



About the California Bicycle Coalition

The California Bicycle Coalition is a non-profit education and lobbying organization working to improve bicycling conditions throughout the State of California. CBC's mission is to create safe, healthy and livable communities in California by promoting bicycling for transportation and recreation.

Based on its mission, CBC advocates for increased bicycle use, access, safety and education. CBC is a diverse membership-based organization comprised of recreational and commuter cyclists, bicycle related manufacturers, bike shops, law enforcement, environmentalists, transit advocates, and transportation and air quality planners. CBC has a 501(c)3 education branch, and a 501(c)4 lobbying branch.

CBC's General Advocacy Principles

People who bicycle make the world a better place: Bicycling creates healthier, safer and more livable communities. We work to increase the number of people who bicycle.

Bicyclists need good roads: Public roads constitute the primary bicycling network. We strive to ensure that all roads are planned, designed, constructed and maintained so that people can safely and efficiently use them for bicycling.

Trails are important . . . and fun: Trails can add value to communities and increase bicycling opportunities. We support well-designed, off-road multi-use paths for recreation and transportation.

Mountain bicyclists deserve reasonable access: Bicyclists usually can share trails with hikers, equestrians and other users, so we support access to most trails.

Bicyclists need parking facilities: The availability of secure and convenient bike parking at workplaces, schools, stores, transit stations and other destinations is essential.

Bicyclists need multimodal access: Public transit agencies and private transportation companies should provide affordable and convenient space or facilities for carrying bicycles on buses, trains, shuttles, ferries and airplanes.

Bicycling is a skill: Knowing and applying vehicular cycling principles is key to enjoying cycling on public roadways. Public agencies and private organizations should increase the number of Californians who receive vehicular cycling instruction.

The legal system must serve bicyclists: Police officers, judges, juries and attorneys must recognize that people who bicycle are legitimate roadway users deserving of all protections of law afforded to other roadway users. Enforcement of, and penalties for, moving violations should be commensurate with the potential consequences. Public agencies should be held accountable for providing reasonably safe roads and trails for people who bicycle.

Driving is a privilege: Improving the education of motorists regarding cyclists' right to use public roadways and ridding the streets of unlicensed, unskilled or reckless drivers are two imperatives.

Transportation, planning, traffic calming and land-use reforms can benefit bicyclists: An excess of cars and trucks on our public roadways makes bicycling less comfortable and safe than it should be. We support practical attempts to reduce the speed or number of motor vehicles when those efforts demonstrate a clear benefit to bicyclists. We also support land-use planning that makes bicycling safer and more convenient.

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CONTACT

1017 L Street, #288
Sacramento, CA 95814
916-446-7558
F 916-914-2494
www.calbike.org
cbc@calbike.org



Who rides bicycles – and why more people should

Nearly 40% of adults in the U.S. ride bicycles.¹

The 2000 U.S. Census report estimates that approximately 489,000 people use bicycles as their primary means of transportation to work.²

52% of Americans would like to bike more. 46% of Americans would bike to work if designated trails were available. 53% of Americans favor increased federal spending on bike facilities.¹

There are more bicyclists in the U.S. than skiers, golfers and tennis players combined.¹ 78.5 million Americans rode bicycles (on paved roads) in 2006, making bicycling the nation's most popular outdoor activity, ahead of hiking, fishing and camping.³

41% of all trips made in the U.S. are 2 miles or less. 38% of all trips made in the U.S. are in single-occupancy cars.¹

Bicycling in California keeps 7 tons of smog-forming gases and 600 pounds of inhalable particles out of the air *every day*.⁴

Physical inactivity causes numerous physical and mental health problems, is responsible for an estimated 200,000 deaths per year, and contributes to the obesity epidemic.²

The occurrence of obesity in the United States has more than doubled (14.5 percent to 30.5 percent) from the 1970s to 2002. Obesity is a contributing cause of diabetes, heart disease, osteoporosis, some cancers, hypertension and depression.²

Physical activity is linked to academic success, improved mental health and overall well-being.²

The Centers for Disease Control determined that creating and improving places to be active can result in a 25 percent increase in the percentage of people who exercise at least three times a week.²

Walking or bicycling to work and other physical activity performed during your daily commute may reduce the risk of colon cancer. Since an estimated 64 percent of American adults are either overweight or obese, physical activity may be an important method of cancer prevention in the U.S. SOURCE: American Journal of Epidemiology, November 1, 2004.²

Sources

- 1 Bikes Belong Coalition, Boulder, CO www.bikesbelong.org
- 2 California Center for Physical Activity, California Department of Health Services
- 3 Outdoor Industry Foundation
- 4 California Air Resources Board, Air Quality and Transportation Planning Branch



Safety risks to people who ride bicycles for transportation

As noted in the California Strategic Highway Safety Plan, there are limited data on bicyclists relevant to improving roadway safety in California. The data currently available from various federal, state and local sources indicate that while bicycling for transportation involves significant safety risks, adequate infrastructure, education and enforcement can reduce those risks and help ensure that bicycling remains a practical, healthful, economical and environmentally friendly alternative to motor vehicle use for the people of California.

