



NEWS RELEASE

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City Again Named ‘Bicycle Friendly Community’ By League of American Bicyclists *Spartanburg one of just 214 municipalities in the nation so recognized*

SPARTANBURG, S.C. – May 18, 2012 – The City of Spartanburg announced today the League of American Bicyclists **for the second time has named the City a Bicycle Friendly Community, one of just 214 in the nation.** After becoming the first city in South Carolina to earn the four-year designation in 2007, the City submitted an application to have it renewed earlier this year.

“This recognition by the League of American Bicyclists places the City in very select company not only in South Carolina and the Southeast, but in the entire nation,” said Mayor Junie White. “The values at work in earning this honor are the same values that are helping to make Spartanburg the kind of city where people increasingly will choose to live, open businesses, and raise their families. This recognition truly sets Spartanburg apart, and that’s why it is so rewarding and exciting.”

Partners for Active Living and the City’s Pedestrian-Bicycle Commission led the application process on behalf of the City. Along with the City, the two groups have been at the forefront of what has become a long-term, community-wide effort to promote ways for people to be able to bicycle safely, whether done for transportation, recreation, leisure or exercise.

“The City of Spartanburg has created a culture that embraces walking and bicycling in our community, and Partners for Active Living is thrilled to be a partner,” said Laura Ringo, Executive Director for Partners for Active Living. “This is essential for the health, economic development, transportation opportunities, and overall quality of life of our citizens.”

The League of American Bicyclists group Bicycle Friendly Communities into four status levels: Platinum, Gold, Silver, and Bronze. Just as in 2007, Spartanburg has earned Bronze level status. Only

three cities have achieved Platinum status; 16 have earned Gold; 39 have earned Silver; and 156 have earned Bronze status.

“In 2007, we celebrated Spartanburg for being the first ever Bicycle Friendly Community in South Carolina, and our congratulations extend yet again to the City for their leadership as a community that embraces bicycling for the many ways that it improves the health, quality of life, and economic development of Spartanburg,” said Rachael Bronson, Executive Director of the Palmetto Cycling Coalition. “We have six Bicycle Friendly Communities in the state, and Spartanburg has always led the pack for their bicycle safety innovations and accommodations.”

Since the City first earned the Bicycle Friendly designation, it has worked with Partners for Active Living on several initiatives and projects to improve safety as well as access to both essential transportation routes and recreational amenities for bicyclists. Highlights include:

- Completion of the City/County pedestrian and bicycle master plan, a product of a partnership between the City, the Spartanburg Area Transportation Study, Spartanburg County, and Partners for Active Living.
- Established the B-Cycle program, the first bike-share system in the South.
- This City today has 8 total miles of bicycle lanes. Lanes created since 2007 include those along Magnolia, Forest, College, Broad, Liberty, and Converse streets; Union Street Extension; and Cameron Drive.
- Built and opened the Duncan Park mountain biking trails.
- Development of a childhood obesity task force of more than 20 public, private, and institutional partners, focused on improving physical activity, such as walking and bicycling, and access to healthy food.

In addition, the several projects are either underway or in various stages of planning:

- The most visible addition is a “road diet” project that will add bicycle lanes on West Main Street approaching downtown, a significant step forward in connectivity between the City’s west side and downtown. This project will get underway in the coming months.
- Two other bicycle lane projects are in progress: Chestnut Street leading to the new YMCA; and Caulder Avenue, which is a connector on the Southside.
- The City and PAL will be launching a third bike-sharing station, which will be located at the new Healthy Food Hub to be developed on Howard Avenue.

“A safe, accessible transportation infrastructure is important to all citizens, not only motorists,” said Randy Cooksey, chair of the City’s Pedestrian-Bicycling Commission. “The ability to get from ‘Point A’ to ‘Point B’ safely is important to the pedestrian walking to work, the cyclist riding to school, or the

family trying to live a healthy lifestyle. When on the road, a bicycle is a vehicle and should be treated as such.

“The City of Spartanburg has done a great job in recent years of making transportation accessible to all individuals and we look forward to advancing those efforts. We hope to see other municipal, county, and state governments join Spartanburg in their effort to become Bicycle Friendly Communities. None of this is possible without the support of our lawmakers from the municipal to the federal level of government and we thank those who are helping pave the way to safer streets for everyone.”

About Partners for Active Living

Partners for Active Living transforms Spartanburg County into a vibrant, healthy, connected community where we live and grow. Approximately 75% of chronic conditions such as cancer, childhood obesity, and diabetes are preventable, so Partners for Active Living is working to get ahead of them. PAL does this by employing the four p's: places to walk and bike, programs to encourage activity, and policies and partnerships that sustain our work. The organization wants to help create a community in which physical activity is safe and convenient and part of everyday life for all ages and abilities. www.active-living.org

About the City Pedestrian-Bicycle Commission

Established in 2011, the Commission consists of local residents appointed by City Council who advise the City on local pedestrian and bicycling issues. Its goal is to improve bicycling and walking opportunities, engagement, infrastructure, and marketing throughout the City of Spartanburg.

About the League of American Bicyclists

The League of American Bicyclists promotes bicycling for fun, fitness and transportation, and works through advocacy and education for a bicycle-friendly America. The League represents the interests of America's 57 million bicyclists, including its 300,000 members and affiliates. www.bikeleague.org

About the Palmetto Cycling Coalition

A Columbia-based non-profit organization working to improve bicycling access, safety and education in South Carolina. www.pccsc.net

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