

MEMO

To: Design Review Board (DRB)
From: DMC Staff
Date: Aug. 3, 2016
Re: Request for DRB Approval: Public Realm Improvements in The Edge

In order to bring about a visible transformation in the Medical District and The Edge, Memphis Medical District Collaborative (MMDC) led a process to identify and address much needed improvements to the public realm within the area. Existing conditions include poor pedestrian crossings and connections, lack of green and gathering spaces, awkward vehicular sight lines and flow, substandard landscaping, excessive chain link fencing and use of razor wire, lack of lighting, benches, public art, and other issues that result in negative visitor experience and poor environmental aesthetics.

The improvement plan was created with input from the Medical District anchor institutions (University of Tennessee, Baptist College of Health Sciences, RegionalOne, Methodist/Le Bonheur Children's Hospital, Southern College of Optometry, Southwest Tennessee Community College, BioWorks Foundation, and St. Jude Children's Research Hospital), along with neighborhood groups (Victorian Village Inc., The Edge District), the Downtown Memphis Commission, and residents and workers in the Medical District. The design team was led by Looney Ricks Kiss along with Alta Planning + Design, who engaged in stakeholder interviews, site investigations, a two-day design charrette, and other efforts to determine recommended improvements.

The plan is designed to build the pedestrian and visitor experience primarily by calming vehicular traffic; adding benches, trash cans, planters; improving and maintaining landscaping; building pedestrian gathering areas; installing public art; and adding pedestrian crossings at key intersections.

The plan calls for enhancements to ten key areas in the first year - four of which are in The Edge. In following phases, additional locations will see improvements, as will more permanent or modified designs be implemented for those locations that have been tested previously.

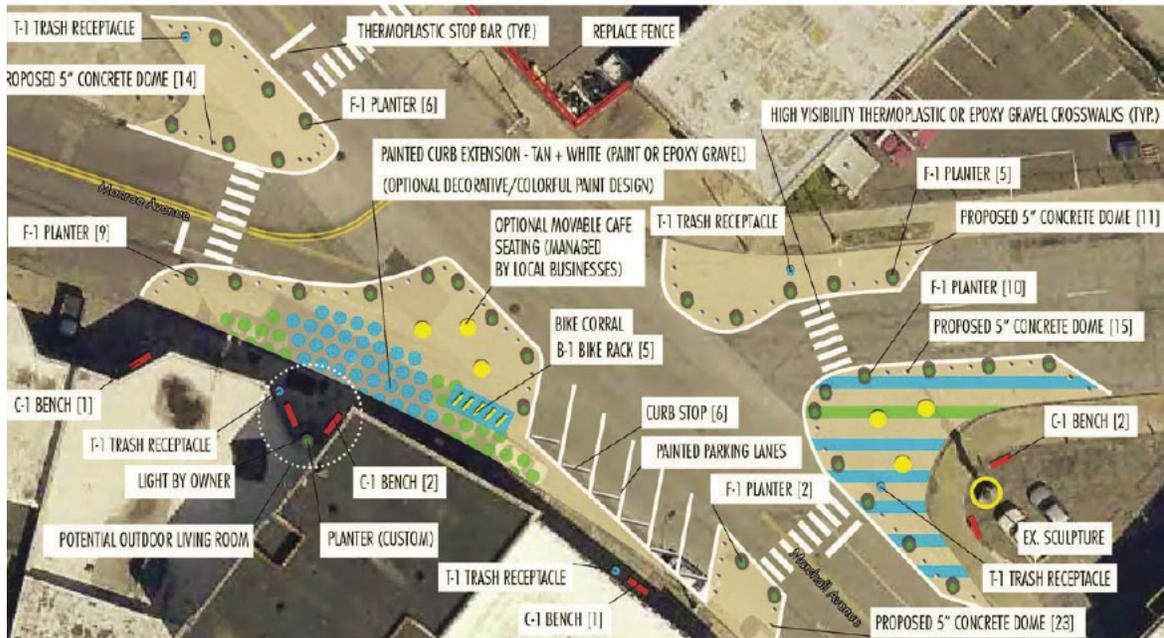
DRB approval is required because the CCDC recently approved a \$240,000 Grant to fund the four (4) improvement projects in The Edge.

