

Payne Avenue Pedestrian Improvements Phase 1 Engagement Summary

SUMMARY

The success of the Payne Avenue Pedestrian Improvements project is highly dependent on integrating the community's voice and stakeholder input throughout the process. Engagement will take place through a variety of strategies occurring throughout the project, focusing on three phases.

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
<i>Introduction + Experiences Today</i> Fall - Winter 2025	<i>Shaping Improvements</i> Winter 2026	<i>Impacts + Next Steps</i> Spring 2026

The remainder of this document summarizes engagement from Phase 1: Introduction and Experiences Today.

ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES



Project Website

Available throughout the project, includes materials, engagement activities, and contact information.



Interactive Map

Identified specific pedestrian obstacles, safety concerns, and areas for improvement.



Business & Stakeholder Outreach

Discussed the project and needs with businesses and community members.



Community Meetings

Brought project information and feedback opportunities to the community.

KEY THEMES

Desire for street lighting, furniture, and less littering.

People walk on Payne Avenue to eat, work, access recreation, or shop.

Many people want to see traffic slowed down.

Community members want to support businesses along Payne Avenue.

Pedestrian concerns include cars traveling too fast, lack of pedestrian visibility, poor sidewalk conditions, and not enough marked crosswalks.

HOW DID WE GATHER FEEDBACK?

Phase 1 included a variety of public engagement strategies, including:

- Virtual presence
- Project survey
- Interactive map
- Business and stakeholder outreach
- Community meetings

Information about the project and engagement opportunities were promoted in a variety of methods for community members, residents, businesses, and stakeholders along the corridor. Detailed information about promotion for this phase is included in the Appendix.

STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH

Door Knocking



Project staff conducted outreach and door knocking to 16 businesses and stakeholder organizations along Payne Avenue in November of 2025. The goal of door knocking was to share information about the project, review the project schedule, and gather information about existing and future operations such as access, maintenance, and delivery needs. Prior to door knocking, project staff conducted outreach to businesses via email and phone calls and successfully connected with 96 businesses or stakeholders.

Below is a summary of what we heard during discussions with businesses:

- Traffic calming is needed at several intersections as cars frequently speed through intersections, and do not stop for pedestrians in crosswalks.
- Lack of lighting along Payne Avenue does not make the public or employees feel safe walking, especially at night.
- Desire for aesthetic improvements along Payne, including greening, art, updated signage, and debris removal.

Community Meetings



Project staff presented information about the project and engagement opportunities to community groups, councils, and committees in the project area:

- Payne-Phalen District Council Presentation
- Edgerton Hi-Rise Community Meeting Presentation
- Saint Paul Transportation Committee Presentation

SURVEY

The project survey was open from October 28, 2025 to January 1, 2026, with a total of 67 responses online, and nine responses from in-person engagement. The survey was available online, and translated to Somali, Hmong, and Spanish.

Who did we hear from?

67 responses



Most (93%) speak English as their primary language

3% spoke Hmong
1% spoke Spanish
1% spoke German
Remaining respondents preferred not to answer



43% live in the 55130 (Payne-Phalen) zip code

31% live in the 55106 (Payne-Phalen) zip code
4% live in the 55105 (Macalester-Groveland) zip code
Remaining respondents live in other zip codes or preferred not to answer



Most (52%) are White

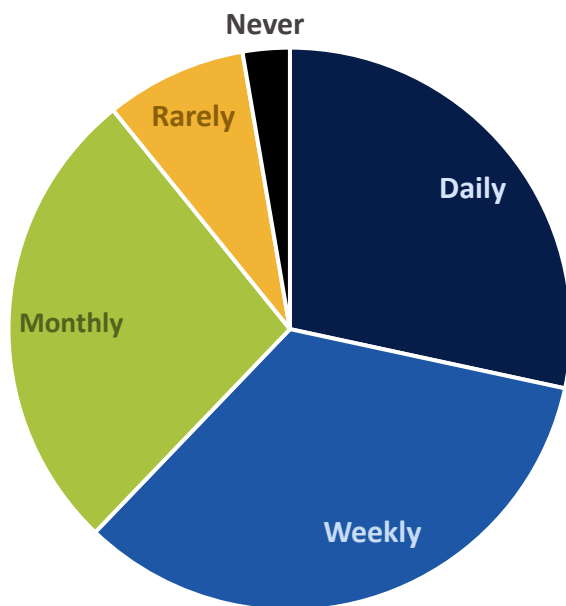
17% are Asian or Asian American
13% are Black or African American
4% are Hispanic or Latino
2% American Indian or Alaska Native
Remaining respondents preferred not to answer

Reflection of Community

Community demographics along Payne Avenue (based on zip codes and census tracts) include higher percentages of Asian, Black, and Hispanic residents than the survey reflects. As the project team plans for Phases 2 and 3, we will focus on connecting with these community groups.

Individual survey questions and response summaries are provided on the following pages.

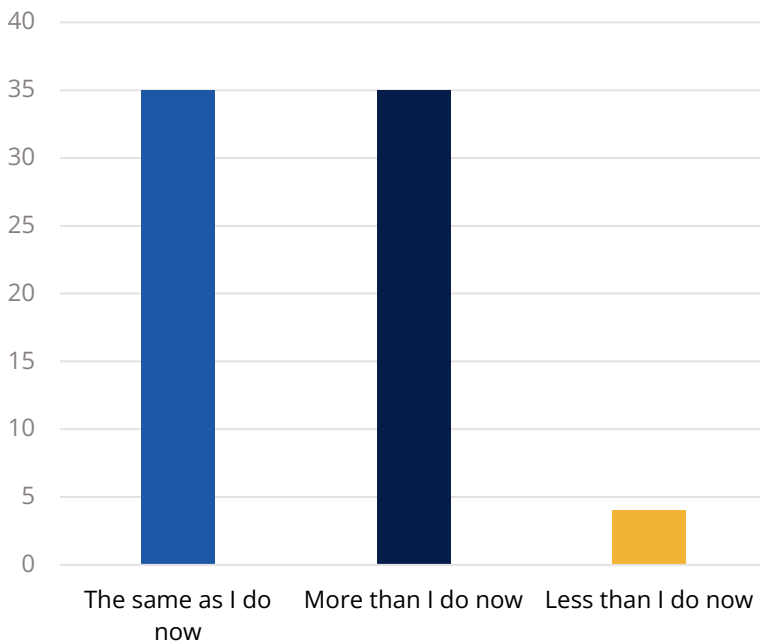
How often do you currently walk along Payne Avenue?



Most survey respondents walk along Payne Avenue **weekly or daily**, with very few never using it.

Frequency	Responses	Percentage
Never	2	3%
Rarely	6	8%
Monthly	20	26%
Daily	21	28%
Weekly	25	33%

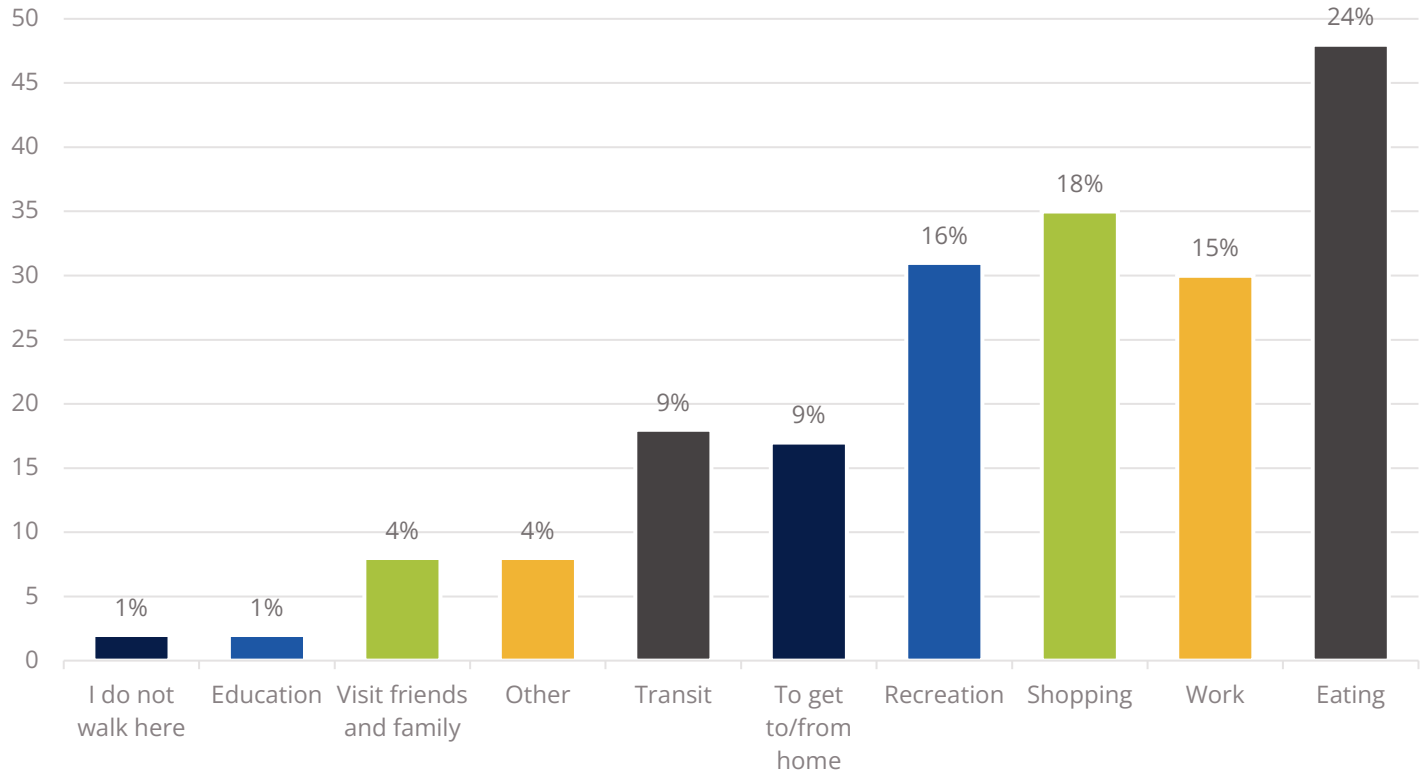
How often would you like to walk along Payne Avenue?



