

Opinion

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OUR VIEW

Bike summit taking a positive route

Working together to change culture, attitudes is sensible

Now, here's a good idea.

Members of the bicycling community, recognizing that a number of events have pushed the issue to the fore, have organized a community forum to discuss bicycle safety in Fort Collins.

The Bicycle Safety Summit will be held Feb. 12 and will be hosted by the Colorado State University Center for Public Deliberation.

Rather than rely on governmental action, forum organizers are wise to recognize that changing the culture surrounding bicycling is a more positive and likely much more effective route to improving safety.

"We need to acknowledge that the city cannot fix the issue on its own," Dave Kemp, city of Fort Collins bike coordinator, said in a statement.

"Community involvement and cultural change is essential to finding a solution."

Summit

The Bicycle Safety Summit is scheduled for 6 to 8 p.m. Feb. 12 at the Drake Centre, 802. W. Drake Road. For information, contact Martin Carcasson, CSU Center for Public Deliberation, 491-5628.

Wednesday, February 4, 2009

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While Fort Collins has received numerous accolades for its access to bicycling, including being named among the most bicycle friendly communities by the League of American Bicyclists, a number of tragic events involving bicyclists also have occurred.

Just this past year, 32-year-old Rebecca Allen was killed by a motorist while riding her bike; and 9-year-old Erica Forney died after being struck while riding her bike home from school by a motorist using a cell phone.

Fortunately, bike-related fatalities are rare in Fort Collins, but concerns are growing as more residents turn to bikes due to rising gas prices and a slow economy.

In another in a series of positive uses of the Center for Public Deliberation, student facilitators will moderate the summit and the discussion will be documented to ensure that the public's concerns and questions are addressed by the city of Fort Collins and the general cycling community.

This should not be a "preaching to the choir" event. Rather, all those who have concerns about bicycling safety are encouraged to attend.

We applaud organizers for taking a positive and grassroots approach toward changing attitudes surrounding bicycling.