

# SUMMIT AVENUE REGIONAL TRAIL PLAN

CITY COUNCIL

MAY 24, 2023



Review Process



SAINT PAUL  
MINNESOTA





# SUMMIT AVENUE REGIONAL TRAIL



EAST - WEST  
connection across the city



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& MENK

SUMMIT AVENUE REGIONAL TRAIL PLAN



# Why is the City doing a Regional Trail Plan now?

1

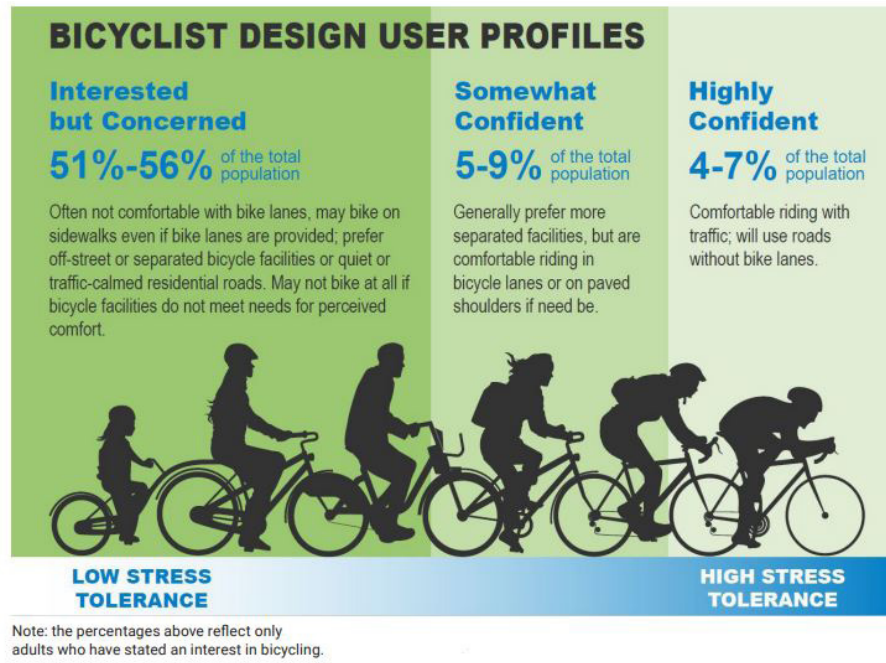
Long-range  
planning

2

User  
Experience

3

Existing  
Infrastructure



Source: U.S. Department of Transportation - Federal Highway Administration Bikeway Selection Guide, 2019



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# Long-Range Planning Project Context

**Mississippi Gorge - Samuel Morgan Regional Trail**  
The Regional Parks Policy Plan views both this search corridor and the Summit Avenue search corridor as complementary to one another and serving two separate functions/service areas within the regional trail system.

**5.5-mile** corridor along Summit Avenue, Kellogg Boulevard, and Eagle Parkway

**Connection for Regional Park Units:**

- Mississippi Gorge Regional Park
- Samuel H. Morgan Regional Trail

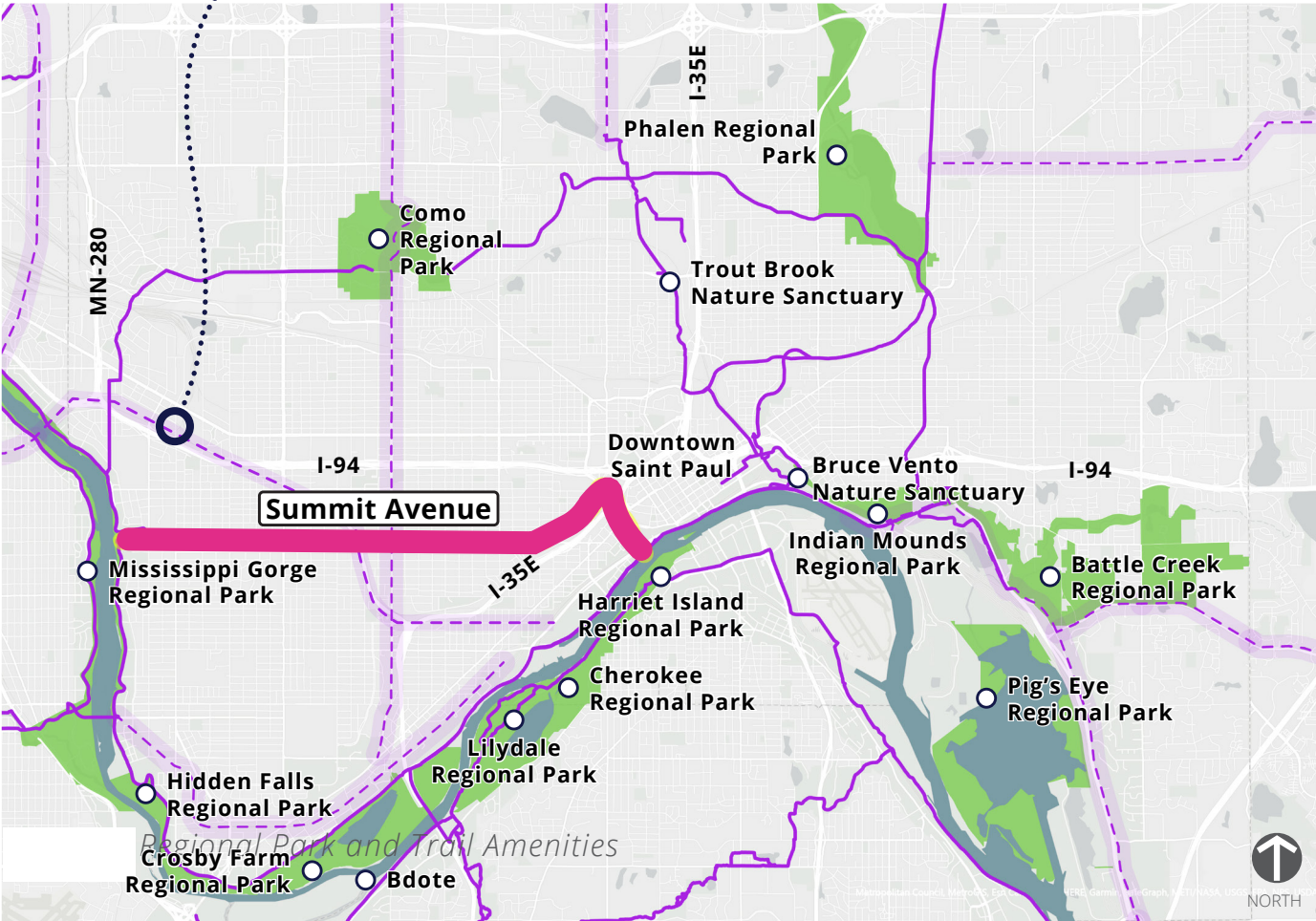
**Regional Network Connections**

- Ayd Mill Road
- Lexington Parkway

Important east-west connection between Regional Park and Trail facilities. Currently sees high use for transportation and recreation in the City

The trail would be a regional park amenity in Ward 1. Ward 1 does not currently have regional park or trail facilities.

Other Routes:  
Other potential routes were evaluated at a high-level. Routes were not preferred to Summit due to various conditions such as indirect connections, lack of parkway characteristics for recreation, and narrow public right-of-way, for example.



- Legend**
- Project Area
  - Regional Park
  - Regional Trail
  - Regional Trail Search Corridor

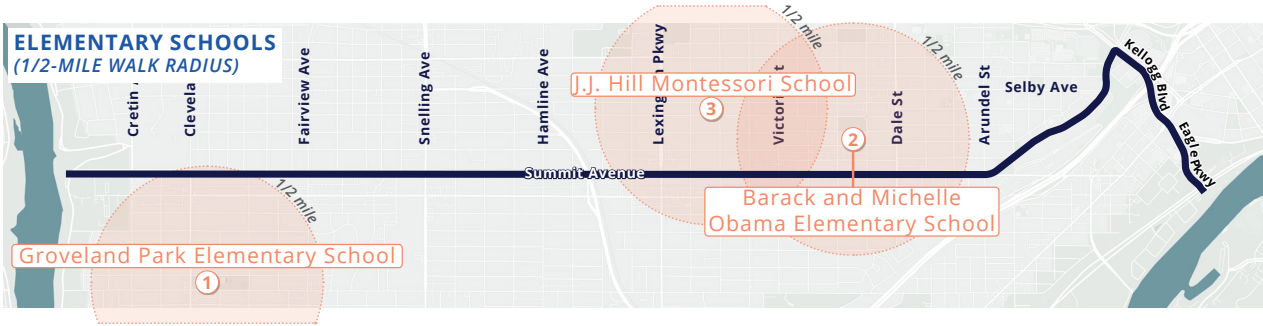
Summit Avenue currently has high multi-modal use and its parkway characteristics are important for recreation. Regional trails are placed in regionally desirable settings that can provide high quality opportunities for people to get outdoors.