Most survey respondents want to **walk along Payne Avenue the same as they do now or more than they currently do.**

Frequency	Responses	Percentage
The same as I do now	35	47%
More than I do now	35	47%
Less than I do now	3	5%

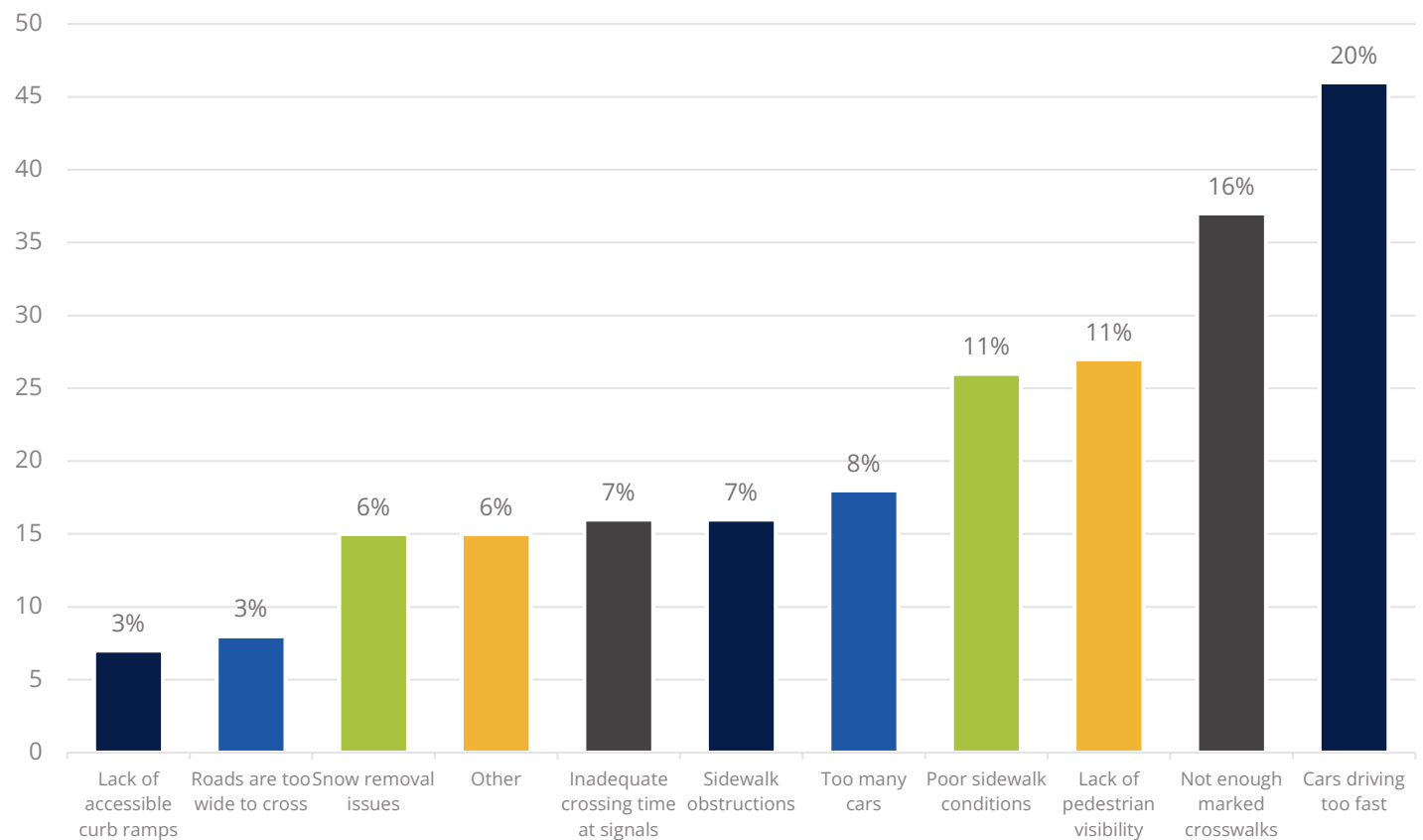
Why do you typically walk along Payne Avenue? (Select all that apply)



Most survey respondents walk along Payne Avenue for **eating, work, shopping, and recreational activities.**

Activity	Responses	Percentage
I do not walk here	2	1%
Education	2	1%
Visit friends and family	8	4%
Other	8	4%
Transit	18	9%
To get to/from home	17	9%
Recreation	31	16%
Shopping	35	18%
Work	30	15%
Eating	48	24%

What pedestrian issues do you experience walking on Payne Avenue today? (Select all that apply)

