

From: Nicholas Davies <nbdavies@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, August 11, 2024 3:41 PM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Support park connections in West Area Plan

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

Dear Park Commissioners,

The West Area Plan is on your next agenda; it includes a vision for future additional parks on the west side, and connections to parks in that area. I hope you'll recommend approval of the West Area Plan, particularly when it comes to these items of interest to you.

In particular, the West Area Plan proposes adding a short path connection to reach Walnut Grove Park from the west, across Sauk Creek. You may have heard of the Sauk Creek Greenway, which was going to follow the course of Sauk Creek lengthwise; that's no longer in the West Area Plan, and instead there'll be just a short connection across the creek.

This connection will be valuable for those living west of the creek to reach their nearest city park, whether on foot or bike or assistive mobility device. Particularly those with limited mobility, the current route to the park, the long way around, represents a barrier to access, requiring a trip by car, or just giving up. Unfortunately, some neighbors have taken issue with the idea of making this convenient for other neighbors.

For some, the east-west connection would form part of a safer route to school, and for others, it'd form part of a safer commute to work. And it would function as an amenity of Walnut Grove Park, drawing more visitors. This accessibility and popularity could make the park a better venue for future public events.

A useful comparison to this would be the Greentree greenway, which helps families coming from Schroeder & Struck get to Elver Park, without braving the traffic on McKenna. If you've ever been to major events at Elver Park, like July 4th fireworks, you may be aware of how many people reach those events via this path. These events simply would not work at scale otherwise.

You could also compare this to the greenway path connecting Mineral Point Park and Owen Conservancy, which also functions as a school route. Think of how valuable these existing

connections are, and how uncontroversial they are, once they're actually built. This is what's being proposed for Walnut Grove Park. Its value is not hypothetical.

Even those questioning the need for this connection to Walnut Grove Park probably take the existence of these other greenway paths for granted. They complain that a path across Sauk Creek would require the removal of trees--unmanaged invasive saplings that suppress the growth of proper tree canopy--and indeed, if you count those up, you get a large number (good job! lol). If that were truly the better option, there would be similar demands to tear up existing paths, and let unmanaged invasive saplings grow there too. But I think we all recognize how unacceptable that would be.

The question of whether it's worth the money is a real one. In our city's current financial situation, we need to be asking that of every project, and deferring it or pursuing grants when necessary. However, that shouldn't stand in the way of including this in the West Area Plan. This plan will be in effect for years to come, and during those years, maybe the city will be flush with cash again, or maybe this path connection will go unbuilt and show up in the next iteration of the plan (like the connection at Sauk Creek Park).

I hope you'll affirm your support for safe routes to parks in your approval of the West Area Plan.

Thank you,

Nick Davies

3717 Richard St

From: Amy Nichelason <sparkly117@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, August 12, 2024 7:04 PM

To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>

Subject: Agenda Item 84383: Oppose Any Bike Path in the Sauk Creek Greenway

You don't often get email from sparkly117@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Dear Park Commissioners,

I am writing to object to the inclusion of the east-west bike path, or any bike path in the Sauk Creek Greenway for the following reasons:

Sincerely

Amy Nichelason

From: Patrick Rindfleisch <porindfleisch@icloud.com>

Sent: Monday, August 12, 2024 7:08 PM

To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>

Subject: Agenda Item 84383: Oppose Any Bike Path in the Sauk Creek Greenway

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Hello -

I would like to express my opposition to the bike path being considered through the Sauk creek greenway and walnut grove park.

I have been impressed with how the neighbors come together to stand up for the precious trees in the greenway and I believe first and foremost that individuals most directly affected by government decision should have a loud voice at the table.

In addition, the bike path is not needed due to routes on high point rd and also why would the city spend millions on a bike path that is not needed, is not wanted and all at the same time the mayor is asking departments for budget cuts?

These dollars can be directed elsewhere and our city government can do things the constituents actually want and need.

Patrick Rindfleisch

Canvasback Circle

From: Ellen Schneiderman <ejks73@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, August 12, 2024 7:31 PM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Agenda Item 84383: Oppose Any Bike Path in the Sauk Creek Greenway

[You don't often get email from ejks73@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

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Dear Park commission:

I am a resident of Sauk Creek neighborhood and live on Bruce Circle. I just want to make it clear that I oppose any type of bike path in the Sauk Creek Greenway. This includes the proposed East/West path connecting Brule Circle and Walnut Grove Park. Thank you for your consideration.

