August 13, 2025

Re: 2025.07.17 Broadway and South Union Street Improvement Project Public Meeting

Dear Mr. Hubbard,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the proposed Broadway and South Union Street Improvement Project. We have appreciated the opportunities to engage in the public process, and anticipate remaining engaged throughout the successive design presentations and public engagement of this important project!

Thank you for reviewing our April input letter and incorporating many elements into the conceptual design presented at the July 17, 2025 informational meeting. As stated in our previous input letter, we support the two way conversion and thank project designers for emphasising Rochester's Vision Zero Commitment. As the project advances into detailed design, we wanted to offer feedback on the conceptual design and offer suggestions for the project team to explore moving forward.

Monroe Ave to Pearl Street

The Monroe Ave to Pearl Street section of this project should maintain protected bike lanes to the project boundary. An unprotected on-street bike lane at the end of the project will diminish the connectivity of the all-ages-all-abilities network and make it harder to connect to the future Monroe Ave bike spine as described in the 2023 Active Transportation Plan.

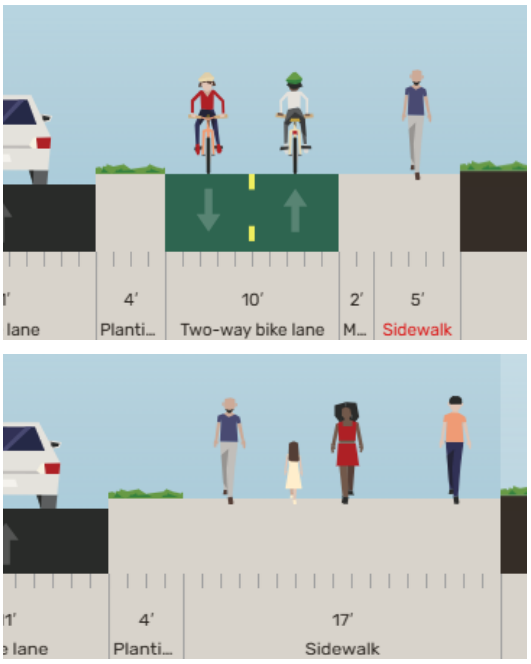
Designers have indicated that bike accommodations would shift from protected to on-street after Pearl Street to preserve several parking spaces. 3 of the 6 buildings on this block have off street parking and ample street parking exists on Pearl Street, Griffith Street, and the surrounding neighborhood. **On roadways identified as part of Rochester's bike network, connectivity and all-ages-all-abilities infrastructure must be the city's number one priority.** The need for parking can be supplemented here by making Griffith Street one way, as recommended by the project team, and allowing parking on both sides of the street (10' travel lane with two 8' parking lanes). We would

also recommend the exploration of a bump out at the intersection of Griffith and Union to shorten the pedestrian crossing distance and protect vehicles parked on the street.

As mentioned in our previous project input, we strongly encourage project designers to explore installing part of a protected intersection at Monroe Ave as explained in section 7.9 of the 2024 AASHTO Bike Design Guide. New sidewalks and curbs are being installed at the intersection making this a perfect opportunity to upgrade part of the intersection to an all-ages-all-abilities design. Please refer to the design depicted in our previous letter, we are happy to discuss the design elements with the project team.

South Goodman to Meigs

The conceptual design depicts the separated bike lane ending at Edmonds Street before turning into a shared use path for one block. We caution against ending the separated bike accommodations before Goodman as this will make it harder to connect dedicated bike lanes to Goodman Street when it is upgraded to accommodate all-ages-all-abilities infrastructure as prescribed in Rochester's ATP. If this block must be built as a shared use path, it is essential that it be built to be easily upgraded as part of a future project.



Potential profiles of the two way protected bike lane proposed in this project. The top figure represents Meigs to Edmonds while the bottom represents Edmonds to Goodman. Renderings made in StreetMix.

