



## Research Summary – Economic Benefits

### Economic Benefits of Trails and Greenways

[http://www.railstotrails.org/resources/documents/resource\\_docs/tqc\\_economic.pdf](http://www.railstotrails.org/resources/documents/resource_docs/tqc_economic.pdf)

**Source:** Rails to Trails Conservancy, 2003

**Subject:** Multiple Trail and Greenway Projects across the US

**Findings:**

- The Mineral Wells to Weatherford Trail near Dallas, TX attracts approximately 300,000 people annually and generates local revenues of \$2M.
- Visitors to Ohio's Little Miami Scenic Trail spend an average of \$13.54 per visit just on food, beverages, and transportation to the trail. In addition, they spend an estimated \$277 per person each year on clothing, equipment, and accessories to use during these trail trips. The total economic development impact is impressive, considering there are an estimated 150,000 trail users per year.

### The Economic Impact of Investments in Bicycle Facilities – Study Overview

[http://www.ncdot.gov/bikeped/download/bikeped\\_research\\_EIAoverview.pdf](http://www.ncdot.gov/bikeped/download/bikeped_research_EIAoverview.pdf)

**Source:** North Carolina Department of Transportation, 2004.

**Subject:** The Outer Banks of North Carolina

**Findings:**

- A conservative estimate of the annual economic impact of bicyclists is \$60 million.
- The annual economic impact of cyclists is almost nine times as much as the one-time expenditure of public funds to construct special bicycle facilities in the region.
- 1,400 jobs are created or supported annually with the expenditures made by bicyclists.
- Almost half of surveyed bicyclists earn more than \$100,000 annually and 87% earn more than \$50,000. Forty percent have a Masters or Doctoral degree and an additional 38% reported completion of a college degree.

### Pine Creek Rail Trail 2006 User Survey and Economic Impact Analysis

[http://www.railstotrails.org/resources/documents/resource\\_docs/RTC\\_PineCreekGuide\\_web.pdf](http://www.railstotrails.org/resources/documents/resource_docs/RTC_PineCreekGuide_web.pdf)

**Source:** Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, 2006

**Subject:** Pine Creek Trail, North Central PA

**Findings:**

- Trail usage estimates ranged from 95,428 to 138,227 visitors annually.

- Based on surveys and analysis, trail visitors annually spent between \$4.8M and \$7.0M on purchases, food, and lodging in association with their trail visits.

### **Case Study: Mispillion River Greenway**

[http://www.railstotrails.org/resources/documents/resource\\_docs/mispillionRiverGreenway.pdf](http://www.railstotrails.org/resources/documents/resource_docs/mispillionRiverGreenway.pdf)

**Source:** Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, 2005

**Subject:** Mispillion River Greenway, Milford, DE

#### **Findings:**

- The greenway and related streetscape projects have inspired downtown reinvestment. According to the local Chamber of Commerce, Milford has demonstrated a net gain in new businesses with annual retail sales figures exceeding \$200M over the past ten years.
- More than 250 people now work in downtown offices, stores, and restaurants.

### **Case Study: Mineral Belt Trail**

[http://www.railstotrails.org/resources/documents/resource\\_docs/MineralBeltTrail.pdf](http://www.railstotrails.org/resources/documents/resource_docs/MineralBeltTrail.pdf)

**Source:** Rails to Trails Conservancy, 2001

**Subject:** Mineral Belt Trail, Leadville, CO

#### **Findings:**

- In the months following the trail's opening, Leadville reported a 19 percent increase in sales tax revenues.
- Owners of restaurants and lodging facilities report that they are serving customers who have come into town specifically to ride the trail.
- The Mineral Belt Trail has helped Leadville prevent an economic recession by contributing to the town's revitalization efforts and successful development as a recreational and tourism destination.

### **Case Study: Greenway Trail**

[http://www.railstotrails.org/resources/documents/resource\\_docs/GreenwayTrail.pdf](http://www.railstotrails.org/resources/documents/resource_docs/GreenwayTrail.pdf)

**Source:** Rails to Trails Conservancy

**Subject:** Greenway Trail, Maryville to Alcoa, TN

#### **Findings:**

- The trail has encouraged major corporations to relocate to Maryville. After considering several cities, Ruby Tuesday, Inc. moved its Restaurant Support Center to a site adjacent to the trail. Chairman and CEO Samuel E. Beall, III, stated: "I was very impressed with the beauty of the park, which helps provide a sense of community to this area, as well as the many benefits it provides to our more than 300 employees.
- In recognition of the many health, educational, and travel benefits the Greenway Trail offers, Blount Memorial Hospital, Alcoa, Inc, and other businesses have donated more than \$300,000 worth of funds and easements to enhance the trail.

### **Case Study: Silver Comet Trail**

[http://www.railstotrails.org/resources/documents/resource\\_docs/SilverComet.pdf](http://www.railstotrails.org/resources/documents/resource_docs/SilverComet.pdf)

**Source:** Rails to Trails Conservancy, 2003

**Subject:** Silver Comet Trail, Cobb, Paulding, & Polk Counties, GA

**Findings:**

- The trail and its associated businesses are attracting a growing number of visitors to the town of Rockmart. Just one year after the Silver Comet began bringing trail users directly into downtown, Mayor Curtis Lewis was quoted in the May 6, 2002 edition of the Atlanta Journal-Constitution as saying: "In the last 12 months, we've had more tourists than in the last 30 years. Before, there wasn't anything to bring them here."
- Residential developers are recognizing the value of the Silver Comet Trail as an attraction for prospective homeowners. For example, a community of 322 homes is being constructed adjacent to the trail in Dallas, GA. The developer also plans to construct a community trail that will connect to the Silver Comet Trail.

