

City Council President, Kathy Lantry:

On behalf of the Saint Paul Downtown YMCA, I am writing to express my concern about the Sixth Street Sidewalk extension. The YMCA has been a viable organization and pillar in the downtown community since 1856. The YMCA has been serving community needs and challenges with the utmost respect.

The Sixth Street Sidewalk extension proposal affects hundreds of YMCA physically-challenged members as well as the employee base.

The top concerns for the physically-challenged members include:

1. Limited parking time (only allows them to park during non-rush hour times).
2. Safety issues for loading and unloading passengers in wheelchairs.
3. Eliminates parking for physically-challenged members without a plausible location for them to park that provides easy access to the YMCA.

All of these members come to the YMCA for one main reason; to increase their mobility and to strengthen their muscle condition. The YMCA provides this opportunity in a community-based, family fun environment.

It is difficult to employ valuable staff at this location due to the lack of available parking. The staff that we employ in our aquatic and fitness departments have very specialized skills, but also work anywhere from two to four hours. This elimination of parking continues to reduce our pool of dedicated employees that provide quality programming.

In conclusion, parking at this location is already a hindrance. The proposal would make it more difficult for members and staff to engage in the YMCA.

Sincerely,

Mary Britts
Executive Director of the Saint Paul Downtown YMCA

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The Y: We're for youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility