

HB

57

<TARGET><BILL>HB 57</BILL><SUBJECT>HB
57</SUBJECT><COMM>HTRA27</COMM></TARGET>

CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 57(TRA)

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA
TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY THE HOUSE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

**Offered:
Referred:**

Sponsor(s): REPRESENTATIVES SEATON, Gruenberg

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 **"An Act authorizing municipalities and nonprofit organizations to sponsor a program to**
2 **encourage the safe use of bicycles as a mode of transportation and to educate the public**
3 **regarding the safe use of bicycles, and amending the duties of the Department of**
4 **Transportation and Public Facilities to include administration of state funds**
5 **appropriated for those purposes."**

6 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

7 *** Section 1.** AS 29.55 is amended by adding a new section to read:

8 **Article 2. Safe Bicycle Ridership.**

9 **Sec. 29.55.100. Safe bicycle ridership.** (a) To encourage the safe use of
10 bicycles as a mode of transportation, the governing body of a municipality may
11 establish a program within the municipality to

12 (1) encourage the safe use, distribution, and maintenance of bicycles,
13 bicycle helmets, bicycle facilities, and bicycle trailers; and

1 (2) educate the public on the safe use of bicycles and traffic laws
2 relating to bicycles and motor vehicles.

3 (b) The municipality may apply for a grant under AS 44.42.150 to receive
4 funds

5 (1) for the purchase, maintenance, and repair of bicycles, bicycle
6 helmets, bicycle facilities, and bicycle trailers by municipal residents; and

7 (2) to establish safety and education programs described in (a)(2) of
8 this section.

9 * **Sec. 2.** AS 44.42 is amended by adding a new section to read:

10 **Article 1A. Program to Encourage Safe Bicycle Ridership.**

11 **Sec. 44.42.150. Grant program to encourage safe bicycle ridership.** (a) To
12 encourage the regular and safe use of bicycles and bicycling as a mode of
13 transportation, a grant program is established in the department to allow municipalities
14 and nonprofit organizations in the state to apply for financial assistance to establish
15 programs for

16 (1) the purchase, maintenance, and repair of bicycles, bicycle helmets,
17 bicycle facilities, and bicycle trailers by residents of the community where the grantee
18 is located;

19 (2) educating the public on the safe use of bicycles and traffic laws
20 relating to bicycles and motor vehicles.

21 (b) The department shall develop regulations establishing criteria for issuing
22 grants to municipalities and nonprofit organizations for the program, giving priority
23 for receiving grants to municipalities and nonprofit organizations that actively
24 encourage safe bicycling as a mode of transportation.

25 (c) The commissioner shall appoint an administrator of the program. The
26 administrator shall

27 (1) educate communities and nonprofit organizations about the
28 program and the grant requirements;

29 (2) receive and evaluate grant applications;

30 (3) from money in the fund described in (d) of this section, award
31 grants to qualified applicants.

1 (d) A fund to encourage safe bicycle ridership is established in the department.
2 The Department of Revenue is the fiduciary of the fund and may invest money in the
3 fund under AS 37.10.071. The fund consists of appropriations by the legislature of

- 4 (1) money to provide grants for the program;
5 (2) gifts, bequests, contributions from other sources, and federal
6 money; and
7 (3) interest earned on the fund balance.

8 (e) In this section, "program" means the grant program to encourage the
9 regular and safe use of bicycles and bicycling as a mode of transportation, as described
10 in this section.

11 * **Sec. 3.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to
12 read:

13 PROGRAM SURVEY. Not later than

14 (1) December 31, 2012, the Department of Transportation and Public
15 Facilities shall mail a survey to all Alaska residents who received a bicycle or bicycle trailer
16 under the program established in AS 44.42.150, added by sec. 2 of this Act, to evaluate the
17 effectiveness of that program;

18 (2) December 31, 2014, the department shall deliver a report to the legislature
19 with an evaluation of the program to encourage safe bicycle ridership and recommendations
20 for the program.

27-LS0315B
Kane
2/18/11

CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 57()

**IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA
TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION**

BY

**Offered:
Referred:**

Sponsor(s): REPRESENTATIVES SEATON, Gruenberg

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

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2 **encourage the safe use of bicycles as a mode of transportation and to educate the public**
3 **regarding the safe use of bicycles, and amending the duties of the Department of**
4 **Transportation and Public Facilities to include administration of state funds**
5 **appropriated for those purposes."**

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18 is located;

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21 (b) The department shall develop regulations establishing criteria for issuing
22 grants to municipalities and nonprofit organizations for the program, giving priority
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29 (2) receive and evaluate grant applications;

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31 grants to qualified applicants.

1 (d) A fund to encourage safe bicycle ridership is established in the department.
2 The Department of Revenue is the fiduciary of the fund and may invest money in the
3 fund under AS 37.10.071. The fund consists of appropriations by the legislature of

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6 money; and

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15 Facilities shall mail a survey to all Alaska residents who received a bicycle or bicycle trailer
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17 effectiveness of that program;

18 (2) December 31, 2014, the department shall deliver a report to the legislature
19 with an evaluation of the program to encourage safe bicycle ridership and recommendations
20 for the program.

*DOT
course be changed
to include training
and education*

27-LS0315\A

HOUSE BILL NO. 57

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA
TWENTY-SEVENTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY REPRESENTATIVES SEATON, Gruenberg

Introduced: 1/18/11
Referred: Transportation, Finance

*Gruenberg
change the bill*

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 "An Act authorizing municipalities and nonprofit organizations to sponsor a program to
2 encourage the safe use of bicycles as a mode of transportation, and amending the duties
3 of the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities to include administration of
4 state funds appropriated for that purpose."

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8 **Sec. 29.55.100. Safe bicycle ridership.** (a) To encourage the safe use of
9 bicycles as a mode of transportation, the governing body of a municipality may
10 establish a program within the municipality to encourage the safe use, distribution, and
11 maintenance of bicycles, bicycle helmets, bicycle facilities, and bicycle trailers.

12 (b) The municipality may apply for a grant under AS 44.42.150 to receive
13 funds for the purchase, maintenance, and repair of bicycles, bicycle helmets, bicycle
14 facilities, and bicycle trailers by municipal residents.

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4 encourage the regular and safe use of bicycles and bicycling as a mode of
5 transportation, a grant program is established in the department to allow municipalities
6 and nonprofit organizations within the state to apply for financial assistance to
7 establish programs for the purchase, maintenance, and repair of bicycles, bicycle
8 helmets, bicycle facilities, and bicycle trailers by residents of the community where
9 the grantee is located.

10 (b) The department shall develop regulations establishing criteria for issuing
11 grants to municipalities and nonprofit organizations for the program, giving priority
12 for receiving grants to municipalities and nonprofit organizations that actively
13 encourage safe bicycling as a mode of transportation.

14 (c) The commissioner shall appoint an administrator of the program. The
15 administrator shall

16 (1) educate communities and nonprofit organizations about the
17 program and the grant requirements;

18 (2) receive and evaluate grant applications;

19 (3) from money in the fund described in (d) of this section, award
20 grants to qualified applicants.

21 (d) There is established in the department a fund to encourage safe bicycle
22 ridership. The Department of Revenue is the fiduciary of the fund and may invest
23 money in the fund under AS 37.10.071. The fund consists of appropriations by the
24 legislature of

25 (1) money to provide grants for the program;

26 (2) gifts, bequests, contributions from other sources, and federal
27 money; and

28 (3) interest earned on the fund balance.

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30 regular and safe use of bicycles and bicycling as a mode of transportation, as described
31 in this section.

1 * Sec. 3. The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to
2 read:

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4 (1) December 31, 2011, the Department of Transportation and Public
5 Facilities shall mail a survey to all Alaska residents who received a bicycle or bicycle trailer
6 under the program established in AS 44.42.150, added by sec. 2 of this Act, to evaluate the
7 effectiveness of that program;

8 (2) December 31, 2012, the department shall deliver a report to the legislature
9 with an evaluation of the program to encourage safe bicycle ridership and recommendations
10 for the program.

CS for
date changes
Mj Shows has CS

LEGAL SERVICES

DIVISION OF LEGAL AND RESEARCH SERVICES
LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS AGENCY
STATE OF ALASKA

(907) 465-3867 or 465-2450
FAX (907) 465-2029
Mail Stop 3101

State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182
Deliveries to: 129 6th St., Rm. 329

MEMORANDUM

January 26, 2011

SUBJECT: Sectional summary of HB 57 (Work Order No. 27-LS0315\A)

TO: Representative Paul Seaton
Attn: Mary Jane Shows

FROM: Brian J. Kane *BJK*
Legislative Counsel

You have requested a sectional summary of HB 57, a bill authorizing municipalities and nonprofit organizations to sponsor a program to encourage the safe use of bicycles as a mode of transportation and amending the duties of the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities to include administration of state funds appropriated for that purpose.

Please note that a sectional summary of a bill is not an authoritative interpretation of a bill. The bill itself is the best statement of its contents.

Section 1 of this bill provides that a municipality may establish a program to encourage the safe use, distribution, and maintenance of bicycles, bicycle helmets, bicycle facilities, and bicycle trailers and apply for grants to purchase bicycles, bicycle helmets, bicycle facilities, and bicycle trailers.

Section 2 of the bill establishes in the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities a grant program to encourage safe bicycle ridership which allows municipalities and nonprofit organizations to apply for financial assistance to establish programs for the purchase of bicycles, bicycle helmets, bicycle facilities, and bicycle trailers.

Section 3 of the bill instructs the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities to mail a survey to residents who received a bicycle or bicycle trailer under the program and report to the legislature an evaluation of the program.

BJK:ljw
11-046.ljw

Alaska State Legislature

State Capitol, Room 102
Juneau, AK 99802
Phone: 465-2689
Fax: 465-3472
Toll Free (800) 665-2689
Representative_Paul_Seaton@legis.state.ak.us



345 W. Sterling Highway
Suite 102B
Homer, AK 99603
Phone: 235-2921
Fax: 235-4008

REPRESENTATIVE Paul Seaton

District 35

HB57 provides Alaskans access to bicycles and encourages bike use as an alternative mode of transportation. This bill creates the Safe Bicycle Ridership grant program for municipalities and non-profits. The increased access to bikes gives Alaskans a choice to respond to high fuel costs in an unstable economy. This availability of an alternative to motor vehicles will benefit many Alaskans and reduce transportation costs while promoting improved community health.

HB57 allows municipalities and nonprofit organizations to apply for state funding to develop and sponsor alternatives to motorized travel by encouraging safe bicycle use. The Department of Transportation will develop regulations establishing criteria for community grant awards, education of grant requirements, evaluate grant applications, and award money. Non-profits and municipalities can propose programs to increase bicycle use in the way that best fits their community. This may be a bike share program, education of safe use of bicycles, a voucher system, or any variation that fits the unique needs of the community.

One example is the City/Borough of Juneau's award winning Bike program that has been working successfully for 3 years. Juneau, in partnership with several local non-profits created the "Bikes, Bikes, Bikes Community Program." This program acquires abandoned bikes through the police department and donations from the community. A local Youth Center provides a maintenance room where young adults learn how to repair and maintain these bikes. The repaired bikes are painted all one color and loaned out to the public with a focus on youth. This program is widely popular and works throughout the summer months.

Shifting a portion of Alaskan's personal travel to bicycling can result in safe non-motorized transportation, improved public health, a decrease in road maintenance, less air and water pollution, and a more vibrant state and population. This transition will also save individuals money by lowering fuel and vehicle maintenance costs and help the State and local government by reducing congestion on the highway.

Staff contact
Mary Jane Shows

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
2011 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Fiscal Note Number _____
 Bill Version HB 57
 () Publish Date _____

Identifier (file name) HB057-DOT-AS-2-4-11 Dept. Affected DOT&PF
 Title Bicycle Grant Program Appropriation Administration and Support
 Allocation Program Development
 Sponsor _____ Rep. Seaton _____
 Requester _____ H. Transportation _____ OMB Component Number 2762

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below.

