



Gloucester Department of Community Engagement and Public Information

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Gloucester County Announces Projects to Promote Cycling on the Cusp of National Bike Month

Gloucester County is encouraging all residents to “Share the Road” during National Bike Month in May, and especially during National Bike to Work Week, which will be observed May 17-22. The County, through its newly established Transportation Planning Advisory Committee (TPAC), is also highlighting several local projects that are forthcoming to impact cyclists and pedestrians.

One of these projects includes the installation of bicycle and pedestrian improvements along Roaring Springs Road from Main Street to Beaverdam Park. CMAQ (Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality) Program monies are funding this project, which could begin as early as 2026. The Federal program provides a flexible funding source to state and local governments for transportation projects and programs to help meet the requirements of the Clean Air Act.

Also in the works, thanks to the endorsement of the Gloucester County Board of Supervisors and SMART Scale funding, is a project to include the development of a shared bicycle and pedestrian facility along Main Street from the Route 3/14 intersection south to Route 17. Advertisement for construction of this project is expected as soon as 2027. A study to determine the feasibility and development of a bicycle and/or pedestrian facility along Ware House Road to connect the public boat landing to Main Street has also been funded through the Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP).

“We are incredibly excited about the newly formed Transportation Planning Advisory Committee, and its purpose to serve as an advisory group to the County Administrator and the Board of Supervisors,” said Carol Rizzio, Senior Comprehensive Planner for Gloucester County. “One of the main aspects of this Committee, made up of local citizens, County staff, elected officials and professionals, is to garner public input on the County’s transportation network and prioritize important projects as we move to further explore these and other needed transportation projects...and don’t forget about all of the cycling opportunities at the new State Park! At Machicomoco State Park, there is a 3.1-mile trail that cyclists will be able to enjoy.

These projects may help to address some of local resident Andy Smith's concerns. Smith, an avid cyclist who logs in over 5,000 miles per year, and member of TPAC, said the main issue he sees on a regular basis is vehicles passing close to cyclists at high rates of speed. On the flip side, he sees cyclists blow through stop signs regularly, and encourages both cyclists and motorists to be educated on the rules of the road. "Cycles are considered a vehicle and must stop," Smith said. "It's important to remember, it's not us versus them, we all must share the road!"

For more information about any of these projects, contact Rizzio at 804-693-1224.

Safety and New Laws, Effective July 1, 2021

Also, as part of National Bike Month, the County is emphasizing sharing the road so that both motorists and cyclists alike can stay safe.

Virginia Governor Ralph Northam just recently signed into law the Bicyclist Safety Act, to take effect July 1, that will require motorists to change lanes while passing cyclists and allows cyclists to always ride two abreast. There is no stipulation related to the type of road this law is enforced on. Cyclists can ride side by side on all roads, and if a motorist cannot safely pass (at least three feet to the left of the cyclists), the motorist shall change lanes to pass.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), when a crash occurs between a vehicle and a bike, it's the cyclist who is most likely to be seriously injured. In 2019, 846 bicyclists were killed in traffic crashes.

There are several ways cyclists can be prepared before going out. Some of these include riding a bike that appropriately fits your body, wearing well-fitting protective equipment such as a helmet, choosing brightly colored clothing and lights that make you easier to spot, and plan your route for an area with less traffic and slower speeds. Other recommendations from the NHTSA includes driving defensively and predictably so that motorists can get a sense of what you intend to do and can react to avoid a crash – and improving your riding skills, in general.

There are also safety considerations for drivers, which include yielding to cyclists and not underestimating their speed; check for surroundings; obey the speed limit and give cyclists room.

Also, motorists should always remember the 3-foot law. This states that any driver of a vehicle overtaking a bicycle, electric personal assistive mobility device, electric power-assisted bicycle, moped, animal, or animal-drawn vehicle proceeding in the same direction shall pass at a reasonable speed at least three feet to the left of the overtaken vehicle and shall not again proceed to the right side of the highway until safely clear of such overtaken vehicle.

Motorists should pass bicyclists as they would any other vehicle – when it's safe to move over into an adjacent lane, according to the NHTSA. For more information on safety, visit www.nhtsa.gov.

Gloucester County



MAY IS NATIONAL BIKE MONTH

This May and always,
let's share the road, Gloucester!

May 17-22 is
National Bike to
Work Week!



ROAD SAFETY IS A
TWO-WAY STREET!



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