

PORTSMOUTH

Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan



August 21, 2024



AGENDA

- **Planning Process Refresh**
- **Existing Conditions Summary**
- **Engagement Update**
- **Visioning and Goals**
- **Next Steps**



PLANNING PROCESS OVERVIEW



Engagement Process

Two phases of outreach to engage the public through a combination of online survey, two public meetings, pop-up events, and focus groups.



Existing Conditions

Review of existing walking/biking programs and policies, field visits, inventory of existing infrastructure, and analysis of where things stand today



Vision and Goals

Development of a vision statement and goals.

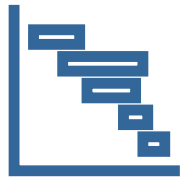


PLANNING PROCESS OVERVIEW



Opportunities & Constraints

Understanding of the network opportunities and constraints, document audit, and summary of policy and programming opportunities.



Recommendations

Prioritization criteria and assessment, updated design guidance, and program/policy/project recommendations



Implementation Program

Development of a final plan!



SCHEDULE

SPRING 2024



Existing Conditions Assessment

SUMMER 2024



Visioning & Network Updates

FALL 2024



Develop Recommendations

WINTER 2024/25
AND BEYOND!



Plan Development & Documentation



Online Public Input,
Pop-Up Events, and
Public Meeting #1



Focus Groups and
Public Meeting #2



Published Plan



OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENGAGEMENT

EXISTING CONDITIONS

- Document Review
- Land Use
- Socioeconomics and Demographics
- Existing Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities
- Major Destinations and Multimodal Generators
- Roadway Characteristics
- Transit Network
- Crash History



REVIEWED DOCUMENTS

- **City of Portsmouth Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) FY 2025-2030 (2024)**
- **New Hampshire Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan (2024)**
- **Open Space Plan (2020)**
- **Complete Streets Design Guide (2017)**
- **Portsmouth 2025 Master Plan (2017)**
- **Portsmouth Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (2014, 2018 update)**
- **Wayfinding Plan (2014)**
- **Bicycle Friendly and Walk Friendly Community Policies (2013)**
- **Safe Routes to School Action Plan (2010)**



Building a Resilient Future
An Open Space Plan
CITY OF PORTSMOUTH, NH • 2020



PROGRESS IN THE LAST TEN YEARS

EXISTING (Completed before 2014)

-  Sidewalk
-  Bike Lane
-  Shared Use Path
-  Shared Lane Markings

EXISTING (Completed since 2014)

-  New Sidewalk
-  Buffered Bike Lane
-  Bike Lane
-  Shared Use Path
-  Shared Lane Markings

