

To whom it may concern,

I understand that the city is considering re-opening Vilas Park Drive, along with other "shared streets," to through traffic, including commuter traffic. I am writing, as a resident of the Greenbush Neighborhood, to express my opposition to doing so. The availability of Vilas Park Drive as a safe pedestrian walkway has been of tremendous value, especially given the limitations that the ongoing (and worsening) pandemic have placed on people's activities. As you know, there is also a great deal of public support for permanently closing this road to traffic. Please reconsider this plan and keep Vilas Park Drive closed to traffic for the indefinite future.

Siri Carpenter  
[REDACTED] Vilas Ave.

Dear Commissioners,

I am a senior living in the Greenbush, and have used Vilas Park Drive frequently for walking, biking and nature watching since it has been closed to traffic. These are activities I rarely did when the drive was open to cars.

My neighbors and I are looking forward to winter outdoor activities along the drive, including cross country skiing and snowshoeing. I think people would come from all over the city for winter recreation if most of the road remained unplowed.

I understand access for ice skating will be important for about two months. Perhaps half the road could be opened and cordoned off, with signs saying No Thru Traffic, during that time.

We have learned a lot about how wonderful the park is without traffic, and this newfound insight is helping us plan for a better Vilas Park. Let's use this difficult time to experiment with winter uses too.

The cars won't miss the park, but we will.

Thank you're for your consideration,  
Janet Murphy

As someone who lives near Vilas Park and uses it six out of seven days a week, I am strongly opposed to reopening to car traffic. The park as is - currently closed to through traffic - has been a veritable haven to walk through and play in. It has been a god-send during covid. I am not sure how I would have gotten on this long as well as I have without it and I am 100% positive hundreds of others in the neighborhood feel the same. It has been a restorative space during this difficult time. Why give it over to drivers, who with little inconvenience can go around the park, a total of 1/4 mile. Please consider those who live near the park and visitors who depend on it for our well-being.

If there weren't alternatives, I would heartedly support it as a drive-through. But there are alternatives and we need to promote those.

Please oppose Item #7 to reopen Vilas Park. This simply should not happen.

Marilee Sushoreba  
[REDACTED] Adams St.  
Madison, WI

To the members of the Transportation Commission,

I am writing to express opposition to reopening Vilas Park Drive. I am a frequent walker, jogger, and biker on Vilas Park Drive and my children are frequent users of Vilas Park. I very much enjoy using the road

safely without cars. I believe that the Vilas Park Dr. will be continued to be used for foot traffic and biking throughout the fall and winter months during the pandemic,. Much of the traffic is through traffic and those people are not there to enjoy the park but rather for a shortcut.

Please consider keeping it closed to traffic or consider opening it only partially in the winter so that people can access the shelter and ice skating rink in the winter.

Thank you,  
Sarah Bahauddin  
[REDACTED] Jefferson St.  
Madison WI 53711

I live near Vilas park and have greatly enjoyed having the road along the shoreline closed to motor vehicles. I've observed many people using the road to bike, walk and run: far more than before it was closed to cars. Please consider me a strong proponent of continuing to keep cars out of that area!

Adam

Dear Commissioner:

I am greatly opposed to opening Vilas Park Dr. to through car traffic. Traffic studies have shown that during commuter hours up to 200-300 cars per hour use this as a short cut to get to the Beltline. Car traffic even during non commuter hours, greatly deters from the enjoyment of the Vilas Park shoreline, even in winter. Cars race through the Vilas neighborhood, creating safety issues. Left turning cars congest on Edgewood Dr. and Monroe St. Opening up car traffic over Stone Bridge is a large setback to the quality of life in Vilas Park and and for the adjoining neighborhood.

Eric Kerlow  
[REDACTED] Adams St.  
Madison, WI 53711

**Hi, Transportation Commission Members!**

**I understand that tomorrow, October 28th, there is a meeting to discuss reopening Vilas Park Drive. I am writing to urge you not to. My reasons are:**

- 1. The general populace has become accustomed to the restriction on drive-through traffic. Commuters are using alternative routes; pedestrians feel safe; and park users are using the area in numerous ways more appropriate to a park and shoreline than ever before. A change back will result in a period of adjustment that will result in confusion, frustration, and a risk to safety.**
- 2. While it's true that bike and pedestrian use declines in winter, there are more walkers and bikers in the winter months than ever nowadays. And with a nice place like this to go, it will be used even more.**
- 3. Since there is no firm commitment on when and how motor traffic will again be restricted in the spring, trying to hit a "reset" button after the winter will be more laborious. Let's not go that route.**

