



CYCLING EQUITY: Barriers to Bike Access and Use in Communities of Color

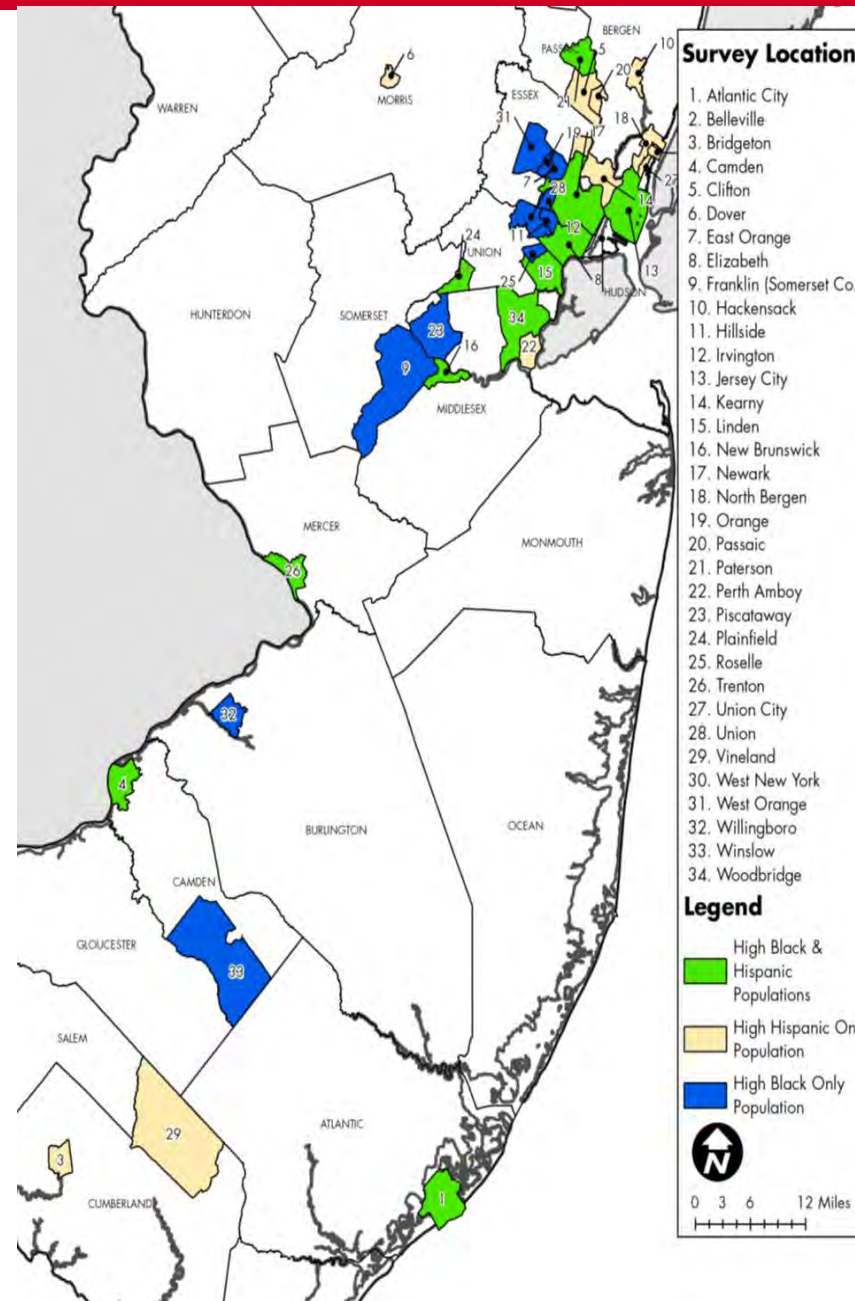
Charles T. Brown, MPA

National Association of City Transportation Officials (NACTO) Webinar

August 15, 2017

Research Purpose, Questions and Methodology

- **Purpose**
 - Ascertain barriers to and identify solutions to bicycle use among Blacks and Hispanics
- **Research Questions**
 1. Why do Blacks and Hispanics choose not to bicycle?
 2. What prevents current B-H's from choosing to bicycle more?
 3. What can be done to encourage all of them to bicycle more often?
- **Methodology/Data Collection**
 - Literature Review
 - Two focus groups (\$50 cash incentive)
 - Intercept surveys in 34 towns
 - Two surveys (bicyclists & non-bicyclists)



