

**From:** Heidi Anderson <heidiruthanderson@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, May 8, 2021 9:24 AM  
**To:** Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** we support the Vilas Park proposal for gravel pedestrian path

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Thank you.

Heidi and John Anderson  
1443 Chandler St  
Madison, WI 53711  
608.445.8461

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**From:** Kathryn Ryan <katiehowarthryan@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, May 8, 2021 10:45 AM  
**To:** Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** 66344/opposition to closing section of Vilas Drive

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Hello Park Commission.

I would like to register opposition to closing the section of Vilas Drive as proposed in item 66344. I understand Alder Evers and a neighborhood survey, showing 50% of survey respondents (number of respondents?), support closing the drive. I would appreciate it if you would consider the equity of closing this portion of the drive before making a decision about the proposal.

Please realize there are neighborhood residents such as myself who do not agree with the equity or necessity of closing this section of the park to cars. Where is the city's data regarding any safety issues? Are there records of problems or accidents to support the closing? Is there any data about the number of people from outside the neighborhood who use the park? Who does the park serve? Were general users surveyed about use or the proposal? What about the people from outside the neighborhood who use the park?

Keeping the drive open one way allows park users who arrive by car to enjoy the shoreline for recreation as well as greater access to the park in general. There are often people parked as allowed along the drive to enjoy a sandwich in their car with a view of the lake, to park near a fishing site or picnic spot. I often see families with their gear or people enjoying even just reading in a chair with their car parked close by. Walking to these spots with gear or for mobility-restricted people is very difficult. (A gravel path as proposed will not be passable for a wheelchair for example, or many elderly people.) Parked cars do not impinge in the use of the pedestrian path as currently marked or for traffic.

There is greater diversity of park users by allowing the drive to remain open, in my observation. More Madison residents who do not live the neighborhood, including people of color, have ready access to the park by being able to use the drive. (Data would be able to be collected from users if such a survey was done.) The safety issues for pedestrians and bicyclists may be dealt with other ways besides entirely closing off use to the many Madison residents who use their cars to enjoy the park and lake. I hope consideration has been given to possible alternatives, for example, perhaps partial closings such as done with Arboretum Dr. or other solutions which will allow access by car to continue.

I previously sent written comments and spoke at meetings during this process. I respectfully submit my comments again for your consideration. I am simply pointing out another view of the current proposal. I appreciate that you are interested in listening.

Thank you for your work on the park plan which has so many commendable aspects. Vilas Park contributes to the vibrancy of life in Madison and to building community through access to recreation. It is an invaluable resource for the citizens of Madison, as is the entire the park system.

Sincerely,  
Kathryn Ryan

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From: Peter Daly <peterdaly@charter.net>  
Sent: Saturday, May 8, 2021 10:49 AM  
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>  
Cc: Nancy Daly <nmdaly@charter.net>; Ann Rivlin <amfrivlin@gmail.com>  
Subject: May 12 Item 12 Vilas Park Drive - Intermediate Traffic Management Plan - In support

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Commissioners,

We strongly support Vilas Park Drive Intermediate Plan. Many commuters ignore the signage and use the drive as a through a fare at higher speeds than the posted 15 MPH speed limit. Something needs to be done for the safety of walkers, bikers and others along the drive. You need to take this intermediate step to allow park users to fully enjoy the park without fear of being run over.

Peter and Nancy Daly  
1112 Lincoln St  
Madison  
608-251-6531

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**From:** Melanie Askay <melaskay@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, May 8, 2021 8:43 PM

**To:** Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** Vilas Dr

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Hi!

I'm writing to support the proposal to provide stop gap measures to keep Vilas Dr. more pedestrian friendly. We loved that it was closed last year and any additional protection you can give to pedestrians before it's fully closed off to traffic is greatly appreciated.

Thanks!

Melanie Askay  
2115 Madison St, Madison

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**From:** Shawn Schey <shawnschey@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, May 9, 2021 12:04 PM  
**To:** Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** Supporting Item #65344

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Dear Park Commissioners:

I am writing in support of the item #65344 to close a portion of the Vilas Park Drive where cars will not be allowed on the drive from the shelter parking lot to the Edgewood Avenue parking lot as an interim effort to increase pedestrian and bicyclist safety on Vilas Park Drive until the creation of a multiuse path as proposed in the Vilas Park master plan.

Thank you!

