



Eastern (Burton to Ardmore)

June 11, 2024



Agenda

- Introductions
- Guiding Documents and Principles
- Project Overview
- Preferred Design
- Discussion

STREETS ARE VITAL FOR



RESIDENTIAL

INCREASED PROPERTY VALUES AND
BETTER MOBILITY (CARS, BIKING, WALKING
AND BUSES)



SMALL BUSINESS

CUSTOMERS NEED TO SAFELY REACH
RETAILERS & RESTAURANTS IN THE AREA



BIG BUSINESS

STREETS ARE VITAL FOR MOVING GOODS
& PRODUCTS TO CONSUMERS

Introductions

City Staff

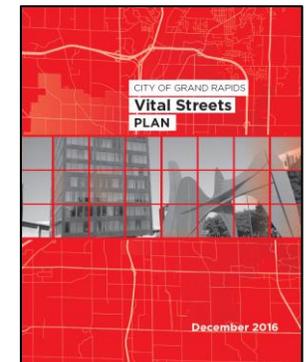
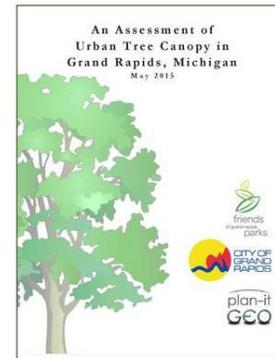
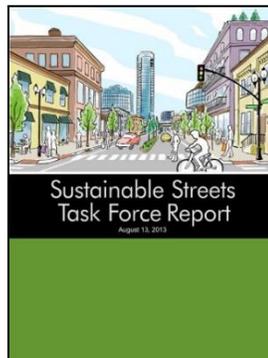
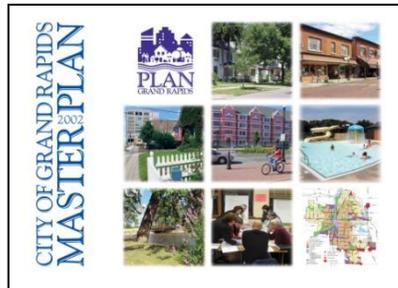
- Engineering – Breese Stam
- Community Engagement – Juan Torres & Sarah Itani
- Planning – Kristin Turkelson
- MobileGR/Traffic Safety – John Bartlett

Guiding Documents and Principles



Guiding Documents

- 2000-2002 City Master Plan
- 2007-2010 Green Grand Rapids
- 2012-2013 Sustainable Streets Task Force Report
- 2015 Urban Tree Canopy Assessment
- 2016 Vital Streets Plan
- 2019 Bicycle Action Plan
- 2020 Southtown Business Area Specific Plan



Southtown Business Area Specific Plan

SEYMOUR SQUARE - RETAIL PRIORITY AREA



Seymour Square Design Process

SOUTHTOWN BUSINESS AREA SPECIFIC PLAN

- Completed in 2019
- Held engagement activities to understand what is needed for Seymour Square
- Participants expressed concern over
 - Parking safety
 - Intersections
 - Street lighting & furnishings



SEYMOUR SQUARE DESIGN

- Based off feedback received in the Southtown BASP
- Design process included meetings with:
 - The Southtown Corridor Improvement Authority
 - The Southtown CIA Design Committee

Southtown Business Area Specific Plan Goals and Strategies

#4 – BE A SAFER ENVIRONMENT FOR EVERYONE

- Improve the retail corridor environment. Improve safety and comfort. Be clean and welcoming. Have a cohesive identity.
- Provide improved transit and bus service accommodations.
- Improve bicycle and pedestrian safety.
- Improve personal safety and crime, in tandem with improving policing practices.

MOBILITY AND STREET DESIGN

STRATEGIES:

M1 INSTALL SITE FURNISHINGS

M2 COORDINATE WITH IMPROVEMENTS TO BICYCLE FACILITIES

M3 INSTALL STREET TREES AND LANDSCAPING

M4 IMPROVE TRANSIT FACILITIES AND OPERATIONS

M4 IMPROVE STREET LIGHTING

M6 INSTALL SAFE PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS

M7 IMPROVE PEDESTRIAN SAFETY AND COMFORT

Southtown Business Area Specific Plan

Seymour Square is an existing retail hub, commercially anchored by Harvest Health Foods. The U.S. Post Office at this location provides a civic anchor in this district and could benefit from reinvestment to make it a more positive user destination.

