

Sustainability in the City and Beyond

Concordia University

March 19-21, 2019

More Cyclists Wanted: A Study on Barriers Preventing Students From Cycling to Sir George William Campus

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As concerns about our environment's well-being continues to rise, many countries have reintroduced the bicycle into their cities in an effort to increase sustainable practices in an urban environment (Beatley T, 2012). This is due to the bicycle's efficiency and size, which makes it an attractive solution for combatting the common problems of overcrowding and congestion in typical modern cities (Wilson D.G., 2004). Despite the bicycle's benefits, the 2017 Commuter Habits Survey at Concordia, conducted by Yuwei Wang from Concordia's Environmental Health and Safety office, found that while 52% of students lived within 5 km of the Sir George William Campus, only 7% of students cycle to school (Yuwei Wang., 2017). This large gap between the potential and actual cycling rates prompted the question: what are the barriers preventing students at Concordia from cycling to Sir George William Campus?

Many researchers have attempted to identify barriers that prevent individuals from cycling. Key barriers commonly cited in the literature include safety, weather, distance, scheduling and effort. These barriers among other factors have an effect on which mode of transport is chosen by an individual.

In order to answer my research question, I created a short survey made up of close-ended questions. To ensure my study is representative of the 40,000 students at Concordia, with a confidence interval of 95%, I aim to reach 381 students, of which 46% would be from the faculty of Arts & Sciences, 21% from the faculty of Engineering, 21% from the faculty of John Molson School of Business, and 8.4% from the faculty of Fine Arts. Sustainability in the City and Beyond Concordia University March 19-21, 2019 In order to achieve this high volume of respondents, I decided to ask professors with large class sizes if they would be willing to take 5 minutes at the end of their class time and allow me to hand out my survey to their students. The body of the survey is broken down into 3 sections. The first consists of collecting demographic data such as age, gender, faculty, and postal code. The survey then goes into a series of questions that aim at understanding the participants' perceptions on cycling and distances. This section also asks participants to identify the Concordia cycling initiatives that they are aware of. Finally, the third section breaks down the participants' transport mode over the course of 4 months (September, October, November, December) of the school year in 2018. Participants are asked to identify their transport mode for each of these months and if that transport mode was not cycling, they are then asked to choose which barriers they felt were stopping them from cycling to school.



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Many of the barriers presented to participants in my survey are avoidable. However, they cannot be addressed until the barriers are identified. This is why the aim of my study is to gain information on which barriers need to be addressed by Concordia in order to increase the number of cyclists on campus. I also hope that in doing the survey, participants will reflect on if the barriers stopping them from cycling.



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