

# Event Program

## Bicycle Friendly Community Commemoration and Celebration

November 20, 2013



**2:30** – Presentation at Newport City Hall

**Host:** Mayor Harry Winthrop

**Speakers:**

Mayor Harry Winthrop

Andrew Koziol, RI Dept of Transportation Highway Safety Program

Presentation of Bicycle Friendly Community Award  
by John Siemiatkoski, League of American Bicyclists

Allison McNally, "Every Cyclist"

Sgt Chris Hayes – Newport Police Department,  
Community and Traffic Services

Renee Kaminitz, Safe Cycling Advocate

Bicyclists from Thompson Middle School

**3:15** – The Victory Lap: Group Ride Around City Center

**4:00** – Reception at The Fifth Element, 111 Broadway

# Bike Friendly America

Now in its tenth year, this national program of the League of American Bicyclists, which was founded in Newport in 1880, has granted Bike Friendly Community status to 291 communities that actively support bicycling for fun, fitness and transportation.

With more people bicycling, these communities experience reduced traffic demands, improved air quality, greater physical fitness, and a better quality of life. Bicycle friendliness can translate into increased property values, business growth, and increased tourism.

## Did You Know?

Newport is the birthplace of the League of American Bicyclists. The League of American Wheelmen, as it was known then, first convened in Newport in 1880. On the occasion of the League's centennial in 1980, a monument was erected in Touro Park, facing Bellevue Avenue midway between Pelham and Mill Streets.

**“We know Newport’s investment in bicycling will be returned many times over in the health, environmental, and quality of life benefits of a thriving community.”**

~Andy Clarke, President, League of American Bicyclists



This monument in Touro Park commemorates the centennial of the League of American Bicyclists

# Bike Friendly Newport

To achieve Bicycle Friendly status, Newport demonstrated progress in the five key areas of consideration – **The Five Es** of Bicycle Friendliness:

- **Encouragement:** Creating a strong bike culture that welcomes and celebrates bicycling.
- **Education:** Giving people of all ages and abilities the skills and confidence to ride.
- **Engineering:** Creating safe and convenient places to ride and park.
- **Enforcement:** Ensuring safe roads for all users.
- **Evaluation:** Planning for bicycling as a safe and viable transportation option.



**Educate:** bicycle-dependent workers learn safe riding behaviors and the benefits of safety equipment through Bike Newport’s Night Bright program.



**Engineer:** the City raises signs along major one-way streets reminding cyclists to ride with traffic.



**Encourage:** group riding events like the 4th of July Bike Parade encourage family cycling.

## How We Encourage

Year-round events and initiatives support bicyclists and motivate others to hop in the saddle.

The **Newport Bicycle Map** is in its third edition in three years. The map is the result of Bike Newport's Roads and Routes Committee working with RIDOT's mapping team to improve the reporting of suitable roads for biking. Up-to-date and informed by the cyclists who ride the roads, the print map includes numerous recommended recreational routes, transit information, local ordinances, and lots more information both helpful and encouraging. The 2013 edition includes all of Aquidneck and Conanicut Islands and is available in print, online, and mobile phone versions.

Year-round **Special Events** build bike culture and engage cyclists of all ages and abilities. *Bike Newport Night in March* helps raise funds for community cycling initiatives such as *Night Bright* distribution of night safety equipment. *Bike to Work Day in May* gives folks the chance to try bike commuting – the best way to start the day – and includes a commuter breakfast, mid-day press conference, release of the annual map update, group ride around town, and the annual Bike Fair. Many of Newport's numerous summer events now include bike parking and a Tune-Up Tent. In fact, the *2012 America's Cup* and *2013 Newport Folk Festival* supported up to 800 cyclists/day. And *2013's inaugural Elliot Kaminitz Father's Day Ride* welcomed more than 300 participants to Fort Adams and the Ocean Drive, including a bustling Children's Safety Town. Safe cycling is supported and encouraged at numerous local events, including



Newport Police Department's *Night Out Newport*, the City Manager's *Engage Newport*, and Washington Square Roots *Complete Streets Charrettes*, among others.



Volunteer-managed bike parking at the Newport Folk Festival. Over 2,000 bikes parked in 2013.

## How We Educate



Bike Newport interns learn comprehensive bike mechanic skills.

From printed rules and ordinances to free smart cycling classes – efforts are made city and island-wide to spread the word and inform the practice: *Bicyclists have the same rights, rules and responsibilities as cars.*

Youth learn cycling skills and basic bike mechanics at two "Bike Garages" – one at Rogers High School, and one at the Florence Gray Center. A corps of a dozen League

Certified Instructors teach free courses island-wide. Road rules are reviewed along with distribution/installation of night cycling safety equipment for bike dependent workers through the *Night Bright* program. Helmets are made available through the Newport Kiwanis Club. Local media road sharing messages directed to cyclists and motorists. Bike shops and inns distribute rules with their bike rentals, and tourist kiosks point out local ordinances in the Newport Bike Map.

