

# I-375 RECONNECTING COMMUNITIES PROJECT

## MEETING NOTES SUMMARY

### GOVERNMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING 2

**DATE:** May 22, 2023

**TIME:** 3:00 – 4:30 pm

**LOCATION:** Horatio Williams Foundation, 1010 Antietam Ave., Detroit, MI 48207

**ATTENDEES:** Government Advisory Committee (GAC) Members and Guests, City of Detroit Representatives, MDOT Staff, and HNTB Staff (**See Appendix B: Meeting Attendees**)

The second GAC meeting was held on May 22nd and included government representatives from across the project area and representatives from the state and state agencies. The purpose of this meeting was to give an overview of project developments and updates since the previous GAC meeting in January and share feedback from the Project's Local Advisory Committee (LAC) meetings since and its first public open house meeting in April. The meeting centered on the aesthetic design guide process and feedback received thus far, geometric changes made to the final design alternative, and a summary of input gathered on traffic operations during construction from April's LAC meeting.

Jon Loree, MDOT's I-375 project manager, opened the meeting with a welcome and overview of the agenda (**See Appendix A: Meeting Agenda**). Afterward, Bradleigh Merrill, from the Project's public engagement team, shared a recap of the public open house meeting that took place on April 19th at Eastern Market and had over 250 attendees. Bradleigh also gave an overview of the feedback received from the public meeting. The main themes from this feedback included:

- Concerns for traffic operations during construction
- Safety of pedestrians and cyclists on the new boulevard
- Suggested alterations to the design of the new boulevard
- Positive insights about the Small Business Enterprise program and workforce development

Bradleigh then provided an overview of the next steps and timeline for the aesthetic design guide. She also summarized an aesthetics exercise that took place during the April LAC and public meetings where both the public and LAC members shared their preferences for

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conceptual examples of the aesthetic elements of the corridor. Bradleigh explained that the feedback was informative and will help the project team move forward with developing corridor exhibits with images and aesthetic examples to be presented at the July LAC Meeting (**See Appendix C: Meeting Presentation, Slides 7-8**).

Dave Langlois, on the Project's design team, provided design updates showing the geometric changes made to the I-375 design alternative since the FONSI was published in March 2022 (**See Appendix C: Meeting Presentation Slides, 10 -12**). The geometric design updates included:

- Sidewalk added in the boulevard median north of Gratiot Avenue to cross over I-75
- Indirect left on the boulevard north of Gratiot Avenue
- Indirect left on the boulevard south of Gratiot Avenue
- Left-turn changes on the boulevard at Macomb Street and Clinton Street
- Two continuous through lanes on westbound Lafayette Street at the boulevard
- Indirect left turns on Jefferson Avenue at Beaubien Street

In accompaniment to listing these design updates, Jon shared a video that “flies over” a digital, 3-D animation of the current project design with the GAC attendees to help them visualize the new corridor. This animation began at Mack Avenue heading down I-75 south to the new boulevard and ending at the Detroit Riverfront. A GAC member requested more information about the addition of the sidewalk in the boulevard median north of Gratiot. John specified that all of the corridor design's new geometric changes, including the addition of the sidewalks, are illustrated in the updated concept animations hosted on the I-375 project website.

Regine Beauboeuf, the Project's equity advisor, presented the different ways equity measures are being implemented throughout the Project including designing the new boulevard for transportation of all modes, a Small Business Enterprise (SBE) training program and workforce development initiatives, and the addition of a Community Enhancements Plan and Land Use Framework Plan. One component she expanded on is the SBE training program which prepares small business enterprises and Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs) with the necessary skills and requirements for MDOT contractor and sub-contractor prequalification and incorporates them into design, construction, engineering, and inspection roles on the Project. This creates a more equitable workforce for the I-375 Reconnecting Communities Project and for future MDOT

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infrastructure projects. Regine explained that MDOT also plans to engage college and high school students during this Project and offer opportunities such as internships through this program. Regine shared that MDOT will be hosting a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise and Workforce Development Forum to engage small and disadvantaged businesses and solicit their input on the Project's SBE and Workforce Development Framework.

Afterward, Regine gave an overview of the process and timeline for planning traffic operations during construction that was introduced during April's LAC meeting. Regine briefly shared the guiding principles that the project team will use as they assemble the plan for maintaining traffic during construction as well as MDOT's decision to use a Progressive Design-Build project delivery method (**See Appendix C: Meeting Presentation, Slides 18-20**). Regine summarized the next steps for planning the construction phase of the Project and shared some common themes from the feedback collected during the April LAC meeting breakout session discussions to guide plans for traffic operations during construction.

