

## MEMORANDUM

December 13, 2023

To: Jonathan DiGioia  
Organization: City of Dunwoody  
From: Byron Rushing, Hillary Essig, Addie Webber  
Project: Dunwoody Road Safety Action Plan

### Re: Community Engagement Summary

The Dunwoody community provided input on roadway safety concerns through public surveys, community pop-up events, and stakeholder listening sessions. From April through August various activities were created to engage key stakeholders and community members of all ages, races, and socio-economic backgrounds. The community was invited to identify their top safety concerns and review recommendations to make Dunwoody streets safer for all.

#### Safety Working Group Meetings

A Safety Working Group made up of residents, business owners, property owners, along with agency and city leadership met three times throughout the project to offer their unique perspective on top safety issues, to review data and initial findings, and provide direction on recommendations and implementation.

##### *Meeting 1 – Introduce the Project*

June 8, 2023

The project team outlined the schedule and scope, expectations of the study, its mission, how this study aligns with local, state, and federal safety programs, and asked members for their insight into roadway safety, and challenges and opportunities for funding, implementation, and engagement.

##### **What Was Heard:**

- Cut through traffic is a constant complaint in the city.
- Apartment communities and Homeowners Associations should be engaged.
- Various funding programs exist for implementation.
- Transit opportunities and safety of riders should be reviewed.

##### *Meeting 2 – Review the Data*

July 13, 2023

The Safety Working Group learned about Safe System Principles, discussed community input, and reviewed initial data that focused on crash trends, roadway characteristics and location, and behaviors. A draft High Injury Network (HIN) was presented for discussion.

**What Was Heard:**

- Discussed speed and mechanisms to slow speeds.
- Concern about pedestrian safety at several intersections along Ashford Dunwoody.
- Data need to help prioritize city decisions.

*Meeting 3 – Present the Draft Recommendations*

The project team reviewed the project progress to date, including data analysis and public engagement events, reviewed how this study aligns with local, state, and federal safety programs, and asked SWG members for input on to proposed final recommendations (Action Items provided prior to the meeting).

**What Was Heard:**

- Improvements are needed on larger city streets (ex: Chamblee Dunwoody Rd) – coordination and direction to route pedestrians to safe crossings and not midblock. Streetscaping, directional barriers, elevated crosswalks, reducing speeds, midblock crossings,
- Intersections and crossings – midblock crossings are key; safer intersections: tighter turn radii to slow down turning movements, raised crosswalks
- Speeding is a common concern – how to manage speeds along major roads and prevent speeding when cutting through neighborhoods
- Communication, marketing, and outreach are important for transmitting city messages to a diverse group of stakeholders and residents.

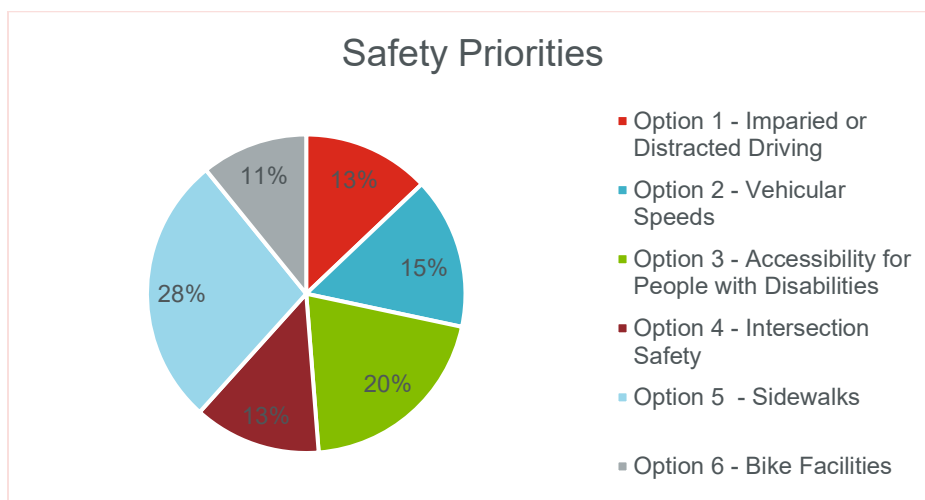
**In-Person Activities**

*Pop-Up Booth*

Two pop-up booth activities were hosted during popular community activities to obtain input on safety needs within Dunwoody.

***Lemonade Days Festival, April 22, 2023***

The first outreach effort involved City staff and the consultant team attending Lemonade Days at Brook Run Park. The community was asked to drop a ping-pong ball in a container that identified their top safety priority and discuss opportunities or challenges within the city. Flyers were distributed in English and Spanish prior to and during the event. Flyers included QR codes to the online survey and community input map.



### ***Food Truck Thursday, June 29, 2023***

Dunwoody Food Truck Thursdays is a popular, family-friendly event hosted at Brook Run Park. Over the course of two-hours, the consultant team and city staff spoke with community members who dropped by to review feedback heard to-date from the online survey and community map. Attendees also listened to additional community roadway safety concerns.

### ***Corners Outreach Presentation, August 17, 2023***

The City of Dunwoody and Toole Design staff partnered with Corners Outreach and AssuranceAmerica to host a Transportation Night discussion in the city, specifically aimed at Spanish-speaking residents. The event was broadcast through Corners Outreach and City channels and had approximately 25 people in attendance. Project staff presented data findings and transportation safety design information in Spanish.

