

TranPlan 21

2009 Stakeholder Survey



Statewide Public Involvement Survey

State of Montana
Department of Transportation

Bureau of Business & Economic Research
University of Montana-Missoula

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2009 Montana Department of Transportation's (MDT) stakeholder groups were:

- Generally satisfied with Montana's transportation system.
- Most satisfied with interstate highways and airports.
- Least satisfied with bus depots and intercity bus service.

Out of 17 possible actions to improve Montana's transportation system, stakeholders' highest priorities were:

- Maintaining pavement condition.
- Keep current with new transportation technologies.
- Improve transportation safety.

Stakeholders' lowest priority was reducing single-occupant vehicles.

When compared to stakeholder surveys since 1997:

- It appears that 2009 stakeholder groups are more satisfied with components of the transportation system than were stakeholders in previous studies.
- Overall satisfaction with the transportation system remains at a relatively high level.
- Customer grades of MDT performance also continue to improve since the first time they were measured in 2001.

Stakeholders' top priorities for possible actions to improve roadways are increasing shoulder and road widths.

Stakeholders' lowest roadway improvement priority is increasing roadway lighting.

Stakeholders rate the following public communication tools highest:

- Radio and television
- The MDT Web site
- Maps

Stakeholders rate the following general public communication tools lowest:

- Special mailings
- Surveys
- Brochures

Customer grades of MDT performance are in the B+ to C+ range. These grades closely parallel those given by the public.

INTRODUCTION

The primary purpose of this report is to document data collected through the 2009 Montana Department of Transportation Stakeholder Survey. It also references the 2009 Public Involvement Telephone Survey for comparisons between the general public and transportation stakeholders. In addition, the report provides a limited number of comparisons to the 1997, 1999, 2001, 2003, 2005, and 2007 Transportation Stakeholder surveys.

Stakeholder surveys are an important part of MDT's public involvement process. They illustrate transportation stakeholders' perception of the current condition of Montana's transportation system and consider possible actions and priorities that could be taken by MDT to improve different areas of the transportation system. The public involvement process provides citizens, constituency groups, transportation providers, local governments, Montana's American Indian tribes, and state and federal agencies the opportunity to participate in planning and project development. Public involvement at the future planning level reduces potential for future controversy, results in a better statewide transportation system, and allows for open communication between the Department and citizens of Montana. The surveys also help MDT staff determine changes in public opinion that indicate a need to update Montana's multimodal transportation plan, TranPlan 21.

The stakeholder groups included in the 2009 survey were:

- Mayors and chief executives of cities and towns;
- County commissioners;
- Economic development associations, business organizations, local development corporations and associations;
- Montana's American Indian Tribal Planners;
- Metropolitan Planning Organizations, urban area planners, and state and federal agencies;
- Commercial trucking, freight rail, air freight, and intermodal interests;
- Bicycle and pedestrian interests;
- Environmental organizations and associations;
- Passenger transportation interests include local transit, intercity bus, rail, and air.

Stakeholders were selected from MDT's mailing list database, which consists of over 600 individuals, organizations, associations, businesses, and government agencies with an interest in transportation-related issues, and local government officials.

Survey Methods

The stakeholder questionnaire has four parts. Part 1 includes a wide range of transportation questions that are the same questions asked of Montana residents in the 2009 Public Involvement Telephone Survey. Using the same questions allows for relevant comparisons between stakeholders and the public. Questions in Part 2 focus on possible improvements to Montana's road and highway system and on methods used by MDT to communicate with the public. Part 3 focuses on the Department's customer

service. Respondents grade MDT service areas using an A through F scale. Part 3 also includes items that examine transportation system security.

The survey was administered by the University of Montana’s Bureau of Business and Economic Research (BBER) using the telephone during the period 4/20/09 and 8/02/09. A total of 709 stakeholders were included in the list of respondents provided by MDT, but 50 were found to be verified out of business, no longer with the organization with no replacement, or repeated names on the list. This yields 659 eligible respondents. Of those 659 respondents, 417 (63.3%) completed the questionnaire. BBER documented case status in a manner that allowed calculation and reporting of a unit response rate using the American Association for Public Opinion Research (2008) standard definition (RR1).¹ A response rate is the number of completed interviews divided by number of eligible respondents surveyed.

BBER achieved improved response rates over 2003 in each of the iterations it has administered since taking over data collection from MDT in 2005. The 2003 iteration of this survey was administered by MDT using mail methods. Using mail in 2003, a 36% response rate was achieved. The 2005 response rate of 65.2% represented a 29.2 percentage-point increase over 2003. The initial 2007 response rate of 80.1% was a 14.9 percentage-point improvement over 2005. While the 2009 response rate declined to just under the 2005 rate, the 2009 Stakeholder Survey response rate is significantly higher than rates that are typically achieved in general population surveys. The greatly improved response rates achieved by BBER significantly decrease the likelihood that the data are adversely affected by nonresponse bias.

Eight American Indian tribal planners responded in 2009. Their aggregated responses are included in the body of this report.

Table 1 below shows the total number of responses received by stakeholder group.

Stakeholder Group	2003 Completions	2003 %	2005 Completions	2005 %	2007 Completions	2007 %	2009 Completions	2009 %
Mayors	52	22.3	109	27.0	105	19.0	83	20.0
County commissioners	25	10.7	52	12.9	55	10.0	43	10.3
Economic development	19	8.2	40	9.9	89	16.1	87	21.0
Tribal planners	7	3.0	4	1.0	8	1.4	8	1.4
State and federal	19	8.2	20	5.0	25	4.5	19	4.5
Intermodal	28	12.0	55	13.6	78	14.1	46	11.1
Non-motorized vehicle and pedestrian	20	8.6	50	12.4	58	10.5	36	8.7
Environmental	10	4.3	18	4.5	21	3.8	25	6.0
Passenger transportation	53	22.7	55	13.6	113	20.5	70	17.0
Total	233	100.0	403	100.0	552	100.0	417	100.0

Table 1

¹ American Association for Public Opinion Research. 2008. *Standard Definitions: Final Dispositions of Case Codes and Outcome Rates for Surveys*. 4th edition. Lexana, Kansas: AAPOR.

OVERVIEW OF ALL STAKEHOLDERS

Stakeholders' Satisfaction with the Transportation System

Respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with various aspects of the transportation system on a scale from one to ten. Though the mathematical midpoint of the scale is 5.5, a response of 5.0 is considered a “middle response.” Answers above a 5.0 represent a higher level of satisfaction, while answers below 5.0 represent a lower level of satisfaction. Stakeholder satisfaction is presented in two forms. When comparisons with the 2009 Public Involvement Telephone survey are made, the statistic presented is the mean of all 2009 stakeholder responses. This statistic was chosen because it most closely matches the statistics that describe the Public Involvement Survey data. When comparisons with past Stakeholder surveys are made, the statistic presented is a mean of the nine stakeholder group means. This second statistic is chosen to maintain comparability with the four previous iterations of the Stakeholder Survey. In the figures that follow, 95% confidence interval bars are included on the 2009 Public Involvement Telephone Survey point estimates. No confidence interval is calculated for the Stakeholder Survey. If the Stakeholder Survey point falls outside the Public Involvement Survey confidence interval bar, it can be said with 95% confidence that the Stakeholder Survey value differs from the Public Involvement Survey value.

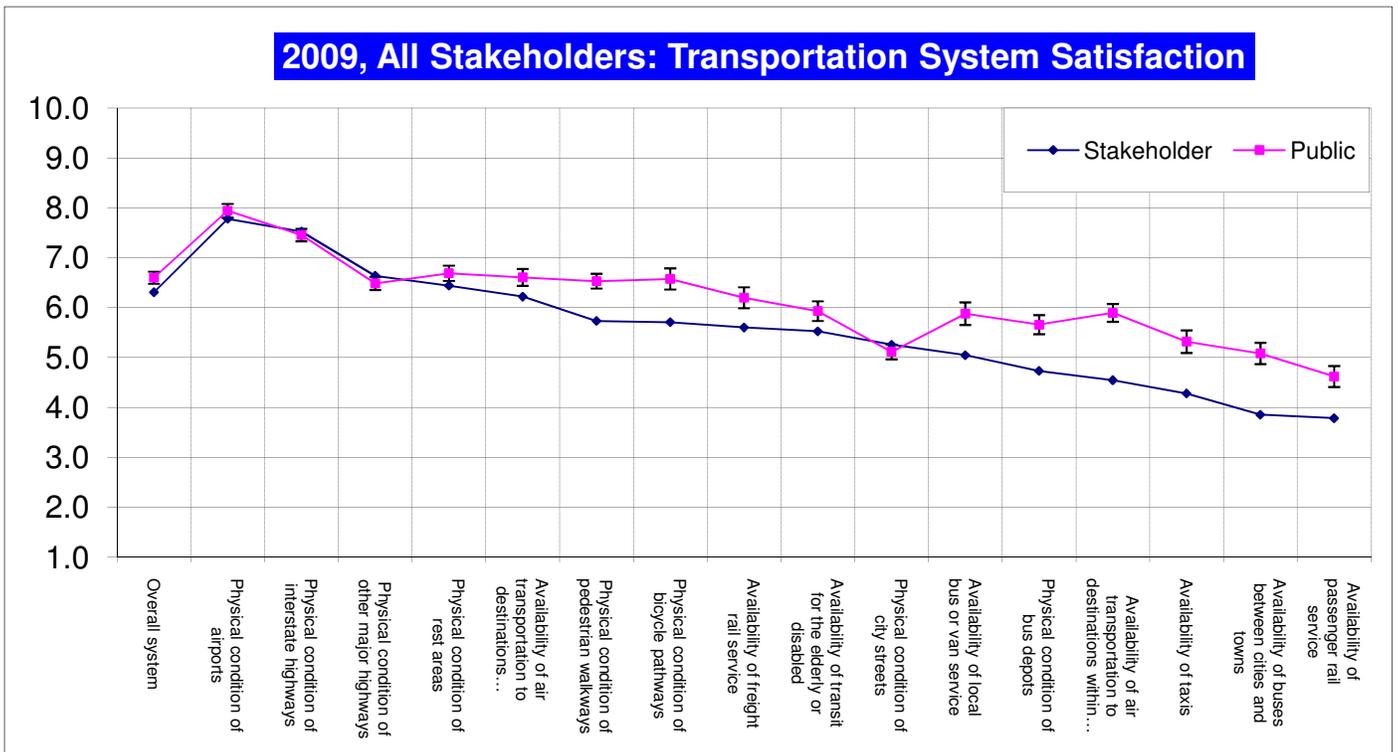


Figure 1: 10 = High Satisfaction

Stakeholders' moderate level of satisfaction with Montana's transportation system overall did not differ significantly from that of the public in 2009. However, when considering 16 other aspects of the transportation system individually, stakeholders were somewhat less satisfied than were other members of the public (see Figure 1). Stakeholders were less satisfied than the public in 11 of the system components, while in no category were they more satisfied than the general public. The level of stakeholder satisfaction could not be distinguished from that of the public for five of the system components.

The largest difference in satisfaction between the two groups came when the availability of air transportation to destinations within Montana, the availability of taxis, and the availability of buses between cities were examined. On average, the general public was satisfied with or held neutral feelings about these three components while the stakeholders were dissatisfied.

Stakeholders were most satisfied with interstate highways and airports. They were most dissatisfied with the availability of passenger rail service and intercity buses.

The 2009 stakeholder responses follow a pattern that has been found since 1997 (see Figure 2). On first glance, it appears that 2009 stakeholders are, as a group, more satisfied with components of the transportation system than were stakeholders in 1997, 1999, and 2001. In addition, stakeholders' satisfaction with the physical condition of rest areas, pedestrian walkways, bicycle pathways, and bus depots has steadily increased since 1997. Stakeholder satisfaction with the availability of passenger rail service has steadily declined since 1997.

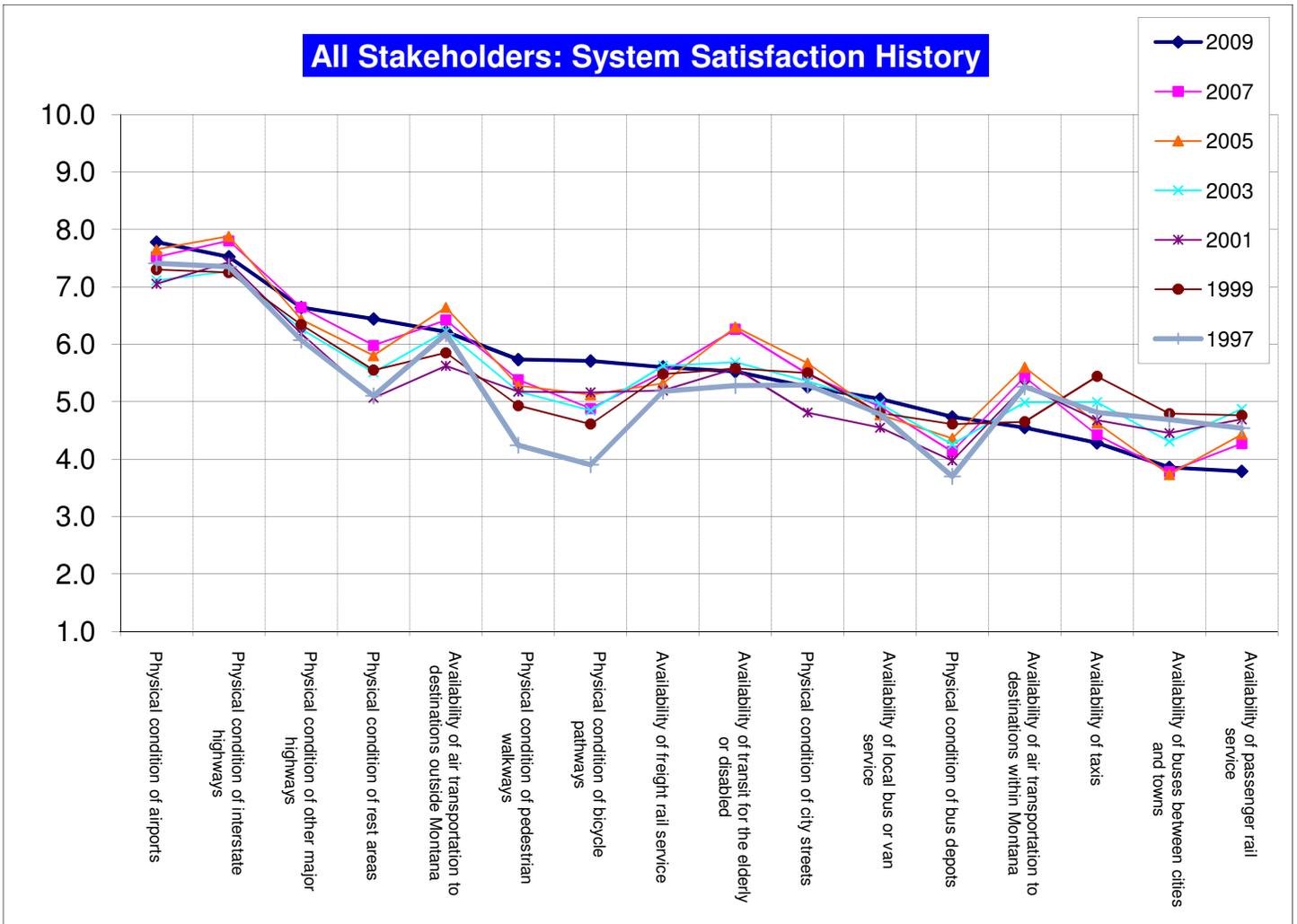


Figure 2: 10 = High Satisfaction

Examination of stakeholder satisfaction with the transportation system overall by group reveals an overall system satisfaction rating at or near the highest yet measured among five of the ten groups shown (see Figure 3).

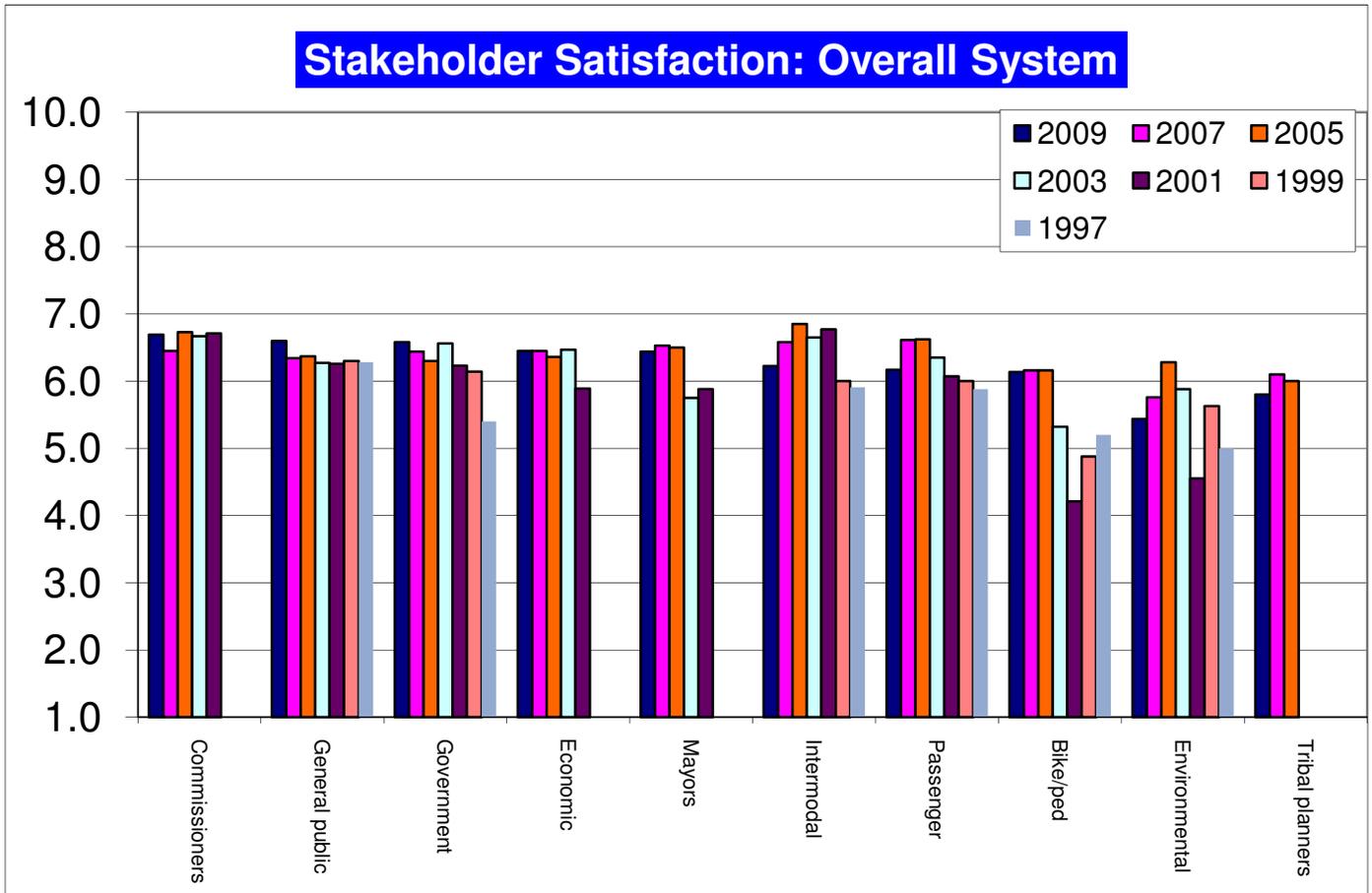


Figure 3: 10 = High Satisfaction

Overall system satisfaction is declining among three stakeholder groups: intermodal, passenger, and environmental.

Prioritizing Actions to Improve the Transportation System

Stakeholders were asked to prioritize 17 possible actions to improve the transportation system in Montana. The actions were rated on a scale of 1 to 5 where:

- 1 = Very low priority
- 2 = Somewhat low priority
- 3 = Medium priority
- 4 = Somewhat high priority
- 5 = Very high priority

Stakeholder priorities for the 17 items (see Figure 4) ranged from almost “somewhat high” to just below “medium.” Stakeholders’ highest priority was supporting efforts to preserve existing passenger rail service. Stakeholders’ lowest priority for action was reducing single-occupant vehicles.

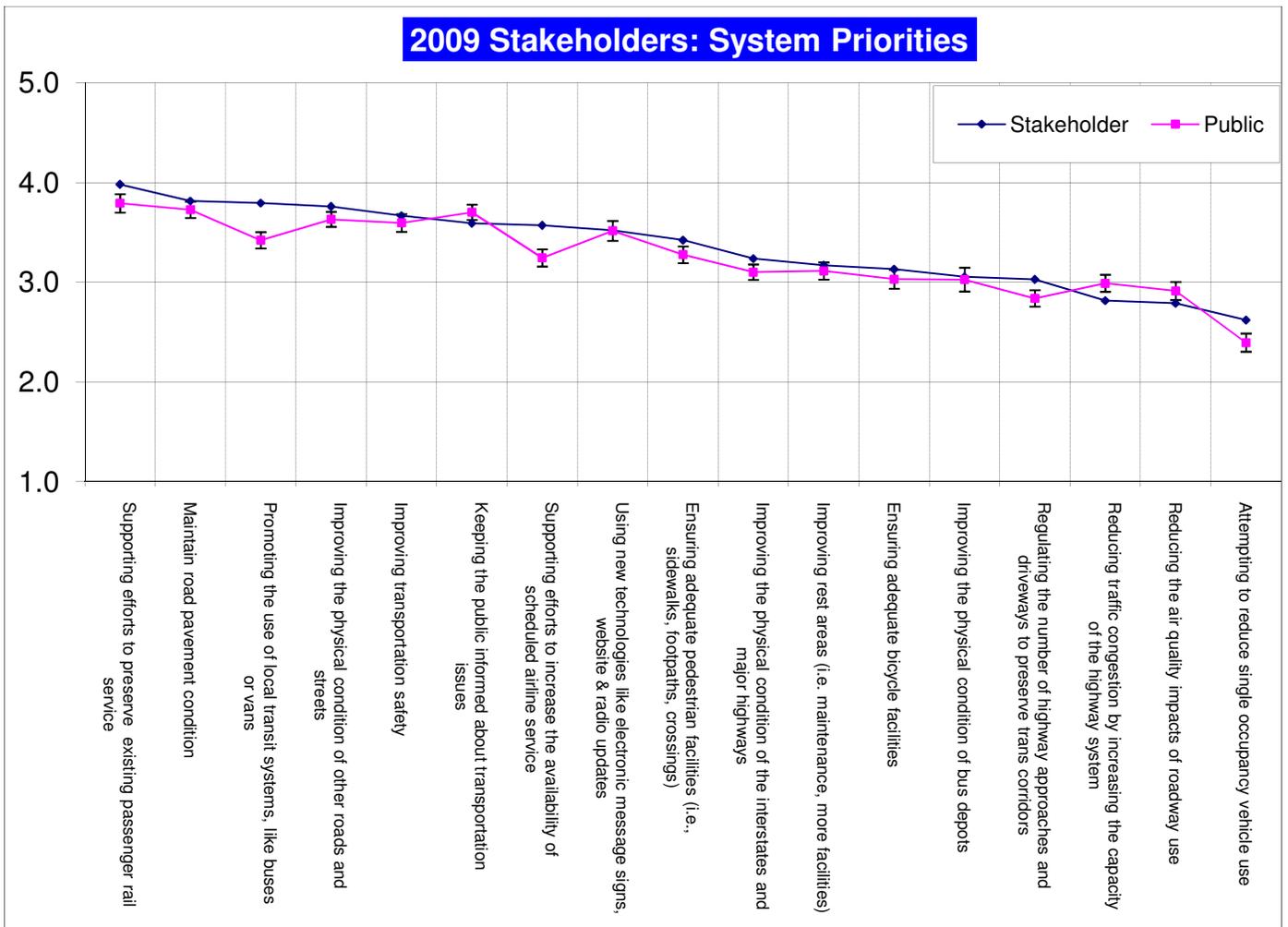


Figure 4: 5 = Very High

Stakeholders rated six possible actions as higher priorities than did the public, and they rated one possible action as a lower priority than the public. The remaining items were not rated as significantly higher or lower priorities by stakeholders when compared to the public.

Stakeholders' priorities for possible actions to improve the transportation system were lower in 2009 when compared with 2003 - 2007 (see Figure 5). Stakeholder priority scores for the previous surveys used a different scale and are thus not reported here. The largest decrease in priority in 2009 occurred for reducing the air quality impacts of roadway use.

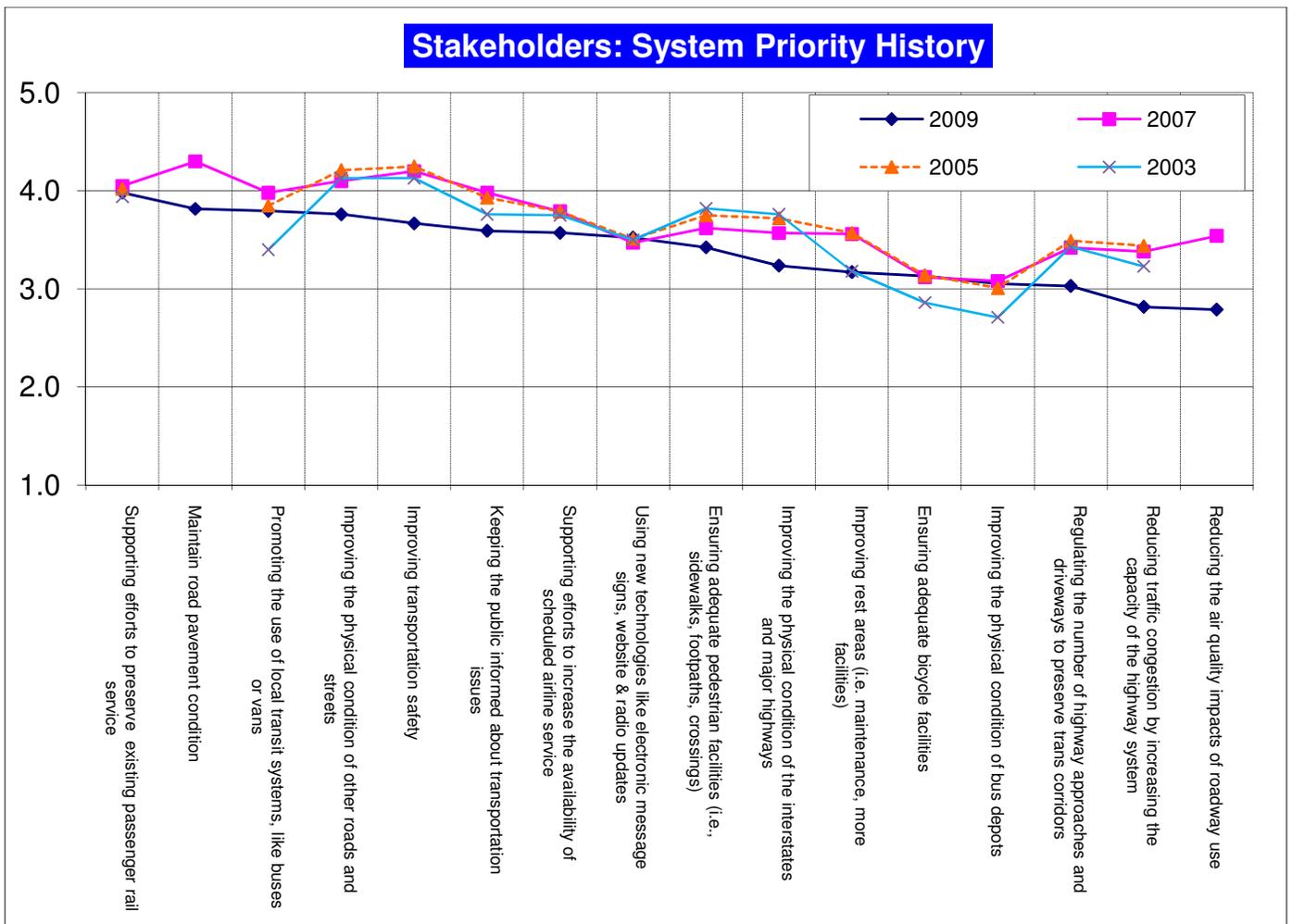


Figure 5: 5 = Very High

Actions to Improve Roadways

In addition to asking about a broad range of possible actions to improve the transportation system, the 2009 stakeholder questionnaire asked eight questions that focused on possible actions to improve Montana’s roadways. Each possible roadway improvement was prioritized by respondents using the same very low to very high priority scale.

Every priority was ranked between “somewhat high” and “medium.” The highest priorities for roadway improvement were: a) widen road shoulders for motorists, b) widen road shoulders for bicycles, and c) widen roadways in general. The lowest priority was adding more lighting for roadways.

The 2009 stakeholder priority scores for two of the eight possible roadway improvements studied were not measurably different from those of the general public (see Figure 6). Only three of the eight scores could be said to differ statistically from those found in the Public Involvement Survey.

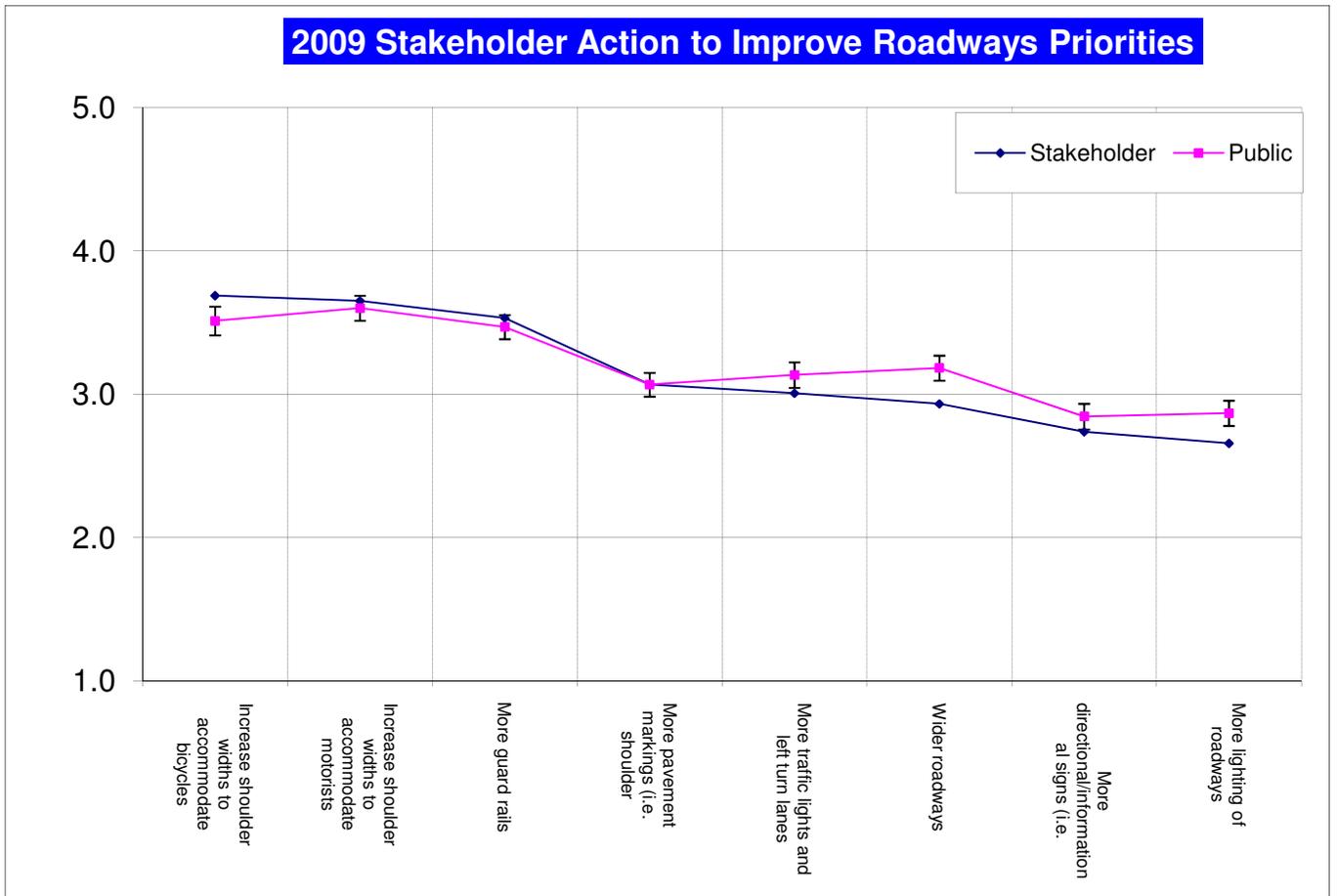


Figure 6: 5 = Very High

The priority of roadway improvements among all stakeholders dropped in 2009 compared to previous years (see Figure 7). Only one item increased in priority in 2009, adding more guard rails. The drop in priority among stakeholders is consistent with the overall increase in satisfaction with system components discussed earlier in this report.

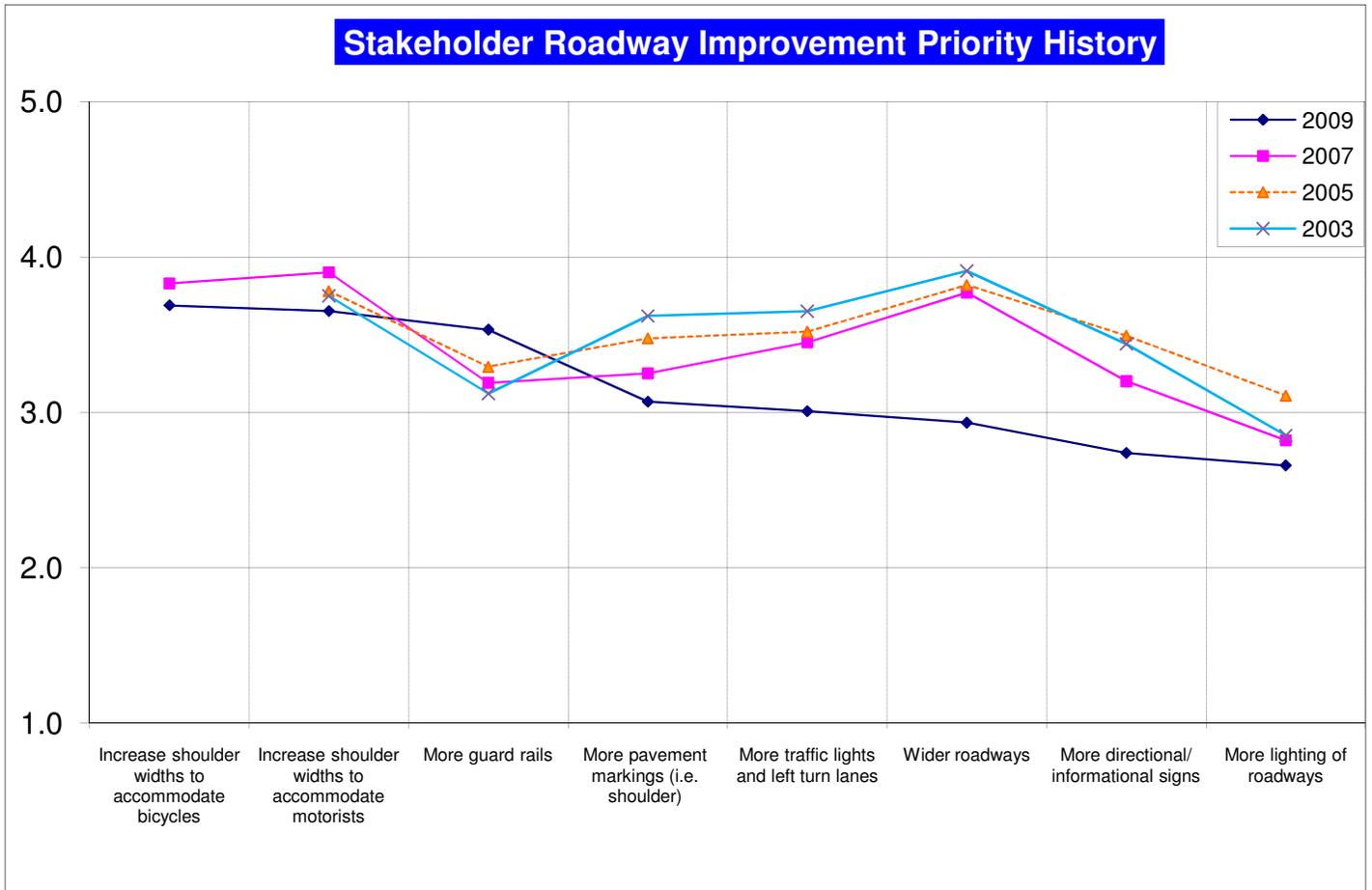


Figure 7: 5 = Very High

General Communication Tool Ratings

Keeping the public informed about transportation issues is a high priority to many Montanans. In order to efficiently distribute information, respondents were asked to rate some of the tools MDT uses in its public information sharing efforts (see Figure 8).

The 2009 stakeholders rated five tools between somewhat useful and very useful: the Web site, electronic media, public meetings, a toll-free call in number, and newspapers. Stakeholders rated special mailings and surveys as slightly less than somewhat useful.

Stakeholders rated the MDT Web site and public meetings higher than the public. The public finds television and radio more useful than do stakeholders.

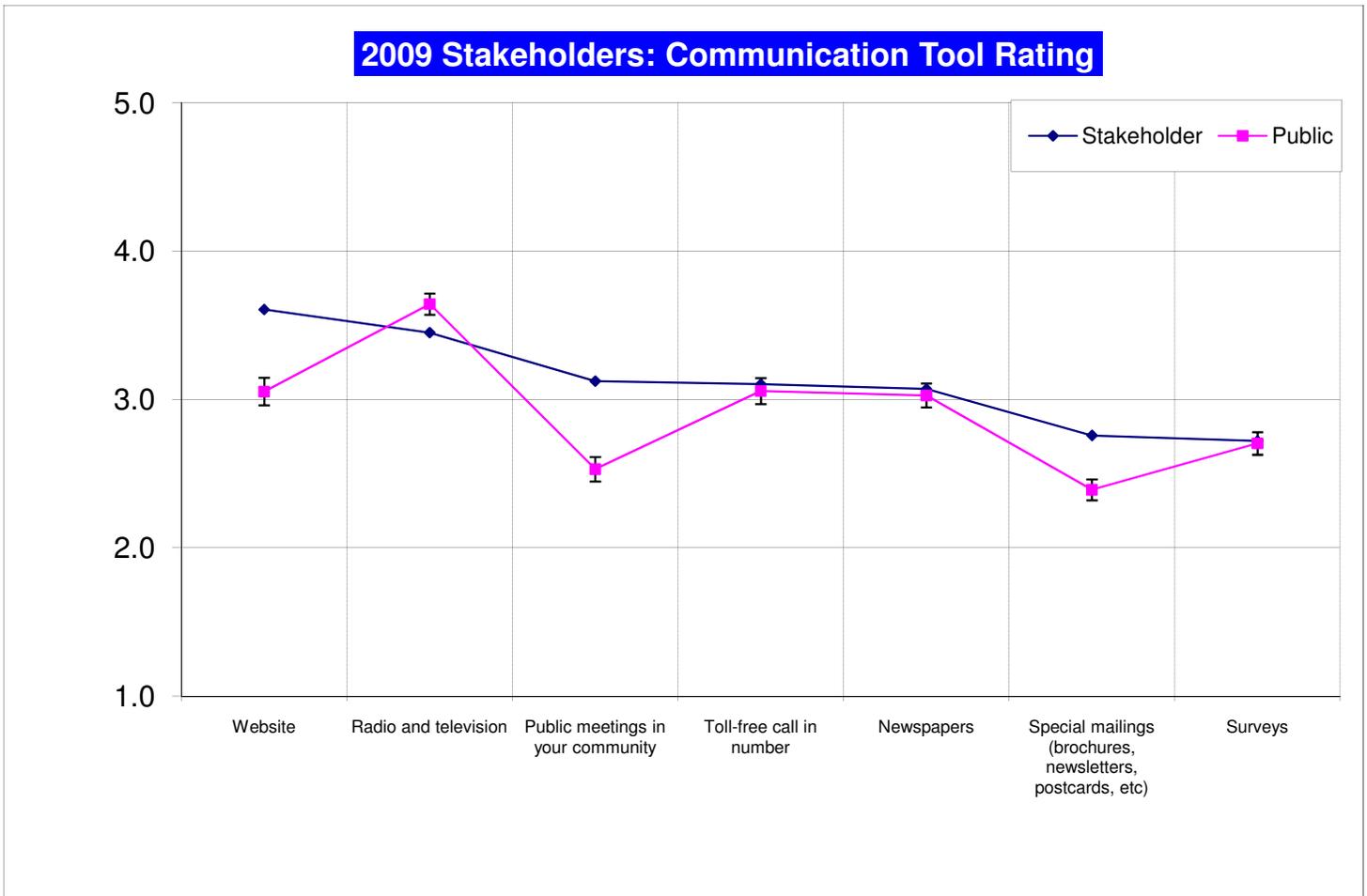


Figure 8: 5 = Extremely Useful

Planning and Project Communication Tool Ratings

MDT also asked stakeholders to rate planning and project-specific communication tools (see Figure 9). Stakeholders rated four of six tools studied between very useful and somewhat useful. Stakeholders gave their highest ratings to maps and pictures, graphics, and the Web site.

