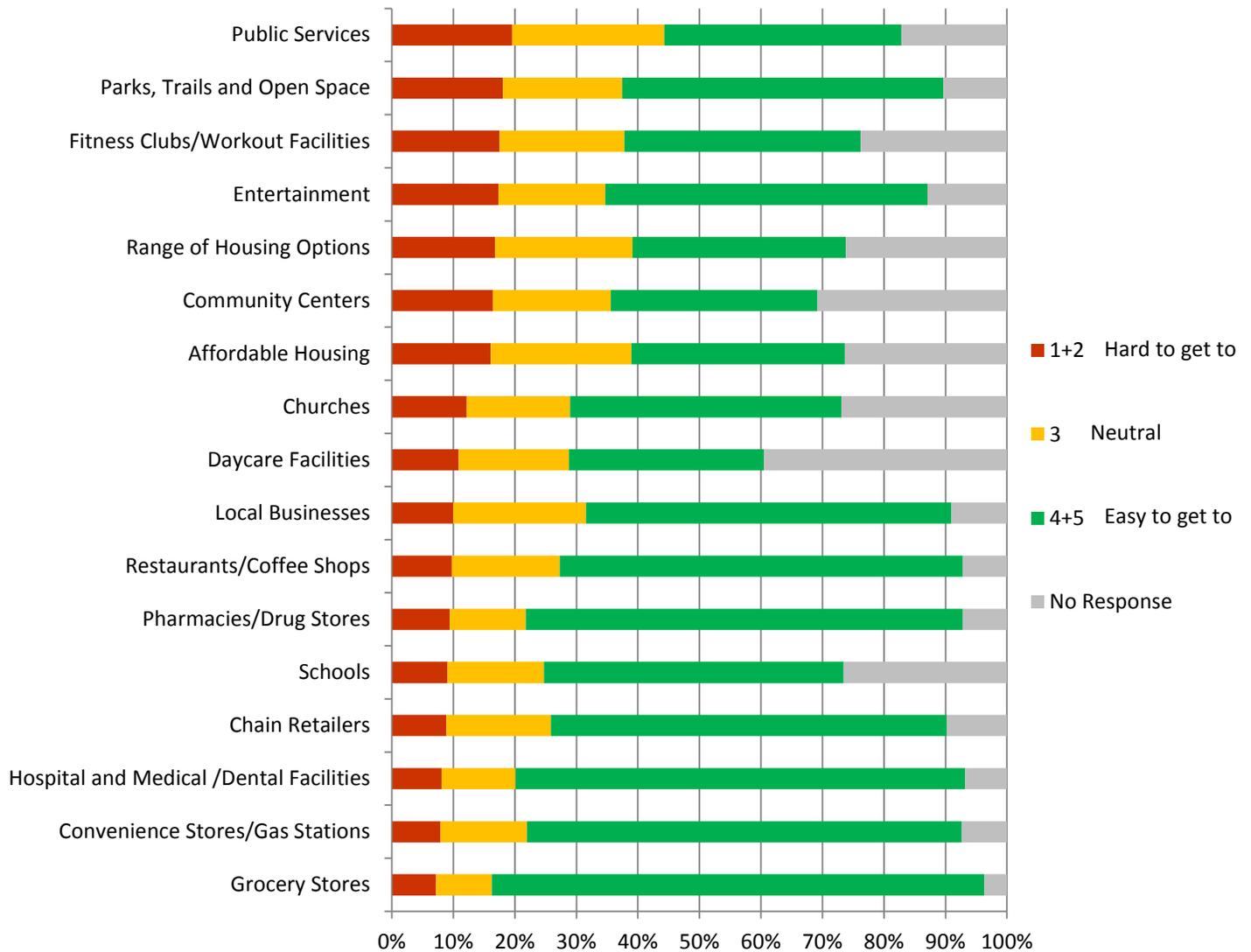
The Martin Way District stretches about 1.5 miles from Sawyer Street eastward to Lilly Road and includes a quarter-mile area north and south of Martin Way, which served as the region's primary north-south highway before the construction of Interstate 5 a half-century ago. Today, the area is characterized by proximity to Providence St. Peter Hospital and other medical facilities, a large wetland, and some of the last undeveloped parcels along Martin Way. The district features frequent bus service but lacks a complete sidewalk network and contiguous development along the street edge, despite the district's zoning density and proximity to Interstate 5 [See Appendix, Map 1: Martin Way District Boundaries, Zoning & Amenities].