#### **What Was Heard:**

- Cars are not stopping for school buses, dangerous for the kids. Mentioned that they believed school buses in other places have the ability to take photos for enforcement purposes and wanted to bring that here to help with the issue.
- School zone cameras turning on and ticketing at incorrect times (9 pm given as an example)
- Understand that it is expensive but would prefer for barriers that separate bicyclist and pedestrians to be high enough that cars cannot go over them.
- Better maintenance at pedestrian crossing. Overgrown trees and bushes make it difficult for pedestrians to be seen.
- Would love to be able to go biking with children but does not feel safe doing so.
- Cars trying to go around stopped school buses results in traffic. With children and moms having to weave around the stopped cars to cross the street.
- Very dangerous pedestrian crossing to get to playground (North Peachtree with Tilly Mill Road). Their husband was involved in a collision here, and she has heard of many others similarly getting hurt. She doesn't walk her kids to that playground anymore, preferring to drive even though its only five minutes from her home.
- Want to be able to walk kids to school or to bike with them. But they and other parents feel that it is unsafe to do so. They drive them instead.
- Using signalization to allow peds to cross safely, however feels that the signal timings at intersections need to be better calibrated. A driver feels left waiting for a long time even when no one else is present at the intersection.
- Tilly Mill feels narrow when driving down it and would support the lanes being widened.

### **Social Media**

Several social media tools were used to highlight this study. The city's Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram accounts advertised where the community could engage staff and consultants and to the city's dedicated project page which included links to the community input map and survey.

### **Online Activities**

#### ***Stakeholder Listening Sessions***

Four virtual listening sessions were held in May using an online digital whiteboard. These conversational sessions were focused on safety concerns, opportunities, challenges, and identification key community destinations. A full summary of comments from the listening sessions can be found in the appendix. A general summary is below:

- Pedestrian safety, particularly at crossings and intersections, is critical especially within school zones.

- Review arterial corridor designs and find opportunities for increased sidewalk widths and safer pedestrian connections.
- Speeding is frequent throughout Dunwoody.
- The HAWK signal near State Farm works well.
- Distracted driving is a major concern.

### Survey

A non-statistically valid online survey was available from April 22 to July 15. A total of 322 survey responses were recorded. Key takeaways are highlighted below, and the complete responses will be available in the final report's appendix.

#### **Key survey results:**

- ***What is your current relationship to the City of Dunwoody?***  
94% of respondents live in Dunwoody.
- ***How do people report traveling during a typical week?***  
98% of respondents drive during a typical week, followed by walking at 75.5%. Only 4.7% take transit.
- ***What behaviors do you believe lead to traffic safety issues?***  
77.9% of respondents believe the speed of vehicles is the biggest safety issue followed closely by distracted driving at 77.6%
- ***What are your top safety concerns with the existing conditions of Dunwoody's streets?***
  - Street design that encourages speeding
  - Lack of sidewalks/poor condition of sidewalks
  - Poor visibility at intersections/crosswalks
  - Lack of bike lanes or paths/condition of bike lanes or paths
  - Lack of safe routes for children to walk to school
  - Lack of crosswalks
  - Long distances / not enough time to cross the street
  - Bus stops without sidewalks or crosswalks nearby
- ***What is the one thing that the City should do to improve traffic safety?***  
50% of respondents would make changes to the street design to decrease speeding, increase visibility, and address safety concerns for people walking, biking, rolling, driving, and riding transit.

#### **Survey Demographics**

- 25% of respondents were between the age of 35-44
- 56% of respondents have children under 18 years old
- 57% are women
- 81% of respondents are white

### Community Input Map

The city hosted a community input map to gather location-specific feedback on roadway safety concerns. The online map was available from April 28 to July 15. Respondents were asked to drop pins on a map to give feedback on the following categories:

- Icon – Top safety priority for improvement
- Icon – Unsafe for pedestrians
- Icon – Unsafe for bicycles and scooters

#### **Community Input Map Stats**

- 273 Pins
- 65 Pins with a comment
- 60 pins with a story

- Icon – Unsafe for cars and motorists
- Icon – Unsafe for transit users
- Icon – Share your story

After placing a pin, participants had the option to write in a specific description of their thoughts. Respondents were also able to view and respond to other people's comments on the map. An overview of feedback by location is illustrated on the following pages. The base map for the comments is the High Injury Network (HIN) (full description can be found in the City of Dunwoody Road Safety Action Plan Crash Analysis Report). Linking the HIN to public comments will give city staff additional insight into safety concerns and potential distribution of resources.

**Key map themes include:**

- High speeds through school zones and neighborhoods are a top safety priority.
- Neighborhood cut through traffic is a concern.
- Protected bike facilities or multiuse paths are needed throughout the community.
- Improve pedestrian crossing visibility and legibility at intersections.
- Remove slip-lanes.
- Traffic calming initiatives are needed, specifically in neighborhoods with cut through traffic.
- Intersections that interface with exit/entrance ramps to Interstate 285 are a concern for all modes.

## Community Input Map Summary Results: Share Your Story

"The sidewalks along most of Mt Vernon are old, narrow, crumbling.... this is a heavily trafficked area for runners, bikers, and cars. Would recommend widening and replacing the sidewalks."

