

## SUMMARY OF ENGINEERING RECOMMENDATIONS

### **Sixth Street Sidewalk Improvements – Sibley to Wacouta**

Report Prepared	12-26-12
Report Revised	2-7-13
Public Hearing	3-6-13

#### **PROJECT**

This project is to improve the sidewalk on the north side of **East Sixth Street between Sibley Street and Wacouta Street**, by reconstructing and widening the sidewalk and abandoning existing areaways and completing all other related work to complete said improvement.

The abutting property owners have requested the sidewalk be widened to allow for operation of seasonal sidewalk café's in this area.

#### **EXISTING CONDITIONS**

The existing sidewalk is 10' wide and in poor condition and not wide enough for the size of sidewalk café desired by the property owners.

From north to south, the existing cross section of 6<sup>th</sup> between Sibley to Wacouta consists of a 10' sidewalk, a 10' wide bus lane (on east end) and Parking Lane (on west end), two 10' wide traffic lanes, a 10' wide parking lane, and 10' wide sidewalk in a 60' wide right of way. When cars are parked on the west end, the bus has to merge into adjoining traffic lane to avoid parked cars. 6<sup>th</sup> Street is one-way westbound.

#### **PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS**

It is proposed to improve the sidewalk on the north side of East Sixth Street between Sibley Street and Wacouta Street, by removing the existing 10' wide sidewalk, abandoning the areaways under the sidewalk, construct an 18' wide concrete sidewalk, complete storm sewer and other related utility relocations, install 4 trees, relocate globe style street lights, complete traffic signal revisions, revise striping and signing to transition and shift traffic lanes as necessary through the widened sidewalk area, ban parking as needed and remove 6 parking meters and complete all other related work to complete said improvement.

Under this proposal, the sidewalk would be wide enough to accommodate sidewalk café areas and an accessible path for pedestrians.

From north to south, the proposed cross section of 6<sup>th</sup> between Sibley to Wacouta will consist of

an 18' sidewalk, a 12' wide bus / bike lane, a 10' traffic lane, a 10' traffic / parking lane, and a 10' wide sidewalk in a 60' wide right of way. The 10' traffic / parking lane will function as a traffic lane during the weekday morning rush hour between 6:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. and as a parking lane during all other times.

## ALTERNATES

To do nothing would be inconsistent with the property owners desire to widen sidewalk and operate a larger sidewalk café.

During community process for project, there was discussion of implementing a seasonal sidewalk widening to allow for a larger sidewalk café area in Spring, Summer and Fall but then be removed during Winter Snow Season. A small pilot installation of this option was installed in 2010. Property Owners were not interested in this option as a long-term solution.

## POSITIVE BENEFITS

General improvement of the public right-of-way will enhance and add quality to the neighborhood. The newly rebuilt sidewalk will improve walkability of the area and space available for seasonal sidewalk café's. Providing a full Bus/Bike Lane will improve transit and bicycling in this block.

## ADVERSE EFFECTS

Throughout the public process, a recurring item of concern was the loss of available on-street parking. Public Works duly took note of these concerns and explored potential alternatives. Our former proposal was modified on 1/15/13 in order to maintain on-street parking along the south side of 6<sup>th</sup> Street. In order to maintain a passing grade on the Level of Service rating for this street, parking must be banned during the weekday morning rush hour between 6:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. Congestion levels at and near this block will increase.

In order to maintain two traffic lanes, a combined Bus /Bike Lane, and provide for an 18' wide sidewalk, it will be necessary to remove parking and parking meters as follows:

### North Side Sixth – Sibley to Wacouta

6 Parking Meters

Estimated Yearly Revenue Lost - \$8,000 to \$10,000

### South Side Sixth – 100' west of Sibley to 100' east of Wacouta

16 Parking Meters and 1 signed Handicapped Parking Space

**Parking Banned between 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.**

Previous Estimated Yearly Revenue Lost - \$20,000 to \$26,000

**Revised Estimated Yearly Revenue Lost - \$2,000 to \$2,600**

Parking Meter Usage and Yearly Revenue estimates are attached.

Estimate revenues are based on 30% to 40% of maximum potential revenue. Maximum potential revenue is calculated using the meter rates for the entire day for the entire year. Parking meter revenue is estimated based on evaluating usage characteristics within the area. An analysis was completed for this area in the fall of 2012, and it was determined that on-street parking revenue was being generated at a rate suggesting 33% usage. The lost revenue ranges as listed above are based on collecting 30%-40% of maximum potential revenue.

Parking revenue was revised due to the revised proposal. Since parking revenue is generated between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 pm (9 hours), the morning rush hour ban on parking will only reduce the revenue time by 1 hour Monday through Friday, with no reduction on Saturdays. The estimates of yearly revenue lost were revised accordingly.

An additional adverse effect of this project is the loss of free on-street parking for those that use these spots outside of our normal collection hours. These spots are important for the residents that do not have private parking options for visitors.