Marshall and Monroe



Challenges to address include:

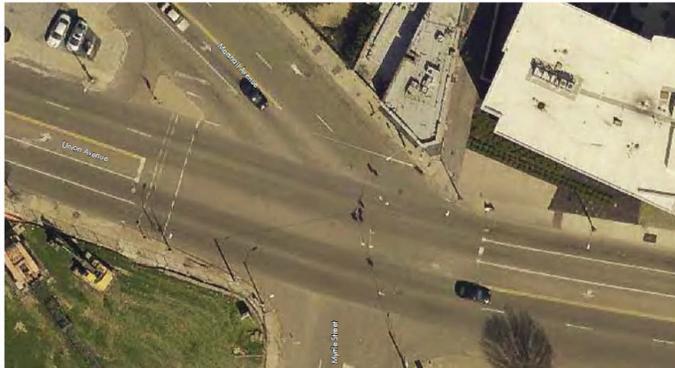
- Awkward vehicle stopping locations/sight lines
- Excessive pedestrian crossing distances
- Excessive vehicle speeds
- Automobile dominant area, including disorganized parking
- Parking lots with chain-link fences and razorwire
- Lack of gathering locations, particularly to accommodate special events
- Lack of bicycle parking
- Lack of landscape and pedestrian-scaled lighting
- Uncomfortable environment for tourists who frequent the area



Recommended improvements include:

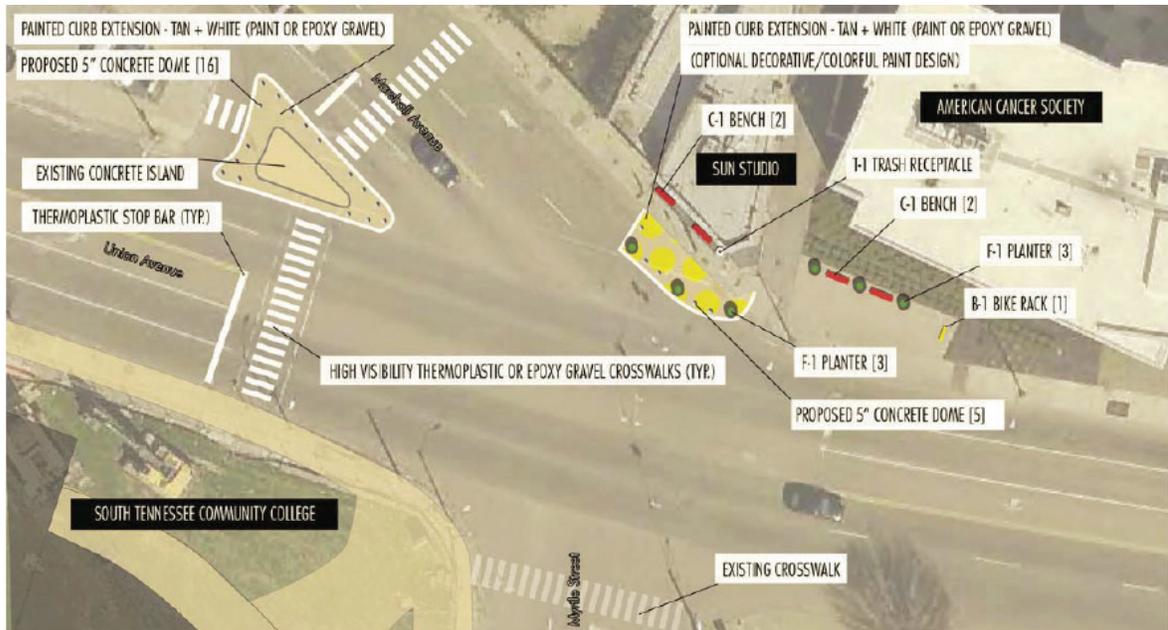
- Added pedestrian street furniture (benches, landscape, trash receptacles)
- High-visibility crosswalks
- Coordinated stopping locations and markings
- Bicycle infrastructure (bike corral)
- Playful pedestrian zone markings
- Reconfigured curblines (painted with surface-mounted domes)
- Additional public art installations
- Improved fencing and landscaping
- Banners and signage

Union at Marshall



Challenges to address include:

- Awkward vehicle stopping locations/sight lines from Marshall Avenue
- Numerous tourists lingering outside Sun Studio on a narrow sidewalk
- Excessive pedestrian crossing distances
- Excessive vehicle speeds, especially from Union to Marshall Ave.
- Hidden driveway entry to Sun Studio, and limited tour bus pick-up/drop-off
- Lack of well-appointed gathering locations, particularly to accommodate tourists seeking pictures of the building
- Lack of landscape and pedestrian-scaled lighting



