



CITY OF SAINT PAUL
Christopher B. Coleman, Mayor

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Street Engineering/Construction
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September 16, 2014

Dear Saint Paul Property Owner:

The City of Saint Paul Department of Public Works will hold a neighborhood meeting to present a Residential Street Vitality Program (RSVP) project to be constructed in your neighborhood over the summer of 2015 (project map is included on the last page). This meeting is an opportunity to learn about the construction process, and for you to inform City staff of your concerns. The meeting for the **Como-Chatsworth RSVP Project** will be held:

6:30 - 8:30 PM, Tuesday, September 30, 2014

**Twin Cities German Immersion School
Aula / Auditorium
1031 Como Avenue**

General Street Reconstruction Information

Street reconstruction includes concrete curb and gutter, storm sewer catch basins, sewer and water main repairs as needed, bituminous pavement, concrete outwalks and driveway aprons, sodded boulevards, lantern-style street lighting, boulevard trees, and public art.

Construction is expected to begin in May and be completed by the end of November. During the project, the street will be dug up several times because the work is done in stages, and often by different crews. They may not work on your block every day. In fact, there may be several days or weeks when no work is done on your block. Construction work is very dependent on the weather. In general, expect about four months of disruption on your block.

The contractors must maintain access for emergency vehicles at all times. Access to at least one end of an alley will be maintained at all times. A "Road Closed" sign at the end of the block does not mean you cannot get to your house. If you have a driveway off the street, there will likely only be a few days when you will not be able to use it. Alley openings and driveway access will be restricted when the concrete curb and gutter is poured, and when the concrete aprons are poured. The construction inspector will notify you when the work will be done at your driveway, including the details for when you will be able to drive over it again.

Some of the specific topics to be discussed at the meeting are described below.

Street Widths

Residential streets in Saint Paul are generally 30' or 32' wide. For this project area, we plan to keep most streets close to their existing width. However, we will be proposing some changes at the public meeting. For any widths less than 30', it may be necessary to ban parking on one side.



Traffic Calming

We will discuss and show pictures of a Traffic Calming option that could be added to some of the streets being reconstructed. Curb bumpouts could be added if requested by the neighborhood using a petition prepared by the City. The process for requesting bump outs will be explained at the meeting.

Water Services

As part of this project, **Saint Paul Regional Water Services (SPRWS)** will replace all **lead** water services from the water main to the property line at no additional cost to the homeowner. This is typically done ahead of the start of the Public Works' project itself. Approximately one-half of the properties in this project area have lead water services. If you have a lead water service, you will receive a letter from SPRWS with details about what to expect from the replacement program. If you wish to replace the portion of the water service from the property line to your house, you must hire a private contractor. A list of private contractors who can do this work will be included with the letter from SPRWS. If you have any questions, please contact the **SPRWS** service desk at **651-266-6270**.

The homes that are having their lead water service replaced in the right-of-way will receive a notice the day before, explaining that their water will be temporarily shut off during that day for this replacement work.

Nearly all the water main in this area will be replaced as part of the project. Properties affected by this replacement will be put on a temporary water main that runs above ground while the new main is installed and tested.

The hydrants near your property may also be replaced. The hydrants are typically replaced during the winter and early spring, before the project begins. If that is the case, a notice will be placed on your front door saying your water will be shut off for the day.

Gas Meters

If your gas meter is still inside your home, Xcel Energy will probably be working on your block to update their system and to move those meters to the outside of homes. For more information about possible natural gas work on your street, please contact **Mike Madigan with Xcel Energy** at **651-265-7068**.

Sewers

The Public Works' contractor will be installing or repairing storm and sanitary sewer mains, and building storm sewer catch basins as part of the project. During the design process, the City will inspect the sanitary sewer main and the service connections. If there are indications that your sewer service connection at the main is bad, we will send you a letter suggesting that you have it replaced as part of the project. With the City's inspection, we can only check the connection at the main and about 1' or 2' of pipe toward the homes. Property owners can hire a private sewer contractor to inspect the full length of the service to the house if they desire. It is important to note that all work on the sanitary service, even between the main in the street and the property line, is the property owner's responsibility to pay for.

If you already have problems with your sanitary sewer service — or even if you don't yet, this project will be a good time to get it replaced. You can save money if your service is replaced during construction versus after. Repairs at the connection to the main, or the length of the sewer service from the main to the property line, can be done by the City's contractor at the property owner's request. You will need to sign a waiver form from the City if you would like the contractor to do that work. Waiver forms will be available at the meeting, or can be requested by calling me at 651-266-6112. The cost for doing this work can be added to the assessment for your property.