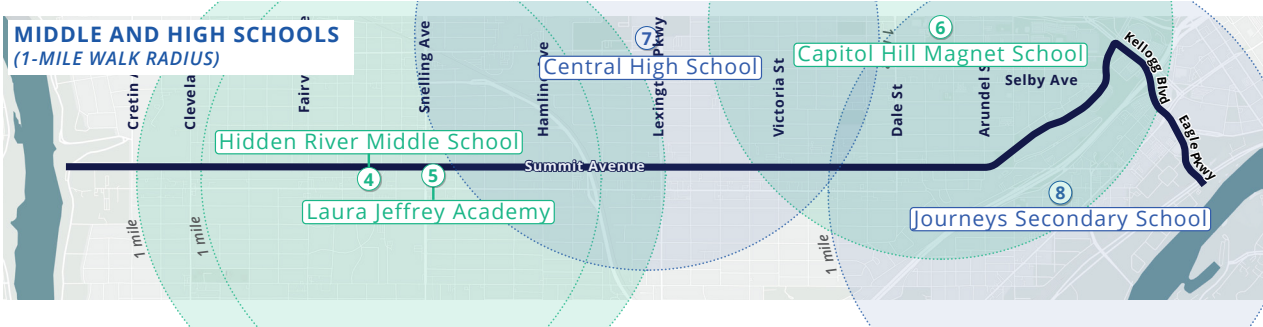


# Long-Range Planning | Community Engagement | Youth and Families

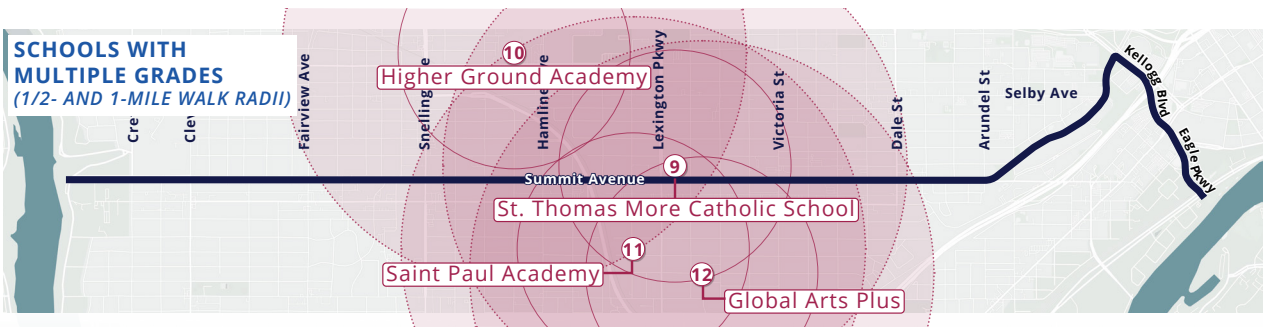
## ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS (1/2-MILE WALK RADIUS)



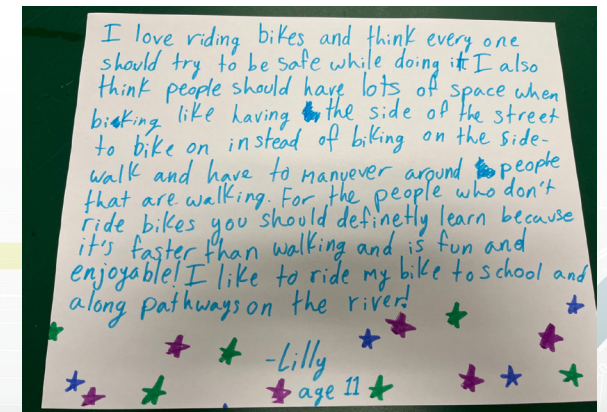
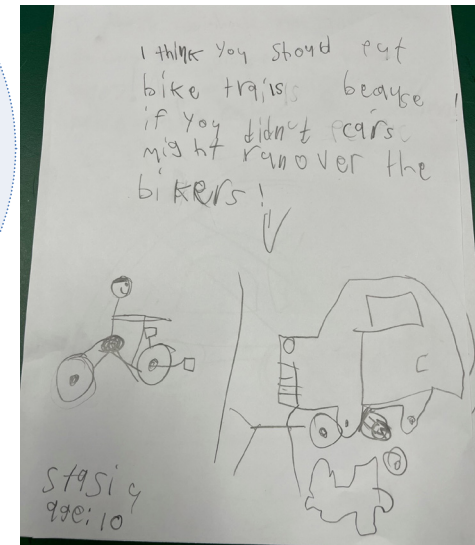
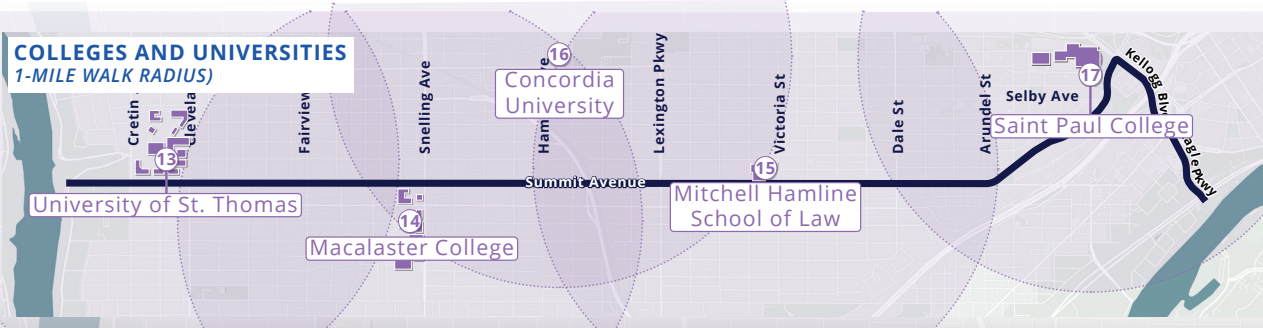
## MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOLS (1-MILE WALK RADIUS)



## SCHOOLS WITH MULTIPLE GRADES (1/2- AND 1-MILE WALK RADII)



## COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES (1-MILE WALK RADIUS)



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# Long-Range Planning | Community Engagement | Youth and Families



**Saint Paul**  
**PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**Independent School District 625**  
360 Colborne Street  
Saint Paul, MN 55102-3299

**Office of the Superintendent**  
Joseph Gothard, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

Telephone: (651) 767-8152 Fax: (651) 767-3441 [www.spps.org](http://www.spps.org)

May 24, 2023

To: Saint Paul City Council  
From: Dr. Joe Gothard, Superintendent  
RE: Summit Avenue Regional Trail Plan

Dear City Councilmembers,

I am writing to express Saint Paul Public Schools' support of the Summit Avenue Regional Trail Plan. Saint Paul Public Schools serves over 33,000 students and employs around 6,000 staff across St. Paul, and it is imperative that they are able to get to and from school and work safely.

Our students get to school in a variety of ways, from yellow buses and Metro Transit to personal vehicles, walking and biking. We are fortunate in St. Paul that all of these options exist for our students, and in many cases for our staff as well.

SPPS is part of a network of Minnesota school districts that participate in the Safe Routes to School program. Our district works with several partners on Safe Routes, including St. Paul Public Works, the St. Paul Police Department, the Bicycle Alliance of Minnesota and St. Paul-Ramsey County Public Health, among others. Safe Routes to School is funded by the Minnesota Department of Transportation, SHIP and Allina Health.

Safe Routes programs bring many benefits to our community, including cleaner air, less traffic, and healthier students that arrive at school ready to learn. Research shows that being active helps kids learn and improves academic achievement. More walkers and bikers at a school also means less air pollution, according to the EPA. The City of St. Paul and other road authorities support Safe Routes in St. Paul by making streets near schools calmer and safer for everyone.

The Summit Avenue Regional Trail Plan aligns with many of the goals and benefits of the Safe Routes program. SPPS has several schools located within what is called the "walk zone" of Summit Avenue (half a mile or less for elementary schools and up to a mile for middle and high schools), where students are ineligible for busing. These schools include Hidden River Middle School, Central Senior High School, Obama Elementary, J.J. Hill Montessori, Global Arts Plus Lower Campus, Groveland Park Elementary and Capitol Hill Gifted and Talented Magnet (middle school students). In total, these schools serve approximately 4,500 students, many of whom live within the immediate neighborhood.

The Summit Avenue Regional Trail Plan will especially benefit these students, staff and area residents in many ways. For one, we know that separated bikeways are safer for bicyclists, pedestrians and drivers alike. This is especially important before and after school, but will also allow more opportunities for walking, biking and outdoor physical education activities during the school day. Safe walking and biking routes also provide an additional transportation option for students who participate in after-school activities or employment.

