A Nonprofit 501(c)(3) Community Coalition

Our mission is to promote safe bicycling and walking as transportation and recreation for a healthier, more vibrant and connected Indian River County.

2021: Steering out of the Pandemic

If 2020 was a year of change and challenge for us, 2021 was the year we honed our process and demonstrated how we would rise to the challenge. And rise to the challenge we did!

Our Bike Rehab Project Warehouse Space Improves: Through the generosity of our donors and the hard work of our volunteers, we continue to transform our warehouse space into a working center for bike rehab and distribution. What our volunteers have accomplished this year is nothing short of a miracle. We are well organized and outfitted with tools, stands, spare parts and bikes waiting for a new owner. We host regular weekly rehab and distribution hours to meet the demands of our community.

Our Distribution Process: Our online application process, implemented last year, is working well. A person in need of a bike simply goes to our website and completes an online application which includes an interactive online safety course developed by one of our certified bicycle safety instructors. They select one of our community partner organizations to assess need and upon approval, the applicant makes an appointment with one of our volunteers to get their bike, helmet, lock,
and if appropriate, lights. Our community partners currently include Camp Haven, Crossover Mission, Gifford Youth Achievement Center, Homeless Children’s Foundation, The Hope for Families Center, the Indian River County Sheriff’s Office, The Mental Health Collaborative of Indian River County, NAACP - Indian River Chapter, The Salvation Army, The Senior Resource Association, United Against Poverty, The West Wabasso Cemetery Association, Youth Guidance Mentoring Academy and Vero Beach Rotary - Oceanside. We welcome new partner organizations who can refer applicants to us who need a bicycle for transportation.

The demand for our bikes has been strong this year. As of August we distributed 200 bikes and anticipate completing the year with at least 300 bikes distributed. We encourage donations of bikes that we can rehab and distribute. They may be dropped off at Orchid Island Bikes and Kayaks during regular business hours.

**Education**: Our cooperative program with Youth Guidance Mentoring Academy continues to train young bike mechanics. Our fall semester course has just begun. The program teaches all aspects of bike repair including wheels, tires, and drive train mechanics, gears and shifting components and braking methods. Each student gets a bike, which they fully rehab during the course. One of recent course graduates has been hired by a local bike shop as an intern mechanic!

**A Safe Place to Ride**: BWIRC continues to focus on having safe places to walk and ride in Indian River County. We work actively with the Florida Department of Transportation, the local Metropolitan Planning Organization, elected officials and county staff to implement changes that will make our community safer. Here are some highlights of our involvement this year:
• Bike lanes along A1A north of the city were expanded to seven foot buffered bike lanes.
• New bike lanes were installed along 49th Avenue.
• The intersection at Indian River Boulevard was restriped to continue the southbound bike lane to a rideable shoulder.
• Pedestrian crossing signals at 58th Avenue and College Lane were installed.
• Intersection improvements at 8th Street and Indian River Boulevard were completed.
• Signs reminding motorists to give 3 feet of clearance to bikes were installed along Highland Drive, 6th Avenue and portions of Old Dixie.

• Safety rail improvements are being made to the Wabasso high bridge.
• A project to install bike lanes on north Indian River Boulevard (north of the Barber Bridge) is planned for next year.
• We partnered with the Sheriff’s Office to produce a series of public service announcements promoting bike safety awareness.

Off Road Trails: The Trans Florida Railroad Trail, which will connect Sebastian and Fellsmere, will grow by another 1.5 paved miles by 2023. Fellsmere is adding another 3/4 mile by 2024. We continue to work toward the day when the county’s Greenway plan, which includes a series of paved trials along our existing canal system will provide a safe place for recreation and bike commuting.

Community Support: With an annual budget under $15,000, we operate successfully with no paid staff because of the time devoted by our
many volunteers. Our primary expenses are warehouse rent, bike parts and supplies, and locks and lights for rehabbed bicycles. Donations from our generous supporters and many community organizations contribute to our success. In addition to our Bike Rehab community partners, we have received substantial support from The Community Foundation of Indian River County, the Rotary Club of Vero Beach, Grand Harbor, and the Indian River County Sheriff’s Office. We also receive tremendous in-kind support from Orchid Island Bikes and Kayaks who provide technical expertise and act as a drop off for bikes for our rehab program.

**How Can You Help?**

- Give at least 3 feet when passing someone on a bike — change lanes if possible.
- Let your elected officials and county leadership know that you care about making our roads safer and more comfortable for pedestrians and people on bikes.
- Donate time, bikes, parts or money to The Bike Rehab Project.
- If you are really passionate, join our Board!

We welcome input to make our community safer and more supportive of those walking or riding bikes. If you have ideas, please share them with us.

We want everyone to feel safe walking, riding and living in our community. We are having a significant impact on bike and pedestrian safety in our community and thank you for your continued support in this effort.
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