



GREEKTOWN AWARDED \$20 MILLION FROM STATE OF MICHIGAN FOR REDESIGN OF MONROE STREET IN DOWNTOWN DETROIT

Greektown awarded \$20 Million from the State of Michigan for a Monroe Street streetscape redesign that prioritizes pedestrians, increases safety, provides maximum program flexibility, and celebrates the rich cultural and historic heritage of Greektown. It will be the first shared streetscape in Downtown Detroit of this scale with the ability to be completely pedestrianized.

DETROIT, Mich., June 29, 2023 – Greektown has been awarded \$20 million from the State of Michigan to complete a redesign of Monroe Street through Greektown in Downtown Detroit. The renewed Monroe Street streetscape will prioritize pedestrians, increase safety, provide maximum program flexibility, and celebrate the rich cultural and historic heritage of Greektown. It will be the first shared streetscape in Downtown Detroit of this scale with the ability to be completely pedestrianized.

Monroe Street is one of Detroit’s most special places. It has maintained its status as a primary commercial street in the area for over a century and continues to attract a broad array of locals and visitors to its entertainment venues and eateries. The traditional center of Detroit’s Greek community, decades of diverse and overlapping cultures have found a home here, creating stories of family, community, entrepreneurship, food, and celebration—a culture of hospitality that continues to thrive today. Its intimate scale, Victorian architecture, and downtown location have made it one of the city’s most walkable commercial corridors and often the first stop for visitors to Detroit and Michigan. The future of Monroe Street accommodates users of all kinds and modes and will be refocused to prioritize the thousands of pedestrians that walk it each day, supporting and complementing the many businesses along it. The redesign encompasses four blocks of Monroe Street from Randolph Street to the I-375 Service Drive.

Based on extensive stakeholder and public outreach, and working very closely with the City of Detroit, Greektown Neighborhood Partnership and its design team, SmithGroup, developed a schematic design for the Monroe Street Streetscape redevelopment in 2022. This work built upon the *Greektown Neighborhood Framework Vision*, a community-led urban planning initiative for the future of Greektown, adopted by the City of Detroit. The innovative design for the new Monroe Street will not only address the needs of today but also provide Greektown with the flexibility to address future needs. The curbsless streetscape redesign will transform Monroe Street into a pedestrian-first, walkable street, a vital component of any thriving community. By eliminating curbs and leveling the road, the project will make it easier for pedestrians to move about the area safely and comfortably. This will allow the street to quickly and easily flex to accommodate festivals, larger pedestrian crowds, and outdoor cafés, while also accommodating loading, parking, and vehicular traffic. The new configuration includes one centered driving lane when open to vehicular traffic, an expanded pedestrian walk, and ability for outdoor cafes for the entire length of Monroe Street. Bollards, trees, planters, and street furniture all reinforce the edge of the pedestrian zone for drivers traveling the corridor. When the street is closed to vehicular traffic, it becomes a pedestrian only plaza, allowing more outdoor dining, flexible programming, and easier pedestrian movement.

“The pedestrian-first redesign of Monroe Street will create a broad palette of experiences through the heart of Greektown and reinforce the district’s role as the gateway to Detroit. Monroe Street sees some of the highest pedestrian traffic of any place in the City and our public engagement through the design process overwhelmingly indicated support for closures to vehicles that are both planned and programmed,” said Melanie Markowicz, Executive Director of the Greektown Neighborhood Partnership.

The forthcoming improvements include:

- Prioritizing pedestrians and outdoor cafés by creating wide sidewalks and ensuring accessibility.
- Providing a flexible curb-less road that can be quickly and easily shut down to vehicular traffic.
- Promoting safety, slow traffic speeds, and reduce reckless driving with reduced driving lanes.
- Reallocating parking, loading and pick-up/drop-off zones along Monroe Street and its side streets.
- Creating gateways into the community that can be seen from Campus Martius and from the east.
- Utilizing a consistent and durable set of attractive amenities and premium paving materials.
- Supporting a diverse set of users and family friendly programming.
- Improving light distribution along the corridor.
- Significantly expanding the tree canopy.
- Promoting hospitality in all aspects of the design.
- Celebrating culture, heritage, and art.

The transformational project will serve as a draw for visitors and support critical event programming while the district endures the impacts of adjacent construction, ensuring the continued viability of the district's businesses and vibrant community.

The \$20 million Michigan Infrastructure Grant for the Monroe Street redevelopment is included in the FY 2023-2024 Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity budget, which passed in the Michigan Legislature yesterday and awaits Governor Whitmer's signature.

For more information about Greektown and to access the Monroe Street Streetscape Redesign report, please visit www.GreektownDetroit.org.

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About Greektown Detroit

Greektown is a celebrated entertainment and cultural district, serving both Detroiters and visitors from around the world all year round. The traditional center of Detroit's Greek community, the Greektown neighborhood is one of the last surviving Victorian-era commercial streetscapes in downtown Detroit. Lively Monroe Street is the heartbeat of historic Greektown, and our district is bounded by Gratiot, Randolph, Lafayette, and I-375. For more information, visit www.GreektownDetroit.org.

About the Greektown Neighborhood Partnership

Greektown Neighborhood Partnership is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization dedicated to the long-term economic and cultural vibrancy of Greektown. We support and enhance inclusive and equitable opportunities for growth within the district through community and economic development programs, all while celebrating our strong cultural roots. For more information, visit www.GreektownDetroit.org.

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