

Monroe Street Reconstruction  
Pedestrian, Bicycle, Transit Infrastructure World Café  
Meeting Notes  
August 11, 2016, Edgewood College

Total participants: 58

## Pedestrian and Bicycle Access Conversation:

After presentations from City of Madison staff on Pedestrian and Bicycle Infrastructure, small table groups discussed a series of questions, with one participant at each table taking notes. Consolidated responses are as follows:

### **Question 1: What design concepts were discussed during these two presentations?**

For pedestrians:

- Midway point/refuge island (6)
- Rapid flashing beacons (RRFB) (5)
- Elevated crosswalks (4)
- Colored crosswalks, different materials (4)
- Bump outs (4)
- Overheads with or without flashers (2)
- Pedestrian count downs (2)
- Combination of measures to keep drivers alert (2)
- Crosswalk/traffic flags
- Speed table (like one in front of City/County Bldg.?)
- Raised intersection
- Lane markers
- Bike parking
- Rebuild will call attention to pedestrians
- Decreasing complexity for pedestrians
- Visibility

For bicycles:

- Protected bike lanes (3)
- Side street connectivity (2)
- Painted bike lanes
- Contra-flow bike lanes
- Bike lanes vs. on-street parking
- Wingra Park connector
- Widened sidewalk along Monroe from Laurel to Edgewood
- Wayfinding/signage
- Amateur cyclists will make people feel safe and comfortable
- Integrate bike stuff into traffic calming

- One high flow traffic lane
- One single car parked by Edgewood can stop the flow

**Is there anything that you believe was missing from these discussions?**

- Having rush hour traffic (4 lanes of traffic) creates more risk for pedestrians (2)
- Interaction of cyclists and pedestrians on sidewalks
- Where can bikes legally ride?
- Protected bike lane as a pedestrian benefit
- Feasibility of closing car lanes
- Green painted bike lane
- Bumpouts help pedestrians but are a challenge for people on bikes
- What are the tradeoffs in reducing parking?
- Traffic demand management to reduce parking demand (park and shuttle?)
- Need for a turning and passing lane at Edgewood
- Crossing Monroe street with the addition of bike lanes
- Residents need driveway access
- Pedestrian safety in different seasons
- Bus accessibility during winter
- College commuters are gone during the summer
- Cyclists get the bike path plowed first before streets
- More design ideas for traffic calming
- More signalized intersections
- Signage regarding fines
- Consideration of older people who need to drive/park on Monroe
- Pedestrians have to wait to be seen and to get the right of way, drivers don't usually comply with traffic rules
- Hawk beacons

**Question 2: What does improving access for pedestrians and bicycles mean to you? What goals are important for us to consider in designing Monroe Street to improve access for pedestrians and bicycles?**

Access (number of times mentioned in parenthesis):

- Convenience and safety to cross Monroe Street (4)
- Safety (3)
- Comfort (2)
- Safety for children
- Ease of use
- Improving access for pedestrians means focusing on the crossings
- Depends on primary mode of transportation
- Smooth, clear road conditions
- Access to transit
- Timing of buses central to equitable access

- For the aging population
- Facilities that can be used by bicyclists without them having to act as a pedestrian
- Differing skill levels (from kids to experienced bikers) can use/have access to the same facility
- Accessibility to education for markings and communication, to create clear consistent “for all transitors” signage
- Separation and space designated for all
- 4 lanes for cars is *not* compatible with pedestrian access
- Varied parking spaces on and off Monroe Street
- Loss of on-street parking would hurt businesses
- Buses may slow down traffic
- Separated bike facilities
- Widening the sidewalk sounds good, but not the mixing of pedestrians and bikes
- Destination cycling, rather than highway through traffic like the bike path

Goals:

- Reduce traffic speeds
- Improve access to existing bike paths on side streets
- Improve safety and reduce crashes
- Improve sidewalk bike/pedestrian conflict (i.e. by Trader Joe’s)
- Eliminate peak hour traffic
- Reduce high end speeding
- Prioritize focus on the local community
- Create seasonal bike parking
- Increase amount of bike riding on Monroe, slows traffic and acts as buffer between pedestrians and cars
- Protect side street, keep them calm, make bike boulevards
- Get bikes off the sidewalks but keep parking
- Build up south side of Monroe to connect pedestrians and cyclists
- More bike parking
- Objective safety and the perception of safety
- Middle lane for left and right turns
- Pedestrian crossing islands
- Trolley that runs down Monroe, free paid by merchants, used to be on State Street

**Question 3: Considering the ideas and impacts discussed, what design options make the most sense to you to enhance pedestrian access along Monroe Street? (Number of times mentioned in parenthesis.)**

- Bumpouts (6)
- Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs) for crossings (4)
- Raised tabletop crossings (3)
- Longer times to cross/count down time until don’t walk (2)
- Removal of the rush hour travel lanes (2)
- Slower vehicle traffic (2)
- Walk signs that turn before the green light for vehicles

