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Lewisburg Bikeability Report 2022

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Lewisburg Neighborhoods
& Bucknell Center for Sustainability & the Environment

LEWISBURG BIKEABILITY REPORT

2022



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INTRODUCTION

As a spatially compact community, there is growth opportunity for increasing active transportation in Lewisburg borough. There is a history of active groups working towards a more walkable and bikeable Lewisburg Borough. First, in the form of the Borough Traffic Advisory Committee (formed in 2003 and dissolved in 2015), and then in Lewisburg Neighborhood's Walk It! Bike It! Committee, formed in 2015. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Walk It! Bike It! ceased to regularly meet; however, its programming and advocacy efforts continue. Despite the COVID disruption, bicycling as a mode of transportation is growing within the Borough. According to the 5-year estimates from the American Communities Survey, bicycling represented 2.8% of commutes in 2011. Ten years later, in 2021, the share of bicyclists more than doubled to 6.9% of commuters.

In 2021-22, Lewisburg borough participated in a Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection program that partnered local governments with universities and the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives to create local climate action plans. This work included managing a greenhouse gas inventory, undergoing a months-long process to collaboratively draft a climate action plan for the borough, and conducting surveys to better understand and incorporate community input. In recognition that transportation was the majority source (58.7%) of greenhouse gas emissions for the borough, coupled with the public interest in safer biking, the draft Lewisburg Climate Action Plan includes a number of recommended actions to improve biking infrastructure and support an active transportation system. According to a 2022 survey conducted to inform the climate action plan development, 46.7% of respondents were unsatisfied with the safety of biking while 78.9% believed that encouraging more walking and biking is an important objective for the Borough of Lewisburg. When asked to project what is important for Lewisburg's future, a bikeable community ranked even higher, with 82.95% classifying it as important.

Recognizing the importance of bikeability for Borough residents, the Bucknell Center for Sustainability & the Environment and Lewisburg Neighborhoods conducted a further survey specifically on bikeability in the Lewisburg region to assess the experiences and perceptions of cyclists. The goal of this summary report is to present and discuss the findings of this survey for community partners and stakeholders and to inform strategies for how the Borough can become more cyclist-friendly.

BIKING FREQUENCY

The bikeability survey includes four sections regarding respondents' general biking habits, aspirational biking habits, biking with children, and safety concerns. 157 people from Lewisburg and the surrounding areas responded.

Figure 1 (below) displays the average length of participants' current bike trips. Notably, over 50% of trips taken in and around Lewisburg exceed 3 miles in length.

Respondents indicated that they would like to be able to bike more frequently. Figure 2 (below) demonstrates that participants would like to increase the number of trips that they take by bike.

The largest increase between the number of trips respondents currently take and the number of desired trips is in the '6+ per week' category. An additional 14% of respondents (a 154% increase) indicate that they currently ride their bike fewer than 6 times per week, but would ride more than six times if given the opportunity.

