

From: [Janet Murphy](#)
To: [Transportation Commission](#); [Conklin, Nikki](#)
Subject: Reconsider the Sauk Creek Greenway path
Date: Monday, July 29, 2024 6:00:49 PM

Some people who received this message don't often get email from janetmusicrn@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Like many good projects, the locals fear change but love it after it happens. I believe the locals and many others would benefit from the two bike trail connections through the Sauk Creek Greenway.

The planet is burning up. We need to get out of our cars. And the greenway deserves attention. It doesn't just belong to the abutting neighbors.

Thanks for listening,
Janet Murphy
Enthusiastic bike riding senior

From: [Anna Shen](#)
To: [Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: Oppose Regent St. shared path
Date: Monday, July 29, 2024 9:48:40 PM

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I wish to register opposition to Item 11 on page 27 of the draft West Area Plan, that proposes to convert the sidewalks on Regent Street south of Rennebohm Park to a shared bike/pedestrian path. The disadvantages of this plan far outweigh the very limited benefits for bicyclists. This plan does little to improve bike safety or connectivity because it does not extend to either Midvale Blvd or Whitney Way. If the shared path is only on the north side of Regent, it does not help bicyclists at the most dangerous time - the morning eastbound rush. The major flaws in this proposal are that it requires removal of a large number of mature (>40 years old) trees and it is not wide enough to safely separate pedestrians and commuter bicyclists, many of which are fast ebikes. Many pedestrians, including dogs, children, and strollers, use this sidewalk. As ebikes become more common, the city needs to consider plans that provide a safe route for pedestrians.

Thank you,
Anna Shen

From: [dave stecher](#)
To: [Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: West Area Plan - I support bike, pedestrian and traffic calming infrastructure
Date: Monday, July 29, 2024 9:58:45 PM

You don't often get email from dave.stecher@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hi I am writing in support of bike infrastructure, traffic calming, and pedestrian safety measures included in the West Area plan.

I would also like to see more traffic calming and pedestrian safety measure implemented along Rosa Rd, in particular at the intersection of Rosa Rd and Regent St. In particular, curb bulbouts to prevent drivers from passing on the right in the parking lane, speed humps and four way stop sign should be installed at this intersection, as it is a main point of crossing for children.

I believe that Rosa Rd and Regent St when they are reconstructed should be reconstructed to the narrowest possible travel width per the Complete streets document, and in the case of Regent street it should be rebuilt as a non-divided street. This would free up space for an all ages and abilities and All-Seasons Path along the entire length of Regent St from Midvale to Rosa Rd, and along the entire length of Rosa Rd from Old Middleton to Research Park Blvd. These two streets are ideal locations to have off street paths that cater to kids in particular as they pass by many schools, and pools and connect to shopping areas. These two streets could form the spine of an east-west and north-south all ages connection in the west area.

-Dave Stecher

From: [Nicholas Davies](#)
To: [Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: West Area Plan looks good!
Date: Monday, July 29, 2024 11:11:58 PM

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Dear Transportation Commission,

The West Area Plan has gone through an enormous amount of process and revision and public comment and effort by city staff. This is as close to consensus as I think we're going to get.

For instance, the proposed path to allow access to Walnut Grove Park from the west (across Sauk Creek) is something I support, having heard from people in that neighborhood who want a way to access the park and/or get through that large block without taking their kids along major streets.

I understand that not everyone was on board with a path along the full length of the greenway at this time, so I understand the compromise being made here. (I think attitudes will change once the greenway inevitably gets a maintenance path.) I also think the city's time spent on this one hypothetical path has been plenty. At some point we need to consider what other priorities we're neglecting as a result of this hyperfocus.

I also really appreciate how the city responded to feedback regarding added street connections, and removed some of the controversial ones in the final draft.

If we were to continue the process, I would gladly advocate for more modal filters, and continue to push back on the idea that vehicular through-traffic within a neighborhood is necessary or beneficial. But at this point in the process, I'm ready to move on. These larger conversations can take place over time in other venues.

Not having an up-to-date long-range plan is detrimental. It limits our ability to iterate as a city, and leaves people with uncertainty and inability to make plans of their own within the planning area. Acknowledging all of the work and public input that has gone into this already, I hope the West Area Plan can be passed without further complication.

Thanks,

Nick Davies
3717 Richard St

From: [Grace Kwon](#)
To: [Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: Agenda Item 84377: OPPOSE Any Bike Path in the Sauk Creek Greenway
Date: Tuesday, July 30, 2024 4:54:57 AM

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Dear Transportation Commissioners,

The proposal to put a bike path through Sauk Creek Greenway is a “want” rather than an actual “need,” and poses significant risks to our community.

Building the path would lead to the loss of mature trees, increase flooding and light pollution in a designated dark skies community. The environmental impact would be significant: trees sequester carbon dioxide, emit oxygen, control erosion, and stabilize bluffs and creek banks. This path would also destroy a quiet refuge for walkers and wildlife, as bikes are prohibited on other nature trails in Madison (Sprecher’s Pond, Owen Park, Picnic Point, Raymers Cove path, and others). Additionally, trees serve as sound barriers in urban environments, providing a crucial buffer against city noise.

Please carefully consider who is sending you the “support” emails. Verify whether they are truly Madison neighbors or from online bike lobbying activists with incorrect information gathered from across the country via social media.

The concerns of Madison west area residents must be prioritized. This bike path will devastate our community.

With the looming \$22 million deficit, shouldn't we focus on ways to reduce spending rather than continually increasing it?

The proposed \$22 million referendum would place a continuous tax burden on us year after year with no end!

I am writing to “OPPOSE” the inclusion of the east-west bike path, or any bike path, in the Sauk Creek Greenway for the following reasons:

1. ****Impact on Stormwater Channel Restoration****: Imposing a wide paved path on the important stormwater channel restoration project contradicts the aim of retaining as much of the urban forest as possible. Mandating wide paved bike paths will decimate the forest.
2. ****Low Tree Canopy Coverage****: The Sauk Creek Greenway is a significant part of the tree canopy in District 19. With a city-wide goal of 40% and a current coverage of 23%, it is counterproductive to consider decimating the Greenway for an unneeded bike path. The 2019 Urban Forestry Final Report highlights the need to increase canopy coverage, not decrease it.
3. ****Healthy Trees Throughout the Greenway****: There are numerous healthy trees, including old-growth oaks, throughout the Greenway. The argument that the greenway is full of “garbage trees” is not valid.
4. ****No Gaps in the Bike Network****: The city’s bike network map, particularly the low-stress

bike route map, shows no gaps in the bike network surrounding the Greenway.