Ellen Schneiderman

From: Wendy Blanchard <wendyblanchard694@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, August 12, 2024 8:18 PM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Agenda Item 84383: Oppose Any Bike Path in the Sauk Creek Greenway

You don't often get email from wendyblanchard694@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Dear Park Commissioners,

I am writing to object to the inclusion of the east-west bike path, or any bike path in the Sauk Creek Greenway for the following reasons:

Biking on High Point and Westfield is safe. We do not need a path through the woods. Use the money for other bike paths or maintenance.

In order to create a path through the woods many healthy good trees will have to be removed - which I object to!

Wendy Blanchard

From: Nancy Chapman <nancychapman@me.com>
Sent: Monday, August 12, 2024 8:57 PM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: AGENDA ITEM 84383 Oppose any bike path in the Sauk Creek Greenway

[You don't often get email from nancychapman@me.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

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Dear Park Commissioners,

I am writing to object to the inclusion of the east-west bike path through the Sauk Creek Greenway.

This path would hinder our use and enjoyment of the greenway. It would mean the loss of many trees, and the tree

canopy is very helpful to the health of our community. The larger the canopy the better for the whole city.

I feel this green space is very important to provide families in the neighborhood access to a natural space for recreation and

interacting with the wildlife in the area.

Remember, the city of Madison has been selected to join the program NATURE EVERYWHERE.

Please keep our greenway safe from development.

Hope you keep our greenway safe

Sincerely,

Nancy and Brian Chapman

7606 Gray Fox Trail

Madison, WI

2623851205

From: Jessi A <jessialter@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, August 12, 2024 9:26 PM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>; Urban Design Comments <urbandesigncomments@cityofmadison.com>; Field, Derek <district3@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: No to road through Sycamore Park in NE Area Plan

Some people who received this message don't often get email from jessialter@gmail.com.

[Learn why this is important](#)

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Hello All,

My name is Jessi. I live at 821 Bewick Dr. My family has been a resident of the Burke Heights Neighborhood since the 1960's. I am excited that our current residents have had the opportunity to participate in the City's new Planning Framework and appreciate the sense of community our local government has created while planning for our future. My husband and I have had the opportunity to attend numerous virtual sessions as well as a neighborhood session and walkabout with folks from multiple city entities (very cool.) Additionally, we are excited to see the new bike track at Sycamore being used already! Such fun enrichment and health benefits!

I do apologize on the front end here, as I've not been paying as much attention as I typically do and also missed the session in May. However, it just came to my attention that the Northeast Area Plan has a "other planned street" (annotated in blue) running directly through Sycamore Park. Our residents do NOT want this and I wish to express strong opposition to this portion of the plan. Can you remove this aspect prior to the adoption meeting on Wednesday please?

There are many reasons why I, and others, feel strongly against putting a street through our park. It would be of great detriment to our neighborhood and our neighbors, especially those who live in surrounding apartments, to lose our precious and highly utilized recreation and natural space. It is also just totally unnecessary and a waste of tax payer dollars.

I am happy to provide more insight about why we do NOT want a road to tear through our beautiful vibrant and diverse park. It truly would be a shame.

Thank you,

Jessi Alter

From: Byron Knight <4beknight@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, August 12, 2024 9:27 PM

To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>; Friends of Sauk Creek <fosc.msn@gmail.com>

Subject: Agenda Item 84383: Oppose Any Bike Path in the Sauk Creek Greenway

You don't often get email from 4beknight@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Dear Park Commissioners, I am writing to object to the inclusion of the east-west bike path in the Sauk Creek Greenway for the following reasons:

- **Conflicts with Parks and Open Spaces Plan 2023: Walnut Grove Park** is roughly 20 acres and there is a dense steep wooded bluff area with a sharp drop where the proposed East-West Bike Path path would be built and would require switchbacks zig zagging through the woods. It would require the loss of tens of trees on the bluff to make that path accessible to all ages and abilities. Destruction of Trees conflicts with one of the **mission statements** for Parks and Open Spaces Plan 2023 that states that Parks should "Preserve and expand our forest resources through a well-planned and systematic approach to TREE MAINTENANCE, planting and natural area management." and "Steep grades may make accessibility paths unfeasible in some area parks." Friends of Sauk Creek have continually advised city officials that trees absorb water and stop erosion in the greenway.
- **The east-west bike path also can run afoul of the important 2023 Parks and Open Spaces Plan**, which guides park commissioners' decisions. It says that "Studies suggest that the resultant loss of tree canopy....can increase risks of cardiovascular disease and lower respiratory tract illness and mortality. "
- In the plan's Chapter Nine, it recommends these strategies:
 1.
 - Protect and Enhance Natural and Cultural Resources
 - Respect and Protect Tribal Sacred Sites. (This area is called Sauk Creek in respect and memory of the indigenous peoples who lived here before us. The Friends of Sauk Creek support keeping the trees and natural environment of the green way as a living testament to the Sauk and indigenous people. Not by removing trees/ vital animal habitat and destroying a bluff for an asphalt, lighted bike path.
 - - **WHY is the city imposing a wide paved path on the important stormwater channel restoration project?** Planners at the November Greenway Restoration kick-off meeting said that IF the West Area Plan includes a bike path the engineers will have to add one. We are hoping for a minimally invasive creek restoration – to retain as much of the urban forest as possible. Mandating wide paved bike paths will decimate the forest.
 - **Paltry 16% Tree Canopy!** The Sauk Creek Greenway is the MAJOR portion of the 16% tree canopy in District 9. With a city-wide goal of 40% and a current coverage of 23% WHY would the city even consider decimating the Greenway for an unneeded, redundant, bike path.

Byron Knight

501 N. High Point Road

Madison, Wi 53717

From: Paul Noeldner <paul_noeldner@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, August 12, 2024 10:38 PM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Please vote No to any bike path through the Sauk Creek Greenway

You don't often get email from paul_noeldner@hotmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Please vote No to proposed bike paths through the Sauk Creek Greenway.

We need both trees and bike paths and should not and need not degrade one to add the other.

Bike paths should follow already degraded paved and open areas that do not require removing mature trees or chopping paths through remaining natural areas.

Thank you.

Paul Noeldner
Volunteer Madison FUN Coordinator
Wisconsin Master Naturalist Instructor
136 Kensington Maple Bluff
paul_noeldner@hotmail.com
[608 698 0104](tel:6086980104)

From: lynn hummel <lynn.hummel@aol.com>
Sent: Tuesday, August 13, 2024 8:40 AM
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Sauk Creek Greenway Bike Path

[You don't often get email from lynn.hummel@aol.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

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Dear Commission: I see no need for an east-west bike way in the Sauk Creek Greenway because:

1. The trees that would need to be removed would change the character of the Greenway disrupting the abundant wildlife in this unusually majestic forest.
2. The path is not and would not create a “vital” link to Walnut Grove Park from the west. Bicyclists are much better served by using Tree Lane just to the south or Old Sauk Road to the north. Cutting through Walnut Grove Park on a bike would just slow you down if you are moving from east to west and vice versa. Creating this link would not suddenly create a flood of visitors from the west to Walnut Grove Park. Please be aware that Hain Family Park is readily available to those seeking a park from West of High Point Road.
3. This proposed bike/walk path would cost a lot of money for very little benefit especially in a time of financial crisis. It would be better to use the money on a bike path that would really serve more users. Just like the proposed north-south bike path, this path wouldn't really go anywhere.

All this is from a Madison resident who usually rides a bike an average of 20 miles/day

From: Jenn <twidget808@yahoo.com>

Sent: Monday, August 12, 2024 11:19 PM

To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>

Subject: Agenda Item 84383: Oppose Any Bike Path in the Sauk Creek Greenway

You don't often get email from twidget808@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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Dear Park Commissioners,

I am writing to object to the inclusion of the east-west bike path, or any paved path in the Sauk Creek Greenway for the following reasons:

- **Conflicts with Parks and Open Spaces Plan 2023: Walnut Grove Park** is roughly 20 acres and there is a dense steep wooded bluff area with a sharp drop where the proposed East-West Bike Path path would be built and would require switchbacks zig zagging through the woods. It would require the loss of hundreds of trees on the bluff to make that path accessible to all ages and abilities. Destruction of trees conflicts with one of the **mission statements** for Parks and Open Spaces Plan 2023 that states that Parks should "Preserve and expand our forest resources through a well-planned and systematic approach to TREE MAINTENANCE, planting and natural area management." and "Steep grades may make accessibility paths unfeasible in some area parks." Trees absorb water and stop erosion in the greenway.

