



Berkeley Poll Results: Appetite for Increased Cycling Infrastructure

420 interviews in Berkeley, CA from September 24-30, 2024

A recent poll of 420 residents in Berkeley, California finds both strong interest in cycling in the city, and overwhelming support for expanding cycling infrastructure.

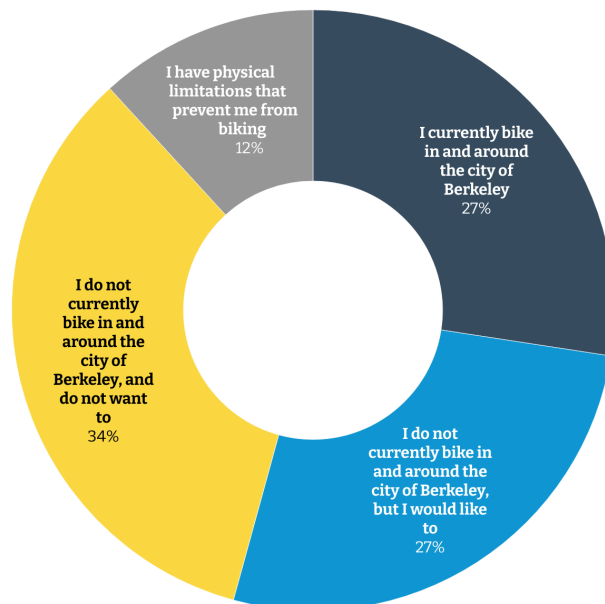
Despite marked interest in cycling, residents highlight safety from drivers and traffic as a top deterrent to cycling. Additionally, residents overwhelmingly feel comfortable cycling on bike paths that have barriers separating cyclists and pedestrians from car traffic, but this comfort decreases dramatically when thinking of using painted bike lanes positioned next to high-speed traffic. These findings suggest that more people may be encouraged to bike within Berkeley through the expansion of safe cycling infrastructure.

Significant portions of Berkeley residents report regular cycling around the city.

When asked about what modes of transportation they use in an average week, 23% of Berkeley residents say they use a bike or e-bike to navigate the city. Moreover, nearly three in 10 (28%) report having ridden a bicycle for commuting or recreation in the past month, with 23% saying they have cycled to reach a destination.

Relationship with Cycling in Berkeley

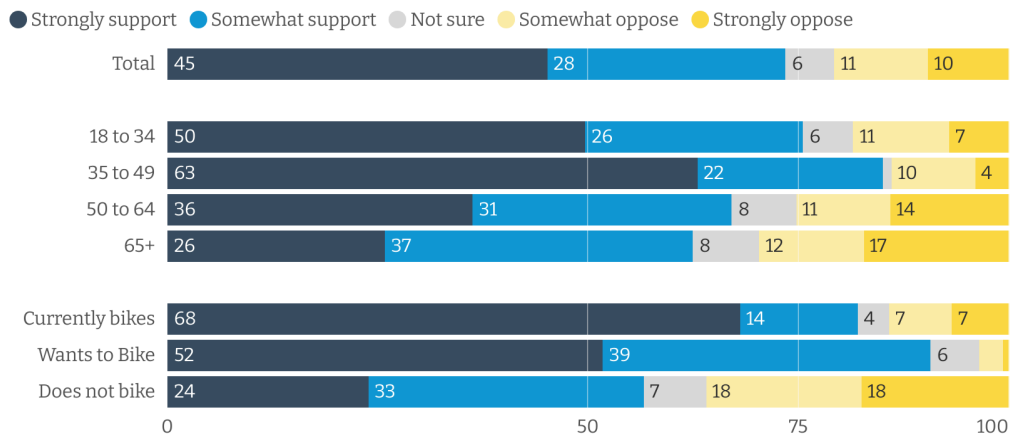
Over half of Berkeley residents report themselves as actively cycling or interested in cycling in the city. When asked about their relationship with cycling, 27% of residents say they currently bike in the city of Berkeley, and an additional 27% say they do not currently bike, but would like to. Only a third of residents (34%) have no interest in cycling. An additional 12% have physical limitations that prevent them from cycling.



Q. Which of the following best describes you? For this question, biking includes using a variety of types of bikes, including adaptive bikes that can accommodate some mobility issues.

Residents overwhelmingly support expanding cycling infrastructure in the city of Berkeley. Just under three-quarters of voters (73%) say they support expanding cycling infrastructure, while just 21% oppose it, and 6% are unsure. Majorities of voters across all age groups show support for cycling expansion. Moreover, while support is strongest among those who want to cycle (91%) and active cyclists (82%), a majority of residents who do not or cannot cycle (57%) also support the expansion of cycling infrastructure in the city.

