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COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Several community outreach activities were completed as part of the planning process for the creation of the Urbana Park District Trails Master Plan. These outreach activities were designed to keep the residents informed on the progress of this plan and provide various opportunities for getting public feedback. Throughout the planning process, two sets of public meetings were organized in conjunction with the Urbana Bicycle Master Plan (UBMP). The purpose of these meetings was to provide an opportunity for Urbana residents to voice and prioritize their needs and desires for the trail and bike facilities in the community. Ultimately, this input provided the foundation for the recommended bike and trail network.



Public Workshop Series #1 at the Urbana Civic Center.

The following community outreach activities were utilized:

- Pedestrian and Bicycle Survey (PABS)
- Public Meeting Series #1
- Public Meeting #2
- Online Feedback through Project Website

7.1 PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE SURVEY (PABS)

Soliciting public input on bicycle, trail, and park facilities in Urbana was integral in developing the Urbana Park District Trails Master Plan (UTMP). The first step in doing so was to survey Urbana residents' mode choices and preferences as well as socio-economic information. The survey model used was the Mineta Institute's Pedestrian and Bicycle Survey (PABS). The City of Urbana contracted with CUUATS to gauge public use of pedestrian and bicycling facilities, determine attitudes about active transportation modes, and solicit ideas for improvements.

The survey focused on these main purposes:

- Determine the modes of transportation used by Urbana residents during the past year
- List the general purposes of walking and cycling trips
- Determine the prevalence and frequency of walking and bicycling together with exploring the reasons for not walking or bicycling
- Understand respondents' habits in walking or bicycling to different destinations within the community

CUUATS staff mailed the paper surveys to 1,574 randomly selected households in two mailings identified from the stratified sampling method (for more information, see Appendix D). An address list of all households in each traffic analysis zone (TAZ) within the Urbana Park District was created through geographic information systems (GIS), and CUUATS staff used this to randomly select households in each TAZ. Each mailing contained: a cover letter explaining the survey's purpose, the paper survey, instructions on how to access the web survey, and a stamped return envelope to mail back the completed paper survey. This gave respondents the flexibility to complete the survey either on paper or on the internet.

In addition to paper surveys, CUUATS posted a link on the UTMP website to the PABS survey on the Urbana Bicycle Master Plan website so that any Urbana resident could complete it. The survey link was advertised via the paper survey, Urbana Park District website and advertising, City of Urbana website, Urbana Public Television (UPTV), and a News-Gazette article. CUUATS staff also attended several community and planning outreach events and asked event attendees to complete the PABS survey if they had not done it yet.

A component of the Pedestrian and Bicycle Survey unique to Urbana was to estimate and evaluate trail usage to better understand people's preferences and to address the growing need for more information on trail use. Section 7.1.1 discusses respondents' purpose of trail use, followed by discussion on Urbana residents' preference of trail length and type and how they usually travel to parks in subsequent sections. It also outlines respondents' opinions about preferred facility types that would encourage them to bike to the park.

7.1.1 TRAIL USE

Out of 1,371 responses, almost two-thirds (62%) of the respondents reported that they use park trails in Urbana. Non-trail users made up 22% of the survey respondents, and were also not asked to answer any more questions in this section of the survey if they did not want to.

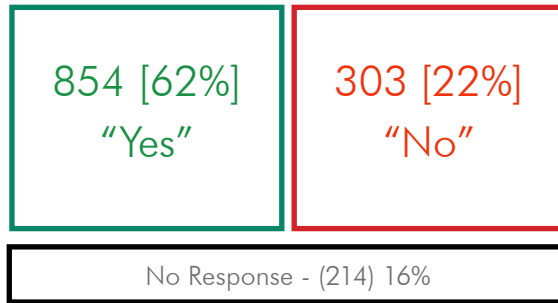


Figure 17 Do you ever use park trails in Urbana?

