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Members of the Common Council,

My name is Louie Cornelius. I have lived in Sauk Creek for 37 years. I am here tonight as a concerned member of this community, speaking on behalf of residents who believe we must take a more thoughtful and responsible approach to the Sauk Creek Corridor Plan. Madison prides itself on being a **green city**—a leader in sustainability, conservation, and environmental responsibility. Yet, with this project, we risk making a decision that could **permanently damage one of our city's last remaining natural corridors**—without the necessary environmental study, without fiscal transparency, and without proper consultation with experts who have offered better alternatives. **And this decision doesn't just affect one district—every Madison resident will be paying for it through increased stormwater rates.**

That is why I am asking one of you to make a motion to **postpone this vote**, and I am asking the rest of you to do the right thing and **second that motion**.

Here's why this is necessary:

First, **environmental concerns**. This project will impact nearly 35 acres of land, yet the City has not disclosed how many trees will be removed in this densely wooded corridor. These trees are critical for preventing erosion, absorbing stormwater, and providing habitat. Additionally, there are five wetlands in the area—four of which may be directly disturbed—without a clear understanding of the long-term consequences. An **Environmental Impact Study (EIS)** has not been conducted, and that alone is reason enough to pause.

Second, **fiscal transparency—this affects all of your districts**. This project will be

funded through stormwater funds, which means every **Madison resident will see their stormwater rates increase** to pay for it. Yet, the City has not disclosed a total project budget or considered a more cost-effective approach. Renowned hydrologist **Faith Fitzpatrick has offered to meet with the City** to propose a less invasive, lower-cost alternative—but that meeting has not happened. Shouldn't we explore better options before increasing costs for all taxpayers?

Third, cultural and historical responsibility. The West Area Plan identified a possible Native American burial site in the Sauk Creek Greenway on Pages 40 and 41. Yet, this plan does not mention it at all. Please remember that we live on Ho-Chunk Land, and we reaffirm it in our Land Acknowledgements. **Out of respect for the Ho-Chunk Nation,** a formal archaeological

study should be conducted before any work begins. There needs to be balance in our natural environment. From a Native American perspective, . . . the plants and animals came first . . . before humans. Let's preserve this order.

In conclusion, I want to be clear, I am not standing here tonight to reject improvements to Sauk Creek. I am asking you to ensure that those improvements are done **responsibly, transparently, and with full consideration of the environmental, financial, and cultural impacts.**

So again, I ask: **Will one of you make the motion to postpone this vote?**

And to the rest of the Council, I ask: **Will you second that motion?**

This decision affects every Madison resident—not just those near Sauk Creek.

Let's take the time to get this right. Thank you.