



To: Mr. Frank Tower – Mayor
Mr. Bryan Bain – Deputy Mayor
Mr. Mr. Darryn Burich – Planning Director
Mr. Mark Rohloff – Oshkosh City Manager
Mr. Christopher Strong – Transportation Director
And: The Honorable Members of the Oshkosh City Council
From: Brian Kienert - OCC President and the Oshkosh cycling community
RE: Oshkosh Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation Plan - 1998
Date: 1-30-09

Dear Mayor Tower, Mr. Mark Rohloff, Mr. Darryn Burich and distinguished members of City Council;

I write to you regarding the "Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation Plan" of Oshkosh, WI. My name is Brian Kienert, citizen of Oshkosh and President of the Oshkosh Cycling Club. I write to you on behalf of the many people that we both work for and represent. The Oshkosh cycling community is quite large. We are nearly 300 strong, see copied above. They are also citizens of Oshkosh. We are here to help and eager to see this much needed urban plan become a reality.

This long awaited "Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation Plan" of 1998 is a specific concern for us now for 3 main reasons.

- 1) It's been Ten Years with no Action.** We are beginning to fear that it will never happen. We want to see it accomplished. We are ready to help and want to discuss this much needed plan in real terms at our next council meeting – specifically, how and when to begin. Our enthusiasm for this project is high but we have waited with great patience for many years. I believe we have waited long enough. I understand our city government's tendency to move cautiously and judiciously. This approach has its merits; however I have seen this lethargic approach cost us greatly as well. Do you remember the 11 million dollar water treatment grant that we should have had? We lost it simply for lack of action. Don't let that be your legacy! Lessons like that should not be forgotten. It's time to let the lessons of our past help us move forward now so that immobility and indecision does not cost us again. We can't afford to miss out on this window of opportunity available to us now, especially in times like these. That brings me to my next point.
- 2) State and Federal stimulus funds have never been more available than right now!** This is exactly what we need for this kind of project. We stand at a unique crossroads in our history. This great economic crisis brings us also great opportunities! We can't afford to let the window close on this! If you have the fortitude and wisdom to act, you can bring great things to our community! State and federal economic stimulus funds are coming available in a big way! (See "Doyle Plans Big" Oshkosh Northwestern – Friday Dec. 12th, 2008). If we are responsive we will be able to fund the many recommendations of the "Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation Plan", perhaps much more! This is no time to shrink behind our fear in paralysis. It's our own trepidation that we have most to fear now! This chance will not come again and it won't be here long. This is a time for bold leadership! Communities with leaders who act decisively will be the benefactors of these times. If our community has leaders are like that, you will be remembered as the ones who brought a much needed renaissance to Oshkosh and its people! Let that be your legacy!

The people we represent have an excellent beef on this issue! They want you to hear it. Until now, most of them have been fairly quiet or perhaps unheard. I have heard them. They feel very frustrated and they are finished with waiting. I have heard from worried mothers and fathers with children, fearful grandmothers, cyclists, runners, pedestrians, skaters, and kids. The message is always the same. There is no disagreement. This is a project's whose time has come because of the third and most serious reason!

- 3) Oshkosh is Dangerous for walkers, runners, cyclists, and others mentioned above!** It's not pleasant to say, or experience, but it's true. Oshkosh is a hostile environment for people who walk and ride. It is downright scary. Moms and cyclists have been most vocal about it. Crossing Hwy 41 in Oshkosh is an act of faith. Moms are petrified for their kids and with good reason! The bridges in

Oshkosh are no safer. There is much that must be done. There are no bike lanes in Oshkosh - not over Hwy 41 - not over our bridges, not anywhere. I love my city and the people who live here. Oshkosh has much to offer but the people deserve a safe way to bike and walk across town. Pedestrians and cyclists pay taxes too! They deserve to be safe just as motorists do. That is why this "Ped and Bike Circulation Plan" has so much appeal! It will benefit everyone who lives here including motorists!

What do we need to do to get this done? Fellow urban cyclist, Mr. Steve Barney has followed this issue closely and kept us informed. We are ready to assemble and act on this issue. It can never be done if we never get started. As I understand the information from Mr. Barney, to get this project off the ground we must do the following things:

- 1) **Create a Planning and Review Board or Commission** to oversee and review this project throughout the processes. "This Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation Plan Review Process can be incorporated into an existing city board or commission", see priorities 8 and 9 of the "13 High Priority Implementation Actions" for the City's "Comprehensive Plan, 2005 - 2025". Has that been done yet? If not, can we here a motion to do this at the next meeting?
- 2) **Create a "Combined Transportation Committee" to oversee the implementation of that plan.** http://www.ci.oshkosh.wi.us/Community_Development/Comprehensive_Plan/pdf/Transportation_Element.pdf As I understand it, nothing can be done until the City Council has created the "Combined Transportation Committee" and the "Review Commission", if I'm not mistaken. Has that been done yet? If not can we hear a motion to form that combined transportation committee?
- 3) **Identify and develop a linked network of parks and trails around the city.** Has that been done? If not can we hear a motion to assign somebody to do this?
- 4) **Design and construct the Fox River Corridor with a continuous, looped trail system** and an environmentally sensitive design for the shoreline. Has that been done? If not can we hear a motion to have this done by the committee within a specific reasonable time frame?
- 5) **It has also been pointed out that the 2008 City budget includes \$40,000** to update the "Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation Plan" (priority # 9) (see "2008 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM," pg 19, http://www.ci.oshkosh.wi.us/Public_Works/cip/2008_cip.pdf). Is that money still available?
- 6) **Seek state and federal economic stimulus funds to pay for the implementation** of these recommendations of this project. Can I convince your office to do that Mr. Rohloff? I'll help, if I may!

A Final Note: Mr. Matthew Burczyk - Community Planner / Bike-Ped Specialist of Schreiber Anderson Associates has made the effort to contact me and many others in the Oshkosh cycling community regarding this project. He has impressed us with his effort and initiative! No other firm has made that same effort. I believe he would do well for us and he has my recommendation.

Thank you all so much for reading my letter! I look forward to talking with you soon about this exciting and much needed circulation plan. When it is done it will be something we can all be proud of!

Sincerely,



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