

Memorandum

To: Supervisor Mike Higgins, Town of Allegany
Prepared by: Kaden Shea, Community Engagement Manager, GObike
Subject: Allegany School Trail Feasibility Study: Community Survey Summary

Background. In 2021, the Town of Allegany partnered with GObike Buffalo in applying for a Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation grant to conduct an extensive community engagement process and develop a feasibility study that connects the Allegheny River Valley Trail and the planned Southern Tier Trail to a system of greenways that would improve access from the school to the village.

Between September, 2022 and February, 2023, GObike offered a survey for Allegany residents to provide input on a bike trail proposed for 2.2 mile stretch of Five Mile Road, connecting the Village of Allegany to Allegany Limestone Middle-High School. This survey was an opportunity for residents to express their primary concerns along the route, and to note which features they would potentially like to see along Five Mile Road. It also served as an opportunity for GObike to collect information about respondents, and to document the road's current usage by Allegany-area residents and visitors.

190 individual survey responses were received.

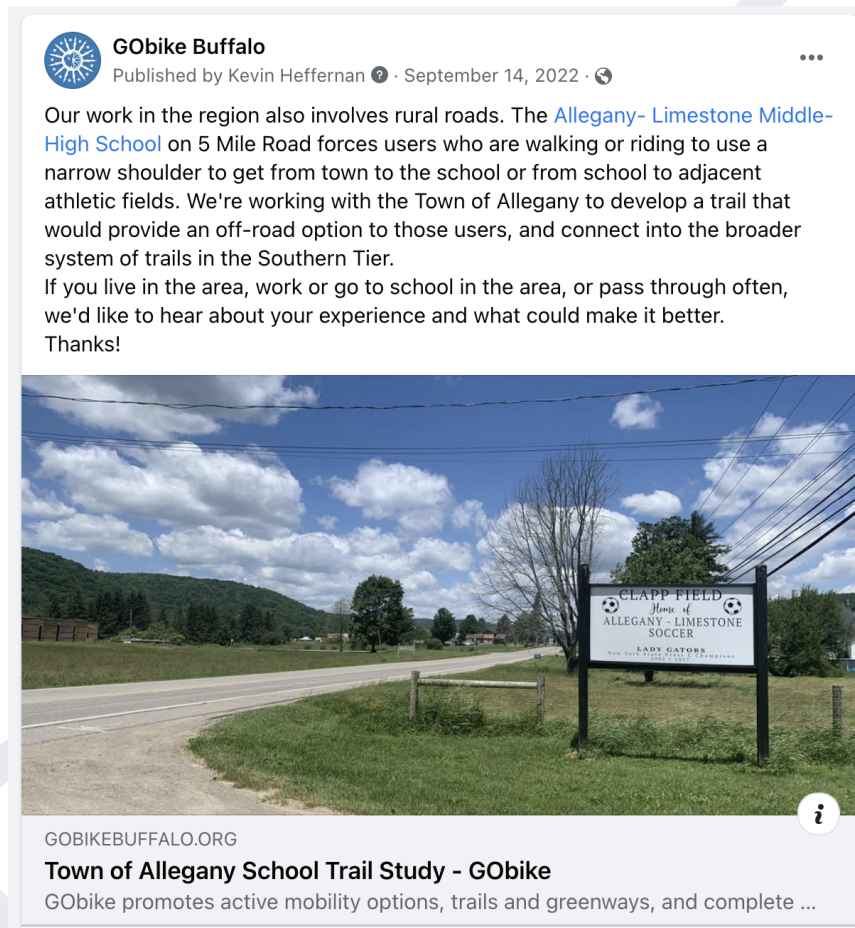
Findings. The survey demonstrated that there is substantial support for a bike path connecting Allegany-Limestone Middle-High School, though any project is likely to be met by overt opposition by Five Mile Road residents, many of whom have apprehension and concerns about property impediment, potential for trespassing, and the general loss of privacy they believe the introduction of mixed-use path might introduce.

The following pages offer detailed information on how survey responses were collected as well as breakouts of the survey results.

Collection Strategy.

In July, 2022, GObike developed a "Town of Allegany School Trail Study" landing page on their website, featuring the preliminary information about the project, as well as a public document hub for related material and meeting slides, and project timeline. The survey was added to the website in September, 2022. It was promoted on GObike's website and social media, and on the Town of Allegany's website and social media as well. .

Figure 1: GObike Facebook Survey Promotion, September 14, 2022



Printed surveys and project links were made available to residents at the **Allegany Public Library from January 12, 2023 – February 15, 2023**. As an incentive for taking the survey, GObike provided a prize basket with a bike helmet and safety lights to the library; anyone who took the survey at the library – digitally or in print – was eligible to win.

Project information links and paper surveys were also made available to anyone in attendance at the Allegany School Trail Public Meeting held at Allegany Limestone Middle-High School on **January 12, 2023**. The meeting had approximately 39 attendees and was promoted through the following channels:

- January 7, 2023: Digital & print ads in the **Olean Times Herald**
- **January 2 - 12, 2023:** Website and social media ads hosted on the **Town of Allegany's website and social media channels.**

Figure 2: GObike Social Media Promo, Allegany School Trail Public Meeting. January, 2023



Community Survey Summary.