The public rated all of the items studied lower than did stakeholders, though the public also finds maps and pictures or graphics most useful.

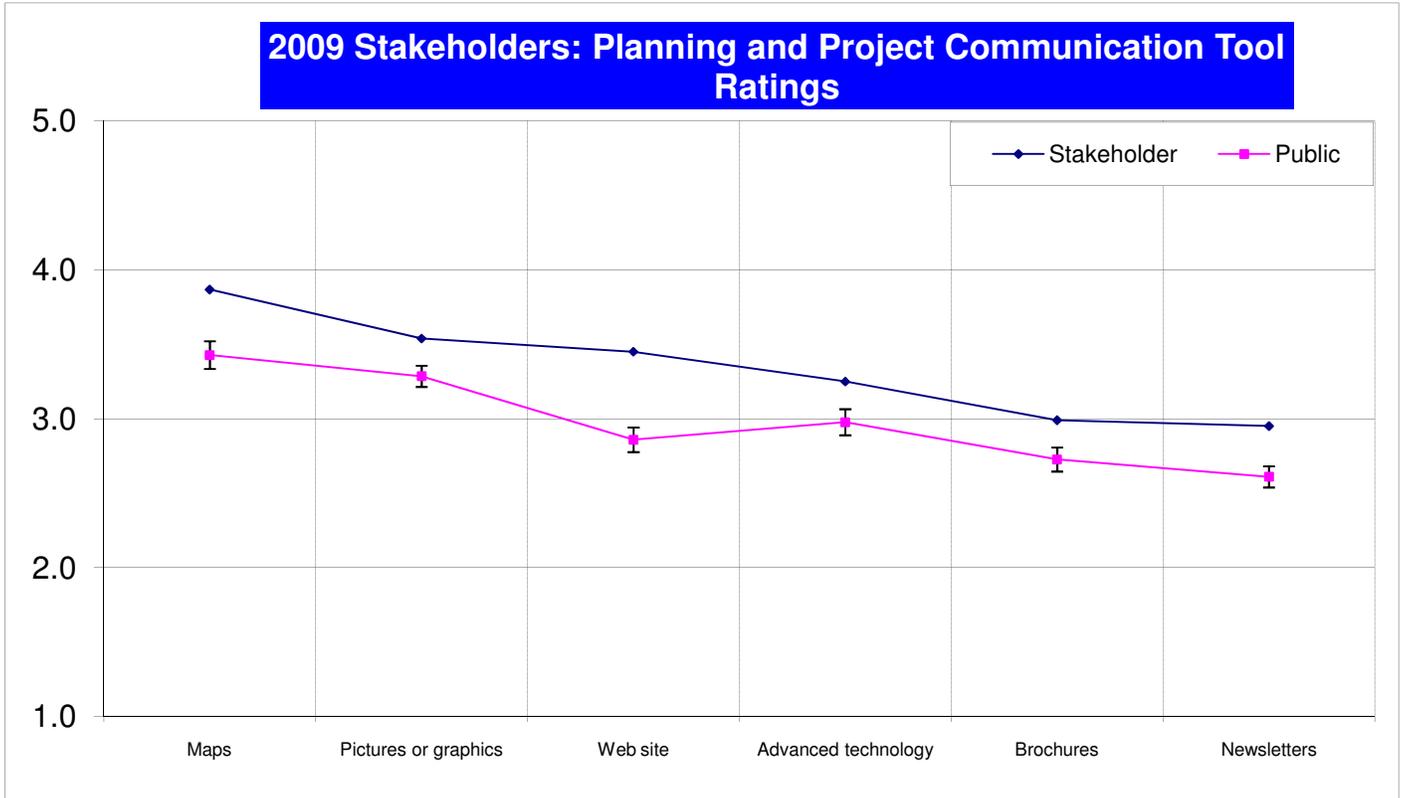


Figure 9: 5 = Extremely Useful

MDT's Customer Service and Performance Grades

Respondents were asked to grade MDT in several areas of overall performance and customer service. Each aspect was graded using an A through F scale where A = 4 and F = 0.

Stakeholders gave MDT grades that fell in a very tight range; all fell between B and C+. Stakeholders graded MDT's quality of service when compared to five years ago highest, though this was followed very closely by several other items (see Figure 10). The 2009 stakeholders graded MDT's responsiveness to ideas and concerns lowest.

Stakeholders' grades for MDT paralleled those given by the public very closely. There is no practical or statistical difference between the stakeholders' grades and the public's'.

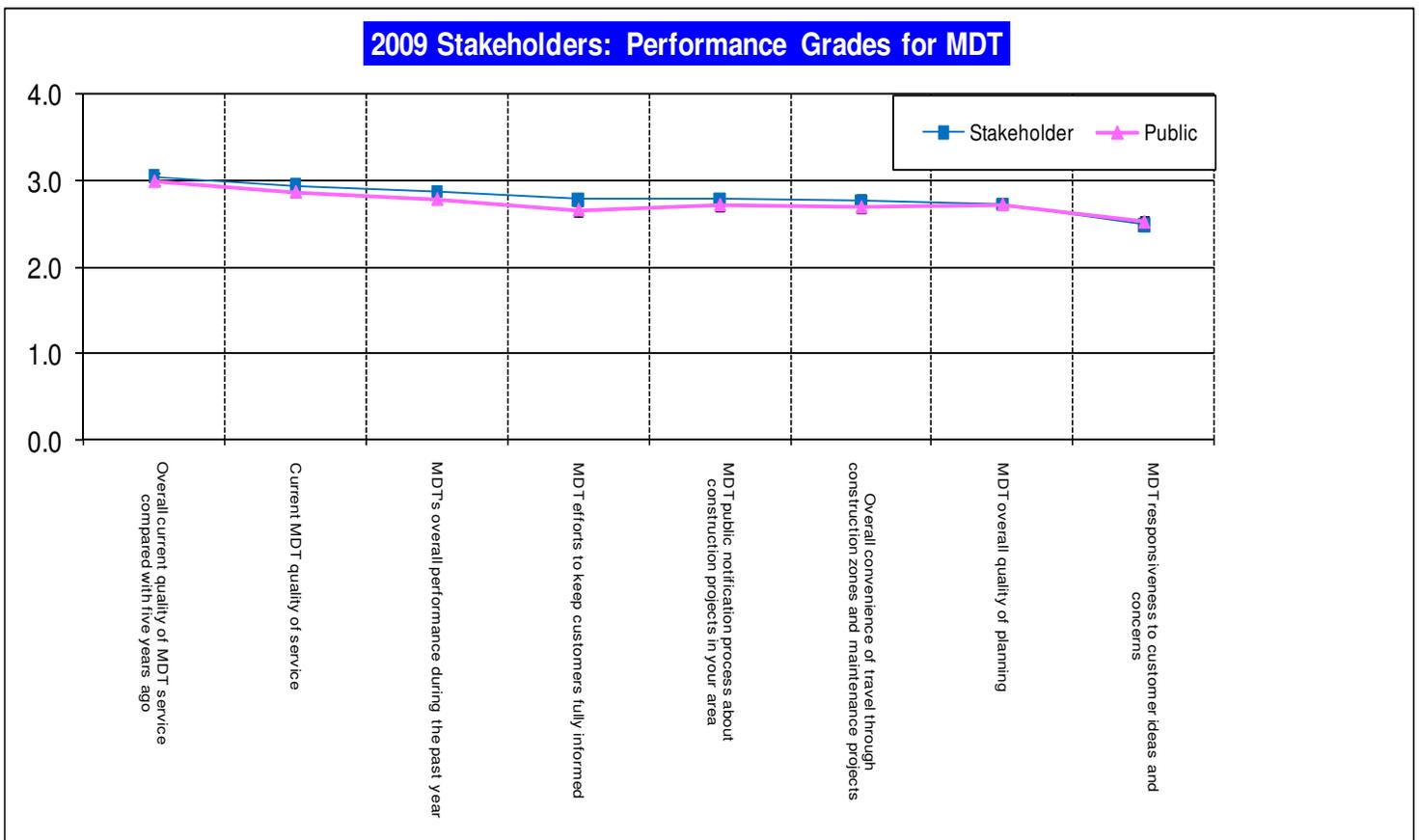


Figure 10: 4 = A

Grades continued the overall trend of improvement since stakeholders were first asked to grade MDT performance and customer service in 2001 (see Figure 11). The 2009 grades are better than those found in 2001, 2003, and 2007.

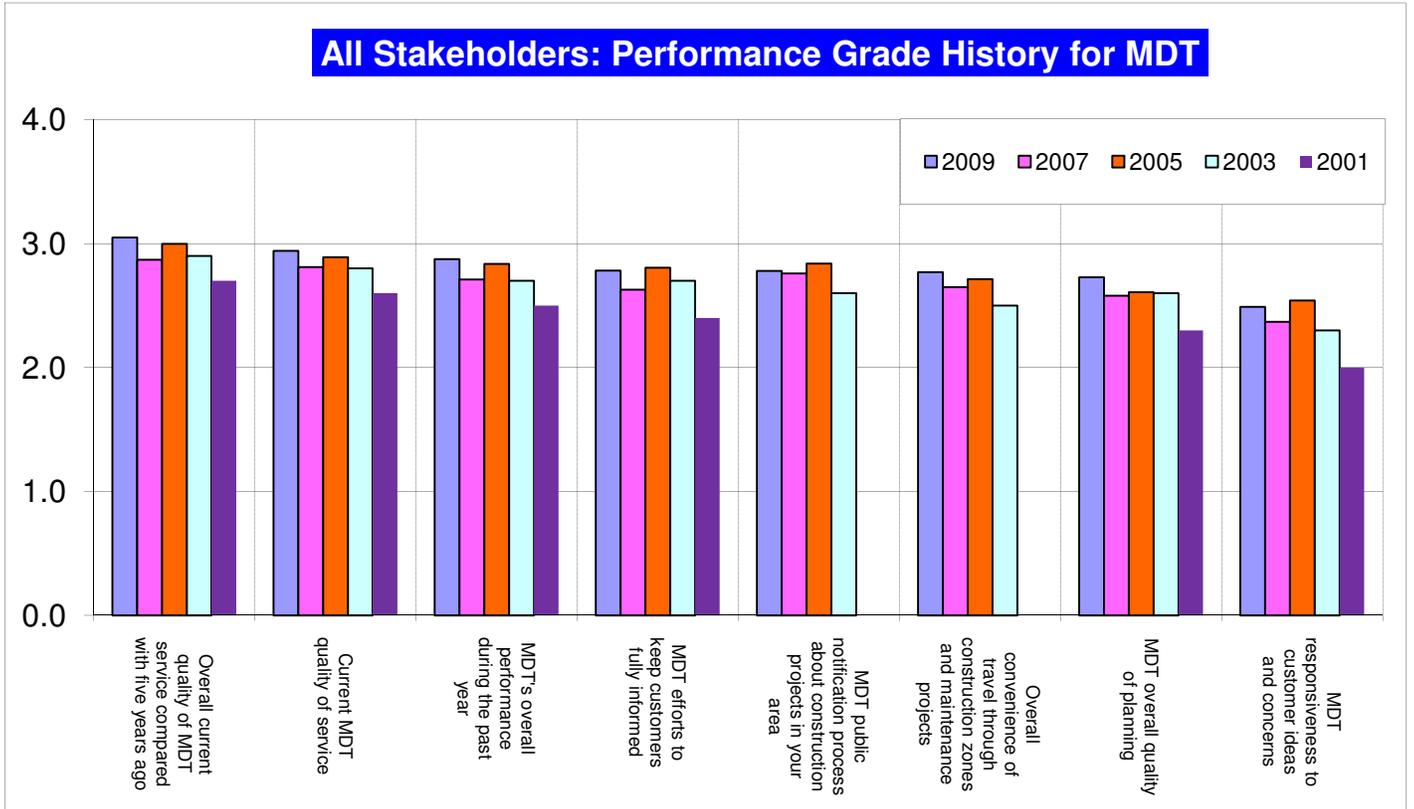


Figure 11: 4 = A

Security for System Components

Respondents were asked to rate the security importance of various transportation system components. Each component was rated on a scale from 1 – 5 where 1 is not at all important and 5 is extremely important.

Stakeholders gave importance ratings that fell between extremely important and somewhat important. Stakeholders rated coordinating with other agencies, emergency response plans, border crossings, and airports most important. The 2009 stakeholders rated availability of alternate routes and public facilities, like bus terminals, lowest in importance.

Stakeholders' ratings for importance paralleled those given by the public very closely. There is little practical meaning in the small statistical differences between the stakeholders' ratings and the public's'.

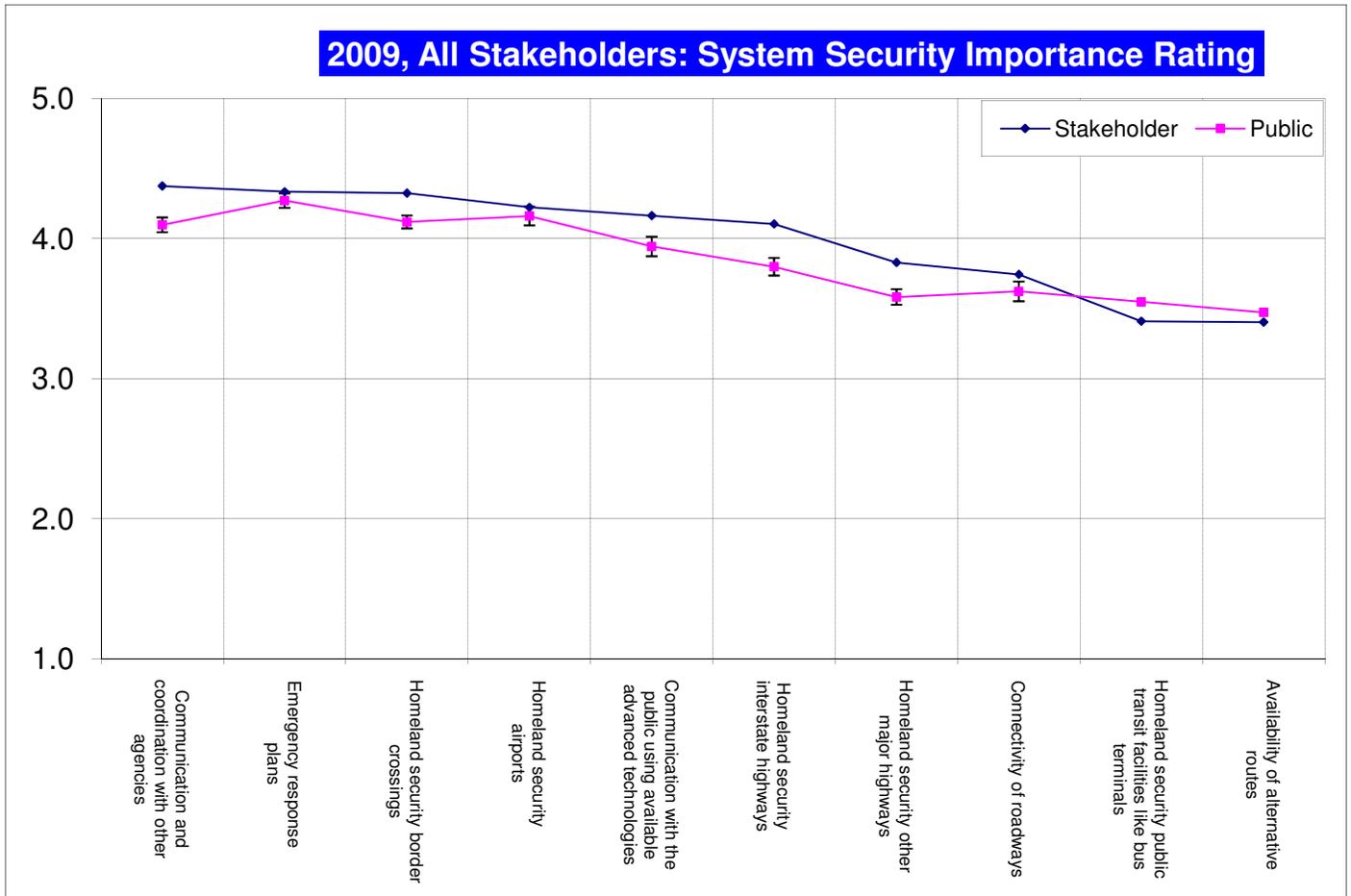


Figure 12: 5 = Extremely Important

BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN STAKEHOLDER GROUP

This group is represented by various bicycle and pedestrian interests from across Montana. Stakeholders include representatives from:

- Bicycling clubs
- Community development groups
- Bicycle/pedestrian advisory boards
- County planning offices
- Cops on bikes
- City park and recreation organizations.

In 2009, 36 representatives of bicycle and pedestrian groups completed interviews in 2009.

Transportation System Satisfaction

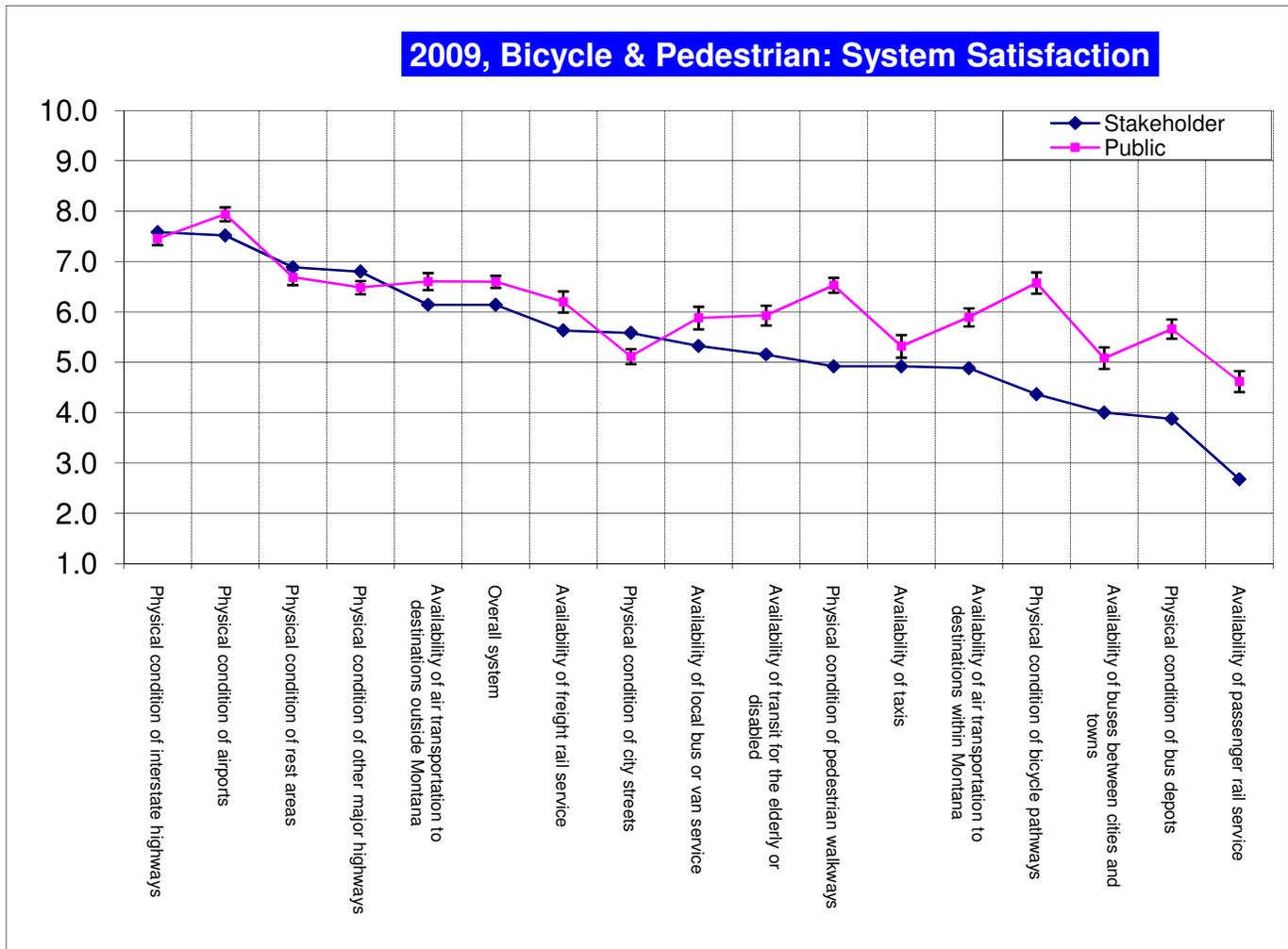


Figure 13: 10 = High Satisfaction Rate

Bicycle and pedestrian group respondents were moderately satisfied with the transportation system overall, giving it a mean rating of 6.14 on a 1 to 10 scale (see Figure 13). This is lower than the public’s mean rating of 6.60. The 2009 rating is no change from the 2007 rating (6.16).

When asked about specific components of the transportation system, bicycle and pedestrian group members expressed satisfaction with 9 of 16 system components. They were most satisfied with interstate highways and airports. Bicycle and pedestrian group members expressed dissatisfaction with pedestrian walkways, taxis, availability of air service to destinations within Montana, bike pathways, intercity bus service, bus depots, and passenger rail service. This group expressed significantly less satisfaction than did the public with pedestrian facilities and bicycle paths.

Actions to Improve the Transportation System

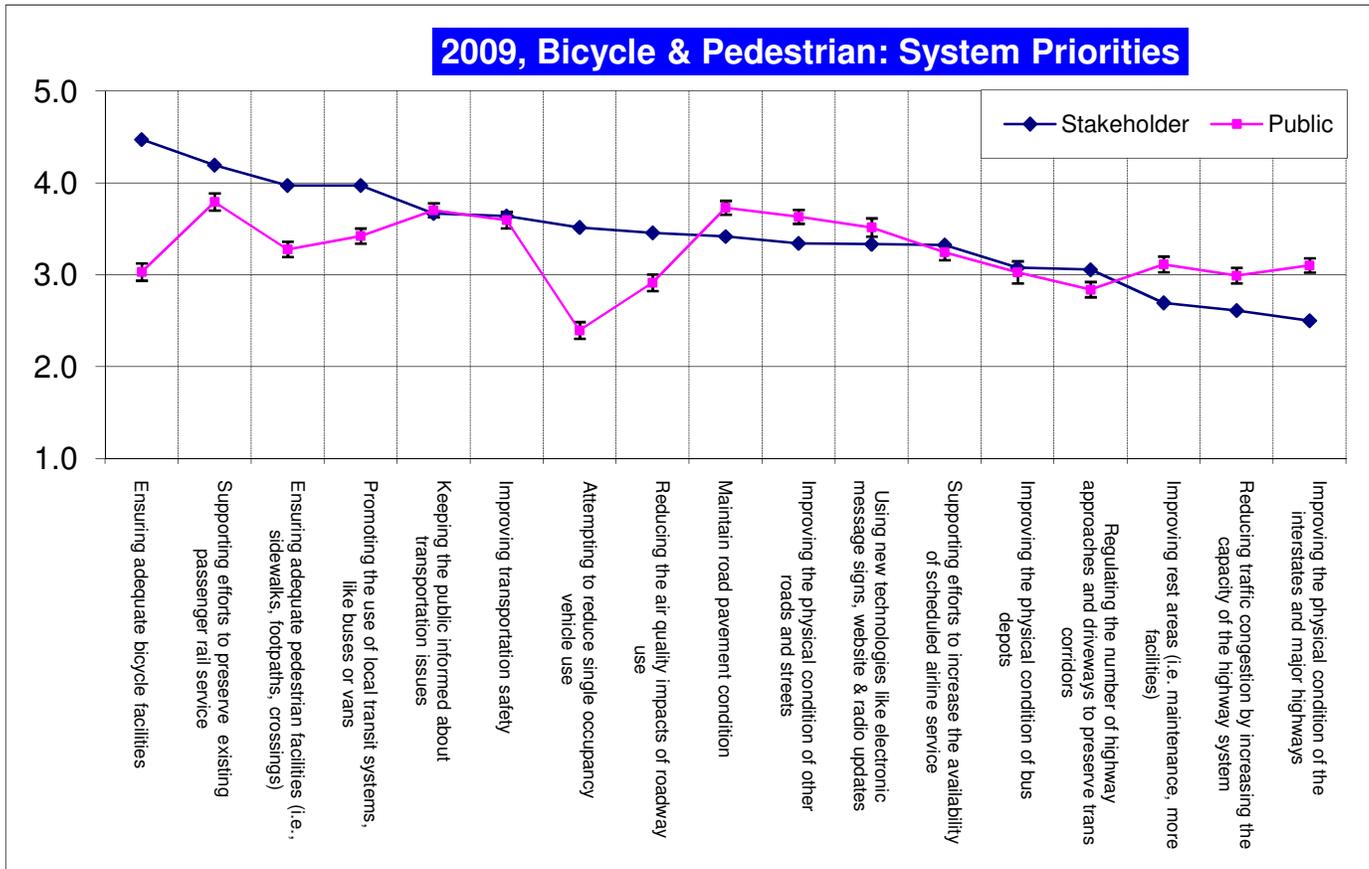


Figure 14: 5 = Very High Priority

The three highest priorities for improving components of the transportation system for bicycle and pedestrian group members were ensuring adequate bicycle facilities, supporting efforts to preserve existing passenger rail service, and ensuring adequate pedestrian facilities (see Figure 14).

Three items were rated as less than a medium priority: improving interstates, reducing traffic congestion by increasing system capacity, and improving rest areas. Bicycle and pedestrian group members rate 7 of 17 possible actions to improve the transportation system higher than did the public (see Figure 14).

This group rated the following items at least one full scale point higher in priority than did the public: ensuring adequate bicycle facilities, and reducing the number of single occupant vehicles. Ensuring adequate pedestrian facilities and reducing the air quality impacts of roadway use was also rated a significantly higher priority by this stakeholder group when compared to the public.

Actions to Improve Roadways

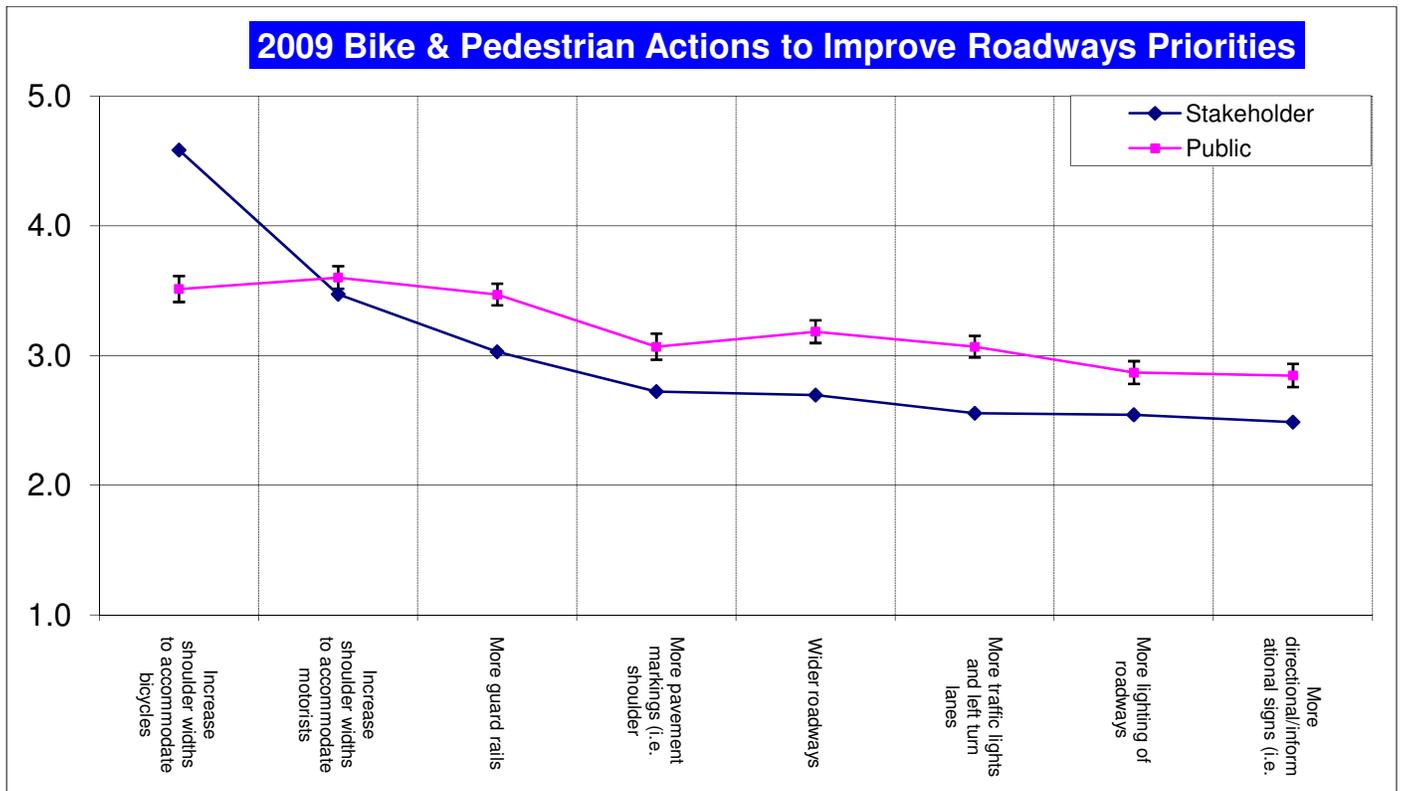


Figure 15: 5 = Very High Priority

The highest priority roadway improvement for the bicycle and pedestrian group was increasing shoulder widths for bicycles, which was rated a “Very High Priority” (see Figure 15). One of the remaining seven items - increasing shoulder widths for motorists and widening roadways - were rated between “Somewhat High Priority” and “Medium Priority”. Six items received a priority score lower than that delivered by the public.

General Communication Tool Ratings

The 2009 bicycle and pedestrian stakeholders rated three tools between somewhat useful and very useful: the MDT Web site, electronic media, and a toll-free call in telephone number. They also rated newspapers and surveys as slightly less than somewhat useful.

Bicycle and pedestrian stakeholders rated the MDT Web site, public meetings and special mailings significantly more useful than did the public. The public found television and radio and surveys more useful than did bicycle and pedestrian stakeholders.

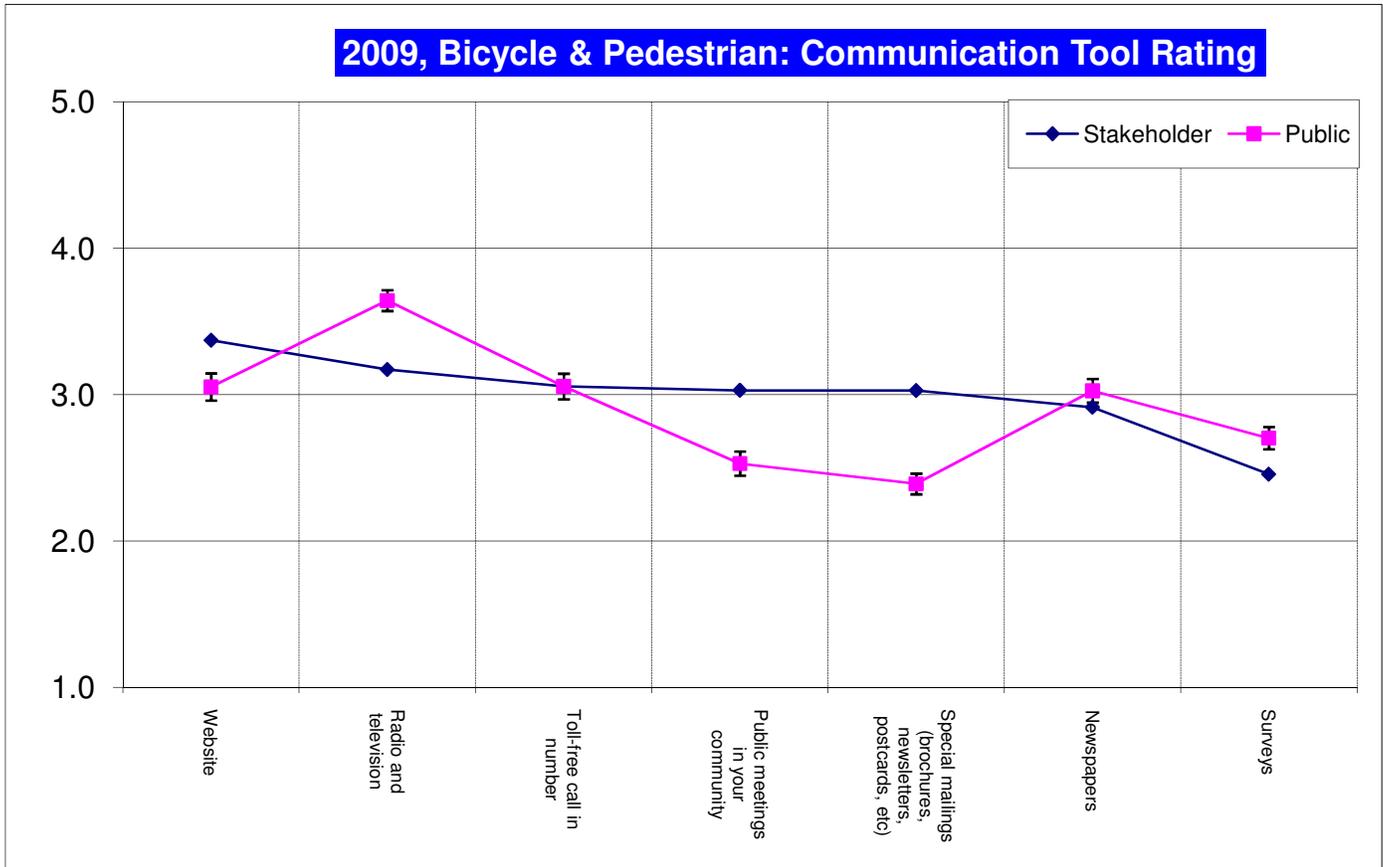


Figure 16: 5 = Extremely Useful

Planning and Project Communication Tool Ratings

MDT also asked bicycle and pedestrian stakeholders to rate planning and project specific communication tools (see Figure 17). Bicycle and pedestrian stakeholders rated three of six tools studied just over somewhat useful. Stakeholders gave their highest ratings to maps, pictures or graphics, and Web site media.

The public rated three of the items studied lower than did bicycle and pedestrian stakeholders: maps, the MDT Web site, and newsletters.

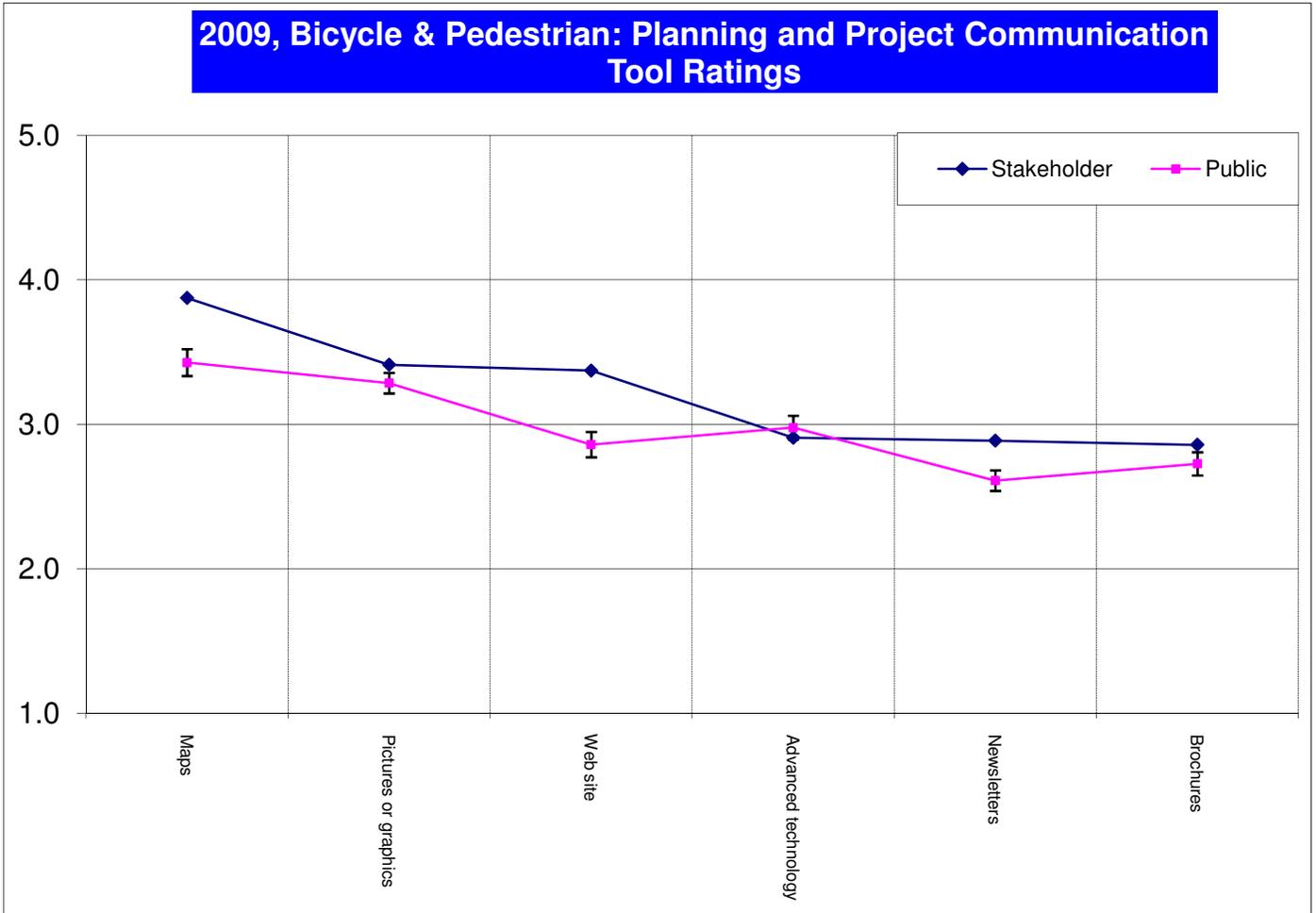


Figure 17: 5 = Extremely Useful

MDT Customer Service and Performance Grades

Bicycle and pedestrian group grades ranged from B to C+ (see Figure 18). These closely paralleled the public's. In only two instances were the differences between groups significant. The public gave MDT a lower grade for keeping the public informed and for public notification about construction than did the bicycle and pedestrian group.

