Public Engagement Summary

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Active Transportation Plan

Public Engagement Summary

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Overview

Project Background

The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) is developing a statewide Active Transportation Plan, Walk.Roll.Illinois, to create a vision and identify measures to improve walking, biking, and accessible infrastructure throughout the state. The project includes various stakeholder and community engagement activities to gather input from transportation agencies, Metropolitan Planning Organizations, counties, community organizations, and residents. The goal is to understand the current conditions of walking, biking, and accessibility in the state as well as to identify active transportation needs and barriers.

The following report is a summary of public engagement activities conducted in the first phase of the project that ended October 31, 2023.

Public Engagement Overview

The public outreach process has two major phases:

- The first phase solicited feedback on existing conditions, key destinations, and community concerns, and active transportation opportunities and constraints. As part of the first phase, the project team launched interactive online tools, hosted pop-up events in communities across the state, and solicited public feedback via public surveys and an interactive map. In addition, the project team met with IDOT District staff and key statewide and local stakeholders to identify barriers and challenges to active transportation.
- The second phase will engage historically underrepresented groups within Illinois. The project team will partner with local organizations to assist in convening focus groups to engage and seek feedback on residents' active transportation experiences and needs.

Public Engagement Activities

Activity Snapshot

A variety of engagement activities took place in 2023 to inform and seek feedback from residents in Illinois. Below is a brief overview of these activities:

Online Public Engagement

- > Project website
- > Social media campaign
- > Virtual open house public meeting
- > Public online survey and interactive map
 - The public survey and interactive map were closed on October 31, 2023.

In-Person Public Engagement

 Pop-up engagement events in communities across the state

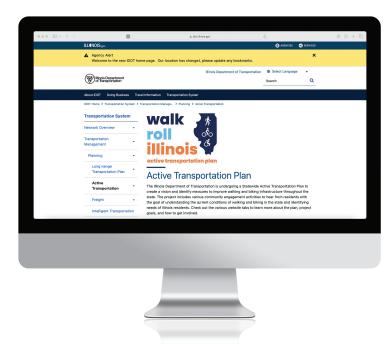
Additional Project Materials

- > Project factsheet and postcard
- Public-meeting-in-a-box

Public Outreach Overview

A robust public outreach campaign was launched in early 2023 to engage Illinois residents in the Active Transportation Plan. To engage the public, a variety of community engagement activities were used to hear from residents with the goal of understanding the current conditions of walking and biking in the state and identifying needs of Illinois residents.

Through a mix of online and in-person outreach, residents across the state provided valuable feedback for the Active Transportation Plan. An overview of the various materials and tools used to engage the public is provided on the following pages, along with public feedback received through the end of the public survey comment period, October 31, 2023. Additional outreach will be conducted throughout the duration of the project and will be captured in future reports. <section-header><section-header><image><image><image><image><image><image><image><image><image><section-header><section-header><section-header><section-header><section-header><image><section-header><text><text><text><text>



Project Website

The project webpage acts as a central hub for stakeholders to access project-related information, updates, and resources.

The website includes resources for agencies, municipalities, the public, and others interested in active transportation.

Public Online Survey & Interactive Map

The project team launched an online survey to solicit input from communities across Illinois regarding active transportation. In addition, an interactive map allowed the public to suggest improvements in specific areas in their community.

Participants provided a total of 2,442 survey responses and 4,133 map comments by October 31, 2023.

Tell us about walking, biking and rolling in Illinois

Use the buttons below to provide feedback on locations where you have a concern or face a challenge walking, biking, or rolling along statemaintained routes. State-maintained routes are highlighted on the map. You can drop multiple points on the map. Comment categories are defined below.

Comment Categories:

 Pedestrian Barrier

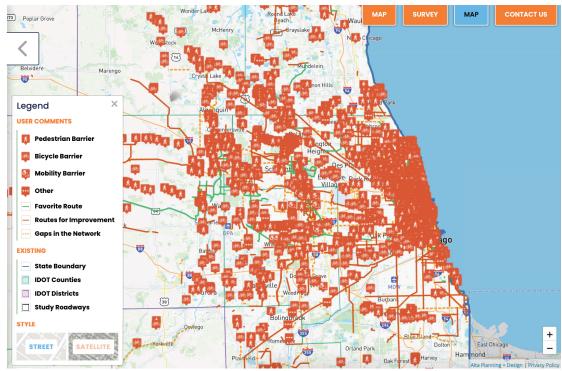
 Location with pedestrian safety concerns or issues.

 Bicycle Barrier

 Location with bicycle safety concerns or issues.

 Mobility Barrier

 Location with safety concerns related to wheelchair or mobility scooter usage.



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Virtual Open House

The project website included a virtual open house public meeting space to inform the public about the project and encourage them to provide feedback on their own schedule.

The virtual open house was viewed by 123 visitors.





Project Information Fact Sheet & Postcard

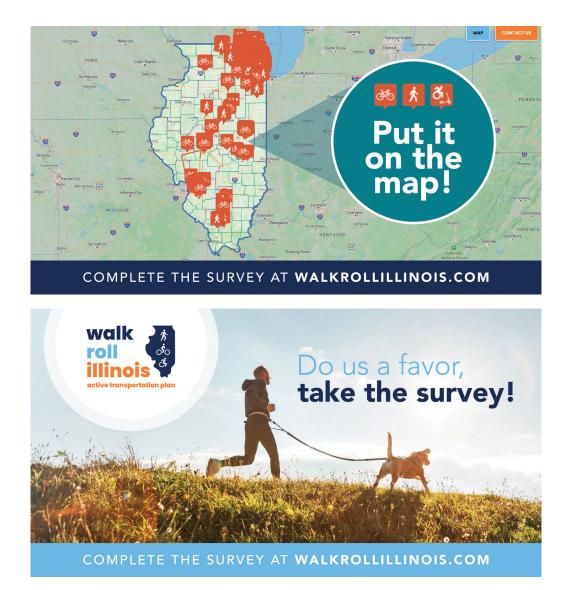
The project team developed a fact sheet to provide stakeholders with essential project details, including project goals and objectives, an overview of the project schedule, and ways to get involved.

In addition, the team created a project postcard in English and Spanish for communities to share. The fact sheet and postcard were posted on the project website.

Social Media Campaign

Beginning in April 2023, the project team initiated a strategic social media campaign across IDOT platforms to raise awareness about the project and encourage public participation in the online survey and interactive map.

In addition, community groups were encouraged to use the public-meeting-in-a-box materials and other project materials to spark a conversation about local active transportation needs.



Pop-Up Events

Beginning in October 2023, project team members handed out project materials at multiple pop-up events in local communities. The booth allowed project team members to engage with the public and answer questions. Each location was selected in efforts to reach active transportation users.

District	City	Location	Date	Surveys Collected	Postcards Distributed
1	Chicago	Chinatown Public Library & Business District	10/23	34	65
2	Moline	Center Station	10/26	10	115
3	Kanakakee	Kankakee Public Library	10/23	6	60
4	Peoria	Transit Center	10/25	12	50
5	Champaign	Illinois Terminal	10/25	11	62
6	Springfield	Downtown SMTD Transfer Center	10/20	5	68
7	Decatur	Downtown Transportation Center	10/20	10	40
8	East St Louis, Granite City	JJK Station MetroLink Station, Granite City	10/19	4	73
9	Carbondale	Downtown Carbondale	10/18	5	46
Totals				97	533

Pop-Up Event
PARTNERSHIPS

Peoria

Tri-County Regional Planning Commission offered staffing support to conduct outreach efforts, distributed flyers, and collected surveys at their regional active transportation plan meeting.

Chicago

The Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community offered their Corridor Ambassadors to support efforts in Chinatown and provide translation services.

Additional Outreach

The project team conducted additional outreach by reaching out to specific organizations to seek feedback and promote the survey. This additional outreach included providing project and survey information at or to the Illinois Statewide Metropolitan Planning Organization meetings, 2023 National Shared Mobility Summit in Chicago, Quad Cities Marathon Club, Quad Cities Bicycle Club, and a Quincy Transit public meeting. Approximately 2,300 additional stakeholders were reached via the above organizations' social media channels and membership lists.

