

Sustainability Initiatives: Bicycle Tourism

PRESENTED JUNE 2016 BY

CENTER FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM, ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

FOR ARIZONA COUNCIL FOR ENHANCING RECREATION AND TOURISM (ACERT)

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Posted at www.scrd.asu.edu/sustainabletourism

Bicycle Tourism

Bicycle Tourism is a multi-disciplinary approach to tourism, business and advocacy. For ACERT we will define bicycle tourism as any **travel-related activity** for the purpose of **pleasure** which incorporates a bicycle. Bicycle usage varies, therefore the definition is broad. Types of bicycle tourism can include: an organized tour, an event/festival, a long distance self-supported tour, an overnight trip/ short form tour, and a destination bicycling.

Bicycle Tourism should and can involve the **partnership** of tourism, active transportation organizations, federal land managers, national and federal agencies, and state and local organizations to work together to provide national support for bicycle travel.

Arizona has an extremely **diverse and unique terrain** that can host a wealth of outdoor opportunity and adventure to cyclists of every style.

Economic Impact

Bicycle tourism creates economic impact for communities. As a slower form of transportation than car, train or plane, travel by bike accounts for more spending on meals, services and overnight stays. Both urban and rural communities have found the development of bicycle tourism beneficial to economic growth.

According to a June 2013 Economic Impact Study of Bicycling in Arizona commissioned by Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT), non-resident bicyclists contributed **\$88 million to the Arizona economy**, including \$57 million in retail sales.

Throughout the United States and internationally, the economic impact of bicycle tourism is apparent. A report released by the Outdoor Industry Foundation in 2006 shows bicycling contributes **\$133 billion** annually to the U.S. economy. A report released in 2012 showed bicycle tourism contributed \$400 million to the Oregon economy and a study in Montana found touring cyclists to spend between \$75 and **\$103 per day**.

