



City of Norman, OK's Bicycle Friendly Community application

Name of Community:

City of Norman, OK

Mayor or top elected official in municipality:

Mayor Cindy Rosenthal

Contact First Name:

James

Contact Last Name:

Briggs

Position:

Park Planner II

Employer:

City of Norman, OK

Address:

201-C West Gray Street

City:

Norman

State:

OK

Zip:

73069

Phone:

405-366-5480

Fax: (not required)

405-366-5470

Email:

james.briggs@normanok.gov

Website: (not required)

normanok.gov

Population:

111543

Square mileage of municipality, Total Area:

196.50

Square mileage of municipality, Water Area:

10.00

Square mileage of municipality, Land Area:

186.50

Population Density:

567.65

Average temperature for January:

36.80

Average temperature for April:

60.35

Average temperature for July:

81.50

Average temperature for October:

62.40

Average precipitation for January:

1.40

Average precipitation for April:

3.50

Average precipitation for July:

3.00

Average precipitation for October:

3.80

Median Income:

39391

Age distribution, % under 20:

28.00

Age distribution, % 20 - 64:

63.00

Age distribution, % 65 - 84:

8.00

Age distribution, % 85+:

1.00

Race, % Hispanic or Latino :

4.00

Race, % Not Hispanic or Latino:

96.00

Race, % One race:

no answer provided

Race, % White:

83.00

Race, % Black or African American:

4.00

Race, % American Indian and Alaska Native:

5.00

Race, % Asian:

4.00

Race, % Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander:

no answer provided

Race, % Some other race:

no answer provided

Race, % Two or more races:

no answer provided

If you have Journey-to-Work census data on bicycling to work, what percentage of people in your community bike to work?

1.32

How many households are within 1/4 mile of a retail or business area?

Most

How many neighborhoods have significant grass, flowers, and trees?

All

How many neighborhoods have significant amenities such as parks, water fountains, benches, and public art?

Most

How many neighborhoods in your community would you consider a good place to raise children?

All

Do you have a Bicycle Master Plan?

Yes

Do you have a written bicycle accommodation policy?

Yes

What was your community's most significant investment for bicycling in the past year?

We are currently in the process of adding a vital missing link in our multi-modal trail utilizing SAFETEAU federal highway funds at a cost of \$400,000; while another \$150,000 is being used to add bicycle detection sensors at heavily used street intersections and add bike parking facilities in our downtown and other retail areas. The City is also constructing a new \$12 million bridge over Interstate 35 at Rock Creek Road that includes pedestrian and bicycle lanes as a model for all future bridge re-construction planned for the next several years.

List current community activities that encourage/promote bicycling.

The Norman Bike Route Map just finished a major overhaul and those physical changes that go with it are being installed; including adding "Share the Road" signs, changing un-safe drain grates, and passing a bike parking ordinance. Also, Norman has participated in Bike to Work Day and National Bike Month for the past 5 years and the Bicycle Advisory Committee has held regular "BikeNorman" events at football games and other community events to help spread the word.

List your official bicycle/pedestrian coordinator or bicycle issues contact person on government staff.

Angelo Lombardo

What department is the bicycle coordinator located in?

Traffic Engineering

How many hours are spent per year in this capacity?

200

List all other government staff or contractors whose primary duties are devoted to bicycling issues.

There are no dedicated staff positions assigned primarily to bike issues; however, the capital project managers from public works, parks, and planning are all subject to working on projects that deal with bicycle accommodation. Also, the Norman Police Department has several officers who patrol on bikes and are very involved with issues related to cycling.

Do you have a Bicycle Advisory Committee, Ped/Bike Council or other venue for citizen input?

Yes

List the name of the Chair and their contact information.

Dr. Kyran Mish (kdmish@ou.edu)

Engineering Section

Do you have a policy that requires the accommodation of cyclists in all new road construction and reconstruction and resurfacing?

No

Provided policy

You have not provided a copy of this legislation

Have you provided training for your engineers and planners on how to accommodate cyclists?

