WALKBIKE
LONGVIEW | GLADEWATER | WHITE OAK

Survey Summary and Analysis

February 2018

Executive Summary

During the fall of 2017, the Longview Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) conducted a survey of Longview area citizens through in-person distribution of surveys at outreach events, and on the website LongviewTexas.gov/WalkBike. A total of 1,774 community members participated in the survey.

Key findings include:

- **Purposes for walking** – Survey respondents walk or run most frequently for exercise or recreation purposes, rather than for their daily transportation needs, including getting "to where you need to go" and to the bus. However, respondents earning less than $35,000 annually were much more likely to walk or run to get where they need to go.
- **Purposes for biking** – Most survey respondents reported never biking or biking only occasionally. The most common reason for biking was "For casual exercise or recreation." 31.8% of respondents bike once a week or more for this reason.
- **Security while walking** – Beyond making trail and sidewalk improvements, nearly half of respondents (46%) said they would walk or run "much more often" if areas felt safer from crime, and an additional 26% said they would do so "somewhat more often."
- **Security while biking** – Likewise, most respondents said they would bike much more often with additional, secure bicycle parking (33%), and if areas felt safer from crime (31.9%).
- **Walking infrastructure priorities** – Regarding infrastructure and traffic engineering measures to encourage walking and running, respondents prioritized paved trails (chosen by 65%) and more sidewalks (59%), as well as improved condition of existing sidewalks (32%). Whether the survey-taker currently walks frequently or not at all to get where they need to go had little to no effect on their response to this question.
- **Biking infrastructure priorities** – Likewise, for biking, creating new paved trails was the most frequently selected improvement among respondents (chosen by 52%), followed by connecting trails and bike lanes to more destinations (45%), creating more on-street bike lanes (44%) and protecting bicycle traffic from car traffic (40%).
- **Bikeway type preferences** – Respondents expressed clear preference for bikeways with the greatest separation from automobile traffic. Over three quarters (76%) of respondents said they would be likely to ride in an on-street bikeway separated by protective barriers, and nearly as many (65%) said they would ride on a shared-use trail entirely separated from a roadway.

Trends and Themes

Survey respondents walk and bike more often for exercise and recreation than for transportation purposes. 95% walk and 71% bike for this reason at least occasionally.

Attitudes differed slightly based on how often respondents currently walk for transportation purposes. Among those who said they never, or only occasionally, walk to get to where they need to go, non-infrastructure factors have a significant influence on trip choices. Shade or other relief from heat was most likely to encourage this group to walk somewhat or much more often. Having someone to walk with and having more destinations close by were also more favored by this group.

People who currently walk for transportation said they would walk more often if infrastructure was improved and areas are made to feel safer from crime. Despite these differences, each subgroup expressed the same priorities for public improvements: creating more sidewalks and paved trails.

Nearly 6 in 10 respondents said they would bike more often simply if more secure bicycle parking (a relatively low-cost public investment) was available. However, paved trails were consistently ranked the most attractive strategy when provided as an option. This preference for separation from automobile traffic again emerged in selection of favored bikeway types, when respondents were prompted with photos of different facilities.

Who Took the Survey?

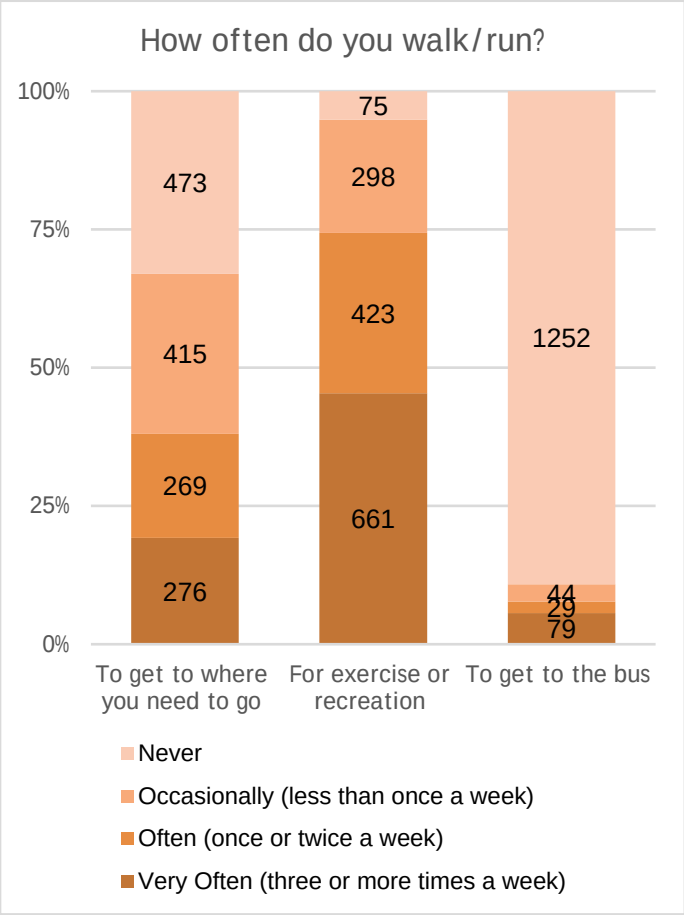
Survey respondents were provided with an option to answer questions regarding demographics, including age, race/ethnicity, gender, annual household income, and number of children living at home. Because responses were not required to each of these questions, the following results are estimates only of the actual cross-section of respondents. However, a general interpretation of the findings reveals that people who took the survey were most heavily represented by women aged 25 to 64 with income greater than $75,000 who have children living at home. Only 39.9% of respondents were men, compared to 48.9% of the area population. 14.5% of respondents were under 25, compared to 37% of the population (though it should be noted that the survey was primarily targeted at adults). 81.5% of respondents self-identified as white, compared to 75.3% of area residents. 8.6% identified as Hispanic, compared to 18.7% of the area. Of all races, Black or African American residents were least represented proportionally, comprising 4.8% of those surveyed, compared to 21.9% of the area population. Due to the optional nature of providing demographic information by survey respondents, the demographics reported are estimates only of the actual cross-section of respondents.

