

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Street Cycle Track Upgrade Narrative**

The City of La Crosse is working to meet Wisconsin's Carbon Reduction Strategy by reducing singular occupant vehicle trips. One strategy to reach this target is to update the 2<sup>nd</sup> Street Cycle Track. As it stands, the cycle track is a dedicated bicycle facility stretching from Market Street to La Crosse Street with green pavement markings and sharrow buffers at all intersections and collapsible bollard posts installed as a buffer. The upgrade to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Street Cycle Track will increase mobility, enhance user safety and confidence, produce less conflict, cultivate greater use, and reduce carbon emissions. Upgrades to the cycle track will include: 1) Concrete median with signs near intersections further indicating the cycle track versus driving lanes with bollards attached periodically; 2) Bollards at all entrances for a physical barrier to prevent cars from driving down the cycle track; 3) Additional stop signs in areas with previous confusion.

The City of La Crosse's Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan was first adopted in 2012 and another update will soon be completed in 2024. Plans have continually updated best practices in planning, design, and education for the thousands of commuters and recreational users. Research and conversations throughout the update of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan led to a conclusion that protected bikeways are a model for future bicycle infrastructure in the city. The addition of bicycle infrastructure on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street was first introduced as an idea in the 2012 Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. The project idea was further developed in the 2021 Downtown Master Plan with the suggestion of a protected two-way cycle track. The desire from the community is for the bicycle network to serve all ages and abilities and by upgrading this infrastructure we can pave the way for more cyclists and more opportunities. During the 2024 Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan update, we received the following comments during the public engagement process:

*"I often see delivery trucks parked in the new bike lanes on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street. This is not safe for bike riders."*

*"Every time I have biked in this new 2-way bike lane there has been a parked car. A vehicle almost hit me in the lane as well when he was driving in the bike lane."*

*"Plastic sticks do not count as a protected bike lane."*

*"Bike lanes need physical protection from cars. Northbound bike traffic is literally one foot from southbound auto traffic."*

*“Thank you for bike lanes on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, it’s much safer now. Replace the bollards with a curb.”*

*“2<sup>nd</sup> Street north-bound cycle path cannot see stop signs, because they are across two traffic lanes plus parking.”*

In one year, the city has observed growing numbers of regular usage among cyclists. However, the safety aspect needs to be improved to create better opportunities for cyclists of all ages. According to the La Crosse Climate Action Survey, over 65% of respondents indicated they would walk or bike more frequently if they felt safer. With safer infrastructure, people will feel more comfortable transitioning from driving to biking and this upgrade will provide that opportunity right in downtown La Crosse.

The City’s Climate Action Plan (CAP) has multiple actions related to bicycle education, infrastructure, and incentives. The CAP greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction goal is to reduce community wide GHG emissions by 40% to 50% below 2019 levels by 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality by 2050. A strategy expressed in the CAP for achieving this goal is to improve the comfort and safety of walking and biking within La Crosse. Increasing opportunities for and safety of biking and walking routes for all users can support reduced vehicle use by replacing those trips with other types of transportation.

### **Timeline**

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Street Cycle Track upgrade is an important safety improvement that can be implemented in one year.

Grant Award to Contract	One to two months
Project Design Planning/State Review	Three to four months
Project Bid and Award	Three months
Construction	One to two months
Punchlist/Grand opening	One month

We don’t anticipate problems or obstacles to project implementation. Grant funds will assist in addressing comments made during the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan to make this infrastructure useable and safe for new and experienced cyclists alike. The 20% project match (\$81,697) will be requested from the City’s Capital Improvement Plan. Cost effective benefits to the public include a less expensive way to travel for commuter trips.

**Connectivity:** La Crosse has 13.15 miles of on-street bike facilities, 4.38 miles of on-street side paths, and 11.65 miles of paved paths. The project directly connects to Swift Creek Trail (Isle la Plume) and the Marsh Trails. From the Marsh Trail, users can easily connect to La Crosse River and Great River State Trails. These connections provide effortless access to many employers downtown such as La Crosse Distilling Company, the La Crosse Center, Holiday Inn & Suites, and more. Additionally, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Street Cycle Track assists in a connection to one of La Crosse's major employers, Gundersen Hospital, with over 1000 employees.

