

From: [Kurt Stege](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Subject: Item 2 on Plan Commission December 9, 2021 meeting agenda
Date: Thursday, December 9, 2021 9:54:04 PM

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This is the testimony I provided this evening. Please add the written version to the public record.

Why do we have historic districts?

They are vestiges of a time and reflect what people could build and chose to build. They are a tangible way to associate with a period of history.

Historic districts represent less than 2% of Madison's land parcels.

These small areas of the City have a great deal to teach us.

If we don't treat them differently than other areas, they won't continue to exist.

They have been specifically singled out for protection from change.

To now carve out areas of these districts in order to encourage highly visible change is antithetical to the entire concept of historic preservation.

Historic districts are immobile assets. They aren't literature or music that are inherently mobile. By definition, historical districts cease to exist in a different location.

Why would someone want to encourage development in a national park?

There is simply NO basis for drawing a distinction between local, state, and national historic districts. All were created for the same purpose.

Thank you.

Kurt Stege
82 Cambridge Road
Madison

From: [Jon Becker](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Cc: [Halverson, Gary](#)
Subject: Comment on BRT TOD overlay
Date: Thursday, December 9, 2021 5:13:33 PM

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Hello,

Regarding the distance of the overlay around the proposed Mendota/Anderson/Wright jughandle off East Washington:

This route has been touted by staff as saving BRT travel time versus a westbound route that continues on E Wash (downtown bound), crossing HWY 51. This seems unlikely, and staff's time analysis should be checked for accuracy. Also: Connection of Mendota to Anderson across HWY 51 will be costly. Last, the nearby neighbors (I'm one of them) have not been well-informed about this proposed jughandle's construction impacts (I've been trying to get the alder to hold a BRT jughandle-route-specific meeting for several months).

Please consider the possibility that in-person attendance at Madison College-Truax since the pandemic has reduced student use of the remote parking lot off Wright street to zero. Metro no doubt wants to serve their campus (and the Wright street neighborhood). A desire for continuation of the Metro Partner revenues from MC must also be a factor. Metro staff reports that MC has assured them that Truax campus in-person attendance will rebound, but it has not as yet resulted in use of the remote parking lot off Wright.

Thanks for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

Jon Becker
POB 8574
Madison 53708

PC Testimony BRT TODs

Bob Klebba 9 December 2021

Thank you Chair Zellers, commissioners, and City Staff for the opportunity to participate in this discussion.

I'm excited about the extensive research required for the presentation we are reviewing today. Transit overlay districts are an important part of coordinating the successful long-term implementation of BRT. Increasing density close to the BRT stations will make the facility more efficient and provide a higher quality of life for those living in the transit corridor

However, I am concerned about the interference of the overlay districts with our defined historic districts. I hear rumors that Local historic districts will be exempt from any zoning changes that would be imposed by a TOD. But I must urge the commission to apply the same exemption to national historic districts as well. These areas have been recognized as historic resources, even though they don't factor into local ordinances. As you know, there is great fear of testing the current Wisconsin state legislature's tolerance for more local historic districts by city staff and by the Madison Trust for Historic Preservation. As a result, for the past 10 years, national historic districts that could have become local historic districts remain as national districts. So, I ask the Commission to treat the national districts the same as the local ones and to exempt the transit overlay district in the national districts as well.

Last, the long-term benefit of the TODs will be to promote more affordable housing not on the isthmus, with easy BRT access to the entertainment and employment opportunities that the downtown offers. The goal of the BRT TODs should be to provide affordable density in areas that aren't already dense, not in areas that are close to downtown. I believe that this policy would align well with the market forces pushing residential construction. Thus, I ask the commission to exempt areas from the Yahara River west to Breese Stevens.

Thank you.

Plan Commission
Special Meeting of December 9, 2021
Agenda Item #2, Legistar #67554

Historic Districts

I support exempting local and National Register historic districts from the TOD overlay. Not for the purpose of avoiding a Section 106 review, but because the Comprehensive Plan recognizes historic preservation as a worthy goal.

The Comprehensive Plan ("CP") has a strategy of implement BRT, but also has a strategy of historic preservation. How does the CP balance what some see as conflicting goals? "Directing redevelopment and infill to existing auto-oriented commercial centers and other areas as identified in the Growth Priority Areas Map, Generalized Future Land Use Map and sub-area plans will help accommodate needed growth while protecting the historic character of older neighborhoods." (CP, page 50)

The CP recognizes that historic preservation can improve the quality of housing and help achieve sustainability goals.

"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). However, historic preservation is applicable only to a small portion of Madison's housing stock. Special area plans guide the processes of preservation, conservation, and rehabilitation in established neighborhoods, even if a neighborhood conservation or historic district is not in place. Finally, housing conservation and rehabilitation will help achieve the City's sustainability goals, as the most sustainable housing stock is that which already exists." (CP, page 55)

The CP recognizes the economic impact of historic districts.

"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."

The CP said that historic preservation should drive changes in the zoning code, not the other way around.

"The zoning code should be reviewed with respect to the new HPP [Historic Preservation Plan] and the revised historic preservation ordinance and modified as needed to ensure that the provisions of the code are consistent with the HPP and the historic preservation ordinance."

The Historic Preservation Plan speaks to preserving both local and National Register districts:
“Three fundamental functions of historic preservation include: 1) identifying, evaluating and designating historic resources, 2) preserving and protecting designated historic resources, such as locally designated landmarks and historic districts, and 3) 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.”

