

Comparison of Bicycle-Friendly Community Applications from Burlington, VT, Missoula, MO, and Corvallis, OR.

Burlington Walk-Bike Council January 2013

# Bicycle-Friendly Communities

- League of American Bicyclists
- Three Platinum
  - Davis CA, Boulder CO, Portland OR
- 16 Gold
  - Furthest east is Madison WI
- 46 Silver
  - Burlington got Silver in 2011
  - Other eastern cities are New York, Boston, Philadelphia
- 173 Bronze

# Gold Bicycle-Friendly Communities

Community	State	Population
Scottsdale	AZ	217,385
Tucson & East Pima Region	AZ	512,023
Palo Alto	CA	64,403
San Francisco	CA	739,426
Stanford University	CA	13,315
Breckenridge	CO	4,540
Steamboat Springs	CO	12,088
Fort Collins	CO	118,652
Durango	CO	16,887
Minneapolis	MN	379,499
Missoula	MT	66,788
Eugene	OR	142,681
Corvallis	OR	53,165
Seattle	WA	563,374
Madison	WI	221,551
Jackson and Teton County	WY	18,251

# Application Review

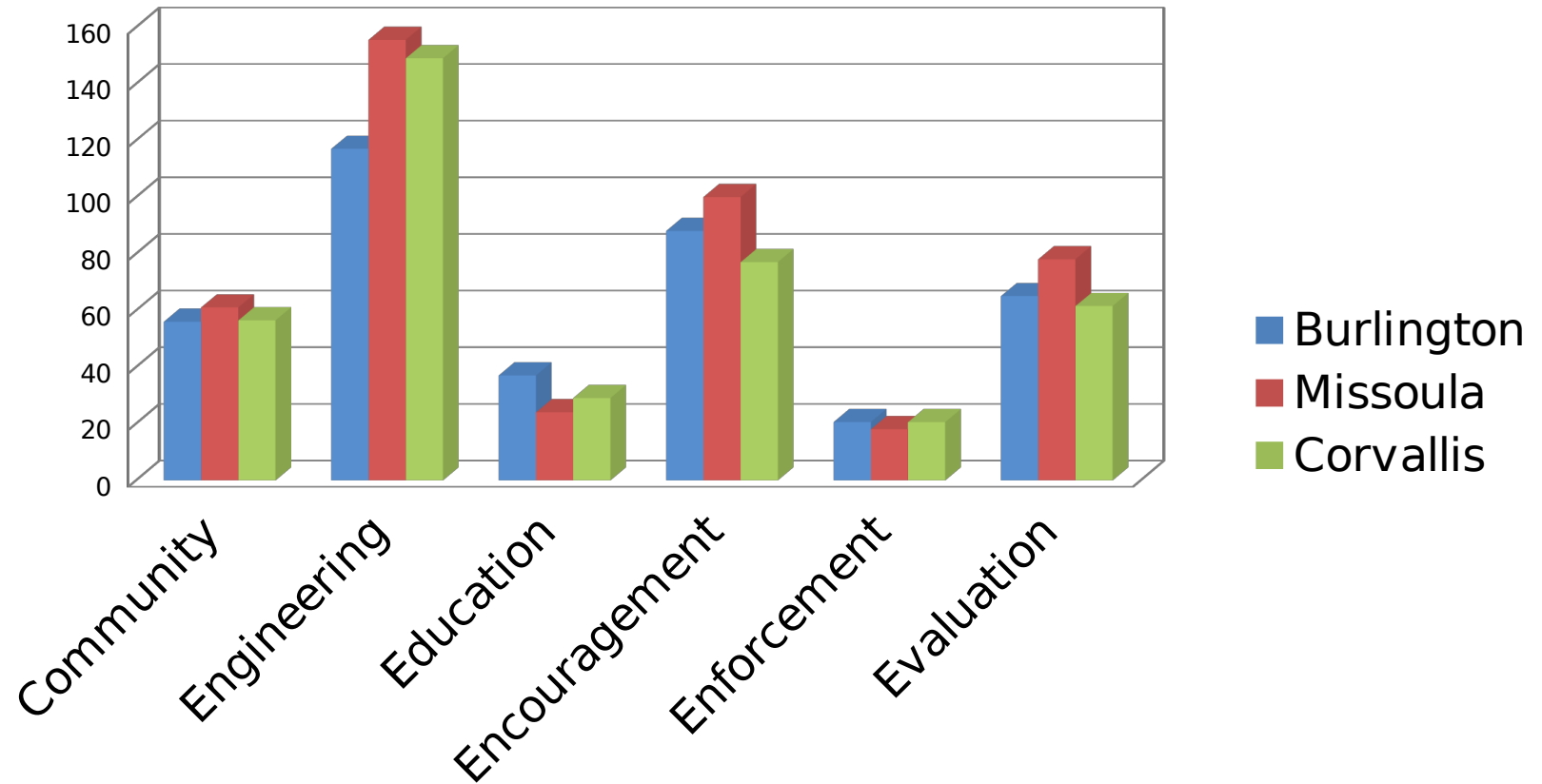
- Compare applications
  - Burlington VT, Corvallis OR, and Missoula MO
  - What makes a Gold application?
- Review performed by:
  - Erik Brown
  - Carmen Cormier
  - Steve Norman
  - Brent Weigel