Recommended improvements include:

- Added pedestrian street furniture (benches, landscape, trash receptacles), particularly around the Sun Studio entry
- High-visibility crosswalks with coordinated stopping locations and markings
- Bicycle rack
- Playful pedestrian zone markings
- Reconfigured curblines (painted with surface-mounted domes)
- Protected tour bus parking

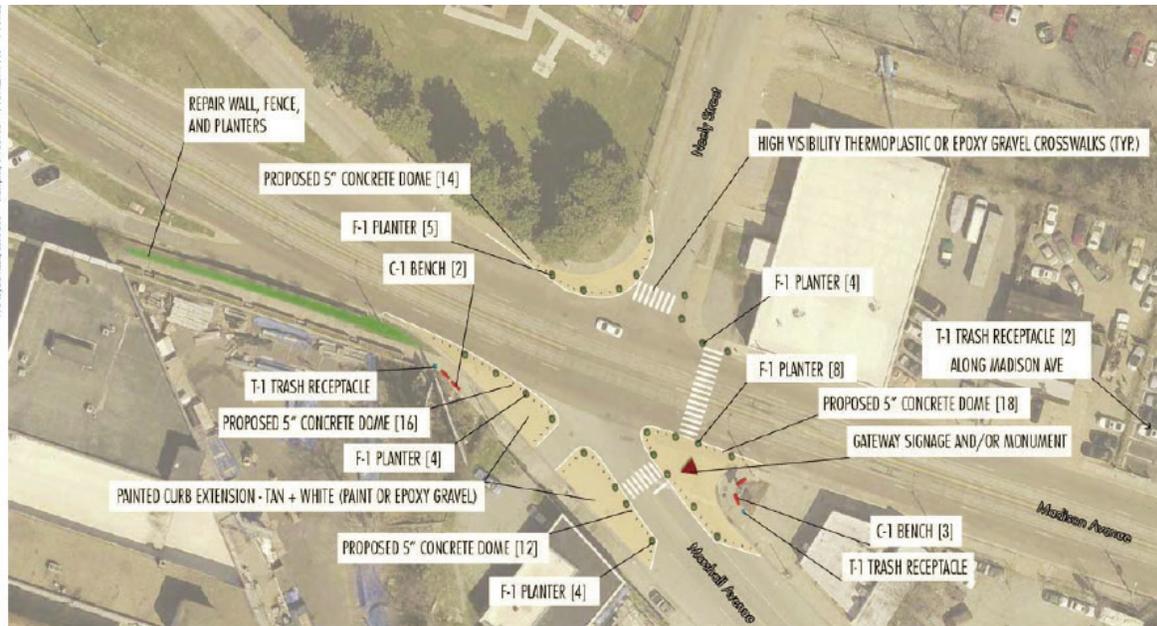
***Working with Sun Studio to determine appropriate improvements**

Madison at Marshall



Challenges to address include:

- Awkward intersection geometry, vehicle stopping locations/sight lines from Marshall Avenue
- Excessive pedestrian crossing distances
- Excessive vehicle speeds, especially from Madison Avenue to Marshall Ave.
- Damaged retaining walls south of the intersection
- Lack of landscape and pedestrian-scaled lighting



Recommended improvements include:

- Expanded pedestrian zone to narrow the vehicular approach on Marshall Avenue
- Added pedestrian street furniture (benches, landscape, trash receptacles)
- Gateway sculpture or other artwork
- High-visibility crosswalks with coordinated stopping locations and markings
- Reconfigured curblines (painted with surface-mounted domes)
- Repaired bridge wall

Madison at Orleans



Challenges to address include:

- Unused triangular-shaped public space, lacking meaningful recreational purpose
- Excessive vehicle speeds along Madison Avenue
- Lack of on-street parking in front of retail businesses
- Untended landscaping at trolley stop platform
- Lack of landscape and pedestrian-scaled lighting



Recommended improvements include:

- Improved public space landscaping and fenced dog park area
- Added pedestrian street furniture (benches, landscape, trash receptacles) in park space and in front of businesses
- Improved landscaping and screening of MATA electrical equipment and on trolley platform
- High-visibility crosswalks markings
- Bicycle rack and relocated pedestrian crossing
- Reconfigured curblines (painted with surface-mounted domes)
- Optional extended planted median on Madison Avenue