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To: ZZ Council Members; ZZ City Clerk External
Subject: Resolution 25-1265 - Support for Alternative 1

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Good morning, Councilmembers,

I am writing in relation to Resolution 25-1265, in support of Alternative 1, which would add protected bike lanes on 3rd and 4th streets. I tuned into last week's Judiciary and Administration meeting where this was discussed, and I heard Councilmember Sleznikow acknowledge that people DO use bike lanes, but they aren't the folks you're getting emails from. So, here I am!

Like most avid cyclists, I navigate around our city both on my bicycle and in my vehicle. Perhaps because I am a cyclist who has been severely injured being hit by the driver of a pick up truck who "didn't see me," I DO notice cyclists in bike lanes when I'm in a car, pretty much any time I am both in my car and in close proximity to a bike lane. I have, on more than one occasion, ridden my bicycle on the 2nd street cycle track from Houska park to near the La Crosse center without encountering a single vehicle, and yet, I understand that doesn't mean "cars never even use that road." The first thing I am asking some of you is to believe us when we tell you, we do use the bike lanes. Regularly. Year-round.

Had the 2nd street cycle track existed in 2017, I would have avoided a bicycle crash that seriously injured me while commuting to my job at Gundersen. I am grateful for and paying attention to the advances La Crosse has made in bicycle infrastructure over the years, and the more I use my bicycle to get around, I also see how much further we have to go to accomplish a truly safe network of bicycle infrastructure.

In addition to being a cyclist, I also love our downtown. Unfortunately, I have never felt safe bicycling on third or fourth street, and as such, I don't frequent the businesses I'd like to support nearly as much as I would if I could more easily access them by bicycle. With protected bike lanes on 3rd and 4th street, I'd be spending a lot more of my dollars with locally owned businesses and a lot less of them with Starbucks and Amazon. I'd be putting a lot less wear and tear on our streets not only on my trips downtown, but my trips across town that are tricky to make both safely and efficiently by bicycle under the current design.

Another hat I wear is that of an advocate for disabled folks in our community. I'm a parent to a disabled child and I take accessibility very seriously. With protected bike lanes, I could feel safe making trips downtown with my disabled teen on the adapted tandem e-trike that makes biking accessible for him. I also hear and share the concern for parking for people with disabilities. As such, I propose that a significant number of the remaining street parking spaces be designated as disability accessible parking spots. Those who don't have mobility concerns and are able to walk a block or two to reach their destination can do so, and those who rely on parking close by their destination can be accommodated.

This is an incredible opportunity to make downtown safer and more accessible for everyone. You have the opportunity to create a downtown that brings together people of all abilities, people on foot, on bikes, and in cars, to create a downtown that works for everyone, reduces our reliance on cars, frees up parking, and allows businesses to thrive with the additional revenue from those who, like me, currently avoid shopping downtown

as much as we'd like to because we can't safely bike there with our families.

Thank you,

Joella Striebel
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District 1