

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - DRAFT

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SUBJECT: UA Parking & Transportation Services Acts to Protect Cyclists

Tucson, AZ. Beginning February 21, 2009, UA Parking & Transportation Services in partnership with the City of Tucson Transportation Department will install the region's first "Bike Box" on southbound Highland Avenue at Sixth Street, which is the southern gateway for bicyclists to the UA campus.

The Bike Box will be provided to clearly designate a waiting area for bicyclists, in front of and in full view of drivers, while waiting for the traffic signal to change. The box will be marked with slip resistant bright green thermoplastic material on the pavement and signage to alert drivers to stop behind the box at red lights. The main goal of this particular bike box is to prevent collisions between motorists and bicyclists going straight. Currently southbound traffic faces a "pinch point" where cars and bikes must merge in the middle of the intersection. The bike box is about making bicyclists more visible on one of the region's busiest bike routes.

Tucson and the UA campus is already considered a bike-friendly urban center. But the boxes, believed to be one of the first such to be put to use by any campus, will make bicyclists even safer and more comfortable on the street, biking advocates and transportation officials say.

"This is something that the City and the UA have been talking about for a long time, said David Heineking, Director, UA Parking & Transportation Services. "The campus community has just made it so clear that this is very important for the safety of our cyclists."

Installation of the Bike Box and traffic signs will take place by the City of Tucson on February 21st with the UAPD providing educational materials to motorists and bicyclists on February 23rd. Opportunities for press photos will take place on February 23rd.

Motorists should know that when the traffic signal is yellow or red, motorists must stop behind the white stop line behind the green bike box. Don't stop on top of the bike box. Keep it clear for bicyclists to use. When the light turns green motorists and cyclists may move through the intersection as usual, with cyclists going first. After about 200 feet, the bike lane returns and the motorist will be able to pass safely.

If you have questions, please contact the City Bicycle and Pedestrian Program, 791-4371 or UA Parking & Transportation at 626-9655.

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