

Committee of the Whole  
Monday, October 3, 2022 6:00 PM  
Council Chambers  
2500 14 Street  
Columbus, NE 68601

The Mayor and City Council reserve the right to go into closed session as per Section 84-1410 of the Nebraska Revised Statutes. A current agenda is on file at the office of the city clerk at City Hall, 2500 14 Street, Columbus, Nebraska. For more information, call 402-562-4224 or visit our website at [www.columbusne.us](http://www.columbusne.us).

- 1. Statement of compliance with Open Meetings Act and roll call.**

# Open Meetings Act

## **Neb. Rev. Stat. § 84-1407. Act, how cited.**

Sections 84-1407 to 84-1414 shall be known and may be cited as the Open Meetings Act.

## **Neb. Rev. Stat. § 84-1408. Declaration of intent; meetings open to public.**

It is hereby declared to be the policy of this state that the formation of public policy is public business and may not be conducted in secret.

Every meeting of a public body shall be open to the public in order that citizens may exercise their democratic privilege of attending and speaking at meetings of public bodies, except as otherwise provided by the Constitution of Nebraska, federal statutes, and the Open Meetings Act.

## **Neb. Rev. Stat. § 84-1409. Terms, defined.**

For purposes of the Open Meetings Act, unless the context otherwise requires:

(1)(a) Public body means (i) governing bodies of all political subdivisions of the State of Nebraska, (ii) governing bodies of all agencies, created by the Constitution of Nebraska, statute, or otherwise pursuant to law, of the executive department of the State of Nebraska, (iii) all independent boards, commissions, bureaus, committees, councils, subunits, or any other bodies created by the Constitution of Nebraska, statute, or otherwise pursuant to law, (iv) all study or advisory committees of the executive department of the State of Nebraska whether having continuing existence or appointed as special committees with limited existence, (v) advisory committees of the bodies referred to in subdivisions (i), (ii), and (iii) of this subdivision, and (vi) instrumentalities exercising essentially public functions; and

(b) Public body does not include (i) subcommittees of such bodies unless a quorum of the public body attends a subcommittee meeting or unless such subcommittees are holding hearings, making policy, or taking formal action on behalf of their parent body, except that all meetings of any subcommittee established under section 81-15,175 are subject to the Open Meetings Act, and (ii) entities conducting judicial proceedings unless a court or other judicial body is exercising rulemaking authority, deliberating, or deciding upon the issuance of administrative orders;

(2) Meeting means all regular, special, or called meetings, formal or informal, of any public body for the purposes of briefing, discussion of public business, formation of tentative policy, or the taking of any action of the public body; and

(3) Virtual conferencing means conducting or participating in a meeting electronically or telephonically with interaction among the participants subject to subsection (2) of section 84-1412.

## **Neb. Rev. Stat. § 84-1410. Closed session; when; purpose; reasons listed; procedure; right to challenge; prohibited acts; chance meetings, conventions, or workshops.**

(1) Any public body may hold a closed session by the affirmative vote of a majority of its voting members if a closed session is clearly necessary for the protection of the public interest or for the prevention of needless injury to the reputation of an individual and if such

individual has not requested a public meeting. The subject matter and the reason necessitating the closed session shall be identified in the motion to close. Closed sessions may be held for, but shall not be limited to, such reasons as:

(a) Strategy sessions with respect to collective bargaining, real estate purchases, pending litigation, or litigation which is imminent as evidenced by communication of a claim or threat of litigation to or by the public body;

(b) Discussion regarding deployment of security personnel or devices;

(c) Investigative proceedings regarding allegations of criminal misconduct;

(d) Evaluation of the job performance of a person when necessary to prevent needless injury to the reputation of a person and if such person has not requested a public meeting;

(e) For the Community Trust created under section 81-1801.02, discussion regarding the amounts to be paid to individuals who have suffered from a tragedy of violence or natural disaster; or

(f) For public hospitals, governing board peer review activities, professional review activities, review and discussion of medical staff investigations or disciplinary actions, and any strategy session concerning transactional negotiations with any referral source that is required by federal law to be conducted at arms length.

Nothing in this section shall permit a closed meeting for discussion of the appointment or election of a new member to any public body.

(2) The vote to hold a closed session shall be taken in open session. The entire motion, the vote of each member on the question of holding a closed session, and the time when the closed session commenced and concluded shall be recorded in the minutes. If the motion to close passes, then the presiding officer immediately prior to the closed session shall restate on the record the limitation of the subject matter of the closed session. The public body holding such a closed session shall restrict its consideration of matters during the closed portions to only those purposes set forth in the motion to close as the reason for the closed session. The meeting shall be reconvened in open session before any formal action may be taken. For purposes of this section, formal action shall mean a collective decision or a collective commitment or promise to make a decision on any question, motion, proposal, resolution, order, or ordinance or formation of a position or policy but shall not include negotiating guidance given by members of the public body to legal counsel or other negotiators in closed sessions authorized under subdivision (1)(a) of this section.

(3) Any member of any public body shall have the right to challenge the continuation of a closed session if the member determines that the session has exceeded the reason stated in the original motion to hold a closed session or if the member contends that the closed session is neither clearly necessary for (a) the protection of the public interest or (b) the prevention of needless injury to the reputation of an individual. Such challenge shall be overruled only by a majority vote of the

members of the public body. Such challenge and its disposition shall be recorded in the minutes.

(4) Nothing in this section shall be construed to require that any meeting be closed to the public. No person or public body shall fail to invite a portion of its members to a meeting, and no public body shall designate itself a subcommittee of the whole body for the purpose of circumventing the Open Meetings Act. No closed session, informal meeting, chance meeting, social gathering, email, fax, or other electronic communication shall be used for the purpose of circumventing the requirements of the act.

(5) The act does not apply to chance meetings or to attendance at or travel to conventions or workshops of members of a public body at which there is no meeting of the body then intentionally convened, if there is no vote or other action taken regarding any matter over which the public body has supervision, control, jurisdiction, or advisory power.

**Neb. Rev. Stat. § 84-1411. Meetings of public body; notice; method; contents; when available; right to modify; duties concerning notice; virtual meetings authorized; emergency meeting without notice; appearance before public body.**

(1)(a) Each public body shall give reasonable advance publicized notice of the time and place of each meeting as provided in this subsection. Such notice shall be transmitted to all members of the public body and to the public.

(b)(i) Except as provided in subdivision (1)(b)(ii) of this section, in the case of a public body described in subdivision (1)(a)(i) of section 84-1409 or such body's advisory committee, such notice shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation within the public body's jurisdiction and, if available, on such newspaper's web site.

(ii) In the case of the governing body of a city of the second class or village or such body's advisory committee, such notice shall be published by:

(A) Publication in a newspaper of general circulation within the public body's jurisdiction and, if available, on such newspaper's web site; or

(B) Posting written notice in three conspicuous public places in such city or village. Such notice shall be posted in the same three places for each meeting.

(iii) In the case of a public body not described in subdivision (1)(b)(i) or (ii) of this section, such notice shall be given by a method designated by the public body.

(c) In addition to a method of notice required by subdivision (1)(b)(i) or (ii) of this section, such notice may also be provided by any other appropriate method designated by such public body or such advisory committee.

(d) Each public body shall record the methods and dates of such notice in its minutes.

(e) Such notice shall contain an agenda of subjects known at the time of the publicized notice or a statement that the agenda, which shall be kept continually current, shall be readily available for public inspection at the principal office of the public body during normal business hours. Agenda items shall be sufficiently descriptive to give the public reasonable notice of the matters to be considered at the

meeting. Except for items of an emergency nature, the agenda shall not be altered later than (i) twenty-four hours before the scheduled commencement of the meeting or (ii) forty-eight hours before the scheduled commencement of a meeting of a city council or village board scheduled outside the corporate limits of the municipality. The public body shall have the right to modify the agenda to include items of an emergency nature only at such public meeting.

(2)(a) The following entities may hold a meeting by means of virtual conferencing if the requirements of subdivision (2)(b) of this section are met:

(i) A state agency, state board, state commission, state council, or state committee, or an advisory committee of any such state entity;

(ii) An organization, including the governing body, created under the Interlocal Cooperation Act, the Joint Public Agency Act, or the Municipal Cooperative Financing Act;

(iii) The governing body of a public power district having a chartered territory of more than one county in this state;

(iv) The governing body of a public power and irrigation district having a chartered territory of more than one county in this state;

(v) An educational service unit;

(vi) The Educational Service Unit Coordinating Council;

(vii) An organization, including the governing body, of a risk management pool or its advisory committees organized in accordance with the Intergovernmental Risk Management Act;

(viii) A community college board of governors;

(ix) The Nebraska Brand Committee;

(x) A local public health department;

(xi) A metropolitan utilities district;

(xii) A regional metropolitan transit authority;

(xiii) A natural resources district; and

(xiv) The Judicial Resources Commission.

(b) The requirements for holding a meeting by means of virtual conferencing are as follows:

(i) Reasonable advance publicized notice is given as provided in subsection (1) of this section, including providing access to a dial-in number or link to the virtual conference;

(ii) In addition to the public's right to participate by virtual conferencing, reasonable arrangements are made to accommodate the public's right to attend at a physical site and participate as provided in section 84-1412, including reasonable seating, in at least one designated site in a building open to the public and identified in the notice, with: At least one member of the entity holding such meeting, or his or her designee, present at each site; a recording of the hearing by audio or visual recording devices; and a reasonable opportunity for input, such as public comment or questions, is provided to at least the same extent as

would be provided if virtual conferencing was not used;

(iii) At least one copy of all documents being considered at the meeting is available at any physical site open to the public where individuals may attend the virtual conference. The public body shall also provide links to an electronic copy of the agenda, all documents being considered at the meeting, and the current version of the Open Meetings Act; and

(iv) Except as otherwise provided in this subdivision or subsection (4) of section 79-2204, no more than one-half of the meetings of the state entities, advisory committees, boards, councils, organizations, or governing bodies are held by virtual conferencing in a calendar year. In the case of an organization created under the Interlocal Cooperation Act that sells electricity or natural gas at wholesale on a multistate basis or an organization created under the Municipal Cooperative Financing Act, the organization may hold more than one-half of its meetings by virtual conferencing if such organization holds at least one meeting each calendar year that is not by virtual conferencing. The governing body of a risk management pool that meets at least quarterly and the advisory committees of the governing body may each hold more than one-half of its meetings by virtual conferencing if the governing body's quarterly meetings are not held by virtual conferencing.

(3) Virtual conferencing, emails, faxes, or other electronic communication shall not be used to circumvent any of the public government purposes established in the Open Meetings Act.

(4) The secretary or other designee of each public body shall maintain a list of the news media requesting notification of meetings and shall make reasonable efforts to provide advance notification to them of the time and place of each meeting and the subjects to be discussed at that meeting.

(5) When it is necessary to hold an emergency meeting without reasonable advance public notice, the nature of the emergency shall be stated in the minutes and any formal action taken in such meeting shall pertain only to the emergency. Such emergency meetings may be held by virtual conferencing. The provisions of subsection (4) of this section shall be complied with in conducting emergency meetings. Complete minutes of such emergency meetings specifying the nature of the emergency and any formal action taken at the meeting shall be made available to the public by no later than the end of the next regular business day.

(6) A public body may allow a member of the public or any other witness to appear before the public body by means of virtual conferencing.

