

Ciclovias as an urban initiative to get city residents outdoors

ahipp@wustl.edu

aeyle@wustl.edu

J. Aaron Hipp, PhD and Amy A. Eyler, PhD, CHES
Washington University in St. Louis (Missouri, USA)



PREVENTION
RESEARCH CENTER in St. Louis
Promoting Healthy Communities
<http://prcstl.wustl.edu>

BACKGROUND

- During the past 20 years there has been a dramatic increase in obesity in the United States
- Obesity rates are higher among population subgroups (minority & low-income in particular)
- Rates are particularly disparate among children
- Physical inactivity contributes to overweight and obesity
- Policy and environmental level factors, e.g., lack of places to be physically active, are major contributors
- **St. Louis Open Streets** is a *ciclovia* initiative implemented in 2010
- A 6-mile route is closed to vehicles on event dates

- Routes vary to highlight different neighborhoods
- Open Streets provides space for recreation, encourages sustainable forms of transportation, facilitates interaction with the urban built environment, and complements the city's bicycling, complete streets, and greening initiatives

EVALUATION

- Working with the mayor's office, we evaluated the four 2010 Open Street events
- To determine if Open Streets:
 - increased physical activity & sense of community
 - was reaching minority, urban residents

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- US CDC recommends **75min** of vigorous physical activity/week for adults
- Below were the primary activities of participants and time spent during the June event:

| ACTIVITY | N | MINUTES (AVG.) |
|-------------------|----|----------------|
| Bicycling | 49 | 108.2 |
| Walking | 16 | 66.3 |
| Activity Stations | 13 | 53.1 |
| Jogging | 3 | 35.0 |

