

Karen Willey, Chair
Lawrence-Douglas County Planning Commission
Lawrence City Hall
6 East 6th St.
Lawrence KS 66044

22 January 2019

Chair Willey and Commission:

For more than a decade, the Sustainability Action Network has advocated for multi-modal transportation to reduce our community's use of petroleum. We have proposed bikeway projects to the City Commission, the Public Works Department, and the MPO transportation planners, as ways to retrofit bikeways into our existing transportation network.

We also wish to assure that all newly planned urban development incorporates bikeway infrastructure by intent, so that difficult and expensive future retrofits do not become necessary. In that regard, I have some observations and requests for bikeways consideration in the 23rd Street Mixed Use Development.

Two major aspects of Lawrence bikeways consists of a 22 mile circumferential "Lawrence Loop", and cross-town "spokes" that connect urban nodes to each other and to the Loop.

One major north-south spoke passes in immediate proximity to the 23rd Street Mixed Use Development, and should be given particular attention. It extends from Sunnyside Dr. at K.U. south along Naismith Dr. From 23rd St. it extends along the west side of Naismith Dr. to connect with the Naismith Valley Trail that goes all the way to the S.L.T. Trail (part of the Loop). This 2 1/2 mile spoke has a 1/2 mile gap between 23rd St and 19th St. that Lawrence is planning to complete within a year or two.

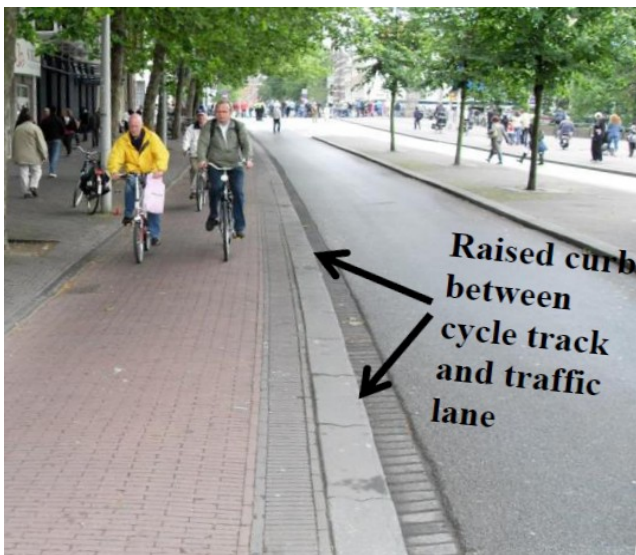
A second major spoke along 23rd St. also should be given particular attention. This east-west spoke extends from K-10 and Clinton Parkway eastward to 23rd St. at the Burroughs Creek Trail (also part of the Loop). The section along 23rd St. between Iowa and Haskell Ave. is planned as a shared use bikeway in the current Lawrence Bikeway Plan - [Lawrence bikeways map_2014.pdf](#).

Therefore, the 23rd Street Mixed Use Development is at the nexus of two of the most important bikeways in Lawrence, yet the developer has not included adequate bikeway connections to their project. This can partially be attributed to Planning Staff not being familiar with our bikeway plans, while needing to focus primarily on the Development Code. In truth, all development proposals should also be on the Transportation Commission agenda for adequate multi-modal review, but that's not being done at present. So it's up to the Planning Commission and the City Commission to make policy decisions that address bikeway treatments in projects.

The Naismith Bikeway Trail immediately east of this project faces two obstacles. First, it crosses two wide curb cuts, one into the mixed use development, and the other into Natural Grocers. The residential and retail aspects of the development will significantly increase motorist activity at this entrance from virtually zero activity at present. Likewise, the Natural Grocer motorist activity onto Naismith Dr. will increase from present, because all west bound 23rd St. traffic will have to enter and exit here. I strongly suggest the two driveways off of Naismith Dr. be combined into one, using a cross access agreement between property owners.

The second obstacle is how there is no bikeway connecting the Naismith Bikeway Trail itself to the development. The developer must include one, situated so that it has the least possible conflict with motor vehicle traffic. Combining the two driveways into one will help facilitate this.

The 23rd St. frontage poses a more difficult challenge for the planned shared use bikeway. Though it hasn't yet been specified, this 10 foot wide bikeway will most likely be on the south side of 23rd St., because there are almost twice as many curb cuts on the north side that would create dangerous conflicts. Although the proposed "outdoor terrace civic space" between the retail shops and the curb line is a vast improvement to the conventional sea of parked cars, as it is currently depicted, it accommodates pedestrians but excludes a bikeway. The development appeal would be greatly improved if this public space included a shared use bikeway for both pedestrians and bicyclists. Public examples abound on how this can be done, such as these two images:



Here are a couple quick links to show the possibilities: [Pedestrian-Bicyclist Realm](#), and [Sidewalk Zones- NACTO](#). Please instruct the developer to revise the 23rd St. frontage to incorporate a 10-foot wide shared use bikeway in the civic space.

Thank you,
Michael Almon