Partner Toolkit

The project website featured a Partner Toolkit with various materials such as social media posts and graphics, project fact sheets and postcards, links to surveys, and group activity materials. IDOT posted social media announcements about this toolkit and notified the Stakeholder Advisory Group and Technical Stakeholder Group about the resources to help communities gather input. The project team also reached out to municipalities and community groups across the state to encourage them to share these materials and surveys with their members or residents.

Survey Results

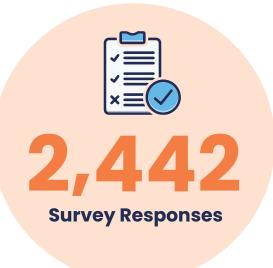
Survey Overview

A survey was made available on the project website to solicit input from residents and communities across Illinois. The survey primarily focused on gathering information on residents' transportation habits and experiences using active transportation. The online survey was also made available in Spanish. A total of 2,442 responses were received between March 2023 and October 2023.

Survey Objectives

The survey had two main objectives:

- 1. Gather information on residents' transportation habits and experiences with using active transportation infrastructure in Illinois; and
- 2. Provide data that assists in removing or minimizing barriers to active transportation in the state



Survey Highlights

Survey results indicate that the public wants to be able to walk or bike for fun and recreation as well as for traveling to specific destinations like work, shopping, government services, school, places of worship, running errands, and other everyday activities.

Survey results provided insights on how residents think active transportation can be improved across the state. Feedback indicates that residents will use active transportation infrastructure that is safe and is separated from vehicular traffic. Many participants stated that transportation infrastructure should prioritize walkability and accessibility. Participants also stated that gaps in local active transportation networks, such as unfinished sidewalks and paths, hinder their ability to get around their communities.

Safety, Safety, Safety

"We need **street design** that is safe for **walkers and bikers** and structured to slow down traffic so we can **share** the road."

Gaps in the Network

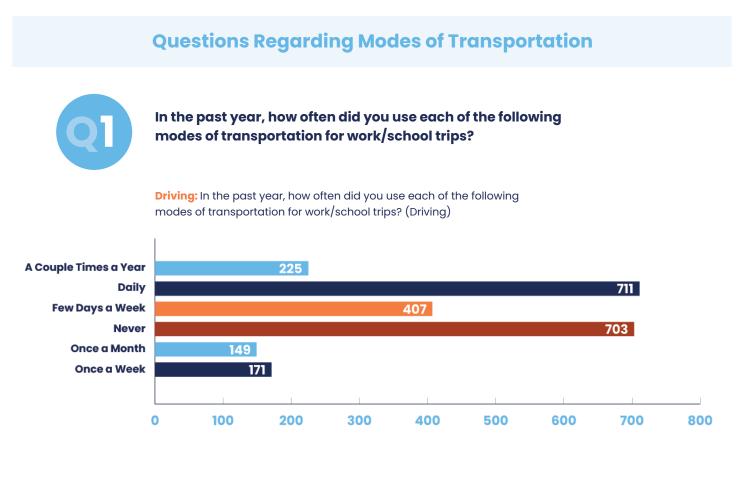
"Lack of connections between neighborhoods. For example, there is an **unfinished path** between my town (Kingston) and the town I could bike to for errands making the trip unsafe. Similarly, in the town in which I work, there are several **segments missing**, such as a finished path from Route 64 (south side) to Peace Road (east side). If this were finished it would be a great bike trip to go **shopping**."

Design with Walkability in Mind

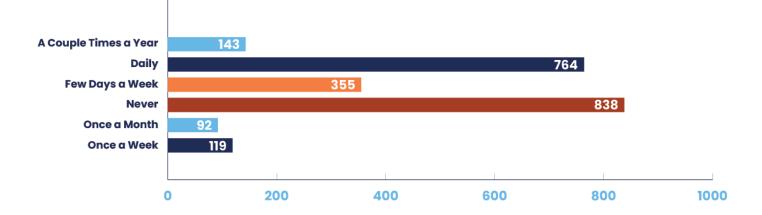
"Not enough **connected paths** for walking, riding that connect areas or towns. We don't build **infrastructure** for towns with walking, riding a bike or other transportation outside of cars."

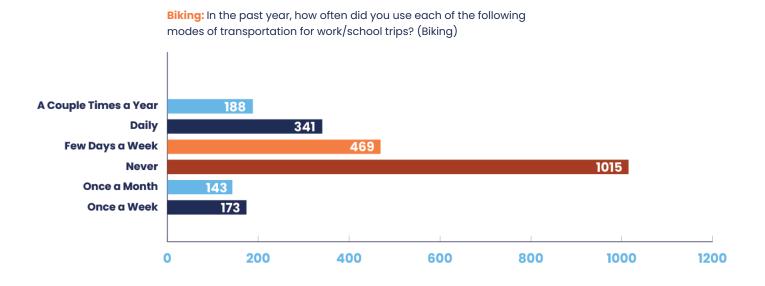
Survey Results

The following is a high-level look at statewide survey results. Callouts highlight key result findings.

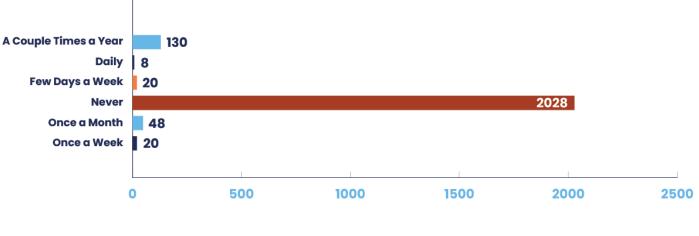


Walking: In the past year, how often did you use each of the following modes of transportation for work/school trips? (Walking)

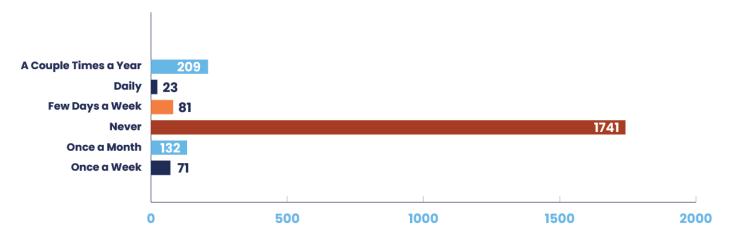


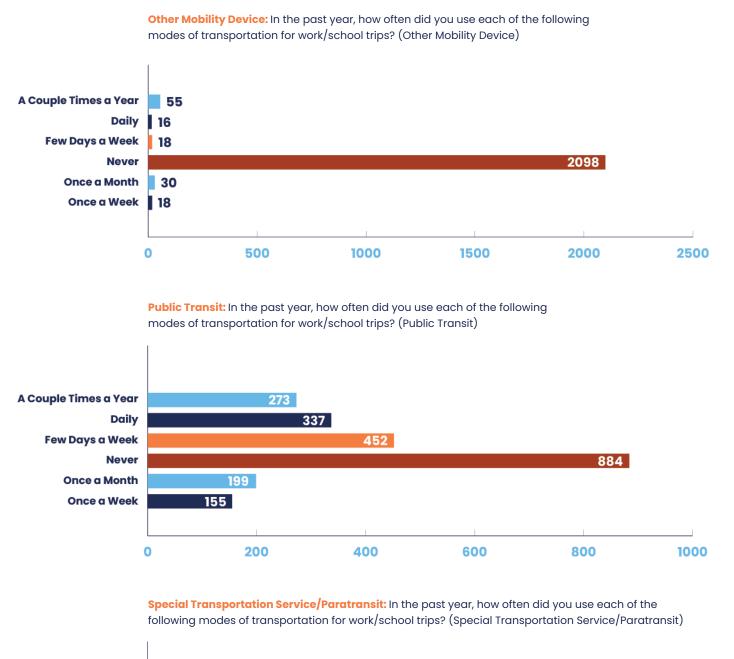


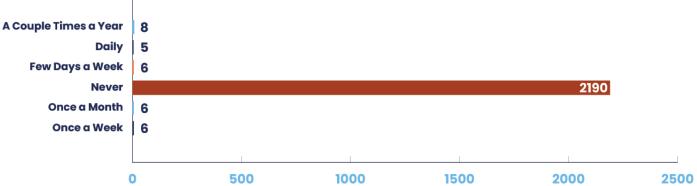
Electric Scooter Share: In the past year, how often did you use each of the following modes of transportation for work/school trips? (Electric Scooter Share)

