

BETTER POLICIES FOR BETTER BICYCLING FLORIDA BICYCLE EARNS ADVOCACY WINS

A recently enacted law supported by the Florida Bicycle Association will vastly expand the state’s network of non-motorized trails. The fight continues for other policy victories, including stronger enforcement of speed limits in school zones, and more.



comfortable and welcoming for all people. Several recent policy initiatives are gaining traction.

Perhaps most notably, Florida Bicycle organized grassroots advocacy in early 2023 for legislation that will vastly expand the state’s network of non-motorized trails. Through Senate Bill 106—which was signed into law in April—funding for the Sun Trail program will double to \$50 million annually and include a one-time appropriation of \$200 million to accelerate trail construction.

“We strongly supported this legislation, and will continue calling for efforts to fill in gaps in existing trails and to create new connections to—and within—population centers,” said Eric Draper, president of the board of directors for Florida Bicycle. “This way, more people can access the trails and safely use them for transportation.”

The association also supports a proposed state law that would strengthen enforcement of vehicle speed limits in school zones (Senate Bill 588), as well as federal laws and rules that would:

- make it easier for states to build safe bicycling and pedestrian infrastructure by allowing

them to use federal safety money as local matching funds.

- require that “vulnerable users” such as people on bicycles are included in research into the safety benefits of truck side-guards that prevent people from being swept under large trucks and trailers.
- make e-bikes eligible for tax incentives similar to those already provided for electric cars.
- track greenhouse gas emissions from “surface” transportation such as trucks and cars, so the benefits of bicycling and other active forms of transportation can be more accurately quantified.

Florida Bicycle also is working to improve infrastructure, including better bike lanes, more protected bike paths, and safer intersections, by providing direct, technical assistance to communities and individuals who want better conditions at specific trouble spots. (See page 4.) The association also provides education and training, conducts outreach through extensive social media initiatives and a speakers’ bureau, and provides free resources online at www.floridabicycle.org.

Some of the most important work of the Florida Bicycle Association is to advocate for better policies and infrastructure to support people who want—or need—to bicycle in the Sunshine State.

In recent years, Florida has earned a reputation as one of the most dangerous states in the nation for people on bicycles. In 2021 alone, more than 180 people were killed while bicycling in Florida.

But Florida Bicycle is working hard to change that, and to make bicycling more accessible,

Read Florida Bicycle’s position papers and learn how to take action at floridabicycle.org/advocacy.

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The Florida Bicycle Association is a 501c3 non-profit, membership-based organization that mobilizes volunteers and partners to make Florida better for people who want to bicycle and for people who need to bicycle. Florida Bicycle is led by a forward-looking team that is committed to the vision of Florida as a place where bicycling is safe, accepted, and encouraged. Learn more at floridabicycle.org.

Florida Bicycle Association
P.O. Box 770668, Winter Garden, FL 34777
Phone: (407) 734-1690

Although the Florida Bicycle Association's newsletter has undergone a makeover and has a new look and format, the Messenger will continue to provide the meaningful content that readers have come to expect. The Messenger will now be published three times per year, and will be supplemented with an annual report sharing highlights from the year. For more frequent updates, subscribe to the monthly e-newsletter at floridabicycle.org/news and follow @floridabicycle on Facebook and Instagram. Content is also available on Twitter and YouTube.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

JOIN THE MOVEMENT AS A LEADER HELP SHAPE THE FUTURE OF BICYCLING IN FLORIDA

BY ERIC DRAPER, PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

I am calling on members of our community to step forward and join us.



In a previous professional role, I was fond of saying that we all walk in the footsteps of others. As director of the Florida Park Service, I pointed out that every trail was blazed and every vista discovered by someone who came before us; the very best places were protected because someone said, "This will make a great park."

I'm looking for a metaphor for bicycling that similarly credits earlier efforts. As we work for safer streets and bike lanes, we are building on the efforts of those in Florida who first declared that, "Bicycles belong." As we push for shared-use paths and policies that support people going places by active modes of transportation, we know the foundations were laid by others.

With paths forged before us, the Florida Bicycle Association is moving into the next phase of our organization's growth and development, and we need help. I urge you this month—National Bike Month—to become a volunteer, or step up to join the board of directors, or make a donation, or all three.

We have made great strides in advocating for investments in bicycling infrastructure and stronger laws to protect bicyclists, promoting

bicycling as a transportation option, teaching safe practices to drivers, bicyclists, law enforcement and elected leaders, and directly assisting communities in making changes to be more bikeable. However, as recent safety data demonstrates, we need to go even further.

Become Part of Our Team

I am calling on members of our community to step forward and join us. In addition to volunteers and funding for expanding programs, we are seeking passionate and dedicated individuals to serve on our board of directors. Ideal board members embrace the priorities we've laid out for the year to come. (Read about those priorities in this *Messenger*.) Whether you are an experienced cyclist, an advocate for sustainable transportation, or simply someone who cares deeply about the future of our state, we invite you to connect with us about becoming part of our team.

Our board members play a crucial role in setting the strategic direction of Florida Bicycle and ensuring that our organization remains focused on its mission. We are seeking individuals who possess strong leadership skills and a commitment to our shared values of health, the environment, equity and the economy.

I think the best thing about bicycling is camaraderie. My fellow board members at Florida Bicycle are just like the people I enjoy

riding with: sharing the work and encouraging others to the end. They're the kind of people you want around you.

Some Things are Really Special

Recently, I rode in the Havana Hills Spring Classic. The steep climbs made the ride more challenging than expected. Fortunately, as happens in so many cycling events, I made a friend along the way, a fairly new and quite capable cyclist from Savannah, Ga. We shared the work in the constant wind and cheered each other up the hills.

More examples of bicycling camaraderie abound: Winter Haven's Slow Roll and other events have given me the opportunity to appreciate the efforts of local clubs, communities and shops.

