

REPORT / RECOMMENDATION



To: MAYOR AND COUNCIL

Work Session Item #: IV.

From: Mark K. Nolan, AICP, Transportation Planner

Action

Date: August 19, 2014

Discussion

Subject: Blake Road Corridor Study Update

Information

Action Requested:

Blake Road Corridor Study Update

Information / Background:

WSB & Associates will be present at this work session to provide Council with an update of the Blake Road Corridor Study, led by the City of Hopkins in conjunction with Hennepin County and the Cities of Edina and St. Louis Park. Staff and consultants would appreciate comments and feedback based on the presentation.

Attachments:

WSB Memorandum: Blake Road Corridor Study



Memorandum

To: Edina City Council
From: Tony Heppelmann, PE
WSB & Associates
Date: August 13, 2014
Re: Blake Road Corridor Study
WSB Project No. 01787-240

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the Edina City Council an update on the Blake Road Corridor Study.

Background

The City of Hopkins, in conjunction with Hennepin County, the Cities of Edina and St. Louis Park, is leading a corridor study for Blake Road/Aquila Avenue to identify and plan for transportation improvements needed to support construction of the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) line. The study area extends from 36th Street in St. Louis Park to Interlachen Boulevard in Edina. The study has included participation from the agencies listed above as well as Three Rivers Park District, the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District, the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) and with Southwest LRT Project Office. The study is intended to address infrastructure needs in order to:

- Provide better accommodations for pedestrians, bicyclists and bus users
- Provide better connections and access to the planned light rail station at Blake Road and 2nd Street for all modes
- Provide better connections and access to adjacent neighborhoods, commercial nodes and recreational facilities
- Provide the necessary transportation infrastructure to support redevelopment in and near the corridor that will enhance economic growth, community connectivity, and residential diversity

The study is guided by a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) with representatives from each of the partner agencies listed above.

Schedule and Scope

The Blake Road Corridor Study began in March 2014 and is anticipated to be completed by February 2015. The scope of the study includes the following:

Spring 2014	Data collection: traffic, safety, trails, planned improvements, previous studies Document existing conditions – safety problems, gaps in the networks, poor operations, connectivity concerns, areas identified for redevelopment/planned development, etc. Analyze future traffic conditions Develop corridor goals and objectives
Summer 2014	Develop and evaluate alternatives for improvements to the corridor Attend city council work sessions/meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Open House 1: June 25 (collect input on needs, issues, etc.)• Open House 2: September (present and collect input on alternatives)
Fall 2014	Select a preferred alternative Develop an implementation plan: costs, timing and funding sources Provide update to city councils <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Open House 3: November/December (present preferred alternative)
Winter 2014/2015	Finalize implementation plan Prepare final report

Public Involvement

The first project open house was held on June 25, 2014. Approximately 50 people attended the meeting. The project team provided information on the purpose and goals of the study. The open house materials also included information on existing conditions in the corridor, including crash history, traffic operations, proposed public infrastructure and private development in the corridor, and existing and planned pedestrian and bicycle facilities. Comments from the public fell into the following themes:

- Traffic operations and safety concerns
- Pedestrian crossings of Blake Road and the need for sidewalks on intersecting streets, including Belmore Lane
- Desire for bicycle facilities on Blake Road
- Safety concerns about the Cedar Lake Regional Trail crossing of Blake Road
- Access to future Southwest LRT station for pedestrians, bicyclists, and bus transit users

Summary of Alternatives

Based upon the technical analyses and feedback from the TAC and the public, WSB developed a series of alternatives (for the roadway, pedestrian/bicycle facilities, intersection improvements and corridor crossings) to meet the identified needs and desires along the corridor. The project Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) has reviewed these alternatives and provided feedback that was used to refine the alternatives. These alternatives will be presented to the public at an

open house in September. The following paragraphs summarize the alternatives developed to date:

South of Excelsior Boulevard (CSAH 3)

Within the City of Edina Blake Road is proposed to remain a two-lane roadway with 6 foot wide bicycle lanes adjacent to the curb. A new sidewalk is proposed on the west side of Blake Road, from Boyce Street to Waterman Avenue. The sidewalk would be 6 feet wide and 6 feet from the existing curb. North of Boyce Street, the sidewalk would connect to multipurpose trails on both sides of Blake Road. The attached layout and typical section show the proposed sidewalk and bike lanes in Edina.

Between Excelsior Boulevard (CSAH 3) and 36th Street

WSB and the TAC are currently evaluating the following alternatives for Blake Road between Excelsior Boulevard (CSAH 3) and 36th Street. Attached are typical sections showing the cycle track plus sidewalk and multipurpose trail alternatives on a 4-lane divided roadway, as well as a layout showing the proposed design for the intersection of Blake Road and Excelsior Boulevard.

