



bike pottstown

**Bicycle Infrastructure  
and  
Community Bike Program  
Study**

**GVFTransportation** Since 1990  
Creating Partnerships



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## 1. Introduction

### A. Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to develop a plan to increase bicycle use in the Borough of Pottstown based on existing plans and infrastructure. This plan will include both on-road bicycle facilities such as paved shoulders and bike lanes, as well as the creation of a community bicycle program. The study will help aid in the development of a plan to serve the transportation needs of bicyclists, with recreation and healthier lifestyles as the primary benefits.

### B. Demographics

#### Bicycling

Bicycling has long been overlooked as a sensible transportation alternative. Bicycling is sensible because it is a healthy, economical and an environmentally friendly form of transportation and recreation. People have begun to increase the use of bicycling to commute to work or run errands, despite the lack of facilities and concerns for the safety of roadways.

Through out the years, national studies have shown that individuals are willing to convert motor vehicle trips to bicycling if adequate facilities existed in the area in which they live. According to the *Montgomery County Planning Commission's Bike Road Map*,

“A 1991 Harris Poll showed that roughly 46 percent of adults aged 18 and older would commute bike to work if better bicycle facilities existed. (Source: Rodale Press Inc., 1992). A 1992 survey of 823 southeastern Pennsylvania residents found that only a small percentage (12 percent) of all respondents would never consider commuting by bicycle. Further analysis revealed that of those respondents not affiliated with bicycle clubs or advocacy groups, 37 percent would never consider bicycling to work. Both analyses show that the majority of respondents are potential bicycle commuters. (Source: Noland, Robert, *The Role of Risk in Policies to Promote Public Transportation*, 1992).”

Additionally, the Federal Highway Administration's *Nationwide Personal Transportation Survey of 1990* states, “...nationwide, 27 percent of all daily trips are 1 mile or less, 40



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percent are 2 miles or less, 49 percent are 3 miles or less and about 33 percent are 5 miles or less.” In the 1995 *Nationwide Personal Transportation Survey*, “almost 40% of all trips on bicycles were used for work, personal, family and school business and for civic purposes.”

These statistics aid in the efforts to increase bicycling facilities and infrastructure, not only within the Borough of Pottstown, but also across the country. However, Montgomery County is at a disadvantage. Existing conditions make it difficult to accommodate bicyclists on our local roadways. According to *Shaping Our Future- A Comprehensive Plan for Montgomery County*, “In Montgomery County, only 0.2% of commuters bicycled to work in the week before the Census was taken in the early spring of 2000.”

The use of bicycles as a form of transportation provides the following benefits:

- Bicycling removes cars from the roads and eases congestion on roadways
- Those who are too young to drive, lack use of a personal automobile, or who choose not to drive, benefit from bicycling as an alternate form of transportation
- Air quality is improved from the lower amount of cars emitting pollutants into the atmosphere
- Bicycling allows users to save money since less is being spent on gasoline and upkeep
- Bicycling helps to promote social interaction within a community
- Bicycling improves personal health and fitness

The benefits of bicycling are numerous to list. However, while statistics show that bicycling is a viable form of transportation, consideration must be given to the different types of bicyclists that exist. In the 1994 publication, *Selecting Roadway Design Treatments to Accommodate Bicycles*, the Federal Highway Administration describes bicyclists according to three basic groups:

1. **Group A (Advanced) Bicyclists:** These are experienced riders who can operate under most traffic conditions. They comprise the majority of the current users of collector and arterial streets and are best served by the following:
  - Direct access to destinations usually via the existing street and highway system.
  - The opportunity to operate at maximum speed with minimum delays.



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- Sufficient operating space on the roadway or shoulder to reduce the need for either the bicyclist or the motor vehicle operator to change position when passing.
2. Group B (Basic) Bicyclists: These are casual or new adult and teenage riders who are less confident of their ability to operate in traffic without special provisions for bicycles. Some will develop greater skills and progress to the advanced level, but there will always be many millions of basic bicyclists. They prefer:
    - Comfortable access to destinations, preferably by a direct route, using either low-speed, low traffic-volume streets or designated bicycle facilities.
    - Well-defined separation of bicycles and motor vehicles on arterial and collector streets (bike lanes or shoulders) or separate bike paths.
  3. Group C (Children) Bicyclists: These are pre-teen riders whose roadway use is initially monitored by parents. Eventually they are accorded independent access to the system. They and their parents prefer the following:
    - Access to key destinations surrounding residential areas, including schools, recreation facilities, shopping, or other residential areas.
    - Residential streets with low motor vehicle speed limits and volumes.
    - Well-defined separation of bicycles and motor vehicles on arterial and collector streets or separate bike paths.

In designing any bicycle facility these guidelines should be used in consideration in accommodating all bicyclists.

### **Borough of Pottstown**

The Borough of Pottstown is located in western Montgomery County and is situated along the Schuylkill River. According to the *Census of 2000*, there are 21,859 individuals living within the 5.5 square mile area of the borough. Also, the population was spread out with 25.6% under the age of 18, 7.5% from 18 to 24, 30.9% from 25 to 44, 19.8% from 45 to 64, and 16.2% who were 65 years of age or older. The median age was 36 years.

The extensive distribution of age among the population provides the opportunity to increase bicycling infrastructure within the borough because of the broad range of benefit, to everyone. No one single age group would benefit from these efforts.



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The borough is home to a wide variety of attractions that make it a great place to live, work and play. Some of these attractions include:

- Pottsgrove Manor
- Montgomery County Community College- West Campus
- The Hill School Center for the Arts
- Schuylkill River Greenway
- Pottstown Symphony
- Historic walking tours
- Carousel at Pottstown
- Trilogy Park
- Extensive park system
- Ricketts Community Center
- Downtown shopping area
- Pottstown Memorial Medical Center

### **C. History of Community Bikes**

An early white bicycle project started in the 1960s by Luud Schimmelpenninck was possibly the first large-scale community bicycle program. This program provided free bicycles that were supposed to be used for one trip and then left for someone else. The program is still active in some parts of the Netherlands and other places like Helsinki and Copenhagen. It originally existed as one in a series of White Plans proposed in the street magazine *PROVO*.

One of the first community bicycle projects in the United States was started in Portland, Oregon in the mid-1990s and took the approach of simply releasing a number of bicycles to the streets for un-restricted use. This program failed initially due to theft and vandalism of the bicycles. The program was later revised to operate under a more restrictive system. Since then, many community projects around the country have attempted similar models and met with varying degrees of success.

Jared Benedict, of the Hampshire College Yellow Bike Program, lists the following as reasons to implement a community bike program:

- Provide a viable alternative method of inter-community transportation.
- Provide transportation which does not require the individual to follow a specific schedule like other means of public transportation.



- Offer a complimentary method of transportation to existing public transport (Buses, Subway, etc.)
- Reduce privately owned bicycle theft - Hundreds of thousands of bicycles are stolen every year. The two most popular reasons for theft are to sell the bicycle or convenience theft where the thief simply wants to quickly get across town. Community bike programs can provide an alternative to convenience theft.
- Reduce traffic congestion.
- Support community development by including the community in the program.
- Increase interaction of community members by getting them out of their cars.
- Improve the health of community members.
- Increase community distinctiveness - A community bike program makes your community distinct and memorable. It provides an opportunity to increase tourism. It's also a way for tourists to get to know your community.
- Support traditional "village" communities. Prevent sprawl.

The implementation of community bike programs have been unique to the communities they reside. Each has been met with varying levels of success and has faced obstacles in the process.



**Figure 1: Decatur Yellow Bike Program**  
Photo from [DYbikes.org](http://DYbikes.org)



## 2. Existing Bicycling Infrastructure and Recommendations

### A. Bike Lanes

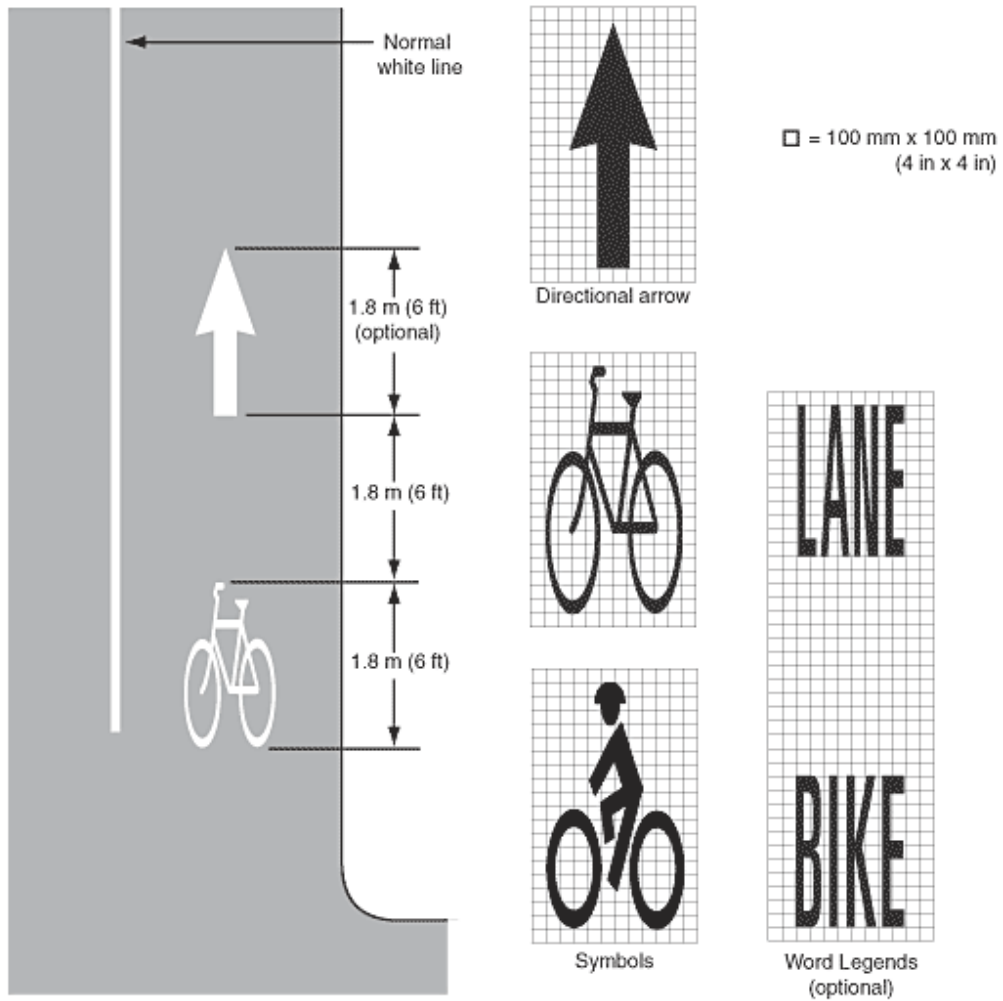
The *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD)* defines a bike lane as “a portion of a roadway that has been designated by signs and pavement markings for preferential or exclusive use by bicyclists.” These lanes are one-way facilities that carry bicycle traffic in the same direction as adjacent vehicle traffic. Vehicles are prohibited from using bike lanes except for emergency situations.

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation has adopted the Federal Highway Administration’s guideline for bike lane design as “recommended standards” for roadways in the state. Part 9 of the *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Device* provides an overview of traffic controls for bicycle facilities.



**Figure 2: Example of Typical Bike Lane**  
Photo from Smartgrowth.net

**Figure 9C-6. Example of Optional Word and Symbol Pavement Markings for Bicycle Lanes**



**Figure 3: Examples of Optional Word and Symbol Pavement Marking for Bicycle Lanes**  
Image from MUTCD Part 9- Figure 9C-6



Currently, bike lanes have been installed on High Street as part of the borough's back-in angle parking design in May 2003. The lanes travel both eastbound and westbound along High Street through the downtown shopping area. The addition of these bike lanes has encouraged more bicycle traffic through the downtown area.

However, one issue that needs to be addressed concerning the High Street bike lane is that after the intersection of College Drive and High Street only a westbound bike lane exists. PennDOT classifies bicycles as motor vehicles thus requiring them to abide by all motor vehicle regulations. Due to this classification, bicycles must travel with the flow of traffic. Due to the lack of an eastbound bicycle lane, this causes a dilemma for those who choose to bike in this area.



**Figure 4: High Street after Bike Lane Installation**  
Photo from [Saveourlandsaveourtowns.org](http://Saveourlandsaveourtowns.org)



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## Recommendations

### 1. Additional Pavement Markings

The design of the current bike lane along High Street currently meets the standards set forth by PennDOT and the Federal Highway Administration. The bike lane is marked by a solid white line with bicycle detector pavement marking and directional arrow as indicated in Figure 3. It is recommended that in addition to these pavement markings the word legend “Bike Lane” be added in the lane at a determined distance on the approach to intersections. This pavement marking can be seen in Figure 2. The addition of those marking will alert motorists when approaching these intersections that the bike lane can not be blocked by their vehicle.