"Speeding on Tilly Mill is very bad at all hours"

"A multiuse trail on Mt. Vernon to make it safer for bikers and walkers."

"Too many people come through the neighborhood above the speed limit. I wish we could have ways to mitigate speed on this road.."

"Speeding on North Peachtree is terrible; I've seen cars being passed right in front of PCMS on at least two occasions"

"I'm afraid for school children walking to and from school."

"This intersection (Mt. Vernon Road and Chamblee Dunwoody Road) needs a roundabout. The traffic is crazy here."

"Significant speeding during before and after school times due to cut through route to high school. Very dangerous for young kids and others living in our neighborhood."

"One crossing that needs to have a flashing light would be Kingsland to Happy Hollow's East side; Speed of drives on Happy Hollow is never the speed limit of 35 mph."

# Map 1: Community Input Summary – Top Safety Priority for Improvement

## Community Input Map Summary Results: Top Safety Priority for Improvement



*Note: top comments identified as representative of community concerns.*

## Map 2: Community Input Summary – Unsafe for Bikes, Scooters, Pedestrians, and Transit Users

### Community Input Map Summary Results: Unsafe for Bikes, Scooters, Pedestrians, and Transit Users



*Note: top comments identified as representative of community concerns.*



### Map 3: Community Input Summary – Unsafe for Cars and Motorists

#### Community Input Map Summary Results: Unsafe for Cars and Motorists



*Note: top comments identified as representative of community concerns.*

## Recommended Action Items

Recommended Safety Action Items were developed in response to local safety data, crash analysis, public input, city staff input, and national peer examples. 37 specific actions were identified in six focus areas: Transformative Actions, High Injury Network, Citywide (systemic) Safety, Equity, Culture Change, and Data & Transparency. The initial draft list was vetted by the city and distributed to the SWG members for their review and input.

### Action Items Feedback:

- *Interdepartmental Road Safety Committee* – recommend setting a frequency (quarterly? Every 6 months?)
- *Develop corridor studies focusing on safety for the High Injury Network* – this is a planning-intensive task and costly, considering that there is already a well-defined HIN and other planning processes. I would focus less on more planning, and more on implementation, measurement, and results.
- *Manage speeds on the High Injury Network* – should this be a little more prescriptive? Is this infrastructure, or what is meant by “manage speeds”?
- *Work with schools to install safety projects* – is there thought of installing school zone speed cameras? Changing the infrastructure to encourage lower speeds and provide active mode options is more effective, but cameras can be an additional mechanism if there’s appetite for technology-based enforcement.
- *Promote Safe Routes to School (SRTS) planning and programming to all schools* – is there thought of installing school zone speed cameras?
- *Reduce barriers to traffic calming* – love this one! Why not make this happen sooner?
- *Develop a focused enforcement program for the Perimeter Mall area* – is this the #1 HIN location? Or why the focus on just that area?
- *Coordinate with Dunwoody Police Department to have all fatal and serious injury crashes identified* – would it make sense to expand this to all crashes? Frequent “minor” crashes can also be important signals

### Additional Feedback:

- Dunwoody may have the resources to try to better track how many people are walking, biking, and taking transit. As you implement safety improvements, I suspect you may not see a decrease in overall crashes, but you may see a lot more people feeling safe to get out outside of a car. Over time this may have a positive “safety in numbers” effect, but it will be hard to detect in the short term, unless you are tracking travel by alternative modes.
- This generally looks good to me [DPD]. Keeping the stats and data from serious/fatality crashes will not be an issue. We already have a solid traffic enforcement campaign that targets PCID/mall a great deal – monthly distracted driving or crosswalk details. However, we will probably need commitment from our community outreach in reference to the efforts at local schools, social venues, and mall...
- Lower Ashford Dunwoody and Cotillion roads speed limits to 35 mph. Both are on the high KSI list.
- Don’t automatically exclude bike lanes on ridge road segments where multi-use paths are considered. Bike lanes offer commuter and the spandex riders segments where full speed can be achieved without intermingling pedestrians and novice and young bike riders on paths.
- Specific Quick Build: Eliminate deceleration and acceleration lanes, mostly on Mt Vernon and Ashford Dunwoody roads.
- Make mid-block pedestrian crossings tabled so as to calm traffic speeds.
- Create an intersection table at Vermack and Womack roads.
- Make a table crossing at Vermack and Parliament roads intersection.

- Place impediments in median to deter mid-block crossings on Ashford Dunwoody from Valley View Road to Hammond Road. Could be plantings to accommodate parkway look.
- Address Ashford Dunwoody and Perimeter Center West intersection where Lazy Dogs, McDonalds and Meridian Hotel are located. For pedestrians it's inviting jay walking and has a major blind spot for Perimeter Center West eastbound drivers turning right (south) onto Ashford Dumwoody.
- Eliminate right turn lanes on all of Mt Vernon. Drivers pass on the right whenever a vehicle is turning left.
- Eliminate the over quarter mile right lane on Mt Vernon (heading west) just west of Mt Vernon West.

