



T r a n s p o r t a t i o n

ASSESSMENT OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

Streets & Vehicular Traffic

Traffic

The planning area is near the confluence of several major roads. With estimated traffic counts ranging from 50,950 to 54,200 vehicles per day (VPD) just south of the planning area on University Avenue. University Avenue is the main conduit of car and bus traffic to the University and Downtown from the west side of Madison, the City of Middleton, and the Village of Shorewood Hills. It is also the busiest road in Dane County, aside from the US Highway and Interstate systems.

Other major roads with traffic counts over 5,000 VPD that are close to the planning area include: Midvale Boulevard (20,750 VPD just south of University Avenue), Whitney Way (18,700 between Sheboygan Avenue and Old Middleton Road), Segoe Road (10,250 VPD just south of University Avenue), Rose Place (9,250 VPD), and Sheboygan Avenue (6,800 VPD between Eau Claire Avenue and Segoe Road).

The overall area has many notable destinations; and although much of the traffic consists of through traffic heading to and from Downtown Madison, there is a significant portion that is attracted to the area by Hilldale Mall, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, and retail and office development in the Village, such as Borders, Copps, and the UW Credit Union.

Like most portions of University Avenue east of Old Middleton Road, the section that runs past the planning area faces near-gridlock eastbound in the morning and westbound in the afternoon. Other than driveway openings onto University Avenue for businesses, access to the planning area is limited — the only other public access is Locust Drive via Rose Place. The limited access and high traffic counts on University Avenue could combine to influence potential redevelopment of the commercial parcels in the planning area.

There are two projects that will impact traffic in the area — the continuing redevelopment of Hilldale Mall, and the proposed redevelopment of the Hill Farms State Office Building parcel. A Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) dated May 2007 was performed by Strand Associates as part of the rezoning process for the Hill Farms property. The TIA projects traffic increases from future phases of Hilldale Mall and redevelopment at the Hill Farms area, and makes recommendations to deal with the estimated increases in traffic. The study area stretches from Whitney Way to Midvale Boulevard, and from University Avenue to Regent Street.



The Hilldale Mall redevelopment — townhomes along Midvale Boulevard.

The TIA projects significant increases in traffic on area roads through 2025, with University Avenue traffic between Segoe and Midvale increasing by 17,650 VPD (35%), Midvale at University increasing 3,400 VPD (16%), Whitney Way between Sheboygan and Old Middleton increasing 3,930 VPD (20%), Segoe Road at University increasing 5,800 VPD (53%), and Sheboygan Avenue between Eau Claire and Segoe increasing 6,800 VPD (115%). It should be noted that not all of the predicted increase in traffic is due to development in the area.

A wide-ranging list of improvements to area roads, sidewalks, and bicycle routes are also

discussed in the TIA; only those that are recommended and adjacent to the planning area are listed below:

- Install a ramp meter on the eastbound Old Middleton Road on-ramp to University Avenue and coordinate it with the Whitney/University signal.
- Create a new University Avenue intersection with direct access to the Hill Farms parcel via a new street (“B Street”) between Segoe and the Old Middleton entrance ramp onto University Avenue.
- Extend a 2-way Old Middleton Road under University Avenue.
- Create a University Avenue underpass from the Hill Farms parcel (between Segoe and “B Street”) to the extended Old Middleton Road. Include bike lanes and sidewalks as part of the underpass.

As of February 2008 the Hill Farms General Development Plan (GDP) had been approved by the Madison Plan Commission and City Council, but the applicants had not addressed several conditions of approval. Therefore, the City of Madison considers the project “dormant,” and conditions placed on the development will have to be addressed before it moves forward. Whatever ends up taking place for the Hill Farms redevelopment, there should be no net decrease in Village-owned land due to new road connections or any other infrastructure projects related to the redevelopment.

