



With cycling back in attention, a new tri-city study highlights lack of safe and comfortable cycling infrastructure

Pune: The culmination of the Pune Grand Cycling Tour has put cycling back into public focus in Maharashtra, offering an opportunity for all cities to ensure local cyclists have the best infrastructure to cycle on.

In this context, a multi-city study titled, “*Cycling in Our Cities*”, conducted by ITDP India across Pune, Pimpri Chinchwad, and Nagpur, found that **56% of cyclists cite obstructions as the biggest deterrent to using existing cycle tracks and lanes.**

The study surveyed 605 cyclists and non-cyclists and assessed over 152 km of cycling infrastructure across the three cities. Parked vehicles emerged as the most common type of obstruction, cited by 72% of cyclists, followed by encroachment by vendors (66%) and movement of motor vehicles on cycle tracks (55%).

According to the research team, **the aim of the survey was to analyse how citizens perceive the various kind of cycling infrastructure being built in the city, in order to inform future infrastructure plans.** Currently, there are four major types of cycling infrastructure provided; footpath level cycle tracks, at-grade segregated cycle tracks, painted cycle lanes on the carriageways. The fourth type is the common shared street with traffic calming measures.

Cyclists consistently rated **shared streets with traffic calming** as the safest and most comfortable environment—**57% rated them positively for safety**—while segregated tracks at footpath or carriageway level scored poorly due to encroachments, poor surfaces, and broken continuity. In other words, **design alone is not enough; design plus enforcement is what counts.**

“This is a classic case of a well-intended infrastructure not being used or perceived as being unusable due to poor enforcement and maintenance. This should help the administration in the three cities to course correct wherever needed,” said Pranjal Kulkarni, Programme Manager, ITDP India.

It may be noted that though cyclists are not largely visible on city roads, they thrive in large numbers and are often easy to miss because the streets are not designed for them. ITDP India’s primary surveys recorded almost 240 cyclists per hour in Nagar Road Pune, 160 cyclists per hour in Ring Road, Nagpur, and 160 cyclists per hour in Kalewadi Road, Pimpri Chinchwad.

Despite the challenges women prefer segregated

Women cyclists made up 160 of the 605 respondents. When asked what makes cycling difficult for them, half reported **speeding vehicles and lack of enforcement as major deterrents**, and more than 60% flagged poor road conditions and potholes as serious safety concerns. It is no surprise, then, that 87% of women cyclists said they prefer physically segregated cycle tracks, indicating how crucial well designed and well enforced infrastructure was.

Cyclists prefer asphalt on cycle tracks over other materials

More than half of the cyclists (52%) preferred asphalt blacktop over concrete or paver blocks, citing comfort and ride quality. Cyclists also expressed a preference for speed tables over rumble strips as traffic calming measures.

The researchers note that with the Pune Grand Cycling Tour culminating as a success and inspiring more and more to take up cycling, it is time the administrations in the three cities focus on not just building cycling infrastructure but making it work for all.

“In a nutshell, Pune has a robust cycle track coverage, but enforcement remains the weak link. In PCMC the biggest concern is that cycle tracks/lanes are visible, but fear of accidents was highest among the three cities. This was due to wider carriageways allowing speeding. In Nagpur, there are very few cycling tracks present in the city to even be used,” explained Siddhartha Godbole, Deputy Manager, ITDP India.

“This tour has offered a golden opportunity for the three cities to build on their existing infrastructure- Pune already has 91km of cycling infrastructure, whereas Pimpri Chinchwad and Nagpur have 50km and 11kms of cycling infrastructure. Making them continuous, especially across intersections, connecting key origin-destination points is also very crucial. Simultaneously, prioritising shaded trees, adding traffic calming measures, along with enforcement is the way forward,” added Smruti Sawane, Associate, ITDP India.

The team has also emphasised the need to have asphalt blacktop cycle tracks which are not as harsh and hard to use, and also prioritise parking management along cycling infrastructure to ensure the major cause of obstruction is removed.

Ends//

Data points

Total cycling infrastructure in three cities

- Nagpur – 11km
- PCMC- 50km
- Pune- 91km

Total surveyed- 600 citizens

Cyclists- 439 respondents

Non-cyclists- 166

Age profile

- below 18- 100
- 18-50- 355
- 50+- 150

Major deterrents to cycling frequently include:

1. Too many obstructions- 56%
2. Lack of strict enforcement- 54%
3. Speeding vehicles- 49%
4. Lack of continuous cycling network- 41%
5. Air pollution- 28%
6. Not enough shade- 21%

Top 3 Major obstructions as observed by cyclists:

1. Parked vehicles on cycle track/lane- 72%
2. Encroachment by vendors- 66%
3. Moving vehicles on cycle track/lane- 55%

Find the full study here: <https://itdp.in/resource/cyclinginourcities/>

About ITDP India:

ITDP India provides a wide range of technical and strategic support to national, state, and city governments—helping them design and implement people-centric transport systems. Our expertise spans across technical advisory, data-driven research, knowledge publications, and capacity-building programmes. We focus on enabling cities to develop efficient, high-quality public transport systems—including electric mobility solutions—while also prioritising safe and accessible infrastructure for walking and cycling. Our work supports traffic reduction mechanisms, low emission zones, and the development of integrated mobility plans that promote cleaner air, reduced congestion, and improved quality of life.