

From: On Behalf Of SandyCi Moua

Sent: Wednesday, April 20, 2016 8:45 AM

To: #CI-StPaul_Ward1; #CI-StPaul_Ward2; #CI-StPaul_Ward3; #CI-StPaul_Ward4; #CI-StPaul_Ward5; #CI-StPaul_Ward6; #CI-StPaul_Ward7

Subject: Please read: Urge to not support amendment to original amendment: commercial vehicle parking restrictions for farmers

Dear City Council members Thao, Noecker, Tolbert, Stark, Brendmoen, Bostrom and Prince,

As a life-long St Paul resident, community organizer and property owner,

I understand that Council member Thao has proposed an amendment to your originally approved amendment regarding public parking permits for Hmong and/or small business commercial farmers. His amendment allows only 1 commercial vehicle per household.

I am frankly disappointed and I urge you to not vote for this new amendment.

It flies in the face of Council member Thao's commitment to racial equity which I can attest to as I have directly organized alongside him.

WHY:

It's **SIMPLE**: This amendment is in equitable.

It targets only these specific farmers instead of being instituted for all and any commercial and recreational vehicles. Also, it doesn't take into account the reality that in order for these businesses to thrive, 2-3 commercial vehicles are needed.

Therefore, it negatively impacts a specific socio-economic and racial group while inadvertently supporting other groups.

The Hmong community knows that:

1. We **HAVE** faced inequitable St. Paul parking policies before.

Case in point: From 1993 to 2001, Districts 11 and 10 were able to institute a parking policy that didn't allow for the annual Hmong Sports Festival attendees to park anywhere in any public street within the perimeter of the festival-

YET, the MN State Fair- which is easily **10X larger** than this festival **AND** is located near populated neighborhoods- did **NOT** have these parking restrictions.

Confronting the Districts, Public Works Dept and Lao Family, our **LIFT THE BAN!** Community organizing group successfully organized to ensure that this was changed to be equitable by having one-side, first come parking- which is equitable and equivalent to MN State Fair parking policies.

2. Every Hmong person knows a Hmong farmer and we know the countless hours, sweat and tears it takes to farm, bring the items to market and even make a decent profit.

My sister's in-laws are these very farmers.

I myself have spent over 20 hours picking organic tomatoes from the fields only to have only 70% to pass inspection for sale.

Parking fees of \$1,000 and more plus this parking permit amendment would undermine the very efforts of these small business owners

AND prohibit racial, educational and socio-economic diversity and competition in small businesses.

I urge you to not vote for this amendment as it targets only small business owners who are farmers- many of who are Hmong.

Instead, I urge you to remain committed to the original amendment passed in April 2016 which I know took over 6 months of diligent conversations between you and many Hmong farmers and advocates.

If you have questions or concerns, I can be reached directly at: .

Thank you,
Sandy'Ci Moua

Current Eastside homeowner and Community Organizer