



Agenda Item:

40A

## COUNCIL COMMUNICATION City Manager's Office

### GENERAL INFORMATION—

Agenda Date: 12/06/04  
04-618

Communication No.:

Agenda Item Type: Receive/File

Roll Call No:

Submitted by: Jeb E. Brewer, City Engineer

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### SUBJECT—

Recommendation of Traffic Safety Committee on Drake University Request to Vacate Clark Street from 27th to 28th Street and 28th Street from Forest Avenue to Clark Street.

### SYNOPSIS—

At their October 25, 2004 meeting, the City Council received a request from Drake University, along with a recommendation from the Plan and Zoning Commission, to permanently close Clark Street from 27th to 28th Street, and 28th Street from Forest Avenue to Clark Street. Council referred this request to the Traffic Safety Committee to review and make recommendations. The Traffic Safety Committee voted 10-0 to support the requested closure of Clark Street and 28th Street, and further recommended several changes to improve the traffic flow and minimize the traffic impact of the closure to the neighborhood.

### FISCAL IMPACT—

Minor costs for traffic signs and traffic signal modifications to be paid from the Traffic and Transportation Division operating budget.

### RECOMMENDATION—

Receive and File.

### BACKGROUND—

At their October 25, 2004 meeting, the City Council received a request from Drake University, along with a recommendation from the Plan and Zoning Commission, to permanently close Clark Street from 27th to 28th Street, and 28th Street from Forest Avenue to Clark Street. Drake

proposes to make major renovations to Drake Stadium, including connecting the open area north of Clark Street to the stadium. These changes are necessary so the field throwing events north of the stadium are contiguous with the events in the stadium, to maintain the future viability of the Drake Relays and to position Drake to host major regional and national track and field events. Council referred this request to the Traffic Safety Committee to review and make recommendations.

The Traffic and Transportation Division has conducted a traffic study of the traffic conditions in this area to determine the impacts of a permanent closure of Clark Street and 28th Street. The closure of these two streets will impact traffic flow and circulation for Drake University and the residential neighborhoods around Drake, particularly to the north of Drake. These impacts will generally fall into two categories: impacts on a recurring daily basis, and those impacts associated with special events at Drake, primarily at Drake Stadium or the Knapp Center.

The Traffic Safety Committee held a special meeting on Monday, November 29, 2004 from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. at the First Christian Church, 25th and University Avenue to consider this closure request. Staff presented a traffic report detailing the existing traffic conditions, expected daily traffic conditions with Clark Street closed, and expected traffic conditions for special events. A copy of the full Traffic Safety Committee report is attached.

Due to the relatively low traffic volume on Clark Street, closing it between 27th and 28th will not have major impacts on traffic flow in this area. Through traffic on Clark will be diverted to Forest Avenue from 27th to 30th Streets. Forest Avenue has adequate capacity to accommodate the traffic and continue to allow parking during the non-peak periods. The existing traffic signals on Forest at 25th, 27th and 30th Streets provide adequate opportunities for vehicles and pedestrians to safely cross Forest Avenue. Additional traffic signals on Forest Avenue are not warranted due to the proposed closing of Clark Street.

City staff from Traffic and Transportation and the Police have begun working with representatives of Drake University to develop an improved traffic control plan for special events. The main objectives of this plan will be to better provide for and control event parking, especially buses, and facilitate traffic flow on the routes leading away from Drake at the conclusion of events. These main traffic routes include: Clark Street, Forest Ave and University Ave to the east; Forest Ave and University Ave to the west; 30th Street to the north; and 25th Street or 30th/31st Street to the south.

Other preliminary elements of the special event traffic control plan will include the following:

1. Drake University will work to develop additional off-street parking or better utilize existing parking that can help support special events. In addition, the potential regional and national track and field events would occur during the summer months when Drake students are not on campus, so there would be substantial amounts of parking available.
2. Drake has identified several large athletic department parking lots that can be used for bus parking during special events. In conjunction with No Bus Parking signs on streets north of the stadium, this should alleviate the problem of buses on the residential streets.

3. Post temporary No Parking signs on the south side of Forest Avenue east of 25th Street and the north side of Forest west of 28th Street to move traffic away from the stadium and/or Knapp Center.
4. Change traffic signal timings at 25th and Forest and 25th and University to give more time for 25th Street to enter or cross those two major streets. In addition, the recommended left-turn signal on Forest at 30th Street will help traffic exiting from events.

These items are preliminary only, and not intended to represent the final plan. City staff will work with Drake and neighborhood representatives to further develop measures that may be included in a more detailed plan. Drake will continue to work through the City's Street Use Committee for special permits for any street closings for special events or other activities. City staff will also work with Drake and MTA representatives to evaluate the potential for special event parking at some remote parking areas, such as downtown 7th and Center Park and Ride parking garage, with a shuttle bus to Drake. A similar shuttle bus service is provided for the State Fair. In addition, the plan is intended to be somewhat flexible, so it may change over time and may include or exclude certain elements for certain events, depending on the size and other characteristics of the event.

The Traffic Safety Committee voted 10-0 to support the requested closure of Clark Street and 28th Street, and further recommended several changes to improve the traffic flow and minimize the traffic impact of the closure to the neighborhood:

1. Restrict parking on the south side of Forest west of 27th Street for approximately 135 feet.
2. Install permanent **"No Bus Parking"** signs in the immediate residential area north of Drake Stadium, including 27th Street, 28th Street, Meek Avenue and College Avenue.
3. Install **"Not A Through Street"** signs on 24th Street at Washington Avenue and at Clark Street.
4. Install corner clearance parking restrictions at intersections identified by residents to improve visibility.
5. Modify the existing traffic signal at 30th and Forest to provide a left-turn signal for westbound traffic on Forest Avenue.
6. Drake should extend the sidewalk on Meek Avenue from the dead end west to 28th Street to improve pedestrian circulation.
7. Direct staff to continue to work with the Police Department, Drake University and neighborhood representatives to develop and implement an enhanced traffic control plan for special events.

