

# 2008 BOSTON BIKES ANNUAL SUMMARY

## Overview

Boston Bikes is part of Mayor Menino's vision for a vibrant and healthy city that benefits all its citizens. It seeks to make Boston a world-class bicycling city by creating safe and inviting conditions for all residents and visitors.

Boston Bikes focuses on improvements in all five universal bike planning areas: Engineering, Enforcement, Education, Encouragement, and Evaluation.

Mayor Menino formed Boston Bikes in September, 2007. This summary reviews work that took place during the first 15 months of the program.

## Philosophy

We began 2008 with a series of guiding principles that would enable us to craft Boston into one of the country's premier biking cities. These include the following:

1. Work in conjunction with larger "Healthy City" programs
2. Enable collaboration between other related programs in the city.
3. Focus on high-quality and manageable projects that have the greatest impact possible.
4. Engage the entire community.

## Goals

The overarching goal of Boston Bikes is to **change culture** – to establish cycling as a mainstream activity and a form of transportation that is welcoming to the general public. Programming and goals were designed around the five universal "Es": Engineering, Encouragement, Education, Enforcement, and Evaluation, with this overarching goal in mind. Goals were as follows:

1. ENGINEER
  - a. Install several miles of bike lanes
  - b. Install 250 bike racks
2. ENCOURAGE
  - a. Directly engage 7,000 cyclists, with a focus on new riders.
  - b. Indirectly engage 1 million people in the issue of cycling.
3. EDUCATE
  - a. Reach 500 people with wide-reaching programs teaching safety and skills.
4. ENFORCE
  - a. Establish positive, respectful relationships between all parties.
5. EVALUATE
  - a. Establish benchmarks by which to measure progress.

## 2008 Projects

Boston Bikes designed and prioritized over a dozen projects to achieve these goals.

**Two above-priority** projects emerged, which are of such integral importance to the creation of the world-class bicycling city that they are ranked ahead of all other prioritized projects.

*Bike Share* The City of Boston is spearheading an effort in partnership with the MAPC, Cities of Cambridge, Somerville, Brookline and Arlington, the MBTA, DCR, Harvard University, MIT, Northeastern University, UMass Boston and BU to bring a bike share system to the Metro-Boston area, modeled after the program in Paris, France. As envisioned, the program will include more than 1500+ bikes, and 20,000 daily trips. Twelve respondents replied to an RFI issued by the City of Boston. An RFP will be issued this winter, with an eye towards launching in Spring 2010.



An example of a bike share in action



The Parisian bike share model

*Complete Streets* The City of Boston contracted VHB and Toole Design Group to create 21<sup>st</sup> century street design guideline that will allow us to make livable, healthy communities that work for everyone. This goal of this venture is to create a consistent standard by which to design streets that successfully accommodate cars, bikes, and parking safely and effectively.

**High Priority projects** include the creation of the Boston Bikes Summit, the installation of 250 bike racks and several miles of bike lane and the Hub On Wheels citywide bike ride and festival.

*Bike Lanes* The most important of these high priority projects is the creation of bike lanes. Carving space for cyclists on the road is critical to making the road more inviting to cyclists. A survey of over 200 metro-Boston bicyclists participating in Bike Friday confirms this.

- 73% of respondents say road improvements such as bike lanes, bike paths, eliminating potholes will increase their riding.
- 56% of respondents believe making road improvements should be the priority for Boston Bikes

- 80% of novices and 50% of experienced riders bike more often when they can take car-free off-street paths.

In 2008 bike accommodations were added as follows:

Comm Avenue	Bike Lanes	1 mile
Bennington St	Shared Road	2 miles
Kenmore Square	Bike Lanes	n/a (partially complete)
Turtle Pond Pkwy	Bike Lanes	2 miles
Washington St	Bus/Bike Lane	1 mile
Perkins St	Bike Lane	.5 mile (restriped)

In 2009, the following bike accommodations are planned:

American Legion Highway	Lanes & Shared	2.2
Columbus Avenue	Lanes	1 mile
Commonwealth Avenue	Lanes	1 mile
Dartmouth Street	Lanes	1 mile

Additional roadways are being analyzed.



