



**BICYCLE
COALITION
OF MAINE**

2022 Candidate Questionnaire - Active Transportation

Maine residents throughout the state should all have access to safe places to bike and walk for work, school, recreation, or transportation. Currently, many people report that they do not feel safe walking and biking on Maine's roadways. By providing more active transportation (especially bicycle and pedestrian) facilities, we make every street safer for all users and create vibrant communities.

The Bicycle Coalition of Maine (BCM) invites you to share your position on issues related to making Maine a better and safer place to bike and walk. Your answers will be made public so voters can better understand your position on active transportation.

Candidate Name

Nathaniel Ferguson

Candidate Office

City Council

Town/District

Portland District 3

Do you think active transportation should be a priority for the state?

Yes

Why do you think active transportation should/should not be a priority for the state?

Active transportation improves the overall health and well-being of citizens, and has a lower total cost compared to private car transportation.

Do you agree that Complete Streets (a design philosophy that provides safe accommodations for all users based on the context of the street) is the approach Maine needs to take when designing and reconstructing roads, even if it means prioritizing people walking or biking in certain contexts?

Yes

Do you support increasing funding for bicycle and pedestrian facilities, even if it means deferring some motorist roadway projects?

Yes

The number of pedestrian fatalities in Maine doubled in 2021 compared to 2020, and eight pedestrians and one cyclist have died on Maine roads in 2022 to-date (August). What will you do to make our streets measurably safer for people biking, walking, and using wheelchairs?

I think the primary way to make streets safer is to prioritize vulnerable road users, like those biking, walking, or using a wheelchair, in the built environment of the street. This means converting crosswalks to raised "continuing sidewalk" crossings, investing in dedicated bicycle routes, and implementing traffic

calming measures to reduce the danger of motor vehicle traffic. If elected, I would lead the City Council in prioritizing and implementing these changes.

How would you support transportation options for the 24% of Mainers who don't or can't drive?

When we make our streets safer and more welcoming to those outside of a car, we support those who aren't driving. I would work to improve our streets for non-motorists through the use of bus-only lanes, pedestrian-first infrastructure, and bicycle safety improvements. I also support increased funding and resources for the Greater Portland Metro with the goal of more frequent and reliable service where taking the bus just makes more sense than driving.

Forty years ago, more than 60% of school children in the US walked or rode a bicycle to school. Today, that figure is less than 10%. This decline in bicycling and walking and physical activity in general has been mirrored by dramatic increases in negative health impacts for kids. What would you do to reverse this trend?

An important way to reverse this trend is ensuring that sufficient housing exists within biking and walking distance of schools that families can afford. A key issue for me is allowing more middle-density housing throughout Portland, which can help bring more children closer to their schools. For children who live within a close distance of our schools, I would support investments on streets nearby schools to prioritize pedestrian and bicycle safety especially with children in mind. I would also support investments in "walking school buses" and outreach to students and parents explaining the options for active student transportation to school. I truly think that a city should be accessible to children and allow them the freedom to move around without fear of motor vehicle traffic.

When was the last time you rode a bike?

Within the last week

Do you walk?

For errands; For health/recreation

Is there anything else you would like to share about active transportation in Maine?

I think that there is a persistent myth in Maine that our winters make active transportation simply unworkable and too difficult to use. I would like to say that I think this is egregiously false, and that there are many regions with bad or even worse winters that still maintain excellent active transportation infrastructure. It is important to me that we prioritize year-round access to active transportation infrastructure, because it is the only way we can make active transportation a viable alternative to car use and ownership.