

TART Trails 2024/2025 Trail User Survey – Key Findings  
301 responses | July 2024 – July 2025



1) Who's on the Trails

- Age: The majority are 56–75 years old (52%), with strong use across all age groups.
- Gender: Nearly equal male and female representation.
- Race: 97% of respondents identified as White.
- Location: Most users live locally (ZIPs 49684 & 49686 make up over 60%).

2) How People Use the Trails

- Primary Activities: Biking (42%) and walking (35%) lead the way; running (13%) and e-biking (8%) are also common.
- Purpose: Nearly half (48%) use trails for health & exercise; another third (33%) for recreation.
- Frequency: Over 70% use trails at least weekly.
- Seasonal Use: Almost all use trails in summer (99%), with strong fall (87%) and spring (86%) participation; winter use is lower (58%).
- Most Popular Trails: Boardman Lake Loop (85%), Leelanau Trail (75%), TART-in-Town (65%).

3) How People Access the Trails

- Access: Most users bike (27%) or park at trailheads (23%). 0% used public transit.
- New Access Points: 77% said more access points wouldn't change use; 23% said they'd increase use

4. Economic Impact

- Local Spending: Nearly half (48%) spend money during outings, averaging \$10.55 per trip.

5. Experience on the Trails

- Satisfaction: 95% rated trails 4 or 5 (satisfied or very satisfied)
- Safety and Security: 87% rated 4 or 5
- Maintenance: 96% rated 4 or 5
- Conflicts: Most (69%) saw no change, 24% reported an increase

6. Trail Awareness & Engagement

- How They Heard: Word of mouth (52%) is strongest
- Familiarity with TART Trails: 79% aware of the nonprofit
- Continue engagement: 19% of respondents shared contact info to stay connected

7. Priorities & Improvements

- Top requests: Restrooms (24%), More trails (20%), Better trail connections (19%)
- Other ideas: Safety improvements, etiquette education, more art mentioned in open comment (17.61%)
- Funding: 74% support a recurring public funding program; many did not know there was no recurring, designated public funding for the TART Trails Network (47.51%)

8. Health & Well-being Impact

- 86% report improved physical and mental health from trail use

Bottom Line:

Trail users value the TART Trails Network for health, recreation, and community connection. They are overwhelmingly satisfied, strongly supportive of expanded investment, and see the trails as a vital regional resource.