



Rockford, IL

Award: Honorable Mention | Fall 2023

Award History:

First-time applicant.

The 5 Es Category Scores	Rockford	Max Score this round
Engineering	34.74%	79.3%
Education	11.90%	76.3%
Encouragement	33.70%	87.5%
Evaluation & Planning	24.54%	78.0%
Equity & Accessibility	14.13%	70.5%

Scores are determined by points earned in each 'E' Category, weighted against comparable communities in the Fall 2023 BFC round. See pages 2-3 for your full subcategory points in each Category.

Key Outcomes

Overall Commuter Ridership: 0.3%

Male Commuter Ridership: 0.5%

Female Commuter Ridership: 0.1%

(Bicycle Mode Share among commuters, according to the Census Bureau's 2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate.)

Bicycle Mode Share: Unknown

(Reported by applicant)

Annual Average Bicyclist Crashes in last 5 years: 21.4

Annual Average Bicyclist Fatalities in last 5 years: 0.6

(Crashes and Fatalities both reported by applicant)

Rockford's BFA Program Stats

of Local Bicycle Friendly Businesses: **0**

of Local Bicycle Friendly Universities: **0**

of Local League Cycling Instructors: **0**

Illinois's Bicycle Friendly State Ranking: **#15**

Community Profile

Population: 148,655

Area: 64.54 square miles

Population Density: 2303.3 people/square mile

Land Classification:

Mixed Urban/Suburban/Rural

Poverty Rate: 20.6%*

Median Household Income: \$44,525*

Percent of the Population that Speaks a

Language Other Than English at Home: 20.7%*

Percent with Disability: 16.5%*

Percent of Households with No Vehicle Available: 12.7%*

*Source: https://data.census.gov/profile/Rockford_city,_Illinois?g=160XX00US1765000

Rockford's Bike Links

Bike Network Map, if available:

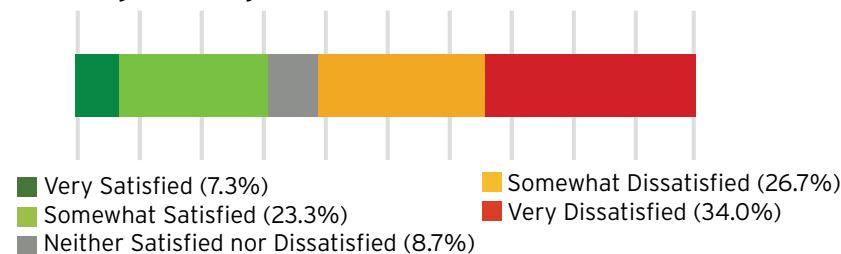
PDF available upon request.

Bike Plan, if available:

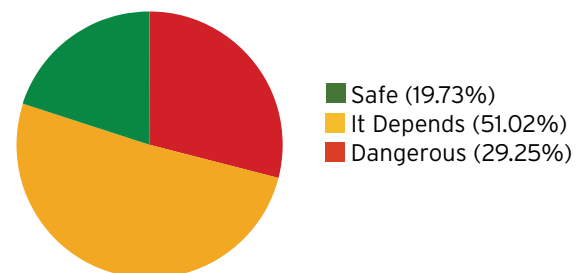
<https://www.rockfordil.gov/documentcenter/view/391>

Fall 2023 BFC Public Survey Response Summary for Rockford, IL

How satisfied are you with how this community is designed for making bike riding safe? (n = 150)



Is it safe or dangerous to ride a bicycle in your neighborhood, or does it depend? (n = 147)



What is the number one change you would most like to see the local government make in this community for bicyclists? (n = 151)

1. More bike paths (25.2%)
2. More bike lanes (25.2%)
3. Improve existing bike lanes to protected bike lanes (17.2%)

About this Report Card

The following scores are based on the online application submitted by Rockford in the Fall 2023 Bicycle Friendly Community (BFC) submission round. These scores reflect a combination of automatically-generated points earned through the online application, as well as judge-assigned points and bonus points given by BFC reviewers.

The League updated its Bicycle Friendly Community application and awards criteria in 2022, after nearly a year of research, focus groups, interviews, listening sessions, and other outreach. The updated application includes a new section on Equity and Accessibility, and other changes throughout. As such, **this Bicycle Friendly Community Report card is a beta version** as we refine our new scoring system and develop a greater understanding of how to convey new information.

All Fall 2023 BFC Report Cards (including this one) will be republished with updated scores if there are significant changes to the points system after the next round of BFC applications. To learn more about the BFC application and awards criteria, please visit <https://bikeleague.org/community>.