Map of Current Boston Bike Network

*Boston Bikes Summit* – Mayor Menino launched Boston bikes with the 3 day Boston Bikes Summit, intended to bring national leaders, advocates, and cyclists together to learn about various issues and actively engage everyone in dialogue. Over 300 participants attended 35 seminars, led by experts including National experts: Andy Clarke

from the League of American Bicyclists, Jennifer Toole from Toole Design Group, Nick Jackson from the Chicago bicycle and pedestrian program, and John Cicarelli from Bicycle Solutions. Local groups including LivableStreets Alliance and MassBike took an active role in planning.

*Bike Racks* – With over 250 bike racks installed to date, Boston Bikes reached installation goal. Boston Bikes worked to have racks distributed equitably throughout the city. Additionally, Boston Bikes worked with historic districts and secured approval for installation. Racks have since been installed on Newbury Street, Boylston Street, Charles Street, and in the South End. Boston Bikes intends to add 250 more racks annually for the next two years.

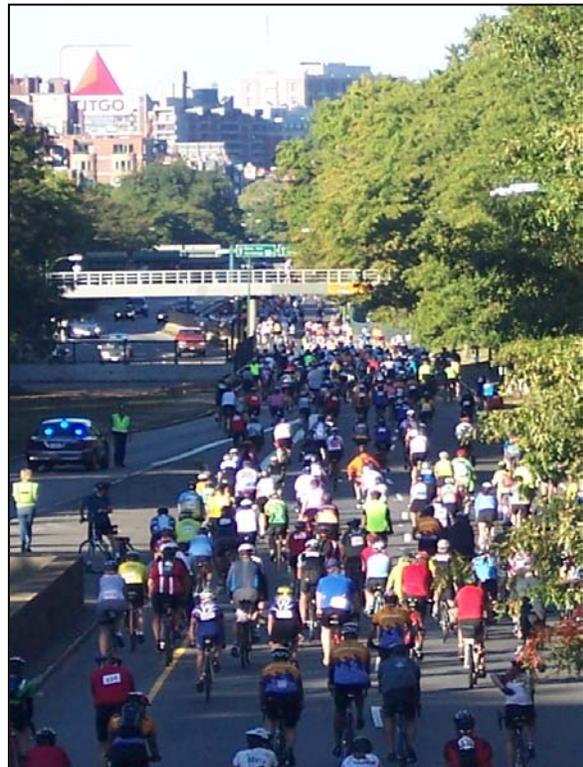


930 Mass Ave, BEFORE



930 Mass Ave – AFTER

*Hub on Wheels* citywide bike ride and festival– Andy Clarke, the President of League of American Bicyclists, lauds major citywide bike rides as one of just three programs with transformative results. Storrow Drive was closed for the first time in its near entirety inviting 4000 riders to participate, a 60% ridership increase from 2007. The power of such one-time events: they create converts. 57% of HOW participants report plan to bike more frequently because of Hub On Wheels. Nationally, statistics show that with Bike Week, also a one-time event, 40% of participants are new riders and 32% continue to bicycle afterwards.



**Moderate Priority** projects include the creation of a bike map, establishment of an advisory board, and promotion of Bay State Bike Week.

*Map* – The Boston Bikes Bike Map (draft) is complete and available for review online at [www.cityofboston.gov/bikes](http://www.cityofboston.gov/bikes). The importance of a map cannot be understated.

- We called several different cities and asked what important initiatives should be undertaken in order to encourage a city as it works on becoming more bike-friendly; all said that a bike map is critical.
- Over one-third of Bike Friday survey respondents use a map to choose routes.

