

Bike Summit Breaks Attendance Records, Rallies Industry

MARCH 19, 2007 -- WASHINGTON, D.C. (BRAIN)--Some 431 suppliers, advocates and retailers made their voices heard last Thursday on Capitol Hill, shattering last year's 361 record.

"We have a new record this year," said Andy Clarke, executive director of the League of American Bicyclists, during the opening plenary. "We're trying hard to meet Congressman Blumenauer's request to fill the room."

The annual event, which ended on Friday, brought the industry together for three days of networking, advocacy training and lobbying. Wednesday offered attendees 12 breakout sessions that covered topics including global climate change, the future of transportation funding, Safe Routes to School, IMBA's federal access agenda and field updates, the health and community benefits of cycling, achieving land preservation and bicyclist access, and more.

After a full day of advocacy training, state delegates met early Thursday before heading out for meetings with members of Congress. Congressman James Oberstar (D-MN) led the morning pep rally, and talked about key moments and key people that have helped bicycling gain momentum. "It's a thrill to be here and see how it's grown—five years ago, we would have met in a phone booth," he said.

"This is the new age—we're trying to make it a true mode of transportation. We'll convert America from a hydrocarbon economy to a carbohydrate economy," he added.

Congressman Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) used the rally as the occasion to officially introduce the house version of the Bicycle Commuter Act (HR1498), which would extend the transportation fringe benefit available to those who commute by mass transit, car and vanpool, to bicyclists. The bill has been introduced in the Senate by Ron Wyden (D-OR) and Susan Collins (R-ME).

"This is bike partisanship at its best," said Blumenauer. "It's an equity issue, an energy conservation issue. This is a logical extension in the tax code."

Other highlights of this year's Summit included a surprise appearance by Tour de France champion Floyd Landis, who received a standing ovation during the keynote luncheon.

"I know what it's like to fight for something you believe in," Landis said. "I appreciate you guys having me here."

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http://www.bicycleretailer.com/bicycleretailer/headlines/article_display.jsp?vnu_content_id=1003559887

The bill was introduced by Mr. BLUMENAUER (for himself, Mrs. CAPPS, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. MORAN of Virginia, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. SNYDER, Mr. RUPPERSBERGER, Mr. MCDERMOTT, Mr. FARR, and Mr. CAPUANO and referred to the Committee on Ways and Means.

Note the companion bill **S. 858 Bicycle Commuters Benefits Act of 2007** was introduced by Senators WYDEN, SNOWE, COLLINS, ENZI, MENENDEZ, INOUE, DURBIN, and SANDERS; and was read twice and referred to the Committee on Finance.

Paris Embraces Plan to Become City of Bikes

By John Ward Anderson
Washington Post Foreign Service
Saturday, March 24, 2007; A10

PARIS, March 23 -- Paris is for lovers -- lovers of food and art and wine, lovers of the romantic sort and, starting this summer, lovers of bicycles.

On July 15, the day after Bastille Day, Parisians will wake up to discover thousands of low-cost rental bikes at hundreds of high-tech bicycle stations scattered throughout the city, an ambitious program to cut traffic, reduce pollution, improve parking and enhance the city's image as a greener, quieter, more relaxed place.

By the end of the year, organizers and city officials say, there should be 20,600 bikes at 1,450 stations -- or about one station every 250 yards across the entire city. Based on experience elsewhere -- particularly in Lyon, [France's](#) third-largest city, which launched a similar system two years ago -- regular users of the bikes will ride them almost for free.

"It has completely transformed the landscape of Lyon -- everywhere you see people on the bikes," said Jean-Louis Touraine, the city's deputy mayor. The program was meant "not just to modify the equilibrium between the modes of transportation and reduce air pollution, but also to modify the image of the city and to have a city where humans occupy a larger space."

The Socialist mayor of Paris, Bertrand Delano?, has the same aim, said his aide, Jean-Luc Dumesnil: "We think it could change Paris's image -- make it quieter, less polluted, with a nicer atmosphere, a better way of life."

But there is a practical side, too, Dumesnil said. A recent study analyzed different trips in the city "with a car, bike, taxi and walking, and the bikes were always the fastest."

The Lyon rental bikes, with their distinctive silver frame, red rear-wheel guard, handlebar basket and bell, can also be among the cheapest ways to travel, because the first half-hour is free, and most trips are shorter than that.

