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November 5, 2018

Rebekah Scheinfeld
Commissioner, Chicago Department of Transportation
David Reifman
Commissioner, Department of Planning and Development
121 N LaSalle Street
Chicago, IL 60602

Dear Commissioners Scheinfeld and Reifman,

As you know, during the current budget hearings, I requested an immediate briefing on the proposed vacating of the Iowa Pacific Holdings railway tracks running along the North Branch of the Chicago River. It is imperative that meeting take place as soon as possible.

ABC News reported this week the General Iron North Avenue driveway access is being eliminated in January. This is the same location where these tracks sit.

Several issues have been triggered by the city:

- Closing this truck access has a dramatic negative impact on traffic in my ward. My constituents deserve to know the new truck route.
- Residents also have a right to know the future plans for the rights of way:
- The Framework plan for the North Branch Industrial Corridor contains recommendations for transit ways; some proposed uses have immediate and lasting downsides.
 - The large venue traffic of the proposed Lincoln Yards development will likely be generated on the west side of the river, yet the area being vacated suggests routing traffic to the already congested east side of the river.
 - The Framework proposed other practical alternative routes that more directly serve the traffic Lincoln Yards will create.
 - The existing tracks are in a lightly populated section of Goose Island that is not proposed to change use
- Proposed development in the Corridor already exceeds what was anticipated in the Framework but vacating the tracks suggests migrating more high density development to the east side of the river - an alarming idea given the overwhelming traffic issues that exist in this area now.
- An ill-advised transitway clearly would abort plans to transform the General Iron site into

sorely needed public parkland as proposed at www.northbranchparkpreserve.org, and endorsed by a coalition of over 25 environmental, athletic, business, educational and neighborhood groups.

43rd Ward Taxpayers deserve a seat at the table concerning the unprecedented Lincoln Yards development. They especially warrant a voice in any transit discussions underway, it seems, behind closed doors.

I understand you are planning to introduce these critical transit plans to City Council very soon and believe the courtesy of a briefing is in order immediately.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Sparer".

Cc: Alderman Brian Hopkins (2nd)