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**Morgantown Strives to Continue “Bicycle Friendly Community” Rating**

MORGANTOWN – The League of American Bicyclists accredited Morgantown as a Bronze-level bicycle friendly community in 2016, an award that is valid for the next four years.

In total, 140 communities applied for recognition. Morgantown joins a leading group of communities, in all 50 states, that are transforming neighborhoods to become safe for bicyclists. There are now 404 communities currently recognized for their efforts to make biking better with a BFC award.

The City of Morgantown and the Bicycle Board hope to raise its score in the next round of applications for the BFC awards.

Drew Gatlin, a Bicycle Board member, explains the necessary improvements include increasing education for bicyclists.

“The bicycle board is actively recruiting accredited teachers for updated curriculum surrounding cycling education,” Gatlin said. “The city and WVU recently resigned a memorandum for serving these classes through CPASS, with anticipated class offerings in 2017.”

Other improvements to be added to the Great Morgantown area include adding more bike lanes and improving public decision-making processes for transportation improvements.

“[This year] witnessed a major refreshment to the bicycle board membership and a renewed commitment to seeking representation from all city wards as well as Greater Morgantown,” said Gatlin. “Additionally, in 2016, the board formally recruited ex-officio representatives from nearly all related departments within the city. Procuring the two bicycle-related TAP grants, successfully applying for the League award, and updating the bike storage ordinance were all made possible through the combined work of these stakeholders.”

Several grants are in the process of being updated for bike safety in the City of Morgantown. The FY2014 TAP Grant: “Enhancing Bicycle Signage and Facilities” address numerous projects in the MMMPO Regional Bike Plan through a two-pronged strategy. First, the grant funds the installation of pavement markings called “sharrows” and R4-11 signs that read “Bicycles May Use Full Lane.” The combination of these two traffic control devices have proven safer and more effective than previous “Share the Road” campaign markings. Secondly, the grant funds installation of covered bicycle parking at various Mountain Line Transit Authority bus stops.

FY2016 TAP Grant: “Morgantown Multi-Use Path Along WV 705” provides $400,000 in Federal Funds to the City of Morgantown from the Federal Highway Administration. The current proposal accepted by the West Virginia Division of Highways in November of 2016 describes construction of a multi-use path on the east/northeast side of 705 from the Mileground roundabout to at least Stewartstown Road. There is also plans for a combination of bicycle lanes from Stewartstown Road to Willowdale. Additionally, the grant aims to install crosswalks at various intersections across 705 between Stewartstown and Willowdale. It is one of the largest TAP grants in this current cycle.

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