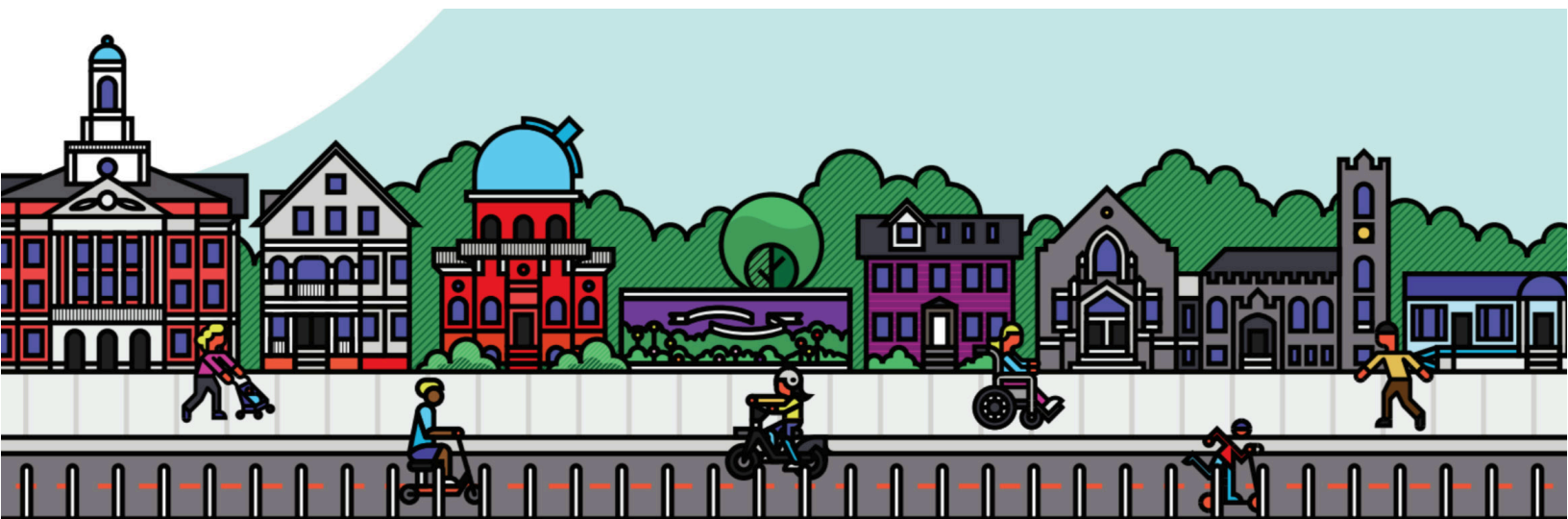


HOPE STREET TEMPORARY TRAIL

October 1-8, 2022

FINAL EVALUATION



PROVIDENCE
-- STREETS COALITION

Thriving Places
Collaborative

RI
BIKE

SPIN

3M

AARP®



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A parent and child ride in the temporary trail

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In January 2020, the City of Providence released its [Great Streets Initiative and Urban Trail Network Master Plan \(Great Streets Plan\)](#)¹, which envisions that every street in Providence should be safe, clean, healthy, inclusive, and vibrant. The plan proposes the creation of a 78-mile network of urban trails that will connect every Providence neighborhood with high-quality routes for people walking, running, accessing public transit, riding bicycles, and using wheelchairs, skateboards, skates, and other mobility devices to get around the city. The goal is for all Providence residents and visitors to be able to safely and comfortably travel to schools, jobs, errands, and other destinations like parks, libraries, and shops.

Hope Street is one of the streets identified in the Great Streets Plan for an urban trail, as it is a community and commercial backbone of the East Side. Hope Street is also part of Providence's [High Injury Network](#)² -- with an average of 7.24 crashes involving people walking or biking every year from 2009-2021.

In response, the Providence Streets Coalition and Thriving Places Collaborative proposed, installed, and evaluated a one-week temporary urban trail for one mile of Hope Street between Olney Street and Lauriston Street (approximately one third of Hope Street). Funding for the project came from a number of partners including SPIN, AARP, and 3M. The trial ran from October 1st-8th, 2022.

Extensive qualitative surveys were completed before, during, and after the project to gather community feedback on the proposal. In the initial community survey in fall 2021, 496 total responses were captured with an online poll where 64% of respondents expressed support for the idea, 57% said that speeding drivers make them feel unsafe on Hope Street, and 64% of respondents said they would be more likely to ride their bike on Hope Street if there was dedicated and protected space to ride. 16 businesses responded with 10 businesses opposed to the trail.

Another survey was placed in businesses for patrons to fill out before and during the trial, with a total of 354 responses. It found that 51% of respondents drove their car, 28% walked, and 21% rode a bike or scooter. 11% of respondents (42) considered themselves mobility challenged or to be a caretaker of someone with a disability-- of those, 78% (32) arrived by car, 18% (7) arrived by walking, and 4% (1 person) arrived via bus and bike.

Six weeks before the start of the project in summer 2022, 23 of the 47 businesses on Hope Street signed a petition asking the mayor to cancel it, expressing fears about the economic impact of losing parking if there were a trail.

During the trial, a total of 2,235 intercept surveys were collected, both online and in person. These surveys revealed that 53% of

respondents were in favor of the trail, 43% were opposed, and 4% were unsure.

Quantitative data analysis included a parking occupancy study conducted before and during the trial to determine how much parking is utilized and how the temporary trail could affect residents and businesses. It was found that the trail occupied 132 (9.6%) of a possible 1,233 spaces either on or within one block of Hope Street.

For the entire study area, the average parking occupancy rate was 27% pre-trial, and 33% during the trial. In the business district (Dana/Lewis Street to 6th Street), the average occupancy rate was 33% before the trial, and 35% during the trial. The highest occupancy rates in the business district were found on Saturday afternoons, with 47% pre-trial, and 47% during the trial.

Eco-counters measured the number of bikers and scooters on Hope Street before and during the trial. Bike and scooter rides doubled during the trial, counting a total of 1,800 rides. A survey of trail users (703 responses) found 89% wanted the trail to be permanent, 8% did not want it to be permanent, and 3% were unsure. No crashes occurred during the trial.

A pedestrian survey of people walking next to the trail collected 452 results with 58% of pedestrians wanting the trail to be permanent, 36% not wanting it to be permanent, and 6% unsure. One of the main sentiments among pedestrians was that they felt safer while walking because the trail provided a barrier between them and drivers, and opened up sight lines for more visible movement. Equity, accessibility, and the health of the local economy was a top concern among both trail supporters and opponents.



Volunteers installing the bus island in the temporary trail

II. INTRODUCTION

What is tactical urbanism?

Tactical urbanism is all about action. It is an approach to making change in our communities that empowers governments, organizations, groups of residents, or individuals to use our skills, knowledge, and creativity to improve the cities we live in right now. Tactical urbanism projects are short-term, low-cost, and scalable interventions to the built environment that are meant to catalyze long-term change.

The concept of tactical urbanism emerged in the 2010s as a solution to the shortcomings of traditional city planning, which is good at overseeing major infrastructure projects like the construction of bridges and highways, but can be frustratingly slow at implementing even minor changes on a more localized scale. Over the past decade, tactical urbanism has become an international movement, bringing about a profound shift in how communities think about project development and delivery. Tactical urbanism goes by a host of other names, including guerrilla urbanism, DIY urbanism, and urban acupuncture—the latter being an idea popularized by Jaime Lerner, the renowned urban theorist and former mayor of Curitiba, Brazil.

“The lack of resources is no longer an excuse not to act. The idea that action should only be taken after all the answers and the resources have been found is a sure recipe for paralysis. The planning of a city is a process that allows for corrections; it is supremely arrogant to believe that planning can be done only after every possible variable has been controlled.” - Jaime Lerner

Examples of tactical urbanism include highly-visible and formalized efforts, such as New York’s Plaza Program that last months, or smaller-scale “demonstration projects” typically lasting 1 to 7 days, like the Hope Street Temporary Trail. Tactical Urbanism projects can be led by governments, non-profits, grassroots groups, or frustrated residents. Though the degree of formality may vary, tactical urbanism projects share a common goal of using low-cost materials to experiment with and gather input on potential urban design changes.

In 2018, the City of Providence led a successful tactical urbanism project on [Broad Street](#)³, showcasing how an urban trail and public art could increase safety and cultural pride on the Southside. Following this demonstration day and another three years of community engagement and planning, the City built the full-scale [Broad Street Improvement Project](#)⁴ in 2022. This permanent reconstruction included repaving, new crosswalks and curb ramps, re-timed traffic signals, bus islands, and a two-way urban trail.

The COVID-19 pandemic caused an explosion in tactical urbanism projects in cities around the world. Social distancing and masking rules, the closure of most indoor public and private spaces, small businesses in financial chaos, and a halt in long distance travel resulted in a rapid reimagining of outdoor public space – the majority of which is streets – for active mobility, small business support, and community connection. In cities around the country and the world, parking lots and lanes were converted into ‘streeteries,’ sidewalks and bike lanes were quickly expanded, and ‘slow streets’ and ‘open streets’ programs flourished. With gyms and yoga studios closed, people around the world rekindled a love of walking, running, skating, and biking.

To help people get outside and help Providence recover from the pandemic, in 2020 the Providence Streets Coalition began funding and supporting tactical urbanism projects across the city with its Creative and Safe Streets mini-grant program. In 2023, that effort expanded statewide to become the [Rhode Island Streets Transformation Project](#)⁵.



Broad Street Demonstration Day, summer 2018

Why Hope Street?

In January 2020, the City of Providence released its [Great Streets Initiative and Urban Trail Network Master Plan](#), which envisions that every street in Providence should be safe, clean, healthy, inclusive, and vibrant. The plan proposes the creation of a 78-mile network of urban trails that will connect every neighborhood with high-quality routes for people walking, riding bicycles, using wheelchairs and mobility devices, accessing transit, or using shared micro-mobility options like scooters and e-bikes, with a goal that residents and visitors can safely and comfortably travel to schools, jobs, and other important destinations like parks, libraries, and museums.

Currently, with two lanes for driving and two lanes for parking, Hope Street is designed primarily for those who drive personal vehicles. This leaves many others without affordable, reliable, and safe transportation – including children and youth, people who cannot afford cars, people who cannot drive due to disabilities or age, new immigrants and refugees, people who are legally barred from driving, and people who simply choose not to drive. This project location was determined to intentionally provide safer access to activity centers that attract older adults and young families, including the Rochambeau Community Library, East Side / Mount Hope YMCA, Hope High School, faith institutions, banks, pharmacies, and local businesses.

For a detailed understanding of why improving active mobility and public transportation is vital for community health, equity and affordability, access, quality of life, economic vitality, and

combating climate change, please visit pvdstreets.org/why.

After 12 neighborhood meetings were held across the city in March 2019, the first draft of the Great Streets Plan was released at a public meeting and online in June 2019. This draft identified Morris Avenue, a low-volume street parallel to Hope, as a potential ‘neighborhood greenway,’ with no changes to Hope Street north of Doyle Avenue. A neighborhood greenway is a type of urban trail that implements traffic calming and wayfinding to low-traffic streets. However, when soliciting community feedback to the draft plan, putting a protected urban trail on Hope Street all the way to the Pawtucket border was the most-requested change citywide.

In response, the City of Providence proposed a two-way urban trail on Hope Street that would consolidate parking to one side of the street in the final plan. However, like many of the proposed urban trails, this project is only a conceptual segment of the whole envisioned network. No funding has been allocated and no further design work on Hope Street has been completed besides the community-led, temporary project described in this report.

Neighborhood Map



Ok but really, why Hope Street?

Community support for an urban trail on Hope Street is the primary reason the Providence Streets Coalition chose it to test and gather feedback by doing a tactical urbanism project.

Other motivations include:

- A history of highly attended, successful open streets (car-free) events — the springtime Hope Street Block Party and holiday season Winter Stroll. These events have attracted up to 10,000 residents and visitors to enjoy and shop on Hope Street by fully eliminating vehicle traffic for one day. They are widely attended and beloved events that bring great economic benefits to local businesses. Our project proposed pedestrianizing 25% of the street for seven days, rather than 100% of the street for one day.
- In 2016 the City of Providence found that there was **not sufficient parking demand**⁶ on Hope Street to necessitate parking meters. Parking is also not allowed overnight on Hope Street, meaning all residents have driveways or the ability to park on side streets.
- Anecdotally, we knew that parking occupancy is extremely low between Mayflower and Olney Street (south of the business district). The parking lanes on both sides of the street often act as de-facto urban trails, except when one or two cars are sprinkled in. Then, people on bikes, scooters, and wheelchairs must swerve dangerously back into the lane with cars and the #1 RIPTA bus.
- Hope Street is among the top 10 corridors with the highest number of total bike crashes for 2009-21, at 2.83 per year.

Neighborhood map of Mount Hope from the Great Streets Plan



The August 2023 Hope Street Block Party. Photo: Hope Street Merchants Association

Its pedestrian crashes were 4.41 per year, which does not place it in the top 10. There have been 13 bike or pedestrian crashes on Hope in the past three years. Locations with crashes within the temporary trail study area are Rochambeau (9/24/20), Doyle (1/23/19), and Carrington (10/21/19). All of these crashes resulted in an injury. Note: North Main Street, which runs parallel to Hope Street, has a much higher crash rate and is thus a higher priority for permanent safety improvements. However, the vehicle speeds and volumes on North Main make it far too dangerous to be feasible for a tactical urbanism project using light-weight materials and volunteers.

- An established need for traffic calming: in the summer of 2021, the Providence Police Department installed digital sign sleds asking drivers to slow down at Hope & Cypress. Traffic speed data from the City's Department of Public Works finds that the majority of drivers are routinely driving around 30 mph rather than 25 — an increase which causes serious risk to people traveling outside of motor vehicles. Additionally, the speed camera just around the corner on Olney Street near Hope High School issued **26,536 tickets for drivers going 11mph or higher over the 20mph speed limit in 2019 – the highest amount in the entire city.** This makes sense, as Hope Street's travel lanes are 12 feet wide – 2 feet wider than the recommended national standard of 10'. According to the Federal Highway Administration, there is a 1.3 to 1.7 mph increase

in speeds for every one foot increase in shoulder width on two-lane highways. Hope Street's mostly-empty parking lanes result in essentially two 8' wide shoulders with long sightlines. This design causes speeding.

- Convenience and access to many destinations as a straight, north-south route connecting three neighborhoods on the East Side. People riding bicycles and scooters use Hope Street as a commuter path because it is a direct link between Pawtucket, Summit, Brown University, and Fox Point. Many people suggested that these riders should use side roads since they are not as busy, but many cyclists commented that they do not use parallel streets because of the steeper hills on either side of the road.



Low parking volumes and long sight-lines in the residential sections of Hope Street contribute to a chronic speeding issues.

- An abundance of Providence Streets Coalition volunteers live in the neighborhood who were eager to support and participate in the project.

At the time of writing in summer 2023, Providence's urban trail network as a whole is approximately 35% complete, and recently received \$27 million in federal funding from the Federal Highway Administration. However, none of that funding is specifically reserved for Hope Street.

Why Olney to Lauriston?

While we would have liked to test a temporary trail on the entire three miles of Hope Street from Pawtucket to Fox Point, the material costs and distance for volunteer data collection would have been too high. So, we decided to choose a one-mile segment to test for one week — expanding on the model of the City's 2018 test on Broad Street for four blocks for one day.



Curb bumpouts north of Lauriston Street presented a major design challenge for a temporary trail

Olney Street has existing protected bike lanes that are already used to connect from Summit to Benefit Street and downtown Providence, so we decided to begin the temporary trail there. North of Lauriston Avenue, the existing sidewalk bumpouts at several intersections presented too much of a design challenge for a temporary project, so we decided to end the temporary trail there. It's important to note that any design process for a permanent urban trail on Hope Street would have to contend with the bumpouts. Solutions certainly exist, just not ones that were practical or feasible for a one week test.

Why only one week?

The temporary trail project involved data collection and surveying for 12-15 hours per day at several locations. So while we would have liked to run the test for longer than one week, we simply did not have the staff or volunteer resources to do so.

Why the east side of the street?

When designing a trail for active mobility, it's best to have as few potential conflict points with drivers. In the early stages of planning the temporary trail, we counted every driveway and cross-street intersection on Hope Street and found the amount on each side to be roughly equal. We were and still are agnostic to whether a permanent urban trail should be planned for the west or east side of the street, and believe that if plans move ahead, that is something the community should decide.

Who organized and funded this?

The Hope Street Temporary Trail was a grant-funded project managed by two lead organizers and supported by three funders.



Founded in 2019, the Providence Streets Coalition is an alliance of 42 community organizations, local businesses, schools, neighborhood associations, and thousands of engaged individuals advocating for people-friendly streets in Providence. We support providing safer streets, more transportation choices, and

policies that advance mobility justice to improve safety, equity, sustainability, prosperity, health, and quality-of-life in our city and region. We believe in constructing streets in a way that lets all people move safely and easily no matter how they travel – whether driving, walking, biking, taking buses, scooting, skating, and/or using mobility-assistance devices. More mobility choices and people-centered roads will result in less traffic congestion and air pollution, fewer crashes, and a more healthy and just city. Staff of the Providence Streets Coalition led the grant-writing, project management, community engagement, volunteer recruitment and management, and logistics for the Hope Street Temporary Trail.

