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Mayor Coleman, Partners Unveil First Bicycle Sharrow On High Street, Launch Bike To Work Week and Two By 2010 CEO Bike To Work Challenge

To kick-off Bike To Work Week today, the city's Share The Road initiative took another step forward with the unveiling of the first bicycle sharrow pavement marking on North High Street. Mayor Michael B. Coleman, City Council President Pro-Tem Hearcel F. Craig, Congresswoman Mary Jo Kilroy, Ohio Department of Transportation Director Jolene M. Molitoris, Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission Executive Director Chester R. Jourdan, Jr., and Consider Biking Executive Director Jeff Stephens uncovered the first of 189 sharrows that will be installed on High Street between Nationwide Boulevard and Morse Road this spring. The sharrows, in addition to 54 Share the Road signs installed on High Street in the fall of 2009, remind cyclists and motorists that they, by law, must share the road legally and safely.

"We are investing in signage, bike racks and other infrastructure to make Columbus streets safer for cyclists and motorists to share the road," said Mayor Coleman. "Making Columbus a great cycling city is good for our environment and improves our quality of life."

Share The Road is built around the four E's: Education; Engagement, Engineering; and Enforcement. It's the latest step in the City's Bicentennial Bikeways Plan that calls for an additional 31 miles of off-street trails and 58 miles of on-street bike lanes and routes. The city currently has 87 miles of bike routes and trails.

"I am thrilled to join Mayor Coleman and other local leaders to help kickoff Bike to Work Week. Together we are investing in projects to provide increased bike lanes and accessibility," said Congresswoman Kilroy. "Bicycling is one of the healthiest, most energy-efficient modes of transportation that we have, and it is also a fun way to get around town while getting your daily exercise."

"Safety is the number one concern of people riding their bikes to work, school and for recreation and exercise," said Hearcel F. Craig, City Council Public Service and Transportation Committee chair. "Drivers should remember that both bicyclists and motorists have legal access to our city streets. The shared-lane pavement markings or sharrows will serve as constant reminders for everyone to remember to share the road."

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The sharrows, like the previously installed Share the Road signs, are funded through a partnership with ODOT and MORPC.

“Biking and walking are critical components of a thriving, healthy, and complete multi-modal transportation system,” said ODOT Director Jolene M. Molitoris, who rode in this morning’s Bike to Work event on a three-wheel recumbent bicycle. “When we have all of the modes of transportation working safely together, we create a sense of place where people want to live and businesses want to grow.”

“MORPC supports the efforts of its local communities to become more bicycle friendly by providing federal funding to build and improve infrastructure. It’s not just about building bike lanes everywhere. It’s about providing safe accommodations for all bicyclists no matter their age or ability,” said MORPC Executive Director Chester R. Jourdan, Jr.

Today’s event also launched the new 2 by 2012 CEO Challenge campaign, which calls on business owners and their employees to bike to work at least twice a month by 2012, the City’s bicentennial year. The city’s Bicentennial Bikeways Plan also sets a 2 by 2012 goal—biking to work at least 2 days a month—that “citizens, government and businesses can achieve together.” The CEO Challenge is a collaborative effort by Consider Biking and the Columbus Foundation.

“We’re grateful for the support of The Columbus Foundation and our many partners,” said Consider Biking Executive Director Jeff Stephens. “Today’s overwhelming support shows that the civic and business leadership of Central Ohio recognize that bicycling is a viable means to make our region more competitive economically. We’ll prove that encouraging and facilitating bicycling helps a business’ bottom line.”

A total of 70 CEOs or their representatives participated in the event, including the ride to the Statehouse. The CEOs include Steve Allen, Nationwide Children’s Hospital; D. Chesebrough, COSI; Rhonda DeMuth, TDCI; Denny Griffith, Columbus College of Art & Design; Melissa Ingwersen, Chase N.A.; Jolene M. Molitoris, Director, Ohio Department of Transportation; and Jack Partridge, Columbia Gas of Ohio.

“I am proud of the CEOs who have already committed to making Columbus a more bike friendly city by biking to work and encouraging their employees to do the same,” said Mayor Coleman. “Our business leaders are essential to making Columbus a greener city where people make the choice to ride their bikes, mass transit or walk and leave their cars at home.”

“The health of our workforce effects the wellness of businesses and our overall economy,” said Ty Marsh, president and CEO, Columbus Chamber. “Biking to work is one way to improve personal and community health. In addition, it supports efforts to ensure that our community is attractive to young professionals – the future of our workforce.”

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The City of Columbus in 2010 will invest \$10 million in bikeways projects, including:

- Department of Public Service projects
 - Design of future on-street bikeways projects; the list of projects is yet to be finalized
 - Construction of on-street bikeways projects including bike lanes and shared signed routes
- Recreation and Parks: 11 projects, more than nine miles of new trails and bikeway improvements:
 - The final 3 miles of trail will be built, completing a 22 mile long Alum Creek Trail greenway between Westerville and Three Creeks Metro Park
 - Two new projects that will add two miles of trail, between the city's near west side and downtown, extending the Scioto Trail
 - Four short neighborhood connectors that will link neighborhoods with the regional trail system
 - A new trail underpass will be built from Miranova, connecting the Scioto Trail with the Scioto Mile park improvements.
 - New cycling improvements to Goodale Street between Olentangy River Road and Michigan Avenue, including access to Harrison West and the Olentangy Trail.
 - Design work on a new downtown pedestrian/bicycle bridge connecting the Arena District, North Bank Park and the west Scioto Trail system

More information about Share the Road is online at www.sharetheroadcolumbus.org