

OPEN HOUSE
University Avenue Corridor Plan (UAC)
December 1, 2010
Inn Towner Hotel, 2424 University Avenue
7:00 – 9:00 pm

The City of Madison, Regent Neighborhood Association, and the District Alderperson hosted a public open house on December 1 to solicit input from residents and businesses regarding the future of Old University Avenue. Approximately forty participants attended the input session.

Participants were requested to stop at six destinations to review and comment on preliminary solutions and/or recommendations. Below are the written comments received.

Destination 1: Where Are We Going? (Vision Statement)

General Comments

- It sounds too much like it's trying to be everything to everyone – what is the focus?
- It's fine
- Sounds good – not sure we're really up for 'vibrant' – it usually includes cars and noise
- Too wordy. Pare it down.
- Love it. Genius authors.
- Should reflect an attitude that embraces change and welcomes new opportunities. Let's not have a status quo plan.
- Well thought-out
- We need a bold and creative vision. Make it predominantly pedestrian and bike-friendly. And safe.
- Plan is misleading. It focuses on University Avenue alone. North side of Kendall Ave. from Breese Terrace to Grand Ave – also zoned for apartments. How many tall buildings do developers want to put there too?
- Like the idea of mixed use, including pedestrian/bike-friendly passageways. Neighborhood would be livelier, safer, with places open evenings (like old Ivy Inn, like present restaurants).
- Somewhat blah and unfocused.

What would you add or take out?

- Like “rejuvenated corridor” – emphasize range of residential/housing with commercial and retail development – it is a corridor, it is in a residential area that borders the University and hospital complex and thus has commercial development
- It's good
- Really support transit at Highland Avenue
- Rewrite this second sentence. This pedestrian-friendly corridor offers residents and visitors a rich variety of locally-owned services in a safe arrangement. Mixed-use

development and building design emphasis: yes – human scale, sustainable practices and a range of housing options to support a diverse population

- Get rid of ugly utility poles, put “Regent Neighborhood” sign at west entrance to University Avenue.
- Building’s must be quiet – especially the HVAC systems. Our neighborhood has far too much industrial noise now and we can’t tolerate any more.
- Add innovative green alternatives, such as promoting sustainable structures, environmentally friendly green space and other surfaces (porous sidewalk concrete?? if possible).

What are some possible branding ideas for University Avenue?

Blend historic—futuristic, green as possible, balance between peds/bike/car/bus, rename it: Green Univ. Ave (promote LEED standards, sustainable practices), Old & Slow Univ. Ave – promote slow food places, promote slow/safe pedestrian and bike traffic, promote walking-friendly destinations (no parking needed)

Destination 2: Windshield View

General Comments

- Emphasize residential setting
- Smaller businesses
- Corridor between UW/residential
- Highland/Univ. intersection is already extremely multi-modal. Retail can cater to walk/bike/bus traffic and neighbors. There is parking in the area, but customers may need to walk a block.
- Proposed land-use changes look good.
- Agree with proposal to downgrade HDR to MDR and CMU to NMU in order to protect current population density.
- I agree that we are missing the 2600 Block of University Ave – need to include
- Agree with proposal to downgrade Land Use Designation to NMU and HDR within the green and blue portions of existing CMU and HDR.
- The current lane plan land use maps look pretty good – allows for a dense corridor to support neighborhood serving commercial uses.
- I often bike and drive Old Univ. Ave. and seldom have any difficulty or concerns. One exception is turning left on U. from Allen St.
- Commercial units along Old University Ave., between Allen and Grand. A real challenge, ever since Campus Drive bypass came along in 1968.
- There are quite a few blank, uninteresting facades, not much greenspace. Patchy use of trees, though not too bad.
- Zero lot line buildings should be avoided at all cost! A nicer idea is courtyards which are intriguing and green. Buildings can border them without losing too much space.
- Why doesn’t the corridor extend westward through the 1-way eastbound exit off University Avenue, e.g. to include defunct bookshop? That block is an eyesore now.

Where do you think changes should occur? What kind of changes? What type of intensity of uses?

- More retail.
- More visually interesting things on street: plazas, art work, benches, trees, etc.
- Maintain low rise and low density on south side –not HDR on south – allow small commercial uses on whole corridor.
- Also need to protect area West of Farley by extending NMU designation to Franklin. This is important to make the Farley/University Bay – Campus intersection safer.
- More consistent development – 3-story max; adequate setbacks and stepbacks
- In all areas not already built to High Density, change plan and zoning to Medium Density. That is plenty for serving a rail transit stop while preventing undue intrusion into residential areas.
- The City must grow to survive. I believe it is better to work to target infill development than to see development at the fringes. The University Ave. corridor is the perfect opportunity for this type of growth. I fear the “proposed recommendations” would lock in the status quo and include opportunity for comment, sustainable urban growth.
- No buildings over 5 stories in height, and on north side of Old University, nothing over 3 stories. Setback from sidewalk with greenspace.

Specific Areas of Interest:

--Birge Terrace – Paunack Place Area

- Keep as smaller residential-owner-occupied
- MDR is right
- How about another bike/ped bridge over Campus Dr. here?

--North of University Avenue (along Campus Drive)

- 6 stories max near campus drive, 3 stories max on north side of Univ. Ave
- Plant more trees
- All along here a screen of trees/foilage sorely needed (I live in a building along Campus Dr.)

--North of University Avenue (along the frontage)

- 3 stories max
- Don't exceed 5 stories
- See above, under General Comments.

--South of University Avenue (between Breese Terrace and Allen)

- 2 to 3 stories
- MDR -- ≤ 3 stories
- Keep residential, as is, but make bike-friendlier.

--South of University Avenue (between Breese Terrace and Chestnut)

- 2 to 3 stories
- MDR -- ≤ 3 stories
- Keep residential, as is, but make bike-friendlier.

--South of University Avenue (between Chestnut and Grand)

- 2 to 3 stories
- NMU is good
- Keep residential, as is, but make bike-friendlier.

--South of University Avenue (between Grand and Farley)

- 2 to 3 stories
- Intersection at Farley in particular is wide open and treeless, so buildings must be kept to 3 stories maximum. Lots of pedestrians and cyclists use this area to cross to UWH and VAH. The area of CMU west of Farley also needs to be downgraded to NMU.
- NMU is good
- This area should continue to be primarily a commercial node.
- Keep residential, as is, but make bike-friendlier. Traffic calming needed!

Destination 3: WOW, Look at That!

General Comments

- Keep low heights on south side
- I question whether anyone would like to live in an apartment overlooking noisy Campus Drive.
- It is exceeding important to avoid blocking the view of the sky for single-family residential homes. As important as height, is to hold builders/developers to architectural standards that create attractive buildings with varied surface.
- As the corridor evolves and grows over time, providing an opportunity for density is critically important as a key to sustainable urban neighborhoods.
- Most agreeable buildings are not taller than 3-4 stories
- Bldgs that are too high will overwhelm the neighborhood and make it too dark.

Heights of Building along Campus Drive

- 6 stories max.
- 4-10 stories, especially the cul-de-sacs: Chamberlain, Pannak and Birge
- 5 stories
- 6 story max
- 4 stories along south side (max) – facing SF (Single Family) Residential
- 6 stories along north side – facing Campus Drive
- 5 stories
- Could be slightly higher here, but will cause light blockage if too high.
- Can be somewhat higher as road is wider. Narrow streets dictate lower bldgs.

Heights of Building on north side of University Avenue

- Keep height around 3-4 stories
- 4-6 stories
- 6 max – always with setbacks
- 4 stories
- West of Farley, no higher than the gum drop trees or maybe 4 stories.
- 3 stories max
- 6 stories – avoid blocking the sky for residential neighbors
- 3 east or 4 west stories
- Erratic – several too high, stick out like sore thumbs.
- Shorter than Campus Drive.

Heights of Buildings on south side of University Avenue

- Keep height around 2-3 stories for new bldgs
- 3-4 stories
- 2-3 max – make it consistent with houses directly behind
- 2-3 stories
- West of Farley, no higher than the gum drop trees or maybe 4 stories.
- 2-3 stories
- 4 stories to avoid undue intrusion to viewscape of SF (Single family) residential homes.
- These are mostly better, consistent.
- Even shorter.

Heights of Buildings on Highland Avenue

- N of Campus Drive \leq 6 stories
- S of Old Univ. -- \leq 2 stories
- 3-4 stories
- 3-4 stories
- 2-3 stories
- Limit to 2 stories, or 3 with neighbor approval.
- 1-2 stories
- Not bad. Inntowner quite dense but ok for its location.
- 2-3 story max.

SEE ATTACHED MAP FOR MAP RESPONSES.

