

As a daily, year-round Bicycle Rider, I recently became aware of the possibility that additional Medians were being considered on Marshall Avenue in Saint Paul.

I believe that as far as Bicycle Traffic is concerned, these Medians are hazardous, especially during the Winter months.

Public Works has shown it's inability to plow to the curb along this particular very narrow stretch of roadway; and during the Winter, the Sun is so weak and low in the sky that especially on the South side of the street the accumulated ice and snow forces parked vehicles to further constrict the already narrow travel-lane, making it a gauntlet to be run every day of our long Minnesota Winter.

To attempt to enhance the usability of one segment of the non-driving population (pedestrians) at the expense of another (Bicycle Riders) strictly through Engineering offers a false hope promoted by people who are not Riders themselves. Unless you're willing to restrict parking along any stretch adjacent to these Medians when the parked vehicles encroach on the Bicycle Lane, this project will DECREASE Safety and insure negative interaction on this Road by all users except Pedestrians.

This problem is especially exacerbated by the pinch-point where bump-outs and Medians offer enhanced crossing for Pedestrians, again worse on the South side of the Street.

A better alternative would be to become known as a city where Pedestrians and non-motorized vehicles have the Right Of Way through a high-profile Enforcement Campaign, and to quit giving motorists a pass when it comes to living in, or traveling through, our city of Saint Paul:

Specifically that Pedestrians have the Right Of Way at ALL Crosswalks; that State Law mandates that motor-vehicles must give 3-feet clearance when passing a Bicycle; I'd add that 'Illegal Use of Horn' also be enforced; as well as the installation of the next generation of Speeding Enforcement Cameras that issue tickets to speeding vehicles, clearly and accurately identifying the driver of said vehicle; Finally, I'd ENFORCE the Parking Ban from Dec 1st to Mar 1st along Marshall Avenue and plow/scrape these areas EVERY week to ensure that parking adjacent to the existing Medians does not create the hazardous situation that has existed this Winter, again, ESPECIALLY on the South side of the street. (Sorry, my iPhone doesn't have italics, only all-caps.)

Marking and enhancing the Bikeway East to John Ireland Blvd is a fine idea, as traffic drops off precipitously at Lexington, but the continuation of the Median Project along the same stretch is, again, misguided and a waste of effort, time and money.

Finally, to compare Marshall Avenue to the Greenway in Minneapolis is an apples to cinder-blocks comparison, especially with free-range, scofflaw motorists racing through these white-knuckle Median-Zones when snow and ice make daily Bicycle Riding challenging with NO traffic.

I am, Chris Budel, and this is what I believe.

Chris Budel