

Belmont Boulevard Pilot Bikeway

Outreach Report | January 2024 | Prepared by Fairpointe Planning

Belmont Boulevard is a major bicycle route to downtown, and it is envisioned to be even more so as Nashville’s bicycle network grows. The Nashville Department of Transportation (NDOT) recently completed a bikeway pilot/demonstration project on Belmont Blvd. from 18th Ave S to Ashwood Ave. An important part of evaluating how the pilot bikeway has been working is collecting feedback from the community. NDOT engaged with the community about the pilot using the following methods:

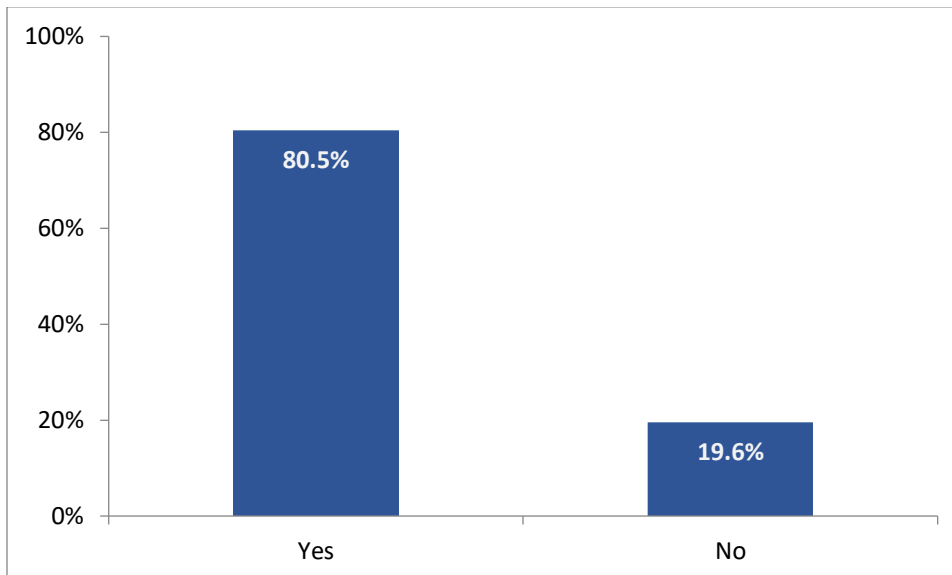
- Two online surveys
- On-site intercept surveys/interviews
- Business site visits
- Council Members
- Pop-ups
- Stakeholder interviews
- Project website
- Social media and newsletters

Survey Results

Two online surveys – a long, detailed version and a short, brief version – collected feedback on how well the pilot bikeway was working. The longer version received 26 responses while the shorter version received 179 responses. Below is a summary of the responses from the short survey.

Question 1: In general, is the **parking-protected bike lane** on Belmont between 18th and Ashwood working well for you?

