



MEDIA RELEASE

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**PRESS RELEASE**

Knoxville has been recognized as one of the country's "Bicycle Friendly Communities" by the League of American Bicyclists, which announced today that the city was one of 18 communities making the list for the first time.

The third time was the charm from Knoxville, which received a Bronze designation after receiving honorable mention status on two previous bids to be named to the BFC list. The Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization featured the work of the TPO's Knoxville Bicycle Program, City of Knoxville efforts including extensions of its greenways network and a soon-to-be-installed signed bike route network in its successful application.

"We're very pleased that Knoxville has been selected as a Bicycle Friendly Community," Mayor Bill Haslam said. "A lot of people have worked very hard to encourage people to ride and to demonstrate how easy it is to access places like downtown and the University of Tennessee by bike from practically every neighborhood in the city. We're very proud of the TPO and grateful for the efforts of its staff and the city will continue to develop bicycling opportunities in the future."

The League of American Bicyclists announced its 18 new [Bicycle Friendly Communities](#) (BFC) in a September 14<sup>th</sup> release. Baltimore joined Knoxville in making the list on its third try.

"The most exciting thing about this round of awards was seeing communities that had implemented past feedback, improved their communities, and achieved a Bicycle Friendly Community designation," said Andy Clarke, League president.

Kelly Segars, principal planner with the TPO and its Bicycle Program Manager said Knoxville showed strong support for bicycling through participation in events like the Neighborhood Bike Ride and Tour de Lights.

"When you get more than 450 people to decorate their bicycles and ride in the dark on a cold weekday evening, you can safely say that Knoxville loves bicycling!" Segars said.

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M E D I A R E L E A S E

The 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Neighborhood Bike Ride, sponsored by the TPO and the city, is set for Saturday, Oct. 2, and will start at the corner of Baxter Avenue and North Central Street in Happy Hollow. The ride starts at 10 a.m., though the site will be open at 9 a.m. for bicycle safety checks and tune-ups.

Segars added that the number of bike commuters traveling to and through downtown has tripled in the past five years, according to counts conducted twice a year by the TPO.

"We recognize the importance of bicycling as a way for individuals to help improve air quality, save some money and get exercise as part of their daily lives," said Haslam, who bicycles for both exercise and transportation, and regularly participates in Bike to Work Day each year.

"It is great to see the bicycle-friendly bar being raised in communities across the nation," said Bill Nesper, director of the Bicycle Friendly America program.

The League's release said that an increasing number of mayors and community leaders are promoting bicycling to improve public health and quality of life while protecting the environment and provide better transportation choices. Bicycle commuting in the BFCs has grown by 70 percent over the last eight years.

During that same time period, the BFC program has provided hundreds of communities with personalized support and assistance. There are currently 158 Bicycle Friendly Communities in 43 states (out of more than 400 applicants).

The League of American Bicyclists sponsors the Bicycle Friendly Community, Bicycle Friendly State, Bicycle Friendly Business and the new Bicycle Friendly University programs.

To learn more about building a Bicycle Friendly America, visit [www.bikeleague.org](http://www.bikeleague.org).

More information about the Knoxville Regional Transportation Planning Organization is available at [www.knoxtrans.org](http://www.knoxtrans.org) and information about the TPO Bicycle Program is at [www.knoxtrans.org/plans/bikeprog.htm](http://www.knoxtrans.org/plans/bikeprog.htm)

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