



Iowa's Living Roadways

**community
visioning**

designing livable communities, 2023

Glenwood, Iowa





"[There needs to be] construction of a biking overpass on Highway 34."



"We have two children, so we go for walks often. This town has terrible sidewalks or lacks sidewalks on most of our routes. [There is] also [a] lack of curb ramps for strollers."

"As I drive the many streets in Glenwood it would be greatly appreciated if it was a smoother drive/ride."



Introduction

The Iowa's Living Roadways Community Visioning Program is a collaboration involving the Iowa Department of Transportation, the Living Roadway Trust Fund, Iowa State University, and Trees Forever. One of the primary objectives of the Community Visioning Program is to assist participants in the process of building livable communities—that is, creating an environment that not only meets residents' basic needs but is also aesthetically appealing.

With assistance from Iowa State University's Survey Research Services staff in the Center for Survey Statistics and Methodology (CSSM-SRS), ISU visioning program staff conducted a survey to better understand the transportation patterns, behaviors, needs, and desires of Glenwood residents. Surveys were mailed to 500 randomly selected residents living in Glenwood and the surrounding area. To increase the response rate, the study was publicized through the local media and follow-up packets were mailed to nonrespondents.

With adjustments for ineligible respondents (e.g., incorrect addresses, no longer living in the community), the final sample size was 445. A total of 138 people returned surveys, for a response rate of 31%. (A response rate of 20% is considered valid.)

Why Do A Survey?

The survey provides the visioning steering committee with objective, representative information for the goal-setting phase of community visioning. The quantitative data collected from survey responses complements the qualitative information gathered from the focus groups at the transportation assets and barriers workshop.

The modes of transportation that residents use and the routes they take suggest suitable types of transportation enhancements in these areas. Having a sense for people's willingness to help either financially or with their time is important because many transportation enhancements are funded from multiple sources, including grants, private donations, in-kind contributions, and volunteers. Understanding what types of improvements are important to residents gives the committee insight into how to prioritize projects.

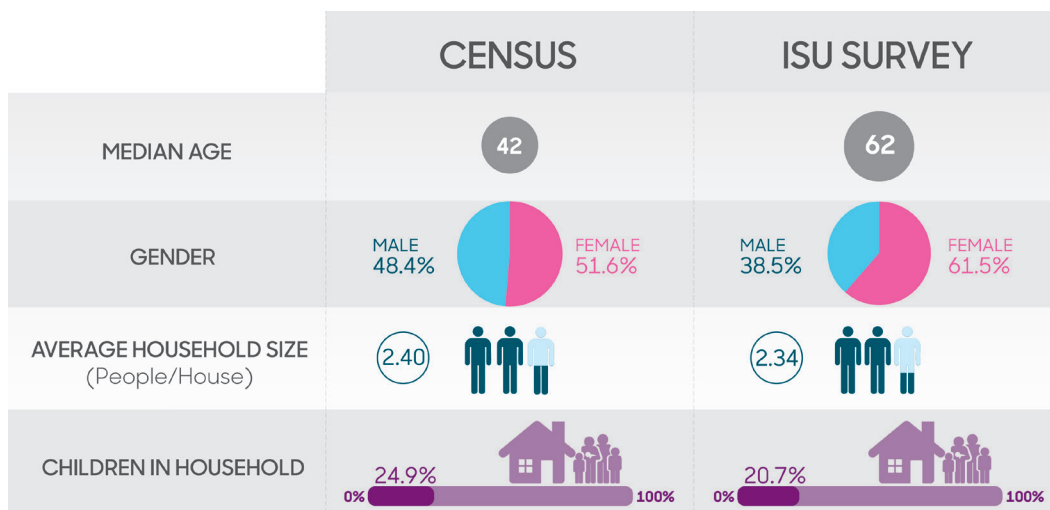
What Did We Find Out?

We asked survey recipients what routes they use most often for going to work, walking, and biking. In addition, we asked what qualities and features are important to trail users. We also discovered what residents think is most important in terms of transportation enhancements that address issues such as accessibility, mobility, and safety. Finally, we learned whether or not residents are willing to contribute their time or their financial resources to making enhancements to Glenwood. This series of boards summarizes the results of the survey as follows:

- Willingness to Help
- Enhancement Priorities
- Commuting Routes
- Walking Routes
- Biking Routes
- Desired Trail Features

How Did We Do?

