

Regent Street—Frequently Asked Questions

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Complete Green Streets & Bike Facilities

Q: What does Complete Green Streets require for facilities on Regent Street?

A: Madison’s Complete Green Streets approach is intended to guide street design by balancing the needs of all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, motorists, businesses, emergency services, and adjacent property owners. The Guide takes a network perspective, recognizing that it is not possible to include everything on every street, but we aim to build a complete network for every mode of travel. The policy recognizes that constrained urban corridors often require tradeoffs and that designs must consider the specific context of each street. The Complete Green Streets requirements for Regent Street are an emphasis on tree planting on the north side of the street due to its Tree Canopy Priority score and accommodating large trucks due to Regent Street being part of the City’s Truck Route.

Q: What type of street does Complete Green Streets classify Regent Street as?

A: Regent Street is classified as a Community Main Street within Complete Green Streets. Community Main Streets are a unique type of street in that the parking/loading areas are a high priority for the health of businesses. This is called out in the Complete Green Streets guide. Page 15 explains the Modal Hierarchy and times when parking may be a higher priority. From page 15 of the Complete Green Streets Guide:

“Some people interpreted the hierarchy as signaling a large-scale removal of parking across the city, including on neighborhood streets and shopping streets (e.g., Monroe Street or Williamson Street). However, that is NOT the intent of this modal hierarchy. In fact, there are relatively few instances in which bike lanes would be placed on neighborhood streets, since most of those streets are suitable for biking without bike lanes. Similarly, on streets with small, local businesses (Main Streets in the street typology; see Section 5), the importance of on-street parking is well-recognized and is a high priority.”

Q: What is a Community Main Street and what makes it unique?

A: A Community Main Street is a street with dense businesses facing the street. Think of a traditional, small-town main street. This street is unique in that it's a destination street for shopping, food, and drinks. Rather than a single destination, there are many destinations with a sense of place. There is a high priority on streetscapes such as trees and sidewalk cafes and amenities for pedestrians. There is a higher priority on loading and parking and a high turnover of parking. Regent Street itself is unique in that is a Community Main Street that is also a truck route, event area, commuter route, bus route, and emergency vehicle route. It is also within 500' of an "all ages and abilities" multi-use path. All these aspects must be considered in the design.

Q: Does Complete Green Streets require bike lanes on Regent Street?

A: No, Regent Street is not part of the All Ages and Abilities Bike Network in the Complete Green Streets Guide, and therefore bike lanes are not a requirement as the Complete Green Streets Guide recognizes the need for identifying priorities and making tradeoffs. If Regent Street was on the All Ages & Abilities network, then dedicated bike lanes would be required.

Q: Why aren't bike lanes included in the TC/BPW approved design?

A: Regent Street is narrow between building faces, requiring tradeoffs between many main competing uses: pedestrian space, dedicated bike facilities, traffic lanes, and parking/loading areas. Given the available width, all these cannot reasonably be accommodated at the desired standard within the corridor.

The design approved by the Transportation Commission (TC) and Board of Public Works (BPW) prioritizes significantly improved pedestrian space while maintaining loading and parking access for adjacent businesses. The corridor serves numerous restaurants, taverns, and small businesses that rely on curbside loading and short-term parking, and there are limited nearby alternatives for those functions.

In addition, alternative east-west bicycle routes already exist near Regent Street, including the Southwest Commuter Path immediately north of the corridor and lower-stress neighborhood streets to the south.

