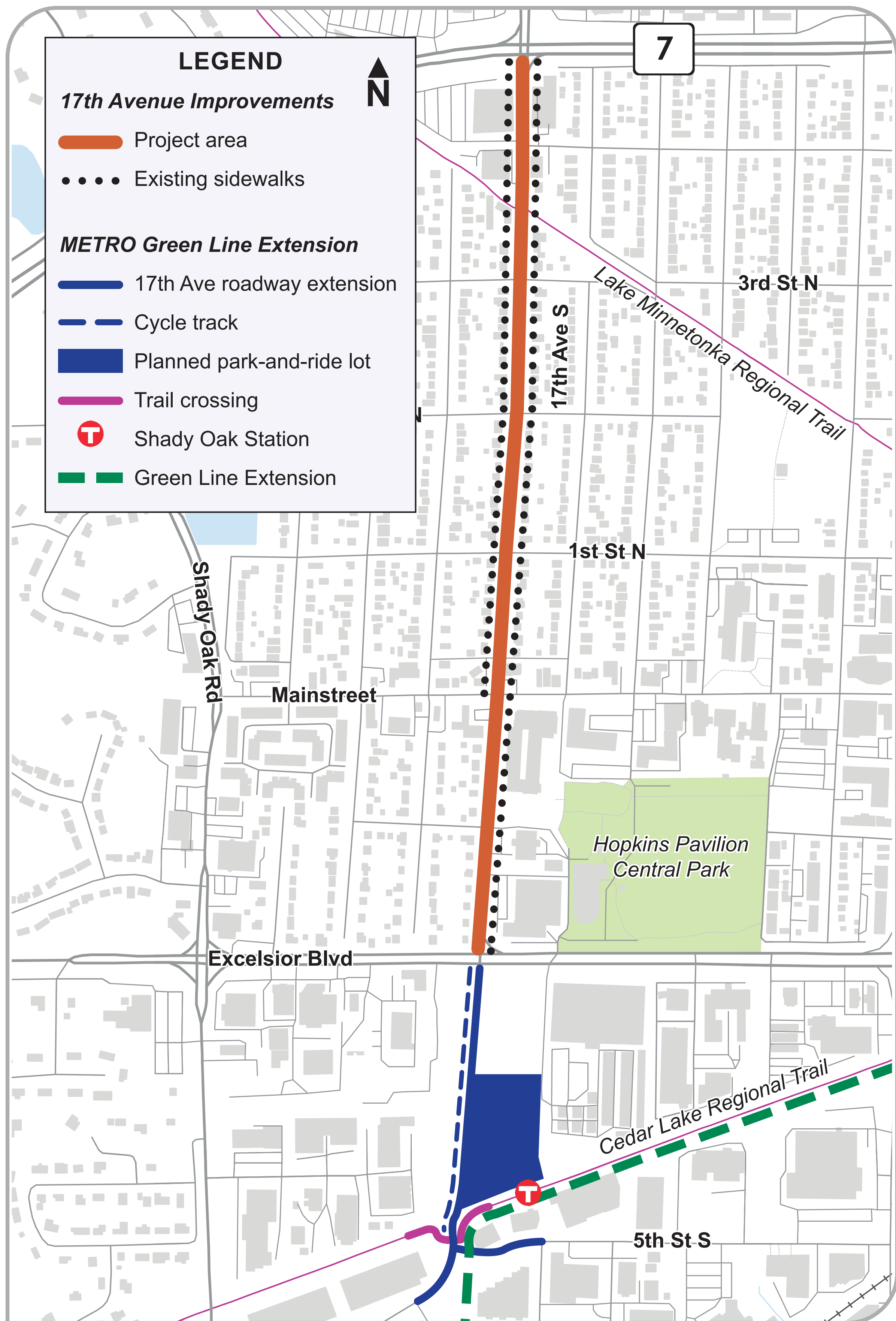


# 17th AVENUE IMPROVEMENTS OVERVIEW



## Project Overview

The City of Hopkins is planning to reconstruct 17th Ave from Excelsior Blvd to Hwy 7 due to the poor condition of the pavement and utilities. Currently, 2026 - 2029 is the estimated time frame of when construction may occur.

As part of the METRO Green Line Extension project, 17th Ave will be extended south of Excelsior Blvd to the planned Shady Oak Station. This new segment of 17th Ave will include a two-way bicycle lane along the west side of the roadway, “dead ending” at Excelsior Blvd with sidewalks on both sides. With no dedicated bicycle facilities along 17th Ave north of Excelsior Blvd, there exists a gap without suitable connection to the Lake Minnetonka Regional Trail, just south of Hwy 7.

