

# PAC MEETING #3 SUMMARY

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**Exposition Dr & 1<sup>st</sup> Ave N – Billings**

**NH 16-1(53)0, UPN 7908000**

January 23, 2020

Billings, Montana

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PAC Meeting #3 was held on December 12, 2019 at the Billings Public Library, 510 N 28th St, Billings, MT 59101. The meeting time was 3 to 5 PM.

## Attendees

*The sign-in sheet is included in Attachment A.*

## Action Items

- Post PAC meeting summary on web page
- Kittelson posting online open house for more feedback
- Comment sheets are due January 10
- Review and assess comments from Open House and PAC
- Continue to meet with property owners and businesses
- MDT to review feedback and select preferred alternative in late January/early February—*Note: We are meeting with MDT during the week of February 10.*

## Meeting Objectives:

1. Understand the Tier 2 intersection alternatives, evaluation criteria, and results
2. Provide feedback on the Tier 2 alternatives

## Meeting Summary

3 PM *Welcome*

Andy welcomed the group.

3:15 *Presentation - Presentation slides are included in Attachment B.*

## Comments/Questions

- Is the facility for bicycles and pedestrians on the north side of 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue N a sidewalk or wide path?
  - It's a shared-use path with 6' of landscape buffer and 12' of bicycling and walking space.
- Relocating the intersection further north along Exposition Drive would remove some skew and improve operations but would be substantial property impacts to Metrapark and Berry's Cherries.
- The 4<sup>th</sup> leg would be beneficial for properties along 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, but impacted property owners are not onboard.
- Public comment received by MDT – what if instead of expanding from 2 lanes on 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue N to 3 NBT & 1 NBR, this became 2 NBT & 1 NBR? Then the existing WBR would become a free right-turn?
  - We did test this, and the queues on the NB approach are higher with only 2 through lanes.

- The 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue N plans (other project) maintain status quo in this spot.
- MetraPark perspective – would a cooperative project to coordinate construction be possible?
  - Yes, makes a lot of sense to coordinate on this and access considerations.
  - Big Sky Economic Development Area RFP exploring more formalized access off of 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue N to MetraPark.
- Utilizing the public comment to identify more pros/cons of the two alternatives
  - Planning to open online open house to gain more input.
- Is the west side of Exposition Drive a sidewalk or full pathway? Does this connect to the on-street bike lanes on 3<sup>rd</sup>?
  - Full pathway is shown and yes, connects to on-street bike lane at 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue N.
- Is it truly free flow on Alternative 4?
  - Yes, unless a pedestrian is present.
- What's the weaving like?
  - We tested this and there's adequate distance for merging. There may be some friction, but this is anticipated to be infrequent.
- Another consideration would be to increase the landscape buffer on the east side of Exposition Drive, maintaining existing trees and increasing the comfort for people walking and biking.
- Should the "sidewalk to nowhere" terminate at the crossing on the south side of 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue N? Is that all gravel?
  - The properties near that termination shows connection to the last property that would have pedestrian activity. There's an asphalt sidewalk from that point to MDT's facility.
- How much do you think the bypass is going to take away from the WBR here?
  - That could be evaluated with the updated travel demand model that the MPO has. Rough numbers were 15-20% of traffic. After 4-5 years the volumes would likely be back to where it was. The high school being opened in Lockwood will also relieve some traffic.
- What was the reasoning for making the crossing at 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue N perpendicular? Is it necessary for traffic operations?
  - It's currently a long distance to cross for pedestrians. The shorter distance is more comfortable for pedestrians, allows for larger refuge areas for both sides and in the median, and reduces exposure for pedestrians to vehicles. Allows for shorter cycle length if desired by decreasing crossing time, though the northbound through would have a longer all-red time as they stop further back from the intersection.
  - It's a little out-of-direction – would people cut straight-across if they're able-bodied? Would cars making an EBR try to sneak by or not see a pedestrian as well? We can evaluate this item further.



## Comment Form Summary:

Attendees were provided comment forms to give their feedback and recommendations for the preferred alternative. One comment sheet was turned into the project team. MetraPark indicated their preference for Alternative 4 on this sheet. *Attachment C includes the completed comment forms.*

## Attachments:

- A. Sign-In Sheet
- B. Presentation Slides
- C. Comment Forms

Attachment A Sign-In Sheet



# Project Advisory Committee

December 12, 2019 3 to 5 PM

Billings Public Library

	<u>Name</u>	<u>Business/Organization</u>	<u>Initials</u>
1	Mike Black	Yellowstone County Public Works	
2	Erin Claunch	City of Billings Traffic	EC
3	Rusty Logan	MET, Transit	
4	Mike Yakawich	Billings City Council - Ward 1	
5	Roy Neese	Billings City Council - Ward 2	
6	Donald Jones	Yellowstone County Commission	
7	Scott Walker	City of Billings Transportation Planning	SW
8	Kristi Drake	Billings TrailNet	
9	John Brewer	Billings Chamber of Commerce	
10	Pepper Valdez	Billings Fire Department	
11	Brian Korell	Billings Police Department	
12	Bill Dutcher	MetraPark	BD
13	Ed Arnold	Billings Heights Task Force	
14	Tim Goodridge	EBURD Coordinator	
15	Gale Berry	Cherry Properties	
16	Ray Stevenson	A&I Distributors	
17	Denis Pitman	Yellowstone County Commission	
18	Wade Salyards	MDT	WS
19	Stan Brelin	MDT	
20	Mike Taylor	MDT Kurtis Schnieber (for M.T.)	KT

Attachment B Presentation Slides

# Project Advisory Committee (PAC) Meeting #3

December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2019



# Meeting Purpose & Agenda

- Purpose
  - Understand the Tier 2 alternatives, evaluation criteria, and results
  - Provide feedback on the Tier 2 alternatives
- Agenda
  - Welcome
  - Presentation
    - Recap from PAC Meeting #2
    - Recap from Open House
    - Tier 2 alternatives, evaluation criteria, and results
  - Review Tier 2 alternatives (break-out session)
  - Next steps and meeting close



# Introductions

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- Name
- Who you represent?
- Have you heard anything related to this intersection?