Key Themes. The following themes emerged through review of the survey:

<i>Favorable</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Many residents are excited by the economic stimulation that multi-use trails could bring to the region, especially if connected to nearby regional trails.• Students and other residents are already using Five Mile Road for active mobility like walking and biking, though not many feel safe when doing so.• Student-athletes at both Allegany Limestone Middle-High School and St. Bonaventure University are eager for the opportunity to practice and commute on multi-use trails.
<i>Unfavorable</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some residents of Five Mile Road vehemently opposed to project; concerned the installation of any trail would be an impediment of their land and privacy• Respondents critical of whether anyone will use a trail to access Allegany Limestone Middle-High School, due to students' tendency to bus or be driven to school.• Concern that hazardous traffic patterns, speed, and nature of Five Mile Road as a shipping lane for local industry cannot be countered by complete street design; the road is too unsafe to host bike and pedestrian travel in any context.
<i>Neutral</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Respondents commented that a trail would better serve the community if located on West Five Mile Road, along the Allegheny River.

Survey Respondent Demographics & Characteristics.

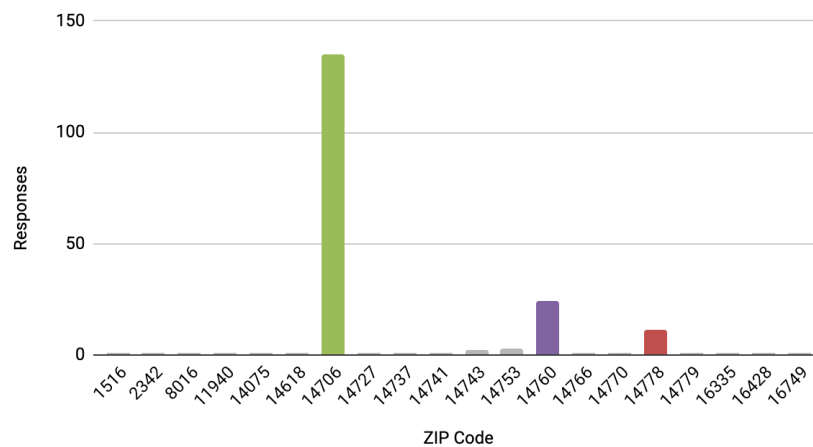
190 survey responses were submitted; **135 people (71.1%) identified themselves as residents of the 14706 ZIP code**, within which both Five Mile Road and Allegany-Limestone Middle-High School are located. **Olean's 14760 ZIP code comprised the second-highest number of respondents (12.63%). Residents of the 14778 ZIP code, in which St. Bonaventure University is located, composed the third-largest group of respondents (5.8%).**

Table 1: *In what ZIP code is your home located?*

ZIP Code	Responses	Responses
1516	1	0.53%
2342	1	0.53%
8016	1	0.53%
11940	1	0.53%
14075	1	0.53%
14618	1	0.53%
14706	135	71.05%
14727	1	0.53%
14737	1	0.53%
14741	1	0.53%
14743	2	1.05%
14753	3	1.58%
14760	24	12.63%
14766	1	0.53%
14770	1	0.53%
14778	11	5.79%
14779	1	0.53%
16335	1	0.53%
16428	1	0.53%
16749	1	0.53%
Grand Total	190	

Chart 1: *In what ZIP code is your home located?*

ZIP Code Responses

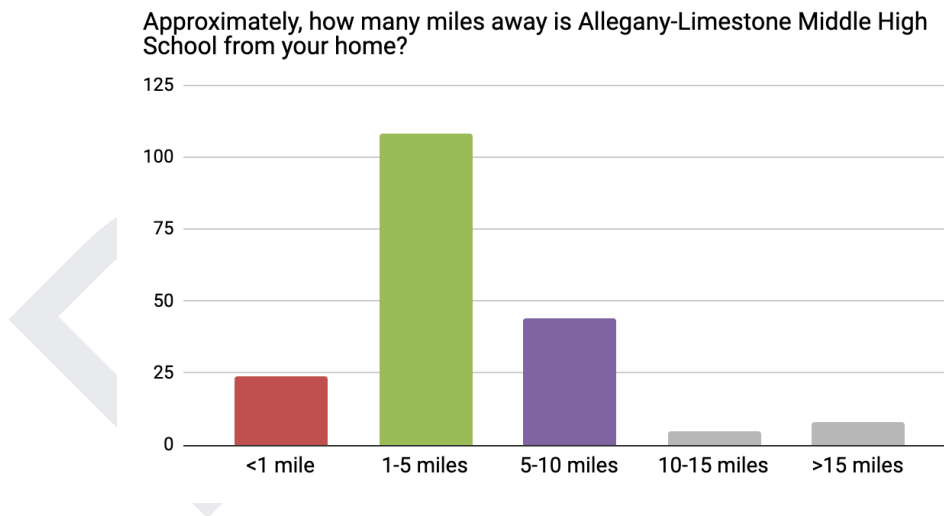


24 respondents (12.7%) reported residing within 1 mile of Allegany-Limestone Middle High School, while the majority of feedback received was submitted by individuals residing within 5 miles of Allegany-Limestone Middle High School (69.8%).

