

38th and Chicago

Winter Interim Design Options

Engagement Questionnaire Summary



Overview (Questionnaire Context)

On May 25, 2020, George Floyd, a Black man, died in the custody of Minneapolis Police at the intersection of 38th Street East and Chicago Avenue. Since then, the intersection has been a focal point for people mourning Floyd and calling for racial justice. Mr. Floyd's death has sparked protests around the country calling for fundamental changes in policing and racist systems. In order to provide safe access for visitors to the site, the City placed barricades to through traffic, while also ensuring ADA and emergency vehicle access. Since May, the barricades have remained in place.

Beginning in mid-June, staff from Neighborhood and Community Relations, Public Works, Community Planning and Economic Development, and the Division of Race and Equity developed a basic engagement framework for the area with input from Council Vice President Andrea Jenkins and Council Member Alondra Cano. The engagement approach started with taking the time to listen to community and evolved into supporting the community in a variety of ways. There have been many different groups meeting in the area, including twice daily meetings of some immediate residents, several meetings and events hosted by Bryant, Central, and Powderhorn neighborhoods, and various nearby block meetings. Staff have attended numerous community hosted meetings since mid-June and have had numerous conversations with community members in the area. Council Vice President Andrea Jenkins and Council Member Alondra Cano have also hosted several virtual town hall meetings that City engagement staff have attended.

Key themes: A variety of perspectives have been gathered which highlight both short and long-term desires and needs for the intersection.

- Strong emphasis on seeing racial justice and equitable community development that serves historically marginalized BIPOC communities.
- Strong concerns about public safety.
- Many divergent opinions on what changes in street access may mean for public safety.
- Preserving space for mourning and to preserve the living street memorial. The area of Chicago avenue from the roundabout fist sculpture north to 37th Street is especially important for community space.
- Connecting with many artists who have contributed art to the area, as well as the arts organizations nearby.
- A need for expanded access, including for the 5 and 23 bus, and less traffic on nearby streets.
- A desire for clarity on next steps in the short and long term.
- Long-term visions for the area, including a memorial honoring George Floyd.
- Questions about what winter means for the space, access and the memorial.
- A range of ideas for the street, from no changes to 38th and Chicago, to requests for the streets to be fully restored to traffic and requests for adjustments in between.

Engagement Questionnaire Overview

In September 2020, Public Works launched a questionnaire to gather public feedback on interim winter design options for the intersection of 38th & Chicago. These options are being considered in order to ensure that essential access is retained through the winter. Although various conversations have occurred this summer and fall regarding the intersection, this was the first formal feedback mechanism in which the public could comment on specific design options.

To maximize response rates to the questionnaire, Public Works staff utilized a variety of additional engagement methods:

- Public Works staff hosted a virtual online meeting on 10/1 to discuss the two proposed winter interim design options and answer public questions.
- Public Works staff went door-to-door on 10/2 and 10/3 to connect with residents and business owners within a one-block radius of 38th & Chicago.
- Public Works staff also received emails and phone calls from the public in response to the questionnaire.

Engagement questionnaire limitations

The questionnaire proved to be an effective method to quickly gather responses from the public. However, it should be acknowledged that this method only captured a small portion of the total stakeholder population. For example, the total population within a one-mile radius of the intersection of 38th and Chicago is approximately 34,000 people.¹ Additionally, Black and Latino community members and people younger than 25 are significantly underrepresented among responses. Thus, the questionnaire represents a small sample of the respective population and should be viewed as piece of information to supplement the additional engagement activities that have occurred since early June.

Questionnaire responses

- In total 929 responses were received.
- 65% of the responses supported an interim design option or generally requested that the street be reopened to vehicle traffic. Further analysis of these responses indicates a greater preference to interim winter design option 2 (two-way traffic on both streets).
- 24% of questionnaire respondents indicated the desire for justice before implementation of an interim design.
- 19% of questionnaire respondents supported keeping the street closed indefinitely.

¹ Minnesota Compass 2020, <https://www.mncompass.org/>

Common themes

The responses received provided a plethora of feedback, the list below highlights key themes that emerged and is sorted in order of comment frequency (1 = most frequent, 10 = less frequent).