Thriving Places Collaborative

Since 2020, Thriving Places Collaborative is woman-owned and disability-owned company that has worked with community organizations and municipalities to bring their placemaking

projects to fruition through project management, community engagement, and evaluation. They aim to create public spaces that are artistically engaging, ecologically regenerative, and socially just. Throughout the community engagement process, they center and elevate the voices of residents, workers, and visitors in the neighborhoods they serve. Thriving Places provided support in grant-writing and project management and led data collection and evaluation for the Hope Street Temporary Trail.



AARP is the country's largest non-profit organization, with a mission to empower people to choose how they

live as they age. AARP sponsored the Hope Street Temporary Trail through its national Community Challenge grant program, which helps communities become more livable for people of all ages. For an understanding of how complete streets policy and active mobility infrastructure improves the mobility of older adults, visit [aarp.org/ppi/issues/livable-communities/transportation](https://www.aarp.org/ppi/issues/livable-communities/transportation).



3M is an American manufacturing company operating in the fields of industry, worker safety, healthcare and consumer goods, including many transportation-related products. The company's Transportation & Electronics Business Group's (TEBG) has a commitment to support urban safety and mobility, working to ensure everyone has access to safe, affordable and sustainable transportation options. 3M sponsored the Hope Street Temporary Trail through in-kind materials donations, technical assistance, and funding through 3MGives.



SPIN is a micro-mobility company that is transforming cities and communities by offering accessible, affordable and sustainable forms of personal mobility. SPIN has operated in Providence since 2021. SPIN sponsored the Hope Street Temporary Trail project via their "Streets" program which invests funding and resources towards infrastructure projects that make our streets safer and more accessible to all.



Since 2004, the Rhode Island Bicycle Coalition (RI Bike) has worked to create safe & accessible biking in for all. Their dedicated board, volunteers and members envision safe & connected bike routes separated from traffic within easy reach of all Rhode Islanders. RI Bike provided insurance for the Hope Street Temporary Trail, as well as helped organize a "Bike Bus" to school for students and parents of MLK Elementary School.



Families from MLK Elementary biking to school on the Hope Street Temporary Trail

III. PRE-TEMPORARY TRAIL

Community Engagement Timeline

At its core, the Hope Street Temporary Trail was in and of itself a method of community engagement — a way for everybody who lives near or travels on Hope Street to experience an urban trail in 3D and give their feedback. Demonstration projects are one of the most robust community engagement methods available in urban planning.

However, we knew that thorough engagement well in advance of the demonstration project would be necessary to inform residents and businesses, and gather their ideas for making the temporary project as safe and successful as possible. Here is the timeline of engagement activities that occurred from June 2021 through October 2022:

- **June 2021:** Community engagement for the Hope Street Temporary Trail began with preliminary, exploratory discussions with the leadership of the Hope Street Merchants Association and local elected officials.
- **July 19, 2021:** Staff of Providence Streets Coalition and Thriving Places Collaborative presented the idea at a Summit Neighborhood Association meeting. Finding support for the concept of a temporary trail among neighbors, we decided to move forward with the project.
- **July-October 2021:** We began having informal discussions with Hope Street business owners and nonprofits about the project.
- **November 3, 2021:** We launched the preliminary Hope Street Temporary Trail Community Survey, which collected 500 responses between November 3 and December 31, 2021. The survey was advertised via the Summit Neighborhood Association, Providence Streets Coalition, and Councilor Nirva La-

Fortune's email and social media channels. We also printed out 250 postcards and placed them in mailboxes in the project area until supplies ran out. See the results in the next section.

- **November 6-10, 2021:** We conducted the first parking study. The City of Providence's GIS (Geographic Information Systems) Manager and Curbside Administrator created a parking availability map, detailing how many total parking spots are available on each block of Hope Street from Olney to 4th Street and one block east and west. We then recruited 30 volunteers to help us count parking occupancy — how many cars were parked per block. Our volunteers recorded parking occupancy four times per day for four days, a total of 16 times for each block on a Saturday, Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday. See results in the next section.
- **November 16th, 2021:** The first public meeting dedicated to the Hope Street Temporary Trail was hosted by Councilwoman Nirva LaFortune and State Representative Rebecca Kislak. The meeting took place both in person at Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School and on Zoom. Approximately 40 people attended the meeting, including residents and several business owners, and a dynamic discussion about the project took place.
- **December-April, 2021:** We evaluated the information we had collected in the fall. During this time, SPIN was purchased by a European company, delaying our grant timeline by several months. We also applied to the AARP Community Challenge Grant and 3M Foundation grants.
- **May 16, 2022:** We presented the findings from the survey and parking study to the Summit Neighborhood Association and further discussed the project.
- **June 28, 2022:** We presented the findings from the survey and parking study to the Board of the Hope Street Merchants Association at Kreatelier, and received supportive feedback for the project.
- **June/July 2022:** We actually received the funding from all three grantors and were able to start purchasing materials and ramping up engagement.
- **July 18, 2022:** We held another public meeting at the Rocheambeau Community Library with over 80 people in attendance. There was a long question and answer period.
- **August 1, 2022:** We met with a group of parents from the YMCA Mount Hope Childcare Center centered around crosswalks and safe pickup/dropoff.



Survey postcards were placed in mailboxes in fall 2021

- **August 9-12, 2022:** We canvassed every business and residence on Hope Street from Olney to Lauriston. Residents who were not home received an informational flyer about the upcoming project. Every business was offered an 'in-business' survey collecting travel information from customers through the end of the trial in October. See results in the next section.

the east side of Hope Street, and put flyers in every resident mailbox reminding them to park on the west side of the street from October 1st-8th.

- **September 30-October 8, 2022:** We built the Temporary Trail! And we gathered feedback from visitors - over 2,235 intercept surveys. See results in Chapter 5.
- **October 8-October 31, 2022:** The City of Providence conducted a follow-up community survey.
- **November 2022 - September 2023:** We compiled the data that we collected and wrote this report.



In-business survey at Francesco's Pizzeria

- **September 17 & 24, 2022:** On the two Saturdays before the installation of the temporary trail, Providence Streets Coalition staff tabled at the Hope Street Farmers Market in Lippitt Park and outside the Rochambeau Community Library. We had renderings of the trail available, and were able to speak with dozens of residents about what to expect.
- **September 22, 2022:** We hosted a final pre-trial public meeting at the Rochambeau Community Library, with well over 100 people in attendance. Also in attendance were representatives from multiple city departments – Planning, Public Works, and Police — as well as City Councilor Nirva LaFortune and Representative Kislak. Many residents at this meeting expressed concerns, which we incorporated into the final design and analysis of the project.
- **September 25-27, 2022:** We placed posters in businesses, large yard signs in the ground and on telephone poles along



PSC staff canvassing residences on Hope Street



PSC staff tabling at the Hope Street Farmers Market

Data Collection: Community Survey

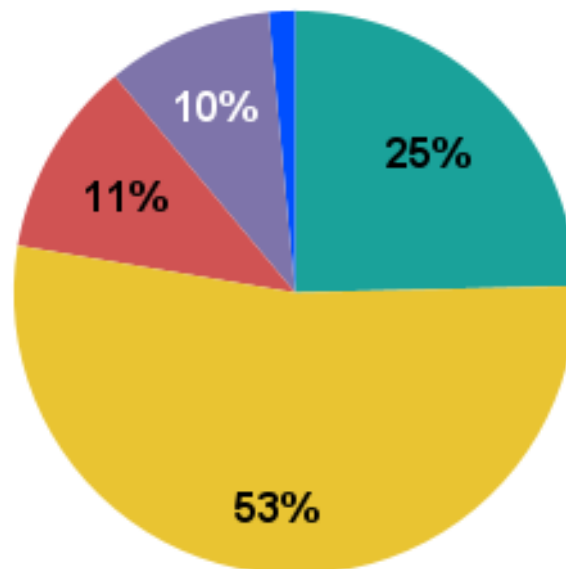
A preliminary online community survey was open in November and December 2021. The purpose of this survey was to gather feedback from neighbors about the project. We used this information to inform the design of the trail and mitigate concerns that the community anticipated might occur as a result of the project. During this process, we gathered 496 responses. The full survey questionnaire is available in Appendix A.

- 55% either lived on Hope St or within 2 blocks, another 25% lived within a quarter mile
- 49% of those who currently ride a bike on Hope St had safety concerns
- 27 people (5.4%) had been involved in a crash on Hope St
- 5.4% of respondents identified as disabled or mobility challenged
- 55% already ride a bike on Hope St at least a few times per year
- 57% said that speeding drivers makes them feel unsafe
- 61% drive a car on Hope St several times a week.
- 64% expressed support for a permanent trail on Hope St
- 64% of respondents said they would be more likely to ride a bike on Hope St with a safer trail
- 77% said they can find a parking spot in less than five minutes
- 16 business owners responded, 10 did not support a permanent trail

Community Comments:

- *I am excited for this project! Hope St is such an important connection for cyclists but it is only for the fearless that are willing to contend with impatient drivers.*
- *I was t-boned by a car on my commute home - hospitalized, spent a month in a wheelchair*
- *More space between those walking and those dining outdoors! pushing a stroller down the sidewalks is a nightmare!*
- *I'm worried that trying this for just a few days will bring all the anger and confusion from drivers without the time to adjust and appreciate the benefits. Recommend lots of "this is an experiment" signage!*
- *I'm in favor of the trail on south water - it's kind of like an expressway over there anyways, but I worry a trail on Hope Street could hurt some small biz on the street. I know I personally avoid tight parking places - like Thayer - because I have two kids under 7 and it's difficult to park far, carry bags and walk kids alone.*
- *I realize the idealists want a city that allows for less of a carbon footprint but we do not live in a planned city. This is an old city with narrow streets. I bike often but for fun. When I see all these changes taking place it is often at the expense of motorist and local businesses, for the gain of a few at the expense of many. STOP IT!*

When you visit Hope Street by car, how long does it typically take to find parking?



● Less than a minute ● 1-5 minutes ● More than 5 minutes

REASONS FOR SUPPORT:

- Drivers will be less likely to hit cyclists, cyclists will be less concerned about getting hit
- Will be easier to walk around outdoor dining
- Trail becomes part of a network to make it safer for people to get around Providence without using a car
- Will serve as a connection, especially between Blackstone Blvd. and East Bay Path, and easier access for bikes to train station in Pawtucket
- People would frequent local businesses more because they wouldn't have to deal with the hassle of parking
- Give people more options for how to get to the area
- The atmosphere is more pleasant in cities with bike lanes
- Bike lane would slow traffic down/prevent speeding/create a safer atmosphere
- Will make the neighborhood environment less polluted
- An urban trail will provide a place to push strollers when streets are covered in snow/more safety for parents crossing Hope to reach the Morris Ave Tot Park
- It will make it easier for less confident bikers in my family to ride with me
- Easier to get to class without worrying about cars hitting me
- More stores could open because it would redirect people to parts of the city where they don't often visit
- I'd be able to bike almost all the way to work and bike to get groceries, which I currently do by car
- Safer to walk, exercise, especially long distances
- Make Providence less car-oriented

MOST COMMON CONCERNS:

- There will be increased congestion on side streets
- Fewer people will go to the area if there is less parking available
- It will hurt businesses
- Bikers will run into pedestrians
- Cars will be more likely to hit cyclists and pedestrians

OTHER CONCERNS:

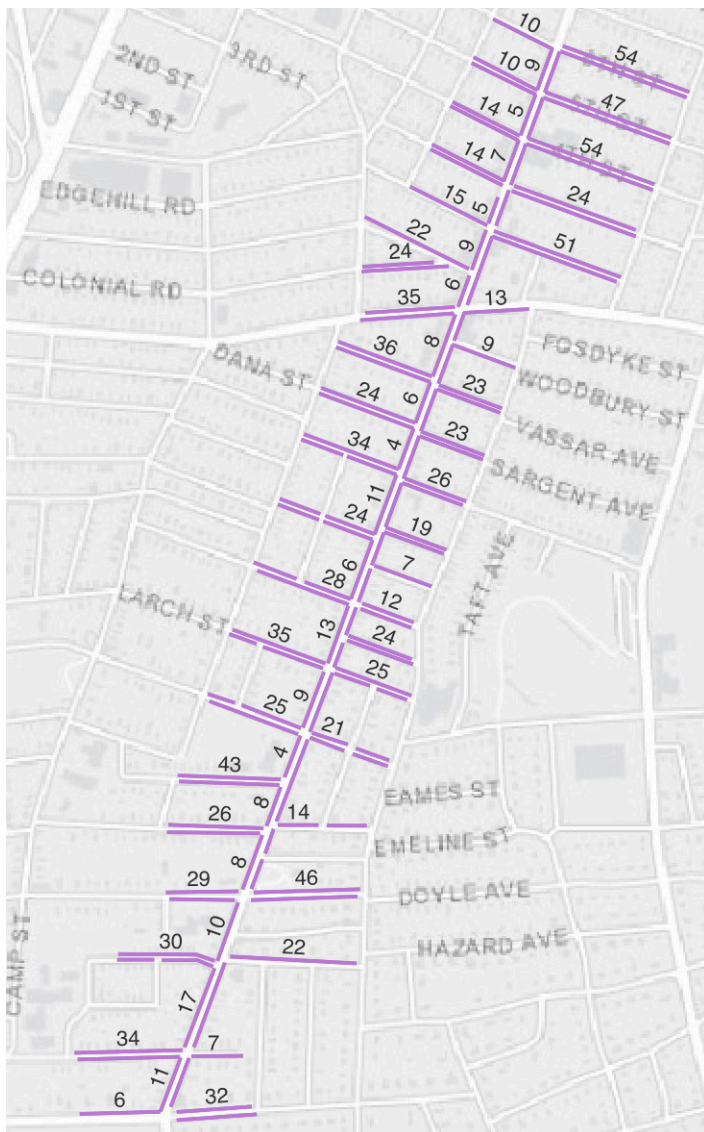
- It won't connect properly to other trails
- It is too cold/snowy in Providence for a bike lane
- Snow removal will not be properly handled
- Fallen leaves will make it dangerous
- People will throw trash in the bike lane
- It is a waste of tax payer money
- Fix the sidewalks instead because it's a better use of resources
- This will only benefit a tiny fraction of the population
- Cars will drive/park in the bike lane
- People will walk in the bike lane/businesses will put tables in it
- Powerful institutions will oppose it
- The project will get delayed/abandoned
- It will be poorly designed/messy rollout
- Signs for the bike trail will confuse motorists/it will make the space more chaotic
- There won't be enough bike/scooter parking
- Lack of parking will lead to more road rage
- "Bikelash"
- Bad attitudes from cyclists
- It will be harder to board buses
- The street will be too narrow
- Kids will think they can ride bikes in every street, since they could ride on this one
- People will speed through the area because they won't slow down to look for parking
- It will become a dead zone/no one will use the trail
- Too many people will want to use it at the same time
- Dooring will be inevitable
- There might be "moral outrage" :)

Data Collection: Parking Study

We knew when we started this project that consolidating parking to one side of Hope Street would be the main issue of concern. From anecdotal experience, we knew that parking occupancy is very low on Hope Street outside the business district, and very high within the business district. But exactly how low? And exactly how high? When? And what about the side streets? Would replacing one side of parking with an urban trail really cause an untenable situation for residents of the side streets? How much farther would people have to walk?

That's why, a year before the temporary trail itself was installed, we worked with the City of Providence and a group of 30 volunteers to establish a baseline data set of parking **availability** (how many spaces are available on each block) and **occupancy** (how many spaces are actually occupied at different times of day) in the area. The parking study area included the one mile of Hope Street on which the trail would be located, as well as one block to the east and west.

Parking availability map of Hope Street from Olney Street to 4th Street. All parking availability was calculated by City of Providence Department of Public Works.



We shared the results of this initial parking study with the community and published a summary online. Residents pointed out during the trial that our initial analyses during the Pre-Trial Parking Study data included a few streets where we believed there was parking where there was in fact a No Parking zone. These zones were located on Lauriston Ave, West 4th St, West 5th St, and Cypress Avenue. **In our original count, we believed that there were 1,450 parking spaces available in the study area, and the actual number of parking spaces is 1,365.**

After community feedback, we also adjusted the analysis to more closely focus on the northern business district, which has the highest concentration of businesses. This area runs from Dana/Lewis Streets to 6th Street and has 617 parking spaces. We have updated both the pre-trial and demonstration parking studies to more accurately reflect the total curb count in the study area.

