



187 E Becher St Milwaukee, WI 53207
(414) 253-333 info@wisconsinbikefed.org

RE: File# 200695 - Rezoning request for 123 & 147 E Becher St. City Plan Commission planAdmin@milwaukee.gov

November 9, 2020

The Wisconsin Bike Fed has recently become aware of the emerging Bear development within the 14th Aldermanic district of Milwaukee, WI. There lies a significant amount of potential in land-use along the eastern side of the property that would complement the ongoing development of the Kinnickinnic River Trail (KKRT). We believe the Bear Development project should include a provision for an easement that would restore the former rail right-of-way that would enable the KKRT off-street trail connection.

The Bike Fed has made advances in Milwaukee for well over a decade through the co-development of local plans and policies. One major policy that we have co-developed with the City and residents is the nationally acclaimed [Complete Streets Policy](#) passed by the council in 2018. The policy states that *"The public way shall be designed, operated, and maintained to address accessibility and maximize the comfort, safety, and needs of all users, of all ages and abilities."* The policy also goes on to articulate that the City recognizes the importance of partnerships with *"private developers, public and private utilities, and other agencies to promote Complete Streets on infrastructure within but not owned and maintained by the City of Milwaukee."*

It is well documented and concluded that developing trails systems significantly increase the quality of life for the public.¹ We are now aware that the outdoor recreation industry outpaces the economic impact of the oil and gas industry, and that trails have the potential to be highly equitable. Recent studies have shown that people of all ages, abilities, and walks of life want to live in active communities that provide vibrancy and access to cultural assets and nature. Trails are almost always free to use, are available 24/7/365, and provide transportation alternatives no matter what mode of travel you use.

As part of the City's approval processes, we would support a proposal to include an easement to the City to support connecting the KK River Trail. We otherwise support the rezoning application and anticipate the further development of the neighborhood.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Austin Fin".

Wisconsin Bike Fed, Executive Director

¹ <https://www.americantrails.org/images/documents/Why-Trails.pdf>