7.1.2 PURPOSE OF TRAIL USE

People use trails for different purposes. Questions related to greenways and trails show that most of the trail users engage in different types of physical activity during their visits. Figure 18 shows the number and percentage of respondents reporting those various activities. Respondents could give multiple answers. Walking (33%) was by far the most frequent mode used on Urbana trails, followed by biking (15%), nature hiking (14%), and running (11%). 2% of trail users also mentioned that they use park trails for other uses. However, about 25% of respondents did not answer this question.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

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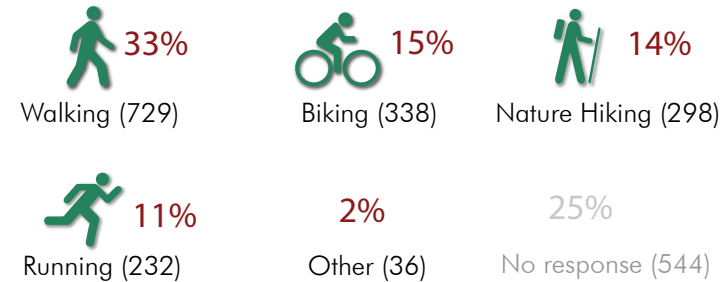


Figure 18 Purpose of trail use

7.1.3 TRAIL LENGTH

The survey asked people about their preferences on trail length. Approximately 35% of respondents preferred medium length trails that are 0.5 to 4 miles in length. 21% of respondents preferred long trails more than 4 miles long.

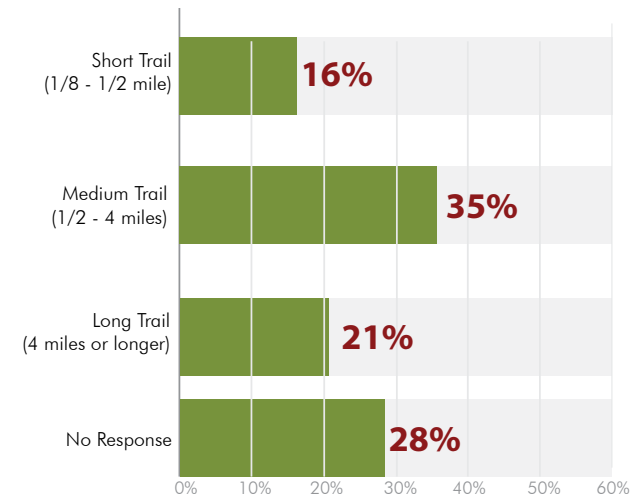


Figure 19 Respondents' preference for trail length

7.1.4 TRAIL TYPES

The survey also asked what type of trail people would prefer to use. Most of them preferred paved trails (24%) compared to non-paved trails (13%). On the other hand, 23% of respondents preferred both paved and non-paved trails.

Table 14 Trail Type Preferences

Responses	#	%
Paved Surface (e.g. concrete, asphalt)	333	24
Non-Paved Surface (e.g. mowed natural area, woodchip, gravel)	182	13
Paved AND Non-Paved Surface	309	23
No response	547	40
Total	1,371	100

7.1.5 TRIPS TO PARKS

More than one quarter (26%) of the respondents travel to parks by driving. About one quarter (23%) of Urbana residents walk to parks, and almost another quarter (22%) of residents bike to parks. Only a very small number of trail users use public transit to get to parks (2%). 2% of the respondents also mentioned other means of transportation to get to the park, such as driving with a friend or getting a ride from someone else, running, and roller skating.

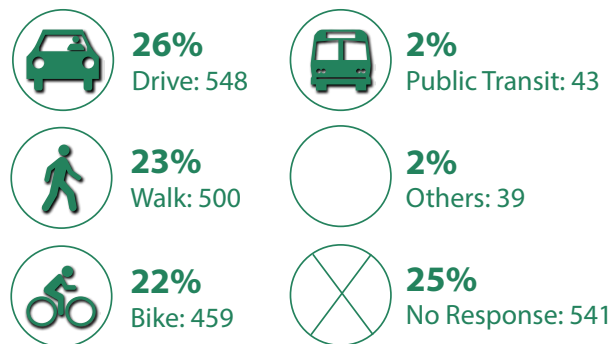


Figure 20 Travel modes to parks

7.1.6 ENCOURAGEMENT FOR BIKING

From a list of five options, respondents were asked what would encourage them to bike to a park. Around 29% of respondents would bike to the park more if more off-street and/or on-street facilities existed. The highest group of residents preferred a connected bicycle network using a combination of on-street and off-street facilities (12%). Separately, 10% of respondents felt that a connected off-street trail system would encourage them to bike to the park; while only 7% of respondents felt that a network of on-street facilities such as bike lanes and routes would encourage them to bike to the park. While 17% of respondents mentioned that they already bike to the park, 10% stated that they would never bike to the park.

