

**From:** [Jenna Sadjadi](#)  
**To:** [Andrew Escobedo](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward2](#); [\\*CI-StPaul>Contact-Council](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Drive Throughs  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 18, 2026 9:41:47 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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Hi Andrew – Thank you for contacting the Ward 2 office. I will share your email with CP Noecker. Would you like your comment added to the public record? If yes, please let me know and I will make sure it is added. To read the full details of Ordinance 24-26, please visit: [City of Saint Paul - File #: Ord 24-26](#).

**Jenna Sadjadi** (she/they)  
**Executive Assistant to Council President Noecker**  
Saint Paul City Council - Ward 2  
15 W Kellogg Blvd, Room 310B  
Saint Paul, MN 55102  
651-266-8620 | [www.stpaul.gov/ward2](http://www.stpaul.gov/ward2)



**SAINT PAUL**  
**MINNESOTA**

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**From:** Andrew Escobedo <[bedo7667@gmail.com](mailto:bedo7667@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 17, 2026 4:26 PM  
**To:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward2](#) <[Ward2@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:Ward2@ci.stpaul.mn.us)>  
**Subject:** Drive Throughs

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [bedo7667@gmail.com](mailto:bedo7667@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

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

Hello Council member Noecker,

I wanted to write to you before tomorrow's meeting about drive throughs in St. Paul and say that I oppose the more lenient rules mentioned in today's Pioneer Press article. I think it's time for the city to ban new drive throughs for the health and safety of the community. We need to encourage more local commercial hubs where people don't need to drive to go shopping. The drive throughs encourage more driving and pollution in our city. I understand disabled people need access but at the cost of everyone's health and safety is not the solution when we can invest in helping those members get out and socialize through assistance in expanded public transportation options.

In addition, I don't believe businesses will follow the rules about blocking sidewalks and roadways and based on the city's poor ability to enforce current road rules. I already see cars

blocking sidewalks and roadways without any enforcement. We don't even have basic parking enforcement downtown with cars going un-ticketed for an entire week without moving.

Overall our goal as a city should be to create a healthier environment with more local neighborhood gathering places. Allowing drive throughs is contrary to making St. Paul a less car dependent city.

Thank you for your time and service,

Andrew Escobedo  
523 Jackson St Unit 314  
St Paul, MN 55101

**From:** [Julia McColley](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_Contact-Council](#)  
**Subject:** Drive Through Zoning Study Public Comment  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 18, 2026 8:59:30 AM  
**Attachments:** [Drive Through Public Comment D9 202602.pdf](#)

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Good morning,  
Please see the attached letter from the West 7th/Fort Road Federation regarding the Drive Through Zoning Study, Ord 24-26.

Thank you,  
Julia McColley  
Executive Director  
West 7th / Fort Road Federation  
[www.fortroadfederation.org](http://www.fortroadfederation.org)

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**West 7th/Fort Road Federation**  
395 Superior Street  
Saint Paul, MN 55102  
651.298.5599  
[www.FortRoadFederation.org](http://www.FortRoadFederation.org)

Sent via email: [contact-council@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:contact-council@ci.stpaul.mn.us)

February 18, 2026

Saint Paul City Council  
15 W. Kellogg Boulevard  
Saint Paul, MN 55102

**Re: Drive-Through Zoning Study Public Hearing, Ord 24-26**

Dear Members of the Saint Paul City Council,

The West 7th/Fort Road Federation Board appreciates the opportunity to comment on the reopened public hearing regarding the drive-through zoning study. Our board previously submitted comments to the Planning Commission in 2024 supporting a prohibition on new drive-through facilities. After reviewing the proposed ordinance revisions, particularly the shift to specified minimum stacking requirements, we write to reaffirm and strengthen our concerns.

While the revised ordinance attempts to mitigate conflicts by requiring defined off-street stacking (six spaces for banks and pharmacies, 12 for fast food, and 14 for coffee shops) and prohibiting vehicle queues from extending into sidewalks, trails, bicycle lanes, alleys, or streets, the underlying land use and urban design impacts remain fundamentally at odds with the City's adopted goals.

First, drive-through facilities reinforce a car-centric development pattern that conflicts with the vision of a walkable, urban city. Even when designed to avoid spillover into the public realm, they still prioritize vehicle throughput over pedestrian comfort, safety, and street-level activity. This contradicts the City's Pedestrian Plan, Bicycle Plan, and broader Complete Streets policies that place people—especially those walking, rolling, and biking—first in the public right-of-way.

Second, the newly proposed stacking requirements exacerbate inefficient land use. Requiring up to 14 on-site queuing spaces dedicates a significant amount of valuable commercial land to

*The Fort Road Federation coordinates participation in advocacy and planning and builds community connections for the residents, businesses, and nonprofit organizations of the West 7th neighborhood so that it is a place where people want to live, work, and play.*

*Affirmative Action, Equal Opportunity Employer*

vehicle storage rather than active, productive uses such as housing, small-scale retail, or public realm improvements. In established corridors like West 7th, where parcels are constrained and demand for mixed-use, walkable development is high, this represents a substantial opportunity cost and undermines efforts to create compact, transit-supportive nodes.

Third, even with stricter queuing rules, drive-throughs continue to contribute to idling emissions, localized air pollution, and additional impervious surface. These outcomes run counter to the City's Climate Action and Resilience goals by increasing carbon emissions, intensifying the urban heat island effect, and worsening stormwater runoff challenges.

Finally, we are concerned that the proposed ordinance changes may inadvertently place certain commercial corridors at greater risk of increased drive-through development. By establishing clear technical standards rather than a prohibition, the amendment could signal that drive-throughs are broadly acceptable if minimum stacking requirements are met. Corridors already under pressure from redevelopment—particularly those seeking to transition to more pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use patterns—could see proposals that are technically compliant but inconsistent with the long-term community vision and corridor plans.

In West 7th, we are actively working to support locally owned businesses, improve pedestrian safety, and foster a vibrant, human-scaled streetscape. Drive-through-oriented development, even when well regulated, tends to favor national chains, interrupt building frontage, reduce street engagement, and introduce new pedestrian-vehicle conflict points. These outcomes would degrade local character and undermine ongoing public and private investments in walkability and placemaking.

Additionally, it is important to note that the vast majority of drive-through facilities in Saint Paul are operated by national or regional chain businesses rather than small, locally owned establishments. These larger companies are far better positioned to absorb the costs, time, and technical expertise required to pursue approvals under more permissive standards. Maintaining or expanding a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) requirement provides an essential review process that allows the City of Saint Paul and affected communities to evaluate whether a proposed drive-through is compatible with neighborhood context, corridor plans, and pedestrian safety goals. This discretionary review is a critical tool to ensure that projects are not automatically approved based solely on technical compliance, but are instead assessed for their fit within the surrounding urban fabric and long-term community vision.

For these reasons, the West 7th/Fort Road Federation Board reiterates its position that the City of Saint Paul should move beyond regulating drive-throughs and instead prohibit the construction of new drive-through facilities. At minimum, we urge the Council to carefully consider corridor-specific impacts and ensure that proposed ordinance changes do not unintentionally encourage an expansion of auto-oriented uses in areas striving to become more walkable, transit-supportive, and climate-aligned.

Thank you for your consideration and for reopening this important conversation about the future of our commercial corridors and public realm.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Julia McColley', written in a cursive style.

Julia McColley  
Executive Director

February 25, 2026

Council President Rebecca Noecker  
Councilmember Anika Bowie  
Councilmember Saura Jost  
Councilmember Molly Coleman

Council Vice President Hwa Jeong Kim  
Councilmember Nelsie Yang  
Councilmember Cheniqua Johnson

### **Re: Ordinance 24-26 Zoning Code Amendments for Drive-Thrus and Walk-up Services**

Dear Council President Noecker and members of the City Council,

On behalf of the St. Paul Area Chamber and our 1,600+ members and affiliates, I am writing in regard to the recently amended Ordinance 24-26 governing drive-thru and walk-up zoning regulations.