The willingness of people to come together is what makes some things really special. If you are interested in serving on our board or know someone who would make a great addition to our team, please reach out to us at floridabicycle.org/getinvolved or by connecting with a current board member you already know.

Together, we can build upon the work already done and make a real difference in helping bicycling to become a safe, healthy, and sustainable mode of transportation in Florida. Thank you for your support of the movement, the mission, and the organization.

Gold
Transparency
2023

Candid.

Florida Bicycle Earns Transparency Badge

The Florida Bicycle Association recently earned a Gold Seal of Transparency from Candid, an achievement that demonstrates the organization's commitment to build trust and confidence in the work it does.

The seal connects Florida Bicycle to GuideStar, a popular resource among donors and foundations that verifies non-profit organizations' accomplishments, finances, and leadership information. Learn more about Guidestar and how Florida Bicycle is pursuing its mission, by clicking the Gold Seal at the bottom of the page at floridabicycle.org.

FATALITY DATA: A SOMBER REMINDER TO WORK WITH URGENCY

BY KELLY MORPHY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Florida's bicyclist death rate underscores the urgency of our mission.



I would like to begin by acknowledging the tremendous efforts that our organization and many partner organizations have made in the past several years to combat bicycling fatalities in Florida.

Despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, hurricanes, and more, we have remained steadfast in our commitment to making Florida safer for people on bikes, and I am proud of the progress that we have made.

The recently released National Highway Traffic Safety Administration data on bicycle fatalities is a sobering reminder, however, of the work that still needs to be done. While the report indicates a decrease in overall traffic fatalities nationally, there was a 5.3% increase in bicyclist fatalities from 2020 to 2021—the most recent year for which complete data is available. Even more disheartening: Florida ranks the worst,

with a per capita death rate of 7.6 bicyclists killed per one million people.

This is unacceptable, and it underscores the urgency of our mission.

I want to assure you that the Florida Bicycle Association is working harder than ever to address this issue. We are intensifying our efforts to collaborate with local and state authorities to improve infrastructure, increase education and awareness, and promote safer practices for people driving, biking, walking and rolling. Many of those efforts are highlighted throughout this *Messenger*, as well as on our website and social media accounts. We will not become complacent.

There are several ways you can become directly involved, as well.

1. Sign up to be a member *and* to volunteer. See other parts of this *Messenger* for why and how to become a member—if you aren't already—during our Spring Membership Drive. Then, attend an informational session (or watch the recording) to learn about volunteer opportunities, how your participation directly impacts

the organization's mission, and basic information on how to be an effective ambassador for the bicycling movement. (See page 5.)

2. Contact your elected leaders at the local, state and federal levels to urge their support of policies that improve conditions for people who *want* to bicycle and for people who *need* to bicycle in Florida. (See other parts of this *Messenger* and our website to learn about our policy positions and how to take action.)
3. Utilize the free help we offer through our Community Assistance program, including bicycle-infrastructure assistance, to change conditions at specific locations. Ask us about the issues you encounter while bicycling, and we will research what's feasible, and help you ask the appropriate agency for a solution.

Above all, I encourage all of you to continue to support our mission by promoting safe practices, advocating for safer infrastructure, and being vigilant on the road. With all of our contributions and collaboration, we can make Florida a safer place for all cyclists. We simply must.

UPDATED PRIORITIES ARE GUIDING FLORIDA BICYCLE'S WORK IN 2023

The Florida Bicycle Association's board of directors adopted updated priorities to guide the organization's work in 2023.

The new priorities, adopted in late 2022, set attainable goals to build revenue, increase staff capacity, leverage volunteer networks, and broaden Florida Bicycle's impact on bicycling accessibility and safety. Outcomes thus far are shared throughout this *Messenger* and will be included in future communications.

Build Organizational Capacity

- Increase and diversify income to secure finances, add staff/consultants, carry out programs, and deepen the association's impact.
- Reset goals for membership development and implement a membership growth program.

Spread the Word

- Improve external communications by developing tools and channels to reach an expanded set of target audiences and by sharing compelling messages that convey the association's value proposition and increase goodwill toward the organization.
- Define, promote, and deliver educational and training programs.

Harness the Power of the Network

- Engage, train, organize, and maximize the power of volunteers, the board, and advisors in the organization's educational and training programs and policy agenda.
- Affiliate with successful organizations whose missions complement ours; strengthen our brand through associations that link our successes.
- Articulate a policy agenda and collaborate with partners to secure bike-friendly policies, funding, and infrastructure.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

HELP PROMOTE BETTER BICYCLING BECOME A VOLUNTEER WITH FLORIDA BICYCLE

Volunteering with the Florida Bicycle Association is a rewarding experience, as you will be able to make a positive impact in your community and meet like-minded individuals who share your passion for bicycling and making Florida more bike-friendly. As a volunteer, you will have the opportunity to participate in a variety of activities, such as community outreach events, group rides, and advocacy campaigns.

A virtual training event in early May will provide prospective volunteers with information about Florida Bicycle, the events for which volunteers are needed, and basic information on how to be an effective ambassador for the bicycling movement.



Register for online volunteer training at floridabicycle.org/getinvolved. Even if you can't attend the live session, sign up online for access to the recording.

Volunteer Kati Jones is seen here helping Florida Bicycle Association staff to properly fit helmets for children at a safety fair in Largo. Florida Bicycle is actively recruiting volunteers to help with upcoming events and outreach activities across the state.

KEY VOLUNTEER RECEIVES ADVOCACY AWARD FOR ADVANCING SAFE INFRASTRUCTURE



Ed Barsotti, the volunteer director of bicycle-infrastructure assistance for the Florida Bicycle Association, received an advocacy award in April from Bike Walk Indian River County. The award recognized Barsotti's dedication and tireless efforts in promoting safe infrastructure for bicycle riders in Indian River County.