5. ****Existing On-Street Alternative****: High Point Road serves as the on-street alternative. The assertion that people are uncomfortable biking on High Point Road is unfounded, given that the only stretch not included on the bike route is a very wide, calm section with few driveways or parked cars.

6. ****No Recorded Bike Accidents on High Point Road****: There have been no bike accidents on High Point Road. A path through the Greenway would not have impacted the two recorded bike accidents on Westfield Road.

7. ****Significant Tree Loss from East-West Path****: The proposed East-West shared-use path would result in significant tree loss due to the grading and width requirements. The steep grade of the greenway would necessitate switchbacks, further increasing tree loss.

8. ****Madison's Nature Everywhere Campaign****: This initiative aims to increase equitable access to nature. The Sauk Creek Greenway is the only natural area in the 19th district and should be preserved to provide children with access to nature.

9. ****High Cost****: The bike path project is estimated to cost around \$2 million.

Thank you for considering my concerns.

Sincerely,
Grace Kwon
District 19
Madison West Area Resident

From: [Ellen Schneiderman](#)
To: [Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: Oppose Sauk Creek bike path
Date: Tuesday, July 30, 2024 6:52:32 AM

[You don't often get email from ejks73@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

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Dear commission:

I want to voice my staunch opposition to any construction of any type of bike path in the Sauk Creek Greenway.

Not only do I feel a bikepath is unnecessary and duplicates existing bike lanes and access the disruption to Flora, Fana, and waterways is unwarranted and unnecessary.

The saw Creek Greenway is one of very few remaining natural areas in the immediate neighborhood or in the wider neighborhood with dense tree, cover abundant wildlife, and a barrier from the growing crush of noisy commuters on the beltline.

There seems to be no valid reason why a bike path is needed especially at the cost. I'm a beautiful wooded oasis.

Thank you for voting no on this wasteful and harmful endeavor.

Ellen Schneiderman
5 Brule Circle

From: [Donna Beestman](#)
To: [Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: Oppose new bike trail
Date: Tuesday, July 30, 2024 10:02:36 AM

You don't often get email from donna.beestman@me.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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We must keep as many trees as possible in Madison. I oppose the proposed bike trail by Tamarak on the far west side.

Donna Beestman

6225 Mineral Point Rd. #A3
Madison, WI 53705

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Gabriel](#)
To: [Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: East-West bike path through Sauk Creek Woods
Date: Tuesday, July 30, 2024 10:11:11 AM

You don't often get email from gljohnson87@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Good Morning,

I'm writing to oppose the bike path cutting through Sauk Creek Woods. It's unnecessary, as biking High Point Rd is safe. I and my young child bike from Red Fox Trl to the High Point Swim Club regularly, for example, without issue. Biking Tree Ln to the schools is also safe. The only threat are drivers driving too fast which as always is an enforcement issue. Bike/car accidents are few and far between in these areas to my knowledge.

Destroying trees for an unnecessary bike path seems a shame given Madison's ostensible commitment to tree canopy.

Thank You,

Gabe Johnson
7522 Red Fox Trl
Madison WI 53717

From: [Andrea Peterson Straus](#)
To: [Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: Agenda Item 84377 Opposition
Date: Tuesday, July 30, 2024 10:28:36 AM

You don't often get email from andipetempls@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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To members of the City of Madison Transportation Commission:

I'm writing to object to the proposal to include an East-West bike path, or any bike path in the Sauk Creek Greenway.

I live in the area close to the Sauk Creek Greenway. I'm also an avid biker but this proposed trail is useless from a transportation standpoint and would destroy the greenway.

Planners have said that "people are uncomfortable biking on High Point Road". The only stretch of High Point NOT included on the bike route is the section from Sauk Creek Park to Tree Lane. So, they are saying that crossing Old Sauk and Mineral Point Road is fine but this very wide, calm section, with few driveways or parked cars is the problem? I don't understand the logic.

Another important concern is the cost of this proposal.

Planners have not addressed the cost of the bike path because they don't "have a specific plan yet". The greenway is a sliver of land surrounded 85% by homes. The largest inlet, at Walnut Grove Park, is on a bluff. So, an "any all ages and abilities path" will require switchbacks to traverse the bluff, which will mean a significant loss of trees, bridges to cross the creek, and grading of current inlets on the western edge since they are too steep. A conservative estimate of the cost of the path alone is \$2million.

Finally, and most importantly, a paved bike path would destroy the only remaining natural sanctuary of the area. **The Sauk Creek Greenway is the only natural area in the 9th district !**

According to Madison's "Nature Everywhere Campaign", the greenway should be preserved to provide children who live, learn, and play in the neighborhoods surrounding the greenway access to nature. The bike path project would be in direct opposition to that goal.

Thank you for allowing local West side residents to express their concerns and opposition.

Andrea Peterson Straus
7844 East Oakbridge Way
Madison, Wisconsin 53717
(612) 999-8223

Andipete

From: [Sue Stark](#)
To: [Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: No bike paths in Sauk Creek woods
Date: Tuesday, July 30, 2024 10:57:13 AM

You don't often get email from sstark7060@aol.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Madison is a very poorly run City.

This idea of unwanted, unnecessary lighted asphalt bike paths, goes against drainage issues of Sauk Creek, global warming issues and destroys habitat for our animals and birds. We have foxes, turkeys, raccoons, deer, owls, hawks, and cranes. We all purchased our lots BECAUSE of the natural privacy the woods allows for, and the abundance of animals and birds that add to our daily lives. We have bike lanes on all the streets in the neighborhood and do not need or want bike paths in the woods that go nowhere and have zero contribution to the quiet and cooler temperatures the woods provide, not to mention the drainage of rainwater.

