

May: A Great time to Bike or Walk!

With spring in the air, Mayor Randy Rhoads has officially proclaimed that **May is Bike and Walk Month** in Lee's Summit, as it is across the country. Whether you choose to bike or walk, you will enjoy the many benefits of active living.

You are no doubt aware of some of these benefits. Here are just a few:

- Better health, longevity and quality of life
- Enjoying the great outdoors
- Getting around town in an inexpensive and environmentally friendly way

These are, in fact, some of the reasons that our City Council adopted the Livable Streets Policy in 2010 and formed the Livable Streets Advisory Board in 2011.

The **Livable Streets Advisory Board** is working with the City to make our streets safer and more accessible for people who choose to bike, walk or use mass transit. We are helping to transform Lee's Summit into a more "Bike Friendly and Walk Friendly Community".

So go ahead. Get out there and get moving! Walk or bike to whatever destinations you can: work, school, a friend's house, running errands. Make a special effort on these dates: **May 14-18 is National Bike to Work Week** and **Friday, May 18 is Bike to Work Day**.

Here are a few important safety tips:

When you bike:

- ❖ Wear a helmet and bright colors. (Make sure drivers can see you.)
- ❖ Choose the safest route (A Bike Plan with preferred routes is in the works.)
- ❖ Experienced bicyclists are allowed on any city street by law, but streets with a wide curb lane, bike lane or paved shoulder are the safest.
- ❖ Less experienced bicyclists may use the multi-use trails where available. But watch out for 1) other people and pets on the trail, and 2) vehicles at intersections and driveways.
- ❖ Communicate with motorists by using approved arm signals and making eye contact. Signal before turning or changing lanes.
- ❖ **OBEY TRAFFIC LAWS!** Reckless biking and "blowing through stop signs" puts everyone at risk and unnecessarily gives bicyclists a bad reputation.
- ❖ Wave pleasantly to acknowledge motorists who are courteous or who may be temporarily inconvenienced by your presence on the street.

When you walk:

- ❖ Stay on the sidewalks, multi-use trails and marked crosswalks.
- ❖ Be certain cars are stopping for you before stepping into a crosswalk.
- ❖ If no sidewalk is available, walk carefully on the left side of the street, so you can see cars coming toward you. (Many gaps in sidewalks have been filled by City Staff.)
- ❖ Watch out for moving vehicles, particularly at intersections and driveways.

When you drive:

- ❖ Be aware of the increased number of people out walking and biking.
- ❖ Stop for pedestrians in a crosswalk
- ❖ Anticipate sudden movements and “darting” by children near a street.
- ❖ When you encounter a person on a bicycle:
 - Slow down, focus, and assess the situation. Proceed cautiously.
 - Pass carefully, giving the cyclist plenty of room (at least 4 feet)
(If there is not room to pass safely, it is safest if the bicyclist rides in the center of the lane until the lane widens or they are able to turn onto a safer street. Please be patient.)
 - Do not honk at, yell at, or otherwise harass the person on the bike. (These will not improve the situation and will increase the potential danger.)
- ❖ When in doubt, yield to a person walking or biking. Failure to do so could cost that person their life.
- ❖ ***OBEY TRAFFIC LAWS!***

Whether you choose to bike, walk or drive...**BE COURTEOUS and BE CAREFUL!**

Check out these excellent resources:

- Mo. Bicycle and Pedestrian Federation: <http://mobikefed.org/skills-safety.php>
- National Complete Streets Coalition: www.completestreets.org
- BikeWalkKC (a great *regional* resource) www.bikewalkkc.org

Keep Biking and Walking, Lee’s Summit!

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