Table 2: *Approximately, how many miles away is Allegany-Limestone Middle High School from your home?*

Answer Choices	Responses	Percentages
<1 mile	24	12.70%
1-5 miles	108	57.14%
5-10 miles	44	23.28%
10-15 miles	5	2.65%
>15 miles	8	4.23%
Answered	189	
Skipped	1	

Chart 2: *Approximately, how many miles away is Allegany-Limestone Middle High School from your home?*



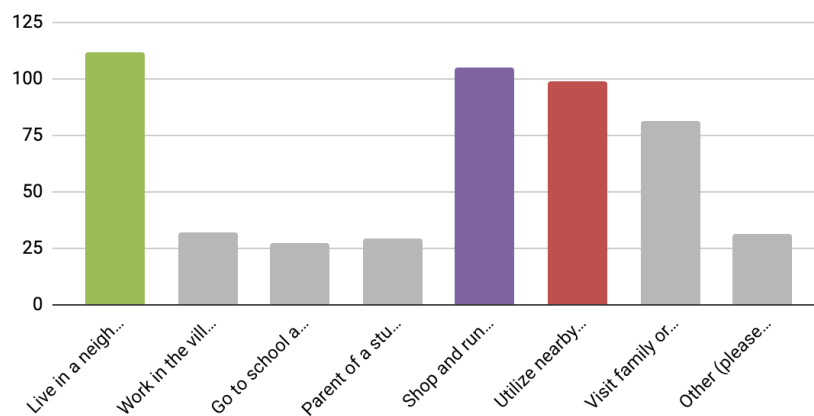
When asked “In what ways are you connected to the town or village of Allegany, or the Allegany-Limestone Middle High School? (check all that apply),” **66.2% of respondents claimed to reside in the town of Allegany, followed by those who shop and run errands in Allegany (62.1%), and those who utilize nearby greenway trails (58.5%).**

Table 3: *In what ways are you connected to the town or village of Allegany, or the Allegany-Limestone Middle High School? (check all that apply)*

Answer Choices	Responses	Percentages
Live in a neighborhood in the village or town	112	66.27%
Work in the village or town	32	18.93%
Go to school at Allegany-Limestone Middle High School	27	15.98%
Parent of a student at Allegany-Limestone Middle High School	29	17.16%
Shop and run errands in the village or town	105	62.13%
Utilize nearby greenways and trails	99	58.58%
Visit family or friends in the village or town	81	47.93%
Other (please specify)	31	18.34%
Answered	169	
Skipped	21	

Chart 3: *In what ways are you connected to the town or village of Allegany, or the Allegany-Limestone Middle High School? (check all that apply)*

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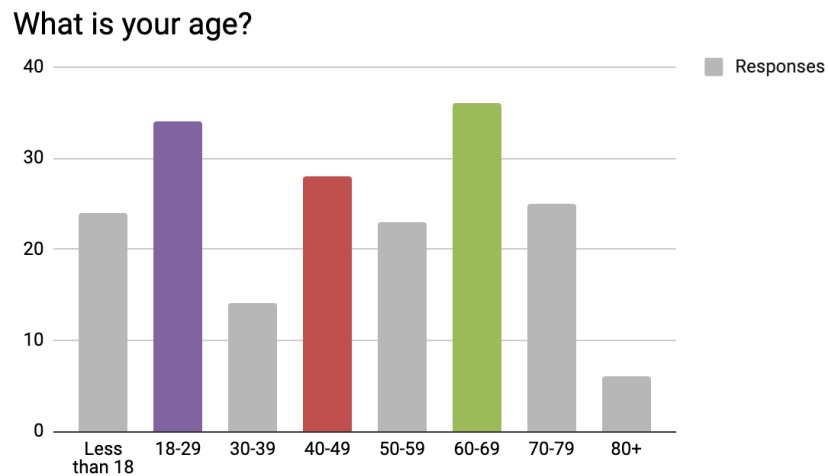
While the ages of those surveyed varied with no overwhelming concentration in any one age group, **respondents ages 60-69 accounted for the majority of those surveyed (18.9%), with ages 18-29 (17.9%) and 70-79 (13.2%) and in second and third place, respectively.**

Table 4: *What is your age?*

Answer Choices	Responses	Percentages
Less than 18	24	12.63%
18-29	34	17.89%
30-39	14	7.37%

40-49	28	14.74%
50-59	23	12.11%
60-69	36	18.95%
70-79	25	13.16%
80+	6	3.16%
Answered	190	
Skipped	0	

Chart 4: What is your age?

