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To whom it may concern:

The Macalester-Groveland Community Council fully supports the Grand Avenue Pedestrian Safety CIB proposal developed in collaboration with the Summit Hill Association, the Grand Avenue Business Association, neighborhood residents, and business representatives.

The Macalester-Groveland Community Council Transportation Committee acts as a liaison between stakeholders, including local community councils and government agencies supporting and advocating for a balanced multi-modal transportation system, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit and motor vehicles. With two pedestrian fatalities occurring in this neighborhood in less than two years, pedestrian safety has become a priority issue for the committee to focus on.

The committee responded to the tragic pedestrian fatality at Grand Avenue and Hamline Avenue in August 2012 by inviting businesses and neighbors to a public meeting to discuss pedestrian safety on Grand Avenue. More than 30 people attended this meeting and three key issues emerged from the discussion:

1. A need for increased enforcement of the Crosswalk Law
2. A need for increased education and awareness about pedestrian rights and responsibility for both drivers and pedestrians
3. An opportunity to identify engineering changes to calm traffic and increase visibility at pedestrian crossings through the development of a CIB proposal and the updating of the Macalester-Groveland Community Council Comprehensive Community Plan

The committee is exploring the first two items and collaborating with other District Councils to develop an education campaign. We will kick off the process to update our 10-year Community Plan this spring, and will engage community stakeholders in conversation about transportation issues, including pedestrian safety and neighborhood walkability.

To develop a CIB proposal as a way to influence traffic engineering changes, a task force was formed including residents from Summit Hill and Macalester-Groveland, business owners, and staff from Summit Hill Association, Macalester-Groveland Community Council, and the Grand Avenue Business Association. We worked with Elizabeth Stiffler, City of Saint Paul Public Works Traffic Engineer who helped identify the best design for safety and feasibility in the area we identified on Grand Avenue between Hamline Avenue and Lexington Parkway.

The proposal has gone through a few stages of development as we talk with businesses, residents, and city staff. The final proposal went before the Macalester-Groveland Community Council Transportation Committee and the Board of Directors who fully support the proposal to include

bumpouts, painted medians and parking lane striping, crosswalks, signage, and lighting enhancements at the intersections between Hamline Avenue and Lexington Parkway.

This CIB project addresses a significant public safety concern for our neighborhood. We often hear from residents who witness “near misses” at Grand and Syndicate and who are deeply concerned about this pedestrian crossing in particular. This CIB project not only incorporates important pedestrian safety and complete streets elements outlined in the City of Saint Paul’s Comprehensive Transportation Plan, but also supports several points within the Macalester-Groveland Community Council’s Comprehensive Community Plan which includes a vision for this community that is pedestrian-friendly, recommendations to slow vehicular traffic through the implementation of traffic calming techniques, and support for programs that promote pedestrian safety. Grand Avenue is a vibrant asset in our community, and we want to ensure that it is a safe place for pedestrians.

Thank you for your consideration of this proposal and for continuing to work to keep Saint Paul a safe, pedestrian friendly city. Please feel free to contact me with any questions at 651-695-4000.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Callie Recknagel".

Callie Recknagel  
Community Organizer