"It's faster than the bus or metro, it's good exercise, and it's almost free," said Vianney Paquet, 19, who is studying law in Lyon. Paquet said that he uses the rental bikes four or five times a day and pays 10 euros (about \$13) a year, half for an annual membership fee and half for rental credit that he never actually spends because his rides typically last just a few minutes.

Anthonin Darbon, director of Cyclocity, which operates Lyon's program and won the contract to start up and run the one in Paris, said 95 percent of the roughly 20,000 daily bike rentals in Lyon are free because of their length.

Cyclocity is a subsidiary of outdoor advertising behemoth JCDecaux, which runs much smaller bike businesses in Brussels, Vienna and the Spanish cities of Cordoba and Girona. London, Dublin, Sydney and Melbourne reportedly are considering similar rental programs.

The Cyclocity concept evolved from utopian "bike-sharing" ideas that were tried in Europe in the 1960s and '70s, usually modeled on Amsterdam's famous "white bicycle" plan, in which idealistic hippies repaired scores of bicycles, painted them white, and left them on the streets for anyone to use for free. But in the end, the bikes were stolen and became too beat-up to ride. A number of U.S. cities, including Portland, Ore., have also experimented with community-use bicycle programs.

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JCDcaux experimented with designs and developed a sturdier, less vandal-prone bike, along with a rental system to discourage theft: Each rider must leave a credit card or refundable deposit of about \$195, along with personal information. In Lyon, about 10 percent of the bikes are stolen each year, but many are later recovered, Darbon said.

And to encourage people to return bikes quickly, rental rates rise the longer the bikes are out. In Paris, for instance, renting a bike will be free for the first 30 minutes, \$1.30 for the next 30 minutes, \$2.60 for the third half-hour, and \$5.20 for the fourth half-hour of use and every 30 minutes after that. That makes the cost of a two-hour rental about \$9.10.

Membership fees in Paris will be steeper than in Lyon, from \$1.30 for one day to about \$38 for a year.

The Paris deal will bring the world's biggest bicycle fleet to the City of Light in a complex, 10-year public-private partnership.

JCDcaux will provide all of the bikes (at a cost of about \$1,300 apiece) and build the pickup/drop-off stations. Each will have 15 to 40 high-tech racks connected to a centralized computer that can monitor each bike's condition and location. Customers can buy a prepaid card or use a credit card at a computerized console to release a bike.

The company will pay start-up costs of about \$115 million and employ the equivalent of about 285 people full time to operate the system and repair the bikes for 10 years. All revenue from the program will go to the city, and the company will also pay Paris a fee of about \$4.3 million a year.

In exchange, Paris is giving the company exclusive control over 1,628 city-owned billboards, including the revenue from them, for the same period. About half the billboard space will be given back to the city at no cost for public-interest advertising.

Based on statistics from Lyon, company officials estimate that each bicycle in Paris will be used on average 12 times a day, for a total of about 250,000 trips a day, or 91 million trips a year.

In Lyon, according to deputy mayor Touraine, the city's 3,000 rental bikes have logged about 10 million miles since the program started in May 2005, saving an estimated 3,000 tons of carbon dioxide from being spewed into the air. Overall, vehicle traffic in the city is down 4 percent, he said, and bicycle use has tripled, not just on account of Cyclocity, but also because the program has prompted a boom in private bicycle use and sales.

The main complaint voiced by riders is that at certain times in certain places -- such as mornings at local universities -- all the racks can be occupied, making it impossible to return a bike. "I'm going to start using my own bike, because sometimes there are not enough spaces in the rack" at school, said art student Cecile Noiser, 19.

Company and city officials said that because the system sends in electronic data about which bikes are where, they are exploring ways to redistribute bikes using trucks to better match customers' needs. Touraine said the glitches are minor compared with the benefits.

Researcher Corinne Gavard contributed to this report.

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Transportation study receives outstanding paper award

Walkability study sheds light around Portland & San Francisco light rail stops

EUGENE, Ore.—(Feb. 28, 2007)—Got a train to catch? The walk to the nearest stop has been put under scientific scrutiny, looking at distances involved and the environment along the way.