Any sewer service repair work desired by the owner on private property must be done by a private contractor, and arranged for by the property owner. Work on the sanitary service, all the way from the main in the street to the house, is at the property owner's expense. This cost would be in addition to the assessment for the roadway and street lighting construction. Please contact the **Sewer Utility service desk** at **651-266-6234** for more detailed information about your private sewer service.

Outwalks and Carriage Walks

Outwalks are the sidewalks that run from the mainline walk to the street. They will all be replaced as part of the construction project. The outwalk location will be moved if it is within 5' of an existing tree, to help prevent tree roots from heaving the walk up in the future. If you do not want an outwalk, please let me know before the construction begins. Otherwise, a 3' wide outwalk will be constructed at every residence.

Carriage walks are the narrow sidewalks that run parallel to, and just behind, the curb. These will be removed with the project and, according to City policy, not replaced.

Boulevard Rain Gardens

The City of Saint Paul partners with Capitol Region Watershed District (CRWD) to install curb cut rain gardens in the boulevard as part of the RSVP project. Homeowners interested in having their boulevard evaluated for a rain garden should contact me to be added to the list. Boulevards of interested homeowners will be inspected to make sure they meet dimensional requirements and are free of existing tree roots and utilities. In order to be considered for a rain garden, homeowners must agree to carry out regular maintenance tasks to keep the garden functioning properly. **Homeowners are responsible to maintain the gardens, which includes watering until the plants are established, keeping the inlet clear of debris, and regular weeding throughout each growing season.** Where site conditions are met, the City will install a curb cut, create a small depression behind the curb, and install rain garden soil and hardwood mulch. To finish off the rain gardens, the watershed district provides plants and coordinates a neighborhood planting day after completion of the street work.

Existing Boulevard Gardens and Sprinklers

Some residents may have existing gardens or other landscaping in their boulevards. The boulevards will be cleared and graded as part of the construction. If you have plants or other landscaping items you want to keep, I suggest you move them before the construction begins so the items are not damaged in early stages of the work. The contractor will install topsoil and sod on the boulevard after the street work is done. If you do not want sod, please give me a call and let me know.

Sprinkler systems in the boulevard will likely also be damaged during construction. It is the property owner's responsibility to remove the system before construction begins, or repair it if it is damaged by the contractor(s). Please wait until the sod has been laid before you replace or repair your sprinkler.

Ash Trees in the Boulevards

In 2009, a noxious insect, the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB), was found to have invaded the Hampden Park neighborhood of Saint Paul. In states like Ohio and Michigan where this insect has gained a foothold, EAB has proven to be deadly to nearly all ash trees. Wishing to replace trees likely to be affected in a timely, cost effective manner, the City has decided to remove boulevard ash trees wherever major construction is scheduled. In the Como-Chatsworth project area, there are approximately twelve ash trees that will be removed and replaced with other species in conjunction with the street work. The City's policy for dealing with the Emerald Ash Borer will be further explained at the meeting.

Public Art

In 2009, the City Council passed an ordinance designating 1% of the cost of most public construction projects in Saint Paul be used for the addition of public art to that project. At the meeting, you will be able to sign up if you are interested in being kept up-to-date on the public art aspect of the project.

Street Lighting

New lantern style street lights will be installed in the project area. The existing street lights on wood poles will be removed once the new street lights are operational. The wood poles will be removed if they only carry a street light. If they also have electrical, phone, or cable TV lines, they will remain in place. Xcel and other utilities do not bury their over-head lines as part of construction projects like this unless that work is paid for by the affected property owners.

Assessments

The total cost of this project is estimated at approximately six million dollars. The project is funded by **assessments to the property owners** that benefit from the project, and by Street Improvement Bonds. The assessments cover approximately 25% of project cost. The 2015 assessment rates have not yet been set by the City Council, but we anticipate them to be between **\$85.00 and \$90.00 per linear foot of street frontage**. Corner residential lots are assessed for the short side only. Corner commercial lots, including apartment buildings, are assessed for both sides if work is being done on both sides.

