From:	Susan De Vos
To:	Tolley, Sabrina
Subject:	Fwd: South Capitol Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) District Planning Study Final Report
Date:	Monday, January 26, 2015 2:31:27 PM
Attachments:	Southwestern Law Park Ped-Bike Underpass Concepts.docx

-------- Original Message --------
Subject: South Capitol Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) District Planning Study Final Report
Date: Mon, 26 Jan 2015 09:51:40 -0600
From: Ron Shutvet <rshutvet@gmail.com>
To: district14@cityofmadison.com, aaron.crandall@yahoo.com, lydmaurer@gmail.com, district6@cityofmadison.com, district10@cityofmadison.com, hiwayman@chorus.net, robbie@robbiewebber.org, ronsteinhofer@yahoo.com, sa_lehner@hotmail.com, kolarsmmj@gmail.com, devos@ssc.wisc.edu

Re: Â PEDESTRIAN/BICYCLE/MOTORÂ VEHICLE COMMISSION meeting January 27
Â Â Â Â Agenda Item D.1.

Â Â Â Â Accepting the South Capitol Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) District

Â Â Â Â Planning Study Final Report, Executive Summary (Report of the South Capitol

Â Â Â Â District Planning Committee) and the recommendations contained within.

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Attached to this email is a document that elaborates on a concept for grade separation of pedestrian / bicycle crossings at the West Gateway intersections along the John Nolen Drive corridor in Law Park. I am hopeful that theÂ PEDESTRIAN/BICYCLE/MOTORÂ VEHICLE COMMISSIONÂ realizes the potential of utilizing parklands along the John Nolen Drive corridor to greatly enhance the experience of ped/bike travel through this part of Madison.

One only need read all the bold print in the final report of the South Capitol District Planning Committee to decide how to move forward in solving the transportation issues that plague the southern half of Madison's isthmus. While the study recommends short term, low cost alternatives for many of these transportation issues, it also wisely recommends that elements of various design alternatives presented by Madison residents during the public input process of this study should be considered as possible components of a longer term vision for the area that solves the growing transportation issues and, more importantly, greatly enhances the overall experience of visiting or living in downtown Madison.

I worry that Madison will set course to late for a visioning process that plans well into the future for residents of the city. This final report of the South Capitol District Planning Committee has not even been approved by the Common Council, yet the recommended site for an Intermodal Transit Center on North Bedford Street is already being proposed for another use by the property owner. Initial plans for a residential tower on the site are being reviewed by city staff and the Urban Design Commission. The plans do not include any provision for an Intermodal Transit Center on the site.

I recommend that theÂ PEDESTRIAN/BICYCLE/MOTORÂ VEHICLE COMMISSIONÂ approve the study final report with the recommendation to the Common Council that the city begin a visioning process for a long term transportation master plan for the entire Law Park area and John Nolen DriveÂ transportation corridor that incorporates grade separation for the ped/bike trails along this busy transportation corridor. The sooner we start this process, the better the outcome will be.

Ron Shutvet

Madison WI

Southwestern Law Park Ped-Bike Underpass Concept

This is a proposed radical redesign of the John Nolen Drive corridor on the southwestern end of Law Park.

Underpass Concept A
Reconstruct John Nolen Drive in the vicinity of North Shore Drive and Broom Street to allow for a ped/bike underpass to be constructed between the Capital City Trail and the parkland area just west of Broom Street. This would require raising the elevation of the roadway approximately 6 to 7 feet.

Reconstruct both railroad corridors in this area by reconfiguring the trackage so that the two rail corridors meet at a new switch location between North Shore Drive and Broom Street. The publicly owned east-west rail corridor would follow a new railroad right of way just north of North Shore Drive to reconnect with the existing corridor just east of Bedford Street. The Union Pacific track could be moved slightly to the west in this area to allow JND to be shifted slightly away from the existing lakeshore in this area. Both railroads would also be raised approximately 4 feet in elevation to allow for the various ped/bike paths to travel under the tracks as underpasses in this vicinity.

North Shore Drive would also be raised approximately 6 feet in elevation as it approaches to connect with JND. This would allow the North Shore ped/bike path to be relocated as it approaches JND to travel through a new underpass under North Shore Drive. It would continue under the relocated publicly owned railroad tracks and connect to a new ped/bike path along the former publicly owned rail corridor. This new ped/bike path would connect the Cannonball ped/bike path with the Wilson Street ped/bike corridor. Broom Street would be reconstructed approximately 5 feet higher to allow for an underpass where the new ped/bike corridor crosses Broom Street.

