



APPENDIX B:
Civic Engagement Summary

Civic Engagement Summary

Civic engagement played a large role in the completion of this Chapter related to bicycling and walking in the City. As outlined in the *What's Next Alexandria Civic Engagement Handbook*, a civic engagement plan was developed as part of the overall planning process (see Appendix A). This plan included outreach to various community stakeholders and groups, the establishment of an Ad Hoc Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan Advisory Committee (Ad Hoc Advisory Committee), and general outreach to the community at large. Online engagement played an integral role in updating the public on the progress of the planning process, and provided a platform for polling, and receiving feedback on issues related to bicycling and walking. This Appendix provides a summary of outcomes related to the civic engagement process which included: Ad Hoc Advisory Committee Meetings, online outreach via public website, interactive crowdsourcing map, and online surveys; public meetings, and general outreach throughout the City.

1. Ad Hoc Advisory Committee Meetings

To guide the direction of the Pedestrian and Bicycle Chapter of the City's Transportation Master Plan, an Ad Hoc Advisory Committee was appointed by the City Manager. The committee encompassed members of the community representing various stakeholders including the Parks and Recreation Commission, Planning Commission, the Commission on Persons with Disabilities, Commission on Aging, Transportation Commission, Traffic and Parking Board, as well as general representatives from the Community.

The Committee provided insight to issues related to walking and bicycling in the City and provided feedback on the direction of the project. More specifically, the committee focused on providing advice on existing issues and needs, future priorities for the City, proposed recommendations and next steps.

This 14 member Committee met on a bi-monthly basis throughout the duration of the project. This section summarizes the major topics and outcomes discussed in each of the meetings:

Meeting 1 – This meeting was held at the Alexandria City Hall on June 25, 2014, and served as the introduction to the project for the Ad Hoc Advisory Committee members. In this meeting, Representatives from the City presented the proposed Vision and Objectives for the project; the proposed scope of work for the consultants; the proposed civic engagement plan; and the proposed project timeline. Other issues discussed included potential priorities for the project, separation of modes, and the parameters the study team would use to understand the “hot spots” that need to be addressed.

Meeting 2 – Following an August break and a public meeting held in September 2014, the AdHoc Committee met on October 9, 2014 at the TC Williams High School to discuss and comment on the Goals and Objectives for the project. Additionally, a short summary of existing conditions was presented which included current bicycle and pedestrian mode share, trends in commute mode over time, commute trip length, pedestrian and bicycle count data, as well as crash data, and Capital Bikeshare data. Committee members also discussed the Case Study Areas to understand the issues related to walking and bicycling in the City.

Meeting 3 – The third Ad Hoc Advisory Committee meeting was held on December 3, 2014 at the Samuel Tucker Elementary School. The study team provided updates on public input received via the interactive crowdsourcing map (see section below). A briefing on the Complete Streets component of the project was also provided. Further, a recap presentation on the Pedestrian and Bicycle Vision, Goals and Objectives was given, and a discussion on measurable outcomes related to bicycling and walking in the City was had. Committee members provided input on the proposed language and priorities related to the Vision and Goals. Finally, a short breakout session was used to identify a finite set of pedestrian Case Study Areas where the study team was tasked to conduct field work identifying issues with the pedestrian network.

Meeting 4 – The Ad Hoc Advisory Committee met on February 4, 2015 at the Alexandria City Hall to finalize the Vision, Goals and Objectives for the Plan. Committee members were also provided with a progress report on what the City has accomplished and built since the 2008 Mobility Plan was adopted. Finally, the Committee discussed the proposed pedestrian Case Study Areas and scope of fieldwork for this task. The Project team was then asked to document general conditions for walking as well as specific issues including pedestrian desire lines (worn paths or commonly used street crossings), ADA access needs and issues, intersection designs, and connectivity needs. The full final focus areas can be found in Appendix D of this Chapter.

Meeting 5 – This meeting was held at the William Ramsay Center on April 16, 2015. The Project Team provided an update on the project milestones, presented a detailed explanation about the process for prioritizing proposed improvements and the reasoning behind it, and allowed committee members to provide feedback on how this process could be refined. Committee members raised a variety of issues about the prioritization process including the need to focus on safety, geographic equity, and accessibility. Further, a presentation and discussion related to the Draft Bicycle Facilities Network in the Western half of the City was held. Committee members raised questions on how the Plan would address the differences between recreational and utilitarian/transportation-related bicycling. Finally, members of the general public raised concerns about how the proposed bicycle network would provide a continuous link to regional trails and destinations.

Meeting 6 – The meeting was held on May 14, 2015 at the Cora Kelly Center. The Project Team presented the final draft of the prioritization process used to rank proposed projects in this Chapter. The factors and weights included in this process were Safety (5 points), Demand (3 points), Geography (3 points), and Connectivity (2 points). The meeting also included a presentation on the proposed bicycle network within the Eastern half of the City. The Committee was asked to comment on the network, and to point out any important destinations that were not being served by the proposed network. Further, the Committee was asked to note any important connections or routes that were missing. Committee members raised concerns about transitions and connections to the Mount Vernon Trail, Eisenhower Avenue trail, and Four Mile Run trail. The meeting also included a short presentation on the Pedestrian Case Study areas.

Meeting 7 – The meeting was held at the Alexandria City Hall on June 8, 2015. A recap from the Proposed Bicycle Network Discussion was provided as well as a presentation on the Draft Pedestrian Case Studies. These case study areas included Landmark area, Duke Street (between Jordan and Wheeler Ave), King Street near King Street Metrorail Station, Arlandria, and Seminary Road (between I-395 and N. Howard Street). For each case study, extensive fieldwork was conducted and a set of

recommendations was developed based on the issues observed. The project team presented the Seminary Road case study as an example, and provided an explanation of existing conditions and recommendations using maps and photographs. The meeting was also used to discuss the Draft Pedestrian Strategies which included programmatic, policy and infrastructure related recommendations. Issues raised by the Committee included: the need to address conflicts between people walking and people biking especially in Old Town; bicycling on sidewalks; how the Complete Streets guidelines would be implemented, and general connectivity for bicyclists and people walking.

Meeting 8 – The meeting was held once again at the Alexandria City Hall on August 12, 2015. The project team provided a summary of several draft pedestrian and bicycle related strategies that were discussed at previous Ad Hoc Advisory Committee meetings. These strategies were also refined using feedback and comments from the Ad Hoc Advisory Committee and community at large. The Committee raised the following concerns: need to focus on maintenance especially as it relates to trash and snow removal; need for targeted outreach to non-native English speaking communities and lower income groups; and the need for longitudinal tracking of measurable outcomes related to each strategy.

Meetings 9 – This meeting was held at TC Williams High School on January 19th, 2016. The project team presented the draft plan and highlighted changes that had been made based on Committee and Commission feedback. In addition to the Ad Hoc Committee, draft plan content was presented at a public meeting in September 2015 as well as to the Transportation Commission and Planning Commission. Key changes based on input from these audiences included the addition of a sixth Case Study Area at Commonwealth and Braddock Road, the revision of several plan strategies and changes to the proposed bike network. Committee discussion focused on the need to prioritize low-stress bicycle facilities when implementing enhanced bike corridors, the need to enhance the importance of Vision Zero in the plan, and the need to clarify the timeline/process for implementation.

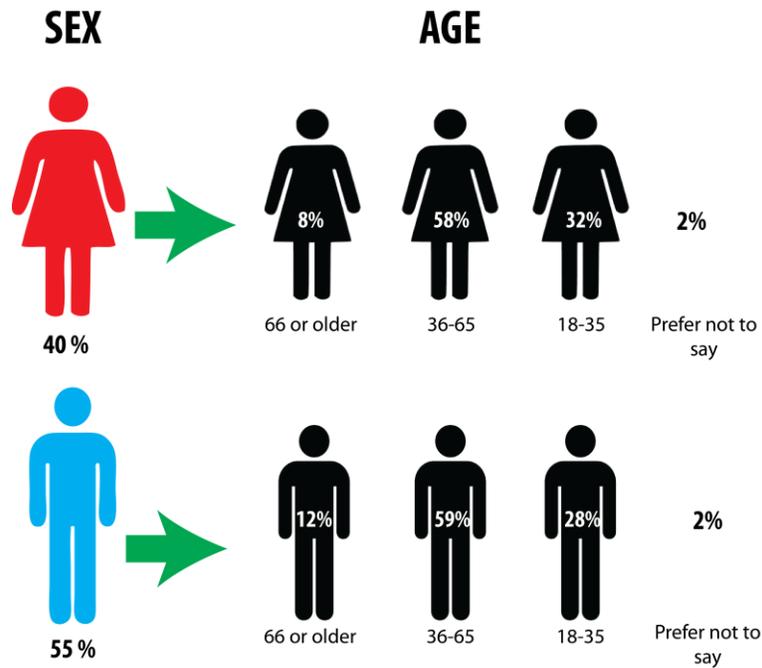
Meeting 10 to be updated upon completion

2. Interactive Crowdsourcing Map (Wikimap)

To support the City’s efforts to create an online presence to complement the in-person community outreach efforts of this Plan, and to request information from the public via the internet, an interactive crowdsourcing map, or wikimap was developed and placed on the project website. The wikimap was made available in English and Spanish to reach the largest representation of City residents. The wikimap was advertised and its use was encouraged through various community meetings, stakeholder meetings, and at public outreach events in different parts of the City.

