

2024 Grand Avenue Reconstruction

Fairview Ave to Snelling Ave

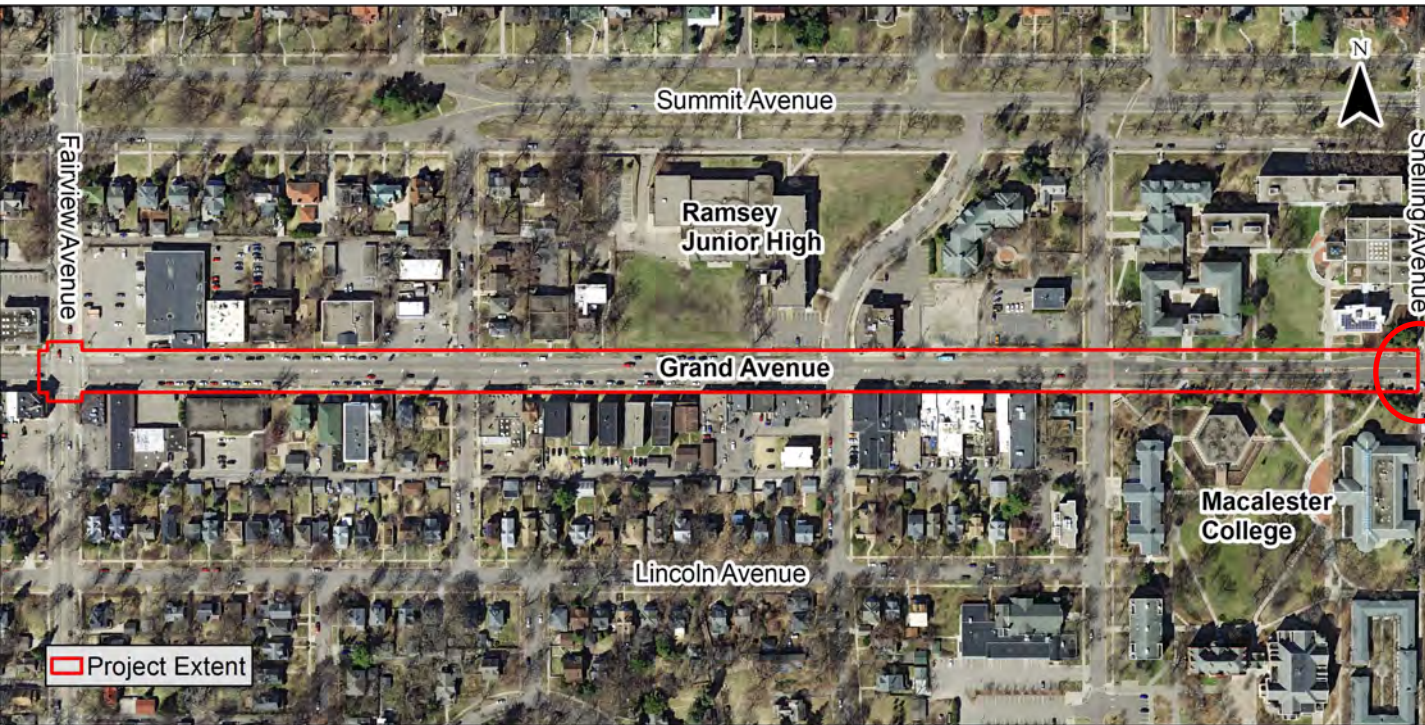


SAINT PAUL
PUBLIC WORKS

STPAUL.GOV



Grand Avenue Reconstruction



Project Extent:
From Snelling Ave to
Fairview Ave intersection

The City has applied for
funding to include the
Snelling Avenue
intersection into
project scope



Project Need and Goals

- Project Need
 - Low pavement quality throughout the project extent
 - High pedestrian activity
 - Pedestrian crossing needs at intersections, and notably mid-block crossings within the Macalester College campus
 - Ageing underground infrastructure
- Project Goals
 - Improve safety along the corridor, with an emphasis on pedestrian crossing safety
 - Upgrade and modernize ageing infrastructure
 - Improve built environment to better serve Grand Avenue businesses
 - Improve transit user experience
 - Balance mode share to encourage non-automotive trips along and to the corridor
 - Improve interaction/placemaking through Macalester College campus



