



**Bicycling** / Moving America Forward

*2008 Edition*



# What's in this Booklet

Bicycling Appeals to All Americans	2
The Key to a Healthier America	3
A Solution for Today's Transportation Challenges	7
A Great Way to Get to School	10
A Force in the American Economy	12
An Activity for a Lifetime	15
The Foundation of Safe, Livable Communities	16
Resources	Back Cover

*“When we make biking and walking safe and accessible, I believe millions more Americans will choose them... thereby making us a healthier, trimmer, more fit nation.”*

Congressman James Oberstar (D-MN), Chairman of the U.S. House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee



Bikes Belong is the national coalition of bicycle suppliers and retailers working together to put more people on bicycles more often. We produced this booklet to highlight bicycling's many benefits.

# How can we make our communities stronger and healthier?

## Bicycling...

- Promotes healthier lifestyles
- Creates jobs and supports independent businesses
- Lowers healthcare costs
- Strengthens family bonds
- Provides a recreational outlet for youth
- Builds closer-knit communities
- Reduces polluting emissions
- Decreases road congestion
- Lessens our dependence on foreign oil

## Bicycling is good for America

Nearly 40% of adults in the U.S. ride bikes, and bicycling is a powerful and influential force in our culture and economy.

Whether you're an elected official, community leader, corporate executive, bicycle supplier or retailer, media representative, or any other American, you should support bicycling. It's fun, healthy, convenient, and good for our country!



**CYCLING IN AMERICA**

**86 million Americans ride bicycles.**

(OUTDOOR INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION)

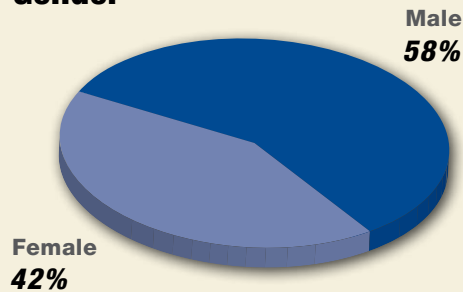
# Bicycling Appeals to All Americans

Bicycling is fun for everyone. Men and women, young and old—Americans all across the country enjoy this safe and healthy activity.

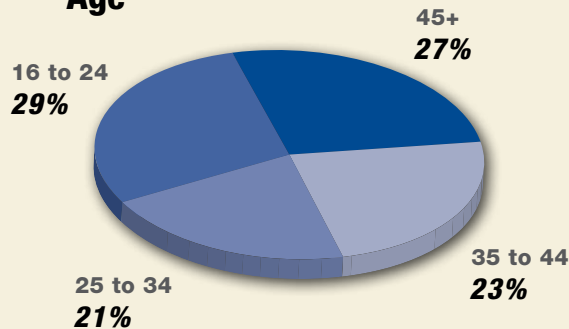
## Adult bicycling demographics\*

(OUTDOOR INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION)

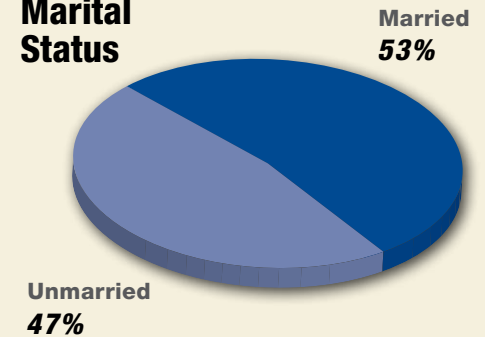
### Gender



### Age



### Marital Status

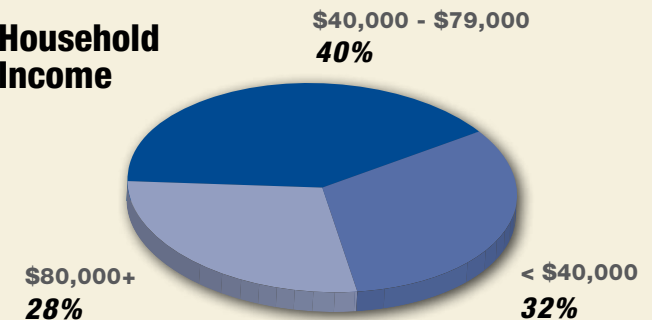


## NUMBER OF BICYCLISTS

The number of Americans who ride bicycles is greater than all those who ski, golf, and play tennis combined.

