

**2012**

# National Bike Month Event Implementation Guide



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This guide is based on the League of American Bicyclists' May is National Bike Month Getting Started Guidebook (Guidebook). It outlines events and outreach strategies the Town of Bethlehem can use to increase participation and awareness about National Bike Month, specifically the keystone event Bike to Work Day. It also provides guidance on recruiting volunteers and businesses to sponsor events and has an implementation schedule the Town can use as an event planning tool. Click on the links below to go directly to each section of this implementation guide:

- [Potential Bike to Work Day Events](#)
- [Recruit Businesses Sponsors, Donors, and Volunteers](#)
- [Event Promotion and Outreach](#)
- [Implementation Schedule](#)

## Potential Bike Month Events

May is National Bike Month. For 2012, National Bike to Work Week begins May 14<sup>th</sup> and National Bike to Work Day is Friday, May 18<sup>th</sup>. This guide is designed, however, to be applicable for any year. Below are suggestions from the Guidebook on events and initiatives designed to engage citizens in National Bike Month.

Events/Initiatives Prior to Bike to Work Day	
Event/Initiative	Description
Route Mapping Assistance	Provide businesses with information on bicycle friendly routes to the office. Have offices distribute the route guidance to employees in advance of Bike to Work Day. Have businesses promote the event to employees.
Commuter Challenge	Engage local businesses in a challenge to engage the highest percentage of employees in Bike to Work Day. Publically reward or recognize those businesses with the highest participation.
Bike Rodeo and Smart Cycling Classes	Host bicycle safety and maintenance classes so that non-bicycle commuters can safely participate in Bike to Work Day events. The American League of Cyclists (ALC) has multiple League Certified Instructors in the Albany area who offer bicycle safety courses for different audiences. More information on finding a League Certified Instructor, classes, and information on becoming an instructor can be found on the ALC website: <a href="http://www.bikeleague.org/programs/education/course_schedule.php">http://www.bikeleague.org/programs/education/course_schedule.php</a>

Community Rides	Work with community groups to organize community rides on the weekends or in the early evening
Incorporate bicycling into other events in town	Emphasis opportunities to bicycle to Town-sponsored events such as community meetings, recreation events such as youth sports leagues, and cultural events.
Host presentations and movies	Give presentations on bicycling and screenings of bicycle themed movies at the Town's school and libraries. Movie suggestions including <i>Breaking Away (PG)</i> , <i>American Flyers (PG-13)</i> , <i>A Sunday in Hell (documentary)</i> , <i>The Goonies (PG)</i> , <i>Pee Wee's Big Adventure (PG)</i> .
<b>Events/Initiatives on Bike to Work Day</b>	
<b>Event/Initiative</b>	<b>Description</b>
Bike to School Day	Engage students in National Bike to Work week by having students bicycle to school. The first National Bike to School Day will be held May 9 <sup>th</sup> 2012.
Bike Rally and Commuter Convoys	Have "commuting stations" set up along predefined cycling routes ending at major areas of employment. Riders will meet at the commuter stations at pre-determined times and ride in groups lead by experienced cyclists. Given that many Bethlehem residents work in Albany, the Town could coordinate with the City of Albany to host a bicycle rally in the city where riders receive breakfast and bicycle related handouts. The commuting stations could also have light refreshments and other freebies donated by local businesses or purchased using funding from event sponsors.
Incentives from local businesses for biking to work	Enlist local restaurants and retailers to provide discounts or incentives to patrons who bicycle to work on National Bike to Work Day.

In addition, the Albany Bike Coalition typically hosts a variety of events during Bike Month. Bethlehem could partner with the Coalition to support, join and expand these events to include Bethlehem. The following is a list of events the Coalition was involved with in 2011.