The new ped/bike underpass that would connect the Capitol City Trail with the new ped/bike path along the old Union Pacific rail corridor could be constructed as a bridge similar to the East Washington Avenue bridge over the Yahara River. During construction a portion of the fill that was placed in this area years ago to fill in Lake Monona and create JND would be removed to create a small lagoon between the existing Lake Monona shoreline and the original Lake Monona shoreline that existed along the old Chicago and Northwestern Railroad before that railroad corridor was originally constructed in 1864. This railroad corridor became publicly owned by the Wisconsin River Trail Transit Commission in 1980.

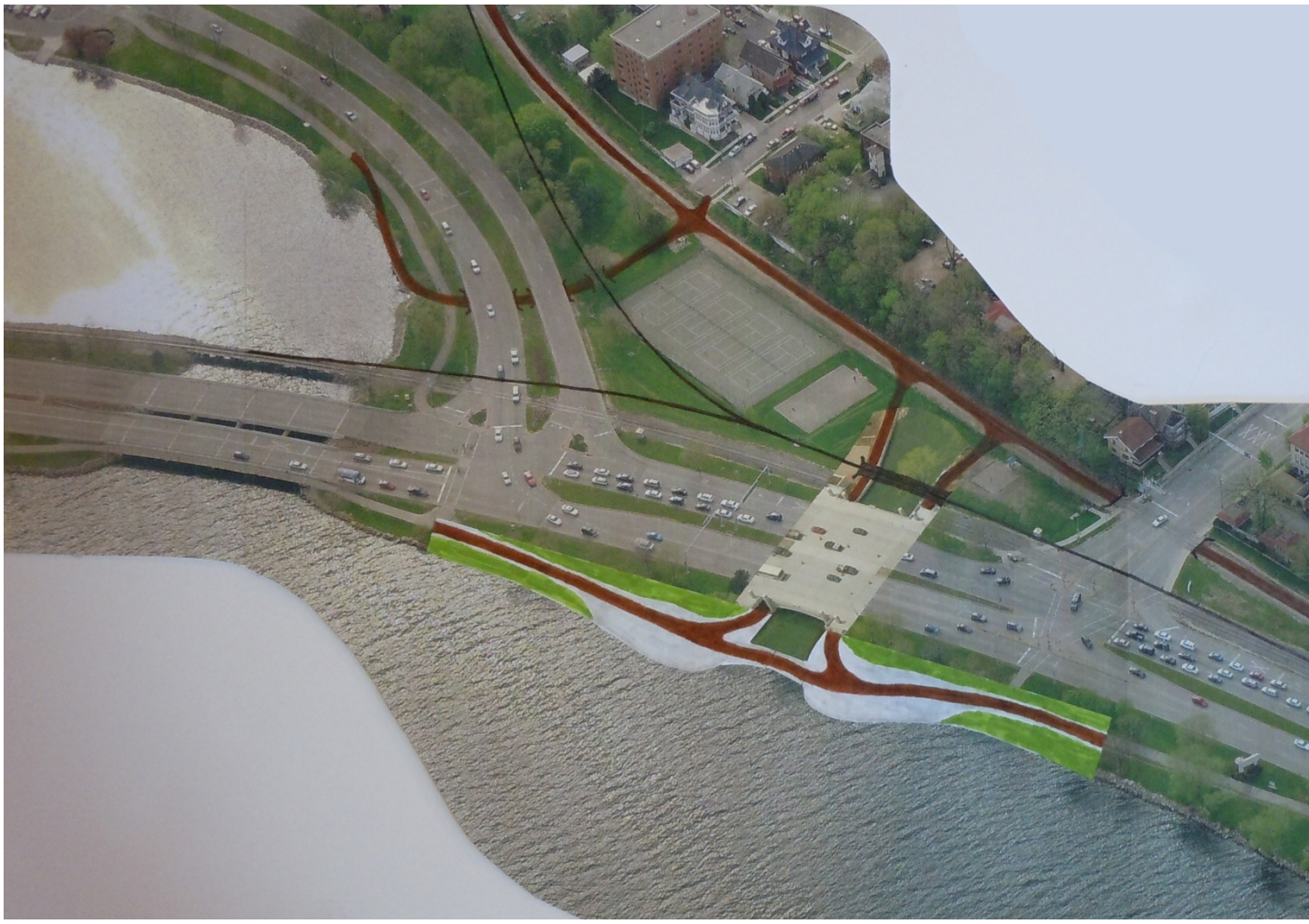
The new lagoon would reclaim this filled area of Lake Monona to be part of a state of the art storm water treatment facility for the storm water entering the lake from multiple storm water outflows that exist in the area. The debris and sediment collection areas for the storm water would be designed to be cloaked with landscaping features to make the storm water outflows look more like natural springs and streams. Four or more vertical axis windmills could be constructed along the lakeshore in this vicinity to generate electricity to power a lake water pumping facility that would circulate fresh lake water through the lagoon area. Depending on the amount of wind power available at any time, the fresh lake water