The Chamber appreciates the Council's decision to remove the outright ban on restaurants and coffee shops, as well as the requirement that walk-up windows mirror drive-thru hours. Those provisions created significant operational barriers.

Despite these improvements, Ordinance 24-26 continues to create regulatory uncertainty and site design constraints that will negatively affect investment decisions across multiple sectors. For that reason, the Chamber continues to encourage a "no" vote, based on the operational and regulatory challenges detailed below.

1. **Stacking Requirements:** The ordinance maintains a six-space stacking requirement for banks, credit unions, and pharmacies. Our banking and credit union members have repeatedly noted that this exceeds their current demand and would force unnecessary surface area additions at best and prohibit development at worst.

In addition, clarity is needed on how stacking is measured – specifically, from "the last pickup window in the direction of drive-thru movement". Ambiguity at the zoning stage introduces unpredictability during site review, raising costs and timelines for applicants.



2. **Grandfathered Rights and Renovations:** The ordinance does not clearly define how existing drive-thru operations are treated when properties are sold, remodeled, or upgraded. Questions remain about whether renovations, safety improvements, or technology upgrades could inadvertently result in a business losing its legal drive-thru rights. Clear guidance and administrative flexibility are necessary to protect current investments and allow businesses to modernize without risk.
3. **Discontinuation of Use:** This ordinance removes a business's legal right to a drive-thru if it is out of operation for over a year but does not define what starts that clock. Does it start the day the building is sold to a new owner? What if the building burns down through the fault of no one? Will a business be able to make safety and technology upgrades to better serve customers without their drive-thru becoming a non-conforming structure? Do interior lobby or storefront upgrades impact the status of a drive-thru service lane? Without clear statutory standards, this provision increases the risk profile of affected properties. Uncertainty discourages reinvestment, complicates lending decisions, and undermines long-term site planning. Property rights should not hinge on ambiguous timelines or administrative interpretation.
4. **Cumulative Impact on Site Design:** When combined with stacking requirements and residential setbacks, the ordinance may create layouts that are difficult to implement on constrained urban parcels. Reduced flexibility can affect pedestrian circulation, ADA compliance, and overall site efficiency. A more workable approach would preserve design standards while allowing administrative flexibility to address unique site conditions.
5. **Expanded Transit Buffer:** We understand Version 3 would double the transit buffer from 300 feet to 660 feet, substantially increasing the ordinance's geographic impact. After more than a year of review, introducing a significant expansion one week before final adoption does not allow adequate time to evaluate parcel-level impacts or unintended consequences. Nearly 40% of the city's existing drive-thrus fall within the proposed buffer. Clear standards are needed regarding how existing operations, property transfers, and reinvestment would be treated under this expanded boundary. Major zoning amendments of this scale warrant thorough vetting prior to final action to ensure clarity, predictability, and sound policy outcomes.

Drive-thrus remain a critical operational tool for restaurants, banks, pharmacies, and coffee shops. They improve safety, expand access, and support efficient service models that consumers expect. Policies that make this tool harder to use reduce competitiveness at a time when Saint Paul is working to attract and retain investment.



Even with recent amendments, Ordinance 24-26 introduces unnecessary rigidity and uncertainty into Saint Paul's development framework. At a time when the city is competing for private investment and seeking to strengthen its tax base, adding avoidable risk to otherwise viable projects undermines that goal. For these reasons, the Chamber respectfully urges a vote against the ordinance.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



B Kyle  
President and CEO  
Saint Paul Area Chamber





February 23, 2026

**RE: Ordinance 24-26 (Drive-through sales and services and walk-up service windows)**

Dear Council President Noecker and Members of the Saint Paul City Council,

On behalf of Minnesota Retailers, we appreciate the opportunity to share feedback on the proposed amendments to Chapters 65 and 66 related to drive-through sales and services.

Retailers are committed to being strong community partners and recognize the City's goals around thoughtful land use, transit-oriented development, and pedestrian safety. At the same time, the proposed changes raise significant concerns regarding their practical impact on retail operations, investment, and—most critically—access to essential services such as pharmacy care.

### **Site Feasibility and Investment Constraints**

The proposed distancing requirements from residential properties, intersections, and transit stations substantially narrow the number of viable sites for drive-through uses. In practice, this limits redevelopment opportunities in the very corridors where the City is seeking reinvestment. Many existing commercial areas, particularly those near transit, would effectively become unavailable for future drive-through-enabled retail.

### **Increased Development Costs and Barriers For Small & Mid-Sized Retailers**

The updated stacking requirements, including a minimum of six spaces for pharmacies and the potential for additional requirements through transportation analysis, increase land needs and site design complexity. For many urban and infill sites, these requirements will make projects financially infeasible. This is particularly challenging for small and mid-sized retailers that do not have the flexibility of large-format developments.

### **Operational Uncertainty and Approval Risk**

The introduction of additional discretionary requirements, such as transportation-based stacking adjustments, creates uncertainty in the development process. Retailers rely on predictability when making investment decisions, and added uncertainty increases both cost and risk, often resulting in delayed or canceled projects.

## Impact on Pharmacy Access and Community Health

Pharmacies are uniquely impacted by these changes. Drive-through services are not simply a convenience, they are a critical component of healthcare delivery. They serve seniors, families with young children, and individuals with mobility or health challenges. Limiting the ability to develop or operate pharmacy drive-throughs risks reducing access to medications and healthcare services, particularly in neighborhoods that would benefit most from convenient, local options.

While the proposal introduces walk-up service windows, these are not a functional substitute for drive-through services in many healthcare scenarios.

## Broader Economic Implications

Taken together, these changes could result in fewer retail projects moving forward within Saint Paul, shifting investment to surrounding communities with more flexible standards. This not only impacts business growth but also affects job creation, tax base stability, and the availability of services for residents.

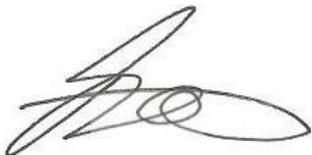
We respectfully ask the Council to consider modifications that better balance urban design goals with the operational realities of retail and healthcare delivery. Specifically, we would welcome the opportunity to work with you on:

- More flexible siting standards that preserve redevelopment opportunities
- Right-sized stacking requirements based on actual use patterns
- Greater predictability in the approval process

Minnesota Retailers stands ready to be a constructive partner in refining this proposal to ensure it supports both community goals and the continued vitality of Saint Paul's retail landscape.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Bruce Nustad  
president  
bruce@mnretail.org

**From:** [Melissa](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul>Contact-Council](#)  
**Subject:** Support transit corridors by restricting drive-throughs  
**Date:** Monday, February 23, 2026 8:56:37 PM

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Dear Councilmembers,

My name is Melissa Wenzel and I live at 349 Michigan Street in Saint Paul. I am writing to ask you to strengthen our property-tax base and protect our significant investment in transit-oriented development by amending the proposed drive-through ordinance to increase the minimum distance that new drive-throughs must be located from existing and planned Light Rail, Bus Rapid Transit, and Arterial Bus Rapid Transit stops from 300 feet to one-eighth of a mile (660 feet). I commend the city (council members and staff) for a balanced approach to this topic; that an outright ban may not be viewed as reasonable, but recognizing that, in certain situations, there is a negative benefit of having drive-throughs located near ultra-urban transit stations.

Independent, locally-owned restaurants typically do not have drive-throughs, and definitely bring in more money that contributes to our tax base than drive-throughs. Especially now, supporting locally-owned establishments with their increased tax base should be highlighted, encouraged, over non-local national or international chain establishments.

In support of our local and independently owned establishments,

Melissa Wenzel

**From:** [jjohns007@icloud.com](mailto:jjohns007@icloud.com)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_Contact-Council](#); [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#)  
**Cc:** [megduhr@gmail.com](mailto:megduhr@gmail.com); [maggie wirth](#)  
**Subject:** drive-through ordinance  
**Date:** Monday, February 23, 2026 6:38:42 PM

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Dear City Council and CM Coleman,

I'm opposed to adding new drive-through businesses in St. Paul, for multiple reasons (see below), and would like to see existing ones have larger buffer zones around their ingress/egress lanes.