Road Conditions & Layout

As mentioned above, there are several potential improvements that could take place in the future if the Hill Farms redevelopment proceeds as planned. In 2011, the County has plans to reconstruct University Avenue from Allen Boulevard in Middleton to Segoe Road. This section will be converted to an “urban” cross-section, with bike lanes and curb and gutter. Potential exists for the State and County to coordinate on integrating suggested

improvements related to the Hill Farms redevelopment in the planning and design for the University Avenue reconstruction. Pavement replacement from Segoe Road to Shorewood Boulevard is also scheduled for 2011, but could be moved to 2010 if sufficient funding is acquired.

The only other streets in the planning area are Locust Drive, Maple Terrace, and Burbank Place. Both Maple Terrace and Burbank Place dead end at University Avenue. Locust Drive was recently resurfaced and is in good condition. Both Maple Terrace and Burbank Place are in somewhat deteriorated condition and future redevelopment may include some work to these streets.

Parking

Parking in the area is sufficient, and perhaps excessive, for the commercial properties. The Pyare building has 243 surface parking stalls. A proposed redevelopment aims to reduce that to

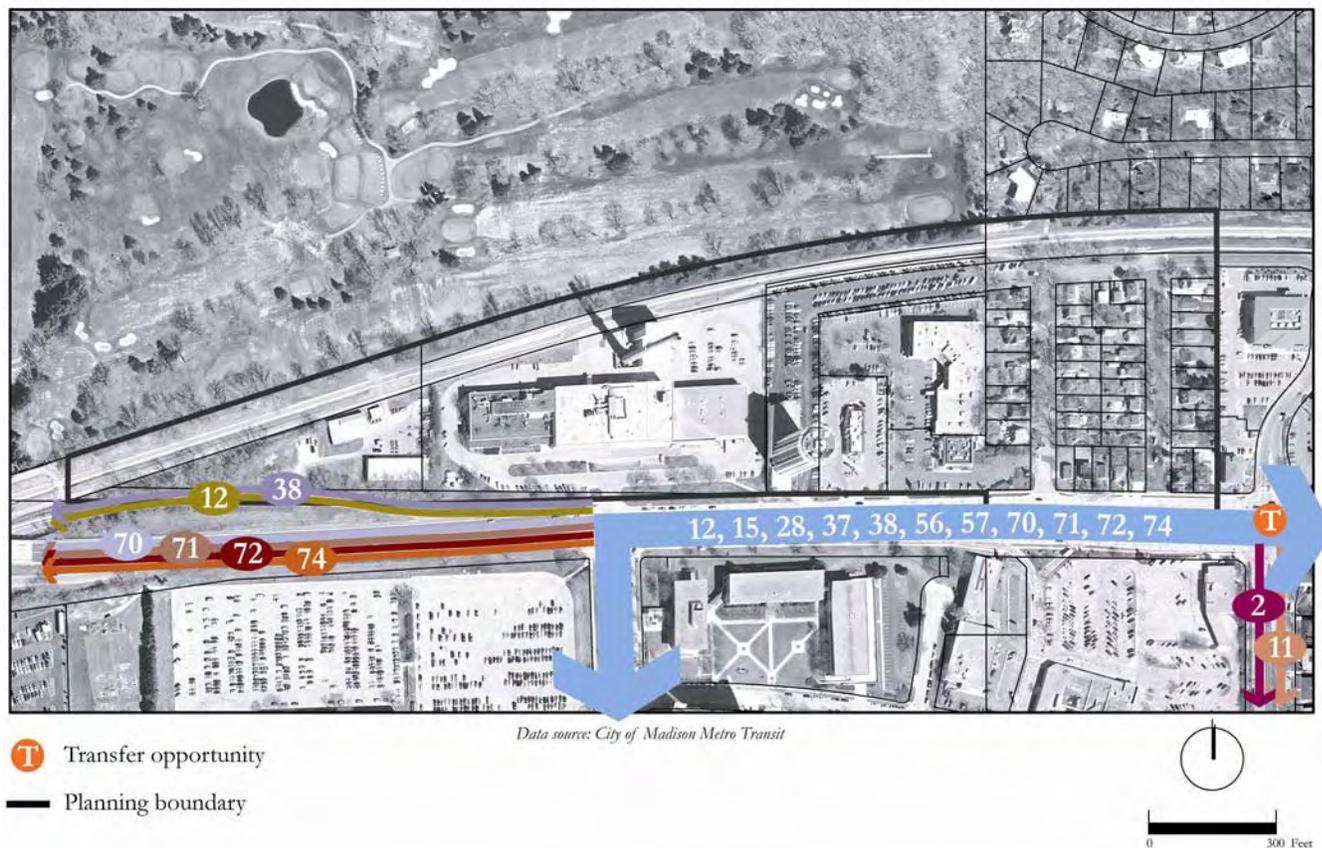
178 stalls (some of which would be in a parking structure) and increase the pervious area. The Walnut Grove shopping center has approximately 175 parking stalls, and rarely uses all of them. McDonald’s has about 55 parking stalls.

