

Neon Bike

511 Contra Costa



Why?

- 511 Contra Costa wanted to show students how to make their bikes unique, personal, and safe
 - Putting lights on your bike makes it much safer to ride at night
 - Lights allow you to personalize your bike and make it your own
 - Make an old bike look modern and interesting!

The Schwinn Impact

- We started with a Schwinn bike that had seen better days



- The minute we saw it, we knew we wanted to paint it a brilliant 511 Contra Costa blue

Bike Maintenance



- We started with breaking down the bike, replacing the seat, and prepping it for painting
- The seat was stuck on with an old clamp system, so a lot of force was required to remove it, but the new seat looked much better

Bike Maintenance



- We also needed to remove the tires so that we could replace them with blue ones
- We used tire levers to make the job easier



Painting the Bike

- We chose to use PPG automotive paint from Ned's Auto Body in Concord, which would give the bike a professional look
- Ford's Blue Flame paint gave a great look to the bike



Painting the Bike



Before painting the bike, we had to:

- degrease the frame and components
- cover the parts of the bike that couldn't get painted
- sand the frame to make the paint stick better
- put on heavy-duty paint masks

We painted the bike with two coats of the Blue Flame basecoat and two coats of the acrylic clear coat.

Painting the Bike

Painting the bike requires a lot of prep and protection. You must wear masks and protect your work area!



Reassembling the Bike



- After letting the paint dry, we had to reassemble the bike
- The job was not hard because we had labeled all of the parts when we had taken it apart
- The final touch was to put bright blue tires on the bike

Making it Glow



- We knew from the beginning that we wanted to put lights on the bike, but not just any old lights
- We purchased Cool Neon wire, or electroluminescent wire, from Funhouse Creations in Oakland

Framing the Bike



- We weren't sure how we wanted the lights to look, so we used removable tape to frame the lights
- We figured out which sections we wanted to apply the lights to, and then we attached them with both removable and permanent tape to protect the paint job and provide a lasting hold
- In order to provide power, we used a huge battery pack and a "driver" that distributed the power

511 Contra Costa Sign



- The last piece of our new bike was the 511CC sign we wanted to put in the frame cutout
- We made a cardboard layout and had TAP Plastics in Pleasant Hill cut an acrylic sheet for us
- Then, Signs that Sell in Concord put our logo on it
- To attach it, several holes were drilled in the plastic, and zip ties were used



Finished Product

- With lights and a custom sign, the 511 CC bike is unique, safe, and innovative
- You can do the same thing to your bike
 - It's likely you won't have to paint yours, which will make the process a lot easier
 - All you have to do is purchase a EL wire kit and attach the wires to your bike
 - No soldering or technical knowledge is required!

Make your bike personal and exciting!



Thanks to these volunteers who helped with this project:

Dave Roberts

Mark Kauzer

Joe Caulfield

Judy Goode

Additional Information

Bike Laws

- Make sure that your bike has the correct lights and reflectors before you ride it at night
 - In California, you must have a white lamp at the front of your bike
 - You must also have a red reflector at the back, a white/yellow reflector on each pedal, shoe, or ankle, and a white/yellow reflector on each side to the rear and front of the bike

Expenses

- Schwinn bike: \$80
- Painting the bike: \$160
- Lighting the bike: \$130
- Sign: \$110

Meet the Builder

My name is Ethan Cordes, and I was a summer intern for 511 Contra Costa as part of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's High School Internship Program. I worked for several weeks on the Neon Bike project, and it was a very rewarding experience. I think that DIY projects are important, so go ahead and try this on your own bike!

Contact Information

Have questions?

Corinne Dutra-Roberts

Program Manager

corinne@511contracosta.org

