

# Shared-Use Paths User Feedback, E-bike Usage, Path Speeds & Etiquette

**Transportation Policy & Planning Board**

**July 18, 2022**

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# Path Conflict

## Typical Concerns/Suggestions

### People going too fast and/or passing too close

- E-bike riders
- Inexperienced e-bike riders
- “Racers”
- Bikes generally

### Speed limits needed on path; too dangerous to walk during commute times

### Bikes pass into oncoming traffic when they shouldn't

### Audible Warnings

- Being yelled at (such as “on your left”) from behind by a bicyclist can be distressing
- City should have bell ordinance
- People too assertive in using bell or saying “on your left” – should only be done in rural areas
- “Bicycle bullies” don't give an audible warning – should call out “on your left”
- People who don't give audible warnings should be given tickets



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# Path Conflict

## Typical Concerns/Suggestions

### Speed limits

- Speed limits needed on path
- Too dangerous to walk during commute times
- More education needed at people biking too fast – speed limit on paths should be 10mph with speed feedback boards
- Support 15mph speed limit on all city paths
- Support for “reasonable speed” requirement
- Add speed humps
- This should be a “pleasure path” not for racing/high speed commuting – enforce a speed limit



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# Path Conflict

## Typical Concerns/Suggestions

### Walkers obstruct traffic

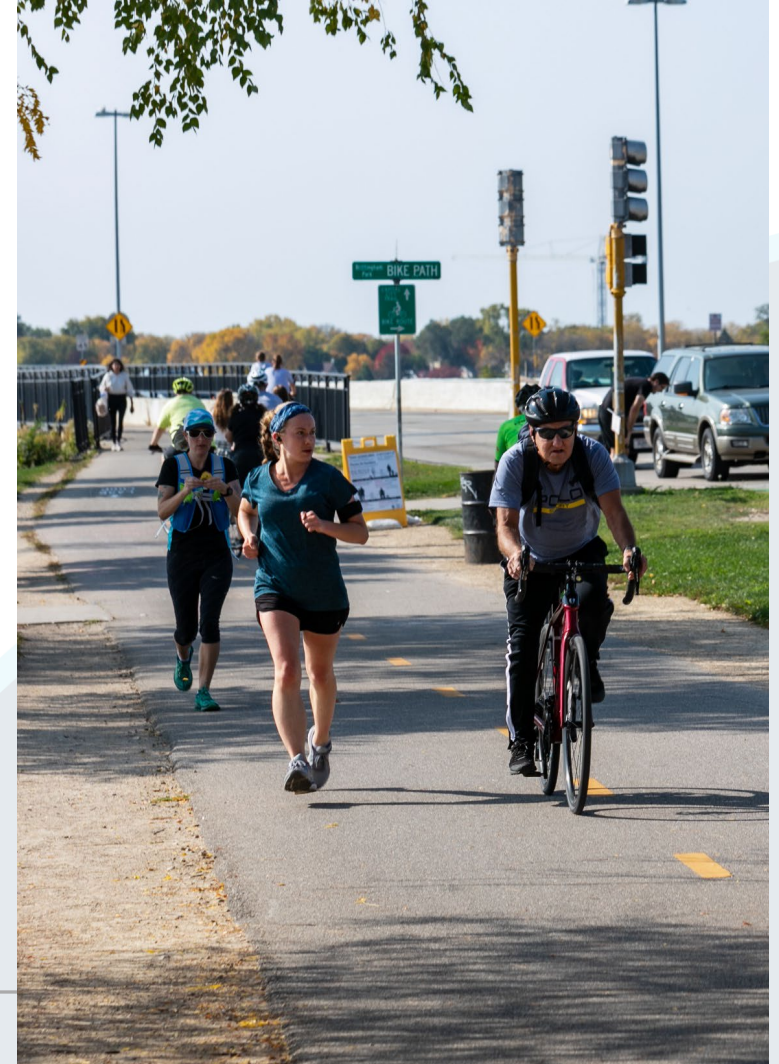
- Walking facing traffic causing bottlenecks & confusion
- People walking should be on the left
- People walk taking up the whole path with no regard for other users
- People wearing earbuds don't hear audible warning
- People upset when give audible warning

