# I-75 Cap

## Project Concept Report

I-75 Cap Vision and Alternatives Analysis

Downtown Detroit Partnership

February 2025

DOWNTOWN DETROIT PARTNERSHIP
EST. 1922

MDOT
Michigan Department of Transportation

CITY OF DETROIT

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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## WITH SUPPORT FROM

*Project Partners*

City of Detroit
Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT)

*Members of the I-75 Cap Stakeholder Committee*

American Citizens for Justice
Bedrock
Brush Park CDC
Cass Technical High School
City of Detroit
Cliff Bells
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# 1 INTRODUCTION

The I-75 Cap is a locally led, and U.S. Department of Transportation supported, initiative to reconnect communities cut off from economic and social opportunities by prior transportation infrastructure decisions. The Downtown Detroit Partnership (DDP) co-led this planning initiative with the City of Detroit and Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT).

This Project Concept Report is the final component of the Vision and Alternatives Analysis, summarizing work conducted throughout 2024. During this planning phase, the Downtown Detroit Partnership explored cap options within the Study Area, which extends from 3rd Avenue on the west to Brush Street on the east. The team collected community feedback on potential overbuild options and design elements for this segment.

## I-75 DIVIDES DOWNTOWN DETROIT AND NEIGHBORHOODS TO THE NORTH

I-75 is an Interstate Highway that runs north-south from Florida to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Construction of the Downtown Detroit segment of I-75 started in the late 1950s. The freeway replaced active urban uses with a barrier between Downtown Detroit and neighborhoods to the north. That barrier persists to this day. Building highway caps can help enhance local connectivity and quality of life while maintaining the regional and national transportation network.

# 2 PROJECT VISION AND GOALS

A primary focus of DDP and its partners was to develop a community-supported vision of the capping project that addressed goals and needs for the surrounding area. Through the initial rounds of engagement, the project team developed the vision and goals shown below.

## PROJECT VISION

*"The I-75 Cap project will restore city connections between neighborhoods, providing new spaces that create opportunities for community resilience, economic prosperity and recreation. Through community-centered design it will support residents impacted by legacy infrastructure investments, prioritizing social equity, environmental sustainability, sound financial stewardship, and access for all."*

## PROJECT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

### Community-Centered Public Space

Engage the community to create a public space that fulfills needs

Provide inclusive and diverse programming

Elevate local history and culture

### Sustainability & Resiliency

Mitigate impact of climate change (i.e. extreme heat)

Reduce vehicle emissions by improving walkability and bikeability

Improve air and noise quality

### Equity & Opportunity

Incorporate community restoration, stabilization and anti-displacement strategies

Address historical inequities

Support inclusive economic development and entrepreneurship

### Connectivity & Mobility

Increase safety and connectivity, including all abilities and ages

Connect neighborhoods with Downtown community assets

Increase access for those without a car

# 3 EXISTING CONDITIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The I-75 Cap planning process was informed by a review of current conditions and precedent highway-capping projects. The team conducted a spatial analysis of the area through the *Mapping Framework* and assembled lessons learned from other capping projects through the *Project Precedents Report*. The *Mapping Framework* analysis focused on the Benefit and Impact Area pictured to the right, which includes the area within a 10 to 15 minute walk of the potential I-75 Cap.

## I-375 COORDINATION

The **I-375 Reconnecting Communities and Neighborhoods Project**, led by MDOT, will transform the depressed I-375 freeway to a street-level boulevard. This project is scheduled to be constructed in the next five years. The **I-75 Capping Study** is earlier in development, with no specific timeframe for construction. These projects adjoin each other, and an important role of the DDP will be to ensure collaboration between project teams.

## I-75 CAP NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The pages that follow offer a summary of the key insights from analysis of the Benefit and Impact Area, as well as the precedent project experiences.

## COMMUNITY-CENTERED PUBLIC SPACE

The spatial analysis identified a need for connection, investment, and inclusivity.

| Needs | Opportunities |
|---|---|
| **Enhanced Connection** | • Enhance resident access to downtown amenities<br>• Restore street grid, particularly Park Avenue<br>• Reconnect entertainment, dining, and retail districts<br>• Reduce parking need by investing in infrastructure for pedestrians, bicyclists, and micromobility<br>• Lower transportation costs<br>• Reverse trends of auto-centric infrastructure |
| **Investment** | • Prioritize areas with historical disinvestment through redlining practices and highway placement<br>• Anchor upcoming development, catering to a variety of uses<br>• Spur investment in vacant or underutilized areas at west end of the Study Area |
| **Inclusivity** | • Reduce economic inequality and segregation by improving connections between neighborhoods<br>• Mitigate displacement by providing inclusive spaces in areas providing vital services to the community<br>• Coordinate with Cass Technical High School and other local institutions |

*PRECEDENT LESSONS LEARNED*

*Frankie Pace Park (Pittsburgh):*

Strong community engagement informed design priorities through a comprehensive process of design review and community listening. Local community organizations were informed about the project and sent early letters of support for the project's grant. Public artwork was commissioned from regional artists, with designs inspired by feedback from residents. Three artists had direct connections to the neighborhood. This was an intentional process aimed to foster community stewardship and inclusive planning.

Frankie Pace Park Artwork


Source: "Frankie Mae Pace Park over I-579 wins $10,000 for youth programs," unionprogress.com

*Park Over Highway (St. Louis):*

The National Park Service and its partners worked with a universal design group to improve accessibility through park grounds, incorporating inclusive planning and design practices to ensure visitors of all abilities can easily enter and use park facilities. Additionally, during the planning process, the National Park Service ensured the project mitigated any impacts to the on-site amenities listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

## SUSTAINABILITY AND RESILIENCY

The spatial analysis identified a need for improved resilience and health.

| Needs | Opportunities |
|---|---|
| **Resilience** | • Reduce impervious surfaces<br>• Construct stormwater and green infrastructure<br>• Plant more trees<br>• Create more park programming for youth<br>• Increase public space in the area |
| **Health** | • Promote transportation modes with lower emissions<br>• Create opportunities for outdoor recreation<br>• Buffer high noise levels from highway |

*PRECEDENT LESSONS LEARNED*

*Frankie Pace Park (Pittsburgh):*

This cap collects stormwater that previously ran off I-576's pavement. Up to six inches of rainwater can be absorbed the lawn's soil composition. The landscape design includes a network of open trench drains that directs water to six rain gardens situated in the lower northwest corner of the site. The rain gardens and lawn retain the rainwater until it evaporates, absorbs into the vegetation, or gradually returns to the sewer system. The cap also added urban tree cover to the city, offering shade, filtering water, and cleaning the air. These trees lower the urban heat island effect and absorb stormwater.

Frankie Pace Park Stormwater Feature

Source: "Frankie Pace Park," lba-la.com

*Klyde Warren Park (Dallas):*

The sustainable landscaping of this park contains 37 plant species and 247 trees. Once the trees reach maturity, they are estimated to sequester 7 tons of carbon per year. They also act as a natural bio-filter, reducing stormwater runoff, mitigating heat, and reducing both freeway and surface level traffic noise. The cap contains concrete slabs which act as planter boxes that allow the trees to grow to their desired size.

## EQUITY AND OPPORTUNITY

The spatial analysis identified a need for more transportation options, stability and equity.

| Needs | Opportunities |
|---|---|
| **Transportation Options** | • Invest in non-motorized transportation<br>• Enhance walkability and bikeability, particularly for the quarter of residents who do not have access to a vehicle |
| **Stability and Equity** | • Stabilize and support residential population in Lower Cass<br>• Accommodate growth in Brush Park, Brewster, Douglass areas<br>• Invest in area that has experienced disinvestment<br>• Create a space that is more family-friendly<br>• Create amenities and enhance mobility for senior residents<br>• Provide spaces that are welcoming for all, including lower income residents |

*PRECEDENT LESSONS LEARNED*

*Cap at Union Station (Columbus):*

The cap at Union Station is composed of three separate bridges – one for through-traffic across the highway and one on either side for retail structures. These retail structures provide over 25,000 square feet of leasable space. The cap transforms what previously was I-670 into a seamless urban streetscape with nine retail shops and restaurants.

