



PPA Transportation & Safety Committee Agenda
Tuesday, 20 October 2020
7:00pm: Zoom

Chair: Evan Roberts (transportation@prospectparkmpls.org)

Time	Topic	
7:00-	Welcome, Sign in, Review Agenda	All
7:05	Malcolm Avenue north of University (see letter)	Julie Wallace
7:15	PPA support for protected bike lanes on University Ave and 4th Street (see letter)	Jeremy Bergerson
7:25	Malcolm Ave shared street (see proposal)	Allison Bell / Evan Roberts
7:45	Update on Public Safety community sessions	Ben Tuthill
8:00	Prospect Park Trail taskforce (see proposed motion)	Dan Cross



Minutes of the PPA Transportation & Safety Committee, Tuesday, 20 October 2020
7pm, via Zoom.

In attendance: Evan Roberts (Chair), Dan Cross, David Frank, Dan Bryant, Ben Tuthill, Kathy Kahn, Jeremy Bergerson, Kate Needleman, Jenna Hoge, Allison Bell

University Ave and 4th St SE bike lanes: Jeremy Bergerson explained the background to the letter, with the City of Minneapolis having asked that neighborhood organizations indicate to Hennepin County their views on the proposed reconstruction of these streets from I-35W to Oak St.

Discussion ensued and small modifications were made to the letter.

Motion (Bergerson, seconded by Dan Cross): The Committee endorses the letter for the Board to send to Hennepin County. Passed unanimously.

Malcolm Ave north of University: Kate Needleman explained the background to the letters. A short discussion ensued.

Motion (Needleman, seconded by Kathy Kahn): The Committee endorses the letter for the Board to send to the City of Minneapolis. Passed unanimously.

Malcolm Ave shared street: Evan Roberts presented a memo recommending the PPA Board re-direct \$2000 in traffic calming funds to funding the construction of planter boxes for traffic calming on Malcolm Ave between Sidney Place and Orlin Ave.

A discussion ensued and slight modifications were made to the memo.

Motion (Kahn, seconded by Bryant): The Committee endorses the recommendation the Board redirect traffic calming funds.

Passed with one abstention.

Public Safety Listening Sessions: Ben Tuthill reported on a working group that is developing public safety discussion sessions. There were discussion and questions about the speakers and planning committee.

Motion (Tuthill, Seconded Kahn) to adopt the motion passed unanimously.



Prospect Park Trail Taskforce: Dan Cross outlined a motion for the Transportation Committee to create a taskforce to research the work needed for the Prospect Park trail to be constructed. Motion (Cross, seconded by Dan Bryant): Passed unanimously.

Angela Conley
Hennepin County Commissioner, District 4

Dear Commissioner Conley,

University Ave SE and 4th Street SE are crucial streets serving the Prospect Park neighborhood. Our neighborhood includes student communities around the University of Minnesota, a diverse older housing mix on the slopes of Tower Hill, and the Glendale Townhomes. The population of Prospect Park has grown from less than 5,000 in 2000 to more than 14,000 today. The transportation needs of this growing population can be best addressed by prioritizing transit and safe bicycling options. The Prospect Park Association's submission to Minneapolis' Transportation Action Plan identified the completion of a robust protected bike lane network in the area as a high priority.

Hennepin County is currently consulting on re-design of University Ave and 4th St SE between I-35W and Oak St. With Oak St being the border of Prospect Park, these streets directly serve our neighborhood. The current layout of these streets channels traffic at high speed through a dense residential neighborhood. We thank Hennepin County for consulting about proposed changes in advance of a street reconstruction that will serve this area for the next fifty years.