Barsotti is the former executive director of Ride Illinois and snowbirds with his wife Laurie in Florida. He is an avid bicyclist—having cleared 100,000 lifetime cycling miles back in 2015—and volunteers part-time with Florida Bicycle, where he helps community advocates to request (and government agencies to implement) better bicycling conditions at specific problem locations.

The award recognized several of Barsotti's efforts, including his advocacy for motorist-directed signage about Florida's three-foot-passing law, better bike lane accommodations on upcoming road projects, his advocacy of rumble strip designs that are safer for bicyclists, and the Florida Bike Safety Quiz.

"I know from personal experience how valuable your counsel has been to me and countless others," said Danny Jaye, a board member for Bike Walk Indian River County, in announcing the award to Barsotti.

The award was presented at the county's Metropolitan Planning Organization meeting in Vero Beach on April 12. In the photo, provided courtesy of Barry Barker, Jaye (left) presented the award to Barsotti (right.)

FREE INFRASTRUCTURE ASSISTANCE IMPROVES CYCLING CONDITIONS

Program is available to community advocates who need help.

Florida Bicycle Association offers “Bicycle Infrastructure Assistance” to help community advocates improve conditions at specific locations. The assistance also is available to government agencies.

Led by Ed Barsotti, an award-winning statewide advocate and the former executive director of Bike Illinois who now volunteers his time to improve conditions in Florida, the assistance program is part of Florida Bicycle’s ongoing help desk, which assists dozens of communities and constituents each year.

To get assistance evaluating and adopting bike-friendly infrastructure and policies, a constituent can submit a simple form online at floridabicycle.org/assistance.

The Florida Bicycle team investigates what can be done to improve the situation and provides assistance in requesting a solution from the appropriate agency.

“If there is an upcoming road project in your problem area, we can even ask the road agency to add specific features to the design,” Barsotti said. “If not, we can determine if lower-cost retrofits are achievable and can make a difference in the interim.”

The team’s approach is pragmatic and takes into account Florida Department of Transportation standards, national best practices, and jurisdictional complexities.

Projects already addressed through the program span a wide range of improvements, such as adding new motorist-directed signage in Vero Beach, restoring a removed bike lane in Lakewood Ranch, improving a trail crossing in Wakulla County, selecting good streets and treatments for bike routes in DeLand, and improving safety where a bridge’s bike lane tapers to an end in Daytona Beach.



When completing the form requesting assistance, constituents are asked to provide detailed information so that the assistance team’s research and response can be as quick and productive as possible.

In addition to bike-infrastructure assistance, the Florida Bicycle help desk also answers questions about traffic laws, where to ride, group-cycling best practices, and where to find other resources.

Photo courtesy of Visit Central Florida

RIDE LIKE MADD IN MAY TO HELP END IMPAIRED DRIVING FLORIDA BICYCLE MEMBERS RECEIVE \$5 DISCOUNT FOR VIRTUAL EVENT

To address the danger that impaired drivers pose to people on bicycles, the Florida Bicycle Association is supporting the second annual Ride Like MADD Tour de Florida challenge, and members of Florida Bicycle can register for the event at a discounted rate. Organized by Mothers Against Drunk Driving, the challenge is a statewide virtual event that raises money to end impaired driving and create a Florida of #NoMoreVictims. Florida Bicycle members receive a discounted registration fee of \$40 to enter the challenge, which begins May 1. (Discount code: FBA.) The challenge has two components: the Ride Like MADD portion, which is 39 miles of riding, and the Tour de Florida portion, which can be 100 miles, 247 miles, or 500 miles. Why those distances? Visit madd.org/r1mf1 to learn about the statistics behind the distances, and to sign up for the challenge. Funds raised will stay local and will be used to expand MADD’s teen outreach prevention programs, support law enforcement in their efforts to eliminate impaired driving and provide support to victims.

Mileage Prizes

- 39 Miles
- 100 Miles
- 247 Miles
- 500 Miles
- 0 Miles when you fundraise \$250

RUMBLE STRIPS GET A REDESIGN TO HELP BICYCLISTS, REDUCE NOISE

Bicycling advocacy group and state agency align to make design better.

Paved roadway shoulders can provide a good alternative for bicyclists to ride, separated from the dangers of vehicular traffic. However, many roadway shoulders are dangerous for bicyclists due to a feature that's actually intended to keep everyone safe: rumble strips.

Most drivers are familiar with the traditional rumble strips that often line the edge of a roadway. When run over by a car wheel, the rumble strips create a noise and vibration inside the car that are hard to ignore, thereby alerting the driver they are drifting off the road.

The conventional design of rumble strips consists of grooves or lines that are perpendicular to the direction of travel. When people on bicycles ride on the shoulder, they often are forced to cross over the rumble strips, which can not only cause discomfort, but also loss of balance and even crashes.

To address this problem, the Florida Bicycle Association and Florida Department of Transportation worked together to evaluate and adopt a better design for rumble strips on certain paved roadway shoulders that will make them safer for people on bikes to navigate. Called "sinusoidal" rumble strips, the new design is now being incorporated into FDOT's roadway standards that guide transportation infrastructure design across the state. The sinusoidal design also creates less noise outside the vehicle.

The changes were driven in part by research conducted by FDOT going back more than five years. Florida Bicycle encouraged the research and became involved in testing and advocating for the newer design. Cyclists from both organizations rode in locations where the new rumble strip design had been installed, and found the newer design preferable.

Sometimes, people on bicycles need to ride across rumble strips on paved highway shoulders. A traditional rumble strip (left) can cause bicyclists to lose their balance and crash. Sinusoidal rumble strips, recently adopted as a design standard by the Florida Dept. of Transportation and shown as installed on SR 100 in Putnam County (right), are safer for people on bikes, and help reduce noise..

