

2013

TranPlan 21

Public Involvement Survey



**VOLUME I
FINAL REPORT**

**State of Montana
Department of Transportation**

**Bureau of Business and Economic Research
The University of Montana – Missoula**

Volume I

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The purpose of the 2013 TranPlan 21 Public Involvement Survey is to examine Montanans’:

- perceptions of the current condition of the transportation system;
- views about possible actions that could improve the transportation system in Montana; and
- opinions about the quality of service Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) provides to its customers.

The Bureau of Business and Economic Research at The University of Montana-Missoula interviewed 1,063 households from May 29 2013, through August 13, 2013.

In 2013 Montanans are:

- generally satisfied with the state’s transportation system;
- satisfied with the physical condition of system components;
- somewhat satisfied with the availability of most transportation services (except passenger rail service).

Montanans want more facilities, equipment, or services for:

- major highways other than interstates;
- rest areas;
- pedestrian walkways.

Montanans viewed nearly all problems studied as small problems. Only one problem was viewed as moderately severe: road pavement condition.

Montanans’ place the highest priority for possible actions to improve the transportation system on:

- including wildlife crossings and barriers in roadway projects
- maintaining road pavement condition;
- improving the physical condition of highways other than interstates;
- keeping the public informed about transportation issues;
- taking appropriate measures with roadside vegetation;
- improving transportation safety, and

- supporting preservation of existing rail service.

Trends:

- Overall system satisfaction has improved.
- Satisfaction with the physical condition of system components has improved slightly relative to the 2011 survey.
- Perceived system problems continue to be rated as small or moderate problems.
- Possible system improvements remain rated as medium priorities.
- MDT keeping customers informed and responsiveness to ideas and concern grades declined slightly from 2011.

MDT’s overall customer service and performance grades are in the B to C+ range.

The public rates the following as the most important security priorities for Montana’s transportation system:

- emergency response plans;
- airports; and
- border crossings.

Montanans view radio and television as the most useful general communication tools.

Montanans say maps are the most helpful communication tool for transportation planning and project information.

Indications that warrant attention:

- The MDT website is becoming a primary communication tool particularly among the young and educated.
- Using new technology like electronic message signs increased as a system improvement priority.
- Energy development impacts on the transportation system are growing concern of District 4 respondents.
- Support for increasing or improving passenger rail service continues to broaden and is felt more intensely by supporters.
-

The purpose of the 2013 TranPlan 21 Public Involvement Survey is to examine Montanans’:

- perceptions of the current condition of the transportation system;
- views about possible actions that could improve the transportation system in Montana; and
- opinions about the quality of service MDT provides to its customers.

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

The telephone survey, one of several MDT public involvement processes, provides MDT policy-makers and planners a statistically valid sample of different groups of Montanans and their transportation needs and preferences. The survey explores trends in public perceptions by maintaining comparability with prior TranPlan 21 telephone surveys which have been conducted biennially since the mid-1990’s.

Survey Design

The 2013 TranPlan 21 Public Involvement Survey is the ninth iteration of a repeated, cross-sectional analysis designed to provide both a snapshot of current public opinion and trend analysis. This survey was administered by telephone using a Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) process. Sampling was conducted using a Random-Digit Dial (RDD) process. The population sampled was all adult Montanans who live in a household with a working telephone. A working telephone is defined as a landline or cell phone. This population should not be confused with all Montanans, since it excludes households without working telephones, the institutional population, and Montanans absent from the state during the survey period. The approximate sampling error for this survey is plus or minus 2.9 percent. This means that using this

study design, in 95 of 100 samples a sampled mean would be within 2.9 percent of the population mean. Estimates using subsets of these data will have higher sampling error rates.

At least 200 respondents were interviewed in each MDT district. Post-stratification weights were applied so that statements about all adult Montanans could be made.

Survey Administration

The survey was administered from May 29, 2013, through August 13, 2013. Of the 2,791 eligible respondents contacted, 1,063 (38 percent) participated in the survey. This cooperation rate is considered typical for a survey of this type.¹

Respondents who lived in households with landline telephones were selected randomly within households. The person answering the telephone had the same probability of being selected as any adult member of the household. If the selected member of the household was not home, an appointment was made to interview the absent respondent. Sampled individuals who were out of state during the administration period and individuals with medical problems that precluded participation were ineligible. Telephone numbers drawn by the RDD process were ineligible if they were out-of-service, fax machines, or businesses. Numbers for which there was no answer were called repeatedly during morning, evening, and weekend hours.

Starting in 2009, BBER implemented additional sampling procedures to mitigate any possible under-coverage bias due to the higher proportion of adults who live in wireless-only households. In 2013, BBER conducted interviews with 155 adults who use wireless telephones. This yielded 79 completed interviews with adults who live in wireless-only households. This is the number of

¹ Groves, Robert, M. et. al. 2004. *Survey Methodology*. New York: John Wiley & Sons. pp. 184-187.

wireless-only household completions that BBER believes is the minimum of practical statistical value. Wireless telephone respondents received \$2.00 as compensation for any telephone charge imposed on them as a result of the interview, if they were willing to give BBER contact information.

BBER documented case status in a manner that allows calculation and reporting of a unit response rate using the American Association for Public Opinion Research (2008) standard definition (RR3).² The response rate for this survey was 33.4 percent. This response rate is excellent for rigorously conducted RDD surveys.³

Data Set Preparation

Following collection, the data were inspected to ensure no duplicate cases were included and to correct any interviewer miskeys. Appropriate data labels were added. Appropriate composite variables, post-stratification weights, and flags were also added to the data set to facilitate analysis. Missing values for age were imputed using the hot deck method to facilitate comparison with the 2010 Census. Hot deck imputation substitutes the responses of similar cases for missing data.

Post-stratification weights were applied to the data. This is a common data processing technique that has been shown to improve the accuracy of estimates. The data are weighted by MDT region, age, sex and telephone type.

² American Association for Public Opinion Research. 2008. *Standard Definitions: Final Dispositions of Case Codes and Outcome Rates for Surveys. 4th edition*. Lexana, Kansas: AAPOR.

³ Groves, Robert, M. et. al. 2004. *Survey Methodology*. New York: John Wiley & Sons. pp. 184-187.

The Respondents

The table below describes the respondents and provides benchmarks against which they may be compared. Nearly half (49.4 percent) of respondents are female, and just over half (50.6 percent) are male. The percentage of females and males from 2010 Census⁴ is within the sampling margin of error of the corresponding percentages from the 2013 Public Involvement Survey.

Distribution of the sample among races also approximates Census Bureau estimates.⁵ American Indians or Alaskan Natives comprise 5 percent of respondents, while 95 percent are white and other races.

Table 1.1: Respondents by Gender and Race

	2013 Public Involvement Survey		2010 Census
	Unweighted	Weighted *	
Males	50.6%	50.0%	49.8%
Females	49.4%	50.0%	50.2%
White and other race adults	95.2%	95.0%	94.7%
American Indian adults	4.8%	5.0%	5.3%
Median age of adults	60	49	47
Males	60	48	47
Females	60	50	48
Median age by phone usage			
Cell and landline	60	53	na
Cell only	44	37	na
Landline only	64	58	na

* Weighted by age, sex, MDT District, phone type

⁴ Gender estimates U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census, Montana Table DP-1.

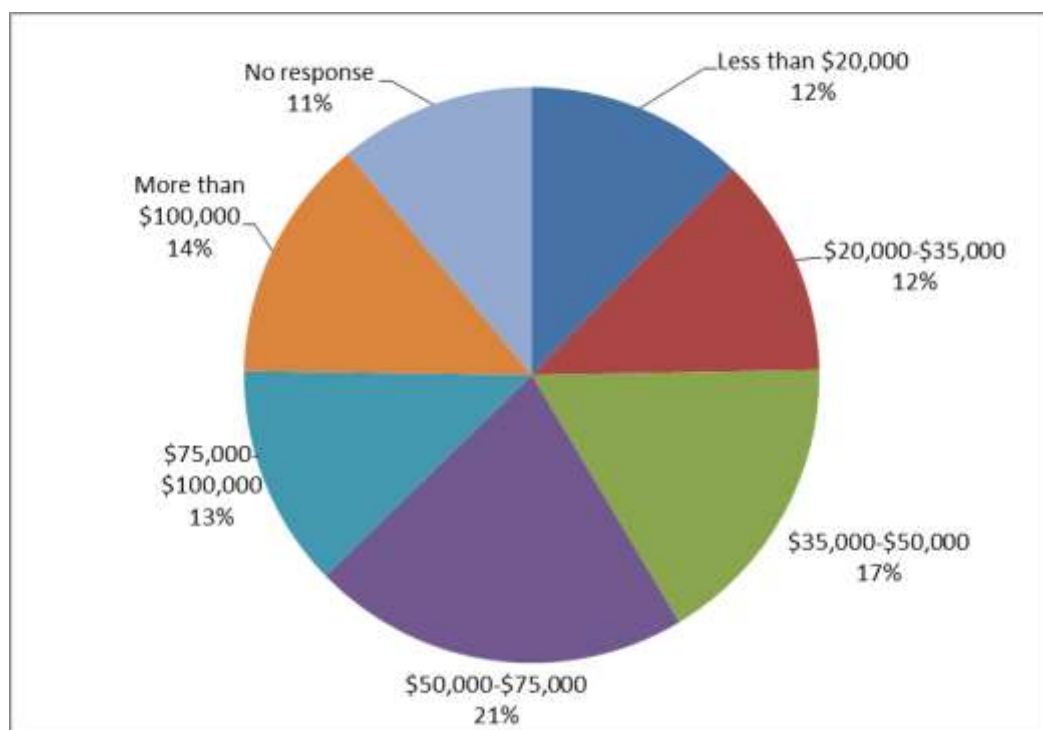
⁵ Race estimates U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census, Montana Table DP-1, Race alone or in combination with other races.

The weighted median age of 2013 respondents is 49 years, while the median age of Montanans age 18 and over in 2010 was 47.⁶ The age difference is small but statistically significant. It is likely that older people are easier to reach on the telephone. The probable effect of this difference on the data is small. Respondents who live in landline phone-only households are significantly older than those who live in households with both a cell phone and a landline phone, or those who live in cell phone-only households.

According to the U.S. National Center for Health Statistics as of 2011, 32.6% of Montanans aged 18 and older lived in cell phone-only households.⁷

The income distribution for the respondents is shown in Figure 1.1. Since the income data were collected as a categorical variable, direct comparison with Census Bureau data is not practical. Eleven percent refused to give an estimate of household income. However, based on observation of the 2013 TranPlan 21 Survey income distribution, it would appear that the distribution is slightly higher than the Census Bureau estimate of Montana's median 2011 household income of \$44,222.⁸

Figure 1.1: Income Distribution of 2013 Respondents

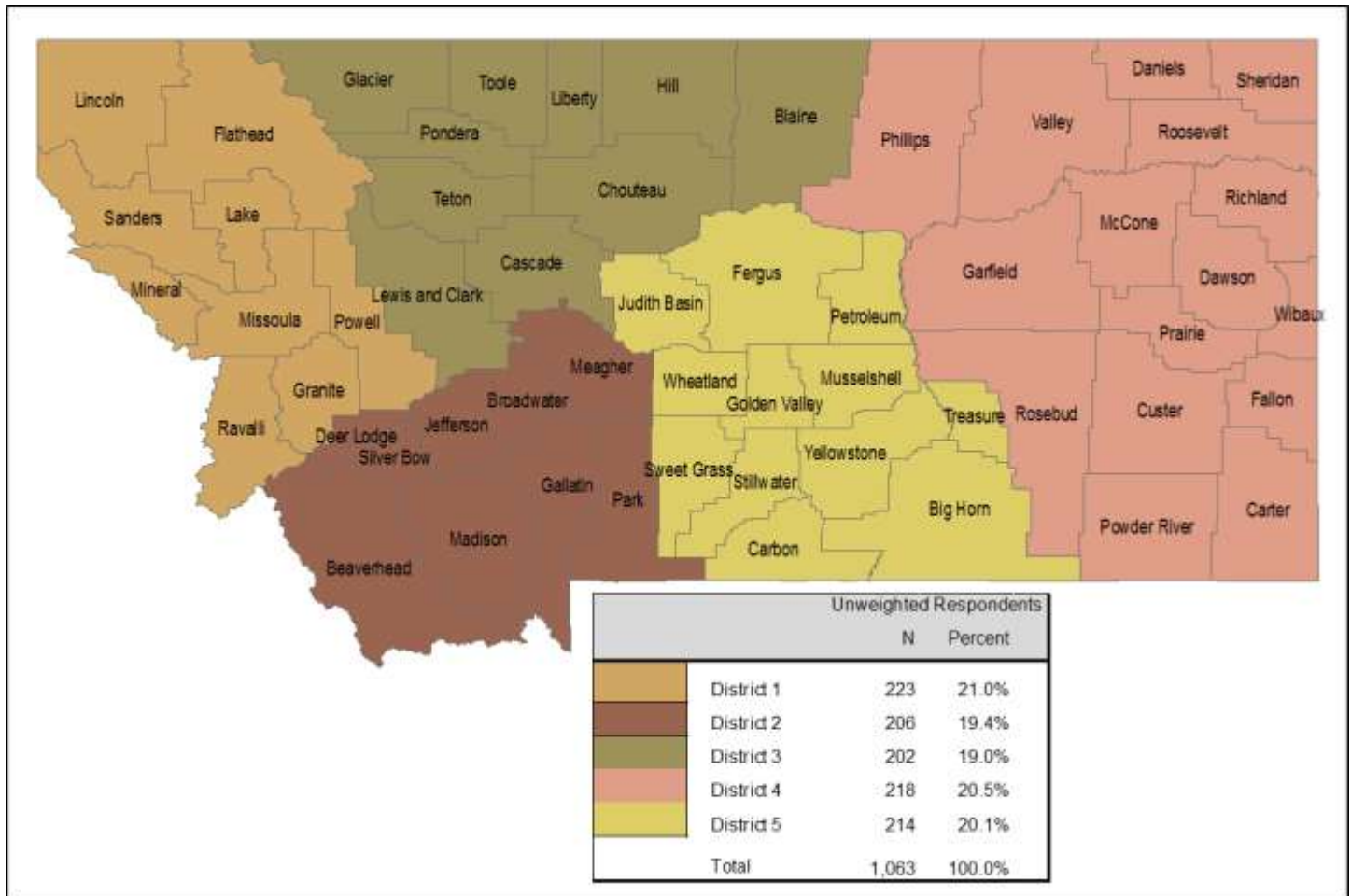


⁶ Age estimate, U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census, Montana Table DP-1.

⁷ Blumberg SJ, Luke JV, Ganesh N, et al. Wireless substitution: State-level estimates from the National Health Interview Survey, 2010–2011. National health statistics reports; no 61. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics. October 12, 2012.

⁸ U.S. Census Bureau, 2011 American Community Survey.

Figure 1.2: MDT Regions and 2013 Unweighted Respondents



The figure above shows that 21 percent of respondents live in MDT District 1 (Lincoln, Flathead, Sanders, Mineral, Missoula, Ravalli, Granite, Powell, and Lake counties), 19.4 percent live in District 2 (Beaverhead, Madison, Deer Lodge, Silver Bow, Jefferson, Broadwater, Meagher, Gallatin, and Park counties), 19.0 percent live in District 3 (Glacier, Pondera, Teton, Lewis and Clark, Cascade, Toole, Chouteau, Liberty, Hill, and Blaine counties), 20.5 percent live in District 4 (Phillips, Valley, Daniels, Sheridan, Roosevelt, Richland, McCone, Garfield, Dawson, Prairie, Rosebud, Fallon, Custer, Powder River, Carter, and Wibaux counties) and

20.1 percent live in District 5 (Bighorn, Treasure, Stillwater, Sweet Grass, Wheatland, Yellowstone, Golden Valley, Petroleum, Fergus, Musselshell, Judith Basin, and Carbon counties).

Structure of this Report

The primary purpose of Volume 1 of this report is to describe data collected by the 2013 TranPlan21 Public Involvement Survey. Adequate description of these data requires presenting an extensive set of tables throughout the report. Analyses of the data are also presented. The report examines three areas. First, Montanans' attitudes about the state's transportation system are explored. Second, opinions about the customer service provided by the Montana Department of Transportation are described. Finally, trends in Montanans' attitudes about the transportation are discussed.

Volume II contains the appendices. The text of the 2013 TranPlan 21 Public Involvement Survey may be found in Appendix A (Volume II). Tables of responses to each question are also found in Appendix B (Volume II), and can serve as a useful, quick-reference tool.

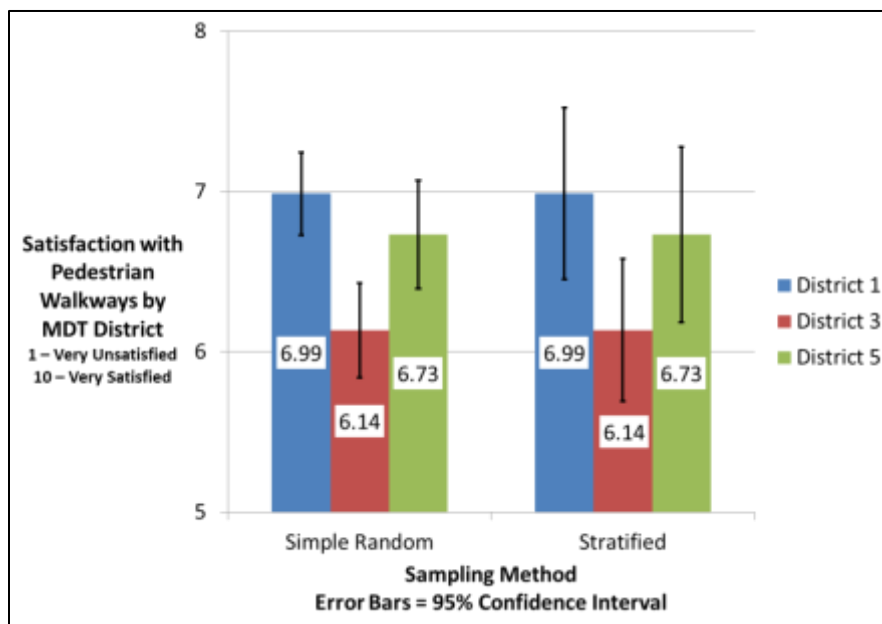
To determine differences between group means and percentages, t-tests were calculated and are reported throughout this document. T-test results reported here will use the .05 significance level unless stated otherwise. If a value is said to differ from a second value at the .05 level, in 95 out of 100 samples the value will be found to differ from the second value.