My request

1. Short of a total moratorium on new drive-throughs, at least such applications should undergo an assessment process that considers neighborhood needs and preferences, rather than being approved administratively based on meeting technical requirements.
2. Additionally, I believe that existing (and new) drive-throughs need a larger buffer zone around ingress/egress lanes near transit stops, increasing from 300 to 660 feet, to protect people waiting at those stops from the exhaust fumes and engine noise of vehicles idling in the drive-through lanes.

My opposition to drive-throughs is based on the following considerations:

1. Decreased tax base, from inefficient use of commercial space (for concrete and asphalt driveways, rather than businesses with main-street style frontage and footprint).
2. Drive-throughs perpetuate a car-based culture, whereas St. Paul has committed to fostering a more pedestrian, transit, and cyclist friendly transportation mix. Drive-throughs directly interfere with these alternate modalities and promote a car-centric mindset.
3. "Uglification" of St. Paul, reducing its historic charm and defacing it with national chains that make our streets look like generic suburban strip malls or highway truck stops, and that generate abundant paper and plastic packaging waste that often becomes litter.
4. Environmental concerns: idling vehicles spew greenhouse gases and toxins, and concrete/asphalt hardscape enhances stormwater runoff and the urban heat island effect.

Respectfully,

-JJ

James Johnson  
[jjohns007@icloud.com](mailto:jjohns007@icloud.com)

**From:** [Mary Huschle](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_Contact-Council](#)  
**Subject:** Support transit corridors  
**Date:** Monday, February 23, 2026 5:54:33 PM

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[You don't often get email from maryhuschle@yahoo.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

Hello. My name is Mary Huschle and I live at 1050 Lombard Avenue. I am writing to ask you to strengthen our property tax base and protect our investment in transit-oriented development by amending the proposed drive-through ordinance to increase the minimum distance that new driveway throughs must be located from existing and planned light rail, BRT, and arterial bus rapid transit stops from 300 feet to 660 feet.

Drive throughs near transit stops are an inefficient use of land. They undermine the fiscal potential of transit-oriented development.

Mary Huschle  
St. Paul

**From:** [Lincoln Wells](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul>Contact-Council](#)  
**Subject:** Support transit corridors by restricting drive-throughs  
**Date:** Monday, February 23, 2026 4:56:04 PM

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You don't often get email from lincolnwells@live.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

My name is Lincoln Wells and I live at 695 Fuller Ave. I am writing to ask you to strengthen our property-tax base and protect our significant investment in transit-oriented development by amending the proposed drive-through ordinance to increase the minimum distance that new drive-throughs must be located from existing and planned Light Rail, Bus Rapid Transit, and Arterial Bus Rapid Transit stops from 300 feet to one-eighth of a mile (660 feet).

**From:** [Michael Flynn](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_Contact-Council](#)  
**Subject:** Support transit corridors by restricting drive-throughs  
**Date:** Monday, February 23, 2026 2:04:26 PM

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You don't often get email from mjfly77@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

*My name is Michael Flynn and I live at 1751 Bohland Ave. I am writing to ask you to strengthen our property-tax base and protect our significant investment in transit-oriented development by amending the proposed drive-through ordinance to increase the minimum distance that new drive-throughs must be located from existing and planned Light Rail, Bus Rapid Transit, and Arterial Bus Rapid Transit stops from 300 feet to one-eighth of a mile (660 feet).*

**From:** [Adam Frei](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#)  
**Subject:** Support transit corridors by restricting drive-throughs  
**Date:** Monday, February 23, 2026 1:47:13 PM

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You don't often get email from freiguy20@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello -

My name is Adam Frei and I live at 936 Albemarle. I am writing in support of smart restrictions on drive-throughs within Saint Paul. While some drive-throughs may make sense in certain, less densely developed locations, I see no reason for drive-throughs to be build in transit-oriented and densely developed areas of Saint Paul where the space required to build a drive-through limits the ability for Saint Paul to grow its tax based and makes it less safe for those who walk, roll, and take transit.

I would request that the proposed drive-through ordinance be amended to at least increase the minimum distance for new drive-throughs be located at least 600 ft. from a current or planned transit stop. And recommend that more significant limitations be put in place to ensure that our neighbors who do not drive and residents who live near drive-through locations are not negatively impacted by the increased traffic that is created by a drive-through:

- increased emissions from idling vehicles
- less attentive drivers crossing sidewalks, trails and bike paths
- vehicles stopping in the streets waiting to enter drive-throughs causing other cars to lose focus on

Thank you for your consideration,

Adam Frei  
608.515.9733

**From:** [James Slegers](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul>Contact-Council](#)  
**Subject:** Amend drive through proposal to require 1/8 mile setbacks  
**Date:** Monday, February 23, 2026 11:42:38 AM

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Hi,

I am writing the council regarding upcoming consideration of rules tightening restrictions on the locations of new drive-thrus. I am writing in support of amending the proposal on the table to increase the clearing distance of proposed drive through from existing or proposed high density nodes or high capacity transit routes, to maximize the space devoted buildings and businesses serving those amenities. An 1/8 mile distance would still allow on average one half of the street frontage to be used for drive-thrus while preventing any queue backups from disrupting transit and keeping blocks of space that is open to less car-focused amenities.

James Slegers, 1153 Edmund

**From:** [Hugo Bruggeman](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#)  
**Subject:** Safer Streets for All by Regulating Drive-throughs near Transit Stops  
**Date:** Monday, February 23, 2026 11:34:32 AM

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You don't often get email from h.bruggeman@fastmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

My name is Hugo Bruggeman and I live at 1923 Princeton Ave, St. Paul

Please consider the trade-offs associated with unregulated drive-throughs in our city. Do we really want near-unlimited access for vehicles? What is the cost of such access? Vehicles turning in and out of drive-throughs can create queues, block lanes and sidewalks, and pose risks to pedestrians. This situation is hardly conducive to areas where transit operates.

Let's prioritize the needs, safety, and comfort of all community members. We should support bus drivers in reaching transit stops, assist teenagers running to catch the bus, and prevent drivers from endangering pedestrians on sidewalks as they rush in and out of drive-throughs while navigating traffic.

I respectfully request that you amend the proposed drive-through ordinance to increase the minimum distance for new drive-throughs from existing and planned Light Rail, Bus Rapid Transit, and Arterial Bus Rapid Transit stops from 300 feet to one-eighth of a mile (660 feet).

Thank you for considering this crucial change to make our streets safer for all.

Sincerely,  
Hugo Bruggeman  
1923 Princeton Ave, St. Paul

**From:** [Jenna Sadjadi](#)  
**To:** [Karen Sieber](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward2](#); [\\*CI-StPaul\\_Contact-Council](#)  
**Subject:** RE: URGENT request to meet re Wizard's Auto before CC mtg next week  
**Date:** Monday, February 23, 2026 11:20:56 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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Hi Karen -- On behalf of Councilmember Noecker, thank you for your email requesting a meeting on this item.

Whenever the City Council considers an appeal or makes a ruling on a specific property, the process is considered quasi-judicial. When preparing to make a quasi-judicial ruling, councilmembers are obligated to make their decision based solely on the materials that are on the public record – either testimony at our public hearing or written correspondence. They are not allowed to speak or correspond on the issue outside of the official public hearing process. Therefore, Council President Noecker respectfully declines this meeting request.

Statements can be submitted to be included in the public record, where councilmembers can review it prior to the public hearing, by emailing [Contact-Council@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:Contact-Council@ci.stpaul.mn.us).

Thank you for contacting the Ward 2 office.

**Jenna Sadjadi** (she/they)  
**Executive Assistant to Council President Noecker**  
Saint Paul City Council - Ward 2  
15 W Kellogg Blvd, Room 310B  
Saint Paul, MN 55102  
651-266-8620 | [www.stpaul.gov/ward2](http://www.stpaul.gov/ward2)



**SAINT PAUL**  
**MINNESOTA**

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**From:** Karen Sieber <karenlynnsieber@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, February 20, 2026 11:12 AM  
**To:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward2](#) <Ward2@ci.stpaul.mn.us>  
**Cc:** Megan Jekot <Megan.Jekot@ci.stpaul.mn.us>; [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward2](#) <Ward2@ci.stpaul.mn.us>  
**Subject:** URGENT request to meet re Wizard's Auto before CC mtg next week

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

Rep. Noecker and team,

Meg Duhr alerted me to an upcoming council meeting in which Wizard's Auto on Randolph will be arguing against a violation they received.

