



## Join ECC!

Our email list currently includes about 500 people. Become part of the growing movement to make New Haven a bike-friendly community – visit our website at [www.elmcitycycling.org](http://www.elmcitycycling.org) to sign up and learn more. Or just show up at one of our regular monthly public meetings, held the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of every month at 6 p.m. on the second floor of City Hall. Contact Melinda at 203-623-2186 for basic questions.

<http://www.elmcitycycling.org/>

### **History and Rationale**

Elm City Cycling began in 2001 as a small group of bicycle advocates working to make Greater New Haven more bike-friendly. Why? Because New Haven – mostly flat and compact, making commuting distances very manageable – is a potentially marvelous cycling city. Out of every city on the East Coast, New Haven already boasts the second-highest percentage of residents who walk or bike to work. But it also has the highest number of motorist/bicyclist accidents of any city in Connecticut. In the past few years, children, teens and adults on bicycles have all been killed in collisions with cars or trucks.

### **Spokes People: Networking for Results**

Since our beginning, we have collaborated with elected and appointed officials – from the mayor, to the city’s transportation department head, to the chief of police, to municipal and state legislative leaders – in order to press our concerns about safety and to promote the idea that cycling for commuting and recreation is a healthy, non-polluting and cost-effective transportation option – especially as gasoline prices continue to spiral upward. We have also worked with other cycling advocacy groups around the state and partnered with groups as diverse as the International Festival of Arts & Ideas, City-Wide Open Studios and local school parents’ associations.

### **Safe Streets: Share the Road**

Recognizing the effects that traffic safety and livable streets have on all road users and on the city’s economy, environment and health as a whole, ElmCityCycling is also an active sponsor of New Haven’s new “safe streets” coalition – see [www.newhavensafestreets.org](http://www.newhavensafestreets.org) for more information.

## Accomplishments

The efforts of ElmCityCycling have resulted in several bike lanes on city streets, more bike racks downtown, the publication and distribution of bicycle maps outlining the best routes around town, increased visibility and awareness of cyclists citywide, and other improvements.

We have advocated for more access for bikes on CT Transit and Metro North and Shoreline East trains to promote the “multi-modal” transportation model that will help reduce highway congestion and air pollution and reduce our state’s contribution to global climate change.

We lead bike rides every year for hundreds of people who wouldn’t otherwise venture out in the city on two wheels. In the summer of 2007, our public series of “BikeSummer” events drew over 2,000 riders. Check [www.elmcitycycling.org](http://www.elmcitycycling.org) for a current calendar of events.

We sponsor monthly Bike to Work Days in mild weather, offering free breakfast, bike-related giveaways, and a chance to meet “bike commuting buddies.”

We organize Bike Jamborees in neighborhoods to teach kids how to cycle safely, do minor bike repairs and pass out helmets and lights.



## Route Planning / Commuter Chaperone Service

Looking to plan your bicycle route to work, or even just across town? Visiting New Haven for the first time with your bicycle? Many ECC members are veteran riders, who know the detailed ins and outs of the best routes through the region. Contact ECC on our listserv, and someone will respond with detailed advice. We will even offer to bicycle to work with you the first few times for free, so that you can get better accustomed to your new commute! Contact 203-623-2186 for commuting questions.

## Biking to Work

Here are a few reasons why so many of our members bike to work:

“I bike to work for many of the obvious reasons: it's regular exercise that I probably wouldn't have time for otherwise; on average, it's just as fast or faster than driving; it's inexpensive and it's pollution-free. But of all of the good reasons for biking to work, the opportunities for social engagement and the sensory experience of being out in the world are most compelling.”

“What keeps me going is the positive interactions one on one with people. I really think it's easy—in a metal box—to drive around angry & resentful. It's nice to be able to cruise and talk to & meet people!”

“Besides biking because it's a perfect storm of economic, environmental, health and spiritual reasons, here are some specifics: I saw a red-tailed hawk perched in a high branch on Hartford Turnpike this week on my way home. I smell flowers in the spring -- pretty soon the lilacs will open. I sometimes pass turkeys crossing the road. I ride through East Rock Park and watch the sun glinting off the water on Lake Whitney and the Mill River, and the park is one of the best birding areas in the East, so I see and hear lots of birds every morning. I love breathing the (relatively) fresh air and knowing I'm not contributing to polluting it.”

“For me, the benefits are easy to calculate. I'm calmer and happier when I get to work, or get home. I'm more focused and have more energy throughout the day!”