



Adventure Cycling Association

A Bicycle Travel Friendly Town

It is great to hear about the efforts underway, across Adventure Cycling Association's 38,000 plus miles of bicycle routes and across the nation, to make towns and places better for the traveling bicyclist. When working with your local city council, businesses or tourism bureaus, below are some examples of what other communities have done to create a better experience for their visitors.

Create Safe and Interesting Routes. To attract even more cyclists, a town or region can consider the creation of safe routes in their area, as well as routes of interest. These routes should move through communities, and connect different communities since traveling cyclists tend to bike longer distances. Safer routes are off-road or have a well-shouldered, decent road surface, with good signage. Interesting routes can showcase the regions history, agriculture, natural beauty, and culture.

Food. Traveling bicyclists are looking for food, including grocery stores and restaurants. Even if your community does not have a full-blown eatery or grocery store, it is a nice service to stock some basic cycling food in other businesses, like gas stations, convenience stores, and even campgrounds. Just putting up a little sign that says "snacks available," with some energy bars, oatmeal, and trail mix is a nice gesture.

Water. Bicyclists like to fill up their water bottles when they get to towns, so even if your town does not have public water fountains, sometimes just a spigot outside a shop does the trick.

Accommodations. Bicyclists are also in need of accommodations. They like to camp or stay indoors. Many small communities along our routes have allowed bicyclists to stay at their local park (city, town, community, or county). Some even have separate tent pads with picnic tables available. Setting aside space away from lawn sprinklers is important as well. If possible, keep the restrooms open at night, especially at the height of bicycling season. Other communities have been able to set aside a room in a community center or church for cyclists to get a respite from the road.

Communications. Having a phone available for use by bicyclists is great. If you do not have a library in your community, having a computer available for traveling bicyclists to use is a great service. It allows them to keep in touch with loved ones, pay bills back at home, and stay connected with the larger world.

Hygiene. If possible, maintain public restrooms, or post where they are available for cyclists. Showers are always a big hit for bicyclists, and your local pool, community center, YWCA, or church may have some facilities that they are able to share with bicyclists. Also, bicyclists are usually traveling pretty light, so doing laundry becomes a very important task. If you do not have a laundry mat, some communities have made washers and dryers available through their local YMCA, church, community center, or store.

Bike Tools. Cyclists are often in need of some basic bike tools and supplies. These include things like tubes, spokes, oil, patch kits, etc. If you do not have a local bike shop, some communities stock a basic array of bicycle supplies in their hardware store. Make sure to let folks know about these products with a small sign in the window saying “basic bike parts available”. Having bike pumps available at local gas stations or hardware stores for bicyclists to borrow is also a great service.

Bike Storage. This includes creating a place for bicyclists to park while shopping or lodging. This can consist of a place to lock their bikes in the case of a grocery store, or of indoor storage for a hotel stay.

Welcoming signage. Many communities, including our headquarters in Missoula, put up signs on either end of town that say “bicyclists welcome” or “bicycle friendly town.” These signs are a great way to convey the fact that your town is welcoming to folks on our routes. Businesses can put up signs in their windows saying “welcome bicyclists” as well.

Become a member of Adventure Cycling Association. By local businesses or groups becoming a member of Adventure Cycling Association, you will receive 9 issues a year of *Adventure Cyclist* magazine, which is chock full of great cycling stories and advice that will help you to connect with the traveling bicyclists lifestyle. Visit <http://www.adventurecycling.org/> for more information.

Encourage residents to join the Warm Showers List. The Warm Showers List is a directory of people across the world that offer their hospitality towards touring cyclists. The extent of the hospitality depends on the host and may range from simply a spot to pitch a tent to meals, a warm (hot!) shower, and a bed. Visit <http://www.warmshowers.org/> for more information.

Use Your Local Library. ACA maps list libraries in the towns that the route goes through. Many libraries only allow their members’ access to the Internet, which makes life on the road much harder for cyclists wanting to check email and keep in touch with family, friends, and work. Check your local library for their rules on internet usage. If access is limited encourage your library to allow traveling cyclists to use their computers as a guest.

Tell the traveling cyclists about the resources your town provides. You can do this on your partner’s websites and through materials distributed at key venues. At Adventure Cycling Association, we provide a pamphlet to cyclists that have a map of town and basic resources. Check out our example at <http://www.adventurecycling.org/ac/assets/visitormap.pdf> and <http://www.adventurecycling.org/ac/assets/visitormaptext.pdf>.

Tell everyone about it. Couple a good route with good resources such as those found in the list above, and then your community is ready to develop a marketing plan for your efforts. The more allies and partners that you have in this effort, the more people you will have on board to help you get the word out. These allies can be folks from local businesses including restaurants, hotels, historical sites, etc. as well as tourism bureaus, downtown associations, government, etc. Once you’ve got your marketing team together, you’ll want to design your media/marketing plan. Do your best to get

information about your local bicycle route and bicycle-travel friendly community onto the websites and outreach materials of all of your partners. You also might want to do an event where you celebrate bicycle travel – this could be by leading an actual tour on the route, or having a ribbon cutting ceremony. Make sure to invite the media, and to keep them in the loop wherever possible. Mention the economic and health impacts of bicycle travel for the participants and community. And make sure to track any impact you can from year to year.

Contact the experts. Feel free to contact Adventure Cycling Association again with any questions. In addition, there may be other valuable resources in your state, including:

- **The Department of Transportation's Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator:** <http://www.walkinginfo.org/assistance/contacts.cfm>
- **Tourism Bureaus**
- **Bicycle Clubs** - See *The Cyclists' Yellow Pages*: <http://www.adventurecycling.org/cyp/index.cfm>
- **Bicycle Non-Profits.** See the Thunderhead Alliance: <http://www.thunderheadalliance.org/site/index.php/site/about/C407>.
- **The League of American Bicyclists** has a great program called Bicycle Friendly Communities: <http://www.bikeleague.org/programs/communities/>.

Other articles and sources for bicycle tourism information:

- **Does It Pay to Get Stoked About Spokes?**
<http://www.wickedlocal.com/mpnnow/towns/brockport/x914619638>
- **Build it and they will come**
<http://www.bikingbis.com/blog/archives/2007/10/29/3283156.html>
- **Pennsylvania's Pine Creek Trail Survey**
http://www.railstotrails.org/resources/documents/resource_docs/RTC_PineCreekGuide_web.pdf

We hope this list is a good starting off point for you, and thanks for making your town a friendly place to visit for traveling bicyclists.

For more information on bicycle travel, visit www.adventurecycling.org.