



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**FOR INFORMATION:**

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**VeloFemmes: Tacoma women. Having fun. Riding bikes.**

Tacoma, Wash. – A local group of Tacoma women has joined together to encourage more women to cycle and they're kicking it off with a free cycling celebration in Tollefson Plaza on June 20, 2013 at 5 p.m. with a short 3.7 mile bike ride at 6:30 p.m.

The event is open to all women and will include bike maintenance support by 2<sup>nd</sup> Cycle, commuter tips, art, jewelry, helmet-friendly hairstyles by Hair by Carina, chalk art, food and fun giveaways – all by women and for women. The bike ride is designed to be accessible to all levels of cyclists and on any type of bike. It will culminate in food and drinks at the Tap Room on the outside patio.

In the U.S., only 24% of all bicycle trips are made by women. VeloFemmes is a grassroots group dedicated to providing opportunities for more women to cycle in an effort to change this number. The group plans to organize future events like workshops and group bike rides.

"While women are half the population, we are vastly underrepresented among cyclists. A healthy cycling community has a 50-50 split. VeloFemmes is a great step towards involving more women in the pleasures of cycling in Tacoma," says Diane Wiatr, Active Transportation Coordinator with the City of Tacoma.

Downtown On the Go provides commute options to anyone whose daily life is downtown. Through resources, encouragement and incentives, they are trying to improve the downtown drive alone rate by 11 percent so attracting more downtown employees to cycling is important.

"Anyone can ride their bike but a commuting bike ride can be really intimidating. We want to make cycling really accessible through our work with VeloFemmes. We hope women will come as they are, whether they are most comfortable riding in work clothes, lycra, or summer dresses," says Kristina Walker, Downtown On the Go Manager. "Someone who gets their start at a VeloFemmes event may turn into a bike commuter in the future."

The event is sponsored by Downtown On the Go and the Tacoma Wheelmen's Bicycle Club. The event is free and open to the public. For details and to RSVP visit the Facebook event at <https://www.facebook.com/events/115257385311184/>

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Women. Having Fun. Riding Bikes. Find VeloFemmes on Facebook and Twitter.