



PENN AVENUE CORRIDOR STUDY

FROM HIGHWAY 62 TO 68TH STREET



Penn Ave looking north from 65th Street



Prepared For Hennepin County and the City of Richfield
Prepared by Zan Associates
April 2021



PROJECT OVERVIEW

The City of Richfield and Hennepin County are studying design improvements on Penn Avenue from Highway 62 to 68th Street. The project was initiated to identify safe, effective, and feasible transportation improvements for all users, which support positive redevelopment and investment in the area.

The purpose of this report is to document processes and findings of the corridor study, including the public engagement process, near-term improvements, and the ultimate corridor vision. This includes illustrations of some of the strategies that could be used along Penn Avenue. These illustrations are conceptual and not intended to be viewed as a final design plan.



Study area

CENTRAL QUESTIONS FOR THE STUDY:

Near-term improvements

What can be accomplished with the county's planned (summer 2021) maintenance project? Can all or some of the corridor be reconfigured from four lanes (two lanes in each direction) to three lanes (one lane in each direction with a shared center turn lane)? Can bikable shoulders be implemented?

Problem statement

What are the issues and opportunities facing the corridor? What improvements are needed to address those issues and how can they be phased over time as resources become available?

Corridor vision

What is the long-term vision for the corridor? What improvements can be made to balance the corridor constraints, city and county policy direction, and community desires for Penn Avenue? Can the corridor vision be accomplished without significant business/resident displacement?

Parking

Is there an adequate supply of parking along the corridor? Are there locations where additional on-street parking should be considered? Are there opportunities to implement district or shared parking in the area?

Access and circulation

What strategies could be implemented in partnership with the adjacent property owners to help reach a mutually beneficial corridor vision?



BACKGROUND AND EXISTING CONDITIONS

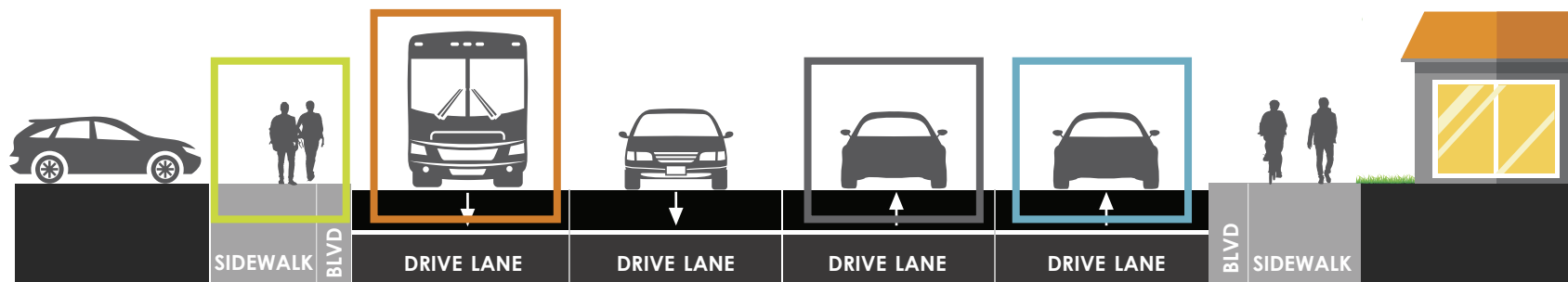
Penn is a primary north-south arterial reliever roadway through Richfield. It is under Hennepin County jurisdiction as County State Aid Highway 32 (CSAH 32) and serves as an important regional connection for all modes. Known locally as the Penn Central Corridor, Penn Avenue connects Richfield to Hwy 62 to the north and I-494 to the south, as well as neighboring cities of Minneapolis and Bloomington, while providing neighborhood access to Penn-Central businesses.

Penn Avenue is in need of repairs to address deteriorating pavement, and the City of Richfield's Comprehensive Plan – Richfield 2040, identifies the Penn Avenue corridor as potential redevelopment area with future Mixed Use development. The intent is to create a "traditional neighborhood corridor that is vibrant and pedestrian-oriented."

COMMUNITY CONTEXT

Land uses along the corridor are a mix of neighborhood commercial (restaurants, retail, offices, etc.), multi-unit residences, and institutional uses like the Fraser school offices and a fire station. In addition, construction of a 6-story residential development adjacent to the existing Lunds and Byerlys grocery store on the north end of the project is currently underway, and the city Housing and Redevelopment Authority has plans to develop the former "Bumper-to-Bumper" site at Penn Avenue and 65th Street as a multifamily residential building in the future.

EXISTING ROADWAY



The existing right-of-way width is 66-feet, building front to building front except near the Penn Avenue and 66th St intersection where the right-of-way increases to 85-feet. The following illustrates the typical existing roadway design along Penn Avenue.



Typical sidewalk on Penn Avenue (north of 66th Street)

PEDESTRIANS

There are concrete sidewalks along both sides of Penn Avenue within the study area, and striped crosswalks across side streets along Penn Avenue at several intersections. The sidewalks are generally 5 to 6 feet wide with little or no separation from traffic lanes on Penn Avenue. There is also a shared-use trail on the southside of the noise wall along Hwy 62 that crosses Penn Avenue at the northern end of the study area and sidewalks and a trail crossing the corridor at 66th Street.



Bikable shoulder on Penn Avenue south of 66th Street

BIKES

There are no dedicated bicycle facilities along the corridor, but Penn Avenue is identified in the city's Bicycle Master Plan (2012) as a "future planned bicycle route." The 3-lane section of Penn Avenue south of 66th Street is striped with wide, bikable shoulders. Intersecting bicycle routes include an east-west trail at the north end of the study corridor, along Hwy 62 and an east-west shared-use path on 66th Street. Additionally, the Nine Mile Creek Regional Trail runs along 75th Street and crosses Penn Avenue 7 blocks to the south of the study corridor.



Bus stop on Penn Avenue north of 66th Street

BUSES

Penn Avenue is a key transit corridor for Richfield with regularly scheduled buses running throughout the day. Penn Avenue is served by Metro Transit's Route 4 and express service with route 558. There is also local service (route 515) on 66th Street with bus stops at Penn Avenue. METRO Transit has also identified the study segment of Penn Avenue as a potential future rapid bus route (arterial BRT).



Truck on 66th Street west of Penn Avenue

CARS AND TRUCKS


The posted speed limit is 30 mph and there are signalized intersections at Hwy 62, 64th Street and 66th Street. Traffic volumes were measured between 11,900 and 12,800 vehicles per day in 2016. Most businesses offer off-street parking. The only on-street parking is on the west-side of Penn Avenue between 66th Street and 67th Street and on both sides of Penn Avenue between 67th Street and 68th Street. Penn Avenue also serves as a freight corridor by providing first- and last-mile hauling connections to local customers and businesses. A 2018 traffic count on Penn Avenue south of I-494 (south of the study corridor) estimated 1,350 heavy commercial vehicles per day.

