ABSTRACT

Two colleges, five miles apart in central Minnesota provide a window into the mindset of the early twenty-year-old and the barriers that prevent them from choosing to travel by bicycle. The trip between the two campuses takes between twenty to thirty minutes by bicycle, fifteen by bus, and eleven by car. Drawing from small towns and colleges that have successfully fostered a strong cycling community; there are many cycling specific infrastructures, policies, and community engagement practices that the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John’s University should implement. In order to foster a stronger cycling community, it is imperative that CSBSJU implement cycling specific infrastructure and invest in active community engagement.

METHODOLOGY

Survey
Survey of 347 CSBSJU Students
Population=3640 Undergraduate Students
67.6% CSB Students, 32.4% SUJ Students
76.1% In-State Students

Case Studies
Williams College Campus Bicycle Master Plan
Buffalo State University of New York Bicycle Master Plan

Interviews
Tom Lais - Saint John’s Alumni ‘76
Adventure Bicyclist and Advocate

Kevin Ishaug - Owner of Freewheel Bike
Successful bike shop owner and Minneapolis community cycling advocate

SURVEY RESULTS

Figure 1. CSBSJU students mark all that apply when choosing when to ride a bicycle. Results are displayed out of percentages because of the large number of CSB respondents. Time constraint is a common concern among students, who also noted in the additional information section.

Figure 2. CSBSJU students mark all that apply with initiatives that might make them more inclined to ride. Most notably, the distribution of Johnnies that are interested in cash incentives is significantly higher than the CSB respondents. In addition, many students wrote they would like more information on campus commuting options.

Figure 3. To the left is student perceptions on how long it takes to ride to CSB from SUJ. Out-of-state students had a median estimate of 30 minutes, with larger outliers than in-state students.

Figure 4. This map details the typical trip between CSB and SUJ by bicycle. Google Maps estimates a travel time of 30 minutes, however the time varies significantly between riders. Much of the trip is on the Lake Wobegon Trail owned and maintained by Stearns County.

COMMENTS FROM CSBSJU STUDENTS

“I’m aware bikes are available but don’t really know how to access them.”

“The Johnnie-Bennie Bikes design is good for leisure biking, but I prefer to do more athletic biking when I travel around.”

“It takes a lot of planning to bike back and forth, and if you have to rent a bike (like I do), then you can’t keep it overnight. It’s more of a leisure activity on a nice day rather than a way of commuting for me.”

“Better maps”

“More time between classes when traveling from CSB to SUJ.”

“I didn’t even know this was a thing” (Bike Share/Rental)

“I ride my bike whenever I have time to be outside, especially on weekends.”

INTERVIEW FINDINGS

Tom Lais drew upon international cycling experiences when he suggested a new, shorter path between campuses with artwork and technology coming together into an innovative bike path. With an accounting background, Lais is numbers oriented and believes that cycling can bring economic opportunities to the community and campus.

CONCLUSION

Active community engagement
• Map of the Wobegon Trail should be available to students, along with information on bicycle resources available
• Many students lack the knowledge to bike between campuses or rent a bike, community rides,

Cycling Infrastructure
• Proposed bicycle lane at SUJ, more visible infrastructure encourages cycling
• Student interest in transporting bicycles on the Link Bus

Create Intercampus Bicycle Master Plan
• Develop mission statement and concrete goals
• Strong focus on community engagement