



Georgetown – Lewes Trail

2022 Multi-Use Trail User Electronic & Intercept Survey



Executive Summary

This report provides a summary of data collected from multi-use trail users collected electronically and through intercept surveys between August 18, 2022, and October 3, 2022.

The purpose of the survey is to understand the demographics of trail users, their usage, and their opinions regarding the trail. 804 people throughout the survey period responded to 14 specific questions. An overwhelming majority of respondents answered all survey questions.

Delaware Greenways collected the data during the survey period using two methods. A QR code distributed widely throughout the areas surrounding the trail, and volunteers who conducted intercept surveys on different dates and at different locations along the trail between Nassau and Gills Neck Roads.

Thank you to the volunteers who contributed their time to collect this data and our friends at A.I. Whoo for their help in drafting the report. Without these folks this project would not have been possible.

- **Bicycling outpaces all other forms of use.** In response to “How do you usually use the trail?” - 75% of trail users surveyed indicated using a bicycle on the trail. 20% walk, 4% Run/Jog. Balance of respondents use a mobility aid or selected “other”.

- **Most trail users bicycle to reach the trail.** Asked how they reach the trail 52% bicycle, 29% use a vehicle either traveling alone or with someone, 15% walk. Other respondents run/jog or use public transit.
- **Exercise was prioritized as users' primary purpose for using trail.** 92% selected exercise as their priority, then recreation and relaxation. 12% ONLY use the trail for exercise. Other responses were dog walking and commuting.
- **Most users are on the trail for an hour or more.** 46% spend an hour, 38% 2 hours and 5% are on the trail for 3 hours. 7% estimate spending 30 minutes with the balance spending less than 30 minutes.
- **Users are out on the trail frequently.** 40% responded they use the trail 2-4 times a week. 25% once a week, 14% 5 or more times a week, 12% once a month, followed by every few months. 12 respondents were using the trail for the first time.
- **The trail is popular year-round.** 54% use the trail year-round. 34% spend their time in the Spring, Summer, and Fall.
- **Enjoying other trails.** 74% of respondents use other trails. 26% do not.
- **Users stay active as they age.** 42% of users selected the age range of 65-74. 32% 55-64, 18% 35-54, 8% are 75+, and 4% fall in the range of 18-34.
- **Male users represented a slight majority of surveyed trail users.** 51% male, 46% female, 15 preferred not to respond and 2 were non-binary/gender fluid.
- **Respondents overwhelming identified as white.** 89% of respondents identified as white or Caucasian.
- **A majority of respondents report household incomes of \$100,000 or more.** 57% of all respondents reported household income of \$100,000 or more.
- **Users' primary residence is in zip code 19958.** Local residents made up a larger portion of the survey in August and after Labor Day.

Dates	19958	19968	19971	19966	19947
8/18/22-9/5/22	68%	0%	4%	0%	1%
9/6/22 – 10/3/22	55%	11%	7%	3.50%	2%

Two open-ended questions were asked.

What are your favorite things about this trail?

This was an open-ended question where respondents could explain multiple things that they liked about the trail. To analyze this data, a word cloud was created to understand what many answers were. The larger the text in the word cloud the more it was said in the results.



What would improve your trail experience?

This section was also open-ended, and users were able to report more than one improvement. **9.7% of the users didn't think there was anything to improve along the trail.**

Most improvements had a focus on bicycle usage. **Bicycles were mentioned 259 times in this survey question representing 32% of the survey results.** Of these results regarding bicycle usage, **108 of the improvements or 42% were regarding speed.** Many results called for a **speed limit for bikes (31%)** and a **total ban of electric bikes (22%).** Multiple users mentioned that enforcing speed limits and monitoring of the trails would be useful.

Respondents also mentioned a **widening of the path (13%) or a specific bike and walking lane for solutions to the bicycle problem as well as increasing the capacity. 15% of respondents mentioned trail etiquette being a major issue on the trail.**

The next most prevalent improvement was regarding safety. 18% of respondents mentioned a safety concern. Most of these improvements were regarding crosswalks and intersections with road traffic. Many motor vehicles don't slow down or stop for trail users. Suggestions for improving this issue included: flashing lights at crosswalks, speed bumps, or traffic signals.

Additional lighting throughout the trail was another suggested improvement. Lighting would allow additional hours of daily use, especially during Standard Time. **Bike lanes to the trail** appear to be limited causing safety concerns. Users mentioned creating bike lanes or increasing police presence around the trail for bikes to arrive and leave safely from the trail. Users also mentioned **mile markers** that would allow them to not only know the distance they traveled but in the case of an emergency be able to communicate their location.

Another common improvement was **expansion of the trail. This was mentioned 130 times and represented 16% of the results.** This includes completion of the current expansion plans as well as expansion to new areas. They also mentioned adding more trails along the current pathway.

10.6% of users mentioned that they would like to see regular maintenance on the trail. 4.7% of total survey users mentioned that dog waste along the trail was a problem. Dog refuse stations as well as trash cans maintained regularly would decrease these occurrences.

Respondents also reported that **weeds and vegetation** take over the path in some areas. There are also some site-specific concerns regarding dust, pavement, and train tracks.

5% of trail users mentioned rest areas as well as public restrooms. Areas where users can stop and rest for short periods of time would allow for them to be on the trail even longer. The results show that many users are on the trail for extended periods of time, but some users may not be able to do so with limited rest and rest areas.

4% of respondents mentioned that water stations would be useful along the trail.

26 people or 3% of respondents discussed improvements regarding parking. This included more spaces for parking and more parking lots with access to different spots on the trail. This would allow for users to experience other parts of the trail that they would not otherwise travel to.

Some users had more positive improvements. One person asked how they could donate to the trail. Another mentioned creating an **'Adopt the trail'** program.