

A large, dark silhouette of a bicycle is positioned on the left side of the page, oriented vertically. The bicycle is shown in profile, facing right. It includes the front wheel, handlebars, a seat, a frame, a rear wheel, and a rear fender. The background is a solid, vibrant orange color.

seattle bicycle master plan ●●●

Public Engagement Summary Report  
**PHASE ONE**



# TABLE of CONTENTS

<b>Key Findings &amp; Themes</b>	page 1
----------------------------------	--------

---

<b>Introduction</b>	page 3
Background and Context	
2012 BMP Update Public Engagement Strategy	

---

<b>Getting the Word Out: Tell Us! Show Us!</b>	page 9
Overview	
Events	
Other outreach efforts	

---

<b>What SDOT Heard</b>	page 11
Who we heard from the online survey	
How people are making trips on today's bicycle network	
Why are people riding bicycles?	
Trip length	
How do people currently make bicycle trips?	
Where do people currently ride?	
Barriers to riding a bicycle	
Problem locations	
Barriers beyond infrastructure	
What would people like to see in the future?	
Where do people want to ride in the city?	
What types of priorities do people want to see from the updated BMP?	
What are the most important priorities and programs?	

---

<b>Next Steps</b>	page 39
What's next for public engagement	

---

<b>Appendices</b>	page 41
Survey questions	
Raw data and results	
Map of zip codes and response rates	
Spreadsheet of all comments	
List/calendar of to-date outreach events	
SBAB Bikeability Reports	

# KEY FINDINGS & THEMES

In the spring of 2012, the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) began an update of the 2007 Bicycle Master Plan (BMP). One of the first steps of the update process was to find out more about how people currently view bicycling and what they would like to see from the plan update.

The findings below summarize the results of an online survey and mapping tool conducted in May and June of 2012 as part of the plan update, in addition to information from a statistically valid phone survey SDOT conducted in April 2012, and other comments received at outreach events and via email during the spring of 2012. Several key themes emerged from outreach conducted to date:

## **Safety is a major concern for bicycle riders and prospective riders.**

- The words “safe” and “safety” were mentioned nearly 400 times in comments (online survey)
- “Do not feel safe riding a bike” was the #1 barrier for respondents “interested in riding a bike, but concerned” (online survey) and the #2 barrier for phone survey respondents, behind weather (phone survey)

## **Build facilities that are comfortable for all ages & abilities.**

- Generally, respondents want to see bicycle facilities that improve comfort and safety including:
  - Neighborhood greenways
  - Cycle tracks
  - Off-street paved trails
  - Safe routes to and on bridges
    - Ballard Bridge and the South end of the University Bridge were identified as top locations for crossing/intersection improvements (online mapping tool)
  - Buffered bicycle lanes
    - Dexter Ave was the most popular facility for places people like to ride (online mapping tool)
- On-street separated bicycle facilities and off-street paved trails ranked highest for increased investment (online survey)
- Low volume, low traffic residential streets without bicycle lanes are the most-used facilities currently (phone survey); residential streets and off-street paved trails were most used facilities for “interested in riding a bike, but concerned” respondents (online survey)
- Desire for separated bicycle facilities was a primary theme in comments section (online survey)
- Support for an on-street separated facility in Downtown Seattle (online survey)
- Almost every downtown street identified as “worst place to ride” (online mapping tool)





## **Reevaluate how well existing bicycle lanes and sharrows are working.**

- Concern that sharrows are not well understood and respected by motorists and do little, if anything, to increase safety (online survey)
- Many comments reference fear of being hit by a car door while riding in bicycle lanes adjacent to on-street parking (online survey)

## **Plan for maintenance of the bicycle network and improve pavement quality.**

- Improving pavement conditions was the second-ranked priority for encouraging bicycling, behind build more on-street bicycle facilities and off-street paved trails (online survey)
- Many comments cite locations where lack of maintenance has created hazardous conditions (e.g. 2nd Ave downtown) (online survey)

## **Increase efforts for education and enforcement campaigns that target all road users.**

- Large number of comments about the need for increased education and enforcement of traffic laws for all road users (online survey)
- Safety concerns include getting hit or killed by drivers, distracted driving, uncertainty and lack of understanding of the rules of the road, behavior of bicycle riders, and animosity between modes (online survey)

## **Seattle has significant non-infrastructure related challenges.**

- Weather was listed as the #1 barrier to bicycling in both the online and phone surveys
- Topography is a significant barrier for people who are “interested in riding a bike, but are concerned” and those who do not currently ride (online and phone survey)
- Only 40% of residents report having access to a working bicycle (phone survey)

# INTRODUCTION



## Background and Context

In 2012, the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) embarked on an update to the Bicycle Master Plan (BMP). While the current BMP, which was adopted in 2007, has been effective at guiding improvements to the City's bicycle network over the last five years, an update to the plan presents an opportunity to include fast-evolving best practices and new thinking in bicycle facility planning and design. This will result in a connected bicycle network that will appeal to a larger number of bicycle riders in the future.

During the 2007 Bicycle Master Plan, public engagement included an online survey with 1,600 responses, 100 email comments, and three public meetings which drew over 800 people. However, the majority of participants in the 2007 planning process were frequent bicyclists, while occasional cyclists and potential riders were not as involved in the planning process. One of the primary goals of public outreach for the 2012 plan update is to engage Seattle's many diverse and varied communities in the planning process and broaden the conversation about bicycling in the City of Seattle.

This report provides an overview of the public outreach and engagement to date and summarizes what SDOT has heard, including results from the online survey and mapping tool, a statistically valid phone survey that SDOT conducted in spring of 2012, and specific comments received at public events, through email, and through the survey tools.

The findings described in this report will inform several parts of the plan update and upcoming work. This work includes an update to the Bicycle Master Plan vision, goals, objectives, and performance measures and an updated map showing where bicycle improvements should be built, with recommended bicycle facility types. Feedback will also inform the draft plan document, including policies and actions for plan implementation. Throughout the BMP update process, SDOT staff will continue to attend meetings and outreach events, in addition to several formal comment opportunities including public meetings and workshops to review draft plan elements.



# 2012 BMP Update Public Engagement Strategy

The update to the Bicycle Master Plan has two public engagement goals: 1) to engage broad and diverse segments of Seattle residents, businesses, and property owners, and 2) to update the BMP to reflect the priorities and interests of a broad segment of people, including infrequent and potential riders, in addition to current users of the bicycle system. SDOT will meet these goals through three primary phases of public engagement.

The first phase of work began in May 2012 and capitalized on a number of engagement opportunities related to National Bike to Work Month. Bike to Work Month is an advantageous time for bicycle outreach, as there are a large number of bicycle-related events and many people try riding a bike for the first time. SDOT employed several engagement strategies including the creation of several online survey and mapping tools, attendance at numerous community events and stakeholder meetings; meetings of the Seattle Bicycle Advisory Board (SBAB); direct mailings to libraries, community centers and other neighborhood destinations; emails to neighborhoods, businesses, and focused outreach to specific community groups; and outreach to local news media. The 2012 Seattle Bicycle Map, which contains BMP update specific messaging to encourage people to get involved with the process, was also released at the time of the BMP launch and maps were distributed at a number of public events. Work on the first phase of public engagement continued until the end of June, with the survey tools officially closing on July 9th.

The second phase of the public engagement process will include public meetings, briefings to the City Council, and outreach to specific neighborhood and stakeholder groups to discuss the draft materials. Following revision to the draft plan elements to reflect public comment, the third and final phase of public engagement will include an opportunity to comment on the complete BMP update document.

Throughout the process, SDOT staff will attend meetings of the Seattle Bicycle Advisory Board and other groups and continue to respond to questions and comments from citizens. SDOT will also continue to work with the Seattle Bicycle Advisory Board (SBAB), which is a citizen advisory board whose members are appointed by the Mayor and City Council, to discuss the public engagement plan and specific engagement phases, what SDOT has been hearing, and how the information will help inform the update to the plan.





## SPECIFIC feedback from public engagement efforts

Much of the information from the public that SDOT received during the first phase of public engagement aligns closely with the direction that City Council provided for the update, particularly the need to include new types of bicycle facilities, such as on-street separated bicycle facilities and neighborhood greenways in development of the future bicycle network. These new bicycle facility types are already incorporated into the scope of work for the project.

Other information from the public engagement process includes identifying the geographic location of specific problem areas and gaps in the network based on comments and response to the mapping tool, incorporating new project ideas from community groups, and making sure that the plan update addresses the issue of education and enforcement for all road users.

SDOT will use information collected during this first phase of public engagement to integrate public input with field investigation, roadway characteristics, gap analysis, bicycle counts and other efforts to identify areas for bicycle facilities. Draft future bicycle network maps, based in part on public input received thus far, will be presented in community meetings in the fall. This will allow the public an opportunity to provide input to the network at both a city-wide perspective and at the neighborhood level.



Getting the Word Out

# TELL US! SHOW US!



## Overview

The goals of the BMP Public Engagement Strategy include engaging a broad and diverse array of Seattle residents, businesses, and property owners and ensuring that the update reflects the priorities and interests of all Seattleites. In order to address these goals, SDOT conducted some focused outreach efforts and made efforts to identify the location and characteristics of those participating in the engagement process.