Corridor History

- Grand Avenue original use was for a streetcar line
- Macalester College donated land for Grand Avenue streetcar right-of-way
- Streetcar line discontinued in 1950s
- Recent work:
 - Most recent work: thin mill and overlay in 2020 from Snelling Ave to Macalester St
 - Center median installed through Macalester campus mid 2000s
 - Metro Transit completed bus stop improvements and stop consolidation for Route 63 in 2020





Project Data

- Project construction year: 2024
- Project description:
 - Full depth reconstruction
 - Roadway surface
 - Curb and gutters
 - Street lighting replacement
 - Reconstruction of sidewalks
 - Underground utility replacement
 - Signal replacement (Fairview Avenue)
- Project budget: \$6,990,000 (including signal replacement at Fairview)
- Project length: ~2,600 feet (~0.5 miles)

Existing Conditions Overview



- Grand Avenue is a Main Street classified as a Minor Arterial
- Route 63: high frequency bus route – 3 stops east and west bound
 - A-Line stops are located along the southern leg of the Grand and Snelling intersection
- Average Daily Traffic (AADT): 7,779 (2017)
- Pavement Condition (PCI): poor throughout the project extent (13 to 51 (out of 100))
- 25 MPH speed limit
- Considerable and aged underground utilities



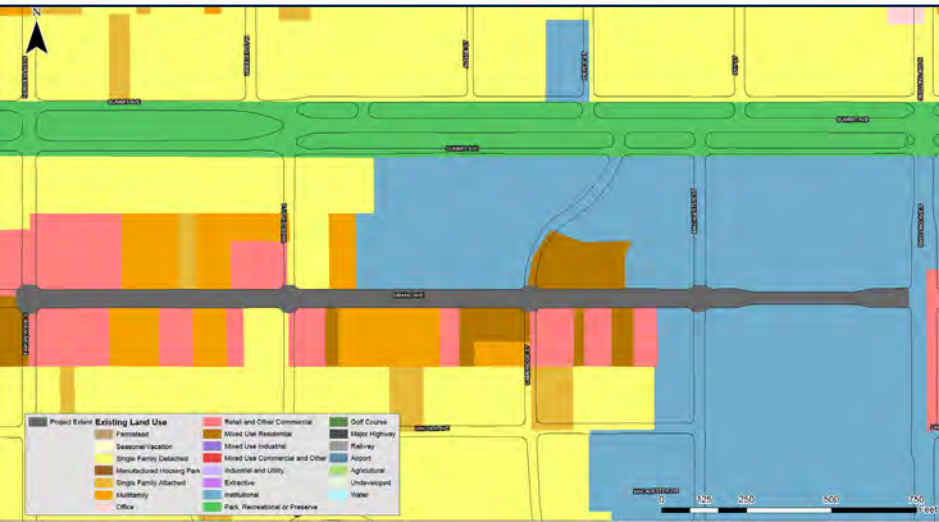
Corridor Crash Data

Grand Ave has been identified as a corridor for infrastructure safety improvements in MnDOT's Roadway Safety Plan for St Paul





