

Analyzing different reasons for cycling to facilitate better bicycle infrastructure planning

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Dr. Joey Iuliano of the University of Arizona, a 2020 NITC dissertation fellow who earned his Ph.D. in 2021, has published a journal article in

the March 2022 issue of *Cogent Social Sciences*: Where and how Tucsonans ride and implications for cycling infrastructure.

Drawing from cycling ethnographic work, Dr. Iuliano used [video recordings](#) of three groups of cyclists (commuter, recreational, and athletic) in Tucson, AZ, to contextualize their movements and interactions with the built environment, drivers, and other cyclists. Cycling can be utilitarian for commuters and a social, leisure, and athletic activity for recreational and athletic riders. Depending on their reason for riding, cyclists utilize [infrastructure](#) to suit their needs and protect themselves from drivers. Confidence levels also influence where and how people ride. For example:

- Commuters rode defensively and sought out less-trafficked facilities.
- Recreational riders rode solo on paths and in groups on open roads.
- Athletic riders claimed space from drivers by riding in packs while being mindful of group safety.

Video ethnography helps improve the understanding of the different reasons for cycling and those experiences. With this information, planners can provide more accurate maps and overcome pushback from some cyclists by designing infrastructure accordingly—such as providing both a path and bicycle lane along the same corridor to serve various cycling needs.

The article draws on findings from Dr. Iuliano's NITC-funded dissertation, [Pedal the Old Pueblo: A Naturalistic Study on Bicycling in Tucson, AZ](#). His doctoral research project uses the City of Tucson and Pima County, Arizona—a region of low-density development, traditionally focused on the car and now trying to improve [cycling](#) rates—to explore how cyclists interact with other [road users](#) and the built

environment, and how transportation professionals can use that information for better bicycle infrastructure planning.

More information: Joseph Edward Iuliano et al, Where and how Tucsonans ride and implications for cycling infrastructure, *Cogent Social Sciences* (2022). [DOI: 10.1080/23311886.2022.2054127](https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2022.2054127)

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