



To: Madison Common Council

From: Madison Bikes Board of Directors

Subject: A Better Winnebago Street for All: Support Option 2

Date: April 30, 2018

We, the Madison Bikes Board of Directors, are writing in support of Option 2 for the proposed Winnebago Street reconstruction (Bashford Ave to 2nd St).

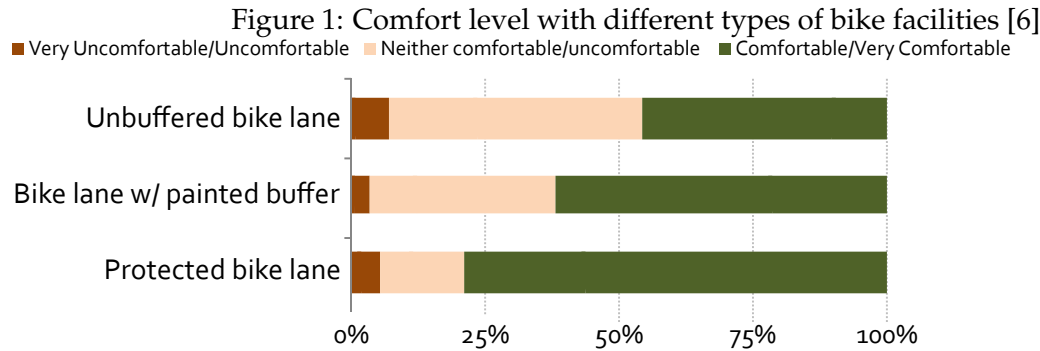
Winnebago Street is an important connection in a part of our city that is growing. The reconstruction of the street provides an opportunity to reallocate our public right-of-way in alignment with our city's stated goals and priorities. The Sustainability Plan states: "Expand the number of neighborhoods and commercial centers where sustainable transportation choices enable mobility without a car." [1] The recently adopted Madison in Motion plan asks to "[e]xpand transportation infrastructure to support a greater range of options for all user types" and that "[f]uture transportation system investments must contribute to healthy living and good quality of life for all residents." [2] The Common Council also committed itself to a Complete Streets policy that "ensure[s] that streets are designed to enable safe access for all users, pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders, of all ages and abilities." [3] Finally, our city has pledged to reduce CO₂ and other greenhouse gas emissions. Twenty-seven percent of those emissions in Madison are coming from the transportation sector. [4] We understand that the goals in these plans are not absolutes and must be weighed against other considerations. However, we strongly believe that in this particular project there are no compelling reasons to deviate from our goals.

Option 2 for Winnebago Street is consistent with those goals, whereas Option 1 is not.

Option 1 will not create a street that is safe, comfortable, and convenient for people who aren't driving. An unbuffered bike lane right next to parked cars, as proposed in Option 1, is comfortable for only a small subset of the population. Research conducted across a number of cities in the US shows that adding a buffer to a bike lane greatly increases the proportion of people who would feel comfortable or very comfortable biking there (Fig. 1). The widely accepted guidelines by National Association of City Transportation Officials (Madison is a member city) also call for a buffered or protected bike lane on streets like Winnebago, with a signed speed of limit 25 mph and a daily volume 4200 vehicles (Tab. 1) [5].

There are additional factors specific to Winnebago Street that make a buffered bike lane even more important: Winnebago Street is a bus route. Option 1 proposes to narrow travel lanes to 10 feet and parking lanes to 7 feet. The narrow travel lanes will increase the likelihood of motor vehicles driving near or in the bike lane, especially wider vehicles such as Metro buses or trucks. The narrow parking lanes will result in cars partially obstructing the bike lane, especially when there is snow on the ground (Fig. 2). Examples elsewhere in the city, such as East Johnson Street, Fair Oaks Avenue, or Commercial Avenue (Fig. 3), have demonstrated these issues widely. Winnebago Street is also an important connection to East High School, requiring a safe, all ages, all abilities bike facility. A buffered bike lane, as proposed in Option 2, can address all these issues.

Madison Bikes is a non-profit advocacy organization that envisions Madison becoming a place where anyone can ride a bicycle conveniently and comfortably to any place in the city and neighboring communities year round. Madison already has an expansive network of low-stress bike



facilities. However, until important connectors such as Winnebago Street also comfortably and safely accommodate people on bikes of all ages and all abilities, the benefit from the existing network cannot be fully realized. A more complete low-stress bike network will benefit not only your constituents and our community directly, but it also will contribute to our city's long-term sustainability and equity goals.