T-tests here are calculated using specialized software that estimates sampling error while accounting for the stratified random sampling design of this survey. These estimates of the sampling error are the most accurate estimate possible, and cannot be derived using most off-the-shelf statistical software packages. Most off-the-shelf software packages calculate sampling error assuming the simplest design which is simple random sampling.

Data users are urged to account for the impact of the sample design on sampling error when analyzing these data.

Failure to account for the sampling design when estimating sampling error in this study could cause a data analyst to find differences between groups when none actually exist. For example, in Figure 1.3 below, differences in 2013 MDT District levels of satisfaction with pedestrian walkways are illustrated by displaying 95% confidence intervals calculated assuming either simple random sampling or the stratified random sampling design actually used. Assuming simple random sampling, a data analyst would conclude that District 1 is more satisfied than District 3. However, as the figure demonstrates, the actual 95% confidence intervals overlap when calculated assuming this stratified random sampling design.

Figure 1.3: Comparison of Confidence Intervals, Simple Random Sampling and Complex Sampling



The 2013 TranPlan 21 Public Involvement Survey was designed to provide analysis of the trends in Montanans' attitudes and perceptions about their transportation system. To the extent possible, the wording of the questions was repeated exactly, so that responses from the 2013 survey can be compared to those from previous years.

The 2013 survey findings are compared in the following sections to the surveys conducted in 2005, 2007, 2009 and 2011. Several questions were added in 2005, 2007, and 2011; thus in some cases comparisons can only be made for the later years.

Overall Satisfaction

Montana's overall transportation system was ranked on a scale of one to ten, where one is "very unsatisfied" and ten is "very satisfied." The mean response was 6.83, reflecting moderate satisfaction with the overall transportation system. The psychological midpoint of the one to ten scales is five. The distance above five is a measure of the intensity of satisfaction.

Satisfaction with the Physical Condition of System Components

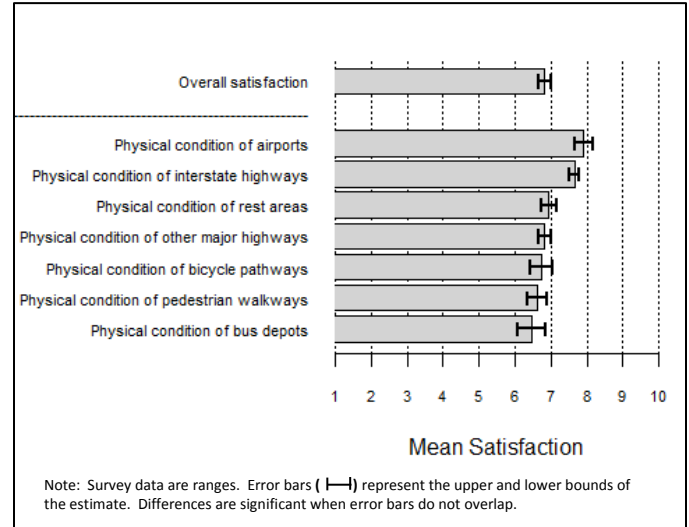
Each component of Montana's transportation system was also rated using the same one to ten scale. These ratings are reported in Table 2.1 and Figure 2.1. Figure 2.1 shows the mean for each component with an upper and lower bound. Differences in satisfaction are easily seen by looking for overlap among the bars.

Table 2.1: Satisfaction with Physical Condition of System Components

	Mean	95% Confidence		Number of respondents
		Lower limit	Upper limit	
Overall system	6.75	6.57	6.92	1,049
Airports	7.93	7.70	8.16	825
Interstate highways	7.60	7.46	7.75	1,044
Rest areas	6.92	6.70	7.14	965
Other major highways	6.78	6.61	6.96	1,026
Bicycle pathways	6.70	6.39	7.00	698
Pedestrian walkways	6.60	6.34	6.86	933
Bus depots	6.41	6.04	6.77	497

Airports ranked highest in terms of satisfaction (7.93). People also express relatively strong satisfaction with interstate highways (7.60). Behind interstate highways is a group of four components with which Montanans are moderately satisfied: rest areas (6.92), other major highways (6.78), bicycle pathways (6.70), and pedestrian walkways (6.60).

Figure 2.1: Satisfaction with Condition of System Components



Respondents expressed a lower level of satisfaction with bus depots (6.41). A relatively large number of respondents said they did not have enough information about bus depots.

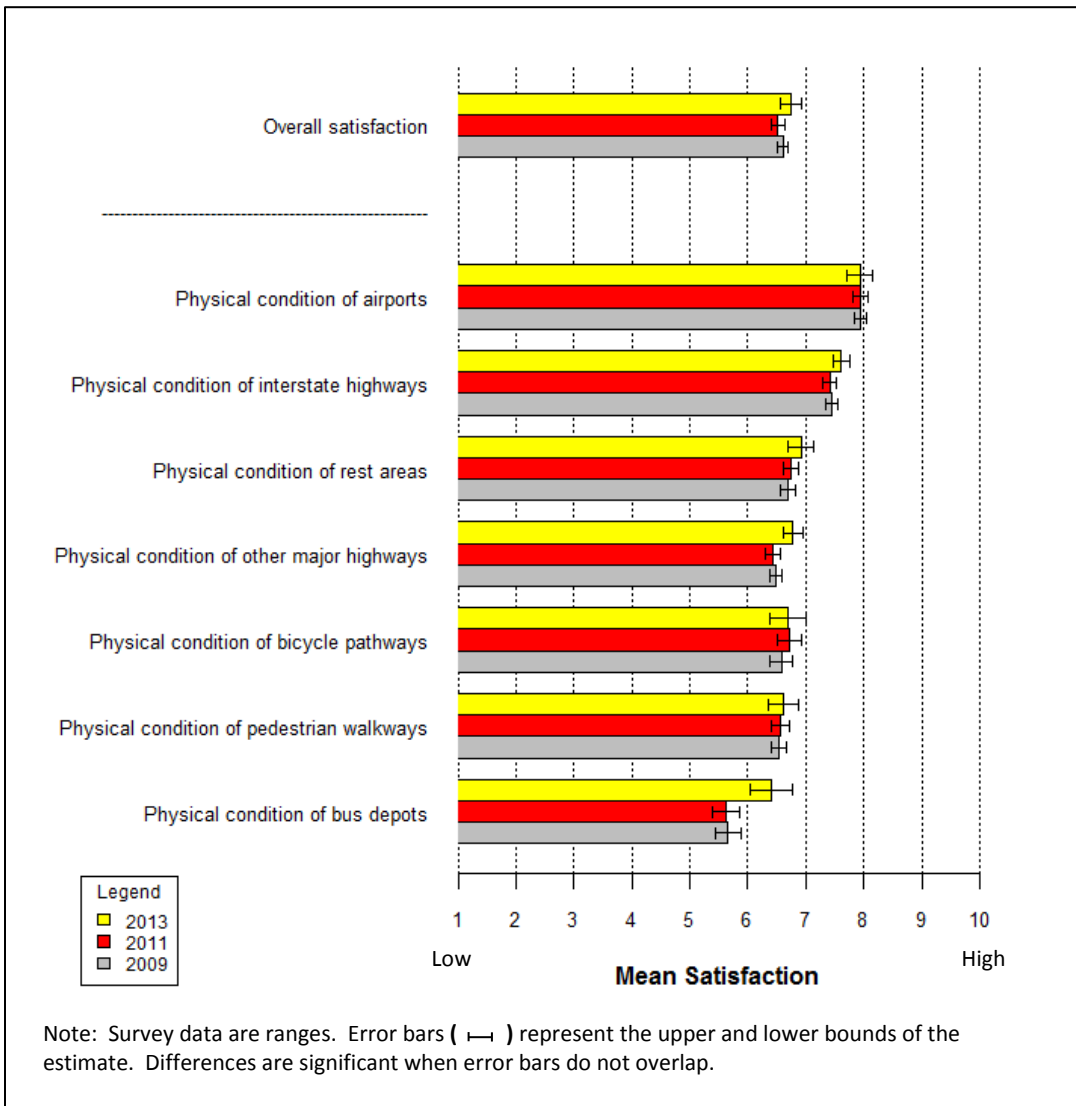
In each of the seven replications of this study respondents were asked identical questions rating their satisfaction with the physical condition of various system components. The questions utilized a one to ten scale, where one is very unsatisfied and ten is very satisfied. As shown in Figure 2.2, when asked to rate their overall satisfaction with Montana's transportation system in 2013 respondents' satisfaction improved slightly between 2009 and 2013.

Respondents' rating of the physical condition of Montana's airports remains high over the 2009-2013 time periods.

The opinion of Montana residents about the physical condition of Montana's interstate highways has not changed much over the last few years; the satisfaction rating is relatively high at 7.6. Satisfaction with the physical condition of Montana's other major highways shows improvement over earlier surveys.

The rating of the physical condition of rest areas and bus depots also improved over early surveys. Ratings of the physical condition of bicycle pathways and pedestrian facilities also showed some improvement, although the improvement is not statistically significant.

Figure 2.2: Comparison of Physical Condition of Montana's Transportation System, 2009-2013

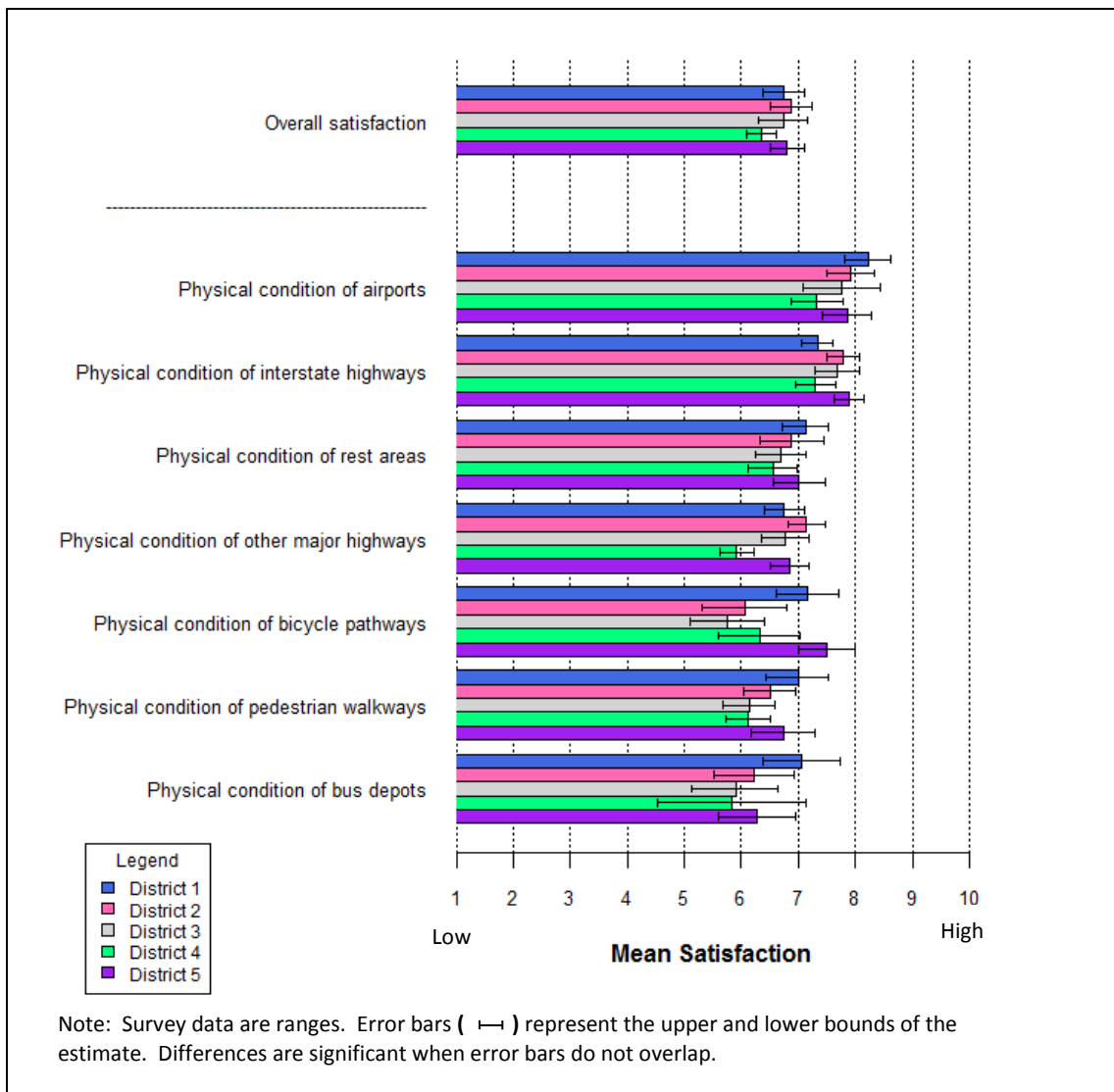


Respondent satisfaction can also be examined by MDT District within Montana. Figure 2.3 presents mean satisfaction scores for each of the five MDT Districts.

Tests were calculated to assess the statistical significance of differences between the means presented. Overall, there is general agreement between respondents from the various MDT districts. However, a few district differences exist. First, in terms of overall system satisfaction, District 4 residents were slightly

less satisfied than residents of other districts. Districts 4 respondents were slightly less satisfied with the condition of airports, although the difference was not significant. There were no differences among MDT districts regarding the condition of interstate highways. District 4 residents were less satisfied about the condition of other major highways, when compared to other MDT districts.

Figure 2.3: Mean Satisfaction with Condition of System Components by MDT District



Perceived Need for More Infrastructure

Montanans were asked whether each of eight transportation system components needed additional facilities, equipment, or services. Respondents' perceptions about the need for more transportation infrastructure are examined below (Table 2.2).

Table 2.2: Perceived Need for Additional Facilities, Equipment, or Services

	Yes	No	Do not know	Number of respondents
Other major highways	53.2%	40.8%	6.0%	1,063
Pedestrian walkways	51.8%	37.0%	11.2%	1,063
Rest areas	46.2%	45.6%	8.2%	1,063
Bicycle pathways	41.3%	35.8%	22.9%	1,063
Interstate highways	36.1%	57.4%	6.5%	1,063
Local transit	33.3%	28.0%	38.6%	1,063
Airports	21.7%	58.0%	20.3%	1,063

Consistent with their satisfaction ratings, about one-half of Montanans believe that more facilities, equipment, or services are needed for other major highways and pedestrian walkways. Less than one-half of the respondents perceived a need for additional rest areas (46 percent). About two-fifths perceived a need for bicycle pathways (41 percent).

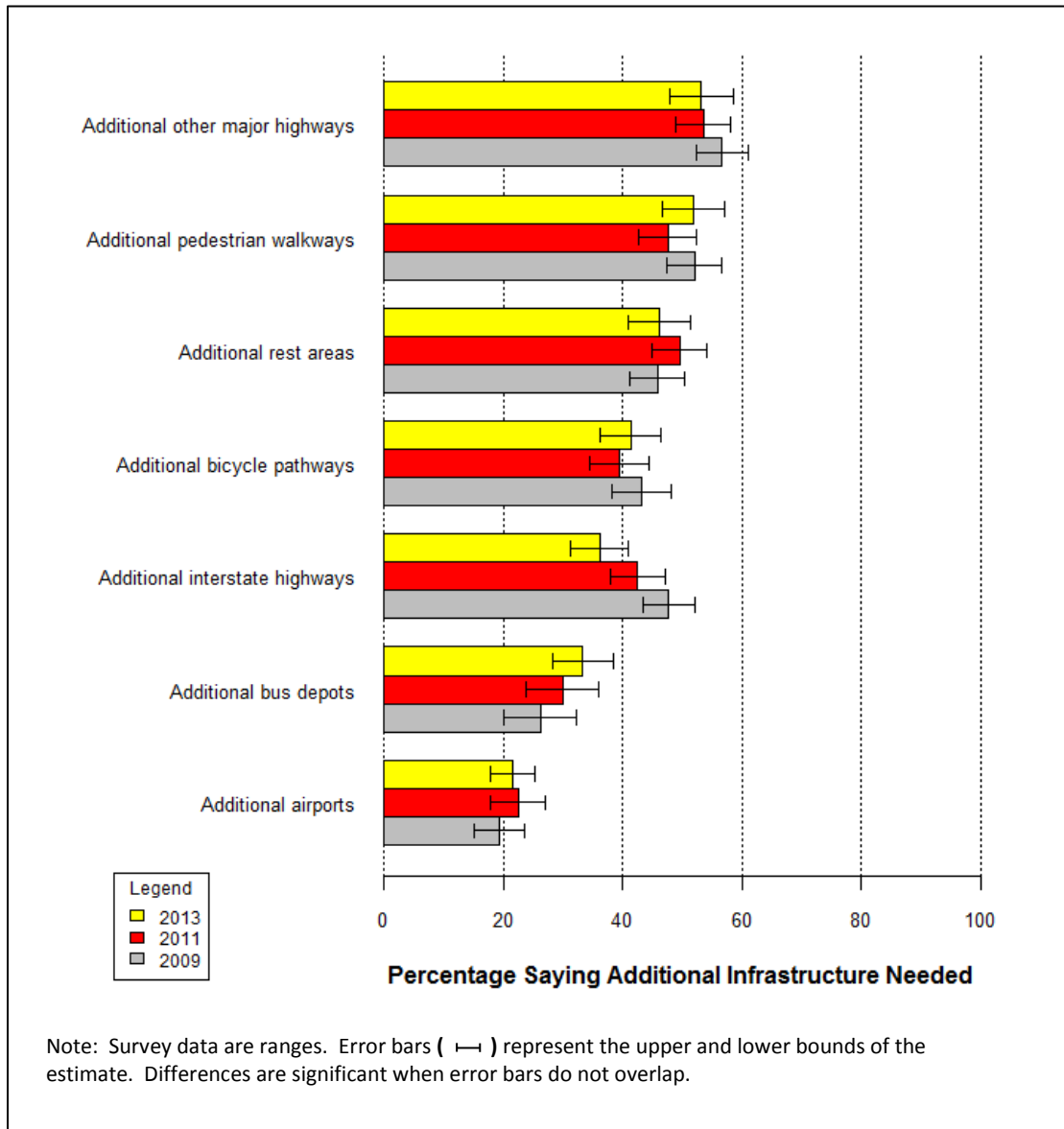
Two of five respondents say they didn't feel qualified to answer questions about local transit (39 percent). Only one in five respondents said Montana needs more airports.

