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HONORABLE NEIGHBORHOOD AND COMMUNITY SERVICES STANDING COMMITTEE

Re: Issues raised by Sheila Crowell about bike lanes in Southwest Detroit (Final report)

City Planning Commission (CPC) staff has been asked to look into issues raised by resident Sheila Crowell about bike lanes in Southwest Detroit that she says are being planned by Bridging Communities, a grassroots collaborative based in Southwest Detroit. CPC staff spoke with Ms. Crowell, staff from Bridging Communities, and Department of Public Works staff.

In 2011, Bridging Communities and the Detroit Collaborative Design Center led a multi-part visioning exercise to develop a plan for bicycle and pedestrian routes for the Chadsey-Condon Neighborhood in a general area bounded by W. Warren Ave. to the north, Junction St. to the east, John Kronk St. to the south, and the City of Dearborn to the west; the effort is called Claytown Connections. According to a project brochure, "the goal of the planning process was to identify the best non-motorized transportation routes and develop greenway enhancements for the Claytown neighborhood in Southwest Detroit." "Greenway enhancements" include a range of infrastructure improvements from bike lanes to tree plantings, signage, and public art. Because the Claytown Connections visioning process was done at a neighborhood scale, it is much more detailed than the City's Non-motorized Urban Transportation Master Plan, but it appears to be compatible with and certainly furthers the goals of the Non-motorized Plan because it improves non-motorized connections and travel options within the city.

Bridging Communities staff conducted public outreach as part of their planning process. They held community and stakeholder meetings to which they invited a range of community members, including Ms. Crowell. They also held follow-up meetings with geographic and demographic groups that they felt weren't well represented at their community meetings. CPC staff believes that Bridging Communities did a satisfactory job of reaching out to the community. Additional outreach through mailings to area residents was not economically feasible given the limited project budget.

One goal of the Claytown Connections plan is to improve the comfort and safety of pedestrians and bicyclists. Bike lanes separate bike traffic from automobile traffic, thus enhancing the safety

of bicyclists on busy streets and improving travel options by encouraging those bicyclists who might normally be too nervous to ride in mixed traffic.

Claytown Connections is a vision produced by a community planning process. Elements of plan implementation that are in the public right-of-way would still need approval by the City. Any infrastructure improvements will be reviewed by the Department of Public Works, which will determine if a particular street can or should be engineered to include bike lanes.

CPC staff believes that the Claytown Connections planning process was inclusive of the local neighborhood and community. CPC staff would be happy to pursue further engagement of the community in this instance or future instances if the Council so desires. Efforts such as this one, if implemented, will help develop more travel choices in Detroit, enhance travel safety, and improve the city's quality of life. No action is required by Your Honorable Body at this time.

Respectfully submitted,



Marcell R. Todd, Jr., Director

Laura Buhl, AICP, Staff

cc: Ashok Patel, Traffic Engineering, DPW
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Sheila Crowell
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