

DETERMINING CYCLIST TRIP PURPOSE ON OFF-STREET URBAN TRAILS IN THREE US CITIES

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CREATING THE NEXT®

- Little research has been conducted on cyclist trip purpose on off-street trails
- Cyclists and pedestrians likely use the trails for different reasons
 - Off-street trails offer unique advantages to cyclists
- Off-street trails are an increasingly popular form of form of transportation infrastructure
- Typically funded using Parks and Recreation budget lines
- Many major trails have been constructed using Federal transportation funding
 - TIGER
 - CMAQ
- Understanding the purpose of cycling trips on off-street trails is critical to funding decisions, trail design, and network planning



OBJECTIVES

The study had three main objectives:

1. Create a quick, easy method to identify the purpose of bicycle trips on off-street trails
2. Quantify the percentage of transportation and recreational trips by bicyclists on off-street trails in three American cities
3. Describe characteristics of cyclists using off-street trails



Source: Atlanta BeltLine, Inc.



- Surveys were conducted in 3 hour increments
 - Morning peak (7AM-10 AM)
 - Evening peak (3 PM-6 PM)
- Different times of year
 - Chicago on April 28
 - Atlanta on May 17
 - New Orleans on June 28
- Conducted near automated count locations
- 3 signs were used in each direction
- Called out to ask if the trip was for transportation or recreation

Say why you're riding:

Transport

(To work, to the store)

Fun

(Exercise only)



Variables collected

- Trip purpose
- Gender
- Direction

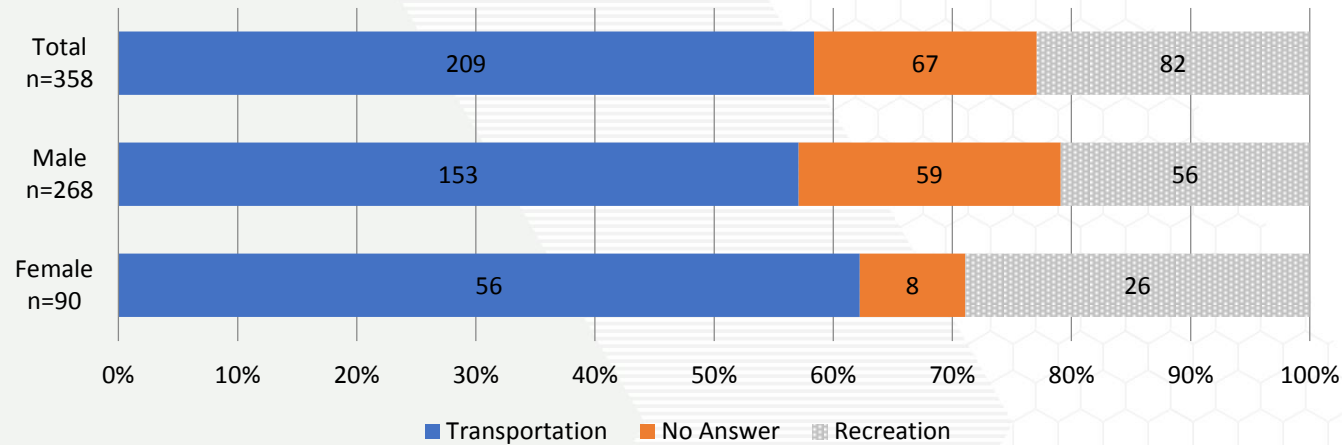


Trail	Year Opened	Completed Length (miles)	Bicycle and Pedestrian trips in 2016	AABT 2016	Peak daily traffic
The 606, Chicago	2015	2.7	1,460,000	4,000	10,000
Atlanta BeltLine Eastside Trail	2012	2.1	1,723,426	4,708	12,169
Lafitte Greenway, New Orleans	2015	2.6	272,926	746	2,027