1. Desire for the streets to be reopened (65%)
2. Justice first (24%)
3. Closing the street indefinitely to private vehicles and potentially all vehicles (19%)
4. Preserving space for mourning and public reflection (16%)
5. Vehicle access impacts to businesses and residents (14%)
6. Desire for a permanent memorial (9%)
7. Public safety impacts (9%)
8. Transit impacts (9%)
9. Winter maintenance challenges (7%)
10. Emergency vehicle access (3%)

1. Desire for the streets to be reopened

65% of responses offered support for one of the interim design options or generally asked for the streets to be reopened. Option 2 (two-way traffic on both streets) received more support than option 1 (converging one-ways on Chicago).

2. Justice first

24% of responses indicated the desire for justice before the implementation of an interim design. Many of these responses specifically requested that City of Minneapolis leadership reach consensus with the authors of the Justice Resolution Letter and its twenty-four demands before an interim design option is implemented. Many of these responses also mentioned resolving the twenty-four demands as a method to center the Black (African American) voice. These responses also highlighted the trauma that the death of George Floyd has caused to Black community members.

3. Closing the street indefinitely

19% of responses indicated an interest in permanently closing the street to certain types of vehicles. Responses ranged from restricting all vehicles to restricting private vehicles while allowing transit, emergency response and business delivery vehicles. The sentiment with these responses highlighted a desire to preserve the public gathering space within the intersection and promote bicycle and pedestrian access.

4. Preserving space for mourning and public reflection

16% of responses indicated a desire to preserve public space for gathering and reflection at the intersection of 38th and Chicago. Many responses highlighted how much they valued the existing public art that had been organically created at the intersection and expressed a desire to preserve this art into the future.

5. Vehicle access impacts to businesses and residents

14% of responses highlighted concerns with vehicle access to businesses and homes near the intersection of 38th and Chicago. In addition to limited access near the intersection, adjacent residential streets such as Elliot Ave have experienced a significant amount of detour traffic. Minneapolis Public Works staff have installed temporary speed bumps to alleviate some of the speeding concerns, but the volume of detour traffic was still a common concern highlighted in responses. Responses also highlighted concerns with potential vehicle speeding issues that could develop with the implementation of both interim design options since vehicle access would return to 38th St and Chicago Ave.

6. Desire for a permanent memorial

9% of responses highlighted a desire for a permanent memorial to honor the life of George Floyd. Potential ideas included acquiring adjacent properties and creating a museum or community center, other ideas included statues and other memorials within the street.

7. Public safety impacts

9% of responses highlighted numerous public safety concerns occurring within the intersection of 38th and Chicago. Many reported concerns regarding gun shots, theft and a general feeling of unsafety, especially in the evening hours. Although there was a general sentiment that public safety has been a long existing issue within the area of 38th and Chicago, there was also an acknowledgement that through this summer and have fall there has been an unprecedented uptick in violence.

8. Transit impacts

9% of responses highlighted various viewpoints regarding the lack of transit service to the intersection of 38th and Chicago. Most transit related responses expressed concern with the inability to access transit directly at the intersection of 38th and Chicago and favored both interim design options as a method to restore transit service to the intersection. Option two was highlighted in several responses for its ability to fully restore transit route 5 and 23 to the intersection. Additional responses indicated that the current transit detour routing was adequate.

9. Winter maintenance challenges

7% of responses expressed concerns with the ability to remove snow under the existing conditions (barricades). Responses also highlighted concerns with snow removal under both interim design options and requested that Public Works remove snow from the area after it was plowed. Under current snow maintenance procedures, snow is plowed on both 38th St and Chicago Ave to the curb where it is stored.

10. Emergency vehicle access

3% of responses highlighted a concern with emergency vehicle responsiveness to calls from residents within the immediate area of 38th and Chicago. Respondents highlighted experiences in which emergency response calls were not fully addressed.