In regards to the color of the striping for the bike lane, the *MUTCD* recommends white as the preferred color. As stated in the *MUTCD*,

“WHITE is the color for all markings except those that are specifically required to be yellow and except for special red and blue raised pavement markers (reflectors mounted on or in the pavement). Lane lines are always WHITE. Edge lines along the right side of any roadway or ramp are always WHITE. Transverse lines are always WHITE, except for cross-hatching markings in medians or safety zones separating opposing traffic flows or in left shoulders, which are yellow. Arrows, words, and symbol markings (except the special red, white, and blue Interstate route shield symbol marking) are always WHITE. Speed hump markings and parking space markings are always WHITE.”

However, FHWA does have a mechanism for sanctioning experiments with new signs and markings that must be adhered to if a change to the *MUTCD* is eventually going to be approved. The FHWA website says that:

"All requests for experimentation should originate with the State/local highway agency or toll operator responsible for managing the roadway on which the experiment will take place. That organization forwards the request to the FHWA, which must approve the experiment before it begins. Requests may also be forwarded directly to the FHWA Division Office in the State or the FHWA Headquarters Office. All requests must include:



1. A statement of the nature of the problem.
2. Describe the proposed change, how it was developed, how it deviates from the standard, and why it is an improvement over the existing standard.
3. Any illustration(s) that enhance understanding of the device or its use.
4. Supporting data that explains how the experimental device was developed, if it has been tried, the adequacy of its performance, and the process by which the device was chosen or applied.
5. An agreement to restore the experimental site to a condition that complies with the provisions of the MUTCD within 3 months following completion of the experiment. The agreement must also provide that the sponsoring agency will terminate the experiment at any time if it determines that experiment directly or indirectly causes significant safety hazards. If the experiment demonstrates an improvement, the device or application may remain in place as a request is made to update the MUTCD and an official rulemaking action occurs.
6. An agreement to provide semiannual progress reports for the duration of the experimentation and to provide a copy of the final results to the Office of Transportation Operations (HOTO) within three months of the conclusion of the experiment. HOTO may terminate approval of the experimentation if these reports are not provided on schedule.

A successful experiment is one where the public understands the research results, it does not cause adverse conditions, and the device or application generally performs as intended. The "experimenter" must evaluate conditions both before and after installation of the experimental device and describe the measurements of effectiveness (MOEs) of the safety benefits and traffic benefits (e.g., better visibility, reduced congestion)."

The Borough of Pottstown could use this process as an opportunity to investigate whether changing the color of the bike lane on High Street would increase visibility among motorists, thus creating a safer environment for bicyclists.

## **2. Additional Bike Lanes/Shared Road Facilities**

### **Bike Lanes**

When looking at the potential for additional bike lanes in the borough, few roads meet the width required to accommodate such a facility. Two roadways meet the initial requirements when viewed by the Pottstown Police Department.



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### Industrial Drive

Industrial Drive has the potential to accommodate a bike lane from Hanover Street to a partial portion of Moser Road. Some minor modifications would be needed along Industrial Drive to accommodate a bike lane. Where the bike lane would end off Moser Road, Share-the-Road signs could be installed to alert motorists to bicycle traffic. The sidewalks in this area could also accommodate increase bicycle traffic through this area.

- The intersection of Industrial Drive and Washington Street has a small median. Modifications to the existing lane striping would be needed to accommodate the bike lane through the intersection (or) discontinuation of the bike lane through the intersection and resuming beyond the Washington Street intersection.
- When traveling onto Moser Road, modification to the double yellow line would be required to accommodate bike lanes on either side of the roadway.
- From the intersection of Moser Road and Center Avenue to Michael Perate & Company property, parking would need to be prohibited to accommodate a bike lane on either side of the roadway. When viewing the current parking situation, most cars begin parking beyond the Perate property.

Industrial Drive runs parallel to the Schuylkill River and observations have shown that individuals elect to use Industrial Drive as a facility to bike. Consideration should be given to this roadway for a bike lane.

### Hanover Street

Hanover Street, from 3<sup>rd</sup> Street to High Street, is wide enough and meets the requirement standards to accommodate a bike lane. Due to existing laws, bicycle traffic on the sidewalks are prohibited in this area. The addition of a bike lane on Hanover Street would make a crucial link to the already existing bike lane on High Street. While Hanover Street from High Street to the Schuylkill River can not accommodate a bike lane, this addition would provide an option to those who live in this area of the borough.

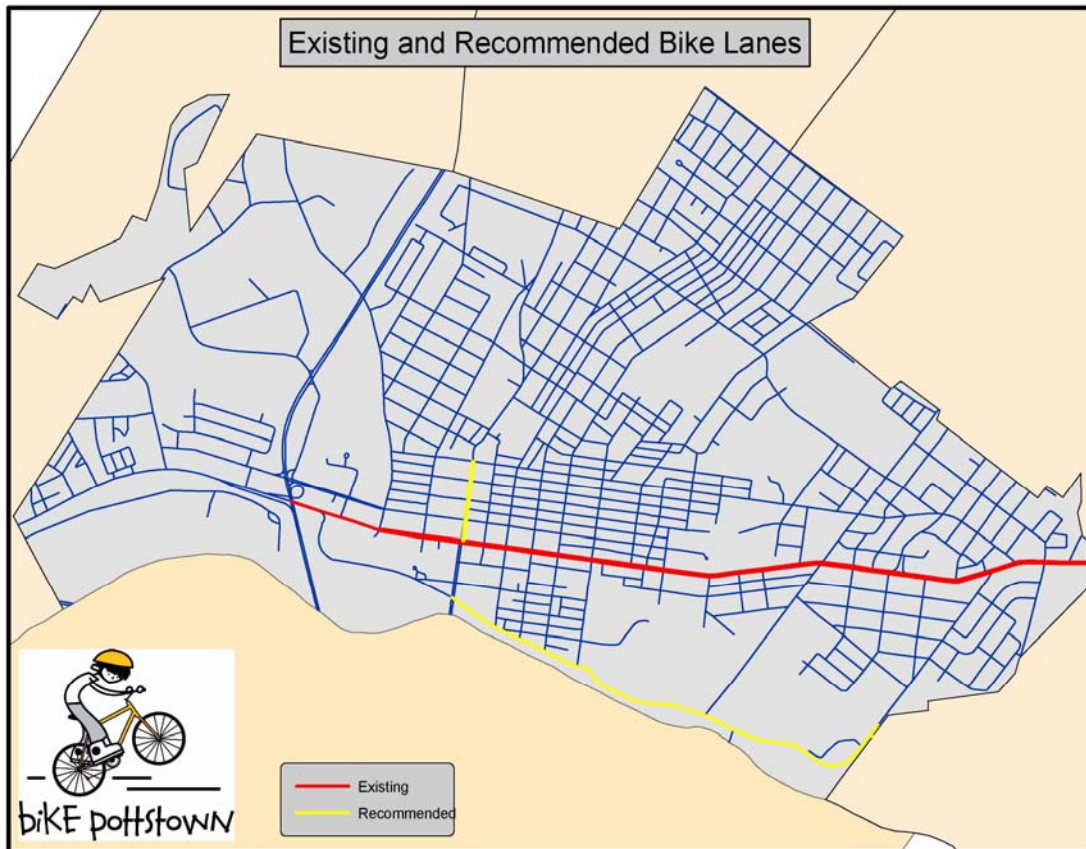


Figure 5: Existing and Recommended Bike Lanes

### Shared Road Facilities

Since bicyclists are legally able to use all roadways, all roads are technically classified as "shared roadways" (with the exception of controlled-access freeways in some States). The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) defines a shared roadway as "a roadway which is not officially designated and marked as a bicycle route, but which is open to both bicycle and motor vehicle travel. This may be an existing roadway, street with wide curb lanes, or a road with paved shoulders."

Most shared roadways have no provisions for bicycle travel and are, therefore, perceived as unsafe by many bicyclists. However, there are some design measures that can be taken to ensure that shared roadways accommodate bicyclists safely and efficiently. One



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measure that can be taken is the installation of Share the Road signs. These signs are used to encourage safe and smart interaction between motor vehicles and bicycles on roadways.

Share-the-road.org lists criteria for the signs as follows:

- Significant usage by local cyclists
- Documented car-bike accident history
- Narrow sections without paved shoulders
- Wide segments that allow high speeds and/or dangerous passing
- Road sections interrupted by numerous driveways
- Roads that are being promoted as a cycling route by a local or state agency.

Based upon the listed criteria, several roadways within the borough could be promoted as shared roadways since they do not meet the standards for a bike lane. It is recommended that Share the Road signs be installed due to conditions of the sidewalks within the borough. In most instances, the conditions of the sidewalks create an unwelcoming and dangerous riding condition. Currently, Share the Road signs are being used along High Street in the borough.

Roadways that are recommended for Share the Road signs are:

- **Evans Street:** From Beech Street to Mervine Street
- **Franklin Street:** From Beech Street to Mervine Street
- **Keim Street:** From Industrial Drive to Mulberry Street
- **Farmington Avenue:** From Wilson Street to 3<sup>rd</sup> Street
- **Jackson Street:** From Keim Street to Wilson Street
- **Wilson Street:** From Adam Street to State Street
- **Beech Street:** From Keim Street to Manatawny Street
- **Industrial Drive:** From Hanover to High Street
- **Manatawny Street:** High Street to Belmont Street

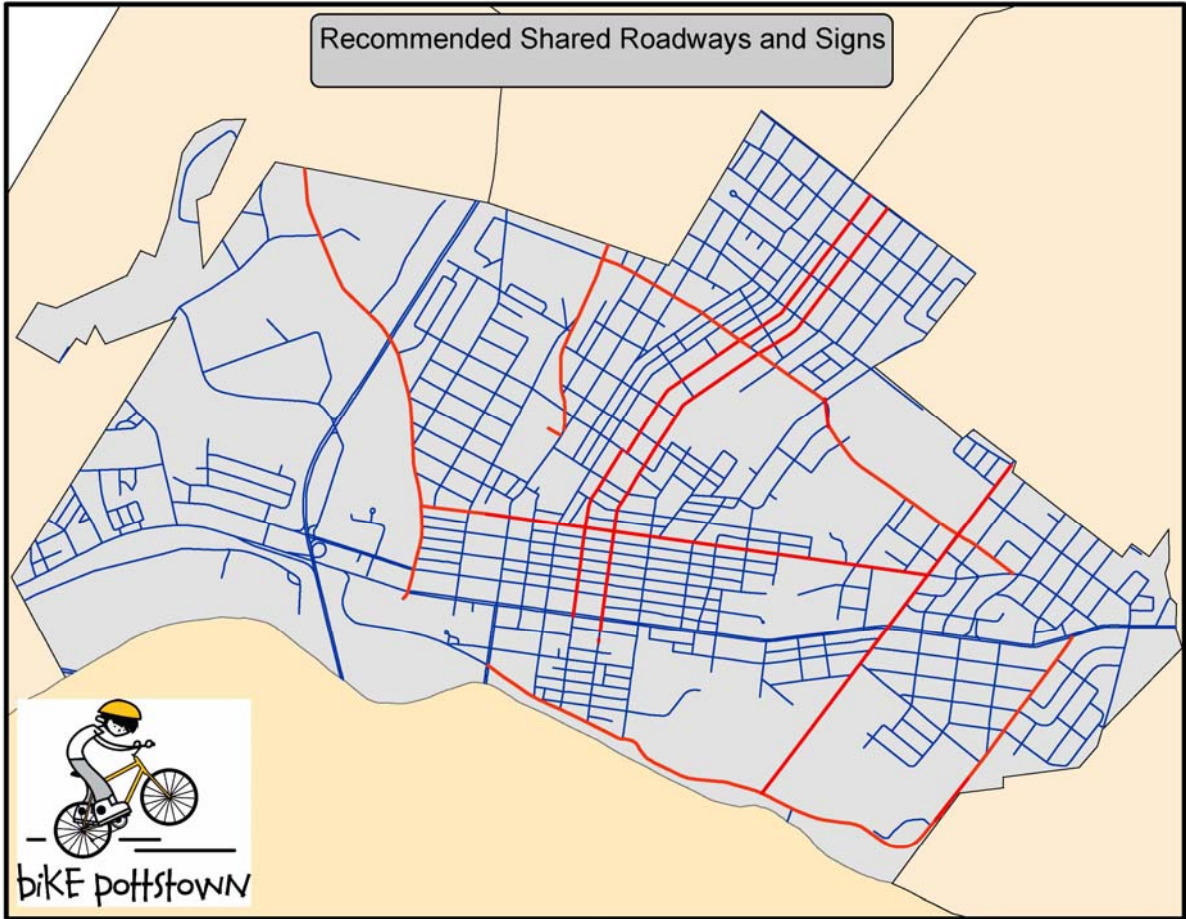


Figure 6: Recommended Shared Roadways



**Figure 7: Share the Road Sign**  
Image from Share-the-Road.org



**Figure 8: Share the Road Sign along Steel Valley Trail**  
Image from Post-Gazette.com



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## Pottstown Promenade

The promenade was conceived as a pedestrian and bicycle link between downtown Pottstown and the Montgomery County Community College. The promenade will connect Hanover Street to the bus stop facility adjacent to the community college with a link to Riverfront Park and the River Center at Pottstown.

