

From: Dani Peterslie <dani.peterslie@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 13, 2025 11:19 AM
To: ZZ Council Members
Subject: Concerns Regarding Proposed Bike Lanes on 3rd & 4th Street

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Hello La Crosse Common Council -

On behalf of the businesses on Pearl Street West—including The Pearl, Drift Mercantile, and TJ’s La Crosse Shop—I want to share our perspective on the proposed bike lanes along the 3rd and 4th Street corridors. I also wish to note that I served as a member of the steering committee for the City Vision 2040 plan for La Crosse, so I value thoughtful, long-term planning for our community.

I currently operate our shops alongside my sister and our wonderful team of managers and staff. Like many downtown merchants, we’ve navigated significant challenges in the post-COVID years. The removal of customer parking, especially in such a vital commercial corridor, would have a serious and lasting impact on local businesses that rely on convenient access for residents and visitors alike.

Through my daily presence in our shops, I’ve heard consistent customer feedback about the 2nd Street bike lanes—many found the project confusing and have observed limited use compared to the parking opportunities that were lost. While I appreciate the intent behind creating safer cycling infrastructure, the data and daily reality suggest that the 2nd Street Cycletrack already fulfills this purpose. Cyclists now have a dedicated, buffered route just one to two blocks from 3rd and 4th Street, along with multiple bike racks downtown to access local shops and restaurants.

According to the City Vision 2040 plan, the only stated purpose for adding protected lanes on 3rd and 4th Streets would be to provide “direct and safe

bicycle access through the downtown core.” However, the 2nd Street Cycletrack was built precisely for that reason—and it serves that function today. Given the seasonal nature of cycling in Wisconsin, these additional lanes would go largely unused for nearly half the year, while permanently reducing much-needed customer parking.

At a time when small businesses are already facing rising costs—higher goods, increased labor expenses, and competition from developments in areas with abundant parking, i.e. Valley View Mall area in Onalaska—it’s critical that city policy supports downtown accessibility and vibrancy. Wider sidewalks, landscaping, and pedestrian-friendly enhancements would benefit all users year-round, while preserving parking and supporting downtown’s economic health.

La Crosse has enormous potential. But realizing that potential requires a balanced approach that strengthens—not limits—our downtown. More bike lanes on 3rd and 4th Streets will not bring the kind of revitalization our community needs. I urge you to consider the wider sidewalk alternative and prioritize accessibility, beauty, and business vitality in this historic part of our city.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Warm regards,

Dani Peterslie

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Dani Peterslie

The Pearl • Grand Hotel Ballroom • Drift Mercantile
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