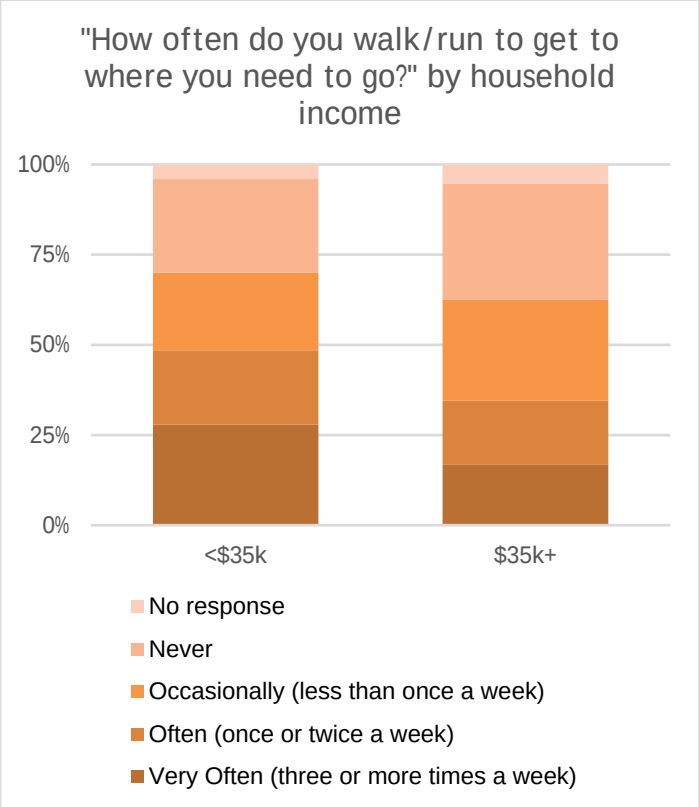
1. How often do you walk (or run)?

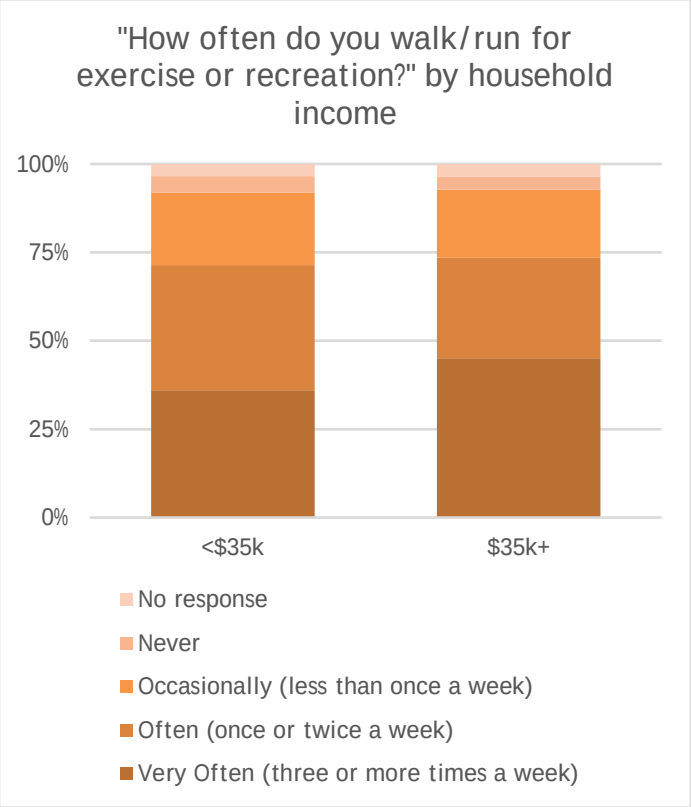
The most common reason survey respondents report walking or running often or very often is for exercise or recreation purposes. In contrast, most respondents do not often walk for their daily transportation needs, including getting "to where you need to go" and to the bus. A full one third of respondents "never" walk to get to where they need to go, 29% do so occasionally (less than once a week), 18.9% do so often (once or twice a week), and 19.3% do so very often (three or more times a week).

Responses to this question varied greatly by the survey respondents' income level. Lower-income respondents (earning less than $35,000 annually) were much more likely to walk or run to get where they need to go. 71 of 147 of these respondents (48.3%) reported doing so "often" or "very often," compared to 328 of 948 of those earning more than $35,000 (34.6%).

