



BICYCLE FRIENDLY COMMUNITY FEEDBACK REPORT

NORTH LITTLE ROCK, AR

Fall 2013

The League of American Bicyclists has designated **North Little Rock** as a Bicycle Friendly Community at the **Bronze** level, because North Little Rock exhibits a sustained commitment to cycling. The reviewers felt that there is still “room to grow” but that notable steps are being made in the right direction.

Reviewers were very pleased to see the current efforts and dedication to make North Little Rock a great place for cyclists.

Below, reviewers provided key recommendations to further promote bicycling in North Little Rock and a menu of additional pro-cycling measures that can be implemented in the short and long term. We strongly encourage you to use this feedback to build on your momentum and improve your community for bicyclists. There may also be initiatives, programs, and facilities that are not mentioned here that would benefit your bicycling culture, so please continue to try new things to increase your ridership, safety, and awareness!

To learn more about what federal funds are available for bicycle projects, use Advocacy Advance’s interactive [Find it, Fund it tool](#) to search for eligible **funding** programs by bike/ped project type or review the same information as a PDF [here](#).

The key measures North Little Rock should take to improve cycling:

- Continue to increase the amount of [high quality bicycle parking](#) at popular destinations throughout the community. Residents of multi-family dwellings and public housing should have access to high quality bike parking as well. Regulations that require bike parking, e.g. for new developments, can secure private funding. See the bicycle parking ordinances of [Madison, Wisconsin](#) and [Santa Cruz, California](#). Also consider adding some [artistic bike racks](#) to enhance the sense of place of your community.
- Continue to expand the bike network and to increase network connectivity across town through the use of different types of [bike lanes](#), [cycle tracks](#) and [shared lane markings](#). Since arterial and collector roads are the backbone of every transportation network, it is essential to provide designated bicycle facilities along these roads and calm traffic speeds to allow bicyclists of all skill levels to reach their destinations quickly and safely. On roads with posted speed limits of more than 35 mph, it is recommended to provide protected bicycle infrastructure, such as [cycle tracks](#), [buffered bike lanes](#) or parallel 10ft wide shared-use paths.

Benefits of Further Improving North Little Rock for Cycling

- On-street improvements coupled with the expansion of the off-street system [will encourage more people to cycle](#) and will improve safety. Ensure smooth transitions for bicyclists between the trail network and the street network. 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.
- Expand the [bicycle wayfinding system](#) to cover all strategic locations around the community. This will help visitors and residents to find safe routes to popular destinations and will raise awareness. For example, signs could lead to the River Trail and new Levy Trail.
- Host, sponsor and/or encourage a greater variety of social and family-friendly bicycle-themed community events year-round such as a Christmas, New Years and July 4th Fireworks rides. Consider adding/encouraging more like this for example rides bike movie festival, an “increase-your-appetite” Thanksgiving community ride, a bicycle fashion show (stylish alternatives to spandex), a Halloween bike decoration competition, a bike to the arts event, etc. Work closely with local bicycle groups like the Bicycle Advocacy of Central Arkansas an local bicycle groups like Arkansas Bicycle Club, Arkansas Heels on Wheels, Major Taylor Club, bike shops and schools. Provide appropriate safety measures such as road closures or police escorts.

Further 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) out of cars. This will also make communities 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 of 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 public 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.

- Encourage more local public agencies, businesses and organizations to promote cycling to the workplace and to seek recognition through the free [Bicycle Friendly Business program](#). Businesses will profit from a [healthier, happier and more productive workforce](#) while the community would profit from less congestion, 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 business-sponsored public bike events or classes. Your community's government should be the model employer for the rest of the community. See what the Colorado-based New Belgium Brewing Company is doing [here](#).
- Ask police officers to target both motorist and cyclist infractions to ensure that laws are being followed by all road users. Particularly speed enforcement is needed to make streets safer for all road users. Ensure that bicycle/car crashes are investigated thoroughly and that citations are given fairly.
- Regularly conduct research on bicycle usage beyond the U.S. Census' Journey to Work report to more efficiently distribute resources according to demand. Conduct frequent counts using automated or manual counters in partnership with advocacy organizations. Consider participating in the [National Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation Project](#).

- Adopt a target level of bicycle use (e.g. percent of trips) to be achieved within a specific timeframe, and ensure data collection necessary to monitor progress.
- Implement a community-wide SOV trip reduction program or ordinance. See good examples [here](#).

Menu of additional recommendations to further promote bicycling:

Engineering

Low hanging fruit and fast results

- Develop and implement streetscape design guidelines that foster a pleasant and comfortable environment for pedestrians and cyclists. Beautiful streetscaping has also shown to increase community livability and pride, reduce crime and increase property values.
- Ensure close departmental cooperation (e.g. Engineering with Fit2Live) both in design and implementation of the growing bicycling network. It would be good for the city to develop a working relationship with the AHTD, to improve and promote bicycling as well.
- Implement "Walkable & Livable Community" improvements in more neighborhoods.

