



City of Bellevue

Bellevue Grand Connection:

I-405 Crossing – Downtown to Eastrail

Online Open House Summary Report

February 26 – March 24, 2024

[EngagingBellevue.com/i405-crossing](https://engagingbellevue.com/i405-crossing)



Project Overview

The Grand Connection program is 1.5 miles of interconnected public and pedestrian-focused spaces. It starts at Meydenbauer Bay Park and continues east through downtown Bellevue across I-405 to the Eastrail. It will be a place where people who live, work and play in Bellevue can walk, bike, roll, relax, gather, eat and shop. The next element of the Grand Connection is the crossing over I-405—the Grand Connection Crossing, which will link downtown Bellevue to the Eastrail and Wilburton for people traveling without a car.

The Grand Connection Crossing will start at the City Hall Plaza and terminate at the Eastrail, ultimately tying downtown Bellevue into a 175-mile regional trail network that connects more than half a million Eastside residents.

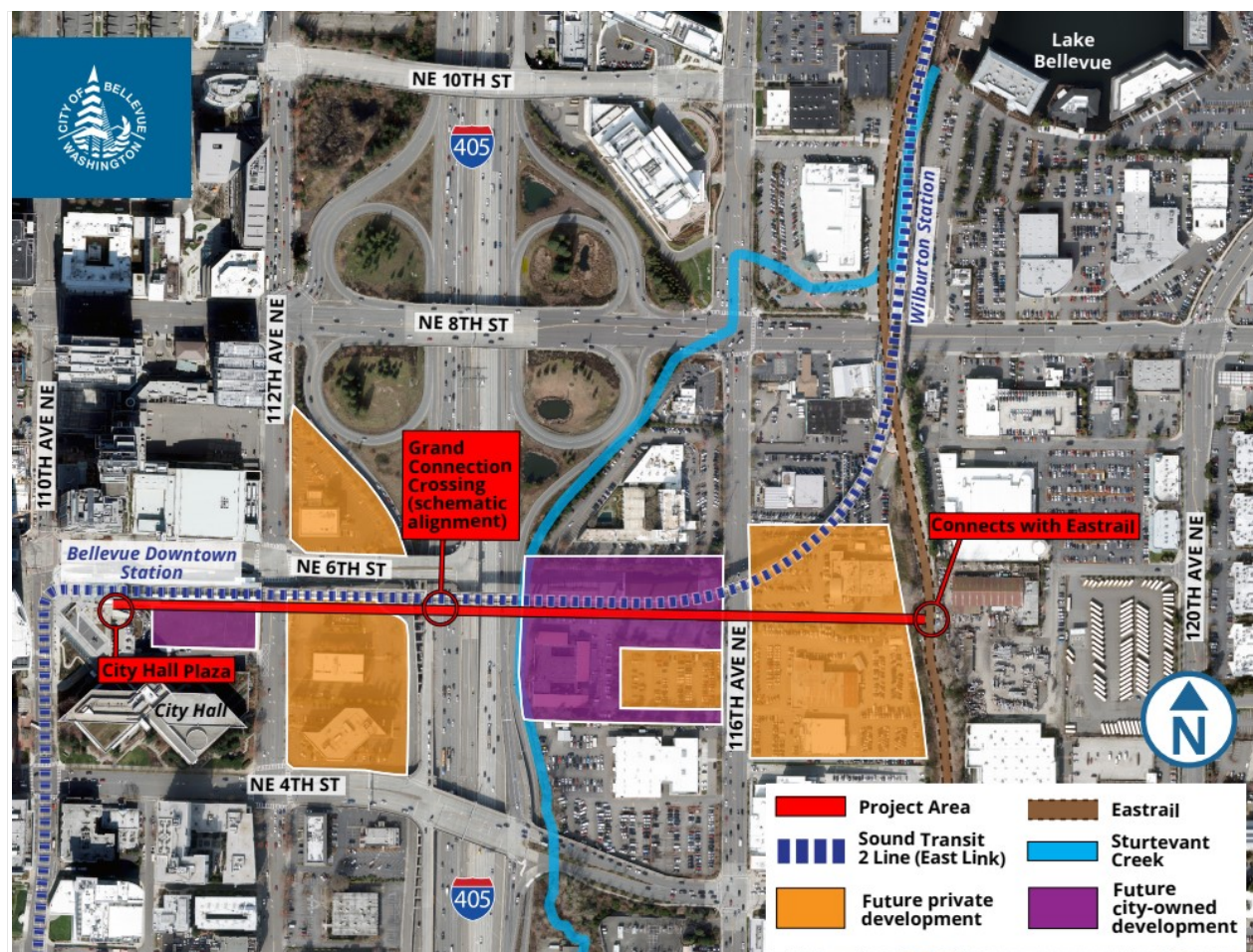


Figure 1: Grand Connection Crossing Project Limits

The Grand Connection Crossing will support the transformation of the Wilburton study area into Bellevue's next urban mixed-use community, where improved amenities, greater livability, opportunities for healthy living and economic vitality will serve the needs of a diverse and growing population. Wilburton study work will coincide with the crossing, which will happen simultaneously with the Grand Connection public activation work along the corridor.

This crossing will also be compatible with a future lid park over I-405, which is a long-range vision included in the city's Grand Connection Framework Plan. When complete, the crossing will enable people of all ages and abilities to access a network of events, jobs and recreational opportunities safely and conveniently beyond the downtown core and will create a vibrant landmark with activated outdoor spaces that celebrate and serve the community.

Online Open House Overview

The City of Bellevue project team held the first of three open houses from February 26 to March 24, 2024, on the city's EngagingBellevue.com website.

Purpose: The online open house shared an overview of the Grand Connection program and Grand Connection Crossing project, described outcomes from a recent Design Workshop (Charette) with key partners and provided an opportunity for participants to share their input by taking a survey and engaging in an "Ideas Board."

Format: The online open house included a 14-question survey focused on the potential usage and vision of the Grand Connection Crossing. It also included an "Ideas Board," where participants viewed images of other active transportation (also known as non-motorized) crossings and indicated what they liked about the images. Participants could also share their own images and comments on those images. Outreach for this online open house was city wide, thus the English online open house was translated into the top seven languages commonly used within the city of Bellevue. All information and survey questions were translated into: Chinese (Simplified and Traditional), Korean, Japanese, Russian, Spanish and Vietnamese.

Online Open House Analytics

The site was live for approximately one month and informed the public about the Grand Connection Crossing. The online open house web traffic showed a total of 1,400+ people visited the project website in all languages on Engaging Bellevue. 516 participants interacted with the website by viewing the FAQs, downloading the Design Workshop Summary and viewing related project pages. A total of 353 community members contributed and submitted a survey. 352 surveys were completed in English, and one was completed in Simplified Chinese.

Table 1: Online open house visitor engagement levels

Metric	Participants
Engaged ¹	353
Informed ²	516
Aware ³	1,463 ⁴

Community members who participated in the survey arrived at the engagingbellevue.com project page through various means, the top three sources being directly from an email link, a government website, and navigating internally to the survey page from other page of the engagingbellevue.com site.

Table 2: Sources of traffic for engaged visitors

Source	Engaged visitor⁵
Email	28.9%
Direct website	20.3%
.Gov site	22.1%
Search engine	15.8%
Social	13.4%
Referrals	10.8%

Survey and Ideas Board

The survey was a traditional multiple-choice survey that asked community members demographic questions and questions focusing on their potential usage of the Grand Connection Crossing. The “Ideas Board” was intended to better understand what community members might like to see in the Grand Connection Crossing.

This section presented community members with five examples of similar crossings designed for people walking, biking and rolling from around the country, and asked for their comments of what they liked from the examples or to provide in their own words what they want to see in a crossing. They could also contribute their own examples of active transportation/non-motorized crossings, and other users could vote on their favorite contribution. A total of five ideas were contributed by five different community members.

¹ **Engaged** users participated in surveys, navigated to various open house pages, downloaded documents, and contributed to ideas; A single engaged participant can perform multiple actions.

² **Informed** users clicked on links to view photos, download project documents, navigated to multiple pages, and/or contributed to the survey and/or ideas board; A single informed participant can perform multiple actions.

³ **Aware** users clicked on a link and navigated at least one page of the open house; an aware user could have also performed an Informed or Engaged action.

⁴ **Total Aware** users includes Engaged and Informed.

⁵ **Engaged visitor** includes total number of engaged users participating, this assumes the overall percentage includes both verified users and unverified users.

More information about their contributions can be found in *Appendix B: Ideas Board – Community Contributions*.

Who Did We Hear From?

Contributors had the opportunity to provide demographic information (age, race/ethnicity, gender identity, type of residence, languages spoken, relationship to Bellevue, disability and neighborhood). **243 respondents (52.8%)** indicated that they live in Bellevue and **217 other respondents (47.17%)** commute to Bellevue for work, school or to shop, dine and for leisure.

Using the census data from 2022, and the Bellevue Demographics cited on the City of Bellevue website, this table shows the comparison between survey demographics and those indicated they live in Bellevue, Washington.

Table 3: Demographics of survey participants in comparison to the overall demographics of the City of Bellevue.

