



MUNICIPALITY OF ANCHORAGE

Municipality of Anchorage, Alaska
Parks & Recreation Department

632 W. 6th Avenue, Suite 630
P.O. Box 196650
Anchorage, AK 99519
Tel 907-343-4355

URL www.muni.org/departments/parks

ANCHORAGE



PARKS & RECREATION

MEMORANDUM

Date: May 12, 2016

To: Parks & Recreation Commission

Cc: Joshua Durand, Parks Superintendent

From: Maeve Nevins, Park Planner

Project: PRC 16-17 Action Item: Bike Anchorage Totem Counter

INTRODUCTION

Bike Anchorage is a local non-profit advocacy organization, formed in 2008 to make Anchorage more bicycle-friendly. A bicycle-friendly city is one where it is safe and convenient to travel by bike. *Bike Anchorage* advocates for viable, efficient, comfortable and safe bicycle transportation. Until *Bike Anchorage's* inception, there was no organization in Anchorage that represented or advocated on behalf of commuter/utilitarian bicycle users or was singularly focused on improving bicycle transportation for everyone that chooses to go by bike including recreational bicyclists.

Anchorage currently has a strong, multi-faceted bike community. As of February 2015, 2.2% of Anchorage commuter's bike to work (Regional Household Travel Survey), but the bike community is much larger, encompassing recreational riders, tourists, road bikers, mountain bikers, and the booming fat bike trend. Anchorage boasts a beautiful and well-known trail system for riders of many varieties, however detailed data on the trail use is not currently being maximized to benefit the community.

Bike and pedestrian data can be incredibly important to highlight the role trails play in our city. Once analyzed, the bike data and "real-time" displays will positively affect the community through increased support of park and trail projects, support for park bonds, and support of community driven initiatives such as the *Live.Work.Play.* vision. *Bike Anchorage* will also be able to utilize this data to promote their program and their work, as well as the partnerships that will grow through this planning process.

As an Anchorage Park Foundation Challenge Grant project, *Bike Anchorage* proposed a variety of projects all aimed at providing better data on bike riding in the Anchorage bowl to the whole community. Currently, 8 trail counters exist along the Chester Creek Trail and Coastal Trail, which are two of the busiest multi-use trails in Anchorage, however very little is being done with the data. They'd like to set up a system to analyze the data and share it with the community to market biking in Anchorage as a viable means of recreation, fitness, tourism, and commuting. Included in the system would be a new "real-time" bike totem counter. This totem would support the project goals by visually displaying "real-time" biker counts. It will be custom designed with the new wayfinding branding incorporated and all affiliated organization's logos.

The recently installed trails counters currently can only record data and are manually uploaded to the traffic department's website by a staff technician. Providing live, "real-time" data displays of user counts to trail users on site has been found to significantly help support trail projects by providing users with live data that highlights how many people have passed by per day and year to date. Real-time bike displays are powerful tools to communicate, educate and encourage the public to cycle. As described on the product website:

"Standing tall, the Eco-TOTEM ensures that cycling is noticed. Day in and day out, cyclists are counted and the display shows that number right there for everyone to see. As a transparent communication tool, it displays in real-time the number of cyclists on a daily and yearly basis.

Custom-made, each one of them is designed to speak to the local community. It highlights the unique cycling culture by integrating the counter into the public realm. The count display serves as a reminder of cycling when the bike lane is empty and a celebration of the cyclists when they pass. Simple and elegant, such an idea almost always garners media attention – bringing further the discussion about cycling in the community.”

PLANNING, PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND FUNDING

Bike Anchorage has worked closely with the MOA Park and Recreation and Traffic Departments to determine the preferred site near the Westchester Lagoon at the confluence of the Lanie Fleischer Chester Creek Trail and the Tony Knowles Coastal Trail. This site was selected because of the following reasons:

- Two sets of counter cables can be installed along the both trails to capture the most amount of users;
- The site is considered a major “hub” intersection for a variety of users and tourists and will be highly visible;
- The asphalt is scheduled for replacement in 2016 as part of the “greenbelt trail repair” improvement project, thus efficiently combining construction projects;
- This site currently does not have a counter and was identified by the Traffic Department as an ideal location for one during original planning stages of the improvement project;
- Electrical power source is located close by, thus making the project more cost effective.

This project has been vetted through the Community Council process and a resolution of support was approved by the South Addition Community Council on April 7, 2016. This project is also supported by the Anchorage Trails Initiative and the Anchorage Park Foundation.

Bike Anchorage’s challenge grant includes \$30,000 of cash and \$30,000 of in-kind match. MOA Park Department will be paying for the asphalt repair of the site as a continuum of the Greenebelt Trail rehab project. Traffic will be installing the cables and assisting with technical coordination.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The Department believes that the *Bike Anchorage Totem Counter* project will improve public support of trail projects and build community through education and awareness. Public process has been undertaken to identify the location and support has been documented throughout the process. The Department recommends that the Parks & Recreation Commission pass the proposed resolution to support this project.