Yes

Description

The city's Traffic Engineer is aware of bicycle planning as part of the job for himself and all others in the that division of the city. They stay current on all relevant bike regulations as described in the MUTCD, AASHTO Standards and other relevant manuals and legal guidelines. Planning and Engineering just wrote and got passed a new mandatory bicycle parking ordinance for all new construction in Nornman.

Is there a mechanism to provide training on an on-going basis?

Yes

How many bridges are in your community?

71

How many are closed or inaccessible to cyclists?

None are closed to bikes by either signage or ordinance.

Of those accessible by bike, how many have shoulders, bike lanes, wide curb lanes, or multi-use paths?

Approximately five percent (5%)

Do you have a bike parking ordinance?

Yes

Provided policy

Your ordinance is on file, [click here](#) to view it.

Are there bike racks or storage units at Schools?

All

Are there bike racks or storage units at Libraries?

All

Are there bike racks or storage units at Transit Stations?

Few

Are there bike racks or storage units at Recreation Centers?

All

Are there bike racks or storage units at Government Buildings?

All

Are there bike racks or storage units at Office Buildings?

Some

Are there bike racks or storage units at Retail Centers?

Some

Are there bike racks or storage units at Public Spaces and Parks?

All

Are buses equipped with bike racks?

All

Can bikes be brought inside transit vehicles?

Yes

Please describe any restrictions

It is preferred that bikes get mounted on the front of the bus on the racks provided. However, the racks are designed to only hold two bikes--so bikers are allowed to bring their bikes onto the bus as long as the bikes can be safely secured and out of the way of other passengers, once the rack is full.

How many miles of bike lanes do you have?

3

How many miles of bike lanes are in your bicycle master plan?

0

What is the mileage of your total road network?

977

What percent of arterial streets have bike lanes or paved shoulders?

12

How many miles of designated bike routes do you have?

108

How many miles of signed bike routes are in your bicycle master plan?

134

Please describe any maintenance programs or policies that ensure bike lanes and shoulders remain usable.

Routine maintainance:

Street sweepers are aware of the location of the bike routes throughout the town. All are indicated in the field with signage. They prioritize their schedule based on the amount of traffic (including bikes) that use each road.

Capital Improvements:

The annual city budget includes expenditures for street maintenance equipment which can be increased based on the amount of usage of this equipment, as well as the staff needed to operate the equipment.

Please describe initiatives your community has taken to ensure or improve bicycle access, safety and convenience at intersections, including bicycle detection, signing and marking.

The city is partially completed with a project that will add bike video detection at intersections with high volume weekly rides and on low-speed streets on the bicycle routes where they cross major arterial streets. The city has worked hard to identify, and remediate, dangerous grates on the roadways. All dangerous grates are currently being replaced with bicycle friendly grates. This is an ongoing project. Construction has also begun on a new local bridge over Interstate-35 with major pedestrian and bicycle accommodation designed into it. Share the Road signs have been installed along the existing routes and the entire bike route system has been evaluated and re-designed, where needed, to improve safety and access across the town. Several more miles of routes have been added to the rural areas of east Norman, as well.

How many miles of paved or hard surface trails do you have?

28

How many miles of paved or hard surface trails are in your bicycle master plan?

36

How many miles of natural surface trails do you have?

20

How many miles of natural surface trails are open to mountain bikes?

15

What is the estimated acreage of open space and public lands within the community (city, county, state, and federal public lands)?

3043

Are these area open to cyclists?

Most

Please describe any maintenance programs or policies for multi-use paths.**Routine maintainance:**

All are inspected regularly for usability by the parks and public works maintenance crews that mow the areas along the paths. Sides of the paths are either mechanically edged or sprayed with weed killer to reduce encroachment of grass and weeds onto the trail.

Capital Improvements:

Multi-use paths are added regularly through capital projects, funded primarily from sales tax. Maintenance also is funded this way. The City of Norman is currently preparing construction documents to add to the existing Legacy Trail multi-use path and connect the north and south segments into an over-6-mile long trail. Also, a major portion of east Main Street (east of downtown Norman) was widened, and included multi-use paths being installed along both sides of the new street.

