



# L.A. BIKE + AND PED COUNT

2013 WHO GETS COUNTED COUNTS

# BICYCLE

*Findings & Recommendations*



LOS ANGELES COUNTY

**BICYCLE  
COALITION**

WWW.LA-BIKE.ORG





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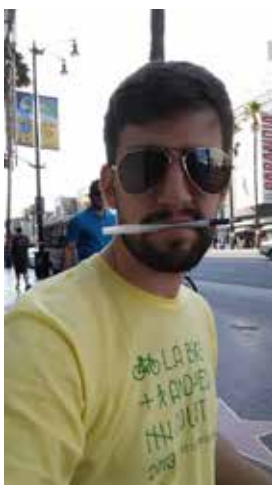
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## Thank You to our Volunteers, Partners and Sponsors!



## Partners:

**Los  
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**UCLA** Luskin School of Public Affairs  
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*The views expressed in this report are solely those of LACBC and not necessarily those of our partners or sponsors.*

**The Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition** is a membership-based, volunteer-driven nonprofit organization that works to make all communities in Los Angeles County into healthy, safe and fun places to ride a bike. Through advocacy, education and outreach, LACBC brings together the diverse bicycling community in a united mission to improve the bicycling environment and quality of life for the entire region. Since 2009, LACBC has been the primary organization conducting regular bicycle and pedestrian counts throughout the City and County of Los Angeles.

**The Los Angeles County Bike Count Data Clearinghouse** at [www.bikecounts.luskin.ucla.edu](http://www.bikecounts.luskin.ucla.edu) is a one-stop repository for bike count data. The Clearinghouse provides guidance on how to do bike counts, and allows users to view, upload, and download bike count data. It is housed at the Lewis Center for Regional Policy Studies and the Institute of Transportation Studies at UCLA and recently received the Award of Excellence for a Communications Initiative from the Los Angeles Section of the American Planning Association.



## Sponsors:



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May 2014

LACBC is excited to release these results from the 2013 Bicycle and Pedestrian Count that we conducted alongside Los Angeles Walks and community partners from across the City of Los Angeles. This count was a massive undertaking, requiring over 400 volunteer shifts at 120 distinct locations throughout the city on multiple days in September 2013. In total, our volunteers counted nearly 18,000 bicyclists over six hours. This report comes three years into the implementation of the 2010 Bicycle Plan and provides a timely progress report on the City's efforts to become more bicycle-friendly.

Since the 2010 Bicycle Plan, Los Angeles has expanded its bicycle network at an unprecedented rate, at one point exceeding 100 lane miles in one year. However, most of these miles have consisted of bike lanes "where they fit" and sharrows where bike lanes don't. The result has been a somewhat fragmented bicycle network primarily designed to avoid impacts to motor vehicle delay rather than designed to meet the needs of people who want to ride a bike. This report makes it clear that where bicycle improvements are made, ridership is up, but that citywide growth is limited by the lack of a connected network of safe bikeways accessible to all Angelenos.

LACBC believes that bicycling should be safe, comfortable and accessible to all who live, work and play in our city. Achieving this goal requires elected officials, city agencies and the public to work together to ensure that our transportation system provides for the safety and mobility of all who travel on our city streets, with special attention to students, seniors and other vulnerable populations. Angelenos overwhelmingly support mobility options: voting to tax ourselves for transit expansion and attending car-free events like CicLAvia in record numbers. Now the City must work to create local mobility options that better serve our diverse neighborhoods every day.

It is our hope that these findings and recommendations will guide policymakers in their efforts to make informed investments in our transportation system. Too often the lack of data has caused transportation agencies to overlook investment in biking and walking. Increased attention to complete streets, safe routes to school and revitalization of our waterways provides an opportunity to integrate these concepts into our planning framework, performance measures and investment decisions. In an era of constrained budgets, it is all the more important to use data to focus investments on the most cost-effective mobility solutions and target those resources to the communities most in need.

Thank you allowing us to share these results with you. We look forward to working together to make Los Angeles a healthy, safe and fun place to ride a bike.