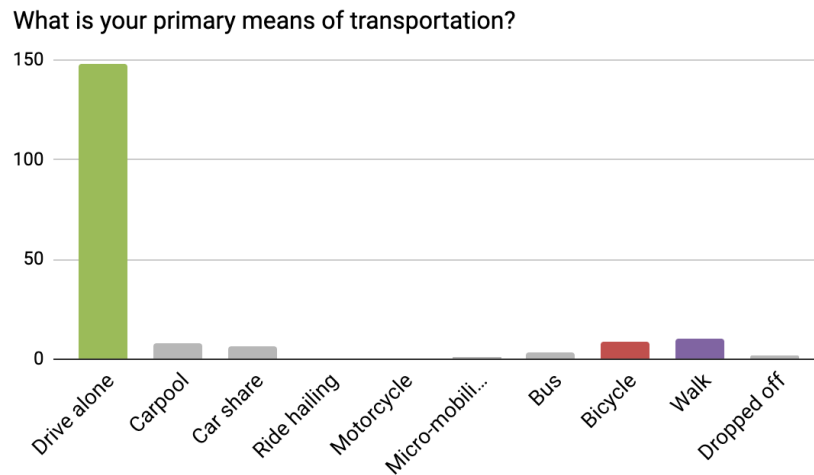


When asked to identify their primary means of transportation, 148 respondents (**79.1%**) answered “drive alone,” with walkers (**5.3%**) and cyclists (**4.8%**) in second and third place, respectively.

Table 5: What is your primary means of transportation?

Answer Choices	Responses	Percentages
Drive alone	148	79.14%
Carpool	8	4.28%
Car share	6	3.21%
Ride hailing	0	0.00%
Motorcycle	0	0.00%
Micro-mobility vehicle	1	0.53%
Bus	3	1.60%
Bicycle	9	4.81%
Walk	10	5.35%
Dropped off	2	1.07%
Answered	187	
Skipped	3	

Chart 5: *What is your primary means of transportation?*



Road / Trail Usage & Comfort.

91.7% of respondents reported being both aware of existing bicycle and pedestrian paths in and around Allegany County, and having used them. This high level awareness and utility demonstrates an existing appreciation for multi-use paths and trails in the Allegany region.

Table 7: *Are you aware of existing bicycle and pedestrian paths in or near Allegany?*

Answer Choices	Responses	Percentages
Yes	154	91.67%
No	14	8.33%
Answered	168	
Skipped	22	

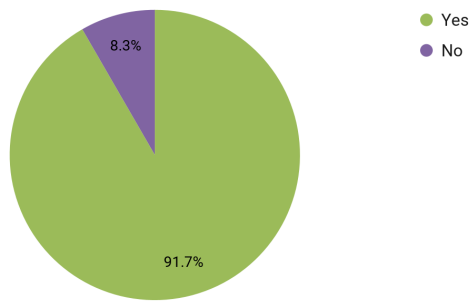
Table 8: *Have you ever used existing bicycle or pedestrian paths in or near Allegany?*

Answer Choices	Responses	Percentages
Yes	154	91.67%
No	14	8.33%
Answered	168	
Skipped	22	

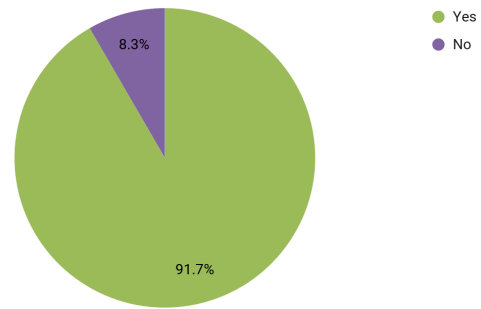
Chart 7 (left side): *Are you aware of existing bicycle and pedestrian paths in or near Allegany?*

Chart 8 (right side): *Have you ever used existing bicycle or pedestrian paths in or near Allegany?*

Are you aware of existing bicycle and pedestrian paths in or near Allegany?



Have you ever used existing bicycle or pedestrian paths in or near Allegany?



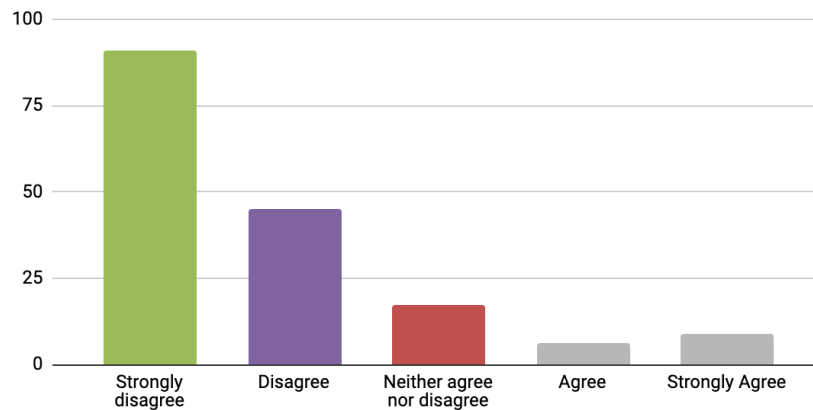
When asked to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement, “Current crosswalks, crossing signals, and signage make it comfortable to walk, drive, ride a bike on Five Mile Road,” **80% of those surveyed disagreed or strongly disagreed** with that statement, **indicating overall unease and discomfort with current crosswalks, signals, and signage on Five Mile Road. 15 respondents (9%) either agreed or strongly agreed** with the statement, **indicating that they were comfortable performing those activities on Five Mile Road.**

Table 9: Current crosswalks, crossing signals, and signage make it comfortable to walk, drive, ride a bike on Five Mile Road

Answer Choices	Responses	Percentages
Strongly disagree	91	54.17%
Disagree	45	26.79%
Neither agree nor disagree	17	10.12%
Agree	6	3.57%
Strongly Agree	9	5.36%
Answered	168	
Skipped	22	

Chart 9: Current crosswalks, crossing signals, and signage make it comfortable to walk, drive, ride a bike on Five Mile Road

Current crosswalks, crossing signals, and signage make it comfortable to walk, drive, ride a bike on Five Mile Road.



