



VIENNA BICYCLE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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BIKE VIENNA NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2011 NEWSLETTER

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Thursday, 17 November 2011, 8pm – Town Hall
Vienna BAC Meeting is open to the public.

SPECIAL EDITION

Vienna BAC is proud to provide you a feature article which will be in three installments. Watch for December's edition for this article's continuation.

EYE TO EYE - SAFETY TIPS FROM OUR FRIENDS AT TOWN OF VIENNA POLICE

By MPO W.G Murray, Town of Vienna Police



Bicyclists, please be extra cautious when riding along sidewalks in Town. When a rider is pedaling down a sidewalk, such as those that run alongside Maple Avenue, a vehicle approaches from the rear traveling in the same direction as the rider, but in the roadway. The vehicle passes the rider and shortly thereafter decides to turn right into a driveway or parking lot apron thereby crossing over the sidewalk.

The bicyclist believes that the vehicle had seen him prior to turning and therefore would be looking back to see if he was approaching. Unfortunately the driver would have to turn his head so far back that it would be very difficult to see the rider. The bicyclist continues across the apron and never looks left to make **EYE TO EYE** contact with the vehicle driver and strikes the side of the vehicle or is struck by the vehicle.

PREVENTION: Always assume that **NOBODY** has seen you and ride defensively. Make **EYE TO EYE** contact prior to crossing driveway aprons.



IS VIENNA A BIKE FRIENDLY COMMUNITY?

By Andy Clarke, League of American Bicyclists

For the past nine years I've helped manage the League of American Bicyclists' Bicycle Friendly Community (BFC) program - first as the day to day program manager and more recently as CEO of the 130-year-old national membership organization. I've been very close to being a Vienna resident that whole time: 14 years in the Pinewood Greens neighborhood (think mini-golf at Jefferson Park on Lee Highway) and the past four years where the W&OD Trail crosses Gallows Road.

I use the trail every day to get work in the District; my 15 and 12 year old children use the trail to get to soccer practice, school, ice cream, the pool, and to visit friends in Vienna. Jacqueline (12) and I even managed to ride with her guitar to a lesson at Jammin' Java the other week - the trail is an incredible resource, and is absolutely the reason we live where we do. But is one trail enough to make an entire community bike-friendly?



That's a question we've considered often as we've reviewed close to 500 community applications for BFC recognition - a process that involves completion of a detailed questionnaire in the hopes of getting recognition as a BFC at Bronze, Silver, Gold or Platinum levels.

Most communities don't actually make one of these levels at all; they get a helpful list of suggestions for improvement and the benefit of having learned just what a Bicycle Friendly Community really looks and feels like. In this area, Arlington and Washington DC are both silver.

The simple answer to the question is that, no, one trail running through a community isn't enough - but it's a really good place to start building a BFC. On the plus side, not only does Vienna have the trail, but it has two fantastic bike shops, an active Bicycle Advisory Committee, a smattering of bike parking, the very beginnings of a bike network beyond the trail, and the increasingly effective Fairfax Advocates for Better Bicycling leading the charge.



Andy Clarke is the President of League of American Bicyclist. Mr. Clarke has successfully led efforts to create, interpret, and implement the various transportation programs that are available to improve conditions for bicycling and walking. He is a graduate of the University of Birmingham, UK with an undergraduate degree in Law. He is on the Board of Directors for America Bikes, and a member of the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycling Professionals. Mr. Clarke and his family are residents of Vienna, VA.

IS YOUR BUSINESS BIKE-FRIENDLY? BE A TOWN OF VIENNA BIKE VIENNA PARTNER!



Attract more customers, advocate a healthy lifestyle, invest in the health of our planet. Be a Bike Vienna Partner! Add a bike rack to your business, it's a simple process for little to low cost to you, an added service which benefits your customers. Email us

at bac@viennava.gov for more information.

▶▶▶ COMING SOON ▶▶▶
 Bike Vienna Bike-Friendly Directory of Businesses will be coming soon at www.ViennaBAC.com.

LIGHTS AND REFLECTORS / RIDING IN THE FALL
 By Jeff Palmer, Spokes Etc.

Daylight Savings Time ends on November 6th and as you can tell each morning or early evening there is less and less light. If you are going to ride at night at all, it is essential to have a good lighting system, at least if you want



the cars and other cyclists to see and avoid hitting you. Even if you don't plan to ride at night, there will be times when some form of light will be appropriate (riding to and from the metro at dusk or early evening) so it's not a bad idea to be prepared with an inexpensive but adequate lighting system.

For the back of your bicycle, the objective is to be seen by cars or other cyclists coming up behind you. The LED flashing rear lights are great for this. When looking for a flasher, go to a bike shop that has a large selection of them and buy the one that seems to be brightest from the all different directions (some side visibility is always a plus). If you have a rear rack on your bike make sure the light will fit that rack.



In the front of the bicycle, the objective depends on where you will be riding. You definitely want to be seen by oncoming traffic, especially cars coming towards you.



Also, if you are riding on a bicycle trail or rural road, you will need sufficient light so that you can see bumps and other road obstacles in time to avoid them.

If all you need is to be seen, there are white LED front lights that are sufficiently bright.

I also think reflectors are a good idea. I spent a few dollars and bought a package or two of stick-on reflectors, so now I basically have reflectors all over my helmet, fenders, and bicycle. My jacket, panniers, and cycling tights also came with reflective strips on them -- I have been told that the reflective wrist strip on the jacket was really visible when I used my arm for a turn signal. And the white wheel reflectors that attach to your spokes really help in visibility from the side (which is good when a car comes up a side street towards you).



Plan to spend approximately \$17.00 to \$30.00 for a rear LED light. Front lights vary from \$30.00 for a battery unit to \$120.00 for a front rechargeable light unit that will last for years and light the way on road or trail.

Adding a lighting system to any bicycle extends the "riding season" Enjoy!

Jeff Palmer is the General Manager at Spokes Etc, www.spokesetc.com. He and his wife live in Oakton. Mr. Palmer rides his bike to work in Vienna daily. On his days off, he rides cross country trails or the C&O Canal. His wife enjoys biking to Starbucks on her hybrid every weekend.

Come and join us transform Vienna to a more bike-friendly community. Email us at bac@viennava.gov.