



CITY COUNCIL MEETING
Wednesday, August 5, 2026 at 4:30 PM

At 4:30 p.m. Council will meet in Review Session #1 of the Preliminary 2027 Budget in Chambers, Charles S. Crandall Center at City Hall, 540 West Hills Circle.

1. Items of Discussion:

- 1.1. Session #1 - 2027 Budget Review
- 1.2. Owatonna Bus Company & Owatonna Middle School Joint Proposal - 15th Street NE Street Morning Closure - Restricted to Bus Traffic



DATE: August 5, 2026
TO: Mayor and City Council
FROM:
SUBJECT: Session #1 - 2027 Budget Review

Purpose:

Background:

Budget Impact:

Staff Recommendation:

Attachments:

None



DATE: August 5, 2026
TO: Mayor and City Council
FROM:
SUBJECT: Owatonna Bus Company & Owatonna Middle School Joint Proposal - 15th Street
NE Street Morning Closure - Restricted to Bus Traffic

Purpose:

Background:

The Owatonna Bus Company and ISD 761 are jointly requesting morning closure of 15th St NE from 7:25 AM to 7:45 AM on all school days, except for bus traffic. The purpose of the request is to provide safer drop off and transfer of students at the OMS. The Bus Company and ISD 761 will present the proposal and staff will provide feedback.

Budget Impact:

Staff Recommendation:

Attachments:

1. OMS Transfer site - City Proposal

PROPOSAL: Restricted Bus-Only Traffic Access on 15th Street NE

A Joint Initiative by Owatonna Bus Company and Owatonna Public Schools

Date: July 15, 2026

Submitted to: The City of Owatonna

1. Purpose & Executive Summary

The Owatonna Bus Company and Owatonna Public Schools respectfully submit this joint proposal requesting that the City of Owatonna restrict public vehicular access on **15th Street NE (between 7th Avenue NE and St. Paul Road)** during morning school transportation times.

The Safety Concern

- **Unregulated Drop-Offs:** Over past school years, a high volume of parents dropping off students directly on 15th Street NE has created severe, unmanaged safety hazards.
- **Active Conflict Zones:** Vehicles are regularly observed discharging students directly behind parked buses and within active blind spots while buses are in motion.
- **Urgent Risk:** Under these current, uncontrolled conditions, the threat of a serious pedestrian accident is not a matter of *if*, but *when*. Restricting traffic is a proactive measure to prevent a tragic incident.

2. Proposed Traffic Restriction

To mitigate these safety risks, we propose the following traffic restriction:

- **Location:** 15th Street NE, from the intersection of 7th Avenue NE to St. Paul Road.
- **Restriction:** Restricted to **bus traffic only**.
- **Schedule:** Weekdays from **7:25 a.m. to 7:45 a.m.** during the active school year (or as otherwise designated by the City and School District).

3. Requested City Actions

To successfully implement this safety initiative, we request that the City of Owatonna authorize and assist with the following:

1. **Signage Installation:** Install permanent, highly visible traffic signs at both ends of the restricted segment displaying:
"Bus Traffic Only — Weekdays 7:25 AM to 7:45 AM"
2. **Official Authorization:** Formally recognize and authorize this weekday traffic restriction.
3. **Collaboration:** Coordinate with the Owatonna Bus Company and Owatonna Public Schools regarding the optimal placement and ongoing maintenance of the signage.

4. Operational Responsibilities (Owatonna Bus Company)

To ensure minimal disruption to the surrounding neighborhood and clear guidance for motorists, the Owatonna Bus Company commits to the following operational procedures:

- **Daily Deployment:** Staff will place temporary traffic cones at both ends of the restricted segment (the intersections of 15th Street NE at 7th Avenue NE and St. Paul Road) immediately prior to the 7:25 a.m. start time.
- **Prompt Removal:** All cones will be removed immediately following the conclusion of the restriction period at 7:45 a.m. to restore normal traffic flow.

5. Anticipated Benefits

- **Systemic Safety:** Standardizing the traffic flow allows bus operations and student unloading to proceed exactly as designed, eliminating hazardous conflict points.
- **Reduced Liability:** Proactively manages and minimizes the risk of pedestrian-vehicle collisions in a high-density school zone.
- **Community Alignment:** Establishes clear expectations for parents, neighbors, and bus drivers, resulting in a calmer, safer morning commute.

6. Conclusion

The Owatonna Bus Company and Owatonna Public Schools respectfully urge the City of Owatonna to review and approve this joint proposal. By authorizing these temporary traffic restrictions and installing the requested signage, we can collectively ensure a safer environment for our community's children.

Submitted Jointly By:

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