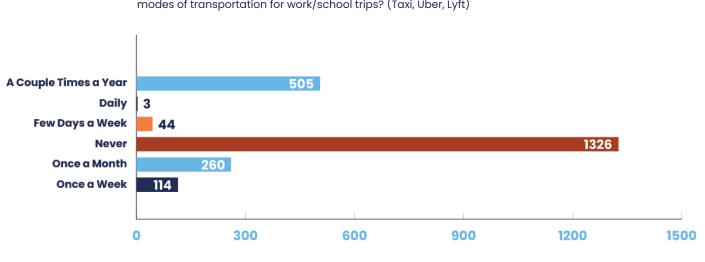


Bike Share: In the past year, how often did you use each of the following modes of transportation for work/school trips? (Bike Share)





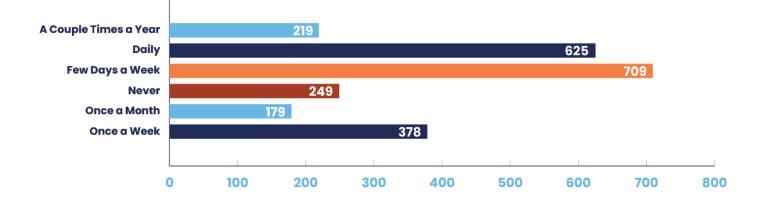






In the past year, how often did you use each of the following modes of transportation for non-work trips (recreation, errands)?

Driving: In the past year, how often did you use each of the following modes of transportation for non-work trips? (Driving)



Taxi, Uber, Lyft: In the past year, how often did you use each of the following modes of transportation for work/school trips? (Taxi, Uber, Lyft)

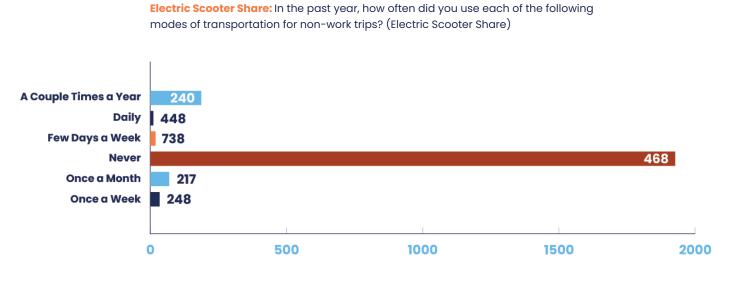
A Couple Times a Year 91 Daily 1129 Few Days a Week 702 97 Never Once a Month 121 **Once a Week** 211 0 200 400 600 800 1000 1200



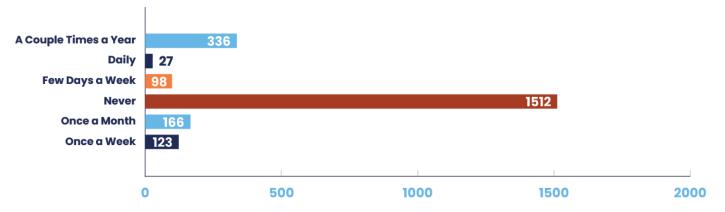
Respondents are walking and biking for non-work trips (recreation, errands) daily or a few days a week.

Biking: In the past year, how often did you use each of the following modes of transportation for non-work trips? (Biking)

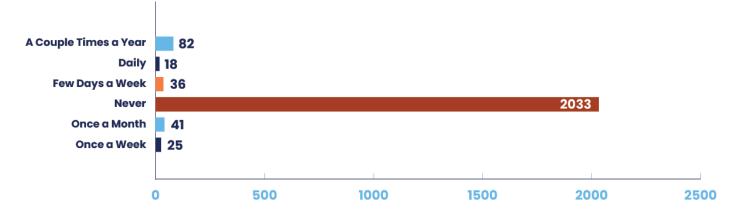


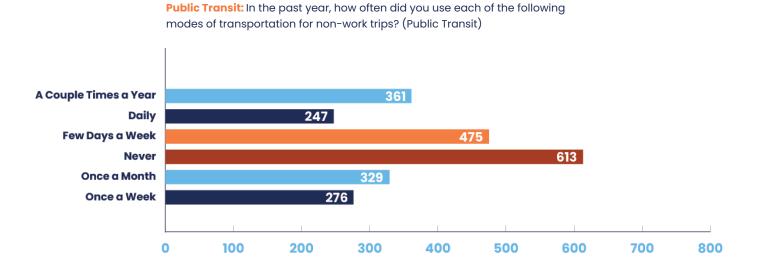


Bike Share: In the past year, how often did you use each of the following modes of transportation for non-work trips? (Bike Share)

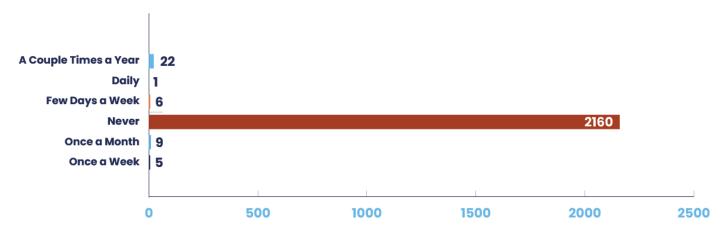


Other Mobility Device: In the past year, how often did you use each of the following modes of transportation for non-work trips? (Other Mobility Device)

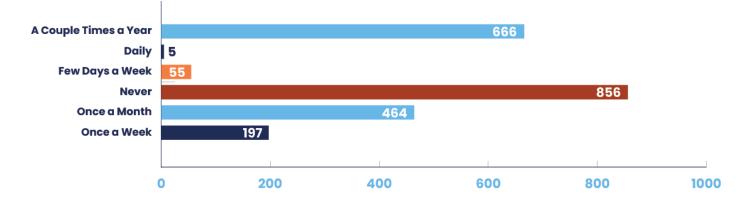




Special Transportation Service/Paratransit: In the past year, how often did you use each of the following modes of transportation for non-work trips? (Special Transportation Service/Paratransit)

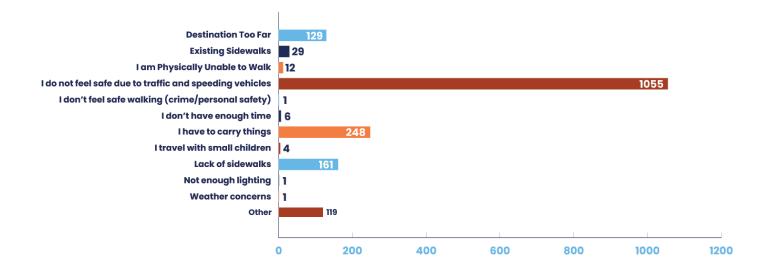






Questions Regarding Barriers to Active Transportation

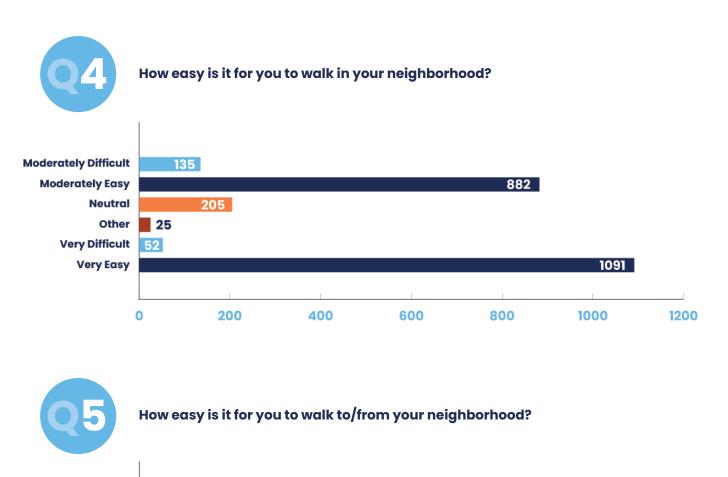
If driving is the primary way you get around for work or recreation trips, what are the barriers that prevent you from walking more?