Following the presentation, the project team gave attendees an opportunity to ask questions and give suggestions. Two questions focused on maintaining traffic and access to destinations throughout the corridor during the construction phase and coordinating with coincident construction projects in the area. Jon explained that the project team plans on incorporating traffic modeling and the use of simulations to help determine modifications to maintenance of traffic plans. Regarding access during construction, Jon confirmed that access will be maintained throughout the project area and will facilitate safe travel for all transportation modes. He also noted that much of construction operations are determined by drainage and utility coordination that is currently taking place and will influence the future plan. Attendees also asked questions regarding the involvement and community investment of Black Detroiters throughout this Project and how the project team plans on acknowledging the area's history. Bradleigh explained that the project team will be working with the LAC and the public to figure out what that will look like and to incorporate these ideas into the Community Enhancements and Land Use Framework plans. Regine added that the SBE program will also include helping other types of small businesses later in the Project in addition to those involved during the design and construction phases.

Another attendee suggested that the project team create a short timeline to remind people of the decisions and public engagement that have occurred since the beginning of the environmental phase and how the feedback received during this phase was incorporated into the project design. Another attendee suggested that the project team develop a

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snapshot of major design changes that were made because of the public input and feedback and how they affected the final design alternative.

After the conclusion of the meeting, attendees were given the opportunity to review the Project's roll plots, make written comments, and speak with project team members.

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### APPENDIX A: MEETING AGENDA

**DATE:** May 22, 2023

**TIME:** 3:00- 4:30 p.m.

**LOCATION:** Horatio Williams Foundation, 1010 Antietam Ave, Detroit, MI 48207

- I. Welcome
- II. Project Updates
- III. Aesthetic Guide Update
- IV. Design Update
- V. Small Business Enterprise and Workforce Development Update
- VI. Traffic Operations During Construction Introduction
- VII. Q & A
- VIII. Conclusion

### PROJECT WEBSITE:



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### APPENDIX B: MEETING ATTENDEES

#### Staff:

- Jon Loree, MDOT
- Leslie Love, MDOT
- Mark Dubay, MDOT
- Dave Langlois, HNTB
- Regine Beauboeuf, HNTB
- Bradleigh Merrill, HNTB
- Sasha Freeman, HNTB
- Simona Stalev, HNTB
- Dan Lijana, Lovio George Communications
- Christina Lovio-George, Lovio George Communications

#### City of Detroit:

- John Sivills, City of Detroit
- Kevin Schronce, City of Detroit
- James Hannig, City of Detroit
- Samuel Krassenstein, City of Detroit

#### GAC Members:

- Terry Campbell, Office of U.S. Senator Debbie Stabenow
- Alex Bourgeau, SEMCOG
- Steve Patrinick, DDOT
- Ray Solomon, Director of Department of Neighborhoods District 5
- Keith Butler, Manager of Department of Neighborhoods District 5
- Brittney Hoszkiw, Michigan Economic Development Corporation
- Stephen Grady-Muhammad, Wayne County Executive Office
- Sylvester McIntosh, Office of Congressman Shri Thanedar
- Jacqueline Ramsey, Office of State Senator Stephanie Chang
- Julia Roberts, Regional Transportation Authority
- Yosif Hachem, Office of U.S. Senator Gary Peters
- Raymond Simpson, Office of City Council Member Mary Sheffield

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- Van Adams, Michigan State Housing Development Authorities
- Kennis Johnson El, Office of City Council Member Coleman Young

### **Non-GAC Members:**

- Tim Moore, Urban Information Network

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# I-375 RECONNECTING COMMUNITIES PROJECT

## MEETING NOTES SUMMARY

### APPENDIX C: MEETING PRESENTATION



## I-375 RECONNECTING COMMUNITIES PROJECT

GOVERNMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

MAY 22, 2023



## AGENDA

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Project Updates
3. Aesthetic Guide Update
4. Design Update
5. Small Business Enterprise And Workforce Development Update
6. Traffic Operations During Construction
7. Q & A
8. Conclusion