**Project Success:** To ensure project success, the city will communicate the project's purpose and any closures or detours during construction. Communication will be on the website, social media, and with businesses along 2<sup>nd</sup> Street. Project success will be measured by increased use and achievement of requested improvements.

**Project Benefits:** We have identified four quantitative ways to evaluate the project.

- 1) We estimate 175 daily bike commuters (based on AADT and US Census commuter data) using the existing lane. Assuming the average bike commute is two miles, the average annual vehicle miles currently saved is 1,000 per commuter (2 miles one way x 2 trips per day x 5 days per week x 50 weeks annually).
- 2) According to US Department of Transportation data, the average fuel mileage for light duty vehicles is 22.8 MPG. The average fuel saved per La Crosse bike commuter is 43 gallons annually (1,000 / 22.8).
- 3) According to the US EPA, a gallon of gasoline produces 0.00878 Metric Tons of GHG emissions.<sup>1</sup> The average GHG emissions avoided per La Crosse bike commuter is 0.4 Metric Tons annually (43 x 0.00878)
- 4) According to "Lessons from the Green Lanes: Evaluating Protected Bike Lanes in the U.S." a study from Portland State University, the average protected bike lane sees bike counts increase 75% in its first year alone.<sup>2</sup> Based on this projection, the project should result in a reduction of at least 122 metric tons of GHG emissions annually (0.4 metric tons x 175 existing commuters x 75% increase). Over the project lifespan, the project should result in a reduction of at least 2,440 metric tons of GHG emissions (122 metric tons annually x 20-year project design lifespan).

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.eia.gov/environment/emissions/co2\\_vol\\_mass.php](https://www.eia.gov/environment/emissions/co2_vol_mass.php)

<sup>2</sup> [https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1143&context=cengin\\_fac](https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1143&context=cengin_fac)

Please enter the title of your project:

2nd Street Cycle Track Upgrade

	<u>Total Funding</u>	<u>Federal Funding</u>	<u>Local Funding</u>
Total Participating Construction Cost	\$ 355,206	\$ 284,165	\$ 71,041
Total Non-Participating Construction Cost	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
A. Subtotal Construction Costs	\$ 355,206	\$ 284,165	\$ 71,041
B. Construction Engineering Costs (Coordinate with WisDOT Region)	\$ 43,281	\$ 34,625	\$ 8,656
C. State Review for Construction (Provided by WisDOT Region if Necessary)	\$ 10,000	\$ 8,000	\$ 2,000
Total Construction Cost Estimate with Construction Engineering and State Review (sum lines A, B, and C)	\$ 408,487	\$ 326,790	\$ 81,697

	<u>Total Funding</u>	<u>Federal Funding</u>	<u>Local Funding</u>
Total Participating Other Cost	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Total Non-Participating Other Cost		\$ -	
Total Other Costs (should round to the nearest \$1,000)		\$ -	



**LOCATION MAP**

SCALE IN FEET





## City of La Crosse 2<sup>nd</sup> Street Cycle Track Upgrade Current Condition and Deficiencies



2<sup>nd</sup> Street Cycle Track at an intersection. Bike sign and bike light on right.



2<sup>nd</sup> Street Cycle Track with sharrow, green paint, and bollard center divider at intersection



Bollards should be placed within every striped line in median.



Deficiency – Damaged and Missing Bollards in Median

Not enough signage to deter autos from using Cycle Track



Deficiency: Inadequate number of bollards.

Less reminder to automobiles and less safety for cyclists.



Deficiency: Inadequate number of bollards.

Not enough differentiation to show Cycle Track versus road.



## City of La Crosse 2<sup>nd</sup> Street Cycle Track Upgrade

### Examples of Planned Improvements for Design and Planning:



The City anticipates concrete medians with bollards placed between to call attention to separation and still allow for stormwater management.



The City also anticipates placing bollards at each intersection between the cycle track lanes so there is a physical barrier to stop cars from driving down the cycle track.



June 21, 2024

Rob Winterton, SE Region  
Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT)  
robert.winterton@dot.wi.gov  
(608) 789-7879

Dear Mr. Winterton,

I am writing to express my strong support for the WisDOT Carbon Reduction Program grant application to upgrade to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Street Cycle Track in La Crosse.

