Building a Bike-Friendly City
Downtown Ithaca is becoming a safer and more convenient place to bike, thanks to efforts by the City of Ithaca, local initiatives and community members. This guide helps you choose the best routes for your comfort level and highlights bike lanes, the bicycle boulevards, the Cayuga Waterfront Trail and more.

The Ithaca Neighborhood Biking Map is a product of Bike Walk Tompkins which aims to make biking and walking safe and comfortable for people of all ages and abilities.

Safety & Riding Tips

Follow the rules of the road
Bicycles belong on the road. People on bikes have the same rights and responsibilities as drivers. Ride in the same direction as other traffic, even in a bike lane. Obey stop signs and traffic signals.

Be seen
Wear bright clothing, especially at night. Equip bike with reflectors, a white headlight and red tail light. Drivers still may not see you so ride with care.

Be predictable
Ride in a straight line and don’t swerve. Look behind you and check blind spots. Signal before turning, merging or changing lanes.

Be aware
Stay outside of the door zone of parked cars. Be alert for turning vehicles, potholes and other hazards.

Check your bike
Before you ride, test your brakes and make sure there is enough air in your tires.

Lock your bike
Use a U-lock; a heavy cable lock, or both. Secure both wheels and frame to a bike rack, if available.

Wear a helmet
By law children under 14 must wear a helmet, but adults can lead by example and wear one too.

Ride on the road
If you’re under 10 you are allowed to ride on the sidewalks in the City of Ithaca. Everyone else must ride in the road.

Biking is good for you and your community.

Shared Roads
Bicycles belong on the road. People riding bikes must follow rules of the road just as a motorist does.

When you drive a car
Move slowly behind a cyclist and pass only when it is safe to do so.

When passing a person on a bike, give at least 3 feet of side space between your vehicle and theirs.

Be polite and considerate. Always be alert for people on bikes.

When you ride a bike follow the rules of the road and stay out of the door zone.

Bike Boulevard Network
Ithaca’s Bike Boulevard network connects about 3 miles of low-traffic and traffic-calmed streets to downtown schools, community centers, and parks. Though these routes are intended to be “family-friendly,” cyclists must still share the travel lanes with motor vehicles and need to use caution when crossing busy streets.

SPECIAL NOTE TO DRIVERS
Please use extra care when approaching cyclists along the Bike Boulevards. These are priority routes for students riding to and from school and for families and others looking for lower-traffic streets when biking. Though the speed limit along these streets has already been lowered to 25 mph, drivers are encouraged to drive even more slowly, especially when passing cyclists.

Bike Lanes
A bike lane is an extra travel lane on the road that is intended for people riding bicycles.

Using the lane
Cyclists do not have to stay in the bike lane if there is a reason to move out of it, such as when preparing to turn left or to avoid debris.

Follow the rules
Treat bike lanes like other travel lanes and follow the rules of the road.

Parked cars & doors
Stay outside of the door zone of parked cars.

Uphill only
Some bike lanes in Ithaca only go in the uphill direction.

Multi-use Trails
Multi-use trails are popular for people walking, riding a bicycle, running, skating, pushing strollers, and walking dogs.

People riding bikes should be courteous, alert, and yield to pedestrians.

Pass on the left and say “on the left” or use a bell to alert people in front of you while passing.

Trails can have difficult crossings, blind curves, and sharp turns. Go slow and be alert.

The Cayuga Waterfront Trail is a 5.5 mile multi-use trail that connects some of Ithaca's most popular waterfront destinations.