



GREENTREE

Neighborhood Association

9-23-2004

TO: John Steiner, DOT

The Greentree Neighborhood Association (GTNA) herewith provides formal comment on the Verona Road/West Beltline Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). The Greentree subdivision, in the 1st Aldermanic District, is bounded east to west by Whitney Way and Saalsaa Road – and north to south by Schroeder Road and Hammersley Road. Since 1962 GTNA has been an active community group and has provided a collective voice for the Greentree neighborhood. The following comments do not presume to reflect the exact opinions of all 700+ households in the Greentree Neighborhood; however, they do underscore a number of issues that concern our neighborhood.

1. The DEIS fails to fulfill the promise of "full description" and "full disclosure" and is therefore inadequate as both a public information document and a Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) decision document. Specifically:
 - a. There is no specific proposed action or alternative with respect to the beltline crossing options. While four alternatives are presented, there is no provision for a combination of the projects. Additionally, the maps and descriptions of these stand-alone improvements do not provide sufficient information for public evaluation of the impact on adjacent neighborhood traffic.
 - b. Inadequate and outdated information is used for describing and evaluating existing neighborhood and environmental conditions, and finally;
 - c. The level of study of impact analysis is inconsistent with the scale of the project. The DEIS attempts, all in the same report, to analyze 1) a major \$100+M freeway-to-expressway improvement at the intersection of Verona Road and the Beltline, 2) a substantial \$20+M Hwy 12/14 corridor improvement, and 3) several small <\$10M West Beltline interchange improvements and beltline crossing alternatives. As a result, the level of significance associated with the crossing alternatives appears inconsequential in comparison. We feel the combining of disparately scaled projects in one report is inappropriate and does not adequately analyze the very real, significant impact these crossings will have on adjacent neighborhoods.
2. We are extremely concerned with the potential for increased cut-through traffic in the Greentree Neighborhood if the "East Watts Extension" underpass alternative is built in its current configuration. Traffic on already over-burdened Frisch and Chapel Hill roads will increase, and there is a real likelihood for high-volume, high-speed morning rush hour traffic on Hathaway Drive and Woodington Way: traffic that will coincide with Falk Elementary School's start time and result in serious safety issues for young children. The regional traffic model used in the DEIS is not capable of predicting local street volumes and does not reflect the actual traffic patterns and volumes that will occur if Forward Drive and Rayovac Drive are connected to an East Watts Extension underpass. Therefore, we urge a new, appropriately modeled traffic assessment for the Greentree neighborhood.

3. The DEIS makes no provision for the impact on the Rayovac Conservancy Area or the West Madison Little League Fields. These areas would be significantly affected by the “East Watts Extension” through increased traffic, loss of green space and future development.
4. In addition, the DEIS traffic analysis should be redone with updated information including neighborhood streets, arterials and connectors reflecting data from the Madison Area MPO, existing ADT and 2020 projections for all roadway segments impacted by the proposed connectors.

Our neighborhood needs to be adequately informed, and adequately heard. We were grateful for the opportunity to co-host an informational meeting on September 22 with the DOT and Strand & Associates to specifically discuss the beltline crossing and western beltline interchange improvement alternatives. We wish to see the minutes from this meeting, as well as a DOT response to the issues that were raised by Greentree neighbors at this meeting, incorporated into the DEIS. In closing, we reiterate our desire to see an analysis that fully addresses all the potentially significant impacts, including a meaningful micro-scale analysis of the local traffic impacts, to the Greentree neighborhood.

Cordially, the Board Members of the Greentree Neighborhood Association:

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Enc: Letter from Allen Youngwood

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