You Must listen to the people who LIVE in Sauk Creek and who use the woods for quiet walk and contemplation. I know the Mayor AND the Planning commission as a whole, have never even seen this area that they are blindly making horrendous and misguided plans for. LISTEN to YOUR Constituents and LISTEN to all the objections!!!! You are also wasting thousands of dollars and destroying habitats for animals, birds and Madisonians. Open your ears!!!!

The Biking group DOES NOT LIVE in Sauk Creek. Do you only understand LAW SUITS?!?!?

Mary Stark
7433 Farmington Way
Madison, WI. 53717-1311

[Sent from the all new AOL app for iOS](#)

From: [Greg Zalesak](#)
To: [Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: Agenda Item 84377: Oppose Any Bike Path in the Sauk Creek Greenway
Date: Tuesday, July 30, 2024 11:04:05 AM

You don't often get email from zalesakg@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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I am writing to object to the inclusion of the east-west bike path, or any bike path in the Sauk Creek Greenway.

The Sauk Creek Greenway is the only natural area in the 9th district. As a parent and grandparent (and as someone who enjoys biking as well), I feel the Sauk Creek Greenway should be preserved to provide all children in the neighborhoods surrounding the greenway the access to nature that is provided by the greenway.

I am concerned about the cost given the city's current budget situation and the necessity for the bike path since there are existing safe alternative routes on streets (i.e. High Point Road) surrounding the Sauk Creek Greenway.

Thanks.

From: [Patricia Filas-Mortensen](#)
To: [Transportation Commission](#); [Anna Shen](#)
Subject: Oppose Regent St. Shared Bike/Pedestrian Path
Date: Tuesday, July 30, 2024 12:43:36 PM

You don't often get email from pamortensen@uwalumni.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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I wish to register opposition to Item 11 on page 27 of the draft West Area Plan, that proposes to convert the sidewalks on Regent Street south of Rennebohm Park to a shared bike/pedestrian path. The disadvantages of this plan, such as danger to pedestrians and negative climate change considerations, far outweigh the very limited benefits for bicyclists.

This plan does little to improve bike safety or connectivity because it does not extend to either Midvale Blvd or Whitney Way. If the shared path is only on the north side of Regent, it does not help bicyclists at the most dangerous time - the morning eastbound rush. The current bike lanes on Regent street are used very infrequently because these are **redundant** bike lanes as there are already safer lanes thru Rennebohm Park & on Sheboygan Ave leading to Segoe Road and eventually Midvale Blvd and along Old Middleton Road leading to the Shorewood path. A shared bike lane along Rennebohm Park would stop and start without followthru necessitating riders to discover novel ways to navigate to another, safer route. This is especially dangerous for inexperienced riders.

The proposed path would not be wide enough to safely separate pedestrians and commuter bicyclists, many of which are racing to work or even using fast ebikes. This park is becoming busier every day because of numerous elderly care facilities and apartments with families and small children increasing due to the BRT overlay. Pedestrians including many mobility challenged individuals using walkers, canes or wheelchairs, young children on bikes and trikes, parents and caregivers with strollers and toddlers running about, dog walkers and joggers/runners use this sidewalk. As ebikes, electric scooters and electric skateboards become more common the city needs to develop plans that provide safe routes for pedestrians all over the city and especially in the city parks..

One of the major flaws in this proposal is that it requires removal of a large number of mature (>40 years old) trees. To quote a PhD in Horticulture from the University of Wisconsin Extension "It takes more than three decades to achieve the same level of carbon sequestration and stormwater capture that a mature tree provides. To cut down a mature tree right now, especially if it is non-invasive (and most urban plantings are) and in the midst of climate change, is the absolute worst thing a city can do. A stupid bike path will never offset the climate and stormwater management services a mature tree provides." The University Extension is currently trying to **educate** Wisconsin cities on the beneficial aspects of urban forestry. It is my understanding that in the past Madison has been honored as a "Tree City" and has a 40% canopy goal but is currently at a 17% canopy. We have a long way to go and cutting down these trees would not help that goal. And yes the extension person did use the word "stupid" in the original comment. Additionally, her argument doesn't mention the 10 to 15 degree temperature decrease a mature tree's shade provides by blocking the sun's radiation.

Please reconsider the location of this and any bike path or city project that necessitates the destruction of mature trees.

Thank you,

Patricia Filas-Mortensen RN MSN
209 Green Lake Pass
Madison WI 53705-4756
608-335-2440 (cell)

From: [Gwen Long](#)
To: [Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: Agenda Item 84377 Oppose Any Bike Path in the Sauk Creek Greenway
Date: Tuesday, July 30, 2024 1:25:24 PM

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Dear Transportation Commissioners:

1. WHY is the city imposing a wide paved path on the important stormwater channel restoration project? Planners at the November Greenway Restoration kick-off meeting said that IF the West Area Plan includes a bike path the engineers **will have to add one.** ***Stormwater experts can design***

minimally invasive creek restoration, through shallow creeks, without the need for access

roads – to retain as much of the urban forest as possible, and at huge cost savings!!! Thus no place for wide paved bike paths that would further affect the wetland protections that the forest provides.

2. Paltry 16% Tree Canopy! The Sauk Creek Greenway is the MAJOR portion of the 16% tree canopy in District 9. With a city-wide goal of 40% and a current coverage of 23% WHY would the city even consider decimating the Greenway for an unneeded, redundant, bike path. Here is a link to 2019 Urban Forestry Final Report for more information: <https://madison.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=8033567&GUID=9B1BC88B-FD1E-4CC6-B4DC-72D52838455E>.

Page 24: There are substantial differences in tree canopy by area. For example, downtown Madison and the UW-Madison campus areas have only 8-13% of canopy. Areas on the far east (District 17) have only 17% canopy and **far west (District 9) have 16% canopy**. Other areas of the city have canopy levels of 40% and higher. Given these differences, a general citywide goal may not address the deficiencies at the neighborhood level where the absence of trees is most acutely experienced. **CITY RECOMMENDATIONS: #3. The city should institute a range of policies and programs designed to **increase canopy coverage at the neighborhood level.** In conjunction with neighborhood groups, staff should develop strategies for increasing tree population**

3. Good Healthy trees throughout the Greenway. Documents show that there are GOOD HEALTHY trees – including many old growth oaks – THROUGHOUT the greenway. Don't accept the argument that the greenway is full of "garbage trees"!

