



# CITY OF LONG BEACH **ORD-18**

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

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February 8, 2011

HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL  
City of Long Beach  
California

## RECOMMENDATION

1. Declare ordinance amending Chapter 10.50 of the Long Beach Municipal Code, relating to bicycle registration, read the first time and laid over to the next regular meeting of the City Council of final reading;
2. Direct the City Manager to cease the City's current bicycle licensing/registration practices and enforcement related to licensing;
3. Request the City Manager to initiate a public information campaign directing residents to the National Bike Registry, or other online registry service, for voluntary bicycle registration. (Citywide)

## DISCUSSION

On December 14, 2010, the City Council requested the City Manager to report to the City Council in 30 days, the feasibility, costs, and potential benefits of eliminating the bicycle registration requirement and instead moving towards a voluntary registration program.

Currently, the Long Beach Municipal Code (LBMC), Chapter 10.50 governs bicycle registration in the City, with Section 10.50.20 stating: "No person shall ride or propel any bicycle upon any street, alley, park or bicycle path or other public place in the city which is not registered, or for which the appropriate fee has not been paid or which does not bear a bicycle plate as required by the provisions of this chapter."

Last year, the Police department issued 1,035 citations for lack of bicycle registration, but in every instance that was not the only infraction. Bicycle registration is primarily used to assist the Police Department in returning stolen bicycles to their registered owners. Last year, 980 bicycles were recovered, 220 of which were returned to owners.

Los Angeles, San Francisco, San Jose, Seattle, Santa Monica and other cities have ended their requirements for bicycle licensing. The reasons cited include a lack of cost-effectiveness based on fees not covering the cost of administering the program, a high rate of non-compliance due to difficulty purchasing licenses from fire stations or other city facilities, and an uniformed public regarding a rarely enforced section of the California Vehicle Code.

### **Issuance of Bicycle Licenses**

In accordance with LBMC Section 10.50.030, bicycle licenses are issued every Saturday and Sunday from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon. Since Fire Department personnel are not always available during these times, some residents have had difficulty in purchasing licenses. In an effort to make purchasing a license more convenient, in January 2011, the Parks, Recreation and Marine Department began offering licenses at ten locations citywide. Bicycle licenses are also available at the Bikestation downtown, and at Jones Bicycles in Belmont Shore. The City currently charges \$3.00 for each new bicycle license, and \$3.00 for each license renewal.

### **Revenues and Expenditures**

In FY 10, 2,600 new licenses were issued, and 3,047 renewals were obtained. The revenue received from licenses and renewals in FY 10 totaled \$16,941. When considering the cost of staff time and the cost of the license and renewal stickers that must be purchased from the State (approximately \$3,000 in FY 10), the cost to administer the bicycle license program greatly exceeds the revenues received.

### **Alternatives**

There are four alternatives to current licensing practices. They are:

1. Make bicycle licenses voluntary and continue current licensing practices;
2. Make bicycle licenses voluntary, and administer and maintain a web-based bicycle licensing and renewal program;
3. Continue to require bicycle licenses, and administer and maintain a web-based bicycle licensing and renewal program;
4. Eliminate mandatory bicycle licensing and related enforcement efforts, and encourage residents to register with the National Bike Registry or other online registry service.

It is important to note that Alternatives 1, 2, and 3 will continue to require a City subsidy.

### **Recommendations**

Given the costs to administer the current program or a web-based program, and the relatively low rate of recovered bicycles returned to owners, staff recommends the City eliminate mandatory licensing and enforcement. Staff also recommends that residents be encouraged to register with the National Bike Registry or other online registry service. Information about the National Bike Registry has been attached.

This matter was reviewed by Chief Assistant City Attorney Heather A. Mahood on January 31, 2011 and by Budget Management Officer Victoria Bell on January 28, 2011.

SUSTAINABILITY

The requirement to purchase and maintain a current bicycle license is generally not the practice in cities that are considered bicycle-friendly. The requirement is often unknown to many residents and visitors. It is believed that eliminating the City's requirement for a bicycle license will encourage more people to ride their bicycles, thus reducing the number of vehicle trips traveled in Long Beach.

FISCAL IMPACT

Eliminating the City's bicycle license program will refocus various staff to core services.

SUGGESTED ACTION

Approve recommendations.

