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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Los Angeles Receives Economic Boost from Social Bikes

Prescott, Arizona – January 7, 2009 – Los Angeles received an economic boost last week when the New Belgium Brewing Company funded an innovative new program that will create jobs through affordable transportation bicycles. New Belgium’s funding will cover initial costs of the Social Bike Business program coordinated locally by C.I.C.L.E., a nonprofit organization promoting the bicycle for sustainable transportation in Los Angeles. C.I.C.L.E. has partnered with One Street, an international bicycle advocacy organization, for guidance on the program. One Street will replicate this program’s successes in other cities around the world.

The Social Bike Business program follows the principle of social business that adheres to the proven for-profit structure, but replaces the monetary bottom line with the number of underserved people served by the business. The heart of the program will be housed at the Bicycle Community Center in Northeast Los Angeles where area residents will tap into job training programs such as bicycle business management, manufacturing and repair. The Center will also train individuals on using bikes for transportation including riding and maintenance skills. The Center will employ local residents so students and trainers will be neighbors.

"Bicycling is not only an environmentally friendly form of transportation but for many of our community’s residents who are transit dependent, it is also an effective and low cost means of contributing to their livelihoods," said Councilmember Ed Reyes of the First District in Northeast Los Angeles when he learned about the program’s launch. "C.I.C.L.E.'s social bike business project fulfills a great need in my district and I fully support their efforts."

The bikes manufactured at the Center will cost less than the cheapest mountain bike but will hold up to tough transportation use, including carrying loads. The Center will also launch and support social bike shops in distressed neighborhoods around the Center. These social bike shops will be owned and operated by people trained at the center, offering the bikes manufactured at the Center as well as bike repair, parts, accessories and even coaching to help area residents choose bicycling for their transportation needs. The Center and the social bike shops will also help residents develop entrepreneurial opportunities with these transportation bikes such as mobile souvenir carts, delivery bicycles and even bicycle taxis.

While the New Belgium funding makes the initial launch of the program possible, funding is still needed for the Center and the training programs. Those wanting to help should contact C.I.C.L.E. C.I.C.L.E.’s full name is Cyclists Inciting Change thru Live Exchange. Their work focuses on promoting the bicycle as a viable, healthy, and sustainable transportation choice. Find their contact info and more at www.cicle.org . Find out more about One Street at www.onestreet.org .

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