

Upshift – Summer 2020



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Bridge along the Illinois Prairie Path. Photo by Fred Fallor.

Working Statewide for Better Bicycling

Opening Thoughts

Hey Bike Friends. My first nine months as executive director of Ride Illinois has been anything but business as usual! The pandemic has led to the cancelation of many annual events and rides, including our Grand Illinois Bike Tour.



Through it all, Ride Illinois has remained focused on our mission to make biking better in Illinois. This issue of Upshift includes some highlights of the advocacy work that has taken place so far in 2020.

My plan was to travel around the state to meet with Ride Illinois members, partners, planners, and elected officials in 2020. Those plans have been delayed and I hope to meet many of our members before too long!

Join me on Tuesday, September 15th at the online Illinois Bike Summit. We have a full slate of useful and interesting topics to discuss and share! Contact me at dave@rideillinois.org with your questions, comments, or suggestions. Thanks for your continued support!!

With hope for the future,



Cancelation of Grand Illinois Bike Tour

Ride Illinois had to make the difficult decision to cancel our **Grand Illinois Bike Tour**. We know that GIBT is a highlight of more than 200 riders' summer but, of course, the safety and well-being of our riders and volunteers is our top priority. We have secured the same locations for the 2021 GIBT, which is scheduled for June 13-18, 2021.

GIBT is Ride Illinois' largest annual fundraiser. The funds we receive from GIBT and through memberships are support our important advocacy work for cyclists in Illinois. We humbly ask that you make a donation (or renew your membership) to support our ongoing efforts to make biking better in Illinois.



Illinois Bike Summit – September 15th



Spend the day learning ways to improve bicycling in your community! Our 2020 Illinois Bike Summit will take place online on Tuesday, September 15th. Ride Illinois members and supporters are invited to learn more about bicycling issues from your home or office. This year's online summit will feature a range of session topics from bikeway types and bike share programs to advocacy and community engagement.

Bill Nesper, executive director of the League of American Bicyclists will be the keynote speaker. Visit illinoisbikesummit.org for the event's extensive lineup of presenters, discussion and Q&A sessions, and descriptions of the following breakout session options:

- Infrastructure – Bikeway Types and Bike Planning
- Bike sharing programs in Illinois
- Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
- Trails – IDOT's policy and practical tips
- Bicycle Education Resources
- Bicycles and the Law
- Infrastructure case studies
- Sharing the public way with e-bikes and scooters
- Local Bike Advocacy: enacting change in your community
- Bikeway & trail grants
- Apps and e-maps for users, advocates and planners
- Cycling During a Pandemic

The registration fee for Ride Illinois members is only \$20. Visit illinoisbikesummit.org to register today!

There will be a separate professional training day on Monday, September 14th. The morning session will be an overview of bicycle design suited for urban and suburban environments. The afternoon session will focus on IDOT's revamped design policies for bicycle and pedestrian accommodations on state roads. Continuing education credits (for engineers and planners) are available both days.

Spring Digital Ad Safety Campaign

Ride Illinois shared safety messages to a wide audience this spring through our Digital Ad Safety Campaign. The campaign ran on social media throughout Illinois from mid-April through May. It was generously funded through an Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) Injury Prevention grant. View the ads at rideillinois.org/advocacy/digital-ad-safety/.



The ads focused on the common causes of bike crashes – such as cyclists riding against traffic and motorists cutting off cyclists when turning right (known as the “right hook”, plus ways to avoid them. Each ad included a plea to take our BikeSafetyQuiz to learn more.

The campaign resulted in 2.17 million impressions on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. More than 32,000 people visited the BikeSafetyQuiz page on our website and 1,500 completed sessions of BikeSafetyQuiz during the campaign. Take (or re-take) the quizzes at BikeSafetyQuiz.com.

BikeSafetyQuiz Now Available in Spanish

Ride Illinois enhanced our free educational resource by developing a Spanish language version of our popular online quizzes. Three of the quizzes (Adult Bicyclist, Child Bicyclist, and Motorist) are available in Spanish at BikeSafetyQuiz-espanol.com.

Ciclista Adulto

Ciclista Menor

Conductor/
Educación del
Conductor

We also developed downloadable PDF versions of BikeSafetyQuiz quizzes that are suitable for use in the classroom or group setting when technology is not readily accessible. A separate PDF for each quiz contains content for test takers and a Proctors Guide for those administering the quiz.

“The education of cyclists and motorists is one of Ride Illinois’ key objectives. We’re excited to release these new products to provide useful, practical information to Spanish-speaking residents of Illinois. In addition, the administration of the quiz in a group is now more feasible by using the PDF versions,” said Ride Illinois executive director Dave Simmons.