Comparisons of responses to perceived needs from previous surveys are presented in Figure 2.4.

In general, the need for new facilities, equipment, or services has declined slightly since this surveying effort

began. The ranking has remained fairly constant with minor differences occurring on a year-to-year basis. 2013 respondents perceived less a need for additional facilities and services than previous respondents.

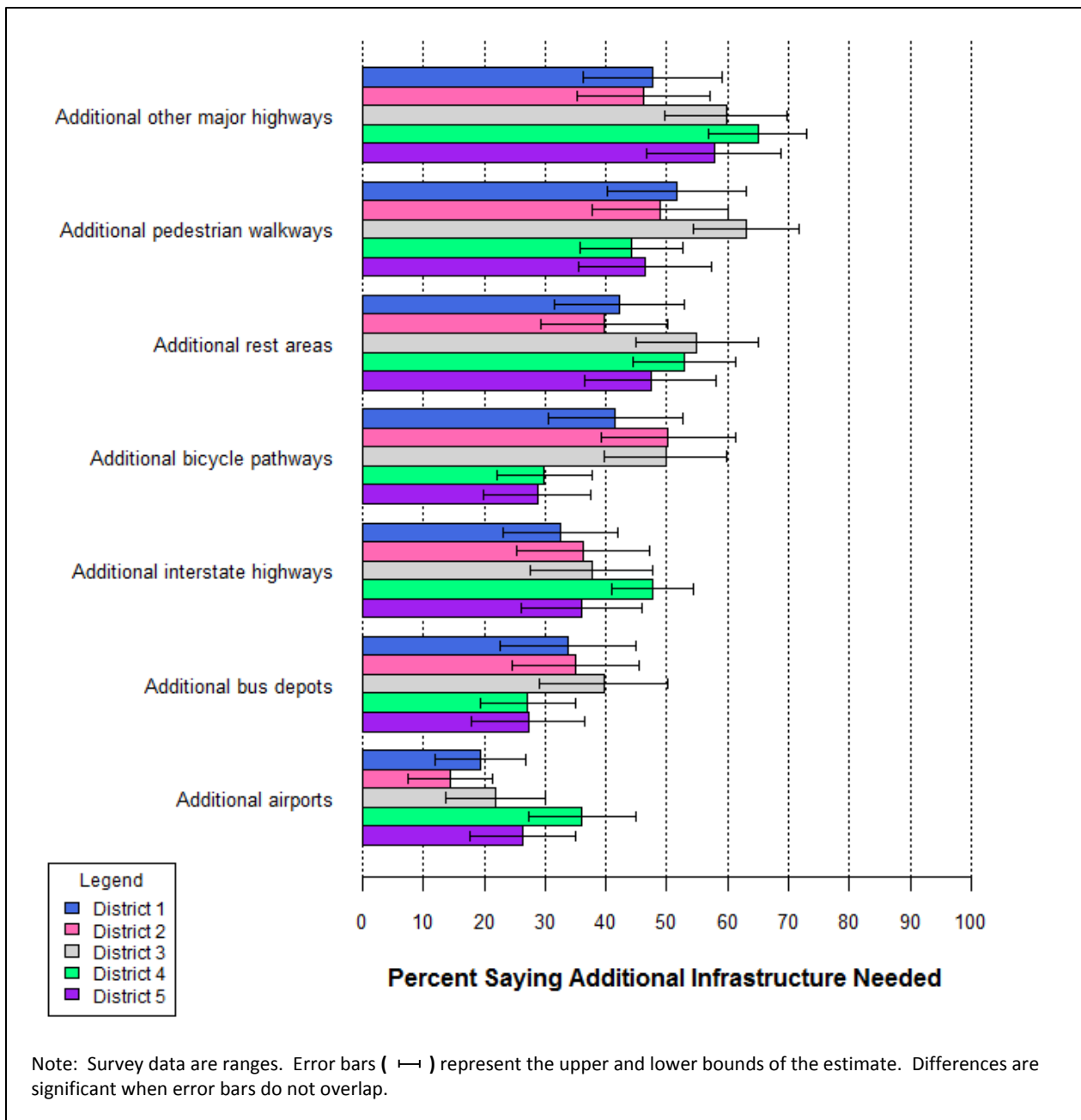
Figure 2.4: Perceived Need for More Facilities, Equipment or Services, 2009-2013



A few regional differences are found when looking across MDT districts (Figure 2.5). Slightly more District 3 and 4 respondents thought there was a need for additional non-interstate highways and rest areas.

Slightly more District 3 respondents also thought there was a need for addition pedestrian walkways.

Figure 2.5: Perceived Need for Additional Facilities, Equipment, or Services in Each MDT District



Satisfaction with Service Availability

Respondents were asked to rank service availability on a scale of one to ten, where one is “very unsatisfied” and ten is “very satisfied.” Respondents stated they were moderately satisfied with the availability of air transportation to destinations outside Montana (6.40), freight rail (6.38), transit for the elderly or disabled (6.07), the availability of local bus or van service (5.40), and air transportation to Montana destinations (5.41).

Montanans are least satisfied about the availability of intercity bus service (4.56) and passenger rail service (4.46).

Table 2.3: Mean Satisfaction with Service Availability

	Mean	95% Confidence		Number of respondents
		Lower limit	Upper limit	
Air transportation outside Montana	6.40	6.13	6.66	891
Freight rail	6.38	6.05	6.71	573
Transit elderly/ disabled	6.07	5.76	6.39	777
Local bus or van	5.40	5.06	5.75	655
Air transportation in Montana	5.41	5.14	5.67	695
Intercity bus	4.56	4.18	4.93	672
Passenger rail	4.46	4.08	4.84	718

Figure 2.6 compares survey respondents' levels of satisfaction with the availability of various transportation services in Montana's transportation system. The relative ranking has remained constant over the last three iterations of the survey. Satisfaction with the availability of intercity buses has declined slightly since the 2009 and 2011 surveys.

Satisfaction with the availability of intercity buses and passenger rail service remain the lowest ranked transportation service.

Figure 2.6: Comparison of Availability of Service in Montana's Transportation System, 2009-2013

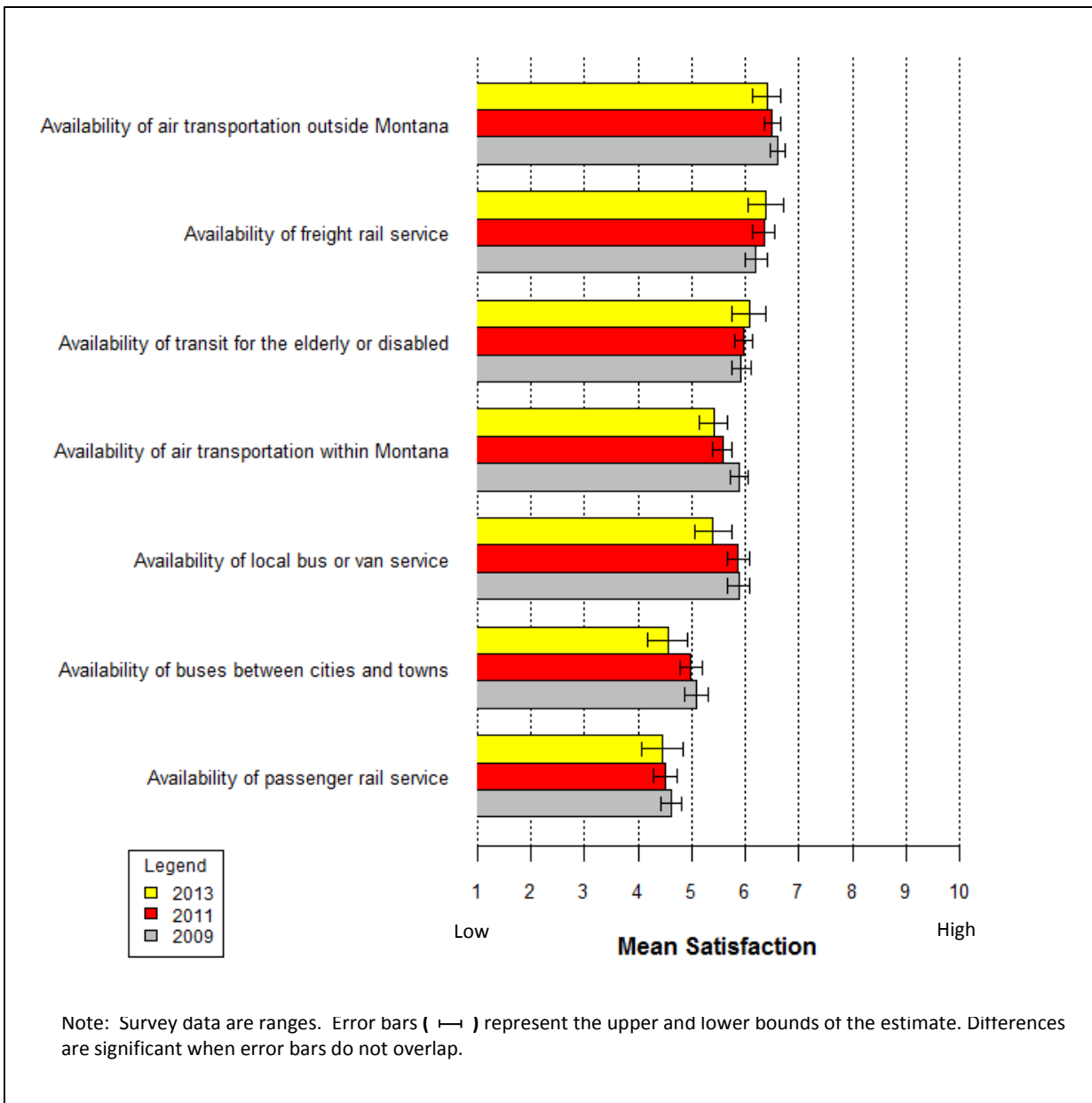
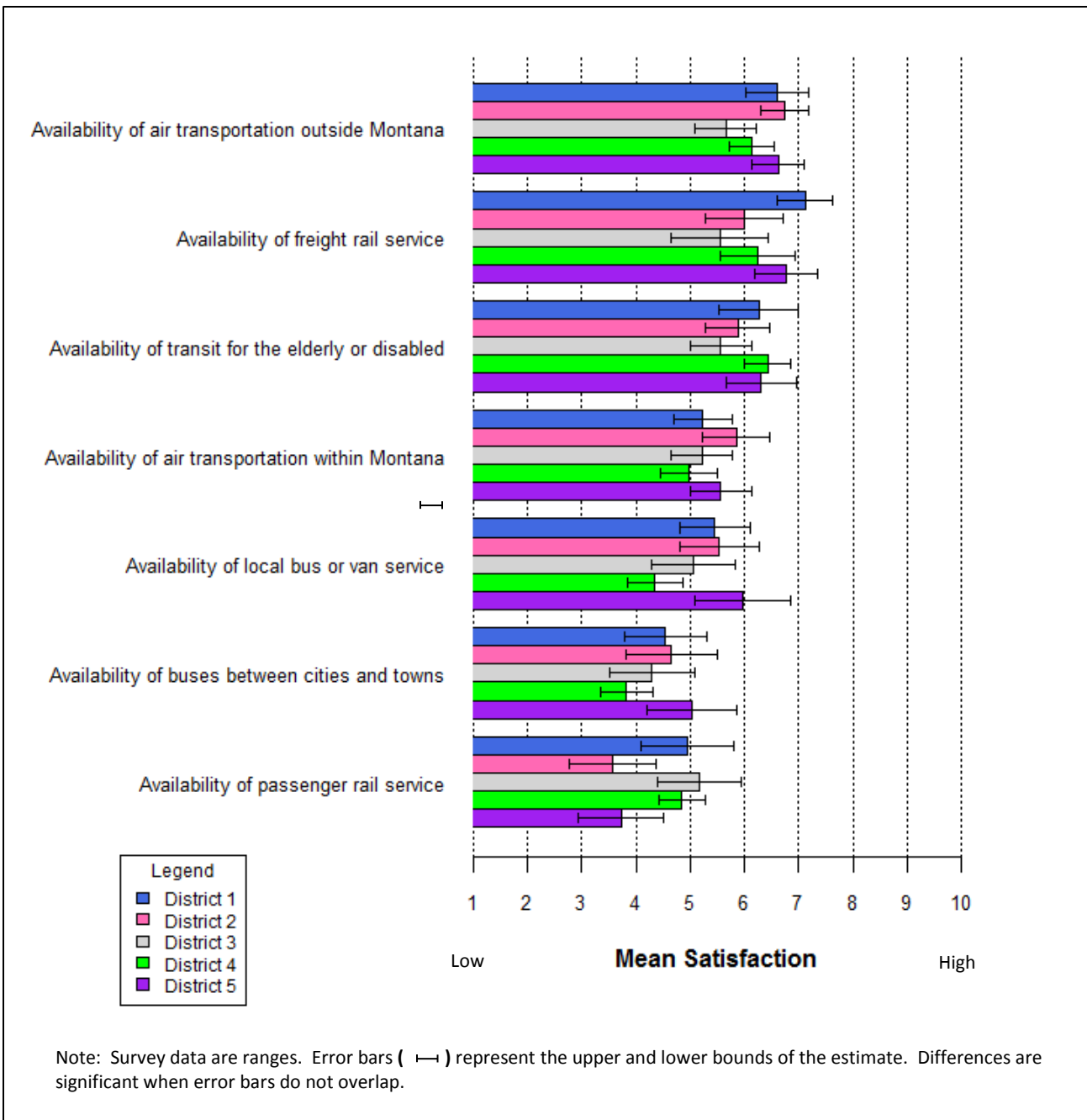


Figure 2.7 shows the mean levels of satisfaction of the same seven transportation services by MDT District. In general, there are few differences among MDT Transportation Districts for the eight transportation services queried. One exception is District 4 residents

are slightly less satisfied with intercity bus service and local bus or van service than other regions. The availability of passenger rail service is more a concern of District 2 and 5 residents.

Figure 2.7: Mean Satisfaction with Service Availability by MDT District



Perceived Problems with Montana's Transportation System

Montanans rated possible problems (Table 2.4) on a scale from one to four, where one is "not a problem" and four is a "serious problem." Montanans classified only one of the fifteen problems studied, road pavement, as meriting moderate concern, with a mean score of 2.48 or above. No other potential problem reached this level of awareness. This reinforces the positive overall level of satisfaction with the transportation system expressed by Montanans.

While only one significant problem emerges when examining statewide data, the conclusions are different at the district level. Figures 2.9a and 2.9b explore the percentage of respondents in each district that say an item is a moderate or serious problem.

Fewer respondents from Districts 3 and 4 view traffic congestion as a problem. The number and condition of rest areas is less of a problem for District 1 and 2

respondents. Fewer District 4 respondents view vehicle carbon monoxide as a problem.

