



Feedback on **Newark's** application to be designated a Bicycle Friendly Community – Spring 2010

The League of American Bicyclists has designated Newark as a Bicycle Friendly Community at the **bronze** level. Reviewers were very pleased to see the current efforts, potential and commitment to make Newark a great place for bicyclists which can be seen in the growing number of cyclists. Some good examples include, but are not limited to, the new Complete Streets policy, the work to expand the on and off-street network, the work of the Newark Bicycle Committee, the planning efforts of WILMAPCO, and the support of the city officials who see this as part of the effort to build a more green and sustainable Newark.

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 right away are:

- Update and fully implement the comprehensive bike plan and continue to close gaps in the cycling network. Pay special attention to reaching underserved populations and the university community.
- Expand encouragement efforts during Bike Month starting with a public proclamation. Document and track Bike to Work Day participation and set annual goals. Improve the numbers by hosting a Mayor-led ride during one of the signature community events.
- Ensure that law enforcement officers are educated on traffic law as it relates to bicyclists and best practices in targeted enforcement. Provide opportunities for ongoing training on accommodating bicyclists for engineering, planning staff, and law enforcement. Consider hosting a *Smart Cycling* course for city staff to better understand cyclists' needs, behavior, and their right to use city streets as well as multi-use paths for transportation.
- Increase bicycling education opportunities for children and adults. Scheduling bike safety classes for adults could be an easy way to encourage and educate residents to ride more often and having instructors is key. 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

Reviewers provided the following suggestions to further promote bicycling:

Engineering

- Ensure that new and improved facilities to accommodate bicyclists conform to current best practices and guidelines – such as the AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities and the DOT's own guidelines.
- Improve the coordination between the city and the state paving and rehabilitation projects and facilities maintenance.
- Devote more of the bicycle and pedestrian coordinator's time to scaling up the bicycle program efforts. Current work of the BPAC and TDM staff could be complemented by a staff person focused on making the community bicycle-friendly. See this report on the importance of Bicycle & Pedestrian program staff.
http://www.bikeleague.org/resources/reports/pdfs/why_bike_ped_staff_april_2010.pdf
- Continue to expand the bicycle network and increase network connectivity through the implementation of planned 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.
- Continue to increase the amount of secure bicycle parking throughout the community at every possible destination including retail, office building, and around the university.

Education

- Improve the reach of the community's bicycle safety campaigns. Use 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> , PSA's <http://www.bikeleague.org/programs/bikemonth/psas.php> and the downloadable Bicycle Safety Tips for Adults video at <http://www.bikeleague.org/programs/education/shortversion.wmv>
- 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, 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>.
- Work to get bicycling and motorist education messages added to routine local outreach such as public services announcements and tax renewals, drivers licensing and testing, or inserts with utility bills.

- Start a motorist education programs for professional drivers such as bus and taxi drivers in the city. See what San Francisco has done <http://www.sfbike.org/?drivertraining> Also, use the materials listed above for this purpose in addition to classes that can be offered by League Cycling Instructors.
- *Smart Cycling* can be integrated into motor vehicle violation diversion programs, Safe Routes to School, as well as motorist education classes for city employees.
- Continue to expand the Safe Routes to School program in order to reach every student in the district.

Encouragement

- Expand encouragement efforts during Bike Month. Have the Mayor and/or the City Council proclaim May as Bike Month and do a promotional ride as well.
- Encourage local businesses to promote cycling to the workplace. During Bike to Work Week set up a commuter challenge or bike to work pit stop. For more information on encouragement ideas please visit <http://www.bicyclefriendlycommunity.org/tech.htm> Olympia, Washington holds a Bike Commuter Contest during Bike Month and encourages people to participate in the month-long Contest to see who can ride the most number of days or miles in the month of May. The growth in participation has been stunning. Olympia also offers city employees a \$2 per day incentive for commuting by bike (as well as for walking, riding the bus or carpooling). Each year, approximately 50 to 60 of the City's 600 employees participate in the Bicycle Commuter Contest.
- Consider passing an ordinance or local code that would require larger employers to provide bicycle parking, shower facilities, and other encouragement tools. The city could be the model employer for the rest of the community.
- Develop a series of short (2-5 mi.) loops rides around the community and provide appropriate way-finding signage. Integrate these rides into local bike map.
- Increase the amount of way-finding signage around the community.
- 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.
- Create an online bike map that gives bicyclists and potential bicyclists a wide variety of choices from transportation to recreation at various cyclist comfort levels.

Enforcement

- Make connections between bicycling community and law enforcement. Ensure that police officers are aware of the “Share the Road” message and have general knowledge regarding traffic law as it applies to bicyclists. The city should consider hosting an *Enforcement for Bicycle Safety* seminar. This is a great continuing education opportunity for law enforcement.
<http://www.bicyclinginfo.org/enforcement/partnerships.cfm>
Law Enforcement's Roll Call Video: “Enforcing Law for Bicyclists” -
http://www.nhtsa.gov/multimedia/bicycles/bicycle_safety_LE.wmv
Enhancing Bicycle Safety: Law Enforcement's Role (CD-ROM Training) -
<http://www.nhtsa.gov/Driving+Safety/Bicycles/Enhancing+Bicycle+Safety:+Law+Enforcement%27s+Role>
- Encourage police officers to use targeted enforcement to encourage motorists and cyclists to share the road. This could be in the form of a brochure or tip card explaining each user's rights and responsibilities.

Evaluation/Planning

- Work with mountain biking community to develop a plan for off-road access and increase opportunities for single-track riding within the city
- Work to integrate the development of the cycling network into larger land use planning and development projects and plans.
- Consider conducting an economic impact study on bicycling in your community
http://www.altaplanning.com/App_Content/files/fp_docs/2008%20Portland%20Bicycle-Related%20Economy%20Report.pdf