

# Bicycling and Byways

## Building Biking Destinations



### Why Focus on Bicycling?

Travelers along byways and on long-distance bicycle tours share many of the same motivations; seeing the road less traveled, allowing for easier stops when curiosities are piqued, and enjoying the world at a slower pace of life. In many ways, byways are already ideal destinations for bicycle tourism, though there are considerations that are important to keep in mind to make byways even friendlier for people bicycling.

### Bicycle Tourism and Communities

During the year 2015, bicyclists spent an average of just over \$120 per day when traveling. In total, they generated more than \$14 million in economic activity in Minnesota alone. The US and many states have compiled their own statistics about the economic and health benefits of bicycling. Ensure that bicyclists have safe, secure places to park their bicycles and comfortable facilities to get around town. This is critical to maximizing the amount of time that people spend in your community.

In addition to the economic benefits to communities, people bicycling reduce the number of vehicles traveling through communities, reducing congestion and emissions while also contributing to better health outcomes. Improvements for bicycling also helps local residents access goods and services that may be beyond walking distance, but are easily accessible by bicycle.

### Planning for Bicycling

Basic planning for people bicycling should include the following steps:

1. **Identify Potential Bicycle Destinations.** Looking closely at the places where people will want to bicycle can help to identify where on-or-off-road improvements should be made, including bicycle parking.
2. **Understand Who is Bicycling.** Through conversations with businesses and community leaders, gather information about who bicycles in the

community. Reach out to nearby bicycle clubs to learn about their experience bicycling in the area.

3. **Go for a Ride!** Take a small group of people on a bike ride in the community along your byway. Note where you feel comfortable or uncomfortable, and what causes you to feel that way. Are you able to access your desired destination safely and comfortably? If not, note the reasons why.
4. **Connect with Transportation Partners.** After gathering information, work with the relevant roadway authorities to understand current and future plans for bicycling in the community and what potential improvements could be made.

### Bicycling along the Byway

Things to consider outside of communities along the byway center on providing safe places for people to ride. This can take different forms, but on rural roadways, wide shoulders or shared-use paths are the most common facilities. If rumble strips will be installed on the roadway, consider requesting that the roadway authority install them on the “fog line” to ensure that a larger portion on the shoulder is available for smooth bicycling. Additional amenities frequently common at wayside rests are also helpful for people on long-distance bicycle trips.

#### NSB Foundation Webinar - Bicycle Tourism on Byways

Russ Roca, presenter from the ‘Path Less Pedaled,’ shares the impact of Bicycle Tourism, tips for packaging a bicycle tourism experience and attracting bicyclists to your communities in the NSBF webinar: “Bicycle Tourism on Byways.”

Our recorded webinars are available to NSBF members in our Resource Library, <https://nsbfoundation.com/webinars-access/>

See [nsbfoundation.com](https://nsbfoundation.com) for membership options.

### REFERENCES

**Bicycle Tourism on Byways** (May 2018), nsbfoundation.com, <https://nsbfoundation.com/webinar/bicycle-tourism-on-byways/>

**FHWA Small Town and Rural Design Guide**, Facilities for Walking and Biking. <https://ruraldesignguide.com/>

*Research and writing of this fact sheet, courtesy of Jacob Rueter, Minnesota DOT*