

February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2019

Gloria Jeff, Project Director  
MnDOT – Interstate 94 Project Office  
Fairview and University Avenue West  
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55104

Dear Ms. Jeff:

Re: Recommendations from the Union Park District Council to improve safety and access along Cretin Avenue in St. Paul including the south section of the Cretin/Vandalia interchange at I-94.

On December 5, 2018, the Union Park District Council (UPDC) adopted a series of strategies from a year-long study process that examined ways to improve safety, access, and connectivity along a one mile stretch of Cretin Avenue. Several of those recommendations address problems at the south portion of the Cretin/Vandalia interchange at I-94. The recommendations may be relevant to the mill and overlay of I-94 planned for 2019 and for planning prior to design and reconstruction of the TH280/I-94 interchange (since this project may propose to change access at Cretin Avenue).

The Cretin and I-94 interchange area poses significant barriers and danger to people walking, bicycling or accessing transit along and across Cretin Avenue. The recommended strategies listed below propose possible solutions:

1. Install new signage to warn drivers turning south onto Cretin from westbound I-94 exit ramp to look for pedestrians crossing Cretin (drivers often begin to turn right while pedestrians are in the crosswalk).
2. Install wider sidewalk on the east side of Cretin (between the eastbound I-94 on-ramp and Temple Court) so sidewalk is not piled with snow in winter and to provide more distance between vehicles and pedestrians or bicyclists (bicyclists are typically on the sidewalk in this area).
3. Reconstruct the intersection from northbound Cretin at the eastbound I-94 ramp area to remove the slip right or install a safer pedestrian median. A bollard might prevent out-of-control vehicles from mounting the pedestrian median and hitting the signs which happens at least once per year. There is a drainage problem here also.
4. Install new signage to direct drivers exiting I-94 who want to go south on Cleveland to turn north on Cretin then east on Wabash during rush hours. Alternatively there could be an information campaign to make this route known. Diverting drivers to Cleveland could help to reduce the traffic back-up in the weekday evening peak.

Two years ago when the Cretin and Prior Avenue bridges over I-94 were reconstructed, there were missed opportunities due to the lack of community input. We are being more proactive with these projects.

We have not yet undertaken a similar review process for the other I-94 interchange locations – Snelling and Lexington – or other streets that cross over or under the highway in Union Park

Since the boundary of our neighborhood is at I-94 in this location, we urge MnDOT to meet with the Saint Anthony Park neighborhood to talk about improving bicycle and pedestrian safety on the Cretin Avenue bridge and at the terminus of the I-94 entrance and exit ramps at Cretin on the north side of the bridge.

We welcome any questions you might have and we look forward to talking with you about these recommendations.

Kind regards,

Brandon Long, Executive Director  
Union Park District Council

CC: Mitra Jalali Nelson, Ward 4 Council member, City of St. Paul  
Kathy Lantry, Director, Saint Paul Public Works  
Brenda Thomas, MnDOT, I-94 Community Engagement

Attached: Cretin Ave Working Group, Corridor Facts Document, May 2018