### Walkers/runners

- People who take over the whole path (either people biking in groups or walking in groups)
- People wearing earbuds who can't hear audible warnings
- Runners get too close (pandemic)

### Dog Owners

- Dogs not kept close to owner or not on appropriate leash
- People do not dispose of pet waste appropriately



# Path Conflict

## Typical Concerns/Suggestions

### Signage

- Signage should clarify what is and isn't allowed to be used on paths (other than motor vehicles)
- Need lots of signs telling people to slow down and stay to the right
- Signage needed to reinforce giving audible warning
- Too much signage isn't useful

### Space/Path Width

- Paths should be wider to better accommodate the many users
- Conflicts will continue while paths are so narrow
- More space needed for people to be side by side whether walking or biking

# Path Conflict - Typical Concerns/Suggestions

## Other Concerns

- Rollerskiers take up too much space
- Too many new devices people are using on the path (e-skateboards, mono wheels, etc.)
- What is and isn't really allowed – what is a motor bike vs electric bike?

## Other suggestions

- People biking for exercise should have other locations designated for that use other than the paths
- People biking should not be in heavy pedestrian use areas
- People commuting should not be expected to constantly be going so slowly they can't get to work on time
- Both bikes and pedestrians should go single file on paths so everyone can pass



# Path Conflict – Concerns/Suggestions

## May 2020:

The Dudgeon Monroe Neighborhood Association is concerned about the increased safety risks associated with high speed uses of shared use pathways such as the Southwest Path through our neighborhood. We strongly encourage the City of Madison to consider the following activities as soon as possible:

- Initiate a benchmarking and baseline study to understand the current use mixes and speeds on shared use pathways. Share this data with neighborhood leadership so neighborhood leadership can evaluate if all user needs are being met.
- **Encourage high speed users (faster than 15mph) to use city streets even when there is only moderate use on these paths, rather than create potential conflicts on these paths and the sidewalk network.**
- Promote etiquette standards for all users of the pathways, including recommendations for audible warnings while overtaking slower path users, leashed pet restrictions, and sensible headphone and cell
- **Adoption of a recommended speed on the citywide pathways of 15 miles per hour to help prevent conflicts with pedestrian and other slower path users.**
- phone usage.
- Development of clear guidance for pathway and sidewalk usage for e-bikes, e-scooters, and similar personal mobility devices.

This statement is provided to:

- Enhance safety and promote non-carbon based forms of transportation to use our pathways
- **Recognize that the shared use pathways were not designed for speeds in excess of 20mph.**
- Acknowledge that high speed uses of the pathways demand additional resources for vegetation management, pavement maintenance, and clear zone requirements.
- Promote the use of e-bicycle and e-scooters in a manner consistent with neighborhood use and enjoyment of this valuable community asset.



# Relevant Legislation – Electric Bicycles

## State of Wisconsin Statute 340.01

### Definition – Electric Bicycle

“Electric bicycle” means a bicycle that is equipped with fully operative pedals for propulsion by human power and an electric motor of 750 watts or less and that meets the requirements of any of the following classifications:

- (a) Class 1 electric bicycle is an electric bicycle equipped with a motor that provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling and that ceases to provide assistance when the bicycle reaches the speed of 20 miles per hour.
- (b) Class 2 electric bicycle is an electric bicycle that may be powered solely by the motor and is not capable of providing assistance when the bicycle reaches the speed of 20 miles per hour.
- (c) Class 3 electric bicycle is an electric bicycle equipped with a motor that provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling and that ceases to provide assistance when the bicycle reaches the speed of 28 miles per hour.



# Relevant Legislation – Electric Bicycles

## State of Wisconsin Statute 347.489

### Lamps and other equipment on bicycles and other vehicles and devices

#### 3m (a)

1. After January 1, 2018, a manufacturer or distributor of electric bicycles shall permanently affix to the electric bicycle a label containing all of the following information in Arial font of a minimum size of 9 point:

- a. The classification number of the electric bicycle.
- b. The speed at which the motor will cease to provide assistance or power.
- c. The wattage of the motor equipped to the electric bicycle.