Right-of-way for the residential streets in the planning area is 60 feet, but the actual pavement width on Maple Terrace and Burbank Place is only about 25 feet, which limits on-street parking. Given that both streets are dead ends, however, the street width seems appropriate.

Buses

There are 11 bus routes that run in front of the planning area between Segoe Road and Midvale Boulevard. The section of University Avenue that runs along the south of the planning area has the best bus service on the West Side, with multiple options to get to the UW Campus, Downtown Madison, or Middleton.

Map 4.1: Existing bus routes.



Bicycles

A bicycle path runs along the railroad tracks at the northern edge of the planning area. The path runs from Spring Harbor Drive (a little over a mile west, along the path from Maple Terrace) to the eastern edge of the planning area at Locust Drive, where it ends at a section of sidewalk along the northern side of Locust and street bike lanes continue along both sides of Locust. If “missing links” can be filled in, the route has the potential to stretch from Downtown Madison all the way to Middleton.



Bicycle lanes along Locust Drive.

Pedestrians

Aside from the path discussed above, the area has limited pedestrian accessibility due to the barrier presented by University Avenue on the south and the railroad tracks and golf course on the north. There are no sidewalks along Maple Terrace or Burbank Place. There is a sidewalk that runs along University Avenue, and one along the north side of Locust Drive.

Rail

A Wisconsin & Southern rail line runs along the entire southern edge of the planning area. The line is used for freight, and generally has light traffic, some of which uses the tracks at night.

The County’s Transport 2020 planning process has recommended using the tracks for a

commuter rail route from Middleton to Sun Prairie. The current plan shows 3 stops in Shorewood Hills: directly north of the Midvale Boulevard terminus, at Shorewood Boulevard, and in the vicinity of the Veteran’s Administration Hospital. Federal funding assistance has been applied for to construct the system. A Regional Transit Authority (RTA), with an as yet undetermined funding mechanism, would need to be authorized by the state to operate the system. The long-term timetable has commuter rail service starting in 2015-2016, assuming federal funding is acquired, RTAs are enabled by the state, and voters approve a referendum.

PUBLIC WORKSHOP #1 RESULTS

During the transportation section of the first public workshop, participants took part in a mapping exercise to identify problems and solutions for pedestrian, bicycle, and motor vehicle circulation.

Several pedestrian and bicycle circulation problem areas were identified. University Avenue is the biggest obstacle near the planning area due to its traffic volume. Participants identified the Midvale Boulevard/University Avenue intersection and Segoe Road/University Avenue intersection as needing of stronger pedestrian connections. Also identified was the potential for a mid-block connection between the Garden Homes/Pyare area and Hilldale Mall.

East-west pedestrian movement is also a problem. Many residents pointed out that it is difficult to walk from their homes to the Walnut Grove shopping center, and even more difficult to walk to the Hill Farms area due to discontinuous pathways, conflicts with motor vehicles, and grade changes.