"Overall, the implementation of sinusoidal rumble strips is a promising solution to improve safety for bicyclists on paved roadway shoulders," said Ed Barsotti, volunteer director of Bicycle Infrastructure Assistance for Florida Bicycle. "We applaud FDOT's design change, as it will provide a smoother and safer ride for bicyclists while still alerting drivers of the road's edge. We encourage all transportation agencies to consider this new design when implementing rumble strips on their roadways."

Barsotti noted that Florida Bicycle would like to go even further with updating roadway design standards. The organization will look for opportunities to:

- encourage replacing traditional rumble strips with the new design on local roads.
- evaluate "two-inch, transverse tapering" for the new design, as doing so will even further reduce the risk of bicyclists falling, especially for faster cyclists on narrow tires.
- conduct added testing to confirm the effectiveness of tapered sinusoidal rumble strips where posted speed limits are lower than 50 mph.
- require routine sweeping maintenance of paved roadway shoulders to prevent the collection of debris.

"It is to everyone's benefit that our advocacy organization and the state transportation department have a good working relationship," said Kelly Morphy, executive director of Florida Bicycle. "With that as the backdrop, there is much that we can achieve."



TRADITIONAL VS. SINUSOIDAL RUMBLE STRIPS

Traditional or cylindrical rumble strips consist of evenly spaced, parallel grooves or ridges cut into the pavement. They are typically placed perpendicular to the direction of travel, creating a bumpy vibration and noise when a vehicle crosses over them. They can cause instability and crashes for people on bicycles.

Sinusoidal rumble strips, on the other hand, are designed with a wavy or undulating pattern, consisting of a series of rounded shapes with gradually varying heights and spacing. This type of rumble strip is intended to produce a more subtle and less jarring vibration and noise when a vehicle passes over it, while still providing an effective warning to drivers.

Compared to traditional strips, sinusoidal strips can be beneficial in areas with noise-sensitive populations. They also provide a smoother ride for bicyclists and motorcyclists, reducing the risk of crashes due to instability.

Sinusoidal rumble strips have been tested in various locations, including California, Minnesota, Washington, and now, also in Florida. In all cases, the results have been positive.



E-BIKE ACT MAKES A COMEBACK IN CONGRESS

In the Florida Bicycle's Association Autumn 2022 edition of the *Messenger*, we lamented that the Inflation Reduction Act had left out e-bikes. Now, climate leaders have reintroduced the E-BIKE Act in Congress, renewing the possibility of a federal tax credit for electric bicycles. The excerpt below, taken from a PeopleForBikes article, expresses why Florida Bicycle and other statewide bicycle advocacy organizations across the country are supporting adoption of the E-BIKE Act.

BY NOA BANAYAN, DIRECTOR OF FEDERAL AFFAIRS AT PEOPLEFORBIKES, PEOPLEFORBIKES.ORG



offer individual consumers a refundable 30% tax credit for purchasing an electric bicycle—up to a \$1,500 credit for new bicycles less than \$8,000. The credit would be allowed once per individual every three years, or twice for a joint-return couple buying two electric bicycles. New to this version is this addition of income caps that parallel the electric vehicle tax credit caps: an annual salary of \$150K for single filers, \$225K for heads of households, and \$300K for those filing jointly.

“Incentivizing electric bicycles makes them a competitive transportation option for more Americans and supports a national effort to lower carbon emissions,” said PeopleForBikes CEO Jenn Dice. “The E-BIKE Act rightfully positions electric bicycles as a critical part of a larger solution to climate change and equitable mobility. We’re grateful to our climate leaders in Congress leading the charge on e-bikes.”

The bill also mandates a report from the IRS after two years to understand the distribution of the credit by income tax bracket and adjust for equity in the future.

An electric bicycle tax credit was included in

the House-approved Build Back Better Act in 2021, but unfortunately, this provision did not make the cut in negotiations as that package evolved into the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), now law. The IRA is the largest climate policy package in American history, but to quickly and effectively take action on reducing emissions, Congress must consider the E-BIKE Act as an essential and complementary policy.

When forward-thinking climate leaders in Congress first introduced the E-BIKE Act in 2021, it was one of few proposed electric bicycle incentives in the U.S. Since its inception federally, cities and states across the nation have moved where Congress stalled by proposing, approving, and implementing a wide array of creative and effective e-bike programs inspired by the E-BIKE Act.

Electric bicycles keep people moving with efficiency and ease, no matter their age or physical abilities, while also displacing trips by car. Studies show that across the United States, we can expect an 11% decrease in carbon emissions with a 15% increase in electric bicycle mode share. In Denver, a successful and popular e-bike voucher program led to 71% of recipients using their cars less after purchasing an e-bike, with 90% riding weekly. An all-in approach to reducing carbon emissions must recognize the power electric bicycles have to take cars off the road while keeping people moving, active, and connected to their communities.

PeopleForBikes applauds the reintroduction of federal legislation to create an electric bicycle tax credit, helping more people easily access the many benefits of electric bicycles. The [act] prioritizes electric bicycles as a zero-carbon mode of transportation by making them more affordable and accessible for all Americans.

Though [lawmakers] first introduced the E-BIKE Act in 2021, the latest version looks largely similar. If signed into law, the E-BIKE Act would

Florida residents can support the E-BIKE Act by linking to the PeopleForBikes support page via floridabicycle.org/advocacy.

FLORIDA BICYCLE'S POSITION ON E-BIKES

The Florida Bicycle Association supports the lawful use of legal e-bikes that comply with applicable regulations, including state statutes (see box to the right) and local speed limits.

E-bikes represent an advancement in transportation technology that can help connect more people with the places they need to go using a sustainable form of transportation. Furthermore, e-bikes can extend the age and range of bicyclists throughout Florida, providing greater access to transportation options for people of all ages and abilities. However, where concerns exist about e-bikes making nonmotorized trails uncomfortable or unsafe for other users, they must be addressed.

