

**STRONG
TOWNS**

SANTA BARBARA



STATE STREET BIKE STUDY

Prepared by: Strong
Towns Santa Barbara
Volunteers

The business report majorly shares a description of the top contributors to a significant increase in revenue for the company in a specific timeframe.

Summary

Strong Towns Santa Barbara is a local advocacy group focused on urban planning issues ranging from bike infrastructure to affordable housing. Our volunteers come from a range of backgrounds and ages; we have a common goal of helping Santa Barbara become more resilient, fiscally sound, and people-oriented — one step at a time.

After the May State St. Advisory Committee meeting, we realized that more information about bikes on State Street should be available to the committee to help them make a more informed decision. There are many questions that should have answers. They include: Why are bikers there? Are they using it as a thoroughfare, or are they shopping on State? Is it just tourists or locals?

Through conducting a survey and bike count over multiple days, we collected data pertinent to the bikes on State conversation. The results, along with an insightful discussion, are laid out in this report.



Strong Towns Santa Barbara June Meeting

Methods

We wrote a short, 5-question survey to administer to cyclists on the street, which you can view [here](#). Questions included why they were there, with the ability to choose from a range of answers including: shopping, eating, sightseeing, because it's safer than other streets, meeting with friends, or just passing through (participants could choose more than one). We then asked their age (in decade groups), their zip code, how often they bike there, and whether or not they want to see a dedicated space for bikes in the permanent designs.



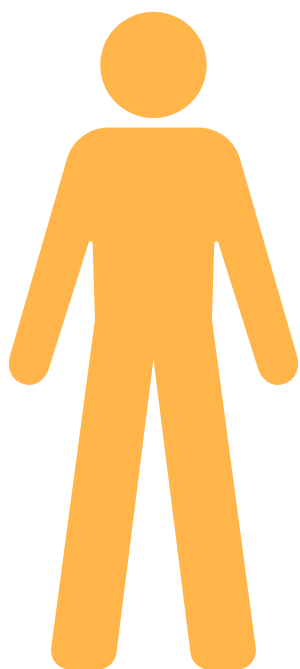
Important disclaimer: our methods and survey were far from perfect. We only administered the survey over 3 days, and counted bikes over 4. The weather was different on those days, and the times we stood outside were different too. We only surveyed/counted bikes at one location (the intersection of State and Cota). We also only gave the survey to cyclists, not all users of the street. We were also only able to survey a fraction of the people biking (approximately 16% of cyclists who passed on the three surveying days); many did not stop for us or too many came by at once. However, the goal was to understand the demographics of people who use State St. for biking, and in that we believe we succeeded. In statistics, what we got is called a “representative survey” meaning that it represents the views of the whole population, with room for margins of error. That means that in the future, the city should try to survey the population in more depth and over more time, though that doesn’t invalidate our results. We also are a completely volunteer organization, and we are grateful to Kira, Marie, Sully, and Tristen for standing outside for hours and flagging down cyclists for the survey.