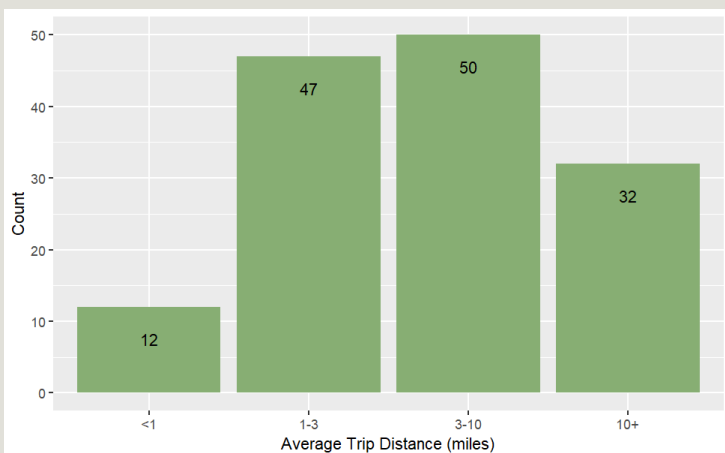


Fig 1. Average distance of trip by bike

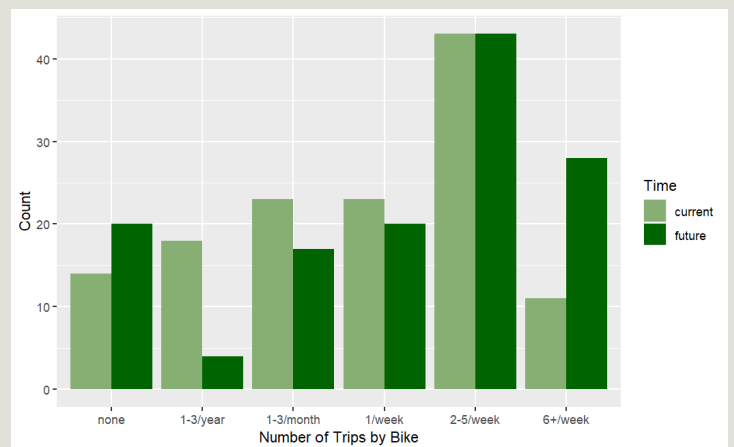


Fig 2. Current versus desired number of trips respondents

BIKING DESTINATIONS

Figures 3-6 (below) display the desire people have to visit popular locations around Lewisburg by bike more frequently than they currently do. These questions asked respondents to choose how frequently they currently visit, or would aspire to visit these locations on a Likert scale from 1-5 corresponding to the responses never, almost never, occasionally, sometimes, and frequently respectively. The below figures represent the percent of "sometimes" and "frequently" responses. (See Appendix A for numerical data).

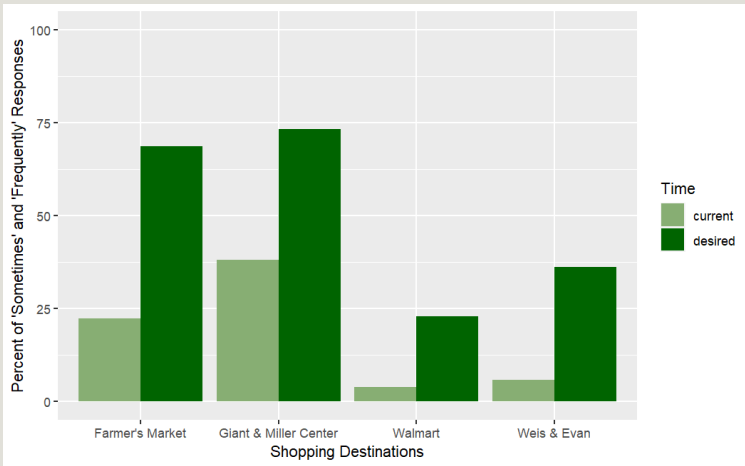


Fig 3. Comparative chart of current versus desired trips to shopping destinations in Lewisburg

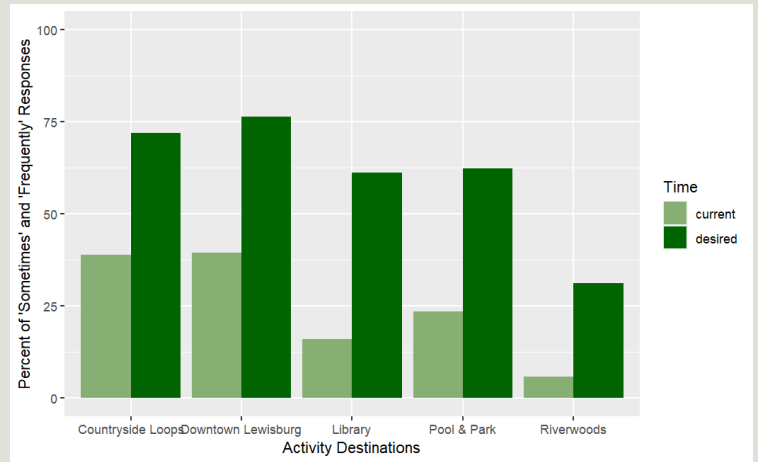


Fig 4. Comparative chart of current versus desired trips to popular activity destination in Lewisburg