Thank you for the extensive planning and engagement efforts that have gone into this plan. The residents of our city, including our students, will greatly benefit from these improvements to the safety and usability of Summit Avenue.

Thank you,

Dr. Joe Gothard, Superintendent



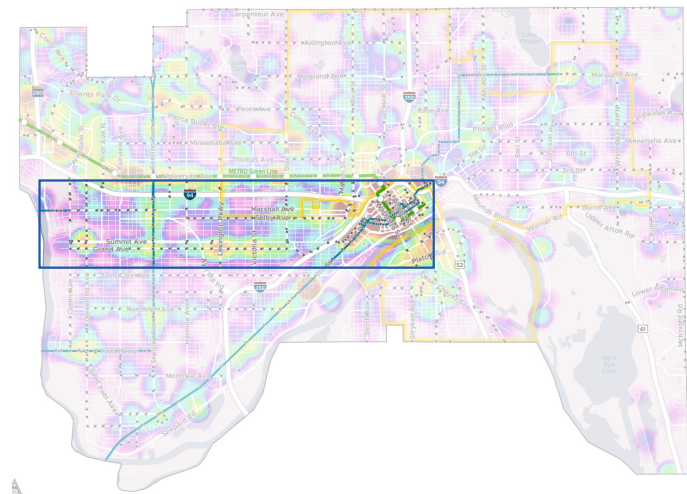
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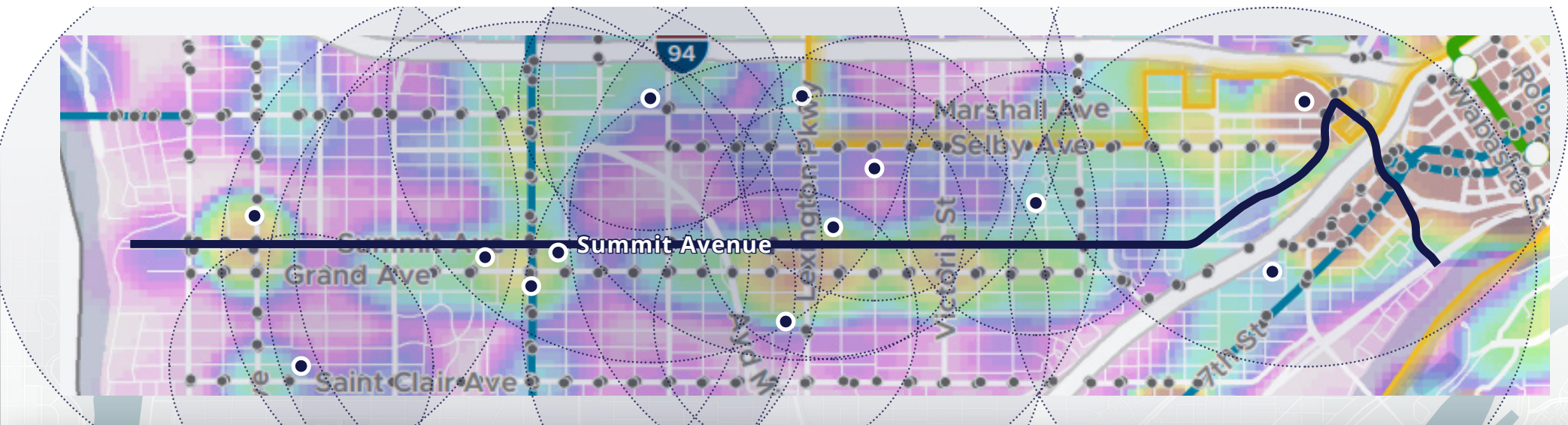
# Long-Range Planning *Job Concentrations*



Job Concentrations and Transit Map from Saint Paul's 2040 Comprehensive Plan



Job Concentrations, Transit, Schools, and School Walk-radii near Summit Avenue





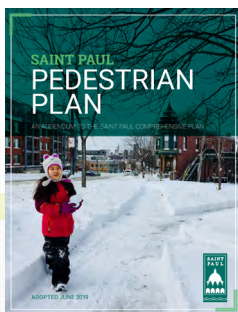
# Long-Range Planning 2040 Comprehensive Plan



## Plan Chapter Highlights



## Plan Addenda



## Values, Goals, & Policies

### Celebrating Parks

### Community/Public Health

### Respecting our History and Culture

#### *Land Use*

- Institutional campuses and safe pedestrian and bicycle access
- Off-street parking efficiency
- Stand-alone parking use is limited

#### *Transportation*

- Priority Hierarchy: Pedestrians, Bicyclists, Transit, other vehicles
- Safety and accessibility for all users
- Access to employment and Economic opportunity
- True Transportation choice
- Functional and attractive parkways

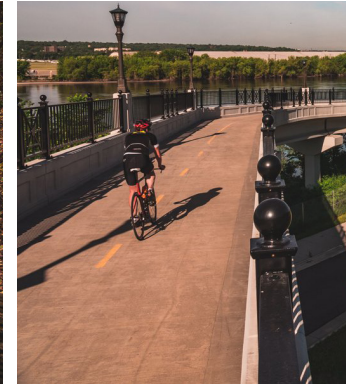
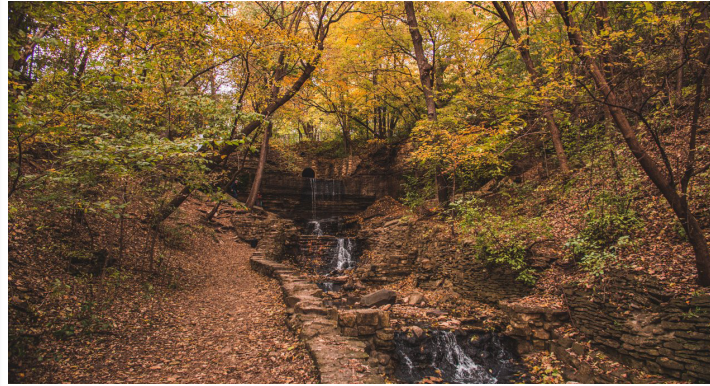
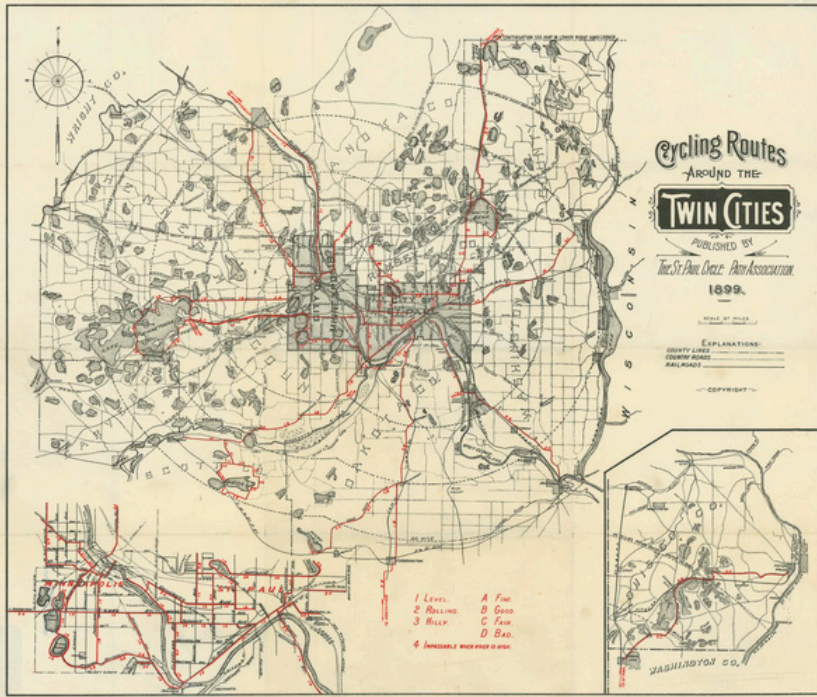
#### *Parks, Recreation, and Open Space*

- Equitable programs, resources & amenities
- People, responsive to changing needs
- Healthy network of community partnerships
- Strong and accessible connections:  
***Integrate parkways into City's broader transportation network***





# Long-Range Planning *Recreational Planning*



## recreational path:

No additional curb or walls will be installed on the residential side of WB. A continuous hard surface path will be installed on the bluff side of the boulevard.

TYPE: Combined pedestrian/bike casual recreational path.

LOCATIONS: The path will be continuous the length of the parkway on the bluff side to take advantage of the river corridor quality.

WIDTH: Typically 8' 0" but narrower where limited space exists; pedestrian/bike paths where space permits adjacent to the F

MATERIAL: Bituminous pavement with an earthen color crushed gravel (seal coat).