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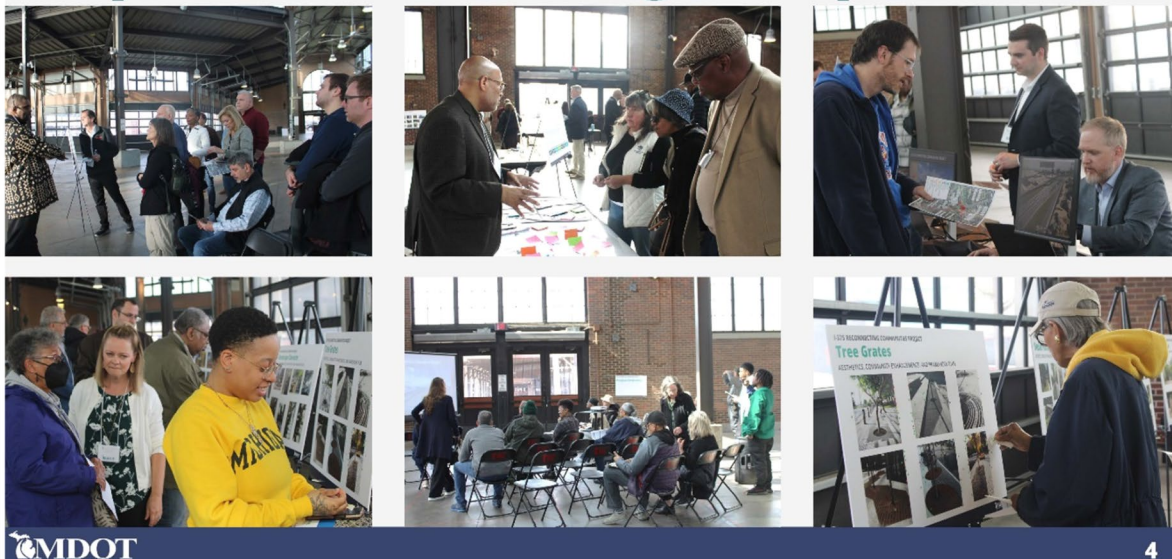
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## April Public Meeting Recap



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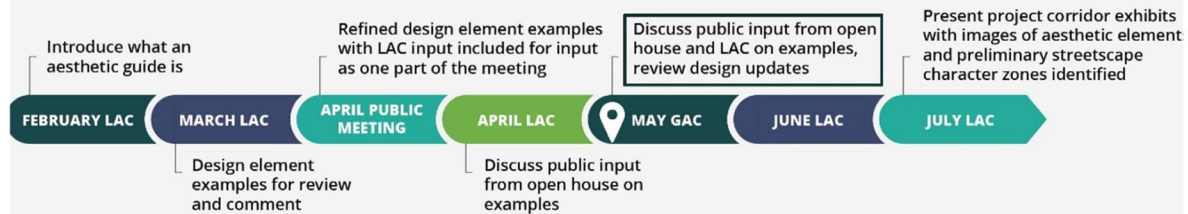


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### Aesthetic Guide Process



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### Aesthetics Exercise and Feedback

- During the April LAC and Open House, the project team collected feedback about aesthetic examples that could potentially be placed in the project area.
- Examples included pictures of benches, bicycle loops, interchange bridges, feature lighting, historic markers, median planting, pathways, paving, planters, public art, shelters, streetscapes, and tree grates.
- Using stickers, people were able to share their reactions to specific examples on the project boards.
  - A green sticker meant the image was liked, yellow meant it was somewhat liked, and red stickers were used to convey dislikes. Examples of feedback can be seen below.