The commercial core is the intersection of two well-trafficked corridors, Burton Street SE and Eastern Avenue SE, which provide good visibility and accessibility to the surrounding neighborhood. A large portion of identifiable storefront space remains intact, and with some reinvestment, can transition into a vibrant and walkable hub.

Parking opportunities are limited, and diagonal parking opportunities provide some parking, but is also perceived as unsafe. Non-retail uses on the southern corners of Burton Street and Eastern Avenue will require special treatments, such as artistic features on the

building walls or on the sidewalk, to improve the character and sense of connection between the retail concentrations on opposite sides of Burton Street.

Pedestrian conditions in the district are challenging, with narrow sidewalks, fast moving traffic, and confusing bicycle lanes that result in bicycles utilizing sidewalks for travel. Pending a more thorough traffic analysis, the area around Eastern Avenue and Burton Street would benefit from lane narrowing, reduction of unnecessary turn lanes, and the addition of bumpouts to increase sidewalk widths.

Streetscape enhancements throughout the corridor should focus on improving the safety of pedestrian crossings and enhancing the corridor with decorative street lighting and street trees.

Southtown Business Area Specific Plan

The Seymour Square retail node includes several active retailers, in addition to opportunities for redevelopment of existing buildings and parcels. There are a number of anchors stores (e.g. Harvest Health Foods) that can draw people from well outside of Southtown district to shop here.

While there is a good supply of parking in the business district, parking lots can be linked together when possible to accommodate a shared approach to parking between businesses and easy navigation for customers. Where possible, alleyways can be enhanced to better link rear

parking areas to front building entrances to reinforce a more vibrant streetscape environment for patrons and pedestrians.

On-street parking should be reconfigured as parallel parking to increase the pedestrian areas and make parking more consistent from district to district to promote safety.

A facade improvement program will improve the character of the area and strengthen its identity. Enforcement of signage restrictions and increased trash collection will improve the sense of cleanliness.

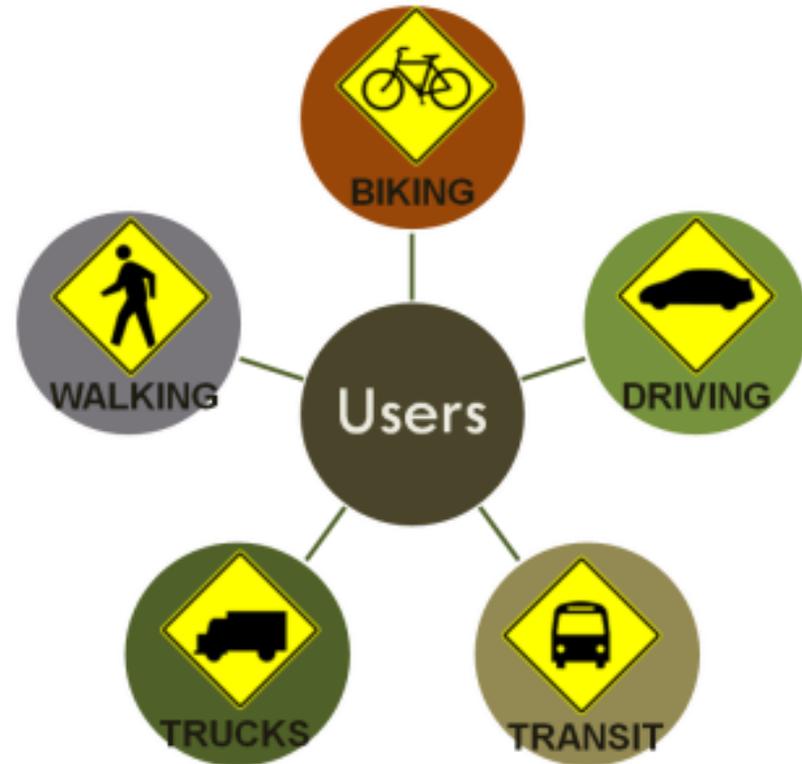
Turn lanes that are not warranted (as deemed by a traffic study) can be eliminated and sidewalks widened to promote safer and more comfortable crossings and sidewalks.

New decorative streetlights and street trees will highlight the area as a retail destination and make it even more friendly to pedestrians.