The Pottstown Promenade will serve as a vital link between the downtown area and the Schuylkill River Trail and Riverfront Park. Currently, there is a disconnection from the downtown to this area because current laws state that biking is prohibited on sidewalks in this vicinity. Also, Hanover Street from High Street to Industrial Drive can not accommodate a bike lane due to its current configuration.

The completion of this project is strongly recommended to serve the biking and walking needs of the community.

### 3. Signage

Increasing signage in conjunction with the bike lane on High Street would swell the number of signs along the roadway and provide more confusion to riders and motorists. The only recommended addition to signage in the borough would be the installation of Share the Road signs along designated shared roadway facilities. Additional pavement markings to the existing bike lane would be more beneficial to increase awareness of the bike lane.

### B. Bike Racks and Locations

The *International Bicycle Fund* has determined "...there are various mechanisms that can be used for determining where to put the racks. Almost all the ones that are sited with bicyclist input are in heavy use. Determining bicycle parking doesn't have to be scientific. Some of the best determinants for determining bike parking are:

- **Visual observation-** Look for where bikes are parked illegally due to lack of legal parking. The (car) parking patrol people can probably do this for you in a week.
- **User input-** Ask bicyclists (through clubs or advocacy groups) to create a list of most-needed spots for bike parking.



- **Land use criteria-** Target every coffee shop, bookstore, video arcade, teen/young adult clothing store.
- **Public-private partnership-** Have a grant program whereby businesses can request bike parking for customers and employees, paying for the installation themselves, but getting the racks paid for by the grant.
- **Building code-** Require all new development or change of business to install bike parking proportionate to car parking requirements.”

Within the borough, there are several locations that currently have bicycle parking. These locations include:

- Smith Family Plaza
- Schuylkill River Greenway Pavilion
- Borough Hall
- Riverfront Park
- Memorial Park
- Pottstown Public Library
- Montgomery County Community College
- Barth Elementary
- Edgewood Elementary
- Franklin Elementary
- Lincoln Elementary
- Rupert Elementary
- Pottstown Middle School
- Pottstown Senior High School

## Recommendations

### **1. Increased Locations of Bike Racks**

To increase the attractiveness of bicycling with the borough, adequate biking parking is needed to aid in these efforts. Bike parking needs to be publicized in order for individuals to use it. Bike racks can be painted in bright colors so that pedestrians and bicyclists can see them easily. Signs can be used to direct cyclists to the parking. The placement of a bicycle logo on the rack or on the ground can help publicize the availability and location of bicycle parking.

It is recommended that the following locations be considered for bike parking in the borough. These locations include:



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- North End Shopping Center
  - Pottstown CareerLink
  - Pottstown YMCA
  - Ricketts Community Center
  - Neighborhood Parks
    - West Street Park
    - Walnut Street Park
    - Maple Street Park
    - Pollack Park
    - South Street Park
    - Cherry Street Park
    - Potts Drive Park
    - Brookside Park
    - Spruce Street Park
    - Washington Street Park
  - Various locations along High Street in the downtown area.
  - Farmers Market
  - Pottstown Memorial Medical Center

## **2. Bike Lockers**

A growing trend among bicycle-friendly communities has been the installation of bike lockers. Bike lockers allow users to store their bikes in a safe, enclosed structure out of the elements. In addition to storing bikes, lockers can be used to store bags and personal items that are carried along with the bike.

The addition of bike lockers in the downtown area would allow for users of the Schuylkill River Trail to come into the borough and patronize the downtown shops with the peace of mind that their bike and items are being stored in a safe and secure facility. Locations through the downtown and trail area could be identified as potential locations for bike lockers.



**Figure 9 & 10: Examples of Bike Lockers**  
Photo from Cyclesafe.com

## C. Biking Ordinances

When looking into how the borough can become more bicycle-friendly, consideration must be given to the existing state and borough ordinances already in effect. Listed below are the current ordinances that are in effect.

### State of Pennsylvania

**Title 75 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes** contains the laws which govern the operation of vehicles on Pennsylvania roads.

In Pennsylvania, a bicycle is considered a vehicle and, as such, is governed by a general set of rules (common to all vehicles) and a specific set of rules (designed for bicycles). The following annotated list provides all of the important sections of the Vehicle Code which a Pennsylvania bicyclist should know. Keep in mind that the laws themselves often describe only what a bicyclist is required to do, not how to do it. This manual addresses how to bicycle safely and efficiently by following the rules of the road.

### **Chapter 33 - OPERATION OF VEHICLES**

#### **Section 3336. Method of giving hand and arm signals.**

All signals given by hand and arm shall be given from the left side of the vehicle in the following manner except as indicated for pedalcycles and motorcycles and the signals shall indicate as follows:



- (1) For a left turn, the hand and arm shall be extended horizontally.
- (2) For a right turn, the left hand and arm shall be extended upward, except that the operators of motorcycles and pedalcycles may also be permitted to signal a right turn by extending the right hand and arm horizontally.
- (3) To stop or decrease speed, the left hand and arm shall be extended downward.

## **Chapter 35 - SPECIAL VEHICLES AND PEDESTRIANS**

### **Subchapter A - Operation of Pedalcycles (Bicycles)**

#### **Section 3501. Applicability of traffic laws to pedalcycles.**

**(a) General rule.** -- Every person riding a pedalcycle upon a roadway shall be granted all of the rights and shall be subject to all of the duties applicable to the driver of a vehicle by this title, except as to special provisions in this subchapter and except as to those provisions of this title which by their nature can have no application.

**(b) Application of subchapter.** -- The provisions of this subchapter apply whenever a pedalcycle is operated upon any highway or upon any path set aside for the exclusive use of pedalcycles subject to the exceptions stated in subsection (a).

**Comment:** Bicycles are considered vehicles under Pennsylvania Laws and must obey all the rules of the road which apply to vehicles. These are the "responsibilities" mentioned above. The "rights" refer to the roadway space required to operate the bicycle in a safe, lawful manner.

#### **Section 3502. Penalty for violation of subchapter.**

Any person violating any provision of this subchapter is guilty of a summary offense and shall, upon conviction, be sentenced to pay a fine of \$10.

#### **Section 3503. Responsibility of parent or guardian.**

The parent of any child and the guardian of any ward shall not authorize or knowingly permit the child or ward to violate any of the provisions of this title relating to the operation of pedalcycles.

#### **Section 3504. Riding on pedalcycles.**

**(a) Use of seat by operator.** -- A person propelling a pedalcycle shall not ride other than upon or astride a permanent and regular seat attached to the pedalcycle.

**(b) Number of riders.** -- No pedalcycle shall be used to carry more persons at one time than the number for which the pedalcycle is designed and equipped, except that an adult



rider may transport a child in a pedalcycle or in a child carrier which is securely attached to the pedalcycle or in a trailer which is towed by a pedalcycle.

**Section 3505.**

**(a) General rule.** -- Except as provided in subsections (b) and (c), every person operating a pedalcycle upon a highway shall obey the applicable rules of the road as contained in this title.

**Comment:** This statement reiterates the necessity for cyclists to conform to the expectations of other road users in order to ensure the safety of all.

**(b) Operation on shoulder.** -- A pedalcycle may be operated on the shoulder of a highway and shall be operated in the same direction as required of vehicles operated on the roadway.

**Comment:** A bicycle may be operated on either a shoulder or on the roadway (the travel lanes). The locations will be based upon traffic volume, the physical condition of the travel lanes or the shoulder, traffic speed, the bicyclist's intended direction, and other safety factors.

**(c) Slower than prevailing speeds.**-- A pedalcycle operated at slower than prevailing speed shall be operated in accordance with the provisions of Section 3301(b), unless it is unsafe to do so.

**[3301(b). Vehicle proceeding at less than normal speed.**

Upon all roadways, any vehicles proceeding at less than the normal speed of traffic at the time and place under the conditions than existing shall be driven in the right-hand lane then available for traffic, or as close as practicable to the right-hand curb or edge of the roadway, except when overtaking and passing another vehicle proceeding in the same direction or when preparing for a left turn at an intersection or into an alley, private road or driveway. This subsection does not apply to a driver who must necessarily drive in a lane other than the right-hand lane to continue on his intended route.]

**Comment:** Taken together, 3505 (c) and 3301 (b) state that slower vehicles should keep to the right, which is the normal expectation of all road users, while permitting bicyclists to make movements consistent with their intended route.

**(d) One-way roadways.** -- Any person operating a pedalcycle upon a roadway, which carries traffic in one direction only and has two or more marked traffic lanes, may ride as



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near the left-hand curb or edge of the roadway as practicable, exercising due care when passing a standing vehicle or one proceeding in the same direction.

**Comment:** Bicycles may ride in the left lane of a one-way street which contains two or more lanes. However, this does not apply to pedalcyclists on freeways. See Section 3511(d), below.

**(e) Limitation on riding abreast.** -- Persons riding pedalcycles upon a roadway shall not ride more than two abreast, except on paths or parts of roadways set aside for the exclusive use of pedalcycles.

**Section 3506.**

No person operating a pedalcycle shall carry any package, bundle or article which prevents the driver from keeping at least one hand upon the handlebars.

**Section 3507. Lamps or other equipment on pedalcycles.**

**(a) Lamps and reflectors.** -- Every pedalcycle when in use between sunset and sunrise shall be equipped on the front with a lamp which emits a beam of white light intended to illuminate the pedalcycle operator's path and visible from a distance of at least 500 feet to the front, a red reflector facing to the rear which shall be visible at least 500 feet to the rear, and an amber reflector on each side. Operators of pedalcycles may supplement the required front lamp with a white flashing lamp, light-emitting diode or similar device to enhance their visibility to other traffic and with a lamp emitting a red flashing lamp, light emitting diode or similar device visible from a distance of 500 feet to the rear. A lamp or lamps worn by the operator of a pedalcycle shall comply with the requirements of this subsection if the lamp or lamps can be seen at the distances specified.

**Comment:** Many car-bike crashes occur at night and involve a poorly illuminated bicyclist. Bicyclists should understand that headlamps serve two purposes: a) primarily, they advise other road users of their presence (vitaly important to prevent unsuspecting motorists from cutting across the paths of cyclists they cannot even detect), b) secondarily, illuminate the bicyclist's path.

**(b) Audible signal devices.** - A pedalcycle may be equipped with a device capable of giving a signal audible for a distance of at least 100 feet except that a pedalcycle shall not be equipped with nor shall any person use upon a pedalcycle any siren.



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(c) **Brakes.** - Every pedalcycle shall be equipped with a braking system which will stop the pedalcycle in 15 feet from an initial speed of 15 miles per hour on a dry, level and clean pavement.

**Section 3508. Pedalcycles on sidewalks and pedalcycle paths.**

(a) **Right-of-way to pedestrians.**-- A person riding a pedalcycle upon a sidewalk or pedalcycle path used by pedestrians shall yield the right-of-way to any pedestrian and shall give an audible signal before overtaking and passing a pedestrian.

(b) **Business districts.**-- A person shall not ride a pedalcycle upon a sidewalk in a business district unless permitted by official traffic-control devices, nor when a usable pedalcycle-only lane has been provided adjacent to the sidewalk.

**Section 3509. Parking.**

(a) **Sidewalks.**

(1) A person may park a pedalcycle on a sidewalk unless prohibited or restricted by an official traffic-control device.

(2) A pedalcycle parked on a sidewalk shall not impede the normal and reasonable movement of pedestrian or other traffic.

(b) **Roadways.**

(1) A pedalcycle may be parked on the roadway at any angle to the curb or edge of the roadway at any location where parking is allowed.

(2) A pedalcycle may be parked on the roadway abreast of another pedalcycle or pedalcycles near the side of the roadway at any location where parking is allowed.

(3) A person shall not park a pedalcycle on a roadway in such a manner as to obstruct the movement of a legally parked motor vehicle.

(4) In all other respects, pedalcycles parked anywhere on a highway shall conform with the provisions of Subchapter E of Chapter 33 (relating to stopping, standing and parking).

**Section 3510. Pedalcycle helmets for certain persons.**

(a) **General rule.**-- A person under 12 years of age shall not operate a pedalcycle or ride as a passenger on a pedalcycle unless the person is wearing a pedalcycle helmet meeting the standards of the American Standards Institute, the American Society for Testing and Materials, the Snell Memorial Foundation's Standards for Protective Headgear for Use in Bicycling or any other nationally recognized standard for pedalcycle helmet approval.

This subsection shall also apply to a person who rides:

(1) upon a pedalcycle while in a restraining seat attached to a pedalcycle; or

(2) in a trailer towed by a pedalcycle.



**Comment:** The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation strongly recommends that all bicyclists wear approved helmets whenever they ride.

**Section 3511. Pedalcycles prohibited on freeways.**

**(a) General rule.--** No person shall ride a pedalcycle on a freeway.

**(b) Exceptions.**

(1) On State-designed freeways, pedalcycles may be authorized under the following limitations:

(i) The pedalcycler is 16 years of age or older and is accompanied by a pedalcycler 18 years of age or older.

