

**Exhaustive version:  
Seward Neighborhood Safety Plan for  
People walking, People on Bikes and People in Wheelchairs  
Approved by SNG April 24, 2019  
Updated April 6, 2021**

**Green=Already planned or completed**

**Red= Already requested by SNG**

**Orange=Reconnecting Neighborhoods recommendations (also approved by SNG)**

**Blue= Other priorities**

**Pink= Questions**

**Yellow highlight= changes in 2021**

**NOTE:**

This version of this document includes the recommendations contained in the *Reconnecting Neighborhoods* report that was coordinated by Redesign, Inc. with SNG and West Bank Community Development Corporation. The full report and details of the participation can be found at <https://redesigninc.org/current-initiatives/reconnecting-neighborhoods/>

This version also includes updates and modifications based on information from the community in 2020 and 2021 and updates because of changes made to the infrastructure since 2017

**BACKGROUND:**

**Why a walking, bicycling and people with disability plan for Seward?**

Seward Neighborhood is blessed with a lot of great infrastructure for biking and walking. But there are still places where it is not safe to bike or walk. There are streets where people drive cars too fast and drivers don't yield to pedestrians or people in wheel chairs; there are intersections with so many distractions that people driving cars don't notice the people walking, in wheel chairs or on bikes; there are way too many crashes that injure or kill people who are walking and people who are on bikes; using a wheel chair in Seward is usually a challenge and can be impossible—especially in winter.

The mission of Seward Neighborhood Group is to make Seward a better place to live, work, and play. Making Seward a safe place to bike and walk is critical to that mission.

**Why a plan by Seward Neighborhood Group?**

The City of Minneapolis is now working on a Transportation Plan that will include biking and walking; It has committed to "Vision Zero" to eliminate traffic related deaths and serious injuries; It has a "Complete Streets" policy that city streets are to be designed for people who walk, people who bike, people who use transit, people who drive cars, and the delivery of goods. With all of that, why a separate effort in Seward? Because we believe that the residents of Seward know a lot about where problems are in Seward and what some solutions may be.

**How have Seward residents been involved?**

This effort started when an immigrant from Ethiopia who was riding his bike was killed in a crash on 22<sup>nd</sup> Street and 26<sup>th</sup> Avenue. We have solicited ideas from residents in a number of ways:

- Solicited ideas on the Seward Neighbors' Forum email discussion list and the NextDoor service on the web.

- Have had five meetings of the Seward Neighborhood Community Development Committee that included getting ideas and comments
- Sought comments at the Seward Neighborhood Group annual meeting
- Incorporated public input from Seward Redesign/West Bank CDC's Reconnecting Neighborhoods project. (Meetings in the Seward Towers and other neighborhood locations and community walks with translators)
- Solicited comments on NextDoor Seward, Seward Neighbors Forum and via the SNG website, blog and email newsletter in late 2020 and early 2021.
- Discussed the updated report at the April SNG Community Development Committee in April, 2021
- For the parts from the Reconnecting Neighborhoods Report:
  - A variety of community involvement activities were conducted, many specifically aimed at the immigrant community in Seward and Cedar Riverside (including discussions at meetings inside Seward Towers and community walks with members of the immigrant community).
  - A working committee that included members from Redesign, Seward Neighborhood Group, Seward Civic and Commerce Association, Seward Towers Corporation, West Bank Business Association, West Bank Community Development Corporation, Augsburg University, and Fairview Health Services, Minnesota Department of Transportation, Hennepin County Public Works and Minneapolis Public Works.

### **What about the design professions who know about designing safe streets?**

This is the first draft—it includes what Seward Neighborhood Groups believes are ideas that need to be explored. The next step will be to meet with the design professionals and leaders of the Minneapolis and Hennepin County Public Works departments, MnDOT design people, and our elected officials to refine our ideas. For the suggestions that are part of the Re-connecting neighborhoods project, representatives of MnDOT, Hennepin County Public Works and Minneapolis Public Works are members of the committee doing much of the work.

### **When will all of this happen?**

We don't know. We do know that it won't happen unless we raise the issues. Some of it may happen quickly, some of it may have to wait for a good opportunity (for example the bike lanes on 26<sup>th</sup> Avenue had been proposed by the neighborhood long before they happened. We took advantage of a Hennepin County road project on 26<sup>th</sup> Avenue to get them painted.

