

**From:** [Patricia Filas-Mortensen](#)  
**To:** [Urban Design Comments](#); [Plan Commission Comments](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Oppose Regent St. Shared Bike/Pedestrian Path  
**Date:** Tuesday, July 30, 2024 1:16:01 PM

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**From:** **Patricia Filas-Mortensen** <[pamortensen@uwalumni.com](mailto:pamortensen@uwalumni.com)>  
**Date:** Tue, Jul 30, 2024 at 12:43 PM  
**Subject:** Oppose Regent St. Shared Bike/Pedestrian Path  
**To:** <[transportationcommission@cityofmadison.com](mailto:transportationcommission@cityofmadison.com)>,

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,

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