This initial outreach process utilized a combination of online tools, in-person meetings, and events to reach potential stakeholders. Information about the update was translated into the six most-spoken languages in the City of Seattle (Chinese, Vietnamese, Tagalog, Spanish, Korean, and Somali) and distributed at numerous events and locations. Mailings of the poster in English and translated business cards were sent to each of the six neighborhood service centers, all 37 Parks & Recreation public facilities, every library in the city, and to ten diverse community groups to encourage additional participation of potential or infrequent

bicycle riders. SDOT printed 10,000 English language business cards with a link to the online survey tools and distributed posters and cards (shown above) to every bicycle shop in the City.

SDOT project team staff also attended numerous events and meetings during May and June to gather input from the community. Because May is National Bike to Work Month, a number of events were organized and sponsored specifically to promote and encourage cycling. However SDOT also made a conscious effort to attend events that did not cater specifically to bicyclists, such as Summer Streets in Alki and Ballard and the Seattle Pride Parade. SDOT staff also utilized social media and e-mail to reach out to a diverse array of community organizations and other potential stakeholder groups.



In addition to information and comments received in the on-line survey, phone survey, and web mapping tool, SDOT also received comment letters from the Seattle Greenways organizers and Cascade Bicycle Club. There were also a number of briefings with City boards and commissions and other stakeholder groups to discuss the project and solicit input. More information on these meetings is in Appendix E.

Finally, one source of information about bicycling in Seattle was from a statistically valid phone survey, conducted in April of 2012. This survey was conducted using an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) random digit dial phone survey approach. A similar survey was also conducted in 2011. The 2012 survey included 600 total interviews, with a margin of error of +/- 4.0 points, with responses weighted to accurately reflect the adult population based on Seattle Census demographics.

Online Survey Tools

# WHAT SDOT HEARD





This section explains some of the findings from SDOT's survey tools including the BMP online survey and mapping tool and phone survey, as well as from the many comments we received at public events, meetings, and by e-mail.

It is important to note that the results from the BMP online survey should be read with the understanding that response to this survey does not necessarily reflect the views of the entire community. Although the online survey and mapping tools both provided an important opportunity for feedback and comment on the Bicycle Master Plan, these tools do not represent a comprehensive survey or a statistically valid sample of the population.

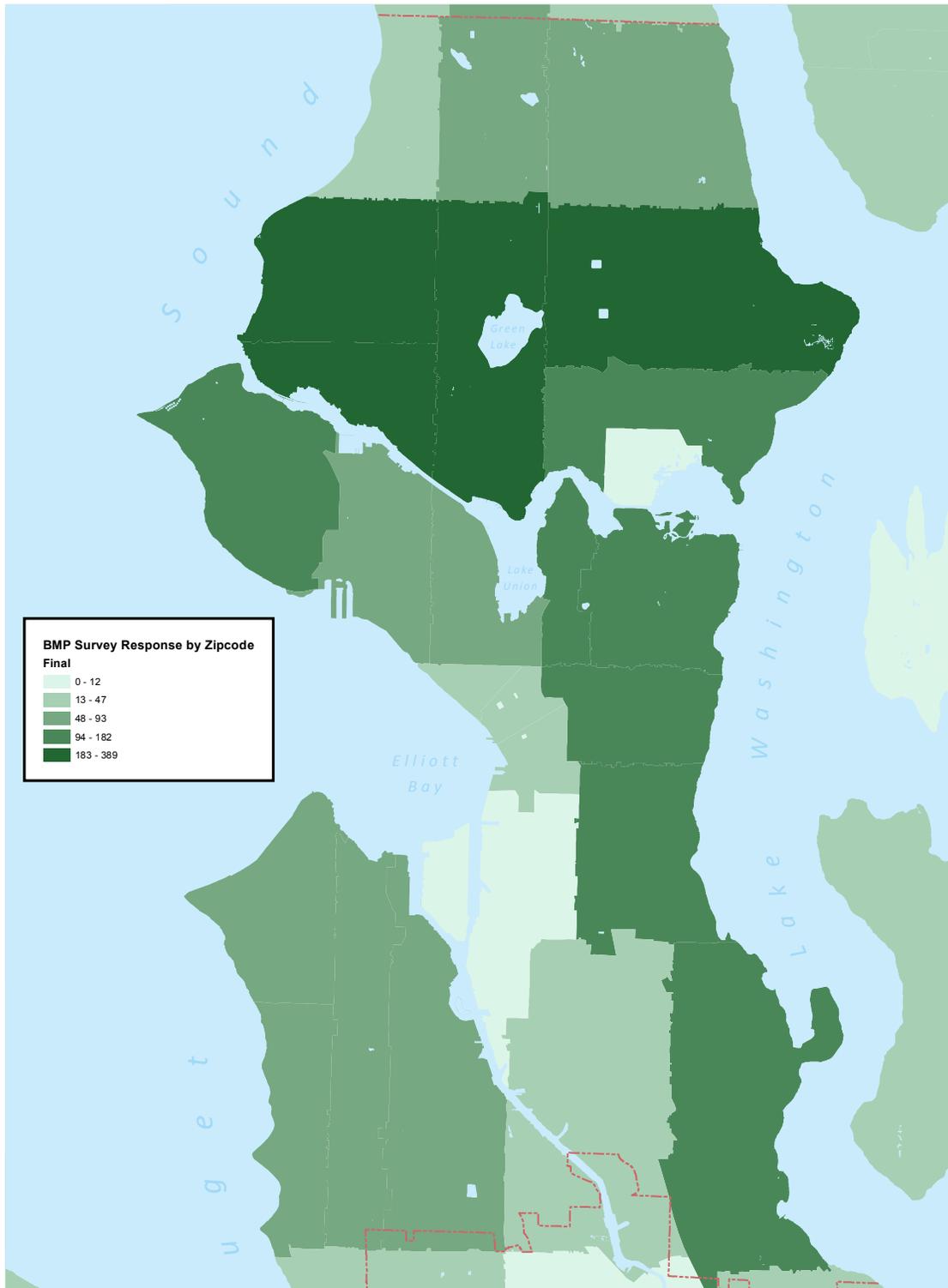
For comparison, the phone survey conducted by SDOT's traffic management division in April of 2012, which asked several questions about bicycling, presents a statistically valid perspective. These results will be included whenever possible so as to provide a clearer picture of bicycle perceptions and use in the entire Seattle community.



## WHAT SDOT HEARD

# WHO we heard from in the online survey

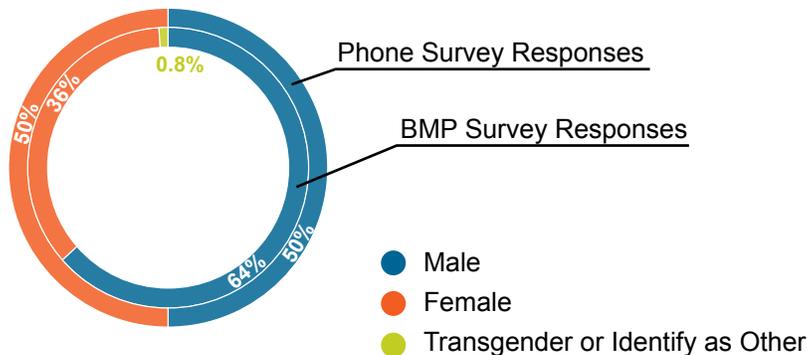
In all, there were over 3,500 responses to the BMP online survey and thousands of lines drawn on the online mapping tool. Responses came from every zip code in Seattle and some from beyond the Seattle boundaries. The response by neighborhood is shown in the map below:



Although SDOT did hear from a large number of people, some demographic groups responded more than others. The following graphics show who we heard from in the BMP online survey, compared to who was surveyed as part of the phone survey.

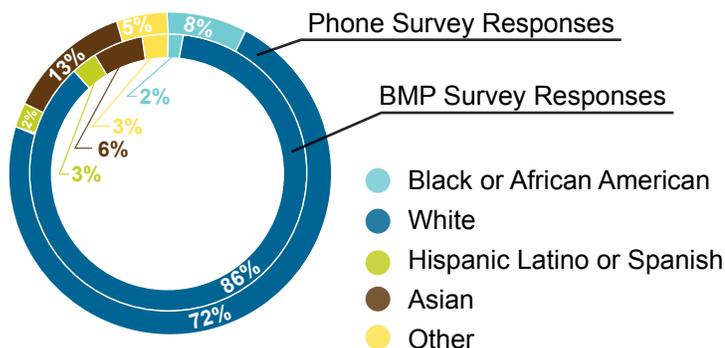
**Gender:**

One of the biggest differences was the response by gender. Response to the BMP online survey was heavily male compared to the phone survey, as shown at right:



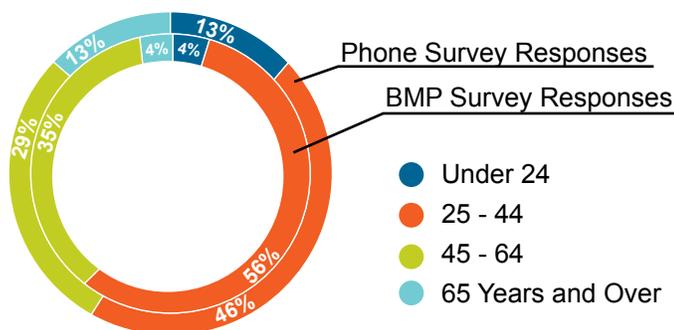
**Race:**

Response by race also differed between the two surveys, with the phone survey better representing the diversity of Seattle’s population. In contrast, the BMP online survey respondents were more likely to be white.



