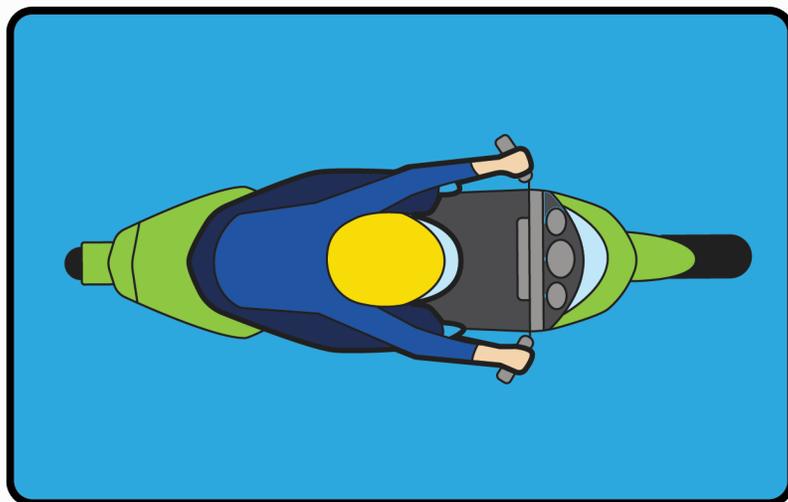
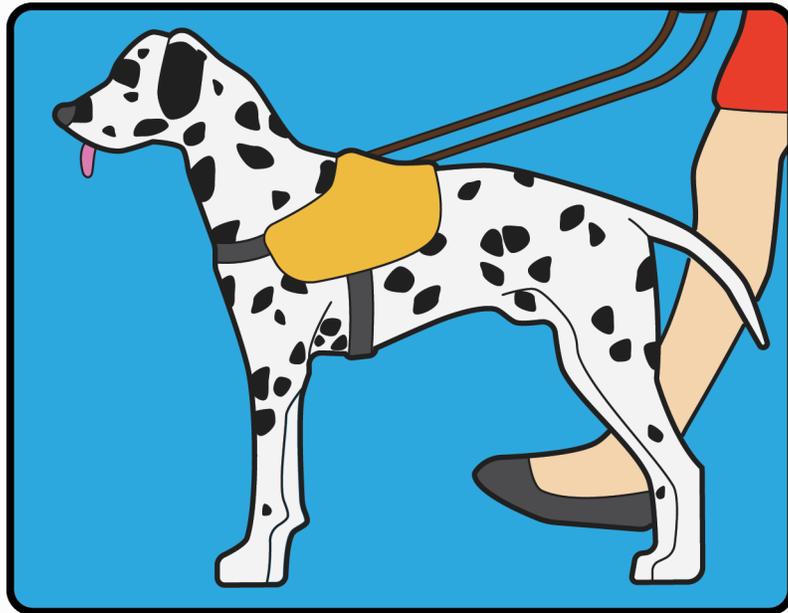
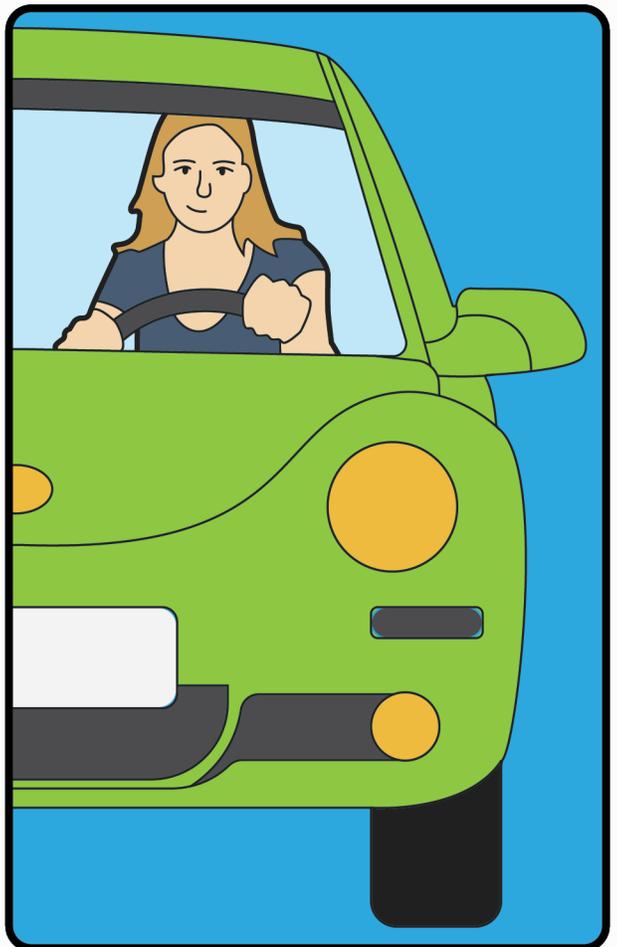


BLOOMINGTON

SAFE STREETS FOR ALL



Appendix B: Public Engagement Overview

July 2024

Background & Purpose

This memorandum summarizes the public input methods and results gathered as part of public engagement efforts for Bloomington Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Action Safety Plan in Spring 2024. The public engagement for the Bloomington SS4A Safety Action Plan aimed to gather public input that would help the project team on the following tasks:

- Identify general transportation safety concerns.
- Identify unsafe locations throughout the city.
- Identify opportunities to improve roadway safety.
- Assist in developing and affirming the High Injury Network.
- Inform the development of implementation strategies and projects.