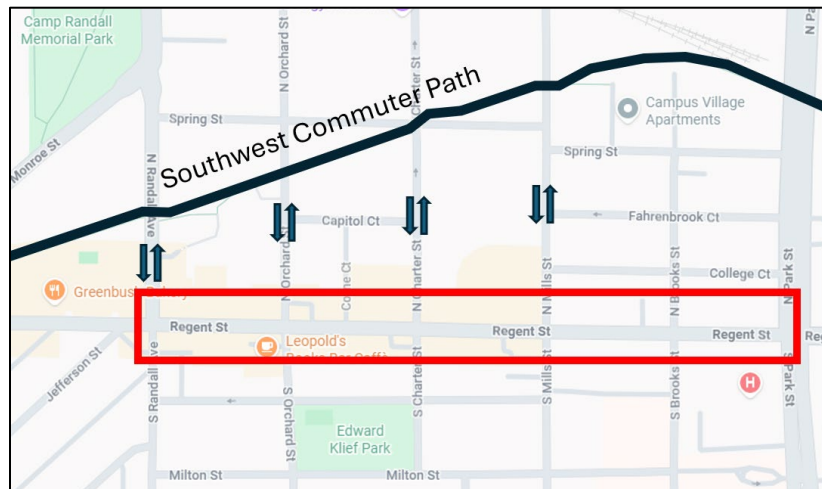


Figure 1. Connections to Southwest Commuter Path

Q: What are the major improvements included in the proposed design?

A: The TC/BPW approved design substantially improves the pedestrian environment and overall streetscape along the corridor. Key improvements include:

- Sidewalks widened from approximately five feet to eight feet in many locations.
- Significantly shorter pedestrian crossing distances to improve safety and accessibility.
- Mid-block bump-outs on both sides of the street, creating additional pedestrian space and opportunities for outdoor cafés and gathering areas.
- Wider terrace areas on the north side of the street to accommodate street trees, sidewalk cafes, bike parking, etc., where none exist today
- Installation of new street trees (18) along a corridor that currently has no City-owned trees.
- Upgraded lighting, pavement, and pedestrian infrastructure as part of the full street reconstruction.
- Added dedicated bike lane connections to the Southwest Commuter Path and across Regent Street
- Elimination of the peak-hour travel lanes and inclusion of turn lanes to remove the ambiguity of the current combined turn/thru lanes.

Overall, the TC/BPW approved design places a stronger emphasis on pedestrian safety, comfort, and the long-term streetscape character of the corridor allowing for street-activation and a lively destination/shopping street. It also significantly improves UW game day experience on Regent Street.

Q: What are the drawbacks of including bike lanes on Regent Street?

A: Accommodating dedicated bike lanes within the existing corridor width would require significant compromises elsewhere in the design. In practice, this would generally mean either:

1. Reducing sidewalk and terrace space, or
2. Removing parking and loading areas from one side of the street, and
3. Significantly increasing pedestrian crossing distances at all intersections along the corridor.

Reducing sidewalk and terrace space would limit opportunities for street trees, outdoor café space, and pedestrian comfort while also resulting in longer pedestrian crossings. Removing parking and loading areas would create operational challenges for businesses, particularly because there are limited loading opportunities on adjacent side streets. Deliveries would likely occur illegally within the bike lane itself, creating potential operational and safety conflicts.

Bike lanes in any design will lengthen the crosswalks at intersections. Difficult pedestrian crossings along Regent Street were a top concern during the public feedback process.

Additionally, the bike lanes would be moderate-to-high stress as they would be located between a busy, narrow travel lane and loading zone or high turnover parking.

The image below shows the comparison of curb lines between the TC/BPW design (red), and a bike lane design (blue) with parking removed from the south side. All pedestrian improvements would need to be eliminated from the south side under this scenario.

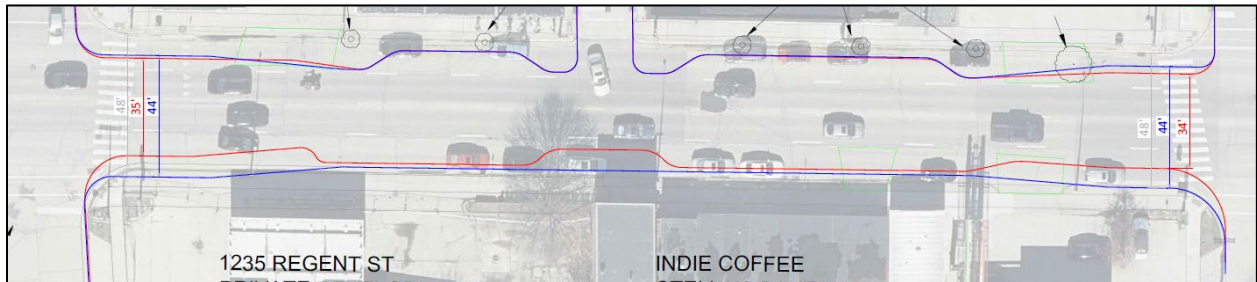


Figure 2. Curb comparison—TC/BPW approved design in blue and south side parking removed for bike lanes in red.