Higher-income respondents were more likely to walk or run for exercise or recreation "very often" (427 of 948 – 45%) than lower-income respondents (53 of 147 - 36%). However, the combined share of each income group that walk or run for exercise or recreation "often" or "very often" are nearly equal.



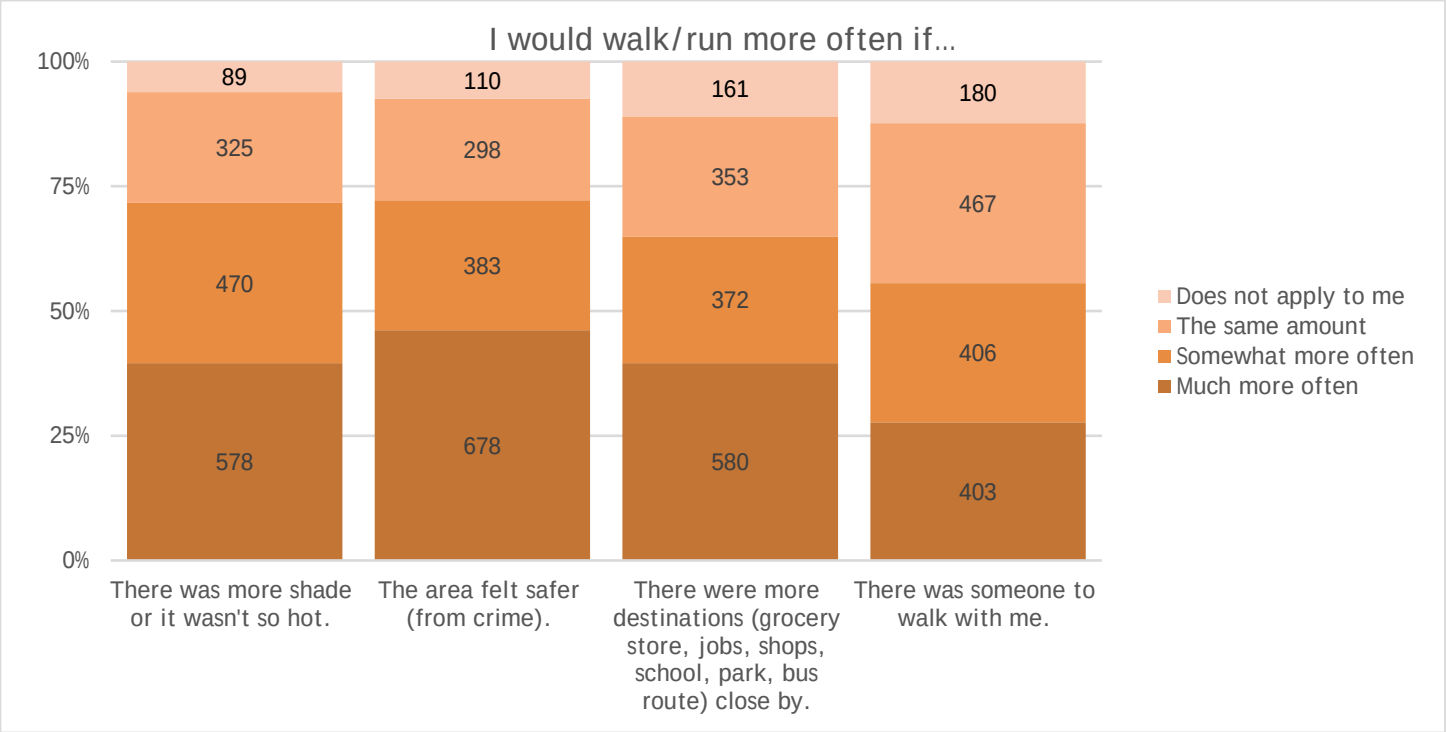




2. Would you walk (or run) more often if any of the following issues were improved?

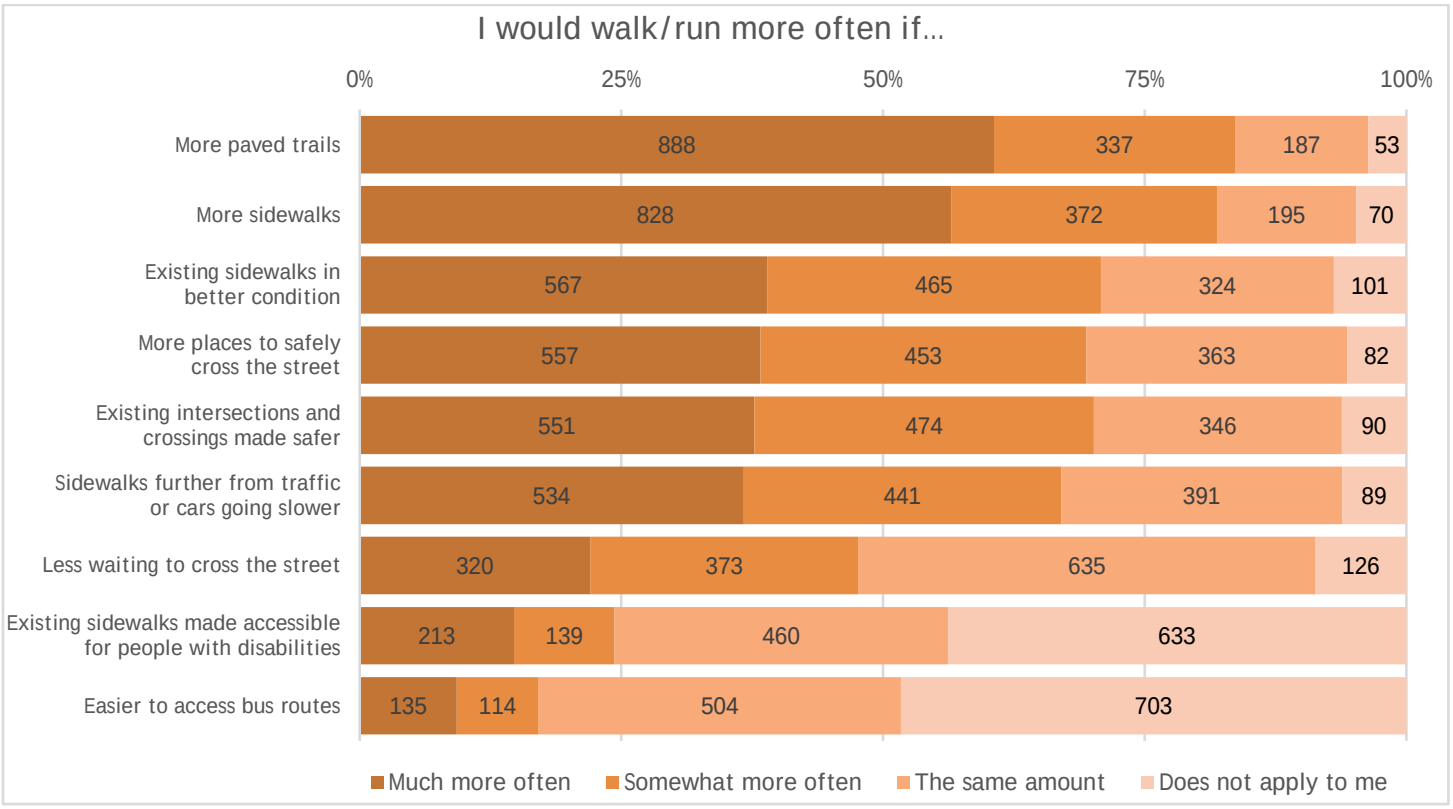
This question sought respondents' attitudes toward non-engineering approaches to making walking and running more appealing. Making areas feel safer from crime was the most popular.

- Nearly half of respondents (46%) said they would walk or run "much more often" if the feeling of safety from crime was improved, and an additional 26% said they would do so "somewhat more often."
- Providing more shade was the second most popular strategy. 40% said they would walk or run "much more often," and an additional 32% said they would "somewhat more often."
- While not as important as safety and shade, making destinations closer to one another would make 40% of respondents walk or bike "much more often" and 25% "somewhat more often."
- 56% of respondents said they would walk or run somewhat *or* much more often if "there was someone to walk with me."



3. Would you walk (or run) more often if any of the following traffic- or sidewalk-related changes were made?

This question attempted to understand what infrastructure or engineering-based measures would be most effective in encouraging people to walk or run more. Creating more paved trails and more sidewalks were the measures most likely to make respondents walk or run more often. Although to lesser degrees, improving the conditions of existing sidewalks, creating more safe opportunities to cross streets, and creating wider buffers between roadways and sidewalks would also make most respondents walk or run much more often. Shortening waiting intervals for crossing streets, making existing sidewalks ADA accessible and improving bus stop access would have the least impact on respondents' choice to walk or run.

