



8/5/2025

Bike Anchorage Comments Re: Recreational Trails Plan 2025

Bike Anchorage appreciates the opportunity to provide feedback to the 2025 Recreational Trails Plan, given our membership's insight into the use of trails throughout the community of Anchorage.

Bike Anchorage supports many components of the plan, particularly those prioritizing safety and usability of the trail system:

- Upgrading trail culverts to underpasses at road crossings
- Grade-separated trail crossing at Lake Otis for long term and at-grade signal/marked crossing for short term
- South Coastal Trail extension from Kincaid to Potter Marsh along coast (not on streets) with due respect for sensitive habitat and ecosystems
- All trail maintenance
- Lighting on Coastal Trail and all greenbelt trails
- Perimeter trail
- North Coastal trail

Bike Anchorage supports adding trail classification 6 for high-use areas on all greenbelt trails. The Chester Creek trail is an excellent example of where classification 6 would be useful. The trail is used for both recreation and transportation utility, and serves an important role as a safe, non-motorized route east-to-west through town. Unsafe roads and delayed improvements have resulted in many people utilizing the Chester Creek trail for several important uses, making class 6 a high priority for this trail in particular. Class 6 for the Chester Creek trail could result in:

- Widening the trail with the aim of accommodating both recreational and utility non-motorized needs year round, and winter multi-use maintenance in particular;
- Utilizing knowledge gained from recent Finland tours by municipal staff for tools and techniques used in other winter cities;
- Planning for drainage to manage ice and traction safety;
- Winter grooming to accommodate bicycling on more affordable and accessible non-fat tire bikes; and
- Year-round separation of bikes and pedestrians to allow for safer movement at large speed differences.



A few specific items from the Systemwide Recommendations that Bike Anchorage appreciates and wishes to emphasize include:

- We support policy item 10 prioritizing trail connections to active transportation routes, transit routes, and school/work and other essential daily destinations;
- We support design 22 upgrading grade separated crossings from culverts to underpasses, as well as drainage and ice management in tunnels next to creeks which often flood in the late summer and fall, and become unsafe due to ice in the winter;
- We support items 31, 32, 34, and 35 involving non-motorized network development;
- We support item 50 for improved trail lighting;
- We support item 52 in order to educate the public on the current regulatory framework for electric micromobility such as e-bikes and scooters, a popular and growing mode that provides more people with the freedom to choose active transportation;
- We support item 52's encouragement to participate in community events such as Bike to Work Day.

The Parks Ambassador program mentioned in item #67 has great potential to make our trails safer and friendlier, and we encourage the Department to look to the Washington Area Bicyclist Association's [Trail Rangers program](#) for inspiration. Trail Rangers are outfitted with a cargo bicycle and supplies to perform basic trail maintenance, clean up trash, and assist the public with wayfinding or trailside bike repairs.

Items not seen in the plan that we'd like to be considered are:

- Ensure secure bike parking is provided at trail access points and popular points of interest to allow everyone to bike to trails and secure their bike while exploring and recreating along the trail system. All bike parking should be selected and installed in compliance with current Title 21 standards, and existing non-recommended bike rack types such as "wave" racks should be upgraded.
- Develop a parking strategy to outline how vehicle parking will be managed for heavily used trailheads and during events. We've seen a trend developing where certain community members attempt to block important trail projects and recreational events on trails based on fears of projected vehicle impacts. We encourage Parks and Rec to have a strategy to respond to these concerns by ensuring all modes of transportation are supported at our trails and that people are encouraged to choose alternatives to vehicles and plan events that encourage arriving by bike, transit or carpooling. We'd like to see expansion of parking lots be a last resort.



- Work in partnership with People Mover to provide public transit (using transit vehicles which accommodate bikes) to major trailheads and recreation areas such as Hilltop, Russian Jack and Kincaid. We advocate for our young riders and those who cannot or choose not to drive to have access to all our recreational facilities. This also accommodates those who want to explore trails without returning to a starting point to retrieve a vehicle such as the Mountains to Sea route.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Recreational Trails Plan. We look forward to continuing to work with the city on improving the safety and accessibility of Anchorage's vibrant and valuable trail network.

Sincerely,

Alexa Dobson
Executive Director, Bike Anchorage