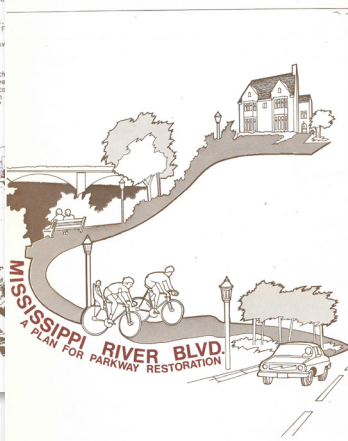
OTHER CONSIDERATIONS: A turf boulevard strip will be provided between the path roadway wherever possible as an aesthetic and unobstructive area for utilities, plant furnishings, trees, and snow storage. A boulevard strip will take precedence over path. The path will be reduced to width up to a minimum of 4' to accommodate the boulevard.



MRB at MADOFF AV.



MRB NORTH of SHADOW FALLS



CITY of ST. PAUL - DEPT. of COMMUNITY SERVICES - DIVISION of PARKS and RECREATION

## RESOLUTION CITY OF SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA

Council File # 92-79  
Green Sheet # 2314

Committee: Date

the quality of our urban environment requires that the City address the problems of carbon dioxide and carbon monoxide emissions can be reduced by using alternative on; and bicycling emits no undesirable emissions as well as being a popular commuting and for many residents of the City of Saint Paul; and Summit Avenue is a popular bicycling route due to its continuity between Mississippi Capitol/Downtown area as well as its aesthetic appeal; and the Public Works Department placed a bicycle test section on Summit Avenue between 1st and Wheeler St. in August, 1992; and two neighborhood meetings and hundreds of calls to the Citizen Service office have acceptance to the concept; and Public Works has observed no operational problems and an early indication of



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User Experience

Existing Bicycle Lanes



BICYCLIST DESIGN USER PROFILES

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                                    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <div>Interested but Concerned</div> <div>51%-56% of the total population</div> <div>Often not comfortable with bike lanes, may bike on sidewalks even if bike lanes are provided; prefer off-street or separated bicycle facilities or quiet or traffic-calmed residential roads. May not bike at all if bicycle facilities do not meet needs for perceived comfort.</div> | <div>Somewhat Confident</div> <div>5-9% of the total population</div> <div>Generally prefer more separated facilities, but are comfortable riding in bicycle lanes or on paved shoulders if need be.</div> | <div>Highly Confident</div> <div>4-7% of the total population</div> <div>Comfortable riding with traffic; will use roads without bike lanes.</div> |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

LOW STRESS TOLERANCE

HIGH STRESS TOLERANCE

Note: the percentages above reflect only adults who have stated an interest in bicycling.







Many segments of Summit Avenue have not been reconstructed for more than 100 years.

Over time, roadways need to be reconstructed to replace aging infrastructure, this includes underground utilities, roadway base structure and surface, lighting, curb & gutter and sidewalks.

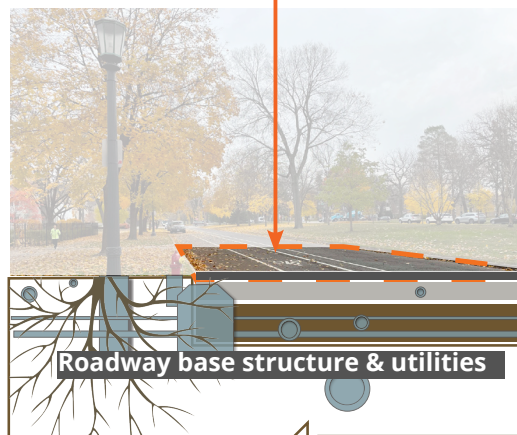
## Improvements

### Near-Term (2-3 yr.)

- **Surface treatments**
  - Lexington to Victoria
  - Portions west of Snelling
- **Maintains existing bike lanes**
- **Funded for construction**

### Long-Term (Phased process, ~10-15+ yr)

- **Roadway Reconstruction**
- **Regional Trail Facility**
- **NOT funded for construction**



## ROADWAY Composition & Construction

**SURFACE IMPROVEMENTS**  
Occurs every 8-10 years\*



**STREET RECONSTRUCTION**  
Occurs every 50-100 years\*

\*Specific scope and timing of roadway construction projects vary depending on existing conditions and funding availability

## How does this relate to a trail facility?



The most cost-effective opportunities to add pedestrian and bicycle improvements come when roads are being fully redesigned.





## Industry Best-Practices, Recommended Facility

This table outlines current best practices for bicycle facilities based on traffic volumes. Based on the existing annual average daily traffic counts on Summit Avenue, the majority of the corridor falls into the >6,500 vehicles per day category. The segment from Ramsey St to John Ireland Blvd is 3,900 vehicles per day.

| Roadway Traffic Volume<br><i>(vehicles per day)</i> | Posted Roadway Speed | Recommended Facility Type        |                                      |                                            |
|-----------------------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
|                                                     |                      | FHWA Bikeway Selection Guide     | MnDOT Bicycle Facility Design Manual | NACTO Designing for All Ages and Abilities |
| < 3,000                                             | 25-30 mph            | Shared Roadway or Bike Boulevard | Shared Roadway or Bike Boulevard     | Bike Boulevard (<25 mph)                   |
| 3,000-6,500                                         | 25-30 mph            | Bike Lane (buffer preferred)     | Bike Lane (buffer preferred)         | Bike Lane (<6,000 AADT and <25 mph)        |
| >6,500                                              | 25-30 mph            | Separated Bike Lane or Sidepath  | Separated Bike Lane or Sidepath      | Separated Bike Lane or Sidepath            |

Fig. 4-33 | Recommended Facility Types





# What have we heard?

## Community Engagement



**1,316** Survey Participants  
Engage Saint Paul Site  
10/01/2021-10/17/2022



**119** Public Information Session\*  
June 2022 - 30% design update  
\* Figure reflects registered participants



**289** Community Open House\*  
October 2022  
\* Figure reflects registered participants

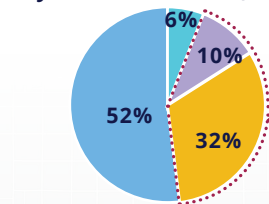
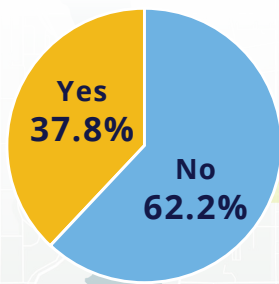
**593** Comments received  
60% Draft Document - Engage Saint Paul

**720** Comments received  
90% Draft Document - Engage Saint Paul

### Focused Engagement Surveys

Do you currently use the on-street bikeways on Summit Avenue?

If you answered no, why not?



*42% of those who do not currently use the bikeways on Summit, indicated either accessibility or the on-street bikeway experience as a barrier to their use.*

- Location/Proximity** - I don't travel or connect to places near Summit Avenue
- Safety/Comfort/Experience** - Biking on-street does not feel safe to me
- Accessibility** - Bikeway is not ADA accessible or I do not have a bicycle
- Interest** - I am not interested in biking



## How has engagement informed the Regional Trail Plan?



### • Tree preservation

- Disturbance utilizes roadway footprint
- Framework for constrained conditions when needed

### • Safety & User Experience

- Physical separation
- Removes two-way trail & contra-flow
- Intersection toolkit
- Youth and Families

### • Historical Significance

- Roadway footprint reflects travelway
- Patterns and symmetry
- Future formal SHPO and HPC reviews

Plan Development (current process) Design and Engineering (future phases)



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# April 13, 2023 - Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting Recap

The information below summarizes feedback heard at the April 13th, 2023 Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting. City staff gave a presentation to Commissioners on the Summit Avenue Regional Trail Plan. A representative from both SOS (Save Our Streets) and the Saint Paul Bicycle Coalition gave 4 minute remarks to the Commission, followed by a comment period where over 60 individuals provided comments.