*Shawn Schey*  
*Dudgeon-Monroe Neighborhood*

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**From:** Weselley Slaymaker <wess@wesengineering.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, May 10, 2021 10:27 AM  
**To:** Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** Pedestrian friendly Vilas Park Drive

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Hi

I wanted voice my support to create a pedestrian path and block cars on parts of Vilas drive- I walk this route most days of the week. Its a very scenic route, currently no pedestrian walk in

parts of that drive. Appreciate that there is a way to get some improvement ahead of the bigger master plan changes that will take some years

Wes Slaymaker, P.E.  
WES Engineering  
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Madison WI 53715  
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**From:** Ann Rivlin <amfrivlin@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, May 10, 2021 11:25 AM  
**To:** Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** Vilas Park Drive--item 65344

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

To the Board of Park Commissioners,

I am writing in support of the proposed interim solution for Vilas Park Drive. I have served as a member of the Resident Resource Group for the Vilas Park Master Plan process as well as a resident member of the city working group examining interim options for Vilas Park Drive. I live in Vilas and am a frequent user of Vilas Park.

I very much appreciate the work of Parks and Traffic Engineering staff on this issue. There is high interest in making Vilas Park Drive safer for pedestrians and bicyclists that is shared by Parks, Traffic Engineering, and many of the users of Vilas Park. However, I want to point out that this effort goes beyond just how the drive is used. Traffic on Vilas Park Drive affects how Vilas Park itself is used. During the Shared Streets program, the lack of cars on Vilas Park Drive produced park use in previously neglected areas. Park users enjoyed the Lake Wingra shoreline in a whole new way—it was a vibrant part of the park. Once cars returned to Vilas Park Drive, people reduced their use of the park near the drive.

I strongly support option one—two-way traffic from the east to the shelter lot—because this option improves safety issues at both ends of Vilas Park Drive. While it will take the implementation of the master plan recommendation for the drive to fully improve the safety issues on Vilas Park Drive, this option will be a significant improvement over the current situation.

The drive has one end by Edgewood Avenue that includes a historic bridge. This bridge is lovely, but it is very narrow. Accommodating pedestrians, bicyclists and cars in the limited space

on the bridge is difficult. Pedestrians and bicyclists do not feel safe sharing the bridge with cars, which are often travelling at high speeds and using the drive as a cut through route, despite the posted speed limit of 15 mph and “park users only” signs.

The other end of Vilas Park Drive is by the zoo. At this end, there is no clear space for pedestrians and zoo visitors to walk, and frequent flooding limits the space available for pedestrians, bicyclists and cars driving to the zoo or beach. Adding in cars that are using the drive as a cut through contributes to the safety risks at the zoo end of the drive.

Option one improves both ends of Vilas Park Drive. Creating a vehicle free section that includes the historic bridge stops the pedestrian/bicyclist/car conflict at the bridge and ends the use of the drive as a cut through route. The planned ped way and buffer zone create a clear space for pedestrians throughout the drive, most importantly at the zoo end of the drive. The zoo end of Vilas Park Drive will also benefit from the end of cut through traffic as it will reduce, at times substantially, the number of cars using the drive. I also think this option will allow people from Madison and the surrounding areas to enjoy the lake shoreline in Vilas Park.

Thank you for your consideration, and I urge the Commission’s support of this proposal.

Respectfully,

Ann Rivlin

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From: Mary J Lindstrom <lindstro@biostat.wisc.edu>  
Sent: Tuesday, May 11, 2021 2:02 PM  
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>  
Subject: Agenda item 65344 Vilas Park Drive

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I would like to register my preference for closing Vilas Park Drive to through traffic. Thank you.

Mary Lindstrom  
1105 Van Buren St  
Madison 53711

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From: MC Murphy <maryclare@charter.net>  
Sent: Tuesday, May 11, 2021 6:53 PM  
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>  
Subject: Please approve short-term improvements to Vilas Park safety for pedestrians

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

Thank you for your attention to the safety of pedestrians along Lake Wingra within Vilas Park. Putting this short-term plan in place would be a huge benefit for all of us who use the park drive regularly and those who use it once or occasionally. This area is full of distractions: walkers, runners, sun bathers, stroller pushers, geese, bikers, dogs on leashes, ducks, hammock nappers, migrating birds and waterfowl, etc.

First, you have your speeders, going who knows where. Then you have the people who drive through the park so they can enjoy the lake view, which of course entails taking your eyes off the road, even for just a few moments. They also can't help but notice the people and animals trying to make their way through the area, but this is a tough crowd to check-out while you're driving. Everyone, except the nappers and picnickers, is moving.

Separating these two populations, in any way, even as a temporary measure, is worth the effort and cost.

Thanks,

Mary Clare Murphy  
1910 Jefferson St.

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**From:** Kathy Gerhardt <gerhardtkathryn@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 11, 2021 7:52 PM  
**To:** Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** 65344

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I am against closing vilas park drive to traffic. Drake st will be a nightmare of traffic shortcutting through from Monroe to Park st.