*Klyde Warren Park (Dallas):*

Since the park opened in 2012, the park has had a $2.5B economic impact on Dallas, enhancing land value around the park and raising tax revenue for city services. Rental fees from pavilion use helps to fund the upkeep of the park and fund programming events that are free to the public.

Cap at Union Station Street View

Source: "Cap at Union Station," Wikipedia.com

## CONNECTIVITY AND MOBILITY

The spatial analysis identified a need for updated facilities and more transportation options.

| Needs | Opportunities |
|---|---|
| **Updated Facilities** | • Convert 2nd Avenue from one-way to two-way from Cass Park to Plum Street<br>• Reimagine Grand River Avenue off-ramp traffic flow<br>• Remove or relocate Clifford Street on-ramp<br>• Enhance pedestrian and bicycle safety, particularly near on- and off-ramps<br>• Right-size Fisher Service Drives (north and south)<br>• Improve and complete the sidewalk network<br>• Add protection to bicycle lanes on bridges<br>• Update bridge infrastructure, especially at Brush Street |
| **Transportation Options** | • Further emphasize Woodward and Grand River as transit corridors<br>• Strengthen non-motorized options, particularly on Woodward, Grand River, Brush, Cass, and Fisher Service Drives<br>• Connect Park Avenue and Witherell Street across I-75 with pedestrian and bicycle only streets<br>• Incorporate bicycle and micromobility facilities into design<br>• Enhance safety, particularly along the Study Area segments of Grand River and Woodward, which are included in the Streets for People High-Injury Network<br>• Coordinate with upcoming I-375 Project streetscape network changes |

Lower Rainer Pedestrian Land Bridge

Source: "Lower Rainer Vista and Pedestrian Land Bridge," asla.org

*PRECEDENT LESSONS LEARNED*

*Central Access (Philadelphia):*

When I-95 was constructed in the 1970s, much of Philadelphia's Old City neighborhood access to the river was cut off. Several residents and businesses were displaced. This cap aims to reconnect the neighborhood and the Delaware river. It also aims to complement new private development at the edges of the park, accommodating an increase in street traffic, surface transit, bicyclists and pedestrians.

Central Access Park

Source: "I-95 Central Access Philadelphia Project," hillintl.com

*Lower Rainer Pedestrian Land Bridge (Seattle):*

This project highlights the importance of integrating with public transportation systems and considering surrounding land uses. The Lower Rainer Vista project was conceived to connect a new light rail hub with enhanced bus, bike and pedestrian routes to the University of Washington campus. This was an opportunity to complement plans for a regional light rail system, which had stations located adjacent to the park serving the campus and stadiums. In recent years, the use of this park has been diminishing as this area, on the outskirts off the University of Washington Campus, has gained more surface parking lots.

# 4 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

## OVERVIEW

Engagement took place throughout the duration of the project, with the first public meeting held in June 2024 and the final public survey open until November 2024. Engagement opportunities were grouped into three phases.

Phase 1 focused on introducing the project by explaining the project scope and providing information about other capping projects across the United States. During this phase, the project team collected feedback on study goals, priorities for the broader Benefit and Impact Area, and priorities for the immediate Study Area.

Phase 2 provided project background, summarized findings from Phase 1, presented proposed vision and goals, and described various cap design approaches. Feedback informed vision statement development, cap locations, and cap programming. A "Create your Cap" activity allowed participants to indicate where they would prioritize cap locations and what programming they would like to see on the cap.

Phase 3 provided an overview of the project, a summary of the work to date, and a summary of previous feedback received. Feedback informed proposed cap locations and initial programming ideas for the West, Central, and East Caps.

Public Meeting 2 "Create your Cap" Activity

### Phase 1
June - July 2024

- Public Meeting 1 — 64 attendees
- Online Survey 1 — 880 responses

### Phase 2
Aug. - Sept. 2024

- Public Meeting 2 — 60 attendees
- Online Survey 2 — 182 responses
- Small Business Owners Forum
- Senior Outreach

### Phase 3
Oct. - Nov. 2024

- Public Meeting 2 — 76 attendees
- Online Survey 2 — 88 responses
- Cass Tech High School Workshop

## PHASE 1 FINDINGS

Feedback from Phase 1 helped the project team identify issues and opportunities in the area. Feedback revealed that this area is heavily used for shopping and dining, walking, and relaxing. Overall, respondents feel like they belong and feel safe in this area, but there are not things for kids to do and it is hard to run errands and access things needed for daily life. Additionally, respondents do not feel connected to green space and nature here. Respondents identified a lack of tree canopy, green space and adequate stormwater drainage.

Many respondents identified a need for better connections between neighborhoods and for improved bicycle and pedestrian pathways. Participants identified an opportunity to invest in Lower Cass and the Grand River Avenue corridor to the west of the Study Area, which currently contains a lot of vacant land and surface parking lots to the north and south of I-75. Participants also called for cap space near the residential neighborhoods to the northeast of the Study Area, including Brush Park and Brewster Homes.

During Phase 1 engagement, the public was presented with draft preliminary goals. Overall there was support for all four goals, with a slightly higher importance placed on "connectivity and mobility" by online survey respondents. Participants elaborated on goals and elements that they value. This feedback is summarized in the lower-left graphic.


Public Meeting 1

**Community-Centered Public Space**

- Inclusivity & accessibility
- Cultural & historical representation
- Entertainment & recreation
- Security
- Community gathering spaces

**Sustainability & Resiliency**

- Economic development & support
- Urban revitalization
- Sustainable Development
- Infrastructure & safety

**Equity & Opportunity**

- Safety
- Walkability
- Bikeability
- Connections
- Urban design
- Parking & mobility

**Connectivity & Mobility**

- Carbon emissions
- Noise pollution
- Air quality
- Sustainable practices
- Repurposing materials