The engagement strategies for the Bloomington SS4A Safety Action Plan emphasized the following:

- Including various in-person and virtual outreach events.
- Inform the development of implementation strategies and projects.
- Engaging jurisdictional staff and a SS4A Steering Committee that can help guide plan development and provide direction on implementation.
- Attracting a broad and diverse audience, reaching beyond transportation safety advocates, and engaging people of all ages, abilities, genders, races/ethnicities, languages, and incomes throughout Bloomington.
- Prioritizing Communities of Interest (COI) in engagement outreach to ensure historically marginalized voices are included.
- Utilizing City of Bloomington communication methods and community partners to promote the project, direct people to project resources, and announce project meetings and engagement opportunities

Equitable Engagement

Community engagement provides local governments with key information and local expertise that may not be available anywhere else and is often required to receive federal, regional, state, or local funding. Conducting equitable engagement invites people to reflect on their lived experiences and bring their unique perspectives to the conversation in order to correct past planning wrongs and prevent inequities in future planning efforts.

Equitable engagement makes special effort to search out and listen to voices of Communities of Interest (COI) including BIPOC, low-income households, people with disabilities, people with low English proficiency, children, elderly adults, students, limited vehicle access households, and other groups who have intentionally and unintentionally been excluded from transportation planning efforts and decision-making in the past. This exclusion from prior community conversations, along with other factors, generally results in having less access to safe, comfortable, and convenient transportation, being overrepresented in serious and fatal crashes on our roadways and being displaced by transportation projects and planning efforts.

The engagement methods used as part of the Bloomington SS4A Saefy Action Plan were intentionally designed to be welcoming and engaging for historically marginalized communities. The project team worked to ensure that COIs felt empowered that their input can influence transportation decision-making and outcomes.

Participant Demographics

The project team gathered demographic data from about 450 webmap participants and 100 evening event attendees (more details on these methods are later in the memo). The following graphics show how the participant demographics compared with each other as well as with Bloomington's overall population. In general, webmap participants were more likely to be white, own their home, be highly educated, and older than Bloomington residents as a whole. Those that participated in evening events were more representative of Bloomington residents, especially in terms of race, home ownership, education, and income.

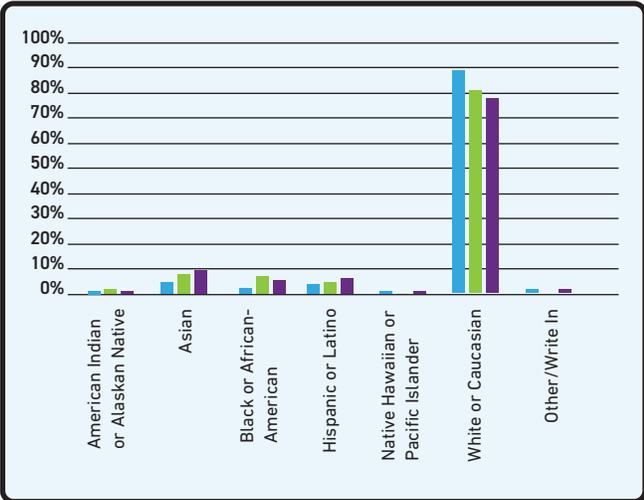


Figure 1. Race and ethnicity of public engagement participants

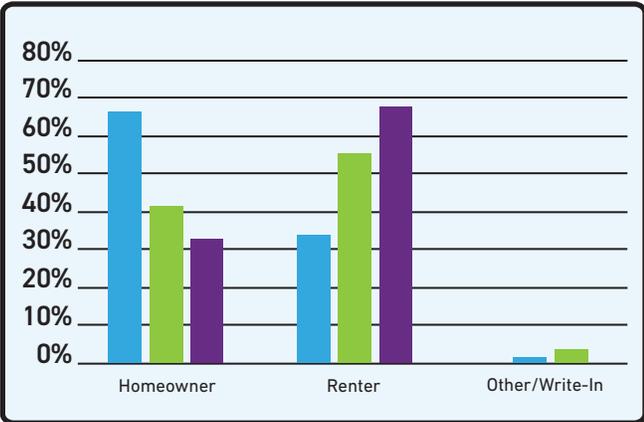


Figure 2. Housing situation of public engagement participants

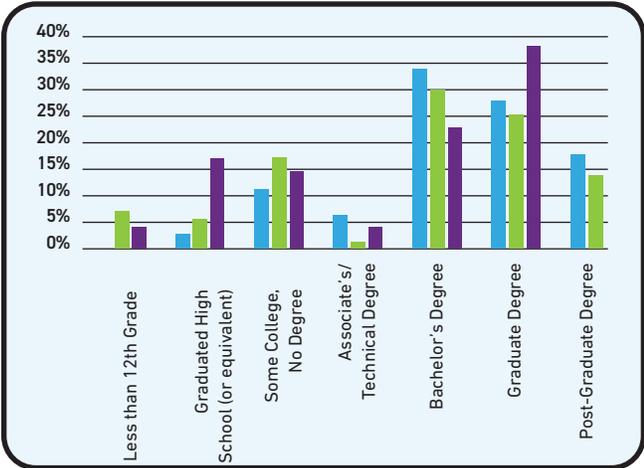


Figure 3. Highest level of education completed for public engagement participants

