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From: Monica H <cloud19th@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, July 18, 2022 5:10 PM
To: Transportation Policy Board
Subject: comments on agenda item: 3 72615 Speed Policy on Shared Use Paths

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Dear Transportation Policy Board,

Especially since our backyard abuts the Capitol City Trail, my family and I use the path system in and around Madison very often--even multiple times a day-- for both transportation and recreation, by bike and on foot. We travel especially frequently on path segments between the UW campus to John Nolen Dr., and in the corridor between John Nolen/ North Shore to Dempsey Rd.

In 15 years, we've seen a full spectrum of path use, from parades and protests to post bar-time meandering. We've seen housing and businesses grow adjacent to the paths: along the SW path there are the 640 West apartments, the Nine Line apartments, and the Seven27 apartments; further east, new developments include the Velo 404 apartments, Garver Point apartments, the Garver Feed Mill, and the Royster Corners development, including the beautiful new Pinney Library. This is all wonderful! And in this same span of time we've also seen more kids using the path to bike to schools, more people using the paths to walk their dogs, and more people using the paths for bike transportation, including by e-bike. The increased path use is also wonderful--but as you're aware, the crowding can be frustrating for path users.

In the materials for your discussion of Agenda Item 72615, I see several suggestions about the need for more rules on these shared-use paths, particularly where there are higher volumes of users, such as on the SW path and/or along the Cap. City trail along Monona Terrace. As much as I appreciate that the number of solutions offered almost balance the complaints, I do not think these solutions --speed limits, requiring bells, etc.-- are feasible. The paths are created for and used by people who do not need licenses to use them, and as such, the rules for using the paths should be kept to a minimum. The potential for increased conflict from increased path use and speed differentials should be addressed with design. Where feasible, wider paths, wider curb cuts and crossings so that path users are not funneled and crowded at intersections with on-road traffic, would help. Landscaping options, such as keeping brush clear within 2-3 feet of the paths, would help.

The only times I have felt unsafe, or have felt unsafe for my child biking, running, or walking on these shared paths have been when others are not showing awareness of path traffic: when someone is walking a dog on a long leash and the dog is 6 feet away from them, with the leash across the path; when someone running with headphones on suddenly makes a U-turn without checking for bike traffic behind them; when path users stop and block traffic to chat. Asking people with low awareness to be aware of more rules is not the best solution, and I'm sure we can come up with better ways to accommodate and design for increased path use and safety.

Thank you,

Monica Harkey