# Sections of Application

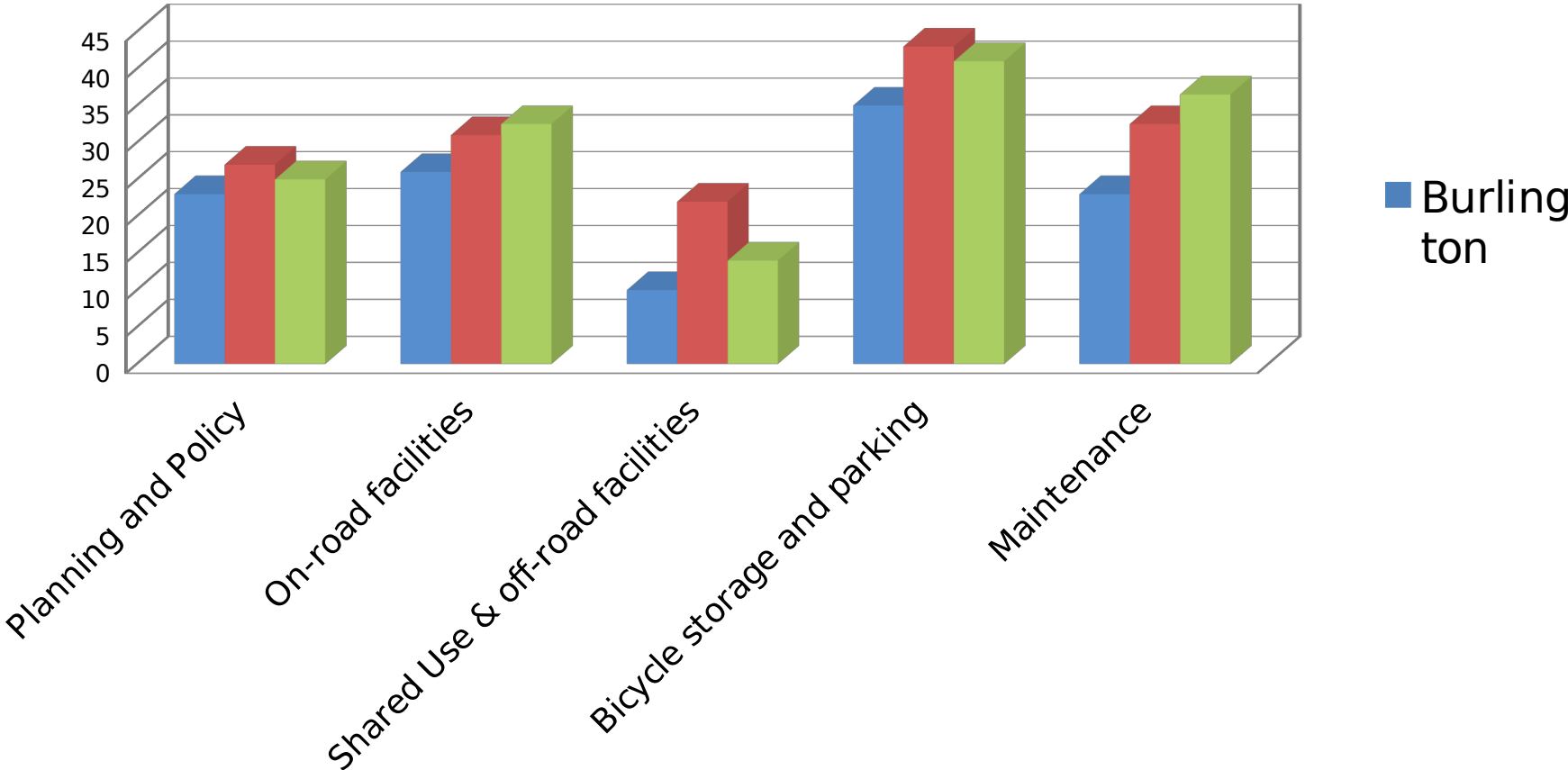
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- Community
- Engineering
- Education
- Encouragement
- Enforcement
- Evaluation and Planning

# Unweighted Comparison



# Engineering Breakdown



# Summary of key findings

- Main gap: infrastructure and engineering
  - On-road and off-road facilities
  - Maintenance
  - Bike storage and parking
- Opportunities for improvement in other areas:
  - Education, Encouragement, and Enforcement
  - Evaluation, Planning, and Policy
- Political support essential
- Bottom line: results



# On-road facilities

- Arterial roads
  - Only **50%** had “bike lanes or wide shoulders” ☹️
  - Compare to **90%** for Missoula; **98%** for Corvallis
  - Clear need for improvement
- Network of bike routes through downtown
  - Winooski Ave. priority

# On-road facilities

- Use full range of accommodations for bicycles:
  - Bike lanes
  - Bike cut-throughs
  - Counterflow lanes
  - Bike tracks
  - Bicycle boulevards
  - Sharrows , etc.
- Improve traffic signals and intersections
  - Marked bike-sensitive loop detectors, bike boxes, etc.