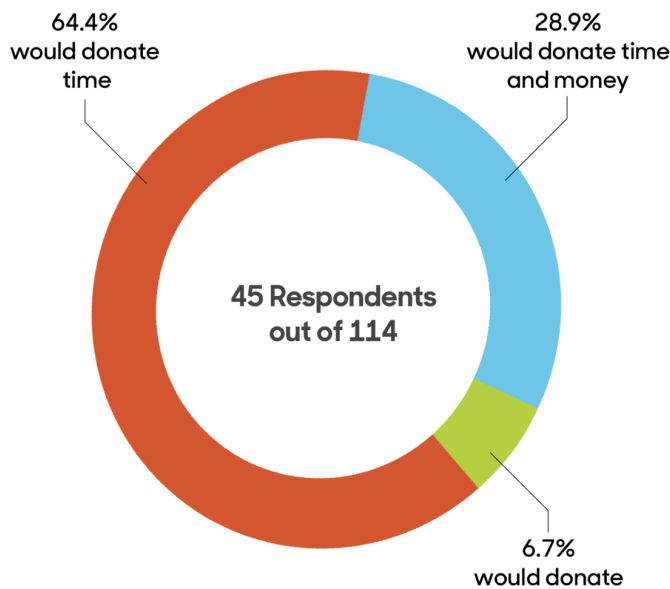
The demographics of the respondents are somewhat different from those obtained from the 2021 American Community Survey (ACS). For example, the survey respondents median age of 62 is significantly older than the ACS estimated average age for Glenwood residents of 42. In terms of gender, females are significantly over-represented at 61.5% of respondents compared to the ACS estimate of 51.6%. Average household size and the percentage of households with children among survey respondents are somewhat lower than the 2021 ACS estimates.



Source: US Census Bureau, 2021 American Community Survey.

ARE PEOPLE WILLING TO HELP?

39% said YES!



Willingness to implement change

Most survey participants who answered “Yes” to this question are willing to contribute their time to community improvements (64.4%), while 28.9% would help financially and contribute their time. More than 6% of respondents indicated that they would be willing to contribute financially.

Compared to other small towns in Iowa, Glenwood residents are somewhat less willing to become involved in improving their community. In 2014, on average, 43% of residents in small, rural towns volunteered to help with a community project.¹ The percentage of Glenwood residents willing to be involved is 4% lower than this average.

How Do You Get People to Help?

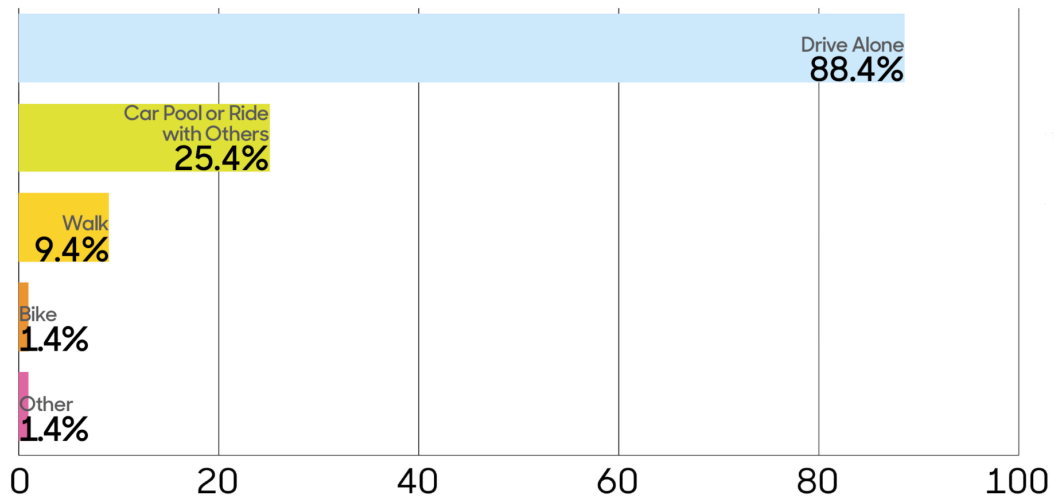
In 2014, the most common reason residents in small-town Iowa said they didn’t become involved in community projects is that no one asked them (34%). Twenty-eight percent on average said that they don’t have time, which is significantly lower than the 2004 average of 59%. Sixteen percent indicated that they didn’t know how to become involved, and 7% said that no community project needed volunteers.¹ These results indicate that the best ways to get people involved in community projects is to simply ask, along with advertising opportunities through traditional and social media outlets.

