

Friends of Youngstown, Inc.  
River Trails Roads & Rails Subcommittee

Community Input Survey Summer 2024  
Executive Summary

49 responses!

Over 50% of the respondents live directly in the path of the proposed trail area.!

Over 65% of the respondents are married!

Over 83% of the respondents are of the age of 30-69!

50/50 split male vs female!

89% of the responses would use the trails for casual biking low to medium speeds !

73% said they would use it for walking!

42% said they use the Lower River Rd path daily to several times a week.!

Spring/Summer/Fall are the primary seasons that the Lower River Rd path is used!

The majority of the respondents indicate they use the Lower River Road path for exercise/walking/casual biking!

89% of the responses indicate when using the Lower River Rd path they feel unsafe: vehicles speed, path is too close to the road, no safety barriers, trucks parked on path/side of road, path/road have potholes and is not well maintained.!

73% of responses indicate that when driving a car on Lower River Rd they feel unsafe due to trucks parked on the shoulders blocking traffic and view of oncoming vehicles, cyclists, passing on double yellow, traffic is too fast.!

Caption

88% of the respondents would Absolutely/Likely use an alternate safe route other than Lower River Rd path if one was available.!

No respondents own businesses along the proposed path.!

47% of the respondents support the idea of adding parking in the Village of Youngstown and having a bike path right along Main St. going past the businesses.!

Majority of respondents support water filling stations, picnic areas and rest rooms along the path. Mixed response for bike maintenance area.!

Optional additional comments box: 24 respondents expressed positive response for the overall effort. 23 respondents did not express anything.

# River, Trails, Roads & Rails Community Input Survey

49 responses

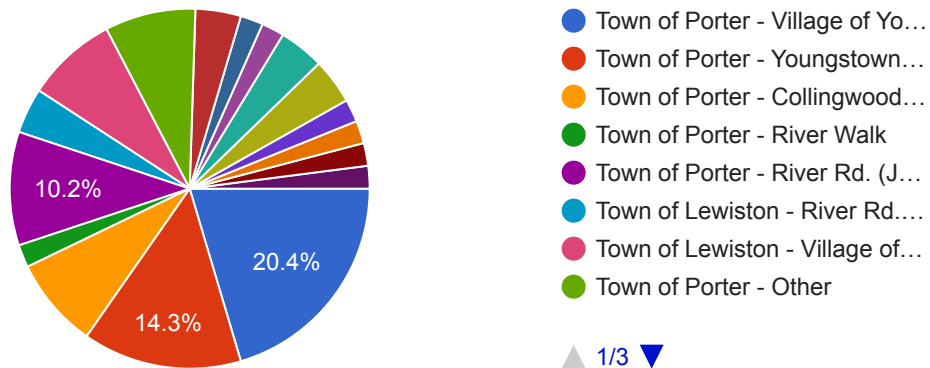
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## General Questions

Where do you live? (Please pick the best answer)

[Copy](#)

49 responses

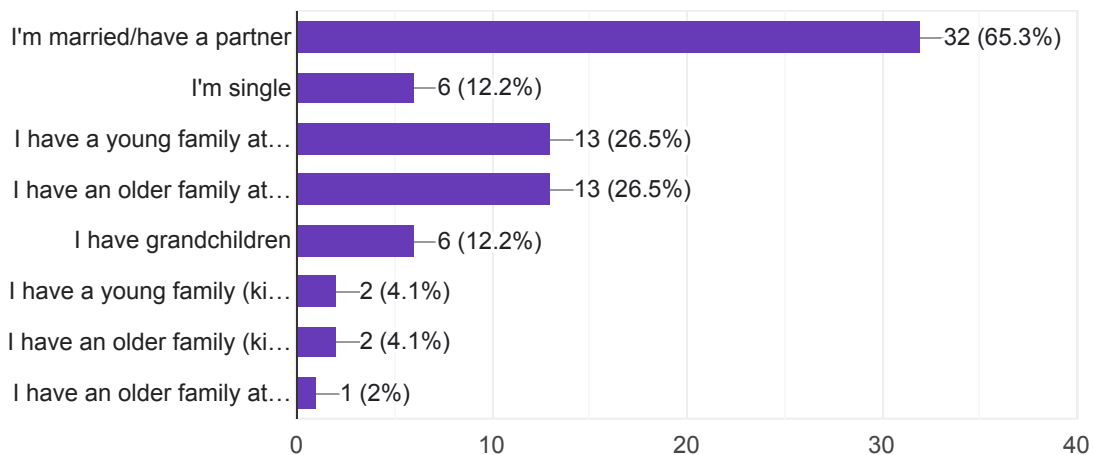


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Please check the boxes that best describe you.

