

To: PBMVC
Date: 5/25/2010 (Room 260, MMB)
Re: Bicycle and pedestrian projects for 2011 – 2013 capital budget

From: Jay Ferm
Co-chair, Platinum Bike Planning Committee
Director of Advocacy, Planet Bike
Member, Urban Design Commission

Dear PBMVC Members,

I was very much looking forward to attending the public hearing this evening regarding capital budget requests for bicycle and pedestrian projects. Unfortunately, I find myself unable to attend. Please accept this letter as my public testimony.

This is an exciting time for bicycling in Madison. With the recent study trip to Europe by the Mayor and key City staff, there is growing momentum and determination to dramatically improve our bike infrastructure. The upcoming budget cycle is our best opportunity to add to this momentum and really get things rolling.

Here are my specific requests for capital projects:

- (1) **Convert E. Mifflin St. into a full bike boulevard.** The current measures (signage) are a good start but fail to realize the incredible benefits to all road users of a full-on bike boulevard. This project should include the extension of Mifflin St. to the Yahara River path. A full bike boulevard design includes diverting through car traffic onto major parallel car routes (E. Washington Ave., E. Johnson and E. Gorham) while maintaining through connections for bikes, pedestrians, roller-bladers, etc. Majority of cross streets should have STOP signs at the Mifflin St. bike blvd. so that bike blvd. traffic has priority.
- (2) **Convert Kendall Ave. into a full bike boulevard.**
- (3) **Convert Mills St. to a full bike boulevard** from University Ave south to Erin St. Because of a major St. Mary's Hospital campus entrance at Erin St., a modified bike blvd. design is called for at this segment. The Mills St. bike blvd. will provide a safe and convenient alternative to riding on Park St. to and from campus and will connect with Vilas Park and the excellent Wingra Dr. bike path.
- (4) The intersection of John Nolen/Williamson/Wilson/Capital City Trail remains a long-standing nightmare for all road users (car drivers included). **At intersection of John Nolen/Williamson/Wilson/Capital City Trail:**
 - a) **Construct a formal connection of the inbound Capital City Trail across Blair St. to W bound Wilson St.**
 - b) **Construct a bike and pedestrian separated crossing from inbound Capital City Trail across Williamson St** to the continuation of the Capital City Trail. The bike and pedestrian crossing separation can be achieved by use of paint.
 - c) Provide for timed bike movement from E bound Wilson St. to the E bound Capital City Trail.
 - d) Use bike specific stop lights integrated with the motorized vehicle stop lights.

- (5) **Extend SW Commuter Path diagonally across intersection of Regent/Monroe**, install bike-specific stop lights with loop detectors and pedestrian activation and incorporate into overall stop light scheme to allow safe and convenient crossings for bicycles and pedestrians.
- (6) **At intersection of N. Shore Dr. and John Nolen Dr. build a continuous bike and pedestrian crossing** across all John Nolen Dr. lanes with designated bicycle and pedestrian crossing areas to provide the safe and convenient crossing of large, parallel groups of bikes and pedestrians. There are frequently too many bikers, walkers, runners, etc. to safely stage the crossing using traffic islands. The islands would need to be so large they would impede automobile traffic. Current condition requires a three-stage crossing and awkwardly mixes bikes, pedestrians, runners, roller-bladers, etc. The island between the flying right turn from N. Shore onto S bound John Nolen often gets over-filled with bikes and pedestrians and is not safe.
- (7) **Build a Bike Station** as part of the reconstruction of the Capital East parking ramp / high-speed-rail terminal parking.
- (8) **Construct a destination-based way finding system** for on-street and off-street bicycle ways. One of the challenges to getting more people on bikes more often is that they don't know how to find their way around by bike and they don't know how many great destinations exist along bike routes they already use. A destination-based way finding system will make our existing bike routes, paths and lanes more useful to all road users. They communicate distance so people can plan their trips and they tell existing path users of additional great places they can get to that they didn't realize. For example:
- a) The Capital City Path heading east from downtown will have signs indicating how far to Olbrich Gardens, East Towne Mall, City of Monona, Milwaukee Street, etc. and indicate the nearby Walgreens drug store and library at E. Washington x E. Johnson.
 - b) Kendall Ave heading west will have signs indicating how far to Hoyt Park, Hilldale Mall, Garner Park, Owen Conservation Park, and West Town Mall and indicate the nearby Whole Foods grocery and UW hospital.
 - c) Formal and informal neighborhood centers and commercial districts will have signs on all nearby bike routes indicating their nearby presence and pointing the direction and distance. This includes: libraries, grocery stores, drug stores, hardware stores, police stations, fire stations, malls, etc.