Context-Sensitive Design

The CP speaks to “the importance of ensuring redevelopment can integrate well with its surroundings through context-sensitive design and scale.” (CP, page 50) See also:

- “Context-sensitive design is particularly important in neighborhoods with an established character and where redevelopment or infill is occurring in close proximity to buildings of historic or architectural value. Restoration of historic assets can be an important part of context-sensitive design (Culture and Character Strategy 2, Action c also covers this topic).” (CP, page 75)
- “Madison will need to balance encouraging redevelopment and infill with protecting the qualities that made existing neighborhoods appealing to begin with. Redeveloping existing auto-oriented commercial centers and other areas identified in the Growth Priority Areas Map, Generalized Future Land Use Map, and sub-area plans will help accommodate needed growth while respecting the historic character of older neighborhoods.” (CP, page 76)
- “Old buildings, even if they are not formally recognized as landmarks or part of a historic district, often establish the character of a place. These buildings often have a level of design, detail, materials and craftsmanship not typically found in newer buildings. They also often represent connections between certain segments of the community to the history of a particular neighborhood. Reuse or rehabilitation of these buildings can extend their life beyond the originally intended purpose and achieve many sustainability goals, such as keeping materials out of landfills and not wasting the embodied energy contained within the existing building. In addition, older buildings are often less expensive for residential and commercial tenants than new construction.” (CP, page 77)
- “The City should continue to encourage context-sensitive redevelopment within Activity Centers and mixed-use corridors through implementation of Strategies and Actions within this Plan, but will also need to undertake detailed planning to set the stage for some current commercial and employment areas to transition to vibrant mixed-use Activity Centers.” (CP, page 15)
- Appendix A, Culture and Character, has two goals:
 - Goal: Madison will be a vibrant and creative city that values and builds upon its cultural and historic assets.
 - Goal: Madison will have a unique character and strong sense of place in its neighborhoods and the city as a whole.”

Strategies include:

Emphasize high quality human-scaled design in new buildings and public spaces. Use the City’s development review standards and processes to ensure that redevelopment and infill projects result in interesting, high-quality buildings and spaces and harmonious design relationships with older buildings.

The standardized overlay proposal does not promote context-sensitive design. Three examples illustrate this point.

First, the Schenk's corner/Atwood area. During the CP process, this area was proposed as Community Mixed Use (2-6 stories, general residential density of 130 units/acre or less). The Plan Commission, and Council, reduced the intensity of this area to Neighborhood Mixed Use (2-4 stories, general residential density of 70 units/acre or less). A map footnote was added to recognize that taller buildings *might* be appropriate in a few areas.

Yet this TSS zoned area would be treated under the proposed overlay as any other TSS zoned area, ignoring the neighborhood context that was recognized when amending the draft CP. There are only two other stretches of TSS within ¼ mile of the BRT route, both of which are right on the route: about 4 blocks on University Avenue around the intersection where Campus/University intersect (26 tax parcels); and, the 2400-2500 blocks on the north side of East Washington (14 tax parcels).

Second, East Johnson Street, where there are about 4 block faces of NMX zoned properties. In 2018, a project proposed for the 700 block, Legistar 50758, was reduced from a 4-story structure to a 3-story structure to better fit with neighborhood character. The conditional use approval for this proposal was referred several times, and the rezoning of this property was tabled by the Council before being approved upon reconsideration. Clearly, there were concerns with this proposal, yet the proposal looks like it would be a permitted use under the overlay proposal.

Third, South Baldwin and East Wilson, across from McPike Park. There are 8 properties zoned NMX in an area which the CP designates as Low Residential (1-2 stories, general density of 15 dwelling units/acre or less). Three properties on E Wilson about an area the CP identifies as Medium Residential (2-5 stories, general density of 20-90 dwelling units/acre), yet the CP did not extend the increased intensity of use further down the block. Further intensifying redevelopment intensity for this Low Residential area does not reflect context-sensitive design.

In addition, the CP states: "While more intense forms of multifamily or mixed-use development may occur as mapped along major corridors adjacent to, or running through, LR areas, any infill or redevelopment that occurs within an LR area should be compatible with established neighborhood scale, and consistent with any relevant sub-area plan." In low-residential areas, the CP allows for three-unit buildings, single-family attached, and small multi-family buildings in "select conditions" at up to 30 dwelling units/acre and three stories. (CP, page 20)

The CP also calls for sub-area plans to be respected. (CP, pages 124-125) And in connection with transit corridors, an action under Strategy #5 (Concentrate the highest intensity development along transit corridors, downtown, and at Activity Centers) is: "Ensure that redevelopment is well-integrated with adjacent low density residential areas." (CP, page 36) One could argue that treating all properties within a particular zoning category the same does not respect sub-area plans and does not ensure integration with low density residential areas. The CP addressed BRT corridors: "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. (CP, page 32)

Parking

Minimum parking requirements would be removed.

Currently, minimum parking exists for restaurants, restaurant-taverns, taverns, restaurant-nightclub, nightclub, and brewpubs if located within three hundred (300) feet of another restaurant, restaurant-tavern, tavern, or brewpub. The parking is 15% of capacity. However, this can be administratively reduced by 20 parking spaces, and is regularly reduced, due to factors such as proximity to transit. That means that an establishment with a capacity of 133 persons or less does not generally have any parking requirement. Should a new establishment like Schwoegler's, with a capacity of 1307 and within ¼ mile of the BRT route, have some sort of parking requirement?

Currently, minimum parking is required if the floor area exceeds a set amount (varies by zoning district). These are proposed for removal under the overlay. But should all buildings be exempted? This past summer, 849 E Washington (zoned TE) received conditional use approval. The ordinance required 251 parking places, the applicant proposed 142 parking spaces. Staff discussed the parking reduction being appropriate based, in part, on its location on the BRT route, and Plan Commission approved. Rather than eliminating parking (since not all 214 residents of 849 E Washington will be without a car), would it make more sense to reassess the amount of minimum parking?

Auto-Oriented Uses

What happens to existing auto uses such as gas stations? Do they become nonconforming uses (with restrictions on repairs and expansion)? There are many auto-oriented uses on the proposed corridor, and many on the route discussed for the north-south corridor. Even the prohibition on vehicle access windows could negatively affect businesses such as banks and fast food restaurants. Perhaps such uses should be available through conditional use approval.

Exemption of the Isthmus

Please consider exempting the isthmus from the overlay, in addition to the Downtown.

The isthmus from the Yahara River to Blair has almost 11,000 residents within ½ mile of the BRT route. Compare that to the number of residents from Highway 51 to the interstate, about half again as long, which only has around 5,000 residents within ½ mile of BRT.