¹ *Sigma: A Profile of Iowa Small Towns 1994 to 2014* (Ames, IA: Iowa State University College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, 2015).

How Do Glenwood Residents Travel?

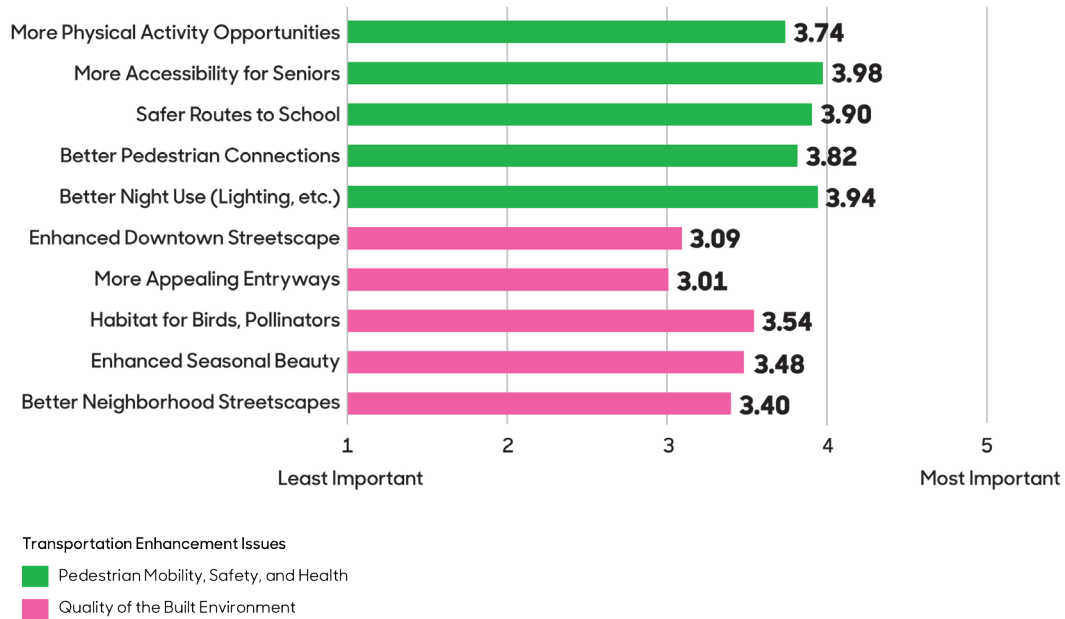
Most survey respondents drive to important destinations such as the convenience store, the post office, school, and church (88.4%). More than 35% car pool or ride with someone else. Some people indicated that they walk (9.4%) and/or bike (1.4%), but the primary mode of transportation in Glenwood is by vehicle.

Please note that some respondents indicated that they use more than one mode of transportation to get to work; therefore, percentages add up to more than 100%.



WHAT TYPES OF ENHANCEMENTS ARE IMPORTANT?

Mobility, Safety, and Health!



Importance of transportation enhancement by type (119 responses)

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the most important, participants in Glenwood ranked improving accessibility for seniors as most important, with a mean value of 3.98. Other types of transportation enhancements that address pedestrian mobility, health, and safety are also considered important, such as better lighting for night use (3.94), developing safer routes to school (3.90), and creating better pedestrian connections (3.82). In terms of quality of the built environment, survey respondents consider creating habitat for birds and pollinators as most important (3.54), followed by enhanced seasonal beauty (3.48) and enhancing neighborhood streetscapes (3.40). These findings are consistent with the views expressed by focus-group participants during the Transportation Assets and Barriers workshop held in March 2023.



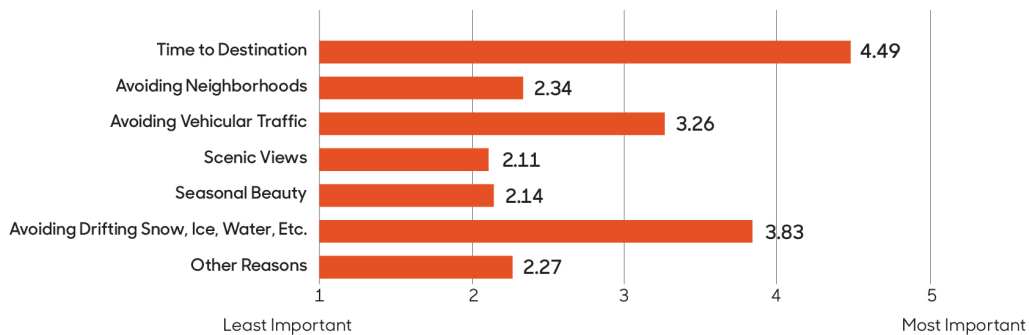
Map Source: Iowa Department of Natural Resources, "Natural Resources Geographic Information Systems Library," <http://www.igsb.uiowa.edu/hrgislib/>.