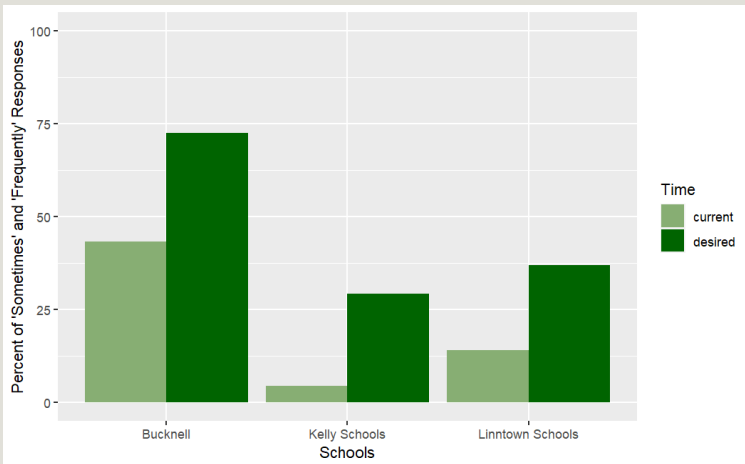


Fig 5. Comparative chart of current versus desired trips to schools systems in Lewisburg

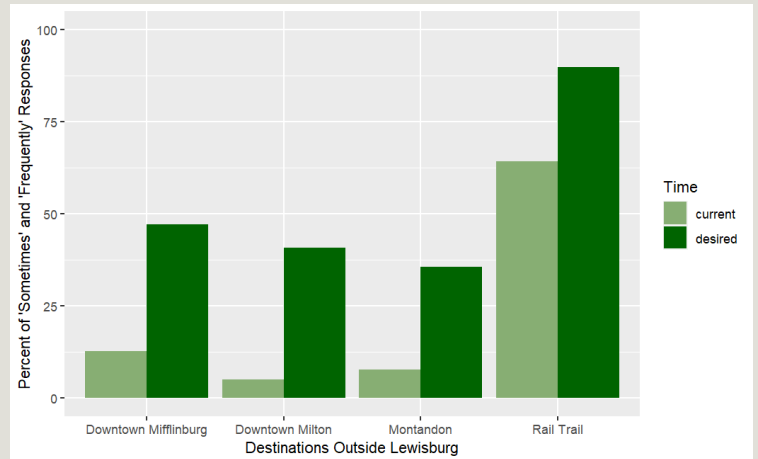


Fig 6. Comparative chart of current versus desired trips to destinations in the surrounding area around Lewisburg

KEY TAKEAWAY

The responses to current and desired destinations are significantly different, with a p-value well below .05%, which means people do want to bike to these locations more than they currently do.

SAFETY & OBSTACLES

Figure 7 (below) displays the average severity of obstacles that cyclists face in Lewisburg. Participants were asked to choose how severe they felt each problem is. The obstacles which were deemed the biggest issues are crossing Route 15, traffic, drivers, and safe routes. Many of these obstacles become a further issue when respondents are riding with children. Figure 8 (right) displays the frequency with which participants ride with children. Numerical data on the specific obstacles that children in Lewisburg face while riding can be found in Appendix E.