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**From:** Wendy Fearnside <wendy.fearnside@att.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, May 11, 2021 9:49 PM  
**To:** Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** Support for Agenda Item 65344 Vilas Park Drive

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

I support approval of Item #65344, the Intermediate Traffic Management Plan for Vilas Park Drive. The plan does a good job of balancing the needs of different park users. It preserves some of the benefits seen when the Drive was closed to traffic during the past year, while still providing vehicle access to the shelter, hockey rink, beach and shoreline.

Wendy Fearnside  
912 Van Buren St.  
Madison, WI

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**From:** Denise Jess <djess@wcblind.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 12, 2021 6:13 AM  
**To:** Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>  
**Cc:** Ann Kovich <annelizabethkovich@gmail.com>; McGuigan, Patrick <PMcGuigan@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** Vilas Park Intermediate Traffic Plan

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Dear Board of Parks Commissioners,

I serve on the city's Transportation Commission, am the executive director of the Wisconsin Council of the Blind & Visually Impaired, and live with vision loss. I am in general support of the intermediate traffic plan for Vilas Park, but wish to bring your attention to the need for additional signage and other measures to assure that the park's roadway and adjacent paths are as accessible for people with disabilities as possible during this transition period.

This project was brought before the Transportation Commission on April 28. During that meeting, support for the plan was expressed by the commission. Additionally, I appreciated the cooperation between the residents, alder, and staff to develop a preferred option. However, a couple of fellow commissioners and I raised concerns about accessibility for people with disabilities; primarily those using mobility devices and those with vision loss. One suggestion was to narrow the bike lanes when possible to give increased space for pedestrians. However, the response from parks staff felt insufficient for creating increased safety and accessibility for vulnerable users.

I followed up with Renee Callaway from Traffic Engineering and Anne Freiwald from Parks to explore other low-cost measures to increase usability and accessibility. Renee suggested additional signage to guide cyclist behavior to better accommodate the space for pedestrians. I believe Renee's suggestions, plus narrowing the bike lanes in places like the bridge, will help increase accessibility and make the park drive more welcoming for all users. I ask that you inquire about these increased safety and accessibility measures this evening to be sure they are included in the final plan. I am unable to attend this evening's meeting to speak to these issues directly as the Transportation Commission meets at the same time.

In general, I'd like to ask the Board of Parks to hold a high standard for accessibility of Madison's disability community and visitors. Our parks are beautiful, offer respite from busy lives, and places to gather with friends and loved ones. Our parks need to be welcoming spaces for all, including people with disabilities, if we want to truly be a city that promotes equity and inclusion. I've appreciated the efforts to enhance accessibility of parks in the master planning process and have been involved in some of this work. I'd ask that you apply a filter of equity

even in these intermediate and smaller projects. There are often low cost and simple solutions that can be implemented that create enhanced usability, accessibility, safety and equity for people living with disabilities. I am happy to consult with staff on these issues as are my colleagues from other disability serving organizations in the city.

Thank you for your consideration.

Denise

Denise Jess  
She/Her/Hers  
CEO/Executive Director  
Wisconsin Council of the Blind & Visually Impaired  
754 Williamson Street  
Madison, WI 53703  
608-237-8103 - Direct  
[www.weblind.org](http://www.weblind.org)

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From: Diana C <busybees2@juno.com>  
Sent: Wednesday, May 12, 2021 9:11 AM  
To: Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>  
Subject: Vilas Park Drive Interim Solution

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

Dear Park Commissioners,

I am writing to support the interim plan for Vilas Park Drive.

It is important to me to do this for safety of pedestrians and bicyclists as well as for the creating a healthier space for people to move around in.

Last year, it proved to be successful when the drive was closed to vehicles. More people felt comfortable and safer walking along one of the most lovely areas of our city.

Thank you for considering this.

Best,

Diana Cohen  
[busybees2@juno.com](mailto:busybees2@juno.com)  
706 S Orchard St, Madison

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**From:** Randall Baldwin <outlook\_92F65F9B52DCE4E6@outlook.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 12, 2021 10:09 AM  
**To:** Park Commission <pacommission@cityofmadison.com>  
**Subject:** opposition to closing Lake Wingra Shoreline-Vilas Park to vehicle traffic

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Too many people enjoy the drive through and street parking along the lake shore of this Park and Pleasure Drive to close it off. A separate walkway and bikeway can be created that should satisfy the pedestrian/ bikers who for some reason don't like the one way traffic. In the 49 years living near the zoo entrance I haven't heard of any accidents along this drive that would justify closing it to vehicles. Have there been any?

Randall Baldwin 1328 Drake Street