Final assessments for this project will be approved by the City Council in the fall of 2015, as the construction is nearing completion. A bill will then be sent to the property owners. Whatever portion of the bill that is not paid within 30 days will automatically go onto the property taxes, where it can be paid out over twenty years with simple interest. There is a senior citizen deferment program for those over 65. For more information on payment of the assessments, contact the **Real Estate Division at 651-266-8858**.

Alleys

Alley paving is not included with this project. Alley work is 100% assessed to the abutting property owners. Contact Scott Brimer at 651-266-6225 as soon as possible for more information on having your alley paved. Scott can provide the neighborhood with a petition which would need to be completed and returned by October 31, 2014 for any alley paving to be added to the project.

Summary

We plan to start construction in the project area in May 2015, and be completed by the end of November 2015. You will receive a letter from the construction manager about a week before the Public Works' portion of the project is started. I recommend keeping that letter for its useful information and phone number list as you may want to refer to it later during the construction.

Project updates will be available on the City's web site: www.stpaul.gov/index.aspx?NID=3973. This will bring up a list of projects where you can select Como-Chatsworth RSVP. The web site is active for this project, but it will not be updated on a regular basis until construction begins.

If you have questions or comments that need to be addressed before the meeting, feel free to contact me at 651-266-6112.

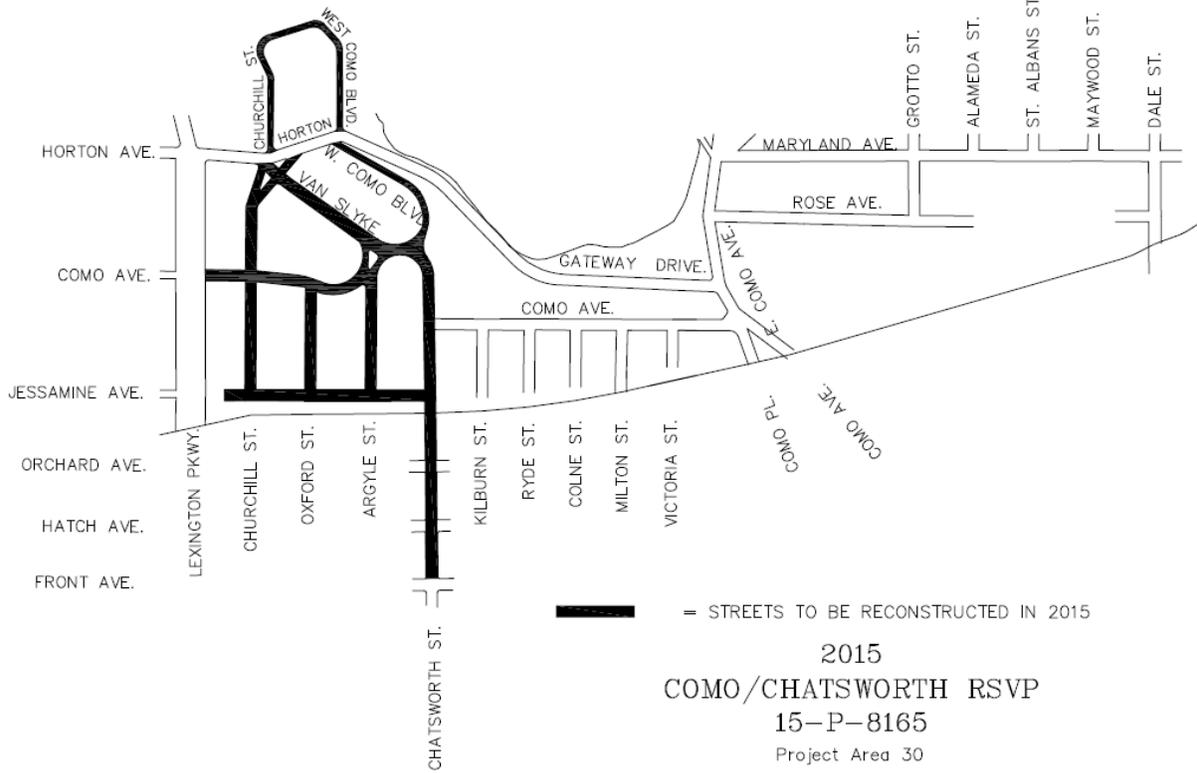
Sincerely,



Barb Mundahl, P.E.
Project Engineer



City of Saint Paul
 Department of Public Works
 Street Engineering and Construction Division



2015
 COMO/CHATSWORTH RSVP
 15-P-8165
 Project Area 30
 8/13/2014