

# Feedback

Bicycle Friendly University Application

University of Illinois  
Urbana-Champaign

Fall 2011





The League of American Bicyclists has designated the **University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign** as a Bicycle Friendly University at the **Bronze** level. Reviewers were very pleased to see the current efforts, potential and commitment to make the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign a great place for bicyclists which can be seen in the growing number of cyclists.

Some of the **highlights** of the application are the comprehensive campus bicycle path network, the Complete Street enhancement project on Goodwin Avenue, the Campus Bike Project shop for bicycle education and repair assistance, the bicycle safety information campaign, the Complete Streets Policy, the Itty Bitty Bike Shop, Public Safety Day, Light the Night events, females and transgenders bike programming, C-U "Share the Road" bus wrap, Build-a-Bike program, Bike to Work & School Day, 'Illinois Cross-Campus Bike Project', non-mandatory bike registration, Multi-Modal Transportation Study, and the bicycle master plan.

The BFU review team expects great things in the future given the good local team and the coming improvements to the network and programs.

Below, reviewers provided recommendations to promote bicycling at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign in the short and long term. Increasing bicycle use can **improve the environment** by reducing the impact on the community 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 campuses more accessible for public transport, walking, essential car travel, and emergency services; **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 students, faculty and staff to participate socially and economically in campus and community activities, regardless of income or ability. Greater choice of travel modes also increases independence; **Boost the economy** by creating a campus environment and community that is an attractive destination for new students, residents, tourists and businesses; **Enhance recreational opportunities** and further contribute to the quality of life on campus; **Save university funds** by increasing the efficient use of public space, reducing the need for costly new road infrastructure, preventing crashes, improving the health of the campus community, and increasing the use of public transport; **Enhance campus 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 campus events; **Improve the health and well being** of the campus population by promoting routine physical activity.

**The five most significant measures the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign should take to improve cycling on campus are:**

- Ensure that new and existing bicycle facilities conform to current best practices and guidelines – such as the [NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide](#), [AASHTO Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities](#) and your DOT's own guidelines. Consider innovative bicycle infrastructure such as bicycle tracks, contra-flow bike lanes or colorful bike lanes.



- Increase the amount of [secure bicycle parking](#) at popular destinations such as transit stops, class room/lab buildings, dorms, recreation and entertainment facilities, and retail and office locations on campus. Regulations that require bike parking, e.g. as part of new developments, can secure private funding for bike parking. More and more institutions also ensure that off-campus student housing provide secure and covered bike parking. Ensure that bicycle parking adheres to [APBP standards](#). In addition, allow students to bring their bikes into dorm rooms.
- Provide a bicycling skills class, Traffic Skills 101 class and commuter class to students, employees and the wider community on a *frequent* basis. Ideally the instruction would incorporate a classroom portion as well as on-road training. Contact your local advocacy group to see if there are classes in your area. Or invite a League Cycling Instructor (LCI) to your campus to conduct the class. For examples of educational materials visit: <http://www.bikeleague.org/programs/education/>
- Establish a formal incentive program for those who bike commute. This should include such benefits as cash incentives, Guaranteed Ride Home, zip car discounts and coupons at local bike shops. Check out what's involved in Stanford's Commute Club membership: [http://transportation.stanford.edu/alt\\_transportation/Commute\\_Club.shtml](http://transportation.stanford.edu/alt_transportation/Commute_Club.shtml)
- Consider launching an automated bike sharing system for students, faculty and staff. A bike share system is a convenient, cost effective, and healthy way of encouraging students and employees to make short trips by bike. See what is being done at Emory University in Partnership with Fuji <http://bike.emory.edu/ride/bike-share/>

**Reviewers provided the following menu of recommendations to further promote bicycling:**

### **Engineering**

Low hanging fruit and fast results

- Provide more opportunities for [ongoing training](#) on accommodating bicyclists for engineering, planning staff, and law enforcement, such as an [FHWA course](#). Consider hosting a [Smart Cycling](#) course for engineers and planners to better understand cyclists' needs, behavior, and their right to use streets as well as multi-use paths for transportation.
- Consider a membership to the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals [www.apbp.org](http://www.apbp.org) for staff working on bicycle issues. Training opportunities and the listserv provided by this organization are excellent resources.
- Place way-finding signage at strategic locations around campus. Here are some best practices from the Washington, DC area council of governments: <http://www.mwcog.org/uploads/committee-documents/t1dZW1k20070516090831.pdf>



## Long Term Goals

- Better maintain the existing bike network and continue to expand it to increase network connectivity through the use of bike lanes, bike tracks, shared lane arrows, signed routes and bicycle cut-throughs. On-street improvements coupled with the expansion of the off-street system will continue to increase use and improve safety. 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.
- Ensure that there are end of trip facilities. Consider a policy requiring showers and locker rooms in non-residential buildings in addition to the LEED Gold standard requirement. One of the most common excuses people use to not commute by bike is that they don't have a shower at work. Also make sure to provide showers and lockers as a benefit not as an additional cost to students and employees.
- Add bicycle accommodations at intersections to improve efficiency and discourage cyclists from running red lights. These include timing lights for bicycle speeds, incorporating [bike boxes](#), [loop detectors](#), or [bicycle signal heads](#).
- Consider constructing a bike station to provide secure and covered parking for commuters. Similar to the [Bike Center at University of Minneapolis](#), the bike station can serve as a hub for commuters including repair services, shower and locker facilities, and bike route and event information. Check out other cities and universities that have already implemented a facility <http://home.bikestation.com/>
- Develop a system of bicycle boulevards that creates an attractive, convenient, and comfortable cycling environment welcoming to cyclists of all skill levels. See more on how to do it at <http://www.ibpi.usp.pdx.edu/guidebook.php>

