Bicycle theft has become a tremendous problem on college campuses, and the Brown University campus is no exception. Bicycles and bicycle parts, including seats and "quick release" wheels, are in high demand, and thieves are well-equipped and well-organized.

We have found that in the vast majority of bicycle thefts, bicycles were either unlocked, improperly locked, or locked with inadequate locking devices, such as lightweight cables or chains, or low-quality U-lock devices.

**BICYCLE THEFT MAPPING PROJECT**

In February 2017, Bikes at Brown met with DPS to find the total number of bike racks available on campus for use as that information is a requirement to becoming a [Bicycle Friendly University](#). Brown University is currently the only Ivy League school which is not certified as bicycle friendly. Facilities Management purchases and installs bike racks on campus. FM had an outdated map of bike racks and were unable to provide an accurate count. This provided an opportunity for DPS to gather accurate data on campus for bicycle theft mapping and data driven crime analysis.

Using a data survey collector app for ArcGIS, Kate Felder and Officer Kelly Mitchell set out to collect bike rack location data (latitude and longitude) of all existing bike racks. DPS developed partnership with Earth Sciences to utilize ArcGIS technology – the data is being stored in their secure server. While bike rack data was being collected, metal stickers with numbers assigned from Facilities Management were adhered to each rack for identification for use by the reporting officer. WHY? If someone reports a stolen bike from a street corner (let’s say Waterman and Thayer Streets), there could be bike racks on any of the four corners. To be able to identify the particular rack, DPS can change patrol areas, move camera field of vision, or use internal crime deterrent tactics - but most importantly - accurately identify and map the bike racks which are being targeted. There are currently over 100 bike racks on campus.

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<th>Bicycle Thefts on the Brown Campus – 2016 (red) versus 2017 (green)</th>
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**Bicycle thefts are down 75%**

Comparing October 2016 to October 2017

**LOCATIONS**

Pembroke quad on the North side of campus is being hit most frequently

**TIME**

The majority of reported thefts occurred between 1pm and 6pm EST

**MAKE/MODEL**

TREK is the most frequently stolen bicycle brand
In another significant effort to reduce crime and deter theft, the Department of Public Safety initiated a cable lock exchange program. When you register your bike with DPS, you may trade in your cable lock for a Kryptonite U Lock, free of charge. DPS holds over a eighteen property registration events every year. Bikes which are improperly locked are tagged with *U-Lock or U-Lose* flyers, with information on how to obtain a U-Lock. Since December of 2016, DPS handed out 205 U-Locks. Anyone with a valid Brown ID may register their property and be eligible for a cable lock trade in.

Using the averages of thefts from the past five years, DPS forecasted an upswing in bike thefts at the beginning of the fall semester each year. As of October 31, 2017, bike thefts are down by 75%.

**BICYCLE THEFTS ON THE BROWN CAMPUS**