Jennifer Klausner  
Executive Director

# *Findings:*

## Ridership Is Up!

At count locations observed in both 2011 and 2013, overall bicycle ridership increased by 7.5%. Angelenos are demonstrating a strong desire to ride, particularly where the City is investing in safe streets.



**7.5% More Bicycling in 2013 Than 2011**

**2011**

**2013**



Since the 2010 Bicycle Plan, bike lanes have been added to major streets as part of the Backbone Network. Some of these bike lanes were installed by removing a general traffic lane. On streets with before and after data, a 103% increase in bicycling was observed.

## 103% More Bicycling After Bike Lanes Installed on Major Streets

2011

2013

# Bike Infrastructure Works!

Los Angeles has added many miles of Shared Lane Markings, a.k.a. “sharrows,” mostly along minor streets with lower speeds or traffic volumes. On streets with before and after data, a 132% in bicycling was observed. Sharrows likely help bicyclists discover routes they might not otherwise know to take.

## 132% More Bicycling After “Sharrows” Installed on Neighborhood Streets

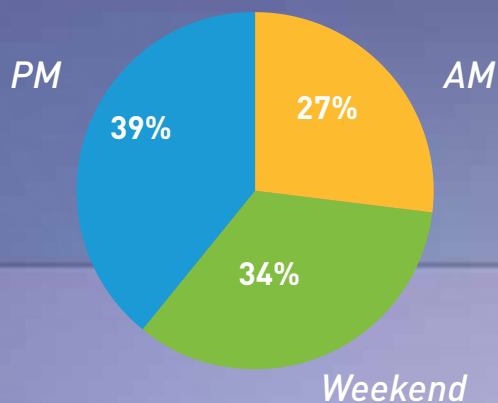
2011

2013





## WHEN PEOPLE RIDE

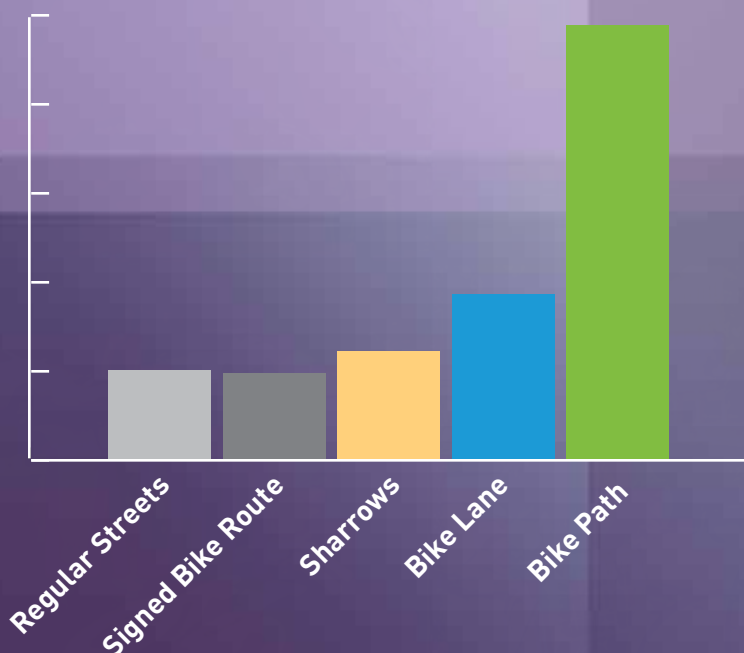


People ride bikes for many reasons and at all times of the day, so it isn't surprising that bicycling is common during both the morning and afternoon commute hours and on weekends. More bicyclists were counted during the afternoon peak period than on the weekend, suggesting that most Angelenos are using bicycles primarily for transportation.



