

ENCOURAGEMENT

INTRODUCTION

The companion to “build it and they will come” is “tell people about it and they will ride”. Through a comprehensive variety of promotional, educational and encouragement strategies, Portland has seen dramatic increases in bicycle trips as expansion of the bikeway network has occurred.

The highlights that follow demonstrate the breath and depth of the encouragement strategies that Portland has pursued for the last 10 years. As Portland turns its attentions to making bicycling an easy, safe, and comfortable choice for most Portland residents, all levels of government, non-profits, neighborhoods, businesses, and residents will need to expand the range of strategies to come up with creative ways to address the real and perceived barriers to bicycling.

Portland has championed the award-winning SmartTrips Program as its signature encouragement effort. SmartTrips builds on the principle that individuals engaged in a dialogue about alternative transportation are more likely to actually change their behavior than if simply presented with more traditional advertising and promotional activities. SmartTrips offers all residents the opportunity to order information and resource materials and participate in hands-on programs in a target area to assist them in making the choice to walk, bike, ride transit and carpool. Key components of this program are the “Portland By Cycle” kit, which includes a packet of maps and information, and the popular “Portland By Cycle” and “Women on Bikes” rides and clinics, which are aimed at getting new and inexperienced riders on their bikes for recreation and transportation.



Jonathan Maus/BikePortland.org

Giving people the opportunity to ride, at whatever level they are comfortable, is crucial to encouraging increased bicycling. There are literally thousands of organized bicycle rides and events every year and throughout the year in Portland. There are large rides such as the Providence Bridge Pedal, which accommodates 17,000 riders across 10 Willamette River bridges in August and is second only to New York City’s ride in size. The Worst Day of the Year Ride in February 2006 hosted 1,500 riders. There are also small rides, such as those run by Portland’s Office of Transportation (PDOT) offering lessons on three-wheeled bikes for seniors. In addition to the vast number and variety of slow, fast, long and short bicycle rides available to new and experienced riders, Portland has an active racing and mountain biking community. Bicycle safety clubs at schools get more kids riding and riding safely with the Safer Routes to School program (see chapter X Safety). Regardless of their riding experience or interest any person can find an entry point to riding.

Portland also offers a citywide bicycle map of recommended routes. This has been enhanced with Metro’s regional *Bike There* map, City of Portland downtown route and parking maps and five neighborhood bike maps.

With the exception of the water-resistant regional *Bike There* map, all other maps are free and available at most bike shops and community centers around town and at many community events and fairs. PDOT distributes 60,000 maps annually. PDOT also offers personalized bicycle trip planning, complete with directions and marked up routes for the Portland metropolitan area, and assistance with long distance bike touring routes. Community activists with Metro developed a sophisticated web-based trip planner, ByCycle.net, which will eventually include choices for travel based on quickest route, hill avoidance, and low-traffic street preferences.

Commuters who want to start bicycling to work or school have a wide variety of programs to choose from to find the support and advice they need. The Bicycle Transportation Alliance's "Bicycle Commute Challenge" recruits more than 550 area businesses for a month-long contest to see who can get the most employees riding in September. The Community Cycling Center's "Create a Commuter" program works with social service agencies to equip and train low-income and newly employed Portland residents with everything they need to start commuting to work by bicycle. Transportation Management Associations (Lloyd District and Swan Island) work with area businesses to implement policies, incentives and programs to benefit cycling employees. PDOT's new SmartTrips Downtown program focuses on encouraging bicycle commuters as a means to address the congestion caused by construction projects downtown. Hundreds of employers and tens of thousands of employees participate annually in one program or another.

The number and types of people cycling has grown and become more and more diverse. Started in 1991, the Bicycle Transportation Alliance (BTA), a Portland-based statewide bicycle advocacy organization, now has 3,000 members in the Portland region. With the BTA focusing on advocacy, combined with the high level of political and agency support for bicycling in Portland, many bicyclists find that they can focus their attentions on the important task of creating fun. This is exemplified by the organized bicycle fun created by Shift to Bikes, self-described as a "loose-knit and informal bunch of bike-loving folks." Shift organizes an annual Bunny on a Bike Ride with dozens of families riding dressed in bunny costumes and the monthly Breakfast on the Bridges where cyclists riding over Willamette River bridges can help themselves to a free morning coffee and donut the last Friday of each month. These and hundreds of other fun activities encourage and entice ever more people to ride. And send a message that riding a bicycle is not just for the bicycle advocate, messenger or the self-identified "cyclist".

Beyond the bicycling and potential bicycling constituency, Portland has begun to engage the business community in a conversation about the benefits of bicycling to the Portland economy. The Oregon Bicycle Business Association has been formed to promote these emerging small- and a few large-manufacturing, retail, professional, and tourist businesses representing at least \$67 million annually to the Portland economy. The bicycle industry in Portland is more fully discussed in Chapter 12.