Table 2.4: Perceived Problems with Montana Transportation System

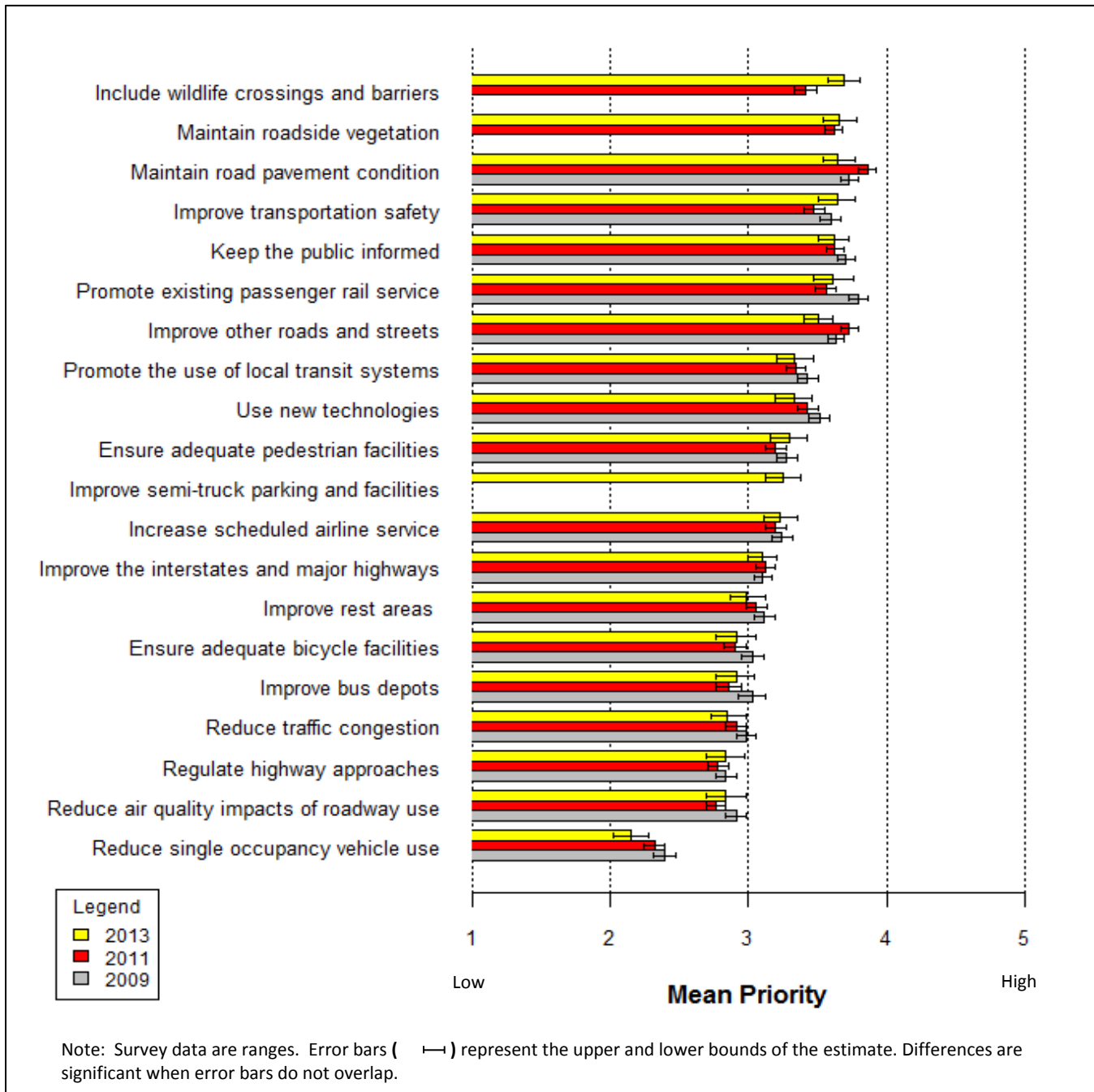
	Serious problem	Moderate problem	Small problem	Not a problem	DK	Mean	Number of respondents
Road pavement condition	13.8%	43.0%	19.5%	23.2%	0.5%	2.48	1,056
Traffic congestion	10.8%	30.6%	24.0%	33.4%	1.2%	2.19	1,049
Vehicle damage from highway construction and maintenance	10.6%	24.2%	30.6%	31.8%	2.8%	2.14	1,031
Timely resolution to safety issues	9.1%	25.5%	19.7%	35.5%	10.2%	2.09	953
Debris on roadways	7.4%	25.5%	30.4%	35.9%	0.7%	2.04	1,053
Impacts on the environment from the transportation system	8.4%	23.1%	25.5%	38.4%	4.6%	2.01	1,012
Number and condition of rest areas	10.2%	22.3%	20.2%	42.2%	5.1%	2.01	1,007
Freight and economic vitality	4.6%	20.2%	21.3%	33.3%	20.6%	1.95	843
Vehicle carbon monoxide emissions	5.7%	24.4%	23.1%	42.3%	4.4%	1.93	1,014
Lack of alternative routes for major roads	7.2%	23.9%	19.9%	45.9%	3.2%	1.92	1,028
The ability to manage specific emergency situations like train derailments, bridge failures, or major accidents	6.3%	19.8%	21.3%	42.1%	10.5%	1.89	950
Number of vehicles with only one occupant	11.4%	15.5%	17.7%	48.8%	6.6%	1.89	991
Air quality impacts from highway maintenance (i.e., excessive dust caused by winter sanding materials)	3.0%	15.5%	30.0%	48.6%	2.9%	1.72	1,031
Too many access points (including driveways) onto major roads	5.3%	16.7%	19.0%	54.9%	4.2%	1.71	1,017
Adequate road signs	2.6%	12.5%	19.6%	64.3%	0.9%	1.53	1,051

2. Attitudes About Montana's Transportation System

Figure 2.8 shows how Montana residents view 20 perceived problems with Montana's transportation system

Road pavement condition is perceived was the biggest problem in 2011 but wildlife crossings and maintaining roadside vegetation are higher priorities in 2013.

Figure 2.8: Perceived Problems with Montana's Transportation System, 2009-2013



While only one significant problem emerges when examining statewide data, the conclusions are different at the district level. Figures 2.9a and 2.9b explore the percentage of respondents in each district that say an item is a moderate or serious problem.

Fewer respondents from Districts 3 and 4 view traffic congestion as a problem. The number and condition of rest areas is less of a problem for District 1 and 2 respondents. Fewer District 4 respondents view vehicle carbon monoxide as a problem.

Figure 2.9a: Perceived Moderate or Serious Problems with Montana Transportation System by MDT District

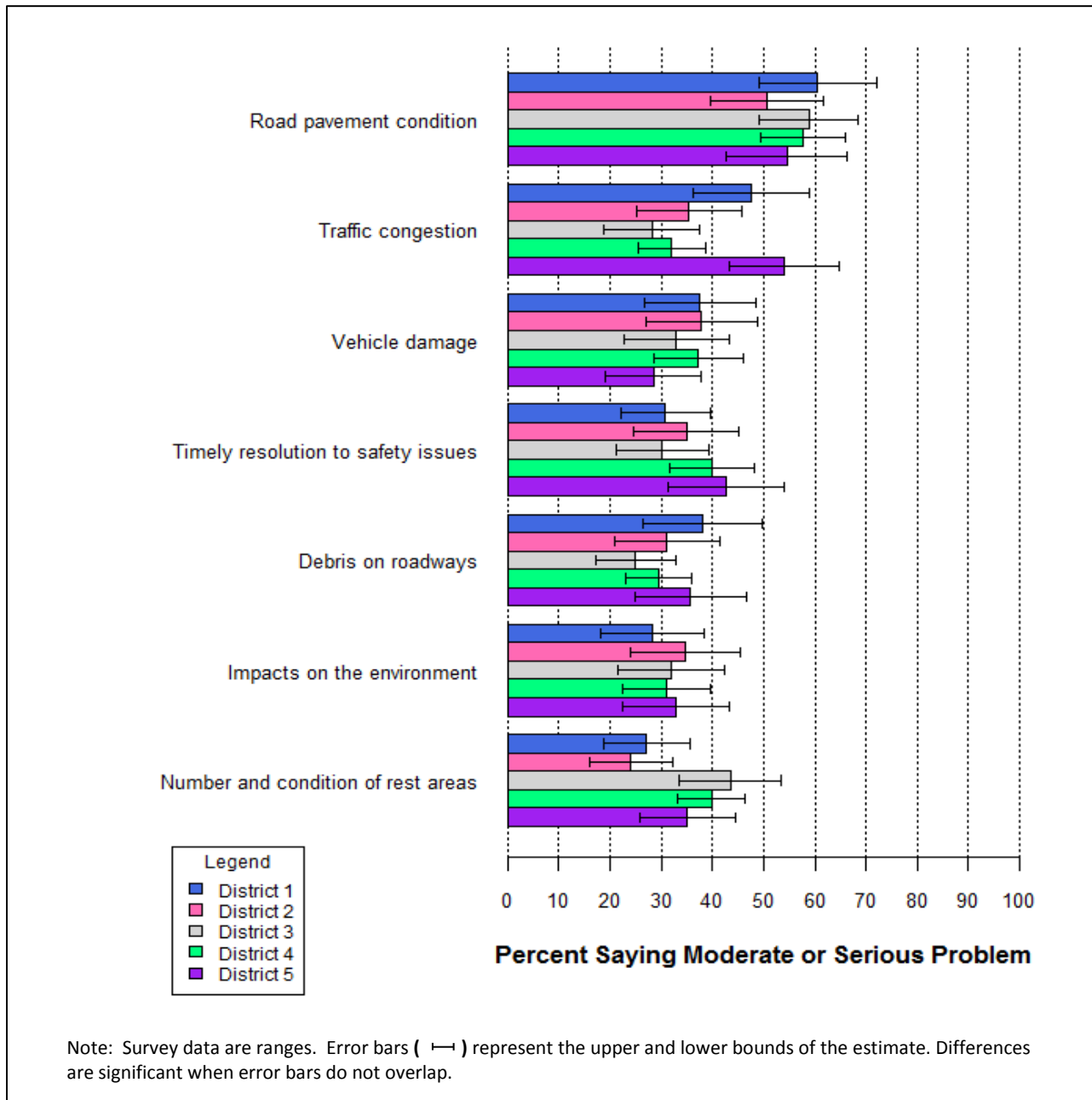
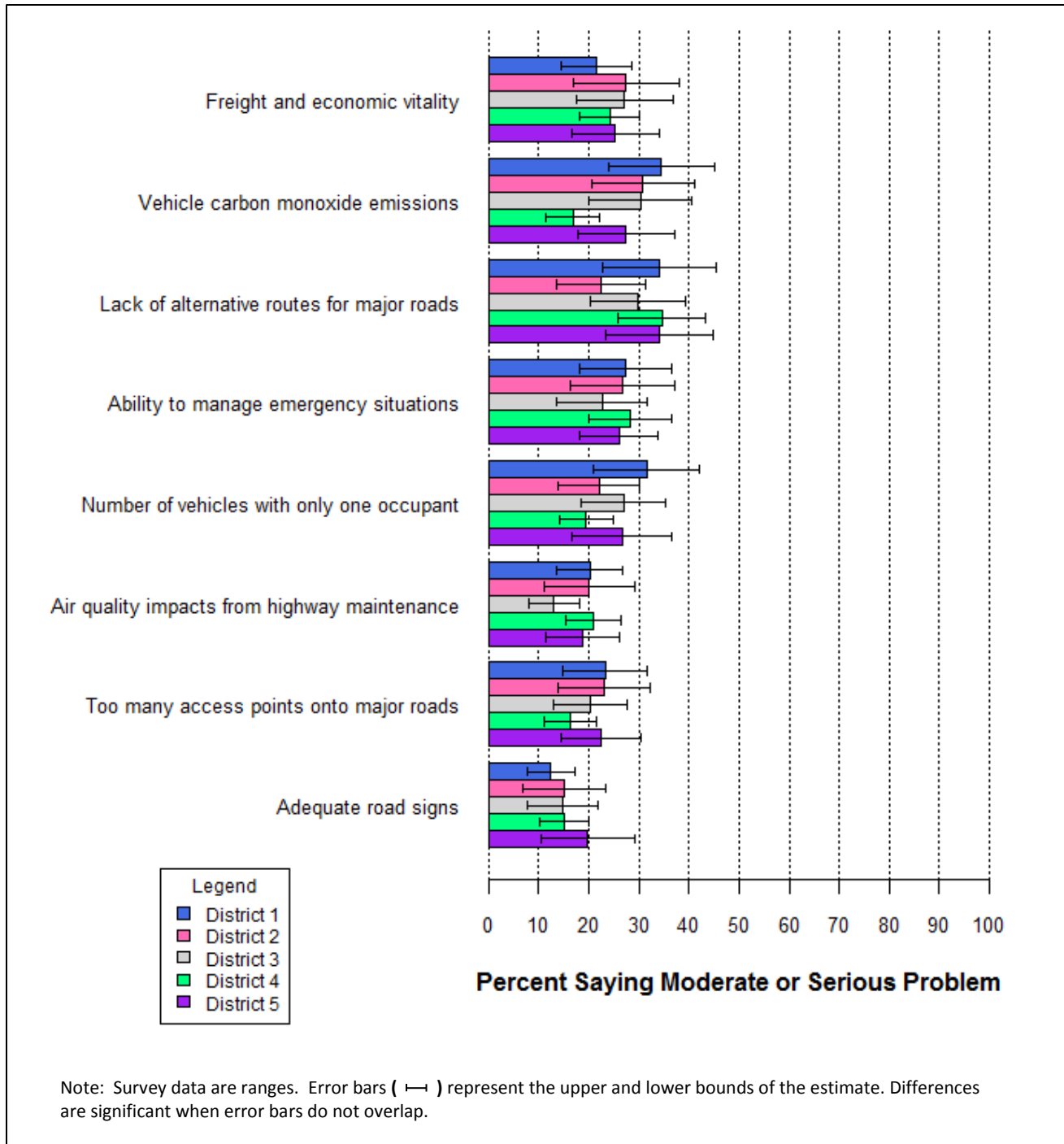


Figure 2.9b: Perceived Moderate or Serious Problems with Montana Transportation System by MDT District



2. Attitudes About Montana's Transportation System

Possible Actions to Improve Transportation System

Respondents were asked to prioritize 20 possible actions to improve Montana's transportation system on a scale of one to five (Table 2.5). A value of one was assigned to the very low category, two to somewhat low priority, and so forth. As with the perceived problem items, very few respondents said they "didn't know". Most felt qualified to prioritize the options presented. While Montanans view most transportation system problems as small, they believe solving those problems should take on a medium or somewhat high priority. Montanans classified, on average, 19 of the 20 possible action items as medium or somewhat high priorities.

Although there was not a clear breakpoint, seven actions received somewhat high priority scores with mean scores of 3.5 or higher: including wildlife crossings, taking appropriate measures with roadside vegetation, maintaining road pavement condition, improving transportation safety, improving the physical condition of roads and streets, keeping the public informed, and promoting existing passenger rail.

Twelve actions were rated as medium priorities for possible improvement. Their scores ranged from 3.33 for promoting the use of local transit to 2.83 for regulating the number of highway approaches and reducing the air quality impact of roadway use.

Table 2.5: Priority of Possible Actions to Improve Transportation System

	Very high priority	Somewhat high priority	Medium priority	Somewhat low priority	Very low priority	DK	Mean	Number of respondents
Including wildlife crossings and barriers in roadway projects	30.2%	29.5%	21.3%	10.6%	5.9%	2.5%	3.69	1,035
Taking appropriate measures with roadside vegetation	26.7%	30.2%	26.5%	10.6%	4.2%	1.9%	3.66	1,041
Maintain road pavement condition	25.2%	29.0%	33.5%	7.9%	3.3%	1.0%	3.65	1,051
Improving transportation safety	30.6%	23.0%	30.0%	8.6%	6.3%	1.5%	3.64	1,045
Keeping the public informed about transportation issues	24.1%	30.3%	32.4%	7.8%	4.6%	0.8%	3.62	1,053
Supporting efforts to preserve existing passenger rail service	29.3%	23.8%	20.8%	11.2%	7.2%	7.7%	3.61	979
Improving the physical condition of other roads and streets	19.1%	31.4%	33.4%	11.6%	3.8%	0.7%	3.51	1,053
Promoting the use of local transit systems, like buses or vans	19.5%	23.8%	29.2%	13.6%	8.8%	5.1%	3.33	1,007
Using new technologies like electronic message signs, website & radio updates, remote weather information systems, coordinated signal systems	18.4%	25.6%	31.1%	12.6%	9.1%	3.3%	3.33	1,026
Ensuring adequate pedestrian facilities (i.e., sidewalks, footpaths, crossings)	20.7%	21.9%	30.0%	16.6%	8.9%	1.9%	3.30	1,041
Semi-truck parking and facilities	14.8%	22.2%	30.1%	14.9%	7.3%	10.6%	3.25	948
Supporting efforts to increase the availability of scheduled airline service	14.9%	22.6%	28.7%	18.4%	6.7%	8.8%	3.23	968
Improving the physical condition of the interstates and major highways	13.1%	17.8%	41.1%	19.2%	7.3%	1.6%	3.10	1,044
Improving rest areas (i.e. maintenance, more facilities)	13.4%	18.5%	31.2%	21.5%	12.3%	3.0%	2.99	1,029
Ensuring adequate bicycle facilities	15.7%	14.4%	27.5%	21.3%	16.5%	4.5%	2.91	1,013
Improving the physical condition of bus depots	9.6%	13.0%	26.2%	16.5%	11.4%	23.2%	2.91	815
Reducing traffic congestion by increasing the capacity of the highway system	10.9%	17.6%	28.9%	21.6%	15.9%	5.1%	2.85	1,007
Regulating the number of highway approaches and driveways to preserve transportation corridors	10.7%	15.9%	29.0%	25.2%	13.8%	5.5%	2.83	1,003
Reducing the air quality impacts of roadway use	14.7%	12.5%	32.5%	15.8%	21.1%	3.4%	2.83	1,025
Attempting to reduce single occupancy vehicle use	6.8%	9.2%	16.8%	22.9%	40.8%	3.4%	2.15	1,025

2. Attitudes About Montana's Transportation System

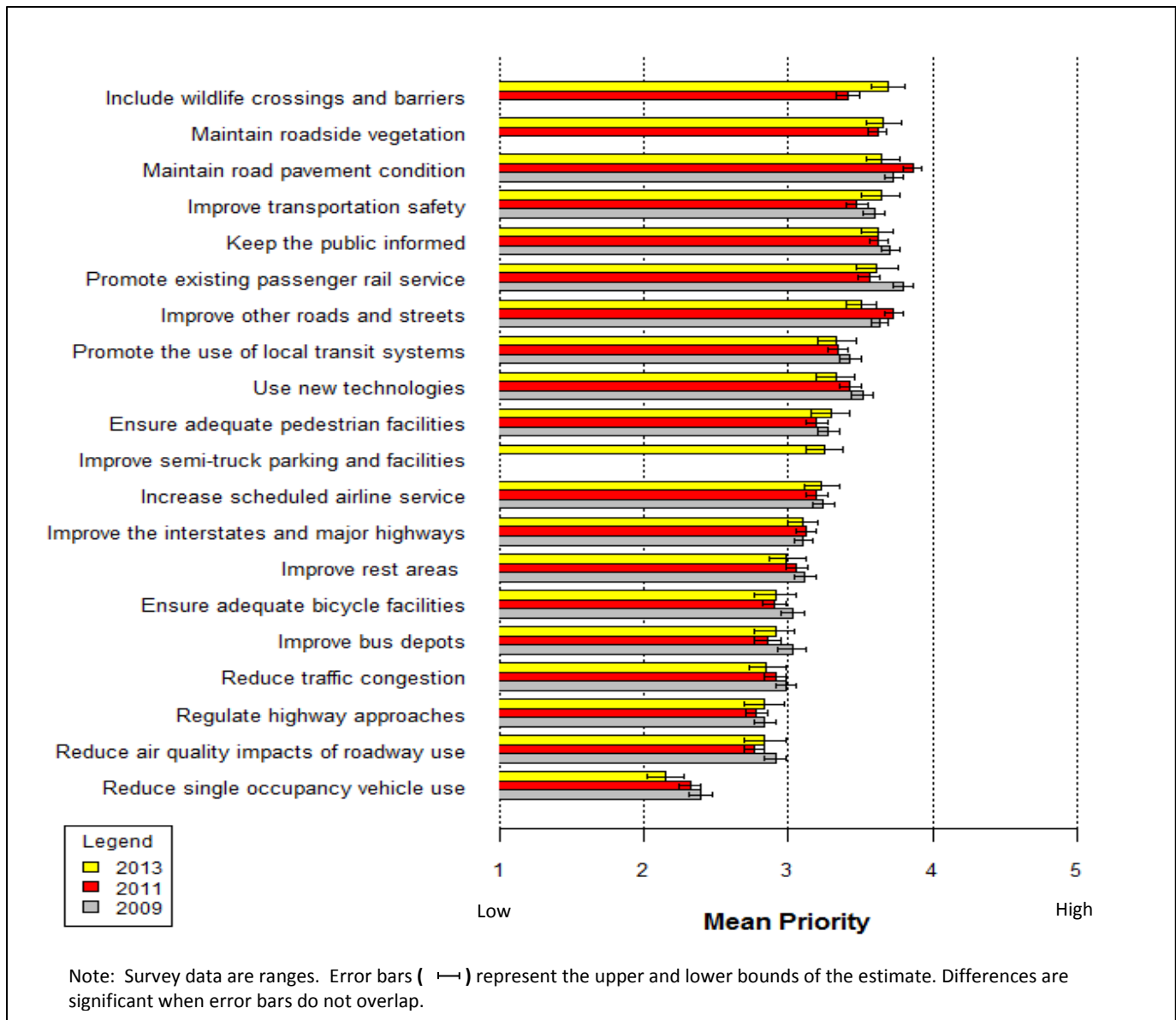
Figure 2.10 shows the priority for various actions to improve Montana's transportation system over time.

