

Martin Luther King, Jr. Way Community Outreach Summary

July 3, 2023

Overview

Since 2015, the City of Oakland, Department of Transportation has developed several plans, programs, and projects. As part of this work, a substantial amount of engagement has taken place in the form of community and stakeholder meetings, workshops, surveys, and more.

This document is a compilation of all the feedback received that is either specifically about the MLK Jr. Way Streetscape Improvements or is relevant to the project. This feedback was collected from the following:

- [2017 Pedestrian Plan, “Oakland Walks!”](#)
- [2019 Bike Plan, “Let’s Bike Oakland”](#)
- A survey for the [Reconnecting the Town](#) project (which includes the MLK Jr. Way Streetscape Improvements scope of work)
- [Oak 311 Service Requests](#)

2017 Pedestrian Plan, “Oakland Walks!”

The planning process for the Pedestrian Plan Update was guided by a Pedestrian Advisory Group (PAG) and the Technical Advisory Group (TAG). The PAG was made up of representatives from the City’s Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Commission, disabled and senior communities, and schools and community groups that are working to make Oakland a better place to walk. Staff also attended seven meetings across Oakland to gather input from community and neighborhood groups. In addition, there was a brief survey released in 2015 to understand the needs and concerns of pedestrians in Oakland, identify the main barriers to walking and hear ideas for improving walking conditions. In total, 588 people responded to the survey. While none of the survey questions specifically asked about MLK Jr. Way, some responses were relevant to, or specifically about, MLK Jr. Way. Below is a summary of the survey responses relevant to MLK Jr. Way. See the appendix for the raw responses.

Question 6: Below is a list of potential barriers to walking. In your opinion, how much do they discourage people from walking in Oakland? (522 Responses)

When asked what people thought were the potential barriers to walking in Oakland, most people chose speeding or aggressive/distracted driving and poor lighting (See Figure 1).