Additionally, dedicated bike lanes would not continue seamlessly beyond the project limits due to roadway width constraints on adjacent segments of Regent Street. As a result, bicyclists would still need to transition to alternative routes east and west of the four-block project area in a convenient way.

Q: If bike lanes were included with this project, what would the western and eastern limits be?

A: Bike lanes could only be added for a four-block stretch, between Randall Avenue and Brooks Street. Bicyclists would need to enter/exit Regent Street at those points and would need to use alternative east/west routes beyond those locations. In other words, bike lanes within this project would not be connected to a broader east/west bike network.

Q: Is Regent Street included on the “All Ages & Abilities Bike Network”?

A: No, Regent Street is not part of the All Ages & Abilities Bike Network. Instead, the Southwest Commuter Path to the north and the route of Grant Street to Drake Street to the south are part of the All Ages and Abilities Bike Network.

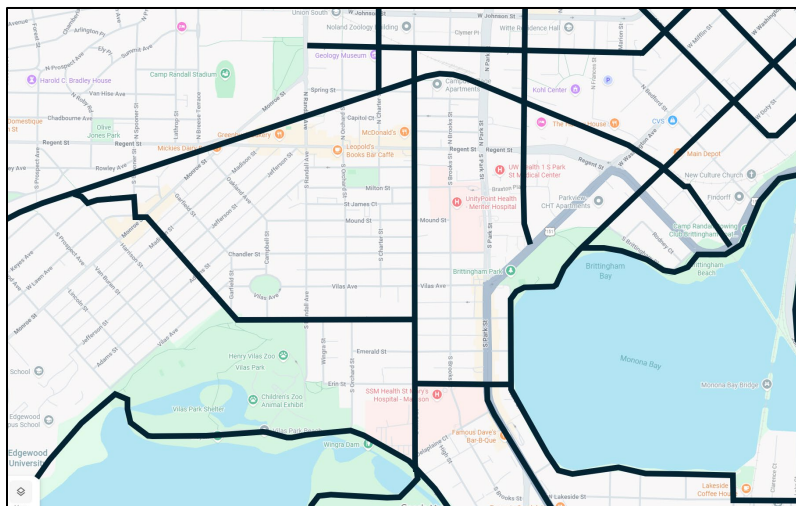


Figure 3. All Ages & Abilities Bike Network

Q: Were bike options considered in the analysis of different designs?

A: Yes, both on-street bike lanes and a protected bike facility were considered. The pros/cons of those options were discussed both internally and at public meetings. One-sided parking option was also considered. The drawbacks of those options were deemed greater than the benefits they would provide. The main drawbacks of those options include:

- Limiting the pedestrian improvements (keeping sidewalks and crosswalks the same as today)
- Limiting the number of tree plantings (this would go against Complete Green Streets Guide requirements for Regent Street)
- Limiting the curb bumpouts and streetscape options
- Impact on businesses

Q: What bike improvements are included with this project?

A: Rather than including dedicated bike lanes on Regent Street, the TC/BPW approved design focuses on the connection to the Southwest Commuter Path and improving the bike crossings of Regent Street in the following ways:

- Randall Avenue—extending the existing bike lanes south to Regent Street, across Regent Street with green dashes, and south to Bowen Court
- Orchard Street—extending the counterflow bike lane configuration from Spring Street south to Regent Street. Adding RRFB push buttons on all four corners of the Regent Street intersection. Extending bike lanes south of Regent Street. Adding a raised intersection
- Charter Street—Adding a raised intersection
- Mills Street—Removing the on-street parking to add buffered bike lanes on Mills Street from the Southwest Commuter Path, through Regent Street, and south to Milton Street.