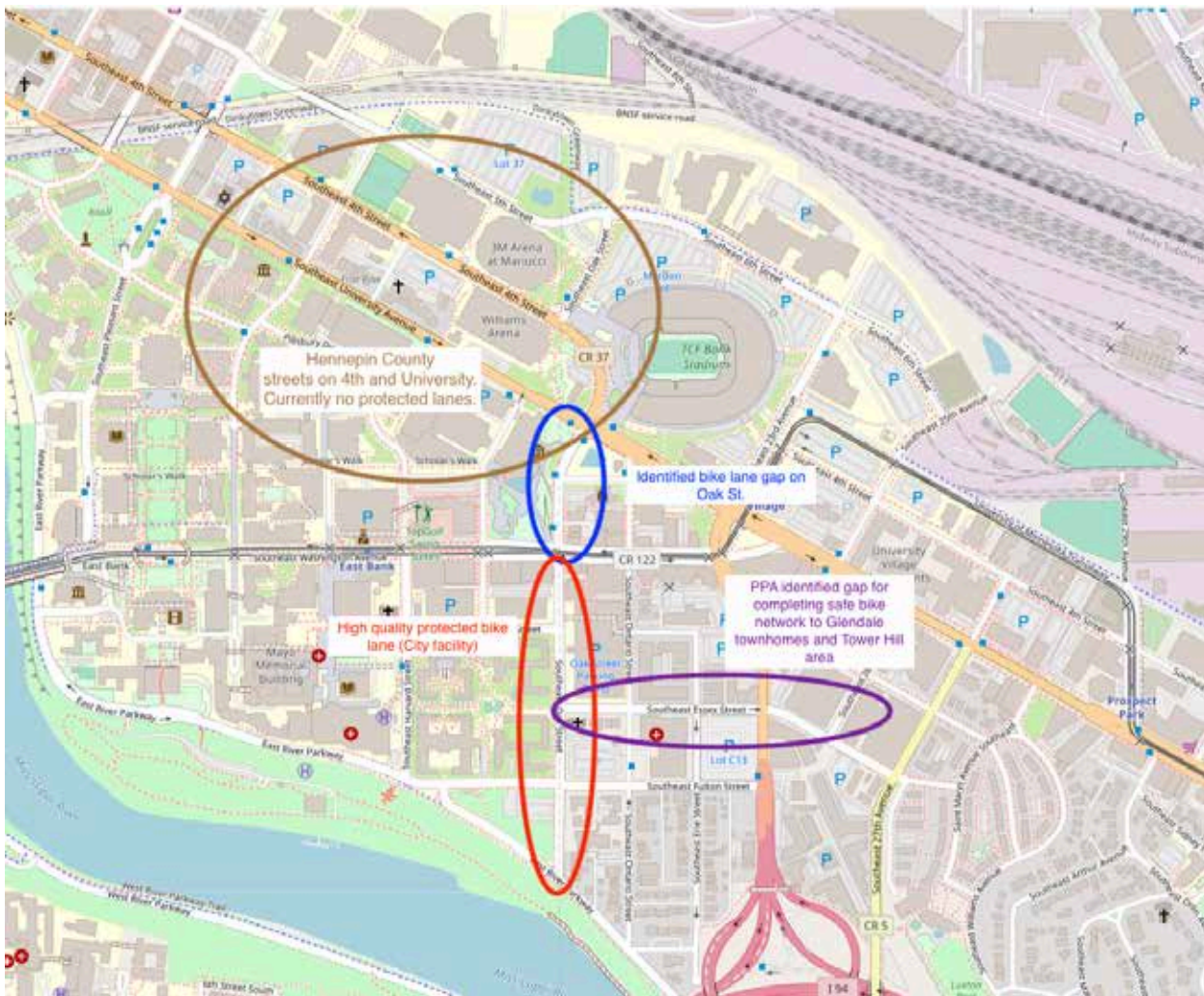


University Ave SE: Current conditions with three vehicle lanes and an unprotected gutter-pan bike lane

The Transportation & Safety Committee, and Board of Directors of the Prospect Park Association (PPA) have important concerns about the design currently proposed for University Ave and 4th St SE. We sincerely hope that you will take our feedback on board, and ask county staff to reconsider the current proposals.