	Appropriation Required	Information						
		FY 2012	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
OPERATING EXPENDITURES								
Personal Services	40.0		40.0	15.0	15.0	15.0	15.0	
Travel	6.0		6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	
Contractual	35.0		10.0	10.0	10.0	35.0	10.0	
Supplies	1.0		0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	
Equipment								
Land & Structures								
Grants & Claims								
Miscellaneous								
TOTAL OPERATING	82.0	0.0	56.5	31.5	31.5	56.5	31.5	

CAPITAL EXPENDITURES							
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CHANGE IN							
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FUND SOURCE (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts							
1003 GF Match							
1004 GF	82.0	0.0	56.5	31.5	31.5	56.5	31.5
1005 GF/Program Receipts							
1037 GF/Mental Health							
Other Interagency Receipts							
TOTAL	82.0	0.0	56.5	31.5	31.5	56.5	31.5

Estimate of any current year (FY2011) cost 0.0

POSITIONS

Full-time							
Part-time							
Temporary							

Why this fiscal note differs from previous version

Not applicable, initial version.

Prepared by Laura Baker, Director
 Division Administrative Services
 Approved by Laura Baker, Director
Administrative Services

Phone 907-465-8974
 Date/Time 2/4/11 4:00 PM
 Date 2/4/2011

Analysis

HB 57 creates a bicycle grant program providing funding to municipalities and non profits for the purchase, maintenance, repair of bikes and bike helmets, and bike trailers. Regulations are required to be established for the grant program. These funds will be for personal services, travel, contractual and supplies for developing the regulations, implementing and administering the grant program, conducting the required survey and providing grants. Regulations will be updated every 5 years. First and second year costs are higher as they reflect 25% of a FTE position for start-up of program, along with initial contractual costs related to regulation changes, program advertisement, outreach, and related costs. Program oversight is required in subsequent fiscal years. Personal services for program implementation and oversight are not reimbursable with federal receipts.

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
2011 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Fiscal Note Number _____
Bill Version HB 57
() Publish Date _____

Identifier (file name) HB057-DOT-AS-2-4-11 Dept. Affected DOT&PF
Title Bicycle Grant Program Appropriation Administration and Support
Allocation Program Development
Sponsor Rep. Seaton
Requester H. Transportation OMB Component Number 2762

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below.

	Appropriation Required		Information				
	FY 2012	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
OPERATING EXPENDITURES							
Personal Services	40.0		40.0	15.0	15.0	15.0	15.0
Travel	6.0		6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0
Contractual	35.0		10.0	10.0	10.0	35.0	10.0
Supplies	1.0		0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5
Equipment							
Land & Structures							
Grants & Claims							
Miscellaneous							
TOTAL OPERATING	82.0	0.0	56.5	31.5	31.5	56.5	31.5

CAPITAL EXPENDITURES							
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CHANGE IN							
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FUND SOURCE (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts							
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1037 GF/Mental Health							
Other Interagency Receipts							
TOTAL	82.0	0.0	56.5	31.5	31.5	56.5	31.5

Estimate of any current year (FY2011) cost 0.0

POSITIONS

Full-time							
Part-time							
Temporary							

Why this fiscal note differs from previous version

Not applicable, initial version.

This person would seek out grants grants are for matched and would have to be appropriated by legis.

Prepared by Laura Baker, Director
Division Administrative Services
Approved by Laura Baker, Director
Administrative Services

Phone 907-465-8974
Date/Time 2/4/11 4:00 PM
Date 2/4/2011

Analysis

HB 57 creates a bicycle grant program providing funding to municipalities and non profits for the purchase, maintenance, repair of bikes and bike helmets, and bike trailers. Regulations are required to be established for the grant program. These funds will be for personal services, travel, contractual and supplies for developing the regulations, implementing and administering the grant program, conducting the required survey and providing grants. Regulations will be updated every 5 years. First and second year costs are higher as they reflect 25% of a FTE position for start-up of program, along with initial contractual costs related to regulation changes, program advertisement, outreach, and related costs. Program oversight is required in subsequent fiscal years. Personal services for program implementation and oversight are not reimbursable with federal receipts.

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
2011 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Fiscal Note Number _____
Bill Version HB0571A
() Publish Date _____

HB057-DOA-DOF-03-04-11
Title Bicycle Program Dept. Affected Administration
Appropriation Centralized Administrative Services
Allocation Finance
Sponsor Representatives Seaton and Gruenberg
Requester House Transportation OMB Component Number 59

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)

Note: Amounts do not include inflation unless otherwise noted below.

OPERATING EXPENDITURES	Appropriation Required	Information					
	FY 2012	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	FY 2016	FY 2017
Personal Services							
Travel							
Services							
Commodities							
Capital Outlay							
Grants							
Miscellaneous							
TOTAL OPERATING	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

CAPITAL EXPENDITURES							
-----------------------------	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

CHANGE IN REVENUES							
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FUND SOURCE (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts							
1003 GF Match							
1004 GF							
1005 GF/Program Receipts							
1037 GF/Mental Health							
Other (please identify)							
TOTAL	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Estimate of any current year (FY2011) cost _____

POSITIONS

Full-time							
Part-time							
Temporary							

Why this fiscal note differs from previous version (if initial version, please note as such)

Prepared by Lisa Pusich
Division Finance
Approved by John Cramer, Deputy Commissioner
Department of Administration

Phone 465-5616
Date/Time 3/2/2011 5pm
Date 3/4/2011

FISCAL NOTE

STATE OF ALASKA
2011 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

BILL NO. HB057A

Analysis

This bill will have no fiscal impact.



January 26, 2011

Representative Paul Seaton
State Capital Building
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Representative Seaton,

HB 57 is well over due in this state and in our seaside community of Seward, especially with the lack of public transportation across the state and the cost of fuel in our community, which is now at \$3.87/gallon.

Seward has taken the necessary steps over the past 15 years to develop a bike friendly community by partnering with the Department of Transportation to designate bike lanes on the state highway; built separated bike paths along the highway where space allows; a bike path from the north harbor following the coastline to the Alaska Sealife Center and current discussion with the National Forest and DOT about building a separated bike path from the highway out to Exit Glacier National Park.

Two years ago, the City of Seward partnered with Providence Hospital to create a wellness plan for our community. The Wellness grant has funded public bike racks, dietary counseling, fitness programs and some prevention programs that encourage a healthy lifestyle.

How would seniors benefit from HB57? Increase and improve balance and flexibility; provide independence by having safe and inexpensive mode of transportation; the opportunity to get outside and become part of their community by traveling on a non motorized vehicle; and an improved outlook on life knowing they can move at a speed that is faster than walking.

Can't you see it now? People of all ages, on all types of bikes, full size tricycles with flowery baskets, recumbent bicycles or unicycles for the really ambitious (Seward's own Magistrate Peck), enjoying the sites, sounds and sea scents from the comfort of a non motorized vehicle.

Thank you Representative Seaton! Sponsoring this very important, progressive bill this legislative session will cost a fraction compared to the multitude of benefits for the Alaskan.

Sincerely,

Dana Paperman

Seward Senior Center

Seward Senior Citizens, Inc., PO Box 1195 ~ Seward, AK 99664, (907) 224-5604
sse@seward.net/www.sewardsenior.org

"Serving senior citizens for 33 years"

***Board of Directors
2010-2011***

*Patty Beals
Susie McHone
Blair Rorabaugh
Mary Williamson
Joy Morgan
Joe Owens
Diane Thompson
Paul Caseman
Karen Sefton*

Executive Director

Dana Paperman

Our Mission Statement

*To insure honor, dignity,
security, and independence
for older Alaskans;
assistance in maintaining
meaningful and quality lives.*

*A non profit Agency
TAX ID: 92-0072425*

The Honorable Paul Seaton
Alaska State Senate
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Dear Representative Seaton,

Thank you for introducing HB57. I greatly appreciate your interest in creating bicyclist-friendly programs and improving bike safety statewide. Not only can HB132 help Alaskans cut down on their fuel costs when we commute less by car, but the state will save money via less wear-and-tear on public infrastructure. Additionally, I am very pleased with the second part of the bill to provide grants to improve and increase safe bike routes. This important component of the bill will encourage Alaskans to commute by bike because of increased safety and expediency.

Thanks again for your work in introducing this fantastic bill and please let me know what I can do to support it in the future.

Sincerely,
J.T. Lindholm

Bikes, Bikes, Bikes:

A program of the City & Borough of Juneau/Parks & Recreation- Zach Gordon Youth Center.

HG Wells once told us that when I see an adult on a bicycle, “I do not despair for the future of the human race. Cycle tracks will abound in Utopia”. This year’s recipient of the Alaska Municipal League’s 2008 Alaska Community Award of Excellence honoring the best in local government innovation is the Zach Gordon Youth Center’s Bikes, Bikes, Bikes Community Program spearheaded by the Zach Gordon Youth Center.

The Bikes program provides free bikes for the public to use around town. Bikes, Bikes, Bikes is a partnership of the Youth Center, SEARHC, Steps to a Healthier SE Alaska (grant), JPD and the Skyler Kim Foundation. The Youth Center provides a maintenance room including bike stands, tools (youth are trained in bicycle maintenance), and a bicycle maintenance instructor six hours a week for students to learn basic bike maintenance skills.

Youth ranging from ten to twenty years of age have experienced the joy of riding and repairing bikes. Thirty bikes acquired through JPD’s recycle program and community donations are available for use. Weekly organized bike rides occur throughout the summer months on local bike trails.

The program is Parks & Recreation’s ultimate contribution to sustainability and healthy transportation choices.

*This information was submitted by
Marc Matsil, Director
Parks & Recreation
City & Borough of Juneau
Alaska’s Capital City
155 S. Seward Street
Juneau, AK 99801
(907) 586-0932

I want to write in support of HB57 a bill establishing a grant program to fund public bike share for Alaskan communities.

Shared bike programs are relatively new throughout the world and have generally been successful. HB57 would allow Alaskan communities to among the first in the world to have some exciting new developments for commuting bikes. A couple of examples; a new company named Breezer bikes makes a bike specifically designed to be a no-frills, durable and low-maintenance yet of good quality and specifically designed for commuting. Here is an article and their website:

http://www.popularmechanics.com/science/4271520?click=main_sr

<http://www.breezerbikes.com/>

A truly revolutionary system is on the horizon as well. It uses the ever-increasing abilities of cell phones and GPS to administer a public bike sharing program. This is, it would be possible for a subscriber to walk up to a locked public share bike, unlock the bike with the cell phone, ride to your destination, lock the bike and walk away and not worry about returning it to a central location. New York city is going to implement it.

Company website:

www.socialbicycles.com

HB57 would provide the funding necessary to make use of these kinds of new technologies and potentially change the face of transportation in communities throughout Alaska.

You can bet if this bill passes I will be active in my community deploying these new technologies. I strongly urge the passage of HB57.

Thank you, Ryan Kennedy

Mary Jane Shows

From: Rep. Paul Seaton
Sent: Monday, January 31, 2011 12:06 PM
To: Mary Jane Shows
Subject: FW: HB57

From: Kenn Barnett [<mailto:cd2wellness@gmail.com>]
Sent: Friday, January 28, 2011 12:28 PM
To: Rep. Paul Seaton
Subject: HB57

The Honorable Paul Seaton
Alaska State Senate
Alaska State Capitol
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

Dear Representative Seaton,

Thank you for introducing HB57! I greatly appreciate your interest in creating bicyclist-friendly programs and improving bike safety statewide. Not only can HB57 help Alaskans cut down on their fuel costs when we commute less by car, but the state will save money via less wear-and-tear on public infrastructure. There is a potential for an even greater benefit to bicycle travel and that would be the health aspect. With recent announcements on the number of sedentary, over weight and even obese residents of all ages in Anchorage and the state, anything we can do to encourage activity is a win for all. This bill will encourage Alaskans to commute by bike because of increased knowledge on the safe and effective use of their bike.

Thanks again for your work in introducing this fantastic bill and please let me know what I can do to support it in the future.

Sincerely,
Kenn Barnett
Anchorage, AK 99507

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Working for a Bicycle Friendly America

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« Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood Recaps National Bike Summit Experience 10th National Bike Summit Rocked! »

LaHood: "This is the end of favoring motorized transportation at the expense of non-motorized."

When the Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood stood on a table at the National Bike Summit to thank the crowd and show his support for bicycling and walking, he was just getting started.

