



## Request for City Council Committee Action From the Department of Public Works

**Date:** October 24, 2011

**To:** Honorable Elizabeth Glidden, Chair Regulatory, Energy, and Environment Committee

**Subject:** Ordinance Amendment – Defining Bicycles as Traffic

**Recommendation:**

That the Regulatory, Energy, and Environment Committee approve amending Chapter 466.30 of the Minneapolis Code of Ordinances to include bicycles in the definition of traffic.

**Prepared by:** Shaun Murphy, NTP Project Coordinator, 612-333-2450

**Approved by:**

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Steven A. Kotke, P.E., City Engineer, Director of Public Works

**Presenter:** Shaun Murphy

**Financial Impact:**

No financial impact

**Background/Supporting Information:**

On May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2011, your committee referred to staff two bicycle regulations. The first regulation concerned the prohibition of parking and stopping in bicycle lanes, as well as the receiving and discharging of passengers in bicycle lanes. The second regulation concerned including bicycles in the definition of traffic. This recommendation addresses the definition of bicycles as traffic.

City ordinance currently defines traffic as “Pedestrians, ridden or herded animals, vehicles and other conveyances either singly or together, while using any street or highway for purposes of travel.” Furthermore, a vehicle is defined as “every device in, upon or by which any person or property is or may be transported or drawn upon a highway, excepting devices used exclusively upon stationary rails or tracks.”

Bicycles are not explicitly included in the definition of traffic. Historically this has led to questions as to whether or not bicycles can be considered as traffic. Bicycles can be considered as a vehicle, and therefore as traffic, since vehicles are included in the definition of traffic. However an amendment to the existing ordinance defining traffic would provide clearer guidance.

In light of the increased use of bicycles as a form of transportation on Minneapolis streets, and the subsequent need to clearly understand the ordinance definition of traffic, staff recommends that the current definition of traffic be amended to explicitly include bicycles.

Even though state statute does not explicitly include bicycles in the definition of traffic, there will be no inconsistency with state statute because this ordinance amendment clarifies, and does not conflict with, the current state definition.