

Staff Responses to Council Questions 12/19/2023

Active Agenda - K. Ordinance: Adopting an Institutional Master Plan for the Property Located at 635 59th Street, Commonly Known as the O'Neill Middle School

1. *Has there been any discussion regarding making 59th between Fairmount and Blodgett a one way east or even closing that section of the street during bus loading and unloading? I'm thinking about the precedent for this on Hill Street at Whittier School.*

The issue of closing 59th St. between Fairmount and Blodgett was raised informally to staff yesterday by District 58. Staff conducted a brief preliminary review. Staff determined that this option is not recommended due to concerns over rerouting traffic from a collector street onto local roads without understanding the full impacts and the consideration of future requests for other schools with similar circumstances.

All current locations near District 58 schools where one way operations are utilized to facilitate pick up and drop off activities occur only on local roads.

2. *A resident inquired about the possibility of creating a south bound bus exit in the Fairmount right of way south of O'Neill and the YMCA. This would be in lieu of the proposed exit onto Blodgett. Was this possibility explored and what would be the pros and cons?*

This concept was addressed in the letter from Wight dated 12/14/23, The following is an excerpt from the letter:

South Bus Lot

Expanding a dedicated bus lot to the south was considered; however due to the amount of green space the lot would take up would impede on the schools ability to deliver outdoor education, space for athletics, and space for overall outdoor activities before, after, and during school hours. This green space is shared with the local park district offering sports such as baseball and soccer. Limiting the green space in this area would be detrimental to the community at large.

West

Unfortunately, the West side was not considered as a viable option for a bussing alternative due to the limited land and adjacency to Fairmount Avenue. Even if it was possible this would not be a good alternative because now 100% of the school's traffic will be entering down Fairmount Avenue and buses and vehicular traffic would be competing with one another even if separate lots were created.

Active Agenda - M. Motion: Direct Staff to Install the Fairmount Avenue Street Design Improvements Related to Neighborhood Traffic Study Area #9

3. *How does the existing retaining wall at 55th and Fairmount affect the design and operations of the proposed bike lanes?*

The proposed bike lanes would be located within the existing pavement width and developed through the use of striping only. No modifications are proposed to the existing retaining wall.