

**From:** [Polly Heintz](#)  
**To:** [Joanna Zimny](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Raised Beds in the Boulevard  
**Date:** Friday, June 23, 2023 8:14:54 AM

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**From:** Victoria Downey <[vdowney@gmail.com](mailto:vdowney@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 22, 2023 11:45 AM  
**To:** #CI-StPaul\_Ward7 <[Ward7@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:Ward7@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>  
**Subject:** Fwd: Raised Beds in the Boulevard

**Think Before You Click:** This email originated **outside** our organization.

Dear Councilmember Prince,

I'm writing to you today regarding the issue of Raised Garden Beds in the Boulevard. I'm sure you are tired of hearing appeals to this issue, and I'd like to make an argument that St. Paul should change our code to allow for these to be utilized throughout the city. As you may know from traversing the city streets, they are already widely in use and it only recently came to my attention that they are not, in fact, permitted.

As someone who is passionate about sustainability and teaches it at a local college, I feel that there are a lot of environmental and social reasons why we *should* be allowing them. In short:

--The St. Paul Climate Action Resiliency Plan includes, under Economic and Social Well Being, "Encourage equitable spatial distribution of community assets to improve food security, including urban farms, community gardens, food markets, and healthy food options (p. 26, <https://www.stpaul.gov/sites/default/files/Media%20Root/Mayor%27s%20Office/Saint%20Paul%20Climate%20Action%20%26%20Resilience%20Plan.pdf>)

--Boulevard trees are publicly owned. Using raised beds would allow for the roots to remain undisturbed, as opposed to an in ground garden.

--Raised beds are by far the safest option if you have contaminated soil, which is a potential problem for many boulevard spaces due to their being adjacent to roads (road salt, history of leaded gasoline, etc). The EPA recommends that if there is a chance that your soils are contaminated, the best way of reducing the risk of coming into contact with these soils is by creating raised beds. Since we allow vegetables to be planted, raised beds are the safest option if we want to eat food grown in the boulevard. ([https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2014-03/documents/urban\\_gardening\\_fina\\_fact\\_sheet.pdf](https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2014-03/documents/urban_gardening_fina_fact_sheet.pdf))

If we are a city that truly believes in climate action, sustainability, increased biodiversity, and food access, then we should be not only allowing but *encouraging* our citizens to plant in raised beds on the boulevard.

I appreciate your time and would be happy to help further if needed.

Cheers,

Victoria

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Victoria S. Downey

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