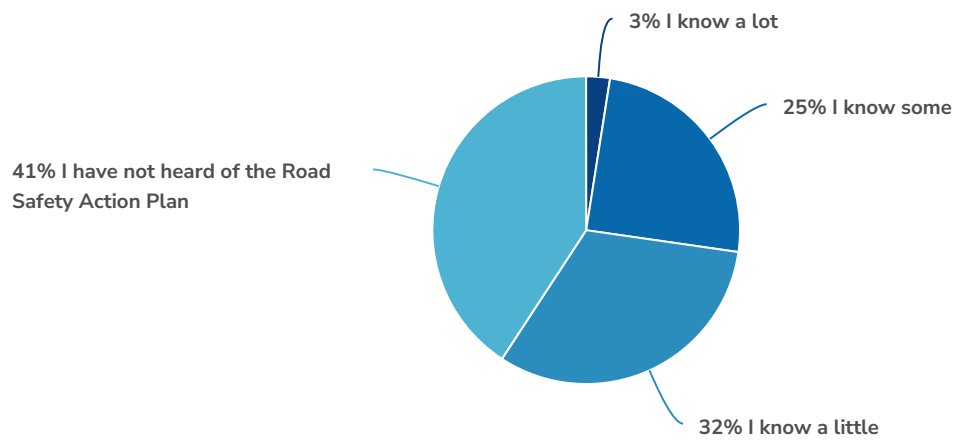
# Report for Dunwoody Road Safety Action Plan

## Response Counts



Totals: 322

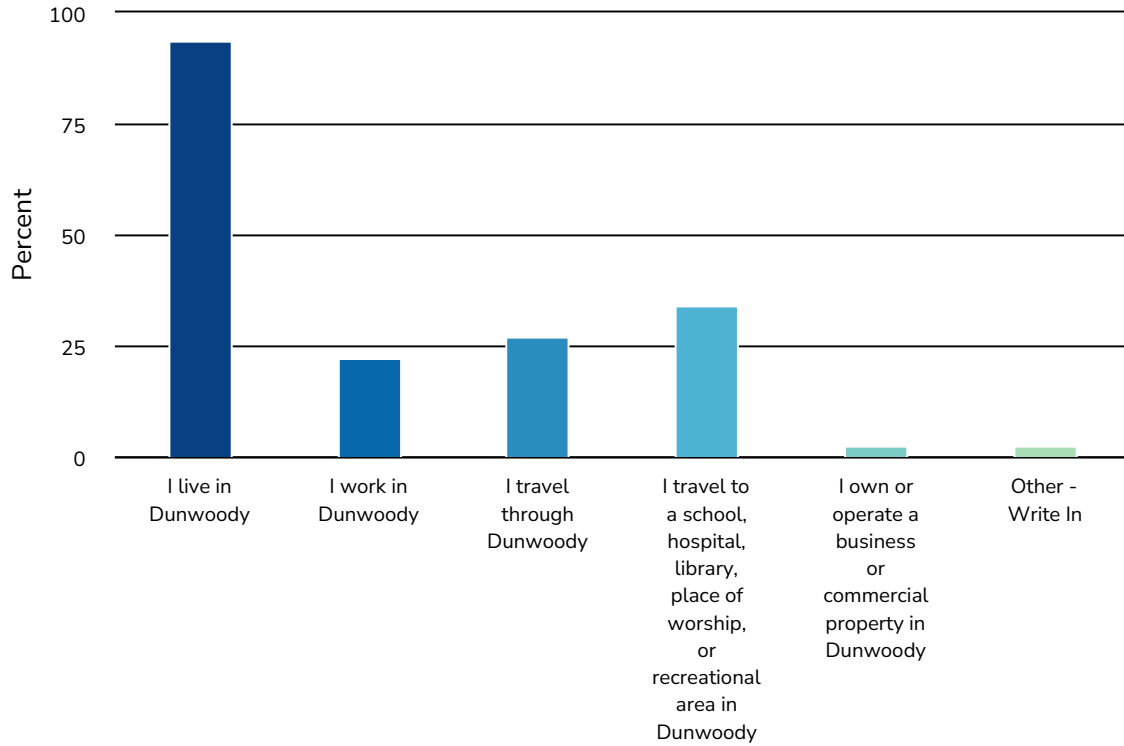
# 1. How familiar are you with the Dunwoody Road Safety Action Plan?



Value	Percent	Responses
I know a lot	2.5%	8
I know some	24.8%	79
I know a little	32.0%	102
I have not heard of the Road Safety Action Plan	40.8%	130

