



CITY OF SAINT PAUL
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DATE: February 9, 2015
TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Transportation Committee
SUBJECT: Highway 5 / Shepard Road Access Options Study

Introduction

With the recent conclusion of the *Shepard Davern Area Plan* and *Zoning Study*, Saint Paul Public Works is beginning the community engagement process for the study of a potential realignment between Highway 5, West 7th Street and Shepard Road. The goal of the study is to create a more walkable and bikeable neighborhood by slowing traffic on West 7th, improving Shepard Road based on the design criteria from the *Great River Passage Plan*, and redistributing vehicular traffic between the two streets.

SRF Consulting Group has been engaged to create a detailed traffic model of the study area, draft alternative alignments, and assess their potential impact on the neighborhood and traffic flow. A project website has been set up: www.stpaul.gov/hwy5study

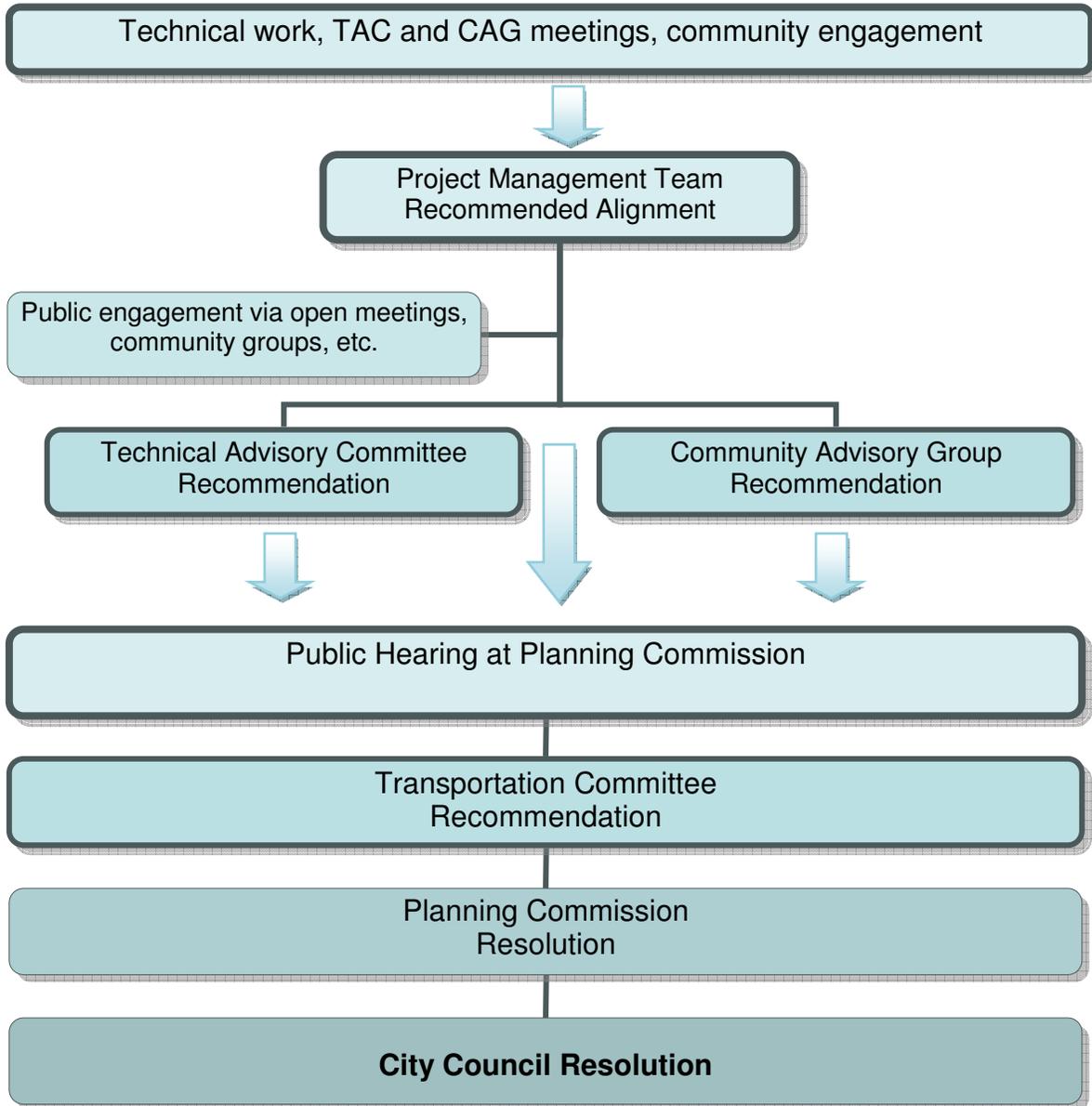
Project Management and the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

This is a highly technical traffic and engineering study. Project Management will be led by the Public Works department, and will include other City staff and the consulting team. The Technical Advisory Committee will be comprised of technical staff from the City, MnDOT, Ramsey County and other agencies, as well as the Project Management team. Project Management will propose a preferred alignment, and TAC will make their own recommendation regarding that alignment to be considered by the Transportation Committee and Planning Commission.