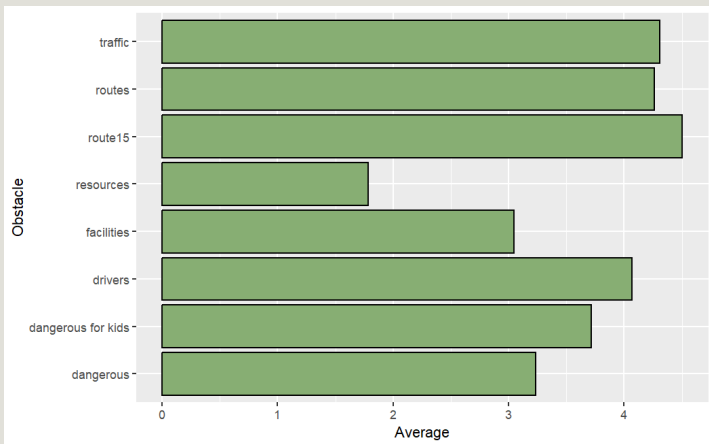


Fig 7. Average response to the severity of obstacles on a Likert scale of 1 (not an obstacle) to 5 (a severe obstacle)
*see Appendix B

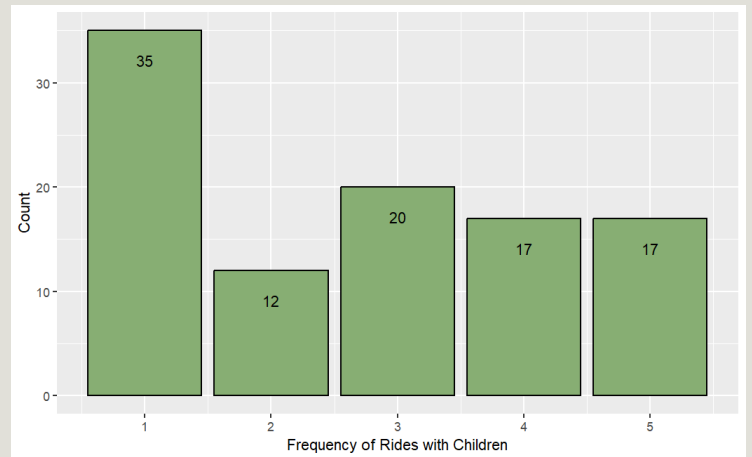


Fig 8. Frequency of rides with children on the Likert scale of 1 (never) to 5 (frequently)

When respondents were asked the type of location they prefer to ride, 93% said they prefer separate bike paths. While the Buffalo Valley Rail Trail provides this type of location, its intersection with Route 15 makes the two parts of the trail near inaccessible to one another.

To determine if Route 15 being a barrier is specific to residency, Lewisburg residents east of Route 15 (54 respondents) and those west of Route 15 (both Lewisburg west of 15 and East Buffalo Township, 78 respondents) were compared. The results show a statistically significant difference, which demonstrates that **residents who live east of Route 15 feel that Route 15 is a more significant obstacle than those on the west side.** See Appendix F for results.



Downtown is not compatible with biking - you can't ride on the sidewalk and the road is way too dangerous...The roads in Lewisburg are not wide enough to support two way traffic in most cases and adding in a bike makes it worse - not to mention the drivers around here that have no regard for your humanity and life.



KEY FINDINGS

- More people want to bike to more place around Lewisburg and they want to bike more frequently in Lewisburg. A perceived lack of safety and access to safe networked routes prevents them from doing this.
- The biggest obstacles to safety were: crossing Route 15, traffic, drivers, and a lack of safe networked routes.
- The biggest points of contention between cyclists and drivers was the amount of space given to cyclists, distracted driving, and confusion from drivers on how to drive around cyclists (see Appendix C).
- Participants prioritized the maintenance of roadways and shoulders, traffic signals responsive to cyclists, and other safety concerns before addressing things like bike racks, lighting, ramps, bike shares, etc.. One respondent wrote that installation of these facilities is helpful, but "only worth it if there are bike lanes that will allow/encourage people to get to these locations." (see Appendix D)
- The single biggest obstacle to safety was crossing Rt. 15 & residents who live east of Route 15 feel that Route 15 is a more significant obstacle than those on the west side

"My child is currently too young to ride on his own...I would prefer to ride with him everywhere rather than be car dependent...I would like to ride him to and from our home to Linntown to the elementary school, but I don't think it is currently safe."

"I live by the old high school and can see the market Street/15 intersection from my house. To me it seems so difficult to just get over 15 with bikes and kids."