- Flashing lights on Atwood exist for peds, bikes crossing
- Wider refuge islands
- Colored pavement at crossings
- Push button for crossing and traffic light
- Better signaled crossings (red flags currently being used don't work as well)
- Use of a variety of methods at different intersections
- Consideration of new traffic lights
- Pedestrian safety awareness campaigns and increased law enforcement
- Clear and consistent communication about pedestrian crosswalks
- Synchronize signalized intersections
- Shorten the distance of crosswalks
- On-street bike lanes (though this would not be better for businesses)
- Reduce Monroe Street to two lanes of motor traffic
- Add radar/speed signs to indicate driver speeds
- Bus stops on the far side of intersections
- Left turn lanes at intersections in place of rush hour lane
- Trim vegetation that impairs sidewalk access
- Big trees for shade and to slow traffic
- Inviting bus stops with green roofs/solar panels
- Widened sidewalks by community nodes
- Overhead banners
- Slogan e.g. "Go Slow on Monroe"

**Question 4: Considering the ideas and impacts discussed, what design options make the most sense to you to enhance bicycle access along Monroe Street?**

- Southwest commuter path connection enhancements (3)
- Wingra Park bike path connection (3)
- Way finding to and from bike paths (3)
- Protected bike lanes (2)
- Bike parking on street, especially in commercial areas/nodes (2)
- Bike signage, ensure bicyclists know where to go
- Prioritize connection points to areas of interest (businesses, parks, schools)
- "Sharrows" or more signage about where bikes should be in the regular lane
- Create safe routes to bike routes
- Madison street/West lawn as a bike boulevard
- Colored bike lane
- On-street bicycle facility, enhanced with paint or bollards
- Express lane in the center to create a bike lane in the 4<sup>th</sup> lane?
- Designated bike parking "corrals"
- Widen the dump out point turning east on Monroe
- Increase the width of the sidewalk from Wingra Park to end of Edgewood Campus
- Complete the Arboretum loop

- Make the Glenway Golf Course paths more connective so they double as bike paths
- Bike service stations
- Designated bike pressure triggered crossings that correspond with on and off ramps

## Metro and Vehicle Access Conversation:

Following presentations from City of Madison staff on Madison Metro and Vehicle Access Infrastructure, small table groups discussed a series of questions, with one participant at each table taking notes. Consolidated responses are as follows:

### **Question 1: What considerations related to planning for buses, parking and vehicle access were discussed during these two presentations?**

- Equity and social justice issues (3)
- Bus times, number of stops on Monroe (3)
- Too many bus stops on Monroe Street (2)
- Extend distance between stops to decrease travel times (2)
- Bus stop safety considerations, locate stops before or after intersections (2)
- Ripple effects to other neighborhoods, regional aspects (2)
- Maintain all modes of transit to support businesses
- Maintain traffic flow
- Street parking for businesses
- Parking demand
- Parking pressure from Edgewood during the school year/school hours
- 2400 people per week board the bus in the project area
- Vehicle access info and parking (parking available within 2 block of Monroe)
- Better signage to show where to park

### **Is there anything that you believe was missing from these discussions?**

- Parking for Monroe Street homeowners (access to driveway, guest parking, contractors, etc.)
- Parking in residential areas when parking is not available on Monroe
- City parking lot near or along Monroe
- Pay by app parking, no more coin meters
- Trolley system that runs down Monroe
- Developing HOV use to reduce single car driving and CO2 emissions
- Bus lane in place of 2<sup>nd</sup> peak travel lane?
- Bus stop improvements
- Badger game day traffic/parking
- Missing data to address
- Bus bump outs

**Question 2: What does access for buses and vehicles on Monroe Street mean to you? What goals are important for us to consider in designing Monroe Street with bus and vehicle access in mind?**

Access:

- Predictability for travel times (2)
- Access for an aging population
- Safety
- Ability to get to your destination
- Alleviate congestion
- Better and consistent signage (larger print, better lighting, more clear wording)
- Better care of the street
- Seasonal access
- Motor vehicle access essential
- Maintain the business district
- Calmed traffic that moves as a steady and predictable rate

Goals:

- More express routes for buses (2)
- Make bus stops a nicer place to wait
- More bus shelters or seating at stops
- Use data to determine which bus stops to keep (boarding data etc.)
- Multi-modal focus, improvements for bikes/pedestrians necessary because we can already access by car
- Make Monroe enjoyable and safe for pedestrians so you may drive there, but then can walk around safely once there
- Consider that parking close is a mindset; people can learn to go to destinations without parking right in front
- Work to make people take the bus who can afford not to
- Leverage parking and bus stops as traffic calmers to promote pedestrian safety
- Data driven approach to address parking needs
- Do not focus on the speed of getting from Point A to Point B on Monroe
- Require parking to be included for new homes, apartments, businesses on and off Monroe (underground)

**Question 3: Based on tonight's discussion, what values are most important for City staff to keep in mind regarding multimodal design decision on Monroe Street?**