(7)(a) Notwithstanding subsections (2) and (5) of this section, if an emergency is declared by the Governor pursuant to the Emergency Management Act as defined in section 81-829.39, a public body the territorial jurisdiction of which is included in the emergency declaration, in whole or in part, may hold a meeting by virtual conferencing during such emergency if the public body gives reasonable advance publicized notice as described in subsection (1) of this section. The notice shall include information regarding access for the public and news media. In addition to any formal action taken pertaining to the emergency, the public body may hold such meeting for the purpose of briefing, discussion of public business, formation of tentative policy, or the taking of any action by the public body.

(b) The public body shall provide access by providing a dial-in  
Open Meetings Act

number or a link to the virtual conference. The public body shall also provide links to an electronic copy of the agenda, all documents being considered at the meeting, and the current version of the Open Meetings Act. Reasonable arrangements shall be made to accommodate the public's right to hear and speak at the meeting and record the meeting. Subsection (4) of this section shall be complied with in conducting such meetings.

(c) The nature of the emergency shall be stated in the minutes. Complete minutes of such meeting specifying the nature of the emergency and any formal action taken at the meeting shall be made available for inspection as provided in subsections (5) and (6) of section 84-1413.

**Neb. Rev. Stat. § 84-1412. Meetings of public body; rights of public; public body; powers and duties.**

(1) Subject to the Open Meetings Act, the public has the right to attend and the right to speak at meetings of public bodies, and all or any part of a meeting of a public body, except for closed sessions called pursuant to section 84-1410, may be videotaped, televised, photographed, broadcast, or recorded by any person in attendance by means of a tape recorder, a camera, video equipment, or any other means of pictorial or sonic reproduction or in writing.

(2) It shall not be a violation of subsection (1) of this section for any public body to make and enforce reasonable rules and regulations regarding the conduct of persons attending, speaking at, videotaping, televising, photographing, broadcasting, or recording its meetings, including meetings held by virtual conferencing. A body may not be required to allow citizens to speak at each meeting, but it may not forbid public participation at all meetings.

(3) No public body shall require members of the public to identify themselves as a condition for admission to the meeting nor shall such body require that the name of any member of the public be placed on the agenda prior to such meeting in order to speak about items on the agenda. The body shall require any member of the public desiring to address the body to identify himself or herself, including an address and the name of any organization represented by such person unless the address requirement is waived to protect the security of the individual.

(4) No public body shall, for the purpose of circumventing the Open Meetings Act, hold a meeting in a place known by the body to be too small to accommodate the anticipated audience.

(5) No public body shall be deemed in violation of this section if it holds its meeting in its traditional meeting place which is located in this state.

(6) No public body shall be deemed in violation of this section if it holds a meeting outside of this state if, but only if:

(a) A member entity of the public body is located outside of this state and the meeting is in that member's jurisdiction;

(b) All out-of-state locations identified in the notice are located within public buildings used by members of the entity or at a place which will accommodate the anticipated audience;

(c) Reasonable arrangements are made to accommodate the public's right to attend, hear, and speak at the meeting, including making virtual conferencing available at an in-state location to members, the public, or the press, if requested twenty-four hours in advance;

(d) No more than twenty-five percent of the public body's meetings in a calendar year are held out-of-state;

(e) Out-of-state meetings are not used to circumvent any of the public government purposes established in the Open Meetings Act; and

(f) The public body publishes notice of the out-of-state meeting at least twenty-one days before the date of the meeting in a legal newspaper of statewide circulation.

(7) Each public body shall, upon request, make a reasonable effort to accommodate the public's right to hear the discussion and testimony presented at a meeting.

(8) Public bodies shall make available at the meeting or the in-state location for virtual conferencing as required by subdivision (6)(c) of this section, for examination and copying by members of the public, at least one copy of all reproducible written material to be discussed at an open meeting, either in paper or electronic form. Public bodies shall make available at least one current copy of the Open Meetings Act posted in the meeting room at a location accessible to members of the public. At the beginning of the meeting, the public shall be informed about the location of the posted information.

**Neb. Rev. Stat. § 84-1413. Meetings; minutes; roll call vote; secret ballot; when.**

(1) Each public body shall keep minutes of all meetings showing the time, place, members present and absent, and the substance of all matters discussed.

(2) Any action taken on any question or motion duly moved and seconded shall be by roll call vote of the public body in open session, and the record shall state how each member voted or if the member was absent or not voting. The requirements of a roll call or viva voce vote shall be satisfied by a public body which utilizes an electronic voting device which allows the yeas and nays of each member of such public body to be readily seen by the public.

(3) The vote to elect leadership within a public body may be taken by secret ballot, but the total number of votes for each candidate shall be recorded in the minutes.

(4) The minutes of all meetings and evidence and documentation received or disclosed in open session shall be public records and open to public inspection during normal business hours.

(5) Minutes shall be written, except as provided in subsection (6) of this section, and available for inspection within ten working days or prior to the next convened meeting, whichever occurs earlier, except that cities of the second class and villages may have an additional ten working days if the employee responsible for writing the minutes is absent due to a serious illness or emergency.

(6) Minutes of the meetings of the board of a school district or educational service unit may be kept as an electronic record.

(7) Beginning July 31, 2022, the governing body of a natural resources district, the city council of a city of the metropolitan class, the city council of a city of the primary class, the city council of a city of the first class, the county board of a county with a population greater than twenty-five thousand inhabitants, and the school board of a school district shall make available on such entity's public web site the agenda and minutes of any meeting of the governing body. The agenda shall be placed on the web site at least twenty-four hours before the meeting of

the governing body. Minutes shall be placed on the web site at such time as the minutes are available for inspection as provided in subsection (5) of this section. This information shall be available on the public web site for at least six months.

**Neb. Rev. Stat. § 84-1414. Unlawful action by public body; declared void or voidable by district court; when; duty to enforce open meeting laws; citizen's suit; procedure; violations; penalties.**

(1) Any motion, resolution, rule, regulation, ordinance, or formal action of a public body made or taken in violation of the Open Meetings Act shall be declared void by the district court if the suit is commenced within one hundred twenty days of the meeting of the public body at which the alleged violation occurred. Any motion, resolution, rule, regulation, ordinance, or formal action of a public body made or taken in substantial violation of the Open Meetings Act shall be voidable by the district court if the suit is commenced more than one hundred twenty days after but within one year of the meeting of the public body in which the alleged violation occurred. A suit to void any final action shall be commenced within one year of the action.

(2) The Attorney General and the county attorney of the county in which the public body ordinarily meets shall enforce the Open Meetings Act.

(3) Any citizen of this state may commence a suit in the district court of the county in which the public body ordinarily meets or in which the plaintiff resides for the purpose of requiring compliance with or preventing violations of the Open Meetings Act, for the purpose of declaring an action of a public body void, or for the purpose of determining the applicability of the act to discussions or decisions of the public body. It shall not be a defense that the citizen attended the meeting and failed to object at such time. The court may order payment of reasonable attorney's fees and court costs to a successful plaintiff in a suit brought under this section.

(4) Any member of a public body who knowingly violates or conspires to violate or who attends or remains at a meeting knowing that the public body is in violation of any provision of the Open Meetings Act shall be guilty of a Class IV misdemeanor for a first offense and a Class III misdemeanor for a second or subsequent offense.

**Neb. Rev. Stat. § 84-1415. Open Meetings Act; requirements; waiver; validity of action.**

No motion, resolution, rule, regulation, ordinance, or formal action made, adopted, passed, or taken at a meeting as defined in section 84-1409 of a public body as defined in such section shall be invalidated because such motion, resolution, rule, regulation, ordinance, or formal action was made, adopted, passed, or taken at a meeting or meetings on or after March 17, 2020, and on or before April 30, 2021, pursuant to a Governor's Executive Order which waived certain requirements of the Open Meetings Act.

**2. Presentation by Wilson & Company, Inc. on downtown area grade separation.**



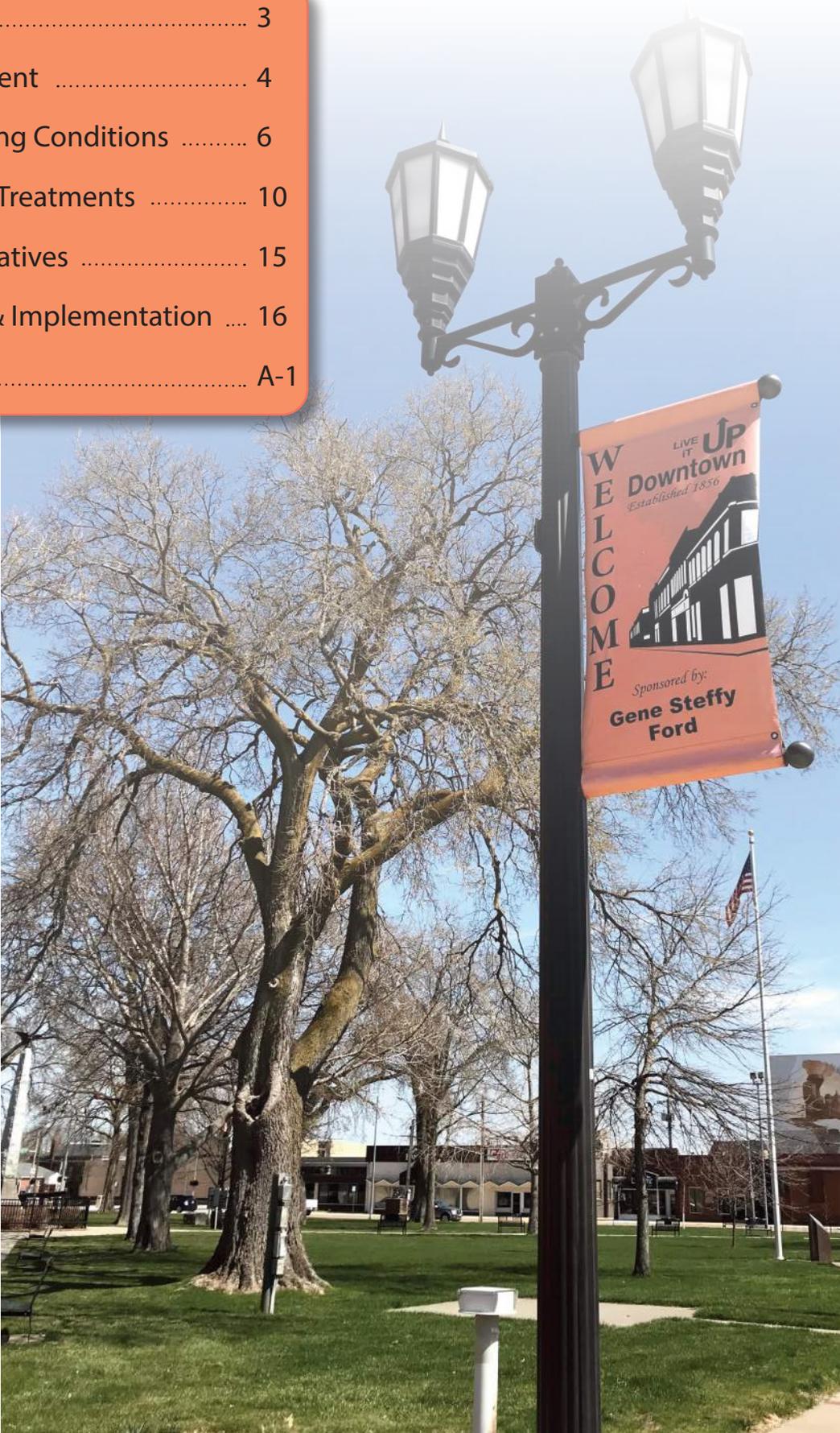
# Columbus Downtown Viaduct Alternatives Study

October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2022



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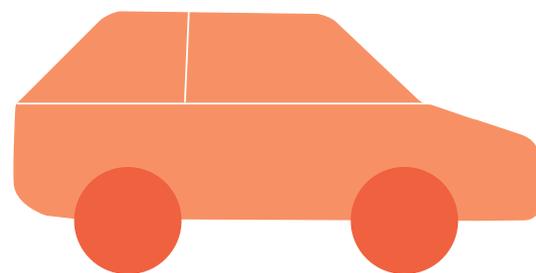
# Introduction

The City of Columbus is identifying and evaluating potential alternative viaduct crossings over the Union Pacific Railroad mainline in the downtown business district. The study area is approximately 226 acres from 15<sup>th</sup> Street to the north, 9<sup>th</sup> Street to the south, 30<sup>th</sup> Avenue to the west, and 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue to the east. Viaduct crossings were considered in the three block downtown core from 26<sup>th</sup> Avenue to 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue. The proposed viaduct will be a grade-separated crossing that will accommodate vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians crossing the railroad. A separate pedestrian only overpass was also considered and paired with the 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue Viaduct Alternatives. This combined package provides a secondary structure to further enhance pedestrian mobility and connectivity in the downtown core.