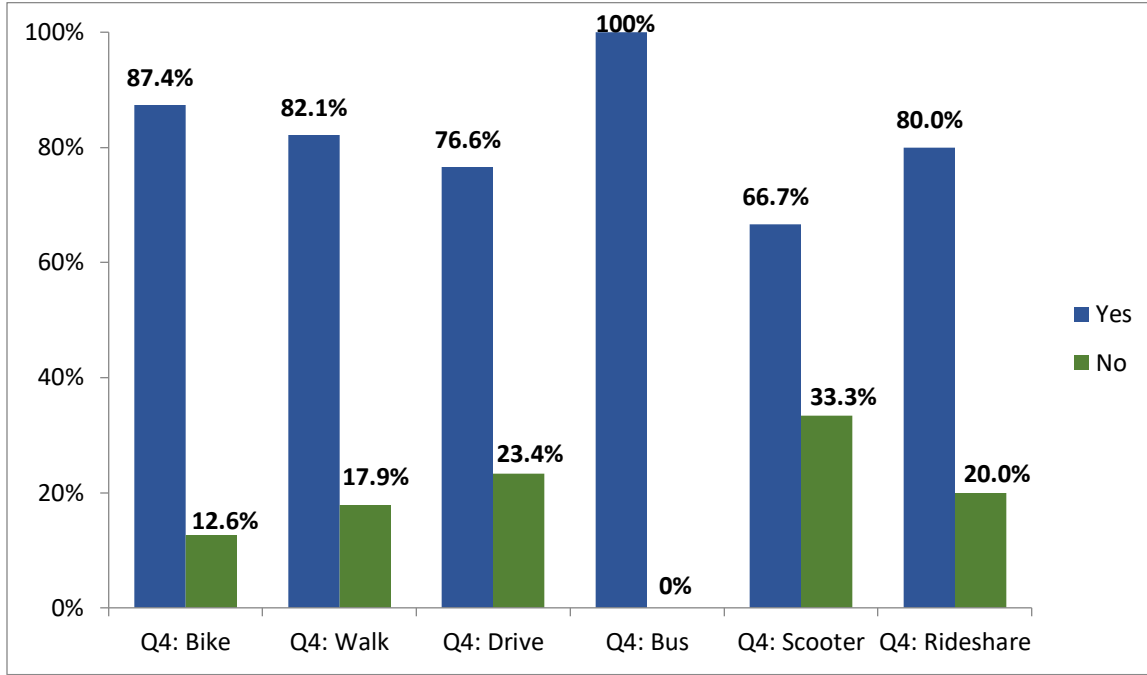
Responses: 179



The following chart breaks down the responses to Question 1 based on how respondents answered Question 4, “How do you travel in the Belmont Blvd. area?”

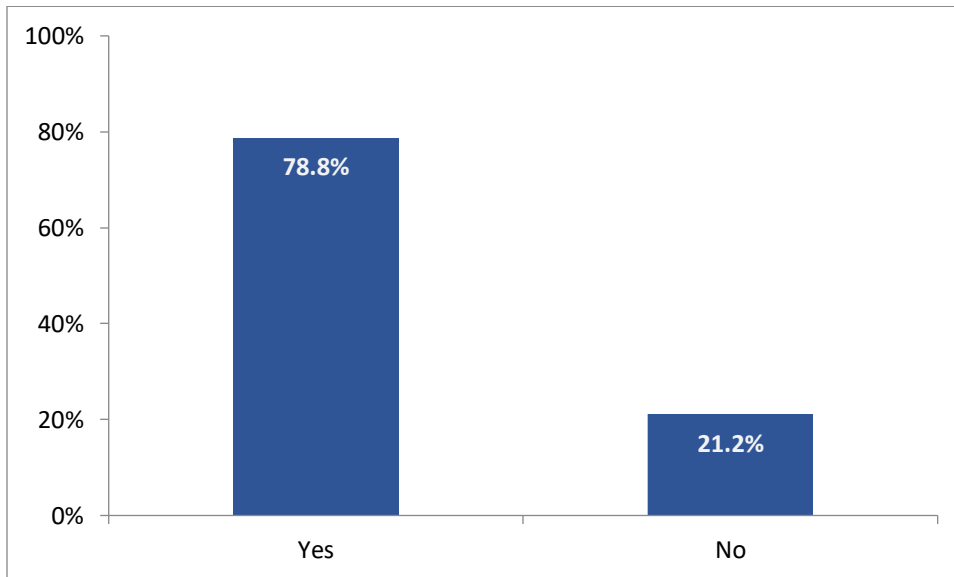
Q4 Responses by Mode:

Bike	Walk	Drive	Bus	Scooter	Rideshare	Total
95	134	137	1	6	10	176



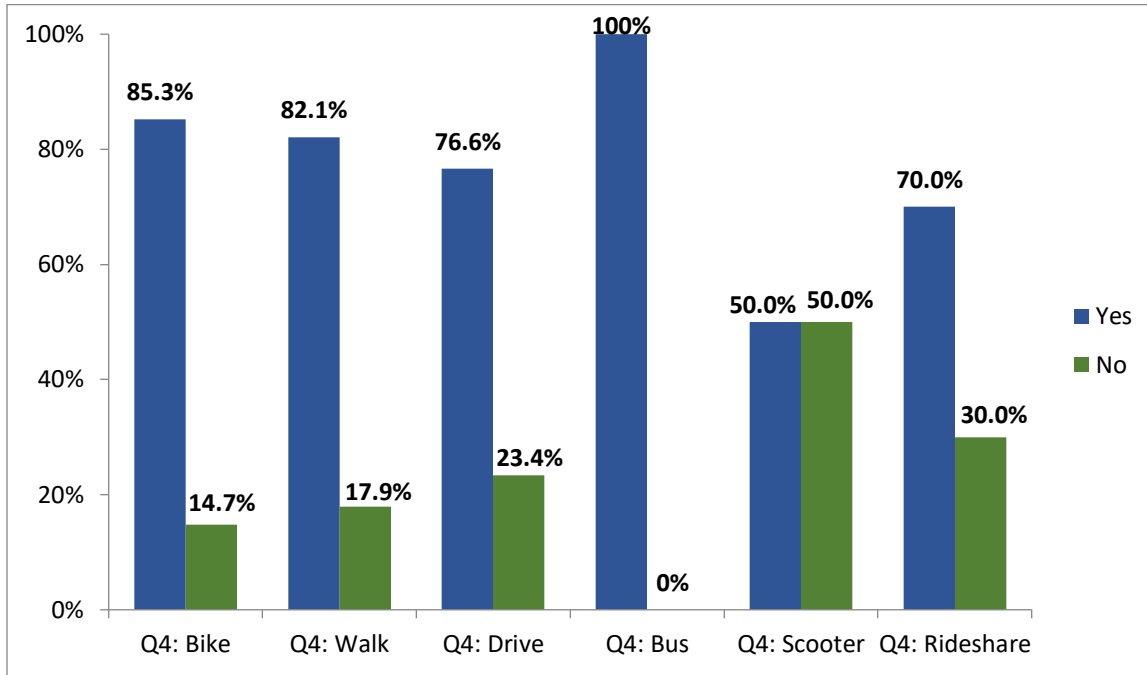
Question 2: In general, is the **on-street parking** on Belmont between 18th and Ashwood working well for you?

Responses: 179



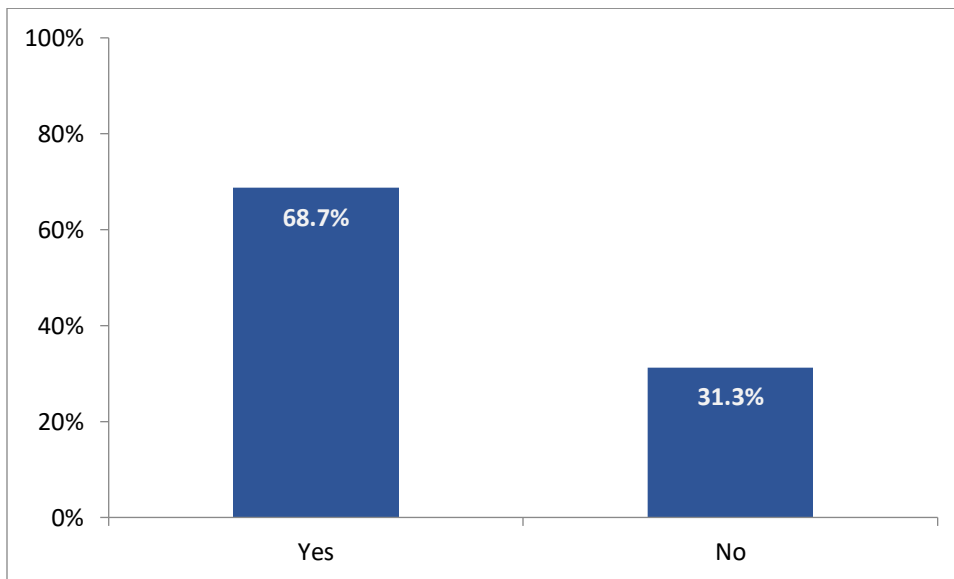
The following chart breaks down the responses to Question 2 based on how respondents answered Question 4, “How do you travel in the Belmont Blvd. area?”

	Bike	Walk	Drive	Bus	Scooter	Rideshare	Total
Q4 Responses by Mode:	95	134	137	1	6	10	176



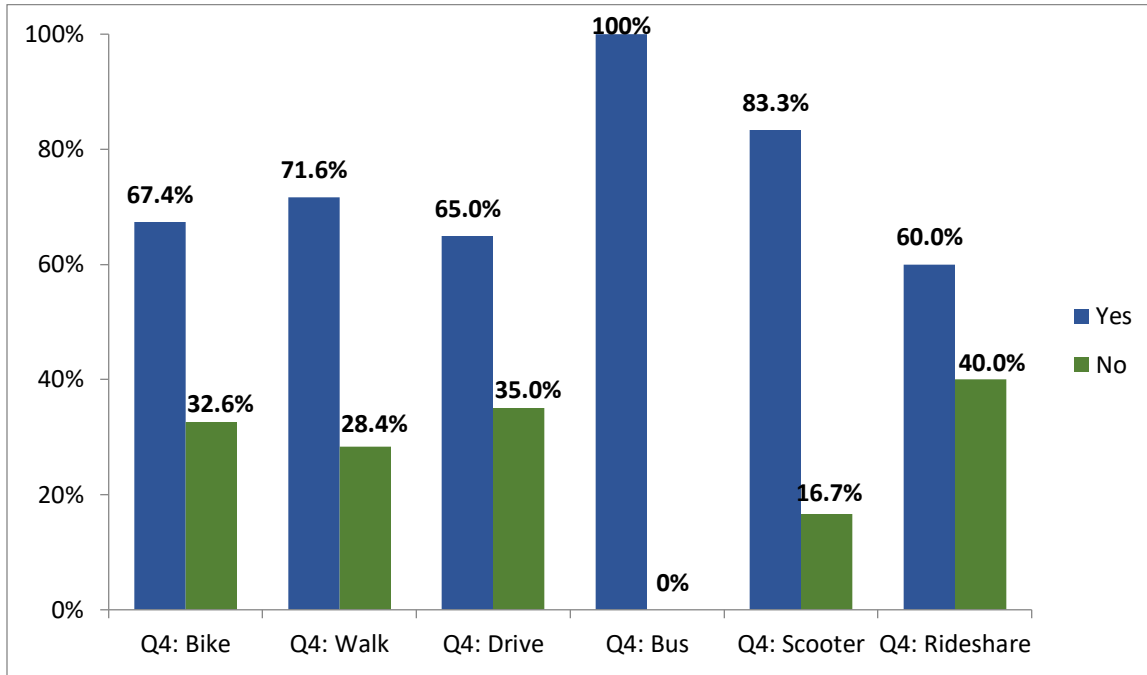
Question 3: In general, does the **current construction detour** on Belmont between 18th and Ashwood work for you?

Responses: 179



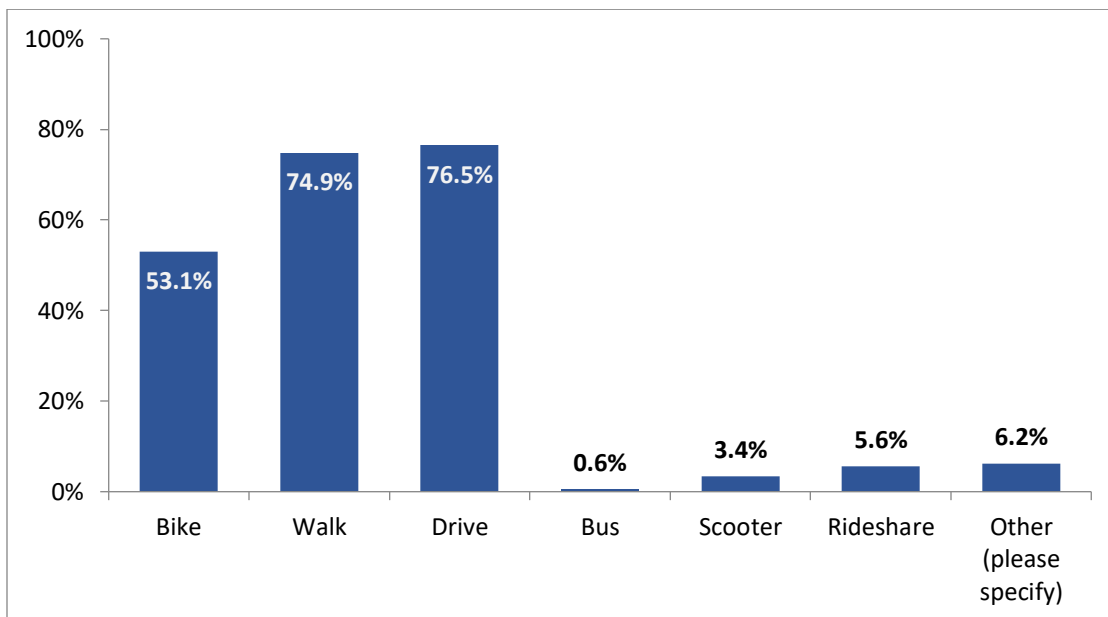
The following chart breaks down the responses to Question 3 based on how respondents answered Question 4, "How do you travel in the Belmont Blvd. area?"

	Bike	Walk	Drive	Bus	Scooter	Rideshare	Total
Q4 Responses by Mode:	95	134	137	1	6	10	176



Question 4: How do you travel in the Belmont Blvd. area?

Responses: 179



Respondents that selected “Other” listed the following travel methods:

- Run
- Golf Cart
- Belmont Safety Officer

Question 5: Please provide any additional comments on the bikeway pilot on Belmont Blvd. from 18th Ave to Ashwood Ave in this blank:

Responses: 131

Bike Lane

- In general, I feel much safer with parking protected bike lanes than the plastic barriers elsewhere on Belmont. (2) However, I think **plastic barriers** would be useful in addition to the parking protection to **indicate the end of parking spaces**. Several times, unloading trucks have blocked the lane or people have parked in the bike lane because there are no physical barriers.
- Any additions to the **protected bike lane** on Belmont must be **between street parking and the sidewalk**. Having parts of the bike lane on the outside of street parking makes bikers susceptible to cars hitting them and prohibits the maximum protection for bikers.
- I am a regular cyclist, and I appreciate the enhancements to Belmont Blvd. (6) Parking-protected cycling lanes are wonderful to separate cyclists from moving vehicles. However, I would love to see **signage** around the area to warn people exiting vehicles to check for oncoming cyclists carefully. I have not seen any. If there is, it would be ideal to be more prevalent.
- Protected, separated bikes lanes are always best. Belmont Ave is narrow enough to spur safe driving speeds mostly. **Further narrowing the visual space by creating barriers with planters** etc. would achieve both improvements at the same time if driving does indeed need to slow. But the leading barrier to bike traffic within the district is **increased danger when nearing Wedgewood or 21st**.
- It’s great but it would be better if there were **better connections** to the other bike lanes in the city. (4)
- I love the protected bike lanes. It only gets difficult when the "safe" routes do not connect or if **bike lane signage is confusing** where sometimes it just ends or I was unsure of which way to go to continue on a bike lane. Would love to be able to hop on bike to get to meetings/events and get anywhere in Nashville.
- Less pegs and **more landscaping/permanent barriers** like 12th South near Wedgewood. (9)
- The protected bike lanes are very helpful. Especially at intersections, the traffic poles were helpful to prevent people from trying to pass left-turners in the parking spaces.
- Please include bollards in all cross-hatched areas. Without bollards, vehicle park in the bike lane. Also, please use higher-quality bollards or true hard protection like curbs. The bollards are low-quality and have been damaged in many places.
- The protected lanes are good at the curve of the road. It slows down cars in a potentially dangerous area.
- I love the protected lane between 18th and Ashwood and wish all of Belmont was like this. (2)
- I’m a bike commuter and this section is my least favorite to pass and the most dangerous for me. I think having a bit more space for the bike lane to avoid doors and having a curb or bollards protecting the lane from being parked in would be really helpful.
- My big concern is that the bike lanes have become jogging trails and bike trails. I see little kids riding their bikes on the road. This will not end well.

- Excellent work slowing traffic. (2) Belmont is less dangerous for drivers with fewer illegal driving instances. Belmont is also safer for pedestrians, cyclists, and walkers.
- Protected inner bike lanes all the way down Belmont please. Bikers and pedestrians are more important than car doors. A narrower Belmont is a slower Belmont.
- Love the bollards preventing people from passing in the bike lane. More please!
- There is a lot of loose gravel on the outbound bike lane beyond Blair Blvd on Belmont. Dangerous hazard.
- The configuration of the pilot project with cars to one side and the curb to the other exponentially compounded the hazard rumble strips created.
- The pilot project created a limited line of sight ahead because parked cars obstruct the view of cyclists who are likely traveling at a good speed coming down Belmont Blvd. You can't see nearly as well as you could if the cars weren't parked there. Worse, it's on a curve so you can't see if there's debris, a dead bloated animal, pothole, or other hazard coming up in the lane.
- Half the cyclists I see going northbound on Belmont Blvd **avoid the bike lane** and ride to the left of the parked cars. So you've managed to not only make the bike lane dangerous, but have pushed concerned riders out into traffic on a street that is narrowed due to the bike lane configuration.
- Because intersections are poorly designed and the parked cars are between bike lane and traffic lanes, drivers turning off Belmont have hit me as they turn across the bike lane as I go straight. The entire bike lane should be painted green and rumble strips or signs added to demarcate the intersections so that when a car turns across a bike lane, the driver is aware that they must yield to oncoming cyclist traffic.
- Lots of night riders - need a way to light the facility up.
- The bike lanes are great for the neighborhood.
- Doesn't feel safe biking, especially with a young child, anywhere outside their own neighborhood despite being an avid biker.
- Parking protected bike lane works well for average bikers, but not cyclists, as I do not feel safe riding so close to cars.
- Continues to improve! Walkability is great.

Parking

- Vehicles park in the bike lane. (19)
 - Especially closer to Belmont University (4)
 - Enforcement should be stricter to prevent parking in the bike lane.
 - Create more awareness around on-street parking and bike lane interactions.
 - Very frequent during the first months of the pilot roll out but has improved somewhat. The biggest problem is when someone parks in the bike lane but other cars are parked inappropriately. The biker can be stuck unable to navigate around the cars in these situations. **Green paint to better delineate bike lane** from parking lane may be helpful. (6) It would be wonderful to see the bike lane moved towards the curb the entire stretch on Belmont.
 - Ticket vehicles that block or park in the bike lane. Maybe some signage for walkers to be aware when walking or running in bike lane.
- Some people must park on the street. This concept makes parking difficult AND dangerous. It is very dangerous to exit a vehicle when your entire car door opens into oncoming traffic. I wonder how mothers ensure children or infants are safely in the car if you can not have the door open?
- Parkers don't understand they can park and most of the time if they do they block the bike lane. (2)

NDOT

- People parking and getting out of passenger side doors don't always look if bikes are coming, causing bikers to weave out of lane to avoid people. (9)
- I love the parking because it doesn't conflict with cyclists.
- Excellent usage of poles between parked cars and bike lanes to decrease likelihood of sudden car door opening right into ongoing biker.