One of the most important aspects of this project is its bike facility. It is PPA's opinion that a bi-directional bike facility on the south side of University Ave SE in addition to the planned westbound protected bike lane on 4th St SE would be best. This design would create seamless connectivity with the upcoming Oak St SE protected bike lane (PBL) gap project by the City of Minneapolis. This project is within Prospect Park and is very important to our neighborhood's bicycling network. PPA has proposed to the City of Minneapolis the construction of an enhanced bike facility on Essex St SE. The utility of the Essex St protected bike lane depends on the Oak St PBL, which we want to see completed.

As shown on the map below a protected bike lane on the south side of University Ave which connects to the proposed Oak St and Essex St bike lanes will create a seamless, safe network into the heart of the Prospect Park neighborhood, allowing residents to safely access more destinations.



As to the style of bike facility, our preference would be for curb-height bike lanes as one now sees on Washington Ave S. This design would reduce the space needed for a buffer. It would also

prevent car drivers from parking in the bike lanes, which they currently do frequently on University and 4th west of I-35 (where these streets are MnDOT controlled). Most importantly, a curb-height bike lane would create a safer situation for the very many UMN students who bike the wrong way down the University Ave bike lane on a daily basis. Some of those students are Prospect Park residents.



Curb height protected bike lanes on S. Washington Ave in downtown Minneapolis

We are concerned about county proposals to retain three travel lanes for vehicles. This configuration creates a feeling that you're not on a city street, but rather on a big, suburban arterial. Consequently, speeding behavior is a big problem. For children or older citizens with mobility challenges, the current configuration of University Ave SE and 4th St SE is particularly dangerous. We therefore strongly urge the County to reduce the travel lanes to two on both streets, in order to transform these streets into calmer, safer ones. A reduction down to two lanes also has the benefit of allowing for more overall pedestrian space, for a better-protected bike lane, and for more space in which to do high-impact tree plantings.

Giving University Ave SE and 4th St SE lane diets and enhancing protected bike lanes will help Prospect Park and Glendale residents have a safer travel experience, whether by bicycle, the E-Line, or by car.

Thank you very much.

Gratefully,

To:

From: PPA

Date:

Subject: Congestion on Malcolm Avenue SE north of University Avenue

The Prospect Park Association requests that the city address the traffic congestion issues at and north of the intersection of Malcolm Avenue SE and University Avenue SE. The completion of several large apartment buildings has exacerbated what was always a difficult area because of the narrow street, the heavy truck traffic, and the difficulty trucks have in making turns at that intersection. Mitigation measures that were recommended several years ago could help alleviate the problems as development in the area continues.

A very comprehensive Traffic Impact Study of this area was carried out in January 2018 as part of the Environmental Assessment Worksheet for the Malcolm Yards project. The study included an analysis of the problems surrounding the intersection of Malcolm Avenue SE and University Avenue SE, and recommended some mitigation measures. Since that study was completed, traffic on Malcolm has increased significantly because of new housing developments along 4th Street SE. Parking is now permitted on both sides of Malcolm. This has made it even more difficult for the large number of trucks that use Malcolm to access the industrial uses along the railroad tracks. There is currently no alternate route available.

The Traffic Impact Study recommended the following mitigation measures (page 6-1):

- The following mitigation measures are recommended:

For Phase 1:

o University Avenue SE/Malcolm Avenue SE intersection

- Provide two southbound lanes at University Avenue SE, with one dedicated left turn lane and one through/right turn lane.

o Malcolm Avenue SE

- Limit on-street parking as needed to accommodate the proposed lane layout. Continue to monitor operations to determine if additional on street parking should be removed in the future.

The time has come for the implementation of at least some of these measures. PPA requests that the city revisit the Malcolm/University intersection and the block of Malcolm between University and 4th Street SE to determine which of the mitigation measures should be implemented immediately.

To:

From: Prospect Park Association

Date:

Subject: Malcolm Avenue SE and 4th Street SE crosswalk

In October of 2018, the Prospect Park Transportation Committee sent a letter requesting that the temporary marked pedestrian crossing at Malcolm and 4th Street SE be made permanent. However, when building construction at that corner was completed, the signage and marked crosswalk were removed. At the same time, the Public Works Department's 4th Street SE Reconstruction Project included new sidewalks on both the north and south sides of 4th Street SE west of Malcolm. These sidewalks have new ramps leading to street crossings of both 4th Street and Malcolm.