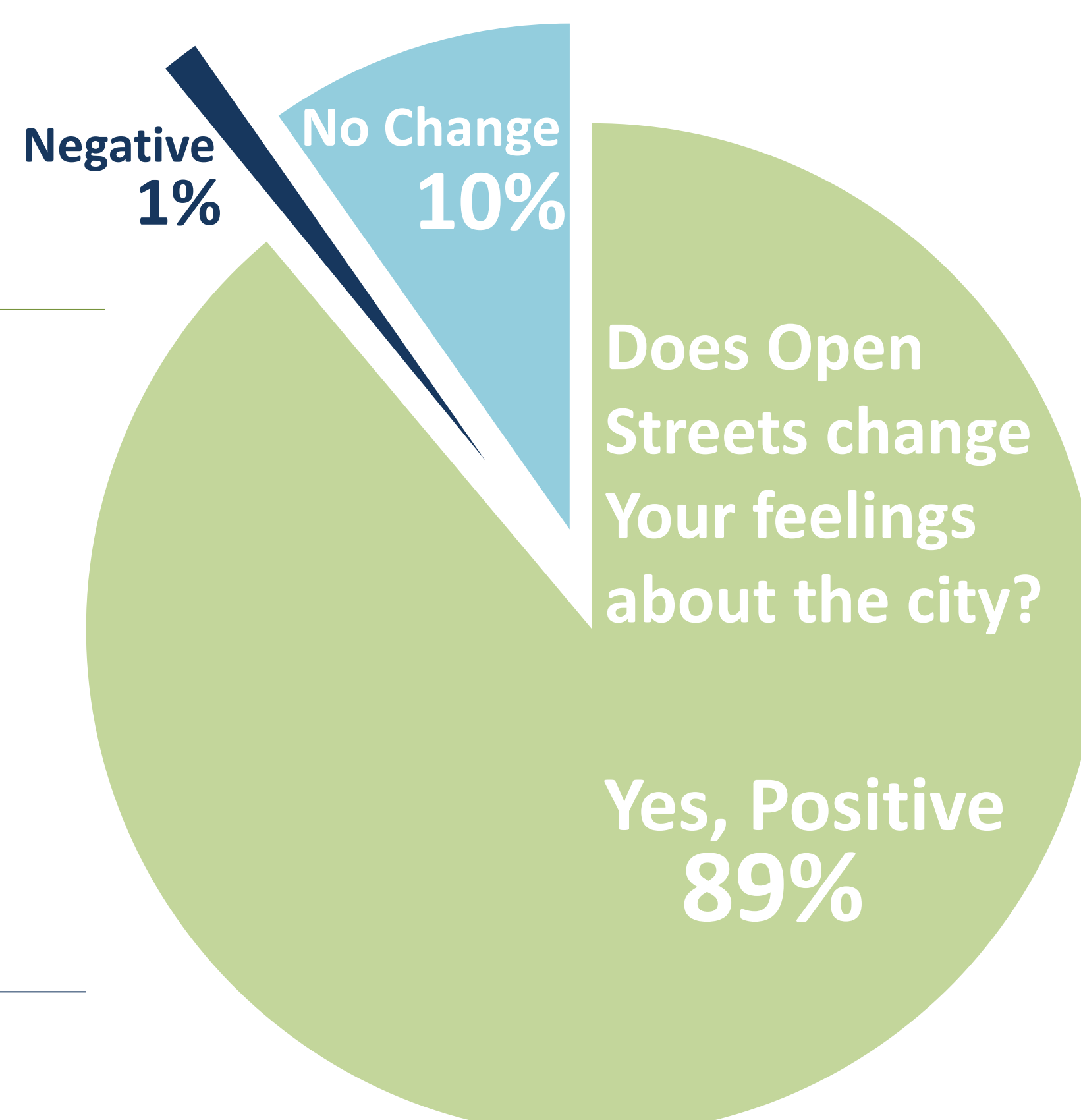


42.9% of respondents reported they would not be performing physical activity on this morning if they had not attended Open Streets.