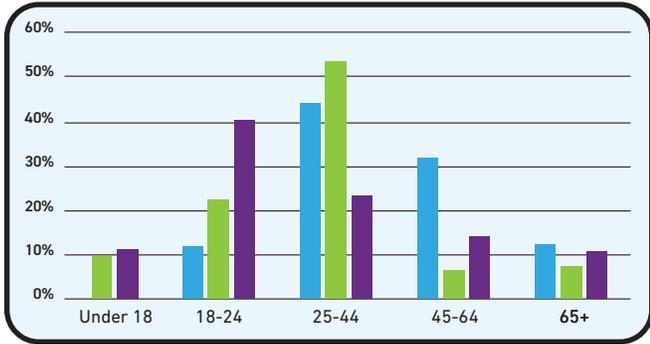


Figure 4. Age of public engagement participants

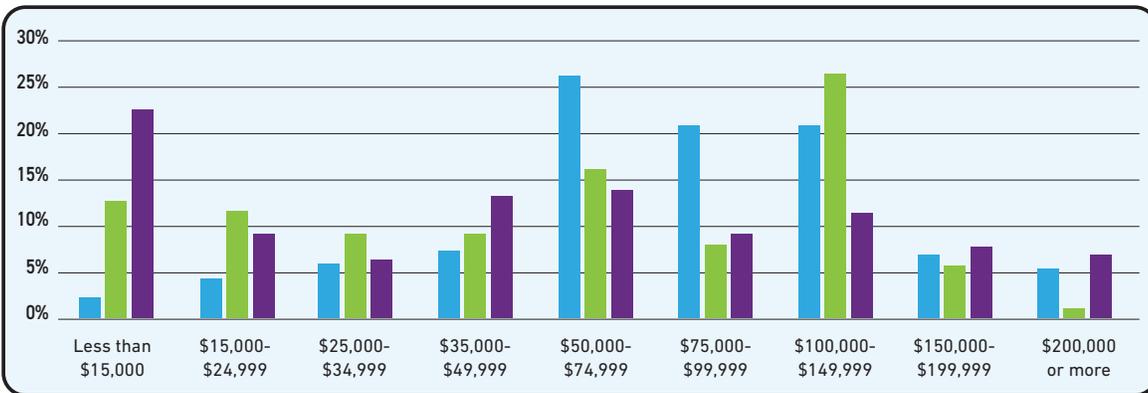


Figure 5. Income distribution of public engagement participants

It should be noted that neither the webmap nor evening event demographics align perfectly with Bloomington residents. Pop-up events conducted during Safety Week were intentionally located in areas frequented by younger, more diverse residents, including those with varying levels of education.

Engagement Methods

The project team used a diverse set of engagement strategies, both virtual and in-person, to reach a wide variety of Bloomington residents. An interactive webmap served as the primary virtual engagement option, and in-person opportunities were conducted during “Safety Week,” a one-week engagement action that included many different techniques and locations. The following sections describe both efforts in detail.

Interactive Webmap

The project team prepared and administered an interactive webmap and survey that served as the primary virtual engagement method. This tool allowed participants to pinpoint locations and/or corridors where they experience safety concerns and leave comments on key issues and opportunities. Decision-making and outcomes.

The map had three distinct parts:

- 1. Landing Page.** This was the participant's first view of the online webmap where they could learn about the project and the role of the webmap.
- 2. Intro Survey.** The survey collected demographic information on who contributed to the webmap.
- 3. Interactive Webmap.** The webmap let respondents enter points directly onto a map to indicate locations where they felt safe or unsafe. Respondents could also provide comments on the area selected, such as highlighting existing conditions, describing an experience that made them feel safe or unsafe, or proposing safety improvements.

Approximately 450 individuals left feedback – either through the survey or webmap. Just over 1,000 “safe” or “unsafe” points were placed on the map.