Several participants mentioned that there are conflicts between bicyclists and pedestrians

along the northern edge of the project area, where the paved bike path becomes a bike lane on Locust Drive. Residents pointed out that many bicyclists continue to ride on the sidewalk rather than merge into the bike lane, creating a dangerous situation for pedestrians.

Parents of young children pointed out that this area is also dangerous for children crossing the Locust Drive to go to school, not only because of bicyclists but also because of the car traffic along Locust Drive.

The most common circulation issue for motor vehicles was access to the planning area from eastbound University Avenue. Several participants admitted to performing U-turns in the middle of University Avenue to access their homes, rather than trying to navigate the busy intersection with Midvale. One solution that was offered was to condense the retail access points to one driveway that served all the development in the area and also made a connection to the Garden Homes area. Another option is to work with the Hill Farms development to gain access to a proposed underpass under University Avenue, providing a connection to the western portion of the planning area.

An abundance of surface parking was also listed as a traffic issue, and most participants felt that any new development should include underground parking facilities.

GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Goal No. 1: Promote strategies and improvements aimed at mitigating existing and future traffic congestion and access problems.

One of the most significant hurdles for future redevelopment is the need to change the existing access and circulation patterns in order to address traffic congestion and access issues. This must be done by enhancing interior connections and connections to the street network.

Objective No. 1: Improve and condense access into the area from the eastbound and westbound University Avenue lanes.

Currently the planning area has four access points off of westbound University Avenue and one access point from eastbound University. The multitude of access points has a negative impact on circulation because it increases the number of points where traffic is slowing to enter or exit the area and increases the complexity of internal circulation routes. It would be beneficial to condense the number of access points to two or three as redevelopment progresses. One access point from eastbound University Avenue should be maintained. Because the spacing of University Avenue turn lanes, it is unlikely that the current median opening, which allows left turns to and from the Walnut Grove parking lot, could be moved. Therefore, access to the current Walnut Grove site should be maintained at this location. The three westbound access points on the western side of the area could be reduced to one or two access points depending on parcel configuration. There is the potential for a better connection from University to Locust Drive as the area redevelops, potentially through the Pyare parcel or the Walnut Grove parcel. While connectivity would improve with such a connection, there is the potential for traffic to increase along Locust Drive.

Objective No. 2: Improve internal connectivity.

In addition to streamlining access points from adjacent roads, future redevelopment should focus on improving connectivity within the area to create a predictable circulation pattern. The current configuration of large, open parking lots and mix of parking configurations creates confusion. If parking is structured or underground, the internal circulation will primarily take place on driveways which serve the structured parking and limited surface parking. This change in parking configuration will, in and of itself, streamline internal connectivity. Access to internal parking should

be placed away from access points off of University Avenue in order to avoid potential bottleneck areas.

Interior site circulation and public road circulation should be designed in a manner that maximizes pedestrian safety and minimizes the potential for vehicular conflicts. The Village has learned from the Coppins/Walgreens/Borders redevelopment that a large number of driveway openings combined with a curving street can result in unsafe circulation patterns for both pedestrians and vehicles. Redevelopment in the Pyare area should maximize pedestrian and vehicular safety by limiting driveway openings on private and public roads.

Objective No. 3: Improve Safety on Locust Drive.

There have been numerous comments from area residents that traffic along Locust Drive often moves at speeds greater than appropriate for area conditions. Traffic calming devices may be necessary for the stretch of Locust Drive behind the Pyare planning area to reduce speed and improve pedestrian and vehicular safety. Potential traffic calming devices could include speed bumps, raised crosswalks, or crossing “islands” in the middle of the street.



Walnut Grove parking lot.

Objective No. 4: Initiate discussions with the State of Wisconsin to determine the feasibility of opening a connection between the State Crime Lab and the planning area.