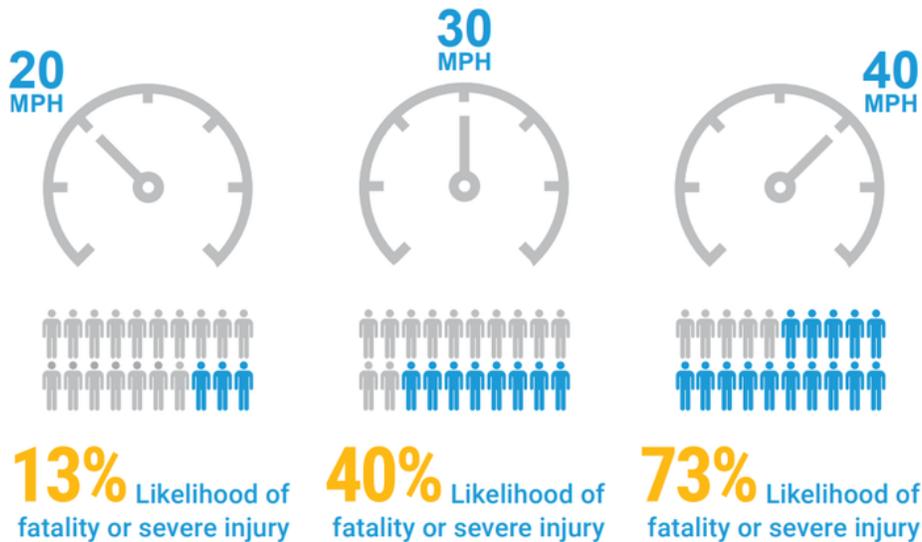
## **GUIDING IDEAS**

There were a few guiding ideas that came out of the process of putting this together:

### **Reduce Speed**

Motor vehicle speed makes a difference.

- Going slower means the driver is more likely to see a person walking or a person biking.
- Going slower means that the driver has more time to stop.
- Going slower reduces injury



(From Minneapolis Vision Zero-Citation: Graphic: Denver Vision Zero Action Plan Data source: Brian C. Tefft)

Our ideas range include changing the design of streets to encourage drivers to drive slower.

- Minneapolis has reduced speed limits on most of the streets it has jurisdiction to 20 MPH. However, the Hennepin County owned streets in Seward (Franklin Avenue, 26<sup>th</sup> Avenue south of Franklin, Cedar Avenue) still have 30 MPH speed limits. Hennepin County should reduce the speed limit on those streets to 20 MPH
- Reduce vehicle lane widths on streets with striping (e.g. 26th Ave)
- Curb bump-outs at intersections, or refuge medians when possible
- Do not paint center line on streets that are primarily residential (e.g. 31st Ave, 25th St, 27th Ave etc) (or just don't repaint the center lines)
- Replace traffic signals with 4-way stops at some lower volume intersections (e.g. 25th St and 31st Ave) to reduce the race to get to the green light.

### Make people walking, people on bikes and people in wheel chairs more visible

In many cases, people driving will say the “just didn’t see the person walking, on a bike or in a wheel chair.” We’ve proposed a number of changes to help solve this problem—from eliminating distractions at some intersections to improving visibility by making physical changes to intersections. The next guiding idea is also important in this effort—making sure drivers know that it is their responsibility to stop for pedestrians in crosswalks and to share the road with people on bicycles. Finally, helping people who are walking, on bikes, and in wheel chairs understand that there are ways they can improve their visibility to drivers is important.

- Leading walk signal for all signalized intersections (especially on Franklin)
- Painted crosswalks at all intersections on major streets.
- Improve lighting at intersections
- Curb bump-outs to make crossing pedestrians more visibility on major streets.
- More protected bike facilities on the busiest roads
- “No turn on red” policy at signalized intersections
- Automatic walk signal at signalized intersections (no need to press button to get walk sign)
- Enforce parking restrictions at intersections

## **Get people to obey Minnesota laws about yielding to pedestrians and about sharing the road with people on bicycles**

Minnesota law requires:

*Where traffic-control signals are not in place or in operation, the driver of a vehicle shall stop to yield the right-of-way to a pedestrian crossing the roadway within a marked crosswalk or at an intersection with no marked crosswalk. The driver must remain stopped until the pedestrian has passed the lane in which the vehicle is stopped.*

And

*every driver of a vehicle shall exercise due care to avoid colliding with any bicycle or pedestrian upon any roadway...*

(2018 Minnesota Statutes, section 169.2)

We have proposed a number of ideas to remind people of these laws.

