

Promoting Bicycling with a Tech-savvy Green Map

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<http://cyclingmap.jp/>

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Background: Sightseeing by Bicycle

It is popular among Tokyo residents to work hard during the week, then take a weekend drive to the countryside. What they don't realize is that the amount of gas used on their 100 km round-trip drive to Mount Fuji generates 35 kg of CO₂. It takes three cedar trees a full year to absorb this amount of CO₂. The Tokyo Cycling Green Map was inspired by a desire to promote alternatives to the weekend drive that would be fun and rewarding.

The first Tokyo Cycling Map offered information on bicycle repair shops, bicycle rentals and hot spas. Recommended cycling routes had fewer cars and traffic. These 'traffic calmed' routes were often missing from traditional maps, since those maps were usually designed with drivers in mind.

The idea was to make people feel comfortable taking a long distance trip by bicycle without having to worry about breakdowns or getting lost.

Soon, an interactive web version was set up for registered users to add new and useful information. The accumulated site and route information is then charted



(Above) The online map was designed to exchange information among bicycle riders in Tokyo area. It provides fun interactive experience.

(Middle) Traditional alley in Tokyo's Mukojima neighborhood. Bicycling provides a detailed view while sightseeing.



(Bottom) Tokyo Earth Day Ride that began in 2003 is now held every year on Earth Day on April 22.



and new printed editions are distributed to local newspapers, municipal offices, rental bicycle shops and at Earth Day events.

Impacts: Accessible Design with Cyclists in Mind

The design process began by removing highways from the Tokyo Cycling Green Map since they were unsuitable for bicycling. Then colors were added to show elevation, which is very useful for cyclists. Interestingly, the map ended up looking like an old Tokyo map from the Edo period.

The project was partly funded by the Ministry of Environment, with recent support from Shimano Corporation. The Tokyo Cycling Green Map won the Good Design Award in 2007. The Mapmakers are excited by the project's success both as a city planning and personal tool. Future editions that expand the map are planned.



Tokyo Metropolitan Government sponsored 2007's "Stop Global-Warming Awards". The Green Map team won the "Modalshift" Award