The Portland print media, radio and television and now web have expanded their coverage of bicycling and the variety of topics concerning bicycles. Bicycle fatalities are worthy of significant coverage, as are bicycle cultural events. The City's Portland Bicycle Summit and launching of the BTA's Bike Boulevard campaign made the front page feature article, an editorial supporting the efforts, and Jonathan Nicolas's column in the *Oregonian* all on one day. In 2005 the *Willamette Week* created a special pull out called "I Like Bike" publicizing some of the activities and events happening that spring and summer for bicycling. Lastly, BikePortland.org, a blog all about

Portland's bike community and bike issues, is one of the top blogs in the country with about 40,000 unique visitors on a typical month.

HISTORY OF ENCOURAGEMENT PROGRAMS

Portland prides itself on being on the cutting edge of developing a bicycle-friendly city. For many years Portland focused its energies on building the much-needed infrastructure that allows bicycling to be a viable option for more than just the "brave and fearless" rider. Bicycle lanes were often the facility of choice based on the demands a previous generation of advocates and cyclists combined with the need to increase bicyclists' safety on busier through streets. Early encouragement efforts focused on developing a route map and building of many miles of bikeways.

In the 1990s, Portland looked toward expanding its menu of education and encouragement strategies to increase ridership. The PDOT Bicycle Program, which had been dispersed throughout the agency, shifted most of its outreach and encouragement programs to the newly formed Transportation Options Division. Transportation Options was made up of transportation demand management (TDM), bicycling, walking, traffic calming, and traffic safety project managers. This division investigated a myriad of strategies from around the country and the globe looking for innovations and tried and true programs that would measurably and reliably increase bicycling, walking, transit use, carpooling and carsharing through promotion, encouragement and education.

Options brought TravelSmart – an individualized marketing program – to the U.S. After a pilot project in southwest Portland and a large-scale project in north Portland, Options modified the project to reduce costs and build community. "SmartTrips" adds hands-on approaches to the dialogue about transportation with opportunities to try out bicycling (and walking). Like the rest of the world, Portland demonstrated dramatic decreases in drive alone trips and increases in bicycling, transit use, walking, and carpooling. The SmartTrips Eastside Hub and SmartTrips Northeast Hub saw nine percent and thirteen percent reductions in drive alone trips respectively. A more detailed description can be found in Best Practices – Behavior Change.

During this time new bicycling community groups were forming and growing to address the more diverse interests and encourage more riders on streets, dirt trails, racing venues, and off-street paths. A group of activists, who would later identify themselves as "Shift", organized Bike Summer/Pedalpalooza in 2002. They have continued this "summer of bike fun" as an annual two week-long festival of bicycling events and rides each June. Portland United Mountain Pedalers (PUMP) is pursuing the development of single-track bike routes, or mountain bike trails, within the city of Portland. Slug Velo leads slow 6paced bike rides. Oregon Bicycle Racing Association hosts dozens of races during the racing season. ZooBombers take 20-30 mini-bikes to the top of the

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This Issue:

*Why People Don't Ride a Bike
(and How to Get Them to Start)*
Part I

A core function of Transportation Options' work is to facilitate the individual and cultural shift from drive alone auto trips to more efficient and sustainable ways of getting around Portland.

One of the many distinctions that Portland holds is the direct result of our success - the designation of being the number one city for bicycling in North America by Bicycling Magazine.

The number of people bicycling and the number of trips taken by bicycle have risen steadily in Portland over the last 15 years. This homegrown trend runs in opposition to most US cities of similar or larger size.

So what is it that motivates people to bicycle in Portland? What keeps people from bicycling more, or at all? We know the doubling of bikeway miles doubled in the roughly 7 years leading to the year 2000 corresponded with an increase in bicycle trips across the Willamette River Bridges, but that's not the whole story. What are the other factors at play?

As part of the Platinum Bike effort in Portland, Transportation Commissioner Sam Adams commissioned focus groups and polling to help tease out the reasons.

In January 2007, six hundred Portland residents, in one of three groups of two hundred each, participated in the polling. The three groups represented were:

- Current Bicyclists
- Potential Bicyclists
- Not interested or not able bicyclists



west hills (the Oregon Zoo MAX stop) and “bomb” down the hill every Sunday night. These are but a few of the newer groups that make up the community of bicycling groups. (For a comprehensive list of current organizations see X.)

PDOT’s Traffic Investigations Section, which focuses on safety, took a page from the Marin County Safe Routes to School program to create a comprehensive bicycle education program for middle and elementary school children. Part of this partnership includes bike encouragement safety clubs. A full description of Safe Routes to School can be found in Chapter X – Safety. Investigations also created a new senior bicycling program to encourage the elderly to get safely back on their bikes with three-wheeled vehicles.

