SUMMARY OF ENGINEERING RECOMMENDATIONS
Charles Avenue Project
City Project No. *To Be Assigned*

Report Prepared – 7/3/12
Public Hearing – 9/5/12

Project

Improve the multimodal function of Charles Avenue between Aldine Street and Park Street.

Purpose

The current environment along Charles Avenue is typical for an older urban area in that the focus of the roadway is the vehicle. By developiong a strategy that implements complimentary soft and hard infrastructure elements such as signing, striping, traffic circles and median refuges the focus of the 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. The proposed modifications will allow the avenue to provide a more balanced service for all users by implementing complimentary soft and hard infrastructure elements.

I. INITIATING ACTION

As part of the federal SAFETEA-LU transportation bill, in 2007 Minneapolis and adjoining communities were allocated approximately $25 million for a Nonmotorized Transportation Pilot (NTP) program that would be administered by Transit for Livable Communities (TLC). The proposed Charles Avenue Project has been awarded a $450,000 NTP grant.

II. PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

Based on feedback from the neighborhood involvement process, the following improvements are being preliminarily proposed for Charles Avenue.

- Traffic circles at the intersection of Charles Avenue with Pascal Street, Griggs Street, Chatsworth Street, Milton Street, Grotto Street, Arundel Street and Farrington Street.
- Median at Snelling Avenue, Hamline Avenue, Lexington Parkway, Dale Street, Western Avenue, Marion Street and Rice Street.
- A raised intersection at Syndicate Street.

- Flashing beacons with pedestrian push button activation at Snelling Avenue, Lexington Parkway and Marion Street.
- Bump outs on Charles Avenue between Elfelt Street and Galtier Street.
- Bike boulevard pavement markings along entire corridor.
- Bicycle specific destination, directional and route marker signs.

III. ALTERNATIVES

This project came to Public Works via a neighborhood coalition which had reviewed other alternatives to Charles. Since Charles Avenue is identified in the Bike/Walk Central Corridor Action Plan as being a viable east/west route between Aldine Street and Park Street, the other alternatives were eliminated from moving forward to Public Works.

IV. POSITIVE BENEFITS

There would be many benefits of implementing the proposed project. The project would provide an improved continuous east/west pedestrian and bicycle facility that provides improved access to recreation centers, parks, schools and the LRT. It will also provide an incentive to those who seldom walk or bike to do so more often, helping to improve the health of the City. The project is in keeping with the Complete Streets initiative, the Bike/Walk Central Corridor Action plan, the Transportation Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan and the Mayor's goal of making Saint Paul the Most Livable City in America.

On various sections of the corridor pedestrian safety will be improved, traffic calming will be introduced, the aesthetics of the corridor will be improved and a move toward shifting the paradigm on Charles Avenue will begin.

V. ADVERSE EFFECTS

Normal issues relative to implementing infrastructure improvement projects will be present. Those issues include, but may not necessarily be limited to, noise, dust and general disruption to vehicle traffic.

VI. TIME SCHEDULE

It is anticipated that the project will be let in fall of 2012 and constructed in the spring of 2013.

VII. COST ESTIMATE

Construction	$ 450,000.00
Engineering	$ 135,000.00
PROJECT TOTAL	**$ 585,000.00**

VIII. ESTIMATED FINANCING

TLC NTP Grant	$ 450,000.00
City Match	$ 135,000.00
PROJECT TOTAL	**$ 585,000.00**

IX. PROPOSED ASSESSMENT RATES

Not applicable

X. SOURCE OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For additional information please contact Christina Morrison at 266.6546.

XI. SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Department of Public Works believes the project submitted herein to be necessary and feasible. The Department's Engineering Recommendation is for approval of the project.