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To: [Christine Brown](#)
Subject: FW: Recommendations for a BI Safe and Healthy streets initiative
Date: Wednesday, April 29, 2020 11:25:24 AM
Attachments: [Recommendations for a BI Safe and Healthy Streets plan.docx](#)

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Subject: Recommendations for a BI Safe and Healthy streets initiative

Dear BI City Council,

Squeaky Wheels and Bainbridge Greenways are delighted to have received many encouraging emails from you in support of a Safe and Healthy Streets initiative to protect cyclists and pedestrians during COVID-19. We thank all of you who replied so quickly! You may be interested to know that not only Seattle, but Edmonds, WA, Philadelphia, PA, Denver, CO and Oakland, CA have already implemented similar initiatives with much success.

We are **attaching a summary of recommended actions** along with a list of roads that would be appropriate candidates, based on the city of Seattle's experience with their Safe and Healthy Roads initiative. As the summary makes clear, the solution is very simple, inexpensive and would require little time and effort. Our organizations are excited to help out with this in whatever way is needed.

In short, what is needed is:

2. **Direction** by the council to designate certain roads local-traffic-only and/or one-way traffic. The sooner the council can approve a list of recommended roads, the sooner pedestrians and cyclists can feel safer on the roads.
2. **Barricades** that the city owns to be placed in front of the designated road entrances. City public works has trucks and the manpower to do this. Placing the barricades should not require much staff time.
3. **Appropriate signs** indicating traffic rerouting. We believe this is an in-house function that would cost the city little money or staff time.
4. **Police support** to help monitor road use and parking, and work with citizens to comply.

Squeaky Wheels and Bainbridge Greenways are dedicated to solving this problem quickly and easily. We look forward to making this initiative happen in a timely manner. And look forward to discussing ways to solve this serious and potentially very dangerous problem immediately.

Paula Holmes-Eber, PhD
President, Squeaky Wheels

Recommendations for redirecting traffic on Bainbridge

To help pedestrians and cyclists during Covid-19

Squeaky Wheels and Bainbridge Greenways

Quick summary of key points

- We recommend **implementing shared streets with local access only and signage** indicating they are for local traffic and are pedestrian/cycle priority streets. “local traffic only” designations.
- We believe that several streets make sense, including **Grow Avenue, Pleasant Beach Drive, Point White Road, and Manitou Beach**. We think that City staff should also be engaged in the discussion on what streets may be appropriate or to develop alternative strategies to make space on the street for people walking and cycling.
- We also **recommend working with Parks so that vehicles are not parking in shoulders** or further reducing space for people trying to walk or cycle to their neighborhood trailhead or parks closures.
- Further, a **general campaign to slow down and share the road** may be helpful, as many of our neighbors live on main arterials where these solutions are not feasible, but they may still be trying to get outside to exercise or access essential services.

Explanation of recommendations

While we recognize that our community is unique from Seattle, we’ve taken time to consider how we might learn from the City of Seattle’s Safe and Healthy Streets initiative and apply them to our Bainbridge Island context.

We’d recommend the city look at making a few roads shared streets -- also known as “play streets” or woonerfs -- where cars expect to share the road with people walking and bicycling. These streets would remain open to local traffic, including deliveries, and for emergency vehicles, but closed to through vehicular traffic. With simple signage, this could make more space for people trying to get outdoors for exercise or to access food take-out or grocery stores.

Here’s some recommendations based on the lessons learned from Seattle’s Safe and Healthy Streets initiative:

1. Start small with a trial area and period

In Seattle, they designated Safe and Healthy Streets on existing neighborhood greenways - non arterial routes that already were prioritizing people walking or cycling. They started with just 2 (about 2.5 miles) and tested it for one weekend and now are moving forward with 15 miles closed 24/7.

--Two possible greenways that would fit these criteria are Manitou Beach and Crystal Springs/Point White

2. Support the needs of local residents

Seattle put signs on the right side of the road so local traffic and deliveries could get through easily and sought volunteers to make sure signs were up. Roads were not permanently “closed” or modified to one-way only streets that could alter traffic patterns more dramatically for local residents.

3. Select areas where pedestrians and cyclists have the greatest need

In BI, we’re seeing a density of walking and rising near our urban and neighborhood centers (Winslow, Lynnwood Center and Rolling Bay) plus near key recreation routes (Fort Ward, Manitou Beach, Battlepoint Park, Grand Forest). In Seattle, they focused on areas that amplified outdoor exercise; places where people had less available outdoor open space; places with lower car ownership rates; and routes that connected people to essential services like grocery stores or food delivery.

--Several roads that fit these criteria are Grow Ave, Pleasant Beach Drive and Point White Rd

4. Relieve the strain resulting from distancing related trail and park closures

People aren’t able to walk as many trails due to social distancing or because they live too far away to walk or bike to parks or trailheads. Maintaining social distancing on roads means cyclists and walkers need far more space in the road lane. In Bainbridge, roads also lack shoulders, exacerbating the problem with the space people walking and riding need.

COBI should work with Parks to control unauthorized parking occurring adjacent to parks and making it safer for neighbors to walk or ride there by making more space. This might be combined with creating a local-access only shared-street road.

-- The roads along Battlepoint Park, along Miller near the Grand Forest and perhaps also those near Fay Bainbridge pose particular parking and traffic issues for local walkers and cyclists

5. A general education campaign to raise awareness

A general campaign to “share the road” would help raise awareness of the need for cars to slow down and watch for pedestrians and cyclists. It would also help islanders to be more supportive of any traffic redirections in their neighborhoods.