

Puget Sound Bicycle Scorecard

August 2010

KIRKLAND

population: 49,010
% trips to work by bike: .41
average annual bike collisions: 16
bicycle crash rate: .07

REDMOND

population: 51,890
% trips to work by bike: 1.5
average annual bike collisions: 21
bicycle crash rate: .03

RENTON

population: 86,230
% trips to work by bike: .33
average annual bike collisions: 14
bicycle crash rate: .05

SHORELINE

population: 54,320
% trips to work by bike: .5
average annual bike collisions: 7
bicycle crash rate: .03

TACOMA

population: 203,400
% trips to work by bike: .56
average annual bike collisions: 44
bicycle crash rate: .04

AUBURN

population: 67,485
% trips to work by bike: .34
average annual bike collisions: 20
bicycle crash rate: .09

BELLEVUE

population: 120,600
% trips to work by bike: .6
average annual bike collisions: 32
bicycle crash rate: .04

EVERETT

population: 103,500
% trips to work by bike: .57
average annual bike collisions: 34
bicycle crash rate: .06

FEDERAL WAY

population: 88,580
% trips to work by bike: .13
average annual bike collisions: 12
bicycle crash rate: .1

KENT

population: 112,380
% trips to work by bike: .03
average annual bike collisions: 32
bicycle crash rate: .75

bicycle club
Cascade

Sources:

Bike to work mode split: American Community Survey (ACS) 2006-2008; Average annual bike collisions: Washington State Collision Data Summary (data averaged between 2006 and 2008); Bicycle crash rate: crash rate calculated as (2006-2008 annual collision average)/(2006-08 ACS * total population)



Overview

The ten largest cities in the Puget Sound region outside of Seattle were surveyed for the Puget Sound Bicycle Scorecard.* The cities represented in this scorecard comprise nearly 1 million people – over a quarter of the total population of the central Puget Sound region. Based on Census data, the average percentage of work trips taken by bicycle within the ten cities is .5 – with the highest percentage in Redmond at 1.5.

This report is intended for the general public, local bicycle advocates, city planners and policy makers. It provides baseline information regarding the progress and status of city-wide policies, plans and data collection efforts related to bicycling. The importance of the types of policies and plans reflected in this survey cannot be overstated; the top bicycling cities around the world -- notably Copenhagen, Amsterdam, and Portland -- experienced tremendous growth by establishing aggressive plans and policies that recognize bicycling as a priority.

To compile the information presented in this scorecard, Cascade Bicycle Club designed and distributed a survey to the appropriate city department in each of the ten cities. The survey questions were designed to gain insight into the distinct plans, policies and overall level of support for bicycling within each municipality. While the survey questions were general, the responses indicate areas in which cities are excelling in their level of support for bicycling as well as opportunities for improvement.

As Cascade seeks to bolster support for bicycling throughout the central Puget Sound region, this report provides valuable information and data that will help to monitor the progress of bicycle-supportive plans and policy development in the ten partner cities. It will also help inform and prioritize our advocacy efforts as an organization. We plan to update this report every two years.

We want to thank all the cities for participating in this effort. We look forward to continuing our bicycle advocacy work with each jurisdiction.

Scorecard Highlights

Kirkland received a “bike symbol” in all Scorecard categories, with Redmond, Bellevue, Tacoma and Renton following close behind

The cities that received more “bike symbols” in Scorecard categories also tended to have higher numbers of bicycle commuters and lower bicycle crash rates

More than half of the cities have adopted or are working on adopting a Complete Streets Ordinance or Resolution

Tacoma and Bellevue have the most miles of bicycle facilities planned, with 165 and 164 respectively

** In 2009, Cascade Bicycle Club produced The Report Card on Bicycling in Seattle, and therefore Seattle is not one of the ten cities included in this report.*

Report Categories

NONMOTORIZED PLANNING

Developing and adopting a comprehensive nonmotorized plan is essential for improving and expanding a city's bicycle infrastructure and ultimately encouraging more people to bicycle. It is difficult to receive funding for bicycle projects if they are not identified and prioritized in a city plan. There are specific elements within nonmotorized transportation plans that will help support implementation and funding of the plan, such as a project implementation timeline, a prioritized project list and identified funding sources. In this category, cities were asked questions pertaining to elements of their nonmotorized plan.

POLICY

Policies provide the framework to support decision making and funding of projects and plans within a city. There are many policies that can be adopted or amended to support investments in bicycling. For instance, the City of Portland, Oregon, recently adopted a policy to "create conditions to make bicycling more attractive than driving for trips of three miles or less." Ideally, these policies will be further regulated through legislation, such as an adopted "Complete Streets" ordinance. In this category, cities were asked questions regarding Complete Streets policies and bicycle parking ordinances, both of which support the inclusion of bicycle facilities in various city planning and design efforts. If cities indicated having a Complete Streets policy of some type, they were asked how it was adopted. While Complete Streets resolutions are a step in the right direction, they are not enforceable like ordinances.