About the Respondents

- **Demographic Characteristics of Survey Respondents**
 - 2,061 intercept surveys collected
 - 38% Black/African-American, 32% Hispanic/Latino, 16% White, 3% Asian, 4% Biracial
 - Persons in age group 18 – 24 years old made up the largest share of respondents (21%)
 - 54% percent of respondents were males
 - The educational attainment of the respondents is lower than the population of New Jersey as a whole but comparable to the population residing within the study area (i.e., 34 towns)
 - The respondents are poorer than the population within the study area and New Jersey as a whole
 - 80% of households have two or more adults present
 - 49% of households have no children present
 - More than one-quarter (27%) of households reported not having bicycles present
 - Respondents reported having few motor vehicles available in their households than those in the study area and NJ as a whole



Country of Origin

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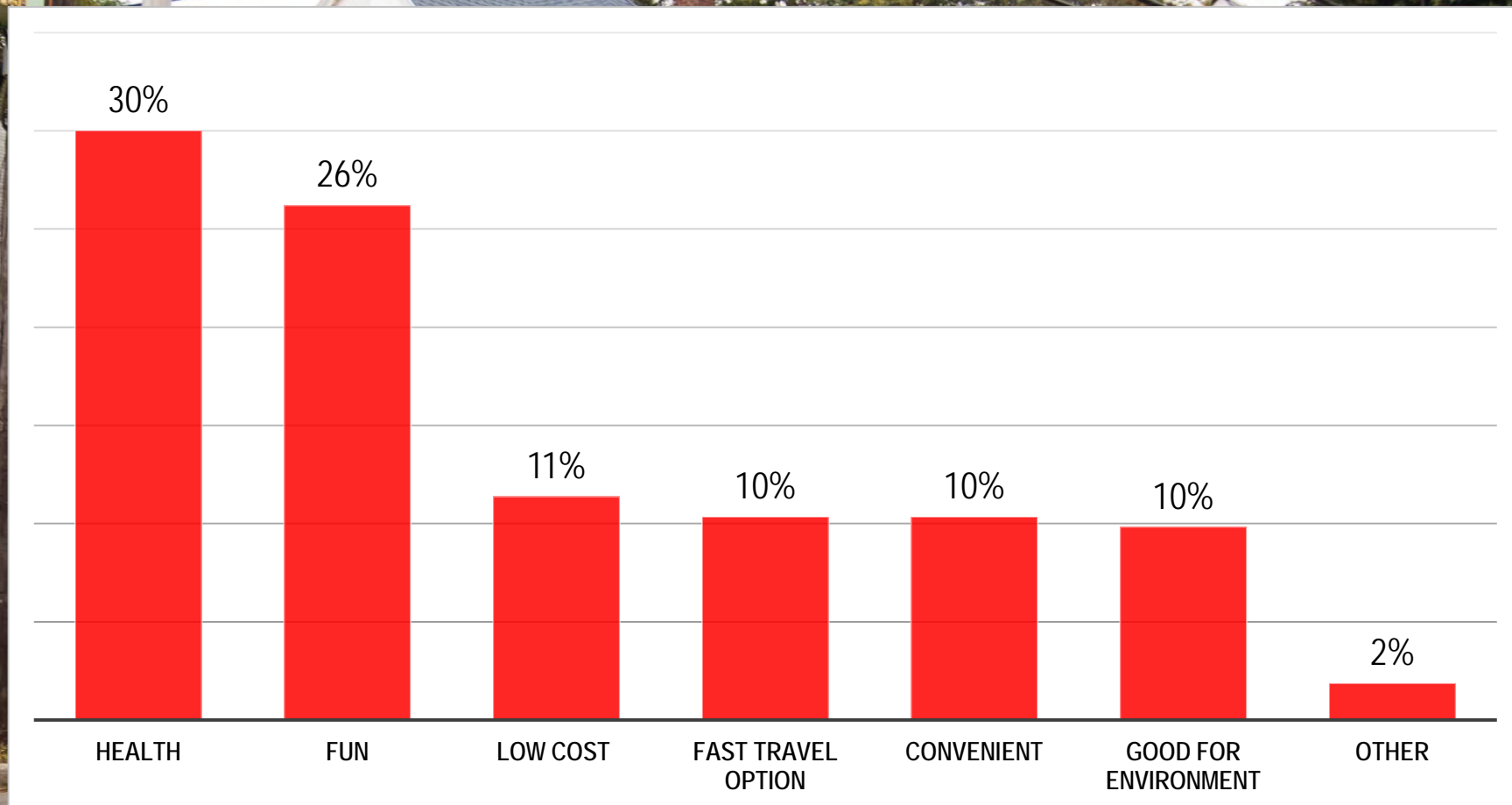
MAJOR TAKEAWAY: Nearly 1 in 4 (21%) spent their formative years outside the US.



Select Results from Questions Unique
to the Bicyclist Survey

Bicyclists – Reasons for Cycling

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MAJOR TAKEAWAYS: The majority (56%) bicycle to be **HEALTHIER** and to have **FUN**.

