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Subject: Safe connections to Mendota St and Anderson Rd platforms for BRT jughandle
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Attachments: [REINDAHL-Fiscal Analysis Parks Board-2022-08-10 \(rev2022-09-08\).pdf](#)

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Hello CCHIC,

Please be aware that if the proposed BRT jughandle on Mendota St proceeds, a safe pedestrian route to the BRT east/west platforms on E Washington Ave at Mendota St will need to be provided. Safe passage will be needed from both the new men's shelter on Bartillon and from the multi-family homes and businesses/non-profits along Orin/Onsgard Rds, including Planned Parenthood.

The only alternative would be to proceed north on Bartillon Rd and then east to Portage Rd, and then south to the proposed BRT platform at E Washington Ave. This alternative has sidewalks, but is considerably longer and– being mainly along large business sites, park fields, and farmland– perhaps less safe (especially in the dark), and less protected from cold winds.

Currently, residents must walk on Mendota St itself, when walking to or from the existing Metro bus stop on E Washington at Mendota St. That would also be the case for residents of the men's shelter. This is unsafe, especially in the dark. It is particularly unsafe near the hairpin transition from Mendota St to Lien Rd.

Probably sidewalks will need to be installed on one or both sides of Mendota St from the hairpin. Separated sidewalk extensions may also be need to be added along the proposed new BRT-only connection across the N Stoughton Rd Service Drive to Anderson Rd. Currently, one must cross the often busy KwikTrip driveway, which collects multiple streams of internal Kwik Trip traffic.

In a nutshell, safe passage across the nexus of these existing neighborhood streets, an existing multi-use path, and the existing north driveway/entrance for the nearby KwikTrip will need to be provided. It is already challenging to walk or bicycle safely through this nexus, even before the BRT-only connector and BRT 15-minute service are added.

Safe passage across HWY 51 will also be needed, for folks wishing to cross from this nexus to Anderson Rd (East Madison Community Center, Madison College, ANG base, etc) and the proposed BRT platforms near Wright. This crossing eventually should go under or over HWY 51, as WisDOT reconsiders/reconstructs this highway between I 90 and HWY 30, to provide safe cross-highway accessibility, especially for youth, elderly, and disabled folks.

Could the funding for the BRT project can cover the expenses of Mendota St sidewalk installation and other improvements for necessary access and safety? That would in part offset the increased air (tire and brake particulates) and noise (cumulative disk and air braking dBs) that, with the addition of 15-minute BRT service existing Mendota St residents will need to endure for the greater community good.

The neighborhood would also benefit from undergrounding of multiple overhead utility lines along HWY 51, Stoughton Service Rd, Lien Rd, and Mendota St, as well as along the west

and south borders of Reindahl Park, and along its Portage Rd side. Much of the neighborhood needs additional street trees, which undergrounding would allow to be full size. Yet it is my understanding that multi-family residential tenants cannot initiate terrace tree plantings by the city's forester; such request must be made by landlords, some of whom/which are located outside the City of Madison.

Utility undergrounding would benefit the entire community by increasing service reliability: In recent years two derechos and a tornado have downed or damaged trees and lifted multi-family building roofs in the vicinity.

New tunneling and electrical transmission/distribution technology allows undergrounding to be net cost effective long-term, though initial expenses for utility companies may be higher than overhead facilities, when externalize expenses are not considered (such as power interruptions to businesses induced by critters or weather, increased building cooling costs due to diminished shade and the urban heat island effect, etc.).

Last, north of Mendota St, a multi-use underground or bridge on E Washington is necessary, for safe passage across this 6-8 lane highway. The proposed library+pavilion (Imagination Center) may be sited in Reindahl Park, despite the city's failure since 2014 to consider alternative sites/designs. Or it may be sited elsewhere, near Reindahl Park or in East Towne Mall, using the approach for Pinney PL library+condos (for a savings of \$3.5 million in construction savings, plus added future annual property tax revenues of ~\$250,000/yr; please see attached). The MPL's own 2016 report indicates there would be greater socio-economic impact long-term if the facility were sited in the East Towne area. In any event, safe access to this new facility will need to be provided for pedestrians and bicyclists, from both sides of E Washington Ave.

The residents of the new men's shelter on Bartillon will also benefit from the above improvements.

Thanks in advance for your consideration of these concerns.

[Jon Becker](#)