THE ROAD AHEAD

I-75 CAP

Final Report

I-75 Cap Feasibility Study

Downtown Detroit Partnership

October 2026

DOWNTOWN DETROIT PARTNERSHIP
EST. 1922

MDOT
Michigan Department of Transportation

CITY OF DETROIT

Acknowledgments

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Detroit Department of Public Works
Detroit Greenways Coalition
Detroit Mayor's Office
Detroit Planning & Development Department
DTE Energy
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Olympia Development of Michigan
Park Avenue Hotel
Regional Transportation Authority
Related Companies
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University of Michigan Center for Innovation
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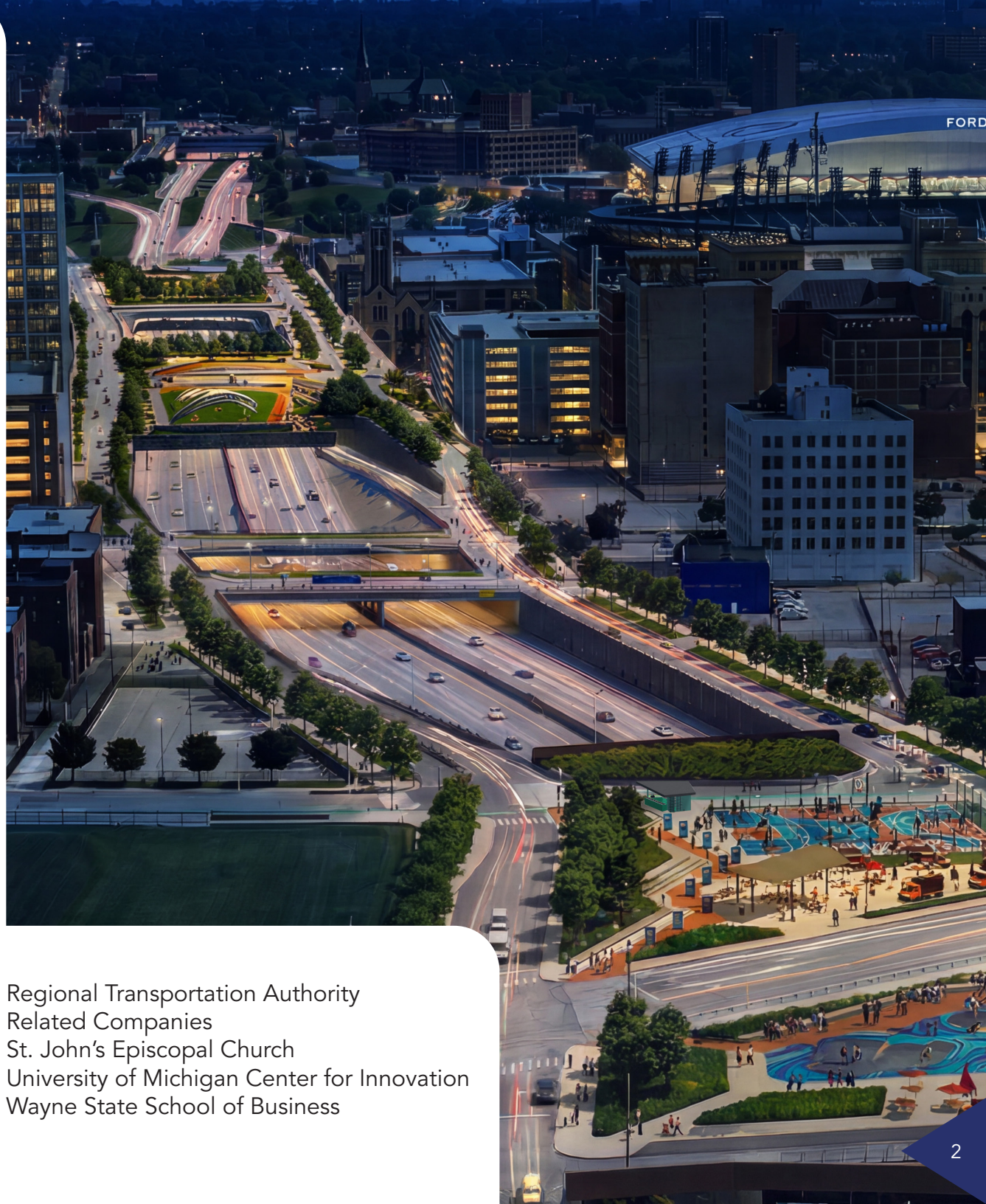


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1 Background

The I-75 Cap is a project led by the Downtown Detroit Partnership (DDP) exploring three opportunities to provide public spaces on top of the Interstate I-75 highway (I-75) between Third Street and Brush Street.

Caps are structures built over highways with the intention of reconnecting communities affected by this infrastructure. A range of benefits can result from capping projects, including enhanced mobility, screening from traffic noise, and new public spaces serving as anchors for current and future development. Many other cities across the country have implemented caps.

Key Terms

Other key terms used throughout this report include:

- *Vision and Alternatives Analysis:* The previous phase, primarily conducted in 2024, establishing the initial vision and cap locations.
- *Feasibility Study:* The current project phase, investigating issues that will determine the final shape and design of the project.
- Vision: A collection of ideas and decisions that describe how the project will look, feel, and function in its final form.

Other reports completed during the Feasibility Study are noted in **bold** when referred to in this document.

Examples of Small (S), Medium (M), and Large (L) Caps Constructed Across the United States





S

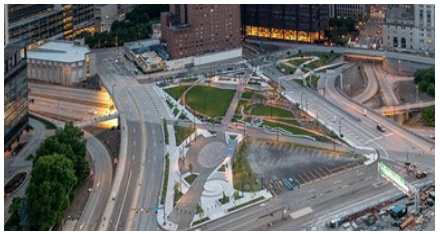
The Cap at Union Station
Columbus, OH
~1 acre

Lower Rainer Pedestrian Land Bridge
Seattle, WA
~1 acre

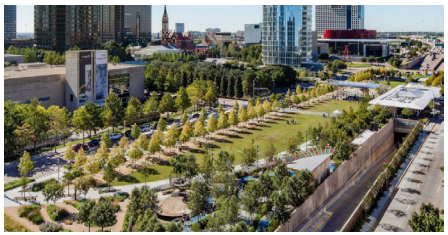
Frankie Pace Park
Pittsburgh, PA
~2 acres

Bridging I-696: Connecting Oak Park
Oak Park, MI
~3 acres (per cap)

M









L

Klyde Warren Park
Dallas, TX
~5 acres

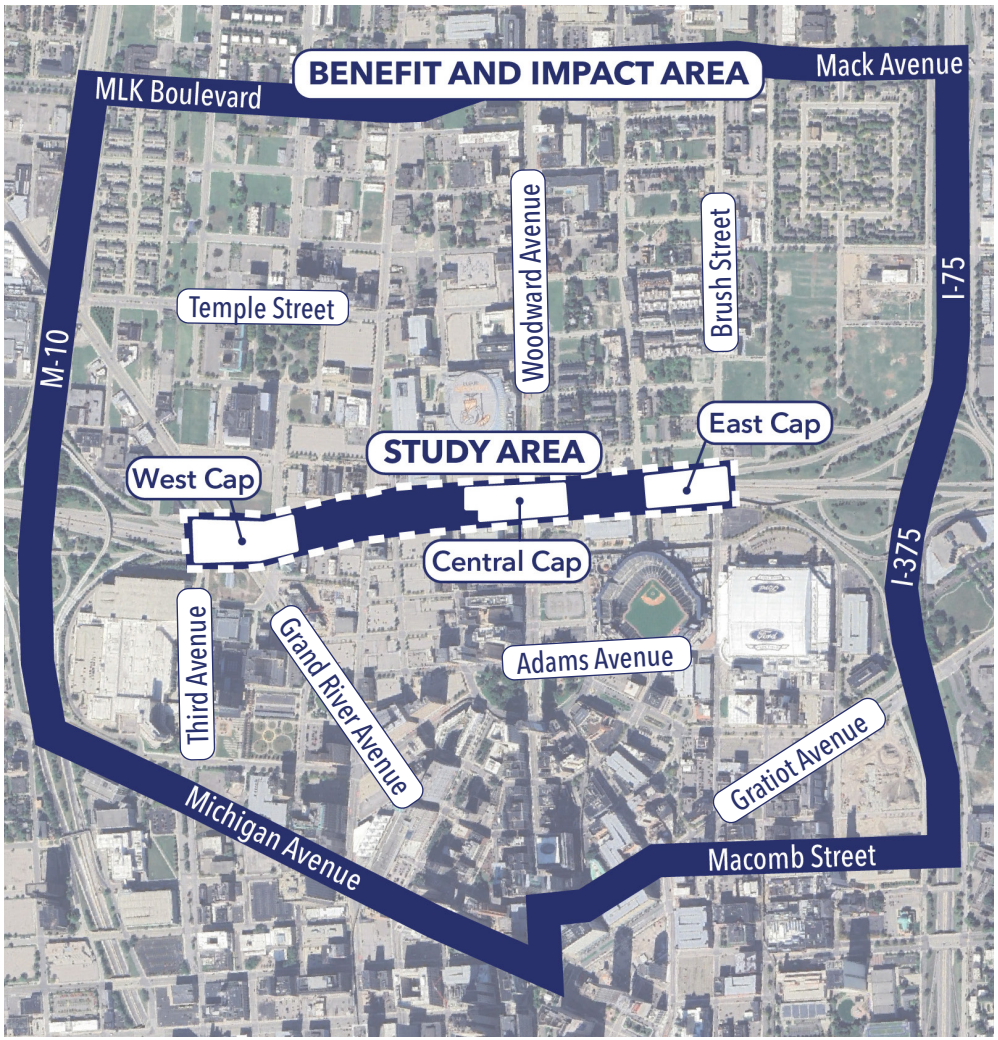
Park at Penn's Landing
Philadelphia, PA
~5 acres (cap area)