In 2011, this portion of the isthmus had 7,962 residents, it now has 10,819 residents (per 2011 and 2021 redistricting materials). This is a growth of 2,857 residents, for an increase of 36%, and even more residential projects have been approved but not yet constructed. Does this approximate 1.13 mile stretch need the additional encouragement for redevelopment that is provided by the overlay?

The portion of the isthmus south of E Washington has few sites that the BRT overlay would apply to: (1) the E Washington corridor remains governed by UDC #8; and, the residential area by the lake is historic. That leave the area between E Main and the bike path, an area with

MGE, the Water Utility, Research Products, Madison Metro and McPike Park – areas not likely to be redeveloped.

The area north of E Washington also has the first block governed by UDC #8. The residential zoned areas are primarily TR-V1 (4 units are permitted), with pockets of TR-V2 (12 units are permitted) and some TR-C4 (3 units are permitted). Though there are pockets of NMX on Johnson Street, large buildings are not context-sensitive structures.

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Lehnertz

From: [Ann Hardel](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Subject: Proposed rezoning along Whitney Way
Date: Thursday, December 9, 2021 11:14:02 AM

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

Dear Planning Commission,

As a home owner in the Hill Farms area I would like to go on record against the proposed rezoning to allow more high density housing along Whitney Way. There is already a shortage of single family housing in Madison. Multi-unit housing is springing up everywhere all along Whitney Way from the project near Mineral Point Road to the massive update in the old Westgate shopping area and the project at Whitney Way and Old Middleton Road. Additionally, there is empty property at the old Pick N Save location. Would it not make more sense to turn this property into apartments? I am very concerned about this density in a neighborhood where traffic on Whitney continues to increase with little regard for the newly posted speed limits. Let's preserve the single family housing that we have and build the multi-family units where it makes sense. I know real estate is prime, but lets draw the line at replacing these single family units.

Thank you,

David Hardel
5317 Burnett Drive
Madison

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

From: [Ian Jamison](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Subject: Agenda Item 2: TOD Zoning Framework
Date: Thursday, December 9, 2021 2:49:26 PM

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Hello,

I have lived in Madison for the last 10 years, as a student and professional. I own a home that I rent out, and I'm currently a renter. I've owned a car in the city, and recently sold it to go carless. I've seen a lot of different sides of the city.

Though I've worn many different hats, the BRT plan is a HUGE benefit to this city regardless of the perspective I look at it from. It's an opportunity to help our city grow, to benefit from amenities that result from that growth, and to make accessing all parts of this booming city easy and environmentally-friendly for everyone.

For BRT to realize its full promise, it is imperative that it's accompanied by inclusive zoning in the TOD Framework. Some folks have written looking to exclude national historic districts from upzoning. This would be a huge mistake.

I live in the East Washington neighborhood, and there is ample opportunity to upzone along the BRT corridor. "Historic" preservation has historically been used to exclude the not-yet-rich and the non-white, while locking in booming property values for affluent, white property owners. It's a farce.

As I said – I've lived in Madison for 10 years. I know the city well. If you sent me towards Breese Stevens and into the Yahara neighborhoods and asked me to guess which areas are historic and which aren't, I wouldn't be successful. I doubt many Madison residents would be. Instead, the "historic" areas are the ones with the loudest, most affluent residents. It's not right.

While most Madison residents couldn't pick out a historic neighborhood from a non-historic neighborhood, they can certainly distinguish affordable housing in in-demand areas from overpriced housing. How much affordable housing (and, how much BRT use we get as a result) we get will be a direct result of how far we push the envelope on upzoning. We should push it to 11.

With gas prices high, rents rising, and the climate crisis leading more and more folks to look for alternatives to Single Vehicle driving, apartments and homes along the BRT corridor will only increase in demand. With bold, visionary action now, we can set the stage for that future, and prevent folks like me writing back to you years down the line, talking about how unaffordable housing is, and how hard it is to access BRT.

Think big and do the right thing.

Thank you

Ian Jamison

December 9, 2021

RE: Proposed zoning changes along the BRT

Dear Members of the Planning Commission,

I appreciate your taking the time to gather feedback on the proposed zoning changes to the BRT corridor, in particular changes that would impact the Hill Farms neighborhood. More than 20 years ago I purchased my family's house in Hill Farms specifically because of the neighborhood—quiet, meandering streets lined with mostly single-family homes. It's a very safe area, a great place to raise a family.

When the Hill Farms neighborhood was created, it was with intent. Streets are not overly wide, with many curves and turns designed to ensure cars drive slowly and disincentivize drivers from using the neighborhood streets as a cut-through. This helps explain why residents stay in our neighborhood. When I moved in, 40 years after the neighborhood was established, I bought our home from an original resident. A significant portion of my block, Door Drive, was occupied by the original owners. Over the course of 60+ years, our home has only seen two families. This is the type of neighborhoods our City should be striving to keep—ones with long-term residents who continually improve and maintain their homes.

In a similar fashion, we have made upgrades and improvements to our house. We did so with the fair assumption that our neighborhood's character was set and permanent. We had believed the investment we made into our house would be secure with rising home values. However, if the changes in zoning are allowed to go through, that could all change.

Intentionally changing the zoning of the neighborhood to accommodate denser development does not fit with the neighborhood design. Streets that are currently safe for our children to walk and cross quickly become hazardous with too much traffic. Parked cars lining streets create blind spots, further reducing safety.

Our neighborhood has already experienced changes to safety with the development that has occurred at Madison Yards. People working at Madison Yards who previously utilized onsite parking started parking in Hill Farms. We noticed immediately the change in safety as cars lined our street, reducing it to a single-lane and creating hazardous blind spots where our children cross roads. No longer was our street a reliably safe place for our children to play ball out front. Things have improved slightly with more people working from home, but that will not last and in the coming years, more people will be working at Madison Yards which will create more congestion and safety issues.