The bike map is also an important educational tool, disseminating valuable information regarding laws, commuting, cycling events, bike shops, etc.

*Advisory Board* – As per one of the main suggestions of the Boston Bikes Summit, an interim advisory group was established in June of 2008. Over 60 people applied for the final board. Twenty plus members will be announced shortly.



*Bike Week* – Nearly 3000 cyclists participated in this year's Bike Week, marking a 50% increase over 2007. A part of National Bike Month, Mayor Menino and the City of Boston were lead sponsors in this event, partnering with MassCommute, MassBike, the City of Cambridge and others. The goal was to encourage as many new riders to try cycling as possible through a variety of exciting events, including a 50,000 Mile Commuter Challenge and a Bike Bash.

**Medium Priority** projects included Bike Friday, Bike Friendly Businesses, a Youth Cycling Program and benchmarking.

*Bike Friday* – The main goal of Bike Friday is to encourage people to try commuting and to foster a community of cyclists. On two Fridays during the summer, bike convoys with police escorts allowed people to experience bicycle commuting safely from various points throughout metro Boston. As the groups converged on City Hall Plaza, and were greeted with free breakfast, music, and a bike expo. Over 500 people participated. Bike Friday turned out to be more successful than anticipated resulting in an expanded 2009 program.



*Bike Friendly Businesses* – This program recognizes efforts businesses make in order to create a bike-friendly environment for their employees and/or customers. Honors were given to thirty socially responsible businesses that actively promote bicycling for transportation, recreation, and sport. Technical assistance and information is provided to help companies continue to improve in these areas, as well. This program is continued in 2009 and will be expanded to have gold, silver and bronze level recognition awards.

*Youth cycling programs* – Youth cycling programs saw multiple programs. In September we hosted the first-ever R.O.C.K. ROLL & RIDE, which was a day of bicycle-centered family fun in Franklin Park. Featuring bike rodeos, bike tours, workshops, music, and food, this event is a part of the continuing process of getting the community excited about cycling while teaching necessary bike skills and safety.

Thanks to a grant from the Charles River Wheelmen (CRW), we were also able to reach out to over 350 youth this year through programs at Camp Harborview, Dearborn Middle School, and Fenway High School. The goal of these programs is to teach bicycle skills and safety, and to allow kids to fall in love with biking. Having secured another CRW grant for 2009, we will be building our program so that we will be able to reach 1000 children in conjunction with the Boston Centers for Youth and Families, Trips for Kids, and Camp Harborview.



*Benchmarking* - Lastly, we established the beginnings of a database containing information on cyclists and bike trips. Prior to launching Boston Bikes, we used Google to track the trips of 300 cyclists, and took traffic counts at twenty locations. These counts were duplicated in 2008, showing a 5% increase in bicycling. Due to the great variability in weather, we believe the actual ridership increased far more dramatically. (See figure 2.)

From this research, we found a few facts that are of interest:

- The bicyclist mode split is highest on the bridges with bicyclists representing 5%, 7% and 4% of all traffic on the Lars Anderson, Longfellow and BU Bridges respectively.
- Bicycle traffic is heaviest traffic on off-road bike paths.
- Bicycle traffic is heavy on direct routes, regardless of bike-friendliness

### **2009 Goals**

In 2009, Boston Bikes intends to expand on the work from 2008. Highlights are as follows:

- Publish Bike Share RFP in late winter.
- Create a bike network plan
- Install 5 miles of bikeways/accommodations
- Install 250 new bike racks
- Continue to the dynamic growth of Hub On Wheels (5,000 riders) and Bay State Bike Week (4,000 riders)
- Print the Boston Bike Map.
- Engage over 1,000 youth through various youth cycling programs