**Thank you for considering my POV.**

*Shawn Schey*  
[REDACTED] Woodrow St  
Dudgeon-Monroe

Dear Transportation Committee members:

I am writing to ask that you oppose allowing Vilas Park Drive to be reopened to traffic. The traffic assessment that showed over 200 cars per hour going through the park during the afternoon rush was no surprise to those of us who spend a lot of time in the park. I'm sure it's a convenient cut-through for people trying to get to the Beltline who don't

want to deal with the stop lights on Park and Regent or the stop signs on Mills, but whiz-through auto traffic is not an appropriate use of the narrow road along the lakeshore through the park. A modern transportation plan would never put commuter traffic through such a place. Fixing this decades-old mistake for good will make use of the lakeshore much quieter and safer for those of us who walk with kids, bike, skate, birdwatch or carry fishing gear and kayaks along the narrow roadway.

Best regards,

Anne Spurgeon  
[REDACTED] Garfield St.  
608-345-3855

Dear Transportation Commission,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposal to end the Shared Streets program, particularly on Vilas Park Drive. The approaching winter months will not put an end to pedestrians' need for safe spaces to walk--especially not this winter, with Covid-19 curbing most indoor winter activities. In the case of Vilas Park drive, more pedestrians than ever have been using the park thanks to the removal of dangerous traffic near the shoreline. Moreover, the majority of respondents to the latest Vilas Park Master Plan survey favored closing the drive to vehicular traffic. It makes sense to anticipate this probable change by maintaining the road closure. Drivers and pedestrians alike have adapted to Vilas Park Drive being closed, and there is no reason to revert back to having the drive open on a temporary basis. Community members' safety, peace of mind, and ability to enjoy the park should be prioritized, especially as we head into what will undoubtedly be a difficult winter for all. Therefore, I urge you to keep Vilas Park Drive closed to vehicular traffic.

Sincerely,  
Emily Kohlhasse  
[REDACTED] Vilas Ave [REDACTED]

Dear members of the Transportation Commission, I and my family live on West Lawn Ave., just west of Vilas Park. Prior to the pandemic, we would occasionally visit Vilas Park and the zoo. To be honest, we were much more likely to utilize the shortcut and drive through Vilas Park Drive on our way to Fitchburg and other points south/east. Since closing the street to through traffic, we have re-discovered this beautiful lakeshore and very much prefer the current no-thru-traffic configuration. I strongly support keeping this street closed to vehicle traffic and allowing the park to be better utilized by walkers/bikers/scooter-ers/wheel-chair-users/etc.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Chris Benish  
[REDACTED] West Lawn Ave.  
Madison, WI 53711

Please keep Vilas Drive closed during the continuing pandemic. I ride my bike around the arboretum everyday and have witnessed increased pedestrian and bike traffic as the summer wore on and that traffic has maintained during the fall. Users are respectful of the 6 foot separation recommendations so adding vehicular traffic to the mix would be a nightmare, especially in light of the more aggressive driving Madison is experiencing, and with less traffic enforcement as was reported in this morning's Wisconsin State Journal. Please keep Vilas Drive closed and, as a result, people safe.

Respectfully,  
Fred Toney  
[REDACTED] Rowley Ave, Madison, WI 53726

Please keep Vilas Park Drive closed to cars! Since the road was blocked off we have been able to run, bike, and walk more safely and freely, able to keep large distances between ourselves and others, and even bring my handicapped mother to the lake to walk safety with her walker. It has been wonderful, and we wish it had been blocked off years ago! The park seems much more peaceful and inviting without traffic.

I am opposed to the opening of Vilas Park Dr. to cars full time.

During this stressful time it has been a welcome relief from cars being able to walk during the day without traffic.

It has been a respite and wonderful extension of the park for the neighborhood, especially seniors. I think people will be using it all winter and hope they will feel safe and unrestricted from through traffic.

Thank you,

Judy Sidran  
[REDACTED] Jefferson St.

Dear Shiva and members of the Transportation Commission,

It seems absurd to me, at a time of record high Covid cases in Dane County, to bring cars through Vilas Park. The drive, since its closure to car traffic, has been used increasingly and with greater safety by pedestrians and cyclists eager to recreate. I would hate to see their (and my) security compromised in any way.