Rezoning parts of the neighborhood would pile on to those current and future issues, reducing property values and disincentivizing families, like mine, from staying in the City. It is vital for the long-term future of Madison that it remains a good, safe place to raise a family. It is a slippery slope if conditions are created that push families to the suburbs. A wide, varied tax base is important to a city's survival. Step-by-step changes that do not fit with neighborhood plans, such as is being proposed with zoning along with BRT corridor, will slowly and negatively impact Madison's vitality.

I therefore strongly urge the Commission to not change the zoning in Hill Farms.

Kind regards,

Joe Kremer
20+ year Hill Farms resident

From: [Marybeth McGinnis](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Subject: Reject historic districts - we want housing and transit
Date: Thursday, December 9, 2021 3:24:03 PM

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Hello,

I wish to express my disagreement with carving out exemptions for so-called "historic" districts. Instead I beg of you to reject the obsession with "historic" and instead address the urgent housing and transportation needs of Madison's residents and future residents.

To exclude *any* part of the isthmus from the TOD overlays on the basis of fears of density or so-called historic preservation is to condemn our city's residents and its future residents to the burdens of high rents, being pushed to the margins, lack of walkability, and being forced into car ownership. The isthmus is the most walkable part of our city; for this reason, it is also the most lively and for many, the best place to live in the entire city. Density is not a hindrance to this: instead, density is *the reason* why living in downtown, Atwood, Monroe area, Tenney, Marquette, etc. is so pleasant. It is only through density that the burst of wonderful restaurants, good transit and biking, jobs, access to retail, and even the simple amenity of living near one's friends becomes possible. The irony of historic districts is that these became historic because they are nice places to live: yet by cementing them into place, we simply continue to benefit those with enough wealth to buy a home, as well as landlords of some of the worst-quality housing in the city (who know they can get away with poor property management).

I have lived in apartment buildings and subdivided houses across the isthmus. I have always been a renter, and many of my friends cannot even *imagine* being a homeowner in this city. But even the most affordable housing units, subdivided houses - many of which are old and essentially run by slumlords - are becoming too costly. We need not only more housing but more affordable housing and higher quality housing than the rundown shacks many renters live in in Madison.

As you can see from the map on slide 9, the entire isthmus is within a half-mile of a BRT station. That is pretty much a city's dream - for many current and future residents, the quality of sidewalks and bike lanes, and now with BRT, makes the isthmus the perfect place to *not own or depend upon a car in Madison*. In addition to the *many* benefits to reduced congestion and pressure on parking, putting more people in the best car-free area of the city has the wonderful impact of *reducing housing cost through reduced transportation cost*. This means that even if an apartment on the isthmus has a higher rent than somewhere else in the city, the overall cost of housing may be *lower* if residents do not need to own and operate a car. However, we need housing to match this reality.

Today, I rent a single family house in the Atwood area. Personally, I think I live in the best area of the city: trees, easy biking, great local businesses. Please, please put more neighbors near me. It is ridiculous to have the best places in the city to live be restricted to SFHs. There should not be a single % of this city near a 1/4 or 1/2 mile of BRT with low-residential zoning.

Sincerely, a lifelong renter,
Marybeth McGinnis

From: [Mary Pustejovsky](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Subject: TOD ordinance
Date: Thursday, December 9, 2021 1:58:03 PM

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

Hello

I am writing to voice my support for the TOD ordinance for BRT. I lived in a TOD zone for 7 years in Austin and it was fantastic. People were able to walk, bike, or take transit and decrease car usage. No area of the city should be exempted, as all of us benefit when more people are able to live near transit. Considering the climate crisis, we need as many people as possible living near transit to meet our GHG reduction goals.

Thank you
Mary Pustejovsky

RE: Transit Overlay Development Plan
December 8th, 2021

Dear Plan Commission Members, Alder Benford,

A discussion item you are discussing is the Transit Overlay District for Bus Rapid Transit. The staff presentation lists as item #1: “What geography and which zoning districts should be impacted by the TOD overlay?” Staff proposes that most residential districts be included. Please consider not including TR-U1 and TR-U2 in the zoning categories affected by TOD overlay.

Last June increased density was approved for TR-U1 and TR-U2.

- TR-U1 went from 8 units as a permitted use to 24 units as a permitted use. Height was increased by one story, to 4 stories/52 feet.
- TR-U2 went from 8 units as a permitted use to 60 units as a permitted use – at least that is what the ordinance reflects. The amendment proposed by Alder Evers at the 6/1/21 Council meeting called for changing the threshold in the TR-U2 district from >60 to >36. It seemed to have passed, yet the ordinance reflects 60 units as permitted. TR-U2 was lowered in density due to a number of residents expressing concern about an affordable multi-family building on Merry Street, the only building zoned TR-U2 amongst TR-C4 homes.

Including TR-U2 in the TOD overlay has the potential to reverse the Council’s specific decision which was made to help ensure that the Merry Street property would not be redeveloped in an inappropriate manner for its setting.

TR-U1 has already received the benefit of increased density and increased height.

We, the undersigned, ask that TR-U1 and TR-U2 not be included in the TOD for BRT.

Respectfully,

1. Anne Walker (1704 Winnebago)
2. Jeremy Manheim (209 Merry St)

3. Sonam Yangchen (209 Merry St)
4. Larry J Chapman (208 Merry St)
5. Rebecca Parmentier (222 Merry St. #14)
6. Jasmine Banks (213 Merry St)
7. Leila Belakhdar (217 Merry St)
8. Faisal Belakhdar (217 Merry St)
9. Cassandra Duernberger (208 Merry St)
10. Craig Howering (201 Merry St)
11. Meghan Hawkins (201 Merry St)
12. David Poklinkoski (205 Ramsey Court)
13. Tam (205 Merry St)
14. Karolyn Beebe (220 Merry St)
15. Christopher Burant (212 Merry St.)
16. Rita Ruona (222 Merry St.)
17. Dale Ruona (222 Merry St)
18. Amie Heeter (229 Merry St)
19. Andrew Miller (229 Merry St)

Dear Members of the Planning Commission,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed plans regarding the TOD overlay.