Complete Streets

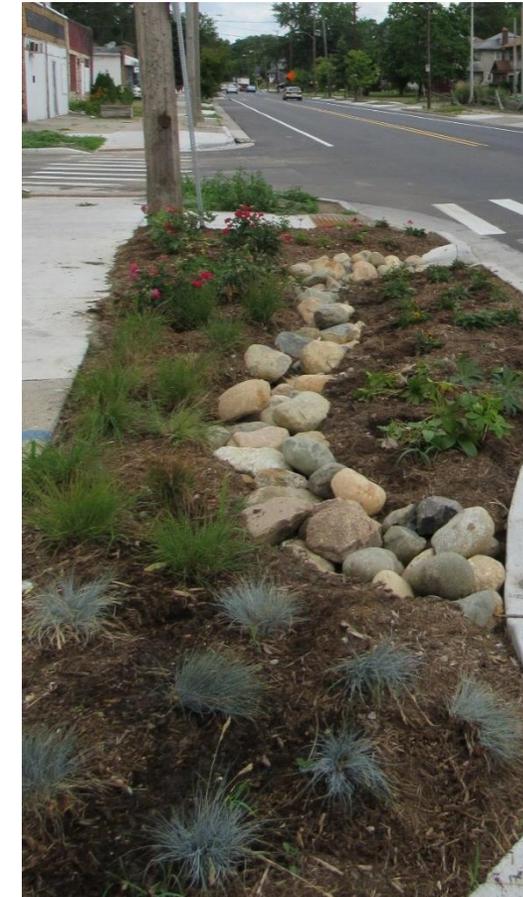
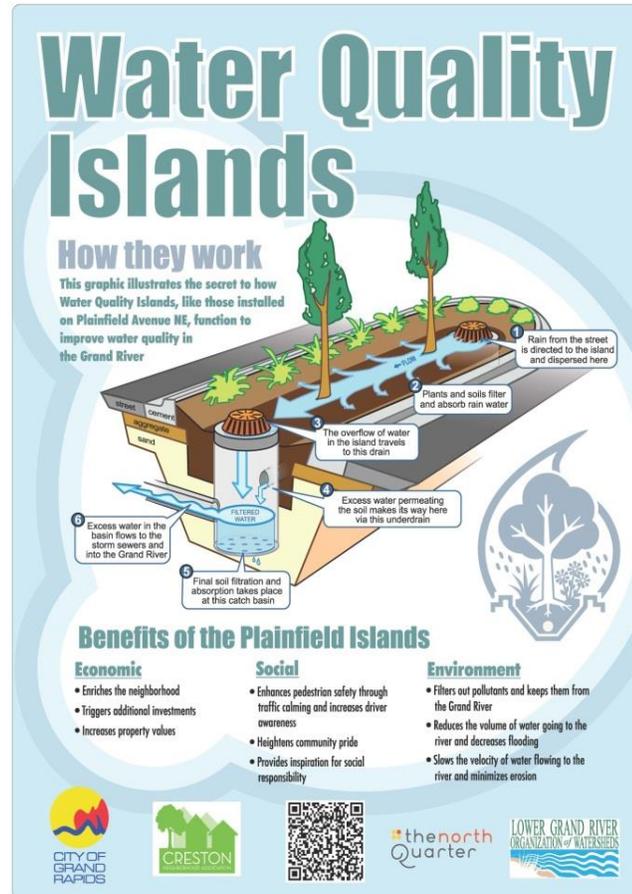
A system of streets...planned, designed, operated and maintained so all legal users may safely, comfortably and conveniently move along and across streets

~ PA 134 of 2010



Vital Streets

Complete streets + green infrastructure



All users include:

- People walking
- People driving
- People biking
- People of all abilities
- Trucks
- Buses

ACCESSIBILITY
WE NEED TO PROVIDE
QUALITY ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS
FOR **ALL** MODES SO PEOPLE CAN GET TO WORK,
SCHOOL, HEALTHCARE, SHOPPING AND PLACES OF WORSHIP.



Why all users?

