

Where to find a free loaner bicycle

The bicycle loaner program is a public-private partnership between the City of Punta Gorda and TEAM Punta Gorda, a non-profit organization committed to the city's revitalization.

Look for the canary yellow bicycles, available for FREE at Fishermen's Village Marina, Four Points by Sheraton, Charlotte Regional Medical Center-Wellness Center, and Isles Yacht Club. They're noted on the brochure map. Check in with the Hosting Sponsor, present an ID and credit card, sign the "Notice to borrowers and operators of loaner bicycles," and receive a lock and key. Then hop on for a great ride through a city recognized nationally as a "bicycle-friendly community."

Please adhere to the following rules:

1. All bicycles must be returned to the pickup location 30 minutes before closing or sunset, whichever comes first. It is illegal to ride the bicycles after dark as they have no headlamps.
2. It is illegal to operate cell phones or headset devices while riding.
3. Wear proper footwear. No sandals or flip-flops while riding.
4. Helmets are required. No exceptions.
5. Operate the bicycle in a manner consistent with the "Florida Law Enforcement Guide," available upon request.
6. When on a roadway, you must act as a vehicle. When on the sidewalk, you must act as a pedestrian.
7. You are responsible for damage to the bicycle beyond normal wear and tear.

Help us support the bicycle loaner program

Your gift enables the program to purchase and repair bicycles and helmets. Gifts of \$300 or more are acknowledged with a placard on the basket.

Name _____
Address _____
City _____
State _____ Zip _____
Phone _____ Email _____

Make your tax-deductible check to TEAM Punta Gorda, a 501(c)(3) non-profit. Write FREE BICYCLE LOANER PROGRAM on the memo line.
Mail to:

TEAM Punta Gorda
252 West Marion Avenue
Punta Gorda, FL 33950
Phone: 941-637-8326



Satellite Photo (FWC Marine Research Institute)

Outlined in red, the Charlotte Harbor watershed – the land from which fresh water drains into the harbor – covers 4,700 square miles, about 8 percent of the state of Florida. It reaches as far north as the headwaters of the Peace River in Polk County and as far south as Estero Bay.

This brochure was made possible by a public outreach grant from the Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program (CHNEP), a partnership working to protect the natural environment from Venice to Bonita Springs to Winter Haven. Charlotte Harbor was designated an "estuary of national significance" by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The CHNEP partnership brings together citizens, elected officials, resource managers and resource users to solve the area's most pressing environmental issues of water quality, water flow, habitat loss and stewardship.

**CHARLOTTE HARBOR
NATIONAL
ESTUARY PROGRAM**
Phone: 239/338-2556
Toll free 866/835-5785
www.CHNEP.org



Produced in cooperation
with The City of Punta Gorda
and TEAM Punta Gorda



252 West Marion Ave.
Punta Gorda, FL 33950
Phone: 941-637-8326

CHARLOTTE HARBOR MAP AND NATURE GUIDE

It's a Free Ride

**PEDAL and DISCOVER
with
PUNTA GORDA'S
BICYCLE LOANER
PROGRAM**



**Look for the canary yellow bicycles,
available for FREE at Fishermen's Village
Marina, Four Points by Sheraton, Laishley
Marina, Charlotte Regional Medical Center-
Wellness Center, and Isles Yacht Club**





Map Points of Interest

- # 1** Peace River Wildlife Center
- # 2** Fishermen's Village
- # 3** Muscle Car City Museum
- # 4** Charlotte Harbor Environmental Center
- # 5** Charlotte County Historical Center
- # 6** Visual Arts Center
- # 7** History Park
- # 8** Historic City Hall
- # 9** AC Freeman House
- # 10** Events Center
- # 11** Historic County Courthouse
- # 12** Historic Train Depot
- # 13** Blanchard House



TEAM Punta Gorda hopes you use this brochure to enjoy all that Punta Gorda has to offer. The brochure was made possible with a grant from the Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program.



Welcome to Punta Gorda and Charlotte Harbor!

Most people admire the beauty and serenity of Charlotte Harbor from their car, on foot, or by boat. Punta Gorda's free bicycle loaner program offers another, unique way to experience our waterfront community and the precious resource that is the Charlotte Harbor estuary.



Shell Creek Reserve, Punta Gorda

As you pedal along the Harbor's edge in downtown Punta Gorda, look out on the water. Perhaps you'll spot a dolphin or spotted eagle ray breaking the surface, a pelican or osprey swooping down for a meal, a sailboat with a full sail, or a fisherman peering hopefully into

the briny below from one of the U.S. 41 bridges or the Gilchrist Park pier.

Of course, the bicycle routes highlighted in this brochure also will take you inland where you can experience the city's shops, art galleries, restaurants, historic district and other attractions. But the highlight of your tour by pedal is the Harbor. We want you to come to know it well and learn why it's important that we preserve its health and bounty. It is our community's fortune.



Punta Gorda Beach, Punta Gorda

A valuable estuary

The Charlotte Harbor Estuary, designated an "estuary of national significance," is 270 square miles, the 2nd largest in Florida and the 17th largest in the country.

Estuaries are bodies of water where rivers meet the sea.

Our Harbor is fed by three rivers. The closest is the 106-mile-long Peace River. Spanish explorers named the waterway Rio de la Paz, "river of peace." English colonists named the Harbor for British Queen Charlotte.

You might notice, especially in summer, that the water is reddish brown. The color is from tannins produced by natural vegetation decomposition and carried to the Harbor down creeks and rivers.

The Harbor is a huge nursery, providing food and habitat for dozens of state or federally protected species. Manatees, sea turtles, roseate spoonbills, wood storks, bald eagles, alligators, and smalltooth sawfish make the Harbor their home.



Punta Gorda Boardwalk, Punta Gorda

Recreational and commercial fishing generate millions of dollars for the local economy.

Much of the mangrove and salt marsh shoreline, along with the Harbor's seagrass habitats, are in state-designated preserves. The mangroves are vital to the Harbor's health, filtering pollutants running off the land while serving as a protective buffer from hurricanes.



Bobcat near headwaters, Gottfried Creek, C.R. Pearson



Brown Pelican, Cayo Costa, Tom Buckard

Submerged seagrass meadows cover the shallow flats along the shoreline of the Harbor and serve as a bellwether of the Harbor's health. These seagrasses depend on clear water and sunlight to thrive, and provide food, shelter and oxygen for marine life.

It is a privilege to those of us who live or visit here and enjoy the pristine beauty of Charlotte Harbor and its tributaries every day. We enjoy the swamps, beaches, creeks, canals, mangroves, sunsets, and the bountiful marine life within the Harbor's waters. It is also our responsibility to protect and preserve the assets of Charlotte Harbor for people to enjoy in the future as we are enjoying it today.

As you Pedal and Discover, help us protect this treasure and join us in becoming good stewards of one of nature's wonders.

For more information on the Harbor's vital environmental roles, visit the Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program website: www.chnep.org.



Great Blue Heron, Peace River Wildlife Center, Punta Gorda



Gilchrist Park Pier, Punta Gorda