As a long time resident of Madison, I have both owned and rented properties in various neighborhoods of the city and have observed the growing traffic congestion especially in the downtown/campus area and on the main commuter paths. I am glad that the city is working on solutions to mitigate these issues.

I do, however, strongly support the exclusion of Madison's historic districts for a variety of reasons:

- 1.) There are many resources that detail the importance of preserving historic districts , including inclusive ones, in various cities. ¹ These designations are the result of decades of thoughtwork and community reflection about what is important to the community and to society preserve for the benefit of future generations.
- 2.) Looking at the overlay map, there historic districts are not contiguous, but are small zones within a larger plan. Therefore this exclusion does not obviously have a large negative impact on the overall benefit and strategy of the project. Having a mixture of new and denser construction be intermingled with historic districts will preserve Madison's history and architectural and general vibrancy.
- 3.) Given this plan is still in its nascent stages, it seems prudent to maintain the historic exemption, allow the plan to progress and then evaluate the situation once actual usage and potential issues can actually be addressed. There are many examples of urban planning that did not actually unfold as anticipated.

Consider the Hill Farms neighborhood as an example. Along the corridor of Whitney Way towards University, there are a few blocks of historically designated University Hill Farms single family homes, south of that there is University Research Park land which is not densely utilized and then a large amount of commercially zoned area which is currently mostly surface parking which is largely underutilized. There is also a lot of commercially zoned area along Mineral Point road. If people will be commuting from areas farther out, there is already opportunity to strategically address flow and parking issues. There are also already several multifamily housing units too that are planned or have been built in this area.

Often in a business context the question raised is "what problem are we trying to solve." It appears there is a lot of opportunity to strategically address the congestion issues while preserving Madison's history within the context of larger development. I strongly advocate that a balanced thoughtful approach be applied which preserves Madison's historical designations.

¹ <https://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/implement/physical-social-environment/historic-preservation/main>,
<http://www.slcdocs.com/historicpreservation/GuideRes/Section1.pdf>
<https://forum.savingplaces.org/blogs/special-contributor/2020/09/10/building-an-inclusive-preservation-plan-in-madison>,

Thank you for your work and your time and consideration.

Best regards,
Stephanie Adamany
5121 Door Drive

From: [Shaun Abshere](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Cc: [Bob Klebba](#); [Vicki Abshere](#)
Subject: BRT and Transit Overlay Districts: Station or Route Radii for Zoning Changes?
Date: Wednesday, December 8, 2021 8:29:42 AM

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

December 8, 2021

Hello, Plan Commissioners and Staff --

My spouse and I have lived in the Tenney-Lapham Neighborhood for 38 years. We're concerned about the negative effects of zoning changes under discussion as part of the Bus Rapid Transit initiative.

We've learned that Staff now recommends moving forward on zoning changes within a ¼ mile buffer on both sides of the BRT **route**.

This is a change from an earlier version that discussed or recommended a ¼ mile **radius** around **each** BRT stop.

What's the rationale for the change from stop-oriented to entire-route-oriented re-zoning?

Thanks.

.shaun abshere, 1038 E Dayton St

Huzzah !

shaun abshere | +1 608 320 5229

From: [Alexander Harding](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Subject: TOD overlay excluding historic zones is heinous
Date: Monday, December 6, 2021 1:28:19 PM

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

Good Afternoon members of the Plan Commission,

I strongly oppose excluding historic districts from the TOD overlay. Frankly, a lot of these “historic” districts are just white, upper class, single family homes that exclude upward mobility and worsen our housing crisis.

Historic districts are white moats to keep people out. They work in direct opposition to the prosperity and human-centric development of our city.

When I see a “historic district” marker or zone, I think “you’re not welcome here.” Because I’m not.

Thank you
Alexander Harding
3602 Wyota Ave

From: [Nicholas Davies](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Subject: Yes on TOD Overlay (but don't stop there!)
Date: Sunday, December 5, 2021 4:09:42 PM

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

Dear Plan Commissioners,

I am very much in favor of the proposed TOD overlay, agenda item 67554. I especially appreciate that it would abolish parking minimums close to transit. However, there are areas where it doesn't go far enough:

Width

As a brisk walker, I can walk a mile in about 15 minutes. If BRT could quickly/reliably get me to my destination, I would not see a 1 mile walk as an impediment to using it.

I'm originally from Bethesda, MD, where Montgomery County just announced their plan to allow multi-unit residential within 1 mile of mass transit. (We should be outright abolishing single-family residential zoning, which is a relic of racist redlining, but that's a topic for another time.)

1 mile seems reasonable, and 1/4 mile exceedingly narrow. If people 1/2 mile from BRT will benefit from it and use it, which I believe they will, then we should use the TOD overlay to allow more people to live in those areas.

Historic Zones

I attended your last meeting. One topic was an ugly office building on N. Midvale, and the discussion involved this ugly office building being part of a historic district in that area, just because many buildings there were built around the same time, in the 1950's-1960's.

Just because an area was last developed at a particular time, that doesn't seem like an adequate reason to let that section of the BRT corridor stagnate and fail to house people/employ relying on mass transit.

Density

The TOD overlay would only allow one additional unit on areas zoned for single-family residential. Only one! Only a duplex! So for every housing unit that gets torn down and replaced, it can only be replaced with two units. And this is what we're proposing for the areas closest to a mass transit corridor. Who would even bother redeveloping, if that's all they can do with it?

Allowed Uses

Additional residences shouldn't be the only thing we allow along the BRT corridor, because residences are typically only at one end of a transit trip. We should also be allowing more commercial amenities (which are also employment opportunities).

As apartment buildings go up along BRT, there may be some legitimate concern that they're pushing out commercial space, actually making the BRT corridor less vibrant. Allowing a mix of uses within the BRT buffer would alleviate that. Not every place of business has to front on

a vehicular arterial, if their clientele isn't arriving by motor vehicle.

It would also allow some of these neighborhoods--like around Garner Park which is landlocked residential--to become more self-sufficient and walkable, if someone on Rosa Rd for example were permitted to build a commercial space for a corner store, instead of (or in addition to) a residence.