## 1 Safety

- *Priority for Safety*
- *Engineering & Safety*
- *Vehicle Conflicts*
- *More Vulnerable Users*

## 3 History

- *Historic Preservation*
- *Historic Destination*

## 5 Process and Community Engagement

- *Frustration*
- *More Time*
- *Inclusion*
- *Process Clarity*
- *Priorities*

## 2 Tree Canopy

- *Data Discrepancies*
- *Value of Trees*
- *Balance of Needs*
- *Priority for Preservation*

## 4 Parking

- *Economic Impacts*
- *Safety and Accessibility*
- *Land-use Priorities*

## 6 Climate Change and Future Planning

- *Investment in Climate Resilience*
- *Future Infrastructure Planning*
- *Youth and Future Generations*





# What is being proposed?

## Corridor Layout

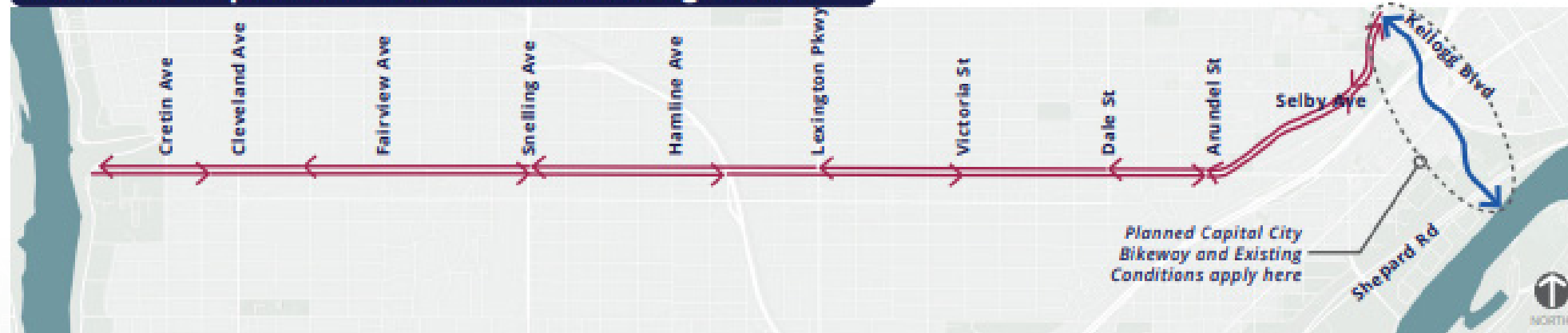
### Summit Avenue Corridor Segments



### Guiding Principles

-  Improve connectivity and public access to open space
-  Create a safe and equitable recreation experience for all users
-  Balance historic quality of corridor while modernizing infrastructure
-  Preserve greenspace and tree canopy
-  Anticipate evolving needs of users to create a more resilient, people-oriented corridor

### Preferred Proposed Corridor-wide Trail Alignment



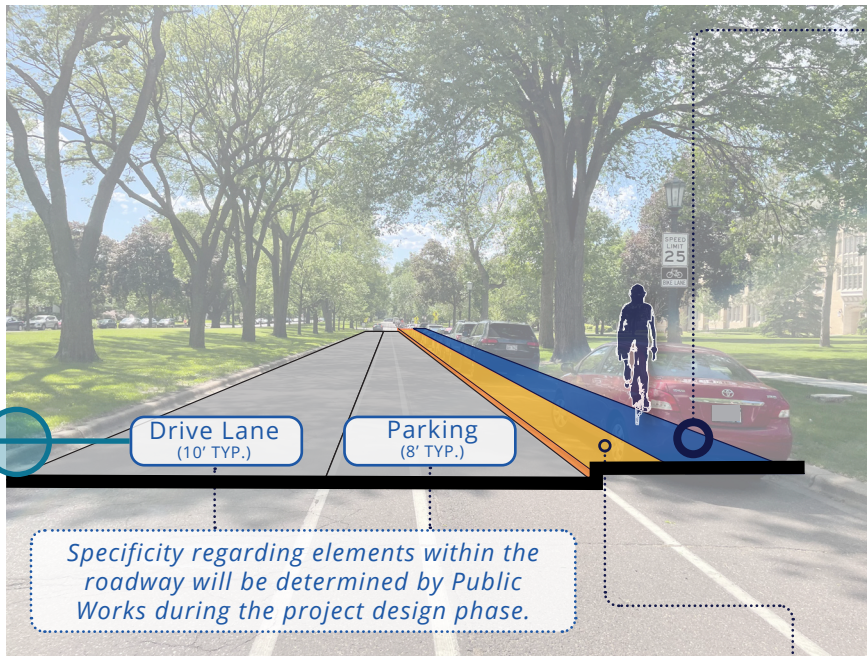
### Legend

-  Proposed Bike Facility - Two One-Way Facilities
-  Proposed Bike Facility - One Two-Way Facility

(Kellogg & Eagle Parkway)



# Proposed Components of the Transportation Envelope



Example | Paved Buffer:



Example | Vegetated Buffer:



## Buffer

recommended width: **4'**  
minimum width: **2' clear**



## One-Way Trail Facility

recommended width: **8'**  
minimum width: **7'**  
constrained condition: **6'**



- Familiar to drivers and current users of the Summit Avenue bike lanes
- Easier to maintain consistent facility through project implementation
- Predictable movement between modes at intersections and transition points



OR

## Two-Way Trail Facility

Kellogg and Eagle Pkwy only

recommended width: **14'**  
minimum width: **12'**



- Easier and less costly to maintain
- Smaller overall facility - easier to implement in existing roadway with limited impact
- Align with City and other policy recommendations



Note: all facility dimensions to be verified at the time of design and implementation

**Drive Lane Widths & Design Minimums**



**10' recommended for traffic calming**  
(Requires 1'-2' curb reactions, i.e. 11'-12')



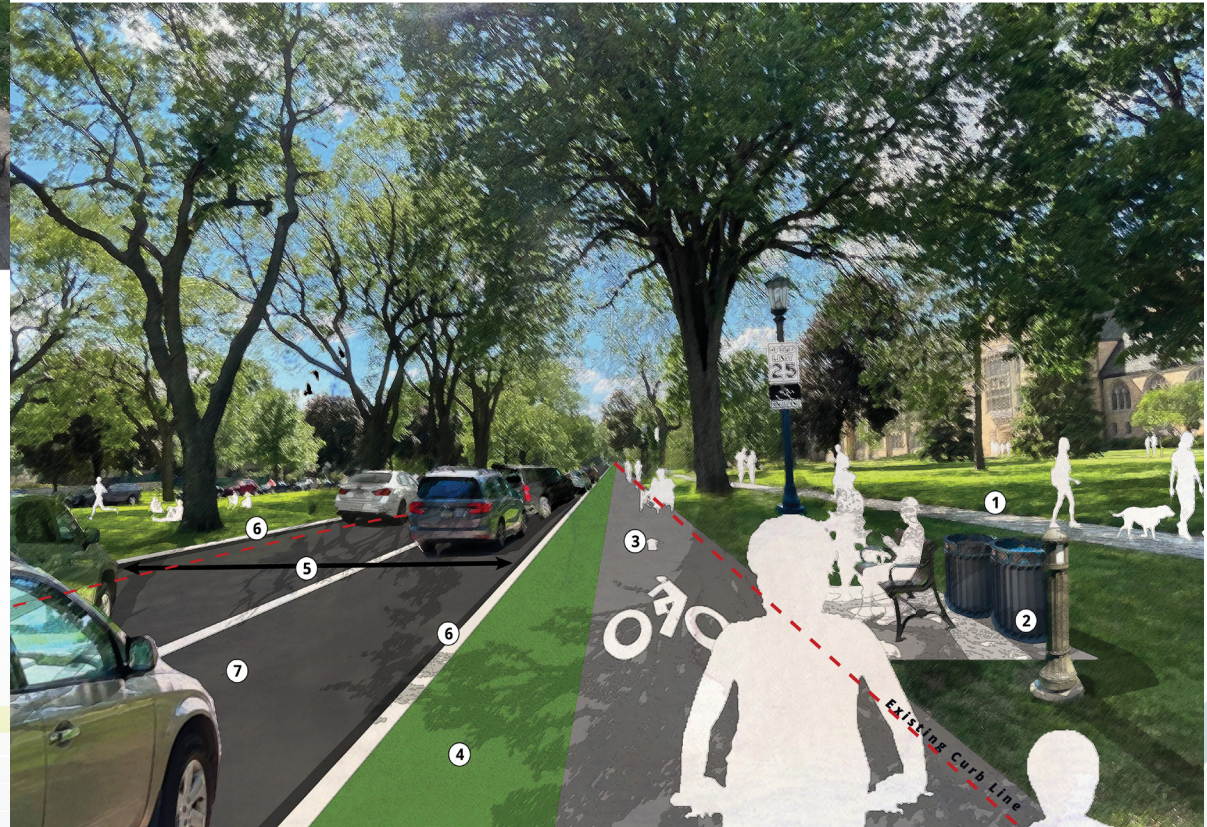




EXISTING



- ① **Sidewalks**  
Variable widths, 6'-10'
- ② **Amenity Areas**  
Space for rest, furnishings
- ③ **One-Way Trail**  
Grade Separated
- ④ **Buffer**  
Grass
- ⑤ **Vehicle Corridor**
- ⑥ **Curb**  
6" Height
- ⑦ **Parking**  
On-Street