## WALK

## BIKE

## RIDE



The study analysis will be used to understand community desires for walkability, bikeability, vehicle crossing, economic development, aesthetics, and connectivity between commercial and residential areas on the north and south sides of the tracks, and connectivity with downtown.

A wide range of alternative crossings were initially considered and several, such as an underpass, were eliminated from further study due to fatal flaws. See Appendix A for a table of all options, including those that have been eliminated after not evaluating as high as the three primary alternatives that have been carried ahead for further study.

**Purpose of Study:** Develop viaduct alternatives that accommodate vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians crossing the railroad in the downtown area.

**Who is on the team:** City of Columbus, Community Stakeholders, Union Pacific Railroad, Wilson & Company, Confluence, RCA



# Public Involvement

## Columbus Days



August 14, 2021 - Columbus Days: Wilson & Company team members engaged with Columbus residents, sharing information about the viaduct study, answering questions, and promoting public engagement through online and paper surveys.

### Public Meetings

January 17, 2022: Presentation of alternatives to City Council

June 7, 2022: Open house public meeting - joint meeting with Downtown Revitalization Study (hosted by RDG)



# Public Involvement

## Public Survey

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Preferred Alternatives

Cost Estimates

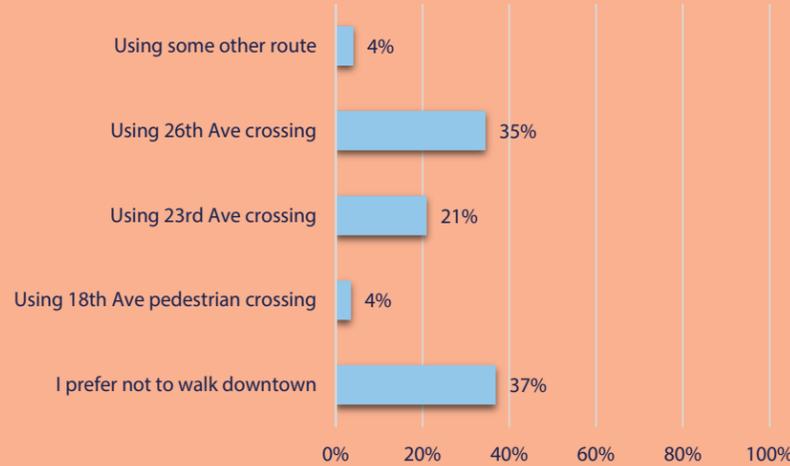
523 paper & online survey responses were received between August 14, 2021 and September 30, 2021



### City of Columbus Downtown Viaduct Survey

Please help us plan for a downtown viaduct to connect north and south of the railroad by answering the questions below! To keep up to date with the project and future events, please sign up for the newsletter here with your email: \_\_\_\_\_

#### How do you cross the tracks when walking downtown?



#### How do you cross the tracks when walking downtown? (check the box)

- Using 26th Ave crossing
- Using 23rd Ave crossing
- Using 18th Ave pedestrian crossing
- Using some other route
- I prefer not to walk downtown



**Take the Survey Online!**  
Open your camera app and click the link that pops up on your screen

#### Where do you live? (check the box)

- North of the Railroad
- South of the Railroad

#### Where do you work? (check the box)

- North of the Railroad
- South of the Railroad

#### If there was only one access point over the rail, which would you prefer? (check the box)

- 23rd Ave
- 26th Ave

#### How important is it for you to DRIVE across the railroad at 26th Ave? (circle the number below)

LOW 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 HIGH

#### How important is it for you to DRIVE across the railroad at 23rd Ave? (circle the number below)

LOW 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 HIGH

#### How important is it for you to WALK across the railroad at 26th Ave? (circle the number below)

LOW 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 HIGH

#### How important is it for you to WALK across the railroad at 23rd Ave? (circle the number below)

LOW 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 HIGH

#### How important is it for you to BIKE across the railroad at 26th Ave? (circle the number below)

LOW 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 HIGH

#### How important is it for you to BIKE across the railroad at 23rd Ave? (circle the number below)

LOW 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 HIGH

#### How important are AESTHETICS at a future railroad crossing? (circle the number below)

LOW 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 HIGH

#### Identify your preferred route (check one box per column)

##### DRIVE



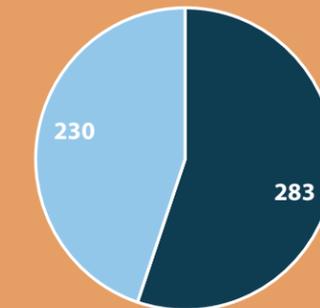
##### WALK



##### BIKE

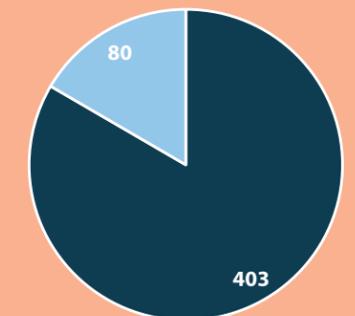


#### Where do you live?



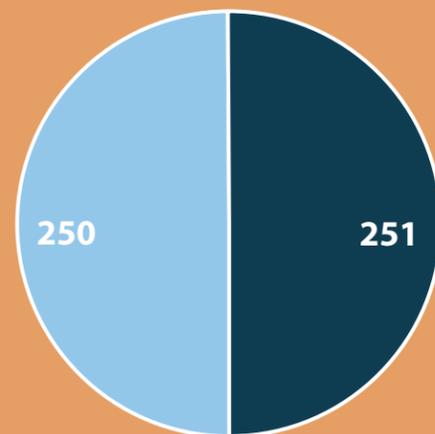
■ North of the Railroad ■ South of the Railroad

#### Where do you work?



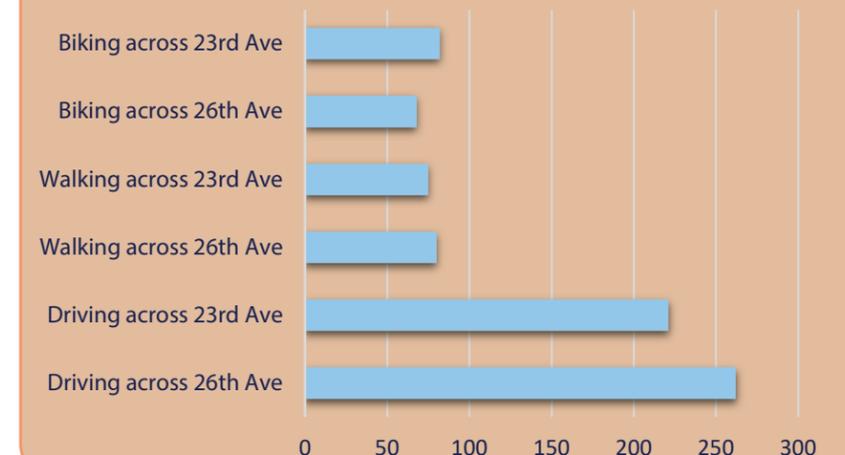
■ North of the Railroad ■ South of the Railroad

#### If there was only one access point over the railroad, which would you prefer?



■ 26th Ave ■ 23rd Ave

#### Identify your preferred route over the railroad.



# Inventory / Existing Conditions

## Built Environment

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There are **65 historic properties and buildings** in downtown Columbus that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. These sites were identified and considered in the development of alternatives. Avoidance or minimization of impacts to these historic properties is important to preserve the existing character of the downtown core area.

## Historic Properties



The project area's population differs slightly from the City of Columbus as a whole.

Project Area Comparisons		
	Columbus	Project Area
People of Color Population	26%	↑ 31%
Low Income Population	28%	↑ 35%
Linguistically Isolated Population	5%	↑ 9%
Population under 5 years of age	7%	↑ 9%
Population over 64 years of age	16%	↓ 8%

2018: U.S. Census Bureau ACS 5-Year Estimates

# Inventory / Existing Conditions

## Built Environment

## Hazardous Material Sites

Introduction

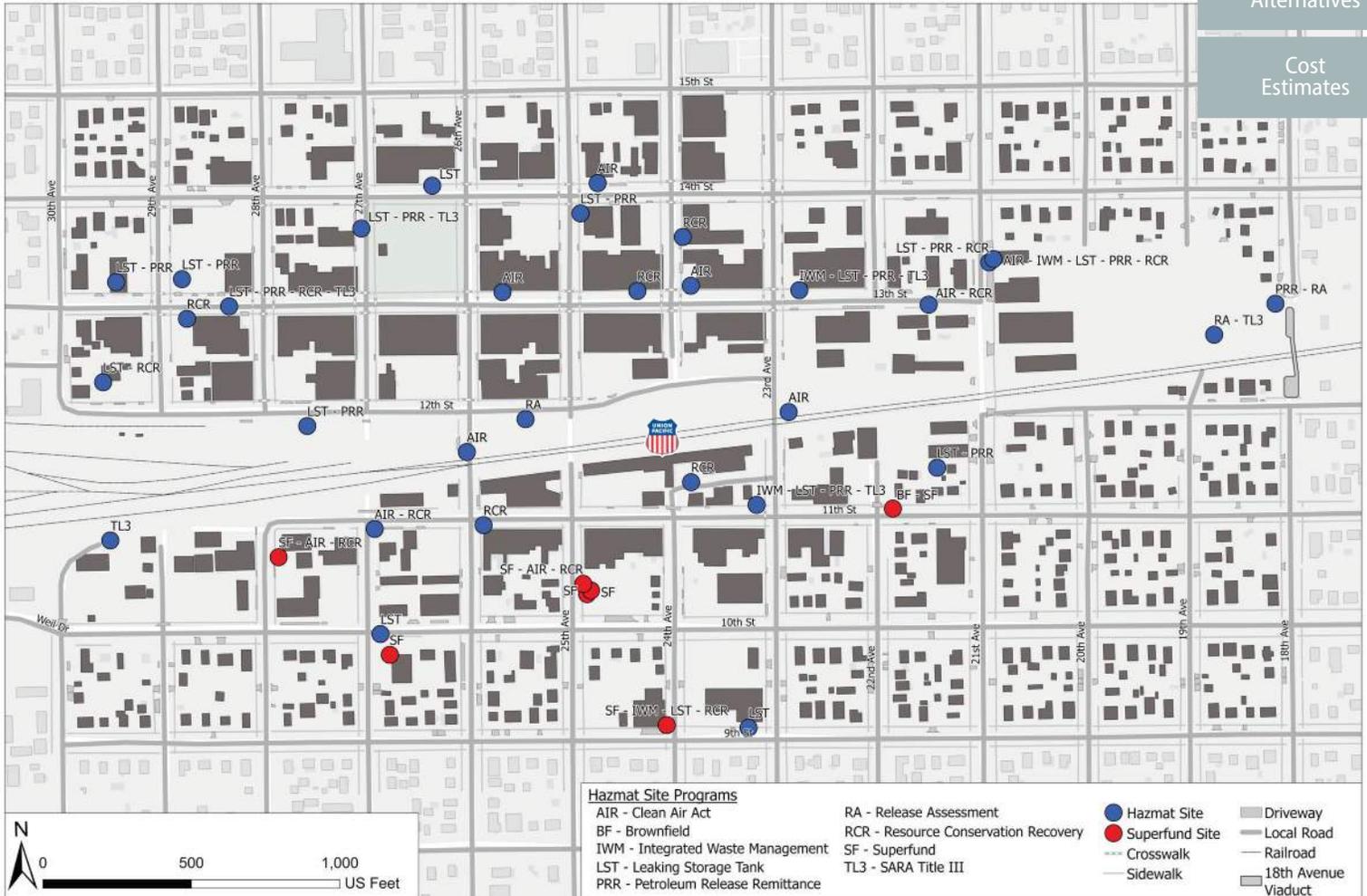
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There are **38 hazardous material sites** in the project area, **7 of these are brownfields**, which are properties that do not require Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) intervention, but could have or did have hazardous materials present, **or Superfund sites**, which are properties registered with the EPA on the National Priorities List (NPL) and are considered the nations worst environmentally hazardous sites.

