



2005
Sidewalk & Bike Path Questionnaire

a report by

The Duxbury Sidewalk & Bike Path Committee
November 30, 2005

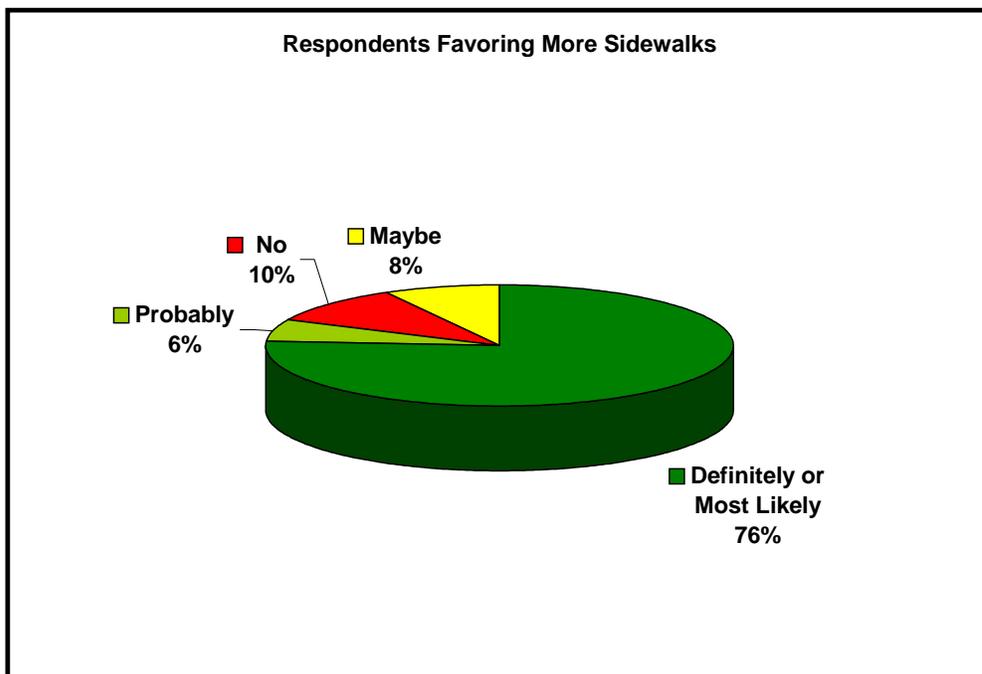


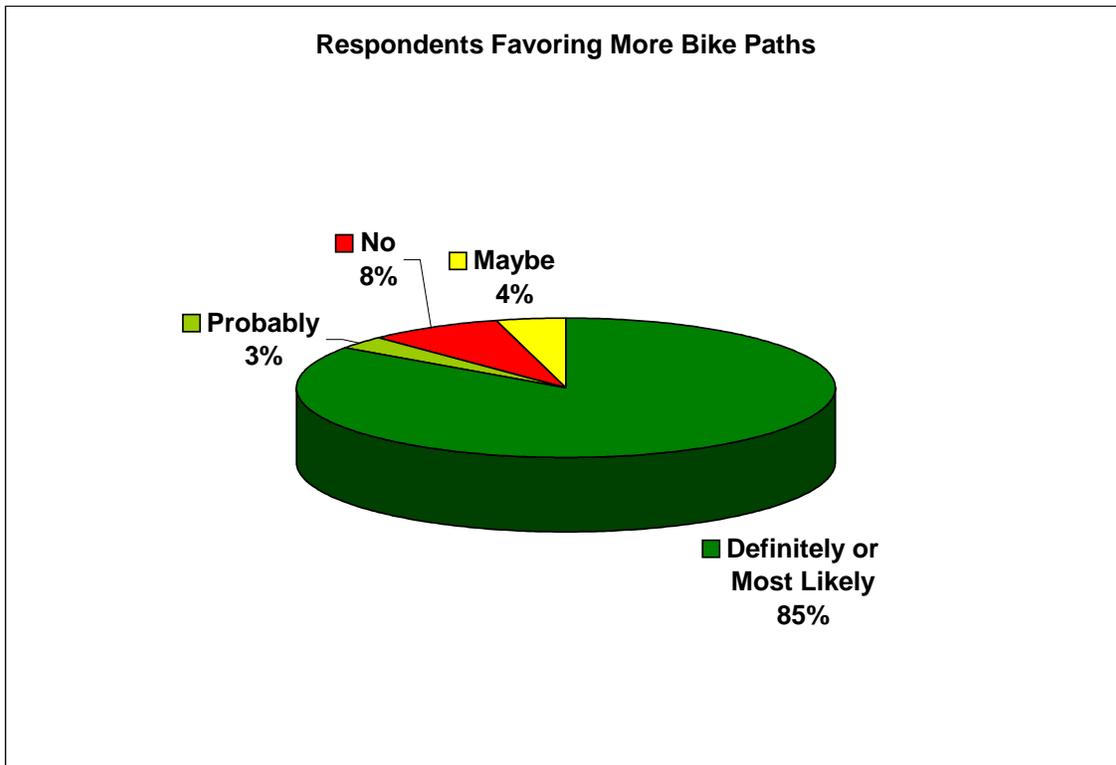
Overview

In September 2005 the Sidewalk and Bike Path Committee developed a brief questionnaire to gauge the opinions of residents about adding sidewalks and bike paths in the community. This information is essential to guide future planning of the Town's transportation infrastructure and recreational facilities. Respondents were asked whether they walked or cycled and, if so, why they did so and what impediments they experienced. The survey questionnaire also probed residents' safety concerns about walking and bike riding in Duxbury and asked if they would walk or bike more often if specific types of new walking or biking facilities were available. Questions were included to determine residents' attitudes about sidewalks or bike paths along their own streets, elsewhere in Town, through wooded areas and about the recent Chestnut Street sidewalk project. Identified below are some highlights and trends brought out by the responses.

Highlights

The questionnaire results show that a large majority of the 365 respondents favored both more sidewalks and more bike paths in Duxbury. 76% of those answering the question said they would definitely or most likely favor more sidewalks in Duxbury. (If those who answered that they probably would favor more sidewalks were added, those in favor would increase to 82%). An even larger majority favored more bike paths in Duxbury. 85% definitely or most likely wanted them. If those that responded that they probably wanted them were added, the total favorable responses would climb to 88%. Only 10% of those answering were against more sidewalks and only 8% were against more bike paths in Town.