Business Engagement

Staff from the Community Planning and Economic Development - Small Business Team and Public Works started contacting businesses near the intersection of 38th and Chicago in July 2020 to provide general information and support resources and to assess critical business needs. In October 2020, Public Works staff contacted businesses and performed physical door-knocking to inform them of the questionnaire and to answer any questions. The conversations and questionnaire responses reflect several key themes:

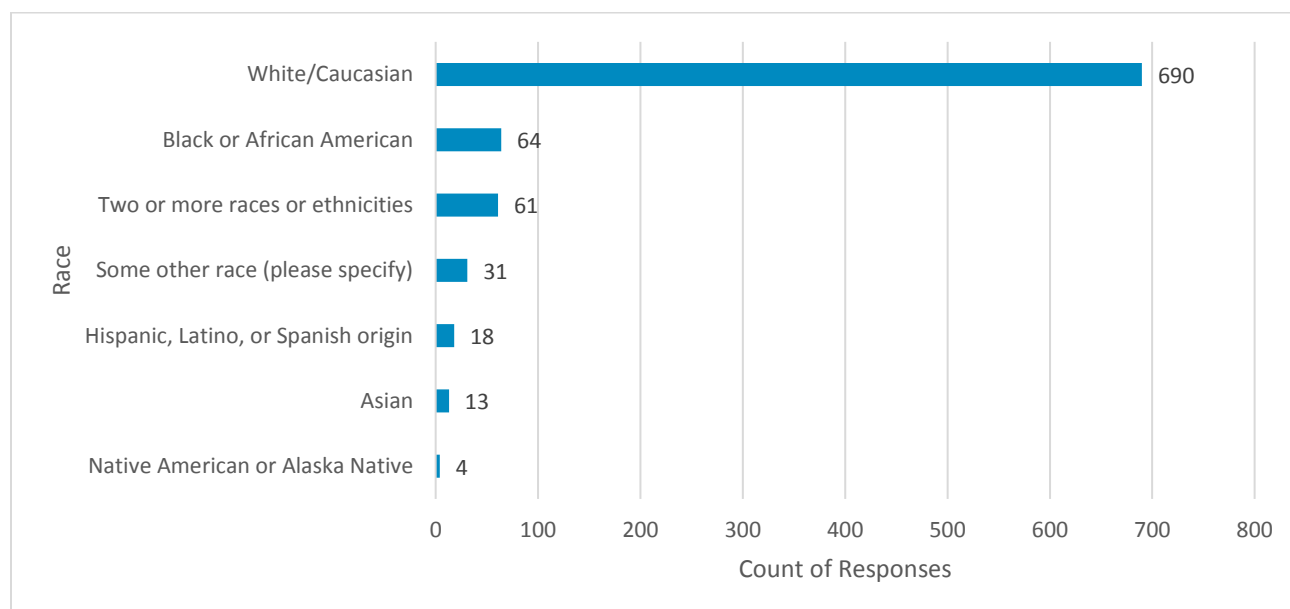
- Limited vehicle access complicating delivery of goods and reducing customer access.
- Public safety concerns for employees and customers.
- Business revenue impacts due to COVID-19 and street closure.
- Winter snow removal challenges with the street closed.
- Desire to preserve public art and for the establishment of a long-term memorial.
- General support of interim winter design options.

Questionnaire Demographics

Figure 1 highlights the racial demographics of responses. Respondents who identified as White/Caucasian represented 690 (74%) responses; but account for 49% of the population within a one-mile radius of the intersection of 38th and Chicago.² Respondents who identified as Black or African American represented 64 (7%) responses, but account for 18% of the population within a one-mile radius of the intersection of 38th and Chicago.³ Respondents who identified as Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin represented 18 (2%) responses, but account for 24% of the population within a one-mile radius of the intersection of 38th and Chicago.⁴ It should also be noted that the online questionnaire was also made available in the Spanish language.

Despite the difference in the racial demographics, there was not a discernible difference in response themes when segmenting by race. For example, those who identified as White/Caucasian and those who identified as Black or African American generally supported the same themes at a similar frequency (see *Common Themes*, pages 3-4).

