

Pedestrian and Bike Study

University of Louisiana at Lafayette

Fall 2022 - Spring 2023



UL Lafayette Pedestrian & Bike Study

- The Office of Sustainability gathered qualitative and quantitative data on the pedestrian and biking experience on UL Lafayette's campus by conducting:
 1. **Pedestrian Study** at Johnston Street Intersections on Campus
 2. **Bicycle and Pedestrian Workshop** with LCG's Planning Division
 3. **Bicycle Lafayette Survey** with LCG's Planning Division



1. Pedestrian Study

- In the 2022 fall semester, the Office of Sustainability conducted a pedestrian study at the campus intersections of Johnston St. to study pedestrian patterns and identify potential solutions to reduce local traffic congestion and improve safety for bikers, pedestrians, and drivers.
- The Office of Sustainability defines expanding access to safe and sustainable, active transportation options for students, faculty, and staff as a priority transportation objective in the University's Sustainability Strategic Plan.

Why?

The Office of Sustainability conducted this study to measure the volume and direction of pedestrian traffic of the Johnston Street intersections to evaluate efficiency and safety of students as the University progresses to the next stage of the Master Plan, to include the University of Louisiana at Lafayette's Health Sciences campus expansion across Johnston Street.

When?

Thursday, October 20, 2022 from 7am - 6pm
Monday, October 24, 2022 from 7am - 6pm

Where?

Johnston Street intersections at East St. Mary Boulevard, East University Avenue, and East Lewis Street.

2. Bicycle and Pedestrian Workshop

- The Bicycle and Pedestrian Workshop was held in the 2023 spring semester to gather input from student, faculty, and staff about non-motorized connectivity.
 - The Bicycle and Pedestrian Workshop was held April 5, 2023.
 - There were 30 participants.
 - Participants included undergraduate students, graduate students, community members from neighborhoods adjacent to the campus, faculty and staff from various departments and offices from across the university.
 - Comments and destination maps were collected from the workshop.



Students, faculty, and staff working in small groups at the Bicycle and Pedestrian Workshop in the 2023 spring semester.



UL Lafayette is recognized by the League of American Bicyclists for maintaining campuses that encourage biking and rider safety. 2015-2019 & 2020-2024

3. Bicycle Lafayette Survey

- The Bicycle Lafayette Survey was also conducted during the spring semester of 2023 to gather input from students, faculty, and staff to improve Lafayette's existing and planned bike and pedestrian network.
 - The survey was open from February 23, 2023 - May 31, 2023.
 - There were 427 participants.
 - Nearly half of the participants were students, and the other half were faculty and staff. (49.4 % Students and 50.6% Faculty and Staff)
 - Comments, occupant data, destination data, preferred routes, and preferred amenities were collected.



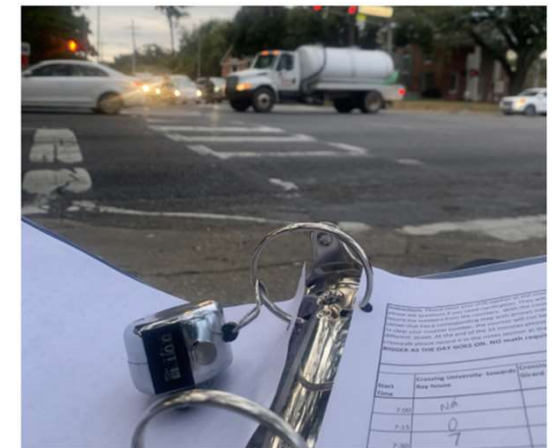
UL Lafayette Bicycle Survey that went out to the entire university in the 2023 spring semester.

Methodology Used to Conduct the Pedestrian Study

- The American Planning Association (APA) model for Pedestrian Counts is a comprehensive pedestrian count to determine the overall pedestrian volume and traffic patterns for a multiplicity of purposes. It should include all midblock points and intersections in a urban core with heavy pedestrian volumes.
- At the Johnston Street intersections at East St. Mary Boulevard, East University Avenue, and East Lewis Street on Thursday, October 20, 2022 and Monday, October 24, 2022 from 7am – 6pm the Pedestrian Study was conducted. Every 15 minutes the volume and direction of pedestrian traffic was recorded at the intersections and at the Midblock between East St. Mary Boulevard and East University Avenue.



Pedestrian counter volunteer at the corner of University Avenue and Johnston Street documenting pedestrian volume and directional flow.

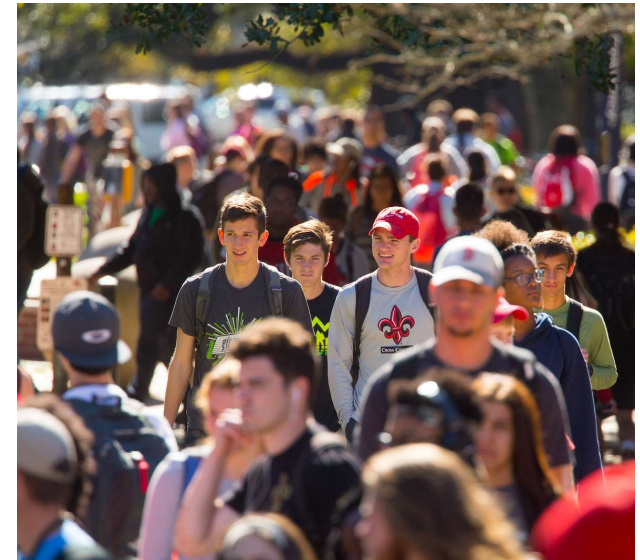


Pedestrian Counter and data tracker at 7:30am on Oct. 20, 2023.