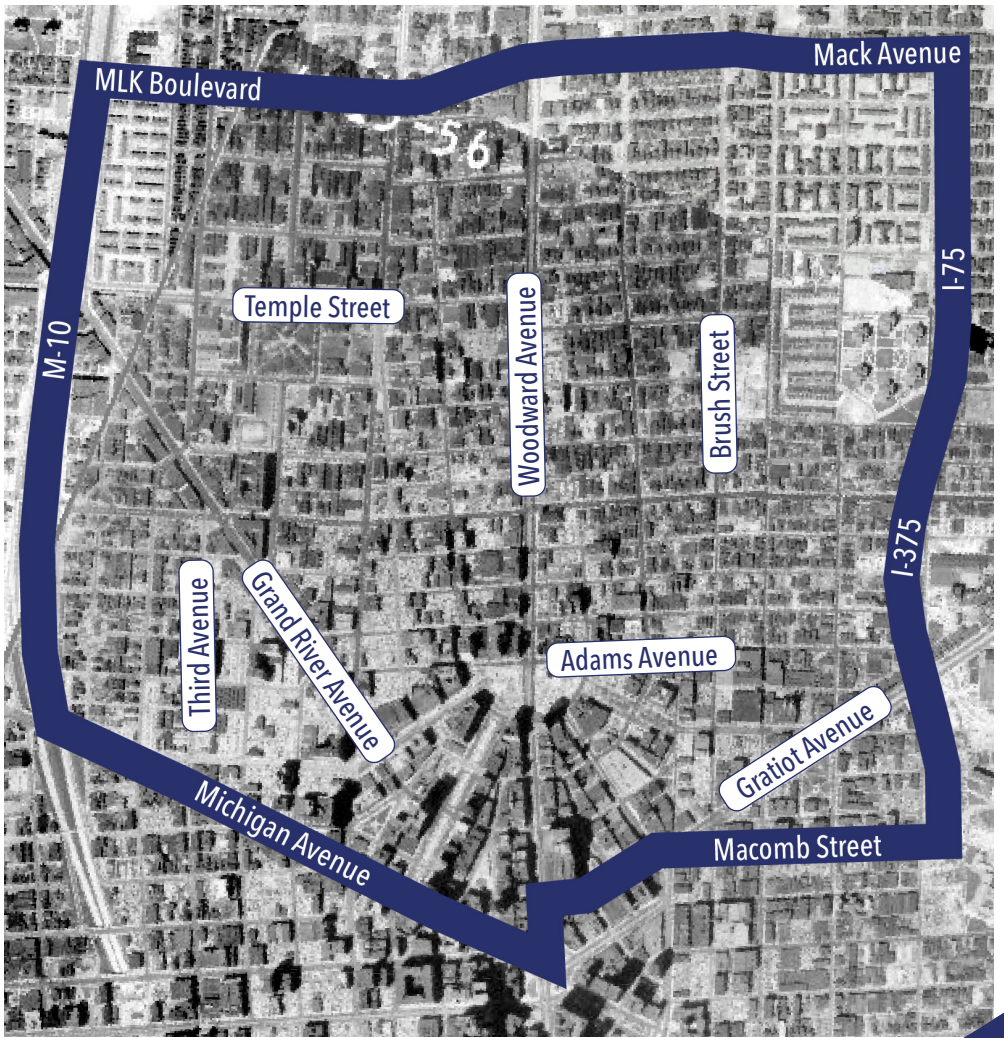
Project Overview

I-75 is an interstate highway that runs north-south from Florida to Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Construction of the Downtown Detroit segment of I-75 started in the late 1950s. The freeway cut through vibrant, walkable neighborhoods, creating a barrier between Downtown and neighborhoods to the north. That barrier persists to this day.

DDP, in partnership with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and the City of Detroit, initiated the I-75 Cap project in 2024, exploring how caps located between Third Avenue and Brush Street could enhance local connectivity and quality of life while maintaining the regional and national transportation network. While separate from the I-375 Project, the I-75 Cap project similarly aims to improve connection between Downtown Detroit and surrounding neighborhoods.

The Benefit and Impact Area and Study Area shown on a 2026 aerial (left) and the same area shown in 1956, prior to the construction of I-75 (right)





Project Schedule



Project Schedule

The I-75 Cap project is being advanced over multiple phases. The first phase, called the *Vision and Alternatives Analysis*, was conducted in 2024 to establish a project vision and identify approximate cap locations. This report summarizes the *Feasibility Study*, the most recent phase conducted from 2025 to 2026. The next phases of the project include securing funding to advance the project, furthering design of the cap structures and public spaces, and constructing the caps. These future phases are explained further in the Implementation Planning section of this report.

Project Vision and Goals

A primary focus of DDP and its partners in the *Vision and Alternatives Analysis* was to develop a community-supported vision for the project that addressed goals and needs for the surrounding area. The vision and goals were developed during the initial rounds of engagement.

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

Community-Centered Public Space: Engage the community to create a public space that fulfills needs, provides inclusive and diverse programming, elevates local history and culture.

Sustainability and Resiliency: Incorporate treatments that improve comfort by reducing exposure to noise and air pollution and reduce vehicle emissions by improving walkability and bikeability.

Equity and Opportunity: Incorporate community restoration, stabilization and anti-displacement strategies, address historical inequities, support inclusive economic development and entrepreneurship.

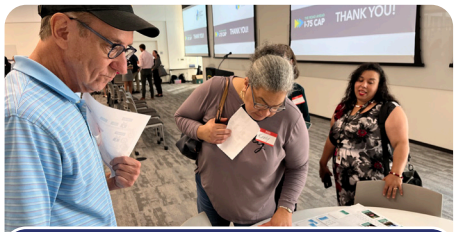
Connectivity & Mobility: Increase safety and connectivity for all ages and abilities, connect neighborhoods with Downtown community assets, and increase access for those without a car.

Public and Stakeholder Engagement Process

Public and stakeholder engagement is crucial to the I-75 Cap project. Ongoing touchpoints allow the community to work directly with the project team to shape the vision for the caps and ensure programming meets their needs, addresses their concerns, reflects community history and culture, and creates opportunity for local businesses and artists.

The graphic below summarizes all the public and stakeholder engagement that has been conducted for the I-75 Cap project to date during both the *Vision and Alternatives Analysis* and the *Feasibility Study*. The *Feasibility Study* focused on collecting legacy resident stories and gathering input on potential changes to the street network at each of the caps, preferred placement of the Central Cap relative to Woodward Avenue, and public space programming at each of the caps.

The Public and Stakeholder Engagement Process



Project Introduction

Summer 2024

- 64 attendees
- 880 survey responses



Vision and Goals

Fall 2024

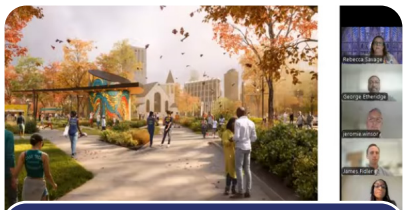
- 60 attendees
- 182 survey responses



Cap Locations and Programming

Winter 2024/2025

- 76 attendees
- 88 survey responses



Project Re-Introduction

Fall 2025

- 45 attendees (virtual)



Street Network and Central Cap Placement

Winter 2025/2026

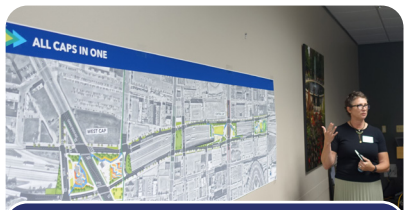
- 75 attendees
- 184 survey responses



Public Space Programming

Spring 2026

- 39 attendees
- 392 survey responses



Refined Vision and Implementation Path

Summer 2026

- 30 attendees
- Press release

Preliminary Vision

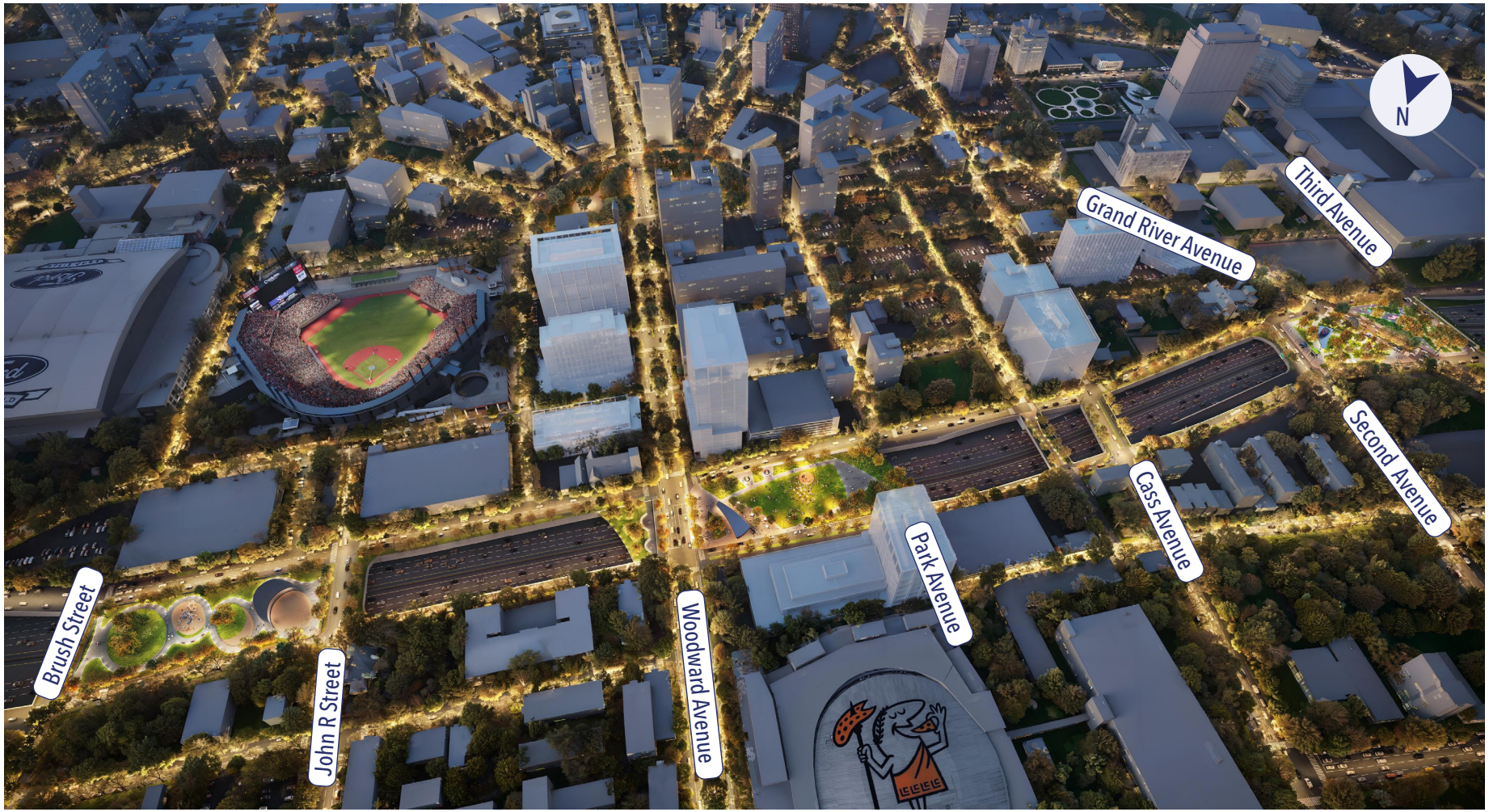
To guide future phases of work, the *Vision and Alternatives Analysis* identified three distinct caps with three distinct identities, along with a baseline understanding of the types of programming desired for each cap.

