



## Best Practice: Sunday Bike Program

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**CITY: MEXICO CITY**

**POLICY AREAS: CLIMATE CHANGE; TRANSPORTATION; ENVIRONMENT**

### BEST PRACTICE

Mexico City's Move by Bike ("Muévete en Bici") is a **Sunday Bike Program** that encourages residents to use carbon-neutral transportation by closing specific streets in the city center to motor vehicles every Sunday from 8:00 in the morning to 2:00 in the afternoon. Launched in 2007, by Mayor Marcelo Ebrard, the program is a component of City's overall Bicycle Mobility Strategy which includes other programs like EcoBici.

### ISSUE

Mexico City faces tremendous challenges with air pollution, traffic congestion, noise and other traffic related environmental problems.

- **Traffic Congestion:** Mexico City experiences high levels of traffic and congestion with nearly 4 million motor vehicles in use each day. Commuters spend nearly 2.5 hours per day on transportation. City streets are mainly used by cars and there is little space for pedestrians, cyclists and people using non-motorized vehicles.
- **Public Health Concerns:** Mexico City is also working to address health issues as obesity rates have continued to rise in the city. There are not enough public open spaces for recreational activities and streets have been hostile for bicycle mobility.
- **Environment:** 45 percent of Mexico City's carbon dioxide emissions come from vehicle transport, resulting in poor air quality.

### GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Sunday Bike Program aims to relieve traffic congestion and improve air quality by prohibiting a segment of automobile traffic one day a week. It encourages healthy habits by promoting the use of bicycles throughout the city as a method of transportation, recreation and sport. The program additionally supports:

- Public space recovery
- Social inclusion and integration
- Respect between motorists and cyclists
- Reduced emissions from a reduction of motor vehicles
- Tourism opportunity and economic development

### IMPLEMENTATION

The Sunday Bike Program launched on May 13, 2007 on a 10 kilometer (6.2 miles) section of major thoroughfare, Paseo de la Reforma. Since 2007, the 10 kilometer route has expanded to 24 kilometers (14.9 miles).

From 2007 to 2009, the Sunday Bike Program launched in seven districts of Mexico City (Coyoacán, Tlalpan, Xochimilco, Gustavo A. Madero, Iztacalco, Azcapozalco y Venustiano Carranza).

In 2009, the route was extended 14 kilometers (8.7 miles) east of the historic city center. Every Sunday, several streets are open to cyclists, skaters and pedestrians between 8:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. Residents and tourists have the opportunity to gather in a safe open space dedicated to recreation, sports and leisure. Alternative cycling routes are available in different city neighborhoods on a rotating basis. Organizers estimate that some 920,800 people have participated in *Muévete en Bici* through September 2011.

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Since February 7, 2010, the route was extended 24 kilometers (15 miles) which unite three parts of the city with different socioeconomic status and fulfills the goal of social inclusion and equity of the program.

In 2010, the program “Muevete en Bici” started night bike rides through the historic center between the hours of 7:00 P.M. and 11:00 P.M.,

Inter-agency cooperation between municipal authorities enables free bicycle rental, medical assistance, environmental and road education workshops, water, musical shows, rallies, physical education classes, all under the City’s police protection.

The following city agencies contribute staff and resources to the program:

### **Secretariat of the Environment**

- Coordinates the program
- Broadcasts radio updates during the program’s operation
- Hires public bathroom rental services
- Hires box lunch services for the program’s operators and distributes the lunch boxes
- Develops opinion polls to evaluate the program
- Mounts service stations during the program’s operation

### **Secretariat of Civic Engagement**

- Organizes a team of volunteers who monitor the route via radio and provide information to participants

### **Secretariat of Culture**

- Coordinates entertainment along the route including music, art displays, dance and other performances

### **Secretariat of Health**

- Provides 2 ambulances to monitor the bike route
- Sends medical staff to deal with accidents, injuries and dehydration
- Implements the physical activation program “Muévete y Métete en Cintura”, focused on the promotion of physical activity to prevent overweight and obesity

### **Institute of the Youth**

- Offers free bicycles to the program’s attendants

### **Secretariat of Tourism**

- Provides bike rental coupons for tourists to participate in the program
- Promotes the program in nearby hotels to encourage tourists to participate

### **Police Department**

- 800 officers help maintain the bicycle route and ensure participants’ safety

On the last Sunday of every month, a 32 kilometers (19.9 miles) circuit is open to the public from 8:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. This ride is called “Ciclotón Familiar” and offers services for the full 32 kilometers (19.9 miles).

