



**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

Sam Zager

Candidate Office

State Representative

Town/District

Portland (District 116)

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?

Environment/Climate; Health; Fun. I have been a bike/run/transit commuter since 1997. Here's a video I created to promote Bike to Work Day in 2020 that answers this question.

<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/YRq9RF-lzuk>

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?

Continue to work with advocates for vulnerable road users. For instance, Lauri Boxer-Macomber suggested a repeal of the statewide prohibition of speed-enforcement cameras as several other states did in 2021. Those states (HI, MD, OR, VT) tend not to have as much of a personal liberty emphasis as

Maine often does, but that doesn't mean we could never get this passed in Maine. It's a promising idea worth exploring.

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

I favor more active and public transit options, more frequent service, and expanded networks.

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?

The increase in overweight/obesity and diabetes among children in this country is astounding. And it will continue to cause increasing suffering and colossal healthcare expenditures. The causes seem to be to be cultural as well as policy-based. I want to discuss further with PBPAC and the Bicycle Coalition of Maine. I like the "walking school bus" program that BCM has piloted in a few rural school districts.

When was the last time you rode a bike?

Within the last week

Do you walk?

For errands;For health/recreation;For other reasons

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

Legislation in any policy area, including active transportation, has to be carefully thought through and calibrated. Whenever possible, I want to avoid harming something important, for the sake of pursuing something equally worthwhile. I need to be able to read a bill before promising a vote for or against. The question above, "Do you support increasing funding for bicycle and pedestrian facilities, even if it means deferring some motorist roadway projects?" is a statement of principle. However, an actual bill, such as a budget bill has thousands of implications and competing contexts. As a statement of principle, yes, I support increased funding for bike/ped facilities, even if it means deferring some motorist roadway projects. But I have an obligation to my constituents and my conscience to examine each bill's implications to the extend practical. I'd be happy to discuss further.