

Title: Planning for Wendy, the willing-but-wary transportation cyclist

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Meet Wendy. Wendy is afraid to ride in traffic so she seldom gets her bike out of the garage. People like Wendy are the future of cycling in the US. Wendy represents the “Willing-but-Wary”. Since Wendy does not belong to bike clubs, she seldom shows up in cyclist counts, surveys, or focus groups. The Wendy group is the massive untapped market needed to achieve ambitious mode shift targets in US biking.

With User Experience research tools (Grudin & Pruitt, 2004) developed for product testing at hi-tech facilities such as NASA, Apple, Google, and Microsoft, the author has developed a *persona* to represent the Willing-but-Wary market segment (see Roger Geller’s Interested but Concerned market segment, 2007).

According to Roger Geller’s model, Interested but Concerned people are “curious about bicycling,” like to ride, but are afraid to do so and therefore very few regularly ride and they “will not venture out onto the arterials.”

It would be naive to believe that many Wendys turn into a Confident and Enthused personas over time. Most Wendys will never become comfortable using high-stress bicycle facilities. Therefore, it is essential that Wendy sees complete low-stress bicycle facilities before she will use them or take her children on them.

Wendy fits well into the Mineta Level of Traffic Stress (LTS) model (2012). Since Wendy is a smart, educated parent who listens to her intuition when it comes to making good transportation choices for herself and her family, safety is her primary concern, but not her only value when it comes to transportation. She knows integrating exercise into the daily routine is an important ingredient of healthy children and adults.

Wendy only feels comfortable using Mineta LTS-1 (low stress) facility types. Wendy may let her children bike or walk to school only if there is a continuous series of LTS-1 segments between home and school. Money spent on higher stress facilities is unlikely to yield significant increases in riders who match the Wendy persona.

Speed Kills. Wendy instinctively knows this to be true and is right to be concerned for herself and her children. Safety is a real concern for Wendy. Research conducted by Jennifer Dill (2012) found that 84% of Interested but Concerned fear being hit by a motor vehicle.

Wendy trusts that her needs are considered when planning for low-stress bicycling and walking.

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