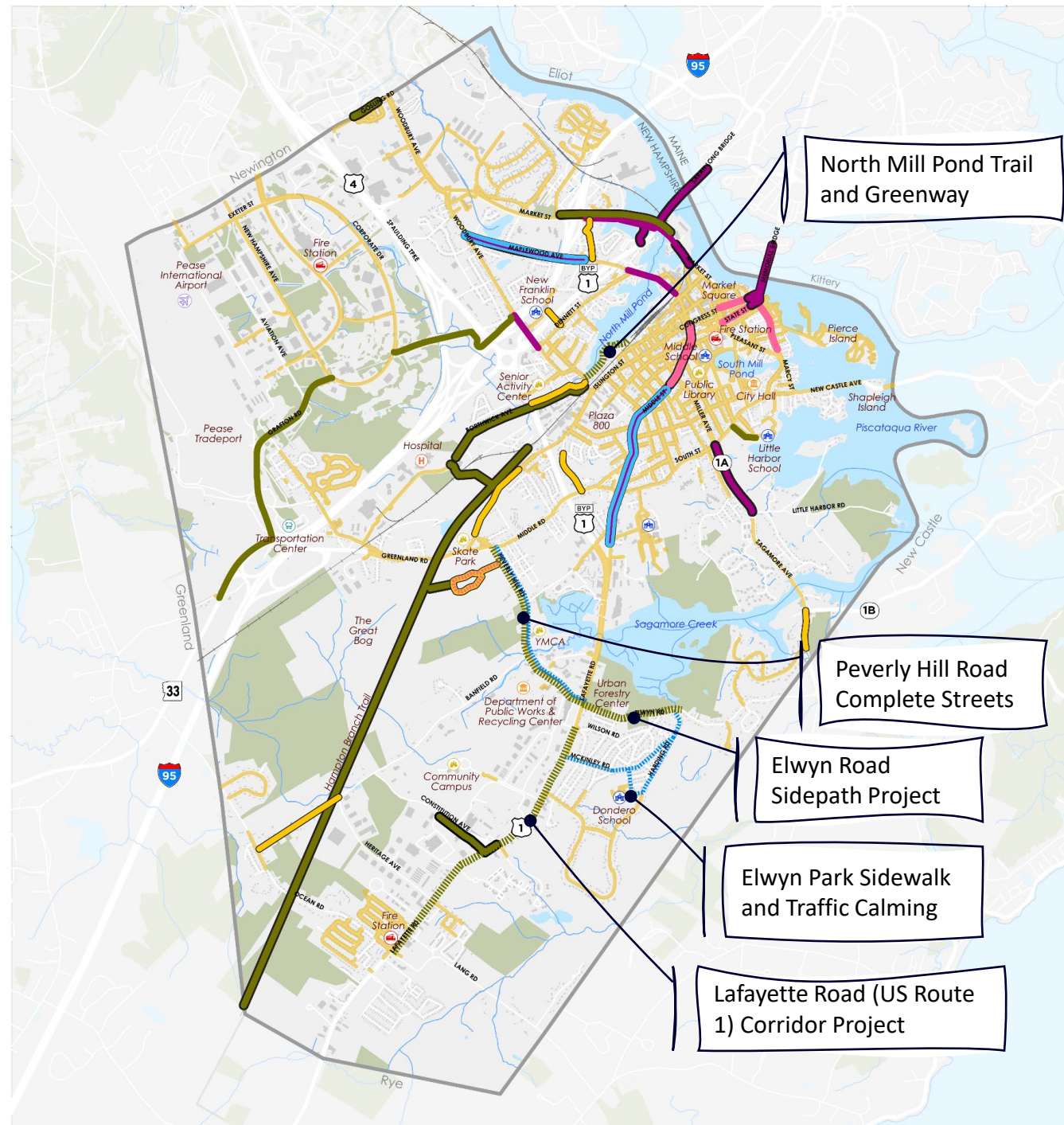
PROGRAMMED

-  Sidewalk
-  Shared Use Path
-  Shared Lane Markings



7,000+ feet
of new sidewalks

Nearly 8 miles
of bike facilities added
in the last ten years



PROGRESS IN THE LAST TEN YEARS



- Created **Complete Streets Design Guidelines** in 2017, building on the 2013 Complete Streets Policy
- Achieved **Bronze Level Bicycle Friendly Community** Designation from the League of American Bicyclists in 2019 and **Silver Level Walk Friendly Community** by the Walk Friendly Communities Program
- Provided **dedicated funding** for bike and pedestrian projects in the CIP
- Continued to support and promote **Walk and Bike to School Days**

People are walking and biking more!

From 2021 to 2023, on average, there was a 33% increase in bicycle volumes and an 8% increase in pedestrian volumes at two key intersections.



