



Bicycle Friendly Community

Feedback on **Harrisonburg's** application to be designated a Bicycle Friendly Community – Spring 2011

The League of American Bicyclists has designated Harrisonburg as a Bicycle Friendly Community at the **bronze** level. Reviewers were very pleased to see the current efforts, potential and commitment to make Harrisonburg a great place for bicyclists which can be seen in the growing number of cyclists.

Some of the highlights of the application are an updated Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, Safe Routes to School program at almost all schools, the “Walk Smart Bike Smart” display, helmet distribution, the “Bike Like Ike” campaign, Bike Month events and website, and staff trip to Davis, California.

The BFC review team expects great things in the future given the good local team and the coming improvements to the network and programs. Reviewers provided the following suggestions to further promote bicycling.

The four most significant measures the city should take to improve cycling in the community are:

- Offer a bicycling skills class on a *regular* basis. Ideally the instruction would incorporate a classroom portion as well as on-road training. Contact your local advocacy group to see if there are classes in your area. Or invite a League Cycling Instructor (LCI) to your campus to conduct the class. For examples of educational materials visit:
<http://www.bikeleague.org/programs/education/> To find a local LCI go to:
http://www.bikeleague.org/programs/education/course_schedule.php
- Adopt a Complete Streets policy and offer implementation guidance. Every street should accommodate bicyclists, pedestrians, motorists and transit users of all abilities and ages.
<http://www.completestreets.org/>
- Increase the number of arterial streets that have wide shoulders or bike lanes. Continue to expand the bicycle network and increase network connectivity through the use of bike lanes, shared lane arrows and signed routes. On-street improvements coupled with the expansion of the off-street system will continue to increase use and improve safety. These improvements will also increase the effectiveness of encouragement efforts by providing a broader range of facility choices for users of various abilities and comfort levels.
- Conduct research on bicycle usage beyond the U.S. Census’ Journey to Work report to more efficiently distribute resources according to demand. Consider implementing a trip reduction program/ordinance. See good examples at <http://bikepeddocumentation.org/> and <http://www.portlandonline.com/transportation/index.cfm?c=43801>

Reviewers provided the following suggestions to further promote bicycling:



Engineering

- Increase the amount of [secure bicycle parking](#) throughout the community – in addition implement a regulation that requires bike parking. See bicycle parking ordinances and guidelines for [Madison, Wisconsin](#) and [Santa Cruz, California](#) Bicycle Parking Ordinances and guidelines for choosing racks.
- Road diets to calm traffic and lead to a better use of roadway space <http://lcmpoweb.las-cruces.org/Training/Road%20Diet/Road%20Diet%20Supplement.pdf>
- Increase the amount of way-finding signage around the community. Here are some best practices from the Washington, DC area council of governments: <http://www.mwcog.org/uploads/committee-documents/t1dZW1k20070516090831.pdf>
- Add bicycle accommodations at intersections to improve efficiency and discourage cyclists from running red lights. These include timing lights for bicycle speeds, incorporating [bike boxes](#), [loop detectors](#), or [bicycle signal heads](#).

Education

- Start a bicyclist and motorist ticket diversion program. Those given citation are offered an opportunity to waive fees for violations by attending a bicycling education course. This should include a classroom and on-road component. See what Pima County has done: [http://bikedep.pima.gov/Safety%20\(pdfs\)/April%20-%20May%202011%20Bicycle%20Diversion%20Class%20\(No%20Locations\).pdf](http://bikedep.pima.gov/Safety%20(pdfs)/April%20-%20May%202011%20Bicycle%20Diversion%20Class%20(No%20Locations).pdf)
- Continue to expand public education campaigns to promote the share the road message and the rights and responsibilities of all users. There are some new tools for you to use. See a new motorist education video at <http://bikelib.org/video/index.htm> It is vital to make motorists and cyclists aware of their rights and responsibilities on the road. Also, see the excellent Look Campaign from New York City: http://www.nyc.gov/html/look/html/about/about_us_text.shtml and use the valuable information from the League's Ride Better Tips in your outreach education and encouragement efforts. See the Ride Better Tips pages at <http://www.bikeleague.org/resources/better/index.php>
- The community should work to increase bicycling education opportunities for children and adults. Host an LCI seminar to train League Cycling Instructors. Contact the League offices or visit <http://www.bikeleague.org/programs/education/> for information on upcoming seminars. Both adult and child classes can be taught by League Cycling Instructors. Having local instructors will enable the community to expand cycling education, to be cycling ambassadors, to deliver education to motorists, provide cycling education to adults, and



have an expert to assist in encouragement programs.

http://www.bikeleague.org/cogs/programs/education/seminar_schedule

Encouragement

- Consider offering a 'Ciclovia' or 'Summer Streets' type event, closing off a major corridor to auto traffic and offering the space to cyclists, pedestrians and group exercise events.
<http://cicloviarecreativa.uniandes.edu.co/english/index.html>
- Consider launching a public bike sharing system that is open to the public in addition to the Cycle Share that is exclusive to James Madison students. A bike share system is a convenient, cost effective, and healthy way of encouraging commuters to make short trips by bike. See what is being done across the country at
<http://streetswiki.wikispaces.com/Public+Bike-Sharing+Programs>
- Set up community celebrations and/or rides each time the community completes a new bicycling related project. This is a great way to show off the city's good efforts and introduces new users to the improvement.
- Work to create more active involvement of bicycle community. Consider a Bicycle Ambassador program like Chicago's. This could be based out of a Bikestation. Read this paragraph is from the Transportation Alternatives newsletter:

Mayor Daley's Bicycle Ambassadors

The five summer Ambassadors attend 200 community events a year where they teach the public about bike safety, sharing the road, bike lane and bike path etiquette and how to bike to work and school. They also help novice bicyclists bike more, fit helmets and perform bike safety checks.

<http://www.chibikefed.org/ambassador>

Enforcement

- Improve and expand the training offered to police officers regarding traffic law as it applies to bicyclists. See the video put out by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)<http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/portal/site/nhtsa/menuitem.810acaee50c651189ca8e410dba046a0/> Here are some Law Enforcement Products
 - | [Law Enforcement's Roll Call Video: "Enforcing Law for Bicyclists"](#)
 - | [Enhancing Bicycle Safety: Law Enforcement's Role \(CD-ROM Training\)](#)
- Make stronger connections between bicycling community and law enforcement. Ensure that police officers are educated on the "Share the Road" message and have general knowledge regarding traffic law as it applies to bicyclists. The city should implement regular training for officers on this like an *Enforcement for Bicycle Safety* seminar. This is a great continuing education opportunity for law enforcement.
http://www.bicyclinginfo.org/bikesafe/case_studies/casestudy.cfm?CS_NUM=801



Evaluation & Planning

- Fully implement the [comprehensive bike plan](#) and continue to close gaps in the cycling network. Also, expand the encouragement, education, and enforcement programs to increase usage. Set an ambitious, attainable target to increase the percentage of trips made by bike in the city.
- Expand efforts to evaluate the bicycle usage and crash statistics to produce a specific plan to reduce the number of crashes in the community according to location and type of crash. There are tools available including *Intersection Magic*: <http://www.pdmagic.com/im/> and [PBCAT](#). See the report [*Bicyclist Fatalities and Serious Injuries in New York City 1996-2005*](#)
- Consider conducting an economic impact study on bicycling in your community
http://www.alatplanning.com/App_Content/files/fp_docs/2008%20Portland%20Bicycle-Related%20Economy%20Report.pdf

For more ideas and best practices please visit the [Bicycle Friendly Community Resource Page](#)