



Courtesy Trevor Christensen Leland Rowley poses with his bike in downtown Provo during the 2011 Bike To Work Day. The League of American Bicyclists has recognized Provo as a bronze-level bicycle-friendly community. Provo is the third Utah city to be honored by the league. Provo honored as third friendliest city for bicyclists in Utah
First Published Oct 31 2012 01:22 pm • Last Updated Oct 31 2012 10:54 pm

Provo made its tread mark on the national map this month when the League of American Bicyclists recognized the city as a bronze-level bicycle-friendly community.

The league represents 57 million bicyclists and promotes cycling around the nation with more than 300,000 members.

To learn more visit: www.bikeprovo.org or www.bikeleague.org

Provo applied for the award, composed of five levels — diamond, platinum, gold, silver and bronze.

Travis Martin, a cyclist and Mad Dog Cycles store manager in Provo, said social media have a lot to do with the recent surge in cycling.

"I have been in the bike retail industry since 1988, and I remember back then hardly anybody rode their bike to work, or on the streets, period," he said. "Now more and more people are starting to ride their bikes."

Martin, who commutes to work on his bike, said what was once a hobby is becoming a way for children and adults to get around and also stay in shape.

Although Provo received an entry-level award from the league, Provo spokeswoman Helen Anderson said the recognition is a start to building an even better community for bicyclists in the future.

"It is an important step forward," Anderson said of the award. "It is a small step, but a worthwhile one."

Utah is ranked 13th in the nation by the league. Provo now joins Salt Lake City and Park City as the only bike-friendly communities in Utah recognized by the group. The award will also improve the city's plan to become an outdoor recreation area and promote a healthier lifestyle for the younger generation.

"We know that biking communities are more connected and friendly to each other," she said.

The city has constructed 42 miles of bike lanes during the past 15 years. This summer the city added bike lanes on Seven Peaks Boulevard and expanded shoulders for biking from Provo to Springville on the south end of State Street along with several other bike-lane projects. As part of the city's recently awarded \$150,000 grant, it has created a bicycle master plan, including seven miles of road on the west side of Provo with a separate trail for bikes and pedestrians.

Now with a population of more than 117,000, Provo continues to grow, and incorporating bicycling into the community as a means of transportation is an integral part of adapting to the growth, Anderson said.

"It demonstrates an interest in improving upon what we have," she said.

Provo volunteer bike committee co-chairman Aaron Skabelund hopes the recognition will extend beyond cycling being a hobby and more of an active, healthy lifestyle. "I'm hoping it will give us even greater momentum going forward in creating bike lanes and bike paths in the future."

Skabelund hopes Utah County will follow suit and get Brigham Young University on board by improving campus and community bike connections.

Noting the heated college rivalry, Skabelund said this fall the league awarded the University of Utah with silver status. It is the only college in Utah to have this recognition, he said.

"I hope BYU is not outdone by our rivals to the north," Skabelund said.