Smith's Bike Shop is an integral business in downtown La Crosse. Every day we hear about the hardships cyclists have in navigating our city. One of the top concerns is safety, including having safe routes available and providing protection from vehicles. Having infrastructure like our 2<sup>nd</sup> Street Cycle Track is imperative in making future cyclists consider choosing bicycles over driving vehicles to commute to their destinations.

At Smith's Bike Shop we encourage and are advocates for alternate modes of transportation. I am the President of our local trails organization, ORA Trails; sit on the Bicycle and Pedestrian committee for the City of La Crosse; and am the Vice President of the Wisconsin Bike Federation. Through these organizations, I strive to be an integrator to ensure these organizations work together towards the same common goals of enhancing transportation options, promoting safety, and fostering a sustainable urban environment. This shift towards cycling not only reduces traffic congestion but also promotes physical activity, improves air quality, and supports our sustainability and carbon reduction goals.

Smith's Bike Shop leads our local elementary school in a morning bike bus, even inviting local legislators to ride with us. We also organize and lead 100 Adventure Team kids and 50 coaches weekly, teaching life skills through biking. By working with children, we hope to shape the future generation of advocates. We are teaching kids the importance of cycling for themselves and our environment through fun and accessible experiences.

Additionally, we man a bike valet at La Crosse's weekly concert series, Moon Tunes, to encourage people to ride bikes instead of drive. It is not uncommon to have 100 bikes parked at the valet, reducing the volume of cars that drive to the park. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Street Cycle track leads riders to Moon Tunes at Riverside Park.



Smith's Bike Shop urges you to prioritize the improvement to the 2nd Street Cycle Track as part of our community's commitment to enhancing transportation options, promoting safety, and fostering a sustainable urban environment. This initiative will not only benefit current residents and businesses but also contribute to the long-term prosperity and attractiveness of our downtown area.

I strongly support the 2<sup>nd</sup> Street Cycle Track project and the City of La Crosse's application for the Carbon Reduction Program grant. If you have any further questions, please reach out to me at 608-386-3446 or [randi@smithsbikes.com](mailto:randi@smithsbikes.com).

Sincerely,

Randi Pueschner, Owner and Bicycle Advocate  
Smith's Bike Shop

**Drift Share, Inc.**  
**Drift Cycle - La Crosse Bike Share**  
P. O. Box 334  
La Crosse, WI 54602



Date: 6/27/24

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for the proposed upgrade of the cycle track along 2nd Street in downtown La Crosse. As a member of Drift Cycle Bike Share Service in La Crosse, I firmly believe that improving cycling infrastructure is crucial for enhancing safety, sustainability, and the overall quality of life for residents and visitors alike.

The current cycle track on 2nd Street has already proven to be an asset, providing a dedicated space for cyclists that promotes safer travel through our downtown district. However, as our city continues to evolve, it is essential that we invest in upgrading our infrastructure to meet the increasing demand for sustainable transportation options.

Upgrading the cycle track will bring several significant benefits. Firstly, it will enhance safety by improving the visibility and separation of cyclists from vehicular traffic. By adding a concrete median, adding protective barriers at cycle track entrances, and implementing other safety features, we can reduce the risk of accidents and create a more secure environment for all road users. Furthermore, promoting cycling as a viable transportation alternative helps to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels and decrease overall carbon emissions. By providing a safe, accessible, and efficient route for cyclists, we can encourage more residents and visitors to choose bikes over cars, thereby contributing to cleaner air and a healthier urban environment.

At Drift Cycle, one of our primary goals is to encourage biking among all individuals, especially those who are newer to biking. Enhancing the cycle track along 2nd Street and making it safer would greatly benefit new or less confident bikers by providing a more secure and comfortable environment.

In conclusion, I urge you to move forward with the grant application for the proposed upgrade of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Street cycle track. This initiative will not only benefit current residents and businesses but also pave the way for a more sustainable, connected, and inclusive city for generations to come.

Thank you for considering my perspective on this important matter. I look forward to seeing continued progress towards making our community a leader in sustainable urban development.

Sincerely,

Katie Maliszewski  
Drift Coordinator  
driftlaxprogram@gmail.com