Note that under the Central Corridor Bike Walk Plan adopted by City Council, it is recommended that the Bus Lanes on 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> be converted to a shared Bus and Bike Lane which would require removal of the 6 parking meters on the north side of 6<sup>th</sup> Street between Sibley and Wacouta.

Normal problems associated with construction such as noise, dust, reduced access to businesses, and general disruption will be present.

## **PUBLIC INPUT**

The Saint Paul Farmers' Market submitted a letter (attached) urging this project to be delayed until after the Saints Stadium is complete. The primary reason is the potential loss of 22 on-street parking stalls exacerbating the parking issues already taking place due to light-rail construction.

The CapitolRiver Council set up a task force in 2010 and received community input on the proposal. The full CapitolRiver Council adopted the following resolution:

*“CapitolRiver Council approves the plans for a permanent sidewalk extension and cafe on 6th Street between Sibley and Wacouta, and urges building owners to further consider a seasonal decking option by meeting with John Mannillo.”*

In June of 2012, CapitolRiver Council Development Review Committee adopted the following motion:

*“In light of the Greater Lowertown Master Plan and the uncertainty of the future of Lowertown, a permanent sidewalk extension is premature and the preferred solution is a temporary, pop-up sidewalk with further exploration to determine the cost.”*

## CORRELATION TO PLANNING DOCUMENTS

Excerpts from the Comprehensive Plan (<http://www.stpaul.gov/index.aspx?NID=3427>) as adopted by the City Council (2/24/10):

*“represents a paradigm shift from a city in which the built environment is shaped by the automobile to one that increasingly utilizes transit and accommodates the pedestrian” (LU 32)*

*“In the context of surrounding land uses, design wider sidewalks to accommodate people, landscaping, street furniture and transit shelters” (T 14)*

*“Support cooperative efforts in streetscape design, landscaping, pedestrian-scale lighting, and other amenities for people” (T 16)*

The Downtown Saint Paul Station Area Plan (<http://stpaul.gov/index.aspx?NID=159>), as adopted the City Council (2/10/10) encourages projects that:

*“rebalance movement opportunities in favor of pedestrians and bicyclists” (Section 1.1)*

Excerpts from the Greater Lowertown Master Plan (<http://www.stpaul.gov/DocumentCenter/Home/View/57904>), Greater Lowertown Master Plan Summary was adopted by the City Council (4/18/12):

*“Seasonal cafes are an effective and efficient way to improve the public realm and pedestrian experience. They should be strongly encouraged throughout Lowertown, but especially in the restaurant/retail cluster around Mears Park and the Depot.” (Page 100)*

*“Strategies: ...Conduct a study on historic streetscape and infrastructure to inform future open space and streetscape proposals... Encourage the use of temporary and experimental “pop up” installations within the District as a way to activate buildings and spaces without disrupting the well-preserved assets...” (Page 117)*

*“Primary Observations: ...Lowertown’s historic character is established by the architectural significance of the individual buildings, the collection of those buildings, and the established street grid and streetscape; they are fundamental to the neighborhood’s physical identity.” (Page 118)*

*“Lowertown is significant in the history of landscape architecture and city planning due to the dramatic street pattern and grade changes which were made in the 1870’s. Lowertown’s significance is also due to the fact that a park (Mears Park) encompassing an entire city block has been preserved since the 1880’s in the midst of a large warehouse and industrial area with tightly clustered buildings.” (Page 118)*

*“Land Use: ...Create a parking plan for downtown and Lowertown that prioritizes full occupancy of existing parking spaces over construction of new parking.” (Page 126)*

*“Strategies: ...Expand the use of temporary / seasonal cafes and plazas” (page 132)*

## **HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMITTEE REVIEW**

Public Works recognizes the importance of historic preservation and submitted this project for Heritage Preservation Committee (HPC) Review due to its location within the Lowertown Historic District. HPC denied the application on 1/24/13. Public Works issued notice of an appeal on 2/6/13.

## **TIME SCHEDULE**

The project will be completed in 2013. Exact timing and schedule of project will be coordinated to minimize disruption to adjacent property owners and the community.

## **COST ESTIMATE**

Construction	\$	239,000
Engineering	\$	60,000
	\$	
<b>PROJECT TOTAL</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>299,000</b>

## **ESTIMATED FINANCING**

Assessments	\$	299,000
<b>PROJECT TOTAL</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>299,000</b>

The above costs do not include areaway abandonment which will be directly assessed to each affected property owner. This cost is estimated to be approximately \$150,000. The above costs also do not include the 8% City Processing Fee.

The assessment rate for this project is approximately \$995 per assessable foot, plus approximately \$75,000 for each areaway. It is proposed to assess 100% of cost to benefitting property owners.

## **SOURCE OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

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

## **SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATION**

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

Respectfully submitted,

Jesse Farrell  
Public Works