Existing



Planned

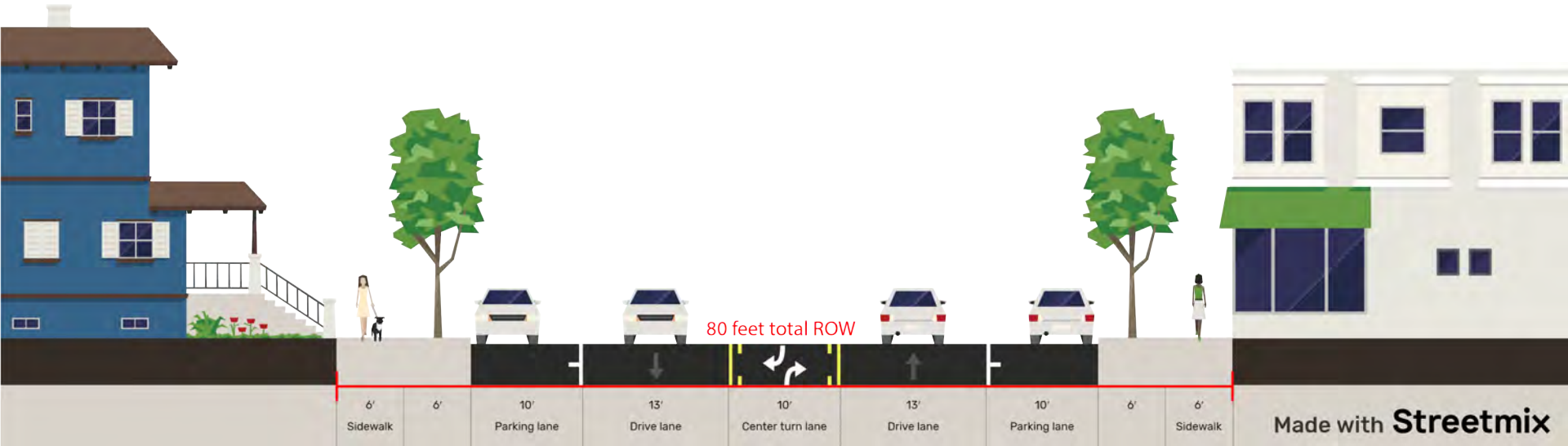




Existing Cross Sections - Two distinct sections

From Fairview Ave to Macalester Ave – three-lane street with parking on both sides

- Typical Grand Avenue configuration (same cross section found on majority of length of street)
- Dedicated center left turn lane
- Multiple driveways (primarily on north side)
- Marked crossing at Ramsey Junior High
- Multiple businesses which utilize ROW for seating, product display, unloading, etc.
- Curb-to-curb 56 feet (roadway width)
- Total Right-of-Way 80 feet (total including sidewalks and boulevards)

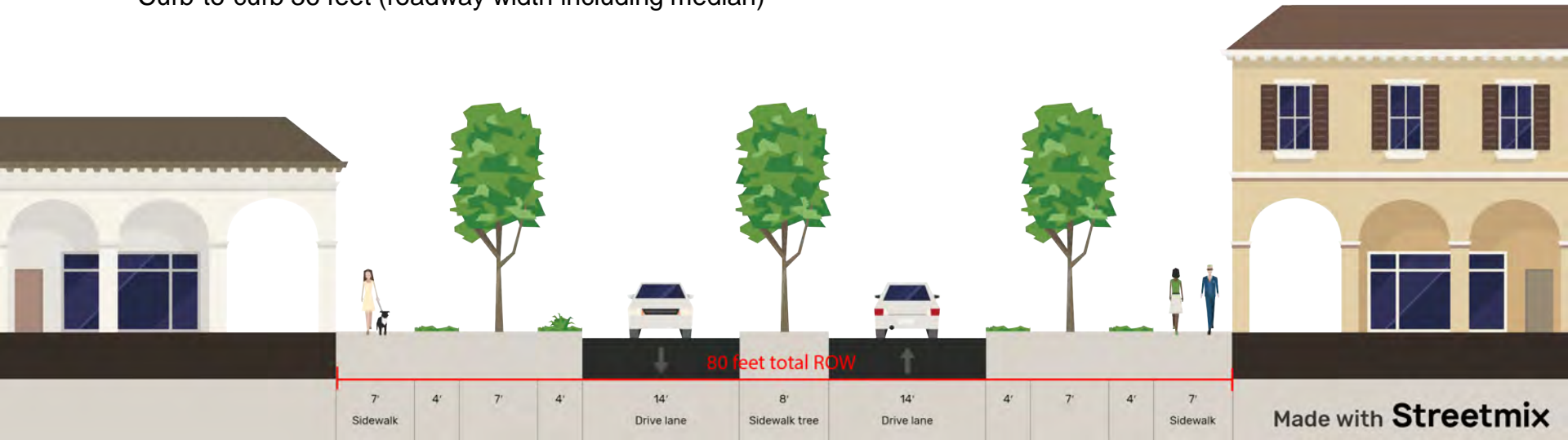




Existing Cross Sections – Two distinct sections

From Macalester Ave to Snelling Ave – 2-lane street with left turning facilities at intersections