In addition to being useful for bikers, way-finding signs will communicate to other road users (e.g. car drivers and pedestrians) that they have more choices about how to go. Way finding signage will act as an advertisement for the bikeway network to current non-users.

- (9) **At the intersection of the Capital City Trail at Williamson Street/Winnebago, build a bicycle connection northeast to N bound Winnebago.** There is a 1½ block section that is one-way S bound and therefore illegal and dangerous for N-bound bike traffic. To get to the two-way section of Winnebago, bikers are forced to either:
- a) Ride on the sidewalk on N side of Winnebago (passing through a heavily used Metro stop which frequently has several people waiting), or,
 - b) Illegally (and awkwardly) enter and cross the oncoming (SW bound) car lane
- (10) **Build a connection between the Capital City Trail across Eastwood Dr. to 1st Street.** There is currently no safe and convenient way to get from 1st Street to the Capital City Trail. Instead, bikers are forced along north sidewalk and typically merge right into the NE bound car lane, than cross the lanes as street traffic to get on the Capital City Trail Path around about Russell St.

To: PBMVC
Date: 5/27/2010
Re: Bicycle and pedestrian projects for 2011 – 2013 capital budget – PRIORITIZED list

From: Jay Ferm
Co-chair, Platinum Bike Planning Committee
Director of Advocacy, Planet Bike
Member, Urban Design Commission

Dear PBMVC Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to present my requests for bicycle and pedestrian capital projects. This is an exciting time for bicycling in Madison. With the recent study trip to Europe by the Mayor and key City staff, there is growing momentum and determination to dramatically improve our bike infrastructure. The upcoming budget cycle is our best opportunity to add to this momentum.

In answer to your question the other night I stated that the E. Mifflin St. bike blvd. would be my number one choice if only one project could be done. After more careful consideration I have revised my priorities. While the E. Mifflin corridor remains an outstanding candidate for a bike blvd., several factors weigh against it being the number one choice for a major capital project at this time:

- a) E. Mifflin was recently completely rebuilt. Converting to a full bike blvd. would mean ripping up pavement at each intersection that is in excellent condition. This would be a waste.
- b) Much can be done with signage alone, e.g. prioritizing bike traffic on E. Mifflin over cross traffic.

The #1 priority project is the intersection of **John Nolen/Willy/Wilson/Capitol City Trail**. This is one of the most highly visible and notorious intersections in the city. Fixing this intersection will have the broadest impact on all road users: bikes, pedestrians and car & truck drivers.

Per your request, here are my specific, prioritized requests for capital bike projects:

- (1) The intersection of John Nolen/Willy/Wilson/Capitol City Trail remains a long-standing nightmare for all road users (car drivers included). **At intersection of John Nolen/Willy/ Wilson/Capitol City Trail:**
 - a) Construct a formal connection of the inbound Capital City Trail across Blair St. to W-bound Wilson St.
 - b) Construct a bike and pedestrian separated crossing from inbound Capital City Trail across Willy St to the continuation of the Capital City Trail. The bike and pedestrian crossing separation can be achieved with paint.
 - c) Provide for timed and signaled bike movement throughout the intersection.
- (2) **Convert Kendall Ave. into a full bike boulevard.** A full bike boulevard design includes diverting through car traffic onto parallel car routes (e.g. University Ave.) while maintaining through connections for bikes, pedestrians and other non-motorized road users. Majority of cross streets will have STOP signs at Kendall so that bike blvd. traffic has priority. Kendall Ave. deserves to be the first full on bike blvd. for several reasons:
 - a) Kendall will be an outstanding bike commuting corridor
 - b) The roadway is in terrible condition and needs to be rebuilt
 - c) Kendall will serve the west side, which is lacking in dedicated bike infrastructure.
- (3) **Build a full service “Bike Station”** as part of the reconstruction of the Capital East parking ramp/high-speed-rail terminal parking. The Bike Station will provide bike parking for hundreds of bicycles, locker and shower facilities for the many Capitol area employees who commute more than three miles and need to arrive at their workplace “business ready”. It will include a small bike shop concession (run by a local bike shop) to provide repair services and bike commuter supplies.