would appear as springs at the disguised storm water outflows and, when there is enough wind to power it, a spray fountain in the lagoon that varies in height depending on the power produced by the windmills.

The existing parkland, consisting of a dog park, a basketball court and 4 tennis courts, could be reconfigured to contain some of the same park elements or reconfigured for other uses. The tennis courts and basketball court often sit idle. The dog park is little used during the day Monday through Friday but can become heavily used on weekday evenings and on weekends. In fact, this dog park can become crowded with too many dogs at times and the grass there has a very hard time recovering from this periodic heavy use. In the spring and fall this dog park becomes very muddy whenever the ground is wet and it is above freezing. Perhaps the area could be reconfigured to create a larger dog park and eliminate or reduce the number of tennis courts.

Benefits of the proposed extensive reconstruction of this transportation corridor

- All ped/bike path crossings would be grade separated from the roads and rail corridors in this area. This would allow the ped/bike traffic to travel unimpeded through the area.
- The new ped/bike path along the old publicly owned rail corridor would connect multiple nearby ped/bike paths to the Wilson Street ped/bike corridor with mostly off road paths and a grade separated crossing of Broom Street.
- Because all the roads in this area would become grade separated from pedestrian and bike traffic the vehicular traffic flow through the area would be greatly improved. The reduced idling times for traffic stopped at the lights would translate into improved air quality in this area.
- The proposed state of the art storm water treatment system would greatly benefit Lake Monona and could become a self guided educational walkway tour area to educate the public on the city's efforts to improve storm water quality.
- The proposed vertical axis wind powered generators would be part of this "Sustainable Future" walkway by showing how the wind can be harnessed to work for us in helping to improve our lake water quality.
- The combining of the two rail corridors and moving the switch area to the west of Broom Street would clean up the present configuration with two sets of tracks crossing Broom Street at the intersection with John Nolen Drive. With only one set of tracks the intersection would be easier to navigate for traffic traveling on Broom Street.