CRASHES HISTORY

2009-2013

34 crashes involving a pedestrian

Crashes involving bicyclists not reported

Priority Areas:

- Lafayette Road
- Islington Street
- Northern Woodbury Avenue

2019-2024

32 crashes involving a pedestrian

11 crashes involving a bicyclist

- Downtown Streets with high pedestrian and bicyclist volumes



MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION

Means of Transportation to Work

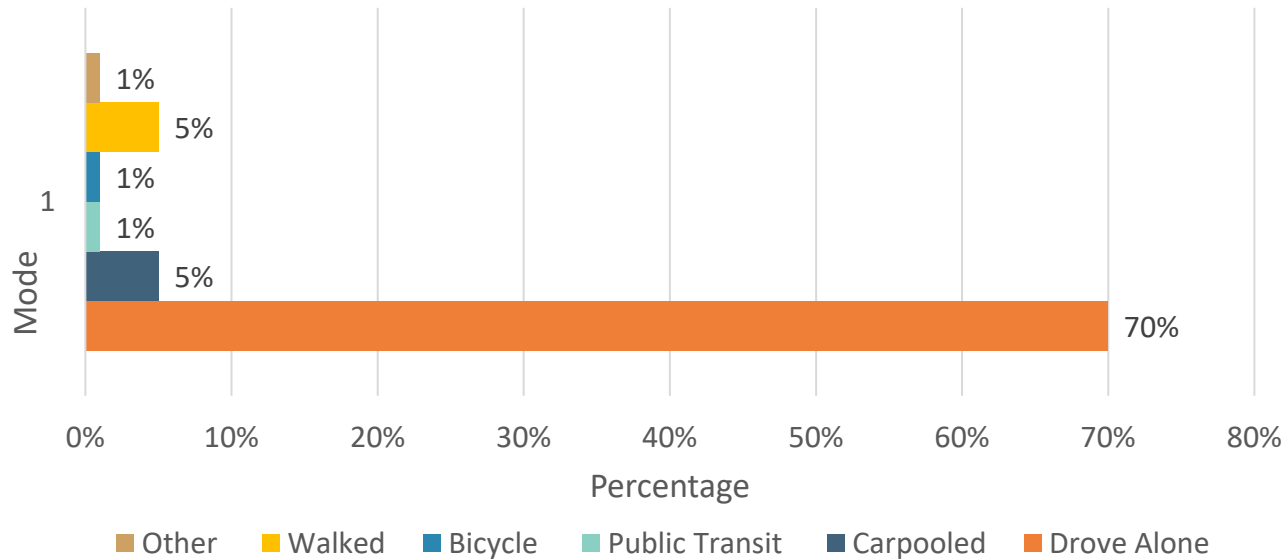
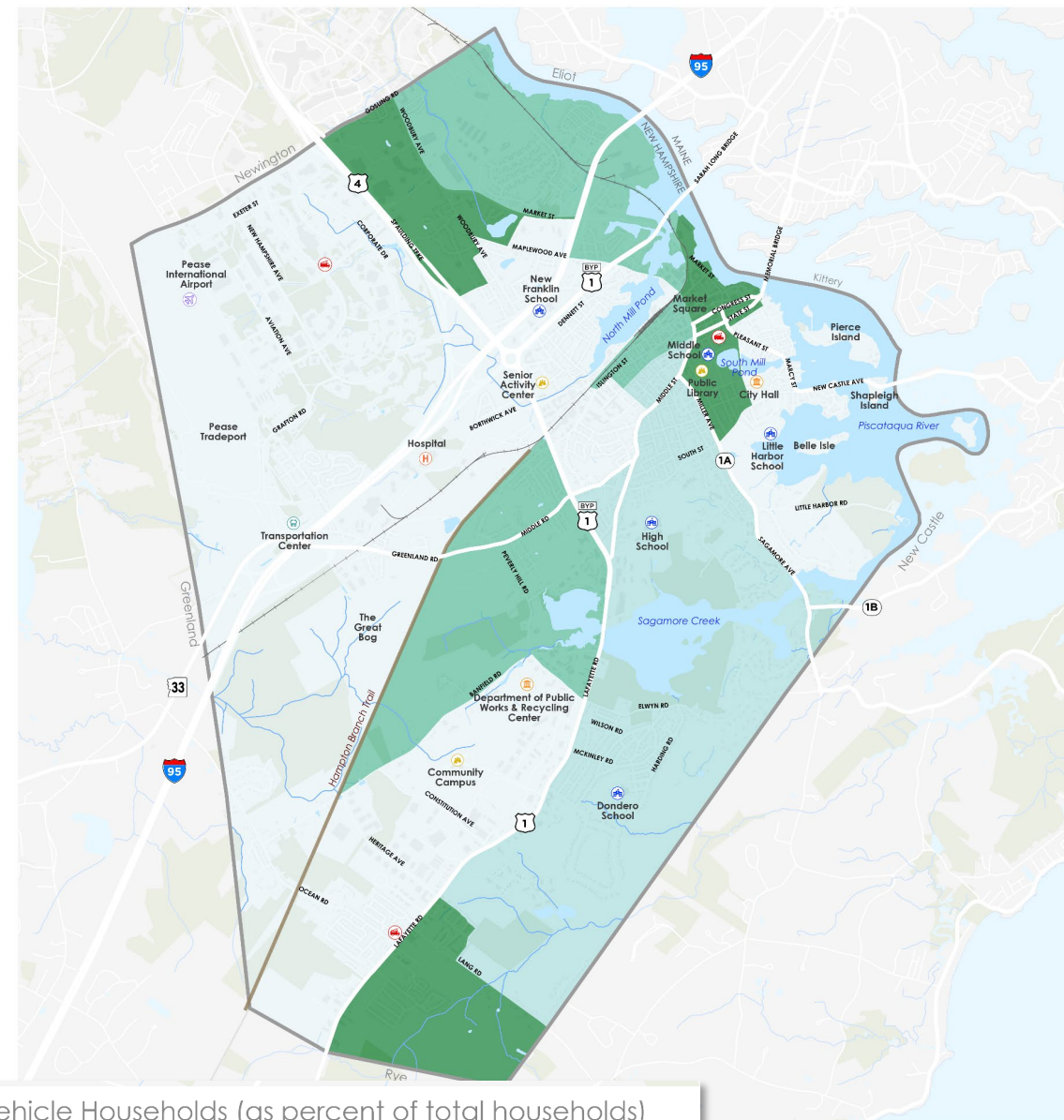
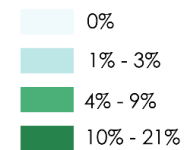