One of the key reasons Florida Bicycle supports e-bikes is because they advance transportation equity. E-bikes allow people who may not be able to ride a traditional bike due to physical limitations or other factors to still maximize the benefits of bicycling, such as getting to their job without a car. This can be particularly important in communities where access to transportation options is limited or where transportation costs are high. By making it easier for more people to get around using a sustainable form of transportation, e-bikes can help create a more equitable and accessible transportation system. Creative financial solutions, like the City of Tampa's e-bike voucher program (see below) and bike shops offering low-cost financing options, can help make e-bikes more affordable and accessible, too.

In addition to advancing transportation equity, e-bikes also have the potential to make bicycling safer for everyone by increasing the number of people riding bikes, leading to greater visibility and awareness among people driving cars.

Furthermore, e-bikes allow people to ride at a pace that is comfortable for them, which can help reduce the risk of fatigue-related accidents. Of course, it is vital for all bicyclists to gain bike-handling skills. Using an e-bike may require added training, as it may travel faster than a novice bicyclist can handle, and an e-bike is heavier than a traditional bike.

Many concerns about e-bike users traveling at dangerous speeds or making non-motorized trails uncomfortable for other users are well-founded and must be addressed. Florida Bicycle encourages all e-bike users to follow the same rules and regulations as traditional bicyclists, including obeying speed limits and yielding to pedestrians. It is important to remember that e-bikes are still considered bicycles under Florida law and are subject to the same rules of the road as non-motorized bicycles. The association also urges enforcement of safe speed limits and practices by state and local agencies.

E-bikes have the potential to make our communities more equitable, sustainable, and healthy. By addressing concerns about speed and safety, we can create a future where e-bikes are a safe and accessible transportation option for everyone.

TAMPA LAUNCHES INNOVATIVE E-BIKE VOUCHER PROGRAM

The City of Tampa recently launched an innovative e-bike voucher program aimed at promoting sustainable transportation, providing connections to jobs, and reducing traffic congestion. The program provides residents vouchers to purchase e-bikes from participating local bike shops.

The vouchers range in value from \$500 to \$2,000 based on the voucher type and the applicant's income qualifications. The program launched in February, more than 900 people applied for vouchers, and the application

window closed in April.

E-bikes, when operated lawfully, are an eco-friendly alternative to traditional bicycles, as they use an electric motor to assist with pedaling, making it easier for riders to navigate hills and travel longer distances. They also emit less pollution than cars, making them an ideal option for short trips around the city.

The Tampa e-bike voucher program has been well-received by residents. The program also has garnered attention from other cities across the country, with many considering

WHAT IS AN E-BIKE AND WHERE CAN IT BE USED?

In Florida, there are three classes of electric bicycles. Class 1 e-bikes are equipped with a motor that provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling, and the motor stops when the bike reaches 20 miles per hour. Class 2 e-bikes are equipped with a motor that can be used to propel the bike without pedaling, but the motor stops when the bike reaches 20 miles per hour. Class 3 e-bikes are equipped with a motor that provides assistance only when the rider is pedaling, and the motor stops when the bike reaches 28 miles per hour. A city, town or state agency that has jurisdiction can restrict where e-bikes are allowed.

As for electric mountain bicycles, or eMTB, access to federal, state, county and local trails can vary significantly. When in doubt, check for local rules and regulations.

It's important for all e-bike riders to understand the differences between the classes of e-bikes and to follow the rules and regulations that apply to their particular e-bike.

Florida Bicycle encourages Floridians to view legal e-bikes operated lawfully as a safe, healthy, and sustainable transportation option, while also urging e-bike users to follow rules of the road and agencies to enforce safe practices.

implementing similar initiatives to promote sustainable transportation.

City staff and a local bike shop owner delivered a presentation about the program during the National Bike Summit in March.

"This program will not only help overcome some of the existing barriers to e-bike ownership, but will also provide access to reliable transportation to jobs, promote sustainable transportation, and improve the City's carbon footprint," according to the program website.



MAKE THE RIGHT TURN: BECOME A SAFETY ADVOCATE IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

BY KAREN "SMOKE" SMOCZYNSKI

There are many ways cyclists can become engaged and promote our sport or preferred form of transportation.

When I got back into cycling six years ago, the first time I turned onto a heavily traveled road with a vehicular speed limit of 55 mph, I almost turned back into the safe confines of my community.

When I got home later, I did some online research using the keywords 'bike safety instruction' and discovered Cycling Savvy and the Florida Bicycle Association, which provided me with educational resources. The more I learned, the more I realized we can't ever stop learning—and teaching—bike safety. Sometimes it's as easy as modeling good behavior, or saying a friendly "thank you."

In my community, there are only a few year-round sport cyclists, but many people bicycle for basic transportation. Too many dart across traffic lanes if they think they can make it. Unfortunately, our fatality rates for vulnerable road users are high.

Now, when I see cyclists riding against the flow of traffic, I flag them down if it's safe to do so, and offer them tips. I also created a Facebook page

for others as a resource where I post bike safety information, and made cards to hand out to cyclists that share a concise summary of safe cycling tips. Today in my small town, when I see someone coming toward me in my lane, they usually move over to their right; I call out "thank you" and give them a thumbs-up.

Educating people about driving is more of a challenge. Many do not believe people should be using bicycles on the roads. Many don't know they're required by law to give three feet of clearance when they pass people on bicycles. The tools I use are eye contact and hand signals.

I wanted to test a theory that if I modeled best practices, drivers would see me and understand why they must give me space. I ride defensively, ITL (in the lane.) When there is no oncoming traffic, this forces drivers who want to pass me to move over to the adjacent lane. I watch my rear-view mirrors. If they don't move over, then I prepare to move right, just in case. When it is unsafe for a motorist to pass me, I extend my left arm, wave up and down, palm facing back. When I feel they can safely pass, I do a WAG signal (when alright give): I move right, releasing them to pass.

