

Rams Settlement Hearing 12.2.2023

Testimony provided by Liz Kramer

Thank you Alderwoman, and hello members of the Board. My name is Liz Kramer, and I am the outgoing co-chair of the Community Mobility Committee. We are an advisory group made up of residents who are committed to creating a safer, more accessible experience for people who are getting around by walking, transit, biking, and other modes of transportation.

I'm speaking today in support of the improving community mobility priority challenge. At our meetings and from the community, we hear from people who have experienced the devastating impact of traffic violence. We hear a demand for quick action, and a need for urgency. We are so grateful to the investments in long-term infrastructure change that have been funded in recent years, including through ARPA, your own ward capital investments, and projects across the region. And yet, people's lives are at risk now, and to have hope that things will be different, and reckless driving will not put so many people in danger, we need to see changes on the ground quickly.

For this reason, we've proposed a pilot to create quick-build, high-impact traffic calming at dangerous intersections. We've proposed a team, modeled on work happening in Cincinnati, where they hired an in-house pedestrian safety crew that is focused on building cost-effective safety improvements. The Rams Settlement Fund is a great opportunity to try this out in a way that would allow residents to see change quickly — on the order of 2-3 months, instead of 2-3 years. We would hope that thoughtful work on this program would also help to inspire different ways of working going forward, where the timeline to critical safety projects could be shortened, and we could see more aesthetically pleasing, effective infrastructure — and that this could be truly transformational for St. Louis going forward.

Beyond this immediate, fast response, we have also proposed investment in improving the conditions for pedestrians and people using the buses along Jefferson and Parnell now. We believe this infrastructure investment is particularly important because as we plan for a potential expansion of MetroLink, we need to have infrastructure that makes it possible for people to access this new transit amenity. This means having complete sidewalks, with curb ramps, transitions, lighting, street trees, improved signals, and stormwater infrastructure along the blocks on either side of Jefferson. This is particularly important for bus transfer points across the system.

For any investments made through the Rams settlement, we ask that you ensure adequate resources and a thoughtful approach for long-term maintenance...and work towards fully and sustainably funding maintenance needs for infrastructure across St. Louis. Thank you again for your time.