



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

Engineering Division
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January 17, 2014

Dear Fremont Street Property Owner:

The Appleton Common Council adopted the City's On-Street Bike Lane Plan in September, 2010. The Plan includes the addition of bike lanes on Fremont Street from Oneida Street to Telulah Avenue. The installation of the proposed Fremont Street bike lanes is scheduled for 2014 to coincide with the pavement reconstruction of Fremont Street between Kernan Avenue and Telulah Avenue.

On Tuesday, February 25, 2014, at 5:30 p.m. in Committee Room "A", Sixth Floor, City Center Building, the Municipal Services Committee of the Common Council will meet to discuss the proposed bike lane plan for Fremont Street. Attached for your information is a copy of the City's 5-Year Bike Lane and Trail Plan as well as a document entitled "Frequently Asked Questions about Bike Lanes."

Your attendance at the Municipal Services Committee meeting is highly encouraged. If you are unable to attend the meeting, feel free to contact me at 832-6482 (email: paula.vandehey@appleton.org) with any questions or comments.

Sincerely,

Paula Vandehey, P.E.
Director of Public Works

C: Alderperson Coenen
Alderperson Martin
Alderperson Oswald

Attachments

Frequently Asked Questions about Bike Lanes

The Big Picture: Why is the City's On-Street Bike Lane Plan Important?

The positive consequences of biking as a healthy mode of transportation, or as a purely recreational activity, span across many aspects of our lives. They can be expressed in terms of the health of the environment, as well as the health of individuals who are more physically active. A transportation system that is conducive to bicycling has been shown to reap many benefits in terms of reduced traffic congestion and improved quality of life. Economic rewards both to the individual and to society are also realized through reduced health care costs and reduced dependency on auto ownership. There are also other economic benefits of bicycling that are more difficult to measure, such as the increased economic vitality of communities that have emphasized bicycle mobility.



Was there a public process the City followed leading up to adoption of the City's On-Street Bike Lane Plan?

Yes. For any City project, the primary means of public communication consists of public meetings and press releases, supported by numerous individual meetings. In this case, the plan was discussed at numerous public meetings, many of which received extensive television, print and radio coverage (see <http://goo.gl/uYZqZ8> for an example).

What is a bike lane and who is permitted to use them?

Bike lanes are marked lanes in the public right-of-way that are for use by bicyclists. Bike lanes are separated from traffic by a white line and are marked with a bike symbol and arrow indicating the direction of travel. By law, motorists are not allowed to travel or park in the bike lanes. They are, however, allowed to cross the lanes when turning or when entering or exiting a legal parking space.

Why put bicyclists on the street; why not on sidewalks or bike paths?

Sidewalks are intended primarily for pedestrians. Bicycle use on sidewalks increases the likelihood of bike-pedestrian crashes and their associated injuries. In most cases, the street is the safest place for bicyclists to ride. National studies have shown that riding on the sidewalk is a significant contributor to car/bike collisions because the motorist is not looking for a relatively fast moving vehicle on the sidewalk. Bike lanes encourage bicyclists to use the street as opposed to the sidewalk, which eases congestion and improves safety on the sidewalks. Streets, by their very nature, serve the bicyclist in the same way they serve every other user; they get people where they want to go. The street system is already in place and streets provide access to virtually all destinations; homes, businesses, shops, schools, churches, parks, etc.

Are bike lanes safe on busy streets? They only consist of markings and signs after all.

Bike lanes are intended to make the street a bit safer and more comfortable for everyone using it. Recent studies have shown an approximate 50% reduction in injury crashes after the installation of bike lanes on two-lane residential collector streets.

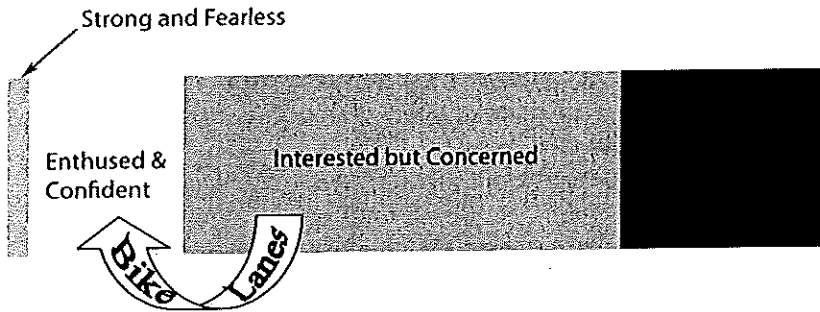
I don't see many bicyclists on my street. Do bike lanes really make sense?