PROPOSED



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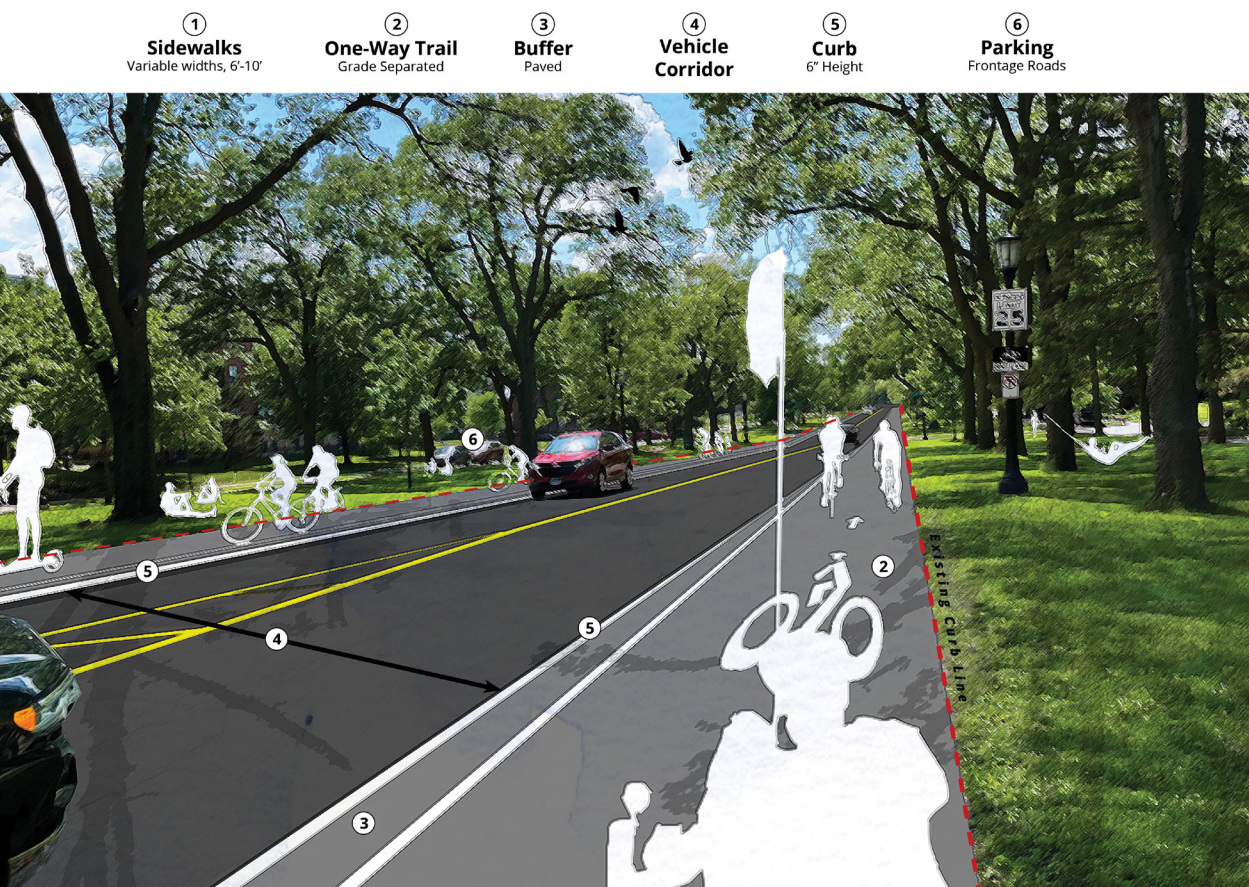
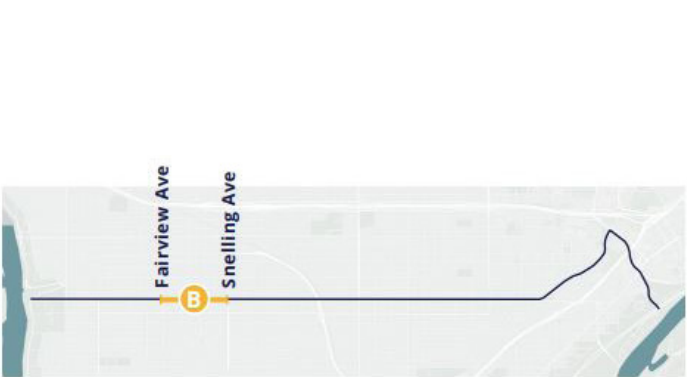
SEGMENTS A & C

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EXISTING



PROPOSED

- |                         |                      |               |                         |             |                |
|-------------------------|----------------------|---------------|-------------------------|-------------|----------------|
| ①                       | ②                    | ③             | ④                       | ⑤           | ⑥              |
| <b>Sidewalks</b>        | <b>One-Way Trail</b> | <b>Buffer</b> | <b>Vehicle Corridor</b> | <b>Curb</b> | <b>Parking</b> |
| Variable widths, 6'-10' | Grade Separated      | Paved         |                         | 6" Height   | Frontage Roads |



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SEGMENT B

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①  
**Sidewalks**  
Variable widths, 6'-10'

②  
**Tabled Crossing**  
Trail and sidewalk raised  
6" above street level

③  
**One-Way Trail**  
Grade Separated

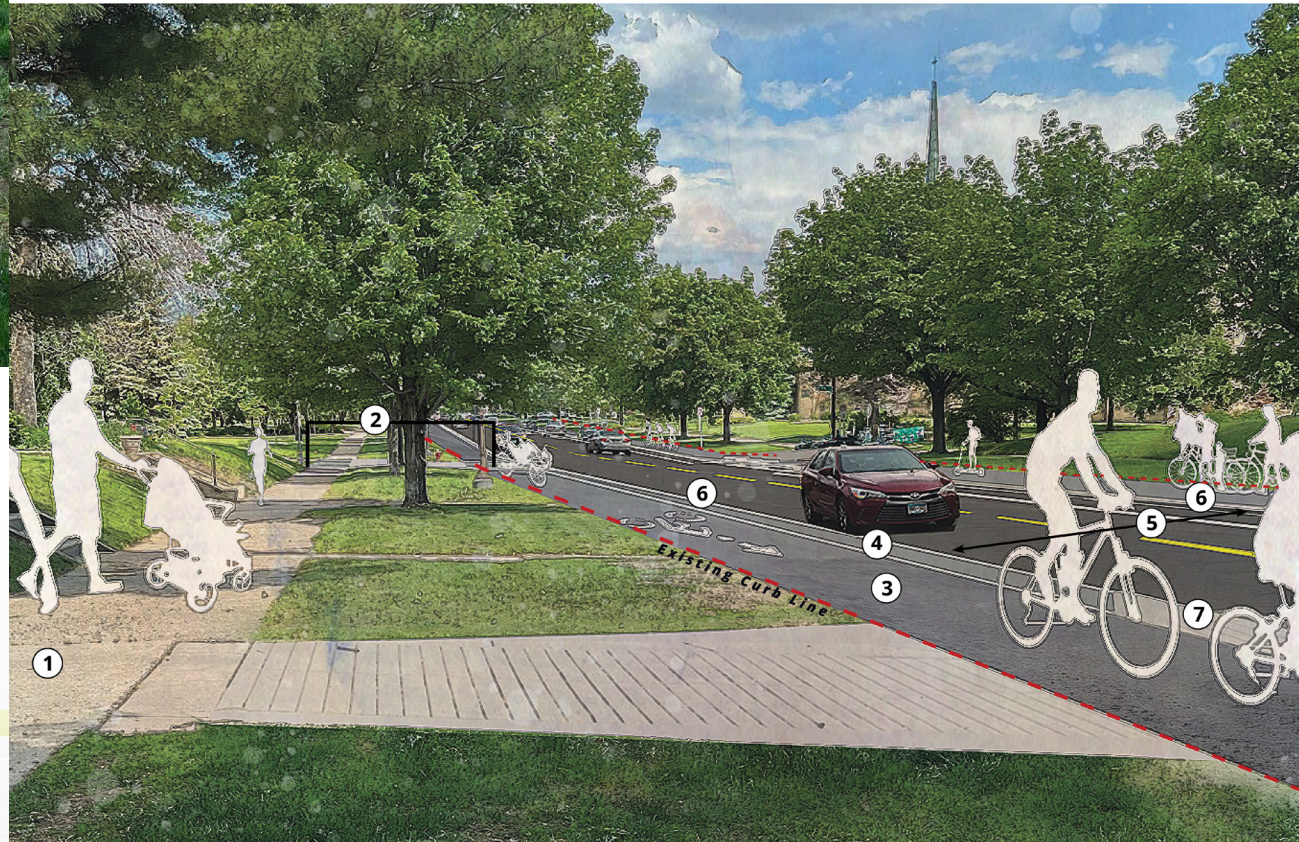
④  
**Buffer**  
Paved

⑤  
**Vehicle  
Corridor**

⑥  
**Curb**  
6" Height

⑦  
**Driveway Apron**

EXISTING



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SEGMENTS D, E, & F

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# How are concerns addressed?