They only received a single violation for multiple infractions over multiple months submitted by multiple different neighbors . The \$1,000 fine and a single ding is MORE than generous.

Neighbors have submitted evidence of over 100 incidents of violations over the past year+ that the tenant, landlord and city did not act on.

I am hoping to meet with you briefly sometime between today and the meeting if possible to show you some of the evidence so that you can see how truly bad it has been (whenever, wherever, am, pm, weekend, weekday). While they have indeed been "better" some issues are still unresolved. And as Meg and other neighbors have noted, neighbor complaints and evidence don't seem to be included or considered in the exhibit items.

Thanks for your time,  
Karen Sieber

**From:** [Cody Fischer](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul>Contact-Council](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward1](#)  
**Subject:** Support a 660-foot setback for new drive-throughs near transit  
**Date:** Monday, February 23, 2026 11:05:57 AM

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You don't often get email from codyfisch@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Members of the City Council,

My name is Cody Fischer, and I live in Ward 1 at 1017 Ashland Ave.

I urge you to amend the proposed drive-through ordinance to increase the required setback for new drive-throughs near high-capacity transit stops from 300 feet to 660 feet (one-eighth of a mile).

This is not about banning drive-throughs citywide. It is about aligning land use with Saint Paul's fiscal reality, climate goals, and public safety commitments — especially in the areas where we have made the largest public investments.

## 1. Fiscal Health and Tax Base

Saint Paul residents have been clear: the pace of property tax increases is unsustainable. If we are serious about stabilizing taxes, we must be disciplined about how we use scarce urban land — particularly along transit corridors where the land has the highest long-term productive potential.

The Urban3 analysis prepared for Sustain Saint Paul shows that drive-through properties generate substantially less taxable value per acre than comparable commercial uses. Countywide averages show:

- Commercial properties: **\$2.9M per acre**
- Restaurants/Bars: **\$2.8M per acre**
- Drive-through properties: **\$1.6M per acre**

In other words, drive-through sites generate roughly **half the value per acre** of other commercial properties.

Specific Saint Paul comparisons are even more striking. For example, the Midline Apartments generate roughly **\$35M in value per acre**, compared to approximately **\$2M per acre** for a McDonald's. On University Avenue, White Castle is shown at **\$1.7M per acre**, while nearby sit-down restaurants and mixed-use properties generate between **\$3–6M+ per acre**.

These differences are not abstract — they directly impact our city's ability to fund parks, streets, libraries, and public safety without continually raising rates.

Transit station areas are some of the most valuable land in the city. Allowing low-intensity, auto-oriented uses within a block of these stations undercuts our ability to strengthen the tax base where it matters most.

## **2. Protecting Public Transit Investments**

Saint Paul has invested millions in Light Rail and Bus Rapid Transit corridors with the expectation of catalyzing transit-oriented development — multi-story housing and mixed-use buildings that increase ridership and expand the local customer base.

The Sustain Saint Paul letter makes clear that station areas have immense potential to increase tax base and support walkable neighborhood growth . Concentrating drive-throughs in these same areas undermines those goals. A modest 660-foot setback simply ensures that the highest-capacity transit nodes are reserved for land uses that maximize ridership, housing supply, and long-term fiscal returns.

## **3. Climate and Resilience**

Drive-throughs are inherently auto-dependent land uses. Siting them directly adjacent to transit stations sends a contradictory signal: we are investing in low-carbon transportation while encouraging vehicle idling and car-oriented site design at the same location.

If Saint Paul is serious about reducing emissions and building climate resilience, land use must reinforce — not contradict — our transit investments.

## **4. Safety for Pedestrians and Cyclists**

The original zoning study was prompted by real safety issues, including drive-through traffic spilling onto major streets and creating hazardous conditions for people walking and biking.

While improved queuing requirements are helpful, they do not address the fundamental conflict between high pedestrian activity at transit stops and concentrated vehicle circulation associated with drive-throughs. A one-block buffer is a practical, balanced way to reduce that conflict while still allowing drive-throughs in many other areas of the city.

The proposed 660-foot setback is a modest, targeted amendment. It does not eliminate drive-throughs. It simply ensures that our highest-value, highest-investment transit corridors are used in a way that strengthens Saint Paul's fiscal health, climate goals, and safety commitments.

I respectfully urge you to support this amendment.

Thank you for your consideration.

Cody Fischer  
Saint Paul Resident

**From:** [Joe Baierl](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#)  
**Subject:** Support transit corridors by restricting drive-throughs  
**Date:** Monday, February 23, 2026 10:23:02 AM

---

You don't often get email from joe.r.baierl@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello,

My name is Joe Baierl and I live at 406 Wacouta Street, in Lowertown. I am writing to ask you to strengthen our property-tax base and protect our significant investment in transit-oriented development by amending the proposed drive-through ordinance to increase the minimum distance that new drive-throughs must be located from existing and planned Light Rail, Bus Rapid Transit, and Arterial Bus Rapid Transit stops from 300 feet to one-eighth of a mile (660 feet).

Such action would be a good compromise on this issue, allowing flexibility, yet still moving Saint Paul towards established best practices on land use, property tax optimization, and traffic management.

Thank-you, Joe

Joe Baierl  
[joe.r.baierl@gmail.com](mailto:joe.r.baierl@gmail.com)  
Mobile: 612-963-5235

**From:** [Katherine DuGarm \(she/her\)](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_Contact-Council](#)  
**Subject:** Support transit corridors by restricting drive-throughs  
**Date:** Monday, February 23, 2026 8:50:32 AM

---

You don't often get email from kdugarm@protonmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

My name is Katherine DuGarm and I live at 1142 Norbert Lane. I am writing to ask you to strengthen our property-tax base and protect our significant investment in transit-oriented development by amending the proposed drive-through ordinance to increase the minimum distance that new drive-throughs must be located from existing and planned Light Rail, Bus Rapid Transit, and Arterial Bus Rapid Transit stops from 300 feet to one-eighth of a mile (660 feet).

I want to safely walk to the bus, not navigate people paying attention to a drive through lane in front of them or eager to go around waiting cars.

Thank you,

Katherine DuGarm  
Sent with [Proton Mail](#) secure email.

**From:** [quilla.park](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul>Contact-Council](#)  
**Subject:** Support transit corridors by restricting drive-throughs  
**Date:** Monday, February 23, 2026 7:54:58 AM

---

You don't often get email from quilla.park@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

My name is Quilla Park and I live at 345 Saint Peter St, Apt 1209, St. Paul, MN 55102. I am writing to ask you to strengthen our property tax base and protect our significant investment in transit-oriented development by amending the proposed drive-thru ordinance to increase the minimum distance that new drive-thrus must be located from existing and planned light rail, bus rapid transit, and arterial bus rapid transit stops from 300ft to one-eighth of a mile (660ft).

Thank you,  
Quilla Park  
814.392.9119

**From:** [Sustain Saint Paul](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul>Contact-Council](#)  
**Subject:** Support transit corridors by restricting drive-throughs  
**Date:** Sunday, February 22, 2026 11:20:49 PM

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On behalf of Sustain Saint Paul, I am submitting a public statement for Ord 24-26, "Amending Chapters 65 and 66 of the Legislative Code pertaining to drive-through sales and services and walk-up service windows." We are asking the city council to amend the proposed drive-through ordinance to increase the minimum distance of new drive-throughs from existing and planned Light Rail, Bus Rapid Transit, and Arterial Bus Rapid Transit stops from 300 feet to one-eighth of a mile (660 feet) — approximately one city block.

Please enter into the record our [full statement here](#). Please also enter [this slide-deck](#) of property tax comparisons compiled from publicly available Ramsey County data by Urban3 on behalf of Sustain Saint Paul.