Table and Figure Source: US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates 2022



Zero Vehicle Households (as percent of total households)

Source: U.S. Census Bureau ACS 5-Year Estimates 2022



ENGAGEMENT SO FAR

- **Online Survey**
 - 328 responses*
- **Interactive Map**
 - 190 entries*
- **Pop-Up Events**
 - Farmer's Market (July 21st)



*as of August 6th, 2024



WHAT WE'VE HEARD SO FAR (FROM YOU)

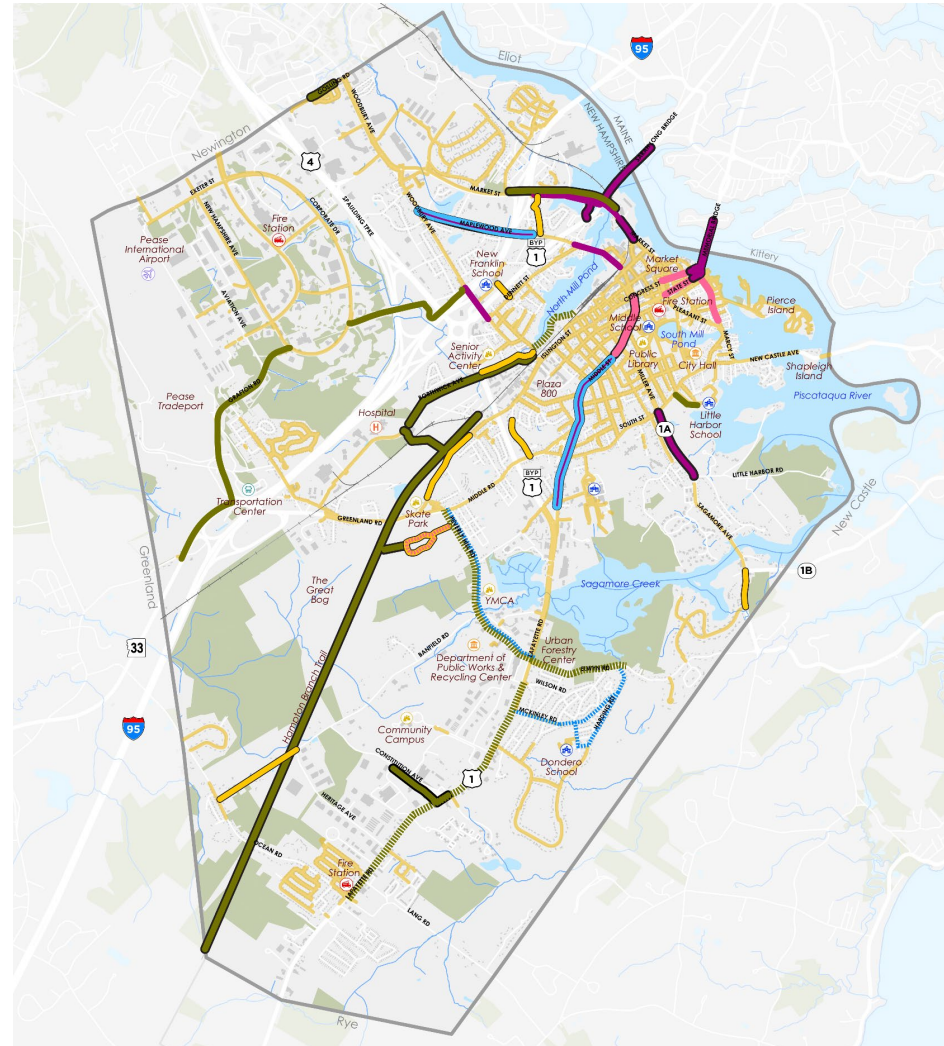
- Focus on **implementable recommendations**, including quick-build and interim projects, and better leverage local streets.
- **Connect islands** (which include many of the schools) and better integrate with local transit.
- **Transitions at intersections** remain a challenge for both people biking and walking, especially where there are exclusive right turn lanes (e.g., turn pockets), as well as curb radii and curb ramp transitions.
- **Seasonality** is a consideration, including influx of summer employees and opportunities for walking and biking from hotels.



WHAT WE'VE HEARD SO FAR (FROM YOU)

Great places to walk/bike:

- **Rail Trail** – it's safe, no cars, it's pretty and clean
- **Lincoln Ave** – good sidewalks, slow traffic, wide streets, landscaped and attractive area
- **South End** – wide sidewalks, slower traffic on narrow neighborhood streets, roads are well-maintained, historic buildings, and attractive landscaping



Lousy places to walk/bike:

- **Congress St** – sidewalks are too narrow, street is too wide to cross safely, speeding cars
- **Peverly Hill Rd** – lots of traffic, no sidewalks, no bike lanes, little to no shoulder, traffic goes too fast
- **Middle St/Maplewood** – high speed, multi-lane traffic, overly wide lanes, dooring risk in bike lanes, crossings are dangerous and sightlines are risky with parked cars



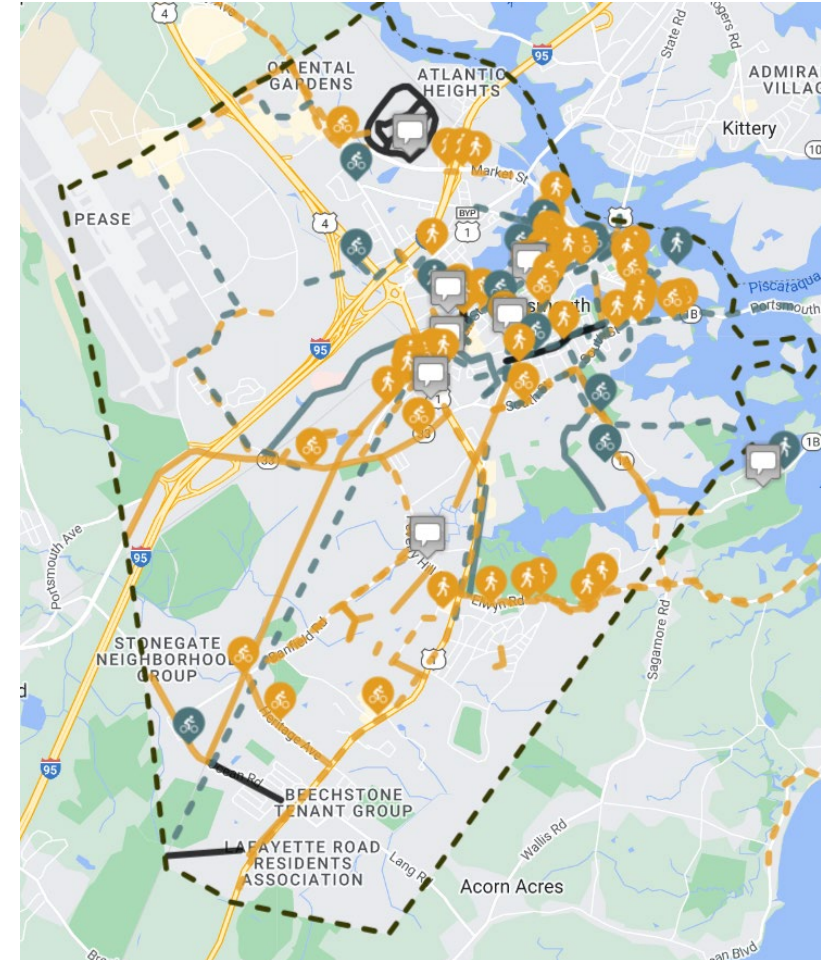
WHAT WE'VE HEARD SO FAR (FROM THE PUBLIC)

Islington St – “**Not safe for bikes:** Cars go too fast, too many distractions, complicated traffic patterns, (in some segments: too many lanes)”

South St – “Despite the 20mph speed limit, there is no shoulder and cars are very impatient (even when biking downhill). --- **I would never bike this street uphill,** its uncomfortably steep and there is no way to avoid cars.”

“All Portsmouth needs to do a much better job of clearing the sidewalks in the winter. **If we want to be a walkable city, and a winter city, we need to commit to it year-round.**”

“**Sagamore Avenue is a popular cycling route** connecting Portsmouth with the Seacoast to the South. The section in front of Luster King is **particularly hazardous** as the **road narrows** and the **shoulder is virtually nonexistent.**”