## Historic Lens

### Engagement & Review Processes

#### • Plan Development

**Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)**  
Staff from Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) and State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) are invited to participate in TAC meetings to provide guidance and initial feedback

#### BEYOND THE PLAN PROJECT UNDERTAKING | SECTION 106

#### • Design & Engineering

##### Formal Review

Depending on funding sources, Local, State, and Federal Review Processes Apply

Any undertaking identified in the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) as a project, activity, or program that is funded in whole or in part with federal financial assistance requires that affects to designated or potentially eligible structures are identified and assessed

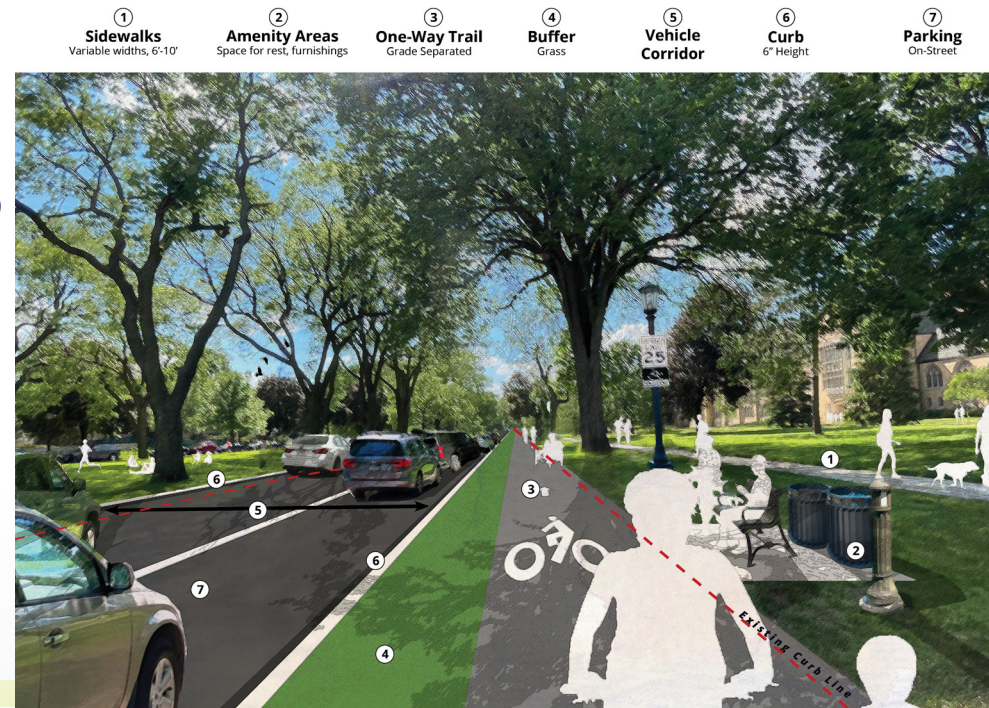
### PLAN

(CURRENT PROCESS)

#### • PARKING

#### • PAVED TREADWAY

Departure from the typical section would be determined during design and engineering, constrained conditions could remove parking or reduce paved surface dimensions as a way to adapt to site conditions within the roadway.



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# Driveways

Drivers should yield to cyclists on the trail similar to yielding to pedestrians on a sidewalk. Different treatments of driveway crossings may be necessary depending on their use classification (high, medium, low). Many of the driveways in the corridor are for residential properties and would potentially have a lower use frequency

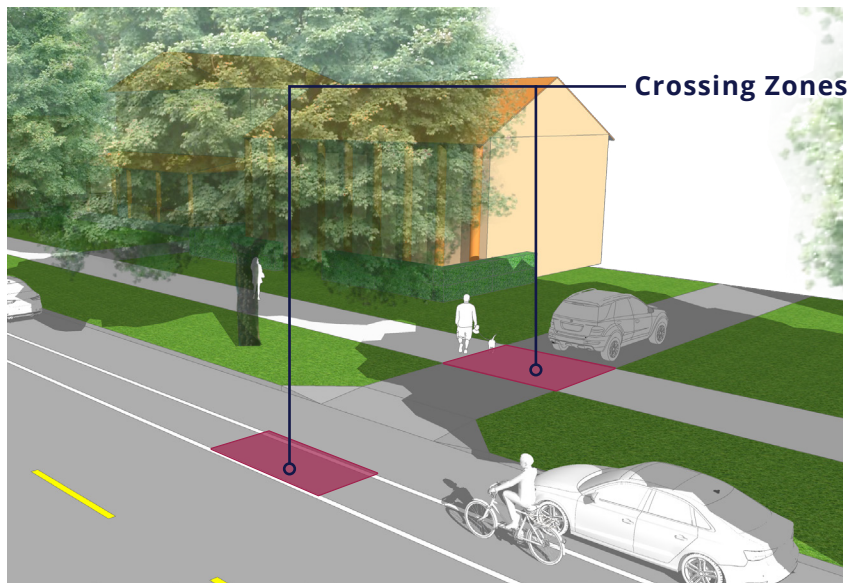


Fig. 4-3 | Typical Driveway Condition - Existing

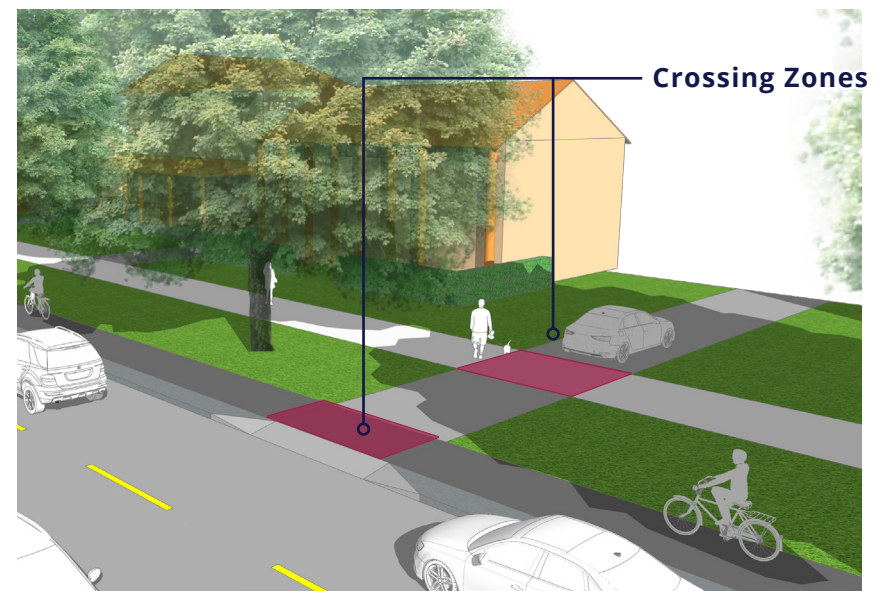


Fig. 4-4 | Typical Driveway Condition - Proposed

*Driveways in the public right-of-way will be rebuilt as a part of future street reconstruction. Consider solutions during engineering that maintain usability for residents and keep sight lines open for all modes in crossing zones.*



# Parking



Citywide planning and policies in general do not prioritize on-street parking for single-occupancy vehicles.

Parking counts conducted as a part of the Plan analysis phase reflect on-street parking is under-utilized corridor-wide which supports a strategy of reducing on-street parking options to reallocate space for a regional trail facility.

## *West of Lexington Parkway*

- 200' Public Right of Way
- Parking generally to remain

## *East of Lexington Parkway*

- 100' R.O.W.
- Parking reduced by 50%



2

User Experience

- Proximity of modes
- Safety & accessibility
- Perceived comfort
- Seasonal conditions



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# Evaluating Potential Tree Impacts

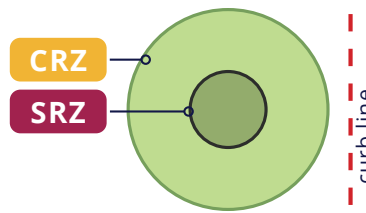
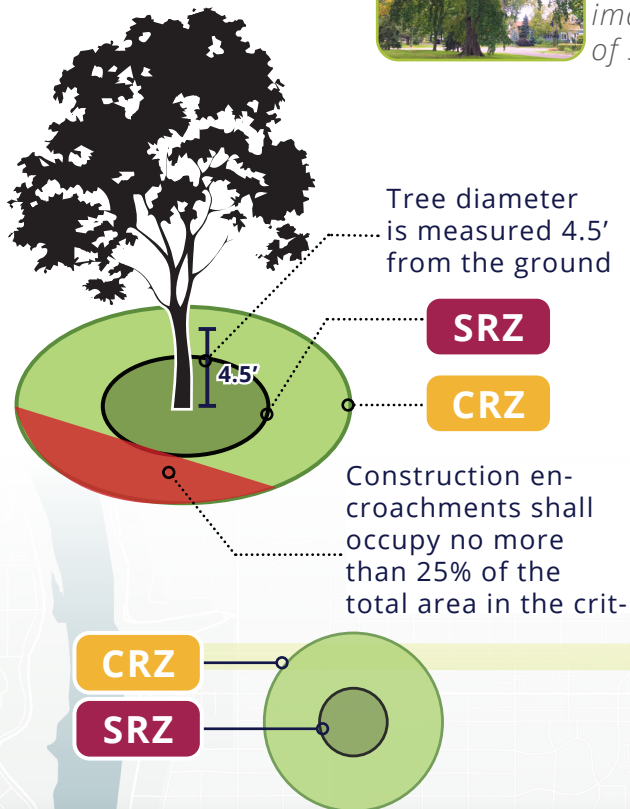
*Risk to trees is highly variable depending on specific site conditions, health of tree, and tree species.*

