



# BICYCLE FRIENDLY COMMUNITY FEEDBACK REPORT

Tulsa, OK

Fall 2013

The League of American Bicyclists has designated **Tulsa** as a Bicycle Friendly Community at the **Bronze** level, because Tulsa 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 including, but not limited to, the new Complete Streets Policy, new Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee and extensive trail system.

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

Below, reviewers provided key recommendations to further promote bicycling in Tulsa 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! Here is a comparisons showing Tulsa next to the average Silver level community in the categories that still need improvement:

- **Percentage of bike commuters:** Tulsa: 0.42% (average Bronze: 1.2%), Average Silver: 3.5%
- **Safety - Crashes per 10k daily commuters:** Tulsa: 318 (average Bronze: 370), Average Silver: 180
- **Fatalities per 10k daily commuters:** Tulsa: 3.63 (average Bronze: 4), Average Silver: 1.4

- **Percentage of arterial streets with bike lanes:** Tulsa: 15% (average Bronze: 33%), Average Silver: 45%
- **Bike facility network mileage to total road network mileage:** Tulsa: 4% (average Bronze: 25%), Average Silver: 30%
- **Percentage of primary and secondary schools with biking education:** Tulsa: 5% (average Bronze: 33%), Average Silver: 43%
- **Bike program staff :** Tulsa: 1 staff per 196k residents (average Bronze: 1 staff per 77k residents), Average Silver: 1 staff per 70k residents

To learn more about what 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 Tulsa should take to improve cycling:

- Dedicate additional city staff to the bicycle and active transportation program to scale up your BFC efforts. Explore contracting with an advocacy group to help manage the Complete Streets program and other aspects of the bicycle and pedestrian program (including working with schools) if hiring additional full time staffing is an issue. See [this report](#) on the importance of Bicycle & Pedestrian program staff.

- Using the Complete Streets policy, continue to expand the bike network and to increase network connectivity through the use of different types of [bike lanes](#), [cycle tracks](#) and [shared lane markings](#). 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- Commit to comprehensive bicyclist and motorist safety education programs that reach a significant portion of the population. It is essential to make both motorists and cyclists aware of their rights and responsibilities on the road. Continue to expand your public education campaign promoting the share the road message. Take advantage of your local bicycle groups for content development and manpower. See the excellent [“Look”](#) campaign in New York City, the [“Don't be a Road Hog”](#) campaign in Colorado and this great, downloadable PSA released by the AAA and the League: It Moves Us All <http://vimeo.com/60585187>
- 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 develop and implement a Safe Routes to School or equivalent program that emphasize bicycling for 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](http://www.bikeleague.org/programs/saferoutes/index.php) or visit [www.saferoutesinfo.org](http://www.saferoutesinfo.org).

# Benefits of Further Improving Tulsa for Cycling

- Offer the shorter and easily accessible Cycling Skills and bike commuter classes more frequently or encourage a local bicycle advocacy group or shop to do so.  
[www.bikeleague.org/programs/education/](http://www.bikeleague.org/programs/education/)

## Menu of additional recommendations to further promote bicycling:

- Expanding the Bicycle & Pedestrian Coordinator's time focused on bicycle projects would help in scaling up your BFC efforts. This staff person should spend more time on working closely with the Bicycle Advisory Committee, reviewing development proposals to ensure that local bicycle/pedestrian requirements are incorporated and to assess bicycling and walking impacts, developing and implementing educational and promotional programs, writing grant proposals, serving as the public contact for bicycling/walking inquiries and complaints, educating other staff about state and federal facilities standards and guidelines, and coordinating with neighboring cities, transit agencies and other departments to implement policies and projects. See [this report](#) on the importance of Bicycle & Pedestrian program staff.

## 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

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 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 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 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.

shown to increase community livability and pride, reduce crime and increase property values.

- Offer more [ongoing training](#) opportunities on accommodating bicyclists for engineering and planning staff.
- Consider passing an ordinance or policy that would require larger employers to provide shower facilities and other end-of-trip amenities.
- Ensure that the standards for bike parking conform to [APBP guidelines](#).
- Increase the amount of [high quality bicycle parking](#) at popular destinations such as major transit stops, schools, universities, recreational and entertainment facilities, retail stores, office buildings, and churches 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 implement [road diets](#) in appropriate locations to make streets more efficient and safe. Use

the newly created space for bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

- Install a [bicycle wayfinding system](#) at strategic locations around the community.
- 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.
- Adequately maintain your on and off road bicycle infrastructure to ensure usability and safety. Increase the frequency of sweepings and address potholes and other hazards faster.
- Consider a [raised crossing](#), a grade separated crossing or a high-visibility treatment where a shared use path crosses a medium or high traffic road. Ensure that both path and road users are clearly informed about who has the right-of-way.
- Join NACTO and participate in the Cities for Cycling project. Cities for Cycling aims to catalog, promote and implement the world's best bicycle transportation practices in American municipalities.

## Long Term Goals

- 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. Learn how to do it at <http://www.ibpi.usp.pdx.edu/guidebook.php>. Use the [Bicycle Boulevards section](#) of the NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide for design guidelines.
- Implement land use policies that minimize large lot/low density development to better facilitate bicycling, pedestrian and transit trips. Require a mix of uses throughout the community to further shorten the distances people need to bike. 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.
- Improve the [connectivity of your street network](#). Both increased intersection density and additional street connectivity are associated with more walking, biking, and transit use due to greater directness of travel and more route choice options.

- 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

- Consider offering bicycle education for children and youth outside of school through bike rodeos, youth recreation programs, helmet fit seminars or a [Safety Town](#) program.
- Consider creating a Bicycle Ambassador program. Have Ambassadors attend community and private events year-round to talk to residents and visitors of all ages about bicycling and to give bicycle safety demonstrations. They can also offer bike commuting presentations for area businesses.

- Team with a local bicycle group or shop to offer regular bike maintenance workshops at parks, libraries, community centers or at events. A short tutorial on how to change a flat tire can empower a person to ride their bike more often.
- Regularly host Traffic Skills 101 or bike commuter courses for engineers and planners to better understand cyclists' needs. For more information visit: [www.bikeleague.org/programs/education/](http://www.bikeleague.org/programs/education/)
- Host a League Cycling Instructor (LCI) seminar to increase the number of certified LCIs in your community. Having local instructors will enable your community to expand cycling education, recruit knowledgeable cycling ambassadors, deliver education to motorists, provide cycling education to adults and kids, and have experts available to assist in encouragement programs. Visit <http://www.bikeleague.org/programs/education/> for more information.

#### Long Term Goals

- 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.

- Start a Share the Road motorist education program for professional drivers. See San Francisco's [Frequent Driver Education](#).
- Increase your efforts to ensure your bicycle education programs reach traditionally underserved populations, particularly seniors, women, minorities, non-English speakers and the disabled.

#### Encouragement

##### Low hanging fruit and fast results

- Host, sponsor and/or encourage a variety of social and family-friendly bicycle-themed community events year-round, such as a bike movie festival, a 4<sup>th</sup> of July bike parade, an “increase-your-appetite” Thanksgiving community ride, a dress-like-Santa community ride before Christmas, 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, bike shops and schools. Provide appropriate safety measures such as road closures or police escorts.
- Consider offering a ‘Ciclovía’ or ‘Summer Streets’ type event, closing off a major corridor to auto traffic and offering the space to cyclists, pedestrians and group exercise events. Check out LA’s [CicLAvia!](#)

- 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 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](#).
- 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.

- Work with local non-profits to increase youth recreation or intervention program offerings centered on bicycling, such as an [Earn a Bike program](#). (e.g. expanding the reach of the Tulsa Hub) See what the Community Cycling Center in Portland, OR does: <http://www.communitycyclingcenter.org/>
- Design and publish a local bike map in paper and online, addressing diverse needs and skill levels (commuter, recreational cyclist, sport cyclist, mountain biker etc). The map should outline the existing on and off-road bicycle network by infrastructure type and skill level (if applicable). In addition, the map could identify the locations of landmarks, greenways, low-traffic streets, public restrooms, water fountains, bike routes, designated scenic routes, bike stations, bike repair stations, bike parking and transit stations. Take a look at Pittsburgh's award-winning [bike map](#).