How People Get To Work

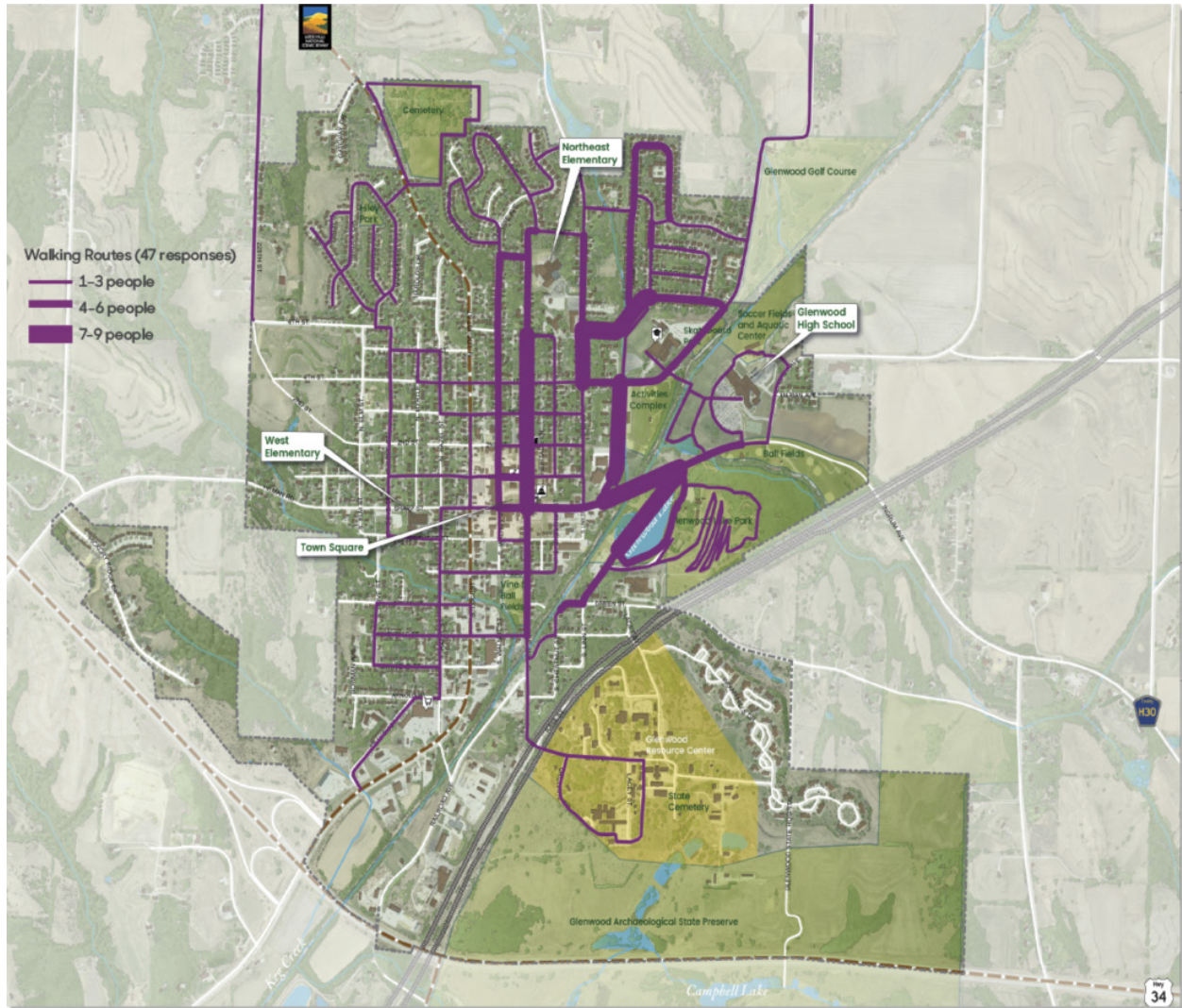
This map shows the commuting routes identified by 54 survey respondents. The frequency that the routes are used is depicted by their width, with most frequently used routes being the thickest. The primary north-south commuting corridors into and out of Glenwood are the Loess Hills Scenic Byway/Locust Street and 230th Street/Linn Street. The major east-west route is Hillman Road/Sharp Street. These routes are also the most heavily used corridors in town.