Improving transportation safety, keeping the public informed, maintaining road pavement conditions and supporting existing passenger rail are priorities over the long term. Two items added in 2009, including wildlife crossings and maintaining roadside vegetation, are high priorities with more recent surveys.

Single occupancy vehicles, air quality, and the number of highway approaches are not priority problems in respondents' minds over both the short and long term.

Satisfaction with Montana's transportation system has improved over the last decade. Keeping the public informed and maintaining road pavement conditions are important to Montanans. Passenger rail remains a desire for a majority of Montanans.

Figure 2.10: Possible Improvements in the Transportation System and Roadways, 2009-2013



2. Attitudes About Montana's Transportation System

Attempting to reduce one-occupant vehicle use (2.15) was rated by respondents as somewhat low priority and it was the lowest priority examined.

Priorities for possible actions to improve the transportation system were also examined across each of the five MDT districts. The percentage of respondents in each district who said an action was a somewhat or very high priority (the top two categories)

is presented in Figures 2.11a and 2.11b. Since, on average, respondents classified almost all of the studied actions as medium priorities, the differences between districts largely focus on the relative magnitude of response. Including wildlife crossings and barriers was a slightly higher priority of District 1 and 2 respondents. Regulating highway approaches was less of a priority for District 4 respondents.

Figure 2.11a: Possible Actions to Improve Transportation System a Somewhat or Very High Priority by MDT District

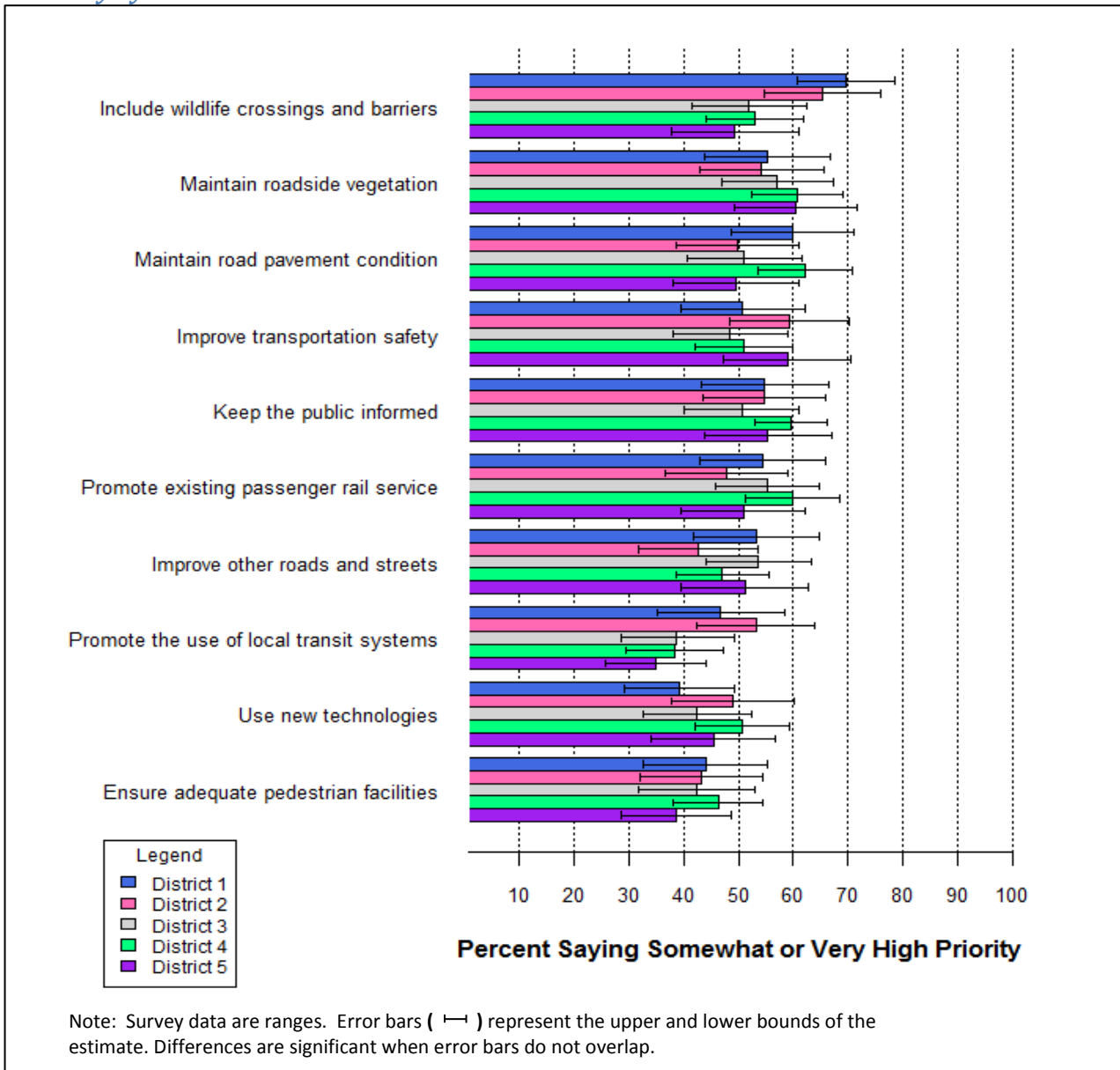
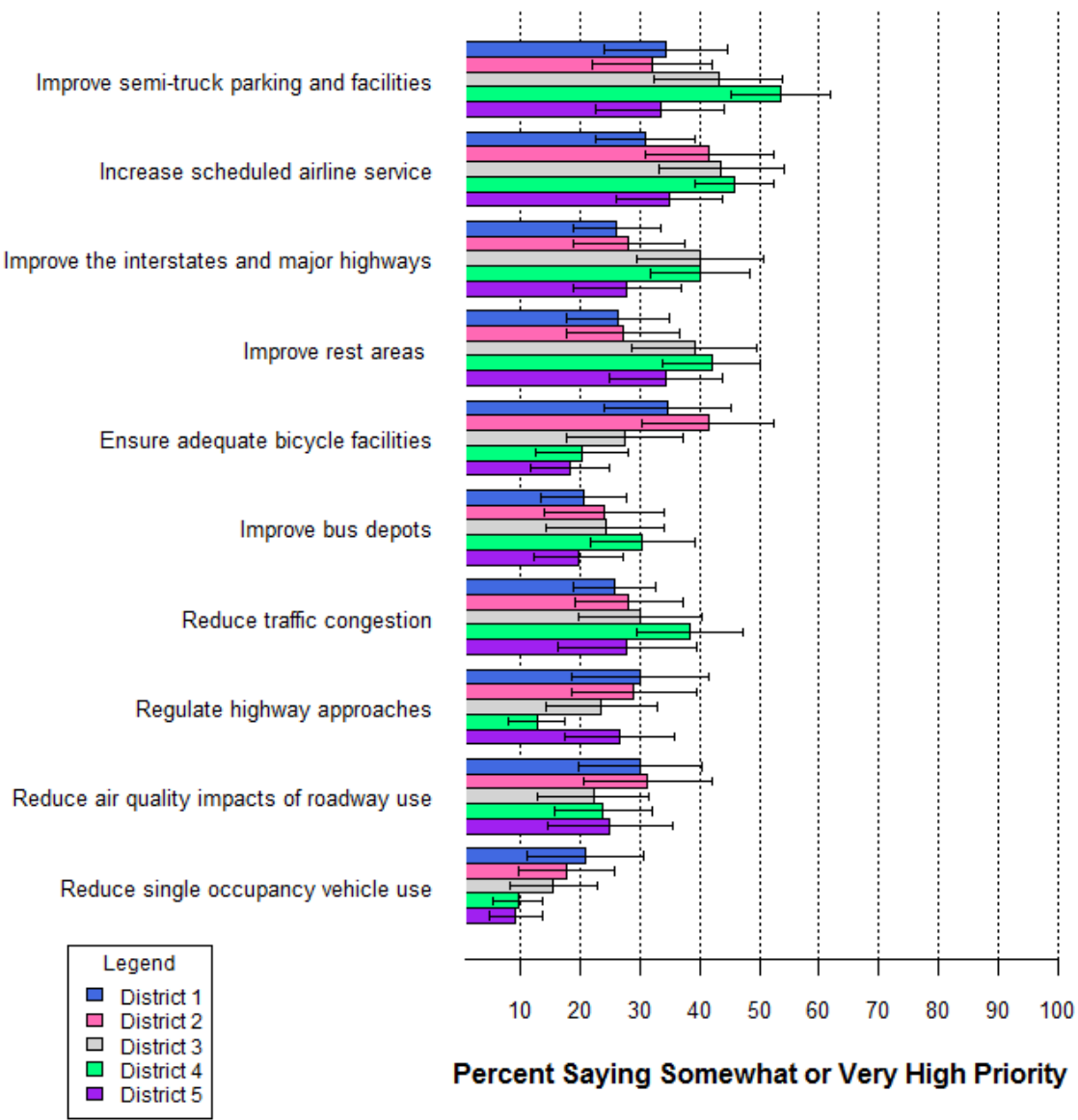


Figure 2.11b: Possible Actions to Improve Transportation System a Somewhat or Very High Priority by MDT District



Note: Survey data are ranges. Error bars (—) represent the upper and lower bounds of the estimate. Differences are significant when error bars do not overlap.

Respondents were asked to rate the relative importance of various system components to the security of the overall transportation system. Ratings were chosen from a scale of one to five, where one equals not at all important and five equals extremely important. Overall, responses ranged from somewhat important to very important (see Table 3.1 below).

Only one element of the transportation system was rated greater than or equal to very important for the security of the system: emergency response plans (4.09). Homeland security at border crossings (3.95) and airports (3.96) were close. Communication and coordination with other agencies (3.83) and communication with the public using available advanced technologies (3.77) were also rated important. The lowest rated aspect of the system was availability of alternative routes (3.25).

Table 3.1: Security Priority of Transportation System Components

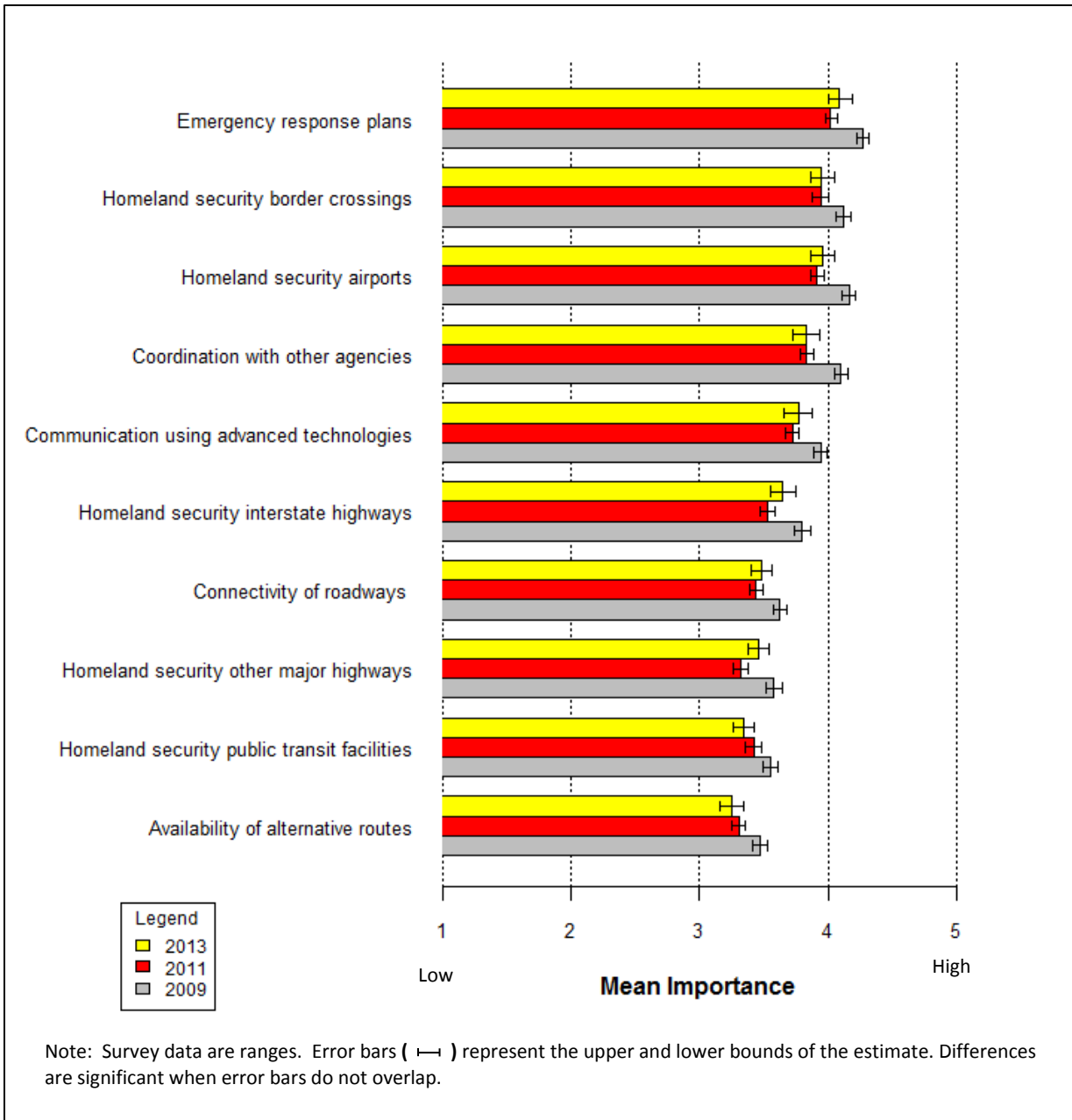
	Extremely important	Very important	Somewhat important	Not very important	Not at all important	DK	Mean	Number of respondents
Emergency response plans	30.3%	47.4%	13.9%	1.1%	1.7%	5.6%	4.09	1,002
Security at airports	26.9%	40.7%	22.0%	1.9%	1.6%	6.9%	3.96	988
Security at border crossings	25.7%	43.4%	17.3%	3.3%	2.0%	8.3%	3.95	973
Communication and coordination with other agencies	21.9%	40.6%	24.1%	3.2%	2.2%	8.0%	3.83	976
Communication with the public using available advanced technologies	20.5%	39.7%	27.0%	3.0%	3.1%	6.6%	3.77	991
Security of interstate highways	17.5%	37.5%	29.9%	4.8%	3.4%	7.0%	3.65	987
Connectivity of roadways	9.2%	33.7%	41.8%	3.4%	2.6%	9.4%	3.48	962
Security of other major highways	9.7%	34.2%	38.9%	5.5%	3.1%	8.5%	3.46	971
Security at public transit facilities like bus terminals	9.9%	26.4%	41.0%	9.3%	3.1%	10.3%	3.34	980
Availability of alternative routes	7.5%	27.7%	41.9%	11.1%	4.2%	7.7%	3.25	980

Questions about security priorities and the transportation system have been asked since 2007. Figure 3.2 on the next page compares how each item ranked over the last four iterations. Emergency response plans were the number one priority all four times these questions were asked. All sectors of transportation system security were rated as somewhat important or higher.

