

The League of American Bicyclists has designated **Burlington, VT** as a Bicycle Friendly Community at the **Silver** level, because Burlington exhibits a strong commitment to cycling. The reviewers felt that notable steps are being taken to address the needs of current bicyclists and to encourage other residents to become regular cyclists as well:

Engineering Burlington recently implemented a policy to engineer streets with the consideration of bicyclists and is beginning to develop a trail network. Community and transportation planners, and civil engineers receive training in bicycle and pedestrian planning and engineering. The community has a several bike parking ordinances. Most public busses are equipped with bike racks. More than ten percent of all roads accommodate bicycles. The community uses road diets to make roads safer for all road users. Bike infrastructure includes innovative facilities such as contra-flow bike lanes, bike cut-throughs, a buffered bike lane and way-finding signage with distance and/or time information. Half of arterial streets have bike lanes or paved shoulders.

Education Most elementary schools and half of all middle schools have Safe Routes to School programs. Burlington has recently educated motorists and bicyclists on sharing the road safely through public service announcements, community newsletter articles, utility bill inserts, a bicycle ambassador program, newspaper column/blog on cycling and share the road signs. Traffic Skills 101 classes, Cycling Skills classes and Commuter classes are offered regularly in the community.

Encouragement Burlington promotes National Bike Month through a commuter challenge and commuter breakfasts. Community celebrates cycling outside of Bike Month through community rides, public service announcements, a commuter challenge and commuter breakfasts.

Enforcement Burlington has an identified law-enforcement point person to interact with cyclists. Officers have received specific training on the relationship between bicycling and law enforcement. There are specific penalties for failing to yield to a cyclist when turning and/or it is illegal to park or drive in a bike lane (intersections excepted). There is a ban on texting while driving.

Evaluation & Planning Burlington is familiar with and responsive to the needs of cyclists and has a bicycle master plan. Bicycle mode share is above average for U.S. communities. There is a trip reduction ordinance or program.

Particular **highlights** were Cycling Adventure Camp, bike skills training at Champ Camps, Safe Streets Collaborative, Way to Go! Promotion, Kohl's Cares for Kids, Bicycle Ferry, Halloween Ride, Mother's Day bike ride, bicycle cafe "Magliano", 3 feet passing ordinance and Bike Recycle Vermont.

Reviewers were very pleased to see the current efforts, potential and commitment to make Burlington an even greater place for bicyclists which can be seen in the growing number of cyclists. The BFC review team expects great things in the future given the good local team and the coming improvements to the network and programs.

The key measures Burlington should take to improve cycling in the community are:

Accommodate bicycles at intersections and multi-use path crossings to improve efficiency and safety of all road and path users. At intersections, time traffic lights for bicycle speeds and incorporate microwave cameras, loop detectors or bicycle signal heads, and include on-street pavement markings that indicate where cyclists should locate their bicycle to trigger the signal. Consider adding bike boxes to make bicyclists more visible to motorists. Ensure that bike lanes are continuous through intersections. Consider incorporating raised multi-use path crossings or other high-visibility treatments on medium and high traffic roads. Ensure that both path and road users are clearly informed about who has the right-of-way at every crossing.

Education on bicycling is not only important for bicyclists but for all road users - including motorists. Start a motorist education programs for professional drivers such as bus and taxi drivers in the city and strengthen the Safe Streets Collaborative. See what San Francisco has done <http://www.sfbike.org/?drivertraining> Classes can be offered by League Cycling Instructors or local bicycle advocates and material is available through the League of American Bicyclists.

Expand encouragement efforts during National Bike Month in partnership with local bicycle advocacy groups. Have the Mayor and/or the City Council proclaim May as Bike Month. Host, sponsor and/or encourage bicycle-themed

community events such as community rides. Ensure to integrate your efforts into the 'Way To Go' commuter challenge if appropriate and widely advertise all bicycle-themed community events. You and the local bicycle community can increase your efforts on Bike to Work Day/Week, for example by having the mayor or council member lead a commuter convoy: <http://www.bikeleague.org/programs/bikemonth/>

Recreational bicycling can be promoted through facilities and programs like mountain bike parks, velodromes, cyclocross course or similar bicycle amenities. Ensure that the facilities are accessible by bicycle, so that there is no need to drive to ride.