What follows is a look at the key promotion and encouragement programs, projects and strategies that Portland has undertaken in the last ten years. The list is representative but not exhaustive. There are just too many interesting and innovative activities to catalog them all. Best Practices section is broken up into types of strategies and is followed by a listing of some of the current ideas for programs and projects to address encouragement deficiencies. These deficiencies are the start of the conversation on developing strategies to include and pursue in the next 10-20 years.

BEST PRACTICES PROMOTION AND ENCOURAGEMENT OVERVIEW

There are four basic encouragement strategies: providing service, changing behavior, raising awareness and providing incentives to ride (or disincentives to drive). Each addresses the top subjective reasons why people choose not to ride a bicycle for a trip. Portland has been at the cutting edge of creating, implementing and evaluating the different strategies.

Encouragement activities tend to start where the vast majority of mode choice decisions are made – in the home. Central to the decision to ride a bicycle for transportation is having employment, shopping, entertainment, leisure, and fitness opportunities close to home. There needs to be a “there there” to which residents can ride their bikes. Portland residents who live within three miles of a main street or town center can reasonably choose to ride there. Many, but not all Portlander’s have access to these kinds of land use patterns.

Successful promotion of encouragement programs must necessarily address each individual’s barriers to bicycling. Barriers to bicycling fall into two categories: objective and subjective. Objective barriers include things such as poor or no infrastructure, long distances, no available bicycle, inclement weather, and carrying capacity. Subjective reasons include perceived issues regarding safety, travel time, comfort, and acceptance. [See Chapter 2 – Bicycle Use] Numerous surveys identify concerns about safety as the most frequently mentioned barrier to bicycling. Many of these subjective barriers to bicycling can be reasonably addressed with encouragement strategies.

In addition to encouraging individuals to increase bicycling, Portland’s community, business and media leaders have a role to play in promoting and mainstreaming bicycling as an easy, convenient and safe option for transportation. This includes ideas and projects aimed at special constituencies such as politicians and other opinion leaders, plus bicycle industry and community organizations. Specific strategies aimed at these audiences

include marketing and public relations activities, awards, networking opportunities, and support for complying with and exceeding the standard regulatory and administrative rules.

Best Practices: Services

Services for cyclists are provided by a variety of public agencies, non-profit organizations, volunteer groups, and business-supported transportation organizations. Some of the better-known programs are identified below.

Maps and Trip Planning

A basic service that most bicycle-friendly communities offer residents and employees is a map of existing bikeways that note safer routes on which to ride. Portland annually produces, prints, and distributes 60,000 free citywide and five neighborhood bicycle maps. They are revised annually. In addition to producing maps, Portland's Office of Transportation has enhanced information for cyclists with a downtown route map including long-term bicycle parking locations and a comprehensive website with information on bicycling, including maps. Traffic detour information that affects popular bicycle routes is posted on the City's "Keep Portland Moving" website showing active downtown and regional construction projects. Community activists with the support of Metro developed a sophisticated web-based bicycle trip planner. It is named ByCycle.net and will eventually include choices for routes based on quickest route, hill avoidance, and low-traffic street preferences.



PDOT Publications (S:/Photos)

Customer Service

The Lloyd District Transportation Management Association (LDTMA) provides a high level of service to its 650 employers and their 21,000 employees. The TMA works with employers to develop bicycle-friendly policies to encourage bicycling by customers and employees. They have a storefront with trip planning and personal service to walk-in customers/employees. This service model is enhanced by bicycling advocates within the TMA creating behavior change and awareness programs for all area employees. Their hands-on service and other work have resulted in steady increases in commuter bicycling.

Equipping Cyclists

The Community Cycling Center, a non-profit organization, implements a robust "Create a Commuter" program for residents. Social service agencies identify low-income and recently employed Portland residents. The "Create a Commuter" program then trains and outfits them (including a bicycle) to commute to their job by bicycle. For workers with limited or no transit service, this service enables them to become working members of the city. In the last five years, 1,500 people have gone through the program. There is currently a 700-person backlog.

Shift to Bikes, a non-profit volunteer organization, started the “Get Lit” program. “Get Lit” uses volunteers to distribute and install front and back bicycle lights on the bicycles of low-income and other needy cyclists’. To date, the program, which was picked up and is now run by the Community Cycling Center, has distributed 1,600 light sets.

Rental, Fleet and Loaner Bicycles

The City of Portland includes bicycles as part of its vehicle fleet available to employees for work trips. These bikes are equipped with chain guards, step-through frames, fenders, locks, helmets, and other amenities to make them ideal for riding in work clothes. On an average month, the fleet bikes are used for 50 round trips. Police Officers and Parking Deputies use bicycles as their work vehicles to increase efficiencies and mobility especially in downtown.