Best,

R  
Ms. Ronnie Hess  
Madison, WI

Good evening,

I'm writing in opposition to the Committee's consideration of opening up Vilas Drive to traffic. I write this as a commuter who formally used (and enjoyed) Vilas Drive on my commute to work. Since the drive has been closed, my family and I have spent much more time in and walking through the park. We have noticed a significant increase of walkers and bikers enjoying the park and believe that residents will continue to need and appreciate this green space during the long, winter months.

Many take advantage of the park at the end of a long work day sitting in front of a screen. During the winter months it will be dark by the time the work day ends. If cars are allowed back on the road, it will deter walkers/bikers who do not feel safe sharing the road with cars in the dark. Keeping the drive safe and accessible for walker/sbikers does not place an undue burden on those who were using the drive for commuting. Commuters have many alternative routes/roads - as I know from experience.

Thank you for your consideration,

Amie Goldman  
[REDACTED] Madison St.

I oppose changing the current state of Vilas Park Drive (open to pedestrians, bikes, and closed to drive-through motor traffic). Allowing motorized traffic to drive through the park will effectively make the park unsafe for the families, children, residents who now enjoy the lake front and zoo (and later the ice skating and perhaps cross country skiing) without worrying about cars and motorcycles.

I think it would be fine to allow cars to enter and park near the icerink facility. this helps everyone enjoy the park in the winter without the risks of through traffic.

Please to not change the current status of Vilas Park Drive.

Thank you  
Barbara Streibel  
Eton Ridge  
Madison WI

I am in favor of continuing the practice of keeping Vilas Drive open to pedestrians and bicycles. Have traffic patterns in nearby areas of the neighborhood changed significantly or negatively? I have not noticed but am not an expert. The safety and recreation benefits of that space are obvious.

Thanks,  
Ben Walker  
[REDACTED] Adams St, Madison, Wi 53711

Commuter traffic is unwanted by all park users. Please don't allow this menacing misuse of one of Madison's great parks to resume.

Peter and Nancy Daly  
[REDACTED] Lincoln St  
[REDACTED]

Dear Commissioners:

Please continue to keep Vilas Park Drive bike and pedestrian friendly. Earlier this year it was so welcome to walk there and not have to be wary of vehicles. As this pandemic continues and we all need to socially distance, many would benefit from having this area safer for being outdoors.

Commuters found other routes when the Drive was closed and they can use these. Vilas Park is an oasis when the road is closed to commuters and we need this oasis to help protect our public health. This Park is my neighborhood and it really impacts neighbors significantly.

If you must compromise on this issue, leave the parking lot by the (now closed) Zoo entrance and the lot by the shelter open. This would allow access to those who want to drive to the skating rink and not walk into the park. My strong preference is for closing the Drive.

Thanks for your consideration.

Gail Anderson  
[REDACTED] S Orchard St. [REDACTED]  
Madison 53715

Commissioners:

As a senior citizen who lives on Orchard Street just north of Wingra Dr. and Vilas Park, I vigorously oppose the idea of returning this road to a commuter speedway during the Covid Pandemic. In normal times it is quite dangerous for walkers and bikers to enter the Park from the east side because one is forced to walk in the street due to the fact that there are no paved walking or riding paths on either side of Wingra until one gets to the Zoo entrance. When conditions are icy or snow covered motorists can not slow suddenly for those of us who are walking or pushing strollers on the street pavement..

In normal times there is a lot of speeding that goes on especially from young people using the road as a shortcut from Edgewood schools campus over to east side collector streets. This is why I and many Green Bush neighbors have been pushing to permanently close down this route to through traffic in the new Master Plan Model discussions. Please keep the traffic confined to one parking lot on each side of the south road in Vilas. Thank you for your consideration of users' and residents' wishes. Dan Elsass, [REDACTED] Orchard Street.

Hello,

I am writing to request that Vilas Park Drive remain closed to drive-through traffic. My understanding is that this will be discussed at the Transportation Commission meeting tomorrow. As frequent visitors to the park with a young child, the ability to feel safer walking along the drive throughout the period of the road closure has been one of the bright spots of the year, and we have seen many others enjoying walking along the road as well. The increased access to the Wingra shoreline has also substantially enhanced the experience of being in the park. Throughout the winter, as options for getting out of the house are diminished due to the pandemic, the continued ability to walk along the shoreline safely would be of tremendous value to pedestrians and other park users.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Best,

Brigid Daly  
[REDACTED] S Charter

I'd like to register my strong opposition to the closure of Vilas Park Drive.