(NATIONAL SPORTING GOODS ASSOCIATION)

### Household Income



## Cyclists have economic clout

U.S. cyclists who bike frequently have a median income of almost \$60,000.

(2005 SRDS THE LIFESTYLE MARKET ANALYST)

\* From a 2005 survey of cyclists



# The Key to a Healthier America

**Bicycling keeps people healthy.** That's good news given the increasing illness and healthcare costs in the U.S. Sedentary lifestyles are contributing to record levels of obesity and premature death from heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and other weight-related health problems. Active living is the solution.



Bicycling is an inexpensive, convenient way to stay fit and healthy. The annual operating cost of a bike is just 2.5% that of a car.

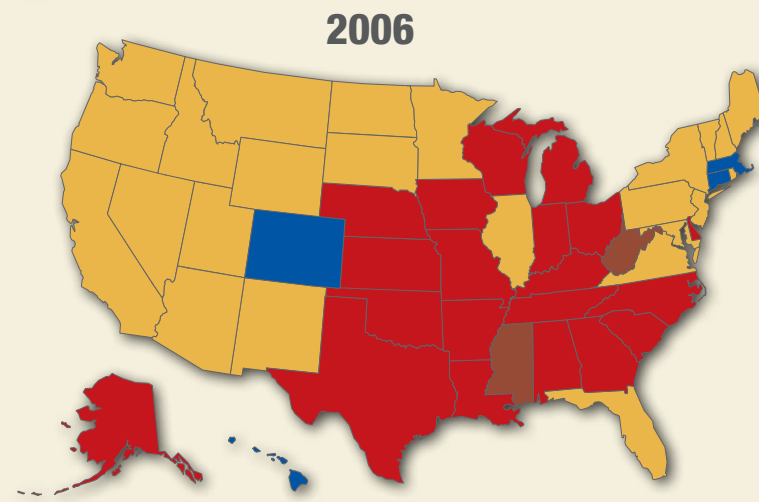
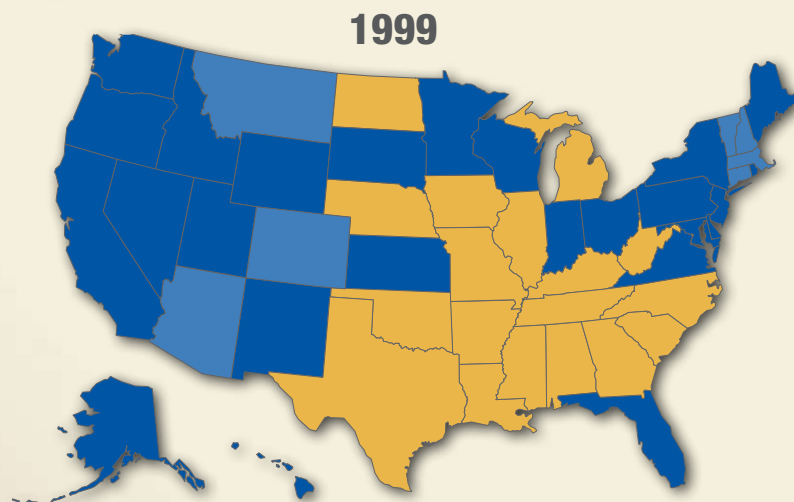
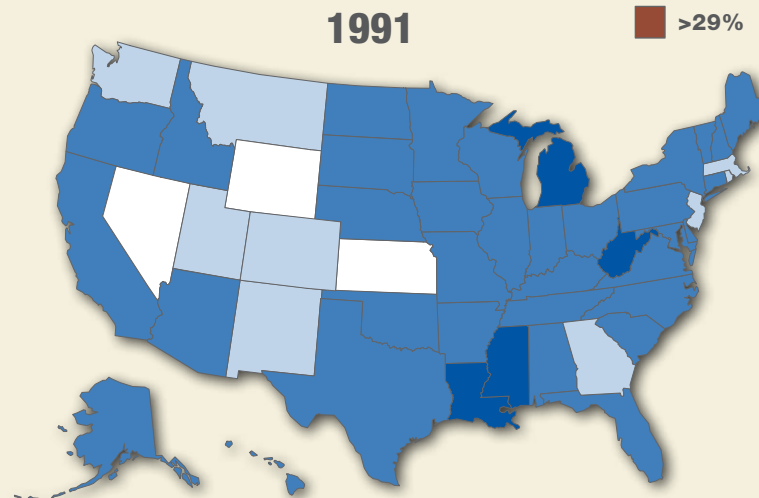
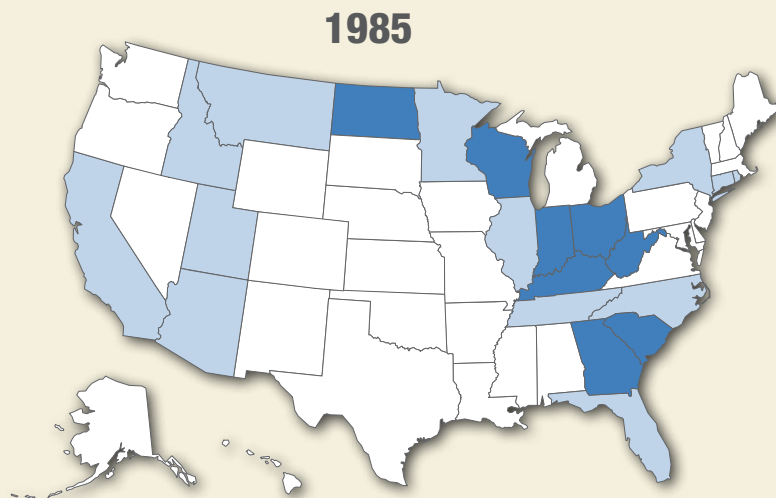
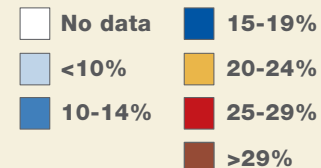
(ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION)  
(AMERICAN PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION ASSOCIATION)