The East Cap was envisioned as a neighborhood gathering space between John R Street and Brush Avenue connecting Brush Park and Brewster Homes residents through play, fitness, and landscaping.

The West Cap was envisioned as a pocket of daily activity between Third and Second Avenues serving as 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.

The Central Cap was envisioned as a vibrant hub around Woodward Avenue for the broader Detroit community, fostering celebration and connection within the entertainment district.

Preliminary Vision from the Vision and Alternatives Analysis



2 Feasibility Study Overview

This Final Report summarizes the *Feasibility Study*. This Study refined the preliminary vision established by the *Vision and Alternatives Analysis* and explored implementation paths based on the following analyses.

Cap Engineering

The structural design team assessed how the caps could be sized and designed to accommodate ventilation and access needs in the event of a fire or other emergencies on or under the caps without requiring cost-prohibitive ventilation systems. Concepts were developed for how the bridge structures could be designed, including drainage systems to facilitate proper stormwater management and avoid leaks onto the highway below. The team also identified potential utility relocation needs, options and considerations for conducting construction, and public space programming limitations based on load capacities and amenity placement relative to the underlying bridge structures. These findings, documented across various technical memorandums, are crucial for moving the I-75 Cap project into more detailed design and eventual construction.

Public Space Programming

The **Public Space Program Plan** was developed to identify amenities to include at each cap based on public and stakeholder preferences and common activities. The team developed concepts laying out potential program elements, visualizations of what the public spaces could look like, and options for how the spaces could be operated and maintained.

History, Arts, and Culture

An **Arts and Culture Plan** was developed to understand how history, arts, and culture can inform public space design. Legacy resident interviews unveiled stories about what the area was like before, during, and after the construction of I-75. Public and stakeholder engagement helped reveal how residents would like to see arts and culture represented on the caps. This work led to the identification of common themes, methods to incorporate preferences into public space design, and potential Detroit-based artists and creatives to consider for public art creation.

Access and Mobility

Cap construction will affect adjacent service drives and the new public spaces will change how people navigate the area surrounding each of the caps. The **Street Network Analysis** considered how various local street network designs would impact traffic and safety. Recommended street network changes were identified, some which could be implemented in the short term to improve safety under existing conditions, and some which would depend on cap construction. These findings will help MDOT and the City implement a street network that facilitates safe access to the future caps while maintaining access to nearby event centers.

Implementation Planning

Understanding next steps for the project required research into the anticipated environmental review process and into the implementation of cap projects in other cities. This work identified cost estimates and scenarios for potential ownership and maintenance, phasing, and funding. The environmental team examined existing cultural resources, potentially contaminated sites, noise levels, air quality levels, and transportation of hazardous materials on I-75. These findings are crucial for moving the project into the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process, which is the review process required for all federally funded projects. The **Implementation Plan** will guide how the I-75 Cap project moves into future phases.

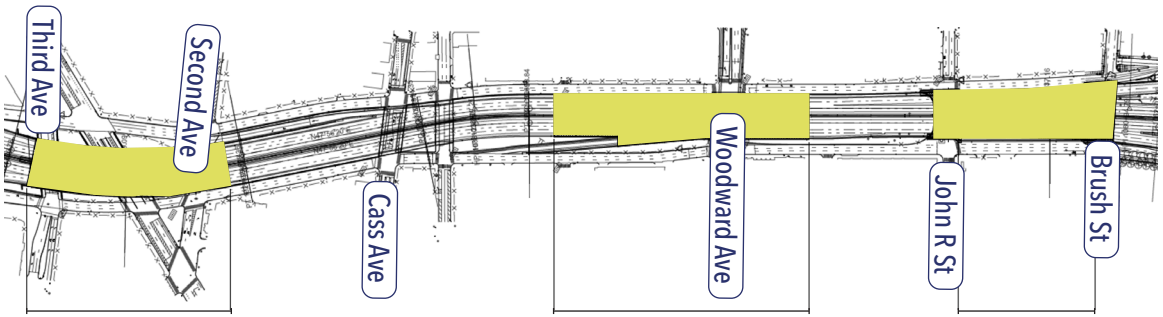
3 Cap Engineering

Cap locations were selected and refined through an extensive public engagement process held between 2024 and 2026. The *Vision and Alternatives Analysis* identified approximate cap locations and the *Feasibility Study* wove in findings from engineering studies and additional public input to refine cap lengths and locations.

Ventilation Needs and Cap Size Limitations

A fire and life safety analysis was conducted to understand ventilation needs below the caps. Through this analysis, a cap length of about 705 feet was identified as the maximum length each cap could be without requiring cost-prohibitive ventilation systems. This finding only affected the Central Cap, the only cap originally envisioned with a longer length than 705 feet.

Original Cap Lengths and Cap Size Limitations



Original West Cap length:
<705 feet

Original Central Cap length:
>705 feet (too long)

Original East Cap length:
<705 feet

Public and Stakeholder Input

Understanding that the Central Cap length would need to be adjusted, options for shifting the cap placement were presented to the Stakeholder Committee and the public at the February public meeting and through an accompanying online public survey. Feedback indicated a preference for the "Shift East" and "Central" options.

Shift East Option



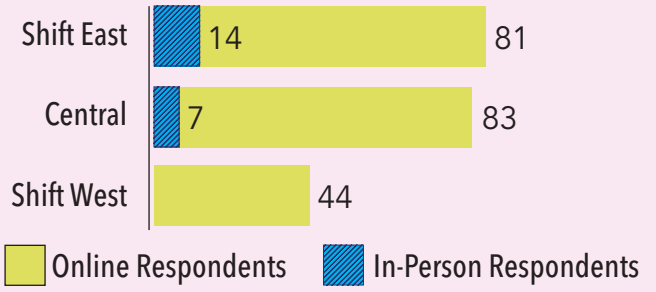
Central Option



Shift West Option



Which Central Cap placement option(s) would you support?



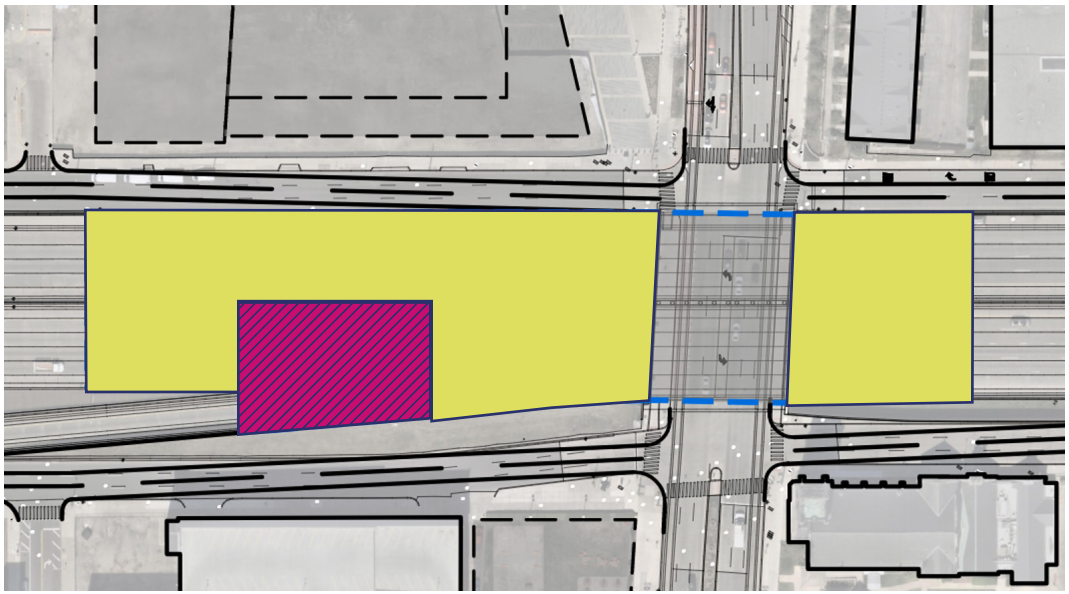
Refined Cap Locations

To maintain alignment with the Central Cap's preliminary vision as a civic gathering space, meet fire and life safety requirements, and respond to stakeholder and public input, the vision for the Central Cap was refined to be shortened to the maximum 705 feet and shifted to the east. The final placement of the Central Cap will be determined during future design phases and may eventually shift a few feet west or east. The refined vision for each cap location coming out of the *Feasibility Study* is shown below.