Demographic	Engaging Bellevue Survey	City-wide data US Census Data (2022) ⁶ Bellevue Demographics (2020) ⁷
Age	6.6% - Under 18 72% - 18-64 21.4% - 65+	19.5% - Under 18 61.1% - 18-64 19.4% - 65+
People of color	24% people of color (including Latino or Hispanic ancestry)	58.5% people of color (including Hispanic or Latino)
Renters	1.5% renting	48.3% non-owner-occupied housing
Multifamily housing	3% living in apartment, condo, or townhome	44.6% 2-or more unit structures
Language other than English spoken at home	1.95% speak language other than English at home	2020 data -- 49.6% (± 3.7%) speak language other than English at home
Residents of Bellevue	.15% of the total Bellevue population	152,767 live in Bellevue (population estimate for 2022)

The data above highlights areas where additional outreach efforts are needed to achieve broader representation and inclusivity within our community engagement initiatives. There are significant gaps in demographic representation between the users who completed the

⁶ U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: Bellevue city, Washington. (n.d.). [www.census.gov](https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/bellevuecitywashington).
<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/bellevuecitywashington>

⁷ *Demographic Profile of the City of Bellevue - Bellevue welcomes the world. Our diversity is our strength. We embrace the future while respecting our past.* (n.d.). [Bellevuedemographics.shinyapps.io](https://bellevuedemographics.shinyapps.io/DemographicProfileApp/). Retrieved April 1, 2024, from <https://bellevuedemographics.shinyapps.io/DemographicProfileApp/>

Engaging Bellevue Survey and city-wide demographics, particularly concerning **renters, people of color and individuals speaking languages other than English at home.**

In the survey, **renters comprise only 1.5%**, whereas city-wide data indicates nearly half of Bellevue's population resides in non-owner-occupied housing. Similarly, while the survey **captures 24% people of color**, city-wide demographics reveal a much higher representation at 58.5%. Additionally, the survey only reflects **1.95% of respondents speaking a language other than English at home**, significantly lower than the 2020 census data's estimation of approximately 49.6%.

These vast gaps show the need for targeted engagement strategies, so all community members can see their values and priorities reflected in the crossing. Detailed results and demographic information of respondents to the survey can be found in *Appendix A: Engaging Bellevue Responses*.

What Have We Learned from Respondents So Far?

Key findings from the survey results were:

- Community members who responded to the survey indicated their top reasons for using the crossing in the future included exercise (69.3%) and accessing shopping, dining or entertainment (67%). Other popular reasons for using the crossing include gathering with friends (45.3%), connecting with nature (45%), commuting (41.8%) and viewing public art or attending a performance (39.8%).
- The highest priority elements for the crossing are stairs and ramps to access nearby shops and restaurants and landscaping.
- To feel safe and welcome, respondents prioritized trash cans and regular maintenance, lighting and separation of high-speed modes (e.g., bicycling) from low-speed modes (e.g., walking).
- Most survey respondents (90.7%) indicated the formal purpose and need statement provided adequate justification for the project.
- Of the respondents (9.3%) who indicated the formal purpose and need statement did not provide adequate justification for the project, few submitted comments to explain their response.
 - The top three responses for rejecting the project, included dismissing the project being built, having other priorities lie in other areas of the community, and needing more information about project overall cost.

Open-Ended Comments Summary

- Online open house visitors had the opportunity to write in comments for Questions one, two, four and six if they chose the “other” option on these questions. Through this “other” options, **visitors submitted a total of 101 comments.**

- All 101 comments were submitted in English and centered on **four main themes** including **connectivity, health benefits, safety and project cost**.
 - **75 comments expressed positive or neutral sentiment** toward the project. These comments noted the health benefits, connectivity, and safety elements the bridge would bring to the community.
 - **26 of the comments expressed negative sentiment**, most reflecting concern of how tax dollars will be spent on the project and the overall project cost.

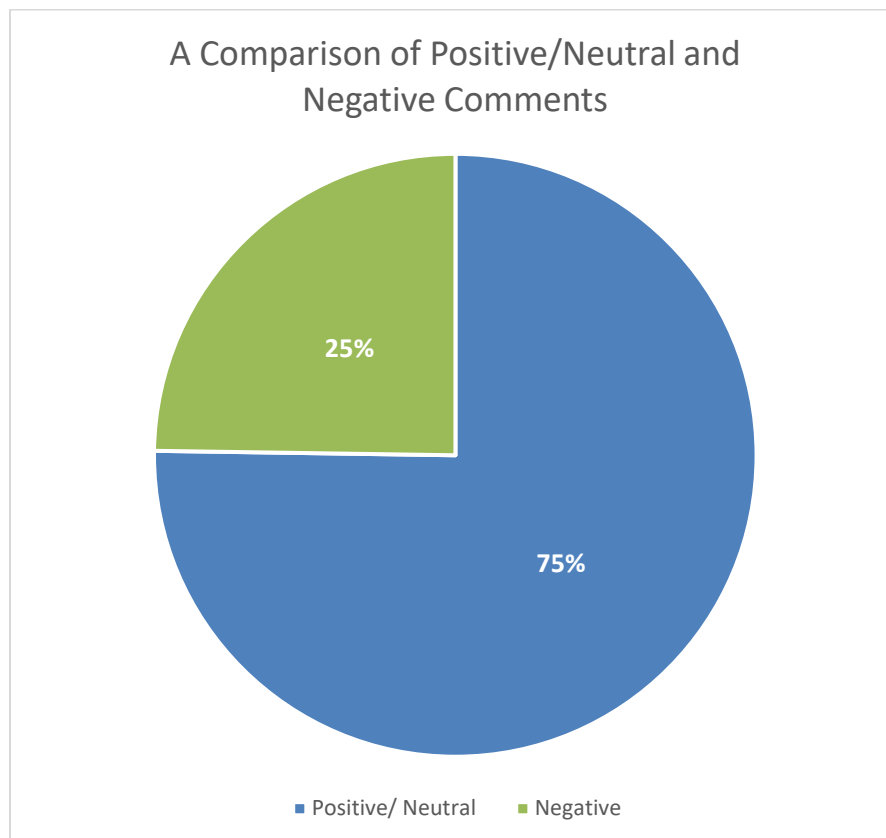


Figure 2: An analysis of the comments submitted shows that 25% of comments were negative in sentiment and against the crossing, while the remainder 75% of comments were positive or neutral in sentiment towards building the crossing.

Appendix A includes tables with the summarized open-ended comments.

Notification Strategy

Print and Emailed Outreach

The City of Bellevue Project team informed the public about the online open house by including information about the project and open house in the quarterly city newsletter *Its Your City* and placing project blurbs in the monthly e-newsletters *Neighborhood News* and *ChooseYourWayBellevue*. The project team also shared a press release and emailed an online open house invitation to the expanding project subscription list of community members interested in the project.

Web Outreach

The City of Bellevue leveraged their city websites and posted direct links to the EngagingBellevue.com online open house on the Economic Development department Grand Connection program [webpage](#), as well as to the Transportation's Grand Connection Crossing project [webpage](#). The city also posted the online open house link to the [BellevueGrandConnection.com](#), a website dedicated to the Grand Connection program managed by the city and supported by a partnership between the city, Bellevue Downtown Association, and the Friends of the Grand Connection (FOGC). In addition to the city managed websites and webpages, the FOGC published the online open house link to their website [friendsofgrandconnection.org](#).

Community Based Organization Outreach

Between February 26 – 29, 2024, the project team sent an informational email with project and the online open house information to the following community-based organizations that were identified as priority partners:

- Bellevue Diversity Advantage Network (BDAN)
- Bellevue Disability Allyship Resource Team (DART)
- Centro Cultural Mexicano
- Chinese Information and Service Center
- Eastside for All
- Indian American Community Services (IACS)
- Korean American Resource Center /
- Neighborhood Associations
- Sound Transit Accessible Services

Social Media

The city posted notices on the city owned social media accounts on Facebook, Instagram, Nextdoor and X, formerly known as Twitter. The city translated social media posts into all seven survey languages and posted to social media sites. The project team also shared in-language posts with the city's cultural outreach assistants who posted to culturally specific outreach channels in Spanish and Simplified and Traditional Chinese such as WeChat, Little Red Book, and Facebook groups. Not all comments left on the post from the public, were relevant to the online open house or the survey opportunity, however those in response to the project were primarily negative. Many questioned the wisdom of spending tax dollars on the project. Some commenters indicated there are higher priorities to address. Post visuals and comment topics can be found in *Appendix C: Social Media Notifications*.

