

Economic Benefits of Bicycling

SUPPORTING BICYCLISTS AND BICYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE IS
GOOD FOR THE (LOCAL) ECONOMY

Ralph Buehler, PhD, Professor and Chair Urban Affairs and Planning, Virginia Tech

Cycling is very sustainable

Environmentally friendly:

- > Virtually no pollution at all
- > Almost no nonrenewable resources used

Socially sustainable:

- > Financially affordable
- > Physically possible for most
- > Physical, mental, and social health benefits from physical activity

Economical:

- > Low private and public costs
- > Improved health from cycling can reduce medical costs for individuals and society



Economic Benefits of Cycling

- Public Health
- Environmental Benefits
- Traffic Impacts
- Bicycle Industry
 - Manufacturing
 - Wholesale
- Bicycle infrastructure
- Businesses
 - Tourism
 - Sales
- Savings for households/individuals
 - Health care
 - Car transport



Some Findings from the Literature

- Cycling is associated with consumer spending
 - cyclists spend less per trip than drivers, but shop more frequently
- Cycling infrastructure, traffic calming, and investments in walking environments are effective at attracting customers
- Bikesharing can generate new travel and spending
- Regions and cities which support bicyclists and the bike infrastructure report economic benefits for homeowners, businesses and consumers through increased job creation, increased economic activity, and savings in transportation and healthcare costs



Traffic Impacts

Space Required to Transport 48 People



Car



Electric Car



Autonomous Car



Bus



Bike

Source: <https://samim.io/p/2020-07-23-space-required-to-transport-48-people/>

Infrastructure

Figure 1: Job Creation: Making a Case for Healthy Transportation Investments
Jobs Created Per Million Dollars Spent



Source: American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), Average Direct Jobs by Project Type (2012); jobs in terms of full-time equivalents (FTE)

Summary

- Supporting bicyclists and bicycling infrastructure is good for the (local) economy
- Multitude of benefits for the public, economy, businesses and individuals: health, environment, traffic, jobs, revenue, expenditures



How to make
city cycling
safe and
convenient
for everyone

MIT Press,
464 pages, \$30

Cycling for Sustainable Cities



edited by Ralph Buehler
and John Pucher