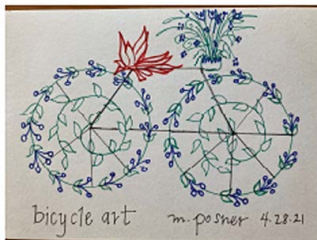


34th Annual Thurston County Bicycle Commuter Challenge Final Report: Another year of challenge and adaptation for the BCC!



Intercity Transit's **Thurston County Bicycle Commuter Challenge** continued to adapt as the world and peoples' reasons for bicycling changed in 2021. With vaccines coming on line for more people in the spring, and outdoor activities deemed safe enough, we were able to hold adapted versions of the Earth Day Market Ride and Bike to Work Day. We kept the BCC open to all kinds of bike rides, as many peoples' transportation habits are still in flux. Most of our sponsors were able to reconnect, so we had over 40 mostly local businesses and organizations contributing prizes, free passes and discount coupons.

The **Winter BCC** was surprisingly popular this year, and participants again broke the record for the number of miles ridden in February. The **Bike Art Challenges** in February and April garnered many submissions including the image that was the inspiration for our 2021 BCC theme, "Bicycle for Joy!". In collaboration with Walk n Roll program staff, we revived the **School Bike Challenge** and have plans to continue to grow that event next year.

The **May Bicycle Commuter Challenge** went ahead, with the aforementioned changes. At the time of planning, it still seemed too risky to proceed with the **Prize Hoopla** in June, and we again used the postal service to mail all team and individual prizes to the winners, and sent all participants a coupon pack and reflective BCC sticker as we have done in the past.



Notable for 2021:

- Fourth year of the Grand Prize bike vacation with Adventure Cycling Association.
- Third year of presenting a hand made quilt as a prize, made by longtime BCC participant Pam Leonard.
- Held off doing the Bike Commuter Basics class, for beginning and “interested but concerned” riders.
- Winter BCC snapshot: 270 riders logged 19,792 miles on 1,827 total days, breaking previous mileage records.
- 17 youth and adult artists submitted bike related artworks in the Bike Art Challenge.
- Over 40 youth participated in the Youth Bike Challenge.
- 50 riders participated in the Earth Day Market Ride, and a similar number in Bike to Work Day activities.
- Grand Prize winner Betsy is a car free mom, who drops her child at school on her way to work by bicycle!

2021 Bicycle Commuter Challenge by the Numbers:

- 682 riders logged trips.
- 177 new riders recruited (26% of all riders).
- Total miles ridden: 68,987
- Average miles ridden over the month per rider: 101.
- Total days on which participants rode their bikes: 6,346.
- 67 teams recorded trips in the BCC this year.
- For more info including team standings, visit: <https://bcc.intercitytransit.com/events/2021-5>

What's Next for the BCC:

- Continue to Monitor Covid 19 situation, resume/adapt event schedule for 2022.
- Continuing cooperation with Intercity Transit's Youth Education Program, to engage younger generations.
- Expand and adapt outreach efforts to the evolving circumstances.

Situation:

Using a bicycle as a means of transportation has many community benefits including reducing pollution, traffic and parking congestion, and improving individual and public health. In a public health emergency, the benefits are especially highlighted. Bicycling benefits both physical and mental health and wellbeing, and allows social distancing while traveling for work, errands, or recreation.

Objectives: In keeping with Intercity Transit's mission to support a sustainable, livable, healthy community, the Bicycle Commuter Challenge's goals are:

- To encourage people of all ages and abilities to try bicycling for transportation.
- To celebrate those who make that choice- whether it is every day, or for one day.
- To connect new practical cyclists to available education, resources and support.
- To convey participant feedback to local jurisdictions about bicycling infrastructure needs.
- To engage local employers and jurisdictions and encourage them to support active transportation choices.
- To connect our local practical cycling community with others around the country, to learn from them, and to set an example for communities that are not as far along as we are.
- To stimulate and support our local economy while offering incentives to participants through partnerships with our sponsors.

Impact: In the sixteen years that Intercity Transit has hosted the BCC, and now including the Winter BCC, over 15,000 participants have logged approximately 1.5 million miles on 127,000 practical trips, preventing the release of nearly 750 tons of CO₂, not to mention other pollutants. Over the course of its 34 year history, the BCC has recruited an estimated 25,000 community members and engaged them to try a new transportation mode. As participant testimonials show, many of these peoples' lives have been changed for the better as a result. Our community is also much more bike friendly than it was when the BCC started in 1988, and the BCC and its proponents have been a big part of that evolution. This year, under continuing challenging circumstances, the BCC adapted and provided the community with encouragement to stay active and healthy.

Budget: The BCC runs on a very small budget, which is enhanced by sponsorship contributions.



Community Involvement: The BCC normally engages volunteers from the community to help with its events, but sadly we missed them this year due to continuing caution regarding Covid 19.

Local Bike Month Proclamations:

The BCC works with local jurisdictions to proclaim May as “Bike Commuter Month” in the following jurisdictions: **City of Lacey, City of Olympia, City of Tenino, City of Tumwater, City of Yelm, Thurston County.** Proclamations were all done remotely again in 2021.

2021 BCC Participant Testimonials:

Boy I sure wish I was still living in Thurston county and could be doing this challenge. However, I'm now living on the Oregon Coast Tillamook and am down here permanently. Good luck with all your Bike adventures. You've always done a B job. Jan Burt, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

The best bcc framework in the history of the bcc! Keep up the great work! Tom Skjervold

Just wanted to say how much I appreciate all you and Intercity Transit have done to keep us all on track, in shape, and conscious of our beautiful environment. Sincerely; Bob Lang

Thanks for the program, it's been motivating to get out riding more! Shaun Haby

You do such a great job with the BCC. I appreciate it muchly! I'm not commuting to work anymore, so I don't tend to get to log as many miles. But I still mostly do errands and visits to friends by bike, so rest assured I still love, love, love my bicycle! Laura Schleyer

Thanks for all you do to promote biking! Pat Kilmer

Conclusion: 2021 has been another strange but successful year for the Bicycle Commuter Challenge. From February through May, participants reduced pollution and traffic congestion, eased parking problems, saved money, raised awareness about transportation choices and benefited the health of individuals, our community and our planet, not to mention creating some awesome bicycle themed art!



2021 BCC Grand Prize winner Betsy S. receives prize.