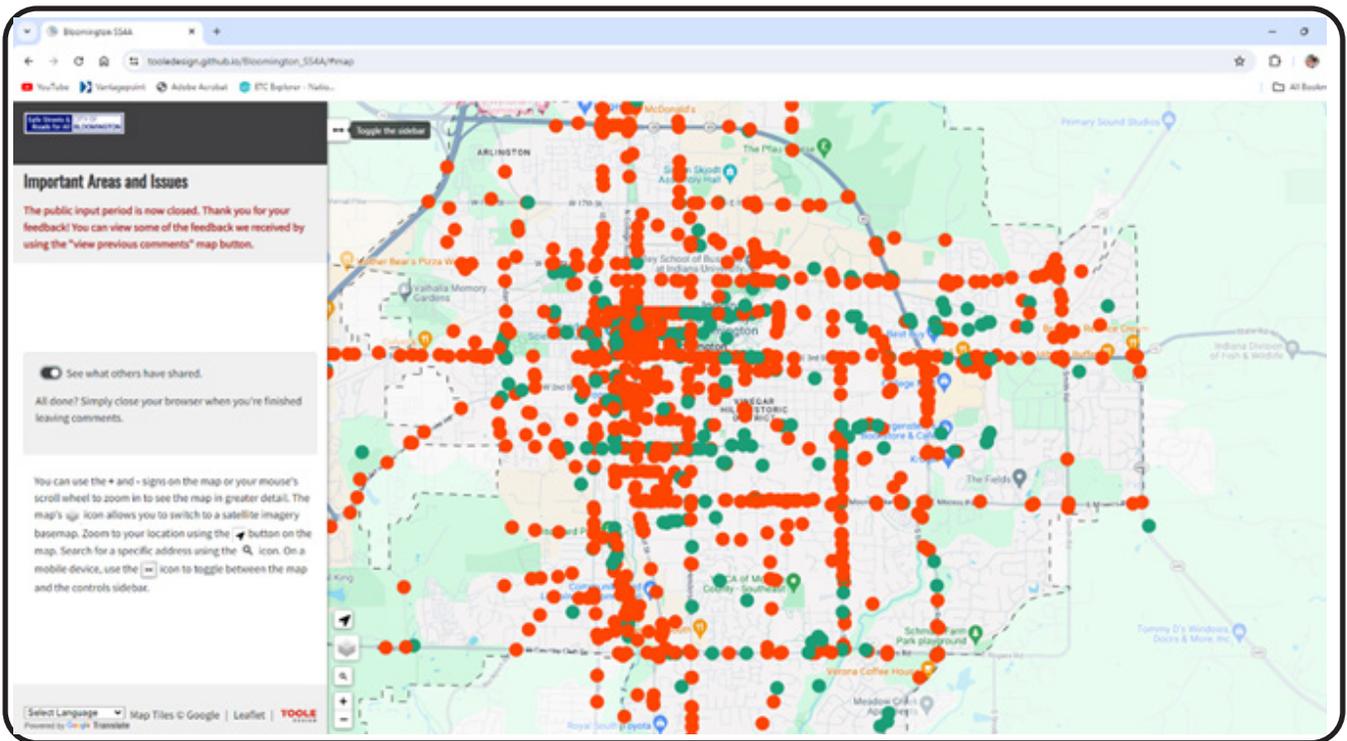


Figure 6. Screenshot of interactive webmap responses

In-Person Engagement

Safety Week

While the online map generated and allowed for a wide range of feedback, the project team felt it was essential to have in-person opportunities. As such, the project team hosted “Safety Week” from April 1 – 5, 2024, which sought to get feedback from a wide and representative range of Bloomington residents and allow for more in-depth conversations than could be had through the webmap.

The following sections describe the different elements of Safety Week.

Pop-Up Events

Pop-up events are tabling activities that were set up throughout the community at places identified as having populations that we wanted to especially engage with as part of the SS4A Saefy Action Plan. The activity had two parts – (1) asking participants to respond to the question of “What are the top three things that make you feel unsafe on Bloomington’s streets” by placing pom-pom balls in jars with potential answers, and (2) drawing on a map of Bloomington to show where they have safety concerns or see opportunities.

There were 13 pop-ups held during Safety Week, which engaged approximately 750 people. While demographics were not gathered, participants trended younger (20-30) and racially diverse. This, most likely, was due to the specific places the pop-up events were held which aimed to intercept student populations, which included:

- 3rd and Walnut Transit Center
- BloomingFoods Co-op
- Stadium Parking Lot
- 10th/Fee Arboretum
- The Back Door (LGBTQ+ bar)
- IU Health Sciences Building
- Hopscotch (coffee shop)
- Downtown Library
- Little 5 Practice
- Courthouse Square
- Sample Gates
- Student housing bus stop
- La Bonita (Hispanic/Latino grocery store)



Figure 7. Pop-up at the 3rd and Walnut Transit Center



Figure 10. Pop-up at Sample Gates



Figure 8. Pop-up at Indiana University Health Sciences Center



Figure 11. Pop-up at Hopscotch coffee shop



Figure 9. Pop-up at the Stadium parking lot



Figure 12. Pop-up at Bloomingfoods Co-op



Figure 13. Pop-up at student housing bus stop



Figure 14. Pop-up at the downtown library

Evening Open Houses

The project team hosted three evening events as part of Safety Week. These events were open to the general public and included six stations, each with an interactive activity, to garner feedback and spur discussion. The questions asked at the open houses closely mimicked those from the online webmap survey in order to complement that data set.

The open house locations were selected to be welcoming and, potentially, places where Bloomington residents might already be. The events were advertised using flyers posted throughout town, a local blog, social media, and word of mouth. The events were held at the following places, dates, and times:

- **City Hall Atrium.** April 2, 2024. 5-7pm. This event was originally supposed to be held at the Waldron Hill Buskirk Park but, because of thunderstorms, was relocated to the City Hall Atrium. There was a taco truck parked outside. All participants who completed all the activities were given a \$10 gift card to the taco truck.
- **Chocolate Moose Ice Cream Parlor.** April 3, 2024. 6:30-8pm. At this evening event, all participants who completed the activities received a free small ice cream. This event had all ages and demographics attend, and probably had the most families of any event.
- **Friendly Beast Cider Company.** April 4, 2024. 6:30-8pm. This event was held during the location's weekly trivia night and trivia participants participated in the engagement stations before and after trivia rounds. Most of the participants were younger adults and, notably, very few knew about the project or attended that evening because of the engagement event. All participants who completed the activities received a gift card to a local taco shop.