Today, he announced his new Policy Statement on Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodation Regulations and Recommendations. It is simply the strongest statement of support for prioritizing bicycling and walking ever to come from a sitting secretary of transportation.

On his blog, he writes:

Today, I want to announce a sea change. People across America who value bicycling should have a voice when it comes to transportation planning. This is the end of favoring motorized transportation at the expense of non-motorized.

We are integrating the needs of bicyclists in federally-funded road projects. We are discouraging transportation investments that negatively affect cyclists and pedestrians. And we are encouraging investments that go beyond the minimum requirements and provide facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians of all ages and abilities.

To set this approach in motion, we have formulated key recommendations for state DOTs and communities:

- Treat walking and bicycling as equals with other transportation modes.
- Ensure convenient access for people of all ages and abilities.
- Go beyond minimum design standards.
- Collect data on walking and biking trips.
- Set a mode share target for walking and bicycling.
- Protect sidewalks and shared-use paths the same way roadways are protected (for example, snow removal)
- Improve nonmotorized facilities during maintenance projects.

Now, this is a start, but it's an important start. These initial steps forward will help us move forward even further.

The Secretary ended by thanking the League of American Bicyclists, but we strongly thank him for his words, his energy, and now for his official policy statement. We agree that there is further to go and we look forward to working with the Secretary to get there.

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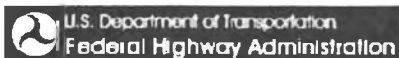
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United States Department of Transportation Policy Statement on Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodation Regulations and Recommendations

Signed on March 11, 2010 and announced March 15, 2010

Note: Also available on the [United States Department of Transportation Website](#)

Purpose

The United States Department of Transportation (DOT) is providing this Policy Statement to reflect the Department's support for the development of fully integrated active transportation networks. The establishment of well-connected walking and bicycling networks is an important component for livable communities, and their design should be a part of Federal-aid project developments. Walking and bicycling foster safer, more livable, family-friendly communities; promote physical activity and health; and reduce vehicle emissions and fuel use. Legislation and regulations exist that require inclusion of bicycle and pedestrian policies and projects into transportation plans and project development. Accordingly, transportation agencies should plan, fund, and implement improvements to their walking and bicycling networks, including linkages to transit. In addition, DOT encourages transportation agencies to go beyond the minimum requirements, and proactively provide convenient, safe, and context-sensitive facilities that foster increased use by bicyclists and pedestrians of all ages and abilities, and utilize universal design characteristics when appropriate. Transportation programs and facilities should accommodate people of all ages and abilities, including people too young to drive, people who cannot drive, and people who choose not to drive.

Policy Statement

The DOT policy is to incorporate safe and convenient walking and bicycling facilities into transportation projects. Every transportation agency, including DOT, has the responsibility to improve conditions and opportunities for walking and bicycling and to integrate walking and bicycling into their transportation systems. Because of the numerous individual and community benefits that walking and bicycling provide — including health, safety, environmental, transportation, and quality of life — transportation agencies are encouraged to go beyond minimum standards to provide safe and convenient facilities for these modes.

Authority

This policy is based on various sections in the United States Code (U.S.C.) and the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) in Title 23—Highways, Title 49—Transportation, and Title 42—The Public Health and Welfare. These sections, provided in the Appendix, describe how bicyclists and pedestrians of all abilities should be involved throughout the planning process, should not be adversely affected by other transportation projects, and should be able to track annual obligations and expenditures on nonmotorized transportation facilities.

Recommended Actions

The DOT encourages States, local governments, professional associations, community organizations, public transportation agencies, and other government agencies, to adopt similar policy statements on bicycle and pedestrian accommodation as an indication of their commitment to accommodating bicyclists and pedestrians as an integral element of the transportation system. In support of this commitment, transportation agencies and local communities should go beyond minimum design standards and requirements to create safe, attractive, sustainable, accessible, and convenient bicycling and walking networks. Such actions should include:

Considering walking and bicycling as equals with other transportation modes: The primary goal of a transportation system is to safely and efficiently move people and goods. Walking and bicycling are efficient transportation modes for most short trips and, where convenient intermodal systems exist, these nonmotorized trips can easily be linked with transit to significantly increase trip distance. Because of the benefits they provide, transportation agencies should give the same priority to walking and bicycling as is given to other transportation modes. Walking and bicycling should not be an afterthought in roadway design. Ensuring that there are transportation choices for people of all ages and abilities, especially children: Pedestrian and bicycle facilities should meet accessibility requirements and provide safe, convenient, and interconnected transportation networks. For example, children should have safe and convenient options for walking or bicycling to school and parks. People who cannot or prefer not to drive should have safe and efficient transportation choices.

Going beyond minimum design standards: Transportation agencies are encouraged, when possible, to avoid designing walking and bicycling facilities to the minimum standards. For example, shared-use paths that have been designed to minimum width requirements will need retrofits as more people use them. It is more effective to plan for increased usage than to retrofit an older facility. Planning projects for the long-term should anticipate likely future demand for bicycling and walking facilities and not preclude the provision of future improvements.

Integrating bicycle and pedestrian accommodation on new, rehabilitated, and limited-access bridges: DOT encourages bicycle and pedestrian accommodation on bridge projects including facilities on limited-access bridges with connections to streets or paths.

Collecting data on walking and biking trips: The best way to improve transportation networks for any mode is to collect and analyze trip data to optimize investments. Walking and bicycling trip data for many communities are lacking. This data gap can be overcome by establishing routine collection of nonmotorized trip information. Communities that routinely collect walking and bicycling data are able to track trends and prioritize investments to ensure the success of new facilities. These data are also valuable in linking walking and bicycling with transit.

Setting mode share targets for walking and bicycling and tracking them over time: A byproduct of improved data collection is that communities can establish targets for increasing the percentage of trips made by walking and bicycling.

Removing snow from sidewalks and shared-use paths: Current maintenance provisions require pedestrian facilities built with Federal funds to be maintained in the same manner as other roadway assets. State Agencies have generally established levels of service on various routes especially as related to snow and ice events.

Improving nonmotorized facilities during maintenance projects: Many transportation agencies spend most of their transportation funding on maintenance rather than on constructing new facilities. Transportation agencies should find ways to make facility improvements for pedestrians and bicyclists during resurfacing and other maintenance projects.

Conclusion

Increased commitment to and investment in bicycle facilities and walking networks can help meet goals for cleaner, healthier air; less congested roadways; and more livable, safe, cost-efficient communities. Walking and bicycling provide low-cost mobility options that place fewer demands on local roads and highways. DOT recognizes that safe and convenient walking and bicycling facilities may look different depending on the context — appropriate facilities in a rural community may be different from a dense, urban area. However, regardless of regional, climate, and population density differences, it is important that pedestrian and bicycle facilities be integrated into transportation systems. While DOT leads the effort to provide safe and convenient accommodations for pedestrians and bicyclists, success will ultimately depend on transportation agencies across the country embracing and implementing this policy.

Ray LaHood, United States Secretary of Transportation

APPENDIX

Key Statutes and Regulations Regarding Walking and Bicycling

Planning Requirements



*Alaska Campaign for Active Transportation
Anchorage, Palmer and Wasilla, Alaska
2008*

**Anchorage, Palmer, Wasilla and the “core area” Active
Transportation Partnership**



Confirmed Partners as of October 2008:

Municipality of Anchorage
Matanuska-Susitna Borough
Southcentral Foundation
Alaska Center for the Environment
Alaska Transportation Priorities Project
Bicycle Commuters of Anchorage
Valley Mountain Bikers and Hikers

CASE STATEMENT

Alaska Campaign for Active Transportation Anchorage, Palmer and Wasilla, Alaska 2008

Anchorage, Palmer, Wasilla and the "core area" Active Transportation Partnership

Confirmed Partners as of October 2008:

Municipality of Anchorage, www.muni.org/transplan/non-motorized.cfm

Matanuska-Susitna Borough, www1.matsugov.us

Southcentral Foundation, www.scf.cc

Alaska Center for the Environment, www.akcenter.org

Alaska Transportation Priorities Project, www.aktransportation.org

Bicycle Commuters of Anchorage, www.bicycleanchorage.org

Valley Mountain Bikers and Hikers, www.vmbah.org

Key contacts:

- Lois Epstein, AK Transportation Priorities Project, lois@aktransportation.org, 907 929-9372
- Lori Schanche, Municipality of Anchorage, SchancheLE@muni.org, 907 343-8368
- Pat Owens, Valley Mountain Bikers and Hikers, pato@mtaonline.net, 907 745-7714

Executive Summary

Anchorage, Palmer, Wasilla and the "core area" between Palmer and Wasilla represent areas ripe for increased, non-motorized trips year-round. Anchorage has a completed, comprehensive Pedestrian Plan, is far along in development of its Bicycle Plan and – with adequate funding – will accelerate plan implementation. Palmer, Wasilla and the "core area" require pedestrian and bicycle plan development prior to plan implementation. The entire region, however, has receptive populations due to the outdoors-focus of many Alaskans and their ability to adapt to cold weather, and the extremely high price of motor fuel in Alaska. The Campaign will include a focus on shifting Alaska Native travel patterns to increased non-motorized transportation since Anchorage contains the largest Native population of any community in the state. Based on population, the Campaign expects to spend 80% of its funds in Anchorage and 20% of the funds in Palmer, Wasilla, and the "core area." Finally, the bi-partisan composition of the Campaign's communities helps ensure that the state's federal representatives will act to increase non-motorized transportation funding.

The Campaign's goals are to:

1. Significantly increase the number of trips to/from work, shopping, school, and public transportation in Anchorage, Palmer, Wasilla and the "core area" via non-motorized travel, including among Alaska Natives;
2. Increase safety for walking and bicycling on roads and trails in Anchorage, Palmer, Wasilla and the "core area";
3. Make Anchorage, Palmer, Wasilla and the "core area" more pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly year-round; and,
4. Provide better connections from diverse neighborhoods in Anchorage to the city's world-class paved trail system.

The Alaska Campaign for Active Transportation has a high likelihood of success. The benefits of a successful campaign include decreased road maintenance costs and reduced need for new roads and/or road expansions (the majority paid for using federal dollars), safer non-motorized travel, improved public health, less air and water pollution, and more vibrant neighborhoods and communities.

Alaska Campaign for Active Transportation
Anchorage, Palmer and Wasilla, Alaska
2008

**Anchorage, Palmer, Wasilla and the “core area” Active Transportation Partnership
Partners (confirmed and unconfirmed as of October 2008):**

*Municipality of Anchorage, www.muni.org/transplan/non-motorized.cfm

*Mat-Su Borough, <http://www1.matsugov.us>

City of Palmer

City of Wasilla

Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Public Health

Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities

Anchorage School District

Alaska Native Medical Center

Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium

*Southcentral Foundation, www.scf.cc

*Alaska Center for the Environment, www.akcenter.org

Alaska Mobility Coalition

Alaska Public Interest Research Group

*Alaska Transportation Priorities Project, www.aktransportation.org

American Lung Association of Alaska

Anchorage Citizens Coalition

*Bicycle Commuters of Anchorage, www.bicycleanchorage.org

Friends of Mat-Su

*Valley Mountain Bikers and Hikers, www.vmbah.org

Anchorage Chamber of Commerce

Palmer Chamber of Commerce

Wasilla Chamber of Commerce

* Confirmed partners

Introduction and Goals

Active transportation, which includes all forms of non-motorized transportation, is a concept many Alaskans heartily support. Alaskans are an outdoors-oriented population and – if physically able and weather conditions allow – Alaskans generally enjoy walking, bicycling, and/or skiing. The mission of the Alaska Campaign for Active Transportation (the Campaign) is to increase the number of essential trips using non-motorized means by residents of Anchorage, Palmer and Wasilla (the two largest Mat-Su Borough communities, both within commuting range of Anchorage) as well as the unincorporated “core area” between these communities. The benefits of a successful campaign include decreased road maintenance costs, reduced need for new roads and/or road expansions, safer non-motorized travel, improved public health, less air and water pollution, and more vibrant neighborhoods and communities.

