



Bike Walk Every Town Local Election Platform

Making our streets safer and better for walking, biking, and public transit starts in our own backyards. Every day local elected officials make decisions that impact the issues we care about. By working together and advocating for local level change, we can further grow the number of trips taken by biking, walking and public transit, and significantly reduce the likelihood of traffic crashes and fatalities.

Municipal elections provide a unique opportunity to educate decision makers and the general public about the role active transportation can play in making our communities healthier, cleaner, and more economically vibrant. Communities throughout the region benefit from increased investment in alternative transportation options, particularly in low-income areas where the costs of owning a car are a major financial burden.

The following platform is intended as an educational resource to inform the general public about current priorities for improving biking, walking, and public transit, as identified by our members and supporters.

Active Transportation Alliance is a non-partisan member organization that does not endorse candidates for public office.

Build streets that work for everyone, whether they walk, bike, use transit, or drive.

For too long, our streets have been built with only one goal in mind: move as many cars as possible. Dozens of suburban communities have already embraced a new vision for streets to balance the needs of people walking, biking, using transit, or driving. We need to build upon these successes to encourage Complete Streets everywhere.

- *Action Item:* Adopt and implement a Complete Streets policy to help ensure that all road users are considered in future transportation plans and projects.

Unleash the potential of bicycling as transportation in the suburbs.

Many people in suburban Chicago communities would like to ride bicycles for transportation, but do not feel safe or comfortable doing so. In order to address the perceived lack of safety, more and better on- and off-street bike facilities such as protected bike lanes, bike boulevards, side paths, and off-street trails are needed in suburban communities. An Active Transportation Plan can help map out a vision of a connected network of low-stress bikeways and trails, as well as sidewalks and transit access.

- *Action Item:* Develop an Active Transportation Plan and prioritize the implementation of a bike and trail network that makes biking and walking safer and more comfortable for all.



Embrace walkable communities and remove barriers to walking in the suburbs.

Our streets should be safe for all road users and safe to cross for people of all ages and abilities, including our most vulnerable populations such as children, seniors and handicapped residents. But in many parts of the suburbs, unsafe intersections and roads discourage people from walking and lead to serious injuries and fatalities. No loss of life is acceptable and traffic crashes are preventable incidents that can be reduced and eventually eliminated with systemic changes.

- *Action Item:* Commit to prioritizing pedestrian safety improvements at the most dangerous intersections and crossings including setting a Vision Zero goal of eliminating traffic fatalities.

Invest in better and safer biking and walking experiences.

Funding remains one of the biggest barriers in moving suburban municipalities forward on biking and walking improvements. While millions of public funds are spent on roads every year, very little goes towards improving biking and walking conditions. Funding, staff, and other resources should be fairly allocated to biking and walking projects.

- *Action Item:* Dedicate a minimum amount of funding toward biking and walking priorities and pursue funding opportunities from the federal, state and regional levels.

Connect people to jobs and educational opportunities by expanding access to public transit.

Large parts of the suburbs are poorly served by transit and existing services often fail to connect people to jobs and educational opportunities. Local elected officials can be powerful advocates calling for new funding solutions to maintain and expand regional public transportation.

- *Action Item:* Support regional efforts to identify new revenue sources to support maintenance and expansion of public transit.

Build people power and engage elected officials.

Local officials are expected to manage a variety of complex and pressing issues and priorities. To hold these officials accountable for implementing bicycle and pedestrian projects and policies, a Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Council can be established. The council, made up of both resident advocates and public officials, can help the municipality track progress on plans and policy goals, garner community input on projects, and help ensure active transportation commitments move forward.

- *Action Item:* Commit to establishing a Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Council to help advise and advance the implementation of bicycle and pedestrian projects and policies.