

Mayor Coleman, Council Members Lantry, Bostrom, Carter, Tolbert, Stark, Brendmoen and Thune:

Our company owns commercial buildings at 652-684 Transfer Road and 801 Transfer Road. I am also a St. Paul resident (682 Goodrich). The proposed sidewalk infill program has targeted the west side of Transfer

Road for new sidewalk from University to Ellis, and will come before you for approval on March 20. I will be in attendance at that meeting.

Last night, I attended an open house at the Rock Tenn offices hosted by Public Works, at which they shared their plan that will be up for approval and to garner feedback from commercial property owners. While the open house was appreciated, the consensus from those in attendance, including the Project Manager Al Czaia and PED's Al Lovejoy, that this meeting should have been held before a formal plan was submitted for Council approval.

As you know, this particular section of Ward 4 is primarily commercial/industrial in nature, and will likely remain such for the foreseeable future, with residential components focused on University Avenue. You will be receiving comments from other land owners specific to their concerns, so my comments will pertain only to the proposed sidewalk on Transfer Road. Unlike the east side of Transfer Road, which has combination office/warehouse properties from University to Ellis, and has a sidewalk up to the 800 building at Ellis, the properties on the west side (including our building at 801) are much more industrial in nature with significant truck traffic, many of which are over the road semi trailers. There is limited pedestrian traffic on Transfer as it stands today, which will likely be reduced when the Amtrack station closes and moves downtown. Adding another sidewalk on the west side of Transfer will serve little purpose or add any value to the buildings on that side. There are few, if any employees in those buildings that will utilize the light rail. Further, the amount of heavy truck traffic from the west side will increase safety and liability issues for truckers and building owners. The transportation plan is looking to provide a better direct access to Vandalia and I-94 by modifying the intersection at Ellis and Transfer to pull trucks off of Pierce Butler/Transfer. It seems premature to install sidewalks that may need to be relocated or removed in the near future. Finally, there are no residential or office properties accessible from Transfer farther to the north than Ellis, and the current sidewalk is more than adequate to handle the current of projected future foot traffic.

As an aside, the literature for the open house presented that the cost that owners would typically be assessed will only be half, since there are funds from CIB bonds. That's great as an owner, but as I am also a citizen who pays taxes and it means that all residents would be subsidizing this discount - which I found offensive when the discount was presented as an "inducement".

Our requests are as follows:

- 1) Eliminate the sidewalk planned for the west side of Transfer for the reasons stated above
- 2) Consider extending the sidewalk on the east side to Ellis if need be - OR -
- 3) At least defer action on this proposal and send it back for common sense modifications formulated by discussion between Public Works and land owners.

Please feel free to contact me directly for clarification.

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