Next Steps

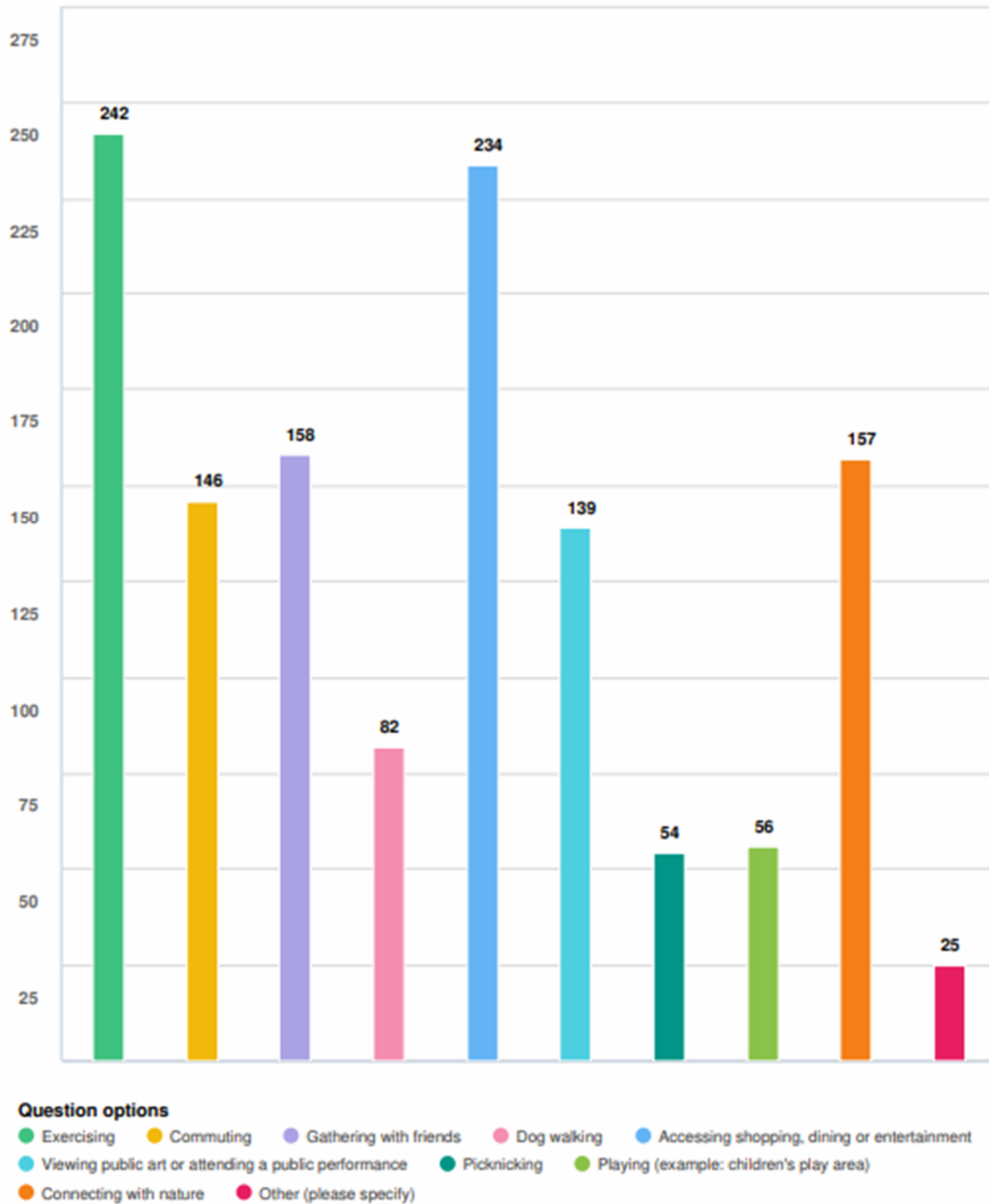
The City of Bellevue project team is reviewing the survey results and comments and will address them in the 30% design of the Grand Connection Crossing. The project team will host an in person open house on May 2, 2024, to share the latest progress on 30% design and gather community input. The City of Bellevue will continue to update the community at project milestones and provide opportunities for the public to share their input with the project team.

Appendix A: Engaging Bellevue Survey Responses

The following pages provide the detailed results and demographic information of respondents to the online open house survey.

Grand Connection Crossing Vision

Question 1: How do you imagine using this crossing in the future?

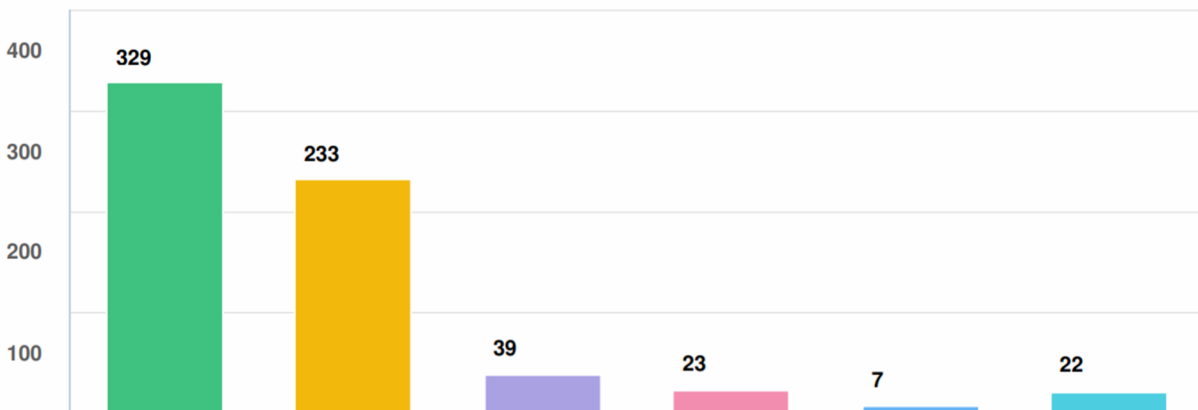


Optional question (349 response(s), 4 skipped)

Question type: Checkbox Question

Q1: "Other (Please Specify)"	
Comment Topic	Number of times comment topic occurred
Business use	2
Community connection	1
Focused on using amenity	2
No build	6
Recreational use	11
Transportation/ connectivity use	3

Question 2: What mode(s) of travel would you use on this crossing? (Check all that apply)



Question options

- Walking
- Bicycle (including electric)
- Scooter (including electric)
- Wheelchair
- Segway
- Other (please specify)

Optional question (351 response(s), 2 skipped)

Question type: Checkbox Question

Q2: "Other (Please Specify)"	
Comment Topic	Number of times comment topic occurred
Connecting to motorized transportation	1
Electric Rolling	2
Footpath activities	10
No use/ no build	6
People watching	1
Rolling	2

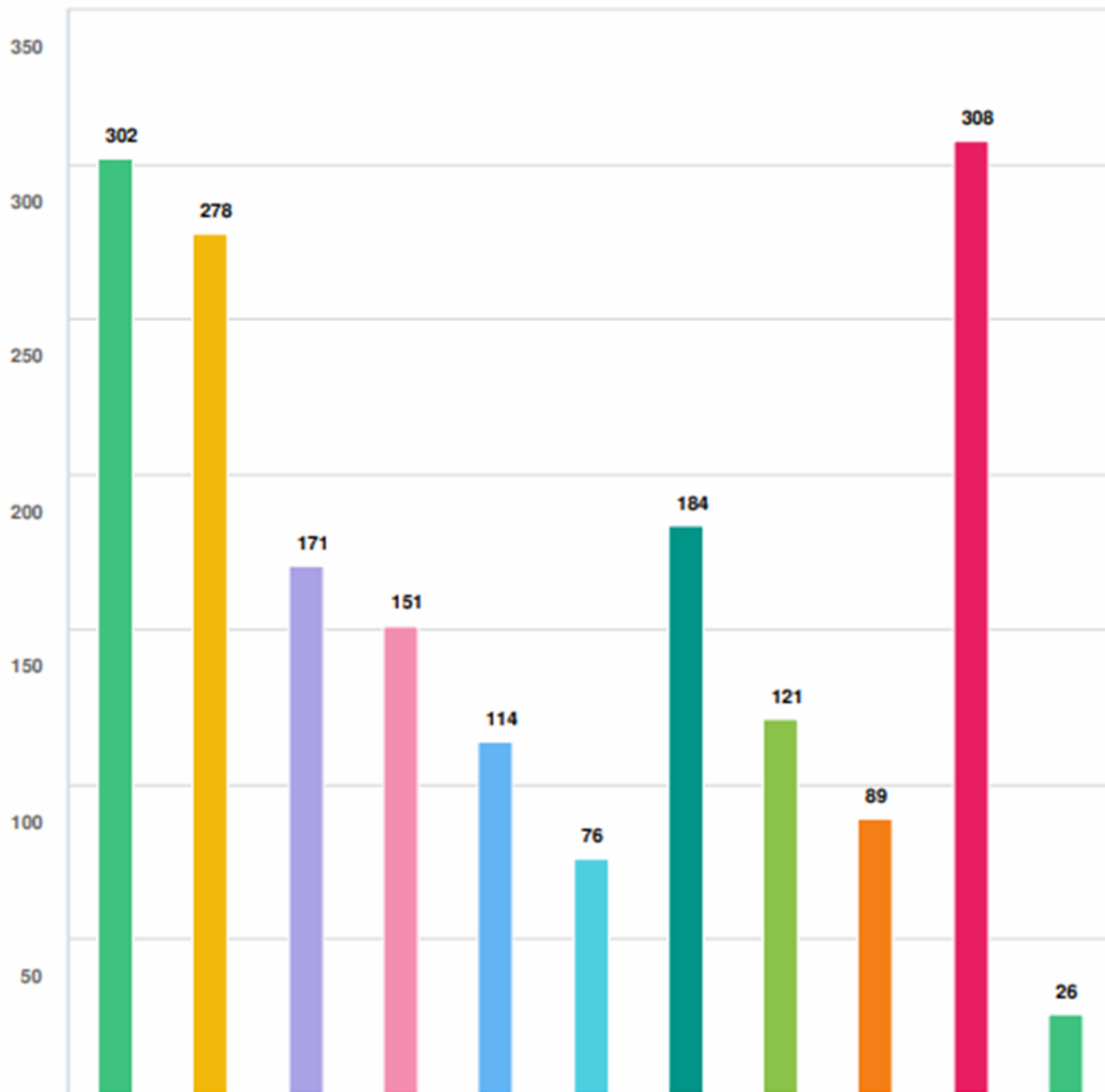
Question 3: What features would you like to see on this crossing? (Rank in the order of importance to you, where 1=most important and 11=least important)