I hope you will approve the TOD Overlay plan. If there's still an opportunity to improve it and address these concerns, I hope you will. Otherwise, mass transit will be a part of our lives, and we'll have much more motivation to correct these things soon enough.

Thank you,

Nick Davies
3717 Richard St

From: annewalker@homelandgarden.com
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Cc: [Benford, Brian](#)
Subject: TOD, item #2
Date: Friday, December 3, 2021 10:05:39 AM

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

Dear Plan Commission Members,

I am a strong supporter of BRT. Living in the isthmus, on a secondary arterial, Winnebago, I very much appreciate BRT's potential to help prevent congestion, improve the quality of life for isthmus residents and the population as a whole.

BRT is especially important in an isthmus. Not many capitals are built on an isthmus. I think there is wisdom in that, most especially one that is narrow, flat and a former wetland. My understanding is that the BRT's TOD focus is to increase building density within a quarter mile of BRT stops. There is certainly wisdom to that plan. My question is how is flooding potential, mitigating the urban heat island effect and climate change being considered in this formula?

Living in the isthmus, below the Tenney Locks, I have learned to have a great appreciation for flooding. I have experienced several of them starting in the early 90's. The most recent flooding event required the National Guards aid as well as city staff, scores of neighbors and many many sandbags to get us through. I question the wisdom of continuing to build in these flood prone areas.

Roger Bannerman worked for the DNR for many years and is the person the city of Madison has named our rain garden program after. He modeled the increase of urban run-off for Lake Mendota. By 2020, based on our patterns of development, the increase was modeled at 57%. I mention this study because flooding in the isthmus had felt like a freight train coming at us in my neighborhood. What happens when Lake Mendota is at its storage capacity is the locks are opened. As many of you know, opening the locks can be a flooding problem for those of us who live below them.

The tendency in the isthmus for newer developments is to build up. However, that can still leave roads and infrastructure in the flooding zone. This trend is also problematic for existing neighbors. With newer neighbors building higher, existing neighbors potentially become the low spot, and more likely to flood. And in an old neighborhood, that's quite a few of us.

I ask you to please, very carefully consider the implications of continuing to build in flood prone areas and in areas that are prone to urban heat issues. We are flood prone and canopy tree deficient in the isthmus. Often rooftop gardens are heralded as the answer. While I absolutely support rooftop gardens and their beneficial effects, they are **not** a substitute for greenspace on the ground.

Respectfully,

Anne Walker
District 6
Professional Landscape Gardener/Rooftop Gardener

From: [Kevin Luecke](#)
To: [Plan Commission Comments](#)
Cc: [Heck, Patrick](#); [Benford, Brian](#); [Stouder, Heather](#); [Tyler Lark](#); [Bob Klebba](#)
Subject: TOD Overlay Districts
Date: Friday, December 3, 2021 9:18:57 AM

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

Members of the Plan Commission,

I am writing today to strongly express my support for the development and implementation of Transit Overlay Districts along the BRT corridor. Madison is growing rapidly and will continue to do so, and we need to ensure that as much of that growth as possible occurs where people can easily walk, bike, and take transit to as many destinations as possible.

I urge you to:

- Establish TOD zones within a *minimum* of 1/4 mile radius (not walking distance) of all BRT stations (and perhaps a wider area).
- Eliminate all parking minimums within the TOD zones.
- Sharply reduce the parking maximums within the TOD zones.
- Disallow the use of TIF funds for any parking structures (other than publicly owned ones) within the TOD zones (and ideally citywide).
- Not provide any exemptions for historic districts (local or national) or locations on the National Register of Historic Places

This is a key opportunity to direct Madison's future growth in a more sustainable direction.

Thank you,
Kevin Luecke
121 N Ingersoll St

--

Kevin Luecke
kluecke1@gmail.com

Dear members of the Common Council, Transportation Commission, and Plan Commission,

I'm writing today in support of the proposed TOD overlay within a quarter mile of the BRT transit corridor, and also asking the members of the commission to support the TOD overlay on a 1/2 mile distance from the BRT corridor.

I'm quite surprised that this change is receiving any pushback. The changes proposed as part of the overlay are incredibly minor, with most parcel receiving 1-2 additional floors and 1-4 additional units as permitted uses. The areas covered in the overlay are already some of the most desirable areas to rent, and allowing additional units in the area will help reduce rent. Additionally, the neighborhoods on the isthmus are often the destination neighborhoods for trips. Easing zoning restrictions will make building new commercial or mixed-use buildings easier, which will in turn make BRT more successful by driving trips at both the source and destination.

On the topic of removing parking minimums, I am whole-heartedly in support. As you may know, Toronto recently removed parking minimums city-wide for new residential units, following in Minneapolis's steps. Minimum parking requirements drive up costs for residents both living in and near new buildings. Residents living in new buildings have the required parking factored into the cost of their rent, whether they want to own a car or not. Residents outside of the building pay a cost in higher traffic, which leads to more pedestrian deaths, longer travel times, and increased pollution. Removing parking minimums means that these costs will no longer be required by the city, and has been recognized as a key feature of modern city planning.

I am not surprised, but I am disappointed to hear so many of our residents describe density negatively. I chose the Tenney-Lapham neighborhood precisely because of its density. I can walk to the grocery store or restaurants, I can take the bus to Hilldale, and I have easy access to bike paths for mid-distance trips to Willy Street or Schenk-Atwood. All of these things are only possible because of the density of our neighborhoods, and I hope that the Common Council encourages the dense neighborhoods that enable these activities. Voting in favor of the TOD overlay, and especially the expanded 1/2 mile overlay, is a simple way to support livable housing.

In conclusion, I think the evidence in favor of a 1/2 mile overlay greatly outweighs any negatives, which are often just aesthetic. Faster trips, reduced GHG emissions, fewer traffic deaths, and increased housing units are all benefits that the TOD overlay and BRT can bring together.

