

## PRELIMINARY GUIDELINES and CULTURAL & HERITAGE INTERPRETATION AND PUBLIC ART

*Funding for community engagement activities is provided by the Center for Prevention at Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota.*



### Dale Street Bridge and Roadway Project

The Dale Street Project is a joint initiative to improve pedestrian safety, walkability, accessibility, and traffic safety on Dale Street by replacing the bridge over I-94 and making improvements from the bridge to University Avenue. Ramsey County is the lead organization and works in collaboration with a community-based coalition led by Summit-University Planning Council to implement an inclusive and meaningful community engagement process.

### Session Focus

The focus of this meeting was to get feedback on the preliminary design criteria for the Dale Street Project and to explore opportunities to integrate cultural interpretation and public art into bridge design.

### Session Snapshot

Craig Churchward presented the preliminary design criteria by going through each section individually and inviting feedback after presenting each section. Copies of the design criteria were available to everyone.

Public artist Seitu Jones set the stage for exploring incorporation of cultural interpretation and public art in to the project with presentation of public art elements and opportunities in transportation infrastructure projects. He shared a video about the Long Street Bridge and Cultural Wall in Columbus, Ohio as one example of how

### PARTICIPANTS (from Sign-up Sheets)

#### Community Members

Marvin Anderson\*  
Shirley Barker  
Dionne Binns  
Gloria Carter  
Lerris Cooper  
Thelma Daniels  
Anita Urvina Davis  
Rev Jim Erlandson  
Melvin Giles\*  
Dorothy Jefferson  
Seitu Jones\*  
Irene Markley  
Gloria Massey  
Shawn McGovern  
Claude Mikkelson  
Lyle Nelson  
Myrna Nelson  
Rebecca Ryan  
Jean Schroeffer  
Marvin Scroggins  
Rev Stacey Smith  
James Thomas  
Carl Walker  
Mary Walker  
Anika Ward  
Irene Weaver

#### Ramsey County

Commissioner Toni Carter  
Noel Nix, Cmr. Carter's Office  
Erin Laberee, Public Works  
Joe Lux, Public Works  
Matt Christensen, TKDA

#### MN Dept. of Transportation

Dale Gade, Engineer, District Office  
City of St Paul

Mai Chong Xiong, CM Thao's Office

#### Metropolitan Council

Mai Thor, Outreach Coordinator

#### Community Engagement Team

Jens Werner, Summit-University  
Planning Council (SUPC)  
Carol Swenson, SUPC  
Craig Churchward,  
Michael Baker International  
Jono Cowgill,  
Community Design Group

this has been done in a community that like Rondo was harmed by construction of a freeway. Following, Marvin Roger Anderson talked about how such an approach might work for the Dale Street bridge. He stressed an inclusive approach that recognizes all communities that now call Rondo home. He also talked about growing community interest in affiliating the eight bridges in the Rondo neighborhood with eight values identified by Rondo Avenue, Inc. Dale would be the bridge of “Hope.”

## Notes and Observations

### Preliminary Design Criteria

- Response to the design criteria was positive and there were only a few questions.
- Craig Churchward will use the criteria to develop an example of how they might be applied in this project.
- Ramsey County and their consultants will use the criteria to guide their design and engineering work.

### Cultural Interpretation and Public Art

- Seitu Jones’ presentation focused on the integration of public art into safety features, sidewalks, seating, railings, and signs and wayfinding.
- Mr. Jones concluded his presentation with a video about the Long Street Bridge and Cultural Wall in Columbus, Ohio. Like Rondo, the Long–King District was cut in two by construction of a freeway. The bridge and cultural wall are part of a larger initiative to reconnect and revitalize by attracting economic development with an attractive and vibrant public realm on the bridge and at both ends. Here are links to videos. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xo37zo-Xweg&t=2s>  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hQIQANefmnQ>
- Marvin Anderson talked about the opportunity to celebrate the history of Rondo and lift up new communities that have become a part of the Rondo neighborhood. Mr. Anderson also spoke of growing community interest in public art on all eight bridges in the Rondo neighborhood that reflects the core values of Rondo.
  - Lexington Parkway — Dignity of Work
  - Chatsworth Street — Importance of Education
  - Victoria Street — Importance of Religion
  - Grotto Street — Social Interaction
  - Dale Street — Hope
  - Mackubin Street — Economic Independence
  - Western Avenue — Home Ownership
  - Marion Street — Respect for Self
- Leadership Circle participants responded very positively to integrating public art into the project and the association of the bridges with core values.