Table 15 Biking to parks encouragement preferences & behaviors

Response	#	%
I already bike to the park	246	17
Connected on-street bicycle network	108	7
Connected off-street bicycle network	149	10
Combination of on- and off-street bicycle network	169	12
I would never bike to the park	147	10
Other	82	6
No response	550	38
Total	1,451	100

6% of respondents cited other factors affecting their decision to bike to the park. The most cited factor that would get them to bike to the park is owning a bike, or owning a working bike. Time, having young children not able to bike to the park, and preferring walking or running were also cited by multiple respondents. Other desires to persuade people to bike to the park are more bike parking, more destinations besides Meadowbrook Park, and longer park trails. Some respondents stated that they are fine using the streets without special facilities, while others wanted better maintained roads that are less bumpy or have bike lanes cleared of debris.

7.2 PUBLIC MEETING SERIES #1

CUUATS hosted the first series of public workshops for the UTMP and UBMP in February 2014 to solicit Urbana residents' input about bicycle, trail, and park facilities in Urbana. To engage with residents from all neighborhoods, CUUATS hosted four public workshops at different dates and locations. The meetings' details, including the number of attendees, are provided in the table below:

Type	Date – Location	# of Attendees
Community wide	Feb 12, 2014 – Urbana Civic Center	33
Neighborhood (North Urbana)	Feb 18, 2014 – King Elementary School	14
Neighborhood (East Urbana)	Feb 19, 2014 – Urbana Early Childhood School	9
Neighborhood (Latino Community)*	Feb 20, 2014 – Leal Elementary School	2
*This neighborhood meeting was conducted in Spanish.		Total: 58

In all public workshops, attendees were asked to indicate their bicycling and/or walking trip origin and destination(s). For trip origin, there was a trip origin map depicting Urbana-Champaign-Savoy and attendees placed stickers on the intersection that was closest to their place of residence or their latest trip origin. Also, there were trip destination tables showing top employers, parks, shopping areas, schools and UPD facilities. Attendees placed stickers on the tables to indicate their trip destination(s). The stickers were sorted into four types or colors:



Attendees also participated in a series of group exercises where they drew desired bicycle and trail facilities on each of the five geographical zones in Urbana: North Urbana, West Urbana, Central Urbana, East Urbana and South Urbana.

Individuals also filled out the comment card. The full list of comments received are listed in Appendix E.