OPTIONS	AVG. RANK
Stairs and ramps to access nearby shops and restaurants	3.30
Landscaping	3.52
Viewpoints	4.78
Decorative lighting	5.31
Seated picnic areas	5.35
Public art	5.57
Coffee cart or food truck	5.93
Space for performances or exhibits	6.29
Play area(s)	6.46
Sports or exercise facility (examples: climbing wall, par course)	7.04

Optional question (343 response(s), 10 skipped)

Question type: Ranking Question

Question 4: What additional elements would this crossing need for you to feel safe and welcome to use it? (Check all that apply)



Question options

- Lighting
- Separation of higher speed modes (e.g., bicycles, scooters) and lower speed modes (e.g. walking, using a wheelchair)
- Security/surveillance cameras
- Emergency call boxes
- Signage using visuals and maps (instead of text)
- Gender inclusive restrooms
- Weather protection
- Police/security presence
- Elements (such as art and signage) that highlight Bellevue's diverse communities
- Trash cans and regular maintenance of entire facility
- Other (please specify)

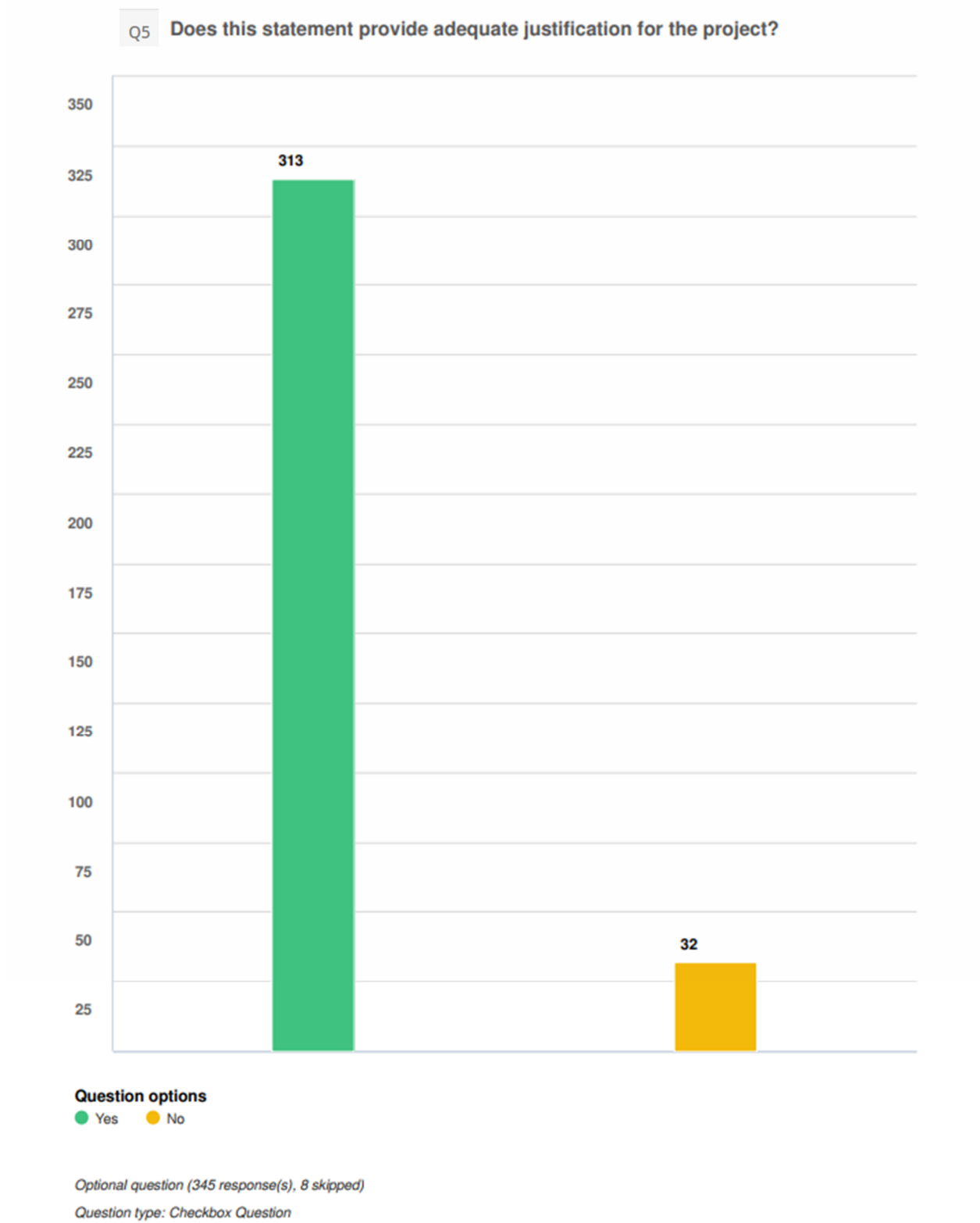
Optional question (352 response(s), 1 skipped)

Question type: Checkbox Question

Q4: “Other (Please Specify)”	
Comment Topic	Number of times comment topic occurred
Air quality monitoring/ barrier	1
Business access	1
Environmentally conscious landscaping	4
Minimal spending on project	2
No build	3
No encampments/camping	5
Robust and secure amenities	1
Robust and secure amenities/ ADA compliance	2
Robust and secure amenities/ environmentally conscious landscaping	1
Robust safety measures	1
Sound/noise barrier	3
Transit access/ schedule coordination with transit services	1
Wayfinding	1

Purpose and Need Statement

Question 5: Does this statement provide adequate justification for the project?



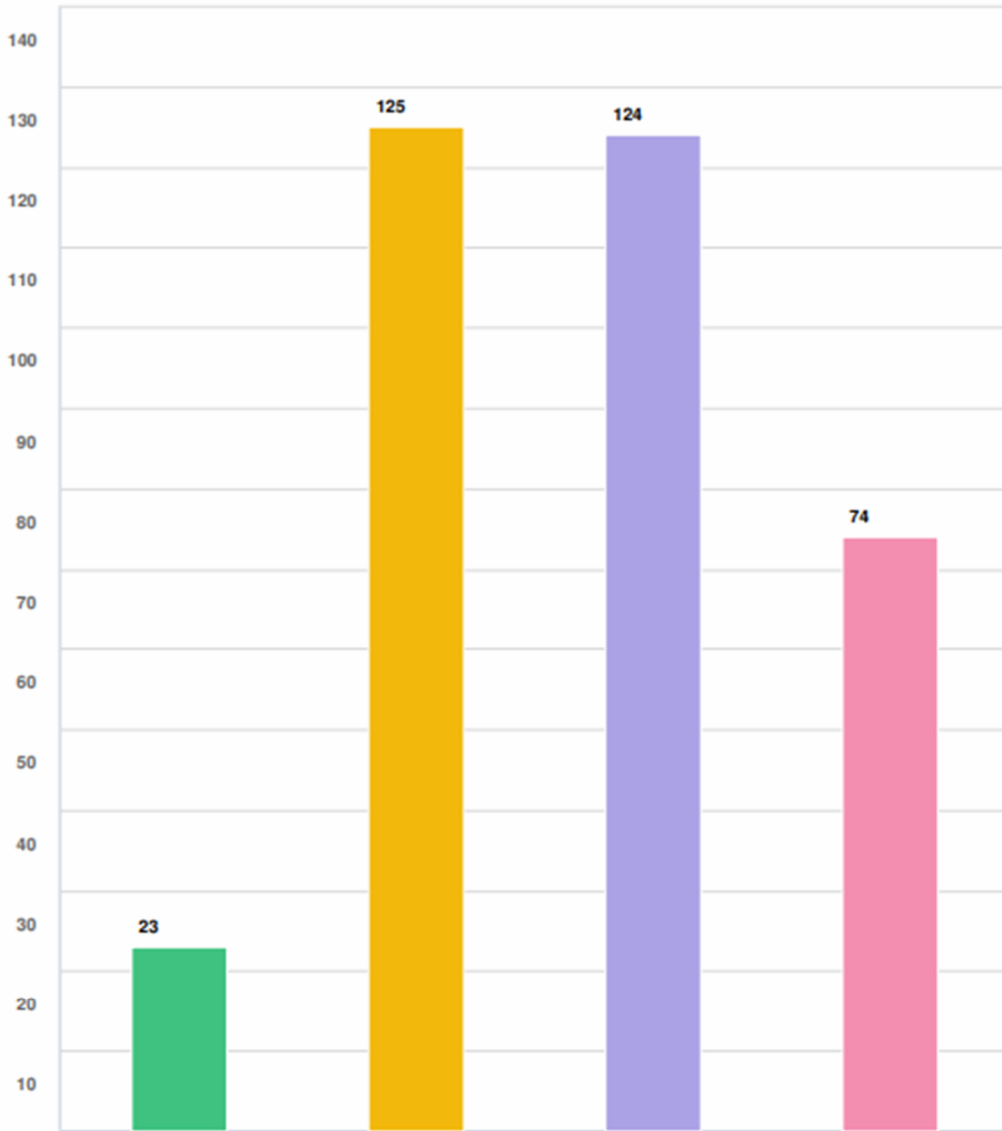
Question 6: Why not? What is missing (Follow up question to question #5)

Open ended answers	
Comment Topic	Number of times comment topic occurred
Agreement with project benefits	1
Does not agree with alignment path	2
Needs to include background information about studies leading up to the purpose and need	1
Needs clarification	1
Needs information about project cost	2
Needs to address sustainability goals/ environmental sustainability	2
Needs to address green space	2
No build	6
Not needed	3
Statement is hard to understand	1
Priority lies in another area	4
Project vision is too narrow	2
Project vision is too wide	1

Demographic Questions

Age

Q7 How old are you?