Respectfully,  
Jacob Hooper  
Director of Advocacy  
Sustain Saint Paul

**From:** [Kevin Gallatin](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul>Contact-Council](#)  
**Subject:** Support transit corridors by restricting drive-throughs  
**Date:** Sunday, February 22, 2026 10:23:31 PM

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Council President Noecker and council members,

I am writing to ask you to strengthen our property-tax base and protect our significant investment in transit-oriented development by amending the proposed drive-through ordinance to increase the minimum distance that new drive-throughs must be located from existing and planned Light Rail, Bus Rapid Transit, and Arterial Bus Rapid Transit stops from 300 feet to one-eighth of a mile (660 feet).

Thank you,  
Kevin Gallatin  
1822 Highland Parkway  
Ward 3

**From:** [Harrison Maddox](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul>Contact-Council](#)  
**Subject:** Change the drive-through ordinance  
**Date:** Sunday, February 22, 2026 9:57:08 PM

---

You don't often get email from hmaddox987@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

*My name is Harrison Maddox and I live at 1808 Benson Ave. I am writing to ask you to strengthen our property-tax base and protect our significant investment in transit-oriented development by amending the proposed drive-through ordinance to increase the minimum distance that new drive-throughs must be located from existing and planned Light Rail, Bus Rapid Transit, and Arterial Bus Rapid Transit stops from 300 feet to one-eighth of a mile (660 feet).*

Thank you for your time.

Sent from MetroMail

**From:** [Noah Schneider](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul>Contact-Council](#)  
**Subject:** Support transit corridors by restricting drive-throughs  
**Date:** Sunday, February 22, 2026 8:39:39 PM

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You don't often get email from noahschneider@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

My name is Noah Schneider and I live at 808 Berry St, Apt 407, St Paul, MN. I am writing to ask you to strengthen our property-tax base and protect our significant investment in transit-oriented development by amending the proposed drive-through ordinance to increase the minimum distance that new drive-throughs must be located from existing and planned Light Rail, Bus Rapid Transit, and Arterial Bus Rapid Transit stops from 300 feet to one-eighth of a mile (660 feet).

Noah Schneider

**From:** [Mary Quinn McCallum](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul>Contact-Council](#)  
**Subject:** Restrict drive-throughs for better transit corridors  
**Date:** Sunday, February 22, 2026 6:51:55 PM

---

You don't often get email from mary@fieldguideinc.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Esteemed Councilmembers,

I am writing to request an amendment to the proposed drive-through ordinance to better protect our property-tax base and transit-oriented development (TOD) investments. Please consider increasing the minimum distance for new drive-throughs from 300 feet to 660 feet from existing and planned Light Rail, BRT, and A-BRT stops.

A 660-foot buffer is essential to ensure pedestrian safety by reducing car traffic in transit zones, maximizing property-tax revenue by prioritizing high-density development over low-density car-centric uses, and preserving the compact, sustainable vision of our transit corridors. Strengthening this requirement will permit our public infrastructure investments to yield their intended economic and community returns. By prioritizing safer access to walking, biking, and public transit for residents and visitors to St. Paul, you will quite literally pave the way for a safer and more equitable future.

Thanks for your consideration and for your service!

Sincerely,  
Mary  
Mary Quinn McCallum  
1520 Fairmount Ave.  
St. Paul 55105

**From:** [Autumn Nelson](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul>Contact-Council](#)  
**Subject:** Support transit corridors by restricting drive-throughs  
**Date:** Sunday, February 22, 2026 4:57:47 PM

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You don't often get email from autumnstellamusic@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City Council,

My name is Autumn and I live at 337 7th St W. I am writing to ask you to strengthen our property-tax base and protect our significant investment in transit-oriented development by amending the proposed drive-through ordinance to increase the minimum distance that new drive-throughs must be located from existing and planned Light Rail, Bus Rapid Transit, and Arterial Bus Rapid Transit stops from 300 feet to one-eighth of a mile (660 feet).

I fell in love with St. Paul because of our transit. Friendly faces, kind drivers, and a quick, effective way to support local businesses. I moved here recently from Minneapolis, and I quickly fell in love with transit corridors near the B Line, the 63 bus, and more. As a taxpayer and a consumer, I am happy to spend money on businesses that are dense and easily accessible by bus- without the impediment of parking space, excess drivers, or more.

With my disability, I live life without a car, even though I work 40-hour weeks and contribute heavily to our local economy. It helps me save money for things I prioritize, like medical bills, accessible housing, and more. Car-free living also gives me a lower-stress lifestyle, allowing me to focus on the people, hobbies, and work I love, such as organizing music charity events and helping out my neighbors.

Restricting drive-throughs is just one step in reducing car dependence and giving Minneapolis pedestrians, transit riders, and shoppers more breathing room to truly enjoy our urban fabric.

I love Saint Paul, and I believe strongly in the future of transit and dense urban development to propel us forward with the "small town" tightly-knit vibe and big city amenities that we hold dear to us.

With love and encouragement,

Autumn Nelson (they/she, 24)  
West 7th Resident, Saint Paul

**From:** [Catie Creiman](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#)  
**Subject:** Please support transit corridors by restricting drive-thrus  
**Date:** Sunday, February 22, 2026 4:45:37 PM

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You don't often get email from [catiecreiman@gmail.com](mailto:catiecreiman@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

My name is Catie Creiman and I live at 623 Laurel Ave, St. Paul, MN. I am writing to ask you to strengthen our property-tax base and protect our significant investment in transit-oriented development by amending the proposed drive-through ordinance to increase the minimum distance that new drive-throughs must be located from existing and planned Light Rail, Bus Rapid Transit, and Arterial Bus Rapid Transit stops from 300 feet to one-eighth of a mile (660 feet).

Thank you for considering,  
Catie

**From:** [Ben Quam](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul>Contact-Council](#)  
**Subject:** Please support transit corridors by restricting drive-throughs  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 24, 2026 12:21:41 PM

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You don't often get email from benjamin.quam@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hi City Council,

My name is Ben Quam, and I live in Merriam Park. I am writing to ask you to strengthen our property-tax base and protect our significant investment in transit-oriented development by amending the proposed drive-through ordinance to increase the minimum distance that new drive-throughs must be located from existing and planned Light Rail, Bus Rapid Transit, and Arterial Bus Rapid Transit stops from 300 feet to one-eighth of a mile (660 feet).

Drive-throughs have a place in our city, but not near transit investment.

Thank you!

Ben

**From:** [Caleb Rohrer](#)  
**To:** [#CI-StPaul Council](#)  
**Subject:** Support transit corridors by restricting drive-throughs  
**Date:** Sunday, February 22, 2026 6:13:58 PM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from calebrohrer@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

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

Hon. Councilors of St. Paul,

My name is Caleb Rohrer and I am a constituent living in the Mac-Groveland neighborhood. I am writing to ask you to strengthen our property-tax base and protect our significant investment in transit-oriented development by amending the proposed drive-through ordinance to increase the minimum distance that new drive-throughs must be located from existing and planned Light Rail, Bus Rapid Transit, and Arterial Bus Rapid Transit stops from 300 feet to one-eighth of a mile (660 feet).

Sincerely,

Caleb Rohrer  
1304 St Clair Ave  
St Paul, MN 55105

**From:** [Maroney, Matthew](#)  
**To:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Council](#)  
**Subject:** Drive-throughs on transit corridors  
**Date:** Monday, February 23, 2026 7:22:12 AM

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from gmaroney01@hamline.edu. [Learn why this is important](#)

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

My name is George Matthew Maroney and I live at 823 Snelling Ave N. I am a constituent of Molly Coleman. I cannot express fully how important well-operating transit corridors in St Paul are to so many of our lives, including mine. The A line, Green Line, and the 61, 63, 67 and 83 buses have facilitated 90%+ of my travel during my time living in the Midway. We all remember the “carbucks” on Marshall and what awful traffic it created. Ensuring our neighbors who take transit have access to fast moving corridors is critical for equity. Drive-thrus, and car centric development overall, are killing our cities. Sustain Saint Paul calls for increasing the minimum distance drive thrus can be constructed from a transit stop from 300 ft to 660 ft, which I support. But the council should think even larger than that. We should ban drive thrus in the City of Saint Paul. We should be a national leader and model setter for sustainable, high tax, dense, people-centric development. We must put people before cars.

