

# LivableStreets Rethinking urban transportation

e-bulletin #4

June 6, 2005

## Welcome!

We celebrate our 6-month anniversary this month with over 500 individuals on our e-bulletin mailing list! Launched in November 2004, the Boston Bicycle Planning Initiative (BBPI), a project of the LivableStreets Alliance, seeks to make Boston a more bicycle-friendly city. We are recognized by other bicycling, pedestrian, and transit advocates, officials and politicians in Boston and other neighboring cities, planning agencies, and regional government agencies such as the MBTA and Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR).

**Please help spread the word!** Forward this e- bulletin to anyone you think would be interested (use the link at the bottom of this message), or direct them to our website [www.livablestreets.info](http://www.livablestreets.info).

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## MAYOR MENINO SIGNS BIKE PROCLAMATION



In early May as part of the National Bicycle Greenway Mayor's Ride, a five-leg 51-city tour to show how bicycling can improve the quality of life in our urban areas, Boston's Mayor Menino signed a "bicycle proclamation" welcoming bicyclists to the City of Boston. This, along with the Mayor's endorsement of the upcoming Boston Bicycle Festival on September 25, 2005, are positive indications that Boston might actually begin to take seriously the need to improve safety and increase opportunities for bicyclists in the city. [Click here to view the text of the proclamation.](#)

The National Bicycle Greenway is envisioned as a nationwide network of interconnected bike friendly roads and bicycle pathways that will connect cyclists to major cities all throughout the US.

[Click here for more information](#)

## WE NEED VOLUNTEERS!

## Feature article:

### SAN FRANCISCO BICYCLISTS BECOME ESTABLISHMENT

*By Gregory Dicum  
SF Gate,  
May 25, 2005*

"My first Critical Mass was really an eye opener," Leah Shahum told me. "I had never thought of bicycling as a political thing, as a part of a social movement. Riding with a thousand people just felt so empowering. It felt different: I felt safer, I felt more confident. These were good feelings."

That was 1996, shortly after Shahum had moved to San Francisco a few years out of college. It was the period when Critical Mass established San Francisco as the epicenter of militant bicycling culture, as thousands of bikers swarmed in a usually joyous and always chaotic monthly leaderless parade. A decade later, Shahum is executive director of the San Francisco

The Boston Bicycle Planning Initiative is seeking people like you to help make Boston a better place for bicycling. Currently we are operating entirely with a volunteer staff (though we expect to receive funding for a staff person in the near future)-so we need your help. No previous bicycle advocacy knowledge or skills required!



Bicycle Coalition and the public face of a new kind of grown-up bicycle activism.

[\[MORE\]](#)

[Click for the entire article](#)

There are a wide variety of tasks and projects to suit even the fussiest of volunteers: big and small, one-time and continuous, technical and creative, field observations and computer work, solo and group projects, activist stuff with an edge and research/ office tasks. Contribute a little something, learn a little something, and have fun in the process with others interested in bicycle advocacy. You will work with committed, knowledgeable, and creative bicycle advocates who will help set you up with a volunteer activity that suits your interests and time availability.

Email [jeff@bikethehub.org](mailto:jeff@bikethehub.org) for more information.

[For more information](#)

#### NEWS: US SENATE PASSES TRANSPORTATION BILL



The Senate passed SAFETEA, its version of the federal transportation bill, on May 17th, with significant provisions to benefit bicycling and walking. Final passage occurred just minutes after the Senate decisively rejected (84-16) an amendment offered by Senator Sessions that proposed drastic reductions in funding for transit and the CMAQ, Enhancements and TCSP programs.

The margin of defeat of the Sessions amendment was overwhelming, sending a powerful message that programs that fund transportation alternatives are important elements of federal transportation policy. This is important as the House and Senate head into conference committee to work out differences between the two bills.

If the best of the House and Senate bills are combined during the conference committee, people who walk or bicycle will benefit from a strong new Safe Routes to School program, as well as continued funding for Transportation Enhancements, Recreational Trails, and other popular programs.

[Safe Routes to School Program](#) The Senate bill includes a Safe Routes to School Program, a critical new program that will make it safer for children to walk to school. However, the Senate funding level of \$312 million is inadequate. America Bikes is seeking funding at the House level of \$875 million along with the inclusion of House policy language in the final bill.