**Age:**

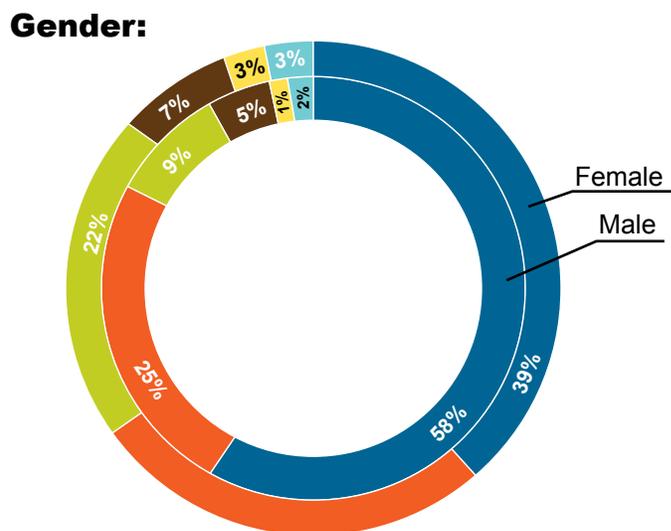
As far as age, response to the BMP online survey was much greater in the age 25-44 and 45-64 age groups than in the phone survey, which again provides a better distribution across groups.



# WHAT SDOT HEARD

## Cyclist Type:

One question that was not on the phone survey, but provides insight as to who we heard from in the online outreach, was a question on the BMP online survey that asked respondents to identify themselves as one of several types of cyclists. These results show that many of the people who took the online survey are frequent bicycle riders.



## Online Responses:

- A frequent cyclist; rides in mixed traffic with automobiles on any type of street
- A frequent cyclist; rides on arterial streets w/ bicycle facilities and on low speed, low traffic streets when bicycle facilities are not on arterial
- Interested in bicycling; rides on low speed residential streets, but concerned about safety in mixed traffic with automobiles
- Recreational or occasional cyclist; ride primarily off-street paved trails
- I do not ride a bicycle now; might be interested if Seattle developed bicycle facilities that met my needs or made me feel safer
- I do not ride a bicycle and am unlikely ever to do so





## HOW are people making trips on today's bicycle network?

The BMP online survey asked several questions about what kinds of trips people make and how often they make them. Many respondents said that they ride a bike frequently, especially for commute trips. In the warmer part of the year (April-September), 75% of respondents said they ride at least once a week, and 60% ride at least once a week in the cooler season (October-March). In comparison, the phone survey did not ask exactly the same question, but found that only 13% of all respondents reported bicycling a few times a week or daily, with an additional 20% riding a few times a month. These questions highlighted the fact that many of the BMP online survey respondents are frequent bike riders and commuters.

**"I bike with my kids on board. I'd love to see biking made more family friendly in Seattle. Well marked bike lanes/boxes--especially when buffered--should be all over town. We take the Burke-Gilman whenever we can, but of course it's not complete in Ballard."**

**- BMP Update online survey comment**



## WHY are people riding bicycles?

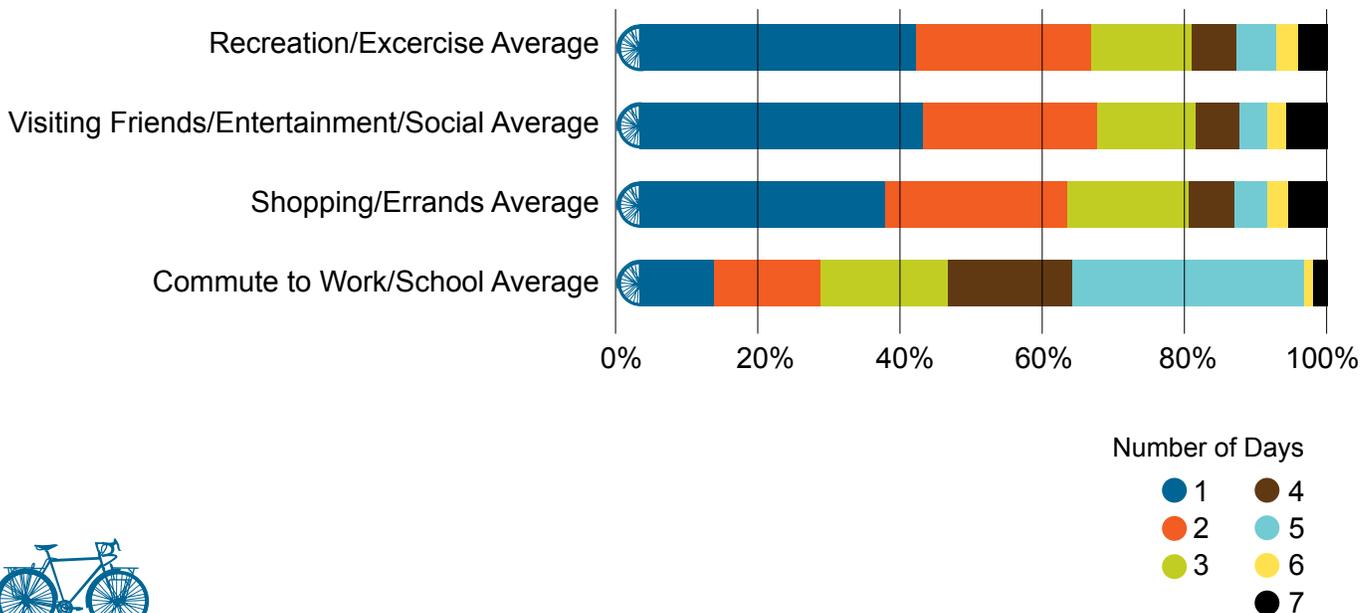
The BMP online survey asked how often people make trips for the following purposes:

- Commute to work or school
- Shopping/errands
- Visit friends/entertainment/social
- Recreation/exercise

In general, commute trips and recreation/exercise trips were the most common. When asked what the purpose of their most recent trip was, 65% of respondents said that it was a commute trip, 25% recreation, and only 7% shopping/errands and 5% visit friends/entertainment/social.

Commuter trips were also the most frequently made trip type – a third of those who ride for commuting purposes do so an average of 5 days a week throughout the year. Furthermore, commute trips were the least likely to be affected by weather. Respondents commuting by bike reported riding almost as much in the winter and rainy Seattle spring as in the summer and fall. Recreational trips, on the other hand, dropped by 25% from the warmer months to the cooler. Social and shopping trips were, however, more likely to be the kind of trip made nearly every day of the week – approximately a tenth of respondents said they make these trips 6 or 7 days a week.

**Average days cycled by trip type**



# TRIP length

The length of trip appears to be closely related to the type of trip. For example, the BMP online survey found that the largest portion of shopping/errands trips are 2 miles or less, entertainment/social trips are 5 miles or less, commute trips are between 2-10 miles, and recreation/exercise trips above 10 miles. The phone survey, in comparison, found that overall the largest portion of trips are between 2-5 miles (36%), while approximately 20% are less than 2 miles, 20% are 6-10 miles, and 20% are more than 10 miles. Some of our other outreach efforts indicated that some people would like to be able to travel longer distances for commute trips – for example across the SR 520 bridge – while for other types of trips people would like to be able to make intra-neighborhood trips to the grocery store, school, and other community destinations/amenities.

## HOW do people currently make bicycle trips?

One of the BMP online survey questions asked what type of streets people use when riding their bikes for different purposes. The question asked what type of facility people use for the majority of each trip, although it is likely that people often use many different kinds of streets for each trip. Because of this, it is possible that the types of facilities that people use to travel long distances may be overrepresented in these results. This question found that:

- Recreational trips mostly use off-street paved trails and arterials without bicycle facilities (63% of trips).
- Three quarters of entertainment/social trips use residential streets, arterials with sharrows, or bicycle lanes as the primary facility (29%, 27% and 19% respectively). Shopping/errands trips show similar distribution (25%, 21%, and 17%).
- Commute trips use arterials with bicycle facilities - sharrows or bicycle lanes - more than any other trip types and nearly 75% of all trips are made on either these facilities or off-street trails. Commute trips also show the most even distribution among facility types.
- All in all, nearly 70% of respondents report using dedicated bicycle facilities (off-street trails, bicycle lanes, and sharrows) for commute trips and recreation trips, while only half of entertainment/social and shopping/errands trips use these facilities. Instead, respondents were 3 times more likely to report using residential streets for entertainment/social and shopping/errands trips than for commute or recreational trips.