Structural Design

Using the refined cap locations, a structure feasibility study was conducted to develop engineering concepts for the cap structures and how they could be constructed. This process identified various design considerations that will inform the next phase of the project, including what kind of loads can be accommodated on top of the caps, how cap elevations can transition to meet the service drives and other surrounding streets, and how stormwater can be drained away from the cap.

Illustrative Example of Cap Structure Loading Study Findings



Permissible dead load (weight of permanent design materials) that the structure can hold

- 1.5 feet of soil and a 2,000 square foot single story structure
- 4 feet of soil and a 2,000 square foot single story structure

Refined Vision for I-75 Cap Locations



4 Public Space Program

A multi-year engagement process allowed the project team to work closely with residents, stakeholders, community organizations, and partner agencies to shape a shared vision for public space on top of the caps.

An Informed Design

Rooted in the broader goal of reconnecting neighborhoods divided by I-75, public space design efforts sought to reflect the needs, aspirations, and identity of the communities surrounding each cap. Through public meetings, design charrettes, online engagement, stakeholder interviews, and ongoing collaboration, the project team gathered input that informed the character of each public space.

The engagement process unfolded in a series of iterative phases, with each round of public input building upon the previous one. Once the three cap locations were established, the community defined the desired character, amenities, and programming for the public spaces on each cap. That input, combined with the site's physical context and surrounding neighborhoods, led to a set of distinct public space visions that were then brought back to the public for additional refinement.

Through continued engagement, these visions evolved into the programming frameworks and concept designs presented in the **Public Space Program Plan** and summarized in this report. This work establishes a complementary system of spaces that reconnect neighborhoods, support everyday community life, provide destinations for citywide gatherings and events, and celebrate Detroit's culture, history, and creativity.

February 2026 Public Meeting



May 2026 Public Meeting



West Cap

The West Cap is envisioned as a playful and dynamic urban hub for daily activity. Located between Cass Tech, the University of Michigan Center for Innovation (UMCI), and surrounding neighborhoods, it is designed as a welcoming, everyday destination for students, workers, residents, and visitors.

Active Commons

Within the larger cap network, the vision for the West Cap emphasizes recreation and informal social activity, creating places to meet friends, eat outdoors, play a pickup game, relax, or meander through the city. The West Cap's urban and dynamic character is expressed through multi-use sports courts, a skate plaza, flexible lawns and plazas, food and beverage destinations, shaded gathering areas, and comfortable seating. Public art, murals, graphic pavement, and interactive installations celebrate Detroit's creative culture and provide opportunities for community storytelling, while gardens, meadows, and planted areas soften the urban setting and support environmental education and stewardship. Flexible amenities allow the public space to adapt throughout the day and across seasons.

Programming elements, illustrated on the following page, reinforce this emphasis on everyday activity through pickup sports, art workshops, educational programs, small cultural events, community gatherings, and opportunities for local food vendors and entrepreneurs. These elements establish the West Cap as an active neighborhood commons and gateway that strengthens connections between communities and institutions.

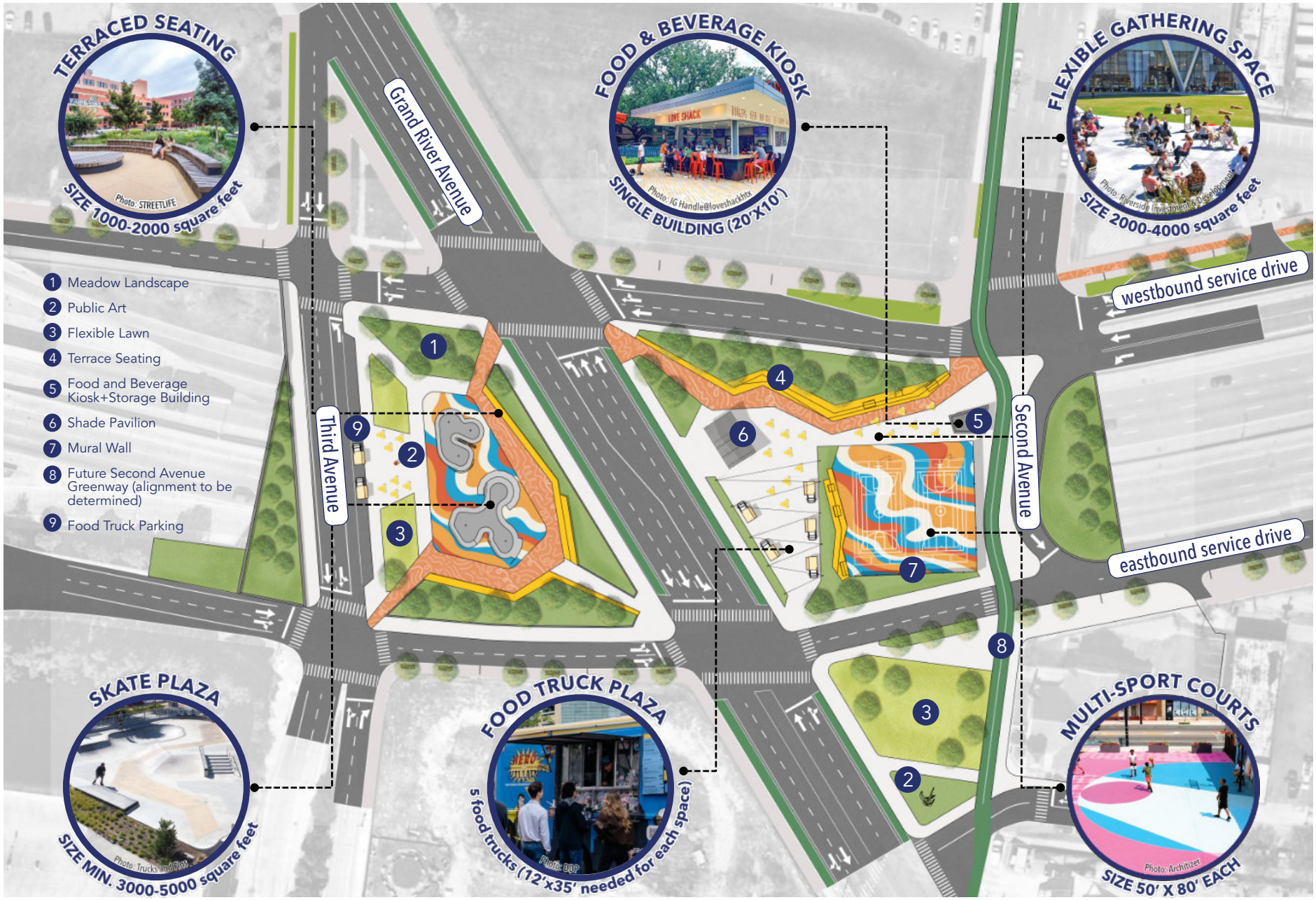
Rendering Illustrating the Vision for the West Cap



West Cap: Program Plan

The plan below illustrates how the West Cap programming elements are organized within the public space.

West Cap Programming Elements



Central Cap

The Central Cap is envisioned as a vibrant hub for the broader Detroit community, creating a signature civic space that celebrates the city's culture, energy, and identity while improving connections across I-75. Positioned at the heart of downtown and spanning Woodward Avenue, the West Cap creates a strong connection across the freeway in an area already experiencing high levels of foot traffic. Within the cap network, it functions as the premier gathering space, welcoming everyday activity, major community celebrations and citywide events.

Civic Pride and Celebration

The Central Cap design aims to create a civic, refined, and vibrant space through an event lawn and performance terrace, flexible greenspace, plazas, gardens, shaded seating, and food and beverage destinations. Along Woodward Avenue, terraced seating supports everyday activity and major traditions such as the Thanksgiving Day Parade, while lawns, movable furnishings, and a robust tree canopy create comfortable spaces for daily use. Public art, signature lighting, and seasonal installations create a memorable downtown destination.

Programming elements, illustrated on the following page, range from concerts, festivals, holiday celebrations, markets, performances, and game-day gatherings to smaller cultural activities, outdoor dining, and daily routines. Flexible spaces allow activities to evolve throughout the day and seasons, ensuring the Central Cap remains welcoming even when major events are not underway. Rooted in Detroit's culture and history, the Central Cap serves as the heart of the cap system where the community can come together.