2. If a person modifies an electric bicycle so as to change the classification of the electric bicycle, the person shall prepare and affix to the electric bicycle a revised label satisfying the requirements of subd. 1.

(b) An electric bicycle shall meet the requirements of [16 CFR Part 1512](#), as if the electric bicycle were a bicycle as defined under [16 CFR 1512.2](#) (a).

(c) An electric bicycle shall operate so that the motor ceases to provide assistance or power when the brakes are applied or the motor ceases to provide assistance or power when the rider stops pedaling.

(d) No person may operate a class 3 electric bicycle unless the electric bicycle is equipped with a speedometer that with reasonable accuracy registers the speed of the electric bicycle in miles per hour.

# Relevant Legislation – Electric Scooter

## State of Wisconsin Statute 340.01

### Definition – Electric Scooter

“Electric scooter” means a device weighing less than 100 pounds that has handlebars and an electric motor, is powered solely by the electric motor and human power, and has a maximum speed of not more than 20 miles per hour on a paved level surface when powered solely by the electric motor.

# Relevant Legislation – Electric Bicycles & Scooters

## **WSS 346.803 Riding bicycle, electric scooter, or electric personal assistive mobility device on bicycle way.**

- (1) Every person operating a bicycle, electric scooter, or electric personal assistive mobility device upon a bicycle way shall:
  - (a) Exercise due care and give an audible signal when passing a bicycle, electric scooter, or electric personal assistive mobility device rider or a pedestrian proceeding in the same direction.
  - (b) Obey each traffic signal or sign facing a roadway which runs parallel and adjacent to a bicycle way.
- (2) Every person operating a bicycle, electric scooter, or electric personal assistive mobility device upon a bicycle way open to 2-way traffic shall ride on the right side of the bicycle way.
- (3) Every operator of a bicycle, electric scooter, or electric personal assistive mobility device entering a bicycle way shall yield the right-of-way to all bicycles and pedestrians in the bicycle way.
- (4) Except as provided in ss. [349.236 \(1\) \(bm\)](#) and [349.237](#), a person may operate an electric personal assistive mobility device, or an electric scooter at a speed not to exceed 15 miles per hour, upon any bicycle path.

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# Relevant Legislation – Electric Bicycles

## **WSS 346.806 Special rules applicable to electric bicycles.**

(1) Except as otherwise expressly provided, an electric bicycle and an operator of an electric bicycle shall be afforded all the same rights and privileges, and be subject to the same duties, provided in chs. [340](#) to [351](#) as a bicycle or an operator of a bicycle. An electric bicycle shall be considered a vehicle to the same extent as a bicycle.

(2) A person operating an electric bicycle is not subject to the provisions under ch. [341](#), [342](#), [343](#), or [344](#) relating to financial responsibility, operator's licenses, registration, or certificates of title.

(3) (a) A person may ride, with the power unit in operation, an electric bicycle upon a bikeway, as defined under s. [84.60 \(1\) \(a\)](#), under the jurisdiction of the department of natural resources, subject to any restrictions specified in a rule promulgated by the department of natural resources under s. [349.18 \(4\) \(b\)](#), or under the jurisdiction of a municipality or county, subject to any restrictions specified in an ordinance enacted under s. [349.18 \(4\) \(a\)](#).

(3) (b) A person may ride, with the power unit in operation, an electric bicycle upon a bikeway, as defined under s. [84.60 \(1\) \(a\)](#), under the jurisdiction of the department, subject to any restrictions specified in a rule promulgated by the department.

(4) No person under the age of 16 years may operate a class 3 electric bicycle. A person under the age of 16 years may ride as a passenger on a class 3 electric bicycle that is designed to accommodate passengers.



# Relevant Legislation – Electric Bicycles

## State of Wisconsin Statute 349.18

### Additional traffic-control authority of counties and municipalities.

(4) (a) The governing body of a municipality or county may by ordinance prohibit the operation, with the power unit in operation, of electric bicycles on bikeways, as defined under s. [84.60 \(1\) \(a\)](#), under its jurisdiction.

