



Summit Avenue Regional Trail Master Plan

Document Summary

October 2022



Introduction and Planning Framework

Statement of Need

The local, on-street bikeway on Summit Avenue is one of the most heavily used bicycle routes in Saint Paul. The current bicycle lanes on Summit Avenue were introduced in the early 1990s, making them some of the first bike lanes in the City. The paved roadway space is currently striped on-street to create bicycle lanes, positioning the bicyclist between moving vehicles and parked cars. Creating the Summit Avenue Regional Trail would create a protected trail space, separating vehicles and bicyclists to increase comfort and safety in a way that can suit all users and abilities.

Pavement conditions in the corridor reflect a variety of surface conditions and in many segments, a high-priority for either resurfacing or street reconstruction. As infrastructure in the corridor is replaced, the City of Saint Paul would look for opportunities to coordinate improvements to the regional trail with the larger roadway improvements to the entire corridor. Developing a regional trail along Summit Avenue would be an opportunity to coordinate infrastructure improvements while creating a significant recreational parks amenity for the region.

Project Context

The project area encompasses approximately a 5.4-mile corridor along Summit Avenue, Kellogg Boulevard, and Eagle Parkway, connecting the Mississippi Gorge Regional Park and Samuel H. Morgan Regional Trail. The proposed trail facility touches the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area (MRCCA) at the eastern and western most edges of its alignment. The proposed trail is also within two designated historic districts, and adjacent to several historic sites.

Project Goals

- Evaluate and identify a regional trail alignment on Summit Avenue to improve recreational experience and safety for all users.
- Identify ways to balance the character of Summit Avenue when modernizing infrastructures including but not limited to trees, greenspace, parking, vehicles, recreation, and historical designation.
- Improve connectivity and public access to parkland.
- Support the evolving needs of users to create a more resilient, people-oriented corridor.

Planning Framework

The Metropolitan Council facilitates planning and funding for regional park and trail facilities including the proposed Summit Avenue Regional Trail corridor. A key objective for the Metropolitan Council within the Regional Parks System is preservation and restoration of natural resources to provide opportunities for recreation, stress reduction, and social interaction. The Summit Avenue Regional Trail corridor is classified as a regional linking trail. Linking trails provide connections from other regional parks and trails, and seek to provide high-quality recreation opportunities for all users.

Several planning documents are guiding the development of the Summit Avenue Regional Trail Master Plan, listed below:

- Saint Paul's 2040 Comprehensive Plan
- Saint Paul Bicycle Plan (2015)
- Saint Paul Pedestrian Plan (2019)
- Saint Paul Climate Action & Resilience Plan (2019)
- Neighborhood, Community, and District plans from six districts within the proposed trail corridor

Community Engagement

Engagement Events

The community engagement process has been a valuable tool to inform the trail design concepts, and balance the values of community members and stakeholders with other project components. The design team hosted several in-person and virtual engagement events. A number of those are listed below.

- Twin Cities Marathon | *October 2021*
- Saint Paul Farmer's Market | *October 2021*
- On-site Engagement along Summit Avenue | *October 2021*
- Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Meeting #1 | *February 2022*
- Design Advisory Committee (DAC) Meeting #1 | *February 2022*
- Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Meeting #1 | *February 2022*
- Drop-in Engagement Series (3 sessions) | *February - April 2022*
- Design Advisory Committee (DAC) Meeting #1 | *February 2022*
- Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Meeting #2 | *May 2022*
- Design Advisory Committee (DAC) Meeting #2 | *May 2022*
- Public Information Session | *June 2022*

City staff also attended other City-wide events to engage with potential local and regional users of a trail along Summit Avenue. These events took place between Fall 2021 and Summer 2022. Online engagement opportunities were also available on engagestpaul.org/summit where visitors were encouraged to take an online survey, place notes on a project map, or share general comments about the project.

Summary of Feedback Themes

Throughout the engagement process for the master plan, several common themes arose from a majority of community members and survey respondents, listed below.



