



9/25/2025

To: Mayor Suzanne LaFrance  
CC: Anchorage Assembly; AMATS

## **Bike Anchorage Comments on the 2026 Preliminary Municipal Budget**

Dear Mayor LaFrance,

On behalf of Bike Anchorage, thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the 2026 municipal budget. Bike Anchorage is a nonprofit organization dedicated to making our city more bike-friendly, and the same interventions that make a city bike-friendly also make it safe and welcoming for people of all ages and transportation of all types; that means not only people who bike but drivers, transit users, and pedestrians alike.

Anchorage is experiencing an unprecedented road safety crisis. According to the Anchorage Police Department, traffic fatalities of all types in 2024 were 93% higher than the year before, and pedestrian fatalities rose 150%. Already in 2025, eleven people have been killed while walking. These are not isolated tragedies, but the result of road designs that allow dangerous vehicle speeds and fail to protect vulnerable users.

Despite these facts, and while serving on the Vision Zero Task Force, the Alaska Department of Transportation & Public Facilities has recently chosen to [undermine its own safety projects](#) by implementing a policy making it difficult, if not impossible, to implement Federal Highway Administration-endorsed Proven Safety Countermeasures on its own roadways. If the state will not lead, Anchorage must take every opportunity to advance safety on our local streets. Doing so will also directly advance your administration's priority of creating safe streets and trails.

Therefore, we ask that the municipal budgeting process be guided by these principles:

- **Prioritize safety and Vision Zero.** Every person deserves to get home safely, period. Driver convenience must never be treated as more important than saving lives on our streets.
- **Make the best use of what we have before adding more.** Many city roads are massively overbuilt for actual vehicular demand. Right-sizing roads reduces long-term maintenance costs while creating space for bicycle and pedestrian facilities.



- **Enact the Long-Range Transportation Strategy.** The LRTS calls for a safe, accessible multimodal transportation network that reflects the needs of all Anchorage residents. In particular, decisionmaking should adhere to the modal hierarchy that prioritizes the healthiest and most efficient forms of transportation (walking, bicycling, transit, etc.) over private vehicles.

### Priority Capital Projects

We thank you for including many important safety and accessibility projects in the preliminary capital budget. These should remain high priorities:

- **Downtown Streets Reconstruction** (D Street, E Street, F Street, and G Street)
- **Midtown Corridor Improvements** (Denali Street area, Fireweed to Tudor Road)
- **Northern Lights Boulevard at Bragaw Street Pedestrian Crossing Improvements**
- **Patterson Street Improvements** (Debarr Road to Chester Creek)
- **15th Avenue at Sitka Street Pedestrian Crossing Improvements**
- **Hyder Street Greenway**
- **HSIP Mountain View Drive**

### Projects to Add

We also urge the addition or restoration of the following projects for connectivity and safety:

- **E 23rd Avenue / Eagle Street Area Reconstruction**
  - Eagle Street is a key connection point from the Chester Creek trail into Midtown, and its importance will continue to grow as the Fireweed and Denali Street projects make the area significantly more bike-friendly.
- **8th Avenue at A Street and C Street Pedestrian Safety**
- **Lore Road Surface Rehabilitation and Pedestrian Safety Improvements**



## Safety Enhancements for Pavement Projects

Per Goal 1, Strategy 1 of the LRTS, every road project must be treated as a safety project. For pavement preservation and rehabilitation projects in the 2026 budget, we ask the municipality to incorporate fast, low-cost safety countermeasures wherever possible:

- Use striping and signage to:
  - Narrow or remove unneeded vehicle lanes.
  - Add or widen bike lanes.
  - Install marked crosswalks.
- Add driver accountability signage (“Yield to pedestrians and bikes,” “Bikes may use full lane”) and yield signs at crosswalks.
- Reduce posted speed limits, ideally to 30mph or lower.
  - Why 30mph? Vehicle speed is the main factor determining whether a pedestrian lives or dies in a crash, and the risk grows exponentially above 30mph. According to the [Insurance Institute for Highway Safety](#), a person struck by a typical pickup truck at 40mph has a 66% chance of dying; at 30mph, that risk falls to 21%.

