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As a longtime, year round biker who is a transportation geek, I have been listening and watching the debate about the lights on the SW bike path. From my observation, if the conversation stays at the level it has been there will continue to be arguing and disagreement and everyone will go away feeling unsatisfied. I think the larger question is what kind of city do we want to be? And if one of the answers is a **great city** that is built for people, then this issue is bigger than this strip of the SW bike path.

We have all learned that cities become great when they bring people together for work, play, shopping, art and community. This cannot occur, however, unless our public streets, sidewalks, and other public spaces serve the needs of the people who live in and visit them. In the 1950s, our country built the interstate highway system. The focus turned to the automobile as the main mode of transportation in our communities, and we began to design and build the infrastructure of our cities to reflect that **priority**. In many cities, the physical infrastructure still reflects the focus on prioritizing transportation by car. In that same period of time, we have witnessed American cities generally struggle and go into decline. Some cities have resisted or recovered from this trend, however, in large part because they have preserved or restored pre-1950 pedestrian-friendly spaces and streets. They have done so because they remembered what the rest of us forgot: Cities are for People.

The people who live in, commute to, and visit our city have various transportation needs. For our city to accommodate those different needs, we must provide transportation options that recognize and legitimize **all** modes of transportation—mass transit, walking, bicycling, delivery trucks, emergency vehicles, and possibly other modes to come—on par with private automobile traffic. Once all of these transportation modes gain respect and legitimacy, our streets, sidewalks, public spaces, and transportation infrastructure will change. They will reflect the needs of all people more equitably, striking a new balance that does not favor motorists at the expense of all others. They will promote safe and predictable behavior by all who share our streets, sidewalks, and public spaces.

Our sidewalks need to be ample, clean and well lit with the appropriate signals at crosswalks; our streets need to include segregated, **well-lit** lanes for bicycles with the appropriate pedestrian and bicycle signals at crossings; Madison Metro will have a wider reach in order to service all citizens of our community; trucks will be able to deliver their goods safely; and emergency vehicles will have safe access. The system needs to respect all modes of transportation as equals.

As a community, we must begin now to shift our transportation paradigm by **respecting and legitimizing** all modes of transportation to provide safe, welcoming, and accessible streets, sidewalks, and public spaces and safe transportation options for our residents and those visiting our community.