



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
THURSDAY, FEB 4, 2010**

Contact: Jeff Stephens
(614) 579-1127
jeff@considerbiking.org

Consider Biking, City of Columbus Working To Make Columbus More Bicycle and Pedestrian Friendly

New National Report Shows Investment in Bicycling and Walking Boost Safety

COLUMBUS – Consider Biking continues to work with the City of Columbus and other partners to make Columbus a safer, more bike friendly city as a national report on bicycling and walking is released. The report, “Bicycling and Walking in the U.S.: The 2010 Benchmarking Report,” compares all 50 states and the 50 most populous U.S. cities, including Columbus. The report was released by the Alliance for Biking and Walking, a national coalition of state and local bicycle and pedestrian advocacy organizations.

“This Benchmarking Report clearly validates that investment in walking and bicycling is a wise public health decision. Experience from around the country and world demonstrate that encouraging active transportation and lifestyles is a viable solution to our nation’s obesity epidemic, said Jeff Stephens, Executive Director of Consider Biking. “Columbus and our surrounding communities, understand this correlation, and have made significant progress toward increasing the level of bicycling and walking quickly.”

Consider Biking has been a key partner with the City of Columbus in a series of developments designed to make Columbus more oriented to cyclists and pedestrians:

- Mayor Michael B. Coleman in 2008 created the Bicentennial Bikeways Plan, which identifies goals for adding bikeways, bike paths, bike lanes and other bike facilities.
- In 2009, the League of American Bicyclists presented Columbus with an award recognizing Columbus as a Bike Friendly City
- The City has revamped City Code to make it consistent with the goals of BBP
- BBP projects include a partnership with the Ohio Department of Transportation to invest in the Share The Road project on High Street, which installed 54 STR signs along a 6.5 mile stretch of High Street, with companion sharrows to follow along the same section of High Street in 2010

“As an avid rider myself, I am proud of our efforts to make Columbus a more bike friendly city, but we have much more to do,” said Mayor Michael B. Coleman. “That includes adding new paths and lanes as well as educating motorists and cyclists about their common responsibility to share the road safely.”

Consider Biking also is working closely with the City’s Institute for Active Living based in the Columbus Public Health Department. The Institute promotes healthy lifestyles including cycling, walking and diets that include fruits and vegetables. Consider Biking teamed with the Institute to organize Mayor Coleman’s BikeColumbus ride in May 2009. Rides of 7.5, 25 and 50 miles attracted 200 cyclists of all ages and skill levels to benefit the Institute’s mission of promoting healthier lifestyles.

Figures in the study were generated before the allocation of significant Federal Stimulus grants from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. These dollars provide bike parking and end-of-ride facilities in the core of downtown and support bike trail and resurfacing in several locations in Columbus. Columbus has increased its level of bicycling and walking in the last two years by a small percentage.

“Based on the exceptional foresight of city leadership and the recent funding partnerships, our ranking in this report is understated,” said Stephens. “We expect Columbus to rise above average and assume a prominent national ranking in all measures in the coming five years.”

To download a copy of the Alliance for Biking and Walking “Bicycling and Walking in the U.S.: The 2010 Benchmarking Report” and supporting graphics suitable for publication, visit the Alliance website at www.PeoplePoweredMovement.org/benchmarking. The study was funded, in part, by the Centers for Disease Control.

About Consider Biking:

Consider Biking is Central Ohio’s 501c(3) bicycle advocacy organization. Our mission is simple - to get more people bicycling. Consider Biking is the primary information resource for bicyclists in Central Ohio and seeks to have Central Ohio recognized for its world class regional bicycle network that provides infrastructure, education, safety, comfort and convenience for all bicyclists.

About the Alliance:

Alliance for Biking & Walking is the North American coalition of over 160 grassroots biking and walking advocacy organizations. The Alliance works to strengthen state and local organizations through research, sharing best practices, training, resources, and grants. For more information or to find a local organization visit www.PeoplePoweredMovement.org.

###