When the data was split between those who answered “drive alone” as their primary means of transportation, verses those who selected alternative transportation options like walking, biking, rideshare, or micro mobility, the findings were somewhat surprising; **a higher percentage (19.5%) of those engaged in active or alternative mobility agreed or strongly agreed with the statement than those who drive alone (5.8%).**

Though the majority of respondents in both categories disagreed or strongly disagreed that “Current crosswalks, crossing signals, and signage make it comfortable to walk, drive, ride a bike on Five Mile Road,” the difference in answers between those two groups indicates that numerous individuals already using active or alternative mobility on Five Mile Road, find the roadway’s signage, crosswalks, and signals to be more suited to those activities than is perceived by those who primarily drive alone.

Table 10: Current crosswalks, crossing signals, and signage make it comfortable to walk, drive, ride a bike on Five Mile Road (Bike/Ped/AltTrans ONLY)

Answers	Responses	Percentages
Agree	2	5.56%
Disagree	9	25.00%
Neither agree nor disagree	2	5.56%
Strongly Agree	2	5.56%
Strongly disagree	21	58.33%
Grand Total	36	

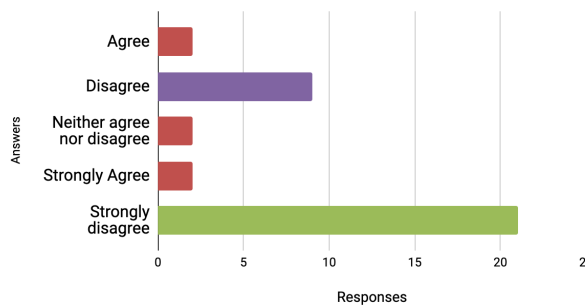
Table 11: Current crosswalks, crossing signals, and signage make it comfortable to walk, drive, ride a bike on Five Mile Road (Drive Alone ONLY)

Answers	Pesponses	Percentages
Agree	4	2.92%
Disagree	42	30.66%
Neither agree nor disagree	13	9.49%
Strongly Agree	4	2.92%
Strongly disagree	74	54.01%
Grand Total	137	

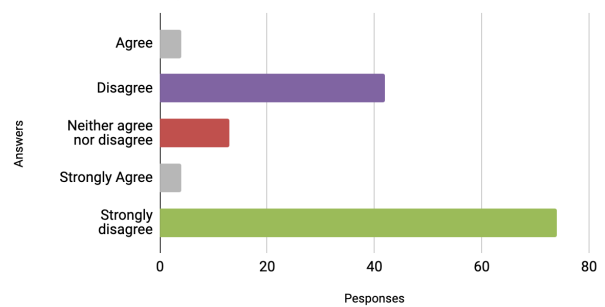
Chart 10 (left side): Current crosswalks, crossing signals, and signage make it comfortable to walk, drive, ride a bike on Five Mile Road (Bike/Ped/AltTrans ONLY)

Chart 11 (right side): Current crosswalks, crossing signals, and signage make it comfortable to walk, drive, ride a bike on Five Mile Road (Drive Alone ONLY)

When walking or biking along Five Mile Road, I feel comfortable dealing with the traffic around me.



Current crosswalks, crossing signals, and signage make it comfortable to walk, drive, ride a bike on Five Mile Road.



When comparing answers from those same two demographic groups when answering the question, "When walking or biking along Five Mile Road, I feel comfortable dealing with the traffic around me," a similar pattern emerged; **while 83.9% of respondents overall disagreed or strongly disagreed with that statement, only 72.7% of those who primarily walked, bikes, or used alternative transit agreed or strongly disagreed, indicating that traffic and drivers - more so than existing signage and infrastructure - made them feel unsafe when traveling on Five Mile Road.**

Chart 12: When walking or biking along Five Mile Road, I feel comfortable dealing with the traffic around me - ALL RESPONDENTS

When walking or biking along Five Mile Road, I feel comfortable dealing with the traffic around me.