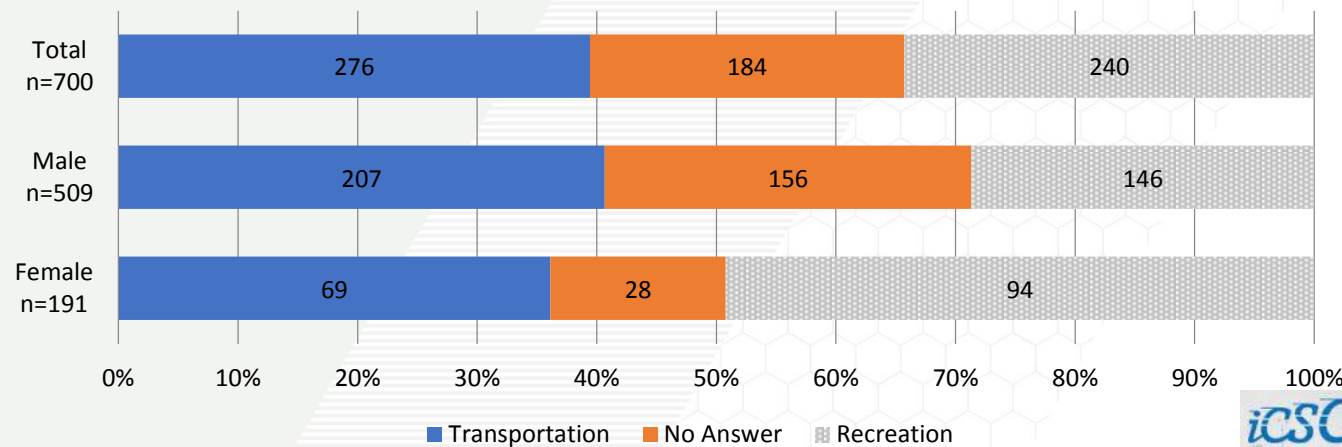


ATLANTA BELTLINE RESULTS

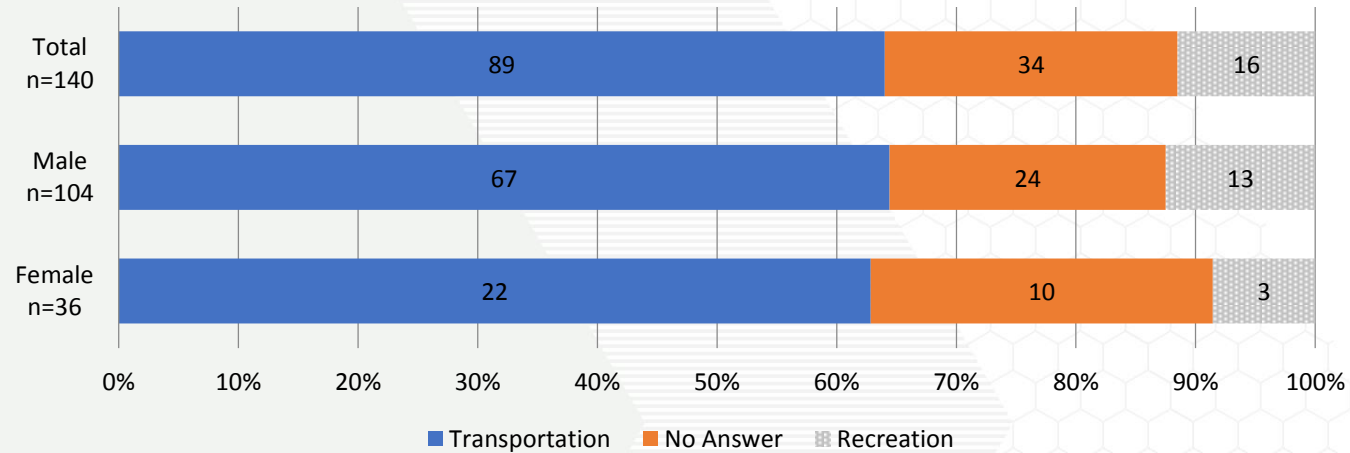
AM observations



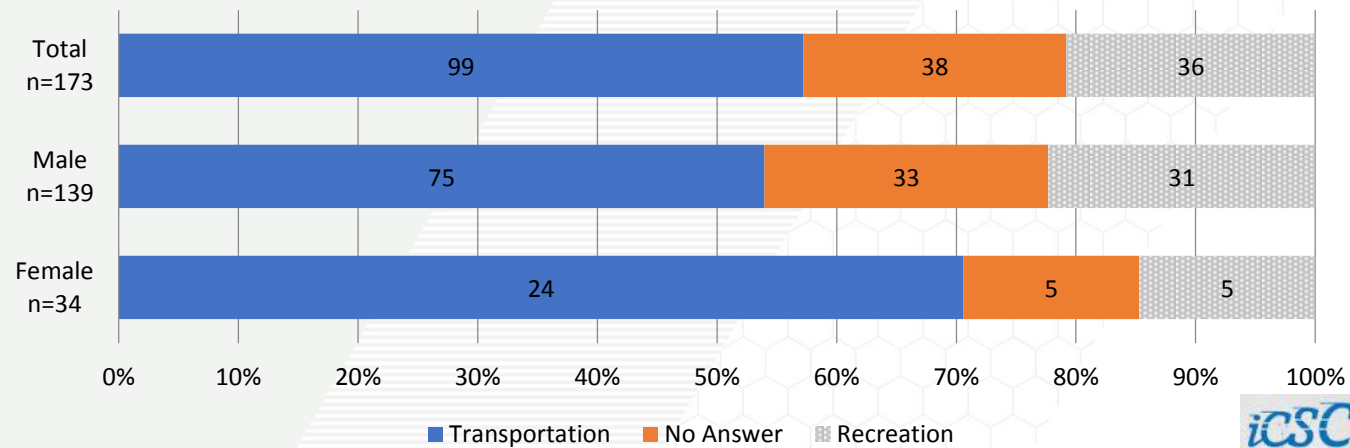
PM observations



AM observations

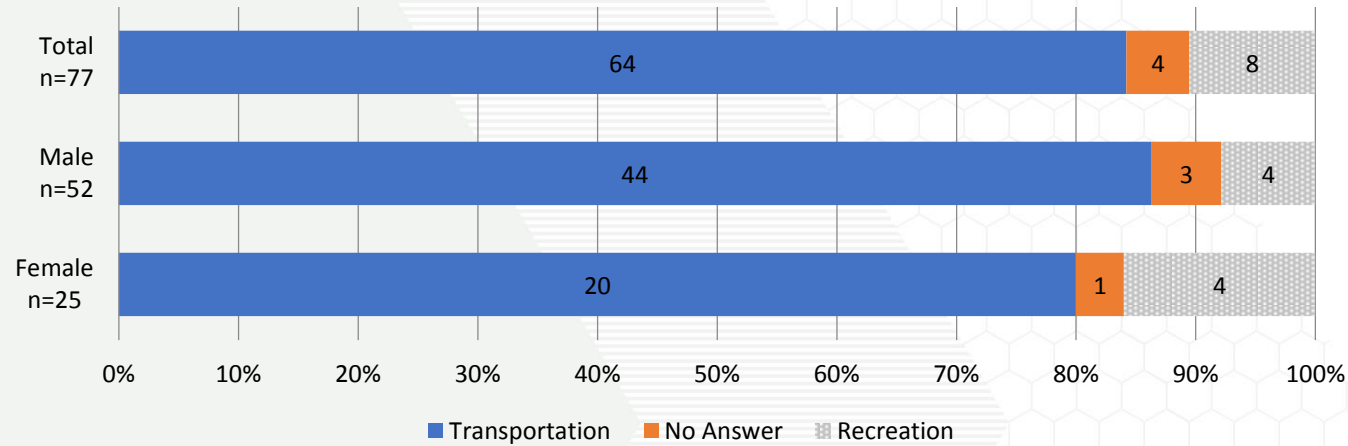


PM observations

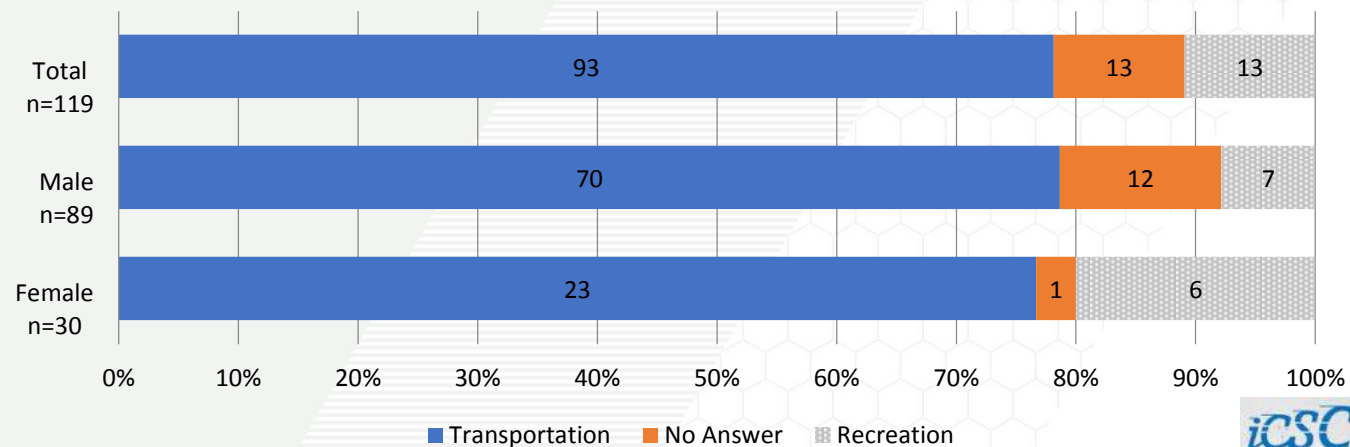


LAFITTE GREENWAY RESULTS

AM observations



PM observations



CONCLUSIONS

- Urban linear parks are used for cycling transportation trips
 - Majority of respondents on each trail were riding for transportation
 - Ranged from 39.4% to 83.1% of trips
- Short intercept survey does not require cyclists to dismount
