

To: Members of the Transportation Committee
From: South Madison Unite! (Dave Davis, Carrie Rothburd, Lisie Kitchel)
Date: July 21, 2020

Regarding Agenda Item 7 (61298): We support adding the 16 spots back onto new Cedar Street. The stated priority of the Truman Olson development is to make the new supermarket a long-term success and prevent South Madison from becoming a food desert. Success depends on the store's accessibility to its primary community of South Madison neighbors and also its secondary community of commuters traveling along South Park. In addition, given the shortage on parking that the development faces as a whole, the added parking spots are needed by visitors of the development's residents.

Back when the South Side was faced with the threat of losing its only full-service supermarket and the focus of the City's solutions was on maintaining food access for South Madison citizens, South Side neighbors met several times with George Reistad, staff from the Plan Department, and Alders Carter and Evers to discuss how the City could help bridge the looming food access gap. Those conversations should be instructive now as they focused on the question: What mode of transportation do South Siders use on food shopping trips?

As you know, South Madison is home to a large percentage of Madison's low-income people and seniors. The answer to we heard from neighbors was this: People on the South Side do not bike or walk to buy their groceries for the following reasons (also expressed in the South Park Street Corridor survey circulated throughout South Madison last year by Bay Creek Neighborhood Association and South Madison Unite!):

- 1) South of Wingra Creek, neighbors as a whole do not have the time to spend on cycling or walking. Some lack in physical stamina. The daily life challenges of single parenting, working multiple jobs or shifts, and/or poor health mean that they rely predominantly on personal vehicles—their own or friends'—to do their food shopping.
- 2) North and South of Wingra Creek, the challenges of biking along Park Street and Fish Hatchery disincline people to bike, let alone walk, outside of their neighborhoods. (See the South Madison Neighborhood Plan/SMNP, 2005 for discussions of the importance of focusing attention on taming Park Street in advance of the development of South Madison.)

The City's proposed solution to getting people to various stores, represented by its Food Policy Coordinator, was cabs. No one suggested handing out bicycles to South Siders. In fact, in light of the racial disparities discussion already underway, the suggestion would have been deemed insulting.

Regarding Agenda Item 13 (60869): We neither support nor oppose this item. However we oppose Option 4. This option would allow right turns onto Park from old Cedar, but no left turns onto Park. Nor are there left turns from Park onto old Cedar or onto Beld when headed southbound on Park. This "solution" represents an unacceptable and unnecessary hardship to the people who live on old Cedar and the surrounding tree streets by cutting off their direct access to Park Street and to the grocery store. It also represents a hardship to Bram's Addition and Capital View neighbors by cutting off direct access to their neighborhood from South Park Street and therefore from the supermarket. The priority of the Truman Olson development, as stated repeatedly by the City, is the creation of a sustainable full-service supermarket serving the entire South Madison community. While the goal of promoting cycling in Madison is laudable, the needs of cyclists should not be given precedence over those of neighbors who need access to their homes and the grocery from South Park.

Regarding both Items 7 and 13: There is certainly room for **improving cycling options in South Madison**, and if the Transportation Committee is serious about designing Cedar Street as a biking street welcoming of all ages and abilities, it will pick up where the City left off 15 years ago and attempt to tame the South Side's two major, high-speed urban corridors and make those bike-friendly. Without doing so, the creation of a bike-friendly street between two dangerous urban corridors is a futile gesture toward making the South Madison community a welcoming place for cyclists.

Improving bike transit has come up several times during the surveys South Siders have performed among ourselves in the past two years as one way of improving South Madison as a community. South Madison residents would be happy to share local perspectives with the Transportation Committee members so you can get to know us and plan with us for the betterment of our neighborhoods and the success of our supermarket in a way that better suits the South Side and promotes the success of its supermarket. This discussion would also have the benefit of promoting the goal of building a bike-friendly Madison as it would help integrate the Town of Madison into the City of Madison by encouraging biking along Fish Hatchery as a means of commuting into the City from points further south.