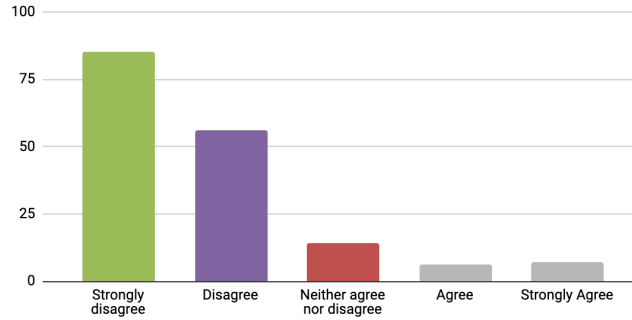
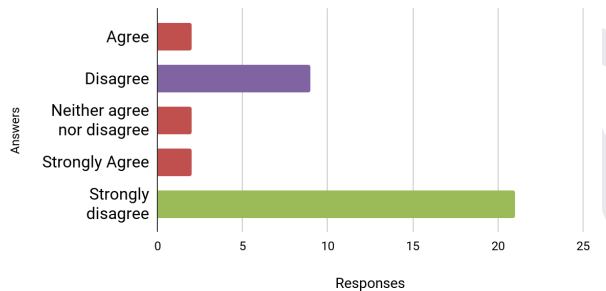


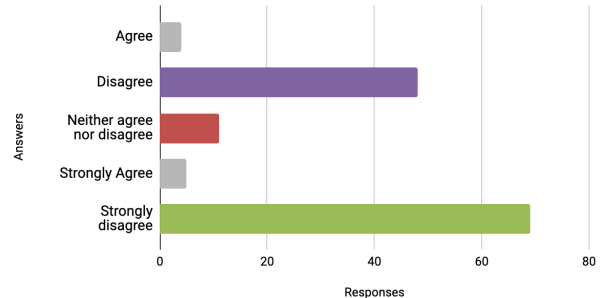
Chart 13 (Left Side): When walking or biking along Five Mile Road, I feel comfortable dealing with the traffic around me. (Bike/Ped/Alt Trans)

Chart 14 (Right Side): When walking or biking along Five Mile Road, I feel comfortable dealing with the traffic around me. (Drive Alone ONLY)

When walking or biking along Five Mile Road, I feel comfortable dealing with the traffic around me. (Bike / Ped / Alt Trans Only)



Current crosswalks, crossing signals, and signage make it comfortable to walk, drive, ride a bike on Five Mile Road (Driver Only)



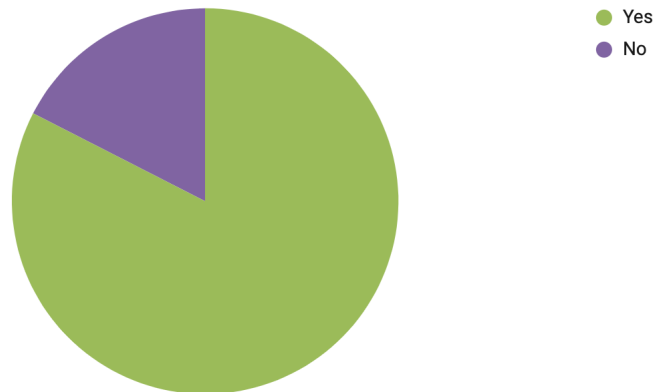
When asked “Would it be easier/safer for you or minors in your care to get from point A to point B if there were a dedicated, connected bicycle and pedestrian pathway instead of using Five Mile Road?” the **overwhelming majority of respondents (82.5%)** indicated that it would be safer and easier, **verses 17.5% who indicated otherwise.**

Table 12: Would it be easier/safer for you or minors in your care to get from point A to point B if there were a dedicated, connected bicycle and pedestrian pathway instead of using Five Mile Road?

Answer Choices	Responses	Responses
Yes	137	82.53%
No	29	17.47%
Answered	166	
Skipped	24	

Chart 15: *Would it be easier/safer for you or minors in your care to get from point A to point B if there were a dedicated, connected bicycle and pedestrian pathway instead of using Five Mile Road?*

Would it be easier/safer for you or minors in your care to get from point A to point B if there were a dedicated, connected bicycle and pedestrian pathway instead of using Five Mile Road?

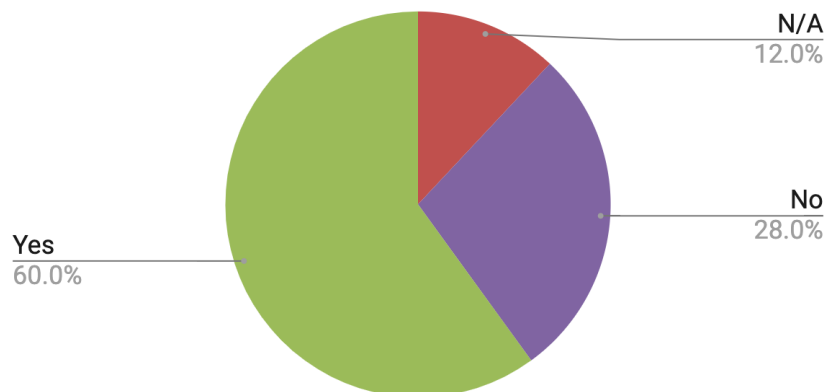


Five Mile Road Community Residents.

Despite objections to this feasibility study expressed by some Five Mile Road residents, the **24 survey respondents residing less than one mile from Allegany-Limestone Middle High School were not entirely in opposition to the establishment of a mixed-use path on Five Mile Road; 60% claimed it would be .**

Chart 16: *Residents > 1 mile from school: Would it be easier/safer for you or minors in your care to get from point A to point B if there were a dedicated, connected bicycle and pedestrian pathway instead of using Five Mile Road?*

Residents > 1 mile from school: Would it be easier/safer for you or minors in your care to get from point A to point B if there were a dedicated, connected bicycle and pedestrian pathway instead of using Five Mile Road?