Thank you,
Will Ochowicz

File #67554 Discussion of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Zoning Framework

Email received December 19, 2021

Dear members of the Transportation Policy and Planning Board:

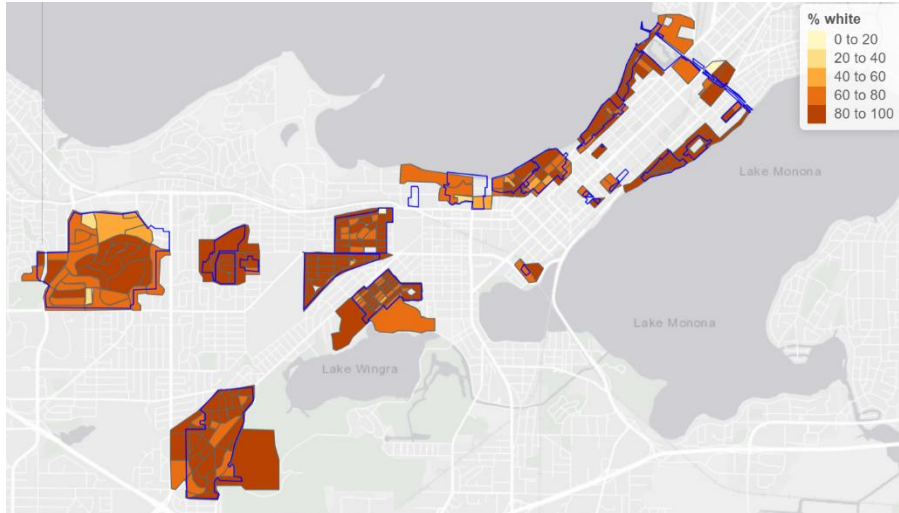
I appreciate you tackling the issue of transit-oriented development. Madison is growing, and as we now know from the 2020 Census, we are growing even faster than what was anticipated in the Imagine Madison comp plan. The first bus rapid transit (BRT) line is coming, and hopefully a second, north-south line will follow soon after. To realize the potential benefits of transit in general and BRT in particular, we need as many people and jobs within reach of transit as possible.

I watched the Plan Commission special meeting on December 9, and I would like to offer input on a few issues debated there.

No exemption of historic districts

I strongly oppose the exclusion of local and national historic districts from the TOD overlay. In recent years, we have come to realize that "protecting the character of our neighborhood" is often code for keeping housing that is accessible for people of color, for renters, for immigrants out of majority white neighborhoods. At the same time, these neighborhoods are often the ones richest in opportunity, and creating new housing would allow more people to have access to that opportunity.

Historic districts have largely escaped this scrutiny. To inform the discussion with data, I conducted preliminary demographic analyses, based on data from the 2020 Census and the boundaries of historic districts. Looking at the racial makeup of the population within local and national historic districts, they are disproportionately white. The population of local historic districts is approximately 82% white; that of national historic districts 77% white.^[^1] This compares to a city-wide proportion of 71% white. I suspect that if we looked at variables such as educational attainment or household income, historic districts similarly don't represent our city's population at large. Therefore it seems highly problematic to grant special exemptions to these districts and allow them to remain segregated.



National Historic Register of Places and percentage of population identifying their race as White alone



Local Historic Districts and percentage of population identifying their race as White alone

Do not allow auto-oriented uses

At the Plan Commission meeting, several commissioners appeared genuinely surprised that drive-up windows or drive-throughs would be considered auto-oriented uses and may be prohibited in the TOD overlay. Further, some commissioners argued that these uses should continue to be permitted, either for formalistic reasons (creates too many non-conforming uses) or anticipated resistance from "the business community." I urge you to not go down this route. All auto-oriented uses create an environment that is hostile to people walking, rolling, and biking; it creates additional vehicle miles traveled, and it does not serve transit riders. Prohibiting these uses is an important component of creating a walkable, transit-friendly urban environment.

1/4 versus 1/2 mile

One topic under discussion was whether the TOD overlay should apply to 1/4 or 1/2 mile along the BRT route. I support the 1/2 mile area, but would also encourage you to consider a mixed solution: Either within 1/4 mile of the BRT route, or within 1/2 mile of a BRT stop. As an example, I live less than 1/2 mile from the E/W BRT route, but because the route as currently planned will have no stops on Campus Drive, the nearest stop will be about 0.9 miles from home.

Thank you for your consideration.

Harald Kliems

6 N Allen St, Madison, WI 53726

[^1] Methodological notes: The boundaries of historic districts and Census blocks often do not align well. Included in the analysis are all blocks that intersect or are fully within any historic district. This leads to the inclusion of blocks that only have some proportion of their area within a historic district. The Wisconsin Memorial Hospital National Historic District was excluded from the analysis as it is not located near any future BRT lines.

Email received December 19, 2021

Good Afternoon,

I want to register my support for high intensity development along BRT routes. I live in the Hill Farms Neighborhood and I am very excited about our proximity to a BRT route on Whitney Way. People want easy access to BRT routes - allowing higher density housing along the new routes is essential.

I also **do not** support a possible TOD exemption for Historic Districts...especially the Hill Farms "Historic District." There is nothing historic about my neighborhood; this distinction is only used to stop new higher occupancy developments from being built.

Thank you for considering,

-Liz Jesse

5126 S Hill Dr, Madison, WI 53705

Email received December 19, 2021

Hello,

During their last meeting, the Plan Commission did not acknowledge ANY public opposition to excluding historic zones from the TOD overlay.

Specifically, the Plan Commission failed to acknowledge written comments from:

1. Kevin Luecke
2. Nicholas Davies
3. Alexander Harding (myself)
4. Mary Pustejovsky
5. Marybeth McGinnis
6. Ian Jamison

Source: <https://madison.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=10321631&GUID=CE95E175-FD1A-4511-ADA6-FD6940423129>

Please, at least acknowledge the voice of these residents.