- **The east-west bike path also can run afoul of the important 2023 Parks and Open Spaces Plan**, which guides park commissioners' decisions. It says that "Studies suggest that the resultant loss of tree canopy....can increase risks of cardiovascular disease and lower respiratory tract illness and mortality. "
- In the plan's Chapter Nine, it recommends these strategies:
 - Protect and Enhance Natural and Cultural Resources
 - Respect and Protect Tribal Sacred Sites. (This area is called Sauk Creek in respect and memory of the indigenous peoples who lived here before us. Those living here, including myself, support keeping the trees and natural environment of the greenway as a living testament to the Sauk and indigenous peoples. Not by removing trees/ vital animal habitat and destroying a bluff for an asphalt, lighted bike path.)
- **WHY is the city imposing a wide paved path on the important stormwater channel restoration project?** Planners at the November Greenway Restoration kick-off meeting said that IF the West Area Plan includes a bike path the engineers will have to add one. We are hoping for a minimally invasive creek restoration – to retain as much of the urban forest as possible. Mandating wide paved bike paths will decimate the forest.
- **Paltry 16% Tree Canopy!** The Sauk Creek Greenway is the MAJOR portion of the 16% tree canopy in District 9. With a city-wide goal of 40% and a current coverage of 23% WHY would the city even consider decimating the Greenway for an unneeded, redundant, bike path? Please see the 2019 Urban Forestry Final Report for more information: <https://madison.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=F&ID=8033567&GUID=9B1BC88B-FD1E-4CC6-B4DC-72D52838455E>. Page 24: There are substantial differences in tree canopy by area. For example, downtown Madison and the UW-Madison campus areas have only 8-13% of canopy. Areas on the far east (District 17) have only 17% canopy and far west (District 9) have 16% canopy. Other areas of the city have canopy levels of 40% and higher. Given these differences, a general citywide goal of 40% does not address the deficiencies at the neighborhood level where the absence of trees is most acutely experienced. CITY RECOMMENDATIONS: #3. The city should institute a range of policies and programs designed to increase canopy coverage at the neighborhood level. *In conjunction with neighborhood groups*, staff should develop strategies for increasing tree population. The Sauk Creek Neighborhood Association strongly opposes ANY AND ALL paved paths through the greenway.
- **Good Healthy trees throughout the Greenway.** Documents show that there are GOOD HEALTHY trees – including many old growth oaks – THROUGHOUT the greenway.
- **High Point Road IS the on-street alternative the Transportation Commission asked for.** Planners have said that this paved path is for “people [who] are uncomfortable biking on High Point Road”. Notice on their map (page 13) that the only stretch of High Point NOT included on the bike route is the section from Sauk Creek Park to Tree Lane. So we see that they are saying that crossing Old Sauk and Mineral Point Road is fine but this very wide,

calm section, with few driveways or parked cars is the problem? https://www.cityofmadison.com/transportation/documents/complete-green-streets/Complete%20Green%20Streets%20Guide_Final.pdf

- **NO Recorded Bike Accidents on High Point Road.** There are rumors that the path through the greenway is needed because of serious bike accidents on the surrounding streets. There have been NO bike accidents on High Point Road and a path through the greenway would not have had any impact on the 2 recorded bike accidents on Westfield Road. Use the following WI DOT interactive map to see for yourself. <https://transportal.cee.wisc.edu/partners/community-maps/crash/search/BasicSearch.do;jsessionid=0E109C131FC1197A17BF06290CAF632B>
- **East-West Path = Significant Tree Loss.** The updated WAP Draft includes an East-West shared-use path from the end of Brule Circle to Walnut Grove Park. We have clarified with city planners that a “shared-use” path has the same width and grading requirements as an “all-ages and abilities” path. The minimum width is 5ft for a walking path but 10ft for a biking path. The maximum grade is 5%. The grade across the greenway is approximately 17% -- more than 3 times higher. City staff have discussed the use of switch-backs to accommodate for the grade. Imagine the tree loss that comes with a 10ft wide path winding back and forth up the bluff, along with the tree loss from getting the construction equipment, and concrete trucks in there that will be needed to build a bridge - that area will also need to be cleared of trees, as they have throughout Madison when building park bridges.
- **Madison’s Nature Everywhere Campaign.** This initiative is designed to increase equitable access to nature everywhere children live, learn and play (see announcement below). The Sauk Creek Greenway is the only natural area in the 9th district. The greenway should be preserved to provide children who live, learn, and play in the neighborhoods surrounding the greenway access to nature. Personally, my family and I (mom, dad and 2 kiddos aged 6 and 8, regularly visit the greenway to visit with and learn about nature). Announced March 14, 2024. The City of Madison is proud to announce it is one of nineteen communities in the country selected to join the inaugural **Nature Everywhere Communities initiative**. The initiative is designed to increase equitable access to nature everywhere children live, learn, and play. “This partnership embodies our city's commitment to sustainability and equity, recognizing that access to nature is not only a fundamental human right but also a cornerstone of public health and well-being,” said City of Madison Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway.
- **Cost-sharing required by Federal and State Grants likely will require significant payments from Madison Taxpayers.** (Fed and State grants are matched by City taxpayers). The Autumn Ridge Path & bike Bridge, through Hiestand Park, total project is *estimated* to cost about \$4.5 million, with about \$2.5 million, covered by federal funds. [The city is slated to cover the remaining \\$2 million.](#)
- **Fill True Gaps in Bike Network.** Why is the city wasting valuable staff time and taxpayer money in the short ¾ mile bike path, that has faced huge opposition since it was announced, when it has already identified true bike network gaps on the NE side and other