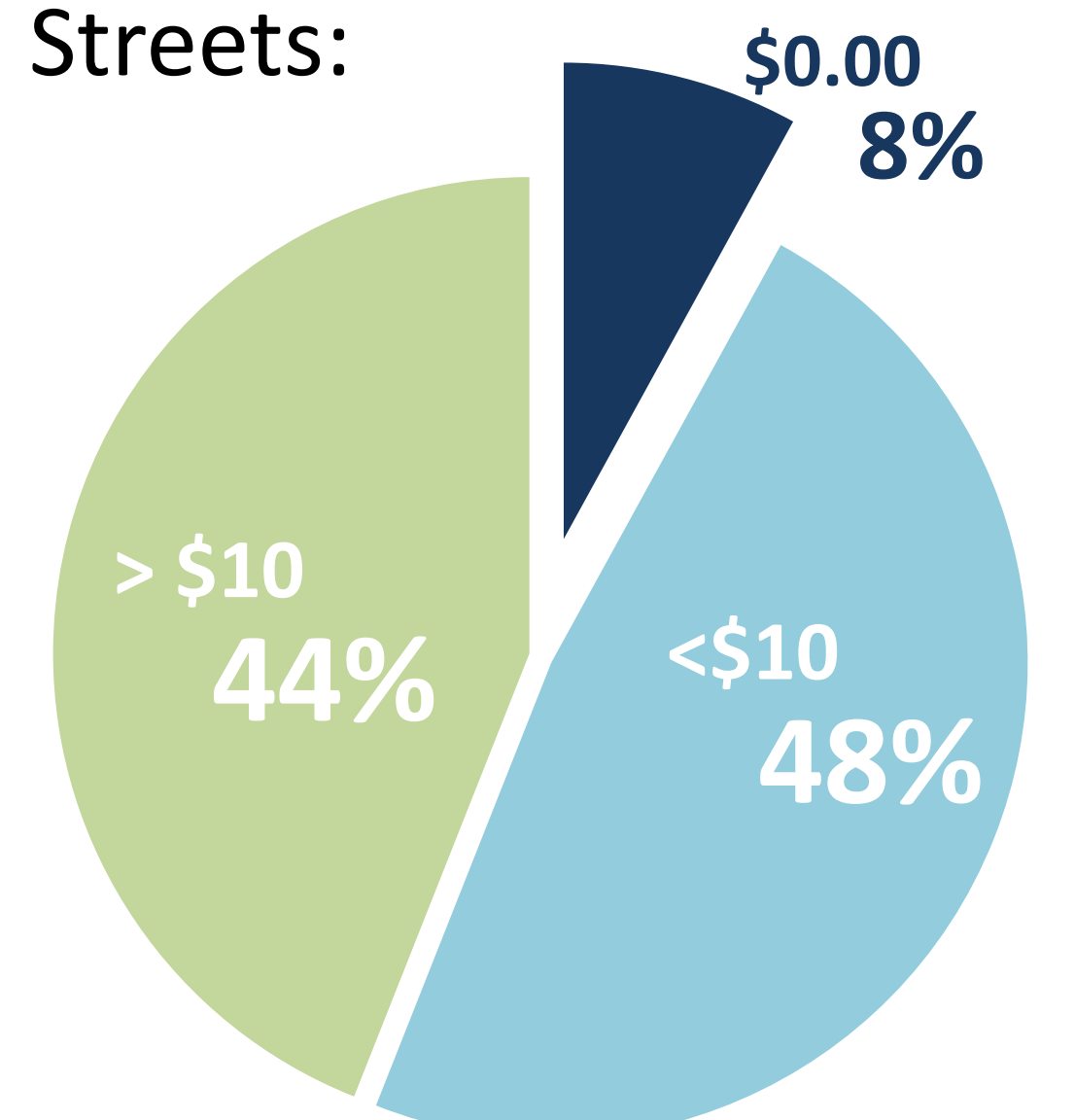
SENSE OF COMMUNITY

- **88.1%** 'Agree' or 'Strongly Agree' that 'Open Streets strengthens our community'

