

LETTER

Where do you stand on the Summit Avenue bike trail, Ward 4 candidates?

To all Ward 4 voters and homeowners on Summit Avenue, all citizens of St. Paul and citizens of all of Minnesota — I want to call your attention to an issue that needs to be pinned down with the current Ward 4 candidates regarding the Summit Avenue Regional Trail (SART) bike path prior to the Aug. 12 election.

Each voter in Ward 4 should seek answers as to which candidate supports using over \$30 million from St. Paul's 1% sales tax revenue through 2029 and over \$5,000,000 in homeowner assessments to fund only a portion of the bike trail from the Mississippi River Boulevard to Hamline Avenue. These figures have been generated by the City.

Summit Avenue is the longest street in the United States with a national historic preservation designation, with over 248 Victorian homes. I would submit that the voters approving the 1% sales tax in 2024 did not know their vote approving such a tax was also a vote to destroy and alter historic Summit Avenue.

All Summit Avenue homeowners should know that the second source of funding for the bike trail is homeowner assessments, and solid data exists that the value of their property will not increase, but decrease. If the assessments are disallowed, the tax burden for all City taxpayers for this bike path will increase by the millions.

Where do the St. Paul City Council candidates stand on these issues and use of taxpayer dollars? Where do the candidates stand on assessing a historic home for a bike path that will benefit only a few?

With only a few days to go before the Ward 4 election, I would submit this issue has not been debated or definitively declared by each candidate.

There is still time to reverse this wasteful decision with projected costs at over one hundred million dollars.

I am a proponent of St. Paul and an opponent of the Summit Avenue Regional Trail.

— *Patrick H. O'Neill Jr., Woodbury*