

**From:** Andy Flamm  
**Sent:** Friday, May 26, 2017 4:14 PM  
**To:** Noecker, Rebecca (CI-StPaul)  
**Cc:** Maki, Taina (CI-StPaul)  
**Subject:** Re: Help for Brooks, Comments from Rupp

It seems strange that a council member can't have a private discussion with a constituent, but what do I know.

Feel free to share the attached document with your colleagues. It states our case regarding Railroader and puts forth some positive alternatives. While we have sympathy for what Jaunae has been dealing with, we feel more strongly than ever that approving her waiver would be a bad idea.

There was a strong sentiment from guests at our meeting this morning that residents voices were not being heard and that council members were being influenced by building owners and one-sided media coverage. While our June 26 Downtown Live event will provide a great forum for resident input, it was felt that it would be too late to provide balance to the Council regarding Railroader. There is a concern that allowing Jaunae to close at 8pm might set a precedent leading to a system-wide closure at that hour, to which residents are adamantly opposed. I can assure you that there will be a much-larger contingent of residents at the June 7 hearing.

I keep coming back to the idea that it shouldn't be that expensive for Jaunae to clean up her building. If the City Council wishes to help her pay for it, that's its choice, but why are we debating closing down skyways over this one little problem area?

Getting a headache...need a long weekend...thanks for listening.

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**From:** Andy Flamm  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 24, 2017 2:16 PM  
**To:** Noecker, Rebecca (CI-StPaul); Maki, Taina (CI-StPaul)  
**Subject:** Re: Help for Brooks, Comments from Rupp

And for your reading pleasure, here is a summary of my latest thoughts on skyway security issues, which I plan to hand out on Friday. I hope it helps in some way.

The SGAC has defined the challenges facing the skyway system, encouraged public dis

course about those challenges and possible solutions, and stimulated action by government, building owners and other stakeholders toward solving these issues. Now we need to hone in on short- and long-term solutions and push for their implementation.

The most pressing issues relate to people behaving badly and the resulting damage to skyway appearance and reputation. Specifically, there are two challenges: people sleeping in and messing up less-traveled portions of the system, along with occasional threatening or disgusting behavior, and young people hanging out near Central Station, doing illegal activities such as littering, vandalism, drugs

and gambling, and creating a threatening environment for legitimate skyway users. Our committee is not capable of solving either the homeless issue or the challenges of unruly youth, so we need to focus on what we can do instead.

It is not the responsibility of the Saint Paul Police Department to monitor and patrol the skyway system; that is the job of private security hired by building owners. Police are available to take action when crimes are committed, but private security is the first line of defense against both sleepers and unruly young people. Therefore, the primary solution to these problems is to improve private security so needed actions can be taken.

The best way to improve private security is for building owners to join together and develop a coordinated system covering the skyways. If they wish to include other areas that is their prerogative, but at a minimum they need to ensure that any disallowed behavior anywhere in the skyway system will be handled quickly and consistently. This will discourage bad behavior and build the reputation of the skyways as a safe place for all. Building owners would fund this system according to their size, however defined, so all can participate, which is crucial to success. BOMA is requesting proposals for a security consulting contract, but it is not known if they will ultimately establish the type of comprehensive security system needed.

It needs to be noted that the Met Council owns a significant portion of the skyway system where problems are occurring, and indeed it has been suggested that building the Green Line caused many of those problems. As building owners work together to improve private security, the Met Council will need to be a major partner in the endeavor.

If building owners do not step up and provide adequate private security, the city should provide it and bill the offending owners. Doing nothing is not an option.

It has been suggested that the skyway system be privatized. That would give owners control, leading to a variety of hours and diminishing the system's effectiveness. Furthermore, this would not solve the security issues owners face during hours when the skyways are open or accessible to those who commit bad behaviors. It would also be a huge public subsidy for building owners as the skyways were paid for with public money.

On the other hand, the system can't be totally public because it largely runs through private buildings. The city could take over the security and maintenance functions and bill owners accordingly, but buildings would presumably still need their own security services so we'd end up with costly duplication.

No matter how we look at the challenges facing the skyway system, the long-term solution keeps coming back to creating a system-wide coordinated security plan funded by building owners, including the Met Council, and augmented by SPPD and Metro Transit Police.

In the short-term, the city should press building owners, including Met Council, to live up to their responsibilities concerning security and maintenance; the city should also provide assistance to building owners who demonstrate hardship in conforming to reasonable standards.

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**Why the Saint Paul City Council Should Deny the  
Railroader Printing Building's Request for a Permanent Skyway Hours Waiver**

Skyway Governance Advisory Committee

May 26, 2017

The Railroader Printing Building filed a request with the City for a waiver allowing them to close their skyway doors at 8pm instead of the standard 2am. The Skyway Governance Advisory Committee voted unanimously to recommend denial of this request, for the following reasons.

- The building owner violated city ordinance by closing their skyway at 8pm prior to requesting or receiving a waiver.
- The building owner installed a keypad allowing after-hours access to those she deemed worthy but denying general access to this public thoroughfare. (It is not known if the keypad would remain if the waiver is approved, or if access would then be denied to all.)
- The skyway in question connects the system to River Park Lofts and at least two bars and restaurants. No accurate survey of skyway users has been done to substantiate the building owner's claim that there would be little opposition to closing the skyway early.
- The building owner has not been providing adequate private security for her building as required by the building's easement agreement with the City. Instead, she has been relying on video cameras and calling Police to deal with problems. Other buildings that do provide an appropriate level of security are not having the same problems. An hours waiver should only be considered in cases of need, not for the convenience or financial advantage of building owners.
- Granting the waiver would set a precedent, inciting other building owners to shut down their skyways early and diminishing the value of the system.

**Better Alternatives to Hours Waivers**

Our committee understands that issues such as homelessness and unruly young people have increased in recent years and have impacted building owners and tenants, as well as other skyway users. Rather than closing some or all skyways early, thereby denying usage to thousands of downtown residents, patrons and employees of downtown businesses and others, we recommend the following, some of which are already in the works.

- Establish and enforce a minimum standard of security required of building owners.
- If building owners do not meet the minimum standard, the City should provide security as needed and bill those owners, thereby maintaining a safe environment.
- Building owners should cooperate to create a comprehensive security system throughout downtown, including the skyways. Funding would be based on building size, perhaps by way of a Business Improvement District or similar mechanism.
- Survey skyway users and businesses to determine optimal skyway hours, and make those hours consistent throughout the system.
- Require buildings to lock their skyways during the hours they are closed. This is not currently required, which has contributed to people getting into the system after hours.