



Cycling and Walking: *From Now to Next*

COVID-19 acting as a catalyst to push the use of cycling and walking



Cycling/Biking, as we all know, has always been an effective/sustainable way to travel. Yet, in the world of transportation modes (dominated by cars), it only represents a small percentage. During the COVID-19 situation, with most of the planet in some form of lockdown, the roads turned strangely empty for the very first time. But the need to travel, be it for buying grocery items or for essential business to run, cannot be eradicated. Travelling is still inevitable.

With public transit being suspended and social distancing measures to be followed, many countries encouraged the use of cycles and walking. The only few options wherein social distancing could be practiced turned out to be a lifeline and a boon!

To let this trend thrive, countries would need to focus attention on the cycling and pedestrian infrastructure underpinned by safety as an imperative.

Many cities have already engaged in this, by either making temporary/emergency lanes or planning investments in the near future. Governments across the world are realizing the impact this change can bring in the long run too. In a way, the crisis is acting as a catalyst to push the cause of many cities to reduce cars on the roads—towards green mobility.

Even before the crisis, Paris was trying to increase the number of bike commuters by 20%. Now the Mayor intends to convert the city's mobility culture and make it a "15-minute city."

MANY REGIONS WITNESSED A SIGNIFICANT SURGE IN CYCLE USAGE DURING COVID-19

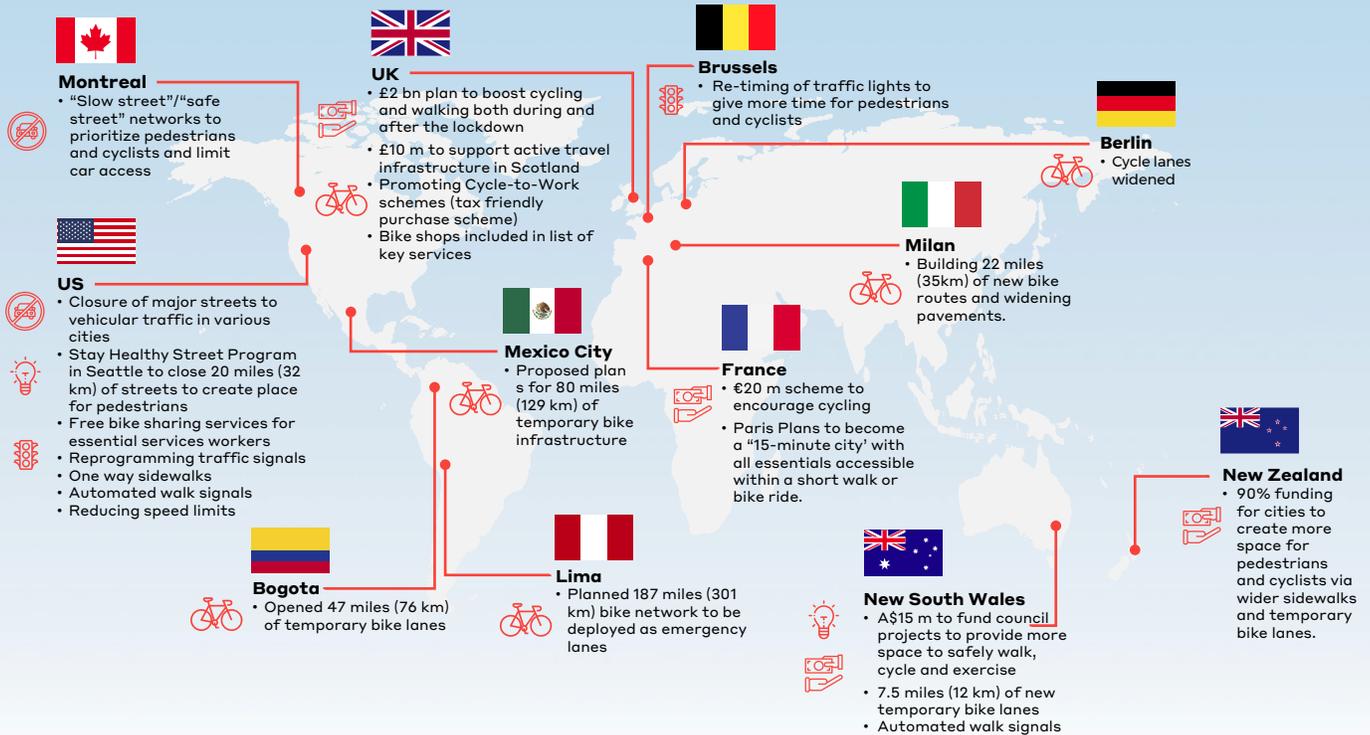
1. The Philippines saw a surge in cyclists on Kelly Drive Trail by 471% between the same period of 2019 and 2020
2. Citi Bike, New York's bike share program, noted an increase in demand by 67% just between March 1 and March 11 (compared with the same period last year)
3. Beijing reported bike-share system users increased by roughly 150%
4. Bike manufacturers such as Brompton and Halfords reported increased online sales
5. Canada started to face a shortage of bikes confirm many bike manufacturers



Take a look at Figure 1 on how the other countries/cities are responding to active transportation:

Figure 1

Spotlight on Active Transportation During Covid-19



Overall, various strategies—from expanding cycle lanes to limiting car traffic—are all leading to a bigger outcome, which is increased open spaces for pedestrians. A recent article suggests that open streets can reduce density, which would act as an important feature of how a pandemic resilient city could be designed.

