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October 14, 2014

Dai Thao
St. Paul City Council
Facsimile No. (651) 266-8574

Re: Light Rail assessment for 767 University Av W
File No. 19082

Dear Mr. Thao:

I cannot personally attend the council meeting tomorrow evening so I am sending to you a written statement concerning the proposed assessment for light rail. I understand that this assessment is for a perceived benefit some believe business owners on University Avenue have received from the 'beautification' of the avenue, i.e., wider sidewalks, boulevard trees.

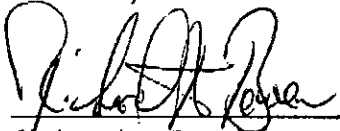
My gross income for the year 2013 was approximately 50 percent less than that of 2012 and that loss of income is attributable to the extraordinary inconvenience the construction of light rail had on my clients and potential clients. Many would not come to my office. I was able to meet some in the midway parking lot but others went elsewhere not wanting to deal with the congestion. I paid to have a sidewalk put in from the alley to my front door at my own expense because the promise of monies for constructing parking spaces for businesses was, I was eventually told, no longer being fulfilled. My numerous calls to my then-city council person were never returned.

Besides the loss of business, which to date has not improved, our lawn, of which we had previously received numerous complements, became full of weeds due to dust from construction constantly blowing into our yard. A large section of our front sidewalk was dug out and, although replacement of the slab was at first refused, the concrete replacement is

of poor quality and pock-marked. The installation of parking meters is another concern of clients and potential clients. They do not want to put their money in parking meters at my office. And I do not want to go out every 2 hours to pay to park in front of my building. It should also be noted that we had boulevard trees prior to light rail construction and the wider sidewalks simply caused my costs of snow shoveling to nearly double.

I have been on the Avenue for over 33 years, 30 at the 767 location. I have tried very hard to keep my prices affordable for the people who cannot afford to 'go downtown' to pay for an attorney. The taxation value for the above property increased from \$68,000 to \$175,000 last year and I see where it is going up to nearly \$250,000 next year. And now an additional tax assessment for close to \$3500 is being assessed as well? I have seen no benefit to the so-called 'beautification' of University Avenue nor from light rail - only a devastating loss of business and necessary abandonment of my ideals of being an affordable attorney for those least able to afford legal representation.

Sincerely,



Richard A. Bowen