Pedestrian Study Results

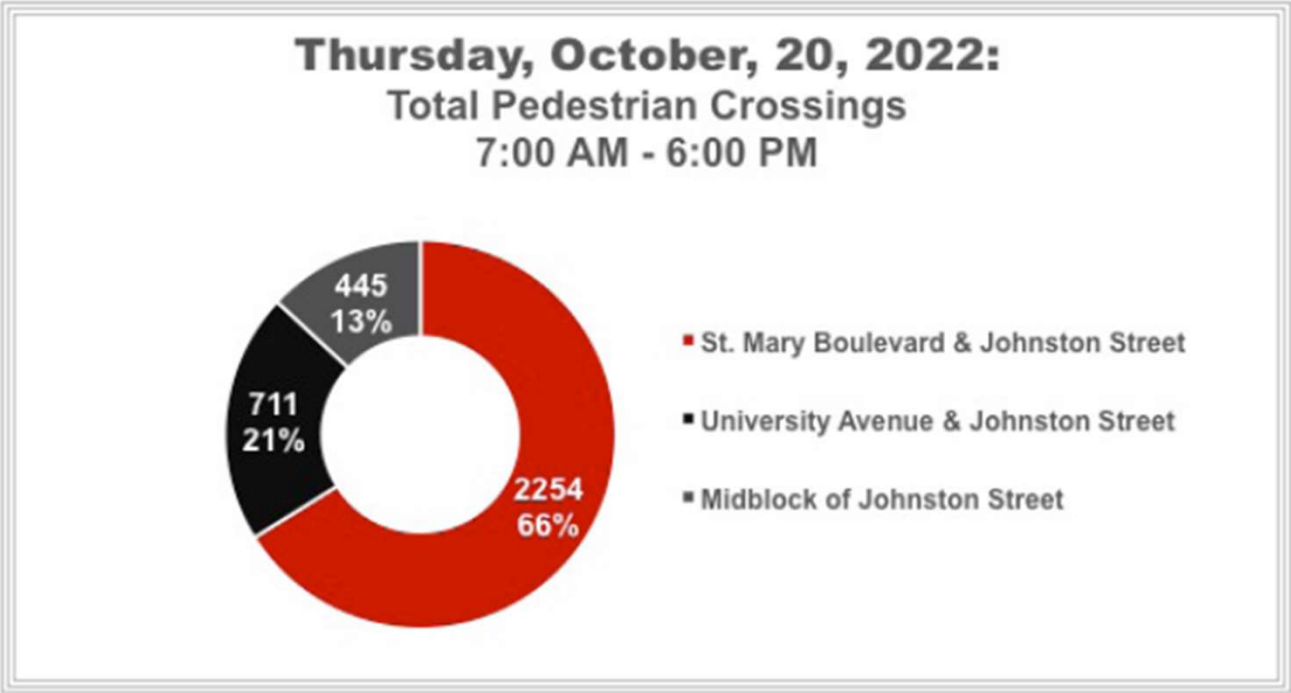
- **Key Takeaways:**

- **East St. Mary Boulevard. and Johnston Street** intersection had the most pedestrian foot traffic (over **2000 crossings** recorded on both days of the study).
- Peak foot traffic flows occurred when students were **switching classes** and during **lunch times**.
- Thursday's highest pedestrian foot traffic occurred at **12:30pm with 170 crossings in a 15 minute time interval** at East St. Mary Boulevard and Johnston Street.
- Monday's highest pedestrian foot traffic occurred at **10:45am with 175 crossings in a 15 minute time interval** at East St. Mary Boulevard and Johnston Street.
- Over **400 mid-block crossings** were recorded each day, making up over 10% of all the crossings.



On both days of the Pedestrian Study, over **400** students, faculty, and staff members were witnessed crossing at the mid-block across four lanes of traffic at Johnston St. between University Ave and E St. Mary Blvd.

