

Turnagain Community Council Board of Directors
c/o Breck Tostevin, President
3340 Knik Avenue, Anchorage, AK 99517

May 7, 2009

sent via email: bikes@muni.org

Traffic Department
Municipality of Anchorage
Lori Schanche
4700 Elmore Road
Anchorage, Alaska

RE: Public Review Draft of the Anchorage Bicycle Plan

Dear Traffic Department:

Please accept the following comments with regard to the 2009 Anchorage Bicycle Plan from the Turnagain Community Council (TCC) Board of Directors. The TCC Board supports the Bicycle Plan Goals, Policies and Action Items detailed in Chapter 6, which are easy to understand and appear to be achievable.

The TCC Board believes the following policies and statements are important parts of the plan:

- Bicycle Plan Goal 3, to develop and maintain a bicycle network, by implementing a network of on-street bicycle facilities with bicycle lanes being the preferred type of on-street bicycle facility. (Policy 3.1)
- Policy 3.3, which includes an action step to include requiring bicycle signage and safety to be tested for a State of Alaska Driver's License.
- The Municipal Traffic Department, as proposed in the plan, to do as much signage and striping of the bicycle network as soon as possible in conjunction with maintenance and operations, to increase the number of bicycle facilities as the least expense.

The TCC Board has the following specific comments regarding the Bicycle Plan:

Chapter 1, Page 6 and Chapter 6, Page 92 – Modify Goal 2

The TCC Board recommends modifying Goal 2 on pages 6 and 92 of the Plan to include tourists or visitors as follows: "Establish a bicycle network that adequately responds to the transportation needs and desires of Anchorage residents AND VISITORS."

Chapter 2, Page 10 – Additional Existing Bicycle Facilities in TCC Area

Exhibit 1 does not include the airport constructed multi-use trail partially around Spenard Lake and Lake Hood, which should be added to the map.

Exhibit 1 does not include an existing multi-use trail along Aero Drive from West Northern Lights Boulevard on the south to Cosmos Dr., which should be added to the map.

Chapter 3, Page 45 and Chapter 4, Page 70 – New Signs for Right Turn on Red

To address one of the issues raised in Chapter 2 regarding accidents at right turn on red intersections, the TCC Board recommends adding signs, similar to the signs on 6th Avenue if turning right at C Street, with language to the following effect that “Vehicles Turning Right Must Yield to Pedestrians AND BICYCLES.” The TCC Board notes that these signs are particularly important at intersections where there are right turn only lanes, such as at Minnesota and West Northern Lights intersection at the Shell gas station.

Chapter 3, Page 47 – McCrae Road should be McRae Road

McRae Road is misspelled in Table 6.

Chapter 3, Pages 35 and 47, Figure 11 and Table 6 – Proposed Bicycle Network in TCC Area

Figure 11 and Table 6 show a proposed bicycle lane along Postmark Rd. and Aircraft Dr. Both of these roads have wide shoulders and are definitely used by bikers; however, these roads are also used by walkers and runners. The TCC Board would like to make sure that if a bike lane is striped as proposed, that the bike lane would not create a conflict with the current multi-use lane. The TCC Board would not support any additional filling of wetlands and removal of trees to widen these roads to include a bike lane.

Figure 11 and Table 6 propose a bike lane for West Northern Lights to Postmark Dr. Since the existing road was just widened last year, the TCC Board would not support widening the road west of Wisconsin.

There is currently a 35th and McRae Road Plan now in the design phase. The TCC Board would like to confirm that the bike lane, as proposed in this Plan, will be coordinated with the Municipal department updating the road. As stated in Chapter 7, page 105, "... this Bicycle Plan should be coordinated with other city and state planning documents." The TCC Board would like to make sure that not only must planning be coordinated between municipal and state departments, but design and implementation must also be coordinated.

Figure 11 and Table 6 propose a bike lane on Forest Park Dr. from Northern Lights to Hilltop. The residents of this area have spoken very strongly about not including a bike lane unless there is room to do so within the existing footprint of the road. If not, this proposal will likely be very controversial.

Chapters 1, 2, 3, Page 1, 30, 33 – Photographs

On Chapter 1, page 1; Chapter 2, page 30, and Chapter 3, page 33, the photographs do not look like Anchorage. Please consider either using a different photo, listing the Anchorage location as done on the photo on page 2 at C Street, or acknowledging the location outside, as done on page 45 regarding photo from Vancouver, B.C.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Public Draft of the Anchorage Bicycle Plan. With citizen input, appropriate planning and management of streets and trails, Anchorage will become a more bicycle friendly city.

Sincerely,

Breck Tostevin
Turnagain Community Council President
And TCC Board of Directors