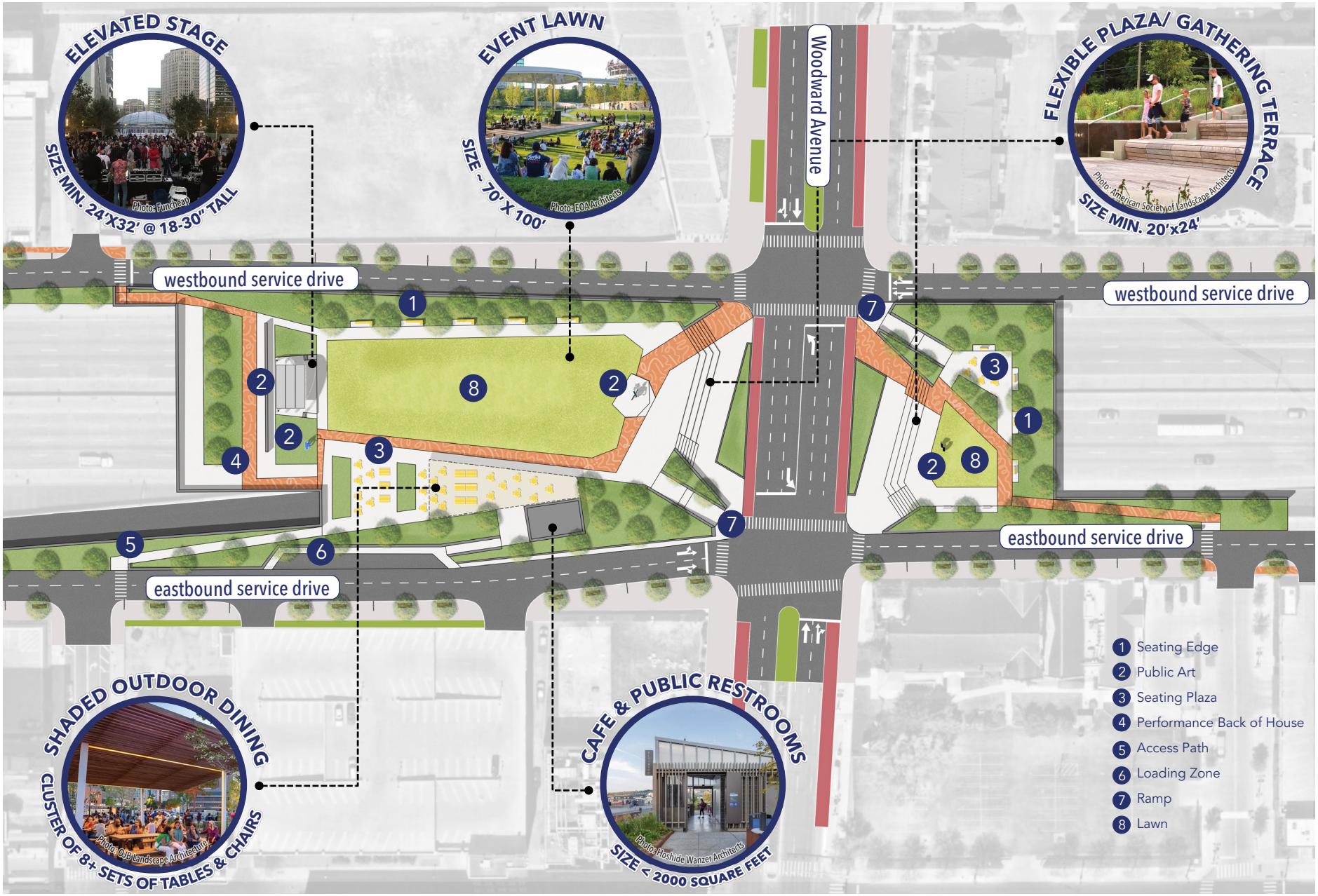
Rendering Illustrating the Vision for the Central Cap



Central Cap: Program Plan

The plan below illustrates how the Central Cap programming elements are organized within the public space.

Central Cap Programming Elements



East Cap

The East Cap is envisioned as a welcoming, family-oriented neighborhood gathering space that strengthens connections between Brush Park, Brewster Homes, and surrounding communities through nature, play, learning, and culture. Within the larger cap network, its primary role is to serve as a multi-generational neighborhood destination that celebrates community heritage, supports everyday recreation and wellness, and provides opportunities for families, youth, and seniors to connect with one another and the surrounding community.

Neighborhood Gathering Space

The East Cap's design aims to create an authentic, connected, and restorative space through meandering paths linking playgrounds, lawns, sensory and edible gardens, dog-friendly spaces, fitness areas, picnic groves, and shaded seating. Nature-based play, gardens, and native plantings encourage exploration and provide opportunities for relaxation, learning, and connection with nature. Public art, murals, and interpretive elements celebrate the history of Paradise Valley and surrounding neighborhoods, ensuring the landscape reflects the community's stories and cultural legacy.

Programming elements, illustrated on the following page, focus on children, families, seniors, and neighborhood life through educational programs, fitness classes, art workshops, gardening activities, games, and community celebrations. Flexible lawns and gathering spaces accommodate both everyday use and small neighborhood events, while seasonal installations and year-round programming keep the space active across seasons. Together, these elements establish the East Cap as a welcoming, neighborhood-focused space for nearby residents.

Rendering Illustrating the Vision for the East Cap



East Cap: Program Plan

The plan below illustrates how the East Cap programming elements are organized within the public space.

East Cap Programming Elements



Operations and Stewardship

In addition to public space design, the project team established a high-level operational framework to guide future staffing, budgeting, governance, and implementation planning for the caps. Based on discussions with DDP, this section summarizes findings from the **Public Space Program Plan**, which identifies relative staffing needs, operating costs, management responsibilities, and resource requirements.

High-Level Staffing and Cost Planning

The caps are anticipated to operate under DDP's management model, with DDP providing oversight, operational coordination, programming management, and partnership development.

Distributing Resources

Operational investment will vary by cap. The West Cap will support daily recreation and recurring community programming with nearby institutions and organizations. The Central Cap will require the highest level of support, accommodating food and beverage, events, markets, performances, rentals, and major civic gatherings. The East Cap will primarily serve everyday neighborhood use, complemented by family, recreational, and seasonal programming. Across all three caps, programming should balance informal daily use, recurring activities, and signature events. Community-based programs can provide regular activation, while larger events will be concentrated primarily at the Central Cap.

Partnerships, Security, and Long-Term Sustainability

DDP is expected to lead programming while partnering with neighborhood organizations, cultural groups, universities, sports organizations, and other community institutions. These partnerships can expand programming capacity, strengthen community stewardship, and create opportunities for sponsorships and shared responsibilities.

Long-term operations should inform continued design development. Design should accommodate maintenance, security, and event access while addressing structural loading, snow storage, irrigation, and other long-term operational needs. The caps are envisioned as public amenities requiring ongoing public investment and organizational support. Earned revenues from concessions, event rentals, sponsorships, and vendor permits can offset costs but are not expected to make the spaces financially self-supporting. Instead, they can complement other funding sources and support long-term operational sustainability.

Kids Programming



Campus Martius Park



DDP Ambassador



Image Sources: Kennett Trails Alliance (left), DDP (middle), DDP (right)

5 History, Arts, and Culture

The caps are an opportunity to create vibrant public spaces that reconnect neighborhoods, celebrate Detroit's cultural legacy, and serve residents for generations to come. To inform public space design, the project team conducted a series of legacy interviews to gather community members' experiences and memories and engage with Detroit's vibrant arts and culture community to identify opportunities to reflect the City's creativity and history.

Legacy-Informed Design

Story capture was a sustained thread of engagement, drawing on connections made through senior buildings, fraternal associations, institutional partners, and community meetings. The interviews garnered lived experiences, memories, and perspectives of residents and former residents, students, community leaders, and business owners connected to Paradise Valley, Brush Park, Woodward East, Cass Tech, and the surrounding neighborhoods. Interviews were assembled into an important qualitative record, ensuring community perspectives and historical experiences are incorporated in public space planning and design. Ten interviews of legacy residents and Cass Tech alumni were collected during the *Feasibility Study*. Below is a synopsis of the common themes from the interviews conducted.

- ***Neighborhood as a Self-Contained, Dense Ecosystem***
- ***Churches and Faith as Spatial Anchors***
- ***Mobility Before the Freeway***
- ***Recognition, Achievement, and Builders After the Freeway***
- ***Food Culture as Identity and Memory Anchor***
- ***Youth Life - Play, Recreation, Fashion, and Activism***
- ***Disruption - Erasure and Broken Promises***
- ***Education as Community Infrastructure***
- ***Soundscape, Music, and Nightlife***
- ***Family Networks and Multi-Generational Living***
- ***Paradise Valley as Cultural Imagination***
- ***Multi-Ethnic Detroit***

Public and Stakeholder Input

Feedback from public and stakeholders shaped the vision for how history, arts, and culture could be represented on the caps. Engagement with specific stakeholders helped provide deeper, cap-specific insights.

- May Open House: The public open house and online survey hosted in spring 2026 solicited feedback on cultural experiences, artistic formats, and representation to guide programming elements for the caps.
- Ride and Reflect: Five sessions invited artists, designers, and stakeholders to experience each cap location firsthand by walking or riding in a vehicle, providing valuable site-specific insights.
- Cass Tech Workshop: Two classes of Cass Tech students shared their perspectives on how the cap spaces can serve youth, families, and the community.
- Drinks x Design: The existing Design Core platform was leveraged to reach Detroit's creative community. Attendees provided feedback on potential arts, cultural experiences, and wellness activities.

Input Collected at the Drinks X Design Event



Image Source: Elonte Davis, courtesy of Design Core Detroit

What We Heard

The following six themes consistently emerged across all engagement activities.

- *Make it distinctly Detroit.* Reflect local histories, neighborhood identities, cultural traditions, and Detroit's contemporary creative community.
- *Prioritize local talent and participation.* Create meaningful ways for Detroit artists, performers, makers, businesses, students, and community organizations to shape and benefit from the spaces.
- *Create spaces that adapt to everyday needs and evolve over time.* Balance programmed cultural activity with flexible spaces for gathering, recreation, and everyday use, while allowing exhibitions, performances, and activations to change as community needs evolve.
- *Design for well-being, access, and inclusion.* Create welcoming, resilient spaces that support physical and mental well-being and respond to different ages, abilities, sensory needs, and ways of using public space.
- *Be thoughtful about infrastructure*. Successful cultural activity depends on the physical conditions that support it, such as power, seating, shade, water, lighting, restrooms, and weather protection.
- *Make the space feel lived-in rather than event-dependent.* Activity doesn't necessarily mean programming. Detroiters want the caps to be active and regularly used rather than constantly activated for events.

Arts, Culture, and Community

The proposed caps represent an opportunity to reconnect neighborhoods, celebrate Detroit's cultural legacy, and create vibrant public spaces that serve residents for generations to come. In collaboration with partners, the project team gathered arts and culture perspectives and identified opportunities to reflect Detroit's creativity, history, and community identity in the proposed spaces. The **Arts and Culture Plan** describes these perspectives and opportunities by cap, illustrating how work from Detroit creatives can be incorporated into public space design.

Three Caps. One Connected Detroit.

Recognizing that each location serves different neighborhoods and institutions, community feedback supported creating three distinct identities connected by one shared vision. The future of the caps will be shaped not only by thoughtful design, but by the people, stories, creativity, and communities that bring these spaces to life.