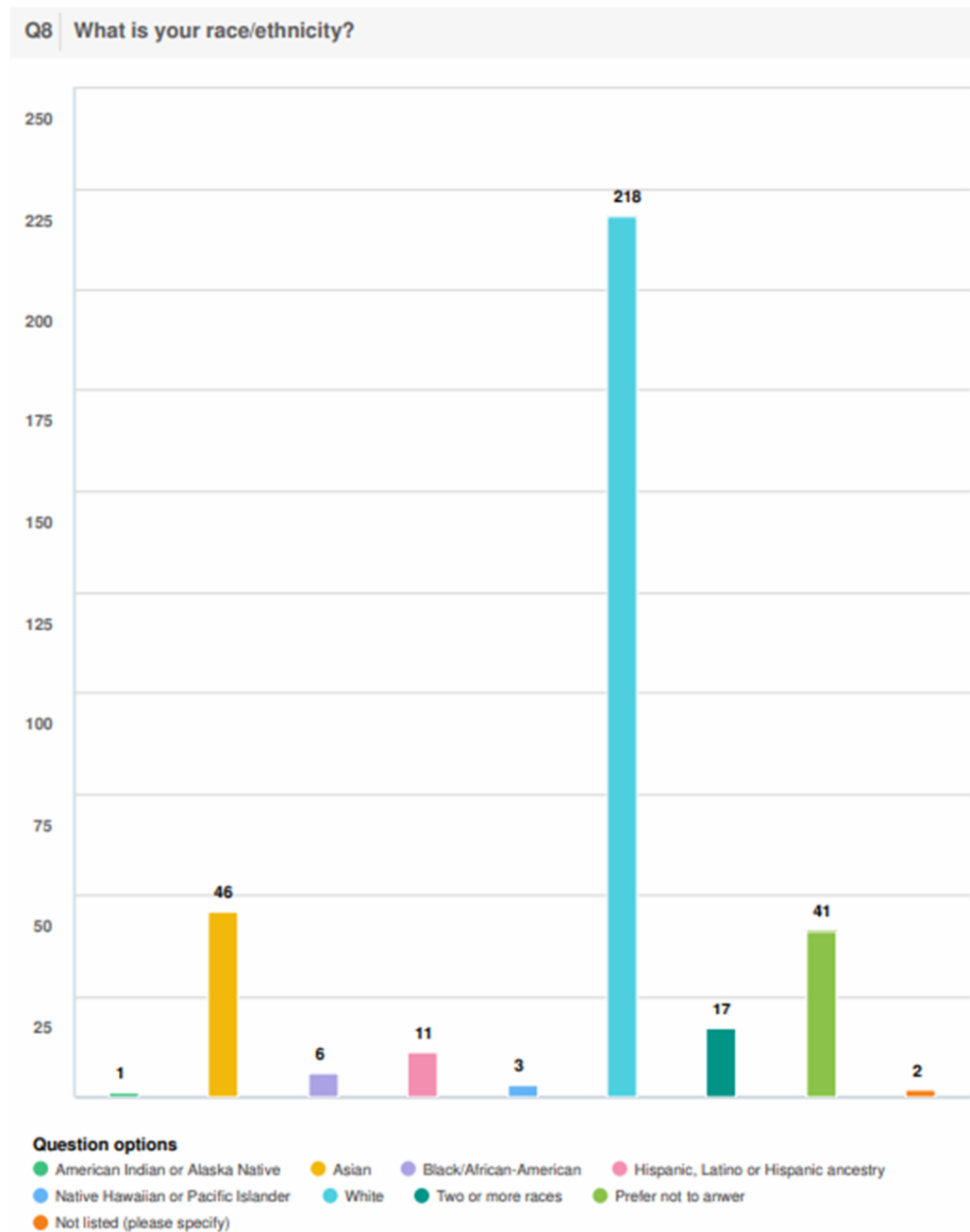
Question options

● Under 18 years old ● 18 to 44 years old ● 45 to 64 years old ● 65 years old or older

Optional question (346 response(s), 7 skipped)

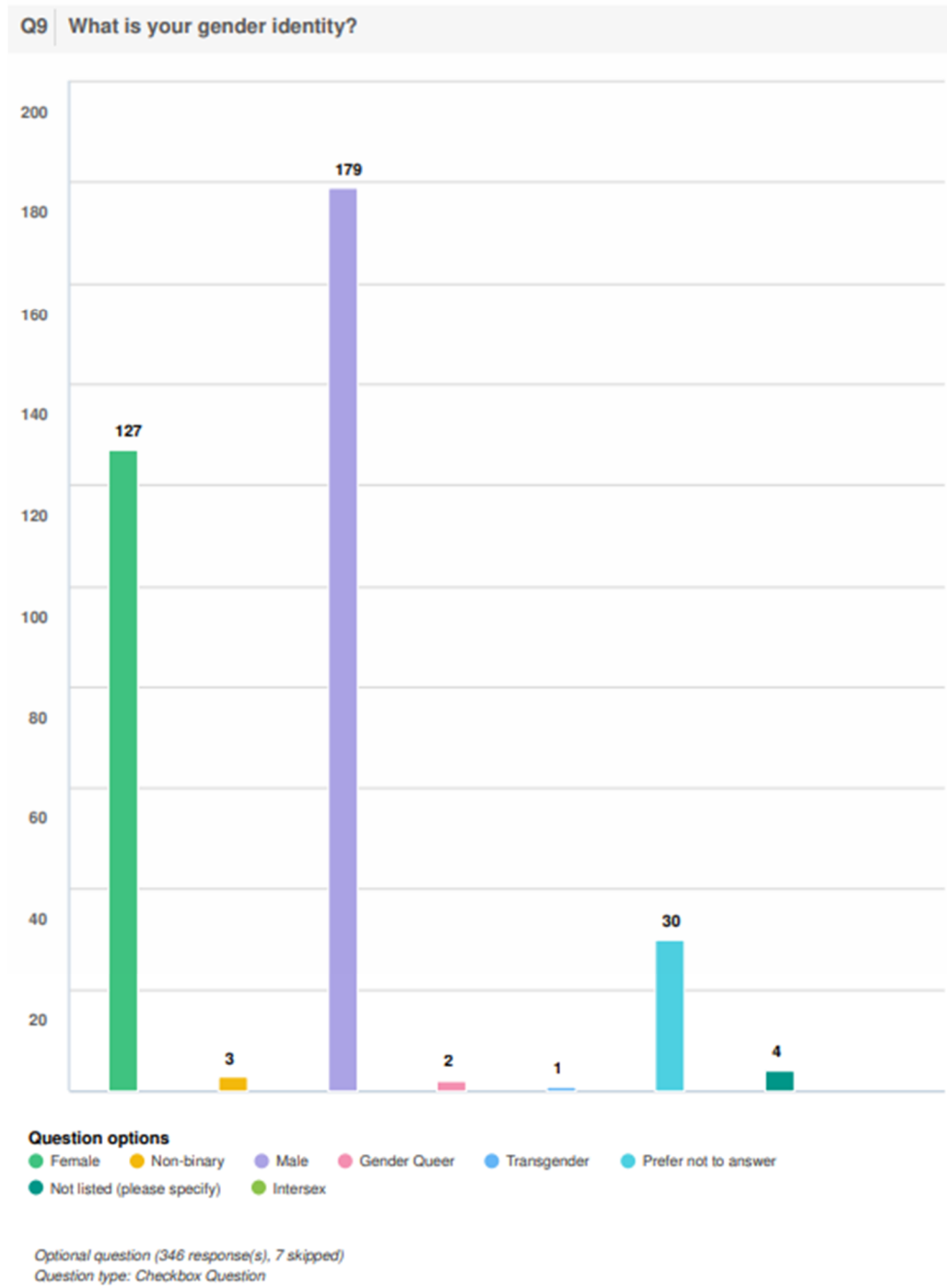
Question type: Checkbox Question

Race/Ethnicity



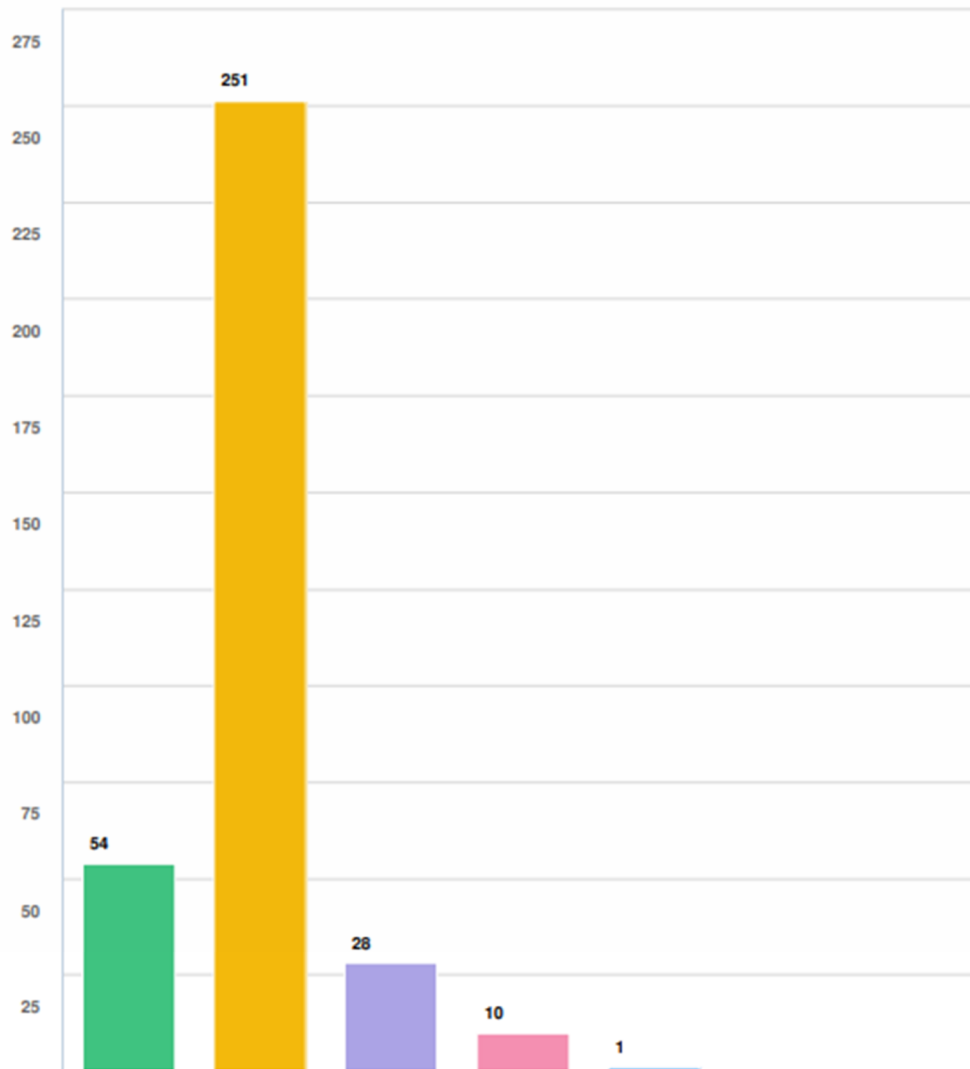
Optional question (345 response(s), 8 skipped)
Question type: Checkbox Question

Gender Identity



Residency

Q10 Do you rent or own your current residence?

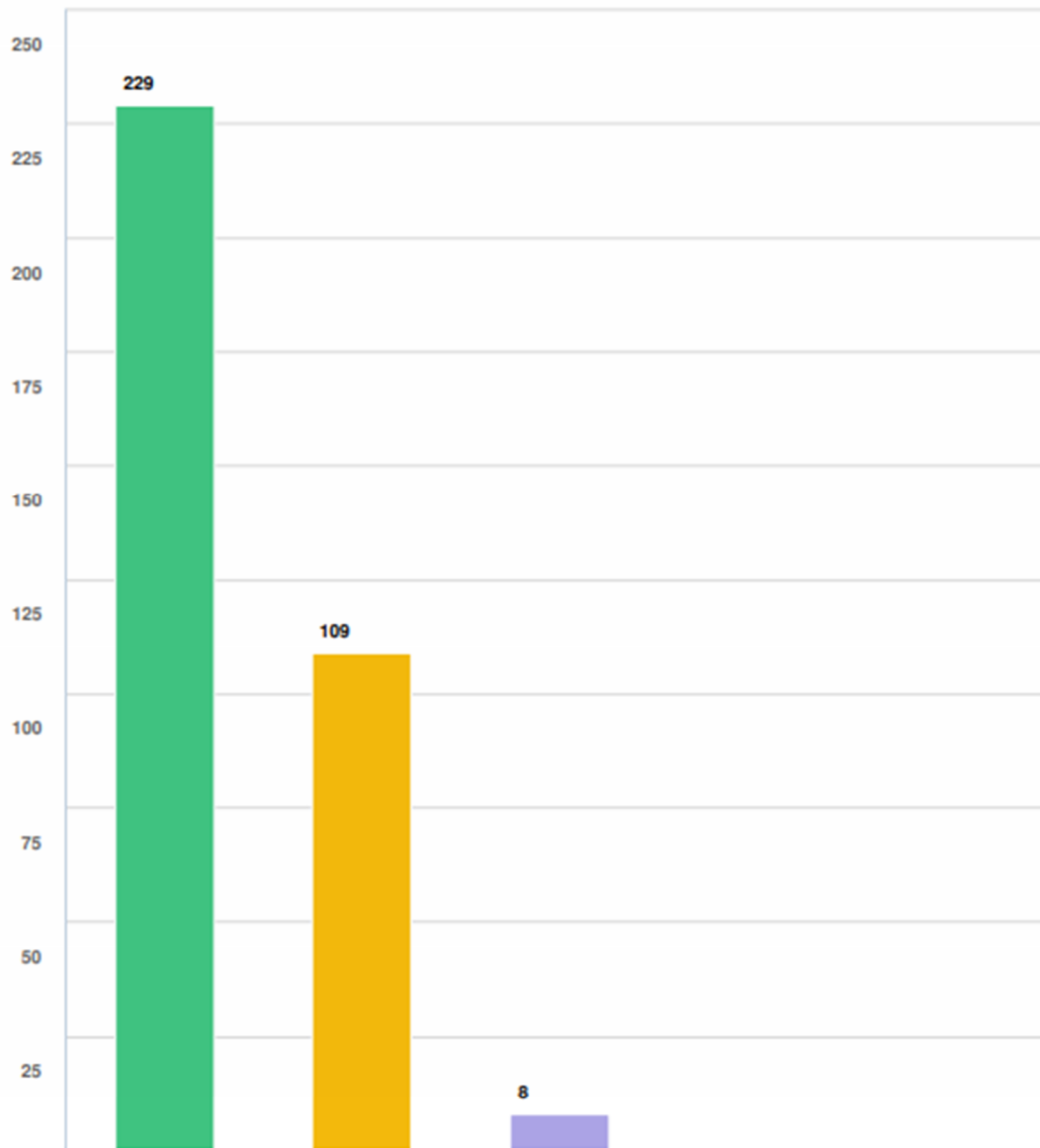


Question options

☒ Rent ☒ Own ☐ Living with parents/grandparents/guardians/family ☐ Prefer not to answer
☐ Not listed (please specify) ☐ Living with friends ☐ Currently without housing

Optional question (344 response(s), 9 skipped)
Question type: Checkbox Question

Q11 What type of home do you live in?



