

FOLD, RIDE, SHARE AND REBRAND

*a low-tech crowdmap for social change
and biking in South Los Angeles*

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Why this map? More than way-finding for cyclists, this is a community strategy for rebranding neighborhoods and starting conversations about social change. With this map, we advocate for the future of the historically marginalized South Los Angeles. Yes it is possible to bring business and connect to grassroots for social change. Our route tells a story, linking businesses that fight for social change to public art and tips on taking action. Group rides spark conversations across the far-flung metropolis of L.A. -- one ride in June drew from 43 different ZIP codes to get 120 riders representing 12 bike clubs.

This is proudly a paper map. We use digital tools for routing and documentation, but insist on printing the map because paper is more practical for street use. Like phones, paper is a "mobile medium" but reaches across the digital divide and persists at local businesses and schools after the smartphones leave. For full effect, fold the map to create a pocket guide, transforming the flyer handout format that is so easily tossed away. Pocket guides are things you keep. We have distributed the map at community events like CicLAvia and TEDxUSC, during community rides in South LA, and left stacks of maps in local bike shops and restaurants.

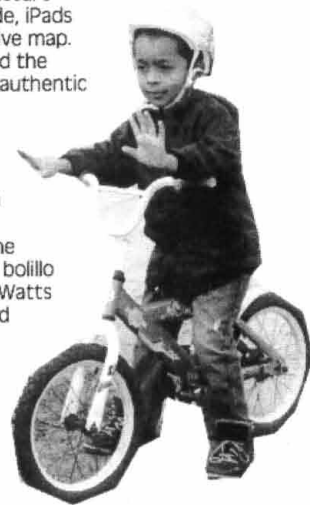
BONUS FEATURE: Fold it twice lengthwise to create a strip showing turn-by-turn directions, which wraps around your wrist or handlebars. Invent your own map origami!

Photos taken by everyday riders!



Process: crowd-made and low-tech verified. This map was created and pedal-tested by more than 60 cyclists, featuring pictures they took with their own camera phones. We first scouted the route, looking for quiet streets, safe crossings, and experiences along the way. Then last January, CICLE (Cyclists Inciting Change through Live Exchange) and the East Side Riders Bike Club from Watts led more than 60 riders, both Watts residents and visitors, to create an "asset map." They documented the ride live, sending photos from their everyday phone as "picture messages" via our ParTour system. During the ride, iPads mounted to some of the bicycles displayed the live map. Colleen Corcoran, a graphic designer, then turned the stream of pictures into a printable map. To stay authentic to its contributors, the map was tested in workshops with community organizers, researchers and neighborhood residents.

What's shown on the map? It's a round-trip route guiding your ride from the wetlands of Augustus Hawkins Natural Park to the iconic Watts Towers. On the way, you can grab a bolillo from Pancho's Bakery or enjoy soul food at the Watts Coffee House. Plan to stop by Roosevelt Park and catch the skateboarding action. There are locally-owned bike shops, should you need a repair, and Metro stations where you can hop on the train if you get tired. Make sure you visit the Watts Labor Community Action Center, serving the community since 1965. And of course, don't miss the Watts Towers! We highly recommend the close-up inside tour to see the detail of Simon Rodia's hand-made masterpiece, entirely covered with recycled ceramics, glass, and found objects.



To find out more or to download the map, go to RideSouthLA.com