## BICYCLISTS LIKE BIKE FACILITIES

### WHERE PEOPLE RIDE

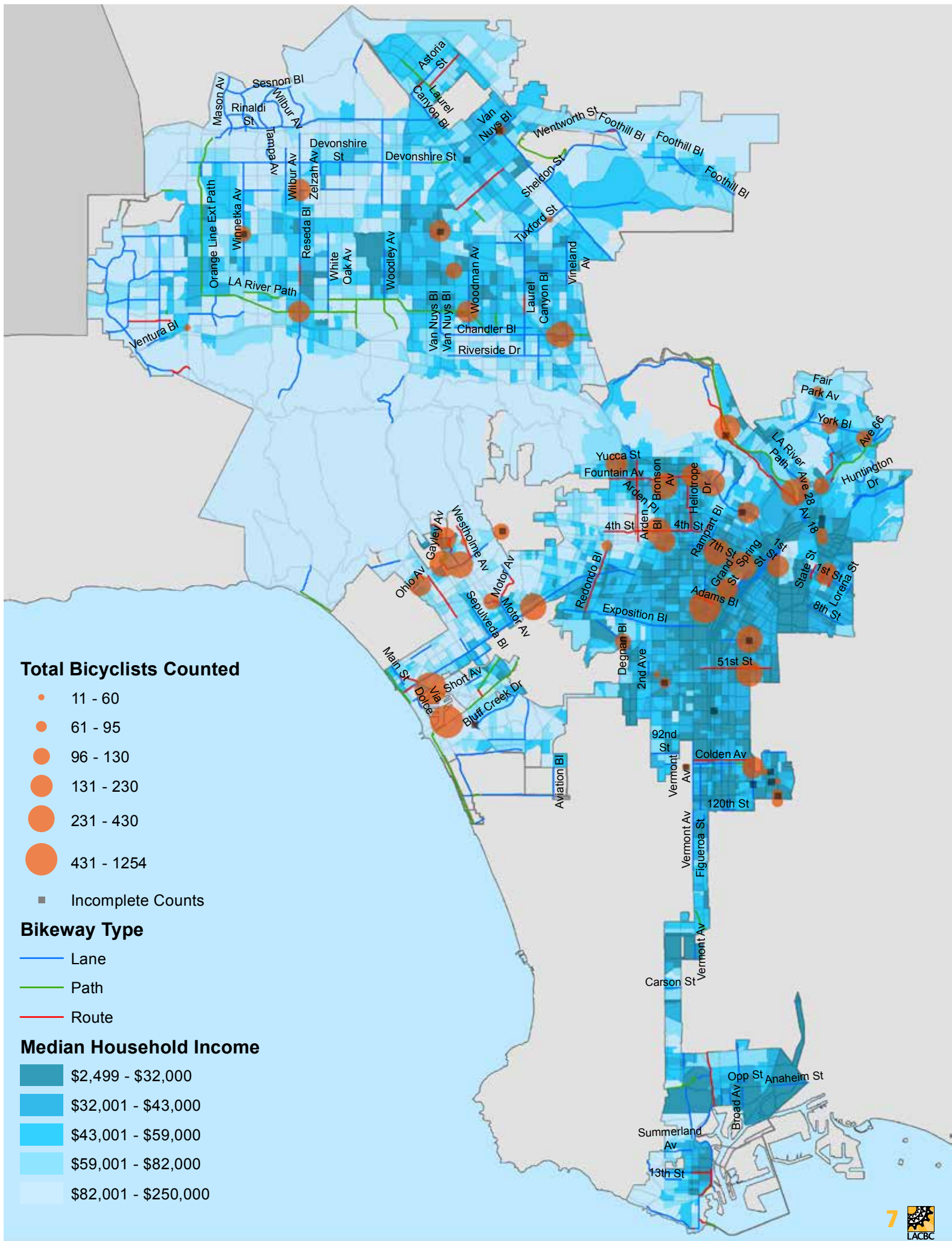


When given an option, bicyclists tend to prefer riding on dedicated facilities. Compared to streets with no bicycle facilities, sharrows are correlated with 22% more ridership, bike lanes 86% more ridership and bike paths 391% more ridership. Signed bike routes with no painted markings are not correlated with increased bicycling.

Bike paths are particularly well loved by Angelenos. Despite accounting for only 8% of count locations, over 25% of bicyclists counted were on paths.