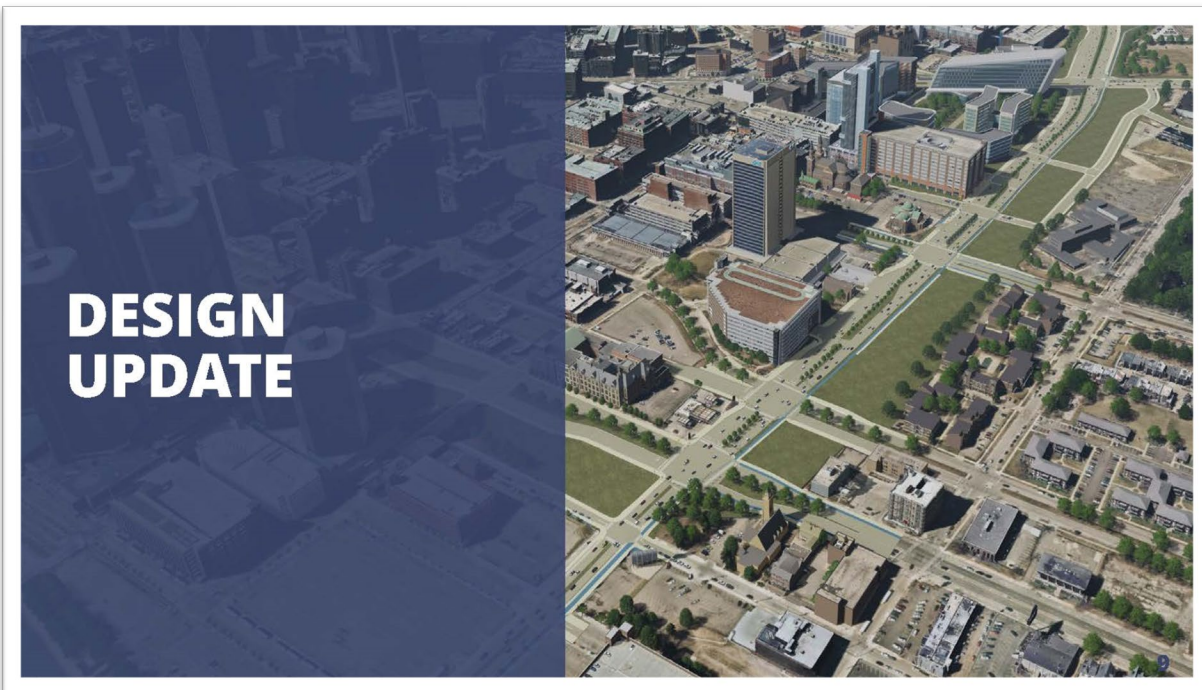
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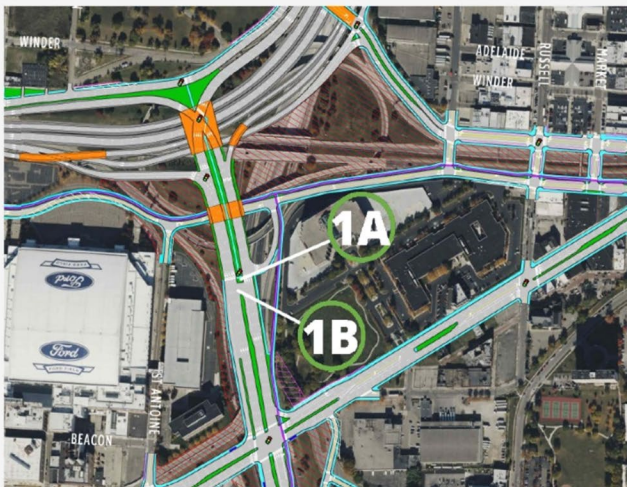


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## Geometric Updates



### 1A – SIDEWALK IN MEDIAN NORTH OF GRATIOT AVENUE

- Move sidewalk from outsides of the Boulevard to the median from south of Montcalm connector to north of interchange
- Eliminates pedestrian crossing and signal at the NB I-75 on-ramp
- Reduces overall bridge width for the I-75 structure

### 1B – INDIRECT LEFT NORTH OF GRATIOT AVENUE

- Improves access from WB Gratiot to SB Boulevard
- Improves access from NB Boulevard to WB Gratiot
- Accommodates large truck with trailer (WB-67) u-turn

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### Geometric Updates



#### 1C – INDIRECT LEFT SOUTH OF GRATIOT AVENUE

- Improves access from EB Gratiot to NB Boulevard
- Improves access from SB Boulevard to EB Gratiot
- Accommodates large truck with trailer (WB-67) u-turn

#### 1D – BOULEVARD CHANGES AT MACOMB STREET AND CLINTON ST.

- Adds a NB left turn lane at Macomb from the Boulevard
- Provides direct access to Greektown neighborhood from NB Boulevard at Macomb
- Removes low volume NB left turn lane at Clinton from the Boulevard
- Improves pedestrian and vehicular traffic safety and operation at Clinton



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### Geometric Updates



#### 1E – TWO CONTINUOUS THRU LANES ON LAFAYETTE BOULEVARD

- Improves thru traffic safety and operation
- Requires new right-of-way acquisition in northeast quadrant of the intersection
- Longer pedestrian crossing due to added thru lane

#### 1F – INDIRECT LEFT TURNS AT JEFFERSON

- Improves safety and operations by eliminating left turn movements
- Provides pedestrian access and completes the downtown grid at St. Antoine
- Keeps corridor consistency along Jefferson Ave.