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PRC RES NO. 2016-15
Bike Anchorage Totem Counter

WHEREAS, the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission serves in an advisory capacity to both the Mayor and the Assembly; and

WHEREAS, the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission has the responsibility and duty to provide for the long term vision of our park system by ensuring that a balance of parks, natural resources, and recreation facilities provides for the health, welfare, and safety of all residents of the Anchorage Bowl; and

WHEREAS, encouraging the public to ride bikes has health, safety, many other positive benefits; and

WHEREAS, Bike Anchorage strives to make Anchorage bicycle-friendly by creating a vibrant, livable and healthy city where it is safe and practical to go by bike; advocate for safe routes through the city for children, recreational riders, bike commuters and many others; educate children, motorists, and bicyclists to make Anchorage a safer place for everyone; encourage people to go by bike, especially those that are either new to biking or only occasionally go by bike; and

WHEREAS, Bike Anchorage was granted \$30,000 in matching Challenge Grant funds through the Anchorage Park Foundation to install a totem counter on a greenbelt trail; and

WHEREAS, the intersection of the Lanie Fleisher Chester Creek Trail and Tony Knowles Coastal Trail at Westchester Lagoon is one of the busiest multi-use trail intersections in Anchorage; and

WHEREAS, the proposed location is supported by the Park and Recreation Department, the Traffic Department, the Anchorage Park Foundation, the South Addition Community Council, the Trails Initiative and Bike Anchorage members, whom have all assisted in locating the totem counter site and selecting a preferred concept design; and

WHEREAS, the totem project will encourage Anchorage residents to go by bike more often and experience the Lanie Fleisher Chester Creek and Tony Knowles Coastal Trails; and

WHEREAS, the totem will activate families, neighbors, visitors and commuters near Westchester Lagoon with the need for improved safety in, extended ownership of, and responsibility for, bike safety in Anchorage; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission approves the proposed design for the Bike Anchorage Totem Counter.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Anchorage Parks and Recreation Commission this 12th day of May, 2016.

Chair
Parks and Recreation Commission

ATTEST:

John Rodda, Director
Parks & Recreation Department

April 7, 2016

To: South Addition Community Council

From: Bike Anchorage

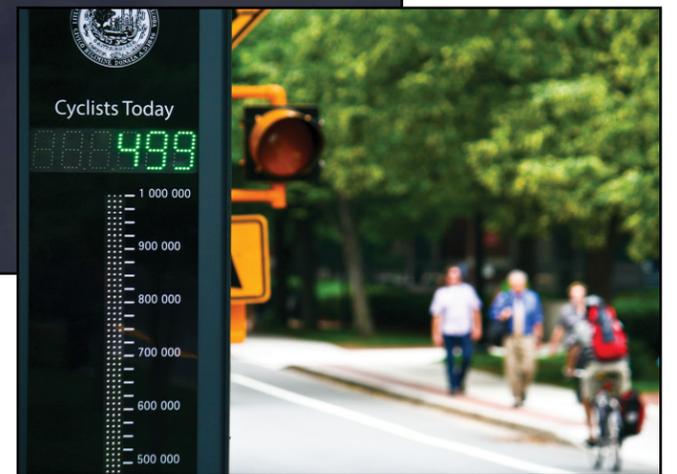
Re: Request for approval of a Resolution supporting a bike counter totem near the intersection of the Lanie Fleisher Chester Creek and Tony Knowles Coastal Trails at Westchester Lagoon

- Whereas, encouraging the public to ride bikes has health, safety, economic, and many other positive benefits;
- Whereas, the intersection of the Lanie Fleisher Chester Creek and Tony Knowles Coastal Trails at Westchester Lagoon is publically perceived as one of the busiest multi-use trail intersections in Anchorage;
- Whereas, Bike Anchorage strives to:
 - Make Anchorage bicycle-friendly by creating a vibrant, livable and healthy city where it is safe and practical to go by bike;
 - Advocate for safe routes through the city for children, recreational riders, bike commuters and many others;
 - Educate children, motorists, and bicyclists to make Anchorage a safer place for everyone;
 - Encourage people to go by bike, especially those that are either new to biking or only occasionally go by bike.
- Whereas, Anchorage community organizations and municipal and state agencies have identified a need for more bike data;
- Whereas, Bike Anchorage is granted funds through Anchorage Park Foundation and working with Anchorage Parks and Recreation and Traffic departments;
- Whereas, the bike totem project will encourage Anchorage residents to go by bike more often and experience the Lanie Fleisher Chester Creek and Tony Knowles Coastal Trails;
- Whereas, this bike totem will activate families, neighbors, visitors and commuters near Westchester Lagoon with the need for improved safety in, extended ownership of, and responsibility for, bike safety in Anchorage;
- Whereas, improvements to parks is a cornerstone part of Anchorage Park Foundation Challenge Grants.
- Therefore, be it resolved that the South Addition Community Council supports the proposed bike totem at Westchester Lagoon that includes installation of the totem.

Jeffrey Manfull, President



Passed this day, April 21, 2016



COASTAL TRAIL CONFLUENCE at WESTCHESTER LAGOON

B i k e C o u n t e r T o t e m