- Critical Mass/Community Ride (x2)
- Bike Expo
- Three bicycle-related movies/presentations
- Tune Up Your Bicycle Night (x3)
- ABC Community Bicycle Ride (x4)
- 1<sup>st</sup> Friday Gallery Spin (x2)
- Blessing of Bicycles and Ride

- Historic Mansion Tour
- Moonlight Ride (on the full moon)
- Ride of Silence (National)
- PAL Bike Rodeo
- Bike Month Alley Cat – Bike to China Charity
- Three-day camping
- Geocaching Ride

Even though Bike Month is not until May, preparations for events should begin in February and March 2012. The following sections discuss the two primary preparations necessary to host a successful Bike Month—recruitment of volunteers and business, and media promotion and educational outreach.

*Best Practice: Bike Fridays*

*Boston, MA*

*The City of Boston hosts bike commuter convoys on Fridays throughout the summer. The convoys are led by experienced riders and follow fixed routes ending at Boston City Hall where riders enjoy free breakfast donated by local restaurants. To learn more, visit: <http://www.bikefridays.org/>*

*Best Practice: Bike Commute Challenge*

*Statewide, Oregon*

*Oregon workplaces compete for the highest number of bike trips completed by employees during the month of September as part of the Bicycle Transportation Alliance (BTA)'s Bike Commute Challenge. Workplace teams log their trips during the competition, and the BTA hosts a party to announce the winning companies at the month's end. To learn more, visit: <http://bikecommutechallenge.com>*

### *Best Practice: Free Breakfast*

*Saratoga Springs, NY*

*Saratoga Springs has participated in Bike to Work Day since 2009, offering free breakfast to participants. The event was hosted by Saratoga Healthy Transportation Network, an organization that promotes alternative modes of transportation. The organization or business with the most participants takes home a prize made of gold-painted bike gears. To learn more, visit <http://www.healthytransportation.org/special.html>*

## **Recruit Business Sponsors, Donors, and Volunteers**

For a successful Bike Month, the Town of Bethlehem and the PaTHs Committee should begin recruiting volunteers and businesses in March of 2012. The Town could use the existing PaTHs committee or Sustainable Bethlehem page of its website for online registration for businesses and individuals to contribute time, funding, or resources to Bike Month events. The Town will need to recruit volunteers and businesses to:

- Staff Bike to Work Day events
- Donate food, beverages, handouts, and/or prizes for Bike to Work Day participants
- Become event sponsors by contributing financially to Bike Month events
- Distribute educational and promotional materials about commuting by bicycle and Bike to Work Day events.

Appendix A contains a worksheet the PaTHs Committee can use to identify potential organizations and businesses in Bethlehem that could provide event sponsorship, donations and volunteers for Bike Month. Appendix D has a sample letter the Town can use to request sponsorship. This letter has been adapted for the Town of Bethlehem from the Guidebook sample letter that was provided courtesy of RIDES for Bay Area Commuters, Inc., in San Francisco, California. Additionally, there is a checklist in Appendix C that can be used for planning purposes.

## Event Promotion and Outreach

The Town will need to promote Bike Month events using local media outlets, posters, bulletin boards, school notices, and other mediums to:

- Educate the public on the benefits of bicycle commuting and bicycle safety
- Entice businesses and the public to participate in Bike to Work Day
- Recognize Bike to Work Day sponsors, participants, and volunteers
- Publicize Bike to Work Day outcomes after the events have been completed

Outreach and publicity to the general public for Bike Month should begin in April 2012 and continue through the first week of June so that the outcomes of the events can be shared with the public.

The American League of Bicyclists has a sample press release to inform the public about Bike to Work Day in the Guidebook which has been customized for Bethlehem and is located in Appendix E. The Guidebook also has tips on how to promote the event using different marketing techniques. In Appendix B there is a worksheet for identifying newspapers, radio, television stations, and ideal poster locations where press releases and posters should be sent.

## Implementation Schedule

On the next page there is an implementation schedule for Bike to Work Day events. Each event or initiative is broken into subtasks with the timeframe for completing each task shown in the shaded table cells.

### *Resource:*

The American League of Bicyclists has promotional materials for National Bike Month, such as sample press releases, signs, and website banners.