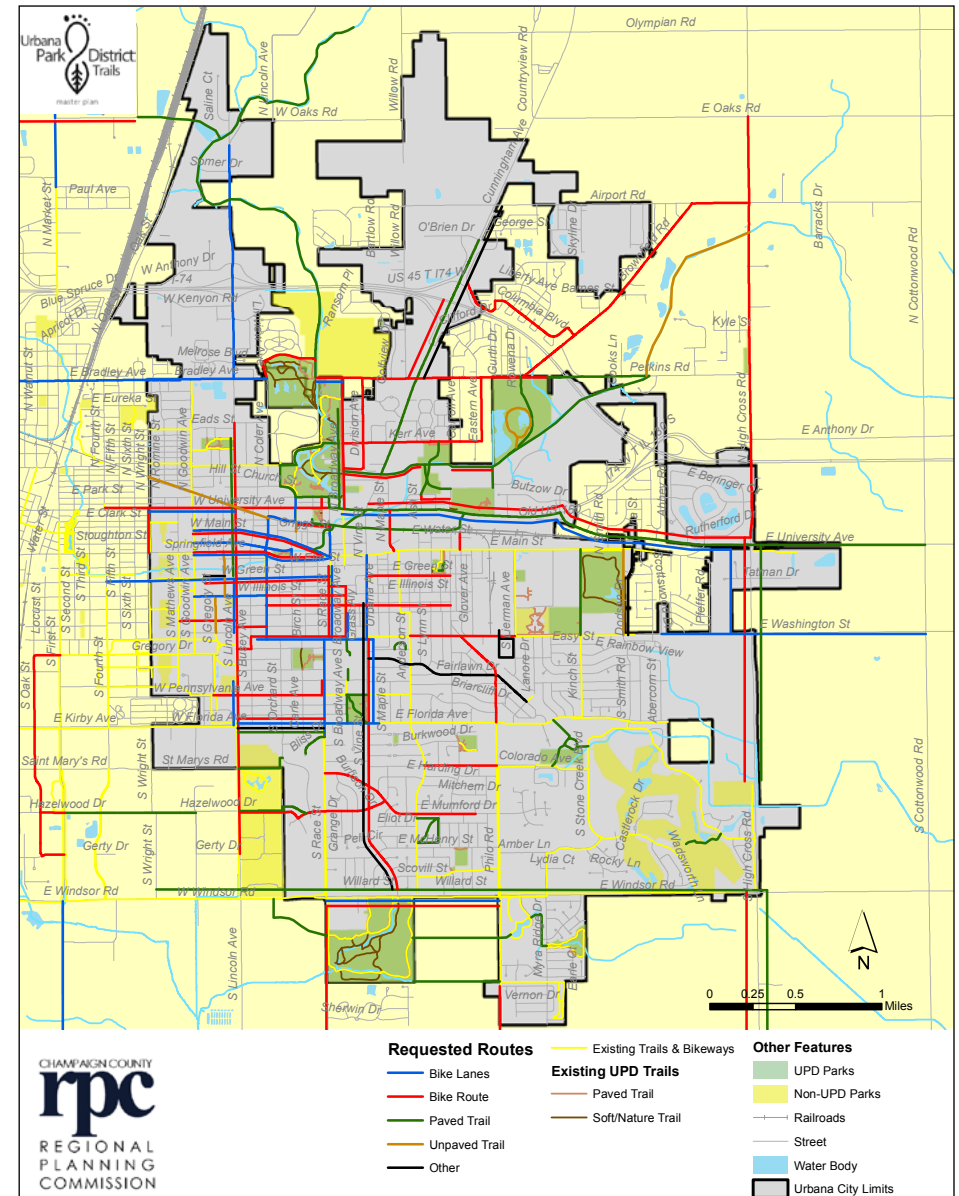


Figure 21 Individual public requested routes



Group exercise at the Urbana Civic Center.



Group exercise at Urbana Early Childhood School.

Below is a summary of the responses received during the first series of public workshops:

- When asked why participants were interested in the UBMP & UTMP, around half cited use of active transportation for recreation, while another 35% cited use of active transportation for commuting to work or school. Around 18% of the participants also mentioned other reasons of interest for these projects.
- When asked which active mode of transportation participants used to reach their destination, 185 were bicycle votes, and 65 were pedestrian votes.

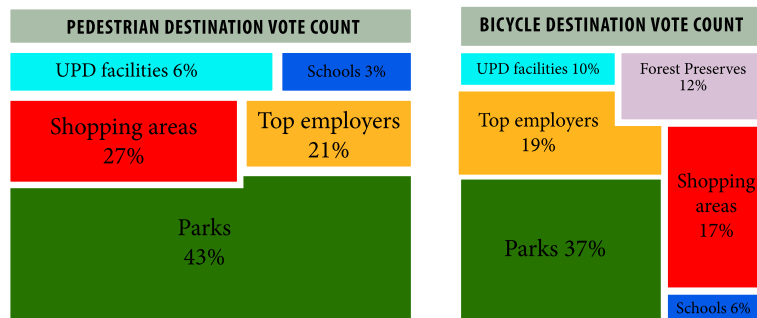


Figure 22 Pedestrian and Bicycle destinations vote count

- Parks received the most votes as a destination either by walking or bicycle. Parks received 43% of the votes as a pedestrian destination and 37% as a destination by bike.
- Top 5 voted pedestrian destinations were: Downtown Urbana (8), University of Illinois (8), Blair Park (5), Meadowbrook Park (5), Crystal Lake Park (3) and Leal Park (3).
- Top 5 voted bicyclist destinations were: Meadowbrook Park (21), University of Illinois (12), Downtown Urbana (11), Market at the Square (10) and Homer Lake Forest Preserve (10 votes).
- All comments collected on the UBMP and UTMP interactive map websites and comment cards were organized by subject. Those subjects are listed on the wordle in Figure 24.

7.3 PUBLIC MEETING #2

CUUATS hosted the second public workshop for the UTMP and UBMP on April 23, 2014 in the Urbana Middle School Cafetorium. 20 people attended.



Public Workshop #2 exercise.



Public Workshop #2 exhibit boards.

Participants voted for their top desired labeled segments of the proposed bicycle and trail network segments in each of Urbana's five geographical zones: North Urbana, West Urbana, Central Urbana, East Urbana and South Urbana.

