



Contact: Carolyn Szczepanski
Communications Director
League of American Bicyclists
carolyn@bikeleague.org
202.822.1333

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Morgantown named a Bronze Level Bicycle Friendly Community by the League of American Bicyclists

The City is working hard to encourage cycling for recreation and transportation.

MORGANTOWN – May is National Bike Month, with hundreds of events and thousands of riders celebrating bicycling nationwide, and a growing number of U.S. communities taking steps to encourage residents to ride all year round — including Morgantown. Today, the League of American Bicyclists announced the latest round of Bicycle Friendly Communities (BFC) and Morgantown was named a Bronze Level BFC.



“We are not surprised that this was the largest number of new and renewing applicants that we’ve ever had,” said League President Andy Clarke. “The popularity of this program is clear evidence that investment in bicycling is a major catalyst in creating the kind of vibrant communities people want to live, work and visit. Morgantown recognizes that simple steps to make bicycling safe and comfortable pay huge dividends in civic, community and economic development.”

The BFC program is revolutionizing the way communities evaluate their quality of life, sustainability and transportation networks, while allowing them to benchmark their progress toward improving their bicycle-friendliness. With this impressive round, there are now 214 BFCs in 47 states across America. The Bronze Level BFC award recognizes Morgantown’s commitment to improving conditions for bicycling through investment in bicycling promotion, education programs, infrastructure and pro-bicycling policies.

The city of Morgantown first demonstrated its commitment to cycling by creating the Morgantown Municipal Bicycle Board. In the past few years, the board has created and run a Confident City Cycling course, which educates cyclists of their rights and duties on the roadway and how to avoid crashes. The city has made infrastructure improvements, including installing bike rack loops on parking meters in the downtown area and pilot testing bike lockers at two city parking garages. The city also adopted the Greater Morgantown Bicycle Plan at its May 1st meeting, which recommends several bike-friendly improvements including designating bike-climbing lanes on portions of Monongahela Boulevard.

Morgantown is the first city in the state of West Virginia to officially be named a Bicycle Friendly Community. West Virginia ranks 50th on the League’s website for bicycle friendliness. Huntington has received honorable mention.

“Morgantown has been working hard the past five years to establish a balanced program of education, enforcement, infrastructure development, encouragement and evaluation to facilitate

cycling not only as recreation, but also as a practical means of transportation to achieve our goal of having by 2020, 1 of every 20 vehicles on Morgantown's streets be a bicycle," said Frank Gmeindl, Morgantown Bicycle Board Chair. "Receiving the LAB's Bicycle Friendly Community Bronze designation indicates that we're on the right track but there is much work to be done."

The BFC program provides a roadmap to building a Bicycle Friendly Community and the application has become a rigorous and an educational tool in itself. Since its inception, more than 500 distinct communities have applied and the four levels of the award – platinum, gold, silver and bronze – provide a clear incentive for communities to continuously improve.

To apply or learn more about the free BFC program, visit bikeleague.org/community. To learn more about the activities of the Morgantown Municipal Bicycle Board and cycling in Morgantown, visit bikemorgantown.com.

About the Bicycle Friendly America Program

The Bicycle Friendly Community, Bicycle Friendly State, Bicycle Friendly Business and Bicycle Friendly University programs are generously supported by program partners Bikes Belong and Trek Bicycle's One World, Two Wheels Campaign. To learn more about building a Bicycle Friendly America, visit <http://www.bikeleague.org/programs/bicyclefriendlyamerica/>

The League of American Bicyclists promotes bicycling for fun, fitness and transportation, and works through advocacy and education for a bicycle-friendly America. The League represents the interests of America's 57 million bicyclists, including its 300,000 members and affiliates. For more information or to support the League, visit www.bikeleague.org.

For more information, contact Public Communications Manager Susan Sullivan at 304-284-7426.