

Subdivision Paving Survey Summary
Transportation Department/Commissioner's Office
May 7, 2010



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Introduction

The Board of County Commissioners directed the Transportation Department to brainstorm and create different payment possibilities for paying for the reconstruction of the deteriorating subdivision paved roads in a timely, cost-effective, affordable, efficient, and fair manner.

Given this task, the Transportation Department issued a survey and distributed 10,200 postcards to subdivision homeowners or homeowners who use subdivision roads to notify them of this online survey and also give them the opportunity to request a paper copy. This survey asks for respondents' feedback and opinion on: subdivision condition, timing of reconstruction, property owner payment options, and cost allocation. Respondents were encouraged to review subdivision material before completing the survey.

Using the unique survey ID given to every resident, the geographic location of every survey response has been determined. (Please refer to the maps for more detail.)

Upon closing May 3rd, 2010 after three weeks of offering individuals an opportunity to complete the survey, 2,144 participated in the survey and 1,868 completed the survey for a 87% completion rate.

The following will give more detail about the results of each question, including the comment section. For more detail about the closed-ended responses (especially for geographic purposes) please refer to the maps.

Road Condition

The majority of respondents answered this question as their subdivision roads having "Fair" road conditions. The actual measured conditions of the roads resulted in very similar results as the survey respondents: 33% of subdivision mileage was categorized as poor-terrible, 36% of subdivision mileage was categorized as fair, and 31% of subdivision mileage was categorized as good-very good.

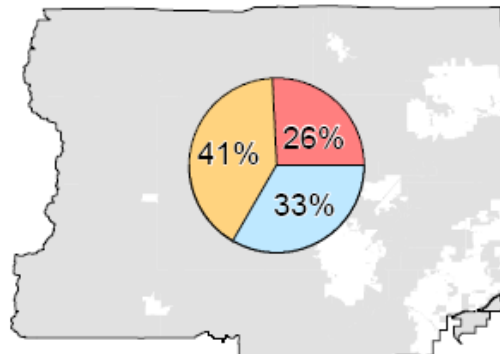
Survey Question #3

Overall, what do you think is the condition of the roads in your subdivision?

Survey Results*

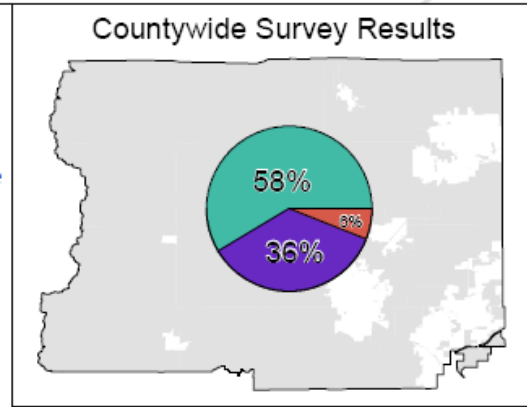


Countywide Survey Results



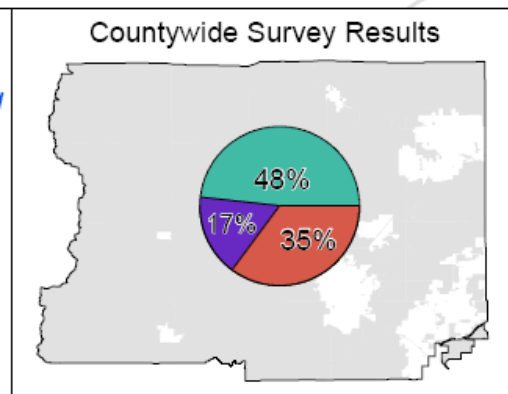
Reconstruction

Approximately 58% of survey respondents would prefer if all reconstruction and repair began now.



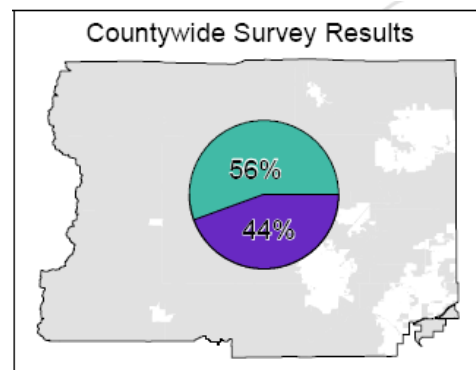
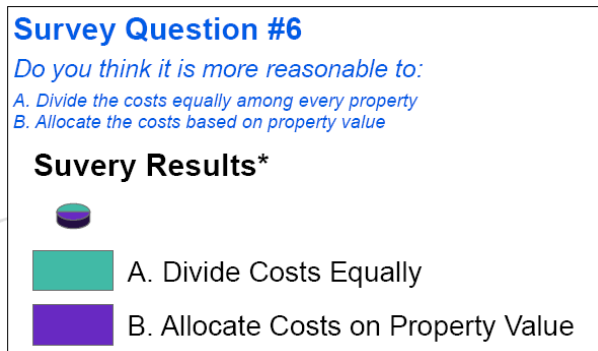
Property Owner Payment Options

48% of survey respondents selected the option with the highest yearly payments, but lowest total payment.



Cost Allocation

Only a slight majority (56%) of survey respondents selected the option to have every property owner pay equally.



Comments

Overview

Out of the 1,868 completed surveys, 983 were submitted with comments. Although not all of the organized comments will directly help with further decisions, they will give perspective of how people feel and think on this issue. Most of the comments fell under the following categories:

1. Payment
2. Vote for Decision
3. Appreciation
4. Frustration
5. Maintenance Feedback
6. Timing

Within the categories of Payment, Frustration, and Timing, the following sub-categories were created in order to clearly organize the feedback given in the comment section of the survey.