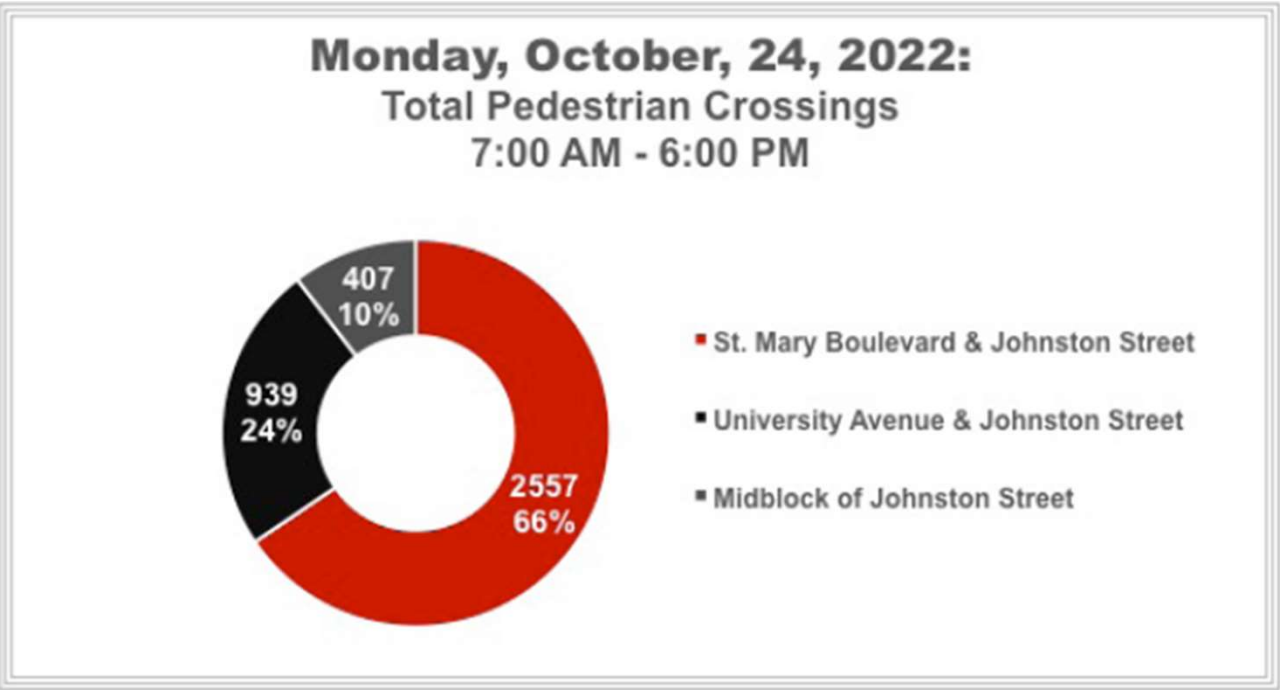
Data Analysis of the Pedestrian Study



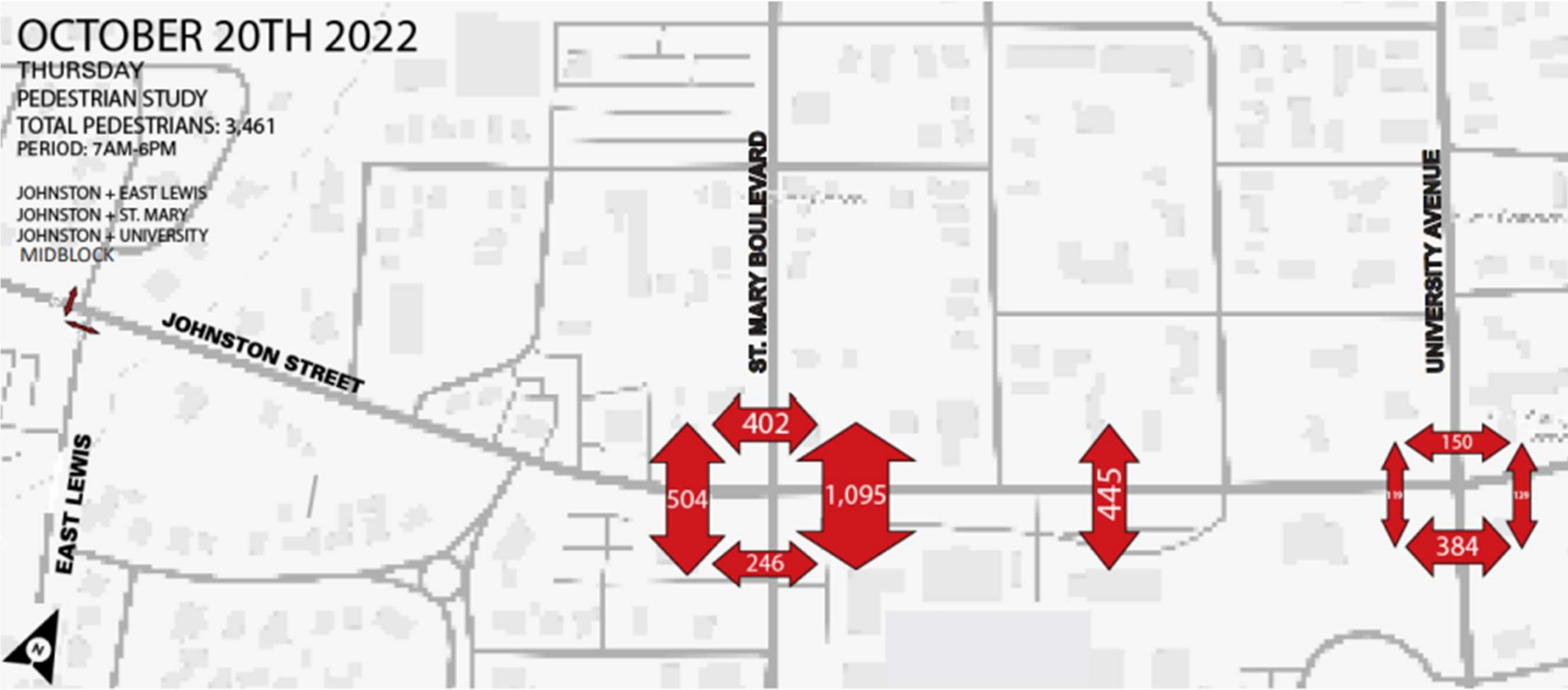
3,410
Pedestrian crossings on Thursday, October 20, 2022

