

National Poll: Americans Support Increasing Funding for Sidewalks, Bike Lanes and Paths



As bicycling grows in popularity and more and more Americans want to live in walkable communities, a new survey finds that the majority of Americans support increasing federal funding for biking and walking.

[Princeton Survey Research Associates International](#) asked a nationally representative sample of 1,000 adults in the United States about their opinions on federal funding for sidewalks, bike lanes and paths.

Participants were asked to estimate what percentage of federal transportation funding is currently spent on sidewalks, bike lanes and paths and then asked to say what percentage of transportation funds should be spent on biking and walking infrastructure.

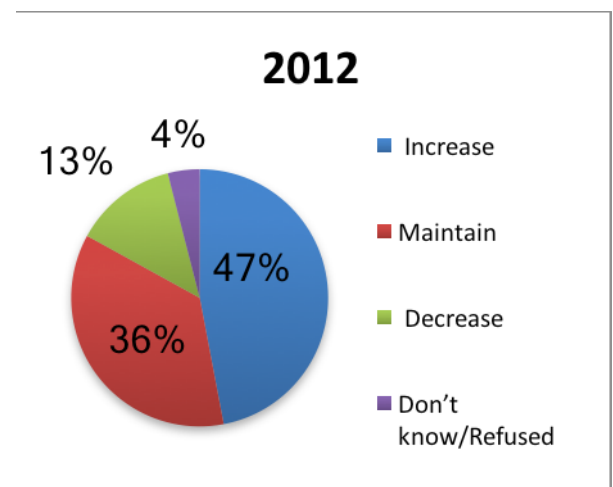
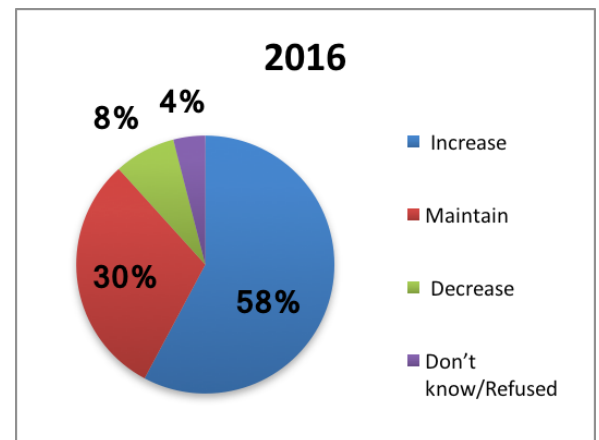
Respondents then learned that less than two percent of transportation funding goes to sidewalks, bike lanes and paths, 17 percent is used for public transportation, and 80 percent is used for roads and highways. Respondents were asked if the percentage that goes to biking and walking should increase, decrease or stay the same.

58 percent of respondents support increasing federal funding for biking and walking infrastructure. The results showed that a majority of respondents, 58 percent, support increasing federal funding after being told how transportation funding is divided among roads, transit and biking and walking. This support for increasing funding was almost twice the 30 percent percentage wanting federal funding for biking and walking to stay the same, and more than seven times the eight percent who believed funding for biking and walking should be decreased.

That support increased significantly in three years. Princeton Survey Research Associates International had previously asked these same survey questions in March 2012. From these numbers, we see a significant rise in support for increasing funding, and the rise is consistent across almost all demographic crosstabs. Support rose the most from the Midwest and suburbs.

In the 2012 survey, 47 percent of respondents supported increasing funding for sidewalks, bikeways and paths. In 2016 that number has jumped to 58 percent.

Support is increasing everywhere – across all demographics. The rise in support for funding is true across almost all demographics. We saw increasing support in every geographic region of the country: in urban, suburban and rural areas; among all age groups, all race and ethnicities; among parents and non-parents and across genders.



Investing in multi-modal projects creates jobs and builds local economies

“We are going to fix our inner cities and rebuild our highways, bridges, tunnels, airports, schools, hospitals. “We’re going to rebuild our infrastructure, which will become, by the way, second to none, and we will put millions of our people to work as we rebuild it.”