Figure 1: Count of responses by race



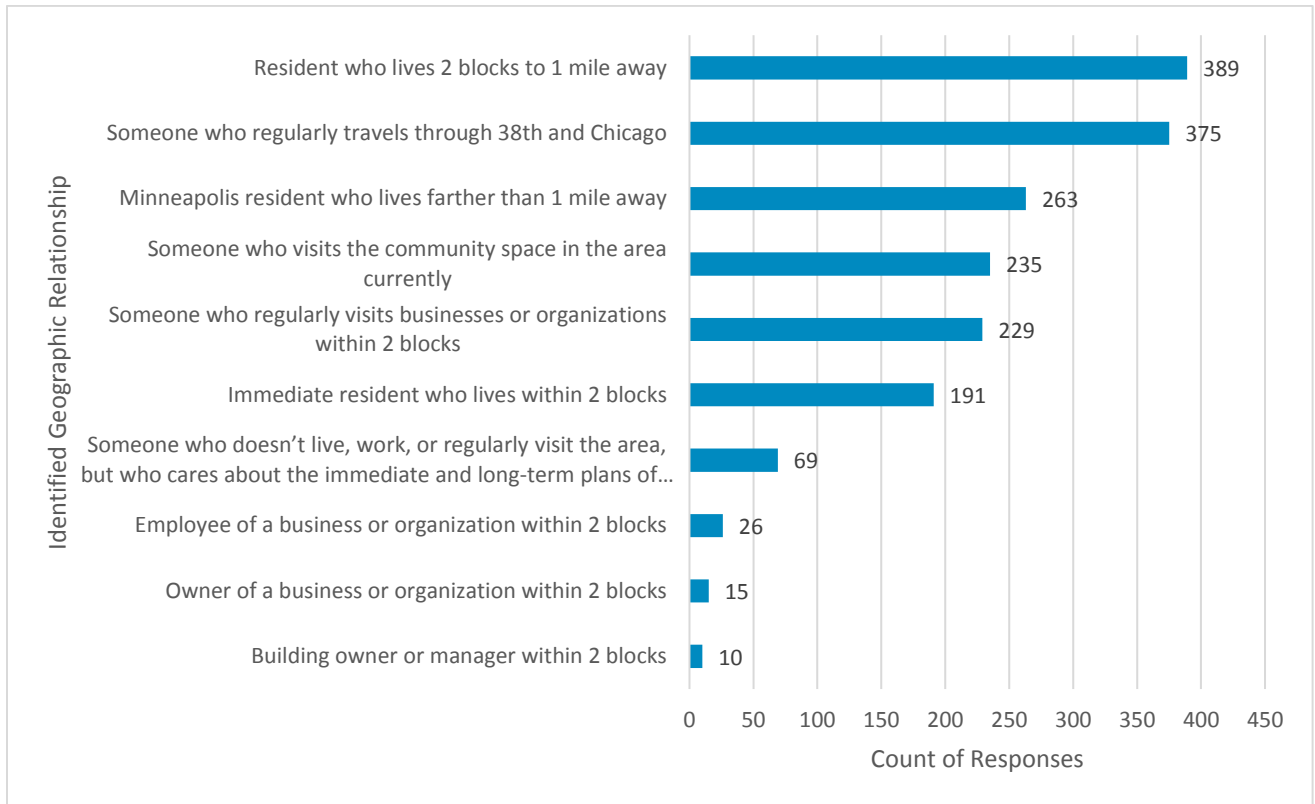
Respondents were asked to identify their connection to 38th and Chicago and allowed to select all options that applied. Due to this, respondents could for example identify as a 'resident who lives 2 blocks to 1 mile away' and also identify as 'someone who regularly travels through 38th and Chicago.' Figure 2 categorizes these responses.

² Minnesota Compass 2020, <https://www.mncompass.org/>

³ Minnesota Compass 2020, <https://www.mncompass.org/>

⁴ Minnesota Compass 2020, <https://www.mncompass.org/>

Figure 2: Respondents' geographic relationship to 38th and Chicago



Next Steps

Public Works will provide an engagement update to the Transportation and Public Works Committee of the City Council on October 21st, 2020.