[Fair Share for Safety](#) This provision would direct states to use their federal safety funding in proportion to the percent of fatalities among different road users. Right now most states spend less than 2 percent of their safety funds on bicycle and pedestrian safety, even though 13 of traffic deaths nationwide are on foot or bicycle. This provision is not in the House bill.

[Conserve By Bicycling Program](#) This new program establishes 10 pilot projects throughout the country that conserve energy resources by

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encouraging the use of bicycles. Unfortunately the funding provisions were stripped before passage. In it's current form the bill instructs the U.S. Secretary of Transportation to establish the program but identifies no resources for implementation.

Core Programs: The Senate bill continues funding for Transportation Enhancements, a primary source of funding for bicycling and walking, as ten percent of the Surface Transportation Program. Funding is also continued for Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ). Both of these are in line with the House bill. The Senate bill includes funding for the Recreational Trails Program at a level of \$270 million, below the House level of \$503 million. This program uses a portion of federal gas taxes for off-road recreation. The Senate bill continues funding of a National Bicycle and Pedestrian Clearinghouse, as does the House bill.

What's Missing:

\* Non- Motorized Transportation Pilot Program This program would help several communities complete non- motorized transportation networks, to demonstrate that bicycling and walking can carry a significant share of trips. It is funded in the House bill at \$25 million a year, but is not in the Senate bill.

\* Complete Streets was offered as an amendment by Senator Harkin in final Senate debate, but fell just short (44 in favor, 53 opposed). This provision would have required states and regions to adopt policies to ensure that all road projects accommodate people who walk and bicycle. It is not in the House bill.

\* High-priority projects fund specific projects by Congressional district. They are a prominent part of the House bill, but are not a part of the Senate bill.

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#### **NEWS: STATE ANNOUNCES MBTA EXPANSION**



State officials announced on May 18 that Somerville's Union Square would get a separate branch of the Green Line extension. The list of commitments totals \$770 million and calls for building stations on the Fairmount Line, which runs through Hyde Park, Mattapan, and Dorchester; doubling service on the Worcester-Boston commuter rail line; and adding 1,000 parking spaces at as-yet unspecified commuter rail and transit stations throughout the Boston region.

The roster of projects does not include two on the original 1990 list: restoring the Arborway trolley service in Jamaica Plain and building a connection between the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority's Red and Blue subway lines.

Their absence has upset some environmentalists, who say they will continue to pursue a federal lawsuit seeking to force the state to follow through on the original list of transit commitments. "What we're really concerned about is that we're getting one transit commitment, as opposed to the package of transit commitments the Commonwealth has long promised the people of Boston," said Philip Warburg, president of the Conservation Law Foundation.

The new list now goes to regional planners and to state environmental regulators for their review. The projects would be funded by a mix of state and federal money.

The largest of the projects by far would be what officials are calling the enhanced Green Line extension, which would include branches with trolley service to both West Medford and Union Square, similar to the various Green Line branches in Boston, Brookline, and Newton. At an estimated \$559 million, it would be one of the largest MBTA expansions since the mid-1980s and is scheduled to be completed between 2011 and 2014.

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## CALENDAR & EVENTS

**FOR A GREAT LIST OF RIDES, SEE:**

<http://www.landrys.com/Pages/events.html>

**PHOTO EXHIBIT:** Robert Fine is having a bicycle-related photo exhibit in and around Central Square in Cambridge. Check out his works from June 1-30 at Carberry's Bakery on 74 Prospect Street.



**BNB ADULT MECHANICS COURSES.** Learn to repair your own bike! These are "basic" mechanics courses which give you the skills to do a full tune-up, plus more advanced work overhauling rotational systems. Classes cover bike fit, flats, brakes, gears, and adjustments and overhauls of hubs and headsets. Each course meets at Bikes Not Bombs (Jackson Square T stop, Roxbury) once a week for 5 weeks. Cost is \$100 A: Thursdays, 7-9pm June 2nd-June 30th; B: Tuesdays, 7-9pm, June 7th - July 5th; C: Thursdays, 7-9pm, July 14th -August 11th; D: Tuesdays, 7-9pm, July 19th-August 16th. : [Click here for more information.](#)