The circulation patterns that emerge when routes for biking, walking, and commuting are overlaid suggest suitable types of transportation enhancements. For example, where pedestrian and vehicular traffic intersect, such improvements could include creating better visibility, defining crossing points, or improving signage.

Why They Go That Way



On a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the most important, survey participants ranked the characteristics and features that factored into their choice of commuting route. Among Glenwood participants, time to destination is the most important factor in determining commuting routes, with a mean value of 4.49. Avoiding weather-related issues such as snow and ice is also somewhat important (3.83), as well as avoiding vehicular traffic (3.26). Scenic views, seasonal beauty, and avoiding neighborhoods are not critical factors in determining commuting routes.

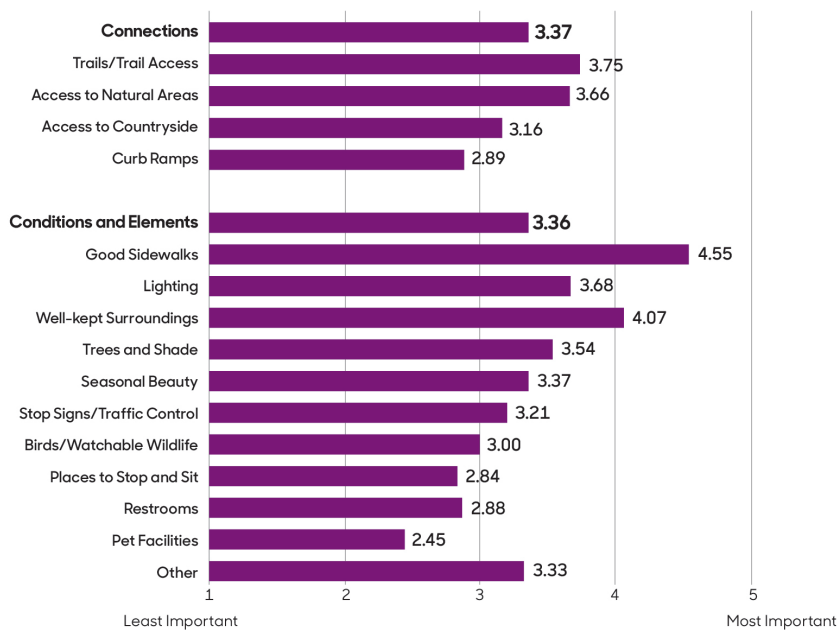


Map Source: Iowa Department of Natural Resources, "Natural Resources Geographic Information Systems Library," <http://www.igsb.uiowa.edu/nrgislib/>.