Mack Alive Community Center Gazebo, Detroit Month of Design 2017



Image Source: Design Core Detroit

6 Access and Mobility

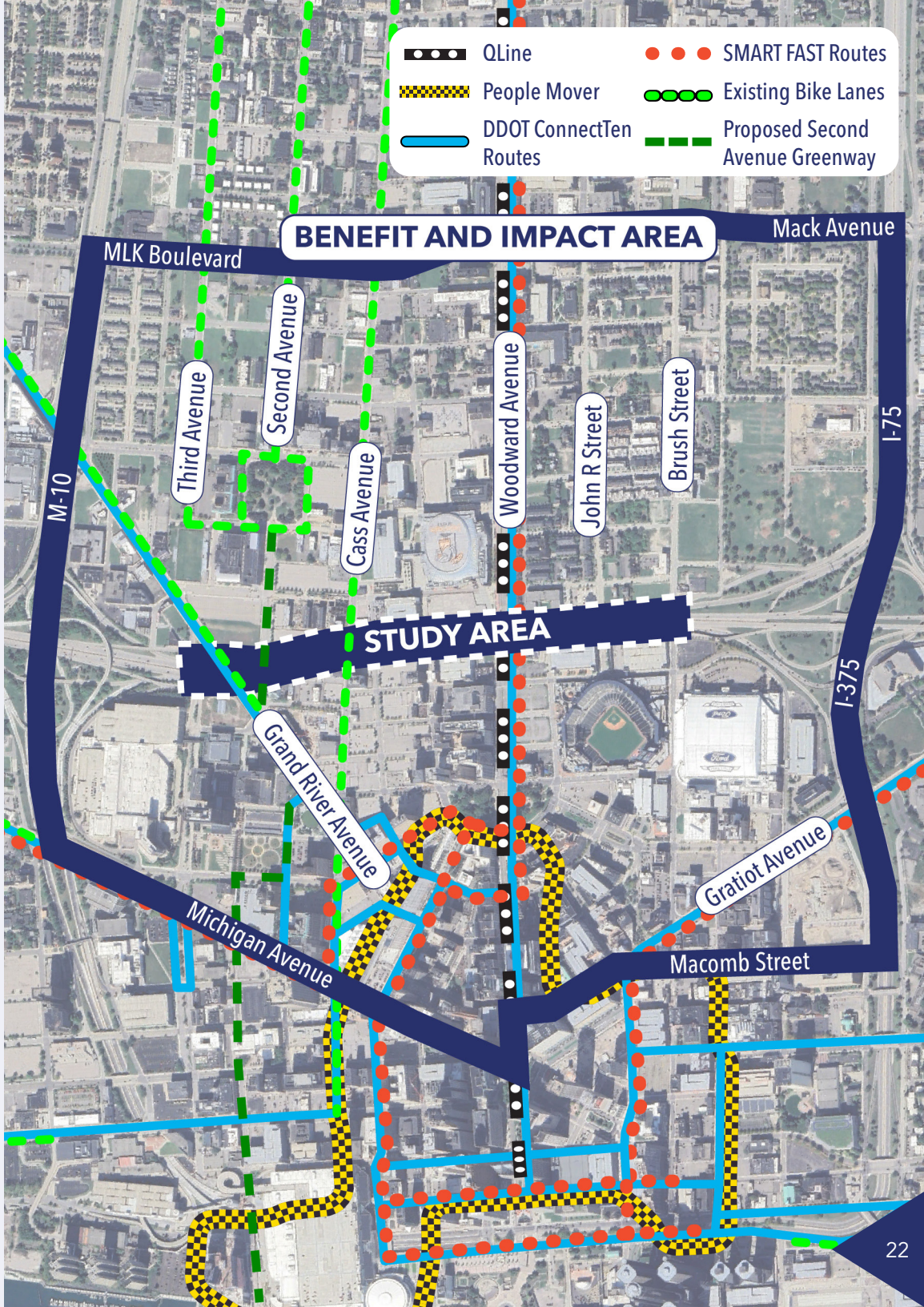
Because cap construction will require adjacent service drive reconstruction, the I-75 Cap project presents an opportunity to improve the surrounding streets to allow for safe access to the caps while improving conditions throughout the broader Benefit and Impact Area. This Study aims to improve safety and access by envisioning an improved street network design around each cap.

During the *Vision and Alternatives Analysis*, the project team began coordinating with key staff at MDOT and the City of Detroit, who own and maintain the streets. This coordination continued into the *Feasibility Study*, with workshops in September 2025 and February 2026 informing street network option identification and traffic and safety analysis methodologies.

Opportunities and Challenges

Currently, the street network can be difficult to navigate. The highways restrict localized movements to vehicular or pedestrian bridges. The one-way service drives are three to four lanes streets with high speeds and difficult crossing conditions. Grand River and Cass Avenues have bicycle facilities; however, there are no bicycle facilities between Woodward Avenue and Brush Street. Public transit service is well established along Woodward and Grand River Avenues, but unsafe crossings and discomfort from loud and fast traffic inhibit access to bus stops and QLine stations.

Safety issues are also present, with the segments of Woodward and Grand River Avenues in the Study Area identified within the top three percent most dangerous surface streets in the City of Detroit. Out of fifteen high-severity crashes identified in the Study Area between 2015 and 2024, seven involved a pedestrian or cyclist. Additionally, informal pick-up, drop-off, and loading activity creates safety concerns along the service drives.



With ongoing and future changes, including the Second Avenue Greenway, UMCI, housing and hotel development, and the I-375 Project, the way people navigate the area will continue to shift.

Street Network Analysis

The Benefit and Impact Area contains a variety of residential and commercial development along with multiple event centers, attracting visitors from the surrounding neighborhoods, across Metro Detroit, and across the world. Because of this, the streets must accommodate a variety of transportation modes and an influx of pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles during sporting events and concerts. The **Street Network Analysis** identifies a preferred street network design that improves safety and maintains access on busy evenings when there are concurrent events in Downtown and Midtown.

Traffic and Safety Analyses

To analyze different street network options around each cap, combinations of changes called "variants" were analyzed. This analysis allowed the team to compare how different variants improved traffic flow and safety conditions. The traffic analysis focused on ensuring the street network could maintain access to the event centers during event arrival and departure, when an influx of vehicles and pedestrians are moving through the area. The safety analysis focused on the number of conflict points between drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists, anticipated vehicle speeds, and how stressful or comfortable streets would feel.

Curbside Use Zones

The need for curbside management was identified through site visits and stakeholder engagement, which revealed current, informal use of the service drives for pick-up and drop-off activity. The refined vision identifies locations for curbside use zones throughout the Study Area. Whether these zones are used for loading, vending, private bus and rideshare, or student pick-up and drop-off, these zones will require active management to ensure appropriate use of the space.

Existing Street Network near the West Cap



Existing Street Network near the Central Cap



Existing Street Network near the East Cap



Public and Stakeholder Input

Coordination with the public, neighboring stakeholders, and MDOT and City staff shaped street network development and design.

Public Feedback

In February, an open house and an online survey solicited feedback on street network options. Participants placed a strong emphasis on improving safety and connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists in the study area. For the West Cap designs, the partial closure of Second Avenue received the most support, with the public favoring the safer, less complex street environment. Feedback on the Central Cap focused on strengthening Woodward Avenue as a pedestrian corridor and improving transit operations. Near the East Cap, participants supported efforts to enhance bicycle infrastructure, safety, and walkability.

Stakeholder Feedback

Neighborhood stakeholders refined the preferred street network concepts by providing local context on access, mobility, and safety needs. Discussions with Cass Tech, UMCI, Wayne State University, and the City of Detroit Transportation Green Task Force generally supported designs that improved safety and enhanced pedestrian connectivity. Feedback informed the concepts, with input focused on maintaining safe and efficient school access, supporting future UMCI operations and public spaces, improving pedestrian connections between destinations, and addressing parking and access challenges.

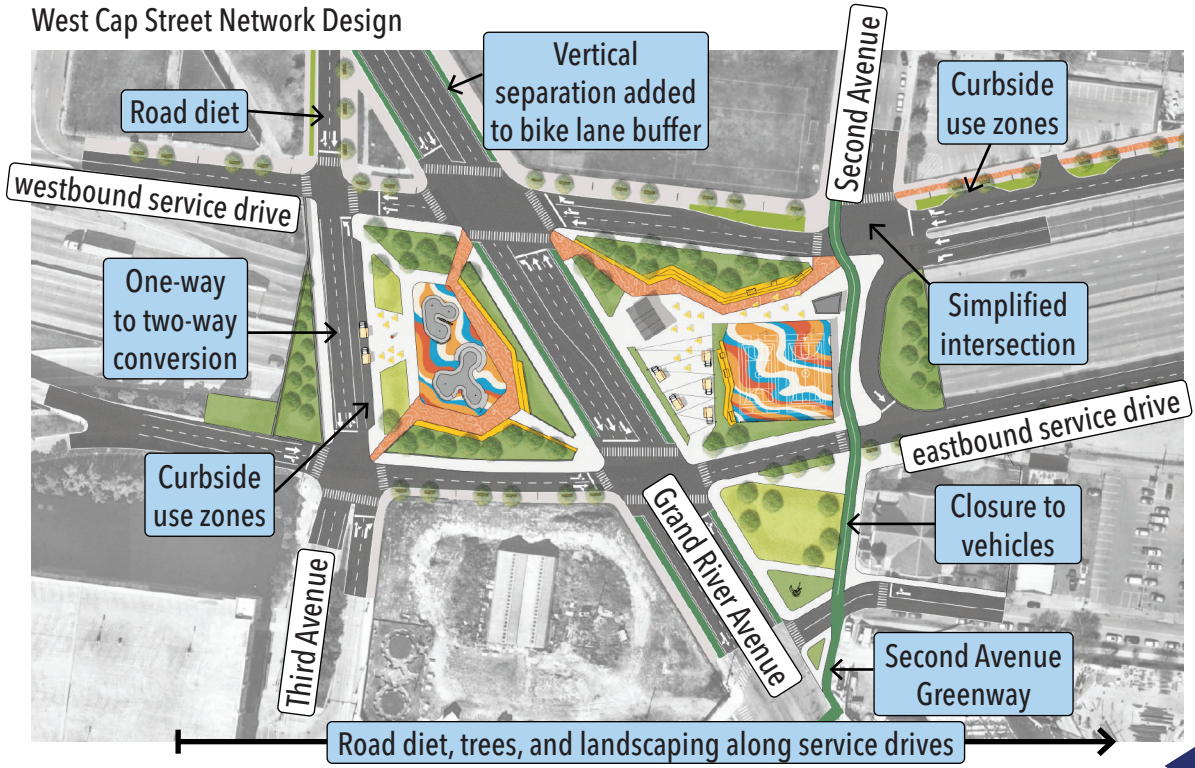
Refined Vision for Each Cap

Results from the traffic and safety analyses allowed the team to identify a preferred street network design alongside partners, stakeholders, and the public.

West Cap

The street network around the West Cap closes Second Avenue to vehicles between the westbound service drive and Columbia Street, improving safety and access for cyclists and pedestrians. This partial closure of Second Avenue reduces delay for vehicles at the westbound service drive and Second Avenue intersection and reduces queuing down the I-75 off-ramp by removing the northbound movement and adjusting signal phasing. While the Second Avenue closure disrupts some movements, re-routed vehicular traffic can be absorbed by the surrounding streets without causing major delays at nearby intersections. Additionally, traffic operations are improved by converting Third Avenue from a one-way to two-way street. Curbside use zones near the West Cap are strategically located to create formal locations for Cass Tech parent pick-up and drop-off and to provide flexible public space access for visitors or vendors.

West Cap Street Network Design



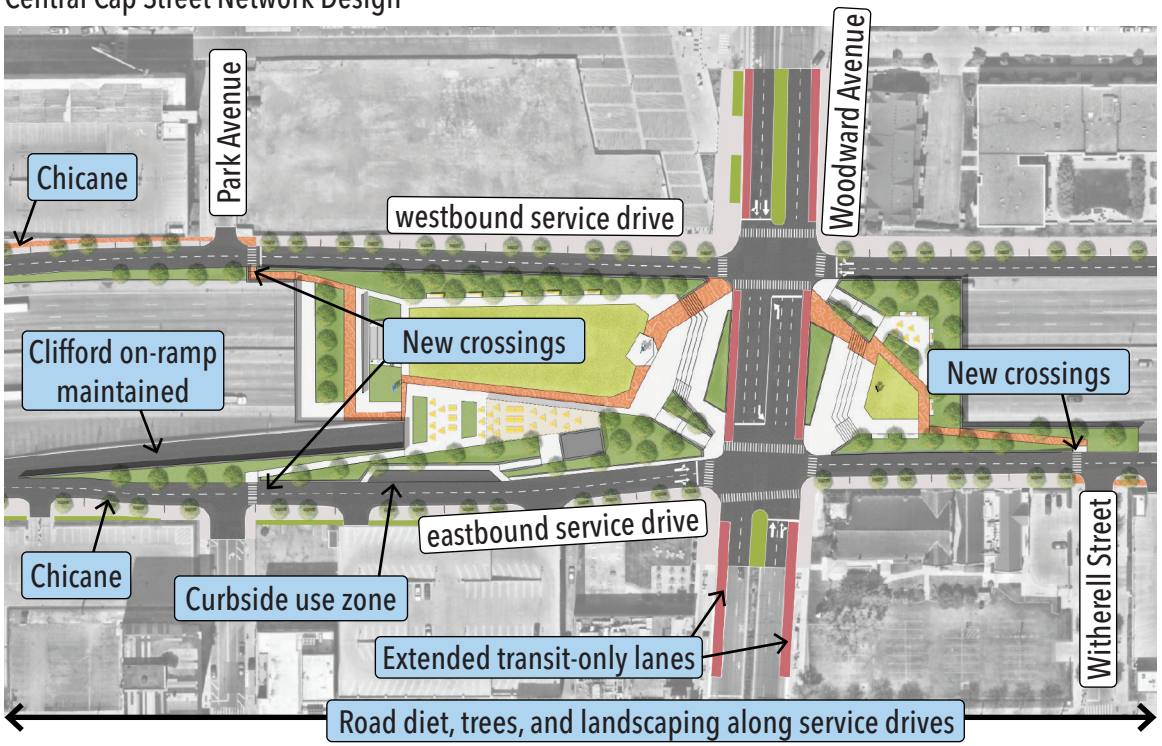
Central Cap

Both safety and access are improved at the Central Cap through the updated street network design. The service drive road diets shorten pedestrian crossing distances and manage speeds along with chicanes, which form curves along the roadway to remind drivers to slow down. At the Woodward Avenue and service drive intersections, new, pedestrian-only signal phasing improves pedestrian access and safety. The extended transit-only lanes reduce service delays during events when transit vehicles are stalled in traffic. The I-75 on-ramp is maintained at Clifford Street. This was necessary to avoid delay caused by traffic re-routing to find alternate ways to access the freeway. A curbside use zone in the southwest corner of the public space provides access for cap vendors or visitors.

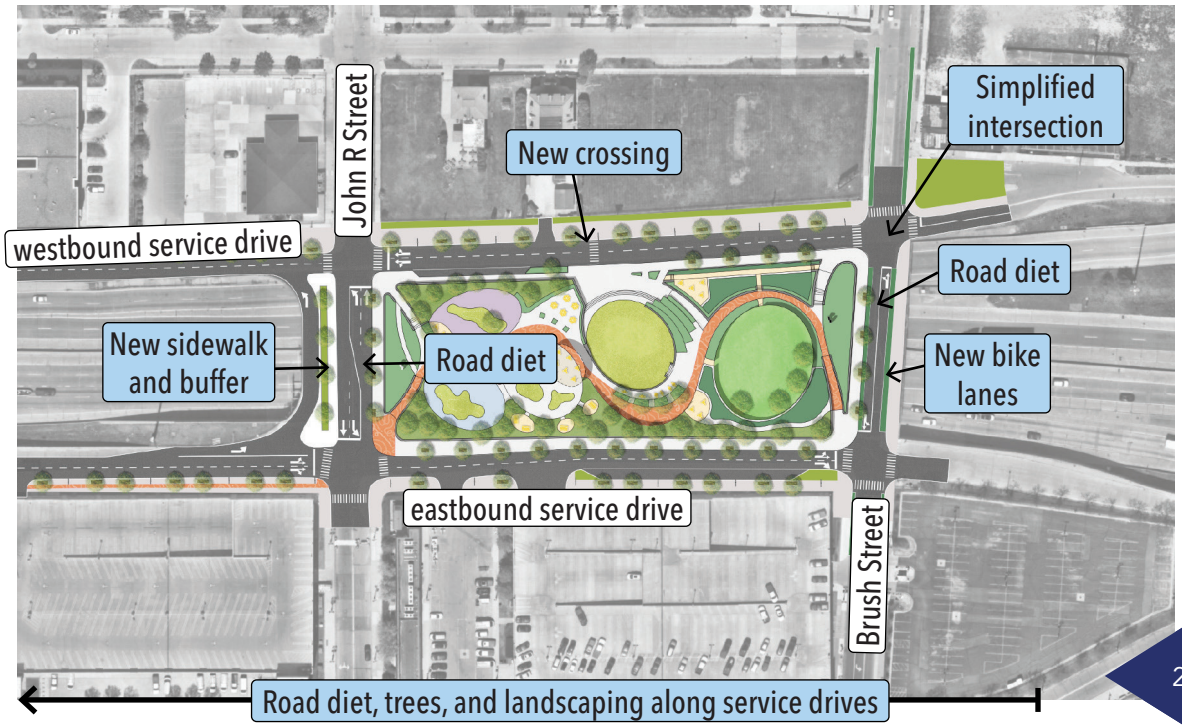
East Cap

Interventions near the East Cap help manage speeds, improve pedestrian comfort, and separate bicyclists from vehicular traffic. Maintaining the John R U-Turn keeps vehicular traffic balanced and avoids delays. John R is converted from four to three lanes, adding a buffer to the west sidewalk to separate pedestrians from vehicles using the U-turn. Brush Street is converted from three to two lanes, adding bike lanes to facilitate north-south bike access. Additionally, a mid-block crossing is added across the westbound service drive and the intersection of the westbound service drive and Brush Street is simplified by removing the segment of the westbound service drive branching north. The curbside use zones north and south of the cap are strategically placed to accommodate rideshare and private bus drop-off and pick-up activity near Comerica Park, Ford Field, or Little Caesars Arena.

Central Cap Street Network Design



East Cap Street Network Design



7 Implementation Planning

During the *Feasibility Study*, the project team developed initial design concepts for the cap structures, drainage systems, and public spaces, conducted research to arrive at a recommended class of action for the NEPA process, updated and refined cost estimates, and explored construction phasing options.