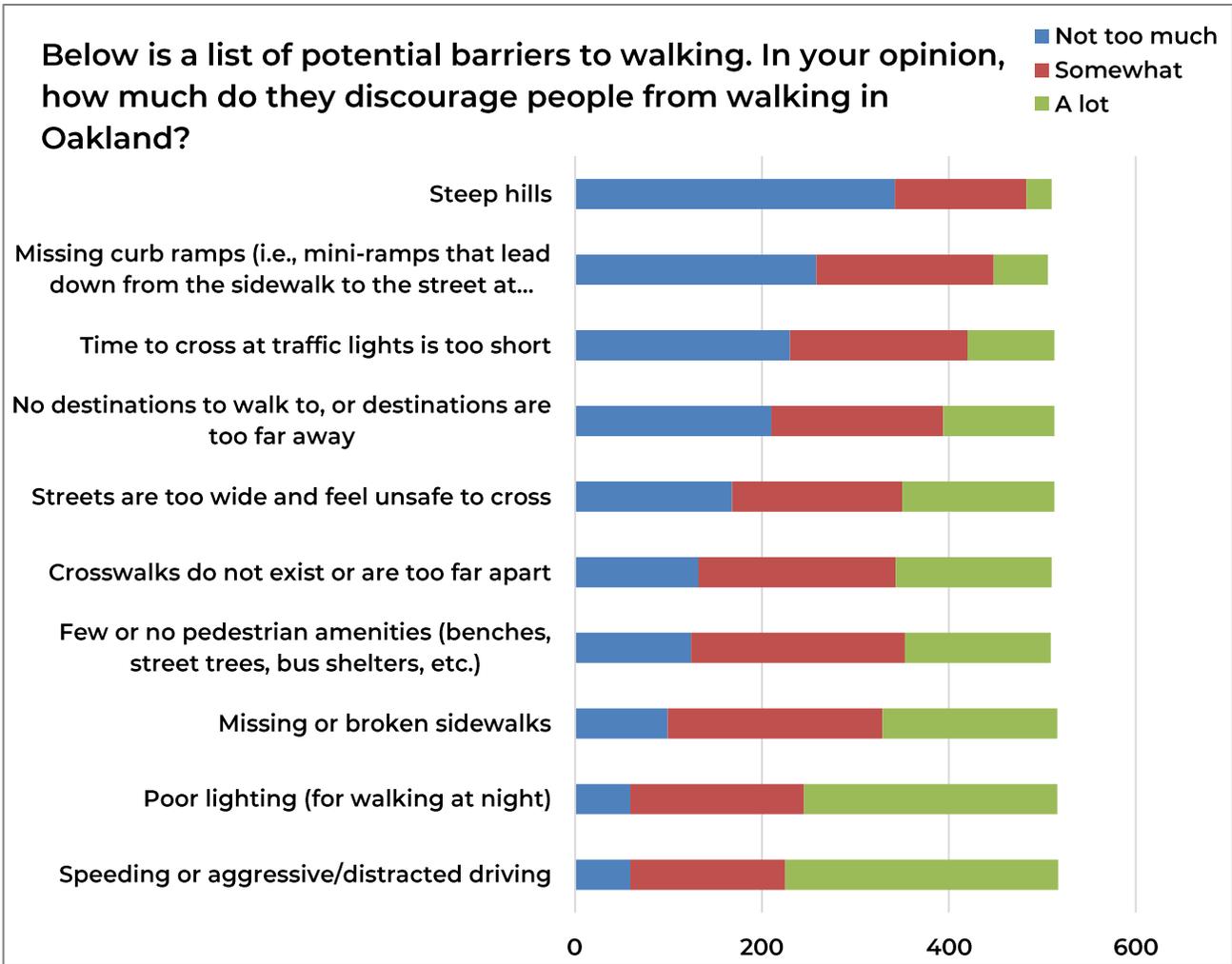


Figure 1. Number of responses received about barriers to walking.

Question 7: If you were in charge of Oakland's Pedestrian Program, what would you do to make walking in Oakland easier, safer or more pleasant? To submit your ideas or suggestions for specific blocks, intersections or other locations, please use the Pedestrian Master Plan's online mapping tool. (304 Responses)

In response to Question 7, four people mentioned MLK Jr. Way and/or commented on the mapping tool. These respondents stated that MLK Jr. Way should get:

- a road diet and bike lanes
- more street trees and landscaping
- roundabouts
- bulb outs and more high visibility crosswalks
- more pedestrian signals
- lighting
- community art

Question 13: From the list below, rank the five types of projects that are most important to you. (509 Responses)

In response to Question 13, the project option, “Measures that slow traffic on large streets (e.g. International Blvd., Telegraph Ave.)”, was selected most often as a top priority, with 18% of people choosing this project type as the most important and 31% of people choosing this as the first or second most important type of project (see Figure 2).

