

From: [Robin Greenler](#)
To: [Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: Proposed Beltline expansion
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Hi,

I would like to comment on the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's plan to widen the Beltline. As many other cities have experienced, that increasing the lanes on a highway reduces traffic only in the short-term, but after 1-5 years, with changes of habits, sprawl development and business relocations, the traffic on the stretch of road that was widened returns to the equilibrium that is as congested as it was before. This "induced demand" means that expanding the beltline is not the way to go. I understand that you have not incorporated induced demand into your models which, while difficult, must be considered.

Instead, we can follow the path that others such as the Colorado, Michigan and Minnesota Departments of Transportation, and build better solutions for moving people, not cars. Let's consider spending the money to build more transit lines serving other parts of the Madison area, or to build more bike paths connecting more areas to a safe bike network, or to build the train line that connects Madison to Milwaukee, Chicago, and Minneapolis, or to build safer streets to increase bike and pedestrian traffic options.

With our current plan we will spend hundreds of millions of dollars on widening highways, commit ourselves to billions more in maintenance costs, and the congestion on the road is the same. And all of those new car trips start or end on surface streets, making those streets more congested. This will make our region more car-dependent, putting a higher financial burden on families and reducing the autonomy and freedom of movement for the ~40% of residents in the Madison area who are not drivers.

As Chris McCahill at UW's State Smart Transportation Initiative recently said, if we build for cars, and we'll get more driving; build for transit or biking, and you'll get more of those. Let's spend our dollars building for a city that we all want--a city that moves everyone effectively, is reducing noise, air pollution and carbon emissions, that is equitable, walkable, healthy and vital. Expanding the beltline will not build such a city.

Thank you,

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