Some of these trends might just stay to see the big shift from a focus on motor vehicles to cycling (and walking) as a much-needed push towards a healthy and green environment.

These cities becoming more cycle-friendly might just add their contributions to the targets towards decarbonization and visions of emission-free cities.

FROM ACTIVE TRANSPORT DURING THE COVID-19 CRISIS....

... TO A HEALTHY AND GREEN WORLD

Cycling is good for exercise	Cycling is a safe and resilient transportation mode
Cycling is just a 5 km solution	Cycling could be a 15 km solution
Banning cars of crowded streets	Using data analytics to see how new temporary lanes perform
Traditional bicycles	E-bikes are a norm
Pedestrians walk for their health	Walking is an industry
Temporary cycling lanes	Increase in dedicated cycle lanes
Cycling is a choice	Rewards for selecting cycling over public transport/subsidized cycles
Parks and open spaces to reduce stress	Parks and open spaces become imperative for pandemic resilient cities



COVID-19 has forced behavioral changes, from working remotely to curbside pickup at stores and restaurants to mobility. We are witnessing changes in personal mobility, with people taking to the streets and parks on foot and on bicycles and a significant reduction in auto travel. This seems to reflect stay-at-home restrictions and social distancing as well as a desire for non-motorized mobility options.

In the United States, we are seeing parks, streets and sidewalks overcome with people and communities are reacting. Although some parks have been closed, others have modified operations – closing roads to provide more room for social distancing for pedestrians and cyclists, enabling people to be outside for mental and physical fitness. Similarly, cities are closing formerly busy roads to improve non-motorized access and mobility. With traffic volumes down as much as 50%, there is room to rebalance the roads and better accommodate non-motorized users. Behavior changes are raising attention to the importance of active transportation as a mobility option and the value of infrastructure that accommodates non-motorized transport; decision-makers are paying attention and taking action with both temporary and permanent infrastructure improvements.

The increased levels of biking and walking that we are witnessing today provide an opportunity for communities to leverage current public desire for active transportation, along with the necessary political will, into infrastructure improvements that will have a significant impact on mobility and quality of life for years to come.

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Sources for Solutions on Map

Australia

MAY 08, 2020

[\\$15 million to transform our streets and public spaces for social distancing \(NSW Government\)](#)

New Zealand

APRIL 16, 2020

[New Zealand to fund “pop-up” bike lanes, sidewalk widening amid pandemic \(Smart Cities Dive\)](#)

UK

MAY 14, 2020

[Coronavirus: a huge push for cycling to work \(Financial Times\)](#)

MAY 09, 2020

[UK plans £250m boost for cycle lanes and fast-track e-scooter trials \(The Guardian\)](#)

MAY 09, 2020

[U.K. Government Boosts Bicycling And Walking With Ambitious £2 Billion Post-Pandemic Plan \(Forbes\)](#)

MAY 07, 2020

[Coronavirus: Boom time for bikes as virus changes lifestyles \(BBC\)](#)

France

MAY 01, 2020

[France's plan to push pedal power to keep post-pandemic pollution levels low \(We Forum\)](#)

FEBRUARY 18, 2020

[Paris Mayor: It's Time for a “15-Minute City” \(City Lab\)](#)

Berlin

APRIL 21, 2020

[Coronavirus: Should we be cycling during lockdown and is it safer than ever? \(The Independent\)](#)

US

MAY 07, 2020

[Seattle takes new steps to fine-tune traffic signals for people walking and rolling during COVID-19 health crisis \(Seattle Department of Transportation\)](#)

MAY 03, 2020

[Re-spacing Our Cities For Resilience \(International Transport Forum\)](#)

APRIL 11, 2020

[Boston suburb implements one-way sidewalks to encourage social distancing efforts \(The Hill\)](#)

APRIL 09, 2020

[One way sidewalks unveiled in Beverly \(YouTube\)](#)

MARCH 08, 2020

[Lyft is offering free and discounted bike-share passes for workers fighting the coronavirus \(The Verge\)](#)

JANUARY 29, 2020

[The Spine of San Francisco Is Now Car-Free \(City Lab\)](#)

Milan

APRIL 21, 2020

[Milan announces ambitious scheme to reduce car use after lockdown \(The Guardian\)](#)

Others

MAY 13, 2020

[Canada is running out of bicycles as more people take to the road \(Global News\)](#)

MAY 09, 2020

[Coronavirus cycling boom makes a good bike hard to find \(The Guardian\)](#)

APRIL 27, 2020

[Cities have seen a cycling surge amid COVID-19. Will the trend stick? \(Smart Cities Dive\)](#)

APRIL 27, 2020

[How do you build a city for a pandemic? \(BBC\)](#)

APRIL 17, 2020

[Biking Provides a Critical Lifeline During the Coronavirus Crisis \(World Resources Institute\)](#)

APRIL 08, 2020

[How to Open Streets Right During Social Distancing \(StreetsBlog USA\)](#)



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