



Flagstaff Biking Organization
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Nov 19, 2021

City Staff, Mayor, Vice Mayor, and Council-

We are writing today to provide feedback on the city's Active Transportation Master Plan (ATMP).

We commend the city on the installation of Flagstaff's first protected bike lanes this fall. We have already heard positive feedback from the cycling community and have enjoyed using them ourselves.

While the pilot bike lanes are a welcome upgrade for the safety of existing cyclists, we do not anticipate that two small pilots will turn out a new generation of cyclists in Flagstaff. To create actual mode shifting, active transportation networks must be complete, cohesive, safe, and convenient. We believe that the draft ATMP provides not just a clear vision of checking these boxes, but also a well-defined and appropriately prioritized plan for implementing that vision.

Additionally, transportation infrastructure generally, and specifically and more so bicycling infrastructure, has fallen significantly behind the rapid growth of our community. It is imperative that the City move forward in a substantial way with the implementation of this infrastructure. ***It is time to stop planning and surveying community interest and take real action.***

Funding will need to be found to complete the ATMP prior to the 2030 target for carbon neutrality set by Council

Without funding the ATMP goes nowhere. Infrastructure for active transportation is exceptionally affordable and a good value for cities and we encourage Council to explore all options to fund it. We encourage the city to make use of grant funding when possible, but to commit to execution on a set schedule regardless of federal funding. Prop 419 money should be employed, as outlined below, to incorporate ATMP direction into every street project. The Lone Tree Overpass (LTOP)/Prop 420 should become a demonstration project for the ATMP.

Funding decisions should prioritize active transportation

Council has passed an aggressive Carbon Neutrality Plan (CNP) and guided the creation of the ATMP. Prop 419 was sold to the public with pictures of active transportation. Too often the actual implementation of transportation plans induces increased carbon emissions by creating wide, fast roads which are inhospitable to active transportation users while sidelining bicycling and pedestrian facilities. We urge Council to direct Staff to weight bicycling infrastructure within any project to represent the expressed will of the citizens of Flagstaff. A "[Complete Streets](#)" approach will create an holistic result that benefits everyone, not just motor vehicle users in a rush to be stuck in the next traffic jam. When properly implemented, bicycling and pedestrian facilities are a proportionally inexpensive means to help alleviate traffic congestion and contribute greatly to the livability of our community for all citizens. ***Specifically, we understand that the portion of Prop 419 funds that is not allocated exclusively to bicycling and pedestrian infrastructure will necessarily fund bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure inclusions in holistic street designs as called for in the ATMP.***

Lack of a consistent vision between policymakers, citizen desires, and a subset of city staff

As we identified in our recent letter to council on the subject of the LTOP, city staff is implementing major capital projects that are designed with no consideration of the city's CNP, (Overpass modeling assumes massive traffic growth), and appear to be diametrically opposed to the goals of the ATMP, (Overpass project has Phoenix-style, bicycle-and-pedestrian-hostile intersections). Unelected staff, for whatever reasons, are thus vetoing the priorities of the voters and citizens of Flagstaff, a situation which must change for progress to occur. It is imperative that City Leadership and City Council affect a paradigm shift within the City's management structure to meet the desires of the citizens of Flagstaff. Council needs to take its role as the representatives of the greater interests of the people to heart and question, in earnest, and redirect the administrative leadership to act for the greater interests of the people of Flagstaff. ***The ATMP will only be successful if its direction is actually followed!***

Intersections are key to safe and efficient active transportation

Although we strongly support separated bike lanes and pathways where appropriate, these facilities are by no means the end-all of providing for safe and efficient routes for bicyclists.

The ATMP calls for several grade-separated crossings. We think there should be more. Given the negligent behavior of so many who drive while texting, while intoxicated or otherwise distracted, it has become necessary to protect cyclists from drivers with as many tools as possible.

Where it is infeasible to have grade separated crossings, we support traffic control devices that isolate the crossing of bicyclists and pedestrians from the crossing of motor vehicle traffic. An example of this would be traffic signals that allow cyclists to safely turn left while motor vehicles wait.

Bicyclists should be given significant consideration during the design of traffic intersections, and the direction put forth in the ATMP should be a fundamental driver of these designs.

Lone Tree Overpass/Prop 420 as an ATMP demonstration project

Although we have not supported the LTOP/Prop 420, we would like to see the City treat this as an opportunity to explore best practices for implementing the ATMP direction. The initial design proposals

relegate bicyclists and pedestrians to second-class citizen status on this project. It is entirely possible to shift the focus of this project to show what can be achieved for providing for bicycle and pedestrian access while still reaching the design goals for vehicular traffic. We have expressed our willingness to help review ideas for how to achieve this and take this opportunity to express that willingness again.

In line with this direction, the City Staff could use analysis of induced demand for cycling and walking to potentially offset some of the as-yet-unanalyzed induced demand for motor vehicles as it assesses its CNP goal requirements on Lone Tree Overpass Project.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment. The ATMP is long overdue but we are pleased to see the City moving into the 21st Century by finally adopting strong direction for the future of bicycle and pedestrian facilities in Flagstaff.

For the Board of Flagstaff Biking Organization-

John Dailey and Anthony Quintile