The wikimaps were available for input from June through October 2014. During this time, 380 unique users provided over 800 comments (71 percent were in the form of lines, and 29 percent in the form of points). The grand majority (over 99 percent) of comments were received through the English version of the wikimap. Users were asked to identify routes they currently walk and bike through, destinations they’d like to reach via walking or bicycling, barriers to walking and biking, and potential locations for Capital Bikeshare stations. The figures below present a summary of the feedback received.

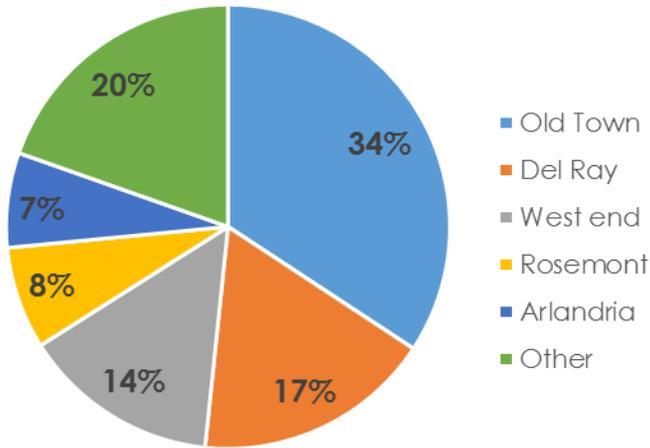
As seen on below respondents were evenly split by sex, and almost two thirds of them between the ages of 36 and 65.



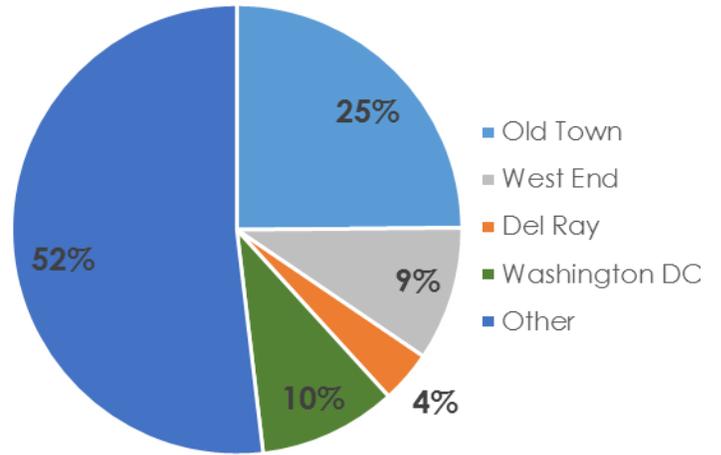
* Five percent of respondents did not want to share their age or sex

Wikimap users were also asked to identify their home and work zip code:

Where do respondents LIVE?

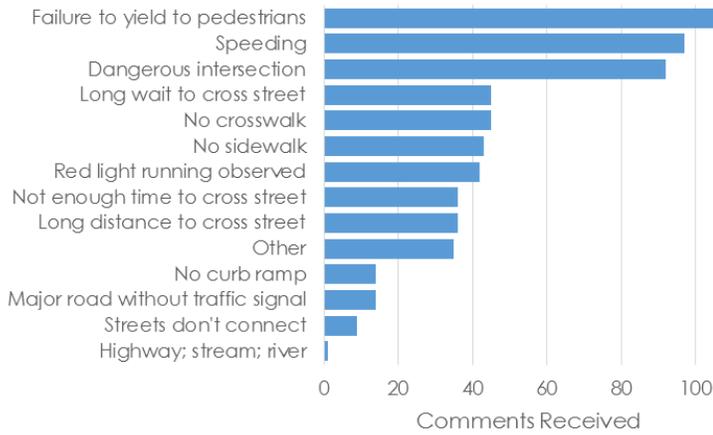


Where do respondents WORK?

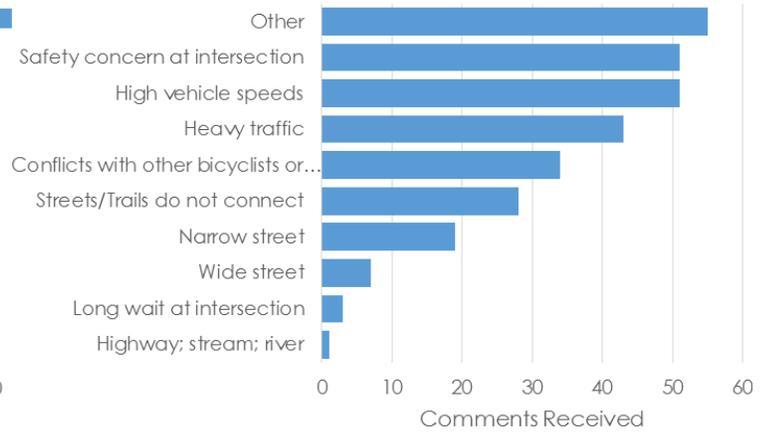


Users were asked to identify the types of barriers to walking and biking:

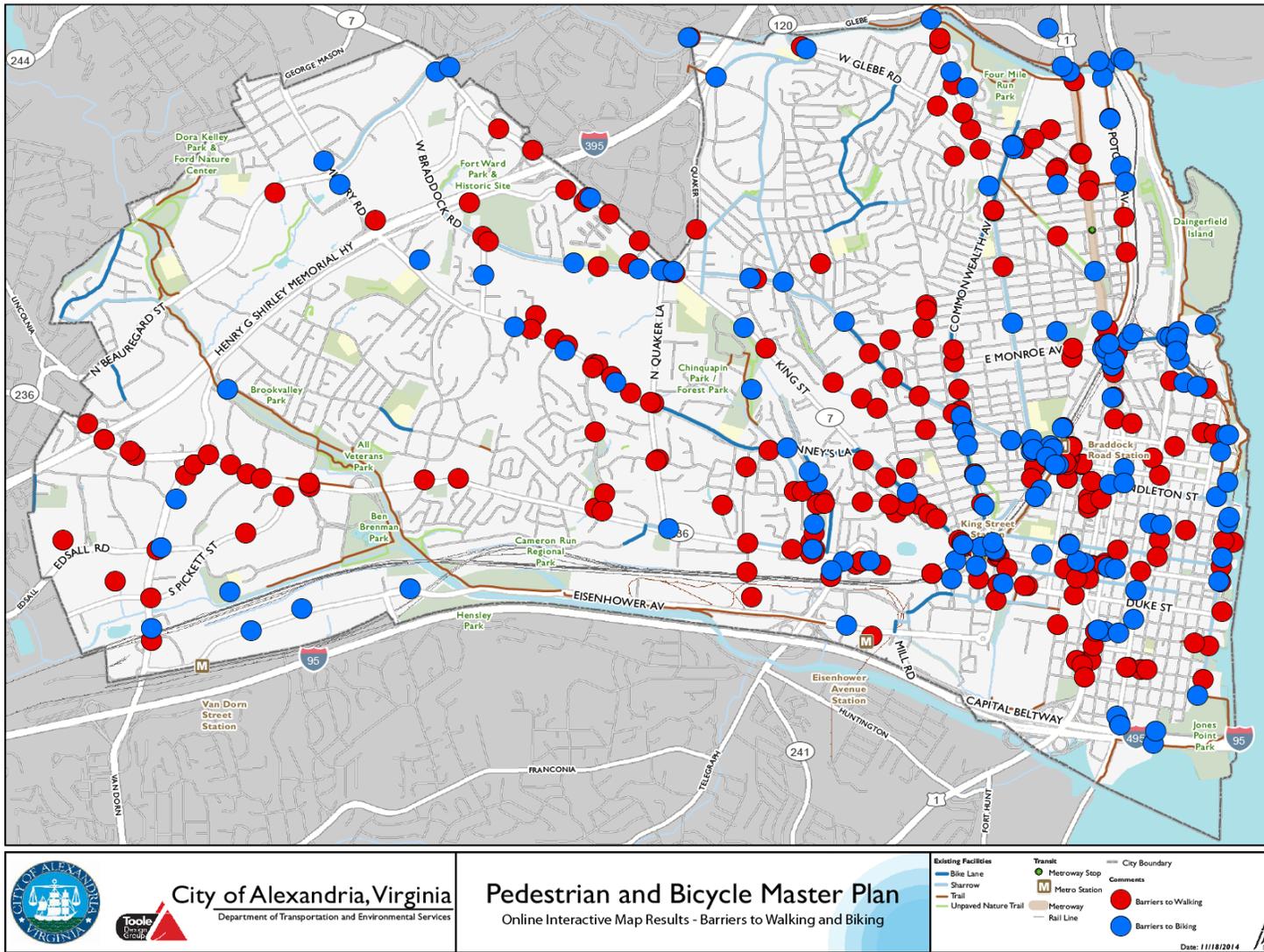
Barriers to Walking



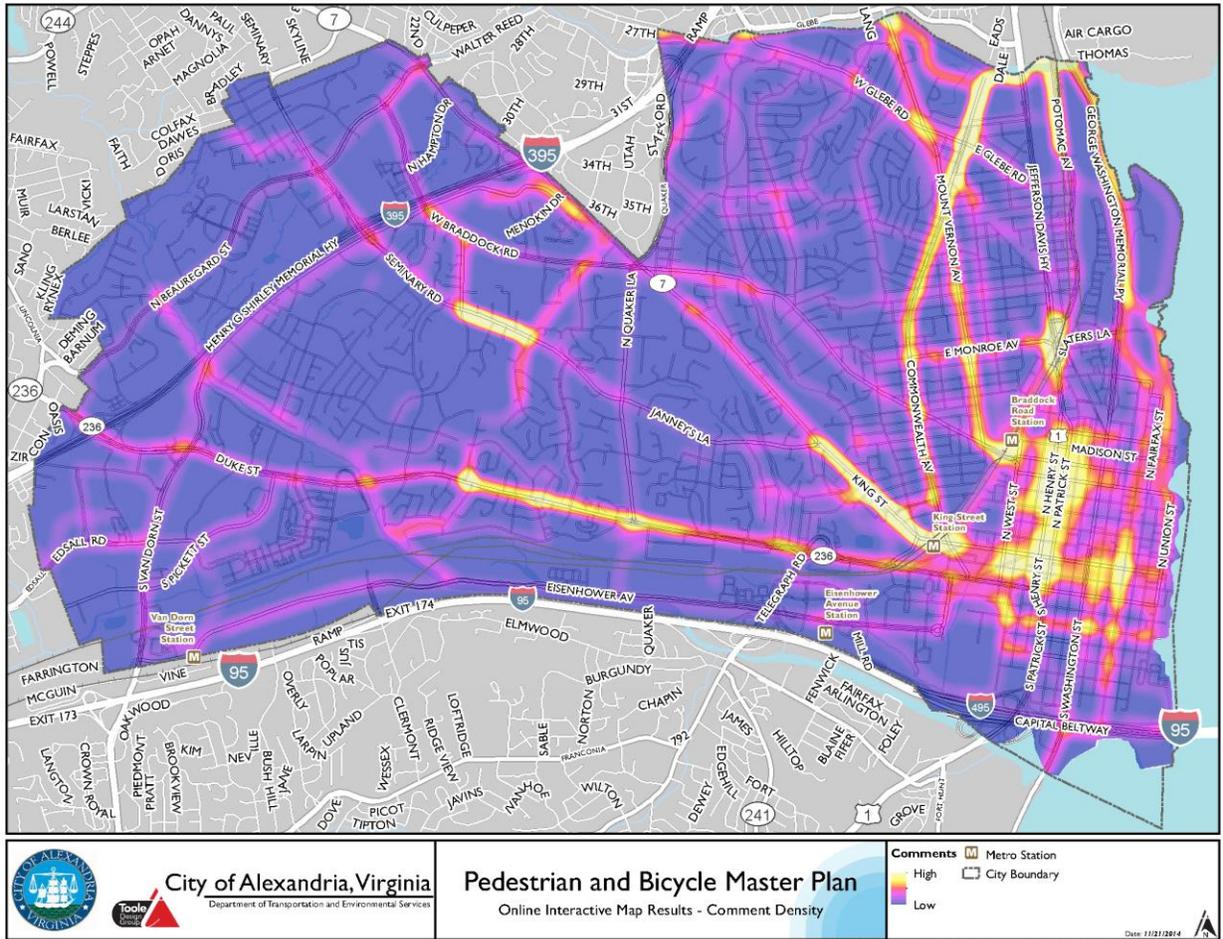
Barriers to Biking



The map below shows the location of those barriers to walking and bicycling identified.



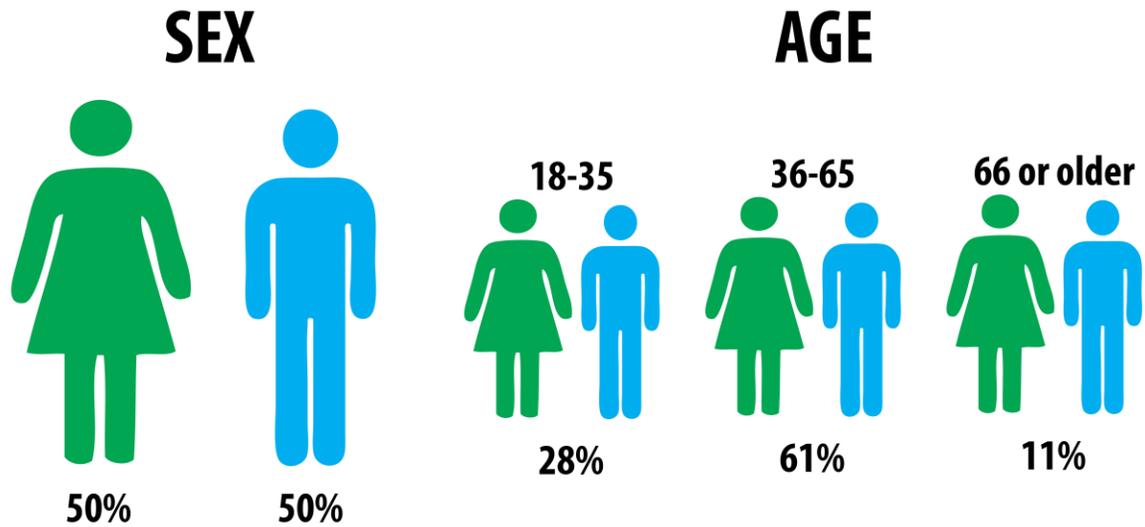
Wikimap users were also asked to identify routes they would like to walk and bike on. The map below is a composite of the most common routes where residents would like to walk and bike on. Not surprisingly, the most common routes people would like to walk or bike include Mount Vernon Avenue, Duke Street, King Street, several north-south routes in Old Town connecting to the Mount Vernon Trail, Seminary Road and Commonwealth Avenue.