BikeSafetyQuiz.com content is not just for individuals that want to test and grow their knowledge. Schools, after-school programs, scouts, driver’s education instructors, and other institutions can administer it for groups of people. Communities, colleges, and police departments have used the quiz for public education and constructive enforcement.

BikeSafetyQuiz-espanol.com and the downloadable PDFs make useful, practical safety information available to a wider, more diverse audience. The entire suite of BikeSafetyQuiz.com resources aim to increase safety on Illinois roads and reduce crashes by increasing the knowledge of Illinois residents who ride a bike, drive a car, or both.

Driver Ed Students Learn Through BikeSafetyQuiz.com Grant

The COVID-19 pandemic has not stopped Illinois driver education students from learning how to drive safely in the presence of bicycles - thanks in part to Ride Illinois’ BikeSafetyQuiz.com resource.

Nearly 150 high schools are enrolled in our mini-grant program that awards schools \$2 per student for using our online Motorist/Driver Ed quiz which focuses on relevant laws and crash avoidance skills. Since October, more than 18,000 young drivers have been taught...and that number increases every day!

In this time of remote learning, Ride Illinois has communicated with teachers to share information about our Child Bicyclist (for elementary school students) and Adult Bicyclist (for middle school and high school students) online quizzes. Ride Illinois’ mini-grant program is funded by the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) using federal 405(h) funds for bike and pedestrian safety campaigns. Ride Illinois played an instrumental role in the League of American Bicyclists’ national coalition to secure these funds.

BikeSafetyQuiz Available to Other States

Ride Illinois has contacted agencies and other nonprofit bike advocacy organizations around the country to offer replication of our BikeSafetyQuiz.com resource for their states. More than 110,000 adults and children have completed BSQ in Illinois - through driver education and schools, police departments, municipal outreach, bike share programs, bike to campus raffles, and more.

Online/Distance learning continues to grow, especially since the beginning of the pandemic. Quizzes for Adult Bicyclists, Child Bicyclists, Motorists/Driver Ed, and Truck Drivers can be found at BikeSafetyQuiz.com.

A small fee covers our time to prepare BSQ for replication in other states, setting up their Google Form-based quiz modules, and helping the state or organization get started. Our quiz questions can also be tailored to other states and cover relevant laws, crash avoidance, other situational skills, and more.

Rockford Bikeway Implementation Study

Rockford strives to be a more bike-friendly community. Already the home of the beautiful Rock River Recreation Trail, a growing network of designated bike routes, and a Complete Streets policy (that is actively used), the city of nearly 150,000 took a major step forward in making bicycle travel safer and more convenient. Ride Illinois is assisting!

For many years, Rockford has been adding Bike Route signage and adding striping to streets around the city. Most of the streets selected are shown as preferred routes in Ride Illinois' Rockford Metro Bicycle Map.



It was time for the next 10-year plan, to improve the quality of the existing network's segments and to add more. The city's leaders upped the budget's "Citywide Bicycle and Active Transportation Program" line item from \$50,000 annually to \$300,000 per year, starting next year. Rockford hired Ride Illinois to develop its "Rockford Bikeway Implementation Study" with details to guide the next decade of investments.

Ride Illinois studied more than 500 distinct road segments in Rockford. Traditional, buffered, or separated bike lanes. Striped shoulders. Off-road side path trails. Bike Route wayfinding signs and 3-foot law signs. Our job has been to determine what is needed and appropriate where, given each segment's roadway geometry, traffic conditions, available right-of-way and other constraints.

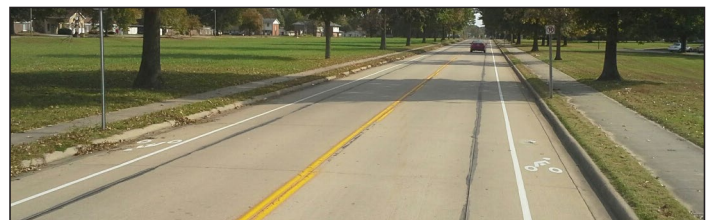
"Rockford will win a national Bicycle Friendly Community award soon," predicts Ride Illinois' Ed Barsotti. Besides the City's and Park District's improvements to bicycle infrastructure, local advocates including 'I Bike Rockford' are active with events, safety, and policy. Thousands of local driver education students – more than anywhere else in the state – have used our BikeSafetyQuiz.com.

Ride Illinois Can Assist Your Community

Could your town use some expert help on how to become more bike-friendly? Ride Illinois has a long history of providing technical and strategic advice to municipal staff and local advocates, on bike-friendly infrastructure, education campaigns, Bicycle Friendly Community designation, and more.