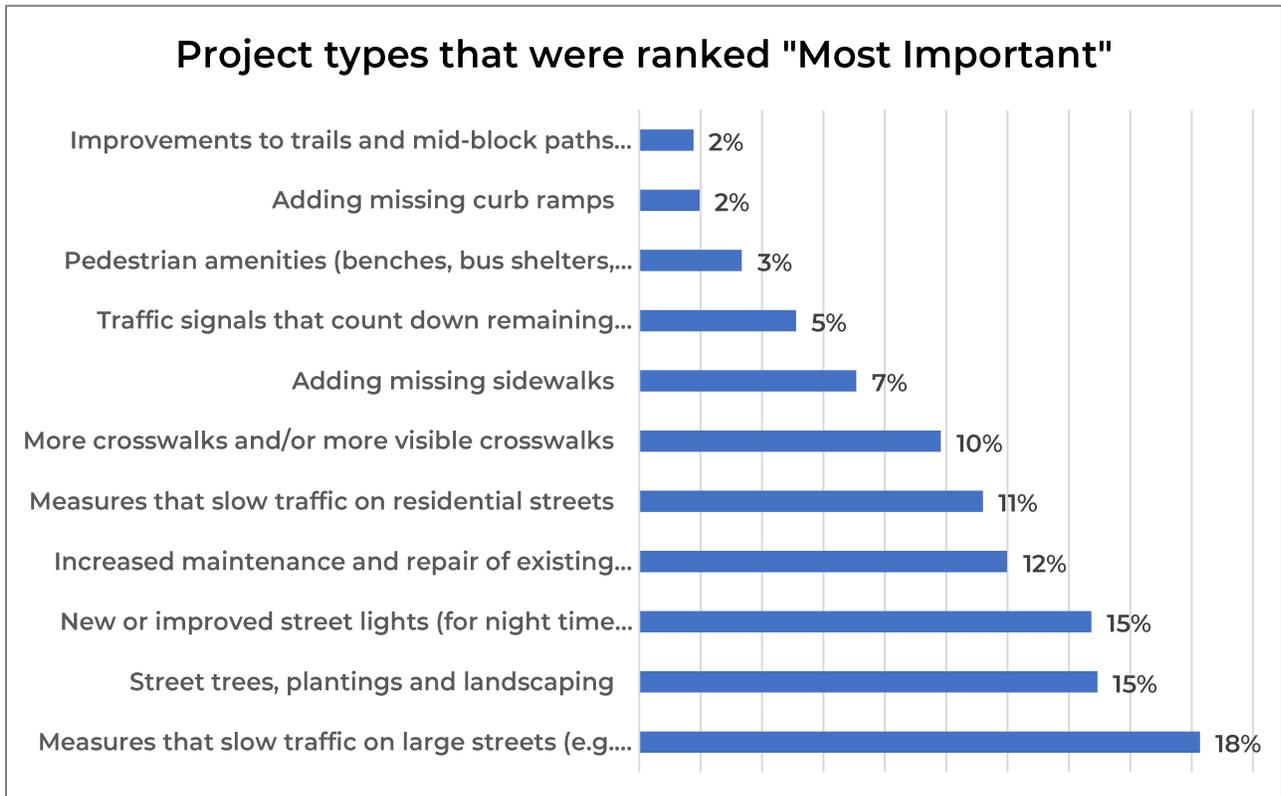


Figure 2. Most important project types.

“Let’s Bike Oakland” 2019 Oakland Bike Plan

The 2019 Bike Plan gathered input from communities and residents throughout the city about their priorities for and concerns about biking and overall mobility in their neighborhoods. Part of this engagement process included the use of a web map tool that allowed people to mark specific points or routes in Oakland and provide comments. Over 2,300 comments were received on this web map tool. Only one respondent said they used MLK Jr. Way as a bike route. This person stated that MLK Jr. Way is the most direct route between the west side of Uptown, Downtown Oakland, and Jack London. They stated that MLK Jr. Way was in need of bike lanes because drivers make it uncomfortable for cycling.

Reconnecting the Town Survey

This survey was conducted in 2021 for the purpose of getting community feedback on the proposed Martin Luther King, Jr. Way and Broadway Streetscape Improvement projects. The survey results shown below are based on responses received between June 2021 and January 2023, however almost all these responses were submitted in 2021. In total, 378 survey responses were received.

Who responded?

This survey asked questions about the respondents in order to understand whether the feedback received is from people representative of Oakland's diverse population and/or of the project area's population. Questions were also about the respondent's race and ethnicity, health and mobility, gender, and where they lived or worked in Oakland.

Race and Ethnicity of Respondents

Of the 378 people who responded to the survey, 89% reported their race/ethnicity. The majority (69%) were White of Caucasian alone, followed by Asian or Asian American alone (11%), more than one race (9%), Black or African American Alone (7%), Hispanic, Latinx, or Spanish origin (4%), Middle Eastern or North African (0.3%), and Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (0.3%). Results also shown in Figure 3. When compared to Oakland's population citywide, the respondents were disproportionately White or Caucasian (69% versus 29% citywide) and are underrepresented in all other race/ethnicity categories except for those who are more than one race.