Data Analysis of the Pedestrian Study

3,903
Pedestrian crossings on Monday, October 24, 2022

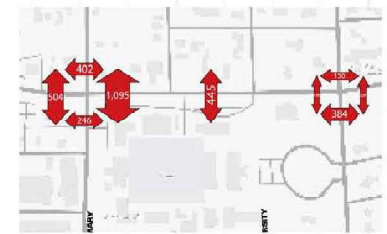
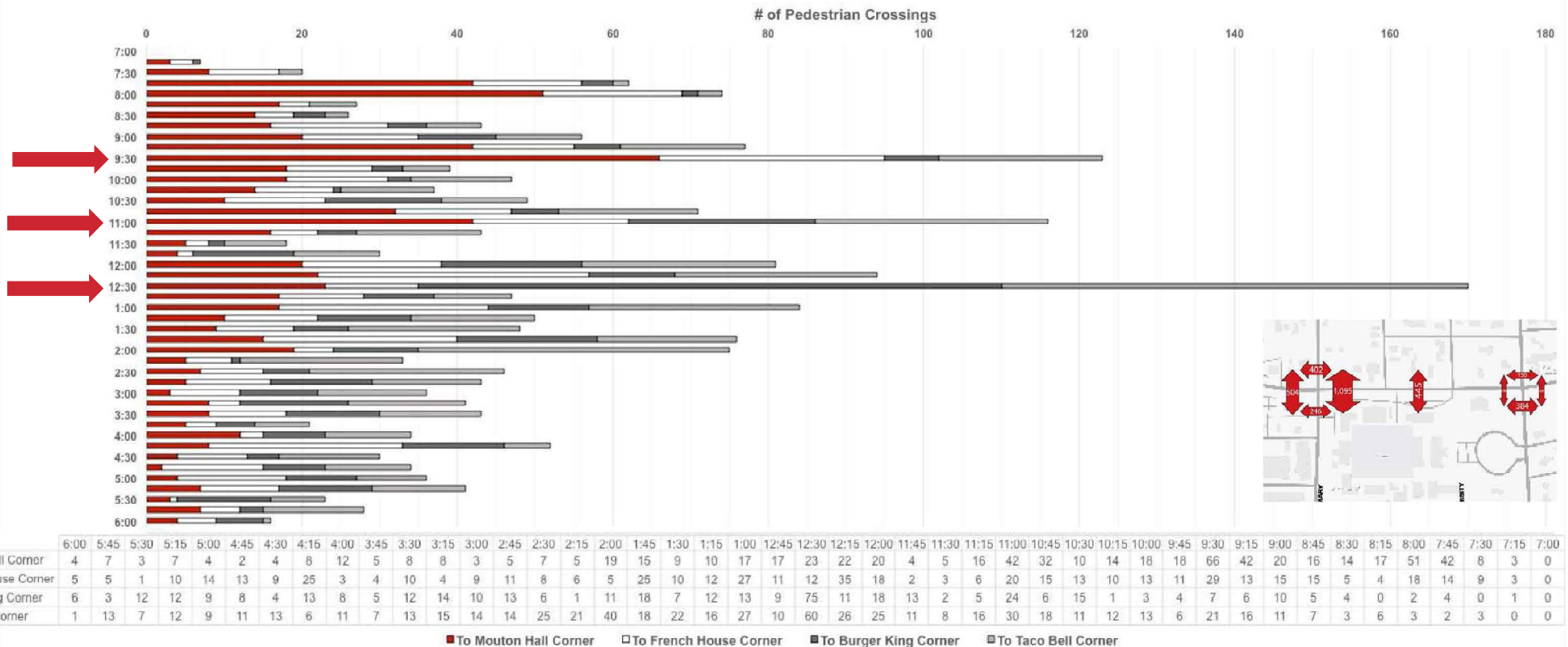