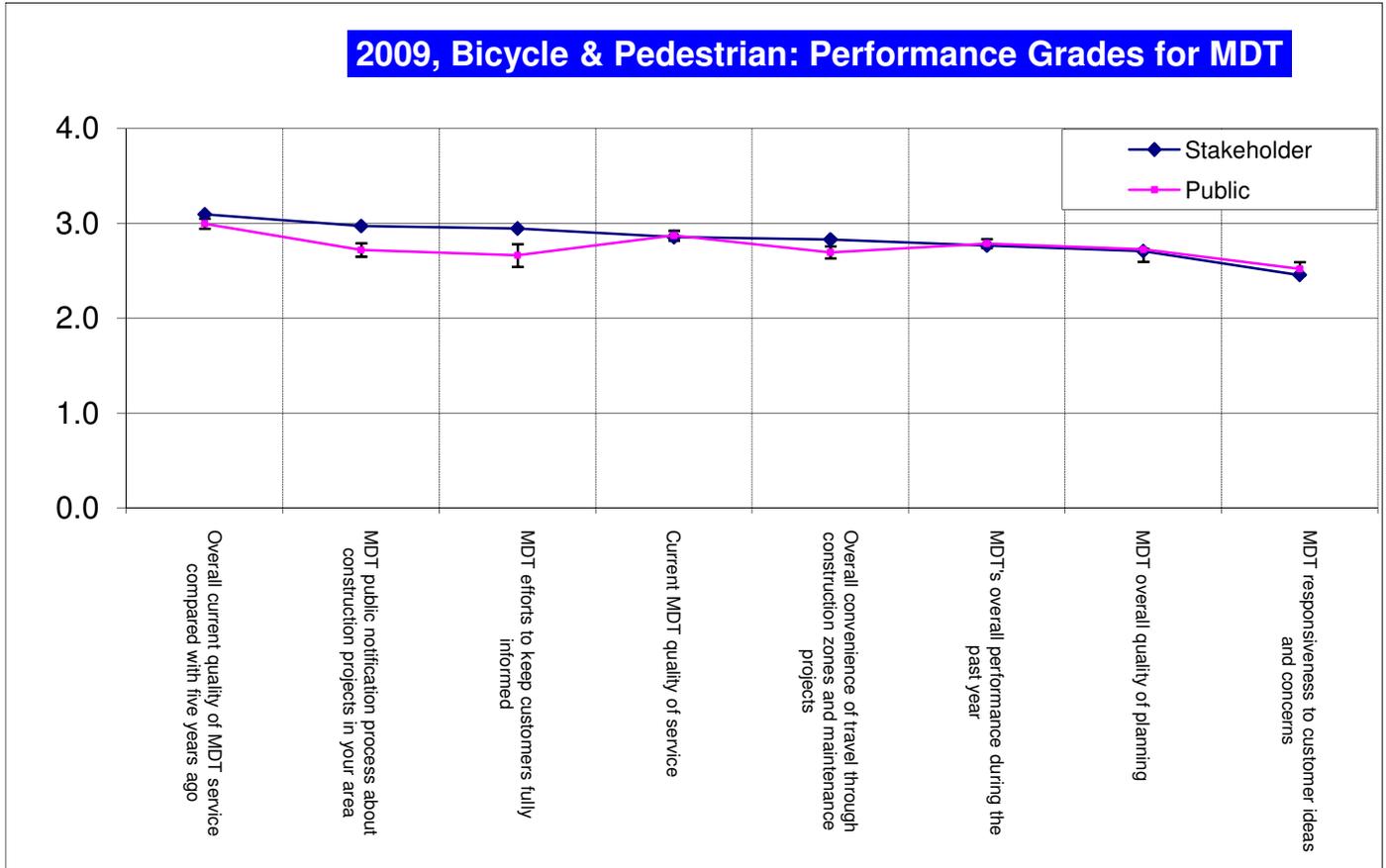


Figure 18: 4 = A

Security for System Components

Bicycle and pedestrian group respondents were asked to rate the security importance of various transportation system components. Each component was rated on a scale from 1 – 5 where 1 is not at all important and 5 is extremely important.

Bicycle and pedestrian group stakeholders gave importance ratings that fell between extremely important and somewhat important. Coordinating with other agencies, border crossings, emergency response plans, and the security of airports were rated most important. The 2009 stakeholders rated availability of alternate routes and other major highways lowest in importance.

Stakeholders’ ratings for importance paralleled those given by the public closely. However, bicycle and pedestrian group stakeholders rated five of the ten security items a lower priority than did the public.

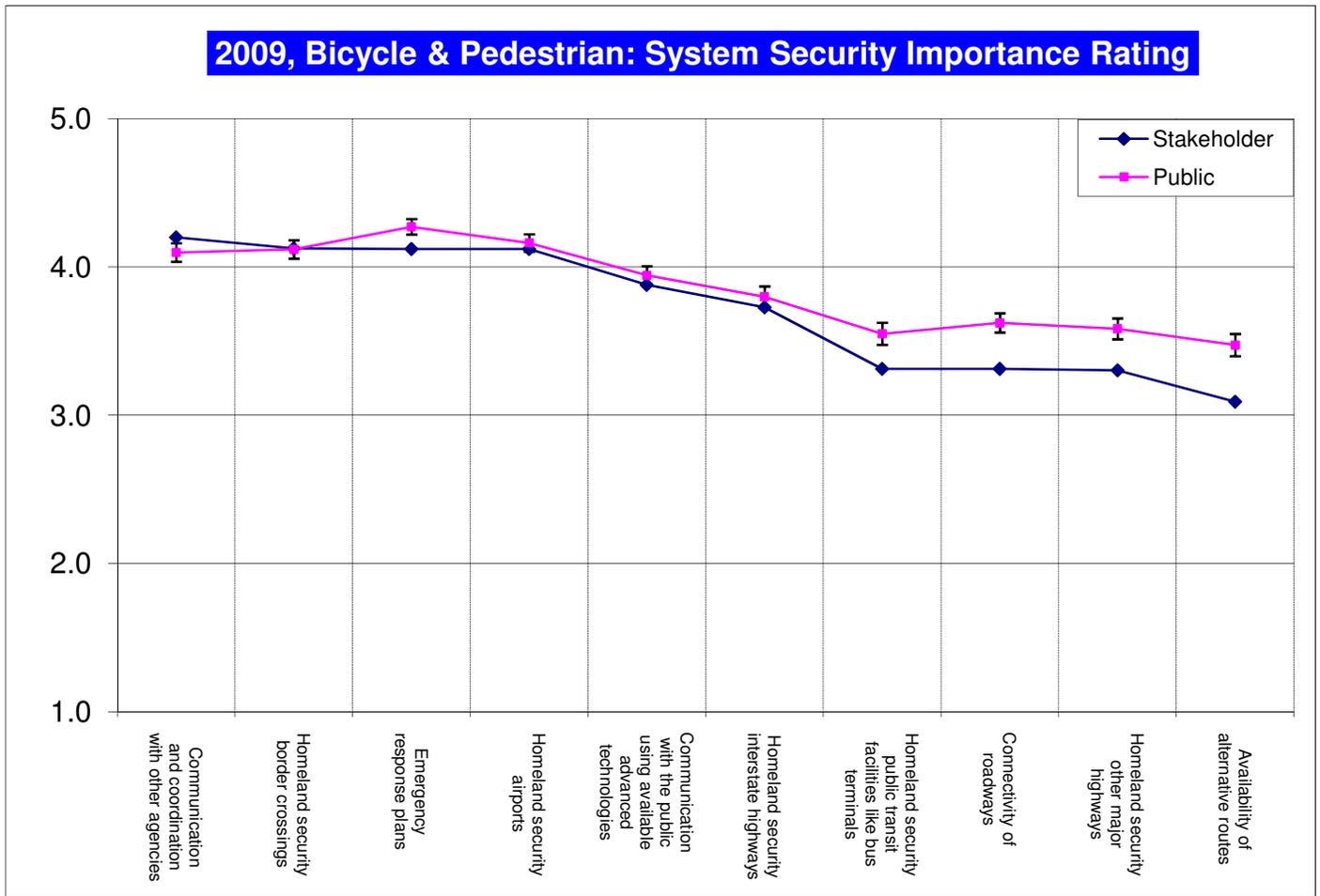


Figure 19: 5 = Extremely Important

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STAKEHOLDER GROUP

This group is represented by various economic development interests from across Montana. Stakeholders include representatives from:

- Economic development associations
- Business organizations
- Local development corporations and associations

In 2009, 87 completed interviews were collected from members of the economic development group, compared to 89 responses in 2007.

Transportation System Satisfaction

Economic development group respondents were moderately satisfied with the transportation system overall; giving it a mean rating of 6.45 on a 1 to 10 scale. This is almost identical to the public's mean rating of 6.60 (see Figure 20). The 2009 rating is numerically unchanged from the 2007 rating (6.45).

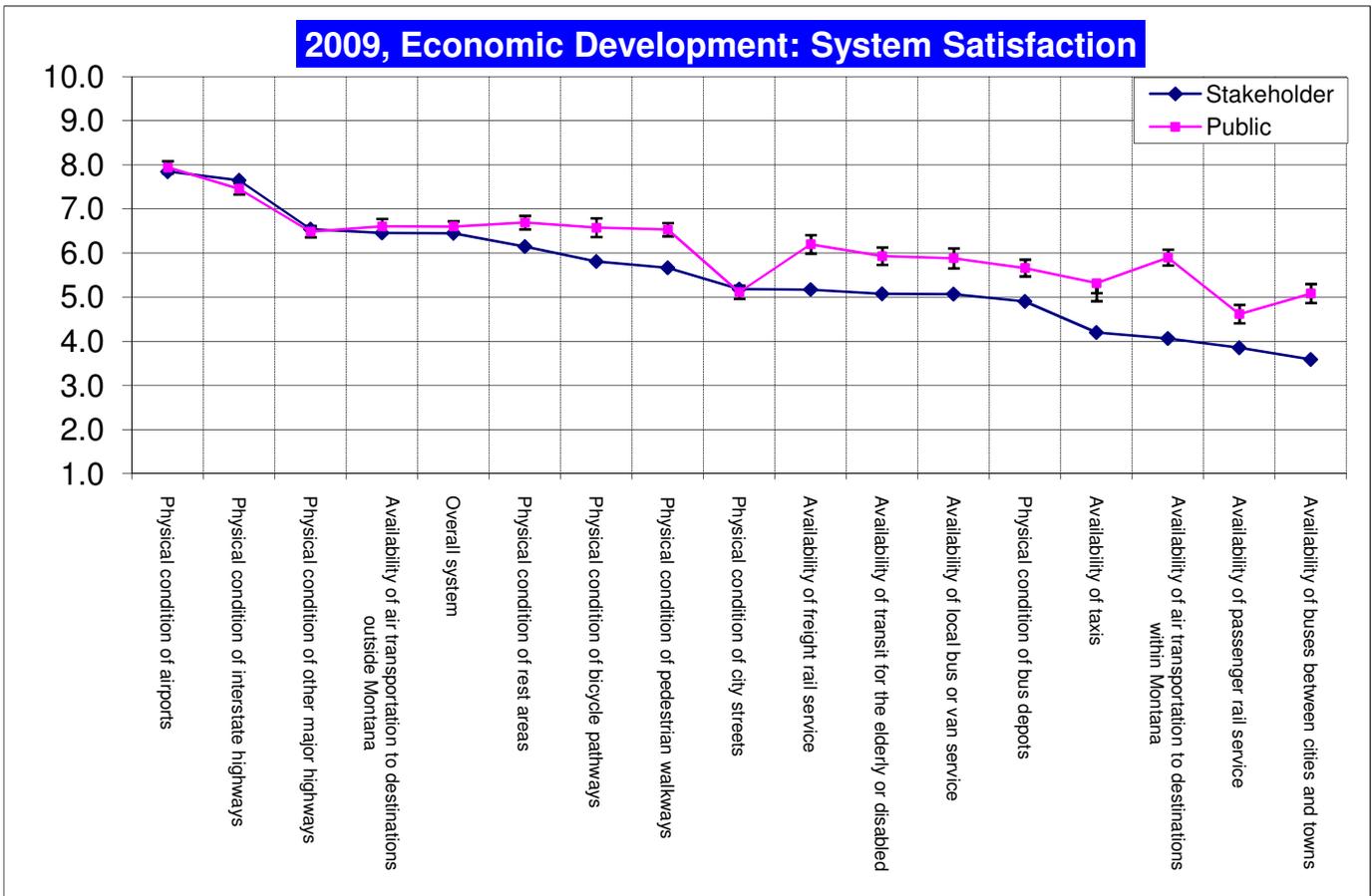


Figure 20: 10 = High

When asked about specific components of the transportation system, economic development group members expressed satisfaction with 12 of 16 system components. They were most satisfied with airports, interstate highways and major highways other than the interstates. Economic development group members expressed dissatisfaction with intercity bus service, passenger rail service, air transportation in Montana, taxis, and bus depots. This was mildly more favorable than the 2007 survey, when only 9 of 16 system components received at least a satisfactory score. This group expressed less satisfaction than did the public with 14 specific system components.

Actions to Improve the Transportation System

The three highest priorities for improving components of the transportation system for economic development group members were promoting scheduled airline service, supporting existing passenger rail service, and maintaining pavement conditions (see Figure 21). Four items were rated as less than a “Medium Priority”: reducing single occupancy vehicles, reducing air quality impacts, improving bus depots and reducing traffic congestion by increasing highway capacity. Economic development group members rated 12 of 17 possible actions to improve the transportation system higher than did the public. The widest disparity between the priority rankings of economic development group members and the general public was the promotion of scheduled airline service.

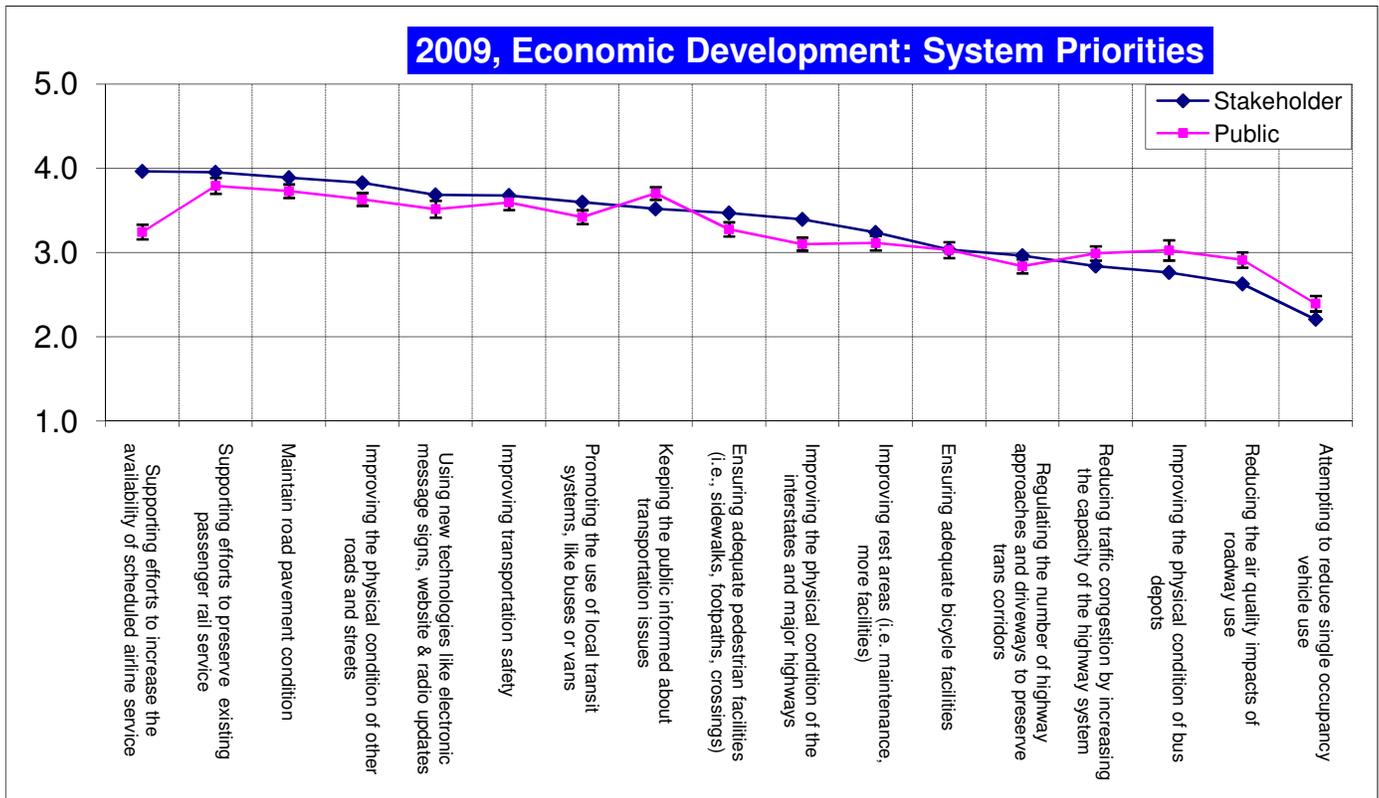


Figure 21: 5 = Very High

Actions to Improve Roadways

The highest priority roadway improvements for the economic development group were more guard rails and widening road shoulders for motorists, which had identical rankings (see Figure 22). This was followed closely by increasing shoulder widths to accommodate bicycles. The remaining five items were rated “Somewhat High” or “Medium Priority”. Wider roadways, additional traffic lights and left turn lanes and increased roadway lighting all receive priority scores lower than those expressed by the public.

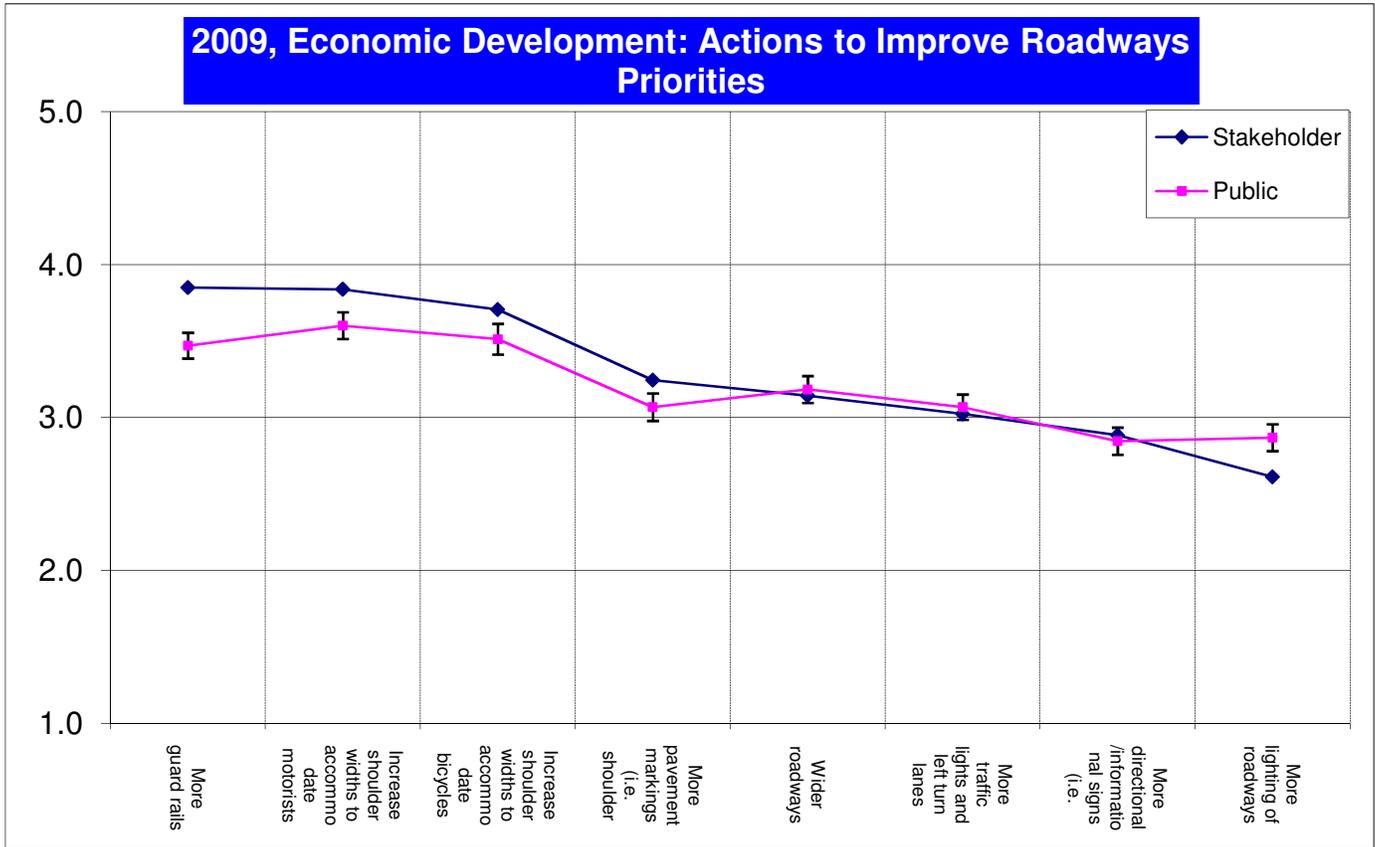


Figure 22: 5 = Very High

General Communication Tool Ratings

Economic development stakeholders rated two tools between somewhat useful and very useful in 2009: Web sites and traditional electronic media. They also rated special mailings and surveys as less than somewhat useful.

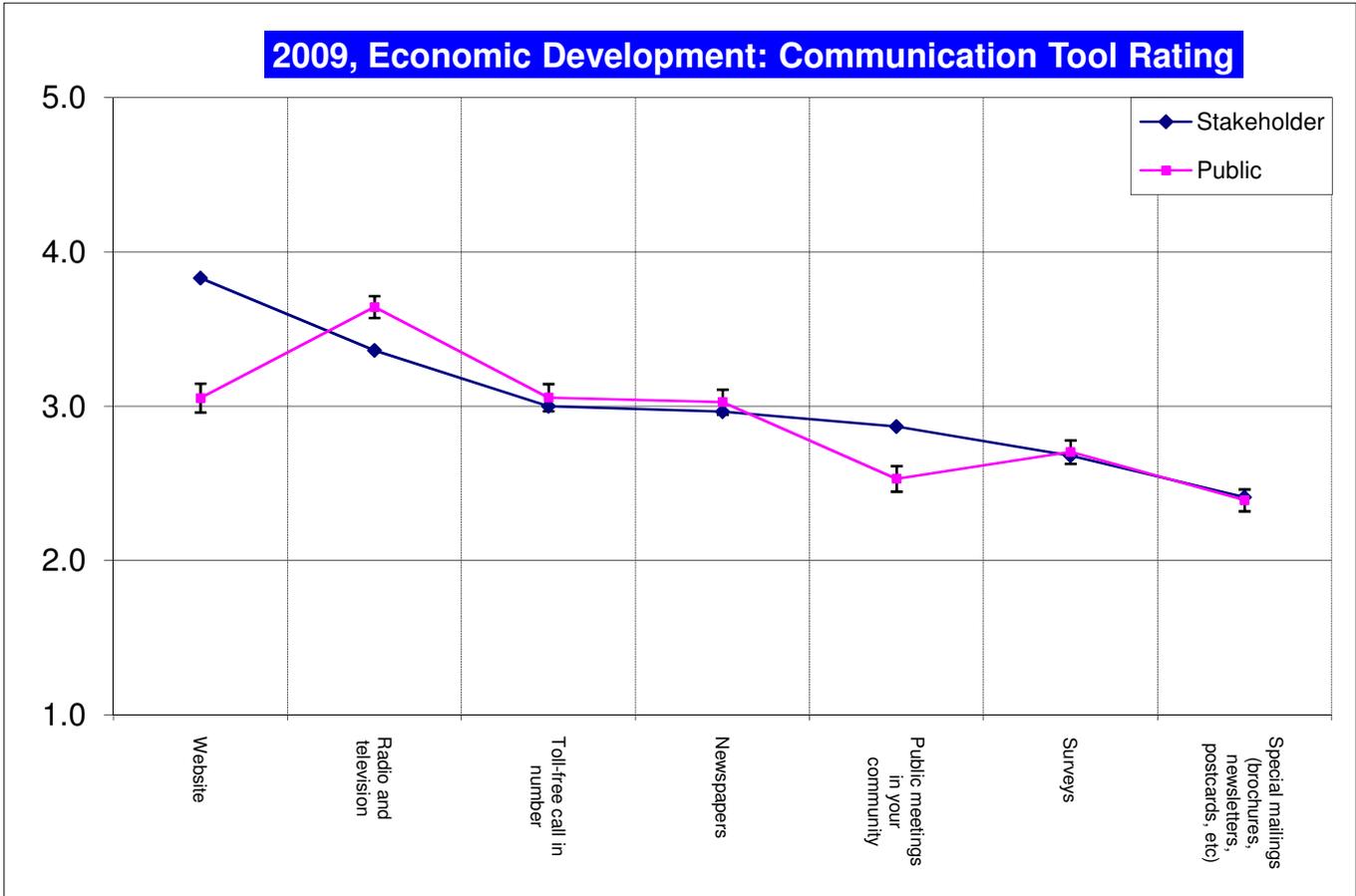


Figure 23: 5 = Extremely Useful

Economic development stakeholders rated the MDT Web site and public meetings just lower than very useful, while the public rated the item as somewhat useful. Economic development stakeholders also found public meetings more useful than did the general public, while the situation was reversed for radio and television.

Planning and Project Communication Tool Ratings

MDT also asked economic development stakeholders to rate planning and project-specific communication tools (see Figure 24). Economic development stakeholders rated four of six tools studied as at least “somewhat useful,” with maps ranked as very useful. Stakeholders gave their highest ratings to maps, the Web site and pictures or graphics. Nearly all this stakeholder groups’ ratings were higher than the general public.

As in 2007, the public in 2009 rated each item studied lower than did economic development stakeholders. The public rated the MDT Web site, newsletters, using advanced technology, and brochures significantly lower than did economic development stakeholders.

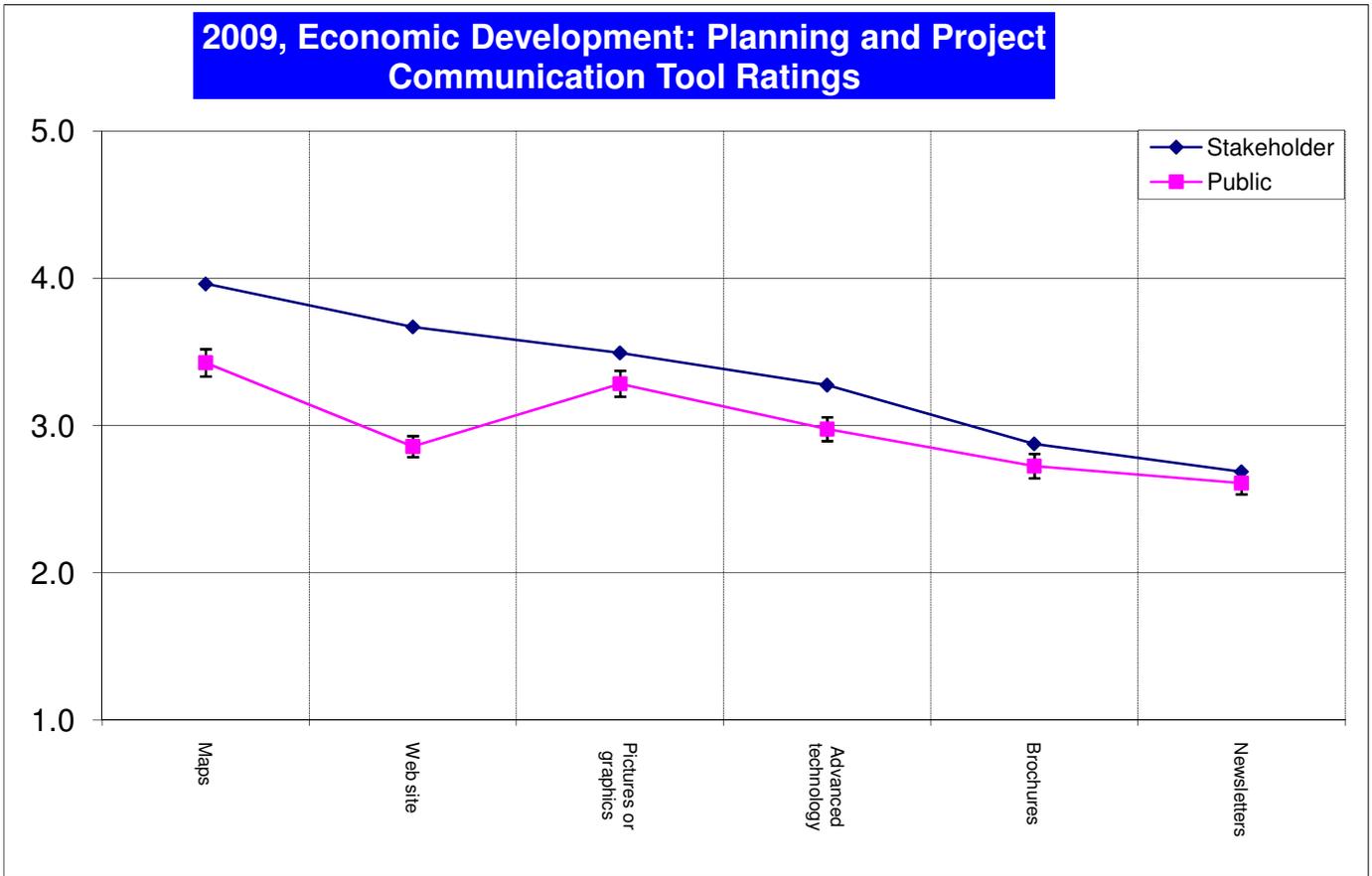


Figure 24: 5 = Extremely Useful

MDT Customer Service and Performance Grades

Economic development group grades for MDT ranged from B to C (see Figure 25). These closely paralleled the public's. The largest difference between the two groups' grades was only two tenths of a point, referring to MDT's overall performance over the past year. Highest grades received by MDT from economic development stakeholders were for service improvements over five years, performance over the last year, and the current quality of MDT service. The lowest grade was for MDT responsiveness to customer input.

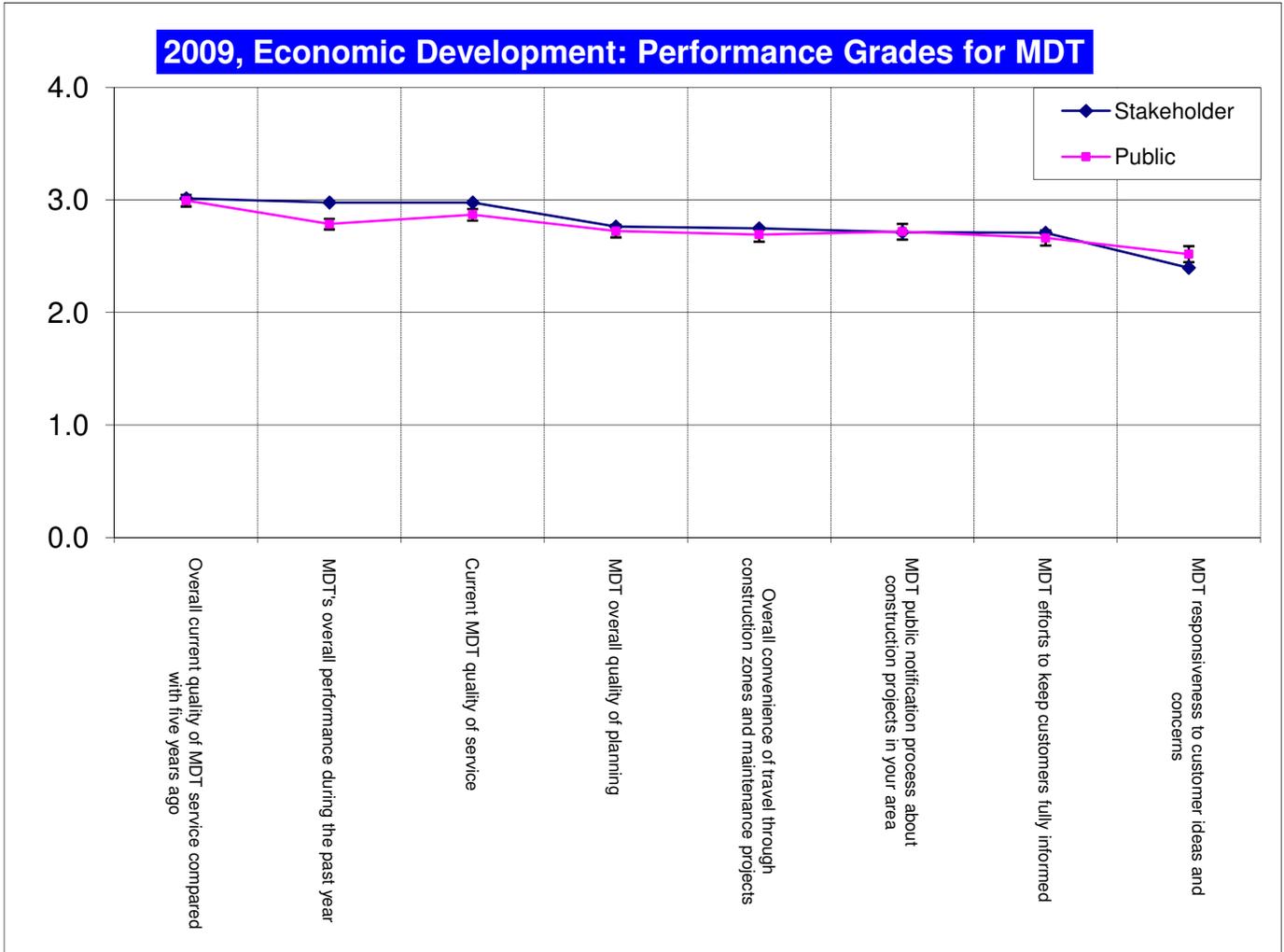


Figure 25: 4 = A

Security for System Components

Economic development group respondents were asked to rate the security importance of various transportation system components. Each component was rated on a scale from 1 – 5 where 1 is not at all important and 5 is extremely important.

Economic development stakeholders gave importance ratings that fell between extremely important and somewhat important. Stakeholders rated inter-agency communication, border crossings, emergency response plans and airports as the most important security issues in 2009. Security at public transit facilities such as bus terminals received the lowest security concerns.

Stakeholders’ ratings for importance relating to security were higher than the public across most transportation areas.

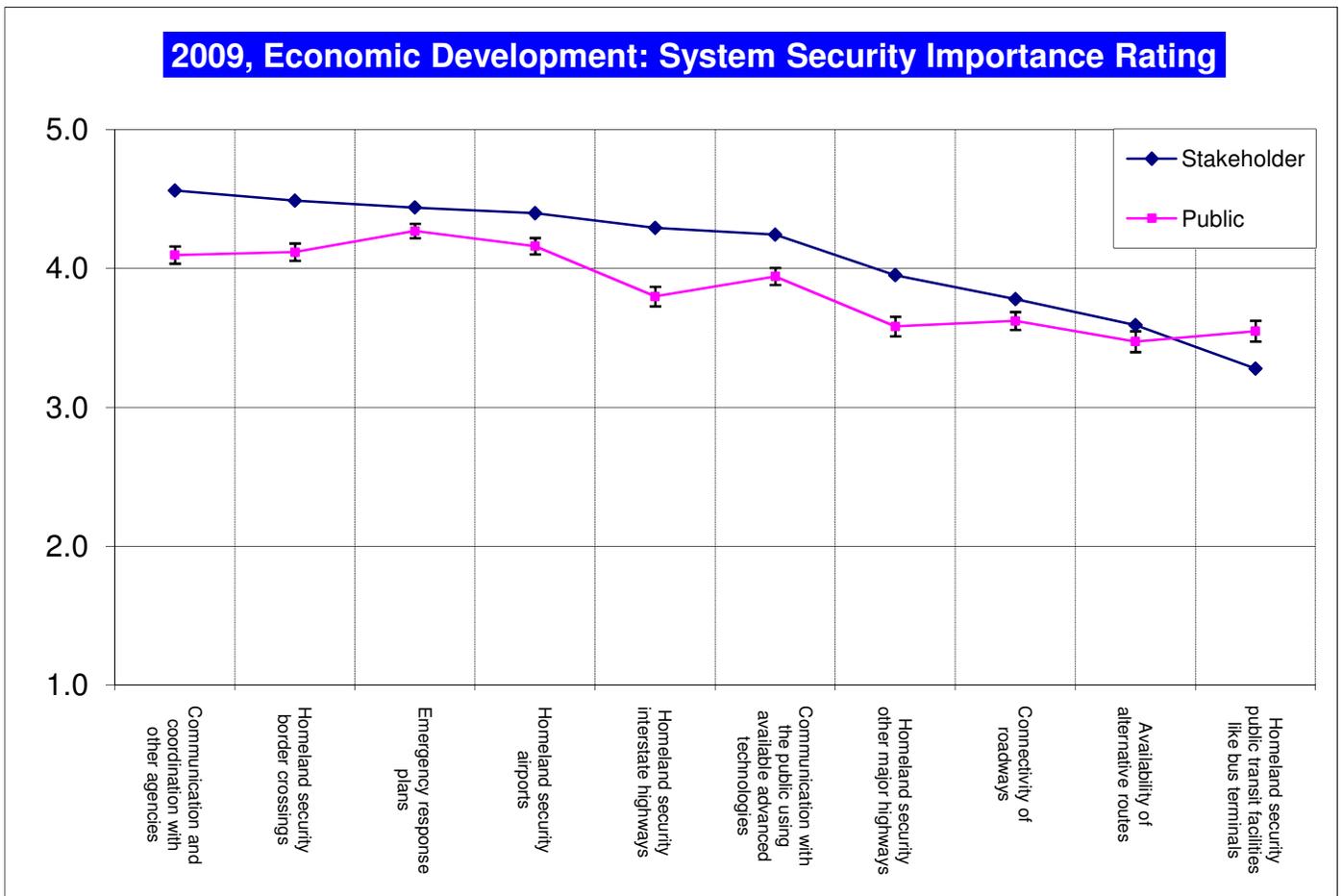


Figure 26: 5 = Extremely Important

ENVIRONMENTAL STAKEHOLDER GROUP

This group is represented by various environmental interests from across Montana. Stakeholders include representatives from:

- Wilderness coalitions
- Wildlife associations
- Audubon societies
- Preservation coalitions
- Sierra Club affiliates
- Resource centers

In 2009, 25 completed interviews were collected from members of the environmental group compared to 21 responses collected in 2007.

Transportation System Satisfaction

Environmental group respondents expressed neutral satisfaction with the transportation system overall, giving it a mean rating of 5.4 on a 1 to 10 scale. This is significantly lower than the public's mean rating of 6.6 (see Figure 27). The 2009 environmental group rating is lower than the 2007 rating (5.8).

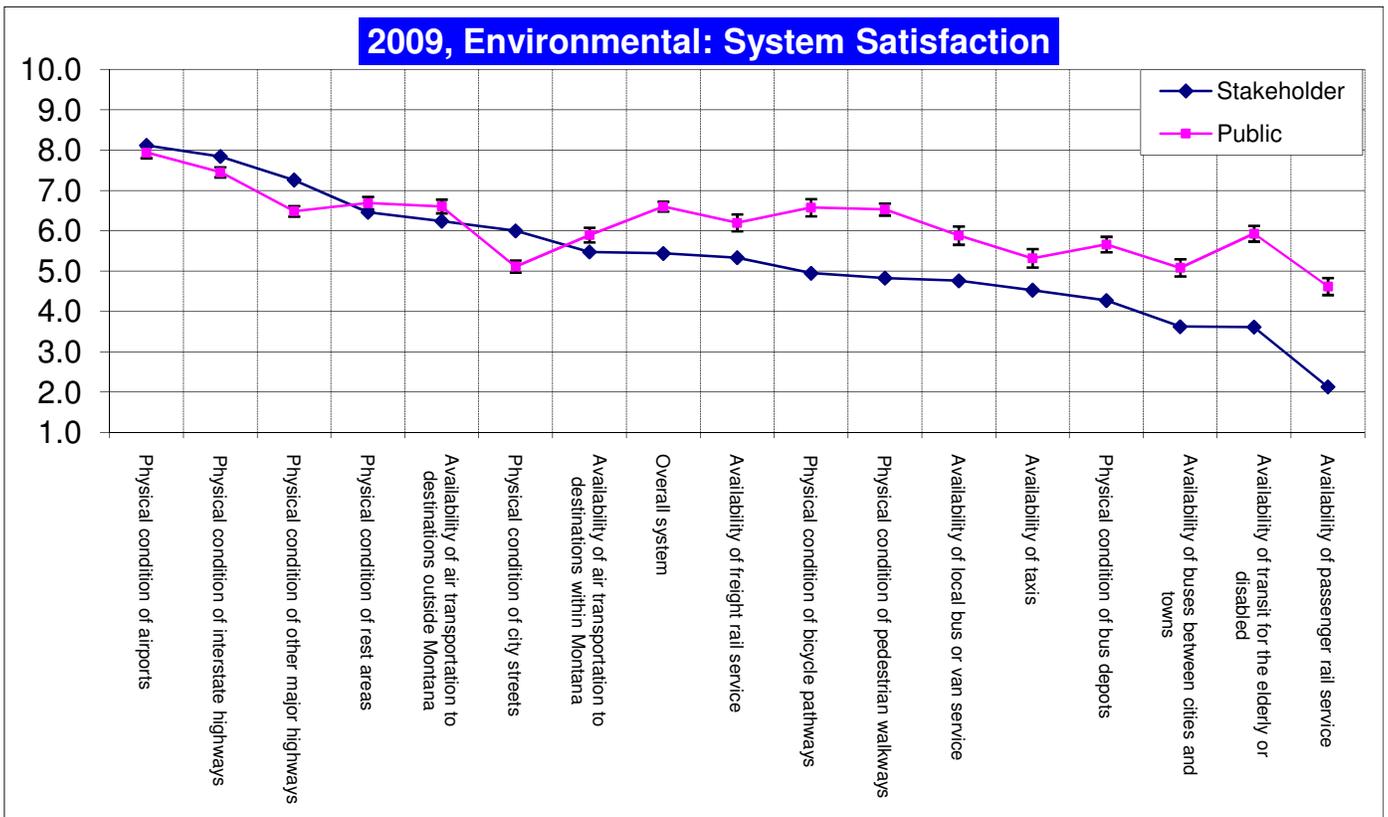


Figure 27: 10 = High

When asked about specific components of the transportation system, environmental group members expressed satisfaction with 9 of 16 system components. They were most satisfied with interstate highways and airports. Environmental group members expressed dissatisfaction with bike pathways, pedestrian facilities, bus depots, local transit systems, intercity bus service, transit for the elderly or disabled, and passenger rail service. This group expressed less satisfaction than did the public with 11 specific system components.