People riding bicycles in California face a disproportionate risk of being killed in a vehicle collision.

Throughout the U.S., people use bicycles for less than 0.9% of all trips (by all transportation modes), yet bicyclists account for 1.7% of all traffic fatalities. In the largest U.S. cities, bicyclists account for 0.94% of all trips and 1.9% of all traffic fatalities.¹

In 2004, 124 people on bicycles died in vehicle collisions in California, 16.1% of the national total. The state's rate of bicyclist deaths (per million population) from vehicle collisions was 23 percent higher than the national rate.² California's bicyclist death rate (2.7%) is the nation's fifth highest, behind that of Hawaii, Florida, Nevada and New York.¹

Among the 50 largest U.S. cities, San Jose has the highest rate of bicyclist fatalities: 8.9% of all traffic fatalities. Fresno ranks second (8.3%).¹

Human behavior is the leading contributor to bicyclist deaths and injuries.

Human behavior is a factor in 93% of all traffic fatalities, while roadway characteristics are a factor in 34% of fatalities. Vehicle characteristics affect 12% of traffic fatalities.²

Vehicle right-of-way violations against bicyclists account for the highest number of vehicle-bicycle collisions each year in San Francisco. Traffic signal/sign violations by motorists and bicyclists are the second most common collision factor.⁴

70% of bicyclist fatalities in vehicle collisions nationwide in 2001 occurred at locations other than intersections.³ In San Francisco, non-intersection bicyclist fatalities were 52% of the total in 2006 and 58% in 2005.⁴

In San Francisco, 69.5% of all bicycle-vehicle collisions in 2006 and 72% in 2005 occurred during daylight hours. The highest incidence of collisions occurred from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. (12%).⁴

Alcohol was a factor in more than one-third of all vehicle collisions nationwide where a bicyclist was killed. In 32% of fatal vehicle collisions, either the motorist or the bicyclist was intoxicated with a blood alcohol level of .08 or higher. In another 8% of fatal crashes, lower measurable blood alcohol levels were reported.³

Children and teens on bicycles face a higher risk of death, but the risk to adults is growing. Males face a much higher risk of death and injury than females.

21% of bicyclists killed in vehicle collisions nationwide in 2001 were between 5 and 15 years old, a fatality rate nearly double that of bicyclists of all ages. Bicyclists age 25 and older made up an increasing proportion of all bicyclist deaths between 1991 and 2001. Overall, 65 percent of fatalities and 81 percent of injuries involved bicyclists between the ages of 5 and 44.³

Males accounted for 91% of bicyclists killed in vehicle collisions in 2001 and 79% of those injured. In 2000 the bicyclist fatality rate per capita was more than 8 times higher for males than for females, and the injury rate per capita for males was nearly 4 times higher than that for females.⁴ These numbers are consistent with the ridership patterns of males and females.

The rate of bicyclist deaths in California is slowly declining.

From 1995 to 2004, the annual number of people on bicycles who died in vehicle collisions in California remained more or less steady, even as population and the total number of traffic fatalities grew. The decline is attributed to mandatory helmet use by children, increased helmet use by adults, the growing number of dedicated bike lanes and paths, more bicycle-friendly neighborhood design, and other prevention efforts.²

U.S. cities with the highest levels of bicycling generally have lower bicyclist fatality rates.²

San Francisco ranks 5th among the 50 largest U.S. cities in percentage of trips to work made by bicycle.³ San Francisco has documented a 19.3% drop in bicycle-related injury collisions from 1998 through 2006, while the number of people bicycling there increased significantly.⁴

California spends disproportionately little on infrastructure, education and enforcement to protect bicyclists and pedestrians from vehicle collisions.

While 20% of all traffic fatalities in California involve people riding bicycles or walking², California spends a far smaller percentage of its annual transportation budget on bicycling and pedestrian infrastructure and education. The federal Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), which requires states to develop a Strategic Highway Safety Implementation Plan, directs states to use their federal dollars strategically to the highest and best use.

Sources

1 *Bicycling and Walking in the U.S.*, 2007 Benchmarking Report, Thunderhead Alliance
<http://thunderheadalliance.org/benchmarking.htm>

2 *California Strategic Highway Safety Plan*, California Business, Transportation & Housing Agency, 2006
<http://www.dot.ca.gov/SHSP/>

3 *Traffic Safety Facts 2001 – Pedalcyclists*, U.S. Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, National Center for Statistics & Analysis
<http://www-nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/pdf/nrd-30/ncsa/tsf2001/2001pedal.pdf>.