Sponsorship from private companies allows the city to offer additional free services during the Sunday rides. Sponsors include: Icy Hot, Disney Channel, Bimbo, Gatorade, Sport City and Office Max, Sports Promotions, McCormick, Ocesa, Nike, Nestlé, Venastat, Meta Sports, Scibe, Alterbuy Bike, Movistar, Disney, Nesquick, Sal la Fina, etc.



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### COST

In 2007, Mexico City's Ministry of Environment provided \$270,000 USD to support the Sunday Bike program. The annual operating budget for the project is \$200,000 USD. These costs include only material resources—the majority of personnel working on the project are government employees from various departments; their salaries are not included in this budget. Each year the Ministry of Environment of GDF has allocated a budget for this program care about \$250,000 USD.

### RESULTS AND EVALUATION

#### May-Dec 2007

- 517,300 participants
- 52 bicycle rides organized
  - o 24 in the Reforma-Zócalo route
  - o 21 in other neighborhoods
  - o 7 "Familiar rides"

#### Jan-Dec 2008

- 801,220 participants
- 85 bicycle rides organized
  - o 37 in the Reforma-Zócalo route
  - o 36 in other neighborhoods
  - o 12 "Familiar Rides"

#### Jan-Dec 2009

- 704,500 participants
  - 74 bicycle rides organized
    - o 38 in the Reforma-Zócalo route
    - o 26 in other neighborhoods
    - o 10 "Familiar rides"
- \*Two rides were canceled due to the Influenza epidemic

#### Jan-Dec 2010

- 894,500 participants
- 54 bicycled rides organized
  - o 40 in the Reforma-Centro Histórico la Villa
  - o 2 night rides in Centro Histórico
  - o 12 "Familiar rides"

#### Jan-Dec 2011

- 1,173,800 participants
- 55 bicycled rides organized
  - o 40 in the Reforma-Centro Histórico-La Villa
  - o 4 night rides Centro Histórico
  - o 12 "Familiar rides"

### TIMELINE

#### February 2007

Representatives from Mexico City attend the Recreational Cycle Routes of the Americas conference in Guadalajara to learn about successful cycling programs.

#### March/April 2007

"Muévete en Bici" is presented to Mexico City leadership and approved for development.

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### May 2007

Program launches with 5,000 participants in its inaugural ride.

### August 2007

Promotional materials, supplies and rental bicycles are purchased by the city for use in the program.

### October 2008

The "Muevete en Bici" Program of Mexico City won the First Prize at the Active Cities, Healthy Cities in the category of Recreation and Sport. This contest was organized by the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), together with other international associations related to issues of recreation, quality of life and sport.

### November 2010

Mexico city to host the annual meeting of the Network of Recreational Cycle Routes of the Americas (Red de Ciclovías Recreativas de las Américas) to showcase its successful program.

### April 2011

The "Muevete en Bici" Program was awarded the Second International recognition, in this case the Swiss National Cycling Federation.

### October 2011

As part of the celebration of World Habitat Day, the Ministry of Environment of the Mexico City Government received from UN Habitat recognition as "Best Practice" for implementing the Bicycle Mobility Strategy.

## LEGISLATION

- "Muévete en Bici" **Procedures Manual** – a list of safety recommendations and procedures was published in Mexico City's Official Gazette (Gaceta Oficial del GDF) during the Sunday events.
- On April 16, 2010, the Official Gazette of the Mexico City Government, published the "Guidelines for the Coordination of Sunday Rides Program "Muévete en Bici" to institutions, agencies, entities, delegations, participants and attendees.
- The "Muévete en Bici" **Civil Protection Manual** approved by Mexico City's government.

## LESSONS LEARNED

- Implementing this kind of project requires closely coordinated inter-agency operations.
- While private sponsorship contributed to the program's success, clear rules must be established for sponsor and donor participation.
- A larger budget should be allocated for the project, specifically for public awareness campaigns.

## TRANSFERABILITY

Bike programs are increasing in popularity in urban areas around the world. "Muévete en Bici" is a member of the "Red de Ciclovías Recreativas de las Américas" (Recreational Cycle Routes of the Americas Network). This organization promotes cycling projects in many cities including Bogota, Chacao, Chicago, Guadalajara, Guatemala City, Medellin, Quito, Rio de Janeiro, San Borja and Santiago.



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In 2010, Mexico City hosted the annual meeting of the “Red de Ciclovías Recreativas de las Américas” where cities exhibited their projects.

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This report is based on an exhibition from the 2009 Copenhagen Climate Summit for Mayors Future Cities Exhibition. Innovative initiatives demonstrating how cities around the world are combating climate change were on display. For more information, visit [www.climatesummitformayors.dk](http://www.climatesummitformayors.dk).

Facts and figures in this report were provided by the highlighted city government to New York City Global Partners.