

Hi Colin:

Please share my public statement with the Park's Advisory Commission:

TO: The Ann Arbor Parks Advisory Commission

RE: Item G-3 on the PAC agenda for 10/17/17 – Resolution Regarding The Proposed Ann Arbor Station

I wish to share my concerns about the resolution before you. The public parkland in question at Fuller Park has been owned by the city since 1905 – approx. 112 years. It has been and remains a central component of the string of city owned parks that stretch along the banks of the Huron River as it winds through our city landscape.

The large oxbow shape of the Huron River surrounding Fuller Park and the surrounding hillsides flanking the valley; the Cedar Bend lookout to the north and the university hospitals to the south, creates the quintessential river valley viewshed. This viewshed would be adversely impacted by the placement of a large parking structure – currently proposed at 5 stories high within the river valley.

In addition to the natural landscape, the Fuller Park corridor serves as a major recreational activity center including – walking, biking, swimming, canoeing, kayaking, soccer, etc. The north and south campuses of the university are also connected by this corridor with students commuting back and forth, many on bike or by foot. The city has recognized the problem with traffic congestion in this area by placing the Maiden Lane/E. Medical Center roundabout project at the top of the Capital Improvement Project list for years. At the same time, almost a decade of traffic studies have resulted in no decisive plans or any types of improvements to the Border-to-Border trail in this area.

Placing a large parking structure and multi-modal transportation hub at this location will produce even more traffic congestion and create an even greater risk to the park user's safety as well as diminished air and noise quality.

As the stewards of our city parks and parks programming, you have a duty to protect and improve these natural resources. Ann Arbor has a long and proud history of parkland preservation and maintaining robust city parks. The request before you today will not help you to accomplish those goals. This development will have much more than a minimal impact on a prized city resource. Given the negative impacts to pedestrian and biker safety, air quality, noise pollution and loss of a prized viewshed, I am asking you to vote “no” on this resolution.

Thank you,

Larry Baird