

**Craig, Sondra**

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**From:** cvm <cvanmaren@protonmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 30, 2024 8:00 AM  
**To:** ZZ Council Members; ZZ City Clerk External  
**Subject:** 24-0957 Bike Ped Master Plan Update

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Dear Council Members,

I am emailing in support of the updated Bicycle Pedestrian plan and encourage you to approve it. Not only is it long overdue, it is a required part of fulfilling the city's climate action commitments. We must have better, safer, more direct facilities for people of all ages and abilities to bike, not just for recreation, but for transportation to life needs and events. We have to have places for families to bike and for children to learn to bike, and that means places that do not rely on paint or plastic sticks to protect an eight year old cycling to school or an 80 year old biking to the grocery store.

I do think there are some omissions. I believe school streets (streets in front of schools that are temporarily closed to car traffic during school start and end times to encourage and facilitate biking and walking\*) should be in the plan. I believe car parking changes and charges should be part of the plan. I believe the plan should also include the possibility of neighborhood shared streets. Missing from the funding section is any thought that parking fees and fines could be used to discourage driving and encourage and improve biking and transit, something that the Climate Action Plan calls for. Much more thought, research, and discussion needs to be given to how we are prioritizing private cars and neglecting cleaner, healthier, more sustainable active transportation options. While it is a bike/ped plan, the dangers and reasons we need special infrastructure are because of cars, so you have to include cars in the plan, it seems to me. And, though I know it was requested several times, the plan does not include specific examples of quick-build opportunities among the identified specific projects, something that could make implementation faster and, possibly, less expensive (using a lane of parked cars to protect a separated bike lane, for example). I hope that these can be considered and addressed in coming months.

**BUT**, there's one omission (in my opinion) that requires immediate attention. I encourage you to either add it now or pledge to fix it as soon as possible. I have tried raising this concern throughout the process by attending and participating in in-person sessions, emailing, completing online surveys, and submitting online comments without success. **Losey Boulevard needs to include bike infrastructure.**

I think the plan has pretty much ignored the needs of cyclists on the city's far south side, especially those of us who live near Losey and Mormon Coulee Road. I have been a bike commuter/transportation cyclist from the Hintgen neighborhood since 1985. Losey Boulevard is the main direct route from Mormon Coulee Road/Losey to Central HS, the Village Shopping Center, and other businesses and services in that area and north to Forest Hills and Hixon Forest. The closing of 27th Street several years ago at the railroad tracks removed the one safe, quiet north-south (at least to Central HS) route for bikes. The Shelby island is a big blank blob on the master plan map. Instead of the obvious solution, a protected bike lane on the whole of Losey Boulevard, the plan suggests never-gonna-happen bike paths alongside railroad tracks.

We need real, improved bike accommodations on Losey Boulevard and we need them now. Losey is not a state highway and it should be covered by our complete streets legislation, yet when the center section of Losey (Ward Ave to Green Bay) was reconstructed a few years ago, nothing was added for cyclists (but we have a whole lane devoted to occasionally turning cars). This is really a crime. The south end of Losey is due for reconstruction soon. Without anything in the Bike Ped plan, that section will also have no bike accommodations. You have made a 25 mph speed limit on a road whose straight, wide lanes tell drivers to go 40 mph. Adding a protected bike lane and narrowing lanes would not only make bike trips safer and encourage more to ride, it would also slow speeding cars.

The map on page 12 of the plan shows that much of the area I'm writing about is in the top or second quartile of the highest equity concerns. We have the opportunity to bike to school, work, shopping, appointments, and entertainment, but we are surrounded by high-traffic busy streets and highways. We need special accommodations on these busy streets to support and encourage more bike trips of one to three miles (trip reduction initiative, p. 16) by more people, especially the established 60% in the "interested but concerned" group. The map on page 51 shows this area is within 1/4 mile of a *recommended* AAA network but does not currently include an *existing* AAA network. This is a missed opportunity, isn't it?

Losey is shown on the "spot improvement" recommendations map, p. 46, but as a "long term" separated facility. Rather it should be an immediate need separated facility. Immediate because the need exists now and, if the council wants to encourage fewer car trips, this is a prime place to do that, and immediate because if it's not part of the coming redo of this section of Losey, it will probably not happen in my lifetime (so, *my* immediate need!)

There are zero Tier 1 or 2 priority projects south of Ward Avenue at all (except for upgrading an existing bike lane on the quite low-volume East Avenue), and it's not because we are full of bike infrastructure. We're not. But, we *are* the ones who need to travel north and west to shopping, appointments, schools, work, services, entertainment, and recreation, and the ones whose mode shift could have a big impact on our transportation carbon emissions.

Again, Losey is only coded as "further evaluation needed." As an important, direct north-south route, we can't just leave it out. We have been "evaluating" Losey for many years and now it's time for action. The Toole Group recommendations proposed in the 2015 Transportation Vision project (<https://www.cityoflacrosse.org/home/showpublisheddocument/1366/637129579197070000>) included separated bike lanes on Losey Boulevard. Why now, almost ten years later, is further evaluation needed?

Please approve this Bike Ped update AND please add a Losey Boulevard protected bike lane as a Tier 1 priority.

Cathy Van Maren, La Crosse

\*School Streets: <https://www.childhealthinitiative.org/media/792262/school-streets-globally.pdf>

and <https://usa.streetsblog.org/2023/10/13/reimagining-north-american-streets-for-safe-active-and-joyful-trips-to-school>