

Please accept this testimony in support of the University Boulevard Corridor Plan.

I fully support the University Boulevard Corridor Plan. This is a once in a generation opportunity to transform University Blvd. into a complete street, in other words, a place that serves the entire community.

I live in the Woodmoor neighborhood of Four Corners and want to walk and bike with my family to places that are within walking and biking distance, but with narrow sidewalks and car-centric infrastructure, we don't always feel comfortable. Shared use paths and a sensible street grid with right-size roadways would help transform our community into a place where we can move around in safety and comfort.

Safe and welcoming bicycle and pedestrian facilities the length of University that fully connect neighborhoods like Four Corners and Wheaton would allow and encourage more people to walk and bike.

Allowing for more small-scale retail along the corridor (where you don't include zoning for retail), for example, cafes, restaurants, and small shops on the first floor of apartment buildings would help create fifteen-minute neighborhoods and provide an alternative to driving.

We need to have clear language in the plan that ensures that any redevelopment of current commercial spaces in town centers like Four Corners results in mixed use space that attracts small, local businesses with appropriate small store sizes, business cooperatives, incentives to preserve affordable rents, etc.

As I get older and think of downsizing, I hope to stay in my neighborhood. I would like to see more housing types (even further into neighborhoods) that would allow people to live here instead of only in more far-flung developments that contribute to sprawl, which is environmentally and economically unsustainable.

A big part of the transformation is improved transit. We are a high use transit corridor and world class BRT can make it even more so. Changing a car lane to a bus lane between Four Corners and Wheaton has shown that we don't need three lanes for cars. That bus lane is now permanent because it is working so well.

Narrowing lanes creates more room for bike and pedestrian infrastructure and helps calm car traffic which makes the streets safer and results in less noise and particulate pollution from brakes.

The intersections with the Beltway create barriers that make it dangerous and uncomfortable to leave our neighborhood when walking or biking. Your recommendations are important. Ramps need to meet local streets like University and Colesville at 90 degrees so drivers slow down and pedestrians and people on bikes can travel safely.

It's important that we develop and plan our communities in agreement with Thrive 2050, The Pedestrian Master Plan, VisionZero, and other guidelines. I am grateful that the University Boulevard Corridor Plan is visionary and truly attempts to transform our communities with livable, complete streets.

Tim Soderquist