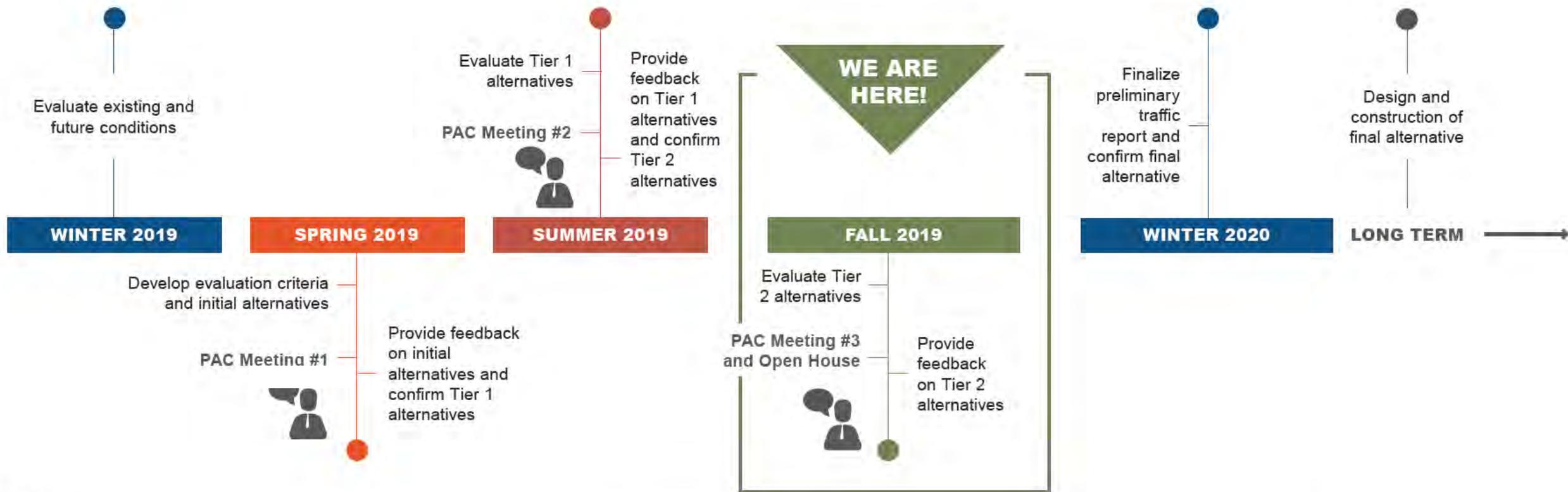


# Study Objectives

- Facilitate an open, honest, and transparent decision-making process
- Improve traffic operations and safety for all users
- Improve the pedestrian and bicycle environment
- Improve pavement and area drainage



# Schedule



- Other Activities
- Survey
  - Geotechnical
  - Hydraulics
  - Environmental
  - Utilities



# Recap from PAC Meeting #2



# PAC Feedback on Tier 1 Alternatives

Alternative	Move Forward to Tier 2		Comments & Concerns	
	Yes	No	Pros	Cons
Alt 1 NB	1	2	Used for comparison	
Alt 2 Shared L/R	0	5	No comments	Doesn't solve operation issues for 2040
Alt 3 L/R/R	0	5	No comments	Doesn't solve operation issues for 2040 Potential queuing problems for westbound left-turn
Alt 4 Free RT	5	0	Good bicycle and pedestrian facilities Better safety for bicyclists and pedestrians Simple design for users Relieves queuing Good free-flow movement for vehicles heading west-to-north	No comments
Alt 5 Dual RT	3	2	Good bicycle and pedestrian facilities Potential queuing on WB right-turn if no RTOR	
Alt 6 DLT	3	2	Longer life expectancy Fewer construction periods Relieves queuing	Higher right-of-way and cost Worse bicycle and pedestrian facilities compared to Alts 4 and 5 Potential weaving issues northbound

# Action Items from PAC Meeting #2

1. Post meeting materials on website [www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/expofirst](http://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/expofirst)
  - Materials posted on website.
2. Schedule next PAC Meeting in December
  - We are here today!