**From:** [Narayan NL](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_Contact-Council](#)  
**Subject:** Support transit corridors by restricting drive-throughs  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 24, 2026 1:45:43 PM

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You don't often get email from nlnarayan26@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello,

My name is Narayan Nazare, and I live at Galtier Towers in Lower town, St. Paul.

I am writing to ask you to strengthen our property-tax base and protect our significant investment in transit-oriented development by amending the proposed drive-through ordinance to increase the minimum distance that new drive-throughs must be located from existing and planned Light Rail, Bus Rapid Transit, and Arterial Bus Rapid Transit stops from 300 feet to one-eighth of a mile (660 feet).

Thank you for your consideration.

Kind regards,  
Narayan Nazare

**From:** [briana erickson](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul>Contact-Council](#)  
**Subject:** Support transit corridors by restricting drive-throughs  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 24, 2026 1:29:39 PM

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You don't often get email from [briana.erickson@gmail.com](mailto:briana.erickson@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

My name is Briana Erickson and I live at 2086 Suburban Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55119. I am writing to ask you to strengthen our property-tax base and protect our significant investment in transit-oriented development by amending the proposed drive-through ordinance to increase the minimum distance that new drive-throughs must be located from existing and planned Light Rail, Bus Rapid Transit, and Arterial Bus Rapid Transit stops from 300 feet to one-eighth of a mile (660 feet).

Thank you,  
Briana Erickson

**From:** [Brooke Wallington](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_Contact-Council](#)  
**Subject:** Support transit corridors by restricting drive-throughs  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 24, 2026 4:33:22 PM

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You don't often get email from brookeawallington@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

My name is Brooke Wallington and I live at 777 Albert St N in Saint Paul. I am writing to ask you to strengthen our property-tax base and protect our significant investment in transit-oriented development by amending the proposed drive-through ordinance to increase the minimum distance that new drive-throughs must be located from existing and planned Light Rail, Bus Rapid Transit, and Arterial Bus Rapid Transit stops from 300 feet to one-eighth of a mile (660 feet).

Thank you.

**From:** [Jeff Walsh](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#)  
**Subject:** Support transit corridors, restrict drive thrus  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 24, 2026 4:33:01 PM

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You don't often get email from jeffmattwalsh@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello - My name is Jeff Walsh and I live at 345 Saint Peter St, Apt 1209, St. Paul, MN 55102.

I am writing to ask you to protect our significant investment in transit-oriented development by amending the proposed drive-thru ordinance. This ordinance should increase the minimum distance that new drive-thrus must be located from existing and planned light rail, bus rapid transit, and arterial bus rapid transit stops from 300ft to one-eighth of a mile (660ft).

Thank you,  
Jeff Walsh  
218-791-9965

**From:** [Matt Frank](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#)  
**Subject:** Support transit corridors by restricting drive-throughs  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 24, 2026 4:15:51 PM

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You don't often get email from mjfrank84@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello,

My name is Matt Frank and I live at 350 Saint Peter Street, Saint Paul, MN 55102. I am writing to ask you to strengthen our property-tax base and protect our significant investment in transit-oriented development by amending the proposed drive-through ordinance to increase the minimum distance that new drive-throughs must be located from existing and planned Light Rail, Bus Rapid Transit, and Arterial Bus Rapid Transit stops from 300 feet to one-eighth of a mile (660 feet).

Drive-throughs near transit stops are a poor and inefficient use of land. They generate roughly half the per-acre tax value of comparable non-drive-through commercial uses. Near transit stops, they undermine the immense fiscal potential of transit-oriented development. These concerns compound with safety concerns for pedestrians and drivers alike.

Please consider amending your current proposed ordinance to restrict the construction of new drive-throughs in the immediate vicinity of existing and planned transit stops. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Matt Frank

A concerned property owner living in a transit-oriented building downtown

**From:** [Andy Singer](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_Contact-Council](#)  
**Subject:** restricting Drive-Thrus  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 24, 2026 3:39:59 PM

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[You don't often get email from [andy@andysinger.com](mailto:andy@andysinger.com). Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification> ]

Dear Council Members,

I hear that the Council is considering restricting new drive-thru businesses in Saint Paul. I support this and believe that you should put a moratorium on ALL new drive-thrus. Drive-thru businesses and active driveways are incredibly dangerous for pedestrians, cyclists and even other drivers. For many years Kowalski's had a third active driveway from its parking lot on the corner of Grand and Syndicate. Many pedestrians were hit there and it took a herculean, multi-year effort by the community council and other activists to get it closed. It was one of my first columns for the local blog StreetsMN--  
<https://streets.mn/2014/03/23/grand-avenue-and-syndicate-intersection-needs-improvement/>

The Marshall Avenue Starbucks drive-thru was another disaster zone. Multiple people were hit by drivers trying to get coffee including a 19-year-old cyclist. You can still see a short news video clip of just a few of the insane maneuvers drivers did--  
<https://www.fox9.com/news/starbucks-drive-thru-in-st-paul-creates-traffic-woesd>

Adding active driveways (required for new drive-thrus) create more dangerous, unsignalized conflict points where pedestrians (and cyclists) can get hit. Drivers turning left into them only look for oncoming traffic and "left-hook" pedestrians. Drivers exiting them, only look to their left for on-coming traffic and end up hitting or "right-hooking" pedestrians. For this reason, it is Minnesota state and national street design policy to avoid having active, mid-block driveways crossing bicycle facilities and pedestrian routes. To this day, I am frequently almost hit by drivers exiting Starbuck's parking lot on Snelling Avenue (between Marshall and Dayton). Ford Parkway between Cretin Avenue and Howell Street is an example of an urban pedestrian area that's been severely compromised by too many driveways, drive-thrus, parking lots, and cars. Is this what you want Saint Paul to look like?

The city's current Comprehensive Plan claims the city will prioritize safe biking and walking over cars. Drive-thrus are antithetical to that. If drivers want to never leave their cars, they should move to suburbia. We should not be actively promoting this in Saint Paul. Please further restrict or simply ban new drive-thrus.

Thank you for your consideration.

Andy Singer  
2103 Berkeley Avenue  
Saint Paul, MN 55105  
651-917-3417 (landline)  
[andy@andysinger.com](mailto:andy@andysinger.com)



**From:** [Paul Fiesel](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#)  
**Subject:** Support transit corridors by restricting drive-throughs  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 24, 2026 3:31:26 PM

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You don't often get email from plfiesel@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello,

I am writing to ask you to strengthen our property-tax base and protect our significant investment in transit-oriented development by amending the proposed drive-through ordinance to increase the minimum distance that new drive-throughs must be located from existing and planned Light Rail, Bus Rapid Transit, and Arterial Bus Rapid Transit stops from 300 feet to one-eighth of a mile (660 feet) or further.

Drive-throughs degrade Saint Paul in many ways, some of which are described here:

1. They take up additional space for car queuing that contributes little to the tax base.
2. This queuing exacerbates pollution in my neighborhood.
3. The speakers for taking orders tend to be loud and are disruptive to neighborhoods.
4. Drive-through restaurants tend to not be local independent businesses.
5. I have spent countless hours picking up trash that originated from drive-throughs. The McDonald's on Jefferson and West 7th is a prime example of this.

Drive-throughs should not be allowed. In lieu of that, I would like stronger limitations on our busy pedestrian corridors which tend to have BRT, aBRT, or LRT stations.