Delivery / Loading / Parking

Q: How would including both parking/loading AND bike facilities affect the pedestrian and terrace space?

A: The terrace space would be too narrow to plant trees between the parking/loading areas and the sidewalk. Approximately eight tree locations would be removed. The total number of trees would be reduced from 19 down to 11. If both parking and bike lanes were included, much of the pedestrian improvements would be eliminated from the project. Sidewalks become narrower, several trees eliminated, and intersections wider with longer crosswalks than the TC/BPW approved design.

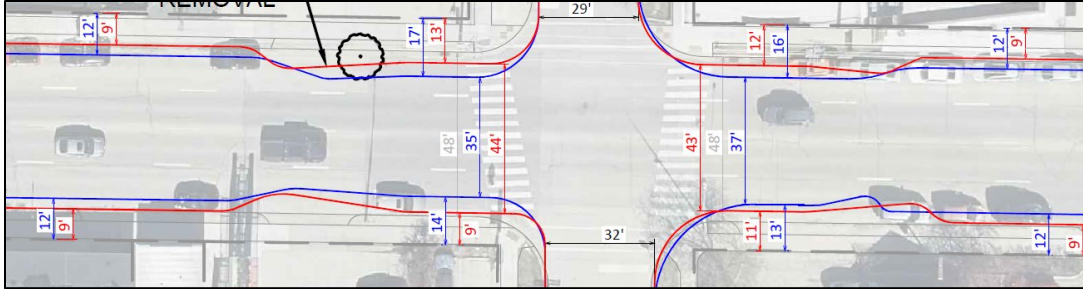


Figure 4. Curblines comparison of TC/BPW approved design (blue) to a bike lane design (red)

Q: Could parking/loading be removed from one side of the street and relocated to side streets to accommodate bike lanes?

A: This design would result in major operational issues. There are very few locations where loading zones will work on the side streets. Most of the side streets are narrow with driveways and bike lanes themselves, which limits the opportunity for loading zones. The realistic outcome of including bike lanes without loading zones, is that the bike lanes will be illegally used as loading zones.

Q: Can't Parking Enforcement just issue tickets to keep the bike lanes free from being used as loading zones?

A: Tickets would be issued, but experience shows that enforcement does not fix this problem. Many drivers know the rules and choose to take the risk. Or drivers will drive away as parking enforcement is writing the ticket. This is an issue in Madison and many cities around the country. This issue has become worse with the rise in popularity of food delivery apps such as DoorDash, Uber Eats, and Grubhub. Regent Street has a high number of delivery/loading events. City Staff documented 50 separate vehicles loading during a one-day period from 6am to 7am just on the one block between Brook Street and Park Street.

Q: What about State Street? There is no parking on the street with many small businesses.

A: Delivery vehicles are allowed to use State Street at all times except the lunch period (11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.) The street is very actively used for delivery purposes directly in front of businesses.

Q: How many existing loading/parking spaces are there and what is included in the TC/BPW approved plan?

A: Today, there are approximately 47 total parking/loading spaces between Randall Avenue and Mills Street. The TC/BPW approved design has 36 total spaces in those blocks with additional spaces to the east, between Mills Street and Brooks Street with the redevelopment of that block.

Q: Is the on-street parking really needed?

A: Community Main Streets place a particularly high priority on maintaining on-street parking to support local businesses. While there are examples of Community Main Streets with reduced on-street parking, those corridors typically have alternative parking options available, such as rear parking lots or nearby public parking structures. Regent Street does not have a nearby public parking structure or public lot. Although some businesses have small private parking areas, they provide limited capacity. As a result, businesses along Regent Street rely heavily on on-street parking and loading areas for both customer access and deliveries.

Maintaining this level of on-street parking and loading is important not only for supporting existing businesses, but also for attracting future business investment and redevelopment. This principle is explicitly recognized in the Complete Green Streets Guide (page 15), which states that on streets with small, local businesses—identified as Main Streets within the street typology—the importance of on-street parking is well recognized and considered a high priority.