COMMUNITY VOICES

PHASE 1: UNDERSTANDING THE PROBLEM


GOALS

- Provide information on the study
- Connect with residents, businesses, and property owners
- Ask people about what works and what could be improved on Penn Avenue
- Discuss options for redevelopment opportunities


ACTIVITIES

- MnDOT design workshop
- Penn Fest
- Open house
- Virtual survey
- Business listening sessions
- Richfield Transportation Commission

PHASE 2: DESIGNING THE TOOLBOX

- Provide a study update
- Confirm the issues and opportunities
- Ask about community preferences for potential design strategies

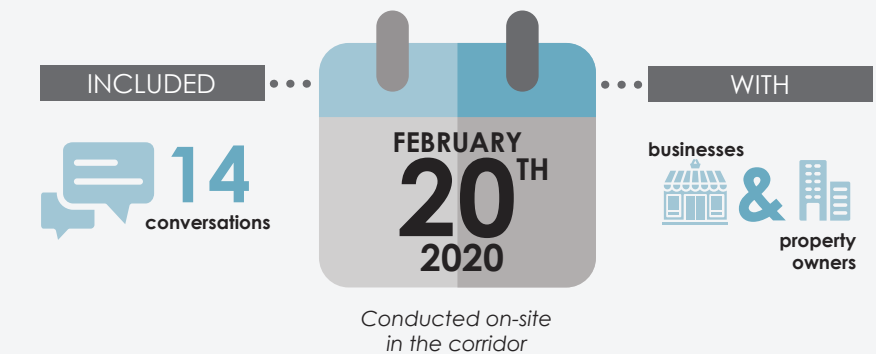
- Virtual open house (survey and business listening sessions)
- Richfield Transportation Commission

This study included a range of community engagement spread out over two overlapping phases. The goal of phase one was to collect input on issues and opportunities and the goal of phase two was to present a range of potential strategies and to ask about preferences.

FIRST OPEN HOUSE



LISTENING SESSIONS



VIRTUAL OPEN HOUSE 2





COMMUNITY VOICES



WHAT WE HEARD

The following is a summary of the key themes of the community engagement activities.



Many people want **safe pedestrian crossings**. Every Penn Avenue intersection in the study corridor was acknowledged as needing pedestrian crossing improvements. Those without traffic signals were most frequently identified.



Improved sidewalks and boulevards were a popular request for the entire Penn Avenue corridor. People said the existing facilities are in poor condition or are too close to the road.



Many people want **streetscape improvements** that improve the look of Penn Avenue and add more greenery. People said that the existing road is in poor condition and has too much pavement.



Many people said that **bike lanes** are needed throughout the corridor, but there was disagreement on what type of bicycle facility would be best to use on Penn Avenue. Some people requested better bike crossings at problem intersection such as the trail crossing south of Hwy 62.



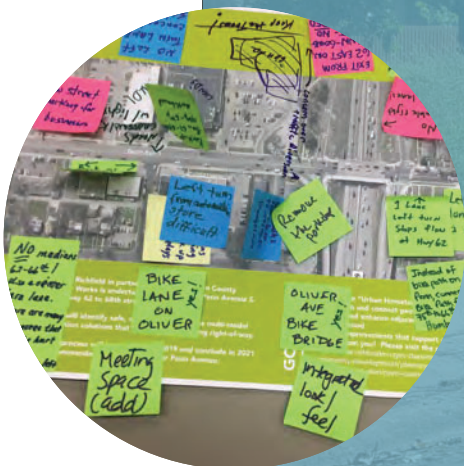
Many people said a **road diet** (decreasing the number of vehicle through lanes) would allow traffic to keep moving and make left turns easier to and from Penn Avenue



Several people requested **on-street parking** on Penn Avenue to help access destinations such as the businesses south of 66th Street and the businesses near the intersection at 63rd Street.



There was disagreement about **roundabouts** on Penn Avenue with some people requesting them at problem intersections like 66th Street or 65th Street, while others were opposed to adding any roundabouts



Engaging the community at Penn Fest and Open House at Sheridan Hills Elementary School

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES



This map is a summary of the issues and opportunities identified throughout the community input process, and as a result of the technical analysis completed (e.g., crash data review, traffic analysis, etc.).

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PROBLEM STATEMENT AND PRIORITIES

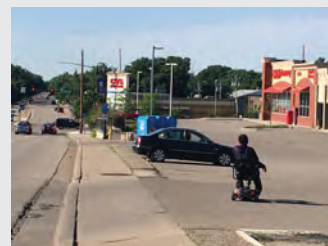
PROBLEM STATEMENT

A problem statement is a tool used to help evaluate potential design strategies. The problem statement for Penn Avenue was developed considering the constraints of the corridor, city and county policy guidance, and input from the community.



Penn Avenue needs improvement to facilitate community revitalization plans

- The comprehensive plan calls for mixed use redevelopment to support a vibrant and walkable neighborhood.
- The existing auto-oriented street and sidewalks do not support this vision.



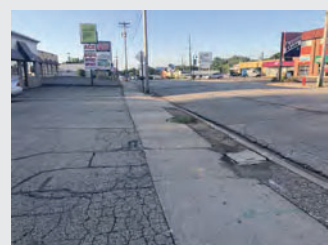
Penn Avenue is not comfortable to walk

- It is not comfortable or convenient to walk along and across, and community feedback indicates that it feels unsafe.
- There are no features like boulevards and trees to create a positive walking experience.



Biking on Penn Avenue is not practical

- There are no dedicated bike facilities.
- Biking along the corridor is impractical for all but the most confident riders.



Very little green space or space for stormwater treatment and utilities

- Lack of a continuous boulevard means no space for trees or plantings to create vertical separation between the road and sidewalks.
- No space for stormwater treatment, snow storage, utilities, and signage means frequent sidewalk obstructions.








Vehicles need a functional roadway

- Pavement is deteriorating and in need of repairs.
- Left turns experience delays and queuing during peak periods.

MODAL PRIORITIES

The modal priorities for Penn Avenue were developed based on a combination of community input and city and county policy direction. These are intended to guide the evaluation of design concepts.

| MODE | PRIORITY | DESIRED ELEMENTS OF FACILITIES |
|---|----------------|---|
|  Walking (along and across) | HIGHEST | Wide sidewalks, benches, shade, trees, lights, crosswalks, medians for refuge, safe vehicle speeds |
|  Driving to Penn Ave | HIGHEST | Dedicated left turn lanes, convenient driveway access, parking, aesthetic treatments |
|  Taking the bus | MEDIUM | Same as walking elements, accessible bus stops with benches, shelter, lighting, heat, garbage |
|  Biking | MEDIUM | Dedicated facilities, separation from vehicles, safe vehicle speeds |
|  Driving along Penn Ave | LOWEST | Convenient and reliable traffic flow, safe vehicle operations |

TOOLS AND STRATEGIES

The toolbox includes a range of improvement strategies that have been implemented in other places throughout Hennepin County and could be considered for Penn Avenue. This chart shows an evaluation of these tools' ability to meet the corridor vision. The evaluation criteria were developed considering the problem statement and modal priorities established through the study. The map that follows is an illustration of these tools. Review the Toolbox Memorandum for a more detailed description of each tool, including a review of the benefits and tradeoffs for each (see Appendix B).