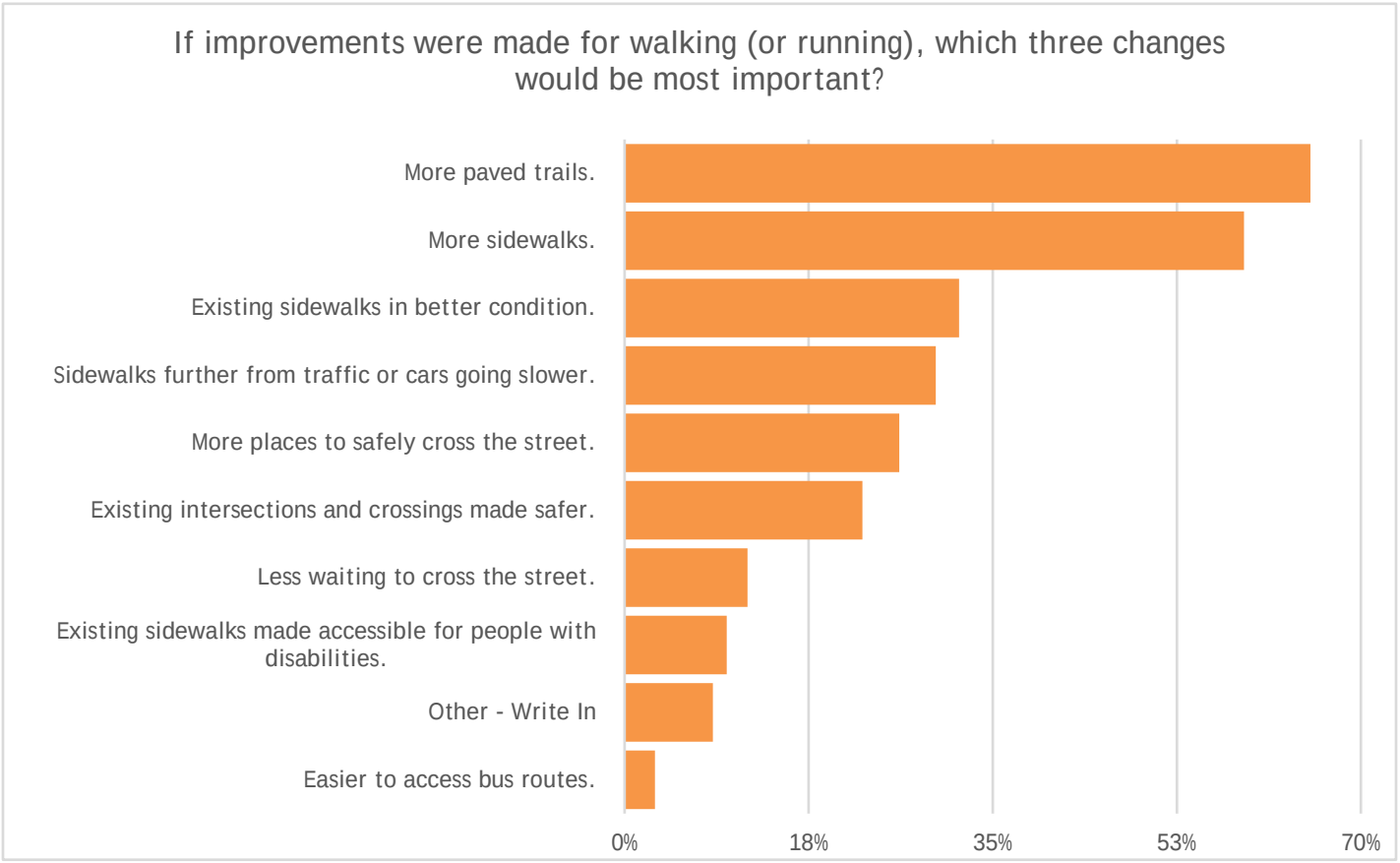


4. Is there anything else that would make you walk (or run) more often? Please describe (be as specific as possible).

Many responses to this question echoed choices from questions two & three, particularly regarding new and improved sidewalks & trails, as well as calls for improving the feeling of safety from crime. Two respondents requested restrooms accessible along trails. The word cloud below depicts the write-in responses.

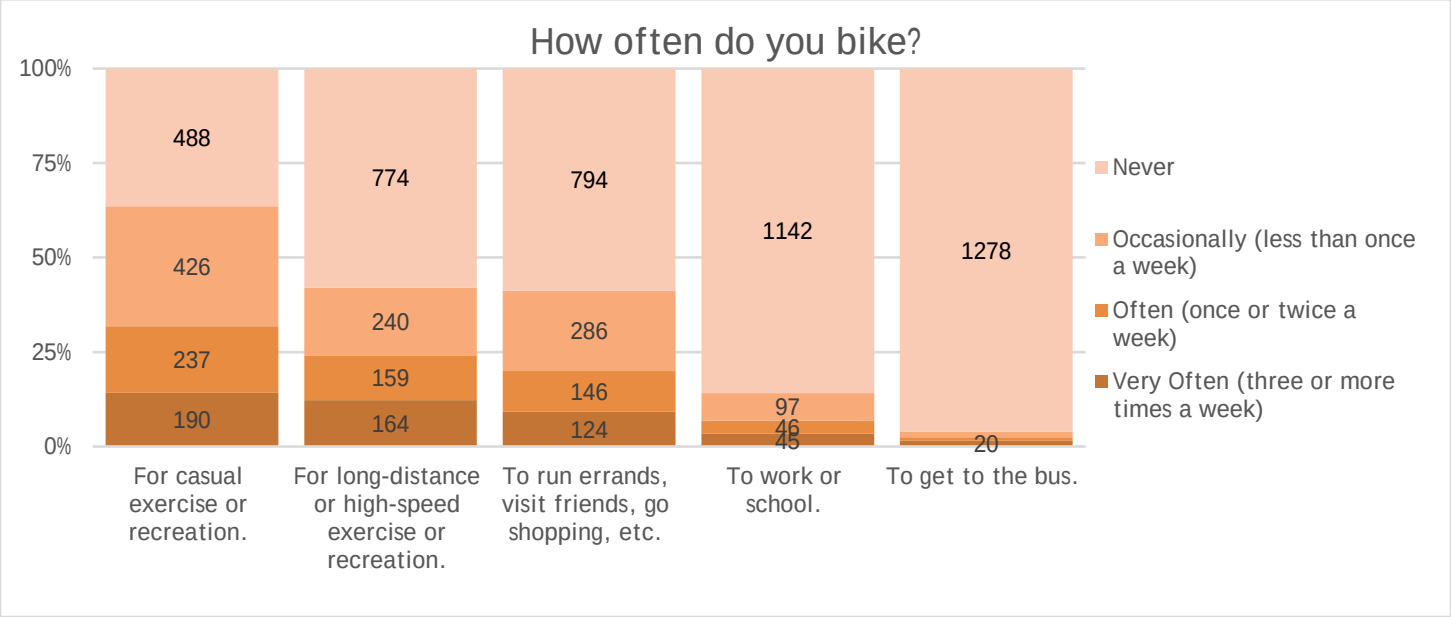
5. If improvements were made for walking or running, which three changes would be most important?