# Inventory / Existing Conditions

## Mobility

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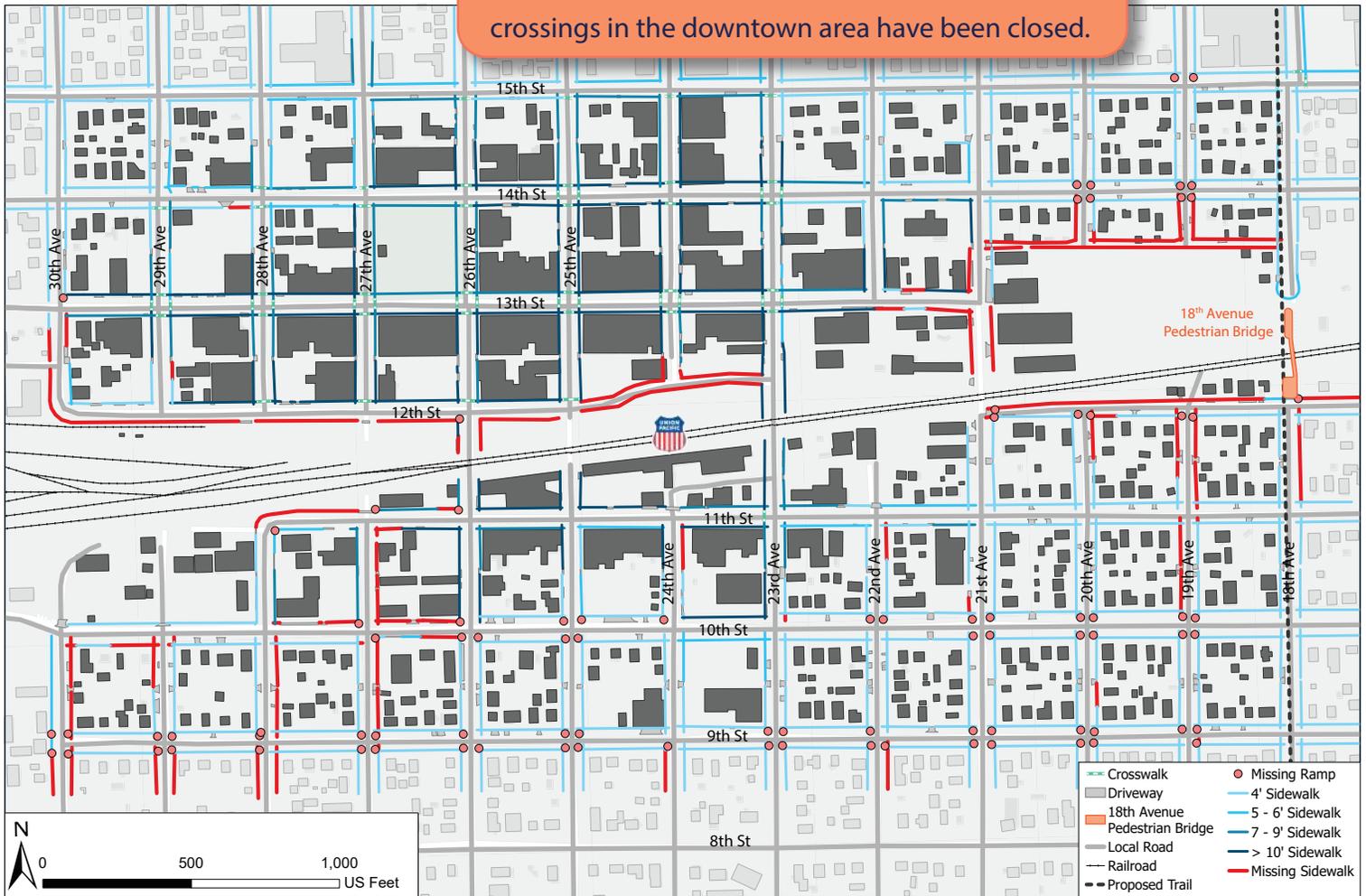
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## Ramps and Walkways

There are several areas that are missing sidewalks throughout the study area. These missing links are prominent around the railroad and industrial corridor. The only existing pedestrian routes crossing the railroad are the recently constructed pedestrian viaduct at 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue and the non ADA compliant sidewalks at 26<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue. All other crossings in the downtown area have been closed.



Missing pedestrian ramps can make a pathway inaccessible to people with disabilities and those who use mobility assistance devices, forcing them to use the street instead of the sidewalk, resulting in safety concerns.

