

Note to Editors: Below this Press Release, please find and consider for publication, Twelve Tips for Sharing Our Streets Safely in Long Beach.

PRESS RELEASE

August 25, 2011

Bicyclists Reminded to ‘Walk it or Lock it’ in Business Districts

With more bicyclists than ever sharing the streets in Long Beach, the City is launching a campaign to remind people about bicycle safety, including the importance of walking bikes on the sidewalks in business districts.

The Long Beach bike safety survey, conducted over the past few months, has revealed that while many residents (95 percent) know that bicyclists should ride in the same direction as traffic, only three out of four know that it's illegal to ride bikes on the sidewalks in Long Beach business districts.

“Being bike-friendly means we all have to share the road, and our busy sidewalks,” Mayor Bob Foster said. “A little courtesy goes a long way to make Long Beach a better place to live.”

As part of the campaign, police officers will be able to hand out safety cards (like the one depicted here), when appropriate, to encourage bicyclists to be courteous and walk, not ride, their bikes on the sidewalk. Merchants will also be displaying posters with a similar design.

“Mixing people riding bicycles with people walking on our busy sidewalks just isn't safe,” said Long Beach Police Department Chief Jim McDonnell. “Especially with more people walking in the summertime, it's critical that bike riders ‘Walk It or Lock It’ in business districts – either walk their bikes on the sidewalk, or lock them to one of the 1,200 bike racks in the city and walk the final steps to their destination. And, of course, bike riders can always ride with traffic in a business district or any Long Beach street as long as they obey the rules of the road.”

Long Beach business districts include Broadway and Pine Avenue in Downtown Long Beach; along Atlantic Avenue in Bixby Knolls; along Second Street in Belmont Shore; and along ‘Retro Row’ on Fourth Street.

The “Walk it or Lock it” campaign is the first part of the city's “SOS: Share our Streets” safety campaign. As part of this campaign we are also encouraging Long Beach residents to complete the 2011 Bike Safety Survey, www.surveymonkey.com/s/bikesafelb, which was commissioned as part of an expanded motorist and bicyclist safety campaign in the city funded by a grant from the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro). The survey results will provide a baseline of information for the safety campaign and help to shape the city's outreach plan.

“We invite Long Beach residents who have not yet taken the 5-minute survey to share their feedback with us on which bicycle-friendly amenities would encourage them to ride more often,” said Allan Crawford, Bicycle Coordinator, Bike Long Beach. “Long Beach is already paving the way as a national leader in bike-friendly infrastructure, and we have more bike boulevards and bike lanes in the planning stages. The more input we get from the community about their specific needs, the better we can provide the right solutions for our neighborhoods.”

Print copies of the survey can be requested for your civic or neighborhood organization by contacting Bike Long Beach via email at bikelongbeach@longbeach.gov.

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“Be Aware. Share Our Streets”

Twelve Tips for Sharing Our Streets Safely in Long Beach

1. Same Road, Same Rules, Same Rights for motorists and bicyclists
2. Stay Focused and Avoid Distractions
3. Red Means Stop at Traffic Signals and Stop Signs
4. Watch the “Door Zone” when bicycles are riding alongside parked cars

Important Rules for Motorists

5. Slow When Passing Bicyclists
6. Allow 3 Feet or More When Passing Bicyclists
7. Take Extra Precaution at Driveway Entrances and Intersections
8. Use Your Horn to Warn, Not to Scorn

Important Rules for Bicyclists

9. Be Predictable and Use Hand Signals
10. Be Visible at Night – Use a Headline and Side and Rear Reflectors
11. Ride with the Flow of Traffic
12. Walk Your Bike on the Sidewalk in Business Districts

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Electronic copies of the 12 tips and “Walk Your Bike” are available at www.bikelongbeach.org