Visit:

<http://www.bikeleague.org/programs/bikemonth/>

Event/Task	Feb	March	April	May			
				week 1	week 2	BIKE WEEK	week 4
<b>Recruit Businesses to Participate in Bike Month Events</b>							
Identify Major Regional Employers Bikeable from Bethlehem							
Create Memo or Pledge to Recruit Businesses							
Create Webpage/Registration Site for Businesses to Register							
<b>Distribute Memo/Pledge to Businesses to Join the Following:</b>							
Distribute suggested biking routes to work							
Promote Event to Employees							
Participate in competition for highest employee engagement							
Be a financial event sponsor							
Donate Food/beverages/prizes							
Local vendors provide incentives for patrons participating in bike-to-work day							
<b>Follow Up with Targeted Phone Calls</b>							
<b>Media and Promotions</b>							
Identify events/locations to promote Bike Month (businesses, schools, bulletin boards, events)							
<b>Create Marketing/Promotional Materials</b>							
Calendar of Bike Month Events							
Newspaper/press releases							
Local TV/Radio Station							
Pamphlets/Brochures for businesses/schools							
Posters							
<b>Distribute Marketing Materials</b>							
<b>Recognize and thank Businesses/Schools that were sponsors/participants/contest winners</b>							
<b>Publicize bike to work week event outcomes</b>							
<b>Route Mapping Assistance</b>							
Identify Routes and Create Maps							
Give Routes/Directions to Schools and Business to Distribute							
<b>Commuter Challenge</b>							
Recruit Businesses to Participate (see Recruitment task above)							
Determine Method for businesses employee participation							
Provide prizes and recognition for winning businesses							
Provide publicity for participating businesses							
<b>Bike Rodeo and Smart Cycling Classes</b>							
Select Date for event							
Identify sponsors and recruit businesses to contribute food/prizes							
Design safety courses and other activities for event							
Promote event to schools and public							
Post-event publicity							
<b>Bike to School Day</b>							
Coordinate with School Administrators on Bike to School day logistics							
Distribute logistical and educational materials to students							
Host Bike Rodeo or bike safety course at Schools (see Bike Rodeo item below)							
<b>Group Rides and Bike Rally</b>							
Identify group riding stations and routes where more experienced riders can lead groups along pre-defined routes							
Recruit riders to lead group ride stations							
Recruit volunteers to staff stations							
Recruit businesses to donate refreshments/prizes							
Possibly coordinate a ride into Albany for Bike-to-work day rally							



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## **Appendix A: Bike Month Sponsor Identification Worksheet**

This worksheet is intended to be used for identifying and local businesses and organizations that can be recruited to provide sponsorship, donations and/or volunteers.

<b>Organization / Business</b>	<b>Potential Sponsor</b>	<b>Potential Donor</b>	<b>Potential Volunteer Source</b>



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## **Appendix B: Worksheet for Identifying Media Outlets for Press Release**

This worksheet will assist in identifying and organizing media outlets for the press release of Bike Month and other related bicycle and pedestrian events.

Bethlehem Media Name	Bethlehem Media Contact	Audience Reached



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## **Appendix C: Volunteers, Funding and Resource Needs Checklist**

This needs checklist will assist the Town and PaTHs Committee in tracking the various needs (volunteers, resources and funding) for various bicycle and pedestrian events.

Event	Volunteers Needed (type of role and number of people)	Resources Needed (Signage, refreshments, other)	Funding Needed (\$)
Route Mapping Assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify routes</li> <li>• Create maps and other route guidance materials to employers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Materials to create maps and route guidance information</li> </ul>	
	# people:		
Commuter Challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outreach to businesses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Website or other registration tool</li> <li>• Prizes (optional)</li> </ul>	
	# people:		
Bike Rodeo and Smart Cycling Classes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Event management</li> <li>• Instructors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Optional</li> </ul>	
	# people:		
Bike to School Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Event management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signage</li> <li>• Refreshments</li> <li>• Handouts</li> </ul>	
	# people:		
Bike Rally and Commuter Convoys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Event management</li> <li>• Set up route signage/directions</li> <li>• Leaders for commuter convoys</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Signage (optional)</li> <li>• Refreshment (optional)</li> </ul>	
	# people:		
Incentives for Biking to Work from Local Businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outreach to local restaurants and vendors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None</li> </ul>	
	# people:		



