



RAPID CITY FIRE DEPARTMENT

Prepare, Prevent, Protect



To: Mayor Kooiker and City Council
From: Mike Maltaverne, Fire Chief
Subject: Summer Nights Proposals
Date: March 3, 2014

In the interest of public safety, I feel it necessary to express concern on behalf of the Rapid City Fire Department as it relates to the proposed footprints of Summer Nights. One of the proposals allows for westbound traffic to continue along Main street with adjacent closures for 6th street north of Main and 7th street south of Main. This fracturing of Summer Nights could cause potential safety concerns.

While I am aware of the complexity of this issue in trying to reach compromise, from a risk management perspective, this arrangement could cause a serious pedestrian safety issue. Even with a heavy police presence, I have personally witnessed patrons crossing in the middle of the block, circumventing police officers and cadets that are marshalling crowds in the crosswalks and generally behaving in an unsafe manner while crossing Main street. Summer Nights occurs during rush hour traffic as commuters attempt to travel from the eastern portion of downtown to the residential areas in west Rapid City adding to the recipe for a car versus pedestrian incident. Should a patron be run over by a motor vehicle, having Fire vehicles respond with lights and sirens to Main street would draw attention to the scene and have the potential for a secondary incident as firefighters attempted to deal with the injured party.

Secondly, the concentration of patrons on 7th street does pose some challenges as well. As crowds swell and become confined in this small area, there is a potential for an incident. Should there be a medical emergency of some type, Fire Department crews could face challenges in reaching the patient, beginning treatment and removing them to the awaiting ambulance due to the concentration of people in a relatively small area.

I will make myself available for further comments or questions, if need be.

Mike Maltaverne, Fire Chief

Rapid City Fire Department