

Pet #2

Petition Handout: Save Victory Memorial Drive, Preserve Victory Neighborhood, Restore Route 19 Bus Service

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As anyone who lives and plays in the Victory neighborhood knows, this past August Metro Transit began re-routing Route 19 buses from its original route of over 50 years (on 42nd Ave. from Thomas to its layover at 42nd and York) to the current temporary route expansion through the Victory Neighborhood (on Thomas from 42nd to 44th, on 44th to Upton, on Upton to 45th, on 45th to the Robbinsdale Transit Center). Effective December 13th, a portion of the original route will be restored, but the remainder of the buses will continue to run on the temporary route expansion, i.e. up Thomas from 42nd. Currently, Metro Transit is re-evaluating Route 19 routing options. Once the options are re-evaluated, they will be presented at a community meeting for comment. The date of this meeting has yet to be determined. All Victory neighbors are encouraged to watch for a future meeting notice and to attend the meeting and let their voices be heard. In the past, one of the options considered by Metro Transit has been the reconstruction of the road bed on Victory Memorial Drive (the "Drive") from 42nd to 44th to convert that portion of the Drive into a commercial bus route.

A group of Victory neighbors has organized to:

1. Oppose the use of the Drive as a bus route;
2. Demand termination of the Thomas Ave. temporary route expansion and any further routing on that route; and
3. Demand restoration of the original Route 19 service.

1. Keep buses off Victory Memorial Drive

Victory Memorial Drive is used by hundreds of people daily, and thousands annually, for enjoyment and recreation. It is critical to the livability and quality of life of both the Victory and Robbinsdale neighborhoods. Furthermore, it is one of only 12 Minneapolis Historic Districts (the only one on Minneapolis' Northside), and it is the largest war memorial in the Twin Cities and the largest World War I memorial in the nation. Envisioned by Charles M. Loring, designed by Theodore Wirth, and inspired by the City Beautiful movement of the 1920's, the plans for the parkway were intended to reflect "beauty, naturalistic constructivism, and classicism." It is a Minneapolis Parkway on the Grand Rounds National Scenic Byway. Allowing buses on Victory Memorial Drive would have the following adverse effects:

1. Negatively affect the quality of life and livability of the Victory and Robbinsdale neighborhoods;
2. Depreciate housing values and reduce the marketability of homes throughout both neighborhoods;
3. Create a pedestrian and vehicle traffic safety hazard;
4. Desecrate the war memorial;
5. Disregard and countermand the noble purposes Loring, Wirth, and the founders of the 1920s intended.

2. Terminate the current temporary routing of buses through the Victory Neighborhood

The expanded Thomas Ave. route has been in existence for all of three months, and it has been a disaster for the Victory Neighborhood. Buses have to make three tight turns right in the heart of the neighborhood: Thomas onto 44th, 44th onto Upton, and Upton onto 45th. One of the turns, Thomas onto 44th, is right at the "T" in front of Loring School and the two main entrances to the school. In addition, the buses make their turns and pass just a few feet by the Loring School Park playground, recess area, kiddy wading pool, and tennis courts. This situation not only has a negative impact on the park's aesthetics and the use and enjoyment of the park, it has created a serious safety hazard for kids who attend Loring School and for everyone, children and adults alike, who recreate in the park. Furthermore, it has adversely affected the livability of the homes of everyone living along the route, none of whom purchased their home on a bus route. It will result in a devaluation of those homes and a destabilization of the entire neighborhood.

3. Restore the original Route 19 bus service

The original Route 19 bus service served the Victory Neighborhood well for over 50 years. Metro Transit states that it now proposes to run buses to the Robbinsdale Transit Center through the Victory Neighborhood so as to better serve the suburban communities, but possible routing plans recently stated by Metro Transit (e.g., routing buses on the Drive or expanding buses through the Victory neighborhood on Thomas) sacrifice the livability, quality of life, housing values, and marketability of the city to do so.