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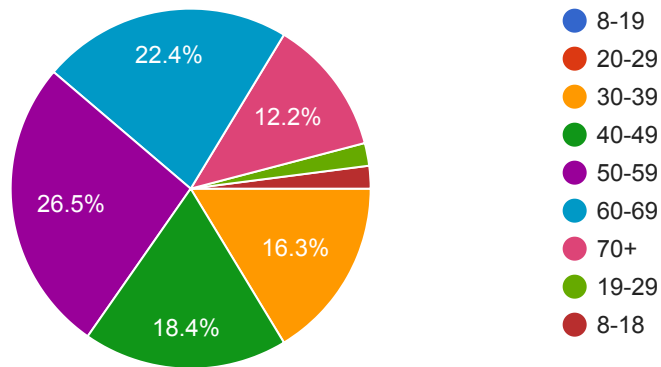
49 responses



### How old are you?

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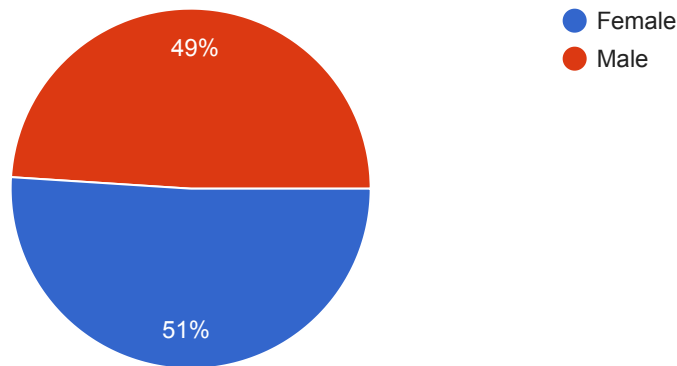
49 responses



### Gender

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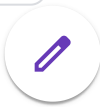
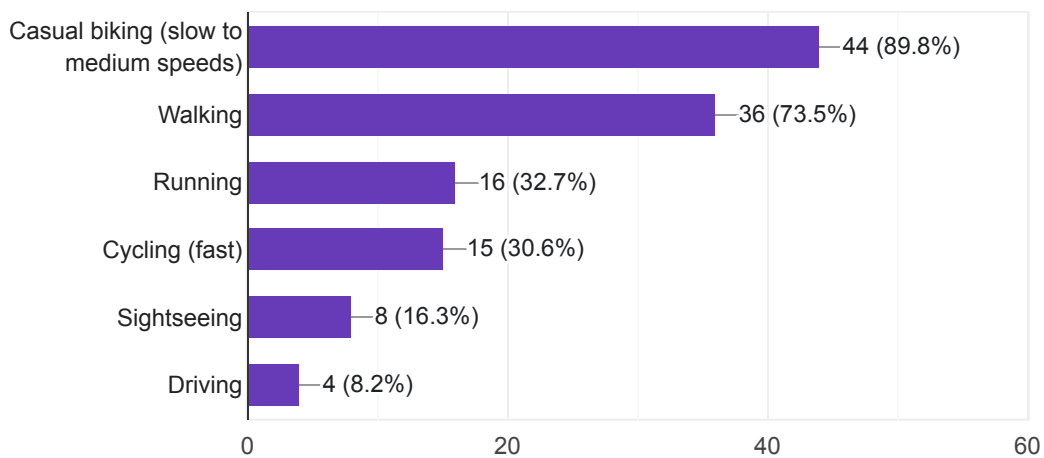
49 responses



### I'm interested in this committee's trail ideas because I would like to use them for the following:

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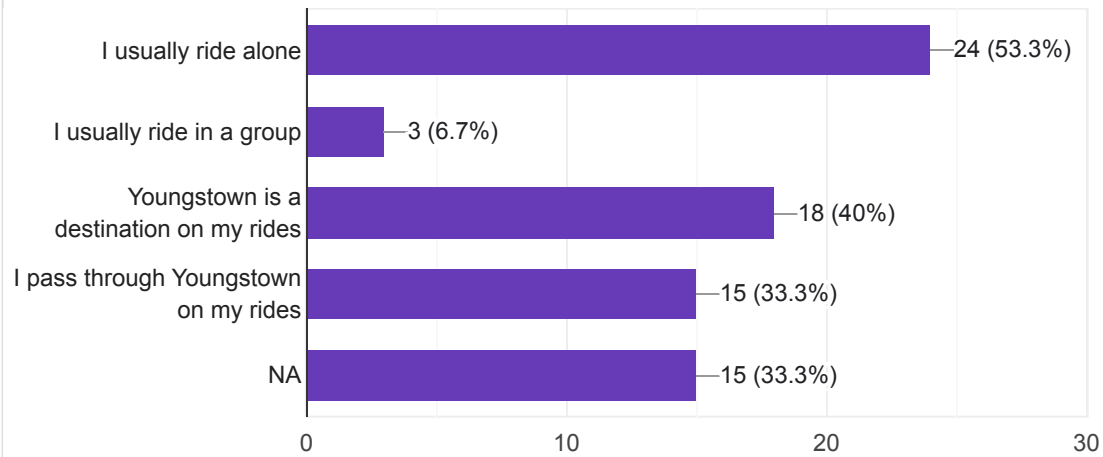
49 responses



If you are a road cyclist, please check the answer(s) that best describe you:

 Copy

45 responses

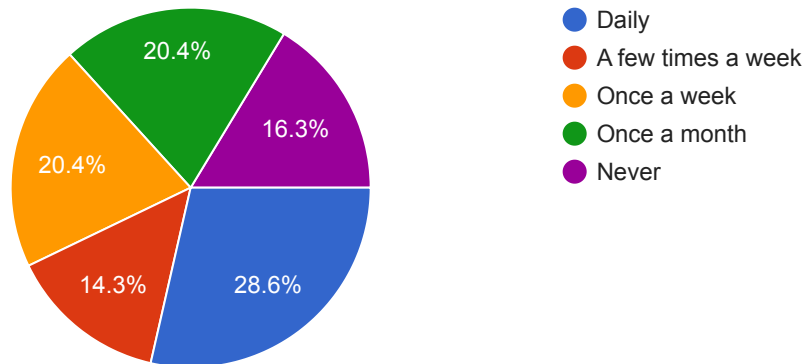


### 18F (Lower River Road)

How often do you and your family use the existing path along Lower River Rd.?

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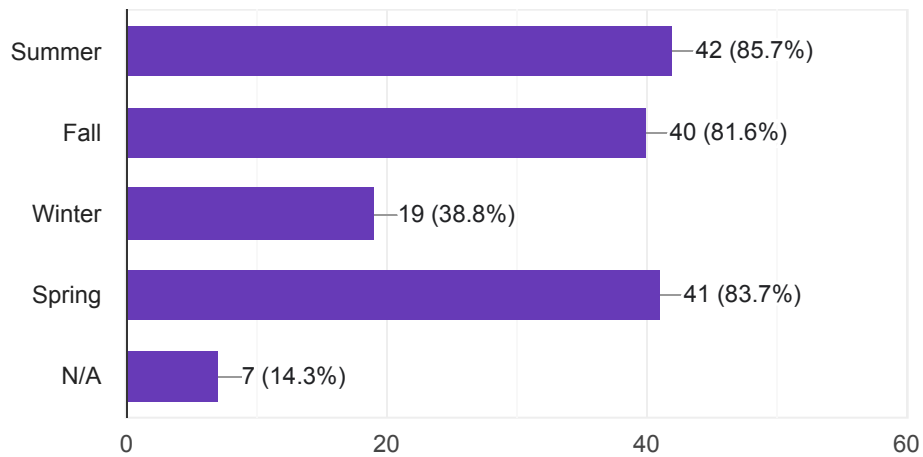
49 responses