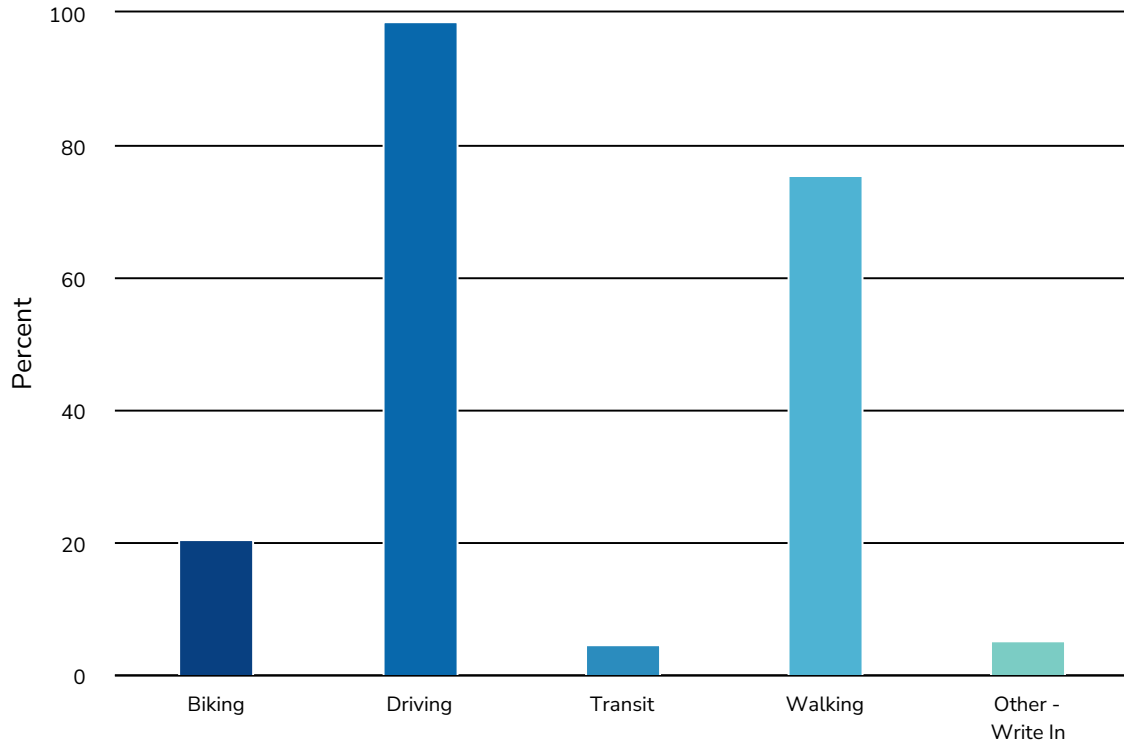
**Totals: 319**

2. What is your current relationship to the City of Dunwoody? (Select all that apply)



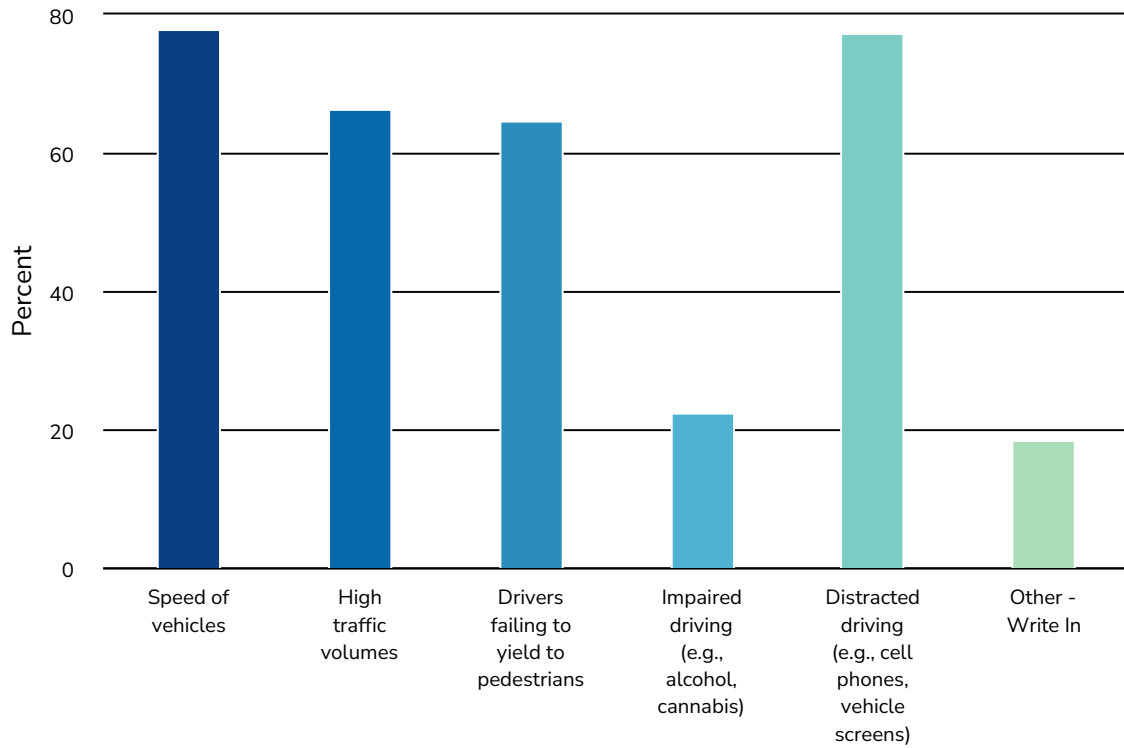
Value	Percent	Responses
I live in Dunwoody	94.0%	299
I work in Dunwoody	22.3%	71
I travel through Dunwoody	27.0%	86
I travel to a school, hospital, library, place of worship, or recreational area in Dunwoody	34.0%	108
I own or operate a business or commercial property in Dunwoody	2.8%	9
Other - Write In	2.8%	9

### 3. What modes of travel do you use during a typical week for transportation or leisure? (Select all that apply)



Value	Percent	Responses
Biking	20.7%	66
Driving	98.7%	315
Transit	4.7%	15
Walking	75.5%	241
Other - Write In	5.3%	17