The City sees the need for reconstruction as an opportunity to consider improvements that support users of all ages, abilities, and transportation modes.

***Share your questions and concerns on the three proposed design concepts with the project team today!***

## Schedule

- Summer/early fall 2023  
Public input on design concepts
- October 2023  
Pedestrian/bicycle improvements demonstration event
- Late fall/winter 2023-2024  
Confirm preferred preliminary design and apply for funding
- 2026-2029  
Estimated time frame of when construction may occur. A schedule will be determined based on the timing of funding.

## What We've Heard

**We've received 550+ comments!**

- » Opposition to Concept C due to safety concerns for bikers and motorists
- » Similar levels of support for Concept A and B
- » Concept A (separated two-way bike lane) themes:
  - » **Likes:** separation of pedestrians and bicyclists and consistency with planned 17th Ave extension
  - » **Concerns:** unsure if there is enough bicycle traffic to warrant a space separate from pedestrians
- » Concept B (separated multi-use trail) themes:
  - » **Likes:** consistency with other multi-use trails in the area and more green space than Concept A
  - » **Concerns:** unsure if pedestrians and bicyclists can safely share the space
- » Concerns with Concept A & B's impacts on:
  - » Property values
  - » Front yards / landscaping / trees
  - » Emergency vehicle and school bus traffic
  - » Ease of backing out of driveways



Scan the QR code to visit the website and sign up for project updates:  
[Hopkins17thAve.com](https://Hopkins17thAve.com)

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## 1. Why are bicycle facilities needed when there are already connections on 8th Avenue?

The proposed bicycle and pedestrian improvements will provide a direct connection between regional trails, the new Shady Oak Transit Station on the Green Line Extension (GLE) light rail line, as well as improve safety for all transportation modes. The City of Hopkins is a bicycle-friendly community and is always looking for opportunities to improve connectivity for bikers and pedestrians throughout the City.

## 2. Why is 17th Avenue the only avenue that is being considered for these facilities?

As part of the GLE Project, 17th Avenue is being extended south from Excelsior Boulevard to the new Shady Oak Station on the light rail line. As part of the new roadway, a two-way separated bike lane (also known as a cycle track) is being constructed along the west side between Excelsior Boulevard and 5th Street South. Unlike most other local north/south roads in Hopkins, the existing stretch of 17th Avenue provides a continuous connection between Excelsior Boulevard, the Lake Minnetonka Regional Trail, and Highway 7. The continuity that 17th Avenue provides makes it the preferred route.

## 3. Why are bicycle facilities being proposed for the west side rather than the east side?

The bicycle facility is proposed on the west side of the road to provide continuity with future cycle tracks and trails proposed north and south of the corridor, such as the GLE Project cycle track that will be along the west side of the 17th Avenue extension (see question 2). Additionally, during previous discussions with the City of Minnetonka, staff learned that a future project is planned to extend a bicycle/pedestrian facility along the west side of Hopkins Crossroad north of Highway 7 to Minnetonka Boulevard. In addition to these future projects, staff reviewed impacts along the corridor, analyzed driveway and street crossings, completed an on-street parking count, and determined that the impacts were fairly equal whether the bicycle facility was constructed on either side of 17th Avenue. Given the benefits of connecting to future infrastructure, the bicycle facility is proposed along the west side of 17th Avenue.

## 4. Why isn't there an option that puts a buffer between bikers and walkers?

The current a two-way separated bike lane concept proposes a 1-foot buffer between the cycle track and the sidewalk on the west side of the roadway. The buffer consists of visual and detectable markings delineating the boundary. During the development of concepts, a boulevard was considered between the sidewalk and cycle track, with the cycle track being located against the back of the roadway curb. This was deemed problematic for winter maintenance by city staff, and also would require street lighting to be located closer to homes. As the project progresses, refinements may be made to further increase the buffer between the sidewalk and the cycle track where it is helpful to reduce project impacts and retains an ability to facilitate proper winter maintenance.

## 5. How will these improvements impact property values?

While specific results vary, research has shown that properties with good access to bicycle facilities generally see increased value than similar properties not in proximity. Furthermore, there is evidence that expanded bicycle and pedestrian networks have a positive effect on property values throughout a community.