### During which seasons do you use the existing path?

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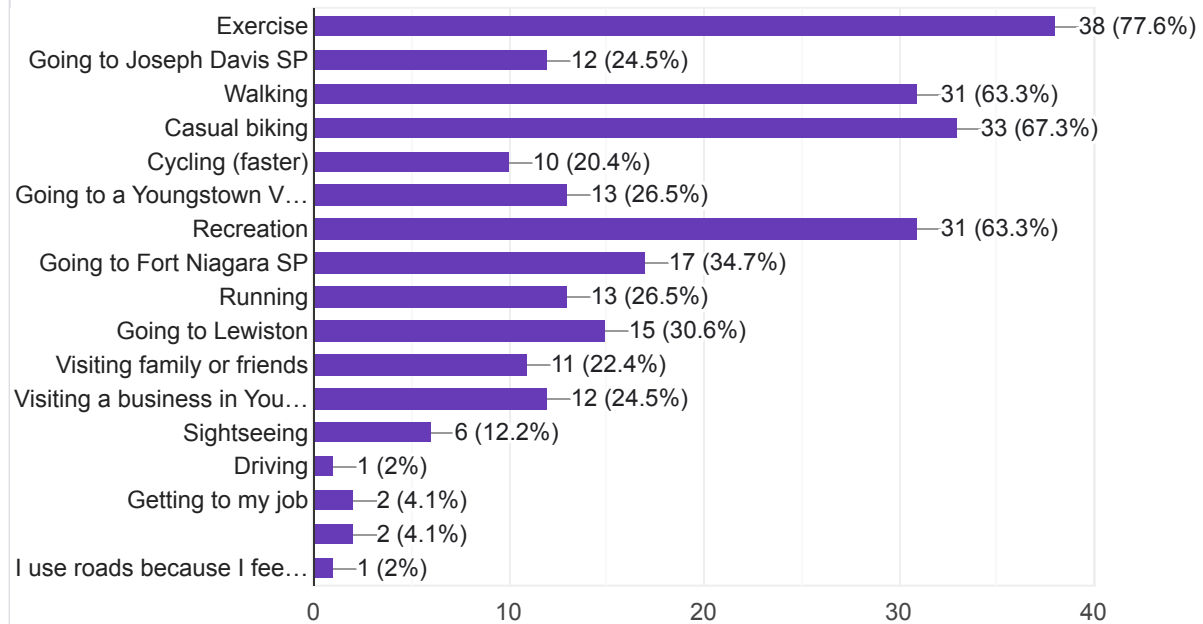
49 responses



### When you use the existing path, please check your reasons for doing so:

 Copy

49 responses



While walking/riding/running on Lower River Rd. from Joseph Davis State Park through Youngstown, do you have any safety concerns? Yes/No. If yes, please explain.

44 responses

no

Crossing the road is dangerous as there are not sufficient warnings and there should be a designated Ped crossing signal.

No

Yes. The cars are going by extremely fast. Drivers are distracted. There is no protection when you are on the path nor an indicator for the driver that they are going off the road.

High speed cars and trucks parked on side of road. Makes for dangerous passing.

Yes, speeding cars

Yes, curve at Joseph Davis West entrance, there needs to be a guardrail to prevent cars from entering the path.

Na

Speeding cars. No where to cycle as cars parked on street or landscaper vehicles on existing paths. Cars not stopping at stop signs.

No shoulders on the road, especially so in the narrow spots.

Yes. Both path and road are not very safe, smooth

Yes, You are taking your life in to your own hands. The drivers do not give way to cyclists and pedestrians.

Yes. No berm. Speeding

Narrow shoulder for bike riding. Many service vehicles parked at roadside blocking shoulder-unsafe to pass. Road in deplorable condition.

I don't use it because I don't feel safe on it

Yes. No buffer between cars and humans



Yes, The existing path is not conducive to cycling. I have been yelled at for riding my bike on the sidewalk, and I have also been yelled at for riding in the road and not using the sidewalk. There are multiple areas as was pointed out in the reason presentation that are very unsafe, especially for families that are crossing from one side of the road to the other. A gentleman in my neighborhood actually hit a cyclist right near the curve near Joseph Davis about a year ago. I'm not surprised this hasn't happened more often.

Yes. Narrow, too close to roads in spots. Cracks.