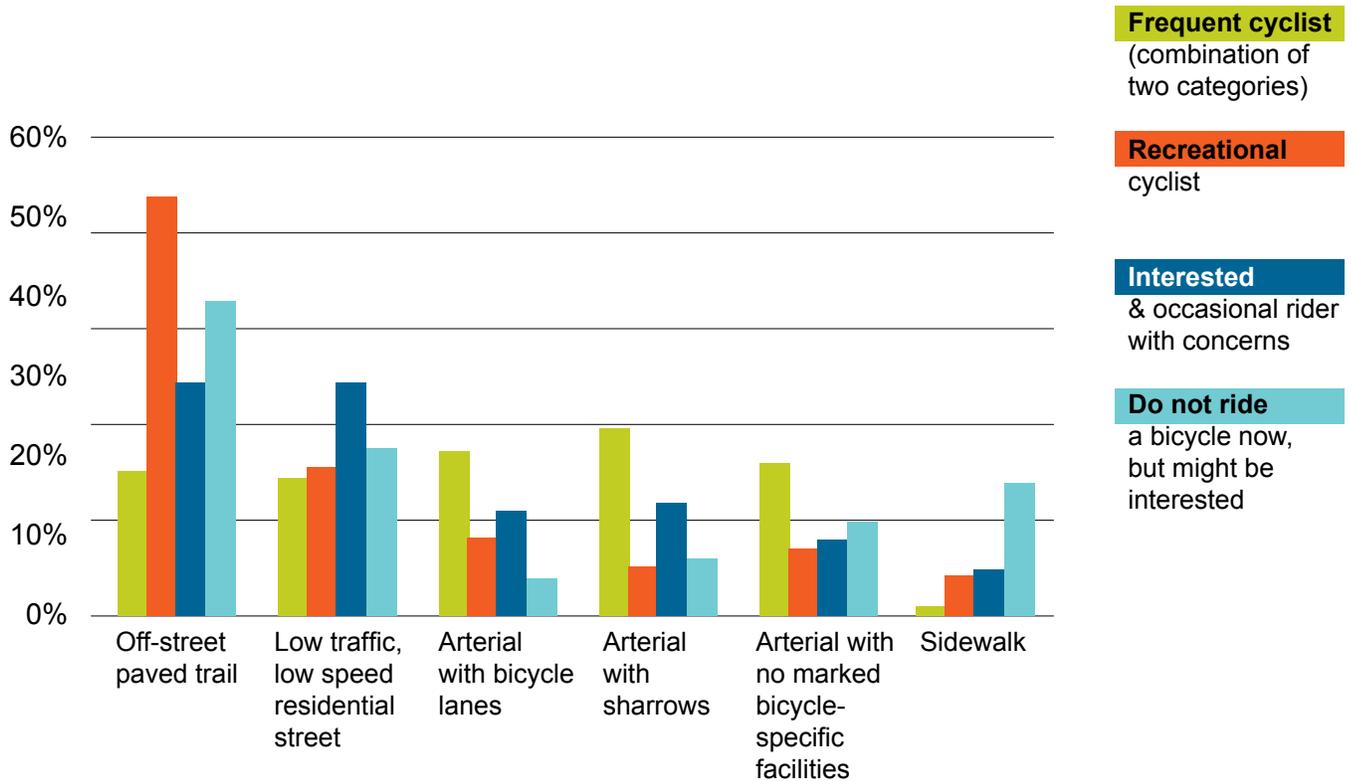




There were also some differences in how people made trips depending on what type of cyclist they identified as. As shown on the next page, frequent cyclists used arterial streets with bicycle lanes, sharrows, or with no facilities at all much more than those who are interested in riding a bicycle, but concerned, or people who do not currently ride. However, the fact that many of the people who reported not feeling safe or comfortable enough to ride a bicycle in the current conditions still reported riding on arterial roads with no bicycle facilities could suggest a few potential issues:

- Perhaps new riders use arterial roads because it is difficult to find bicycle-friendly alternatives to busy arterials using popular mapping tools, bicycle maps, or by navigating the signage and markings along the network.
- There may be areas where there are not currently enough alternatives, so people riding bikes are forced to use the arterial.
- Perhaps some people prefer to take the most direct or fastest route even if it is an arterial street without bicycle markings.





Even though the BMP online survey data is not statistically valid, it appears to show that new or occasional cyclists tend to ride mostly on trails and residential streets, and sometimes sidewalks. This contrasts somewhat with the statistically valid phone survey, which found that roughly 40% of residents who ride a bike report riding on neighborhood streets without bicycle lanes, 30% use arterial streets with bicycle lanes, and 24% use off-street trails.

**“The very worst thing is when you are in a bike lane that all of a sudden ends... Connectivity is important.”**

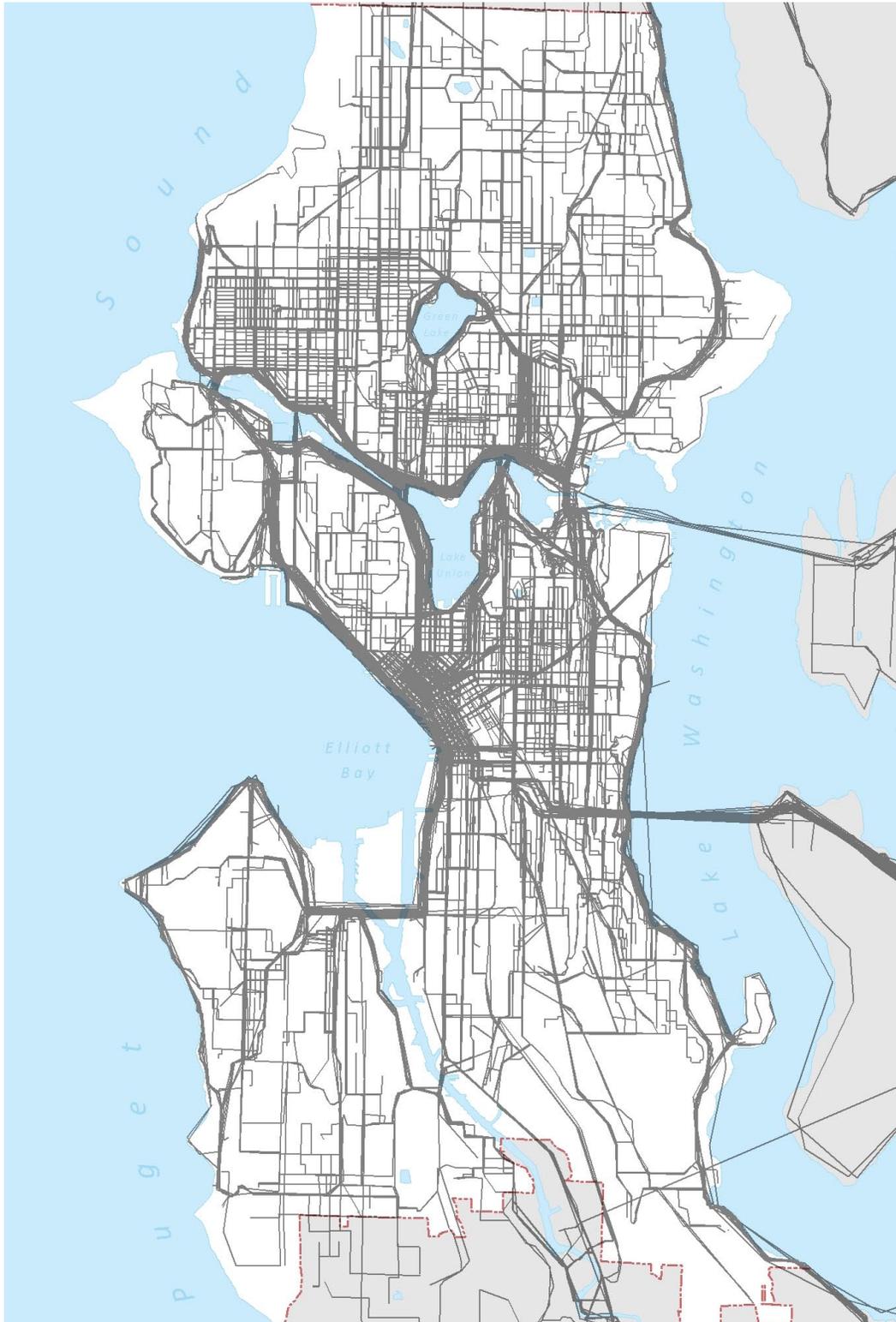
**- BMP Update online survey comment**



## WHAT SDOT HEARD

# WHERE do people currently ride?

The online mapping tool asked respondents about what streets and routes they currently use when riding a bicycle. This map (below) shows that people ride in many parts of the city, but especially in Downtown Seattle and on the off-street trail network.



The following streets were identified as streets that many respondents use for bicycle trips.

Street Name
BURKE GILMAN TRL
DEXTER AVE N
FREMONT AVE N
8TH AVE NW
EASTLAKE AVE E
ALASKAN WAY
NE RAVENNA BLVD
S JACKSON ST
ROOSEVELT WAY NE
WESTLAKE AVE N
N 34TH ST
PHINNEY AVE N
N NORTHLAKE WAY
STONE WAY N
PINE ST
2ND AVE
12TH AVE
NE PACIFIC ST
E PINE ST
4TH AVE
GREENWOOD AVE N
WESTLAKE EAST RDWY AVE N
BEACON AVE S
5TH AVE

**“Being able to safely bicycle to work, has made it possible for me to accept jobs and keep jobs.”**

**- BMP Update online survey comment**



# WHAT SDOT HEARD

Among these streets, SDOT also asked people to identify which ones they like riding on the most. This gives an idea of some of the most popular routes in terms of where people want to travel, as well as what some of the most popular streets are for getting there.

## Online Mapping Tool Response: What are the best places to ride?



This map shows several trends. For one, there are many more North/South lines identified than there are East/West. Many of the top ranked roadways run North/South in the North half of the city. Dexter Ave N is the most popular roadway for bicyclists in the city. In 2011, SDOT resurfaced Dexter Avenue N from Roy Street to the Fremont Bridge. The repaving project created an opportunity for SDOT to implement a “Complete Streets” approach to the roadway, which strives to improve conditions for all users of the street – including pedestrians, cyclists, transit, and those who live on the street. Cyclists benefit from many components of the project, including traffic calming effects, 6-foot buffered bicycle lanes, and bus islands that allow bicycles to continue unimpeded by buses pulling into stops.

The map also shows that more streets were selected in the North portion of the city than in the South. Additionally, there are no downtown streets in the top results, despite the fact that the previous map showed that many respondents do ride downtown. It could be that people who used the mapping tool were most familiar with streets in the north part of the city; the mapping tool was not able to capture zip codes. However, these results could also indicate that there needs to be greater investment in providing good bicycle facilities throughout the city, particularly in Southeast, South, Southwest, and Downtown Seattle.

A complete list of the most frequently selected roadways are shown below.

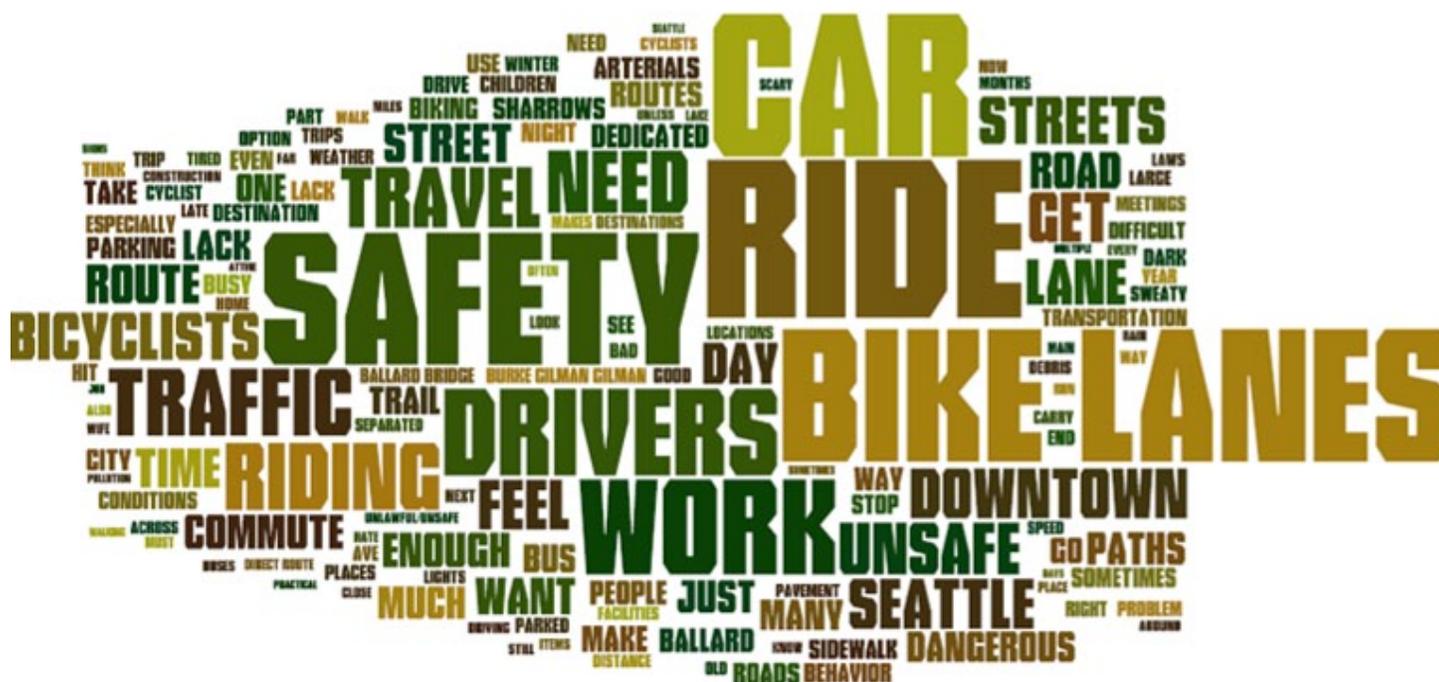
### Online Mapping Tool: Best streets to ride

Street Name
DEXTER AVE N
NE RAVENNA BLVD
8TH AVE NW
FREMONT AVE N
PHINNEY AVE N
12TH AVE
BURKE GILMAN TRL
GREENWOOD AVE N
STONE WAY N
LAKE WASHINGTON BLVD S
GALER ST
ROOSEVELT WAY NE
WESTLAKE AVE N
ALOHA ST
CROCKETT ST
M L KING JR WAY S
VALLEY ST
NE 65TH ST
6TH AVE NW
GARFIELD ST
EASTLAKE AVE E
DENNY WAY
E PINE ST
BROAD ST



## BARRIERS to riding a bicycle

For many people, the decision to ride a bicycle depends on a number of factors including the weather, time of day, trip purpose, and whether there is a good route to get where they need to go. Some of these themes emerged throughout the public engagement process. For example, the word cloud below was generated directly from the words and phrases that people used the most in the BMP online survey when asked about the reasons they may not ride a bicycle. Safety is the primary issue that people mentioned. Safety concerns included wanting improved safety in interactions with other road users, the desire to travel with children, poor pavement conditions, challenging connections to and within Downtown Seattle, concern about the safety of sharrows and bicycle lanes in the door zone, and specific locations such as the Ballard Bridge and Rainier Avenue. Some people also mentioned other types of barriers to riding a bike, such as the lack of end-of-trip facilities (showers and lockers for changing before work), weather conditions, or the need to travel quickly to their destination.



When asked to choose among several specific options, BMP online survey respondents listed weather, travel time, unsafe motorist behavior, and having too many things to carry as some of the top barriers to riding a bike, although other issues were not far behind (See page 26). These results are similar to what the phone survey found. Although the phone survey had fewer options, the top barrier was also weather, followed closely by “Don’t feel safe riding”, “Not that interested in riding more often” and “The hilly terrain”.



### Online survey response: Barriers to bicycling

Weather	55%
Travel time/distance to my destination	46%
Unlawful/unsafe motorist behavior	36%
I have too many things to carry	35%
Inadequate bicycle facilities/gaps in the bicycle network	32%
Street pavement conditions	30%
Hills (topography)	28%
I do not feel safe riding a bike	26%
Lack of availability of end-of-trip facilities (secure bicycle parking, showers/changing rooms at my destination)	20%
Less convenient than other options	18%
Other, please specify	14%
Difficult connections to transit, not enough bicycle racks on buses, no room for my bicycle on the train	13%
I travel with small children	11%
Crime	5%

There were some differences in how people rated these barriers depending on their characteristics. For example women were more likely than men to rank “Hills” and “Do not feel safe riding a bike” as barriers. Riders who described themselves as “interested, but concerned” listed “Do not feel safe riding a bike” as the number one barrier to cycling and another safety barrier, “Unlawful/unsafe motorist behavior” as the third most important barrier. These cyclists listed weather and hills as the second and fourth most important barriers, respectively. People who do not currently ride at all said that convenience was the number one barrier, though weather, hills, and safety were also top responses.

## PROBLEM locations

Other barriers to riding a bike exist where the current bicycle network is inadequate, missing, or lacking connectivity. SDOT heard comments from people who live all over the city about the most problematic locations in their neighborhood or bicycling experience. The online mapping tool asked people to show exactly where they think the worst places to ride a bike are – both along the roadway and at specific intersections and crossings.

The top locations identified in the online mapping tool are shown on page 28. The top crossing location barrier was the Ballard Bridge, which was also referenced in numerous comments. Other key locations identified for crossing improvements included:

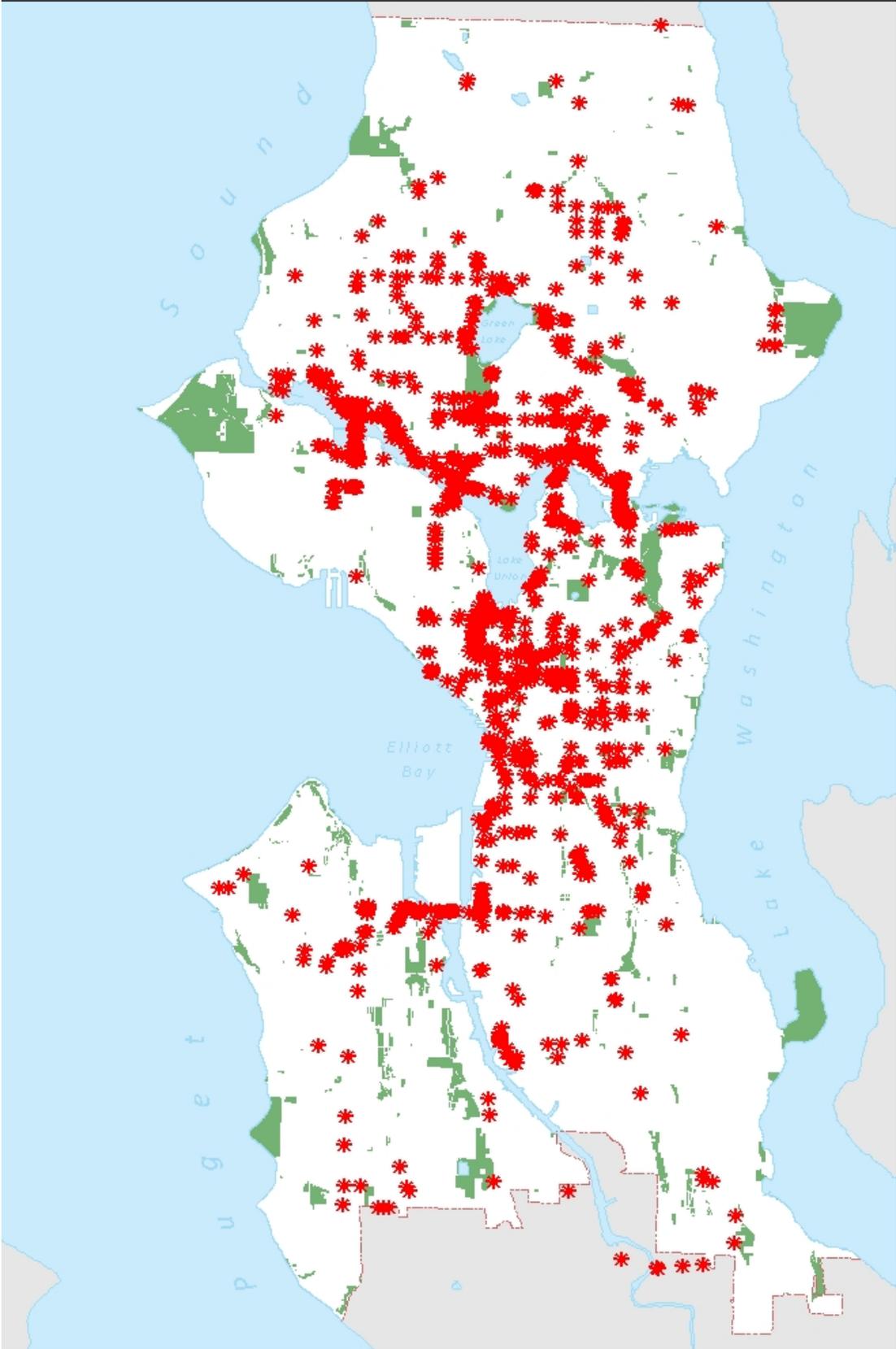
- Broad St & Valley St
- Stone Way N and N 34th St (where the Burke-Gilman Trail crosses Stone Way N)
- Montlake Boulevard E (where SR-520 crosses Montlake Boulevard)
- 24th Ave NW & NW Market St
- Eastlake Ave E & Fuhrman Ave E (South end of the University Bridge)
- Eastlake Ave E & Harvard Ave E
- 12th Ave & E Madison
- 12th Ave & E Jefferson St

**“Seattle has done an excellent job of improving conditions for cyclists in the last 10 years. GREAT WORK! I urge city officials to please concentrate efforts to close the small gaps that exist many places, where a bike lane suddenly ends on a busy arterial, and to please fix the pavement defects in bike lanes where they present more hazard than elsewhere.”**

**- BMP Update online survey comment**



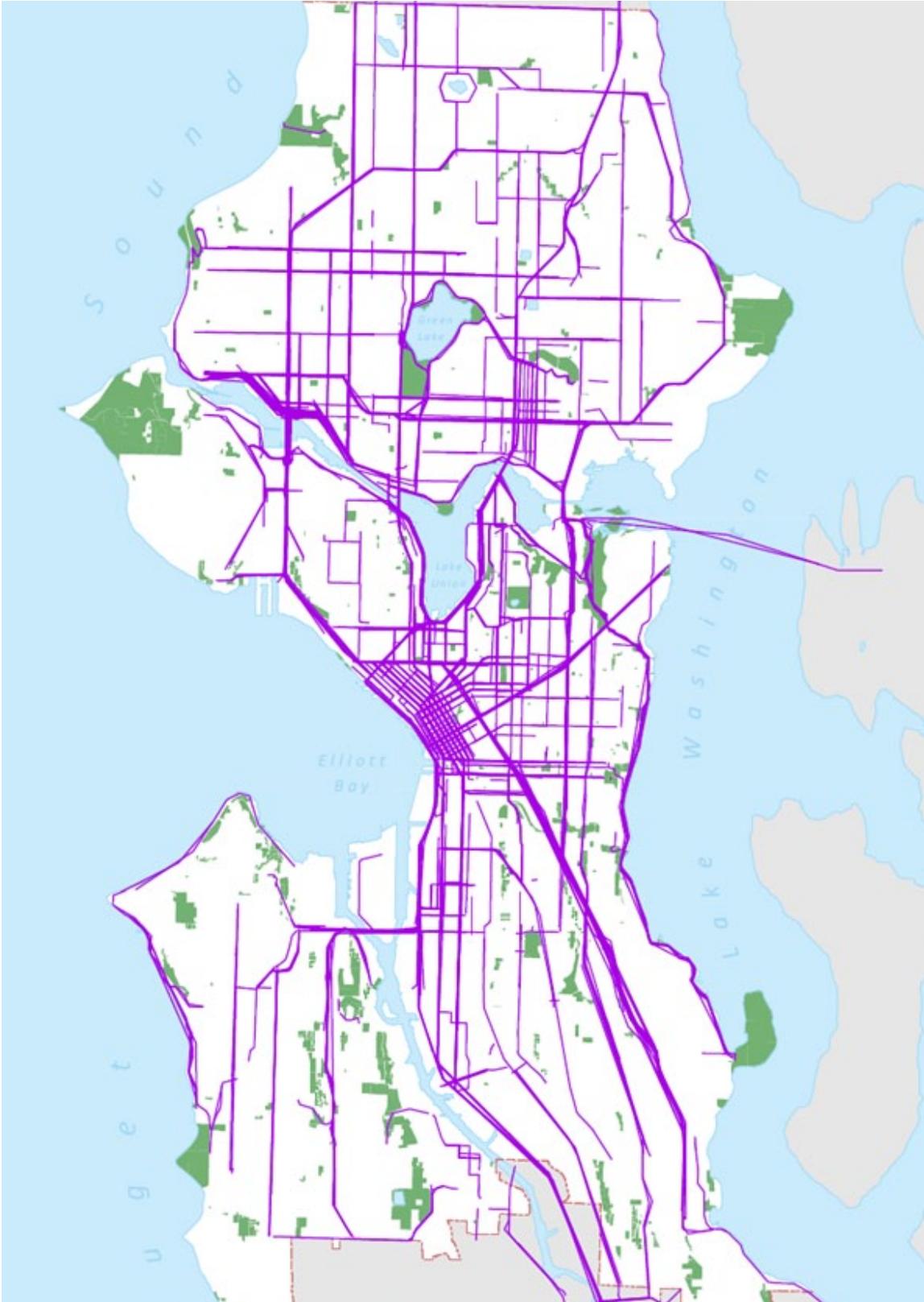
Online Mapping Tool Response: Crossing Improvements



## WHAT SDOT HEARD

Another question in the online mapping tool asked where the worst streets to ride a bike are. The thick purple lines show that several corridors were frequently rated as bad places to ride:

### Online Mapping Tool Response: Map of worst streets to ride



This information does highlight some of the most challenging connections around the city. Many of the lines in this map show the difficulty in moving across town on a bicycle. Rainier Avenue South had the most responses, but other cross-town connections also ranked highly. Many of the comments SDOT received at public events and meetings highlighted these same locations as areas that should be a high priority for safe bicycle facilities in the future.

### Online Mapping Tool Response: Worst streets to ride

Street Name
RAINIER AVE S
15TH AVE NW
DENNY WAY
NE 45TH ST
SHILSHOLE AVE NW
2ND AVE
15TH AVE W
NW MARKET ST
3RD AVE NW
E MADISON ST
M L KING JR WAY S
S JACKSON ST
EASTLAKE AVE E
4TH AVE S
WESTLAKE AVE N
ROOSEVELT WAY NE
MADISON ST
STEWART ST
24TH AVE E
BOREN AVE
N 45TH ST
1ST AVE S
4TH AVE
5TH AVE

Some of the findings that emerge from these figures are that poor quality streets for biking include:

- Routes through South/Southeast Seattle including Rainier Ave S and MLK Jr Way S
- Major East/West routes such as NE/N 45th, Denny Way, E Madison, and S Jackson
- Pinch points and crucial connections such as the Ballard Bridge (15th Ave NW/W) and the Missing Link of the Burke-Gilman Trail/Shilshole Ave NW, and Eastlake
- Downtown Seattle
  - North/South streets including 2nd Ave, 4th Ave, and 5th Ave
  - Major connections from Downtown to other neighborhoods including Westlake, Stewart, Boren, 1st Ave S





## BARRIERS beyond infrastructure

In addition to information about barriers from an infrastructure perspective, it is clear that Seattle faces some challenging hurdles that are not directly related to the infrastructure, including interaction between modes, steep hills, Pacific Northwest weather, and even access to a working bicycle.

