

Dear Council Member Chughtai,

[Pueblos de Lucha y Esperanza](#) (*People's Struggles and Hopes*) is a non profit organization who advocates for the rights of non-US born and undocumented people in Minnesota

We are writing to share our concern that the proposed plan for the upcoming Hennepin Avenue S reconstruction will no longer include 24/7 transit lanes when the project opens in 2026.

This change will drastically affect the ability of non-US born persons and those without legal status in our communities to access jobs, groceries, school and healthcare.

Car ownership rates for immigrants are significantly lower than non-immigrants. Immigrants and undocumented community members disproportionately rely on biking, walking and public transit to access their destinations.

Our community members, the people we work with, have been on the front lines of the pandemic and go to work every day to keep our cities clean, fed and properly working. Our presence and our value are essential to the wellbeing of our city.

In addition, a lack of access to drivers licenses in Minnesota for those without legal status puts our already vulnerable communities at a much greater risk of being deported as a result of a traffic stop—ripping families apart.

A lack of 24/7 bus lanes means that immigrants and those without legal status will continue to have to face increased harm and reduced quality of life.

We are calling on you, as the elected official responsible for the primary section of Hennepin Ave S in Ward 10 that is scheduled for reconstruction, to ensure that 24/7 bus lanes are in place on the first day that the street reopens to the public. A phased approach is unnecessary and unacceptable.

This is a once in a generation opportunity for the City of Minneapolis to truly demonstrate its commitment to marginalized communities, immigrants, disabled people, working class people and BIPOC community members.

Sincerely,

Karla Arredondo
Executive Director
Pueblos de Lucha y Esperanza

