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[Home](#) > Innovative Infrastructure Investments Increase Non-Motorized Transportation

# Innovative Infrastructure Investments Increase Non-Motorized Transportation

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## Community: City of Covina (Los Angeles County)

**Population: 49,541**

### Summary

To fulfill the city council's goal of becoming an environmentally sustainable community by 2012, the City of Covina is seeking innovative solutions and pioneering new technology to get people to drive less and to walk, bike and use transit more often. As the third-busiest commuter train station in the county, providing enhanced facilities to support multi-modal commuting at the Covina Metrolink station makes active transportation more convenient and feasible for many of the riders.

### Program Highlights

- Investigating new technology options can lead to solutions that support improved public and environmental health.
- Providing safe, secure, and convenient bike parking supports bicycling as a viable transportation option to and from transit stops.
- A free Metrolink shuttle connects riders from the Covina regional rail station to the pedestrian-friendly downtown, local employment centers and the new downtown parking structure.
- As other cities along the transit line install similar bike facilities, a network will develop, supporting multi-modal commuting throughout the county.

### Lessons Learned

- Developing a working relationship with partners facilitates an open discussion that fosters idea sharing, creativity, and capitalizes on each party's expertise. As a pilot site, the city of Covina was able to bring in a unique concept, and work with a private partner to design a facility suited to the needs of their population.
- The keys to a successful project are **(1)** find the right partner, **(2)** proceed with the most logical option, and **(3)** obtain the support of your city council.

## Resources to Learn More

- [Bikestation Covina Website](#) <sup>[1]</sup>
- [City of Covina Three Year Goals](#) <sup>[2]</sup>

## The Rest of the Story...

### Background

In March of 2009 the City of Covina adopted its' 2009-2012 strategic plan. The plan included creating an environmentally sustainable community as one of its goals. Initial efforts to improve the community and decrease environmental impacts have focused on the installation of demonstration gardens, improving pedestrian access and mobility in Downtown Covina to encourage residents to get out of their cars, as well as experimenting with solar technologies to power street lights, bus shelters, public trash compactors and parking machines.

Located about a quarter-mile from downtown Covina, the Covina Metrolink Station is the third busiest station in the inter-regional Metrolink commuter rail system, serving 15 cities in the eastern San Gabriel Valley, a prime location for increasing bicycle infrastructure. After meeting Mobis/Bikestation company representatives at an event a few years ago, the City began working jointly with Mobis/Bikestation staff in August 2009 to develop a bicycle parking module that satisfied the needs of the City and capitalized on the company's expertise.

The new 10 x 25 square foot, high tech "green" design module supplements the existing station bicycle parking and offers 36 new secure parking spaces that can accommodate up to 80 users through secure digital access. In addition to access control, the module also contains a closed circuit security system. The Covina Bikestation is the first self-contained modular Bikestation in the nation, and it is hoped that these smaller modules can bridge the divide between bicycle lockers and full scale retail bicycle transit centers. The City of Claremont, also along this Metrolink line, is slated to be next in line to open a full-scale retail Bikestation at their train depot in February 2010.

In addition to building the Bikestation, a new downtown parking structure and a free shuttle linking the Metrolink station with downtown businesses, local employment centers and the parking structure have been championed by the Covina City Council. Leveraging public-private partnerships and Local Return

Transportation Funds (the local share of the county-wide transportation sales tax,) the City of Covina was able to finance the new bike station (For more information on Local Return Funds visit

[http://www.metro.net/projects\\_studies/local\\_return/default.htm](http://www.metro.net/projects_studies/local_return/default.htm) [3] ).

## **Applicability to Other Communities**

The City of Covina demonstrates that finding the right partners and implementing strategies that are cost effective and can be put in place quickly produces momentum for efforts whose cumulative effect is significant. Building on this momentum, the city is continuing its sustainability efforts by evaluating the energy saving benefits of alternative work schedules for their employees, studying a revision of its free Metrolink Shuttle route to provide service to all City employers with 100 or more employees and to connect the Metrolink Station will all local transit lines, conducting a bikeway network study to aid in creating a bikeway master plan, and developing plans to improve a municipal parking lot with sustainable strategies that reduce overall operations and maintenance costs.

*Compiled November 2009*

### **Links:**

[1] <http://www.bikestation.org/covinaca/index.asp>

[2] [http://www.ci.covina.ca.us/news/Strategic\\_Planning/Covina SP 3-09.pdf](http://www.ci.covina.ca.us/news/Strategic_Planning/Covina_SP_3-09.pdf)

[3] [http://www.metro.net/projects\\_studies/local\\_return/default.htm](http://www.metro.net/projects_studies/local_return/default.htm)