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Supervisor Sheldon Wasserman, Chair
Parks, Energy, and Environment Committee
Milwaukee County Board of Supervisors
901 N. 9th St. Room 201 Milwaukee, WI 53233
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RE: Resolution 21-207

March 12, 2021

On behalf of Wheel & Sprocket, a community-oriented, family-owned business based in Milwaukee County since 1973, we are deeply concerned about Resolution 21-207 to modify the management of the County's recreation trails.

The resolution would fundamentally neuter the role of the Parks Department as it relates to trails. The resolution a) would establish a questionable governance structure, b) would illogically halt use of the County's first mountain bike trail system which is in process of improvement, and c) would be detrimental to our business

1. The Parks Department is a professional, well-trained, knowledgeable group that manages thousands of acres of land and are tirelessly committed to their cause. They juggle the myriad issues connected to conserving public space, activating users, overcoming funding challenges, and overall responsible stewardship. Usurping their experienced, informed decision-making mechanisms is an overreach of governance. In our view, it makes little sense for any supervisory board to micromanage the day-to-day functions of trained professionals. Would the Board like approval authority over individual flights in and out of the airport?
2. The Resolution proposes an immediate moratorium on changes to a particular trail, the Kegel-Alpha Trail, in Whitnall Park. The resolution appears conspicuously punitive as the trails there are highly-valued by the local bike community and are in process of improvement. In a novel public-private partnership, a local user group builds and maintains off-road bike trails, at no cost to the County. Removing access to trails is contrary to the Parks' responsibility to support active recreation and well-being.
3. From a business perspective, in 2019 Wheel & Sprocket opened our Franklin location directly adjacent to both the Kegel-Alpha Trail and Oak Leaf Trail. Trail access is an economic driver and was a primary factor in our investment in Franklin. Restricting that access to the trails, simply put, is detrimental to our business.

On behalf of Wheel & Sprocket's 200+ employees, the local trails community, and as residents we passionately urge Supervisors to vote NO on Resolution 21-207.

Sincerely,

Noel Kegel and Amelia Kegel, Owners

cc: Supervisor Steven Shea. Vice Chair
Supervisor Felsia Martin
Supervisor Sylvia Ortiz-Velez
Supervisor Liz Sumner