There is currently a gate between the Pyare building parking lot and the State Crime Lab parking lot. The gate has remained closed in recent memory. A connection between the Pyare area and the Crime Lab would provide an outlet to the signalized intersection at Segoe Road, which would relieve traffic at the Rose Place/University Avenue intersection. The Village should work with the State to see if reopening the connection is feasible. If possible, a connection should be created/maintained as either property redevelops.

Objective No. 5: Require redevelopment proposals to reimburse the village for a traffic impact analysis (TIA) that identifies potential impacts of development on traffic circulation patterns. Development should not create traffic that cannot be handled by existing or anticipated transportation systems.

Each redevelopment project should provide information to the Village on its traffic impacts on the area. Redevelopment in the Pyare area should be balanced, so that one development does not use traffic capacity that is disproportionate to its size. The Village will craft formal TIA guidelines so developers know what issues must be addressed when a TIA is performed. TIAs should include strategies to reduce the peak-hour impact of proposed developments.

Objective No. 6: Encourage the use of mass transit and other non-car oriented transportation methods.

Facilities such as showers and covered bike parking should be incorporated into buildings as redevelopment occurs to make it more likely for people to bicycle to work. Pedestrian amenities should be provided in the Pyare area to make the street more appealing. Connections to University Avenue should be improved.

The Village should consider mandating the use of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) techniques in redevelopment projects. Such techniques could include free bus passes for employees, paying a bonus to employees who do not drive to work, and encouraging carpooling.

Locating a shared car (perhaps in conjunction with the Community Car program) in the area could allow more people to take mass transit or bike to work by giving them an option for mid-day errands.

Goal No. 2: Provide enhanced safety and connectivity for pedestrian and bicycle traffic.

As redevelopment occurs in the Pyare Neighborhood, increased use will require that more attention be paid to the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists. This can be accomplished through enhanced crossings at existing circulation points, and numerous improvements internal to the redevelopment site.

Objective No. 1: Enhance pedestrian connections internal to the area.

Currently the circulation within the Pyare Area is challenging for automobiles, and even more difficult for pedestrians and bicyclists. Enhancing connectivity will improve safety and also increase the likelihood that people will walk or bike to destinations within the area. Sidewalks, walkways, crossings, paths, and signage must all be considered.

Currently, children from the Garden Homes who walk to the nearby Shorewood Hills Elementary School must cross Locust Drive at points which are either poorly marked or unmarked. Clearer pedestrian crossings, in conjunction with traffic calming devices along Locust, could work to increase pedestrian safety by making them more visible to traffic.

Just as the elementary school is an off-site destination which requires connections within

the Pyare planning area, the proposed transit stops to the east and west of the site would also benefit from improved pedestrian connections. It would be most convenient to integrate pedestrian improvements into the existing path which runs alongside the rail line. Although the path is already used by both bicycles and pedestrians, if a transit stop were to be located along the route, the increased pedestrian usage would likely cause a conflict with bicycling users. It would be beneficial to enhance the pedestrian portion of the path by creating a separate paved portion or widening the path with a clear demarcation between the pedestrian and bicycle sides.

All of the above enhancements deal with moving pedestrians through the Pyare planning area. Equally important is the need to provide connections for pedestrians and bicyclists within the area. To do this, all future structures should be linked with dedicated pedestrian circulation routes and easily accessible bike lanes. Pedestrian routes should be a combination of sidewalks that are located in a manner which limits pedestrian/automobile interaction, and common greenspace which is linked by pedestrian paths and gathering spaces. Providing substantial pedestrian connections within the site will also encourage centrally located parking which can limit automobile circulation problems and congestion at access points.

Internal bike lanes should service the entirety of the planning area and link to the existing bike path on the northern end of the neighborhood. Convenient and secure bike parking should also be located by each building.

Lastly, in order to direct pedestrian traffic through the area, wayfinding signage should also be present. Effective wayfinding would include well-marked buildings, in conjunction with signage along pedestrian and bike routes,

indicating the location of important destinations within the neighborhood and destinations outside of the Pyare neighborhood.