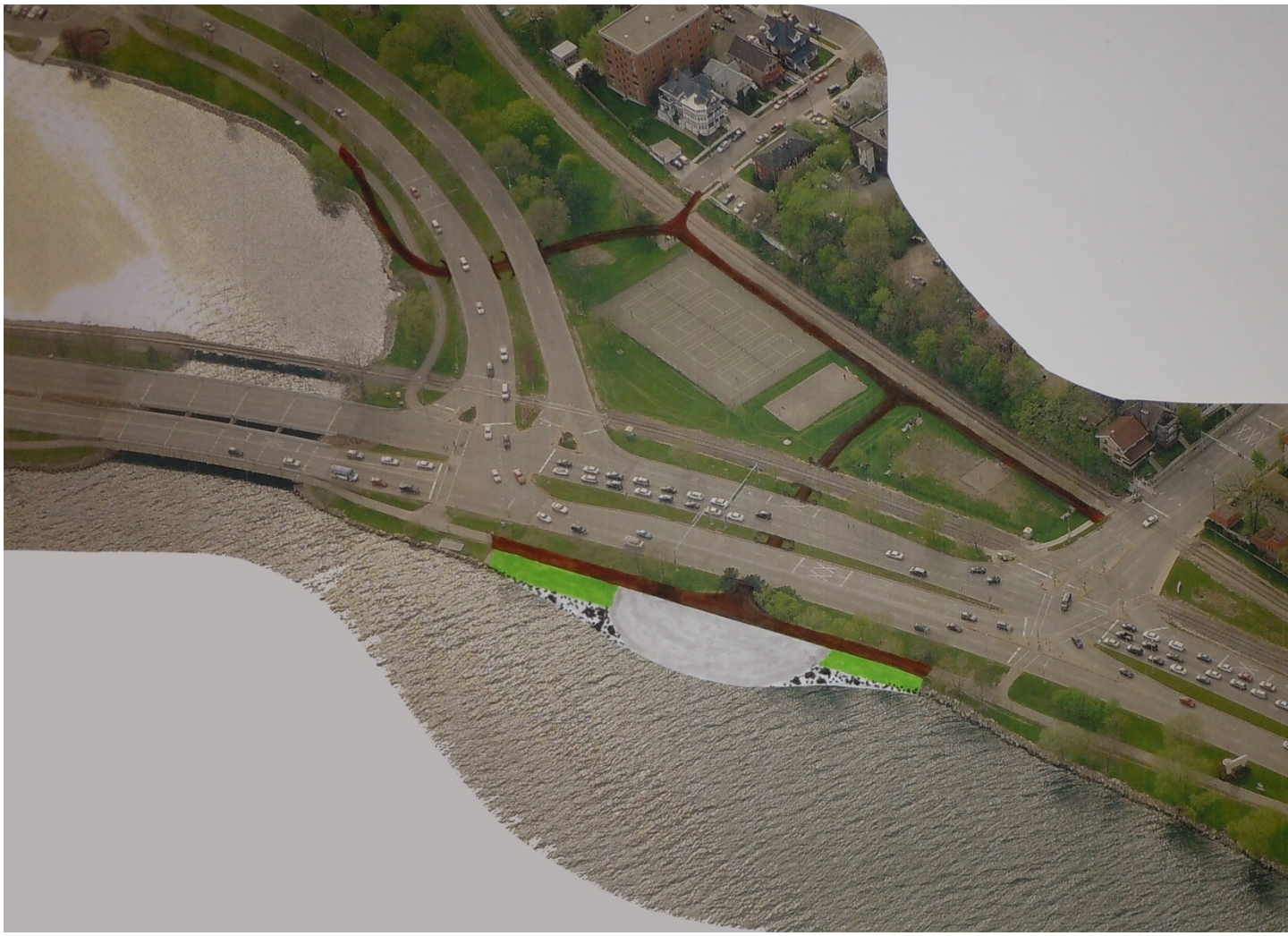


Underpass Concept A

This is the full proposed concept described above.

Alternative Underpass Concept B

This is a scaled down version of the concept reducing the size of the main ped/bike underpass under John Nolen Drive. Both railroad corridors would remain where they are presently located however the Union Pacific rail corridor would be raised in grade to allow for the Ped/bike underpass under both John Nolen Drive and the railroad tracks. The publicly owned railroad corridor would have to be raised slightly but not as much as it would in Option A. The new ped/bike connection in the triangular parkland area would terminate at Broom Street. The storm water treatment system could still be constructed but it would have to run in a smaller channel with the ped/bike underpass. Although this concept would cost less than Option A, the rail corridors would continue to box in the parkland in the area and would make it impossible to create grade separation for a ped/bike path across Broom Street to South Hamilton Street.



Alternative Underpass Concept B

Alternatives to a ped/bike underpass concept

Build ped/bike overpasses for this entire area

This would require multiple bridges that would have to be constructed more than 23 feet over the railroad corridors to achieve the clearance required by Federal Law. At least two large bridges would have to be constructed with very long approaches at each end to gradually transition back to the existing path elevation. A third bridge would be required to achieve ped/bike path separation over Broom Street. However there is no room for a third bridge over Broom Street with the existing publicly owned rail corridor trackage location.

These bridges would block the scenic viewsheds of the Isthmus and Lake Monona for people traveling the corridor and living on properties adjacent to the area. While some may like the views from the perspective of the ped/bike path users, others will be terrified of using the

bridges due to their height and due to complications caused by adverse weather conditions including high winds, rain, snow and ice. In other words, bridges would be too scary for some people to use. Therefore, you would still have to provide the at grade crossings at the intersections for people who don't want to use the bridges for whatever reason.

Due to the need to keep these ped/bike paths operational all year long, a large amount of salt would be required during the winter to keep the ramps and bridges safe to use. This salt use would contribute to higher maintenance costs for the bridge structures.