The Campaign's goals are to:

5. Significantly increase the number of trips to/from work, shopping, school, and public transportation in Anchorage, Palmer, Wasilla and the "core area" via non-motorized travel, including among Alaska Natives;
6. Increase safety for walking and bicycling on roads and trails in Anchorage, Palmer, Wasilla and the "core area";
7. Make Anchorage, Palmer, Wasilla and the "core area" more pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly year-round; and,
8. Provide better connections from diverse neighborhoods in Anchorage to the city's world-class paved trail system.

Location

Southcentral Alaska is the state's most populated region, and contains Alaska's largest community – Anchorage. Approximately 50 miles north are Palmer and Wasilla which are 12 miles apart, and both communities are within one hour's commute of Anchorage. The following map shows the location of Anchorage, Palmer, and Wasilla within Alaska.



Appendix 1 contains maps showing Anchorage's key employment, commercial, and educational destinations, as well as the existing paved trail system.

Background Information

Anchorage is the largest community in Alaska and in 2007 had an estimated population of 283,823 (42% of the state's population).¹ Palmer and Wasilla are the largest communities in the Mat-Su Borough which in 2007 had an estimated population of 80,056 (12% of the state's population).² Both Anchorage and the Mat-Su Borough are growing in population.



The Anchorage region has the largest population of Alaska Natives of any community statewide, with Alaska Natives representing approximately 7% of Anchorage's population during the 2000 census.³ Due to high fuel costs in rural areas, there recently has been significant migration from primarily Native villages to Anchorage.⁴

At approximately 60° north latitude, the region's climate can be characterized as 6 months of winter (October-March) with temperatures below freezing most of the time, 3 transitional months (April, May, and September), and 3 months of summer (June-August). Alaskans are accustomed to cold weather and many individuals walk and even bicycle all year long using modified gear such as shoes with grippers and studded bicycle tires.

Anchorage Journalist Tim Woody and his commuting self-portrait.

The region has limited daylight during fall and winter. As a result, walking and bicycling routes, including routes to schools, must be well-lit and walkers and bicyclists must be very visible to avoid injuries from vehicles and the area's many moose.

¹ Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development. See <http://labor.state.ak.us/news/2008/news08-43.pdf>.

² *Ibid.*

³ See <http://www.muni.org/homepage/quickstats.cfm#mapson>.

⁴ "Bush costs prompt exodus to cities; Task force urged to stem Migration," Julia O'Malley and Kyle Hopkins, *Anchorage Daily News*, September 29, 2008, (see http://www.adn.com/front_story_541188.html).

Notably, *Prevention* magazine ranked Anchorage 8th best walking city of the 100 most populous cities in the U.S. in 2006, with the criterion that counted most being the percentage of people who regularly walked.⁵ The March 2006 issue of *Bicycling* magazine ranked Anchorage among the 21 best bicycling cities in the U.S., giving it an honorable mention in the 200,000 to 500,000 category (winning cities were Madison, WI, Tucson, AZ, and Albuquerque, NM; Minneapolis, MN – a Non-Motorized Transportation Pilot Program community – also received an honorable mention).

In 2006, Anchorage issued its *Ten Year Plan on Obesity and Health*.⁶ This plan contains a key goal (one of four goals), with several subgoals, consistent with increasing non-motorized transportation:

Goal 4: Create a community environment that supports a more physically active way of life.

Subgoal 4.1: Develop safe, convenient, and attractive sidewalks/pathways.

Subgoal 4.3: Improve [the] off-road trail system to provide better area wide connectivity and linkages to major destinations and adjoining neighborhoods.

Subgoal 4.4: Improve safety and maintenance of [the] pedestrian transportation system.

Subgoal 4.5: Site public facilities, such as schools, parks, and public buildings in locations where they are readily accessible by walking, biking and/or public transit to the residents intended to be served.

Subgoal 4.6: Modify the Municipality of Anchorage's land use regulations to encourage and facilitate compact mixed use and pedestrian friendly development, particularly in those areas so identified in the Municipality of Anchorage's Comprehensive Plan.

Further proving its interest in non-motorized transportation, this year several involved individuals formed an all-volunteer pro-bicycling organization, Bicycle Commuters of Anchorage, or BCA (see BCA's very impressive website: <http://www.bicycleanchorage.org/>). BCA works to improve conditions for bicycle transportation and encourage bicycle use in Anchorage. BCA sponsored several events this year to promote bicycle commuting, worked with the Alaska Injury Prevention Center on Public Service Announcements to prevent vehicle collisions with bicycles, and serves as a member of a state/local transportation advisory committee. BCA also assisted the Municipality of Anchorage in promoting Bike to Work Day which included 112 business teams with 918 registered riders, and promoted International Walk to School Day to the media.

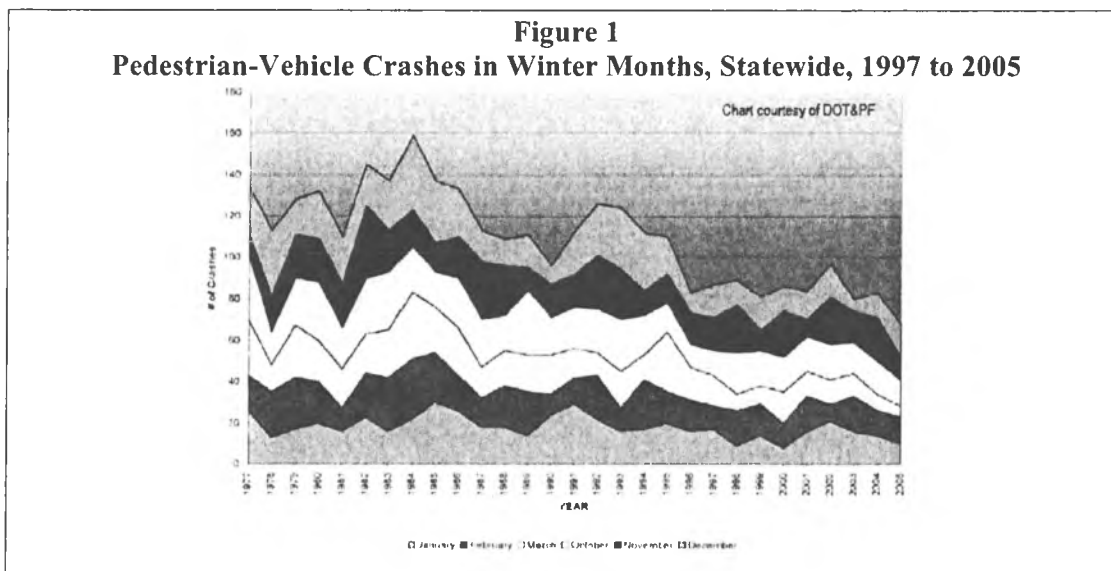
Also in 2008, the Anchorage Metropolitan Planning Organization voted to increase spending on Transportation Enhancements from 10 percent of its money to 10-20 percent.

⁵ See http://www.prevention.com/cda/article/100-best-walking-cities/1ba0d08f88803110VgnVCM20000012281eac_fitness/walking/getting.started.

⁶ See <http://www.muni.org/iccimages/healthchp/Final%20MOA%20OFF%20May%2010%202006.pdf>.

Anchorage has a world-class paved trail system of approximately 120 miles, used recreationally and for commuting. There are 458 miles of sidewalks (mostly in older neighborhoods), representing 13 percent of the total miles of road in the Anchorage bowl.⁷ Approximately 75 percent of all intersection curbs with sidewalks have accessibility improvements for the disabled.⁸ Anchorage's People Mover buses all have bicycle racks and, due to demand, the newest buses can carry three rather than two bicycles.

To ensure year-round walking in the region, it is critical for sidewalks to be cleared of snow. Over the past decade, Anchorage has increased its sidewalk snow clearing to 130 miles of walking facilities. Pedestrian-vehicle crashes in winter have trended downward as a result (see Figure 1, below⁹).



To show its commitment to greenhouse gas emission reductions, Anchorage Mayor Mark Begich has signed onto the U.S. Conference of Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, which commits the city to reduce greenhouse gas emission to 7 percent below 1990 levels by 2012.

⁷ *Anchorage Pedestrian Plan, making Anchorage a better, safer place to walk*, Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions, Traffic Department, Municipality of Anchorage, October 2007, p. 9 (see http://www.muni.org/iceimages/transplan/PedestrianPlan_Web.pdf). The smaller, more rural communities of Chugiak-Eagle River and Girdwood, all part of the Municipality of Anchorage, have even less sidewalk coverage.

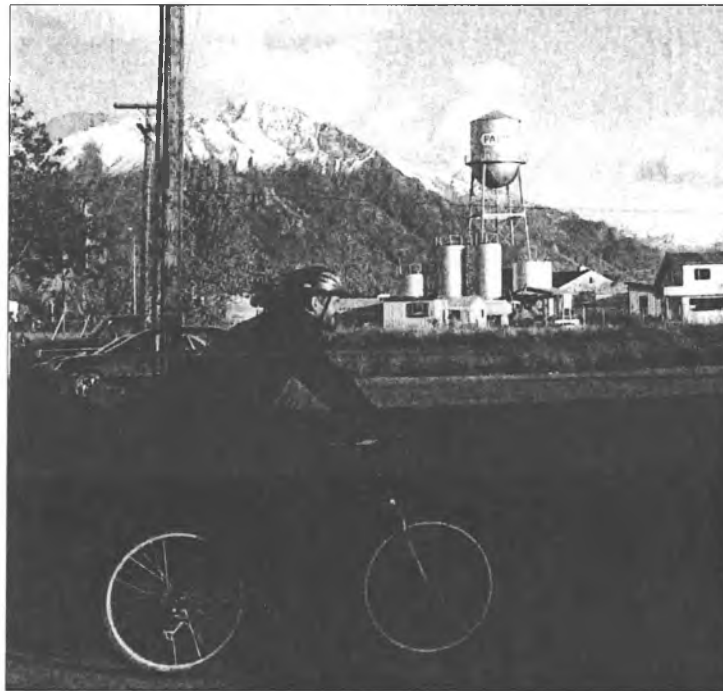
⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁹ *Anchorage Pedestrian Plan, op. cit.*, p. 16.

The Palmer and Wasilla area is much less developed and less populated than Anchorage. Within the Mat-Su Borough, there are over 2500 miles of documented trails, though most are backcountry trails which, in some cases, provide access to non-recreational destinations as well recreational opportunities. Backcountry trails in the Mat-Su Borough are mostly motorized as well. Additionally, there are approximately 90 miles of separated walking and bicycling paths within the Borough that have been constructed during the widening of highways and follow main roads such as the Old Glenn Highway, Palmer-Wasilla Highway, and the Parks Highway. Some shorter off-road paths near schools exist in Wasilla and Palmer, but they often do not connect to the main routes.

Approximately one-fourth of the Borough's constructed separated paths are near or between the two communities of Palmer and Wasilla.

Challenges for the Campaign include a built environment in Anchorage, Palmer, Wasilla and the "core area" during recent decades that primarily supports motorized lifestyles. The region has a large number of vehicle-oriented commercial districts, office parks that require driving to lunch or errands, shopping centers that are isolated from neighborhoods, and a low percentage of streets with sidewalks.



Bicycle commuter Whit Sheard near downtown Palmer on autumn day.

Baseline Data Relevant to the Alaska Campaign for Active Transportation

As Alaska's largest community, there is considerably more baseline data about Anchorage than about Palmer and Wasilla. This section describes the available data most relevant to the Campaign.

In 2002, the Municipality of Anchorage conducted a survey which found that on a typical weekday in spring, walking trips represented about 5.7 percent of all trips by residents,¹⁰ close to the national average of 6.9 percent. This figure does not include trips that require some walking, e.g., for travel to a bus stop. The survey also found that the median length

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

of a walking trip in Anchorage was 6 minutes or approximately 0.3 miles.¹¹ Additionally, approximately 14 percent of students walked to school in Anchorage, similar to the national average.¹²

Around 220 pedestrian-vehicle crashes occur each year in Anchorage, a number that has been roughly stable from 1994-2004 despite growing traffic volumes.¹³

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 61 percent of adults in Anchorage are overweight, with more than 23 percent qualifying as obese.¹⁴ Among the Alaska Native community statewide, 68% are overweight and 31% qualify as obese.¹⁵

Status of Pedestrian and Bicycle Plans

As part of its Non-Motorized Transportation Plan, the Municipality of Anchorage published its Pedestrian Plan in October 2007 with the goal of establishing “a 20-year framework for improvements that will enhance the pedestrian environment and increase opportunities to choose walking as a mode of transportation.”¹⁶ The 220 page plan focuses on walking facilities adjacent to streets and walkways connecting housing areas to schools. The Pedestrian Plan’s goals are as follows:¹⁷

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 13.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 21. Data from the *Pedestrian and Bicycle Collision Report*, Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities, 2005.