# Peak Hour Traffic Movement - Vehicles

Introduction

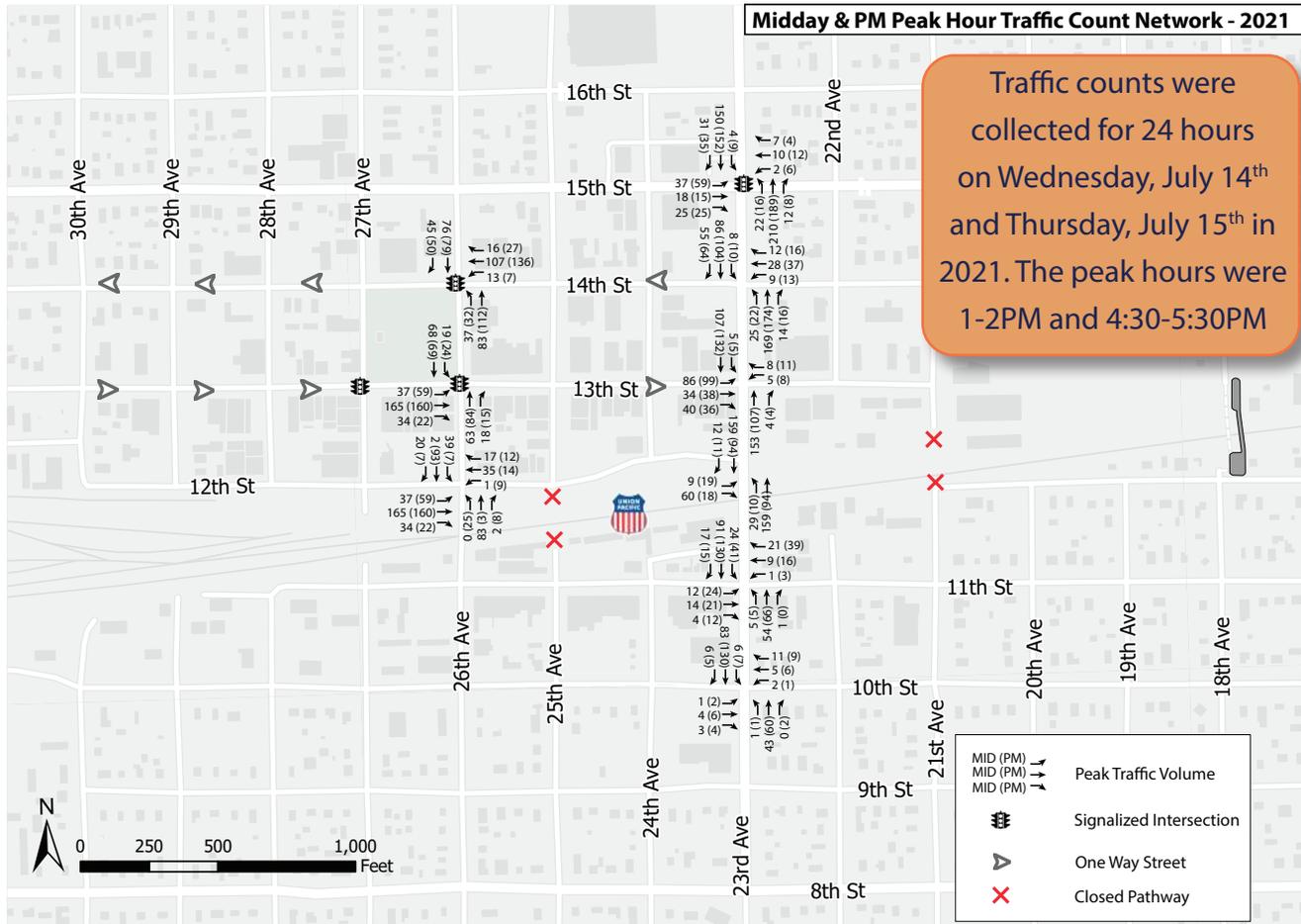
Public Involvement

Inventory

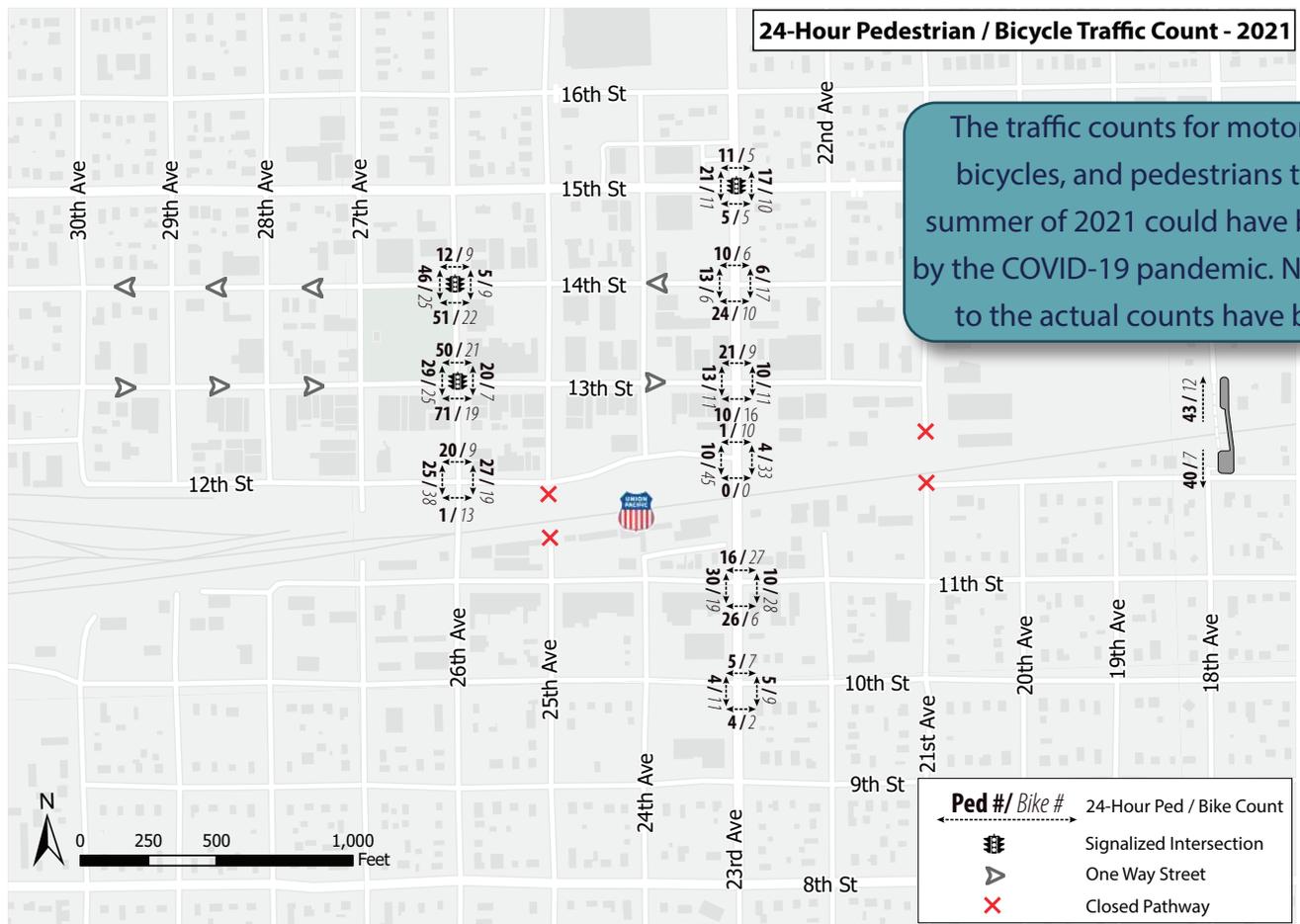
Recommended Treatments

Preferred Alternatives

Cost Estimates



# 24 Hour Bicycle and Pedestrian Traffic

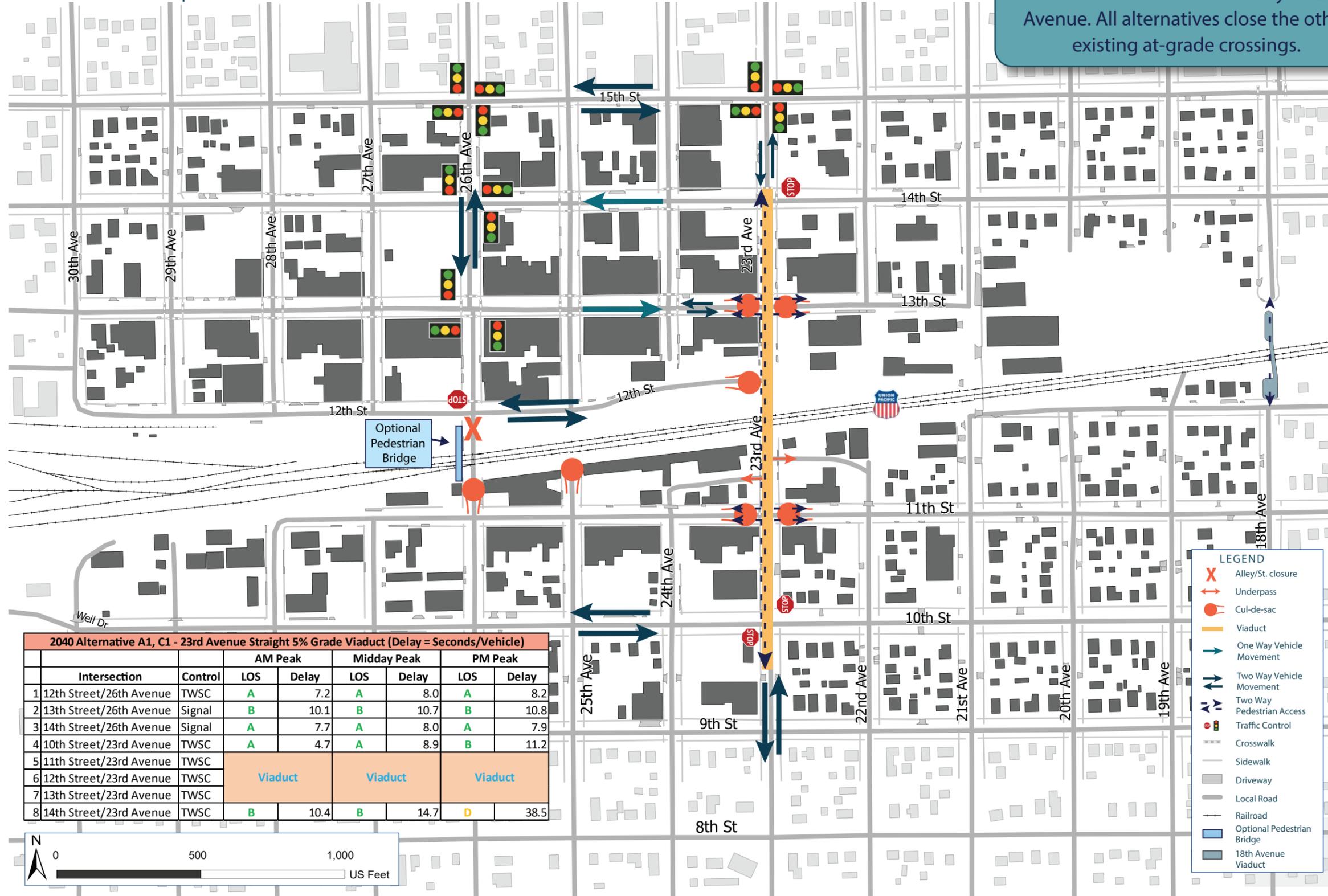


# Recommended Treatments

## Motorized Vehicle and Pedestrian Traffic Analysis

Future Year 2040 Alternative A1 (23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue 5%)

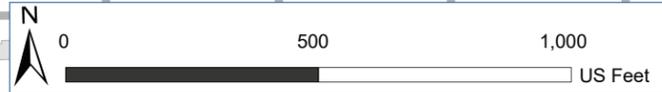
### Traffic Circulation Impacts



A viaduct on 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue would re-route vehicular traffic near the downtown to cross over the railroad solely on 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue. All alternatives close the other existing at-grade crossings.

- Summary of Traffic Impacts
- Traffic on 11<sup>th</sup> Street, 12<sup>th</sup> Street, and 13<sup>th</sup> Street are truncated with cul-de-sacs along the 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue alignment.
  - Year 2040 traffic conditions are anticipated to be acceptable.
  - 14<sup>th</sup> Street / 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue intersection may need to be monitored for conversion to signalized traffic control, under future 2040 traffic conditions.
  - Pedestrians maintain east-west access through underpasses located at 13<sup>th</sup> Street and 11<sup>th</sup> Street.
  - C1 Alternative includes a separate standalone pedestrian structure at 26<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

2040 Alternative A1, C1 - 23rd Avenue Straight 5% Grade Viaduct (Delay = Seconds/Vehicle)							
Intersection	Control	AM Peak		Midday Peak		PM Peak	
		LOS	Delay	LOS	Delay	LOS	Delay
1 12th Street/26th Avenue	TWSC	A	7.2	A	8.0	A	8.2
2 13th Street/26th Avenue	Signal	B	10.1	B	10.7	B	10.8
3 14th Street/26th Avenue	Signal	A	7.7	A	8.0	A	7.9
4 10th Street/23rd Avenue	TWSC	A	4.7	A	8.9	B	11.2
5 11th Street/23rd Avenue	TWSC	Viaduct		Viaduct		Viaduct	
6 12th Street/23rd Avenue	TWSC	Viaduct		Viaduct		Viaduct	
7 13th Street/23rd Avenue	TWSC	Viaduct		Viaduct		Viaduct	
8 14th Street/23rd Avenue	TWSC	B	10.4	B	14.7	D	38.5



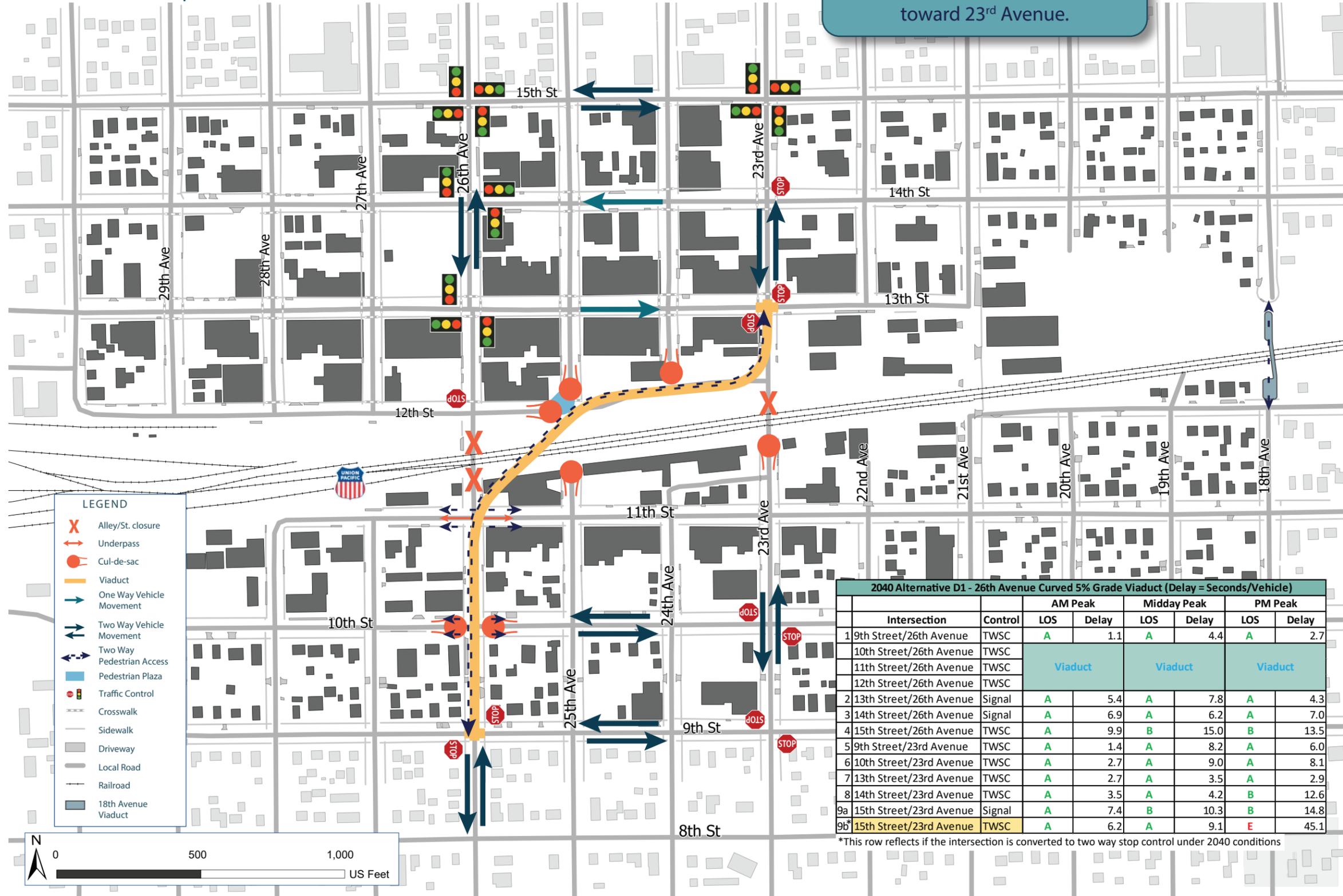
- Introduction
- Public Involvement
- Inventory
- Recommended Treatments**
- Preferred Alternatives
- Cost Estimates

# Recommended Treatments

## Motorized Vehicle and Pedestrian Traffic Analysis

Future Year 2040 Alternatives D1 (26<sup>th</sup> Avenue to 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue Curved)

### Traffic Circulation Impacts



A 26<sup>th</sup> Avenue to 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue curved alternative would direct traffic entering or leaving the downtown toward 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue.

