Craig, Sondra

From: City of La Crosse Notices - No Reply
Sent: Thursday, July 2, 2026 5:31 PM
To: Craig, Sondra; Elsen, Nikki; Janssen, Barb; Kahlow, Chris; Sleznikow, Larry; Trost, Jennifer; Mindel, Mackenzie; Dickinson, Tamra; Goggin, Erin; Steele, Annette; Washington-Spivey, Shaundel; Weston, Lisa; Newberry, Aron; Bedford, Crystal; Padesky, Gary; Stine, Olivia; Northwood, Rosanne
Subject: City Council Contact Form: 26-0703
Attachments: parallel_bike_route_panel_color_400-singer.jpg; greentranspothierarchy.jpg

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Submitted on: 7/2/2026
Name: Cathy van Maren
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Municipality: City of La Crosse
Is this related to a legislative agenda item: Yes
Agenda item number:

Subject: 26-0703

I am emailing to oppose replacing planned bike infrastructure on Green Bay Street with a “greenway” on Redfield Street. The two are not equivalent for transportation cyclists, and that's what this is about. We are trying to make going by bike—for school, work, shopping, appointments, and everyday needs—so pleasant, easy, safe, and convenient that it gets people out of their cars. We are trying to change expensive, dangerous, unhealthy behaviors. We are trying to create spaces where everyone, including children and new cyclists, can ride safely so that they will choose to ride for more trips. This is not about recreation, it's about transportation. This is about the climate crisis.1 This is about health and safety.

We know that changing streets to prioritize healthy, clean transportation works to change behaviors. The former Mayor of Paris transformed that city so much that now, the bicycle is the preferred mode of transportation.2 Similar changes have occurred in New York, London, and other major cities. If you build it, people will change. But it has to be built right.

As noted in the U.S. Federal Highway Administration publication “The Dutch Approach to Bicycle Mobility: Retrofitting Street Design for Cycling,”3 “Planning bicycle-friendly environments requires a broader understanding of the interaction between physical and psychological factors that influence travel behavior and mode choice.” In general, good bike infrastructure is cohesive (complete, comprehensive connections), direct (keeping detours, turns, and stop-and-go intersections to a minimum), attractive (to make cycling something people will choose), safe (protected bike lanes4), and comfortable (not noisy, confusing, congested, or winding).

Green Bay Street can meet these criteria with good protected bike lanes. (And good protected bike lanes do not have to cost ungodly amounts.) The street connects to places people want to get to: schools, shopping, services. It has few stops and allows cyclists to safely cross busy intersections like Losey, West Ave., and South Ave.

Redfield does not. To get to most public services, you need to take other streets to complete the trip. New controls would be needed at busy intersections. With zero bike infrastructure on Losey, West Avenue, or South Avenue, it is not cohesive, safe, or direct.

Again, this decision is about what infrastructure, as we approach catastrophic global heating driven in large part by fossil fuel vehicle emissions, will help people choose to replace car trips (most averaging less than six miles5) with walking, taking the bus, and biking. It's not about which decision will please people who want to park free on public streets wherever they go or people who think bicycles are toys or people who don't care about anyone but themselves.

This is as important as the campaign to ban indoor smoking in public places and the challenges are similar. To be frank, whining people who do not want to change and do not want to give up their unsafe behaviors should not overrule what's best for our health, our future, our children, our environment.

We need a network of safe, direct, connected bike infrastructure, not a few blocks of paint every so often or windy, out-of-the-way routes that are harder to use. We need to change behaviors that are endangering all of us.

If you are not a transportation cyclist, you really need to learn more about the issue, I think, and you cannot rely on advice from people who are not cyclists and have not studied the latest in good, safe design for cycling. The FHWA guide (link below) is a good start. Here's a half-hour webinar on the five design principles of good bicycle infrastructure design: https://youtu.be/b1A-8rXXKRQ?si=HX-QZ68dWvwyg_Jv (you can start at minute 4:00).

Thank you.

Cathy

1. Global Temperatures Likely to Breach Record Levels Over Next 5 Years, WMO Says. May 29, 2026, Earth.org. https://earth.org/global-temperatures-likely-to-breach-record-levels-over-next-5-years-wmo-says/
2. Parisians prefer bicycle to car, study shows. Apr. 11, 2024, FleetEurope. https://www.fleeteurope.com/en/last-mile/france/features/parisians-prefer-bicycle-car-study-shows
3. The Dutch Approach to Bicycle Mobility: Retrofitting Street Design for Cycling. Sept. 10, 2017. U.S. Dept. of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, https://international.fhwa.dot.gov/pubs/pl18004/fhwapl18004.pdf
4. Why Protected Bike Lanes Are Good for All Road Users by Bryan King. May 13, 2026. https://www.peopleforbikes.org/news/protected-bike-lanes-protect-everyone
5. Share of All U.S. Vehicle Trips by Length (Miles). January 2026, Oak Ridge National Laboratory. https://afdc.energy.gov/data/10318