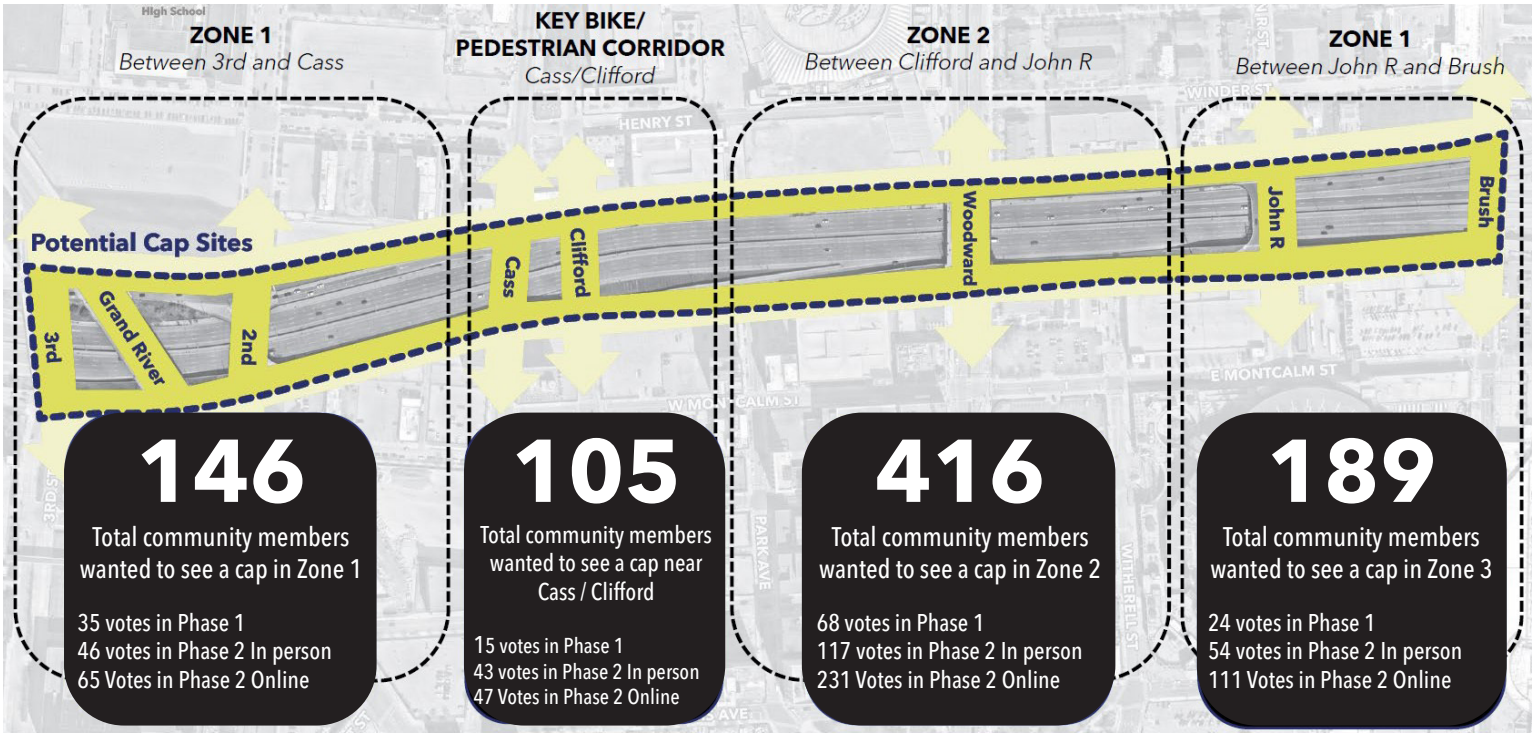
## PHASE 2 FINDINGS

Feedback from Phase 2 helped affirm the project vision, prioritize cap locations, and identify preferred programming elements. All in-person participants supported the project vision, as well as nearly all online respondents (94%). Feedback regarding the vision highlighted the need to serve a wide range of communities, prioritize sustainability, prioritize the community, acknowledge the history of the area, implement good urban design, and consider long-term viability and management.

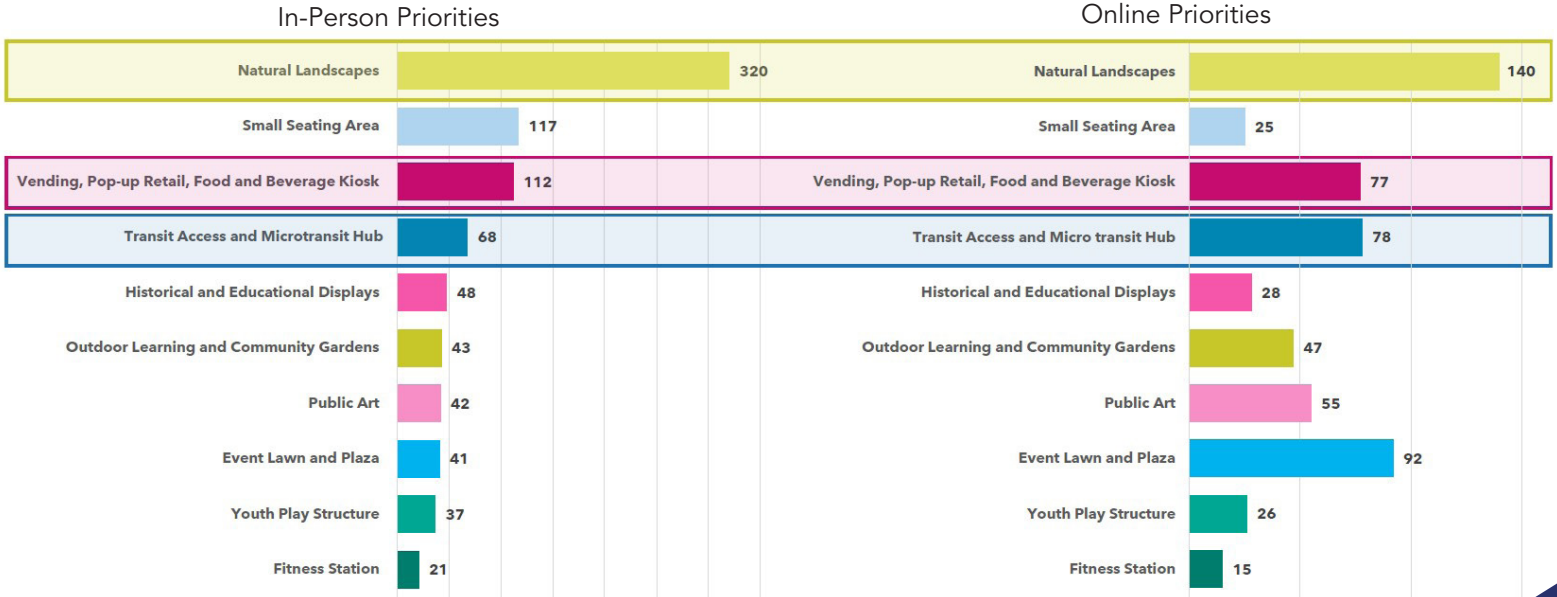
The in-person "Create your Cap Activity" showed a concentration of cap placements around Woodward, John R, Grand River, and Cass / Clifford. The online survey showed a concentration around Park Avenue, between Woodward and Brush, between Cass / Clifford, and 2nd Avenue.

The "Create your Cap" activity asked participants to place programming elements on the map. By far, the most selected element was natural landscapes. Small seating areas, vending, pop-up retail, food and beverage kiosks, event lawn and plaza, transit access and micro mobility hubs, public art, and historical and educational displays were also commonly selected.

Cap Location Preferences, Phases 1 and 2 In-Person and Online Feedback




Potential Cap Programming Elements, Phase 2 In-Person and Online Feedback



## PHASE 3 FINDINGS

Feedback from Phase 3 helped affirm cap locations and identify preferences for programming on the West, Central and East Caps.

When asked if the preferred I-75 concept will achieve the project vision, 73% of in-person participants said "mostly" or "yes" and 64% of online respondents said "mostly" or "yes." Comments regarding cap location included suggestions to aim for the largest caps possible (especially to better mitigate noise), to focus on the Central Cap (maximizing its size and ensuring capping on both sides of Woodward), and to add treatments near Cass and Clifford. Many comments also highlighted the need for noise reduction, the importance of improving connectivity and access, and a preference for fewer larger caps rather than more smaller caps.

To gauge preferences for programming on the West, Central and East Caps, in-person and online participants were presented two different programming options for each cap and asked to indicate and elaborate on their preference.

**West Cap**: There was an overall preference for *a pocket of daily activity* rather than *a learning retreat*. Comments highlighted the importance of biking and walking paths, the importance of slowing traffic and improving safety, and the opportunity to provide spaces for students and youth. Comments also highlighted the need to enhance connections in the area, to create pathways through the cap and raised concerns about traffic safety.

**Central Cap**: There was a slight preference for *a place to gather* over *a green oasis*. Comments highlighted the importance of natural space and need for natural elements on all caps. Comments showed a desire to focus on public art, promote development, provide gathering space and enhance connectivity.

**East Cap**: There was an overall preference for *a neighborhood gathering space* over *a space for community celebration*. Comments highlighted the need for greenery and natural elements, youth, senior, and family spaces, a desire for flexible spaces for events and everyday activities, and an opportunity to highlight the history of Paradise Valley. While most comments called for a focus on residents of the area, some comments saw the potential to attract visitors to the space.

### Cass Tech Workshop

In November 2024, the project team joined two classes with students in the engineering and design program at Cass Tech. The team introduced the concept of highway caps, provided an overview of the project, and asked students to work in groups to act as landscape architects and transportation planners to envision a park design on top of the West Cap.

Through activity responses, student groups showed a strong interest in natural landscapes, small seating areas, vending, pop-up retail, food and beverage kiosks, and transit access on the cap. Multiple comments called for basketball courts or soccer fields on the cap, increased safety for students and others in the area, and an improved pedestrian crossing at the corner of the northern service drive and 2nd Avenue. Students highlighted the use of the northern service drive for student pick-up and drop-off.

Public Meeting 3

# 5 ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

## OPTIONS CONSIDERED

The evaluation report evaluated four different design options. It also evaluated a scenario where improvements were made to the streetscapes in the study area and no caps were added.

