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ALDERMAN, 3RD DISTRICT

# Creating safer, more accessible streets with NACTO

## **Statement of Alderman Jonathan Brostoff January 20, 2023**

Today's announcement by the Department of Public Works (DPW) that Milwaukee has officially become a NACTO (National Association of City Transportation Officials) city is a much needed, welcome, and truly exciting moment for our city.

NACTO is an association of cities and transit agencies formed to exchange transportation ideas, insights, and practices, and cooperatively approach national transportation issues. The mission of NACTO is to build cities as places for people, with safe, sustainable, accessible, and equitable transportation choices that support a strong economy and vibrant quality of life.

In the run-up to assuming my role as Alderman, the 3rd District saw multiple traffic-related deaths take place, incidents that were absolutely preventable. After taking office, pursuing the conversation around making our roadways safer, more accessible, and less car-dominant was a top priority. I quickly learned that the administration was already making this a reality, and that DPW Commissioner Jerrel Kruschke had directed the department to begin using NACTO design guidance as the City's official street design standards.

The underlying principle that drives the NACTO mission is that streets should be transformed into pedestrian-friendly places that improve safety for ALL users and are less car dominant, promote economic vitality, and provide a sense of place for the community. I could not agree more, and I commend the administration and department for embracing this philosophy that will help create a city that is safe, welcoming, and livable for all – regardless of how they choose to get around.

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In addition to prioritizing NACTO design principles, Milwaukee has officially become a NACTO partner city, which will allow DPW staff and others within city government the opportunity to attend trainings, webinars, and workshops on how to best utilize the NACTO guides, as well as hear from leaders around the country on street design best practices, and network with peer cities that are also reimagining their streets in similar fashions.

This exciting shift in philosophy is already beginning to manifest itself throughout Milwaukee.

North Van Buren St. from E. Kilbourn Ave. to just north of E. Brady St. has transformed from a four-lane street to a two-lane street, with additional improvements on the way in the form of enhanced bicycle lanes, raised crosswalks, widened sidewalks at bus stops, and widened areas in road medians to help people more safely cross busy streets.

East North Ave. (one of the city's top automobile crash corridors) between the Milwaukee River and N. Prospect Ave. recently had an initiative pushed forward that will include a pedestrian plaza, protected bike lanes, and removing left-turning lanes on North Ave. to make more space available for wider sidewalks.

These are just a couple of the many examples of NACTO principles at work as we strive to make Milwaukee a safer place. With willing leadership, new design and engineering standards, and the community collaboratively working toward the same goal, I have no doubt Milwaukee is on the right path to making our streets safer, more equitable places for everyone.