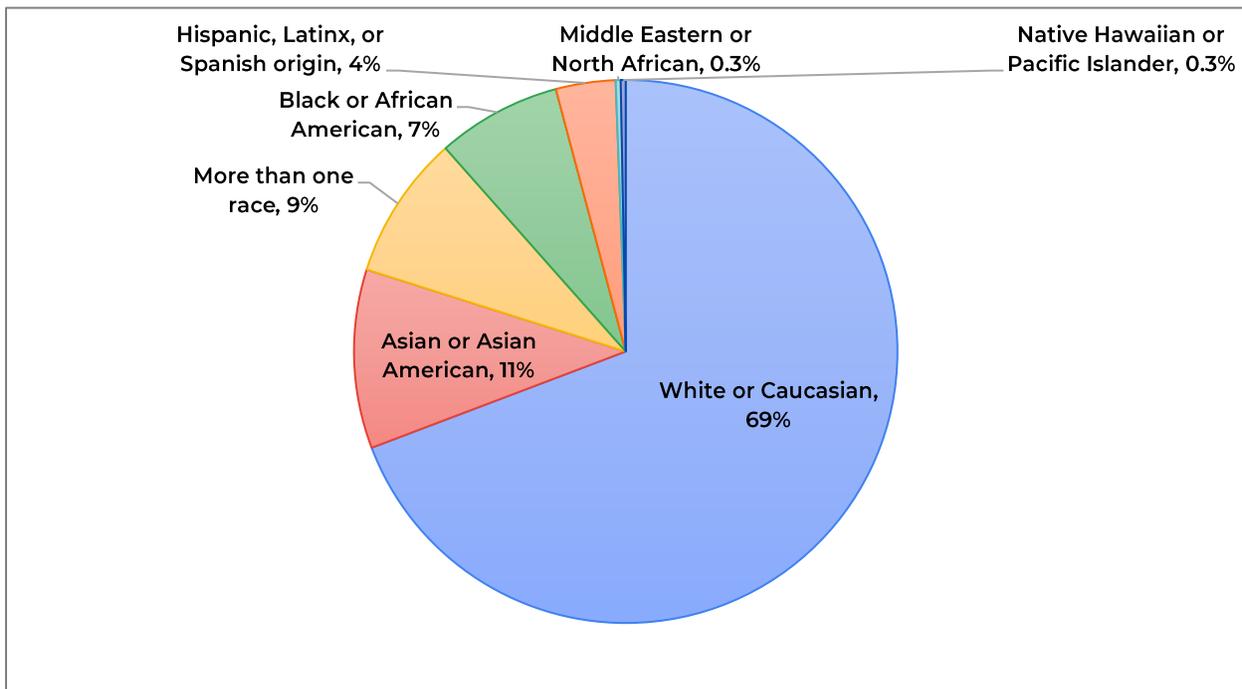


Figure 3. Race/Ethnicity of survey respondents

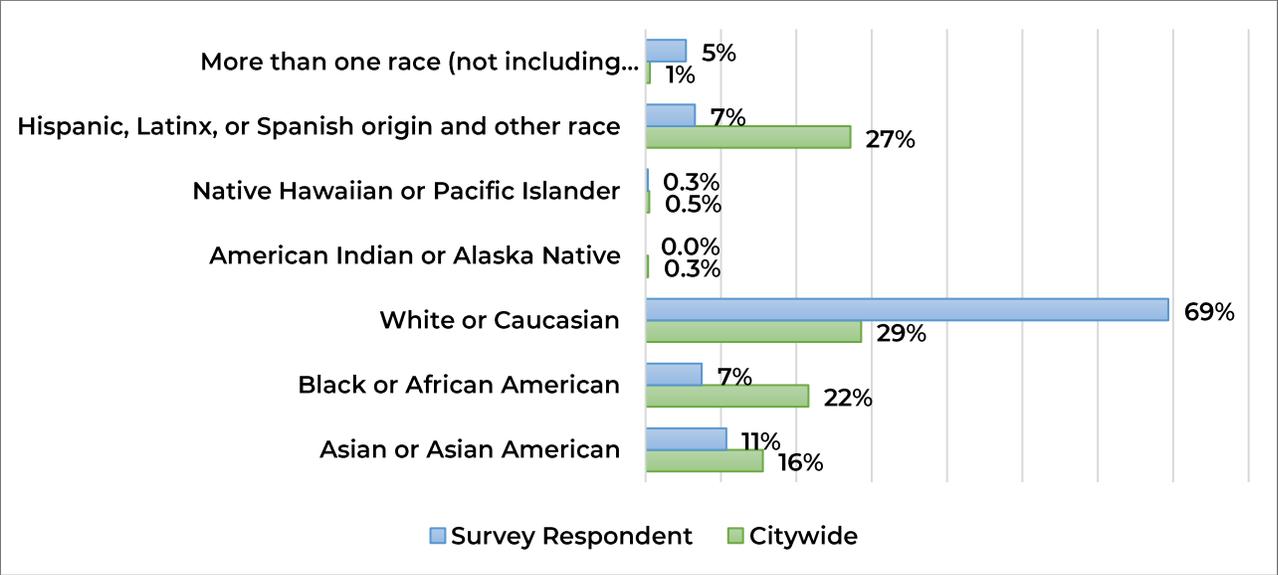


Figure 4. Race/Ethnicity of survey respondents compared to Citywide population

Respondent Health and Mobility

322 people, or 85% of respondents, reported their health and/or disability status. 100 people, or 31% of those who responded to this question, reported experiencing one or more disabilities or impairments. Long-term mental health condition (e.g., depression, anxiety) was the most commonly reported condition (11%), followed by mobility impairment (10%), and sensory impairment (6%).

Respondent Gender