Another service that encourages bicycle use is active bicycle rental businesses for tourists. There are seven bicycle shops in Portland that rent bicycles. These are daily or weekly rental vehicles unlike the hourly rental bicycles that many European cities have adopted.

Lessons Learned: Services

1. As much as providing the on-street bicycling infrastructure is bottom line, providing maps, route planning, and information are essential for riders. Without maps, route planning assistance, and information, potential cyclists use the “mental maps” that they rely upon for driving around town. These busy arterial streets are often not the best place to ride a bicycle.
2. Every year Portland increases the number of maps and information distributed. The demand far exceeds the capacity to print and store enough material. Bike maps are the number one visited item on PDOT’s website. Portland has limited distribution for visitors and children – prioritizing Portland adult residents.
3. How one gets from place to place is a well-formed habit, and most Americans have the “habit” of driving. One of the best times to break this kind of transportation habit is to provide new transportation information when residents are making a change – moving into a new neighborhood, changing jobs, or even experiencing the addition of new transportation infrastructure in their area.
4. Access to a working bicycle is one of the top barriers for potential riders. Portland has largely relied upon social service agencies and the Community Cycling Center to work with low- and no-income residents outfitting people with bicycles and bicycle gear. Services that have proven effective at increasing bike access in other cities include rental, loaner and more extensive fleet bikes.

Best Practices: Behavior Change

SmartTrips

For the past four years, Portland has tested, adopted and expanded programs to promote long-term changes in residents' transportation habits. This focused effort is the SmartTrips program, an individualized marketing program that offers information and hands-on experiences to neighborhood residents to encourage bicycling and other transportation options as alternatives to driving alone.. It is described below in broad outline, along with other representative programs aimed at lasting changes in behavior.

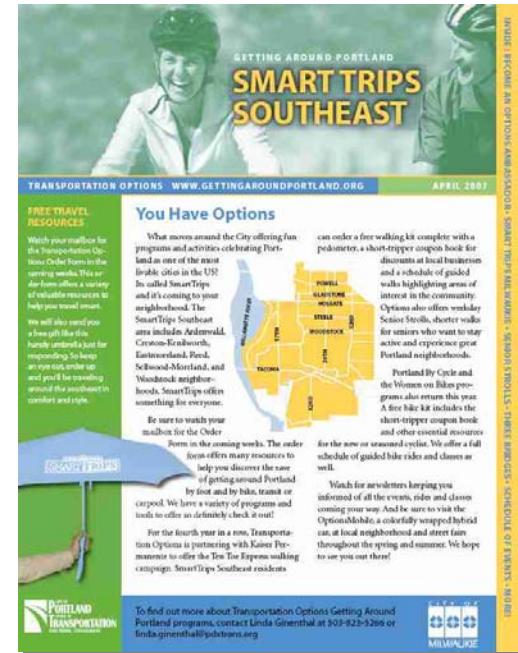
"SmartTrips" extends an invitation to every household in a chosen target area to obtain more information about transportation options by ordering information and materials. A comprehensive bicycle kit with maps, tips, rules of the road, rides and clinics series calendars, and incentives (leg straps, patch kits, etc.) is available, or items can be chosen a la carte.

"SmartTrips" offers 25 guided rides annually in the target area for new and inexperienced cyclists. These guided rides and clinics are offered both to all interested parties ("Portland By Cycle") and for women only ("Women on Bikes").

The 2003 TravelSmart pilot program in southwest Portland contacted 600 households. Two hundred and forty seven ordered information with a third requesting bicycling information. The Citywide Bicycle Map was the most requested item on the order form. This pilot program resulted in an increase in bicycling of 40 percent. In 2004, the program expanded to 6,281 households in North Portland with 2,620 of them (or about 42 percent of all households) ordering materials on alternative transportation. Two thirds of north Portland households (1,750) ordered bicycling information. This program also resulted in a 40 percent increase in bicycling in the target area. These programs were conducted with the contractor and creator of the TravelSmart model, SocialData, for \$20 per household plus City staff time and materials.

In 2005 to reduce costs and add hands-on activities, Transportation Options took the program in-house at a cost of \$10 per person and was able to increase the number of households served to 20,000, reaching 50,000 residents in eastside neighborhoods. This in-house project showed the same nine percent reduction in drive alone trips as with the two previous projects. PDOT conducted on-street video bicycle counts that demonstrated a 23 percent increase in bicycle trips.

The 2006 project in Northeast Portland was even larger with 24,000 households; this showed the most dramatic decrease in drive alone trips at 13 percent. Seventy-five percent of the 4,590 households that ordered materials requested information about bicycling. This project resulted in an increase of 1.5 percent in the mode share for bicycling. In 2007 SmartTrips Southeast will work with the City of Milwaukie to reach out to 3,400 households there plus 20,000 southeast Portland households.