Participants were greeted at a welcome table where a project team member introduced the project, gave them a "passport" to be stamped at each station (once completed, it could be turned in for the incentive), and had them fill out a brief demographic survey. After that, participants moved on to the following stations and activities:

- **Station #1.** Big Question. This station asked how important participants think it is to invest in safe and comfortable transportation in Bloomington. Participants placed a building block on the response area.
- **Station #2.** Trade-offs. This station presented participants with a variety of transportation safety-related trade-offs, and asked them to place a sticker along a line indicating how much they agreed or disagreed with the statements.
- **Station #3.** Safety Concerns. This station asked participants to select their top three transportation safety concerns on Bloomington's streets. This station was the same as the pop-up event.

- **Station #4.** Mode-Specific Safety. This station asked, per mode – walking/rolling, biking, driving, and transit – what would make the participant feel safer.
- **Station #5.** Map. This station had a large map of Bloomington where participants could mark locations of concern or opportunity.
- **Station #6.** Transportation Safety Quilt. Using Bloomington’s quick logo as inspiration, participants wrote their “hopes and dreams” for transportation safety in the city on paper triangles. Staff then put these triangles on to a board to build a “Transportation Safety Quilt.”



Figure 15. Evening event at the City Hall Atrium

Combined Advisory Committee Meeting

On April 1 from 5:30-6:30pm, the project team hosted a Multi-Commission meeting that invited members from a variety of City Advisory Committees to learn about and provide feedback on the project. Attendees included members of the following committees:

- Traffic Commission
- Public Transportation Corporation Board of Directors
- Parking Commission, Environmental Commission
- Environmental Commission
- Council for Community Accessibility
- Commission on Sustainability
- Board of Public Safety

The project team began the meeting with a presentation that gave an overview of the project as SS4A, reviewed the High Injury Network, and covered the variety of events occurring throughout Safety Week. Overall, committee members were supportive of the project and its mission. However, there were notable themes of the discussion:

- **Members would like to see a shorter timeline for the vision zero goal.** The project team provided clarification on process for selecting the timeline, traffic safety data trends, and goals and progress of other jurisdictions.
- **Attendees expressed concern about allocating any of the SS4A project and program funding to the police department,** which is not expected at this time.
- **There was concern for the consistency of data due to COVID, lack of self-reporting and reporting of near misses, perceived safety, and the exclusion of non-vehicle crashes in the data analyses.** The project team elaborated on the definition of safety in the context of SS4A and the emphasis on fatal and serious injury crashes, as well as how engagement provides additional context that is not captured in the data.
- **Addressing speed along the high injury network was a major point of discussion.** The project team provided insight about various proven countermeasures and how a comprehensive safety system minimizes error and impact.
- **Members expressed interest in how culture changes can be incorporated into this project and what type of impact this can have.** Educational and psychological strategies need to be paired with engineering strategies to create a comprehensive safety system, which will be incorporated in the Safety Action Plan. Additionally, land use gaps and opportunities will need to be addressed as land use and transportation are closely linked.



Figure 16. Project team staff presenting at the All-Commission Meeting

School Outreach

Children and their families were identified as a key engagement demographic for this project. To reach students, we worked with three schools in Bloomington – Fairview Elementary School, The Project School, and Tri-North Middle School to bring information and engagement opportunities to students. In the two elementary schools, a project team member led an engaging presentation about how students can practice safe behaviors using any mode and how they can behave to make Bloomington's streets safe for other roadway users.

The presentation also introduced transportation infrastructure that has and will continue to be installed around the city as part of safety efforts such as crosswalks, curb extensions, signs, lighting, bike lanes, etc. – and discussed what each of those elements do. The sessions ended with working with the students to create a “transportation safety quilt,” where they could write or draw about ways to make the city's roads safer for all users on paper triangles, which were then assembled into a larger quilt.

At the middle school, project staff held a pop-up event during the lunch period, which drew nearly 200 students. Students at all the activities were overwhelmingly engaged with the idea of making streets safer for all users. They were quick to discuss how they behave to be safe by walking on the sidewalk, looking both ways before crossing the street, and using Bloomington's trail system, especially the B-line (it should be noted that both elementary schools were close to downtown Bloomington near the B-line).

They were also very aware of dangerous behaviors that their parents often engage in, such as speeding and distracted driving. Students were very interested in understanding how different transportation countermeasures make streets safer and were hopeful to see these on more streets around the City in the future.



Figure 18. Building a transportation safety quilt with Bloomington students



Figure 19. Teaching students about different types of transportation facilities that reduce speed

Engagement Results & Key Takeaways

Through virtual and in-person engagement, the project team received thousands of comments. These comments covered a wide variety of topics relevant to making Bloomington’s streets safer for all users. The major takeaways from questions asked throughout the engagement processes are summarized in the following sections.