Does your community have an ordinance or local code requirement for employers to provide bicycle parking, shower facilities, etc.?

No

Provided ordinance

You have not provided a copy of this legislation

Describe recreational facilities for cyclists such as a low traffic rural roads and signed routes.

All six of our Community Parks (ranging from 17 to 160 acres, each) either have or are planned to have extensive trail systems which allow bikes along most (if not all) parts of these trails. There are also no restrictions on bikes in our 56 other neighborhood parks (generally 10 acres or less, each)--however, not all of these parks have trails in them. The Bicycle League of Norman hosts weekly rides along the nearly forty miles of rural roads within the city limits of Norman. Also, the city has 106 miles of signed, shared-road bike routes throughout the town. These routes connect almost all of the schools, parks, retail areas, university property and housing in a mapped and regularly maintained on-street transportation system.

Are there other facilities that have been created to promote bicycling in your community?

Yes

If yes, please describe:

The City of Norman is home to the Legacy Trail, a 1.7-mile long bike path which runs through a park in the middle of town along the BNSF Rail Line. Also, the University of Oklahoma is a major land owner and an advocate of bicycle usage both on, and leading-to its extensive campus facilities. Each entity has its own Bicycle Advisory Committees and work every year to enhance their bike transportation system and encourage more users. The Bicycle League of Norman, along with the Lake Thunderbird State Park, maintains 18 miles of unpaved bicycle trails along the lake. These trails range from gravel roads to single-track dirt trails. These trails are some of the best in the state, and are are home to the annual Sooner Stampede, and several other bike races throughout the year that support the cycling community within Norman and regionally.

Education Section

How do you educate motorists to share the road with cyclists? Please describe:

The City of Norman has begun installing yellow "Share the Road" signs along the city's bike routes. All bike routes are indicated with the standard green "Bike Route" signs. Also, the Norman Bike Route Map has been revised and includes the rules of the road for cars and cyclists. Graphs and diagrams are now included to create greater understanding. These maps are free to any interested party.

How many community motorists do you reach with these efforts?

Most

Are there other bicycle education opportunities for adults?

Yes

Please describe

Several bicycle organizations exist in Norman. For example, the Bicycle League of Norman and the Canadian River Racing Club both have organized activities where new members are "trained" on proper road and off-road riding tactics. The four local bike shops offer advice on selecting and maintaining a bike. The Bicycle Advisory Committees for both the city of Norman and the University of Oklahoma have also begun setting up information booths at local events to provide information and education about cycling, in general. Student bicycling communities at the University of Oklahoma are targeted via education and outreach programs offered by OUPD. These programs involve presentations in dormitories and apartment complexes on safe use of bike facilities in and around campus. Students are also introduced to bike safety and licensing topics at events staged on campus during student orientation week, and during the fall and spring semesters. Directed education content is in final development, explaining the benefits to drivers and to cyclists on sharing these roads, and how each group is expected to utilize the roads, e.g., Oklahoma law prohibits drivers from moving with three feet of a cyclist using a public road. Educational content (e.g., URLs for national bike education resources) is available on Bike Norman public website. Norman Police Department hosts a Bike Rodeo for statewide bike police officer education, which provides both education and coordination opportunities for police departments.

Do you have a bicycle safety program for children in schools?

Yes

Please describe

Educational outreach for school children is carried out via a variety of methods ranging from bike rodeos for elementary school venues to the development of educational materials (e.g., posters, PSA's) developed by students at Norman's high schools. The city bike committee also maintains liaisons with biking groups at Norman High school. The Norman Police Department performs educational efforts in schools using hands-on interactives, e.g., egg drop and pencil-break manipulatives for use in elementary schools.

How many schools participate?

no answer provided out of no answer provided

What other types of bicycle safety and education opportunities are available for children?

Safety Town is offered through the Norman Police Department for preschool age children. Using a miniature version of the City, children are taught proper bicycle skills among other safety issues concerning children. Several Boy Scout troops also hold Bicycle Rodeos at the various elementary schools.

How many children participate?

hundreds participate each year

Do you make bicycle safety materials available to the public?

Yes

Please describe

The new and improved Norman Bike Route Map (2009 Edition) will be available for distribution to the University student population during their back to campus activities in August. The Map will be distributed to the Norman Public Schools, as well, to be included in the elementary school students' "Thursday Folders" of weekly community information. Bike safety materials are disseminated to the general public in various settings, ranging from direct contact with large populations of citizens (e.g., at home football games, where tens of thousands of people visit campus), to deployment of educational materials through the Bike Norman website.

Do you have a bicycle ambassador program that educates community members on local opportunities for bicycling and answers their questions?

No

Do you have League Cycling Instructors in your area?

Yes

Please list their names:

The LAB web page lists 14 instructors in Oklahoma. The closest instructors listed are Doug Young in Norman (LIC #2222) and Pete Kramer in Oklahoma City (LIC #1325)

Is bicycle safety education included in routine local activities (e.g. tax renewal, drivers licensing and testing, or inserts with utility bills each month)?

No

Please describe

Safety materials are made available to the large student community at the University of Oklahoma during student orientation activities at the beginning of the fall semester.

Encouragement Section

How do you promote National Bike Month in May (or another month)?

The City has participated in Bike to Work Day for the past three years. The event is officially proclaimed by the Mayor and sponsored by community partners including ACOG (Association of Central Governments) and our Metro Area Public Transit System. The Bicycle League of Norman and the Bicycle Advisory Committee promote the event as well. This event is promoted in newspapers, on local radio shows, as well as by posters and flyers posted around town.

How many people do you reach with events and activities during this celebration?

135

Do you actively promote Bike to Work Day or other bicycle commuting incentive programs?

Yes

Please describe

In addition to Bike to Work Day, the Metro Area Public Transit System has various "Dump the Pump" days and regularly promotes bike use combined with their bus and trolley fleet through promotional material and advertisements in the local paper.

What portion of the community workforce do you reach?

Some

Is there an annual bike tour or ride promoted to the general public in your community?

Yes

Please describe

The Norman Conquest is a local T-shirt ride sponsored by the Bicycle League of Norman each July. This year was the 14th year for the event, which attracts around 600 riders. There is a family town tour that attracts parents and children, in addition to distances of 26, 46, and 66 miles in rural Norman. Helmets are required and bicycle safety is stressed before and throughout the event. The Bicycle League of Norman also sponsors a trail riding event at Lake Thunderbird in October called the Sooner Stampede. This event typically reaches 100 riders plus 200 spectator from around the state and regionally. These trails are some of the best in Oklahoma.

Are there community road and mountain bike clubs, bicycle advocacy organizations or racing clubs?

Yes

Please describe

Bicycle League of Norman, Oklahoma Bicycle Society, Oklahoma Earthbike Fellowship, Canadian River Racing Club, Oklahoma Bicycling Coalition, the City of Norman's Bicycle Advisory Committee and the University of Oklahoma Bicycle Advisory Committee

How many specialty bicycle retailers (i.e., bike shops, not big box retailers like K-Mart or Wal-Mart) are there in your community?

3

Are there other bicycling areas or facilities such as BMX tracks, velodromes or mountain bike centers in your community? Please describe.

Yes. Lake Thunderbird State park has 18 miles of identified single track trails divided into beginner, intermediate and expert levels which are maintained by the Bicycle League of Norman.

Does your trail system have a unit of the National Mountain Bike Patrol?

No

Are there opportunities to rent bicycles in your community or other recreational opportunities involving bicycling?

Yes

Please describe

Bicycle rental is available from the local bike stores. Recreational opportunities are available at Lake Thunderbird as previously described. Also, area churches and individuals collect Police impounded bikes to be repaired and distributed to the needy for both recreation and commuting.

Do you have Safe Routes to School program that includes bicycling?

Yes

How many schools are involved?

Some

Please describe

In 2008 the state assigned a coordinator and formed an Advisory Board for Safe Routes to School. The City of Norman has a Safe Routes Steering Committee that works with the state coordinator to identify our Safe Routes priorities.

Does your community have youth recreation and intervention programs that are centered around bicycling?

Yes

Please describe

The Norman police department offers Safety Town classes annually during the month of June for children under the age of six. The program teaches kids about safety with a concentration on bicycle and pedestrian safety.

Do you publish a bike map and keep it up to date?

Yes

Please describe

The map was updated this year and includes all the signed bike routes in town, as well as the multi-modal paved paths in public spaces. Bicycle safety tips and the rules of the road are also featured.

Do you publish a map of mountain bike trails?

Yes

Please describe

The 18 miles of mountain bike trails at Lake Thunderbird State Park have recently been re-mapped using several GPS units and converted to a PDF. The beginner, intermediate and expert sections of the trails are delineated by Yellow & Green, Red & Blue, and Gold, respectively. This map is available at bicycleleague.com.

Please describe any other efforts in your community to encourage cycling

The City of Norman continuously applies for grants to increase our multi-use trails and fund infrastructure improvements to our bike traffic system. The City just successfully lobbied the Oklahoma Department of Transportation for a paved path along State Hwy 9 connecting Norman proper to the Lake Thunderbird trails. Bicycle racks are being added throughout the downtown and campus areas following the passage of a bike parking ordinance. The Bicycle Advisory Committee is a City appointed citizen's group that coordinates with the University of Oklahoma Bicycle Advisory Committee. The Bicycle League of Norman leads community rides each Tuesday and Thursday night throughout the Spring, Summer and Fall. The BLN promotes off road cycling at Lake Thunderbird during the Fall and Winter. The Canadian River Racing Club promotes Criterion events annually.

Enforcement Section

Is your local police department aware of the concerns of cyclists in your community?

Yes

Is there a liaison that communicates with the bicycling community?

Yes

If yes, please describe

Safety Town is Norman Police Department program that communicates with children about proper bike riding. Also, NPD is one of several City Departments that has an ex-officio membership on the Bicycle Advisory Committee to act as an advisor to their discussions.

Do you offer specific training to police officers regarding traffic law as it applies to bicyclists?

Yes

If yes, please describe

Police officers receive training in the police academy regarding bicycle laws and ordinances, along with other aspects of traffic law enforcement. Norman Police Department hosts a Bike Rodeo for statewide bike police officer education, which provides both education and coordination opportunities for police departments.

Do you use targeted enforcement to encourage cyclists and motorists to share the road safely?

No

If yes, please describe

no answer provided

Do you have public safety employees on bikes?

Yes

If yes, please describe

The Norman Police Department has several Bicycle Officers who work special events, parks, around busy shopping areas during the holidays, around the University of Oklahoma during home football games and other places with high pedestrian population. Also, the University of Oklahoma Police Department has daily campus bike patrols, and an even larger presence at large events. For Norman PD, bikes are mounted on the rear of the patrol cars for easy access.

Indicate the number of employees on bike as well as the size of the entire staff.

There are fifteen officers who take shifts on bicycle patrol; and the entire NPD staff is 135 authorized commissioned officers.

Do you have a mandatory helmet law?

Yes

To what ages does it apply?

Oklahoma Law applies to those under the age of 18.

Do you have mandatory sidepath laws?

Yes

If so, what is the status of these laws?

State Law

Are they enforced

Yes

Evaluation & Planning Section

Do you have any information on the number of trips by bike in your community including census data?

Yes

Please describe

The Association of Central Oklahoma Governments, our local Master Planning Organization, does an annual survey as part of National Bike Month. According to their survey data, 134 people ride their bikes for daily commuting. That number of daily trips is certainly higher around the University of Oklahoma, which has a large number of students who ride every day on and around the campus (often along city streets that connect their housing with the main campus, as well as connect the different parts of campus).

How many cyclist/motor vehicle fatalities have occurred in your community in the past five years?

2

How many cyclist/motor vehicle crashes have occurred in your community in the past five years?

110

Do you have any specific plan or program to reduce these numbers?

No

Do you have a system in place that allows bicyclists to submit ideas and concerns to public officials?