Below is a selection of open comments from Five Mile Road residents:

Favorable

- *"Our family could bike to school, town, parks, practice instead of driving on dangerous road. It's far too unsafe to ever bike on currently."*
- *"It would be nice to connect the school to the village and provide students and the community at large a safe way to gather there."*
- *"I live on the Five Mile and the combination of the lack of shoulder and speed limit make it dangerous to walk/ bike on. I work at Allegany-Limestone and the thought of having a safe way to walk to school (about 0.4 mile) is quite exciting to me!"*

Unfavorable

- *"I have concerns about your proposed project going through residential neighborhoods with no security, insufficient lighting, no monitoring of minors misbehaving given the security/lighting issues. This community is getting around just fine as it is. There are a select few individuals who think this is an essential project. The people most impacted have spoken, and they do not want this mess running through their property. As a homeowner near the school, it is difficult enough watching traffic when exiting my driveway without also having to watch for pedestrians walking (espeically in the dark). It is interesting that GoBike has people who have chosen urban living to dictate to rural residents what is best for them. There are far more important things in this community that need fixed before expanding a trail."*
- *"5 mile is wrong choice for precious dollars to be spent on. Choose a place that is motivating to go out and enjoy the out of doors..expand the river trail to connect with ALLEGANY (everyone loves walking by the river...possibly west five mile as it is a less busy (less semi, agricultural and logging trucks. FYI..students do not walk!!!!"*
- *"It is popular to people whose property will not be impacted. To those who live and maintain their properties on the Five Mile, this project creates another burden. This is a popular project to the Town Supervisor, along with the Town Board, none of whom will be giving up any part of their lifestyle or home as a result of this project."*

Neutral

- *"(Put the trail) On West Five Mile"*

- “Same side of the road as the school, with a crosswalk to the soccer fields by Long Acres.”

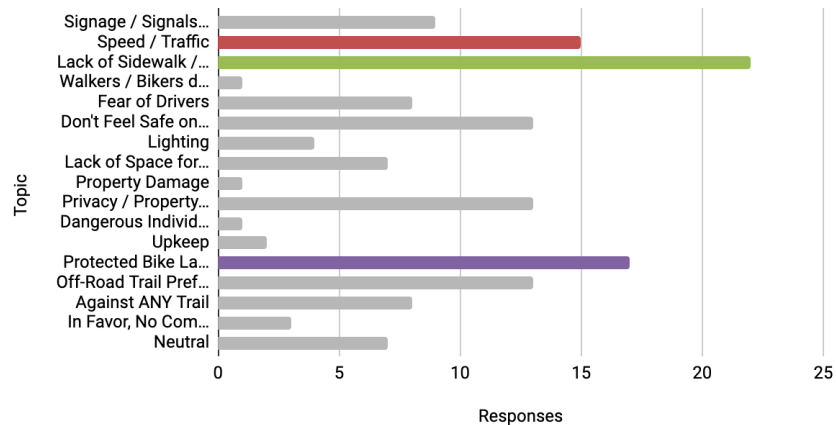
Open-Comment Questions. In an open-comment portion of the survey, people were asked to describe any specific concerns they have about walking/biking safety, transit options and facilities, and getting around in the village or town of Allegany. **Two main concerns were the lack of sidewalks and shoulders on Five Mile Road, as well as fear of the traffic and speed.** A quantified break-down of those comments can be viewed below in Chart 12:

Table 13: *Describe any specific concerns you have about walking/biking safety, transit options and facilities, and getting around in the village or town.*

Topic	Responses	Percentages
Signage / Signals / Crossing	9	6.25%
Speed / Traffic	15	10.42%
Lack of Sidewalk / Shoulder / Cycling Infrastructure	22	15.28%
Trail users don't follow rules	1	0.69%
Fear of Drivers	8	5.56%
Don't Feel Safe	13	9.03%
Lighting	4	2.78%
Lack of Space for Trail	7	4.86%
Property Damage	1	0.69%
Privacy / Property Impediment	13	9.03%
Dangerous Individuals on Trail	1	0.69%
Upkeep	2	1.39%
Protected Bike Lane Preferred	17	11.81%
Off-Road Trail Preferred	13	9.03%
Against ANY Trail	8	5.56%
In Favor, No Comment	3	2.08%
Neutral	7	4.86%
TOTAL	144	

Chart 17: *Describe any specific concerns you have about walking/biking safety, transit options and facilities, and getting around in the village or town.*

Describe any specific concerns you have about walking/biking safety, transit options and facilities, and getting around in the village or town



What we heard:

Favorable

- "Our high school age children, when they were in HS, had to ride bikes to sports practice many times. I was always concerned for their safety because of traffic. A dedicated trail would be much safer."
- "Walking and bicycling is neither safe nor convenient due to lack of infrastructure. A more developed trail/path system would make our community more walkable."
- "Multiple students walk along the 5 mile during the early mornings in the dark where it is difficult to see them and with the high speeds traveled it is very dangerous. A bike/pedestrian path would make their trip safer."