Question: Where do you feel safe and unsafe when traveling around Bloomington?

The webmap and in-person events allowed participants to label points on a map they deemed safe and unsafe and offer details into their opinions. Table 1 shows some of the main reasons webmap participants felt places were safe or unsafe; these responses were consistent with in-person discussion as well.

Table 1: Summary of safe and unsafe location webmap attributes

“This Location Is Safe Because”	Count	“This Location Is Dangerous Because”	
There are bicycle lanes or space for bicyclists	79	People drive too fast`	392
There are sidewalks	74	Drivers do not pay attention	324
There are a lot of other people walking or biking	66	There are no safe places for people walking, biking, or rolling to cross the street	219
People drive at the speed limit or slower	41	There are no bicycle lanes or space for bicyclists	189
There are safe crossings	40	There are no or inadequate sidewalks	189
Drivers are paying attention	35	Other (please specify below)	185
There is good lighting at night for pedestrians or bicyclists	22	There are too many cars on the road	177
Other (please specify below)	18	I have experienced personal safety or harassment at this location	110
		There is not enough lighting at night for pedestrians or bicyclists	84
		There is not enough lighting at night for driving	45
Total	375	Total	1,914

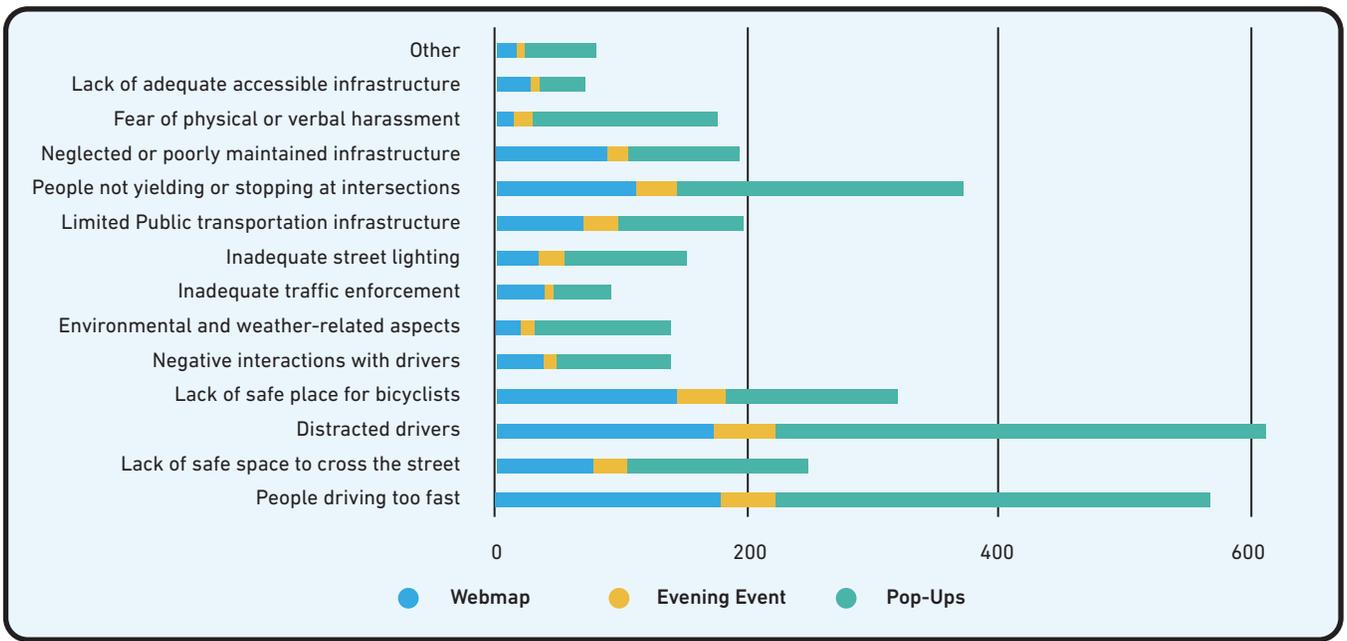


Figure 23. Responses to "What are the top three things that make you feel unsafe on Bloomington's Streets?"

Question. How important do you think it is to invest in a safe and comfortable transportation system in Bloomington?

At both the evening events and on the webmap, participants strongly believed that investing in a safe and comfortable transportation system was important. Very few selected "not important" as their answer.



Figure 24. In-person responses at a Safety Week evening event

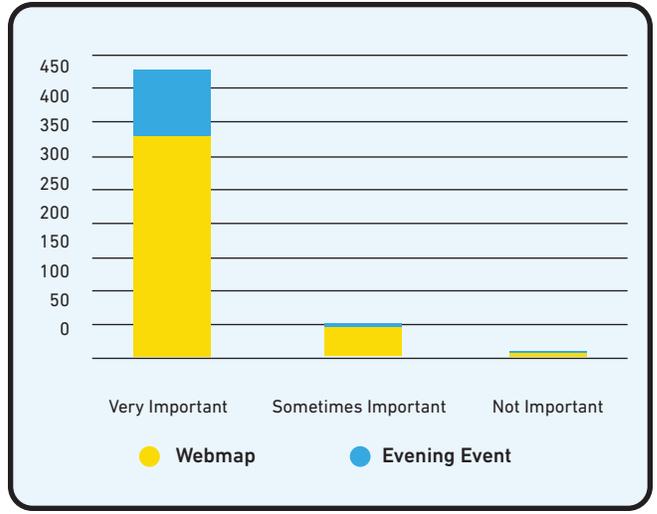


Figure 25. Responses to "How important do you think it is to invest in a safe and comfortable transportation system in Bloomington?"

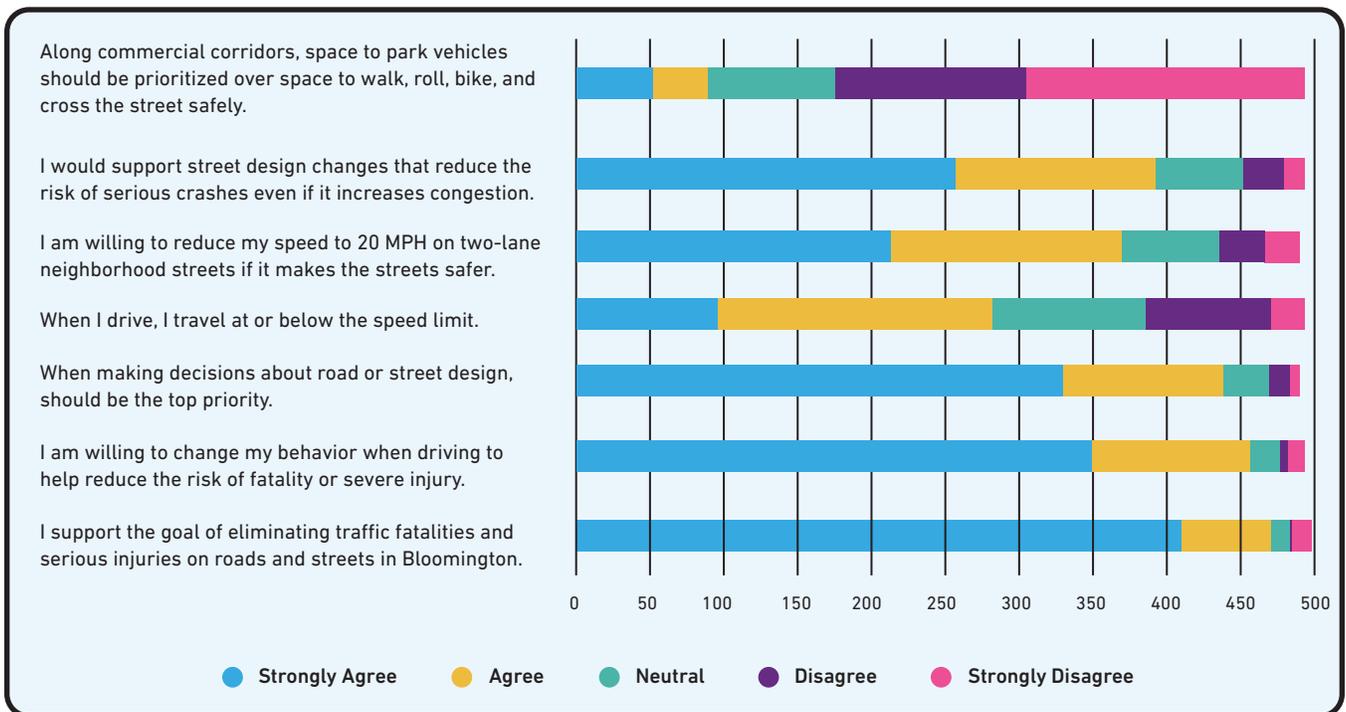
Question: Trade-offs

Participants were asked how strongly they agreed with a variety of statements that focused on trade-offs between safety and speed or convenience. In general, most participants agreed with statements that align with safer roadways design and operational practices. That said, many participants said that they don't usually drive at or below the speed limit which shows that people are in support of safety but may need more than a speed limit to encourage them to drive at safe speeds.

Notably, for policy and project implications, only 20% of respondents believed that space to park vehicles should be prioritized over space to walk, roll, bike, and cross the street safely along commercial corridors. Parking is often a major source of conflict and pushback to safety-focused projects, and these results show that participants are, in theory, willing to make that sacrifice for active transportation and safety improvements.



Figure 27. Trade-off question station at a Safety Week evening event



Question: Generally, how safe do you feel traveling around Bloomington walking, rolling, biking, scooting, driving, or taking transit?

The feeling of safety can vary dramatically depending not only on where you're traveling, but also how you're traveling. Webmap participants were asked what modes of transportation they use and then, as a follow-up, how safe they feel using those modes around Bloomington.

Overall, respondents felt most safe while driving or on transit. Walking was the next "safest," with a very small amount of respondents saying it feels "very unsafe." Feelings of safety dramatically dropped from there with less than a quarter of people feeling safe while biking or in a wheelchair. Notably, nobody responded that they felt "very safe" on a scooter.