(ii) A written request for review of the freeway route based on the potential unavailability of a reasonable alternate route is made to the department.

(iii) The department determines that no reasonable alternate route exists.

(iv) The department publishes a notice in the Pennsylvania Bulletin authorizing pedalcycle access to the freeway. The notice shall constitute approval for the persons authorized under subparagraph (i) to ride a pedalcycle on the State-designated freeway.

**(c) Action by local authorities.--** Action taken by local authorities regarding permission to use pedalcycles on freeways under their jurisdiction shall be:

(1) by ordinance of the local governing body; or

(2) by a commission or public official authorized to act on specified matters.

**(d) Operation on shoulder.-** - If the department authorizes pedalcycle access to a freeway, the pedalcycle shall be operated upon the shoulder of that freeway whenever practicable.

**Comment:** Bicycles may be permitted on freeways in Pennsylvania with permission of the Department. The applicant must submit a written request (form) to the Department for review. In addition, Section 3511(d) requires the bicycle to be ridden on the shoulder of the freeway.



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## **Borough of Pottstown**

### **General Regulations**

§101. Definition. A bicycle, as herein mentioned, is a device having two (2) tandem wheels of a diameter not less than ten (10") inches and propelled by human power. (Ord. 1215, 8/11/1969, §1)

§102. Registration.

1. A person who resides within the Borough shall not ride or operate a bicycle upon any street or public place within this Borough unless said bicycle has been properly registered and tagged in accordance with the following regulations:

A. Every owner or operator of any bicycle within the Borough of Pottstown shall, within ten (10) days after publication of this Part, make application for the registration of said bicycle with the Chief of Police on a form provided for that purpose. No license shall be issued to a minor without the written consent of the minor's parent or guardian.

B. Registration of bicycles shall be serially numbered and kept on file by the Chief of Police in his office as a public record.

C. The Chief of Police, upon receiving proper registration of a bicycle, shall affix, or cause to be affixed, to the rear frame of the bicycle, an identification tag or plate, serially numbered to correspond with the bicycle's registration. A registration card shall be issued to the owner of each properly registered bicycle.

D. A charge, in an amount as established from time to time by resolution of Borough Council, shall be made for the registering and tagging of any bicycle. A charge, also in an amount as established from time to time by resolution, shall be made for the issuing of duplicate registration cards. [Ord. 1735]

E. The Chief of Police shall keep a record of:

- (1) The number of each registration.
- (2) Date issued.
- (3) Name and address of person to whom issued.
- (4) The make and number of each bicycle frame.
- (5) A record of all bicycle registration fees collected.



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F. Bicycles registered under the provisions hereof shall be registered on or before October 1, 1969, and biennially thereafter. The Chief of Police shall affix a new identification tag or plate to each bicycle at the time of such registration or re-registration.

G. Within ten (10) days after the sale, transfer or dismantling of any registered bicycle, such information shall be reported to the Chief of Police by the person in whose name the bicycle was registered. Such person may have the identification tag or plate of his former bicycle transferred to another bicycle owned by him without payment of an additional fee upon proper registration of such bicycle with the Chief of Police.

H. A rental agency shall not rent or offer any bicycle for rent unless the bicycle

is properly registered and tagged and unless such bicycle is provided with the equipment required under the terms of this Part.

2. It shall be unlawful for any person willfully or maliciously to remove, destroy, mutilate or alter the identification tag or plate, frame number of the bicycle or the registration card issued to the owner thereof.

(Ord. 1215, 8/11/1969, §2; as amended by Ord. 1735, 4/12/1993)

§103. Inspection. The Chief of Police, or his duly authorized representative, shall inspect each bicycle presented for registration and shall refuse to register any bicycle found to be in an unsafe mechanical condition or lacking the equipment specified as necessary under terms of this Part. Every bicycle must be re-inspected every two (2) years. (Ord. 1215, 8/11/1969, §3)

§104. Penalties. Any person who shall violate any of the provisions of this part shall, upon conviction thereof, be subject to a penalty of not more than six hundred (\$600.00) dollars or to removal of the license plate from his bicycle, and detention thereof for not more than seven (7) days for a first violation, not more than fourteen (14) days for a second violation, or not more than thirty (30) days for a third or subsequent violation, or to both fine and such removal and detention of the license plate. In default of payment of said fine and costs, said person shall be subject to imprisonment for a period not to exceed thirty (30) days. (Ord. 1215, 8/11/1969, §6; as amended by Ord. 1735, 4/12/1993)



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## Chapter 15: Part 9 - Regulation of Pedalcycles and Non-motorized Vehicles

### §901. Riding and Parking of Pedalcycles on Sidewalks Along Certain Streets Prohibited.

1. It shall be unlawful for any person to ride or park a pedalcycle on the sidewalk along the following portions of the streets in the Borough:

**Street Side Between**

High St. Both Madison St. and Manatawny St.  
North Hanover St. West Farmington Ave. and Fourth St.

2. Any person who violates any provision of this Section shall, upon conviction, be sentenced to pay a fine of twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) plus costs and, on a second or subsequent conviction, a fine not to exceed fifty dollars (\$50.00) and costs.

3. Police officers, while on duty, may ride bicycles on the sidewalks.  
(Ord. 1735, 4/12/1993; as amended by (Ord. 1796, 4/10/1995; as amended by Ord. 1826, 6/10/1996, §1; and by Ord. 1970, 12/8/2003, §3)

### §903. Skates, Skateboards, Coasters, Sleds and Other Toy Vehicles.

1. It shall be unlawful for any person to ride on a sled upon any sidewalk in the Borough, or upon any roadway unless that roadway is on a portion of a street blocked off for sledding by authority of §105 of Part 1 or §216 of Part 2 of this Chapter. Provided: nothing in this subsection shall prevent a pedestrian from pulling a sled, with or without a rider, upon a sidewalk.

2. It shall be unlawful for any person to engage in roller-skating, roller-blading, skateboarding or riding upon or propelling any coaster or other toy vehicle upon:

A. Any street except in order to cross the roadway.

B. Any sidewalk located in a business district and the sidewalk located on the west side of North Hanover Street between Fourth Street and Farmington Avenue, except that nothing in this subsection shall prevent a pedestrian from pulling a coaster or other toy vehicle, with or without a rider, upon a sidewalk.



[Ord. 1826]

3. Any person who violates any provision of this Section shall, upon conviction, be sentenced to pay a fine of twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) and costs and, on a second or subsequent conviction, a fine not to exceed fifty dollars (\$50.00) and costs. [Ord. 1826]

(Ord. 1735, 4/12/1993; as amended by Ord. 1826, 6/10/1996, §2)

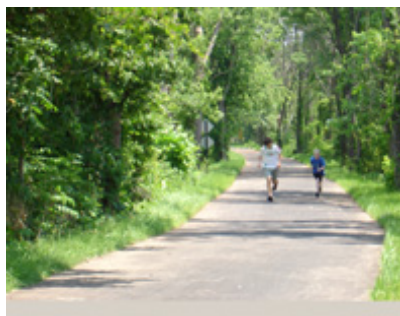
### **Recommendation**

Creation of an ordinance that would require all new development or change of business to install bike parking in regards to location and size of development.

#### **D. Schuylkill River Trail**

The Schuylkill River Trail is a multi-use trail that winds along the valley of the Schuylkill River in Pennsylvania, mostly within sight of the river itself. Recently, a new trail head was opened in Riverfront Park to serve those who use the trail. In addition to the trail head, connections have been made to the Thun Trail in Berks County.

The location of the trail in Pottstown provides a valuable resource for those who are seeking a new area for recreation. The promotion of biking in the borough should be coupled with an increased awareness that the trail passes within the borough limits. Increased visibility and awareness of the Schuylkill River Trail could greatly benefit the downtown commercial area by targeting those who use the trail and open a new market for people to enjoy the trail.



**Figure 11: Schuylkill River Trail in Montgomery County**  
Photo from Schuylkillriver.org



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## E. Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia Cycling Conditions



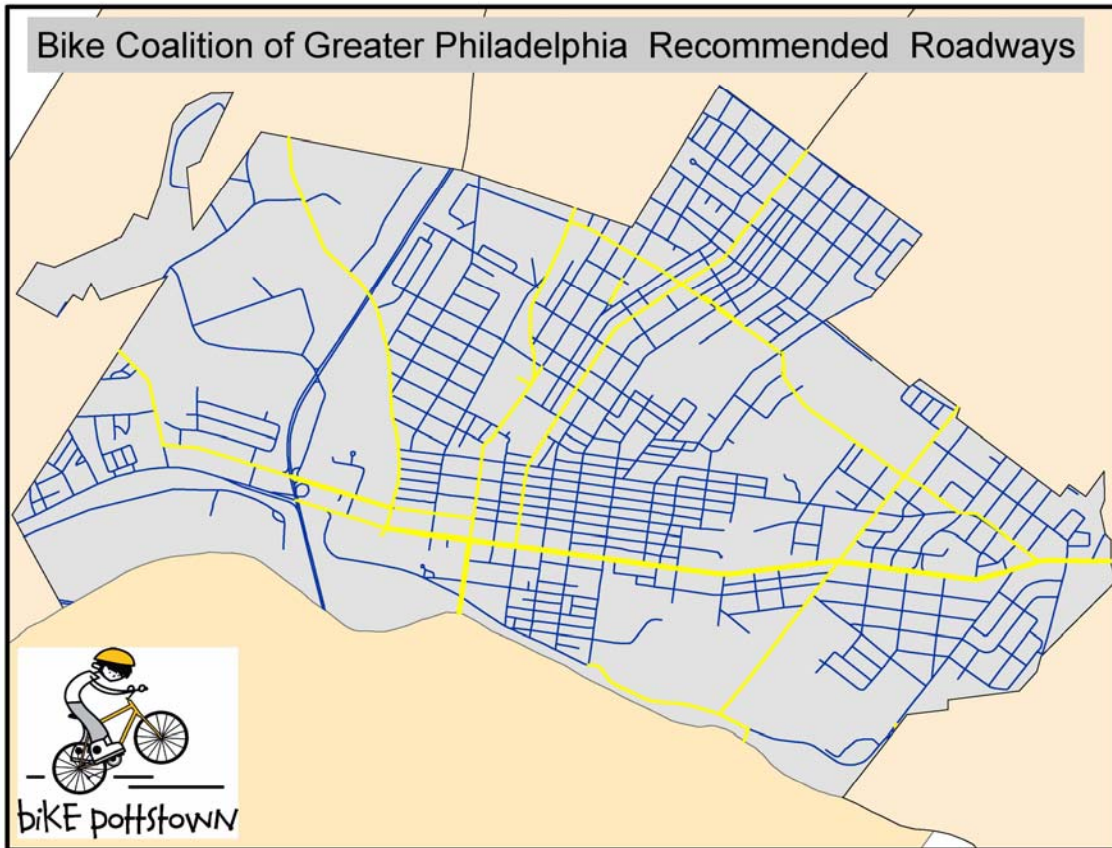
The mission of the Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia (BCGP) is to promote bicycling as an environmentally friendly, healthy, and economical form of transportation and recreation through advocacy and education. Since 1972, the BCGP has been working hard to improve bicycling conditions and promote bicycling. Whether you bike to work, school, shop, or just for fun, BCGP works hard those who enjoy cycling.

In recent years, the Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia has created a Greater Philadelphia Bicycle Map. The map is created based on traffic volumes, roadway geometry and field observations. While they provide this map as a tool, riders should use common sense when riding on these roadways. Cycling conditions are categorized by the following:

- **Bicycle Friendly**  
Most suitable for on-road cycling. Some roads may have heavy traffic, but also have wide shoulders, making them preferred routes.
- **Average**  
Moderately suitable for on-road cycling. Cyclists of lesser skill and experience riding in traffic may find conditions unfavorable.
- **Below Average**  
Least suitable for on-road cycling. While riding on these roads may not be pleasant, they may be the most direct route between two points.



Within the borough, there are several roadways listed at Average for on-road cycling. The map below indicates which roadways are rated as Average.



**Figure 12: Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia Recommended Roadways**  
**Note: Each roadway is recommended as Average**



### 3. Recommended Expansion to Biking Infrastructure

#### A. Bike Racks on Pottstown Urban Transit

A growing trend among transit operators across the country has been the installation of bike racks on to transit buses. The federal government, originally through ISTEA, (Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991), "encourages states and metropolitan areas to develop innovative transportation plans and programs which better integrate public transit, bicycle facilities, and other modes of travel into the existing transportation system. The goal of this multimodal planning is to provide travelers with a real choice of travel options." (Federal Transit Administration, *Bicycles and Transit, A Partnership that Works*, 1999). Adding bike racks on buses does exactly that: provides people with real transportation options by allowing a bicycle trip to be incorporated with a public transit one. Through this incorporation, the bicycle and the public transit vehicle create endless opportunities for a person with a bike and bus fare!