- No Build: Baseline Enhancements
- Option 1: Large Central Park
- Option 2: Small Central Park
- Option 3: Reconnecting Community Hubs
- Option 4: Small Central Park and Reconnecting Community Hubs

## EVALUATION FINDINGS

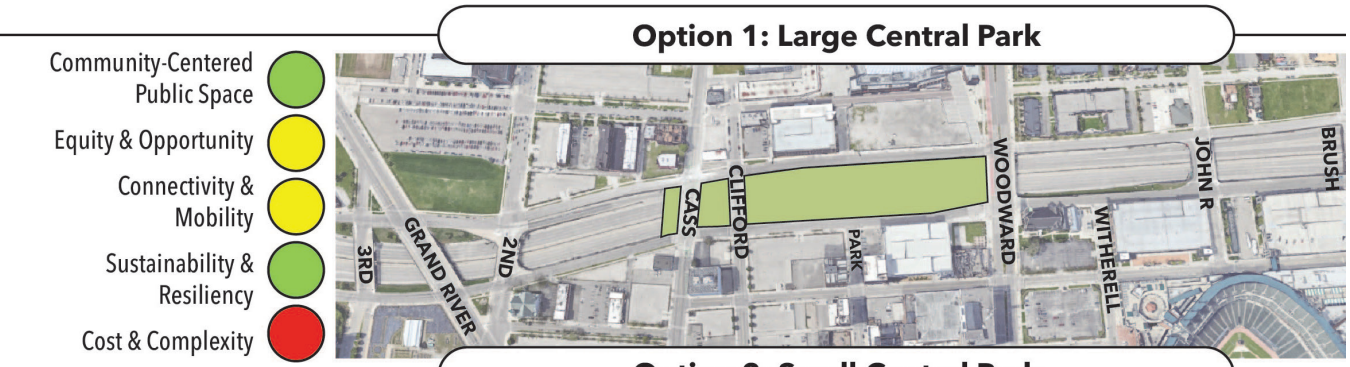
Option 4: Small Central Park and Reconnecting Community Hubs is the recommended option based on this evaluation. For Criteria 1-4 it addresses project needs the most, and for Criteria 5 it addresses all project needs.

The Baseline Enhancements struggle to meet project needs across all criteria since they do not include caps and many of the evaluation metrics require benefits that only a cap can provide (noise reduction, park space, opportunities to connect with nature, space for local pop-ups in key districts, etc.).


## EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

The evaluation report assessed each option based on 15 evaluation metrics sorted into five different criteria (three evaluation metrics for each of the five criteria). Four of the criteria were built around the identified goals for this project: Community-Centered Public Space, Equity and Opportunity, Connectivity and Mobility, and Sustainability and Resiliency. The fifth criteria, Cost & Complexity, evaluates the design options based on engineering and design constraints identified through this planning process. Details on methodology development and scoring process can be found in the Evaluation Report (See *Supporting Documents*).

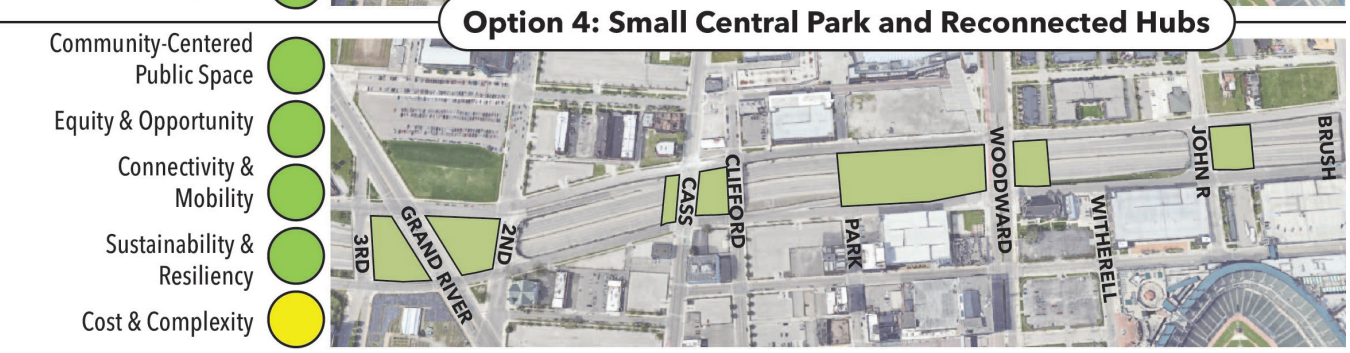
## Option 1: Large Central Park




## Option 2: Small Central Park


## Option 3: Reconnected Hubs


## Option 4: Small Central Park and Reconnected Hubs




**Option 1**: Large Central Park does well in achieving Community-Centered Space and Sustainability and Resiliency criteria, but struggles in Connectivity and Mobility and Equity and Opportunity criteria because the benefits are concentrated around the center of the Study Area. Most notably, the Large Central Park option is significantly more costly and complex than the other options because the park length would officially designate this cap as a tunnel.

**Option 2**: While Small Central Park avoids the official tunnel designation of Option 1, it does just as poorly or worse across all other criteria compared to the Large Central Park. This is because this design makes a smaller investment overall while still concentrating the investment to the center of the Study Area.

**Option 3**: Reconnecting Community Hubs does well in the Equity and Opportunity and Connectivity and Mobility criteria by spreading the investment across the Study Area and by improving multimodal transportation on existing bridges. However, this design does not effectively minimize the negative externalities of the highway and does not create significant park spaces for the community.

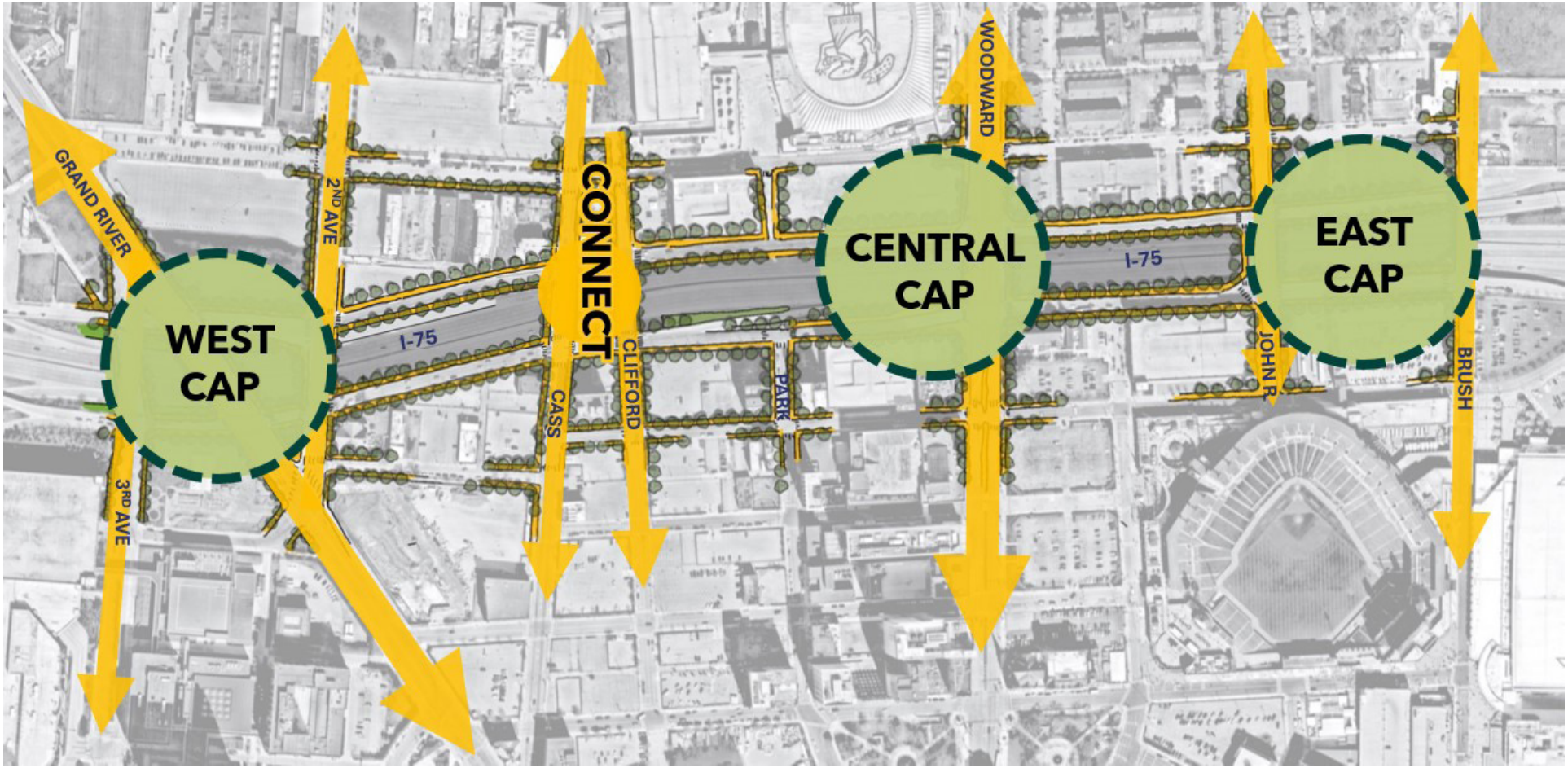
**Option 4**: Small Central Park and Reconnecting Community Hubs strikes a balance between the trade-offs shown in options 1-3. The largest cap is large enough to effectively reduce highway noise and create an impactful space in the part of the Study Area the community has expressed as the highest priority location for a cap (near Park / Woodward). The largest cap is not long enough to be officially designated as a tunnel. The cap near Grand River brings the benefits of a cap to an area in need of investment and to an upcoming development project that will bring more foot traffic to this space. The Cass cap can improve comfort for pedestrians and bicyclists crossing at Cass and Clifford, which are popular multimodal corridors. The John R cap brings the benefits of a cap to residents of Brush Park and Brewster Homes, the part of the Study Area that has the highest concentration of residents.