- Relevant updates are available at the project [website](http://www2.minneapolismn.gov/minneapolisforward/38thandChicago):
 - <http://www2.minneapolismn.gov/minneapolisforward/38thandChicago>
- Additional comments and questions can be emailed to: 38thandChicago@minneapolismn.gov

Appendix A: Interim Design Options

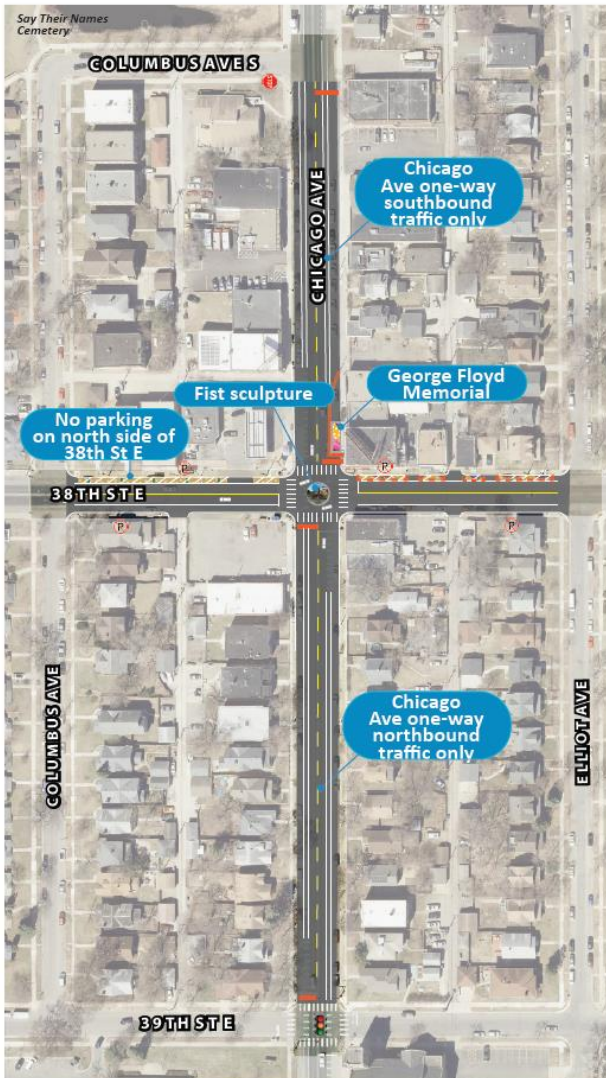
Figure 3: Existing Conditions



Figure 4: Interim Winter Design Option 1

Interim Winter Design Option 1: Chicago Ave, Converging One-Ways

In option 1, the fist sculpture remains in its current location while allowing east-west traffic along 38th St. This design option also accommodates southbound traffic for the north leg of Chicago Ave and northbound traffic for the south leg of Chicago Ave.



Close up view of intersection

Pros

- Preserves public gathering space on Chicago Ave and limits amount of thru vehicle traffic
- Restores intersection service for Metro Transit route 23 and potentially route 5
- Does not require relocating the fist sculpture
- Improves business/resident access on 38th St and Chicago Ave

Cons

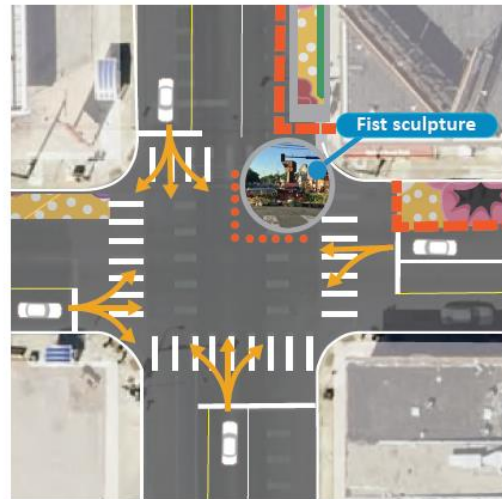
- Metro Transit route 5 would need detour routing before/after intersection
- Limited resident/business access on Chicago Ave
- Adds a level of complexity to vehicle movements



Figure 5: Interim Winter Design Option 2

Interim Winter Design Option 2: Two-Way Traffic on 38th & Chicago

In option 2, the fist sculpture relocates to the northeast corner of the intersection. Two-way traffic would be allowed in all four directions (north, south, east and west).



Close up view of intersection

Pros

- Restores intersection service for Metro Transit routes 5 & 23
- Improves resident/business access on 38th St and Chicago Ave
- Simplifies vehicle movements

Cons

- Less public gathering space preserved
- Requires relocating the fist sculpture

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