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Increasing Bicycle Safety in South Burlington

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Bicycle Travel in South Burlington

Sam Epstein
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Problem Identification and Description of Need

- Commuting to/from work, errands, etc. is primarily done by vehicle.
- Many patients would benefit from a more active lifestyle, yet using a bicycle to travel can be daunting.
- There is a lack of emphasis on bicycle and pedestrian travel, especially between South Burlington and Burlington.
- Need more resources and incentives for citizens to utilize more active forms of travel.

Public Health Cost

- Severe obesity cost Medicaid programs \$8 billion in 2013; nationwide \$69 billion.
- Obese people spend 32% more on healthcare than people of normal weight.
- Obesity has numerous associated co-morbidities such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, cancer, asthma, and others.
- Infrastructure projects are expensive but worthwhile investments in community health, but must also be paired with understanding the community itself.

Community Perspective

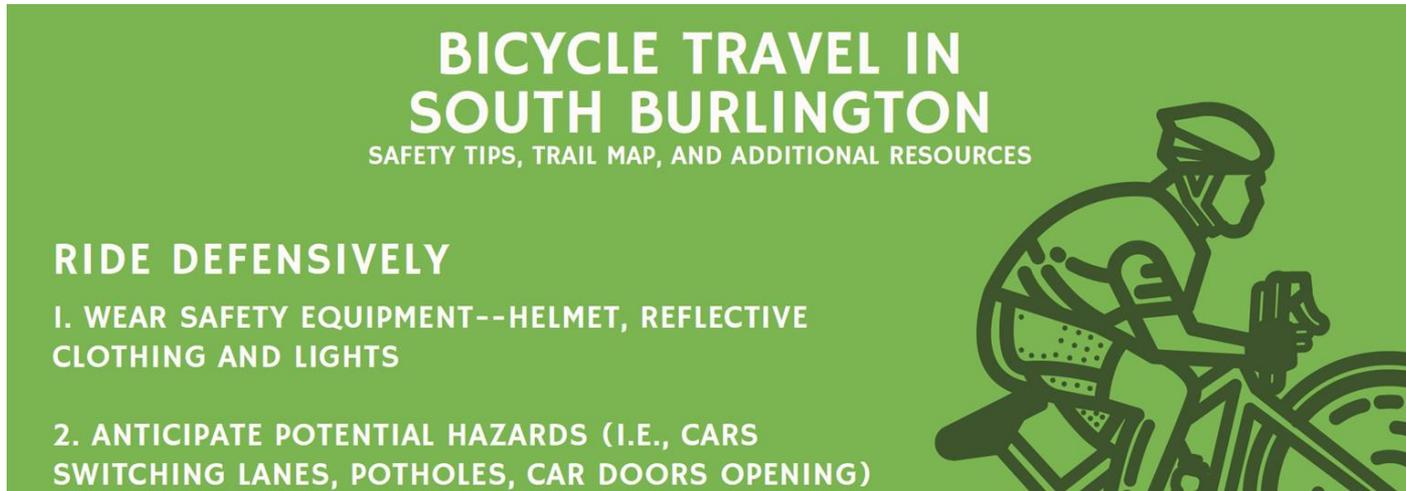
- Ashley Parker, City Planner for South Burlington
 - Lots of interest and ongoing projects related to bike and pedestrian travel in SB
 - Voters passed Pennies for Paths which is a \$0.01 tax, to fund projects
 - Ongoing project for the I-89 crossing
 - Lots of interest from citizens around this issue
 - These infrastructure projects are complicated and require many levels of planning
- Jim Brennan, Bike Mechanic at Old Spokes Home in Burlington
 - Burlington and the surrounding area are more bike friendly than most US cities, but not compared to European cities.
 - Lots of improvements in bike infrastructure in Burlington recently.
 - Barriers to further improvements are that travel in the area is still car-centric, people want to be able to park downtown, and cost
 - Important to follow all the rules of the road as a bicyclist - “if you know how to drive on the roads, you know how to bike on them.”

Intervention and Methodology

- Created a poster that can be shared electronically, ideally in the EMR, or via paper that includes a map of existing bike and pedestrian lanes in SB.
- Includes tips on how to bike safely in cities.
- Includes additional resources from local agencies as well as links to the ongoing infrastructure projects.
- Utilizes easily understandable and combines existing local resources in one place to provide a one-stop resource for bike travel in South Burlington

Results/Response

- Several patients expressed interest in such a resource
- Many patients talked about their desire to get outside more and use their bicycle now that the weather was improving
- Positive reactions from physicians in terms of having this resource available



Evaluation of effectiveness and Limitations

- Evaluation

- Survey providers to see who used this information
- Of those who did, have them follow up with specific patients to see if it impacted bicycle use or engagement with other community resources
- Assess what other types of resources/information, and in what other modalities, would be helpful

- Limitations

- Doesn't address root cause for why someone may not use their bicycle -- they may not own one, they may have a long commute or equipment for their job to carry
- May be challenging to use in the course of a short visit

Future interventions

- In person bike workshops for how to ride in cities, basic maintenance, etc.
- Partnering with employers to offer incentives for biking or walking to work
- Enhancing connections between citizens and city officials to increase collaboration on public infrastructure projects

More resources

Local Motion South Burlington: <http://bit.ly/LM-SB>

South Burlington Recreation Paths and Trails: <http://bit.ly/SBparks>

City Lab City Biking Tips: <http://bit.ly/CL-bikesafe>

I-89 Crossing Study: <http://bit.ly/I89cross>

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