## PREFERRED OPTION

The evaluation of options was conducted before Phase 3 of engagement so that the project team could gather additional feedback from the community regarding the recommended concept. After this additional engagement, the Preferred Option was created. The Preferred Option was adapted from Option 4, the recommended option in the Evaluation Report. The primary difference between Option 4 and the Preferred Option is an increase in the size of the eastern cap to span from John R Street all the way to Brush Street, and the removal of cap space between Cass Avenue and Clifford Street.

This change was driven by community feedback. Participants expressed a desire for larger caps overall to buffer noise and mitigate negative effects from the highway below. Respondents called for a larger cap on the eastern side of the study area to provide a more impactful space for residents living in Brush Park and Brewster Homes. Similarly to Option 4, the Preferred Alternative will not result in any tunnel designations. The Cass Avenue and Clifford Street cap is removed in the Preferred Option. However, the Preferred Option still aims to enhance the pedestrian and bicyclist experience by adding protection to the existing bike lanes on the Cass Avenue bridge and by converting Clifford Street to a pedestrian only street with planters providing a buffer between users of the bridge and the highway below.

Preferred Option



# 6 PREFERRED I-75 CAP CONCEPT

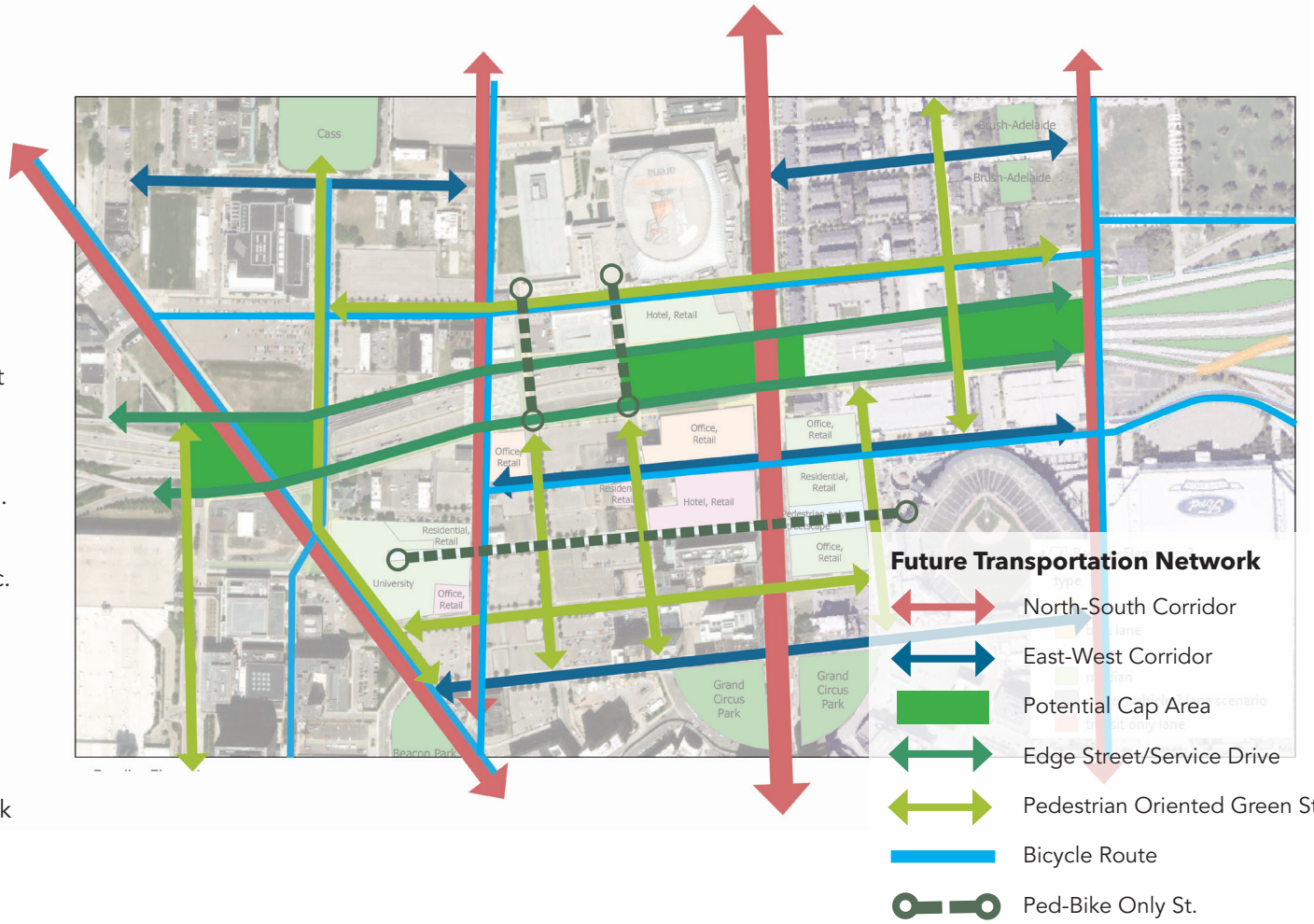
The preferred I-75 Cap Concept locates three caps at strategic locations within the study area. The West Cap creates a hub of daily activity by strengthening the Grand River corridor and increasing walkability and safety. The West Cap anchors the upcoming University of Michigan Center for Innovation development and creates a space for both Cass Tech and U-M students. The Central Cap creates an impactful and memorable space located near vital downtown stadiums and entertainment centers bringing residents and visitors into a central gathering space. The East Cap creates a neighborhood gathering space for Brush Park and Brewster Homes residents, enhancing residents' connection to Downtown and creating a natural space for families, youth, and seniors in the area.

## STREETSCAPE FRAMEWORK

The streetscape framework helps envision how the recommended caps interface with surrounding contexts. In the absence of changes to the existing surface street network and existing land uses, the caps would exist as islands, separated from the surrounding environment by service drives that currently have excessive capacity and unsafe speeds, and between north-south streets that discourage use of non-motorized transportation modes. Without considering changes to surface transportation network, the caps will not adequately enhance bicycle and pedestrian access, and in turn will not effectively reduce vehicular traffic in the area.

