



MICHAEL SULLIVAN/NEWS-REVIEW PHOTOS

Janet Bitter of Roseburg cleans the chain on her bike during a bicycle maintenance class in Roseburg on Thursday.

Sharing the road

Roseburg given bronze status as bicycle friendly community

EMILY HOARD
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With its bicycle lanes, clubs and cycling events, Roseburg has earned a Bronze Level Bicycle Friendly Community award by the League of American Bicyclists.

"It's really partially about the community and its commitment to encouraging people to bike and making it safe for people to bike, so I think the bronze reflects that that is an effort we have undertaken," Public Works Director Nikki Messenger said.

The bronze level also recognizes the city's pledge to improve bicycling conditions through bicycling



promotion, infrastructure, educational programs and pro-bicycling policies.

Part of the efforts are about trying to make it easier, safer and more comfortable for people to hop on a bike to run errands across town or just to get some exercise, according to Dick Dolgonas of the Umpqua Velo Club.

"There are lots of opportunities here, and there are actually lots of people who are starting to ride," Dolgonas said. The bicycling community has expanded in the 37 years he's lived here, he added.

Umpqua Velo worked with the Chamber of Commerce's Land of Umpqua campaign to create the Cycle Umpqua website, www.cycleumpqua.com, which features the top 25 rides throughout Douglas County.

The Umpqua Basin Economic Alliance has also been involved in attracting bicycle tourism and is planning to work toward that goal with a studio workshop through Travel Oregon.

Mickey Beach of the UBEA said he thinks the Bicycle Friendly award is

Marty Fink, bottom, leads a class on bicycle maintenance in Roseburg on Thursday. Looking on, from left, Jayne Farquhar, Kelly Leonard and Susan Weston, all of Roseburg.



Kelly Leonard of Roseburg positions his bike during a bicycle maintenance class in Roseburg on Thursday.

a great opportunity for local businesses that could benefit from cyclists touring the area.

The UBEA hopes to bridge the different communities of the county through communication and common strategies to promote the area.

"I think this is another opportunity to coordinate our communities and provide information to cyclists about how cool this area is to explore,"

Beach said.

The Public Works Department, with input from Bike Walk Roseburg and Roseburg Police Department, spent about three months putting together its application for the Bicycle Friendly certification before submitting it.

It included information on miles of bike lanes, miles of separated multi-use paths, ordinances, land use planning codes and enforcement policies.

"There's a lot of tourism that comes from bicycling, so it's both the tourist that you want to draw to the community but also serving your existing citizens that want to use that as their primary mode of transportation," Messenger said. "It's a balance and it can bring some economic development."

Reporter Emily Hoard can be reached at 541-957-4217 or ehoard@nrtoday.com. Or follow her on Twitter @ [hoard_emily](https://twitter.com/hoard_emily).