4. No GAPS in the bike network surrounding the greenway. Check out the city's bike network map – especially the low stress bike route map. Add comments about your experience as a bike commuter, casual biker, parent teaching your children to bike. <https://cityofmadison.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?>

[id=cb7a2e78477044c19bf6a5eaa1820e38](https://www.cityofmadison.com/transportation/documents/complete-green-streets/Complete%20Green%20Streets%20Guide_Final.pdf)

5. High Point Road IS the on-street alternative the Transportation Commission asked for. Planners have said that “people are uncomfortable biking on High Point Road”. Notice on their map (page 13) that the only stretch of High Point NOT included on the bike route is the section from Sauk Creek Park to Tree Lane. So, they are saying that crossing Old Sauk and Mineral Point Road is fine but this very wide, calm section, with few driveways or parked cars is the problem? https://www.cityofmadison.com/transportation/documents/complete-green-streets/Complete%20Green%20Streets%20Guide_Final.pdf

6. NO Recorded Bike Accidents on High Point Road. There are rumors that the path through the greenway is needed because of serious bike accidents on the surrounding streets. There have been NO bike accidents on High Point Road and a path through the greenway would not have had any impact on the 2 recorded bike accidents on Westfield Road.

Use the following WI DOT interactive map to see for yourself.

<https://transportal.cee.wisc.edu/partners/community-maps/crash/search/BasicSearch.do.jsessionid=0E109C131FC1197A17BF06290CAF632B>

7. East-West Path = Significant Tree Loss. The updated WAP Draft includes an East-West shared-use path from the end of Brule Circle to Walnut Grove Park. We have clarified with city planners that a “shared-use” path has the same width and grading requirements as an “all-ages and abilities” path. **The minimum width is 5ft for a walking path but 10ft for a biking path. The maximum grade is 5%.** The grade across the greenway is approximately 17% -- more than 3 times higher. City staff have discussed the use of switch-backs to accommodate for the grade. **Imagine the tree loss that comes with a 10ft wide path winding back and forth up the bluff. To get construction equipment, and concrete trucks to build a bridge, the area will need to be cleared of trees,** as they have throughout Madison when building park bridges.

8. Madison’s Nature Everywhere Campaign. This initiative is designed to increase **equitable access to nature everywhere children live, learn and play (see announcement below).** **The Sauk Creek Greenway is the only natural area in the 9th district.** The greenway should be preserved to provide children who live, learn, and play in the neighborhoods surrounding the greenway access to nature.

9. Announced March 14, 2024. The City of Madison is proud to announce it is one of nineteen communities in the country selected to join the inaugural [Nature Everywhere](#) Communities initiative. The initiative is designed to increase equitable access to nature everywhere children live, learn, and play. “This partnership embodies our city’s commitment to sustainability and equity, recognizing that access to nature is not only a fundamental human right but also a cornerstone of public health and well-being,” said City of Madison Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway.

10. Cost: Planners have not addressed the cost of the bike path because they don't "have a specific plan yet". The greenway is a sliver of land surrounded 85% by homes. The largest inlet, at Walnut Grove Park, is on a bluff. So, any all ages and abilities path will require switchbacks to traverse the bluff, which will mean a significant loss of trees, bridges to cross the creek, and grading of current inlets on the western edge since they are too steep. Our conservative estimate of the cost is \$2million. The city probably has their eye on matching grants for this project BUT shouldn't that money, whatever the source, be spent on true, already identified by the City, gaps in the city's bike network?

11. Cost to taxpayers (Fed and State grants are matched by City taxpayers), The Autumn Ridge Path & bike Bridge, through Hiestand Park, total project is **estimated** to cost about \$4.5 million, with about \$2.5 million, covered by federal funds. **The city is slated to cover the remaining \$2 million.** Even Capital Improvement costs DO need to be paid back, with interest. We cannot afford more boondoggle, bike paths to no where, that are strongly opposed by the community surrounding them.

12. Fill True Gaps in Bike Network. Why is the city wasting valuable staff time and taxpayer money in the short $\frac{3}{4}$ mile bike path, that has faced huge opposition since it was announced, when it has already identified true bike network gaps on the NE side and other bike safety issues throughout Madison that need funding. Spend the money on safe bike paths elsewhere, where it is truly needed.

13. Safe & wide bike lanes surround the Greenway

14. NO reported bike accidents. suspected severe or minor or deaths [on streets surrounding the Greenway](#) that these paths would prevent, These are the facts, Per UW Traffic Safety web site, not people's incorrect perceptions.

Paths through the Greenway will not make it any safer to get across Old Sauk Road to the library and will end up on Tree Lane

15. Trees Trees Trees! Loss of mature trees to build an expensive, all ages and abilities (ADA) bridge and switchbacks up the bluff to Walnut Grove Park.

16. Light pollution from trail lights – [Madison is designated a dark skies community.](#) July, 2022

17. Climate issues ([the 2 hottest days on earth were recorded last week](#), ocean temps are rising), [Trees protect environment.](#) Save an old growth forest, trees sequester carbon dioxide, emit oxygen, control erosion, stabilize the bluffs and creek bank. Trails allow sunlight, that *increase invasive species growth* along trails

18. Loss of a Quiet Refuge. Citizens need a quiet refuge to walk peacefully in a city full of bike paths. What about walkers and animal rights?

a. Bikes are not allowed on other nature trails in Madison (Sprecher Pond, Tiedeman Pond, Picnic Point and Raymer's Cove paths, and others).

19. Loss of Sound Barrier [Trees Act As Sound Barriers In Urban Environments](#)

From: [Benjamin Noffke](#)
To: [Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: Support East-West Sauk Creek Greenway Path
Date: Tuesday, July 30, 2024 4:49:54 PM

You don't often get email from bnoffke3790@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Hi Transportation Commission,

I'm writing in support of keeping the Sauk Creek Greenway East-West path in the West Area Plan. This path would act as an excellent connector for the community, and I would appreciate it as a connector for low-stress streets on my bike commute in the area.