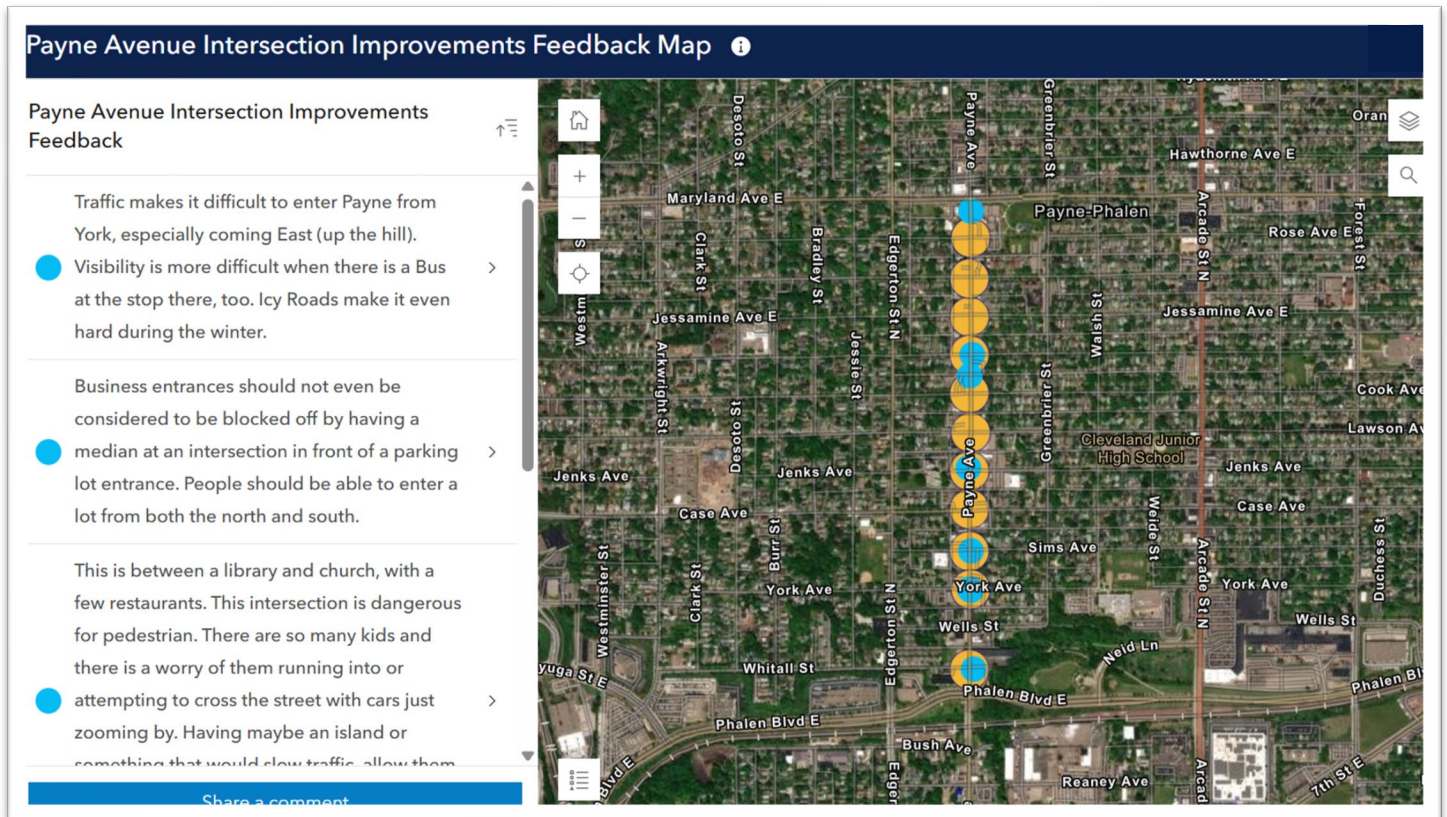


Key pedestrian concerns include **cars driving too fast, not enough marked crosswalks, lack of pedestrian visibility, and poor sidewalk conditions.**

Issue	Responses	Percentage
Lack of accessible curb ramps	7	3%
Roads are too wide to cross	8	3%
Snow removal issues	15	6%
Other	15	6%
Inadequate crossing time at signals	16	7%
Sidewalk obstructions	16	7%
Too many cars	18	8%
Poor sidewalk conditions	26	11%
Lack of pedestrian visibility	27	11%
Not enough marked crosswalks	37	16%
Cars driving too fast	46	20%

COMMENT MAP

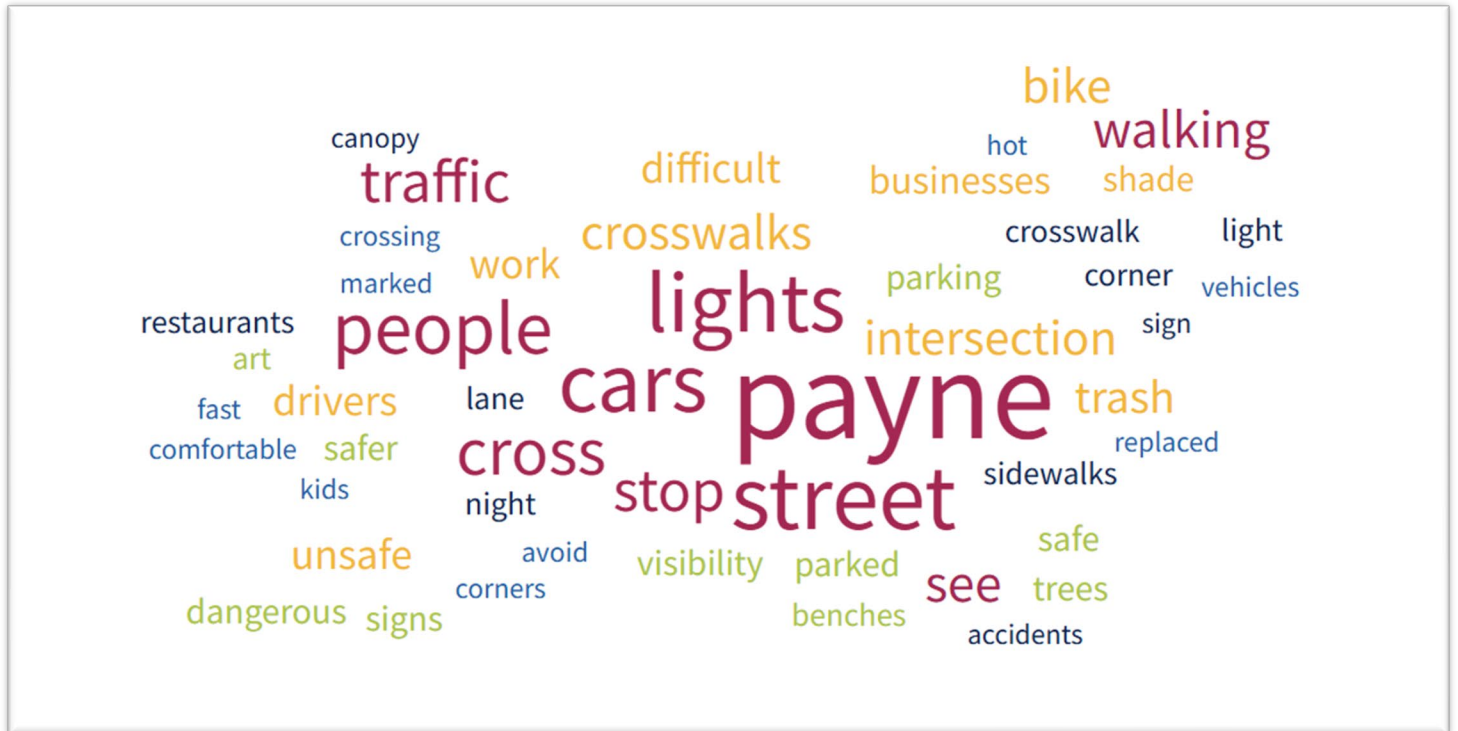
The interactive comment map was open from October 28, 2025 to January 1, 2026, with a total of seven comments. The interactive comment map was available online through the project website and in the online survey, and can be [accessed by clicking on the link here](#). Comments collected from the interactive comment map were also incorporated into the overall thematic analysis in the following section.



FEEDBACK THEMES

What themes did we hear?

Participants were able to share open-ended feedback through the online survey, discussions with project staff, and the interactive comment map. These comments were thematically analyzed and summarized by theme, depicted as a word cloud below.



Community members emphasized several key priorities for Payne Avenue. The most common themes included a strong desire for traffic calming measures, enhanced lighting, additional pedestrian crosswalks and safety measures, and support for local businesses. Residents also frequently called for more greenery and trees, street furniture such as benches, bike racks, and trash cans, as well as aesthetic enhancements like public art to create a more comfortable and vibrant streetscape.

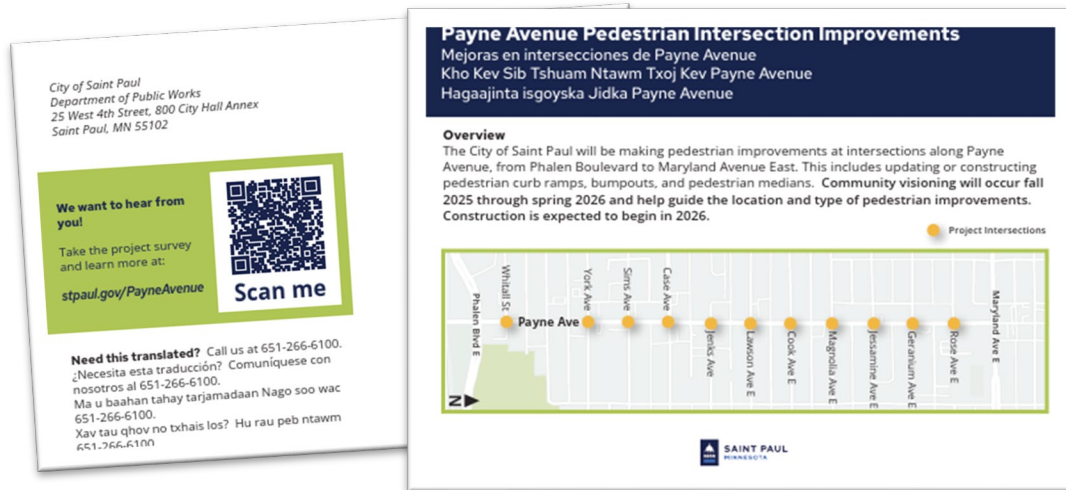


APPENDIX

PROMOTION AND OUTREACH

Project Postcard

To promote the project and online engagement activities, the City of Saint Paul sent a postcard to property owners and residents near the corridor, promoted on the city website, and shared on social media pages.



Postcard sent to community members, businesses, and stakeholders.