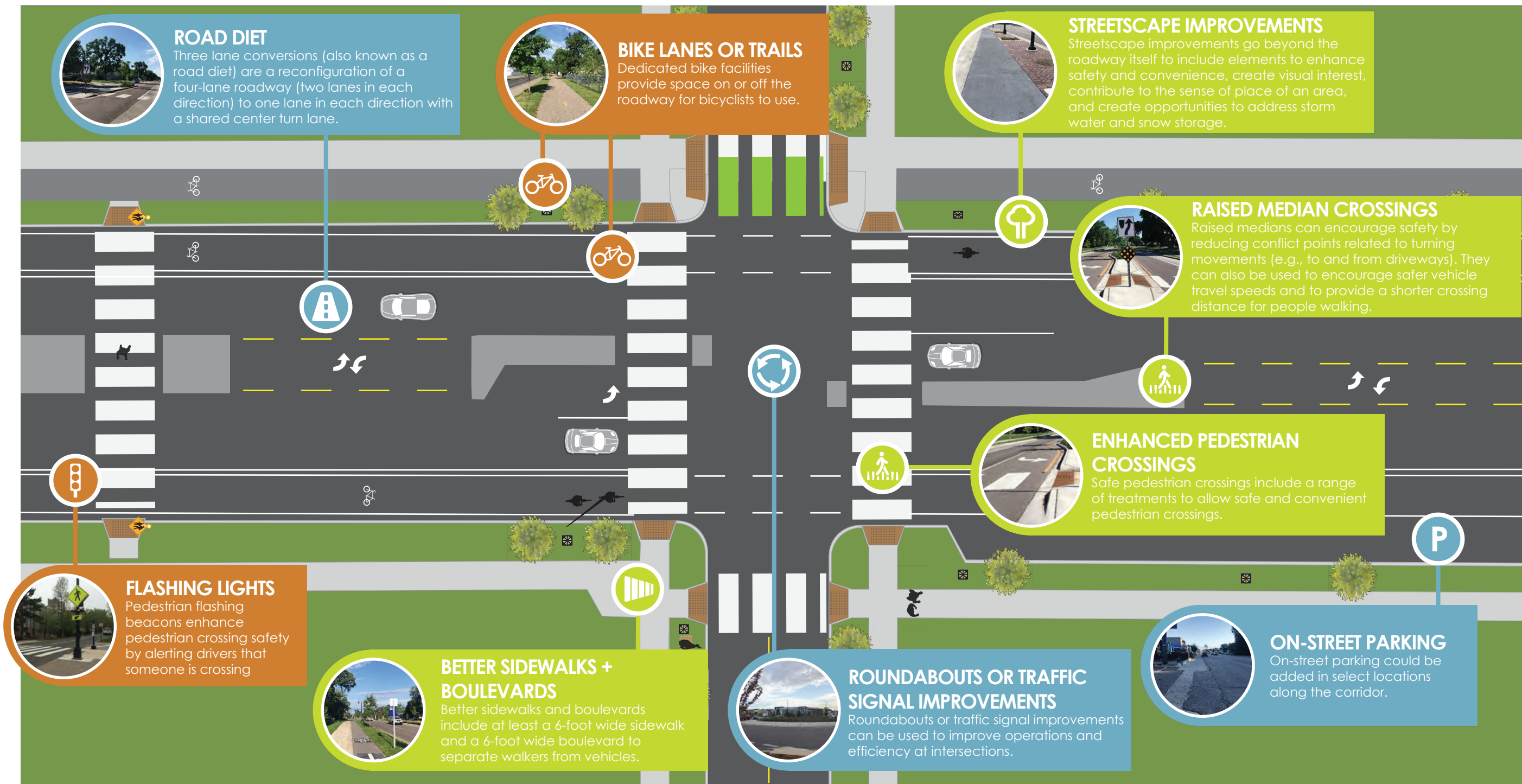
Evaluation Criteria

| | Road diet/3-lane conversion | Better sidewalks + boulevards | Enhanced pedestrian crossings | Flashing lights | Bike lanes or trails | Raised medians (reduced conflict points) | Streetscape improvements | Roundabout or signal improvement | On-street parking |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|--|--------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Walk – along/across | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | |
| Bike – along/across | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | |
| Drive – to Penn Ave | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | |
| Drive – through Penn Ave | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | |
| Community Revitalization | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | |
| Green space/boulevard | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | |

Evaluation of potential tools and strategies



TYPICAL TOOLS AND STRATEGIES



This is a generic illustration of potential tools and strategies and is not intended to represent a specific location on Penn Avenue.

PROJECT PHASING

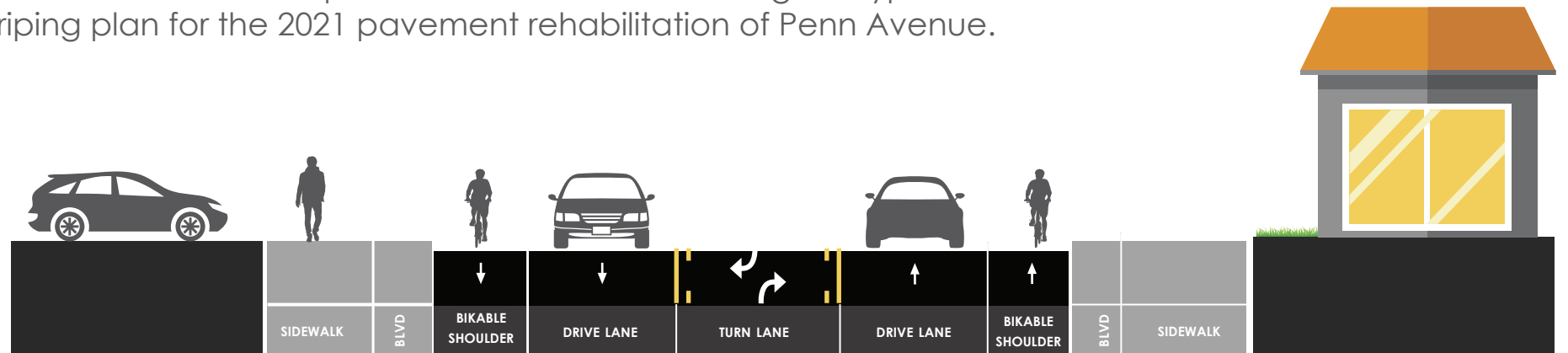
The study identifies a future vision for Penn Avenue which will be completed over time as funding is secured. The study also identifies near-term and intermediate improvements which will move the corridor toward the vision in incremental steps.

NEAR-TERM IMPROVEMENTS

Hennepin County is planning a pavement rehabilitation project for the study segment of Penn Avenue during the summer of the year 2021. As part of this process, the county completed a technical review of the existing and expected future vehicle traffic in the corridor to evaluate the feasibility of implementing a change from 4-lanes to 3-lanes along Penn Avenue using pavement markings as part of the rehabilitation project. This review included consideration for key population and demographic trends, land use, and planned development within the corridor. Based on existing and expected future traffic volumes, a road diet – which would reduce the number of vehicle travel lanes from four (two in each direction) to three (one in each direction) is feasible for much of the corridor. Exceptions include Penn Avenue north of 63rd Street where the entrances and exits to Hwy 62 necessitate extra lanes, and the approaches to 66th Street where turn lanes are needed to facilitate adequate traffic flow. The following is a typical cross-section illustrating this change. Refer to Appendix C for the full striping plan for the 2021 pavement rehabilitation of Penn Avenue.