Thank you for your consideration,

Alexander Harding

3602 Wyota Ave

TPPB Public Comment – Item #4 67554 – Received via email 12/21/21

Dear Metro Transit officials, City of Madison Transportation Commission, and City of Madison Transportation Policy and Planning Board,

I am writing to express my personal concern that the bus riders and neighborhoods previously served by Route 19 are being ignored or dismissed in the planning and redesign of the Transit Network. I am referring to the Crawford-Marlborough-Nakoma Neighborhood, as well as Dunn's Marsh and Allied Drive. Route 19 service took riders from Dunn's Marsh, Allied Dr and areas near the Beltline/Seminole Hwy and the south end of Midvale Blvd directly down Nakoma Rd, close to West High School and over to the west end of U. W. Madison Campus and then downtown. When I rode this from Doncaster Drive to my job at Henry Mall on campus it was a quick 20 to 25 minute trip.

Presently the only service to these areas is Route 18, suggested by Metro Transit as an alternative. It is NOT good service. For very many residents in the greater Nakoma area, it is well over 1/4 mile to any of the Route 18 stops, and is a longer trip requiring transfers. For some, walking to a Route 18 stop would be a half mile or more. This might not seem too unreasonable, except for two factors. First, the bus service is meant to be, and should be, inclusive, accessible to those who are older, and to anyone with mild mobility issues. Second, in winter weather and with snowy or icy sidewalks and streets, even a moderate walk takes longer and can be hazardous. And more so in winter's darkness.

If you live close to the Beltline frontage road near Seminole Highway, a trip to Union South on campus using the "Plan Your Route" tool could require catching the #18 for a round-about trip to the West Transfer point, and taking the #6 to campus, taking 45 minutes. That includes 4-6 minute walk at either end. Or, you could take the #18 to the South Transfer point, transfer to a #4 to Mills St at W.

Johnson and walk, for a 40 minute trip. Either way, that's about twice as long as the Route 19 used to take.

As another example of a trip using the "Plan Your Route" tool, someone living near the Nakoma Rd/Yuma/Seminole intersection is given a 0.7 mile walk down Nakoma Rd and over to Odana Rd to catch a #7 bus to get to Union South on Campus. Total trip time is 24 minutes. But that's a 0.7 mile walk and assumes a fairly brisk walking pace to make a close connection. Another alternative for that same trip involved a total walk of 1.2 mile. This service is simply not inclusive or accessible for many.

Looking ahead, I have studied the redesign maps, ridership and coverage models, and the analysis of impacts. I participated in one of the Transit Focus Groups and saw the presentations. Neither model includes any route going down Nakoma Rd. What is even more disturbing is that the starting point for "existing service", the baseline from which impacts are measured, is the network and service as it exists in 2021, after cutting out Route 19, and fifteen (15) other routes. I counted these route cuts based on comparison of 2021 service to the published System Map and Ride Guide of August 2019. In other words, there is no measurement, at least none that the public has seen, of the impact of the Covid-related cuts. There is no analysis of the redesign impact that includes the pre-Covid service. These riders and neighborhoods apparently aren't counted, don't count, aren't being considered. That is a myopic, short-sighted approach. I think it underestimates the impacts of both of the redesign alternatives, but especially the impact of the ridership model.

I am disappointed that the next redesign phase will strongly favor the ridership model, with only modest "tweaks". A high priority has been put on frequent service to fewer geographic areas, at the expense of access to service. I really think this is a flawed approach. I'm afraid we will end up with multiple routes serving the same few corridors with frequent service, while other areas are left with little or no service. It seems to me that an important goal of a public transit

system should be service that is inclusive to as many neighborhoods as possible. I fear the redesign will fail that goal miserably.

I appreciate all of you taking the time to read this. I realize that with the Holidays coming soon, I may not get a fast response to my concerns. But I would hope to hear back in the not-too-distant future.

Sincerely,

Carol Buelow
4206 Doncaster Dr
Madison

TPPB Public Comment Item #4 67554 – Received by email 12/20/21

Dear TPPB members,

I read Harald Kliems' comment on this, and I found it insightful, and it changed my thinking. While I'm wholly in favor of the TOD proposal, I don't think it goes far enough.

There are a few points I want to include in your discussion tonight:

Mr. Kliems makes a very good point that distance to the BRT route (that is, to the moving vehicles), is not the important metric for whether someone can use BRT as their primary transportation. Living 1/4 mile from somewhere that a BRT vehicle barrels past without stopping does nothing for you. Instead we should be looking at a radius around each station.

I agree that a 1/2 mile radius from the station makes sense. At that distance, I would be glad to walk 15-20 mins and access BRT directly, instead of taking some other mode to the BRT stop. Especially if the starting point is back in a residential area where other buses don't go.

We should not be excluding "historic districts". The Planning Board routinely approves projects in such zones. For instance, 222 N. Midvale was just approved for demolition. It's a 1960's building, in a historic district, but it's ugly and impractical, so the historic district standard did not apply. By excluding historic districts from the TOD overlay, we would be preempting that nuance.

Currently the TOD proposal would only allow duplexes in what are otherwise single-family only zones. Allowing duplexes is exceedingly modest, only allowing two housing units where today there is one. I worry that redevelopment of a parcel isn't going to be worthwhile--let alone profitable--if the limit of housing units on it is so low.

Single-family zoning has a history entwined with racist redlining practices. Yet it has been allowed to continue for decades unquestioned. We're now seeing the results of that artificially-suppressed density, in housing shortages, sprawl all the way out to Deforest, and escalating prices for buying and renting, ultimately resulting in an unhoused population that the city struggles to provide assistance to.

Suppressing middle-density housing also means that the only practical opportunities for densification end up being the kind of large-scale buildings that more severely disrupt a neighborhood. It creates a stark disparity between the "haves" and the "have nots". This leaves the people in the cramped, noisy, poorly-ventilated stick-build spaceships yearning for a single-family home because it's the only better option they see.

Madison absolutely needs to densify. But I don't want that stark disparity to be what characterizes our city. We can densify better if we allow more building types--triplexes, two-up-two-downs, cooperatives, etc. The transit corridor is the prime place to do that.

It's a bit unusual for the TPPB to be providing input on a proposed zoning change, but I hope you'll take this opportunity to improve it while it's before you.

Thank you,

Nick Davies

3717 Richard St