

CICLOVÍA PROGRAM

A CARNIVAL ON THE STREETS OF BOGOTA EVERY SUNDAY AND HOLIDAY

INTRODUCTION

The Ciclovía consists of 100 kilometers of roads throughout the city, closed to traffic every Sunday and holiday for seven hours, from 7:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., where more than one and a half million people practice various sports, visit the recreational facilities and go to cycle-mass. This program, developed by the Bogota City Hall, has the support of the National Government, the private sector and non-profit organizations.

CREATION AND BACKGROUND

- In 1976 its creation and function was decreed and streets for the exclusive use of the Ciclovía were determined.
- From 1977 to 1981 private organizations created the Student Bicycle Caravans covering a distance of 40 kilometers, with the initial participation of 80 students. This initiative increased the number of users of the Ciclovía, reaching a total of 5.000 by the end of 1981.
- In 1982 the first permanent route was inaugurated on one of the main avenues, with a total length of 4.3 kilometers. By the end of this year the Ciclovía was over 54 kilometers long.
- From 1986 to 1995, City Hall carried out studies that showed the following situation:
 - The Ciclovía functioned on isolated routes, which did not form circuits due to the lack of connecting points between them.
 - 80% of the routes were located in the north zone of the city
 - All the activities were focused exclusively for bicycles.

Thanks to these studies the network was improved interconnecting all of the routes and creating new ones in the south. It also helped the District create alternative activities for joggers and skaters.

- In 1995 the Ciclovía Administration Agreement was signed between the District Institution of Sports and Recreation (IDRD), the Secretary of Transportation and the Bogota City Hall, foreseeing the importance this recreational space would have in the future.
- By 1996 the Ciclovía had become the most important recreational activity in the country. It was necessary to develop studies for the lengthening and design of the Ciclovía, extending it to 81 km, covering 70% of the 20 localities through four circuits that permitted a better use of public space. Radio communications were also implemented.
- In 1997 the District Administration created a new activity within the Ciclovía, Aerobics on the way. The city was awarded a Guinness Record when, in 1998, 37,731 people performed aerobics exercises on the same stage. Singapore had held this award before.

CURRENT SITUATION

During the current administration, its extension has gone from 81 to 100 kilometers, adequate permanent signals were installed and the interconnection with the District parks was performed. Education and prevention campaigns were implemented, emphasizing on helmet use, speed reduction and maintaining the routes clean.

The team in charge of the Ciclovía is formed by:

- 1 general coordinator,
- 5 supervisors,
- 22 route managers,
- 165 Ciclovía Watches,
- 12 aerobic point managers,
- 42 aerobics instructors,
- 24 maintenance auxiliaries,
- 1900 social service professionals;
- 300 auxiliaries police bachelors;
- 30 professional traffic agents,
- 5 emergency service professionals.

It also counts with 100 Cycle-patrol people of the Metropolitan Police that move by bicycle and are trained to maintain the citizens' security.

The annual budget is divided as follows:

- City Hall US\$ 1 million
- Sponsors US\$ 400.000

Currently, there are 10 Aerobics on the way locations and Cycle-mass held at the Simon Bolivar Park. These special activities, together with the normal function of the Ciclovía, increased coverage to 45% of the population of the city.

Several subjects that affect the Ciclovía have been organized, including:

- Coordinating a plan for street vendors, defining sales points and organizational structure for this activity.
- Implementing campaigns targeted to pets.
- The radio communications system has been expanded to cover all of the personnel involved with security and assistance.

FUTURE

The goal of the current Administration is to leave 120 functioning kilometers of Ciclovía in the city, covering 3 more localities. Because of its great acceptance, the budget for the program has been increased from US\$ 375,000 (1997) to US\$ 1.4 million (2000) to allow for its maintenance and continuation in time.

A series of studies have been done to identify the levels of satisfaction, use and preferences, among others. This data is the basis for the work plan focused on offering a better service in the near future.

Permanent cycle paths are currently being constructed throughout the city by the Institute of Urban Development (IDU), creating circuits that allow for every day use of the bicycle as a means of transportation.

Probably the most beautiful place in Bogota is the Sunday Ciclovía. It is the only place where all the citizens can congregate regardless of their economic standing. The Ciclovía is also the most secure place in the city, not only because of the police force working there, but, thanks to the inter

relationship between the citizens, there is a wonderful solidarity in the community.