

Bike-Ped NEWS

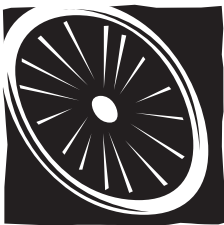
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Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee



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BIKE LANES ON GORNTO LAKE ROAD

There is good news for bicyclists in the Brandon area. A Hillsborough County project to extend Gornto Lake Road, now on the drawing board, has been revised to include on-road bike lanes.

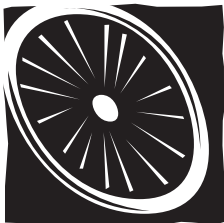
The project will extend Gornto Lake Road from its current location just east of the Westfield Shoppingtown mall (formerly Brandon Town Center) to connect with a short road segment that ends 400 feet south of Brandon Boulevard (SR 60).

Supported by the MPO, the county's Planning & Growth Management and Engineering Departments came together and agreed to revise the project plans, moving the curb closer to the sidewalks and reducing all four lanes from 12 feet to 11 feet. This allows 4-foot-wide signed and marked bicycle lanes on both sides of the roadway, at no additional cost.

With the Project Development and Environmental Study now complete, the county is exploring acquiring right-of-way. For additional information, contact **Tom Thompson** at (813) 272-5170.



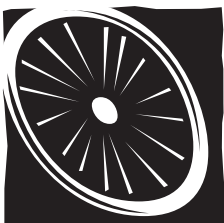
Bike Lanes will be part of the future extension of Gornto Lake Road.

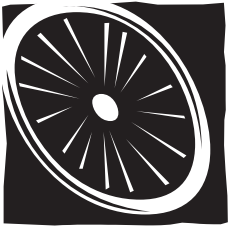


COMMUTER CORNER

A bicycle commuter for more than three years, Sam Merenda now commutes two miles a day from his home in Ybor City to his job in Channelside. Sam prefers cycling because it is healthier, more affordable, and he does not get stuck in traffic. Along with construction projects and road conditions in general, weather continues to be a critical issue for him. Sam believes that you should be constantly aware of safety while cycling.

Sam with his bike.





GENA'S BELIEVE IT OR NOT

“Don't Walk. You Might Get Hit by a Car!”

“When a city puts in a sidewalk, it sends a message that the area is a safe place to walk, ride a bicycle or roller-skate,” says City Engineer Gary West of Mishawaka, Indiana. West does not consider Grape Road, a local five-lane arterial with countless driveways and vehicles traveling in all directions, to be a safe place.

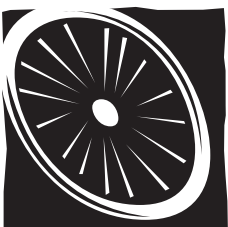
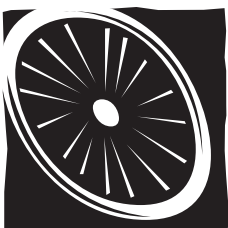
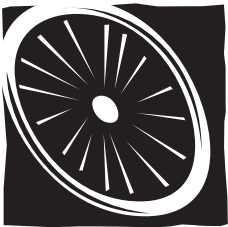
Meanwhile, local disabled residents use golf carts and motorized scooters to get around the Grape Road area. Having no sidewalk, they use them in the street.

Golf carts and motorized scooters, which move slowly and lack the safety features of cars, are illegal on public streets in this city and many others. Mishawaka intends to begin enforcing the law due to complaints.

The disabled citizens worry the city's action will effectively confine them to their homes.

A local journalist wonders if the city's refusal to install sidewalks is self-contradictory, noting that the city has bus stops on Grape Road. If it is safe enough to walk to a bus stop along the road, is it not safe enough to install a sidewalk?

For the full article, see *South Bend Tribune*, August 10, 2003, “Crackdown on Golf Carts Shows Need for Pedestrian Pathway.”



Congratulations! Senior Planner Gena Torres was recognized as Bicycle Professional of the Year by the Florida Bicycle Association at BikeFest 2003.

TO STRIPE OR NOT TO STRIPE: ONE CYCLIST'S OPINION

Josh Switzky, a San Francisco planner, has seen first-hand the differing philosophies of two major U.S. metropolitan areas. Active in both areas' bicycle advocacy groups, he observed an increase in cycling under San Francisco's aggressive bike-lane-creation program, while the City of Boston's emphasis on cycling in regular traffic lanes had little effect on bike ridership.

Writes Switzky, “If one wants to create an urban environment where anyone -- from age 8 to 88 -- feels at ease hopping on a bike and cruising around town, bike lanes are a necessity. This is so that those of us who are not adrenaline junkies -- the majority -- can feel we do not always have to be fending off the grilles of SUV's nipping at our heels.”

Switzky notes that “while bike lanes are not statistically safer than non-bike lanes, they are not statistically unsafe either -- they are a beneficial placebo.” But, he argues, “Until the cyclist population rises enough to be a constant presence swarming around the roadways, there will be a critical need for on-street bicycle facilities that encourage new cyclists.”



A disabled resident navigates Florida Avenue in Tampa, using an electric wheelchair.