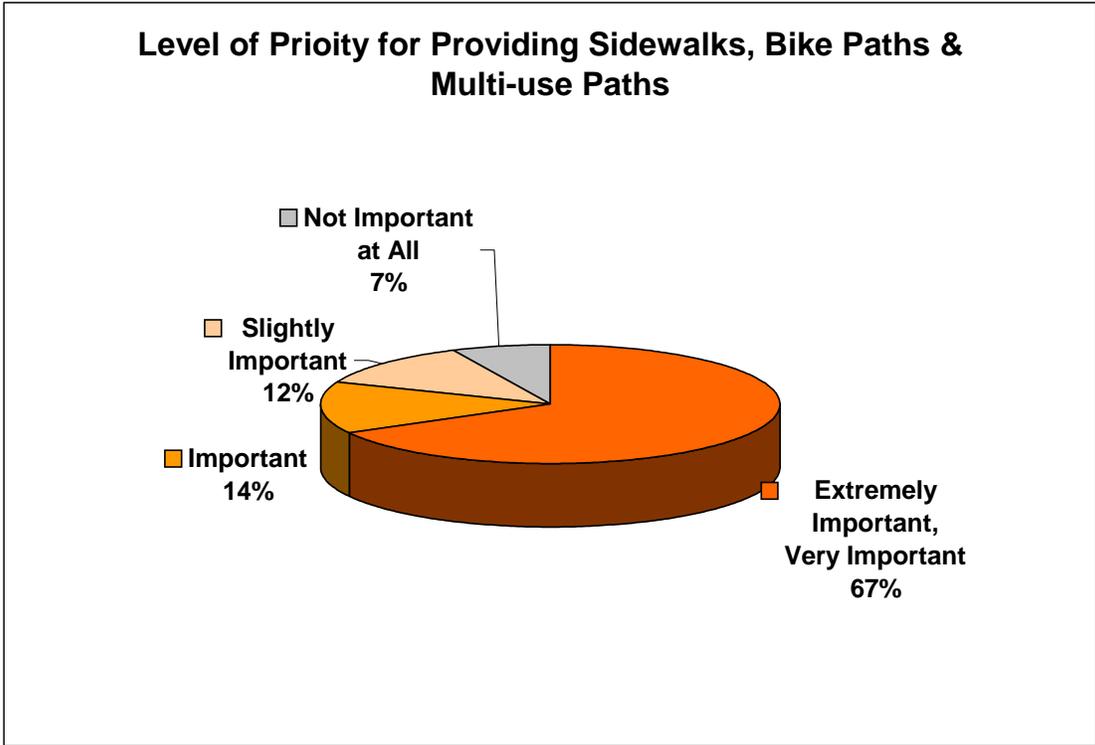




The strong sentiment in favor of more sidewalks and bike paths was confirmed by the answers given to another question which asked “what level of priority do you believe the Town of Duxbury should have for providing more sidewalks; more bike paths; a network of multi-use paths connecting destinations?” Here are the results:

<u>Question</u>	<u>% replying important, Very important & extremely important</u>
Providing more sidewalks?	81%
Providing more bike paths?	82%
Network of multi-use paths Connecting destinations?	82%

The percentages for each of the above questions were similar, therefore, the following chart was used to indicate the range of percentages for each of the questions.



Other Significant Findings

Answers to these questions appeared particularly significant:

Why do Duxbury residents walk or bicycle?

The reasons most often noted with answers of very often, fairly often or sometimes were:

- Exercise – 97%
- Recreation – 96%
- Enjoyment of nature and scenery – 94%
- Visiting a neighbor – 84%
- Going to a community destination – 71%

When they walk or bike, what are their safety concerns?

The reasons most often noted with answers of extremely important, very important, or important were:

	<u>Walking</u>	<u>Biking</u>
Separation from vehicular traffic	90%	91%
Visibility at Street Crossings	83%	86%
Lighting	65%	61%
Personal Safety from Strangers	58%	56%
Traffic Signals at Street Crossings	55%	68%

What currently deters residents from walking and cycling?

The reasons most often cited with answers of very often, often, or sometimes were:

The lack of sidewalks combined with too much traffic – 82%

Did not feel safe - 75%

Would they venture out more often if there were more sidewalks or bike paths?

Over 80% said they would get out more often if the sidewalks or bike paths linked community destinations and more than 70% said they would venture out more frequently if there were more sidewalks and bike paths in their neighborhood.

What were the most frequently cited objections to sidewalks and bike paths in Duxbury?

(This was a question where respondents wrote in responses instead of choosing from a list of multiple choice answers)

Objections expressed are listed below in the order of their frequency, with the number of times each objection was expressed shown in parenthesis (). Multiple comments usually came from one response.

	<u>Times</u> <u>Mentioned</u>	<u>% of Total</u> <u>Responses</u>
Hurt Natural Beauty/Character	(21)	(6%)
Cost	(17)	(5%)
Encroachment on property	(5)	(1%)
Safety of mixed use on same path	(3)	(<1%)
Bad Chestnut St experience	(3)	(<1%)
Personal safety	(2)	(<1%)
Use by Out-of-towners	(2)	(<1%)
Other project priorities	(2)	(<1%)
Sidewalks/Bike Paths are not needed	(2)	(<1%)
Sidewalks/Bike Paths will increase driving speeds	(2)	(<1%)

Washington Street

As the Town’s Department of Public Works recently proposed completing and improving a sidewalk along Washington Street, the committee thought it would be useful to identify some of the questionnaire responses from Washington Street residents. (Incidentally, the largest number of responses to the questionnaire received from a single street were from Washington Street). Of the 21 Washington Street residences from which responses were received, 16 favored a sidewalk on their street, 3 did not. Eleven (11) favored a bike path on Washington Street, 4 did not.

Wooded Areas

Selectmen asked that we include a question to find out people’s opinions about paths traveling through wooded areas. Responses showed that 67% (definitely or most likely) favored bike paths through wooded areas when more practical, but only 50% favored sidewalks through wooded areas.

Chestnut Street

The Selectmen also suggested that the questionnaire seek information about resident's opinions of the Chestnut Street sidewalk and its construction. There were two questions, one multiple choice with respondents choosing from a list of answers. The second was an open ended question where respondents wrote in comments. Approximately 80% thought it has been beneficial to the neighborhood as well as beneficial to the Town in providing safer driving conditions. *(A survey the committee conducted in August of 2004 showed that Chestnut Street residents overwhelmingly (81%) approved of their sidewalk).* In the current questionnaire, some of the comments respondents mentioned most often about the Chestnut Street sidewalk were:

	<u>Times</u> <u>Mentioned</u>	<u>% of Total</u> <u>Responses</u>
Disliked mail box or pole placement	(66)	(18%)
Likes Chestnut St. sidewalk	(31)	(8%)
Make it wider	(26)	(7%)
Would prefer bike lane or path	(22)	(6%)
Better planning/timing	(21)	(6%)
Not familiar with project or unsure	(15)	(4%)
Prefer no curb	(12)	(3%)
Better connection with		
Halls Corner/other paths	(11)	(3%)
Should separate from street with grass	(10)	(3%)
Prefers brick or concrete	(10)	(3%)
Did not like grass strip (mainly due to		
lack of care)	(7)	(2%)
Disliked sidewalk	(7)	(2%)
Wants more natural look	(7)	(2%)
Mandate shoveling	(7)	(2%)
Don't cut trees	(6)	(2%)
Thought sidewalk was not well used	(5)	(1%)
Disliked inclines at driveways	(4)	(1%)
Wanted more lighting	(2)	(<1%)

Many people noted they would like to see sidewalks or paths on the busier streets serving their neighborhoods. Some streets repeatedly mentioned in order of demand are Tremont St. (Rt 3A), Washington St., West St. (Rt 14), Powder Point, Depot St., Standish St., and Franklin St.

Trends

Partial results from surveys within the last ten years are shown below to track trends of opinions. Although the noted surveys had distinct differences in how they were performed, the data is presented for informational purposes. A comparison between the responses to questions in this current questionnaire and similar questions in the 1996 Survey of Registered Voters show a decided increase in support for bike paths (there

were no questions relating to sidewalks in the 1996 Survey). Comparisons with similar questions from an informal survey in 1999 are also included.

	<u>1996</u> <u>Survey</u>	<u>1999</u> <u>Survey</u>	<u>2005</u> <u>Questionnaire</u>
Favor more bike paths in Duxbury	58%		84%
Would use bike paths in Duxbury	53%		81%
Priority considered very important	51%		80%
Favor Path along your street		45%	53%
Do not feel safe			75%
Thinks streets are unsafe for walk/biking		83%	
Favor paths through wooded areas			68%
Favor being within view of road		42%	

Survey Methodology

Fourteen questions were developed by committee members to elicit information about residents' attitudes needed to plan for future non-vehicular transportation and recreation needs. Eleven questions were multiple choice and three enabled the respondents to write in comments. The questionnaire was accessed on line and hosted by Survey Monkey, an on line company specializing in hosting surveys. Links were established between the questionnaire and both the Town of Duxbury website and The Duxbury Free Library website. Both of these websites posted announcements of the survey and links to the questionnaire, enabling any interested resident to complete the questionnaire online. Additional hard copies of the questionnaire for those without internet access were made available at the circulation desk at the Library. The survey was publicized in advance of and during the ten week survey period in August, September and October 2005 by articles and announcements which appeared in the Duxbury Clipper, Duxbury Reporter, *Patriot Ledger* and the *Boston Globe*. It was also advertised by posters which were prominently displayed at popular locations around town toward the end of the survey period. Results were tabulated by the website host, Survey Monkey. Because electronic responses were limited to one per computer the 365 responses more closely represent 365 households than 365 individuals.

Details

A complete results summary of answers to the survey's fourteen questions appears in Appendix A.

Appendix B contains the complete tabulation of all the survey results. The results have been sorted in alphabetical order by Street name. The answers to all of the questions for a particular response spans across four sheets. For example, the answers to questions 1, 2 & 3 for responses 1-22 are on Page 1; the answers to questions 4, 5 & 6 for responses 1-22 are on Page 2; the answers to questions 7, 8 & 9 for responses 1-22 are on Page 3; the answers to questions 10, 11, 12, 13 & 14 for responses 1-22 are on Page 4. The answers to responses 23-38 begin on Page 5 and continue as described above. The response numbers and street names appear on all sheets for reference.