Thanks for your consideration,
Ben Noffke

From: [Julianne Zweifel](#)
To: [Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: Agenda Item 84377 Oppose Any Bike Path in the Sauk Creek Greenway
Date: Tuesday, July 30, 2024 5:00:41 PM

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I strongly object to developing any type of bike path within the Sauk Creek Greenway.

Greenspace must have a good tree canopy. We MUST PRIORITIZE increasing NOT DECREASING the percentage of the tree canopy. This is important for both ecological reasons as well as promoting human health.

With respect,

Julianne E Zweifel

From: [Gwen Long](#)
To: [Transportation Commission](#); [Conklin, Nikki](#); [John Guesquierre](#); [Duncan, John](#)
Subject: Agenda Item 84377 Access to Sauk Creek Greenway, oppose bike path
Date: Tuesday, July 30, 2024 5:29:47 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Accessibility to the beautiful nature trails and wildlife in the Sauk Creek Greenway is paramount to the Friends of Sauk Creek. We have created a group that is doing outreach with the Lussier

Center, the high school and other places that offer nature training for children so that those who live west of Memorial High school can learn about the wonders of the Sauk Creek woods. Many of our neighbors in the Greenbriar Apartments are small children.

Residents who live around the greenway have never taken action to keep others out of the greenway and we have work groups that pull invasive weeds, remove brush and sometimes groom trails when we have the resources for greater Madison.

There are many paths in the greenway that neighbors and visitors use to go to the dog park or to the area where there are wildflowers and other sites.

We cherish this Madison treasure and enjoy sharing it with others.

Two years ago we were told it is NOT park land for our enjoyment, or anyone's enjoyment. Just for stormwater drainage and water movement. We are glad that city officials now realized the recreational value of the land and witnessed how many socialize at the dog park with many people who don't live near us. We don't need a bike path to do this. In fact, it would be an obstacle to our connections.

Those who say that we are trying to limit access to the greenway are disingenuous. First of all, it is city land and we respect that. We look to the city for signage and welcoming gestures that we will support but that the city needs to authorize. There are no physical barriers to the greenway.

1. Friends of Sauk Creek tried to put up **Welcome to Sauk Creek Greenway, Enter Here** signs that FOSC created but were advised by City of Madison representatives that we could not post them on City property.

2. Our community is diverse, active, and inclusive. We reached out last year to our neighbors asking if their accessibility to the Greenway needs are being met.

--People with health conditions and mobility impairments said they just enjoy the shade and wildlife as it is, using the sidewalks and cul-du-sacs, and are ok not traversing the path.

Saving

the trees and climate is a very important issue to them.

--Neighbors with Down Syndrome and Autism are able to enjoy the greenway as it is, and prefer NOT to have a bike path and bikers whizzing through the peaceful, quiet, wildlife and bird-filled greenway.

--Elderly neighbors use walking sticks to cross the creek. Saving the trees and climate is a very important issue to them.

--We are not aware of visually impaired people in our neighborhood. But we would welcome them to enjoy the beautiful scents of the greenway which is alive with the songs of the frogs and the birds.

3. We contacted our Ald. Nikki Conklin to collaborate with us to get Lussier summer camp kids into the greenway and are eager to hear her response.

4. We also reached out to Memorial High School biology and environmental groups to encourage their use of the greenway for various studies and hikes. We plan to try

again this fall.

We believe the Greenway woods and creek are worth preserving in their natural state, with a little maintenance. We intend to enhance our world view that it must be accessible for all to enjoy. Wide, asphalted, lighted bike paths are NOT supported by the community.

Thank you

Gwen Long

From: [tj.hankerson](#)
To: [Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: 84377 West Area plan. Oppose any bike path through Sauk Creek greenway
Date: Tuesday, July 30, 2024 5:37:09 PM

You don't often get email from cookietjh1@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Vote No to any bike path through Sauk Creek Greenway. Too expensive in this area verses very little use. Destroyer of trees. Please vote No. TJ Hankerson

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)

From: [BASSAM Z SHAKHASHIRI](#)
To: [Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: Revised letter to the Transportation Commission from Bassam Shakhashiri
Date: Tuesday, July 30, 2024 5:56:22 PM
Attachments: [Transportation Commission Letter on Letterhead.pdf](#)

You don't often get email from bassam@chem.wisc.edu. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Please accept this letter in place of the one I sent two days ago. Thank you.

--

Emeritus Professor Bassam Z. Shakhashiri
William T. Evjue Distinguished Chair for the Wisconsin Idea
and Director

Wisconsin Initiative for Science Literacy

Department of Chemistry
University of Wisconsin-Madison
1101 University Avenue
Madison, WI 53706-1396
Telephone: 608-692-3913

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50 Years of [Once Upon a Christmas Cheery, In the Lab of Shakhashiri ... And Beyond!](#)

[2012 American Chemical Society Presidential Initiatives](#)

From: [Gail Walsh](#)
To: [Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: Sauk Creek greenway and bike paths
Date: Tuesday, July 30, 2024 5:58:06 PM

You don't often get email from gailtwalsh@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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I support the City's efforts to create safe bike paths. I think integrating such paths safely along roads makes sense. I oppose the destruction of a narrow urban forest in the greenway for a bike transportation route. This is a place of peace for walkers. Please do not destroy this gem for a bike path.

Gail Walsh
5 Plover Circle
Madison, WI

From: [Susan Bruegman](#)
To: [Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: Agenda Item 84377: OPPOSE Any Bike Path in the Sauk Creek Greenway
Date: Tuesday, July 30, 2024 6:18:13 PM
Attachments: [TransportationCommissionSubmissionbySusanBruegman7.28.24.pdf](#)

You don't often get email from susan.bruegman@att.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

Susan Bruegman
559-999-0287
susan.bruegman@att.net

July 30, 2024

Dear Transportation Commission,

I am sharing disturbing information hidden from the Transportation Commission that could invalidate any vote or recommendation you or other city bodies make this week and could put you in danger of legal challenges in the future.

A representative of the Madison Bikes board of directors has withheld key information from you for eight months.

Craig Weinhold, a pro-bike-path spokespeople and director of the Madison Bikes, the area's main bike advocacy group and leader of the pro-path Sauk Creek Greenway effort, told city officials in writing in January that bikers will not use bike paths in Sauk Creek. (See attached.)