ENGINEERING	<i>Rockford earned a weighted score of 34.74% in the Engineering Category. Below is the full breakdown of points that Rockford earned in each subcategory within the Engineering section, compared to the total points available in that subcategory from the Fall 2023 BFC application.</i>	
	Engineering Subcategories	Rockford's Subcategory Points in Engineering
	Policies and Design Standards for the Built Environment	9.5 / 41 pts
	End-of-Trip Facilities	7.6 / 44 pts
	Bicycle Network	33.7 / 128 pts
	Network Maintenance	5 / 32 pts
	Bicycle Access to Public Transportation	8.5 / 23 pts
	Bike Sharing	0 / 24 pts
	Other Bicycle-Related Amenities	2 / 6 pts
	Regional Coordination	15 / 23 pts
Engineering Bonus Points	0 / 10 pts	

EDUCATION	<i>Rockford earned a weighted score of 11.90% in the Education Category. Below is the full breakdown of points that Rockford earned in each subcategory of the Education section, compared to the total points available in that subcategory from the Fall 2023 BFC application.</i>	
	Education Subcategories	Rockford's Subcategory Points in Education
	Youth Bicycle Education	7.2 / 68 pts
	Adult Bicycle Education	4.3 / 47 pts
	Motorist Education	2.5 / 28 pts
	Bicycle Safety Education Resources	0.2 / 16 pts
	Inclusive Education	1 / 26 pts
Education Bonus Points	0.5 / 7 pts	

ENCOURAGEMENT	<i>Rockford earned a weighted score of 33.70% in the Encouragement Category. Below is the full breakdown of points that Rockford earned in each subcategory of the Encouragement section section, compared to the total points available in that subcategory from the Fall 2023 BFC application.</i>	
	Encouragement Subcategories	Rockford's Subcategory Points in Encouragement
	Encouragement Policies, Programs and Partnerships	0.5 / 17 pts
	Route-Finding Support	4 / 10 pts
	Bicycle Culture and Promotion	34.6 / 91 pts
	Access To Bicycle Equipment and Repair Services	4.3 / 35 pts
	Reducing Work-Related/Fleet VMT	0 / 11 pts
	Encouragement Bonus Points	2.5 / 7 pts

EVALUATION & PLANNING	<i>Rockford earned a weighted score of 24.54% in the Evaluation & Planning Category. Below is the full breakdown of points that Rockford earned in each subcategory of the Evaluation & Planning section, compared to the total points available in that subcategory from the Fall 2023 BFC application.</i>	
	Evaluation & Planning Subcategories	Rockford's Subcategory Points in Evaluation & Planning
	Staffing And Committees	2.6 / 35 pts
	Public Engagement for Bicycle Planning	11.3 / 35 pts
	Planning, Funding, And Implementation	11.5 / 46 pts
	Evaluating The Bicycle Network	5 / 25 pts
	Evaluating Ridership	1 / 20 pts
	Evaluating & Improving Safety Outcomes	3.2 / 42 pts
Evaluation & Planning Bonus Points	2.6 / 15 pts	

EQUITY & ACCESSIBILITY	<i>Rockford earned a weighted score of 14.13% in the Equity & Accessibility Category. Below is the full breakdown of points that Rockford earned in each subcategory of the Equity & Accessibility section, compared to the total points available in that subcategory from the Fall 2023 BFC application.</i>	
	Equity & Accessibility Subcategories	Rockford's Subcategory Points in Equity & Accessibility
	Equity & Accessibility Staffing, Committees, & Partnerships	2.3 / 24 pts
	Equity Data Collection & Goals	0.3 / 27 pts
	Equity & Accessibility Policies & Plans	3.5 / 21 pts
	Equity & Accessibility in Engineering	0.7 / 44 pts
	Equity & Accessibility in Education	0 / 52 pts
	Equity & Accessibility in Encouragement	9.8 / 42 pts
	Equity & Accessibility in Evaluation & Planning	7.4 / 51 pts
Equity & Accessibility Bonus Points	0 / 9 pts	



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FEEDBACK TO IMPROVE:

To maintain and improve on Rockford's Honorable Mention status and earn a Bicycle Friendly Community award designation in the future, BFC Reviewers recommend...