Questions about security priorities and the transportation system have been asked since 2007. Figure 3.1 compares how each item ranked over the last three surveys. Emergency response plans were the number one priority every time these questions were

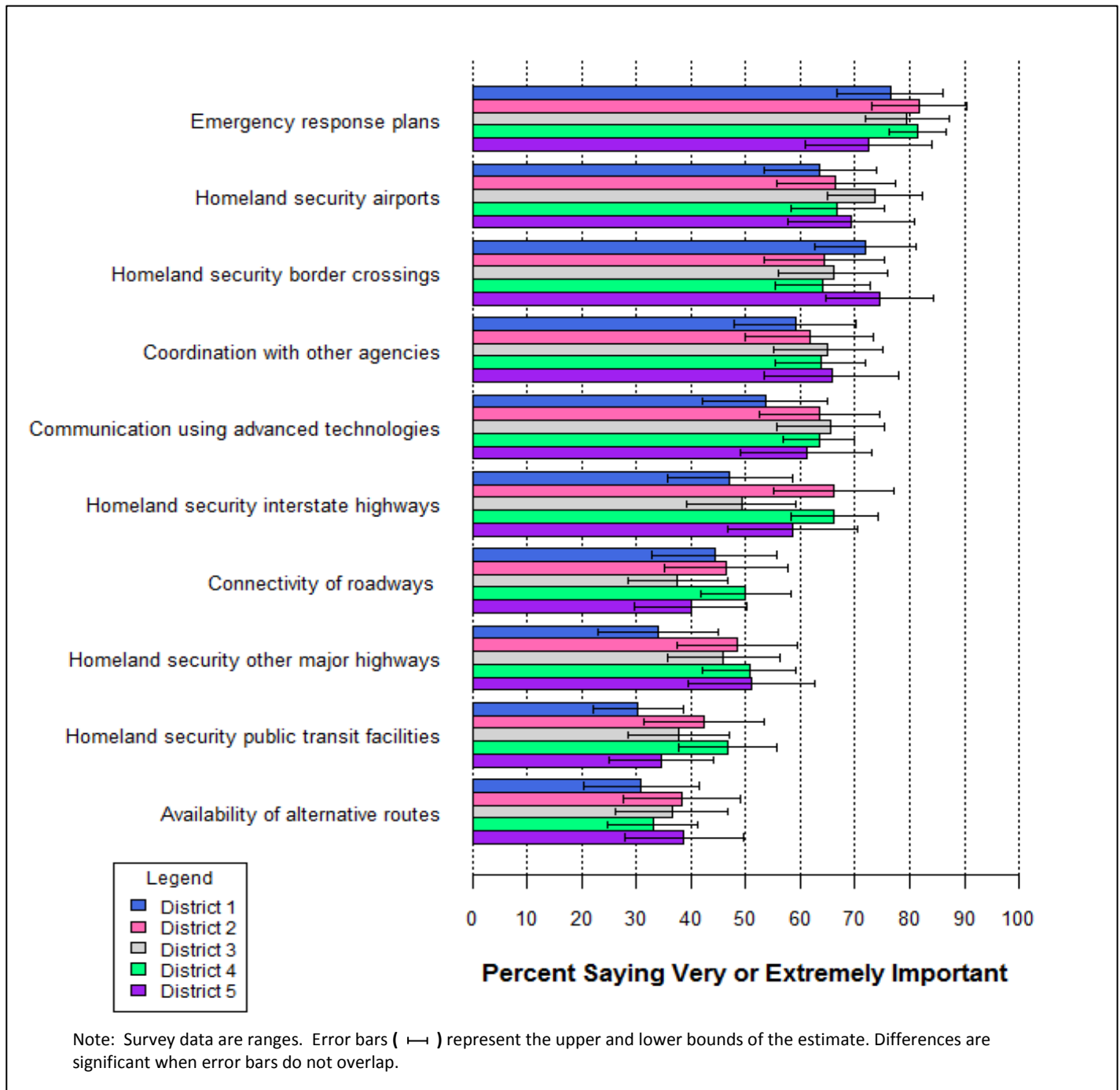
asked. All sectors of transportation system security were rated as somewhat important or higher.

Figure 3.1: Security Priority of Transportation System Component, 2009-2013



Emergency response plans were rated very or extremely important by residents of all MDT Districts (Figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2: Security Priority of Transportation System Components Rated Very or Extremely Important by MDT District



Montana residents were asked to rate the usefulness of selected public communication tools used by MDT.

Residents rated each tool on a scale from one to five where one equaled not at all useful and five equaled extremely useful. Of the ten tools examined, people rated two – radio/ television and variable message boards – as very useful (see Table 4.1 below). In fact, over 60 percent of respondents rated radio and television as either very important or extremely important. The usefulness of variable message boards was added in 2013. Montanans find them very useful with about half of respondents saying they were very or extremely useful.

The remaining tools were rated from just greater than to slightly less than somewhat useful. Respondents found special mailings including brochures, newsletters, and postcards least useful. Only 11.7 percent of persons said brochures and newsletters are very useful or extremely useful.

Two other items added in 2013, apps and social media such as Facebook and Twitter were deemed less useful than other means.

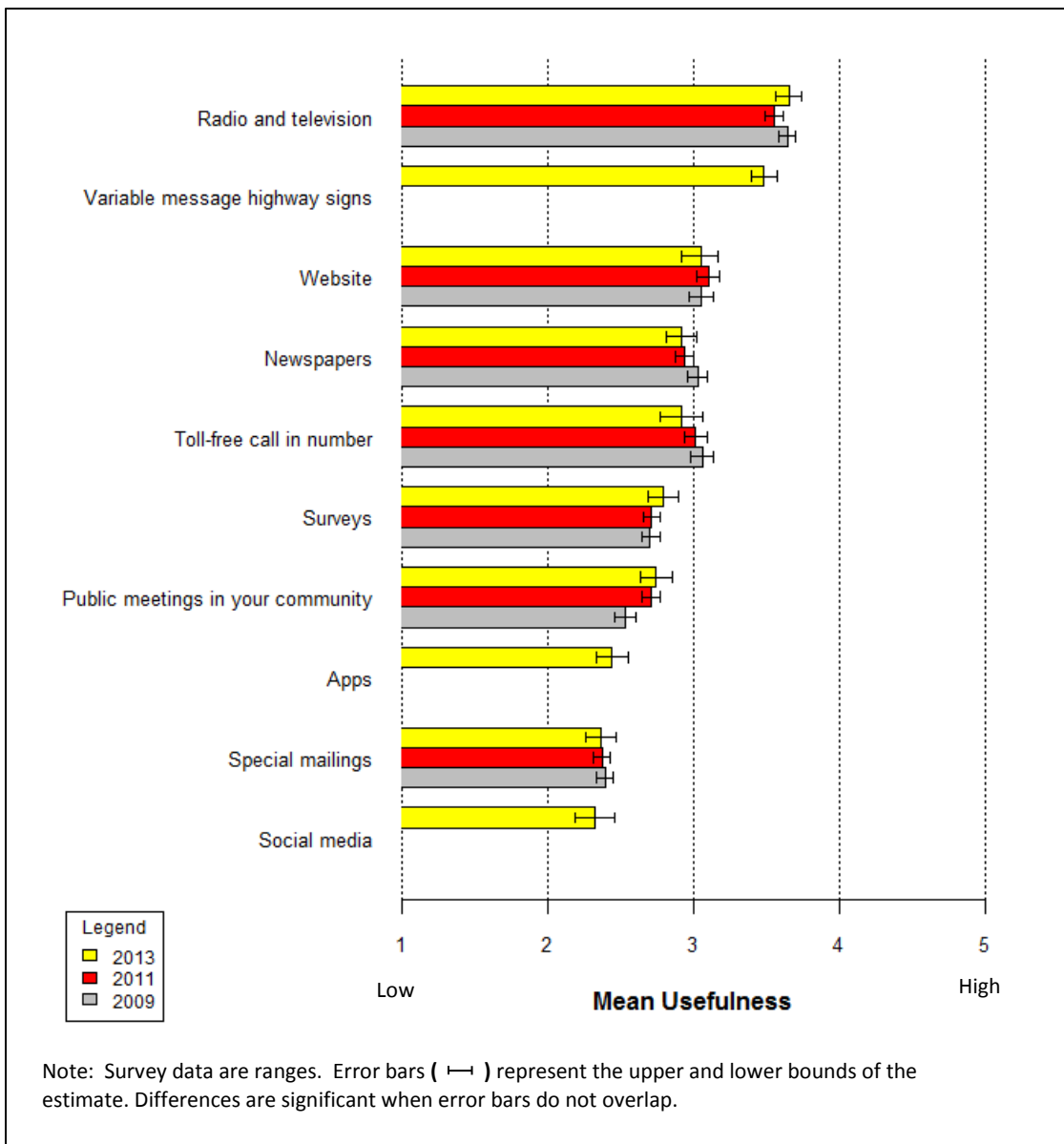
Table 4.1: Usefulness of General MDT Communication Tools

	Extremely useful	Very useful	Somewhat useful	Not very useful	Not at all useful	DK	Mean	Number of respondents
Radio and television	10.4%	52.9%	27.0%	4.2%	3.2%	2.2%	3.65	1,037
Variable message boards	8.8%	41.4%	38.6%	3.6%	4.3%	3.4%	3.48	1,025
Website	7.1%	29.4%	31.6%	8.5%	15.5%	7.8%	3.05	978
Newspapers	4.0%	23.8%	40.1%	12.9%	13.3%	5.8%	2.92	1,000
Toll-free call in number	7.5%	24.3%	30.2%	15.4%	15.9%	6.7%	2.92	990
Surveys	2.3%	16.8%	44.1%	17.2%	11.8%	7.8%	2.79	979
Public meetings in your community	3.3%	18.6%	38.9%	18.0%	16.1%	5.1%	2.74	1,007
Apps	2.8%	17.1%	29.2%	13.4%	30.6%	6.9%	2.44	988
Special mailings	2.1%	9.6%	34.0%	24.7%	24.9%	4.7%	2.36	1,011
Social media	3.8%	15.4%	24.5%	14.9%	36.0%	5.3%	2.32	1,004

Seven general communication tool questions were asked in surveys since 2009; three additional tools were added in 2013. Figure 4.1 shows how each communication tool ranked in each survey. Radio and television mediums were ranked number one in each survey. The toll-free call-in number, newspapers and the MDT website are ranked similarly over the 2009-

2013 time period; there is no significant difference in their usefulness. Variable message highway signs were second most important in 2013. Special mailings consistently rank last; apps and social media ranked low in 2013.

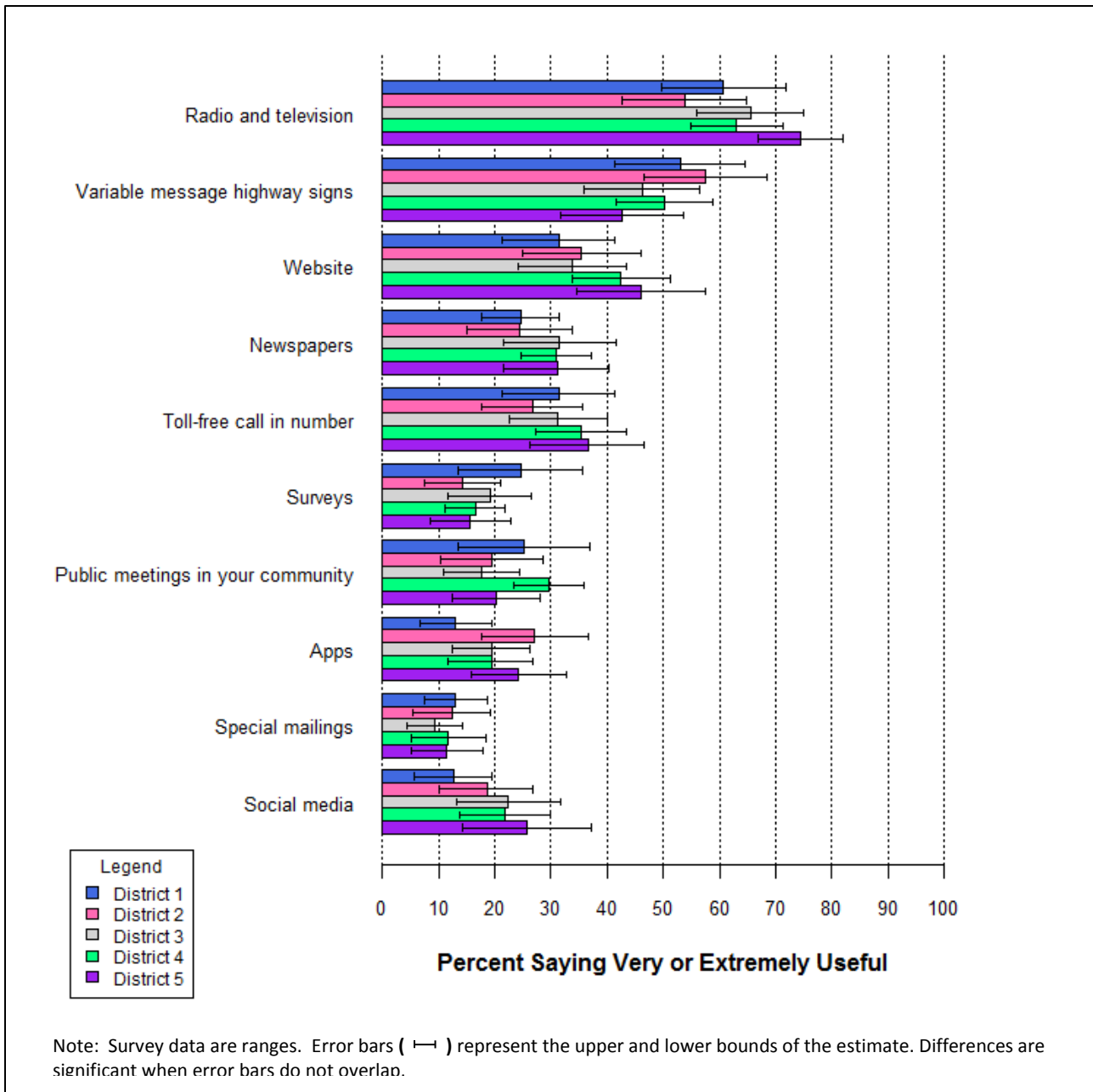
Figure 4.1: Usefulness of General MDT Communication Tools, 2009-2013



When examined at the MDT District level, residents from different locations within the state generally agreed on their usefulness ratings for each communication tool (Figure 4.2). District 4 residents were slightly more likely than District 3 residents to find public meetings very or extremely useful.

When examined at the MDT District level, residents from different locations within the state generally agreed on their usefulness ratings for each communication tool (Figure 4.2). District 4 residents were slightly more likely than District 3 residents to find public meetings very or extremely useful.

Figure 4.2: Usefulness of MDT Communication Tools by MDT District, Percentage Rated Extremely or Very Useful



Adult Montanans also rated tools used specifically by MDT for communicating with the public about planning or projects. They rated each tool on a scale from one to five where one is not at all helpful and five is extremely helpful. Montanans said maps are very helpful to them in the planning process, while they rated the remaining set of communication tools examined as somewhat helpful (Table 5.1).

About half of Montanans (50 percent) said that maps are very helpful or extremely helpful to them in the planning process or in learning about MDT projects. A third (32.8 percent) said that pictures or graphics are very helpful or extremely helpful to them. Apps that push information to you, added in 2013, were not found as useful; only (23.7 percent) thought they were very or extremely useful. Only 11.7 percent find newsletters very helpful or extremely helpful.

