

June 29, 1995
REPORT TO THE COMMITTEE
ON LAND USE AND HOUSING

PROCESS USED IN CLOSING 54TH STREET TO VEHICULAR TRAFFIC

At the Land Use and Housing Committee meeting in May, the matter of the closure of Vine Street at its juncture with the MTDB trolley line was discussed. During the discussion, Committee member Stevens raised a question about a similar closure several years ago of 54th Street and requested a report back as to how that closure was accomplished.

Attached are documents relating to the closure of 54th Street. You will note that the City Council approved the closure by resolution adopted September 14, 1987.

The background information indicates that at that time the City was interested in establishing traffic crossings at First and Front Streets, and MTDB was pursuing its general goal of minimizing the number of traffic crossings of its tracks. It appears that part of the consideration for the City's agreeing to the closure of 54th and 66th Streets to motor vehicles was MTDB's agreement to establish and maintain the vehicular crossings at First and Front Streets.

The process utilized appears to be legally adequate. However, it seems that a more formalized process involving public hearings in the area where street closures are proposed may be appropriate from both a legal and policy standpoint.

Once a street has been closed to vehicular traffic to accommodate a railroad or trolley line, the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) must be petitioned if the City wishes to reopen a street to vehicles. It is my understanding that the PUC has a policy of trying to minimize vehicular crossings of railroad and trolley tracks but that, even if the PUC was convinced to approve a reopening, the City would normally be required to pay the costs of the necessary traffic control devices and improvements which could cost as much as \$200,000 or more for any particular intersection.

Respectfully submitted,
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Attachments
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