- » Continue to expand and improve Rockford's low-stress on-road bike network and ensure that your community follows a bicycle facility selection criteria that increases separation and protection of bicyclists based on levels of motor vehicle speed and volume, to maximize safety and comfort for bicyclists of all ages and abilities. Identify gaps and add new facilities that complete and expand the bicycle network, and work to upgrade existing facilities, such as by converting shared lane markings ("sharrows") into bike lanes, and bike lanes into protected bike lanes or separated side paths.
- » Where upgrading bike facilities is not yet feasible, consider lowering posted speed limits on all roads with sharrows and/or signed bike routes to under 25 MPH. Introduce road diets and traffic calming measures to ensure compliance. Lower speed limits -- and designed speeds -- on residential streets to 20 mph. Introduce road diets and traffic calming measures to ensure compliance. Develop a system of bicycle boulevards, utilizing these quiet neighborhood streets, that creates an attractive, convenient, and comfortable cycling environment welcoming to cyclists of all ages and skill levels. Use the Bicycle Boulevards section of the NACTO Urban Bikeway Design Guide for design guidelines.
- » Consider launching a bike share system that is open to the public. Bike sharing is a convenient, cost effective, and healthy way of encouraging locals and visitors to make short trips by bike, make bicycling more accessible to all, and to bridge the 'last mile' between public transit and destinations.
- » Encourage your neighboring communities of Loves Park, Cherry Valley, New Milford, and Machesney Park to also apply to the Bicycle Friendly Community program. Rockford can serve as a local leader and mentor for other jurisdictions, and you may find that gaining more new BFCs in the region can help identify opportunities to collaborate, such as on connecting trail or pathway projects, or advocacy efforts to the state, MPO, or county.
- » Improve bicycle safety education for students of all ages by incorporating more on-bicycle education opportunities and by expanding the program to all K-12 schools. Providing bicycles in schools for on-bike education ensures that all students can learn to safely ride a bicycle regardless of the availability of a bicycle in their household. Work with the school district, local bicycle groups, and interested parents to expand and improve the Safe Routes to School program. Appoint or hire a dedicated Safe Routes to School Coordinator to lead these efforts.
- » Develop bicycle education opportunities for adults. Consider ways to target demographics who currently do not feel safe riding with classes or events that address their concerns and create an inclusive, welcoming environment.
- » Increase the number of local League Cycling Instructors (LCIs) in your community, either by hosting an LCI seminar or sponsoring a City staffer or local bike advocate to attend an existing seminar elsewhere. Having several active instructors in the area will enable you to expand cycling education for youth and adults, recruit more knowledgeable cycling ambassadors, deliver Bicycle Friendly Driver education to motorists, and have experts available to assist in encouragement programs. Visit bikeleague.org/ridesmart for more information.
- » Develop a community-wide trip reduction ordinance/program, commuter incentive program, and a Guaranteed Ride Home program to encourage and support bike commuters in Rockford.
- » Create an incentive program for businesses to provide standard bike parking, and to develop workplace bicycling programs for their employees. Use the framework of the Bicycle Friendly Business program to engage with more local businesses, agencies, and organizations to promote cycling to their employees and customers.



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FEEDBACK TO IMPROVE, CONTINUED:

- » Rockford could be well-served by a bike co-op or non-profit community bike shop. In communities your size, co-ops have had major success in building a culture around youth/ family cycling and coupled with after-school programming, job training and a connection point with local clubs/advocacy, this can be win-win-win.
- » Create an official, permanent Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) to create a systematic method for ongoing citizen input into the development of important policies, plans, and projects. Ensure that the members of the committee reflect the diversity and ability levels of cyclists in your community.
- » Congratulations to Region 1 (Rockford MPO) for receiving a Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Grant to create a Traffic Safety Action Plan for the City of Rockford! As part of this new Traffic Safety Action Plan, we encourage the city to formally adopt an official goal to eliminate traffic fatalities and serious injuries, potentially as part of a larger Vision Zero policy, to support and strengthen a comprehensive road safety plan. Use the new plan to collect data about bicyclist safety and perceptions of safety, and to identify specific strategies that will reduce traffic crashes and deaths for all road users, including bicyclists and pedestrians. Introducing low stress bikeway facilities and lowering vehicle speeds through traffic calming treatments are important engineering components for addressing roadway safety.

MORE RESOURCES FOR IMPROVING YOUR COMMUNITY:

- » **Guide to this BFC Report Card:** <https://bit.ly/BFC-Report-Card-Guide-Fa23>
- » **League of American Bicyclists:** <https://www.bikeleague.org>
- » **Bicycle Friendly Community (BFC) Program:** <https://bikeleague.org/community>
- » **Resources for Building a Bicycle Friendly Community:** https://bikeleague.org/BFC_Resources
- » **About the BFC Application Process:** <https://bikeleague.org/content/about-bfc-application-process>
- » **The Five E's:** <https://bikeleague.org/5-es>
- » **The BFC Ideabook and Map:** <https://bikeleague.org/BFCIdeaBook>
- » **The League's Benchmarking Project on Biking & Walking Data and Reports:** <https://data.bikeleague.org>
- » **Bicycle Friendly State Rankings and Report Cards:** <https://bikeleague.org/state>
- » **Bicycle Friendly Business (BFB) Program:** <https://bikeleague.org/business>
- » **Bicycle Friendly University (BFU) Program:** <https://bikeleague.org/university>
- » **Smart Cycling Education Program:** <https://bikeleague.org/ridesmart>
- » **National Bike Month Resources:** <https://bikeleague.org/bikemonth>
- » **Advocacy Reports and Resources from the League:** <http://bikeleague.org/reports>
- » **Federal Funding Resources from the League:** <https://bikeleague.org/federal-funding-resources/>
- » **Pedestrian and Bicycle Funding Opportunities from U.S. DOT Transit, Safety, and Highway Funds:** https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/funding/funding_opportunities.pdf
- » **U.S. DOT Navigator:** <https://www.transportation.gov/dot-navigator>