

Schenk-Atwood-Starkweather Creek-Yahara Neighborhood (SASY) Transportation Committee's Response to City of Madison

On October 8, 2014 Madison's City Traffic Engineering (TE) staff met with representatives of the SASY Transportation Committee (TC) and discussed issues related to traffic in the SASY Neighborhood.

Each section identifies, in order, the request by the neighborhood (as identified at the February 20, 2014 public meeting), followed in *italics* by city Traffic Engineering staff (TE) responses (verbatim from their letter), followed in ***bold italics*** by the Traffic Committees' (TC) response to the city.

Pedestrian Safety

Neighborhood: A. Install crosswalks and pedestrian-activated traffic lights on Atwood Avenue at the following locations:

1. At or near Olbrich Gardens;

City TE: City Engineering (CE) and TE have a median and lane reduction project planned for this segment of Atwood—staff anticipates implementation as part of the street reconstruction. Ped accommodations from Olbrich Gardens to the Park/Lake side will be greatly improved with this project.

SASY TC: Cautious OK. Let's see if this improves pedestrian safety.

2. At Corscot Street near the Barrymore Theater

City TE: "We will implement a ped activated beacon/warning system at this location in 2015. Additional locations in the corridor can be considered in future years."

SASY TC: A similar beacon/warning system is located at 4th Street and Johnson, i.e. there is a precedent for this, it seems to slow down traffic, although not all vehicles stop. TC would like to know if there have been ped/vehicle conflicts/incidents since installation of the system at 4th and Johnson.

3. At Ohio Street

City TE: "We can consider additional locations if the Corscot location is considered a success."

SASY TC: a. What criteria will be used by the city to assess "success" of the beacon/warning system at the Corscott location? b. How long will this assessment take? c. If deemed a "success", how long will it take to implement this system at Ohio? Would it be efficient and least costly to implement during the reconstruction of

Atwood?

4. At Waubesa/Miller.

City TE: "We can consider additional locations if the Corscot location is considered a success."

SASY TC: Again, a. What criteria will be used by the city to assess "success" of the beacon/warning system at the Corscott location? b. How long will this assessment take? c. If a "success", how long will it take to implement this system at Waubesa/Miller?

Consider that the busy Goodman Community Center (GCC) on Waubesa generates considerable ped, bike and vehicular traffic in the immediate vicinity of the facility and nearby. For example, peds attempting to cross Atwood to get to Waubesa after alighting from eastbound buses on Atwood have an almost impossible task of safely crossing two to four busy lanes of traffic. To us, the conflicts suggest the City needs to be giving immediate attention to significantly improving ped and bicycle safety around and near the GCC facility.

B. Improve ped safety along Lakeland at Hudson

City TE: "This area was reviewed over aerial photos with nghd reps, there is a worn path along the park edge and weaves between curb and effigy mound. In general worn paths like this are an indication of need for sidewalk, if there is some interest in sidewalk recommend Nghd and TE discuss concerns with CE and Parks Dept. and see if feasible."

SASY TC response: The TC expects a concrete sidewalk on the S. side of Lakeland along the lake would be unpopular, and questions the room available for such a sidewalk. So although the worn path is heavily used by pedestrians, we wonder if alternatives to a cement path are available. Expect it may be unpopular with immediate neighbors.

Neighborhood: C. Improvements to Schenks Corners as follows:

1. Close the small street immediately in front of Alchemy and neighboring businesses;

City TE: "This is an option that can be reviewed/work on with the Schenk's corner reconstruction in 2016."

SASY TC: TC, SASY's Corridor Planning Committee, and the city will jointly discuss as part of the Schenk's corners reconstruction process.

2. Install a pedestrian Plaza to replace the parking lot/spaces in front of Alchemy;

TE: "This is an option that can be reviewed/work on with the Schenk's corner reconstruction in 2016."

SASY TC: TC, SASY's Corridor Planning Committee, and the city will jointly discuss as part of the Schenk's corners reconstruction process.

Neighborhood: 3. Remove the pavement on Winnebago St. east of Second Street from the current curb to form a straight line for Winnebago, thus narrowing the street considerably and making pedestrian crossing easier.

City TE: "Nghd identified a "hot lane" problem that they are seeing on Winnebago in front of Stop n Go. CE has agreed to extend the Schenk's corner project north to this point which will allow us to address this problem."

Neighborhood: 4. Two-way the 1900 block of Atwood with a cul-de-sac at the east end;

City TE: "Nghd does not wish to see the west leg of Atwood at Winnebago opened to two-way traffic and would like consideration of closure and cul-de-sac. Reps would like consideration of making 1900 blk of Atwood two-way. This would require re-opening of the First St end of Atwood and removal of the small island and provide space for Left turns to be made. The removal of the ped refuge island at this location would make the intersection less ped friendly."