4 *2005-2006 San Francisco Bicycle Injury Collision Report*, City and County of San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency, Planning Division, February 2008
http://www.sfmta.com/cms/rbikes/documents/CollisionReportFINAL2_2008.doc



CBC and the Complete Streets Movement

As part of a national movement, the California Bicycle Coalition is leading the way in California to establish Complete Streets policies within state and local government. CBC's efforts focus on working with the California Department of Transportation to implement Complete Streets principles for state highway projects and working with the California Legislature to pass legislation that would bring these same planning principles to bear on city and county roads.

What is a complete street?

A "complete street" is a roadway designed and operated to enable safe access for all users. Pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities must be able to safely move along and across a complete street.

Why do we need complete streets?

More than 50 years of car-first, highways-only transportation planning has resulted in traffic gridlock, polluted air, and reduced levels of physical activity and fitness.

Americans bike and walk

- An estimated 275 million walking trips were made during the summer of 2002
- 15% of all Americans ride a bike six or more days a year
- More than half of older Americans walk regularly

(Source: America Bikes poll)

Americans want to bike and walk more

- Residents are 65% more likely to walk in a neighborhood with sidewalks
- 50% want to bike and walk more than they do now

(Source: Surface Transportation Policy Project poll)

Urban travel patterns are ideal for biking and walking

- 40% of U.S. urban travel is 2 miles or less *(Source: Clif Bar 2 Mile Challenge)*

Benefits of biking and walking

Air quality

Replacing 1% of light duty vehicle trips with bicycling reduces:

- Smog-forming gases by 3.58 tons *per day*
- Inhalable particles by 0.65 tons *per day*
- Carbon monoxide by 20.11 tons *per day*

(Source: California Air Resources Board)

Safety

- Designing intersections for pedestrian travel can reduce pedestrian risk by 28% *(Source: King/Ewing 2003)*
- 42% of motorists stated that bike lanes increased their awareness of bicyclists *(Source: Houston & Seiderman)*

Health

Walking and bicycling help prevent obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure and colon cancer.

For older Californians

- Healthier aging outcomes
- Better quality of life
- Community integration
- Greater independence

For people with disabilities

- Curb cuts and other features for improved access
- Reduced isolation and dependence

Federal guidelines

2000 Federal Highway Administration Guidance: "Bicycling and walking facilities will be incorporated into all transportation projects unless exceptional circumstances exist."

Few states follow this guidance.

California guidelines

Caltrans Deputy Directive 64 (DD-64): "The Department fully considers the needs of non-motorized travelers (including pedestrians, bicyclists and persons with disabilities) in all programming, planning, maintenance, construction, operations and project development activities and products. This includes incorporation of the best available standards in all of the Department's practices."

A recent informal Caltrans audit of 60 state highway project initiation documents showed that half made no reference to bicycle or pedestrian needs. CBC is working with Caltrans to strengthen the bicycle and pedestrian provisions of DD-64.

Proposed California legislation

The California Bicycle Coalition and AARP co-sponsor Assembly Bill 1358 (Leno), the Complete Streets Act. AB 1358 requires the legislative body of a city or county, upon revision of the circulation element of their general plan, to identify how the jurisdiction will provide for the routine accommodation of all users of the roadway including motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, individuals with disabilities, seniors, and users of public transportation.

Learn more about Complete Streets

California Bicycle Coalition
1017 L Street, #288
Sacramento CA 95814
916-446-7558
cbc@calbike.org
www.calbike.org

National Complete Streets Coalition
1707 L Street NW, Suite 1050
Washington, D.C. 20036
202-207-3355
info@completestreets.org
www.completestreets.org



Bicycling and the economy

The U.S. bicycle industry generates about \$6 billion in retail sales, with about 25% or \$1.5 billion in California. 28% of all mountain bikes sold in the U.S. are sold in California.

Californians hold about 25,000 of the nearly 100,000 jobs in the U.S. bicycle industry (includes research and development, manufacturing, distribution, retail sales, service and tourism).

Bicycles outsell cars and trucks in the U.S. every year. About 18.5-20 million bicycles were sold in each of the past three years, compared to 15-15.5 million cars and trucks.

California is home to some of the bicycle industry's leading brands, including Specialized, Giant, Breezer, Haro, Santa Cruz, Electra and KHS.

The size of California's bicycle industry reflects the state's temperate climate and outdoor lifestyle, the substantial investment in bicycling infrastructure, and the presence of major ports in Long Beach and Oakland, which receive a large share of the bicycle components made in Asia for the U.S. market.

Source: Bikes Belong Coalition, Boulder, CO, <http://www.bikesbelong.org>