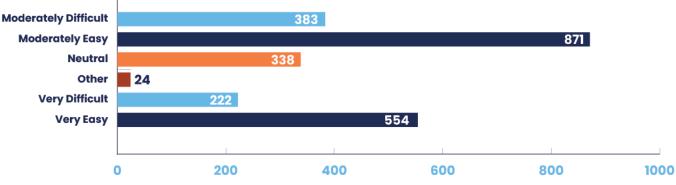




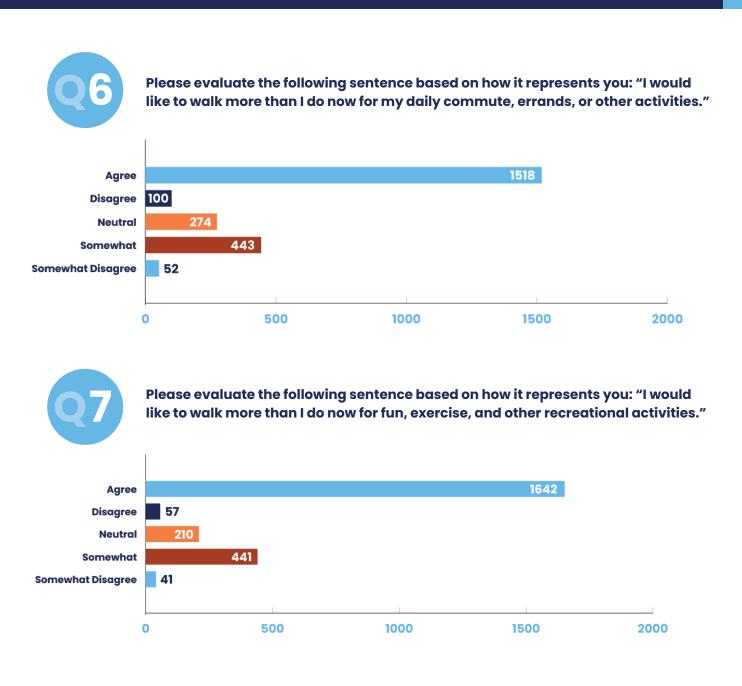
The most frequently cited barrier to walking was safety concerns related to traffic and speeding vehicles.

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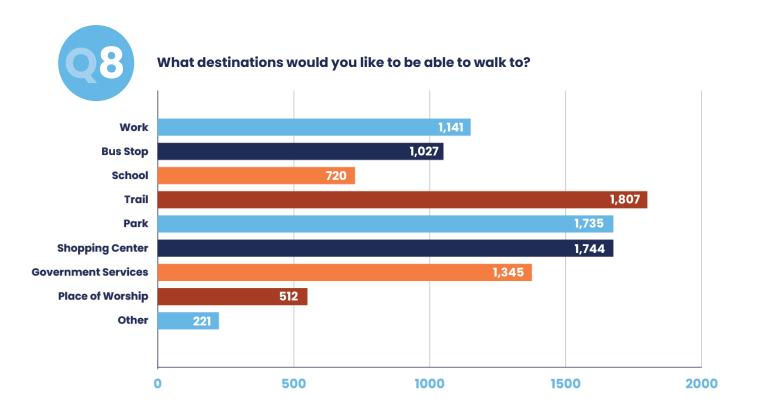






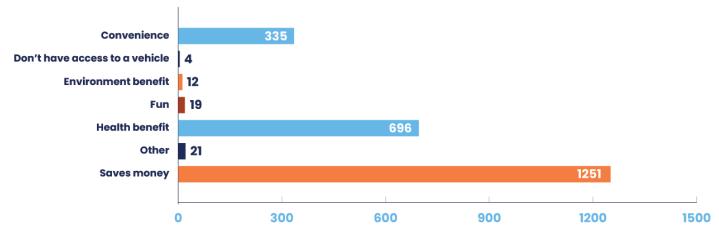
Respondents want to walk or bike more than they do now for fun and for commuting.

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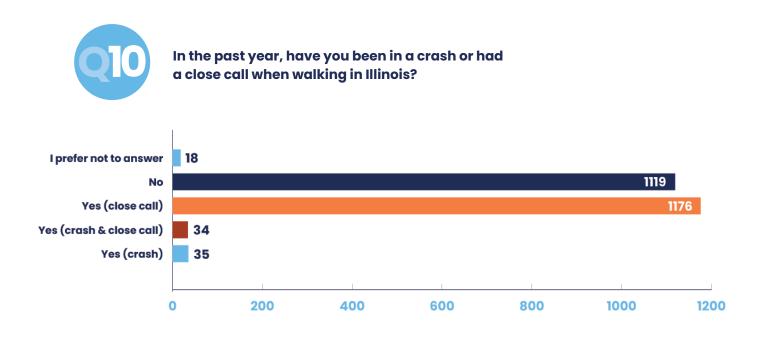




What are the leading reasons that you choose to walk for work or recreation trips?

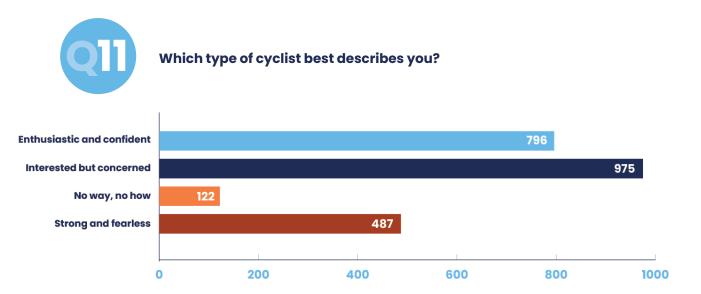


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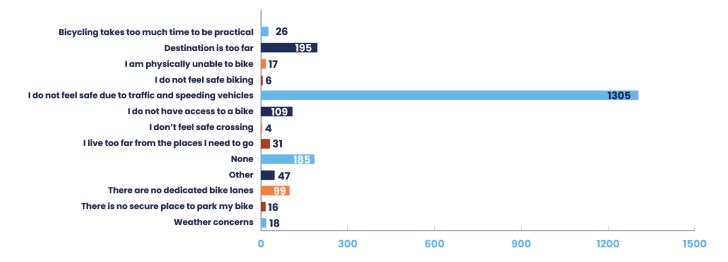


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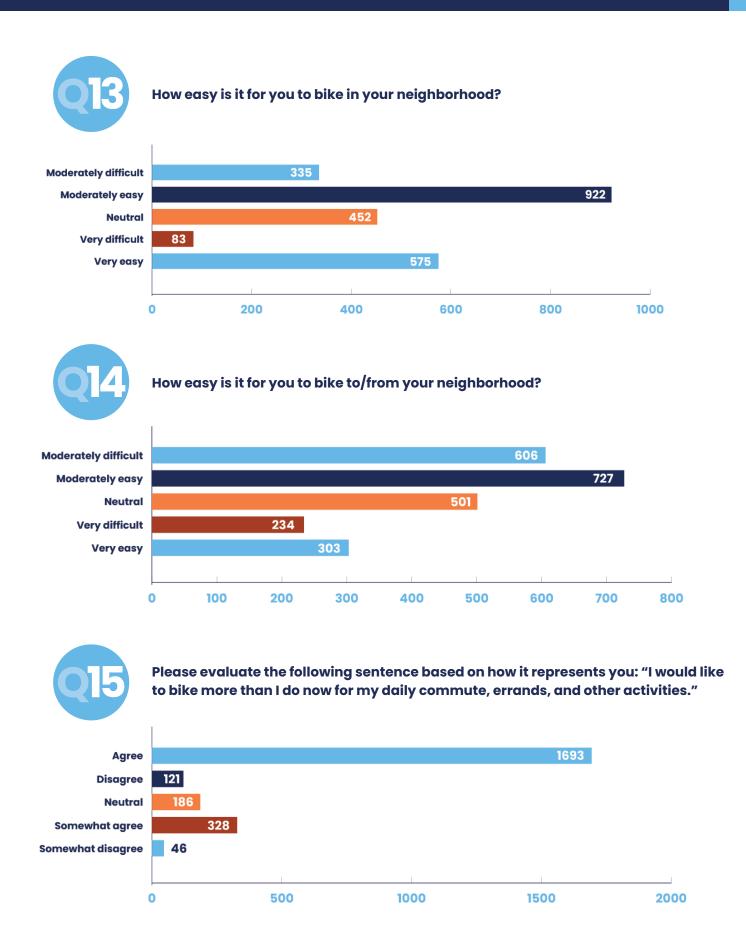