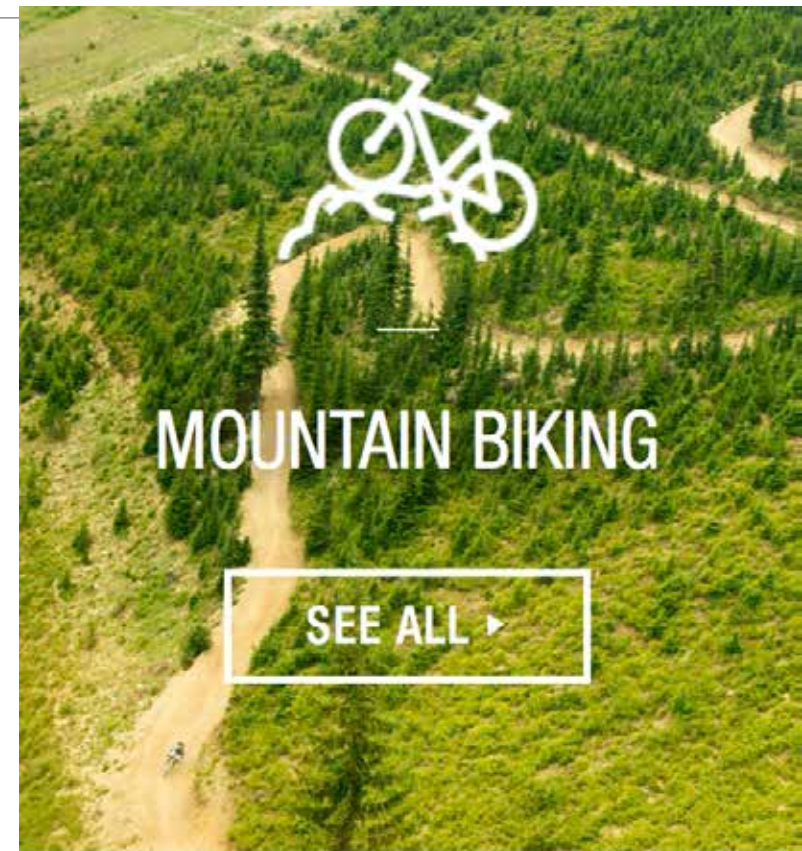
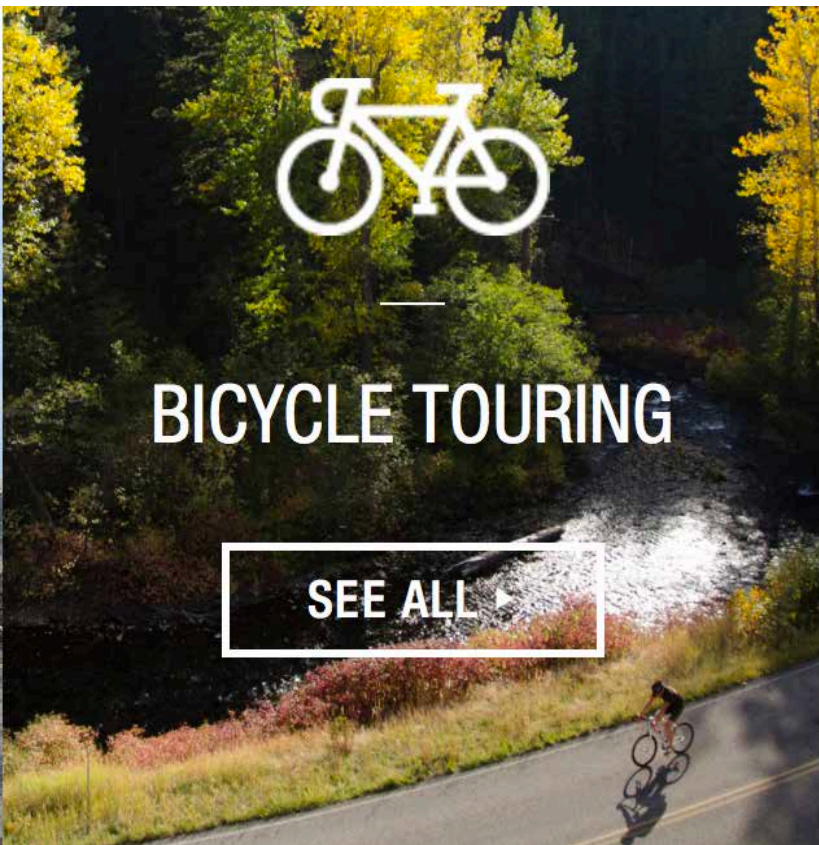
More at <https://www.adventurecycling.org/routes-and-maps/us-bicycle-route-system/benefits-and-building-support/economic-impact/>

Arizona Biking Assets: Arizona Terrain

Whether looking for a challenge or a leisurely ride, Arizona's **unique terrain** offers a diverse range of trails and roads perfect for any novice or expert cyclist.

- Offering a **bicycling link** on a destination website, or any interested business' website, that breaks these experiences into major categories would be optimal for the visitor and Arizona businesses.
- Each of these categories would link users to a more detailed page of **bike routes, local organizations** that support specific styles of biking, and **itineraries** (of things to do, food and beverage offerings, and lodging). The next three slides provide examples of useful destination biking pages to emulate.
- **ACERT partners** could add links to their own websites which point to this biking page or utilize the information to create web pages of their own.

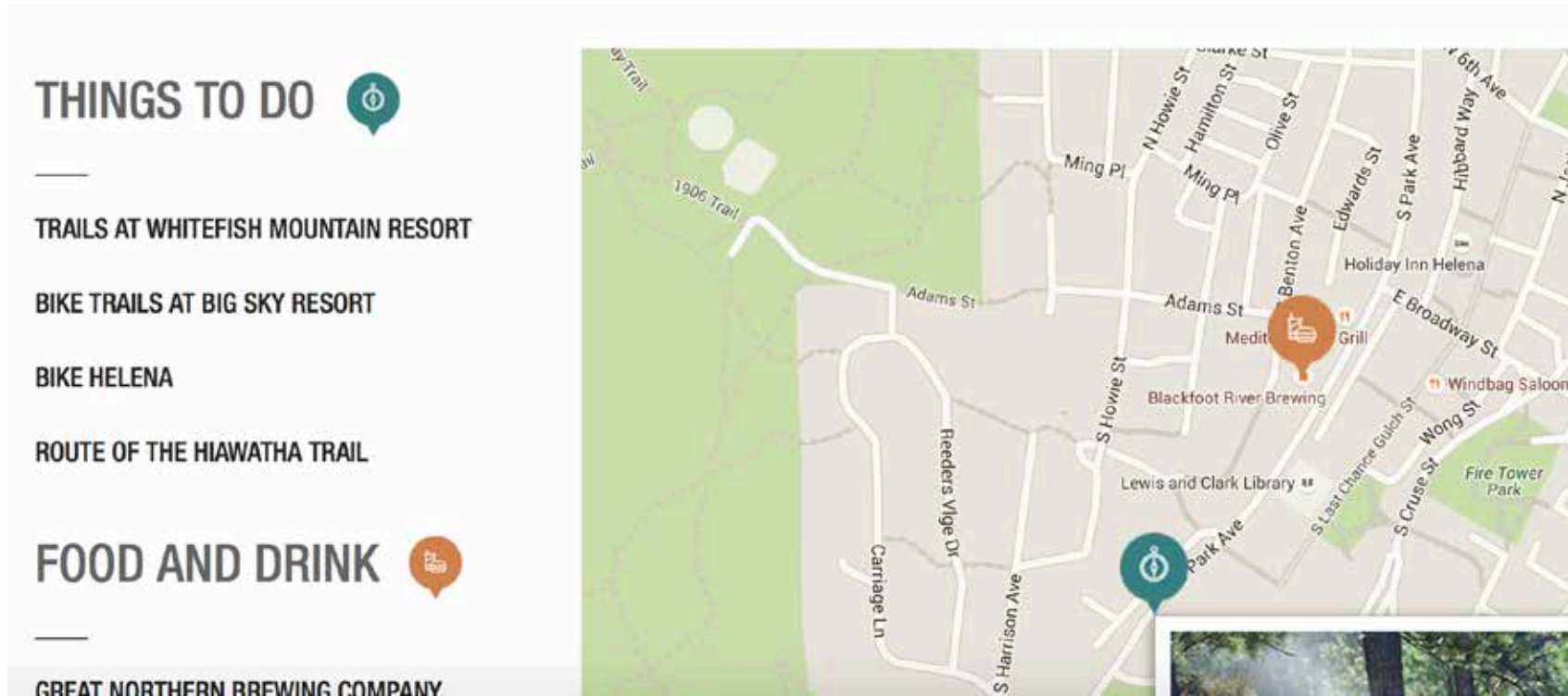
Building Arizona's Biking Assets



Example from Visit Montana's outdoor recreation page for biking.

<http://www.visitmt.com/things-to-do/outdoor-and-adventure/bicycling.html>

Building Arizona's Biking Assets



Clicking on Mountain Biking from Montana's Bicycling page, provides the user with things to do, food and drink, places to stay, and an interactive map.

<http://www.visitmt.com/things-to-do/outdoor-and-adventure/mountain-biking.html>

Building Arizona's Biking Assets

Search by Ride Location

Ex: Portland or 555 State St. Salem 55025

Select a Ride Type

Mountain Biking Trails Road Routes

Gravel Rides Scenic Bikeways


Select a Ride Length (in miles)

1 100+

Search Rides

Showing 1 - 10 of 24 Rides

- 1 **Stub Stewart State Park Loops and Trails**
Length: 8.1 miles | Difficulty: Moderate
- 2 **Surrounding Stub Stewart Loop**
Length: 10.5 miles | Difficulty: Mild
- 3 **Deschutes River Trail Out and Back**
Length: 11.6 miles | Difficulty: Moderate
- 4 **Deschutes River Trail**
Length: 11.6 miles | Difficulty: Moderate
- 5 **Three Waterfalls Loop**
Length: 12.5 miles | Difficulty: Challenging
- 6 **Magone Lake Loop**
Length: 12.8 miles | Difficulty: Moderate
- 7 **Prairie Ranch Loop**
Length: 14.3 miles | Difficulty: Mild



Map showing bike routes in Oregon, including locations like Astoria, Portland, Beaverton, Salem, Albany, Corvallis, Eugene, Newport, Siuslaw National Forest, Coos Bay, and Umpqua National Forest. The map includes a terrain dropdown menu and zoom controls.

