

CLARA BARTON NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

November 7th, 2017

KLJ Engineering
Mike Bittner
728 East Beaton Drive
West Fargo, ND 58078

Dear Mr. Bittner,

Subject: City of Fargo 17th Ave S Corridor Study

Seventeenth Ave bisects our neighborhood and represents a primary corridor through the neighborhood. As such, we support the City and MetroCOG studying the road. We also hope any future redesigns creates a road that positively impacts the safety of all users - especially walkers, runners, and bikers - while also respecting the fact this road traverses through a historic residential neighborhood.

Commuters coming to or leaving downtown and visitors to Lindenwood Park represents the largest amount of vehicle traffic using 17th Ave - for the portion in our neighborhood. This traffic, and more specifically, the speed of the traffic creates significant safety issues for our residents biking, walking, or jogging in the neighborhood and to and from the park. Residents have expressed concern about not feeling comfortable biking to the park along 17th Ave because of vehicle speed and a street design not accommodating cyclists.

The park also generates a large number of bikers and runners from outside the neighborhood who are also subjected to an unsafe road design as they travel along 17th Ave to enter the park. In addition, residents and kids of the neighborhood biking westbound to Fargo South High School, the softball diamonds, and other destinations along the corridor would greatly benefit from bike facilities.

Neighbors have also expressed concern about noise pollution generated from traffic along this corridor. Loud motorcycles and vehicles visiting the park to cruise the loop are frequent culprits. This is most evident with westbound traffic exiting the park where the combination of fast acceleration and loud exhausts creates significant noise for homes in the area. High acceleration is also exhibited by westbound buses, signally the street design itself might be the leading factor to making drivers feel comfortable speeding.

Mike Zimney - President
Michael Anderson - Vice President

Amy Jo Hoepfner - Secretary
Daniel Simmons - Treasurer

The speed of traffic is also a concern because of the negative economic impact traffic speeds have on property values. Research shows a consistent relationship between lower traffic speeds and higher property values^{1 2 3 4 5}. We hope as part this study you do not discount the importance of creating a street design through this historic neighborhood that does not undermine its character, desirability, and value.

Many of the residents moved to the neighborhood because of the easy access to Lindenwood Park, one of the City's best parks. As a neighborhood we understand and expect others living in surrounding areas will use 17th Ave to visit the park. However, we do expect the eventual redesign of the street through the neighborhood will calm the vehicle speeds, enhance biker and pedestrian safety, and strengthen the neighborhood. We also support and encourage the City to improve the bike facilities along the entirety of the 17th Ave corridor.

We appreciate the opportunity for our neighborhood to be part of this discussion. We would also offer to host a neighborhood meeting to discuss this study if it would be useful to your team.

Sincerely,



Mike Zimney
Clara Barton Neighborhood Association President
msz

cc: Mayor Tim Mahoney

¹ National Bicycle and Pedestrian Clearinghouse . The Economic and Social Benefits of Off-Road Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities. National Bicycle and Pedestrian Clearinghouse; Washington, DC, USA: 1995.

² Modra J. Cost-Benefit Analysis of the Application of Traffic Noise Insulation Measures to Existing Houses. Environment Protection Authority of Victoria; Melbourne, Australia: 1984.

³ Bagby D.G. The effects of traffic flow on residential property values. J. Am. Plan. Assoc. 1980;46:88-94.

⁴ Eppli M.J., Tu C.C. Valuing the New Urbanism: The Impact of the New Urbanism on Prices of Single-Family Homes. Urban Land Institute; Washington, DC, USA: 1999.

⁵ Hughes W.T., Sirmans C.F. Traffic externalities and single-family house prices. J. Reg. Sci. 1992;32:487-500.