Greenspace

- Limit impact to trees, focus on preservation
- Importance of canopy for shade and parkway experience
- Maintain open space in medians
- Boulevards as buffer for pedestrians
- Importance of the parkway as local park space



Facility Conditions

- Surface conditions of bituminous are poor
- Safety concerns on walkway surfaces - tripping hazards
- Wider, 10' sidewalks east of Dale St are highly desirable
- Snow maintenance conditions inhibit bicycling in bike lane - desire for year-round accessible spaces
- Desire to maintain dirt path in central median



Safety

- Minimizing conflicts at intersections
- Concerns about vehicle speeds - vehicles using bike lanes to pass
- Confusing median to roadway transition areas
- Desire for more separation between vehicle, bicycles, and pedestrians
- Parked cars and door swing conflicts with bikes



No Change

- Maintain existing functions and on-street conditions
- Limit impacts to corridor
- Surface repairs are a priority

Existing Conditions

This master plan divides the corridor into segments based on roadway features (single large median, double median, and no median), as well as cultural, historical, and natural character.

Summit Avenue Corridor Segments

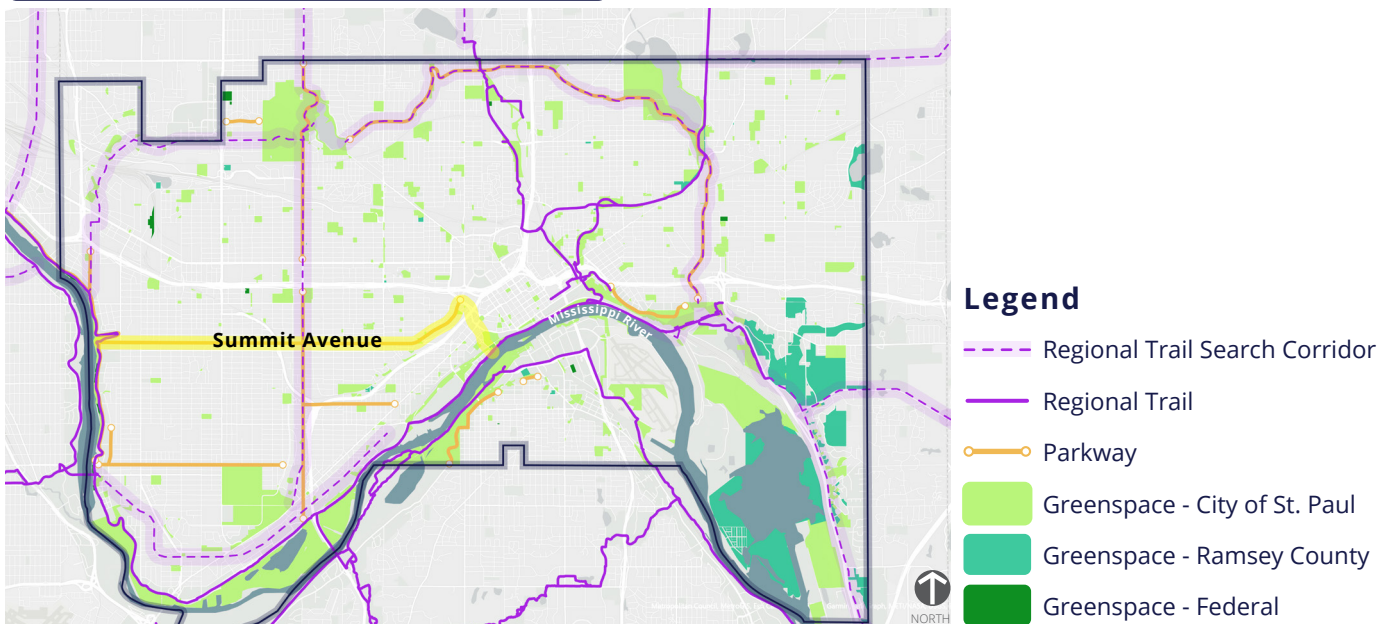


Inventory and Analysis

To understand corridor character and existing conditions along Summit Avenue, a variety of physical, cultural, and historic components were analyzed, listed below:

- Historic Districts and Sites
- Natural resources including mature tree canopy, boulevard and median greenspace, and Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area regions and requirements
- Regional greenspace amenities
- Connectivity, circulation, and access
- Political context
- Traffic and parking analysis
- Existing conditions of roadway and bicycle and pedestrian conditions

Regional Trail and Greenspace Amenities



Master Plan

Project Vision

The Summit Avenue Regional Trail offers a high-quality recreational experience celebrating the past and present along with the natural and built environments. The trail provides regional and local connections serving a broad range of users.

Guiding Principles



Improve connectivity and public access to open space



Preserve greenspace and tree canopy



Create a safe and equitable recreation experience for all users



Anticipate evolving needs of users to create a more resilient, people-oriented corridor



Balance historic quality of corridor while modernizing infrastructure

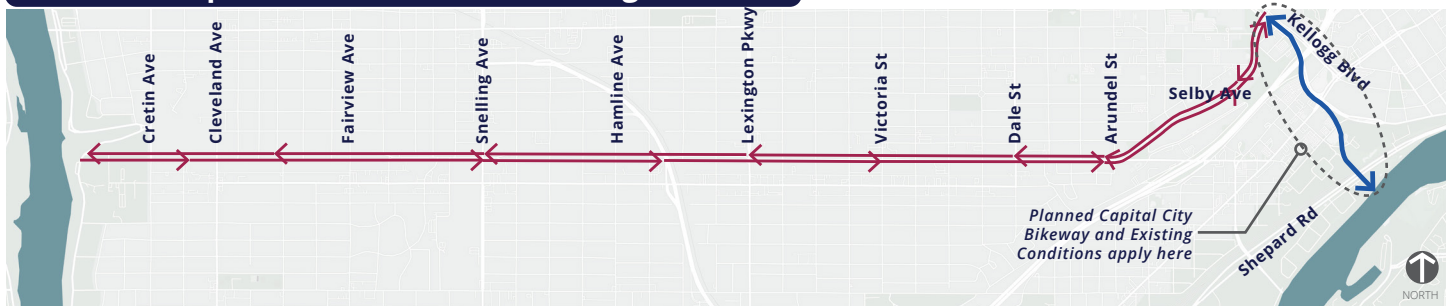
Development Concept

The process of developing a corridor-wide regional trail concept balances a number of considerations including community and stakeholder feedback, safety and industry recommendations, regional greenspace value and regional connections, greenspace and mature tree canopy, historic character and review processes, and accessibility and comfort for all users. The master plan proposes a separated trail facility, meaning that the bike facility is above the curb (at sidewalk level), separated from vehicular traffic. The existing pedestrian sidewalks will remain as they are today.

Proposed Trail Concept

The regional trail concept seeks to provide a consistent and familiar facility type throughout the proposed trail corridor. This preferred approach* provides a one-way bike trail on both the north and south side of Summit Avenue from Mississippi River Blvd to Kellogg Blvd.