¹⁴ Data are from the Municipality of Anchorage Ten Year Plan on Obesity and Health, May 10, 2006, prepared by the Mayor’s Task Force on Obesity and Health.

¹⁵ 2005 data. See <http://www.hss.state.ak.us/dph/chronic/hsl/brfss/risks/obesity.htm>.

¹⁶ *Anchorage Pedestrian Plan*, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

Anchorage Pedestrian Plan Goals

Overall Goal: Double the number of pedestrian trips made by Anchorage residents while simultaneously reducing the number of injuries from pedestrian-vehicle crashes.

Goal 1: Create a safer, more walkable city that will encourage year-round winter pedestrian activity and make walking a safer and more attractive activity.

Goal 2: Provide barrier-free mobility for all populations.

Goal 3: Reduce the number and severity of vehicle crashes involving pedestrians and bicyclists by raising public and law enforcement awareness of practices, rights, and responsibilities that promote pedestrian safety.

Goal 4: Improve community connectivity by providing safe, convenient, year-round pedestrian routes within and between neighborhoods, commercial centers, schools, and public facilities as well as between major employment centers and adjacent residential neighborhoods.

Goal 5: Review the relationship of street design to the design of adjacent land uses to consider needs of all users.

Goal 6: Encourage development patterns that increase and enhance pedestrian use.

Goal 7: Raise awareness of the important role of walking in promoting health and preventing disease.

Creation of new walking facilities in Anchorage will make it easier and safer to walk. These facilities will include curb ramps compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act, new lighting (since children walk or bicycle in the dark for a majority of the school year), signage, traffic calming, removal of obstructions, crossing improvements, and construction of walkways to provide missing links. The Pedestrian Plan also contains a discussion of the federal Safe Routes to School program including obtaining funding from that program for projects associated with walking and/or biking to school.

The Pedestrian Plan includes a prioritized list of over 300 capital projects that will increase walkability. The total cost of pedestrian-related project improvements listed in the Anchorage Pedestrian Plan is \$118.5 million¹⁸ for more than 300 projects, however high-priority projects (ranked 8-10 of 10) total approximately \$20 million. The Pedestrian Plan includes numerous Action Items covering additional analysis, public education, inter-governmental coordination, etc. to meet the Plan's seven goals.¹⁹

Municipality of Anchorage staff currently are working on the city's Bicycle Plan, with a projected completion date of spring 2009. The Anchorage Bicycle Plan will recommend improvements needed to create a network of bicycle routes that can be used for commuting. Suggested improvements will include signage, striping, as well as inclusion of bicycle lanes in road construction projects.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, see Chapter 5, Recommendations, Policies, and Action Items.

Palmer, Wasilla, the “core area” and the Mat-Su Borough currently do not have pedestrian or bicycle plans. The Borough, however, does have a Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan²⁰ which identifies the need for separated walking and bicycle paths and is working on a “Green” Infrastructure plan for the “core area.”

Benefits of a Successful Alaska Campaign for Active Transportation

When Anchorage, Palmer, Wasilla and the “core area” enact actions to promote increased walking and biking, there will be significant economic, safety, health, mobility, and community benefits. Economic benefits include a decreased need for road and vehicle maintenance (fewer potholes!) in a state with no funds dedicated to transportation, and a reduced need for new or expanded roads; as a result, federal taxpayers (who pay for most of Alaska’s transportation needs) and vehicle owners who avoid repairs due to poor-quality road surfaces will benefit economically. Additionally, with gasoline and diesel prices at record or near-record levels, improved walkability and bikeability provides important economic – and frequently property value – benefits to residents. Car and truck travel increasingly is becoming unaffordable for low-income residents, so non-motorized transportation options are becoming not just desirable, but essential, to ensure resident mobility.

Safety benefits result from improved crossings in crash-prone intersections, better lighting, signage, striping, traffic calming, and improved driver education regarding pedestrian and bicycle travel. Health benefits include improved air quality resulting in better lung health, reduced obesity and, potentially, reduced incidence of diabetes. Mobility and community benefits derive from residents not needing to rely on motorized vehicles to get where they must go, thus providing an alternative, and redundant, means of transportation, as well as improved mobility for the disabled and those unable to drive. Additionally, the Campaign will emphasize connecting Anchorage’s diverse and lower-income neighborhoods to the city’s world-class paved trail system.

Because Anchorage is the largest community in the state with the most municipal staff, documents such as the city’s Pedestrian and Bicycle Plans and their implementation will serve as models for smaller communities in Alaska to replicate. Thus, the Campaign would, in fact, benefit multiple additional communities throughout Alaska.

As shown in Figure 2 (next page), the Campaign proposes to divide the expected funding in the following manner: 80% to Anchorage and 20% to the Mat-Su Borough, a reasonable breakdown based on population.

²⁰ “Parks, Recreation & Open Space Component of the Asset Management Plan,” Matanuska-Susitna Borough Assembly Adopted, June 2001 ([see http://www.matsugov.us/LandManagement/documents/ParksRecOpenSpaceFinal_001.pdf](http://www.matsugov.us/LandManagement/documents/ParksRecOpenSpaceFinal_001.pdf)).

Federal Political Strategy

Anchorage, Palmer, Wasilla and the “core area” together represent approximately half the population of Alaska as well as a bi-partisan cross-section of the state (Anchorage is more liberal while the Mat-Su Borough is more conservative). Because these communities represent such a large and politically diverse portion of the state, combining them within the Campaign ensures that the state’s federal representatives will pay attention.

As is well-known, Alaska’s current federal delegation in both the Senate and the House has played a strong role in federal transportation law-making to date. Alaska’s sole Congressman, Don Young, for example, headed the U.S. House of Representatives’ Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure when SAFETEA-LU (named after his wife Lu) passed in 2005.

Should Senator Stevens or Congressman Young not return to the Senate or House in 2009, the Campaign is very confident that any likely successor (Anchorage Mayor Mark Begich in the Senate, a family friend of Congressman Oberstar who now heads the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, and Anchorage’s Ethan Berkowitz in the House) will support increased funding for active transportation. Both these candidates are strong advocates for sustainable communities, conservation, and addressing our nation’s climate change challenges.

Figure 2: Alaska Campaign for Active Transportation Plan and Budget

Action Number	Action* and Date	Lead Organization	Approximate Cost
1	ANC – Construct <u>high-priority</u> projects from the Pedestrian Plan, including connections to transit and connections from neighborhoods to the city’s paved trail system (2008-15)	Municipality of Anchorage	\$20 million – for those projects ranking 8-10 on a 10 pt. scale in the Ped. Plan
2	ANC – Complete Bicycle Plan (2009)	Municipality of Anchorage	Will occur regardless
3	ANC – Become a Bicycle Friendly Community through the League of American Bicyclists (2011-12)	Municipality of Anchorage	\$100,000
4	ANC – Construct <u>high-priority</u> projects from the Bicycle Plan, including connections to transit and connections from neighborhoods to the city’s paved trail system (2010-15)	Municipality of Anchorage	\$16 million
5	ANC – Web-based interactive route planning for the public (2011-12)	Municipality of Anchorage	\$100,000
6	ANC – Targeted outreach to major employers like the federal and state governments, oil/gas companies, hospitals; encourage incentives to walk and bicycle (2010)	Municipality of Anchorage	\$100,000
7	ANC – Provide matching grant incentives for bicycle racks and lockers (2010-15)	Municipality of Anchorage	\$2 million
8	ANC – Purchase needed snow-plow equipment (2010)	Municipality of Anchorage	\$1 million
9	ANC – Promote active transportation among Alaska Natives, including through Centers for Disease Control and Prevention-funded WISEWOMAN program of lifestyle intervention and through public service ads showing Natives walking and bicycling (2010-15)	Southcentral Foundation	\$650,000
10	PAL, WAS – Develop Pedestrian and Bicycle plans (2010-2012)	Mat-Su Borough	\$200,000
11	PAL, WAS – Provide matching grant incentives for bicycle racks and lockers (2010-2015)	Mat-Su Borough	\$500,000
12	PAL, WAS – Implementation of Pedestrian and Bicycle plans, including connections to transit (2012-2015)	Mat-Su Borough	\$9.3 million
13	ALL – Earned media and public service ads and announcements on walking and biking (2010-15)	Alaska Transportation Priorities Project	\$50,000
14	ALL – Conduct events to educate the public on walking (e.g., International Walk to School Day) and biking (e.g., Bike to Work day/week) (2010-2015)	Multiple	Will occur regardless
15	ALL – Promote Safe Routes to School program (2010-15)	Alaska Transportation Priorities Project	Will occur regardless
16	ALL – Obtain additional funding to supplement the federal money including state/local contributions, Rasmuson, Southcentral and other foundations, Native corporation contributions, etc. (2010-15)	Multiple	In-kind contributions from involved organizations

* Action Abbreviations:

ANC – Anchorage, PAL – Palmer, WAS – Wasilla, ALL – All involved communities

Summary

Anchorage, Palmer, Wasilla and the “core area” between Palmer and Wasilla represent areas ripe for increased, non-motorized trips year-round. Anchorage has a completed, comprehensive Pedestrian Plan, is far along in development of its Bicycle Plan and – with adequate funding – will accelerate plan implementation. Palmer, Wasilla and the “core area” require pedestrian and bicycle plan development prior to plan implementation. The entire region, however, has receptive populations due to the outdoors-focus of many Alaskans and their ability to adapt to cold weather, and the extremely high price of motor fuel in Alaska. The Campaign will include a focus on shifting Alaska Native travel patterns to increased non-motorized transportation since Anchorage contains the largest Native population of any community in the state. Based on population, the Campaign expects to spend 80% of its funds in Anchorage and 20% of the funds in Palmer, Wasilla, and the “core area.” Finally, the bi-partisan composition of the Campaign’s communities helps ensure that the state’s federal representatives will act to increase non-motorized transportation funding.

The Alaska Campaign for Active Transportation has a high likelihood of success. The benefits of a successful campaign include decreased road maintenance costs and reduced need for new roads and/or road expansions (the majority paid for using federal dollars), safer non-motorized travel, improved public health, less air and water pollution, and more vibrant neighborhoods and communities.