Actions to Improve the Transportation System

The highest priority (by a narrow margin) for improving components of the transportation system among environmental group members was supporting efforts to preserve existing rail passenger service (see Figure 28). The second highest rating went to promoting the use of local transit systems, like buses or vans. These two items and three others were rated as a “Very High Priority.” One item was rated as less than a “Medium Priority”: reducing traffic congestion by increasing system capacity. Environmental group members rated 12 of 17 possible actions to improve the transportation system higher priority than did the public. This group rated five items at least one full scale point higher in priority relative to the public: reducing the air quality impacts of roadway use, ensuring adequate bicycle facilities, promoting local transit, ensuring adequate pedestrian facilities, and reducing the number of single occupant vehicles.

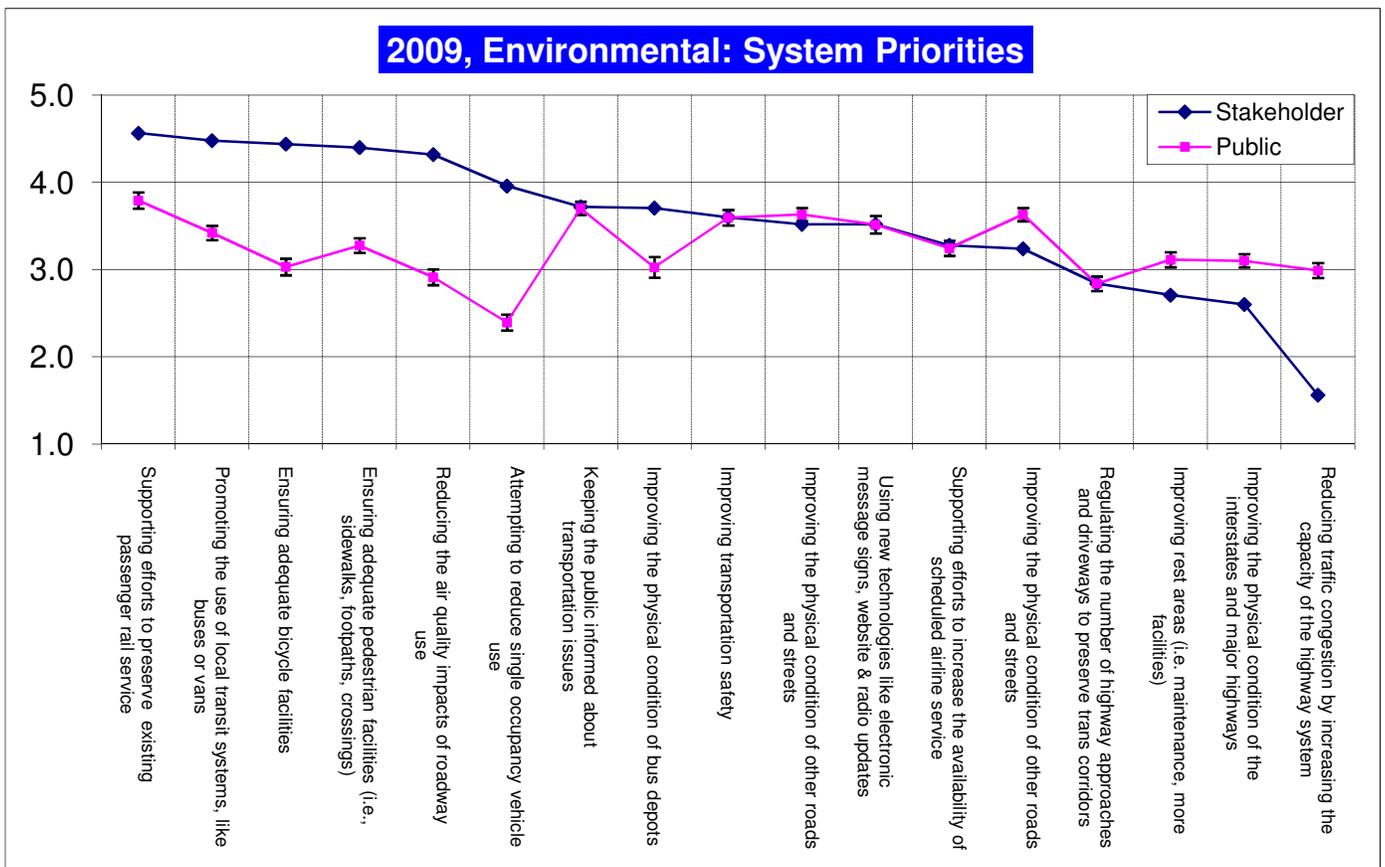


Figure 28: 5 = Very High

Actions to Improve Roadways

The highest priority roadway improvement for the environmental group was increasing shoulder widths for bicycles, which was rated a “Very High Priority” (see Figure 29). Only one additional item, increase shoulder widths for motorists, was rated in the upper two priority categories. The remaining six items received a score in lower priority categories. The public rated six of eight items examined as having significantly higher priorities than did the environmental group.

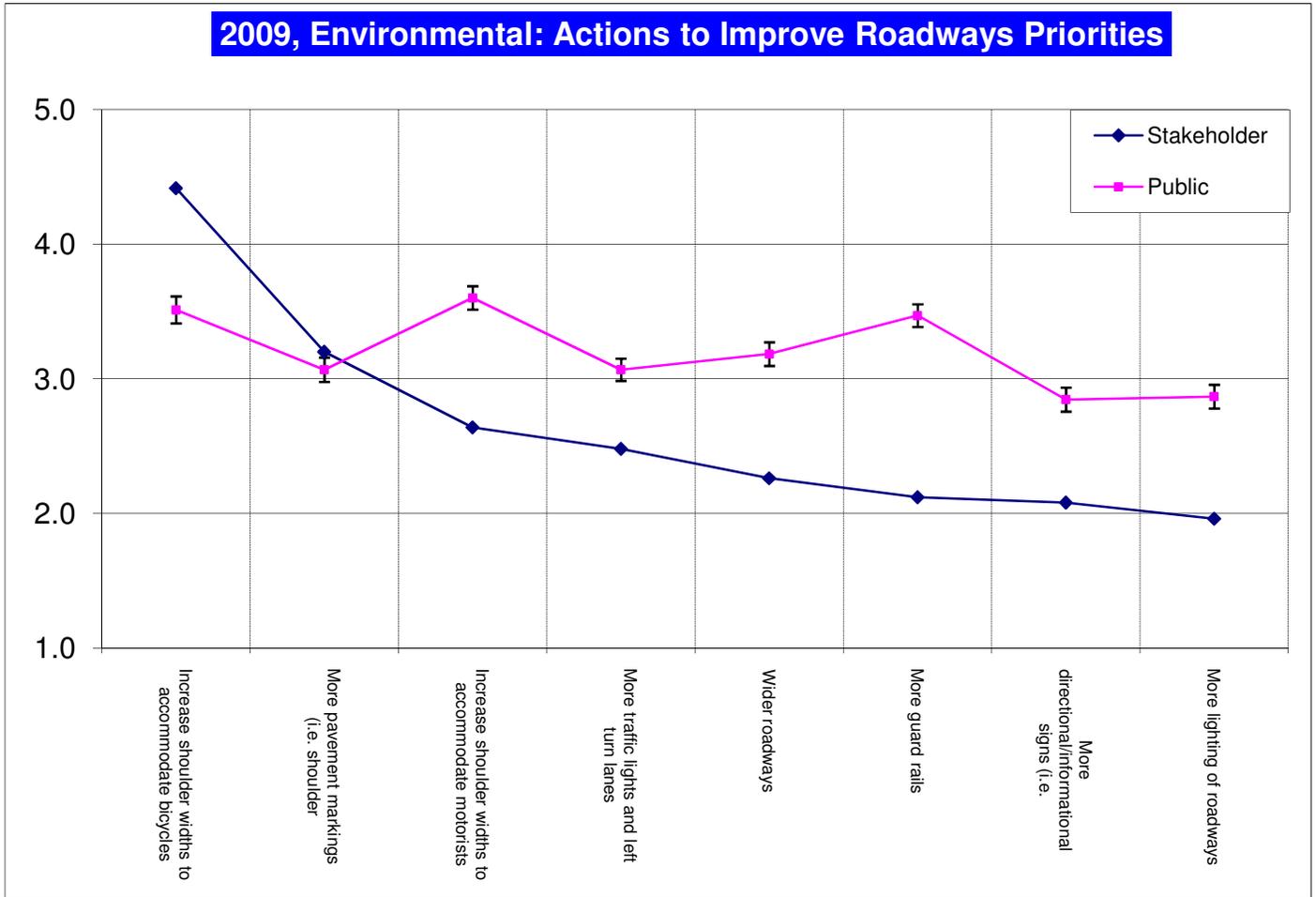


Figure 29: 5 = Very High

General Communication Tool Ratings

The 2009 environmental stakeholders rated four tools just above somewhat useful: electronic media, the MDT Web site, a toll-free call in telephone number, electronic media, and newspapers. They also rated public meetings, surveys and public meetings as slightly less than somewhat useful.

Both the public and environmental stakeholders rated the MDT Web site as somewhat useful, with the public's rating slightly higher than the stakeholder's. The public found television and radio more useful than did environmental stakeholders.

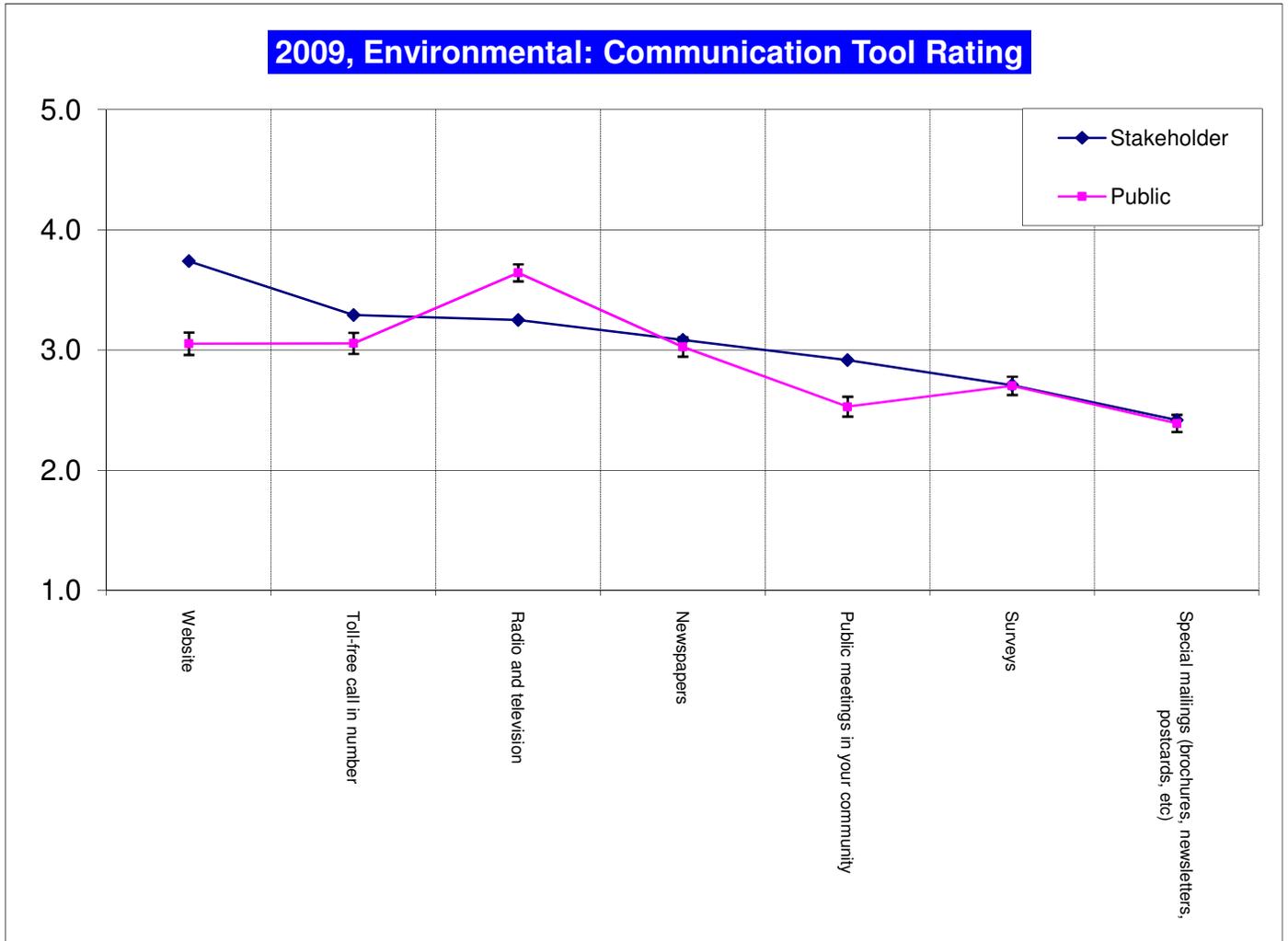


Figure 30: 5 = Extremely Useful

Planning and Project Communication Tool Ratings

MDT also asked environmental stakeholders to rate planning and project specific communication tools (see Figure 31). Environmental stakeholders rated four of six tools studied over somewhat useful. Environmental stakeholders gave their highest ratings to maps and the Web site.

The public rated all but two of the items studied - brochures and newsletters - lower than did environmental stakeholders.

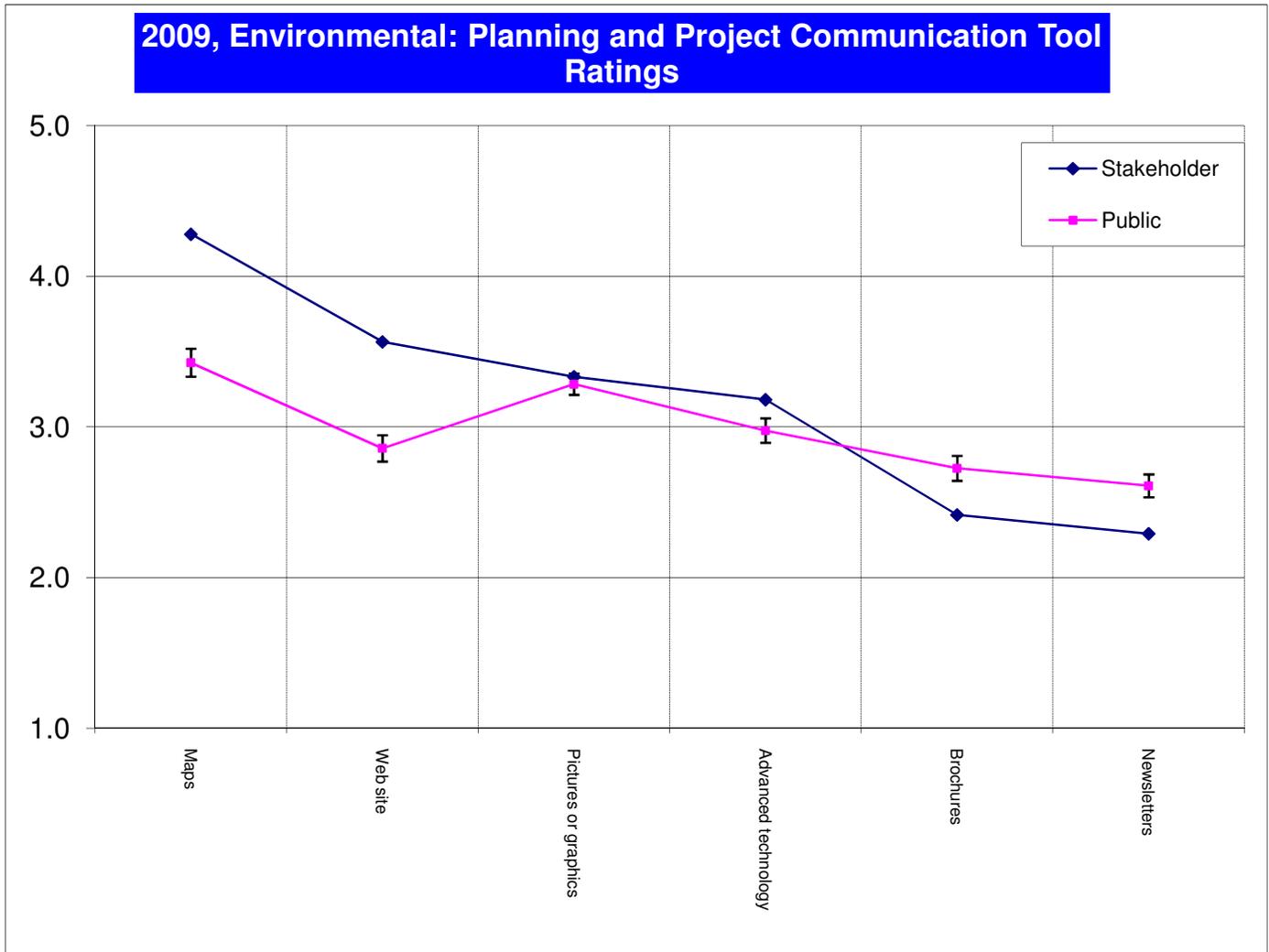


Figure 31: 5 = Extremely Useful

MDT Customer Service and Performance Grades

Environmental group grades ranged from B- to C- (see Figure 32). The public gave MDT significantly higher grades than did the environmental group for seven of the eight categories. Only the convenience of travel through construction zones was received a higher grade from the environmental group.

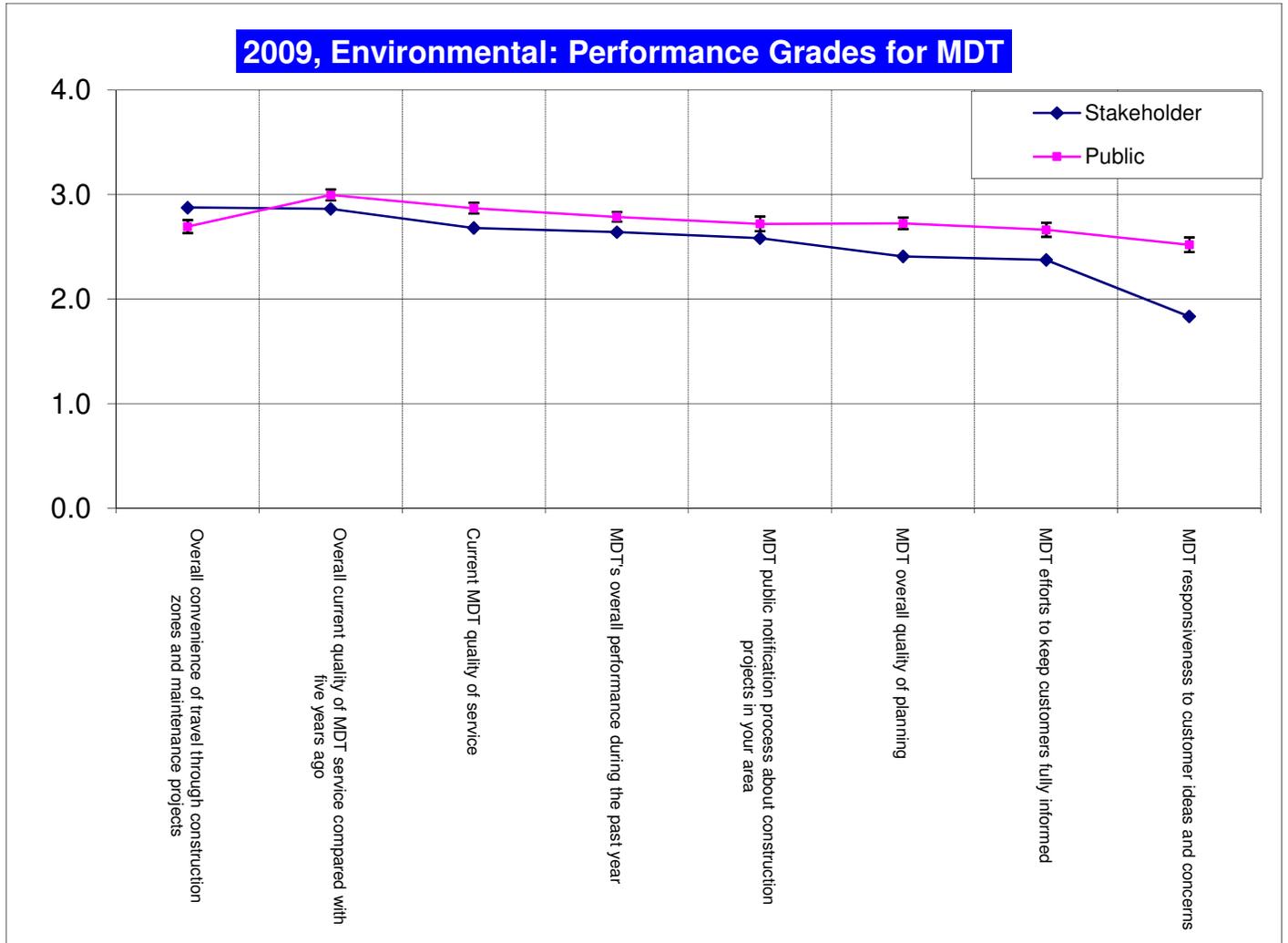


Figure 32: 4 = A

Security for System Components

Environmental group respondents were asked to rate the security importance of various transportation system components. Each component was rated on a scale from 1 – 5 where 1 is not at all important and 5 is extremely important.

Environmental group stakeholders gave importance ratings that fell between very important (4) and not very important (3). Stakeholders rated emergency response plans, communication and coordination with other agencies, and communication with the public most important. These stakeholders rated connectivity of roadways and availability of alternative routes lowest in importance.

Stakeholders’ ratings for importance were significantly lower than those given by the public for seven of the ten items examined.

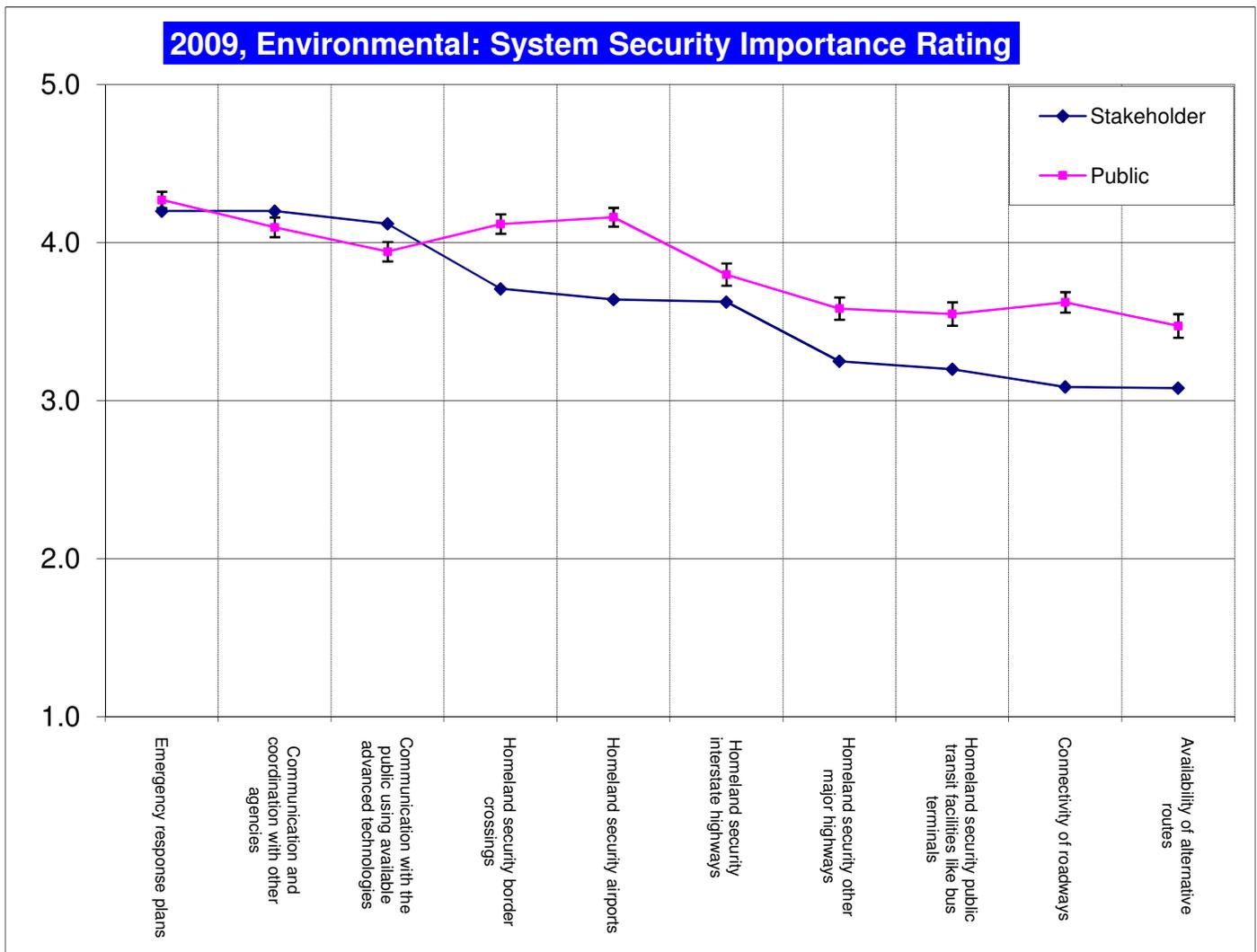


Figure 33: 5 = Extremely Important

INTERMODAL FREIGHT STAKEHOLDER GROUP

This group is represented by various intermodal and freight interests from across Montana. Stakeholders include representatives from:

- Trucking
- Air freight
- Rail freight
- Freight forwarding associations

In 2009, 46 completed interviews were collected from members of the Intermodal group compared to 78 responses that were collected in 2007.

Transportation System Satisfaction

Intermodal group respondents were moderately satisfied with the transportation system overall, giving it a mean rating of 6.2 on a 1 to 10 scale. This is lower than the public's mean rating of 6.6 (see Figure 34). The 2009 rating is lower than the 2007 rating (6.54).

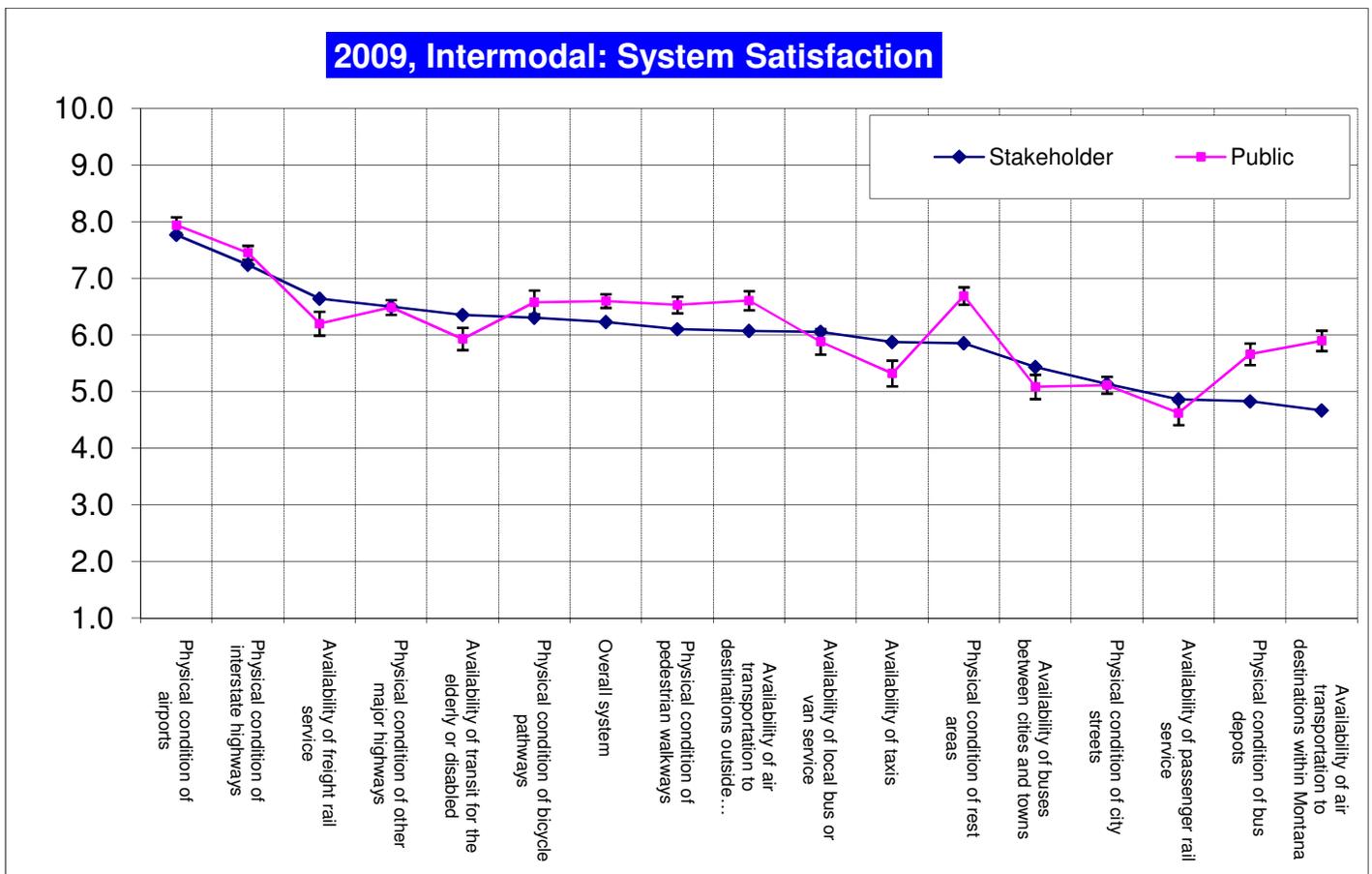


Figure 34: 10 = High

When asked about specific components of the transportation system, intermodal group members expressed satisfaction with 13 of 16 system components. They were most satisfied with airports and interstate highways. Intermodal group members expressed dissatisfaction with passenger rail service, bus depots, and availability of air transportation to destinations within Montana. This group expressed less satisfaction than did the public with six specific system components (see Figure 34).

Actions to Improve the Transportation System

The highest priority for improving components of the transportation system among intermodal group members was maintaining pavement condition (see Figure 35). Four items were rated a “High Priority.” Five items were rated as less than a “Medium Priority”: ensuring adequate pedestrian facilities, improving bus terminals, ensuring adequate bicycle facilities, reducing the air quality impacts of road use, and reducing the number of single-occupant vehicles. Intermodal group members rated 2 of 17 possible actions to improve the transportation system higher priority than did the public.

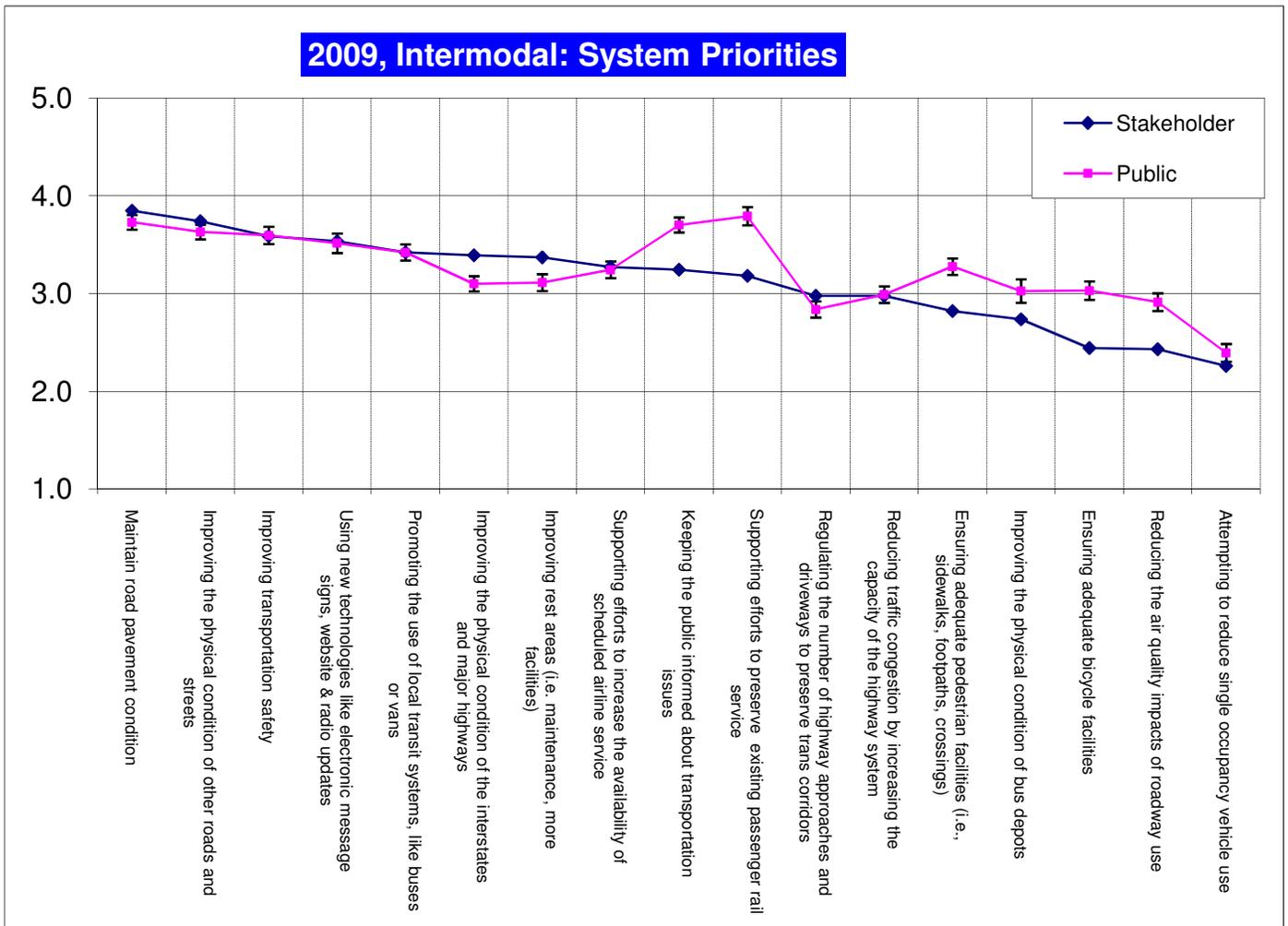


Figure 35: 5 = Very High

Actions to Improve Roadways

The highest priorities for roadway improvement in the intermodal group were wider shoulders for motorists and more guard rails, which were rated a “Somewhat High Priority” (see Figure 36). The remaining six items were rated a “Medium Priority,” and three of these items received a priority score lower than that delivered by the public.

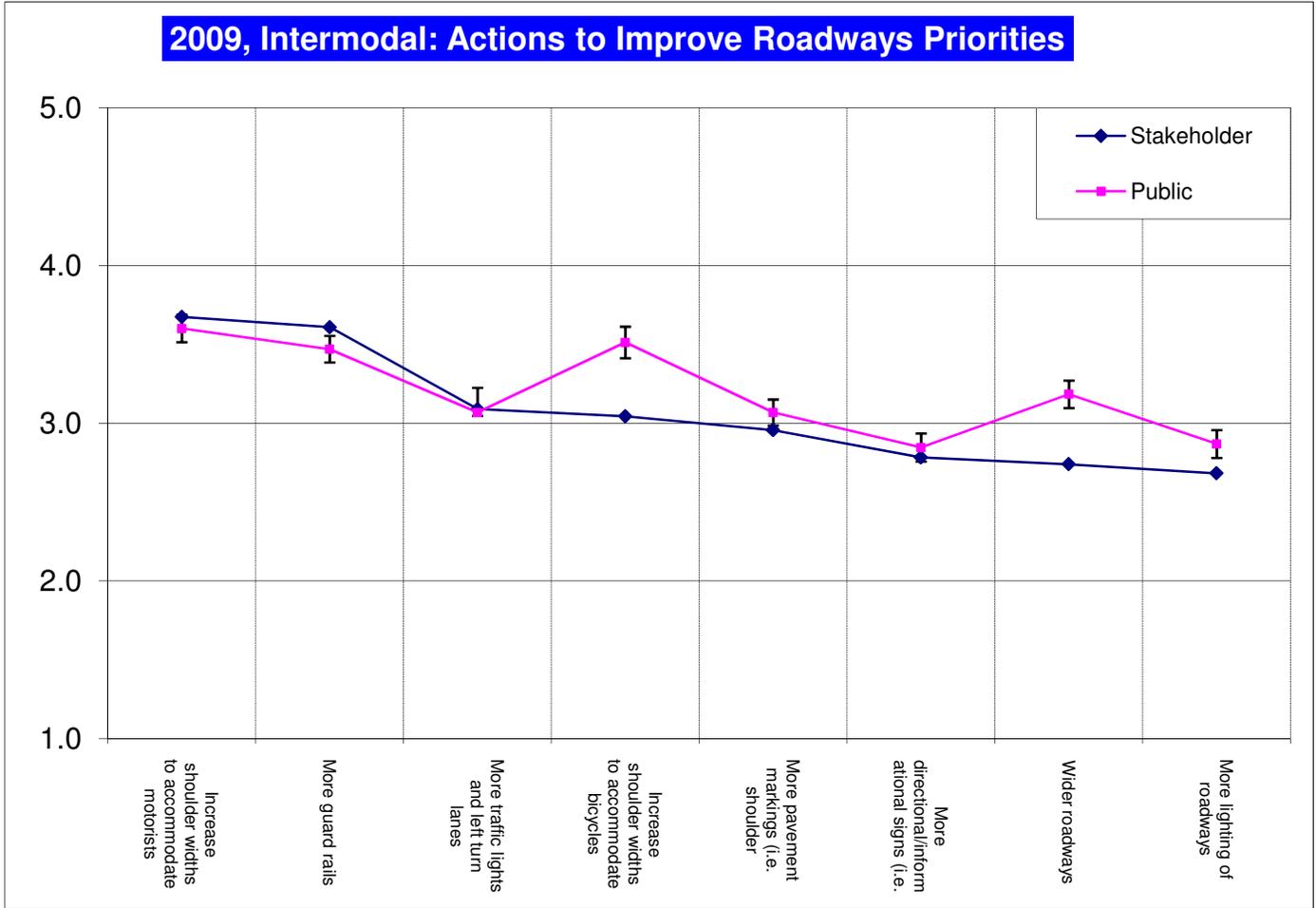


Figure 36: 5 = Very High

General Communication Tool Ratings

The 2009 intermodal stakeholders rated two tools between somewhat useful and very useful: electronic media and the MDT Web site (see Figure 37). They also rated newspapers, the toll-free number, special mailings, and surveys as having less than medium usefulness.

Intermodal stakeholders rated the MDT Web site higher than the public. The public found television and radio more useful than did intermodal stakeholders.

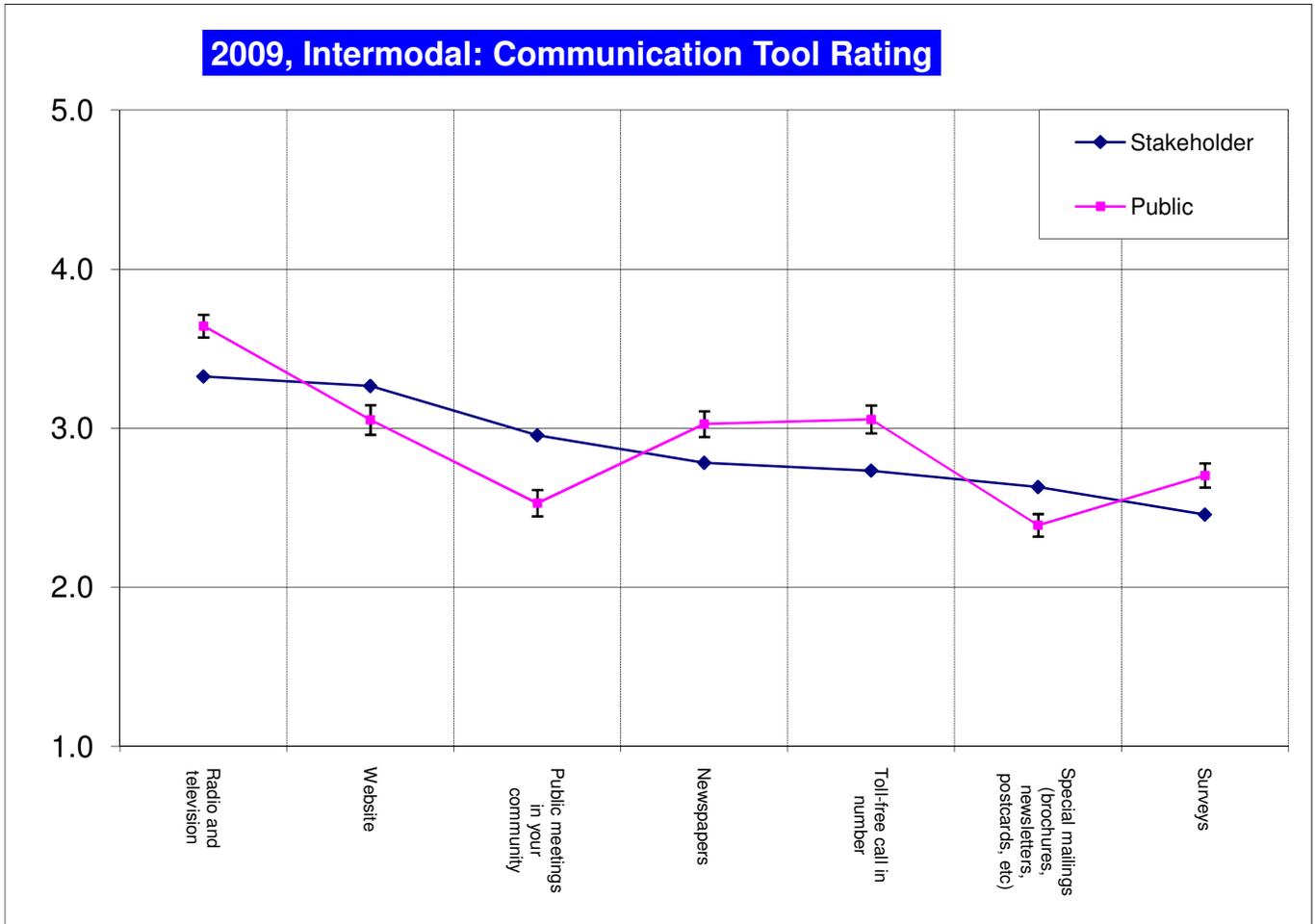


Figure 37: 5 = Extremely Useful

Planning and Project Communication Tool Ratings

MDT also asked intermodal stakeholders to rate planning and project specific communication tools (see Figure 38). Intermodal stakeholders rated four of six tools studied just over somewhat useful. Intermodal stakeholders gave their highest ratings to maps, Web site, and pictures or graphics.

The public rated five of the items studied lower than did intermodal stakeholders: maps, the MDT Web site, advanced technology, and pictures or graphics.

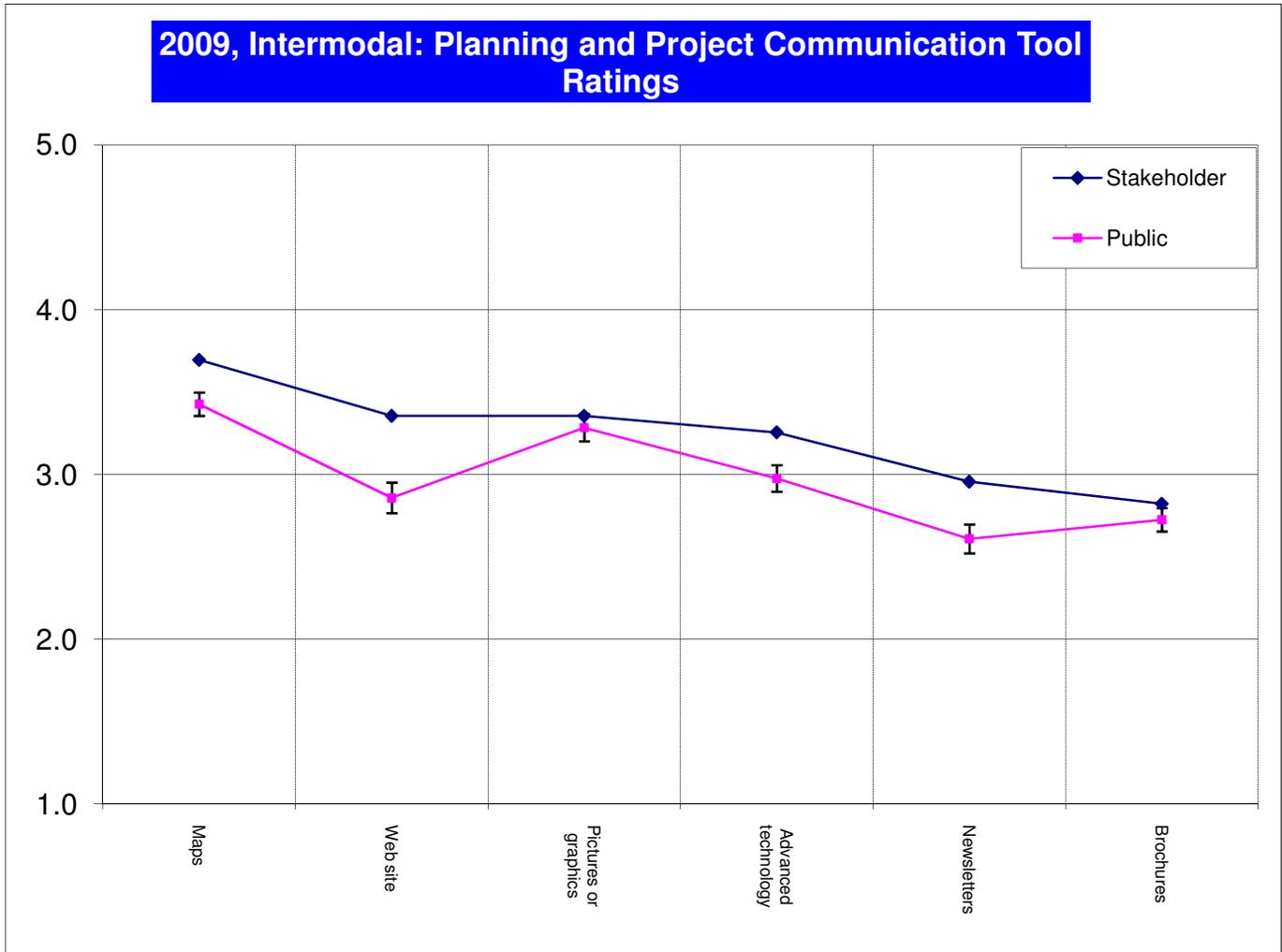


Figure 38: 5 = Extremely Useful

MDT Customer Service and Performance Grades

Intermodal group grades ranged from B- to C+ (see Figure 39). These closely paralleled the publics'. In no instance were the differences between groups significant.

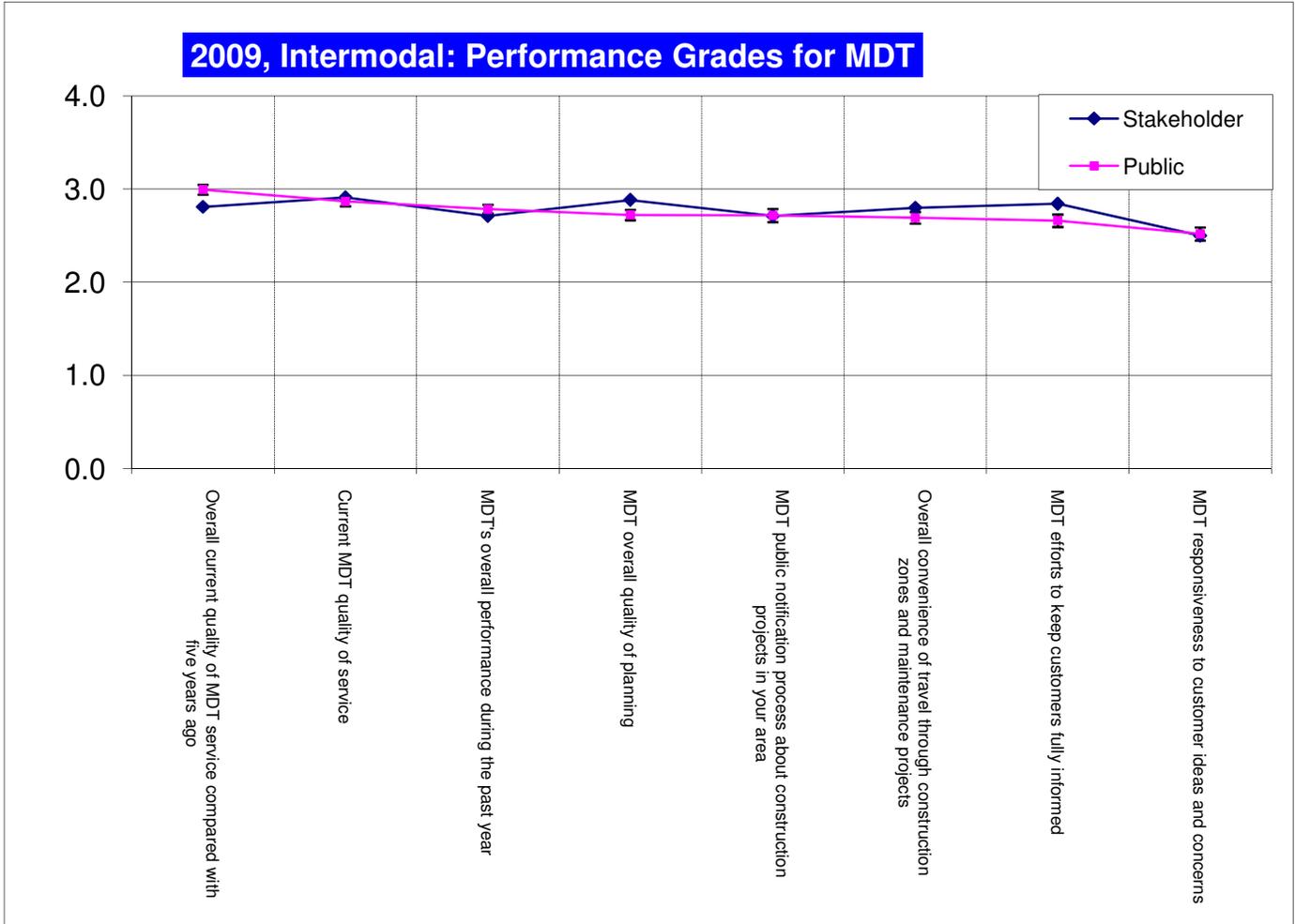


Figure 39: 4 = A

Security for System Components

Intermodal group respondents were asked to rate the security importance of various transportation system components. Each component was rated on a scale from 1 – 5 where 1 is not at all important and 5 is extremely important.

Intermodal group stakeholders gave importance ratings that fell between extremely important and medium importance. Stakeholders rated airports, emergency response plans, border crossings, and communication with other agencies most important. The 2009 intermodal stakeholders rated availability of alternate routes lowest in importance.

Stakeholders’ ratings for importance paralleled those given by the public very closely on seven of the ten measures. There is little practical meaning in the small statistical differences between the stakeholders’ ratings and the publics’ with the exception of intermodal stakeholders’ lower importance rating for the availability of alternative routes; security of public transit facilities like bus terminals; and security of other major highways.

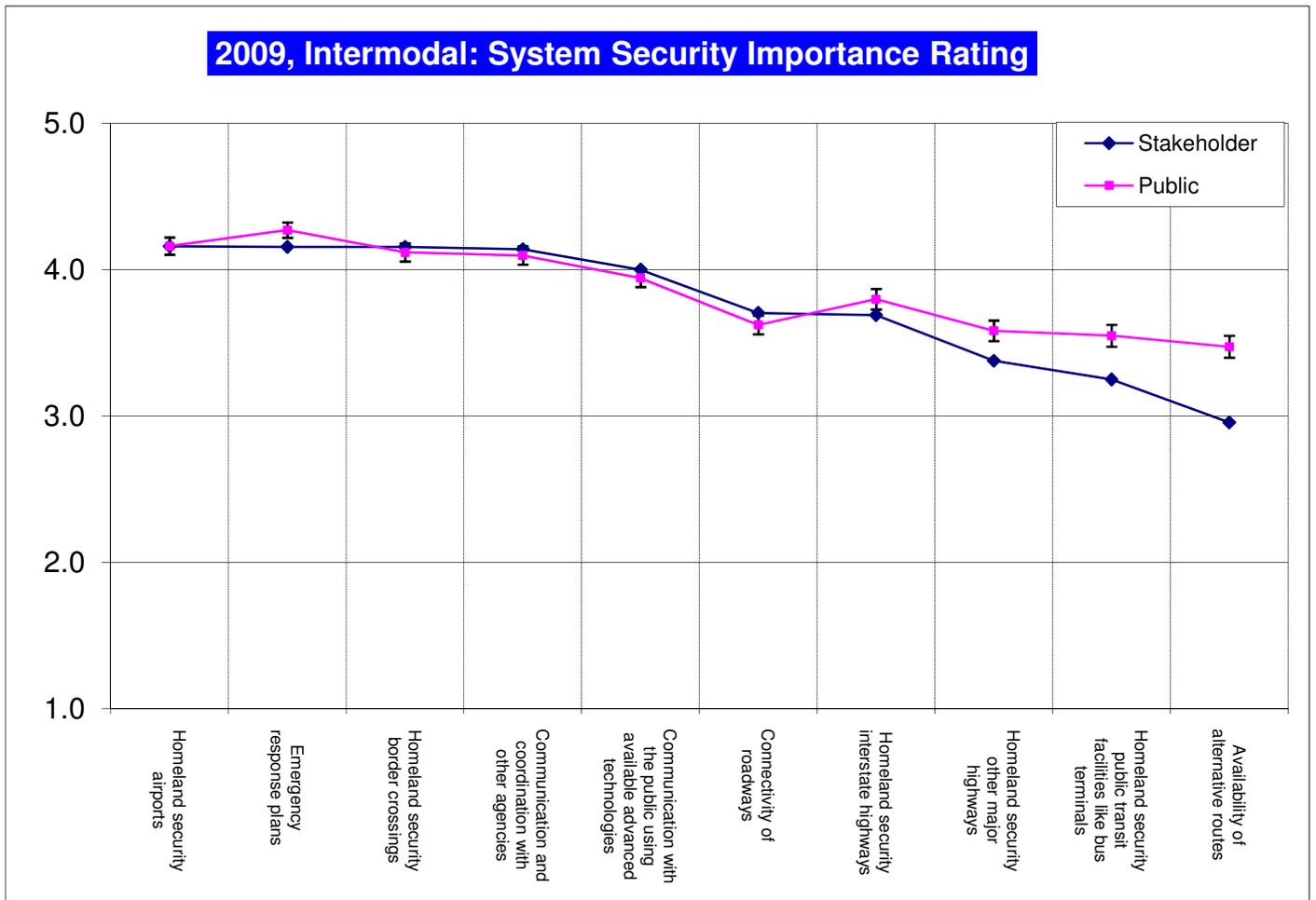


Figure 40: 5 = Extremely Important

CITIES AND TOWNS STAKEHOLDER GROUP

This group consists of mayors and chief executives from across Montana. In 2009, 83 completed interviews were collected from members of the cities and towns group compared to 105 responses that were collected in 2007.

Transportation System Satisfaction

Cities and towns group respondents were moderately satisfied with the transportation system overall, giving it a mean rating of 6.44 on a 1 to 10 scale. This is statistically equal to the public's mean rating of 6.6 (see Figure 41). The 2009 rating is essentially identical to the 2007 rating (6.54).

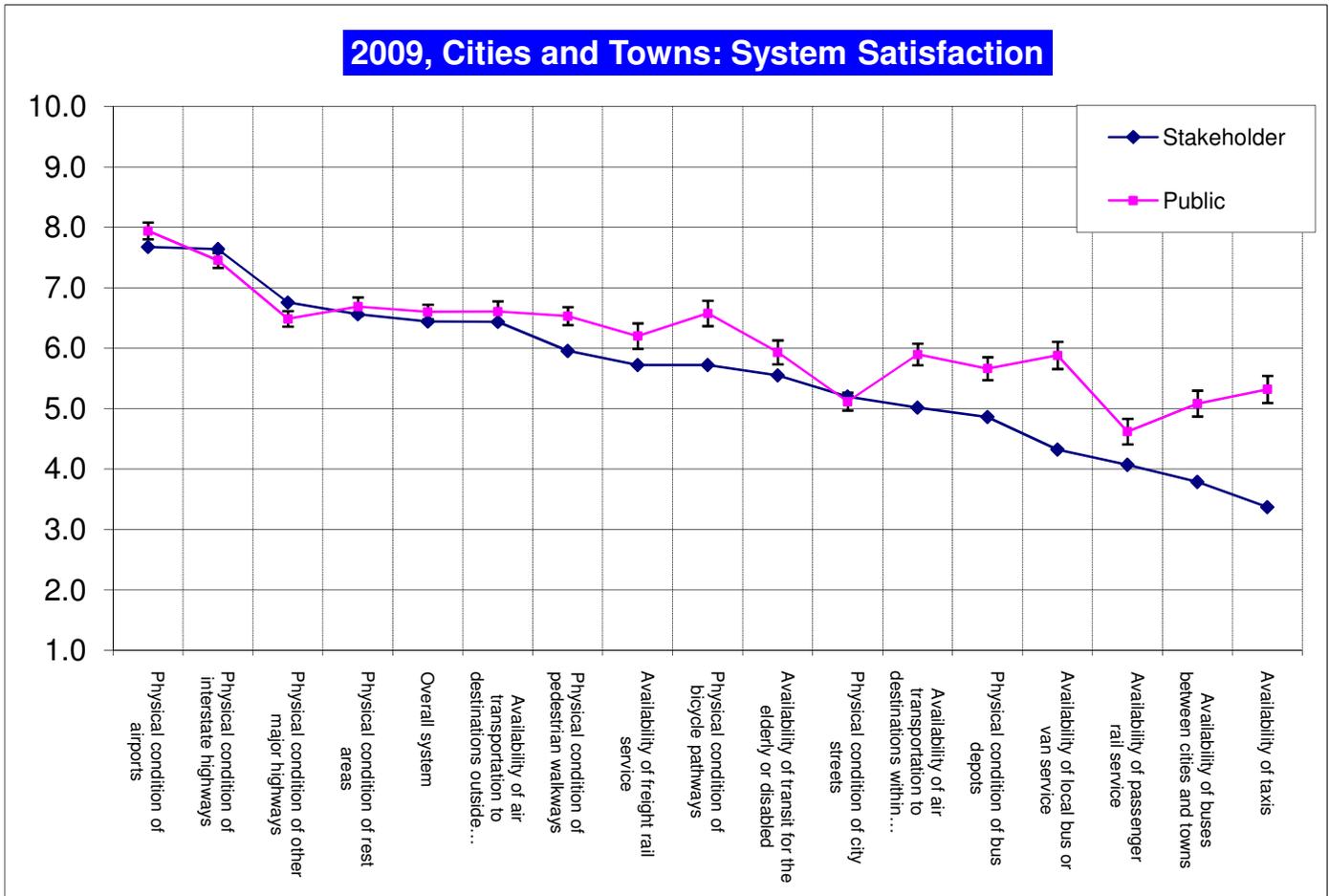


Figure 41: 10 = High

When asked about specific components of the transportation system, cities and towns group members expressed satisfaction with 11 of 16 system components. They were most satisfied with interstate highways and airports. Cities and towns group members expressed dissatisfaction with passenger rail, local transit systems, taxis, and intercity bus service. This group expressed less satisfaction than did the public with ten specific system components.

Actions to Improve the Transportation System

The highest five priorities for improving components of the transportation system among cities and towns group members were, improving the physical condition of other roads and streets, keeping the public informed about transportation issues, maintaining pavement condition, and improving transportation safety (see Figure 42). Promoting the use of existing rail service was rated just over a “High Priority.” Three items were rated as less than a “Medium Priority”. Cities and towns group members rated seven possible actions to improve the transportation system a higher priority than did the public.

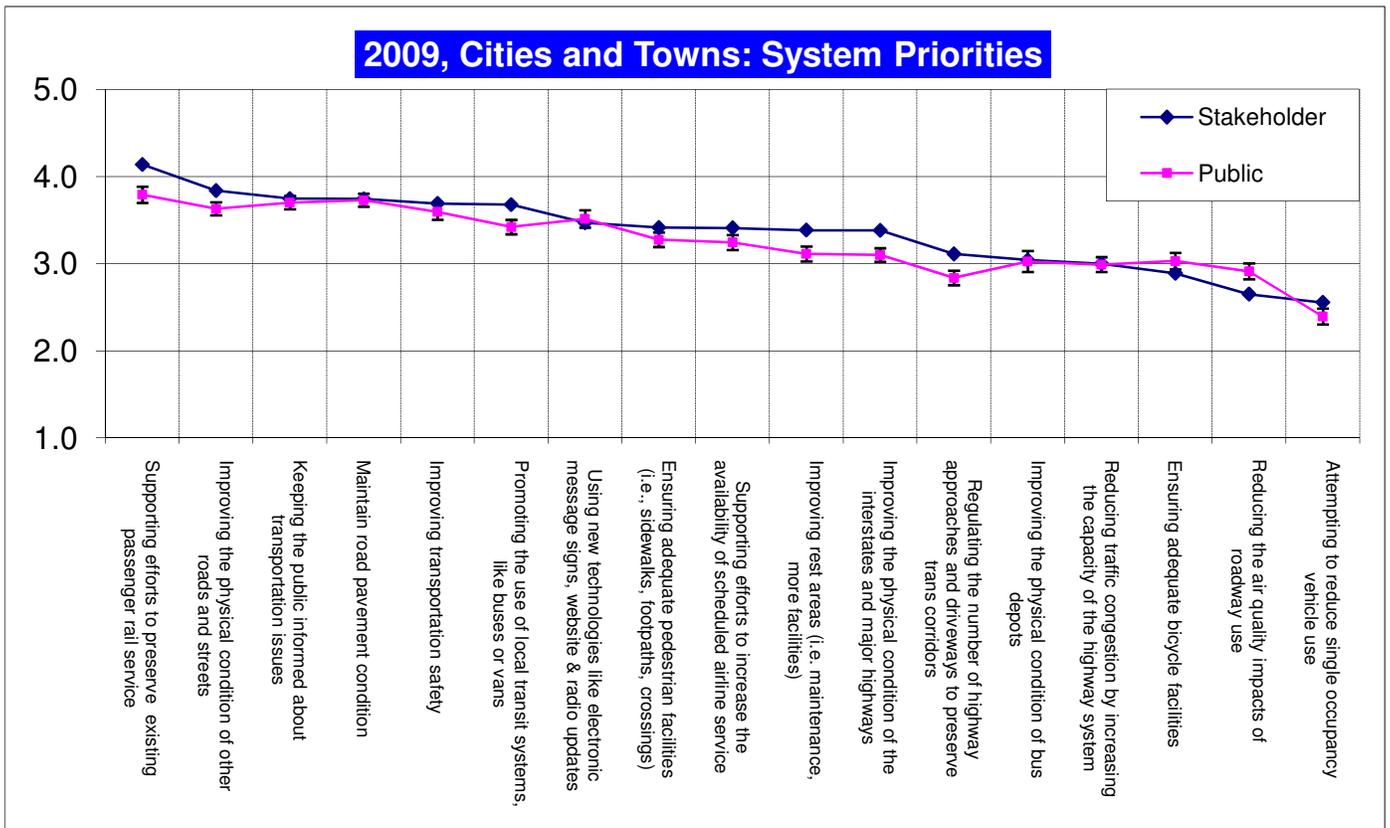


Figure 42: 5 = Very High

Actions to Improve Roadways

The highest priority for roadway improvement among the cities and towns group was widening shoulders for motorists, which was rated a “Somewhat High Priority” (see Figure 43). Only one of these eight items, wider roadways, received a priority score lower than that delivered by the public.

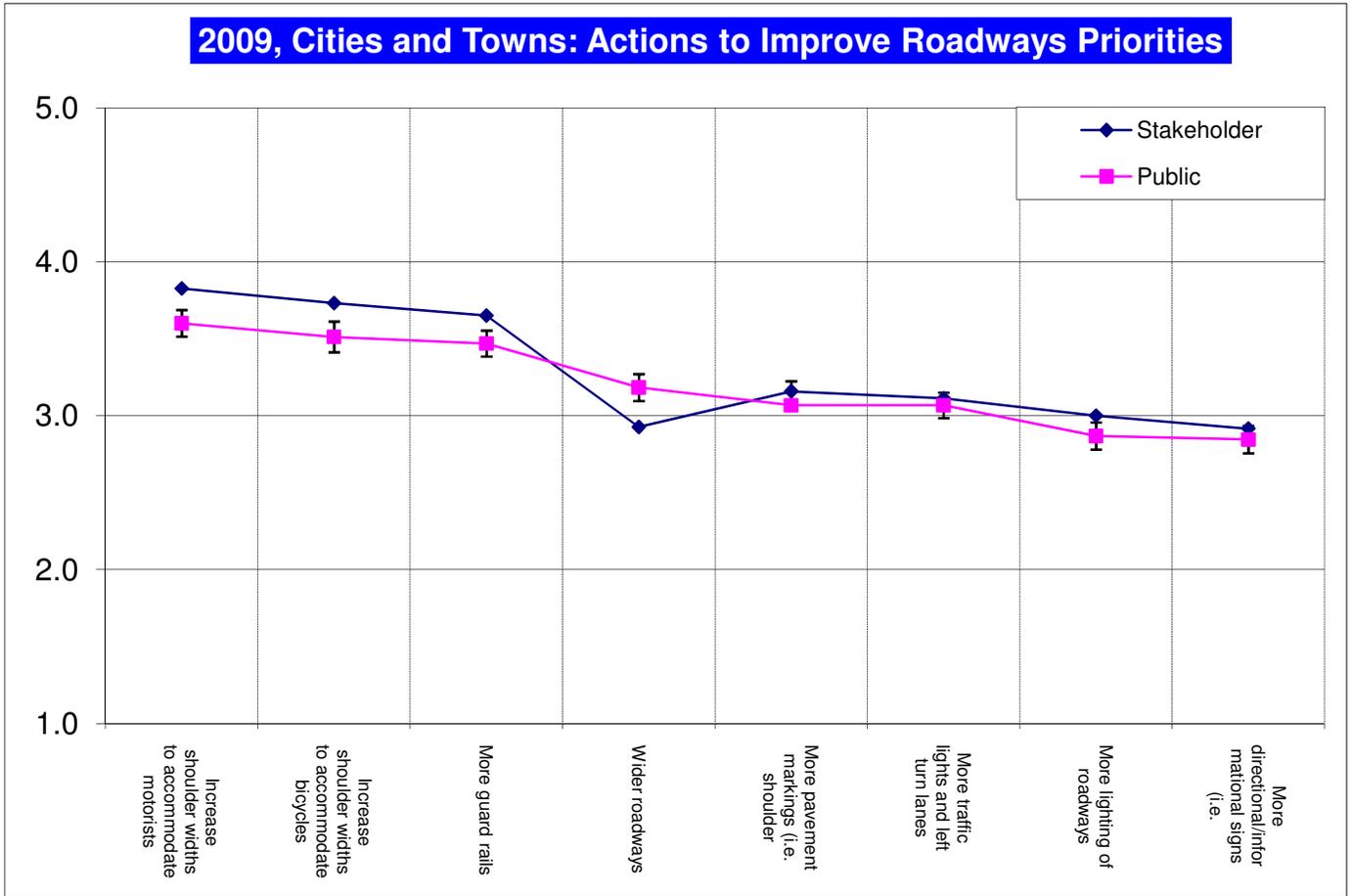


Figure 43: 5 = Very High

General Communication Tool Ratings

The 2009 city and town stakeholders rated all seven tools examined between somewhat useful and very useful (see Figure 44). Both stakeholders and the public gave television and radio their highest ratings. City and town stakeholders rated all tools as more useful than did the public.

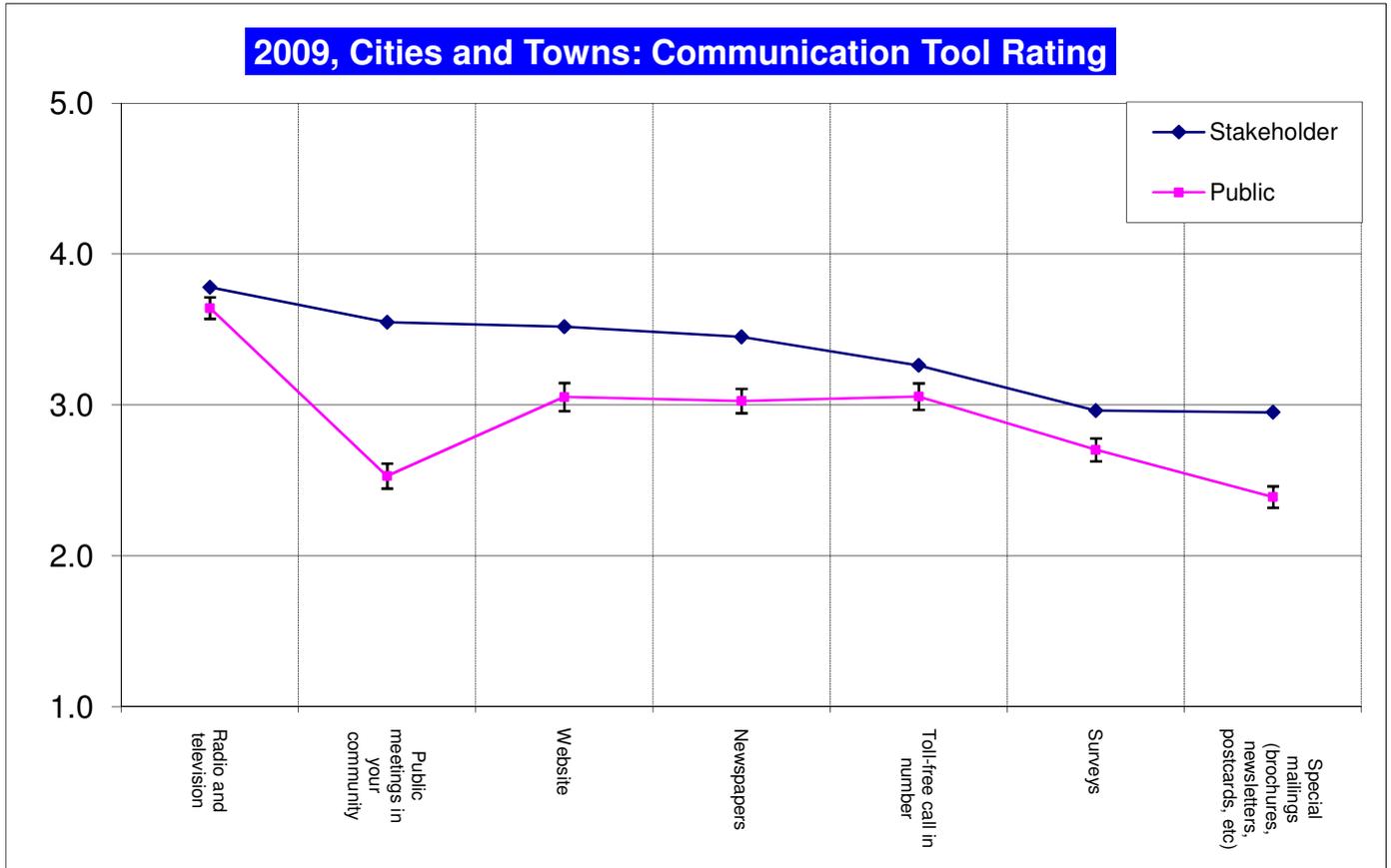


Figure 44: 5 = Extremely Useful

Planning and Project Communication Tool Ratings

MDT also asked city and town stakeholders to rate planning and project specific communication tools (see Figure 45). City and town stakeholders rated each of the six tools studied just over somewhat useful. Stakeholders gave their highest ratings to maps and pictures or graphics.

These scores are all higher than the general public, which rated only two of the items studied higher than somewhat useful.

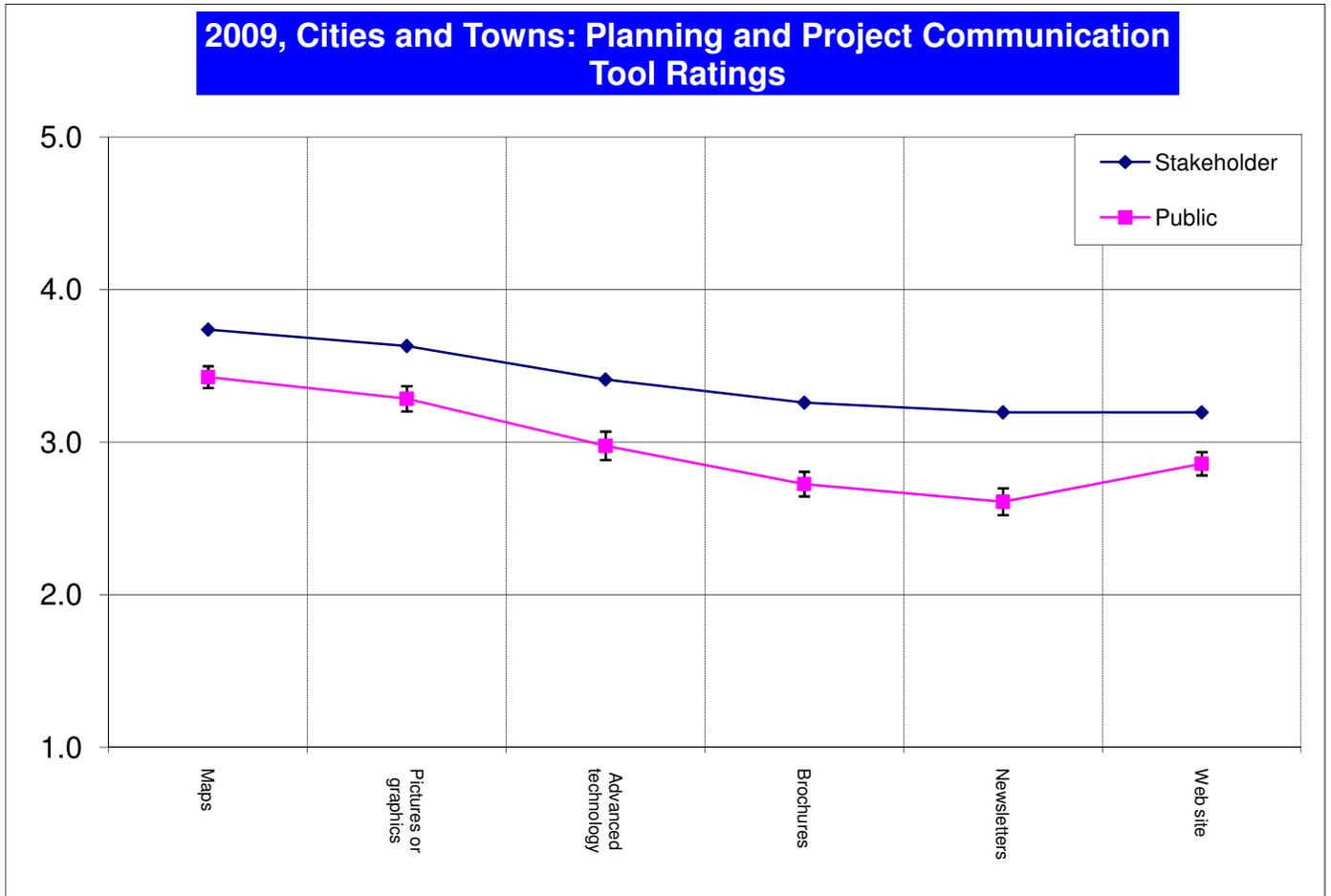


Figure 45: 5 = Extremely Useful

MDT Customer Service and Performance Grades

City and town group grades ranged from B+ to C+ (see Figure 46). These closely paralleled the publics'. In no instance did the difference between groups have statistical significance.

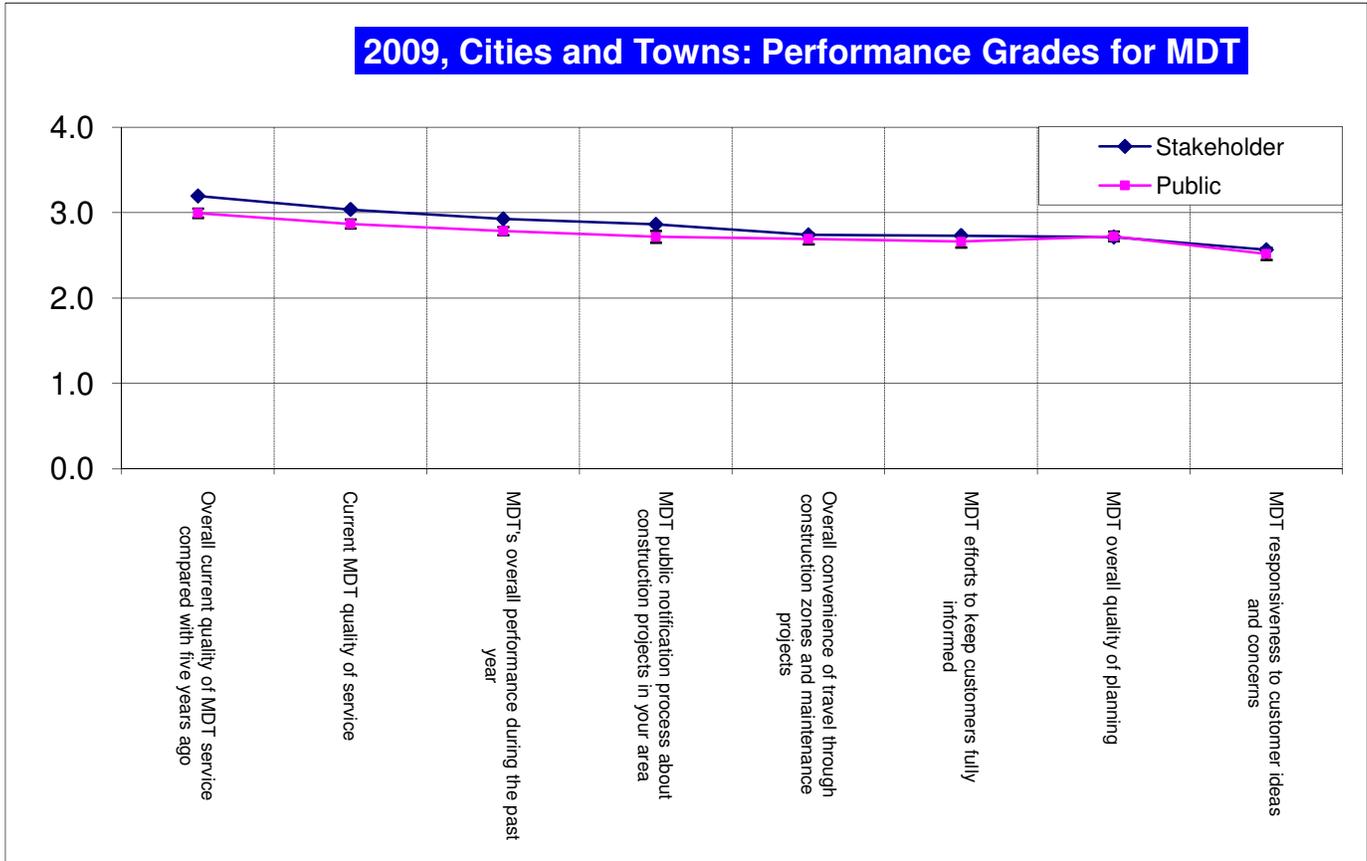


Figure 46: 4 = A

Security for System Components

City and town group respondents were asked to rate the security importance of various transportation system components. Each component was rated on a scale from 1 – 5 where 1 is not at all important and 5 is extremely important.

City and town group stakeholders gave importance ratings that fell between extremely important and somewhat important. Stakeholders' ratings for importance paralleled those given by the public. However, city and town stakeholders rated six of the ten items as more important than did the public.

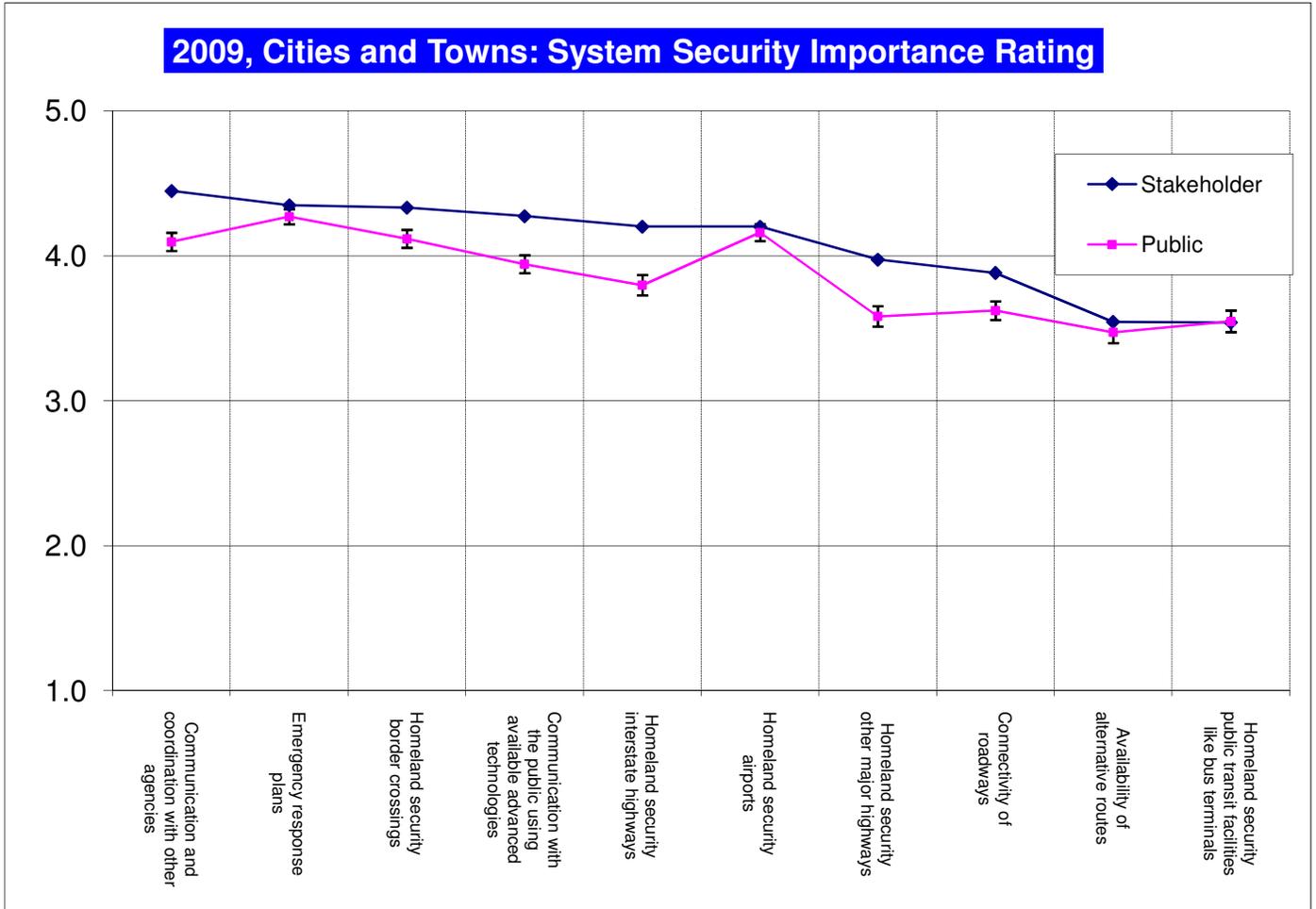


Figure 47: 5 = Extremely Important

COUNTIES STAKEHOLDER GROUP

This group consists of county commission chairpersons from across Montana. In 2009, 43 completed interviews were collected from members of the counties group compared to 55 responses that were collected in 2007.

Transportation System Satisfaction

Counties group respondents were moderately satisfied with the transportation system overall, giving it a mean rating of 6.69 on a 1 to 10 scale. This is equal to the public's mean rating of 6.6 (see Figure 48). The 2009 rating is higher than this group's 2007 rating (6.54).

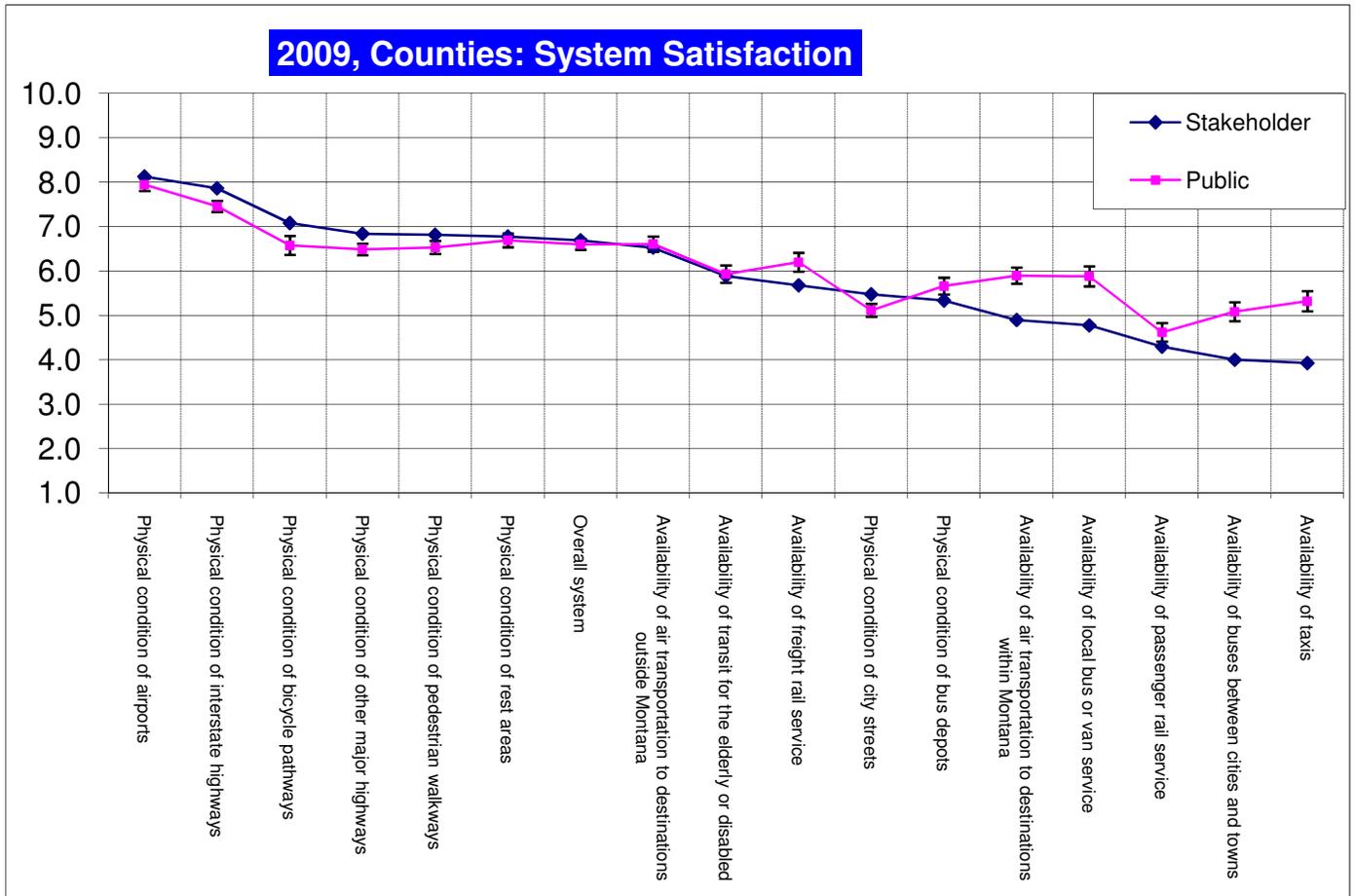


Figure 48: 10 = High

When asked about specific components of the transportation system, counties group members expressed satisfaction with 11 of 16 system components. They were most satisfied with interstate highways and airports. Counties group members expressed dissatisfaction with passenger rail service, local transit service, taxis, and intercity bus service. This group expressed less satisfaction than did the public with five specific system components.

Actions to Improve the Transportation System

The highest priority for improving components of the transportation system among counties group members was improving the physical condition of roads and streets (see Figure 49). This item was rated a “High Priority.” Four items were rated as less than a “Medium Priority”: regulating the number of highway approaches, adequate bike facilities, reducing the air quality impact of roadway use, and reducing the number of single occupant vehicles. Counties group members rated five possible actions to improve the transportation system a higher priority than did the public. This group rated no items at least one full scale point higher in priority than did the public; their priorities closely paralleled those of the public. However, ensuring adequate bicycle facilities and reducing the air quality impact of roadway use were significantly higher priorities for the public than they were for the county stakeholders.

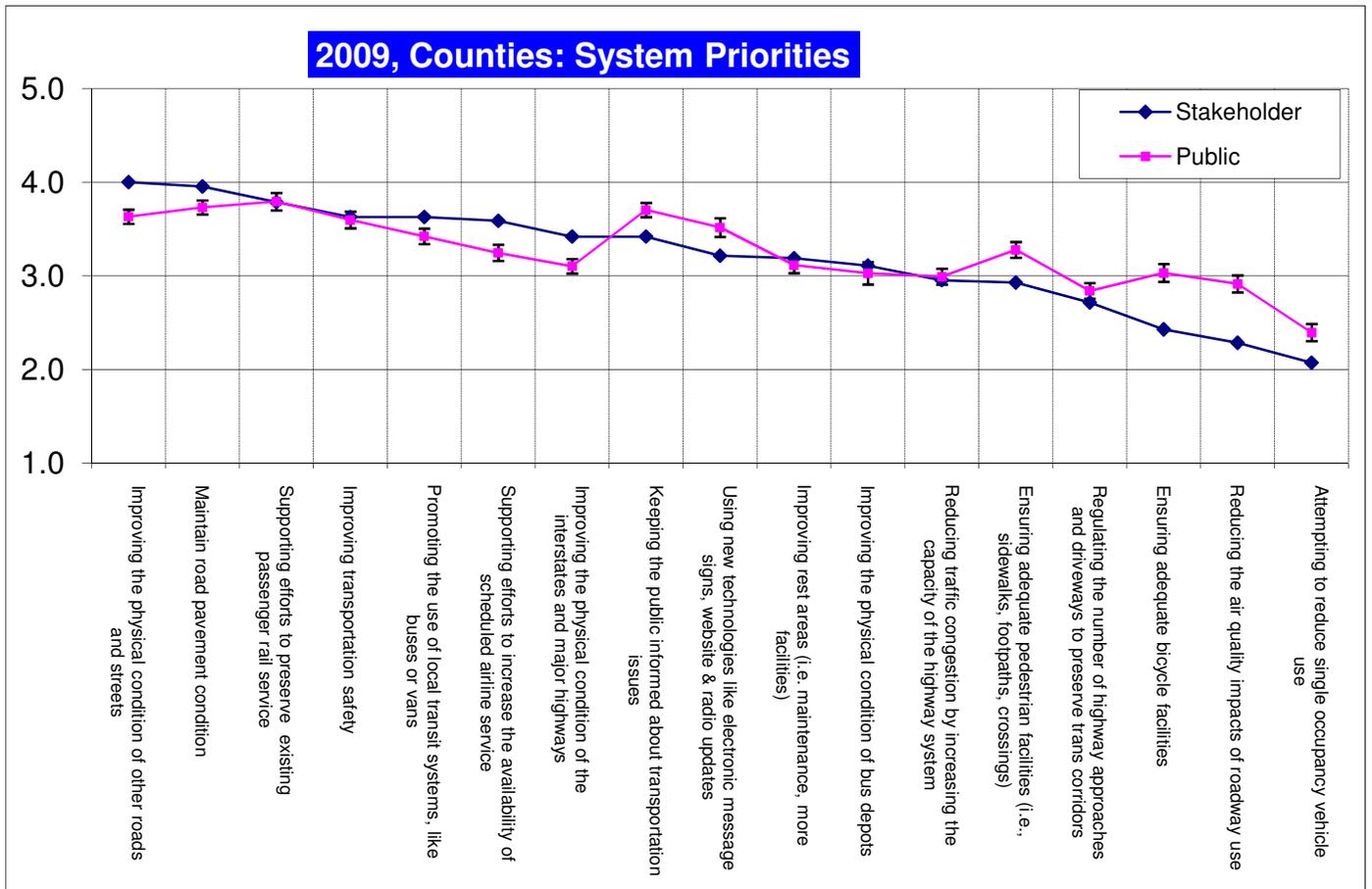


Figure 49: 5 = Very High

Actions to Improve Roadways

The highest priority roadway improvements for the counties group were more guard rails and widening shoulders for motorists (see Figure 50). The remaining six items were rated a “Medium Priority”, and none of these items received a priority score lower than that delivered by the public. Increasing shoulder widths to accommodate bicycles are a significantly higher priority for the public than they are for county stakeholders.

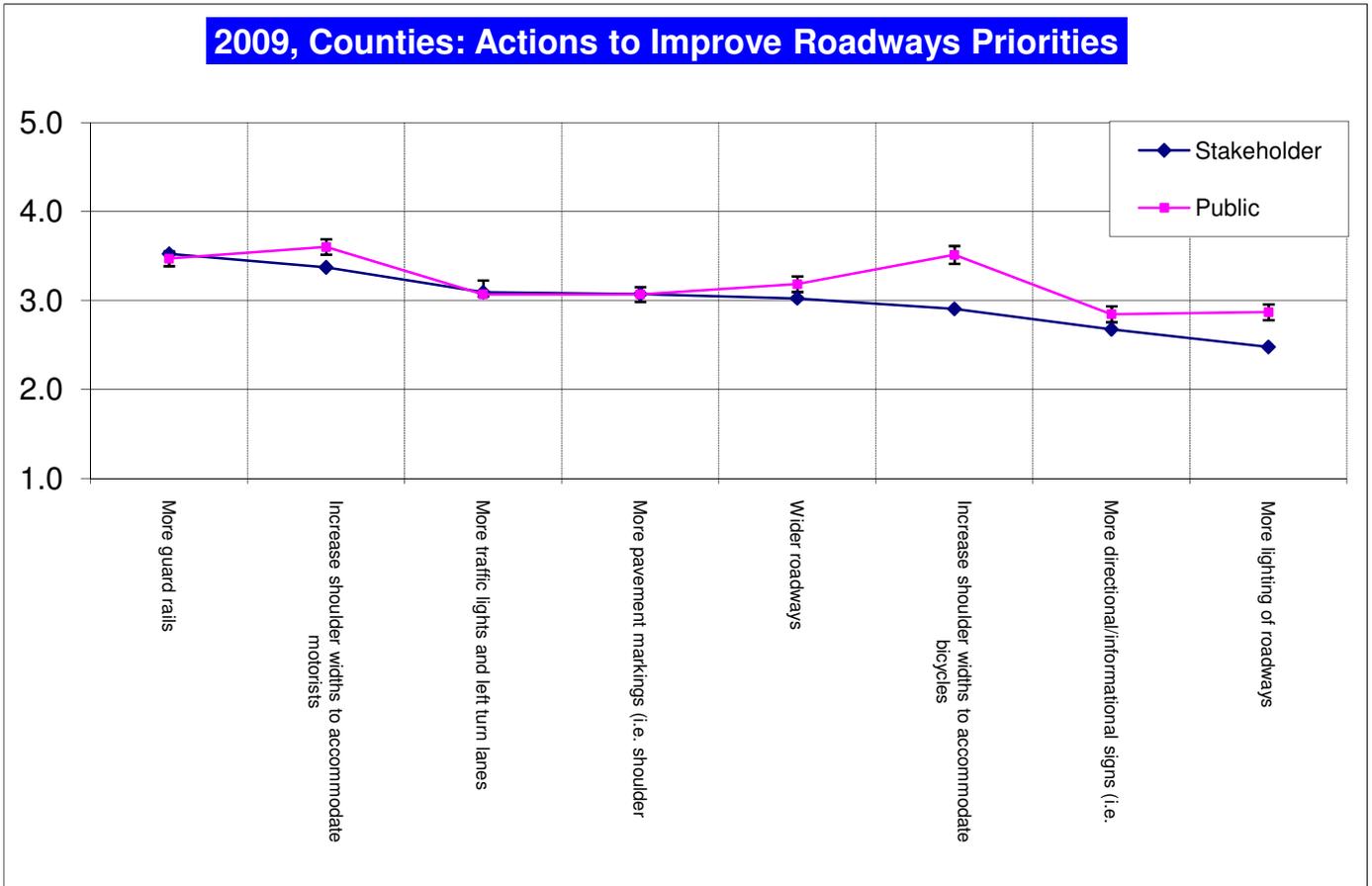


Figure 50: 5 = Very High

General Communication Tool Ratings

The 2009 county stakeholders rated six tools between somewhat useful and very useful.

County stakeholders rated public meetings, the MDT Web site, surveys, the toll-free number, and newspapers just higher than somewhat useful, while the public rated the items lower.

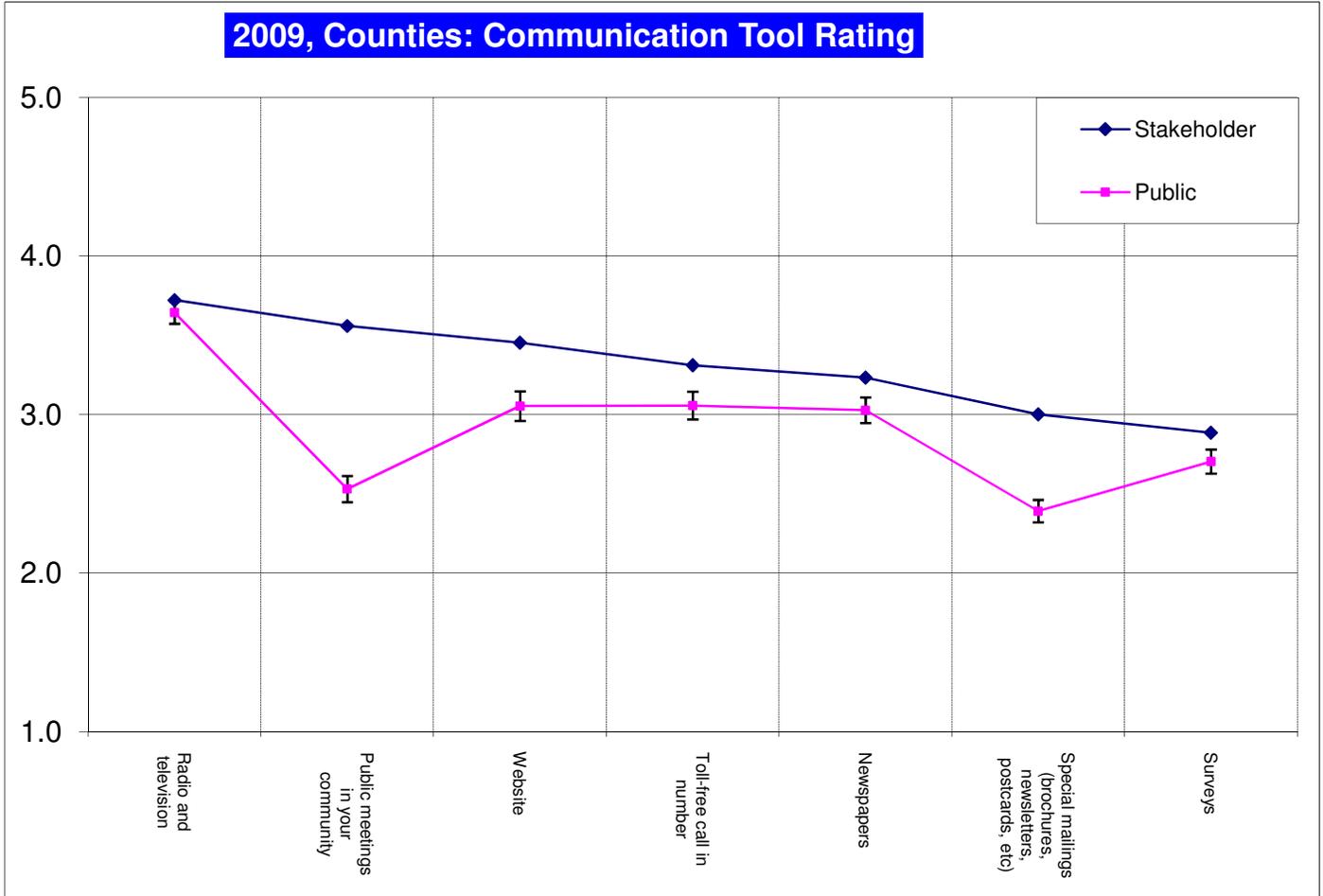


Figure 51: 5 = Extremely Useful

Planning and Project Communication Tool Ratings

MDT also asked county stakeholders to rate planning and project specific communication tools (see Figure 52). County stakeholders rated maps in the very useful range, with pictures and graphics slightly lower. The other four tools were rated in the “useful” range.

County stakeholders rated all six of the items studied higher than did the general public.

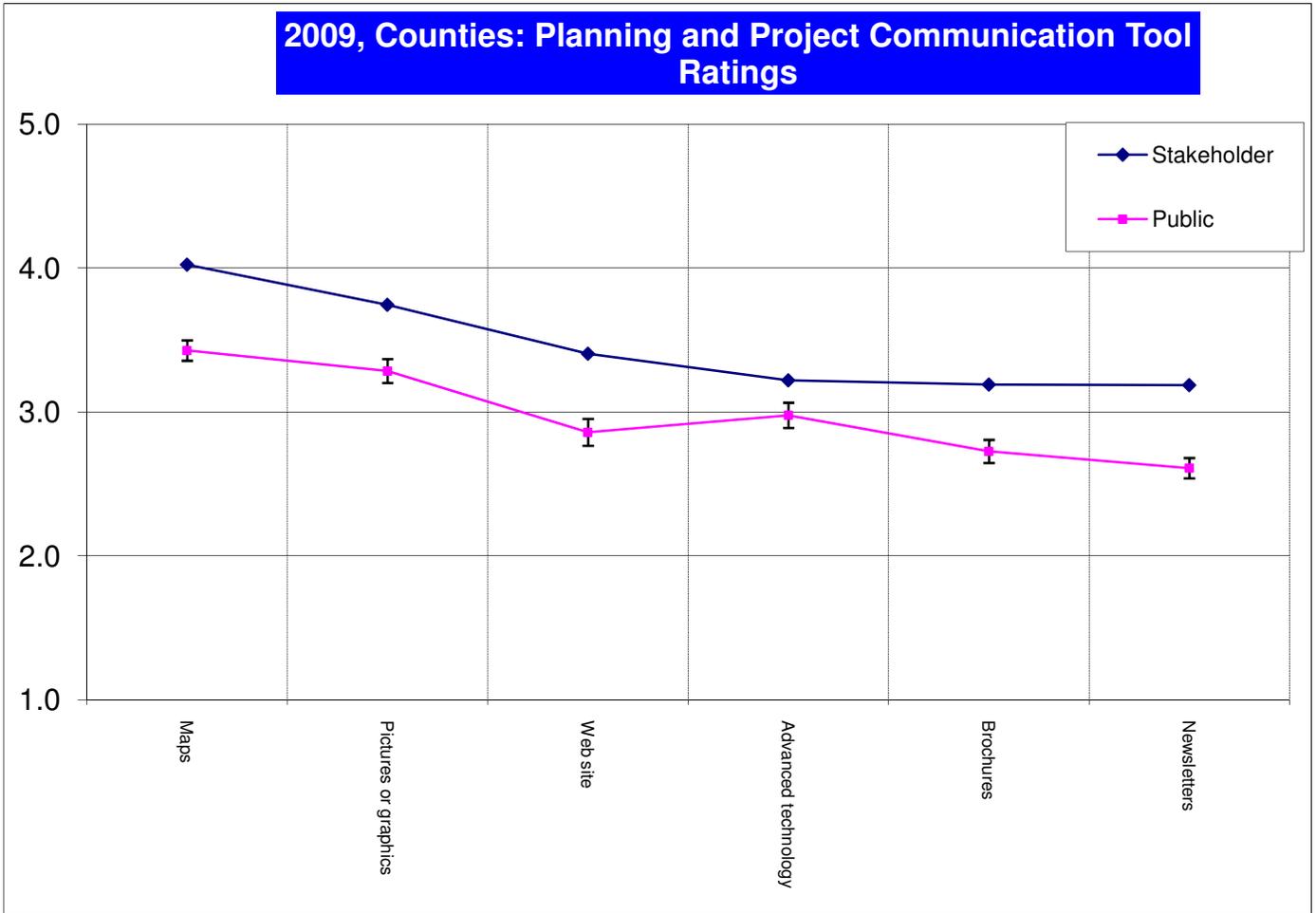


Figure 52: 5 = Extremely Useful

MDT Customer Service and Performance Grades

County group grades ranged from B+ to B- (see Figure 53). These closely paralleled the publics', but were somewhat higher across the board.

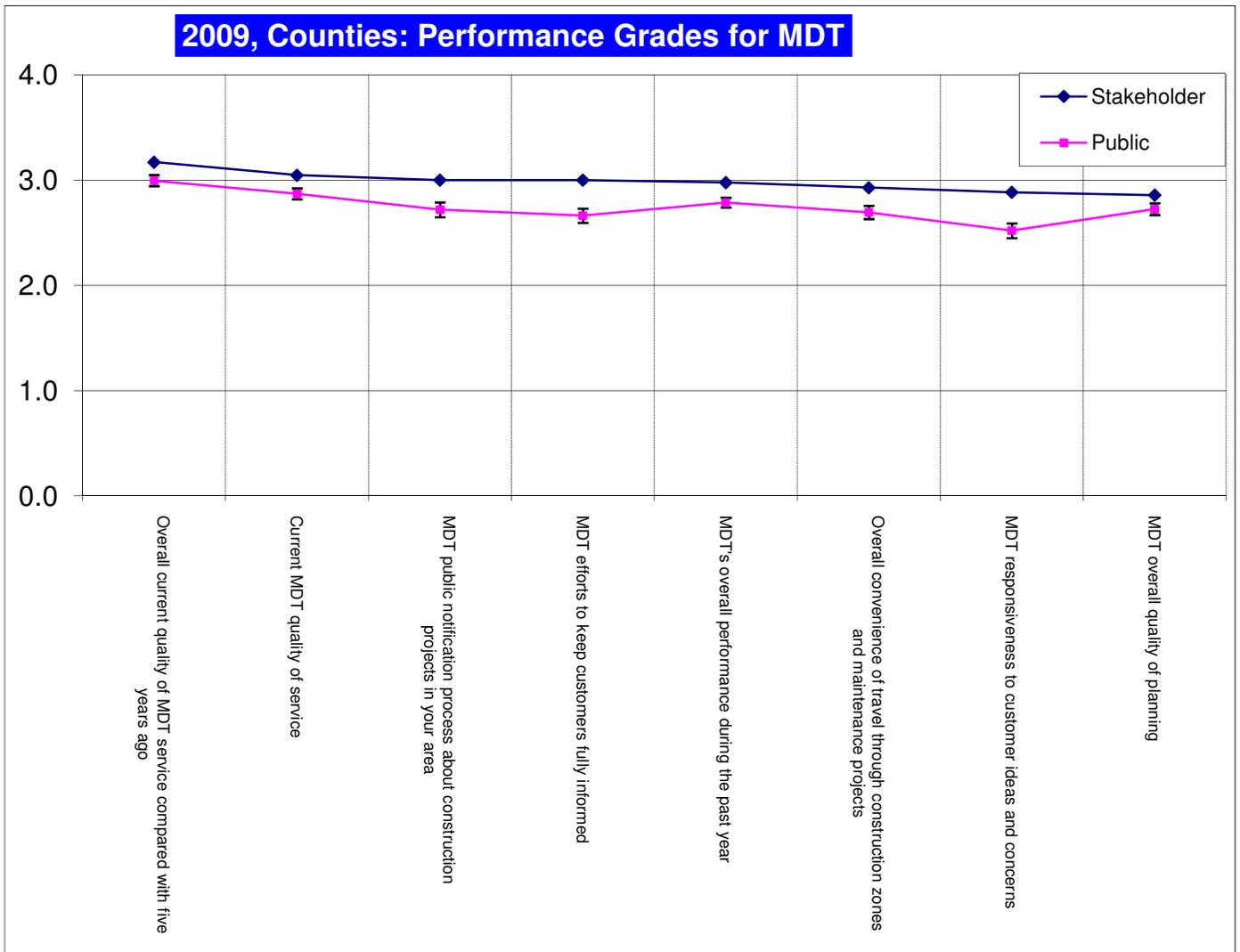


Figure 53: 4 = A

Security for System Components

County group respondents were asked to rate the security importance of various transportation system components. Each component was rated on a scale from 1 – 5 where 1 is not at all important and 5 is extremely important.

County group stakeholders gave importance ratings that fell between extremely important and somewhat important. Seven of the ten measures scored in the “extremely important” range. The 2009 stakeholders rated availability of alternate routes and public facilities like bus terminals lower in importance than other categories.

Stakeholders’ ratings for importance were higher than the general public’s in five of the ten measures. There is little practical meaning in the small statistical differences between the stakeholders’ ratings and the public’s, though, in general, county group stakeholders rated security for system components higher than did the public.

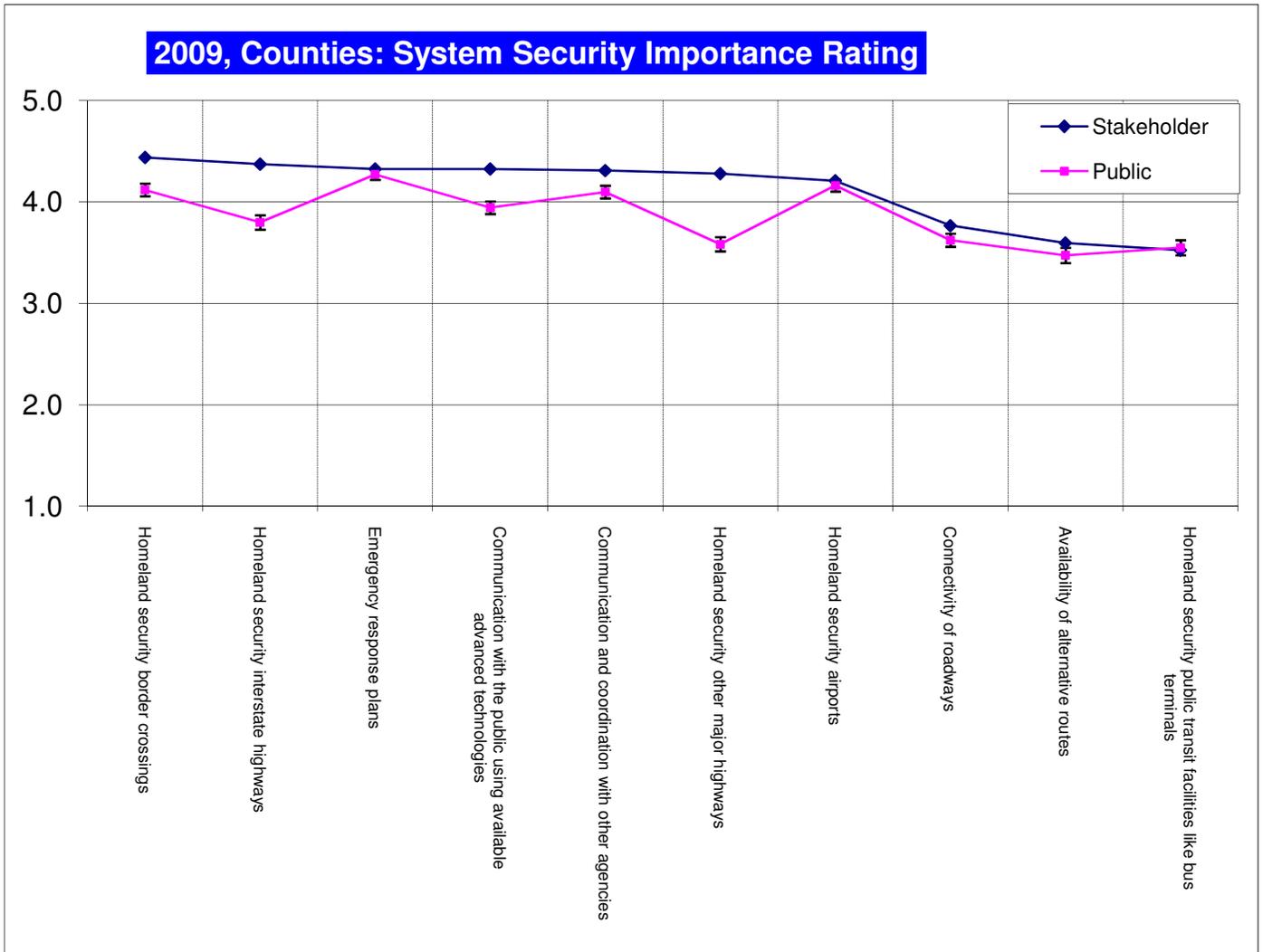


Figure 54: 5 = Extremely Important

PASSENGER TRANSPORTATION STAKEHOLDER GROUP

This group is represented by various passenger transportation interests from across Montana. Stakeholders include representatives from:

- Public transit agencies
- Social service agencies
- Intercity bus agencies
- Rail passenger interests
- Air passenger interests

In 2009, 70 completed interviews with passenger transportation group members were obtained compared to 113 interviews that were obtained in 2007.

Transportation System Satisfaction

Passenger transportation group respondents were moderately satisfied with the transportation system overall, giving it a mean rating of 6.17 on a 1 to 10 scale. This is lower than the public's mean rating of 6.6 (see Figure 55). The 2009 rating is lower than the 2007 rating (6.61).

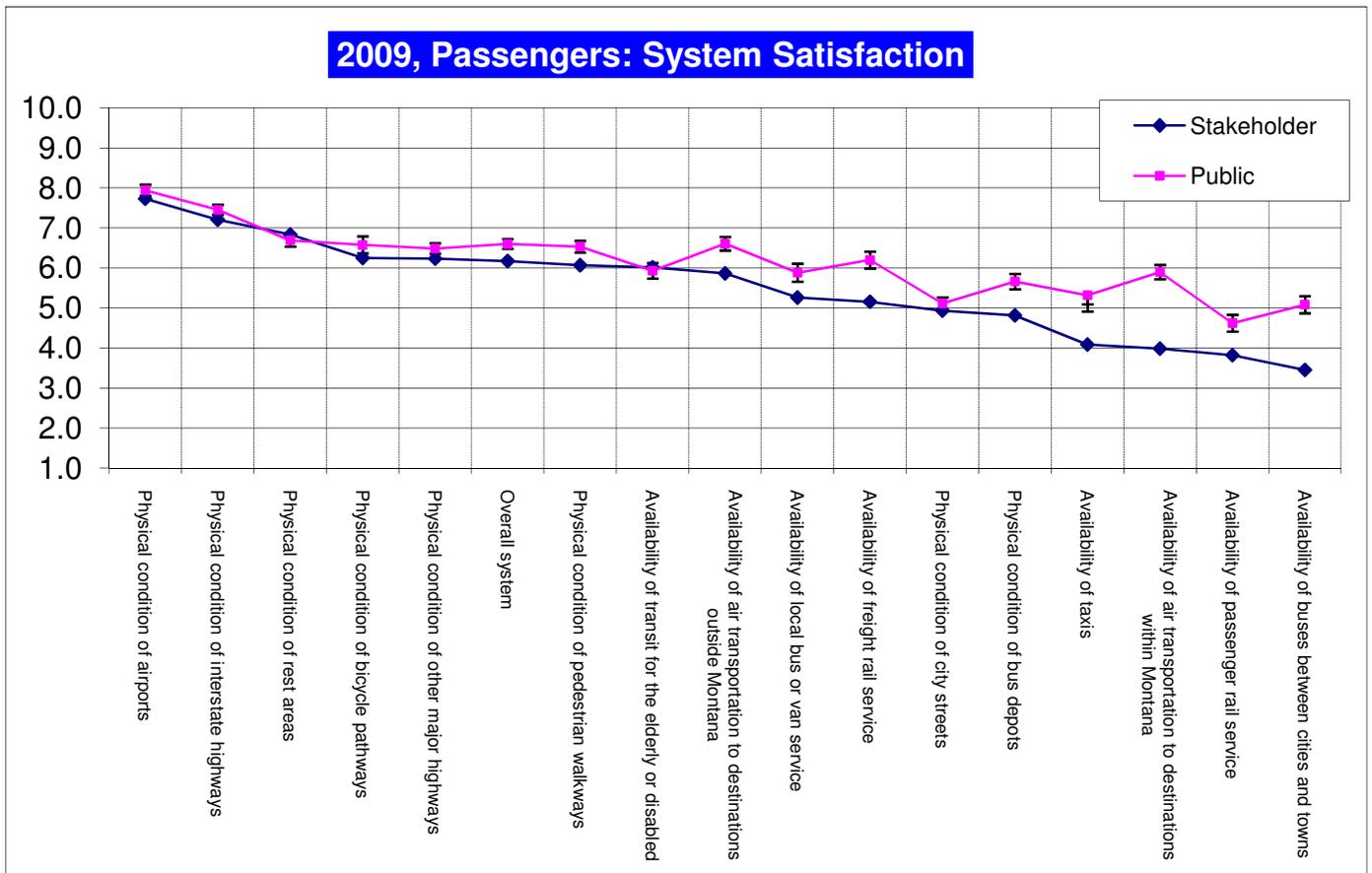


Figure 55: 10 = High

When asked about specific components of the transportation system, passenger transportation group members expressed satisfaction with 11 of 16 system components. They were most satisfied with airports and interstate highways. Passenger transportation group members expressed dissatisfaction with promoting use of existing passenger rail service, bus depots, taxis, intercity bus service, and the availability of transportation to destinations within Montana. This group expressed less satisfaction than did the public with 9 specific system components.

Actions to Improve the Transportation System

The highest priority for improving components of the transportation system among passenger transportation group members was supporting efforts to preserve existing passenger rail service (see Figure 56). This item was rated a “Very High” priority, as was promoting the use of local transit. Two items were rated as less than “Medium Priority”. Passenger transportation group members rated 8 of the 17 possible actions to improve the transportation system higher priority than did the public.

This group rated no items at least one full scale point higher in priority than did the public; however, the passenger group rated promoting local transit systems significantly higher than the public.

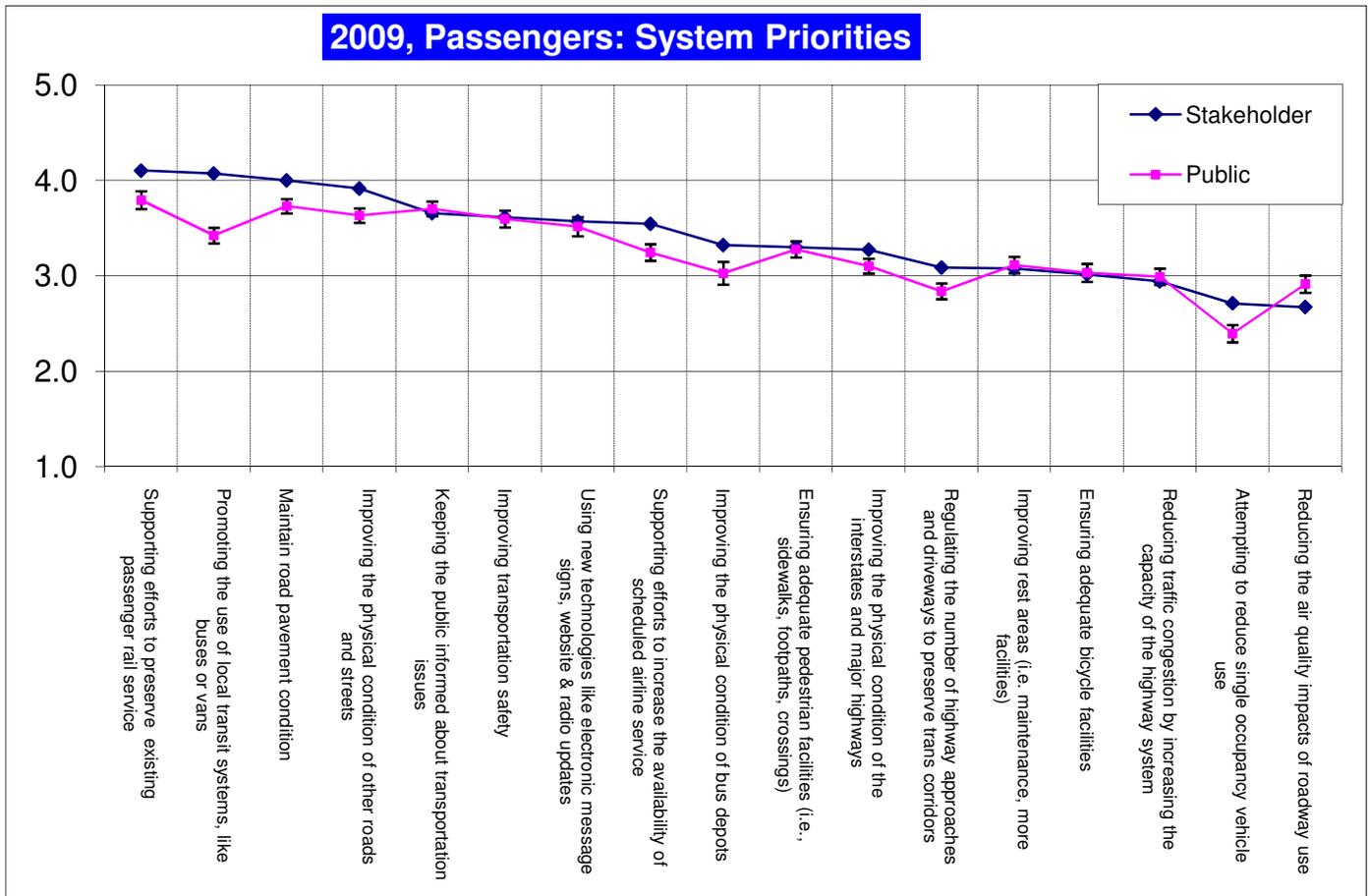


Figure 56: 5 = Very High

Actions to Improve Roadways

The highest priority roadway improvement for the passenger transportation group was more guard rails (see Figure 57). The passenger stakeholder group's ratings very closely matched those of the public.

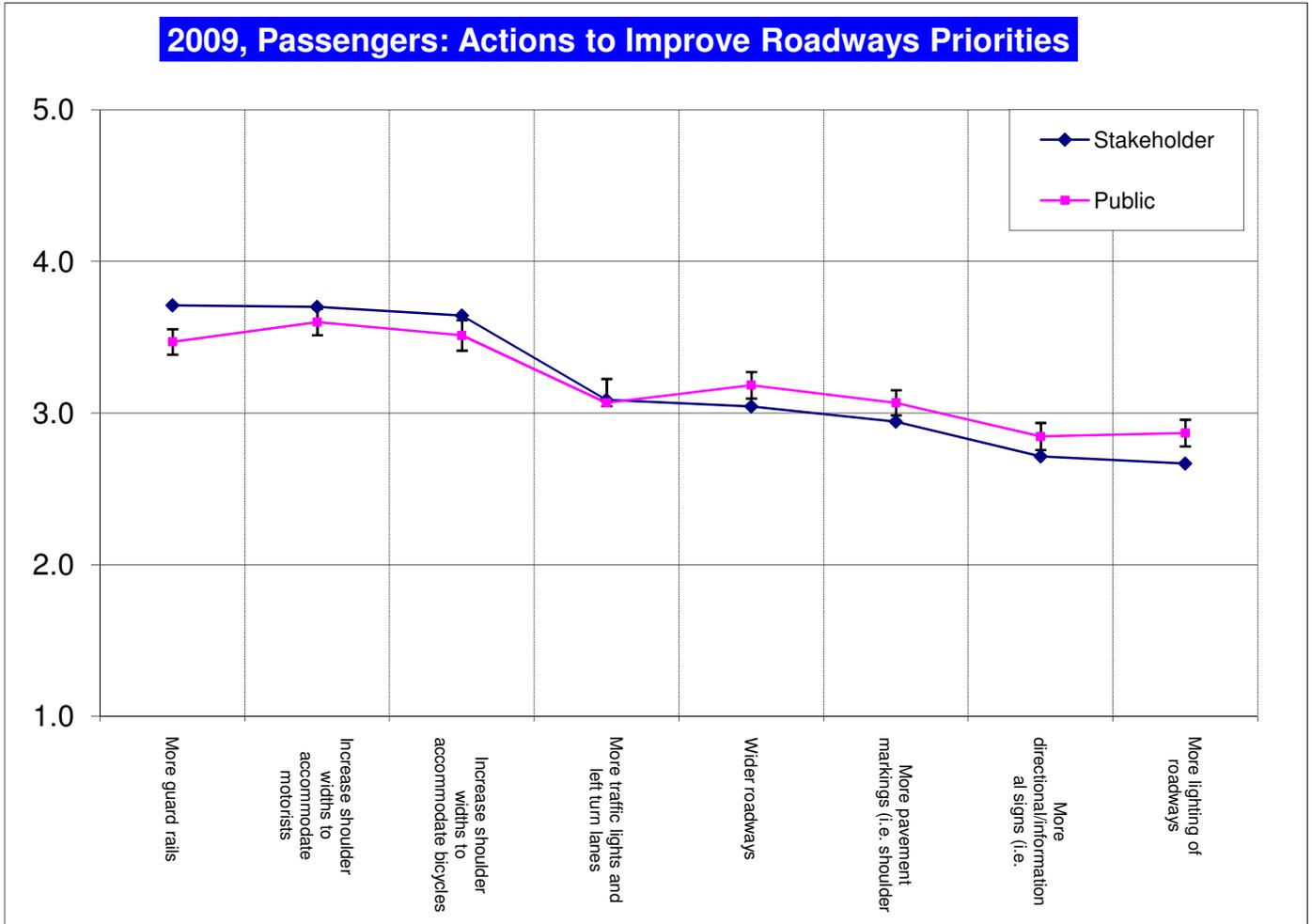


Figure 57: 5 = Very High

General Communication Tool Ratings

The 2009 passenger stakeholders rated three tools between somewhat useful and very useful: electronic media, the MDT Web site, and the toll-free number. They also rated public meetings, a toll-free call in telephone number, special mailings, and surveys slightly lower, in the “somewhat useful” range.

Passenger stakeholders rated the MDT Web site higher than somewhat useful, while the public rated the item at or below somewhat useful. The public found television and radio more useful than did passenger stakeholders.

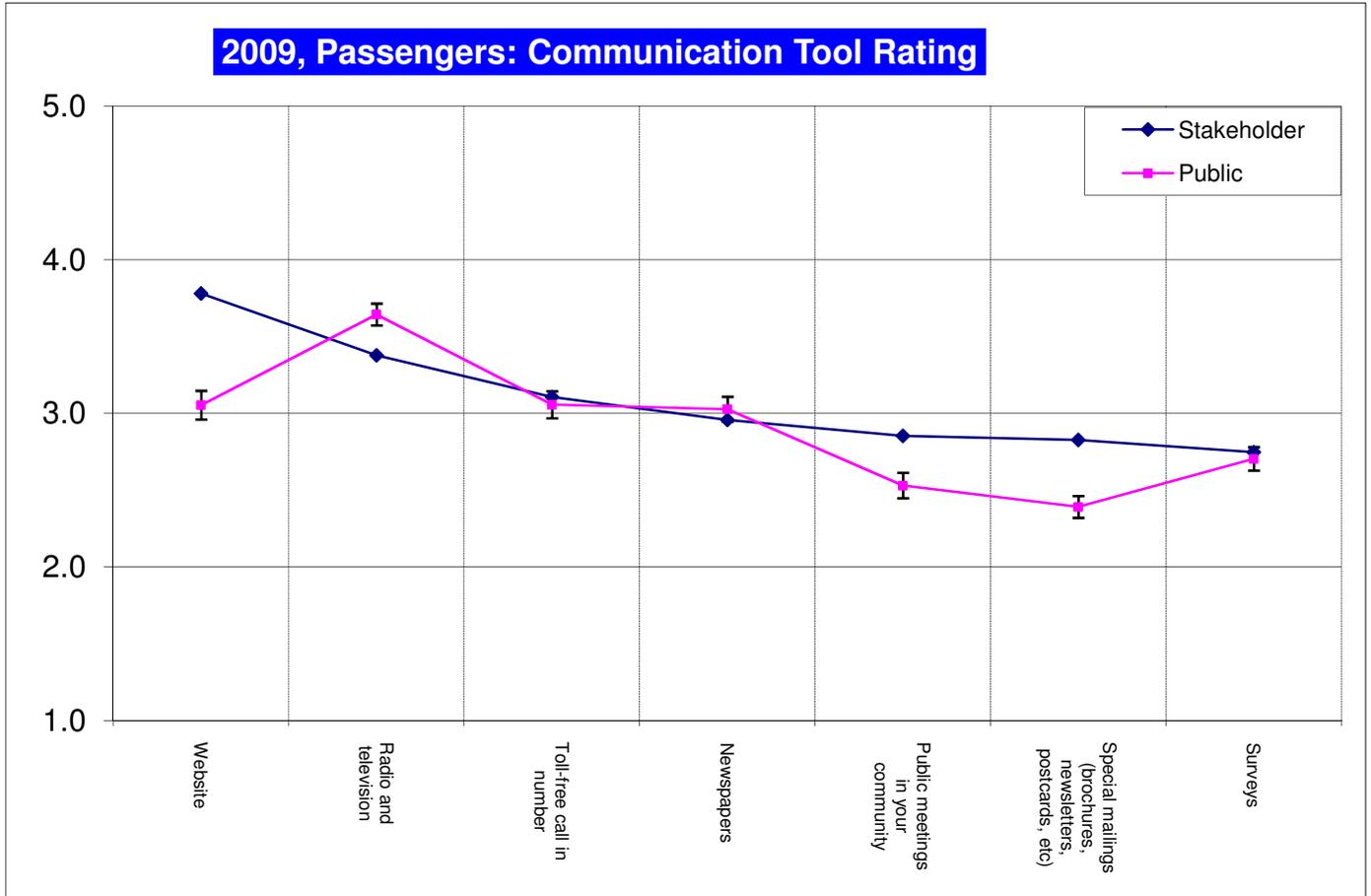


Figure 58: 5 = Extremely Useful

Planning and Project Communication Tool Ratings

MDT also asked passenger stakeholders to rate planning and project specific communication tools (see Figure 59). Passenger stakeholders rated all six tools studied just over somewhat useful. Stakeholders gave their highest ratings to maps and pictures or graphics.

These stakeholders rated the usefulness of the items studied consistently higher than did the general public.

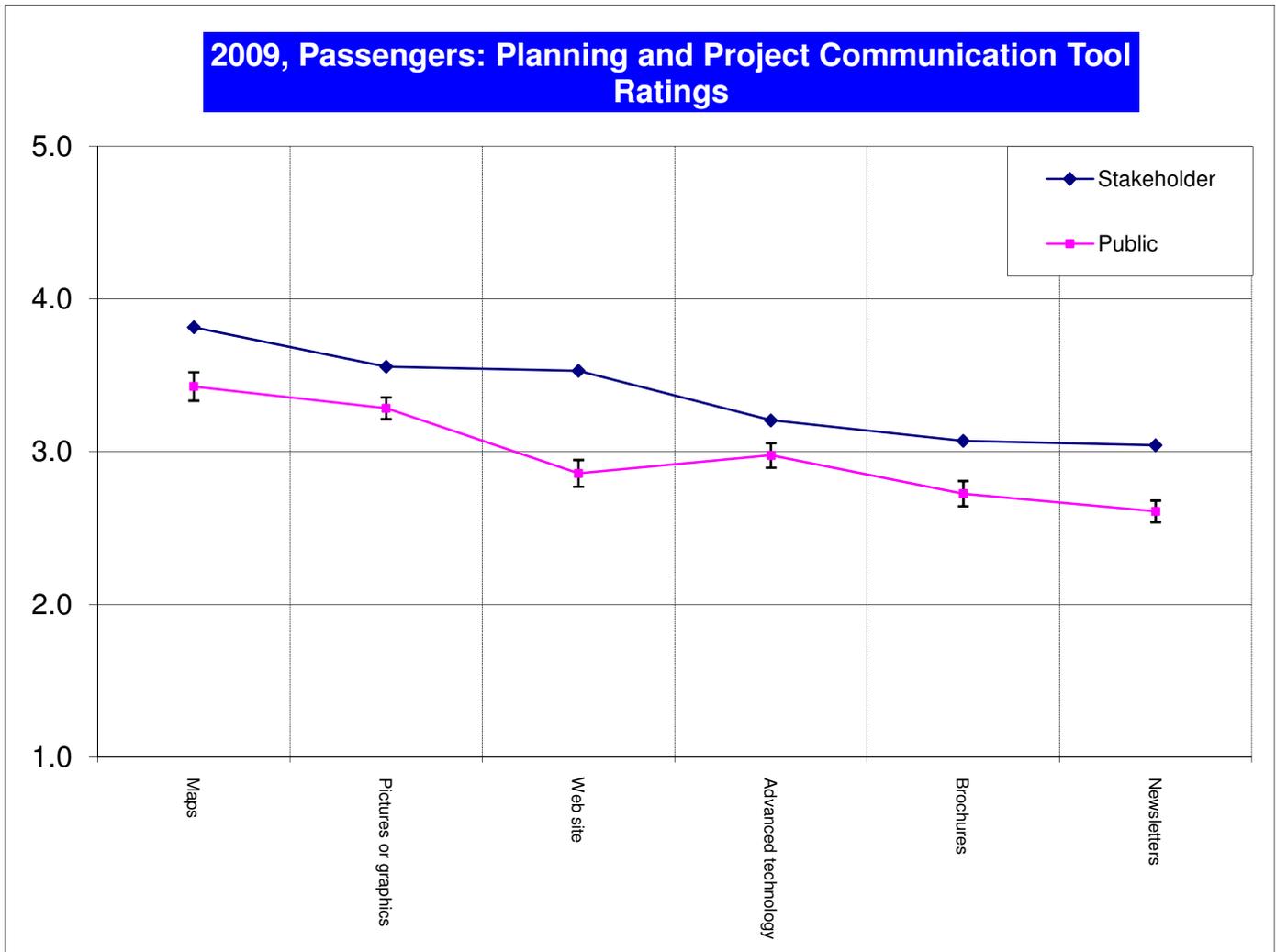


Figure 59: 5 = Extremely Useful

MDT Customer Service and Performance Grades

Passenger group grades ranged from B to C+ (see Figure 60). These closely paralleled the public's. In no instance did the difference between groups have practical significance.

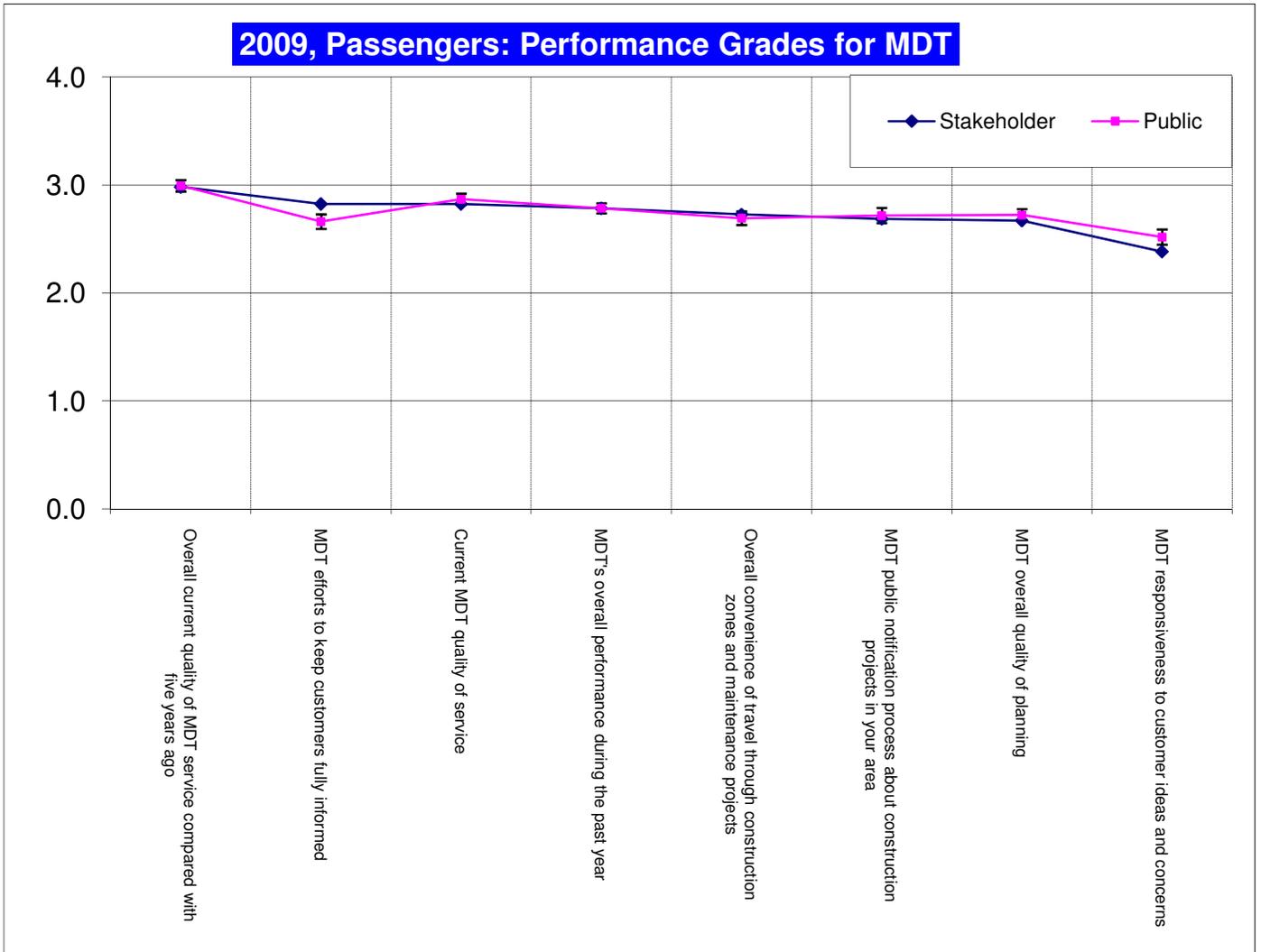


Figure 60: 4 = A

Security for System Components

Passenger group respondents were asked to rate the security importance of various transportation system components. Each component was rated on a scale from 1 – 5 where 1 is not at all important and 5 is extremely important.

Passenger group stakeholders gave importance ratings that fell between extremely important and somewhat important. Stakeholders rated airports, coordinating with other agencies, border crossings, and emergency response plans most important. The 2009 passenger stakeholders rated availability of alternate routes lowest in importance.

Stakeholders' ratings for importance paralleled those given by the public, and were generally higher. There is little practical meaning in the small statistical differences between the stakeholders' ratings and the public's'.

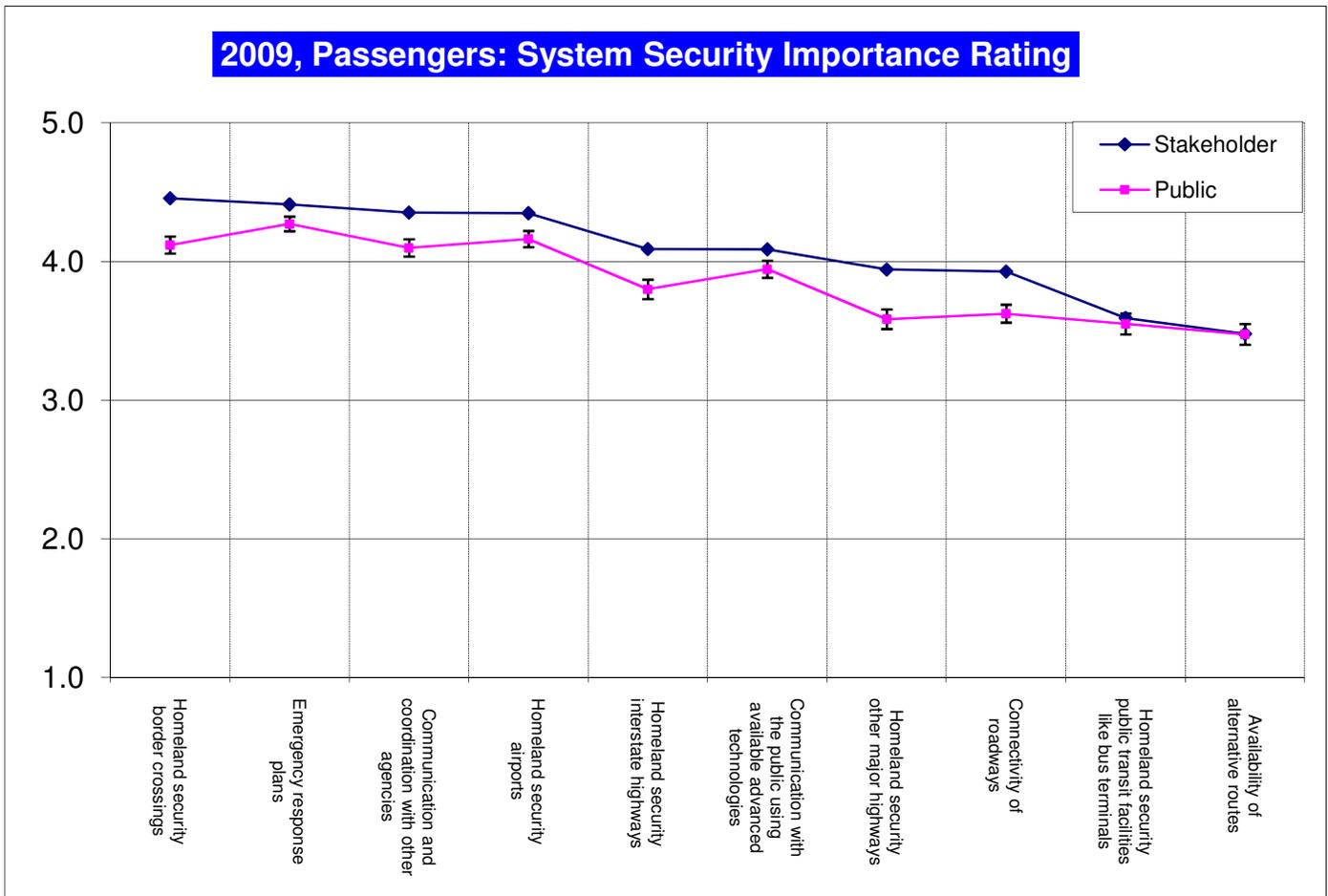


Figure 61: 5 = Extremely Important

STATE AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENT STAKEHOLDER GROUP

This group is represented by non-elected state and federal government officials from across Montana. Stakeholders include (but are not limited to) representatives from:

- Montana Department of Commerce
- Montana Department of Environmental Quality
- Montana Department of Justice (Highway Patrol)
- Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation
- Federal Highway Administration
- Federal Aviation Administration
- U.S. Forest Service
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

In 2009 19 completed interviews with state and federal government group members were obtained compared to 25 interviews that were obtained in 2007.

Transportation System Satisfaction

State and federal government group respondents were moderately satisfied with the transportation system overall, giving it a mean rating of 6.6 on a 1 to 10 scale.

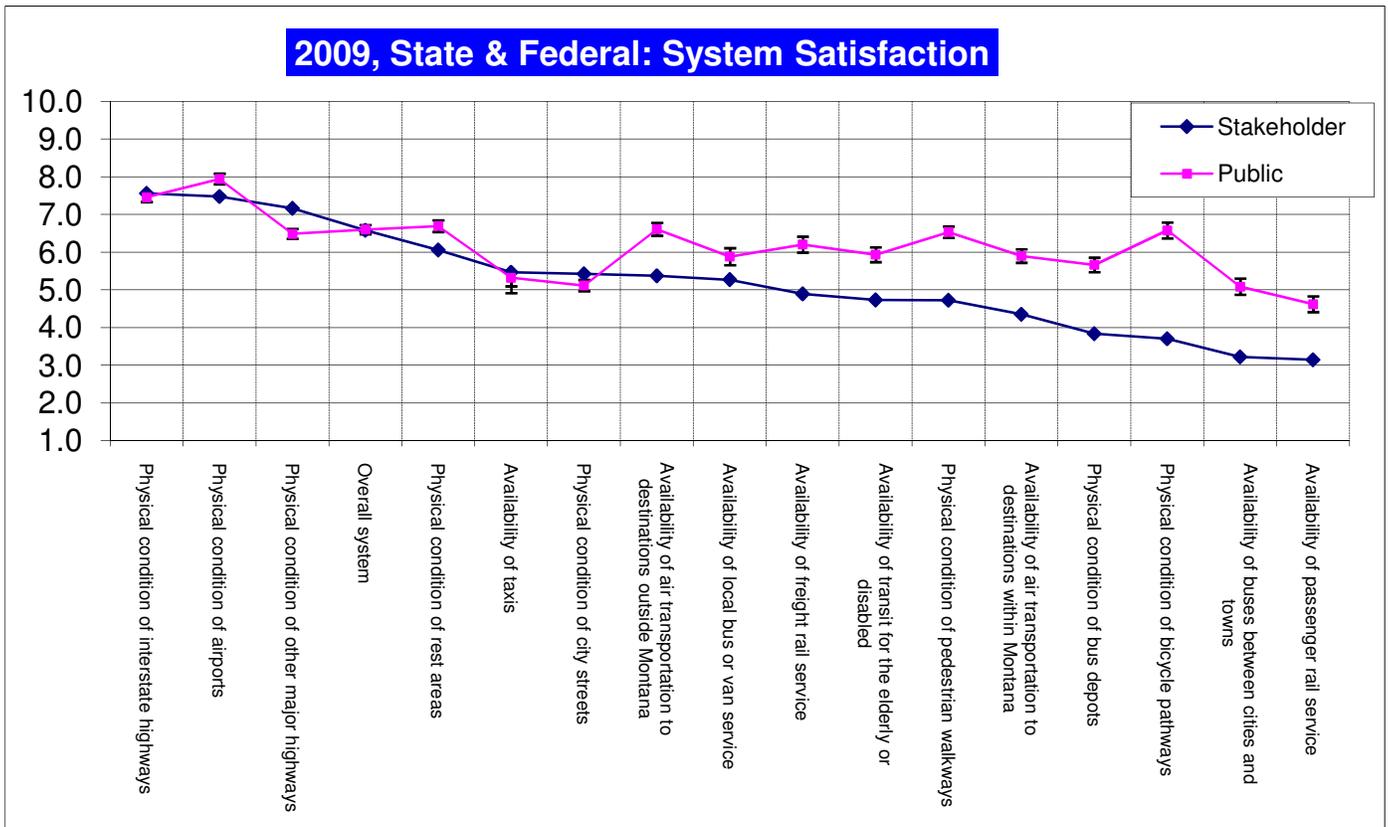


Figure 62: 10 = High

This is equal to the public’s mean rating of 6.6 (see Figure 62). The 2009 rating is roughly the same as the 2007 rating (6.44).

When asked about specific components of the transportation system, state and federal government group members expressed satisfaction with 10 of 16 system components. They were most satisfied with interstate highways and airports. State and federal government group members expressed most dissatisfaction with inter-city bus service and passenger rail service. This group expressed less satisfaction than did the public with 12 specific system components.

Actions to Improve the Transportation System

The highest priority for improving components of the transportation system among state and federal government group members was supporting efforts to preserve existing passenger rail service (see Figure 63). This item was rated a “Very High” priority. Two items were rated under a ”Medium Priority”. State and federal government group members rated eight possible actions to improve the transportation system a higher priority than did the public.

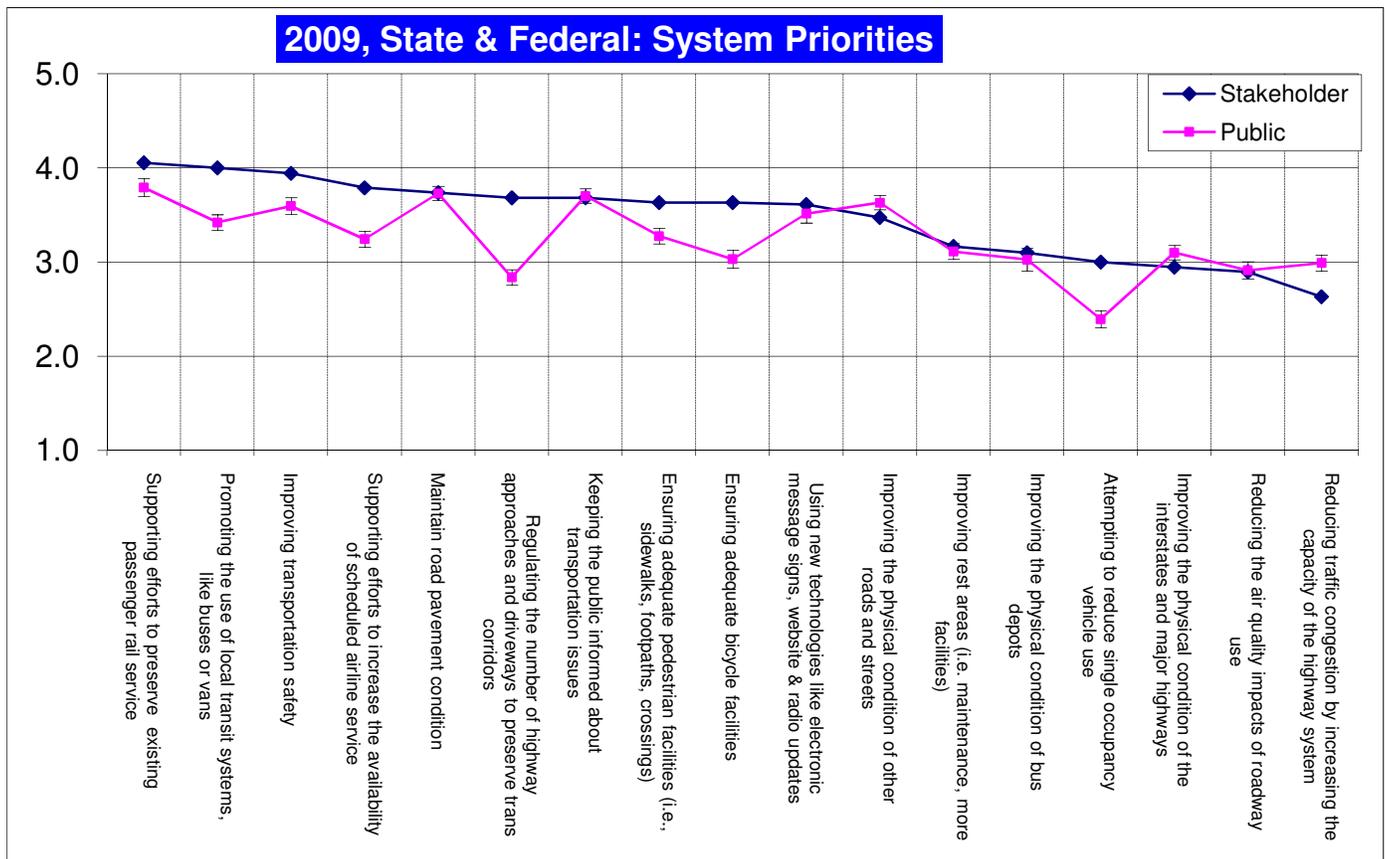


Figure 63: 5 = Very High

This group rated no items at least one full scale point higher in priority than did the public. However, several practical differences between the groups' opinions were observed.

Actions to Improve Roadways

The highest priority roadway improvement for the state and federal government group was widening shoulders for bicyclists, which was rated a "Very High Priority" (see Figure 64). Five items were rated "Somewhat High" or "Medium Priority", and the remaining items were rated below "Medium" priority.

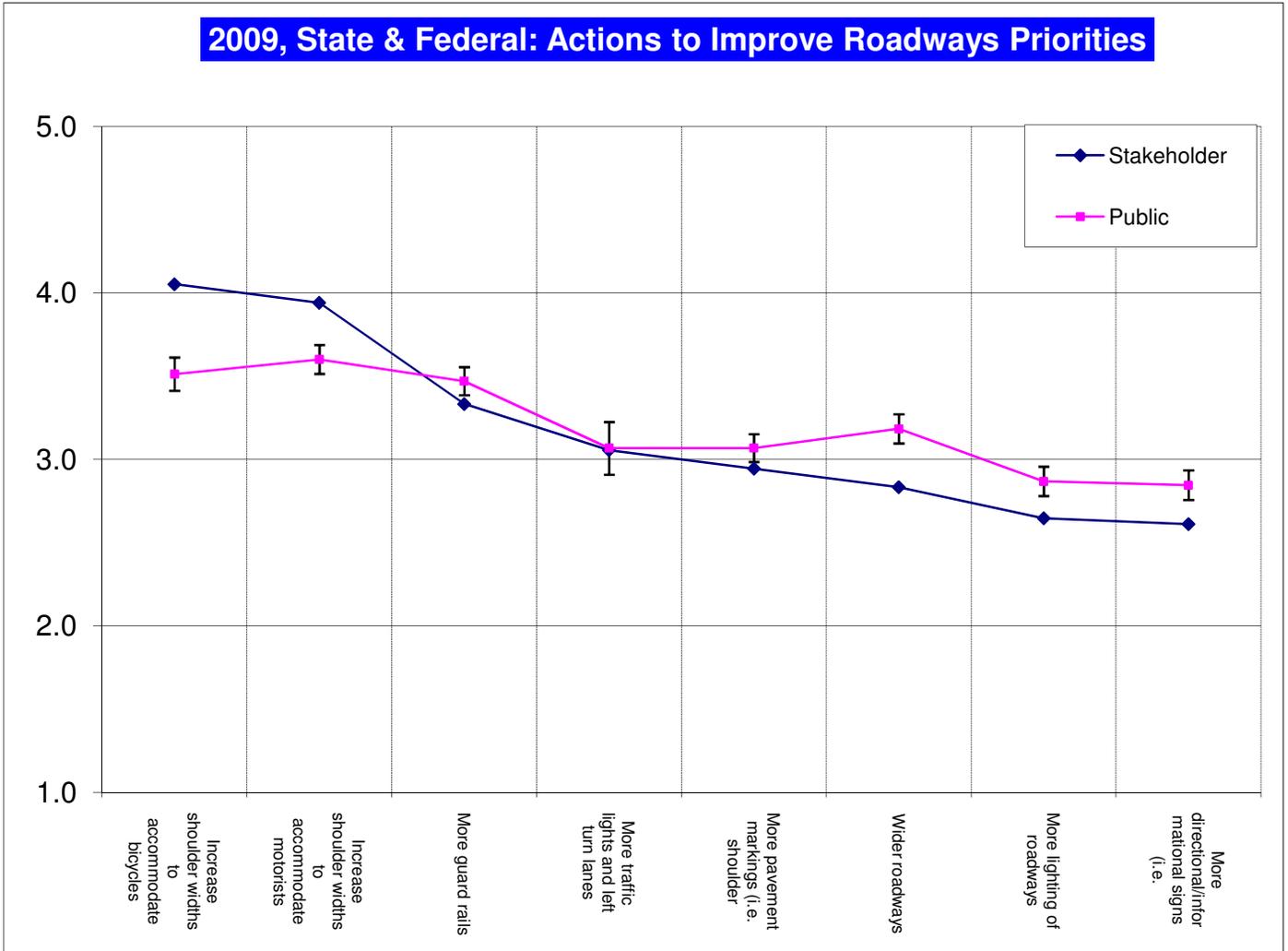


Figure 64: 5 = Very High

General Communication Tool Ratings

The 2009 state and federal stakeholders rated one tool highest: the MDT Web site. The remaining items were rated somewhat useful. Special mailings and surveys rated lower.

State and federal stakeholders rated the MDT Web site and public meetings higher than the public. The public found television and radio, newspapers, and surveys more useful than did state and federal stakeholders.

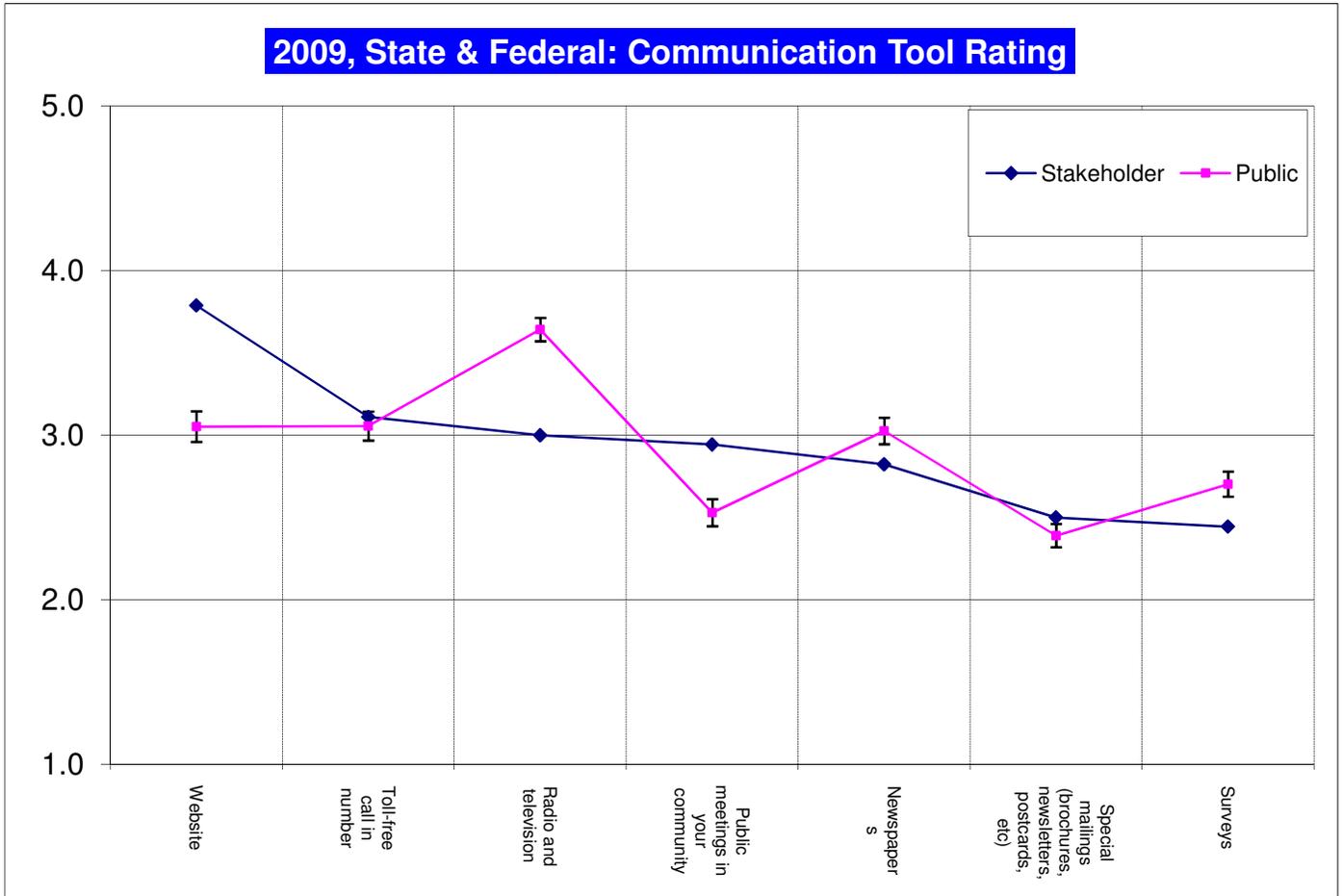


Figure 65: 5 = Extremely Useful

Planning and Project Communication Tool Ratings

MDT also asked state and federal stakeholders to rate planning and project specific communication tools (see Figure 66). State and federal stakeholders rated four of six tools studied just over somewhat useful. State and federal stakeholders gave their highest ratings to maps, Web sites, and pictures or graphics.