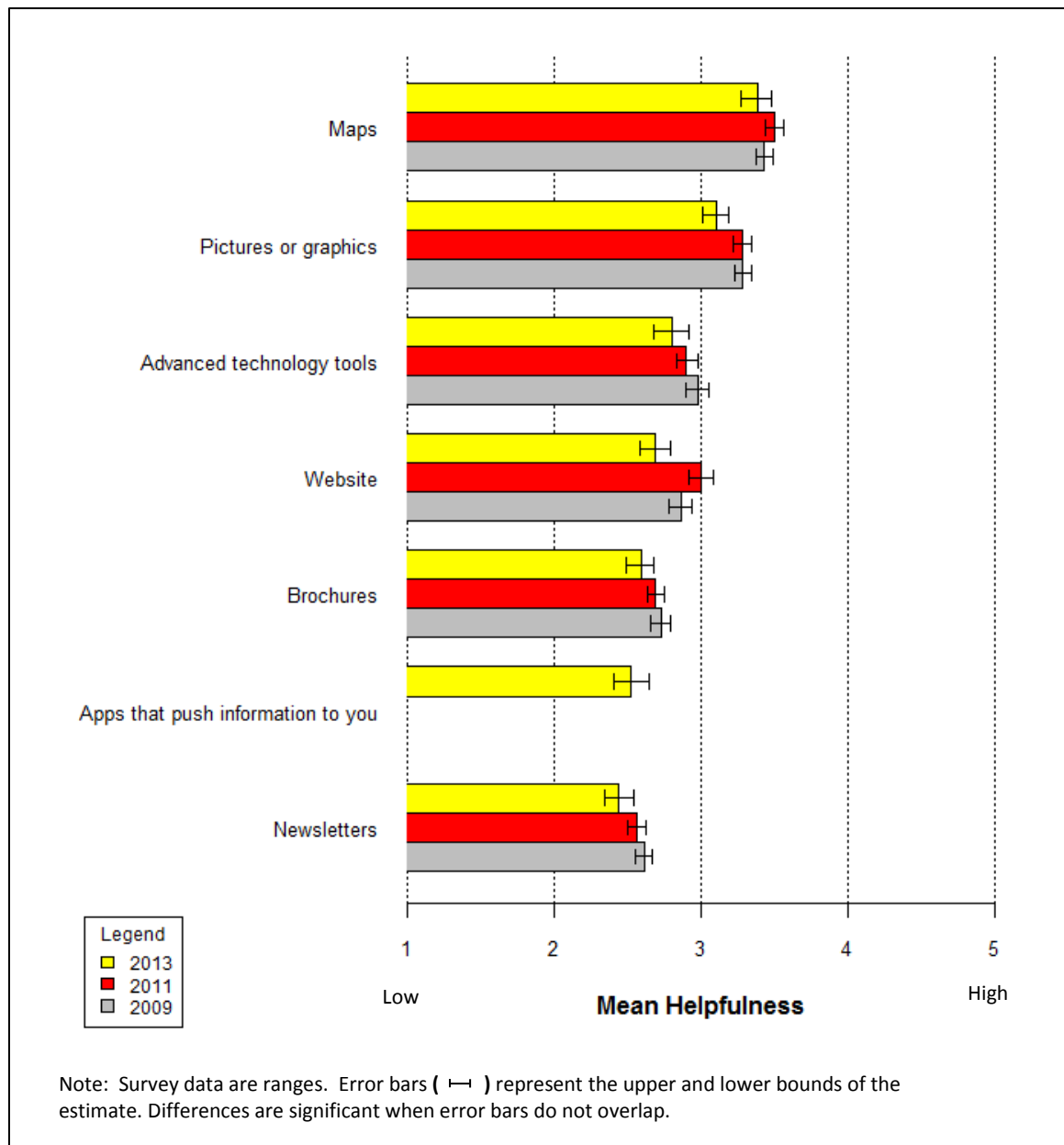
Table 5.1: Helpfulness of MDT Communication Tools in the Planning Process or for Project Information

	Very helpful	Extremely helpful	Somewhat helpful	Not very helpful	Not at all helpful	DK	Mean	Number of respondents
Maps	7.7%	42.3%	29.3%	5.8%	8.3%	6.6%	3.38	991
Pictures or graphics	3.8%	29.0%	42.2%	8.4%	9.6%	7.1%	3.10	986
Advanced technology tools	4.2%	22.9%	30.6%	13.9%	17.7%	10.6%	2.80	949
Website	3.4%	19.9%	32.8%	12.9%	20.9%	10.1%	2.69	954
Brochures	1.7%	13.5%	38.5%	23.9%	15.8%	6.6%	2.59	991
Apps that push information	2.7%	21.0%	25.5%	13.4%	28.2%	9.2%	2.52	964
Newsletters	1.2%	10.5%	35.9%	25.1%	19.8%	7.4%	2.44	982

Maps were rated the most helpful communication tool (Figure 5.1) for presenting project information in all survey iterations. Pictures and graphics were ranked second. The MDT website was ranked fourth in 2009,

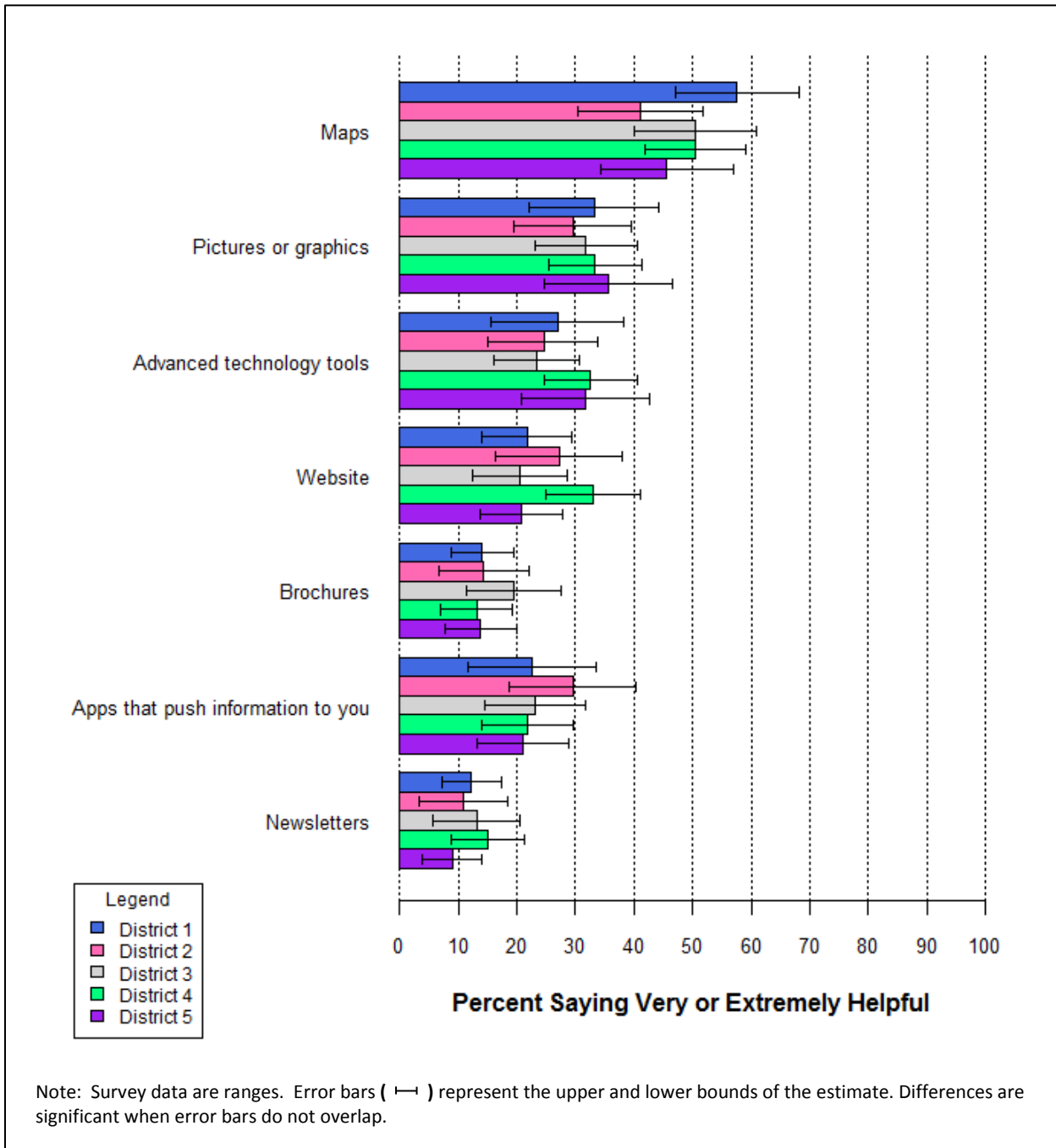
and third in 2011. The website ranking in 2013 was tied with advanced technology tools. Newsletters and brochures as communication tools were not deemed especially helpful.

Figure 5.1: Helpfulness of MDT Communication Tools in the Planning Process or for Project Information, 2009-2013



In general, there was very little difference in opinions regarding communication tools among the five MDT Districts (Figure 5.2). District 1 adults find maps more helpful than District 2 adults.

Figure 5.2: MDT Communication Tools in the Planning Process or for Project Information, Percent Rated Extremely or Very Helpful by MDT District



Respondents were asked to prioritize eight possible actions to improve Montana’s roadways (Table 6.1). Respondents were given five choices of priority categories from “very low priority” to “very high priority.” As with the perceived problem items, nearly all respondents felt qualified to prioritize the action items presented.

The top three improvements, as measured by the mean score, were increased shoulder widths to accommodate motorists, increased shoulder widths to accommodate bicyclists, and wider roadways. Each of these possible improvements was rated by Montanans as a somewhat high priority.

Three items were rated as a medium priority: more guard rails, more pavement markings, and more lighting of roadways.

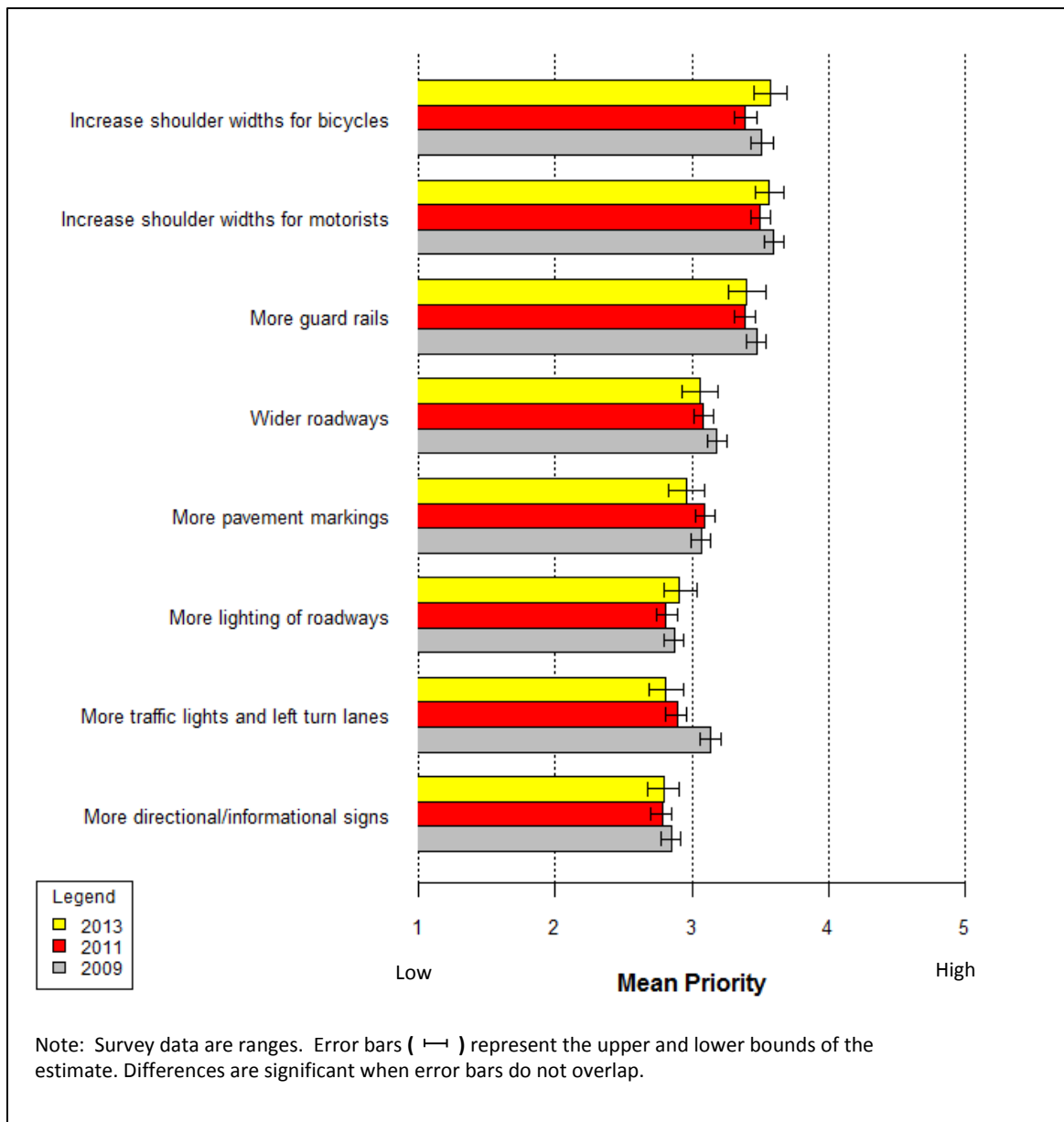
Two potential actions were rated by Montana residents as just under a medium priority: more traffic lights and left turn lanes and more directional/informational signs.

Table 6.1: Priority of Possible Actions to Improve Roadways

	Very high priority	Somewhat high priority	Medium priority	Somewhat low priority	Very low priority	DK	Mean	Number of respondents
Increase shoulder widths to accommodate bicyclists	26.8%	25.7%	26.0%	8.7%	8.2%	4.7%	3.57	1,012
Increase shoulder widths to accommodate motorists	22.3%	27.9%	33.3%	10.0%	3.8%	2.8%	3.56	1,032
Wider roadways	13.2%	20.9%	33.6%	18.4%	11.6%	2.3%	3.40	1,036
More guard rails	22.4%	25.2%	25.9%	17.1%	6.8%	2.5%	3.06	1,035
More pavement markings	12.8%	19.1%	31.0%	22.8%	12.9%	1.3%	2.96	1,047
More lighting of roadways	11.3%	19.8%	32.1%	15.1%	17.9%	3.9%	2.91	1,020
More traffic lights and left turn lanes	10.4%	17.7%	28.2%	23.6%	16.4%	3.8%	2.81	1,021
More directional /informational signs	9.8%	14.7%	35.3%	23.2%	15.8%	1.1%	2.79	1,049

Increasing shoulder widths both for motorist and bicycles and more guard rails are priority actions in the opinion of Montanan's over the long-term. Signs and directional information are the least favored. Priorities over time are shown in Figure 6.1. The priority for wider roadways and more guard rails has declined slightly since 2009.

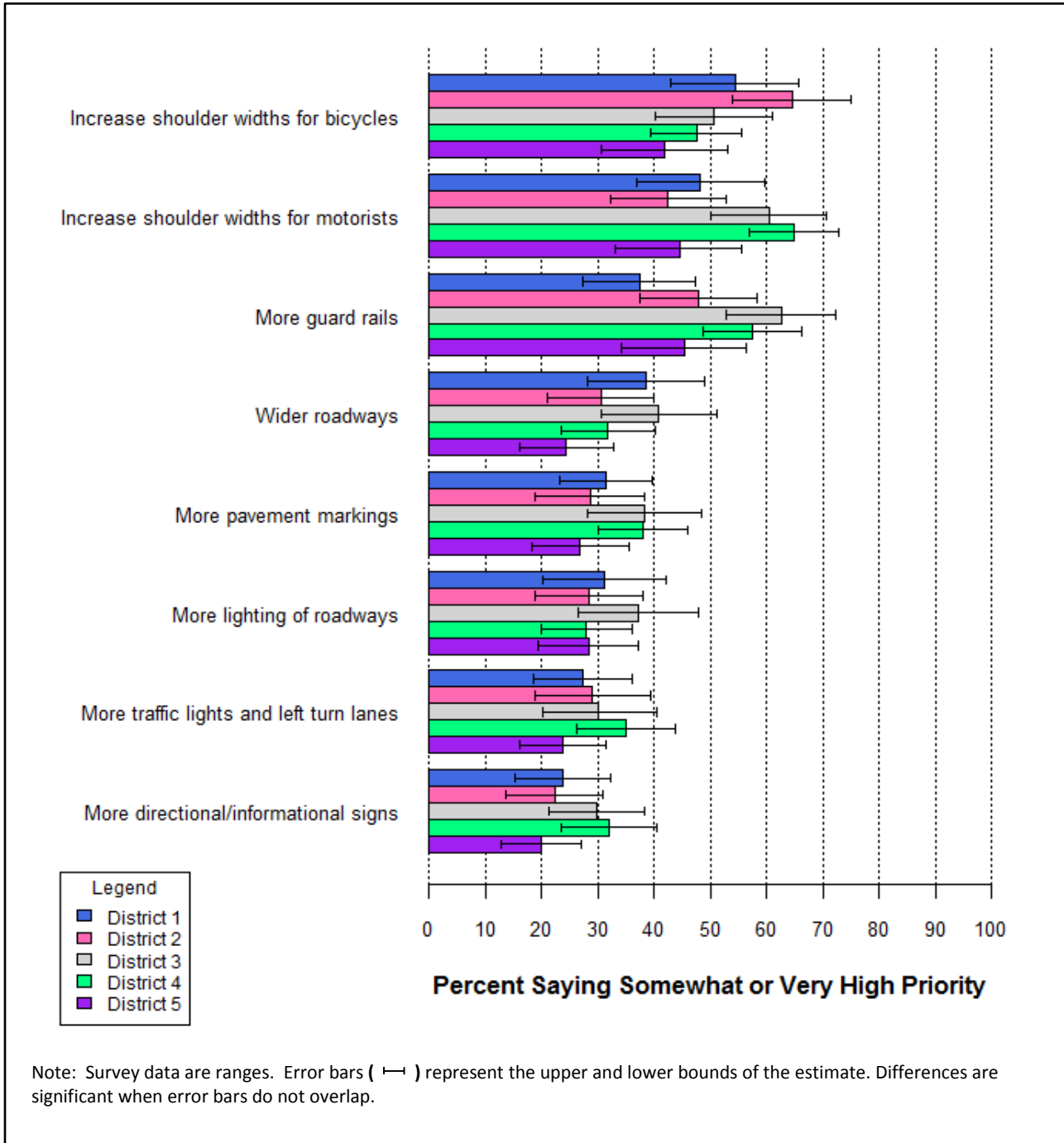
Figure 6.1: Priority of Possible Actions to Improve Roadway, 2009-2013



There are few differences between the MDT Districts in terms of ranking possible actions to improve roadways (Figure 6.2). Districts 3 and 4 residents were slightly

more likely to assign a higher priority to increasing shoulder widths for motorist and more guard rails than District 1 residents.

Figure 6.2: Possible Actions to Improve Roadways by MDT District, Percent Saying Somewhat or Very High Priority by MDT District



The 2013 TranPlan 21 Public Involvement Survey asks a number of questions that examine public opinion regarding overall MDT performance and responsiveness to the public. The responses to those questions are summarized in this section.

Respondents were asked to grade various aspects of MDT overall performance and customer service. The responses to these questions are found in Table 7.1. In general, Montanans give MDT an average or above average (B or C+) grade for customer service and performance.

Montanans gave the highest grades to the MDT's quality of services compared with five years ago (2.99 on a four-point scale), current MDT quality of service (2.82), and its sensitivity to the environment (2.79). Fourth place was a statistical tie between seven categories: MDT overall performance in the last year (2.76), MDT highways and maintenance repair (2.74), the quality of MDT planning (2.65), MDT convenience of travel through construction areas (2.56), MDT keeping the public informed (2.54), and MDT informing customers about construction (2.53).