Pre-Trial Parking Study Methodology and Findings:

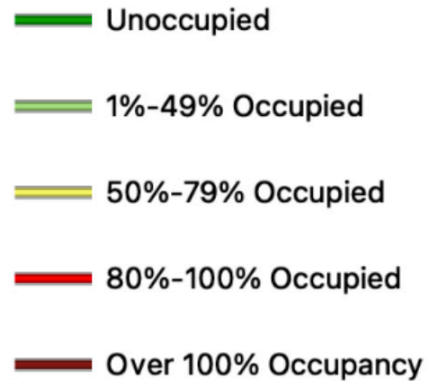
- 30 volunteers collected parking occupancy on a Saturday, Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday in early November, 2021. Counting happened during the morning (8am-10am), midday (11am-1pm), afternoon (3pm-5pm), and evening (7pm-9pm). Each block was counted 16 times.
- After community feedback, we conducted a pretrial count in the business district on Friday morning as well as 3 full counts of the entire study area on a Friday in September 2022, since residents and business owners indicated that was one of the busiest days on Hope St.
- 132 Parking Spaces are located on the east side of Hope Street between Olney Street and Lauriston Ave, which represents 9.6% of parking spaces in the total study area. 1,233 parking spaces remained available during the trial.
- In the business district (Dana/Lewis to 6th Street), there are 45 parking spaces on the East Side of Hope Street. Because the trail ended at Lauriston Street, **the trail occupied 30 of these spaces, which represents just 4.8% of the total parking spaces in the area.** If the trail had extended all the way to 6th Street, it would have used 7.3% of parking spaces in the area.
- The average occupancy rate was 27%, meaning 73% of parking spaces were available for parking. On average, 970 parking spaces were available on Hope St or within one block of Hope Street. Many more were available within two or three blocks.
- The highest occupancy rate at the busiest times (Friday midday and Saturday afternoon) was 35%, and there were 452 and 442 vacant spaces, respectively.
- The lowest occupancy rate occurred on Monday midday, when only 16% of parking spaces were occupied, and 1164 spaces

were available.

- In the business district of Hope Street, there was an average occupancy rate of 33%, meaning that 67% of parking spaces were available for parking. On average, there are 408 available spaces in the business district.
- The highest occupancy rates in the business district occurred at Friday midday and Saturday afternoon, with an occupancy rate of 47% percent. At these times, 275 and 255 spaces were available, respectively.
- The lowest occupancy rate in the business district occurred on Sunday midday, when 17% of parking spaces were occupied. There were 510 available spaces at this time.

A full chart detailing the occupancy rates is located in Appendices B and C.

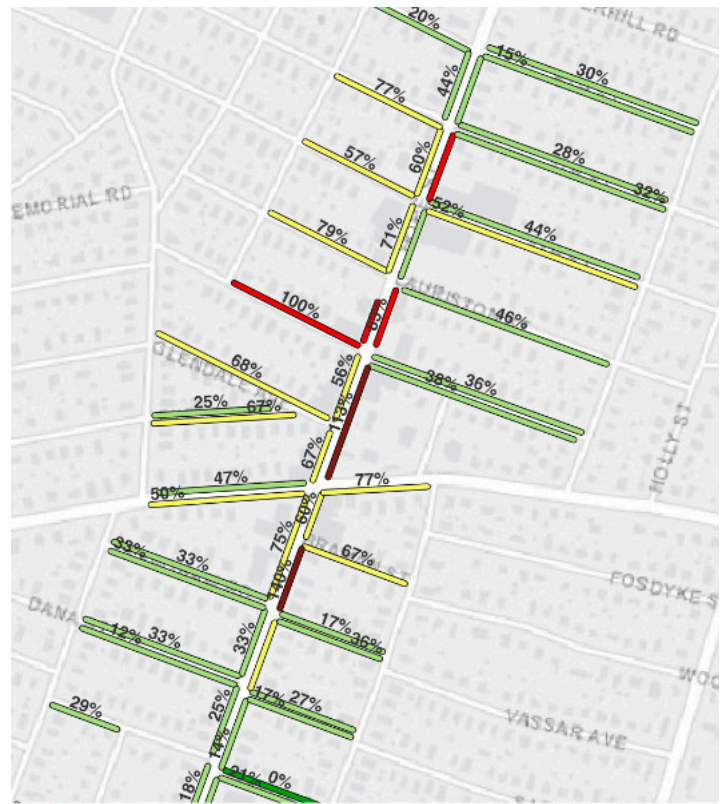
Map legend:



**Pre-Trial Parking Occupancy on Saturday Afternoon:
Savoy to 6th Street (average occupancy rate: 47%)**



**Pre-Trial Parking Occupancy on Friday Midday:
Savoy to 6th Street (average occupancy rate: 47%)**



The parking study confirmed anecdotal observations of high parking occupancy rates on Hope Street itself, especially on weekend afternoons, but with plentiful available parking within a one or two block walk.

Accessible Parking Spot Identification

Before the trial, the only existing parking spots reserved for people with disability placards were on Hope Street at Savoy Street in front of the Church of the Redeemer, and one on Langham Street next to the Rochambeau Community Library. Like most commercial corridors in Providence, Hope Street does not have nearly enough marked accessible parking spots for people whose mobility challenges require them to park as close to their destination as possible. **We are in full support of expanding accessible parking citywide**, and added two permanent accessible spots on Hope Street as part of this project. See the next chapter for more details.

Project Design, Material Selection, and Local Subcontractors

With our grant funding, we were able to hire the Boston-based transportation planning and engineering firm Nelson/Nygaard to help us design the trail. We wanted to take our rough concept of a two-way urban trail that could fit into a parking lane, and flesh it out to have block-by-block designs to use as a guide during installation that included all markings, bus stop locations, and crosswalks. We were also able to consult with the leaders of the Dallas-based Better Block Foundation, a nonprofit that helps communities achieve grassroots urban design, on what kinds of temporary materials to use.

After consulting with these experts, City of Providence planners and traffic engineers, and community members, the final design elements of the Hope Street Temporary Trail included:

- A white line of 4" wide, removable preformed thermoplastic tape donated by 3M. This tape line was installed one foot outside the existing parking lane line by professional local contractors Safety Markings, Inc. located in Richmond, RI, and later removed by volunteers.
- 350 white delineator posts with 12lb bases that were placed in between the parking lane line and the tape line by volunteers. Purchased from Traffic Signs & Safety, Inc. located in Bristol, RI, and placed and removed by volunteers. Delineators were placed approximately every 12 feet. Posts were also placed in the center of the trail at the beginning and end of each block to prevent driving and parking in the trail.
- Yellow dashed lines of 4" wide, removable preformed thermoplastic tape donated by 3M. These tape lines were installed in the middle of the trail to separate northbound and southbound bike/scooter traffic foot by professional local contractors Safety Markings, Inc. located in Richmond, RI, and later removed by volunteers.
- Four permanent crosswalks made of 12" wide preformed thermoplastic donated by 3M at the following locations:
 1. Hope & Olney (serving Hope High School)
 2. Hope & Doyle (serving the YMCA)
 3. Hope & Montague (serving the YMCA Daycare Center)
 4. Hope & Langham (serving Rochambeau Library)
- The temporary relocation of an accessible parking spot on the east side of Hope Street, around the corner of Savoy Street.
- The addition of two permanent accessible parking spots on the west side of Hope Street in the business district. Both had signage installed by the City and were outlined in temporary blue spray chalk and painted with wheelchair stencils by volunteers. The blue markings have since faded, but the signs

remain.

- After consultation with local businesses, a temporary loading zone was reserved on the west side of Hope Street between Braman and Rochambeau.
- White bicycle, wheelchair, skateboard, and skating symbols with directional arrows created by spraying temporary spray chalk over stencils. All symbols were painted by volunteers and removed by a local powerwashing company.



Volunteers creating the trail



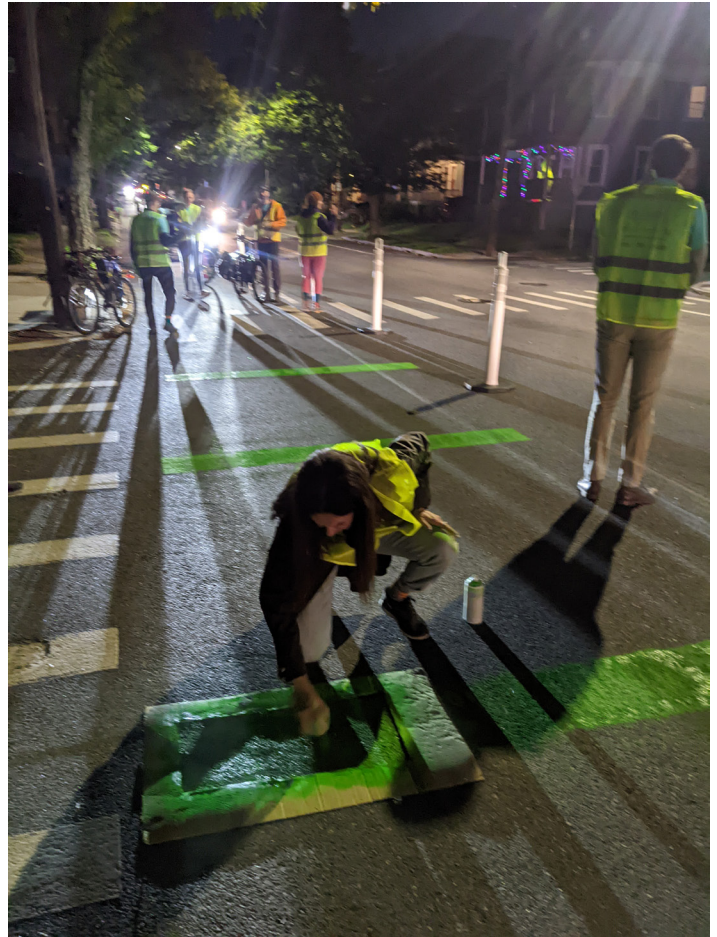
Contractor installing fresh crosswalks

- 2' by 1' Green "crossbike" stripes marking "conflict zones" where the trail crossed with driveways and intersections. These were created by spraying temporary spray chalk over cardboard cutouts. All stripes were painted by volunteers and removed by a local powerwashing company.
- Three wooden temporary bus boarding platforms custom designed and built by local designers and carpenters Yasmine Hassan and Cristian Lopez. Originally we had planned to install five, but moving and assembling them in the rain proved to be a bigger challenge than expected. Each bus island's central platform was 8' x 8', with gently sloping 8' wide platforms

on either side that conformed to ADA guidelines. These were each assembled and installed by volunteers. After installation on Hope Street, the surface of each platform was painted with yellow dashes, arrows, and white crosswalk stripes delineating where pedestrians should cross the platform to get on or off the bus.

- Five RIPTA sign boards indicating where to wait for the bus as well as a QR code linking to a survey for transit riders.

Installation by Safety Markings, Inc. and a group of 50 volunteers began on Friday, September 30th and finished on Sunday, October 2nd.



City Permitting

Because there was no full street closure, the only city permitting necessary for the Hope Street Temporary Trail was a permit to request the posting of Emergency No Parking Tow Zone Signs from the Department of Public Works. Because parking is already free for the entire length of Hope Street, no meter revenue was lost.



IV. Pre- and During Temporary Trail

Eco Counter

In order to measure the amount of people using bikes and scooters on Hope Street before, during, and after the trial, we used an Eco-Counter pneumatic tube counter. A pneumatic tube counter can be easily installed in the street and determines the distance between the front and back wheels of the traveler. With this information, the tube counter is able to distinguish bicycles and scooters from motorized vehicles in mixed traffic, extract directional data, and accurately count the number of cyclists or scooter riders in a group.

We installed two tube counters on Hope Street on September 17th, two weeks before the trial. One was installed in the northbound direction at Fearless Fish Market, and one was installed in the southbound direction at the Rochambeau Library. The tubes were installed from the curb to about halfway into the travel lane, where people on bikes and scooters tend to ride in mixed traffic.



Temporary pneumatic tube counters on Hope Street

Results

We saw the amount of daily bike and scooter rides on Hope Street more than double during the temporary trail demonstration. The tubes counted a total of 1,800 rides on the trail during the installation.

To note, there were a higher number of trail users during the scheduled Providence Bike Jam event on the evening of Friday, October 7th. A spreadsheet of the complete counter data is included in Appendix J.

Bike & Scooter Counts	Pre-Trial 9/17-9/30	During Trial 10/1-10/8	Post Trial 10/9-10/22
Fearless Fish (northbound pre-trial and post-trial, both directions during the trial)	Total: 895 Average over 14 days: 64/day	Total: 1800 Average over 8 days: 225/day	Total: 718 Average over 13.5 days: 51
Rochambeau Library (southbound pre-trial, during, and post-trial for those who chose not to use the temporary trail)	Total: 669 Average over 14 days: 48/day	Total: 193 Average over 8 days: 24/day	Total: 502 Average over 13.5 days: 37
Total counts in both directions per day	112/day	249/day	88/day

Speed Study

One of the goals of the Hope Street Temporary Trail was to see whether or not an urban trail would create a traffic calming effect, because over half of our pre-trial survey respondents said that speeding was a top concern and there have been documented speeding issues in the past. The speed limit on Hope Street is 25mph, the default for Providence streets.

We requested that the City of Providence's Department of Public Works take speed data on Hope Street before and after the trial. In standard traffic engineering and planning, speed is measured by the 85th percentile — the speed at or below which 85 percent of drivers travel on a road segments.

Results

Hope between Montague and Carrington Streets:

Pre-trial collection: September 23, 2022-September 29, 2022

- 85th percentile speed: 31mph
- 50th percentile (median) speed: 26mph
- Max speed: 58mph

During-trial collection: September 30, 2022 - October 8, 2022

- 85th percentile speed: 31mph
- 50th percentile (median) speed: 26mph
- Max speed: 58mph

Conclusion: the Hope Street Temporary Trail had no effect on speeding at Hope @ Montague

Hope at Whiting Street:

Pre-trial collection: September 19, 2022 - September 29, 2022

- 85th percentile speed: 32mph
- 50th percentile (median) speed: 28mph
- Max speed: 73mph

During-trial collection: September 30, 2022 - October 8, 2022

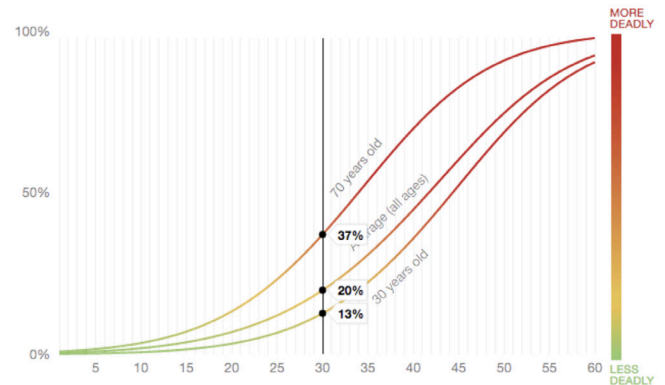
- 85th percentile speed: 31mph
- 50th percentile (median) speed: 27mph
- Max speed: 72mph

Conclusion: the Hope Street Temporary Trail had a very slight traffic calming effect at Hope @ Whiting

Overall, we conclude that the Hope Street Temporary Trail did not have much effect on driving speeds. This makes sense since, by removing parked cars from one side, the trail widened sightlines for drivers rather than narrowing them. However, **the maximum recorded speeds of over 70mph recorded are extremely alarming** and we recommend the City of Providence implement traffic calming strategies to reduce the ability to drive that fast on city streets. The 85th percentile speeds of 31-32mph (rather than the posted 25mph speed limit) may not seem so high, but those 6-7mph represent a crucial interval for human safety: According to [a report commissioned by AAA's Foundation for Traffic Safety](#):

The Chance of Being Killed by a Car Going 30 mph

Roll over the curved lines to see the risk at any speed



Graph: ProPublica

“The average risk of severe injury for a pedestrian struck by a vehicle reaches 10% at an impact speed of 16 mph, 25% at 23 mph, 50% at 31 mph, 75% at 39 mph, and 90% at 46 mph. The average risk of death for a pedestrian reaches 10% at an impact speed of 23 mph, 25% at 32 mph, 50% at 42 mph, 75% at 50 mph, and 90% at 58 mph. Risks vary significantly by age.”

For example, the average risk of severe injury or death for a 70-year old pedestrian struck by a car traveling at 25 mph is similar to the risk for a 30-year-old pedestrian struck at 35 mph.”

Because of the significant injury and fatality risk doubling between the mid 20s and the low 30s, **the City of Providence should do everything it can to bring the design speed – and at least 85% of drivers – on Hope Street into compliance with the 25mph speed limit.**

The City's speed counts are available in Appendix I.

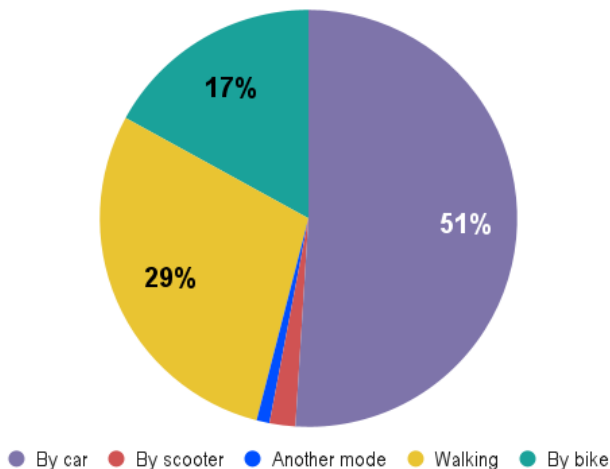
In-Business Survey

In order to gather information on how people travel to the businesses on Hope Street, we created a survey specifically for customers. In early August 2022, we placed sign boards containing a flyer and website link in over 25 businesses. Four businesses requested paper copies of the survey for their customers to fill out in addition to the website link. The survey was available to take from early August until the end of October, and it allowed for multiple entries to capture multiple trips to different businesses on different days. From the business survey, we discovered that roughly half of the visitors to Hope St. businesses arrive in a car, and the other half of the respondents arrived primarily via walking, bike, or scooter.