Support for Cycling Infrastructure Expansion



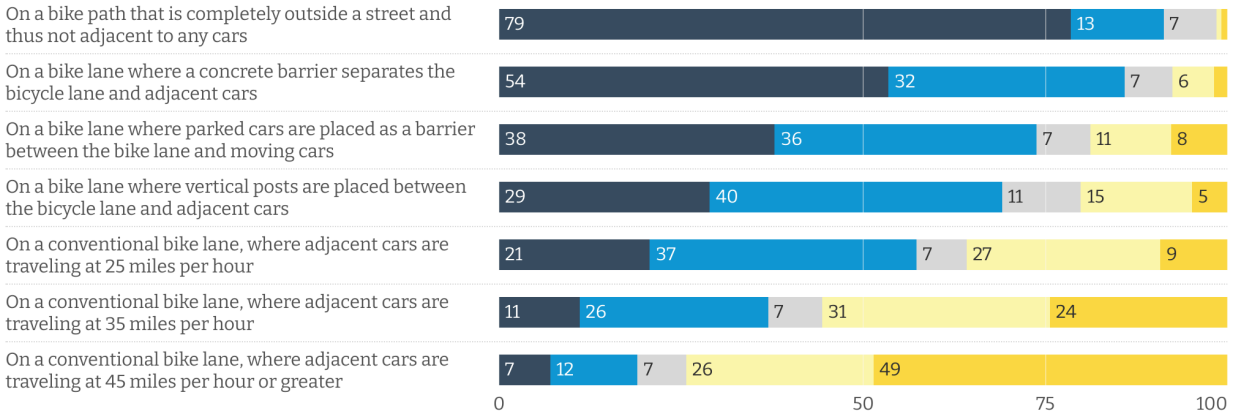
Q: Do you support or oppose expanding cycling infrastructure in the city of Berkeley?

Safety and convenience are the top priorities for Berkeley residents when deciding how to travel in the city. Nearly two-thirds of residents consider safety from traffic or crashes to be “very important” when making decisions about what form of transportation to use. At the same time, a similarly strong majority (60%) say that ease of use (not requiring a lot of planning), is also “very important” in deciding how to navigate Berkeley.

Residents are overwhelmingly comfortable with using bike paths that separate cyclists from car traffic, but are hesitant to use conventional bike lanes with high-speed car travel. Berkeley residents are universally comfortable (91%) with using bike lanes that are completely outside a street and not adjacent to any cars, and strong majorities say they are comfortable biking on paths where a concrete barrier (86%), a lane of parked cars (74%), or vertical posts (69%) separate cyclists from car traffic. Additionally, just over half (57%) of residents say they are comfortable traveling on conventional bike lanes where adjacent cars are driving at 25 mph, but that comfort drops significantly when the speed limit increases. Only 37% of residents say they are comfortable cycling on bike paths next to cars traveling 35mph, and just 19% are comfortable with cycling next to cars traveling 45mph or greater.

Comfort with Bike Path Options

● Very comfortable ● Somewhat comfortable ● Not sure ● Somewhat uncomfortable ● Very uncomfortable



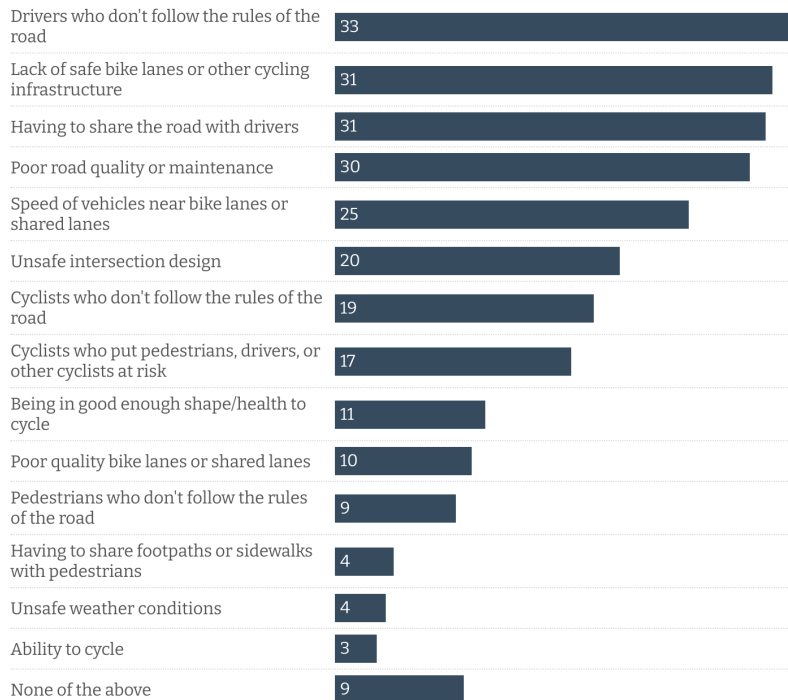
Q: Next, we'll ask you about how comfortable you might be riding on bicycle paths of different designs. If you do not know how to ride a bicycle, please answer the following questions based on how comfortable you think you would be if you knew how to ride a bicycle.