Participants were also given two votes for their top desired proposed non-infrastructure recommendations in each of the following categories: Education, Encouragement, Enforcement and Evaluation. Below is a summary of the responses received during the Public Meeting #2:

- 296 votes were received from the workshop's five neighborhood zone maps, and 135 segments of the proposed network were voted on.
- Top three voted facilities were:
 - o Shared-Use Path / Paved Trail – 72 votes
 - o Bike Route – 37 votes
 - o Bike Lanes – 12 votes
- Most desired paths were:
 - o Florida Avenue South Sidepath (Lincoln-Race) – 11 votes
 - o Washington Street Bike Route (Race-Vine) – 9 votes
 - o Kickapoo Rail-Trail (Smith-E city limits)– 8 votes
 - o Broadway Avenue West Sidepath (Country Club-Park) along Crystal Lake Park– 7 votes

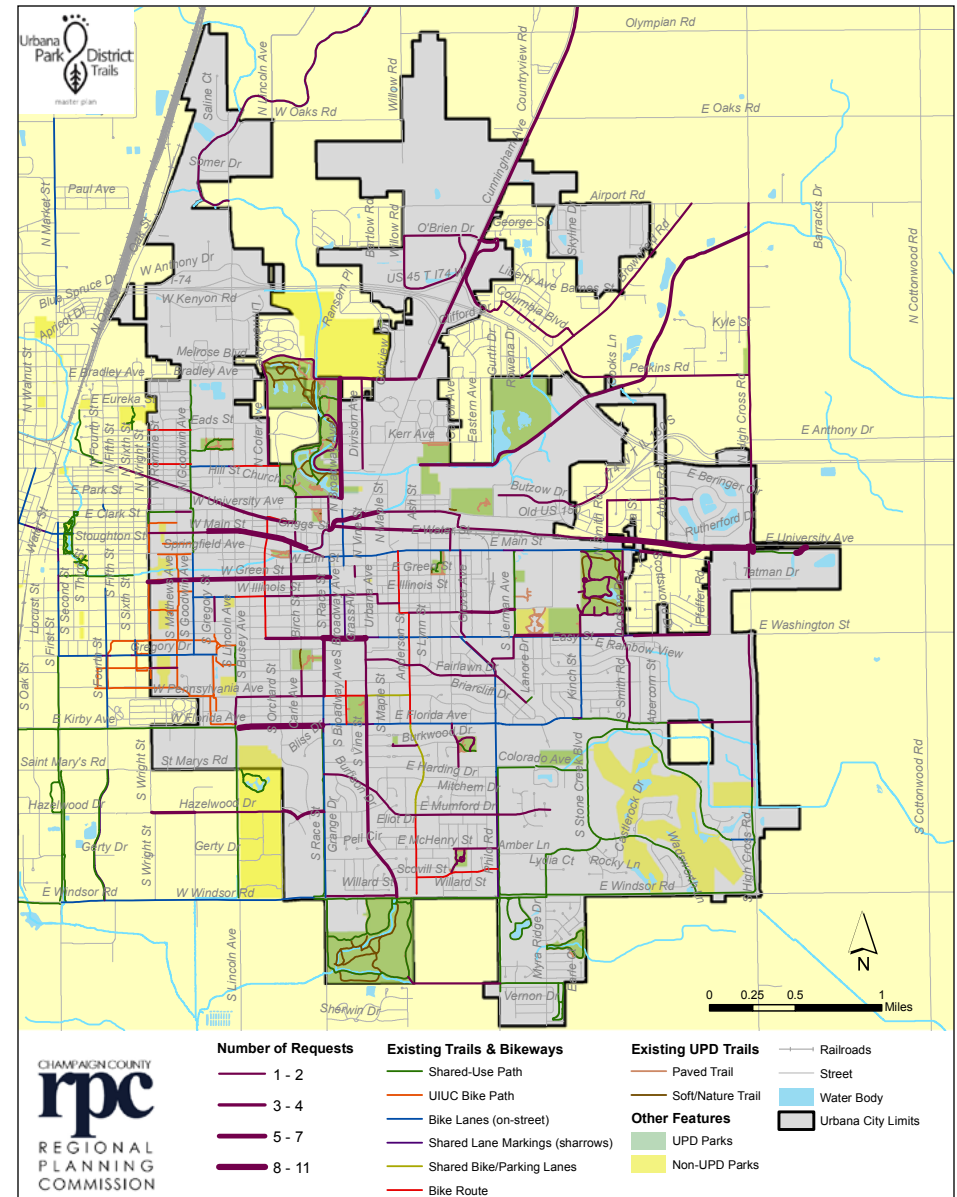
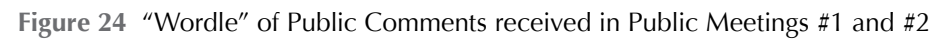


Figure 23 Public preferred recommended routes



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