

SAINT PAUL BICYCLE COALITION

March 19, 2013

Dear CIB Committee or Whom it May Concern,

The Saint Paul Bicycle Coalition strongly supports the Little Bohemia Neighborhood Association's CIB funding application for improvements to the I-35E Bike Trail from Saint Clair to Grand Avenue.

The I-35E trail is a great city asset that very few people know about. This is because it lacks prominent signage at almost every street it intersects. Grand (at Thompson), Western and Saint Clair all lack visible signs identifying the trail and directing riders to it. Grand and Saint Clair also lack safe, prominent crosswalks and warning signs for vehicles that they are crossing a bike trail. At Saint Clair, where there is no traffic light and a freeway entrance, the trail crossing is particularly dangerous.

Another issue is lighting. Some of the trail is rather secluded, running behind back yards, next to a freeway sound wall. There is little or no lighting. This necessitates that riders or joggers carry lights at night just to see where they're going. It also prevents them from having advance warning of potentially dangerous people or situations on the trail.

The proposed CIB project would fund improvements in signage, crosswalks, crossing signage, and lighting. It would also help to pay for resurfacing parts of the trail pavement that have become buckled or broken. We hope that the Little Bohemia Neighborhood Association and the city can come up with a unified trail signage or pavement-marking scheme that we can replicate south of Saint Clair, where the trail detours on city streets in several places and also lacks sufficient way-finding signs or markings. Such a signage scheme could include arrows with "Downtown Saint Paul" in one direction and signs for the various bikeways and streets that the trail intersects as it heads south. These include bikeways on Jefferson and Montreal Avenues.

The Bicycle Coalition listed improvements to the I-35E trail as a priority on its website and in a list of priority projects that it submitted to the Minnesota Department of Transportation earlier this year. We believe this CIB funding request could not only improve the segment from Grand to Saint Clair but (with assistance from MnDOT) it could jumpstart improvements on other trail sections as well. We urge the CIB committee to fund it.

Sincerely,

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