

From: Elizabeth Wefel
Sent: Monday, June 15, 2015 10:34 PM
To: Chris Tolbert; #CI-StPaul_Ward3
Subject: Support Safety and Business

Chris,

On Wednesday, you have the opportunity to help Saint Paul make a few more historic steps forward in making our city safer for people who walk and people who bike when the City Council considers the bike lanes on Cleveland, Lexington and Front. I urge you to support these lanes and help make your constituents, as well as many other citizens, safer.

Change is hard, but implementing real bike lanes on our North/South streets is essential. I know there are some business owners that are concerned, but this is not an either/or question. Bikes and cars can and do co-exist, but we need to make it safer for people on bikes through dedicated lanes. There are multiple studies, which I'm sure you've seen, showing how bike lanes enhance economic development and provide traffic calming effects. Getting more people on bikes is better for the environment and helps to decrease obesity and other health related problem. But if it's not safe many people esp. women and families just won't bike.

Sharrows (sharing the same lane for cars and bikes) are not the answer. Drivers generally ignore them and they don't make it safer for bikers. You represent an incredibly progressive district - a district that cares about the environment, sustainability and good urban planning - represent those values. There's some loud voices in opposition, but if you and this city truly wants to move forward and make progress towards better infrastructure we need to take these steps needed to make biking safer.

If this bike plan is going to mean anything, than we need bike lanes that go north and south. If you kill these lanes, you're killing some of the most important aspects of the bike plan and potentially dooming the plan. If you kill this proposal because of loud voices fearing change, it will have a ripple effect. I'm guessing that is not what you want for the long term of St. Paul. Be the progressive city council person that we know you are - support these bike lanes.

Elizabeth Wefel