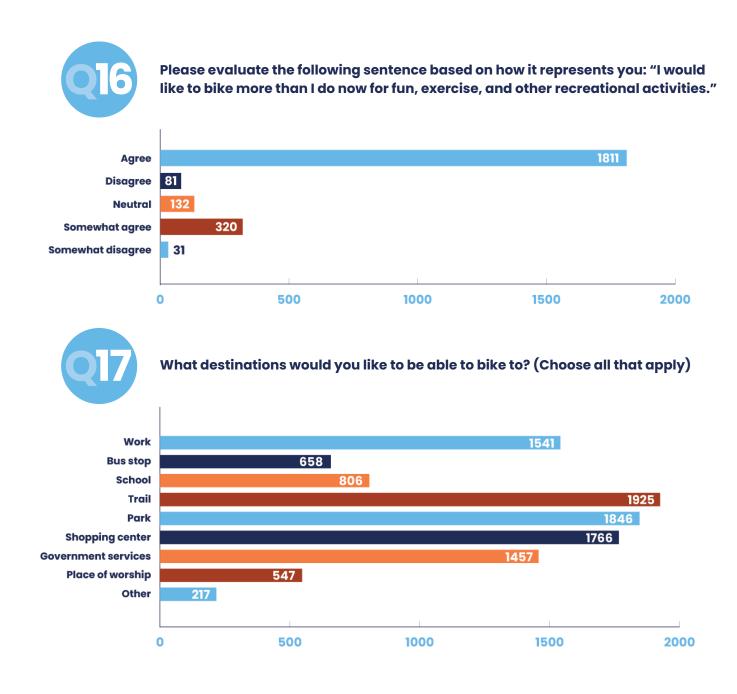
If driving is the primary way you get around the work or recreation trips, what barriers prevent you from biking more?



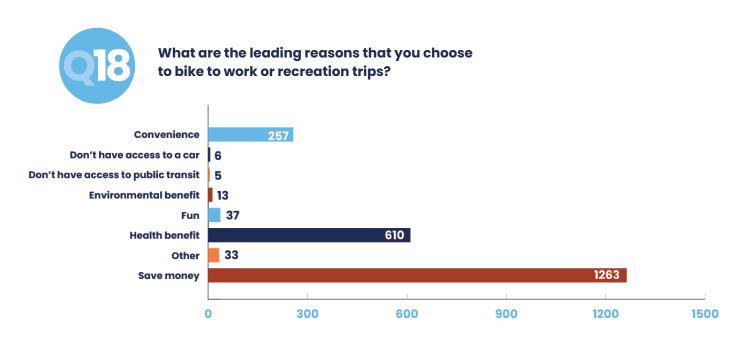
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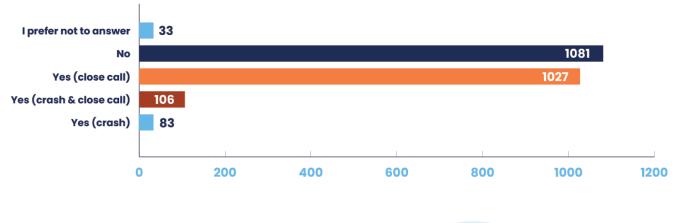


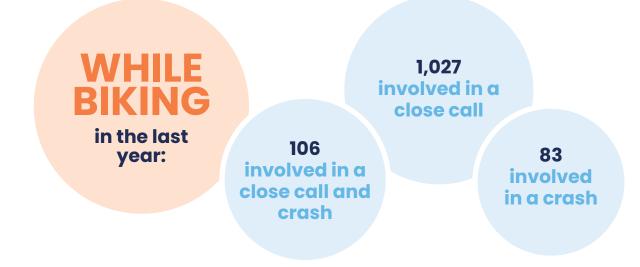
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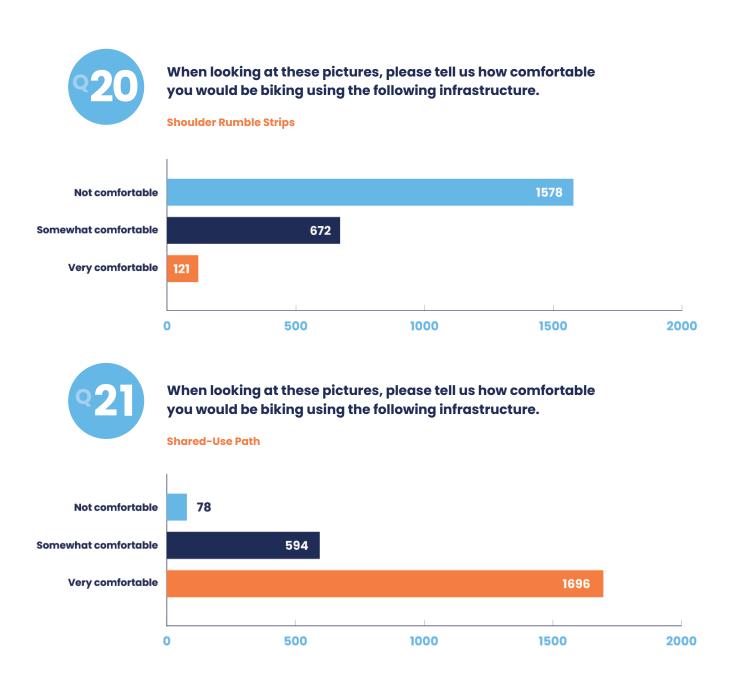


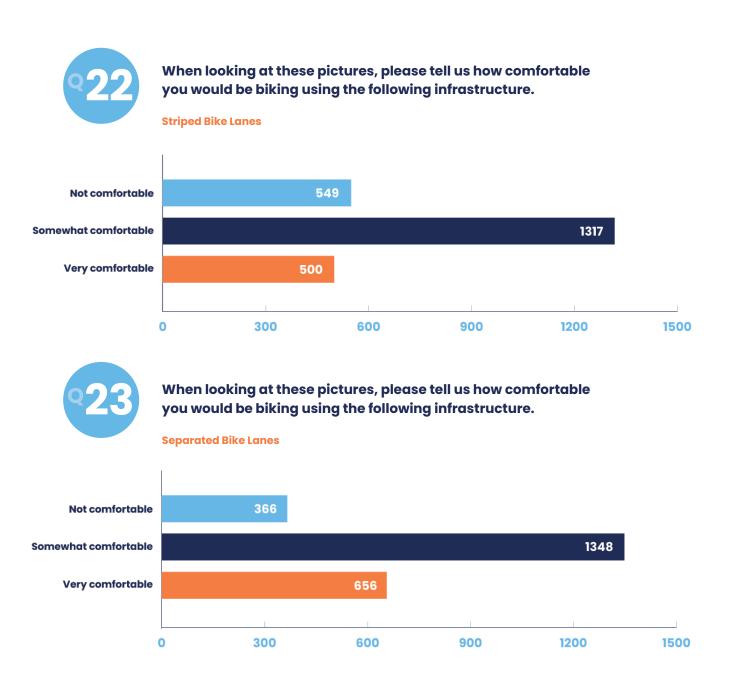


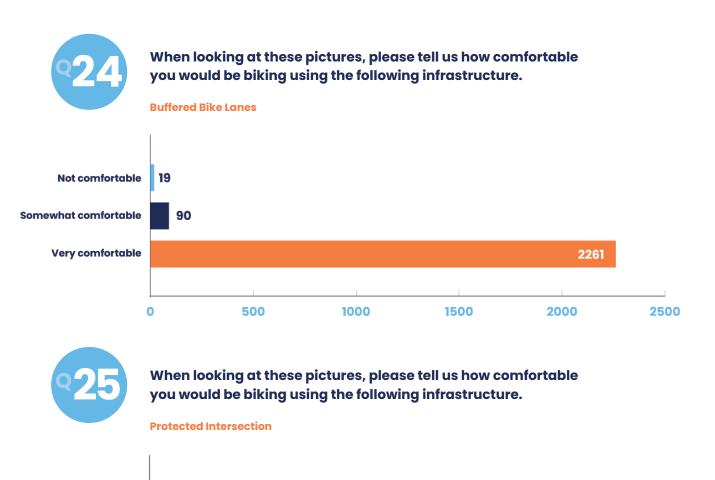
In the past year, have you been in a crash or had a close call when biking in Illinois?

