

Cycling = Livability

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In the past decade there has been a semi-revolution in the world of cycling in North America. Through various means and for various reasons, cities have been investing more in cycling programs and infrastructure. Cities with heavy investment in cycling are consistently rated among the best places to live, the most economically rewarding, and the most progressive -- the choice of the "creative class." The chart below compares cities with healthy bicycle programs, as evidenced by recent rise in bicycle commute rates, to a global livability ranking. (League of American Bicyclists, 2010; Transport Canada, 2008; Business Week, 2007)

City	Rise in Bike Commute Rates 2000-2009	Mercer Global City Livability Ranking 2007
Portland OR	230%	46
Montreal	130%	22
Chicago	129%	44
Toronto	125%	15
Boston	118%	36
Calgary	118%	24
Honolulu	88%	27
Washington	86%	44
Seattle	59%	49
San Francisco	50%	29
New York	29%	48

Bicycle Use and Livability in Select U.S. and Canadian Cities

This article focuses on methods to further increase the quantity of bicycle trips, recreational and commuter. 16 percent of bike trips are school and work commutes (FHWA, 2004), which means that five out of every six trips are rides to the store, park, gym, post office, a friend's house, or just around the block. Additionally, these include food or goods delivery, going to meetings, or doing field work. A single-minded focus on increasing the number of work/home trips causes us to ignore the other 84 percent of cycling trips that are crucial to increasing mode share.

TPD Webcasts

After successfully coordinating two webcasts in year 2010, TPD is working with the APA Utah Chapter to provide CM credits for its members through 2011.

This year, TPD plans continue this program and is looking for volunteers to help develop webinars. Some potential topics suggested by past participants include:

- Strategies for gaining "choice" transit riders.
- Transportation Planning and Green House gasses
- Transportation Legislation
- Traffic Generation for Planners
- Intermodal Transportation Planning
- Strategies MPOs are using to implement their long range plans

If you would like to help develop a webinar, please contact Madhu Narayanasamy, Membership Committee Chair at mc.apatpd@gmail.com.

More details about upcoming webinars can be found at <http://www.utah-apa.org/webcasts.htm>.

Safety in Numbers

The safety in numbers phenomenon has been well researched and documented, beginning with Peter Jacobsen's research in 2003. Jackson found that as cycling rates double, bicycle crash rates rise by only 40 percent. Thus, cycling becomes safer per cyclist. This trend was confirmed in subsequent studies, including Robinson, 2005; Geyer, et al., 2006; and Elyk, 2009.

The primary goal of a cycling program should be to increase ridership, which has the additional benefit of improving cyclist safety.

Potential Cyclists Need...

A survey conducted by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration found that the number one reason for not cycling was lack of access to a bike. (NHTSA, 2002). Surveys of commuters in Amsterdam, Montreal and Seattle list distance and danger as the top reasons why they do not cycle. (Transport Canada, 2008). Another reason for not cycling is the desire to ride (and chat) with others, as when you take a walk or drive with a friend. In short, potential cyclists need:

(1) a bike, (2) short and (3) safe trips, and (4) a friend with whom to ride.

...a bike

You need a bike to ride a bike, and if you have one, you need someplace to keep it. This suggests that homes, offices and shopping locations should have bike garages, or at least parking incorporated into the design. Hence, building and zoning codes should require bike parking, in much the same way they require auto parking, toilets, accessible design, and so on.

Bike share programs are another way to make bikes accessible to those who may not own one. Hotels and work places can also offer bikes to their customers and employees.

...short rides

Trip length is a critical component of cycling. Using the rough guide of a 20 minute commute at 10 miles per hour (a “no sweat” pace), cycling has a range of three miles. Cycling will be most competitive in locations that have a three mile average trip length. In places where people must travel farther to work, school and play, it is a good idea to integrate

bikes into the transit system – for the last (or first) leg of the journey. The three mile range also needs to be integrated into town and regional planning.



Bike on bus, Schenectady NY

...to feel safe

It has been shown that when resources are put into high-quality facilities that make people feel safe, they will use them (Nelson & Allen, 1997; Pucher & Dijkstra, 2003; Dill & Carr, 2003). Planners can use the strategies on the following page to increase safety and perception of safety.

...to ride together, including with children

Imagine the life cycle of a cyclist. They start with training wheels riding in the driveway. They graduate to bikes with orange flags and playing cards taped to their spokes. As young adults they tour by bike, maybe ride on the weekend, or to work every now and then. Once they have kids they buy

a child seat and use it until the little ones are old enough to start pedaling themselves. They are then faced with a predicament – how does one ride safely with a child?

If there is a bike path or cycle track of sufficient width, then they can ride side by side. Fortunately, some jurisdictions, including New Mexico and Washington allow cycling two abreast. Although not all cities have streets with sufficient width to accommodate side by side cyclists, this amenity can greatly improve safety and comfort of parent and children riding together.

The Future

By identifying and addressing the needs of non-commuter cyclists, the overall number of bicycle users will increase. As recreational or casual cyclists increase in numbers, small improvements that address their needs will have great impacts in increasing participation and safety.



Mother riding with son, Amsterdam, Netherlands

Infrastructure Strategies for Cycling Safety



Sharrow marking for wayfinding



Wide medians for cyclist to wait at lights



Colored bike lanes, especially at intersections



Cycle tracks to physically separate cyclists from high speed traffic



Bike boxes at signalized intersections



Bridges



Underpasses

Short cuts!