



BICYCLE FRIENDLY COMMUNITY LOCAL REVIEWER GUIDELINES

The Bicycle Friendly Community Program

Bicycling is an opportunity to make a community a vibrant destination for residents and visitors - a place where people don't just live and work, but thrive. A bicycle-friendly community welcomes cyclists with trails, bike lanes, share the road campaigns, organized rides, Bike to Work Day events and so much more.

The Bicycle Friendly Community (BFC) program provides a roadmap to improve conditions for bicycling and direct assistance to make visions for better, bikeable communities a reality. With a rich matrix of options that recognizes an area's unique resources, the BFC application evaluates how a community encourages people to bike for transportation and recreation through the [five Es](#): engineering, education, encouragement, enforcement, and evaluation/planning.

The popularity of the program speaks for itself: More than 550 communities have applied, and 242 have been awarded Bronze, Silver, Gold or Platinum designation. But, even if a community doesn't quite make the grade yet, applying is well worth the time. Each applicant receives customized feedback and technical assistance. Once a community becomes a BFC, the League will present an award and two highway-quality road signs at a local ceremony or celebration. A designation is valid for 4 years at which point the BFC will need to reapply to renew its award or move up the ranks.

The Judging Process

All Bicycle Friendly Community applications are reviewed by a judging panel that includes League staff and national cycling experts. Though the application is scored, judges take factors such as topography, community and population size, land use, climate and demographics into account. In addition, applications are reviewed by several local cyclists and bike professionals to provide an on-the-ground perspective and fact-check the data provided in the application.

How to Review an Application

If you have received an email with an invitation to review a community, take a couple minutes to read the attached application even if you are very familiar with the community. It is not required to make a site visit, though you are certainly welcome to do so. Next, click on the survey link in the email and answer the questions as detailed as you would like. We recommend typing the answers into a Word or text document first, as you will not be able to save the survey or print a

copy for your records. Also be aware that the survey times out after a while, so copy and pasting pre-typed text will ensure that you won't lose any of your work. If you need more space, you can send us an email with your comments at nicole@bikeleague.org.

Reviewer Eligibility

Unless you have submitted the application yourself or you are the community's official bicycle planner, you can be a local reviewer. So even if you are closely involved in the application process, you can still be a local reviewer as you have very valuable insider knowledge and your input is particularly important for the feedback report.

Scoring Guidelines

Please use the following information as an overview of what measures are generally being taken to accommodate and promote bicycling in communities at each award level. However, expectations vary depending on population size, climate and land use, among other criteria.

NO AWARD: The community does not yet exhibit the characteristics of a Bicycle Friendly Community described in the award levels outlined below. A community must demonstrate more significant achievements in each of the five categories in order to be considered for an award.

HONORABLE MENTION: An Honorable Mention is not an award designation. However, communities that do not yet exhibit the characteristics of a BFC may be recognized with an Honorable Mention designation because the community recently implemented significant improvements for bicycling, but sufficient time has not yet passed for this to develop characteristics of a BFC; or the community has a remarkable project or program, but the impact or influence of this has yet to extend throughout the community.

BRONZE: Communities exhibit a strong commitment to cycling that is still in its beginning stages. There is certainly "room to grow" but notable steps are being made in the right direction. Bronze-level BFCs tend to be strong in one or two of the five categories ([Five E's](#)) of the application. A community at this level may not yet "feel" bicycle-friendly to the average cyclist.

SILVER: BFCs at this level have implemented several projects, policies, and programs that exhibit a strong commitment to cycling. This can be seen in the growing bike culture. The community is likely to have a bike program and dedicated staff, partnerships with local bicycling advocates and a bicycle advisory group that meets regularly. Silver-level communities are likely to be particularly strong in two or three of the five parts of the application.

GOLD: Implementation of bicycle projects, policies, and programs connect transportation and recreation throughout the community. Bicycling has been accommodated in a way that it is a very good choice for most people to get to where they want to go. The strong commitment to cycling is demonstrated in the impressive number of people riding and continuing growth. The community has dedicated bicycle program staff and volunteers, an ever-growing cycling culture,

a supportive administration, strong advocacy groups and bike clubs. Gold level BFCs are usually impressive in four out of five categories of their application.

PLATINUM: A platinum-level Bicycle Friendly Community is an exemplary community for cycling. At every level, the community welcomes, promotes and accommodates cycling. The BFC has made bicycling a priority and a great transportation and recreation option for people of all ages and abilities. This community is commonly referred to as an example how to build the best Bicycle Friendly Community in virtually all categories. There are significant investments in bicycle infrastructure and a variety of well-attended bicycle events. The bicycling culture is unmistakable, which is measures at striking numbers. Platinum level BFCs are usually impressive in all five categories of their application.

Questions?

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Nicole Wynands at nicole@bikeleague.org or 202-822-1333.