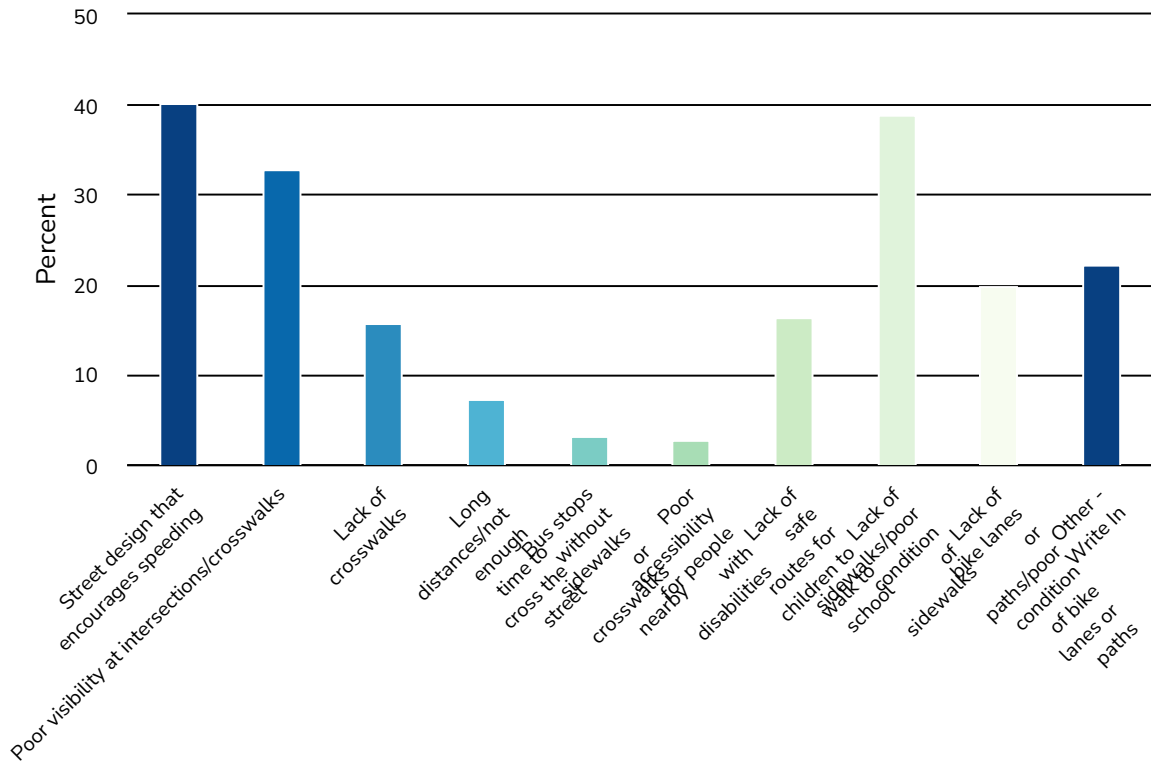
#### 4. What behaviors do you believe lead to traffic safety issues? (Select all that apply)



Value	Percent	Responses
Speed of vehicles	77.9%	247
High traffic volumes	66.6%	211
Drivers failing to yield to pedestrians	64.7%	205
Impaired driving (e.g., alcohol, cannabis)	22.4%	71
Distracted driving (e.g., cell phones, vehicle screens)	77.6%	246
Other - Write In	18.6%	59

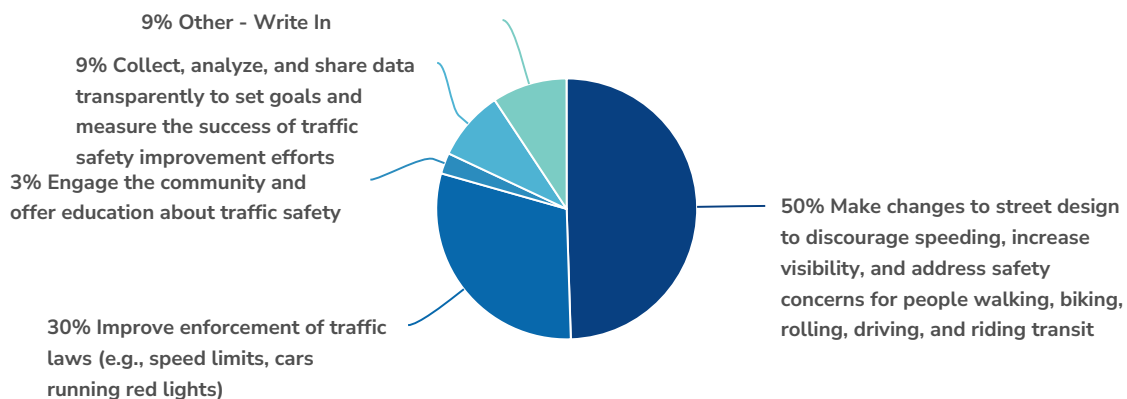


## 5. What are your top two safety concerns with the existing conditions of Dunwoody's streets?



Value	Percent	Responses
Street design that encourages speeding	40.2%	125
Poor visibility at intersections/crosswalks	32.8%	102
Lack of crosswalks	15.8%	49
Long distances/not enough time to cross the street	7.4%	23
Bus stops without sidewalks or crosswalks nearby	3.2%	10
Poor accessibility for people with disabilities	2.9%	9
Lack of safe routes for children to walk to school	16.4%	51
Lack of sidewalks/poor condition of sidewalks	38.9%	121
Lack of bike lanes or paths/poor condition of bike lanes or paths	19.9%	62
Other - Write In	22.2%	69