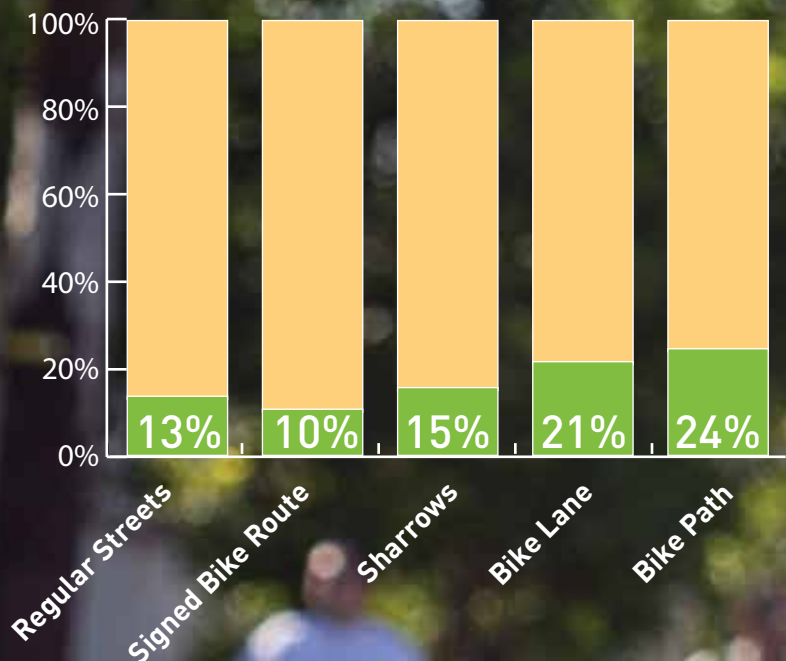
Aside from bike paths, bicycling was highest near universities and in low-income communities, suggesting high rates of people riding for practical or economic reasons.





# Fewer than 1 in 5 Bicyclists are Female

FEMALE RIDERSHIP

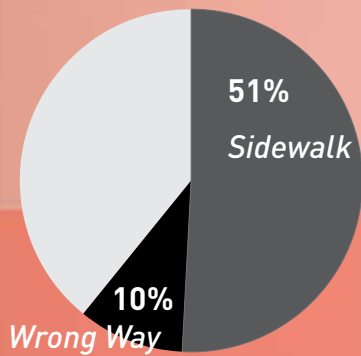


Cities with streets that are safe and comfortable for bicycling tend to have smaller gender disparities in rates of bicycling. When bicycle networks are designed to be both safe and comfortable, people don't need a high risk tolerance to bicycle for everyday transportation.

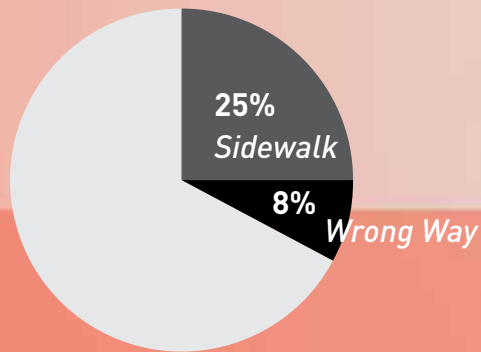
In Los Angeles, the gender disparity is lowest on the highest quality bikeways and highest on streets with no bike facilities at all.



