



209 Page Street West, St. Paul, MN, 55107

[www.wSCO.org](http://www.wSCO.org)

August 5, 2025

Dear Council President Noecker and Saint Paul City Councilmembers,

As the planning council for Saint Paul District 3, the West Side Community Organization (WSCO) has engaged hundreds of neighbors on the **proposed Robert Street reconstruction** project, now seeking municipal consent from the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT).

We support MnDOT's goal to transform Robert Street into a multimodal corridor that improves safety, connectivity, and quality of life for the West Side. **We believe the municipal consent resolution should also set clear expectations for accountability before and during construction and commit to seeking resources that will help prevent displacement of local businesses.**

Well before MnDOT began its redesign process in 2020, WSCO worked with West Side residents to highlight dangerous conditions on Robert Street and the urgent need for reinvestment. Our Destination Robert Street Campaign envisions a corridor that is safe for all modes of travel, reflects our neighborhood's cultural diversity, and supports a thriving locally owned business community.

From January to May 2025, we surveyed nearly 230 residents. Support for improvements was strong, but residents also shared specific preferences for key design elements. Based on this feedback, the West Side Community Organization welcomes this critically needed investment—with **measures that protect community priorities and keep those most affected meaningfully involved.**

To that end, we urge the city council to pass a municipal consent resolution that:

1. **Officially recognizes the Robert Street Accountability Taskforce**, convened by WSCO, as a stakeholder group for project oversight, and include regular engagement between MnDOT and the Taskforce in the consent resolution.



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2. **Requires the MnDOT Project Manager or designee to participate in Taskforce meetings**, give advance notice of any changes affecting access, present workable solutions before disruptions, and serve as a primary contact with contractors.
3. **Commits to securing funding and assistance for small businesses** affected before, during, and after construction, and keeps them visible and accessible throughout the project.
4. **Joins the West Side Community Organization in requesting that MnDOT revise the proposed design**, so bike infrastructure does not limit the ability to build sidewalks wide enough for outdoor dining. Wide sidewalks are essential for creating an inviting promenade that supports thriving businesses, pedestrian safety, and a vibrant community atmosphere.

Robert Street's renewal is long overdue. Without intentional safeguards, this project could displace the very people and businesses that have sustained the West Side through decades of underinvestment. By adopting municipal consent with an accountability framework shaped and refined with community, project leaders, and legal counsel, the City can ensure this investment benefits all who live and work here.

Sincerely,

Monica Bravo, Executive Director

Jessica Klimisch, WSCO Board President