



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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New Ulm Receives “Honorable Mention” as Bicycle Friendly Community

The League of American Bicyclists announced the latest honorees of the Bicycle Friendly Community award on June 10, and New Ulm has received an Honorable Mention.

A Bicycle Friendly Community welcomes bicyclists by providing safe accommodations for bicycling and encouraging people to bike for transportation and recreation. Making bicycling safe and convenient are keys to improving public health, reducing traffic congestion, improving air quality and improving quality of life.

The New Ulm Bike Club, the City of New Ulm and Hearts Beat Back: The Heart of New Ulm Project all collaborated to submit the application. The League awards Honorable Mention status to communities that do not yet meet all of the qualifications for the program’s lowest Bronze level award, but with a few additional improvements could earn a Bicycle Friendly Community award in the future.

“This is a great testimonial to the work everyone in our community continues to do to help improve the bicycling environment in New Ulm to make it safer and more enjoyable for everyone to bike,” said Cindy Winters, manager for The Heart of New Ulm Project.

Winters cited the recent Garden Street improvements, the completion of signage for the 12-mile Bike Circle Route, and the Safe Routes to School planning as examples of that work. To help achieve the Bronze-level designation, the League’s suggestions include:

- Continue to increase the amount of high-quality bicycle parking throughout the community, especially at businesses and other popular destinations. Adopt standards for bike parking that conform to guidelines established by the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals.
- Continue to expand the bike network, especially along arterial streets, through the use of different types of bicycle facilities. Ensure that parked cars do not obstruct bike lanes.
- Celebrate Bike Month (in May) in partnership with local bicycle advocacy groups. Host, sponsor and encourage bicycle-themed community events, campaigns and programs. Increase efforts on Bike to Work Day and Bike to School Day. Widely advertise all bicycle-themed community events and programs.
- Encourage the schools to adopt Minnesota’s Walk! Bike! Fun! Curriculum, which helps children ages 5 to 13 learn traffic rules and regulations, the potential hazards to traveling, and handling skills needed to bike and walk effectively, appropriately and safely through their community.

Anyone interested in volunteering with others to help work on these efforts and help New Ulm improve its environment for biking or walking can contact Cindy Winters at 507.217.5548.

The Bicycle Friendly Community program is revolutionizing the way communities evaluate their quality of life, sustainability and transportation networks, while allowing them to benchmark their progress toward improving their bicycle friendliness. Communities must apply to be considered and the awards are valid for four years. A community must reapply after four years to maintain its status or move up. In Minnesota, there are 15 communities that have achieved the Bicycle Friendly Community status, including the Greater Mankato area.

More information on the awards is available on the League of American Bicyclists website at <http://bikeleague.org/community>.

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