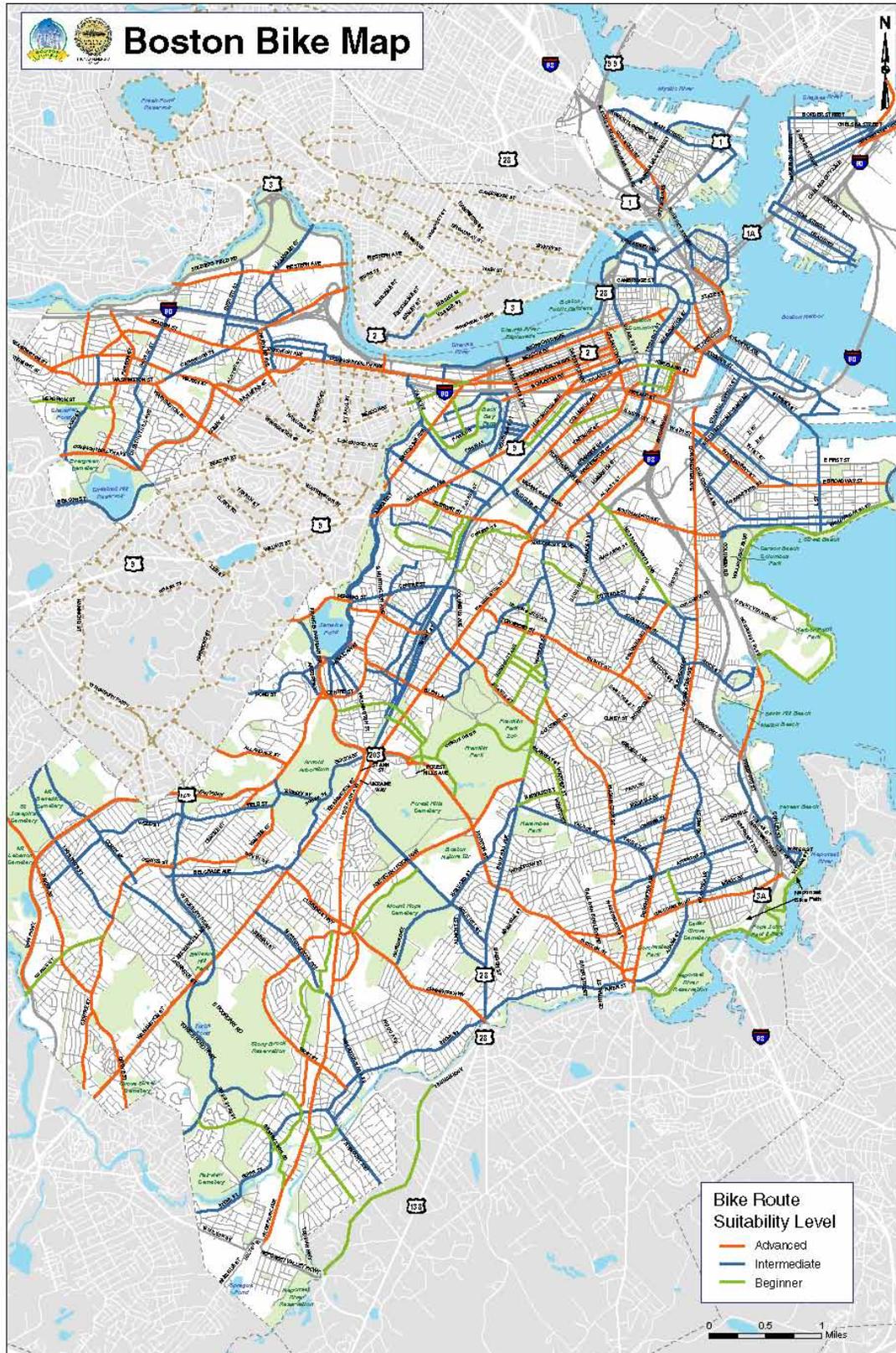


Fig 1 Boston Bike Map (draft)