Sidewalk Stickers

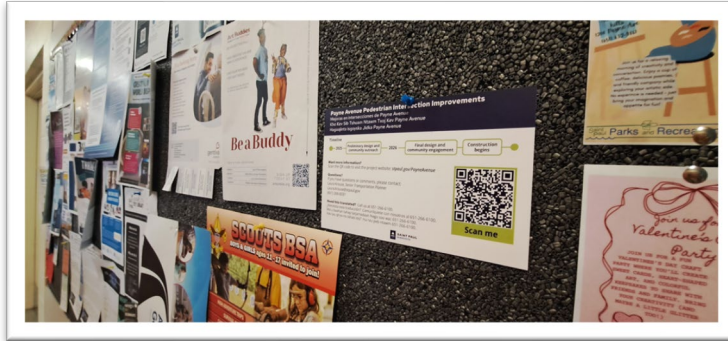
In addition, sidewalk stickers were placed at project intersections, displaying information about the project and links to online engagement activities. This ensured that information about the project was available to those who are on the corridor – no matter their purpose for visiting. Approximately 22 sidewalk stickers were placed along the corridor.



Sidewalk sticker placed at a project intersection along Payne Avenue.

Project flyer

A project flyer was shared with businesses, community groups, and other stakeholders for them to post and or distribute. These flyers served a similar purpose to sidewalk stickers, guiding to the project website, sharing information, and increasing awareness. The project team distributed 65 project flyers with businesses, community groups, and stakeholders both in-person and virtually.



Project flyers displayed on bulletin boards at businesses and community areas.

Translated materials

Payne Avenue outreach materials were translated into Hmong, Somali, and Spanish to reach more community members, businesses, and stakeholders, and gather representative feedback. Promotional materials like sidewalk stickers and flyers were partially translated to encourage community members to visit the project website. The online survey was entirely translated into each language.

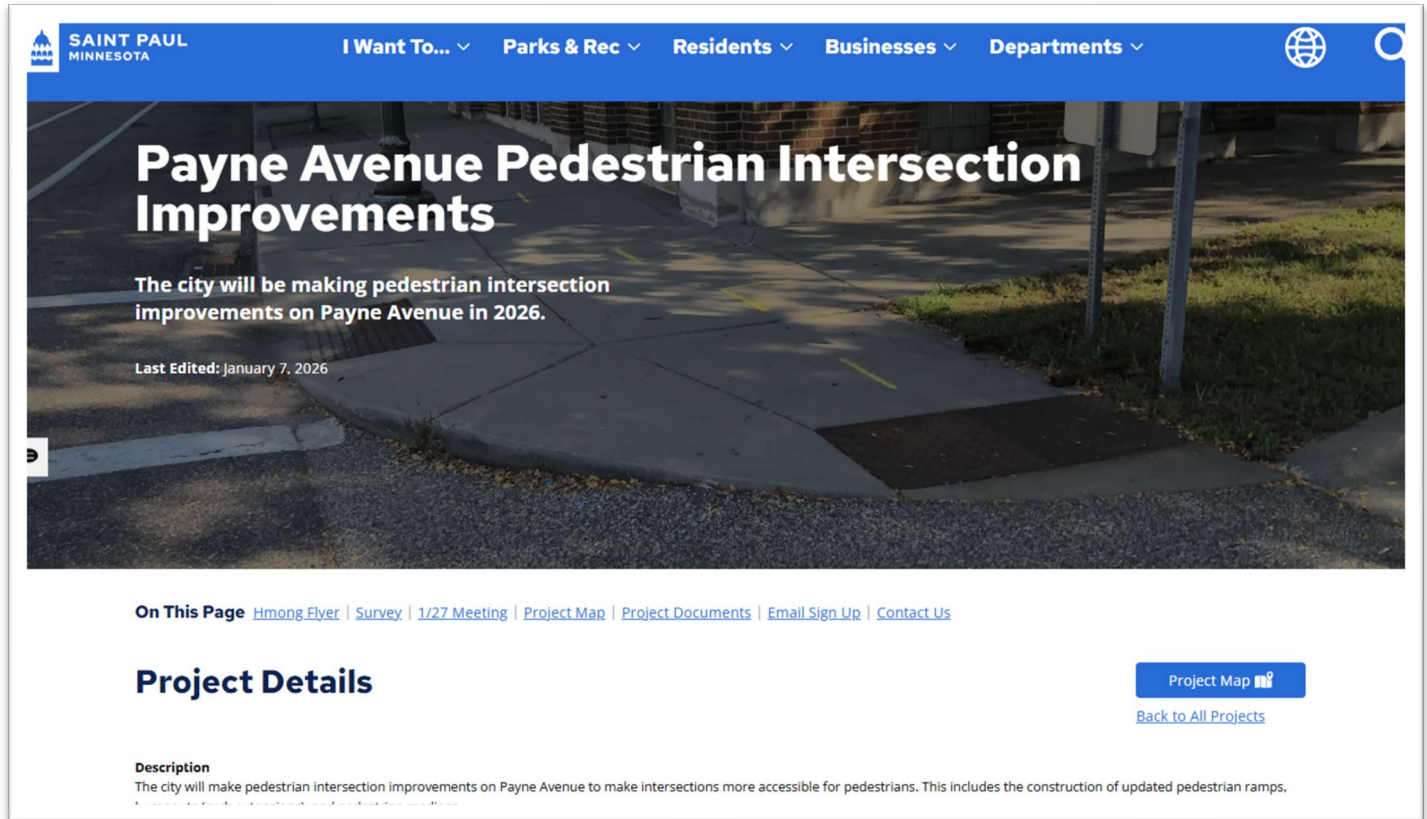
A stakeholder on the corridor shared the need for Hmong translation, and a project team member identified that Hmong audiences may be more likely to engage with the project and share information in an audio format, in addition to translated printed materials. The project flyer was read and recorded in Hmong, and available online through the city's website. A QR-code for the audio recording was added to the Hmong-translated flyer, which was also shared with stakeholders. The audio file received 34 unique clicks or QR-code scans as of January 22, 2026.



