



Biking and Walking: Investing Beyond Transportation

Investing in multi-use trails such as the Empire State Trail will provide needed recreation space in communities across the state. It will also benefit the State's tourism industry, promote economic development, and improve New York's health and environment.

TOURISM



Bicycle tourism is a growing industry, with an estimated 60 million recreational cyclists spending almost \$47 billion on meals, transportation, lodging, gifts, and entertainment at the national level.

The Erie Canalway Trail receives 1.6 million visits per year, pumping over \$253 million in much-needed tourism revenue into the dozens of communities across the 360-mile Canalway Trail corridor between Buffalo and Albany.

Each year, tour operators bring thousands of cycling tourists from around the world to New York State to experience our rich history, culture, and scenery from the unique perspective of a bicycle.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Bicycling and walking are job creators: the Erie Canalway Trail supports more than 3,400 jobs and every \$1 million spent on biking and pedestrian projects creates an average 9.6 jobs compared with an average of just 7.8 jobs created by road-only projects.

A recent study from the National Association of Realtors found that 78% of homebuyers considered walkable neighborhoods important when deciding where to live; 56% also considered bike lanes and trails important.

A survey conducted at businesses in New York City's East Village found that bicyclists spend more per capita per week than customers arriving by foot, car, or transit.

HEALTH



Sidewalks and trails promote mental health: walking on trails and in parks reduces anxiety, improves sleep quality, and positively affects cognitive performance.

In 2011 New Yorkers spent almost \$10 billion to combat the effects of adult obesity-related health problems, costing each family in the State an additional \$771 annually.

Only 49% of adult New Yorkers meet physical activity recommendations. One of the most cost-effective ways to improve New Yorkers' health is to give them places to walk and bike.

ENVIRONMENT



According to a 2014 report by NYSERDA, transportation is the largest contributor, at 34%, to New York State's overall greenhouse gas emissions. Most trips New Yorkers take each day are within biking and walking distance, suggesting we can reduce our negative effect on the environment by investing more in active transportation.

A large share of New Yorkers cannot or choose not to drive. Investing in biking and walking gives this segment of the population the safety and freedom of mobility we all deserve.

Increasing levels of walking and biking can increase the capacity of our transportation network in a low-cost way while simultaneously preventing urban sprawl and preserving open space.

Trails and greenways can also enhance resiliency and sustainability projects such as coastal area and wetland rehabilitation.