# Bike Storage and Parking

- More bike racks:
  - Less than 15% of parks and recreation centers ☹️ (?)
  - 16-30% of public housing ☹️
  - 46-60% transit stations (airport!) ☹️
  - 76-90% of government buildings ☺️
  - 46-60% office buildings and retail areas ☹️
- Bike lockers
- In-street storage

# Maintenance

- Bike lanes
  - **No priority** - same as car lanes, primarily reactive ☹️
  - Missoula - prioritize with main roads
- Shared-use paths
  - **Minimal** - no sweeping or snow removal, reactive ☹️
  - Missoula - plowing, seasonal sweeping, daily inspection
- Need proactive approach
  - Prioritized snow removal and sweeping
  - Regular inspection

# Shared Use and Off-Road Facilities

- 17 miles of shared use paths 😊
- 22 miles signed bike routes 😊
- Application: no unpaved paths or mountain biking facilities (?) 😞
  - Missoula – 39 miles natural surface, 30 miles singletrack, 63% open to bikes
- BHS, Ethan Allen Park, Intervale trails?

# Policy

- Complete Streets policy 😊
- Some guidelines in place 😊
- Trained staff 😊
- Bike racks on busses 😊
- Improvements:
  - NACTO guidelines
  - Regulations?
  - Bigger bike racks

# Education

- Safe Routes to Schools program
  - 5 of 6 elementary schools 😊
  - 1 of 2 middle schools 😞
  - Not in the high school 😞
  - Private schools?
- Safe Streets Collaborative 😊
- Brochures, newsletters, signs, etc. 😊
- Classes for cyclists, commuters 😊
  - No course/program for professional drivers 😞
  - Could include in driver education classes
- Court diversion program 😊

# Encouragement

- Commuter challenge, other promotions 😊
  - Missoula appears to do more promotion, has more participation
- Private bike sharing program 😊
  - Missoula's is public
- No identified Bike-Friendly Businesses 😞
- Some promotion of bike tourism 😐
  - Corvallis demonstrated strong promotion
- No mountain-biking facilities (?) 😞



# Enforcement

- Training for officers 😊
- Targeted enforcement and education 😊
- Some safety giveaways 😊
- Beach and parks patrol on bikes 😊
  - Missoula and Corvallis have 5-6% of PD on bikes
- Identified point person for biking issues 😊
  - Missoula and Corvallis have PD reps on bike committee

# Evaluation and Planning

- Bicycle plan in place 😊
  - Not meeting implementation targets 😞
  - Does not address mountain biking 😞
  - No formal cooperation with mountain bikers 😞
  
- No mechanism to ensure biking is supported in traditionally underserved communities (?) 😞
  - May not be accurate

# Evaluation and Planning

- Economic impact and other evaluation studies 😊
- Relatively few bicycle/vehicle crashes/fatalities 😊
  - At time of application – 1 fatality, 75 crashes in 5 years
  - May be higher now
  - No specific program in place to reduce the number of cyclist/motor crashes (?) 😞

# Community

- Many local advocacy groups 😊
- Active bicycle advisory committee 😊
  - Missoula has rep from Police, Public Works Director
  - Corvallis has reps from Police, Schools, City Council
- 2 FTE on DPW staff for biking issues 😊
  - Missoula has 4

# Community

- From our application: “lukewarm support for bicycling infrastructure by some at the top levels of city government.”
- Clear barrier to continued progress
- Need political support from the new administration

# Accuracy

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- Application appeared to misrepresent and/or undersell Burlington's support for bicycling
- Next application: capture and describe accurately to show how they contribute to our bike-friendliness

# Results

- Burlington commuter mode share: ~4%
  - Missoula: 6.4%; Corvallis: 11.9%
- LAB: “For us, the outcome (a lot of people are riding bikes for transportation and recreation) is of greatest importance, particularly in the higher award categories.”
- “Burlington currently has a mode share of just over 4%, which is a solid number but too low for its potential (as we have seen in the National Bike Challenge!).”
- “The city needs to evaluate what is keeping people from riding bikes more often and develop action steps to address these concerns.”

# Summary

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- Improve infrastructure
  - On-road and off-road facilities
  - Storage & parking, maintenance
- Redouble efforts on education and encouragement
- Ensure political support
- Sell ourselves
- Get results