



BICYCLE FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES

FEEDBACK REPORT

Kelowna, BC

February 2021



KELOWNA, BC

Certified Bronze 2021-2025

Population: 132 000

Size: 211.8 km²

Share the Road Cycling Coalition's Bicycle Friendly Communities (BFC) judging panel was pleased to see the extent to which the City of Kelowna, BC is a great place for cyclists. The judging panel has designated Kelowna a Bicycle Friendly Community at the **Bronze** award level.

Community Strengths

- Substantial cycling infrastructure already in place
- Community support for active transportation including dedicated staff at the City
- Mild climate, flat topography and trail network conducive to cycling

Application Highlights

The judging panel and local reviewers noted the following strengths in Kelowna's efforts to improve bicycle friendliness:

- Strong budget and commitment to building new infrastructure in the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan
- Use of BC Active Transportation Design Guide for implementing protected bike lanes
- Range of encouragement activities (e.g., community rides, car-free days, Winter Bike to Work/School days)

Promising Efforts

- Community Outreach programs run by Tourism Board and cycling clubs and Friends of the Trail groups, and Safe Routes to School program for children

- Planning and policy documents in place to support and guide implementation of bicycle-friendly infrastructure (e.g., streetscape design guidelines, preserving abandoned rail corridors for multi-use trails)
- Availability of bicycle parking and accessibility of bicycle repair stations and air pumps

Key Steps to Silver

There is no single path towards becoming a great community for cyclists, but there are common building blocks evident in the most exemplary BFCs in North America. Below we share some ideas to provide inspiration as you work to advance to the next award level.

Engineering

- Ensure that intersections are designed to maximize cycling safety. For guidance, look to the [NACTO Guide](#) on Next-Generation Street Intersection Design.
- Continue creating cycling infrastructure that appeals beyond the “strong and fearless” and the “enthusiastic and confident” riders into the population of those who are “interested but concerned.” As you know, these types of riders need routes and options that make them feel safe, which means installing protected or buffered bike lanes or cycle tracks along key routes while also ensuring that routes are designed in a continuous and consistent fashion, i.e., addressing any gaps in cycling infrastructure.

Education

- Continue to expand your public education campaign promoting the share the road message, to help educate both motorists and cyclists about their rights and responsibilities on the road. Take advantage of your local bicycle groups for content development and manpower. For examples of educational campaigns, see “[It Moves Us All](#)” from CAA and Share the Road Cycling Coalition, and the “[Dutch Reach](#).”
- Engage with more schools to provide cycling skills education. Ideally, do this as part of a broader active school travel initiative (using tools and guidance from [Green Communities Canada](#)), in partnership with your local school boards.
- Expand cycling education into high schools. For inspiration, check out Durham Region’s [Youth Cycling Guide](#) and the Region of Peel’s [Family Cycling Handbook](#) and [10 Step Handbook for High School Bike Projects](#).
- Offer community rides that feature an educational component—e.g., integrating bike safety, basic riding/handling skills and helmet fit basics—where those components of the ride are offered as an “extra” to supplement a ride that showcases some of the unique elements of your community. Look at what has been done in Thunder Bay with their “[Discovery Rides](#)” for inspiration.

- Ensure that municipal employees are ambassadors for safe driving by starting motorist education programs for municipal employees with an emphasis on sharing the road effectively with cyclists. See what [San Francisco](#) has done. Your Police Services or a local advocacy group may be able to offer the training.
- Implement a [School Streets](#) program, i.e., closing the streets immediately adjacent to schools during drop-off and pick-up times to improve safety and encourage increased rates of active travel for the school journey.

Encouragement

- Hire a Bicycle Outreach Coordinator (e.g., permanent staff position or summer student position) who can liaise with the Kelowna Area Cycling Coalition and other community groups to take the lead on planning and executing cycling Education and Encouragement initiatives.
- Host events outside of “Go By Bike” week to raise awareness and excitement about cycling and encourage people to get out on (or perhaps, back on) their bikes. Consider hosting events like a Commuter Challenge, community rides, and bicycle repair workshops. For inspiration, check out Share the Road’s Bike Month “[Recipe Cards](#).”
- Leverage Kelowna’s bike-conducive topography and presence of amenities within a 20-minute bike ride from many residential areas to create promotional campaigns like [Bike to Shop Day](#) to encourage everyday cycling, e.g., trips to the grocery store, to friends’ homes, to coffee shops, to spiritual centers, etc.
- Work with local stakeholders to offer community rides that cater to a variety of interests and abilities. Start with slow, short rides around the community to give people a chance to try cycling again in a friendly, social environment.
- Host [bike valets](#) at large community events, as well as at routine events like a weekly farmer’s market.
- Deploy automated speed enforcement tools in community safety zones and school zones to make cycling more comfortable in those areas. This technology has the potential to free up scarce police resources, [increase speed limit compliance](#) and significantly reduce the number of injuries and deaths that result from speeding.

Evaluation and Planning

- Continue to strengthen relationships with key stakeholders from a variety of municipal departments and community groups, including Engineering and Public Works, Parks and Recreation, Municipal Council, Public Health, and local school boards. Continue to prioritize active transportation at Capital Coordination meetings.

- Conduct pre/post evaluations of bicycle-related projects to study changes in use, car speed and crash numbers. These data are valuable to build public and political support for future bicycle-related projects.
- Continue to support community mapping efforts by partnering with local non-profits. Consult the example from Ottawa, Ontario on how to [create a robust dataset](#), make use of [route-finding software](#). Another option is to input roads data into [OpenStreetMaps](#). For more resources on measuring network connectivity, check out the (US) Federal Highway Administration's [Guidebook for Measuring Multimodal Connectivity](#).
- Utilize existing cycling data to establish and communicate the benefits of cycling investments in Kelowna.
- Continue to conduct comprehensive surveys to identify how residents are getting around Kelowna in greater detail than what is available from Statistics Canada. Why do people ride? Who is riding and who is not? What types of infrastructure would motivate members of your community to ride more often?

For more ideas and best practices, visit [Bicycle Friendly Community Resources](#) maintained by The League of American Cyclists. Send any additional cycling resources that your community has developed or used to bfc@sharetheroad.ca

Share the Road Cycling Coalition's Bicycle Friendly Communities program is possible thanks to our program partner, The League of American Bicyclists, and our sponsor, CAA.



**BICYCLE FRIENDLY
COMMUNITY**

