



NEWS FROM **OAKLAND PUBLIC WORKS AGENCY**

Media Release:
September 15, 2010

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Oakland's Bicycle-Friendliness Goes National

Oakland, CA —The City of Oakland has been named as one of only 18 new ***Bicycle Friendly Communities*** in the nation as recognized by the League of American Bicyclists (LAB), the pre-eminent bicycling organization in the United States. The designation acknowledges efforts by the entire Oakland community: non-profit organizations, businesses, the City, and other agencies all of which are striving to create a bicycle-friendly environment. Oakland joins the ranks of 157 other Bicycle Friendly Communities in 43 states that, according to LAB, welcome cyclists by “providing safe accommodation for cycling and encouraging people to bike for transportation and recreation.”

According to LAB, mayors and community leaders are promoting bicycling to improve public health and quality of life while protecting the environment and providing better transportation choices. Oakland's Mayor Ron Dellums stated, “This national recognition demonstrates the commitment of the community and the responsiveness of government in achieving Oakland's vision of a sustainable city. Bicycling helps realize the goals of our Energy and Climate Action Plan, while promoting the most affordable, healthy, and energy-efficient mode of transportation for our residents.” Kassie Rohrbach, Executive Director of Walk Oakland Bike Oakland added, “This designation provides Oakland with clear, achievable benchmarks for continuing to increase the safety and usability of our streets so that more Oaklanders can choose biking for everyday transportation. We look forward to working with the city to grow rapidly from Bronze to Platinum.”

Oakland applied for the designation earlier this year to seek independent feedback on progress implementing the City's Bicycle Master Plan (2007), and garnered a bronze-level award on the first try. The award reflects the fact that bike riding and bike culture are flourishing in Oakland. Out of the 70 largest cities in the United States, Oakland has the seventh largest percentage of people bicycling to work (US Census Bureau, 2008 American Community Survey). The City's strong history of promoting bicycling includes community advocacy and building infrastructure to encourage bicycle use. The East Bay Bicycle Coalition, founded in 1972, and Cycles of Change, a youth bicycle education program that started in 1998, were joined in 2006 by Walk Oakland Bike Oakland.

Oakland installed its first designated bike route in 1976 and its first bike lanes in 1997. It now has 97 miles of bikeway, with over 30 miles of new or improved bikeway planned for construction by the end of 2011. Oakland's first annual Bike to Work Day was held at City Hall in 1994, and in May 2010 involved thousands of participants citywide. The City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee has met monthly since 1995. The City adopted its first Bicycle Master Plan in 1999 and updated it in 2007. All AC Transit buses have been equipped with bicycle racks since 2001 and bikes have been allowed on BART trains since 1972. The second "bike station" in the BART system opened at the Fruitvale BART Station in 2004 with parking spaces for over 200 bicycles. The ongoing CityRacks program installs bike racks in commercial districts on request, with more than 3,000 bike parking spaces now available for shoppers, business patrons, movie-goers, and diners. Oakland's Bicycle Parking Ordinance, adopted in 2008, is a model for other cities.

Learn more about building a Bicycle Friendly America, visit www.bikeleague.org. For more information about the City of Oakland's bicycle projects, plans, and programs, visit www.oaklandbikes.info.

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