



Feedback on **Newton's** application to be designated a Bicycle Friendly Community

While Newton was not selected as a Bicycle Friendly Community this year, reviewers hope that this application marks a commitment by the community to make improvements in the future. Highlights of the application included educational efforts including rides and courses, the great work of Bike Newton and Bicycle and Pedestrian Task Force, and bicycle parking required in zoning ordinance.

Six significant things the community should focus on right away are:

- 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/> Also, ensure that current facilities, including shoulders on some main roadway corridors, are properly maintained and resurfaced
- Fully implement the [comprehensive bike plan](#) and continue to close gaps in the cycling network. Expand the current programs in the engineering, education, encouragement, enforcement and evaluation, while paying special attention to reaching underserved populations. Use an inter-agency task group to lead coordinated city effort -- led by a senior staff person.
- Implement a Safe Routes to School program in your middle and high schools that includes bicycling and encourage all schools to get involved. Short-term projects such as painting crosswalks were done right away while larger construction projects are on-going. Funding is available in the federal transportation bill, SAFETEA-LU, among several other sources at both the federal and state levels. See www.saferoutesinfo.org for more information.
- 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
- Create an official bicycle and pedestrian manager position and expand the time focused on these projects would help in scaling up your BFC efforts. Current work of the BPAC and TDM staff could be complemented by a full-time staff person devoted to acquiring bike/ ped grants and 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

- Create an official Bicycle Advisory Committee or Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee with broad membership from advocacy, diverse departments in the city government, business community, law enforcement, and school officials.

Reviewers provided the following suggestions to further promote bicycling:

Engineering

- Increase the number of arterial streets that have wide shoulder 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- Set up training for city staff and area consultants on bicycle facility design and planning. Consider a membership to the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals www.apbp.org for city Bicycle and Pedestrian Staff. Training opportunities and the listserv provided by this organization are excellent resources.
- 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.
- Offer more options for bicycle users of all ages and abilities through a system of bicycle boulevards. This is a great way to reach new cyclists in their neighborhoods. See more on how to do it at <http://www.ibpi.usp.pdx.edu/guidebook.php>
- 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>
- Improve the coordination between the city and the state paving and rehabilitation projects and facilities maintenance. Consider offering oversight to state DOT staff and contractors working within municipal boundaries are properly installing facilities and are current on best practices.

- Consider measuring the bicycle level of service on community roads. <http://www.bikelib.org/bike-planning/bicycle-level-of-service/>
- 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>

Education

- Continue to improve upon the community's good bicycle safety campaigns. You can use this valuable information from the League's Ride Better Tips to expand 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>
- Work to get bicycling and motorist education messages added to routine local activities such as tax renewal, drivers licensing and testing, or inserts with utility bills.
- Start a motorist education programs for 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.
- 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
- Reach children with bicycling education outside of school in recreation programs, bicycle repair co-ops, Trips for Kids events, and through youth bike clubs. Here is an example from Portland, OR - <http://www.communitycyclingcenter.org/index.php/programs-for-youth>

Encouragement

- Expand encouragement efforts during Bike Month, especially regarding government support. Have the Mayor and/or the City Council proclaim May as Bike Month.
- 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>

- 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.
- 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 a local bike map that gives bicyclists and potential bicyclists a wide variety of choices from transportation to recreation at various cyclist comfort levels.
- 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>
- Launch a bike buddy or bicyclist mentorship program for inexperienced riders. See what Spokane, Wash. and Charlotte, N.C. are doing <http://groups.google.com/group/bikementor>, <http://www.spokanebicycleclub.org/bikebuddy.htm>
- Consider launching a public bike sharing system that is open to the public. This seems like a good option to connect the university community with the rest of the city. See what is being done across the country at <http://streetswiki.wikispaces.com/Public+Bike-Sharing+Programs>

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. Host Enforcement for Bicycle Safety seminar <http://www.bicyclefriendlycommunity.org/popup/enforcement.htm>. This is a great continuing education opportunity for law 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.bicyclefriendlycommunity.org/popup/enforcement.htm>.
- 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.

- 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 \(CD-ROM Training\)](#)

Evaluation/Planning

- Expand efforts to evaluate the bicycle usage and crash statistics to produce a specific plan to reduce the number of crashes in the community. 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](#)
- Work to improve data collection methods on bicycle usage and crash statistics and evaluation of this data.
- Work with the [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.
- Conduct research on bicycle usage beyond the U.S. Census' Journey to Work report and consider implementing a trip reduction program/ordinance. See good examples at <http://bikepeddocumentation.org/> and <http://www.portlandonline.com/transportation/index.cfm?c=43801>

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