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### I-375 RECONNECTING COMMUNITIES PROJECT



This video begins at Mack Avenue going south on I-75 and highlights the new interchange configuration where the far right lane will be used to access the new boulevard, while you stay left to stay on I-75 South. The path follows the new boulevard down to the Detroit Riverfront.

### SMALL BUSINESS ENTERPRISE AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT UPDATE



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### Project Equity Focus



Transportation  
for All Modes



Small Business  
Enterprise Program  
and Workforce  
Development



Community  
Enhancement  
Plan



Framework Plan



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### MDOT Contracting Process

Prior to hiring a Construction Contractor, MDOT plans to engage Small and Disadvantaged businesses in Detroit to facilitate the process or training to become project-ready



MDOT puts a project out  
for bid

Contractors bid on it

Contractors look for  
businesses that are  
DBE-certified and have  
MDOT pre-qualifications



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### Small Business Enterprise and Workforce Development Planning

*\*Construction end is subject to change as details finalized.*

Now - 2025

2025 – 2027/2028\*

#### Goal

Engage Detroit-based, minority-owned businesses and workforce in the execution of the pre-construction, construction, and post-construction services.

#### Pre-construction Activities

- Small Business Enterprise program
- Labor Opportunity Enhancement
- High School and College internships
- Construction and maintenance contractor and labor preparation

#### Construction Activities

- Project packaging and phasing to maximize opportunities
- Construction contract provisions to incentivize social, environmental, and economic equity outcomes
- Small Business Enterprise program
- Labor opportunity enhancement
- Existing local business considerations
- Workforce development



