

HWY 5/EAST 7TH ST. AND HWY 61/ARCADE ST.

WHAT WE HEARD FROM THE COMMUNITY

The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) is planning safety and accessibility improvements on Hwy 5/East 7th St. and Hwy 61/Arcade St. from Interstate 94 to Roselawn Ave. in 2024. East 7th St. and Arcade St. are important roads connecting downtown St. Paul, St. Paul's East Side and the City of Maplewood. Whether driving, walking, using a wheelchair, biking or taking the bus, there were nearly 20,000 trips per day on these two streets.

This thoroughfare is home to residents, businesses, schools, places of worship, parks and many other important places. At different places along this nearly five-mile stretch of roads, the character changes from vibrant small business districts to residential areas and park land. This project is primarily focused on updating and rehabilitating the roads while incorporating accessibility features that make these roads usable for everyone.

To prepare for construction in 2024, the project team began conversations with the community in March 2021 that will set the foundation for a continued dialogue as MnDOT plans future improvements. We heard safety and accessibility concerns about the condition of the roads today and ideas for the future. Key topics of interest included:

- Improving and adding sidewalks
- Adding more places to safely cross the street
- Adding lighting
- Consider adding a protected bike lane
- Reducing vehicle speeds



Project map

BY THE NUMBERS

- » 3,000+ people reached
- » 591 survey responses
- » 178 comments on online interactive map
- » 10 virtual stakeholder meetings
- » 350 businesses reached
- » 2 virtual public meetings

TOP COMMENTS

Overall, people expressed support for safety and accessibility improvements throughout the corridor. Many agreed that the existing conditions in the corridor needed improvement—particularly the sidewalks and vehicle speeds. Across all modes of transportation, people frequently said vehicle speeds made the roads less safe and comfortable. MnDOT’s planned improvements seek to address those primary concerns.

Here’s a look at what we heard from people who use these roads:



PEDESTRIAN COMMENTS:

- Improve and add sidewalks
- Create more places to safely cross and greater visibility
- Consider reconfiguring the number of lanes
- More lighting would make people feel safer
- Provide greater separation from vehicles
- Add road beautification elements



MOTORIST COMMENTS:

- Reduce vehicle speeds
- Busy roads create confusion
- Parking can be dangerous
- Consider adding turn lanes



BICYCLIST COMMENTS:

- Consider adding a protected bike lane
- Improve connections and crossings to popular bike trails



TRANSIT COMMENTS:

- Bus stops don’t match up with safe crossings
- Ensure bus stops are accessible



ACCESSIBILITY COMMENTS:

- Improve crosswalks, curbs and crossing times
- Smooth pavement
- Add audio signals in multiple languages



BUSINESS ACCESS COMMENTS:

- Slow traffic
- Add more crossings
- Improve parking
- Maintain access to businesses during construction

A summary of these comments and community engagement activities has been compiled into a public report. To see a copy of the report, contact Kevin Walker at kevin.walker@state.mn.us.

NEXT STEPS

This community input will influence the design alternatives that MnDOT creates and shares with the community in late 2021. Construction is expected to begin in 2024.

Learn more and sign up for email updates at mndot.gov/metro/projects/hwy5-hwy61stpaul