**Summary of Traffic Impacts**

- Traffic on 10<sup>th</sup> Street, 11<sup>th</sup> Street, and 12<sup>th</sup> Street are truncated with cul-de-sacs along the 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue alignment.
- Year 2040 traffic conditions are anticipated to be acceptable.
- Vehicles and pedestrians will have underpass east to west access at 11<sup>th</sup> Street.
- East to west pedestrian only access is maintained through underpasses at 10<sup>th</sup> Street.
- 15<sup>th</sup> Street / 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue is anticipated to need signal timing adjustments. The intersection traffic should be monitored and timings should be adjusted as needed.

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# Recommended Treatments

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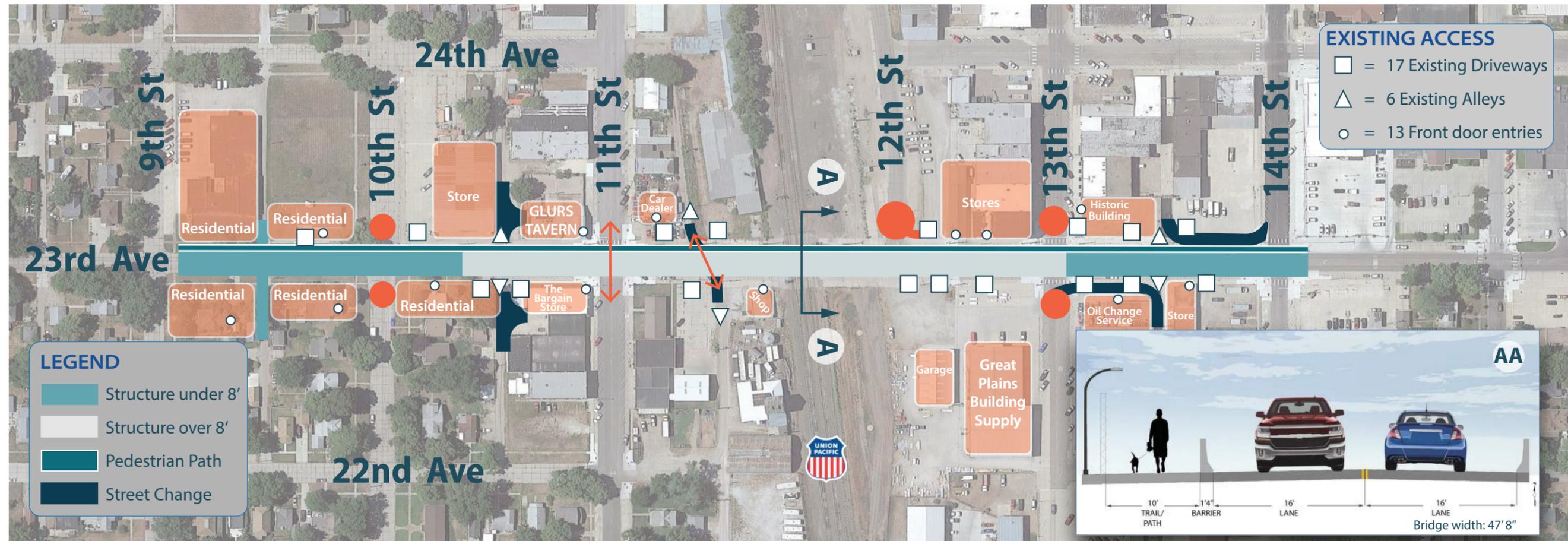
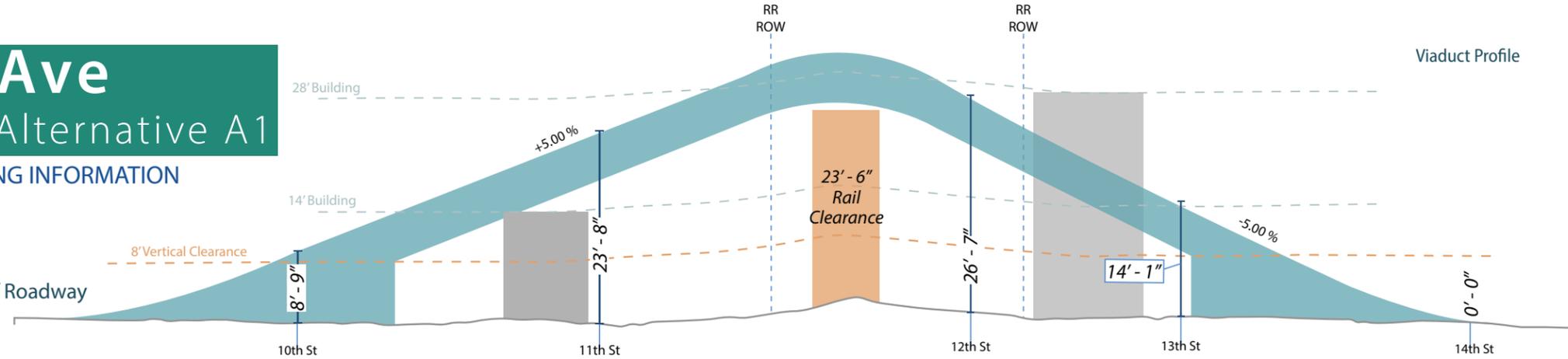
Preferred Alternatives

Cost Estimates

## 23rd Ave Viaduct Alternative A1

### BRIDGE CROSSING INFORMATION

- 5% Grade
- 4 Spans
- about 1,840' of Roadway



### BENEFITS

- ↕ = 2 Underpass
- Maintain 23rd as a primary traffic corridor
- Improvements remain within curb width
- Pedestrian path is ADA compliant

### DRAWBACKS

- = 5 Cul-de-sac
- = 5 Residential Building impact & 11 Business impacts

- Shadowing of businesses near 11th Street and between 12th - 14th

### OPTIONS

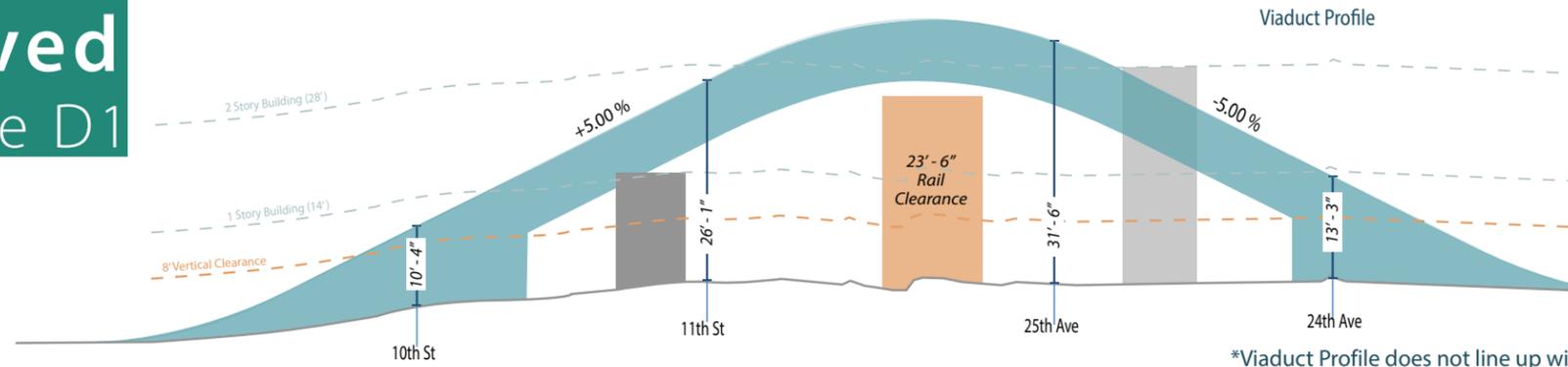
- Pedestrian mall conversion of 13th Street

# Recommended Treatments

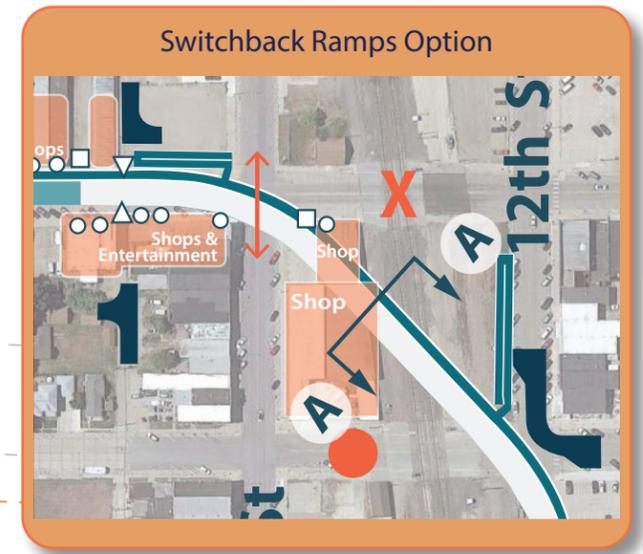
## 26th Ave to 23rd Ave Curved Viaduct Alternative D1