- Add “Turning vehicles yield to pedestrians and bicycles” sign at all signaled intersections
- Center (spring loaded) yield to pedestrians in crosswalks signs
- More education for drivers and bicyclists about what the law is at corners and crosswalks
- Enforce parking restrictions at intersections (no parking 20 feet from inside edge of sidewalk)
- Camera enforcement of vehicles failing to yield to pedestrians in all situations
- Better enforcement of clearing sidewalks of snow and ice and programs to help ensure corners are cleared

## **Improved facilities for people walking, on bicycles and in wheelchairs.**

Over the years, some great bicycle and pedestrian improvements have been made in Seward. The Midtown Greenway, the Bike Boulevards on 29th Avenue and 24th Street, the protected bike lanes on Franklin east of 29th Avenue (especially the improvements to the Franklin Avenue Mississippi River bridge), the Milwaukee Avenue Pedestrian mall have all been great improvements. A number of other improvements, while not in the “great” category have been improved safety for people walking and people biking--the bike lanes on Franklin and 26th Avenues, Some curb bump-outs on 27th Avenue, the changes to the Franklin/Cedar/Minnehaha intersections. We have proposed a number of additional improvements:

- More bump-outs at dangerous intersections to make people more visible
- A protected bikeway from the 20th Avenue I-94 bridge to the LRT trail on the east side of Cedar
- A number of improvements to crossings of I-94 also recommended by the Reconnecting Neighborhoods Project.
- Visibility improvements along the Greenway
- Painted crosswalks at all crosswalks of through streets
- A midblock crossing of the 25th/26th Avenue S curve for the Towers and Triangle Park.
- A bike boulevard with a safe crossing at Franklin Avenue on 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue from 9<sup>th</sup> Street to 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue

## **Improved and enforcement facilities specifically for people with disabilities.**

Besides the recommendations above and the specific recommendations below, people with disabilities have specific needs that need to be addressed on a neighborhood-wide basis. These recommendations will also help people who currently do not have disabilities:

- Insure that sidewalks are cleared of ice and snow to their full width. This is especially true for properties along Franklin, 26<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue, The eastern end of 9<sup>th</sup> Street

and 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue and 22<sup>nd</sup> Avenue north of Franklin. These are all important routes for people with disabilities.

- SNG should start a program of encouraging people to clear their sidewalks within the 24 hours required by city law.
- The City should add details to their annual snow emergency information about the law requiring sidewalks to be cleared full width.
- Improve all the curb cuts in Seward to current ADA standards including width, slope, detectable warning service.
- Audible announcement systems for all traffic signals.

## FUTURE

As re-pavement projects happen on Seward streets, work with residents of each block to consider the changes proposed in this plan to improve the environment for people walking, people biking and people with disabilities in Seward.

## SPECIFIC IDEAS

Key: (RCN) = recommended by Redesign's I-94 Reconnecting Neighborhoods project; (Planned) = already planned by Mpls or Henn Cty; (Previous)= Previously requested by SNG

### Franklin Avenue

- Leading walk signal for all crosswalks with signals on Franklin
- Enforce parking restrictions at intersections (no parking 20 feet from inside edge of sidewalk)
- Add "Turning vehicles yield to pedestrians and bicycles" sign at all signaled intersections
- Center (spring loaded) yield to pedestrians in crosswalks signs
- Add concrete curb islands (like 11th Avenue between the River Road and 2nd Street) to the protected portion of the Franklin bike lanes.

### **Franklin/Cedar/Minnehaha & Franklin**

- Longer left turn signals for vehicles
- Enforcement of vehicles turning w/o arrows that don't stop for oncoming traffic or yield to bikes and pedestrians
- Bike and pedestrian paths from the intersection to the LRT station (not having to walk through AIOIC parking lot.)

