

# SAFE BRIDGES CAMPAIGN

*Make the bridges, overpasses, and underpasses in New Orleans safe for bikers*

## **The Problem:**

Many communities of New Orleans are divided by canals, highways, and railroad tracks, all of which require bridges, overpasses, and underpasses to provide crucial connections for residents and visitors. However, for non-motorized users, especially bikers and walkers, these bridges often pose unsafe conditions that restrict mobility and access to vital destinations as work, school, grocery stores, and health and social services. Marginalized communities, whose residents might have limited access to cars, can be further marginalized by restricted access to services. Improving the infrastructure of these connections would improve access to other communities while increasing equity for bikers, walkers, and transit riders. In this campaign we are focusing on bikers in particular.

## **How are the Bridges, Overpasses, & Underpasses Dangerous for Bikers?**

Life-threatening aspects of the New Orleans bridges, overpasses, and underpasses includes:

- Lack of bicycle infrastructure such as bicycle lanes and sharrows
- Poor access to alternative infrastructure such as sidewalks or lack of sidewalks altogether
- Extremely narrow shoulders without sizeable protective barriers from traffic or the bridge's edge
- Lack of signage stating bicyclist rights on the bridge
- Speeding vehicles and lack of enforcement of speed limit
- Debris and uneven road surface threaten to damage bicycle tires and cause accidents

Bridges, overpasses, and underpasses are often the only reasonable option for bikers to get to where they need to go. This was reflected by the results of a recent survey given by Bike Easy in which 70% of respondents said they encounter bridges, overpasses, or underpasses that must cross on their common routes and feel unsafe doing so. Worse yet, 77% of respondents said they go out of their way to avoid bridges, overpasses, or underpasses along their usual routes.

The ten bridges most commonly identified by survey respondents as dangerous in New Orleans are as follows:

1. Broad St. Overpass at I-10
2. Wisner Blvd Bridge
3. Carrollton Ave at I-10 (underpass)
4. Elysian Fields at Florida Canal
5. St. Claude Ave Bridge at Industrial Canal
6. Claiborne Ave at Industrial Canal
7. Jeff Davis Parkway Overpass at I-10
8. Danziger Bridge (US 90 at Industrial Canal)
9. Seabrook Bridge (Leon C Simon at Industrial Canal)
10. Metairie Road Underpass at I-10

In an effort to clearly and methodically identify the issues with each of these 10 bridges, overpasses, and underpasses, along with others, we plan on assessing each connection with a standardized audit tool. We will use the results of these audits to develop both short-term and long-term solutions that can be implemented to increase safety for these connections.

We welcome new members to our campaign! Email [info@bikeeasy.org](mailto:info@bikeeasy.org) to learn more!