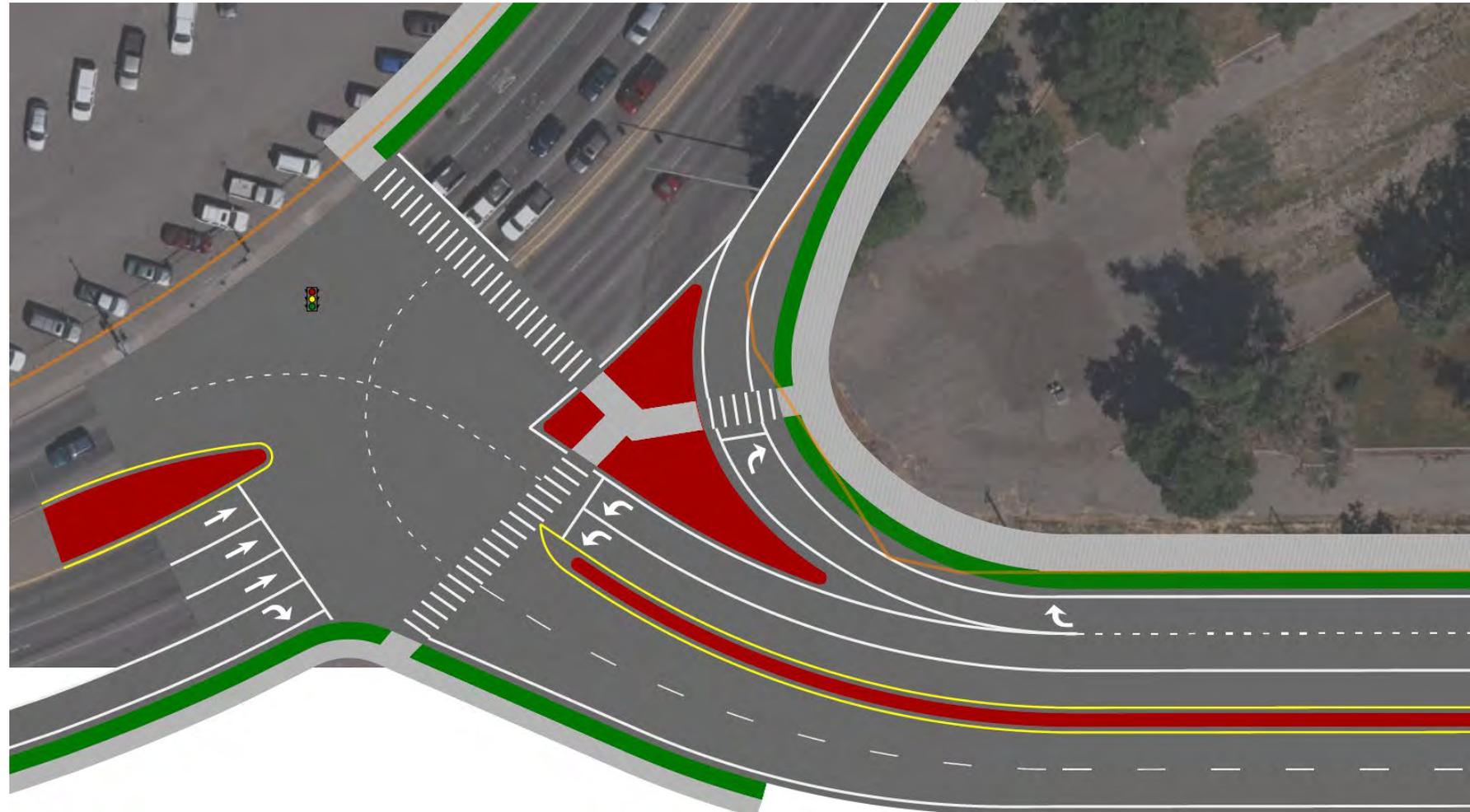
# Action Items from PAC Meeting #2 (cont'd)

3. Lockwood is improving sidewalk on the north side of US 87 to the bridge (east of the study area) – providing improvements on the north side of 1st Avenue N would facilitate connections to Lockwood.



# Action Items from PAC Meeting #2 (cont'd)

4. Interest in seeing free right-turn on different concepts



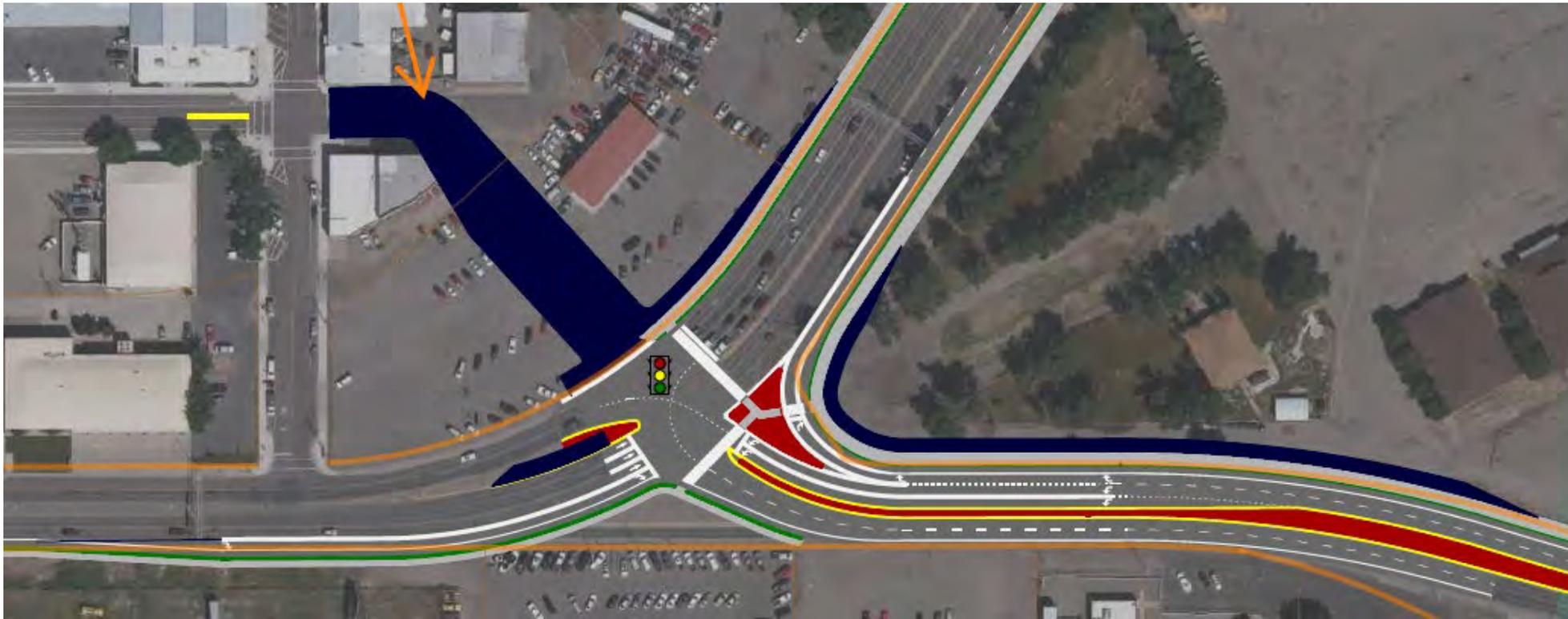
# Action Items from PAC Meeting #2 (cont'd)

