UNIVERSITY AVENUE

ROAD DIET

This is a request for the Senate to support a recommendation to the city to reduce the size of University Avenue.
University Avenue is built for far more traffic than it will ever have.

University Ave = about 12,000 vehicles per day

Similarly configured roads:
- Veteran’s Parkway downtown = 27,000
- Buena Vista = 28,000
Wide roadway with multiple lanes creates…

• Visual cues to drive too fast
• Complex vehicle interactions
• Forbidding conditions for pedestrians and cyclists
• Poor environment for local businesses
University Avenue a good candidate for a Road Diet, per Federal Highway Administration

FHWA criteria:

- Traffic count up to 20,000
- High potential for pedestrian activity
- Large number of intersections and driveways (Univ. Ave has about 35 in 1.5 miles)
Proposed reconfiguration of University Avenue

- One travel lane in each direction
- Left turn lane
- Pedestrian refuge islands
- More crosswalks
- One-way bike lanes in each direction
- On-street parking, as needed
Road Diet benefits

• Slower drivers would set the speed of the road, producing an overall calming effect
• Destination traffic would be privileged over through traffic
• Pedestrians could cross more safely, negotiating only one lane at a time rather than five lanes
• Bike lanes would be added without additional right-of-way
• Turning maneuvers would be safer for motorists, especially left turns to enter the road
• Tangible health benefits could be realized (as predicted, if a Health Impact Assessment is done)
• CSU would become a more attractive destination
What about diminished traffic capacity?

- Road diets have been completed across the U.S., and analysis shows that three-lane roads use space more efficiently (slower cars, closer together).
- At 12,000 vehicles per day, University Avenue has enormous over-capacity.
- FHWA categorizes the Road Diet treatment as a “proven safety counter-measure.”
- At 1.5 miles, University Avenue will never be a major north-south thoroughfare.
- Campus has several alternative entrances.
Conclusion

- University Avenue is not and will never be a major north-south thoroughfare, because its total length is only about 1.5 miles, but its unnecessarily large size creates hazardous conditions, suppresses commercial activity, and wholly disenfranchises pedestrians. Its space could be allocated more rationally to serve the needs of its users. Because a road diet conversion would need no new right of way, it could be accomplished at low cost. The result would be a safer road and more attractive area, with little inconvenience to motorists, except those who want to drive above a safe speed.