

Loretta Spencer
Mayor



"The Space to be
in the 21st Century"

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Mayor Spencer increasing signs defining bike routes

Additional signage will also alert cyclists and motorists to share the road

Huntsville, Ala. --- Mayor Loretta Spencer, Councilman Bill Kling, City Planning Division representatives, Public Safety Department officials and local cyclists met Monday to discuss needs of the growing number of bicyclist in Huntsville. A committee of city officials, local bike clubs' representatives and bike commuters is being formed.

After the last City Council meeting Mayor Spencer notified the city's Traffic Engineering department to increase signage around town as a first phase of an awareness initiative on motorist and cyclists sharing the roadways.

"This is something that can be done within the next 60 to 90 days as an extended part of the public awareness message for motorist and cyclists," Mayor Spencer stated. "We are identifying routes used by cyclists to place additional signage defining bike routes and reminding everyone to share the road."

Over the past several years Mayor Spencer required the city to begin producing video public safety announcements (psa). With the help of local bike clubs, the city has produced 6 video psas and regularly airs bike safety tips on Comcast channel 16 and Knology channel 42. The city will continue to produce more psas which will be delivered to cable and television stations with a request to add these to announcement schedules.

"After the recent tragic death of Sarah Chapman, I feel that motorist and cyclists are more conscience of learning how to safely travel the roadways and streets," Mayor Spencer continued.

The city requires that all new roads have a paved shoulder/bike lane included in the design. One of the new bike lanes constructed is on the newly opened Oakwood Road extension. Signage and decals for the lanes will be one of the issues the committee members will address.

"There are many different types or categories of bicycle enthusiasts that have many different skills to consider and different needs that we will address," the city's Director of Traffic Engineering Richard Kramer stated. "The Planning Division, Traffic Engineering and Huntsville Police Department are working together to address these needs."

Two years ago the city placed bike racks on all shuttle buses to help cyclists combine biking and public transportation for their commuting needs. Each shuttle bus can carry two bikes at a time. The city is also installing temporary bike racks in the downtown area.

"We want to work with local bike stores, clubs and the community to have experience-based education workshops with all ages," Mayor Spencer continued. "We have the perfect facility at Safety City to educate our younger riders, and we will plan similar sessions at other locations for older riders."

In further discussing plans, Mayor Spencer stated that she will also encourage driver education programs to include more training on sharing the road with cyclists.

"There is not an overnight fix to educate and change road habits, but we are going to make an aggressive effort in education and awareness," Mayor Spencer said.

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