

The bicycle is not only the most efficient way to move around cities, it can also be an attractive mode of transportation between cities. In recent years, the Netherlands has been developing a network of fast, super high-quality connections between cities, making recreational and functional cycling even more attractive. Better be careful with the wording however: a 'cycling highway' fits into the car narrative of building multi-lane highways, sparking fears of noise, reduced safety, and other detrimental effects.

Cycle Highways



Photo: Dutch Cycling Embassy

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Photo: Dutch Cycling Embassy



Photo: Sfeerfotografie.nl



Photo: Sfeerfotografie.nl

RijnWaalpad Arnhem-Nijmegen

Reason for intervention

The cities of Arnhem and Nijmegen (both approximately 180.000 inhabitants) are about 18 kilometres apart and growing towards each other. This creates a large pressure on the public space and infrastructure in the area. To give commuters and other travellers an alternative to travel between the two cities, a cycling highway was proposed.

Objective

The formal objective of the RijnWaalpad was to reduce congestion on the main highway as this was a main prerequisite of the national government. For the regional and local governments, objectives were also to increase the attractiveness of the areas and to promote sustainable travel.

Chosen intervention

The chosen intervention was to develop a convenient, hassle-free bicycle route between Arnhem and Nijmegen. This 18 kilometre route was built between two cities; the route is easy navigable, high quality throughout and a clear landmark for cyclists and commuters in the region.

Lessons learned

1. Building a cycling highway is just as much about (personal) cooperation between municipalities, regions, provinces and the national level as it is about developing technical standards. Creating (and keeping!) political support, flexible planning options and mutual considerations for each municipality's challenge is key to building longer and inter-connected cycling infrastructure.
2. A cycling highway is not about top-speed; it is about convenience, not wasting (physical) energy, safety and low-stress. People choose these routes to have an easy, relaxed and reasonably quick commute. Travel time gains are not the main reason why people choose the bicycle; exercise, the joy of being outside and reasonable speeds matter more!
3. Be careful with the words: a 'cycling highway' fits into the car narrative of building multi-lane highways, sparking fears of noise, unsafety and other effects. But... The term is very

appealing to regional or provincial decision makers: it fits the narratives of broader policy development; this might help you in the early development process of the routes.

“ Building a cycling highway is just as much about (personal) cooperation between municipalities, regions, provinces and the national level as it is about developing technical standards.”

Location:
Arnhem, Nijmegen

Duration of the project:
2008 - 2017

Involved organisations:
Arnhem Nijmegen City Region,
Municipalities of Arnhem, Nijmegen,
Overbetuwe and Lingewaard, Province of
Gelderland, Dutch National Government

Read more:
[Province of Gelderland \(NL\)](#)
[Bicycle Dutch \(EN\)](#)



Photo: Provincie Drenthe

Green Corridor Assen-Groningen

Reason for intervention

The provinces of Groningen and Drenthe in the north of the Netherlands aim to be and remain bicycle friendly. In order to stimulate people to use their bikes for distances less than 20 kilometres, cycling should be made as comfortable as possible. This is especially relevant during large maintenance projects on roads and railways. The intention of the network is to create a better connection between the smaller towns to the larger cities in the region.

Objective

The objective of the cycle highway is fourfold. The first aim is to increase the connectivity of the region, which is important for economic developments. Second, the cycle highway stimulates a healthy lifestyle to which cycling contributes. The third objective is to give a boost to the tourism and recreation sector by strengthening the region's image as cycle-friendly through attractive cycle services. The fourth objective of the cycle highway is to contribute to a sustainable society as it eases the transfer from car to bike. Furthermore, these cycle paths should give priority to cyclists, be easily recognizable, wide and comfortable. During winter conditions, these cycle paths are prioritized with salt treatments to ensure safe cycling.

3. Even though available land is scarce in the Netherlands, cycle highways should be wide enough to cope with different speed limits. Cyclists of all ages, speeds and experience should feel welcome and safe on the cycle highway.