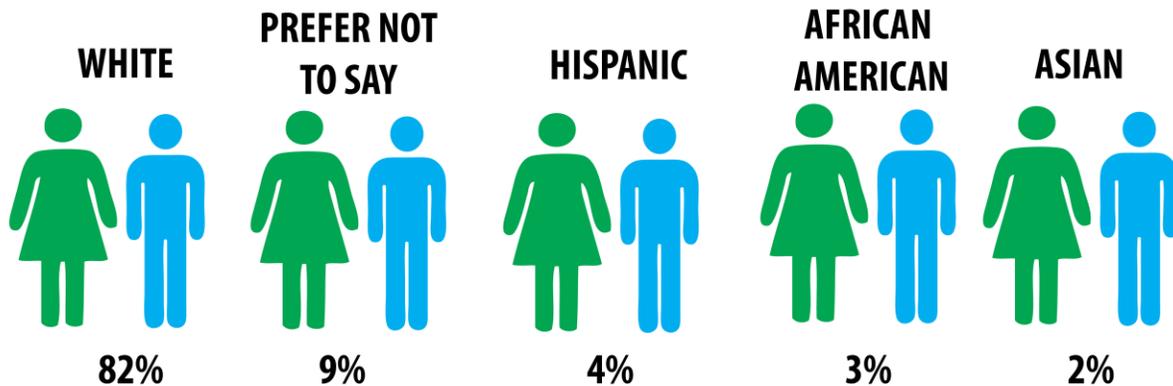
3. Online Survey

The online survey available in both English and Spanish and was posted on the project website between August and October 2014. In this time, 540 responses were received. The survey was used to understand residents' habits and preferences related to bicycling and walking in the City. The figures below provide a summary of the responses received.

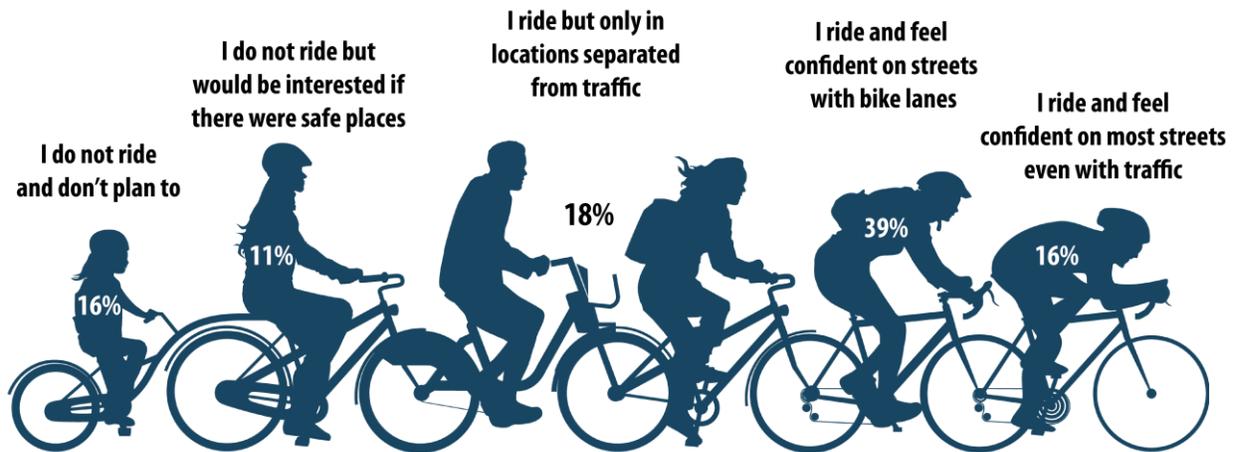
The demographics of survey respondents included an even split between males and females, with the majority of respondents between ages of 36 to 65. The majority of respondents were white.



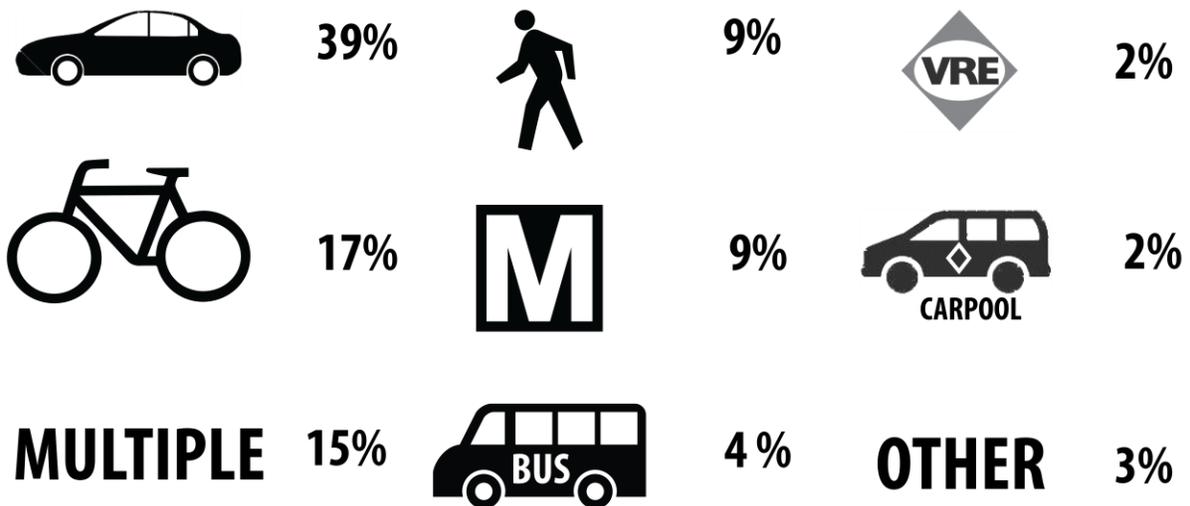
RACE AND ETHNICITY



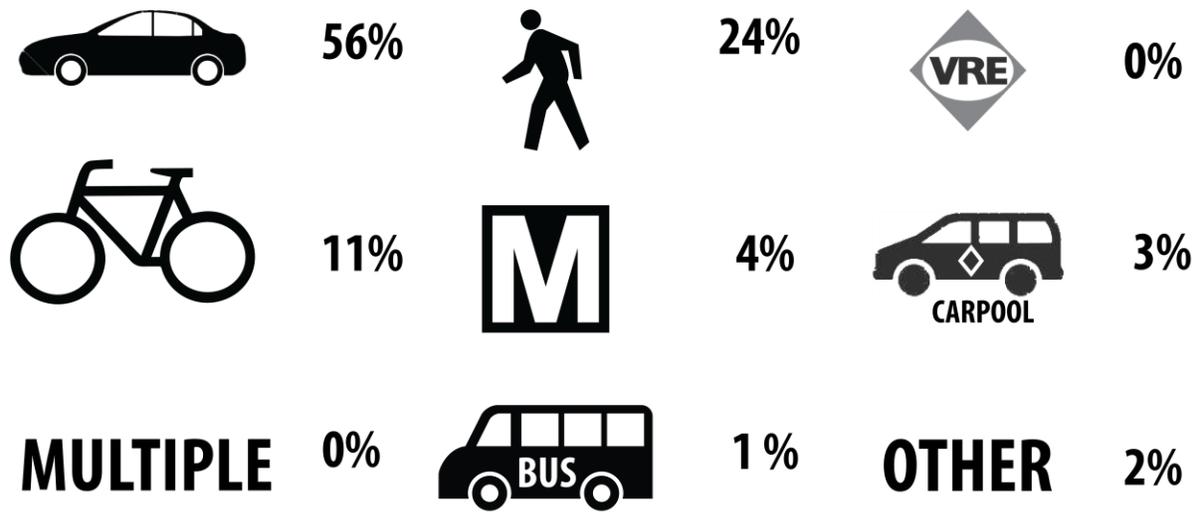
The survey asked respondents to identify their skill and comfort level riding bicycles. Thirty-nine percent of respondents self-identified as “Strong and confident riders” who are comfortable riding on streets with bike lanes.



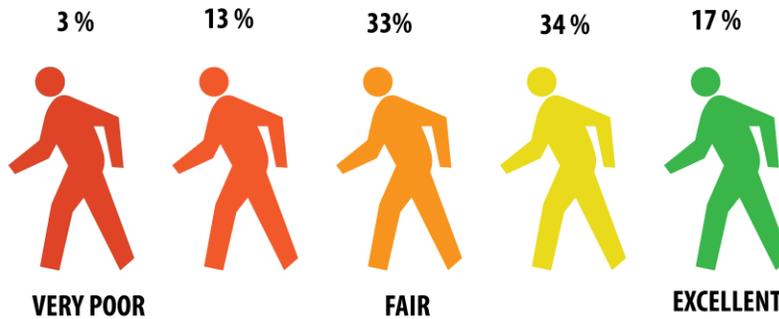
While the proportion of respondents walking and biking to work is high, a large proportion of respondents reported driving to work (39 percent).



On non-work related trips the majority of respondents (56 percent) reported using private automobiles as their primary mode of transportation.



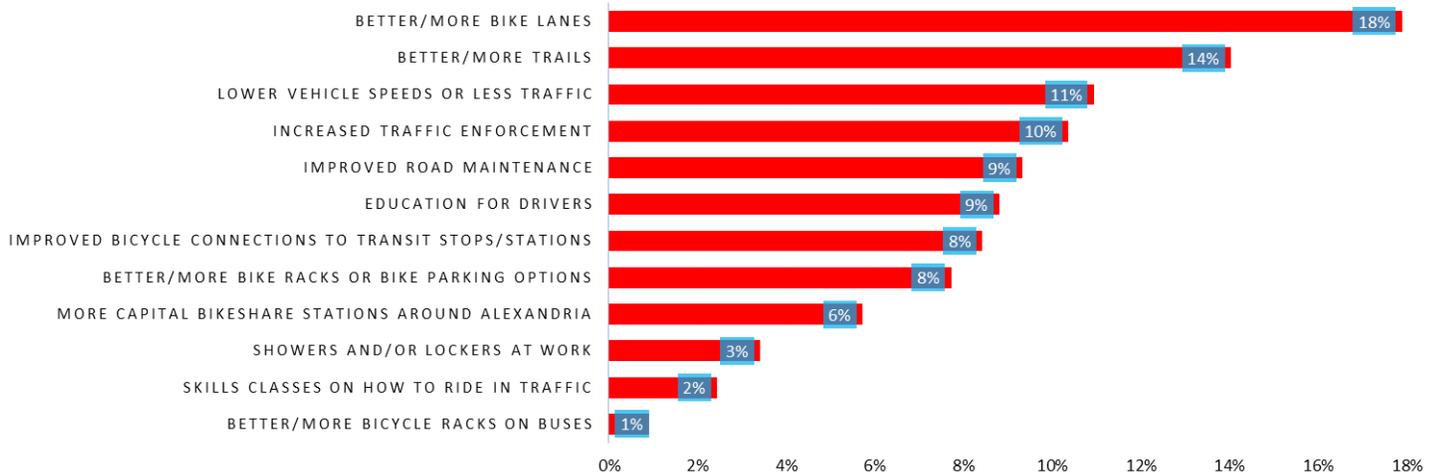
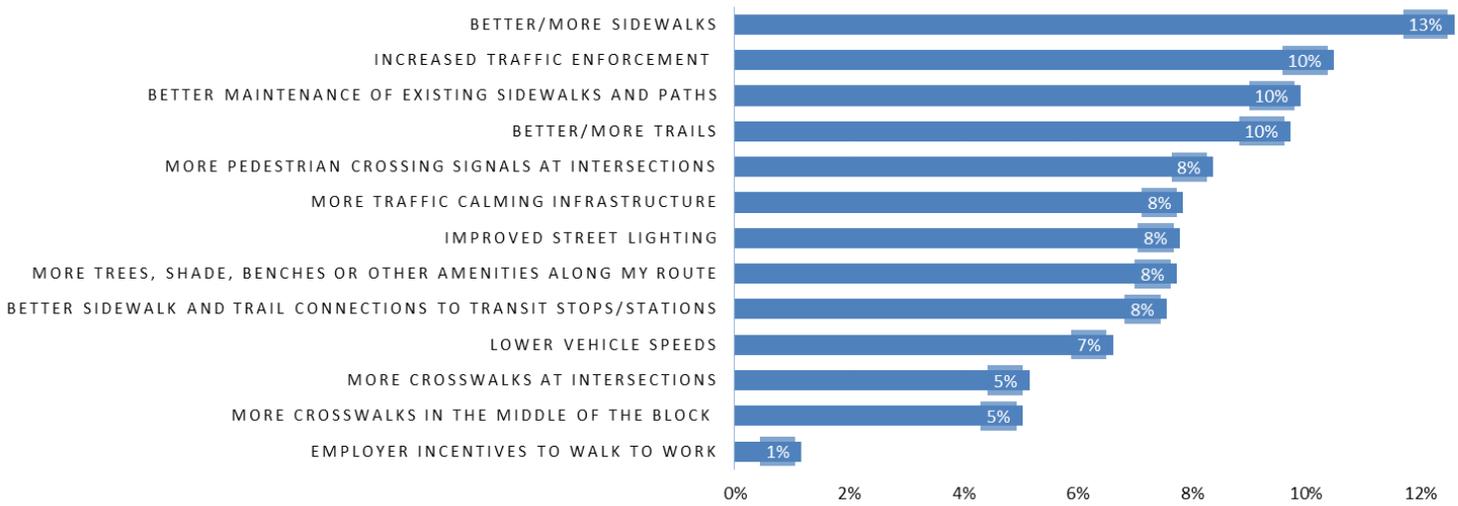
Survey respondents were also asked about their perception of walking and biking in Alexandria, perceived barriers, and what improvements would encourage them to walk or bike more. When asked, “How pedestrian-friendly is Alexandria?,” survey participants responded as follows:



When asked, “How bicycle-friendly is Alexandria?,” forty percent (40%) of survey respondents said “Fair.”



The bar charts below show responses to questions about the most important types of improvements needed related to walking (shown in blue) and biking (shown in red at the bottom of the page).



4. PUBLIC MEETINGS

To complement the aforementioned public outreach efforts and to increase public participation through the planning process, the City of Alexandria hosted two public meetings. The following section provides a summary of each meeting.

A. Public Meeting #1

On September 30th, 2014, representatives from the City of Alexandria and the consultant team were joined by approximately 50 people from Alexandria for the first public meeting for the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan Update and Complete Streets Design Guidelines Project in the Minnie Howard Campus cafeteria.

During the meeting, City of Alexandria staff and the consultant team provided an overview of the project. The presentation included highlights from the existing conditions analysis, mode share trends and a timeline to the study. In the last portion of the presentation section of meeting, participants asked questions to City staff and the consultant team about the project.

Following the presentation, workshop participants divided into four separate groups for more detailed discussions on programmatic issues and opportunities for expanding Education, Enforcement as well as Engineering and Infrastructure programs. Finally, participants within each group were asked to share their opinion on what the most important change that could be made to encourage people to walk and bicycle more:

Education and Enforcement

Attendees were asked to discuss issues and opportunities dealing with education and enforcement of walking and bicycling. Key themes from the discussion included:

- Issues: difficulty with enforcement of traffic laws by Alexandria Police; confusion about traffic laws; unfamiliarity with the City's rules, laws and customs related to walking and biking by the significant number of tourists visiting the City.
- Opportunities/solutions: support for institutionalizing bicycle safety classes in public schools; increase information on existing rules of the road; provide regular training to City police on rules and regulations related to bicycling and walking.

Engineering and Infrastructure

Participants discussed infrastructure challenges to walking and bicycling in Alexandria and provided solutions to the four themes that emerged:

- Issues: concern about existing sidewalk conditions and its connectivity; concerns about the clearly marked pedestrian crossings at various intersections; concern about lack of connection to and from trails; and concern about the lack of separated facilities in comparison to other neighboring jurisdictions.
- Opportunities/solutions: implement a program to fill in gaps in brick sidewalks and increase maintenance of sidewalks; implement city-wide policy to have crosswalks on all four legs of all intersections; implement a pedestrian only phase for street crossings; increase the number of

bicycle and pedestrian facilities connecting eastern and western parts of the City focusing on King Street, Duke Street and Braddock Road.

Big Ideas and Important Changes

At the end of the meeting, participants were asked to identify one change that would make it easier for them to walk or bike in Alexandria. Ideas included:

- Increase the number of separated bicycling facilities in addition to bike lanes on major connector roadways.
- Expand Capital Bikeshare to western parts of the City.
- Increase connectivity to trails and to transit
- Embrace Complete Streets
- Reduce speed limits
- Provide dedicated, separate facilities for bicyclists, pedestrians and motorists

B. Public Meeting #2

The second public meeting was held on September 24th, 2015. Representatives from the City of Alexandria and the consultant team were joined by approximately 40 people at the Oswald Durant Center. The meeting served as a forum to present the draft project recommendations and receive input from the community at large. Attendees were asked to visit various stations and provide comments on the following topics: complete streets design guidelines; findings and recommendations from the pedestrian focus area assessment; draft recommended city-wide bicycle facility and trail network, and proposed Capital Bikeshare expansion; and draft Plan strategies for improving walking and bicycling. Attendees also had the opportunity to participate in an interactive station where they could design a multimodal street.