bike safety issues throughout Madison that need funding? Spend the money on safe bike paths elsewhere, where it is truly needed.

- **Safe & wide bike lanes surround the Greenway on Tree Lane, High Point and Westfield Roads.**
- **Paths through the Greenway will not make it any safer to get across Old Sauk Road to the library.**
- **Lights on trails could cause light pollution – [Madison is designated a dark skies community](#). July, 2022**
- **Climate issues [The 2 hottest days on earth were recorded last week](#), ocean temps are rising, and [Trees protect our environment](#). Save an old growth forest - trees sequester carbon dioxide, emit oxygen, control erosion, and stabilize the bluffs and creek bank. Trails allow sunlight, which will *increase invasive species growth* along trails.**
- **Loss of a Quiet Refuge for hikers, dog walkers and walkers.** What about walkers and animal rights? Bikes are not allowed on other nature trails in Madison (Stricker's Pond, Tiedeman's Pond, Picnic Point and Raymer's Cove paths, and others).
- **[Trees Act As Sound Barriers In Urban Environments](#).**
Massive tree removal could remove the sound barrier for us and wildlife from traffic on Mineral Point and the Beltline.

In short, the current plans for paved paths through the Sauk Creek Greenway not only go against everything the city has pledged to preserve (tree canopy, dark skies, access to nature, and discouraging invasive plant growth) and does nothing to address biking safety throughout the city.

We, as the actual residents of the surrounding neighborhoods, send a strong plea to the park commissioners to reject any paved path through our beloved, and sorely needed, greenway.

Thank you,

Jennifer Rygiewicz

Sauk Creek Neighborhood Association

From: Damon Rygiewicz <damon.rygiewicz@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, August 12, 2024 11:47 PM

To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>

Subject: Agenda Item 84383: Oppose Any Bike Path in the Sauk Creek Greenway

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- **Lights on trails could cause light pollution –** [Madison is designated a dark skies community.](#) July, 2022
- **Climate issues** [The 2 hottest days on earth were recorded last week](#), ocean temps are rising, and [Trees protect our environment.](#) Save an old growth forest - trees sequester carbon dioxide, emit oxygen, control erosion, and stabilize the bluffs and creek bank. Trails allow sunlight, which will *increase invasive species growth* along trails.
- **Loss of a Quiet Refuge for hikers, dog walkers and walkers.** What about walkers and animal rights? Bikes are not allowed on other nature trails in Madison (Stricker's Pond, Tiedeman's Pond, Picnic Point and Raymer's Cove paths, and others).
- [Trees Act As Sound Barriers In Urban Environments.](#)
Massive tree removal could remove the sound barrier for us and wildlife from traffic on Mineral Point and the Beltline.

In short, the current plans for paved paths through the Sauk Creek Greenway not only go against everything the city has pledged to preserve (tree canopy, dark skies, access to nature, and discouraging invasive plant growth) and does nothing to address biking safety throughout the city.

We, as the actual residents of the surrounding neighborhoods, send a strong plea to the park commissioners to reject any paved path through our beloved, and sorely needed, greenway.

Thank you,

Damon Rygiewicz

Sauk Creek Neighborhood Association
