

# BIKE RACKS IN DOWNTOWN NORTHFIELD

## MINOR UPGRADE 4.1

A Proposal from the *ACTION SQUAD*  
Northfield Downtown Development Corporation  
August 21, 2003



## **Action Proposal**

We recommend to the City that it install additional bicycle racks in Northfield's C-1 District to encourage local and visiting cyclists to stop in Downtown Northfield for sightseeing, dining, or shopping.

## **Current Situation Rationale**

Existing bike racks with a capacity of 10-15 bikes have been placed in locations at the edges of the district with the obvious intention of keeping bicycles in targeted areas (near the Library, the Post Office, and on the south side of the McLaughery Block). For some people this is useful, but rarely are there more than two or three bikes in these racks at a time. Often they sit empty.

In reality, cyclists want to park their bikes near their destinations just as do automobile drivers. This can be seen daily by observing that bikes are chained to trees, light poles, and sign poles. They're dropped on the sidewalk, leaned up against buildings, and actually brought into buildings. This makes them unsightly and impediments to pedestrians. It also creates daily headaches for business owners. More than one retailer has installed their own rack in front of their business for just this reason. We'd like to prevent the rest from having to do this in order to achieve a consistent look.

## **Solution Rationale**

A solution to this situation is to install smaller bike racks in convenient (to the cyclist) locations distributed throughout the C-1 District. If this is done with thoughtful and deliberate planning, it can achieve positive results for retailers and cyclists, and should not negatively impact pedestrians or automobiles. We have found a solution that, in addition to being sized appropriately, is relatively inexpensive and will fit aesthetically into the historic district.

## **Specific Recommendation**

We recommend deploying a rack called "Bike Hitch" manufactured by the Dero Bike Rack Company. Each Bike Hitch can park two bikes. It has the following features that make it the right choice, in our opinion:

- Design: it's simple and attractive (great historical resonance!)
- Price: \$124 complete with powder coated color finish and hardware for surface mounting on a concrete base
- Size: 21 inches wide (a very small footprint)
- High security: it supports the frame of the bike and meshes well with the most effective and popular bike lock, the U lock
- Perfect for sidewalk placement
- Easy installation



We recommend a minimum installation of 16 racks and a maximum of 30 racks by putting one or two racks on each side of the street in the blocks below. The minimum number is on the left, the maximum on the right.

	<i>Division St.</i>	<i>5th St.</i>	<i>4th St.</i>	<i>Water St. (west side)</i>
<b>0 block (Bridge Sq.)</b>			2;4	
<b>100 block (W.)</b>		2;4		
<b>200 block</b>	2;4			
<b>300 block</b>	2;4			2;4
<b>400 block</b>	2;4			
<b>500 block</b>	2;4			

In addition to the locations above, we recommend installing a rack at the north entrance to the east Riverwalk and one on the west Riverwalk near the pedestrian bridge landing.

The minimum scenario will accommodate 32 bikes and the maximum will provide parking for 60 bikes. The cost for this project would be \$1,984 (plus installation) for the minimum plan and \$3,844 (plus installation) for the maximum plan.

When the Bike Hitch is installed parallel to the street, it prevents bikes from intruding into the sidewalk or the street. Wherever possible, the racks should be installed in such a way that they adjoin or bracket an existing item on the sidewalk (trees, light poles, sign poles, or waste containers). This is both for aesthetic reasons and so that we retain as much sidewalk as possible for pedestrians. Final siting could be done with consultations between the City’s Public Works staff and the business/building owners, with input from the Heritage Preservation Commission.

Bike racks already installed in the C-1 District could be removed to achieve a uniform appearance or left in place for additional capacity. If existing racks are left in place, the minimum installation in this proposal would double current capacity and the maximum installation would triple it.

## Contact Information

The Bike Hitch rack and its specifications can be seen at the following web address:

<http://www.dero.com/hitch.html>

Company contact information:

Derovations Company  
221 Arthur Ave. SE  
Minneapolis, MN 55454

888.337.6729  
[dero@dero.com](mailto:dero@dero.com)