The project team provided a presentation introducing various elements of the Plan including the vision, goals and objectives; the Plan strategies; recommendations for pedestrian improvements; proposed citywide bicycle network; and the draft priority pedestrian and bicycle improvements.

Participants were also asked several multiple choice questions related to walking and bicycling in Alexandria. While the responses only represented the perspectives of those in attendance, they were useful in helping City staff and the project team to understand the community's opinions on key issues relevant to the Plan. Participants were asked about their age, place of residence and employment; main reasons to walk in Alexandria; self-assessment on the type of bicyclist; and the highest priorities for biking and walking in Alexandria.

5. Additional Public, Committee and Commission Outreach

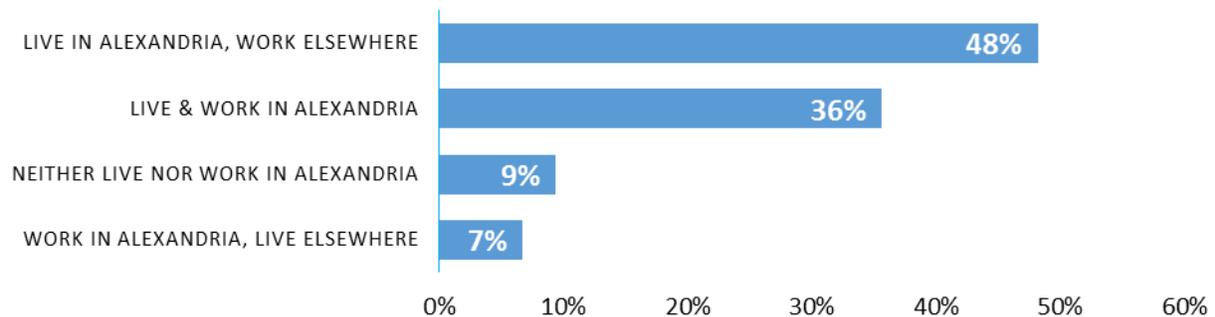
During the summer and fall of 2015, City staff took draft Plan materials to a number of community events including First Thursday in Del Ray, the Old Town Farmers Market, the West End Farmers Market and *Le Tour de Alexandria* (a bike tour of the City). At each event, the public was invited to put “dot stickers” on the draft Plan strategies that they thought were the most important. They were also invited to comment on the draft citywide bicycle network. Input from these events was used to make refinements to the plan content.

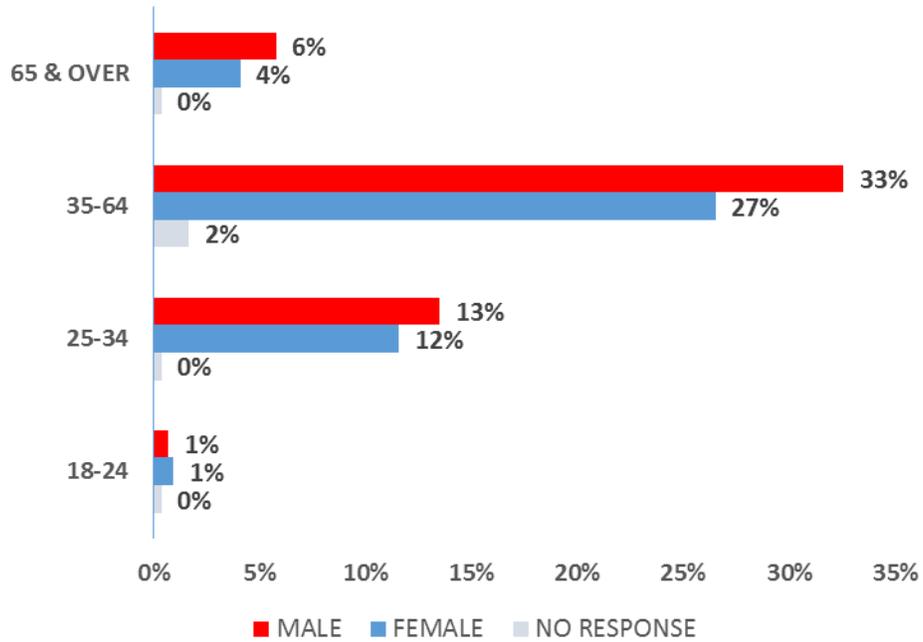
Additionally, City staff presented key elements of the draft final Plan to the Planning Commission, Transportation Commission, Alexandria City Public Schools, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC), the Environmental Policy Committee and the Parks and Recreation Commission. Each of these groups provided input that was used to make further refinements to the Plan content.

6. Summary of AlexEngage Input on Draft Plan

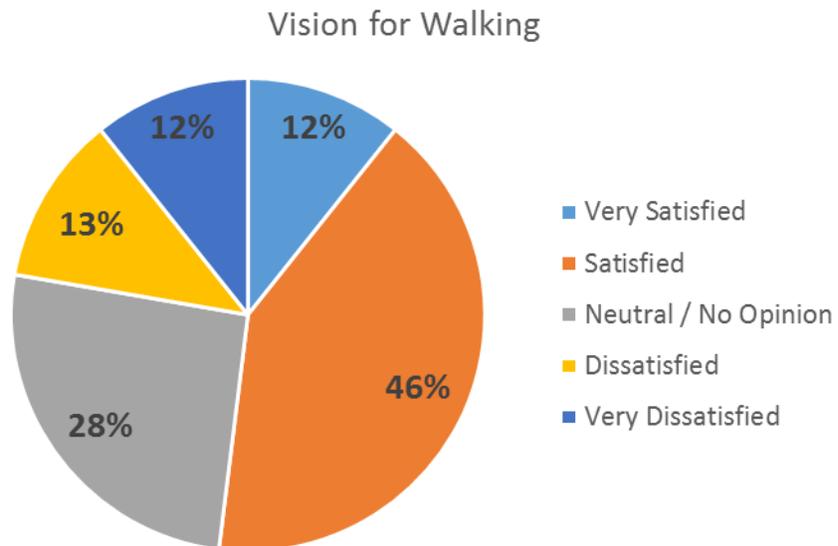
A preliminary draft version of the City’s Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan—complete with draft appendices—was released to the public on Thursday, January 14, 2016 via AlexEngage, the City’s online engagement forum. AlexEngage allows users to view content and provide input on City proposals through various forms of survey questions. For the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan Update, AlexEngage users responded to simple multiple choice questions about the City’s visions for walking and biking, as well as more complex question regarding project and strategy prioritization. Respondents also had the ability to comment on the Plan via an open response prompt at the end of the survey.

The response period ended at 11:59pm on February 5, 2016. The City received 415 responses over the 3 week period. The chart below provides information about whether respondents live or work in Alexandria. The next chart provides a demographic breakdown of respondents’ gender by age.

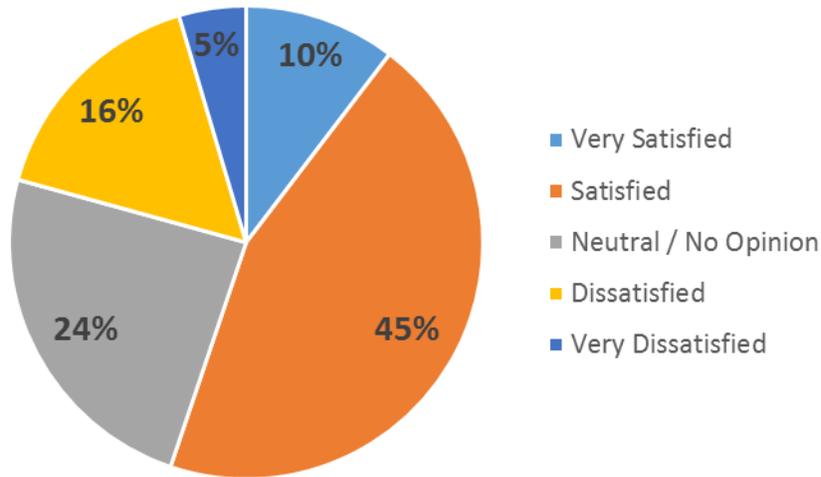




To obtain a general understanding of the public perception on the Plan, the AlexEngage survey assessed satisfaction with the Plan’s Visions for Walking and Bicycling in Alexandria (shown below).