Traffic

Cyclists

Yes, several. I am a cyclist and there are several parts of the road where the shoulder is barely useable due to debris and drainage grates. I have had numerous incidents of vehicles passing me with less than a foot between us. The existing trail has a few areas that have settled and shifted. This condition caused me to have to divert onto the grass in order to avoid self injury and damage to my bike.

Yes- concerned about speed of drivers. Riding on road feels unsafe

Yes, when cycling...so many close calls, cars going too fast and not moving over enough for me to feel safe, poor condition of shoulder, people passing on double yellow so coming towards me, cars coming onto shoulder at curves....scary

More lighting is needed throughout the village

It often feels tense due to lack of space and drivers not paying adequate attention to pedestrians and bicyclists. The number of lawn trucks taking up space on the road often forces cars, bikes and walkers outside our comfort zone. Shouldn't there be some rules about that?

Only in a few spots in terms of cars seeking like a hazard, and I am mindful of those. The uneven surface is not safe for bikes or even running though.

Yes, traffic coming too close to path. Traffic going above speed limit. Cars do not stop for pedestrians at crosswalks per law. Overgrowth of plants onto path ( potential poison ivy, ticks etc)

No sometimes people speed. Cant' believe they closed the cut through at Joseph Davis that was really bad.

condition of existing path, close proximity to roadway, speed of traffic on 18F

N/A



Yes, severe safety concerns. The path often comes dangerously close to the road, where cars drive at high speeds. I often worry for my young children who have only recently learned how to bike. It's also extremely bumpy because it hasn't been maintained and updated appropriately, and those bumps and holes have caused my kids to fall at crumbling parts before.

Debris in pathway and small unsafe shoulder on road inc hill and blind spots

Yes, cars go fast and the cars usually come in groups of 2-5 and there are lots of potholes that you will have to try and avoid in high traffic.

The conditions / surface of the road are awful. My main interest there is cycling on the road and the surface is flat out dangerous.

Cars in river Rd

Car drive by faster than speed limit. Have to take extra precaution when crossing to other side of road to sidewalk when walking dogs or cycling.

No.

Not really

Yes. Vehicles do not abide by the speed limit

vehicle speed.

Yes. The path pictured above is too skinny and unsafe, IMO. I therefore usually prefer the road.

The road can also be unsafe. A particular pickup truck with periodically blare at bikes with his horn, gesturing they should be on the path.

I also find that the crossover while riding southbound from the right hand side of the road and making a left over into to "The Joe" can be very unsafe. Perhaps better signage for cars and a painted crossing on the street?

The southbound part of River Road where the road dips down in a gully near Youngstown is unsafe. This is due to very poor road conditions near the shoulder and o regrown shrubbery growing out into the shoulder lane.

Residents of River Road leaving garbage/bins/branches in the road is also a biking hazard





While driving your car down Lower River Rd from Joseph Davis State Park through Youngstown, do you have any safety concerns? Yes/No. If yes, please explain.

47 responses

No

no

Yes - people often don't use the trail and ride bikes in the road against traffic

Depends - we have one blind curve and often there are service trucks parked on side of road that shifts drivers and if speeding or weather conditions are bad, could cause an accident. I often walk in peoples yards to avoid being an obstacle on that curve. There are locations that I feel fine on though.

Moderately concerned about the number of delivery and landscaping trucks that are often parked on the road near blind turns, including by the entrance to Joe Davis SP and the curves before and after Pletcher.

Yes. No lights at night. Path is narrow at points. Path connects to road at some points. Trees along path make it difficult to cycle on.

Yes. Especially in the summer with the landscapers, sightseers and the crazy fast drivers! Oh, at the motorcyclists. It's a busy stretch!

Yes, all the trucks parked on side of road it makes it difficult to pass bikes safely. Road doesn't have sufficient width.

Yes, speeding cars

Same as the above question.

Na

See last answer

Usually it's tourists, commercial traffic, and work parties parked and consuming much of a lane.

Yes - too much going on for the speed allowed.

Yes, contractors parking on the road.



Speeding. Bikes too close. Sightseers slowly weaving.

Same as previous answer

Cars passing on solid yellow lines, bike riders in dark clothing, bike riders riding against traffic, joggers in dark clothing and going with traffic. Landscapers parking in lanes and obstructing visibility.