# PRELIMINARY DESIGN CRITERIA DERIVED FROM EXERCISE 1: IDENTIFYING VALUES AND ISSUES

## Part A: What makes a pleasant pedestrian experience?



To make a pleasant pedestrian experience while walking along Dale Street, the findings **suggest** that the following guidance **may be** required:

- A. To ensure the safety, comfort and convenience of pedestrians, the design of sidewalks will need to consider:
  1. Being as flat as possible, with minimum grades. It may specifically require reducing the grade between the I-94 Bridge and Central Avenue. If the grade of the sidewalk is to be constructed at the same grade as the adjacent roadway and that grade is considered unacceptably steep by ADA standards for indoor ramps, landings in compliance with standard ADA indoor requirements may need to be incorporated into the sidewalk design with the additional need for railings also evaluated;
  2. Being wide enough for two people walking side by side to pass another group of two people walking side by side;
  3. Avoiding cross-sectional pitching to better facilitate wheelchair movement;
  4. Avoiding placing obstacles, such as utility cabinets, signs, lights, benches, bus shelters within the actual area used for walking;
  5. Minimizing the radius of corners, strategically provide bump-outs; provide ADA curb-cuts and ADA signals;
  6. Providing benches for resting;
  7. Sizing the sidewalk's concrete panels to be relatively large to reduce jointing. Expansion joints may need to be doweled to avoid differential lifting; control joints may need to be sawn and then sealed to maintain smoothness;
  8. Providing a maintenance agreement to clear snow, ice, leaves, and other hazards may need to be incorporated into the design process and financial agreements; include consideration for how to handle garbage—both public and private;
  9. Locating the actual walkway of the sidewalk far enough from back from the curb to allow it to be separated by a boulevard, plantings, street furniture (including benches, signs and lights) or other barrier;
  10. Adding lights sufficient for nighttime security but at a level that avoids blinding harshness; directing light only onto sidewalks and roadways, avoiding stray light shining into adjacent homes and buildings;

11. Adding vegetation as a visual and safety buffer, particularly trees to provide shade and flowers to add visual interest;
  12. Set sidewalks away from buildings as well as the street.
- B. To reduce traffic volumes and speeds evaluate the potential for:
1. Narrowing lanes;
  2. Reducing the location turn lanes;
  3. Adding parking and bicycle lanes;
  4. Adding bump-outs;
  5. Allowing transit stops in traffic;
  6. Revising the intersections with I-94;
  7. Improving parallel vehicular, pedestrian, bicycle, or transit routes;
  8. Adjusting signal phasing and timing.
- C. To induce use the design may need to create opportunities and reasons for people to use and interact on the sidewalk by:
1. Adding art to the sidewalks such as poetry, images, or dedications and including interesting color and patterns;
  2. Adding art and architecture to the boulevard, such as visually interesting functional features such as benches, lights sign posts or actual art like sculpture, playful lighting, paintings, and photographs;
  3. Creating art that interacts with vehicular or pedestrian traffic;
  4. Reducing vehicular noise with distracting features such as music or masking features such vegetation, water, or birds;
  5. Framing views of nearby vistas such as the capitol or other iconic views of Saint Paul;
  6. Inducing more retail activity, including coffee shops, newspaper stands, and postings of local news;
  7. Providing interpretive information on the history of the city, neighborhood, and its people; also on the freeway's construction and its impacts;
  8. Providing transit shelters and stops.

## Part B: What makes a pleasant pedestrian experience on a bridge?



To make a pleasant pedestrian experience while walking over I-94 on the Dale Street Bridge, the findings **suggest** that the following guidance (**in addition** to the general guidance for sidewalks) **may be** required for the design of the bridge:

- A. Establishing and celebrating that the bridge is the location of the epicenter of the Rondo Neighborhood being the site of the Rondo and Dale intersection by:
  1. Understanding the history of this freeway segment (and its context as part of the Interstate System) and how it affected the Rondo Neighborhood by breaking up the community, destroying businesses, and dispersing people;
  2. Creating monumentation that invites exploration, understanding, atonement and reconciliation;
  3. Creating a transition and connections between the two sides of the freeway;
  4. Recognizing the uniqueness of the interchange location not only from crossing over on the bridge but also crossing underneath it.
  