Acknowledgements

Primary author: Lois Epstein, P.E., Alaska Transportation Priorities Project

Key co-authors: Lori Schanche, P.L.A., Municipality of Anchorage; Pat Owens, Valley Mountain Bikers and Hikers

The authors greatly appreciate the assistance of: John Duffy, Mat-Su Borough; Becky Oberrecht, BBA, Southcentral Foundation; Diana Redwood, MS, MPH, Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium (Alaska Native Epidemiology Center); Brian Litmans, Bicycle Commuters of Anchorage

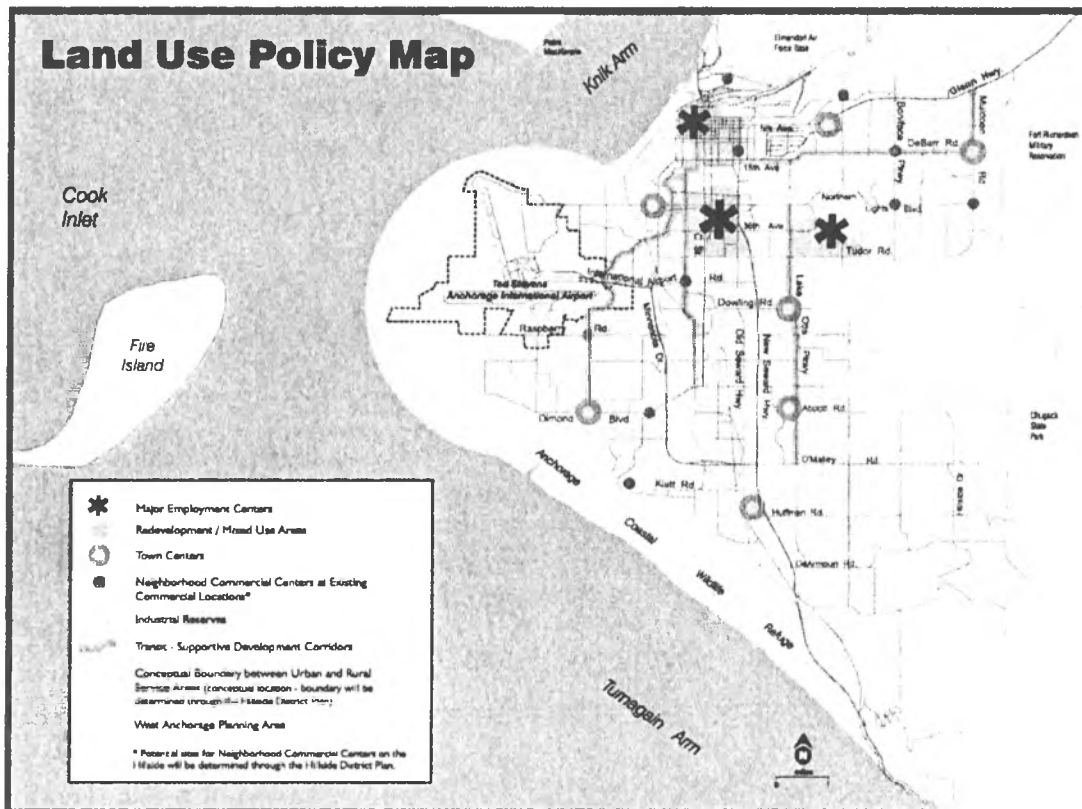
Photo assistance: Tim Woody, Whit Sheard, Dr. Dave Werner

Appendix

- A: Maps
- B: Anchorage Assembly and Mat-Su Borough Resolutions, and Letters of Support
[to be added]
- C: Contacts

Appendix A

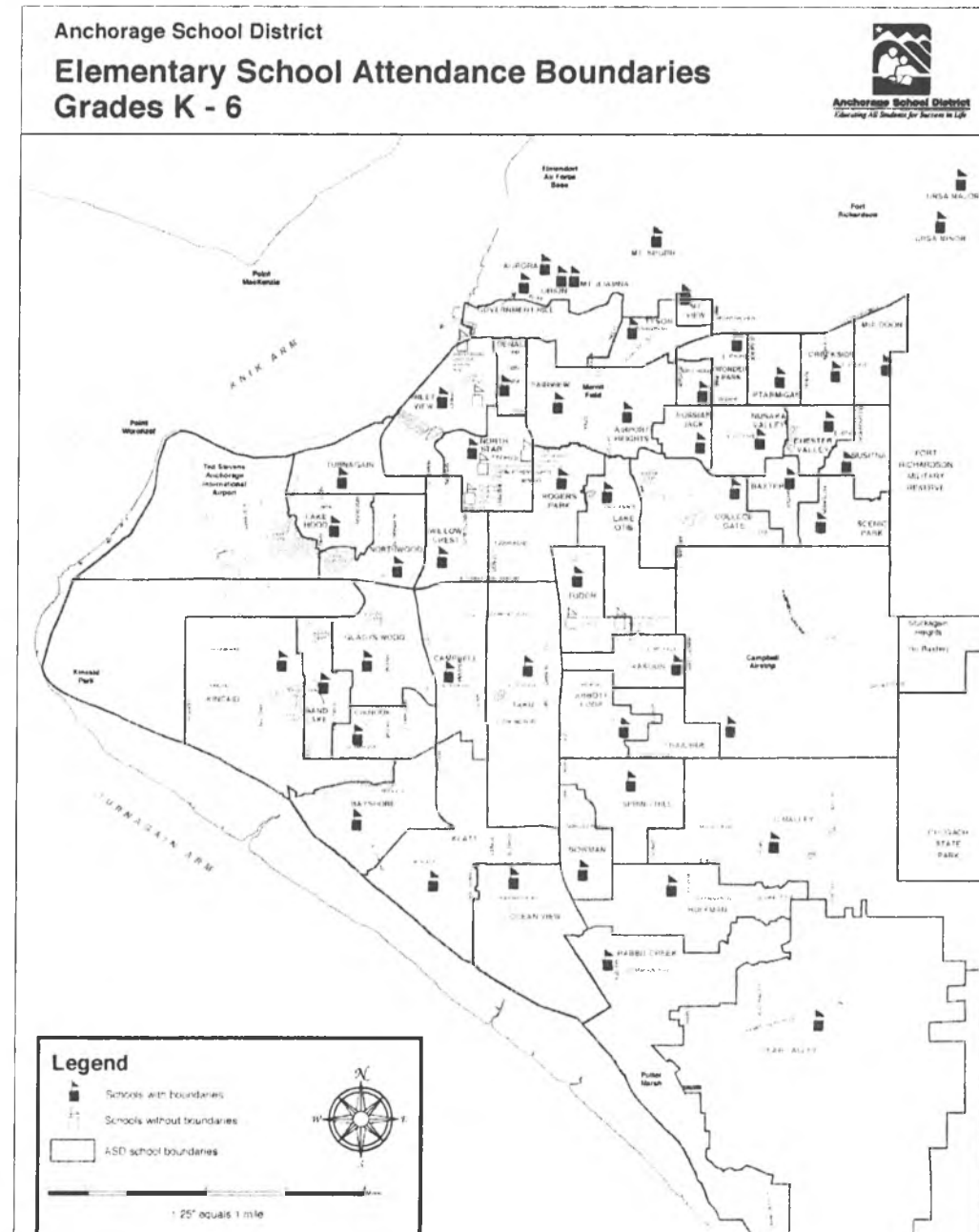
A-1: Municipality of Anchorage Land Use Map Showing Key Employment and Commercial Centers



Source: *Anchorage Pedestrian Plan, making Anchorage a better, safer place to walk*, Anchorage Metropolitan Area Transportation Solutions, Traffic Department, Municipality of Anchorage, October 2007, p. 34 (http://www.muni.org/iccimages/transplan/PedestrianPlan_Web.pdf).

Appendix A

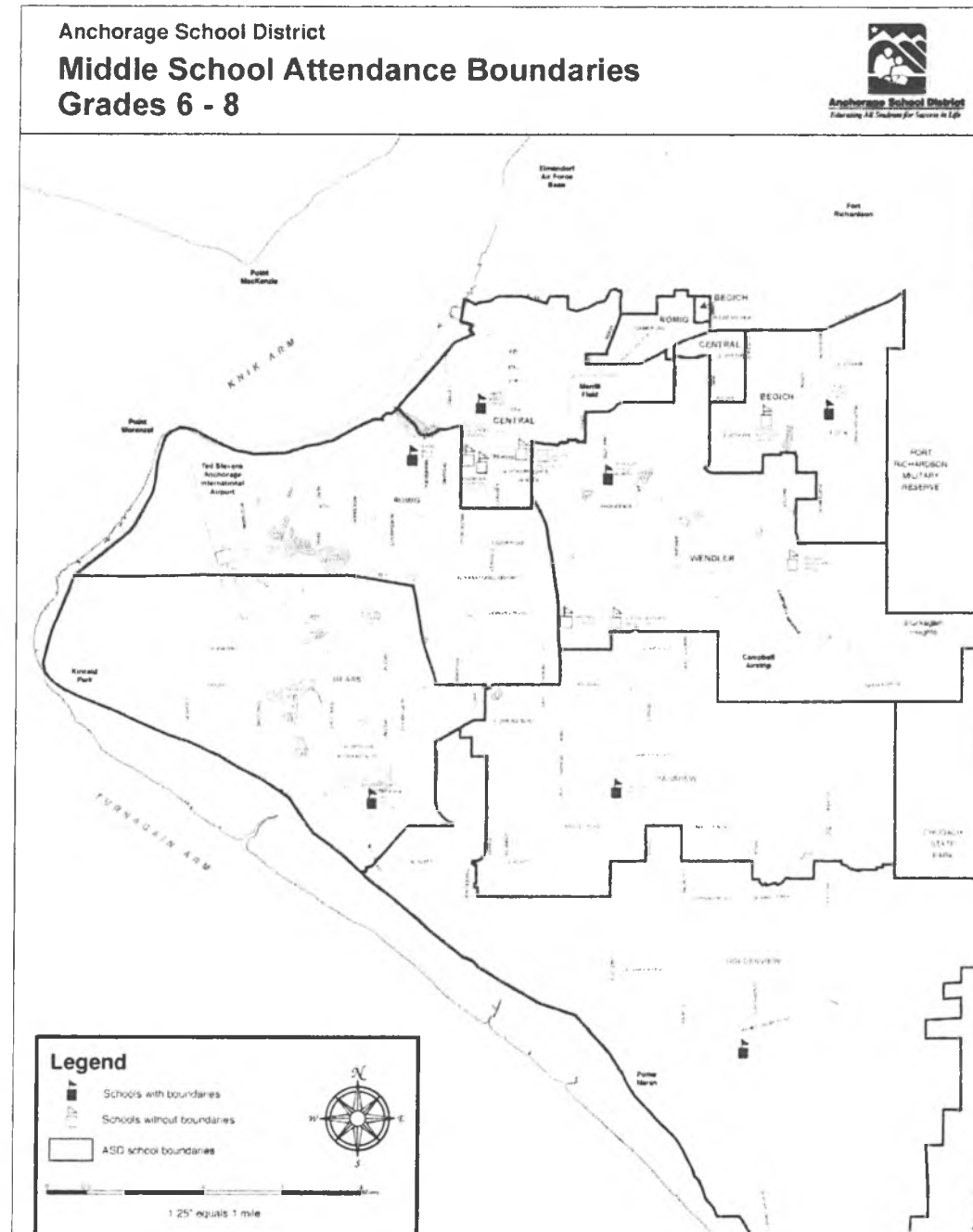
A-2: Municipality of Anchorage Elementary School Locations and Attendance Boundaries



Source: Municipality of Anchorage (see http://www.muni.org/iccimages/traffic/Walking_Route_Manual_0809.pdf, p. 4).

Appendix A

A-3: Municipality of Anchorage Middle School Locations and Attendance Boundaries



Source: Municipality of Anchorage (see http://www.muni.org/iceimages/traffic/Walking_Route_Manual_0809.pdf, p. 5).

Appendix A

A-4: Municipality of Anchorage Trails



Source: Municipality of Anchorage (see <http://www.muni.org/iceimages/parks/TrailwatchMap.pdf>).

Appendix B

**Anchorage Assembly and Mat-Su Borough Resolutions, and Letters of Support
[to be added]**

Appendix C

Key Contacts

- 1) Lois N. Epstein, P.E.
Director
Alaska Transportation Priorities Project
308 G St., Suite 221
Anchorage, AK 99501
907 929-9372
lois@aktransportation.org

- 2) Lori Schanche, P.L.A.
Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator
Project Management and Engineering
Municipality of Anchorage
4700 Elmore Road
Anchorage, AK 99507
907 343-8368
SchancheLE@muni.org

- 3) Pat Owens
Valley Mountain Bikers and Hikers
P.O. Box 22
Sutton, AK 99674
907 745-7714
pato@mtaonline.net



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House Transportation
Committee name

Committee on HB 57 Bicycle Program, dated 3-10-2011
Bill/Subject

Hi

I am a bike commuter and a pleasure biker. I support more funds to make our roads safer for bikers. I support more funds to build more bike trails. Biking is good for our health, for our society, and for our country.

Thanks

Signed: Michal Stryszak

Testifier

Representing (Optional)

2900 Wiley Post Ave. Anchorage, Ak. 99517
Address

Michal_1939@yahoo.com
Phone number



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House Transportation
Committee name

Committee on HB 57- Bicycle Program, dated 3-10-2011
Bill/Subject

I would like to urge support for the Bicycle Bill - HB - 57. It is important to encourage more use of bicycles for commuting and general travel particularly in the urban centers.