Pedestrian Study Results

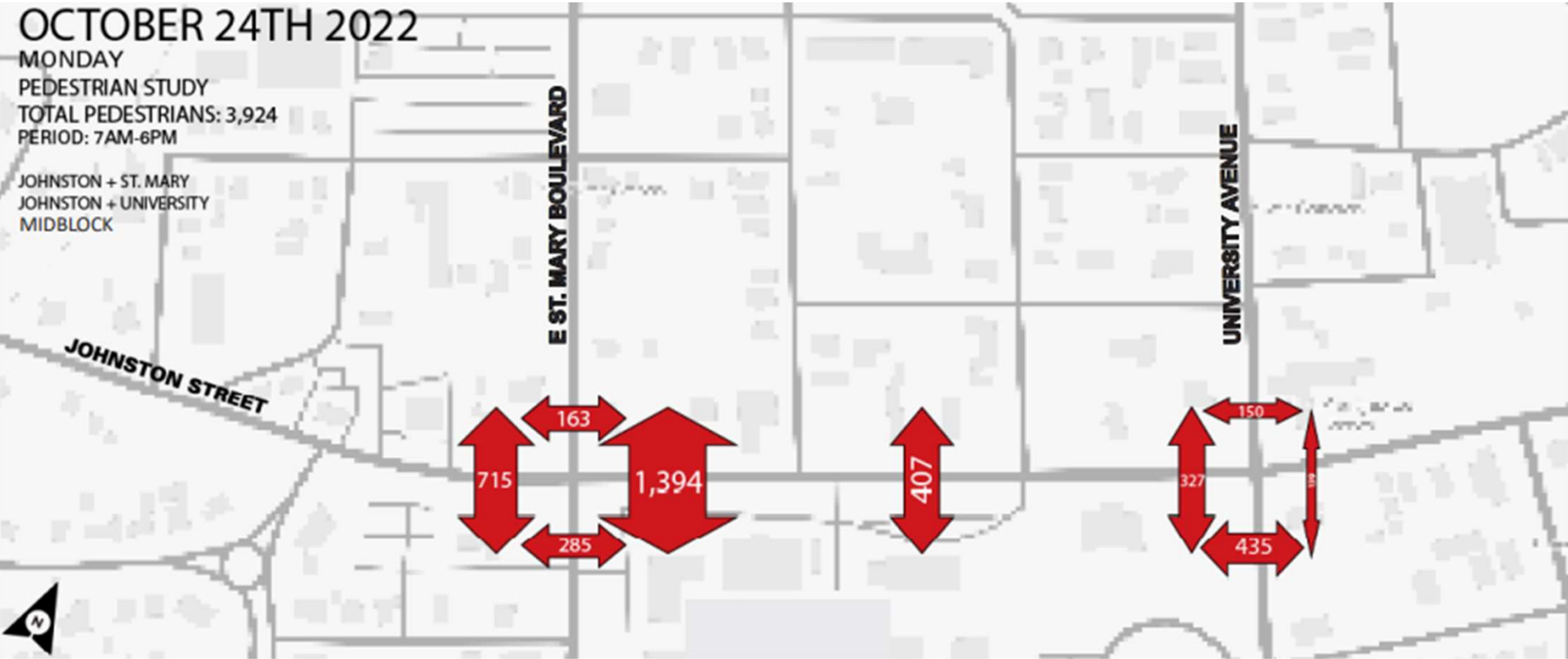


Pedestrian Study Results

Thursday, October 20, 2022: Johnston Street & St. Mary Boulevard

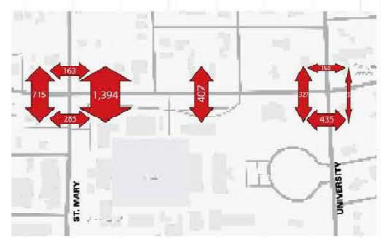
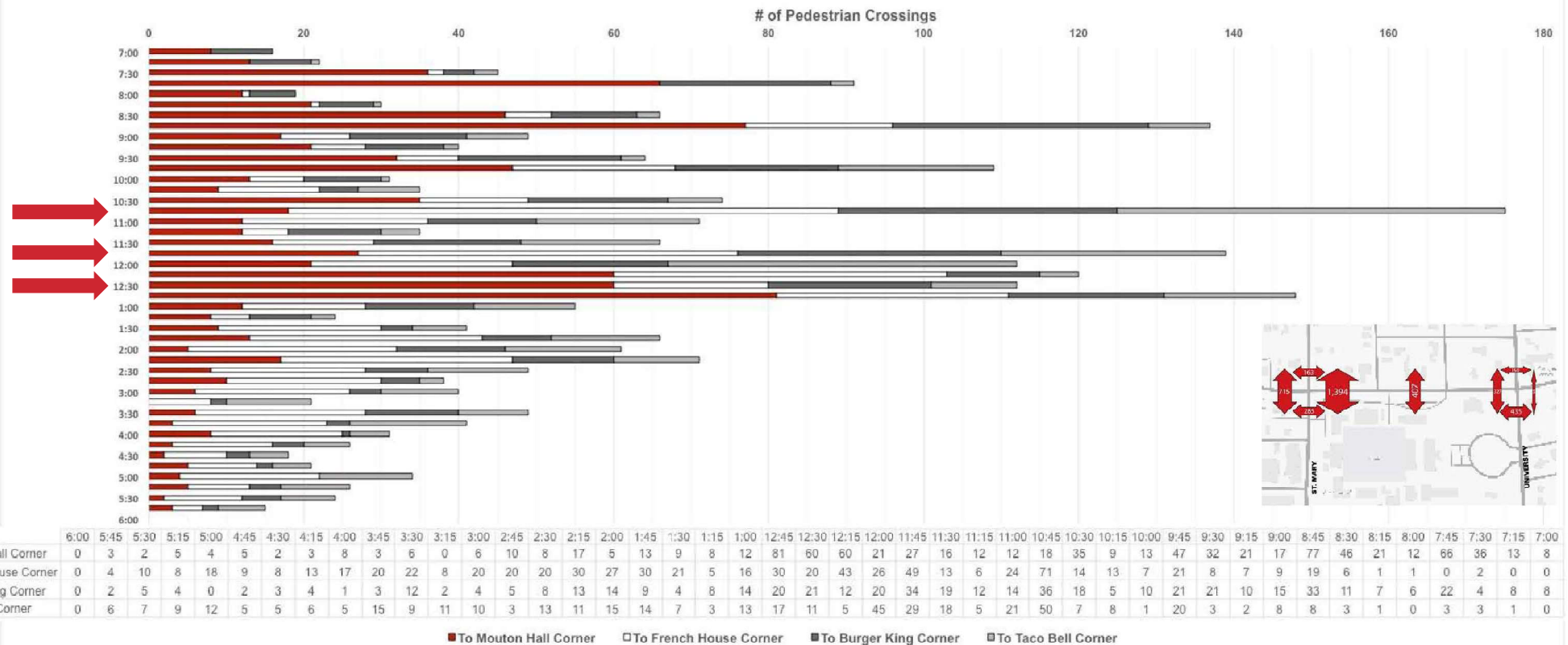


Pedestrian Study Results



Pedestrian Study Results

Monday, October 24, 2022: Johnston Street & St. Mary Boulevard

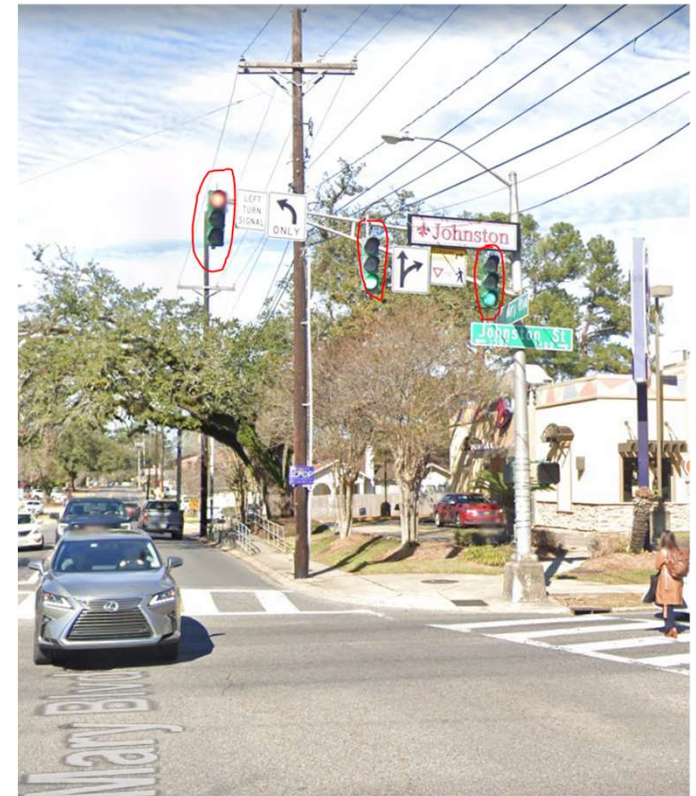


Pedestrian Comments Collected in the Study

- Multiple students and employees requested longer time periods for crossing.
- Multiple students and employees expressed they wanted directional button arrows at crosswalks on East St. Mary Boulevard and Johnston Street.
- One student said crossing Johnston Street on her commute to class was "scary enough."
- Midblock crossings were reported and witnessed crossing University Avenue at KOK Wings & Things, but a count was not recorded within this study. Students told volunteers that "It's too far to get to the nearest light with a crosswalk".
- The pedestrian study site is where the Affiliated Blind of Louisiana's Adjustment to Blindness Training occurs, and trainers and trainees told volunteers about crosswalk accessibility issues for people with vision impairments.
- Affiliated Blind of Louisiana is located on East St. Mary Boulevard less than half a mile from Johnston Street and the East St. Mary Boulevard Intersection.