Destination 4: Share the Roadway

General Comments

- Primarily transit and car with safe pedestrian crossings.
- Need connection between Breese Terrace—University Avenue and Kendall. Too many people on bikes are on sidewalk.
- If no bike lanes, sharrows need to be installed. Many people still use University by bike and will continue to do so. (Note: Sharrows are shared lane markings used within travel lanes shared by bicyclists and other vehicles.

- Be more creative with tree selection and avoid ecologically disastrous monocultures and trash trees like Norway Maple. Use more native species and bury power lines and other utilities to avoid the Urban Forestry hack job.
- The area at Highland cannot be developed in ways that draw more auto traffic. This area needs to allow a safe and convenient ped/bike passage to a (near) future rail transit stop.
- Yes, absolutely. Adopt a complete streets approach.
- We need lighting it makes everything safer!
- Looks pretty good overall.
- Bicycles and pedestrians more important here than cars.
- A difficult problem.
- Need to slow southbound cars down Highland Avenue heading up Highland to west.

Bicycle Markings, Lanes and Bike Path

- Too much traffic – Kendall is one block over – don't see University Avenue as bike route.
- Need bike lanes all the way from Highland to Breese Terrace. Parking one all one side (not alternating) would allow addition of bike lanes on both sides.
- Yes
- Yes bike lanes.
- Emphasize biking and pedestrian safety.
- Very important – have bike lanes, markings, path. Keep sidewalks and crossing safe for pedestrians!
- Very important. It's too dangerous to bike on most paths incorporated into streets now. A better design needs to be implemented so that bikes and busses aren't in conflict.
- Add bicycle wayfinding on Allen Street to help direct bicyclists to Campus Bike Path.

Bus Stops and Bus Shelters

- Yes
- More! Decorative.
- In character with the most attractive nearby buildings; or possibly of the same style as on the Capitol Square.
- Should be enhanced so that transit usage is more commutable and convenient.
- Yes Bus Shelters.
- These could be enhanced, maybe with shelters. This is a high bus-use area.
- Add a bus stop on the south side of University in front of Sushi Box.

On-Street Parking

- Yes – consider 2 lane commute times like Regent St.; otherwise allow parking.
- Will not allow passing bicyclists or busses. Not sure it's a good idea.
- As much as possible.
- Yes!
- No. Any new residential or retail building must provide off-street parking. Discourage traffic use.

- Put it behind businesses.

Traffic Lanes, including Middle Turning Lane

- No
- Make people use Campus Drive. Disincentivize use of Old University.
- No. These dedicated turn lanes are designed to maximize the efficiency of auto travel, often at the expense of other forms of transport (Ped, Bike, etc.).
- If traffic use is discouraged, no turning lanes needed.

Pedestrian Crossings

- Yes
- Use paint, colored pavement or other markings to highlight crossings.
- Trying to cross Highland at Chamberlain is very difficult for Randall Elem and West High students and residents. Need better defined crosswalk and maybe an island to slow the speeding traffic which doesn't stop.
- At Highland and Univ. – much danger to pedestrians and bikers from turning cars. Also at intersection of Highland with westbound ramp to Campus Dr.
- Yes!
- Slightly raised, different color than pavement; distinct, reflective borders.
- Yes – it's a must people should not fear crossing a street!
- Please make these more obvious and safer! It is treacherous crossing this street, esp. at rush hours.
- Very important – lacking now.
- Add red pavement on the ped crossing at Allen Street and University (south side).

Other

- Signage/diversions so people don't get lost going west on University and ending up on Stevens. Some are lost, but many also shortcutting FAST down Stevens.
- Bike Parking – mandatory enforced – must be far enough from buildings to allow convenient use. This must be done to encourage more bike use for shopping and commuting, and cut down on the safety and environmental hazards of car use.
- 1-hour parking is pretty useless. There should be a minimum of 2-hr. spots.
- Extend median from Breese Terrace to Lathrop on University since there are no driveways on northside of roadway.

Destination 5: Making the Walk Intriguing

General Comments

- Great ideas – love all the are charette work – benches
- Be careful not to add so much lighting that what remains of the night sky is blotted out.
- Love it all!
- The single change that would have the greatest improvement of the pedestrian experience would be to manage the street level of development along the corridor with commercial uses. Too many of the multi-family buildings have blank facades. Consider limiting residential uses at street level of certain portions of the corridor.
- Make the walk intriguing and safe.

- Building right up to sidewalk. Make walk ugly and uninviting.

