



# BIKEWAY NEWS



Winter 2008

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## Bike Month 2008 Kick-Off/ Groundbreaking



*Proclamation Presentation for Bike Month 2008 Corporate Challenge*

On May 1, the City of Houston Bikeway Program and the Energy Corridor Management District kicked off National Bike Month 2008 with the groundbreaking of the West Houston Phase II Trail. The West Houston on-street bikeway offers 27.8 miles of bike lanes and designated bike routes west of Beltway 8, between Old Katy Road and Richmond. This trail section extends from Enclave to Terry Hershey Park and will connect to a planned Harris County Trail around the park.

Keith Mouton and a host of BP bike to work commuters showed up all decked out in their finest biking attire and in full support of additional mileage being added to the Houston bikeway network.

Rather than the traditional shovels and dirt, the cyclists led the way as they rode their bikes over the symbolic dirt, provided by South Coast Construction, Inc.



*Keith Mouton of BP riding over the symbolic dirt*

Refreshments were provided by the Energy Corridor Management District and were enjoyed by all long after the ceremony was concluded.



*West Houston Phase II Trail Alignment*

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## All Eyes are on Bikeway Projects

### *Projects Under Construction*

### Columbia Tap Rail to Trail

One of the most talked about and one of the most viable non-motorized thoroughways is the Columbia Tap Rail to Trail project which includes an extension, Columbia Tap Union Station which is now completed. This four mile rail to trail project has been under construction and is now near completion. This project, once completed, will serve a great number of schools, hospitals and neighborhoods.

The pathway begins near Texas Medical Center and just a short walk from Rice University and Hermann Park. From there the trail will roll northeast, bypassing 288 and connecting to 20-plus miles of trails

*(con't on page 2) Columbia Tap*

(con't from page 1) Columbia Tap

along Brays Bayou. Downtown the path will cut through the heart of TSU and pass a few blocks from the University of Houston, 5 elementary schools and a YMCA before it ends at the Houston Astros' Minute Maid Park.

A grand ribbon cutting is being planned by the COH Bikeway Program and there is no shortage of organizations that want to help organize this event. To the right is a photo from the Rails to Trails Magazine that featured the Columbia Tap at the beginning of construction, and a current photo showing construction progress.

## Halls Bayou

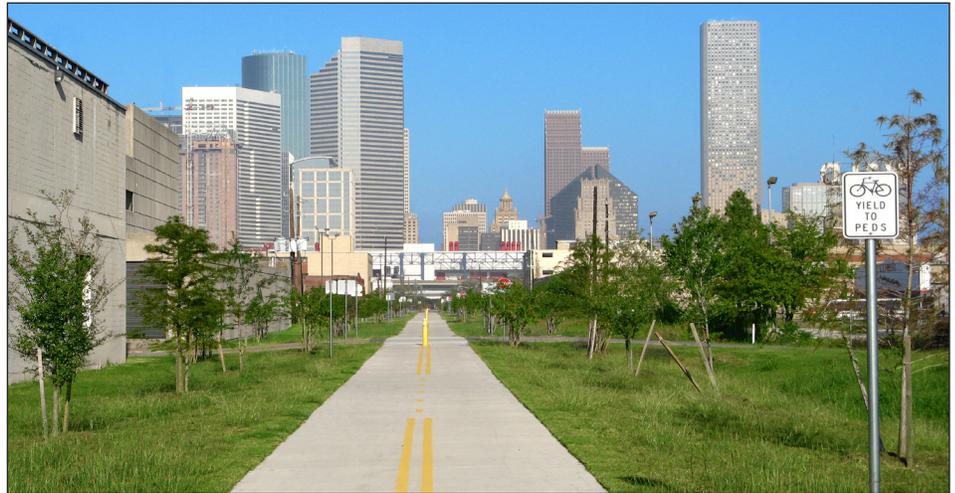
Also awaiting a ribbon cutting is the Halls Bayou Trail Project. The Halls Bayou Trail consists of three miles of a 10-foot wide hike and bike trail. The trail runs from Hirsh to 600' east of the intersection of Bretshire Street and Rebel Street along Halls Bayou with connections to Tidwell Park and Forest Brook High School. The trail includes several bridges and under crossings. Extensive flood control projects will also take place along the bayou and in the future provide opportunities to bring more trails to the area.