SmartTrips Downtown was launched in February 2007 to work with downtown employees to provide bicycle information and policy initiatives to encourage businesses to create incentives and support for employees who ride their bicycle to work.

Bicycle Commute Challenge

The Bicycle Transportation Alliance coordinates a Bicycle Commute Challenge (BCC) every September. Last year, 550 businesses, agencies and organizations competed to see who could generate the most bicycle commute trips during the month. The program has grown every year since it began in 1995. In 2006, 6,186 cyclists participated. In addition to a web-based trip diary, participants can attend Bicycle Commute workshops to learn the tips, tricks, and rules for commuting by bicycle. Each year the program recruits hundreds of new commuter cyclists.

A key factor contributing to the BCC's success is the personal contacts co-workers have with their colleagues to get them to cycle to work. This personal contact allows new cyclists to learn and to experiment with support from someone they already know and trust.

Lessons Learned: Behavior Change

1. SmartTrips works. It effectively gets people out of their cars and on their bicycles (and walking, riding transit and carpooling). Every Portland neighborhood has experienced dramatic increases in bicycle use as a result of this program.
2. The process of behavior change follows a series of steps that make it possible to make a change. The process starts with motivation, awareness and a triggering event(s). Programs that provide as many “triggering” opportunities to encourage a new rider over a condensed period of time can be very effective. These triggering events can be as simple as a mailer or as complicated as a one-on-one conversation.
3. There is no “silver bullet” that will motivate everyone to ride their bicycles. To effect behavior change, a broad range of activities and programs are needed to activate that one or two or even three motivations that a person may need to start riding.
4. Competition/reward for changing one’s behavior is an effective strategy. This increases the commitment and adds a bit of fun.
5. With very few exceptions, behavior change programs enjoy significant public support in Portland. Five percent of households contacted through SmartTrips send positive comments via emails, letters, notes, cards, and phone calls.
6. Polls show that most adults who ride a bicycle had positive experiences from childhood riding a bike. Without that memory/skill it is difficult to change from a non-rider to a cyclist. Children who do not, today, have

experience with riding a bicycle will probably not become cyclists when they get older.

Best Practices: Awareness

Portland's reputation as the best bicycling city in the U.S. is a result of the tremendous citywide commitment to innovation and solid infrastructure investments. This kind of "bragging right" has bolstered Portland's economy with tourist dollars, attracted the important "creative class" to move to Portland, and encouraged new bicycle and other outdoor related industry to locate in Portland. Without consistent and positive promotion and awareness activities over the last 15 to 20 years it is unclear whether the political and community support for bicycling would have continued to expand and deepen as it has.

Awareness programs comprise the bulk of activities in which most jurisdictions engage to encourage bicycling. As a rule, bicycling awareness programs alone do not create behavior change from non-cyclist to cyclist. Awareness programs generally reinforce existing behaviors and inform people about how to behave in a safer, easier, and more comfortable manner. For this reason it is critical that the infrastructure, services, and behavior change programs are promoted through awareness activities.

Some of the awareness projects employed in Portland include community and bicycling outreach events, bicycle rides, visibility campaigns both as earned and free media, and lectures and brown bags, as described in more detail below.

Outreach Events

Transportation Option's "OptionsMobile" – a hybrid vehicle stocked with bicycling brochures and maps, is annually deployed at 70 community fairs, events and concerts. Three of the largest downtown festivals on the waterfront have valet bicycle parking with bicycle information. The Bicycle Transportation Alliance currently manages bicycle parking at The Bite, Oregon Brewers Festival, and the Waterfront Blues Festival. Prominent bicycle parking encourages others to avoid the hassles and expense of driving downtown.

The Lloyd TMA celebrates Bike Commute month in May with transportation fairs and outreach to area employees. Last year 165 people attended. The City has partnered in previous years to celebrate Bike Commute month in Pioneer Courthouse Square. These events consistently draw crowds of 400 with new riders joining the event every year.

Breakfast on the Bridges started as a thank you for bicycle commuters for riding to work and has grown into a Portland institution. Hundreds of bicycle commuters partake in coffee and donuts on the Broadway and Hawthorne bridges from 7:00 to 9:00 a.m. on the last Friday of every month. This fun cultural event is wholly planned and organized with volunteers and mostly donated coffee and sweets.

Pedalpalooza grew out of the national Bike Summer festival of bike events. In 2006, PedalPalooza 170 bike events culminating in the Multnomah County Bike Fair. All events and programs are organized and implemented by volunteers. Community members fund most of the events. PDOT sponsors printing of the June calendar of

activities. This festival is focused on the fun side of bicycling and enjoys a following of hundreds if not thousands of supporters and participants.