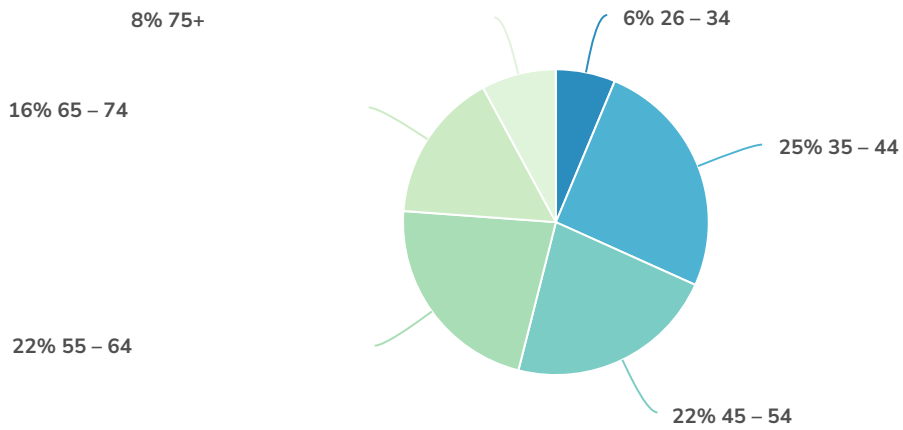
## 6. What is ONE thing the City should do to improve traffic safety?



Value	Percent	Responses
Make changes to street design to discourage speeding, increase visibility, and address safety concerns for people walking, biking, rolling, driving, and riding transit	49.5%	154
Improve enforcement of traffic laws (e.g., speed limits, cars running red lights)	29.9%	93
Engage the community and offer education about traffic safety	2.6%	8
Collect, analyze, and share data transparently to set goals and measure the success of traffic safety improvement efforts	8.7%	27
Other - Write In	9.3%	29

Totals: 311

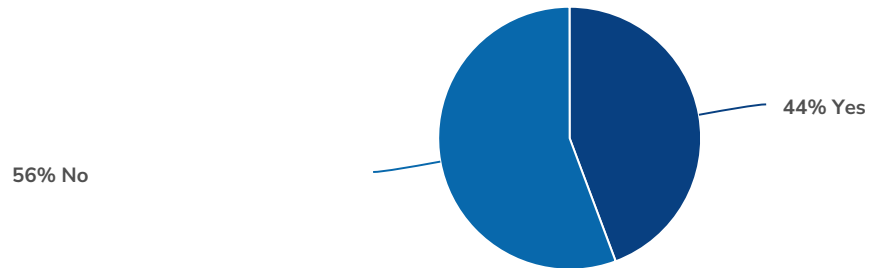
## 7. What is your age range?



Value	Percent	Responses
26 - 34	6.3%	20
35 - 44	25.4%	80
45 - 54	22.2%	70
55 - 64	22.2%	70
65 - 74	15.9%	50
75+	7.9%	25

Totals: 315

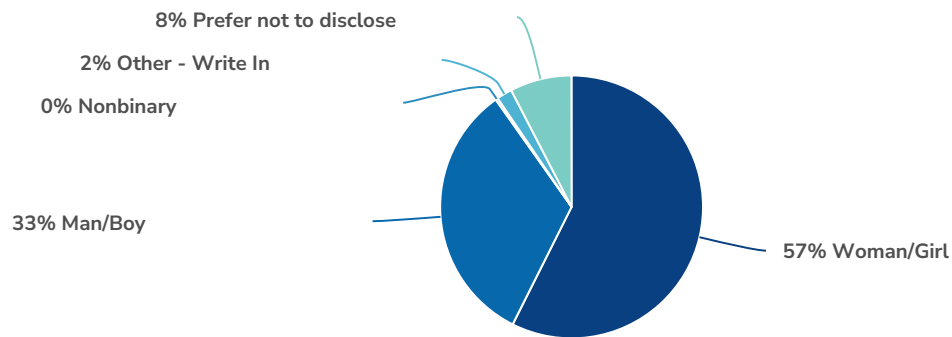
## 8. Do you have children under then age of 18 in your household?



