How to be Cyclist Friendly

1. Welcome cyclists as equal users of roads
2. Pass good cycling laws
3. Run an effective education program
4. Train police
5. Deter road rage
6. Build appropriate bike facilities
7. Test, fix & mark vehicle detectors
8. Fix road hazards
9. Encourage bicycle transportation

Example of misinformation:
Advice: "Stay out of the way of cars." This is bad advice because there are situations where it is safer to obviously be in the way. For example, if the travel lane is not wide enough to share with passing traffic, move LEFT so following drivers are not tempted to "squeeze by". At intersections and driveways, cyclists who try to stay out of the way by riding on sidewalks may "appear out of nowhere" and be hit. Experienced cyclists, who stay in the travel lane, are easily seen and avoided.

Why a Cyclist Friendly Program?

- Overcome Misinformation
  - Authority figure "teachers" with no training or experience
  - "Lessons" are "good advice", not planned curriculum
  - Teaching based on fear, not proper technique
  - Belief that cyclists are inferior users of roads

- Prevent Errors
  - Dangerous & discriminatory traffic laws
  - Confusing cyclists with pedestrians
  - Dangerous separate facilities
  - Violating rules of the road
  - Indifference to harassment & assault
  - Ignoring road hazards

Cyclist Friendly means promoting best practices and treating cyclists fairly

1. Welcome cyclists as equal users of roads
   - Publicly announce that cyclists belong on the road
   - Inform citizens that sidewalks are for pedestrians
   - Fairly enforce traffic laws
   - Have public officials and police set example
   - Consider cyclists to be design users of roads

Every traffic lane is a bike lane!
2. Pass Good Cycling Laws

- Expect cyclists to follow same traffic laws
- Promote best and safest practices
- Uniform rules of the road
- Eliminate discriminatory bike rules

Cyclists deserve equal protection under the law

Traffic Laws are important because

Traffic laws help shape —
- How cyclists are taught to ride
- How the police treat cyclists
- What the motoring public expects from cyclists
- What happens in court or with insurance adjustor if a cyclist has a collision

Traffic laws help shape —

Uniform traffic laws promote safe, & efficient travel for all.

Typical Invalid Bicycle Ordinances
These are also inconsistent with Ohio Law

Overall Rating – D-minus
Ordinances incompatible with safe operation and uniform rules

373.15 (b) Wherever a designated path for bicycles has been provided adjacent to a street, bicycle riders shall use such path and shall not use the street.

(c) ... At no time shall a bicyclist under the age of eight years operate a bicycle on a street.

(f) No person shall ride a bicycle across or through an intersection when crossing a through street. Such intersections are to be crossed by walking the bicycle across or through the intersection.

It takes an informed government to pass good laws
3. Run an effective education program
• Use mass media for general information
• Flyers, handouts & posters spread message
• Sponsor ‘Ride the Right Way Day’
• Work with scouts, youth groups, schools, parents
• Teach engineers & planners about ‘bicycle driving’
• Run seminars & classes for detailed training
• Don’t repeat bad advice!

Almost everyone has been exposed to “Bike Safety” misinformation. It will take a persistent effort to undo the misinformation.

Break the cycle of misinformation
Misinformed adults
Grow up
"Teach"
Children

Why parents must teach their children proper cycling technique

Photo shows wrong-way child cyclist. This is from the cover of the Safe Routes to School booklet from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration – an inexcusable error.

Beware of “GOOD” ADVICE
1. “Stay out of the way of cars”
2. “Always ride on the sidewalk”
3. “Ride as far right as possible”
4. “You could be dead right”
5. “Ride as though other drivers can't see you”

WHY the advice is wrong ---
(1) It’s sometimes safer to obviously be in the way. Where travel lane is not wide enough to share, move LEFT so drivers are not tempted to "squeeze by".
(2) Cyclists who ride on sidewalks "appear out of nowhere" and get hit.
(3) This is a misinterpretation of the law that says ride "as near to the right side as practicable" (practice+able). There are many situations where "hugging the curb" is not safe.
(4) You are more likely to be "dead-wrong".
(5) It is usually much better to make sure other drivers CAN see you. This means, use lights at night, wear bright clothes in daytime and ride in or near the travel lane where other drivers are looking for traffic.

Don’t repeat bad advice just because it “sounds good”
A bike is not a toy. It's a child's first vehicle.

Teach your kids: ‘Drive your Bike!’

There is much more to learn and teach about cycling than what we were taught as kids.

• Bicycles are vehicles
• Operate by rules of the road.
• Teach kids the right way.

4. Train police
• Police must accept cyclists as drivers
• Police must understand proper lane position
• IPMBA trains bicycle police
• Reach all members of dept., not just bike patrol
• Encourage ‘best practices’
• Police must set a good example

International Police Mountain Bike Assn is primary trainer for police. Their materials are good but traffic cycling is only a minor part of the course.

Discourage police from riding on sidewalks because it sets a bad example.

5. Deter road rage
• Publicly state that harassment (assault) is a crime
• Have uniformed police seen riding in busy traffic
• Establish policy to react to credible reports
  • Make record of all incidents
  • Tell perpetrator: ‘Don’t try it again.’
• Use undercover police if needed (and publicize)
• Establish educational ‘diversion’ program for violators

Take road rage seriously!
6. Build appropriate bike facilities

- Well-designed roads are already good for cycling
- Wide curb lanes reduce tension between users
- Fix slots, cracks, drain grates, etc.
- Secure parking, not ‘wheel benders’
- Avoid dangerous parallel facilities
- Multi-use path OK for ‘shortcut’ or recreation
- Don’t confuse recreation with transportation

Segregated bike facilities (bike lanes & paths beside a road) encourage dangerous operation. They are inconsistent with the best practices.

Understand Issues: Narrow Lane

Cyclists have legal right and safety obligation to use the full lane if too narrow to share with motor vehicles

Cyclists who “hug the curb” invite dangerous close passing. They are also less visible under some traffic situations.

7. Test, fix & mark vehicle detectors

- Most work via magnetic inductance
- Test for sensitivity & adjust
- Mark ‘sweet spot’
- Teach public how to use
- Nonworking detectors encourage lawlessness

If cyclists cannot work a vehicle detector, it is “broken” and must be fixed.
8. Fix road hazards

- Fix slots, cracks & grates that cause falls
- Establish hazard ‘hotline’ or web page
- Add gaps to rumble strips
- Beware of dangerous separate facilities
- Train officials about bicycle driving

9. Encourage bicycle transportation

- Publicize ‘bike to work’ & ride for shopping
- Distribute ‘how to’ info.
- Encourage secure bike parking
- Promote ‘guaranteed ride home’ at employers
- Recommend shower & changing facilities
- City officials set example (mayor’s ride, etc.)

For additional information, see the Cyclist Friendly Cities “Toolkit” in the advocacy section at www.ohiobike.org

Every traffic lane is a bike lane!