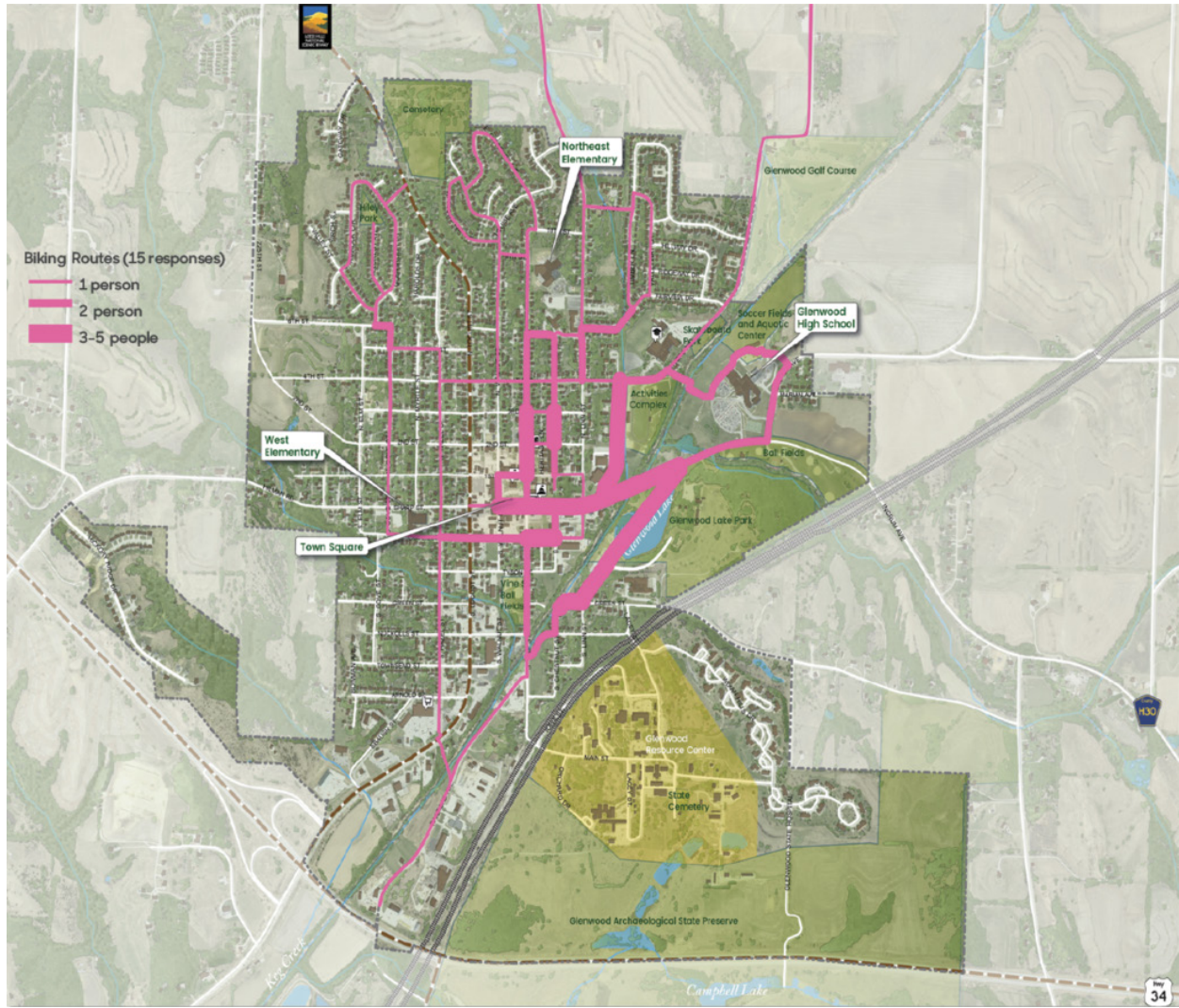
Where People Walk

This map shows the walking routes identified by 47 survey respondents. The frequency that the routes are used is depicted by their width, with most frequently used routes being the thickest. The Glenwood Lake Park is the most popular walking venue among survey respondents. People also walk in the vicinity of the Activities Complex, along Sivers Road, 4th Street, Linn Street, and Fairview Drive. N Vine Street between 6th and E Sharp Streets is another frequently used route.

Why They Go That Way



On a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the most important, survey participants ranked the characteristics and features that made their walking experience better. These features are categorized as either “connections” or “conditions and elements.” Glenwood participants consider connections and conditions/elements nearly equally important, with mean values of 3.37 and 3.36, respectively. In terms of connections, access to trails is most important with a mean value of 3.75. Good sidewalks (4.55) are the most important condition/element to walkers, followed by well-kept surroundings (4.07) and lighting (3.68). Other significant factors include trees and shade (3.54) and seasonal beauty (3.37).