Yet Weinhold and Madison Bikes, which says it has not taken a position on the bike paths in Sauk Creek, have continued to strongly advocate for them. We are concerned you will be swayed by their less-than-forthright arguments in favor of bike paths in Sauk Creek.

Some details: Craig Weinhold, a resident of Shorewood Hills who does not pay Madison taxes that fund Madison bike paths, told three city officials with your Engineering and Planning Departments in written correspondence Jan. 18 that bikers would not use a Sauk Creek bike path. (See attached.)

The attached letter shows the email letter addressed to Engineer JoJo O'Brien and copied to City Planner Ben Zeller and Asst. Traffic Director Renee Callaway. Weinhold **said "Few bikers will choose Sauk Creek paths over other routes since it would be longer, add climbing and have more bike/pet/dog conflicts."**

In addition, calling the bike path a transit route to link the area bike network is a "bit hollow."

This was not a fluke because Weinhold cemented his opinion in a similar message on Jan. 5 to a resident of a neighborhood near the Greenway who is an avid biker.

“There's no doubt that a north/south path will not be a major transit route for confident bicyclists,” said Weinhold in the emailed letter. (See attached.) He adds that the bike paths in Sauk Creek Greenway could be “amenity” for the neighborhoods.

The Sauk Creek bike paths clearly have no transportation purpose and thus their inclusion in the West Area Plan is not the purview of the Transportation Commission and the Transportation Division staff.

Consideration of Sauk Creek bike paths in the West Area Plan by the Plan Commission, the Urban Design commission, the Board of Park Commissioners, other commissions, and the city council **should immediately stop and the east-west bike path should be removed from the West Area Plan so the city can avoid questions about city spending on the unneeded but expensive project in a time of a \$22 million city deficit and a coming referendum.**

It is not the job of the Transportation Commission or the transportation staff to construct expensive amenities that do not have a transportation function. Planner Ben Zeller and Pedestrian Bicycle Administrator and Assistant Traffic Director (Planning) Renee Callaway have consistently told residents for more than a year in public forums that the transit goal for the Sauk Creek Greenway is a link to the bike network outline by the MPO in 2015.

If bikers like Weinhold won't use them, that will be untrue. Planners and Callaway did not do their research about whether bicyclists would use the bike paths or be deterred by the hilly terrain, which Weinhold references. Yet they knew Weinhold's assessment of his fellow biker's lack of interest in the bike paths.

Weinhold began in May to surprisingly make arguments in favor of the bike paths using his close relationship with Madison Bikes and support from his fellow members of the board of directors including Transportation Commissioner Robbie Webber, according to documents acquired by the

Friends of Sauk Creek. Madison Bikes website published Weinhold's 3800-word essay on [the Madison Bikes website called the Tragedies of Sauk Creek Greenway](#). The article contains factual errors and unfair characterizations of supporters of the Friends of Sauk Creek. It also contains statements like his January emails to the engineer, planner, and pedestrian bike administrator. In the May piece, he says that Ald. Nikki Conklin's removal of the north-south bike path **"no big loss for the overall bike network" which indicates that this path has not a transportation purpose.**

[Madison Bikes also published a video by Weinhold in July](#) on Instagram that again talked about amenities. The organization describes the video as Weinhold arguing that an east-west bike path will connect "local families with schools and amenities." Again, amenities are not a transportation purpose.

Weinhold urges bikers in his blog on the Madison Bikes website to "support for the East/West path and to try to restore the North/South path through the Sauk Creek greenway," two expensive unneeded projects that Weinhold himself are valuable for their amenities, not their transit function.

There are many compelling reasons to remove any bike path from the West Area Plan: negative impacts on the environment, the increase in the severity of climate change, the cost of an unneeded bike path during a time of a \$22 million city deficit, and redundant connectivity because bike lanes are already available on High Point Road and Westfield.

At this writing, the north-south bike path has been removed from discussion. Conklin added a bike path going East-West in April that was proposed by Webber at your December meeting and you approved it.

We ask you to consider the role of Madison Bikes with its powerful members of the board of directors in overstating the value of bike paths in the Sauk Creek Greenway and consider whether these unnecessary "All Ages and Abilities" 10-foot wide, paved paths with switchbacks that will destroy thousands of trees just in the construction of the paths is worth the primary purpose of providing amenities. We urge you to vote to remove the east-west

bike path and refrain from restoring the north-south bike path because of their questionable use as transportation routes.

Please see the attachments.

Respectfully,

Susan Bruegman
313 Sauk Creek Drive
Madison, WI 53717

559 999 0287

Attachments

In the email below, Craig Weinhold, member of Madison Bikes board of directors and tacit leader of the Sauk Creek Greenway pro-bike-path movement in Madison, tells a city engineer that bikers will not use a bike path in the greenway and it won't be a link to the area bike "network." He urges the city to build a bike path as an amenity with no transit purpose. He copies Planner Ben Zeller and Asst. Director of Traffic Engineering (Planning) Renee Callaway, who have been instrumental in promoting the Sauk Creek Greenway bike paths because of their role in linking the network of area bike paths. All recipients of this email knew of Weinhold's conclusion that Madison bikers would not use the bike paths in the greenway in January 2024.

From: Craig Weinhold <cweinhold@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 2:22 PM
To: OBrien, Joanna
Cc: Callaway, Renee; Zellers, Benjamin
Subject: Re: Two Sauk Creek greenway questions

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Thanks Jojo, And thanks for posting the

I've been reaching out to some of the more level-headed voices in the Sauk Creek path kerfuffle. One is Tom Dosch (public comment on pg 72-76). Another is Simon Widstrand, (cap times letter-to-the-editor).

It's worth reviewing their input.

