

From: Renay! <bottle.of.shine@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, November 16, 2020 2:42 PM
To: Aldermen <Aldermen@jonesboro.org>
Cc: City Clerk <CityClerk@jonesboro.org>
Subject: Vote No on ORD-20:030

Jonesboro City Council,

Please vote no on the proposed ordinance that would give industrial developers an exemption to our sidewalk requirements.

Accessibility issues are often the first thing to be disregarded and that's why accessibility should be front loaded as a requirement for any development. I have read everything on the legislative record for this item and I'm unconvinced by any of the arguments that this area deserves an exemption from having to build one of the most basic public accessibility tools we have.

- It should not matter how "close" neighborhoods are to this area. If there is a place people will travel to and from, there needs to be accessibility to and from those locations: for people who walk to and from them, for people who get dropped off/picked up at them (such as families who share a car) or from an area close by, and for people who are disabled. Generic public transport options also open up when there's more accessibility, removing the need for the companies to ferry workers just because they don't want to build some sidewalks. Jonesboro already fails at having sidewalks in so many places where they are desperately needed; let's not compound the issue in a new area.
- One cited reason for an exemption is having to build across driveways and how that could impact safety. How is having sidewalks, with clearly marked driveways (as I assume there might be curb cuts or a lowered profile for the sidewalk on each driveway) less safe than no sidewalks? The issue of business entrances and exits remain the same with or without—there's always going to be a risk of hitting a pedestrian, but it doesn't become *more* likely when there are sidewalks—the data on sidewalks and paved shoulders bears that out. The presence of sidewalks should alert drivers to the potential that pedestrians may be near and they should pay attention to their surroundings.

Because accessibility is often the first thing to go when considering new projects—from huge industrial development projects to simple office projects—due to ease of completion or for "cost saving", we **MUST** be vigilant and not let ourselves be convinced that exemptions serve anyone but the people requesting the exemption. Any time accessibility issues are sidelined due to industry pressure, that's a loss for the people in a community.

Please prioritize and advocate for the *people* who will work in this area and may need accessibility options by voting no on this proposed ordinance.

Best,
Renay Williams
Bunker Hill