The findings, which include the discovery that people often walk farther than they had thought despite their desire to minimize time and distance, are detailed in an award-winning paper by researchers at the University of Oregon and San Jose State University. A goal of the research – conducted in Portland, Ore., and the San Francisco Bay area in California – was to build on the idea that walking is healthy; it gets people out of cars and into public transportation, which helps the environment.

[Marc Schlossberg](#), a professor in the [UO department of planning, public policy and management](#), and graduate student Vanessa Bekkouche, along with San Jose State team members Asha Weinstein, a professor, and student Katja Irvin, were honored for their research, which they titled "How Far, by Which Route, and Why? A Spatial Analysis of Pedestrian Preference."

Their effort earned the 2007 Outstanding Paper Award from the Transportation Research Board during its annual conference Jan. 21-25 in Washington D.C. Their award was presented by the Committee on Pedestrians, which selected two papers out of 52 entries. The paper investigated pedestrian access to light rail transit sites in the two West Coast urban areas.

In part, the study suggests the importance of proximate destinations and an absence of major walking barriers, rather than beautifully designed pedestrian environments, Schlossberg said.

"Perhaps the key to increasing the number of walking trips is not to design pedestrian environments full of amenities such as benches, tree cover, awnings and wide sidewalks," he said. "While there is no doubt those assets can enhance the

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pedestrian experience, the real key is to have somewhere to walk to and to have an environment that isn't horrible."

A lot of communities around the country are looking at walkability issues. There are a growing number of state and federal initiatives on Safe Routes to School, as well as concerns over a national obesity epidemic and a wide range of policy initiatives designed to convince travelers to switch from automobiles to more environmentally sustainable bicycle and walking trips. Policymakers recognize walking as a key mode of travel, Schlossberg said, and they believe that increasing the number of walk trips is a key goal.

"Despite the seeming simplicity of the goal, we know very little about how far people actually walk or about how street design affects people's willingness or capacity to access their desired destinations by walking," he added.

The researchers looked at activity near five rail transit stations in both areas and sought to uncover how far pedestrians walk to light rail stations and what environmental factors influence their routes.

The paper concluded with five major findings:

- * Pedestrians walk farther to access light rail stations than commonly assumed, with a mean distance of about a half-mile rather than the prevailing notion of a quarter to a third of a mile.
- * Pedestrians say that their primary concern in choosing a route is minimizing time and distance.
- * Secondary factors influencing route choice are safety and, to a lesser extent, attractiveness of the route, sidewalk quality, and the absence of long waits at traffic lights.
- * Pedestrians vary considerably in how accurately they estimate the distance of their walks.
- * Asking respondents to trace their walking route on a local map is an effective research technique.

The study was sponsored by the Mineta Transportation Institute, a San Jose State University Transportation Center.

Since the project began, a similar national university transportation center has been established in Oregon. The Oregon Transportation Research and Education Consortium ([OTREC](#)) is a partnership between Portland State University, the University of Oregon, Oregon State University, and the Oregon Institute of Technology. Schlossberg is an associate director of OTREC.

OTREC is dedicated to stimulating and conducting collaborative multi-disciplinary research on multi-modal surface transportation issues; educating a diverse array of current practitioners and future leaders in the transportation field; and encouraging implementation of relevant research results. The project investigators are partnering with transportation agencies, industry and other universities in the Northwest.

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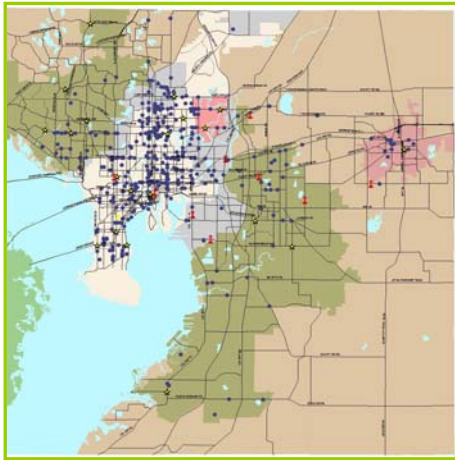
Bicycle Planning In Hillsborough County – The MPO Answers

By Gena Torres

Mom, what is it you **DO** at work? That's the question my kids ask me that starts the ball rolling...or the pedals turning. I leave out the other tasks that help the MPO reach its many goals and give them the answer that keeps me interested and excited to be at work after 17 years... "I try to make it safer for people to bicycle and walk." It's a simple mission with complicated solutions.