I feel the bill should include language that promotes the use and education of motorists and cyclists to provide safe alternative transportation. The bill should allow Non-profits and municipalities to propose programs to increase bicycle use in the way that best fits their community. This may be a bike share program, education of safe use of bicycles, a voucher system, or any variation that fits the unique needs of the community. The bill should support grants for any program that increases bicycle use, educates motorists and bicyclists, or improves bicycle conditions.

Please enter this into the Testimony on March 10, 2011 as I will not be able to participate in person.

Eric Geisler

Signed: _____
Testifier

Representing (Optional)

egeisler@BLM.com

Address

W-907-271-1985 C-509-220-4712

Phone number



MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE
Traffic Department,
Transportation Planning Division
Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator
Planning & Development Center, 4700 Elmore Road
P. O. Box 196650, Anchorage, AK 99519-6650
voice (907) 343-8368, facsimile (907) 249-7806
e-mail: schanchele@muni.org

To Whom It May Concern:

Please accept this letter as support for HB57. This bill will provide Alaskans access to bicycles and encourages bicycle use as an alternative mode of transportation by creating the Safe Bicycle Ridership grant program for municipalities and non-profits. The increased access to bicycles and knowledge of bicycle safety will give more Alaskans a choice to bicycle to work and school which is a legitimate response to high fuel costs in an unstable economy. The resounding choice of using a bicycle for transportation also promotes improved community health.

HB57 will allow municipalities and nonprofit organizations to apply for state funding to develop programs to encourage safe bicycle use. The *Anchorage Bicycle Plan, 2010* (<http://www.muni.org/Departments/OCPD/Planning/AMATS/Pages/Non-MotorizedTransportationPlan.aspx>) notes a few ideas in developing programs, from the League of American Bicyclist's Certified Instructor program, to opportunities for bicycle rentals. Anchorage also has an active bicycle club, the Bicycle Commuters of Anchorage, and the Municipality of Anchorage continues to work with this group and will likely apply for funding to increase bicycle safety.

Many people have already made the move to bicycle use for transportation, but adding programs to make things safer is of utmost importance.

I would be happy to provide any additional information you may need.

Sincerely,

Lori Schanche
Thu Feb 10 12:43:05 2011

Lori Schanche, PLA, ASLA
Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator
Municipality of Anchorage
League Cycling Instructor#2876

Rebecca Rooney

From: bicyclealaska@aol.com
Sent: Tuesday, March 08, 2011 9:41 PM
To: Rep. Peggy Wilson; Rep. Lance Pruitt; Rep. Eric Feige; Rep. Craig Johnson; Rep. Cathy Munoz; Rep. Max Gruenberg; Rep. Pete Petersen
Cc: denny.dewitt@nfib.org
Subject: House Transportation: Please Vote No on HB 57

FROM: Peter Roberts, Owner Downtown Bicycle Rental, Inc., Anchorage.
TO: Members of the House Transportation Committee
RE: HB 57, Bicycle Program

For the following reasons, I urge members of the House Transportation Committee to vote NO on HB 57 – "The Bike Bill."

The Undisputed Benefits of Bikes & Small Business

No thinking person can dispute the many benefits of bicycles. People who bike instead of drive improve their health and save gas. The community benefits because when there is one less car on the road, there is cleaner air, less traffic, and less wear and tear on expensive-to-maintain roads. When people bike more and drive less, everybody wins.

No thinking person can dispute the many benefits of small businesses. After investing their time and risking their money, entrepreneurs sometimes manage to earn a profit and make a living. The community benefits because when businesses compete, the quality of goods and services goes up, and prices go down. Businesses pay salaries and taxes. When businesses thrive, members of the community work more and ask their government for less. Everybody wins.

The High Cost of No Price

Cognizant of the many benefits of bicycles, Representatives Seaton and Gruenberg have introduced HB 57. The purpose of this bill is "to encourage the safe use of bicycles as a mode of transportation. . . ." See Sec. 1, Article 2. To that end, HB 57 asks that a "fund" be established from "appropriations by the legislature," "federal money" and "other sources" so that "municipalities and nonprofits" can fund the "purchase, maintenance, and repair of bicycles, bicycle helmets, bicycle facilities, and bicycle trailers by residents of the community where the grantee is located." See Sec 2 Article 1A.

While the goal of HB 57 is laudable, in towns that already have bike shops, passage will have the opposite of the intended effect. The statutory scheme proposed by this bill takes profits **earned** by small businesses and gives it to nonprofits and government agencies so the latter can give away the same products and services taxed businesses are trying to sell. Successful bike businesses will actually be subsidizing their own demise. Outsourcing to municipalities and nonprofits what private employers already provide will sabotage the tax base and put people out of work.

It is axiomatic that people will not buy what they can get down the street for free. As businesses go under and taxes dry up, government will either have to raise taxes on everyone else, go deeper into debt, cut other (core) government services, or reduce grants from the fund. When the race to the bottom finally ends, not only will no one be selling, renting or fixing bikes, the government will be out of money. While HB 57 targets only a certain line of products and services, if such a scheme were extrapolated to the rest of the economy, no thinking person can dispute what would happen: Blight.

Bikes Don't Commute, People Do

In the previous legislative session, Senator Seaton likened this bill's progenitor (HB 132 which thankfully died in House Finance) to the Energy Rebate Grant Program. As you know, that program reimburses homeowners up to \$10,000 if they improve the energy efficiency of their home. At first blush, the comparison sounds apt, but if you think about it, that program and the one proposed by HB 57 are really very different.

The energy rebate program begins at the bottom and works up. The program imagined in the Bike Bill starts from the top and "works" down. One program reimburses citizens that buy products and services from businesses; the other program gives products and services to citizens that businesses are trying to sell. There are other differences. One program builds a tangible, permanent improvement that keeps people warm for less money; the other gives away a quickly depreciating vehicle with many moving parts. The hope for HB 57 is that it will enable utility bicycle use -commuting. But bikes are also used for recreation. Insulating a house is one thing, changing people's behavior is another. Bikes don't commute, people do. People must *want* to change.

Instead of spending precious tax dollars trying to fix people, the government should shift its focus and fix broken bike paths and make other tangible, permanent improvements that make bike commuting safer and more likely. When HB 132 was discussed by this committee two years ago, Kristi Wood, representing the Bicycle Commuters of Anchorage testified that the "[T]he number one excuse she hears from people who do not commute by bicycle is that they do not believe they have a safe route. . . . She emphasized the need for more bicycle lanes, and bicycle paths." (HB 132 Minutes at 2:48:39 PM. March 19, 2009.) Like HB 132, HB 57 puts the cart before the horse. This time around, I urge all members of the Transportation Committee to weigh-in on the bill's true merits (or lack of them) and vote no.

(03-23-2009, House Journal, 0546: Do pass (2): Gruenberg, Wilson. No recommendation (3): Johansen, Munoz, Doogan)

Cash for Clunkers/Bucks for Bikes

In defense of HB 57, some say there are people who would commute by bike if they afford one. Fair enough. Draft a closely-tailored bill that targets such a person. Food stamps help people eat. "Bike vouchers" can help people commute. The pool of people that currently qualify for home heating assistance or a free monthly bus pass would likely also qualify for a bike voucher. Voucher applicants could be required to first pass an online safe bike operation and/or basic bike maintenance test. Vouchers for commuter bikes could be redeemed by businesses in the community that are already positioned to meet each

individual's unique biking needs. Instead of creating a program that empowers a government agency, why not create a program that empowers people?

Two years ago, the federal government stimulated the auto industry with its "Cash for Clunkers" program. A better bike bill would emulate the model. It could be called "Bucks for Bikes." If government-stimulated demand for bikes and their maintenance exceeds supply, the imbalance will be remedied by a resident who risks their capital, invests their time and hires their neighbor to meet it. In other words, they will start a small business. Everybody wins.

Past Testimony to this Committee Acknowledged Unfair Competition by Nonprofits as a Legitimate Concern

In the last legislative session, when this committee heard public testimony on the previous edition of this bill, the administration sent two representatives from the Department of Transportation. Bob Laurie is the State Bicycle Pedestrian Coordinator. Jeff Ottesen is Director of Program Development." (No State gaming regulators were present.) The minutes from the meeting show two legislators and four members of the public acknowledged government-sponsored competition by a nonprofit as a legitimate concern. Nevertheless, supporters urged passage because the bill, like the current one instructs DOT to "develop regulations establishing criteria for issuing grants to municipalities and nonprofit organizations. . . ." This instruction kicks the can – a can filled with worms – down the road. Again. It is not credible to expect an agency to adopt regulations to remedy a well-known concern when the legislature declines to do it itself. After two years, the following statements could have and should have produced a better bill:

1:52:29 PM

REPRESENTATIVE JOHANSEN referred to page 1, line 14, of Version E which reads "by municipal residents". He asked if the program will only be allowed for municipal residents. He further asked how the program would be monitored in a community like Ketchikan that has 9,000 tourists who disembark from cruise ships in one day, who may also want to use bicycles. He inquired as to how the mechanics of the program would work if the program is limited to residents. He then asked specifically, "How are you going to tell or is that your intent for it just to be residents?"

REPRESENTATIVE SEATON answered that this program would be incorporated in a grant request from a municipality. "Another words, if a municipality came in and said we want to have a program for tourists, not a mode of transportation, but a visitor service." He explained that while HB 132 is intended to provide a mode of transportation to residents, nothing restricts a municipality from allowing others to use the bicycles. However, the intent of the bill is to provide a grant to communities so Alaskans will have an alternate mode of transportation to use instead of motor vehicles. He said, "That's what this bill is for, it's not for recreation, it's not meant to compete with a business that would be renting out bicycles to the cruise ships, if someone has a similar business." He added that HB 132 targets local residents. Additionally, he said he hopes the program can help address obesity rates by encouraging Alaska residents to get more exercise to improve their health.

2:15:01 PM

SUE ELY, Legislative & Communications Manager, Alaska Conservation Alliance (ACA), speaking on behalf of the ACA, offered support for HB 132. . . . "We are here to testify in favor of this bill and I think what I'd like to do is sing the praises of bicycles and talk about some of the barriers that I think this bill addresses." She suggested that the bill might include educating not just riders but also for motorists to better learn to interact with bicycle users. She mentioned bicycle lanes and street plowing are important to allow year round bicycle use. She said:

We want, like the bill sponsor said, we're not trying to get this out here for tourists. This isn't for joy rides. This is for people who don't have cars or don't want to use their car, or don't have appropriate transit or want to make a good choice for the environment. These people aren't going out there for joy rides.

2:29:02 PM

MATTHEW TURNER, Bicycle Friendly Sitka (BFS), speaking on behalf of BFS He expressed concern that the DOT&PF needs to put into place mechanisms to prevent competition with existing bicycle rental or repair shops. He said:

My concern is to make sure that there are assurances that whatever programs come about as a result of this bill are not competing with existing bicycle shops, either rental businesses or repair businesses. And so, I know there's some nuance there, because I hope that it's specific enough to prevent government sponsored competition but still loose enough in its regulations and writing that folks can respond innovatively with programs to get bicycles to those in need.

He said he hopes the focus is to get bicycles in hands of those who cannot afford to purchase a new one in a bicycle shop. He opined that the long-term goal is to have those people become consumers of for-profit organizations in the future.

2:34:42 PM

MS. WEST. . . . She pointed out that he was really glad to get people out on bikes. She stated that it is not about competition, but is about a healthy lifestyle and the "greenness" of riding bicycles.

2:39:32 PM

ROBERT SHIPLEY, Anchorage Trails and committee Coalition, speaking on behalf of the ATGC, offered ATGC's support for HB 132. . . . He reiterated prior testimony emphasizing that programs need to be directed to cyclists and drivers. . . . He further suggested that the bill should be amended to include support for outreach and education safety programs.

LOIS EPSTEIN, Engineer, and Director, Alaska Transportation Priorities Project (ATPP), stated the ATPP is a statewide coalition consisting of conservation organizations, businesses, individuals promoting sensible transportation systems in Alaska. . . . She suggested that HB 132 may need to be amended to clarify its focus on education grants as well as on bicycling infrastructure.

Conclusion

Singing the undisputed praises of bicycles is not relevant testimony. As is the case with most things that sound good on the surface, the devil is in the details. If this bill becomes law, it will not change the behavior of drivers; but it will change the behavior of people who patronize bike shops.