- The trails in this study played an important role for transportation, providing a safe, well-maintained area for cyclists to travel
- First study to estimate the trip purpose on off-street urban trails while traveling



Source: Atlanta BeltLine, Inc.

DISCUSSION

- More than 70% of users responded to the survey in each city
- This survey could be replicated on trails around the country
 - At different times of day
 - Different weather
 - Different times of year
 - Weekdays vs. weekends
- How do connections with larger transportation networks influence trail use?
- Trends observed were similar to other results
 - Small peak in morning, and larger peak in afternoon



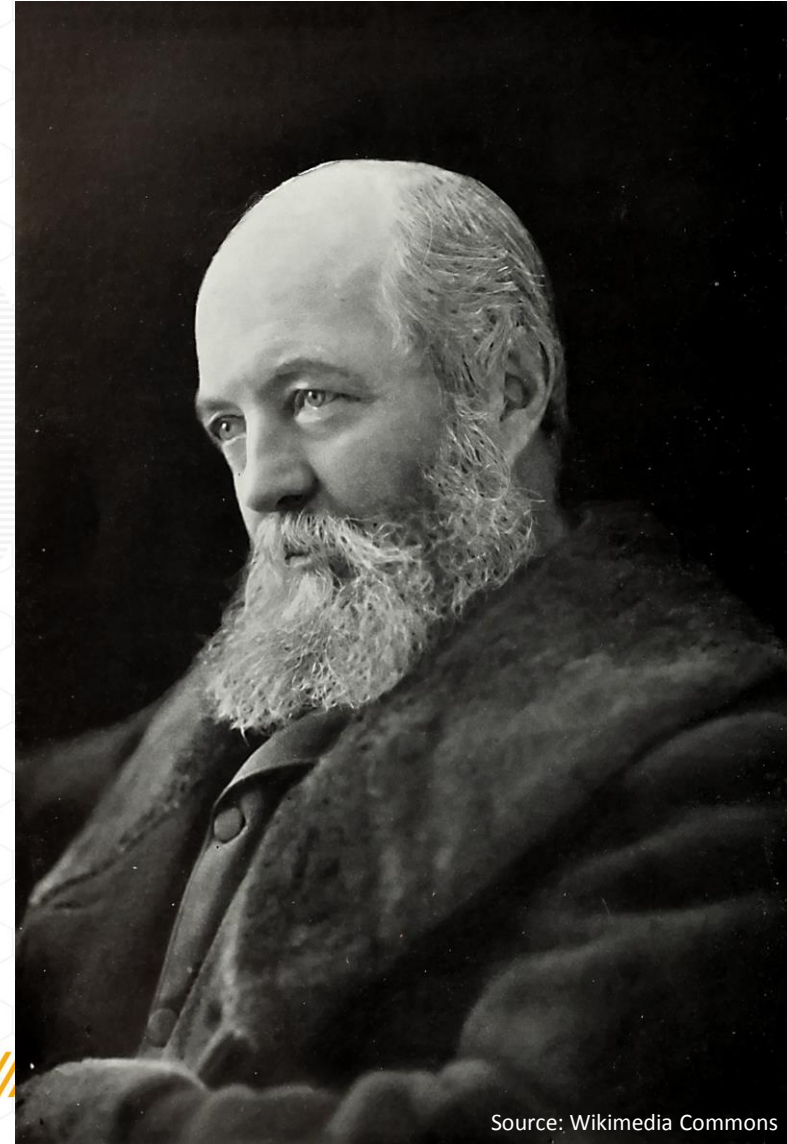
LESSONS LEARNED

- Have a very large, sturdy sign
- Keep the message simple and use pictures
- Warn cyclist well in advance and let them know that there is no need to dismount
- Cyclists will respond if you ask them



“A park exercises a very different and much greater influence upon the progress of a city in its general structure than any other ordinary public work, and that after the design for a park has been fully digested, a long series of years must elapse before the ends of the design will begin to be fully realized.”

-Fredrick Law Olmsted



QUESTIONS



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