Results



965 Bikes
counted

3 Days **8.58** Hrs

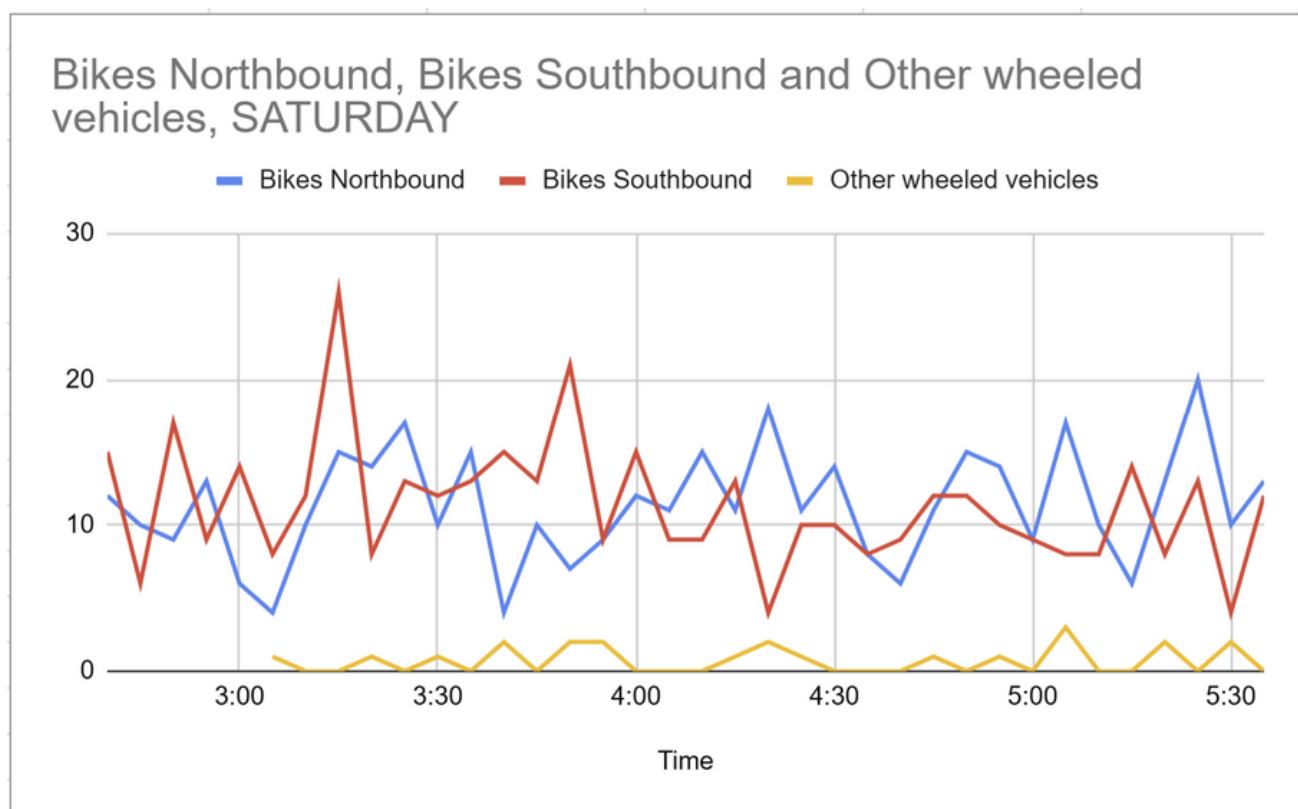
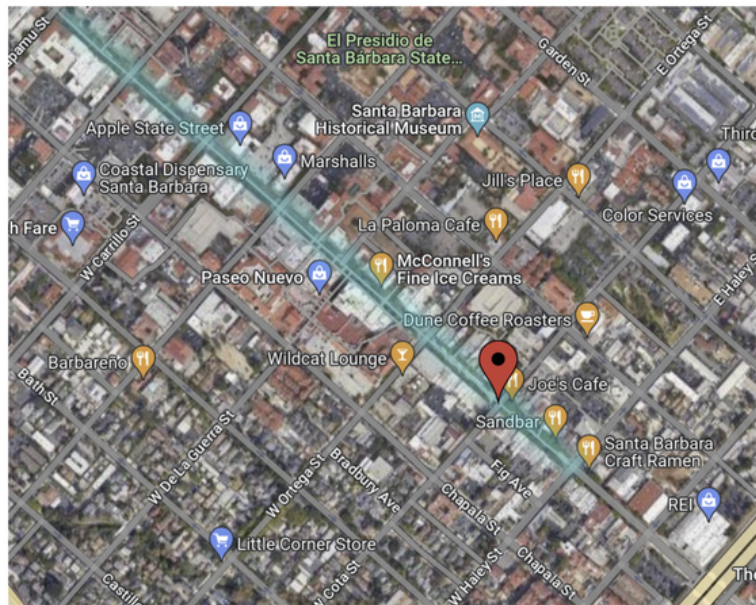


151 People
Surveyed

Results

COUNTS

Bike counts were taken on the corner of Ortega St and State St. Northbound and Southbound vehicles were counted separately. Volunteers began counting other wheeled vehicles, such as skateboards and Onewheels, when it became apparent they were quite common. The data shows us there is a roughly equivalent flow of bikes to the north and south, meaning many different end destinations. Certain spikes on the graph represent more than 20 bikers coming by in under 10 minutes. This many cyclists could not fit onto a traditional bike lane adjacent to vehicles. Below is the graph for Saturday, the 3rd of June. Other dates are available as well.

