

*1. If elected, what would be your top priorities for improving safety and comfort for people walking and biking in Newburyport? Are there specific locations that you would like the City to focus on in the next few years? Are there specific initiatives or policies you would support?*

If elected, I would place a high priority on pedestrian and bike safety on our roadways. Currently, I consistently support these types of initiatives, like complete streets and SRTS where applicable, and have pushed for mitigations from development to better accommodate these alternatives. More people want to be outside, and it is imperative when we “redo a street” that we go through a review of incorporating these elements. As we add residential units to our community, access to safe walking, biking and recreating areas is imperative for us to improve the character of our neighborhoods.

Areas of concern: Hale St Pedestrian/Bike pathway. This link is a missing piece to a larger puzzle. No secret I’ve been an advocate. I see a plan in moving forward in targeted segments first linking Low St all the way to Doe Run, and Turkey Hill/Lavalley to Gloria Brunhardt Trail. Connecting these 2 links via UFP and Cooper Pasture will take some permitting and some collaboration. Completing the pathway, would 1. create a loop connecting existing trails from Nbpt/W Nby line over the 95 bridge and 2. Provide access from forgotten neighborhoods into our schools, rec center and connection to our rail trail.

A specific initiative I’d like to see is NLS lead a project to craft a “master biking” plan for the city. This plan would map out routes from one end to another of the city, from different neighborhoods to places of interest (like schools, downtown, access to the rail trail etc). I’d like to see the data from the bike/walk audits leveraged to identify “popular” routes that can be strengthened in partnership with the City. I’d also like to see proposals for economic programs for things like a 1hour bike tour of the ward 2, or a 3 hour trip to PI, or a bike-and-view at Eagle Fest.

*2. What do you think the City is doing well in terms of bike and pedestrian facilities and infrastructure? What could be improved?*

I think the City has been pretty forward thinking in bringing forward Bike/Ped infrastructure....just think of the impact the rail trail has brought us. We are improving on ped-safety, by addressing crosswalks, access ramps, site lines, buffers, etc. Today, all roads on the streets plan undergo a safety review to cover pedestrian access, and traffic calming but we do struggle incorporating Bike safety in these road re-builds. I think the last improvement made was the extension of the bike lanes on Story Ave from Park Cir to Cutting Drive. We need more targeted actions like this and would look for NLS to provide recommendations for improvements.

3. *Snow and ice can block sidewalks, curb ramps, bus stops, and bike lanes for days, making it difficult for people who walk, roll, bike, or rely on transit to travel safely. Clearing these areas quickly is essential for maintaining year-round accessibility. How do you envision improving accessibility for walkers and bikers during winter weather events?*

I agree. We need to figure out a partnership and a commitment to clear the paths. As a ward councillor, I worked with MADOT to plow the sidewalks on Rt 113 from the fire station to 3 roads. During winter, road sharing is dangerous, and thus sidewalk access is critical. With a master ped/bike plan, we'd be able to prioritize route clearing, if applicable.

4. *Safe walking and biking routes to school help children have the freedom and independence to move around the community and reduce car trips for parents and guardians. Is there anything the City should do to promote safe options for kids walking and biking to school?*

I think the current initiatives are a good start and will continue to improve as more is learned. The role of the City will need to evolve from organization and support.