Yes. No buffer between cars and humans

Yes, see above.

Trucks on shoulders. High speed of other vehicles.

Safety of bicyclists

YES - cyclists are constantly in the road and are not conscious of traffic

Yes. When there are cyclist riding on the road, there is not much room for clearance, especially with some of the curves and bends. When you add in people parked on the barely existing shoulder, it can be a dangerous condition.

Sometimes— especially when landscaping or delivery trucks are parked in road

Yes, I may be the only one who goes the speed limit so cars are on my butt and sometimes pass me... Traffic is too fast

I do not want the speed limit lowered as I use river rd a lot. You can't pass cars & it was already lowered. I live here & is an inconvenience for me day to day.( Also with sightseers driving even slower )

I've had people pass me across the double yellow lines. People tend to drive fast and I don't understand why the speed limit is as high as it is. As stated above, the number of lawn trucks create yet more safety concerns

Yes -- when there are cyclists on both sides of the road and there's an oncoming car, it does not seem safe.

Yes contractors parking in road and not placing marking cones out proper distance. Poor quality lines on road. Cars passing on the double yellow line.

while i drive the speed zone i fear i will be rear ended as vehicles tailgate much to close

When cyclists are on the road, it's a major safety concern because they do not have enough



space and as a driver, you have to drive around them through the oncoming lane.

No. I don't own a car.

Not much

No

I have to be careful when the landscapers are parked on the road with their trucks and trailers, especially on corners when they block the view of oncoming vehicles.

No.

No lived on or near river rd my whole life

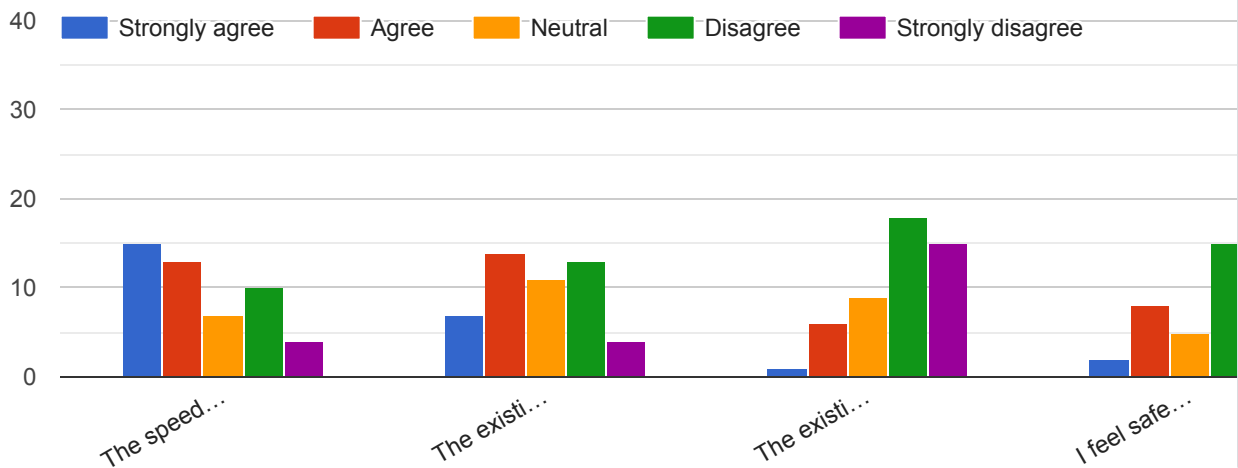
Some blind curves where bicyclists may be on the road

trucks parked in the drive lanes are dangerous.

Lawn care trucks simply parking in the road and causing obstacles, especially near bends.

Please rate your level of agreement with the following:

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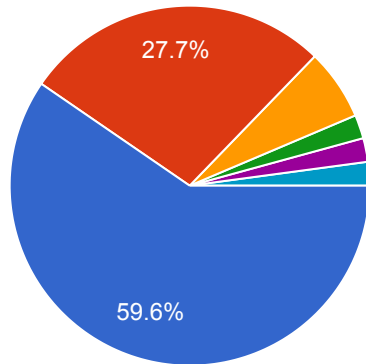
**Rail Trails**



If there were a safe alternative path in addition to the existing path along River Road, how likely would you be to use it?

