

December 17, 2018

Hennepin County Board of Commissioners
300 South Sixth Street
Minneapolis, MN 55487

Dear Commissioners Higgins, Opat, Greene, McLaughlin, Goettel, Callison, and Johnson

At least nine crashes have occurred at the intersection of Hennepin County Roads 2 and 152 since 2014. The intersection, locally referred to as 44th & Penn, is the heart of North Minneapolis's Victory Neighborhood and is home to a handful of small businesses where our neighbors dine, shop, and access basic services. The intersection was modified in 2014 to provide safer pedestrian crossing, including installing a raised median and removing a stop light. However, those improvements have not reduced the incidence of speeding traffic and, in the opinion of the area's longtime business owners, have reduced overall safety.

Several cars have lost control and crashed into the commercial buildings at 44th & Penn. Four businesses have been crashed into no less than nine times. There have also been a number of near misses and fender benders. The financial burden our business owners take on when these accidents occur has become almost an insurmountable barrier to their success. Rising insurance rates, structural damage, and lost sales are just a few of the expenses our business owners incur because of the repeat damage. Tori 44, a restaurant and food production facility, opened on the intersection in April. They've been crashed into four times since. The most recent crash was Saturday when a car came through their patio door during the height of brunch service. In October, a crash through the wall of their main dining room resulted in their prolonged closure. We are fortunate there have not been fatalities from these crashes, but at this point, we no longer have chance on our side.

We do not feel that our requests for help from the county have been met with the urgency required to address safety at the intersection. We understand that government works slowly and have been encouraged to wait for Community Works funding to come through, however, we cannot wait any longer. We've discussed the intersection's challenges with numerous neighbors and small business owners and we are all in agreement- this is an emergency concern and we need emergency action from the county to improve our community's safety.

As such, we request the Hennepin County Board, Community Works, and Sherriff's Office meet the following neighborhood demands by the end of this budget year:

Victory Neighborhood Association

2200 44th Avenue North
Minneapolis, MN 55412



The most recent crash at Tori 44 occurred at the height of their brunch service. In warmer weather, this patio is filled with al fresco diners.



- Reimburse the Tori 44 business owner and building owner for the expenses they incur because of the most recent crash.
- Immediately install the previously discussed granite benches to serve as a barrier for the buildings on the node. At least five benches are to be installed around the Tori 44 building on the southwest corner and at least two are to be installed in front of the Parson's Dental building on the north side of the intersection.
- Immediately install a flashing light on Osseo Road northwest of 44th & Penn alerting drivers to the controlled intersection ahead.
- Immediately install permanent radar signs along the corridor informing drivers of their actual speed and the posted speed limit.
- Collaboration between the Hennepin County Sherriff's Office and the Minneapolis Police Department to implement traffic enforcement efforts in the corridor.
- Move up the Osseo Road reconstruction project from 2024 to 2020 and prioritize engineering enhancements that permanently calm traffic and incorporate barriers that reduce the likelihood of vehicles leaving the roadway.

It is integral to the vitality of our neighborhood that the above demands are met. Our local businesses will not survive without your immediate action. **Most importantly, the likelihood of serious injuries or fatalities only increases with the passage of time.**

Questions can be directed to our administrator, Katie Fitzpatrick, at 612.529.9558 or info@victoryneighborhood.org.

We await your response and look forward to collaborating with you.

Sincerely,



Brandon Knez, Chair
Victory Neighborhood Association

CC: Patricia Fitzgerald, Nate Hood, Jason Staebell, Commissioner-elect Fernando, Sherriff Stanek, Sherriff-elect Hutchinson, Councilmember Phillipe Cunningham, Inspector Kjos, Jason Dorweiler, Jenny Kim, Matthew Kunkel, Mike Parsons, Diane Spector

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