Respondents again indicated the most support for basic infrastructure, most notably paved trails (chosen by 65%) and more sidewalks (59%). All groups, regardless of how often they walk or purpose for walking reported similar priorities.



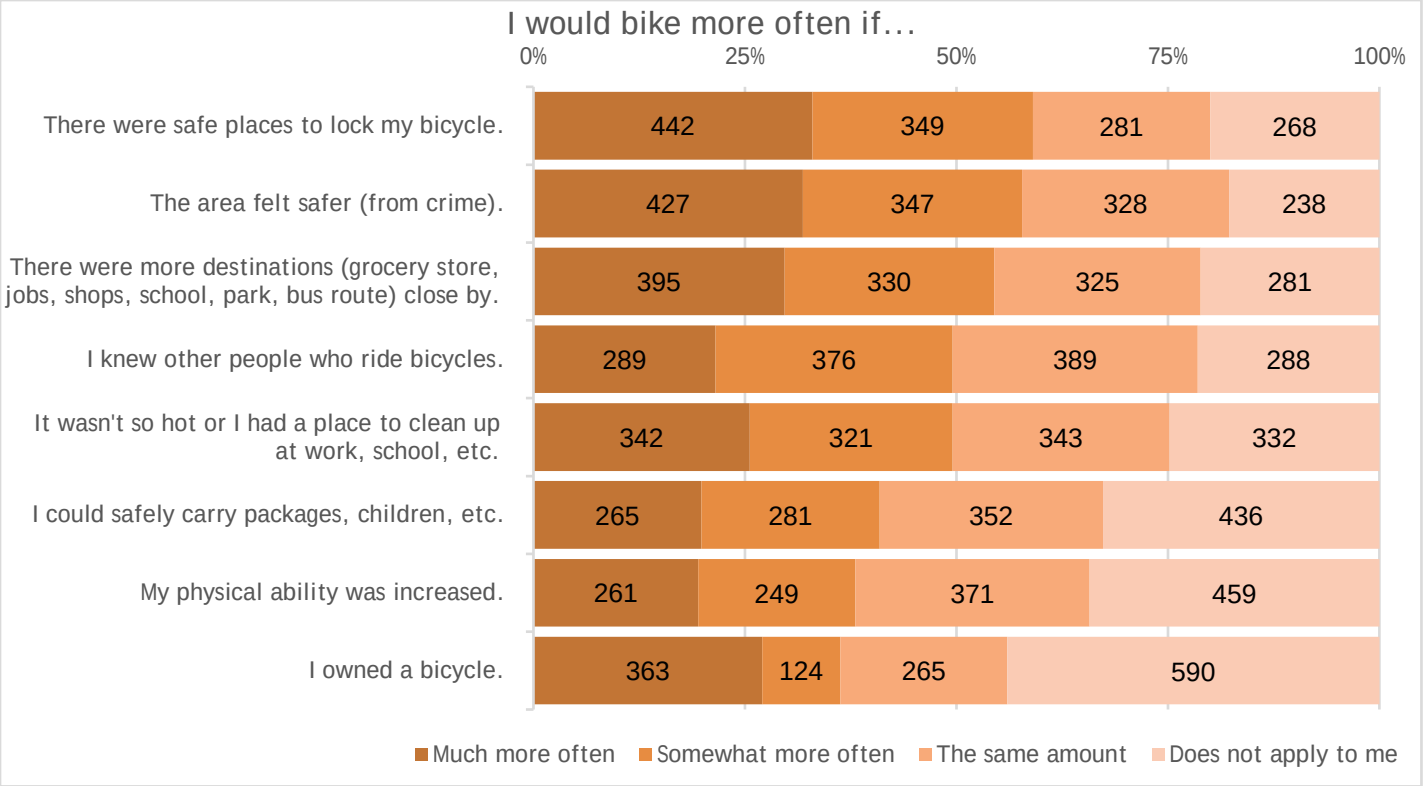
6. How often do you bike?

Most survey respondents reported never biking or biking only occasionally, for any reason. The most common reason for biking was “For casual exercise or recreation.” 31.8% of respondents bike once a week or more for this reason. Unlike those who walk for transportation, results show that income had little effect on the reasons one bikes.