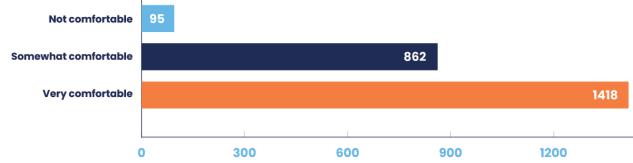


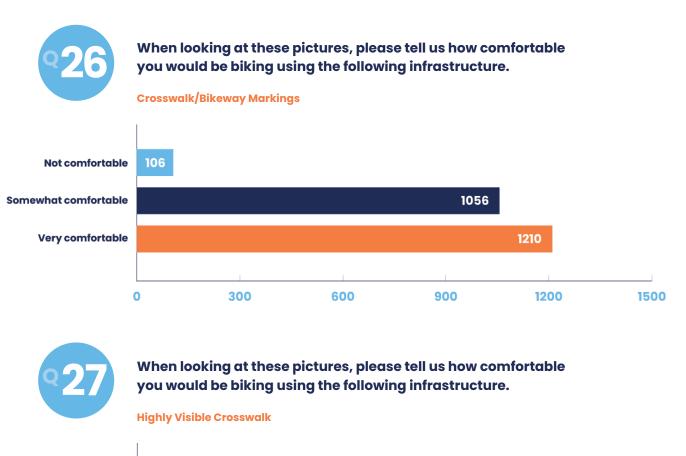


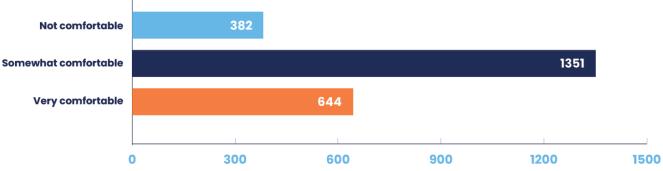




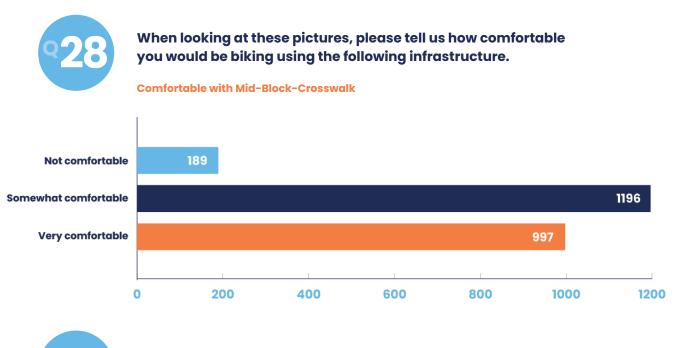






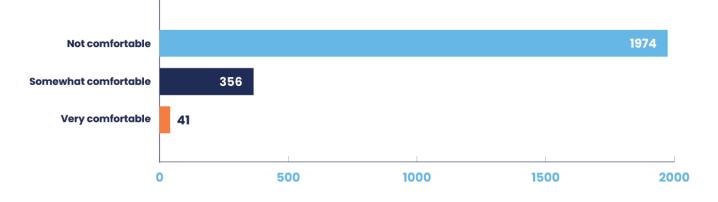


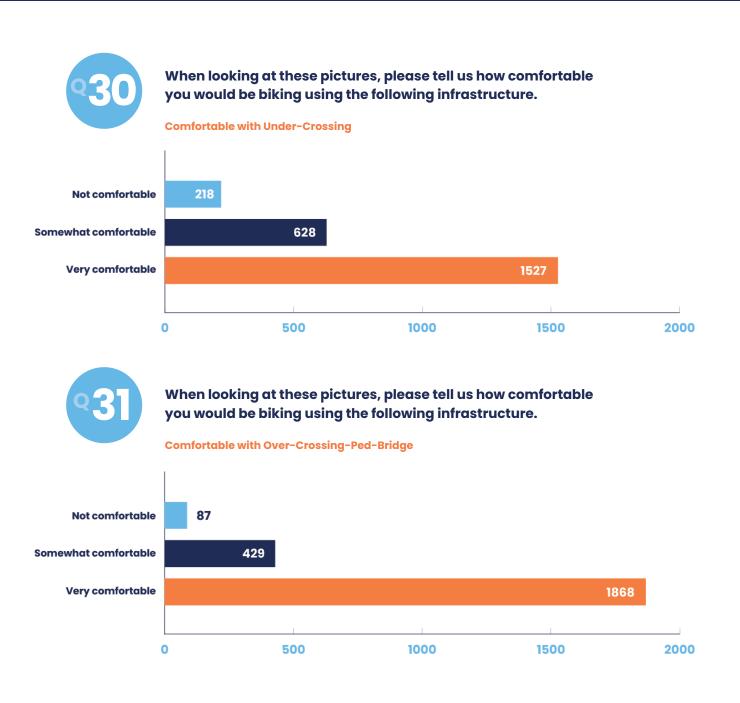
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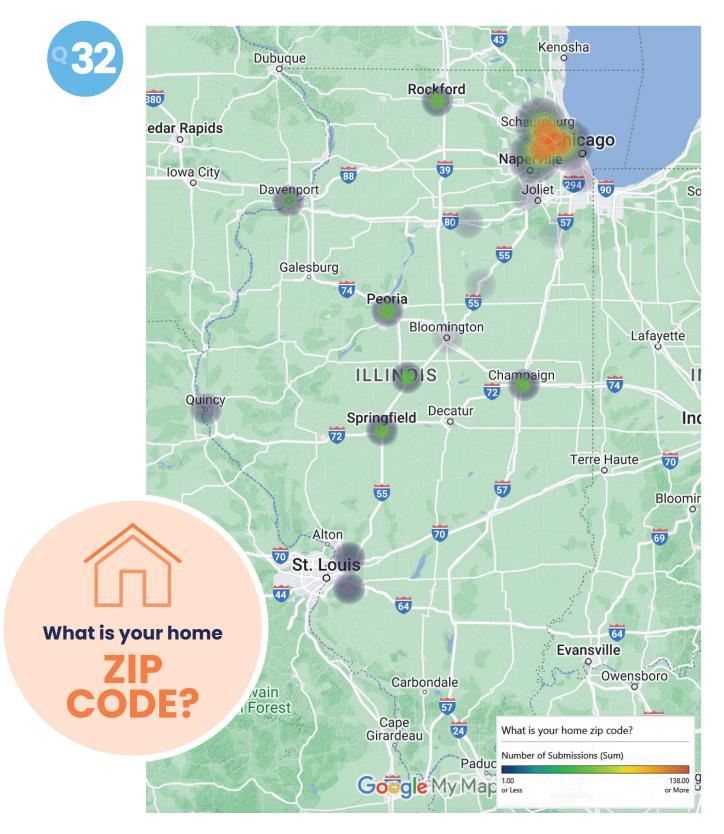
When looking at these pictures, please tell us how comfortable you would be biking using the following infrastructure.

