

From: Heidi Schallberg [<mailto:heidils@gmail.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, June 16, 2015 8:17 AM
To: #CI-StPaul_Ward3; Kantner, Libby (CI-StPaul)
Subject: Cleveland Ave Bike Lanes (+ Front, Lexington)

Dear Councilman Tolbert,

Last month I participated in our neighborhood's second Tour de Highland. After biking the 10 mile route, I walked to many of the participating businesses. It was fantastic to see so many people out enjoying our neighborhood and so many people on bikes. The bike parking was full through the afternoon.

However, it was difficult to miss seeing so many people biking on sidewalks on Cleveland Avenue and Ford Parkway to get to these businesses. I don't blame them; many people bike on sidewalks where they don't feel comfortable and safe biking on the street. But sidewalks aren't designed for people to be biking on; they're usually not wide enough to easily accommodate people both walking and biking, and frequent driveways make them dangerous for people on bikes. People biking on sidewalks show a current need for safe and well-designed on-street bike facilities.

I strongly support the proposed bike lanes on Cleveland Avenue, as well as those on Front and Lexington, as implementation steps for the city's new bike plan and ask for your support for the city staff recommendations. Bike lanes on Cleveland would enable many of the people who biked to and from Tour de Highland on sidewalks on Cleveland to have safe, appropriate connections to get to the activities they want to do in our neighborhood.

I understand some businesses have concerns about having on-street parking spaces replaced with the bike lanes. I also understand that city staff has proposed a solution to these concerns by adding on-street spaces close by. I ask for the Council's support for the staff proposal, which should reasonably address business concerns. Staff's proposal would provide parking options in a reasonable distance. Concerns have also been raised about the disabled, but I have not heard any proposals by business owners to address this by reserving on-street spaces for people with disabilities.

I strongly oppose the possibility of using shared lane markings ("sharrows") in this section of the project to address concerns about parking. Shared lane markings do not help bicyclists travel safely through intersections and would not serve the needs of the wide range of ages and abilities of bicyclists who would use this route.

Other streets have been mentioned as potential routes. However, Cleveland remains the best choice, as noted in the city's bicycle plan, because of its directness and access to businesses along it. Other streets such as Finn or Prior are not through streets. People on bikes are no different from people driving - people like the most direct route whether traveling on foot, on a bike, or in a vehicle. We should not make our people traveling on bike second-class citizens by providing inconvenient facilities.

The city talks a lot about becoming an 8-80 city. I'm excited about this possibility and look forward to its prompt implementation. Providing safe bicycle lanes on Cleveland is the best next step the city can take to serve all ages and abilities.

Sincerely,
Heidi Schallberg
xxx Mississippi River Blvd S