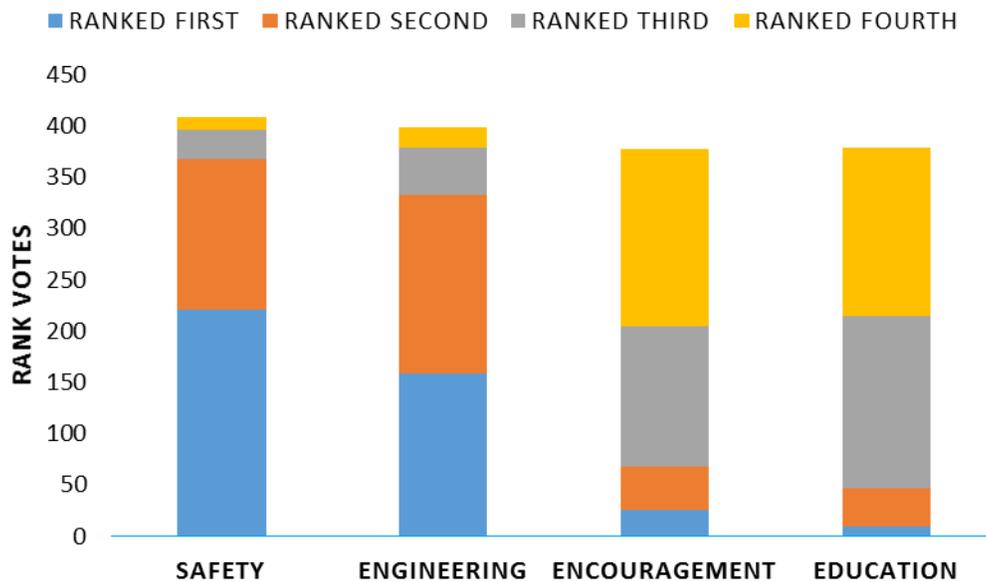


Vision for Bicycling

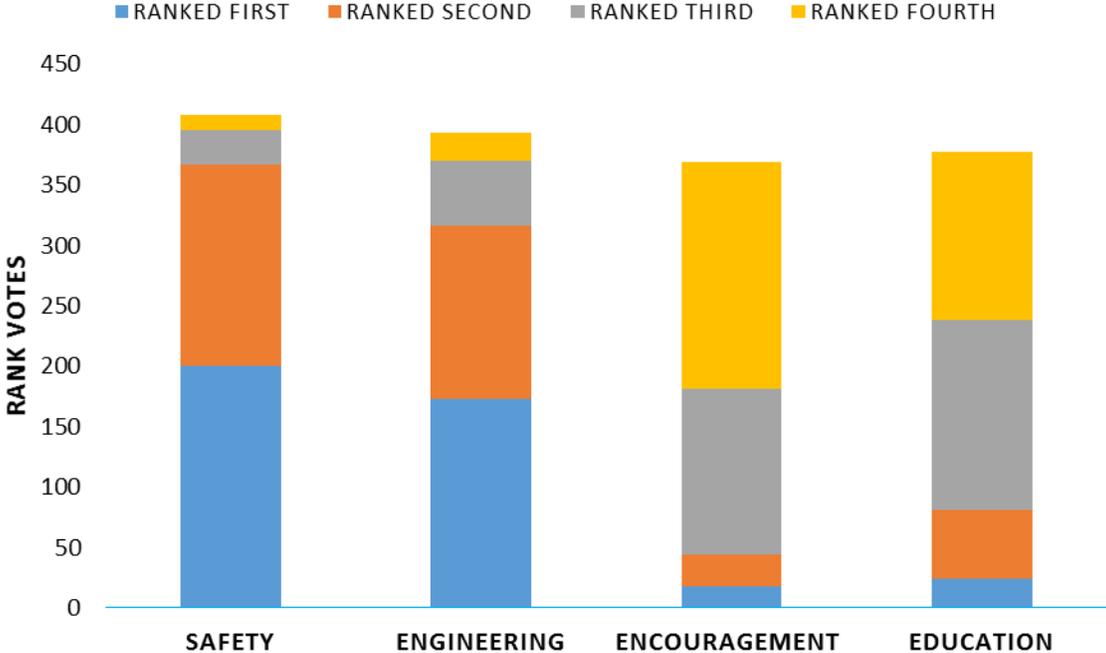


Respondents ranked their goals for both Walking and Bicycling. The four goals—education, encouragement, engineering, and safety—could be ranked in any order, or not ranked at all. The two graphs below depict rankings for both walking and bicycling. For both walking and bicycling, the engineering and safety goals received the most first and second rank votes.

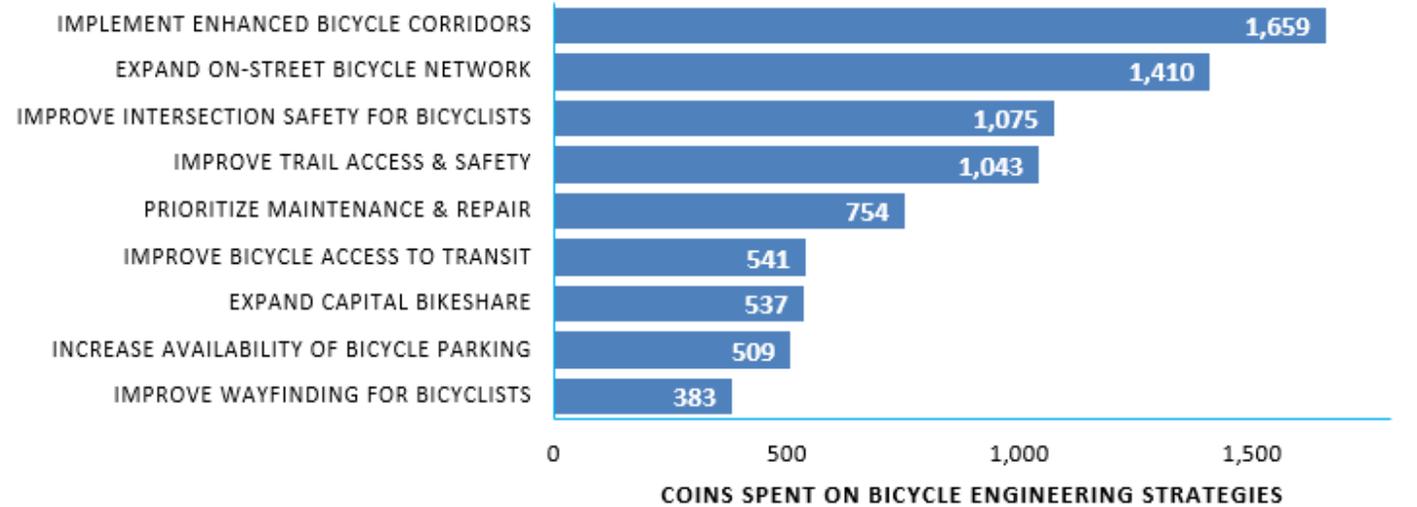
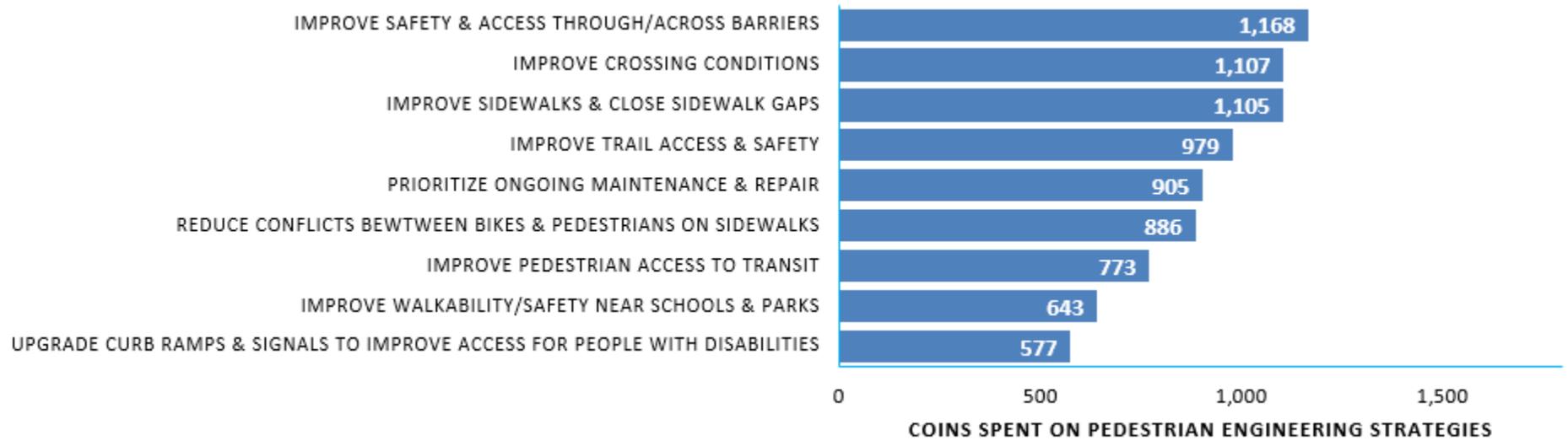
RANKED WALKING GOALS



