

From: [Kelly Slack](#)
To: [Finance Committee](#)
Cc: dboetcher@ibew159.org
Subject: Public Safety first.
Date: Monday, March 17, 2025 8:05:35 AM

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Hello Finance Committee-

I will share with you what I shared with Parks Commission last week below-

Please note that public safety is our #1 consideration. This event, created for vehicles in 1989, uses the vehicle as the safety barrier- keeping the visitors a safe distance from the displays.

Without the vehicle as a barrier this event is not safe for unlimited attendance.

Secondly this event is offered to all for free by the Electrical Workers 159. They do not have event staff or funds to execute a second style of event. The “vehicle” is what keeps this event safe and cost effective enabling it to sustain 36 years.

Hello Madison Parks-

I just wanted to share a note about the past car-free event at Holiday Fantasy in Lights. In 2023 the 3rd car-free event had close to 1000 people, the first with a larger crowd. We observed multiple individuals sitting on displays, caught one climbing the capitol display etc. We had a group of bikers drinking in the park. These visitors also did not travel the loop correctly – going backwards out the tunnel and bypassing the exit booths.

This event created in 1989, was designed for visitors in cars – not leaving the road. It appears that if we take the vehicles out of the equation the visitors feel that they can interact with the displays which is not the case and not safe.

Last year one night we observed a group of about 30 bikers (Cap city group) visit the park and co-exist with the cars as usual. This group was respectful, well lit, enjoyed the loop traveling through as intended. They stopped for two brief photos – did not disrupt traffic or touch a display. This is how the bike community can safely enjoy the event: in smaller groups, obeying road rules as cars would.

The Electrical Workers local 159 will not allow a car-free event again. They feel it is not safe. They also do not intend to restructure the event. The event currently welcomes close to 80,000 vehicles each year- and is always free.

Thank you for allowing the Electrical Workers local 159 to provide this community event in a beautiful Madison park. The Electrical Workers take great pride in providing this gift to the community– for over 35 years now. This event has become a generational tradition that all can enjoy for free.

Kelly Slack

<https://linktr.ee/slackattack>

608-239-7888 text is best



From: Nicholas Davies <nbdavies@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 16, 2025 6:27 PM
To: financecommittee@cityofmadison.com
Cc: Kelly Slack <kelly@slackattack.com>; dboetcher@ibew159.org
Subject: Reject Fantasy in Lights contract--or require a car-free night

Dear Finance Committee,

Historically, the Fantasy in Lights event has included one (1) car-free night amongst its many-night run. This has always been a very different night. Pedestrians and cyclists are free to mingle, people can go through the course however they choose, and because they're not in cars, this doesn't cause a traffic jam.

It's always the best night of the event, and for some families, it may be the only night they can safely attend. Joining the traffic on other nights means progressing through the course at idling car speed, while breathing vehicle exhaust.

The contract on your agenda for approval offers IBEW 159 the option to sub-contract out a car-free night. This is how the car-free night has worked in recent years. IBEW 159 literally leaves the lights on and walks away, and some other organization has to step in and provide everything for that night--staffing, insurance, etc. This is a lot to demand of any community organization.

Kelly Slack has stated that under the current contractual terms, IBEW 159 is not inclined to include a car-free night in the event anymore. Therefore, I encourage you all to add a condition to the contract to require a car-free night, and for that night to be staffed and insured by IBEW 159 like any other night of the event.

This is a compromise position! I could argue that families who want to experience the event without sitting in traffic should be able to do so on any night of the event, and therefore all nights of the event should be car-free. After all, 99% of parents and kids would be perfectly able to get out of the car for a little while and experience the exhibits on foot. But I'm only asking for one car-free night, like how it has worked for years now.

To make this an exclusively car-centric event would be a real step backwards, in an era when every year is hotter than the last, due in large part to vehicular emissions. IBEW 159 has played a crucial role in our region's shift towards renewable energy, and this would very much undermine that hard-won reputation.

Thank you,

Nick Davies
3717 Richard St

From: [Nicholas Davies](#)
To: [Finance Committee](#)
Cc: kelly@slackattack.com; dboetcher@ibew159.org
Subject: Reject Fantasy in Lights contract--or require a car-free night
Date: Sunday, March 16, 2025 6:27:30 PM

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Nick Davies
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