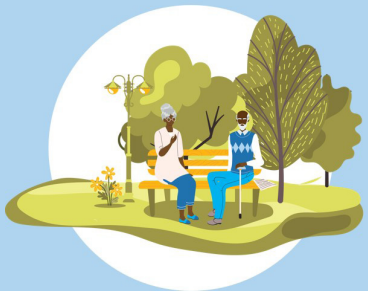
The caps have the potential to do much more than just provide a new park space for the public. The framework considered how the caps can enhance the existing street system, increase connectivity to open spaces downtown, connect to planned greenways, connect to the future I-375 boulevard, and serve as an anchor for upcoming development in the area.

Achieving the goals of the streetscape framework will require coordination with the City of Detroit and MDOT. The streetscape framework has identified concepts for how the surrounding




## The highway caps will...

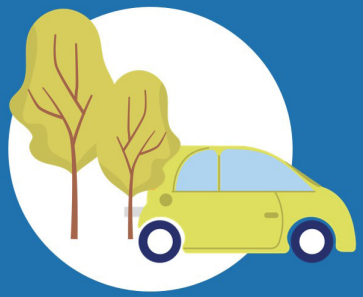
**Shield people from the highway** by reducing noise and hiding it visually.



Create spaces and programming that focus on the **unique needs of community members around each cap space.**

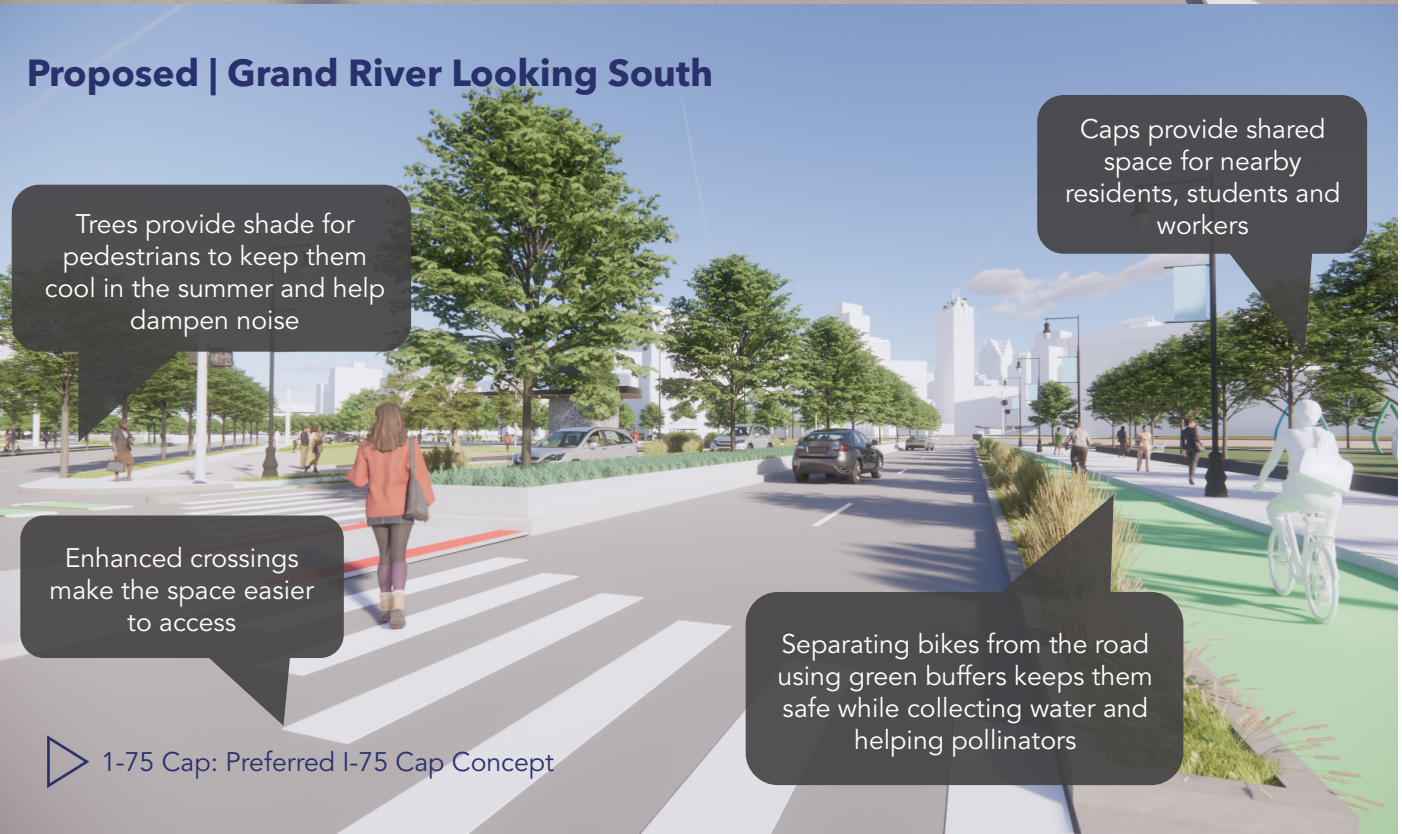
## The streetscapes will...

**Enhance safety** with improved crossings, focusing on improving Detroit's high injury network.



**Provide shade and slow speeds** by visually reducing the appearance of the roadway with plantings.

**Support alternative modes of transportation** like walking and biking.


1-75 Cap: Preferred I-75 Cap Concept

network can be adapted to meet these needs, but additional study will be needed in future design phases to ensure adequate vehicular circulation and access is preserved while improving alternative transportation modes.

The streetscape framework was driven by the following principles:

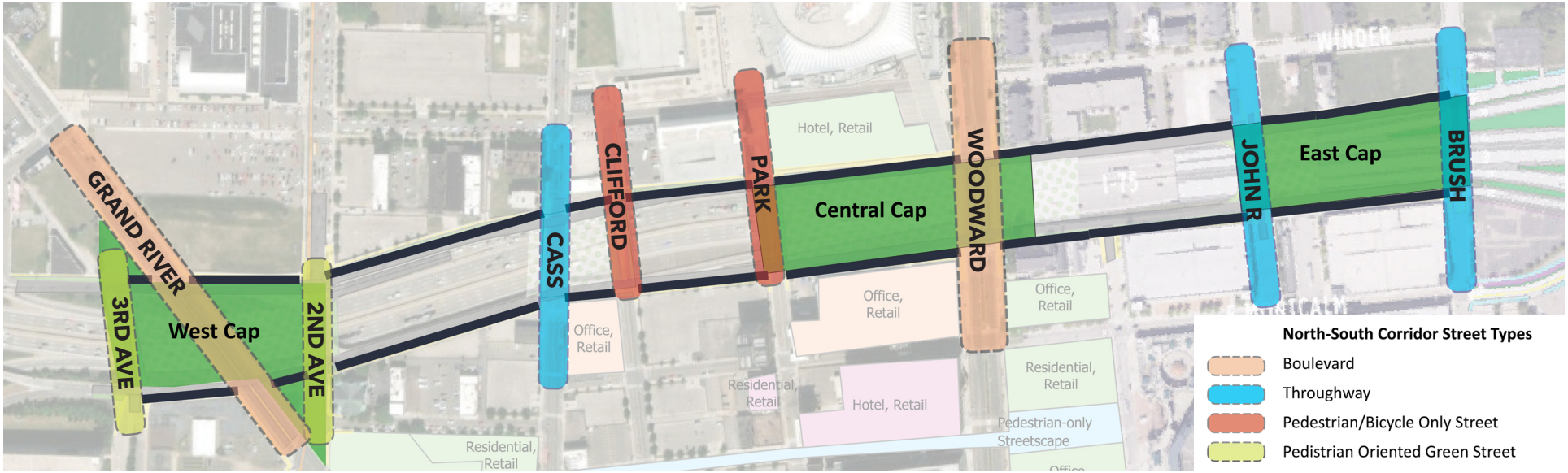
- Consider unique land use contexts
- Foster placemaking opportunities
- Prioritize pedestrian safety
- Create multi-modal amenities
- Integrate transportation modes
- Reallocate auto-oriented space
- Incorporate green infrastructure
- Conform with local planning and design guides

## NORTH-SOUTH CORRIDOR STREETSCAPE ENHANCEMENTS

Within the Study Area, recommended caps are surrounded by the northern Fisher Service Drive, southern Fisher Service Drive, and north-south running roads which include: 3rd Street, Grand River Avenue, 2nd Avenue, Cass Avenue, Clifford Street, Park Avenue, Woodward Avenue, Brush Street, and John R Street.

The north-south running streets serve a variety of purposes in the area. Some are important transit, commercial vehicle, and/or bicycle corridors, while others restrict vehicles to slower speeds and are preferred by pedestrians. Based on current use as well as future planning, north-south corridors are defined in the streetscape framework either as a boulevard, throughway, or pedestrian and bicycle only street types, each with different design implications.

The framework contains different design recommendations for each street type, creating the potential to increase transit use along certain corridors, increase bicycle safety, enhance pedestrian comfort, improve walkability and bikeability in the area, and anchor adjacent commercial or residential land uses.




## Existing | Grand River Cross Section

Sidewalk | Unprotected Bike Lane | Traffic Lanes: 50′ | Unprotected Bike Lane | Sidewalk

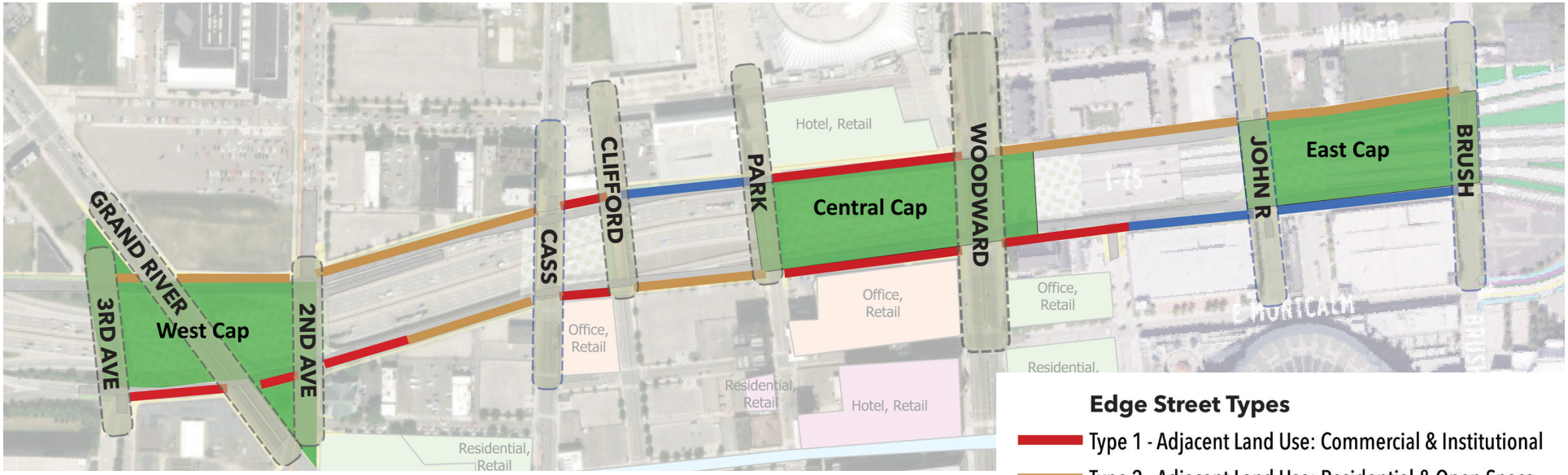
Total Cross Section Width: 116′

## Proposed | Grand River Cross Section

Lighting and Landscaping

Lighting and Landscaping

Cap | Protected Bike Lane | Traffic Lanes: 20′ | Landscaped Median | Traffic Lanes: 20′ | Protected Bike Lane | Sidewalk | Cap




## SERVICE DRIVE STREETSCAPE ENHANCEMENTS

The service drives currently are both one-way streets, each with three lanes running in one direction. They contribute to the division caused by I-75 by together creating six lanes of traffic that need to be crossed. The current service drive design encourages fast speeds, increasing noise pollution and discouraging bicyclist use of the street and pedestrian use of the adjacent sidewalks.

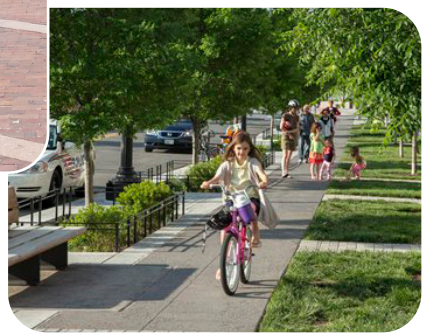
Within the study area, there are a variety of adjacent land uses that could have different implications for service drive design. Some surrounding uses include commercial, institutional, parking structure, residential, or open space.

Different design recommendations based on adjacent land use will enhance pedestrian comfort along sidewalks, increase the tree canopy, improve walkability and bikeability, anchor adjacent commercial and residential land uses, and encourage use of the caps by making it easier to cross the service drives. The service drive design should consider current land use as well as future development of vacant or underutilized sites.

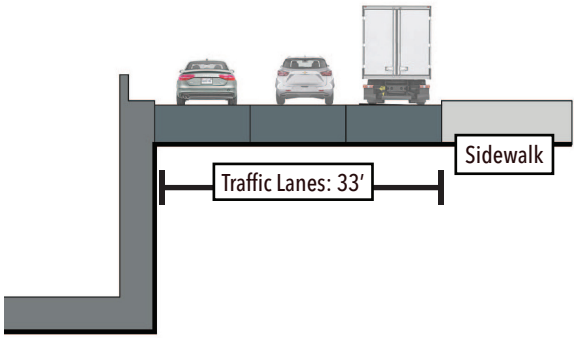
Continue tree plantings along the service drive and adjacent parking structures to create a screening buffer for pedestrians.

Reduce service drives from three lanes to two lanes and use extra right of way to provide a landscape amenity zone that includes planters, street furnishings, and lighting. Option for street parking near Woodward commercial areas.

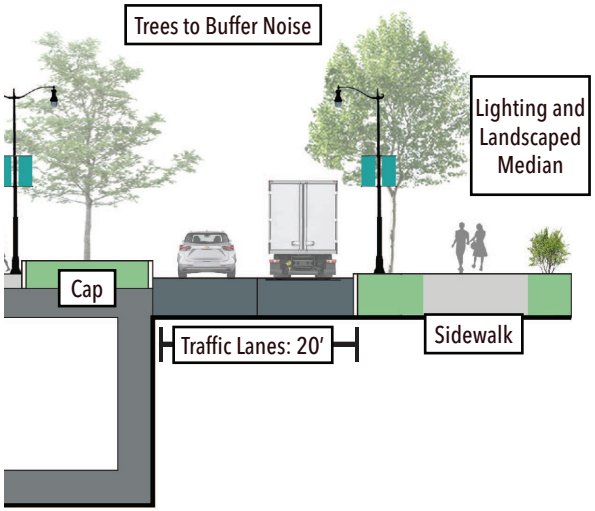
Provide continuous tree planting along the service drive and a landscape buffer between the service drives and the sidewalks.