5. Interest in providing additional southbound left-turn storage on all plans



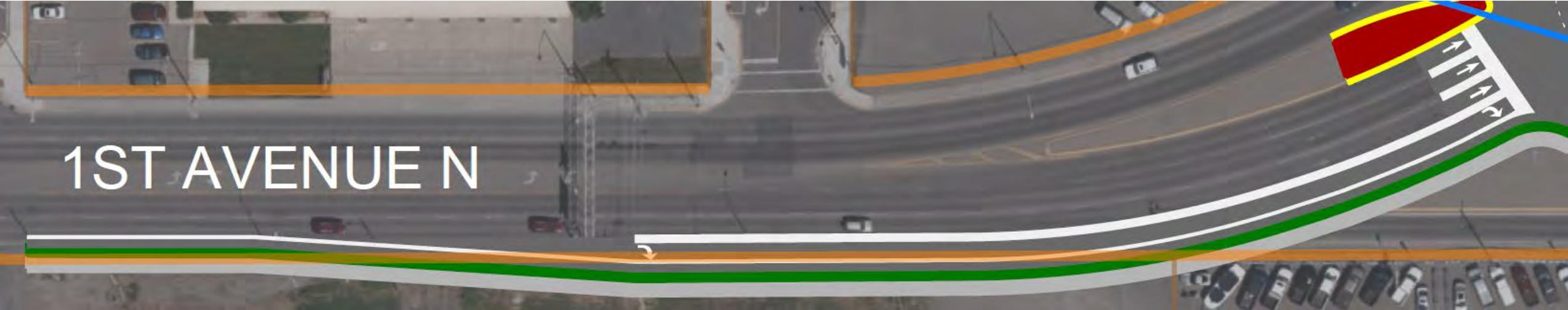
# Action Items from PAC Meeting #2 (cont'd)

6. Interest in seeing how a 4th leg would be integrated to the intersection, providing a connection to 2nd Avenue N.



# Action Items from PAC Meeting #2 (cont'd)

7. Assess a second northbound right-turn lane
  - Minimal operational benefit (6 seconds less of delay)
  - Reduces queue length, but limited usage of both lanes due to queue from northbound through
  - Greater ROW impacts



1ST AVENUE N

The image shows an aerial view of a road intersection. The road is labeled '1ST AVENUE N' in white text. The road has multiple lanes, and there are colored overlays indicating lane configurations: a green line along the left side, a white line in the middle, and a red line on the right. There are also yellow and blue lines. The road curves to the right. There are some cars and buildings visible in the background.

Single Northbound Right-Turn Lane

Required Storage Length: **425 feet**  
Northbound-Through 95<sup>th</sup> Queue: **598 feet**  
Intersection Vehicle Delay: **38.3 seconds**  
NB Right-Turn Vehicle Delay: **20.7 seconds**

Northbound-Through  
95<sup>th</sup> Queue



Dual Northbound Right-Turn Lane

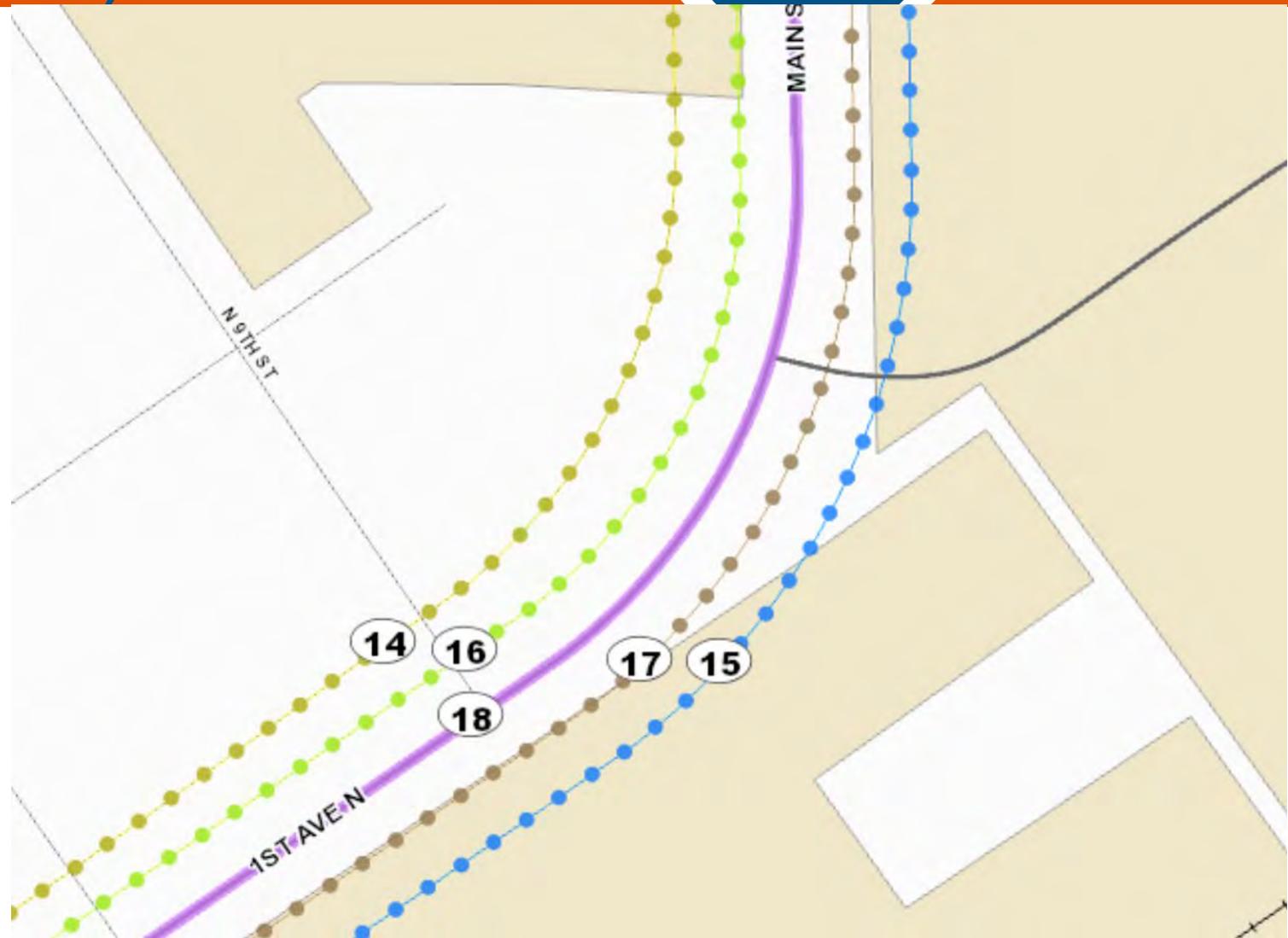
Required Storage Length: **175 feet**  
Northbound-Through 95<sup>th</sup> Queue: **598 feet**  
Intersection Vehicle Delay: **37.6 seconds**  
NB Right-Turn Vehicle Delay: **14.2 seconds**

