**Slide 1**

[Thank your audience for coming and introduce yourself.]

The Bicycle Friendly Community program is a program of the League of American

Bicyclists and I am here to tell you about this excellent program and assist you in

using it to:

-Assess the quality of bicycling options for residents and visitors

-Improve quality of life and sustainability for the community

-Improve traffic congestion and safety

-Prioritize and improve the effectiveness of transportation investments

-Receive recognition for bicycle-friendly initiatives your community makes

-Build a more bicycle-friendly community through step by step guidelines and assistance.

**Slide 2**

The League was founded in 1880 and had big wins early to get the first paved roads for bicyclists. Today, the League continues to make biking better. Its mission is to lead the movement to create a Bicycle Friendly America for everyone. As leaders, the League’s commitment is to listen and learn, define standards and share best practices to engage diverse communities and build a powerful, unified voice for change.

**Slide 3**

The Bicycle Friendly America program is a key component of the League. It provides a roadmap to transform states, communities, businesses and universities. The free online applications, resource libraries and hands-on assistance from program staff offer guidance in building truly bicycle-friendly places.

**Slide 4**

It is important to say that all of this is not a special interest. Creating more

opportunities for bicycling is a simple solution to many of the challenges we face as a nation – from improving personal and environmental health, to building vibrant and robust local economies.

Bicycle Friendly Communities always top the lists of best places to live, work, visit,

retire and study from Forbes and Newsweek to the international rankings of city

quality of life. In addition, these cities have been recognized for their economic

sustainability through the recession. *Businessweek* - top 20 cities to ride out a

recession, 17 are BFCs.

**Slide 5**

And a big part of their high quality of life comes with making bicycling an easier, more comfortable option for people to get to where they want to go or recreate by bike. It works and the proof is in cities across the country.

(Photo: Baltimore - Bronze BFC where bicycle commuting has doubled in the last 10 years)

**Slide 6**

Bicycling is more than a practical, cost-effective solution to many municipal challenges. It’s an opportunity to make your community a vibrant destination for residents and visitors — a place where people don’t just live and work, but thrive.

Community leaders like Mayor Ballard from Indianapolis see building a Bicycle Friendly Community as a way to attract and keep talented people.

**Slide 7**

The League has run a BFC program for 10 years– at first in the 1990s with relatively easy criteria for communities to meet.

In 2002 the program was overhauled and a new, more rigorous application and

review process was initiated. One important change was the creation of a four

tiered award system – created with the intent of encouraging communities to

continually improve. A fifth award level – Diamond – was added in 2012.

**Slide 8**

The free, online application form asks a series of about a dozen questions in each

of five major areas of bicycle policy and programs. The application provides a menu of options for any community to better welcome and accommodate bicycling.

Communities are encouraged to provide the most comprehensive approach to

making bicycling a more comfortable and convenient option for citizens. To reach

the higher levels of BFC designation, communities must score well across all five

areas.

The five E’s are:

1. Engineering: Physical infrastructure and hardware to support cycling

2. Education: Programs that ensure the safety, comfort and convenience of

cyclists and fellow road users

3. Encouragement: Incentives, promotions and opportunities that inspire

and enable people to ride

4. Enforcement: Equitable laws and programs that ensure motorists and

cyclists are held accountable

5. Evaluation: Processes that demonstrate a commitment to measuring

results and planning for the future

(Photo: Philadelphia’s Mayor Nutter with city’s Bicycle Ambassadors)

**Slide 9**

The League has received over 750 applications and designated over 350 BFCs in 50 states.

After a community submits the application and sends any appropriate supporting

literature, the application is reviewed three ways:

a) League staff review the applications internally

b) An external reviewer is asked to score each application, and

c) Local cyclists – League members, LCIs, shop owners, advocacy group leaders,

club leaders etc., are asked to comment on the application and provide their perspective on the bicycle-friendliness of the community.

This last stage of the review is important to us, and local reviewers have definitely

had an impact on many of the awards – or lack of awards.

**Slide 10**

Investing in bicycling works! Between 2000-2013 , the average American city has seen a 62% growth in bicycle commuting – Bicycle Friendly Communities have seen a 105% growth.

It’s not just in places like Portland, OR and Boulder, CO where this is happening. It’s happening in Baltimore, Indianapolis and Memphis as well.

**Slide 11**

Over and over, we hear how useful the program is for coordination, benchmarking and giving the deserved recognition to all of the people – from civic and business leaders to advocates and educators – for building a great bicycle-friendly community

**Slide 12**

The first step in the process is usually visiting bikeleague.org/community and review the Getting Started guide, application and resources, and use the BFC Scorecard to do a quick assessment of your community.

Your local advocacy group(s) and bike club(s) should be brought into the discussion of applying and of course, working to build a stronger bicycle-friendly community.

**Slide 13**

The League’s online resources include best practices and success stories from communities of all shapes and sizes from every region of the country. The League’s BFA program staff members are available to answer your questions and help you through the process.

**Slide 14**

Biking is fun, liberating and good for you and your community. Building a bicycle-friendly community is not rocket science. It is being done in small towns and big cities with the same great results – happy people and vibrant communities.

**Slide 15**

Thank you very much. Questions?