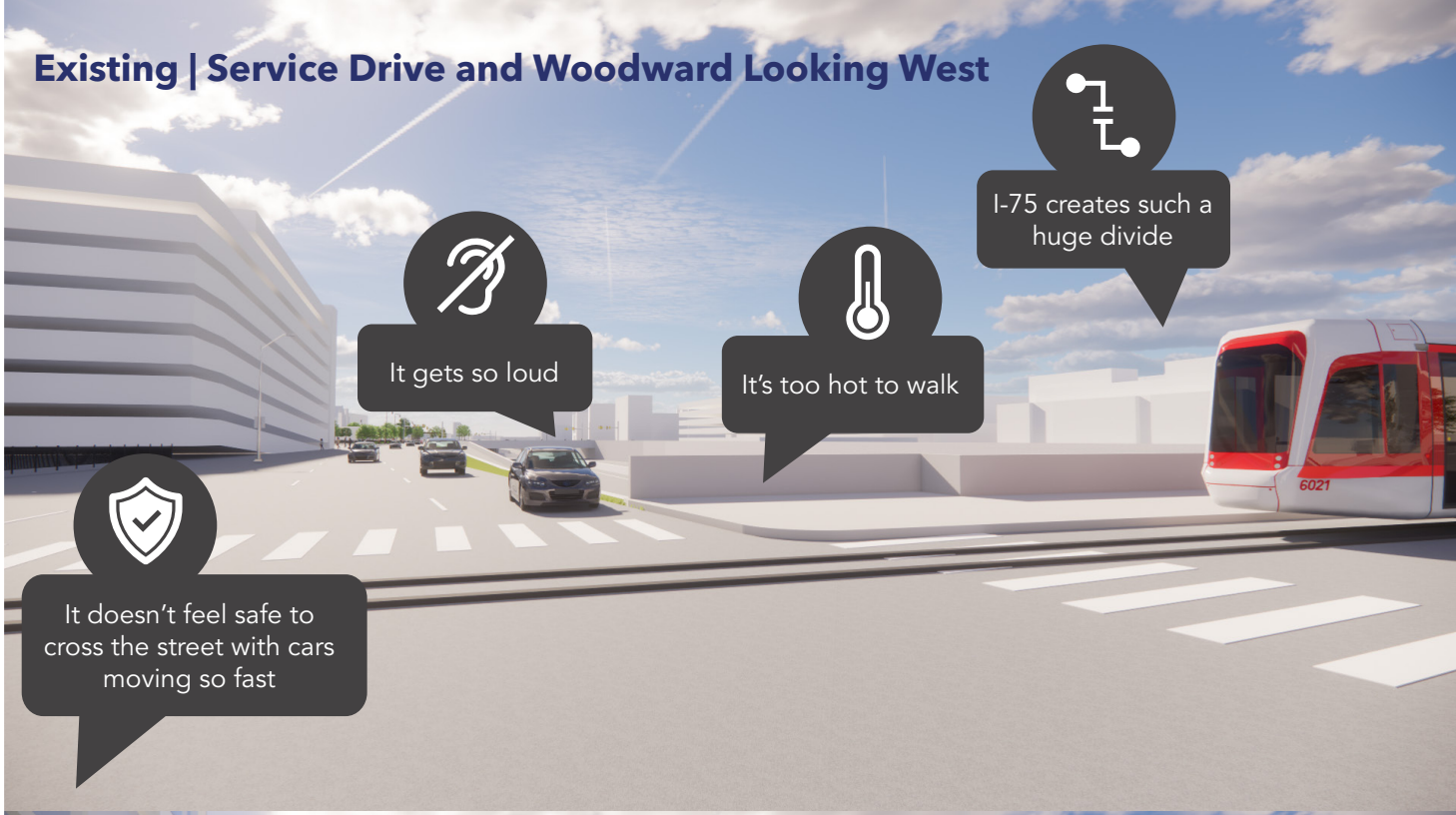


## Existing | Service Drive Cross Section




## Proposed | Service Drive Cross Section





1-75 Cap: Preferred I-75 Cap Concept

## CAP PROGRAMMING AND DESIGN

### *West Cap*

*Design Elements*

The West Cap is envisioned as *"a pocket of daily activity"*, a safe and inviting space for students to stop by after class, congregants to enjoy after service, or nearby workers to take a stroll after work. By capping from 2nd to 3rd, this space creates a spot for everyday respite along Grand River.

*Programming Elements*

The West Cap can provide safe and inviting bicycle and pedestrian connections to surrounding educational institutions like Cass Tech High School and the future University of Michigan Center for Innovation. Public space design and programming will be geared toward supporting these student populations. Traffic calming along Grand River and re-design of 3rd Street and 2nd Avenue to prioritize pedestrians and bicyclists can help make this cap an important hub for transit users, bicyclists, and pedestrians. Programming elements focused on commercial activities such as vending, pop-ups and small-scale development will serve those using this active hub.

Educational Workshops

Vending Opportunities

Urban Gardening

### *Central Cap*

*Design Elements*

The Central Cap is envisioned as "a vibrant hub" for the broader Detroit community, fostering celebration and connection within the larger entertainment district. Large green space on either end of the cap shields the highway and dampens noise. By spanning Woodard, it creates the illusion of the highway disappearing, while expansive open spaces offer the flexibility to accommodate gatherings of all sizes and occasions across the City.

*Programming Elements*

This cap will be an important space for gathering in the central area of Detroit. It will enhance connections to Downtown for those living in adjacent neighborhoods, serving as an important community hub. It will also include monumental features to attract visitors and create a memorable experience for those visiting for a game day or concert at adjacent stadiums. Programming on this cap will serve a variety of uses to anchor both commercial and residential development. Public art will keep the space rooted in the area's culture and history.


1-75 Cap: Preferred I-75 Cap Concept

***East Cap***

*Design Elements*

The East Cap is envisioned as a neighborhood gathering space, connecting Brush Park and Brewster Homes residents through play, fitness, and landscaping. Paired with streetscape improvements on Brush and John R, this would be a beloved community asset in walking distance of adjacent community members.

*Programming Elements*

The East Cap will incorporate natural elements and greenery, enhancing access to natural spaces for residents of Brush Park and Brewster Homes. Programming will be focused on spaces for youth, families, and seniors. Public art and educational displays will honor the history of Paradise Valley.

Pavilion

Dog Park

Play Structure

# 7 NEXT STEPS

Funding is already secured for the further study and design of this project. The next phase will include further exploration to identify additional construction phase funding through public grant programs and private philanthropy.

## FUTURE PHASES

*Feasibility Study: 2025*

This phase will include further study on cap public space planning and design, structural and design studies, and ongoing community engagement.

*Finalization of Construction Engineering: 2026 to 2027*

This phase will follow the feasibility study to refine designs and set up the project for construction.

*Construction: 2028 or Later*

Once the design is finalized, construction will occur to create the caps as well as park programming on each cap. This is dependent on securing funding for the caps and public space amenities

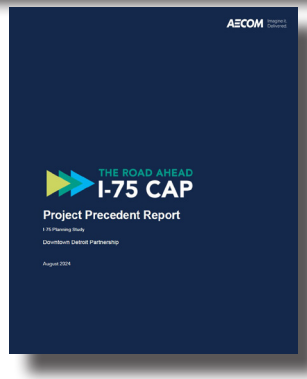
## Three caps
## Three unique identities


# SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

This report summarizes and references the work completed throughout the I-75 Cap Vision and Alternatives Analysis. Additional reports completed during this Analysis include the *Mapping Framework, Project Precedent Report, Public Engagement Summary Reports*, and the *Evaluation Report*.

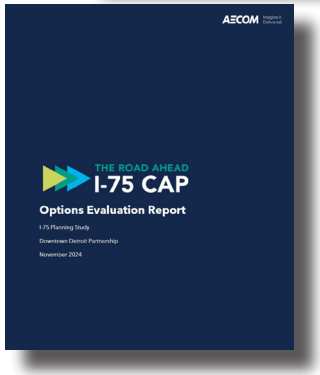
These reports can be found on the DDP's website: https://downtowndetroit.org/about-the-ddp/impact/program-initiatives/urban-innovation/i-75-cap


The *Mapping Framework* documented opportunities and needs in the area. Results were summarized to identify opportunities related to each of the four project goal categories (Community-Centered Public Space, Equity and Opportunity, Connectivity and Mobility, and Sustainability and Resiliency).




The *Project Precedent Report* analyzed capping projects across the nation and summarized key lessons learned for the potential I-75 Cap Study.


The *Public Engagement Summary Reports* (Phases 1-3) summarize engagement activities and findings for each phase of the project.




*The Evaluation Report* evaluated four different design options based on a defined set of evaluation criteria. It also evaluated a scenario where improvements were made to the streetscapes in the study area and no caps were added.

# I-75 Cap