Community Advisory Group (CAG)

The Community Advisory Group will be comprised of residents, business representatives, major property owners, and representatives from the Mayor's office and Ward offices. The CAG will provide feedback on the technical work, and will make a recommendation on the proposed preferred alignment that will also be considered by the Transportation Committee and Planning Commission.

Process



Committee Discussion

The Transportation Committee discussed the initiation of the study, and recommended that the resolution initiating the study explicitly include policies from the *Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan* as well as the other plans mentioned. These changes have been added to the attached resolution.

Transportation Committee Recommendation

The Transportation Committee recommends that the Planning Commission pass the attached resolution, formally initiating the planning process as outlined above, and authorizing the formation of a Community Advisory Group.

city of saint paul
planning commission resolution
file number _____
date _____

Highway 5 / Shepard Road Access Options Study Initiation

WHEREAS, the Highway 5 bridge from Bloomington is a major entry point into Saint Paul and leads directly onto West 7th Street, which operates at high speeds with large traffic volumes; and

WHEREAS, Shepard Road in South Highland operates with significantly lower traffic volumes and has additional capacity for vehicular traffic; and

WHEREAS, both West 7th Street and Shepard Road present difficulties to pedestrians attempting to utilize the neighborhood's businesses, parks, transit stops and other amenities; and

WHEREAS, the *City of Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan*, adopted by the City Council on February 24, 2010, includes transportation strategies such as: Complete the streets; Examine alternatives to enhance safety through right-of-way design, including narrowing or removing lanes on roads; and Develop a strategy for investing in a broad range of infrastructure projects, including, but not limited to, street and traffic improvements to support the growth of existing employment, services, parks, and schools; and

WHEREAS, the *Shepard Davern Area Plan*, adopted on January 21, 2015, recommends that the City slow traffic coming into the city off the Highway 5 bridge onto West 7th to improve the safety of the pedestrian environment and help create a better gateway to Saint Paul; and

WHEREAS, the *Great River Passage Plan*, adopted on April 10, 2013, recommends making the Mississippi River area more accessible to the city's neighborhoods, including redesigning streets to improve park access while enhancing private development potential, and reducing traffic speeds; and

WHEREAS, the *Riverview Major Investment Study* from 2000 identified the need to better balance traffic between West 7th and Shepard Road, which resulted in a City Council Resolution asking MnDOT to study the intersection; and

moved by _____
seconded by _____
in favor _____
against _____

WHEREAS, in 2007 Saint Paul Public Works approved a budget to study this intersection, while other partners did not secure funding, causing the study to stall; and

WHEREAS, Johnson Brothers is currently undergoing planning for the redevelopment of the former US Bank site on Shepard Road between Highway 5 and Davern Street, which presents an opportunity to re-think the street configuration of the area to mitigate some of the traffic issues of the area; and

WHEREAS, to potentially take advantage of this development timing, in 2014 SRF Consulting Group was engaged to conduct a traffic engineering study to identify potential realignments and help create a preferred alignment; and

WHEREAS, the Transportation Committee and Planning Commission will be asked to make a recommendation on a preferred alignment to the City Council; and

WHEREAS, that recommendation should be informed both by technical work of consultants and professional staff and by the input of community members;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Planning Commission hereby initiates the Highway 5 / Shepard Road Access Options Study; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Planning Commission authorizes the creation of a Community Advisory Group to provide comment on the study process and final recommendation, to include representatives from the following groups:

- Saint Paul Planning Commission
- Saint Paul Parks Commission
- Highland District Council (2 representatives)
- Fort Road Federation
- Highland Business Association
- West 7th Business Association
- Friends of the Mississippi River
- Graham Place Senior Apartments
- Highland Pointe Condominium Association
- Johnson Brothers
- Paster Properties
- Trikin Properties
- Sibley Manor
- Stewart Management
- Ward 2 Office (non-voting)
- Ward 3 Office (non-voting)
- Mayor's Office (non-voting); and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that this advisory group shall be appointed after review by the chair of the Planning Commission, and shall be chaired by a Planning Commissioner.