## MKT Rail to Trail

The long awaited MKT Rail to Trail project is ready for construction. The MKT/SP Trail is a Rails-to-Trails conversion project which consists of 4.6 miles of a 10-foot wide, concrete, multi-use hike and bike trail along the old Missouri, Kansas, and Texas Southern Pacific Railroad. The trail runs from 26th Street to 7th Street, and from Shepherd along 7th Street, to Spring Street and White Oak Bayou under



Columbia Tap Rail to Trail photo featured in the Rails to Trails Magazine (above), Recent Photo of Columbia Tap Progress (below)



I-45, where it connects to the Heritage Corridor West Trail providing a connection to the University of Houston and other downtown bike-ways and destinations. The Ground Breaking was held on Saturday December 6th at Heights and 7th Street.

## Little White Oak Bayou

Another trail now released to TxDOT for construction is the Little White Oak Bayou Trail. The Little White Oak Bayou Trail will provide a half-mile long linear park along the bayou with an on-street connection to the existing Cavalcade on-street segment. The trail will run along the banks of the bayou,

ending at the southwest corner of the 610 N. Loop/I-45 intersection, and will provide a connection to METRO. The trail is located along the Little White Oak Bayou on the west side of I-45. Little White Oak Bayou reaches to the banks of the Buffalo Bayou.

## West Houston Phase II

The new West Houston Trail provides an essential link between City of Houston bikeways and Harris County Precinct Three's Terry Hershey Park trail system. The multi-use trail runs parallel to Eldridge Parkway to provide north-

(con't on page 3) Phase II

(con't from page 2) Phase II

south connectivity between bike lanes along Enclave Parkway featuring a new pedestrian-bicyclist bridge across Buffalo Bayou, and will be used by local residents as well as the many bicyclist commuters within the Energy Corridor Management District.



Director of PWE, Michael Marcotte, speaks at the groundbreaking of the West Houston Phase II Trail

## Bike to Work Day

On May 16, 2008 at 7:00 a.m., cyclists joined Mayor Bill White for the 8th Annual Bike to Work Day ride. Cyclists pedaled from Memorial Park to the steps of City Hall as part of the Corporate/Media Challenge celebrating the month of May as Bike Month. The City of



Senator Ellis, Mayor White, and PWE Director Michael Marcotte Riding on Bike to Work Day

Houston Bikeway Program challenged all cyclists to join one of the six teams and pledge to ride anytime in May. The results of this competition were used to determine the winning team

and also automatically entered participants into a prize drawing.

The following teams participated: Clear Lake, Energy Corridor Management District, Galleria, Downtown, Texas Medical Center, and Westchase District

The winner of this year's competition is the Energy Corridor Team with a total of 239 riders. Team members consisted of Shell, Exxon, BP, ConocoPhillips, and the Energy Corridor Management District. Great job!!

The Downtown Team came in

certified transportation planner with over 15 years experience. Originally from New Jersey, Dan joined the City of Houston after serving 6 years as the Pedestrian-Bicyclist Coordinator at the Houston-Galveston Area Council.

While a life-long bicyclist, Dan enrolled in the League of American Bicyclists (LAB) Road One education course shortly after relocating to Houston. "I have found the riding techniques and handling skills as essential towards becoming a

second place with a total of 94 riders in the competition. We would like to thank all of the organizations that contributed to make the Downtown event such a success.

