

**From:** [Alicia Lyu](#)  
**To:** [Plan Commission Comments](#)  
**Cc:** [Guequierre, John](#)  
**Subject:** Potential violation of future Housing Forward Proposals by legislative file 89479  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 9, 2025 5:21:43 PM

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Dear Plan Commission,

[The newly released Housing Forward Proposals](#) hinted at a future policy that could make the proposed development in legislative file 89479 **illegal**:

*Updates to Transit Oriented Development Overlay Zone ... will enable more missing middle housing options and **disallow a small number of auto-oriented commercial uses** within this zone, which is in closest proximity to the city's high-frequency transit service.*

Despite lack of specificities, I understand that the lawmakers on the Plan Commission actively participate in Housing Forward Proposals and should have a sense of the Mayor's plans. I plead that you, esp. Alder Guequierre (CC'ed), be **upfront** about whether this future TOD update will disallow legislative file 89479. If it will, I ask that you take it into account and consider the proposed development **a serious contradiction** to the Comprehensive Plan and TOD zoning rules even in their current form, while it is not an illegality just yet. As I argued before (included below), with the principle of "substance over form" in mind, their design does not meet the drive-thru requirement.

I ask that you deny this proposal.

Alicia Lyu

On Aug 15, 2025, at 7:00 AM, Alicia Lyu <[alicia.w.lyu@icloud.com](mailto:alicia.w.lyu@icloud.com)> wrote:

Dear Plan Commission,

I am writing to oppose the legislative file 89479. I speak as a current resident of 512 S Yellowstone Dr, 2 blocks away from the proposed development.

Our apartment building, the Marquee, is one of the first multi-family developments in the area, a pioneer in the blueprint set out in the West Area plan. I love living here, but I feel not always welcomed, mainly because of the entrenched car-centric infrastructure. As we transition the west area into an urban space, we need the city to deliver their promise in the West Area Plan and facilitate this process. Approving a standalone drive-thru commercial building with no residential component in a RMX zone is the very opposite of what the community needs. Approving Von Mauer in 2021 already set back the plan to extend Odana Road; the West Towne Mall stays cars' sole territory to this day. I urge the city to avoid making the same mistake.

On the front of the laws and zoning language, I second Shaun Becker's analysis. I

also question the applicant's compliance with the following requirement, cited from their letter of intent:

The TOD establishes site standards for Automobile Infrastructure that require drive-thru to be “located under the building covered by upper floors” to reduce the area and impact caused by car structures and promote more pedestrian and bike-friendly access as well as quality public transit.

With the principle of "substance over form" in mind, their design does not meet this requirement. Despite having 2 floors, the only car infrastructure covered by an upper floor is the drive-thru windows. All of the parking area and drive-thru lanes lays bare, uninviting to customers on foot or bikes. I urge the applicant to study Ancora drive-thru Cafe at 3926 Monona Dr Madison, WI 53716 for what the TOD zoning rules actually intend. I urge them to follow suit, making earnest efforts to comply with city planning. I implore the Plan Commission to avoid making a precedent of unsubstantial compliance with drive-thru requirements.

It won't be the worst thing in the world that the new plan should include residential units. It should be profitable for the developers and investors. I encourage the applicant to envision the good they can do to the community beyond a coffee shop with an outdated suburban design, which the west area is long overdue to evolve out of.

Sincerely,  
Alicia Lyu