In short, if you build it, they will bike. Recent developments in bicycle facility planning and design have focused largely on one principle: separating bicyclists – visually, psychologically, and physically – from automobile traffic. According to the bicycle coordinator with the City of Portland, OR:

"Riding a bicycle should not require bravery. Yet, all too often, that is the perception among cyclists and non-cyclists alike. Survey after survey and poll after poll has found again and again that the number one reason people do not ride bicycles is because they are afraid to be in the roadway on a bicycle. They are generally not afraid of other cyclists, or pedestrians, or of injuring themselves in a bicycle-only crash. When they say they are "afraid" it is a fear of people driving automobiles."

Based on a theory developed in Portland and corroborated elsewhere in the U.S., planners often refer to four types of cyclists (and their general prevalence in society) when targeting bike facilities and programs aimed at reducing this fear. As depicted in the figure below, a majority of people are "interested but concerned" with respect to bicycling, a target audience that is less confident in sharing the road with motor vehicle traffic.

The installation of bike lanes has been shown to reduce these fears and has the effect of “moving” people from the “interested but concerned” group to the “enthusied and confident” group.



Why are bike lanes usually on the collector and arterial streets? Why not put more lanes on the side streets?

Several criteria are used when determining which streets to put bike lanes on: Direct streets, streets with relatively low traffic speeds and volumes, and streets that have controlled (stop signs or stop lights) intersections. Quieter residential or side streets are great streets to ride on but can be dangerous when they cross busy streets that do not have a controlled intersection. Therefore, they are often not good candidates for bike lanes. Arterial and collector streets offer directness and access to most destinations. Therefore, they are popular choices for getting around. Bike lanes on arterial and collector streets are designed to offer cyclists the assistance they need at busier intersections.

Will bike lanes slow down traffic?

Bike lanes have been shown to reduce the speeds of motor vehicles in adjacent lanes by about 3 to 5 miles per hour. This usually benefits most urban streets because they work best when cars are traveling between 25 and 35 miles per hour. Bike lanes help to calm and organize traffic, which results in fewer crashes because bike lanes help create a buffer zone at the edge of the traffic lane. This buffer improves safety for people entering or exiting their parked cars and makes it easier for drivers to see children that are about to enter the roadway, giving them more time to react.

What happens at the intersections?

At intersection approaches, the bike lane striping is usually dashed to indicate that motorists may be entering and crossing the bike lane to make a right hand turn. There are pavement markings and signs to indicate this. Where there is not adequate width to stripe the bike lane up to the intersection approach, the curbside lane can be signed as a shared-use lane. In some cases, use of the shared-use lane is restricted to buses, bikes and right turns.

Is it a concern that the bike lane does not connect to other bike lanes?

As bike lanes are implemented throughout the city, there will inevitably be gaps in the system for a period of time due to different project timelines. Even if a bike lane won't take you all the way to your final destination, a segment of bike lane will make your trip safer and more enjoyable. Most bike trips in the city will involve using a combination of streets with bike lanes and streets without bike lanes. Studies indicate that a little assistance is a big factor in encouraging people to bicycle.

A bike lane is great, but how do you get to the bike lanes?

Bicyclists normally ride in traffic on streets that link to bike lanes. Residential streets are great for getting to and from the bike lanes. Most people learn quickly which streets work best for bike riding in their own neighborhood.

It seems that when you add a bike lane it gives cyclists permission to ignore traffic lights and stop signs.

Actually the opposite is true. National studies have shown that bike lanes influence positive behavior and improve safety. Well-designed facilities encourage proper behavior and decrease the likelihood of crashes. Bike lanes have also been shown to discourage riding on the sidewalk, which can be hazardous for adult bicyclists and children alike.

To: Paula Vandehey, P.E. – Director of Public Works

2.15.14

From: Fremont Street Property Owner

Re: Proposed Addition of Bike Lane

I have read and reviewed the information sent to our home regarding the proposed addition of a Bike Lane on Fremont Street.

The space on Fremont Street does not facilitate or require the addition of this proposed lane. My home is between the blocks of Jackson and Jefferson. We already have more than enough general traffic. Also; the ambulance traffic, hospital traffic and now construction traffic; in addition adding the incompetent people who cannot follow the signs that do not allow parking on the south side of the street.

Parking is already cramped with having one lane to do so with the amount of traffic.

There is absolutely no need for a bike lane on Fremont Street. There are more than sufficient areas around Fremont Street for bicyclists to travel. I actually feel it would worsen the situation for the few who even come down our street.

By observing the actual area and needs of this section of roadway; a person considering the action of adding this lane would quickly and intelligently realize just how ridiculous and unnecessary this would be; not to mention a huge waste of tax payer money. Let's use some real common sense here.

I would rather see these funds added to the Appleton Police Department so that they can add patrol time in the AM and PM work hours to apprehend the many speeders that travel our street. They are more of a danger than anything else that travels this section of road.

Deeply concerned Appleton Resident regarding this unnecessary proposed plan,

Stacy Dake