For all of the foregoing reasons, I urge the Transportation Committee to vote no on HB 57.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Roberts

Owner

Downtown Bicycle Rental, Inc.

333 W. 4th Ave. , Anchorage, AK 99501

Tel: (907) 279-3334, Fax: 279-8338

bicyclealaska@aol.com

www.alaska-bike-rentals.com

LESSMEIER & WINTERS

LAWYERS - LLC

VINTAGE BUSINESS PARK
3000 VINTAGE BOULEVARD
SUITE 100
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99801

MICHAEL L. LESSMEIER
GREGORY W. LESSMEIER
SHELDON E. WINTERS

TELEPHONE: (907) 796-4999
FACSIMILE: (907) 796-4998
E-MAIL: lw@gci.net

VIA HAND DELIVERY

February 16, 2011

The Honorable Paul Seaton
Alaska House of Representatives
State Capitol, Room 102
Juneau, AK 99801-1182

Re: State Farm Support for HB 57 – Bicycle Safety

Dear Representative Seaton:

State Farm strongly supports HB 57, authorizing municipalities and non-profit organizations to sponsor programs to encourage the safe use of bicycles, and allowing the Department of Transportation to administer state funds appropriated for that purpose. Anything the Legislature can do to improve safety in the use of bicycles is worthy of consideration and support. If there is any information we can provide to you in support of this effort, please let me know.

Sincerely,

LESSMEIER & WINTERS, LLC

By: 

Sheldon E. Winters
Lobbyist for State Farm Insurance Companies

SEW/lg

Seaton 02-16-11 letter of support

NFIB

The Voice of Small Business®

ALASKA

March 8, 2011

The Honorable Paul Seaton
State Capitol Building
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

RE: House Bill 57

Dear Representative Seaton,

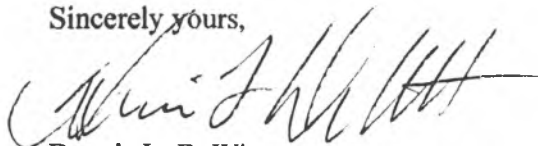
On behalf of the National Federation of Independent Business/Alaska, I wish to respectfully share our opposition to House Bill 57. The National Federation of Independent Business is the largest small-business advocacy group in Alaska.

We appreciate your concern for encouraging the safe use of bicycles in Alaska. However, this bill establishes a grant program to compete with small businesses throughout Alaska. Making state funds available to municipalities and nonprofit agencies to acquire merchandise to directly compete with small businesses in Alaska is not an appropriate function of government.

Providing safety education and training is an important activity. However, creating unfair competition by subsidizing government and nonprofit agencies is detrimental to many small Alaskan businesses that provide jobs and services in our communities.

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns.

Sincerely yours,



Dennis L. DeWitt
Alaska State Director

Cc: NFIB/AK Leadership Council
House Transportation Committee



March 28, 2011

Alaska House of Representatives Transportation Committee
State Capitol, Room 17
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Members of the House Transportation Committee:

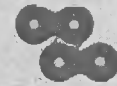
Bicycle Commuters of Anchorage (BCA) thanks you for considering the following comments on HB 57, referred to as the Bicycle Program. BCA submits these comments on behalf of its members and all Anchorage bicyclists who seek a safer, accessible, and viable bicycle-friendly city and State. BCA is a non-profit organization that promotes bicycle use as a healthy, economical, environmentally-sound and fun means of transportation. As a non-profit organization that focuses heavily on safety education, as well as encouragement of bicycle use as a viable means of transportation, BCA fully supports efforts to further education of motorists and bicyclists and efforts that promote bicycle use. As a result, BCA completely supports the educational provisions of HB 57 and expresses general support for programs that encourage bicycle use.

The Benefits of Bicycling

As noted in the March 10, 2011 Transportation Committee hearing on HB 57, there are many compelling reasons to support bicycle transportation. Bicycling means less traffic congestion, less air pollution in urban environments and also alleviates our energy demands. Bicycling has numerous health benefits. It fights obesity, diabetes, heart disease, and reduces stress and the likelihood of depression. Bicycling also results in greater social capital, bringing families and communities closer together. These benefits are easy to achieve because forty percent of national trips are less than 2 miles. Trips of this distance made by car are easily replaced by bicycle. Bicycling also has tremendous economic benefits too. The cost of bicycling pales in comparison to commuting by car, making it an economical means of transportation for many. There's been no shortage of articles in the media about the growth in cycling as a response to rising energy costs and with rising gas prices, we can expect to see more people jumping on their bikes. Bicycling is also great for local businesses – greater bicycle use can create jobs and support independent businesses. Cities with improved bicycle infrastructure have seen rising home values and benefits to local businesses such as restaurants and shops. Educating motorists and bicyclists will lead to a safer environment. Along with programs that encourage bicycle use, Alaska will see increased bicycle use, which in turn will result in all the benefits enumerated above.

The Importance of Bicycle Infrastructure to Increase Bicycle Use.

Also as noted in the March 10, 2011 Transportation Committee hearing on HB 57, bicycle infrastructure plays a crucial role in creating bicycle-friendly cities (as well as making rural areas friendly to bicycle use). There are some basic assumptions that help demonstrate the importance



of bicycle infrastructure and how it will change people's decisions about how they get around town. First, people want to bike – especially in the summer. As Spring approaches, in Anchorage, we quickly see a dramatic increase in those out on their bikes. I have seen old and young, those fit and those trying to get in shape, recreational riders and commuters all out on their bikes. I have seen fathers and mothers with their children on bikes of their own or being pulled in a chariot or tag-along, bicycling to school in the morning. I've seen bicycle racks filled outside of offices downtown. It is clear that people enjoy bicycling by the smiles on their faces. How many folks have you seen smiling in their car as they deal with morning or afternoon rush hour in their car? Bicycling infrastructure leads to more and more bicyclists, in summer and winter.

The second assumption is that people are afraid of being hit. This is a not surprising. Those that do not bike tend to only hear stories from bicyclist about being hit by a car, or near encounters, or being yelled at, honked at or in some case run off the road. What those who don't bicycle miss is all of the positive outcomes from being on a bicycle. I rarely hear people tell stories of how wonderful their bike commute was, of how enjoyable it is to be outside, even in incimate weather, of the ability to enjoy a little bit of nature when on the greenbelts, of the feeling of being refreshed and not stressed. BCA does not discount that there are dangers associated with bicycling. But there is also significant danger every time one gets in a car. However, because we live in an auto-centric culture, people don't think twice about driving to the store to pick up some milk, even if it may statistically be much more likely that they will end up in an accident driving rather than bicycling. Bicycling infrastructure is critical to making bicyclists feel safer.

The third assumption is that people who would like to bike prefer bike facilities and especially prefer being separated from motor vehicles. In some cases, bicyclists will go out of their way and take a longer route if it offers a safer more pleasant ride, such as a separated pathway or bike lane. However, absent such bicycle infrastructure they will take the most direct route even if it isn't the safest. This can lead to bicyclists being on roads which are not safe. However, while people prefer bike lanes and separated paths, if there are significant missing links they may not elect to ride at all. It has been shown that even if a bicyclist could be on bike lanes for 90% of their route, if there is a missing like that results in significant exposure to the bicyclist, they will not get on their bikes. As a result, a bike network can only be truly effective when it addresses entire routes. Bike infrastructure will only be effective if it is part of a bicycle network - connectivity is key for the bicyclist.

When it comes to bicycle use in most cities, people tend to fall into one of four categories. The first category, less than 1% of the city population (based on national averages), are strong and fearless. These bicyclists will ride regardless of how bicycle-friendly the city is. They are comfortable bicycling in just about any condition or scenario and their use is not hindered by lack of bicycle infrastructure. The second group, perhaps 5-6% of the city population, are "enthused and confident" bicyclists. This group enjoys bicycling but prefers bicycle transportation when safety concerns are addressed. Inclusion of infrastructure, such as bike lanes, makes bicycle transportation a viable option for this group. The third group, 60-70% of the



population is interested in bicycling but concerned. The final group is comprised of those who are not likely to ever get on a bicycle.

For bicycle programs to be effective, we must contemporaneously work to provide safe bicycling networks. Amongst the goals of increasing bicycle-use, it should be recognized that to substantially increase bicycle we must provide a bicycle transportation system that alleviates the concerns of the “interested but concerned” group. This would result in a dramatic increase in bicycle ridership. Further, this dramatic rise will see exponential growth because as numbers of bicyclists increase, safety increases too. The “safety in numbers” effect creates a positive feedback loop, which allows for ridership to grow and grow. Additionally, cities across the United States have found that bicycle-vehicle fatalities decrease when bicycle-ridership increases.

In addition to providing a program that supports bicycle education and support for programs that encourage bicycle use, one of the most effective way to get those that are interested but concerned, as well as those that are “enthused and confident” to utilize bicycle transportation more often is to install adequate bicycle transportation infrastructure and treatments. Inclusion of bicycle transportation infrastructure addresses safety concerns for many riders. Infrastructure improvements that provide a greater sense of security, such as separated bikeways like cycletracks, provide a means of transportation that the make those that are “interested but concerned” comfortable. Ultimately, if one is able to make mothers feel safe getting on their bikes with their children in tow, then that community has truly become bicycle-friendly.

So What is Bicycle-Friendly?

The degree to which a community is bicycle-friendly is assessed by the League of American Bicyclists based on how that community fares on the five Es: Engineering, Education, Encouragement, Enforcement, and Evaluation. Engineering, as discussed above, is critical to creating a bicycle-friendly community and getting people on bicycles. Good bicycling infrastructure is something few on this continent, and especially those in Alaska, have seen in their own city or town or are familiar with. It doesn't mean a “bike route” sign and a white stripe along the arterial. It doesn't mean a meandering trail shared with joggers, strollers, roller bladders, or cross-country skiers. Bicycle-friendly means a complete, continuous, interconnected network of named bicycle roads or “tracks,” each marked and lit, each governed by traffic signs and signals of its own. It means a parallel network interlaced with the other urban grids: the transit grid on road or rail; the street grid for cars, trucks, and taxis; and the sidewalk grid for pedestrians. It means separation from those grids: to be useful for everyone from eight year olds to eighty year olds, bikeways on large roads must be physically curbed, fenced, or graded away from both traffic and walkers. On smaller, neighborhood streets, where bikes and cars do mingle, bicycle-friendly may mean calming traffic with speed bumps, circles, and curb bubbles. And as identified by the League of American Bicyclists, it means “Education” and “Encouragement.” This bill supports these two of the five Es. Education of motorists and bicyclists is vital to improving the overall safety for bicyclists.



Partnering with the Business Community

BCA recognizes that to create a truly bicycle-friendly environment, it is important for cities and non-profit organizations to partner with the private sector. Any bike program must ensure that we are supporting local business, especially local bike businesses. BCA works closely with businesses to encourage bicycle use and intends to continue to foster such relationships with the business community.

Conclusion

BCA is very supportive of all efforts to further education and encouragement of bicycle-use. As a non-profit organization, BCA would be excited to provide further bicycle education. Last summer, BCA brought up League of American Bicyclists' Preston Tyree to train 12 people from Anchorage, Juneau and Cordova to become League-certified instructors. These 12 people are not certified to teach the League's Smart Cycling curriculum. Courses from 1 hour to 9 hours educate motorists and bicyclists about the rules of the road, how to share the road, and of course how to bicycle safely. The courses can be taught to children and adults. BCA is excited to launch this curriculum this summer. BCA also expresses general support for a program that encourages bicycle use. However, BCA recognizes the concerns of businesses like Anchorage's Downtown Bicycle Rental. Any encouragement program should strive to work cooperatively with local businesses. While handing a child a helmet is certainly an important thing, without any education and any effort to make the environment safer for bicycle use, the overall impact of such an effort is limited. Let there be no question that BCA supports a bill that would assist Municipalities and non-profits, such as BCA, with the ability to get helmets and bike lights to those in need. And we clearly support the bill as it supports our efforts to further educate motorists and bicyclists. This simple step by the Legislature will provide a resource that can improve safety for all users and is worthy of your consideration and support. If there is any more information BCA can provide in support of this bill, please let us know.

Sincerely,

Brian Litmans
President

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