Observations Documented During the Pedestrian Study

- Multiple cars ran red lights.
- Multiple near misses between two or more cars and among cars and pedestrians.
- Multiple instances of illegal left turns from East St. Mary Boulevard to Johnston Street heading northbound.
- Multiple instances of cars honking at pedestrians when the pedestrians have the right of way.
- Multiple instances of cars turning right into crossing pedestrians.
- Multiple instances of cars driving on the sidewalks when turning right with pedestrians present.
- 3 lights for 2 lanes has caused confusion for drivers.
- Speeding was recorded as high as 55mph in a 40mph zone on the first day of the study.



Johnston St. And St. Mary intersection issues

Crash Data

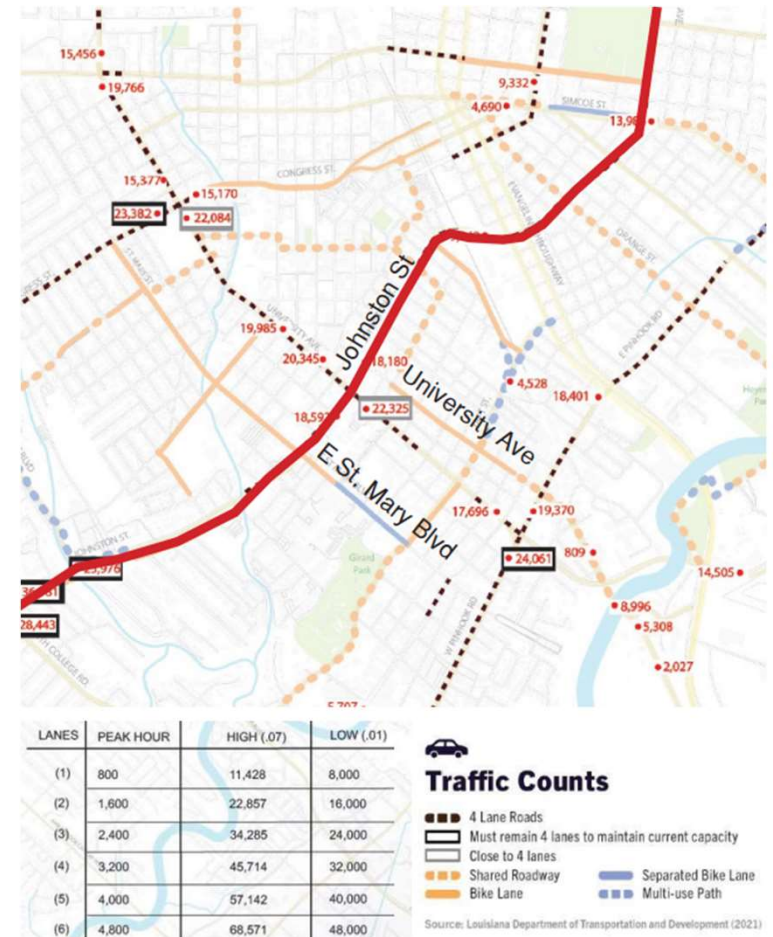
- Between 2019 and 2023, UL Police Department (ULPD) responded to 167 traffic crashes on/or near campus. Of the 167 **reported** traffic crashes, 5 involved pedestrians and 6 involved bicyclists. These numbers do not reflect the quantity of unreported incidents or the Lafayette Police Department's (LPD) numbers. We know from talking with students that **many pedestrian and bicycle incidents are not reported.**
- Bike and Pedestrian Incidents at Johnston St. Campus Intersections :
 - Five pedestrians who were waiting on the sidewalk to cross the road were struck after a driver ran a red light and hit another vehicle into the students at University Avenue and Johnston Street. One of them had moderate injuries and the other four had minor injuries. - Fall 2021
 - ULPD responded to a major traffic crash with injuries at Johnston Street near West Saint Mary Boulevard involving a bicyclist. - Spring 2019
 - ULPD responded to a vehicle crash that hit a bicyclist near the East Lewis Street and Johnston Street. - Spring 2023



Traffic Counts

- **Traffic Counts:**

- The Johnston Street and Cajun Dome Boulevard intersection measured a car count of 25,970 vehicles per day (VPD)
- Johnston Street between the intersections of East St. Mary Boulevard and University Avenue measured a car count of **18,592 VPD**.
- Johnston Street between University Avenue and Jefferson Street measured a car count of **18,180 VPD**.
- According to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) , **15,000- 20,000 VPD is a good candidate for Road Diets.**



Bicycle and Pedestrian Workshop

- The Bicycle and Pedestrian Workshop was hosted by The Office of Sustainability in partnership with Lafayette Consolidated Government's Planning Division. The workshop kicked off with a presentation showcasing the Bicycle Lafayette Plan, existing paths, new and ongoing projects, traffic counts, existing bike and pedestrian infrastructure on campus, bike amenities on campus, and Pedestrian Study Results. Small groups were created after the presentation to identify their top destinations and frequently used paths, using large scale maps



Bicycle and Pedestrian Workshop

- **Bicycle and Pedestrian Workshop Top Comments:**
 - Crossing Johnston Street is difficult because traffic is too fast, the dangerous turns into crosswalks, and lanes at the light are confusing and dangerous for drivers and pedestrians.
 - Crossing University Avenue is also difficult because traffic is too fast, the dangerous turns into crosswalks, and lanes at the light are confusing and dangerous for drivers and pedestrians.
 - Pedestrian light crossing timing issues - discussions were had about Scramble Crossings at peak times of the day when needed in heavy pedestrian areas on Johnston Street.
 - Walkable/Bikeable infrastructure is needed to access the neighboring urban areas such as Downtown, Oil Center, Moncus Park, Girard Park, Freetown, & Saints Streets.
 - Neighborhood routes and the overall connection of neighborhoods to each other, campus, and downtown need improvements.