Northbound-Through  
95<sup>th</sup> Queue



# Action Items from PAC Meeting #2 (cont'd)

8. Has transit been involved
- MET Transit is on the PAC.
  - Five routes travel through intersection.





# Recap from Open House



# Open House Attendance

- We held two sessions on Dec 12, 2019.
  - 18 attendees @ noon session
  - 25 attendees @ evening session



# Open House Attendance



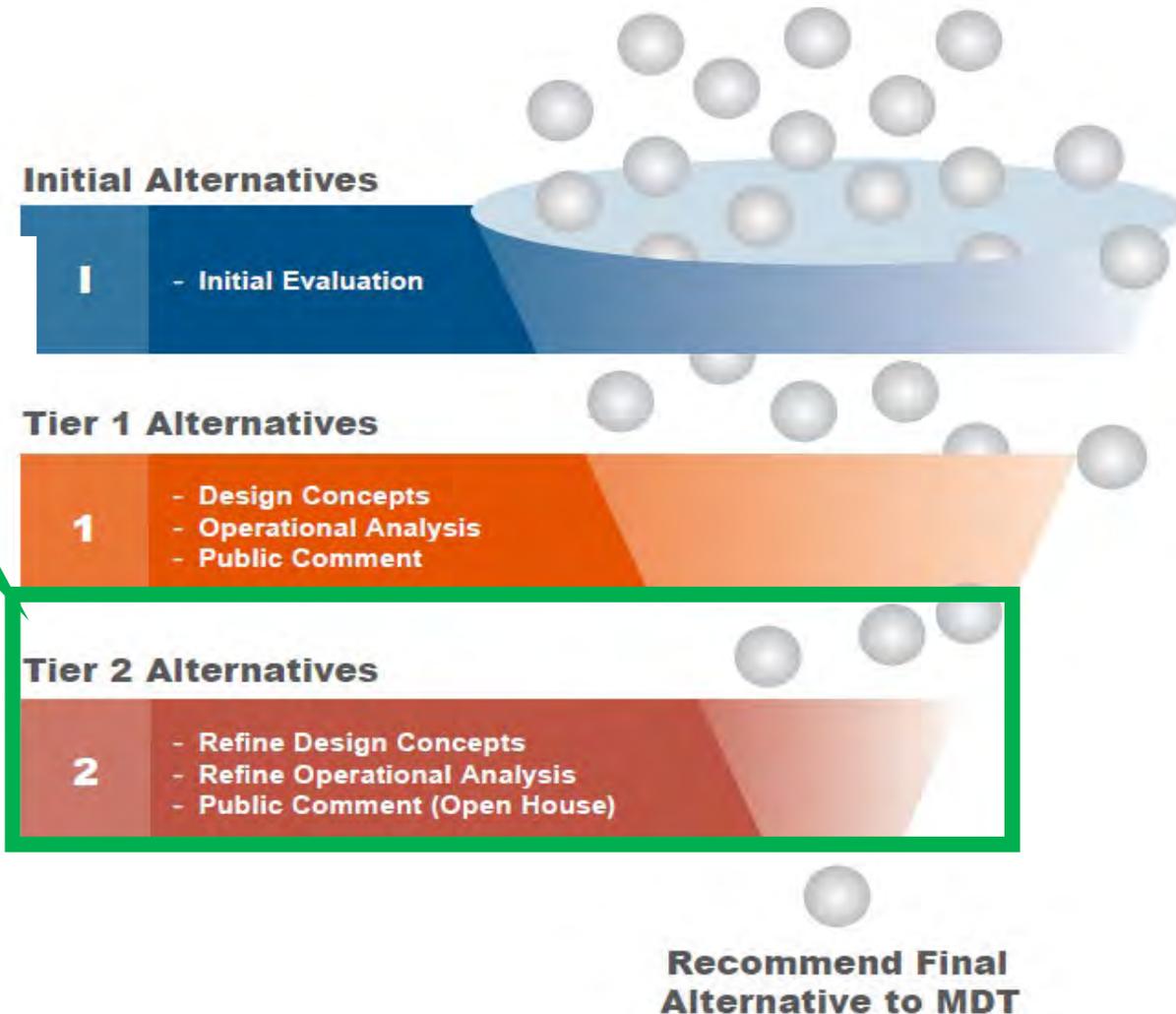




# Tier 2 Alternatives



# Tiered Approach



- Started with a range of options (~16)
  - Selected six alternatives for Tier 1
  - Selected three alternatives for Tier 2
- **Tier 2**
  - Evaluate three alternatives
  - Recommend final alternative to MDT for design