Preferred Proposed Corridor-wide Trail Alignment

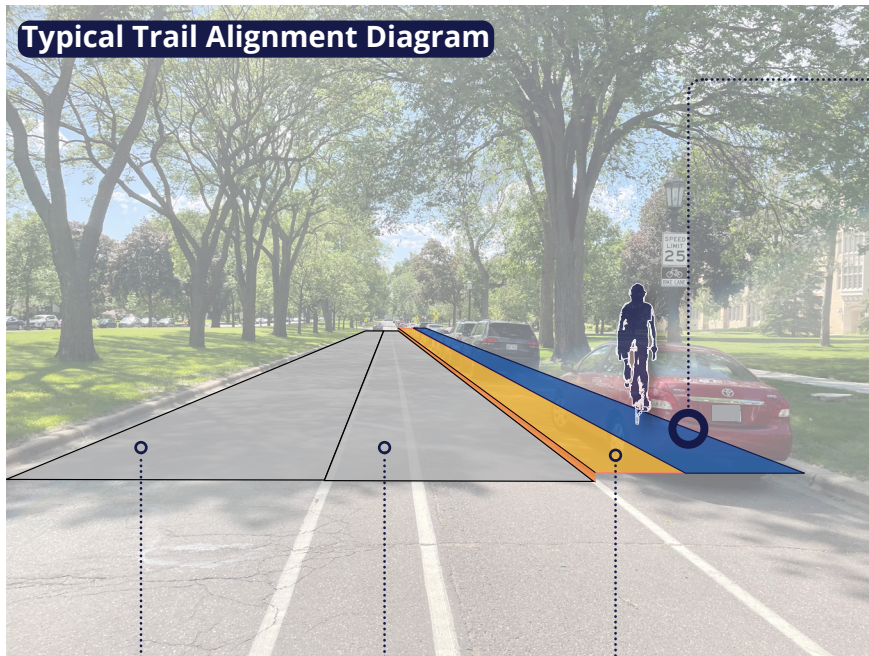


Legend

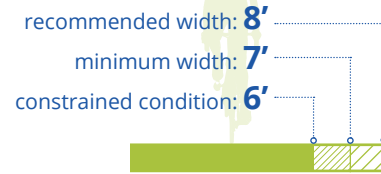
- Proposed Bike Facility - Two One-Way Facilities
- Proposed Bike Facility - One Two-Way Facility

*An alternate approach with one-way trail facilities from Mississippi River Blvd to Lexington Pkwy, transitioning to a two-way facility from Lexington Pkwy to Kellogg Blvd is continuing to be studied for feasibility by City staff in an effort to balance the above stated project goals.

Components of the Transportation Envelope



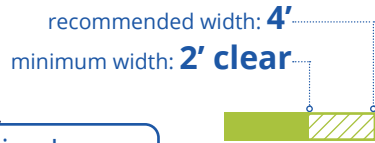
One-Way Trail Facility



- 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



Buffer



Drive Lane

Parking Lane

Specificity regarding elements within the roadway will be determined by Public Works during the project design phase.



One-Way Trail | Segments A and C



One-Way Trail (preferred alignment) | Segments D, E, and F

Implementation

Project Phasing

Phase 1

Lexington Pkwy - Victoria Ave

- 2023 mill and overlay project including restriping
- Curb lines remain
- Funding sources TBD

Phase 2

Phase 2A | Lexington Pkwy to Kellogg Blvd

- Distance: 1.7 miles
- Partnered funding approach (federal and local)
- Funding NOT currently available

Phase 2B | John Ireland Blvd to Shepard Rd

- Distance: 0.75 miles
- New trail: Capital City Bikeway Process (John Ireland Blvd to 7th St): 2027 Funding request submitted
- Enhance existing multi-use trail at Eagle Pkwy
- Funding NOT currently available

Phase 3

Phase 3A | Lexington Pkwy to Fairview Ave

- Distance: 1.5 miles
- Partnered funding approach (federal and local, MnDOT potential at Snelling Ave)
- Funding NOT currently available

Phase 3B | Fairview Ave to Mississippi River Blvd

- Distance: 1.0 miles
- Partnered funding approach (federal and local)
- Funding NOT currently available

Project Costs

Project Information:

- Project Length: 4.7 miles* (24,816 linear feet)
**includes segments from Mississippi River Blvd to Kellogg Blvd*
- Number of intersections (max): 46
- Number of major intersections: 12

Corridor Costs

One-Way Separated Bikeway =

\$45,000 - \$50,000 per 100' length

Assumptions:

- Maintain existing sidewalk and boulevard
- Remove roadway pavement and install bikeways
- Remove 23' wide roadway pavement
- New curb, gutter, 4' grassed buffer, and 7.5' bikeways
- Includes drainage structure relocation
- Includes driveway paving
- Includes signage
- Does not include lighting or utility relocation
- Does not include trail amenities