Comfortable with Unmarked-Crosswalk





Questions Regarding Location and Demographics

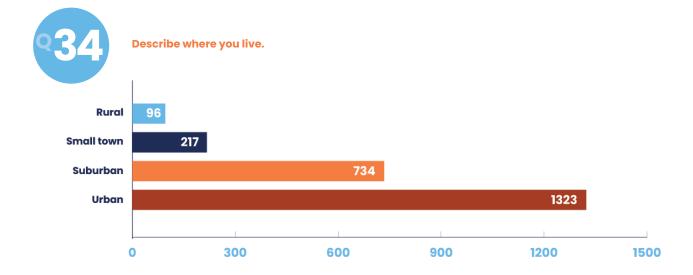


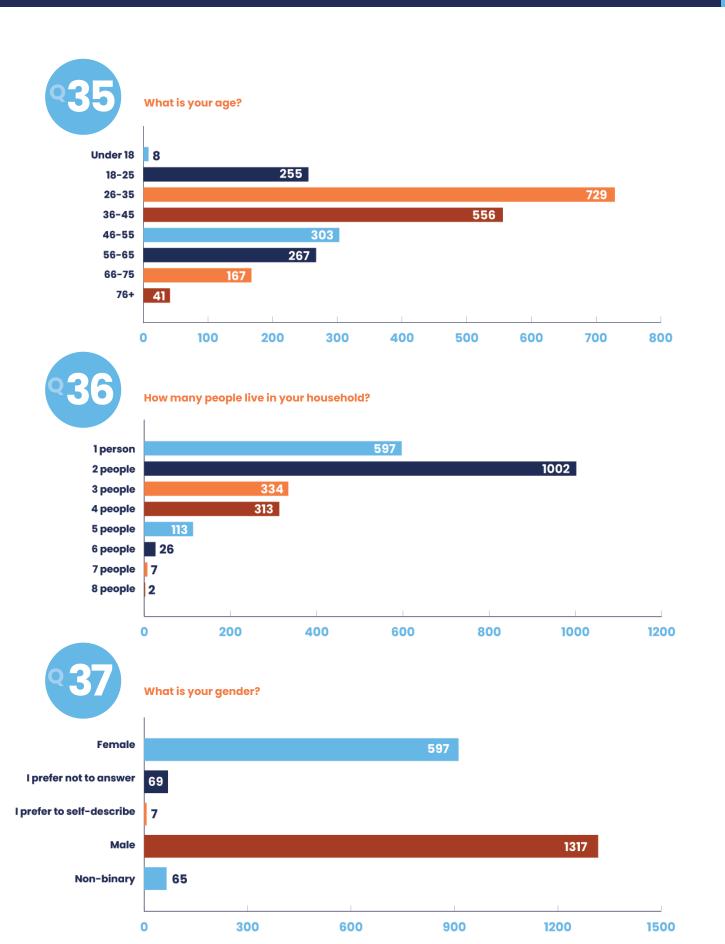


What county do you live in?

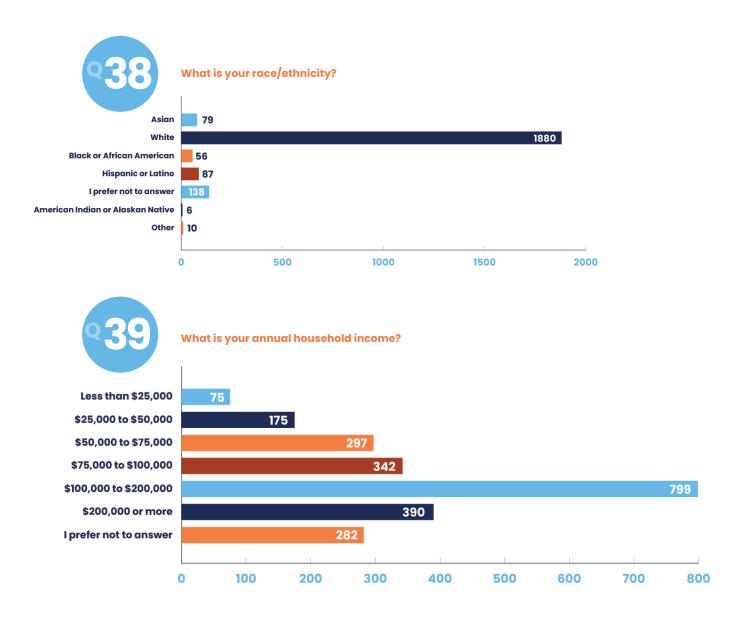
County	Number of Participants
Cook	1,305
Dupage	245
Peoria	76
Will	64
Dekalb	62
Lake	62
Champaign	55
Sangamon	49
Rock Island	38
Kane	34
Logan	26
Madison	23
St. Claire	23
Tazewell	20
Winnebago	19
Adams	10

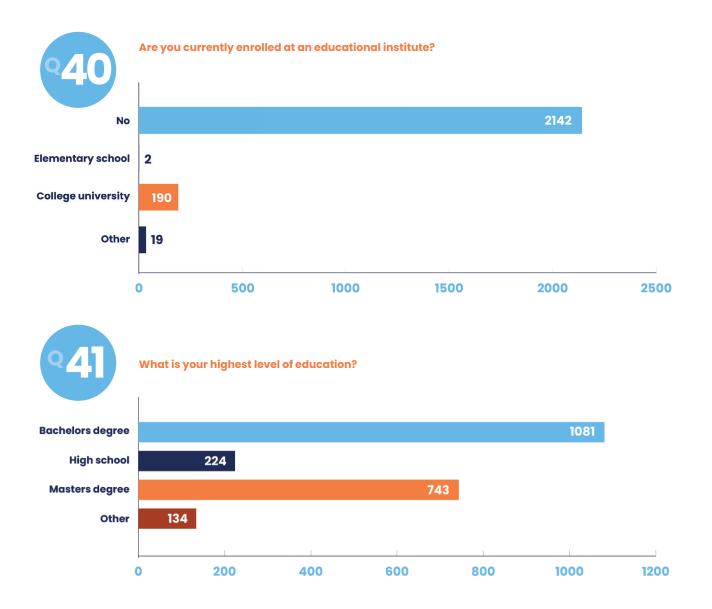
Note: Counties with less than 10 survey participants include Lasalle, Jackson, Kankakee, Henry, Livingston, Woodford, Bond, Clark, Kendall, Whiteside, Boone, Jefferson, Knox, Mercer, Monroe, Bureau, Macon, Williamson, Christian, Douglas, Fayette, Franklin, Fulton, Henderson, Jo Daviess, Lee, Montgomery, Moultrie, Ogle, Pike, Schuyler, and Stephenson.



