

Utsunomiya City

Promoting Utsunomiya as a cyclist-friendly community



Situation

- The city has held Japan Cup Cycle Road Race, the top-rated bicycle road race in Asia, every year since 1992. In addition, a professional cycle road racing team based in the city was established in 2009. These developments have raised citizens' interest in bicycles and cycling.
- Since 2003, city office has promoted wider and better use of bicycles amid changes in the social environment such as worsening congestion of automotive traffic, rising awareness of eco-friendly transportation, and aging society.



Intervention

To increase safety of bicycles,

- Constructed bicycle only roads.
- Held traffic safety lessons in elementary schools collaborating with the cycle road racing team.

To increase convenience of bicycles,

- Created bicycle parking lots near railway stations and bus stops.
- Established rest spots that allow cyclists to make simple repairs to their bikes in public facilities and convenience stores.

To promote tourism, health and environmental conservation,

- Created the facility where cyclists can use the bathroom and rest areas for free in the city centre.
- Expanded bicycle rental services.
- Examined physical data of those who started commuting by bicycle rather than car

Impact

- In 2013, the number of accidents involving bicycles fell 40% from 2008.
- Many citizens and tourists from other areas are using facilities that the city set up.