Thankfully, the MPO understands the challenges and is supportive of the initiatives the MPO's Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) and I have brought forward.



When people learn of Hillsborough County's daunting bicycle crash rates I'm often asked to suggest how those numbers can be reduced. I receive the police crash reports too – each week a new stack accumulates in my in-basket. My answer, hands down: **marked and signed on-road bike lanes**, and we should have them on every roadway a cyclist is legally permitted to ride. The MPO conducted three crash analysis studies reaffirming that most people getting hit are using a bicycle as their main mode of transportation. These cyclists are using the same roadways as motorists for the most direct route to work, school, family/friend's homes, groceries,

appointments, basically conducting their every-day needs.

Traditional safety education campaigns may only reach a finite number of people. However, if reaching one person who may not know an important traffic rule; that helmets are critical to safety; that there is a Bicycle Suitability Map to help guide their trip; and wearing reflective material will greatly increase visibility, then the safety outreach can be considered a success.



The MPO has recently updated the Bicycle Suitability Map and had flashing red lights and reflective wrist-bands made with the MPO logo. The dollars allocated over the years on these practical and popular outreach materials was money well spent. And just this January, the MPO's BPAC co-hosted the annual Gasparilla Bike Rodeo, by the end of the day fitting 300 helmets to area children. The MPO's presence at local events and in support of the Transportation Management Organizations (MPO has prioritized \$300,000 this year) can only

increase the number of people who will try bicycling, and do so safely.

Yet **marked and signed on-road bike lanes**

are most effective at educating every motorist and every cyclist using that roadway. There isn't a media campaign that can beat that. The motorist learns that they are sharing the road with bicycles. The road markings point to the direction the cyclist should ride (with the flow of traffic) and can be reinforced with a sign behind the bike lanes that reads "Cyclist. Wrong Way". St. Petersburg is testing painted bike lanes to bring more attention to cyclists riding there. Even with the best intentions, such as removing cyclists far from the roadway, the most predictable location where cyclists are less likely to be injured are on **marked and signed on-road bike lanes**.

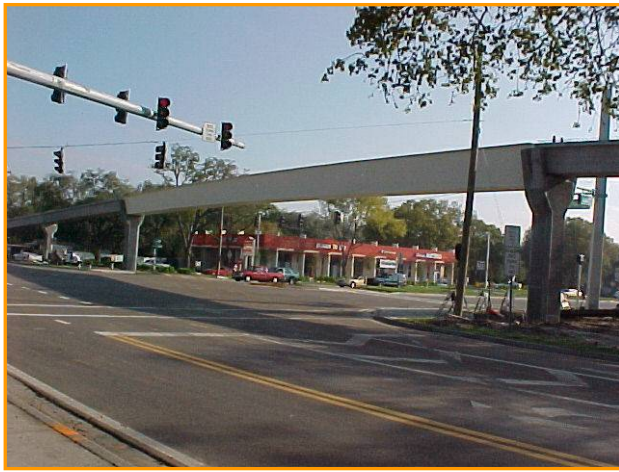


After hearing "Who in their right mind will cycle there?" more times than I care to count, the MPO is tracking bicycling (and walking) trends at 20 locations in the county and observed that the number of people walking and cycling are increasing. In addition, with the MPO's support, I spent a few months pulling over cyclists, taking their picture, and asking for their story. Once they realized that my work is legitimate, they would tell me what the uniform, hard hat, lunch box, grocery bags hanging from the handlebars, and basket full

of clothes, indicated...they indeed did not own a car and their bicycle was their means of getting around. With the number of uses of HART's Bikes on Buses Program – upwards of 6,000 uses each month - coupling a short bike ride with the bus extends the distance a person can reasonably travel around our county.

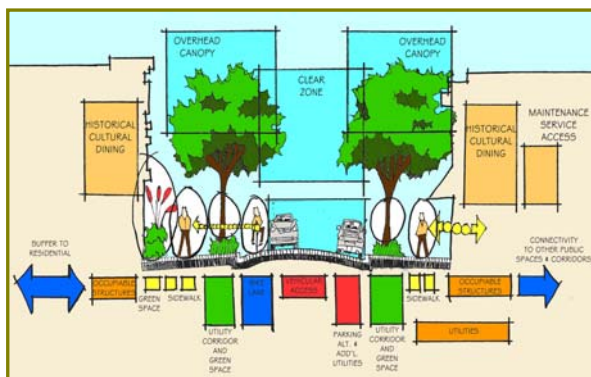
The MPO is dedicated to seeing more bicycle facilities built. The Comprehensive Bicycle Plans developed by the MPO use analytical tools to rank the long list of needed bikeways to arrive at a list of priority facilities. Actually, the Hillsborough MPO was the first in the state to develop and apply the Bicycle Level of Service and Latent Demand analyses to identify the roadways most needing bicycle facilities. With a variety of agencies and the public's input, those priorities have been incorporated into the cost affordable Long Range Transportation Plans.





In the meantime, bicycle facilities are added in an opportunistic fashion by coattailing on existing road projects. The MPO passed a Restriping Resolution stating that when a road with ample width is resurfaced, the designer will look at reducing the motor vehicles lanes to allow a bicycle lane to be striped. Following that resolution, an engineering study was funded to identify appropriate roadway widths that could accommodate cars and bicycles and still meet engineering standards.

As fresh ideas are developed into new standards, the MPO realizes that local professionals benefit from hearing presentations on cutting-edge, new practices across the country. The MPO has hosted or co-hosted presentations on traffic calming, walkable communities, and livable design workshops; using MPO resources to bring experts to Hillsborough County. On occasion, road projects are still designed without bike lanes or sidewalks. The MPO continues to monitor and advise project managers on the best road designs that accommodate all road users.



The MPO staff and I are beginning a project intended to influence roadway and land-use planning that will give prominence to bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit users. What may emerge is the designation of Multi-Modal Districts in appropriate places in our county. Stay tuned for a future article on that exciting possibility.

Included at the end of this article is a table of bicycle projects the MPO has recommended for funding. Of course, the needs outweigh the funding, so only a handful of projects can be recommended. Fortunately, the municipalities expend their resources to add bicycle facilities, particularly during road widening or resurfacing. The MPO has sent many letters of support when bike lanes and trails are added to the growing network of bikeways across Hillsborough County.

My kids at least, now, understand that bicycling and walking contribute to a healthier, more livable community, and maybe their mom is doing a little to help make it easier and safer to do so.

Bicycle Facility Improvements Recommended for Funding Through the MPO's Transportation Improvement Program Over the Past Six Years

Transportation Improvement Program FYs	PROJECT
01/02-05/06	On-Street Bicycle Lanes Bell Shoals from Bloomingdale to Boyette
	Bayshore Blvd. Bicycle Lane – Gandy Blvd. to MacDill AFB
	On-Street Bicycle Lanes Morris Bridge from Cory Lakes to Pasco County
	Multi-modal Trail along CR 581 Hunters Green to Cross Creek
02/03-06/07	Upper Tampa Bay Trail – Phase IV
	Bayshore Blvd Bicycle Trail
	Friendship Trail – Phase III
	Manhattan Avenue Trail Connector
	McKay Bay Bridge Connector
	Gandy Blvd. Bridge Underpass
03/04-07/08	Upper Tampa bay Trail – Phase IV
	Bayshore Blvd Bicycle Lane
	Sweetwater Creek Bike/Ped Bridge
04/05-08/09	Temple Terrace Trail
05/06-09/10	Upper Tampa Bay Trail-Underpass at Sheldon Rd.
06/07-10/11	South Tampa Greenway – Friendship Trail Gandy Crossing
	South Tampa Greenway – Friendship Trail
	Bayshore Blvd. Bicycle Lane
	Dale Mabry Off-Road Bicycle Path

Sample of Projects Supported by the MPO:

- 40th Street – on street bike lanes and wide sidewalks in design
- BBDowns – shoulders included in design plans
- Lutz Lake Fern – on street bike lanes connecting shoulders on Dale Mabry to those on Gunn Hwy
- Cypress Point Park – growing network of off-road trails
- Sheldon Road – restriped to add 6 miles of bike lanes
- HART Bikes on Buses – bike racks used approximately 6,000 times each month
- Fowler, Fletcher, Bayshore, Ehrlich, Tarpon Springs, Morris Bridge – marked, signed, and dedicated on street bike lanes.