Construction Detour

- The current detour could be better, but it is fine.
- I don't know of any detours around the construction on Belmont. The bike lane just ends for the duration of the work zone (only pedestrian lane).
- The detours can be annoying when you add in all of the construction projects on 12 South that impact Ashwood, but the bike lanes are an important addition.
- Construction debris was frequently in the protected bike lane requiring departing said lane. Also construction impeded sidewalks and pedestrians would often hop into bike lane.
- Cyclists heading north need to bump out into traffic at the orange wall. Cars are not expecting this and it has caused issues.
- I know that construction must occur and that will sometimes shift the traffic pattern. It should not remove the bike lane or the sidewalk. Cars can slow down and have a narrower lane while still permitting a bike lane and sidewalk protected by Jersey barriers to co-exist.
- Construction detour difficult for cars because they have to avoid cyclists.
- I walk through the construction detour because there isn't enough space for bikes.
- In general, construction detours with scaffolding creates conflicts with pedestrians and cyclists.
- Construction detours are confusing for cyclists when you're riding to know where to go. No specific cycling signage.

Driver's Perspective

- Some of the sticks are too close to the side streets making it difficult to turn right onto Belmont without swinging out into the oncoming traffic lane. (8)
 - Example - Rosewood to Hillsboro going west and Kirkwood to Belmont going into town.
- As a driver, it feels safer to have the bikers protected by a row of cars.
- This protected bike lane has moved street parking further into the street creating a **significant blind spot (2)** for drivers to see oncoming traffic when turning onto a street with this protected lane.
 - Additionally, if a bike rider is coming around a hill, the driver may not see them coming until the driver has already pulled into the bike lane cutting off the biker's route with no way for them to get around the driver and potentially hitting the biker. (2)
- Love the idea of the protected bike lane, but the car driving lanes are **too cramped** by the street parking. I don't drive a big or wide car and always feel like the rear-view mirrors on the parked cars are going to clip my car, even when going slow.

Criticisms and Suggestions

- Waste of money because nobody uses it enough to justify cost and taking space from drivers who pay gas taxes. Bikers pay nothing and they should pay something.

- Left hand turn lane at Compton needs to go. It takes up too much parking. Also, I don't understand why Belmont gets to shut down additional parking for valet sections during events. Surprised that Belmont also was able to shut down the sidewalks during the construction for so long.
- As a long-time resident of Belmont Blvd (25 years), the bikeway has been used very little compared to pedestrians walking and motor vehicles. In my opinion, taking so much focus on bikers is a mistake. As evidenced from the pilot program, bike traffic has not increased at all since it was installed. Furthermore, the elimination of numerous street parking spaces has made it difficult to frequent the businesses on that side of the boulevard that rely on customers from the neighborhood and surrounding areas.
- The barriers are **unattractive** and are constantly being hit or knocked over. They detract from the neighborhood. (9)
 - The white stanchions are an eye sore but the protected bike lane is important to improve safety.
- The lanes are great. The white posts with reflectors are the problem. There are WAY too many and many are misplaced. For example, when you make a right turn in order not to hit the white posts you have to put the nose of your car into the opposite lane. If the post wasn't there you can make a normal turn that isn't perfectly 90 degrees. Keep the lanes BUT get rid of all the white posts. They are unnecessary.
- The bike lanes negatively impact the traffic time on this major road. It is not a good use of space.
- Please move the bike lane on the left of street parking. Putting the lane between parked cars and the sidewalk is no good.
- I find it **too distracting and confusing** and worry people cannot pay attention to walkers. (7)
 - Runners and bikers often travel against car traffic flow, which is dangerous for all. Belmont Avenue feels like a pinball machine.
 - Very confusing. Driving lanes are too narrow. Some turn lanes from side streets eliminated. Crazy changes.

Other Related Comments

- I think some of the crosswalks on Belmont Blvd could benefit from light up/flashing crosswalks. I'm seeing almost on a daily basis someone trying to cross on a crosswalk and cars not seeing the pedestrians. The flashing crosswalks could possibly help with that.
- Speeding on Belmont is still out of control. (4) The only thing that has been done to lower speeds was a sign change. There were no flashing speed indicators to warn drivers that the limit had been lowered.
- Lower speed limit to 20 miles/hr on all surrounding streets
- Bike lane cleaning is an epic improvement.
- Cut through traffic on Sweetbriar is dangerous. Not enough speed bumps. Traffic pulling out onto oncoming 21st Ave is extremely dangerous.
- Maintenance painting needed. The bike lane markings fade more due to Demonbroomin.
- Granny White at Lipscomb is dangerous for pedestrians.
- I ride my bike to work on Nolensville pike - those bike lanes are always dirty. Filled with glass, etc, Belmont lanes are always clean.
- More crosswalk signs and crosswalks
- Belmont Blvd needs a turning lane far more than bike lane that is seldom used.
- Implement more pilot programs in South Nashville.