## Survey Overview

The lack of active-transportation and public utility infrastructure are assumed to be barriers to redevelopment in the district. The city of Olympia, Thurston County Housing Authority and Thurston Regional Planning Council developed a survey collaboratively and sent it out to nearly 3,100 residents who live within or near the district in June 2013 to learn more about their corridor perceptions, travel habits, and desired transportation and land-use changes. A total of 542 residents filled out their 18-question survey fully or partially, for a response rate of about 17 percent [See Appendix, Map 2: Survey Mailing Area].

**Question 1** asked respondents to rate on a scale of one to five how difficult it is for them to access pharmacies, schools, restaurants, parks and other amenities. The percentage of survey respondents who marked a one or two, which denote “hard to get to,” is shown in red in Figure 1A. The percentage of survey respondents who marked a three, which reflects a neutral response, is shown in orange. The percentage of survey respondents who marked a four or five, which denote “easy to get to,” is shown in green. The percentage of survey respondents who did not answer this question is shown in grey.

**Figure 1A: Perceived Access Along Martin Way Corridor**



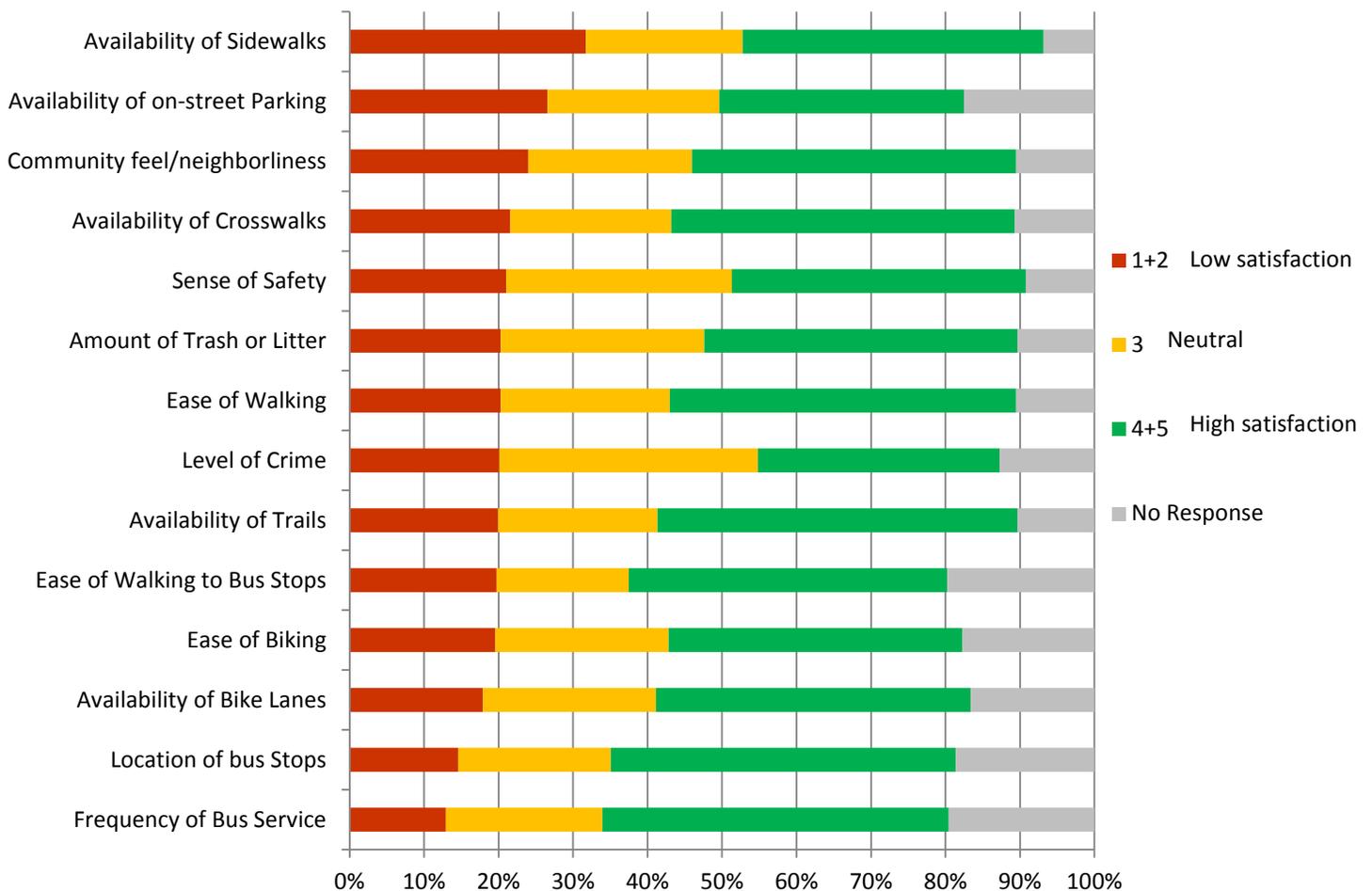
The vast majority of survey respondents noted that they have easy access to commercial services [See *Appendix for raw survey data*]. Indeed, the district is within a quarter-mile of four grocery stores and within a half-mile of Lacey’s Woodland District, which features a robust mix of retail shops, restaurants, banks and other commercial services. Downtown Olympia is about 1.5 miles west of the district.