# Obesity is skyrocketing in the U.S.

(CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION)

## Percentage of residents who are obese



*“Bicycling is a great way to be active and stay healthy. It’s an ideal low-impact activity that’s fun for people of all ages in communities across America.”* Melissa Johnson, Executive Director of the President’s Council on Physical Fitness and Sports



## A bike ride a day...

Just three hours of bicycling per week can reduce a person's risk of heart disease and stroke by 50%.

(LEAGUE OF AMERICAN BICYCLISTS)

### OBESITY

**66%**

of American adults are overweight or obese

**75%**

of American adults will be overweight or obese by 2015

**\$117 billion**

Annual cost due to people being overweight or obese in the U.S.

**\$76.6 billion**

Potential annual healthcare savings if Americans were more active

(JOHNS HOPKINS BLOOMBERG SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH)  
(U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES)





## TRAFFIC

**Road congestion delays Americans 4.2 billion hours and wastes 2.9 billion gallons of fuel annually.**

***Total annual cost: \$78.2 billion***

**For each commuting American, this equals 38 hours in traffic and \$710 a year.**

(TEXAS TRANSPORTATION INSTITUTE/  
2007 URBAN MOBILITY REPORT)



Increasing bicycling from 1% to 1.5% of all trips in the U.S. would save 462 million gallons of gasoline each year.  
(CHICAGOLAND BICYCLE FEDERATION)