## HOW PEOPLE RIDE



*Regular Streets*



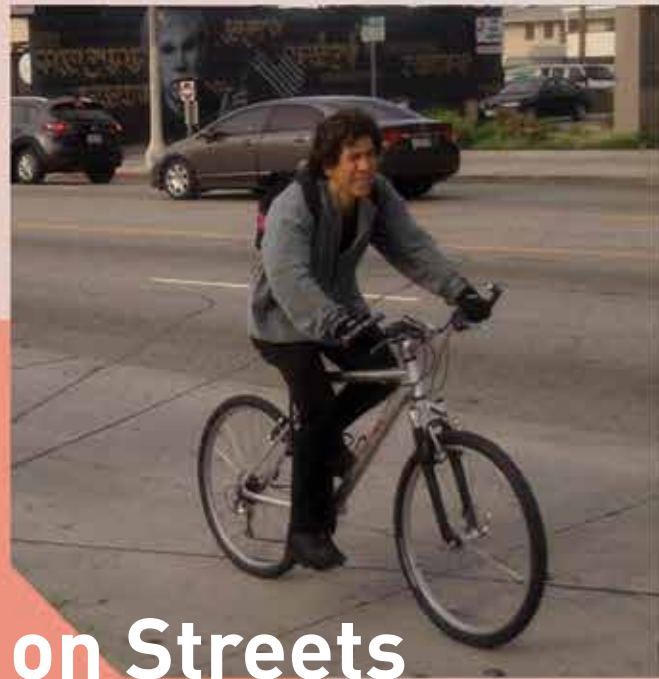
*Streets with  
Bike Lanes*

# People Ride More Safely on Streets Designed for Them

On streets without bicycle facilities,  $\frac{1}{2}$  of people ride on the sidewalk. When streets have bike lanes, only  $\frac{1}{4}$  do.

Less than 1 in 10 bicyclists were observed riding against traffic. Wrong-way riding was most common on streets without bicycle facilities.

54% of bicyclists were observed riding without a helmet. Helmet use is highest on bike paths and mostly-residential streets with sharrows, suggesting that risk-averse people prefer to ride on these facility types.





# Recommendations:

## 1. Design Streets for People of All Ages and Abilities

Bicycling should be safe, comfortable and accessible to all Angelenos, from ages 8 to 80. Adopting an “8 to 80” design standard as part of the City’s Mobility Plan 2035 will expand options for children and families to move around their neighborhoods while protecting our city’s most vulnerable populations.

Streets designed for walking and biking reduce injuries and fatalities, increase physical activity and improve social connections within communities, laying the foundation for a healthier and more prosperous city. Cities all across the country are investing in high-quality bikeways to attract and retain creative talent, as well as provide affordable transportation options.





*Photo by Larry Rich*

Protected Bikeway in Downtown Long Beach



Approved Protected Bikeway in Downtown Los Angeles

## 2. Build a Network of Protected Bikeways

Los Angeles has many iconic boulevards that are excellent candidates for Great Streets. To be truly great, however, streets must be accessible for all. Protected bikeways are the most effective way to create safe and comfortable bike access to business districts.

Protected bikeways are a proven strategy for increasing both bicycle ridership and safety for all street users. They specifically appeal to people who don't otherwise feel comfortable riding in traffic, including women, children and the elderly--the people most likely to currently be riding on sidewalks or not at all.

Protected bikeways provide a boost to local businesses and are an essential component to placemaking along retail corridors. Encouraging bike access unlocks a loyal customer base by making it easier for nearby residents to shop at local businesses.

# 8 to 80

### 3. Build Safe Routes to Everywhere along *Active Streets*

Los Angeles is a city of neighborhoods, allowing people to live, work and play within a short distance from home. Half of all trips in Los Angeles are less than three miles. These are trips to school, shopping, parks and entertainment within neighborhoods. A neighborhood network of *Active Streets* will connect people to these local destinations so that families can explore their communities.

*Active Streets* are places that children can bike, walk and play. These streets use strategic traffic calming to slow speeds and reduce the number of cars to make it safer and more comfortable for people of all ages to walk and bike. *Active Streets* promote healthy lifestyles and strong communities through good design.

Active  
Streets LA

Walk. Bike. Live.

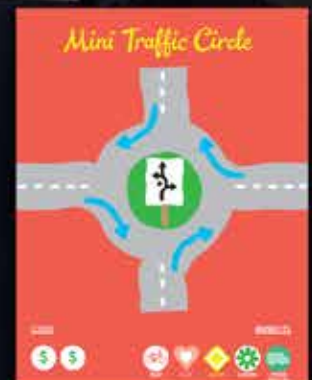
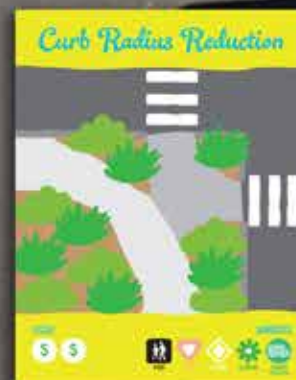
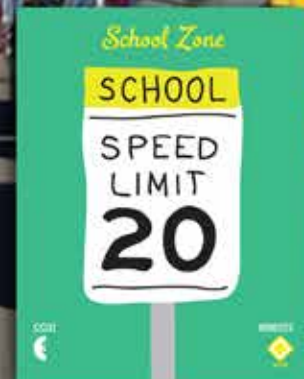