"We need a safe connector for the rail trail across Route 15. The turning lanes while trying to cross at the light by St Mary's Street and Route 15 is awful with kids."

"The biggest barrier here for me is lack of marked bike lanes on the street that connect places around town. Why is there not a really safe clearly marked bike crossing on route 15? How do I get from downtown Lewisburg to the rail trail across 15?"

Appendix

Destination	Currently Visit Average	% of 4/5	Would Visit Average	Would Visit % of 4/5
Downtown Lewisburg	3.083	39.5	4.236	76.4
Farmer's Market	2.299	22.3	3.981	68.8
Library	2.070	15.9	3.809	61.1
Giant and Miller Center	2.943	38.2	4.121	73.2
Weis and Evan	1.490	5.7	2.917	36.3
Walmart	1.331	3.8	2.306	22.9
Bucknell	3.096	43.3	4.102	72.6
Pool and Park	2.433	23.6	3.841	62.4
Linntown Schools	1.815	14.0	2.994	36.9
Kelly Schools	1.414	4.5	2.745	29.3
Rail Trail	3.790	64.3	4.637	89.8
Countryside Loops	2.828	38.9	4.102	72.0
Riverwoods	1.439	5.7	2.732	31.2
Downtown Mifflinburg	1.898	12.7	3.261	47.1
Downtown Milton	1.439	5.1	2.930	40.8
Montandon	1.611	7.6	2.783	35.7

Appendix A. Numerical data regarding responses to frequency of current and desired trips to each location using a Likert scale of 1 (never) to 5 (frequently)

Obstacles	Average	% of 4/5
traffic	4.250	81.8%
route 15	4.538	88.6%
dangerous	3.167	40.2%
dangerous for kids	3.667	57.6%
facilities	3.038	36.4%
drivers	3.985	63.6%
routes	4.258	80.3%
resources	1.795	9.1%

Appendix B. Numerical data regarding responses to the severity of obstacles using a Likert scale of 1 (not an obstacle) to 5 (a severe obstacle)

Appendix

Points of Contention	Average	% of 4/5
none	2.138	15.2%
space	4.160	76.5%
driver violation	3.758	62.9%
cyclist violation	3.068	40.2%
driver confusion	3.939	72.0%
cyclist confusion	3.356	49.2%
distracted driver	4.159	75.8%
distracted cyclist	2.634	23.5%
not looking	3.932	68.2%

Appendix C. Numerical data regarding responses to the importance of points of contention between cyclists and drivers using a Likert scale of 1 (not a point of contention) to 5 (a very important point of contention)

Obstacles to Children	Average	% of 4/5
busy roads	4.194	40.46
crossing roads	4.373	43.51
bike paths	4.333	43.51
distance	2.985	19.08
personal safety	3.642	29.77
schedule	2.507	10.69
transporting equipment	1.538	2.29
carrying too much	2.439	12.21
perception of others	1.627	4.58

Appendix E. Numerical data regarding responses to the severity of obstacles children face using a Likert scale of 1 (not an obstacle) to 5 (a severe obstacle)

Importance for Improvement	Average	% of 4/5
traffic laws	3.817	62.1%
reduced speed	3.305	41.7%
signage	3.869	68.9%
driver education	3.885	64.4%
cyclist education	3.760	60.6%
signals responsive to bikes	4.160	79.5%
maintenance	4.489	87.1%
lighting	3.656	56.8%
bikeshare	2.893	28.0%
maps	3.554	55.3%
bike racks	3.664	61.4%
covered racks	3.262	42.4%
sidewalk ramps	3.692	56.1%

Appendix D. Numerical data regarding responses to the importance of various factors for improving the biking experience using a Likert scale of 1 (not important) to 5 (very important)

Appendix F. Percent of respondents from east and west of Rte. 15 and their average responses to the severity of Rte 15 as an obstacle (see Figure 7)

Residence	Number of Participants	Average
East of 15	54	4.796
West of 15	78	4.359