Survey response results:

- Throughout the trial period, we received a total of 390 responses. Of these surveys, 283 were taken before the trial period, 54 during the trial period, and 53 after the trial period.
- 50.8% of respondents traveled to Hope Street in cars. 28.1% walked, 17.4% rode a bike, 2.4% rode a Scooter, and 1.3% arrived via other modes (multiple modes, ride share, or bus).
- Respondents visited 61 different businesses during the study period. As a note, not all of these businesses were directly adjacent to the trail, but all of them were located on Hope Street.
- Friday and Saturday were the most popular days to visit Hope Street, while Monday and Tuesday were the least popular days.
- Only 15% of respondents traveled to Hope Street after 6pm.

How did you arrive to Hope Street today?



Business visitation habits by user type

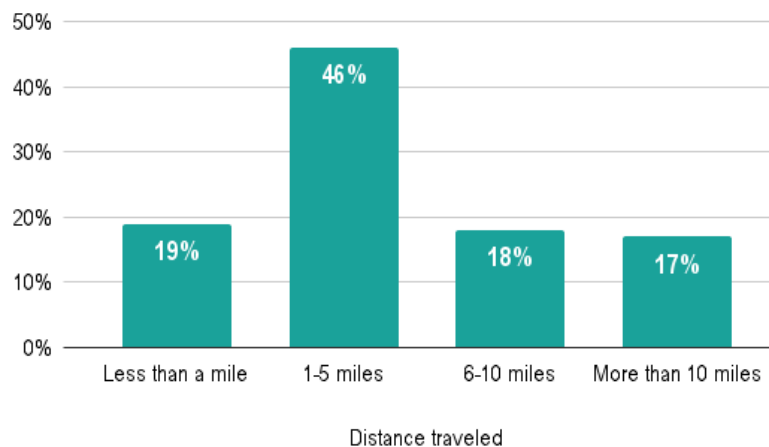
25% of pedestrians, 23% of bike/scooter users, and 20% of car users visited multiple businesses in their visits to Hope St. 23% of disabled/mobility challenged individuals visited multiple businesses in one visit to Hope St. These results are in line with what we expected, based on previous studies indicating that **people who walk and bike to businesses are more like to visit multiple locations with each visit than people who arrive by car.**

Before the trial, the in-business survey indicated that 90% of people arriving by car reported being able to find parking within 5 minutes, compared to 77% in our pre-trial community survey. This dropped significantly to 39% during the trial.

After the trial was over, 66% of people responding to the in-business survey said they were able to find parking in under 5 minutes. According to the intercept surveys, which we will describe in the next chapter in greater detail, during the trial, 52% of drivers reported being able to find parking within 5 minutes. We recognize that these are inconsistent results, which informed our final recommendations for the City of Providence in Chapter 7.

The people who visit Hope Street are primarily local residents. 47% of all visitors to Hope Street traveled less than a mile to arrive at the business, while 35% traveled between 1 and 5 miles. 9% of visitors traveled 6 to 10 miles to arrive, and the remaining 9% of all visitors to Hope Street businesses traveled more than 10 miles. **19% of people arriving by car traveled a mile or less to get to the businesses,** and 46% of people arriving by car traveled between 1 and 5 miles. 18% traveled between 6 and 10 miles, while 17% of visitors arriving by car traveled more than 10 miles. By micromobility device (bike or scooter), 57% of people visiting

How far did car users travel to arrive at Hope Street?



the area traveled less than a mile, and an additional 41% traveled 1-5 miles. 91% of pedestrians visiting Hope Street businesses traveled a mile or less.

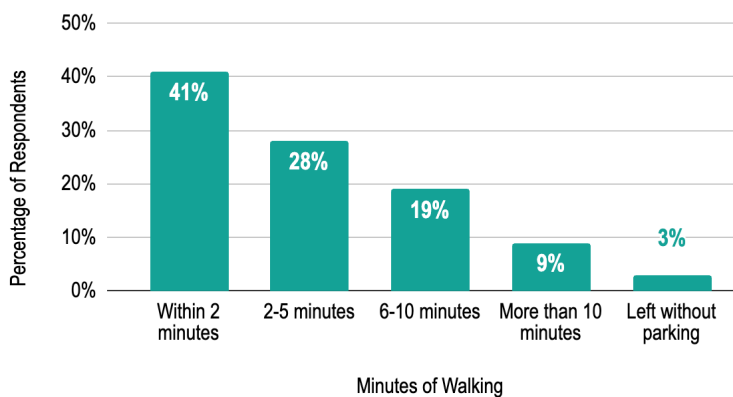
We measured the type of businesses that people visited in order to get a better understanding of where people were going using different types of modalities. We noticed some interesting differences between pedestrians, car users, and micromobility users (i.e. people arriving via bikes and scooters).

The most popular type of business for pedestrians to visit was a restaurant. In fact, 50% of pedestrian trips were to a restaurant. The second most common destination for pedestrians was retail stores, which accounted for 32% of pedestrian trips to the area. **Among micromobility users, retail stores were the most common destination, as 43% of all trips were to retail establishments.** The second most popular destination for people using micromobility options was restaurants, which were 32% of trips.

People in cars made 30% of their trips to retail establishments and restaurants equally, and 24% of car users visited a salon, while less than 2% of pedestrians or micromobility users visited a salon. Prior to the trial, several business owners expressed concerns that people using bikes and scooters would not visit retail destinations because they would be unable to carry their goods afterwards, but we did find that in fact, that was the most popular destination for that modality. Likewise, we heard reports specifically from salon owners that people who came to their businesses were primarily driving, and this turned out to be accurate.

Mobility challenged visitors to the business district

If you are mobility challenged or a caretaker of someone with a disability, how long did you have to walk in order to reach your destination?



11% of respondents (42) considered themselves mobility challenged or to be a caretaker of someone with a disability— of those, 78% (32) arrived by car, 18% (7) arrived by walking, and 4% (1 person) arrived via bus and bike.

Of those who arrived by car and identified as mobility challenged or as a caretaker of someone who is mobility challenged, 41% were able to walk to their destination within 2 minutes, 69% were able to walk within 5 minutes, and 88% were able to walk within 10 minutes. 9% of respondents with a disability or who identified

as being a caretaker of someone with a disability indicated it took them more than ten minutes of walking to reach their destination. One person indicated that they left the area because they could not find parking.

Most of the respondents who were mobility challenged were very concerned about the impact of the project on accessing the stores on Hope St. Their comments included:

- *If i can't park at the door, i can't shop there*
- *I was shocked to see an entire side of parking gone...It's already incredibly difficult to park on Hope Street--I can't imagine how much worse it will be on weekends now. There's never side street parking as it is now. What is the plan to make up for all the parking spots removed if the bike lane goes through?*
- *I use a walker and think this bike path is a terrible idea. I'm in favor of bike paths in the city and use the bike path on the Boulevard frequently using my special bike. Hope St is no place for a bike path. It makes it unsafe for those with mobility issues and for others trying to support local businesses, just a terrible inconvenience.*
- *Normally finding parking along this street is a significant challenge but with this Trail it is a nightmare. Not enough handicap parking/access at the best of times but now it is nigh impossible.*

General Business Patron Comments:

There was not a general consensus on whether or not visiting businesses in the area was more difficult as a result of the bike lane being present.

Some of the comments indicated that arriving by bike or scooter was very enjoyable and helped enhance the experience of living in the neighborhood. Respondents indicated that they appreciated the novelty of the temporary trail, and they were happy to see the experiment in progress. **Some people indicated that precisely because driving to the area was so difficult, they would be more likely to visit the district more often if they had the opportunity to avoid the hassle of parking.** Many people found joy in the ability to visit the area on bike or scooter and indicated that their children felt the same. Comments included:

- *The trail was great in the rain! I didn't have to worry as much about my super-wide umbrella hitting other pedestrians.*
- *I love walking and biking in this neighborhood. I live in this neighborhood for this reason!*
- *The Hope Street Temporary Trail is awesome! My kid was able to bike safely.*
- *My daughter brought her scooter - we reminded her not to scoot around the store :)*
- *I already ride here, but since this project came up, I've been paying more attention to how people act in cars and on foot. I'm excited to see this experiment being tried. I appreciate the*

forward thinking willingness to try new things.

Many people indicated the bike lane had a relatively neutral impact on the area. They indicated that the bike lane didn't slow the flow of traffic or make parking for the business district any more difficult than under ordinary circumstances. There was a sentiment that parking in the business district is generally pretty easy, and this did not change with the presence of the trail.

- I thought the bike lane was fun! First time I've pulled out my bike in years. Bubbie's has been opposing the trail due to a perceived lack of parking, but I was able to park in my usual spot directly across the street. There were only two cars in their parking lot behind the store at the time. I drove through again later in the day while church was in session, and there was still nearby parking available on Braman and 10 available spaces in their parking lot.*
- Parking in Providence can be difficult but Hope Street is always easy to park on.*
- Cars were going just as fast as they always go, the bike lane does not seem to slow anything down.*
- We bike on Hope St. more or less daily, but we also take a car when we do business there. For instance, the other day, we brought a dozen boxes of books to the library in our car, and my husband stopped by Bubbie's to get corned beef and chopped liver for sandwiches. Neither time did we have trouble parking.*

However, not everyone who visited businesses in the area was excited about the prospect of a trail. Many people feared that there would be a negative impact on the businesses and expressed that they would have trouble visiting the area in the event that the temporary trail became permanent. Many people acknowledged that the businesses in the area had already struggled during the COVID-19 pandemic and felt that the addition of an urban trail would be a further burden on the businesses because it would make access much more difficult. Some respondents indicated that the temporary trail made visiting the area more challenging and chaotic and ruined the experience of visiting the area. One person who took the survey stated that they left because they were unable to find parking. It is worth noting that the person who left due to lack of parking did so after the trail had already been taken down.

- Parking has rarely been an issue, but I can see the potential impact of a bike lane on these local businesses*
- I go to hope st pizza about 4 days a week I love the food. The people that restaurant are fantastic. Why do you to ruin their business.*
- Traffic noise and lots of car traffic confusion at the corner the store is located. Also a few bikes on the sidewalk, weaving in and out of tables on the sidewalk. Wishing the car parking was outdoor seating, not parking, and the sidewalk was for walking, not eating.*
- Parking is always challenging coming to Hope Street. It makes*

it difficult to patronize the businesses in the area.

- I find it convenient being able to park in front of hairdressers, if u take away 140 parking spots from small businesses who have survived Covid it's just another slap in the face!!*
- I have rheumatoid arthritis and park right in front of the salon (not across the street). Yes there is a light and cross walk across from the business however many cars go thru the red light and do not honor the cross walk.*
- I couldn't find parking and went home.*

Because the impact of the trail on business owners was such a high concern among both business owners and residents, we recommend that if the trail becomes permanent, planners will need to pay special attention to allowing access to the businesses in the area, particularly for those who are elderly or experience mobility issues.

We recommend that there be reserved one or two spots on every block reserved for people with mobility challenges, which could be located on the side streets directly adjacent to the trail, to minimize people needing to cross the street.

We also want to encourage decision makers to note that roughly half of the people traveling to the area were already traveling in a modality other than by car and that therefore centering the design of the street only for people in cars is ignoring roughly half of the current patrons to the area.

The full business survey is available in Appendix D.



In-business survey on the host stand at a Hope Street restaurant

V. During Trial

So how did the week go?

Weather

The first four days of the trial were unseasonably rainy and cold. Nevertheless, hundreds of people used the trail, and dozens of volunteers came out to build it and collect feedback. The latter half of the week was warm and sunny. Two scheduled special events in conjunction with the trial took place on Thursday, October 6th and Friday, October 7th – a film screening and bike ride, respectively. Each brought out approximately 75 people to Hope Street.



Trash pickup

Monday was trash day. As previously discussed with Waste Management, trash removal was able to happen as usual, with the arms of the bin collectors able to reach the 8' over the temporary trail to the sidewalk. Volunteers captured picture and video of this procedure, and witnessed minimal travel delay to drivers. Bins were placed back on the sidewalk, with some being left in the trail. Volunteers placed them back on the sidewalk. Overall, this experience demonstrated that **it is entirely feasible to successfully collect trash and recycling with the presence of a two-way urban trail.**

EMS services

Ambulances and firetrucks were also observed to be using Hope Street normally during the Hope Street Temporary Trail. We did not have the capacity to interview local hospitals or EMS personnel for this project. We recommend the City collaborate with Public Safety officials on any and all permanent street redesign projects.

Loading zones and deliveries

A chief complaint of local business owners was that the lack of a parking lane on the east side of the street would 'wreak havoc' on delivery operations. While the trail was only in place for one week, this was not observed. As requested by Bubbie's Market, the City of Providence created a temporary loading zone on the west side of the street just south of Rochambeau. Bubbie's is serviced weekly by an 18-wheeler truck from New York City that delivers kosher foods. This truck takes up an entire block for approximately 30 minutes. Unfortunately, during the delivery period during the trial, the temporary loading zone was still being used by local drivers, forcing the owners of Bubbie's to temporarily relocate the trail flex posts. Because the flex-posts were lightweight and easily movable, they were able to do so and replaced them immediately following the delivery.



Accessible parking spots

During the week of the trial, one accessible spot was relocated, and two more permanent spots were created. They were observed to be functioning as intended. We recommend that the City of Providence rapidly add more accessible parking spots – and van accessible spots – to every commercial corridor in Providence so that those who have limited mobility have parking priority. **We also recommend that every accessible parking spot in Providence is either completely painted, or outlined, in blue, to prevent encroachment by able-bodied drivers.** This was a key piece of feedback we heard from disabled community members. Everyone who needs a parking spot should have easier access to them. Those who are able-bodied can walk one or two blocks further to their destination.

Intercept Surveys

The purpose of intercept surveys is for users to provide real-time feedback while they were experiencing the space. At each end of the temporary trail, we set up tables where passersby could fill out surveys to document their experiences of the trail. We provided five different surveys, which collected the experiences of trail users, pedestrians primarily using sidewalks, people arriving in private cars, RIPTA bus riders, and rideshare (Uber/Lyft) users.

Participants were encouraged to provide feedback during each use of the trail, since they may experience different conditions due to varying weather, times of day, and travel mode.



Intercept surveys outside Tortilla Flats

We also had staff and volunteers collecting feedback at various key locations along the trail, including the Rochambeau Community Library, Mt. Hope Community Baptist Church, RIPTA stops, Mt. Hope YMCA daycare, and at the screening of The Street Project at Festival Ballet, an event that was held in conjunction with the temporary trail project. The temporary trail project provided an opportunity for people to engage in dialogue and debate as a community, in person.

In addition to the feedback stations at either end of the trail, we also allowed people to fill out the intercept surveys online, for moments when staff and volunteers were unable to be present on the trail or if filling out a survey in person was not feasible.

We collected 2,235 intercept surveys throughout the week, including 1,436 online survey responses and 799 in-person paper surveys.

We learned that the most popular destinations for people were retail stores, restaurants, and school/work. Visiting friends and family, religious institutions, the library, and medical offices were some of the other top destinations among respondents. 44% of trail users visited a retail store, 39% visited a restaurant, and 31% were commuting to work or school. Among pedestrians, 60% were visiting a retail store, 43% were dining at a restaurant, and 19% were commuting to work/school. 58% of car users were visiting a retail store, 53% were visiting a restaurant, and 17% were on their way to school/work.

TOP-LINE RESULTS:

2,046 respondents (92% of all intercept survey respondents) answered the question “Are you in favor of the Hope St. Temporary Trail becoming permanent?” Of those who responded to this question, **53% said they were in favor of the trail becoming permanent, 43% were opposed to the trail becoming permanent, and 4% said that they were unsure.** 8% (189 out of 2,235) of respondents did not answer the question.

TRAVEL MODE	TOTAL SURVEYS TAKEN	% IN SUPPORT OF A PERMANENT TRAIL	% OPPOSED TO A PERMANENT TRAIL	% UNSURE
Using the trail (biking, walking, rolling)	703	89%	8%	3%
Walking (on the sidewalk)	452	58%	36%	6%
Driving	1026	31%	66%	3%
Bus riders	45	69%	18%	13%
Taxi or ride-share app	9	22%	56%	22%

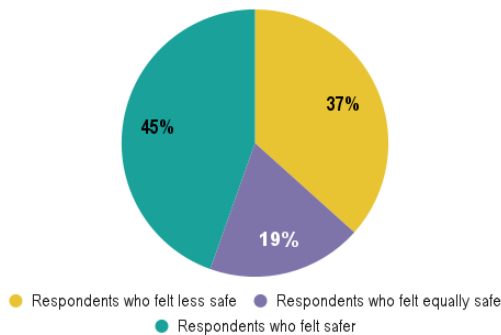
69% of RIPTA riders were going to work/school, 22% were going to retail stores, and 9% were on their way to a medical appointment.