Bicyclists – Locations to Bicycle to in their Neighborhoods



MAJOR TAKEAWAYS: Nearly 1 in 4 (22%) feel they can safely bike to local parks or trails from their homes.

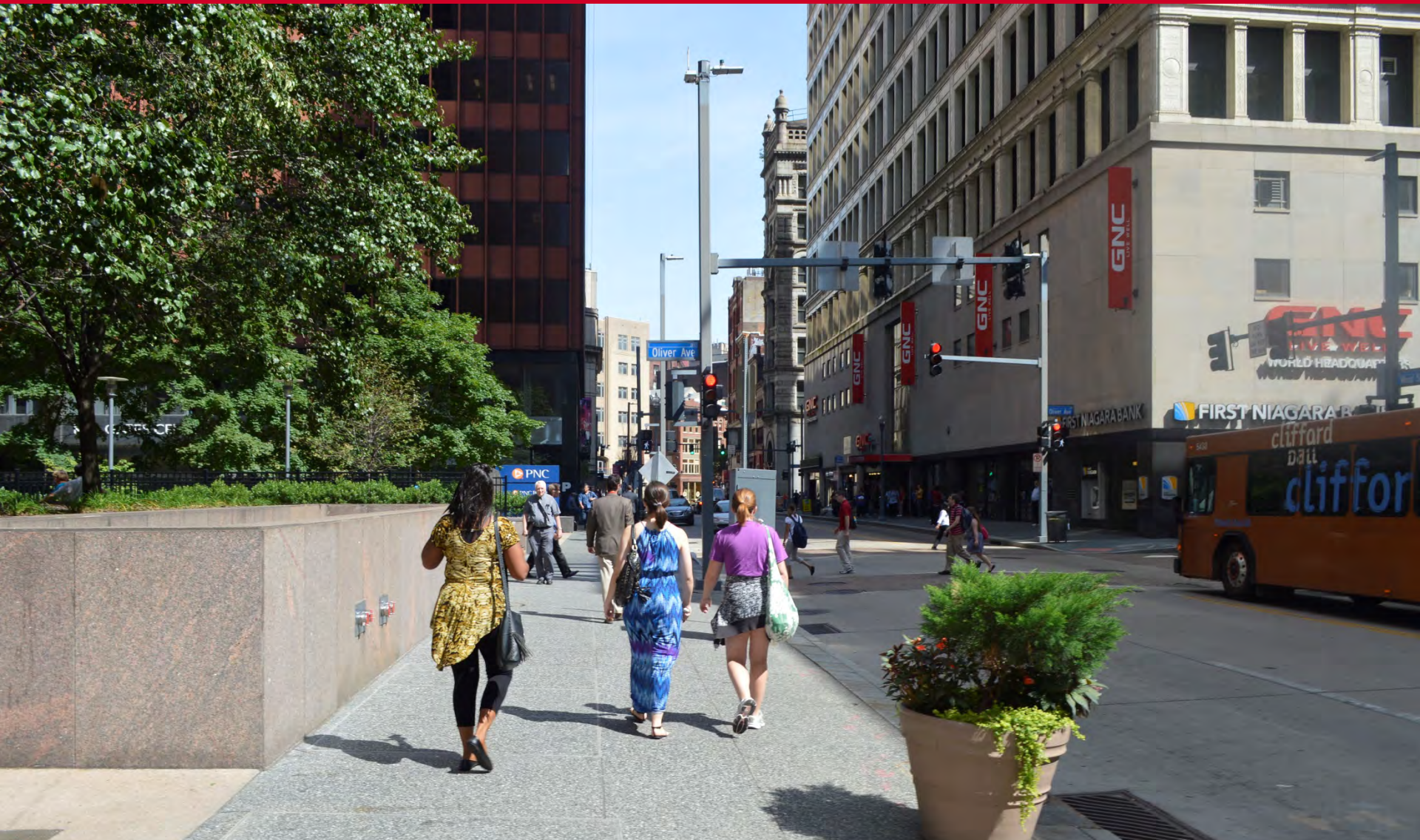


MAJOR TAKEAWAYS: An overwhelming majority (93%) are not active in bicycle clubs/organizations.