# Alternative 1 No-Build



- Does not fix the problem
- Used to compare alternatives



# Alternative 4

## Free Westbound Right-Turn Lane

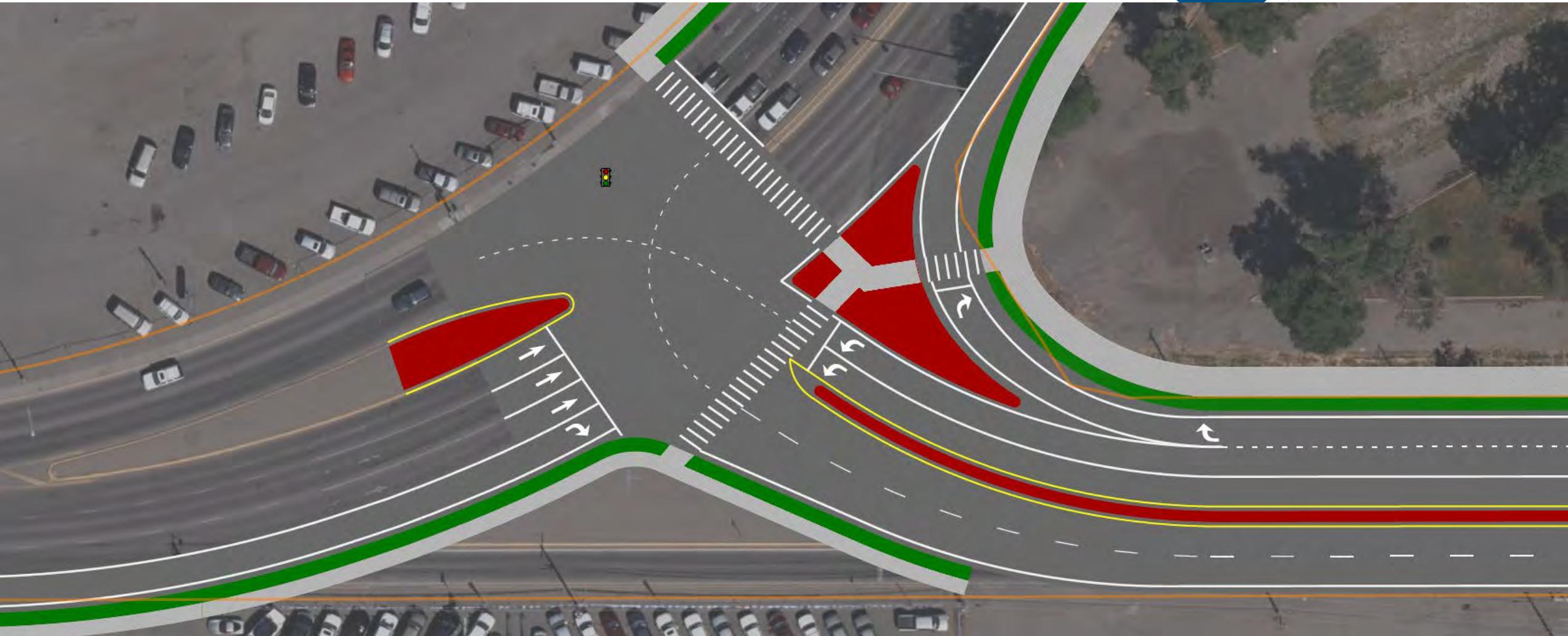


- Modify westbound approach
  - Dual left-turn lanes
  - Single right-turn lane (signalized)
  - Lane alignment
- Add 4<sup>th</sup> northbound through lane to Bench Blvd
- Modify northbound right-turn lane
- Add crossings, pathway, and detached sidewalks



# Alternative 4

## Free Westbound Right-Turn Lane



# Alternative 4

## Free Westbound Right-Turn Lane



# Alternative 4

## Free Westbound Right-Turn Lane



# Alternative 4 Free Westbound Right-Turn Lane



# Alternative 4

## Free Westbound Right-Turn Lane

- Reduces spillback for westbound right-turn lane
- Operates at Level of Service C (30 seconds of delay) during AM peak hour or D (42 seconds of delay) during PM peak hour
- Improves accessibility to MetraPark with new travel lane on Exposition Drive
- Enhances safety by reducing traffic congestion and adding pedestrian and bicyclist facilities

