

TO: PBMVC members

FROM: Green Streets\* Steering Committee (Jay Ferm, Mary Rouse, Matt Logan, Robbie Webber)

DATE: May 27, 2008

RE: 2009 priorities from the Platinum Biking Report

Last week, the Green Streets Steering Committee met to make recommendations for the five to ten projects that we would like to have the city prioritize for 2009. We are asking the PBMVC to forward these priorities, or some other list of five to ten priorities, to the Mayor and Council. If you feel we have missed something important, or do not agree with ones we have selected, please feel free to amend this list.

Our goal was to highlight five to ten items from the Platinum Report that could be financially, politically, organizationally, and/or physically achieved, or at least substantially started next year. These items can also lay the groundwork for future recommendations from the Platinum Report.

We selected five to ten as a reasonable number of items that could be both undertaken by city departments and also expected to receive funding in the budget, if funds are needed. The list below is not ordered by importance, and some of them do not even appear on the list included in committee materials.

*\*Green Streets is a working title for a new, local, pedestrian-bicycle organization that will be forming this summer.*

### **Construct Bike Boxes at select and appropriate signalized intersections.**

Two locations already have bike boxes: Williamson/Wilson St at Blair St, and outbound State St at Henry & Johnson. We think bike boxes would also make sense at the Monroe/Regent intersection, and City Engineering is also interested in investigating this intersection. Although Madison's bike boxes do not incorporate colored pavement, more information on bike boxes can be found in this brochure from Portland: <http://www.portlandonline.com/shared/cfm/image.cfm?id=185112>

### **Study and determine a location for two to three bike boulevards. Construct one and evaluate.**

In 2009, we would expect that at the very least, the first part of this recommendation could be achieved. Construction of the actual infrastructure necessary to implement a bike boulevard might need to happen in future years, but a timeline and funding source should be identified as part of the initial plan. Two locations that have been discussed are E Mifflin St and Kendall Ave.

Bike boulevards prioritize bicycle and pedestrian traffic over motorized traffic. Motorized vehicles can still access all areas of the street, but infrastructure discourages through travel by car drivers, while still allowing easy through travel by walking and bicycling. Examples of infrastructure that might be incorporated include traffic humps, islands, diverters, and one-way streets for motorized traffic that allow two-way travel by bicyclists.

A video on bike boulevards, showing some of the elements and an explanation from the professional planner that helped design it, can be found here:

<http://www.streetfilms.org/archives/portland-or-bicycle-boulevards/>

Madison already has some streets that incorporate elements of bike boulevards. Leonard St has a cul-de-sac for motorists, but allows bicyclists through. The East Isthmus Path uses Wilson St, and signs saying "Do No Enter, Except Bikes." This is also the case at Jenifer St at Williamson.

### **Complete a public bicycle parking needs study for the central city area.**

A full evaluation of existing and needed bicycle parking infrastructure and a plan to meet the needs in the downtown area could be completed in 2009. We recommend that the Planning Department undertake this study, as they already work with the business community, Parking Utility, Mall Maintenance, City Engineering, and other public and private entities in the downtown area. Plans for a Bike Station, or other bicycle parking structure, locations for more racks, bike lockers, or required real estate to meet bicycle parking needs will need to be included in the study, as well as a funding mechanism and implementation timeline.

**All city facilities, including parks, libraries, and city buildings shall have bicycle racks that meet city code.**

It is surprising that so many parks and libraries either do not have racks, or the rack type and placement does not meet our current zoning code and bicycle parking requirements. Public facilities, parks, and libraries should be setting the standard for all other destinations and buildings.

### **Institute a Sunday Parkways ride once per month.**

The Mayor has set this as one of his top priorities from the Platinum Report, and some version of this program should be easily achievable in 2009. Sunday Parkways is a program that has been instituted in many cities in the US and around the world where one or more major roads are closed or partially closed on Sunday so that non-motorized transportation and recreation can take place. Examples might be East Washington, West Washington, Regent St, Johnson, or another large arterial.

There are actually two versions of Sunday Parkways. Both are being used in Chicago. In what Chicago calls Sunday Parkways, and is known more broadly as Ciclovía, a major arterial is closed to motorized traffic, and pedestrians, bicyclists, children and families, skateboarders, and street vendors take over an area that is usually full of cars. A link to Chicago's program can be found here:

[http://www.biketraffic.org/content.php?id=1550\\_0\\_8\\_0](http://www.biketraffic.org/content.php?id=1550_0_8_0)

Chicago also has Bike The Drive, which closes 15 miles of Lake Shore Drive for an early Sunday morning ride on what is essentially a lakeside highway. Being able to bike this beautiful, but normally busy and fast-moving roadway attracts thousands of riders every year. John Nolen Drive would be a local example that would have a similar attraction. Information about Chicago's Bike The Drive can be found at <http://www.bikethedrive.org/>

### **MPD bike program**

The Madison Police Department is both excited about this program and already working on it. This program would train more police officers on the use of bicycles as patrol vehicles and would allow better mobility. This program would also allow better patrol options of the increasing number of multi-use paths and over/underpasses in the city. The primary need here is for the special police bicycles that cost approximately \$2000 each. The reason these bikes cost more than normal mountain bikes is that they are designed to carry police equipment and withstand the rigors of patrolling. In the same way that a police-style Crown Victoria is priced at a premium over a normal one, patrol-equipped bikes also are priced at a premium.

### **Develop a Safe Routes To School program in conjunction with MMSD and other school districts that serve Madison families.**

This will involve both City and MMSD developing a plan for not only infrastructure and walking/biking routes, but also education of children, parents, teachers, administrators,

and neighborhood residents. A plan, timeline, and recommendations for funding options should be substantially completed by the end of 2009.

There are many elements of Safe Routes to School, involving city staff, school administrators and educators, neighbors, parents, and education both in and outside the classroom. More information about Safe Routes To School in general can be found at <http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/>

### **Travel Smart**

This is an individualized alternative transportation planning and marketing program aimed at one neighborhood or area of the city. It could also be used by businesses. Individuals that request assistance would receive maps, educational materials, help planning bus, walking, car pooling, or other alternative transportation information. Program may also include a "buddy" program to assist in overcoming barriers. A pilot in one neighborhood should be done in 2009 with evaluation of the results.

Portland's program is known as Smart Trips, and their web site is <http://www.portlandonline.com/transportation/index.cfm?c=43801>

### **Undertake a scientific survey to determine the level of bicycling in Madison and what the public feels can and should be done to improve bicycling conditions and to increase the number of people bicycling.**

Madison received a \$15,000 grant from REI to undertake a survey of bicycling, but the City should make sure that a full survey is done and base information is gathered. This base information is especially important because until we ascertain where, why, how often, and when people bicycle (or don't bicycle), it will be very difficult to build the infrastructure and education programs to meet these needs. We also need to know the largest barriers to bicycling, whether that be lack of information about routes, fear of traffic, city infrastructure needs, personal hygiene concerns for commuting, social reasons, etc.

We have very little information about bicycling habits, and this constrains our ability to address needs in the community. There are a few paths in the city that track bicycle traffic, but no street counts have been done. The only information on attitudes towards bicycling is anecdotal through public hearings, local advocacy, email listservs, or media.