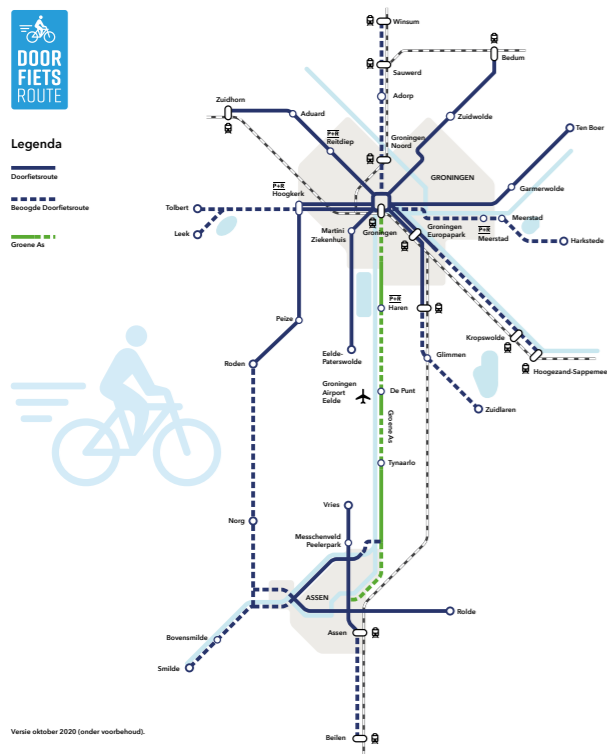
“The first aim is to increase the connectivity of the region, which is important for economic developments.”

Chosen intervention

This project was a collaboration between two provinces, two cities and the region Groningen-Assen. The cycle highway has a functional and recreational purpose. Functional in the sense that it allows cyclists to bike to their home, school or work. The recreational part of the cycle highway is that it is located along a canal with characteristic and green landscapes.

Lessons learned

1. Communicate clearly about the ambitions and goals of the project to make sure all involved parties are aligned. This prevents disappointments.
2. The infrastructure should be connected to the development of the area. Involve the environment actively throughout the process to integrate the cycle highway into the existing territory.



Map: Provincie of Groningen



Photo: Provincie Drenthe



Photo: Dutch Cycling Embassy



Photo: Dutch Cycling Embassy

Star Cycling Route The Hague

Reason for intervention

Between 2018 to 2040, The Hague aims to increase the use of the bike by 50% by making cycling as comfortable, safe and easy as possible for distances up to 15 kilometres. All parts of the city and region should be easily accessible by (e-)bike. People will only choose cycling as their mode of transport for longer distances if routes are really comfortable and attractive. The main strategy to achieve this is developing a network of 'star routes', linking the city centre of The Hague with the region. One of these star routes connects the city centre with the district of Ypenburg, as well as the neighbouring cities of Nootdorp and Rotterdam.

Objective

The objective of this project was to create an easy and attractive connection between the city centre and Ypenburg for cyclists. This route was made as comfortable as possible by redesigning intersections, adding bicycle streets and paths, and building a new bicycle viaduct over the A4 motorway. In Ypenburg, the route links to the regional network.

3. A bicycle route is as good as the weakest link. It is important to make a design for the complete route instead of focusing on smaller sections.

4. Create a network which easily connects with regional destinations, nature reserves and public transport hubs.

5. Anticipate on the increasing popularity of e-bikes. Cycle paths should be wide enough to overtake other cyclists.

6. A set of prioritized routes within the bicycle network helps to generate focus and extra effort.

Chosen intervention

The City of The Hague identified the most logical route based on directness and attractiveness in order to make it as tempting as possible to use this route. The route leads along quiet streets, green areas, canals and residential areas. Busy roads and traffic lights are avoided as much as possible. The biggest challenge, crossing the A4 motorway, has been solved by placing a new bicycle bridge: the Jan Linzelviaduct. This bridge has a span of 335 meters and its lighting is powered by solar energy.

Lessons learned

1. Developing a network of star routes has set a new, higher standard for investing in bicycle infrastructure and can help with generating extra financing.

2. Choose routes which are not only safe and direct, but that are also attractive for cyclists, following green structures, waters and quiet roads. Hereby avoiding busy roads and traffic lights as much as possible.

Location:
The Hague

Duration of the project:
2017 - 2020

Involved organisations:
City of The Hague, Quist Wintermans Architecten, Dura Vermeer, Infra Regio Zuidwest, Hillebrand and ABT

Read more:
[City of The Hague \(NL\)](#)
[Bicycle Dutch \(EN\)](#)