**Topography and Weather:** Both the BMP online survey and the phone survey found that weather was the number one barrier to bicycling. Seattle has a cold and rainy climate for much of the year – with cool temperatures and wet weather persisting even in summer months. However, some of the countries with the highest cycling rates in the world, like Denmark and the Netherlands, have even colder weather and snowier winters than Seattle does. What they do not have though, is steep hills in addition to a challenging climate.

Seattle is a very hilly city, which means that riding a bike in some parts of the city requires physical ability and, for many people, a bicycle that is equipped with enough gears to handle the hills. Topography ranked especially high as a barrier for people who either do not ride or only ride occasionally. Some potential ways to overcome this issue may include focused planning efforts on finding flat routes or on promotion of electric bicycles. SDOT is currently working on a short paper with ideas for how to surmount the Seattle topography challenge.

**Bicycle Access:** Another issue that appears quite significant is one of the findings from the phone survey, that over half (60%) of Seattleites do not have access to a working bicycle. Research has shown that, not surprisingly, bicycle access is a key factor in bicycle mode share. The 2012 BMP will need to consider ways to address this issue through partnerships with active non-profit organizations in the region, bike sharing programs, and other innovative solutions.

**Safety and Perceived Safety:** As mentioned previously, safety was perhaps the most important theme SDOT heard throughout the public engagement process. “Do not feel safe riding a bike” was the second most important barrier to bicycling in the phone survey (behind weather) and the most important factor in the BMP online survey for people who are interested in bicycling but have some concerns. Safety includes components of infrastructure and design, as well as behavior of other roadway users. The comments from the BMP online survey and at meetings highlighted many of the safety concerns people have, including:



Risk of being hit by a car, distracted driving, and other driver behavior



Bicycle lanes that are in the door zone (adjacent to parked cars)



Unclear rules regarding sharing the road & uncertainty surrounding sharrows



Dangerous behavior on the part of bicyclists



Safety concerns about riding a bicycle with children



Pavement condition



Missing pieces of the trail network

Some of the comments included suggestions for how to address these concerns including increased education, outreach, and enforcement as well as different types of facilities that may improve safety. These suggestions and comments are discussed in the following sections.

**“Education of all road users, enforcement of road laws, and meaningful consequences to dangerous drivers (loss of license, fines, prison) would create a safer city for all of us.”**

**- BMP Update online survey comment**



# WHAT would people like to see in the future?

All barriers aside, SDOT heard many comments indicating that people are excited about making riding a bike in Seattle easier and safer in the future. This section provides an overview of what people hope to see from the updated Bicycle Master Plan, including programs, infrastructure, and specific locations for improvements.

**“Great work. Keep it up. Educate more people about the ease of bicycling and provide more education for businesses and residents about how biking really works well to make stronger people and communities.”**

**- BMP Update online survey comment**

# WHERE do people want to ride in the city?

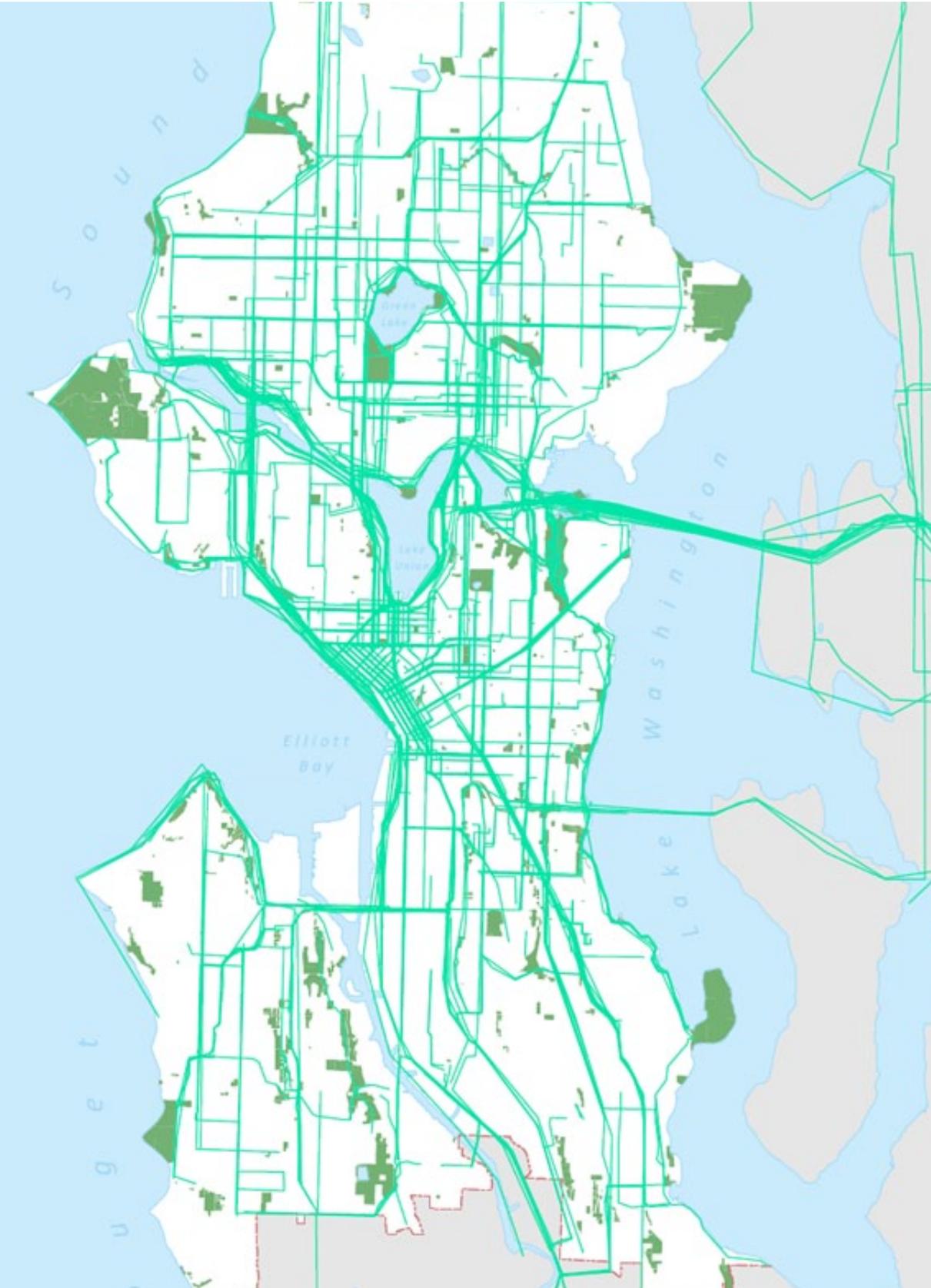
SDOT staff heard many comments at public meetings, events, and through the online survey tools about specific areas and destinations where people would like to ride their bikes. One of the questions in the online mapping tool asked where people would like to ride, but currently do not.

The map, on page 34, is a bit more difficult to interpret than the previous ones – a place that people would like to ride, but currently do not, could be one several types of street. It could be a street that people know or have heard is a great place to ride a bicycle, but they do not live nearby or have occasion to use it. It could also indicate a particular street that people would like to ride on, but do not currently because there is not a bicycle facility, they do not feel safe, the pavement quality is poor, or any number of other issues. A third possibility is that people have different preferences about good streets to ride a bicycle on – for example despite the large number of comments SDOT received about how much people like the new Dexter Ave N facility, there were also some comments from people who do not like it.

The table, on page 35, shows the mixture of responses to this question, as it includes roadways that were mentioned as the best to ride on (Dexter Ave N, Westlake Ave N, Broad St), a number of streets that were on the worst to ride list (Rainier Ave S, MLK Jr Way S, Eastlake, and others), and some that have not yet appeared in any of the other responses, such as Airport Way S and Alaskan Way.