Best regards,

Paul Fiesel  
1992 Jefferson Avenue

**From:** [Jacob Hooper](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#)  
**Subject:** Support transit corridors by restricting drive-throughs  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 24, 2026 3:02:34 PM

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You don't often get email from jacobhoopermn@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

My name is Jacob Hooper and I live at 811 Como Ave. I am writing to ask you to strengthen our property-tax base and protect our significant investment in transit-oriented development by amending the proposed drive-through ordinance to increase the minimum distance that new drive-throughs must be located from existing and planned Light Rail, Bus Rapid Transit, and Arterial Bus Rapid Transit stops from 300 feet to one-eighth of a mile (660 feet).

We need to take sensible steps to reduce suburban design which is choking our tax base, creating pedestrian safety problems, and otherwise undermining our goals of a fiscally resilient, walkable, vibrant city.

**From:** [teresa.mozur](mailto:teresa.mozur)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul>Contact-Council](#)  
**Subject:** Update the ordinance on drive-throughs to promote livability  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 24, 2026 2:42:55 PM

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You don't often get email from tmozur@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

My name is Teresa Mozur and I am a resident of Ward 1. I was disappointed to learn that the Council failed to advance the proposed ban on future drive-thrus. Our city's future prosperity requires our leaders to work towards a vision of Saint Paul that prioritizes transit-oriented development and expands our tax base by improving livability through housing and transit.

With this in mind, I urge you to amend the proposed drive-through ordinance to increase the minimum distance for new drive-throughs from existing and planned Light Rail, Bus Rapid Transit, and Arterial Bus Rapid Transit stops from 300 feet to one-eighth of a mile (660 feet).

The last thing Saint Paul needs right now is more suburban land use designs in the heart of our transit corridors.

Sincerely,

Teresa Mozur

--

**From:** [Karen Allen](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_Contact-Council](#)  
**Subject:** Support transit corridors by restricting drive-throughs  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 24, 2026 4:37:48 PM

---

My name is Karen Allen and I live at 862 Iglehart Ave, Saint Paul MN 55104.

As a city taxpayer, mother of 3 young kids, and a transit and bike rider - protecting our tax base, reducing traffic congestion and improving transit accessibility are all very important to me.

I am writing to ask you to strengthen our property-tax base and protect our significant investment in transit-oriented development by amending the proposed drive-through ordinance to increase the minimum distance that new drive-throughs must be located from existing and planned Light Rail, Bus Rapid Transit, and Arterial Bus Rapid Transit stops from 300 feet to one-eighth of a mile (660 feet).

Thank you for your consideration.

Karen Allen

**From:** [Pat Thompson](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul Ward4](#)  
**Subject:** Support transit corridors by restricting drive-throughs  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 25, 2026 9:18:57 AM

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You don't often get email from pattho@icloud.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear City Council members,

I write as a person who walks, bikes, and takes transit in Saint Paul, and also as a taxpayer who hopes we can get more tax money from the land in our city than results from parking lots and their equivalent (drive-through areas).

Given all of that, I urge you to amend the proposed drive-through ordinance to increase the minimum distance that new drive-throughs must be located from existing \*and planned\* light rail, bus rapid transit, and arterial bus rapid transit stops from 300 feet to one-eighth of a mile, or 660 feet.

Thank you for your consideration,

—

Pat Thompson  
1496 Raymond Avenue, Saint Paul

**From:** [Michele Molstead](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_Contact-Council](#)  
**Subject:** Support transit corridors by restricting drive-throughs  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 25, 2026 7:40:50 AM

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You don't often get email from michelemolstead@icloud.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello City Council,

My name is Michele Molstead and I live at 702 Holly Ave. I am writing to ask you to strengthen our property-tax base and protect our significant investment in transit-oriented development by amending the proposed drive-through ordinance to increase the minimum distance that new drive-throughs must be located from existing and planned Light Rail, Bus Rapid Transit, and Arterial Bus Rapid Transit stops from 300 feet to one-eighth of a mile (660 feet).

I hope the Council will remember both our city's commitment to our climate action plan and our responsibility to increase our property tax base.

Best,

Michele Molstead

**From:** [Sofia Cerkvenik](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#)  
**Subject:** Support transit corridors by restricting drive-throughs  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 24, 2026 11:40:08 PM  
**Attachments:** [Outlook-signature\\_.png](#)

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You don't often get email from [sofia.cerkvenik@spps.org](mailto:sofia.cerkvenik@spps.org). [Learn why this is important](#)

*Greetings!*

*My name is Sofia Cerkvenik and I live at 601 Dayton Ave. I live in Saint Paul, teach in Saint Paul, and am committed, like you, to create a city that is safe and sustainable for all. I am writing to ask you to strengthen our property-tax base and protect our significant investment in transit-oriented development by amending the proposed drive-through ordinance to increase the minimum distance that new drive-throughs must be located from existing and planned Light Rail, Bus Rapid Transit, and Arterial Bus Rapid Transit stops from 300 feet to one-eighth of a mile (660 feet).*

*I appreciate your time, consideration, and work.*

*Warm regards,*



**Sofía Mulholland Cerkvenik** (she/her)

Spanish Immersion and Chinese Immersion Teacher  
Minnesota Studies

Highland Park Middle School • Main Office: 651-293-8950

[sofia.cerkvenik@spps.org](mailto:sofia.cerkvenik@spps.org)

**From:** [Chad Hermes](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul\\_Contact-Council](#)  
**Subject:** Support Transit Corridors  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 24, 2026 7:02:34 PM

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You don't often get email from chadkhermes100@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

My name is Chad Hermes and I live at 1004 Barrett St.

I am writing to ask you to strengthen our property-tax base and protect our significant investment in transit-oriented development by amending the proposed drive-through ordinance to increase the minimum distance that new drive-throughs must be located from existing and planned Light Rail, Bus Rapid Transit, and Arterial Bus Rapid Transit stops from 300 feet to one-eighth of a mile (660 feet).

Best regards,  
Chad

**From:** [Braden Holmes](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul>Contact-Council](#)  
**Subject:** Support transit corridors by restricting drive-through  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 24, 2026 6:47:10 PM

---

You don't often get email from bradenholmes33@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Greetings,

My name is Braden Holmes, a resident at 337 7th St W, St Paul, MN and I am writing to ask you to strengthen our property-tax base and protect our significant investment in transit-oriented development by amending the proposed drive-through ordinance to increase the minimum distance that new drive-throughs must be located from existing and planned Light Rail, Bus Rapid Transit, and Arterial Bus Rapid Transit stops from 300 feet to one-eighth of a mile (660 feet).

Many thanks for your hard work,  
Braden

Braden Holmes  
Cabinetmaker  
St. Paul, MN

**From:** [Eric Yeakel](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul Contact-Council](#)  
**Subject:** Support transit corridors by restricting drive-throughs  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 24, 2026 6:21:30 PM

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You don't often get email from ericpyeakel@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

My name is Eric Yeakel and I live at 928 Iglehart Ave.. I am writing to ask you to strengthen our property-tax base and protect our significant investment in transit-oriented development by amending the proposed drive-through ordinance to increase the minimum distance that new drive-throughs must be located from existing and planned Light Rail, Bus Rapid Transit, and Arterial Bus Rapid Transit stops from 300 feet to one-eighth of a mile (660 feet).

Sincerely,

Eric Yeakel

**From:** [Patrick Smith](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul>Contact-Council](#)  
**Cc:** [#CI-StPaul\\_Ward4](#); [\\*CI-StPaul\\_Mayor](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Drive thru ordinance  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 25, 2026 12:27:38 PM

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You don't often get email from [patrick.gardner.smith@gmail.com](mailto:patrick.gardner.smith@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

I'm not sure why my signature did not go through...