Survey respondents noted that public services, green/open spaces and athletic facilities are most difficult to get to. Most of the district’s green/open spaces are in the form of developable parcels and undevelopable wetlands. And while the district does not contain any designated parks, it sits close to the Woodland, I-5 and

Chehalis Western trails, as well as North Thurston High School’s athletic complex. Public services within the district include the Thurston County Public Health and Social Services Department and Olympia Fire Station 4. Behavioral Health Resources, a nonprofit that provides mental health and addiction recovery services throughout South Sound, plans to expand its headquarters campus amid the 3800 block of Martin Way.

**Question 1** also asked respondents to rate on a scale of one to five their satisfaction with the corridor’s safety, infrastructure, cleanliness and other attributes. The percentage of survey respondents who marked a one or two, which denote “low satisfaction,” is shown in red in Figure 1B. The percentage of survey respondents who marked a three, which reflects a neutral response, is shown in orange. The percentage of survey respondents who marked a four or five, which denote “high satisfaction,” is shown in green. The percentage of survey respondents who did not answer this question is shown in grey.

**Figure 1B: Perceived Satisfaction With Martin Way Corridor**



Most survey respondents expressed general satisfaction with their ability to bike, access a bus, or drive and park amid the district. Even so, nearly a third of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the sidewalk network. Further, between 20 and 25 percent of respondents expressed low satisfaction with the district’s feel, availability of crosswalks, ease of walking, cleanliness and safety. The responses indicate that more could be done to improve the pedestrian experience along the arterial, which features an incomplete sidewalk network, several vacant buildings (e.g., the former Holly Motel and Bailey’s Motor Inn), and fast-moving/high-

volume automobile traffic. TRPC planners visited the site during the summer of 2013 to observe transportation activity, building type/condition and infrastructure. Planners observed pedestrians using parking lots, bicycle lanes and the roadway's shoulder to walk where there were no sidewalks. Several parking lot driveways and stretches of shoulder were littered with debris. A wooded, undeveloped lot northwest of the intersection of Patterson Street and Martin way was littered with debris and showed signs of a homeless encampment.

A September 2012 walkability audit, led by TRPC, noted that Martin Way's sidewalks are in "fair" condition but lack street trees that provide shade and ramps that provide access for persons with disabilities. The audit also noted that street crossings are "moderately marked," but the width may be too great for some pedestrians to cross in a timely manner. The audit

([http://www.trpc.org/regionalplanning/landuse/Documents/Urban\\_Corridor\\_Communities/Walkability\\_docs/Walkability\\_Audit\\_NextSteps\\_Final\\_web.pdf](http://www.trpc.org/regionalplanning/landuse/Documents/Urban_Corridor_Communities/Walkability_docs/Walkability_Audit_NextSteps_Final_web.pdf)) concluded with the following recommendations for the corridor:

- The city of Olympia and Intercity Transit (IT) can work in partnership to use the transit agency's facility expansion fronting Martin Way to help set a new pattern for development oriented to the street with a comfortable and well-defined walking area along the roadway with adequate buffer from traffic.
- Select other catalyst sites along the corridor that are likely to redevelop and work with property owners to define a clear pedestrian space for better access, comfort and safety. An expected standard discussed during the audit is having an 8' sidewalk, decorative lighting and 10' planting strips.
- Make Indian and Woodard Creeks an amenity and focal point for people during the daytime. A stormwater or wetlands park could have the dual function of making the corridor a more appealing destination while helping protect water quality.
- Prepare an access management plan in cooperation with property owners that works in tandem with pedestrian facility improvements to create a better functioning and more orderly corridor for all users. The access management plan needs to incorporate appropriate crossing strategies or treatments of Martin Way roughly every 300' to 500' to support safe access to public transportation and destinations. The stretch of Martin Way between Devoe Street and Pattison Street is especially critical as a crossing for safe access to transit.



Martin Way features an incomplete sidewalk network, which means pedestrians must use the bike lane or road shoulder to walk the corridor.

**Questions 2 -7** asked residents about their travel habits. Ninety-two percent of respondents marked that they own a car, and 82 percent marked that they drive "most of the time." Seven percent marked that they ride the bus "most of the time. Thirty-one percent marked "sometimes," and 62 percent marked "never."

When asked how often they walk, 8 percent of respondents marked “most of the time.” Seventy-five percent marked “sometimes,” and 17 percent marked “never.” The vast majority of respondents marked that they travel between 1 and 10 miles to the place where they work or shop.

**Questions 8-16** sought general demographic information about respondents, including their age, gender, household size, marital status, income, place of work, housing tenure, and educational attainment.

**Question 17**, which was open-ended, asked residents what their vision is for the corridor — i.e., what changes they would like to see.

A major theme of the responses is a desire to travel by means other than privately owned vehicle. Indeed, there is also a strong desire to improve the connectivity of active transportation modes — notably, walking, cycling and riding the bus. Many respondents wrote that a complete sidewalk network would improve the pedestrian experience. Likewise, several respondents wrote that they desire more crosswalks and signal lights.

Another theme of the responses is a desire to remove blight and improve safety/cleanliness perceptions. Some respondents called for fixing aging infrastructure, cleaning up debris, and increasing the number of trash and recycling bins along the corridor. Other respondents called for the removal of old and unkempt buildings.

Several respondents wrote that more needs to be done to address homelessness in the area. Some respondents called for more police patrols. Other respondents called for additional social services or a homeless shelter.

A final theme of the responses is a concern about the types of buildings and their uses along the corridor. Respondents expressed a desire to mix housing with the commercial services currently found along Martin Way. Some respondents also expressed a desire to get away from the strip-mall type of buildings that are now dominant along the corridor. Other respondents expressed concern about how much new building construction would happen amid the district, while others objected to additional chain and big-box stores.

**Question 18**, which was also open-ended, asked whether respondents have “particular concerns” about the corridor. A major concern is a perceived lack of public safety, according to the surveys. Again, several respondents expressed concern about what they perceive as a large number of homeless people and panhandling. Respondents also called for stronger police presence to deter crime.

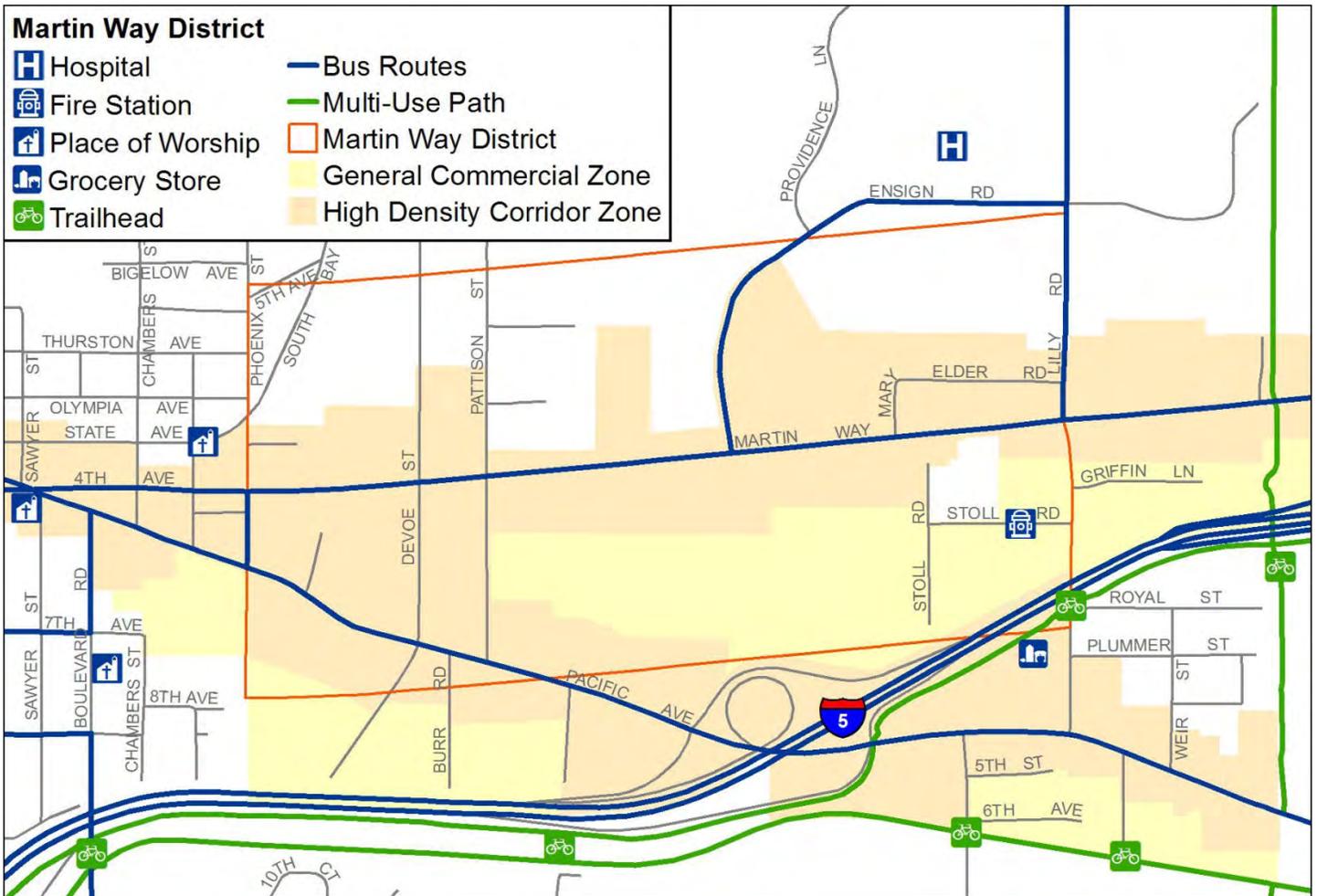
Other respondents also wrote that a reason motorists feel unsafe is because some pedestrians and cyclists do not use safety precautions. Bolstering the network of sidewalks, crosswalks and bike lanes would help address this concern, respondents noted.

Another concern cited frequently is the corridor’s aesthetics. Respondents called for better landscaping along Martin Way. Respondents also contended that there are insufficient public parks and green spaces.