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## **Appendix D: Bike Month Sponsorship Request**

On the following page there is a sample letter the Town can use to request sponsorship. This letter has been adapted for the Town of Bethlehem from the Guidebook sample letter that was provided courtesy of RIDES for Bay Area Commuters, Inc., in San Francisco, California.



Dear [Sponsor]

How would you like to be a partner in one of Bethlehem's most healthy and inspiring events? The Town of Bethlehem, in conjunction with [sponsors], is gearing up for the first annual Bike to Work Day in May and we want you to be on our team.

Although more than half of the U.S. population lives within five miles of their workplace, lack of knowledge and incentive has deterred many from commuting by bicycle. Hundreds of U.S. cities have been successful in increasing bicycle commuters by offering enticements on Bike to Work Day.

Denver, CO reported in 2008 that over 10,352 people tried biking to work for the first time during a city-sponsored event. A study published by the San Diego Association of Governments showed that one out of five people who participated in their Bike to Work Day promotion as first time commuters became regular bicycle commuters.

Your interest in Bike to Work Day is a favorable affirmation of our message: Bethlehem residents can enhance air quality, cut down on traffic congestion, and improve personal health and fitness by commuting to work by bicycle.

Bike to Work Day will be held on May 18<sup>th</sup> 2012. Funding from sponsors helps pay for staff costs and promotional materials, but prizes are needed to make this event a complete success. Sponsors will benefit from their involvement by/through [...].

We would like to offer you this opportunity to join us as a sponsor by contributing a prize valued at \$1,000 or more so we can encourage individuals to bicycle to work. The name of your company will be featured on posters and other campaign materials in recognition of your contribution to this important community event.

Enclosed you will find a fact sheet describing Bike to Work Day. [Name] will call you in the near future to discuss this opportunity with you.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

[Name]

The Town of Bethlehem PaTHs Committee



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## **Appendix E: Sample Bike Month Press Release**

The follow page provides an sample Bike Month press release for the Town of Bethlehem and the PaTHs Committee. It is based off a sample from the American League of Bicyclists.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE

Contact [Name]

Phone [Number]

Email [Email Address]

Website [Website Address]

May 18<sup>th</sup> 2012 is Bike to Work Day in Bethlehem

Help us Celebrate National Bike Month

Bethlehem, NY – With spring in the air, Bethlehem and the League of American Bicyclists, the national organization for bicyclists, announce that May is National Bike Month, May 14<sup>th</sup> is Bike to Work Week, and May 18<sup>th</sup> is Bike to Work Day. The City Council and PaTHs committee urges everyone to bicycle to work or try cycling for fun, fitness or transportation. Participating cyclists should register at [website]. Free coffee, juice, bagels, donuts and fruit at [time] will be provided to all participants at [location].

Andy Clarke, President of the League of American Bicyclists said, “Biking to work is an efficient and fun way to get the exercise you need without having to find extra time to work out. And this year, with gasoline prices as high as they are, biking to work makes more sense than ever.” For more information, visit [website].

Local sponsors include:

[List sponsors]

The following are some tips that will help you enjoy biking to work more.

- Have your bicycle checked over by your local bicycle shop
- Always wear a helmet to protect your head in the event of an accident
- Ride in the right-most lane that goes in the direction that you are traveling
- Obey all stop signs, traffic lights and lane markings
- Look before you change lanes or signal a turn; indicate your intention, then act
- Be visible and predictable at all times; wear bright colored clothing and signal turns

Note to Editors

[Include background info on PaTHs and the League here]