Under the pedestrian and bicycle facility alternatives, the TAC has discussed that the multipurpose trail alternative may be the most appropriate facility for the corridor. A multipurpose trail will meet the needs of less-experienced bicyclists connecting to the Cedar Lake Trail and the future LRT station. The multipurpose trail will also result in fewer impacts to adjacent properties than the cycle track plus sidewalk alternative.

Roadway

- 3-Lane – Center Left-turn Lane and Right-turn lanes (48 feet curb face to curb face)
- 4-Lane – No separate turn lanes (48 feet curb to curb)
- 5-Lane – Center Left-turn lane with no median and no right-turn lane (59 feet)
- 4-Lane Divided – Median with left-turn lanes and no right-turn lanes (67 feet)

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

- On-road Bike Lanes
- Cycle Track plus Sidewalk
- Multipurpose Trails

Other Alternatives

Between Excelsior Boulevard and RR Crossing

- Median Break at Apartment Access
- No Median Break

Cedar Lake Trail Crossing

- At-Grade
- Grade Separated

Lake Street Pedestrian Crossing

- At-Grade
- Grade Separated

Intersections with 2nd and Lake Streets

- Traffic Signal
- Roundabout

Intersection with TH 7

- At-Grade
- Grade Separated Interchange

Next Steps

A project open house will be scheduled for late September. At this meeting the various alternatives considered will be presented along with an initial evaluation of the alternatives. A draft recommendation will be provided in terms of an alternative that is likely to move forward for design. Feedback and input on the alternatives from the public and property owners will be used to help finalize section of a preferred alternative.

Following the open house, the TAC will select a preferred alternative. WSB will develop an implementation plan that includes: construction costs, potential right of way impacts, timing of construction and potential funding sources. WSB will provide an update to city councils in late 2014. A final open house will be held in late 2014.

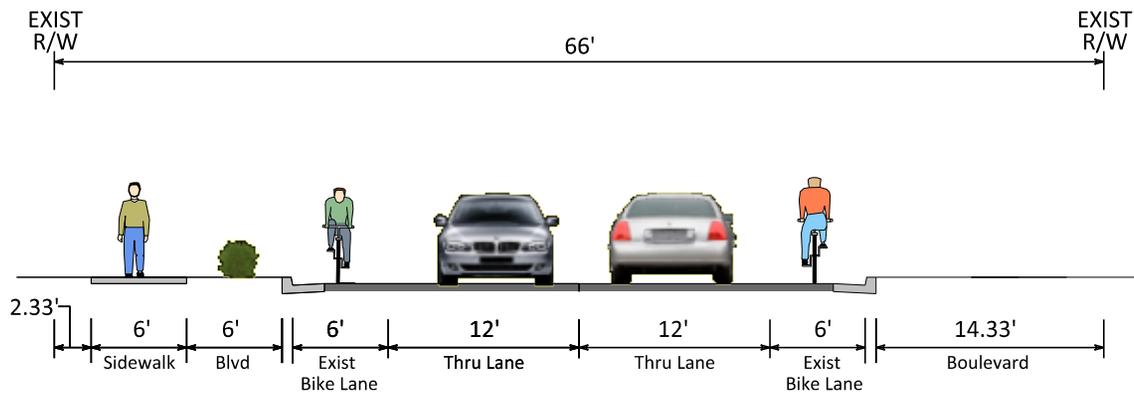
Attachments

Edina Typical Section

Edina Layout

Excelsior Boulevard - TH 7 Typical Sections for Cycle Track/Sidewalk and Multipurpose Trail

Excelsior Boulevard-Blake Road Intersection Layout



Proposed Section with Sidewalk

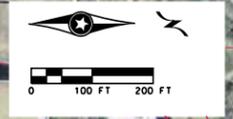


CSAH 20 (Blake Road) Improvements - County Project No. xxx

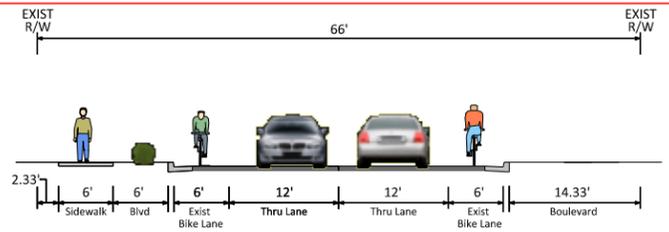
Waterman Ave to Excelsior Blvd
 August, 2014

LEGEND

- Proposed Roadway Built Over Inplace Roadway
- Proposed Roadway
- Proposed Islands / Medians
- Proposed Shoulder
- Proposed Bituminous Path
- Proposed Concrete Walk
- Proposed Retaining Walls
- Proposed Driveways
- Proposed Traffic Directional Arrows
- Existing Right of Way
- Proposed Right of Way
- Proposed Temporary Easement
- Approximate Construction Limits
- Proposed Total R/W Acquisition
- Driveway Remnant Area (To Become Greenspace)
- Partial Taking
- Access Closed