Since 2001, we have developed comprehensive bicycle plans for 20 cities – from Mattoon to Morrison, Carbondale to Palatine, Springfield to Batavia. In addition to working as a consultant in these towns, we have also provided limited pro bono assistance to dozens more Illinois municipalities and trained government staff through the Illinois Bike Summit, our bikeway infrastructure webinars (recordings available), and our Municipal Bicycle Planning Guide. Visit rideillinois.org/advocacy/ or contact us at info@rideillinois.org for more information.

Below is one example of a recent accomplishment. A project in Carbondale added bike lanes on College Street - a significant east-west street popular with cyclists and students. These bike lanes were proposed by Ride Illinois in the 2016 Carbondale Bike Plan.



Cycling During the Pandemic Guidelines

Ride Illinois, with input from several bike clubs across the state, released guidelines for cycling during the COVID-19 pandemic. The guidelines are based on public health info and the Restore Illinois plan.



The Restore Illinois plan divides the state into several regions, each with the ability to independently move through a phased approach. Be sure to adhere to the guidelines established for your region.

- Phase 1: ride solo
- Phase 2: ride solo or with household members
- Phase 3: ride solo or with fewer than 10 people
- Phase 4: ride solo or with fewer than 50 people
- Phase 5: no restrictions

When a region is in Phases 1–4, public health officials recommend wearing a face covering if strict adherence to social distancing guidelines is not possible.

These guidelines do not supersede state or local ordinances and do not replace personal responsibility. Learn more at rideillinois.org/events/covid19/.

Informative Webinars

We have all been spending more time inside than we would like this year. Ride Illinois has hosted a variety of webinars that allowed us to spend a little time “together” in this time of social distancing! We’ve hosted sessions on a wide range of topics:

- Basic Bike Maintenance
- Bike Infrastructure (3 sessions)
- Bike Law
- Cycling for Transportation
- Get Back on Your Bike!
- Intro to Mountain Biking
- Ride of Silence

Visit rideillinois.org/events/webinars to learn more.

Take the Illinois Bike Pledge

More adults and children on bikes across Illinois can be one positive result from the, otherwise, terrible pandemic situation. To that end, Ride Illinois is excited to share the Illinois Bike Pledge! Through the pledge, we hope to engage with long-time cyclists and those that have a renewed interest in cycling.



Taking the Illinois Bike Pledge is a simple way to make a commitment to the most efficient self-powered means of transportation around! Ride Illinois wants to insure that the number of adults and children riding bikes doesn’t decrease as society returns to some sense of “normal.” The current “bike boom” may be the opportunity of a generation to further establish the bicycle as a practical, inexpensive, enjoyable solution to many problems Illinois and its residents are faced with each and every day.

Learn more at rideillinois.org/illinois-bike-pledge/.

Ride Illinois Regional Action Teams

Are you looking to make a positive impact on cycling and safety in your area? If so, we have a great opportunity for you! Before the end of the year, Ride Illinois will be recruiting members to join our Regional Action Teams. Our Action Teams will help to expand Ride Illinois’ reach and allow us to connect with a wider audience across the state.

Action Teams will consist of several Ride Illinois members who will collaborate to discuss and suggest ways to improve cycling for recreation and transportation in their region. Ride Illinois staff and board members will support the Action Teams and offer guidance and input, as needed. More information, including steps to join an Action Team will be shared with Ride Illinois members soon!

Ride Illinois Membership

Become a Ride Illinois member (or renew your membership) and help us make Illinois a more bicycle-friendly state. We advocate for better road design, create municipal bike plans, push for favorable legislation, and educate tens of thousands of Illinois cyclists and motorists on ways to safely share the same space so you can get out and Ride Illinois!



Ride Illinois members receive the following benefits:

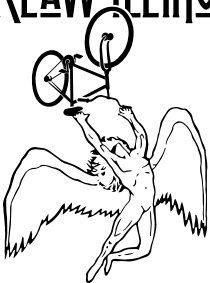
- Our member newsletter, Upshift
- Our annual Ride Guide with info about organized and charity rides around the Midwest
- Registration discounts for the Illinois Bike Summit and the Grand Illinois Bike Tour
- Choice of great membership premiums such as Ride Illinois magnets, T-shirts and jerseys, Planet Bike accessories, or artisan-roasted coffee
- Updates and action alerts on local and statewide issues that impact cyclists
- A strong, consistent advocacy voice in Springfield, Washington D.C., and your community!

Learn more about the benefits and become a member (or renew) at rideillinois.org/membership/. Contact us at info@rideillinois.org with any questions!

Ride Illinois Corporate Memberships

In an effort to engage with companies of all sizes, Ride Illinois has developed a Corporate Membership program. Contributions from corporate members will allow us to expand existing programs and explore additional programs to increase safety on roads and trails. Help us get more adults and children excited about cycling for recreation and transportation!