1/3rd of the population does not drive

Aging population:

- **1 in 5** seniors do not drive (AARP)
- Most seniors outlive their ability to drive by **7 to 10** years (AARP)

Ability:

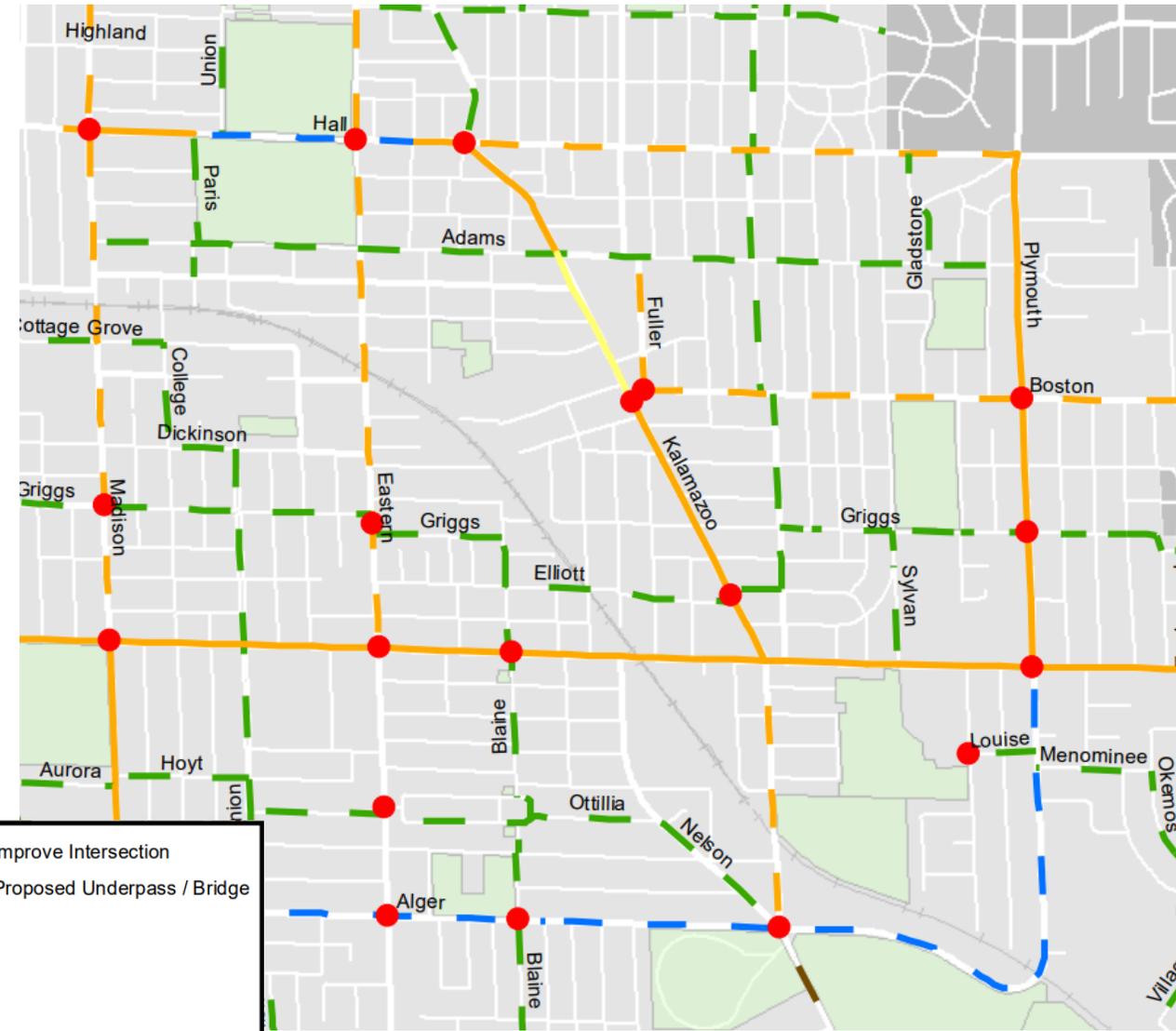
- **20%** of Americans have a disability that limits their daily activities (US Census)
- **Nearly half** of people 65 and older have a disability (US Census)

Why all users?