RANKED BICYCLING GOALS

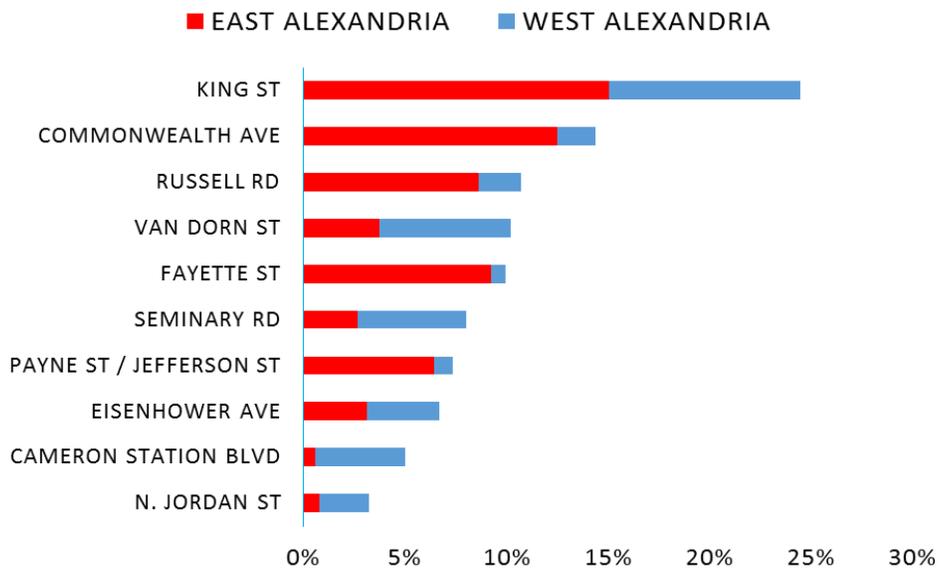


In order to assess trade-offs associated with resource availability, the survey posed two unique questions that provided users with twenty “coins” to spend on items related to the City’s pedestrian engineering strategies and twenty “coins” to spend on items related to the City’s bicycling engineering strategies. Results follow in the two charts on the next page.

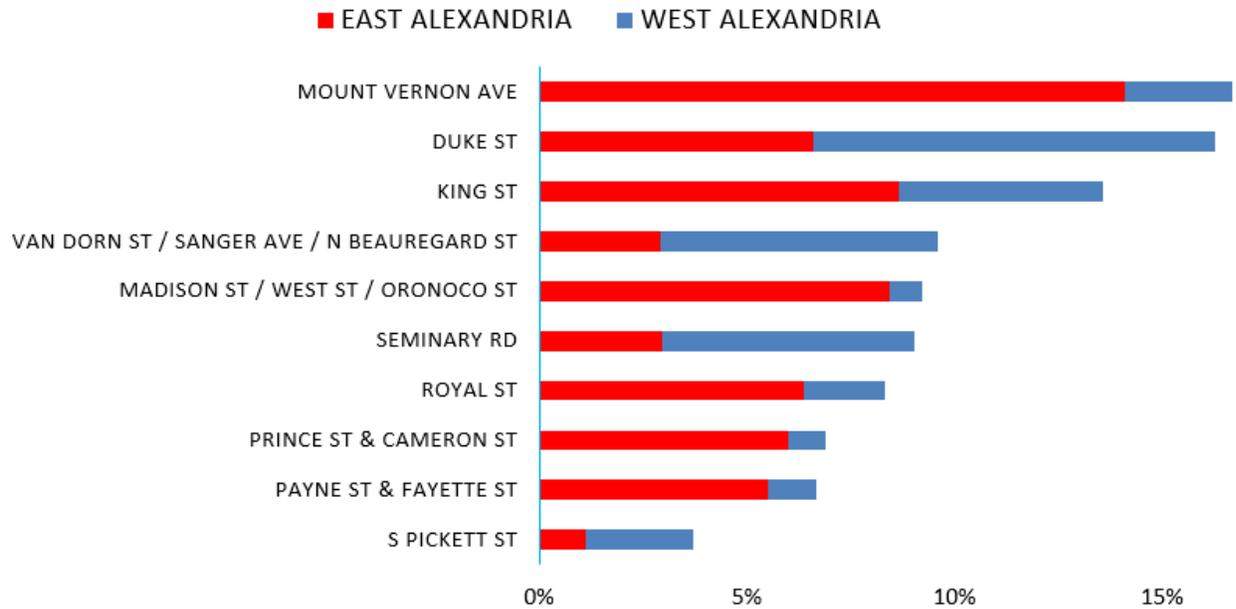


The final set of questions AlexEngage posed to respondents asked users to select their first, second, and third priority sidewalk and on-street bicycle projects. The charts below depict priorities by assigning more weight to respondents' first priorities (weight of 3) and less weight to respondents' third priorities (weight of 1). The result charts sort responses by where respondents live (East or West Alexandria) and also filter out responses from individuals who identified themselves as neither living nor working in Alexandria. As there were more respondents who identified themselves as working or living in East Alexandria, there are naturally greater priority percentages shown in red. Sixty three percent (63%) of respondents identified with East Alexandria, and 37% identified with West Alexandria.

The chart below illustrates that the King Street Priority Sidewalk project is a major concern for both East and West Alexandrians. Commonwealth and Fayette Priority Projects are significant priorities for individuals living in East Alexandria. The Van Dorn Street Priority Project is of significant importance for West Alexandrians.



There was a larger spread of preferences across the Plan's identified Priority Bicycle Projects. While Mount Vernon Avenue overwhelmingly received the greatest weighted score, it is not the first, second, or third concern of West Alexandrians. Instead, these individuals identified the Duke Street and Van Dorn Street / Sanger Avenue / N. Beaugard Street Priority Projects as the City's top priorities.



The final AlexEngage question allowed respondents to directly comment on the plan. City staff worked to code these comments, parsing out common themes. A total of 232 respondents—roughly 56% percent of all respondents—provided a comment on the Plan. Of these 232 comments, 215 contained a theme or themes discussed by at least one other respondent, or a theme general enough to create a code. The 17 responses that were not coded related to a specific concern in the City (i.e. a specific intersection or road) and were not easy to classify, or solely expressed an emotional sentiment (i.e. appreciation, frustration) without further clarification.

The table on the following page lists themes pulled from the survey’s AlexEngage responses, as well as percentages that reflect how frequently these themes were discussed within the 215 coded comments.

Comment Theme Code	Percent of Commenters who Addressed this Theme
Strategies: Vision Zero	12.56%
Enforcement	11.16%
Prioritize Protected/Separated Bike Lanes	9.77%
Timing and Implementation Questions/Concerns	8.84%
Snow Removal	5.58%
Goals: Bicycle Education	5.12%
Survey Design	5.12%
Sharrows Ineffective	4.65%
Expand Bikeshare	3.72%
Idaho Stop	3.72%
Cost/Benefit Analysis	3.26%
Prioritize Connected Network	3.26%
Goals: Pedestrian Education	2.79%
Elderly/Disabled	1.86%
Goals: Pedestrian Safety	1.86%
Lighting	1.86%
Prioritize Pedestrian Walkways	1.86%
Vehicle Speed	1.86%
Bicycle Parking	1.40%
Goals: Bicycle Safety	1.40%
Signal Timing	1.40%
Bike Lanes Ineffective	0.93%
Missing Priority Project	0.93%
Transitions	0.93%
Alternative Modes (e.g. scooters)	0.47%
Bike Lanes - General	0.47%
Focus on Land Use Patterns	0.47%
Goals: Bicycle Encouragement	0.47%
More Pedestrian Focus	0.47%
No Idaho Stop	0.47%
Parallel Roads	0.47%
Road Repair & Maintenance	0.47%
Wayfinding	0.47%