

Cedar Avenue reconstruction

Phase 2 engagement summary

Background

Hennepin County hosted several engagement events in the fall of 2023 to continue to develop a conceptual design for the reconstruction of Cedar Avenue (County Road 152). The second phase of engagement involved reporting back to the community what was learned in Phase 1, gathering input on the updated project goals and gaining insight into community priorities for the roadway through a cross section puzzle exercise.

Engagement events

Engagement events for Phase 2 included the following:

National Night Out
August 7

Greenway Glow pop up
September 9

Corridor residents focus group
September 12

Little Earth focus group
September 18

Spanish language focus group
September 14

Business focus group
September 14

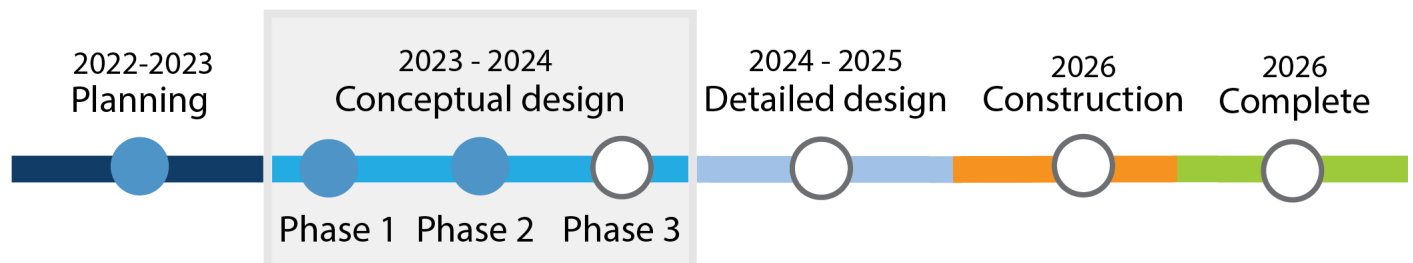
Public workshop
September 21

Cedar Clean Sweep
October 9



Overall, the project team engaged with about 165 people at engagement events.

Project schedule



Reporting back: Corridor priorities

During Phase 1, the public voted on priorities for the corridor. Environment and health was by far the highest priority, followed by pedestrian safety.. These top two priorities were affirmed in the cross section exercise of Phase 2. Boulevards/green space and wide sidewalks were a priority in street designs.

Reporting back: Project goals

Seeking to align with feedback heard in Phase 1, the project team adjusted the project goals to better align with the community's vision for the street and agency policy guidance. This involved providing clarity to existing goals and adding two additional goals. Moving forward, the project team will apply these goals and balance their trade-offs as conceptual roadway designs are developed. Overall, community members supported the changes made to the project goals.

Past goal

Improve access to destinations

Improve multimodal access

Prioritize transit friendly design

Replacing aging infrastructure

Increase greening

Added: Community goals

Updated goal

Make it easier to access nearby community destinations including parks, trails and local businesses

New combined goal: Make it more comfortable for people walking, biking, rolling and using transit along the corridor

Replace and modernize aging infrastructure such as traffic signals and stormwater facilities

Preserve existing tree canopy and increase greening along the corridor

Build a road for today and tomorrow that reflects the community's values

Design a livable, calmer, safer street

Focus group feedback

The main activity in Phase 2 was a cross section exercise, which asked participants to build their ideal street first with an 80-foot right of way, and then again with a smaller 64-foot right of way. This exercise helps both participants and project staff examine priorities for the street.

- Boulevards/green space was prioritized by almost all groups.
- Wide sidewalks were preferred by many participants.
- Many who added furnishing zones alongside the sidewalks mentioned the need for lighting in the corridor.
- There was strong support for bike lanes, especially from Cedar Avenue residents, noting the connection to the Midtown Greenway.
- The Little Earth and Spanish language focus groups prioritized bus lanes, as did about half of public workshop participants.
- Overall, parking was not a priority, except for businesses.

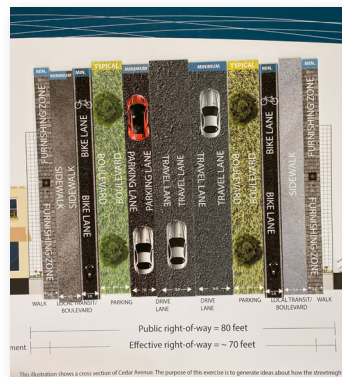
Street priorities differed slightly across the four focus groups:

- **Corridor residents:** Strong support for bike lanes from residents. Overall desire to reduce traffic congestion and traffic speeds. Two of the three groups included parking on the west side.
- **Corridor businesses:** All groups included parking on both sides of the street. Both groups kept bike lanes in their designs, noting the connection to the Midtown Greenway.
- **Banyan Community Center (Spanish language):** All three groups included dedicated bus lanes. Two of the three groups kept bus lanes even in the 64-foot version.
- **Little Earth Residential Association:** All groups included southbound bus lanes. No groups included parking.

