



April 25, 2011

To Whom It May Concern:

The Mid-City Neighborhood Organization (MCNO) hereby expresses its strong support for the proposed improvements and upgrades of the Jefferson Davis Parkway bike path in New Orleans. We are excited to learn of the redevelopment opportunity afforded by the proposed FHWA Recreational Trails Program grant. The neighborhood that surrounds the bike path has a history of holding clean-ups along the Jefferson Davis Parkway neutral ground and bike path and pledges to support the revitalization of the path by recruiting members for additional, regular clean-ups along the path once construction is completed.

MCNO views the improvement of this bike path as a key component in the rebuilding of a sustainable New Orleans post-Katrina, providing critical bicycle transportation infrastructure for the city and assisting in the recovery of Mid-City. With the portion of the path in the Mid-City Neighborhood Organization's boundaries running from Orleans Avenue to the base of the Jeff Davis overpass, this bike path serves as a key connection between Gert Town/Uptown and Mid-City/Lakeview and a primary tributary into the Lafitte Corridor for bicycle commuters, recreational cyclists, and pedestrians alike.

While much progress has occurred since 2005, many parts of the neighborhood remain in need of transportation infrastructure redevelopment and repair. In its present condition, sections of the Jefferson Davis Parkway bike path are broken, cracked, and buckled; underlying drainage issues continue to cause damage to the path's surface; concrete diverters in the middle of the path at most intersections decrease ADA accessibility and create a safety hazard for pedestrians and cyclists; intersections with major streets lack bicycle signaling; and lighting along the pathway is minimal. These hazards pose safety concerns for the community and discourage the use of the bike path.

By addressing these safety concerns through the improvement and repair of the Jefferson Davis Parkway bike path, the path will be able to serve the cycling and pedestrian community at its maximum capacity and provide a safe, dedicated pathway connecting neighborhoods throughout the city that is accessible to all. We hope our support will help to further improvement and progress for the transportation infrastructure and green spaces in Mid-City, whose revival and continued improvement we feel continue to contribute to the revitalization of Mid-City and New Orleans as a whole.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lacy M. Smith".

Lacy M. Smith
Chair, Director of Greenspace and Recreation
Mid-City Neighborhood Organization