The public rated five of the items studied lower than did state and federal stakeholders: pictures or graphics, the MDT Web site, newsletters, brochures, and using advanced technology.

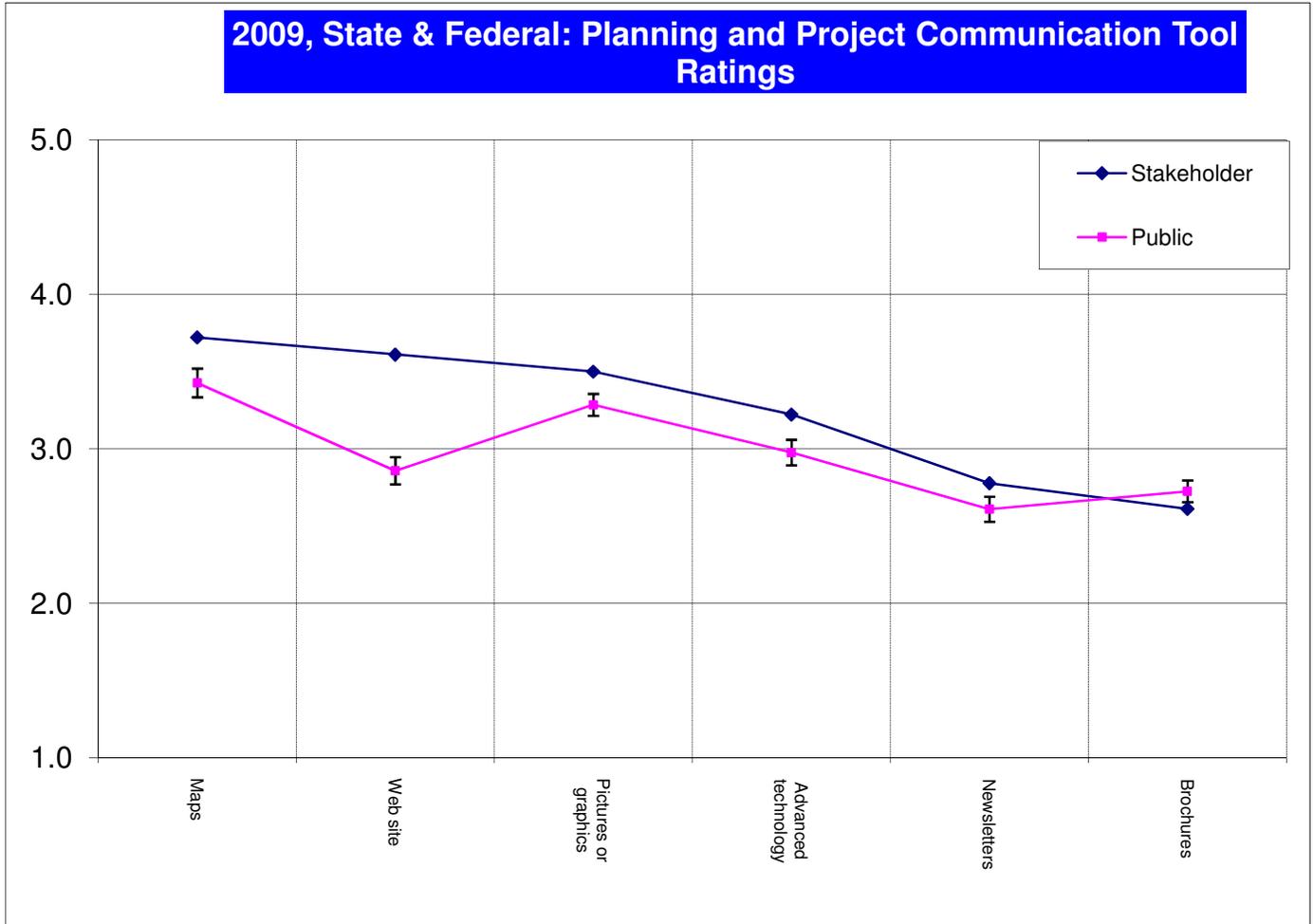


Figure 66: 5 = Extremely Useful

MDT Customer Service and Performance Grades

State and federal group grades ranged from B+ to B- (see Figure 67). These closely paralleled the public's'.

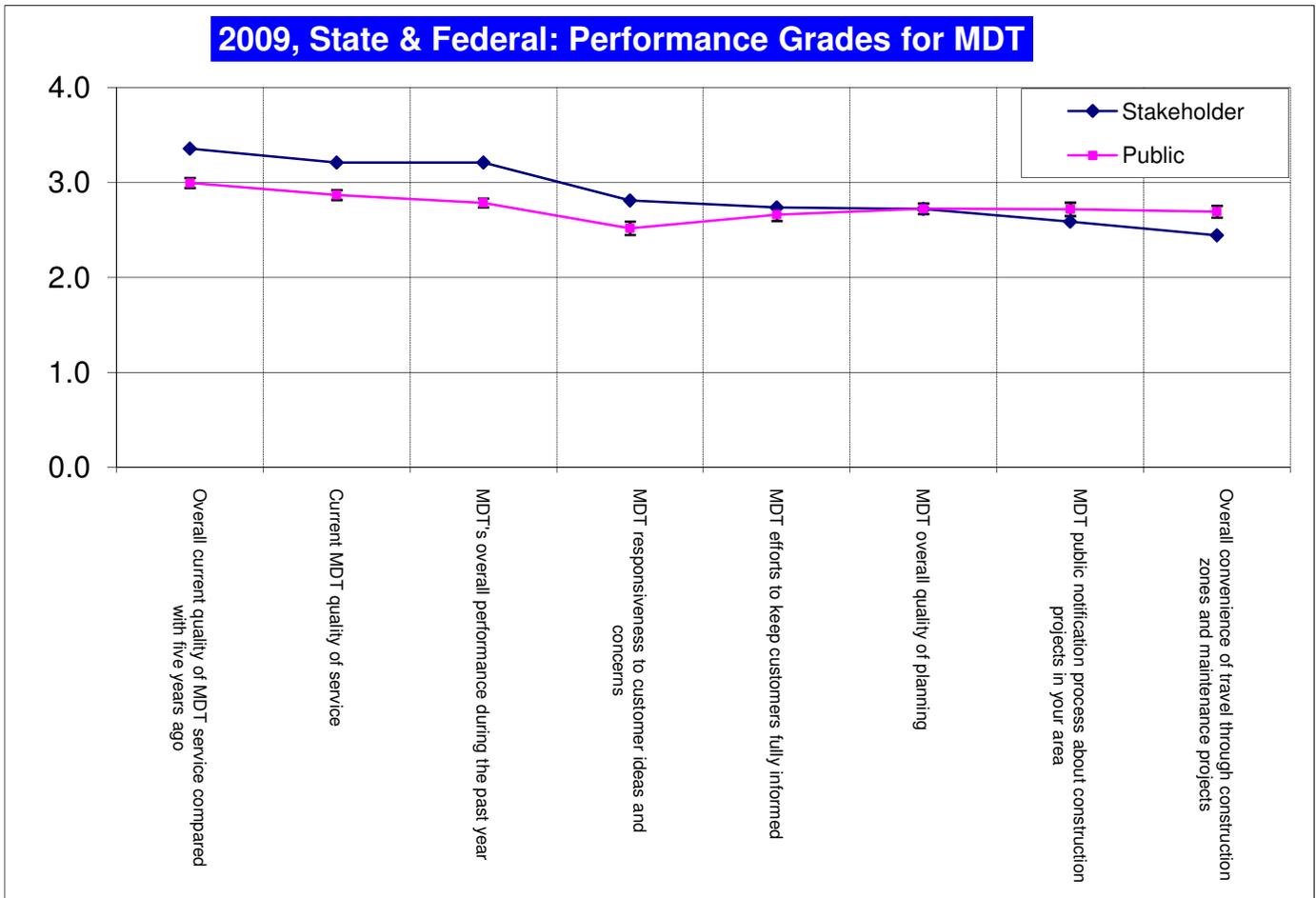


Figure 67: 4 = A

Security for System Components

State and federal group respondents were asked to rate the security importance of various transportation system components. Each component was rated on a scale from 1 – 5 where 1 is not at all important and 5 is extremely important.

State and federal group stakeholders gave importance ratings that ranged between extremely important and somewhat important. State and federal stakeholders rated communication with other agencies, emergency response plans, and interstate highways most important. The 2009 state and federal stakeholders rated availability of alternate routes and public facilities like bus terminals lowest in importance.

State and federal stakeholders’ ratings for importance paralleled those given by the public very closely. There is little practical meaning in the small statistical differences between the stakeholders’ ratings and the public’s.

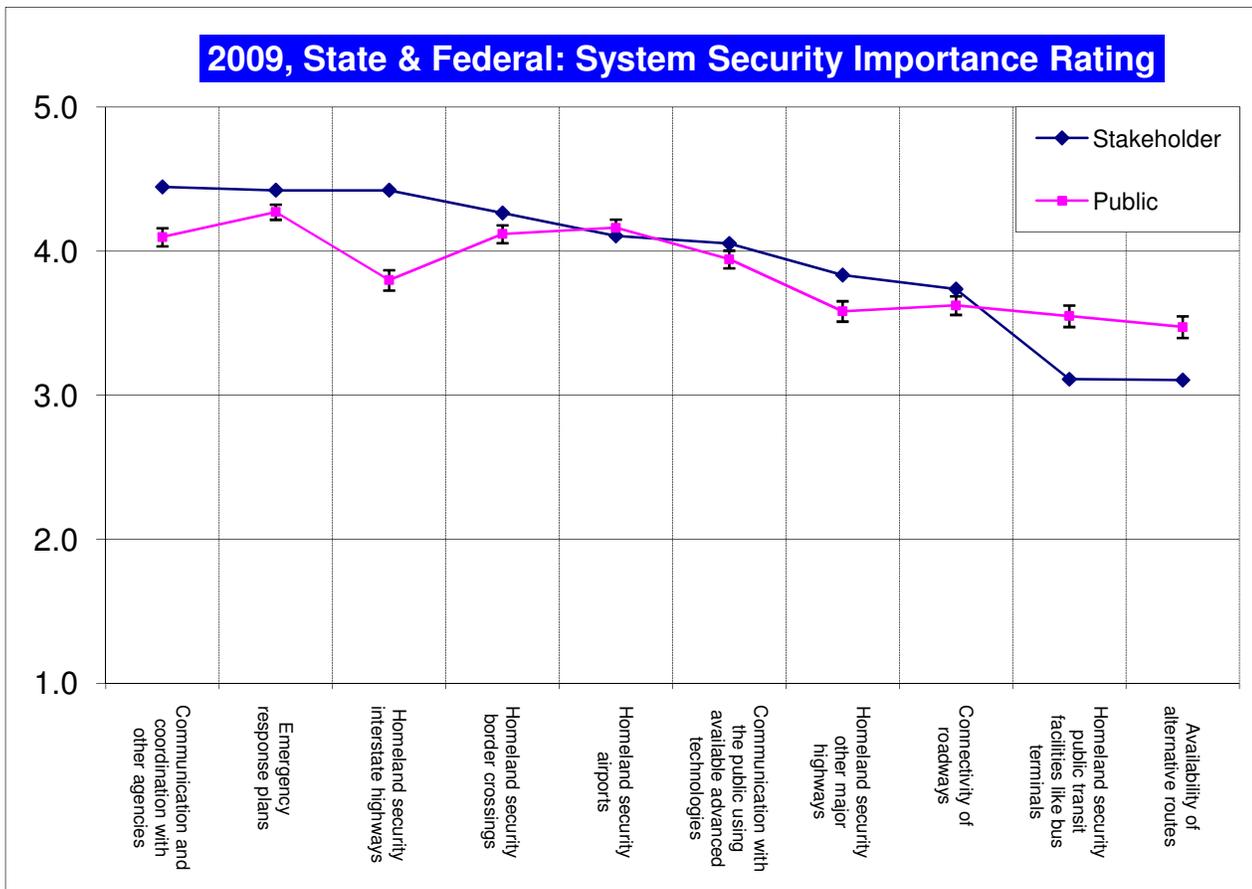


Figure 68: 5 = Extremely Important

TRIBAL PLANNER GROUP

This group is represented by tribal planners from across Montana. In 2009 and 2007, eight tribal planning representatives completed interviews. There were four completed questionnaires in 2005. Readers of this report should exercise caution when interpreting the data presented for the tribal planner group due to the low number of respondents.

Transportation System Satisfaction

Tribal planner group respondents expressed neutral satisfaction with the transportation system overall, giving it a mean rating of 5.8 on a 1 to 10 scale. This rating is lower than the public's mean rating of 6.6 (see Figure 69). The 2009 rating is lower than the 2007 rating (6.13) and the 2005 rating (6.0).

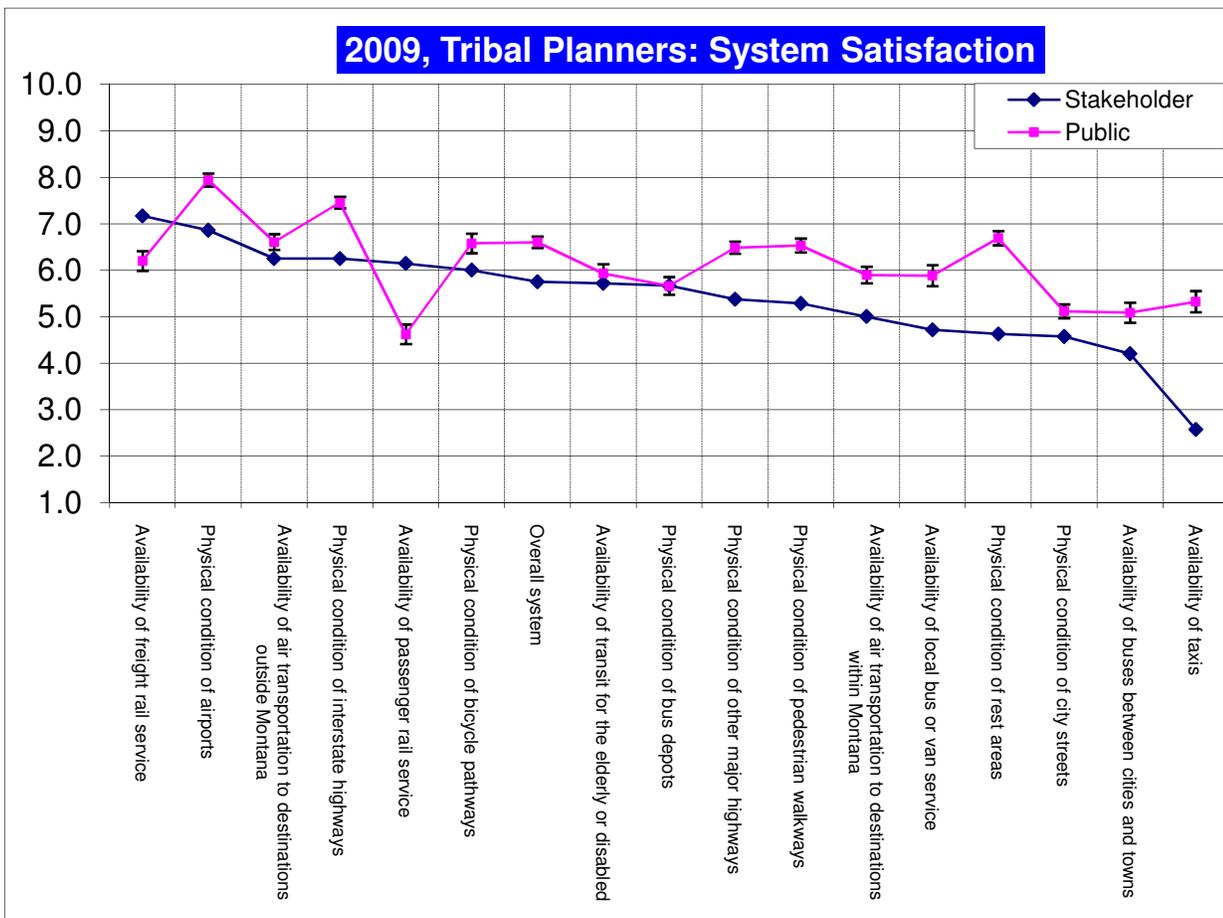


Figure 69: 10 = High

When asked about specific components of the transportation system, these tribal planners expressed satisfaction with 11 of the 16 components examined. They were most satisfied with the availability of freight rail service and airports. Tribal planner group members were least satisfied with the physical condition of city streets, intercity bus service, and taxis.

Actions to Improve the Transportation System

The three tribal planners rated two system improvement priorities, promoting the use of local transit systems and improving transportation safety, at the highest level (see Figure 70). Twelve items were rated a “Somewhat High Priority”. Tribal planner group members rated one possible action to improve the transportation system a “Somewhat Low Priority”: attempting to reduce single occupancy vehicle use.

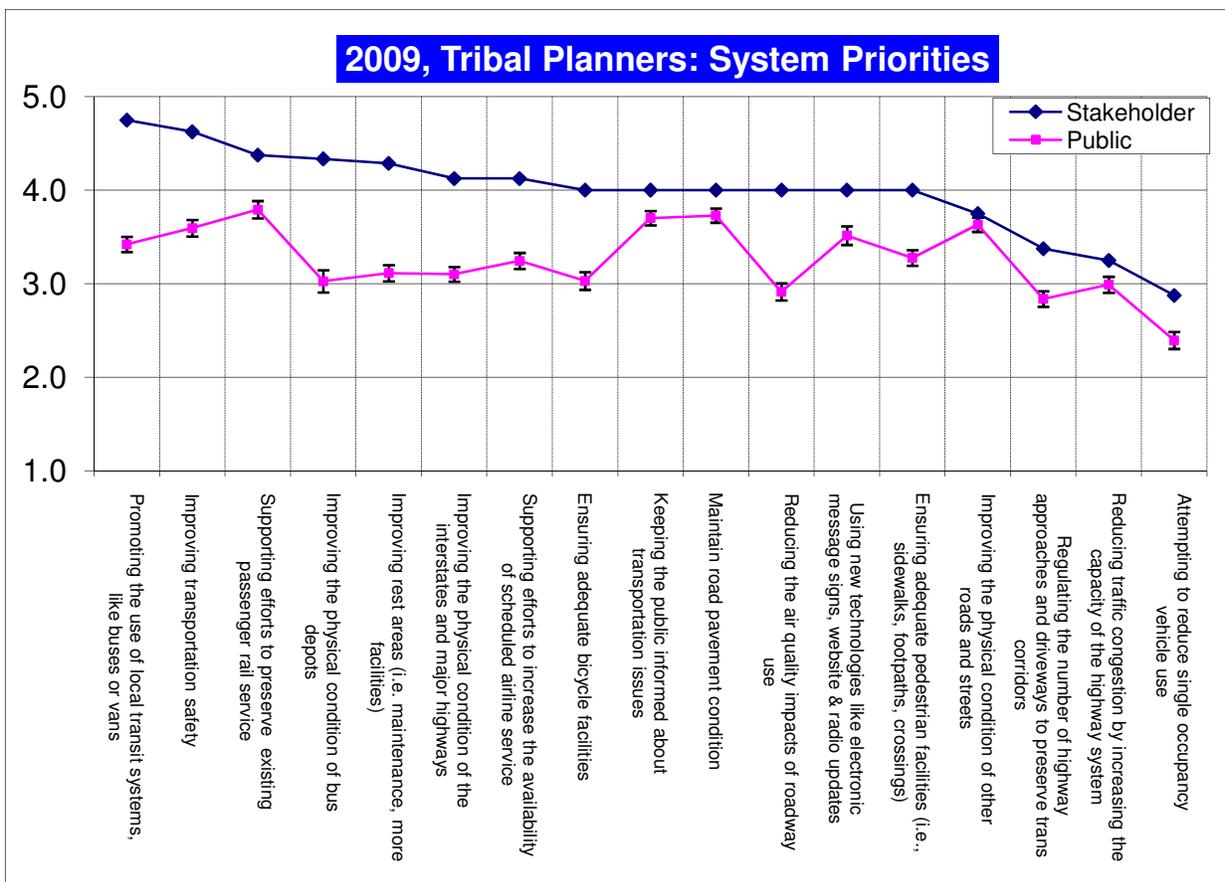


Figure 70: 5 = Very High

The largest differences between tribal planners and the public were found in reducing the air quality impact of roadway use and improving the physical condition of bus depots. Tribal planners rated these possible system improvements a “somewhat high priority,” while the public rated these possible improvements a “Medium Priority.”

Actions to Improve Roadways

The tribal planners rated two of eight possible roadway improvement priorities a “Very High Priority” (see Figure 71). The remaining items were rated a “Somewhat High Priority”. The tribal planners rated each possible roadway improvement a higher priority than did the public. The largest differences were found in wider shoulders for motorists and more guard rails. The tribal planners rated these possible system improvements a “Very High Priority”, while the public rated these possible improvements a “somewhat high priority”.

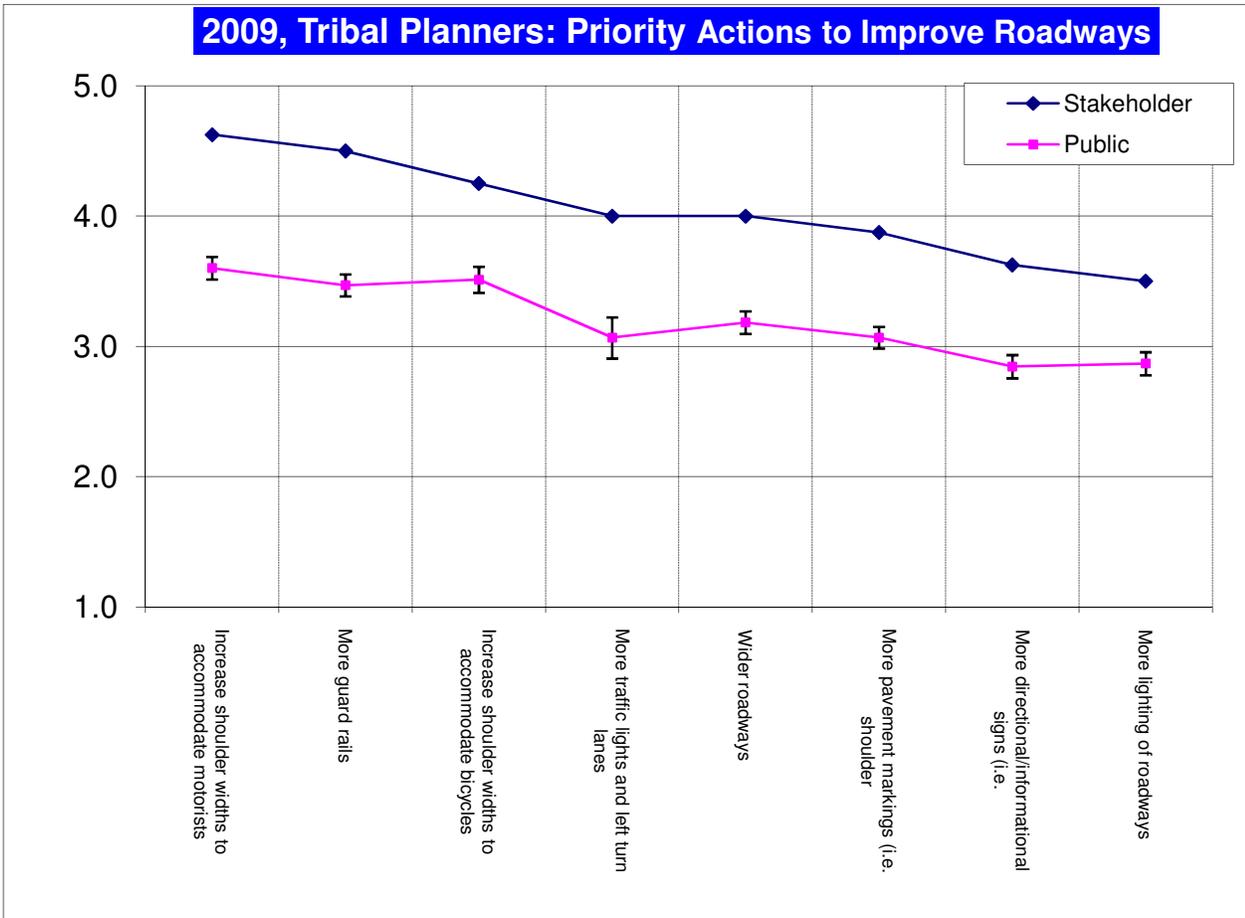


Figure 71: 5 = Very High

General Communication Tool Ratings

The 2009 tribal planners who responded rated two tools as very helpful: special mailings and radio and television. The remaining tools were rated as somewhat helpful. In this stakeholder group, the preference for mailings is markedly different from the general public and other stakeholder groups. Public meetings are also relatively preferred. Other media are more comparably attractive.

Tribal stakeholders rated two tools essentially the same as the public. Newspapers and a toll-free call in number were rated: somewhat helpful.

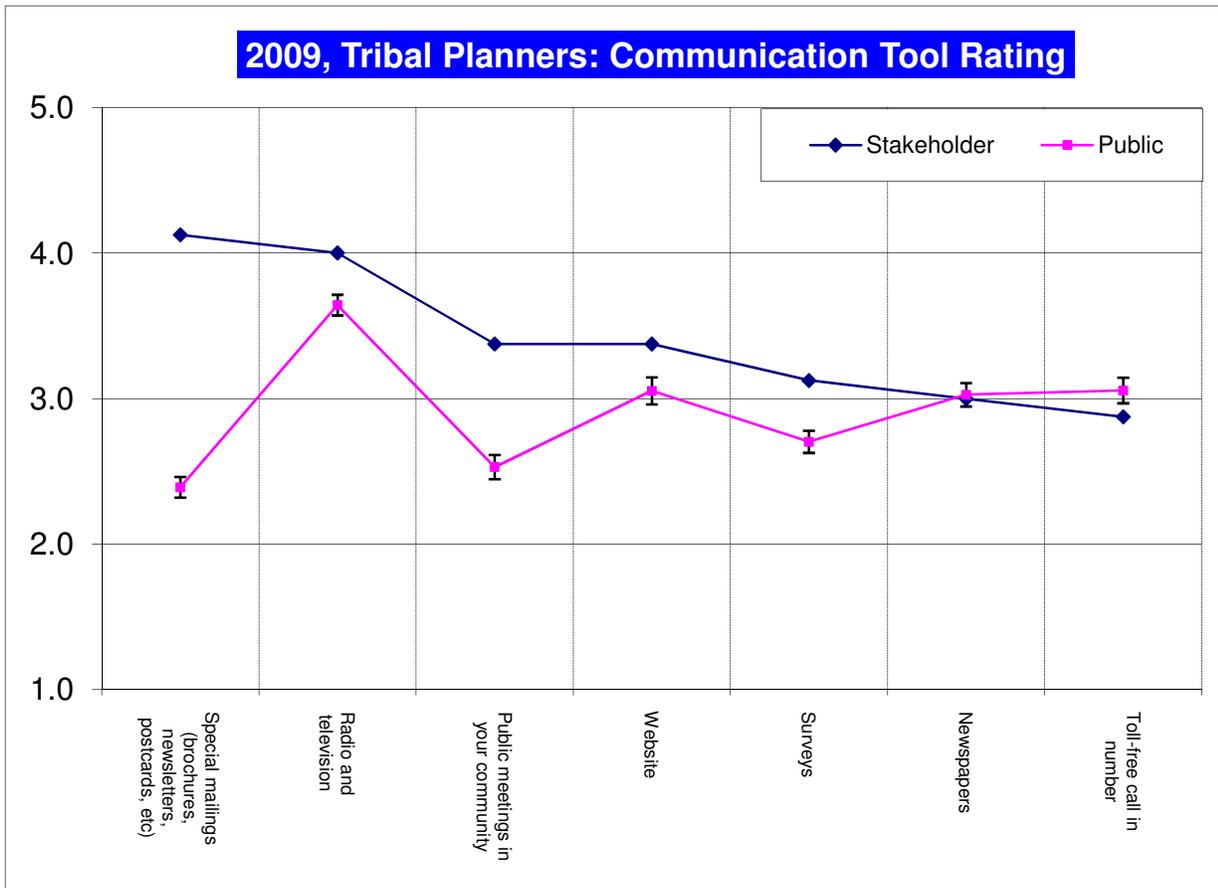


Figure 72: 5 = Extremely Helpful

Planning and Project Communication Tool Ratings

MDT also asked tribal stakeholders to rate planning and project specific communication tools (see Figure 73). Tribal planners rated all six tools studied very useful, Tribal planners gave their highest ratings to pictures or graphics, brochures, and advanced technology.

The public rated all of the items studied lower than did tribal planners.

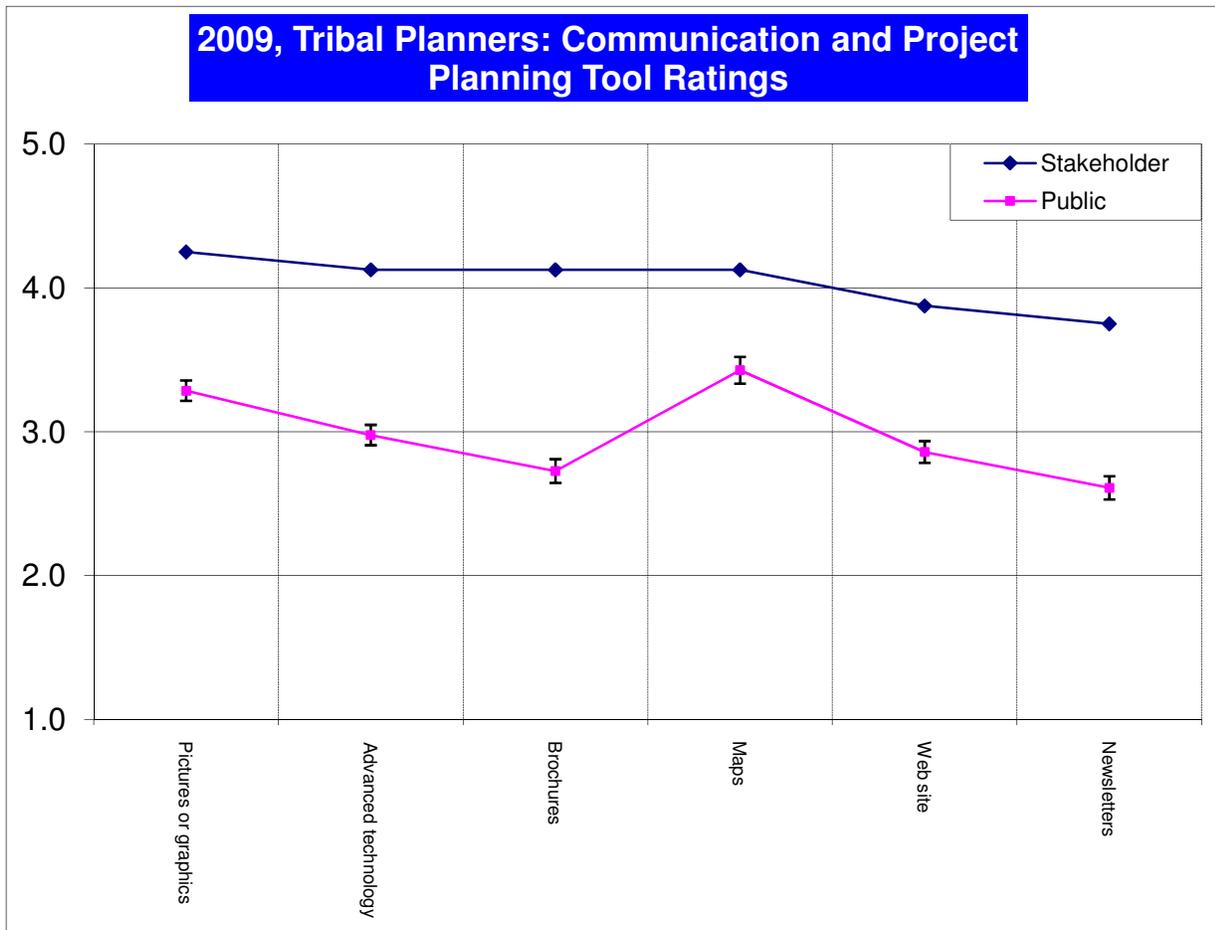


Figure 73: 5 = Extremely Useful

MDT Customer Service and Performance Grades

The tribal planners' grade ratings for MDT averaged from B to C- (see Figure 74). Three average grade ratings were slightly higher than the publics' and one was lower. The largest difference between the tribal planners and the public was observed in average grades for MDT responsiveness to customer ideas and concerns. The tribal planners' average grade for MDT responsiveness was about one-half a grade lower than the publics' average grade for MDT.

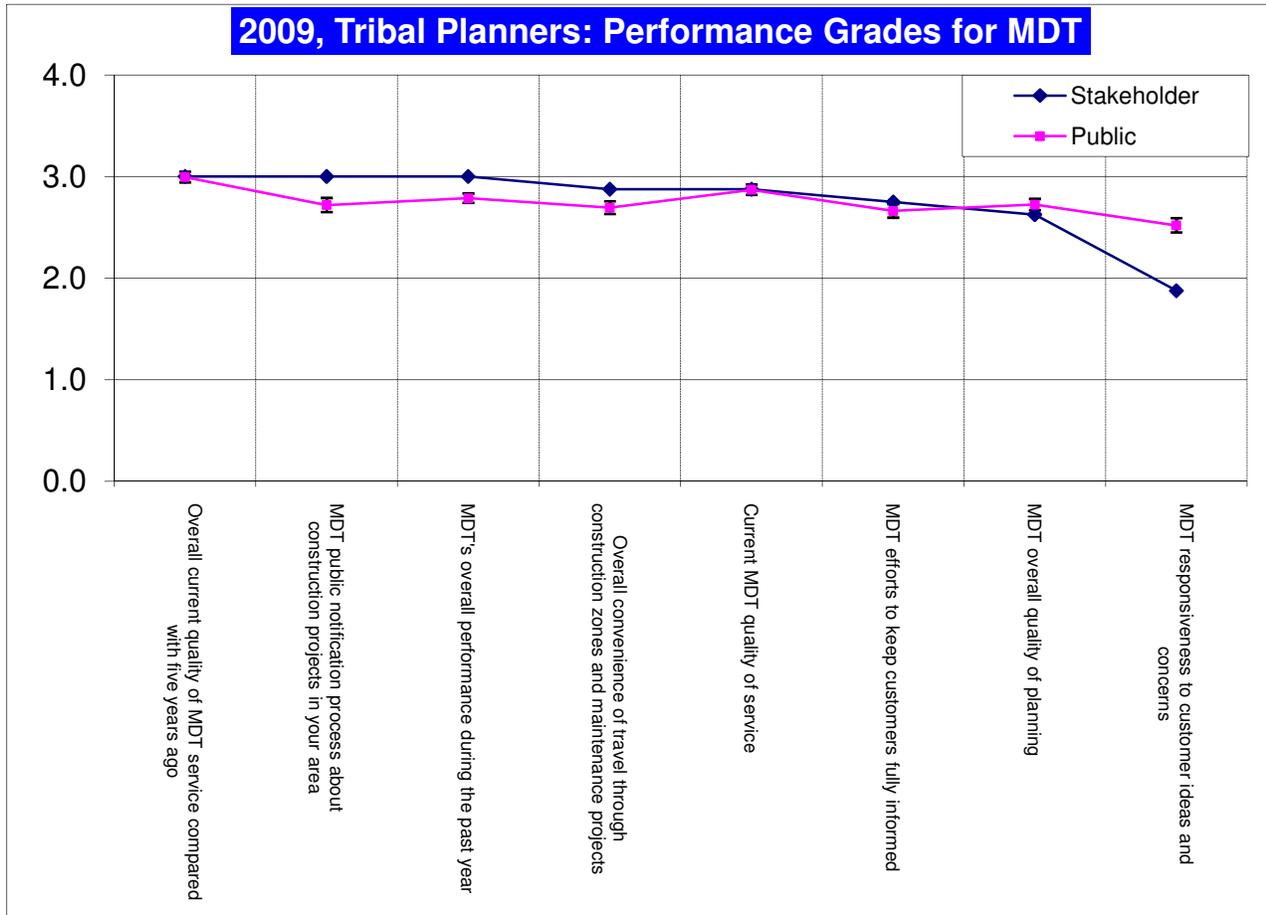


Figure 74: 4 = A

Security for System Components

The tribal planners were asked to rate the security importance of various transportation system components. Each component was rated on a scale from 1 – 5 where 1 is not at all important and 5 is extremely important.

Tribal planners rated every transportation system component’s security as “extremely important” or “very important.” The 2009 tribal planners rated emergency response plans as the highest priority.

Tribal planners’ ratings roughly paralleled those given by the public. However, the differences between the planners’ average ratings and the public’s average ratings are quite large.

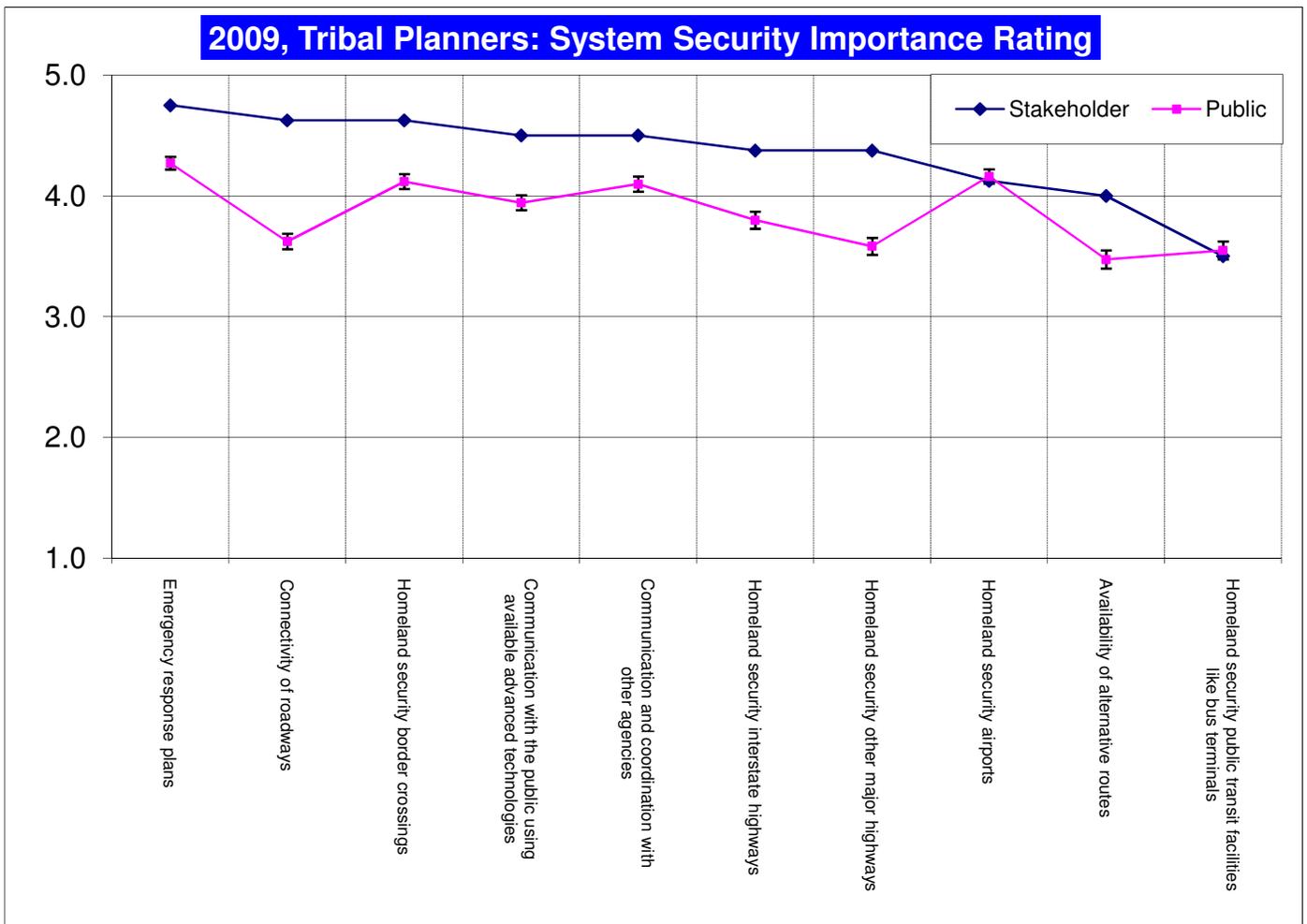


Figure 75: 5 = Extremely Important