

Long-Distance Cycling Routes: Economic Impacts, Best Practices and Marketing Strategies

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Bicycle tourism has the potential to contribute significantly to local, regional, and state economies. Strategic efforts from state tourism offices and local governments can amplify the economic benefits of bicycle tourism, and help define the character and identity of rural communities. [In a recent report from IORT](#), Elizabeth Depew and Jordan Smith synthesize research about establishing long-distance bicycle routes as a guide to the economic benefits that come from bicycle tourism, and offer suggestions for best practices for developing cycling routes that support bicycle tourism.

Cycling routes are relatively inexpensive to plan for and develop, and can directly and indirectly support jobs in local communities through construction, the expenditures of cyclists and the presence of their support crews. This spending could be particularly beneficial to agricultural, gateway, and rural communities looking to diversify tourism revenues. The best practices outlined in this new report can serve as a guide for communities, tourism development offices, and state officials considering adding long-distance cycling routes into their mix of tourism offerings.

Some suggestions from the report:

- Develop trails that promote multi-day trips.
- Monitor route use through trail counters and surveys.
- Connect cycling routes to local shops and grocery stores.
- Market attractions near the cycling route.
- Create and complete assessment tools to establish route readiness.

To know more, [find the full report here](#).