326, or 86% of people responded to the question about gender identity. Slightly more than half (51%) reported man, 44% reported woman, 4% reported nonbinary, 2% reported transgender (including those who reported man, woman, or gender fluid), 2% reported gender fluid, 1% reported agender, and 0.3% gender non-conforming.

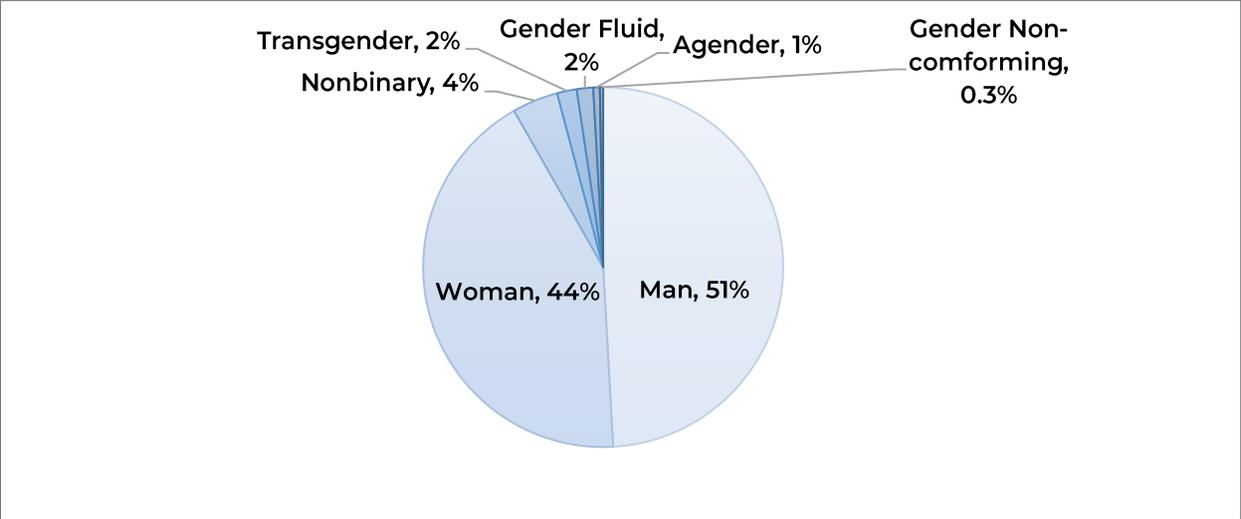


Figure 5. Gender identity of survey respondents

Transportation Modes Used on MLK Jr. Way

The survey asked what transportation mode(s) they typically used on MLK Jr. Way. The options to choose from were driving, taking the bus walking, biking, or some other mode. Here is a summary of the results:

- 75% listed driving as at least one of their transportation modes.
 - 50% of respondents reported driving as their only transportation mode.
 - 25% of respondents reported driving as one of their modes, and the most common reported mode used in combination with driving was biking—10% of respondents reported that they drive and bike.
- 13% of respondents reported taking the bus as at least one of their transportation modes.
 - 8% of respondents (or more than half of bus users) reported that they take the bus and use active modes of transportation (i.e., walking or biking) and do not drive.
 - Only 2% of respondents reported the bus as their only mode of transportation.
- 15% of respondents reported that they only use active modes of transportation

Opinions of the proposed MLK Jr. Way Streetscape Improvements

The survey asked respondents what they thought of the proposed improvements to Broadway and provided the following options: “I love them”, “I like them”, “I don’t like them”, “I hate them”, and “I’m not sure”. Respondents also had the option to write in something else. Below is a summary of the results as illustrated in Figure 6:

- 48% (180) of people like or love the proposed improvements
- 26% (98) of people don’t like or hate the proposed improvements
- 24% (90) of people are not sure
- 3% (10) of people provided specific feedback
 - 7 people said there was need for protected bike lanes instead of buffered bike lanes
 - 2 people mentioned they didn’t want the design to result in more traffic congestion
 - 3 people highlighted other transit problems
 - 1 person mentioned they wanted trees in the median