Emergency Vehicles

Q: Why is Regent Street an important emergency vehicle route?

A: There are limited east/west routes for emergency vehicles in this area. Regent Street is the main route to the emergency room at Unity-Point Meriter Hospital. This is the main emergency room used by Madison Fire and Police. MPD provided this information:

Regent St is a frequently used corridor for emergency responders. It is one of the safest and most efficient routes when responding to emergency calls in the midtown, central and west districts.

It is a main corridor in the area to respond to emergencies because it is the most efficient route to arrive safely and provide aid. Safe arrival is one of the highest priorities, followed by arriving quickly to help those in dire need. While a quick response is often critical, the focus is on efficient routing that avoids hazards and within such is a reasonable road width that allows for such safe travels for emergency vehicles.

Regent St differs from other roadways due it being one of the only safe and efficient corridors to respond to the highly populated hospitals, stadiums, businesses and neighborhoods in area.

Q: How often is Regent Street used by emergency vehicles?

A: Madison Police does not have automatic vehicle log data available, but Madison Fire does. Here are the data for emergency calls based on one month of use:

- Average of 16.3 uses/day for the month
- Station 4 Ambulance = 5.1 per day
- Station 4 Fire Engine = 3.2 per day

- Apparatus speeds are already slow—average of 18.6 mph with a peak of 26 mph
-

Lane Width

Q: Why are the traffic lanes “14’ wide”? How does this compare to other streets in Madison?

A: The effective traffic lane width is not 14’. The TC/BPW approved design has 12’ of asphalt next to the 2’ concrete gutter which raises up slightly to the parking areas. The parking is then 7’ wide. This combined 21’ for the travel lane plus parking lane serves multiple functions—it provides the necessary width for drivers on Regent Street to pull over to allow a fire truck, ambulance, or police car to drive down the center of the street, and it provides a buffer space for people to get into and out of their vehicles when parking. The extra width also accommodates large trucks and buses as Regent Street is a truck route and bus route.

The 21’ for travel lane + parking is consistent with other streets in Madison. Here is a list of comparable streets:

- Williamson Street west of Baldwin 22’
- Monroe Street in the business area is 22’
- Regent Street further west is 22’
- Williamson Street east of Baldwin is 21’

The only streets with less than 21’ for the travel lane + parking are low-volume streets or one-way streets:

- Langdon Street (one-sided parking) is 20’
- E Mifflin Street is 20’
- E Johnson Street (one way street with history of parked car crashes) is 19’
- Jenifer Street (parking is removed in winter to allow two-way bus traffic) is 19’

In summary, 21’ for the combined travel lane + parking is reasonable for the conditions on Regent Street, which include:

- Truck Route
 - High emergency vehicle use
 - Bus Route
 - Snow presence in winter, which results in vehicles parking/loading further from curb
 - High turnover of parking (business area) and high-volume street (arterial)
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Q: Won’t the “14’ lanes” result in speeding?

A: No, the effective lane width is less than 14'. The proposed parking + travel lane width on Regent Street is actually 3' narrower than the existing condition. Currently, there is not an existing, major speeding problem. Reducing the lane width would slow speeds further. More information on speeds from a 2026 study:

- Posted speed limit: 25 mph
- Mean speed = 20.7 mph
- Median speed = 20 – 21 mph
- 85th percentile speed = 26.1 mph
- Very few vehicles above 35 mph
- Extremely rare for speeds over 40 mph

In general, existing speeds are not a major concern, but improvements can still be made. The new TC/BPW approved design will help to slow speeds further, especially with the tighter intersections and shorter pedestrian crossings. A bike lane option would open the intersections with wider crossings to accommodate the bike lanes. This would compromise the tighter feel for drivers and may result in higher speeds.

Q: Why are speeds relatively slow on Regent Street if the lanes are wide?

A: During most times of the day, congestion and traffic-signal timing play a major role in controlling speeds through the corridor.