INCREMENTAL STEPS

The incremental improvement recommendations are a series of spot improvements that should be implemented over time as opportunities arise (e.g., city and county funding, adjacent projects, etc.). These projects represent relatively low cost and high benefit solutions that will move the corridor toward the long term vision.



Typical Cross-Section for 2021 Pavement Project on Penn Avenue

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| <p>NEAR-TERM (2021): County maintenance project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  Restriping project with road diet  Add bikable shoulders where feasible | <p>INCREMENTAL STEPS (FOR CONSIDERATION): Spot safety and operations improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  On-street bike lanes  Enhanced pedestrian crossings  Address sidewalk gap  Reconfigure Highway 62 bridge striping | <p>LONG-TERM VISION (NO FUNDING IDENTIFIED): Full roadway reconstruction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">  Reallocate space to create better places for people to walk and bike  Encourage parking and circulation improvements for adjacent properties  Find opportunities to implement green infrastructure improvements, street trees and plantings, and underground utilities |
|--|--|--|

LONG-TERM VISION

The **vision** for Penn Avenue includes reallocating roadway space to create room to improve safety and comfort for all modes of travel (including those who walk, bike, and roll), adding center left turn lanes to create better access to adjacent businesses, and adding consistent boulevards to allow for street trees and plantings, space for utilities, and better stormwater and snow storage. The corridor will maintain two-way vehicle traffic and will gain wider sidewalks and boulevards, improved pedestrian crossings, an off-street shared-use path for pedestrians and bicyclists, and a center turn lane in some areas to improve access.

To implement the vision, the number of vehicle lanes will be reduced from four lanes (two in each direction), to three lanes (one in each direction and a center turn lane) for most of the corridor (the approaches to 66th Street and to Hwy 62 require additional study). This will allow the space needed to accomplish the project goals to create a more functional, safe, and beautiful Penn Avenue without degrading traffic operations and without significant property takings.

DESIGN CONCEPTS

The following pages include illustrations of the corridor vision for each segment of the Penn Avenue study area at a concept level (cross-sections). These designs are not intended to be viewed as a final design plan. Additional engineering and design will be completed prior to implementation. In addition, this section identifies specific segments where additional improvement strategies should be pursued as funding becomes available, including:

Public/private partnership opportunities

Roadway improvements

Pedestrian improvements

Bike improvements

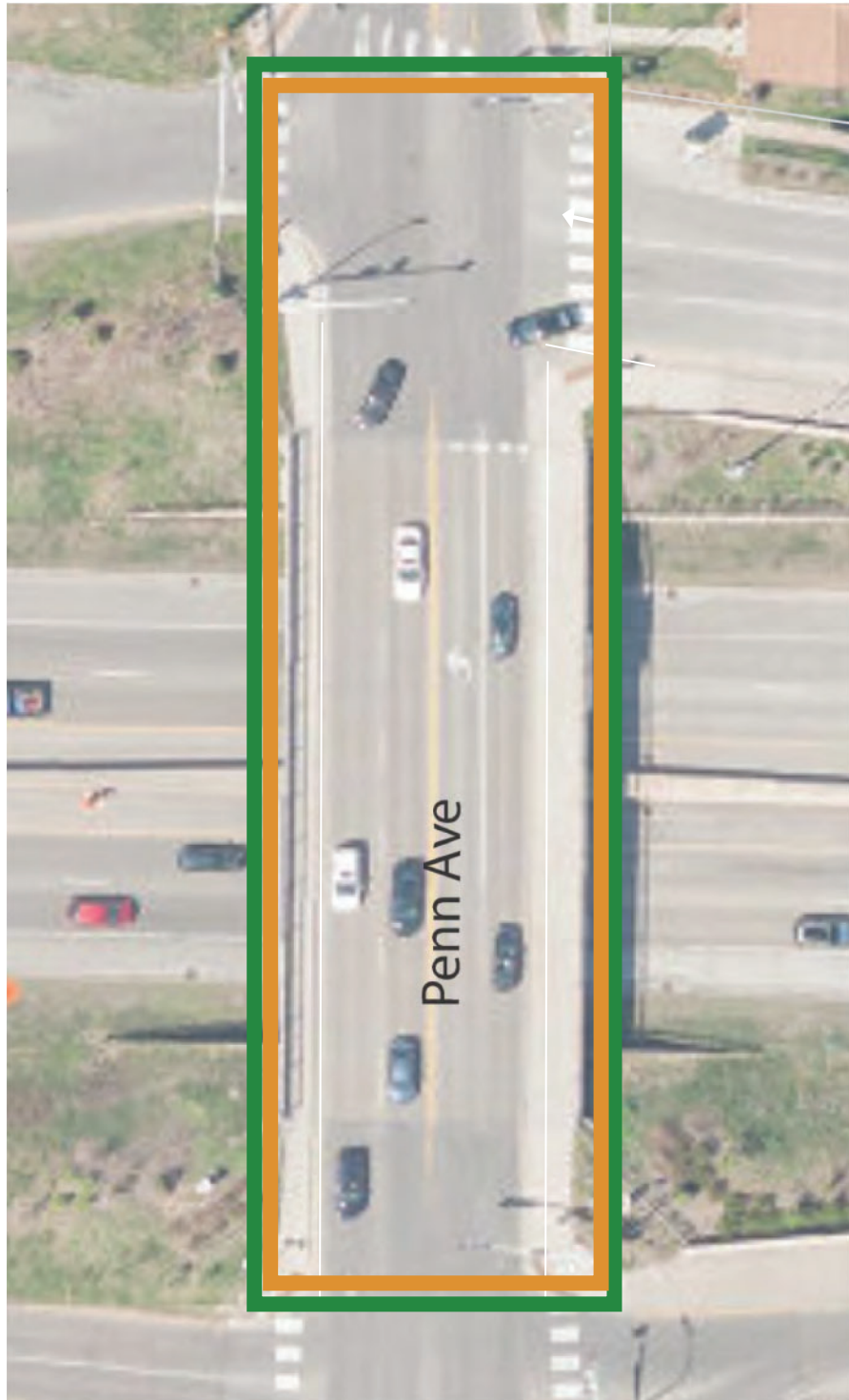
EVALUATION

The design concepts were evaluated based on their ability to meet the corridor vision using a high, medium, and low scoring based on the evaluation criteria. A high score means the design fully addresses the criterion/user/goal and a low score represents a lower level of accommodation or priority placed on that criterion/user/goal.