Intercept Survey Analysis of Key Themes

Safety

We asked all respondents to comment on how the presence of the trail impacted their perception of safety on the street, by asking them to rank how safe they felt on a 1-5 Likert scale, where a 1 indicated that they felt very unsafe while a 5 indicated that they felt very safe. We found that perceptions of safety varied greatly according to the type of user. Overwhelmingly, trail users indicated that they felt significantly safer with the trail in place, while drivers and ride share users indicated that they felt less safe. Pedestrians and RIPTA riders had mixed reactions on their perceptions of safety. On average, across all types of users, 45% of respondents indicated they felt safer with the trail in place, 19% of respondents indicated that they felt equally safe with or without the trail in place, and 37% of respondents indicated that they felt less safe with the trail in place. Among trail users, 82% felt safer with the trail in place, 13% felt equally safe, and 6% felt less safe.

Feelings of Safety With The Trail in Place (Aggregate of All Respondents)



Because safety was a top concern for the project, as well as one of the main benefits that we were hoping to achieve, we paid careful attention to the feedback we received from trail users about their experiences with safety while the trail was in place. Overwhelmingly, trail users reported having an increased sense of security and well-being, both physically and psychologically, when they had a designated space to be on the road. **For these riders, the trail felt like a matter of life and death, or at least a measure that would help reduce the possibility for serious injury.**

Comments from trail users related to safety:

- I loved having a dedicated bike path on Hope street, as this is already quite a narrow street with active traffic. Without the bike path, it is very dangerous to weave in and out of traffic where there are cars parked, and drivers tend to go very fast and try to rush past bikers. I also often get honked at for biking in the street even though it is permitted, and a bike path would establish clearer road rules for both drivers and bikers.*

- I hadn't realized how much time I spent trying to get out of cars' way while biking on Hope Street once I was able to use the trail. When the trail ended and I was back in traffic again, it was stressful.*
- I work at 5:30am, scared of not being seen in the dark, a direct/ dedicated path is nice*
- I was hit by a car while riding my bike last year. All things that make the roads safer should be implemented.*
- The delineator posts provided more separation and reassurance than I expected, riding southbound against vehicle traffic. Still, I know they are more of a psychological barrier than a physical one. I commute the entire length of the temporary trail (plus some more on both ends) every day, year around. I was hit by a car in front of Frog and Toad during my commute 5 years ago, and this was the first time I've taken Hope all the way to work since then, it was nice.*
- I mostly work from home, and I had to commute downtown on Friday. I should always start my day with a bike commute. It made me so happy and energized. And it was nice not to have to worry about cars and safety so much.*



Weather-related concerns

Another common concern that arose in the intercept surveys was the impact that different types of weather, particularly snow, might have on the feasibility of the trail. Respondents stated that walking in the snow would become more difficult with a trail in place, but other respondents noted that during inclement weather with low visibility, the trail was particularly important for keeping cars separate from micromobility users.

Comments related to the impact of weather on the trail included:

- What happens when it snows? Where will the store owners put the snow they clear off the sidewalk? I think it is unfair to ask them to pay.*
- This is our major "neighborhood." It wasn't busy during Covid, and not on a rainy day, but other times it is very busy, and taking parking spaces away is bad. Dangerous for walkers, bad for snowy days, bad for elderly, hard for the side street people who had visitors. Please move it to Summit and Ivy. This is*

hideous for snowy days.

- Worse walking conditions in the rain. Anticipate you Will not be able to navigate in the snow and too dangerous to walk distances then.
- Personally I don't mind losing the parking spaces but I could see giving the trail back to parking during the winter months when parking proximity is more important.
- I commuted for two years on my bike on this stretch of Hope Street at all times of day and all seasons. I felt like I was risking my life every time, especially at night or in the winter because of the dark and the weather. Those are times when drivers are not as attentive. I had a lot of close calls. And the uneven sidewalks are full of dangerous bumps and roots.
- Tonight, I was able to get to my destination on Hope St without feeling like I was risking my life, even though it was dark and rainy. This was the first time I've felt truly safe riding my bike on Hope St.

Business Concerns

By far the biggest concern that the community expressed about the trail was the impact that it might have on the local businesses, particularly due to the fact that the trail occupied 32 parking spaces on the east side of Hope St.

Six weeks before the start of the temporary trail project, 23 out of the 47 businesses and institutions on the street signed a petition asking Mayor Elorza to cancel it. There were 244 surveys (11% of all intercept surveys) that expressed a concern that a permanent urban trail would negatively impact the businesses in the area.

In particular, residents are concerned that people will decide not to go to the businesses if parking becomes too difficult, that older people and those with mobility issues will have a harder time getting around, and that deliveries will become too complicated. Several people in the intercept surveys stated that they would/did stop frequenting local businesses as a result of the trail being in place. However, other people stated that the presence of a trail would make them more likely to frequent businesses in the area, since it would give them additional options for how to arrive.

Community comments anticipating a perceived negative impact of the trail on the businesses:

- *This is a unique little center that has finally seemed to support almost capacity businesses. It has something for all generations. Any change that tends to challenge the success for these businesses would be undesirable. Parking is necessary for so many people who come here. Thayer Street is no longer attractive to many people, especially older. Wayland (also parking challenged) is a very different mix of destinations. It wouldn't take much reduction in accessibility to discourage many older shoppers, who make up a significant group of users. I don't imagine many of the bikers who would like a through route will be stopping regularly in many of the stores.*

I don't know where their bikes would safely be parked if they do.

- *I believe that this will hurt the retailers on Hope Street. As a community we should be helping businesses as much as possible. I am also an avid biker and see no obvious value to this project*
- *I couldn't find a space to park so I changed my plans and went to Wayland Square instead.*
- *Yeah....it's DUMB. Is that a concern??? I mean, really..... a huge 2 lane bike lane???? Businesses WILL CLOSE. It was pouring rain last night and I went to have dinner on Hope St. and drove to Garden City instead. ENOUGH*



Community comments expressing that the trail would have a positive impact on businesses and increased their ability to patronize businesses with ease:

- *I almost never shop on Hope b/c it is too close to home (<3 miles) to warrant traveling by car, plus there's the problem of where to park, and on the flip side, it isn't easy/safe for me to travel there on bike. but this week it is. so i've been up there multiple times, and have frequented multiple shops. I could make it a regular part of my routine if the bike trail were made permanent.*
- *Nice to feel protected on Hope Street for once as a cyclist! Went to a business (fearless fish market) I wouldn't have visited otherwise!*
- *Was able to link a ride from southwest PVD to Hope Street almost entirely on protected bike lanes (except for the pedes-*

trian bridge to Olney stretch). I rarely go to Hope Street restaurants because biking there is scary and I have local options to walk/bike to instead, but the Hope Street trail opened up a whole new set of restaurants to check out, and allowed me to get a bit of exercise (and avoid the worst of the PVD hills) in the process.

- I love having a quick way to pick up a sandwich at 7 stars.
- I visited shops I haven't before! I haven't really been able to easily get up here before. I usually get all of my groceries from Stop and Shop, but today I went with a local business!
- Went twice today - once around 9am to get pastries / coffee at Seven Stars, and again around 2pm to grab lunch at Not Just Snacks. I like that the trail makes it possible to pop over to the shops super quickly and have a blast doing it!
- Any time there are easier commutes on busy streets (either towards the shops or towards the high school) I am MUCH more likely to feel okay taking my scooter instead of my car. I have no doubts that I would spend more time in the shopping area of Hope street if the biking area was permanent.
- As it is, I end up not going to businesses on Hope because it's just far enough to make walking inconvenient. Being able to bike would make it a fun way to go out to dinner.
- I would love to spend more time shopping on Hope street but the parking is always a problem. Cycling there makes it easier and a bike lane makes it safer!
- Prior to the temporary trail, safety walking and riding my bicycle on the street that was a concern that prevented me from visiting businesses in the community.

Overall, among people who were unsure whether they wanted to see the trail become permanent, many people wanted to assure that any permanent trail would take into account the concerns of the businesses as well as the broader community.

- I really like it, but I know some of the shop owners are concerned about parking. This makes me unsure.
- I would vote for it, but am I informed enough? Would Elmwood be a better choice? Talked with shop owner today -- concern about deliveries, bus traffic, emergency vehicles
- Let's make sure all rational concerns from businesses are addressed.

Economic development opportunity

Many respondents felt that in the event that the urban trail on Hope Street becomes permanent, it will serve as an opportunity for Providence to modernize its transportation infrastructure in order to remain an economically competitive and viable place to live. Several respondents predicted that cities of the future will be multimodal, and that Providence can serve as a model for other cities looking to implement similar sustainable development practices:

- Every successful city has different modes of transportation. Car dependent cities rarely make it out of mediocrity in terms



of vibrancy. If we want providence to become and true world class city, although not a large city, then we need to embrace new ideas.

- I believe the Hope street path will benefit everyone in the long run. People who travel by car, bike or public transit will be able to safely get to their favorite restaurants and retail stores. There are many studies of other states implementing trails like this that have greatly improved and benefited small business. I believe this trail will do the same for the businesses on Hope street. I think a lot of people believe the trail should not be permanent because most people travel by car. Which is true but it's because there aren't trails like this in Providence. The more trails that are built, the more people will travel by bike. I have personally seen an increase in the last year with the little bit of bike trails that have been built.
- I want it safer. I want a way to get downtown and to my community garden and the river that's safer than it is now. I expect from all prior studies across the US and in other countries that the implementation of this lane will improve safety for everyone in this area. I WANT TO LIVE IN A REAL CITY.
- I think bike trails are good for businesses and home values. It makes an entire neighborhood safer and more pleasant. Looking forward to biking to work!
- I want to keep the trail. As a landlord, it would be great to be able to tell people, especially college students, that there's a bike path right in front of the place.

Several respondents noted that bike lanes in other areas in Providence as well as other cities have already been demonstrated to have numerous positive benefits for the community:

- I live on Broad Street, which is slower and safer now.

- *This is a city, bike lanes are part of modern cities. Clear demarcation/protection of such lanes is a good thing for drivers too, less chance of accidents.*
- *I think encouraging cycling is great. I've seen what it can do to reduce traffic in places like Seattle and San Francisco.*
- *What a great idea! It's like Denmark or Amsterdam. You give a place for bikes and people will start to use them.*
- *I'm not a biker but cities with bike trails are thriving cities. I want to live in a thriving city.*
- *This trail makes it FAR MORE accessible.*
- *I'm not mobility challenged or disabled, but due to health issues, biking is much more comfortable than walking. Urban trails make it much easier for me!*

Equity and accessibility

One of the key goals of implementing an urban trail on Hope Street would be to provide access to the area for everyone, regardless of transportation modality preference, income, car, age, ability, race, class, gender, or sexual orientation. **One of the main equity issues that the trail hopes to address is providing access to the area for people who cannot afford a car.** Many respondents noted that the best way to allow more customers to patronize businesses in the area would be by allowing these customers easier access to the area:

- *Increasing different forms of mobility is a matter of equity for the city. It also opens up that area to way more business and commerce from people who depend on their bikes or public transportation for mobility. In addition, there is TONS of free, easy, parking if you are driving a car to shop in the Hope Street area--I have literally never encountered an issue finding convenient parking to visit those businesses.*
- *One of the reasons I could afford to move to Providence 20 years ago, was that I didn't need a car, and I used to commute to Boston every day.*
- *We need to reclaim our circulation areas from cars as exclusive users. At the very least it will be traffic calming measure. Not sure how to address merchants' concerns.*
- *I bike a couple miles to work a couple of blocks off of Hope St every day. I love the commute - a car isn't super feasible for me financially, it's a good way to get some exercise, and the environmental implications are nice. My normal route can be a bit scary though. I changed my route while the trail was in place and took Hope St even though it was a little bit out of my way - it felt so much safer, and I would absolutely continue to use it if it were temporary. I also shopped at Hope St stores a few times during the week, which I don't usually do, largely because I was reminded about things I needed to get as I went past them.*
- *I am a young working person who can't afford a car, and on the whole, the East Side is quite accommodating to that reality. Hope street is one of the few areas in the neighborhood that is less accessible to me, and it means that I rarely go towards the restaurants and shops further north on Hope even though I live a short bike or scooter ride away. A trail (which I would support expanding and elongating) would make this area of town a much bigger part of my weekly routine.*



Another major equity challenge that many respondents focused on in the intercept surveys was the impact that the trail had on elderly people as well as those with mobility issues. Some respondents noted that providing the opportunity to ride bicycles in a protected space helps to create equitable access within the community, particularly for people with disabilities that prevent them from using a car as a transportation option. Additionally, not all cyclists are extremely athletic, and providing a protected space allows for a greater range of people to feel comfortable with the option of cycling or scooting.

On the other hand, many respondents mentioned that they were concerned that the lack of parking spaces would make it nearly impossible for people with mobility issues to access the businesses if they had to walk several blocks. They stated that they are unable to visit places if they need to walk several blocks in order to reach their destinations:

- *Eliminating parking in store areas is not kind to older people and those disabled. I have read comments about "just park on 10th street" and walk. The main problem is access to businesses in my opinion.*
- *We need more handicapped parking. I have friends and family who would not be able to access this area easily.*
- *It is not sensitive and discriminatory to older or disabled people who don't have the option of cycling or walking. They need to be able to pull up in front of a store (not across the street or blocks away.)*
- *I take my 98 yo mother to Pizzico for dinner once a month. She is handicapped. I have to double park to get her and her walker out of the car and then go park my car. Eliminating half*

Design Considerations

One of the main goals of the demonstration project was for the community to experience the trail in the 3D world so that they could provide feedback about the benefits and limitations of the proposed design. Many trail users commented that the urban trail helped them to better navigate the streets because it was much smoother than the sidewalk in many places, especially if they were doing an activity such as pushing a stroller or pulling a wagon. The space was wide open to allow for straight passage, and cyclists expressed that they appreciated not having to worry about getting doored by a parked car:

- *The sidewalks aren't well maintained so I avoid using a stroller or wagon on Hope Street because it takes me long to navigate the bumps and ridges. I enjoyed the new street trail because it was a smooth ride without having to navigate sidewalk cut-outs, frost heave, roots, and other sidewalk obstructions.*
- *Not worrying about getting doored or cut off, also it was smooth pavement. I normally ride on Ivy street because I don't feel safe on Hope but the pavement there is in awful condition. It's nice to have a safe smooth way to ride for this week.*
- *Safety. Was able to take the kid with me. He rode his scooter. Usually he crashes into people eating on the sidewalk. Today he was stoked!*
- *We never go to Hope Street restaurants, because they're a pain to get to... being able to bike there safely is a game-changer, and one I'd definitely take advantage of. I love the proliferation of outdoor dining, but the sidewalks are really not wide enough for that in many places, so the trail also allows for pedestrian overflow in a safer way.*
- *Two lane single side bike trail is efficient!*

Due to the temporary nature of the trail, there were some limitations that would not exist in a permanent iteration. For instance, the temporary lane was two feet narrower than a permanent lane would be. Additionally, the bases of the flexposts protruded further than a permanent flex post bolted into the ground would. People also expressed that a permanent design would have better signage, bike signals, and additional green markings to indicate where cyclists could turn left:

- *Make it longer and get rid of the cones. They're ugly. Explore alternative means to protect the trail.*
- *Pylons could be a nuisance. Lanes are skinny-bike safety issues potentially.*
- *I would also love if we added bike signals so the bikes can go straight when pedestrians cross. Assuming those are shown to decrease accidents in studies. I'm open to other improvements to further protect pedestrians and non-motorized vehicles.*
- *Please put signs encouraging biker safety and tips and clear arrows that it is a two-way.*
- *Clear signage for walkers/Unclear if the trail is for pedestrians, strollers, etc.*

- *Walked on the trail but was very confused with the markings. Pedestrians usually have their own space to walk on, hopefully markings can show where pedestrians can walk.*
- *I would like it if the center bollards were removed. Also, green crosswalks at intersections that allow trail users to safely access the trail from the opposite side of the street. Finally, the sidewalk bump outs that slow motorists when making turns off hope st have the unintended consequence of forcing trail users into the main lane, I would like their removal considered since it seems the trail has the same effect.*



Trail users had mixed opinions on the use of flex posts to create an urban trail. The outside barrier protecting the trail from the travel lane for cars generally helped users to feel safer. However, many trail users expressed that the center lane flex posts felt unnecessary and stood as obstacles at times. The main purpose of these center flex posts was to prevent people from parking or driving into the trail. A more permanent trail might be able to signal to drivers that they should stay out of the space, which may allow for no or fewer center lane flex posts. In particular, people saw the bollards as a hazard because there were several fallen leaves and twigs on the trail (as a note, there were likely more than there would ordinarily be due to the remnants of a hurricane passing through Providence on the first day of the demonstration project). Trail users also expressed concerns about the drainage gates on the northbound side of the trail as well as overgrown shrubs from neighboring houses:

- *I think the bollards are an eyesore. It would be nice if it could eventually be upgraded to a raised trail or raised curb.*
- *I need to spend some more time using the trail but I like what*

I see so far. I definitely like having a physically separated bike lane when I am riding northbound. Not sure yet about the contra-flow southbound direction. I do like the apparent traffic calming effect the trail is having.

- *Please remove the cones separating two directions of bike traffic. The reality is that there's a ton of brush and some dangerous gutter/storm drains. So we need to be able to move into the southbound lane to stay safe. This should be ok at bike speeds since you can easily check for oncoming traffic.*
- *Trash cans or overgrown weeds are challenging.*
- *I see a lot of weeds and some trash on the bike path on Olney. Could one just mark the path without the dividers?*
- *I did not enjoy it. The lanes are too narrow. The eastern land, the northbound side, is too close to shrubs and trees on the sidewalk. Users of scooters on the narrow path with cyclists is not safe. Moreover there is no room to pass.*
- *The trail is too narrow for two lanes. The curbside has too much debris. People couldn't pass. It wasn't much used.*

Respondents were also concerned that the trail created a block for essential services in the area, such as delivery trucks, garbage trucks, public works, ambulances, and other emergency vehicles. They were likewise concerned about people who lived and visited residential areas on the street:

- *Too narrow, no room for service vehicles, UPS, On one side of the street. No parking lane for these vehicles in front of homes they are servicing*
- *EMT ambulance traffic would be slower--no place for cars to pull over*
- *I was at the gas station when I saw Providence DPW move the dowels and park in the bike lane. Asked them not to & they said there was no where to park while they emptied the trash cans on the sidewalk.*
- *The reduced parking is an issue for home owners who live on Hope and may have guests, as it is an issue for residents who are seniors with limitations and families with children.*
- *Many streets off of Hope have 2-3 apartments w/ each property and they have 4-6 cars that need parking and it is one sided parking. Shoppers/Diners on Hope St already compete w/ those parking spaces. Imagine coming home from the grocery store and not being able to park in front of your house to bring your groceries into the house? Double park? Block your neighbor's driveway? Or schlep a block in the rain 3 times w/ your groceries.*

Many respondents expressed that they did not want an urban trail on Hope Street, but they were not opposed to an alternative route on a parallel street. The community offered many suggestions for alternative routes that would avoid putting the trail on Hope Street:

- *Hope Street is too narrow and already too busy. I don't support a bike path on Hope. The Boulevard, Elmgrove, and Cole are much wider and have less parking impact. I avoid walking and*



driving on Hope!

- *Hope Street is an inappropriate route. If we need another bike path in the neighborhood, it should be relocated to Elmgrove or Ivy/Summit.*
- *Trail not necessary because there are plenty of alternatives--Morris/Camp and plenty of side street access to Hope.*
- *Maybe consider moving to Lorimer or making Hope St. one way.*
- *There are already two beautiful N/S avenues traversing the East side, the Boulevard and now Elmgrove that have been clearly designated w/ a wide open bike down the middle of the road. There are also many side streets running parallel to Hope that are residential and very safe for riding/walking and it is just a short block up to Hope st.*

Although the temporary trail only went from Olney St. to Lauriston St rather than extending all the way to Lippitt Park, (primarily because of the curb bumpouts starting north of that point), many people expressed that they wished the trail were longer and extended all the way from Pawtucket to downtown Providence. Members of the community had suggestions for ways to address some of the concerns that arose in the community, such as pedestrian safety and parking, particularly for disabled visitors:

- *It would be nice if the trail were longer. The areas of Hope that feel least safe to me are those with narrow lanes and densely parked cars, eg Hope Village and around the Wheeler School.*
- *Thank you for doing this. I hope they make a permanent trail that is longer. It would be nice if it went past Lippitt Park up to the Pawtucket line.*
- *Please make the trail longer. I could only use it for part of my journey because I was going to a destination on hope street in pawtucket.*
- *Love the idea of a bike path! Would like it to continue for longer*

though, or be a part of a larger system so I can actually use it for commuting.

- I think it should be longer! Go from Wickenden to Pawtucket!
- I wish it was longer and connected Lippett Park to Brown campus.
- I think the trail would be more effective if it started at the tail end of the merchants area (over by Not Just Snacks) and lead into the BLVD to make it a more integrated recreation area. Maybe assess those existing recreation areas to determine if they are friendly to those with disabilities or mobility challenges.
- I think prohibiting parking at/near the corners of the cross streets would make a huge difference in pedestrian safety and also in terms of visibility for drivers trying to turn onto/cross Hope Street (the corner between the CVS and Frog and Toad always seems to require a leap of faith that seems somewhat alarming even inside a car). I also think that making the on street parking more short term to allow for more turn over would be beneficial, and perhaps reserving more of the on street parking for disabled or mobility limited visitors to the shops and businesses would prioritize those with a need for convenient access to businesses while freeing up the street to allow for more bike/pedestrian traffic. also probably more enforcement of a lower speed limit.

5% were Asian, 3% were multiracial, 2% were African American/black, and 1% identified as something else, namely Middle Eastern and Jewish. (As a note, we categorized these races and ethnicities in this way based on the responses that our participants gave, but acknowledge that race and ethnicity can overlap in complex ways.) 61% of trail users were male, 34% were female, and 5% identified as non-binary, queer, or genderfluid.

4% of trail users identified as being mobility challenged or disabled, including deaf people who said the trail made them feel much safer because they were unable to hear cars behind them and people who were recovering from previous injuries caused by cycling-related injuries. Some of the people using the trail also indicated that although they were not mobility challenged, they were unable to drive for other reasons and they appreciated the opportunity for safer cycling.

While the majority of visitors to the trail were en route to a commercial destination, 4% of users came to the trail for exercise and another 4% came to check out the trail. 1% of respondents indicated that they were traveling through the area on the way to the park, a community event, a business in another neighborhood, or the gym.

A common benefit of the trail that many users reported was a shared sense of community and the ability to interact with their neighbors on more of a human scale than transportation by private vehicles allows:

- The presence of more bikers and pedestrians made Hope Street feel so much more vibrant and welcoming. Another dimension of community: I finally felt like folks cared about my safety. Sometimes, it feels like my safety and the safety of other folks who get around by bike isn't a priority. Instead, tremendous amounts of space and resources are devoted to car infrastructure, particularly parking. Parking spots end up

Intercepts Survey Analysis by User Type

TRAIL USERS

Among people using the trail, 70% lived in the Hope Neighborhood, 23% lived in Providence outside the neighborhood, 4% lived elsewhere in Rhode Island, and 3% lived outside Rhode Island. Users ranged in age from 5-87, and the average age was 39. 84% of trail users self-identified as white/Caucasian, 5% were Hispanic/Latine,



being treated as more important than safety. The Trail was a wonderful indicator that my needs were being considered by my community and that priorities might be shifting.

- *The Urban Trail says “We Are Here” and “We Belong Here”.*
- *It felt much safer to bike on this road. Seeing so many other people use the urban trail made me feel a part of a safe, equitable, and accessible community.*
- *It was really so neat to feel protected yet part of this community! I also had my eyes opened to who else might use the trail including those scooters and also rollerblades!*
- *I felt more part of the community. Other bikers would nod or say hi as we passed each other.*

Trail users also expressed that the presence of the trail helped them to feel more freedom to make environmentally conscious choices for a healthier lifestyle. These included the options to use transportation with a low carbon footprint and fewer fossil fuel emissions. A proper infrastructure allows residents of a community to take responsibility for their physical health in a way that may not otherwise be available to them:

- *Please please please make this permanent! We would love to lower emissions as a family via our electric and regular bikes, but do not feel safe with little ones especially biking along Hope and other nearby streets. This was so different and great, we’ve been making an entire morning and afternoon of it, stopping for a pastry or snack with our little ones. Thanks!*
- *We need to reduce urban miles traveled by car to reduce car emissions. We need to increase urban miles traveled by bike for health, community!*
- *Urban trails are an excellent way for the community to stay physically active and connected, especially in proximity to a trail like blackstone blvd. Ultimately, I think this makes us all less car dependent, which is obviously a goal.*
- *The bike path creates clearer rules of the road, encourages biking and a greener city with transportation alternatives, and ensures pedestrians and people enjoying the local businesses and restaurants are safe.*
- *Make the neighborhood safe for kids, pollution-free, quiet, and more European feeling.*
- *It’s necessary today to have safe sustainable transportation options that are good for our health and the environment*
- *I’m a strong believer in reducing car dependency and encouraging modes of transport that are more environmentally friendly.*

There are a variety of reasons that cyclists cited for wanting a trail that goes on Hope Street as opposed to other streets. In particular, they cited that the bike lane made climbing the hill a much safer and more pleasant experience. Also, due to the fact that there are hills on both sides of Hope Street, many of the alternative pathways that car drivers suggested, which in a car seem like they are not very far off of Hope Street, are actually quite challenging to access due to the changes in elevation. When asked what people

liked best about the trail, many riders cited the way connecting from other bike lanes in the city and navigating hills in the area became easier:

- *Coming up the hill to Hope, I usually feel anxious as I’m heading from my side street to the “main drag”. Today, I was able to smoothly merge onto Hope without worrying about my safety. Loved it!*
- *I could ride up hill without fear of a car becoming impatient and harassing me.*
- *Being able to actually just use Hope to get to places on Hope instead of climbing hill from side streets*
- *Was able to link a ride from southwest PVD to Hope Street almost entirely on protected bike lanes (except for the pedestrian bridge to Olney stretch). I rarely go to Hope Street restaurants because biking there is scary and I have local options to walk/bike to instead, but the Hope Street trail opened up a whole new set of restaurants to check out, and allowed me to get a bit of exercise (and avoid the worst of the PVD hills) in the process.*
- *I loved being able to ride up and down the hills of Hope Street without needing to worry about car interference. It made me feel safer having the bike lane in place. Using this trail also made me want to check out this neighborhood more often.*
- *Great to get out of traffic hill climbing when you’re slow*



One rider detailed the experience of riding without the trail as follows:

- *The key is hills - re-routing that adds hills is a non-starter - I’ll tackle a hill every day if it’s more direct, but I won’t go out of my way if it adds one. Northbound Hope from Olney to Doyle is terrible - uphill for me, with parked cars and impatient motorists - argh. But just as bad is Northbound Hope from Lloyd to Olney, particularly near Lloyd. (Southbound is bad, too - I take Thayer.) The roadway is too narrow for parking on both sides, but parking is allowed and many cars park there. That forces me into the roadway - and I must take the whole lane,*

for my own safety. There are no sharrows, and traffic is heavy and motorists do not welcome cyclists there. I've learned to carefully time my ride so that the light holds back the traffic just long enough for me to round the corner, across from Hope High, and I can move back into the breakdown lane. I do this every day. There is no alternative route between Lloyd and Doyle that doesn't involve more hills and a long detour. This is the stretch of Hope that most needs a trail, I think. I was disappointed that you stopped at Tortilla Flats. I usually bypass Hope, in my daily commute, in both directions, by taking Ivy between Cypress and Rochambeau, and Summit north of Rochambeau.

equally safe, and 26% felt it was less safe.

Like trail users, many of the pedestrians who took the survey echoed sentiments that the temporary trail helped them to feel safer because it slowed traffic and allowed them to see oncoming cars better. The separate bike lane allowed for a more organized transportation infrastructure in which bikes, scooters, and runners had a designated spot, making the sidewalks feel safer. Pedestrians also felt safer walking because the trail provided a barrier between them and the cars. Like many of the trail users, pedestrians also appreciated the benefits of the trail for environmental, physical health, and the increased sense of community:



Although most trail users were pleased with the temporary trail, there were some users who still opposed the trail becoming permanent. Most of these hesitations were related to issues such as the loss of parking and the assumption that businesses would suffer as a result. However, some people opposed the trail based on other reasons, including that they felt comfortable riding on Hope Street the way it is, they felt that it was a poor use of resources, and the design was problematic because it was too narrow, particularly for bikes going in opposite directions on the same side of the road:

- *It solves a problem that doesn't exist. As executed, it is unsafe. It will deprive small businesses on Hope Street of customers.*
- *I don't think biking on Hope street with traffic is a problem. In any event this lane seems like a bad design.*
- *Most of the time, drivers are civil, etc. At intersections, it's dangerous. Trucks entering Hope Street can barely make turns.*
- *Hope Street is not wide enough for this model.*
- *It is a very selfish use of resources. The bike path on the boulevard is more than adequate for recreational biking. I felt rude using it.*
- *I ride Every Day. I rarely encounter other riders.*

PEDESTRIANS

Among pedestrians, 93% lived in the Hope Neighborhood, 6% lived in Providence outside the neighborhood, and 1% lived elsewhere in Rhode Island, mainly Pawtucket. Users ranged in age from 14-88, and the average age was 45. 84% of pedestrians self-identified as white/Caucasian, 5% were Hispanic/Latine, 5% were Asian, 3% were multiracial, 2% were African American/black, and 1% identified as something else, namely Jewish and Pacific Islander. 53% of trail users were male, 44% were female, and 3% identified as non-binary, queer, or genderfluid. 8% of users came to the trail for exercise and another 3% came to check out the trail. Other destinations for respondents included the park, the farmers market, or picking up the mail.

5% of pedestrians identified as being mobility challenged or disabled, while another 1% identified as being a caretaker of someone with mobility challenges or small children. 41% of pedestrians felt the trail made the experience safer, 33% felt the experience was

- *As a pedestrian using the sidewalk, I feel much safer knowing that bikes and scooter riders have a safe place to ride rather than cutting into the sidewalk when car traffic is too threatening. This is a common occurrence when walking in Providence and can often be a deterrent. While the trail has been in place I have not experienced this at all while walking on Hope St! I also appreciate having a barrier between the sidewalk and car traffic.*
- *It makes both walking and cycling feel much safer, and is a far better use of public space.*
- *Throughout the week I noticed more people biking, scooting, and walking up and down Hope. It was noticeable how much safer the street was.*
- *The trail made the street feel more homey/ like a community. Cars are driving slower. Neighbors are using it to run, too :)*
- *Anything to reduce car dominance, bikes are safer for pedestrians than cars, plus slow traffic and increase visibility.*
- *It was great to be able to cross the street and SEE whether cars were coming before peeking out into the street!*
- *It helps keep bikes off sidewalks and will honestly increase business not reduce it. There's plenty of parking on the other side and in neighborhoods and the redirected bikes from blackstone will most likely discover businesses. It also makes that side of the street more pleasant to walk even on sidewalks.*
- *With the temporary trail, Hope Street feels like a recreation destination as well as a shopping/errands/restaurant destina-*

tion. I would come here just to stroll and hang out with friends.

Pedestrians who opposed the trail cited several concerns, including that they felt it was underutilized, that the trail was unsafe, that they did not like the way it looked, that the two way design felt unsafe, and that Hope Street is too narrow to include a designated lane for cyclists and scooters. They were not used to having to look out for both cyclists as well as cars when crossing the street and expressed that side streets provide adequate opportunities for cyclists. One person declared that people who were not able to cycle without a protected bike lane shouldn't be cycling at all. Several respondents noted that the sidewalks in the area are uneven in some places and that any installation of an urban trail should also include improvements to the sidewalk:

- *At the end of this week, even though there is little bike traffic, I am still not comfortable with crossing the bike trail as a pedestrian.*
- *The bike lanes seem too narrow. I'm concerned for trail users' safety (i.e. small children on bikes) than for pedestrians.*
- *It's unnecessary. There are streets that run parallel to hope that need no modification to accommodate cyclists without disrupting businesses. After walking up there today I won't go again while this is up. So the businesses are losing my formerly daily custom.*
- *I drive, walk, and bus on Hope St, so I can see this from a lot of perspectives. As a pedestrian I don't think it makes things any better; in fact, it becomes an exercise in crossing two streets instead of one (the bike lanes then Hope itself).*
- *Think it slows down traffic but concern is ebikes and ppl are going to go fast.*
- *Unless there is major construction/rebuilding that includes sidewalks and curbs, bike lane, and Hope St. itself, adding a bike trail itself is not viable. I ride a bike but the lane was so narrow it did not seem safe as it is a 2-way trail. Yikes!*
- *I would rather see the sidewalks widened/levelled for safer pedestrian access, given that there are WAY more pedestrians/strollers in the Hope village area.*

CAR DRIVERS

Among drivers, 57% lived in the Hope Neighborhood, 21% lived in Providence outside the neighborhood, 17% lived elsewhere in Rhode Island, and 5% lived outside Rhode Island. Car users ranged in age from 18 to 86, and the average age of car users was 51. 85% of drivers self-identified as white/Caucasian, 4% were African American/black, 3% were Hispanic/Latine, 3% were Asian, 5% were multiracial, and 1% identified as something else, namely Jewish, Native American, and Middle Eastern. 63% of the respondents identified as female, 34% identified as male, and 3% identified as nonbinary, genderqueer, or other.

While the majority of visitors to the trail were en route to a commercial destination described previously, a handful of drivers were en

route to pick up their children from childcare, traveling through the area, heading to the park, or in the area to see the bike trail.

16% of car users identified as being mobility challenged or disabled, while another 1% identified as being a caretaker of someone with mobility challenges or small children. 16% of drivers felt the trail made the experience safer, 27% felt the experience was equally safe, and 57% felt it was less safe.

