

Testimony RE: Z.C. Case No. 22-19, McDonalds upzone at 4950 South Dakota Ave NE

To Whom It May Concern:

I am testifying as a concerned resident of the 5000 Block of South Dakota Avenue NE. In this testimony I will briefly explain why I am hoping the Zoning Commission will **deny the request** to upzone 4950 South Dakota Avenue in order to include a fast food drive through.

During my five years living here I have witnessed, near daily, traffic infractions that put pedestrian life at risk all around the surrounding blocks of 4900 South Dakota. I've seen hit and runs, cars flipped over, axles fly off cars into neighbors yards, and other more "mundane" things like people speeding at 80+ mph, tossing glass bottles from cars, and general littering. The city and community is already hard at work to counter these incidents and one can easily imagine how upzoning to include a drive through would be no less than throwing fuel on the fire we are trying to extinguish.

In the current zoning configuration we routinely have cars going the wrong direction on the bordering one way street - Delafield St NE. The city has made attempts to better indicate the road is a one way but that does not stop folks looking for a short cut into the McDonalds. Adding a drive through would further exacerbate this problem - causing backups onto South Dakota and driving more traffic into the residential neighborhood and on the one way street. Not only do folks routinely ignore the one way street but often they will use the alleyway at the 5000 block to speed around traffic at the stoplight in front of the 4900 block in order to more quickly access or exit the McDonalds. I watch daily as kids on bikes or walking through the alley have to jump out of the way of these reckless drivers. Backing out of parking during the morning or evening rush hour is a dangerous game of cat and mouse. How many times should one have to look both ways - over and over and over - in order to back out of their parking spaces and to not be hit by speeding cars at 30-40mph through the alley as they munch on fries and slurp down their sodas? Twice? Five times? More? And yet, still always a risk. Is the safety of our neighbors - seniors, kids, young families out to play or for a stroll - worth trading for a line of cars queuing up for cheeseburgers before speeding out of our neighborhood; down our streets and through our alleyways?

Recently a neighbor on the 800 Block of Delafield installed a brand new wooden fence. It was a nice looking fence. The very day after it was installed I watched as a car came speeding out of the McDonalds and into our alley, turning left to use the alley as a shortcut to 8th Street, and BOOM - right into the new fence; breaking much of it. The fact is we simply have no solutions for dealing with drivers who would go this fast, and drive this recklessly, in only a matter of 100' from the McDonalds into our backyards. The safety of our neighborhood is already something of concern for my wife and I. We were hoping to start a family but given what I've highlighted above we have had to delay that for fears of what might happen should we be pushing a stroller along these blocks or how a car could end up in our front or back yard anytime as our toddler is playing. It's almost heartbreaking to consider that all of the efforts made to try and

increase safety in our neighborhood would be wiped away almost instantaneously with upzone approval, placing us and our neighbors in an even more dangerous situation.

This doesn't even begin to get into the environmental impacts of increased car traffic and idling lines at the drive through. This area of Ward 5 is already one of, if not the, cities worst heat islands. The increased emissions would not only pose health hazards but lead to the continued warming of our area. I think we all know how that would effect people - those with asthma, seniors, kids trying to exercise and more.

I know the Zoning Commission does not completely control traffic patterns or public health, and maybe some would say the concerns I raise are outside of the scope of this hearing. However, I am asking that the Zoning Commission not simply leave us residents to sort the dangerous consequences of upzoning with yet another city department in hopes that one day the overflowing streets and dangerous alleys be curbed and safeguarded from the impacts of an approval that might be granted in this matter.

Matt Kirkland
Resident - 5000 Block South Dakota Ave. NE