-  Walk – along/across
-  Bike – along/across
-  Drive – to Penn Ave
-  Drive – along Penn Ave
-  Community Revitalization
-  Green space/boulevard

Penn Ave looking north from 65th Street

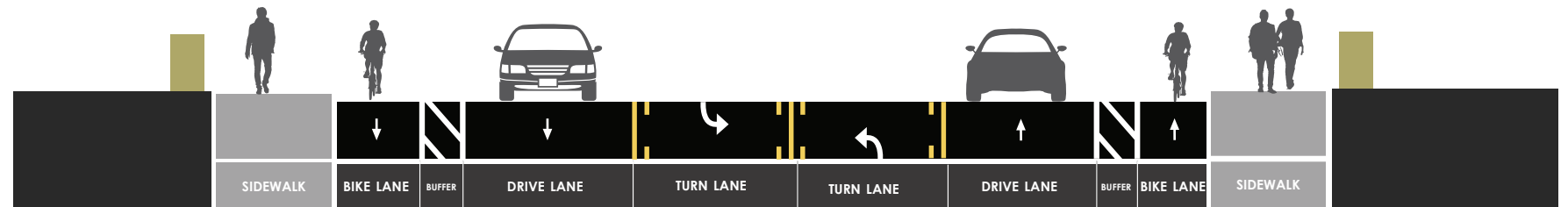
HIGHWAY 62 BRIDGE: FOUR-LANE SECTION WITH BIKE LANES



Roadway improvements





Bike improvements

Vision design concept



Concept Only: Not intended to be viewed as a final plan and subject to change.

Evaluation

| | GOAL | LOW | MEDIUM | HIGH |
|---|--------------------------|--|--------|------|
|  | Walk – along/across | <div style="width: 25%; background-color: #4682B4;"></div> | | |
|  | Bike – along/across | <div style="width: 60%; background-color: #9ACD32;"></div> | | |
|  | Drive – to Penn Ave | <div style="width: 85%; background-color: #FF8C00;"></div> | | |
|  | Drive – along Penn Ave | <div style="width: 85%; background-color: #FF8C00;"></div> | | |
|  | Community Revitalization | <div style="width: 25%; background-color: #4682B4;"></div> | | |
|  | Green space/boulevard | <div style="width: 25%; background-color: #4682B4;"></div> | | |

These scores represent how well the design concepts would address the problem statement and modal priorities, with high being best possible treatment and low being the minimum treatment.

HIGHWAY 62 APPROACH: MODIFIED FOUR-LANE SECTION WITH BIKE LANES

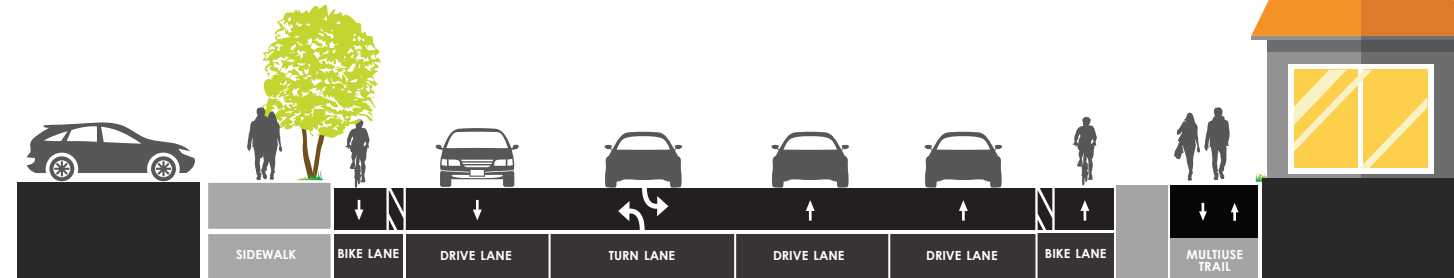


Roadway improvements

Pedestrian improvements







Bike improvements

Vision design concept



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Evaluation

| | GOAL | LOW | MEDIUM | HIGH |
|---|--------------------------|--------------|--------|------|
|  | Walk – along/across | [Green bar] | | |
|  | Bike – along/across | [Green bar] | | |
|  | Drive – to Penn Ave | [Orange bar] | | |
|  | Drive – along Penn Ave | [Orange bar] | | |
|  | Community Revitalization | [Green bar] | | |
|  | Green space/boulevard | [Blue bar] | | |

These scores represent how well the design concepts would address the problem statement and modal priorities, with high being best possible treatment and low being the minimum treatment.

63RD STREET AREA: THREE-LANE SECTION, ON-STREET BIKE LANES, TRAIL ON ONE SIDE

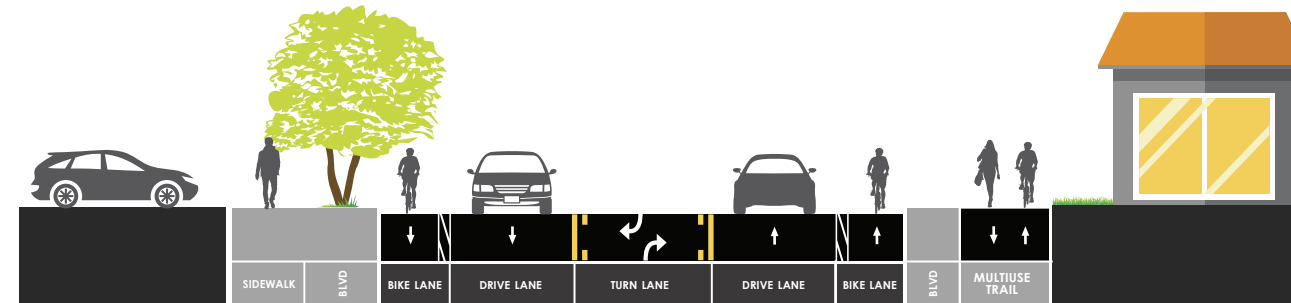


Roadway
improvements

Pedestrian
improvements







Bike
improvements

Vision design concept



Concept Only: Not intended to be viewed as a final plan and subject to change.

Evaluation

| | GOAL | LOW | MEDIUM | HIGH |
|---|--------------------------|-----|--------|------|
|  | Walk – along/across | | | |
|  | Bike – along/across | | | |
|  | Drive – to Penn Ave | | | |
|  | Drive – along Penn Ave | | | |
|  | Community Revitalization | | | |
|  | Green space/boulevard | | | |

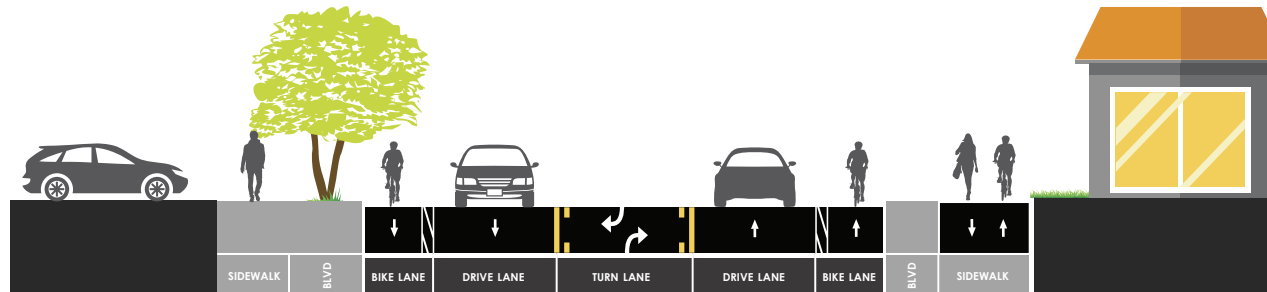
These scores represent how well the design concepts would address the problem statement and modal priorities, with high being best possible treatment and low being the minimum treatment.