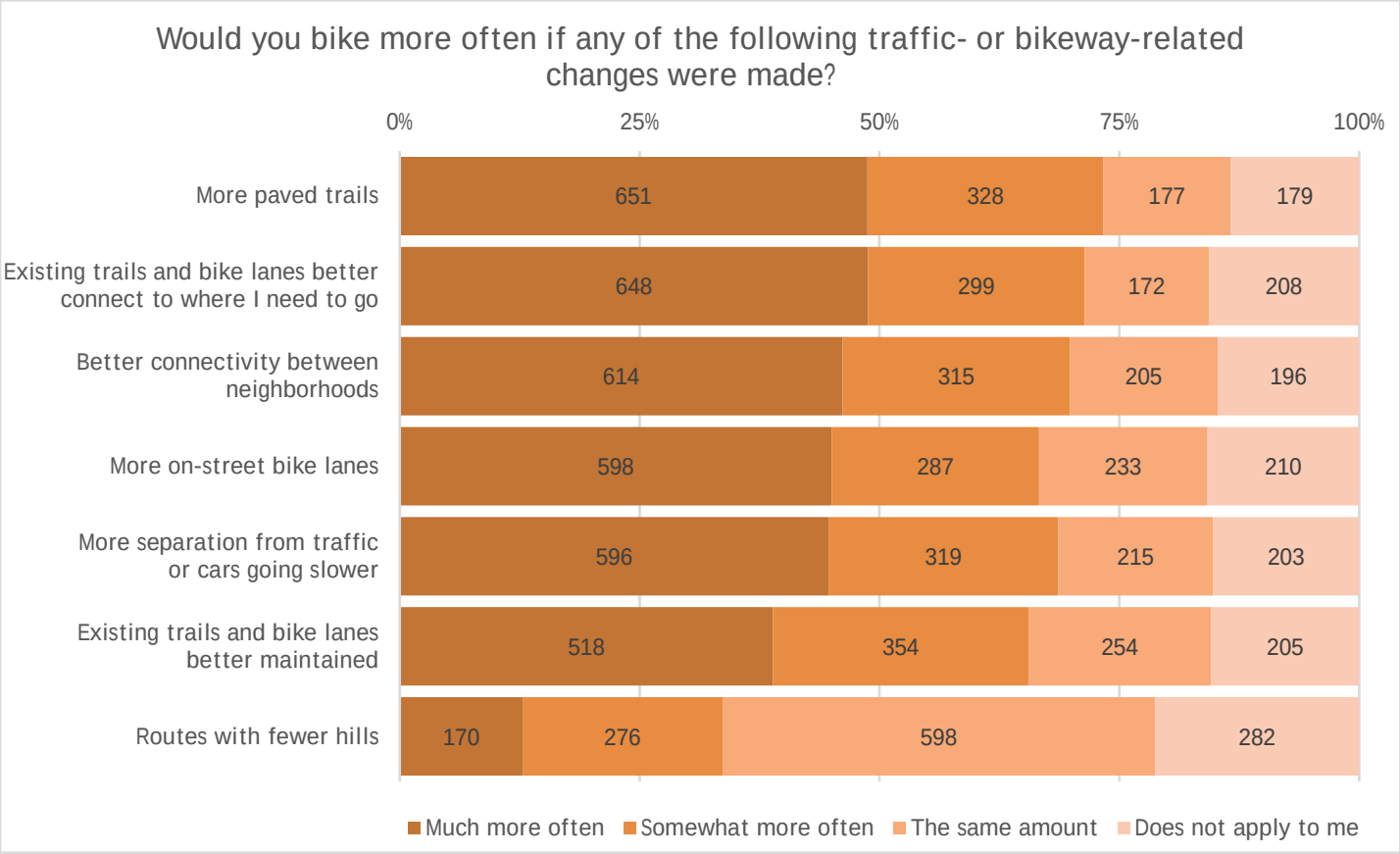
7. Would you bike more often if any of the following issues were improved?

This question attempted to understand what strategies other than creating more sidewalks and bikeways would be most effective in encouraging people to bike more. Respondents said they would bike much more or somewhat more often with additional, secure bicycle parking (59%), and if areas felt safer from crime (58%). Social reasons and personal capabilities (such as if “I knew other people who ride bicycles” or “my physical ability was increased”) were less important to respondents.



8. Would you bike more often if any of the following traffic- or bikeway-related changes were made?

This question attempted to understand what traffic and bikeway strategies would be most effective in encouraging people to bike more. Creating more paved trails and linking existing trails to destinations were the most popular responses. However, most respondents said they would bike “much more often” or “somewhat more often” in response to any of the offered strategies, except for designing routes that avoided hills.