- Young people:
 - **1/4th** do not have a driver's license (U.S. PIRG)
 - Trips by bike ↑ **24%**, ↑ walking **16%**, ↑ transit **40%** (U.S. PIRG)
- Expense:
 - Average cost of owning and operating one automobile (2022): **\$10,728/year** (AAA)
 - Average household transportation costs (Grand Rapids MSA, 2015): **\$12,943/year** (H+T Index)

Bicycle Action Plan

- This street proposed for bike lanes



	Existing Separated / Raised Bikeway		Existing Off-Street Multi-Use Trail/Sidepath		Improve Intersection
	Proposed Separated / Raised Bikeway		Proposed Off-Street Multi-Use Trail/Sidepath		Proposed Underpass / Bridge
	Existing Bike Lane / Paved Shoulder		Existing Sidewalk/Stairway/Tunnel Connection		
	Proposed Bike Lane / Paved Shoulder		Proposed Sidewalk/Stairway/Tunnel Connection		
	Existing Marked Shared Lane		Buffered Bike Lane		
	Proposed Marked Shared Lane		Proposed Buffered Bike Lane		
	Existing Signed Bike Route		Advisory Bike Lane		
	Proposed Signed Bike Route / Bike Boulevard		Add / Improve Connection		

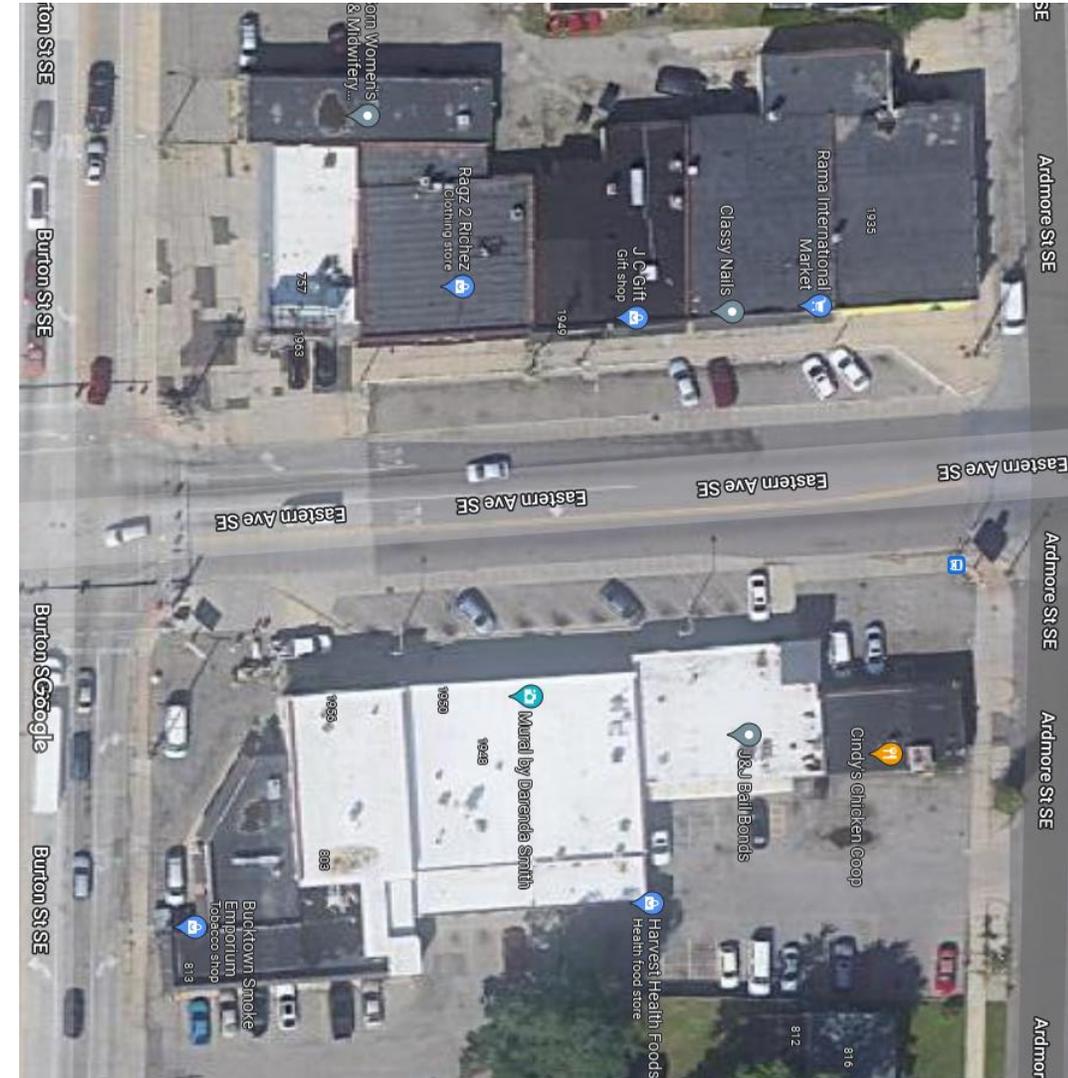


Project Overview



Project Details

- Reconstruction project
 - Water main replacement
 - Lead service line replacements
 - Upgrades to the storm sewer system
 - Replace driveway approaches
- New sidewalks and curb ramps to meet ADA standards
- 2025 Construction