Value	Percent	Responses
Yes	44.3%	140
No	55.7%	176

Totals: 316

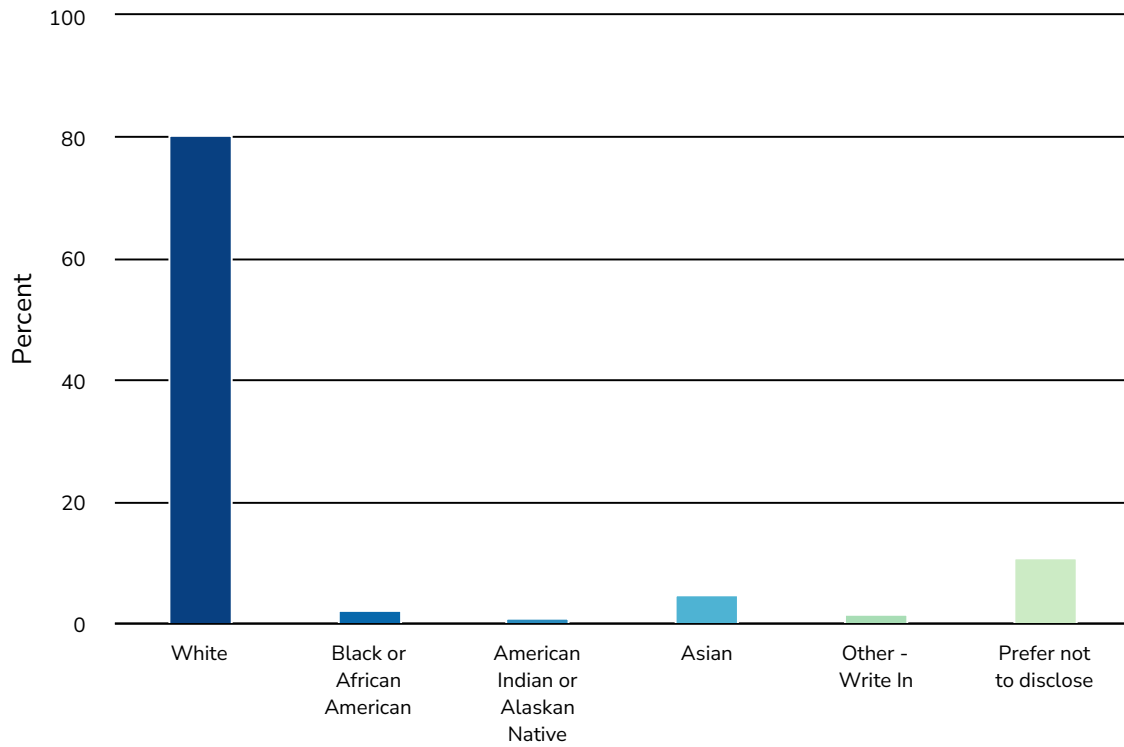
## 9. What is your gender identity?



Value	Percent	Responses
Woman/Girl	57.4%	182
Man/Boy	32.8%	104
Nonbinary	0.3%	1
Other - Write In	1.9%	6
Prefer not to disclose	7.6%	24

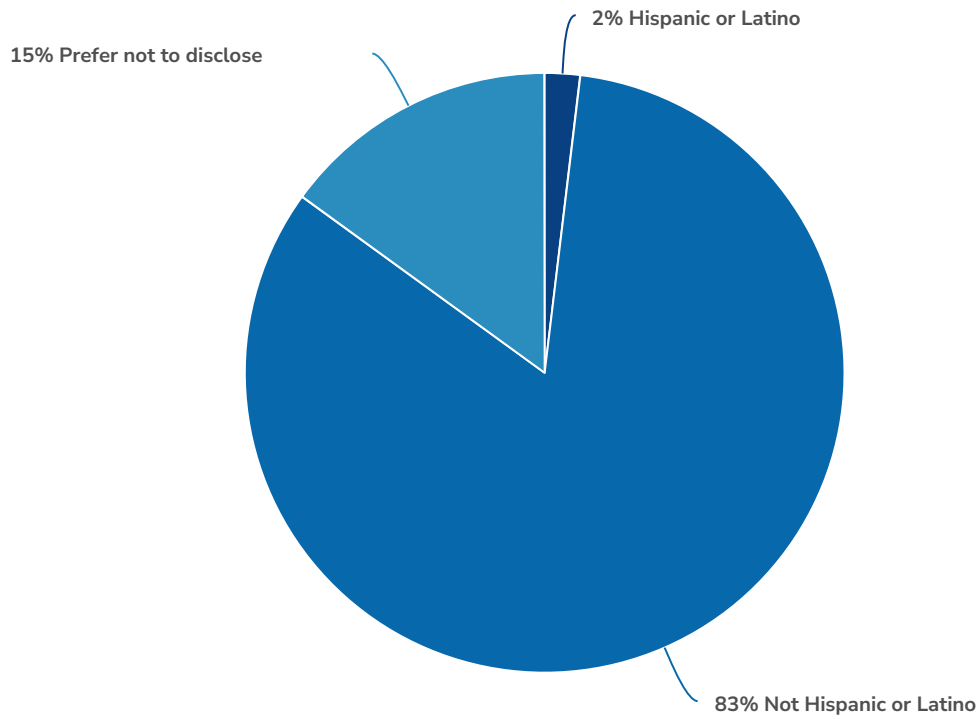
Totals: 317

## 10. What is your race? (Select all that apply)



Value	Percent	Responses
White	80.6%	254
Black or African American	2.2%	7
American Indian or Alaskan Native	1.0%	3
Asian	4.8%	15
Other - Write In	1.6%	5
Prefer not to disclose	10.8%	34

## 11. What is your ethnicity?



Value	Percent	Responses
Hispanic or Latino	1.9%	6
Not Hispanic or Latino	83.1%	261
Prefer not to disclose	15.0%	47

Totals: 314