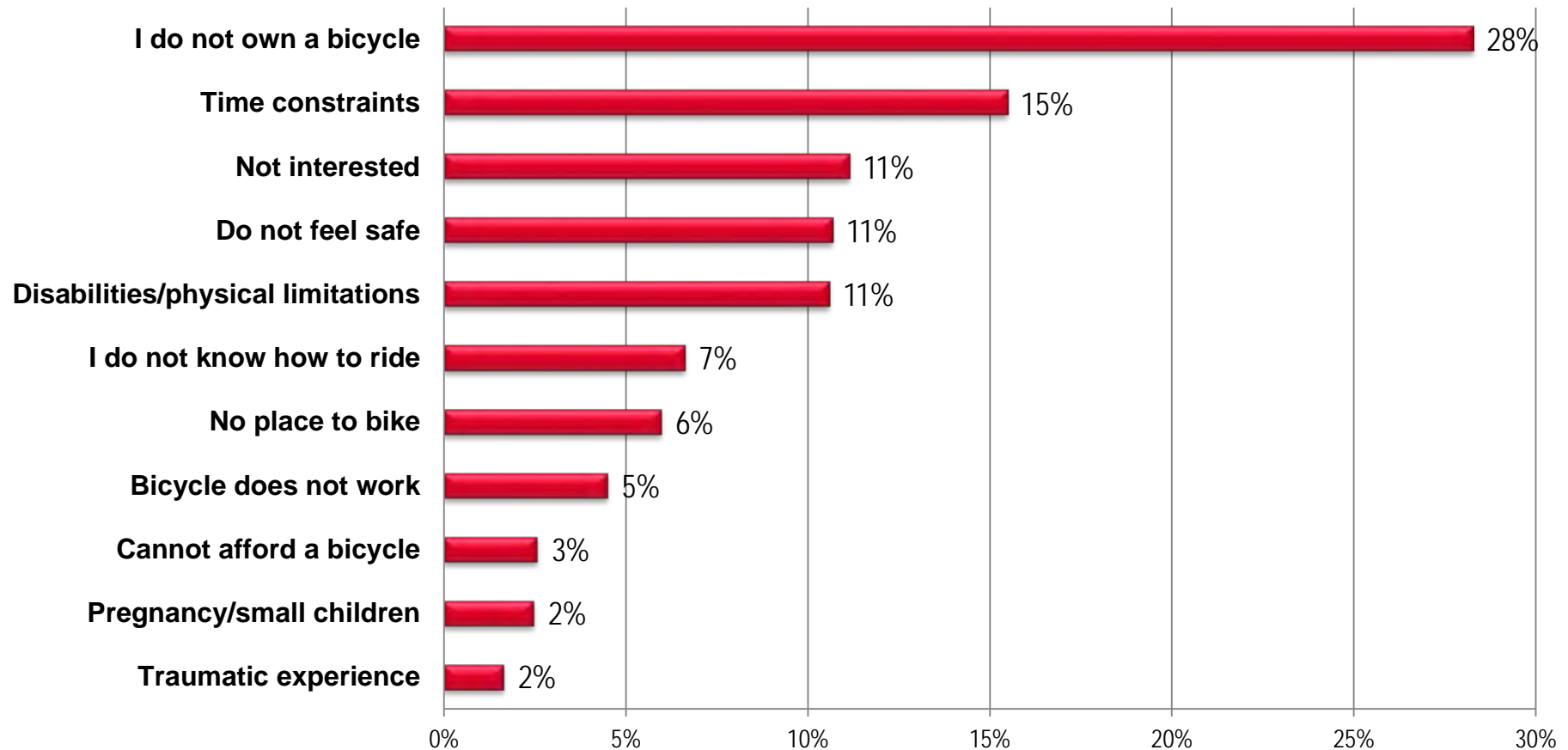
Select Results from Questions Unique
to the Bicyclist Survey

Non-Bicyclists – Ability and Interest



MAJOR TAKEAWAYS: Majority (84%) know how to bicycle, and more women and Hispanic respondents are interested in learning than their counterparts.

Non-Bicyclists – Reasons for not Cycling



MAJOR TAKEAWAYS: More than one-quarter (28%) do not own a bicycle and 11% don't feel safe.

Non-Bicyclists – Negative Bicycle Experiences



MAJOR TAKEAWAYS: More than one-quarter reported having had a negative bicycling experience and a sizable minority stated that it limits how often they choose to cycle.



Questions Identical in Both Surveys

Survey Findings: Cost and Maintenance



MAJOR TAKEAWAYS:

- More than one-quarter (28%) of all respondents feel that a bicycle is too expensive to purchase and maintain.



Survey Findings: Bike Share Programs

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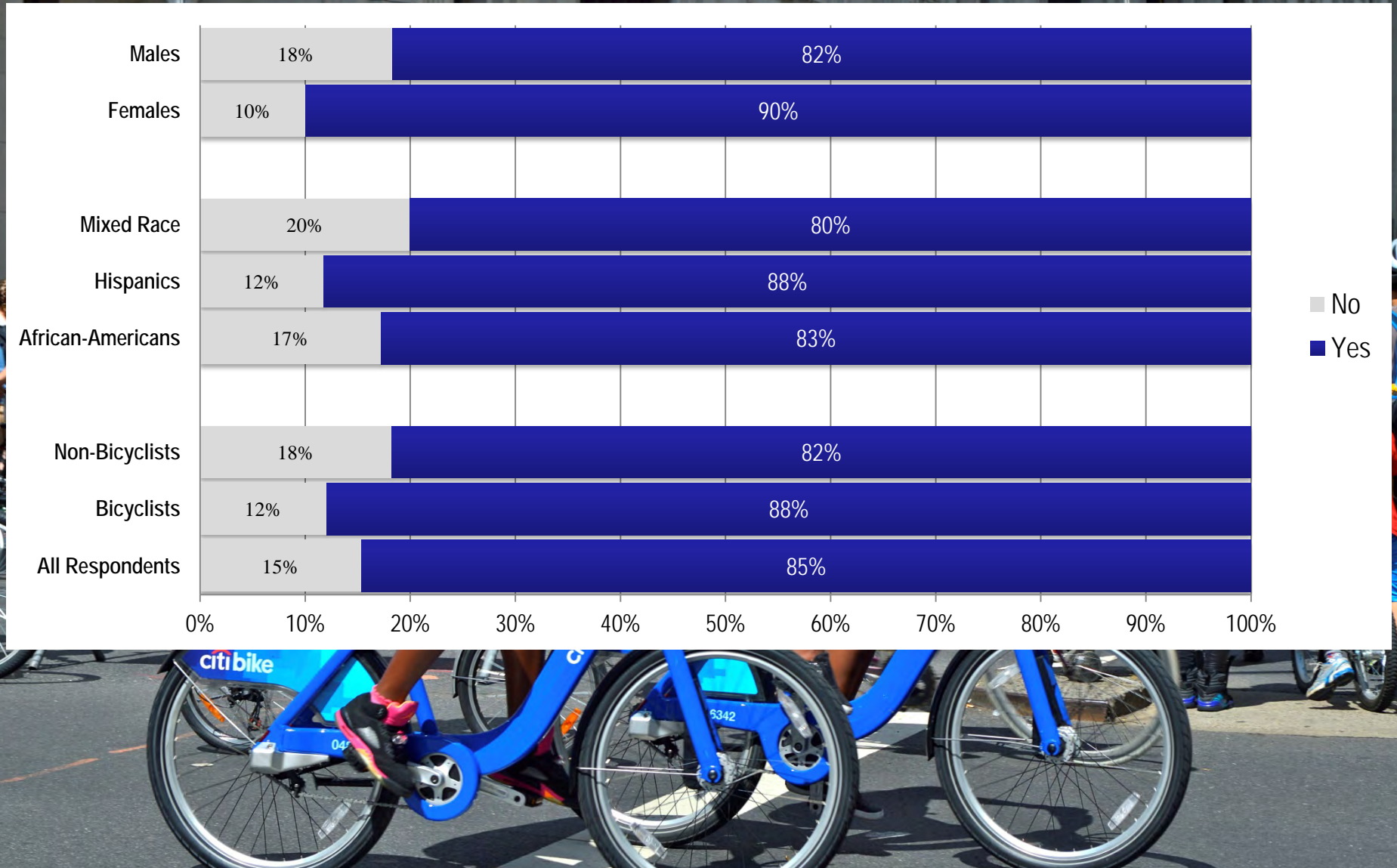


MAJOR TAKEAWAYS: The majority of all respondents (54%) were not aware of CitiBike (NYC) or Indego (Philadelphia).



Survey Findings: Bike Share Programs

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MAJOR TAKEAWAYS: Overwhelming majority (85%) stated they would use bicycle share.

Survey Findings: Who Bicycles?

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MAJOR TAKEAWAYS: The majority of all respondents (60%) believe bicycling is done by the middle class; however, more than one-quarter (29%) believe it is done by the poor.

Survey Findings: Access to Political Power



Survey Findings: Access to Political Power

MAJOR TAKEAWAYS:

- Majority (56%) of all respondents believe that it is unlikely that government would do so.



Survey Findings: Government Support and Investment



MAJOR TAKEAWAYS:

- Majority (63%) of all respondents do not feel their government supports and invests in cycling.

Survey Findings: Bike Lanes



MAJOR TAKEAWAYS:

- Nearly 8 out of every ten respondents stated they would like a bike lane on their street.

