



## BIKE-WALK ALLIANCE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

163 Manchester Street, Suite C ♦ Concord, NH 03301-5143

www.bwanh.org ♦ info@bwanh.org ♦ 603.898.9926

March 9, 2009

Governor John Lynch  
State House  
25 Capitol Street  
Concord, NH 03301

Dear Governor Lynch,

The Bike-Walk Alliance of New Hampshire represents the growing voice of statewide cyclists and pedestrians. As such, we are very interested in New Hampshire's plans for spending its allocations from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. We at BWA-NH strongly urge you to give due consideration to all of our state's current and future cyclists and pedestrians when dispersing these monies. These individuals choose to commute in an environmentally friendly, healthy, efficient manner and must be encouraged and accommodated. Below, I outline a few areas where funding will lead to immediate and long-term job creation, reduced pollution, and a healthier public.

### Rail Trails

The law directs each state to spend 3% of its highway allocation on the Transportation Enhancements program. The expected allotment for New Hampshire is \$3,883,217. In addition, the state is slated to receive \$129,440,556 of the entire \$27.5 billion road and bridge funding. This spending is flexible, and New Hampshire can spend its allotment on bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure as it desires. Specifically, in our state, I encourage you to fund the completion of the rail trail along the old Manchester to Lawrence rail corridor. This includes sections in Manchester, Londonderry, Derry, Windham, and Salem. The City of Methuen MA is planning to continue the rail trail into their downtown area at the old train depot. The Windham Rail Trail is nearly complete and was built with mostly private funds. It is an excellent model of a paved rail trail which serves many people in many ways. Once connected to Salem and Derry, the usage and importance to bike-ped commuters, recreational cyclists, and tourists will economically benefit the towns along the corridor and enhance the health of all users. Connecting to Methuen and Manchester will further the goals and use of this valuable resource. It will be the backbone of non-motorized transportation extending from the Massachusetts border to New Hampshire's largest city. Increased revenue for the state just from tourists would be significant, not to mention the use by bike commuters and having access to the five Park and Ride facilities along the corridor. Based on the criteria specified for the Economic Stimulus funding, this project meets all known requirements and will serve many people for many years in many ways.

## Complete Streets

Allocations for general road and bridge construction should be done so with an emphasis on a Complete Streets approach that includes accommodations for cyclists and pedestrians. BWA-NH drafted and is instrumental in the implementation of HB-1203 which created the "3-foot" rule in New Hampshire. A Complete Street approach that includes bike lanes and pedestrian medians will further protect cyclists and pedestrians.

## Safe Routes to School

The NH Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program is now into the third year of funding infrastructure and non-infrastructure to improve access and safety of students in grades K-8 living within two miles of their schools. "Round 3" of the SRTS funding for over \$1 million is now being reviewed by the Regional Planning Commissions. The applicants will then present their requests to the SRTS Statewide Advisory Committee (SAC) of which BWA-NH is a voting member. After the SAC deliberative sessions, recommendations will be sent to NH DOT Commissioner George Campbell for his approval. This entire SRTS program, designed to help children lead healthier lifestyles while reducing traffic congestion and pollution, is highly supported by BWA-NH. We are actively involved in various bicycling education programs and are implementing a "Train the Trainers" program so that bike-ed will be a sustainable offering in every elementary school in the state. We hope to obtain some funding via SRTS "Round 4" late this year for the 2010 "Train the Trainers" program while other funds are also being sought. Having children learn to bicycle properly and safely is a life-long benefit to them, our society, and our environment. Encouragement and funding via the SRTS program and other initiatives will have lasting benefits for all NH residents.

## Bike Share Programs

BWA-NH requests funding to go towards creating our bike-sharing program. Starting with a few pilot projects in Concord, we envision a future where any resident may go to their local library or other suitable location and check out a bike to get around on. BWA-NH, in conjunction with Central NH Regional Planning Commission and the Central NH Bicycle Coalition are actively seeking grants to launch a pilot project. Full realization of this vision will require considerably more funds. This pilot program is essentially ready to launch provided adequate funding. The stimulus bill provides \$8.4 billion to increase public transportation and improve transit facilities. New Hampshire should allocate at least \$50,000 of its allotment towards BWA-NH's Bike Share Program efforts.

## Conclusion

The time is now to invest in New Hampshire's bike-pedestrian future. BWA-NH encourages the State of New Hampshire to seize the wonderful opportunity the Economic Stimulus Bill provides and go above and beyond everyone's expectations and make our state "The Bike State." We look forward to hearing back from you on these important matters.

Sincerely,

Joshua Sattely, Esq.  
Board Attorney, BWA-NH