If there are no POC, representatives of the Black, Hmong, Latinx and the indigenous Ho-Chunk communities, proportionate to percentages of the overall city demographic, that historically have been keepers and heavy users of "Vilas Park" at the decision-making tables, I urge you to NOT move forward.

While closure has served and been received quite enthusiastically by the predominantly highly educated, civic-engagement savvy, outspoken white upper-middle class community that surrounds the park...

I have noticed a drastic reduction in use of the (entire) shoreline by POC.

In seasons prior to the pandemic, POC were a notable presence in the park and on the shoreline fishing, picnicking, generally enjoying the outdoors, maintaining critically important inter-generational cultural integrity, as Latinx, African-American, Hmong communities. Communities that historically have not, and still do not, have a place at governmental and civic decision-making tables.

There was a notable reduction in the numbers and presence of POC fisher-people west of the large accessible fishing dock this summer.

My observations have been that people who seriously fish urban shorelines, whether they be fishing from the shoreline in the summer or ice fishing in the winter...have gear to haul. Buckets, chairs, coolers, lines and gear. Closing the shoreline limits and makes more difficult, fishing and food acquisition for those who rely on it. There's a reason we see that park heavily used by folx who fish. The fishing is quite good in that little lake.

I am highly opposed to closing the drive to vehicular traffic.

Thanks for hearing the small voice in the woods, Keyena McKenzie (Previously a wilderness ranger wit

To Transportation Commission Members:

Please vote no to re-opening Vilas Park Drive, Agenda #7.

In the 20 years I have lived in this neighborhood I have never seen such a diverse crowd use the park and drive. Even as the weather has turned cooler people are biking, jogging, fishing, picnicking, social distancing in hammocks hung in trees, kicking the ball around, and playing, including many folks from outside the neighborhood. The park gives all of us a sense of camaraderie and comfort that we need during these challenging times.

Winter is no reason to open the drive back up. Vilas ice and hockey rinks are very popular and kids are always running back and forth across the drive to clear patches off the lake itself. The lake and the dam area are heavily used by ice fishermen. Families with kids on sleds and cross country skiers would be delighted to be able to finally safely use the drive.

None of this would be possible or enjoyable if the drive is opened back up to vehicles. It isn't relaxing to walk or ski when cars whiz past constantly and you need to make split second decisions about the choreography of safety: do you pass a sweaty jogger or step into the middle of the road? I would hate to add icy conditions to the mix; given the increase in usage I fear we could be inviting disaster.

The closure of Vilas Park Drive has had a double benefit for me and some of my neighbors whose homes are just 15 feet to 25 feet from Edgewood Drive: during commuting hours the stream of traffic that used to cut through the park was constant, noisy, and dangerous: looking out my windows I'd wince at how close speeding cars got to the sports teams and joggers working out on the steep hill next to my house. Vilas Park should be preserved for recreation and enjoying Nature, not a commuter short cut.

In short, Vilas Park Drive has been closed for months. All of us including commuters are used to the change in traffic patterns. Why take away one of the few good things to emerge from this pandemic?

Thank you  
Shawn Doherty  
██████ Adams Street

Dear Commission members ,

I'm writing in opposition to removing the traffic barriers on Vilas Park Dr. If there is a silver lining to this pandemic it has been the closing of the park to through vehicle traffic. Yes, winter is coming and it is possible that fewer people will be biking and walking the drive. But with winter the ability to walk along the lake is far, far less safe than it is the rest of the year due to snow and ice along the edge of the road. Many people walk to the lagoons or lakeshore for skating or just a chance to get outside. The opportunities for getting out and about are going to be fewer and people are going to need this outlet more than ever.

Thank you for your consideration.

Cynthia Koschmann  
██████ Emerald St

Dear Transportation Committee Members and Alder Evers,

It is my understanding that at tonight's Transportation Committee meeting you will discuss ending the shared streets program that was put in place to provide more safe outside options for Madison residents during the Covid-19 pandemic. I am writing to urge a continuation of this program in general and, specifically, the continued ban on vehicle traffic on Vilas Park Drive.

I live in the Vilas neighborhood, directly across from Vilas Park. Given where I live, I am in Vilas Park and walking or jogging on Vilas Park Drive daily. Prior to the start of the Shared Streets program, it was difficult to enjoy Vilas Park Drive. Cars would speed past pedestrians and bicyclists, with little regard for safety. With the initiation of the Shared Streets program, Madison residents have found new enjoyment in Vilas Park and walking, biking, and jogging along Vilas Park Drive. It is difficult to overstate how many more people I have seen fishing in Lake Wingra, birdwatching, walking, bicycling and jogging along the drive since it has been closed.

I, like many Madison residents, use Vilas Park during the winter months as well. People still take walks and jog, and they are joined by people who snowshoe and cross country ski when there is snow. Given the pandemic, I anticipate more people than ever will be interested in outside recreation during the winter months. It would be a mistake to reopen Vilas Park Drive to traffic as this will remove a safe winter recreation option from Madison residents. The same argument could be made for all of the streets currently in the Shared Streets program.

Respectfully,

Ann Rivlin

I live in the neighborhood and will accept whatever decision is made on cars using the drive, as it is most definitely used as a high use "cut through" road. I am wondering if you would be willing to consider allowing cars with valid disabled parking permits an exception to the rule. I can only walk with the assistance of a walker and must stop frequently to rest. I have not been able to enjoy much of the lakefront since the closure. It would be wonderful to be able to enjoy that area again. I think there are a lot of seniors and disabled folks who would not abuse the privilege, and I do not think that our use has been part of the equation.

Tom Earley [REDACTED]

- Dear Commission Members,
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- I would like to share my opposition to the proposal to open Vilas Park Drive to commuter traffic for the winter months. This particular stretch of park drive is unlike most (all?) other such parkways for non-motorized use and other street bikeways in Madison. Its lakeshore is prime parkland, and users and car drivers have become accustomed to the new pattern. Although uses and numbers do change in winter, there is no reason not to keep dedicated pedestrian and bike (and occasionally ski) lanes open for those who do, during the "shoulder seasons" and during all of winter. Keeping a lane open (marked to separate cars) for access to the skating shelter only (without drive-through) is possible without opening up the whole road to through/commuter traffic.
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- Since there seems to be a commitment in the draft Vilas Park Master Plan for a permanent dedicated non-motorized pathway, it seems prudent to keep this option open in a transitional way until construction might begin.
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- Thank you for this opportunity to comment.
- Anne Forbes

Dear Commissioners,

I am a citizen living in the Greenbush neighborhood, and use the Vilas Park Drive frequently for walking, biking and other recreation since it has been closed to traffic.

These activities are much safer since the drive has been closed to cars.

My neighbors and I are looking forward to winter outdoor activities along the drive, including cross country skiing and snowshoeing. I also think people would come from all over the city for winter recreation if most of the road remained unplowed. Walk-in access to other recreation areas in Vilas is available to folks by parking other nearby areas.



We have learned a lot about how wonderful the park is without traffic, and this newfound insight is helping us plan for a better Vilas Park. Let's use this difficult time to experiment with winter uses too.

The cars won't miss the park, but we will.

Thank you for your consideration,

Keith Sayles

Members of Transportation Commission,

I am writing in opposition to the proposal to re-open Vilas Park Drive to through motor traffic, especially without implementing a way to effectively separate pedestrians from vehicles.

Removing the barriers to through motor traffic that have been in place for months would mean allowing commuter traffic, which exceeded (pre-pandemic) 200 cars per hour during the afternoon commute and comprised about 96% of all motor traffic in the park throughout the week. Over half of these vehicles were recorded as exceeding the speed limit (25 mph, which is already too high for a lane shared by walkers, runners, and bikers traveling in two directions).

The pre-pandemic traffic situation along Vilas Park Drive was untenable, and it is lucky that no accidents occurred that resulted in serious injury. That situation was also incompatible with park and shoreline use and with stated goals of various Madison plans. I believe that a decision to return to that earlier situation, especially after the demonstrated success of the current Shared Streets configuration, would be irresponsible.

#### Vilas Park Drive, Shared Streets Program, and Vilas Park Master Plan

The opening up of Vilas Park Drive to bikers, pedestrians, and other park users (i.e., closure to drive-through motor traffic) this past summer (part of the larger Shared Streets program throughout the city) has been widely recognized as creating a dramatic transformation of the Vilas Park lakeshore to a wonderfully vibrant area for park users, including small children riding scooters or bikes with training wheels, adults with walkers or in wheelchairs, and lots of people hammocking, picnicking, and generally enjoying a much quieter, more peaceful shoreline than we've ever had.

