

Comments Delivered on April 24, 2017
Public Hearing for Charlotte BIKES

Good evening Mayor Roberts, Members of Council and Staff,

My name is Kate Cavazza and I am the bike program manager at Sustain Charlotte. We are a local nonprofit and our mission is to inspire choices that lead to a healthy, equitable, and vibrant community for generations to come.

As the local voice for bicycling, we support the draft bike plan's vision that the city will offer an inclusive cycling environment, where people of all ages and abilities can use their bikes for transportation, fitness, and fun.

We also support the plan's emphasis on the importance of protected bike lanes and demonstration projects. Successful demonstration projects in hundreds of other cities have allowed new street designs and bicycle facilities to be tested before being made permanent.

As a city, we should not be afraid to test new infrastructure and show our citizens what is possible when we design safe streets for everyone.

We also like that the plan has clear goals and metrics. However, these goals must be bolder if we are going to achieve vision zero and become a world-class city for people to safely travel by bicycle. In particular, the plan's engineering and enforcement goals must be stronger because only the city can build infrastructure and enforce traffic laws.

The plan does not include a map or list of future bicycle projects. We strongly recommend the addition of a comprehensive map to prioritize investments and to show the facilities we need to build to have a safe, connected network that allows residents to travel by bicycle wherever they want to go, no matter where they live.

The plan needs to better address enforcement of the many traffic laws that are broken on our streets everyday that jeopardize the safety of bicyclists. Drivers commonly accelerate through yellow traffic lights, run red lights, ignore the speed limit, and use the few bike lanes that we do have as free parking spaces. Yet the plan offers very little to address these threats to safety. We believe the re-institution of red light cameras would help considerably.

But of course the plan can only be implemented if it is funded. For the past 7 years, the City's bicycle program has not received dedicated funding while our peer cities have invested heavily in cycling



infrastructure.

Raleigh has dedicated over \$5 million a year in their capital improvement program for bike facilities. Memphis? 6 million. Atlanta. 9 million dollars per year. This bike plan calls for only investment of \$4 million per year, less than all of these cities.

Let's commit to a bolder plan and fully fund it to ensure we can compete with our peer cities -- and become a healthier, more equitable, and vibrant community where everyone can safely access all our city has to offer by bicycle.

Thank you and we look forward to continuing to work closely with city staff to finalize this plan, and execute it.

Kate Cavazza
Bicycle Program Manager
Sustain Charlotte

kate.cavazza@sustaincharlotte.org

(980) 202-8320