AASHTO recommends a width of 9' to 11' for two-way separated bike lanes as planned on this section of the roadway (AASHTO Bike Guide 7.3.4). The 2025 NACTO Urban Bikeway Design guide goes further recommending a width of "at least 13 ft (2.4 m) wide to accommodate all types of bicycles, side-by-side riding, platooning, and passing. The absolute minimum width is 8 ft (2.4 m) and should be avoided except on short segments" (NACTO Bike pg158). **Given this guidance, we recommend that this project includes a 10' wide or larger separated path.** If the path must stop short of Goodman, the sidewalk must be wide enough to accommodate a future conversion using paint or other low cost materials. A 17' sidewalk could be split into a 10' separated two-way bike lane, 5' sidewalk, and 2' barrier.

Detailed Design Suggestions: Lane Widths & Buffers

We encourage the use of minimum lane widths to calm traffic and support a safer street for all users. The City of Rochester's 2019 street design guide defines Broadway & South Union as a Neighborhood Link. The guide prescribes a 10' width unless the roadway is a transit corridor (CoR Street Design Guide page 9). This project area is not a transit corridor and RTS has no expansion plans indicating otherwise. As mentioned in our previous letter, this corridor is currently designated as a minor arterial with minimal truck traffic which would allow for 10' travel lanes (NYSDOT HDM page 2-47) and a design speed of 25 or 30 MPH (NYSDOT HDM page 2-45). **Ten foot lanes are supported by CoR standards, the NYSDOT HDM, AASHTO, and significant academic research.**

In the one way protected bike lane segments, we recommend a width of at least 6.5 feet. "Because raised bike lanes cannot be easily widened, the rideable width must be maximized from the earliest stages of planning, design, and budgeting. The rideable width of a one way raised protected bike lane should be at least 7 ft (2.1m; aim for 8-12.5 ft (2.4-3.6 m) to best accommodate future demand" (NACTO Bike Page 169). The AASHTO manual agrees saying that protected bike lanes at the sidewalk level "should allow passing of slower bicyclists and side-by-side travel, where feasible (see Section 7.3.4)" which recommends a width of 5.5' to 7.5' assuming low levels of use (AASHTO Bike Guide 7.2.0). The Broadway & South Union bike lane will see increased ridership as network effects are amplified with the construction of the greater bike spine plan.

We recommend the exploration of different strategies to clearly implement a sidewalk buffer between the protected bike lane and sidewalk to ensure accessibility. NACTO recommends either a landscaping/furnishing zone, an intermediate level bike lane, or tactile warning indicators. Intermediate level bike lanes, which place the protected bike lane at an elevation between the sidewalk and the roadway, are explained in detail in AASHTO 7.2.2.3 and could be considered in this project. If the project team decides to place the protected bike lane at the sidewalk level adjacent to the sidewalk, a continuous detectable edge must be included as a buffer. Guidance for this buffer can be found on page 172 of the NACTO Bike Guide and in section 7.5 of the AASHTO Bike Guide.

Detailed Design Suggestions: Intersections

As you begin to enter detailed design, we strongly encourage designers to include protected intersection design at all signalized intersections in the project area. Protected intersections are the preferred treatment described in both the newly updated AASHTO and NACTO design guides. Cities around the country have already installed them with great success including Milwaukee, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, and many more. Research has documented that protected intersections slow drivers, increase driver yielding, and increase safety for vulnerable road users. It is time for Rochester to install protected intersections as part of routine reconstruction projects. "**Because of their higher cost, and more permanent nature, capital improvement projects should also incorporate the preferred design features such as sloping curb medians instead of flexible delineator posts and pavement markings, and protected intersections instead of mixing zones**" (AASHTO Bike 7.2.1).

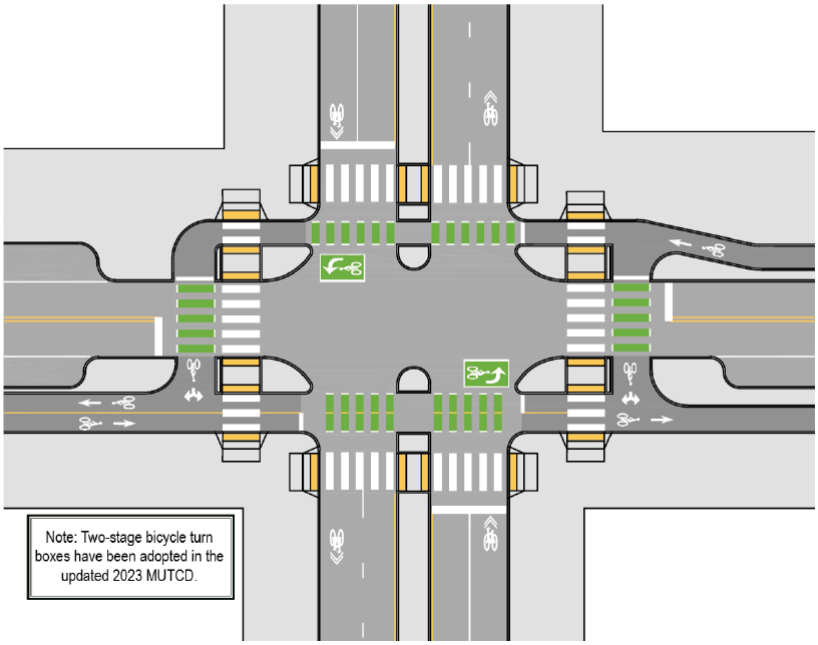


Figure 7-35 from the 2024 AASHTO Bike Guide depicts a transition between a One-Way and Two-Way Separated Bike Lanes at a protected intersection. We strongly encourage designers to include this configuration or the configuration in figure 7-36 (included in our previous letter) at the intersection of Meigs and Broadway.

Although we are confident that protected intersections can be included for minimal increased cost since this is a full reconstruction, two stage turn boxes could be used at intersections. Two stage turn boxes encourage cyclists to complete two stage turns which minimize weaving and merging with vehicle lanes to turn left. **We also encourage painted cross bikes (green cross walks) to be included through intersections regardless of the intersection type selected.**

Detailed Design Suggestions: Raised Crossings, Medians, and Pedestrian Islands

We encourage the project team to evaluate Raised Crossings (sometimes called continuous sidewalks) at all unsignalized intersections and driveways in the project area. Raised crossings keep the sidewalk and protected bike lane at the sidewalk level across side streets. These act as natural speed bumps and "are an effective strategy for reducing crashes between motorists and bicyclists because they slow the turning speed of motor vehicles, increase the visibility of vulnerable street users, and increase yielding behavior of motorists" (AASHTO Bike 5.10.5). One street in Cambridge, Massachusetts, found motorists yield rates jumped from 10% to 55% following installation. Research by Ekman and others has concluded that raised crosswalks at unsignalized crossings can be more effective than other traffic control devices because they control speed at the actual pedestrian crossing.