One question that continually comes up is who and what the "All Ages and Abilities bike network" is for, especially in the context of Sauk Creek. I struggle to answer that. Few bikers will choose a Sauk Creek path over other routes since it'd be longer, add climbing, and have more bike/ped/dog conflicts. They'd only choose it for novelty and nature reasons. Timid bicyclists will use the path, but I don't see them venturing past Mineral Point Rd, Gammon, Beltline, or Old Sauk. (i.e., the "network" part is a bit hollow)

That doesn't mean a path isn't worthwhile, but the current messaging is unpersuasive. I'd recommend some adjustments:

1. Stress the need for east/west connectivity through the greenway, especially given WisDOT's plans for a bike/ped beltline bridge at Sauk Creek Park. Today, the east and west sides of the greenway may as well be on different planets.
2. Stress the value of the path as a neighborhood amenity. The path would look just like Fitchburg's many backyard paths (e.g., Oak Meadow Park, Seminole Glen, McKee Farms, Nannyberry, and Bluestem/Buttonbush). These carry far more local foot traffic than thru- bicyclists.
3. Explain why it's better to put a path through a greenway than along a street. E.g., terrace modification, tree loss, homeowner disruption, loss of parking, etc.
4. Talk about why High Point isn't on the All Ages and Abilities network. It is, after all, already a bike N/S artery with great path connectivity. It seems perfect for a path -- at least south of the greenway.

Best regards,

-Craig

Below is an edited email to a bike enthusiast and resident who lives near Sauk Creek Greenway. In the letter Weinhold reiterates his position that bikers will not use a bike path in Sauk Creek Greenway and it could be an amenity not a transit route.

Editor's note: This letter has been edited to protect the privacy of the people involved.

Date: Fri, Jan 5, 2024 at 10:16 PM
Subject: Fwd: Sauk Creek greenway path

Out of the blue a member of the board of directors for Madison Bikes sent me this email today. I have to suppose that these are the same contentions that city committees are hearing from him and probably from the planning staff. I've never been to any of the 3 parks he compares to Sauk Creek greenway and so don't know if there were environmental issues there, and his emphasis on an east-west pathway raises the prospect of more tree cutting than would a north-south bike path on the sewer maintenance road alone. In any event I don't see a need to get into a debate with him but his message might suggest some points to address in our future comments to city committees, etc. I have to hand it to the guy for trying to explain city policies better than I've heard or seen from city staff.

From: Craig Weinhold <cweinhold@gmail.com>

Subject: Sauk Creek greenway path

Date: January 5, 2024 at 5:47:10 PM CST

To:

I really liked your October letter to the Plan Commission about the Sauk Creek path.

There's no doubt that a north/south path will not be a major transit route for confident bicyclists. It would mostly be a neighborhood amenity to help people reach Walnut Grove Park from the west, and to allow people with mobility challenges to get into the greenway. I see it a lot like the backyard neighborhood paths that Fitchburg is fond of (like [Oak Meadow Park](#) and [Seminole Glen](#) and [McKee Farms](#), which see 10x more joggers and dog walkers than bicyclists). It probably should be paved for easier maintenance, but that's not certain and neighbors could certainly ask for a crushed limestone surface. Some people have mentioned lights, but I don't think those are necessary unless the neighborhood wants them for safer use at night.

That said, last year Madison adopted [Complete Green Streets](#) with its *All Ages and Abilities* bike network to support the ~1/3 of bicyclists who only ride on paths and would use it for transit. These are folks who drive to a trailhead, unload their bike, pedal up and down the paths, and then drive home. These folks keep bikes in their garages and claim they'd use them in town more, but point to the lack of safe paths as a reason they don't. They don't trust cars, and they don't trust themselves. That's why Madison wants to build the *All Ages and Ability* network, the first draft of which is shown on page 24 of [the final Complete Streets Guide](#). Here's a snippet:

It includes Mineral Point Rd, whose north side path will be built next year, and Pleasant View which gets a path with its construction. Junction Rd, Tree Lane, Old Sauk Rd, Gammon Rd, and others would be expected to get paths in the coming years. You can see the planned Sauk Creek greenway path is also on that map. The city likes greenway paths because they've worked so many times before -- Greenway-Chapel Hills Greenway, Yarmouth Greenway, Wingra Creek, Starkweather Creek, Yahara River, Pheasant Branch Creek, and so on. The alternative would be to shift all *ages* path to Westfield (or High Point), which means homeowner inconveniences like loss of street parking, changes to terraces & curbs, and higher project costs. Chances are that there'd be a lot of opposition to that, too.

You made a few observations --

- **Eminent domain** is indeed a headache. Mineral Point Rd's path will change width several dozen times. Pleasant View's will change widths and switch sides of the road! The city does have some nice carrots to encourage landowner cooperation on new paths -- free snow removal and forgoing of special assessments (those were key to getting Hammersly's new path). Madison's lawyers also feel the current law allows existing sidewalks to be widened without running afoul of eminent domain laws. Thus Mineral Point Rd's path is legally called "a widened sidewalk". But a Door County lawsuit about sidewalks has the eminent domain law [headed to the Supreme Court](#), and I have high hopes they might strike the whole thing down as punitive and discriminatory.
- **Lack of connectivity.** All paths are built in pieces, often over decades. For the Sauk Creek greenway, riding 1/4 mile on Tree Lane will reach the new Mineral Point Rd path, which in turn connects to the excellent paths along Junction Rd, Pleasant View, and on down to the Ice Age Junction trail. It also reaches to Grand Canyon where another 1/2 mile of riding reaches the Struck underpass and the Beltline path which will soon connect to Zor Shrine. There's the WisDOT's future beltline overpass at Sauk Creek Park. It might take 20 or 30 years to complete the *all ages* network.
- **Other projects to prioritize.** Yes, there are many! But projects that involve concrete and curbs are always longer and more expensive than projects involving dirt. Right now, the Sauk Creek greenway is under the knife [for other reasons](#), so it will be efficient and "cheap" to build a path there.
- **Money.** I've been following the City infrastructure projects closely for only a few years, but I've already figured out that project costs are completely unpredictable. E.g., the 1/2 mile of path from Gammon Rd to Zor Shrine along the west beltline highway that was approved this summer will cost MORE than the nearly mile of path from the Struck underpass to Gammon Rd and north to Mineral Point Rd, which included the fabulous Gammon Rd underpass. I can't understand that cost dynamic. There's just a huge disconnect between actual project costs and the things we laypeople see, like raw materials, heavy equipment, and human labor. Regardless, these days we have money from the bipartisan infrastructure bill and it's "use it or lose it", so I'm for ANY bike infrastructure project that can get done and fits into a larger network.