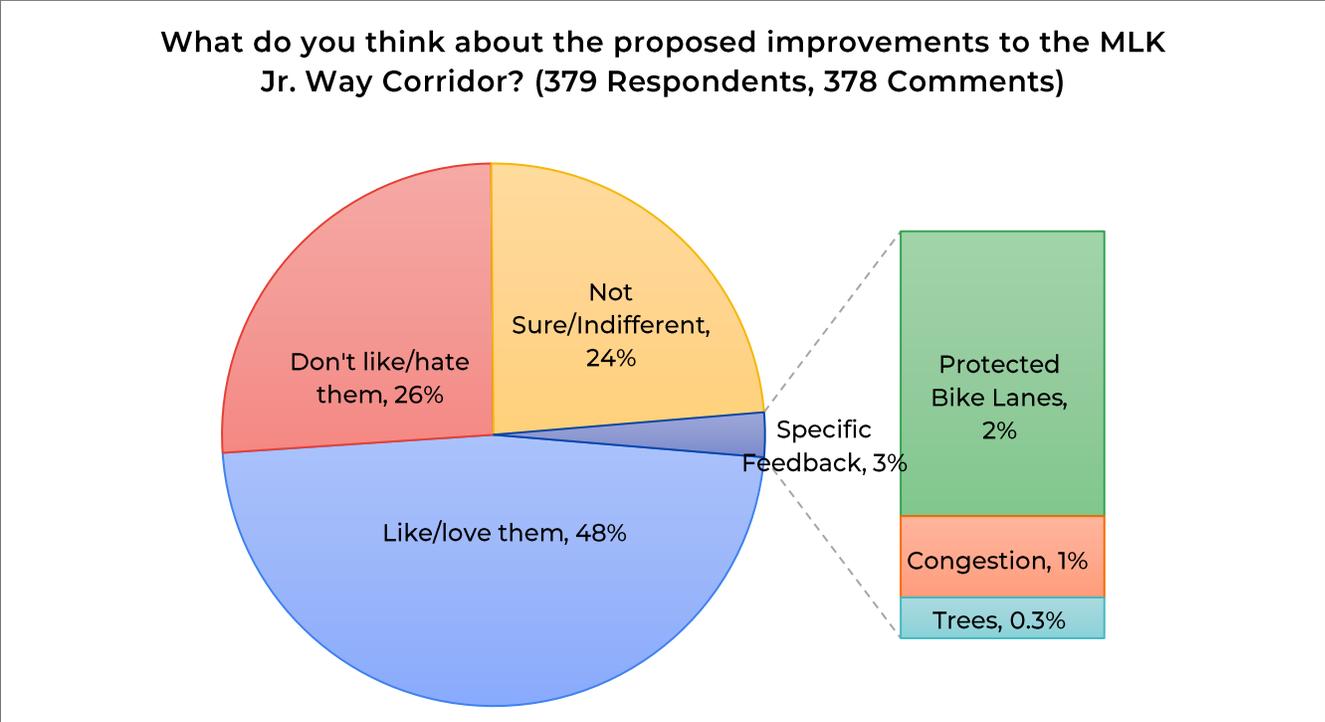


Figure 6. Opinions of the MLK Jr. Way Streetscape Improvements

Additional improvements wanted on MLK Jr. Way

The survey asked respondents what additional improvements they would like to see implemented on MLK Jr. Way. A total of 212 people responded to this question resulting in 213 different suggestions.

- 40% (or 85 people) mentioned protected or separated bike lanes were needed instead of buffered bike lanes
- 15% (or 31 people) mentioned other suggestions for the proposed bike improvements. Most stated that the bike lane design needed to be improved and others stated that the bike lanes should be extended north or on other streets to create a better bike network.
- 12% of suggestions included streetscape enhancements on MLK Jr. Way, such as pedestrian improvements (including sidewalk widening and lighting) (5%), greenery and more trees (4%), cleaner sidewalks (2%), and more parklets (1%).
- Other comments included addressing encampments/homelessness (3%), removing or reducing parking (3%), transit-related improvements (3%), not adding bicycle lanes to MLK Jr. Way (3%), improving public safety (2%), and ensuring parking is safe and accessible (2%).

Oak 311 Service Requests

Staff also reviewed 311 requests that were submitted between 2018 to 2022 and that pertained to MLK Jr. Way from 2nd Street to 14th Street. Below is a summary of what was reported during this time:

- 24 reports of street light outages/damages
- 22 reports of abandoned vehicles
- 19 reports of sidewalk damage
- 18 reports of clogged storm drains, with most reporting flooding
- 16 requests for tree pruning, removal, and reports of tree damage
- 9 requests to fix potholes
- 2 requests for driveway tipping (red curb)
- 1 request for additional signage and reflectors at MLK Jr. Way and 11th Street to prevent drivers from driving the wrong way on 11th Street.
- 1 request to address high speeds on 14th Street crossing MLK Jr. Way
- 1 request to change MLK Jr. Way at 2nd Street from a 2-way stop to a 4-way stop.

Appendix

2017 Pedestrian Plan Survey Responses

<https://maps.kittelson.com/oakwalking>

- Put Market, West, and MLK on road diets, add street trees and plantings, bike lanes, roundabouts, bulb outs, better cross walks. More police presence, foot, bike, horse patrols. Move encampment into shelter, fence the stepped area where everyone camps in the underpass. Add cameras to catch people dumping and prosecute. Get rid of parking below the underpass, plant some trees there. Encourage development along MLK in Longfellow, so those storefronts once again house businesses and provide a place to walk to on this side of the freeway.
- At 9th and MLK Jr. Way: Add painted crosswalks and signage. Ignorant drivers think that because there are no painted crosswalks here that you have no right to cross this intersection. A four lane road should always have painted crosswalks. Thank you!
- At 12th Street and MLK Jr. Way: Add pedestrian signals at intersections near 12th and MLK, but ensure that pedestrian phases are on recall at all times to avoid creating new pedestrian delay
- At 14th Street and MLK Jr. Way: MLK should be one of the nicest, most inclusively designed streets in Oakland. It should have gorgeous trees, bike lanes, lighting and community art. It should not be a 4 lane speedway with narrow sidewalks, power lines and mostly dead or missing street trees.