Relevant projects include, but are not limited to:

- **120th Avenue Upgrade** (Johns Road to Old Seward Highway)
- **64th Avenue Upgrade** (Brayton Drive to Quinhagak Street)
- **88th Avenue Upgrade** (Jewel Lake Park to Jewel Lake Road)
- **Beaver Place/Baxter Road Surface Rehabilitation** (16th Avenue to Northern Lights Boulevard)
- **Farm Avenue Road, Drainage, and Sidewalk Upgrades**
- **Lake Otis Parkway Surface Rehabilitation** (O’Malley Road to Huffman Road)
- **Mountain View Drive Surface Rehabilitation** (Park Street to McCarrey Street)



- **Northern Lights Boulevard Surface Rehabilitation** (Bragaw Street to Boniface Parkway)
- **Providence Drive/University Drive Surface Rehabilitation** (Lake Otis Parkway to East End)

## Lighting and Signals

Lighting and signals (for example, the **Downtown Lighting and Signals Upgrades Annual Program**) are another high-impact, relatively low-cost opportunity to improve safety. We recommend:

- Adding pedestrian-scale lighting.
- Implementing [leading pedestrian intervals](#) (LPIs) at signalized intersections.
- Adopting a “No Right Turn on Red” policy whenever intersections are upgraded.
- Consistently applying driver accountability signage.

## Intersection Treatments

Intersection safety (for example, in the **ARDSA Intersection Resurfacing Annual Program**) can also be improved through relatively quick interventions:

- Repaint marked crosswalks with high-visibility treatments, and add paint and signage to currently unmarked crosswalks.
- Use striping, signage, flex posts and rubber curbs to create bulb-outs or neckdowns that discourage vehicles from speeding.
- Square off turns to reduce dangerous turning speeds.

## Ongoing Maintenance Needs

In order to be fully effective, bicycle and pedestrian facilities must be maintained in good condition year-round. Too often, bike lanes and sidewalks become dumping grounds for debris



in summer and snow in winter. This not only deters use but undermines ADA accessibility and equity for those who rely on walking or rolling to get around the city.

We ask that the city take action to break this cycle. Follow in the footsteps (or tire tracks!) of successful winter cities including Edmonton and Montreal in Canada, Oulu and Helsinki in Finland, by prioritizing excellent, year-round maintenance of our active transportation routes. This should include increased street sweeping frequency in the summer months, ensuring that trash and debris are removed rather than left to accumulate in bike lanes, prioritizing snow removal on sidewalks and bike routes in winter, and removing plowed snow rather than storing it temporarily or permanently on sidewalks and bike routes.

### **Bike Rack Mini-Grants**

Finally, we propose a new mini-grant program to help small businesses install on-premise bike parking. Many business owners have come to us seeking help in adding or upgrading bike parking; we provide free support by identifying optimal bike rack types and install sites, recommending vendors and sharing technical information, but the main hurdle is often monetary.

A Title 21-compliant “corral” bike rack that can park eight bikes costs about \$2,000, and pouring a new concrete pad for the base costs around \$3,000. These costs are steep for a small business owner, but relatively small in the context of a city budget--the sweet spot for a high-impact city grant program. If the city is interested in moving forward with this project, Bike Anchorage would be happy to help increase the impact further by soliciting vendors to offer discounts for purchases through this program, similar to what we did with our [bike parking group discount program](#) in summer 2024.

Thank you for your leadership on safe streets and trails, and for the opportunity to provide input on the 2026 municipal budget. Bike Anchorage stands ready to partner with the Municipality to advance these priorities.

Sincerely,

Alexa Dobson  
Executive Director  
Bike Anchorage