### **20th Ave to 23rd Avenue & Franklin**

- Add painted crosswalks at some or all intersections
- Improve lighting at intersections

### **24th Avenue & Franklin**

- Crosswalks, warning sign (Planned)
- Warning flasher (tentative) (Planned)

### **25<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Franklin**

- A safe crossing at 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue for the proposed 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue Bike Boulevard.

### **26th Avenue & Franklin**

- Add leading left turn arrow for 26th Avenue cars turning onto Franklin. Have red left turn arrow after the leading arrow (RCN)
- Have only one southbound lane on 26th north of Franklin allowed to go straight (RCN)
- Curb bump-out where possible (RCN)
- Parking allowed on west side of 26th south of Franklin at 5 Square building (RCN)

- Shifting the turn lanes on Franklin at this intersection, so that left-turning cars can see oncoming traffic and see their turn more clearly
- Changed phasing of the traffic signal (for both Franklin and 26th Avenues): Protected left turn arrow >> All red >> Walk signal >> 5 second delay >> Green with flashing yellow left (or red left turn arrow)
- Automatic walk signal without need to push the “beg button”

### **27th Avenue & Franklin**

- Curb bump-outs wherever possible to reduce turning speed and improve pedestrian visibility

### **29th and Riverside Avenues & Franklin**

- Use curb bump-out to reduce speed of cars turning from Franklin to Riverside
- Maybe use the “Protected Intersection” model for a curb bump-out on the North-East corner

### **Sebury & Franklin**

- Add curb bump-out to make the turn more right-angle, to reduce turning speed and improve
- Add “turning vehicles yield to Pedestrians and Bicycles” sign

### **Cedar Avenue**

- Protected Bike path from University of MN on east side of 20th Avenue (Planned)
- Protected bike path through Franklin/Cedar Minnehaha Intersection on east side of Cedar to LRT trail (Previous)

### **Hiawatha LRT Trail**

- Improve crossing of LRT trail and 26th Street (Done)

### **I-94** (All included in Redesign I-94 Reconnecting Neighborhoods)

- New pedestrian bridge of I-94 that is at least 20 feet wide, is ADA compliant
- When Riverside and 25th Avenue bridges over I-94 are rebuilt:
  - Wider sidewalks with separate bike lanes separated from vehicles with a concrete barrier (like on Franklin/Mississippi bridge)
  - Larger “landing areas” at ends of bridges--with curb bump-outs
  - ADA compliant curb ramps
- If Riverside and 25th Avenue bridges are not rebuilt in the very near future
  - Add curb bump-outs added at both ends of both bridges
  - ADA compliant curb ramps
  - Stripped southbound traffic lane with bike lane on 25th Avenue bridge
- Protected two-way bike lane on east side of 20th Avenue bridge and 20th Avenue to Franklin.
- Change alignment of I 94 on ramp at Cedar Avenue underpass to improve pedestrian visibility
- Major changes to improve pedestrian safety and experience using the Cedar Avenue underpass.

### **22nd Street from Hiawatha LRT trail to 23rd Avenue**

#### **22nd Street and Minnehaha Avenue 2**

- Curb bump-outs on east side to prevent parking at crosswalk (start with temporary bollards)
- Stop signs on Minnehaha Avenue
- Permanent signs on Minnehaha directing northbound traffic to Cedar (Previous)

#### **21st, 22nd and 23rd Avenues at 22nd Street**

- Turn stop signs to force avenues to stop at these tee intersections (like at 27th Street and 29th Avenue (Previous))
- At 22nd and 21st Avenue, Curb bump-outs on west side to prevent parking at crosswalk (start with temporary bollards).
- Permanently reroute 21st Avenue to make a 90 degree intersection with Minnehaha Avenue (Previous)

#### **22nd Street between 21st Ave and Hiawatha LRT trail**

- Wider path and curb ramps through Normanna Triangle for bikes and peds (Previous)
- Wider combined bike/ped path south of 22nd Street between Minnehaha and Hiawatha LRT trail

#### **Evergreen**

- Add traffic calming as requested by the Evergreen Block Club

#### **25<sup>th</sup> Avenue**

- Make 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue from the intersection with the “S” Curve to 25<sup>th</sup> Street a Bike Boulevard
  - Create a bike connection between the “S” curve and 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue south of the S curve.
  - Add a pedestrian/bike crossing with warning light at 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Franklin
  - Block the illegal car use of the pedestrian connection of the residential and industrial portions of 25<sup>th</sup> Avenue at Evergreen