Survey Findings: Safe Bicycle Storage

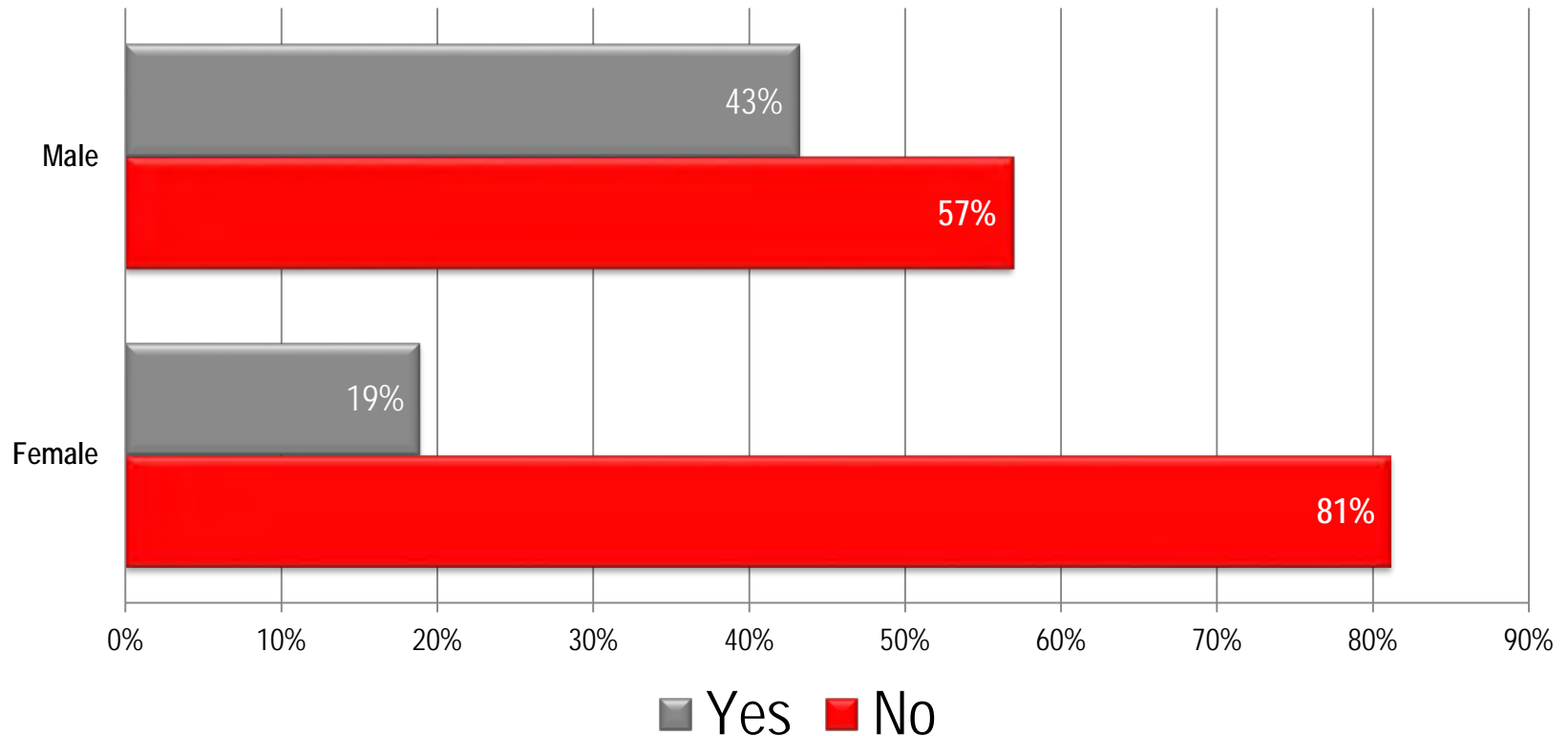


MAJOR TAKEAWAYS:

- Less than 1 out of 4 non-bicyclists reported having a safe place to store their bicycles, versus 9 out of 10 bicyclists.

Survey Findings: Bicycle Theft

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MAJOR TAKEAWAY:

- One-third of all respondents reported being victims of bike theft.
- 43% of males reported being victims; males reported being victimized more than **TWICE** as much of females.



MAJOR TAKEAWAYS:

- The majority of all respondents (54%) do not feel that children are safe from traffic when bicycling in their neighborhoods.

Survey Findings: Professional Bicycle Training



MAJOR TAKEAWAYS:

- A majority of all participants (90%) have not received professional bicycle training.

Survey Findings: Perceived Police Harassment

MAJOR TAKEAWAYS:

- More than 1 out of every ten respondents (13%) reported being unfairly stopped by a police officer.
- Males reported being stopped at a rate 7x than that of females.



