

# Felhaber ■■ Larson

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Reply to Minneapolis Office

JUN 23 2014

June 23, 2014

Mayor Betsy Hodges and  
Members of the City Council  
City of Minneapolis  
City Hall  
350 South Fifth Street, Room 331  
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55415

**RE: Southwest Light Rail Transit Impact on Calhoun-Isles Condominium  
Our File No. 25274.004**

Dear Mayor Hodges and Members of the City Council:

We represent Calhoun-Isles Condominium Association. It consists of 143 residential units and a large, multiple story parking structure. The Association's residential and parking structures are located immediately adjacent to the easterly right-of-way for the Kenilworth Corridor. If the current plan for the construction of the Southwest Light Rail Transit line is actually implemented, a shallow tunnel will be constructed literally within two feet of the exterior walls of the Association's parking structure and residential building. We are writing to inform the Mayor and Council Members of the Association's growing concern over the plan for siting and construction of the line in the location now being proposed because of the serious detrimental impacts the construction and operation of the Line will present for the Association and its residents.

On June 20, 2014, we received documents from the Southwest LRT Office that described the "potholing" activities it conducted in the vicinity of the Association's building and parking structure between December, 2013, and March, 2014. "Potholes" were dug in areas adjacent to the condominium buildings to locate the buildings' footings. Construction of the shallow tunnel in the Kenilworth Corridor will require the placement of sheet piling in the immediate vicinity of the footings for these condominium buildings. The documents produced do not conclude that the installation of the sheet piling and construction of the tunnel wall will not come into contact with the buildings' footings. At best, the sheet piling will be installed within 1.1 feet of the footings for the parking structure. The documents we were provided do not supply any analysis of the structural significance of this below-grade construction on the integrity of the Condominium's buildings.

The documents do indicate, however, that additional potholing activities will be necessary later this summer in order to complete the evaluation of the impact of the construction on these buildings. This means that the Association and its residents do not know, and will not know, whether they will be able to continue to live in their homes, and use their parking ramp, once the tunnel construction commences. Neither is it known whether the location of the sheet piling and the rails so close to the exterior walls of the structures, and of their below-grade footings, will cause damage to those structures to the point where the buildings can no longer be occupied safely.

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The trains will run through the tunnel on rails located approximately 12 feet from the footings of the structures, and some 15.5 feet from their exterior walls. Vibration and noise are bound to affect the habitability of these homes in material, and currently unknown, ways. We have received no assurance that operation of 200 trains per day in a shallow tunnel only 12 feet from the foundations of the Condominium's residences and parking structure will not materially undermine their integrity and safety. No one knows what all of the effects will be, but it is certain that they will be significant and harmful.

We submit that you must account for these facts as you evaluate this project and its location. The residents do not want to move from their homes. They are concerned, for good reason, that the construction of the tunnel, and the operation of the trains, will render their homes uninhabitable. There is nothing in the information that has been produced so far that eliminates, or even mitigates, that risk. The information about those impacts will not be known until after July 15. The Condominium residents should not have to sacrifice their property so that this project can be constructed in this way. We respectfully request that you supply us with assurance that these concerns will be accounted for. Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Christopher S. Hayhoe