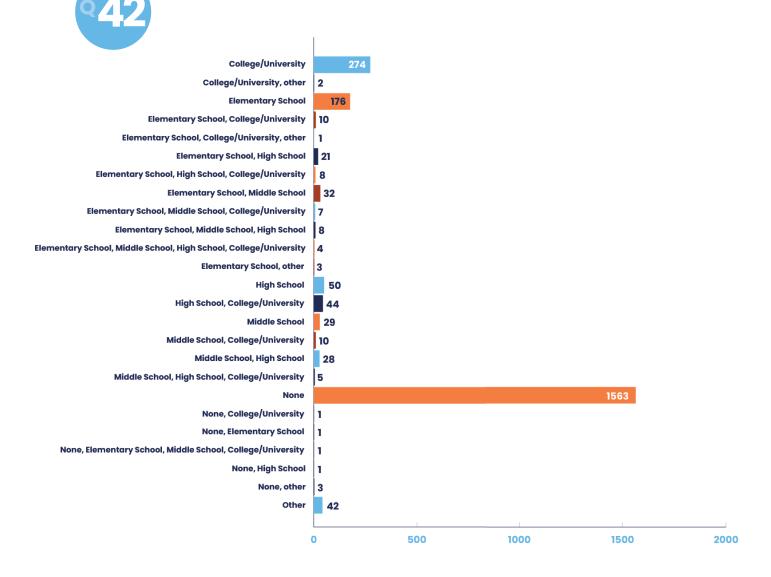


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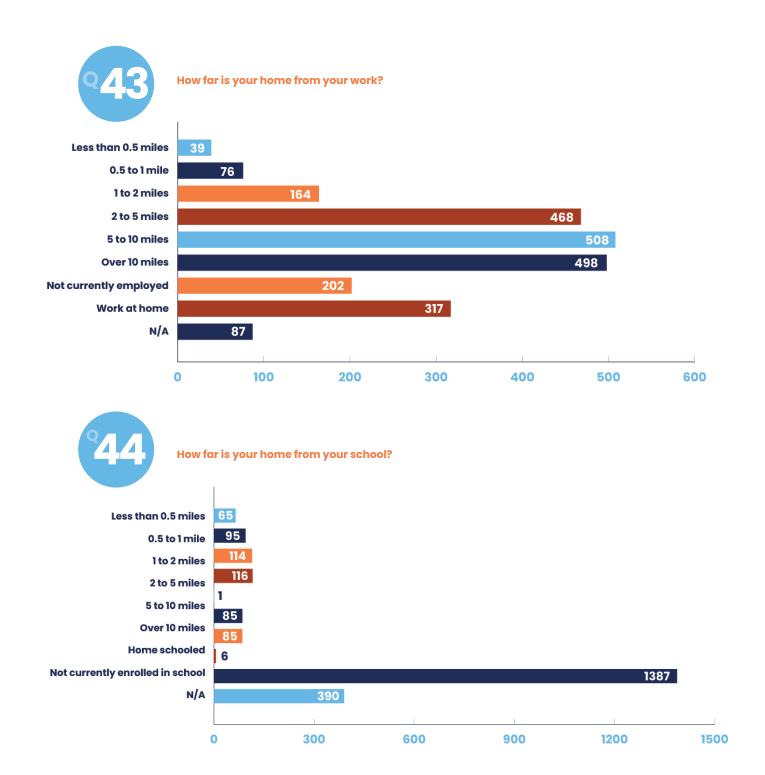


Which of the following educational institutions is anyone in your household currrently enrolled?



Note: 42 "other" responses were recorded. Programs such as daycare, preschool, and adult education courses were most frequently mentioned.

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Interactive Map

Interactive Map Overview

Along with the online survey, an interactive map was made available on the project website to encourage residents to identify specific areas on state routes where active transportation improvements are needed. The map was promoted along with the public survey in order to gather more information on residents' experiences with active transportation in their community.

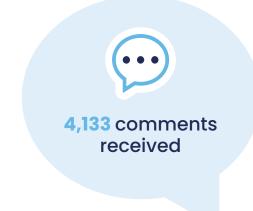
A total of 4,133 map comments were received by October 31, 2023. The charts in this section provide a high-level look at trends compiled from map comments.

Common Themes

Overall, most comments submitted to the interactive online map showed participants' concerns with the safety and accessibility of active transportation infrastructure.

The project team identified the most common themes to get a better picture of specific topics of concern, shown in the word cloud below. The results show participants' concerns with visibility, crossings, intersections, and traffic congestion.





Comment Categories

Respondents could tag their comment with the following categories:

Pedestrian Safety – Location with pedestrian safety concerns or issues

Bicycle Safety – Location with bicycle safety concerns or issues

Mobility Safety – Location with safety concerns related to wheelchair or mobility scooter usage Favorite Route – Location that is a favorite for walking, biking, or rolling

Gaps in the Network – Location that does not have sidewalk, path, crosswalk, or other connection **Needs Improvement** – Location of desired facility improvements for people walking, biking, or rolling (new/improved sidewalks, crosswalks, bicycle lanes, etc.)

Other – Participants were asked to explain the issue or concern they have at their selected location

Comment Type by IDOT Region

Highlighted numbers represent the top comment type for each IDOT Region

Туре	Region 1	Region 2	Region 3	Region 4	Region 5	Overall
Bicycle Safety	24.2%	3.6%	23.5%	22.2%	21.5%	19.1%
Pedestrian Safety	32.8%	59.4%	37.4%	18.5%	20.8%	38.8%
Mobility Safety	3.5%	0.4%	2.2%	3.7%	5.4%	2.8%
Favorite route	4.8%	9.1%	3.9%	2.5%	1.3%	5.6%
Gaps in the Network	6.6%	1.4%	4.8%	27.2%	22.8%	6.2%
Needs Improvement	25.6%	25.8%	27.4%	23.5%	24.2%	25.6%
Other	2.5%	0.2%	0.9%	2.5%	4.0%	1.9%
Percent Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Total	2677	996	230	81	149	4133

8,301 survey responses were received, including comments and votes. Of these, 4,137 were comments. Four comments placed out of state were excluded. 4,133 survey responses were analyzed.



Pedestrian safety is a top concern overall, especially in Regions 1, 2, and 3.

comment rype by ibor bistrict				Fighting	ginea nan	ibers repr	esent the	top com	пени туре		n District
District	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Overall	Total
Bicycle Safety	24.2%	20.8%	2.2%	11.8%	36.0%	19.2%	50.0%	27.7%	13.6%	19.1%	788
Pedestrian Safety	32.9%	15.6%	63.1%	38.7%	36.0%	17.8%	25.0%	25.3%	15.2%	38.8%	1604
Mobility Safety	3.5%	2.6%	0.2%	2.5%	1.8%	4.1%	0.0%	0.0%	12.1%	2.8%	114
Favorite route	4.8%	13.0%	8.8%	4.2%	3.6%	2.7%	0.0%	0.0%	3.0%	5.6%	233
Gaps in the Network	6.6%	9.1%	0.8%	2.5%	7.2%	30.1%	0.0%	27.7%	16.7%	6.2%	257
Needs Improvement	25.6%	39.0%	24.7%	40.3%	13.5%	24.7%	12.5%	13.3%	37.9%	25.6%	1060
Other	2.5%	0.0%	0.2%	0.0%	1.8%	1.4%	12.5%	6.0%	1.5%	1.9%	78
Percent Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
Total	2679	77	918	119	111	73	8 ¹	83	66		4133

Comment Type by IDOT District

Highlighted numbers represent the top comment type for each IDOT District

¹ The District 7 sample size was too low to draw meaningful conclusions.



Districts 6 and 8 had the most concerns regarding **Gaps** in the Network.

Comment Type by Context

Highlighted numbers represent the top comment type by context

Торіс	Urban	Suburban	Rural	Total
Bicycle Safety	21.2%	19.5%	13.0%	788
Pedestrian Safety	37.4%	34.8%	48.3%	1604
Mobility Safety	3.1%	2.6%	2.2%	114
Favorite route	6.3%	4.5%	5.8%	233
Gaps in the Network	4.0%	9.4%	6.7%	257
Needs Improvement	25.6%	27.3%	23.3%	1060
Other	2.4%	1.8%	0.7%	78
Percent Total	100%	100%	100%	
Total	2055	1249	830	4133

Note: Urban context defined by BTS latch: https://www.bts.gov/latch



Among all map comments, the most common themes were: **"Pedestrian Safety"**, **"Bicycle Safety"**, and **"Needs Improvement"**.

Mentions of Goals and Themes by Comment Type

Highlighted numbers represent the top goals and themes by comment type

Project Goal or Theme	Pedestrian Safety	Bicycle Safety	Mobility Safety	Gaps in the network	Favorite route	Needs Improvement	Other	Total Mentions
Equity	1.1%	1.4%	4.4%	1.9%	0.0%	1.6%	2.6%	57
Safety	95.1%	85.2%	71.1%	43.2%	37.3%	68.0%	70.5%	3252
Connectivity	22.4%	40.5%	33.3%	73.9%	63.1%	62.9%	32.1%	1746
Partnerships	1.1%	1.1%	0.0%	5.1%	1.7%	4.4%	6.4%	96
Economic Vitality	1.3%	1.1%	1.8%	3.5%	0.9%	3.4%	1.3%	80
Public Health and Environment	4.1%	5.2%	0.0%	7.4%	6.9%	8.4%	7.7%	237
Livability	2.2%	8.0%	2.6%	19.5%	34.8%	17.2%	10.3%	423
Design	3.2%	3.0%	3.5%	0.0%	3.0%	1.8%	2.6%	108
Maintenance	1.0%	4.4%	8.8%	0.0%	3.0%	1.9%	5.1%	92
Education & Encouragement	0.8%	1.3%	0.9%	1.6%	0.0%	0.5%	0.0%	33

Share of each type of comment type that mentioned something relating to one of the goals or themes. For example, 22.4% of comments categorized as "pedestrian safety" mentioned connectivity. Column totals are not provided because most comments mentioned more than one theme or goal, resulting in totals that exceed 100%. Project goal classification was determined using ChatGPT 3.5 classifications of open ended comments (November 2023)



Safety and connectivity were the top themes by comment type.