

**From:** Alex Metry <alexandermetry@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 13, 2025 12:04 PM  
**To:** ZZ Council Members  
**Subject:** Support for Protected Bike Lanes on 3rd & 4th Streets

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Dear La Crosse Common Council Members,

I'm writing to share my support for Alternative 1, the option that includes protected bike lanes on 3rd and 4th Streets.

This project is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to make our downtown safer, more connected, and better prepared for the future. Adding protected bike lanes will make it easier and safer for everyone – whether they drive, walk, or bike – to move through downtown without taking away existing travel options.

Downtown already has a surplus of more than 3,000 parking spaces, so we can easily afford to dedicate some space to people instead of cars. Cities that have made similar investments have seen clear benefits: stronger local businesses, more vibrant streets, and a more welcoming downtown environment.

The economic case for bicycle infrastructure is compelling. Studies show that adding protected bike lanes can increase business revenue by 3-49%. National data also demonstrate that bicyclists tend to spend more at local businesses and restaurants, because they visit more frequently than drivers. At the same time, younger generations are buying about 20% fewer cars and choosing to live in places where driving isn't a necessity. Providing safe, reliable alternatives to car travel will help attract these young, talented individuals to our community – benefiting our workforce and local economy.

In addition, WisDOT requires that parking lanes be fully funded by the city. Selecting Alternative 2 would double the city's responsibility for constructing and maintaining parking compared to Alternative 1. With the city's budget already stretched thin, we simply can't justify spending more taxpayer money on unnecessary parking subsidies.

Our own city engineers estimate that a single on-street parking space costs roughly \$17,000 to construct. We've already spent even more per space in parking ramps for gas-powered vehicles. It's only fair that those who drive and park downtown bear these costs—not all residents through tax subsidies. Investing in bicycle infrastructure is a far more economical and sustainable approach, providing healthy, low-cost transportation options for everyone.

Consider, too, that owning and operating a vehicle in the U.S. costs the equivalent of a mortgage payment on a \$200,000 home – roughly \$12,000-\$14,000 per year, or \$0.72 per mile (NHSA). In La Crosse County, 15% of residents – over 17,000 people – live at or below the poverty line. Transportation alone can consume up to 40% of their household budgets, leaving little for rent, food, or healthcare. More than half of America's bicycle commuters earn \$25,000 or less annually, and with the average new car now costing over \$51,000, the demand for affordable transportation alternatives like bicycling will only continue to grow.

Bike lanes are not just for recreational riders – they are vital for everyday transportation users. They will also encourage greater use of the Drift Bike Share program, which reduces parking demand and congestion while supporting downtown businesses and promoting a healthier, more active community.

Please choose the option that reflects the kind of future we want for La Crosse – a city built around connection, choice, and people.

Thank you for your time and consideration on this important decision.

Sincerely,  
Alex Metry  
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La Crosse, WI 54601