## Education

### Low hanging fruit and fast results

- Promote bike safety creatively to the student body by informing about local bike laws, promoting helmet use and proper locking. Consider Stanford's multi-pronged approach to Bike Safety through events and programs such as a [Dorm Challenge](#), a bike ambassador program led by [Sprocket man](#), and a bike [safety pledge](#).
- The college should work to increase bicycling education opportunities for students and staff. Host an LCI seminar to train League Cycling Instructors. Contact the League offices or visit <http://www.bikeleague.org/programs/education/> for information on upcoming seminars. Having local instructors will enable the campus to expand cycling education, to be cycling ambassadors, to deliver education to motorists, provide cycling education and have an



expert to assist in encouragement programs.

[http://members.bikeleague.org/members\\_online/members/calendar\\_of\\_events.asp](http://members.bikeleague.org/members_online/members/calendar_of_events.asp)

#### Long Term Goals

- Consider more course offerings in bicycle transportation planning, policy, and engineering. Here are materials and information on implementing a graduate level course in Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning: <http://www.walkinginfo.org/training/university-courses/masters-course.cfm>
- Bicycling should be offered within physical education course offerings.

#### Encouragement

Low hanging fruit and fast results

- Promote the People for Bikes Pledge to students, faculty and staff. You can help this campaign make a statement through our sheer numbers by raising public awareness and demonstrating our passion to our leaders in Congress and in cities and states throughout the country. <http://www.peopleforbikes.org/>
- Expand encouragement efforts, especially during Bike Month. Promote bicycling through events such as a president's ride, a commuter challenge for students and faculty/staff and campus bike tours. Read about what UC Santa Barbara does during CycleMAYnia <http://cyclemaynia.ning.com/events/ucsb-bike-to-workschool-day>
- Consider offering bike valets at events throughout the year to solve parking issues for well-attended events. For example, Boise State University offers bike valet service at football games. See what the University of Arizona is also doing to encourage bicycling through a year round bike valet <http://parking.arizona.edu/bikevalet/>
- Set up campus celebrations and/or rides each time a new bicycling related project is completed. This is a great way to show off the institution's good efforts and introduce new users to the improvement.
- Consider offering a 'Ciclovia' or 'Summer Streets' type event, closing off a major corridor to auto traffic and offering the space to cyclists, pedestrians and group exercise events. <http://cicloviarecreativa.uniandes.edu.co/english/index.html>
- Launch a bike buddy or bicyclist mentorship program for inexperienced riders. A bike mentorship program that teams experienced cyclists with new-comers is a great way to encourage and educate novice commuters. Mentors can help educate on bike routes, gear, safe riding and much more. It also gives new commuters a support group to rely on and often makes them feel more secure and excited about their first few rides. For



more information on mentorship programs see:

<http://www.bicyclinginfo.org/bikemore/support.cfm#mentoring>

#### Long Term Goals

- Recreational bicycling can be promoted through facilities and programs like bike parks and velodromes.
- Expand the bike program. See what other universities are doing and what resources are available for higher ed institutions- <http://www.universitybikeprograms.org/>

#### Enforcement

Low hanging fruit and fast results

- Increase the number of police officers patrolling on bike. This increased interaction between enforcement and the bicycling community should also include targeting bicycle infractions and positive enforcement ticketing.
- Enact policies to support safe cycling. Post these ordinances in an easily accessible location so students and faculty are aware of such policies. Ensure that they are enforced. See the bicycle ordinances that Michigan State University has made public [http://trustees.msu.edu/ordinances/ordinances\\_sec33.html](http://trustees.msu.edu/ordinances/ordinances_sec33.html)
- Have police officers distribute helmets (or coupons to the local bike shop) to encourage cyclists to ride more safely and remove the barriers to attaining this essential bike accessory. See the helmet promotions at Stanford: [http://transportation.stanford.edu/alt\\_transportation/BikeSafetyEd.shtml#helmet](http://transportation.stanford.edu/alt_transportation/BikeSafetyEd.shtml#helmet)

#### Evaluation/Planning

Low hanging fruit and fast results

- Consider conducting an economic impact study on bicycling within your college/ university [http://www.altaplanning.com/App\\_Content/files/fp\\_docs/2008%20Portland%20Bicycle-Related%20Economy%20Report.pdf](http://www.altaplanning.com/App_Content/files/fp_docs/2008%20Portland%20Bicycle-Related%20Economy%20Report.pdf)

#### Long Term Goals

- Fully implement the [comprehensive bike plan](#) and continue to close gaps in the cycling network. Also, expand the encouragement, education, and enforcement programs to increase bicycle usage. Set an ambitious, attainable target to increase the percentage of trips made by bike on campus.



- Integrate the implementation of the bike plan into the campus master plan and/or land use plans, and larger development projects.
- Allow and encourage a mix of uses, a well connected street network and compact development patterns throughout campus to shorten the distances cyclists need to travel.

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