- Using 12th Ave. S more now.
- Our neighborhood very much needs multi-modal options on our streets. We have been working, asking, begging for this for years. Please make these features permanent as soon as possible.

Question 6: What is your zip code?

Responses: 167

Top Three Zip Codes:

Zip Code	Count	Percentage
37212	119	71.3%
37204	19	11.4%
37215	11	6.6%

Other zip codes that were represented in responses are 37212, 37013, 37027, 37122, 37203, 37206, 37208, 37209, 37210, 37211, 37216, 37217, 37219, and 98115.

Some key takeaways from the [long survey](#) included:

- Over 25% (7) of respondents use the pilot bikeway daily.
- Over 60% (16) of respondents feel safer while cycling on the pilot bikeway.
- Most respondents (54%, 14) are not sure if the pilot bikeway has increased the value of their property.
- The majority of respondents (42%, 11) do not think that the pilot bikeway has had a positive impact on local businesses.
- Almost 70% (18) of respondents have noticed challenges or concerns with the pilot bikeway. Some of the challenges listed are below.
 - Limited site distance to other cars, cyclists, and pedestrians
 - Bike lane is blocked by debris or vehicles
 - Feels dangerous with car doors, lanes feel too narrow
- Over 65% (17) of respondents would like to see more investment in bikeways in the community.
- Just under 75% (19) of respondents were not deterred from biking due to the construction with 73% (19) stating that the construction detours were adequate.

On-site intercept surveys/interviews

The project team conducted intercept surveys along the pilot bikeway in May over four mornings on weekdays and a Saturday. Team members set up a tent on the sidewalk and talked to cyclists as they passed in the bike lane. Cyclists provided their general impression on the pilot bikeway and any additional comments while the project team input the data in the survey.

Business site visits

The project team conducted site visits to businesses along the pilot bikeway to inquire about parking, loading/unloading, and accessibility related to the pilot project. The team visited Bongo Java, Circle K, Top Dollar Books, Funtime Ramen Bar, Six One Five Deli, Madelow, Proper Bagel, International Market, Chago's Cantina, and Athens Family Restaurant. No major concerns were identified, other than

occasional vehicles parked in loading zones and perceived low bicycle traffic. Other comments indicated that the bikeway has made people feel safer and is marked well to distinguish from parking. The project team followed up on removing an inconveniently placed bollard and requesting a follow-up speed study.

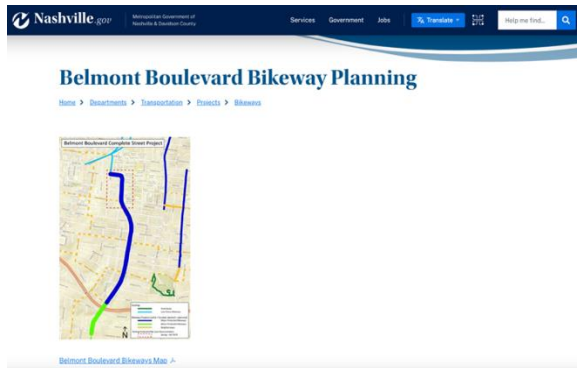
Pop-ups

- 12th South Farmers' Market

Stakeholder interviews

- Belmont University
- Neighborhood HOAs
 - Belmont-Hillsboro Neighborhood Association
 - 12th South Neighborhood Association

Project website



Social Media and Newsletters

- NDOT's social media
- Fairpointe's social media
- NDOT newsletter

Let's Go, Nashville! Newsletter
© NDOT Communications <ndotcommunications@nashville.gov>