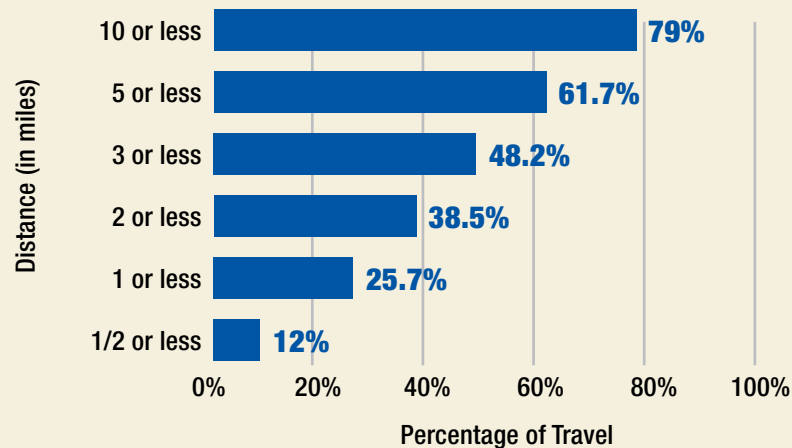


# A Solution for Today's Transportation Challenges

**Bicycling is a convenient, healthy, and inexpensive transportation option.** Yet only 1% of trips in the U.S. are made by bike. We face soaring gas prices, increasing road congestion, rising pollution, and a global warming crisis that threatens our future. Now is the time to embrace bicycling.

## Daily Trip Distances

(2001 NATIONAL HOUSEHOLD TRAVEL SURVEY/BUREAU OF TRANSPORTATION STATISTICS)



Nearly 40% of trips in the U.S. are two miles or less—the perfect length for a bike ride.

38% of all trips are made in single occupancy cars.  
(BUREAU OF TRANSPORTATION STATISTICS)



Someone who bikes four miles round-trip to work instead of driving keeps 51 pounds of carbon monoxide out of the air each year and burns 36,000 calories—the equivalent of 10 pounds of fat.

(SMARTTRIPS)  
(CALORIESPERHOUR.COM)

## Complete streets are safer streets

Too many of our nation's streets are designed solely for cars. Bicyclists and pedestrians struggle to travel safely along important roadways. To solve this, a national effort is underway to promote "complete streets"—roadways that accommodate all users, including bicyclists, pedestrians, automobiles, and public transit.

In Portland, Oregon, a complete streets approach resulted in a 74% increase in bicycle commuting.

(NATIONAL COMPLETE STREETS COALITION)

### COMPLETE STREETS

#### Incomplete street

Roads designed primarily for cars often lack bike lanes and sidewalks. Riding along or crossing the street can be very dangerous.

#### Complete street

The Oregon Department of Transportation illustration below shows how to transform such a road into a complete street. Bike lanes, sidewalks, safety medians, and attractive landscaping make complete streets safe for all users and accommodate traffic more efficiently.



Photos courtesy of Michael Ronkin

## Bike-sharing programs on a roll

Automated bike rental systems are an innovative way to make bicycles accessible for everyone. They're proving popular worldwide. The Paris system, Vélib, debuted in July 2007, bringing thousands of bikes to the city for residents and visitors to use for short trips.

U.S. mayors are inspired by the success of this program and others in Lyon, Barcelona, Vienna, Berlin, and elsewhere in Europe. Several U.S. cities are working to develop similar systems. Washington, D.C., launched a pilot in May 2008.



Photos on this page © Vélib/Mairie de Paris

Paris' Vélib system includes 20,600 bikes distributed among 1,451 stations throughout the city. In the first six months, people took the bikes on 13.4 million trips—an average of 75,000 trips per day.





# A Great Way to Get to School

**Bicycling is a healthy, fun way for kids to get to school.** Children who ride to class are active and independent, arrive energized and happy, and are more focused on schoolwork during the day. Yet the number of kids who bike to school has dramatically declined in the last 30 years. A nationwide initiative called Safe Routes to School is working to reverse this trend.

In 2005, Congress authorized \$612 million for the first national Safe Routes to School program. Since then, communities throughout the country have been working to enhance walking and biking to schools through infrastructure improvements, traffic control, education, community involvement, and encouragement programs.

## RUSH HOUR

**As much as 20–30% of morning traffic is parents driving their kids to school.**

(TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY OF MARIN)

## KIDS

**Kids need safe routes to bike to school. In just one generation, the percentage of children who walk or bike to school has dropped 75% while the number of overweight children has tripled.**

(AMERICA BIKES, NATIONAL CENTER FOR HEALTH STATISTICS)

A 2007 analysis of California schools showed that Safe Routes to School infrastructure improvements increased biking and walking to school by up to 200%.

(CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION)



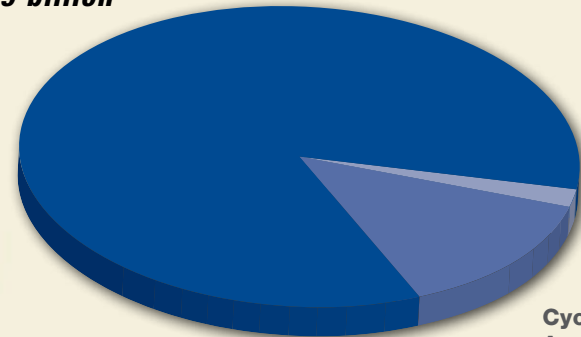
# A Force in the American Economy

The bicycle industry in America is strong and diverse, building momentum every year. A major contributor to the U.S. economy, it employs close to 100,000 people in research and development, manufacturing, distribution, retail sales, service, and tourism.

## A \$5.8 billion industry

(NATIONAL SPORTING GOODS ASSOCIATION)

Bicycle &  
Accessories Sales  
**\$4.9 billion**



Cycling  
Footwear Sales  
**\$50 million**

Cycling  
Apparel Sales  
**\$819 million**



Photo courtesy: Vail Resorts/Leisa Gibson



## Summer business for ski areas

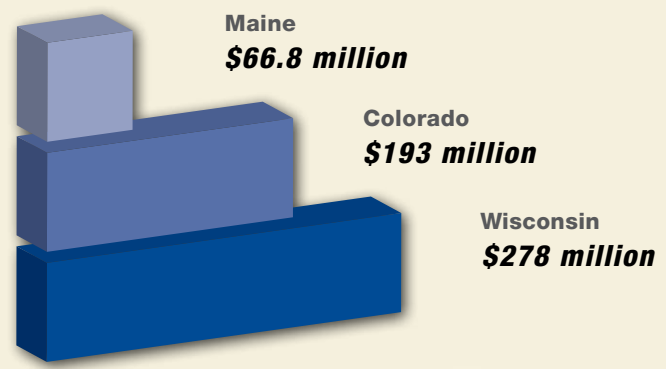
161 U.S. ski areas open trails to mountain bikers in the summer, and 84 run lifts for cyclists.  
(NATIONAL SKI AREAS ASSOCIATION)

## Bike paths boost property values

Properties next to the Mountain Bay Trail in Wisconsin sell faster and for an average of 9% more than similar lots away from the trail.  
Homes near the Monon Trail in Indiana command selling prices 11% higher than other homes in the area.  
Property sale studies conducted in other parts of the U.S. confirm this trend.  
(BROWN COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION)  
(CENTRAL INDIANA CENTER FOR URBAN POLICY AND THE ENVIRONMENT)

## Bicycle tourism generates big money

Estimated annual impact of bicycle tourism in select states.



(MAINE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION)  
(COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION)  
(BICYCLE FEDERATION OF WISCONSIN)





## BICYCLE SALES

**In 2005, U.S. consumers bought 19.8 million bicycles. That's 4.4 million more than all the cars and trucks purchased in the U.S. that year.**

(NATIONAL BICYCLE DEALERS ASSOCIATION, BUREAU OF TRANSPORTATION STATISTICS)



Approximately 4,600 specialty bike dealers do business in the U.S. These independent shops are community hubs, providing personalized service, sponsoring local events, and spearheading efforts to build bike facilities.

***“With several important U.S. bicycle companies here in Wisconsin, the bicycle industry is critical to our state’s economy. It provides nearly 3,500 jobs and generates upwards of \$834 million for our economy.”***

Jim Doyle, Governor of Wisconsin



# An Activity for a Lifetime

**Bicycling improves quality of life.** It gets you outside, relieves stress, makes you feel better, and creates a way to spend time with family and friends. Best of all, it's convenient, flexible, and free. Whether for recreation, transportation, or competition, bicycling offers a lifetime of health and fun.