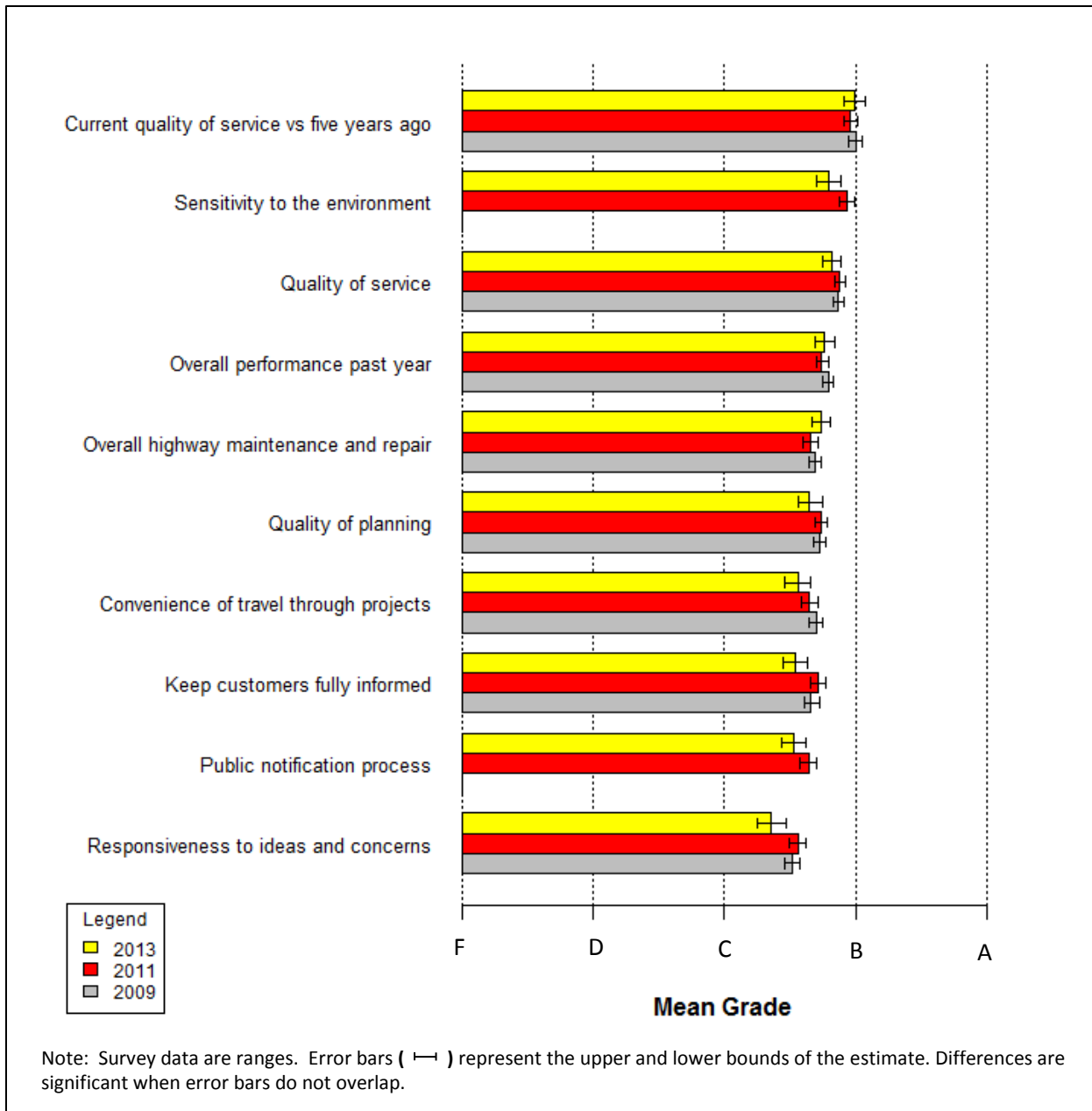
The lowest grade was given to MDT's responsiveness to customer ideas and concerns (2.36).

Table 7.1: MDT Overall Performance and Customer Service Grades

	A	B	C	D	F	DK	Mean	Number of respondents
MDT's quality of service now vs five years ago	21.0%	44.3%	17.0%	1.2%	0.7%	13.9%	2.99	894
MDT quality of service it provides	12.5%	54.4%	24.5%	1.5%	0.6%	6.5%	2.82	992
MDT's sensitivity to the environment?	16.6%	41.3%	24.3%	3.1%	1.4%	13.3%	2.79	920
MDT's overall performance during the past year	11.2%	53.5%	27.0%	2.8%	0.3%	5.0%	2.76	1,008
MDT on its overall highway maintenance and repair	11.5%	56.2%	23.1%	4.8%	1.4%	2.9%	2.74	1,030
Quality of planning to meet statewide transportation needs	12.2%	41.7%	29.0%	4.3%	1.8%	11.1%	2.65	943
Convenience of travel through construction zones	12.2%	41.0%	33.2%	9.6%	0.9%	3.2%	2.56	1,027
MDT efforts to keep customers fully informed	10.3%	38.8%	33.3%	8.4%	0.7%	8.4%	2.54	972
Public notification process about construction projects	11.3%	39.7%	31.9%	10.4%	1.0%	5.6%	2.53	1,002
Responsiveness to customer ideas and concerns	5.4%	26.8%	26.5%	6.7%	3.1%	31.5%	2.36	727

Grades are available for all statements since the 2005 survey. Figure 7.1 shows the confidence intervals for these items. Grades have remained between C+ and B over all iterations. Responsiveness to ideas and concerns consistently receives the lowest grade.

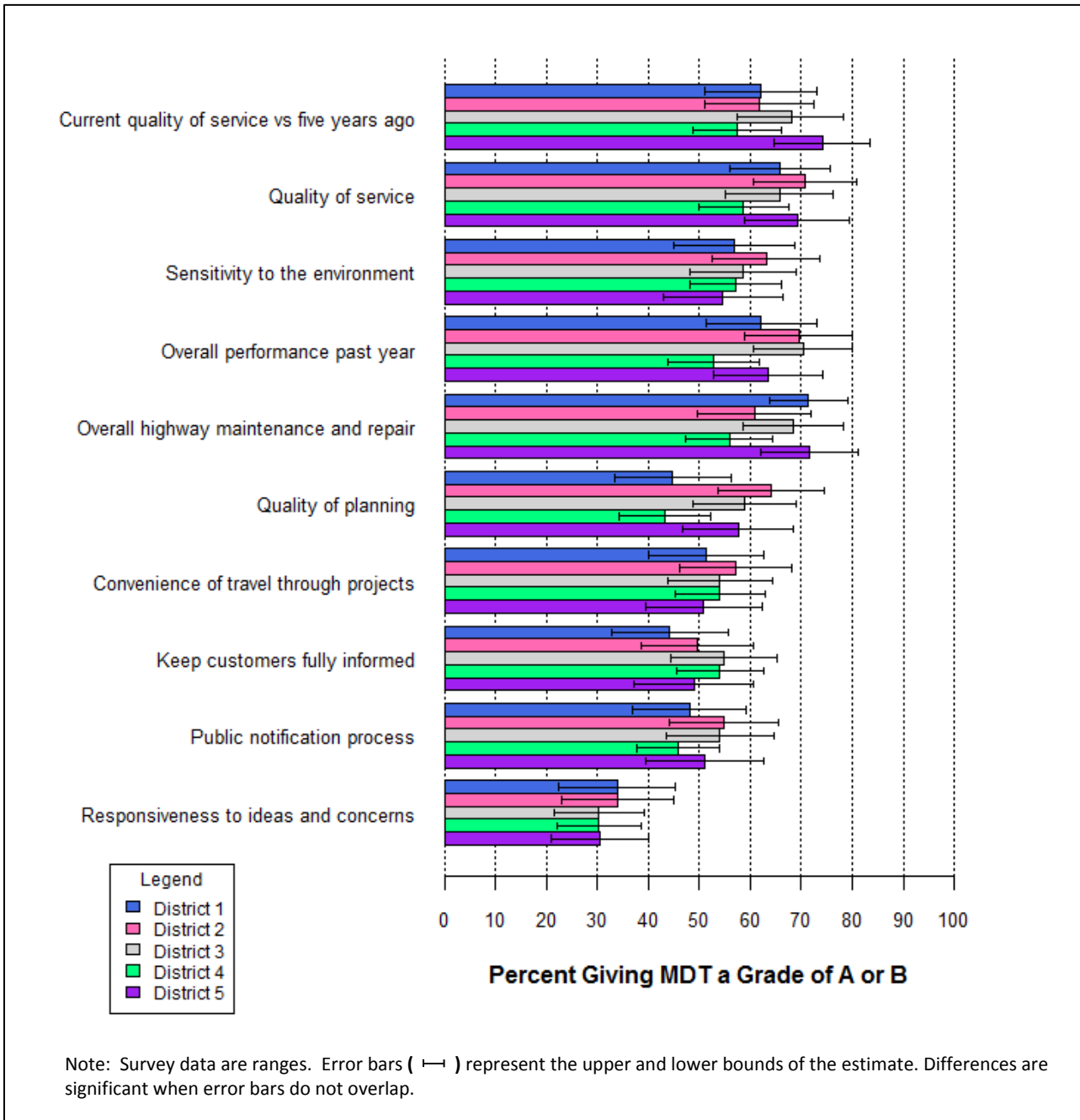
Figure 7.1: MDT Overall Performance and Customer Service Grades, 2009-2013



Respondent's grades of MDT overall performance and customer service by MDT District are presented in Figure 7.2. There is widespread agreement between the MDT Districts regarding MDT overall performance and customer service grades. More District 4 respondents

gave a slightly lower grade for overall performance in the last year when compared to other districts. Districts 1 and 4 gave a lower grade for overall planning.

Figure 7.2: MDT Overall Performance and Customer Service Grades in Each MDT District, Percent A or B



Respondents had two opportunities to tell MDT what they should do in an open-ended question format:

- Are there any other transportation-related issues that you think need to be addressed by the Montana Department of Transportation?
- Do you have any other suggestions for ways MDT can improve the function of Montana's roadways?

The responses provided by at least ten Montanans are listed in Table 8.1 and a complete listing can be found in Appendix B of Volume II.

These responses should be viewed as a rough measure of the intensity of people's feelings about these issues. It should be noted that more than two-thirds of all respondents chose not to respond to these open-ended questions. This is not uncommon. Open-ended questions generally place more burden on respondents than do questions with specific response options. Many respondents gave the same response for both questions. Duplicate responses were deleted.

Bicycle/pedestrian issues were cited by respondent most frequently, followed by a general positive MDT comment and increasing number of lanes. Comments about MDT were classified into favorable or unfavorable. An example of unfavorable is "they waste money." An example of favorable is "they do a good job."

Seven issues received ten or more responses in both 2011 and 2013. These responses were:

- Improve/increase passenger rail
- Improve/repair other highways
- Improve snowplowing/de-icing
- Increase mass/public transit
- Improve dirt/back-roads
- Widen two-lane highways
- Improve/add bike trails

Of the responses given by ten or more people in 2013, three also received ten or more comments in 2011, 2009 and 2007. These were:

- Provide more passenger rail service
- Increase mass/public transit
- Improve snow plowing/de-icing

Two of these items also received ten or more comments in 2005. They were:

- Provide more passenger rail service
- Increase mass/public transit

Increasing or improving passenger rail service is notable for its increase in number of responses and longevity at the top of the list. This may be interpreted as an indication that the positive feeling among some Montanans about passenger rail service is spreading to a larger segment of the population.

Table 8.1: Other Transportation Issues that MDT Should Address (more than 10 responses)

	N
Bike/ped issues	111
General positive comment toward MDT	60
Increase number of lanes, add passing lanes	55
Maintain more, fix roads	41
Increase passenger rail	38
Increase law enforcement, patrols, increase regulation	38
General negative comment toward MDT	36
Improve/increase rest areas	30
Bridge/culvert repair	28
Animal collisions, animals on road	27
Widen/improve shoulders	25
General increase public transportation	25
More/quicker snow removal	23
General widen roads	22
Improve specifically local/county/gravel roads	21
Truck traffic problem or oil business causing problems with roads	20
Increase busses	19
Increased/improve signage	18
Education of drivers/bicyclists	16
Acknowledge/respond to customer/listen/communicate better	15
Speed limit changes	13
Increase in accidents, less safe	11
Use/improve some sort of mode to disseminate information: tv, radio, apps, etc	10

9. Impact of Oil and Gas Activity on Northeastern Montana Transportation

District 4 respondents were asked if MDT was adequately addressing the recent energy development impacts on Montana’s transportation system (Figure 9.1). About 57 percent did not think MDT was adequately addressing the impacts of energy development. One in four District 4 residents said MDT was doing OK; eighteen percent had no opinion.

Those who said that MDT was not doing enough were asked to describe why they felt that way. Figure 9.2 shows the reasons. ‘Truck traffic problems’ was far and away the leading response (36 percent) of those that said MDT was not adequately addressing energy development impacts. Widening roads, increasing lanes, and fixing roads also were mentioned.

Figure 9.1: Is MDT Adequately Addressing the Energy Development Impacts on Montana’s Highways? District 4 Respondents

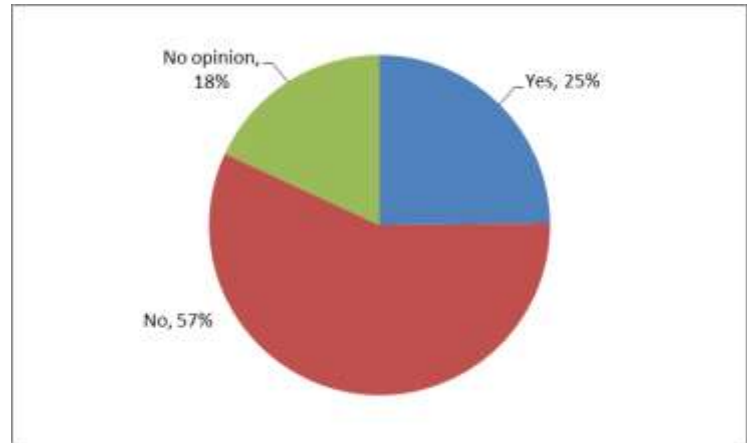
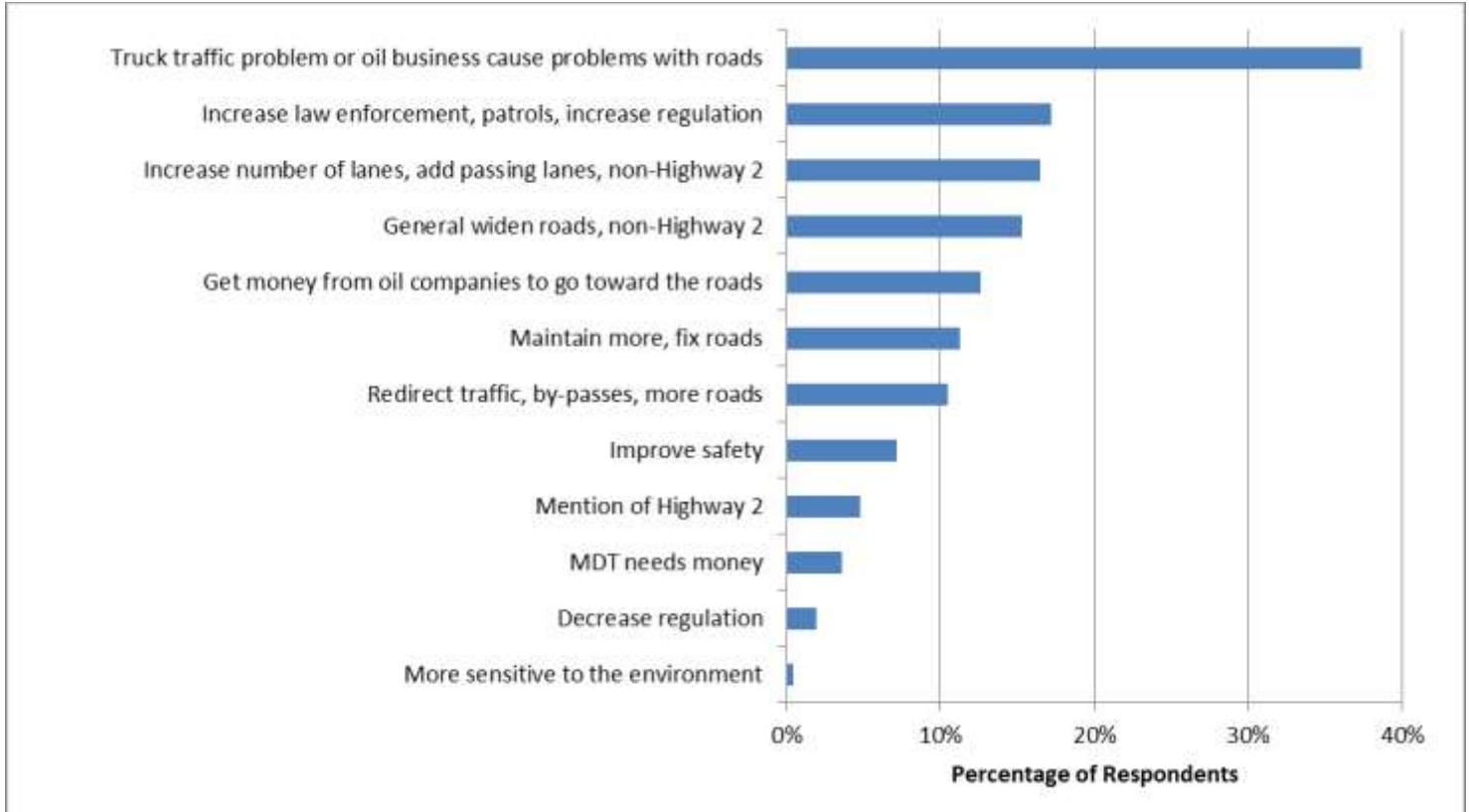


Figure 9.2: What Should MDT Do Differently to Address Energy Impacts? District 4 Respondents



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Montana Relay - 711
P.O. Box 201001
2701 Prospect Avenue
Helena, MT 59620-1001
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