Respectfully submitted,


  
MICHAEL P. CONWAY  
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS

MPC:SG:GH:bs  
P: CL/10-11/21.8/Bicycle License v6

Attachments

MPC:MAC:SG:db  
P:\CL\Bike License Council Letter v5.doc

APPROVED:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
PATRICK H. WEST  
CITY MANAGER



National  
Bike  
Registry

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TAKE A BITE OUT OF  
**CRIME**

## About the National Bike Registry

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Since 1984, the National Bike Registry (NBR) has been helping identify and return stolen bikes (and scooters) to their rightful owners. More than 48% of stolen bicycles are recovered every year by law enforcement, but only 5% are returned since they have no way to determine ownership. When a bicycle is labeled and registered in the NBR database, **it can be easily identified by police and returned to its rightful owner.** The NBR computer database is dedicated exclusively to bicycle registrations and is available FREE to law enforcement nationwide.

[Register Bike](#)
[How it Works](#)
[Law Enforcement](#)
[NBR Partnership Programs](#)
[Locking Your Bike](#)
[Bicycle Theft](#)
[Free Printed Material](#)
[About NBR](#)
[Renew Your Registration](#)
[Update Bicycle Registration](#)
[Register Your Stolen Bike](#)

**The National Bike Registry works!** Every time a police officer has recovered a bike that was in our database, we have been able to quickly identify the owner so that the bike could be returned. [See What Others Say About the NBR](#) for reports from satisfied customers.

NBR has established a network of police departments coast-to-coast who look for the NBR label and can easily report recovered bicycles. In 1999, BoomerangIt, Inc. recognized the advantages of a truly national bicycle registration system and purchased the NBR database.

Since then, BoomerangIt, Inc. has upgraded the label and database technology for NBR and is expanding awareness of the service through outreach with law enforcement and other fiduciaries (hotels, restaurants, airports), partnership programs for non-profits and Web affiliates, as well as programs for bicycle retailers and manufacturers.

We provide an effective and easy-to-use system that allows people to register their bikes so that they can protect their investment and reduce the loss from bicycle theft. **With NBR, bicycle owners everywhere can increase security, discourage theft and enjoy their bikes for years to come!**

Questions about NBR? Message us at [E-mail to NBR Staff](#), request literature to receive by mail ([REQUEST PRINTED INFORMATION](#)), or call our customer service department at:

**1-800-848-BIKE (2453).**

NBR is an official licensee of the National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC).  
McGruff® the Crime Dog and TAKE A BITE OUT OF CRIME are registered trademarks of the NCPC.  
A portion of the fees paid goes to fund NCPC's Public Service Advertising Campaign





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Bike  
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## How It Works

### • THE NBR SERVICE

Many stolen bikes are recovered by police but there is no way to identify the owner. With the NBR service, you can register your bicycle by serial number in our national database and apply the special label you receive to your bike. If your bike is ever stolen, it can be identified and you can prove ownership. **Law Enforcement anywhere can access our database, advise us that your bike has been recovered, and you can be notified immediately.**

### • REGISTER YOUR BIKE & PROTECT YOUR INVESTMENT

You can register online from our web site. Our highly encrypted and secure server allows you to use your credit card for the registration fee. If you prefer, you can register by phone (800-848-BIKE) or you can print out the registration form from our web page and return it, with your check, to NBR.

**\$10 10 years** of coverage for an individual bike

**\$25 30 years Registration** allows you to transfer your registration when you replace your bike. Notify NBR and we will change the information in our database and send you a new certificate and label. This registration is limited to one bike at a time and valid for 30 years.

**\$25 Family Registration** will cover up to 5 bicycles located at a single address. Each bicycle will have 10 years of coverage.

### • NBR GUARANTEE

**NBR guarantees your registration. If your bike is stolen and not recovered by police within 6 months, NBR will register your next bike for free and the stolen bike information will remain in the database until the bike is recovered no matter how long it takes.**

**NBR works.** Check these [testimonials](#).

### • REGISTRATION MATERIAL

Once your information has been entered into the NBR database, **we will send you a Certificate of Registration and an engineered, tamper-proof label** to apply to your bike. The Certificate of Registration can be used to provide proof of ownership if you ever lose or misplace your sales receipt.