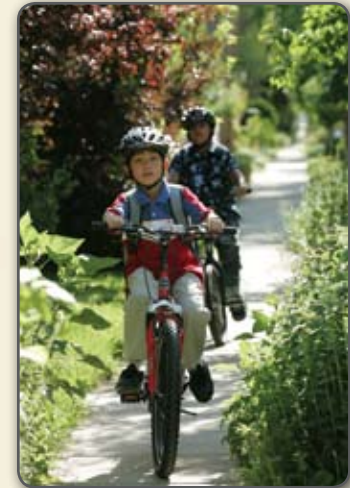


Bicycling is gentle and low-impact, making it an enjoyable, pain-free activity for everyone from ages 3 to 93.

A child's first pedal strokes are an unforgettable rite of passage.

# The Foundation of Safe, Livable Communities

**Bicycling is a strong link in the chain of healthy communities.** Cyclists travel at a slower pace, interact with neighbors, and experience their neighborhoods firsthand. Bicycle commuting is a positive alternative to garage-highway-garage journeys that isolate commuters and clog roads. More cycling means less traffic, cleaner air, and fewer accidents.



Since 1991, federal transportation money has funded more than 8,000 bicycle and pedestrian projects and helped build more than 20,000 miles of shared-use paths.

(AMERICA BIKES)



79 million Americans think that bikeways, walking paths, and sidewalks are very important in choosing where to live.

(BUREAU OF TRANSPORTATION STATISTICS)





## ATTITUDES

**52% of Americans**  
would like to bike more

**46% would bike**  
to work if designated  
trails were available

**53% favor**  
increased federal  
spending on bike facilities

(AMERICA BIKES)  
(TRAILS AND GREENWAYS CLEARINGHOUSE)  
(AMERICA BIKES)

Now is the time  
for **America**  
to invest in bicycling.  
We will all benefit.

# Resources

Bicyclists across the country are working together to promote cycling, share resources, and support the bicycle industry. Please contact the following organizations for more information.

## Adventure Cycling Association\*

adventurecycling.org  
Inspires people of all ages to travel by bicycle for fun, fitness, and self-discovery.

## Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals\*

apbp.org  
Promotes excellence in the professional discipline of pedestrian and bicycle transportation.

## Bicycle Product Suppliers Association

bpsa.org  
Association of bicycle, parts, accessories, and service suppliers who serve specialty bicycle retailers.

## Bikes Belong\*

bikesbelong.org  
The coalition of bicycle suppliers and retailers working to put more people on bicycles more often.

## International Mountain Bicycling Association\*

imba.com  
Creates, preserves, and enhances trail opportunities for mountain bikers worldwide.

## League of American Bicyclists\*

bikeleague.org  
National organization promoting bicycling for fun, fitness, transportation, and work through advocacy and education.

## National Bicycle Dealers Association

nbda.com  
National trade organization of specialty bicycle dealers.

## National Center for Bicycling & Walking\*

bikewalk.org  
Aims to create bicycle-friendly and walkable communities.

## National Complete Streets Coalition

completestreets.org  
Promotes complete streets policies, which create roads that safely accommodate all users, including bicyclists, pedestrians, automobiles, and public transit.

## Rails-to-Trails Conservancy\*

railtrails.org  
Works to create a nationwide network of trails from former rail lines and connect corridors to build healthier places for healthier people.

## Safe Routes to School National Partnership

saferoutespartnership.org  
A network of hundreds of groups sharing best practices, securing funding, and providing education to agencies that implement Safe Routes to School programs.

## Thunderhead Alliance\*

thunderheadalliance.org  
National coalition of bicycle and pedestrian advocacy organizations working to break down barriers to safe bicycling and walking in North America.

\* Member of the America Bikes coalition (americabikes.org)

*The elegant and efficient bicycle will strengthen our families and communities, free us from congested roads, rescue us from health problems, and encourage our spirits to soar.*



**Bikes Belong**<sup>™</sup>  
COALITION

*Putting More People On Bicycles More Often*

P.O. Box 2359  
Boulder, Colorado 80306  
Ph 303/449-4893 • Fax 303/442-2936  
bikesbelong.org