63RD STREET TO 64TH STREET: THREE-LANE SECTION, ON-STREET BIKE LANES, TRAIL ON ONE SIDE









| | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| Public realm improvements | Roadway improvements |
| Pedestrian improvements | Bike improvements |

Vision design concept



Concept Only: Not intended to be viewed as a final plan and subject to change.

Evaluation

| | GOAL | LOW | MEDIUM | HIGH |
|---|--------------------------|-------------|--------|------|
|  | Walk – along/across | [Green bar] | | |
|  | Bike – along/across | [Green bar] | | |
|  | Drive – to Penn Ave | [Green bar] | | |
|  | Drive – along Penn Ave | [Green bar] | | |
|  | Community Revitalization | [Green bar] | | |
|  | Green space/boulevard | [Green bar] | | |

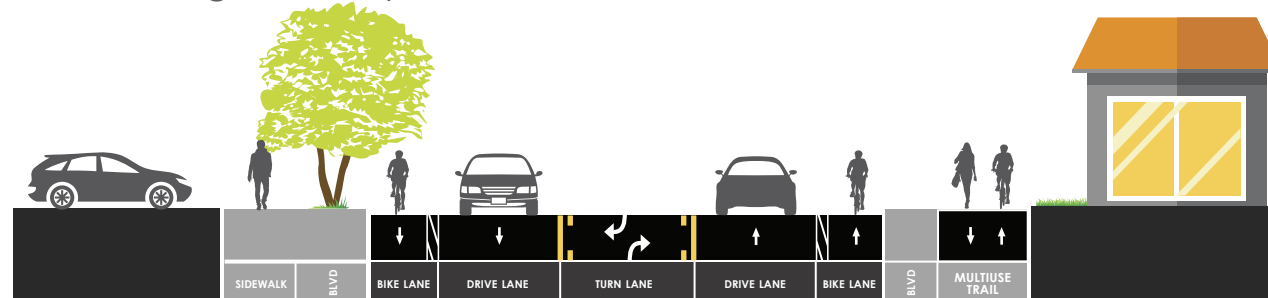
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64TH STREET TO 65TH STREET: THREE-LANE SECTION, ON STREET BIKE LANES, TRAIL ON ONE SIDE









| | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| Public realm improvements | Roadway improvements |
| Pedestrian improvements | Bike improvements |

Vision design concept



Concept Only: Not intended to be viewed as a final plan and subject to change.

Evaluation

| GOAL | | LOW | MEDIUM | HIGH |
|---|--------------------------|--------------|--------|------|
|  | Walk – along/across | [Medium bar] | | |
|  | Bike – along/across | [Medium bar] | | |
|  | Drive – to Penn Ave | [Medium bar] | | |
|  | Drive – along Penn Ave | [Medium bar] | | |
|  | Community Revitalization | [Medium bar] | | |
|  | Green space/boulevard | [Medium bar] | | |

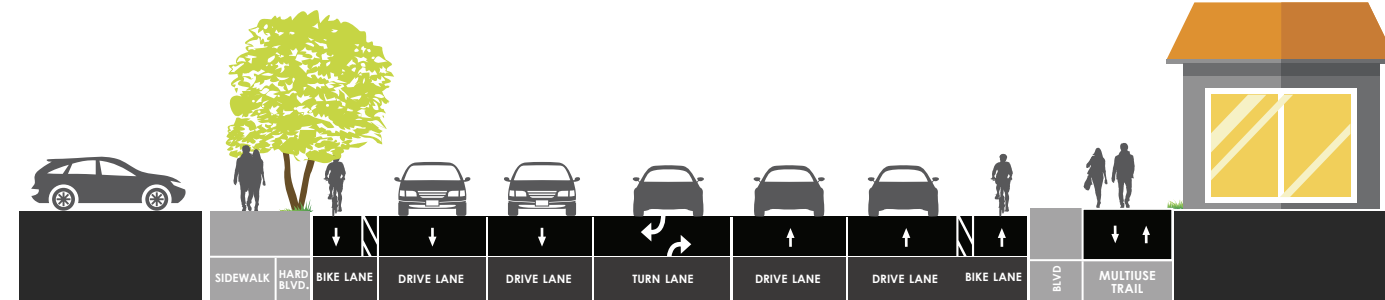
These scores represent how well the design concepts would address the problem statement and modal priorities, with high being best possible treatment and low being the minimum treatment.

66TH STREET AREA: FIVE-LANE SECTION, ON-STREET BIKE LANES









| | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| Public realm improvements | Roadway improvements |
| Pedestrian improvements | Bike improvements |

Vision design concept



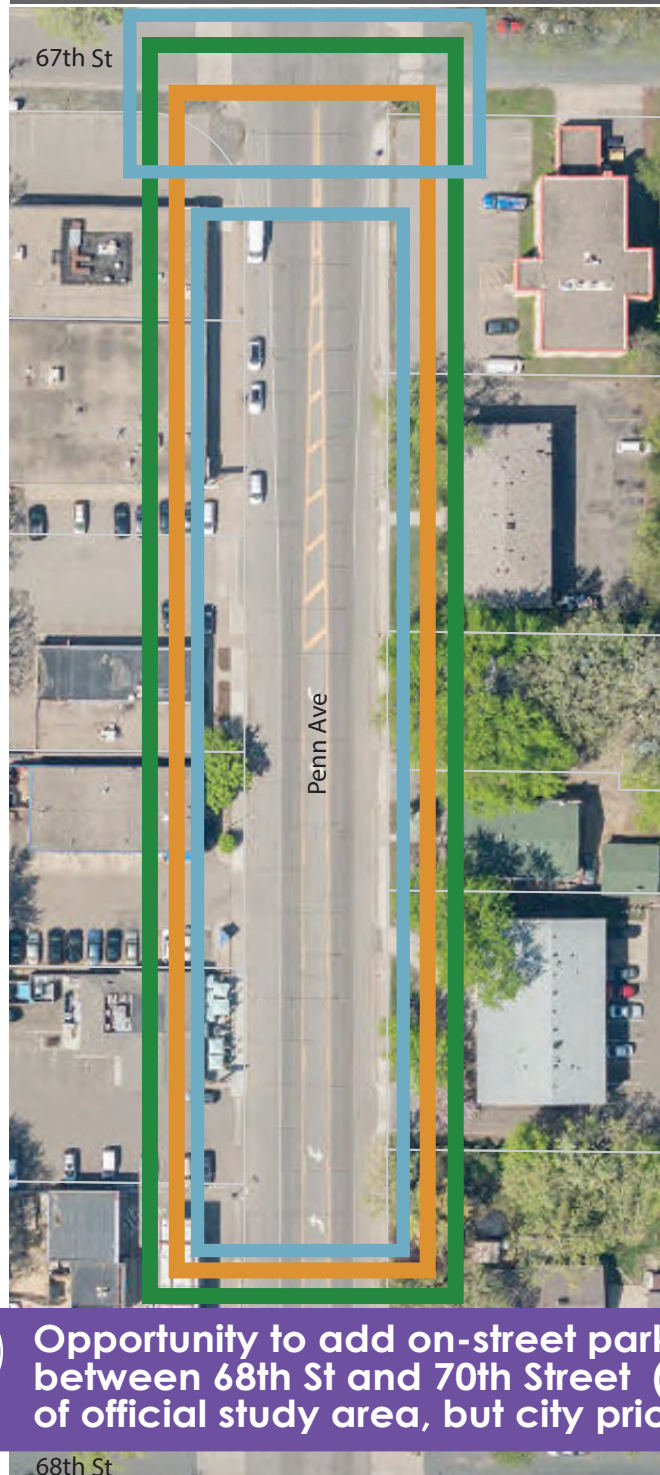
Concept Only: Not intended to be viewed as a final plan and subject to change.


