

BICYCLING AND PEDESTRIAN TRAILS COMMISSION

2022 Year End Report



SRTS Walk to School Day

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 infrastructure.

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 developing 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.

The 2022 Granby Street Lane Repurposing Project that council voted to move forward with is proof that the community wants safe biking and walking infrastructure in Norfolk. Further, the completion of this project will bring us one step closer to completing the vision of the 2015 Strategic Bike and Pedestrian Plan. The “big loop” will provide residents access to bike infrastructure which will in turn give them better access to jobs, grocery stores, and other establishments.

The COVID pandemic was further proof that residents use walking and biking as transportation as well as for exercise. The ERT saw an increase in usage as well as the mountain bike trails at Northside Park. The various counters distributed in bike lanes throughout Norfolk also show that bike lanes are being utilized.

Achievements

We have had many achievements this year to include:

- Speaking in front of Council and being there when they voted yes to accept the Smart Scale funding for the Granby Street Lane Repurposing project.
- Helping to organize and attend a walk to school day for a local elementary school as a Safe Routes to School initiative.
- Attending Safe Routes to School seminars and webinars and relaying the information to the city and NPS.
- Manning the table as a Vision Zero rep during a bike to work day.
- Speaking on behalf of the Commission at the Norfolk Bike Expo.
- Hosting a strategic planning meeting to come up with goals and objectives for the Commission.
- Sitting on various committees for the city.
- Writing and voting in bylaws as well as an Electronic Communication Means policy for the Commission.
- Presenting a plaque to Transit for their work with the Commission.
- Advocating for Transits needs in the upcoming budget.

Other achievements include:

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





Commission Presents Transit a Plaque

Future Plans

The commission is in the process of changing our name to better reflect what we do. As it is written now, Bicycling and Pedestrian Trails Commission, implies we focus on just trails, but we focus on all things related to biking, pedestrians, and active transportation in the city. We also plan to be more involved with Safe Routes to School, Civic Leagues, and doing more outreach to better let the community know what we do and how they can help.