Update the comprehensive bike plan in close collaboration with the community to ensure public involvement, information and ownership. Focus on developing/completing a seamless cycling network that emphasizes and creates short distances between residential areas and popular destinations such as schools, commercial areas, recreational facilities, cultural resources and transit stops. Complement infrastructure planning with encouragement, education, and enforcement programs to increase usage. Develop a clear vision statement and set ambitious but attainable targets. The overarching goal should be to increase the percentage of trips made by bicycle in the community.

Reviewers provided the following menu of recommendations to further promote bicycling:

Engineering

Low hanging fruit and fast results:

Ensure that new and improved bicycle facilities conform to current best practices and guidelines – such as the *NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide*, *AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities* and your DOT's own guidelines. Consider innovative bicycle infrastructure such as bicycle tracks, contra-flow bike lanes or colorful bike lanes.

Provide ongoing training opportunities 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. Your local bicycle advocacy group are a great resource for this kind of training.

Improve the coordination and communication between city departments and state paving and rehabilitation projects and facilities maintenance. Consider offering oversight to state DOT staff and contractors working within municipal boundaries. Ensure that facility design follows current best practice and that they are properly installed.

Consider measuring the bicycle level of service (LOS) on community roads and at intersections, to be able to identify the most appropriate routes for inclusion in the community bicycle network, determine "weak links" in the network, prioritize sites needing improvement, and evaluate alternate treatments for improving bike-friendliness of a roadway or intersection: <http://www.bikelib.org/bike-planning/bicycle-level-of-service/> (roads) and <http://www.bicyclinginfo.org/library/details.cfm?id=4425> (intersections).

Long Term Goals:

Since arterial and collector roads are the backbone of every transportation network, it is essential to increase the number of wide shoulders or bike lanes along these roads to allow bicyclists of all skill levels to reach their destinations quickly and safely.

Continue to expand the bike network and increase network connectivity through the use of bike lanes, bike tracks, shared lane arrows, signed routes and bicycle cut-throughs. 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.

Increase the amount of secure bicycle parking at popular destinations such as transit stops, schools, recreation and entertainment facilities, retail and office clusters and churches throughout the community. More and more communities also ensure that multi-family residential developments provide secure and covered bike parking.

Allow access to suitable public lands for mountain bicyclists. Ensure to connect any off-road trails and facilities to the overall bicycle network. Look for ways to bridge the divide between the bike community and equestrian community by creating dedicated trails for each user group and multiuse trails where feasible.

Develop a system of bicycle boulevards that creates an attractive, convenient, and comfortable cycling environment welcoming to cyclists of all ages and skill levels. See more on how to do it at <http://www.ibpi.usp.pdx.edu/guidebook.php>

Education

Low hanging fruit and fast results:

Ensure that bicycle-safety education is a routine part of public education and that schools and the surrounding neighborhoods are particularly safe and convenient for biking. Work with your Bicycle Advisory Committee and local bicycle advocates to develop and implement Safe Routes to School programs that emphasizes bicycling for high schools. Strongly encourage all elementary and middle schools to participate in the existing programs. In Arlington County, Virginia, Department of Public Works, Police and school officials assessed every school regarding its accessibility by bicycle. A list of problems was developed and measures were identified. Short-term projects such as painting crosswalks were implemented immediately, while larger construction projects are on-going. Funding is available through the federal transportation bill SAFETEA-LU, among several other sources at both the federal and state levels. See www.saferoutesinfo.org for more information.

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>. Again, consider taking advantage of your local bicycle advocates for content and strategy development and manpower.

Add bicycling and motorist education messages to local routine activities such as drivers licensing and testing.

Start a bicyclist and motorist ticket diversion program that offers road users given citation 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://bikeped.pima.gov/Safety%20\(pdf%20\)/April%20-%20May%202011%20Bicycle%20Diversion%20Class%20\(No%20Locations\).pdf](http://bikeped.pima.gov/Safety%20(pdf%20)/April%20-%20May%202011%20Bicycle%20Diversion%20Class%20(No%20Locations).pdf)

Continue to improve bicycling education opportunities for children and adults. The essential *Smart Cycling* curriculum can be integrated into motor vehicle violation diversion programs, Safe Routes to School, as well as motorist education classes for city and private sector employees.