### **Frankie's a Favorite Spot along the Silver Comet Trail**

<http://saportareport.com/blog/?p=934>

**Source:** Saporta Report, 2009

**Subject:** Silver Comet Trail in Rockmart, GA

**Findings:**

- It was quickly apparent that her restaurant has become one of the main attractions along the Silver Comet Trail. Nearly every inch of the restaurant's walls are taken up with people's signatures and photographs marking their stops at Frankie's Italian Restaurant.
- For me, the best part of going to Frankie's was seeing that she had made it. When we had spoken several years ago, her business was fragile and she wondered whether the gamble to put a restaurant along the Silver Comet Trail would pay off. It has. Not just for Frankie, but for all the people in Rockmart who have seen that a beautiful bicycle trail can help transform a town.

### **Case Study: Great Allegheny Passage**

[http://www.railstotrails.org/resources/documents/resource\\_docs/GreatAlleghenyPassage.pdf](http://www.railstotrails.org/resources/documents/resource_docs/GreatAlleghenyPassage.pdf)

**Source:** Rails to Trails Conservancy, 2000

**Subject:** Great Allegheny Passage, Pittsburgh, PA to Cumberland, MD

**Findings:**

- According to a 1998 ATA economic-impact study, the direct economic impact of the Great Allegheny Passage exceeded \$14M a year, even though the trail was only half finished at that time. The study, based on surveys of trail users and local businesses,

recorded more than 350,000 visitor trips on the trail each year with users spending \$12.01 to \$15.33 per person per trip.

- In the Allegheny County town of Boston, the high volume of trail users encouraged some local residents to become entrepreneurs. In 1998, four new trail-oriented businesses opened in Boston, including bike rentals, restaurants, a bed-and-breakfast, and a novelty shop.

### **Bicyclists Bring Business: A Guide for Attracting Bicyclists to New York's Canal Communities**

[http://www.ptny.org/pdfs/canalway\\_trail/b3/Bicyclists\\_bring\\_business.pdf](http://www.ptny.org/pdfs/canalway_trail/b3/Bicyclists_bring_business.pdf)

**Source:** Parks & Trails New York, the New York State Canal Corporation, & the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor, 2010

**Subject:** The Erie Canalway Trail in New York

**Findings:**

- Bicycling is the second most common form of outdoor recreation in the U.S., according to a study by the Outdoor Foundation, with 60 million Americans enjoying the activity.
- More Americans bicycle than golf, ski and play tennis combined.
- In 2008, cyclists took more than 2.6 billion bike outings, averaging 62 outings per bicyclist.
- American consumers purchase 19 million bicycles each year, 20% more than cars and trucks combined and 25 times more than boats.
- We estimate those who take long-distance, multi-day bicycling vacations spend between \$100 and \$300 per day on food, lodging, and other items, with "credit card cyclists" typically near the upper end of this range. A group of six cyclists, therefore, each spending \$250 per day on, say, a seven-day trip would leave behind \$10,500 along their path.

### **Greenways & Trails: Bringing Economic Benefits to New York**

[http://www.ptny.org/pdfs/greenways/publications/economic\\_benefits.pdf](http://www.ptny.org/pdfs/greenways/publications/economic_benefits.pdf)

**Source:** New York Parks & Conservation Association & the Business Council of New York State, Inc, 2010

**Subject:** Numerous Trails Nationwide

**Findings:**

- Findings of a study of owners of businesses adjacent to the Cape Cod Rail Trail in Massachusetts:
  - 60% said the trail was a prominent factor in their expansion
  - 53% said revenue from trail users made up more than 10% of their business
  - 24% said the trail played a part in their decision to open their business
- The downtown of Dunedin, Florida suffered a 35 percent storefront vacancy rate in 1992. Then, an abandoned CSX railroad track became the Pinellas Trail. Now, storefront occupancy is 100 percent and there's a waiting list for available space.
- For peak-season, hotel rooms along Wisconsin's 32-mile Elroy-Sparta State Park Trail are booked up to a full year in advance. A state study revealed that the average

visitor travels 228 miles to get to the trail, bringing substantial "new" money into Wisconsin.

- Marthasville, a small, quiet town in Missouri, has taken on new life since the Katy Hiking and Biking Trail was completed. More than a dozen new businesses have opened and renewed civic pride has led to numerous beautification projects. A user survey of the western half of the Katy Trail showed it generated an estimated \$3 million annually in local revenue.
- Connellsville, Pennsylvania used to be a town with many vacant buildings. According to the Greater Connellsville Chamber of Commerce, vacant buildings are scarce since the opening of the Yough River Trail. Many professionals are moving into downtown and a newly formed Connellsville Festival Committee is busy organizing events.
- Instead of burying a river that ran through downtown San Antonio in Texas, as one plan suggested, the City made it into a park. Today, the San Antonio Riverwalk trail system is lined with successful shops, restaurants, hotels, and a mall, and is now the second largest tourist attraction in San Antonio. In Vermont, statistics show that tourists stay an average of one day longer in Stowe than in other resort areas in the state; this extra day and revenue are attributed to the Stowe Recreation Path, a 5.5 mile multi-use trail.