Keep the present at grade situation into the foreseeable future

This would cause the present situation only to get worse. Monies would be spent to maintain a heavily utilized transportation interface in the heart of this city that is liked by no one. Additional development on properties adjacent to this area could keep us from choosing the underpass option in the future.

Other rational for or against the underpass concept

For

Foot powered transportation would for the first time since 1864 be able to access the north shoreline of Lake Monona without having to cross a hazardous railroad and highway corridor at grade.

Against

Ped/bake underpasses are dangerous and people will not use them for fear of being isolated and vulnerable to attack by another person.

For

Madison already has numerous ped/bike underpasses that are heavily used by Madison residents and visitors to the city. There have been no to very few incidences of crime at most of these underpasses. One of the first underpasses to be built was the underpass at Wingra Creek where it travels under John Nolen Drive. This popular ped/bike underpass has been used as part of the route for the bicycle portion of the Ironman Race here in Madison ever since the popular race was first held here. Then there are the underpasses along the new Yahara River Corridor traveling under East Washington Avenue and Johnson Street. Other popular underpasses cross the beltline and Verona Road and the rail corridor near the Kohl Center on the UW Campus. At the end of this document are some links to similar underpasses in Colorado that are well received by the people who live there and use them.

Against

This concept will cost too much.

For

Although a project of this magnitude would be expense, it would provide a much needed improvement to the quality of life in the heart of Madison. It would help to reconnect downtown Madison with Lake Monona and restore the reasoning behind placing the State Capitol in the Madison area in the first place, the beauty of experiencing the lakes and landscapes that have drawn mankind to this area ever since the last glacier retreated.

By comparison, this project would be much less expensive than the proposed massive reconstruction of the Verona Road and Stoughton Road corridors. It would provide a much needed shift from spending most of our transportation tax dollars for the benefit of motorized vehicles to making real improvements to our non-motorized transportation grid.

Against

Attempting to raise the grade of the rail corridors and move the tracks to new alignments would be impossible to do politically and physically.

For

The trackage along these railroad corridors has been altered in the recent and distant past. There was for a time four sets of tracks that traveled along the Law Park area. There were also multiple sets of tracks that were lain across Lake Monona rather than the one set of tracks that travel across the lake now. The multiple tracks were removed as they were no longer needed and the existing single track at Monona Terrace was re-aligned to travel through the area along the best possible route at the time.

There is plenty of room along these rail corridors to raise the grade of the tracks up to 5 feet higher than the present tracks. A grade change of 1% or less can me maintained along the corridor.

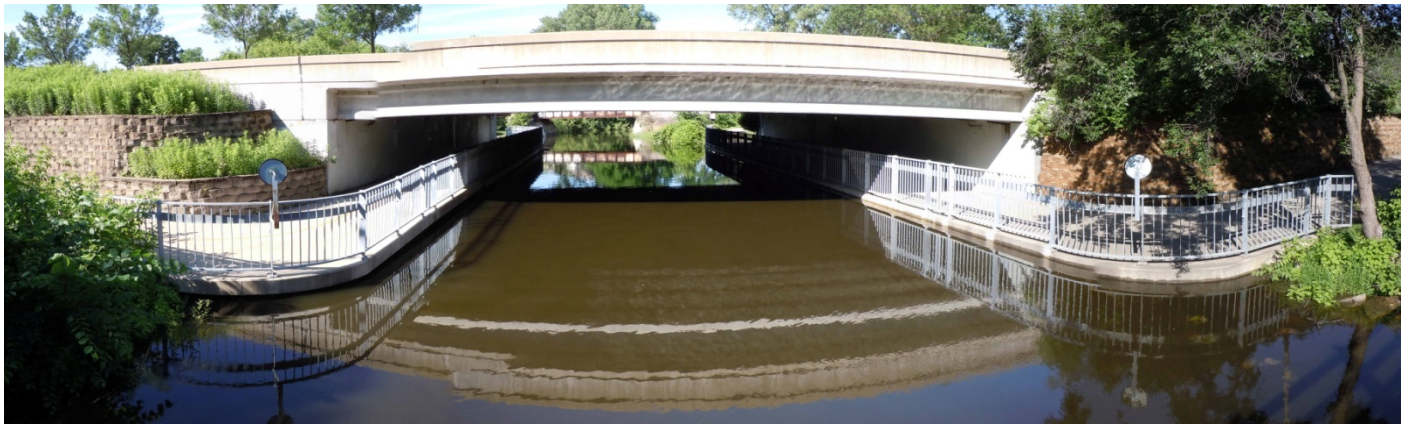
Against

Even the higher elevations of 7 feet or less proposed for the road and rail corridors will block the viewsheds in this area.