Driver comments about ways that the trail improved Hope Street:

- *I liked that I saw quite a few bikes and scooters and that they were safely in their own lane. It makes it easier for drivers than trying to share the driving lane with them. Thank you.*
- *My daughter, who has her permit, was so happy she didn't have to worry about the erratic scooters! We were stoked on the trail!*
- *I like that bikes traveling in my periphery are in a protected lane because when they pass me I sometimes don't see them coming. At night, I can barely see them. With the new lane dividers, the long row of them, the reflection at night is so good, I don't worry as much that bike will come out of nowhere. Its also good for the CVS entrance/exit where there can be a lot of confusion.*
- *It was great to see more people biking on Hope -- a noticeable increase from typical use -- and I felt more comfortable as a driver knowing they had a dedicated place to bike (and I didn't have to worry about an unexpected bike popping out in front of me).*
- *Rhode Island drivers do not respect bikers or crosswalks, added safety for bikers is a plus.*
- *It makes it much more predictable to drive on hope street without the bicyclists weaving in and out like bees.*

Due to the fact that parked cars were no longer on the side of the road, drivers noted that there was improved visibility on the street. They also noted that the traffic calming benefits helped them to feel more relaxed as drivers:

- *I appreciate that the trail makes it easier to turn off of side streets coming from the east. It is usually hard to do so with parked cars blocking the view of oncoming traffic on Hope Street. The trail keeps sight lines clear and makes turning from side streets safer.*
- *The trail helped me see whether people were waiting to cross the street. And helps reduce speed. It's more mellow.*
- *It was easier for me to pull out of the gas station because there were no parked cars blocking my view. I blocked a bicycle that came along while I was waiting for a break in traffic.*
- *I actually found it safer, because I could see around the corners much more easily without cars parked there.*
- *I actually thought I was driving slower and others were driving slower as well. So the temporary trail actually might have a benefit of drivers driving not so fast*

- *I'm filling out this survey because I felt how the trail slowed me down. Without any extra work. Which is probably why I felt safer on my bike, too!*
- *The bike lane is so good at slowing down car traffic on that side of the street and reduces dangerous passing maneuvers people do at the Rochambeau intersection.*
- *There was no difference between my driving ease from before the trail to after the trail. It was clear to me that the trail can only be good.*
- *It is better now and more relaxing to drive.*
- *Removing bikers and putting them in their own lane makes it easier for me to drive without worrying that I'm going to hit someone. Also, when driving on the side of the lane, the fact that cars aren't backing up and trying to parallel park actually makes the driving experience feel smoother.*



Many drivers also acknowledged that even though they were drivers in this instance, they also use other modes of transportation at other times and appreciate the added feelings of safety. Like trail users and pedestrians, they also acknowledged the environmental, health, and social benefits of the trail:

- *My boyfriend loves to bike, but doesn't often because of how dangerous it is to drive down Hope St. The temporary trail got him out on it!*
- *At the moment I live far from Hope Street but my significant other lives close by now and I would love to make use of a permanent bike lane. It's great motivation to bring my bike rather than my car.*
- *Allows for increased safety for bikers, pedestrians. As a driver, I would not mind spending a few extra moments looking for parking should that be necessary.*
- *I think it's safer for everyone, and especially helps children, families and people who have disabilities that make it impossible to drive.*
- *I have 3 young kids and ultimately hope they'll be able to safely bike around the east side and beyond. The less we can drive the better. Technically this trail inconveniences me since we didn't bike it this week and had to drive around to park further away and I still support it because it's benefits for the larger community are significant.*

Overall, many drivers expressed that the presence of the bike lane created ease and a more pleasant experience for everyone:

- *It's much safer and easier for everyone. Cars shouldn't have to swerve around bikes any more than bikes should have to avoid cars in the road. I usually park on side streets anyway, so the change in parking doesn't make much of a difference for me. Also it was much easier to see cars coming when turning on to hope from the bike lane side.*

In spite of the positive experiences drivers had with the trail, there were also many concerns. Some of these concerns were design-oriented, and some of them had to do with concerns about aggressive drivers on the street. One of the most common concerns was related to the fact that drivers were not used to having the trail in place, and they found it to be disorienting. Some of their comments included:

- *Turning through the bike lane is odd and unnatural.*
- *When turning right across the temporary bike lane from Hope onto Rochambeau, I had to make a split-second decision about who had the right-of-way, since there was a scooter coming toward me (southbound) who was continuing straight through the intersection. Normally this wouldn't be a consideration and I don't think there is a traffic rule to cover this situation since one vehicle never makes a right turn across the path of another vehicle. I would yield to a pedestrian in the crosswalk, but bikes aren't pedestrians and the scooter was moving much faster than a pedestrian would so there's less time to make a decision.*
- *About how safe I feel - neutral because I am already nervous/extra cautious about driving on Hope (and the side streets and the Boulevard) because of all the walkers, bike riders, stroller pushers and dog walkers.*
- *Only because it's new... but every time a new element to a roadway is introduced, it takes a community a bit of time to adjust.*

Drivers also commented that the presence of the trail made the travel and turning lanes too tight:

- *It made it harder to turn because of the poles everywhere. The turns onto and off of Hope Street were much tighter.*
- *I find the white posts along the trail very limiting and in the way of both driving and for those who need to pull out of their drive-ways. They reduce the space needed to drive safely. Hope street is not a wide street - delivery trucks, buses, ambulances will certainly have difficulty and will further limit cars mobility.*
- *When exiting side streets you now have to take a wide turn and it makes you have to go into opposite lane of traffic. People drive ridiculously fast on Hope Street and it is not a wide enough street to begin with and now with bike lane and watching for bicycles it makes it even more unsafe.*
- *Turning right from Savoy onto Hope required straddling/ob-*



structuring the bike lane for some time for traffic to clear and then required a very sharp right to get into the traveling lane on Hope without crossing the double yellow line. I've seen others fail to make these turns tightly enough, resulting in crossing the double yellow line into oncoming traffic.

Some drivers also commented that the trail made visibility more difficult and distracted them while they were driving. They particularly expressed that pulling out of driveways and side streets was more of a challenge as a result of the poles. Drivers were also concerned that they would hit a trail user accidentally, particularly if the trail users were not following the rules of the road:

- *I find the white poles to be distracting and actually makes it more difficult to see bikers and other people on the temporary bike path. There were runners, people with strollers and other walkers as well which make it difficult for bikers so it doesn't seem to be being used for it's sole purpose.*
- *Turning corners onto Hope St on the side with the bike trail, not wanting to crash into the polls, takes my attention off of traffic.*
- *The issue I had was that there are so many vertical poles (telephone, stop signs, parking signs, walk lights, along with the white poles marking the bike lane that a pedestrian standing on the side of the road waiting to cross blends in with all those other vertical objects and is therefore less visible to a driver. In my case, there was an elderly man in a dark trench coat standing in a shadowed area among the white poles waiting to cross at the crosswalk. Until he moved, I didn't see him until he started to enter the crosswalk, by which time my car was already in the crosswalk so I had to keep going. I waved "sorry" to the man as I passed by.*
- *I live on Hope street and come and go from my driveway a few times a day. I live on the even side of the street so not with the bike trail. There are A LOT more cars parked on this side now and it makes it harder to see backing out of my driveway.*

There's also less room for maneuverability when backing out, so you really need to be clear in both directions. Since Hope is a main road, it generally feels like there's a lot more traffic/hazards with the bike trail in place taking up so much room. I'm near East Side liquors and people fly up/down this stretch of Hope to begin with.

- *A driver on Hope north was waiting to turn left onto Cypress the driver behind that car veered into the bike lane to pass on the right. There was a bike rider in the lane who had to stop short as not to be hit.*

In addition to these concerns about the design, drivers also expressed concerns about safety when crossing the street, in the event that they had to park on the opposite side of the street from their destination:

- *It is hard to cross Hope Street by foot or with a car and I am concerned that with so much going on bikers or pedestrians will get hit and cars will find it harder to cross the street.*
- *The side of the street that the bike lanes are on is on the side of the street that I need to be on for school and work. This forces me to cross Hope St at busy times of the day.*
- *Can't park in front of my sister's house. Had to park across Hope street and dodge traffic crossing the street*
- *I had to cross Hope St to get my kids to daycare vs parking out front. That said I don't always feel safe getting them out on Hope Street even when I can park out front.*

RIPTA RIDERS

Among bus riders, 79% lived in the Hope Neighborhood, 17% lived in Providence outside the neighborhood, and 3% lived elsewhere in Rhode Island. Users ranged in age from 13-89, and the average age was 39. 75% of transit users self-identified as white/Caucasian, 17% were Asian, and 8% were Hispanic/Latine. 37%

of bus riders were male, 59% were female, and 4% identified as non-binary, queer, or genderfluid. 6% of bus riders combined their trip on the bus with a bike ride. 17% of transit riders identified as being mobility challenged or disabled. 25% of bus riders felt the trail made the street safer, 61% felt the experience was equally safe, and 14% felt it was less safe.

Some of the feedback that bus riders had about safety included:

- *As someone who also bikes and is coming from a much more bike-friendly city, adjusting to Providence has been challenging for bike commuting. Having the bike lane didn't make riding RIPTA any more challenging, and it made biking feel SO much safer. (No more car doors opening in front of me, etc.)*
- *Felt safer as a bus rider because there were no cars in the way of the bus riders disembarking.*

We also wanted feedback from bus riders about how the presence of the trail impacted the speed of the bus. During the trial, RIPTA drivers were instructed to stay in the driving lane instead of pulling over as they normally would. According to bus riders, 3% said this method made their trip faster than usual, 72% said it was about the same, 8% said it was slower, and 17% were not sure. The comments likewise reflected mixed perceptions about how the trail impacted the speed of bus travel:

- *I feel that having the trail allows for a safe way for bikers to travel and it doesn't seem to adversely affect other modes of transport. So its a win win.*
- *I couldn't believe the car traffic congestion while I was on the bus. I've never seen it that bad. I'm not sure if it's the lack of parking, the difficulty of turning into a driveway or side street, or what, but in my 6 years living here I have never crawled like that.*
- *Major delay coming home due to lack of parking on one side and people crossing at day care and YMCA*

In order to allow wheelchair users to get on and off the bus, we installed bus platforms at three of the five bus stops along the trail. Although it was our intention to install platforms at all five of the bus stops, transporting and installing them was a bigger challenge than we originally anticipated. As a result, we removed the flex posts in front of those two bus stops to allow passengers needing wheelchairs to embark on the curb as they did before the installation of the temporary trail. We gathered feedback from bus riders about their experience with the platforms, which received mixed reviews. In the end, we found that 71% of bus riders used the temporary platform. 67% of those who used the platform said that it was easy to use; 19% said it was neither easy nor difficult; and 15% said it was difficult:

- *The bus islands were great.*
- *Normally buses can pull over, so they don't clog traffic. With this trail, they can't do that and the ramp is very unhelpful.*

- *Bus exit is from back. Bus cannot lower the back the way they can lower the front and could not get close enough to the platform so had a big step down.*
- *A more permanent bus island would be better than wood*
- *First of all, there were no bus platforms. Today was an absolutely beautiful day yet I saw only one person on a bike. I did see a blind woman cross the bike trail to board the bus and she had to cross it again when she disembarked. Since there were no bus platforms at either stop, she was at the mercy of someone on a bike or scooter and neither seem to be compliant with rules of the road.*
- *A big fan of the new bike lane, I hope it stays! The bus drivers have been pretty good about dropping us off in a way that makes it easy to hop onto the platform (out of 8 bus rides I've taken this week, only 1 didn't park right in front of the platform). It has been a pleasant surprise to have the platforms -- feels easier than hopping onto the curb.*

RIDESHARE USERS

All of the ride share users lived in Providence; one person lived in the Hope Neighborhood. Ride share users ranged in age from 34 to 82, and the average age was 49. 80% of ride share users identified as white and 20% were Hispanic. 67% of the respondents identified as female, and 33% identified as male. 50% of them identified as being mobility challenged or disabled.

Because very few ride share users responded to our survey, we were only able to gather a few comments that were unique to their perspective, and they were contradictory, particularly on whether or not the trail made their experience safer. Aside from that, their responses reflected many of the same perspectives of people who used other types of transportation, including concern for businesses in the area, suggestions to use an alternative trail rather than building one on Hope Street, and one design suggestion related to extending the trail and avoiding the use of flex posts. Their responses included:

- *No safety concerns at all*
- *Drop off very dangerous for elderly. We are in our 80s. No place for our driver to get out of traffic.*
- *More alternative to car is good, less traffic, more safe*
- *I'm concerned the businesses effected will lose business.*
- *Blackstone Blvd has a trail and is close to this one.*
- *Keep it going further. Instead of the plastic bars, maybe 3 foot planters and add greenery.*

Focused Intercepts

Mt. Hope Community Baptist Church

Upon the request of the leadership at Mt. Hope Community Baptist Church, we went to speak with their members about how the presence of the trail impacted their experience with arriving to church. Several members of the church completed intercept surveys, while others commented about their experience more informally.

Some of the congregants indicated that they felt the bike lane added an urban feel to the street, which they enjoyed. Another person stated that the trail made them feel inspired to start biking again, perhaps with a modified bicycle with the added stability of a third wheel.

However, the vast majority of congregants stated that the presence of the bike lane made arriving to church particularly difficult. One person indicated that it had taken them 45 minutes to find parking, and another person indicated that they had to walk three blocks with knee problems in order to arrive at church. Some of the members said that if the bike lane were to become permanent, they could possibly work together to assure that older people and those with mobility challenges were able to park closest to the church. It is worth noting that two of the accessible parking spaces that were added by the city are on the same block as the church. Although our parking data for the area immediately surrounding the church is incomplete, it did indicate that on Rochambeau Avenue., which is immediately adjacent to the north side of the church, had at least 50% of spaces open.

The members of the congregation also presented the following petition, which was signed by 42 members of the church:

"We the Undersigned do not support removing parking on one side of Hope Street in favor of an Urban Trail.

We support cyclists, alternative modes of transportation and "mobility justice" and agree PVD should have dedicated lanes for such, however, we consider Hope Street an unsuitable location.

Hope Street is a bustling, commercial corridor that supports a dynamic dining and shopping district as well as densely spaced single and multi-family homes whose residents use the on-street parking daily. The businesses rely on patrons from beyond the community to survive, and the loss of parking will have a detrimental effect on both merchants and residents.

The majority of merchants on Hope Street do not have parking lots or off-street parking and need space for ubiquitous delivery vehicles and parking for visitors upon whom livelihoods depend. Additionally, Hope Street hosts both school and city buses and is near Miriam hospital and its emergency vehicles. Hope Street is also a main route that PVD police use regularly and at high speeds.



We request that Hope Street remain as it is and that any bike path be located on a wider, quieter, more suitable street. We believe only so much activity can take place safely in a finite space and are therefore against locating an Urban Trail on Hope St."

Bubbie's Market and Deli

The owners of the Bubbie's Market and Deli, a Kosher deli, requested that we come and speak with their customers during the trial period, so we set up a station to collect feedback from 1230pm to 2pm on Monday, October 3.

Bubbies' patrons almost unanimously spoke out against the trail. Many of them completed intercept surveys, but in general, the overall sentiment among the customers was that the trail was a poorly thought out idea. They were very concerned about the impact that the trail might have on the ability of elderly people to access the store as well as their ability to park in close enough proximity to the store while carrying large amounts of groceries. A few of Bubbie's customers also questioned the validity of the trial period happening during Yom Kippur.

Mt. Hope YMCA Child Care Center

One of our main concerns for the urban trail is that people, especially children would be able to continue to access destinations on Hope Street safely. The Hope Street YMCA Child Care Center was one of our particular concerns, given that there is no private parking lot and that it is located on the eastern side of the road, where the trail was also located. We added extra signage and a crosswalk for parents to safely cross the road with their children. However, parents nevertheless unanimously concluded that the trail added an extra hassle to the process of dropping off their children. Comments specifically from parents at the child care center included:

- *I take a toddler and baby to daycare at the ymca. The ymca daycare has no parking lot so your trail is now taking the space of our parking. Drop-off is very difficult now.*
- *My primary reason for visiting Hope Street is to drop off and pick up my son from the YMCA daycare. The new path eliminated my former parking spot and so now we must park behind the building. This is less than ideal as it now adds ~4-5 minutes to the process, which might sound like much but is a strain, especially in the mornings. Of course, that is a purely selfish response and in and of itself is not a reason for eliminating the bike path. More to the point, as someone who used to live and bike up Hope Street daily, from 2010 - 2015, I can't imagine I would have liked that path. It seems especially narrow and there is no room to dodge out of way if there is an obstacle on the path without hurtling into the other path or the curb. It might be less of an issue without the pylons, which really seem to restrict the space. I noticed runners were using the path, which means I would likely be back on the car lanes road, which seems to defeat the purpose of the path in the first place. And overall, when I biked Hope Street, I never felt particularly unsafe or exposed. I always biked with a light and had no issues. In other words, while my current inconvenience is as a driver. As a biker, I couldn't imagine using that thing - its too narrow and potentially dangerous.*



Parking Study

Every day of the trial, we had volunteers go out to count the number of cars that were parked on Hope Street, as well as one block to the east and west. Due to the fact that staff and volunteer time had to be dispersed across many tasks during the week of the trial, the parking study conducted during the temporary trail was slightly less robust than the pretrial analysis. Nevertheless, during the study, we were able to complete 11 full counts of the entire study area, as well as 20 counts that focused exclusively on the northern business district, and three counts that focused exclusively on the southern end of the trail. We also conducted a count on the evening of Friday September 30, while the trail was being constructed.

