

Statement to Pittsburgh City Council on the Knight Foundation grant (5/29)

Hello again; my name is Ziggy Edwards and I live in The Run. I'm here to continue discussing the \$410K Knight Foundation grant.

You've heard my opinions on the intent behind the grant and the problematic Mon-Oakland Connector plan. It's a shame the Knight Foundation has no incentive for "deep engagement" in repairing the hazardous conditions along Irvine Street, for example. However, I have not been holding out hope for that outcome—and have operated under the assumption that you would accept the grant. Thank you for defying expectations two weeks ago. Once again, I sincerely hope you will consider my words today.

This discussion brings an opportunity for the voices of Pittsburgh residents to interject in conversations that have been happening without us for a long time. We deserve REAL transparency and REAL community involvement in technology and development projects. Today I'm proposing acceptance of the Knight Foundation grant with four conditions:

1. **Outreach will address the full range of consequences of adopting today's autonomous vehicle technology in today's city.** We are not interested in idealized spin about how AV will meet our needs when we lack decent sidewalks. Similarly, development issues cannot be untangled from concerns about housing speculation and resident displacement.
2. **Funding (from this grant or the \$23 million for the MOC) will support a Mon-Oakland Connector environmental and community impact study conducted by an independent third party.** Resident-approved experts must have the opportunity and resources to evaluate MOC plans.
3. **An immediate halt to development activities specifically tied to the MOC.** What is the point of having this discussion if the outcome has already been decided?
4. **Funding will provide real opportunities for residents to evaluate and shape plans that affect our communities.** This means:
 - A full accounting of MOC plans is made public.
 - All parties with financial interests in the MOC are made public.
 - *All* meetings tied to the MOC are open to the public.
 - These meetings are announced with at least 14 days' notice to accommodate working people.
 - Meeting presentations are distributed at least 14 days in advance so participants can arrive with informed questions.
 - Meetings include a Q&A session where every attendee can join the discussion.
 - A full accounting of public funds to develop and promote the MOC plan is made public—as detailed in Right to Know requests filed with the City and the URA. Going forward, the report stays public and up to date.

THIS is what community involvement looks like. Our demands are not unrealistic or unreasonable. Most are not new, either. We delivered them to Mayor Peduto in a 2016 petition that garnered nearly 500 signatures. We reiterated them in an open letter to the Mayor on April 18, which you all received as well. So far, no response.

Last time we met here, I said that City officials ignore us because the plan is for us to go away. I hope you surprise me again and adopt our conditions for the Knight Foundation grant.