Additionally, driver speeds are a function of several factors, not just lane width. As a stretch of street becomes busier, drivers need to process more information and naturally slow down. Drivers tend to slow down on Regent Street due to the high amount of friction including:

- Pedestrian activity
 - Congestion
 - Presence of parked vehicles
 - Active loading/delivery in the parking lane
 - Things to look at (e.g. businesses, billboards, RRFBs, crosswalks, signals)
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Public Engagement

Q: What was the public engagement for this project?

A: The City hired KL Engineering who subcontracted EQT By Design to complete the public engagement for the project. Engagement included stakeholder interviews, an online public survey with over 1,000 responses, and two public involvement meetings. From EQT By Design:

Through stakeholder conversations and survey feedback, it became clear that priorities such as long-term investment, everyday functionality, and direct community impact should inform every design decision.

A pedestrian-focused Regent Street corridor emerged as a central priority. In particular, stakeholders emphasized the importance of a shared, flexible corridor that balances the needs of all users rather than prioritizing a select few.

Core themes across all groups include:

- *Safety - specifically crossing safety and lighting*
- *Ease - reliable access to on-street amenities and loading, rather than faster travel*
- *Comfort and space quality - shade, lighting, benches, trees.*

We also learned:

- *Residents & Students aligned strongly on safety and pedestrian comfort.*
- *Businesses & Commuters prioritized traffic flow and access, though for different reasons (commerce vs. route)*
- *Event Visitors emphasized Regent's identity as an entertainment corridor.*
- *Ultimately, all groups acknowledged events as both a defining strength and a source of strain.*

Q: What was the engagement specifically with UW Students?

A: The following activities were performed by EQT Team members to engage students and student-affiliated groups:

Direct Outreach & Presentations:

- UW Staff and Community Partner Meetings
- Met with members of the campus planning team (non-students; staff) via Zoom.
- Met with Brenda Gonzalez (UW's director of community relations, non-student) in person.
- Met with members of the Promoting Awareness and Victim Empowerment (PAVE) leadership team, presenting at their organizational meeting.
- Presented to members of Wunk Sheek (students of indigenous identity) at their general body meeting.
- Held a phone call with Miinan White, Exec Board member of Wunk Sheek.
- Met individually with Eli Tzarofsky, a former graduate student and member of the Regent Street Neighborhood Association, which is a largely student-led NA.
- Held a phone call with Alder MGR Govindarajan, the UW Student representative on the Madison Common Council.

The direct outreach to these representatives was to create awareness and as materials were made available, they would then share with their networks through their communication channels. The public involvement meetings and survey were also advertised with flyers at Regent Street intersections and electronic message boards on the street, and the PIMs were scheduled to be held during the UW semester.

Transportation Commission & Board of Public Works Feedback

Q: What was the feedback from the Transportation Commission on the approved design vs a bike lane design?

A: December 3, 2025—No designs presented by Staff. This was background information only, and soliciting initial feedback. TC feedback was to improve the pedestrian space, widen sidewalks and terrace and shorten crosswalks. Focus on bike connections and alternatives rather than bike facility directly on Regent Street.

March 4, 2026—Staff presented the first iteration of the current design. There was a lengthy public comment and discussion on bike lanes and businesses. Overall direction from the TC was to further improve pedestrian accommodations for street crossings with reduced corner radii, and additional amenities such as trees and mid-block curb extensions.

April 15, 2026—Approved proposed design by a vote of 6 to 5.

May 13, 2026—TC approved a revision to add bike lanes on Mills Street by a unanimous vote, and a dedicated eastbound left turn lane at Park Street by a unanimous vote with one abstention

Q: What was the feedback from the Board of Public Works on this design vs a bike lane design?

A: April 22, 2026--The Board of Public Works unanimously approved the proposed design on April 22, with a revision to remove the added left turn lanes between Brooks Street and Park Street.

May 20, 2026—The Board of Public Works approved the Mills Street bike lane addition and eastbound left turn lane at Park Street by a vote of 3-1.