- B. Creating a dynamic experience that induces use of the bridge by:
  1. Designing the pedestrian experience in such a way that the time crossing the freeway is seemingly reduced by creating pleasant surprises, distracting views, nice architectural detailing, buffers from moving vehicles, shorting of crossing times and limiting signal waiting times;
  2. Providing ornamental railing, lighting, vegetation, and other landscape and architectural features;
  3. Adding prospect points (look outs);
  4. Framing and interpreting views;
  5. Preventing suicides, rock-throwing, or other destructive or threatening behaviors;
  6. Reducing noise, congestion, air pollution;
  7. Sheltering walkers from inclement weather.

## Part C: What from Rondo's historic and contemporary experiences would bring value to the design of the corridor?



*Incorporating the historic and contemporary experiences and values is an important part of generating understanding, atonement, and reconciliation. As such, the design of the corridor should:*

- A. Commemorate Rondo Community Values by:
  - 1. Nurturing institutions, businesses, and organizations;
  - 2. Sheltering families, supportive adults, and well-cared for children;
  - 3. Evocative words, such as comfort, safety, secure, welcomed, peace, hope, connection, energy, vitality, refuge for the unwelcomed, vibrancy, connectivity, tight-knit, permanence;
  - 4. Evocative images of well-cared for homes, businesses, social gathering places;
  - 5. Evocative portraits and sayings from neighborhood people.
  
- B. Display and rotate art that reflects these values, by including:
  - 1. Examples of historic or lost art;
  - 2. Examples of contemporary art;
  - 3. Room for displaying example of new art created in the future.

**Part D: In summary, what is needed to improve the experience of walking along Dale Street?**

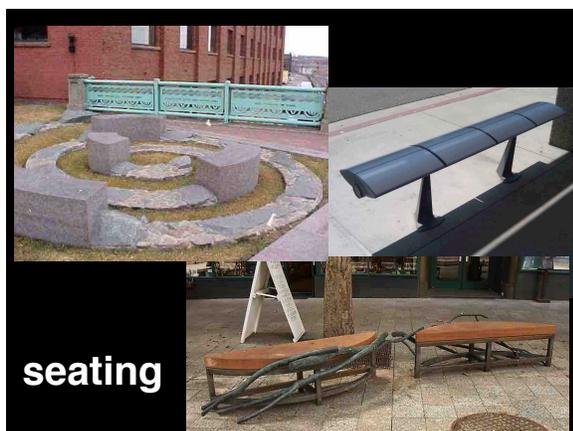


*The current experience of walking along Dale Street must radically change if the street is to become a vital organ of neighborhood commerce and social activity. It must:*

- A. Improve vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle safety, in particular, be more responsive to multimodal needs by reducing traffic speeds and vehicular volumes.
- B. Reduce congestion and subsequently noise, unpleasant smells, and air pollution.
- C. Improve personal safety and security, by creating more opportunities for people to use the street such as adding more businesses fronting the street and by adding more places of refuge to relax and interact with people.
- D. Provide more opportunities to socialize and reduce neighborhood and social divisions by making it easier to walk along or cross Dale Street and by providing opportunities to socialize.
- E. Express history, especially the history of the Rondo community.
- F. By improving the functioning of the sidewalks in terms of grades, width, and cleanliness. Remove snow, ice, leaves and liter that also inhibit walking.
- G. Create a corridor that is enjoyable with a distinctive character.

## Cultural Interpretation and Public Art

Public artist Seitu Jones presented examples of how public art can be integrated into all aspects of infrastructure projects from sidewalks and railings to placemaking. He highlighted Long Street Bridge and Cultural Wall in Columbus, Ohio as nationally recognized infrastructure project that reconnects, celebrates, and returns economic vibrancy to a neighborhood divided the construction of an interstate highway.



## Values of Rondo

### Art that envisions our values

Rondo Avenue was the commercial spine of St. Paul's African American community and was destroyed by the construction of Interstate 94 in the 1960s. Founded in 1982 and the sponsor of the Rondo Days Festival, Rondo Avenue Incorporated drew from the spirit of the Rondo Avenue community and identified 8 core values that sustained and inspired our community for over 100 years. It is my vision to work with the community and other artists to create a visual icon for each value.

Social Interaction

Home Ownership

Importance of Religion

Dignity of Work

Importance of Education

Hope

Economic Independence

Respect for Self



history and  
separation  
from traffic



# DALE STREET

Hope