To conclude, in light of the arguments we presented, we urge you to support Option 2. Option 2 will create a Winnebago Street that is safe and convenient for people of all ages and all abilities, no matter how they choose to get around.

Thank you for your consideration. Respectfully,

The Madison Bikes Board of Directors

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References

- [1] Sustainable Madison. *The Madison Sustainability Plan: Fostering Environmental, Economic and Social Resilience*. Madison, WI, 2017.
- [2] Madison Area Transportation Planning Board. *Madison in Motion: Executive Summary*. Madison, WI: City of Madison. URL: <https://www.cityofmadison.com/dpced/planning/madison-in-motion/1569>.
- [3] City of Madison Common Council. *Resolution 16250: Reaffirming the City's commitment to Complete Streets and directing staff of various agencies including but not limited to Planning & Development, City Engineering, Traffic Engineering and Metro to follow to the extent possible Complete Streets concepts for all new developments, redevelopments, and street reconstruction projects*. Dec. 15, 2009. URL: <https://madison.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=4799492&GUID=AB1E48E8-19F8-499C-AF98-A980AE2C8A18>.

Contextual Guidance for Selecting All Ages & Abilities Bikeways				
Roadway Context				All Ages & Abilities Bicycle Facility
Target Motor Vehicle Speed ^a	Target Max. Motor Vehicle Volume (ADT)	Motor Vehicle Lanes	Key Operational Considerations	
Any		Any	Any of the following: high curbside activity, frequent buses, motor vehicle congestion, or turning conflicts [†]	Protected Bicycle Lane
< 10 mph	Less relevant	No centerline, or single lane one-way	Pedestrians share the roadway	Shared Street
≤ 20 mph	≤ 1000 – 2,000		< 50 motor vehicles per hour in the peak direction at peak hour	Bicycle Boulevard
≤ 25 mph	≤ 500 – 1,500	Single lane each direction, or single lane one-way	Low curbside activity, or low congestion pressure	Conventional or Buffered Bicycle Lane, or Protected Bicycle Lane
	≤ 1,500 – 3,000			Buffered or Protected Bicycle Lane
	≤ 3,000 – 6,000			Protected Bicycle Lane
	Greater than 6,000			
	Any	Multiple lanes per direction		
Greater than 26 mph [†]	≤ 6,000	Single lane each direction	Low curbside activity, or low congestion pressure	Protected Bicycle Lane, or Reduce Speed
		Multiple lanes per direction		Protected Bicycle Lane, or Reduce to Single Lane & Reduce Speed
	Greater than 6,000	Any	Any	Protected Bicycle Lane, or Bicycle Path

Table 1: NACTO recommendations for bike facilities; conditions on Winnebago highlighted [7]

- [4] Kolby Bray-Hoagland et al. *City of Madison Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory: 2010 Baseline*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin–Madison, May 16, 2011. URL: <http://legistar.cityofmadison.com/attachments/6e057de3-01eb-4305-9e94-4d45c6514636.pdf>.
- [5] City of Madison Traffic Engineering. *City of Madison Traffic Count*. 2016. URL: <https://cityofmadison.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=8c2d43c18d8542c7bdf8a93a11d7e545>.
- [6] Nathan McNeil, Christopher M. Monsere, and Jennifer Dill. “Influence of Bike Lane Buffer Types on Perceived Comfort and Safety of Bicyclists and Potential Bicyclists”. In: *Transportation Research Record: Journal of the Transportation Research Board* 2520 (Jan. 2015), pp. 132–142. ISSN: 0361-1981. DOI: 10.3141/2520-15. URL: <http://trrjournalonline.trb.org/doi/10.3141/2520-15>.
- [7] National Association of City Transportation Officials. *Designing for All Ages & Abilities: Contextual Guidance for High-Comfort Bicycle Facilities*. New York, Dec. 2017. URL: https://nacto.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/NACTO_Designing-for-All-Ages-Abilities.pdf.

Figure 2: Current lane configuration on Winnebago St in snowy conditions



Figure 3: Partially obstructed bike lane on Commercial Ave (Image: Google StreetView)