Survey Findings: Perceived Barriers to Cycling

	All Respondents		Bicyclists		Non-Bicyclists	
Variables	%	Ranking	%	Ranking	%	Ranking
Fear of traffic collision	58%	1	48%	1	68%	1
Fear of robbery/assault	30%	2	29%	2	30%	2
Fear of being profiled by the police	14%	5	16%	5	13%	5
Fear of verbal harassment	10%	7	8%	7	12%	5
Fear of being stranded with broken bicycle	20%	4	18%	4	22%	4
Cost of bicycle maintenance	11%	6	9%	7	13%	5
Pavement Condition	26%	3	25%	3	27%	3
Pregnancy/small children	9%	7	8%	8	9%	6

Survey Findings: Perceived Barriers to Cycling



EDUCATION

Fear: A Silent Barrier to Bicycling in Black and Hispanic Communities

BY CHARLES BROWN, MPA

Should transportation professionals be more concerned about the personal safety of cyclists in Black and Hispanic Communities? At the Alan M. Voorhees Transportation Center (VTC), the fear of being robbed and assaulted while bicycling ranked as the number two barrier to bicycling, second only to the fear of a traffic collision in our most recent study of bicycle access and usage among Blacks and Hispanics in thirty-four neighborhoods throughout New Jersey (see Table 1).

While the fear of a traffic collision does not come as a surprise—New Jersey cycling deaths are on a rise and the state has been designated a Pedestrian-Bicycle Focus State by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)—Blacks and Hispanics' collective fear of being robbed or assaulted while cycling is an eye-opener, a lightning bolt of revelation.¹ Considering the perceived difficulty in robbing and assaulting a cyclist, as opposed to a pedestrian who is moving at a much slower pace, this timely revelation has more to do with the overall ranking than the known fact that many Blacks and Hispanics reside in locations with disproportionate amounts of crime.

With only a few exceptions, the overall majority of the Blacks and Hispanics that responded to our intercept surveys reside in the six "Major Urban" centers and the "Urban 15" municipalities in New Jersey, as classified by the New Jersey State Police. During the period of 2005–2014, these major urban centers accounted for 39 percent of all violent crime. Similarly, the majority of all murders occurred in the Urban 15 municipalities, along with 27 percent of all purse snatching, 69 percent of highway robberies, and 11 percent of bicycle theft.²

Since "crime prevention is everybody's business," the personal safety of Blacks and Hispanics cyclists can no longer be ignored or dismissed by transportation professionals as simply a police issue.³ Transportation professionals must be more concerned about the personal safety of bicyclists in Black and Hispanic communities, and here is why.

Transportation professionals are responsible for the mobility and safety needs of all road users. As evident on the ITE website, "The Institute of Transportation Engineers serves as an international educational and scientific association of transportation professionals who are responsible for meeting mobility and safety needs." Historically, however, it can be argued that when it comes to the needs of all road users, transportation professionals have prioritized the mobility and safety needs of vehicles over the needs

of bicyclists and pedestrians during an era in which vehicles have dominated roadways. There can be reluctance by municipal and county engineers to embrace and support complete streets policy adoption and implementation, even though doing so would be the first step towards mobility and safety for all road users, especially in traditionally underserved communities.

Crash statistics fragment the reality and duality of safety. Too often design preferences and solutions are traffic safety-rich and personal safety-bankrupt. This is due, in part, to transportation professionals' reliance on crash statistics to ascertain the safety of a particular roadway or corridor. The issue with this often-used sole approach is that absent of crime statistics, transportation professionals are fragmenting the reality and duality of safety; safety is best understood as being both traffic-related and personal. Decisions cannot be made in a bubble or outside the social context and realities of these communities. If only crash statistics are used to influence design and improvements, there may be a reduction in vehicle-cyclist crashes, but an increase in frustration among residents if the design leads them to the very parts of town that they seek to avoid. These residents are experts of their communities, and if their social realities are not taken more seriously during community engagement and public involvement activities, their personal safety concerns will remain ever-present and a dangerous reality for them and their families. Furthermore, the use of crash statistics absent of crime statistics leads to funding and policy decisions that only target safety from one angle.