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Share the Road License Plates

Support safe bicycling even when you drive your car! Most of the incremental fee for these state-approved specialty license plates fund Ride Illinois' motorist and bicyclist education efforts.

Learn more about 'Share the Road' license plates, at rideillinois.org/share-the-road-license-plates/.



Ride Illinois Legacy Society

Would you like to ensure that our important bike advocacy efforts continue for many years? Do you value an organization that speaks on behalf of cyclists all around Illinois? If so, become a Ride Illinois Legacy Society member to make a lasting commitment to make biking better in Illinois!



Make a planned gift by including Ride Illinois in your will or living trust. One can leave Ride Illinois a percentage of an estate, a fixed dollar amount, or an asset such as real estate. One can also name Ride Illinois as a beneficiary of an IRA or a life insurance policy. Visit rideillinois.org/legacy-giving/ to learn more.

Contact us at info@rideillinois.org to inform us of your intent to include Ride Illinois in your estate plans. We'll add your name to the list of generous donors on the Legacy Giving page on our website.

Partnership with Investing in Communities

At no cost to you, raise funds for Ride Illinois when you: buy a home, sell a home, or lease commercial property! As a member of Investing In Communities, Ride Illinois will receive funding from any brokered real estate transaction: home sale, home purchase, or commercial lease.



Use Investing In Communities to find and choose among real estate agents for your residential and commercial real estate needs. As more supporters use this platform, before engaging a real estate agent, Ride Illinois will have more resources to continue advocating for better cycling conditions in Illinois.

Learn more at rideillinois.org/investing-in-communities.

Attend Ride Illinois Board Meetings

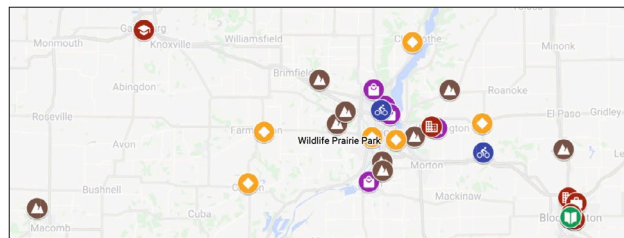
As we all continue to work differently during the pandemic, we're becoming more proficient at virtual meetings. We are pleased to announce that Ride Illinois members are invited to attend future Ride Illinois board of director meetings via Zoom! Tune in to listen as the board discusses important matters, future initiatives, and worthwhile programs.

Current members will receive an invitation to attend the board meetings. Join or renew your membership at rideillinois.org/membership/ to get invited to the next meeting. Not sure if you are a current member? Contact us at info@rideillinois.org and we'll check.



Enjoy Bike-Friendly Illinois Map

Ride Illinois has collected a wealth of useful and interesting information about cycling in the Land of Lincoln on our Enjoy Bike-Friendly Illinois map.



The map includes the following useful information:

- Affiliated Bike Clubs
- Bicycle Friendly Businesses
- Bicycle Friendly Communities
- Bicycle Friendly Universities
- High schools using BikeSafetyQuiz
- Illinois Bike Shops
- Mountain Bike Trailheads
- Ride Illinois Corporate Members
- Ride Illinois Planning Efforts

Visit rideillinois.org/maps/bike-friendly-illinois-map/ to view the map. Send suggestions for additional information to add to the map to info@rideillinois.org.

Contact Info and Social Media

There are many ways to contact Ride Illinois staff and keep tabs on our year-round efforts to make cycling for recreation and transportation better and safer in Illinois.

E-mail: info@rideillinois.org

Phone: (630) 216-9282

Website: rideillinois.org

Facebook: facebook.com/rideillinois

Instagram: [@rideillinois](https://instagram.com/rideillinois)

Twitter: [@rideillinois](https://twitter.com/rideillinois)

We love hearing from our members and supporters. Send us an e-mail, give us a call, or comment on our social media posts. Feel free to tag us on your social media posts too. Be safe out there!



ride
ILLINOIS

815 Leicester Rd #314
Elk Grove Village, IL 60007



2020

**Illinois
Bike
Summit**

Tuesday, Sept. 15th



**Infrastructure
Education
Inclusion**

Attend the 2020 Illinois Bike Summit

Join Ride Illinois on Tuesday, Sept. 15th for a day of online learning and networking with bicycle advocates, planners, engineers, transportation agency staff, and others from around the state. With a range of session topics – from bikeway design and tips to advocacy and community engagement – the summit offers strategies to make your community more bike-friendly.

The themes for 2020 Illinois Bike Summit are: **Infrastructure, Education, and Inclusion.** These important themes will be woven into many of the presentations and breakout sessions.

Learn more & register at illinoisbikesummit.org