 Copy

47 responses



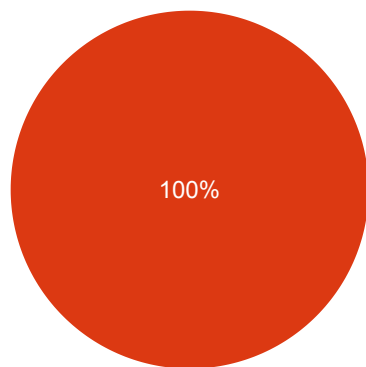
- Absolutely use it
- Likely use it
- I will keep using the River Road path and not take an alternate...
- Connect the path following the thurway from Lewiston to You...
- Use an alternative path when going slower on my bike and...
- It's a great idea for running and cycling and walking

### Village Loop

Do you own a business along the existing path or in Youngstown?

 Copy

49 responses



- Yes
- No



The present proposal takes the path around Main St. in Youngstown due to prior concerns of losing street parking space near the businesses. If the Village is able to add a parking lot in the Main St./Lockport St. area, would you support the path going straight through the Village on Main St? Yes/No. if no please explain your concern.

47 responses

Yes

no

Yes.

Yes

Yes. I would want to see the business district on Main street thrive with increased people activity being diverted through there. It would provide a win-win to many!

Yes, although I understand the convenience for both shop-owners and customers in being able to park in front of stores.

I am on board with either route.

I think having a bike path is good proximity to local businesses is necessary to keep our businesses thriving. I have too many thoughts on solutions for this space. I'll reach out for a conversation and to volunteer soon

Does not seem feasible

No. I don't think that's necessary. We are a 4 season climate and I don't see the advantage in winter weather.

No - speed limit is already slow in that area and parking can be difficult at times. Bikers should be mindful to pass through to businesses slowly and safely without the need to restructure.

Yes, it makes Sense if possible to have bikes going by the businesses... They'll be more likely to stop and support them

Let's see where the parking would be?

Yes! Youngstown has lost so much through the years (bank, pharmacy, major grocery and restaurants) Shouldn't we do our best to bring people to the few businesses that we do have? You can put bike racks on Hinman or at the old bank site rather than directly in front of Main St



stores. Have maps directing bikers to places of interest and encourage the business owners themselves to be bicycle friendly (coupons?)

No. Bikes can still go down main Street with the cars parked there.

No, I don't feel unsafe cycling on Main St. as it is now.

No, it's not so cut and dried.

No

No. Extra parking would be unnecessary and speeds around Main St. Youngstown are slow enough to make it safe for cyclists and pedestrians.

Not sure. If the lot were on river road and very visible / obvious, then I think so

Not sure

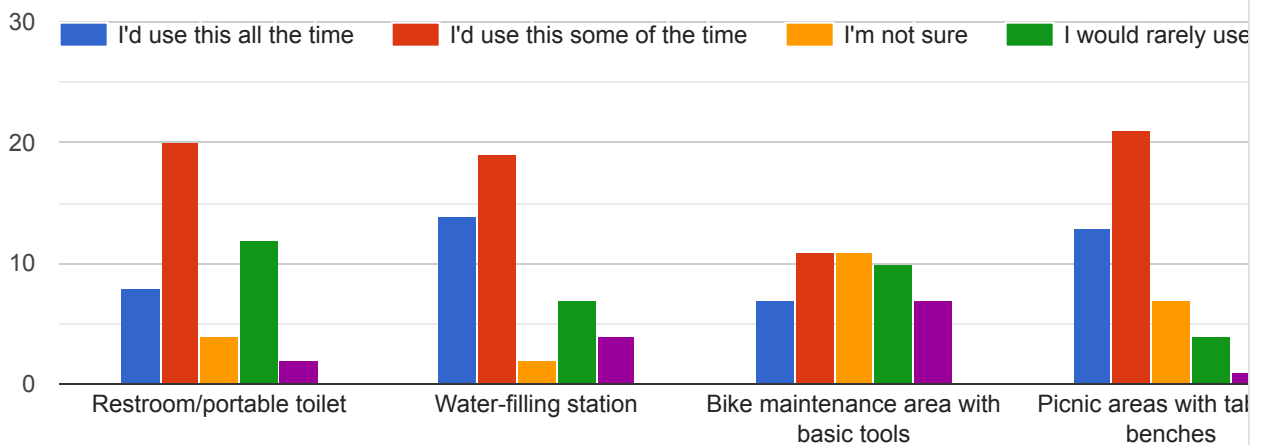
yes. give people choices and let them pick their route. and switch it up over time.