Evaluation

| | GOAL | LOW | MEDIUM | HIGH |
|---|--------------------------|--------------|--------|------|
|  | Walk – along/across | [Green bar] | | |
|  | Bike – along/across | [Green bar] | | |
|  | Drive – to Penn Ave | [Orange bar] | | |
|  | Drive – along Penn Ave | [Orange bar] | | |
|  | Community Revitalization | [Blue bar] | | |
|  | Green space/boulevard | [Blue bar] | | |

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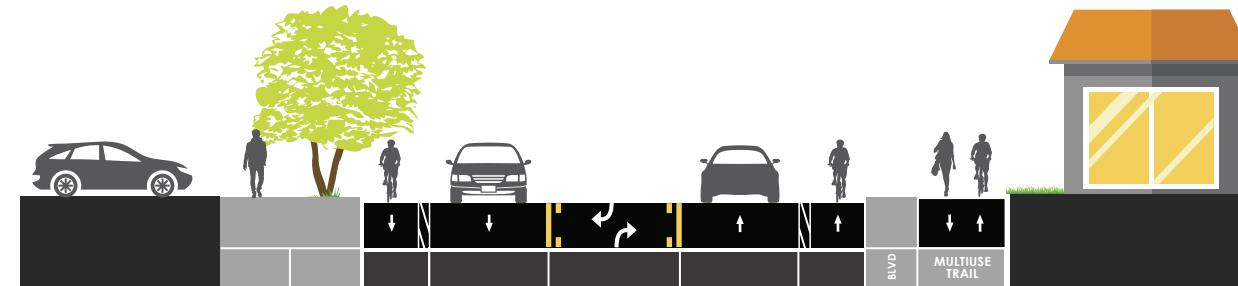
67TH STREET TO 68TH ST: TWO-LANE SECTION, ON-STREET BIKE LANES, 3-LANE SECTION



 Opportunity to add on-street parking between 68th St and 70th Street (outside of official study area, but city priority)







| | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| Public realm improvements | Roadway improvements |
| Pedestrian improvements | Bike improvements |

Vision design concept



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Evaluation

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|  | Green space/boulevard | [Green bar] | | |

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PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES

Exploring public/private partnerships as a way to improve safety, traffic circulation, parking, and the public realm is a critical step toward realizing the long-term vision for Penn Avenue. A range of potential strategies toward that end are discussed below and illustrated through a series of “vignettes,” which are presented in Appendix D. The purpose of the vignettes is to help articulate ideas and they should be used as a source of inspiration when considering a strategy. Implementing these strategies will require ongoing coordination and collaboration between the property owner, City, and County.

PARKING AND CIRCULATION STRATEGIES

Many businesses along Penn Avenue lack adequate frontage for standard parking lots but have fashioned ad hoc parking wherever owners have managed to create space. This practice has led to poorly oriented and arranged parking lots that, in many cases, interfere with safe pedestrian passage. Maintaining private parking lots in front of buildings reinforces the perception that the corridor primarily serves cars. In order to achieve a multimodal vision for Penn Avenue, parking should be reoriented to the rear of buildings wherever possible. The following strategies will help maximize parking opportunities, make traffic circulation more efficient, and reclaim space for pedestrian amenities:



Negotiate shared parking agreements among adjacent businesses. Shared parking is a simple concept of utilizing parking facilities jointly among different businesses or uses in an area that takes advantage of different peak parking characteristics. For example, restaurants typically see a high parking demand during the evening hours versus office space during the day.



Analyze and reconfigure the space available for parking and circulation to provide an optimal experience for patrons of businesses where shared parking agreements are in place. This can include parking lot resurfacing, restriping, removing circulation barriers, and adding wayfinding signage at key locations. Each of the vignettes illustrate how these strategies, employed as a suite, can respond to the unique characteristics of different areas along Penn Avenue.

SAFETY STRATEGIES

Pedestrian safety is essential to making Penn Avenue a complete street and a community destination. While proposed long-term improvements include an expanded pedestrian realm, there are ways to improve safety in the near-term, before Penn Avenue undergoes reconstruction. Implementing the following will help make the corridor a more comfortable and easier to use environment for pedestrians:



Add dedicated pedestrian access areas in parking lots to facilitate safer pedestrian movement between vehicles, sidewalks, and businesses. This can be achieved by using pavement markings that designate pedestrian pathways and are visible to the driver. This strategy is illustrated in Vignette #1.



Reduce the number and length of curb cuts along Penn Avenue in order to eliminate conflict points, while providing a contiguous sidewalk for pedestrians. This strategy is illustrated in Vignettes #2 and #3.

PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES

SUPPORTING AMENITY STRATEGIES

Until the corridor undergoes a full reconstruction and more pedestrian realm can be gained, any streetscape improvements need to occur between the buildings and the existing curb. In that respect, there will be space limitations in creating a comfortable and attractive public realm in the short-term. Making short-term investments to improve the public realm will require public and private partnerships. The City of Richfield has identified public and private partnerships and small business assistance as a future priority. Fostering these partnerships will come with further coordination and collaboration. In the meantime, the following strategies offer ways to improve the pedestrian realm and are illustrated in each of the vignettes.



Create a pedestrian-oriented frontage along Penn Avenue by prioritizing the available space for contiguous sidewalks, benches, café tables, and landscaping. This may require reorganizing parking and access to accommodate these amenities.



Coordinate with the City to provide streetscape amenities along business frontages outside of the right-of-way. This could include adding sidewalk connections, seating, trees, and other plantings.



Provide a comfortable environment for those walking and biking in the corridor by preserving existing trees wherever possible, planting additional trees, and offering seating at regular intervals.



Invest in proper facade.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following is a summary of the major findings and recommendations, and next steps from the Penn Avenue Corridor Study. Further detail on study recommendations are included in the implementation plan.

Problem statement: There is agency and community support for the project problem statement which identifies the need to:

- Pursue infrastructure improvements on Penn Avenue to support community revitalization
- Invest in tools and strategies to make it safer, more convenient, and easier to walk and bike along and across Penn Avenue
- Address corridor aesthetics with plantings and trees, burying utilities, decorative streetscape improvements, and other improvements to the public realm in partnership with adjacent properties

CORRIDOR VISION:

Based on a review of the existing public right-of-way, city and county transportation design criteria, and an evaluation of multiple design concepts, a long-term vision which would reallocate space on Penn Avenue to create more room for pedestrians, bicyclists, and green infrastructure is feasible. Implementation of the long-term vision would likely require a full reconstruction of the roadway (i.e., subbase, base, pavement, curb and gutter, sidewalks and boulevards, etc.) and that some small strip acquisition of property may be needed.

PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS:

Small lot sizes create challenges for adjacent businesses in the form of constrained space available for parking and streetscape amenities, and frequent driveways interrupt traffic operations and impact pedestrian and bicycle safety. There are opportunities to partner with adjacent property owners to implement internal circulation improvements, shared parking, and consolidated driveways to improve safety for all users and create space for public realm improvements.

SPOT SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS:

The study identified several spot safety improvement opportunities which can be completed for a relatively low cost and will provide a relatively high benefit. The highest priorities are enhanced pedestrian crossings north of 66th Street and filling the sidewalk gap south of 66th Street. A more complete listing of spot improvement opportunities is included in the implementation plan.

PARKING:

There is an adequate supply of parking along the corridor as most businesses and residences have off-street parking. However, there are some areas – primarily south of 66th Street – where the provision of additional off-street parking could help to facilitate public realm improvements such as access consolidation, more plantings, and wider sidewalks.

ROAD DIET:

Based on traffic analysis conducted by Hennepin County, a road diet – which would reduce the number of vehicle travel lanes from four (two in each direction) to three (one in each direction) is feasible for much of the corridor. Exceptions include Penn Avenue north of 63rd Street where the entrances and exits to Hwy 62 necessitate extra lanes, and the approaches to 66th Street, where multiple lanes are needed to facilitate adequate traffic flow. Additional study is needed to evaluate options for these areas. Further, an interim road diet based on restriping the roadway is feasible for implementation during the upcoming 2021 pavement rehabilitation project.

Penn Ave looking south from 67th Street

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN



Penn Fest 2019

The findings and recommendations in this study are intended to be implemented over time, as funding is secured. This means pursuing an incremental approach, with multiple individual projects, to move the Penn Avenue corridor toward the ultimate vision. The following is a summary of the recommended corridor improvements, by timeframe:

- 1.** Near-Term (2021): Near-term improvements represent those that should be pursued immediately. This includes improvements that can be completed as part of the county's 2021 maintenance project, as well as other relatively low-cost changes (e.g., striping and signage).
- 2.** Incremental (as funding is secured): Incremental improvements represent relatively low-cost changes that are anticipated to bring a high-level of benefit and utility in moving Penn Avenue toward the corridor vision (e.g., inter-jurisdictional coordination, spot reconstruction, etc.)
- 3.** Long-Term Vision (no funding secured): The long-term vision for the corridor represents the final configuration for Penn Avenue based on the problem statement, community values, and technical constraints. The ultimate vision will likely require a full reconstruction project and additional outside funding sources.



IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The following is a list of potential projects, including a brief description and a general phasing timeframe.

| Phasing | ID | Description |
|-------------|-----|--|
| Near-Term | 1.1 | Three-lane conversion: Pavement rehabilitation with restriping. This will include a three-lane conversion with shoulders from just south of 65th Street to just north of 63rd Street |
| Near-Term | 1.2 | Public/private partnership opportunities: Work with adjacent property owners to explore opportunities to make circulation and access management improvements, streetscape enhancements, and shared parking. Specific improvements that should be considered during this phase are listed below. Other improvements should be explored as opportunities arise. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expand the right of way on the west side of Penn Avenue, adjacent to the proposed Lunds Development, to include a six-foot boulevard and six-foot sidewalk in that area. Work with adjacent properties to identify alternatives to on-street parking on Penn Avenue to allow space for dedicated bike lanes. |
| Incremental | 2.1 | Sidewalk gap: Pursue closing the sidewalk gap on the east side of Penn Avenue, with an option to remove the existing raised center median at the south approach to 66th Street to allow space. |
| Incremental | 2.1 | Highway 62 bridge and ramps: Further analyze the possibility of reconfiguring to allow for a more efficient allocation of space on Penn Avenue from 63rd Street to Highway 62: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reconfigure the westbound Highway 62 exit ramps to include one left-, one through-, and one right-turn lane. Reconfigure the Highway 62 bridge deck to include one through lane in each direction and side by side center turn lanes. Reconfigure the south approach to Highway 62 on Penn Avenue to include two northbound-, one southbound-, and a center turn-lane. |
| Incremental | 2.2 | Enhanced pedestrian crossing: Further analyze the feasibility of enhanced pedestrian crossings, with median refuge islands and flashing beacons (RRFB) at the following intersections: 63rd Street, 65th Street, and 68th Street. |

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The following is a list of potential projects, including a brief description and a general phasing timeframe.

| Phasing | ID | Description |
|-------------|-----|---|
| Incremental | 2.3 | Bike facilities south of 68th Street: Explore opportunities to restripe Penn Avenue from 68th Street to 77th Street, to add buffered on-street bike lanes in place of the existing shoulders. |
| Incremental | 2.4 | <p>Public/private partnership opportunities: Work with adjacent property owners to explore opportunities to make circulation and access management improvements, streetscape enhancements, and shared parking. Specific improvements that should be considered during this phase are listed below. Other improvements should be explored as opportunities arise.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore opportunities to leverage private property at 6626 Penn Avenue (Homestead Pickin' Parlor building) to address sidewalk gap and to add a planted boulevard. This could include using private property for a sidewalk and boulevard, and adding an on-street parking bay in front of the property in the public right-of-way. This concept would need to be further vetted as opportunities arise. • Look for opportunities to share driveways and parking lots for the smaller parcels on the east side of Penn Avenue, north of 66th Street. • Work with adjacent properties to identify alternatives to on-street parking on Penn Avenue to allow space for dedicated bike lanes. This could include internal circulation improvements and select driveway closures to improve safety and convenience for all users. • Encourage property owners to add building frontage, plantings, and trees to their Penn Avenue frontage, in accordance with the Penn Avenue Development study (2005) and Comprehensive Plan (2018) as redevelopment and/or investment occurs over time. |
| Long-Term | 3.1 | <p>Street reconstruction: Fully reconstruction Penn Avenue from Highway 62 to 68th Street. Include wider sidewalks and boulevards, a trail on one-side, street trees and plantings, and one-lane in each direction with turn-lanes or a continuous center turn lane where needed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconfigure the south approach to Highway 62 on Penn Avenue to include two northbound-, one southbound-, and a center turn-lane. |
| Long-Term | 3.2 | On-street parking south of 68th Street: Work with adjacent property owners to explore opportunities to restripe Penn Avenue from 68th Street to 70th Street, to create opportunities for on-street parking. |
| Long-Term | 3.3 | Public/private partnership opportunities: Work with adjacent property owners to explore opportunities to make circulation and access management improvements, streetscape enhancements, and shared parking. |



LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A: Community Engagement Summaries

Part 1, Penn Fest Summary

Part 2, Open House 1 Summary

Part 3, Listening Session Summary

Part 4, Open House 2 Summary

Appendix B: Penn Avenue Toolbox Technical Memorandum

Appendix C: Hennepin County Striping Plan for Penn Avenue

Appendix D: Public Realm Improvement Strategies