## 4. Engage Communities Directly in Design of Their Streets

*Active Streets L.A.* is also an engagement strategy that facilitates city staff and neighborhood stakeholders working together to solve problems along neighborhood streets. *Active Streets L.A.* aims to empower communities with the language and tools of street design, and then provide opportunities to interact directly with city engineers to apply those tools to improve neighborhood streets for walking and biking.

Understanding that schools are centers of community, *Active Streets L.A.* has successfully piloted strategies to engage school audiences. The City should scale up these efforts as part of the citywide Safe Routes to School Strategic Plan to align outreach with infrastructure improvements and education programs. The City should increase staff resources devoted to outreach and partner with community-based organizations to communicate with the public.





## 5. Increase Age-Appropriate Opportunities for Bicycle Safety Education



Resources for bicycle safety education are scarce and irregular. As ridership has increased, many bicyclists and people interested in riding don't have access to bicycle safety classes to boost their confidence and skills. Promoting a culture of safe riding habits requires a coordinated education strategy that starts in elementary school, continues through high school and is accessible for adults.

The City should build on its partnership with LAUSD to include bike safety curriculum in physical education classes, partner with nonprofit organizations to support these efforts and work with Metro to secure stable funding for mobility education programs.

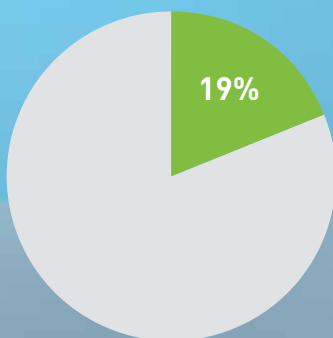




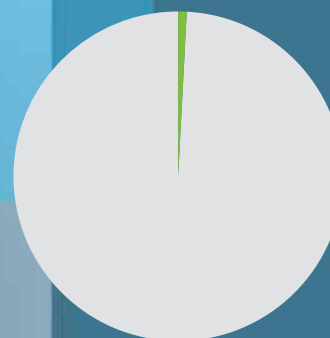


Despite all the attention given to biking and walking in recent years, funding levels have not kept pace with demand. In Los Angeles County, less than 1% of transportation funding is spent on walking and biking combined, despite 19% of all trips being on foot or by bike.

These recommendations to build high quality bike facilities and increase education and encouragement programs are dependent on adequate investment in biking and walking by regional transportation agencies. Walking and biking are often the most cost-effective transportation solutions, and as a result are frequently overlooked in finance planning. The City should work with Metro to increase and expedite funding for walking, biking and safe routes to school in Los Angeles County.



*Percent of Trips that are Walking or Biking in Los Angeles County*



*Percent of Transportation Funding Spent on Walking or Biking in Los Angeles County*

