May 5, 2025

Dear Honorable Mayor Perryman and Distinguished Members of the Madison City Council,

Thank you for giving citizens a chance to review and provide questions and comments concerning the proposed 20-year Transportation Plan.

On behalf of the Episcopal Church of the Advent, we serve as the five Members of the Vestry charged with fiduciary responsibilities for our church campus; this property belongs to the Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta. Dedicated in 1842, this 362 Academy Street historic Gothic brick church commenced as the town’s Methodist Church and in the early 1960s was recommissioned and restored as Madison’s Episcopal Church by Madison civic leaders who successfully led the 1974 designation of Madison’s Historic District…including, but not limited to Adelaide and Graham Ponder, beloved owners of the *Madison Citizen*. Advent co-founder Henry D. Green, whose national historic preservation leadership helped Madison secure Georgia’s second largest historic district, further expanded this church campus through the purchase of an adjacent declining historic residence, rehabilitated and named the Barnett Parish House, 338 Academy Street. From a community service perspective, the Advent campus may be Madison’s only house of worship open 24 hours a day and its Parish House hosts not only PupPack preparation (where weekend food supplies are packaged for impoverished school children) and also hosts weekday lunchtime and evening chapter meetings for Alcoholics Anonymous. Advent is always a full participant in Madison’s famous tours of homes and, most happily, in partnership with fellow downtown churches, Advent annually commences and ends Madison’s fabulous Palm Sunday community processional.

The fact is, Advent’s location illustrates surviving examples of Madison’s original Street System, when horses, wagons and carriages defined residential and church accessibility.

**We offer five simple questions concerning development of the proposed 20-year plan. ALL answers need to be a simple YES or NO:**

1. **Was this plan developed in concert with the Madison Police Chief and his staff?**

*Transportation safety is their responsibility; it’s a prime local government mission.*

1. **Was this plan developed in concert with Morgan County Commissioners?**

*Madison transportation connects into Morgan County transportation systems.*

1. **Was this plan developed in concert with CSX and Norfolk-Southern Railways?** *Currently, Kolb Street, a quiet and largely pedestrian street, lines the Historic Madison Cemetery and directly abuts the Advent campus. Its northern end is capped by very active industrial railroad lines. Industrial railroads are extremely concerned about crossing liabilities, proximities to long established residential and historic areas and not known for paying for bridges to provide railroad crossing access to private properties proposed for residential development.* 
   * + *Who would pay for the Kolb Street railroad crossing development in general, bridge in particular?*
     + *Who would pay for the road proposed to connect Kolb Street and Old Mill Road bridge to GA 83 as illustrated in the 20-year plan?*
     + *Who would pay for Advent to take down its Sunday School Building which borders the City’s 50 foot Right of Way?*
     + *What happens to the Kolb Street traffic? To connect to South Main, there would be a taking of right of way that will materially damage several homes, and particularly the City’s logoed Boxwood residence. Would a Kolb Street extension to South Main necessitate the taking of one of Madison’s Gilded Age jewels, the recently beautifully restored historic home at 373 South Main Street?*
     + *IF Kolb Street traffic is channeled to Academy Street, accompanied by on-street parking (for which there is no residential demand), Academy ends in a difficult turn at Walton Street and in particular could necessitate significant negative Rights of Way impacts to The Oak House at 617 Dixie Avenue.*
2. **Was this plan developed in concert with the Georgia Department of Transportation, the source of State and Federal transportation resources?**
3. **Was this plan developed in concert with the 1974 Madison Historic District citizens?**

* Please note Advent happily shares its Kolb Street parking with local citizens from across town, county citizens and tourism visitors from all over. Advent’s campus is core to Madison’s Historic District where citizens easily side street park their cars & pickups to enjoy safety from heavy traffic plus environmentally clean walking conditions for humans and dogs of all ages and bike riders thanks to few vehicles and no big trucks maneuvering narrow quaint streets made charming by old vegetation, bird sanctuaries and among Madison’s most distinctive residential lots and architecture.
* Please note plans to cross railroads will dump traffic onto Kolb Street and which will materially impact our Sunday School building AND reduce our Academy and Porter Street access by *50 percent*.
* We raise fiduciary concerns this transportation plan materially impacts not only our campus access but also creates unplanned expenses for a Sunday School Building, onsite parking and a church campus reconfiguration.

In closing, we deeply appreciated the time, interest and courtesies extended to us last week by the in-person visits by our City Council Members Eric Joyce, Carrie Peters-Reid (who leases non-profit office space in the Barnett Parish House) as well as our newly elected Morgan County First District Commissioner, Carl Jones. They not only reviewed the Advent property plat **(SEE ATTACHED)** but walked our property and visited our Barnett Parish House. We are most thankful for their Servant Leadership.

Please know the Episcopal Church of the Advent cherishes its Madison-Morgan-Lake Country members as well as our greater community. We have high on our priorities of service to be a responsive member of this community and in particular, to be roundly supportive of our city leaders, citizens, area non-profits and employers seeking to preserve our historic town and county, farms, forests and front porches.

Sincerely,

The Church of the Advent Vestry;

Sr. Warden Devon Dartnell

Jr. Warden Vic Jackson

Mr. Oliver J. Booker

Ms. Elizabeth Branch

Dr. Annie Hunt Burriss

Ms. Mary Horton

CC:

Reverend Mark Johnson

Fiscal & Operations Manager Debbie Permar

Madison City Manager John Klimm

Madison Planning Director Monica Callahan