

Plan Commission
Special Meeting of September 30, 2021
Agenda Item #3, Legistar #67554

TOD Overlay

The presentation offers the Commission three options: (1) a ¼ mile radius around all BRT stops; (2) a ½ mile radius around all BRT stops; and, (3) a ¼ or ½ mile based on walking distance.

A ¼ mile distance based on walking distance would be most appropriate.

- In 2016, the Park+ model (used for the Livingston parking ramp), in consultation with the City, determined for the model that people were willing to walk ¼ mile.
- ¼ mile seems to be the standard, though some suggest ½ mile.
- There are many redevelopment sites within ¼ mile.
- Using ¼ mile would protect neighborhoods from the lone developer constructing a relatively outsized building that does not sync with neighborhood character.
- If the sites within ¼ mile fill, the TOD could always be expanded to ½ mile.

I would like to propose another variation – eliminate the isthmus from First Street to Park Street from any increased density around BRT stops.

- The existing density in the isthmus is enough to support BRT. The stretch of BRT from the Yahara River to South Park has approximately 49,000* residents within ½ mile of BRT stops. This approximate 2.5 mile stretch of BRT (about 16% of the total 15 mile length) already is home to over half the residents living within ½ mile of a BRT stop (the staff presentation shows 93,781 residents live within ½ mile of a BRT stop).
*See page 28, Estimated Population by Wards, of:
<https://madison.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=9715126&GUID=873F0FB4-EE3D-42E5-BEC1-1E9D2DBCE3B5>
- There are isthmus plans with specific standards, the Capitol Gateway Corridor and the Downtown Plan, which are designed to create a specific environment. These plans already allow for density. These are also plans which have been generally followed.
- The isthmus is already walking, taking transit and has the lowest miles driven per year. (Urbanfootprint Analysis for the Comprehensive Plan.)
- The isthmus already has quick bus service. The Madison Transit Corridor Study did not identify any routes in the isthmus to be eliminated.
 - For example, a person who lives on Rutledge/Clemmons could walk .28 miles to Riverside/Winnebago, arrive at Mifflin/Pinckney in under 14 minutes and change to BRT at same intersection. Will that person walk .51 miles to First/E Washington and board a BRT, particularly in the rain or cold? BRT would involve an extra 10 minute walk (accounting for traffic signals), versus an extra 5 minute bus ride.
- And, of course, if minimum parking is eliminated (even for restaurants and bars?), the impact is unknown. Although people take transit, many (most?) are not giving up their vehicles.

Should all increased densities around BRT stops be the same? The Comprehensive Plan said:

- Development, architectural, and site design standards are needed to create a TOD development pattern at and near transit stops. TOD standards may vary from location to

location based on site-specific conditions, but the following design elements should be adhered to for TODs within the city: [14 elements listed]

Should TOD include more than what is being proposed (increase allowable # units, density, height; remove auto-parking minimums; reduce parking maximums)?

- The Comprehensive Plan says: "The City has seen strong demand for redevelopment along major transit corridors. That demand is likely to increase when transit service is improved. BRT corridors should be among the areas prioritized for the preparation of detailed sub-area plans. Such plans should not only cover building use and design to complement investments in transit, but also improvements to pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure that make it easier for people to get to BRT stations."
- Land Use and Planning, Strategy 5, action b.: Ensure that redevelopment is well-integrated into adjacent low density residential areas.

Historic Districts

At a minimum, City designated historic districts should be excluded. (If the isthmus is excluded from TOD overlay, then the local historic districts will not be affected except for a section of University Heights.) Local historic districts total about .45% of City acreage.

The Comprehensive Plan drives the City's growth and development. As said in the Comprehensive Plan: "[T]he Comprehensive Plan is a declaration of the City's values, desires, and future." Many factors are reviewed during the process of creating the Plan, from where housing should be focused, to community gardens, to historic preservation and many other factors. With respect to historic preservation, the Plan says:

- Historic preservation can improve the quality of housing in Madison's older central neighborhoods by encouraging the rehabilitation, maintenance, and adaptive reuse of high-quality older buildings, sometimes with the help of tax credits (in the case of structures within National Historic Districts).
- Madison has long valued its historic and cultural resources - from 2,000-year-old mounds to 50-year-old post World War II buildings. Madison's history, and the places that contribute to that history, are important to preserve for residents, visitors, and future generations to experience.
- The preservation of a city's historic and cultural resources can have significant economic benefits to a community. Heritage tourism is a fast growing economic sector in many cities. As visitors spend more money on trips and experiences, many are traveling to experience the history and culture of different cities. Heritage tourists often stay longer and spend more money than other tourists. This is a largely untapped opportunity for Madison and the surrounding area. Promoting Native peoples' history in the region and the Madison area's association with Frank Lloyd Wright are a couple examples of opportunities to grow and enhance tourism. Historic preservation also has many other benefits. It contributes toward establishing a sense of place that makes Madison feel unique and embodies the social aspects of the city's history that helped shape Madison.

But what of National Register Historic Districts?

- If the isthmus is eliminated from TOD overlay, all but one National Register Historic District would remain unaffected – the exception is the University Hill Farms Historic District (plus the section of University Heights). Eliminating that limited area from TOD would not be unduly burdensome.

- If the isthmus is not eliminated from TOD overlay, the Langdon Street Historic District would be affected, a district that the City has long sought to preserve and which is specifically discussed in the Downtown Plan.
- The Historic Preservation Plan, a plan required in the Comprehensive Plan (Culture and Character, Strategy 2, action a.) has three fundamental functions of historic preservation. One of those three is:
 - "preserving undesignated areas with unique architectural, urban and spatial characteristics that enhance the character of the built environment, such as properties and districts listed on the National Register of Historic Places that do not possess the protections provided by local designation."

I urge the Plan Commission to:

- (1) use a ¼ mile walking distance around BRT stops (though perhaps adjusted to include whole block faces);
- (2) eliminate the isthmus from the standardized increased density/height and removal of parking minimums; and,
- (3) exempt local and national historic districts from TOD overlay.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Lehnertz

From: [Susan Millar](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Cc: [Price, Jessica M](#)
Subject: Thank you, Planning Department!
Date: Thursday, September 30, 2021 12:00:28 PM

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

I strongly support the City of Madison's Planning Department for its work in proposing the changes described in the "Distributed Green Infrastructure - Zoning Changes" and the "BRT and Transit-oriented Development Zoning Framework" documents, to be presented to the Plan Commission on 9/30/2021. I strongly urge the members of the Plan Commission to support and if possible, further strengthen, these proposed changes.

The faster and more comprehensively the Planning Department and the Plan Commission act to help our city reduce climate warming emissions, and implement climate change mitigation strategies, the better. That said, I strongly urge you to act as effectively and quickly as possible on **prevention** strategies, that is, strategies for reducing climate-warming emissions: the more effectively our city joins in Earth-wide prevention, the fewer resources will need to be allocated to mitigation.

Thank you,
Susan Millar

I was born when CO2 PPM was 310.5.
When my youngest grandchild was born, PPM was 400.0 (2015)
At current rates, when he is 20, PPM will be 430. (See the [data provided by climate.gov.](#))

From: Bob Klebba <bob.klebba@gmail.com>

Sent: Thursday, September 30, 2021 4:29 PM

To: Plan Commission Comments <pccomments@cityofmadison.com>; bacantrell@charter.net; Albouras, Christian <district20@cityofmadison.com>; jshagenow@yahoo.com; Kathleen Spencer <klanespencer@uwalumni.com>; Ledell Zellers <ledell.zellers@gmail.com>; Lemmer, Lindsay <district3@cityofmadison.com>; nicole.solheim@gmail.com; Heck, Patrick <district2@cityofmadison.com>; tony.fernandez5@gmail.com

Subject: historic districts - agenda item 3!

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Dear commissioners,

I am very excited to see how much attention the Plan Commission is giving to BRT. I appreciate your anticipating the development changes that will come with these dedicated transit corridors.

I strongly feel that national and local historic districts must be exempt from the TOD overlay districts. For the most part, these districts are already in the urban center of Madison. The purpose of BRT is to make outlying areas of the city more accessible to downtown and across the city. BRT should be able to make density appropriate in the TODs and not affect the existing historic district.

thank you!

sincerely, Bob Klebba

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Bob Klebba he him his
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