In addition to the increased opportunities for cyclists, the installation of bike racks has been shown to increase ridership on the system. According to *Bikesontransit.org* ridership among systems who added bike racks to their increased by 5% on a yearly basis. Across the country, bike racks on transit buses are used over 12 million times.

In the State of Pennsylvania, Pottstown Urban Transit is one of a few providers to not have bike racks on their transit buses. Over 16 transit providers in Pennsylvania provide bicycle access on their transit system. It would be beneficial to investigate the costs of adding bike racks to the Pottstown Urban Transit system. The average cost of a bike rack is less then the cost of a bus tire.



Figure 13: Example of Bike Rack for Transit Bus  
Image from [Bicycleracks.com](http://Bicycleracks.com)



Figure 14: Bike Rack on Toronto transit bus  
Photo from Toronto.ca

## B. Walking Tours of Pottstown

The Borough of Pottstown has 3 free, self-guided walking tours that take participants through the borough. Each tour provides its own unique view of the borough through history, art and architecture. The common theme among each tour is that they are self-guided and you can walk each of them. The 3 tours are:

- **Historic Advertising Murals in Downtown Pottstown Tour**
- **Historic Pottstown Walking Tour**
- **Architectural Legacy of Historic Pottstown Tour**

It is recommended to include in each walking tour brochure the suggestion that individuals can choose to bike the tours in addition to walking.

There is also potential to incorporate biking in the on-going efforts to bring kayaking into the borough. In reviewing the potential for kayaking in Pottstown, the condition of the river would allow for down stream kayaking into the East Coventry area. The changing river conditions would render it difficult to kayak back up stream to the Pottstown area. The preliminary review opens the potential to incorporate biking into the return trip along



the river back into the borough. While the discussions for kayaking are still premature, biking could and should be looked into as a partner in this process. Biking/Kayaking tours of Pottstown would be an added attraction to this area and should be given consideration.

### **C. Enforcement of Existing Ordinances and Laws**

*Montgomery County Planning Commission's Bike Road Map, Section 7* outlines how enforcement efforts should be handled concerning bicycles. It is recommended that the following be used:

“Under state law, bicycles are legitimate vehicles required to adhere to the same traffic laws and rules as motorists. Roads become unsafe for both motorists and bicyclists if rules are not enforced. Additionally, lack of enforcement leads to a general disregard for the laws, which compounds the problem. Therefore, traffic law enforcement is an indispensable part of a safe bicycle network.

Traffic laws are designed to move vehicles safely and efficiently. They ensure an environment where bicycles and automobiles can effectively share the same roads, but only if both bicyclists and motorists obey the rules. Enforcement reinforces safe principles learned through practical training and education. It discourages unsafe bicycle riding and poor driving. Both of these can lead to accidents, which discourage bicycling activity.

Enforcement programs should:

- \* Ensure that traffic and bicycling laws are appropriate and effective.
- \* Ensure that police officers are adequately trained on bicycle issues.
- \* Encourage the enforcement of violations when motorists create unsafe conditions as well as when bicyclists ride in an irresponsible manner.
- \* Encourage bicyclists to regulate each other by advocating good riding practices.
- \* Encourage the formation of citizen bike patrols to serve as ‘watchdogs’ through the bicycle facility network.

Enforcement Policy Objectives



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What specifically must be done from an enforcement perspective to make Montgomery County a safer place to bicycle?

1. Enact, modify, or repeal unsafe and inconsistent laws dealing with bicycles.
2. Train law enforcement officers on bicyclists' characteristics and bicycling violations.
3. Publish and circulate applicable traffic laws governing bicyclists so the general public understands the regulations.
4. Advertise high-profile bicycling incidents/accidents so the general public understands the consequences of improper behavior.
5. Establish "police-on-bike" programs and other bike patrol units to encourage and enforce good bicycling behavior.
6. Promote good bicycling behavior through positive and negative reinforcement of road etiquette.
7. Issue warnings and citations to bicyclists for traffic violations.
8. Issue warnings and citations to motorists for traffic violations that pose hazards to bicyclists. ..."

In addition to the recommendations suggested by the Bike Road Map, the Pottstown Police Department could utilize enforcement campaigns to address driver behaviors, such as speeding, failure to yield to pedestrians, etc. and also help to teach students bicycle safety skills.

The enforcement of those policy objectives and creation of the recommended programs would aid in the effort to create a more bicycle-friendly community. While several of these items are already being enforced, consideration should be given to how the entire recommendation can be put into use through the borough.

### **D. Pottstown School District**

Students in the Pottstown School District stand to benefit from the increased awareness given to bicycling in the borough. Given the locations of the schools through out the borough, bicycling has the potential to become a sensible alternate form of transportation for these students. Students who bike to school will increase their level of daily physical activity. Obesity rates among children have more than doubled in the past twenty years, according to the *National Longitudinal Study of Youth*.

The Pottstown School District can tackle this issue through the following:



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## **1. Creation of recommended walking/biking routes to each school within the district.**

By creating active and safe routes to school, biking and walking to school can once again be a safe, fun, and a healthy part of a child's daily routine. Working in conjunction with the Pottstown Police Department and the district's Public Safety officers, routes can be created and Crossing Guards be positioned to create a safer environment for biking to and from school.

## **2. Incorporation of biking into the physical education requirement.**

The location of the Schuylkill River Trail and the creation of a community bike program would allow physical education teachers the ability to incorporate biking into their curriculum. The new approach emphasizes fitness activities that students can do for the rest of their lives. Partnerships can be formed with the Schuylkill River Greenway Association and the Rails to Trails Conservancy to create an educational component to make the trail more attractive for student use.

The anticipated benefits of biking are immense. Biking increases the likelihood that children and adults will choose to walk and bike for other short distance trips. Biking helps to improve neighborhood safety. Biking also will help alleviate the amount of cars at the pick-up and drop-off points at the schools.

## **E. Formation of a Biking Club**

Throughout the United States, the formation of biking clubs has helped to get people biking more often in communities. Bicycle clubs provide members information on new places to ride, a body of like-minded people to ride with, a source of answers to cycling (and life) questions and a united front to help promote bicycling. There are no rules or regulations for starting a bike club. Forming a club is often an effort in community organizing which in turn is an effort in educating and marketing. (i.e. "join the club to ride more often," "join the club for comradery," "join the club to see new places," "join the club to learn how to ride better," "join the club to share your knowledge and experience with others," etc.).

The formation of a club within the borough would most likely be based on recreational group rides. The lack of an existing club would allow a new club to be formed to best meet the local "bicycling need." Working in conjunction with the local bike shop could



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potentially support the club by offering discounts to members on equipment and/or providing a meeting place. In exchange, the bike shop would be acknowledged in any appropriate club products and publications.

A secondary benefit from the formation of a biking club is that bicyclist can get together and talk about the challenges to cycling (i.e. bad roads, no space, unhealthy air, etc.). They can organize their efforts to combat these issues as a joint citizenry.

The borough has various sites of interest that a bike club could use as a start to help create weekly rides that captures potential member's interest. The biggest hurdle to overcome in the formation of such a club is to form a core group of individuals to champion the project. The costs of running a bike club are relatively low since a club of this nature is solely based on recreation needs.



## 4. Community Bike Program: Bike Pottstown

### A. Program Types

Through out the United State, no two bike programs seem to be the same. Case studies have shown that local variation and human nature suggests that each program reflects the community and those involved in the process. Diverse organizational structure or emphasis can cause projects to develop differently, which is not necessarily a bad thing.

There are currently 3 basic models used as a base when starting a community bike program. The *International Bicycle Fund* lists the following as the primary community bike program models:

1. **Let-loose:** Multiple locations used for lending with no membership and no real tracking system. This program uses new or gathered bikes which are in working order, painted a bright or distinct color, and simply released into the community
2. **Controlled Network:** Several bike stations used for a short-term or relatively short-term lending/checkout program that involves membership and keeping track of who has the bike for how long.
3. **Single Source:** One bike station used as a bike maintenance clinic and single source for bike lending - generally more long-term lending than quick trips around city. This is the furthest from the altruistic ideal, but it tends to be the most stable, and have the greatest longevity.

The recommended choice for Bike Pottstown is the let-loose model. For a start-up program such as Bike Pottstown, the let-loose program is most commonly used for new projects. Let-loose program require almost no infrastructure or real budget to start. A key to the success of a let-loose program is to effectively publicize the program to get community members to participate and buy into the program. A successful let-loose program encourages and requires community involvement to be a success.

However, each program has many obstacles to success. Consideration must be given to the following pitfalls when taking on a let-loose program:

- Let-loose program depend heavily on community involvement. The program faces the potential to fail if it is not championed by a number of enthusiastic individuals.



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- Let-loose programs require a large number of bikes for it to become a dependable mode of transportation.
  - Bicycles have the potential to be left in low traffic areas.

Bike Pottstown has the potential, based upon success of the initial program, to be expanded from a let-loose program to a controlled network system. With any new start up program, the initial success and support will dictate the future direction of the program. It is vital to build partnership and support early in the process to ensure the long-term viability of Bike Pottstown.



## 5. Program Design

When designing a let-loose program, two approaches can be used when determining the types of bikes to incorporate. A common theme among most startup programs is the use of donated bikes. Many programs use bikes donated from community members or use bikes recovered by local police departments. In some cases, programs have elected to purchase new bikes to help alleviate maintenance issues that can arise with using donated bikes.

In either case, determination must be given to the amount of bikes to use, location of these bikes and the number for each location.

### A. Number of Bikes and Types

Since Bike Pottstown is a new program still in its infancy, the initial design should focus on a small number of locations within the core area. The goal should be to start small and set achievable goals. Trying to create a program that provides something for everyone in the community will limit the initial success of the program. Focus should instead be placed on making sure you get the core space, people, and equipment for the program.

Whether new or used bikes are used for Bike Pottstown, the initial number needed to be placed in the community has been targeted at a minimum of **24**. Each bike will be refurbished and brought into proper working order. Additional bikes will be needed to serve as a reserve in case of theft or maintenance issues. With these bikes included, a total of **40-45** bikes will be needed to fully operate a let-loose program.

<u>Initial Bikes</u>	<u>Reserve Bikes</u>	<u>Total Bikes Needed</u>
<b>24</b>	<b>16- 21</b>	<b>40-45</b>

**\*\* Each bike will be registered in accordance with existing borough ordinance. \*\***



### **Donated Bikes**

The use of donated/used bikes is the preferred alternative in the creation of a let-loose program. The use of donated bikes helps keep the cost relatively low for an up-start program and helps create a partnership between those who donate bikes and the program.

The Pottstown Police Department has pledged to provide all unclaimed bikes they have collected from the previous year to the Bike Pottstown program. At this time, the department has a large amount of unclaimed bikes that will suit the needs and requirements of a let-loose program. The most common bike used in community bike program is an adult sized, single speed bike. While the majority of the bikes might not fit this requirement, it will serve as a start to get the program up and running. As more single speed bikes come into the program, multi-speed bikes will be shuffled out of use. Any smaller bikes suited for children will be considered on a case by case basis. The use of bikes suited for children under the age of 12 is strongly prohibited due to state law that required helmets for individuals under 12 (See Ordinance Section). By providing helmets for these riders, the cost and logistics behind this would greatly compromise the success and cost of this program.

To identify each bike in the Bike Pottstown program, the color yellow has been selected to serve as the official color of each bike. Each bike will be painted yellow and placed through the community to identify them as community bikes. In addition to paint color, each bike will have additional identification on the bike and "Ride at Your Own" stickers added to the bike.



**Figure 15: Example of Bike Identification Used by Davidson College**  
Photo from Davidson.edu

### New Bikes

The use of new bikes is being included as part of this study to serve as an alternative for implementation. The purchasing of new bikes will help control the type of bike used in this program and also control what age groups can use the bikes. Programs that elect to purchase new bikes typical purchase single speed, adult sized bikes because the costs to maintain these bikes are relatively low. The choices of bike for most programs are “cruiser bikes”, most commonly used at local beach resorts. The purchasing on news bikes will cause an increase in costs to the initial start up of this program.

All prior consideration to color and identification will be used for the purchasing of new bikes.



**Figure 16: Typical Cruiser Bike**  
Photo from Huffy.com

## **B. Bike Rack Locations**

The location of bike racks for the community bike program should be located in public view with high visibility and good lighting. These bike racks should not be placed in areas where a thief or vandal could work without fear of being immediately noticed. Most experienced bikers will not part their bikes out of public view and the same consideration should be given for community bikes.

### **Recommended Design**

The recommended choice for rack design is a stainless steel or painted rack that could accommodate upwards of 10 bikes. Each should be distinguished by color and signage that states they are for the intended use of the Bike Pottstown community bike project only. The size and configuration of each rack should be one that the intended user can easily use. The rack should be portable in case removal is necessary or a relocation occurs.



**Figure 17 & 18: Examples of Single or Double-sided Portable Bike Racks**  
Photo from Bikeparking.com

### **Bike Rack Features**

Each bike rack will feature a Rules and Regulations sign that will be mounted onto the rack. The sign will list all relevant information regarding the use of the community bike and any necessary contact information.