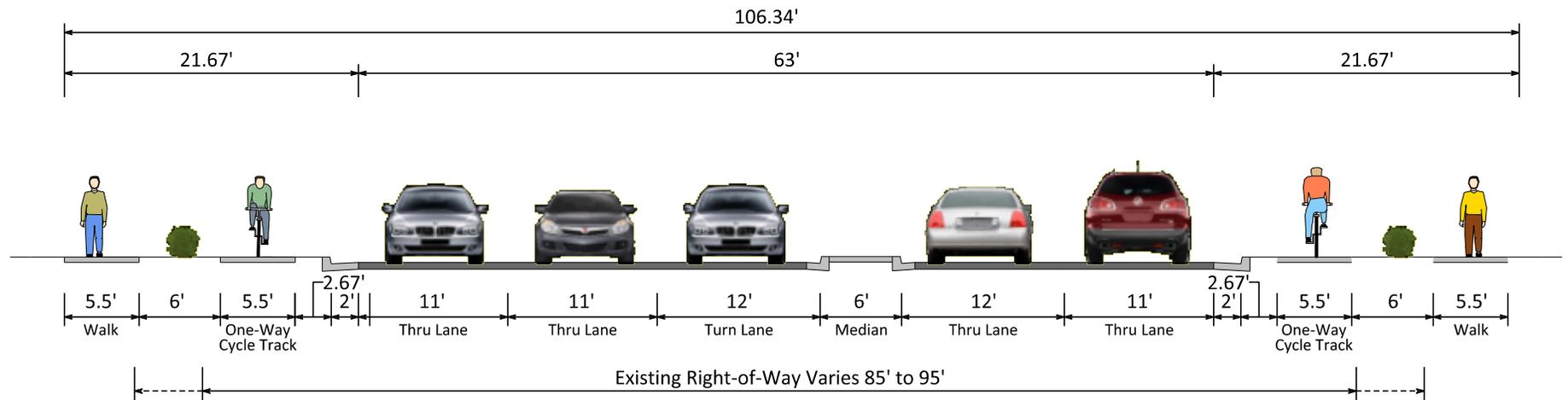


CONCEPT ONLY
 SUBJECT TO CHANGE
 WITHOUT NOTICE
 AUGUST 13, 2014

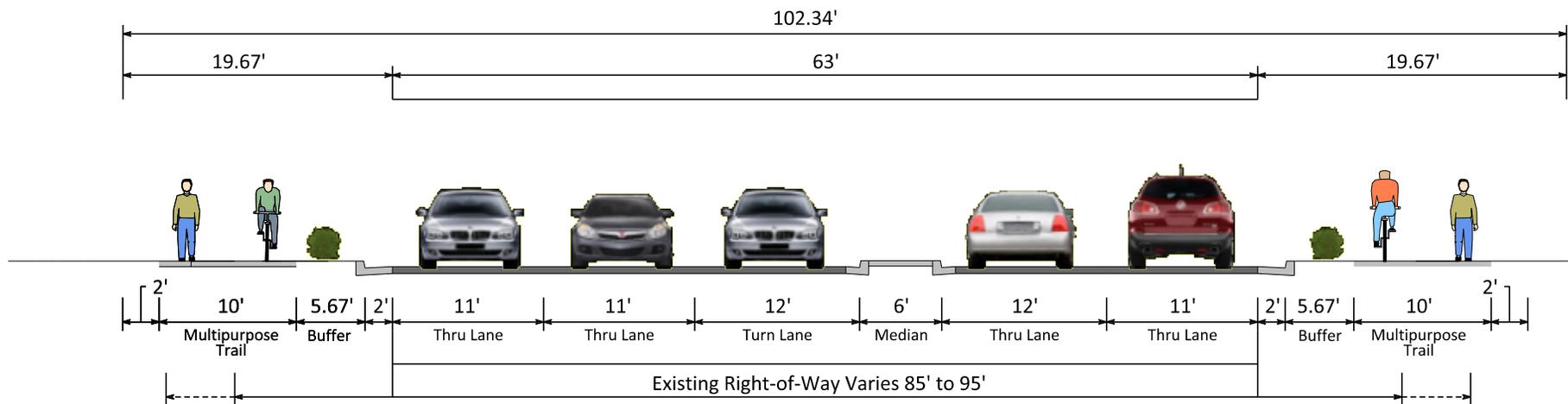


Proposed Section with Sidewalk





Proposed Section with One-Way Cycle Track Walk



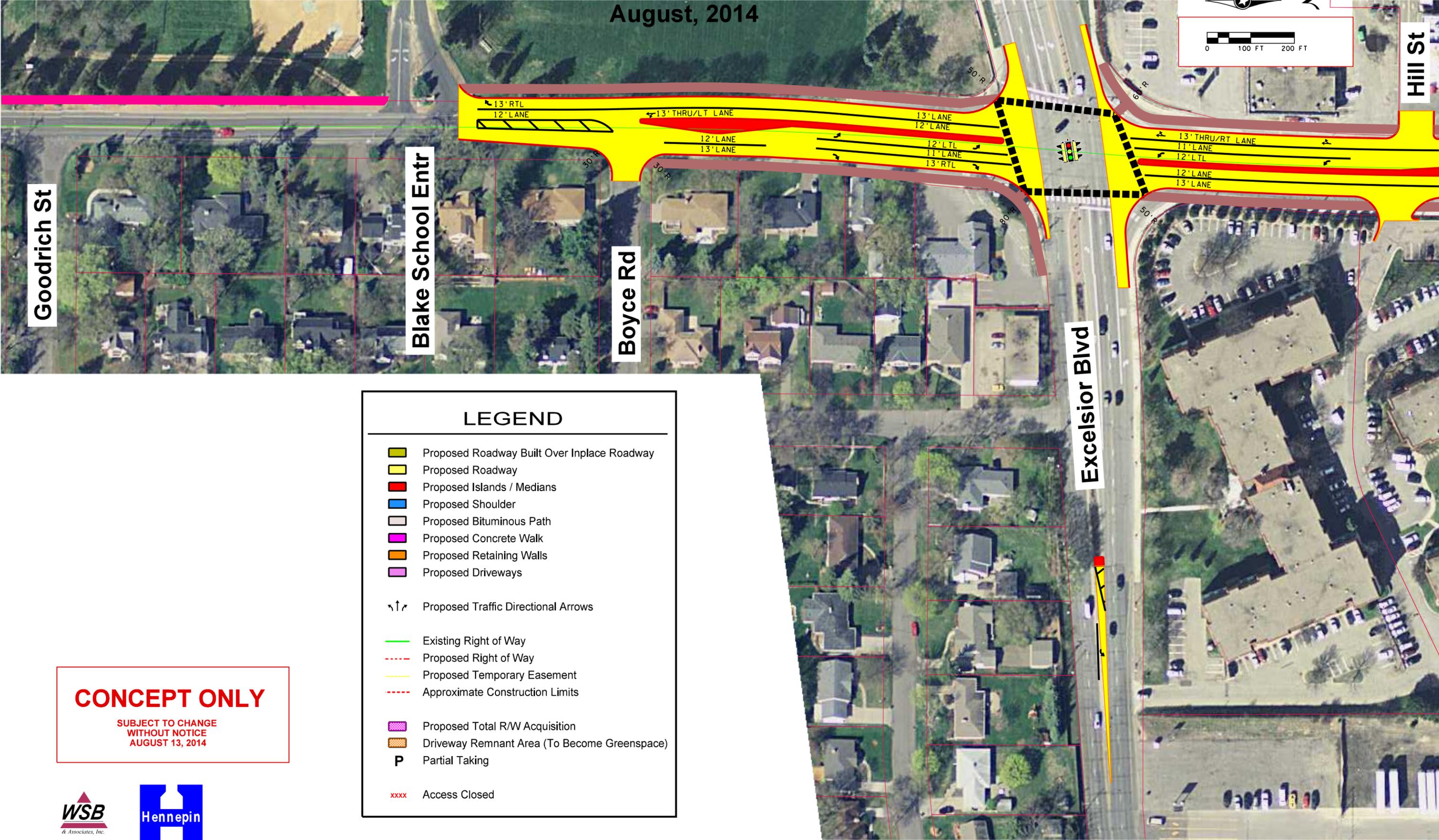
Proposed Section with Multipurpose Trail



CSAH 20 (Blake Road) Improvements - County Project No. xxx

Blake/ Excelsior Blvd Intersection

August, 2014



LEGEND

- Proposed Roadway Built Over Inplace Roadway
- Proposed Roadway
- Proposed Islands / Medians
- Proposed Shoulder
- Proposed Bituminous Path
- Proposed Concrete Walk
- Proposed Retaining Walls
- Proposed Driveways

- Proposed Traffic Directional Arrows

- Existing Right of Way
- Proposed Right of Way
- Proposed Temporary Easement
- Approximate Construction Limits

- Proposed Total R/W Acquisition
- Driveway Remnant Area (To Become Greenspace)
- P** Partial Taking

- xxxx Access Closed

CONCEPT ONLY

SUBJECT TO CHANGE
WITHOUT NOTICE
AUGUST 13, 2014

