



Research Summary – Transportation

Active Transportation for America: The Case for Increased Federal Investment in Bicycling and Walking

http://www.railstotrails.org/resources/documents/whatwedo/atfa/ATFA_20081020.pdf

Source: Bikes Belong and the Rails to Trails Conservancy, 2008

Subject: Business case for investments in walking and bicycling as more cost-effective transportation options for short trips.

Findings:

- Half of the trips in America can be completed within a 20-minute bike ride, and a quarter of trips are within a 20-minute walk. Yet, the vast majority of these short trips are taken by automobile.
- Analysis concludes that modest increases in bicycling and walking could lead to an annual reduction of 70 billion miles of automobile travel. More substantial increases could lead to the avoidance of 200 billion miles per year.
- This volume of decreased auto travel is equivalent to cutting oil dependence and greenhouse gas emissions from passenger vehicles by 3 percent (Modest Scenario) to 8 percent (Substantial Scenario).
- Modest increases in bicycling and walking for short trips could provide enough exercise for 50 million inactive Americans to meet recommended activity levels, erasing a sizeable chunk of America's activity deficit.
- The financial value of improved mobility, fuel savings, greenhouse gas reductions, and health care savings amounts to more than \$10 billion annually under our Modest Scenario. For the Substantial Scenario, benefits would add up to more than \$65 billion every year. These benefits dwarf historic spending for bicycling and walking which was \$453 million per year for 2005–2007 under SAFETEA-LU, and a mere \$4.5 billion cumulative federal investment in these modes since 1992, when bicycling and walking first received documentable federal funding.

The Economic Value of Active Transportation

<http://www.rsa.cc/images/EconomicValueOfActiveTransportation.pdf>

Source: Ryan Snyder Associates, LLC

Subject: Economic value derived from designing and building communities that promote walking and biking.

Findings:

- Active transportation and livability should be funded because governments can recover their investment through enhanced tax revenues, and developers can recoup their investment in higher sales or rents.

Designing for Active Transportation

<http://www.activelivingresearch.org/files/transportationrevised021105.pdf>

Source: Active Living Research, 2005

Subject: The effect of community design on levels of walking and biking

Findings:

- An analysis of studies in six communities found that on average, residents in highly walkable neighborhoods took twice as many walking trips as people in less walkable neighborhoods. Most of the increase was increased walking for errands or to go to work.
- 56 percent of residents in traditional neighborhoods walked to nearby commercial areas, versus 33 percent of those living in suburban neighborhoods.
- Regardless of their stated travel preferences, people in higher-density areas with pedestrian-friendly characteristics such as sidewalk continuity and street connectivity took more non-work trips by foot.

Bicycling and Walking in the United States: 2010 Benchmarking Report

<http://peoplepoweredmovement.org/site/images/uploads/2010%20Benchmarking%20FINAL%201.25.09-Web.pdf>

Source: Alliance for Walking and Biking, 2010

Subject: Nationwide study of walking and bicycling in all 50 states and the 51 largest cities of the US.

Findings:

- Georgia ranks in the bottom third for three of five benchmark categories measured and in the middle third for the other two.
 - On overall levels of walking and biking, Georgia ranked 47th.
 - On safety levels, based on fatality rates, Georgia ranked 42nd.
- While overall numbers of bicycle and pedestrian fatalities are declining, pedestrians and bicyclists are still at a disproportionate risk for being a victim of a traffic fatality.
 - While just 8.7% of trips in the US are by foot and 0.9% are by bicycle, 11.3% of traffic fatalities are pedestrians and 1.8% are bicyclists.
 - In major US cities, 4.8% of trips are by foot and 0.8% are by bicycle, yet 26.5% of traffic fatalities are pedestrians and 3.0% are bicyclists.
- The number of people who bicycle to work has increased steadily, rising 29.8% between 1990 and 2007 from 466,856 to 664,859 people who bicycle to work nationwide. The share of commuters who bicycle to work has risen slightly from 0.4% nationwide in 1990 and 2000 to 0.5% today.

Trails and Greenways for Livable Communities

http://www.railstotrails.org/resources/documents/resource_docs/tgc_fs_livable.pdf

Source: Rails to Trails Conservancy

Subject: The effects of sprawl on America's cities and the benefits of livable communities

Findings:

- Uncontrolled, scattered development in the last half of the 20th century led to farmland and other open spaces being paved over at an alarming rate:
 - Although the population of the Cleveland metropolitan area fell by 11% from 1970 to 1990, developed land increased by 33%.
 - Between 1970 and 1990, the population of Chicago's metropolitan area grew by a mere 4%, while developed land increased by 46%.
- Sprawl leads to inefficient transportation systems:
 - A 1998 study found that children living in scattered developments spend the equivalent of 24 school days commuting to and from school each year.
 - According to estimates from the Texas Transportation Institute, in major metropolitan areas across the country, the annual cost of congestion per capita resulting from low-density development is \$650.

How Much Does It REALLY Cost You to Drive?

<http://www.commutesolutions.org/tcod.html>

Source: Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission

Subject: Direct and indirect costs of travelling by automobile

Findings:

- Right away most people think of the obvious costs: purchasing and maintaining a car, gas, oil, insurance, registration, parking, and tolls. Many people also know that other costs associated with automobiles are paid for by taxpayers, like highway construction and maintenance. Since those fees don't come directly from a driver's pocket, they aren't usually considered as costs of driving. However, indirect costs are very real, along with other hidden environmental and social costs that drivers and non-drivers alike pay to support our primary mode of transportation – the automobile.
- To make these costs even more relevant to you, each cost has been broken down into a cost per mile basis in our True Cost of Driving [calculator](#). After including these costs, it quickly becomes clear that driving a car is much more expensive than you may think. In fact, the *true* cost of driving (as of 5/4/10) is about **\$1.36 per mile!**