## Segment B and C

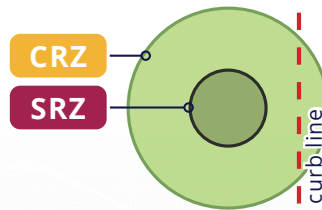


image provided by City of Saint Paul Forestry

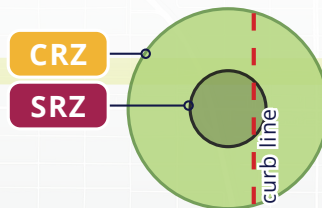
Segments B and C Mature Canopy and Greenspace



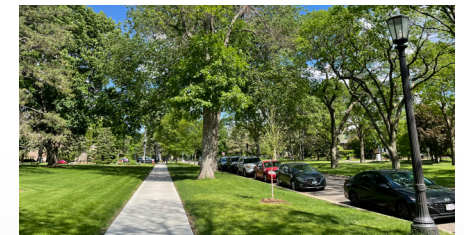
**Low Vulnerability**  
Curb line is outside of both critical and structural root zones.



**Medium Vulnerability**  
Curb line is within critical root zone but not structural root zone



**High Vulnerability**  
Curb line is within both critical and structural root zones





# Evaluating Potential Tree Impacts

## Existing Condition - Baseline for street reconstruction



### Existing Condition

- 1,561 Tree Corridor-Wide
- 132 High Vulnerability Trees (8% of total)

Summit Avenue

## Proposed Trail Concepts

### Preferred Alignment

(one-way trail: corridor-wide)

- 221 High Vulnerability Trees (14% of total)

Summit Avenue

#### Legend

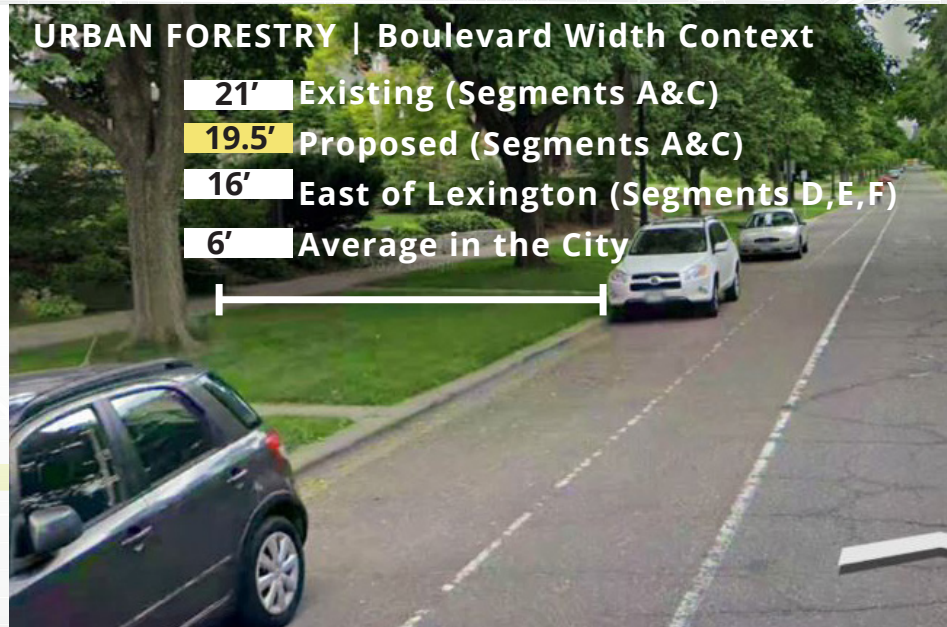
One-Way Trail

## Urban Forestry | Context

- 448** Trees removed along Summit Avenue from 2009 - 2022
- 15%** Average percentage of trees impacted after street reconstruction  
\*Derived from three case studies of City of Saint Paul street reconstruction projects from 2011, 2014, 2015
- 1:1** Tree Replacement practice. Importance of diversity, both age and species

### URBAN FORESTRY | Boulevard Width Context

- 21'** Existing (Segments A&C)
- 19.5'** Proposed (Segments A&C)
- 16'** East of Lexington (Segments D,E,F)
- 6'** Average in the City



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SUMMIT AVENUE REGIONAL TRAIL PLAN

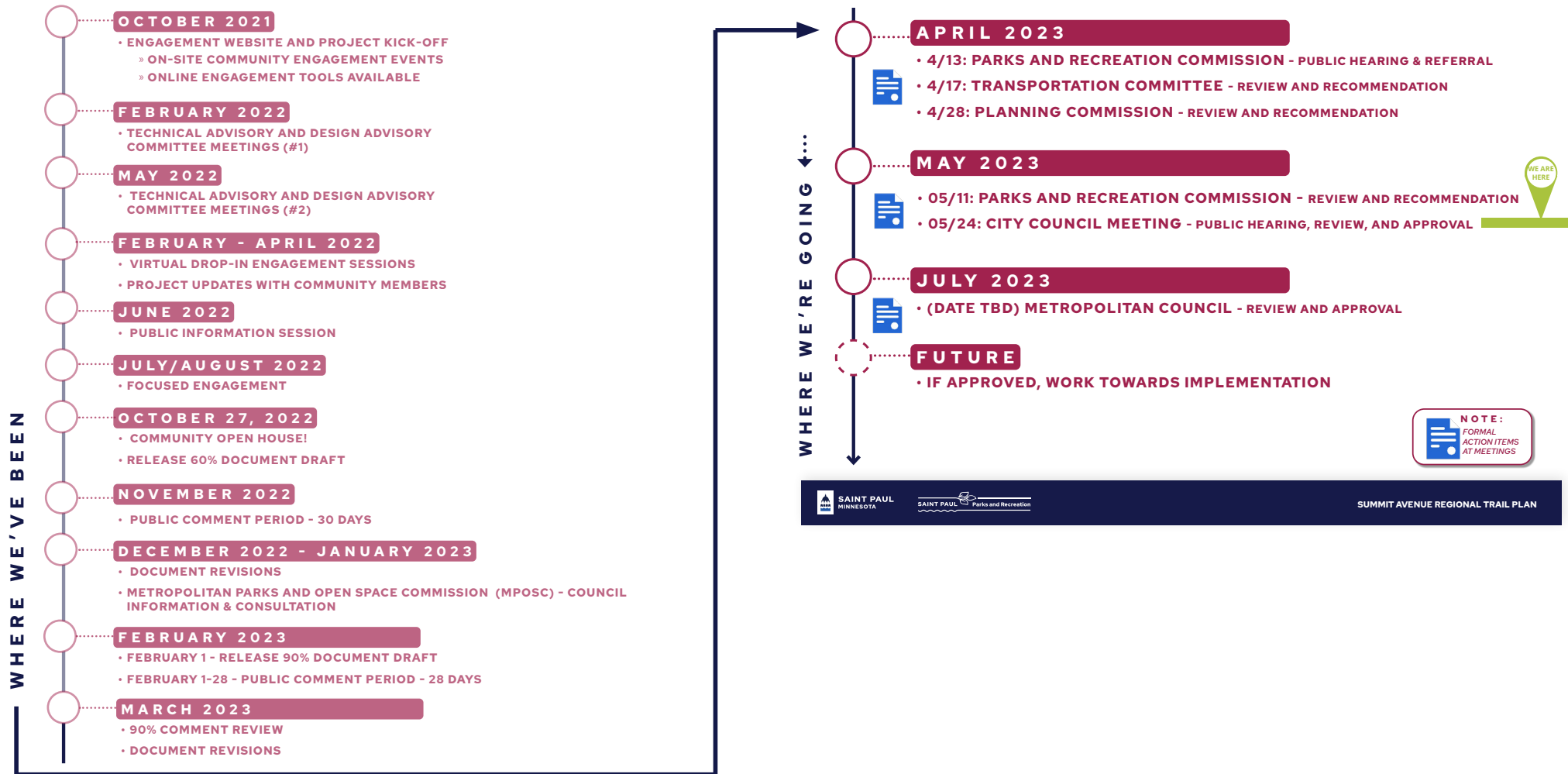


# What is next?

## Process

### Project Timeline

UPDATED 05/11/2023



**Updated DRAFT Summit Avenue Regional Trail Plan  
is available online at  
[www.engagestpaul.org/summit](http://www.engagestpaul.org/summit)**



# SUMMIT AVENUE REGIONAL TRAIL PLAN



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