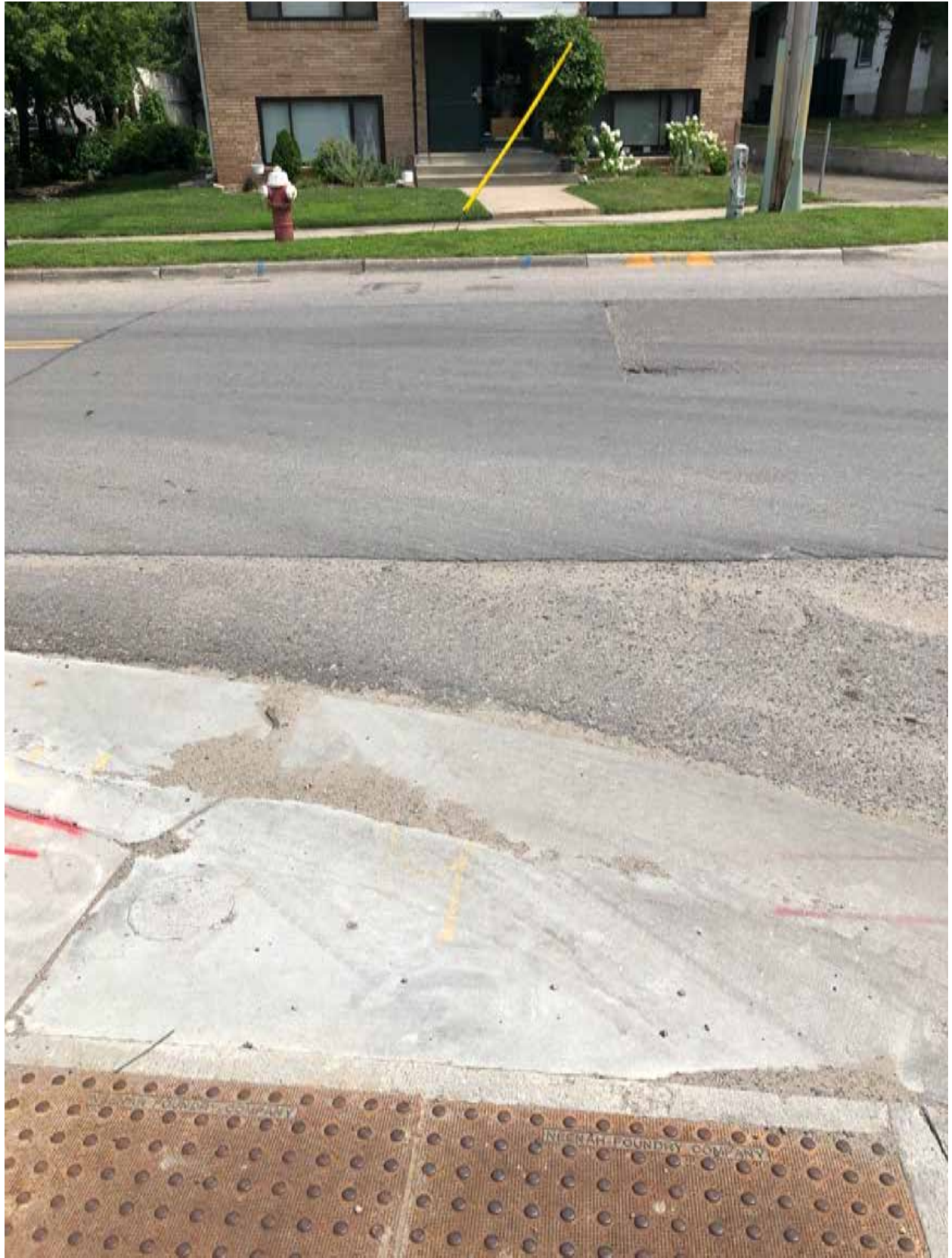
Unfortunately, the sidewalk work on the west side of Malcolm did not extend to the east side, so the sidewalk ramps lead pedestrians into the street with nowhere to go on the other side. This is a three-sided or "T" intersection since 4th Street dead-ends for cars at Malcolm. There are no ramps or curb cuts on the east side of Malcolm, so pedestrians have no clear path to the sidewalk, and there is no sidewalk access for wheelchairs and similar vehicles, as illustrated in the attached photos. The new buildings at that corner include a 283-unit senior residence and a 70-unit affordable housing building that includes many children, so there is a clear need for accommodating wheeled vehicles from strollers to wheelchairs. The new housing developments along 4th Street have resulted in increased traffic on Malcolm, added to the already very heavy truck traffic.