**June 12: BOSTON BICYCLE FESTIVAL MONTHLY RIDE.** Nature's Urban Places - Guided tour of the city's "wild places." The Wild Ride was a great success last year, so with a few updates, here it is again! This is a guided tour of Boston's urban wilds, including Allandale Woods in Roslindale and the McLaughlin Woodland and Historic Orchard on top of Mission Hill, and a bunch of interesting hidden wild spots close by. We'll stop for informational talks about the importance of these spaces, the problems with invasive species, interesting plants and foods you can forage, and info on where and when to harvest free fruit from community orchards planted by Earthworks in some of these spots! We'll provide mechanical support and ride marshalls. Co-sponsored by the Boston Bicycle Festival, Earthworks, and Bikes Not Bombs. The distance will be about 15 miles, with lots of stops for walking through the city's natural oases. [Click here for more information.](#)

**BLACKSTONE RIVER EXPEDITION 2005.** From Wednesday, June 15-Saturday, June 18, participants will canoe, kayak, hike and bicycle along the Blackstone River Valley in Central Mass and Rhode Island. [Click here for more information.](#)

**BROADWAY BIKE SCHOOL CLASSES.** Basic Class- Series of 5 classes, 2 hours each. Repair a flat... learn how to adjust your bearings, brakes, and gears... learn about chains, lubrication, general maintenance and diagnosis. Wednesdays, June 15 - July 13, 2005, 6:30 - 8:30 PM; Mondays, June 20 - July 25, 2005, 6:30 - 8:30 PM. Women-Only Basic Class- Learn basic bicycle mechanics in a women-only environment. Classes are taught by professional women bike mechanics. Series of 5 classes, 2 hours each. Repair a flat, learn how to adjust your bearings, brakes, and gears. Learn about chains, lubrication, general maintenance and diagnosis. Sundays, June 12 - July 25,

2005, 6:00 - 8:00 PM. [Click here for more information.](#)

**June 16: MASSBIKE VOLUNTEER NIGHT.** Pizza, friends, and envelope stuffing! From 5:00-8:30 p.m. on Thursday, June 16. It's a great way to have fun and help the cause. At MassBike offices, 20 Park Plaza, Ste. 528, Boston (Arlington T stop). Please RSVP to [mike@massbike.org](mailto:mike@massbike.org).

**June 20: MBTA RIDERS OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE MEETING.** 4:30 - 6:00 pm. 10 Park Plaza, 2nd Floor, Conference Room 1, 2 & 3. (Boston).

**June 24: BOSTON CRITICAL MASS.** Last Friday of every month, 5:30pm, Copley Square. [Click here for more information.](#)

**June 28: WALKBOSTON ADVOCACY COMMITTEE MEETING.** 75 State Street 5:30 pm - 7:00 pm, RSVP needed for building security, 617.367.9255 or [info@walkboston.org](mailto:info@walkboston.org).

**June 29: HEARING ON MASS. BICYCLIST BILL.** The Bicyclists' Bill of Rights and Responsibilities (H. 1411) will have its next hearing with the Public Safety Committee on Wednesday, June 29 at 10:00 a.m. in the State House's Hearing Room A-2. [Click here for more information.](#)

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[Click Here For More Information](#)

### NEWS: 2500 CYCLISTS HIT THE STREETS OF DUBLIN



To kick off the world's largest bicycle conference, **Velo-City**, held this year in Dublin, 2500 local cyclists celebrated with a 10km "critical mass" ride through the city with police escort on closed streets!

500 attended the conference from around the world which ended last friday,

including about a dozen from the United States; most, though, were from Europe.

The overall theme of Velo- City 2005 is "Delivering the Vision". There will be a strong focus on a vision-led, integrated strategy approach to the development of cycling. Underpinning the theme is the recognition that each city is unique; its aspirations, culture, economy, objectives etc. are non-standard; and the role of cycling in each city is highly variable. "Delivering the Vision" should appeal to cities that are wondering, "Where do we start?", or to those who are disappointed at their achievements relative to cycle-orientated cities in Holland, Denmark and elsewhere.

Boston Bicycle Planning Initiative Coordinator, Jeff Rosenblum, attended the conference and plans a series of presentations during the summer and fall with interesting and exciting highlights from the conference sessions.

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