- (4) At intersection of **N. Shore Dr. and John Nolen Dr. build a continuous bike and pedestrian crossing** across all John Nolen Dr. lanes with designated bicycle and pedestrian crossing areas to provide the safe and convenient crossing of large, parallel groups of bikes and pedestrians. There are frequently too many bikers, walkers, runners, strollers, etc. to safely stage the crossing using traffic islands. The islands would need to be so large they would impede automobile traffic. Current condition requires a three-stage crossing and awkwardly mixes bikes, pedestrians, runners, roller-bladers, etc. The island between the flying right turn from N. Shore onto S-bound John Nolen often over-flows with bikes and pedestrians and is not safe.
- (5) **Construct a destination-based way finding system** for on-street and off-street bicycle ways. One of the challenges to getting more people on bikes more often is that they don't know how to find their way around by bike and they don't know how many great destinations exist along bike routes they already use. A destination-based way finding system will make our existing bike routes, paths and lanes more useful to all path users. Using smaller (and less expensive) signs appropriate for slower moving bicycles and pedestrians, they communicate distance and junctions with other bike paths so people can plan their trips and they tell existing path users of additional great places they can get to that they didn't realize. The exact details of what city features and destinations will be signed need to be worked out. The following examples illustrate the range of possibilities:
- a) The Capital City Trail heading east from downtown will have signs indicating how far to Olbrich Gardens, East Towne Mall, City of Monona, Milwaukee St., etc. and indicate the nearby shopping district and library at E. Washington x E. Johnson and the junction with the Starkweather Creek Path and Yahara River Parkway
 - b) Kendall Ave heading west will have signs indicating how far to Hoyt Park, Hilldale Mall, Garner Park, Owen Conservation Park, and West Town Mall and indicate the nearby Whole Foods grocery and UW hospital.
 - c) Formal and informal neighborhood centers and commercial districts will have signs on all nearby bike routes indicating their presence and pointing the direction and distance. This includes: libraries, grocery stores, drug stores, churches, hardware stores, police & fire stations, malls, etc.

In addition to being useful for bikers, way-finding signs will communicate the potential for additional destinations to all path users. E.g. people who walk their dog along the corridor will see that they can also bike to the drug store and middle school. People will readily see the expansive choices they have to get where they want to go.

- (6) **Construct contra-flow bike lanes on the first blocks of W. Main St. and E. Mifflin St.** to provide access to the Capitol Square from these important bike corridors. Until they reach the outer loop, E. Mifflin and W. Main are two-way streets that provide convenient access to the Capitol area. With current conditions many bikers travelling to the Square leave the road and ride on the sidewalks (both sides) or ride against traffic on the street.
- (7) **Extend SW Commuter Path diagonally across intersection of Regent/Monroe**, install bike-specific stop lights with loop detectors and pedestrian activation and incorporate into overall stop light scheme to allow safe and convenient crossings for bicycles and pedestrians. We can dramatically improve this intersection TODAY with relatively inexpensive traffic control devices while a comprehensive redesign process proceeds with the many affected parties (City, UW, Camp Randall, property owners, and the business district).
- (8) **Convert Mills St. to a full bike boulevard** from University Ave south to Erin St. The entrance to St. Mary's Hospital at Erin St. calls for a modified bike blvd. design south of Erin. The Mills St. bike blvd. will provide a safe and convenient alternative to riding on Park St. to and from campus and will connect with Vilas Park and the excellent Wingra Dr. bike path.

- (9) **Continue the conversion of E. Mifflin St. into a bike boulevard** through the innovative use of signage and minimal infrastructure modifications. Construct a formal extension of E. Mifflin St. to the Yahara River path.
- (10) **At the intersection of the Capital City Trail at Willy Street/Winnebago, build a bicycle connection northeast to N-bound Winnebago.** There is a 1½ block section that is one-way S-bound and therefore illegal and dangerous for N-bound bike traffic. To get to the two-way section of Winnebago, bikers are forced to either:
- a) Ride on the sidewalk on N side of Winnebago (passing through a heavily used Metro stop which frequently has several people waiting), or,
 - b) Illegally (and awkwardly) enter and cross the oncoming (SW-bound) car lane
- (11) **Build a connection between the Capital City Trail across Eastwood Dr. to First St.** There is currently no safe and convenient way to get back and forth from First St. to the Capital City Trail. The current condition forces bikers along the N sidewalk to the Russell St. crosswalk. This is a well used pedestrian way and conflicts with bikes are common. In addition, bikers coming off First St. at speed often merge right from the sidewalk across the terrace into the left-hand car lane, than cross the lanes as street traffic to get on the Capital City Trail at Russell St.