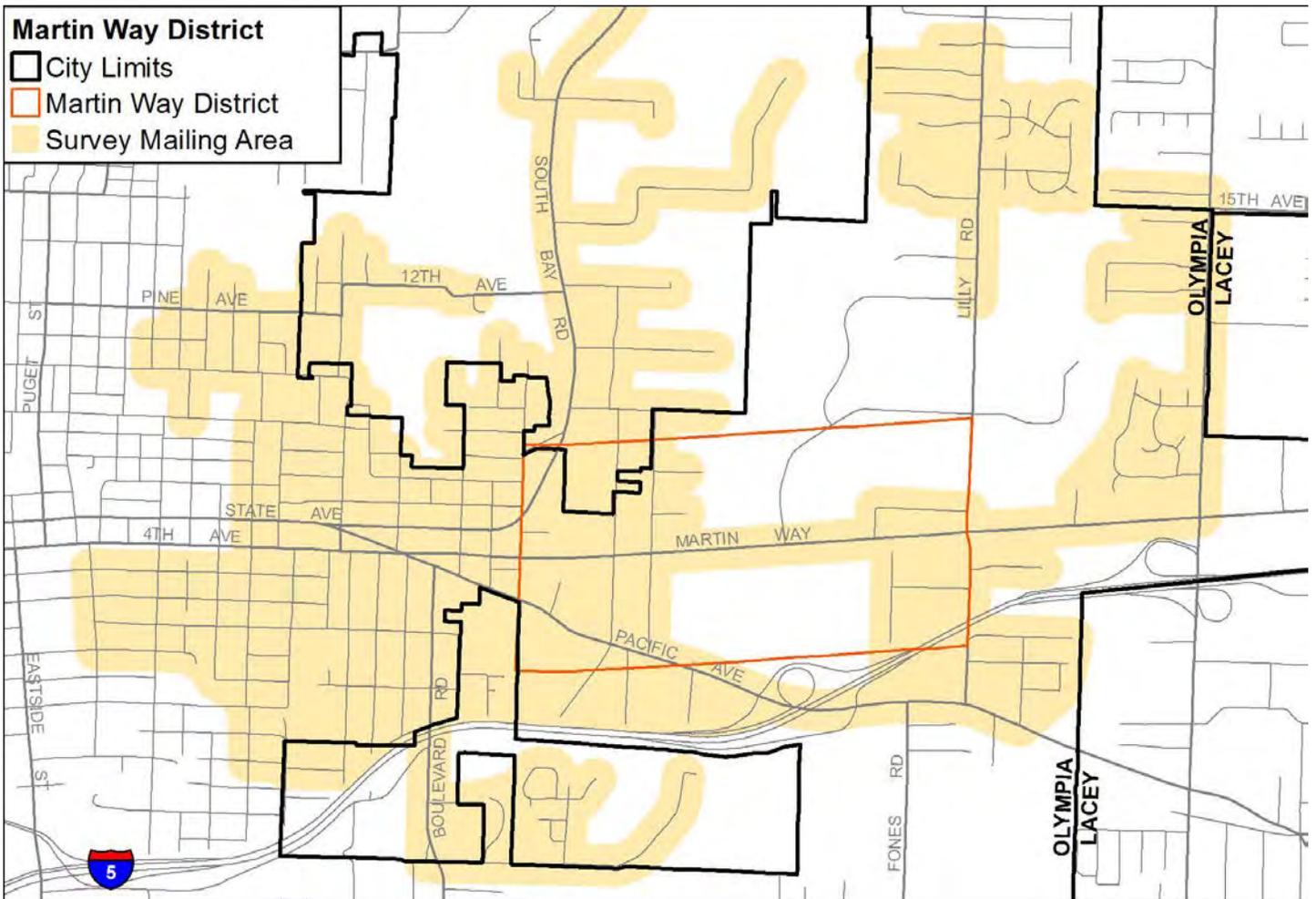
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# Appendix

Map 1: Martin Way District Boundaries, Zoning & Amenities



Map 2: Survey Mailing Area



## Raw Survey Data

### Question 1A: Ease of Access to ... (1 is hard to get to; 5 is easy to get to)

	Hardest to get to		Neutral	Easiest to get to		No Response
	1	2	3	4	5	
Access to						
Grocery Stores	17	22	49	128	306	20
Pharmacies/Drug Stores	18	33	67	136	249	39
Restaurants/Coffee Shops	14	39	95	134	221	39
Convenience Stores/Gas Stations	18	25	76	130	253	40
Local Businesses	13	41	117	155	167	49
Chain Retailers	17	31	92	145	204	53
Fitness Clubs/Workout Facilities	36	59	110	87	121	129
Entertainment	34	60	94	132	152	70
Hospital and Medical /Dental Facilities	14	30	65	108	288	37
Schools	21	28	85	105	159	144
Daycare Facilities	22	37	97	63	109	214
Community Centers	31	58	104	85	97	167
Churches	22	44	91	97	142	146
Public Services	32	74	134	99	110	93
Affordable Housing	28	59	124	92	96	143
Range of Housing Options	27	64	121	97	91	142
Parks, Trails and Open Space	36	62	105	137	146	56