Pre-Trial Highest Average Parking Occupancy, Saturday Afternoon: Savoy to 6th Street (47%)



- Volunteers typically collected occupancy counts 2-3 times a day throughout the trial. We also collected an occupancy count on Friday night, September 30, when the trail was being built. On Wednesday October 5, we conducted only one count, due to the Jewish holiday Yom Kippur.
- **The average occupancy rate during the trial, for the entire trail, was 33%, meaning 67% of parking spaces were available for parking. On average 946 parking spaces remained available on Hope St or within one block of Hope Street.**

- The highest occupancy rates in the business district occurred on the Saturday afternoon October 8, with an occupancy rate of 47%. **This was the same occupancy rate observed on Saturday afternoon pre-trial.** At this time, 280 of the 526 spaces counted remained open. On Saturday afternoon on October 1, the occupancy rate was 42%. Other busy times included Friday afternoon and evening, with occupancy rates of 43%. Saturday morning October 1, Tuesday evening, and Thursday afternoon, with occupancy rates of 41% each in the business district.
- The lowest occupancy rate occurred on Thursday morning, when only 24% of parking spaces were occupied, and 949 spaces out of the 1254 counted remained available.

During Trial Highest Average Parking Occupancy, Saturday Afternoon: Savoy to 6th Street (47%)

Note: the trail removed parking on the east side of Hope Street only south of Lauriston Street

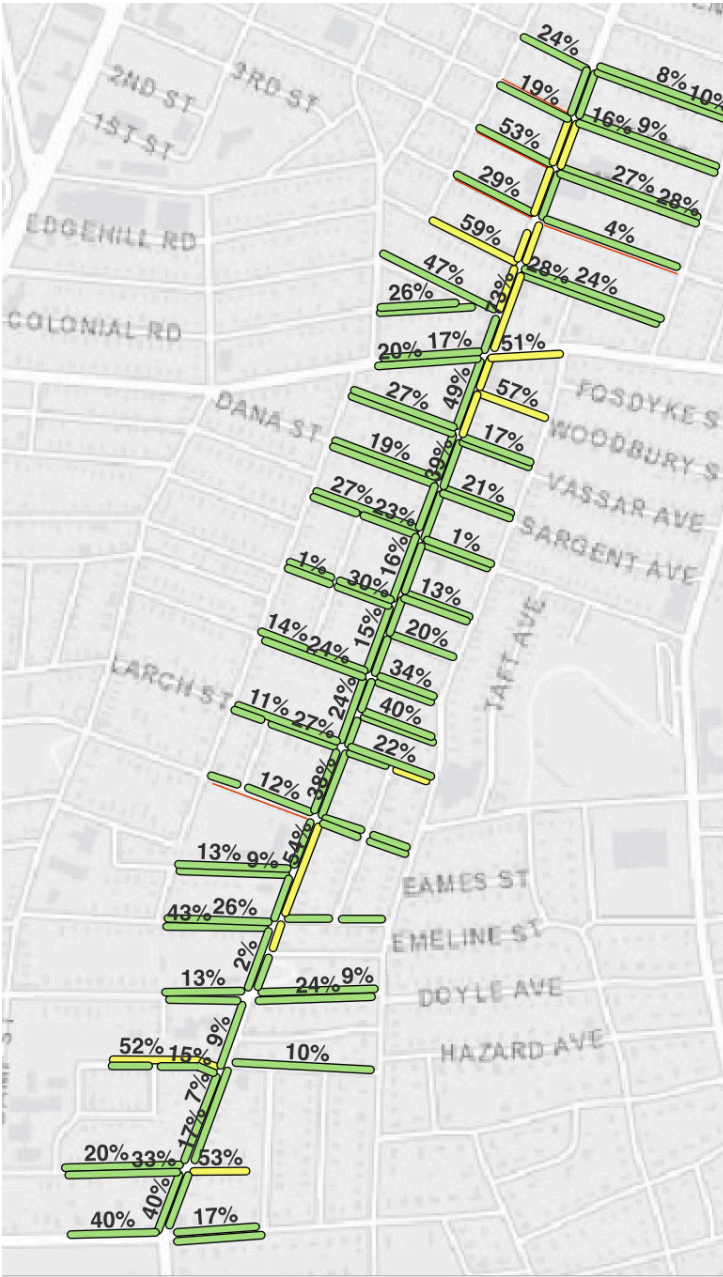


- In the business district of Hope Street, which included the section between Dana/Lewis Streets and 6th Street, as well as one block to either side, there was an average occupancy rate of 35%, meaning that 65% of parking spaces are available for parking. As a note, **this is only a 2% average increase from the pretrial count.** On average, there were 337 available spaces out of an average of 502 counted spaces in the business district.
- The lowest occupancy rate in the northern business district occurred on Monday morning and Friday morning, when 18%

For all counts, here are the **average** occupancy rates observed both pre- and during the trial:

Pre-Trial Average Parking Occupancy Rate (counted 16 times in November 2021): Olney to 6th Street: 27%

During Trial Average Parking Occupancy Rate (counted 11 times in October 2022): Olney to 6th Street: 33%



VI. After Trial

The trial concluded the evening of Saturday, October 8th, 2022.

A group of 30 volunteers removed the delineators and tape. A professional moving company removed the bus platforms. A local power washer erased the green and white markings on Sunday, October 9th.

City Survey

During the final pre-trial community meeting, a neighbor suggested that the City should administer and analyze the post-trial community survey rather than the Providence Streets Coalition and Thriving Places Collaborative. We agreed that that was a good and appropriate suggestion.

The City has committed to publicly sharing the results of their post-trial survey, but had not yet published them at the time of this report being written.



VI. Overall Results and Recommendations

Materials

The materials chosen for the Hope Street Temporary Trail worked extremely well. The weighted bottoms of the delineators meant they stayed in place even in a stiff wind, the thermoplastic tape was both durable and extremely easy to remove, the spray chalk was durable and did not fade even with considerable rainfall.

Our only regret was the size and weight of the bus platforms. While an 8'x8' wooden deck made for smooth and durable riding, walking, and bus boarding/alighting surface, they were extremely heavy and difficult to move, as well as store. In the future, we recommend constructing similar platforms in four pieces (two ramps and two sections of central platform) rather than three (two ramps and one large platform).

We are happy to share more specifics on the materials with any person or group looking to implement a similar tactical urbanism project.

Recommendations Based on Community Feedback

Democratize the streets

This is really a story about who can use the street, what streets are used for, and who decides?

Currently, the whole width of Hope Street is designed for cars, and there are two primary uses: driving and parking. An urban trail, however, would open up a quarter of the street to more kinds of uses and more interpersonal, human-scale connection. Trail supporters said a permanent trail would allow greater freedom for them to make transportation choices that are better for their physical health, mental well-being, and the environment.

In order to maximize the social equity benefits of the urban trail, programs such as affordable bike and scooter-sharing, education on safe cycling practices, and programming to encourage community events for physical and mental well-being should accompany the construction of the trail.

On the other hand, many people who opposed the trail expressed sentiments that biking should be a purely recreational activity and did not view it as a viable method for transportation.

Prioritize safety

Many people who live in the Mount Hope and Summit neighborhoods said that they would bike and roll more often and for more of

their daily trips if there were a safe space to do so. Due to the fact that 82% of trail users felt safer with the trail in place, we strongly recommend that the city create a designated space for people biking and rolling through the Hope Street area. A designated lane would also help motorists and bus drivers avoid conflicts with people traveling outside of cars. We recommend improvements to visibility in the area via daylighting at intersections, updated crosswalks, and that other traffic calming measures be implemented.

Maintain access for people with limited mobility

We are very sympathetic to the concern for older adults and differently abled people who wish to visit the area and agree that additional measures need to be in place to allow better access. It was unclear what people with limited mobility currently do if there is a vehicle parked directly in front of their destination, but we suspect that the current parking situation may already be preventing people with the greatest challenges from patronizing the area. Regardless of whether a permanent trail is built or not, **the city should provide ample accessible parking for people with limited mobility.**



Prior to our study, there was only one accessible parking spot on the stretch of Hope Street where the trail was located. As part of this project, we requested that the city add two new permanent spots – one in front of Rochambeau Library, and one on Hope Street between Glendale Ave and Rochambeau. In the business district, we recommend that the city add at least one accessible spot per block on the side streets. We strongly recommend that all designated accessible spots be outlined in blue to prevent en-

croachment, and that the city take care to ensure several van-accessible spots as well.

Another recommendation for improving accessibility in the area – and along all popular commercial corridors in Providence – is to add grocery store-style signage, reserving spots for people over the age of 55, those with temporary mobility issues, pregnant people and parents with small children, and those who don't otherwise qualify for a handicapped parking permit.

Coordinate with local businesses on ways to make the urban trail into an economic asset and mitigate potential conflicts

Throughout the community engagement phase of this project, we heard from local businesses about their difficulties with loading and deliveries. We recommend the city create a comprehensive plan for curbside management.

We also recommend that local businesses market to people using active and public transportation methods to get to Hope Street through special promotions, as a way to encourage alternative transportation and decrease parking demand. One example of this that we witnessed during the temporary trail was when Frog & Toad ran a promotion in which they handed out free water bottles to cyclists and scooter users. The Hope Street Merchants Association and individual businesses can use their social media platforms to communicate with patrons about driving and parking issues, encouraging those who are able bodied to park a little farther away, reserving space on Hope Street itself for those most in need of a shorter walk.

Plan for quality trail maintenance

Many residents told us that a solid maintenance plan would be necessary to clear debris and snow from a permanent urban trail, and there might need to be some personal accountability from homeowners to keep their lawns, flowers, and hedges properly maintained. This maintenance could also be done by volunteers, in annual community events.

Final Recommendations for the City of Providence

Future Design of Hope Street

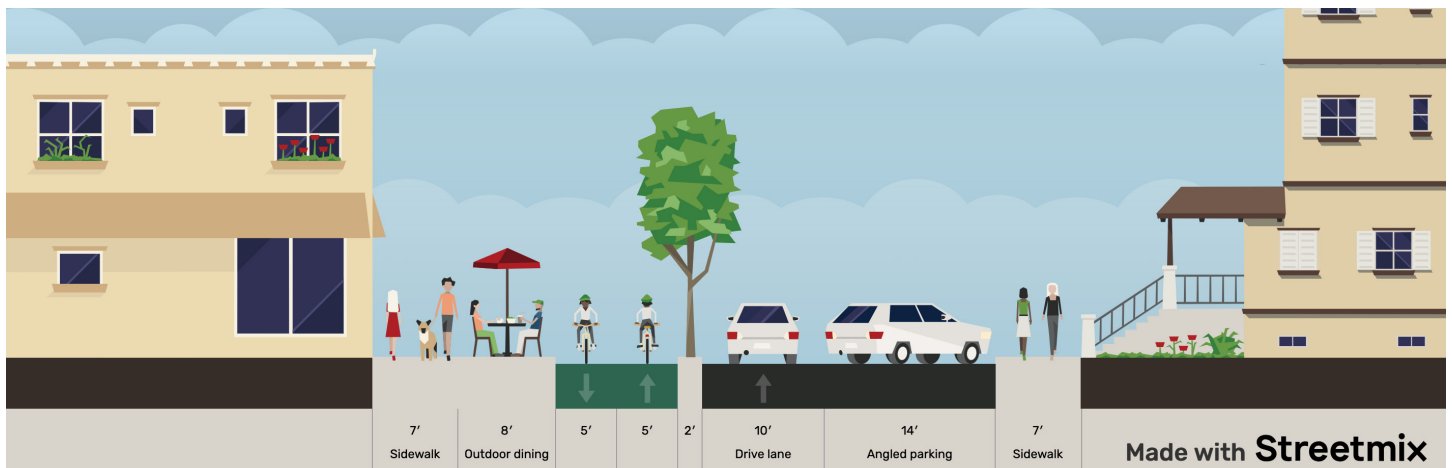
We believe that our results have clearly proven the benefits and feasibility of implementing a two-way urban trail on one side of Hope Street from Olney to Braman Street, with very little drawback or negative impact to residents or businesses. **We recommend the City build this segment of urban trail as soon as funding becomes available.** That would provide an incredibly useful extension of the existing Olney Street bike lanes, which are also slated to be upgraded to a two-way urban trail in the Great Streets Plan.

In order to continue measuring the safety, parking, and economic impacts, **we recommend a longer study of an urban trail north of Braman Street into the business district** – and ideally all the way to Lippitt Park.

Alternative solutions

Many of the people who took our intercept surveys had comments about alternative designs to improve bicycle, scooter, and pedestrian access in the area. We recommend the City explore alternative solutions to creating a more pedestrian-friendly environment within the Hope Street business district, including:

- Making Hope Street an entirely car-free zone or one-way for drivers from Braman Street to 6th Street, with more dedicated outdoor dining space, an urban trail, and angled parking. While angled parking takes up more street width, up to ten cars can fit in the same curb space as four cars parked in parallel. This design would create a more vibrant Hope Street with space for all uses. North or southbound drivers could use parallel streets like Elmgrove or Summit to detour around the business district.
- Considering a design commonly used in Northern Europe, notably Belgium and the Netherlands: parking spaces can be



Below: example of a street in Belgium, c/o Amilcar Lopes



combined with the green buffer (in between trees and poles) while the bike lane goes to the inside of the parked cars. Both the bike lanes and the parking spaces are slightly elevated, almost to the same level of the sidewalk. The elevation adds protection to the bike lane and parked cars from the incoming traffic, and they in turn protect the pedestrians. The existing trees keep the street familiar and adds protection to both parked cars and pedestrians. This solution may cost more, as it would require more robust construction, but it would provide more space for all uses, while preserving parking on both sides of the street.

- Reducing parking demand on Hope Street by building a public multi-story garage on the CVS lot.
- Have a trail that goes around the business district, stopping at Braman or Rochambeau, then routing east or west to go north to Lippitt Park and Pawtucket.
- More dynamic parking regulations. The best way to ensure that the most desirable parking spots are available for more business patrons is to regulate them thoughtfully. Currently, all parking on Hope Street is free, and for 2-hours. No parking is allowed overnight. Since the city has very limited parking en-

forcement resources, this results in long term (all day) parking in some cases, with very little turnover. It can also place an undue burden on people living in multifamily apartment buildings who have to shuffle cars in a driveway or in a backyard every night.

This can make it difficult for drivers to find a spot for a quickdrop-off or errand. We recommend – on Hope Street and across Providence – that the city update its parking regulations to be more dynamic, considering the diverse needs of people on the street. There should be a mixture of 15-minute parking, 1-hour parking, 2-hour and 4-hour, as well as a greater amount of accessible-only spots. We also recommend that the city revisit the idea of meters on the most-desirable blocks of Hope St to ensure turnover, and reserve parking for church on Sundays.

CONCLUSION

It is extremely rare for a community to have the opportunity to experience, debate, and weigh in on a proposed physical change in their neighborhood. Typically, governments and private landowners make decisions about the built environment in behind closed doors, treating community engagement as a box-checking exercise rather than an earnest consultation with those most affected by a project.

Imagine if the level of community process we used for the Hope Street Temporary Trail was used for larger-scale infrastructure projects like highways, energy facilities, or stadiums?

Regardless of the future design of Hope Street, we are extremely proud to have delivered the neighborhood this people-driven experiment, and to have modeled the kind of process we hope to see from our City and State.

At the outset of this journey, we had sincerely hoped that people would come experience the Temporary Trail with an open mind. Unfortunately, that mostly did not turn out to be the case. By the time the project was installed, we believe most residents and business owners had made up their minds about it. For those who visited and talked with us from a place of curiosity and neutrality, we thank you! And we thank everyone who participated - whether in support or opposition. We are all part of the same Providence community, and ultimately trying to improve and protect the places and people we love.

While ultimately a quite polarizing project without a strong consensus, the data we collected as well as the City's follow-up survey shows **there is slightly more support for the idea than opposition.**

It's ultimately up to community members and elected officials to decide what to do next.

We will leave you with the following quotes on change-making:

"Anyone who says you can't change the way things are is probably either afraid you will or ashamed they didn't try."

- Gabrielle Peters, disability activist in Vancouver, British Columbia

"Challenging the status quo takes commitment, courage, imagination, and above all, dedication to learning."

- Marshall Ganz, political and labor organizer

"God is Change."

- Octavia Butler, author

With respect and hope,
Liza and Jill

END NOTES

1. <https://www.providenceri.gov/planning/great-streets/>
2. <https://www.providenceri.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Providence-Great-Streets-Plan-Appendix-B-High-Injury-Network-Update-2021.pdf>
3. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Crkc5NPdCbo>
4. <https://www.providenceri.gov/planning/broad-street/>
5. <https://www.pvdstreets.org/grants>
6. <https://www.providencejournal.com/story/news/2016/04/08/providence-no-parking-meters-on-hope-street/31997512007/>

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