Refreshments were provided by Chick-fil-A, Corner Bakery Cafe, and Blue Cross Blue Shield of Texas. We had an impressive choice of goodies to welcome Mayor White and all the cyclists who joined him. We also want to thank our prize donors, including: Benihana, Hotel Icon, Bikesport, NiaMoves, Flying Saucer, Frank's Pizza, I-Cycle, REI, Bike Barn, Macy's, and Green Mountain Energy. Bike Barn also donated media swag bags. We ended the month-long event at the Berryhill Baja Grill on Post Oak sponsored by Bayou City Outdoors. Thanks Kelly!



Bike Month Celebration Party at Berryhill Sponsored by Bayou City Outdoors

commuter bicyclist." The Road One course teaches vehicular bicycling, including the bike laws of Texas, riding through complex intersections and lane positioning. Dan enjoyed the course so much that he's now a League Certified Instructor (LCI).

Bicyclist education will be one of many expanded components of the Houston Bikeway Program. Dan's priorities include the completion of our current trail projects, the

(con't on page 4) Coordinator

## New Face for the Bikeway Program

The public outreach, education, planning, and program awareness section of the Houston Bikeway Program has joined the Planning and Development Services Division, Planning Branch of Public Works and we've hired a new Bikeway Coordinator, Dan Raine. Dan is a

## Employee Bike Team

For the 2nd year, members of the Bikeway Program Employee Bike Team got together to ride in this year's Guaranty Bank Tour de Houston.

Employees signed up from various departments and rode in the 20-mile, 40-mile and 70-mile loop.

The Tour offers riding opportunities for all riders as they tour across the city in an urban ride that features various Houston sights of the city. This year, the Tour featured an unusual view from 2 wheels on the Hardy Toll Road with 20, 40 and 70-mile routes.

Representing the City of Houston (COH) Bike Team in the Guaranty Bank Tour de Houston were the following employees:

- Andrea Chan, LGL – 40 miles
- Will Chavez, IT – 70 miles
- Jerry Corpening, HFD – 70 mile
- Wolf Guentert, PWE – 70 miles
- Luther Villagomez, CEF – 70 miles
- Romeo A. Mendez – 20 miles
- Manuel Rodriguez – 20 miles
- James M. Tanner – 20 miles
- Orlando J. Sorto – 20 miles
- Michael A. Esparza – 20 miles
- Norka Vera – 70 miles
- Mack Eisenberg – 70 miles

City of Houston employees can sign up to join the Employee Bike Team by calling (713) 837-0003 or by emailing [rita.balchus@cityofhouston.net](mailto:rita.balchus@cityofhouston.net).



*Bikeway Program Employee Bike Team:*

## Safety Village for Kids

The **Houston Police Department Bicycle Administration and Training Unit** formed corporate partnerships with **AAA-Texas** and **BP** to create the Safety Village as a bike and pedestrian safety education tool that included bike rodeos and rail safety to elementary school children.

The program developed a Teens Teaching Program to train middle and high school students to teach bike safety to their peers through a volunteer program supporting the Safety Village.

Recently, the Safety Village has been reenergized through efforts of HPD and partners. Bicycle education for school children is back in full swing. Sergeant Chad Helms, Officer Michael Junco, and Officer Kerry Shaw are leading the effort, with assistance from Officer Jack Hanagriff, the previous HPD lead on this effort. Fantastic!!

Recently, the Safety Village was at Nuestra Familia Nuestra Salude Health Fair at Reliant Center. Nearly 300 kids were trained on bicycle safety. The village and rodeos are generally for specific events or schools as requested.

To find out more about the Safety Village you can contact Officer Shaw at [kerry.shaw@cityofhouston.net](mailto:kerry.shaw@cityofhouston.net).



*Safety Village*

*(con't from page 3) Coordinator*

improvement of our on-street bike-way network, providing “How to Bike Commute” education to major employers, developing a bicyclist-pedestrian review process and ways to improve bicyclist-motorist relations, as well as updating the City's Comprehensive Bikeway Plan. Dan currently owns 9 bicycles and chooses between them to commute from the Oak Forest neighborhood to Downtown 2-3 times per week.



*New Bicyclist-Pedestrian Coordinator  
Dan Raine*

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