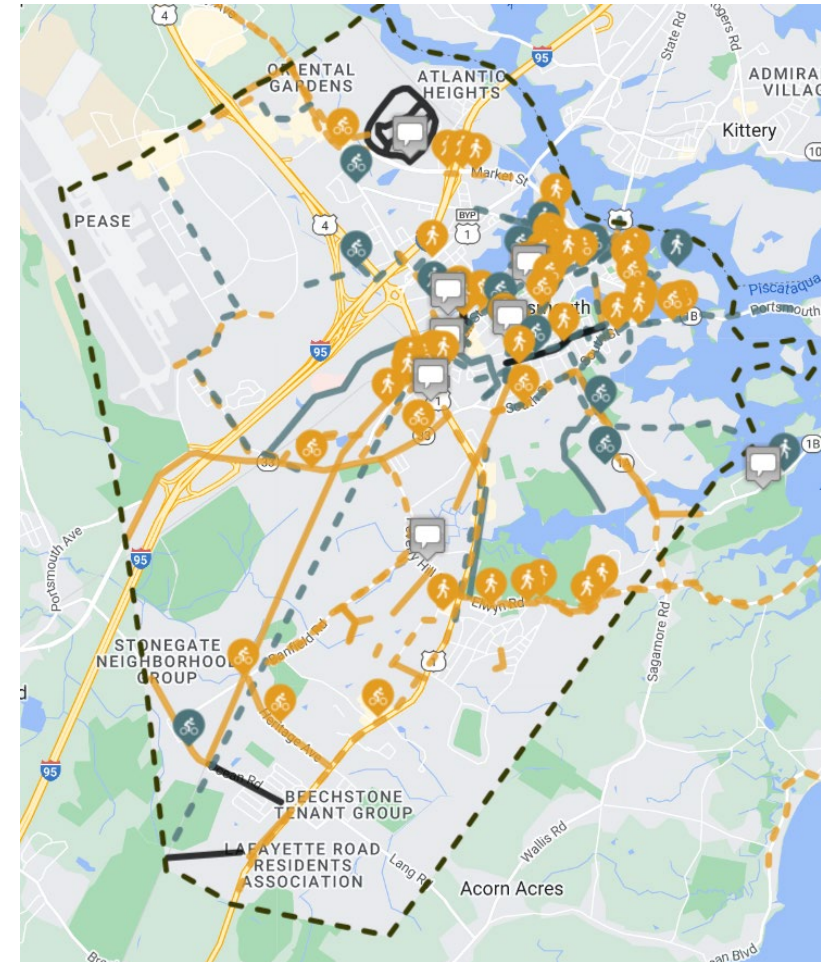
WHAT WE'VE HEARD SO FAR (FROM THE PUBLIC)

"Most of the **sidewalks from Elwyn to Lafayette** are in very **poor shape** and are right beside high speed traffic. Drivers take high speed turns at the frequent curb cuts."

Along North Mill Pond - "We ride our bikes along this unsanctioned trail because there is **no safe bike lane to ride downtown from the West End**. Islington is very busy and dangerous and crossing all the way over top Middle Street is just as bad." – A top liked comment

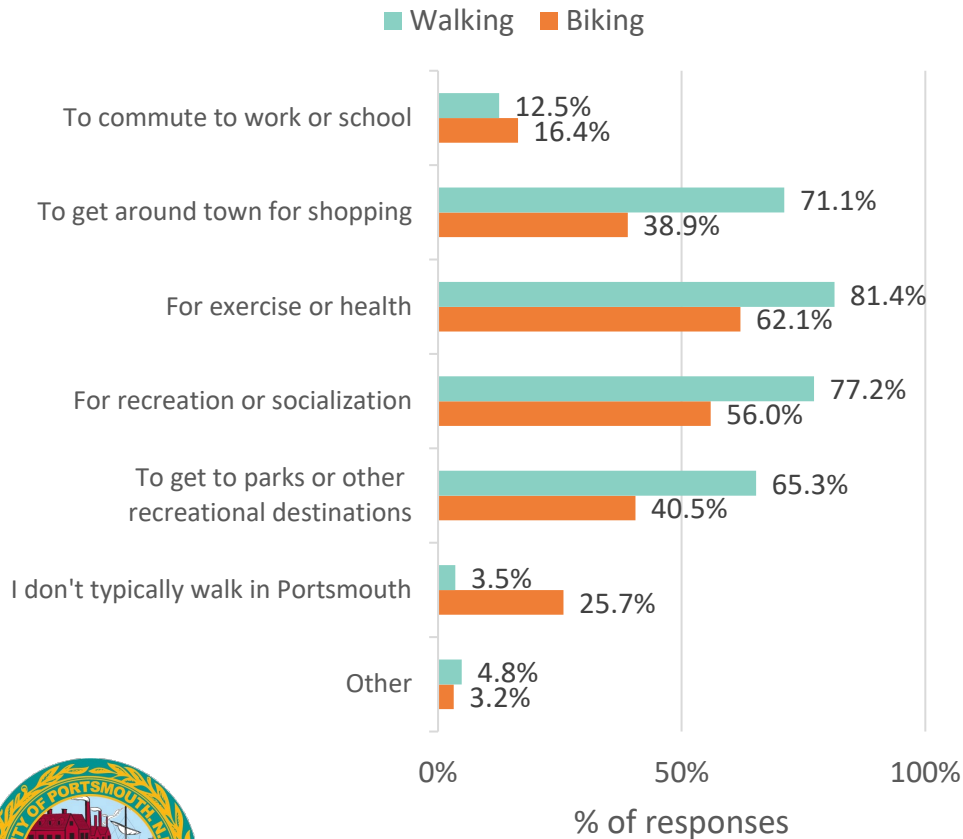
"**Woodbury Ave is an essential corridor** to bike to jobs, shopping, and housing, but multiple lanes of fast traffic make it very unsafe. **We should prioritize separated bike facilities here.**"