#### **26<sup>th</sup> Avenue**

- See Franklin Avenue section for 26th and Franklin Intersection
- Remove center yellow stripe

#### **25th/26th Avenue “S” curve.**

- Single lane southbound traffic on 25th/26th Avenue “S” curve with buffered or protected bike lane (Two lanes with right lane right turn only at Franklin) (RCN)
- Pedestrian crossing with wider median “safe refuge” curb--cuts, and flashing warning light at mid-block from Seward Towers West to Triangle Park (RCN) (DONE!)
- Finish the mid-block crossing project by adding the promised buffering and plastic bollards to bike lanes on S curve

#### **22nd Street and 26th Avenue**

- Curb bump-outs to reduce wide turns and improve pedestrian and bike visibility (including into 22nd Street) (temporary or permanent).
- Painted crosswalks

#### **24nd Street and 26th Avenue**

- Curb bump-outs to improve pedestrian and bike visibility (including into 24nd Street) (temporary or permanent)
- Painted crosswalks

#### **25th and 26th Streets at 26th Avenue**

- Replace traffic signals with four-way stop signs
- Curb bumpouts

#### **27<sup>th</sup> Avenue**

- See Franklin Avenue section for 27th and Franklin Intersection
- Remove center yellow stripe

### **22nd Street and 27th Avenue**

- More curb bump-outs (including into 22nd Street)
- Painted crosswalks

### **24nd Street and 27th Avenue**

- More curb bump-outs (including into 24th Street)
- Painted crosswalks

### **29th Avenue**

- No parking from Franklin to the alley just south of Franklin to improve visibility
- Some type of structure (likely at either 22nd Street or 24th Street) to reduce traffic using 29th Avenue as route between Franklin and 25th or 26th Avenues. (previous)

### **26th Street at 29th Avenue**

- Signs warning drivers to watch for pedestrians and bicycles at stop signs

### **31st Avenue at 25th Street**

- Replace traffic light with 4-way stop sign
- Remove center yellow stripe
- Some way to slow traffic down on 31st Avenue, especially at 26th Street

### **West River Parkway**

- Painted crosswalks on West River Parkway at all intersections
- Stop signs at 24th Street and West River Parkway
- Add stop signs at each street that intersects West River Parkway to make it a slower route and less inviting as a commuter route (e.g. ramps to Lake Street, 4th Avenue by the University, 32nd and 26th Streets)
- Pilot for one summer of closing the River Parkways to cars on weekends

### **Greenway**

#### **26th Avenue at Greenway**

- Stop sign on 26th Avenue (Previous)
- Curb bump-outs at Greenway
- Remove one section of fence on each side of 26th Avenue to improve visibility (Previous)

#### **27th Avenue at Greenway**

- Stop sign on 27th Avenue (Previous)
- Curb bump-outs at Greenway
- Remove one section of fence on each side of 26th Avenue to improve visibility (Previous)

#### **30th Avenue at Greenway**

- Stop signs on 30th at Greenway
- Consider closing 30th Avenue at Greenway to motorized traffic

### **Education/Enforcement**

#### **Crosswalks**

- Temporary signs “do you know pedestrians have the right-of-way here” at problem crossings.
- Temporary signs “Turning vehicles must yield to pedestrians and bicycles” at problem intersections
- Police enforcement of pedestrian right-of-way at problem crossings
- Enforcement of pedestrians and bicyclists not obeying signals at traffic light intersections

- Program to make sure corners are clear of snow and ice in winters, especially for people in wheelchairs
- Enforce no right turn on red
- Enforce no parking within 20 feet of corners
- Temporary signs “The law says, no parking within 20 feet of a corner”

### General

- Better enforcement of clearing sidewalks of snow and ice to full width of sidewalk (planned)
- Have city responsible for clearing ice and snow on major streets in the neighborhood.
- Enforce no parking or stopping in bike lanes
- “I pledge to come to a full stop at all stop signs” campaign in Seward
- Support law requiring hands free use of phone only
- Get police to enforce no texting while driving
- Support Minneapolis Government efforts to allow it to set local speed limit at 20 MPM
- Enforce 25 MPH speed limit on River Parkway
- Reduce semi-truck parking in Seward