### BRIDGE CROSSING INFORMATION

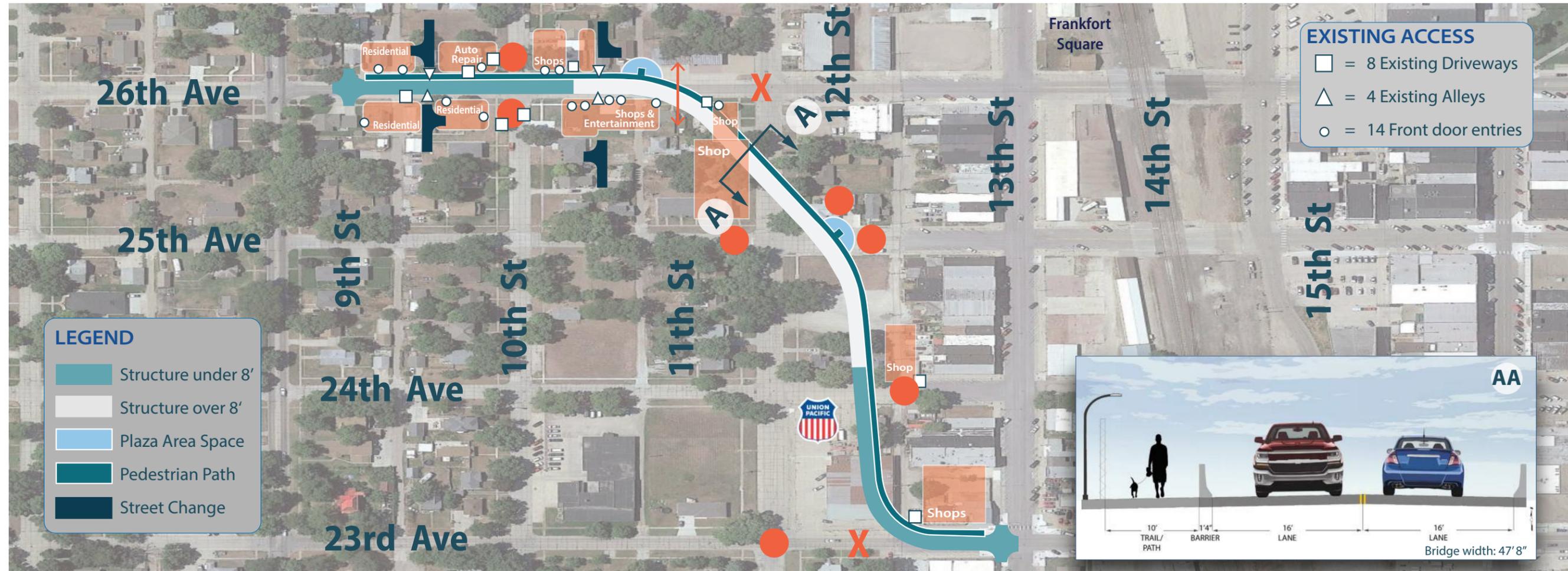
- 5% Grade
- 4 Spans
- about 2,017' of Roadway



\*Viaduct Profile does not line up with graphic below



- Introduction
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**LEGEND**

- Structure under 8'
- Structure over 8'
- Plaza Area Space
- Pedestrian Path
- Street Change

**EXISTING ACCESS**

- = 8 Existing Driveways
- △ = 4 Existing Alleys
- = 14 Front door entries

### BENEFITS

- ↑ = 1 Underpass at 11th
- No impact to 13th or 14th
- No impact to Frankfort Square
- ADA compliant pedestrian path and ramps

### DRAWBACKS

- X = 2 Street closure
- = 7 Cul-de-sac
- = 5 Residential Building impacts & 10 Business Building impacts
- UPRR ROW usage

### OPTIONS - Pedestrian Access

- Elevators (shown above)
- Switchback ramps

**NOTE: Viaduct Alternative D1 requires coordination with and approval from Union Pacific Railroad**

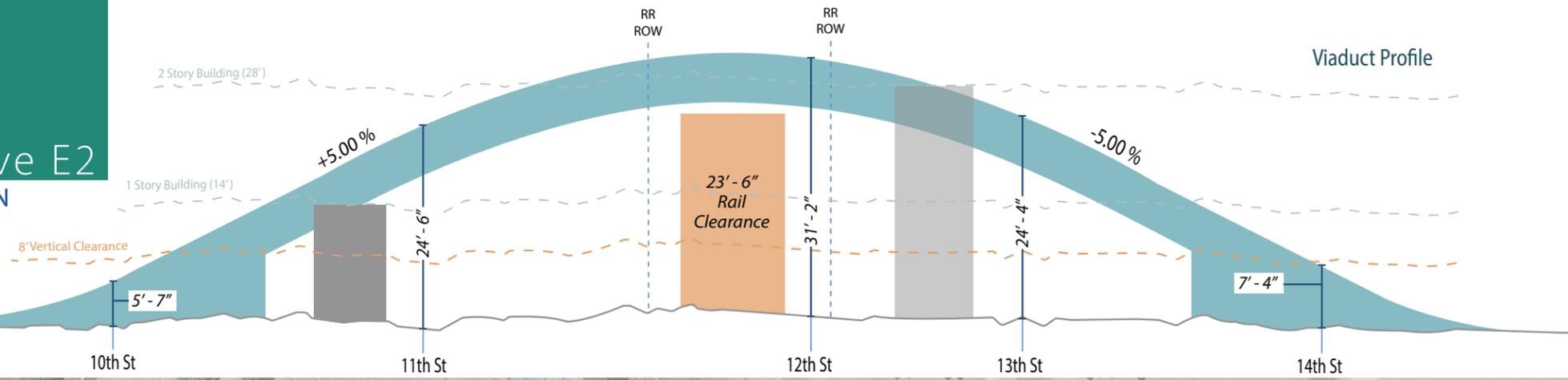
# Recommended Treatments

- Introduction
- Public Involvement
- Inventory
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- Cost Estimates

## 23rd Ave East Shift

### Viaduct Alternative E2 BRIDGE CROSSING INFORMATION

- 5% Grade
- 4 Spans
- about 1,987' of Roadway

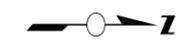


### BENEFITS

- ↕ = 3 Underpass
- Maintain 23rd as a primary traffic corridor
- Pedestrian path is ADA compliant

### DRAWBACKS

- = 5 Residential Building impact & 11 Business impacts
- Shadowing of businesses near 11th Street and between 12th - 14th
- Closes 13th and 14th as one-way streets



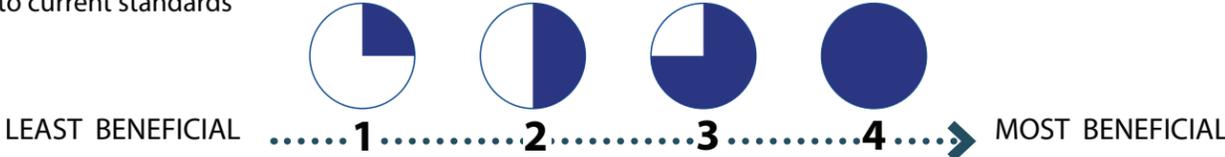
# Preferred Alternatives

## Highest Performing Alternatives

- Introduction
- Public Involvement
- Inventory
- Recommended Treatments
- Preferred Alternatives
- Cost Estimates

	ALTERNATIVES	Pedestrian Access (ADA)	Pedestrian Connectivity to heart of downtown	Vehicle Circulation	Mobility Impacts	Preserves existing Business buildings	Preserves existing Residential buildings	Preserves highly utilized parking spaces	Aesthetic Treatment Opportunities	Economic Development Opportunities	Construction Costs	SUM (Max 40)
A1	23rd Ave 5%											27
C1	23rd Ave 5% with Ped Bridge at 26th Ave											30
D1	26th Ave to 23rd Ave 5% S-Curved											33
D2	26th Ave to 23rd Ave 8% S-Curved with elevator or ramp switchback											32
E2	23rd Ave 5% East Shift*											27

\* Option is similar to the 2001 Feasibility Study, but updated to current standards



The curved options from 26<sup>th</sup> Avenue to 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue provide pedestrian paths and ramps and have little out of direction travel, minor road closures, and minimal impact to the downtown core and one-way streets.

Alternative D2 scored high on the matrix, however because it is at an 8% grade, it is not ADA compliant and has been removed from the viable options.

# Cost Estimates & Implementation

## Cost Estimates

Cost estimates are provided for planning purposes only and are estimates of construction costs in today's dollars for the conceptual alternatives. The estimates are not based on detailed designs and are meant to convey order of magnitude costs. Actual costs will vary due to a number of factors that are unknown at this preliminary study phase. Recent bid prices have fluctuated greatly over the last few years due to contractor and material availability, inflation, and other factors that have made bids more volatile and less consistent across the local market. Construction costs shown below **do not include** additional project costs for purchasing and clearing Right-of-way, utility relocations, design or construction engineer, aesthetic enhancements, and other costs that would add to the total project cost.

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## High Level Summary

Alternative	Cost Estimate (2022 Dollars)
A1: 23 <sup>rd</sup> Ave 5% Grade	\$13,200,000
D1: 26 <sup>th</sup> Ave to 23 <sup>rd</sup> Ave 5% Grade S-curved	\$16,900,000
E2: 23 <sup>rd</sup> Ave 5% Grade East Shift	\$15,800,000

## Constructibility Implementation

- Approximately 3-5 feet, at a minimum, is necessary to work and walk alongside the bridge during construction. Options developed for Columbus would provide 5-10 feet between building facades and bridge construction.
- Fencing along the chosen alternative can prevent or mitigate snow flying up on the windows and buildings during snow removal on the viaduct.
- Switchbacks or elevators save space between the buildings and provide pedestrians with multiple access points.
- Supporting bridge piers and foundation can be made to span the 7.5'x4' box trunk line on 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, however it may not fit into the aesthetic or have enough available space for construction.

# Recommendations

The City of Columbus has a vision for safely connecting downtown with its residents, commerce, and visitors. This vision includes creating a safe way to cross the Union Pacific Railroad main rail corridor. A downtown viaduct would be the last step in eliminating the at-grade street crossings through Columbus. Most of the services and retail of the downtown core is located north of the rail corridor, with a significant portion of the population living south of the railroad. This disconnect creates both a barrier and an equity issue in the community.

Numerous preliminary concepts were evaluated and screened to identify three viable options that accomplish the community goals. These three options create an opportunity to provide safe connections and further enhance the quality of the downtown experience where people can gather to enjoy this vibrant environment.

This report is the next step in the project development process. More work is needed to identify a preferred alternative and explore federal funding opportunities, which will involve community outreach and Union Pacific Railroad participation.

## Next Steps

- Railroad coordination and support
- Public & stakeholder involvement
- Selection of design concept
- Public referendum on downtown viaduct
- Federal grant and funding opportunities
- Topographic survey
- Preliminary design

THANK YOU...

CONTACT: Richard J. Bogus, P.E.

