

From August to October of 2020, Public Works staff collected comments on the project via calls, emails, an online survey and map, and meetings with local stakeholders. Below is a summary of themes heard and responses to questions. **The topics below reflect preferences or opinions of some commenters, and some comments contradict each other, reflecting the diversity of comments received.**

Use of plastic bollards on 1st Avenue

Comments: Why are plastic bollards being proposed on 1st Avenue South, while the bikeway on portions of 28th Street and Blaisdell Avenue South will be separated with a concrete curb? Bollards do not provide enough physical separation between bikes and motor vehicles.

Public Works response: The segment of 1st Avenue South between Grant Street and Lake Street is planned for a full reconstruction in two phases beginning in 2023. The reconstruction of 1st Avenue will include new sidewalk, lighting, curb/gutter, asphalt, and could also include a bikeway at sidewalk level or at street level behind a curb. Because of the upcoming reconstruction, Public Works did not want to install concrete curbs that would quickly be removed and instead chose to use those resources on other parts of the project with no upcoming reconstruction projects. For the period when bollards are being installed on this section, Public Works will look for opportunities to provide planters or more closely spaced bollards that provide a greater deterrence to vehicle intrusion.

Project Route along 1st Avenue and Blaisdell Avenue

Comments: Why is the project proposed along portions of both 1st Avenue South and Blaisdell Avenue South? Can the route be on a single street?

Public Works response: Comments submitted during the first round of engagement did not indicate a strong preference or consensus on having the bikeway on either 1st Avenue South or Blaisdell Avenue South. As such, Public Works considered several items when proposing the route along portions of 1st Avenue South and Blaisdell Avenue South:

- **Address traffic safety in the areas with the greatest number of historical collisions.** The route largely coincides with the portions of 1st Avenue South and Blaisdell Avenue South that are High Injury Streets, meaning they have a disproportionately high number of crashes.
- **Make use of existing used space.** On 1st Avenue South, this includes a wide section north of Franklin Avenue and a lightly used southbound lane between Franklin Avenue and 28th Street. On Blaisdell Avenue, there is already a wide one-way bike lane that can be converted to a two-way bikeway with minimal trade-offs.
- **Provide a large space for bikes.** By using the existing space described above, the bikeway can provide 12 feet or more for the bikeway on most of the route, which should increase comfort and safety for people riding bikes.
- **Improve connections to the bikeway network.** The proposed route connects to a two-way bikeway on 1st Avenue at 15th Street that is currently under construction, providing a connection to the 3rd Avenue protected bikeway in downtown. At the southern end of the corridor, the route on Blaisdell Avenue is closer to the proposed Pleasant Avenue bike boulevard, which will allow for easier travel further south.
- **Balance transportation needs.** The project considered future plans in the area for biking, walking, and transit, and the existing transportation needs along the corridor, including the heavy use of street parking near multi-family residences.

Two-Way Bikeway Design and the Future of Existing One-way Bikeways

Comments: Why is the two-way bikeway being proposed on a street where vehicle traffic is one-way?

Will the existing one-way bikeways on 1st Avenue South and Blaisdell Avenue South outside the project area remain?

How will the two-way bikeway operate where the route turns on 28th Street?

Public Works response: There are several examples of successful two-way bikeways already in place in Minneapolis, including Oak Street SE, 18th Avenue NE, 26th Avenue North and 18th Avenue SE. Constructing a two-way bikeway would minimize trade-offs along the route, which could stall the project. A two-way bikeway also provides a wide, dedicated space for bikes, which makes winter maintenance easier. Further, a recent study indicates that two-way bikeways on one-way streets experience fewer crashes than two-way bikeways on two-way streets, because vehicle operations are simpler. While the specific signal operations of the bikeway along 28th Street are being finalized, Public Works expects that bikes will have their own dedicated signal phase at busier intersections. The existing one-way bikeways on Blaisdell Avenue South and 1st Avenue South outside of the project extents (north of 28th Street on Blaisdell Avenue and south of 28th Street on 1st Avenue) will remain.

Vehicle Speeding

Comments: The project does not do enough to address vehicle speeding. The project should consider adding traffic circles, more bump outs, and chicanes.

Public Works response: The project is proposing several items that should reduce vehicle speeding, most notably narrowing the space for vehicle travel. This includes repurposing a travel lane on 1st Avenue north of Franklin Avenue for the proposed bikeway and narrowing travel lanes throughout the corridor. The project is also proposing adding bump outs at intersections along both 1st Avenue South and Blaisdell Avenue South, and is implementing chicanes on portions of Blaisdell Avenue South. Public Works staff will look into additional opportunities to reduce vehicle speeding as part of the final design.

Parking and Traffic Congestion Concerns

Comments: 1st Avenue has street parking that is heavily relied on by residents. There is also already a bike lane on 1st Avenue. Reducing traffic to one lane north of Franklin Avenue will create vehicle congestion. It is a busy street with parallel parking on either side. Traffic will have to stop as people attempt to park.

Public Works response: The project route was chosen in part to reduce impacts to on-street parking. Parking on 1st Avenue South will largely be maintained compared with what is on the street today. Parking will remain on the east side of the street south of Franklin Avenue and on both sides of the street north of Franklin Avenue. Although there is currently a painted bike lane on 1st Avenue South, the proposed design should improve comfort for people biking and improve traffic safety for all roadway users. These outcomes meet the City's goals of prioritizing traffic safety in project design.

Bike Lane Width

Comments: The bike lane is too narrow. If more space is needed, take away parking.

Public Works response: The proposed design is 12 feet wide in most locations, which will increase space for people biking and should improve safety and comfort compared to the current conditions. For a two-way bikeway in a constrained space, this width is similar to other designs in many parts of North America and the world. The design of the project considered the needs of all street users, including people who do not have off-street parking and must use on-street spaces. On 1st Avenue, many of the buildings are old and do not offer many or any off-street parking spaces. On-street spaces are highly utilized, and parking is already only on a single side of the street. As part of the Public Works develops the recommended layout, staff will explore opportunities to widen the bikeway without removing parking.

Connection to Midtown Greenway

Comments: The project doesn't offer improved connectivity to the Midtown Greenway. How will this improvement connect to future redevelopment of the Kmart site?

Public Works response: The City is preparing to begin community engagement for the future development at the former Kmart site (Nicollet Avenue and Lake Street). As part of that engagement, Public Works will be discussing transportation improvements at and adjacent to the site, including connections to the Midtown Greenway. Due to that upcoming engagement and project, this project is proposing making only minor connection enhancements to the Midtown Greenway on 29th Street. The existing contra-flow bikeway on Cecil Newman Lane will remain.

Winter Maintenance

Comments: How will snowplowing affect the bikeways in winter months?

Public Works response: One of the benefits of the project is the ability to more easily clear snow in the winter as compared to the paint-only bike lane currently on 1st Avenue South. Unlike painted bike lanes, separated bikeways are plowed during the winter. The physical delineation between space for vehicles and space for bikes should both make it easier for Public Works plows to remove snow and discourage vehicles from parking in the lane.

Addition of Green Space

Comments: Are there any opportunities for the elements dividing up cars from the bike lane to introduce plants?

Public Works response: Due to the upcoming reconstruction projects that are planned for 1st Avenue South, that portion of the project is not a good candidate for new plantings or green space. Adding green space on these portions of 1st Avenue South will be considered as part of the upcoming reconstruction project. This project is considering greening opportunities along Blaisdell Avenue, particularly in locations where wider medians are proposed. These includes the blocks south of 29th Street and 31st Street and the intersections with 35th, 36th, and 38th Streets.