### Impacts

- » Right-of-way impact - 59,500 square feet
- » # of properties impacted - 7

### Estimated Construction Cost

- » \$7.5 million



# Alternative 5

## Dual Westbound Right-Turn Lanes

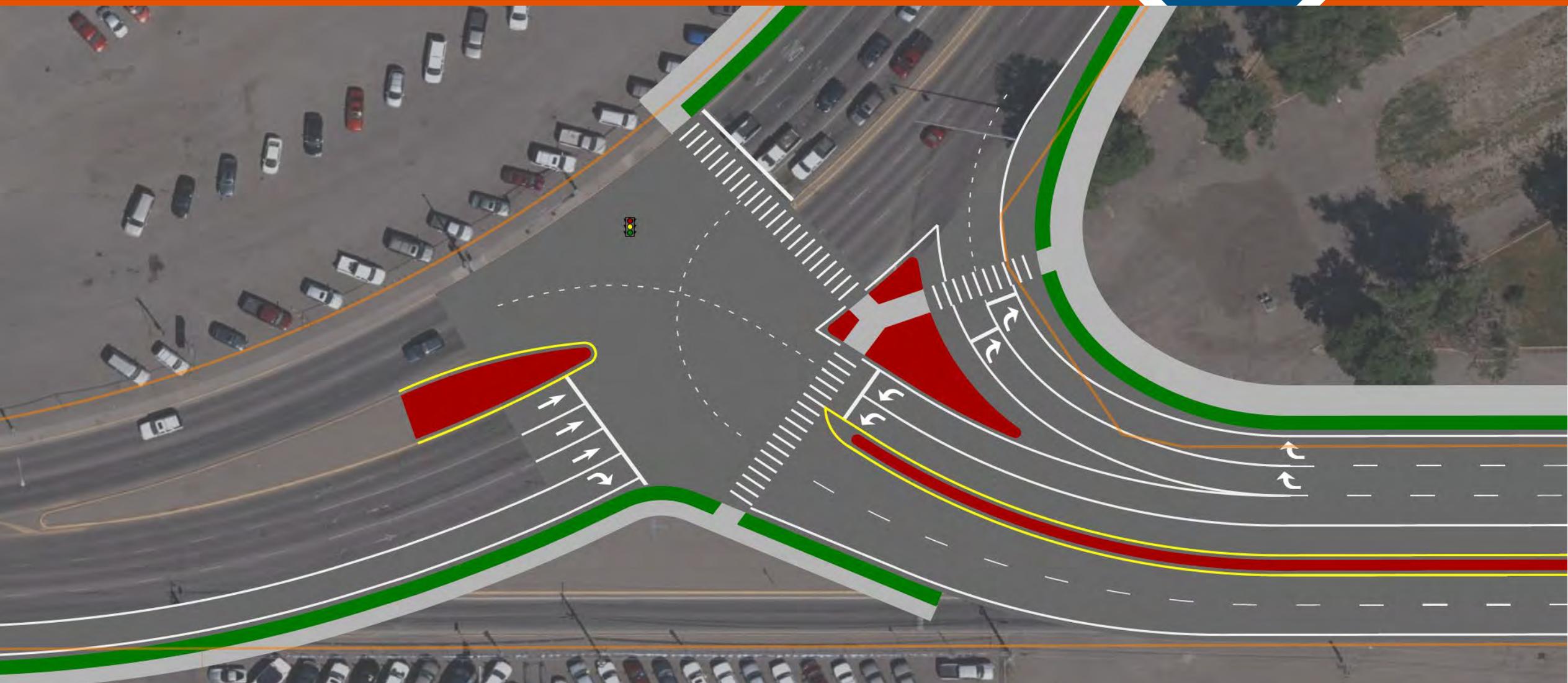


- Modify westbound approach
  - Dual left-turn lanes
  - Dual right-turn lane (signalized)
    - RTOR for outside lane
  - Lane alignment
- Modify northbound right-turn lane
- Add crossings, pathway, and detached sidewalks



# Alternative 5

## Dual Westbound Right-Turn Lanes



# Alternative 5

## Dual Westbound Right-Turn Lanes



# Alternative 5

## Dual Westbound Right-Turn Lanes



# Alternative 5

## Dual Westbound Right-Turn Lanes



# Alternative 5

## Dual Westbound Right-Turn Lanes

- Reduces spillback for westbound right-turn lane
- Operates at Level of Service C (28 seconds of delay) during AM peak hour or D (39 seconds of delay) during PM peak hour
- Provides connections for pedestrians and bicyclists

### Impacts

- » Right-of-way impact - 55,000 square feet
- » # of properties impacted - 7

### Estimated Construction Cost

- » \$7.4 million





# Tier 2 Evaluation Criteria and Results



# Evaluation Results

Criteria	Alt 1 NB	Alt 4 Free RT	Alt 5 Dual RT
Safety Performance	Lower	Medium	Medium
Number of Free Right-Turns	1	1	0
Pedestrian Facility Quality	Lower	Higher	Higher
Bicycle Facility Quality	Lower	Higher	Higher
Traffic Operations (2040 AM/PM Peak Hour Level of Service)	C/F	C/D	C/D
Traffic Operations Lifespan (After 2040)	0 years	8-12 years	8-12 years
Right-Of-Way Impact (square-feet)	None	59,500	55,000
Number of Properties Impacted	0	7	7
Design and Construction Cost Estimates	None	\$7.5 mil	\$7.4 mil

# Project Advisory Committee

## Successful Outcome of this Project

- Long-term solution versus a stop gap solution.
- Multimodal access to MetraPark. Accessibility for all users.
- The project includes bike and pedestrian improvements – a beautiful multimodal project.
- Right solution for all users.
- Just address the problems at hand for now at Exposition Drive and 1st Avenue N and see how other projects (e.g. Inner Belt Loop, Bypass) change traffic at this intersection
- Address simple things (e.g. address snow storage with boulevards and keep sidewalks clear). Make sure it is safer and efficient. Put thoughts together to achieve a viable solution that works for the next 30 or 40 years.
- Improve traffic flow.
- Idea of MDT not purely focused on moving cars. That's a good thing.
- Improved traffic flow and better access into and out of MetraPark.
- Move traffic, bicyclists, and pedestrians safely through the intersection.
- All road users comfortably accommodated. It would be disappointing to forget bikes and pedestrians and go with an easy solution for vehicles only.
- Like the alternative through the MetraPark – its looking good (cost aside). Like the jog to the interstate for a direct connection. Also, like displaced left-turn option.