In addition to the sign, a comment box will be mounted to each rack to allow users to provide feedback regarding maintenance and comments for the program. Also included in the box will be a large red sticker to serve as a “flag” if maintenance issues arise with the bike. This sticker will alert potential users that this bike should not be ridden.

Accompanying the sticker will be a maintenance card that riders can fill out concerning the bike.

### **Recommended Bike Rack Locations**

The following locations have been identified as recommended locations for community bikes. While the goal of the community bike program is to serve the entire borough, centralized locations are recommended initially to help grow the program and create visibility. Downtown Pottstown has several locations where community bikes can be located and patronized. The growing downtown shopping and restaurant area, in addition to the location of the Schuylkill River Trail and Montgomery County Community College, will serve a large number of the targeted users of this project. Below are the recommended locations for community bike.



## Montgomery County Community College- West Campus

- (1) Bike Rack
- (6) Community Bikes

The location of the community college as an anchor on High Street will allow students to utilize the community bikes to visit the downtown area. The community college provides an opportunity to grow the community bike program within the student population.



Figure 19: Montgomery County Community College- West Campus  
Photo from MC3.edu

## Smith Family Plaza

- (1) Bike Rack
- (6) Community Bikes

The location of Smith Family Plaza with the recent addition of wireless internet service makes this an attractive location for community bikes. This location will help offset the demand for bikes that could potentially arise from the community college. Smith Family Plaza is within a reasonable distance from most downtown businesses and is in a heavily traveled area of the borough.



**Figure 20: Smith Family Plaza**  
Photo from Montcopa.org

### **Pottstown Public Library**

- (1) Bike Rack
- (6) Community Bikes

The location of the Pottstown Public Library serves an area of interest in the eastern section of the borough. This high traffic area would create a highly visible location for community bikes and allow for citizens living in this area to access the downtown shopping area.



**Figure 21: Pottstown Public Library**  
Photo from ppl.mclinc.org



## **Shop and Park Lot/Town Clock**

- (1) Bike Rack
- (6) Community Bikes

The location of the Shop and Park lot on High Street can serve as a central location for community bikes in the borough. This location is a highly visible and heavily traveled area in the downtown area.

## **C. Liability**

Liability is the issue that raises the most concern when starting a community bike program. Most programs simply post a sign, attach a sticker, or ask individual riders to sign a waiver that removes any responsibility from the operating organization. The basic premise is "Use at your own risk". Most programs seem to find that this is enough to cover liability concerns. Similar approaches are used for other "risky" community services, such as community gyms etc.

Some experts recommend that a free bike program should be operated as a separate entity, apart from the City and other programs, and having just enough assets to cover its operations. The idea is that there would be nothing to lose in the event of a lawsuit.

Charlottesville's (VA) Free Bike Program is incorporated in the state of Virginia as a non-stock corporation, but has a non-profit organization 501(c3) fiscal sponsor to accept donations and handle administrative duties. They do not have any insurance and their only assets are the bikes.

Charlottesville's (VA) Free Bike Program recommends taking the following steps concerning liability:

1. Incorporated as a 501(c) (3) nonprofit. Corporations provide a liability shield to their board and staff, though (at least under the laws of some states) this shield can be pierced in the case of ineptitude.
2. Get the Directors and Officers insurance. It should only cost a couple of hundred dollars per year and many good people who have been around the block won't join your board unless you have it. It will pay for attorneys to work on your case, and possibly pay a claim against you in the event of a suit.



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3. Make a serious effort to ensure our bikes are safe, thus precluding liability passing through the organization to the board.
  4. Have a membership system where folks join to ride. At the point of joining they sign a waiver (<http://www.yellowbikes.org/cards.htm>) giving the organization some insulation from legal action. The form should state that they will “hold harmless” the organization.
  5. All bikes should have a “ride at your own risk” sticker.
  6. Keep the organization close to broke. Even if you are sued, what are they going to take? Un-repaired bicycles? Tools?
  7. If your organization works with kids <at all> look into what kinds of background checks the government offers. Find out how public school and soccer league volunteers get checked, as this is common in those organizations. I would imagine every government does this work, and in Mass. ,any agency can apply to have checks performed on staff and volunteers if they can justify the need for the information (i.e. working in a classroom environment with kids).

Decatur Yellow Bikes recommends that organization protect themselves in the following ways:

1. Incorporated
2. Have no members
3. Posted “ride at your own risk, obey rules of the road, check bike operation for safety, use lights at night, helmet recommended” information on signs at the bike racks and on stickers on the bikes.
4. Posted phone number on bike to call for pick up or repairs.
5. Suggested that volunteers check their homeowner’s or renters insurance policy for liability coverage when doing volunteer work for a nonprofit corp.
6. If you are working closely with a city, town or other government entity, they may be able to cover your members with a “rider” on their liability insurance.
7. Before bikes are put on the street have a volunteers complete a safety checklist and test ride. It is good ideas to have two volunteers check a bike before releasing it.



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## Recommended Actions

The Bike Pottstown community bike program should be incorporated or join an already existing non-profit organization in the borough. The above mentioned suggestions for liability should be taken into account when forming or joining an existing non-profit. In either case, **liability insurance should be purchased** to cover any incidents that may arise from the use of community bikes.

If a non-profit is created for the community bike program, the Pennsylvania Association of Non-Profits recommends taking the following steps to create a non-profit:

### **1. Determine the purpose of the organization.**

Every organization should develop a mission statement that describes their reason for existing. This can be developed by meeting with potential clients, constituents, board members and other interested parties.

### **2. Determine the structure of the organization.**

This stage should include determining the type of organization that you will form (e.g., a charitable corporation under § 501 (c)(3) or another kind of non-profit: member or not, corporation or unincorporated, association, or trust). Do you want to be a membership organization or governed by a board of directors who elect their own successors? What interests or constituencies should be on the Board?

### **3. Choose your board of directors.**

Your board will help you transform your ideas into reality by helping establish goals and fundraising strategies. Pennsylvania law requires every non-profit corporation to have a President, Treasurer, and Secretary (i.e. officers who perform comparable duties) and a single person may hold all three offices.

### **4. Write bylaws.**

Your bylaws will guide your organization's day to day operations. These should be drafted carefully and may require the assistance of an attorney experienced in nonprofit law to reflect the proper power relationships among those with an interest in the group.

### **5. File Articles of Incorporation with the Department of State.**

For organizations that plan to be incorporated, this is a key step. In Pennsylvania, you need to file your Articles of Incorporation with the Department of State's office. For more information or copies of the basic forms contact:



The Department of State  
Corporation Bureau  
308 North Office Building  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0029  
(717)-787-1057

If you expect to seek exemption as a charitable organization under Section 501 (c)(3), be sure to include the language required by the Internal Revenue Service. It is not on the state's printed forms.

**6. Develop strategic and fundraising plans.**

A strategic plan will help you outline the steps needed to fulfill your organization's goals, determine your staff needs, and establish operational priorities for the upcoming year and beyond. The strategic plan should determine your budget priorities, identify potential donors, establish bookkeeping practices, and delineate fundraising activities (e.g., mailings, dinner-dance, silent auction, etc.) There are six core elements of a successful nonprofit: (1) fundraising, (2) marketing, (3) internal operations, (4) programs, (5) volunteer development, and (6) community involvement.

**7. Establish a system for record keeping and accounting.**

A protocol should be established for keeping all your organization's official records (such as board meeting minutes and financial reports) and records should be preserved for the life of the organization. Establishing written, board-approved, financial and internal management policies and procedures is essential for the organization's success.

**8. Obtain a Taxpayer Identification Number from the IRS.** You'll need this number to open a bank account, file informational returns with the IRS and withhold your employees' income tax. It helps when requesting a Pennsylvania sales tax exemption. You can obtain a Taxpayer Identification Number (also called an Employer Identification Number.EIN) by filling out an SS-4 form. Contact the IRS at 1-800-829-FORM or <http://www.irs.ustreas.gov/charities/index.html> for an SS-4 form or more information.

**9. Request recognition of tax-exempt status from the IRS.** Without a "determination letter" from the IRS, donors who want an income tax deduction may not make gifts to your charity. Nonprofit corporations that are charities and



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meet the definitions in IRC §501 (c)(3) may request recognition of their tax-exempt status. To receive §501 (c)(3) tax-exempt status from the IRS, you must fill out an IRS 1023 form and attach your proposed budget, Articles of Incorporation (certified), and bylaws (a true copy). Resumes of your board members are helpful as well. This application should be filed within the first 15 months of your organization's existence. Contact the IRS at 1-800-829-FORM or [www.irs.ustreas.gov](http://www.irs.ustreas.gov) to receive a copy of this form. There are other nonprofits that are not charities, such as Chambers of Commerce, etc. Different IRS forms are required for these.

**10. Filing for Pennsylvania tax-exempt status.** To request exemption from paying sales tax in Pennsylvania contact the:

Pennsylvania Department of Revenue, Tax Forms Service Unit  
711 Gibson Blvd.  
Harrisburg, PA 17104-3200

If you plan to sell items to others who are required to pay sales tax, you should open a state sales tax collection account.

Your organization's Federal tax exemption status has no bearing on PA tax-exempt status policy.

**11. Register with the Pennsylvania Bureau of Charitable Organizations.**

If your organization will be requesting donations within Pennsylvania you must register with the Bureau of Charitable Organizations prior to beginning any fundraising activities. There are exemptions and exclusion for certain organizations, and you should contact the bureau for the requirements. To receive a packet of information that includes the long and short forms, requirements for exemption, excerpts of the law and instructions for filling out the forms contact:

Department of State  
Bureau of Charitable Organizations  
207 North Office Building  
Harrisburg, PA 17120  
<http://www.dos.state.pa.us/char/site/default.asp>  
800-732-0999



**12. Obtain a nonprofit bulk mail permit from the U.S. Post Office.**

If your organization will be doing any large mailings, you may want to obtain an imprint authorization for bulk mailing. The permit provides a discount on the cost of mailing, if you are sending at least 200 pieces, and the mailing is sorted and processed within the regulations of the Postal Service. There is a one-time imprint fee and the permits must be renewed annually. Certain nonprofit organizations may qualify for reduced rates. For more information on bulk mailing call, (901) 576-2062

**13. Establish personnel policies.**

Before hiring employees, the personnel committee from the board of directors should develop written personnel policies. They can be expanded as the organization develops but should cover basic operational procedures. For areas to be considered in the policies contact the PANO office.

**14. Register for unemployment compensation.**

All nonprofit organizations must participate in an unemployment compensation program. To receive an employer packet describing your compensation responsibilities contact:

Office of Employment Security  
Bureau of Employer Tax Operations  
Labor and Industry Building  
7<sup>th</sup> and Forester Streets  
P.O. Box 60849  
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17106-0849

Another program is also available to your organization. The law allows the option of reimbursing the state for only the actual benefits paid to your former employees. For more information of this program contact the PANO office.

**15. Be sure to withhold employment taxes for the IRS.** Employers are required to withhold their employees' wage income and FICA taxes and submit these to the IRS regularly. Failure to do so can result in significant fines and potential personal liability for the responsible officers. Contact the IRS at 1-800-829-3676 or [www.irs.ustreas.gov](http://www.irs.ustreas.gov) to receive appropriate forms. The state and some local governments also require withholding.



**16. Obtain liability insurance for your organization.** Like the business community nonprofits are exposed to legal risks. Contact PANO, your insurance representative or your attorney for more information on general liability insurance, directors' and officers' liability insurance, and general professional liability coverage.

**D. Maintenance**

An important aspect to any community bike program is properly maintaining the bikes. The condition of the bikes reflects how the program is operated. A poorly maintained bike will decrease ridership and ultimately ruin a community bike program. The creation of a proper maintenance schedule will keep the bikes in proper operating condition.

Before bikes are put on the street have a volunteer complete a safety checklist and test ride. The following is an example of a Repair and Safety Checklist used by several community bike programs.

<p><b>Repair checklist is:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Inflate tires</li> <li>* WD - 40 rusty parts</li> <li>* Wash</li> <li>* Repair and tune-up</li> <li>* Paint</li> <li>* Affix decals and hang tags</li> <li>* Paint Number</li> <li>* Safety Check</li> </ul> <p>_____ Initials</p>	<p><b>Safety checklist:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Brake pad alignment and operation</li> <li>* Tires even on rim, no bald spots and no broken or exposed cords.</li> <li>* Tires inflated to recommended psi</li> <li>* Check tightness of</li> <li>* Wheel lugs/quick release</li> <li>* Handlebar and stem</li> <li>* Seat level and tight</li> <li>* Front and rear reflectors</li> <li>* Complete test ride through all gears.</li> </ul> <p>_____ Initials of inspector</p>
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Figure 22: Example of Repair and Safety Checklist



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Ken Kifer of *Ken Kifer's Bike Page* provides a detailed guide to maintenance and repair. The following is an excerpt from his page:

### **Maintenance**

**1)** Check the inflation of tires every day before starting to ride and from time to time while riding. Avoid both underinflated and overinflated tires. An underinflated tire can get pinch flats and sidewall cracks plus the edge of the rim may be damaged. On the other hand, in recent years, it has become customary to inflate all tires as hard as a rock. This overinflation can cause spoke breakage, rim cracks, and rim damage at the spoke holes. How much the tire should be inflated is not a hard science, so I never use a tire gauge. The tire should be somewhat soft and should distort somewhat from the cyclist's weight; however, it must have enough air in it to prevent excessive distortion. Over and underinflated tires reveal themselves best by hitting too hard on bumps, cracks, and rocks.

