



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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City of Wheeling Named a Bronze-level Bicycle Friendly Community by the League of American Bicyclists

WHEELING, W.VA. – The League of American Bicyclists honored the efforts of the City of Wheeling to build better places for people to bike with a Bronze-level Bicycle Friendly Community (BFC) award.

Wheeling joins 482 communities across the country in the movement for safer streets and better bicycling for everyone. The award recognizes the Friendly City for its commitment to creating transportation and recreational resources that benefit its residents of all ages and abilities while encouraging healthier and more sustainable transportation choices.

City officials are pleased to receive the award.

“We are thrilled to be the recipient of a Bronze-level Bicycle Friendly Community award. In addition to being measured against the five Es - engineering, encouragement, education, evaluation, and enforcement - when being evaluated, feedback was sought from people who bike in our City to find out how we are meeting their needs,” said Assistant City Manager Bill Lanham. “There is always room for growth and improvement, so we will continue to look at ways we can make future investments in bicycle infrastructure with the hope that the next time we apply for a Bicycle Friendly Community designation, we hit Gold or better.”

Bill Nesper, executive director of the League of American Bicyclists, noted during the COVID-19 pandemic, so many Americans across the country have been biking.

“It’s critical that there are communities like Wheeling taking the steps to make biking a safe, accessible option for people, whether they are commuting to essential jobs or looking for recreational options outside their homes,” he said. “This award is the culmination of years of work put in by Wheeling and its citizen advocates for better biking. This award round, Wheeling joins 38 new and renewing Bicycle Friendly Communities in the movement toward healthier, more sustainable and connected places. Our nation and the world is facing an acute public health crisis with long-term

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implications, and we're proud that Wheeling and communities like it are embracing bicycling as a solution to our collective recovery."

The League of American Bicyclists' Bicycle Friendly America program sets the standard for how communities build and benchmark progress toward making biking better. This round of awards, which communities applied for in February 2020, includes 38 new and renewing awardees, joining a total 482 Bicycle Friendly Communities in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The Bronze BFC award recognizes Wheeling's commitment to improving conditions for all people who bike through investments in bike education programs, regular bike events that promote and encourage people to choose biking, pro-bike policies, and bike infrastructure.

More than 850 communities have applied for recognition by the Bicycle Friendly Community program, which provides a roadmap to making biking better for communities of all shapes and sizes. While the award process considers very visible elements such as bike infrastructure, other essential elements include efforts around adult and youth bike education, encouragement through events like Bike to Work Day, evaluation mechanisms, and enforcement all through the lens of equity. The rigorous application process is an educational tool in itself and includes an opportunity for local bicyclists and active transportation advocates to provide input on their experiences and perceptions of bicycling in their community.

The five levels of the BFC award – diamond, platinum, gold, silver and bronze, plus an honorable mention category – provide a clear incentive for communities to continuously improve. Awarded communities must renew their status every four years to ensure that they not only maintain existing efforts, but also keep up with changing technology, national safety standards, and community-driven best practices.

To learn more about the BFC program, visit bikeleague.org/community.

About the League of American Bicyclists

The League of American Bicyclists leads the national movement to create a Bicycle Friendly America for everyone. With a history dating to 1880, the League is committed to engaging diverse communities and building a powerful, unified voice for change around protecting and promoting bicyclists' rights. Learn more at www.bikeleague.org.