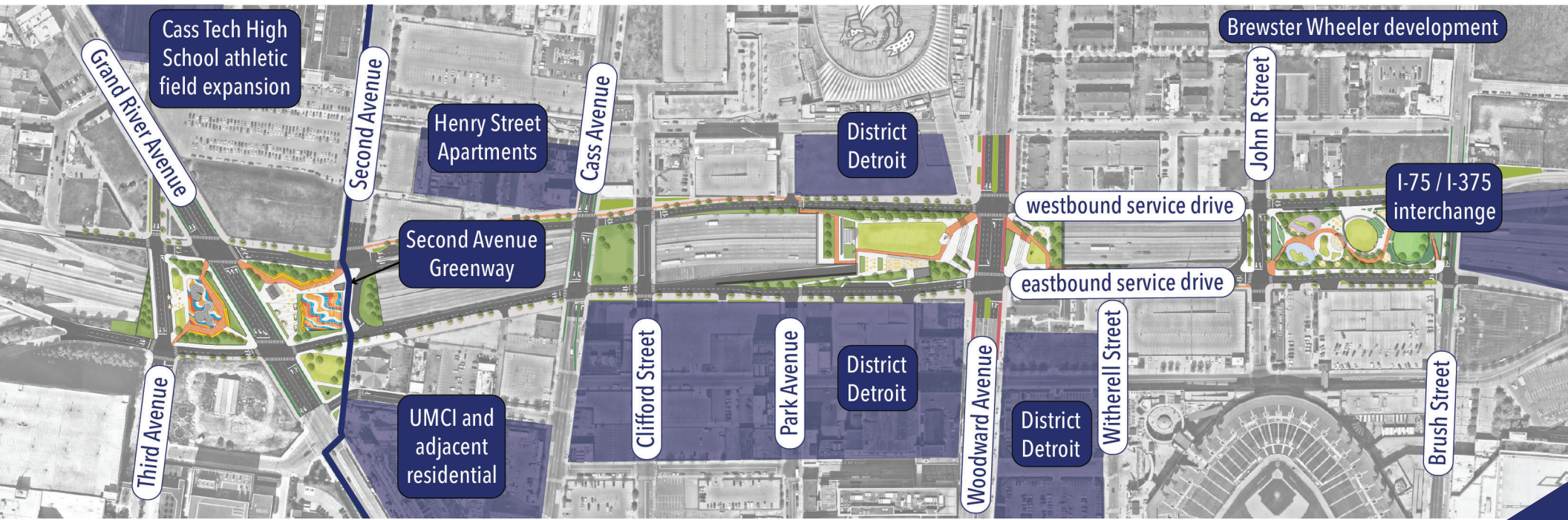
Next steps will include preliminary engineering of the cap structures, clearance of the project through NEPA, attainment of funding to advance the project and determine project phasing, and ultimately, final design and construction. Engineering and environmental challenges identified through this study, including grade shifts, stormwater management, fire-life safety ventilation, hazardous materials routing, and environmental permitting considerations should continue to drive design and implementation planning as the project moves into next steps.

Cap Phasing

Phasing of the caps will need to be considered, both from a funding and a construction perspective. While all caps could be funded simultaneously, it may also be possible that limited funding resources mean that only one or two could be funded initially. If all were funded simultaneously, it is very likely that the construction would need to be phased to limit impacts to connectivity in Downtown Detroit. As a result, the project partners will need to consider scenarios that include advancing a single cap, two of the caps, or all caps into the next steps of implementation.

The implementation order of the caps may also be informed by considerations such as the near-term community benefits and how they align with other upcoming projects and developments in the immediate area, as shown in the graphic below.

Upcoming Projects and Developments



Street Network Phasing

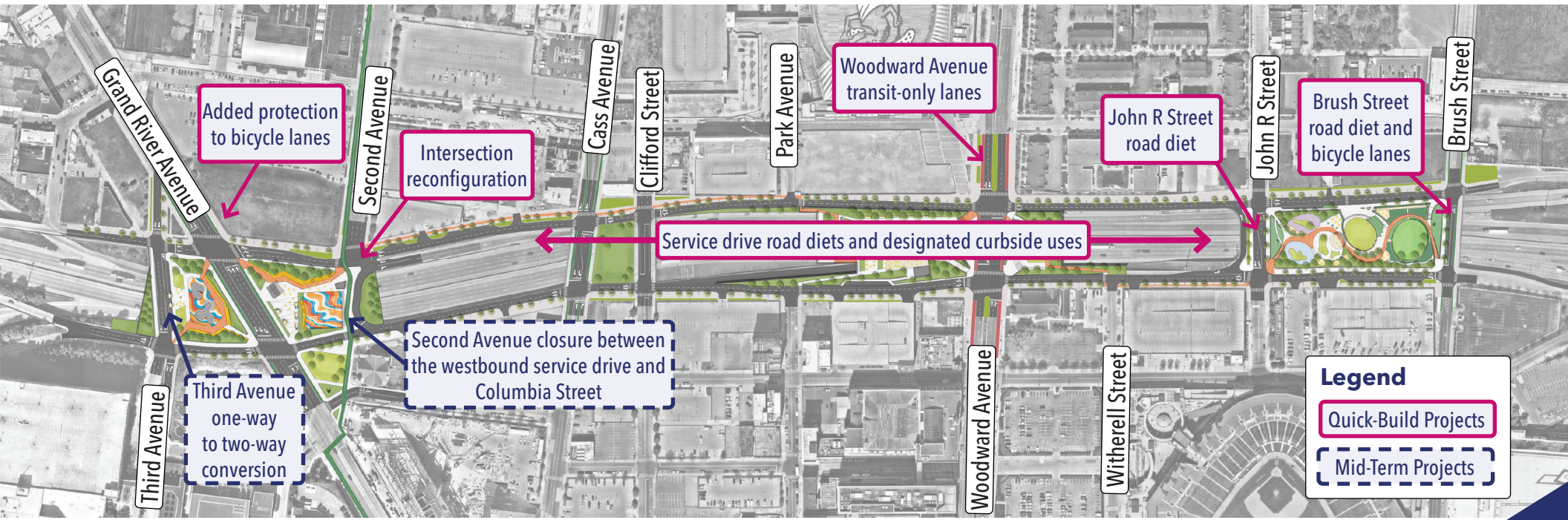
The street network design described in the Access and Mobility section of this report could be implemented as smaller projects in phases alongside the I-75 Cap project. To support planning, projects were organized into two categories: cap-independent changes and cap-dependent changes.

Cap-independent changes could move forward before cap construction, regardless of the I-75 Cap project timeline. These include quick-build and mid-term projects. Quick-build projects would use minimal, cost-effective materials to deliver near-term safety benefits and could serve as pilot installations that are later upgraded to permanent facilities. Examples include service drive road diets, the Grand River Avenue protected bike lane enhancement, the Woodward Avenue transit-only lanes, the John R Street road diet, and the Brush Street bike lanes and road diet.

Mid-term projects would require traffic signal modifications and include projects to convert Third Avenue to two-way operations and close Second Avenue to vehicles between the westbound service drive and Columbia Street. These projects would likely be led by the City of Detroit in close partnership with MDOT and local transit agencies. Piloting these interventions before construction of the caps can bring safety and traffic benefits to the public on a shorter timeline and can help test the street network designs, allowing for refinement prior to permanent upgrades.

Cap-dependent changes include street network changes that will need to be constructed during cap construction. These also include the work required to reconstruct the service drives between the caps. Cap-dependent changes would be completed as a part of the I-75 Cap project as each cap is constructed.

Potential cap-independent changes that could move forward before cap construction, regardless of the I-75 project timeline



Cost Estimates

Preliminary cost estimates for the caps were developed as part of the *Vision and Alternatives Analysis*. These have been updated based on the refined cap structural concepts and public space program plan.

Cost estimates for implementing the cap-independent street network changes break down costs for quick-build and mid-term projects. Cost estimates for cap construction and associated service drive road work are broken down by cap.

Funding

I-75 Cap project development to date has been primarily funded by the federal Reconnecting Communities grant program. Approximately $4.5 million to $6.5 million are currently committed to advance future phases of design and engineering, drawing from congressionally directed funding, remaining Reconnecting Communities grant funding, and local match funding sources.

The committed funding may be used to advance engineering on one or more of the caps, and MDOT, the City of Detroit, and DDP will determine the allocation of this funding. Funding for construction and ongoing maintenance has not yet been identified. Moving forward, project partners will need to seek funding from a mix of public and private sector sources to fully advance the project.

Cost Estimates for Cap-Independent Street Network Changes

Timeframe	Estimated Cost (2026 Value)
Quick-Build	$447,000
Mid-Term	$410,000
Total Cost	**$858,000**

Public and Stakeholder Input

Continuing to engage stakeholders and the public to involve them in further stages of the design process and to keep them abreast of project updates will be important moving forward. Community members can find project updates on DDP's website and can directly receive updates by subscribing to The Road Ahead newsletter. More public meetings and surveys are anticipated as part of the next phases of design and potentially as part of the NEPA process.

February 2026 Public Meeting



Cost Estimates for Cap Construction and Associated Service Drive Road Work

Area	Estimated Cost (2026 Value)	Estimated Cost (Inflated 2030 Value)
West Cap	**$119,527,000**	**$139,830,000**
Cap Structure	$110,114,000	$128,819,000
Cap Public Space	$9,413,000	$11,011,000
Central Cap	**$98,230,000**	**$114,916,000**
Cap Structure	$85,596,000	$100,136,000
Cap Public Space	$12,634,000	$14,780,000
East Cap	**$91,936,000**	**$107,553,000**
Cap Structure	$84,160,000	$98,457,000
Cap Public Space	$7,776,000	$9,096,000
Service Drive Road Work Between the Caps	**$4,739,000**	**$5,544,000**
Total Construction Cost	**$314,432,000**	**$367,843,000**

8 Supporting Documents

Other documents provide more information about the refined vision for the caps and the public and stakeholder engagement that shaped it.



The **Public Space Program Plan** explains the design and programming envisioned for each cap in detail with graphics illustrating what each cap may look like and operational considerations for the public spaces.



The **Arts and Culture Plan** explains how arts and culture could be represented on the caps with examples from other Cities of Design around the world.

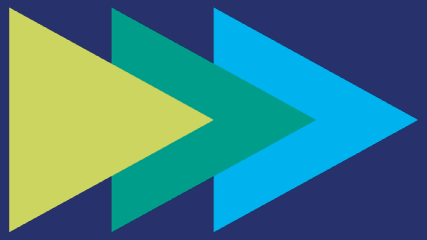


The **Engagement Summary** documents all of the public and stakeholder engagement conducted throughout the *Feasibility Study*.



Various technical documents support the findings reported in this **Final Report**.

- Street Network Analysis
- Hazardous Materials Routing Analysis
- Class of Action Recommendation Report
- Cultural Resource Studies
- Contamination Assessment
- Noise Analysis
- Air Quality Analysis
- Fire-Life Safety Ventilation Assessment
- Structure Feasibility Study Report
- Utility Information and Evaluation Report
- Constructibility and Phasing Memo
- Drainage Memo
- Implementation Plan



THE ROAD AHEAD
I-75 CAP