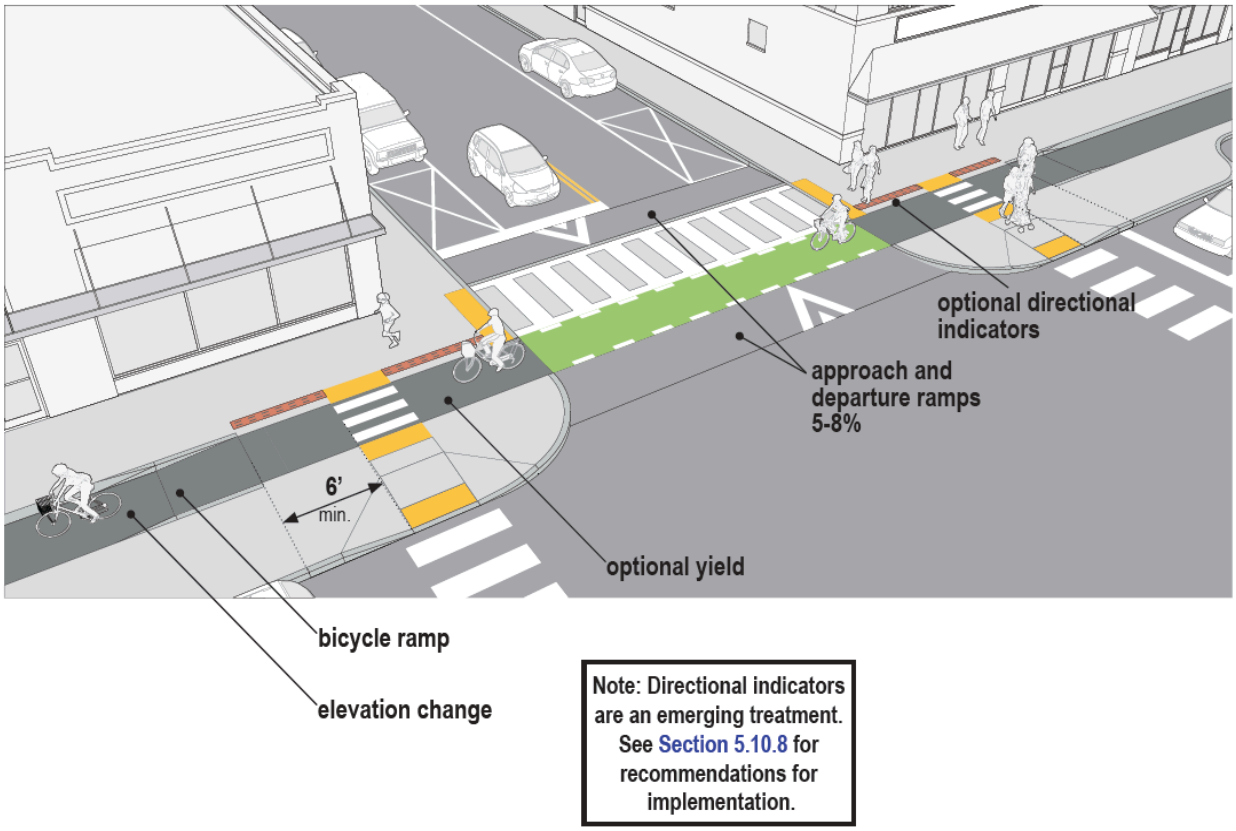


Figure 5-20 from the 2024 AASHTO Bike Guide depicting a Raised Side Street Crossing.

Raised crossings are already standard at driveways in Rochester; however, we recommend exploring them at the intersections of Griffith Street, Pearl Street, Edmonds Street, and Broadway/Union. While this complicates storm water management, reconstruction projects are the time to install raised crossings since waste water infrastructure will likely already be upgraded as part of this project. **We also recommend that project designers examine curb extensions at side streets** to encourage slower turning movements, shorten the pedestrian crossing distance, and to protect parked cars on these streets.

We also encourage an exploration of hardening the proposed mid block crossing in front of the School Without Walls with a concrete pedestrian island. Pedestrian islands greatly increase safety by breaking a crossing into smaller pieces and by allowing pedestrians to focus on one direction at a time while crossing. The FHWA has found that pedestrian refuge islands can reduce crashes by up to 32%.

We caution designers against including a two way turn lane between Averill and Alexander Street. A two way turn lane would widen the curb to curb within this section to be over 40' wide. This could negate the traffic calming effect of the two way conversion. The lack of any buildings on the west side of the street makes a two way turn lane even more inappropriate. If enough space for a taper does not exist to match the design presented between Averill and Meigs, the project team should examine eliminating one of the turning lanes or to replace the two-way-turn-lane space with a grass median. A planted median could preserve space for the turn lanes without compromising the traffic calming characteristics of this project. Properties on this segment would not be adversely impacted as they would access their driveways the same as they do today.

Making this public right of way more safe and inviting for pedestrians and cyclists is especially vital for this project, as it provides access to two different schools- James Monroe and School Without Walls. Safer **intersections** for pedestrians and cyclists are especially important in this regard. Also, there are multiple vacant, developable parcels of land along the project footprint that would be made much more attractive with calmer traffic and pedestrian/bike facilities.

Thank you for taking the time to consider our input.

Sincerely,

Bill Collins
Advocacy Committee Chair

Cody Donahue
Co-Executive Director

Henry Litsky
Policy & Advocacy Coordinator

And…
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