**B**esides checking your tires, be sure to carry an extra tube, a patch kit, and some tire irons on every trip out of your neighborhood.

**2)** After any rain, watch for rust. There are two kinds of rust: red and black. Black rust is actually good, as it will protect the steel from further corrosion, while red rust will flake away, leading to additional damage. Rust on the frame can be removed with sand paper and then the frame can be touched up with spray paint, model paint, or even fingernail polish. Rust on the cables can be controlled somewhat with WD-40, oil, or grease; usually that treatment will turn red rust into black rust.

**3)** After riding in a hard rain, the bike chain should be cleaned and greased to avoid rust. The rain has washed out most of the dirt, and the rest can be quickly cleaned by spraying with WD-40 and using rags, paper towels, and/or a toothbrush to remove grit, then drying and adding a very small amount of grease. It's important that the chain is not sticky; otherwise, it will quickly attract dirt.

**T**here's a great deal of argument about the best way to clean and grease a chain. Undeniable is the need to remove all the old dirt. Greatly contested is the best lubricant, with advocates for oil, grease, WD-40, White Lightning, Tenacious



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Oil, hot oil, hot wax, and others. (Note that the process of creating and applying hot oil and hot wax involves strong risks of fire and burns. If you attempt this, work outside, heat oil and wax in a container of boiling water, keep a bucket of cold water handy, and be very careful to avoid getting the oil or wax on you.) After any treatment, avoid a tacky or sticky chain.

**T**he chain will stretch after many thousand miles, and any skipping and jumping while using seldom-used cogs or chainrings is a sign that stretch has taken place. A new chain will skip on well-worn teeth after such wear has occurred. While I can get 10,000 miles out of a chain-cogwheel combination, after that number of miles, they both have to be replaced and perhaps a chainring as well. Most advocate changing the chain much more often to extend the life of the cogs. The most cost-effective solution depends on the cost of your cogs and chain.

**4)** At all times, be aware of any rattles and noises from the bike. A misadjusted part or a loose bolt can be the cause of such noise. If the rattle is ignored, the nut and bolt will fall off and be lost, and an injury, lost parts, or damage may result.

**W**hile the location of the noise will often be obvious, often a little detective work is needed. Ask yourself questions while riding along. Is the noise periodic or continuous? If it is a periodic noise, does it match the speed of the chain or the speed of the wheels? To see if the noise comes from a pedal, I take turns riding with first one foot and then the other hanging free. To see if the noise is connected to the chain or crank, I coast for a while. I check the wheels by stopping the bike and spinning the wheels separately. If it is a random noise, it is probably something connected to the frame or fenders.

**5)** After the bike has been stored for a while or before beginning a long trip, check all of the bolts that hold racks on the bike for tightness, replace worn brakepads, cables, freewheel/freehub cogs, and a worn chain. If the bearings haven't been greased and if any parts need adjustment, do that too. It is easy to test bearings to see if they are adjusted properly. The pedal, cranks, and wheels will spin slowly and maybe stop if too tight. There might be a noticeable roughness. If too loose, there will be a slight side-to-side wobble. Wheels should turn so easily that the weight of the valve stem will cause the wheel to turn when the bike is held up or turned upside down.



## Repair

As I have already stated, "repair" is a bit of a misnomer. At one time, most bicycle components could be taken apart, the broken parts replaced, and put back together. However, even then it was difficult to obtain the replacements. Now, most components cannot be disassembled at all, so "repair" amounts to replacing, adjusting, greasing, and tightening.

There's one special trick that a repairman knows that could save a do-it-yourselfer a lot of grief: the repairman tightens all the bolts down flush, and then he gives them an extra turn, overtightening them to lock them in place. If a bolt is attached to the nut, the nut must be firmly held or even rotated in the opposite direction to allow the bolt to lock.

Of course, some bolts can be over tightened, such as the one that clamps to a cable. In this case, the bolt must be tightened enough that the cable can't slip but not enough to damage the cable. The adjustment screws on a derailleur don't need additional tightening, of course.

### Components of a Bicycle Which May Need Attention

NOTE: *This is just a list, as thorough details would take an entire website.*

#### The Handlebars

1. Handlebars have foam or rubber grips or handlebar tape which can work loose from time to time.
2. Hand brakes have a screw and clamp which keep them from moving around. They also have a cable that may need adjustment or replacement. On some bikes, the brakes can be adjusted on the handlebars and with other, they must be adjusted at the brake. Some bikes lack adjustments, and the cable must be loosened and retightened.
3. Shifters are often mounted on the handlebars and otherwise on the downtube. They have an attaching bolt, a cable which may need attention, and an adjustment for cable tension (which may be on the handlebar or at the other end of the cable).



4. A bolt connects the handlebar to the stem; if this is loose, the handlebar can rotate.
5. The stem is connected to the downtube with a large bolt connected to a wedge. The handlebar will shift from side to side or even come out if this is loose.

### **The Seat**

1. Some seats have a bolt to adjust tension.
2. The seat has a clamp underneath which keeps the seat attached to the seatpost and which also can be used to adjust the angle.
3. The seatpost is secured to the frame by a bolt. Besides keeping the seatpost from coming out, this bolt keeps the seat at the right height and facing straight ahead.

### **The Headset**

The parts which connect the frame to the front fork is called the headset. There are cones and bearings at the top and bottom of the headset, and there is a large nut which locks the unit together. Problems can include:

1. The nut can come loose. This is a common problem, and the nut is usually too large to allow carrying a tightening wrench. However, the nut can be tightened by hand until you can encounter a wrench.
2. The bearings may need to be regreased. This should be done every year or two, depending on mileage.
3. These bearings can be damaged after miles of use, especially on a touring or mountain bike.

### **The Brakes**

1. Brakes are connected to the frame by a bolt which may come loose (which could cause the wheels to lock).
2. Brakes have brakepads which might need to be adjusted or replaced. Some



brakepads can be adjusted only by moving them up and down or rotating them, and others (as on cantilever brakes) can be adjusted in and out too.

3. Brakes have clamps attached to their cables and may have adjustment screws as well.
4. With caliper brakes, there will be a hanger mounted to the frame above the brake with an adjustment screw. There will also be a yoke (Y-connection) between the hanger and the brakes which also includes an adjustable clamp.

### **The Crankset**

1. The crankset has one to three chain rings held in place by bolts.
2. The crank arms are bolted into the bottom bracket.
3. The pedals are screwed onto the crank arms.
4. The pedals have bearings on the inside and outside.
5. Some pedals have clips and straps attached; others have locking cleats.
6. The bottom bracket has a locking nut.
7. The bottom bracket has bearings on each side.

### **The Chain**

1. A chain can be dirty and needed cleaned and greased.
2. It can stretch over time and need to be replaced.
3. A link may bind or come loose.

### **Derailleurs and Internal Hubs**

1. The front derailleur is attached to the seat tube. It is usually attached with a clamp, and if the attachment is slightly loose, the derailleur can hit the chainrings or become misaligned. The derailleur must be parallel to the chainrings and must clear the large chain ring by about half the height of the chain.



2. The rear derailleur is attached to a hanger which can be part of the frame, bolted to the frame, or attached at the fork blade.
3. The rear derailleur usually has a cable adjustment and always has a cable clamp.
4. Both derailleurs have two set screws which stop the chain from jumping off of the chain rings or cogs on either side. Over time, they will gradually move, causing the chain to fall off or making a shift difficult or impossible to make.
5. An internal hub shifter will have an adjustment device along the length of the cable as cable stretch can make shifting impossible. Some internal hubs require oil periodically. See

### **Wheels**

1. Wheels have tires and tubes which must be kept inflated and in good condition. Repairing a tire is a frequent chore.
2. Spokes can become loose, causing the wheels to wobble.
3. The freewheel or freehub can become worn, needing to be replaced.
4. The wheel can move from side to side on the hub or bind on the hub, plus it may need to be regreased.
5. The bolts or quick releases that hold the wheels in place can become loose and need retightening.
6. On an older bike with a five or six speed freewheel, the axle can break.”

### **Potential Partnerships**

Once the bikes have been placed in the community a routine maintenance program should be developed to ensure the bikes stay properly maintained. Several options currently exist to address this issue.

#### **1) Pottstown Senior High School Vocational-Technical Education Program**

A partnership can be developed between the Bike Pottstown program the vocational program to develop a bike maintenance program as part of their



curriculum. This partnership could provide valuable hands on learning to students interested in this field.

### **2) Montgomery County Community College Non-Credit Class**

A non-credit class at the community college could help meet the maintenance need of the program. This program would have the same goals as a potential partnership with the Pottstown Senior High School.

### **3) Tri County Bicycles**

The recent opening of a full service retail outlet and bicycle service facility in the downtown creates the potential for a partnership among the program and Tri County Bicycles. The incorporation of this business into the overall operation of the community bike program could serve the interests of both parties. Currently, Tri County Bicycles employees are trained to service all makes and brands of bikes.

In addition to maintenance, the bikes will be removed from the community during the winter months to protect them from the elements.

## **E. Marketing Program**

An effective marketing program targets potential and current customers of a product. To effectively market this community bike program, an identity must be established for the program. A budget should be created to help fund any marketing efforts used in conjunction with this project.

Below are samples of steps that can be taken to effectively market Bike Pottstown to the entire community.

### **Logo**

A logo is designed to create immediate attention to the program, by the viewer. The purpose of a logo is to identify organizations. Bike Pottstown has created a unique logo to help create a identity for the community bike program.



**Figure 23: Bike Pottstown Logo**

### **Website**

The purpose of having a website is to communicate with and convey information to a broad audience. With a website, one can advertise, conduct business and perform services for a targeted audience or on a larger scale. In today's world, whenever someone is looking for information they immediately turn to the internet. Several community bike programs across the country have turned to the internet to market their program. Each website is unique to their own program and provides information on rules, regulations, locations, photos and a general overview and purpose of each program. The recommended URL for the program is [BikePottstown.org](http://BikePottstown.org)

### **Brochure**

A print brochure can be created highlighting the program. The location of Pottstown within the Tri-County area provides a unique attraction for people to come to the area. Included with each brochure will be a map of the borough with areas of interest in addition to the map of recommended roadways for biking.



## F. Costs

The following table provides an estimate for the anticipated costs of operating a community bike program. While the goal is to provide a complete list of costs, certain issues will arise and those costs could not be obtained at the time of this study.

Item	Cost	Source of Price	Estimated
<i>Parts / Labor</i>			
New Bikes	\$80.00 plus tax (Per bike)	Huffy.com	Yes
Used Bikes	Donated	Pottstown Police Department	
Paint & Labor	Donated	Blast from the Past Street Rods	
Quick Releases for Seats	\$6.99 plus S/H (Per unit)	Bikepartsusa.com	Yes
Parts (Dependent on Size and Brand)  -Seat -Seat Post -Headset -Bearing -Brakes -Brake Pads - Cables - Crankset - Pedals - Bottom Bracket - Crank Arms - Chain	Prices vary	Bikespartsusa.com	



- Derailleurs - Internal Hubs - Rims - Tire - Tube - Freewheel - Hub			
<u>Racks and Accessories</u>			
Bike Racks	PBR 6205-10 \$395.00 PBR 6207-5 \$375.00 (Per unit plus S/H)	Bikeparking.com	Yes
	AL206S \$340.00 AL206D \$350.00 (Per unit plus S/H)	Bikerackshops.com	Yes
Comment Boxes	\$15.65 (Per unit)	Saunders Mfg. Services	Yes
Rules and Regulations Signs	N/A		
Ride at Own Risk Sticker	N/A		
Ride at Own Risk Sign	N/A		
Maintenance Sticker	N/A		
<u>Liability</u>			
Insurance	N/A		
Creation of Non-profit	N/A		
<u>Storage</u>			



Garage Space	\$200.00 (Per month)		Yes
<u>Marketing</u>			
Logo	\$600.00	Zap Digital	
T-shirts w/ Logo	\$262.00	Zap Digital	
Website	\$3,000 (+/- 10%)	Media Fusion Tech	Yes
Study/Development	\$12,000	GVFTMA	



## 6. Case Studies

### SETTING UP A CAMPUS BIKE COOP

By Allen Brown

The main thing is:

1. Have a physical space
2. Make cycling fun and sexy so all the students will want one.
3. Make coffee and drinks either for sale or available as part of the membership.
4. Make the students become members so they contribute.
5. Allow poorer overseas students etc offer hours instead of money to enable a critical mass of help.
6. Give those without mechanical knowledge other jobs such as publicity.
7. Advertise in the student newspaper.
8. Leave bikes parked outside for publicity.
9. Paint all the bikes the same for publicity
10. Remove the bull horns from racers and replace with a flat bar as students prefer this.
11. Buy reflective safety red tape and place on the bikes so that users are seen in the event the lights on the bike do not work.
12. Get some ties and Perspex and approach the shops on campus and other local business to gauge an ad interest. If the bikes parked outside the library and IT centre then this is good advertising, for eg the local hair dresser may offer a Special on Cuts for students during November etc.
13. Engage bike shops as they may be interested to help
14. Create an awareness via flyers
15. Do a survey during orientation week to seek interest.
16. Do on and off rd tours by bike to attract those who love cycling and who already have a bike.
17. Develop a tour of say "wealthy Colorado people mansions tour etc, or bear watching tour by bike or a chocolate discovery tour.
18. Ensure that the powers that be know that you are a professional outfit, you know how to fix bikes and that all the bikes have been certified by the local bike shop mechanic.
19. Develop a check list for all bikes before leaving.
20. Try to see if you can get a swipe system
21. We had a bond of \$50 per semester and a \$20 membership fee. Ensure the members do not expect the service typical of a regular bike shop.
22. Allow people to donate and fix things yourselves.
23. Makes other things such as tables from bike wheels or belts from old tires to sex up the membership.
24. Get a logo and have it on sweats and all the members will have one when they join.
25. Be open only a set day dependent on the students study and class schedule
26. Ensure the workshop is tidy at all times to prevent injury and academics and admin staff getting annoyed and trying to dismiss the program.
27. Network with others in the surrounding town.
28. Lastly do not over do it as you are there to pass subjects initially, although you could do a paper on your project or use it as work experience.