## 6. Increase Funding for Walking, Biking and Safe Routes to School

## 7. Measure Results

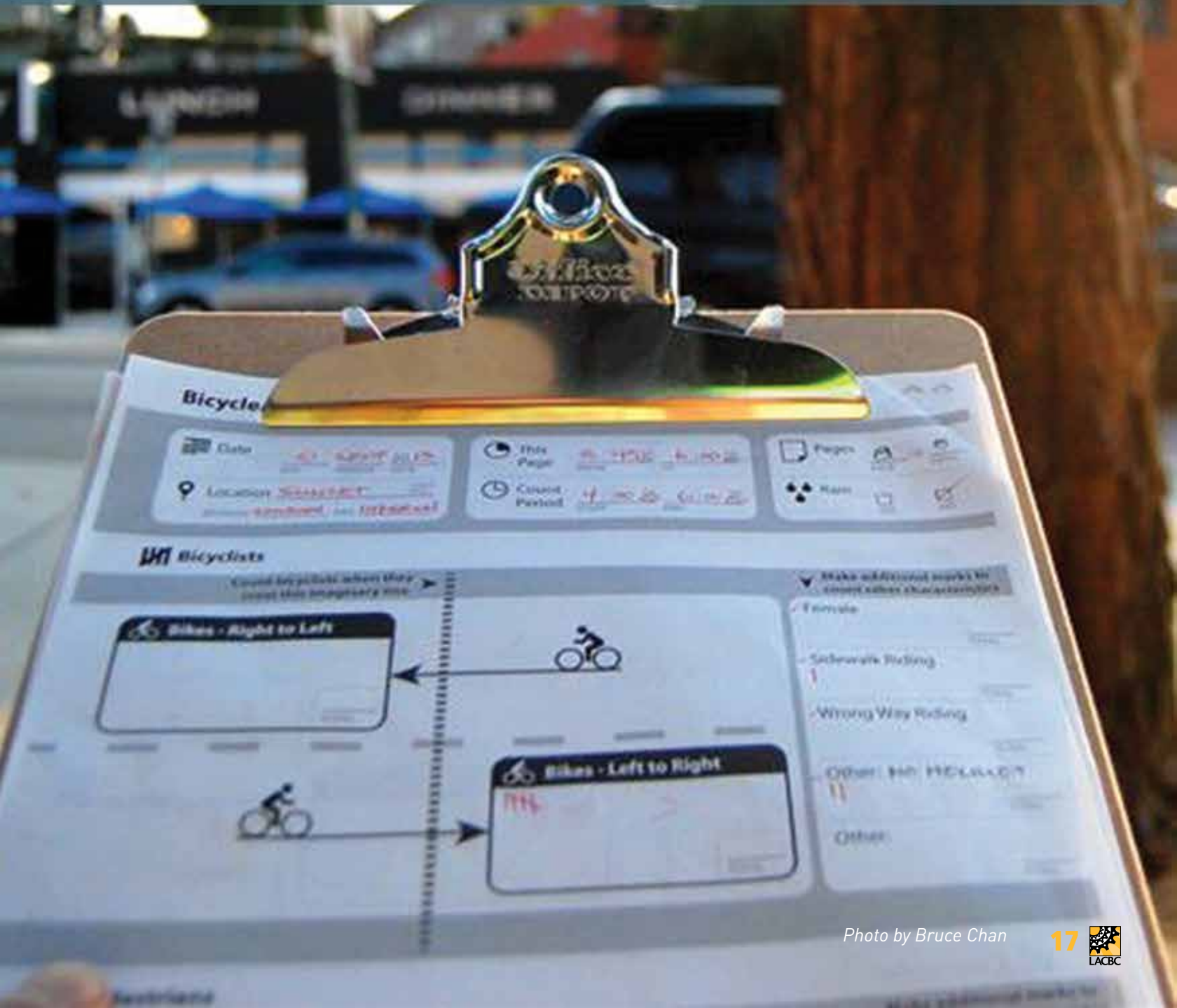
The City's new focus on data and performance metrics should extend to transportation planning. Without regular citywide counts, as well as evaluation of specific projects, it is impossible to evaluate the effectiveness of investments. The City should institutionalize bicycle and pedestrian counts and use the data alongside health, safety, economic, equity and environmental metrics to inform transportation decisions.





# Moving Toward a Bike-Friendly Los Angeles

Cities across the United States are turning to bicycling as the most cost-effective way to improve public health, air quality, neighborhood mobility and local retail business. Bicycling in Los Angeles continues to grow, albeit at a slower pace than many of our peer cities. Los Angeles is home to one of the most diverse and inclusive bicycling communities in the world. It is time that our streets reflect these values by providing for the needs of our diverse communities and including our most vulnerable populations first and foremost in street design. These recommendations to create complete streets for all ages and abilities, engage communities in decision-making and increase investments in education and infrastructure will build a foundation for a healthier, more prosperous and equitable Los Angeles.







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