Conventional bike lanes in the United States are typically a space designated for bicycles on the side of a street, divided from adjacent moving traffic by a painted line. Other bike lanes have additional features.

How comfortable would you be riding:

Concerns around drivers and a lack of safe cycling infrastructure serve as a central deterrent to cycling in Berkeley. Among a list of potential concerns around cycling in Berkeley, respondents who are able to bike are most likely to select “drivers who don’t follow the rules of the road” (33%), “having to share the road with drivers” (31%), and “lack of safe bike lanes or other cycling infrastructure” (31%) as top concerns.

Top Concerns with Cycling



Q: [IF NOT "I have physical limitations that prevent me from biking"] Which of the following concern you most about cycling in Berkeley? Please select up to three.



METHODOLOGY

Embold Research surveyed 420 adults in Berkeley, CA from September 24-30, 2024. We used the following sources to recruit respondents:

- Targeted advertisements on Facebook and Instagram, as well as across the web via Facebook's ad platform (146 respondents)
- Text messages sent, via the Echo 19 platform, to cell phone numbers listed on the voter file for individuals who qualified for the survey's sample universe, based on their voter file data (274 respondents)

Regardless of which source a respondent came from, they were directed to a survey hosted on SurveyMonkey's website.

Ads placed on social media targeted adults in Berkeley, CA. As the survey fielded, Embold Research used dynamic online sampling: adjusting ad budgets, lowering budgets for ads targeting groups that were overrepresented, and raising budgets for ads targeting groups that were underrepresented, so that the final sample was roughly representative of the population across different groups. The survey was conducted in English.

The survey was commissioned by Marc Hedlund and conducted online by Embold Research. Post-stratification was performed on age, gender, education, race/ethnicity, and the 2020 presidential vote. Weighting parameters were based on the breakdowns of each group in Berkeley, obtained from the voter file; that is, if x% of voters were women, then women would be weighted to x% of the sample. Presidential results were retrieved from the California Secretary of State.

The modeled margin of error* for this survey is 5.6%, which uses effective sample sizes** that adjust for the design effect of weighting. This research, like all public opinion research, does entail some additional unmeasured error.

* We adopt The Pew Research Center's convention for the term "modeled margin of error"⁽¹⁾ (mMOE) to indicate that our surveys are not simple random samples in the pure sense, similar to any survey that has either non-response bias or for which the general population was not invited at random. A common, if imperfect, convention for reporting survey results is to use a single, survey-level mMOE based on a normal approximation. This is a poor approximation for proportion estimates close to 0 or 1. However, it is a useful communication tool in many settings and is reasonable in places where the proportion of interest is close to 50%. We report this normal approximation for our surveys assuming a proportion estimate of 50%.

** The effective sample size adjusts for the weighting applied to respondents and is calculated using Kish's approximation ⁽²⁾.

(1) <https://www.pewresearch.org/methods/2018/01/26/for-weighting-online-opt-in-samples-what-matters-most/>

(2) Kish, Leslie. *Survey Sampling*, 1965.

For more information, contact jessica@emboldresearch.com

REPORTED QUESTIONS

1. Are you:
 - Male
 - Female
 - Other

2. In what year were you born? [TEXT BOX]

3. In what ZIP code do you currently live? [TEXT BOX]

4. What is your race?
 - White / Caucasian
 - Hispanic or Latino/a
 - Black or African American
 - Asian / Pacific Islander
 - American Indian or Alaska Native
 - Other (please specify): [TEXT BOX]

*5a. [If Hispanic/Latino not selected] Are you from a Hispanic, Latino/a, or Spanish-speaking background?