1. Payment
 - a. Equal throughout all County property owners
 - b. Use
 - c. Weight
 - d. Other
 - e. Prioritize away from other departments and projects
 - f. Higher gas tax
 - g. Length/Miles of Subdivision
 - h. Existing Funds
2. Frustration
 - a. Directed at County
 - b. Directed Survey
3. Timing
 - a. Long term plan needed
 - b. ASAP
 - c. No need, please don't

The following two figures show the percentage of comments and responses addressing each of the following sub-categories. Note: percentages do not sum to 100% since many responses included comments belonging to multiple categories.

Comments	Payment: Equal throughout all County property owners	Payment: Use	Payment: Weight	Payment: Prioritize away from other departments and projects	Payment: Higher gas tax	Payment: Length or Mileage	Payment: Existing Funds	Payment: Other
TOTAL	30	41	20	112	24	10	291	107
% of Comments	3%	4%	2%	11%	2%	1%	30%	11%
% of All Responses	2%	2%	1%	6%	1%	1%	16%	6%

Comments	Vote for Decision	Appreciation	Frustration: Directed at County	Frustration: Directed at Survey	Maintenance Quality and Method	Timing: Long term plan needed	Timing: ASAP	Timing: No need, please don't
TOTAL	10	115	196	122	162	35	78	68
% of Comments	1%	12%	20%	12%	16%	4%	8%	7%
% of All Responses	1%	6%	10%	7%	9%	2%	4%	4%

Each category of response is briefly discussed below.

Payment

This category garnered the most comment responses—identified in 64% of comments and 35% of all responses. In 30% of comments (16% of all responses), respondents directly expressed their support for expenses fully paid by the County. The next two most common sub-categories (Other and Prioritize away from other departments and projects) both arose in 11% of comments, respectively.

Equal throughout all County property owners: 3% of comments cited the unfairness of requiring subdivision homeowners to pay for subdivision roads and instead suggested that the payment for subdivisions be equally allocated onto all Boulder County property owners.

Use: 4% of comments made the suggestion to have the payment come from the usage of the roads, especially those who don't live in the subdivisions but may use it for various reasons (examples: close proximity to schools, home businesses, drivers avoiding construction, commuters avoiding high traffic roads). While some comments focused on the importance of tolls, others noted how some of the estimation could be done based on how many vehicles/licensed drivers a household has.

Weight: 2% of comments argued that the payment should be based on vehicle weight. Many comments cited how often large heavy vehicles travel through subdivisions (including school buses, semis, and maintenance vehicles) and that this must account for some of the cost of reconstruction of the roads.

Prioritize away from other departments and projects: 11% of comments encouraged the funding to come from other departments (mainly Parks and Open Space and Social Services) or other projects (mainly bike-centric programs).

Higher gas tax: 2% of comments suggested the money come from a higher statewide gas tax.

Length/Miles: 1% of comments recommended that the payment structure be determined by length of road to driveway, or individual subdivision mileage.

Existing Funds: As expected, 30% of comments showed strong support for the County to provide the funding due to the property owners' original understanding of "reconstruction" included under "maintenance".

Other: 11% of comments cited other payment methods, including the below examples:

- County subsidy/match
- Bicycle Licenses
- Contribution by near-by schools
- By parcel size
- Subdivision payments only for the subdivision where the property is located
- Sales Tax
- Increase property taxes
- Mill levy
- Discount for paying one-time lump sum
- Grandfathering of property owners prior to 1978

Vote for Decision

1% of comments urged an official vote on this matter regarding payment options.

Appreciation

12% of comments expressed appreciation for either 1) eliciting public feedback on a tough project and/or 2) doing a great job maintaining the roads.

Frustration

This category comprised of the second largest group, with 20% (10% of all responses) of the comments expressing frustration with the County's approach to this issue and 12% (7% of all responses) of the comments expressing frustration with the survey design and inability to add other suggestions.

Directed at the County: 20% of the comments expressed anger to the County in one fashion or another (i.e.: Transportation Department, Commissioners, or County as a whole). Most of these comments cited frustration with the County's delay in addressing this issue, tackling this issue during an economic recession, or the way the County is handling this issue. Other issues include: Not notifying property owners earlier and seemingly already making a decision on payment and timing issues.

Directed at the Survey: 12% of the comments cited frustration with the survey. Most of these comments cited frustration with the survey design in that individuals could not select "None of the above" or enter other suggestions into a comment box.

Maintenance Quality and Method

16% of all comments noted something related to either maintenance quality or maintenance method. The comments ranged widely, and include the following:

- Too much snowplowing
- Great job snowplowing
- Potholes not patched correctly
- Chip and Seal

Timing

The timing of the reconstruction work spans across the board from immediate to never. Even though there is a close-ended question addressing the timeline, 10% of all respondents reiterated their timing preference in the comments section.

Long-term plan needed: 4% of comments cited the need for a long-term plan to avoid this issue arising again in 10-15 years. Some expressed support of a LID in order to address these reconstruction issues in a more effective and efficient manner.

ASAP: 8% urged the County to start paving as soon as possible due to the roads getting beyond repair and sometimes inability to drive.

No need, please don't: 7% of comments urged the County to not pave now –mostly due to good current road conditions. However, many respondents recommended their roads not be reconstructed in order to let the roads deteriorate back to dirt road conditions in order to discourage high speed traffic and traffic all together.

Closing Remarks

There is a lot of frustration from individuals because there was no opportunity for them to put their own solutions into the survey. The survey design was created in order to access property owners' preferences given the possible answers.

Many comments urge the County to be mindful about the current economic conditions and realize that many living in the subdivisions are seniors living on a fixed income.

As one survey respondents accurately commented, "Remember, you can't please all of us".