78%
of participants described a *negative* biking experience in Lafayette. Common descriptive words used were "*scary, stressful, disconnected, harassed, dangerous, unsafe, and terrifying.*"



Bicycle and Pedestrian Workshop

- **Bicycle and Pedestrian Workshop Top Comments:**
 - Utilities and poles are obstructing sidewalks along streets affecting accessibility for many users.
 - Lack of infrastructure on surrounding/connecting streets(Lights, sidewalks, bike lanes, bike amenities)
 - General condition and quality of existing sidewalks is lacking.
 - Pinhook is an unsafe street for non-motorized users - its not possible to safely bike on Pinhook Road. The road is tight even for cars, the bridge crossing feels dangerous for non-motorized users, and crossing Pinhook Road is difficult and dangerous for pedestrians.
 - The Oil Center could be easily connected to campus by activating the entire length of Coolidge Street.
 - Participants were able to indicate their primary traveled to destinations on the map of Lafayette and most repeated destinations included Main Campus, the University's Research Park, Girard Park, Moncus Park, Oil Center, and Downtown.

Bicycle Lafayette Survey Results

- The Bicycle Lafayette Survey was conducted during the Spring Semester of 2023 collected input from students, faculty, and staff to gather comments to improve Lafayette's existing and planned bike and pedestrian network.
- **Bicycle Lafayette Survey Results:**
 - The survey was open from February 23, 2023 - May 31, 2023
 - There were 427 participants
 - Nearly half of the participants were students(49.4%) and the other half were faculty and staff(50.6%).

64%

of participants said they would bike or walk more often once the Bicycle Lafayette Plan is complete but at the moment they feel *uncomfortable* riding to their destinations.

75%

of participants said they walk to get around campus more than 3 days per week.

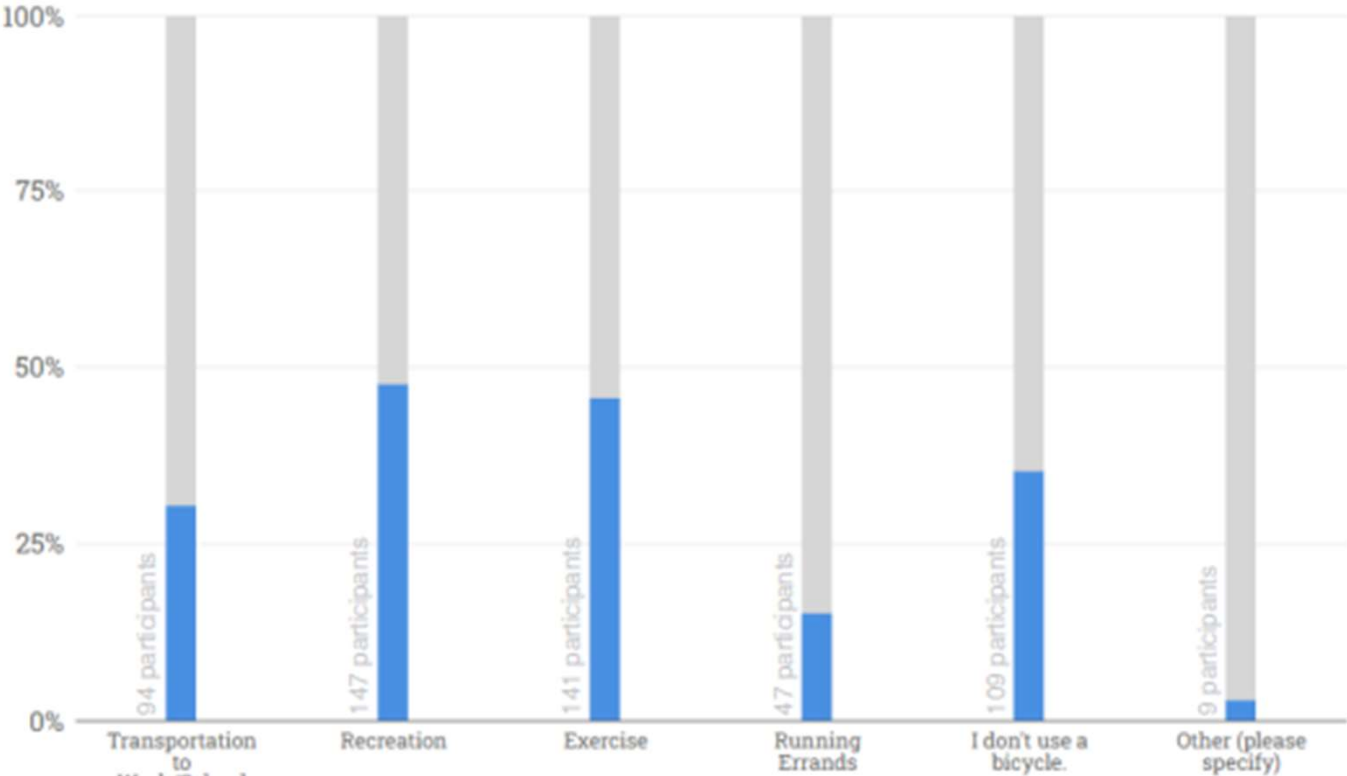
15%

of participants said they bike to get around campus more than 3 days per week.