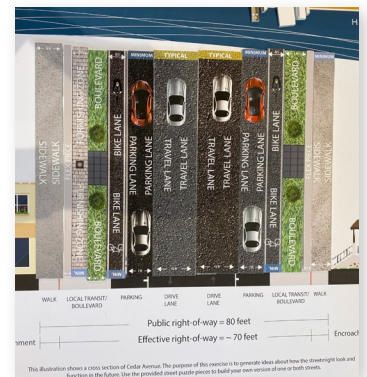


Cedar Avenue business representatives complete the cross section activity at a focus group.

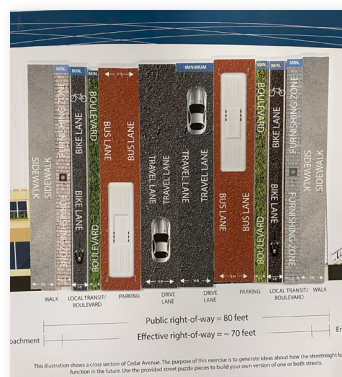
Corridor residents



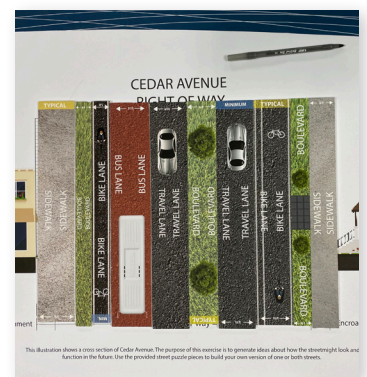
Corridor businesses



Banyan Community Center (Spanish language)



Little Earth Residential Association



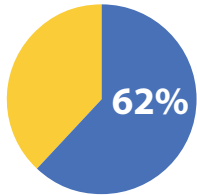
Example of a completed cross section activity from each focus group.

Workshop feedback

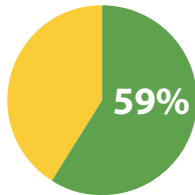
The project team hosted a public meeting/workshop on Thursday, September 21 at Little Earth Residents Association. The event drew about 135 people.

Demographics

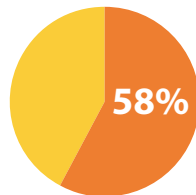
Demographic information was voluntarily collected at this event:



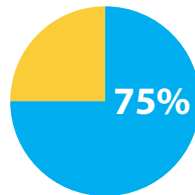
Lived on or close by Cedar Avenue



Were American Indian/Native American



Identified as female



Represented zip code 55404



Project partners engage with public meeting attendees.

Cross section exercise

32 open house attendees completed the cross section puzzle activity resulting in 55 unique roadway designs.



Sidewalks

Present in all designs. Participants generally preferred wider sidewalks.



Boulevards/green space

Other than sidewalks and drive lanes, boulevards/green space was included the most often, appearing in about 70% of designs.



Bike lanes

Appeared in 84% of the 80-foot designs and 65% of the 64-foot designs. The usage of two bike lanes was higher than the use of one.



Parking

Was not prioritized by this group, only appearing in about a quarter of the 80-foot designs and 12% of the 64-foot designs.



Transit (bus) only lane

At least one dedicated transit lane was included in 64% of the 80-foot designs and 46% of the 64-foot designs.



Turn lane

Appeared in about 20% of 80-foot designs and only 12% of 64-foot designs.



Pedestrian zones

Furnishing zones—or areas for elements such as street furniture, lighting and bicycle parking—were in about 30% of designs, prioritized over parking, transit shelters, turn lanes, and café seating. Anecdotally, when furnishing zones were added by participants, conversation with staff indicated that lighting (primarily) and seating (secondarily) were desired in this area.

Engagement goals

The public engagement vision is to connect with community and stakeholders to generate project interest, build rapport, and facilitate a high level of participation in understanding and shaping the project. We plan to realize this by using the following goals-based approach to public engagement.

1

Inclusive engagement

2

Multicultural engagement

3

Prioritize community relationships

Throughout conceptual design the county is partnering with community-based organizations in the Phillips neighborhood with the interest, capacity and expertise in conducting engagement. Little Earth Resident Association, Banyan Community, and the Midtown Greenway Collation will assist the county with engagement to help deliver on our engagement goals.

Upcoming engagement



Phase 3
engagement

Alternative designs will be presented for public input.
Expect more information in early 2024.

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Need more information or would like to attend an event? Email us at
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