Sustainable Transportation Competencies

Bicycling Competencies

- **WEAR A BICYCLE HELMET** because it protects your brain and you need a functioning brain to work, learn and live.

  **DID YOU KNOW?** In the U.S., bicycle accidents result in 600 deaths annually that are directly linked to head trauma. Worn correctly a helmet can reduce the chance and severity of injury and save lives.

- **Ride predictably** to minimize surprises to others.

- **Be visible.** Wear bright or light colors, lights, and have bells or horns.

  **DID YOU KNOW?** One cyclist a day is killed in this country after dark? Nearly 50 percent of bicyclist fatalities occur after dark even though only 10 percent of riding takes place after dark.

- **It is better to trust your own behavior and avoid difficult spots than to trust others to see you and avoid you.** Plan safe routes. Watch for cars pulling out. Make eye contact with drivers.

- **Be aware of your surroundings when you ride.** Enjoy the moment.

- **Impatience is the enemy, not people in other transportation modes.** Be courteous to other bicyclists and those in other modes.

- **Give an audible signal or verbal warning** when you pass other cyclists or pedestrians, especially on campus.

- **Dismount and walk your bicycle in the campus “Walk Zones”.**

- **Observe all traffic laws** – You can get a $103 fine for failure to obey

  - Obey red lights, stop signs and yield signs.
  - Ride with the flow of traffic, no more than 2 bicyclists side-by-side.
  - Ride in any part of the lane that you need to for safety, or if you are traveling at the speed of traffic.
  - Use a white front light and a red rear reflector (or better a flashing red light) after dark.
  - **Yield to pedestrians in intersections.**
  - Don’t ride on sidewalks in downtown Bellingham or Fairhaven.
  - Do NOT wear headphones while riding. They are illegal for all vehicle operators.
  - Use hand signals. Signal because it’s the law, it’s courteous, and for self protection.

- **As a motorist, yield the right-of-way** to other cyclists and motorists.

- **Ride 4 feet from parked cars** to avoid a nasty crash with a car door opening in front of you. “Don’t be doored!”

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