Ride Oregon provides a search function on their home page, allowing visitors to search by ride type and ride length. A similar function could be added to an Arizona bicycling page. <http://rideoregonride.com>

Arizona Biking Assets: Adventure Cycling Route Network

The Adventure Cycling Route Network is an initiative of the Adventure Cycling Association. The route network is 40,000+ miles of cycling routes, featuring rural and low-trafficked areas throughout particularly scenic and historically significant terrains across North America.

Arizona finds itself associated with the Adventure Cycling Route Network through the majestic **Grand Canyon Connector** route, the **Southern Tier** bicycle route, and **Bicycle Route 66**.

The Connector begins in Cedar City, Utah and passes through both Zion and Grand Canyon National Parks (including both rims of the canyon) as it leads southwards where it ends in Tempe, conveniently near the international airport. This 565 mile excursion can be done in pieces, or attempted in one long adventure. <https://www.adventurecycling.org/routes-and-maps/adventure-cycling-route-network/grand-canyon-connector/>

The Southern Tier route goes cross-country from California to Florida, running east-west through Arizona. While Bicycle Route 66 follows the historic Mother Road.

<https://www.adventurecycling.org/routes-and-maps/adventure-cycling-route-network/>

Arizona Biking Assets: Adventure Cycling Route

Visit Montana offers a variety of promotional videos on their website, <http://www.visitmt.com/campaign/montana-tv.html>. One video is created in partnership with Adventure Cycling Association and promotes the TransAm Trail that runs through the state. Arizona could utilize this tactic to bring awareness to the Grand Canyon Connector route, for example.



https://youtu.be/40V86fn_xO8

Arizona Biking Assets: Bike Share

Bike share programs are booming in cities throughout the country and Arizona is no exception. Visitors will find green GRID Bike Share bikes at **50 locations in Phoenix**. Bike stations are also being added in **Mesa and Tempe**. The bikes are available for rent 24 hours a day.

Tucson plans to implement a bike share program in 2017 allowing for further opportunities. Flagstaff is considering bike share as well.

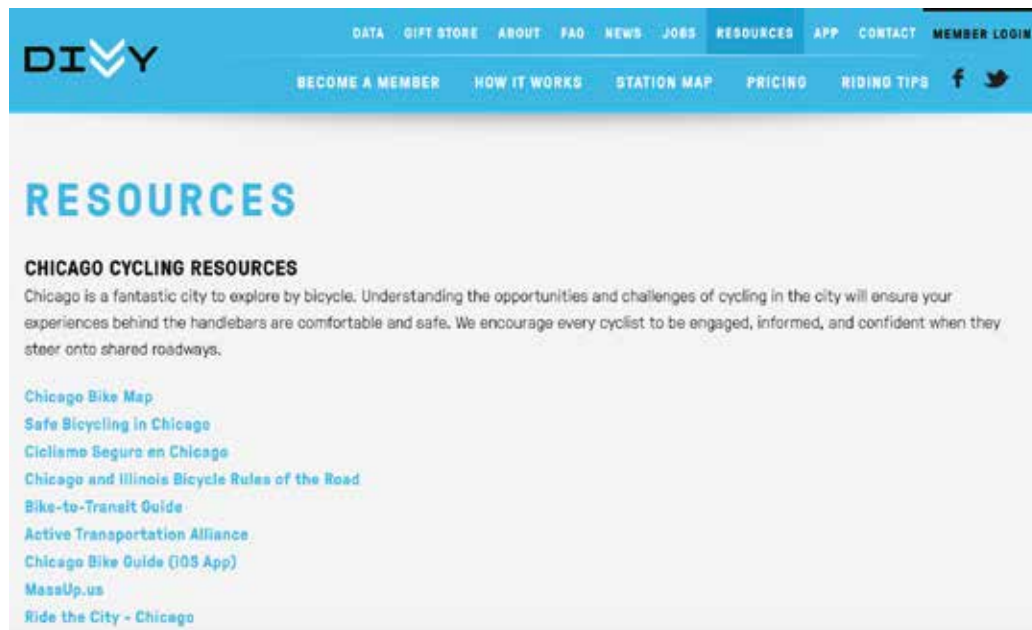
Biking is a great way to explore a destination and see the sites. Creating **itineraries** based on GRID bike station locations will easily connect visitors to the many sites of Arizona's urban areas including museums, restaurants, shops and other sites. These itineraries could be listed on ACERT partner websites and visitor websites of AZ communities. Partnerships should also be explored with GRID Bike Share to list itineraries on their website and create links to Arizona resources. Printed maps or brochures can also be created to further market biking itineraries. Biking safety tips should be included whenever possible.

Select hotels also lend or rent bikes, for which itineraries can also be useful. Itineraries can be built from previously written pieces like AOT's "[Stay and Bike](#)" article and "[Well-Spoken Rides](#)."

As a sustainable transportation option, bikes can also be used to reach light rail and other public transportation options like a bus station, train station or even an airport.

Arizona Biking Assets: Bike Share

Divvy is a bike share company operating in Chicago. Their website includes components to consider implementing.



Resources are listed to assist users in exploring the city by bike. <https://www.divvybikes.com/resources>



Riding tips are included for bicyclists to explore Chicago safely. <https://www.divvybikes.com/riding-tips#plan>

Arizona Biking Assets: Arizona Trail

The Arizona Trail (AZT) is an 800 mile, non-motorist trail that runs from the Arizona-Mexico border to the Arizona-Utah border. Partnering with the Arizona Trail Association to better promote **mountain biking** excursions, both long distance and short, would allow incoming tourists and residents an opportunity to connect with other enthusiasts. Additionally, designing both long and short distance itineraries for different parts of the state is recommended. This would be beneficial to **rural communities**. ACERT and AZTA could cross promote overnight stays, dining, service stops, events and other local opportunities along the trail. Mentions in Arizona Trail Association newsletters, website and trail signage are opportunities for promotion.



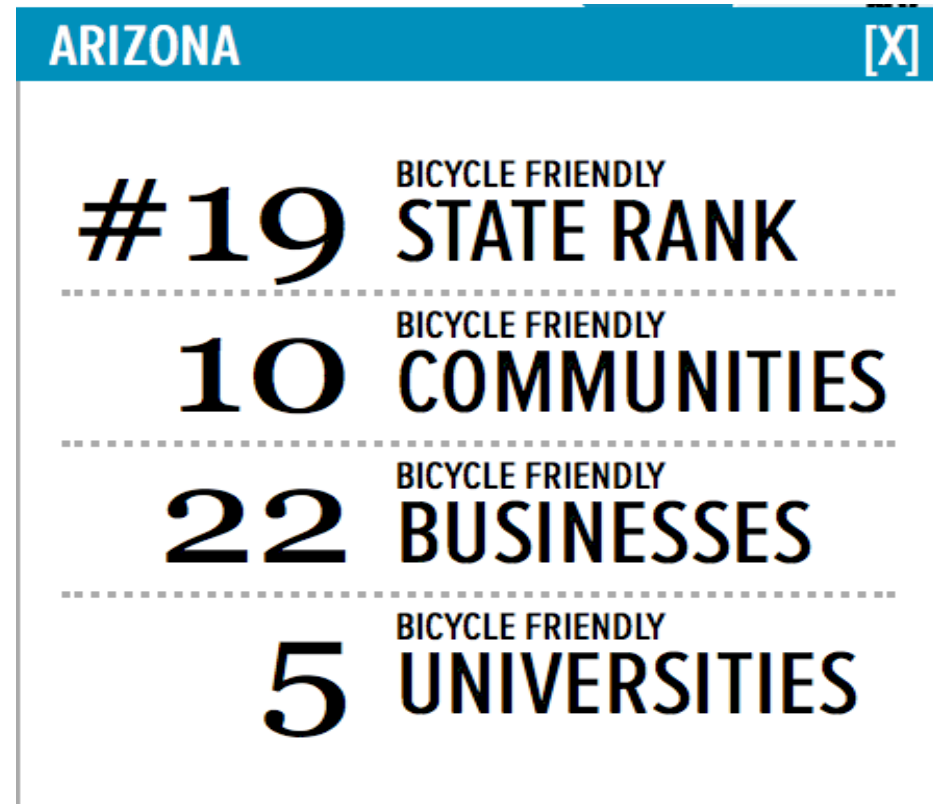
Suggested mountain biking routes include:

- Ride south from the Picketpost Trailhead near the Gateway Community of Superior on swooping singletrack trail beneath impressive Picketpost Mountain. (Easiest access from Phoenix)
- Gabe Zimmerman Trailhead east of Tucson in the Gateway Community of Vail offers great riding in both the northbound and southbound directions on singletrack trail for riders of all abilities.

Arizona Trail Expeditions (<http://aztexpeditions.com/>) has partnered with the AZTA to support hikes, runs and bicycle rides. Their itineraries are for the mostly **self-serve traveler** that is looking for some **logistical support**. They provide the itinerary of where to ride, then meet you at camp each night, with food, firewood, camp chairs and other amenities.

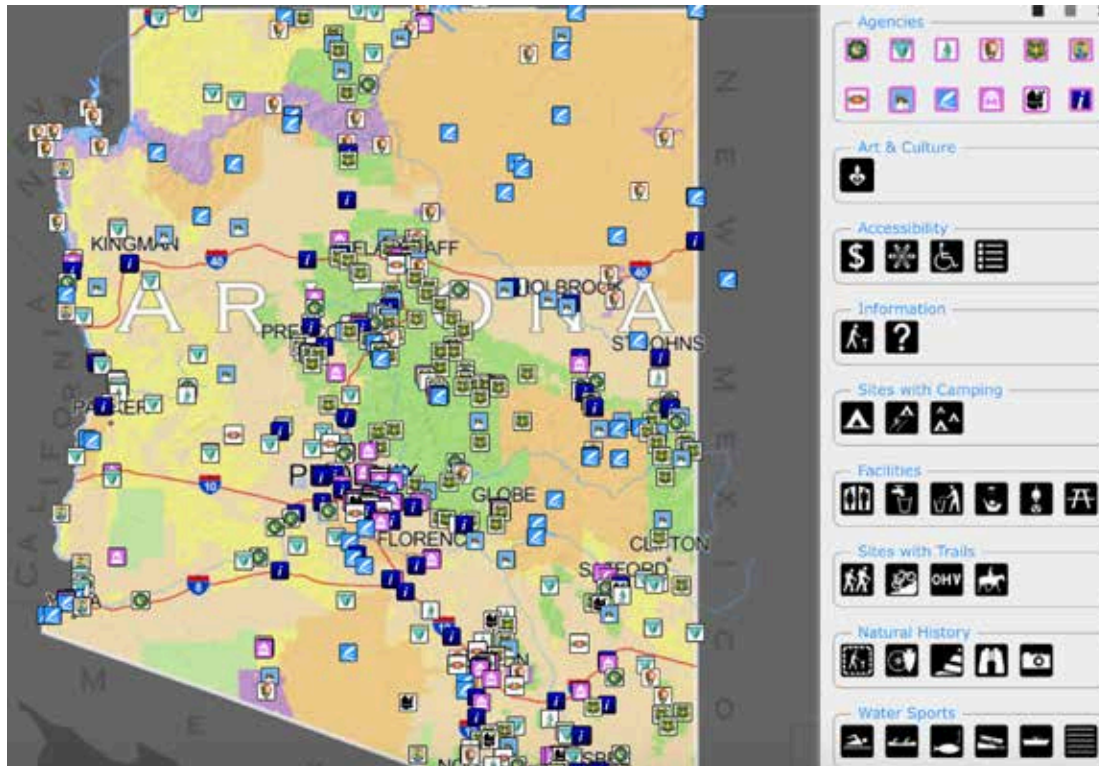
Arizona Biking Assets: Bicycle Friendly Communities