# Relevant Legislation – Electric Scooters

## WSS 349.237 Authority to regulate electric scooters.

The governing body of any municipality or county may, by ordinance, regulate the rental and operation of electric scooters in a manner consistent with the regulation of bicycles in the municipality or county, except that the governing body of any municipality or county may do any of following:

- (1) Restrict or prohibit the operation of electric scooters on any roadway under its jurisdiction having a speed limit of more than 25 miles per hour.
- (2) Restrict or prohibit the operation of electric scooters on any sidewalk or bicycle way under its jurisdiction.
- (3) Establish requirements for and limitations on the parking of electric scooters on roadways, sidewalks, bicycle lanes, or bicycle ways under its jurisdiction.
- (4) Restrict or prohibit the short-term commercial rental of electric scooters to the general public.

# Other Relevant Statutes

- A bike path is a “highway” under Sec. [340.01\(22\)](#)
- A bicycle is a “vehicle” under Sec. [340.01\(74\)](#)
- Thus the default speed limits of Sec. [346.57](#) (with a general minimum speed limit of 25 mph) apply to paths
- Setting an official default speed limit would have to follow [349.11\(1\)\(a\)](#)
  - Could mean people ticketed also lost points on their driver’s license for bike related speeding violations
- Could potentially do a “safe speed” ordinance with language around an upper limit for safety instead of an official path speed limit

# Community Examples

## Fort Collins

### 2019-2020 pilot program

- Class 1 & 2 e-bikes only on paved trails (Colorado law different than WI)

### 2020 approved paved trails allowing Class 1 and 2 e-bikes

### 2021 began an e-bike & e-scooter share program

- E-bike share bikes allowed to max of 15mph on paved trails
- E-scooters not allowed on paved trails

### Trails have a courtesy speed limit of 15mph

- Trails are under jurisdiction of the Parks Department

### Report a Problem allows for reporting trail conflicts



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# Community Examples

## Boulder

### Most paths open to Class 1 & 2 e-bikes

- Exception is paths in Open Space & Mountain Parks

### Paths have a 15mph speed limit

### Have e-bike and e-scooter rental programs

## Colorado Springs

### Class 1 e-bikes permitted on urban paths

- Typically these are commuter and neighborhood connectors
- Not on soft surface paths or trails

### Pilot Program to expand e-bike access has been postponed until further notice

- Colorado law definitions may conflict with expanded access in some situations

# Community Examples

## Seattle

**Class 1 & 2 e-bike & e-scooter use is allowed on paths**

### **15 mph speed limit**

- Consistent with King County path speed limit

**Seattle Parks did have a different policy from the DOT, UW and others**

- Parks did Pilot in 2019 before approving changes

## **Pilot Data**

- E-bikes and pedal bikes go similar avg speeds (14.8 vs 14.9mph)
- Private e-bikes go faster on avg than private pedal bikes (16.8 vs 15.0mph)
- Bikeshare users traveled slowest – these are e-bikes

## **During Pilot**

- Installed trail etiquette signage and work with partners on etiquette messaging

# Community Examples

## Eugene

**Class 1 & 2 allowed on almost all paths**

- Exception is motor may not be used while on 1 city park path

**Class 3 e-bikes are considered motor vehicles in Oregon**

**Eugene Water & Electric Board offers a \$300 e-bike rebate program to incentivize purchases**

## Park City

**Class 1 & 2 e-bike use is allowed on all paved paths and soft surface trails wider than 5 feet**

**15 mph speed limit**

**Partnership with non-profit to raise awareness on path etiquette**

# Community Examples

## Harris County - Houston

### Had 10 mph speed limit on 2 park paths but it was rescinded

- There was a \$300 fine for exceeding 10mph
- Put up etiquette signage when removed speed limit signs

### E-bikes allowed except if posted otherwise





# Literature Review

Completed by City of Fort Collins, Boulder County, Larimer County and City of Boulder

E-bikes provide increased access to recreation and transportation; older adults are more likely to use e-bikes for recreation and fitness whereas younger adults are more likely to use e-bikes for commuting, utilitarian trips, and to replace car trips.