Maplewood Ave - "I walk with a baby stroller now and the **sidewalks along this stretch** are in awful condition for anyone that uses wheels for transportation."



WHAT WE'VE HEARD SO FAR (FROM THE PUBLIC)

Why do you walk/bike in Portsmouth?



61% of survey respondents are interested in biking, but only if there is some formal or high-quality bike infrastructure with separation from vehicles in place.

9% of survey respondents currently bike with their children. 10% of respondents would like to bike with their children but are concerned.

Ranked as the most important aspects of the walking and biking network:

1. Availability of continuous sidewalks or bike facilities
2. Separation from vehicles
3. Access to other parks and recreational opportunities



*Responses as of August 6th, 2024

PUBLIC MEETING #1

- Will be hosted in person
- Aiming for September 18th
- Current Agenda
 - Project Overview
 - Existing Conditions Summary
 - Engagement Update
 - Visioning and Goals
 - Next Steps



Are there any community conflicts with these dates?

 **Discuss!**

What can we do to maximize awareness and attendance?

Your role at the meeting

VISIONING AND GOALS

Consistent with
2014 Plan

- **Vision:** Portsmouth residents, workers, and visitors will view walking and bicycling as comfortable and convenient ways to get around the city. Walking and bicycling will be a part of Portsmouth’s culture, making the city a healthy and vibrant place to live.
- **Goal 1:** Improve the safety of walking and bicycling in Portsmouth.
- **Goal 2:** Increase the number of walking and bicycling trips in Portsmouth.
- **Goal 3:** Advance Portsmouth’s reputation as a city where walking and bicycling are a visible part of everyday life.
- **Goal 4:** Improve the access and connectivity of the overall walking and bicycling network in and around Portsmouth.

“I find it extremely dangerous to bike around Portsmouth.”

“Would love to bike here but terrified.”

“Portsmouth is an easily walkable city.”

“Would be AWESOME to connect Juniper Commons to the trail, without having to bike/walk on Rt 1 and Ocean Rd.”

Added to support the Portsmouth Master Plan 2025 theme of **“CONNECTED – A city that provides strong links throughout the community, supports all forms of mobility, & encourages walking, bicycling & transit.”**



VISIONING AND GOALS

Discuss!

- What are your initial reactions to the vision and goals?
- Is anything missing?
- How can the vision and goals build off the work that has been done since 2014?



NEXT STEPS

- Share the survey and map links with your networks (open until September 30th)
 - <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RF3HWQZ>
 - <https://maps.kittelson.com/portsmouth-bike-ped>
- Provide detailed input yourself!
- Share the public meeting announcement, once scheduled



CONTACTS

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