## 6. Who will be responsible for snow removal for the sidewalks and bicycle lanes?

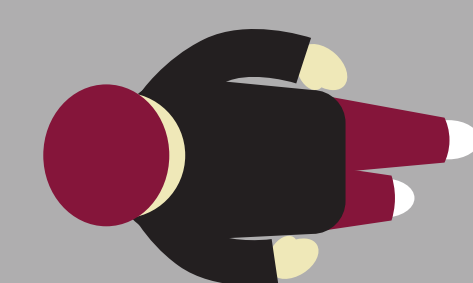
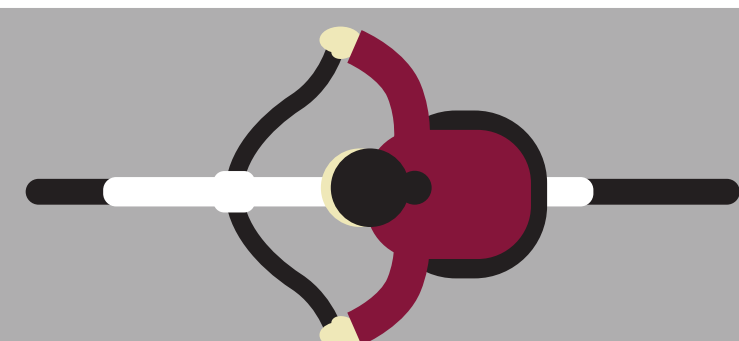
Residents will not be required to clear snow from a bicycle facility. All winter maintenance for bicycle facilities is proposed to be completed by Hopkins Public Works.

## 7. Will property owners along 17th Avenue be assessed for the improvements?

Assessments may be influenced by whether outside funding is received, which is currently unknown, and therefore this question is challenging to answer. For context however, on typical City projects individual residential single-family homes are assessed at the city's assessment cap, which would be between \$112.61 (2026) and \$123.05 (2029) per front foot of property, plus half the actual cost to replace sanitary sewer and water service lines to individual homes. Costs related to construction of a bicycle facility would not be proposed to be assessed.

## 8. Is there space for these improvements or will property acquisition be needed?

All concepts are proposed within the existing right-of-way of 17th Avenue and no acquisition from residential properties is anticipated at this time. At the intersection of Mainstreet and 17th Avenue there is potential for a minor amount of easement to be needed at the northwest and southwest corners, though this will be analyzed during final design and efforts will be made to minimize permanent easement needs.



# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## 9. How will each concept impact the yards/property of residents along the corridor?

Each concept proposes to utilize the full width of right-of-way along 17th Avenue. Construction impacts are equal across all concepts.

## 10. Will trees need to be removed for these improvements?

There will need to be tree removal completed as a part of the project. As the project progresses, details will become available surrounding each impact and measures will be taken to save as many trees as possible. Hopkins Public Works annually removes ash trees, diseased trees, and trees that pose a hazard as part of their annual maintenance program. This is completed across the community each year, and any trees currently marked for removal on 17th Avenue are being removed under this program, not due to future street improvements.

## 11. How will I be able to safely back out of my driveway with both a sidewalk and bicycle lane to drive through?

There will be clear sightlines and adequate gaps in traffic to allow for vehicle maneuvering in and out of driveways across the bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Bicycle and pedestrian facilities similar to the concepts presented have been gaining popularity around the Twin Cities area and have been constructed through residential areas without causing property access and safety issues.

## 12. How will each concept impact traffic and speeds?

Each concept involves narrowing the street and drive lanes, which has been proven to help calm traffic speeds and deter large vehicle traffic.

## 13. How will each of these concepts impact emergency vehicles and school buses?

While the proposed roadway section is narrower than the existing, it still provides adequate width for emergency vehicles and school bus access with no negative impacts anticipated.

## 14. Will these improvements decrease vehicle traffic and increase pedestrian and bicycle traffic through the area?

Generally a significant reduction in traffic volume is only seen when the number of drive lanes is reduced. However, it's anticipated that the addition of bicycle and pedestrian facilities along 17th Avenue could eventually lead to some reduction in vehicle traffic and an increase in those modes, , especially to the future light rail.

## 15. Is there a plan to develop the land surrounding the park and ride and 17th Ave extension?

The cities of Hopkins and Minnetonka jointly completed a plan to guide land use and development around the Shady Oak Station. The Station Area Plan can be found on the City of Hopkins website.

## 16. How will the new Shady Oak Station impact the amount of traffic on 17th Avenue?

During the planning stage for the GLE Project, the Met Council completed traffic forecasting around the station areas. The results of the forecasting were that most vehicular traffic to the Shady Oak Station will access the area via Excelsior Boulevard, Shady Oak Road, K-Tel Drive and 5th Street South. While there will definitely be some traffic accessing the station area via 17th Avenue from the north, it's not anticipated to be a substantial increase to the roadway.

## 17. Are there plans for bicycle and pedestrian facilities north of Hwy 7?

During previous discussions with the City of Minnetonka, staff learned that they have a future project planned to extend a bicycle/pedestrian facility along the west side of Hopkins Crossroad north of Highway 7 to Minnetonka Boulevard. A schedule for the project has not yet been established.