The addition of the electric-assist encourages people to take more and longer trips by bike, and offers individual health benefits.

E-bike users indicate feeling safer on an e-bike than a conventional bike given the ability to travel through an intersection quickly or traverse challenging terrain.

Safety, speed, crowding, and user conflict are common concerns related to bicycles, and even more so for e-bikes. However, e-bike research has shown that people tend to view e-bikes more favorably once they are exposed to or become familiar with e-bikes.

The literature review found little research to suggest that e-bikes have greater negative impacts on trails or wildlife than regular bikes.

Many Colorado jurisdictions have acted to allow some or all classes of e-bikes on their trails.

[View Literature Review Here](#)

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# National North American E-Bike Owner Survey

2018 Report by National Institute for Transportation and Communities

Older adults & those with physical limitations are motivated by reducing the effort of riding

Younger adults motivated by making commuting easier, quicker and more cost effective

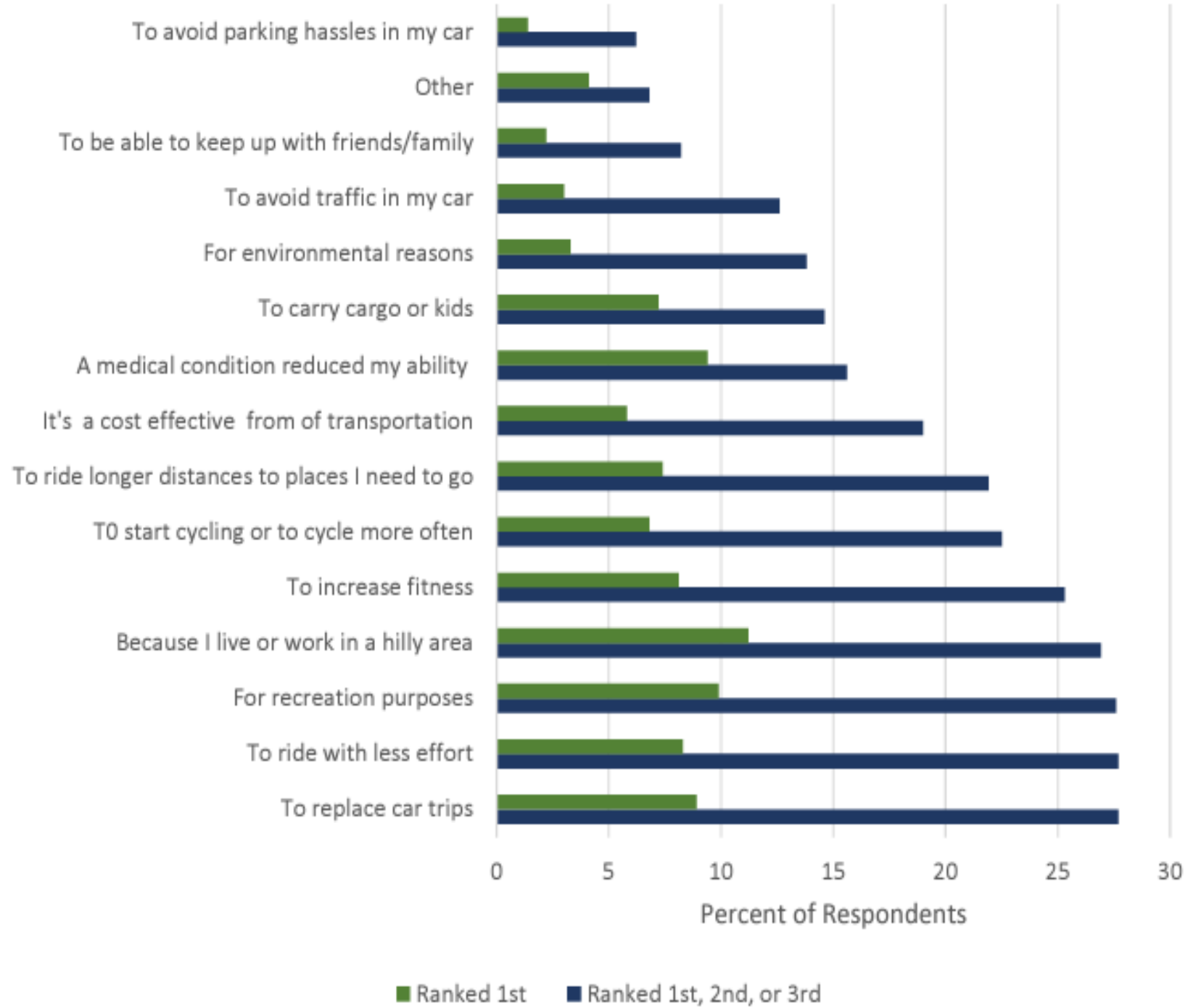
Females report concerns with topography, carrying cargo/children and keeping up with others