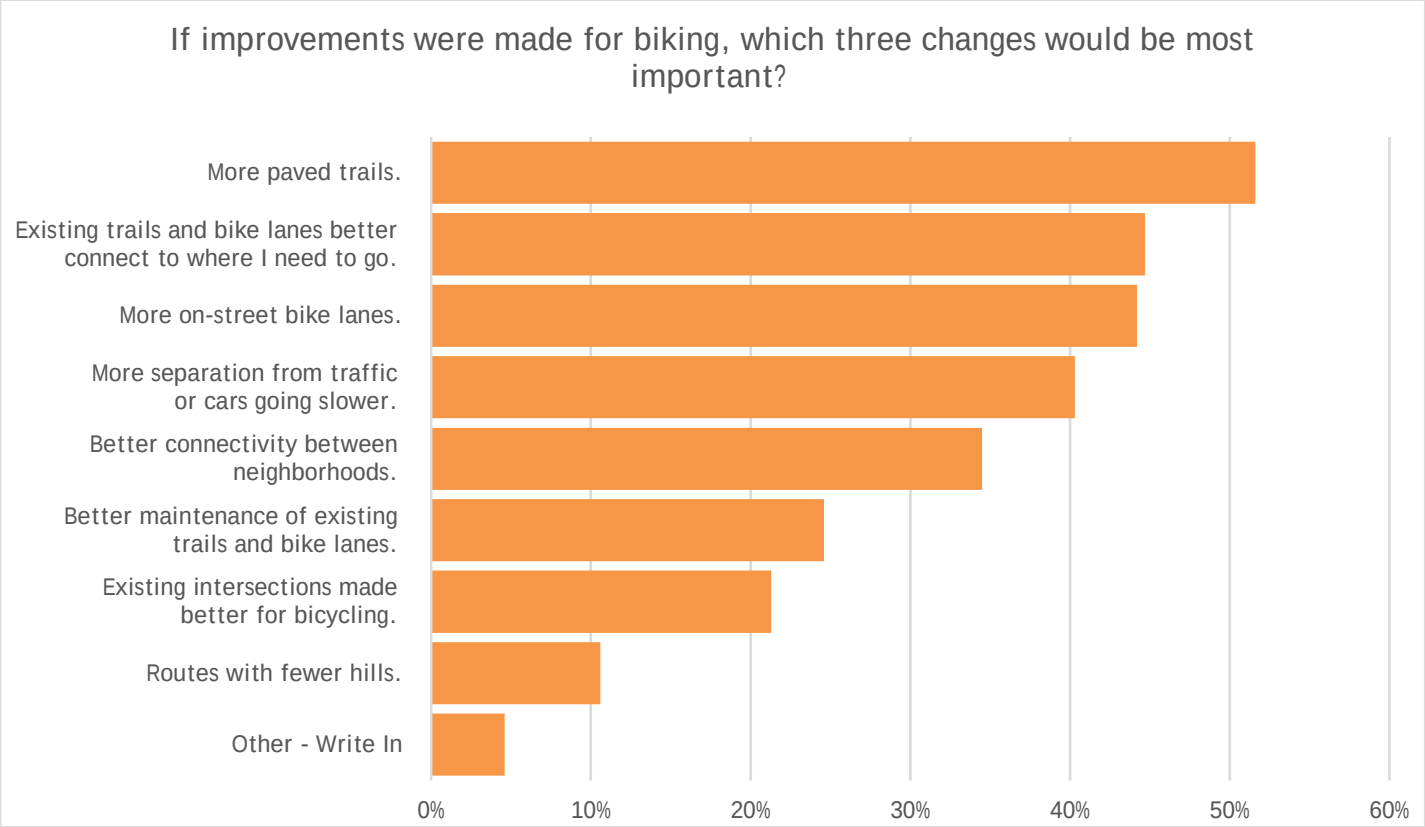


9. Is there anything else that would make you bike more often? Please describe.

In addition to repeating several of the given options from previous questions, respondents said driver education and awareness, more dirt trails, sweeping of streets, and “cut through” trails to bridge divided street networks. The word cloud below depicts the write-in responses to this question.

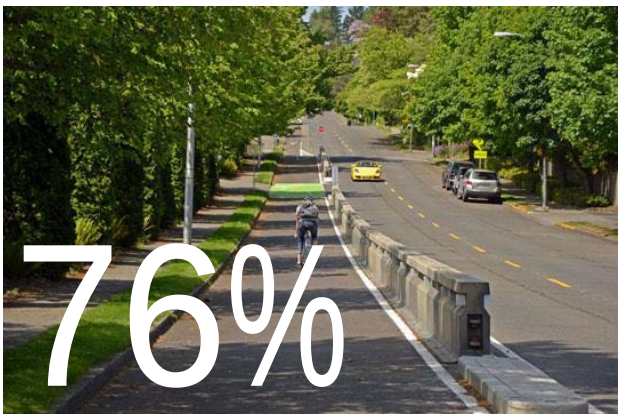
10. If improvements were made for biking, which three changes would be most important?

Consistent with responses to previous questions, creating new paved trails was the most frequently selected improvement among respondents (chosen by 52%), followed by connecting trails and bike lanes to more destinations (45%), creating more on-street bike lanes (44%) and protecting bicycle traffic from car traffic (40%).



11. Below are images of different bikeway types. Select all of the images in which you would be likely to ride a bike.

Bikeways with the greatest separation from automobile traffic attracted the most favorable responses. Over three quarters of respondents said they would be likely to ride in a bikeway separated from motor vehicle traffic by protective barriers, and nearly as many (65%) said they would ride on a shared-use trail entirely separated from a roadway. Nearly half of respondents said they would ride on a traditional dedicated bikeway on a two-lane street with parking, whereas slightly fewer (42%) said they would ride in a dedicated lane along a higher-speed, four-lane roadway in a more rural context. Fewer yet (29%) are willing to ride on a shoulder bikeway on a rural, two-lane road and only about 1 in 5 respondents favored streets designated as shared bikeways with “sharrow” pavement markings. See images on the following page along with percentages of respondents who selected the pictured bikeway type.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65%


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