

Thomas "Tommy" Smigiel

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Bike Norfolk: Do you own a bicycle? Tell us about it, we love to hear about bicycles!

Tommy Smigiel: Yes, during the pandemic I purchased two recycled 3G Bikes - beach cruisers from Andrew Hund. They were painted in Granby colors since both my daughter and I were transitioning as student and principal to Granby High School.

BN: Where do you like to ride your bicycle?

TS: My family shares the two bikes and rides them recreationally around our neighborhood or to businesses close by in East Ocean View. We have also brought them with us once when traveling for easier transportation as well.

BN: Would you consider cycling to work, school, or to volunteer work on some days?

TS: At this time, our family's busy schedule and work hours makes it difficult to cycle to work or school. I am hoping this summer when things slow down I will be able to try a trip to work.

BN: What are your visions for Norfolk as a bicycle-friendly community?

TS: People still need cars. People love to ride bikes and some need it for transportation. People love to walk, some need to walk to work. And some people like those pesky Lime scooters. We need more trails and paths. Let's find the right balance to support everyone. Let's make sure it is safe for everyone. Let's do it right each time. Simply taking away a lane and turning it into a bike lane doesn't work. It creates animosity toward city officials and cyclists. If we do it right the first time, to support those who still need cars, those who walk, those who use bicycles - it is a win-win. Safety always has to be the number one priority when we make these decisions as well.

BN: In December of 2015, City Council adopted the [City of Norfolk Bicycle and Pedestrian Strategic Bike Plan](#). To date, the plan has been partially completed. What actions will you do to ensure Norfolk completes this plan?

TS: As you have heard my comments before, while I originally supported the plan I was frustrated later when I found out about the lack of community engagement. As we have done with the Ocean View Comprehensive Transportation Study, we have engaged hundreds of residents through different outlets such as public meetings and interactive maps. At the end of the day, this feedback helps us to drive that plan and the outcomes better because it has more citizen buy-in. I continue to say to people when they complain about bike lanes and no one using them, that it is because it is a broken system with no true connectivity. When we connect our bike lanes, we will get more users. We need funding. See below information about funding.

(see next page)

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BN: Are you supportive of the City's proposed [Multimodal Transportation Master Plan](#) and would you vote 'Yes' to adopt it? If so, what actions would you use to implement the plan?

TS: Yes - we need to make sure we are capitalizing on new federal funds available to implement the Multimodal Transportation Master Plan. Having the plan finalized will put us ahead of applying for grants and other funding.

BN: In what ways can walking and bicycling infrastructure be improved to allow for more children to travel safely to school?

TS: When I took over as principal at Granby High School, there was no bike rack. Just that alone for a school with 1800 students was a problem. I used funds from another account to purchase a bike rack, and it is used daily. I think we need to continue working with the Safe Routes to Schools program and make sure students are taught at a young age on safety measures when walking or cycling. I also believe that each school should help identify the safest ways to travel to school when walking or taking a bicycle.

BN: What initiatives will you work toward to ensure Norfolk is a [Vision Zero](#) city with zero pedestrian & bicycles deaths?

TS: As you are aware, I secured \$140,000 for the city to conduct a transportation and pedestrian safety study for Ocean View Avenue. I have been an active part of the committee and promoting community response. As we wrap up this work, there are many changes that will be made to assist with both pedestrian and bicycle safety. I will support other initiatives throughout the city where we have opportunities to reduce pedestrian and bicycle fatalities. Tidewater Drive from Ocean View to Downtown needs to be a focus.

BN: We love to ride bikes! Would you like to go for a bicycle ride with us?

TS: Yes, when things slow down I will join you on a bicycle ride.