The city's transportation plans state that curb ramps must be provided at all legal crossings. The Prospect Park Association respectfully requests that the required ramps on the east side of Malcolm Avenue SE at 4th Street SE, and signs alerting drivers to the crossing, be installed at the earliest possible time.

Thank you for your attention to this issue,

PPA President





Malcolm Avenue Traffic Calming Proposal

Executive Summary

PPA has approximately \$2000 available in un-spent NRP funds for traffic calming in the neighborhood.

The Transportation and Safety Committee recommends that PPA plan to spend these funds on constructing and installing planter boxes to calm traffic on Malcolm Avenue near Pratt School. Traffic calming at this location will improve safety in an area of high pedestrian traffic, and at a site for which several initiatives are underway to create an improved community gathering space.

Background

PPA has approximately \$2000 available in un-spent NRP funds dedicated to the installation of traffic calming strategies in the neighborhood. These funds were initially anticipated to be spent on calming of streets around Glendale and near Luxton Park. The City of Minneapolis recently used other available funds to install temporary traffic calming at intersections in this area, including a roundabout at the intersection of Williams Ave, St Mary's Ave, and Delaware St SE.

Thus, PPA could re-direct these funds towards traffic calming in other areas of the neighborhood.

Following discussion at the PPA Transportation Committee meeting in August and September 2020 it was agreed that a proposal be developed for using these funds for traffic calming on Malcolm Avenue near Pratt School for consideration by the PPA Board. Several factors contributed to support for pursuing traffic calming in this area

- Multiple initiatives are underway to enhance the Malcolm and Orlin intersection as a community gathering space, including
 - Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board plans to re-develop one block of Malcolm Avenue between Orlin Avenue and Sidney Place as a woonerf or shared street. On a woonerf design elements, including pavement surface and obstacles on the road, limit traffic to a maximum of 10mph.
 - MPRB plans to develop an amphitheater and community gathering space on Tower Hill Park opposite Pratt School
 - Plans for redevelopment of the Pratt School playground
 - Community discussions about a memorial to the Jackson family, one of the first black families to live in the neighborhood.
- The intersection of Malcolm and Orlin with Pratt School and Prospect Park United Methodist church is a natural community gathering point. Walking patterns in the neighborhood for leisure and to access services north of University take many people through this intersection. For residents in newly developed housing north of University, Malcolm Avenue is a key pedestrian route into the Tower Hill segment of the neighborhood.
- Children and older residents are a significant part of the regular pedestrian traffic in this area, providing a safety rationale for additional efforts to slow traffic.
- The street layout and topography of the area create conditions that are already highly suitable for creating an area where motor vehicle traffic can be made to slow to safe speeds.
- The office of Ward 2 Councilmember Cam Gordon and Pratt School are supportive of efforts directed towards traffic calming in this area.



Location of proposed traffic calming implementation

Proposed traffic calming strategy and use of funds

- In line with recent international and American trends in slowing vehicle traffic, we propose using visible obstructions to narrow street and intersection widths, and create conditions under which traffic proceeds through an area at speeds of 15mph or less. To navigate the area, cars must yield to visible oncoming traffic, and avoid objects in the street. These strategies are in contrast to the use of speed limit signs or speed bumps, which are now regarded as of very limited effectiveness (signs) or having variable effectiveness (bumps).
- Traffic calming can be achieved with a variety of interventions that slow and redirect traffic. In the long-term when streets are reconstructed they can be rebuilt with narrower curb-to-curb widths, or “semi-diverters” that narrow the street width to one lane, and force vehicles to yield if there is oncoming traffic.