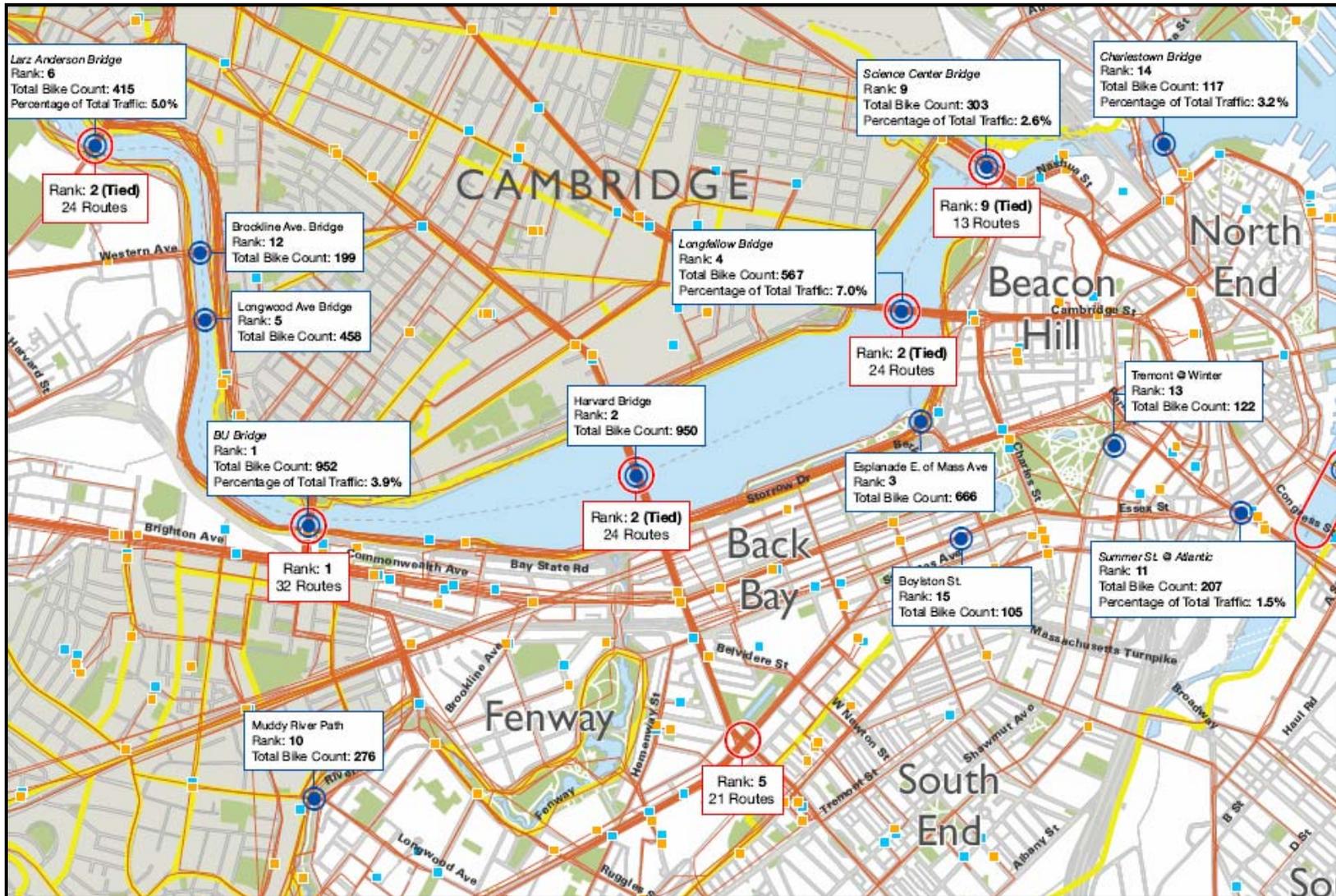


Fig 2 2008 Bike Traffic Counts