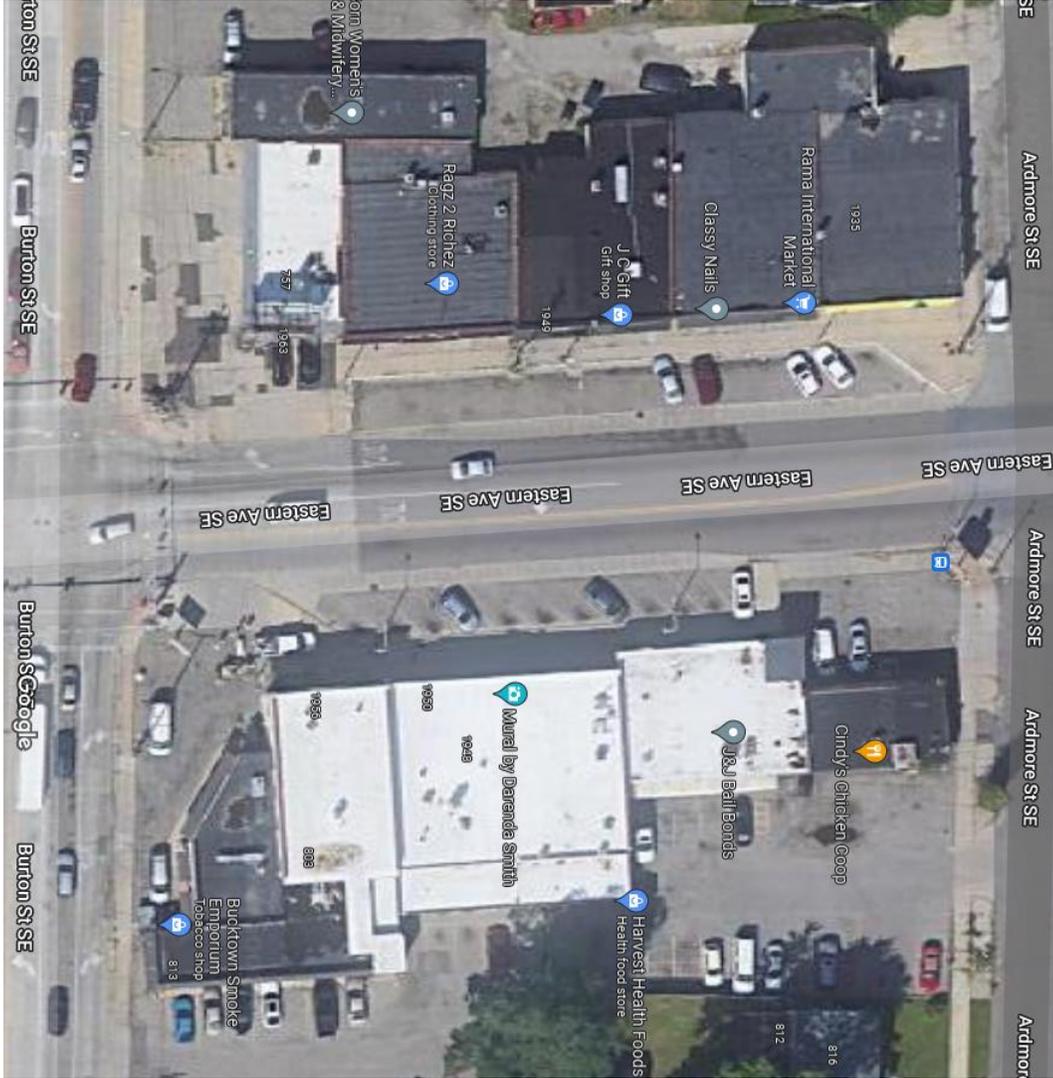


Existing Conditions

- Street pavement condition rating of 2 to 3
- 66-96-foot public right of way
- 50-foot road width, not including angled parking
 - Two travel lanes, one in each direction, and southbound left-turn lane
 - Angled on-street parking on both sides
 - 6-foot sidewalks on both sides