### Question 1B: Satisfaction with ... (1 is low satisfaction; 5 is high satisfaction)

	Low satisfaction		Neutral	High satisfaction		No Response
	1	2	3	4	5	
Satisfaction with						
Availability of Sidewalks	85	87	114	107	112	37
Availability of Trails	43	65	116	145	117	56
Availability of Crosswalks	50	67	117	153	97	58
Availability of Bike Lanes	39	58	126	136	93	90
Ease of Biking	44	62	126	129	85	96
Ease of Walking	46	64	123	132	120	57
Frequency of Bus Service	30	40	114	120	132	106
Location of bus Stops	40	39	111	117	134	101
Ease of Walking to Bus Stops	41	66	96	115	117	107
Amount of Trash or Litter	47	63	148	141	87	56
Sense of Safety	39	75	164	147	67	50
Level of Crime	38	71	188	114	62	69
Availability of on-street Parking	65	79	125	107	71	95
Community feel/neighborliness	54	76	119	150	86	57

<b>2. Do you own a car?</b>	No	43	8%
	Yes	483	92%
<b>3. How often do you drive?</b>	Most of the time	409	82%
	Sometimes	74	15%
	Never	18	4%
<b>4. How often do you take the bus?</b>	Most of the time	36	7%
	Sometimes	163	31%
	Never	322	62%
<b>5. How often do you walk?</b>	Most of the time	43	8%
	Sometimes	390	75%
	Never	90	17%
<b>6. How far do you travel to work?</b>	Less than 1/2 a mile	31	6%
	1/2 to 1 mile	19	4%
	1-3 miles	83	16%
	3-10 miles	137	27%
	Over 10 miles	67	13%
	Don't work	177	34%
<b>7. How far do you travel to shop?</b>	Less than 1/2 a mile	24	5%
	1/2 to 1 mile	42	8%
	1-3 miles	239	46%
	3-10 miles	203	39%
	Over 10 miles	13	2%
<b>8. Gender</b>	Female	320	61%
	Male	201	39%

<b>9. Age</b>	29 and under	41	8%
	30-45	115	22%
	46-64	207	39%
	65 plus	164	31%
<b>10. Marital Status</b>	Single	114	22%
	Domestic partner	24	5%
	Married	262	50%
	Separated/divorced	73	14%
	Widowed	51	10%
<b>11. Household Size</b>	1	165	32%
	2	218	42%
	3	71	14%
	4	51	10%
	5	15	3%
	6 plus	3	1%
<b>12. Level of college</b>	Did not graduate from high school	18	3%
	High school graduate	116	22%
	2-year college graduate	104	20%
	4-year college graduate	137	26%
	Post 4-year college graduate	153	29%
<b>13. Household income</b>	Less than \$20,000	73	15%
	\$20,000-\$39,999	89	18%
	\$40,000-\$59,999	105	21%
	\$60,000-\$79,999	91	19%
	\$80,000-\$99,999	50	10%
	\$100,000-\$149,999	70	14%
	More than \$150,000	11	2%

<b>14. Place of Work</b>	Work in Olympia/Lacey/Tumwater	228	43%
	Work outside of Olympia/Lacey/Tumwater	65	12%
	Work from home	35	7%
	Unemployed	29	6%
	Retired	168	32%
<b>15. Housing Tenure</b>	Own	347	66%
	Own mobile home/own land	3	1%
	Own mobile home/rent land	6	1%
	Rent	171	32%
<b>16. How long have you lived in your current house?</b>	Under one year	55	10%
	1-2 years	43	8%
	2-3 years	33	6%
	3-4 years	26	5%
	4-5 years	35	7%
	5-10 years	93	18%
	10 or more years	246	46%