Semi-diverter narrowing roadway to one lane

Streets in Prospect Park are not proposed for reconstruction within the next five years. Therefore, to calm traffic in the short term and inform more permanent changes to the street, a variety of “tactical” changes can be made. In the United States and abroad, there are three main ways that temporary changes to street layouts can be made

- Flex-posts and signage
- Concrete boulders or bollards
- Wooden planters

These are illustrated overleaf



Flex-posts and temporary signage



Concrete bollards



Wooden planters

Three key considerations in implementing “tactical” interventions for traffic calming are

- Ability to re-design the intervention if it is not working
- Robustness of the intervention to being hit by cars, and ability to protect pedestrians
- Aesthetic appeal

Flexposts and signage are able to be moved easily if the configuration is not working, but are not robust and have little aesthetic appeal. As the photo above illustrates, concrete bollards can easily be made attractive, and provide significant protection for pedestrians. The photo above illustrates the extension of a park space by taking over a lane of the street (in fact, doubling the effective area of a pocket park). However, specialized equipment is required in order to move the bollards. Wooden planters provide an attractive middle ground, and are gaining popularity as a moderate-cost approach to modern traffic calming.

In the photo above it can be seen that planter sits on a base that can be moved with a warehouse pallet jack, pushed by one person. Pallet jacks of this form can be rented at low cost for a short period if it is necessary to move the planter.

Malcolm Avenue interventions

We recommend that PPA support the use of \$2000 in traffic calming funds for constructing planters to calm traffic on Malcolm Avenue at the intersection of Orlin Avenue and Sidney Avenue.



We recommend that the PPA Board request that Public Works work jointly with PPA and Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board on the final placement of the planters.

For \$2000 PPA can support the purchase of materials for

- 8 planters with dimensions 3' x 3' x 3'
- Soil to fill each planter with 36 cubic feet
- Plants

Potential placement of the planter boxes is illustrated above. Key features of these placements, which would need to be approved by Minneapolis Public Works are

- Narrowing the crossing distance across Sidney Place. Although Malcolm Avenue is 24' wide, and Sidney Place 27' wide, the crossing distance at the intersection is 84'.
- Extension of public space at the Sidney Place/Malcolm Ave intersection beside the Pratt School amphitheater
- Strategic placement of planters to slow and divert traffic attempting to enter Malcolm Avenue when Pratt School uses Malcolm Avenue for recess space.
- Provision of passing room on Malcolm Avenue between the Sidney and Orlin intersections
- Ability for school buses to enter and exit Malcolm Avenue when in-person instruction resumes. For this reason, we have not illustrated a planter on the northwest corner of the Malcolm/Orlin intersection adjacent to the Pratt School flagpole.

Proposal: Public Safety Workshop Discussion Series

Motion: In order to fulfill PPA's commitment to public safety conversation, unanimously approved by the PPA Board at the July 2020 Board/Community meeting, the Transportation and Safety Committee moves to organize a 3-5 part Prospect Park public safety workshop series, hosted over Zoom this winter and featuring 3-5 local experts, activists, and educators from a variety of public safety backgrounds.

Summary. The public safety workshop series will feature presenters from various local organizations. Potential organizations include: Our Streets (traffic safety), MPD 150 (police alternatives), Powderhorn Park Neighborhood Association, and the Minneapolis Office of Violence Protection (non-police emergency response).

Purpose. This workshop series comes in response to PPA's July 2020 commitment to public engagement regarding changes to the city of Minneapolis's approach to public safety. It provides Prospect Park neighbors with opportunities to learn about and engage with citywide efforts to improve, expand, and re-think public safety. Structured as both a learning session and an opportunity for discussion, it encourages neighbors to apply broader ideas and strategies to the particulars of the Prospect Park community.

Reach. This series would be advertised on the PPA website and newsletter, as well as neighborhood-wide canvassing (in the form of postings/street fliers), and other channels of communication (block clubs, community meetings, MPHS services, U of M resident services, community churches). The workshops would be available to all, but would specifically focus and target Prospect Park residents.

