District 1 Community Council

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To: Streets and Utilities CIB Task Force
From: District 1 Community Council

Re: Margaret Street Bike Route

The District 1 Community Council strongly supports the proposal from the Dayton's Bluff Community Council for a marked east/west bicycle route in east St. Paul. The District 1 Community Council has long been a proponent of increasing investment in bicycle facilities on the eastside of Saint Paul and was preparing a CIB proposal for a route on Margaret Street when Dayton's Bluff put forward this proposal.

The eastside is severely lacking in bicycle facilities despite the fact that transportation options for this third of the city would help address multiple issues that we face – increasing the economic well-being of residents, facilitating crime prevention, promoting physical health of eastsiders, and easing its dependence on automobiles (thus, improving the environmental health of the area). Focus on bicycles in District 1 has been primarily via the county and has focused on recreational biking. Developing the connectivity of the bicycle route system is vital, not simply to the eastside, but to the city as a whole.

The Margaret Street route, and other bike facilities, is included in the District 1 Transportation Plan, which has been approved by the Planning Commission and awaits final approval by the City Council. In addition, that plan included recommendations to find safe routes through District 1, a draft of which was developed in 2012 by an intern with our office, and includes a bike route along Margaret Street. Margaret Street has also been the site of other traffic calming efforts, including a Paint the Pavement project in 2009-2010. This route was also included in the draft City-wide Bicycle Route Plan that has been in the works for several years.

Again, the District 1 Community Council strongly supports the proposal before you and looks forward to the expansion of bicycle amenities to the eastside, such as the western side of town has enjoyed for many years.

Thank you for your attention to this important connection in the city-wide bicycle system.