For

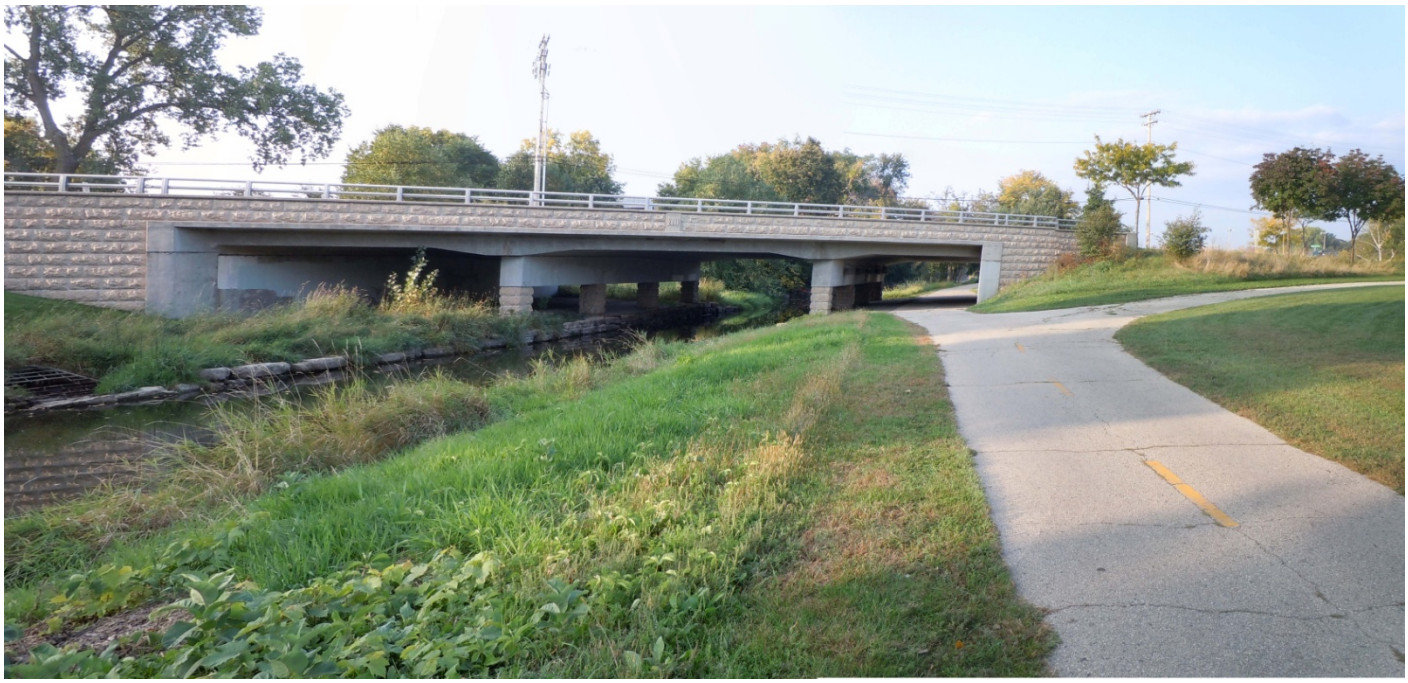
Because most of the private properties facing the lake in the Broom Street area are on land that is at a elevation that is more than 7 feet above the existing corridor elevation the views of the lake from them would be maintained. For travelers in both directions along this corridor and those approaching the area from the southern end of the causeway over Lake Monona, an elevation difference of 7 feet would be barely noticeable and views of the entire city skyline would remain much as they are now. In contrast, a system of ramps and bridges for a ped/bike overpass alternative would completely alter all of the viewsheds in this area no matter which direction you are headed.