Unfavorable

- "I wouldn't let my child use the trail. The road is unsafe for anyone to walk or bike on."
- "If people or children are obese you should be focusing on their diets and the amount of video games and tv they watch. Putting in a trail to the school is not to benefit any children and you want this for your own lame reasons. For any needs to walk or ride bikes there is currently a well maintained trail through st bonaventure and follows the river. It is there for that reason and doesn't destroy people's privacy and take away frontage from their hard earned lifestyle and homes!"

- "A "trail" on the Five Mile Rd should not be considered. In my opinion, that road is too dangerous....and narrowfor walkers/bikersof any age ."

Neutral / Undecided

- "I am worried about sexual predators or weird-os walking along the trail. I like the idea of students being able to bike but I am not ok with the seizure of private property."
- "I would be concerned about people walking in the area along the creek due to liability of the homeowners in the area. I do think there is a need for something like this but there aren't alot of areas/space to build something like this without taking people's land/property for this."

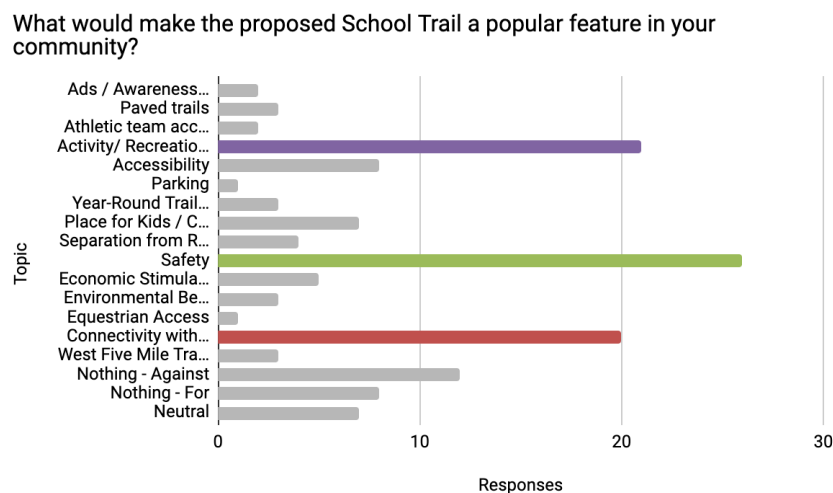
In a second open-comment question, people were asked what would make the proposed School Trail a popular feature in their community; the **three most frequent answers were safety, access to activity / recreation, and connectivity with other trails and regions**. A quantified break-down of those comments can be viewed below in Chart 13:

Table 14: What would make the proposed School Trail a popular feature in your community?

Topic	Responses	Percentages
Ads / Awareness Campaign about trails	2	1.47%
Paved trails	3	2.21%
Athletic team access	2	1.47%
Activity/ Recreation Opportunity	21	15.44%
Accessibility	8	5.88%
Parking	1	0.74%
Year-Round Trail Maintenance	3	2.21%
Place for Kids / Community Activity	7	5.15%
Separation from Roadway	4	2.94%
Safety	26	19.12%
Economic Stimulation	5	3.68%
Environmental Benefits	3	2.21%
Equestrian Access	1	0.74%
Connectivity with other	20	14.71%

destinations		
West Five Mile Trail Preferred	3	2.21%
Nothing - Against	12	8.82%
Nothing - For	8	5.88%
Neutral	7	5.15%
TOTAL	136	

Chart 18: What would make the proposed School Trail a popular feature in your community?



What we heard:

Favorable

- "Safety, accessibility, bringing a sense of community between the school and the village. This should be a no brainer."
- "I believe this proposed trail would invite bicyclists to the area, promote a vibrant physically active community, expand tourism, continue to connect outdoor spaces locally ...overall enrich the growth of our community."
- "Walkable towns & communities are what health-oriented people (as well as those concerned about the environment) want. People walking around make places safer too. All features to make our town more attractive. For my needs- I would ride my bike to town more often if it were safer."

Unfavorable

- *"I wouldn't let my child use the trail. The road is unsafe for anyone to walk or bike on."*
- *"This is not nor will it ever be something that anyone truly wants in this are the only person who really wants this in sense is Mike Higgins for his own personal goals. This will not be a benefit for anyone it will be more of headache for property owners. No trail is wanted by the residents of the Five Mile! Get over it and move on to something that would actually benefit the community rather than this nonsense"*
- *"As a parent of an Allegany children, very very few actually walk to school. Many parents drop their children off at school then go on their way to work. It would be nice if students would walk, but I believe that realistically students and parent habits will not change if there is a trail. I wanted to make sure my young children were safe and sound at school before driving to work. At the middle and high school age, they rode the bus. As a tax payer, if a trail is an option, would this mean fewer buses and lower taxes?"*

Neutral

- *"A trail along the West Five Mile would be a much safer option & a more quiet, pleasant, peaceful recreational environment for users. It wouldn't have the same risks & issues as those listed in question #16 related to the Five Mile location. Thank you."*