

Ken Golden sent extensive notes on the University Avenue Corridor Plan. In this document, the RNA's UAC Plan committee responds:

“...it has apparently been developed by people who do not live on/in the corridor...”

The Regent Neighborhood Association (RNA) represents all residents of the Regent Neighborhood including the University Avenue Corridor. In developing the plan over several years the RNA had extensive outreach by email, flyers, postcards to the entire neighborhood soliciting participation at many meetings and accepting written comments. On two occasions, postcards announcing open houses and meetings were sent to every address along the corridor to make sure we reached apartment residents.

A list of community feedback and comments from community feedback sessions from May 19, 2010 to July 24, 2013 are available at <http://www.regentneighborhood.org/gpage18.html>

“The plan does not discuss University growth and housing needs and how this nearby area might help address these.”

While we don't believe it is the responsibility of the Regent Neighborhood or the Vilas Neighborhood or other adjoining neighborhoods to address University growth, we recognize the vitality that students bring to the neighborhood, the value of density and the infill opportunities along the corridor. Our plan allows for greater density which we anticipate would include greater numbers of students. Our concern is that growth and infill do not act to the detriment of a vibrant and attractive residential neighborhood.

“The plan hints some times at the regional role of University Ave. but treats it like a neighborhood only street.”

Campus Drive construction made Old University a neighborhood street. The addition of on-street parking and better accommodation for bike traffic is a clear expression and commitment to that primary purpose.

“There is no discussion of the adequacy of parking in the business district.”

Parking is a major concern. References are found at page 21, page 33, page 51, page 61, page 64, page 65 and also reiterated in the implementation table. In summary, both existing and potential businesses are concerned about a perceived lack of customer parking. Parking is at a premium on streets near the Corridor, and parking enforcement is not sufficient to ensure turnover of on-street parking spaces. The plan recommends installing parking meters in the City parking lot on the north side of the 2500 block to ensure turnover and make short-term parking available to support nearby businesses.

“The plan pays homage to public transportation with supportive language but fails to mention TOD and limits density of the city's number 1 transit corridor.”

The plan recommends keeping TOD out of the Corridor. See Table 1 and Map 16. To the question of density, the plan supports additional density but suggests a balance of development in an area that already suffers congestion, traffic and significant parking challenges.

“The plan says that the “young, racially diverse, low income” corridor residents are not compatible with the single family homes. We may want to rephrase that to hide the discriminatory implications of this language.”

Mr. Golden manufactures a quote that does not exist in the plan and to our knowledge has not been stated or implied by anyone involved at any point in the plan. Our best guess is that he is referring to text describing the neighborhood demographics on page 19 written by City of Madison Planning Division staff. The RNA finds it alarming that someone would invent a quote such as this and falsely attribute it to anyone involved in the plan.

“The plan fails to identify redevelopment sites.”

True. We do not feel it appropriate for the plan to identify specific properties or parcels for redevelopment. Rather, as the executive summary indicates, “[t]he purpose of the plan is to offer guidelines for further development along University Avenue as it passes through the Regent Neighborhood.”

P. 23 talks of the objective of the plan being to benefit the neighborhood. Benefiting the city or the residents of the corridor is not mentioned.

The neighborhood includes the Corridor, and the recommendations are meant to benefit Corridor residents as well as residents of the rest of the Regent Neighborhood. Maintaining successful livable residential neighborhoods on the isthmus is a benefit to the city as a whole.

“P. 31 implies support for the walnut ramp to campus drive but fails to mention that reducing traffic would hurt the business district it claims to support.”

Reducing commuter traffic will not necessarily hurt the business district. Congestion and lack of parking are the biggest challenge to businesses in the corridor. More through-traffic and too much density with the draw on already limited parking are bigger concerns of the corridor businesses.

“I say, lets be candid and ask this neighborhood to do it again but as citizens of the city, not parochial residents of a neighborhood fearing their neighbors and change.”

The plan suggests managed change that allows for increased density, redevelopment where appropriate, and increased commercial activity in the corridor. It suggests a way in which the city’s development goals can be successfully applied to these local conditions.

A strong Regent Neighborhood and a livable corridor that balances housing options, supports commercial enterprises, and maintains routes for multiple modes of transportation is what the neighborhood desires and what the city needs.