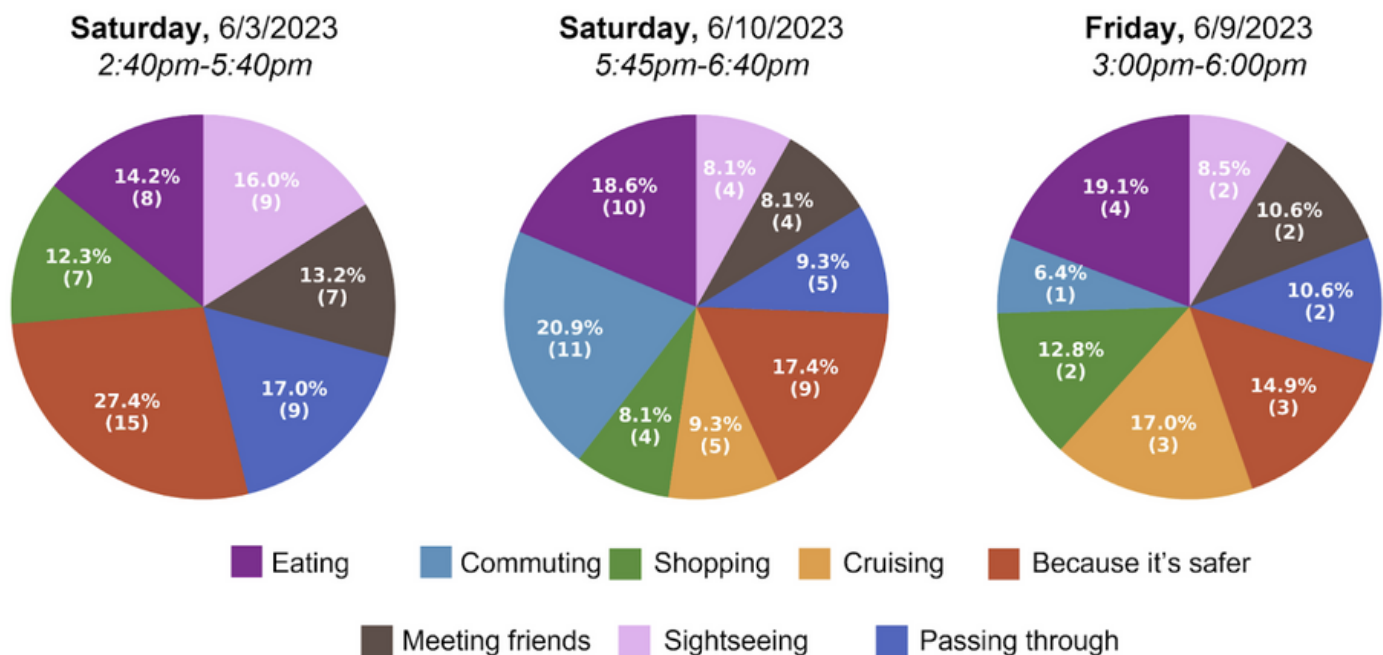


Results and Discussion, Survey Results

Q: WHY ARE YOU ON STATE ST?

In the pie charts below, you can see the answer to perhaps the most important question we asked. On each day, shopping and eating made up between 26-32% of respondent activities. These activities correlate directly with spending money, so it's safe to say that at least a third of people biking down State St are adding to business revenue.

Another important takeaway is how many people are sightseeing and cruising. State St. is one of the most beautiful main streets in America, and tourists and locals alike are coming here to view the sights. That means that if bikes were diverted to Anacapa or Chapala Steets, as some have suggested, bike volume would surely decrease.