Bicycle Lafayette Survey Results

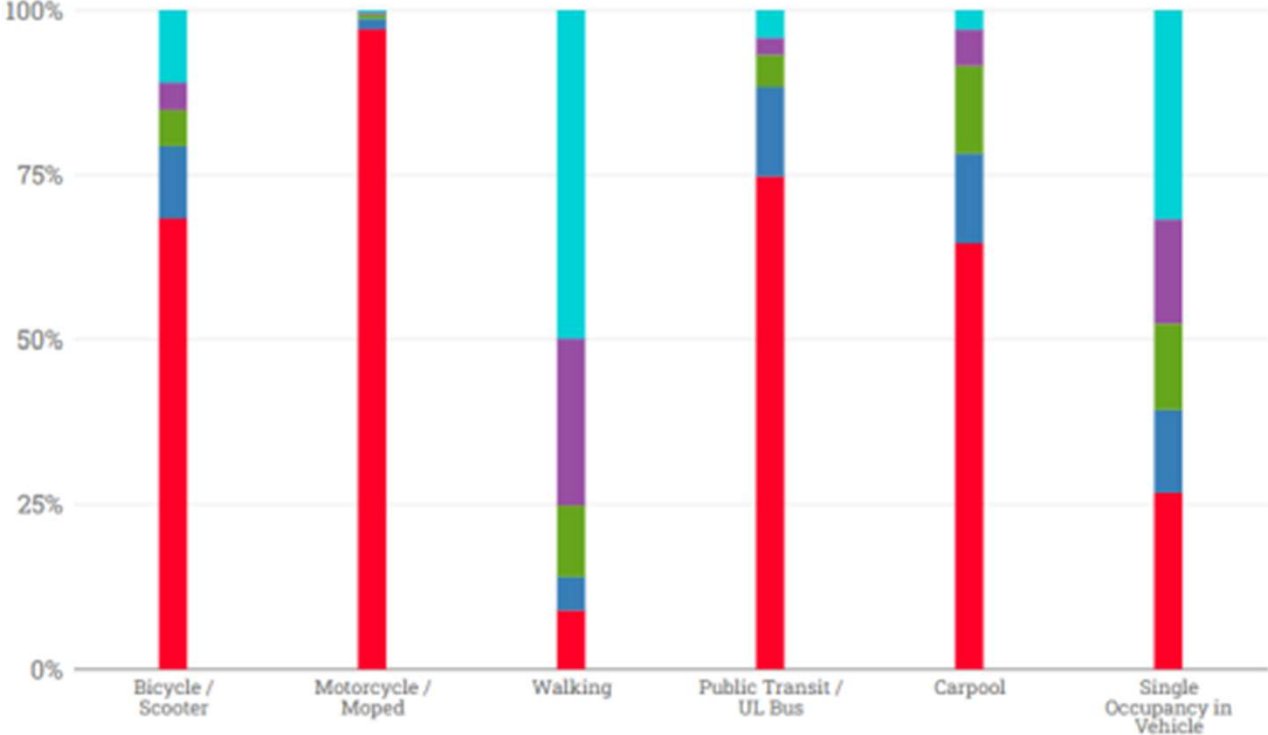
If you bike, what do you use your bike for?



Bicycle Lafayette Survey Results

- Legend**
- Never
 - Less than 1
 - 1-2
 - 3-4
 - 5-7

How many days per week, on average, do you typically use the following modes of transportation to get around CAMPUS?



Bicycle Lafayette Survey Comments

- **Responses for the survey question: "Is there somewhere you'd like to ride your bike now but don't feel safe?"**
 - 36 participants listed "**Johnston St.**" as the primary road of concern that does not feel safe. Other repeated roads of concern besides Johnston Street was Congress Street, South College Road, Pinhook Road, Ambassador Caffery Parkway, Verot School Road, Girard Park Drive, Bertrand Drive, East Bayou Parkway, West Bayou Parkway, East Broussard Road, Kaliste Saloom Road, Jefferson Street, Cajundome Boulevard, East Lewis Street, Surrey Street, and Evangeline throughway. Additionally, participants also described wanting **safe paths to the UL Lafayette campus, downtown, parks, and grocery stores.**
- **Responses for the survey question: "Do you have any additional questions or comments about the plan?"**
 - Many participants expressed **excitement** about the plan but also expressed the **dangers** of the current conditions. Repeated comments were about **poor existing conditions, unmaintained/uncleaned bike lanes, and Johnston Street design and current conditions.**

Findings

The Pedestrian Study, Bicycle and Pedestrian Workshop, and the Bicycle Lafayette Survey revealed that students, faculty, and staff are **uncomfortable and concerned for their safety** when they are **crossing any Johnston Street intersection on campus**.

The **East St. Mary Boulevard and University Avenue intersections with Johnston Street** were the two intersections identified as the **most dangerous for drivers and pedestrians on campus**.



Johnston St. and St. Mary intersection re-imagined in the 2012 University of Louisiana at Lafayette Master Plan.



Johnston St. re-imagined in the 2012 University of Louisiana at Lafayette Master Plan.

Recommendations

- Road Diet to reduce Johnston Street from five lanes down to two travel lanes and turning lanes with protected bike lane (5 lanes reduction to 3-4 lanes).
- Lane size reduction and utilize extra space to add a protected bike lane.
- Pedestrian scramble crossings.
- Pedestrian refuge islands in boulevard conditions.
- Slow down traffic speeds on Johnston Street. Could be another light before E St. Mary Boulevard or a raised pedestrian crossing like Girard Park Circle. Current speed is 40 MPH.
- Add Midblock crossings between Calder and Brashear Street on Johnston Street (400 crossings daily) and on University Avenue at Lamar Street where most midblock crossings occur.
- Redesign turn lanes and quantity of stop lights. The current set up is confusing and endangers both the pedestrians and drivers
- Raised (tactile) arrow push button for pedestrians.
- Accessible pedestrian signals that provide supplemental information in non-visual formats (such as audible tones, speech messages, and/or vibrating surfaces)

Recommendations

- Larger pedestrian queue area at campus intersections to accommodate for number of peds.
- Pedestrian signal timings to exceed minimum requirements when possible.
 - Reasoning: the current design does not support a heavy pedestrian que area, so a line forms further from the road. This creates a situation for pedestrians where it takes them longer to cross the intersection if they were last in the que line. Additionally, this site is an Affiliated Blind of Louisiana training area and should be designed with accessibility in mind. Furthermore, most pedestrians requested longer crossing signals at the E St. Mary Boulevard and University Avenue intersections with Johnston Street.
- Bike lanes that safely cross Johnston Street. Could be shared or dedicated lanes but intersections need to be designed for bike safety as well as pedestrian safety.
- Bury utilities on Johnston Street from Cajundome Boulevard to University Avenue.
- On street parking along Johnston Street to slow down traffic, add parking, and provide a buffer for pedestrians.
- The University would like to add branding to the intersection to strengthen the sense of place while on campus and create a gateway into the university.

