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To: [Transportation Commission](#)
Cc: [Furman, Keith](#); [Figueroa Cole, Yannette](#)
Subject: Lake Mendota Dr - Good plans so far, but why bidirectional?
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Dear Transportation Commission and sponsors,

I know you're receiving a lot of input on this project already. A lot of people want a lot of different things, and it's falling to the city to form not a consensus (that would be a tall order) but something that most people can live with.

I've seen/heard people stressing the importance of accessibility, and the necessity of sidewalks for that, which I absolutely agree with. Folks stressing how Lake Mendota Dr is heavily used by pedestrians, cyclists, etc. Folks who see it as safe for those uses today, and thus resist changing the configuration when it's reconstructed--even if this ignores the accessibility issue, it reinforces that this corridor needs to accommodate non-car use.

I'm also hearing concerns about stormwater runoff, usage of road salt so close to the lake, and the amount of impermeable surface. City staff have provided answers to some of these things--proper gutters will reduce erosion and help catch leaves and grass clippings that would otherwise wash further down. However, these are still valid concerns here.

There's also concern about through-traffic on Lake Mendota Drive and its use as a commuter route. While I contest the claim that neighborhood residents are the only ones who use Lake Mendota Drive, I support the sentiment. University Ave can be congested at certain times, but that is where we want commuters to be.

When you put all of this together, it's not a contradiction, we just need to revisit a premise:

Why is Lake Mendota Drive two-way?

Getting to/from the Spring Harbor boat launch would be one notable exception, and city staff would need to look at what alternate routes people would take to/from their homes on Lake Mendota Dr, but it seems like many sections don't require bidirectional traffic. Even if this couldn't be applied to all sections (for example the long 4900-5000 block which is partly in Shorewood Hills), a one-way treatment on parts of Lake Mendota Drive could make a lot of difference for the street's end-to-end use.

In sections that can be made one-way, this would reduce the impermeable surface, salt, and runoff. It would require less right-of-way for vehicular traffic, leaving more room for walkway and greenspace. It would also naturally reduce through-traffic and speeds.

The city recently took a similar one-way approach on Starkweather Dr, which has been great!

Unfortunately I won't make it to the meeting on Wednesday, but I hope this can be a part of the discussion.

Thank you,

Nick Davies
3717 Richard St

PS. I see nothing wrong with the idea of permeable pavers--for the roadway or the walkway--however it does strike me that the owners of these luxury lakefront homes along Lake Mendota Drive are demanding a luxury-grade street reconstruction as well. Should the city spend more on this street project just because the properties along it are higher-value? Where are the demands for permeable pavers and park-like features when the city is reconstructing a less affluent street?