

OVER THE RHINE

COMMUNITY COUNCIL

September 26, 2017

Dear Mayor Cranley, Manager Harry Black, and members of Cincinnati City Council,

Over-the-Rhine Community Council supports completion of phases 1B and 2 of the Central Parkway Protected Bike Lanes and requests your action to complete the design phase and provide funding for the infrastructure.

Residents of Over-the-Rhine seek to make Cincinnati a premiere bicycling community within the nation to enhance the vibrancy, equity, safety, health, and quality of life for residents and visitors.

Central Parkway is a perfect street for a protected bike lane because it links so many neighborhoods with a high percentage of people who ride bikes: Northside, Clifton, Clifton Heights, West End, Over-the-Rhine, and the Central Business District. Census data shows that people who work in jobs that pay low wages are likely to use bike to get to work and civic activities.

Experience with the Central Parkway Protected Bike Lane has been positive. There has not been an impact on traffic and ridership numbers continue to rise. Completing the protected lane, will lead to increased ridership as it will provide the connection to Clifton, Northside, and Cincinnati State Technical and Community College, and beyond.

Indeed, city staff and community leaders chose this route because Central Parkway is a major connector between Downtown, the West End, Over-the-Rhine, University Heights, Clifton, and Northside -- neighborhoods where large numbers of people use bicycles for transportation. However, while some people are already comfortable riding a bicycle in the street, research nationwide shows that adding bicycle infrastructure (like protected bike lanes) makes people feel safer and dramatically increases the number of people using bicycles for transportation.

City leaders across the country are creating protected bike lanes because bike lanes are a proven way to increase the number of people who ride bikes for transportation and fun. Protected bike lanes are an economy boosting strategy:

- Protected bike lanes increase real estate values.
- People like working at a place they can safely get to by riding a bike.
- They boost traffic at retail districts by bringing in shoppers who are proven spenders.
- They make exercise part of daily life, for healthier and happier residents.

Protected bike lanes in other cities have increased bike traffic significantly, as much as 200 percent. More bike traffic makes the streets safer for everyone - people on bikes, people in cars, and pedestrians. For example, one protected bike lane meant:

- all traffic crashes decreased 34%
- speeding decreased

- sidewalk riding decreased
- traffic flow remained similar
- commercial loading hours/space increased 475%

Protected bike lanes are good for all users of streets. A survey of residents after implementation of a protected bike lane in DC—a project the community initially resisted—found that the vast majority of users in every category—people on bikes, pedestrians, drivers, and transit operators—reported higher satisfaction. Drivers had an easier time predicting cyclists and pedestrians no longer worried about bikes on the sidewalk.

We encourage your prompt action on completion of the protected bike lane now that the construction on the new interchange that caused a delay is complete. In addition, we support maintenance of the lanes and consideration of a more permanent barrier like planters or concrete curbing.

Our transportation committee and leadership would be pleased to meet with you should you have questions.

Sincerely,



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Over-the-Rhine Community Council
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