City of Columbus Engineer  
2412 14th Street, PO Box 1677  
Columbus, NE 68602-1677

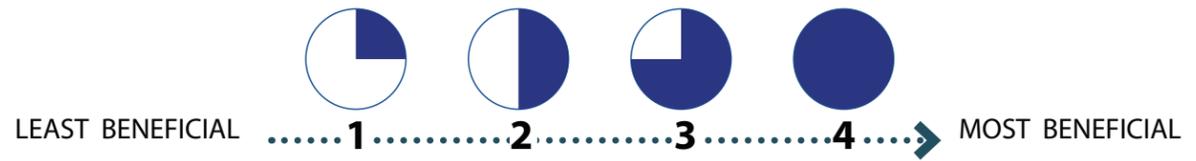
Engineering Department: 402-562-4309  
Direct: 402-562-4235  
Email: rick.bogus@columbusne.us

# Appendix A

## Alternative Options Matrix

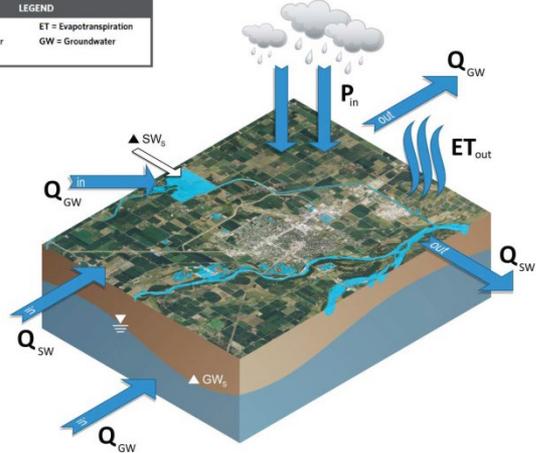
	ALTERNATIVES	Pedestrian Access (ADA)	Pedestrian Connectivity to heart of downtown	Vehicle Circulation	Mobility Impacts	Preserves existing Business buildings	Preserves existing Residential buildings	Preserves highly utilized parking spaces	Aesthetic Treatment Opportunities	Economic Development Opportunities	Construction Costs	SUM (Max 40)
A1	23rd Ave 5%											27
A2	23rd Ave 8% with elevator or ramp switchback											28
A3	23rd Ave 5% Curved											26
A4	23rd Ave 8% Curved with elevator or ramp switchback											25
B1	26th Ave 5%											26
B2	26th Ave 8% with elevator or ramp switchback											27
B3	26th Ave 5% Curved (W)											23
B4	26th Ave 8% Curved (W) with elevator or ramp switchback											19
C1	23rd Ave 5% with Ped Bridge at 26th Ave											30
C2	23rd Ave 8% with Ped Bridge at 26th Ave											30
D1	26th Ave to 23rd Ave 5% S-Curved											33
D2	26th Ave to 23rd Ave 8% S-Curved with elevator or ramp switchback											32
E1	2001 Study - Preferred Alternative 23rd Ave 6% Viaduct											24
E2	23rd Ave 5% East Shift											27

Gray rows were eliminated due to low scoring or having an 8% grade



3. **Presentation by HDR, Inc. on groundwater recharge project.**

LEGEND	
P = Precipitation	ET = Evapotranspiration
SW = Surface water	GW = Groundwater
Q = Flow	



# Columbus Recharge Project

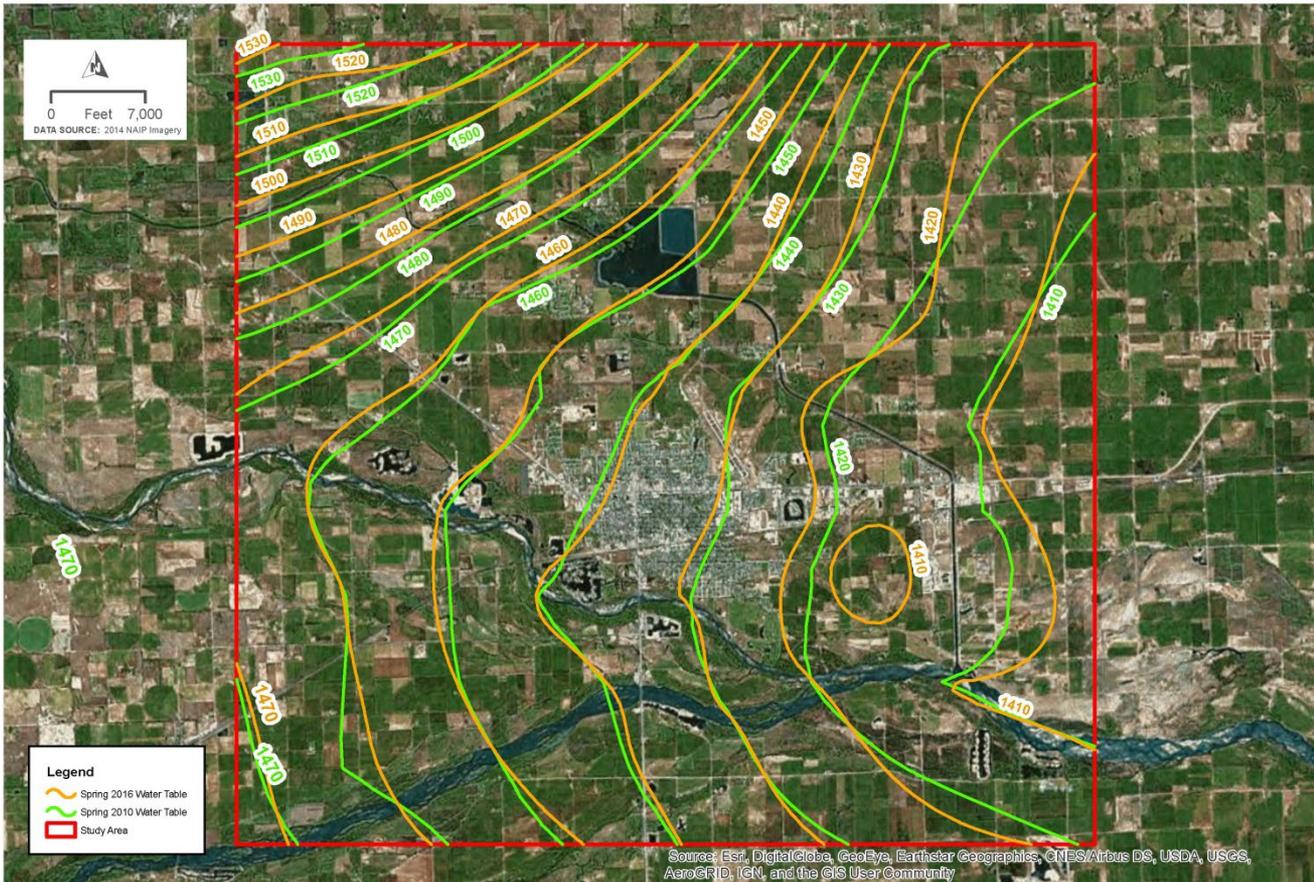
Columbus Committee of the Whole  
October 3, 2022



# Project Timeline

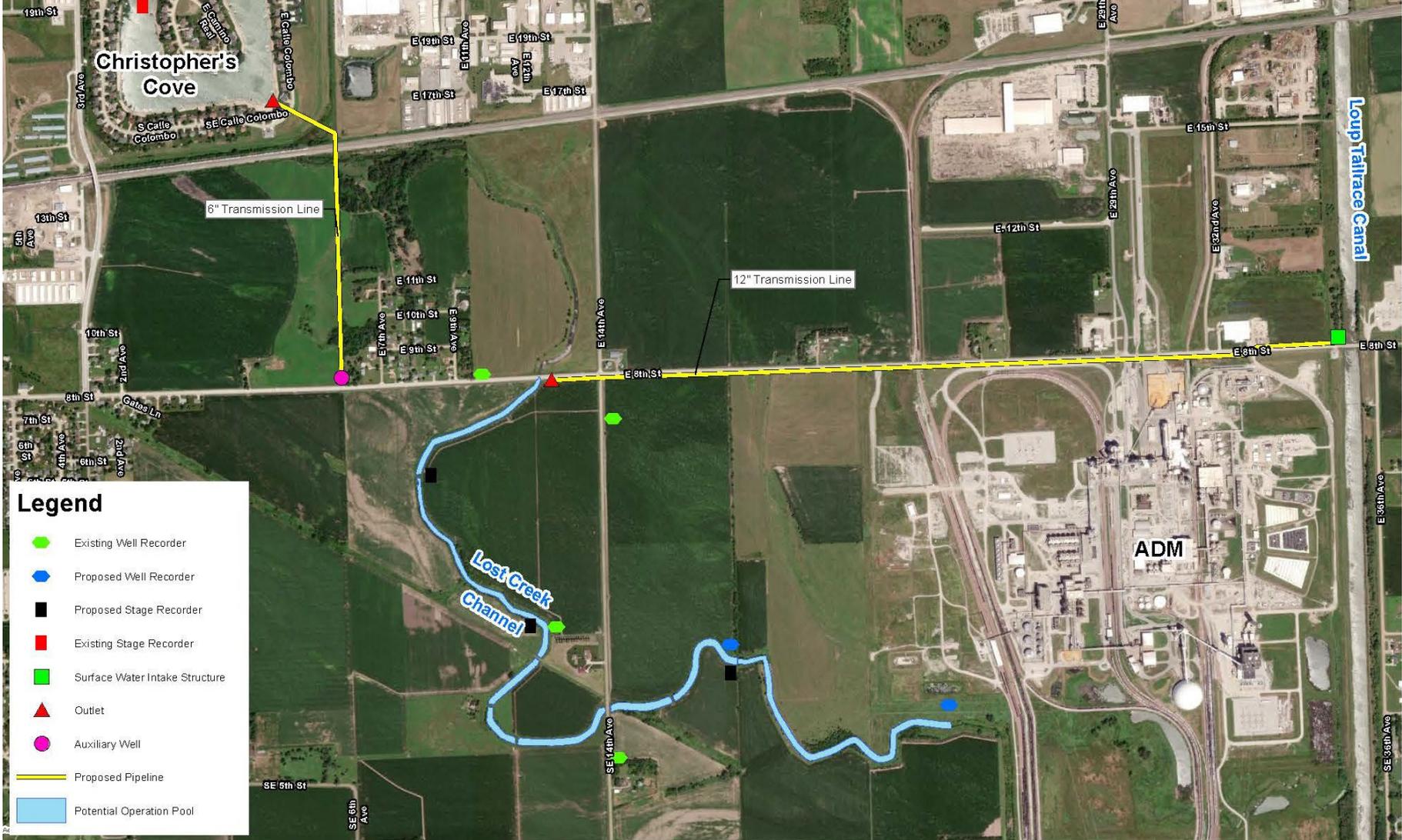


- Initiated Feasibility Study April 24, 2015
- Completed Feasibility Study June 6, 2016
  - Ground Water Decline
  - Mitigation Alternatives Identified



**COLUMBUS AREA WATER RESOURCES ASSESSMENT**  
 2010 AND 2016 WATER TABLE COMPARISON





### Legend

- Existing Well Recorder
- ⬠ Proposed Well Recorder
- Proposed Stage Recorder
- Existing Stage Recorder
- Surface Water Intake Structure
- ▲ Outlet
- Auxiliary Well
- Proposed Pipeline
- Potential Operation Pool

# Project Timeline



- Submitted Water Sustainability Fund Application July 31, 2017
- Awarded Water Sustainability Funding November 28, 2017
  - \$1.224 M
- Coalition Signed Agreement June 25, 2018
  - \$1.216 M

# Project Timeline



- Draft 30% Design September 2018
- Open House October 10, 2018
- Revised Draft 30% Design March 3, 2019
  - Construction and Engineering Cost \$2.4M
- Submitted WaterSmart Grant March 25, 2019
- Awarded WaterSmart Grant June 20, 2019
  - \$750,000
- Total Project Funding \$3.2M

# Project Timeline



- Completed 30% Design October 3, 2019
  - Submitted permits to federal, state, and local agencies
  - Initiated Easement Acquisition
- Completed Preliminary Final Design December 2, 2019
- USACE, USFWS, and USBOR consultation completed August 24, 2020
- Signed MOU to acquire Lost Creek Easements November 16, 2020
- Received Provisional Platte County Permit January 19, 2021

# Project Timeline



- Revised Final Design February 2, 2021
- Texas Power Crisis Began February 10, 2021
- Issued for bid February 17, 2021
- Bid Opening March 18, 2021
- Construction Began May, 2021
- Operational July, 2022







CAT

322B L

CAT

# Operations

- Operated Remotely
- Surface Intake Pump Station
  - Pump rate between 1,750 gpm to 2,500 gpm
  - Cease Operation When Water Flows under River Road
- Auxiliary Pump
  - Pumping Recharged Water
  - Operate When Surface Intake Pump Station On
- Real Time Monitoring – Ongoing











#### 4. **Adjournment.**