Question options

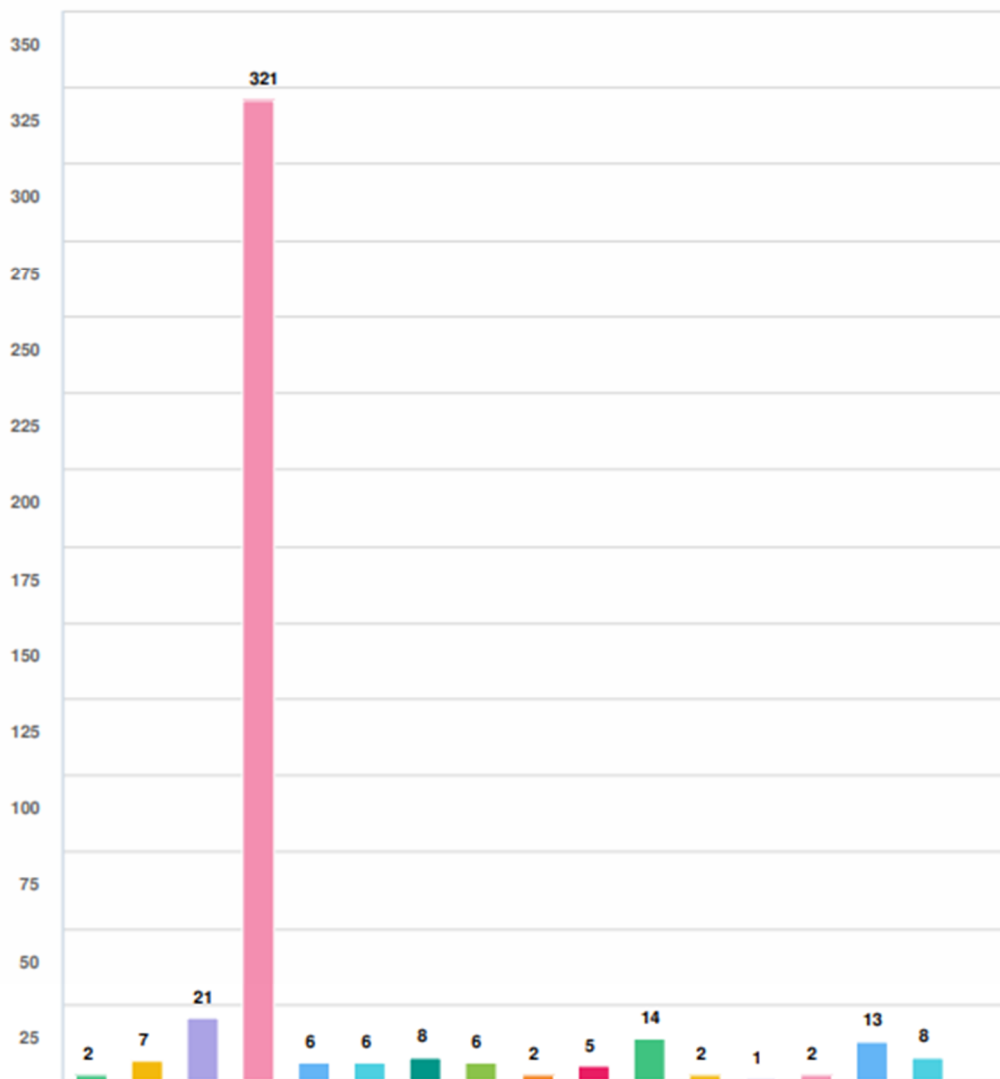
- Single family home
- Apartment, Condo, or Townhome
- Prefer not to answer
- Currently without housing
- Not listed (please specify)

Optional question (346 response(s), 7 skipped)

Question type: Checkbox Question

Language

Q12 What language(s) do you speak at home? (Check all that apply)



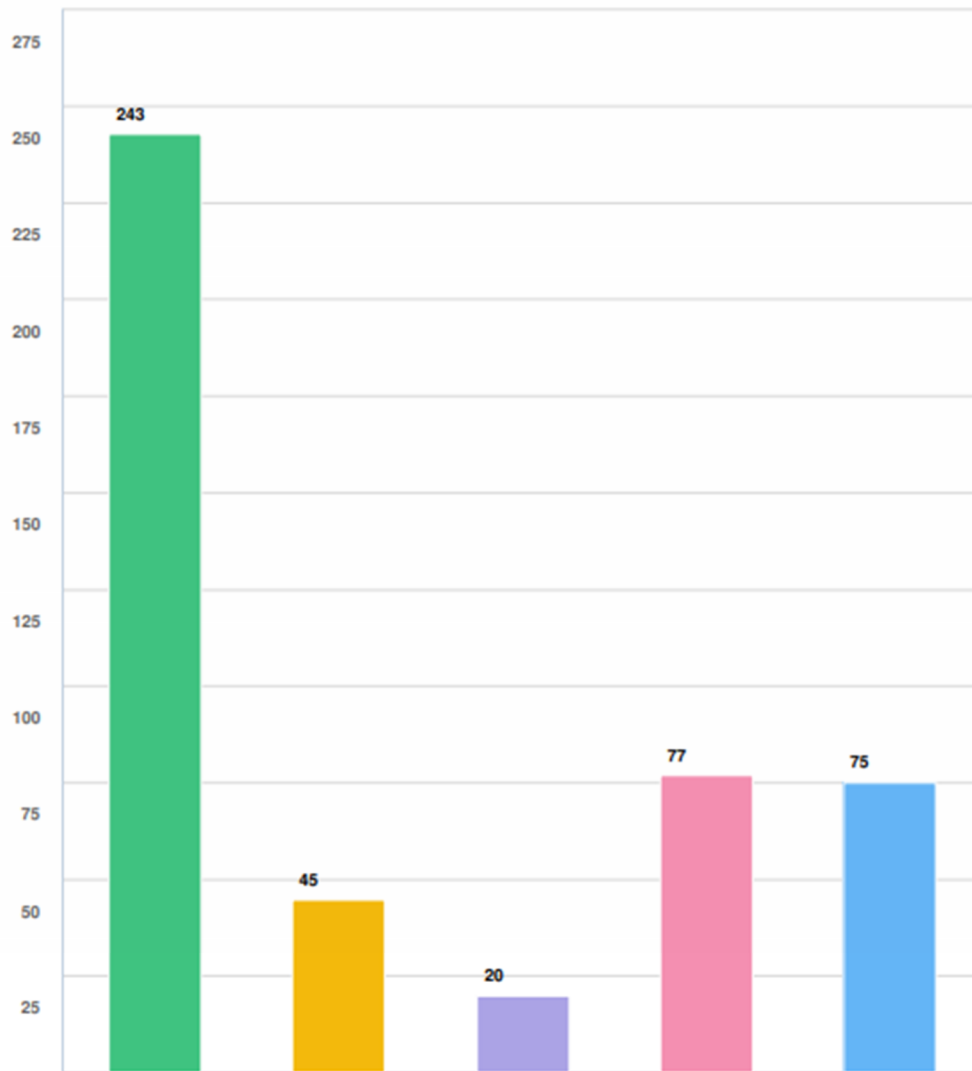
Question options

American Sign Language Chinese - Cantonese Chinese - Mandarin English French German
Hindi Japanese Korean Russian Spanish Telugu Urdu Vietnamese
Prefer not to answer Not listed (please specify) Tamil

Optional question (345 response(s), 8 skipped)

Question type: Checkbox Question

Q13 What is your main relationship with Bellevue? (Check all that apply)



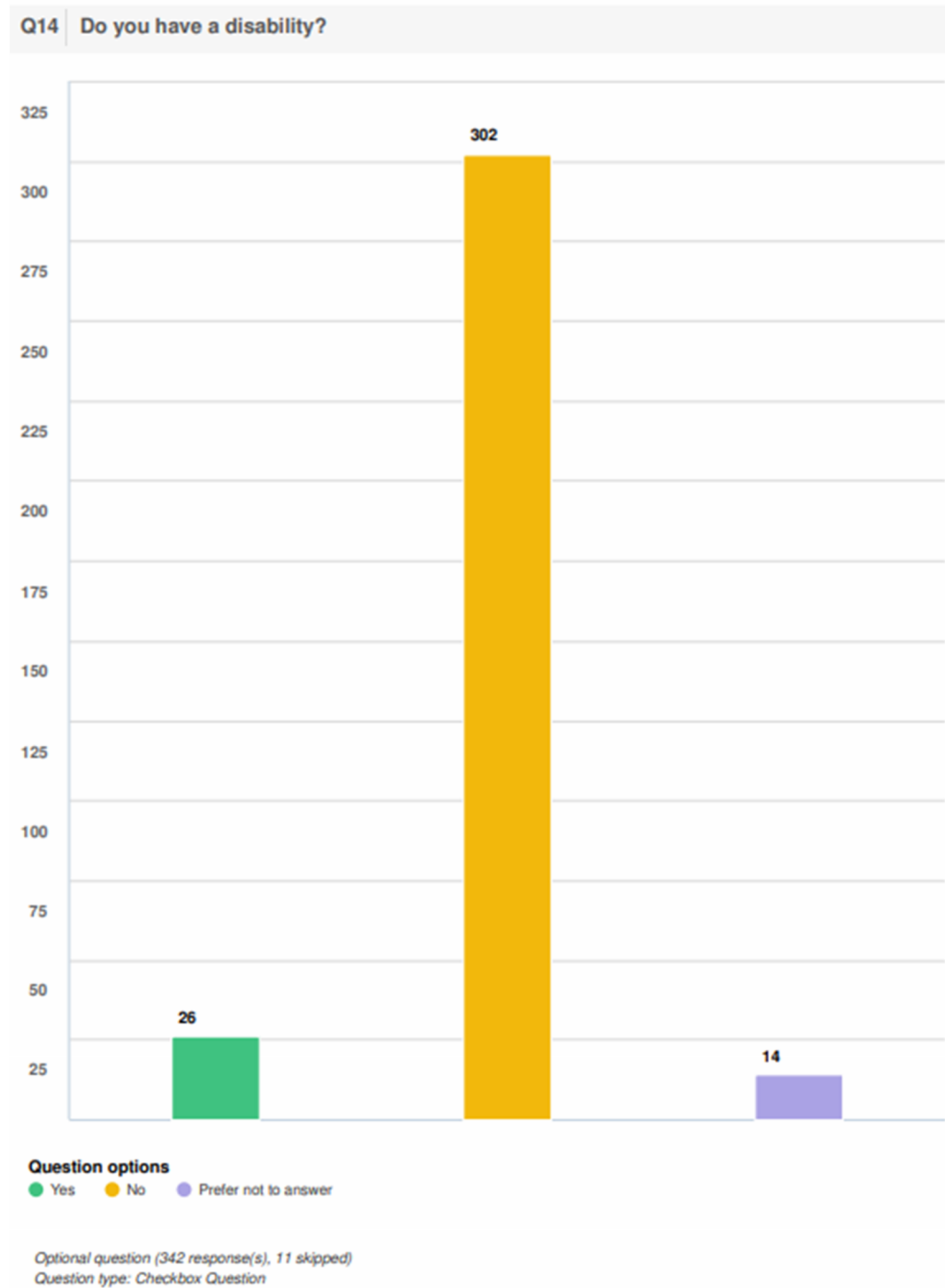
Question options

- ☒ I live in Bellevue
- ☒ I own or operate a business in Bellevue
- ☒ I go to school in Bellevue
- ☒ I work in Bellevue, but live elsewhere
- ☒ I come to Bellevue, to shop, dine, have fun, but live elsewhere.