 - Yes
 - No

5. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
 - High school diploma or less
 - Some college, but no degree
 - Associate's degree, or two-year college degree
 - Bachelor's degree, or four-year college degree
 - Graduate degree

6. Are you registered to vote in Berkeley?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Not sure

7. Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a: [RANDOMIZE DEM/REP]
 - Democrat
 - Republican
 - Independent/Other

[IF DEMOCRAT/REPUBLICAN] Do you consider yourself a:

 - Strong Democrat/Republican
 - Not so strong Democrat/Republican

[IF INDEPENDENT/OTHER] Do you consider yourself closer to: [RANDOMIZE DEM/REP]

 - The Democrats
 - The Republicans
 - Neither

8. How did you vote in the 2020 election for President, or for some reason were you unable to vote?
 - Joe Biden, the Democrat

- Donald Trump, the Republican
- Jo Jorgensen, the Libertarian
- Did not vote
- Not registered/Too young/Ineligible

9. Are you the parent or guardian of a child(ren) under the age of 18?

- Yes
- No

10. What modes of transportation do you use in an average week? Select all that apply:

- Drive a car or carpool
- Walk
- Public trains or buses
- Taxi or rideshare, such as Uber or Lyft
- Bike/e-bike
- Motorcycle
- An assistive device such as a wheelchair
- Other light electric vehicle (such as an electric scooter, one wheel, boosted board, segway, etc.)
- Something else (please specify)
- None of the above

11. Which of the following have you done in the past month? Select all that apply.

- Ride a bicycle to reach a destination (such as work, school, store, home, etc.)
- Ride a bicycle to reach a bus stop or train station
- Ride a bicycle for exercise or recreation, without having a destination for the trip
- None of the above

12. Which of the following best describes your biking activities, if any? For this question, biking includes using a variety of types of bikes, including adaptive bikes that can accommodate some mobility issues.

- I currently bike in and around the city of Berkeley
- I do not currently bike in and around the city of Berkeley, but I would like to
- I do not currently bike in and around the city of Berkeley, and do not want to
- I have physical limitations that prevent me from biking

13. For each of the following, please indicate how important each factor is to you when you're deciding which form of transportation to use for your daily travel. [RANDOMIZE] [Very important | Somewhat important | Not that important | Not important at all]

- Financial cost
- Fastest time possible
- Easy to use (does not require a lot of thought or planning)
- Flexibility
- Safety from crime
- Safety from traffic/crashes
- Desire to get exercise/physical activity
- Desire for enjoyable, non-stressful travel
- Concern for the environment

14. [IF NOT "I have physical limitations that prevent me from biking"] Which of the following concern you most about cycling in Berkeley? Please select up to three.

- Drivers who don't follow the rules of the road
- Pedestrians who don't follow the rules of the road
- Cyclists who don't follow the rules of the road

- Cyclists who put pedestrians, drivers, or other cyclists at risk
- Having to share the road with drivers
- Having to share footpaths or sidewalks with pedestrians
- Lack of safe bike lanes or other cycling infrastructure
- Poor quality bike lanes or shared lanes
- Poor road quality or maintenance
- Unsafe intersection design
- Unsafe weather conditions
- Speed of vehicles near bike lanes or shared lanes
- Being in good enough shape/health to cycle
- Ability to cycle
- None of the above

15. Next, we'll ask you about how comfortable you might be riding on bicycle paths of different designs. If you do not know how to ride a bicycle, please answer the following questions based on how comfortable you think you would be if you knew how to ride a bicycle.

Conventional bike lanes in the United States are typically a space designated for bicycles on the side of a street, divided from adjacent moving traffic by a painted line. Other bike lanes have additional features.

How comfortable would you be riding: [RANDOMIZED] [Very comfortable | Somewhat comfortable | Somewhat uncomfortable | Very uncomfortable | Not sure]

- On a conventional bike lane, where adjacent cars are traveling at 25 miles per hour
- On a conventional bike lane, where adjacent cars are traveling at 35 miles per hour
- On a conventional bike lane, where adjacent cars are traveling at 45 miles per hour or greater
- On a bike lane where vertical posts are placed between the bicycle lane and adjacent cars
- On a bike lane where parked cars are placed as a barrier between the bike lane and moving cars
- On a bike lane where a concrete barrier separates the bicycle lane and adjacent cars
- On a bike path that is completely outside a street and thus not adjacent to any cars

16. Do you support or oppose expanding cycling infrastructure in the city of Berkeley?

- Strongly support
- Somewhat support
- Somewhat oppose
- Strongly oppose
- Not sure