

To: John P. Poorman, Staff Director. Capital District Transportation Committee, and
Dennis J. Fitzgerald, Executive Director Capital District Transportation Authority
From; McKownville Improvement Association (contact person: Don Reeb)
Subject: RFP--McKownville Corridor Study
Date: November 8, 2001

The McKownville Improvement Association requests that the RFP for the McKownville Corridor Study be withdrawn until such time as it can be corrected and amended.

Page 1 of 7 indicates that there are ..."thousands of university at Albany students" generating pedestrian traffic along Western Avenue. This is incorrect. The dormitories are some distance from Western Avenue. Student looking persons are seldom seen walking along Western Avenue. As CDTA well knows, the CDTA bus enters the campus for the students. Few of them walked to either Western or Washington. And other than the McKownville residents who walk to the bus stops, there are few pedestrians along Western, McKown, Schoolhouse, or Fuller. (Other than those walking to and from bus stops, there are few to be found in any middle class residential area, for example between Lenox and Manning along Western Avenue in the City).

A second correction need be made on page 2 where it is claimed that ..."McKown Road is also the only access between the neighborhoods on the north side ".... Schoolhouse Road as an important access road south of Western Avenue in McKownville. (The alleyways in McKownville need be recognized as pedestrian passageways along with several paths used by pedestrians and bike riders. The RFP does not discuss these or their future) .

McKownville has four geographic parts. One borders the University and residents therein use the University as a site for walking, bike riding and so forth. A second borders Stuyvesant Plaza and CESTM and those residents cross Fuller to use the University as a park, also. The two parts south of Western use Abele Park and the cul de sacs in their neighborhoods as recreation areas. Crossing Western Avenue for them is perilous especially for the part nearer Schoolhouse where Western Avenue is five and six lanes (even though there is a sidewalk along Western in that part).

The RFP seems to have a conclusion before the study is made. To shift the center line of Western Avenue to the south, essentially destroying the front gardens of the properties along the south, while adding some sidewalk width on the north side. Just because NYDOT claims that it owns some more of the south side of Western Avenue does not give it the "go-ahead" to come in and destroy the front properties of the two dozen businesses, volunteer fire department and church property and the four or five residences along the south side.

This was proposed once before, during the "Crossgates/Pyramid era" . We then convinced NYDOT to not "take" the south side property. Then as now, in our view, it would further the "speedway" behavior of vehicles through McKownville, make

crossing Western more dangerous, and doom the residential properties on both sides of Western to commercialization.

Western Avenue needs to be narrowed. The street scene needs to be made more like that found between Lenox and Manning in the City of Albany (as one of many examples that could be used) with narrower lanes, curbs, large trees along the street and in the front gardens of the properties, no turning lanes to add to the width and no "bulb outs" or other such road widening devices. This would make McKownville more residential in appearance and make crossing Western less dangerous for pedestrians walking to catch the bus. Changes for McKown, Fuller and Schoolhouse need be reexamined.

The McKownville Improvement Association has no doubt that the property owners along Western Avenue would like to see a more human scale street scene and less of a "speedway" along Western Avenue. The properties along Fuller, McKown Road, Schoolhouse Road and Church Road have been less invaded by highway widening and been able to maintain more of a residential character which we are sure the owners would like to have continued. The recent changes along Fuller Road are more compatible with a residential street .

The intersection at Fuller Road is the major focus of the RFP . Its improvement is of interest to McKownville residents also but needs more discussion in the RFP.

We expect to organize a McKownville planning group in the coming days. We would be pleased to sit with your staff and help redraft the RFP. At this juncture, it appears that the RFP is incomplete and inaccurate and headed towards making recommendations that will prove to be unacceptable to the community and incomplete and therefore largely a waste of time and money.

McKownville Improvement Association Officers, 2001

President	Bill Meehan	7 Country Road	456-4564
Vice President	Don Reeb	5 Norwood Street	489-3909
Secretary	Kathy LeRoux	106 Arcadia Avenue	438-1947
Treasurer	Steve Berg	7 Elmwood Street	438-679

Board of Directors

Alice Torda
2 Knowles Terrace
489-3613
John Smircich
60 Highland Drive
869-1256
Susan Hotchkiss
212 Woodscape Drive
482-8848

Jill Messner
9 Warren Street
482-9125
Jim Cameron
15 Glenwood Street
489-2487
Sue Brown
6 Waverly Place
482-2355 *W. 2355*