Patrick Smith  
1250 Englewood Ave, St Paul  
Ward 4 resident

On Wed, Feb 25, 2026, 12:24 PM Patrick Smith <[patrick.gardner.smith@gmail.com](mailto:patrick.gardner.smith@gmail.com)> wrote:  
To the City Council, Member Coleman and Mayor Her:

I write in support of limiting drive-thrus in the city of St. Paul. **More drive thrus in St. Paul are not the answer.** It seems like some things are starting to turn around in St. Paul. There's some momentum downtown and in the Midway, where I live. The Heights is coming soon. The light rail seems to be getting better. Parks and libraries are being refurbished. Ongoing changes to allow more housing and more small businesses in neighborhoods will strengthen our city over time. **Let's not limit our future vibrancy by locking in more drive-thrus that will only limit our potential.**

Take a look at the McDonald's at University and Marion--the midcentury bank building with the yellow "M" painted in the arches. I was there recently, trying to order in person. Now, they have only a tiny lobby where you can order by screen. The former seating area is locked off to the public. There's no outdoor seating either. (And as far as I could see, no trash cans to minimize the litter.) They're essentially now operating as a drive-thru only business. They're literally ON the green line and next to multiple bus stops, and 1 block from the capitol complex and Frogtown with thousands of potential customers in walking distance every day. Instead, cars back up and idle through the alley. **Is this the type of business we want to promote in our city?**

Drive thrus are unsafe and contribute to multiple health problems. They add traffic and wear and tear to our roads, cause litter, and disrupt the fabric of our city. They are an extremely poor use of land and the development pattern they create is harmful far beyond their specific location. **In the long term, our city will be much stronger if we limit them,** even if there is a short term boost (which is not at all guaranteed anyway.) **More density of housing and businesses is what will truly support our tax base, business feasibility and community strength going forward.**

To address an argument I've heard, while having empathy for people who have limited mobility, drive thrus are not the only way for people to access the things they need. Grocery pickup, DoorDash and other delivery services are common now. If there are gaps, surely there are other solutions that could be thought of to address them. There are many nonprofits and community groups that could be tapped to help. I believe this is a red herring and argument of convenience for the business interests pushing this.

**People don't live in St. Paul because of drive thrus and chain restaurants. It's exactly**

**the opposite - we value strong, walkable communities and local connections. Let's make changes to strengthen our city in the long term, not pursue short term and possibly illusory boosts.**

Thank you for considering my perspective, and thanks for your public service.

**From:** [Thomas Reimann](#)  
**To:** [\\*CI-StPaul>Contact-Council](#)  
**Subject:** Support transit corridors by restricting drive-throughs  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 25, 2026 2:45:05 PM

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You don't often get email from thosreimann@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Good afternoon,

My name is Tom Reimann and I live at 2164 Juliet Ave. I am writing to ask you to strengthen our property-tax base and protect our significant investment in transit-oriented development by amending the proposed drive-through ordinance to increase the minimum distance that new drive-throughs must be located from existing and planned Light Rail, Bus Rapid Transit, and Arterial Bus Rapid Transit stops from 300 feet to one-eighth of a mile (660 feet).

Thank you,  
Tom Reimann



Abundant housing, low-carbon transportation, and sustainable land use

# Sustain Saint Paul

PO Box 16164, Saint Paul, MN 55116

www.sustainstpaul.org | info@sustainstpaul.org

## Board of Directors

February 22nd, 2026

Luke Hanson  
Co-Chair

On behalf of Sustain Saint Paul, we write regarding the proposed Drive-Through Ordinance to **urge you to increase the minimum distance that new drive-throughs must be located from existing and planned transit stops.**

Melissa Wenzel  
Co-Chair

Saint Paul residents have said loudly and clearly in recent years: the current pace of local property tax increases is unsustainable, and our City urgently needs to increase its tax base. Drive-throughs contribute much less tax revenue to the City relative to the amount of finite urban land they consume, compared to other businesses without drive-throughs. When located near high-capacity transit corridors, they also undermine the City's stated goals of transit-oriented development and walkable neighborhood growth.

Michele Molstead  
Secretary

Zack Farrell  
Treasurer

Property tax data from Ramsey County demonstrates the disparity in land productivity:

Paul Fiesel

- Average value of restaurants and bars: \$2.8 million
- Average value of commercial properties (including multifamily and mixed-use): \$2.9 million
- Average per-acre tax value of drive-through properties: \$1.6 million

Cody Fischer

Faith Krogstad

Chris Smith

**Drive-through properties generate roughly half the per-acre tax value of comparable non-drive-through commercial uses.** These figures were compiled for Sustain Saint Paul by urban planning consulting firm Urban3 using publicly available parcel data, and are being submitted alongside this letter.

Ben Quam

Erik Myster

At the same time, Saint Paul has invested many millions of public dollars in Light Rail and Bus Rapid Transit corridors with the expectation of catalyzing transit-oriented development: multi-story residential and mixed-use buildings that generate substantial tax revenue, increase transit ridership, and expand the hyperlocal customer base for nearby businesses. **Transit station areas have immense potential to increase our tax base; we should not squander that potential by allowing low-intensity land uses in their vicinity.**

Cheyenne Violet

## Our Mission

Sustain Saint Paul champions abundant housing, low-carbon transportation, and sustainable land use in the City of Saint Paul through education, advocacy and political action, to ensure a more just and equitable city for all current and future residents.

We therefore urge the Saint Paul City Council to **increase the minimum distance that new drive-throughs must be located from existing and planned Light Rail, Bus Rapid Transit, and Arterial Bus Rapid Transit stops from 300 feet to one-eighth of a mile (660 feet) — approximately one city block.**

We recognize that, by strengthening design standards rather than banning drive-throughs outright, the Saint Paul City Council is balancing multiple priorities: pedestrian and driver safety, late-night worker safety, and accessibility for residents with mobility challenges. A 660-foot setback respects that balance while ensuring they are not concentrated in the areas where the City has made its most significant transit investments and where land has the greatest long-term fiscal potential.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sustain Saint Paul Board of Directors



Southeast Community Organization  
(SECO, District One)  
2105 ½ Old Hudson Road  
St. Paul, MN 55119

Saint Paul City Council  
15 W. Kellogg Boulevard  
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Dear Councilmembers of Saint Paul City Council,

District Council 1 (SECO) appreciates the opportunity to comment on Ordinance 24-26 regarding drive-through sales and services. As the community's planning and engagement body for the Southeast Side, we remain committed to land-use decisions that strengthen neighborhood safety, environmental health, and long-term economic vitality. Our district has a high concentration of existing drive-throughs, making this ordinance especially relevant to the daily experiences and priorities of our community.

Across our district, residents regularly raise concerns about the impacts that drive-through facilities can have on pedestrian and cyclist safety, sidewalk blockages, noise, and litter. These issues directly affect families, elders, and young people navigating our corridors on foot, by bike, and by transit. We support the City's efforts to improve land management and reduce conflicts between vehicle queues and people walking, rolling, and biking. Stronger standards that prevent spillover into the public realm, reduce idling emissions, and mitigate trash are essential to creating safer and more welcoming streets.

At the same time, we recognize that drive-through access can be important for some families, including caregivers with young children, elders, and residents with mobility challenges. Convenience and accessibility matter, and we believe the ordinance should continue to balance these needs with the City's broader goals for walkability, climate resilience, and efficient land use.

District Council 1 has recently taken up drive-through-related items, including Culver's recent proposal, and has supported projects when they demonstrate thoughtful design, community benefit, and minimal conflict with pedestrian and transit activity. Our experience underscores

that context matters: some sites can accommodate drive-through access responsibly, while others present significant safety or land-use challenges.

For these reasons, District Council 1 supports an approach that:

- Improves pedestrian and cyclist safety by preventing vehicle queues from obstructing sidewalks, trails, and bike lanes.
- Reduces environmental and trash impacts through clear operational expectations and site design that minimizes idling, as seen with Culver's addition, and litter.
- Encourages land-use patterns that support neighborhood-serving businesses, transit access, and long-term tax-base growth.
- Maintains reasonable flexibility for situations where drive-through access provides meaningful benefit to families and residents with accessibility needs.
- Allows community review when appropriate, ensuring that proposals reflect corridor plans, safety considerations, and neighborhood context.

We encourage the Council to adopt standards that reflect these shared priorities: safer streets, cleaner corridors, and land-use decisions that serve both present needs and long-term community goals, including an environmentally healthy, inclusive East Side where residents of all abilities can move, participate, and thrive.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued work to support healthy, vibrant neighborhoods across Saint Paul.

Sincerely,

Ianni Houmas

Executive Director, District Council 1 – Southeast Community Organization (SECO)