Largely because of peoples' positive experience with this change, there was overwhelming community support for the option (of the three options presented by the consultants in the draft Vilas Master Plan last May) of permanently restricting drive-through motor traffic on Vilas Park Drive. That design is now included in the final draft of the Vilas Park Master Plan, hopefully on its way for final approval by the of this year or early next year.

The Parks Department has expressed hope that the reconstruction of the drive to its new configuration (with a bike/pedestrian multi-use path from the west, and 2-way motor traffic entering from the east and extending only as far as the shelter) will occur in 2024.

#### How to manage traffic before the Master Plan is Implemented

That leaves the issue of how to manage traffic for the next few years until that reconfiguration can be done. One option suggested by Traffic Engineering would at least separate motor traffic from bike/ped traffic by using some type of bollards or cones. While this is not ideal, since it would still allow commuter traffic, it would be preferable to the pre-pandemic situation, and would provide an opportunity to discourage commuters and excessive speeds through additional design details.

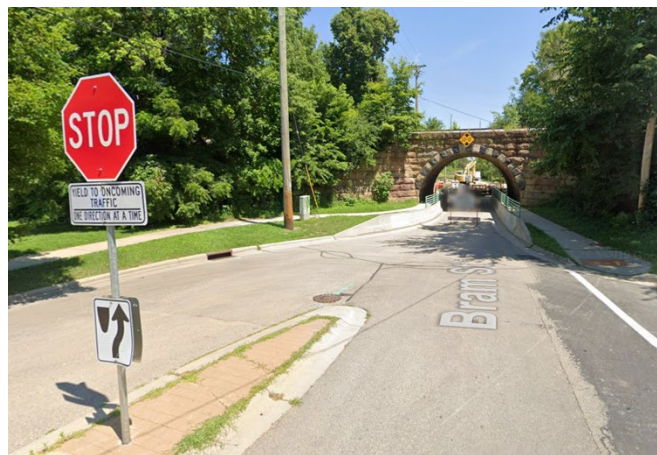
Even better would be to implement a design now that restricts through motor traffic entirely, and that could provide an intermediate solution to potentially carry over until full re-construction of the drive a few years from now. This could be similar to what we've had over the recent months, but perhaps modified to provide car

access to the Vilas shelter. For example, a barrier could be placed just east of the entrance to the shelter parking lot, along with appropriate signage, allowing 2-way traffic from the west to the shelter. Two-way access from the east could be like now, even extending access to the parking area at the boat landing (see red markers in figure below). This would provide car access to the shoreline and park facilities from either end and along much of the drive, while restriction through traffic.



Because 96% of the pre-pandemic traffic was drive-through (not staying in the park for more than 15 minutes), a configuration like this would result in greatly decreased car traffic, making it much safer and more comfortable for park users (including pedestrians and bikers). Also, at any point, additional lane markers and/or cones could be added to separate pedestrians from other traffic at different parts of the road. With sufficient thought put into the nature of barriers, signage, cones, etc., adjustments could easily be made to improve the configuration as we see how things work.

Probably the biggest challenge to this idea (and other possible solutions) is the narrowness of the bridge on the west entrance, which would require motor traffic to merge into a single 1-way lane and for on-coming traffic to yield. But traffic (basically limited to users of the shelter) would be light, and the single lane would actually be an advantage in slowing traffic, allowing bikers and pedestrians to pass safely. (And there is enough width to allow a pedestrian lane separate from the motor vehicle lane.) It would be similar to the single-lane road on Baum street (photo below). (I have heard concern that the rise in the bridge might make it difficult for drivers to see cars coming from the opposite direction, but my observation is that this should not be a problem with appropriate placement of signage.)



It's my belief that, although there are a few challenges on how to implement the details of these kinds of options, these are not big challenges and do not justify opening up the drive to through traffic that is not at least separated from pedestrians, if not bikers, even in winter.