In 2015 Arizona was ranked 19th most bicycle friendly state, out of 50, by the League of American Bicyclists. Furthermore, there are 10 certified (on a gold, silver, bronze scale) Bicycle Friendly Communities within the state of Arizona, three of which were awarded with gold recognition (Tempe, Tucson-East Pima County Region, and Scottsdale). Leveraging this asset to promote bike-shares, businesses to support/incentivize deals to bike users, and most importantly, promoting these communities as destinations is suggested.



<http://bikeleague.org/bfa/awards>

Arizona Biking Assets: Bicycle Friendly Communities



Arizona's Recreation & Cultural Sites Map is a useful tool for consumers. Through this interactive online map bicyclists will find icons designating bicycle trails throughout the state. This map can be promoted and further leveraged as an asset.

<http://arizonaexperience.org/live-maps/arizonas-recreation-cultural-sites-map>

Other Best Practices

A number of other opportunities can be developed for bicycle tourism in Arizona.

- **Bicycle races** and biking events garner much interest from travelers. From competitive races to recreation biking, events can draw everyone from professional bicyclists to families.
- Communities need to ensure **safe bicycle routes** for travelers. Paths that lead to hotels and attractions will make bicycling a more attractive form of transportation. Bike racks should be installed near any business interested in attracting those that travel by bike.
- To encourage biking in downtown and urban areas, **promotions** can be developed to encourage hotel guests to bike to farmers markets or attractions in town.
- **Entrepreneurs** can consider opening bike rental businesses and/or services for bicyclists.

Other Best Practices

Whether a restaurant, accommodation, shop or attraction, sweaty and weather-beaten cyclists know they are welcome when signs in the window indicate “**Cyclists Welcome**” or “**Cycle Friendly**.”

- Businesses that are cycle friendly should consider offering a place to:
 - Securely lock bikes
 - Refill water bottles and rehydrate
 - Charge electric bikes
 - Air pump for tires
 - Purchase or acquire bike route maps
 - Provide repair services or refer to a local bike shop
 - Provide first aid kit
 - Provide a warm welcome



The Delatite Hotel, Australia

Other Best Practices

Under the umbrella of cycle friendly businesses are **cyclist accommodations**. Cyclist accommodations offer all the conveniences and services of businesses mentioned in the previous slide, with the addition of a place to spend the night. Accommodations can range from rustic to luxurious. Rural areas may find this most beneficial.

Examples:

- Al's Place Bike Hostel - An old jail in Farmington, MO has been converted into a hostel for bicyclists passing through
- Hotel Domestique – Luxury awaits cyclists training hard at this hotel in Travelers Rest, SC, inspired by cyclist George Hincapie



Resources

Adventure Cycling Association
www.adventurecycling.org

Arizona Bicycle Association
www.bikeaz.org

ADOT Bicycle and Pedestrian Program
www.azbikeped.org

ADOT Economic Impact Study of Bicycling
https://apps.azdot.gov/files/ADOTLibrary/Multimodal_Planning_Division/Bicycle-Pedestrian/Economic_Impact_Study_of_Bicycling-Executive_Summary-1306.pdf

Arizona Office of Tourism
<https://tourism.az.gov>

Arizona Trail Association
www.aztrail.org

BikeArizona
<http://bikearizona.com>

GRID Bike Share
<http://gridbikes.com>

The League of American Bicyclists
<http://bikeleague.org>

The Mountain Bike Association of Arizona
<https://mbaa.net>

National Bicycle Tourism Conference
(put on by Bicycle Tour Network)
<http://www.bicycletournetwork.org>

Path Less Pedaled
<http://pathlesspedaled.com>