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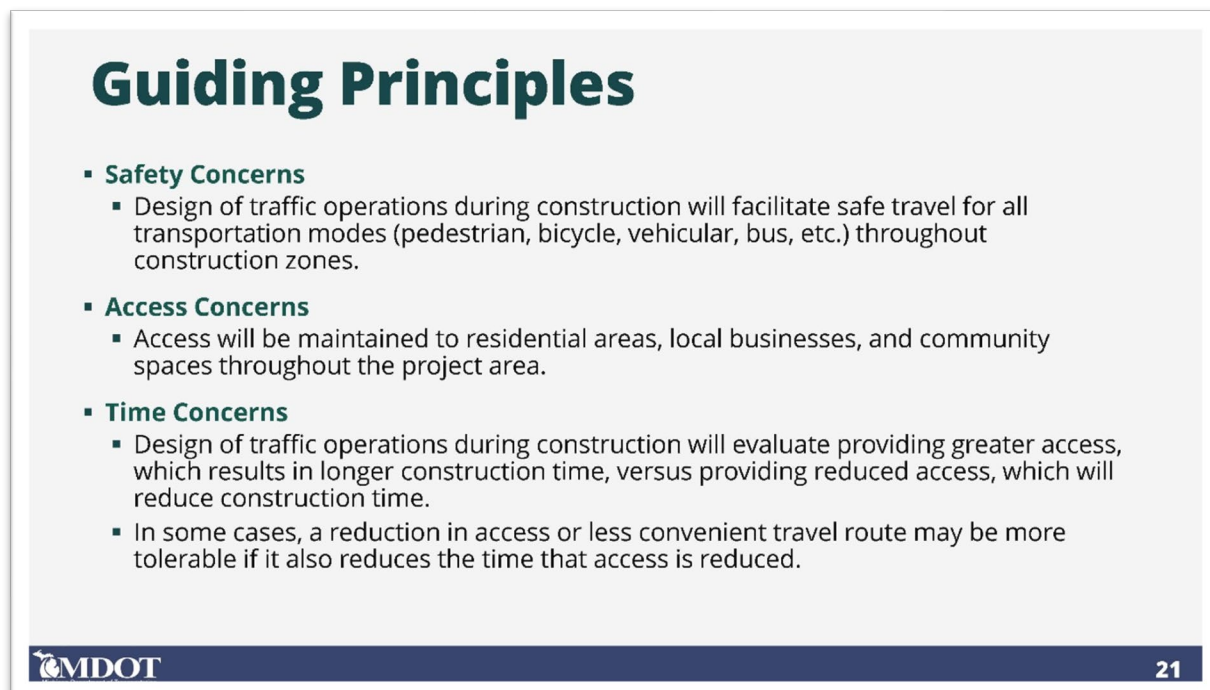
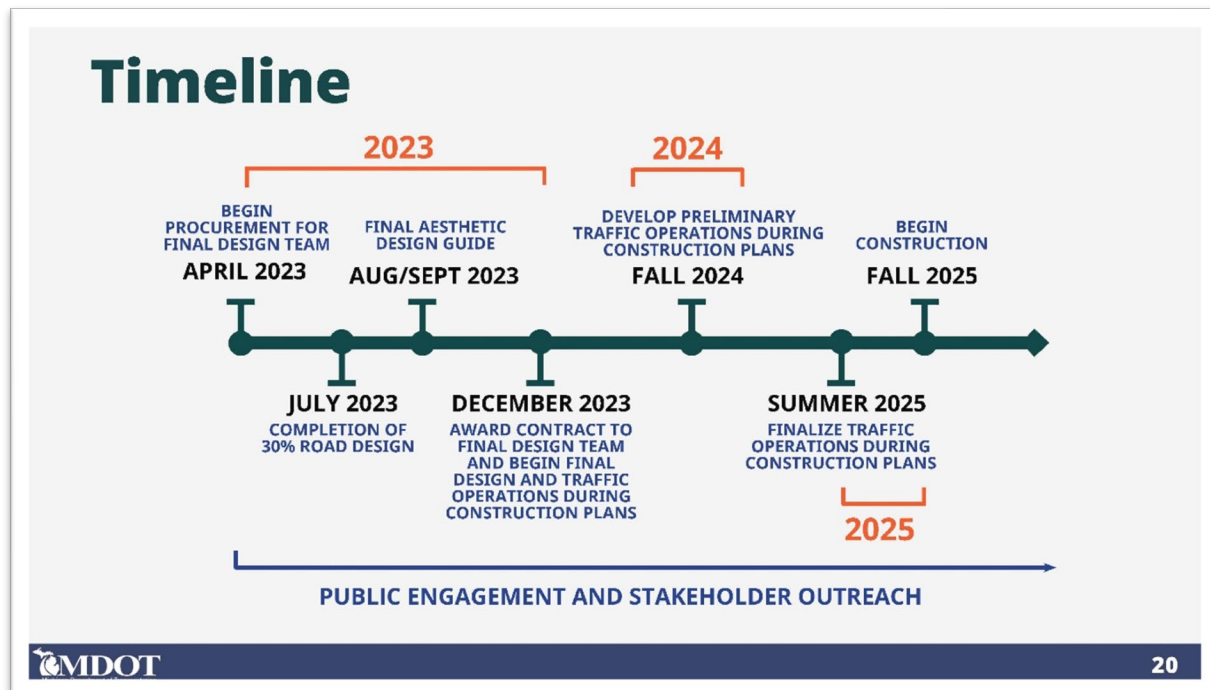
### TRAFFIC OPERATIONS DURING CONSTRUCTION



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### Next Steps in Plan Development

Select a final  
designer/contractor to  
join the team

- Need to collaborate on traffic operations plans with this contractor
- Final designer and contractor will collaborate with MDOT and stakeholders to develop and optimize construction plan

Conduct utilities work

- Deep drainage needs to be addressed

Gather public input

- The breakout discussions today will be used for baseline goals and objectives



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### LAC Traffic Operations During Construction Breakout Session

- **Common themes within the LAC feedback included:**
  - Safe stopping points for busses
  - Pedestrian safety - barricades from traffic, route maintenance, temporary lighting
  - Access between east and west during construction
  - Access to current business and future developments throughout the project construction
  - Continue open and clear communication with affected businesses during construction
  - More preference for a longer construction timeframe if it means impacts to businesses would be reduced. If ingress and egress points are maintained, construction time is less of an inconvenience for everyone
  - Avoid closures during the summer and peak time as much as possible
  - Establish maintained detour routes



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### LAC Traffic Operations During Construction Breakout Session

- **Additional common themes within the LAC feedback included:**
  - Concerns about construction noise and debris affecting surrounding areas and neighborhoods
  - Alternate routes should use surrounding roads in good condition, not poor condition
  - Provide paper routes to pedestrians during construction and students in the area
  - Rodents and pests being stirred up due to construction
  - Access to hospitals and emergency services within the project area during construction
  - Easy access into Greektown during and after construction is crucial
  - Drainage and flooding issues are very concerning for residents
  - The finished project should be accessible by all modes
  - The project should include long-term community investment for all Black Detroiters



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# QUESTIONS?



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