Anyway, I don't speak for the City but I am a biker and transportation advocate who follows these issues closely, and I hope a greenway path is something you could consider supporting.

Best regards, -Craig Weinhold

Below is an email from Craig Weinhold, Madison bike community leader, enlisting Robbie Webber's aid in a blog he posted. You can hit the link and see the derogatory, inflammatory, disinformation he wrote in a blog post on the Madison Bikes' website in his attempt to push the Sauk Creek bike path forward.

From: [Robbie Webber](#)
To: [Lynch, Thomas](#)
Subject: FOIA request: Fwd: Blog about Sauk Creek Greenway path
Date: Wednesday, July 10, 2024 1:23:56 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

This is the only other email that mentions the Sauk Creek Greenway that included a member of the TC.

As with the previous email, Harald was included simply because the original went to the entire Madison Bikes board.

My comments on the blog post were purely copy editing: spelling, grammar, punctuation, clarity, etc

Robbie Webber
pls excuse typos. typed on mobile device
608-225-0002 (cell)

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Robbie Webber** <robbie@robbiewebber.org>
Date: Fri, May 3, 2024, 12:03 PM
Subject: Re: Blog about Sauk Creek Greenway path
To: Craig Weinhold <craig@madisonbikes.org>

Craig -

I'm editing a few things in a Google doc. I think you are in the WordPress post right now, so I don't want to go in there with the edits.

It's most little things like punctuation, typos, etc. It's just old habits from when I edited the big posts at work.

I'll share the Google doc with suggested edits when I'm done

Robbie Webber

On Fri, May 3, 2024, 7:45 AM Craig Weinhold <craig@madisonbikes.org> wrote:

Yes, sorry. My bad! That link only worked if you were logged into wordpress.

Here is a PDF version. The layout is not as clean as it will be on the web, but the content is the same.

-Craig

On Fri, May 3, 2024 at 6:40 AM Eleanor Conrad <conradeleanor@gmail.com> wrote:

Hi Craig,

Can you share the blog via google docs? The link <https://www.madisonbikes.org/?p=6682> is not leading me to a blog draft.

Thank you!

Eleanor

On Fri, May 3, 2024 at 12:57 AM Craig Weinhold <craig@madisonbikes.org> wrote:

In case you missed it, the City and Ald Conklin announced that they have removed the north/south path through the Sauk Creek Greenway from the West Area Plan due to neighborhood opposition.

announcement: <https://www.cityofmadison.com/council/district9/blog/2024-04-29/alder-nikki-conklin-announces-decision-to-shift-a-planned-bike>
west area plan home page: <https://www.cityofmadison.com/dpced/planning/west-area-plan/3896/>

Here is a draft blog that I've penned about this issue: <https://www.madisonbikes.org/?p=6682>

I'd appreciate comments or criticisms. I know it's long; let me know which parts drag.

Thanks!

-Craig

Below is a transcript from the Dec. 13, 2023, Transportation Commission meeting. It was a remote Zoom-like meeting. All who signed up to speak were given 3 minutes each to present their arguments for or against at the beginning of the meeting. While the commissioners discussed the opposition to the bike path, the neighbors were muted and not allowed to ask a question or rebut any statements. Robbie Webber, a commissioner, and a member of the board of directors at the pro-bike-path Madison Bikes, abruptly introduced a plan to add an east-west bike path in the West Area Plan, which was later added by Ald. Nikki Conklin in April to the West Area Plan. Friends of Sauk Creek critique appears in green.

Robbie – Commissioner

I just wanted to add that if we can add to the motion that we feel an east west connection is especially important and if I can just get a u if if that's OK with Denise is that OK with you OK as the maker of the motion. Because the reason I feel that's really important is that there **are no other alternatives to an east West and so I think that that's an especially important piece to consider and I'm trying you know I'm thinking about kids that want to go over and visit their friends and they just have no way to get across that that big space without going all the way down apparently to Mineral Point Road or up to Old Sauk Road to get there or close to that.**

This is false! Robbie falsely claimed that there are NO OTHER options for an east-west route! She says our only options are Old Sauk or Mineral Point Road. Tree Lane AND Farmington Road are east-west routes that residents, like me, walk and bike on EVERY SINGLE DAY!

To give you an idea of distance, I live at the midpoint of the greenway, basically halfway between Old Sauk and Tree Lane. It takes me 7 minutes to bike from my house to Walnut Grove Park, which is the same time it takes me to walk to the closest public bus stop. A bike connection across the greenway is not needed.

If an east-west connection was so important, remember Renee mentioned that they have "explored an east-west connection", why hadn't the planners added it to the WAP? Going back to the public comments from WAP public engagement meetings – not one comment asking for an east-west connection was recorded. And again, if this connection was important, why didn't any of the letters or testimony presented to the TC say "the north-south path is not needed BUT what we really need is an east-west path?"

From: [Sandy Drew](#)
To: [Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: Proposed bike trails through Sauk Creek Woods -- Agenda Item 84377 Oppose Any Bike Path in the Sauk Creek Greenway
Date: Tuesday, July 30, 2024 8:35:41 PM

You don't often get email from sedrew24@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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I vehemently oppose any proposed bike path through Sauk Creek Woods. As an older resident, this is the only place in the neighborhood where we can safely walk in a wooded area and enjoy the birds, small mammals and trees and wildflowers. Too often I have walked in the park or on the sidewalks only to have a cyclist come up behind me without announcing they want to pass. Instead, they have maintained their regular speed and squeezed past me on the sidewalk. This has occurred despite the fact that there are on bike paths on the adjacent streets. I have come very close to being hit or knocked over several times. If I can't be safe on the sidewalk because of rude and inconsiderate cyclists, at least let me be safe walking through Sauk Creek Woods. Keep the cyclists out of the woods.

Sandra Drew

From: [Byron Knight](#)
To: [Transportation Commission](#)
Subject: Agenda item 84377
Date: Tuesday, July 30, 2024 8:44:42 PM

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I oppose any bike path through the Sauk Creek Greenway.

Byron Knight