

Planning Commission Staff Report

Commission date: August 24, 2012

Project Name	Charles Avenue Project
Geographic Scope	On Charles Avenue from Aldine Street to Park Street
Ward(s)	Wards 1 & 4
District Council(s)	Hamline-Midway (11); Thomas Dale (7)
Project Description	This project seeks to implement bicycle and pedestrian improvements on Charles Avenue between Aldine Street and Park Street. Traffic circles, median closures, a raised intersection and mid-block bump outs are proposed as identified in the attached plan sheet and table. The bicycle facility will be a shared facility identified with sharrows. The entire corridor will receive bike specific signs including bike lane signs, route marker signs and revised name blade signs.
Project Contact	David Kuebler & Christina Morrison
Contact email/phone	David.kuebler@ci.stpaul.mn.us , 651.266. christina.morrison@ci.stpaul.mn.us ; 651.266.6217
Lead Agency/Department	St. Paul Public Works & PED
Purpose of Project/Plan	By developing a strategy that implements complimentary soft and hard infrastructure elements such as signing, striping, traffic circles and median refuges the focus of a roadway shifts such that other users, i.e. non-motorized users, are more mainstream. A roadway that is more inclusive is a facility that is safer for all users, conveys a positive image about the neighborhood and the city, and allows the intergration of walking and biking as an alternative to vehicular travel. The purpose of the Charles Avenue project is to provide a major east/west corridor for non-motorized users that: • Compliments other transportation modes. • Is an alternative to University Avenue with respect to bicycle transportation since bicycle specific facilities are not provided on University. • Provides direct access to businesses along University.
Planning References	Transportation Chapter of Comprehensive Plan; Central Corridor Bike Walk Action Plan; University Avenue Station Area Plans
Project stage	Preliminary Engineering
General Timeline	Construction spring/summer 2013
District Council position (if applicable)	District 11 has passed a resolution per the attached email. District 7 is supportive of the project.
Level of Committee Involvement	Advise/consent
Previous Committee action	None
Level of Public Involvement	In 2010 a neighborhood collaborative formed for the purpose of reviewing how to improve the nonmotorized environment adjacent

	to the CCLRT, since dedicated bicycle facilities are not provided on University Avenue. Over the past year this collaborative has been working with TLC, who in turn retained the services of a consultant, to develop ideas on how to meet the goal of the collaborative. Through a series of block parties and neighborhood involvement campaigns, which included neighborhood sponsored meetings on May 8, June 2, and June 12, improvement elements were reviewed and then either included or excluded from a corridor “package” that culminated in a “30%” plan set from the consultant. The ideas developed by the consultant in their plan set were then brought to the City for City consideration relative to implementation. A revised concept was vetted during a neighborhood review process that included a meeting on July 17 and an open house on July 25, both of which were sponsored by the City. The culmination of the review process is the concept plan as shown in the attached exhibit.
Public Hearing	September 5, 2012
Public Hearing Location	City Council
Primary Funding Source(s)	Federal
Cost	Construction cost: TBD => A number of project elements included in original project scope may be reduced to meet budgeted funding.

Staff recommendation	Approve public hearing draft
Committee recommendation	Approval, with the additional recommendation to leave Sherburne and Snelling as the closed intersection that exists today, rather than open Snelling to vehicle turns at Sherburne as proposed by staff
Committee vote	10-0 (Thoman abstained)
Commission recommendation	Approval of public hearing draft
Commission vote	Unanimous