Teachable moments continue throughout my journey. When I signal I'm turning left and a driver slows down, I move to the left side of the lane and prepare to make my turn, releasing the driver to continue past on my right. At intersections, signaling my intention to turn provides a release to drivers who aren't intersecting my line of travel. After I signal, drivers often will use their turn signal to let me know what they are doing; this is helpful communication.

When cyclists and pedestrians interact, it is brief, but we usually can hear each other, so voices are helpful. It is best to start with something positive and then request better behavior. For example: "Great bright shirt; you sure are visible. To help us all, try wearing only one earbud so you hear what is going on around us." Everyone should get a greeting.

(continued on next page)

"Here is a photo of me rolling out the back gate from my community, taken by my friend George Chase. I just have to load my little cooler in the morning. It looks like quite a load, but Gypsy 2 is only 51 cm. I am doing the Ride Like MADD Florida challenge and have already qualified for my free jersey." - Karen "Smoke" Smoczynski on April 11, 2023

On the right, Tony Walker leads the 10-mile group on his double-decker bicycle during the annual Ride for Tiny Town in Arcadia in February. Photo by Jamie Pipher.

Karen "Smoke" Smoczynski organizes the annual Ride for Tiny Town in Arcadia to raise money for services for people experiencing homelessness in DeSoto County. Karen embarked in early April on a cross-country bicycling trip. Follow her journey at www.CrazyGuyOnABike.com by searching for "Plot2Plod."



“SLOW ROLL” TO CELEBRATE WINTER HAVEN BECOMING A TRAIL TOWN



Photo left to right: Stew Mackie, Bike Shop of Winter Haven owner; Chris Sexson, Destroyer Media; Samantha Browne, Office of Greenways and Trails Bureau Chief; Andy Palmer, Parks Planning & Strategic Initiatives Manager; Winter Haven Mayor Brad Dantzler; Katherine Bernier, Office of Greenways and Trails; and Eric Draper, Florida Bicycle Association.

Mayor Brad Dantzler had much to brag about when he told more than 40 cyclists assembled in February about his morning downtown. His point stuck: Winter Haven is the kind of place you can walk or ride to work, shop, or eat, and that's why the cyclists were there that morning to celebrate: Winter Haven was the newest Florida city to be designated a Trail Town.

That honor makes a place best known for its necklace of lakes, a destination for cyclists and walkers. As Winter Haven develops its shared use trails and bike lanes, residents and visitors safely and efficiently navigate around the beautiful waterways.

The city is close to making final connections to Lake Alfred, Polk City and the Van

Fleet State Trail, which is what the Trail Town idea is all about. The Florida Greenways and Trails Council certifies Trail Towns as a way to promote trails within and between urban areas.

To celebrate Winter Haven being named a Trail Town, people gathered at the local bicycle shop, “The Bicycle Shop.” After being welcomed by the mayor and city's trails champion Andy Palmer and greeted by DEP's Office of Greenways and Trails Samantha Browne, the large group rolled around town.

The group ended up at beautiful Lake Silver, with its redeveloped lakeside park. There they joined 1,000 people to watch a water ski show put on by a local club - every bit as entertaining as nearby Cypress Gardens.

Riding safely from one part of town to another to enjoy a show, underscored Winter Haven as one of Florida's best bicycle destinations.

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To become even more involved and see if I could get some improvements to an existing multi-use path, I began attending our county's Community Traffic Safety Team meetings. These meetings bring together the Florida Department of Transportation, law enforcement, local government, road departments, and the public to address concerns about our roadways. I've learned about planning groups, programs such as Safe Routes to Schools, FDOT's efforts to make our roads safer for all users, and more.

When an opportunity to take a helmet-fitting course came up, I enthusiastically participated. I followed up with Florida Bicycle's Ride Leader/Ride Marshal certification. I also prompted our mayor to take the Florida Bicycle Safety Quiz and asked the city to issue a proclamation for Florida Bicycle Month.

There are many ways cyclists can become engaged and promote our sport or preferred form of transportation.

When cyclists consistently demonstrate best practices on the road, motorists learn what we expect from them and what they can expect from us. Being a model for safe cycling in your community is as easy as following safe cycling practices. Chances are you already influence drivers in your area. Give them a friendly wave as they move to the opposite lane to pass, and look for other teachable moments as you bike.

RIDE LEADER CLASSES RESUMING

Members receive a \$10 discount on popular Ride Leader/Ride Marshal training.

The flagship of the Florida Bicycle Association's educational program, the Ride Leader/Ride Marshal class, is relaunching this year. Two options will be offered: in-person and virtual. Although dates aren't yet confirmed, the in-person classes are planned for Boca Raton in the late Spring and Orlando in the late Summer or early Fall. The online classes will be offered mid-Summer and late Fall.

The course is appropriate for everyone from event organizers to club cyclists to community and recreational riders. The four-hour curriculum addresses safety, laws, proper prep, helmet fitting, riding etiquette, rider-down protocols, pace line communications, and

controlling speed. Students at the in-person classes have the option to also participate in a 45-minute practical module on bike-handling and crowd management.

To sign up, complete and submit the form at floridabicycle.org/classes to receive a notice when dates are confirmed and registration is open.

The class fee for members of Florida Bicycle is \$40; for non-members, the fee is \$50. The add-on practical module is \$10 and capped at 20 students.

**Not a member? Join at
floridabicycle.org/getinvolved.**

“GIFT” A MEMBERSHIP TO FRIENDS, FAMILY, CYCLING BUDDIES

Spring membership drive aims to grow the collective voice for cycling advocacy in Florida.

The Florida Bicycle Association launched a membership drive on May 1 in conjunction with National Bike Month. Current members are urged to share their support for a bike-friendly Florida by “gifting” a membership to family, friends or cycling buddies who also benefit from a safer Sunshine State.

For the months of May and June, anyone who donates \$45 or more to Florida Bicycle will be able to give a one-year Supporter Membership (normally \$50) to a special person in their life. The gift membership can be used for a birthday, graduation, new-bike day, anniversary, or ‘just because.’