Team with a local advocacy group, bicycle shop, or League Cycling Instructor to offer regular public maintenance classes to residents at public parks, libraries, community centers and in conjunction with city events. A short tutorial on how to change a flat tire can empower a person to ride their bike more often. You can find local instructors and bike shops here: https://members.bikeleague.org/members_online/members/findit.asp

Encouragement

Low hanging fruit and fast results:

Encourage local businesses to promote cycling to the workplace and to seek recognition through the *Bicycle Friendly Business* program. Businesses will profit from a healthier, happier and more productive workforce while

the community would potentially profit from some bicycle-active businesses as well: increasing the bicycle mode share, less commuter traffic, better air quality, public bike parking in prime locations provided by businesses, new and powerful partners in advocating for bike infrastructure and programs on the local, state and federal level, and public bike events, skills and maintenance classes hosted or sponsored by businesses. The city should be the model employer for the rest of the community. For more information about the free program please visit <http://www.bikeleague.org/programs/bicyclefriendlyamerica/bicyclefriendlybusiness/>.

Continue to encourage local institutions of higher education to promote cycling and to seek recognition through the Bicycle Friendly University program. College and university campuses are unique environments for their high density, stimulating atmosphere and defined boundaries. These factors make them ideal environments to incorporate bikes. Many colleges and universities have built upon these good conditions and embraced the enthusiasm for more bicycle-friendly campuses by incorporating bike share programs, bike co-ops, clubs, bicycling education classes and policies to promote bicycling as a preferred means of transportation. The community could potentially profit as well: Communities near a BFU such as Stanford or University of California at Davis have a very high number of regular bicyclists (as many students bike to campus, shops and restaurants), less congestion around campus, safer streets and university-hosted public bicycle events, programs and classes." See what Stanford University is doing for cyclists:

http://www.bikeleague.org/programs/bicyclefriendlyamerica/communities/bfc_stanford_university.php

Actively involve the local bicycle community in community planning efforts, policy development and public outreach.

Set up and promote bicycle-themed community celebrations and/or rides each time the community completes a new bicycle related project. This is a great way to show off the city's good efforts and introduces new users to the improvement.

Consider offering a 'Ciclovía' 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 partnering with a local bicycle advocacy group or bike club to launch a bike buddy or bicyclist mentorship program for inexperienced riders. A bike mentorship program that teams experienced cyclists with newcomers is a great way to encourage and educate novice commuters. See what Spokane, Wash. and Charlotte, N.C. are doing <http://groups.google.com/group/bikementor>,

<http://www.spokanebicycleclub.org/bikebuddy.htm>

Develop a series of short (2-5 mi.) (themed) loop rides around the community and provide appropriate way-finding signage. Integrate these rides into local bike maps.

Enforcement

Low hanging fruit and fast results:

Invite a police officer to become an active member of the bicycle advisory committee.

Have police officers distribute helmets and bike lights (or coupons to the local bike shop for each) to encourage all types of cyclists to ride more safely and remove the barriers to attaining these essential bike accessories. See the helmet and light promotions at Stanford:

http://transportation.stanford.edu/alt_transportation/BikeSafetyEd.shtml#helmet.

Enforcement practices could also include positive enforcement ticketing. Police officers could team up with local stores to reward safe cycling practices by handing out gift certificates to cyclists who are "caught" following the law. See what Tewksbury, MA is doing:

<http://www.wickedlocal.com/tewksbury/news/lifestyle/x1837747400/Tewksbury-police-reward-young-cyclists-for-wearing-their-helmets#axzz1WdjHHfMo>

Pass laws or ordinances that protect cyclists, e.g. implement penalties for motor vehicle users that 'door' cyclists and ban cell phone use while driving.

Evaluation/Planning

Low hanging fruit and fast results:

Regularly conduct research on bicycle usage beyond the U.S. Census' Journey to Work report to more efficiently distribute resources according to demand. Conduct yearly counts using automated and manual counters in partnership with advocacy organizations. We also strongly encourage you to participate in the National Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation Project: <http://bikepeddocumentation.org/>.

Expand efforts to evaluate bicycle crash statistics and produce a specific plan to reduce the number of crashes in the community. Available tools include *Intersection Magic*: <http://www.pdmagic.com/im/> and PBCAT. See the report *Bicyclist Fatalities and Serious Injuries in New York City 1996-2005*

Long Term Goals

Integrate the implementation of the bike plan into the master plan, all land use plans, zoning ordinances and larger development projects.

Allow and encourage a mix of uses, a well connected street network and compact development patterns throughout the community to shorten the distances people need to bike.

Work with the mountain biking community to develop a plan for off-road access and increase opportunities for single-track riding within the city.

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