- Safety for everyone (bikes, peds, vehicles) (4)
- Comfort (2)
- Retain financially viable businesses (2)
- Make Monroe a destination and retain its neighborhood feel (2)
- Improve signage during construction and advertise that businesses are still
- Each mode of travel works comfortably with the others, ease of use

- Equity: for bikes, pedestrians, kids, cars
- Equity for public space
- Racial equity
- Access to Monroe from outlying neighborhoods
- Efficiency
- Balance between home owners, bikers, and business owners
- Bikers off the sidewalks
- Access to parking
- Explore traffic calming options
- Clear, consistent communication on transit, traffic safety education
- Streetscaping (i.e. large trees) to create a barrier between cars and people walking
- Pedestrians should be able to cross Monroe Street safely
- Pedestrians should be able to enjoyable and safely walk along Monroe Street
- Comparative value of passing through (community) vs. local use (residential/commerce)
- Small town feel within the city
- Maintain and enhance vibrancy
- Monroe Street as part of a greater city
- Environmental sustainability
- Keep environmental issues/consequences in mind as this leads to considerations beyond cars
- Think in terms of number of people moved rather than number of cars moved
- Devaluing cars
- Promote alternative means of transportation instead of cars
- Plan for the next 30-50 years, not just for today. What do we want Monroe Street to look like long-term?
- Keep a vision for the future (of how people commute) central

## Other Questions and Ideas:

Collected from comment cards and Q&A after city staff presentations throughout the meeting:

- Consider HAWKS. You can sync these with other signals. Rapid flash are effective but they are not regulatory, they are a warning device. Additional signals have been considered for Monroe in the past and the argument was that they would improve synchronization. How then, can a hawk signal be so detrimental?
- Consider a roundabout for the Odana-Monroe intersection. Single lane with a very tight additional lane for Monroe-Odana (west bound) to slow that traffic down. If that intersection is not involved with this reconstruction, design the approach to that intersection to not preclude that possibility.
- Use more 6' wide pedestrian islands. These have a proven crash reduction factor and they make crossings so much easier.
- While I'm an avid biker and walker, I don't want to see Monroe Street changed in a way (to accommodate bicycles) so that it becomes less attractive to motorists. If cars feel choked on

Monroe, they'll attempt to use West Lawn and Keyes instead. In a nutshell, I'd rather see bicyclists using West Lawn and the path, and cars stay using Monroe, the main arterial.

- What was the highest speed recorded during traffic studies?
- How long will the pedestrian timers be? Answer: 3.5 feet per second
- Is the Wingra Boat/bike path connection a serious consideration? Answer: Yes
- How many accidents have there been at the intersections of the SW commuter path and the streets that cross it?
- SW path/Glenway needs better street markings (e.g. green bike lane)
- Can we put up signage that advertises what the fines are for speeding and hitting a pedestrian?
- Has there been a thorough assessment of parking demands on Monroe?
- Will a parking/traffic model take the season/time of year into account?
- "Center parking" on the median (e.g. Eugene, OR)
- Employ diverters that allows bikes but not cars through
- Important to think about how to make bike connections along the side streets, like removing stop signs on bike boulevards, diverters, etc. to encourage bikes and discourage through-traffic.
- How long will the results of this construction last? Will the project designers use long-term planning? Answer: The street will be re-milled in 10-15 years after reconstruction.
- What are the tradeoffs in reducing parking?
- During the construction trial, make the rush hour lane a bus only lane
- How many people get on/off the bus on Monroe vs. ride through? Maybe some buses could be express with limited stops.
- Would permitted residential parking free up side street parking for businesses, alleviating need for on-street parking on Monroe?
- Could Wingra parking lot be used as a park and ride for Metro?
- Would removing on-street parking also remove a traffic calmer? I.e. would traffic speeds increase with bike lanes?
- Can each section of rush hour lanes be optimized according to student, retail, and restaurant use?
- Which bus stops will be replaced or moved? Answer: Not determined yet.
- If we really want to help those in the Neighborhood Resource Team areas, can't we look for other ways/bus routes that are faster/better?
- Survey residents in the NRT areas to gather data on their destination and biggest issues/needs for Metro service
- If there was no on-street parking, would snow plowing be easier, allowing for shorter Metro ride times?
- Can we divorce bus travel times from car travel times so that if car travel slows down after reconstruction, bus travel times don't suffer? Express lane for buses or HOVs? Reverse direction at midday?
- Are peak hour lanes benefitting or harming local businesses?
- If it's congested they would move the bus routes somewhere else?
- The community should remember to give more business to Monroe Street shops during reconstruction.



## Meeting Takeaways:

Meeting participants were asked to share what they would take away from this meeting:

- Much of what has been shared at public meetings are small ideas, not truly thinking of big ideas and changes for the long-term future of this project area
- Déjà vu; community members have been through this process before. Is there a better process that can be used?
- Need for more data-driven statements. For example, if taking out the rush hour travel lane would be so detrimental to traffic flow, then the city should prove it with data or a model.



Meeting notes compiled by Urban Assets.  
Project contact: [zia@urbanassetsconsulting.com](mailto:zia@urbanassetsconsulting.com)