# Breakout Session – Let's Hear From You!





# Next Steps



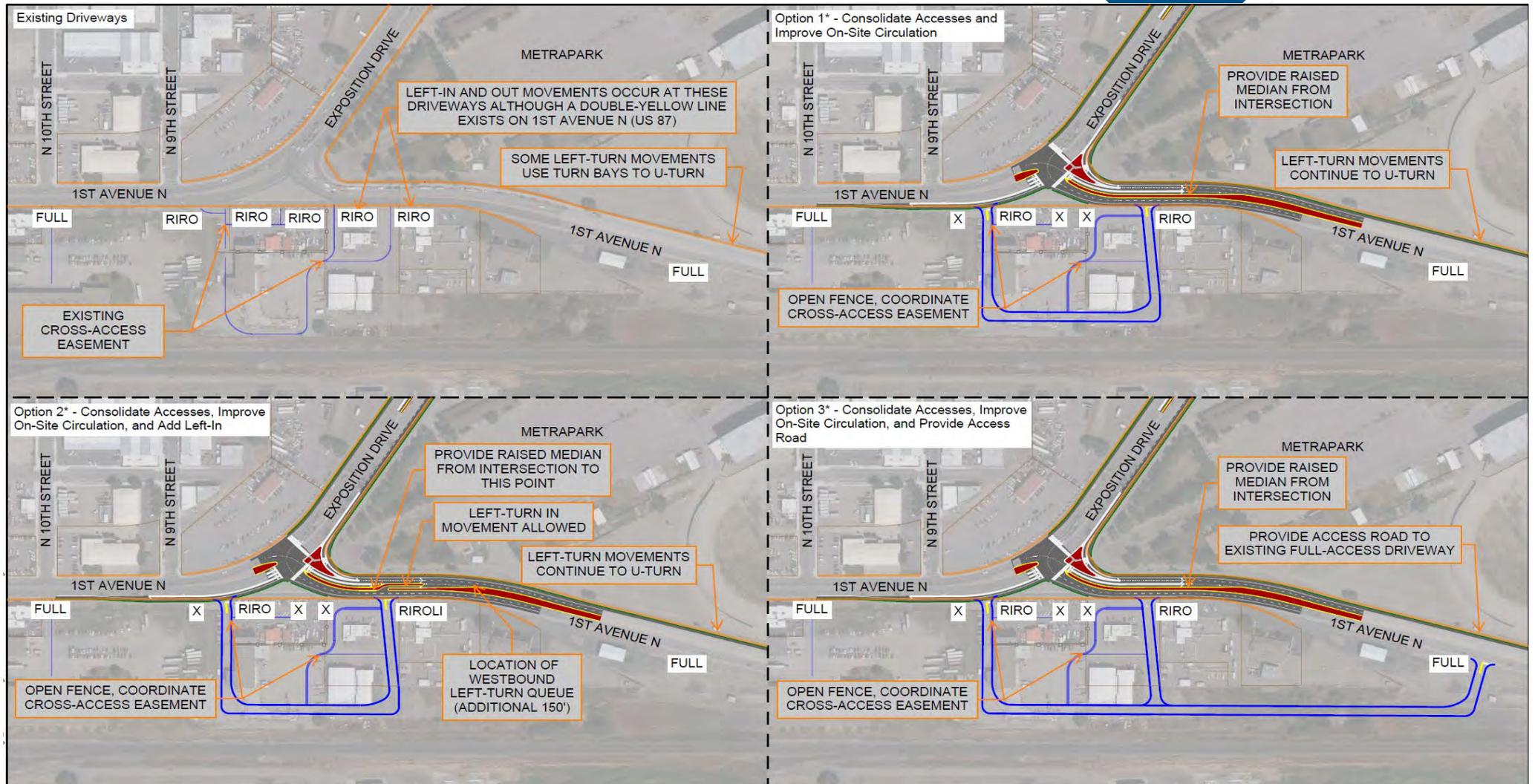
# Next Steps

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- PAC action—Return comment sheet by January 10<sup>th</sup>
- Technical team will...
  - post materials to project website: <https://www.mdt.mt.gov/pubinvolve/expofirst/>
  - review and assess comments from open house and PAC
  - continue to meet with property owners and businesses
  - recommend preferred alternative to MDT



# Driveway Options



## Attachment C Comment Forms

## Comment Form

### Project Advisory Committee Meeting #3

Thursday, December 12, 2019

Project ID: NH 16-1(53)0 Control Number: 79080000

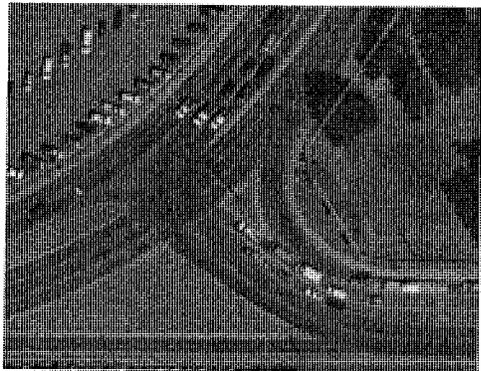


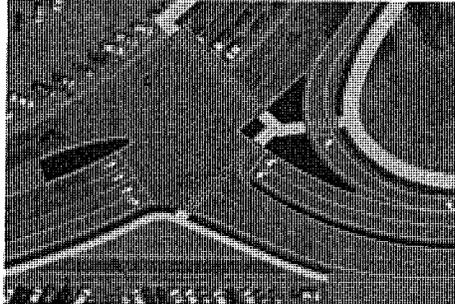
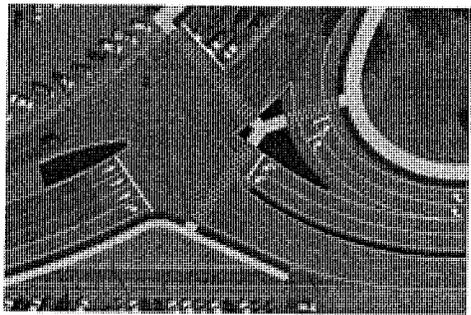
Leave your comments with us, mail to Wade Salyards, Project Design Engineer  
 PO Box 20437, Billings, MT 59104-0437, or e-mail to [wsalyards@mt.gov](mailto:wsalyards@mt.gov).

Please submit comments by **Friday, January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2020.**

Name: Bill Dutcher / Jeff Seward  
 Address: Metrapark  
 E-Mail: bdutcher@metrapark.com  
 Phone: 406.256-2444

1. Three alternatives are being evaluated to improve this intersection. Tell us what you think of each.

Alt. #	Configuration	What do you like?	What would you change?
1	<b>No-Build</b> 		

4	<p><b>Free Westbound Right-Turn Lane</b></p> 	<p>This is our much <del>preferred</del> preferred choice. It has by far the best options in the Metrolark Point of View.</p>	
5	<p><b>Dual Westbound Right-Turn Lanes</b></p> 		

**2. Any Other Comments...**

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**3. Would you be interested in participating in future meetings for this project during the design phase?**

(Circle One) Yes or No

**Thank you for your comments!**