Yes

Please describe

The Norman Bicycle Advisory Committee was formed in 2006 and meets monthly since 2007. It acts as such a forum, as does the daily availability of City staff from Traffic Engineering, Police, Parts and other departments to meet with citizens. Similarly, the University of Oklahoma has recently created their OU Bicycle Advisory Committee to address campus-specific concerns, which are often more concentrated in their physical area. We also have a Norman Action line (Action.Center@NormanOK.gov) where concerned bicyclists can email the City of Norman about trouble spots in the roadways, such as cracks, potholes, misaligned grates, and slow intersections. We are diligently completing these requests as they come in and hope to have all the heavily used intersections and all the misaligned grates addressed in the near future.

Do you have a comprehensive bicycle plan?

Yes

When was it passed or updated?

05/01/1996

Is it funded?

Partially

What percentage has been implemented?

Most

Do you have a trails master plan that addresses mountain bike access?

No

And are there ongoing relations between the mountain biking community and the community recreation and planning staff?

Yes

Is your bicycle network part of the broader development plans, land use plans, and ongoing development projects?

Yes

How many trails, bike lanes, paved shoulders, bike routes connect with each other to provide a seamless transportation options?

Most

Have you evaluated your transportation network and prioritized bicycle improvements based on hazards and needs?

Yes

What specific improvements do you have planned for bicycling for the following year?

The main funded goals are the realignment of drainage grates and major crack fill on the designated bike routes; addition of bicycle detection devices at more intersection; addition of share the road signs; and construction of additional multi-use paths as described earlier in this application. In addition, construction has begun on a bridge that will include multi-use paths that will allow bicycles a safe route across Interstate 35.

What are the three primary reasons your city deserves to be designated as a Bicycle Friendly Community?**Reason One:**

BICYCLE FRIENDLY DESIGN: We are bicycle-possible in that Norman is a long-established town (since 1889), with well-planned neighborhoods and streets as well as large expanses of rural roads and natural park and wilderness areas within the city limits. We also have the advantage of the OU campus area having been planned over the years to accommodate bicycles and pedestrians, which influenced much of the town's early urban design style.

What are the three primary reasons your city deserves to be designated as a Bicycle Friendly Community?**Reason Two:**

BICYCLE FRIENDLY LEADERSHIP: We have a growing population and forward-looking elected leadership and city staff that understand that cities cannot grow responsibly depending solely on internal combustion engines. In fact, our Mayor was one of the first to sign the U.S. Mayors' Global Climate Agreement, which encourages greener lifestyle choices--such as using alternative forms of transportation like bicycles.

What are the three primary reasons your city deserves to be designated as a Bicycle Friendly Community?

Reason Three:

BICYCLE FRIENDLY POPULATION: We are a university town where people specializing in various disciplines are professionally interested in new ideas and influencing how society can continue to evolve. Also, as with any university town, there is a constant flow of new citizens, who often end up as bike riders during college and then take up permanent residence here. Many of these citizens keep their bike-riding habits learned in college throughout their lives, and instill these same habits into their children's lives, as well. We have independent bike stores, vibrant bike advocacy groups and multiple cycling clubs.

What are the three aspects of your community most in need of improvement in order to accommodate bicyclists? Number One Aspect:

ROUTES: more dedicated bike routes (both lanes and paths) are needed to handle the growth in population that Norman has experienced since its bike plan was written in 1996. This effort is currently under review by the city bike committee.

What are the three aspects of your community most in need of improvement in order to accommodate bicyclists? Number Two Aspect:

ENFORCEMENT: there is a need for additional enforcement to handle the growth of the biking community in Norman (esp on the OU campus), and to help keep automobile drivers focused on the road. Norman voters recently passed an initiative to increase the size of the police force, so this should help improve this problem.

What are the three aspects of your community most in need of improvement in order to accommodate bicyclists? Number Three Aspect:

ACCESSIBILITY: Norman is located on both sides of Interstate-35, and the bridges over this heavily-used freeway form a barrier that limits bike access for some groups of riders (e.g., children). The City of Norman is proceeding with construction of its first bike-friendly overpass, and is in negotiations with the Oklahoma DOT to improve all the interstate overpasses within the city limits as part of ODOT's ongoing I-35 renovation project.