SASY TC: TE misunderstood part of the potential solution offered by the neighborhood at the March meeting: neighbors (including the manager of the new apartment building going up on the 1900 block of Atwood) input that they would be happy with two-way of the 1900 block of Atwood only to/from First, becoming one-way (as it now is) at the intersection with Winnebago, while blocking off vehicular access to the now "parking" area in front of Alchemy, which would be replaced by a pedestrian plaza. If the width of the new two-way section of the 1900 block from First is sufficient, install angled parking along that section of the street to replace some of the parking lost to the new plaza. If this is still not clear to TE, lets discuss!

Neighborhood: 5. Install angled parking near the cul-de-sac created on the 1900 block of Atwood to replace the parking spaces lost in front of Alchemy.

City TE: "Parking Utility will lay out some options for parking and see how the available street width can work".

SASY TC: OK, and see TC response to 4 above.

Neighborhood Input Regarding Bicycles

Neighborhood:1. Install/paint bicycle lanes along entire length of Atwood Avenue from Willy Street through to Monona Drive to make it safer for bikes along that entire stretch.

City TE: "Bike lanes would necessitate removal of parking and elimination of peak hour traffic lane. This would have significant impact on traffic in the Isthmus area and would require Council authorization."

SASY TC: Atwood is a very busy street which is used by bicycles in an inherently unsafe environment due to the narrowness of the street in many sections and vehicular traffic volumes. Not having bicycle lanes along the street appears contrary in many ways to City of Madison efforts elsewhere to improve the safety of bicycling as a legitimate transportation modality, and is an equity issue.

While the State Capital Bike path exists as a safe segregated alternative along much of the Atwood corridor route, there is no safe bike route along Atwood from the intersection of the bike path at Walter to/from Cottage Grove Road. We see numerous bicycles using the sidewalk along that section (and the sidewalk is frequently not cleared of snow in winter) so as to avoid vehicles on the road.

Consequently, TC instead proposes connection of the State Capital path along marked bicycle lanes along Walter to Atwood, with bike lanes along Atwood to and from Walter and Cottage Grove Rd. This section of Atwood has widened to two-lanes in each direction. Alternatively, widen the pedestrian path along the NE and SE sides of Atwood to/from Oakridge to Cottage Grove Rd to form a segregated bike path. Please discuss with us if this is unclear.

Neighborhood: 2. Implement table-topping bike path between Dunning and Waubesa as previously recommended by the SASY Council;

City TE: "Table Tops are feasible but they do require storm water work at the crossings of Jackson, Ohio and Corry. Generally projects that impact storm water infrastructure are best done as part of a larger street reconstruction project. Earlier cost estimates for this work determined:

JACKSON \$8-10,000 Storm Water Work

OHIO \$23-25,000 Storm Water Work

CORRY \$35,000 Storm Water Work

This does not include the cost of the table top at these locations-only storm water costs.

The residents requested the City consider a smaller scale project of redoing the three streets curb ramp transitions between Path and Street to make the transition smoother and less jolting to the cyclist. This would not require reconfiguration of the storm water system. We will review the potential of redoing the ramps as a separate project with City Engineering."

TC: The bike path is a major bicycle artery, carrying a considerable volume of bicycle traffic, and the ramps at intersection are a significant impediment. We again respectfully request that the TE makes table-topping a high priority, given the relatively low projected costs compared to the cost of street reconstruction and resurfacing

elsewhere that is intended to serve vehicles. We also request a stop sign for vehicles at the intersection of the path with Ohio. Redoing the ramps is a short-term solution.

Neighborhood: 3. Improve bicycle access to Schenk's Corners businesses from Riverside and the bike path;

City TE: "Modifications to improve bike connections here require a larger reconstruction of the Riverside/Winnebago/First St/Williamson triangle."

