



EDGEWOOD COLLEGE

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Office of the President

September 21, 2016

Ms. Christy Bachmann
City of Madison
Madison Municipal Building
215 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Madison, WI 53703

VIA U.S. Mail and VIA EMAIL TO:
cbachmann@cityofmadison.com

RE: Joint Comments on Proposed Monroe Street Reconstruction Project from Edgewood College, Edgewood High School and Edgewood Campus School

Dear Ms. Bachmann:

We, the respective Presidents of Edgewood College, Edgewood High School and Edgewood Campus School, are writing to you in your capacity as the project coordinator for the City of Madison's proposed combined resurfacing and reconstruction of Monroe Street beginning in the spring of 2018.

Thank you and your team for inviting us, as representatives of the Edgewood schools, to participate in the public information gathering related to this project. We have attended and participated in a number of the public meetings that have been held to gather input about the project proposal this summer. As a follow-up to our participation in those events, we also wanted to formalize our initial comments and concerns regarding the project in writing.

Edgewood College, Edgewood High School and Edgewood Campus School are all located on the shores of Lake Wingra in the 2200 block of Monroe Street. The campus has been thriving in this iconic Madison location for 135 years. We sincerely value our ability to be a part of the vibrant Monroe Street community. Our students, faculty, staff and families not only spend time on our campus, but also frequent the Monroe Street businesses and parks. And we are proud to be a resource for those neighbors who join us for art exhibits, lectures, games, plays, concerts, farmer's market, Mass, and other events that enrich the quality of our local community.



Collectively, the Edgewood Schools employ approximately 700 people. In addition, we have 3000 students who attend classes on campus from grade school through college and who range in age from 4 years old to adult students. Our campus is a very unique educational setting where all of our students interact as an educational community on Monroe Street.

As such, we also have some concerns with regard to the proposed Monroe Street reconstruction project and we offer the following joint comments for your consideration.

- **Maintained Access to Campus.** We urge you to ensure that this project maintains continued and efficient access to the Edgewood campus. There is no parallel corridor to access to the Edgewood campus—Monroe Street is the only way for the vast majority of our faculty, staff, and students to reach Edgewood. As a result, maintaining access during construction and after project completion for our staff, students, visitors and families is critical to our ability to attract and educate students. We believe that four vehicle lanes must be maintained on Monroe Street to provide adequate access to campus.
- **Improved Public Safety.** We believe that the final project should provide increased safety for pedestrians, bikes and vehicles traveling to and from campus. We share the Monroe Street community's expressed concern for safety for all of those living, working and traveling on Monroe Street. Accordingly, we support a project design that both maintains four vehicle lanes, while also making design improvements to enhance safety for drivers, pedestrians and bicycles.
- **Continuation of Madison Metro Bus Routes.** A large number of our students utilize the Madison Metro bus service on a daily basis, accounting for over 61,000 rides. This service has been a central part of the traffic and parking management plan for the campus. Any change that would decrease or eliminate bus service would therefore increase the number of vehicle trips to and from campus. As a result, the environmental footprint of traffic would actually grow, demand for parking both on the campus and in the neighborhood would rise beyond the levels incorporated into current and future planning, and traffic on Monroe Street would increase. We do not believe these are desirable outcomes for the city, the schools, or the local neighborhoods, and therefore request that the final design should include maintaining the bus routes on Monroe Street with a stop in its current location.
- **Support for Restricted Parking Lanes.** A number of our high school and college students and staff utilize the restricted parking lanes on Monroe Street to attend school. We believe that the current system of restricted

parking on Monroe Street near the campus is working and we support that it be maintained.

- **Open Access for Emergency and First Responders.** As stated above, Monroe Street is the main access point to our campus. We urge that the project design carefully evaluate and consider the need to maintain the ability for emergency services vehicles and first responders to not only access our campus, but also access the surrounding neighborhood.
- **Improvement of Street Aesthetics.** Like for many other businesses, Monroe Street is the gateway to the Edgewood Campus. We heard over the summer during the public meetings numerous expressions of support for the project improving the street aesthetics by planting additional or different trees, changing green spaces and other ideas for improvements. We share those goals as a part of this project.
- **Unintended consequences.** In addition to those concerns we raise above, we believe a substantial change to the design of Monroe Street would cause a number of unintended consequences that run counter to the aims such a redesign might appear to achieve. For example, drivers who now utilize Monroe Street as their thoroughfare to and from central Madison will continue to make that trip. They will instead either take routes on other arterials (longer trips, utilizing more fuel, and increasing traffic and safety concerns in those areas), spend more time in traffic on Monroe Street (idling longer, utilizing more fuel), or seeking alternate routes in the neighborhoods near Monroe Street (decreasing the safety on those streets).
- **Process.** We believe that a representative group of stakeholders should develop the set of options to be considered by the City Council. Without question, the local residents should play an important role in this process. At the same time, other stakeholders—including commuters using this thoroughfare, and local not-for-profits and businesses—also have valid interests that should be incorporated in the process of determining redesign options. For example, 65% of individuals who responded to a recent survey indicated support for maintaining the current design of Monroe Street. Any fair process requires substantial weight be given to wishes of that strong majority, along with those who would be affected by foreseeable consequences such as those articulated above.

We share many of the same concerns expressed by our residential neighbors. We seek to ensure safe access to and through the Monroe Street corridor, with a variety of transportation options that minimize the environmental impact of such trips and enhance the beauty of this part of Madison. We believe that some of those ends are best resolved through means other than substantial redesign of Monroe Street and that, in fact, proposals that would limit Monroe Street traffic would actually be counterproductive to these outcomes. Similarly, we share concerns expressed by

neighbors in the local business community—we need sufficient traffic flow and parking availability to deliver on our promise to students and families, thereby sustaining the hundreds of jobs our three schools collectively contribute to our local economy.

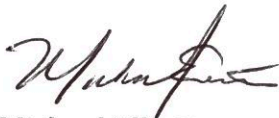
Thank you for your time and consideration of our concerns regarding this project. We look forward to working with you as you continue to accept public input and proceed with the reconstruction.

If you have any questions or if you would like to speak with any of us personally, please contact us directly.

Sincerely,



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