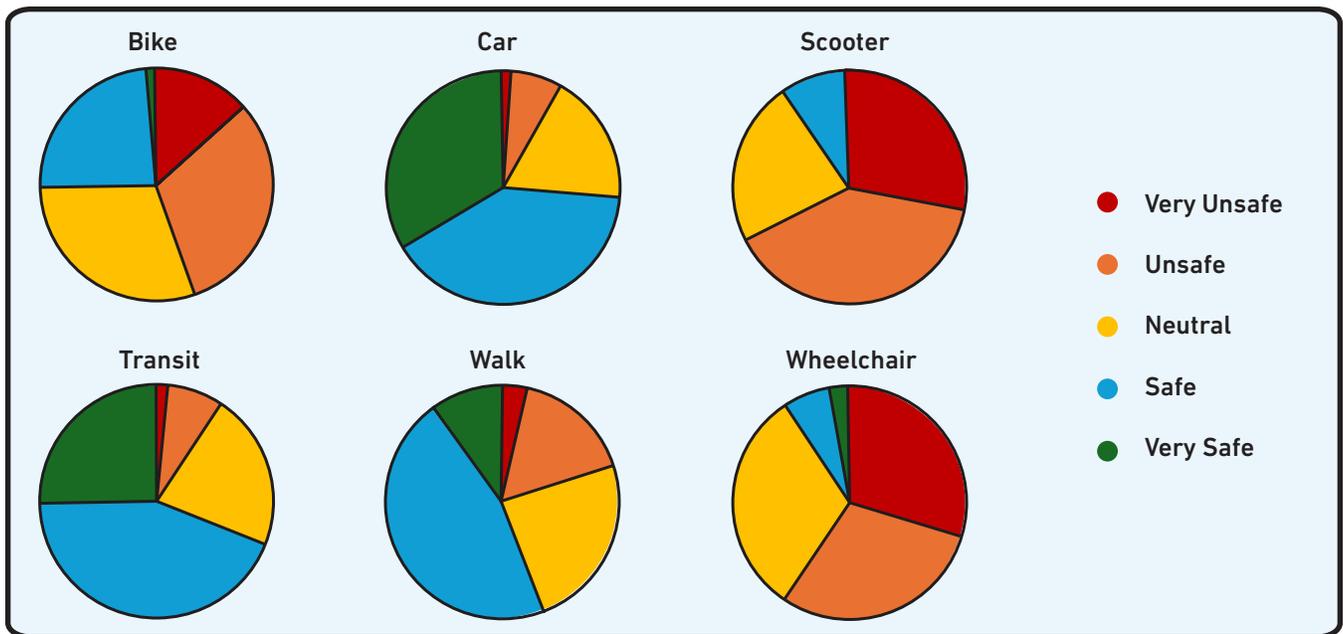


Figure 28. Responses to "Generally, how safe do you feel traveling around Bloomington walking, rolling, biking, scooting, driving, or taking transit?"

Question: “When walking or rolling, biking, taking transit, or driving, what would make you feel safer?”

As a follow-up to the prior question, webmap and evening event participants were asked to select three choices from a list to offer insight about what would make them feel safer while walking/rolling, biking, driving, or taking transit. For walking and biking, participants top answers were the same – they wanted more separation between them and vehicles, better maintained facilities, and more sidewalks, bicycle lanes, or trails in the community. For people biking, more secure bicycle parking and better wayfinding were also common selections. For pedestrians, participants selected better lighting and more accessible infrastructure as items that would make them feel safer.

Interestingly, participants selected “more space separating people bicycling from car traffic” and “better road maintenance” as the top two items that would make them feel safer while driving, which is nearly identical to the responses of pedestrians and bicyclists. Reducing driving speeds using speed bumps or lane reductions, and better or more visible signs were the next most common answers.

Transit riders (of which there were few) highlighted improvements at transit stops, especially adding more pedestrian crossings and/or signals near stops. Adding more shelters was the second most common choice, followed by the desire to increase lighting around transit stops.

What would make you feel safer when walking or rolling?	
More space separating people walking from car traffic	402
More sidewalks or trails	267
Better maintenance of sidewalks and trails	241
Better lighting of sidewalks, trails, and roads	176
Accessible infrastructure (curb-ramps, wheelchair access, wider sidewalks, etc.)	113
Additional signs or signals at intersections	94
Additional police presence	51
Other	48
Better wayfinding so I know where to go	21
What would make you feel safer when biking or scootering?	
More space separating people and bicycling from car traffic	243
More bicycle lanes or trails in the community	236
Better maintenance of bicycle lanes and trails	136
More secure bicycle parking	91
Additional signs or signals at intersections	82
Better lighting of trails and roads	73
Other	44
Better wayfinding so I know where to go	26
Additional police presence	19

What would make you feel safer when driving?	
Better road maintenance	235
More space separating people bicycling from car traffic	219
Increased street lighting	153
Reducing driving speeds using bumps or reducing the number of lanes	134
Lowering speed limits	130
Better or more visible signs so I know where to go	106
Other	78
Additional police presence	64
Increasing the number of traffic signals	36
What would make you feel safer when taking transit?	
Adding more shelters at transit	151
Increasing lighting around transit stops	145
Having more pedestrian crossings and/or signals near transit stops	133
More route information so I know where to go	117
Other	40
Additional police presence on transit	17
Additional police presence at the stops	11



Figure 29. Modal safety station at a Safety Week evening event