Bike Newport maintains an ever-more-informative web site, [www.bikeneportri.org](http://www.bikeneportri.org), and keeps followers up-to-speed with posts and tweets. RIDOT, RIBike, Narragansett Bay Wheelmen, the van Beuren Charitable Foundation, the Frederick Henry Prince Memorial Fund, and other local donors generously support the educational outreach efforts of Bike Newport.

**"We were very impressed with how far Newport has come in such a short period of time. This is a great example how a strong local advocacy group can make a real difference."**

~Nicole Wynand, Director,  
Bicycle Friendly America



The Earn-A-Bike program at Bike Garage North allows youth to earn bikes through volunteerism.



Cyclists ride the Memorial Boulevard bike lane in all four seasons.

## How We Engineer

*“By far, the most significant achievement in the past year is installation of the first bike lane in Newport. [The death of two cyclists] sent chills through the community and prompted officials and advocates to partner to fast-track the changes that would better accommodate bicyclists and other vulnerable road users. Since then, traffic calming . . . , turning lanes, bike lanes, shared lane markings and signage, have been installed along this 1.6 mile transportation corridor.”*

– from Newport’s Bicycle Friendly Community application

Bike Friendly road accommodations are appearing and spreading around town: bike lanes on Memorial; shared lanes on Memorial, Spring and Thames; wayfaring signs from Bellevue to Fort Adams; Park and Bike lots (for special events) at Newport Grand and the Aquidneck School; bike awareness signs on the Ocean Drive; ‘Wrong Way’ cycling signs on Thames and Spring Streets; and rows and rows of pedestrian barricades doubling as bike parking at the busiest summer events.



Cycling with the sharrows on Spring Street.

## How We Enforce

City, police, and advocates work together to ensure that cyclists follow the rules of the road – including riding in the same direction as traffic, obeying traffic signs and signals, and staying off the sidewalk.

Police are equipped with pads that list bicycle ordinances and safety recommendations in both English and Spanish to warn and correct wrongdoers. Wrong-way riders on lower Thames Street are ticketed. New wrong-way signage is designed to alert cyclists to the laws.

City ordinance requiring bicycle registration is designed to deter theft, provide bicycle identification, and assist with return of abandoned bikes to owners. Bike Newport now manages online bicycle registration in partnership with the Newport Police Department.



Community Police Officer Jimmy Winters and Bike Newport Executive Director Bari George and registering bikes at Thompson Middle School during International Walk & Bike to School Day.

## Rules of the Rhode Bike Lanes Explained



Bike Lane



Shared Lane (Sharrow)

### Bike Lanes and RI Passing Law

There are two bike symbols on Newport’s roadways – one for dedicated bike lanes and one for shared lanes:

**BIKE LANE** – A narrow separate lane for bicycles only. Cyclists are protected in the bike lane, but continue to have a right to the main road and will move into the road whenever a hazard exists in the bike lane. Cars should never be in the bike lane and should cross the bike lane with extreme caution.

**SHARED LANE (or SHARROW)** – This travel lane is marked for shared use by cars and bicycles. A cyclist should ride in the right side of the lane when possible, but ride the center of the lane in the vicinity of parked cars to avoid car doors, when preparing to turn left, or to prevent a car from passing too closely.

**RI Passing Law:** Rhode Island state law mandates that a motorist may not pass a cyclist unless there is enough room for the cyclist to fall over sideways into the driving lane and not be hit by the vehicle. This law is written to protect cyclists from serious or fatal injury. Please be patient and courteous when sharing the road.

As printed in Newport This Week.

## How We Evaluate

In order to plan for our city, we need to understand community needs, habits, concerns, and transportation patterns. Starting in 2011, Bike Newport has conducted periodic online surveys of students and adult residents. In 2013, RIDOT funding made possible the start of on-road audits of bicycle and motorist behaviors at key intersections around the city. The newly formed Newport Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission is working toward additional mechanisms to track and record resident experience on the roads. Data available from the City and the State inform roadway plans and safety plans. Research is understood to be key to informing the plans and optimizing the programs that move the City toward improved safety for all road users.



The Roads & Routes Committee meets bi-monthly to plan for the future of bicycling on Aquidneck Island.

The folks who are on the street every day now have a way to quickly and easily report road concerns, including photo documentation – by simply hashtagging comments on Twitter and Facebook with **#newportriroads**. All comments are aggregated, reported and reviewed by Bike Newport and by the City.



## How We ELECTRIFY!

YES, there is a SIXTH E: **ELECTRIFY!** The goal is, afterall, to get more people on bikes, more understanding of the promise of active transportation, more support for cycling, and more excitement about the benefits of biking – to create a Bicycle Friendly Newport that is enjoyed by all.

There are lots of fun, inspiring, exciting, sometimes even a bit crazy, activities to get folks feeling the bike happiness. Our kids are grabbing bikes and tools on Saturday mornings at the Bike Garage North's "bike library" – what a great way to get active! Bike Parades and bike decorating are becoming signature events of on the Fourth of July and Halloween. And Jingle Bikes took Bowen's Wharf by storm last Christmas season, lighting up the holiday tree by pedaling. Perhaps this winter will see pedal-powered movie nights – how cool would that be? We're a city ripe with ideas that will ELECTRIFY the community to hop in the saddle!

