

To:

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City of Columbia, Missouri

701 E Broadway

P.O. Box 6015

Columbia, Missouri, 65205

Date: March 21, 2024

Subject: Forum Boulevard Improvement Project

Dear Mayor Buffaloe, City Council Members, and City Staff:

The Columbia Bicycle and Pedestrian Commission unanimously passed a resolution recommending the following changes to the design of the Forum Boulevard Improvement project:

1. Retain the current design of 11-foot traffic lanes, 2 lanes in each direction north- and southbound, with 2.5-foot curbs and gutters and a 4-foot median.
2. Replace 8-foot pedway on the west side of the road and 6-foot sidewalk/6.5-foot bike lane on the east side of the road with raised 10-foot sidepaths on both east and west sides of the road for the entire length of the project. Each 10-foot sidepath would have a 1-foot buffer adjoining a 2.5-foot curb and gutter section, potentially constructed of colored and textured concrete to provide visual separation of the sidepaths from the curb and gutter.
3. This layout would match the planned width of the project, because the at-grade bike lane would be relocated from the traffic lane and consolidated with the elevated 10-foot sidepath.
4. The sidepaths should extend from Chapel Hill Road beyond Woodrail Avenue to the Green Meadows roundabout.

Benefits of the recommend changes include:

1. Better separation of bicycle and pedestrian traffic from high-volume traffic on Forum Boulevard, leading to a safer and less stressful experience for sidepath users.

2. Less debris on sidepaths due to them being raised above the grade of the road, leading to a safer experience for bicyclists and reduced need for street sweeping.
3. Removing the bike lane from the roadway creates visual narrowing that is shown to reduce traffic speeds. The 1-foot colored buffer between the sidepath and curb would provide additional visual narrowing without impeding traffic.
4. The 1-foot buffer between the sidepath and curb would exclude the potentially hazardous protruding curb inlets from the sidepath.
5. Studies have demonstrated increased ridership and participation with the implementation of more separation from vehicle traffic. Families with children do not use traditional bike lanes. Physical separation, such as raised sidepaths, provide a safe place for these users.
6. Safer and more convenient neighborhood access to the MKT Forum trailhead, enabling families and neighborhood residents to access the trail without using cars.
7. The section of Forum Boulevard between Chapel Hill and Green Meadows does not have driveways accessing the street, making this an ideal site for the use of raised sidepaths.
8. The proposed design can serve as a pilot proof of concept for future projects with a similar design.

Respectfully,



Carol Elliott

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Vice-Chair, Columbia Bicycle and Pedestrian Commission

Cc:

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