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

The single most important benefit of membership in the Florida Bicycle Association is contributing to a collective voice that advocates and educates in support of bike-friendly infrastructure, policies and practices across Florida.

Additionally, members enjoy:

- a 10% discount at Florida Bicycle’s kit store.
- a 20% discount on safety products at Road ID.
- \$10 off Ride Leader/Ride Marshal classes offered by Florida Bicycle.
- \$5 off the Ride Like MADD Florida challenge.
- similar discounts on various events, merchandise, and services throughout the year.

Join or learn more at www.floridabicycle.org/getinvolved.

“Members are the backbone of our organization,” said Kelly Morphy, executive director for Florida Bicycle. “We know that many of our current members have loved ones who share their passion for bicycling and bike-ability. By giving the gift of membership, they are helping to expand the impact of our mission-driven work.”

Membership offers several benefits, including exclusive access to educational resources, discounts on gear, classes and events, and a sense of community with like-minded individuals. Most importantly, though, members contribute to a collective voice that influences policy decisions and promotes bicycling as an important form of recreation and transportation.

To give the gift of membership in May or June, provide your gift recipient’s email address and make a donation of \$45 or more via one of the following methods:

- online at floridabicycle.org/donate;
- by sending a check to Florida Bicycle Assoc., P. O. Box 770688, Winter Garden, FL 34777;
- through your membership account at fbamembership.org;
- by emailing or calling us at info@floridabicycle.org or (407) 734-1690.

You will receive an electronic greeting card that you can print or forward to your recipient that will provide instructions on activating their membership.

MEMBER SURVEY RESULTS: THE MISSION MATTERS MOST

The Florida Bicycle Association recently conducted a membership survey to gauge the satisfaction and engagement of its members. The results of the survey revealed that the majority of members found the greatest value in their membership was supporting a good cause.

Florida Bicycle has been advocating for better cycling infrastructure and safer roads across Florida for over two decades. With members’ support, the organization has been successful in advancing legislation to improve cycling conditions and promoting education and awareness about cycling safety.

Member’s feedback included comments such as:

“FBA is the key organization to make the kind of changes necessary on the state level, which would impact local communities and our efforts.”

“Biking can be enjoyed at any age and anywhere and this organization supports all our interests.”

“I believe that bicyclists deserve a voice in policy-making.”

The full survey results are shared at www.floridabicycle.org/news.

MEMBER OFFER: 20% DISCOUNT ON ROAD ID PRODUCTS

The Florida Bicycle Association is pleased to announce a partnership with Road ID, a leading provider of personalized identification tags for bicyclists, through which Florida Bicycle members receive a 20-percent discount on Road ID products.

While Florida Bicycle continues working to make streets and trails safer for people who bicycle, Road ID provides peace of mind via wearable identification that helps in case of an emergency.

To take advantage of this offer, log in to your Florida Bicycle Association membership account at www.fba.clubexpress.com. Click the “Benefits” section in the left-side menu, and you will find instructions for obtaining the discount code.

If you have any trouble logging in, please email or call Florida Bicycle at info@floridabicycle.org or (407) 734-1690.



HIGH-QUALITY KITS READY FOR YOU

Official kit store open through May 21 and members receive 10-percent off.

The official 2023 Florida Bicycle Association bicycling kit is available to purchase online from May 1 through May 21, and current and new members will enjoy 10-percent savings. Each kit is made-to-order again this year by Hincapie Sportswear, a highly rated, family-owned cycling business based in South Carolina.

“Not only do we think it’s a great-looking design that makes our supporters more visible, but these products will last for years,” said Mark Schiefer, who designed the kit and serves as the treasurer of the board of directors for Florida Bicycle. “And this is the type of kit that is so comfortable, you won’t even think about it while you’re riding.”

Schiefer cycles about 200 miles per week in the Venice area and emphasized that high-visibility designs can help improve safety for cyclists.

The new kit features:

- High-visibility colors and markings
- Florida Bicycle’s new logo with a throwback nod to the original moniker, “FBA”
- Women’s- and men’s-fit options
- A hashtag on the back that directs people to more information about the Share the Road vehicle license plate, which helps to fund statewide bicycling education
- Jerseys, bibs, arm warmers, knee warmers and gloves.

KIT FEATURES HINCAPIE “VELOCITY” JERSEY

The new Florida Bicycle Association kit features a Hincapie “Velocity” jersey available to the public for \$83 and to Florida Bicycle members for \$74.70. The non-branded Velocity jersey normally retails for \$100.

The Florida Bicycle bibs are available to the public for \$103 and to members for \$92.70. The non-branded bibs normally retail for \$130.

Get sizing information and place an order by linking to the store through floridabicycle.org/store.

The discount code of FBA10 is valid only for Florida Bicycle Association members, including new members. Not a member? Join at floridabicycle.org/getinvolved.

The kit store opens May 1, which marks not only the first day of National Bike Month but also the Florida Bicycle Association’s Spring Membership Drive. The store closes May 21 and deliveries will be made within five to six weeks.



HELMETS SAVE LIVES: A CYCLIST'S PERSONAL ACCOUNT



Patty Huff's helmet was dented and scratched when she crashed after riding into unexpected sand on a roadway near her home in Everglades City. Huff, who wears a helmet consistently, is relieved the scratches and dents weren't to her head.

Patty Huff, an experienced cyclist with over 70,000 miles under her belt, shares her recent accident on her daily 10-mile ride in Everglades City. The road damage caused by Hurricane Ian led to an unexpected fall, resulting in cuts, bruises, and a sprained ankle and hand. However, Huff was wearing a helmet that prevented more serious injuries.

"Our roads and sidewalks suffered damage [from the hurricane]," Huff said. "The intersection where I fell is scheduled for repairs within the next few months. I've cycled this route hundreds of times and know where the hazards are, yet still hit the sand unexpectedly."