Images of some existing ped/bike underpasses in Madison

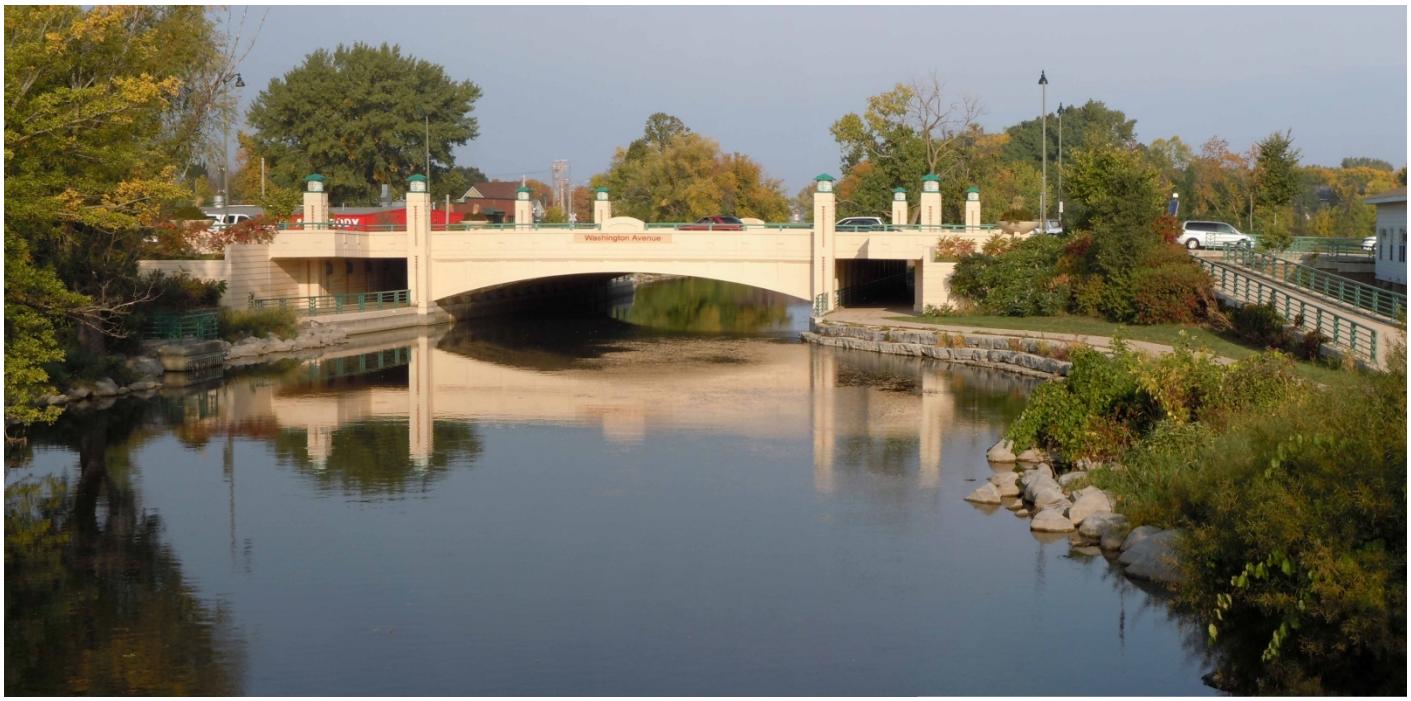


Wingra Creek ped/bike path at John Nolen Drive

Wingra Creek ped/bike path at John Nolen Drive - Looking South



Wingra Creek ped/bike path at Olin Avenue



Yahara River ped/bike path at East Washington Avenue

This document was created by Ron Shutvet to promote grade separation wherever possible on our ped/bike transportation grid. For questions or for more information you can contact me at rshutvet@gmail.com

For additional historical information about the John Nolen Corridor visit www.olin-turville.org This website has a timeline of historical events along the John Nolen Drive Corridor as well as links to other websites containing historical data and images of this area.

Below are additional links with information and images of similar ped/bike underpasses that have recently been constructed in Colorado. All of these webpages have multiple pictures of each underpass configuration.

http://lorisandassociates.com/services/ped-bridges/wonderland-creek-underpass

http://lorisandassociates.com/services/ped-bridges/elmers-two-mile-underpass

http://lorisandassociates.com/services/ped-bridges/skunk-creek-underpass

http://lorisandassociates.com/services/vehicular-bridges/old-wadsworth-bridge

http://lorisandassociates.com/services/ped-bridges/van-bibber-underpass

http://lorisandassociates.com/services/ped-bridges/u-s-highway-287-underpass