[Full Report](#)

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# 2020 User Group Input – Bike Clubs/Teams

## Try to avoid paths if possible but there isn't always a good alternative

- Newer riders especially feel less safe on roads & prefer paths

## Do people understand things like “on your left”

- People often move left if you say that and make passing worse
- Lots of people wearing earbuds so even giving an audible warning doesn't work

## When busy is there an expectation that people will be passed?

- Everyone needs to look before moving over or turning around

## Agree that fast riding or doing intervals are inappropriate on paths

- Would bike shops be willing to hand out information?
- Might be hard with places like Target & Walmart having corporate guidelines
- Social Media campaign
- Stop using term “bike path”
- People should ride for the situation & conditions
- Improve path crossings where interact with motor vehicles
- More paths with separated space for people walking and people biking



# 2021 User Focus Group Input - Ideal Path Experience

- Wish the paths were wider or had separate space for walking/biking
- Wish there was awareness that people have the right to their space and people didn't pass when there isn't space.
- Waiting to pass – like it when people slow down and wait and are respectful
- Training people
- Issue seems to be about people who are able to bike faster
- Verbal warnings when passing are needed
- Awareness/consideration that every person has a right to be there but also to be safe
- Like new Blount St crossing
- Everyone should be kind – and should start from a place of kindness
- People see that the path is their “privilege” or they have an entitlement and can use it the way they want to use it without concern for others
- Bike/car/pedestrian contentiousness
- Ebikes are not really the villains – speed/person not the bike
- Should there be a speed limit? Mention of the city's 20 is plenty residential speed limit project
- Complications with social distancing this year made interactions more challenging as people might go out with friends but try to keep 6 ft apart while being together
- Shared streets allow better pleasure walking than on path

The weekend is not fun on the path



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# 2021 User Focus Group Input - Messaging

- Framing the shared community experience
- Multi-use nature
- Change to pedestrians facing bikes instead of all in one direction
- Bikers need to announce passes – does “passing on your left” actually work or just say passing is better
- No entitled right to be on the path – shift from I get to do what I want to I want to a part of a community
- Our slow down signs don’t pop out enough – too much happening near Monona Terrace
- Put slow down signs with maps – but still big
- Slow down signs in a different color
- Don’t put info on maps as no one reads them
- Yield to slower users doesn’t engender kindness
- Frame rules as being part of community of users
- A lot of: People biking should empathize with people walking more (Bonnie tried to get beyond that but it was hard)
- Why are cyclists speeding up to pass? They should slow down? Definitely misconceptions and lack of understanding of what people might be trying to do.
- Shift conversation to better understanding of others and thinking about when you should change behavior or perceptions

# Typical Current Etiquette Signs



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# Projects & Events

## 2020

- Pandemic oriented Share the Path signs at most paths

## 2021 Pop Up Events

- Simple yard signs with basic etiquette message
- Moved signs to different locations during summer
- Staff handed out bells along paths

## 2022 Bike Week

- Handed out bells

## 2022

- Working on updated brochure & social media items
- Temporary “The Path is for Everybody” Signs placed



# Discussion Items

## Education/Encouragement

- Etiquette Signage
- Direct Education
- Public Information Campaign

## Speed limit question

## Facility changes

- Wider paths
- Separated space
- Other safe options for all ages, abilities

## Other questions, concerns, ideas

## Desired next steps