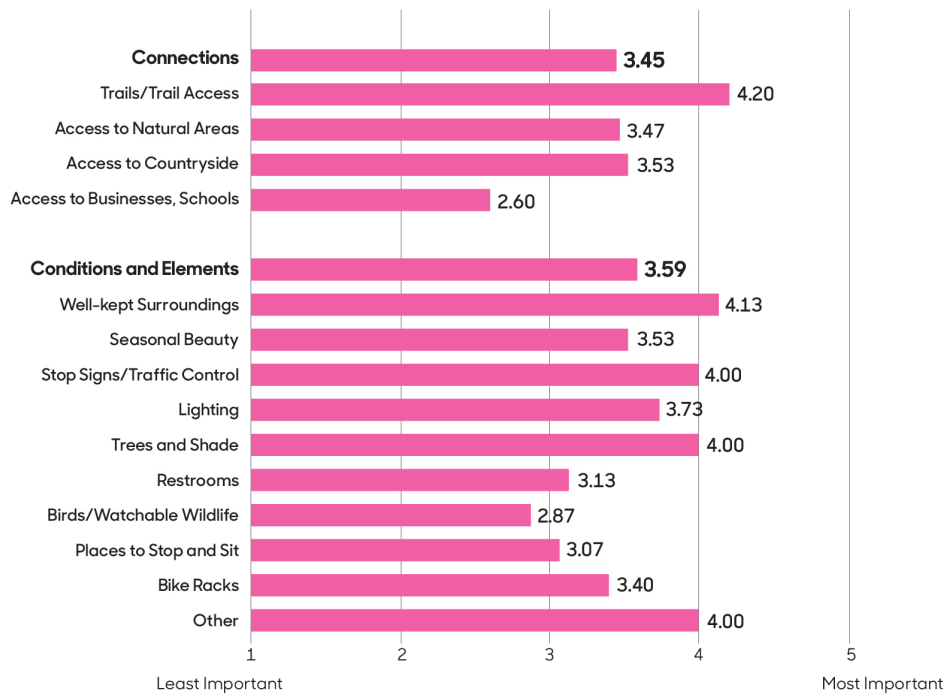


Map Source: Iowa Department of Natural Resources, "Natural Resources Geographic Information Systems Library," <http://www.igsb.uiowa.edu/nrgislib/>.

Where People Bike

This map shows the biking routes identified by 15 survey respondents. The frequency that the routes are used is depicted by their width, with most frequently used routes being the thickest. Like walkers, bikers also frequently go to the Glenwood Lake Park. The streets adjacent to the park—including Lake Drive, Sivers Road, E Sharp Street, and portions of Greene and Coolidge Streets—are also heavily traveled. Some people also bike in the area of the high school and the aquatic center.

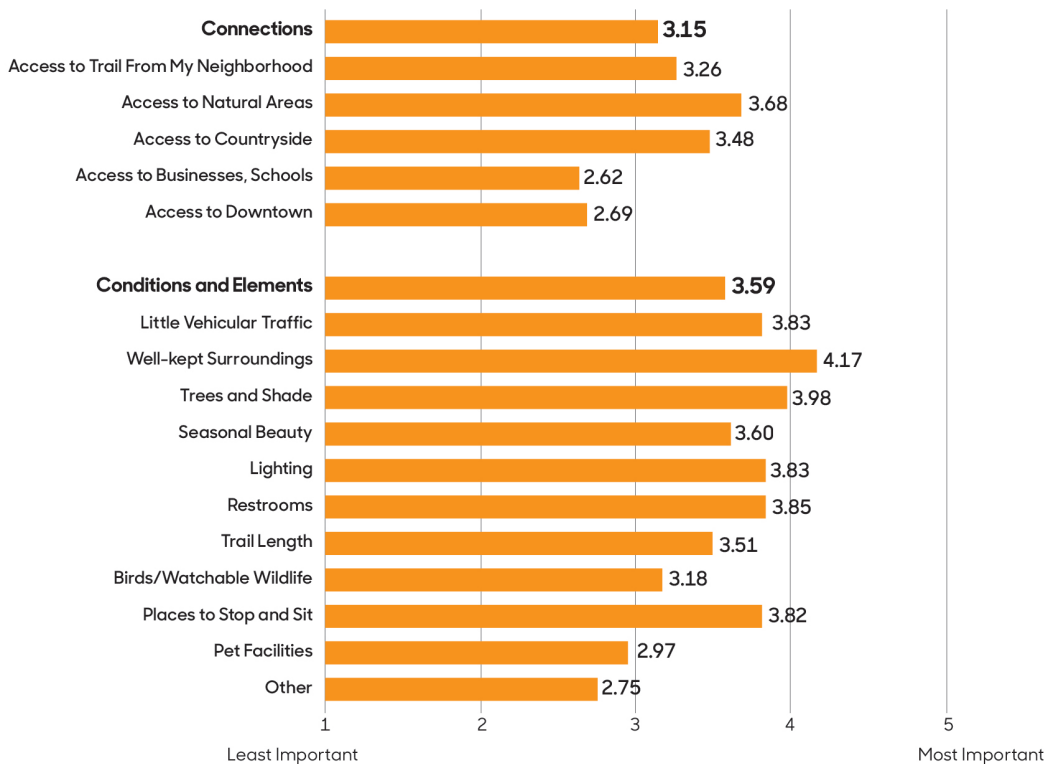
Why They Go That Way



On a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the most important, survey participants ranked the characteristics and features that made their biking experience better. These features are categorized as either “connections” or “conditions and elements.” Glenwood participants consider conditions/elements more important than connections, with mean values of 3.59 and 3.45, respectively. Access to trails is most important connection to survey respondents with a mean value of 4.20. In terms of conditions/elements, well-kept surrounding (4.13) are the most important among bikers, followed by stop signs/traffic control, trees and shade, and other factors such as well-maintained trails (all at 4.00).