Neutral. As is, however, biking on Main Street is dangerous due to the risk of being "doored"

### General Cont'd.

Please rate the importance of the following amenities that could be added to new or existing paths:

 Copy



Please write your name, phone number and email address if you would like to join the group working on the trails projects.

24 responses

Already in

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Would be willing to help as able. Shawn Ferguson, 716-998-6865,  
drshawnferguson@gmail.com





Please use this space to provide any additional input you want to share with the team.

Thank you!

24 responses

Thank you!

Good job, everyone!

If anything, the outcome of this survey, a guardrail needs to be established at the curve of Joseph Davis.

Let me know how I can assist

I'm a big proponent of this effort and would love to contribute in any way I can

Great job. 🙏

Brilliant job! Thanks so much for your efforts!

Thank you for doing this

This is a much needed improvement to our area. I would even pay more in taxes, if necessary, for both the safety and tourism benefits of a dedicated bike/walking path.

Thank you for organizing this.

I love the idea of making the trails more bike friendly, but to do so at the cost of vehicle traffic is unfair to those who live in the surrounding neighborhoods. I do however worry that the width of the road does not allow for such a project. As someone who lives in the Estates, I personally would not mind the trail passing through (assuming it doesn't block our only means of egress or pass through yards), but we do already have crosswalks in place that are rarely used. In addition rules should be in place to prevent bikes from being on the road at all. Our shoulders are not wide enough and many of the curves are blind, so it is not safe. Simply lowering the speed limit and diverting traffic does not solve this issue for those of us who need to travel this route multiple times daily. Diverting commercial vehicles would never work as they would then not be able to make deliveries or do repair jobs in local neighborhoods. Even a van without rear seats is considered a commercial vehicle. In addition, with other parts of the parkway being shut down, diverting traffic is also a concern since we do not know the future plans. That route is already often times not well maintained by the state. Furthermore the current smell coming from Modern landfill would deter me from wanting to get out and use the trails. I feel that that is an issue that is far more pressing. I do very much appreciate the time the committee is taking to improve our region and hope improvements will be made that are good for both motorists' convenience and cyclists safety/enjoyment!



When I first started to get into cycling several years ago, I absolutely loved taking the lower river road route. This was until I had a handful of safety concerns. I still cycle now, but I avoid lower river road as much as possible. I live in the village of Youngstown and there are not a whole lot of safe options for cycling. I currently use creek road the majority of the time due to the shoulder condition/size. But cars still travel quite fast and sometimes crowd the shoulder a little too close for comfort.

This is a fantastic much needed idea, I think you're on the right path lol. I haven't been going to Youngstown, instead heading to the falls because of the condition of the existing path and scary lower River road so I'm thrilled to see a community effort to fix the issues.

I support the speed limit going to 40 instead of 45 in that section, but 30 or 35 the whole way I would not support.

Also, is there a reason why extension of the bike path along the west side of the parkway isn't one of the options being looked at? Maybe all the way to 93 or maybe coming down Blairville to Veteran's Park, etc.

If access to the Robert Moses to & from the newer neighborhoods (Youngstown Estates, Collingwood, Runaway), then fewer motorists might use River Rd.

Town needs to mow and cut back vegetation in places where the property owners are not. Branches are low, plants are encroaching onto path.

Would like to discuss.

i like to suggest safety training for both bicyclist and motorist

Thanks for working towards this!

Extending a path is a great idea for bikers to fry niagara so we can stay off the street

I appreciate the work to make cycling safer which will make it more accessible to everyone.

I can volunteer in the mornings weekdays

a pedestrian bridge hung off the Pletcher Rd parkway bridge would connect to Calkins neighborhood and school.

Thanks for what you're doing! Between the FOY and this project, I think you folks are doing a great job!