**Online Mapping Tool Response: Where would you like to ride, but currently do not?**



# WHAT SDOT HEARD

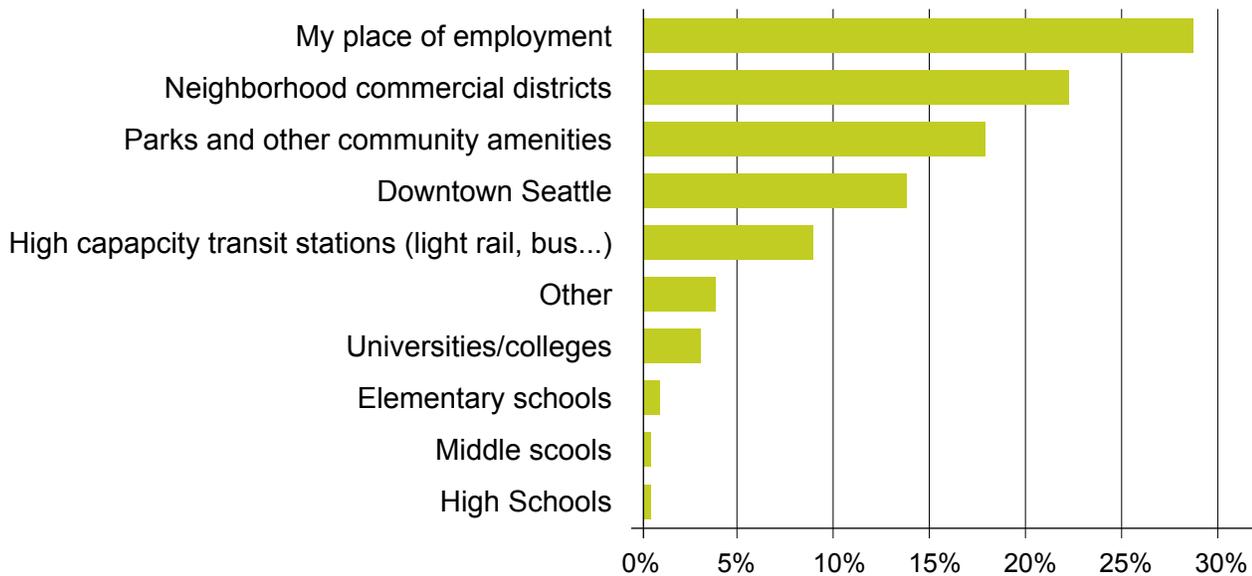
Online Mapping Tool: Streets people would like to, but currently do not ride on

Street Name
RAINIER AVE S
DENNY WAY
WESTLAKE AVE N
M L KING JR WAY S
15TH AVE W
AIRPORT WAY S
15TH AVE NW
E MADISON ST
EASTLAKE AVE E
NE 65TH ST
WESTLAKE EAST RDWY AVE N
SHILSHOLE AVE NW
2ND AVE
MERCER ST
1ST AVE S
ALASKAN WAY
BROAD ST
4TH AVE
FAIRVIEW AVE N
BURKE GILMAN TRL
ROOSEVELT WAY NE
NW MARKET ST
DEXTER AVE N

The BMP online survey also asked people to list the destinations that they would most like to bicycle to. These findings should be read carefully, since the BMP online survey response did not include a population that is as diverse as the City of Seattle as a whole, including relatively few young people and few non-cyclists.

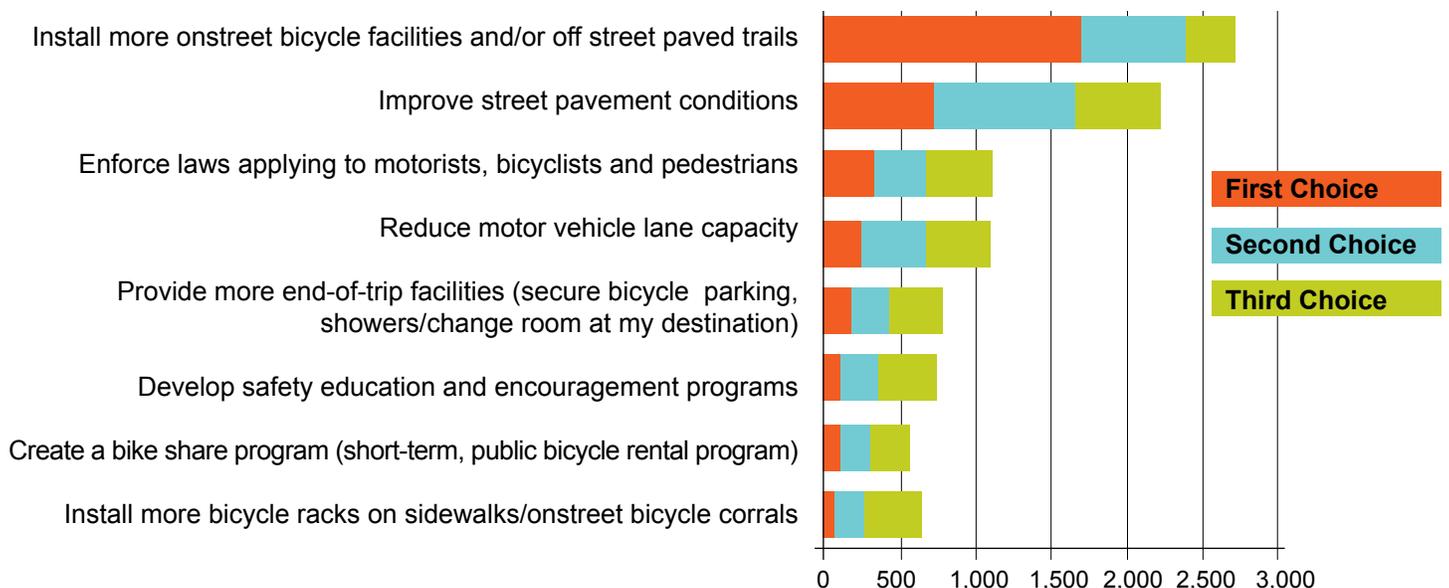


## Online Survey Response: Top Ranked Destinations



## WHAT types of priorities do people want to see from the updated BMP?

The BMP online survey asked people to rank several different types of bicycle-related priorities with respect to what would do the most to encourage bicycling in Seattle. The top priority was “install more on-street bicycle facilities and/or off-street paved trails,” followed by “improve street pavement conditions”, “enforce laws applying to motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians”, and “reduce vehicle lane capacity”. These priorities align closely with what SDOT staff heard through e-mails and comments throughout the public engagement process.





A similar question asked specifically about the types of infrastructure and bicycle facility types that people would like to see. Again, it is important to remember that these responses do not necessarily reflect the views of all Seattleites, but just of those who took the BMP online survey. Of these, the top ranked facilities for increased investment were on-street separated bicycle facilities (such as cycle tracks or buffered bicycle lanes), and off-street paved trails. Bicycle lanes, pavement conditions, and neighborhood greenways all also ranked highly in the BMP online survey.

Generally speaking, comments throughout the process emphasized the desire for bicycle facilities – of whatever type – that are safe enough for all riders, or prospective riders, from ages 8 to 80 and of all abilities. This could, and likely will, include a combination of neighborhood greenways on residential streets, on-street separated bicycle facilities such as buffered bicycle lanes and cycle tracks, and continued development of the off-street paved trail network.



# WHAT are the most important priorities and programs?

In addition to the quantitative results from the BMP online survey, the nearly 1,500 comments from the online survey and comments received by email or at public events addressed a range of issues, from some who feel that Seattle already has too many bicycle facilities, to others who would like to see the city further prioritize bicycling. A sample of some of these comments is provided below:

**“When thinking about bicycle facilities, think about making it easy and safe for people to go where they go most: schools, grocery stores, neighborhood commercial districts and transit hubs. That means not only making it safe to get there, but making it easy to lock up your bike once you’re there, find the appropriate bike route (way-finding) and connect to transit.”**

**“If biking wants to be taken seriously by drivers, the community has to mature to a similar level as the drivers. I tell rogue bikers, “Every biker is an ambassador for all bikers” meaning individual actions become the perception of the group. I love riding, I hate the animosity and hostility between drivers and bikers.”**

**“I’d like to see more refinement and enforcement of the bicycle, traffic, and pedestrian laws for EVERYONE. Coming to a mutual understanding of what is proper etiquette and acceptable behavior for all parties in a traffic situation is essential to stopping the infighting and finger-pointing. Fair enforcement or at least educational warning stops of both cars and bikes is also important.”**



WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

# NEXT STEPS



The lessons from the first phase of public engagement for the BMP update will be useful for directing future stages of engagement surrounding the update. For example, analysis of who took the online survey shows that it continues to be challenging to involve people who do not currently ride a bike very often or those who do not ride at all. SDOT will also need to continue efforts to reach out to groups that were underrepresented in the process thus far, including women, youth, people over the age 65, and diverse racial and cultural groups.

The second phase of public involvement will occur in the fall after the project team produces plan update recommendations, including: an update of the policy framework, a draft update of the bicycle network map, and implementation strategies. The engagement period will include city-wide open houses/public meetings gather feedback on the proposed network.

Lastly, the third and final phase of broad public engagement will consist of public comment on the entire draft plan update. Throughout the update process, project team staff will be attending various events and standing meetings, including monthly SBAB meetings, to update the public on the status of the project, encourage people to provide input, and build understanding about the individual and community benefits of bicycling.



# APPENDIX E: List of Public Outreach Events

APPENDIX A: Survey questions

APPENDIX B: Survey results

APPENDIX C: Response by Zip Code

APPENDIX D: BMP Online Survey Comments

APPENDIX E: List/calendar of outreach events

APPENDIX F: SBAB Bikeability Reports



contact information:

[http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/  
bikemaster.htm](http://www.seattle.gov/transportation/bikemaster.htm)

[bmpupdate@seattle.gov](mailto:bmpupdate@seattle.gov)

