



**BICYCLE FRIENDLY
COMMUNITY**

BICYCLE FRIENDLY COMMUNITY FEEDBACK REPORT

Spring 2013



Photo: Trek

Fort Collins, CO

The League of American Bicyclists has designated **Fort Collins** as a Bicycle Friendly Community at the **Platinum** level, because Fort Collins is a truly exemplar community for bicyclists. Fort Collins is a shining example of how to “do it right” in virtually all aspects of cycling.

Particular **highlights** were the extensive on and off road bicycle network, the available bike parking throughout the community, the fix-it stands, the bicycle ambassador program, bike education opportunities for adults and children of all backgrounds, Share the Road outreach, the thriving local bike culture and events, Bike Month, enforcement, the Bicycle Safety Education Plan, bicycle counts, and the trip reduction programs.

Fort Collins staff and local stakeholders have been working diligently for years to create an even better Bicycle Friendly Community. Diamond is within reach. Here are some comparisons showing Fort Collins next to the Diamond minimum standards:

- **Percentage of bike commuters:** Fort Collins: 6.6% (average Platinum 12%), Diamond minimum: 15%
- **Safety - Crashes per 10k daily commuters:** Fort Collins: 163 (Average Platinum: 110), Diamond standard: 25
- **Fatalities per 10k daily commuters:** Fort Collins: 0.63 (average Platinum: .38), Diamond standard: 0.20

- **Percentage of Arterial streets with bike lanes:** Fort Collins: 85% (Platinum average 80%), Diamond standard: 90%
- **Bike facility network mileage to total road network mileage:** Fort Collins: 38% (Platinum average: 45%), Diamond standard: 70%
- **Percentage of primary and secondary schools with biking education:** Fort Collins: 70% (Platinum average 60%), Diamond standard: 100%

Below, reviewers provided key recommendations to further promote bicycling in Fort Collins 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 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 Fort Collins should take to improve cycling:

- Ensure that all new and existing 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.
- Continue to expand the bike network and to increase network connectivity through the use of different types of [bike lanes](#) and [shared lane arrows](#). In particular, Fort Collins needs better east/west routes, and safe routes to parks and schools in the southeast of the city. On roads with posted speed limits of more than 35 mph, it is recommended to provide protected bicycle infrastructure, such as [cycle tracks](#) or [buffered bike lanes](#). 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 and provide under/overpasses where needed. 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.
- Continue to increase the amount of [high quality bicycle parking](#) at popular destinations to keep up with demand. Provide more covered bike parking at key locations.
- It is essential to make both motorists and cyclists aware of their rights and respectful of their 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.
- 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](#) or visit www.saferoutesinfo.org.
- Expand encouragement efforts during Bike to Work Day in partnership with local bicycle advocacy groups. Host, sponsor and encourage bicycle-themed community events, campaigns and programs. Ensure to widely advertise all bicycle-themed community events and programs. For ideas and more information, visit <http://www.bikeleague.org/content/national-bike-month>.

- Develop a series of short (2-5 mi.) (themed) loop rides around the community and provide appropriate way-finding signage. Integrate these rides into local bike maps.
- Expand the public bike share system. 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/>
- Adopt the updated comprehensive bike master plan that is currently being prepared. Increase the dedicated funding for the implementation of the plan.

Menu of additional recommendations to further promote bicycling:

Engineering

Low hanging fruit and fast results

- Consider passing an ordinance or policy that would require larger employers to provide shower facilities and other end-of-trip amenities.
- Adequately maintain your on and off road bicycle infrastructure to ensure usability and safety. Increase

Benefits of Further Improving Fort Collins for Cycling

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.

the frequency of sweepings of road shoulders and bike lanes.

- 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

- 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.
- 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.
- Continue to 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.

Encouragement

- 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.
- Continue to 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.

Enforcement

- Ask police officers to step up enforcement of both motorist and cyclist infractions to ensure that laws are being followed by all road users.
- Increase the number of officers that patrol streets on bikes year-round, as it gives officers a better understanding of the conditions for cyclists. Also ensure that secluded off road paths are regularly patrolled to improve personal safety and encourage more people to take advantage of this amenity.
- Provide safety amenities such as adequate lighting on shared-use paths.
- Pass more laws that protect cyclists, e.g. implement penalties for motor vehicle users that 'door' cyclists, ban cell phone use while driving, and specifically protect all vulnerable road users.

Evaluation/Planning

- The City Transportation office should work more closely with the leaders of the cycling community to understand and carry out the needs of cyclists.
- Collect more detailed crash data - stratify the data by time of day, use of lights, weather conditions, etc. The base data collected is very effective, but reporting of more variables will provide more tools to drive changes.
- Consider individualized marketing to identify and support current and potential bike commuters in your community. See what Bellingham, WA is doing: www.whatcomsmartrips.org
- Establish a mechanism that ensures that bicycle facilities are implemented in traditionally underserved neighborhoods.

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