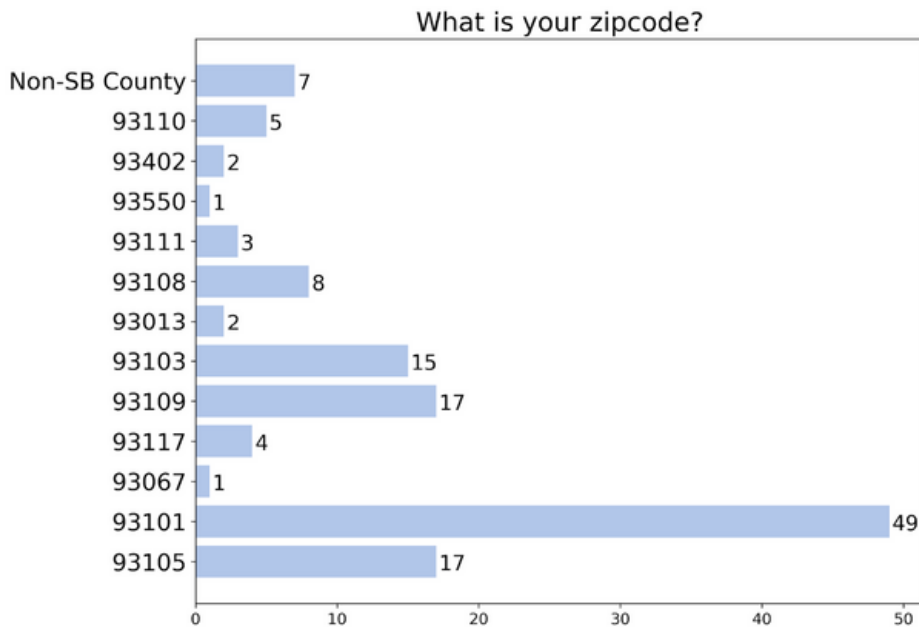


Perhaps the most important result is how many people told us they're biking on State because they feel that it's safer than the alternatives. Many studies have shown that the greatest factor contributing to Americans not biking is a lack of safe infrastructure and a perception of danger. The new State, with its complete lack of deadly automobiles, is the ideal place for cyclists who would be afraid to ride elsewhere, once again providing reason to not divert them to other streets.

These insights show that State is not being used as a "thoroughfare" as one of the SSAC members suggested. Cyclists on State are traveling to local businesses on the corridor, socializing, sightseeing, and feeling safe while they do so.

Results and Discussion

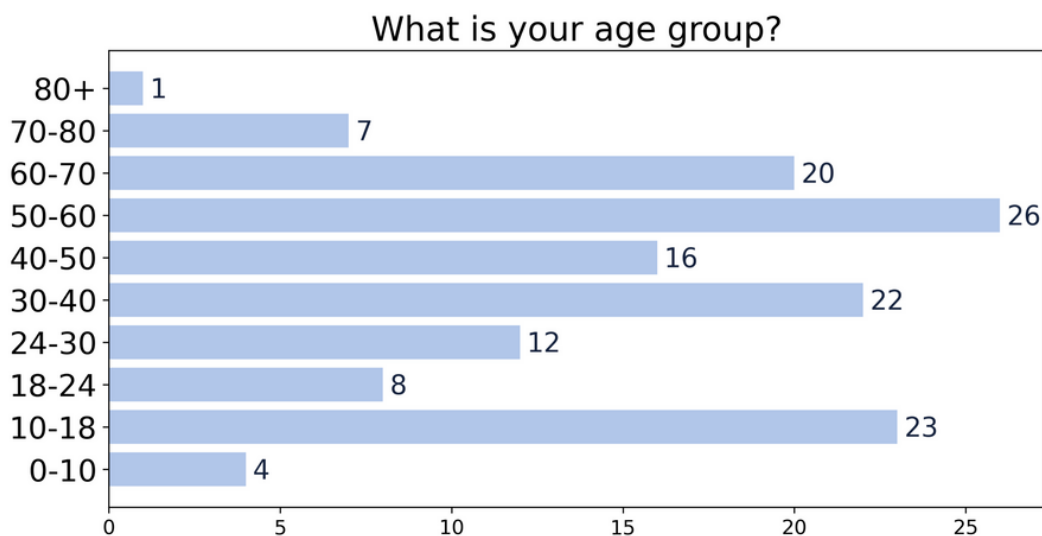
Q: WHERE ARE YOU FROM?