Objective No. 2: Provide improved crossings at important pedestrian and bike nodes connecting the Pyare Neighborhood to other locations in the surrounding environment.

The second component to enhancing pedestrian safety and access in the area is to link the Pyare Neighborhood to the other offerings in the surrounding environment. Because of the busy nature of University Avenue, it would likely be best to consolidate pedestrian crossing locations on University Avenue to one location. Because the intersection at Midvale and University is already signalized and is the gateway to the Hilldale area, it is recommended that the primary pedestrian crossing be located at that intersection. There is also the potential for a University Avenue pedestrian overpass to be constructed which would further enhance pedestrian crossings and shift the primary pedestrian access to the location of the overpass.

In order to integrate the Pyare Neighborhood with a pedestrian crossing at the Midvale Avenue and University Avenue intersection, or a future pedestrian overpass, it would be beneficial to improve the existing sidewalk along University Avenue from the Pyare site to the pedestrian crossing. An improved sidewalk would likely need to be widened and more clearly separated from the roadway through the use of pedestrian scale elements such as lighting. In order to do this, it would be necessary for the Village to work with the City of Madison because the sidewalk is part of the University Avenue right-of-way, which is primarily in Madison as it runs past the planning area.

There are three potential locations for a pedestrian overpass of University Avenue: at the Midvale Boulevard/University Avenue intersection, at the Segoe Road/University

Intersection, and midway between Segoe and Midvale. The future location will depend upon coordination with the City of Madison and the owners of Hilldale Mall.

Goal No. 3: Promote and accommodate existing and future alternative transportation options.

The location of the Pyare Neighborhood within a larger retail, residential, and office node means there is a robust network of existing alternative transportation options. For example, the area has 11 bus routes which run past it, as well as a dedicated bike path, and a potential future rail stop. Although the alternative transportation infrastructure is largely already in place, future development in the Pyare Neighborhood should promote the use of and accommodate alternative transportation options.

The primary methods of encouraging the use of alternative transportation options in the Pyare Neighborhood have already been discussed in other segments of this document. For example, it will be important to ensure pedestrian connections are present between the area and existing bus stops as well as future rail stops. In addition, bike lanes or space for bikes should be provided within the redevelopment area along with adequate and convenient bike parking. This will ensure cyclists can safely coexist with the automobiles that are using the internal driveways and streets.

**RECOMMENDATION
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

Issues of connectivity, access, and circulation, are important in creating safe and inviting redevelopment. By concentrating on making enhancements to the transportation infrastructure for both automobiles and pedestrians, future development can mitigate current transportation issues and meet the goals of improving the experience of Pyare Neighborhood residents and users. The Village

should review the following recommendations when considering future transportation improvements.

Traffic and Access

- Consolidate the three access points on the western side of the Neighborhood into one or two access points.
- Limit the number of intersections of internal driveways.
- Install traffic calming devices along Locust Drive.
- Install wayfinding signage to direct traffic to destinations within and outside the neighborhood.
- Require a traffic impact analysis as part of redevelopment proposals.
- Encourage the use of bikes and transit within the area (this may take the form of requiring certain items, such as shower facilities for bikers, to be included as part of redevelopment projects).

Pedestrians and Bicyclists

- Enhance pedestrian crossings at Locust Drive to improve safety of children walking to school and pedestrians attempting to connect with the path.
- Improve pedestrian access along the path west to the proposed transit stop in order to avoid potential conflict between bicyclists and pedestrians.
- Create a network of sidewalks and paths through the neighborhood linking future development
- Create bike lanes through the neighborhood linking future development.
- Provide abundant, secure, and convenient bike parking.
- Install wayfinding signage to direct pedestrian, bike, and auto traffic to destinations within and outside the neighborhood.
- Work with the City of Madison to provide improved access to key pedestrian crossing

points on University Avenue by widening and defining existing sidewalk space along University Avenue and potentially installing a pedestrian overpass.