



## 2015 Active Trans Suburban Municipal Election Platform

Making our streets safer and better for walking, biking, and public transit starts in our own backyards. Everyday 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 success to encourage Complete Streets everywhere.

*Action Item:* Adopt and implement Complete Streets policies that address the 10 elements of effective Complete Streets policies.

### **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 are needed in suburban communities.

*Action Item:* Develop and implement bike plans that prioritize complete networks of family friendly bikeways, such as protected bike lanes, bike boulevards, sidepaths, and off-street trails.

*Action Item:* Increase bike parking at transit stations, schools, and other key destinations.

*Action Item:* Municipalities and schools work together to create bike and pedestrian education in local schools.



## **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.

*Action Item:* Encourage compliance with the must-stop for pedestrians law through education, signage and crosswalk design.

## **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.

## **Hold everyone using the street accountable for following the rules of the road.**

Whether you walk, bike, or drive, you should follow the rules of the road. Too often, people on the street choose to ignore our traffic laws, leading to dangerous situations. Expanded efforts to educate members of the community and increase enforcement of existing laws are powerful ways to encourage better behavior on our streets.

*Action Item:* Identify targeted funding for police to increase education and enforcement around distracted driving and Illinois' must stop for pedestrian law.

*Action Item:* Increase police and photo/video enforcement of traffic laws.