

The Smallest Cog Bike Shop
115 S. Minnesota Avenue
St. Peter, MN 56082

Minnesota Senate Transportation Committee
Attn: Beth Ethier, Committee Administrator
State Office Building
Room 1100
St. Paul, MN 55155

March 11, 2025

Dear Senators,

Subject: Written testimony in support of S.F. 2162

I am writing in support of S.F. 2162. This bill provides the flexibility that counties and municipalities need to ensure that road projects reflect the desires of the community while providing for the safety of all users.

As a community advocate for safe and sustainable transportation, I am all too familiar with the excuse that state aid standards do not allow for narrower lane widths. Unfortunately, discussions about lane width often occur when the consensus of stakeholders — residents, law enforcement, public works, and others — is that something must be done to slow traffic and reduce volume. What I find particularly egregious is when the overbuilt road must later be “fixed” by tapping precious SRTS, TAP, CRP, and HSIP funds, or relying on law enforcement to ensure compliance with the speed limit.

For this legislative “fix” to be effective, the legislative bodies of counties and municipalities will need to adopt one of the recognized design guides mentioned in the text of the bill. I urge this Committee to consider how best to employ MnDOT’s district offices and the regional planning organizations (MPOs and RDCs) to overcome this hurdle. It is also foreseeable that with the Districts, counties, municipalities and consulting firms that are already on-board with updating engineering practices, this new-found flexibility will be embraced; elsewhere, widening lanes still earns an applicant extra points on the ATP’s Rural application. Legislative change won’t create the organizational cultural change that is needed at MnDOT’s district levels.

I wholeheartedly endorse S.F. 2162 and I look forward to supporting its implementation in south central Minnesota.

Sincerely,

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