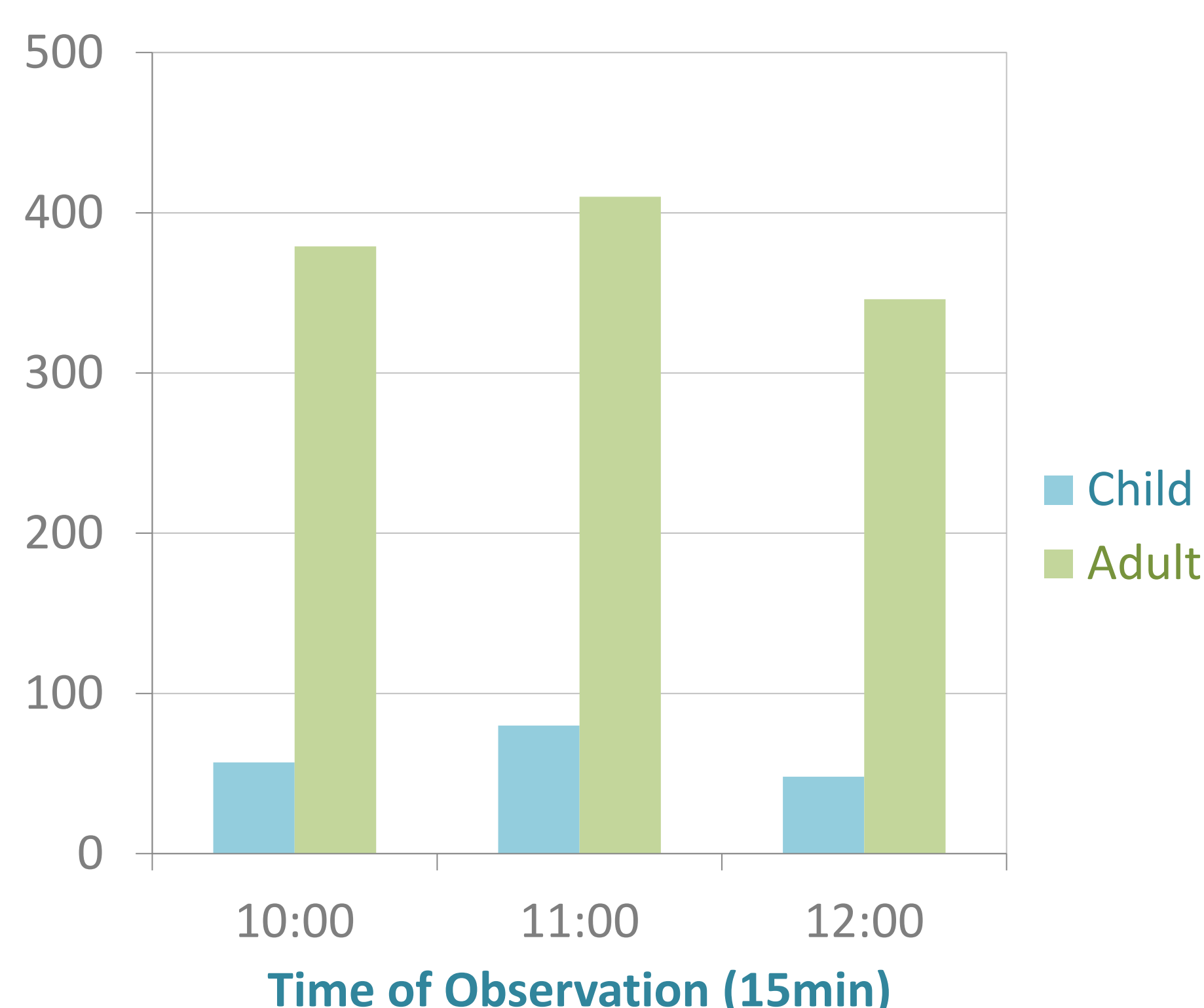
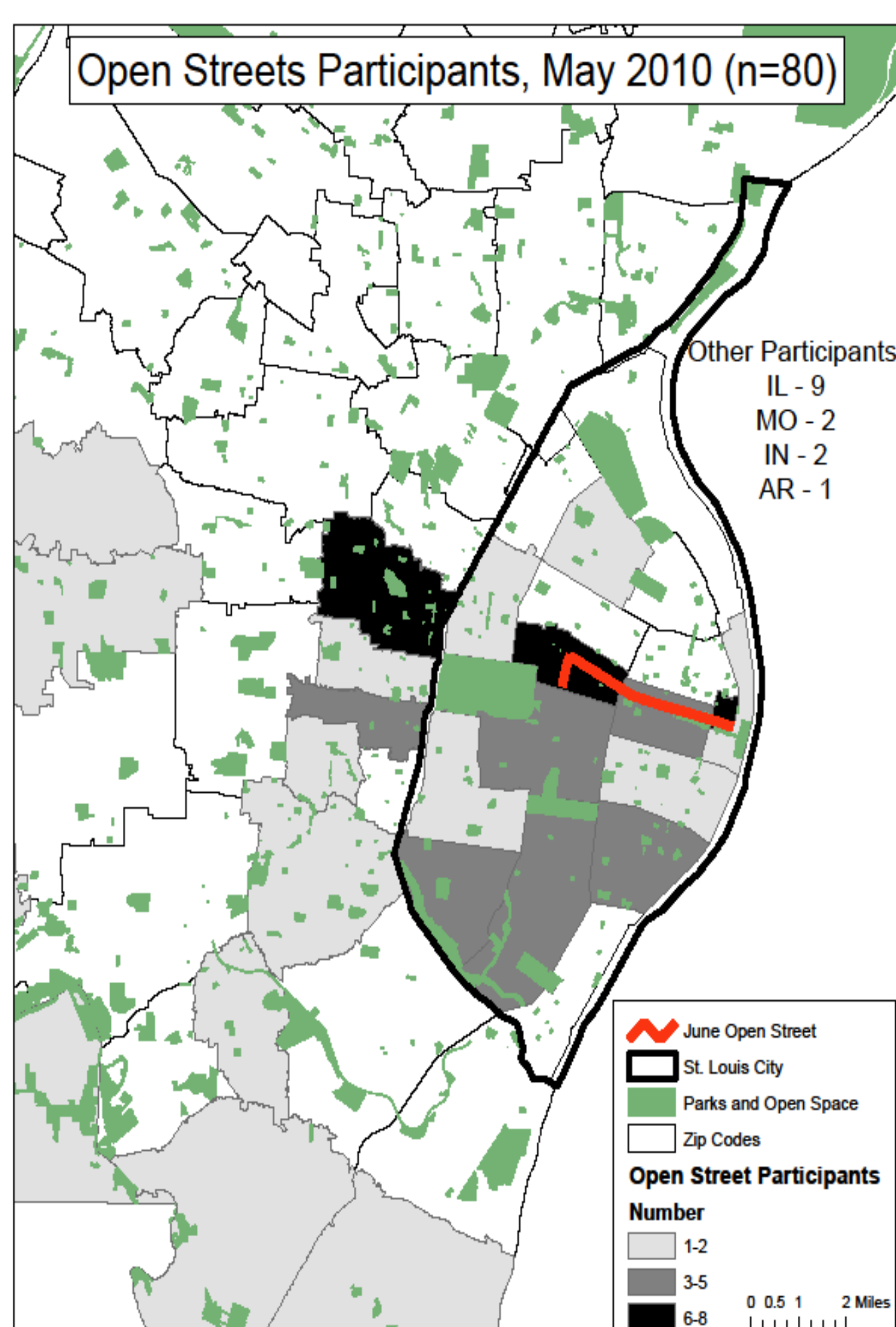


ECONOMIC IMPACT

- **56.0%** became aware of a new restaurant or store while on route
- Avg. dollars spent by participants at June Open Streets:



POPULATIONS (UNDER)SERVED



FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- 18-month funded project to:
 - Identify effective strategies to encourage participation of urban youth and families in Open Streets
 - Apply and evaluate successful communication, partnerships, and environmental strategies to the spring 2012 Open Streets
 - Disseminate findings locally and nationally