

Subject: Motion to Postpone a Vote on the Sauk Creek Corridor Plan - Environmental Impact Study and Other Reasonable Requests

Dear Common Council

Given serious environmental, fiscal, and cultural concerns, The Friends of Sauk Creek respectfully request that the **Common Council postpone a vote** on the **Sauk Creek Corridor Plan** until staff answers questions about the below information to you and the public:

Significant Land Disturbance and Tree Removal

- The project will impact **34.9 acres of land**, including the **removal of an undisclosed number of trees** in a **sensitive ecological corridor**.
- Large-scale land disturbances like this—particularly in a riparian greenway—may trigger an **environmental review** to assess risks such as **increased stormwater runoff, soil erosion, habitat loss, and downstream water quality degradation**.

Lack of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

- The **City of Madison** has **only conducted an Ecological and Channel Assessment**, but has **not completed a full Environmental Impact Study (EIS)** to evaluate the project's broader environmental effects.
- Projects requiring **state permits—such as a stormwater permit from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR)—that may require environmental analysis**. Given the **scale of this project**, we are **recommending that an EIS be required** before any further approvals.

Lack of Transparency on Budget

- The **City has not disclosed an estimated budget** for the project. Without this information, **you and the residents cannot properly assess the plan's fiscal impact**, which will affect all City taxpayers. In the report it is stated on one hand that "with the City's limited resources, budgeting in advance is important to ensure there is funding for a project" and then it essentially states that as the specific designs occur for each phase a budget will be known.
- Dr. Faith Fitzpatrick, Ph.D, a renowned hydrologist with the Upper Midwest Water Science Center, has offered to meet with the City on a **less invasive plan that would save taxpayer dollars** and trees. We **recommend that City staff meet with her** to discuss the recommendations she proposed to the **Board of Public Works**.

Wetlands Protection

- There are **five wetlands in the greenway**; it appears that four of them **may be impacted/disturbed** by the project and **will require a permit from the Wisconsin DNR**.
- Wetlands are **protected due to their role in stormwater filtration, flood control, and wildlife habitat preservation**.

Archaeological Review of Native American Burial Ground Site in Sauk Creek

- The **West Area Plan** noted a **large area in the Sauk Creek Greenway** that **may contain a Native American burial ground site**.
- This **was not addressed or mentioned** in the **Sauk Creek Greenway Plan**.
- **Out of respect for the Ho-Chunk Nation, who historically lived on and stewarded this land, a full archaeological investigation and report should be completed** before proceeding with any approvals.

Request to Postpone a Vote:

Thus, we respectfully request that the **Common Council postpone a vote** on the **Sauk Creek Corridor Plan** until staff presents the below information to you and the public:

1. **A full Environmental Impact Study (EIS) is conducted** and reviewed by the appropriate regulatory agencies.
2. **The City discloses an estimated project budget** and explores **less invasive alternatives** as proposed by **Faith Fitzpatrick**.
3. **A wetland permit review is completed by the Wisconsin DNR**.
4. **A formal archaeological investigation is conducted** to determine the presence of a Native American burial site.

We appreciate your time and consideration reviewing these concerns and urge you to **prioritize environmental responsibility, fiscal transparency, and cultural respect** before proceeding with this project. Thank you for being an environmental steward for our community.

Sincerely,

The Friends of Sauk Creek.

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Ellen Foley

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