- Atypical Grand Avenue configuration
- Cuts through Macalester College – residence halls to north. Lecture halls, administration and athletic facilities to the south
- Landscaped median (installed by PW at College request)
- Three mid-block crossings
- 14-foot through lanes
- Total Right-Of-Way 80 feet (total including sidewalks and boulevards)
- Curb-to-curb 36 feet (roadway width including median)





Engagement Activities to Date

Public Works staff has been extensively engaging stakeholders since March 2022

- MnDOT: Multiple coordination discussions held + continued coordination
- Macalester College: Multiple meetings with Macalester staff + continued coordination
 - Pop-up event on campus held April 27
 - Staff neighborhood update May 25
- Ramsey Jr. High: Multiple meetings held with school staff + continued coordination
 - On-site observation May 11
 - PTO meeting May 19
- Corridor businesses: In coordination with District Council and GABA onsite outreach May 26
- Metro Transit: Multiple meetings with Metro Transit staff + continued coordination
- Open House: June 1 – mailers sent out to all residents and property owners within 500 feet of the project extent



What we have heard so far

Key points of focus have come about from engagement to date

- Overall
 - Vehicle speeds are too high and unsafe through corridor
 - Road width is wider than necessary to accommodate existing vehicle needs
 - Sidewalk width is inadequate for business patio seating/product display and high pedestrian traffic
 - Crossing at any intersection does not feel safe
 - Tree impact and survivability of trees along the corridor is a concern
- Macalester Campus
 - Current crossing situation is not ideal for students as it can be confusing for both pedestrians and motorists and lacks accessibility
 - Existing median works well both aesthetically and to slow vehicles
- Ramsey Jr. High
 - Cambridge St crossing inadequate for students crossing. Vehicle yielding is inconsistent and vehicle speeds on Grand are too high
 - Pick up and drop off times can cause long vehicle queuing and unsafe driving behavior



Design Questions – Pedestrian Crossings



Cambridge Street Crossing

- Adjacent to Ramsey Middle School
- Marked and signed crossing
- Temporary bumpouts (paint and bollards)
- Installed in 2013 following study and report by PW
- Cambridge St identified bicycle boulevard



Macalester Campus mid-block crossings

- ADA compatibility
- Not marked
- Vehicles not legally obligated to yield to pedestrians
- Raised + Landscaped median
- Median installed at behest of Macalester College



Design Questions – Right-of-Way Uses and Space



Grand Avenue Sidewalk Width

- Narrow – six-foot sidewalk + six-foot boulevard
- Creates tight pedestrian corridor with patio seating
- Reduces pedestrian comfort alongside roadway
- Narrow boulevard not optimum for tree health



Grand Avenue Roadway Width

- Excessively wide – 56 feet for five lanes (three through lanes)
- Encourages high vehicle speeds
- Discourages yielding for pedestrians (poor sightlines)
- Long crossing distance for pedestrians
- Not in line with modern roadway design standards



Project Timeline

Engagement
Begin - 2022

Preferred Alternative
Review + Approval - 2023

Construction
Start - 2024

Phase 1

Phase 2

Final and Construction design

Phase 1: Jan-June 2022 engagement
(general opinions + experiences on
current conditions)

- Jan-April – stakeholder conversations
- April – open survey and online engagement tools
- May – in person events (Macalester campus, Grand Ave businesses)
- May – open house 1
- End of June – Finish phase 1 engagement. Publish engagement summary

Stakeholder conversations

- District Council
 - Transportation Committee (3/28)
- Macalester College
 - Pop-up event on campus (4/27)
 - Staff annual meeting
- Ramsey Junior High
 - Staff meeting
 - PTO (5/19)
- Grand Ave businesses
 - Pop-up event on Grand (5/26)
- Other agency partners
 - Metro Transit
 - MnDOT



Project Timeline

Engagement
Begin - 2022

Preferred Alternative
Review + Approval - 2023

Construction
Start - 2024

Phase 1

Phase 2

Final and Construction design

Phase 2: July-November engagement
(produce and review design alternatives)

- July-August – produce alternatives and vet internally
- September – open survey for alternatives
- September-November – share alternatives with public, hold conversations and review
 - Additional open house event along with other activities will be held

Preferred alternative will be formulated from public feedback / internal discussions

- City Council will review final design and sign-off on concept

Final design and construction

- City staff create construction designs in 2023
- Project will begin in 2024
 - Projected to conclude by end of 2024