Huff is 77 years old and has osteopenia. "I just got banged up a bit. It wasn't until the following day that I looked at my helmet and found many dents that covered the right front side," Huff said. "That could have been my head full of dents, or worse."

Huff joined the Florida Bicycle Association 20 years ago to promote bicycle safety throughout the state. She served as president of the board of directors for Florida Bicycle, and now is chairperson for the organization's advisory council. Huff believes that education and encouragement are crucial to encourage all cyclists to wear helmets, especially considering that most bicycle accidents happen within a few miles of home.

"You never know when you can become a victim," she said. "I was lucky!"



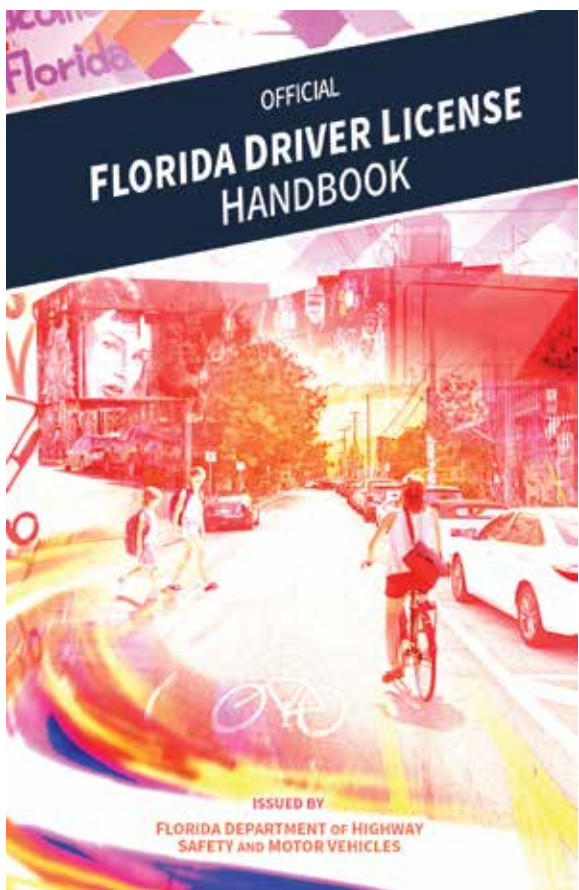
FLORIDA BICYCLE LOOKS OUT FOR BICYCLISTS IN DRIVER- EDUCATION HANDBOOK

As part of its participation in Florida's Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Coalition, the Florida Bicycle Association was invited to review the Official Florida Driver License Handbook and provide recommended edits.

The booklet, published by the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (FLHSMV), typically is updated every year. Although the booklet isn't intended to be a "legal authority," it is nonetheless an important educational document that summarizes laws and safety advice for people driving, biking, walking and rolling.

Florida Bicycle's staff, board, and advisory council members submitted to FLHSMV a combined 18 review comments that address safety for people on bicycles. For example, the team recommended adding specific language to help drivers understand their responsibilities and the legal rights of people bicycling, such as when and how a person driving can pass a person bicycling. The team also suggested clarification that people on bicycles may ride outside of marked bike lanes when needed for their safety.

The booklet usually is updated in the Fall. Florida Bicycle will share the updated publication via social media and an e-newsletter when it's available.



PEDALING FOR PROGRESS

HIGHLIGHTS IN PICTURES



Florida State Representative Christine Hunschofsky, (left) and Florida Bicycle Association Advisory Council Member Paula Saracki (right) caught up during Legislative Sessions in Tallahassee in April. Paula attended the Florida League of Mayors Board of Directors dinner with her husband, Dan Saracki, Mayor of Oldsmar. Hunschofsky has been a vocal advocate for people who bicycle and creating bikeable communities, and in 2021 was named Florida Bicycle's Elected Official Champion of the Year.



Florida Bicycle Association Board Member Conroy Jacobs, AICP, MPA, sports his "Heart Beats for Bicycling" t-shirt, a design available from Florida Bicycle in February to promote bicycling for National Heart Health Month. Jacobs has served on the board since 2021 and is a senior planner at Inwood Consulting Engineers.



Florida Bicycle Association's board president Eric Draper volunteered time to be in the state capital to support legislation that will expand the state's network of non-motorized trails.

Florida Bicycle Association Board Member Caitlin Cerame and her boyfriend, John Terrezza, enjoyed the Pensacola Bay Bridge multi-use path this year. The ten-foot-wide lighted path includes six scenic overlooks, each equipped with shaded seating areas that provide panoramic views of Pensacola Bay. More than three miles of path connect the City of Pensacola to the City of Gulf Breeze, part of a Florida Dept. of Transportation bridge-replacement project.



Tom Demarco, a longtime member and supporter of the Florida Bicycle Association, has completed his goal of bicycling the entire Atlantic Coast of Florida, including Key West. He is pictured here at the Juan Ponce de Leon Landing park in Melbourne Beach. Demarco splits his "residential" time between Plantation, Fla. and Whistler, BC, Canada, but spends his "bicycling" time in many parts of Florida and across the globe.

Florida Bicycle Association Executive Director Kelly Morphy attended the Coast-to-Coast (C2C) Alliance kick-off meeting in February at Wekiwa State Park in Apopka. Here, she is photographed with Bike/Walk Central Florida's Programs Director Patrick Panza and Executive Director Emily Hanna. The C2C Trail is an ambitious effort to create a continuous paved multi-use trail across the state of Florida from the Gulf of Mexico to the Atlantic Ocean, the first state trail of its kind in the United States. Learn more about the trail at c2connector.org.





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A copy of the association's official registration (CH9008) and financial information may be obtained from the Florida Division of Consumer Services by calling toll-free (800) 435-7352 within the state. Registration does not imply endorsement, approval, or recommendation by the state. Contact the Division at (800) 435-7352 or floridaconsumerhelp.com.

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Florida Bicycle Association
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