- Consider passing an ordinance or policy that would require larger employers to provide shower facilities and other end-of-trip amenities.
- Implement broader transportation policies and programs that encourage alternative transportation choices, such as maximum/no minimum car parking standards or paid public parking to complement your community's infrastructure investments and programs.
- Address the problem of bollard handles sticking out into the path on the River Trail by the new Marina, which may cause bicyclists' feet or pedals to get caught on them.

Long Term Goals

- Consider a form-based code to allow for flexible land uses and to provide a comfortable and convenient built environment for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Develop solutions to physical barriers in order to provide convenient bicycle access to all parts of the community. For example, build a bike/ped bridge across Pershing Avenue near Railroad Avenue to allow more cross town commuting; provide local access to the Kroger Store away from Pike Avenue; and ensure that it is possible to safely ride to the downtown from McCain and North Hills.
- Ensure that all bicycle facilities conform to current best practices and guidelines – such as the [NACTO Urban](#)

[Bikeway Design Guide](#), 2012 [AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities](#) and your DOT's own guidelines.

- Develop a system of bicycle boulevards, utilizing quiet neighborhood streets, that creates an attractive, convenient, and comfortable cycling environment welcoming to cyclists of all ages and skill levels. Use the [Bicycle Boulevards section](#) of the NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide for design guidelines.
- Make intersections safer and more comfortable for cyclists. Include elements such as color, signage, medians, signal detection, and pavement markings. The level of treatment required for bicyclists at an intersection will depend on the bicycle facility type used, whether bicycle facilities are intersecting, the adjacent street function and land use. See the [NACTO design guidelines](#) and the 2012 [AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities](#) for recommended intersection treatments.

Education

Low hanging fruit and fast results

- Offer bike commuter classes more frequently or encourage a local bicycle advocacy group or shop to do so.

- Add Share the Road signage on Batesville Pike going north out of town and on Hwy 107 going to Sherwood and LR Air Force Base to the north.
- Bicycle-safety education should be a routine part of public education, and schools and the surrounding neighborhoods should be particularly safe and convenient for biking. Work with your Bicycle Advisory Committee, local bicycle groups or interested parents to expand the Safe Routes to School program to all elementary schools, middle schools and high schools. For more information, see the [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's Safe Routes To School Toolkit](#), www.bikeleague.org/programs/saferoutes/index.php or visit www.saferoutesinfo.org.
- Start a bicyclist and motorist ticket diversion program. Road users given a citation are offered an opportunity to waive fees for violations by attending a bicycling education course. This course should include a classroom and on-road component. See what [Pima County](#) and [San Diego County](#) have done.
- Expand the Share the Road motorist education program for professional drivers. See this [Frequent Driver Education](#) program for ideas.
- Consider offering a ‘Summer Streets’ type event, closing off a major corridor to auto traffic and offering the space to cyclists, pedestrians and group exercise events.
- Set up and promote a bicycle-themed community celebration or social ride each time a new bicycle related project is completed. This is a great way to show off the community’s good efforts and introduces new users to the improvement.
- Encourage local institutions of higher education to promote cycling and to seek recognition through the [Bicycle Friendly University program](#). Many colleges and universities have embraced the growing enthusiasm for more bicycle-friendly campuses by incorporating bike share programs, bike co-ops, 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.
- The large off-road trail system within Burns Park needs mountain bike specific wayfinding signage to make the public more aware of these trails. Also, make a map of trails and bicycling network available to the public.

Encouragement

Low hanging fruit and fast results

Long Term Goals

- Develop a series of short (2-5 mi.) (themed) loop routes around the community and provide appropriate way-finding signage. Integrate these routes into local bike maps. See what Arlington, VA has done at <http://www.bikearlington.com/tasks/sites/bike/assets/File/Arlington-Loop.jpg>
- Consider partnering with Little Rock to launch a bike share system that is open to the public. Bike sharing is a convenient, cost effective, and healthy way of encouraging locals and visitors to make short trips by bike and to bridge the “last mile” between public transit and destinations. See what is being done across the country at <http://nacto.org/bikeshare/>

Enforcement

Low hanging fruit and fast results

- 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.
- Pass more laws that protect cyclists, e.g. implement specific penalties for motorists for failing to yield to a

cyclist when turning, implement penalties for motor vehicle users that ‘door’ cyclists, and specifically protect all vulnerable road users. Improve the mechanism for reporting violations.

Evaluation/Planning

Low hanging fruit and fast results

- Routinely conduct pre/post evaluations of bicycle-related projects in order to study the change in use, car speed and crash numbers. This data will be valuable to build public and political support for future bicycle-related projects.
- Consider measuring the Bicycle Level of Service (BLOS) 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 and hazards, 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).

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