Existing Conditions



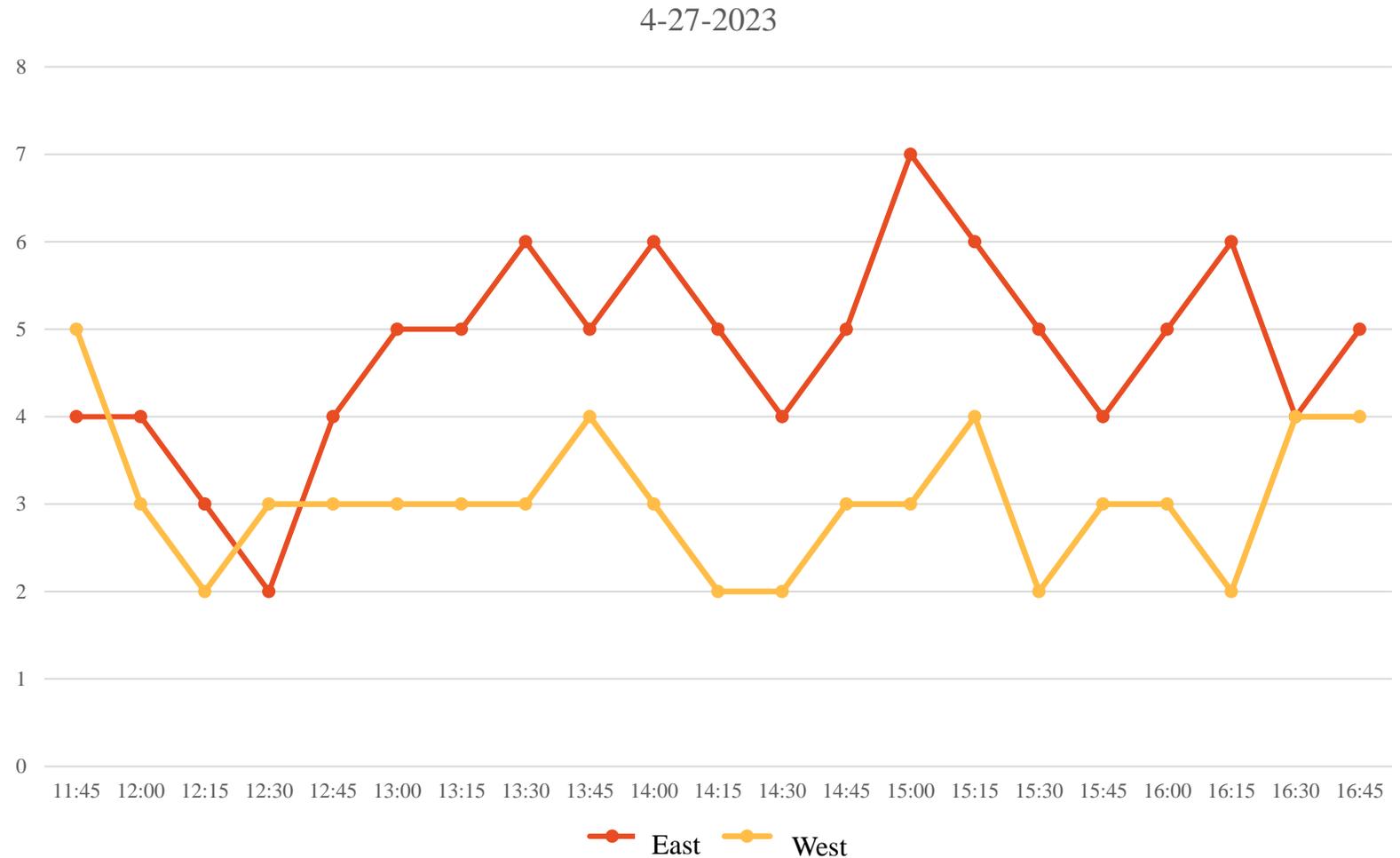
Traffic Data and Parking

Eastern (Burton to Ardmore)			Wealthy (Lake Drive to Gladstone)			Leonard (Alpine to Fremont)		
	Crashes	Parking Related		Crashes	Parking Related		Crashes	Parking Related
2023			2023			2023		
2022	4	2	2022	1	1	2022	6	2
2021	5	1	2021	0	0	2021	4	1
2020	2	0	2020	2	1	2020	8	0
2019	6	0*	2019	0	0	2019	7	3
2018	9	2*	2018	1	1	2018	7	0
2017	12	5	2017	2	0	2017	10	1
Total	38	10	Total	6	3	Total	42	7
		27%			50%			17%

* additional report of rear ending a stopped car just north of intersection (unclear if directly related to parking)

Parking

- Monitored parking for 24 hours on April 27.
- Peak parking use was 44% (12 of 27 spaces).