This question was meant to understand the balance of tourists vs locals. It seems that most cyclists live within the same zip code as State St, with the vast majority leaving in Santa Barbara.

Q: HOW OLD ARE YOU?

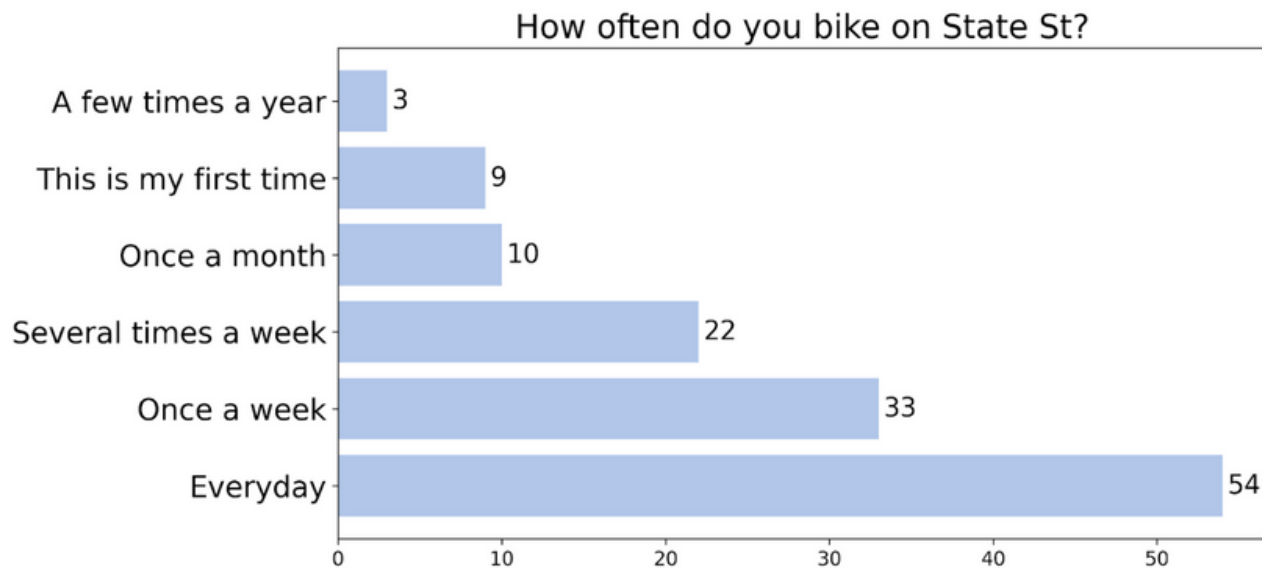
Without getting too personal, you we asked how old the cyclists were. The largest age group was 50-60, with 10-19 second, and 30-40 not far behind. There were also cyclists under 10 and over 80. This spread shows that a variety of people are biking, not just teenagers.



Results and Discussion

Q: HOW OFTEN DO YOU BIKE ON STATE?

Our last question found that a third of users bike on State every day, with frequency decreasing in percent of answers



Conclusion

While our survey was far from perfect, the conclusions are pertinent to the conversation surrounding the future of State St. A bike culture, which includes people of all ages doing various activities from hanging out to commuting, has developed along this beautiful street. In line with many other studies on the subject, we found that cyclists spend money at local shops. These cyclists feel safe here, which is the most important aspect of moving people from their cars to bikes. With about two bikes per minute on average, this bike phenomenon should be celebrated and worked into the permanent plan for State St.