Bicycle Rides

The thousands of organized bicycle events every year allow any person regardless of their riding experience or interest to find a ride to suit their needs and wants. For the recreational rider, the menu of rides include serious spandex crowd rides to leisurely family friendly rides, to Pretty Dress rides where all riders (men and women) dress up. With so many events and rides this report can not begin to capture them all adequately. Some of the more prolific organizations are mentioned below.

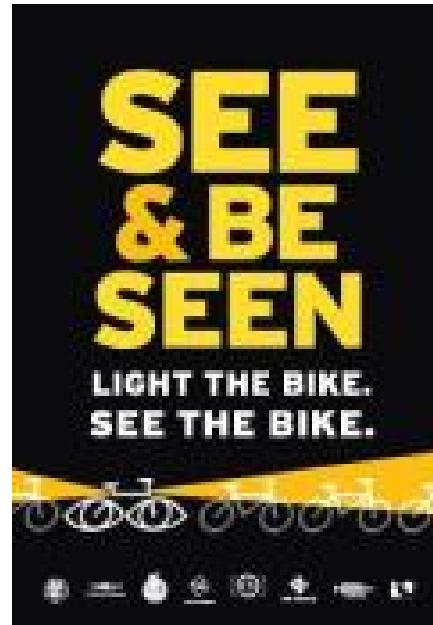
The Portland Wheelman Touring Club hosts at least three bicycle rides per day. These are targeted at the recreational rider who wants to get some miles in every week or go for a long weekend ride. A second bicycle club – Portland Velo – has formed to expand the number and tone of rides catering to those who are also looking for more social riding opportunities. Portland United Mountain Pedalers (PUMP) organizes three or four rides each week. The Oregon Bicycle Racing Association (OBRA) has scheduled races, training rides, and classes all year long for the novice and world class racer.

Signature rides for bicycling in Portland are Providence BridgePedal with 17,000 riders including families, bike commuters and serious cyclists riding over 10 of Portland's Willamette River bridges; Summer Cycle rides with PDOT; last year's Portland Century ride organized by ORBike; and Seattle to Portland ride over one or two days.

Visibility Campaigns

Sponsored by area businesses, the City of Portland, TriMet and the Community Cycling Center, See and Be Seen Bicycle Safety Campaign is a public information and education outreach program to increase the public's compliance with bicycle light laws. Specifically, this campaign reminds drivers to watch for bicyclists and bicyclists to use bicycle lights in the front and back at dark. The campaign included a bicycle light parade and bicycle light distribution and installation to 100 needy riders plus 20 bus backs, 20 bus stop, 10 bench ads, 100 in the bus channel cards, and hundreds of See and Be Seen shop window posters. All three network television stations covered the story.

The Bicycle Transportation Alliance conducted two highly visible public service announcement campaigns in the last five years. The "Decide to Ride" public service announcement campaign produced five television spots sponsored by National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT). Produced, directed, edited and written by Matt Giraud of Grapheon Design, the campaign ran over the course of a year with positive success. KGW donated some of the air time and production costs. The campaign was designed to allow other jurisdictions to run the spots with their own sponsor panel at the end.



BTA developed a *Citizens of the Road* visibility campaign with sponsorship from the billboard advertising company Clear Channel and a pro bono advertising firm RWest. "Edgy" posters and billboards captured the attention of motorists and cyclists alike. Posters showed two people standing in the middle of a road holding up something much more difficult to share than the road – underwear, a bath towel or a hairpiece – with the slogan "The Road. An Easier Thing To Share."

PDOT and bicycling organizations routinely send news releases about events that garner significant coverage in area papers, radio and television stations. Bicycling is either the main topic or included in at least one or two stories a week in one or more media venues. There have also been editorials, opinion editorials, feature and front-page articles, neighborhood articles, and calendar events related to bicycling.

BikePortland.org, a blog for the bicycle enthusiast, sports one of the most active blogs on the web today. Covering everything from stolen bike reports to racing events there are three or four topical stories related to bicycling in Portland every day. These blog postings are monitored by area media to find stories to develop on their own.

Portland Bike Summit

On June 17, 2006, 400 Portland bicycle and community activists and bicycle-industry business members gathered for the first Portland Bike Summit. Representatives from Portland City Council, Metro, and the U.S. Congress participated and took a look back at the last 15 years of successful implementation of bicycle infrastructure and increasing mode share for cycling. The Summit's main focus was a look ahead to explore community ideas and creative strategies for continuing that legacy of strong citywide support for cycling – to increase the number and breadth of Portland residents and visitors riding bicycles.

The Summit was a key component in the Nine-Part Portland Platinum Strategy. This strategy, involving the City of Portland and community partners, outlines our efforts to make Portland the first large city to receive a Platinum Bicycle-friendly award from the League of American Bicyclists.

The Portland Bike Summit was primarily about motivating the cycling community and agencies to encourage more people to ride. To capture the best ideas and suggestions, workshop presenters sought feedback from participants as the main focus for all but two of the workshops.

Participants represented the broad spectrum of cycling: commuters, recreational riders, transportation riders, mountain bicyclists, messengers, city planners, neighborhood activists, and bicycle industry owners, managers and staff. The Summit was also attended by neighborhood activists interested in transportation, and specifically bicycling issues.

Lectures and Brown Bags

Transportation professionals have attended lectures by bicycling and engineering experts on bicycle infrastructure planning and design. Increasing the level of skill and competencies of engineering and project professionals enables bicycling capital projects to work more effectively.

Bicycle advocates and government agencies host monthly informative brown bag events to illuminate aspects of bicycling and bicycling cultures from Portland and around the globe. Seeing how other jurisdictions grapple with new and different traffic design and control can spur innovations in bicycle infrastructure design. Attendance varies from 20 to 200 at each event.

Lessons Learned: Awareness

1. Even with the incredible number of bicycle rides, events and activities, there seems to be a demand for more car-free environments/events for newer and family riding. Bridge Pedal has reached capacity issues.
2. The print, television, web and radio media have embraced bicycling as a signature Portland activity and frequently publish stories about and including bicycling. Therefore, visibility is mainly garnered through free media/news reporting and, to a much lesser extent, donated advertising projects. With this high level of “free” media attention, limited City dollars have been focused on behavior change instead of awareness programs.
3. Both motorists and cyclists want more clarity on how to share the road safely. Creating more visibility campaigns aimed at sharing the road is useful in reinforcing proper bicycle and driver behavior.
4. Portland can boast some of the most bicycle-friendly transportation professionals and sophisticated activists in the nation. This was achieved in part by consistent training and a willingness to take risks on innovations. This has translated into a richer palette of engineering, encouragement, education, enforcement, and evaluation strategies to try and experiment with.



Jonathan Maus/BikePortland.org

Best Practices: Incentives

Cash/Income

The City of Portland offers their employees \$30 per month if they ride or walk to work on 80 percent of their scheduled work days. The program called “Bike/Walk Bucks” is a model for other agencies to promote employee bicycle commuting. Employees sign a certificate every quarter stating the months they walked or cycled to work.

Then, \$30 per month is added to their paychecks on a quarterly basis. About 150 employees participate. Similar to this is the program by David Evans and Associates, a local firm in Portland. They pay employees three dollars a day when they choose to bicycle to work.

Tax Incentives

The State of Oregon allows businesses to claim a 35 percent tax credit on energy efficiency activities and appliances. Adding non-code required bicycle racks and other bicycle infrastructure can be claimed as a credit. Additionally, programs that demonstrate measurable reductions in energy consumption can also apply for the tax credit. Non-profits and government agencies can also take part in this tax credit by partnering with a business that has a tax liability in Oregon. The pass-through partner or business keeps seven percent of the 35 percent credit and the non-profit or government receives the remaining 28 percent. This has amounted to hundreds of thousands of tax credits for businesses while encouraging businesses, non-profits and government to add bike infrastructure and engage in programs that help reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT).

Lessons Learned: Incentives

1. Cash/income incentives are a motivator to keep riding; it is an easy and relatively inexpensive strategy in the arsenal of programs that keep cyclists riding.
2. The Business Energy Tax Credit (BETC) has opened up hundreds of thousands of dollars to businesses and government agencies to promote bicycling and build bicycle parking and other end-of-trip facilities.
3. Disincentives to driving, such as high priced and limited parking, are very effective measures that provide a motivation for changing from driving to bicycling. The public and business community have not wholly embraced disincentives to driving as they have incentives for bicycling.

Best Practices: Advocacy, Opinion and Business Community Leadership

Bicycle Advocacy

There are several major organizations with a dedicated core of activists committed to working with government and businesses to advocate for better bicycling infrastructure and programs in Portland and Oregon. The Bicycle Transportation Alliance (BTA) is the largest with 4,000 members statewide and 3,000 members in the Portland metropolitan area. The City of Portland Bicycle Advisory Committee advises and recommends on policy, planning and projects for the City of Portland. Portland United Mountain Pedalers advocate for single-track trails as well as other amenities and infrastructure for mountain cyclists.

Awards

The Bicycle Transportation Alliance “Alice B. Toecips” Awards Dinner and Auction is the largest bicycle recognition and fundraising event of the year. Dozens of award recipients from around the state include bicycle business industry leaders, politicians, advocates, agency leadership, developers, bicycle innovators, health

providers, media representatives, and lawyers. With 650 prominent community and political leaders in the room and only seven award recipients from the 30 nominations each year, competition is stiff for this coveted award.

Businesses for an Environmentally Sustainable Tomorrow (BEST) Awards are presented annually by the City of Portland Office of Sustainable Development and other City partners to recognize businesses with significant and unique achievements in sustainability. The goal of the BEST Awards is to inspire the business community by showcasing innovation and commitment to sustainability. Transportation alternatives is one of the seven categories for awardees. 2006 awardee Providence Portland Medical Center's Bike Group has combined communications, incentive programs and monitoring/measurement for a bike commute rate twice the average for similar companies at the Portland medical campus.

Business Community

Business Symposium and Bicycle-Industry Growth

The Portland Development Commission (PDC) is working in concert with the Portland Office of Transportation to engage local cycling businesses in a dialogue about industry-specific needs and opportunities. Activities currently underway to promote bicycle-industry growth in Portland are described in Chapter 12 – Bicycle-Related Industry.

Get to Work!

PDOT's Transportation Options Division works with 50 to 70 small businesses each year in the SmartTrips areas interested in providing transportation benefits to their staff. The Get to Work! program helps small businesses encourage their employees to walk, bike, take transit or carpool to work by providing information about installing free bike racks, subsidizing transit passes for employees, and other innovative ideas aimed at freeing up parking for customers and keeping workers happy and healthy.

Last year, 19 businesses requested a free bike parking rack for their business. PDOT delivered 177 bicycle kits to employees. The Get to Work! program has helped over 180 small businesses in Portland over the last three years.

Political and Agency Leadership

Portland has benefited from strong and committed political leadership on transportation, and specifically bicycling, at the local, regional, state, and national levels for over 15 years. Transportation agency leadership – ranging from bureau directors, planners, engineers, project managers, and outreach and maintenance staff – is among the best in the country for envisioning, planning, designing, building, maintaining, and promoting bicycling. This kind of leadership and expertise on bicycling, as well as the large and active advocacy organizations, allow Portland to take on risky and innovative strategies other jurisdictions would not have the skills or political will to do. While this is difficult to quantify, this can not be underestimated in deciding the kinds of encouragement strategies to pursue.

Best Practices: Special Constituencies Outreach and Partnerships

Women on Bikes

Currently beginning its fourth year, Women on Bikes has trained, encouraged and empowered over 200 women who were new to cycling. The program holds ten or 11 rides each year as well as eight clinics that focus on building skills for novice riders, basic bike maintenance, tips for safer, easier and more comfortable riding, and most importantly, conversations with other women discovering bicycling. The program teams up two bike shops – Bike Gallery and River City Bikes – to put on the clinics. The program created a comprehensive listing of bicycling organizations, including those with special programs for women, and distributed it to more than 1,500 women over the two year period.

Providence BridgePedal partnered with Women on Bikes to create a women-only start time for the August ride (see Best Practices Awareness – Bicycle Rides section). A portion of these 800 special registrations was donated to Providence's Heart Healthy campaign for women.

Seniors on Bicycles

Traffic Investigation's Community and School Traffic Safety Partnership funded the purchase 20 three-wheeled recumbent bicycles to use for its senior bicyclist rides. Seniors gathered at the Vera Katz Eastbank Esplanade for a guided three-mile ride along the esplanade, waterfront and over the Steel Bridge. The program was designed to show just how safe and easy it can be for seniors to get back on the right bicycle.

Low Income Residents' Outreach

The Community Cycling Center (CCC) is in the forefront of working with low-income families and individuals to make bicycling accessible and viable for these Portland-area residents. In addition to this "Create a Commuter" program, the CCC works with children training them to repair bicycles. With enough hours in the shop working on bicycles, kids can earn a bicycle for themselves. The CCC's Holiday Bike Drive gives bicycles to children identified through social service agencies as needy and desiring a bicycle. The CCC's program gives out 1,000 bicycles each December. There are several other individuals and programs that also give bicycles to children during the holidays.



Bike Shops Advocacy and Encouragement Activities

There are several bike shops that consistently support the cycling community through sponsorships, event staffing, planning and logistical support for programs and projects, and donation of bicycles and gear for events and incentives. Among the notable shops that contribute significant time and resources are the Bike Gallery, River City Bicycles, Seven Corners Bicycle Shop, Weir Cyclery, and North Portland Bike Works.

While not specifically targeting Portland, Jay Graves of the Bike Gallery has been working with Shimano and Trek to research, build, and market bicycles for adults who haven't ridden since they were a kid. They have been developing bicycles with 1) easier geometry for riders who may not be very flexible or want to put their feet flat on the ground while stopping; 2) simplified or automatic gear shifting; 3) familiar and intuitive coaster brakes that allow a one-hand-free ride; 4) stain-resistant chain guards; and 5) comfortable seats and shock absorbers. These amenities make the job of the encouraging newer adult riders much easier. Having leadership on this strategy in Portland helps the local community get a leg up (literally and figuratively) in the market for these new bicycles.