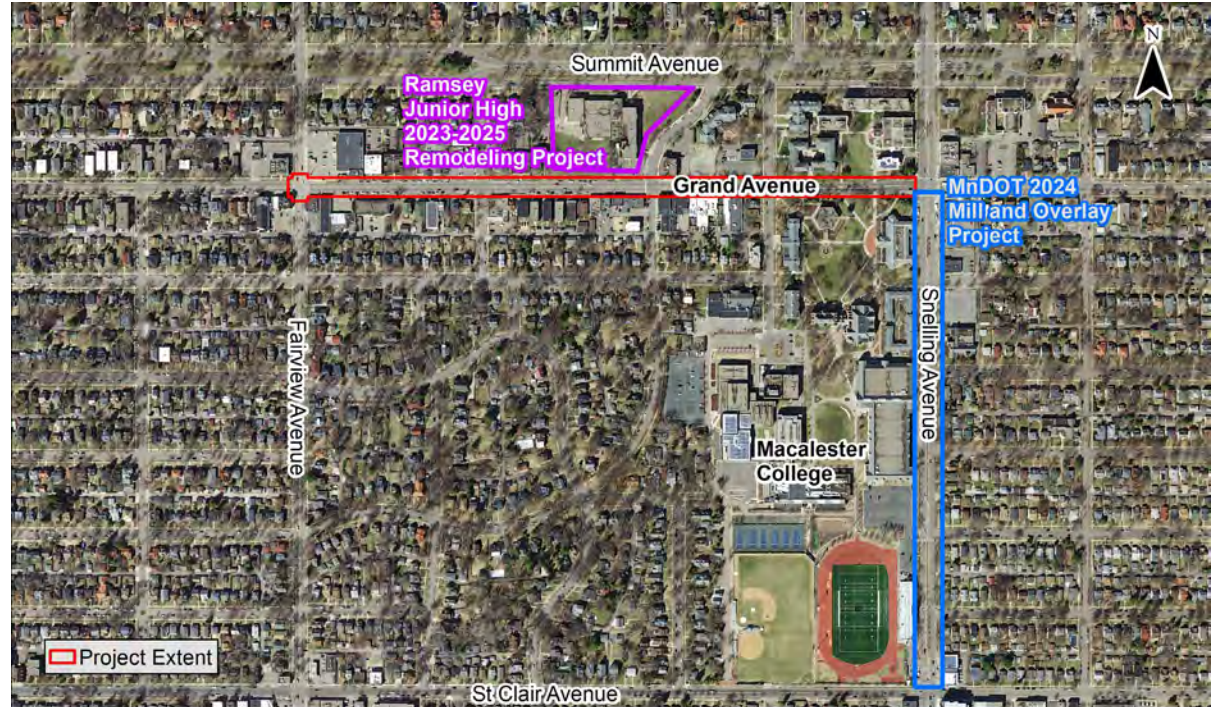


Project Coordination

2024 will see significant construction activity in the area

- Grand Ave reconstruction – 2024
 - St Paul Public Works
- Snelling Ave mill and overlay – 2024
 - MnDOT
- Ramsey Junior High remodeling – 2023 to 2025
 - St Paul Public Schools

Public Works will work closely with MnDOT and SPPS to ensure disruptions in 2024 are manageable for residents, visitors and businesses on Grand Avenue





Discussion

- Known issues/concerns along this segment of Grand Avenue to consider as we move forward
 - Pedestrian crossing facilities
 - General roadway safety – with an emphasis on pedestrian safety
 - Business loading and Right-of-Way use
 - Ramsey Middle School circulation
 - Route 63 accommodation
- Any additional concerns which should be evaluated or addressed?
- Any additional opportunities which should be explored for Grand Avenue?
- Any needs or expectations moving forward?



Contact Information

Project webpage: www.stpaul.gov/grandavenue

- Interactive webmap and survey found on project webpage – open until the end of June

Project contact information:

Joe Widing

Senior Transportation Planner

Department of Public Works | Transportation Planning & Safety Division

25 West Fourth Street | 800 City Hall Annex | Saint Paul, MN 55102

651-266-5996

joseph.widing@ci.stpaul.mn.us