

SUMMARY OF ENGINEERING RECOMMENDATIONS

“Prince Street” Project includes:

**Prince Street – Broadway St. to Willius St.
Lafayette Street – Kellogg Blvd. to Prince St.
Willius Street – Prince St. to Fourth St.**

Report Prepared 2-15-13

Public Hearing 4-3-13

PROJECT

This project is to acquire right-of-way (ROW) and construct a street network in Lowertown that will improve connectivity for motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians in what will soon be an area bustling with activity. Recent and upcoming improvements in the area include the Lowertown Ballpark, the Lafayette Bridge, and the Operations and Maintenance Facility (OMF) for the Central Corridor LRT. The construction of Prince, Lafayette and Willius Streets will fill gaps in what will prove to be a critical road network.

As part of the Lowertown Ballpark, portions of Fifth Street and John Street will be removed and the ROW vacated. This activity will sever a critical link into downtown – especially for bicyclists using the Bruce Vento Trail. The construction of Willius Street and Prince Street will restore the connection to Broadway Street. Lafayette Street will connect Prince Street directly to Kellogg Blvd., thereby providing options for roadway users.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

From Broadway Street, Prince Street currently extends about 300 feet east – at which point the public ROW ends. Existing users access parking lots and two active construction sites (Mn/DOT’s Lafayette Bridge, and the OMF) by means of a combination of private property and private easements. The private property is being used extensively as if it were public ROW. Additional traffic comes directly off of Kellogg via John Street. John Street was partially vacated decades ago, yet it still functions as a quasi-public ROW. Due to the nature of the ownership, the existing pavement varies; most of the surface is degraded asphalt parking lot or crushed gravel.

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

For the majority of the new street construction, Public Works proposes a 38-foot wide street featuring two-way traffic. At intersections there will be a single lane in each direction, with one additional lane to accommodate at turn lane. Outside of intersections, there will be single lane of traffic in each direction, with a parking lane on each side of the roadway.

On each side of the roadway there will be a 4-foot grass boulevard that will provide space for street lighting, trees and signs. One side of the roadway will feature a 6-foot concrete sidewalk, and on the other side there will be a 12-foot bituminous trail, with an additional 2-foot reaction zone.

Prince Street will be extended from Broadway Street to Willius Street, approximately 1200 feet. The street section of Prince Street will be narrowed to 26 feet curb-to-curb between the Northern Warehouse building and the OMR in order to maintain the existing raised patio area / walkway.

Lafayette Street will be constructed between Prince Street and Kellogg Blvd., approximately 300 feet.

Willius Street will be constructed by the Met Council from “curb-to-curb.” Public Works will construct the aforementioned boulevard treatments only.

In addition to street construction, numerous utilities will be making large improvements to their infrastructure – primarily to serve the Ballpark.

PROPOSED ROW ACQUISITION

The project will require acquisition of permanent ROW easements (PE’s) and temporary construction easements (TE’s) along new Prince Street between existing Prince Street and proposed Willius Street, and along proposed Lafayette Street between proposed Prince Street and existing Kellogg Blvd, to accommodate the roadway, sidewalk, boulevard, pedestrian/bicycle trail and lighting. Additionally, a 10-foot strip of permanent ROW easement will be needed along the southerly border of Parcel 3 for a future right turn lane from westbound Kellogg to northbound Lafayette.

Four parcels of private property will be impacted by the acquisition:

Parcel 1 – Diamond Products – PIN No. 32-29-22-33-0009 – PE 29,324 sq ft, TE 2,756 sf
Parcel 2 – Donerly, Inc. – PIN No. 32-20-22-34-0015 – PE 24,797 sq ft, TE 1,946 sq ft
Parcel 3 – D Oren B LLC – PIN No. 32-29-22-34-0012 – PE 18,632 sq ft, TE 2,389 sf
Parcel 4 – D Oren B LLC – PIN No. 32-29-22-34-0013 – PE 0 sq ft, TE 500 sq ft

The parcels are depicted on the three drawings attached to this report.

ALTERNATES

Alternate locations for Prince Street are not practical. The extension of the current ROW is logical, but is tightly constrained by existing buildings and the new bridge piers. As Prince Street continues east beyond the new Lafayette bridge piers, the alignment shifts to the north. This is to minimize impacts to private property owners, and to get the road onto Met Council land that has been provided for City ROW use. The location of Prince Street also takes into account a potential future connection to Seventh Street.

Willius Street is being constructed on property that the Met Council is dedicating for ROW purposes to the city, and as close as possible to the originally platted location. Given the location of the OMF's parking area and train turn-around tracks, alternative locations for this street are limited and less desirable.

Lafayette Street has been placed very close to its originally platted location. The location was selected to minimize impacts to the private property to the maximum extent practical, while balancing future needs at Kellogg Blvd. and the location of the new bridge piers.

Alternatives to the Prince Street project have been thoroughly considered and discussed between Public Works and other city departments over the last few years. Recent and upcoming improvements in the area will place significant demands on the proposed network.

The removal of Fifth Street and John Street severs the existing connection to downtown. Fourth Street (via Mounds Boulevard) would become the only public access to the area that will serve the ballpark. With existing height and width restrictions on Fourth Street, not to mention the inconvenient nature of the alignment connecting up to Mounds Blvd., it is an unacceptable scenario.

POSITIVE BENEFITS

Connections to Lowertown will be restored for roadway users, bicyclists and pedestrians. The connection from Mounds Boulevard will be restored. A future connection to Seventh Street East is also made possible with this project.

Removal of patchwork access that is currently confusing to the general public. Public access to the existing parking lots will be improved significantly. The existing parking lots are low rate, but are utilized heavily during work week hours. Future ballpark activity, coupled with our improvements to Willius Street and Prince Street, will generate a substantial increase in demand for these private facilities.

Improved utility infrastructure, including sewer improvements, and watermain that will serve the OMF and the Ballpark.

Improved trail and sidewalk facilities in a vital area. Sodded boulevard featuring trees and street lighting will enhance and begin to beautify an area of downtown that has long sat dormant.

ADVERSE EFFECTS

Portions of private property currently being used as parking lots will need to be acquired for ROW purposes. While the new roadways will vastly improve access to these lots, it will reduce the number of parking stalls at each location. The new roadway will create some on-street parking, but the amount currently estimated is fairly small, perhaps 25 stalls.

Normal disruption typical of construction including dust, noise and access issues will occur during the course of the project. This area has already been hit hard by recent construction activity.

TIME SCHEDULE

The project will be completed in 2013. Exact timing and schedule of project will be coordinated with the other improvements in the area.

COST ESTIMATE

Construction	\$	1,700,000*
Design Engineering and Inspection	\$	400,000*
ROW Acquisition, Real Estate Fees	\$	1,200,000*
PROJECT TOTAL	\$	3,300,000*

* All estimates are preliminary

ESTIMATED FINANCING

MSA	\$	3,300,000
PROJECT TOTAL	\$	3,300,000

SOURCE OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For additional information, contact the Project Engineer, Jesse Farrell, at 266-6155

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION

The Department of Public Works believes that this is a critical project, and the Engineering Recommendation is for approval of the project and financing.

Respectfully submitted,

Jesse Farrell, PE
Public Works