SUPPORT

Having an organized bicycle advisory committee, dedicated bicycle staff, and a local bicycle advocacy group (in addition to Cascade Bicycle Club) is essential to holding the city accountable

to implementing nonmotorized plans and projects and abiding policies such as Complete Streets. Cities will often establish an advisory committee to oversee the development of a nonmotorized plan; however, these committees can serve an important role throughout the implementation of the plan as well. In this category, cities were asked about the presence of a bicycle advisory committee, dedicated bicycle staff and a local advisory group.

DATA

As bicycling and walking become more established modes of transportation and recreation, a major challenge undermining the level of support and recognition of these modes is the lack of data on usage and demand. Without quantitative data about bicycling and walking, it remains difficult to illustrate the benefits of nonmotorized investments, and thus challenging to integrate bicycle and pedestrian travel into mainstream planning and transportation modeling. In this category, cities were asked about their bicycle data collection and analysis efforts, specifically pertaining to usage and safety.



Planning

Survey Questions*



AUBURN

BELLEVUE

EVERETT

FEDERAL WAY

KENT

KIRKLAND

REDMOND

RENTON

SHORELINE

TACOMA

Nonmotorized plan

Stand-alone plan

Year adopted/
updated

Next plan update

Miles of proposed
bicycle routes

Prioritized project
list

Implementation
timeline

Dedicated funding

2009	2009	2006	1998	2008	2009	2005	2009	2005	2010
2011	2014	in process	2014	2013-15	2014	2010-11	as needed	in process	as needed
30+	164	52 routes	32	49	30	30	96.5	61	165

*Survey questions on this page pertain to each city's nonmotorized plan, which may be a stand-alone bicycle and pedestrian plan, or an element of the city's comprehensive plan.

Yes
 Working on it
 No
 4

Policy Support Data

Survey Questions



AUBURN BELLEVUE EVERETT FEDERAL WAY KENT KIRKLAND REDMOND RENTON SHORELINE TACOMA

Survey Question	AUBURN	BELLEVUE	EVERETT	FEDERAL WAY	KENT	KIRKLAND	REDMOND	RENTON	SHORELINE	TACOMA
Complete Streets										
Type of Complete Streets	—	—	Resolution	—	—	Legislation	Legislation	Legislation	—	Resolution
Bicycle parking ordinance										
Bike coordinator										
Advisory group										
Local bicycle advocacy group**										
Bicycle counts										
Bicycle collision data										

**excludes Cascade Bicycle Club

Conclusion

How do the cities stack up?*



The Puget Sound Bicycle Scorecard provides a snapshot of the ten largest cities in the central Puget Sound region (minus Seattle) and their bicycle policies, plans and other important city-wide provisions. Based on the survey responses reflected in this Scorecard, it's

clear that all surveyed cities have nonmotorized transportation plans. However, because most cities are required under the Washington State Growth Management Act to include a bicycle and pedestrian component in their comprehensive plan, this Scorecard also recognizes those cities that have taken nonmotorized planning to the next level by developing a stand-alone nonmotorized transportation plan. We were impressed by the results -- more than half of the cities have developed, or are developing, a plan devoted specifically to bicycling.

With regard to Complete Streets policies, half of the surveyed cities have an adopted ordinance or resolution relating to Complete Streets, and two other cities are working on adopting an ordinance. The survey responses also provided insight into specific elements of each city's nonmotorized plan, such as the presence of a project implementation timeline, a prioritized project list, and dedicated funding sources -- key ingredients to support strategic and efficient implementation of the plan. While some of the cities have these components in place, others do not. Cascade Bicycle Club will continue to work with cities to ensure these elements are included when the plans are updated.

*based on the number of "yes" responses to the Scorecard Survey

A few good examples:

Complete Streets Ordinance: Kirkland

excerpt: "Bicycle and pedestrian ways shall be accommodated in the planning, development and construction of transportation facilities, including the incorporation of such ways into transportation plans and programs."

Stand-alone Plan: Tacoma Mobility Plan

The City of Tacoma developed a Strategic Mobility Master Plan with the goal of developing a comprehensive network of bikeways and pedestrian walkways citywide to enhance the comfort and safety of all users, improve access to transit and to increase the non-motorized mode split within the city.

Bicycle Parking Ordinance: Renton

excerpt: Bicycle parking shall be provided for all residential developments that exceed five (5) residential units and/or all non-residential developments that exceed four thousand (4,000) gross square feet in size. One-half (0.5) bicycle parking space per one dwelling unit. The number of bicycle parking spaces shall be ten percent (10%) of the number of required off-street parking spaces.

Overall, we were impressed with the number of cities that have these types of provisions in place, and we look forward to working with each city to develop, improve and implement relevant plans and policies.

Above, we've highlighted a few good examples of the types of plans and policies that were referred to in this Scorecard. We hope this provides useful guidance for cities seeking to improve in some of these areas. We encourage the public to use this document to advocate for the types of policies, plans and programs that will allow bicycling to become a viable and attractive mode of transportation and recreation in every city.