

Bicycling: An American Tradition

More than 100 years ago, Americans embraced bicycling as a great way to get around. Now, after decades of designing streets for cars, there's a bicycling renaissance underway. As people recognize the benefits of biking for health, the environment, and community, Americans are reclaiming our bicycling history.



1880s

A bicycling craze sweeps the nation & millions of Americans bicycle for fun and to get around.

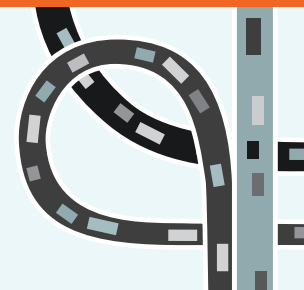
1918

As mass production of cars begins, manufacturers and motorist clubs campaign to redefine the street as a place for cars.



Late 1940s

Federal highway and housing policy leads to an era of suburban sprawl, and communities are built for access by car, not by foot or bicycle.



1970s

The energy crisis leads to a spike in interest in bicycling.



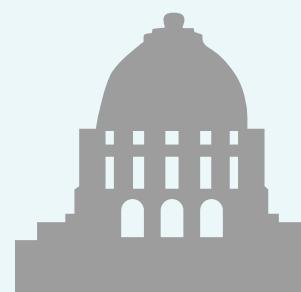
Now

Federal funding for biking and walking is 135 times greater now than in 1990 (from \$6 million in 1990 up to \$808 million in 2013, with a peak of \$1.2 billion in 2009), and the number of trips taken by bicycle has more than doubled. And those numbers look like they'll keep climbing!



1892

With bicyclists leading the way, Congress works to improve dirt and gravel roads, literally paving the way for cars.



1896

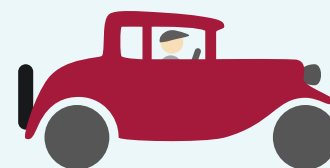
Biking leads to greater independence for women, including the demise of the bustle and corset and the start of more practical clothing.



"I think [bicycling] has done more to emancipate women than any one thing in the world. I rejoice every time I see a woman ride by on a wheel. It gives her a feeling of self-reliance and independence the moment she takes her seat." – Susan B. Anthony

By 1930

Cars are dominant in the battle for ownership of the streets, marginalizing children, "jaywalkers," and bicycles.



2005

The new federal transportation bill funds Safe Routes to School programs in all 50 states, supporting biking and walking infrastructure near schools.



2010

Denver, Minneapolis, and Washington DC kick off the first large-scale bike share programs in the United States, and more than 45 additional cities follow suit.

Share-a-Bike PROGRAM

