

Pien, Janet

From: Bill Guetschow [bguetsc@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, November 28, 2012 7:47 PM
To: ALL ALDERS
Cc: Pien, Janet; Tolley, Sabrina
Subject: I Support Lighting the Southwest Bike Path

Dear Members of the Madison Common Council, Pedestrian Bicycle Motor Vehicle Committee, and Public Works Committee,

I am writing to give my full support for the proposal to install lights along the Southwest Bicycle Path. As a user of the path and someone who has ridden the path after dark, I can attest to the need for lighting the it. Lighting the path is a must for the safety of those who use it. It would reduce collisions and help bicyclists avoid debris dropped from the trees that line the path.

If as a city we are serious about encouraging more people to use bicycles as a mode of transportation, then we must choose to make projects like this a priority. In fact, as I suspect you're aware, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation considers the Southwest Path as a transportation corridor; as such it should be treated like any other urban traffic thoroughway and be given the same level of support, such as lighting, as a city street would. This is especially true given the heavy usage of the path, over 3000 per day in peak time periods.

I have heard the argument that all path users should be responsible for their own lighting, namely bike headlights. While these headlights are a must for night riding (I use both a headlight and a taillight) they are not the same as a car headlight in that most do not provide adequate illumination to light the path of the cyclist. Rather, they are designed as a method to make the bicyclist be more visible to other cyclists and especially, motorists. Most bicyclists, myself included, rely heavily on street lights for visibility of our surroundings when riding after dark. Lighting the path is the same as lighting any other city street.

In short, I strongly encourage the council to consider all of these facts when voting on this proposal. Lighting the Southwest path send the message that we are a forward-thinking city when it comes to transportation issues. Thank you for your time.

Best Regards,
Bill Guetschow
1221 N Wingra Dr
Madison
608-347-2514