

BICYCLING INTO OUR FUTURE

sustainable, equitable, economical and totally Portland



The Role of the Modest Bicycle in Tackling Tomorrow's Great Challenges ...and Why It Is a Vital Tool in Realizing the Portland We Envision

**Combat Climate Change • Form a Greener Transportation System • Preserve the Environment •
Promote Human Health • Cultivate 20-minute Neighborhoods • Improve Our Quality of Life**

In Portland bicycling is more than just a recreational pastime. It is the City's fastest growing means of transportation for commute trips. In 10 years (1996-2006) the bicycle mode share increased 146%, and in the last 3 years annual growth in bicycling has been exponential. Over the same 10 year span, transit has grown 11% while the drive alone commute trip has declined 5%. Commute mode split for bicycling now ranges between 4.5%-8%, with higher levels closer-in. The Office of the Auditor found that 16% of Portlanders currently use their bicycle as either their primary or secondary means of transportation to work.

CLIMATE CHANGE & THE ENVIRONMENT - *a city that is resilient in the face of climate change, generates less CO₂ emissions, and has a minimal carbon footprint.*

Thirty-eight percent of Oregon's CO₂ emissions are attributed to transportation, which is also the fastest rising source. Bicycling can efficiently serve the 60% of trips in Portland that are 3 miles or less. More than immune to rising fuel prices, bicycling is encouraged by it. The City's and County's goal is to reduce greenhouse gases to 10% below 1990 levels by 2010. Since 2000, we have dropped our emissions down to 1990 levels. Further increases in bicycle mode split have the potential to drop emissions by another 5%. Increased bicycling supports a cleaner environment. In fact, the City of Amsterdam's latest initiative "Cycling to Sustainability" touts how bicycling improves the quality of air and noise in urban areas. A visit to Amsterdam, or any other high bike-use city, provides sensory evidence to this effect.

AFFORDABILITY & ACCESSIBILITY - *an affordable city with changing demographics and access for all to services and resources.*

Bicycling is the most equitable and affordable form of transportation. Every year the City expands and enhances what is already an extensive 270-mile network of bikeways. Portland bikeways connect important neighborhood, civic and employment destinations as well as providing seamless links to the regional transit system. All of Portland's citizens already live within a 20-minute bicycle ride of our existing Regional and Town Centers and Commercial Main Streets.

HUMAN HEALTH - *a city that enhances human health and safety, promotes active lifestyles and safe routes to schools and other neighborhood destinations.*

The growing obesity epidemic is threatening the health of millions of Americans. The Center for Disease Control recommends 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity per day most days of the week. The CDC states that "automobile trips that can be safely replaced by walking or bicycling offer the first target for increased physical activity in communities. Portland is perhaps uniquely positioned among US cities to realize this goal.

ECONOMIC PROSPERITY - *a prosperous city, building on our competitive strengths and our core values of equity and sustainability.*

Portland's "Green Dividend," as identified by local economist Joe Cortright, annually keeps \$800 million circulating through the region's economy that would have otherwise left the region. The condition producing the green dividend? We drive less than the national average, and thus spend a smaller percentage of our household income on transportation than do residents of other US cities. The bicycle, as the least expensive form of vehicular transportation allows Portlanders to spend their money in ways that contribute to the vitality of our local economy. In 2006, bicycle-related economic activity contributed an estimated \$100 million and 600 to 800 jobs to the city's economy. Portland's "platinum-level" bicycle-friendly reputation is attracting both tourists as well as new bike-oriented businesses and has encouraged Travel Portland and Travel Oregon to promote bicycle tourism to Portland and the PDC to further develop Portland's burgeoning bicycle industry.

DISTINCT PLACES - *a city that protects and preserves the quality of our neighborhoods and creates other unique and livable places as we accommodate growth.*

Bicycles are distinctly Portland! Since bike trips are local in nature they enable interaction between neighbors, strengthen the riders connection to the community, increase the likelihood of shopping locally, place more "eyes on the street", and contribute to the sense of place. Bicycles function particularly well in compact neighborhoods, where trips are shorter, space is limited, and auto parking is restricted. Lately, the city has focused on developing family-friendly bikeways, called bike boulevards, which appeal to riders of all skill levels. Reducing the negative impacts of traffic on these streets enhances neighborhood livability.

NEW WAYS & MEANS - *a city that develops new ways of achieving public services and investments in a world of changing fiscal conditions.*

Higher fuel prices are encouraging residents to drive less resulting in less gas tax revenue, which is proving an insufficient source of funding to meet our mounting transportation needs. Investing in bicycle infrastructure is a cost-effective means to provide access and mobility. Despite spending less than 1% of Portland's capital transportation budget on bicycle expenditures, the city has achieved a bicycle mode split ranging between 4.5%-8%. Bicycling truly is Portland's best transportation buy.