In summary, here are my reasons for thinking that opening up the drive now to unrestricted through traffic (especially with no separation between cars and pedestrians) is not a good idea:

- By this time, everyone (drivers, walkers, runners, bikers, skateboarders...) has gotten use to the restriction on drive-through traffic. Commuters have found and are using alternative routes; pedestrians feel safe; and park users are using the area in myriad ways that are more appropriate to a park and shoreline than ever before. Each future change in configuration or rules will result in a new period of adjustment with likely confusion, frustration, and risk to safety.
- While it's true that bike and pedestrian use declines dramatically in winter, there are still significant numbers who continue to use it in all weather, and more who would use it (especially on nicer days, even in winter) if they could feel as safe and relaxed as they do now.
- Since there is no clear or firm commitment on exactly when and how motor traffic will again be restricted in the spring, it seems very likely that we will have some really good weather (e.g., in March and April, or even in the next month or so) that will call out more pedestrians and bikers and result in safety compromises before any such new restrictions are implemented.

Thank you for the opportunity for me to communicate my views on this issue, which is of some importance to users of Vilas Park and the Lake Wingra shoreline. I hope that there will be a further opportunity to explore this situation and potential solutions before a decision is reached to open Vilas Park Drive to drive-through motor traffic.

Sincerely,

Jim Lorman, Professor Emeritus  
Edgewood College Social Innovation and Sustainability Leadership Graduate Program

Dear members of the Transportation Commission,

First, I thank you for your service - so many hours of committed work on behalf of our city!

As you consider the City's Shared Streets plan today, please do *not* open Vilas Park Drive to automobiles. My reasons for this request are:

1. *Safety and Repose*: Citizens need the sense of safety and repose that this "walkers/bikers only" area provides. This need is much greater than motorist convenience. I say this as one of the bikers who has valued this Drive all summer and fall (and as one of the people who is disappointed that Arboretum Drive was opened back up to automobiles).
2. *Cultural/symbolic Value*: Some people may consider the choice to sustain Vilas Park Drive as a car-free zone of little importance. I maintain that such a choice is important because it demonstrates to Madison residents, on a daily basis, that we are acting on, not just talking about, becoming a community that values our city's commitment to being a walkable/bikable city (cf., [100% Renewable Madison](#)). By retaining this car-free zone, we affirm our stated goals. (This is what accountability looks like.) On the other hand, by opening Vilas Park Drive to automobiles, we affirm our commitment to "car culture reigns."

Thank you for considering my request and its reasons.

Susan Millar

██████ Rowley Ave., Madison, 53726

All good but DO NOT reopen drive. SAFETY FIRST. Plus - are cars really the future? Elderly (me in a few years) and disabled need consideration, but they can park and get there from near courts.

Thanks.

Adolf G. Gundersen

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Adolf G. Gundersen, Ph.D.

██████ Eton Ridge  
Madison, WI 53726

Dear Members of the Transportation Commission,

I am writing to urge you to keep Vilas Park Drive closed to cars. Closing the drive during the pandemic has been a wonderful development, allowing pedestrians, people in wheelchairs, kids on bikes, etc. to enjoy the park and its beautiful lakeshore in peace without having to share the space with speeding cars. Almost all of the car traffic before the road closure (96%) was from people commuting, as opposed to people driving to the park itself. It seems that other roads are better suited for people commuting. Let's keep Vilas Park Drive for people enjoying the park, instead of for the convenience of commuters who have other options.

Thanks,  
Meg Lamm

Please keep the drive closed to car traffic until the Master Plan is fully implemented.

Thank you,  
Kim Barovic  
██████ Madison St.  
Mad. Wi 53711

To the Transportation Commission:

We urge you not to re-open Vilas Park Drive fully to unrestricted through traffic. We walk/run/cycle in the park daily before or after work, and like hundreds of other families are deeply grateful for the city's decision to close the park to through traffic during the pandemic. The vast majority of cars using that road are not traveling to the park, merely using it as a convenient short-cut to Park Street and Fish Hatchery Road. Approximately 200 cars an hour were going through the park at afternoon rush hour prior to that point, with pedestrians and bikers sidelined in ways that were unpleasant, unsafe, and contrary to the intent of a park to provide peaceful recreational spaces for citizens.

The final draft of the new Vilas Park Master Plan calls for closing the park to through traffic, hopefully by 2024. This has very wide support in the community.

We know that people will want car access to the Vilas Park shelter when the lagoon and lake are frozen. We urge you to look for a way to make that possible without re-opening the park to unrestricted commuter traffic, or, at minimum, separating the roadway with bollards to safeguard pedestrians and bikers from motor traffic.

Sincerely,  
Catherine Jagoe, Edwin Sibert & Toby Sibert  
██████ West Lawn Avenue  
Madison, WI 53711  
████████████████████