The audio recording of the Payne Avenue flyer.

Virtual presence

The City of Saint Paul hosted a project website that includes a project overview, high-level schedule, links to engagement opportunities, and contact information to reach project staff with questions or comments. During Phase 1 of engagement, this website linked visitors directly to the project survey, interactive mapping exercise, and email sign up links.



A photo of the project website.

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

All comments and open-ended survey responses collected during Phase 1 are included in this section. Responses have been minimally edited to remove identifying information.

1. Need trash cans
2. People (non cops) to be present regularly and provide resources for folks using drugs
3. Public art
4. Improved walking paths

As the property owner on [ommitted] we would like to offer more detailed input on our intersection. It needs more shade canopy and crosswalks at intersections. Because of the number of cars parked on Payne near intersections, It's hard for drivers on cross streets intersecting with Payne to see oncoming traffic when they're stopped at the stop sign. I'm constantly afraid accidents will occur at intersections because I've experienced and witnessed this so many times.

Shade trees would help. More benches and trash cans, too.

might be time to get out of here

I work on Payne, at the intersection with Jessamine, but have never walked this length of Payne to explore my own area. Most often I have driven down this section to any stores I go to after work, for my safety, due to the high number of cars and inability to cross. Thank for this project to make Payne safer!

Walking lights for students to cross on especially on Payne and Jasmine st. Urban Roots is on the corner and ALOT of teens cross that street daily to get into the building.

We need to find a balance that allows the vehicle traffic and parking that the businesses rely on to stay in business, but also allows for comfortable pedestrian traffic.

Traffic calming features and marked crosswalks would help, especially the crosswalks with the flashing lights a the more busy crossings.

I have experienced cars not slowing and just swerving around me and my young kids as I'm crossing in a crosswalk. Payne Ave is an area I live near and would like to visit more but am terrified of having to cross the street so almost always avoid.

I get hot in the summertime. There is some shade but not a lot so I typically prefer walking in neighborhoods until I get to Payne.

I would love more bike racks. I love the bike lane.

Yes. Why waste funds on this issue when what is really needed on Payne is help for new business? It's a nearly dead zone right now, and almost nobody walks it. My neighbor is afraid to, because of perceived crime, not curbs. I don't walk it because of its steep incline.

I use to walk from my house to my work on Payne. I loved it, But recently in the past year or so things have become uncomfortable and I have often felt unsafe. Walking to work sometimes at 7 in the morning, leaving work sometimes as late as 9. After 9 I have someone pick me up. I've had people flag me down, follow me, sometimes they would say things to me, other times they just look. I've seen people trying doors to see if any are open. I've had my own office door jiggled very hard when I worked late at night. People who are obviously on something scream shout rant. So instead of walking 5-10 minutes, I have chosen to take my car instead.

It would be really nice to have more crosswalks so cars actually stop when there are pedestrians. It feels very unsafe right now.

The street signs covered by leafy trees.

More art and lights would add a more attractive aesthetic. Bike lanes would make biking safer and more convenient.

Make sure there is sufficient, working lighting.

The area looks rundown so people are less respectful of the property.
We have lost a lot of the businesses that inspired pedestrian traffic.

Cars drive really fast down Payne Avenue. At the same time, the bike lane there is unprotected. I would feel safer walking on Payne if traffic was slowed. I'd like to have a protected bike lane there too.

Payne is a great street and it would be even better if there were more opportunities for the street to do more than just move and park personal vehicles.

The light posts are not lit. It has been very dark and not safe walking around since the wires were pulled out .

We are at [omitted]. If they put a bump on Payne by our parking entrance, this will block from customers being able to take a left into our lot and we would be unable to get our truck into the lot for our orders.

I am not agreeing with the changes that's to be made on Payne Ave, I like the road how it was. The only change I would like to see is, not having cars parked too close to the corners for walkers visibility and cars. Most of the time, the cars are parked too close to the corner so we cannot see incoming cars. Have "no parking" signs farther away from corners. But I don't agree with most of the newer streets that are built. It's really more congestive and busier, higher risk for accidents. Rice St and Maryland is horrible.

Street lights need to be replaced and prioritize for night time walkers and commuters

The things listed above have nothing to do with why Payne Avenue is a problem.
dangerous at night, lots of litter,

Yes, what are those silver poles on the updated sidewalk on Arcade? I am highly curious about them.

There are a LOT of drug addicts in the neighborhood. Some are violent, some are not. Vehicles, including cops without sirens/lights, run lights and stop signs at high speeds. Payne and Phalen are two of the many roads they choose to loiter and race on.

There is also an amazing amount of trash everywhere.

It is very very unsafe. We have children here. We want it to be safer.

Streets are often cluttered with garbage

I think is necessary more lights in the pedestrian crosswalk so the cars really stop, because now they stop because they want to and are gentle, not because they really respect the crosswalk.

Also the city in general needs more light in the sidewalks and trash bins, not only in the principal avenues but include more along the streets.