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Burn Out is a problem, but try to make it fun for all.

Some good advice is food, wine and fun. Work first then reward, The chats after the work with wine helps cement the network.

## **DENVER CHEKER BIKES**

If you've been to Denver, perhaps you've seen a "Cheker Bikes" on corners. Maybe you've taken one for a ride. Cheker Bikes is a public transportation system. Donated bicycles are refurbished and painted, then placed in locations around the metro area as free public transportation. The bikes are highly visible, and cleverly painted, with advertising messages on the baskets.

In a symbiotic relationship, Cheker Bikes works with inner-city youth to provide them with basic bike mechanic skills, plus the training to help them develop their own businesses. Besides keeping Cheker Bikes rolling, it is hoped that the positive reinforcement will keep the kids out of gangs, and teach them the basics one needs to contribute to our ever-changing society.

Additional benefits of the program are: More people on bikes means less people in cars. That means less air pollution and ease in over-crowding. People who cycle more often will no doubt feel the results of better health and physical fitness. And hopefully Cheker Bikes will play a strong role, in helping Denver's citizens to rediscover their neighborhoods and their neighbors. And that's what it's all about.

## **OLYMPIA BIKE LIBRARY (PINK BIKES)**

In April 1996, the Olympia Bike Library installed 32 "free to use" bicycles in downtown Olympia.\* The bicycles are painted pink, offer utilitarian carrying capacity, and are available for community use. The bike library works on an honor system of borrowing and challenges the community to think and act in terms of what they can share (i.e. bikes).

The program is simple; when you see a pink bike, read the guidelines and hop on! Take a ride to the Capitol, shop at the Farmer's Market, fill the "saddle buckets" with your treasures and drop them at home. To reserve a bicycle while you are inside shopping, the signal is to twist the seat sideways. Return the bicycle within 24 hours to a bike parking rack in the downtown core area. The names of the local businesses that have contributed



to the Bike Library are displayed on the buckets. Users are encouraged to stop by and let them know that the pink bikes that they helped put on the street are being used.

The Olympia Bike Library is also based on donated bikes. Bikes can be dropped off or a volunteer come out and collect them. The bikes are then fixed up in the workshop. When they pass an inspection checklist, they are painted pink and installed with rear racks, saddle buckets and quick-release fittings for seat height adjustment. Finally, they are released into the community. Free bikes are busy bikes! They are in a constant motion. This high level of use equates to a high need for maintenance. This proves to be a constantly challenge for the volunteer mechanics.

\* Note the bicycles are taken in for the winter.

## **PORTLAND YELLOW BIKE STORY**

A group which works on livability issues which affect Portland, OR, was looking for things that would improve the city. A community bike program would do just that. In September 1995 they arranged with a local cycling center which trains kids to become bike mechanics to get 10 broken clunkers. The bikes were reduced to single gear bikes and fixed-up to insure that the brakes work and that the tires were sound.

The next step was to make the bikes distinguishable. Yellow paint was chosen. A sign explaining to the program (the purpose, bikes are used at your own risk, return to a main street after use and for repair to contact ...) was added. Lacking money it was necessary to ask people to donate their time and services. Two local auto paint shops and a sign making store agreed to help.

With 10 bikes (repaired, painted, with signs identifying them as free community bikes) they called a press conference for the opening of the project. Fortunately, the press arrived. They received wonderful TV coverage and the newspaper ran a great story. Both the TV stations and newspaper provided a telephone number for folks who would be interested in donating bikes.

The telephone began to ring. People wanted to donate bikes. It appears that there are thousands of old bikes in peoples garages and people love the spirit of free community bikes. The program outgrew the backyard. Volunteers also came forward to help. It also became clear that there was a natural alliance between Yellow Bikes and the Community Cycling Center (CCC) which had contributed the original bikes. Some of the bikes that were donated were actually too good for the program. CCC agreed to swap these bikes 2



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for 1 for older bikes more suitable for community use. Soon fifty more bikes were on the streets.

Getting notices was hardly a problem. City officials began to see the potential of the program. The City endorsed the program and asked to help. Their immediate help came in the form of a warehouse space. The city contacted Multnomah County who agreed to make available an empty, warm, and dry space.

Yellow Bikes now has another 150 bikes on the streets. Their estimate is that it will take 1000 yellow bikes in Portland for the program to reach critical mass. They now must figure out how best to sustain and maintain a large fleet of bikes.

Note: All of this has been done without financing but they feel they are now at the stage where they must look realistically at raising capital to ensure the success of the program. On the question of liability and possibility of being sued, Yellow Bikes feels the best solution to be to make sure that the sponsoring entity has just enough assets to fund its current operations.

## **SANDNES GREEN BIKES**

Following Copenhagen's lead, the idea of community bikes is spreading to Norway. The Town of Sandnes has decided to start with 200 bicycles which will be placed in 10-15 centrally placed bicycle racks. The concept is almost a precise copy of the Copenhagen model, with a 20 Kroner deposit system, bicycle which have unique parts and a very sturdy frame. The only major difference is the color of the bicycles. The Sandnes bicycles will be green. The Norwegian towns of Lillehammer and Hamar also have successful "free bicycles" programs.

## **MINNEAPOLIS / ST PAUL YELLOW BIKES**

A non-profit organization dedicated to transforming recycled bicycles into a fun, economical, environmentally friendly transportation alternative for Twin City residents and businesses. They use a waiver that ALL riders have to sign. It was originally developed and tested for a health club by a local law firm and then modified for them. If you want a copy, let them know. In 1996, the coalition placed another 150 free, community-use bicycles in St. Paul--a small number considering the possibilities, but large considering ALL labor and materials were donated. Late in 1996, thinking the



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Yellow Bike project was a good sustainable development project; the Minnesota Office of Environmental Assistance provided short term funding to allow for part time coordination, research and evaluation.

The research resulted in the 1997 introduction of the **Yellow Bike Hub** concept. Based on a successful European model, but still unique and a first in the US, the hub concept replaced the free, community bikes concept. Although both concepts are based on free usage, the free, community bikes concept means the bikes are placed, unlocked, on the street for anyone to use at any time. In addition to heavy losses due to theft and vandalism, this model is extremely hard to manage. In contrast, the Yellow Bike Hub concept is far easier to manage with far fewer losses. It works similar to checking out a library book. Quality recycled bikes with locks are checked out from participating businesses. Yellow Bike users make a one-time, refundable \$10 deposit, sign a waiver, receive a Yellow Bike Card and pedal away. What's more, by working two hours for the coalition, scholarships are available for those unable to afford the \$10 deposit. Users keep the card and use it to check out a Yellow Bike from any Yellow Bike Hub. The coalition outfits many hub bikes with baskets or carriers and takes care of records and bike maintenance for the hub.

In addition to Yellow Bike Hubs, the coalition has a variety of ongoing projects. For example: Helping businesses start a **Corporate Fleet** to encourage its employees to ride bikes for short business trips and lunch breaks. Marsha Soucheray, a long-time bike rider, a bike advocate and a TYBC board member since its inception, proudly stated, "Not only does a Corporate Fleet benefit the corporation by providing a good image regarding the environment, but it is also a great company benefit to its employees." This program works well not only for the small business that wants only two bikes for employees to enjoy riding during breaks, but it also works well for a major corporation that wants a large fleet of bikes, with paperboy baskets to hold briefcases, because employees need to travel between facilities on a vast campus, and it makes more sense to make the trip by bicycle than by car; **Bike Loans** for group events or individuals who need a bike longer than a day; and **Work to Wheels** where kids who fix bikes are rewarded with a bike.

### **Yellow Bike Action Centre in Kingston, Ontario, Canada.**

By Barb Danielewski, yellowbikeaction@hotmail.com

Yellow Bike Action is a local non-profit which reduces economic barriers to cycling by providing affordable rentals (Yellow Bikes), free bikes for kids, access to tools and parts (for a small fee) and a non-hierarchical environment where people can teach each other



about bike repair and other activities which increase self-reliance (like silk-screening and VCR repair).

## YELLOW BIKE RENTALS

In our first year, YBA placed sixty bicycles on the street with a common lock. Kingstonians could purchase a key for \$5 which would open any key to any yellow bike. At the end of the summer, we noticed that only three bicycles came back to us in good condition. Many yellow bikes ended up in the lake, under bushes, or in such a horrible state of disrepair that they needed to be thrown away. We realized that this system would never be sustainable nor would it be safe for the ridership. We did some thinking and came up with a new plan for year two.

In the second year, we developed a system where Kingstonians could come to our shop and choose a bike that was appropriate for their transportation needs and body size. Our new rental price of \$20 for a six month term seemed affordable, even for a client living on social assistance with a meager \$175/month budget. We provide free locks, and reminded people to bring the bikes back every one to three months for a free tune-up, ensuring that the bikes are in better condition, and safer for the user.

Year four saw over a hundred international exchange students (not all at once!), referred to the shop by the Queen's International Centre, coming by to rent yellow bikes for their brief stay in Kingston. We started putting "dots" on a map of the world to show the diverse countries this new clientele came from. Europe and Asia were well represented, as well as India, Iran, South Africa, and Brazil. This clientele has a world opened up for them when they can explore Kingston by bicycle, and most likely goes back home with enthusiastic words about their experience with their Yellow Bike.

We recently launched our first Yellow Bike Hub at a local non-profit, allowing clients to borrow a bike for a day to get to an interview, or drop off resumes. The non-profit pays the deposit on the two Yellow Bikes and we provide a bike rack (reconditioned, not new!!).

## REPAIRS

Our five to ten volunteer mechanics offer affordable tune-ups while acquiring valuable skills. A tune up costs ten to twenty five dollars. During the summer, we helped over two hundred cyclists with small adjustments or major repairs. Many of these people would not have been able to afford the prices at "for-profit" bike shops. (where a tune up costs



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\$25-150 dollars) We have a hard time saying no to underemployed people who can't afford crucial repairs on their only source of transportation. This summer alone we did fifty free repairs. In the winter we remain open, although the number of repairs we do drops to thirty between the months of December and March. This is the time when volunteers teach themselves new tricks, and get ready for the busy spring season.

Bikes for Sale (between \$20 and \$70) and bike repairs keep our bills paid. We have three full time volunteers and twelve part timers. In addition, five women come every second Saturday for a Girl's Takeover Day which is a lot of fun and gives women a chance to be the experts. Girl's Takeover Day is a series of bike repair workshops, starting with brakes, patching tubes, derailleurs, and moving on to repacking headsets and cranks and fixing coaster brakes. On these days, we also silkscreen anti-car messages on old denim, and make jewelry from old bike parts.

Our unique Bikes for Kids program provides one free, reconditioned bicycle per summer to children in need (regardless of income levels of parents).

From 2000-2004 we gave over one hundred free bikes to kids under the age of thirteen. Due to high demand, we had a long list of children waiting for bicycles in 2004. We rely on donations, many parents choosing to exchange the bike their child outgrew for a more appropriately sized one. Repairs for kids are (thus far) unconditionally free and we estimate 150-200 free repairs for kids performed during the summer months (May-Sept.2004).

People in the park can come by to use the washroom, the phone or simply for a drink of water on a hot summer day, and the vibrant and productive atmosphere is an inspiration to young and old alike. The neighbors seem to agree that its a lot nicer with YBA around! We give away bread from a local health food store and feed our poor friends from a little kitchenette. For five years now we have been keeping a community building open for the needs of the community, here's to five more! Come visit us anytime to help out or have a cup of coffee, we love having guests, and we need all the help we can get....



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