Art Sculptures, Signs and Landscaping

- Plaza/Coffee at bridge entrance
- West High produces scads of gifted artists – let them at it!
- Fun
- Creativity – great
- Good idea but how many opportunities for this exist?
- Do not emulate the football sculpture. Get top-notch artists and let citizens see the designs.

Bridge Decorative Lighting and Treatment (1)

- This would be great. Lighting would make it feel safer.
- Lighting needed under bridges for safety and cheer.
- Yes!
- Bridge structure should mimic the 1930's. Bridges along the Oregon court.
- Need to develop much stronger connections between corridor and University to the North.
- If it is affordable, wonderful!
- Good ideas
- Yes!
- Add RNA sign on bridge. Add Ivy.
-

Building Decorative Lighting and Treatment (2)

- Pedestrian level lighting
- Add texture to some flat faces. More light for pedestrians.
- Use down cart, low-wattage LEDs.
- Yes
- Yes
- Safer lighting rather than harsh spotlights.
- Not kitschy! Some designs on display here are horrible.
- Add UW Madison signage on bridge.

Other

- Would really love to see the power lines buried
- Decorative-theme on signage, bus shelters and banners
- Have interesting visual art which will entice people to walk and look.
- Trees, trees, trees!
- Madison has not done well with this in the past.

Destination 6: Stopping for Lunch

General Comments

- Need breakfast place! With 24 hr. hospitals, researchers with odd hours, stay/work at home neighbors and students, we need breakfast.
- All the existing restaurants are jammed at lunch, so clearly they are surviving off local people/UW/Hosp.
- I like these general ideas – Monroe Street, Williamson Street, Atwood Avenue and East Johnson all have good aspects – many of these would improve Univ. Ave corridor
- Allow commercial along corridors
- Include SW corner of Farley and University Ave in plan. Architectural interest would not make minimal setbacks as objectionable e.g. Willy Street Façade Improvement.
- Encourage access by bus and by the Middleton-Sun Prairie light rail line.
- Overheard: A breakfast place is needed.
- Need a coffee shop.
- Enhance existing commercial locations. Think slow food—slow car traffic!
- Nice to have restaurants one can walk to – Lulu’s, Lombardino’s, New Seoul – need a few more!
- Native plants only.

New Commercial Space

- Yes
- Yes!
- Allow NMU all along the corridor – The commercial space should extend the entire length.
- Promote locally owned green and clean businesses. (e.g. bakery, breakfast eatery, ethnic restaurants).
- A small hotel would be nice and popular because of location – I miss the Ivy Inn!
- Lulu’s will be hard to replace, but attempts should be made to get something which offers real meals of good quality-hopefully ethnic.

Improved Parking Lot (Proposed)

- Maybe
- Yes
- Yes!
- Minimize this our streets, esp. Kendall, bear too heavy of a traffic burden as it is.
- Make it more attractive than the usual.
- At Sunday Farmer’s Market.

Pedestrian Streetscape Amenities (bicycle racks, pedestrian lights, street trees)

- Need more (any) bike parking in area.
- Yes
- Lots of them (bike racks) and native and variety (street trees) – buried utilities to avoid butchering trees
- Yes!
- Good ideas
- Yes, yes, yes to all these!

- Trees are very important – get a variety of species –native plants.
- Please encourage or require bike racks to be placed conveniently to entrances, at least as convenient as auto parking. An example of poor placement is the bike rack at the InnTowner.

Traffic Calming/Diversion

- For pedestrian crossings – otherwise, no.
- No right-turn at Grand Ave for eastbound Univ. Ave traffic
- Speed bumps have been working well.
- Yes!
- Need a speed hump east-bound at Farley (b. of) to slow down cars entering Univ. Ave from E. bound Campus Dr. Too many people use this like a freeway off-ramp.
- Keep traffic off Old Univ. as much as possible – it has become dangerous and crowded.
- Be careful. This can complicate matters for bikes and make accidents more likely. Keep sight – lines! (for cars and bikes and busses).

Food Vendors (in this area or east end by Breese Terrace)

- Prefer 1-2 story retail/residential with some 3-4 commercial/residential
- Might be successful at east end – attract people from Ag and Engr schools. At west end – compete with restaurants?
- Worth a try!
- Encourage mall cafes all along the length of the street with NMU.
- Food at both ends of corridor. *Consider partnerships/training opportunities in small businesses along the corridor.
- Beyond football games? Not sure needed.
- Public Plaza with space for food carts and benches at end of Alicia Ashman Bridge.