

Action Plan for Bicycle Friendly Communities

We, the undersigned Mayors and municipal elected officials, make decisions every day affecting the health and safety of our residents, the efficient conduct of commerce and delivery of government services, and the long term quality of life in our communities.

Cities across the globe are managing diverse issues such as pollution, congestion, traffic safety, accessibility, social inclusion, and economic growth. Increasing urbanization and sprawl is generating extra demand for quality public spaces and recreation opportunities. A renewed emphasis on security and the costs of dealing with the emerging epidemics of obesity and physical inactivity are stretching limited resources even further.

Solutions to these many challenges are equally diverse and complex. This Charter recognizes one policy initiative that addresses these challenges and contributes to many of the solutions necessary to improve the quality of life in cities: increasing the percentage of trips made by bicycle by making communities more bicycle-friendly.

We recognize that increasing bicycle use can:

Improve the environment by reducing the impact on residents of pollution and noise, limiting greenhouse gases, and improving the quality of public spaces.

Reduce congestion by shifting short trips (the majority of trips in cities) out of cars. This will also make cities more accessible for public transport, walking, essential car travel, emergency services, and deliveries.

Save lives by creating safer conditions for bicyclists and as a direct consequence improve the safety of all other road users. Research shows that increasing the number of bicyclists on the street improves bicycle safety.

Increase opportunities for residents of all ages to participate socially and economically in the community, regardless income or ability. Greater choice of travel modes also increases independence, especially among seniors and children.

Boost the economy by creating a community that is an attractive destination for new residents, tourists and businesses.

Enhance recreational opportunities, especially for children, and further contribute to the quality of life in the community.

Save city funds by increasing the efficient use of public space, reducing the need for costly new road infrastructure, preventing crashes, improving the health of the community, and increasing the use of public transport.

Enhance public safety and security by increasing the number of “eyes on the street” and providing more options for movement in the event of emergencies, natural disasters, and major public events.

Improve the health and well being of the population by promoting routine physical activity.

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Therefore we, the undersigned Mayors and municipal elected officials, are committed to taking the following steps to improve conditions for bicycling and thus to realizing the significant potential benefits of bicycling in our community. We hereby adopt the following **Action Plan for Bicycle Friendly Communities**:

1. Adopt a target level of bicycle use (e.g. percent of trips) and safety to be achieved within a specific timeframe, and improve data collection necessary to monitor progress.
2. Provide safe and convenient bicycle access to all parts of the community through a signed network of on- and off-street facilities, low-speed streets, and secure parking. Local cyclists should be involved in identifying maintenance needs and ongoing improvements.
3. Establish information programs to promote bicycling for all purposes, and to communicate the many benefits of bicycling to residents and businesses (e.g. with bicycle maps, public relations campaigns, neighborhood rides, a ride with the Mayor)
4. Make the City a model employer by encouraging bicycle use among its employees (e.g. by providing parking, showers and lockers, and establishing a city bicycle fleet).
5. Ensure all city policies, plans, codes, and programs are updated and implemented to take advantage of every opportunity to create a more bicycle-friendly community. Staff in all departments should be offered training to better enable them to complete this task.
6. Educate all road users to share the road and interact safely. Road design and education programs should combine to increase the confidence of bicyclists.
7. Enforce traffic laws to improve the safety and comfort of all road users, with a particular focus on behaviors and attitudes that cause motor vehicle/bicycle crashes.
8. Develop special programs to encourage bicycle use in communities where significant segments of the population do not drive (e.g. through Safe Routes to Schools programs) and where short trips are most common.
9. Promote intermodal travel between public transport and bicycles, e.g. by putting bike racks on buses, improving parking at transit, and improving access to rail and public transport vehicles.
10. Establish a citywide, multi-disciplinary committee for nonmotorized mobility to submit to the Mayor/Council a regular evaluation and action plan for completing the items in this Charter.

“We will promote safe and environmentally friendly cycling and walking by providing safe infrastructure and networks...” World Health Organization Charter on Transport, Environment and Health, 1999.

“The US Conference of Mayors calls on cities and communities to promote increased safe bicycle use for transportation and recreation...” US Conference of Mayors, 2003.

For the City of:

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Signature

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Name