Workshop format. The workshop will be held over the video-conferencing app Zoom. It will be organized as a series of weekly or biweekly presentations. The format for each presentation will be as follows (subject to adaption):

1. A PPA facilitator will establish workshop norms.
2. A representative from an outside organization will share a 15-30 minute presentation highlighting their organizations' work.
3. The representative and/or host will present 3-5 discussion questions that link the outside organizations' work to the Prospect Park community.
4. The host will put workshop attendees into small (4-7 person) "breakout groups," allowing them 20-30 minutes to discuss. Each breakout group will contain an appointed facilitator/note-taker.
5. After 20-30 minutes, the host will bring the breakout groups back together to summarize their discussions, share ideas, and identify courses of action. The representative from the outside organization will be available to respond to ideas and answer questions.
5. The presentation and discussion will be recorded by an appointed note taker. Notes and minutes will be made publicly available through the PPA website and newsletter.

Budget. Compensation for presenters is estimated at \$150-200 per speaker. A series of five workshops would require approximately \$750-1,000 for compensation, along with minimal promotional expenses (flyers/posters). A series of three workshops would require approximately \$450-600.

PPA responsibilities: Communications with potential speakers are currently underway. Neighborhood volunteers are needed for: promotion (flier design, flier distribution, community outreach (i.e. neighborhood churches, community centers, PPE emails); presentation facilitator/host; small group facilitators/note takers (5-10).

Timeline. This series could be prepared as early as December 2020.

Motion to create and chair a Prospect park Trail Task Force

- Whereas: The Midtown Greenway Coalition is actively pursuing the goal of extending the Greenway across the river into St Paul via the Short Line Bridge.
- Whereas: Last year MGC funded a Kimley Horn Engineering Study which delineated the feasibility and cost of rehabilitating the bridge for this purpose.
- Whereas: On 9/1/20 The MGC kicked off an Economic Impact Study with Damon Farber Associates Visible Cities to provide additional information to decision makers to persuade them of the benefits of funding this project and negotiating with CP Rail to sell and or share the Bridge.
- Whereas: St. Paul recently approved the creation of a trail along a portion of the Ayd Mill Road that comprises a significant piece of their plan to construct a St Paul Extension of the Greenway.
- Whereas: In early October the Met Council added the Midtown Greenway Extension in Saint Paul to their Draft 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan.
- Whereas: The proposed extension would potentially involve the CP Railroad, The State of Minnesota, The Met Council, Hennepin County, Minneapolis, Ramsey County, St Paul and perhaps the MPRB and the National Parks Service.
- Whereas: Prospect Park has long had a loosely defined goal of creating a mixed use trail on the abandoned CP Rail spur that extends from 27th Ave SE to the Short Line Bridge.
- Whereas: 27th Ave SE has been identified as the corridor to complete the missing link of the Minneapolis Grand Rounds.
- Whereas: The Prospect Park Trail would form an at grade connection joining the Grand Rounds to the Greenway Extension.
- Whereas: Compartmentalizing the physical scope and expenses into project phases could smooth the path to approval for the Greenway extension and alleviate dependence on interjurisdictional cooperation.
- Whereas: CP Railroad has offered to sell the Railroad bridge over Interstate Highway 94 between 27th Ave SE and Franklin Ave SE
- Whereas: A case can potentially be made for the completion of the extension of the Greenway to The Prospect Park Trail without waiting for St Paul Et al to coordinate.
- Whereas: To make this argument as strong as possible the advocates for The Prospect Park Trail need to assemble a thorough record of past plans and actions promoting the trail as well as updating our vision of to reflect current and know future conditions.
- Therefore: I Dan Cross make a motion that. The Prospect Park Association Transportation and Safety Committee form a Prospect Park Trail Task Force and elect a chair to conduct it.
- Furthermore: I am reaching out to any and all interested individuals that may have information or energy to contribute to this effort.
- In addition: I volunteer to chair the task force.