Preferred Design



Concept Design

- Reconstruct the street, curb, and gutter, including:
 - Changing the angled parking to parallel parking.
 - Moving the curbs in on both sides of the street to narrow the street and install wider sidewalks.
 - Create curb extensions to shorten the pedestrian crossings.
 - Install permeable pavers in the parking lanes.
- Install bicycle lanes on both sides of the street.
- Install decorative street lighting.
- Install new traffic signals at Burton and Eastern.
- Plant 11 street trees.

Existing vs. Proposed

Existing

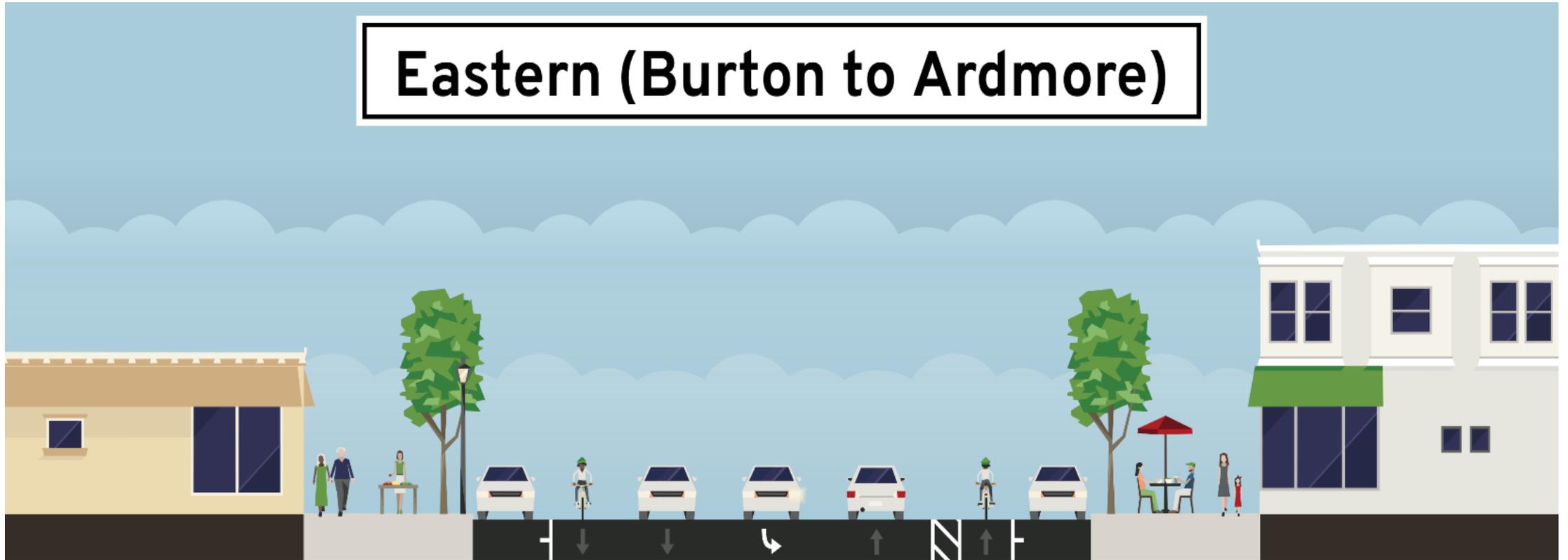
- 27 existing angled parking spaces
- 6-12-foot sidewalks

Proposed

- 14 parallel parking space with new road design
- Narrower lanes
- 10,774 sq ft of additional sidewalk space for business owners and others to make this space a vibrant place to visit
 - Averaging 19.5 feet x 275 feet on both sides of the road
- Bicycle lanes
- Street trees
- Benches and decorative street lighting

Road Reconstruction

Eastern (Burton to Ardmore)





Discussion



Contact Information

- Road construction website:
grandrapidsmi.gov/roadconstruction
- City phone number: 311 or 456-3000
- Email: communityengagement@grcity.us
- Visit gr.publicinput.com and search for *Eastern*