It's a beautiful Avenue. Lots of Businesses and restaurants to shop. Not comfortable walking the distance with any problem people. Kinda scary. I avoid unsafe predicaments.

We need working streetlights in this whole area !!!

My experience with adjustments to the street are poor; they hamper traffic more than help pedestrians Drivers seldom stop at intersections or marked crosswalks to let people go. Bicycles and motorized bikes are also a big problem, especially on sidewalks (and that is where they typically drive)

Use the resources and fix roads , side walls and LIGHTS)

feels unsafe without lights that work

It's getting dark out early now. Multiple lights on Payne are no longer working and they have gone unfixed. The East Side is not very safe and it would be nice to have the lights replaced. In addition, there needs to be a better way to prevent theft of the copper wires. If I were living and paying property taxes in a better part of St. Paul multiple streets also lights being non working with wires exposed is something I would never see. It would be so nice to have visible crosswalks that make it clear to ALL drivers that pedestrians have the right of way and that they MUST STOP for us. There also needs to be more access for people who have physical disabilities and need sidewalk access or more time to cross. Thank you for taking the time to review my feedback.

We need cameras at the intersections to tickets drivers who speed and run red lights Aggressive driving and traffic noise are the main things that makes payne unpleasant to walk on. But I'd also love to see wider sidewalks, benches and trees, and bumpouts/visible crosswalks at every intersection. Also: we need more things to walk to! There are a lot of great destinations on Payne, but there's also a lot of dead space, particularly north of case.

Need more trash receptacles. Some benches for resting for those of us who can't walk a lot without having to rest.

I was hoping this was about Payne A e as a whole. The street is very littered and the side are dirty. The Business are blank with no visible signs of life. The street feels abandoned.

Please consider adding a stoplight to the Payne/York intersection. Entering Payne from York can be challenging sometimes. When there is a Bus at the stop, visibility is limited on the left side. Since York is at a slope, the winter causes additional issues trying to enter the street, given the snowy/icy roads. Please also consider if more street lights are needed or need upgrading.

Hard to find secure places to lock bikes (Caydence has one, ace hardware and the library have good ones with multiple spots but that's kinda it). When I can't find one I lock on metal poles designed to protect some sort of utility box but that makes my bike a bit in the way for pedestrians--like it might be in the way for someone using a wheelchair. A lot of the street sign poles are loose so can't lock up on them

As a driver on Payne, it's really difficult to see pedestrians even when I would stop for them! Visibility is the biggest issue by far. When I'm walking, I have to start going into the intersection before I can even be seen.

- When crossing the street, it's very hard to see past parked cars and know how much time you might have to cross.
- There should be painted cross walks, ped-activated timers at many more intersections than current.
- The tree canopy is inconsistent. This is an urban heat island (as noted in the City's resilience plan) so adding more trees should be an absolute priority. Boulevard gardens would be great too!
- There needs to be places to sit down along the way. This is a key ped. route and it gets long, especially going uphill toward the rec. center and the lake.
- There are few if any bike racks. On a commercial street, bike racks should be a must!
- Slow down cars, please!
- Encourage and support parklets for the local restaurants. There are alot of great businesses on Payne (many more than alot of other city streets). Do something to make the street more festive. It matters.

To many homeless people

The lights are out and that makes the avenue seem scary.

Drug addicts, arsonists and armed people everywhere.

A lot of people using drugs. No trash cans like on Grand so trash is everywhere. Public art would be nice.

The eastside is going to hell thanks to our elected officials

It has become dangerous

people loitering

Lack of lighting starting at Sims Ave and Payne all the way to Phalen BLVD

Too many meth heads and arsonists that get arrested and let go with little to no punishment

Poor light on the streets

Lights. The lights are often out.

street lights are out! vandals pulled the wires!

Drivers never stop for pedestrians. Including school and MTC buses drivers. Several streets have blind spots, causing people to step into the street to check for cars. This gets dangerous because people either are not paying attention, or driving too fast

Lots of litter

Lack of shade so it's unpleasant to walk down on a hot day, cars not paying attention/not stopping at pedestrian crosswalks

Traffic makes it difficult to enter Payne from York, especially coming East (up the hill). Visibility is more difficult when there is a Bus at the stop there, too. Icy Roads make it even hard during the winter.

cars going quickly make it difficult to cross this street. please add location names to make this map easier to read.

Business entrances should not even be considered to be blocked off by having a median at an intersection in front of a parking lot entrance. People should be able to enter a lot from both the north and south.

cars going too quickly, it's difficult to cross this intersection even with the pedestrian walkway. how will all the businesses on Payne be impacted by this construction?

Traffic from this corner makes it hard to cross

the hill here on E Magnolia makes it difficult to see when cars are coming and can make it unsafe to cross the road.

This is between a library and church, with a few restaurants. This intersection is dangerous for pedestrian. There are so many kids and there is a worry of them running into or attempting to cross the street with cars just zooming by. Having maybe an island or something that would slow traffic, allow them to find a safe zone in the middle of the street would probably make it a lot more safe.

Yes, clear the sidewalk please, I am in a wheelchair.

I as a woman, feel unsafe, even a block from home. I have never seen the police.

Broken sidewalks

Snow removal is bad bad bad

Vagrants, drugs, ice agents

Illegal parking