## Long Term Goals

- Recreational bicycling can be promoted through bicycle amenities such as a mountain bike park, a cyclocross course or a pump track. Ensure that the facilities are accessible by bicycle, so that there is no need to drive to ride.
- 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>
- Continue to expand the access and reach of the bike share system

## Enforcement

- Ensure that police officers are initially and repeatedly educated on the “Share the Road” message and traffic law as it applies to bicyclists and motorists. Training is offered by the International Police Mountain Bike Association, the Law Enforcement Bicycle Association and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Here are some recommended Law Enforcement Products: Bicycle Safety [seminar](#); National Highway Traffic Safety Administration [video](#); Law Enforcement's [Roll Call Video: “Enforcing Law for Bicyclists”](#); and

## [Enhancing Bicycle Safety: Law Enforcement’s Role](#) (CD-ROM Training).

- Have police officers distribute helmets, bike lights and bike locks (or coupons to the local bike shop for each item) to encourage all types of cyclists to ride more safely, discourage bike theft and remove the barriers to attaining these essential bike accessories.
- Ask police officers to use targeted information and enforcement to encourage motorists and cyclists to share the road safely. This could be in the form of a brochure or tip card explaining each user’s rights and responsibilities. Have information material available in Spanish, if applicable.
- Ask police officers to target both motorist and cyclist infractions to ensure that laws are being followed by all road users. Ensure that bicycle/car crashes are investigated thoroughly and that citations are given fairly.
- 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.

- Ensure that police officers report cyclist crash data and potential hazards to the public works department, traffic engineers and transportation planners to timely identify sites in need of safety improvements for cyclists.
- Provide safety amenities such as adequate street and path lighting, and emergency call boxes, and offer services such as non-mandatory bike registration and missing bike recovery assistance.
- Pass more laws that protect cyclists, e.g. implement specific penalties for motorists for failing to yield to a cyclist when turning, make it illegal to park or drive in a bike lane (intersections excepted), implement penalties for motor vehicle users that ‘door’ cyclists, ban cell phone use and texting while driving, specifically protect all vulnerable road users, formalize a legal passing distance of 3 feet, and make it illegal to harass a cyclist.
- Adopt fair and equitable traffic laws. Local laws that discriminate against cyclists, restrict their right to travel, or reduce their relative safety should be repealed.
- Continue to actively involve the local bicycle community in community planning efforts, policy development and public outreach.
- 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.
- 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.
- Expand efforts to evaluate bicycle crash statistics and produce a specific plan to reduce the number of crashes in the community. Available tools include [Intersection Magic](#) and the [Pedestrian and Bicyclist Crash Analysis Tool](#). See the report [Bicyclist Fatalities and Serious Injuries in New York City 1996-2005](#)
- Implement a community-wide trip reduction program or ordinance. See good examples [here](#).

## Evaluation/Planning

### Low hanging fruit and fast results

- Adopt the comprehensive bike master plan that is currently being prepared. Ensure that there will be dedicated funding for the implementation of the plan.

- Consider individualized marketing to identify and support current and potential bike commuters in your community. See what Bellingham, WA is doing: [www.whatcomsmartrips.org](http://www.whatcomsmartrips.org)

- Consider conducting an economic impact study on bicycling in your community. [Read about](#) what Portland, OR has done.
- Establish a mechanism that ensures that bicycle facilities and programs are implemented in traditionally underserved neighborhoods.

#### Long Term Goals

- Develop an updated [comprehensive bike plan](#) that sets a high but attainable target for use in close collaboration with the community to ensure public involvement, information and ownership. Consider using a tool like a Bicycle Account to track progress. See the League's Bicycle Account Guidelines for more information: [http://bikeleague.org/sites/lab.huang.radicaldesigns.org/files/Bicycle\\_Account\\_Guidelines.pdf](http://bikeleague.org/sites/lab.huang.radicaldesigns.org/files/Bicycle_Account_Guidelines.pdf)

- The overarching goal should be to encourage residents to bike more often for recreation and transportation.
- Ensure that there is dedicated funding for the implementation of the bicycle master plan.
- Work with your mountain bike community to develop a plan for off-road access to increase opportunities for [singletrack](#) riding within the community.

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