March 8, 2016

**News from the Morgantown Municipal Bicycle Board**

*The City continues working hard to encourage cycling for recreation and transportation.*

MORGANTOWN – As West Virginia’s first nationally recognized Bicycle Friendly Community (BFC), Morgantown has established a balanced program of education, enforcement, infrastructure development, encouragement and evaluation to facilitate cycling not only as recreation but also as a practical means of transportation. The city of Morgantown is committed to improving cycling in the community. Grants have been written and awarded for projects that will assist in these programs.

One such program will be implemented in mid-April. A combination of pavement markings and signage will make cycling on city streets safer for all concerned – cyclists and motorists. The WV Division of Highways in conjunction with the city of Morgantown will be installing new traffic devices called “Sharrows” or “Shared Lane Pavement Markings” throughout the city. They will be installed at select locations alongside new Bikes May Use Full Lane signs. Sharrows and BMUFL signs are used together on narrow roadways where lanes are less than 14-feet wide and bicycles and motor vehicles cannot travel safely side-by-side within the lane. On our roadways it is necessary for the cyclist to “take the lane” and ride in front of motorists, rather than beside them. A new WV law put into effect in June 2014 requires motorists to pass bicyclists at a distance of not less than 3 feet at a careful and reduced speed.

The Sharrows along with the BMUFL signs will:

* Enhance the safe travel of bicycles and motor vehicles in the same traffic lane
* Help position bicyclists on narrow lanes where cars and bikes cannot travel side-by-side safely
* Alert motorists to where bicycles may use the full lane, as WV law requires
* Tell cyclists where to safely ride and alert motorists where to expect cyclists
* Guide cyclists to a safe position next to parking lanes, outside the ”door zone”, where a parked vehicle’s opened door may hit cyclists
* Encourage safe passing
* Reduce wrong-way cycling

For more information on the program and plans for its installation please contact Damien Davis, City Engineer, (304) 284-7412, ddavis@morgantownwv.gov.