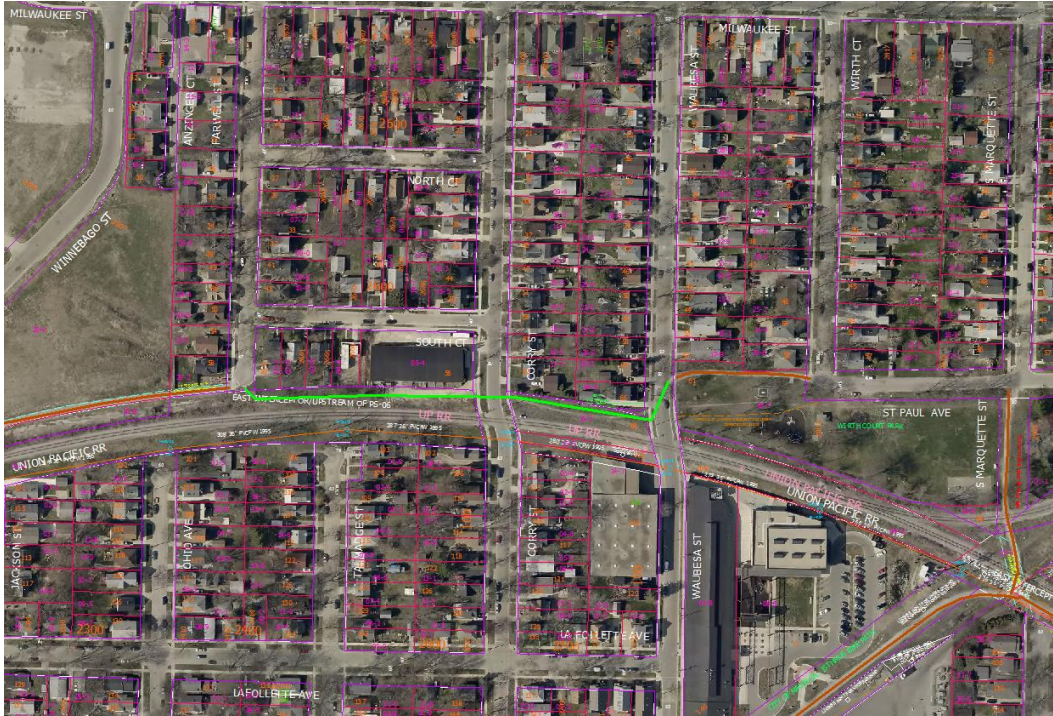
SASY TC: TC, SASY's Corridor Planning Committee, and the city will jointly discuss as part of the Atwood/Schenk's corners reconstruction process.

Neighborhood: 4. Improve bicycle safety along Lakeland at Hudson, Miller and points east.

City TE: "Bike improvements are planned in Olbrich Park as part of the Atwood Ave islands at Olbrich Gardens, Lakeland is a low volume residential street--if there is concern related to traffic or residents are interested in traffic calming recommend the residents take a look and consider the City's Traffic Calming program."

Neighborhood: Design and build an extension of the Wirth Ct. bike path, along the railroad track between Waubesa and the current "bike path to nowhere," which goes from the continuation of Division (north of LaFollette, former street, now bike path) east through the Union Corners land near the railroad track and ends at Farwell. The part of the path inside Union Corners was built before the recession, probably to conform to one of the proposed streets we expected to have been built seven or so years ago, and goes between what was Division and Farwell (see map). The bike path would need to be built between Waubesa and Farwell, crossing Corry and meeting up with the cul-de-sac with Farwell.

City TE: "Graphically this alignment generally looks like this:



This path connection makes sense; however, the path would have to be located in RR right of way. At this time we do not expect the RR would support the concept. The MPO will be including this path in their new bike plan, but construction is not anticipated anytime soon.”

Neighborhood: Two additional areas discussed:

1) Consider a bike left turn lane at signalized intersection of Atwood and Winnebago-for WB bikes on Atwood Ave.

City TE: “This is an interesting idea, will need to lay out moving traffic lanes towards the south curb; this is a concept that should be considered as part of the larger Schenk’s Corner reconstruction project.”

SASY TC: OK

2) Russell St intersection at Eastwood. The side path comes so close to Eastwood that there is insufficient space for a ped to stand to wait before crossing Eastwood and they stand in the westbound side of the side path the result is conflicts with path bicycle traffic.

City TE: “Reviewed the issue with CE, they have a sewer project planned here in 2018, best time to relocate/realign the crossing would be done with that project. Right now we just don’t have the room to try to define a space for peds using pavement markings.

SASY TC: We request a marked pedestrian crossing on Eastwood at the Eastwood/Russell intersection with a sign for vehicles to “Yield to Pedestrians”,

possibly with a flashing light . This is a dangerous, unmarked intersection for pedestrians to cross, especially since vehicles are travelling at 40 MPH or higher speeds along Eastwood, and the distance to the nearest controlled intersection is significant in both directions when travelling by foot. The absence of a safe ped crossing at the Russell/Eastwood intersection significantly impedes ped access to/from Atwood Ave. businesses, churches and bus stops immediately north of Eastwood from/to the neighborhood immediately to the south of Eastwood. A safe crossing would get a lot of use.

3. Also at the Eastwood/Russell intersection, the ped approach from the north sidewalk to cross Eastwood is angled such that when biking eastbound on that sidewalk, it is almost impossible to make that sharp turn to access Eastwood without getting off of the bicycle. This is a popular and easy way for bicycle access in and out of the neighborhood immediately to the south of Eastwood via First and Sherman to/from the north side of Madison.

Consequently, we request that at the intersection of Russell and Eastwood, the short sidewalk approach to the Eastwood crosswalk on the north side of Eastwood at Russell be straightened out.

3. Neighborhood Input Regarding Transit for Madison Metro:

A. Increase frequency of bus service along East Washington, Atwood and Winnebago Streets;

B. Extend more frequent bus service along Monona Drive up to the City of Monona boundary; and

C. Install a bus shelter near Winnebago/Yahara River.

SASY TC: Madison Metro responded separately to neighborhood input but the SASY TC has not yet met with Metro to discuss. Consequently Metro's response will be reported separately to the SASY Council.