Optional question (350 response(s), 3 skipped)

Question type: Checkbox Question

Disability



Appendix B: Ideas Board – Community Contributions

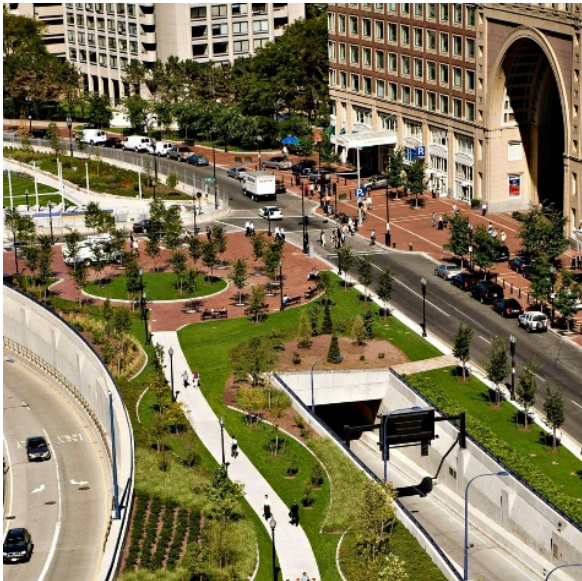
Comment	Image	Community Votes
This photo shows a pedestrian bridge in Seoul, South Korea with transparent walls on each side of the walkway. What I really like about this design is the tall transparent walls along each side of the walkway. I often walk across I-405 on NE 10TH Avenue and the noise from the freeway below is surprisingly loud and very unpleasant. I hope you will consider the idea of using some kind of transparent barrier for the portion over I-405 to mitigate the freeway noise.		3
Bridge Park Similar to 11th Street Bridge Park, Washington DC		1

Sound Conscious Design

This is a part of Cycle Highway Nijmegen - Beuningen South in the Netherlands. Not only is it separated from motor vehicle traffic, the infrastructure is designed in such a way through the use of berms, etc. that people who are walking and biking are not exposed to the sound of the highway and cars. This is critical because the loud sound levels that comes with being exposed to highways significantly worsens the user experience & makes it less accessible for the elderly, youth, etc. This sort of recessed design is much more conducive to lower volume levels than a bridge. This could be combined with a sort of recessed linear park like what has been done in Seoul like another commenter suggested. While a bridge is maybe easier to implement, with proper construction planning practices and design a tunnel could be equally quick, similarly priced, and result in a vastly better user experience.

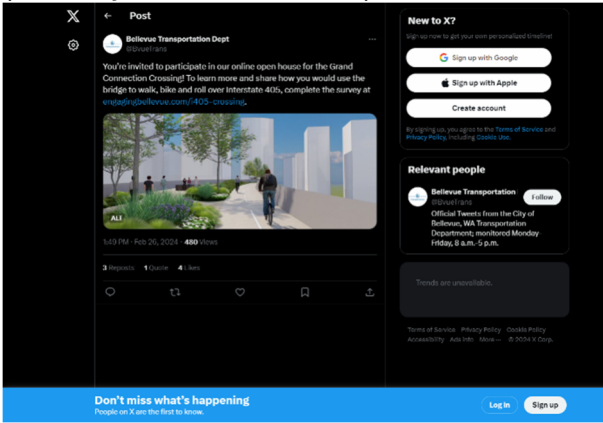
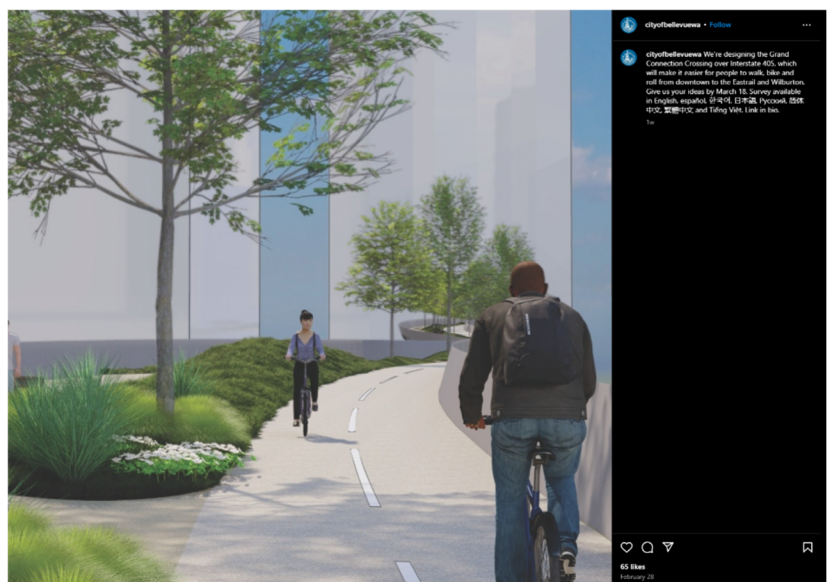


2

Bellevue: City in a Park I love the visible greenery in the photos of New York's High Line Park and Austin's Pfluger Pedestrian Bridge and the clear blue sky above Tacoma's Glass Bridge. Bellevue has long been known as a city in a park, and indeed, many residents were drawn here for the "beautiful view." As one crosses into downtown Bellevue, these views give way to skyscrapers and busy streets. By using natural elements such as wood and stone, this bridge could highlight, celebrate, and draw attention to the natural history and landscape of the area and create a sense of balance and harmony. Here is another view of the High Line. The wooden bridge and plants balance out the busy city setting.		1
Connection to Downtown Park / Minimization of car space I think if possible the route should be expanded to connect to the downtown park - and any other green spaces as applicable. I also think it's important to minimize driving space - for instance see Rose Kennedy Greenway in Boston where the design emphasis is clearly on pedestrian space.		0

Appendix C: Social Media Outreach

Posts

Social Media Post	
Bellevue Transportation Dept: X (formerly known as Twitter) 	City of Bellevue, Washington - Government; Facebook 
City of Bellevue, Washington - Government; Instagram 	

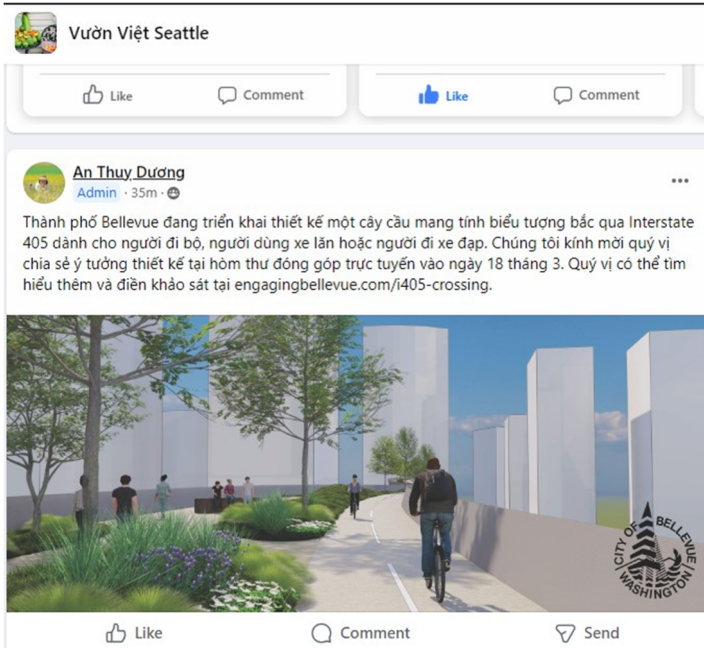
Free Clasificados WA Bellevue

(Spanish); (1.9k members)

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1237493122971207>

**Vietnamese in Seattle (66.4k**

members): <https://www.facebook.com/groups/vnseattle/>

**Vườn Việt Seattle (Vietnamese Garden in Seattle)**

Social Media Comments

Post Medium	Comment Topic	Number of times comment topic occurred
City of Bellevue Facebook Post 2/28/2024	Recycling construction materials from other regional transportation projects.	1
	Not relevant to project	5
	Prioritize other policy issues	3
	Kind of pointless IMO if there's no good bike or pedestrian connector over to Crossroads. And why does Bellevue fracture our city into pieces when asking what we want for non-SOV infrastructure?	
City of Bellevue Next-door Post 2/26/2024	ADA Language Translation inquiry	2
	Prioritize other policy issues	1