— President-Elect Donald J Trump on November 9, 2016

On election night, President-Elect Trump repeated his interest in investing in American infrastructure, including our transportation system, as a way to create jobs and build stronger communities in rural and urban areas.

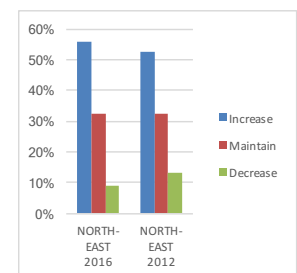
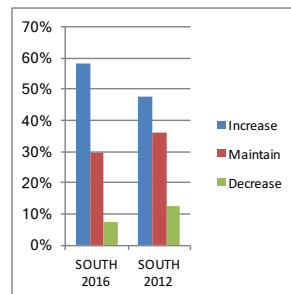
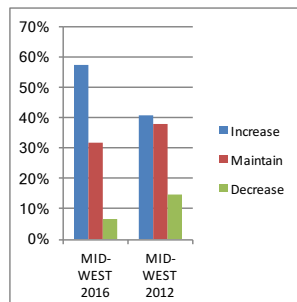
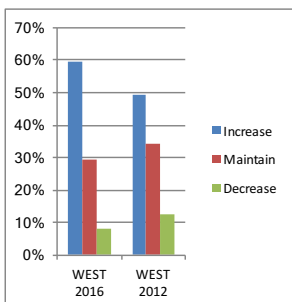
Building multimodal transportation projects, including bicycling and walking infrastructure will contribute to meeting his goals. In fact, two studies have shown that building bicycling and walking projects that building bicycling and walking projects create more jobs per million dollars spent than other types of transportation investment. A National Cooperative Highway Research Program (NCHRP) study of stimulus spending showed that Transportation Enhancement projects such as sidewalks and bike lanes, created 17 jobs per million dollars versus new road construction which creates 12.5 jobs per million. In addition, a study of transportation job in 11 U.S. cities by the Political Economic Research Institute at the University of Massachusetts found that bicycling projects create 11.4 jobs and sidewalk jobs created 9.7 jobs per million versus 7.8 jobs per million for road-only projects.

States and cities have seen economic development benefits from their investment in biking and walking. For instance, a study of ten Complete Streets projects found that eight saw increased values for properties near the improved areas. A recent survey of businesses located near Capital Bikeshare (CaBi) stations in Washington, DC, found that 20% of businesses saw an increase in their sales, and 70% said they saw a “positive impact” on the surrounding area.

The 115th Congress and the Trump administration have an opportunity to meet the infrastructure needs of our country. The League of American Bicyclists strongly advocate for any new investment to include transportation funding that encourages investment in multi-modal transportation, including bicycling and walking networks, that create transportation choices, jobs and benefit local economies.

Census Regions

A majority of respondents from all regions of the country support increase funding for biking and walking. The level of support ranges from 56 percent in the Northeast to 59 percent – within the 3.8 margin of error.



Region Definitions

The Princeton survey used the following designations to assign geographic region:

Northeast: Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont

Midwest: Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, North Dakota, Nebraska, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin

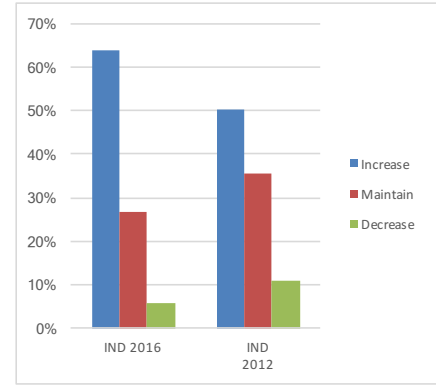
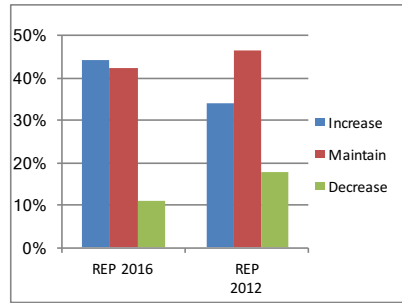
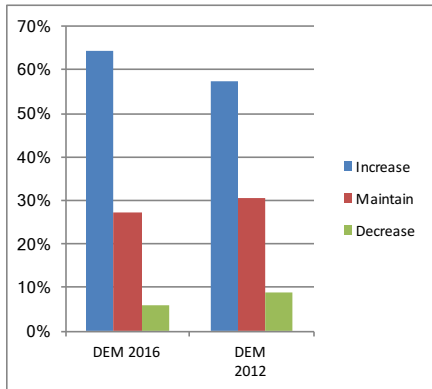
South: Alabama, Arkansas, District of Columbia, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana,

Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, West Virginia

Political Affiliation

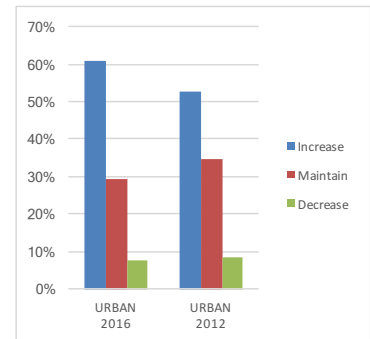
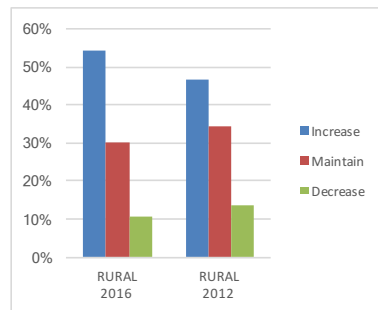
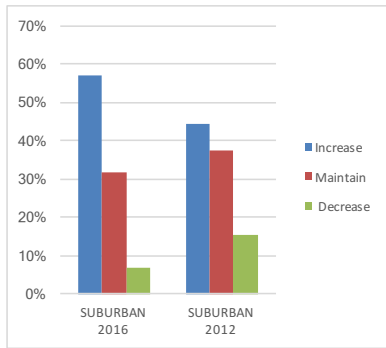
Republicans Shift from support for maintaining funding to support for increasing funding. Independents show the largest jump in support for increased funding. Support for increasing funding jumps from half to almost two-thirds among Independents, from 50 percent to 64 percent. Democrats tie Independents for Support for Increasing funding.

In 2012, Democrats were the only political affiliation to show majority support for increasing funding for biking and walking. In 2016, Support for decreasing funding fell to three percent — among the lowest of any demographic subcategory..

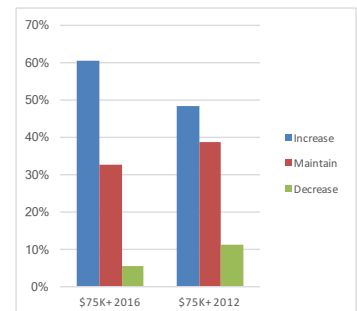
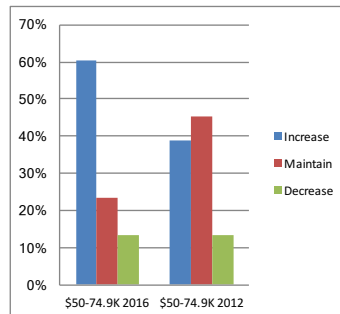
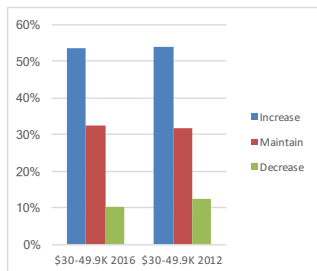
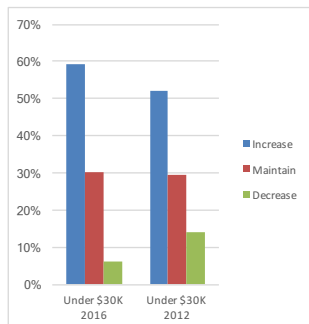


Community Types

Regardless of whether they live in urban, suburban or rural communities- a majority of respondents want more infrastructure for biking and walking.

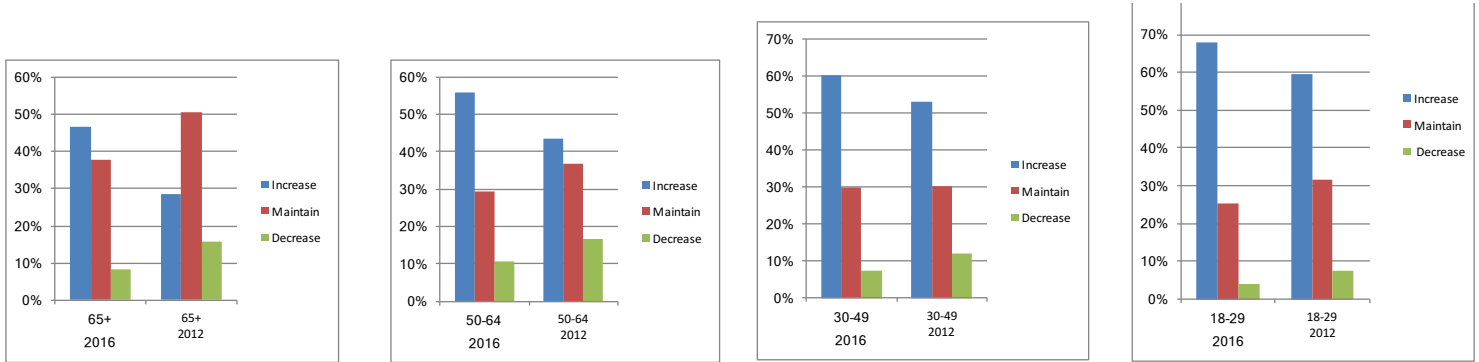


Income



Age

A plurality of all age groups support an increase in funding for biking and walking. A majority of respondents. While the highest support is among younger Americans, the older age groups showed a remarkable increase in support since 2012.



Endnotes

- ¹ Dowell, Paula. NCHRP 08-36, Task 103 *Mining Recovery Act Data for Opportunities to Improve the State of Practice for Overall Economic Impact Analysis of Transportation Investments*, requested by American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Cambridge Systematics. January, 2012 [http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/nchrp/docs/NCHRP08-36\(103\)_FR.pdf](http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/nchrp/docs/NCHRP08-36(103)_FR.pdf)
- ² Garrett-Peltier, Heidi *Pedestrian and Bicycle Infrastructure: A National Study of Employment Impacts* Political Economic Research Institute, University of Massachusetts 6/20/2011 http://www.peri.umass.edu/fileadmin/pdf/published_study/PERI_ABikes_June2011.pdf
- ³ New York City 2013 survey <http://www.nyc.gov/html/dot/downloads/pdf/2013-dot-sustainable-streets-3-mobility.pdf>. Chicago 2014 Survey http://www.cityofchicago.org/city/en/depts/mayor/press_room/press_releases/2014/mar/survey-of-divvy-members-brings-positive-reviews-of-chicagos-newe.html
Washington DC 2013 user survey- http://www.bikearlington.com/tasks/sites/bike/assets/File/Capital_Bikeshare_2013_Member_Travel_Survey.pdf

Methodology

From September 15–18, 2016, Princeton Survey Research Associates International performed telephone interviews with a nationally representative sample of 1,000 adults living the continental United States. The interviews were evenly divided between landlines and cell phones. Interviews were done in English and Spanish

Statistical results are weighted to correct known demographic discrepancies. The margin of sampling error for the complete set of weighted data is ±3.8 percentage points.