

Bicycle and Pedestrian Trails Commission

2021 Year End Report

Mission

To serve in an advisory capacity to the City Council with respect to infrastructure improvements, advocacy and implementation of policies to encourage safe use of biking and pedestrian trails.

Vision

To transform Norfolk into a best in class bikeable/walkable city through promoting safe and plentiful opportunities for cyclists, pedestrians, and runners to travel within and between neighborhoods.

Economic and Quality of Life Impact of Biking/Walking in Norfolk

According to the 2019 Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO) Economic Impact of Bicycle Facilities in Hampton Roads phase one study, 60% of trail users on the Elizabeth River Trail (ERT) came from neighboring cities to use the trail. This shows us that there is a positive economic impact to our city with the addition of biking/walking infrastructure. The Parks and Recreation Master Planning presentation on Dec 7th 2021 showed that the “actions the City could take to improve the parks and recreation system that respondents would be most willing to fund” is develop walking, biking trails, and parks along waterfronts. This same presentation showed that walking and biking trails is the number one “top priorities for investment for parks and recreation facilities and amenities”. People want to ride/walk for many reasons, and this shows that people will travel to neighboring cities to do so.

Achievements

Our biggest achievement this year has been conversing with Council and advocating for the Granby Street Lane Repurposing Project.

Through this yearlong effort, we have:

- *Had a representative sit on the advisory group.
- *Reached out to every Council person with information on the project.
- *Joined the city during the civic league presentations.
- *Attended outreach events to help educate the community.
- *Spoke in front of Council during a Council meeting.
- *Submitted letters to the editor of The Virginian-Pilot.
- *Advocated in partnership with stakeholders in the community like Bike Norfolk ([Bike Norfolk publication](#)), ERT Foundation, DNC, and many more.

Other achievements include:

Providing a forum for the community to voice their biking and walking needs/concerns/issues.

Facilitating restriping of Colonial Ave bike lane.

Facilitating the test section of 35th St raised domes in place of bollards on the bike lane.

Acted as stakeholders on the Multi Modal Transit Master Plan (MMTMP) by, among other things, 1) asking that the big bike loop from the 2015 Strategic Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan be funded for the program of projects 2) getting the 2015 Strategic Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan as an appendix in the plan.

Future Plans

We will be holding a strategic planning meeting in the coming months when covid allows us to meet in person. The plan is to come up with goals and objectives to continue moving us forward. One goal will be to get a bicycle and pedestrian coordinator on city staff. This person can help oversee the Commission as well as coordinate projects among city staff. If the last year has taught us anything, a bike/ped person is needed to facilitate these projects to make them more effective and cost saving.