**"Bicycling can be a healthy transportation option in a small and historic city like Newport. We're committed to continuing improvements so more people will choose bicycling."**

~ Bill Riccio, Director of Public Services, City of Newport

# What's Next?

The commitment to more and better biking has gotten us this far fast, but we all know we've got a long way to go to be truly bicycle friendly. We're taking a break today to celebrate and take a victory lap around the City – and then what? There's work to do!

Newport's application to the League of American Bicyclists for Bicycle Friendly Community status identified the three areas we believe are most in need of improvement. We suspect you'll agree with us:

- 1. Bike parking:** There are only so many parking signs and trees and beat up old school racks. We need modern racks suitable to our colonial city to support bicycling to all of our fabulous destinations.
- 2. Engineering:** In our small island community, there are no opportunities (yet!) to ride without traffic. Bike lanes and other road sharing improvements are a priority to improve cyclist confidence & safety.
- 3. Riding skills:** We must continue to educate cyclists and motorists, while providing classes, workshops, and plenty of road sharing information in order to make cycling safer, more enjoyable, and an easy choice for local transportation.

Many plans and programs are already underway to get us to the next level:



- Classes are available to any group on Aquidneck Island to review and practice cycling skills and how to ride in traffic. *(Get a group together and contact Bike Newport for more information.)*
- More bike lanes and shared lanes are coming. Watch for progress on America's Cup, Ocean Drive and around town.
- Improved bicycle awareness will come from extended outreach in print, broadcast and social media.
- Local businesses will receive guidance to better support and attract cycling patrons and become bicycle friendly businesses.

– Support from the RI Department of Transportation recognizes Newport as a leader in bicycle-related highway safety and will continue to improve community outreach – including seasonal signage supporting safe road sharing.



Signed routes help cyclists navigate to major events like the Newport Folk Festival.

– Bike parking corrals replace one car space with 10-12 bike spaces. Watch for carefully-selected pilots of this higher capacity bike parking solution.

– The City is preparing to share bike rack standards and guidelines to ensure best practices in the best interest of cyclists, pedestrians, motorists, businesses – and the bikes themselves. Let's take care of our bikes!

– Isn't it high time we figure out a place where cyclists of all ages and skill levels can ride without traffic? Where will the first traffic-free bike route show up?

– We're hopeful to establish neighborhood routes where kids, friends, and families can explore their neighborhoods safely on bikes.

– Technology advances will improve cyclist safety and motorist awareness when RIDOT adds high visibility, high friction surface treatment to select intersection blocks.

– Improved road surface maintenance program will include crack sealing, joint repairs and other pavement maintenance.

**"This award is a real vote of confidence. We still have a lot of work to do, but this is a great first step, and a nice welcome to the bike-friendly movement."**

~ Bari George, Executive Director, Bike Newport



## What Do You Think?

Hold that thought! Chances are this pamphlet has inspired you and reminded you of ideas and concerns you've wanted to share. Hop online and deposit your thoughts where they'll be recorded, reviewed and aggregated. Take the Community Bike Survey at:

[www.bikeneportri.org/survey](http://www.bikeneportri.org/survey)

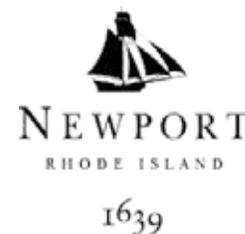
## It Takes A Village

Or, in our case, a City – to make progress.

*"The city-wide collaboration of representative individuals and groups toward the common cause of bicycle advocacy and ongoing improvement to educate, engineer, encourage, enforce and evaluate is Reason #1 to designate Newport a Bike Friendly Community."*

~excerpt from Newport's application for Bike Friendly Community status

*The list of stakeholders and partners who have contributed to Newport's progress toward Bicycle Friendliness is long and impressive! City of Newport, RI Department of Transportation, Newport Public Schools, Newport Police Department, Newport County Preservation Society, Newport This Week, Newport Daily News, Newport Mercury, WADK, The Boys and Girls Club, The Met School, the Florence Gray Center, the Newport Housing Authority, Discover Newport, Sustainable Aquidneck, Newport Film, Newport Folk Festival, Newport Jazz Festival, Newport Grand, Old Colony Railway, Newport Federal Savings Bank, AARP of Rhode Island, Newport Fed, Discover Newport, Gray Matter Marketing, VHB, Washington Square Roots, People's Credit Union, Narragansett Bay Wheelmen, RI Bicycle Coalition, Federal Highway Administration, the van Beuren Charitable Foundation, the Frederick H Prince Memorial Fund, Newport Hospital, Newport Bicycle, Ten Speed Spokes, Pedal Power, Newport City Council, Newport City Manager, Social Venture Partners Rhode Island, Aquidneck Island Planning Commission, Newport County Chamber of Commerce, RI Department of Management, Fort Adams Trust, Newport Pedicab, Pirate Pedicab, Salve Regina University, and many more...*



[www.cityofnewport.com](http://www.cityofnewport.com)



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