Personal safety concerns are universally-silent yet culturally-known barriers to bicycling. Many transportation professionals have proposed creative design treatments and employed international and national best practices to increase bicycling in Black and Hispanic communities with varying degrees of success. Whereas many minorities use bicycles to go to work, school, parks,



Figure 1. African-American family enjoying the New Brunswick, NJ USA Cickovia ("Open Streets").

visit friends and family, or run errands, few initiatives (e.g. Open Streets) or recommendations directly address this silent barrier to bicycling in Black and Hispanic communities (See Figure 1). This is unfortunate considering that an increase in bicycling would lead to safety in numbers, less congestion, and overall reductions in air pollution. Increases in bicycling in minority communities can also lead to social change and economic impacts—the latter of which is a necessity in Black and Hispanic communities.⁴

Transportation professionals should be more concerned about the personal safety of Black and Hispanic cyclists because they are in a position to change how the built environment either acts as a conduit or barrier to criminal activity; they are in a position to advocate for the use of crime statistics and crash statistics to ensure the best design solutions; and they have taken an oath to ensure the mobility and safety of all road users and that includes bicyclists. Here are a few ways in which transportation professionals can make this change:

- Receive training in crime prevention through environmental design;
- Prioritize crime statistics with crash statistics;
- Ask personal safety questions during public involvement meetings;
- Embrace complete streets policy adoption and implementation; and
- Seek diverse transportation staff.

One way ITE has been becoming involved in this issue is through participation in the National Active Transportation Diversity Task Force, which seeks to uplift equity through coalition building. The National Active Transportation Diversity Task Force is composed of a

broad array of experts to engage in a national campaign at the local street scale from a local champion active transportation in underserved and assist states and local promote Complete Streets transportation in the

References

1. <http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov>
2. <http://www.nj.gov>
3. <http://theviceroy.com>
4. <http://njskiped.org>



Charles Brown, MPA
adjunct professor
Planning
has 15+ years
transportation
has extensive experience
with municipal, county
and non-profit organizations.
His current research of
bicycle usage and access
of biking and walking.

Table 1. Ranking of variables that are barriers to bicycling for bicyclists and non-bicyclists in Black and Hispanic Communities.

Variables	All Respondents		Bicyclists		Non-Bicyclists	
	%	Ranking	%	Ranking	%	Ranking
Fear of traffic collision	31%	1	27%	3	34%	1
Fear of robbery/assault	16%	2	17%	2	13%	2
Fear of being profiled by the police	8%	5	9%	5	6%	5
Fear of verbal harassment	5%	7	5%	7	6%	5
Fear of being stranded with broken bicycle	17%	4	10%	4	11%	4
Cost of bicycle maintenance	6%	6	5%	7	6%	5
Pavement Condition	14%	3	14%	3	14%	3
Pregnancy/small children	5%	7	4%	8	5%	6
Other	5%	7	8%	6	2%	7
Total	100%		100%		100%	

Source: Charles Brown, MPA, Alan M. Voorhees Transportation Center

Survey Findings: Potential Solutions

Variables	All Respondents		Bicyclists		Non-Bicyclists	
	Number	Ranking	Number	Ranking	Number	Ranking
Bicycle lane between you and your destination	1071	1	517	1	554	1
Off-street bicycle path between you and your destination	1031	2	515	2	516	2
Secure bicycle parking at your destination	995	3	486	3	509	3
Better weather	970	4	480	4	490	5
If you did not have a car	963	5	459	6	504	4
If your destination was closer	949	6	440	7	509	3
Bicycle Events	871	7	460	5	411	6
If the bus/train was closer	730	8	367	8	363	7
If you did not have small children	652	9	337	9	315	8
Total	8232		4061		4171	



What's Next?

Part II – Barriers to Bike Access & Use Among Minority Women



New Web Series: Walking Towards Justice

20 years strong AMERICA WALKS

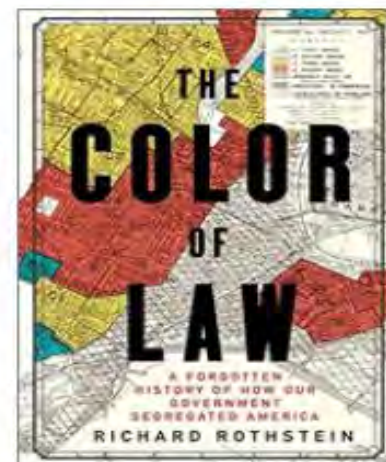
Walking Towards Justice Online Discussion The Color of Law

Join Us for a Free Online Discussion
Wednesday, September 27th
2pm ET / 11 am PT

Register Today!

To provide an open platform for discussion and aid in identifying potential solutions to improve walkability for ALL, America Walks has launched a new social equity-inspired online discussion series, **Walking Towards Justice**. Walking Towards Justice is a discussion series that integrates literature into a discussion regarding the intersectionality of mobility, race, class, gender, and politics. [Click here to learn more about the series.](#)

The first discussion will explore the intersection of walkability and residential segregation. It will be facilitated by **Charles Brown, MPA**, America Walks board member and co-creator of this series, and include special guest, **Richard Rothstein**, author of **The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Government Segregated America**. Also joining the panel are nationally-known experts, **Tamika Butler**, **Sahra Sulaiman**, and **Sonia Jimenez, JD**.



Register Today!

Thank You!

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