Desired Trail Features

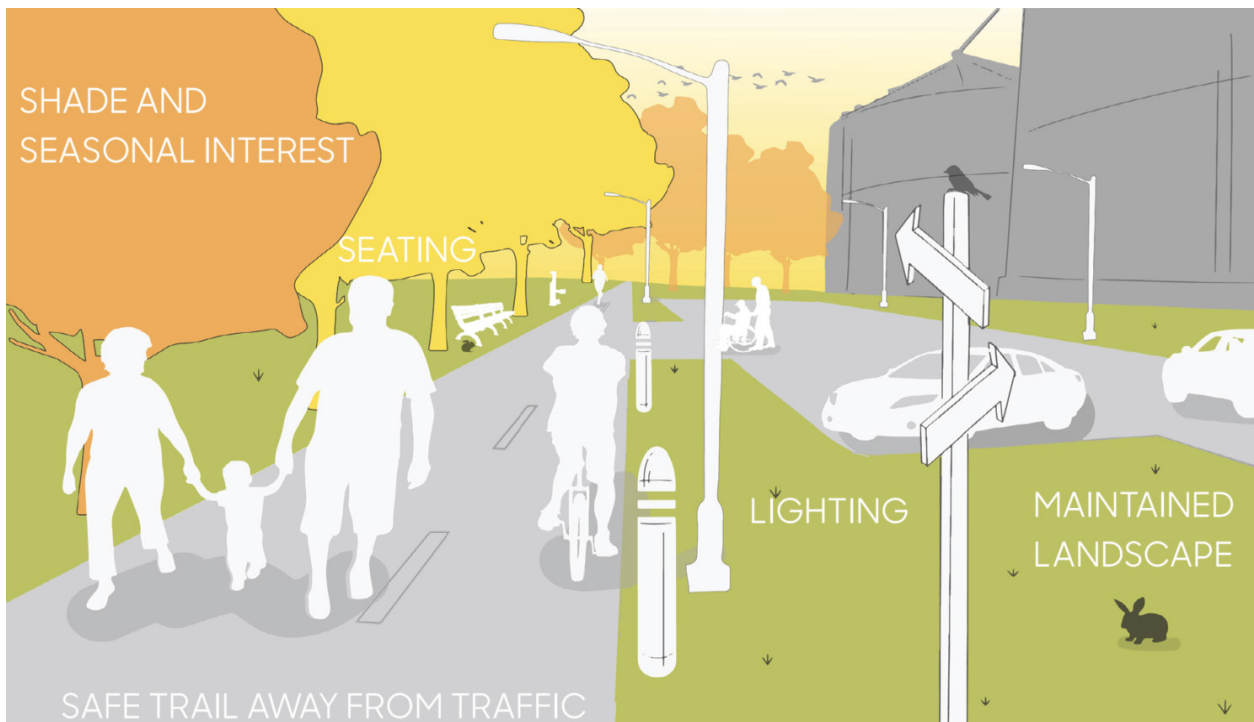
Trails are off-street paths that are paved or unpaved and can be used by pedestrians and cyclists. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the most important, survey participants ranked the characteristics and features that made their trail experience better. Like the bike route features, they are categorized as either "connections" or "conditions and elements." Conditions/elements are more important to Glenwood trail users than connections, with mean values of 3.59 and 3.15, respectively. Access to natural areas is the most important connection among trail users, with a mean value of 3.68. In terms of conditions/elements, well-kept surroundings (4.17) is most important, followed by trees and shade (3.98). Availability of restroom (3.85), little vehicular traffic and lighting (both at 3.83), and places to stop and sit (3.82) are also valued by trail users.





"[I] would like to see a trail connect from downtown Glenwood to the Wabash [Trace], maybe at Mineola."

"[I] would love to see biking/hiking/walking trails more easily accessible in this community."



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