### • HOW TO APPLY THE NBR LABEL



Our labels are specially engineered to be tamper-proof. They are designed to shred if removal is ever attempted. **Police can identify a bike in the NBR database even with a partial label.**

First, locate the manufacturer's serial number stamped on your bike. It is usually located in one of these four areas on your bike. **Write your bicycle serial number on the label with a ball point pen.**



**To maximize its strength, pick a good location for the label on your bike.** Look for a smooth surface. Under the top tube near the saddle is a good place. Application works best when the temperature is between 60° and 110° Fahrenheit, you can heat the bike frame with a hair dryer if necessary.

**Clean and dry the surface.** Expose about half of the adhesive area and place exactly where you want your label. Peel back the rest of the liner paper and smooth the label on the frame. Press down firmly for about 2 minutes, giving special attention to the edges.

**For best results,** let the label set for 24 hours before using the bike. Once the label is attached to your bike, it can not be removed intact. Your bike is now permanently labeled with your NBR number and your serial number is registered in the NBR database.

- **THE NBR DATABASE**

Information about your bicycle is stored for the life of the registration in our state of the art database. **This information is protected and maintained by NBR and only accessible to the bike owner and authorized law enforcement agents.** You have unlimited and free access to your file if you ever need to change an address or contact information. Your information is private and protected, please click on **Privacy** for more detailed information.

The NBR database can be searched by police using the serial number stamped on the bike by the manufacturer. Even if someone has been able to remove part of the label, your bike can be identified by serial number. The police can also search the database by make, model, color, and frame size, if the manufacturer's serial number has been altered.

**NBR is working with Law Enforcement Agencies nationwide so that no matter where a bike is stolen or where it is recovered, it can be returned to you.** NBR has maintained its database since 1984 and continues to use the latest technology to improve the service and expand police connectivity.

If you would like to see a list of Law Enforcement Agencies working with the National Bike Registry, [click here](#).

NBR is an official licensee of the National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC). McGruff® the Crime Dog and TAKE A BITE OUT OF CRIME are registered trademarks of the NCPC. A portion of the fees paid goes to fund NCPC's Public Service Advertising Campaign

ORDINANCE NO.

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE  
CITY OF LONG BEACH AMENDING THE LONG BEACH  
MUNICIPAL CODE BY AMENDING CHAPTER 10.50  
RELATING TO BICYCLE REGISTRATION

The City Council of the City of Long Beach ordains as follows:

Section 1. Chapter 10.50 of the Long Beach Municipal Code is hereby  
amended to read as follows:

BICYCLES

10.50.010 - Definitions.

"Bicycle" means and includes any device upon which a person may  
ride which is propelled by human power through a system of belts, chains,  
or gears and which has wheels at least twenty inches in diameter and a  
frame size of at least fourteen inches.

10.50.020 - Destruction or alteration prohibited.

No person shall willfully or maliciously remove, destroy, mutilate or  
alter the serial number on any bicycle, except in the event that the bicycle is  
dismantled and no longer operated upon any streets in this city; provided,  
however, that nothing in this section shall prohibit the police or fire chief  
from numbering frames or bicycles on which no serial number is legible or  
which serial number is insufficient for identification purposes.

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10.50.030 - Dealer reports.

Every person engaged in the business of buying, trading or selling secondhand bicycles shall daily make a written report to the chief of police, upon forms provided for that purpose by the police department, of every bicycle purchased, traded or sold by such dealer during the past twenty-four (24) hours, giving the name and address of the person from whom purchased or traded, or to whom sold, a description of such bicycle by name and make, and the frame number thereof.

10.50.040 - Enforcement.

The chief of police and his or her representatives and the licensing agency are granted all authority to enforce and carry out the provisions of this chapter pursuant to the provisions included in the California Vehicle Code and all other laws of the state.

Section 2. The City Clerk shall certify to the passage of this ordinance by the City Council and cause it to be posted in three (3) conspicuous places in the City of Long Beach, and it shall take effect on the thirty-first (31st) day after it is approved by the Mayor.

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OFFICE OF THE CITY ATTORNEY  
ROBERT E. SHANNON, City Attorney  
333 West Ocean Boulevard, 11th Floor  
Long Beach, CA 90802-4664

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I hereby certify that the foregoing ordinance was adopted by the City Council of the City of Long Beach at its meeting of \_\_\_\_\_, 2011, by the following vote:

Ayes: Councilmembers: \_\_\_\_\_

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Noes: Councilmembers: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Absent: Councilmembers: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor