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January 23, 2020

# POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

## ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS PHASE

## Agenda

1. Welcome and introductions.
2. Recap of November Policy Advisory Committee meeting.
3. Public engagement update.
4. Engineering update.
5. Environmental update.
6. Schedule update.
7. Public comment.
8. Next meeting.

## Recap of November Policy Advisory Committee Meeting

- Updates on public engagement and coordination activities.
- Recap of key takeaways from Richmond Pulse BRT tour.
- Engineering update:
  - Summary of 15 percent plan comments and process to address comments.
  - Platform height discussion.
- Update on the Ramsey County Rail Right-of-Way Design Guide.
- Discussion on the Transit-Oriented Development Grant Application.



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# Public Engagement Update

## Recent Public Engagement Activities

- Meetings with public housing resident councils:
  - December 4: Valley Hi-Rise.
  - December 9: Wabasha Hi-Rise.
- Ramsey County Rail Right-of-Way Design Guide drop-in discussions:
  - December 5: Hmong Village.
  - December 10: Maplewood Fire Station.
  - December 12: CLUES.



Hmong Village Drop-In Discussion, December 5



## Recent Public Engagement Activities

- December 12: Pop-up at Saint Paul Farmers Market.
- December 16: Meeting with Metropolitan Center for Independent Living.
- January 7: Downtown White Bear Lake station neighborhood drop-in discussion.
- January 21: Harvest Park Master Plan community open house.



Downtown White Bear Lake station neighborhood drop-in discussion, January 7

## Public Engagement Themes



Downtown White Bear Lake station neighborhood drop-in discussion, January 7

- Saint Paul residents, businesses and employees.
  - Excitement for increased transit options downtown and on the East Side.
  - Concern about loss of access and parking on Robert Street.
  - Interest in changes to the Bruce Vento Trail.
- White Bear Lake residents.
  - Concern about traffic impacts of Downtown White Bear Lake station along with planned expansion at White Bear Lake Area High School campus.

## Public Engagement Themes

- Ramsey County Rail Right-of-Way Design Guide drop-in discussions:
  - Concern about safety for trail users and nearby residents.
  - Interested in the size and design of the buffer between the BRT guideway, trail and surrounding property.
  - Desire to maintain natural feeling of the trail.
  - Interest in adding public art at stations.



Maplewood Fire Station Drop-In Discussion, December 10



## Upcoming Public Engagement

- Spring 2020: Targeted engagement with Hmong community and other communities of color in the project area.
- Continuation of efforts to increase general awareness about the project, such as pop-ups at community events.



Saint Paul Farmers Market, December 12



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# Engineering Update

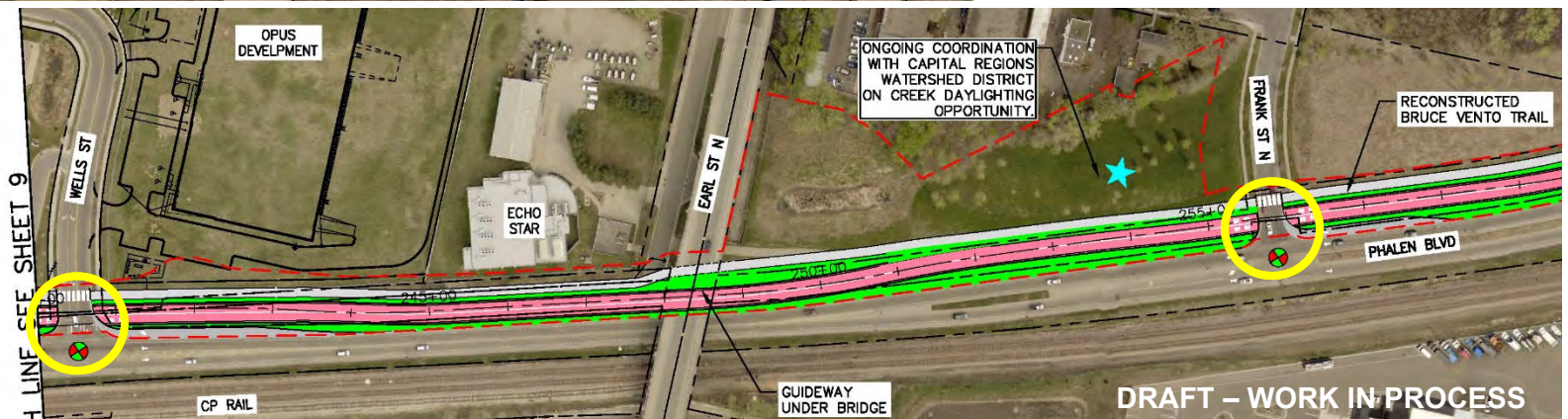
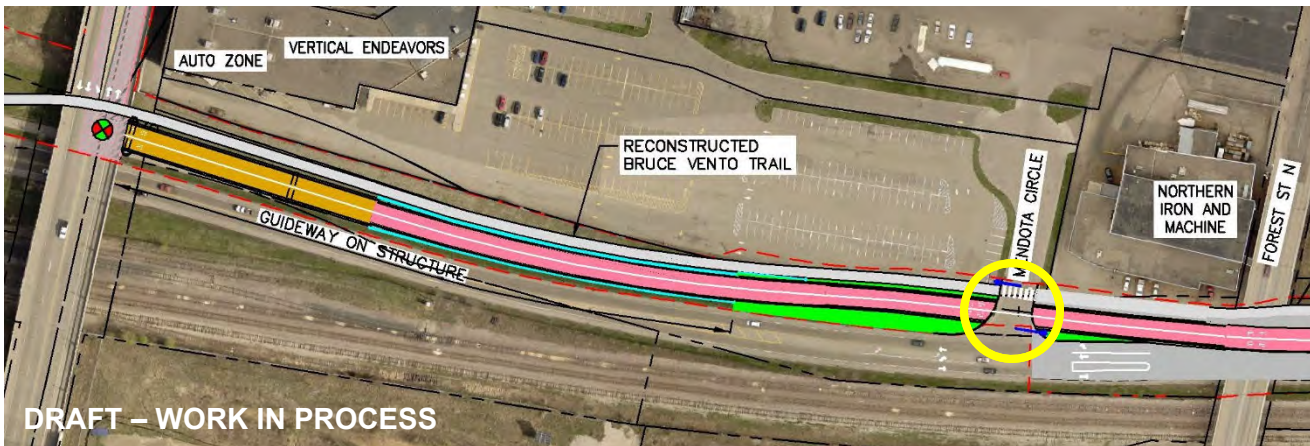
## Recent Coordination Activities

- Issue resolution team meetings (Highway 61, Maplewood and Saint Paul).
- Agency coordination meetings:
  - Saint Paul:
    - 15 percent plan comment review.
    - Robert Street.
  - MnDOT:
    - Highway 61 cross section.
    - Whitaker Street area geometrics.
  - Metro Transit:
    - 15 percent plan comment review.
    - Maplewood Mall Transit Center design.



## Potential Refinements to 15 Percent Plans

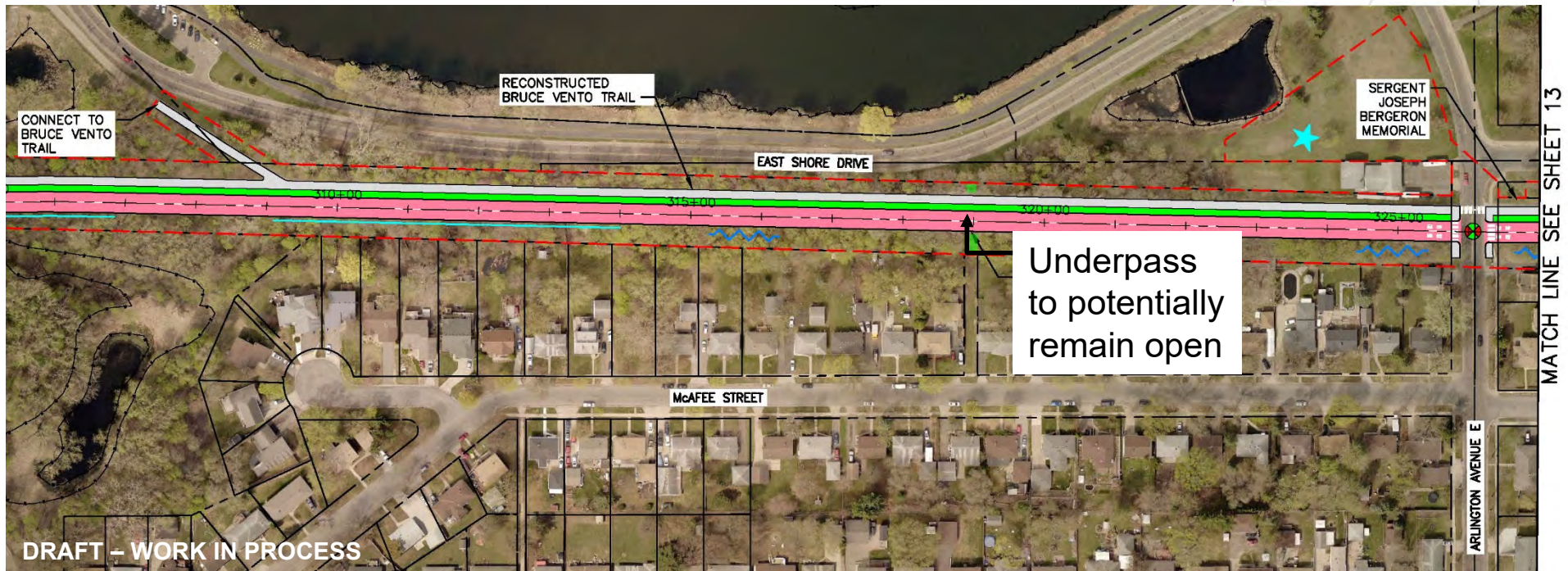
- Consider traffic signal or gates at Mendota Circle, Wells Street and Frank Street.





## Potential Refinements to 15 Percent Plans

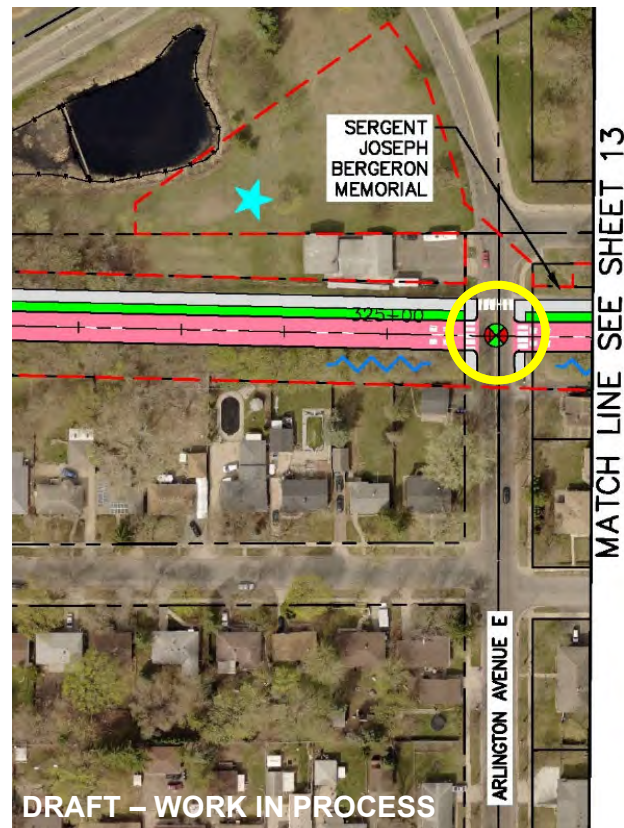
- McAfee Street underpass to potentially remain open.





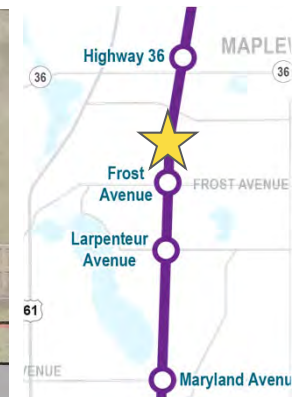
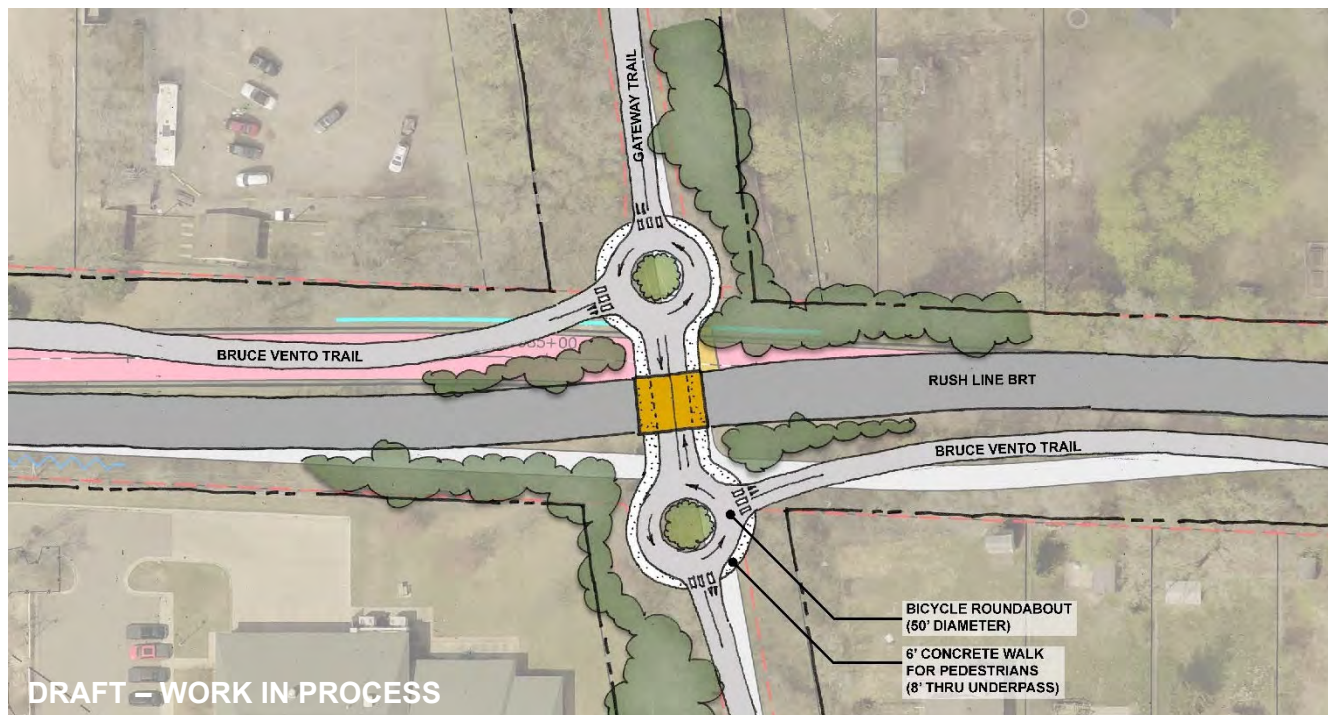
## Potential Refinements to 15 Percent Plans

- Utilize stop sign instead of signal at Arlington Avenue.



## Potential Refinements to 15 Percent Plans

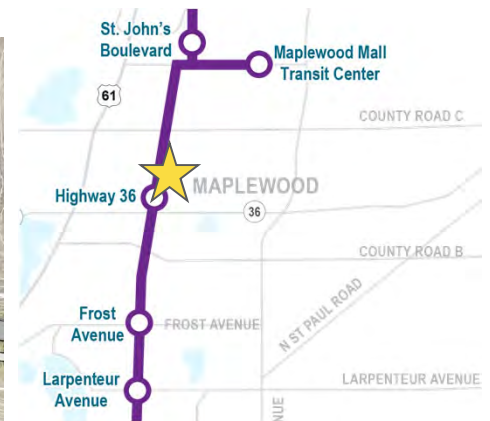
- Switch the Bruce Vento Trail from the west to the east side of the guideway at the Gateway State Trail rather than at Larpenteur Avenue.





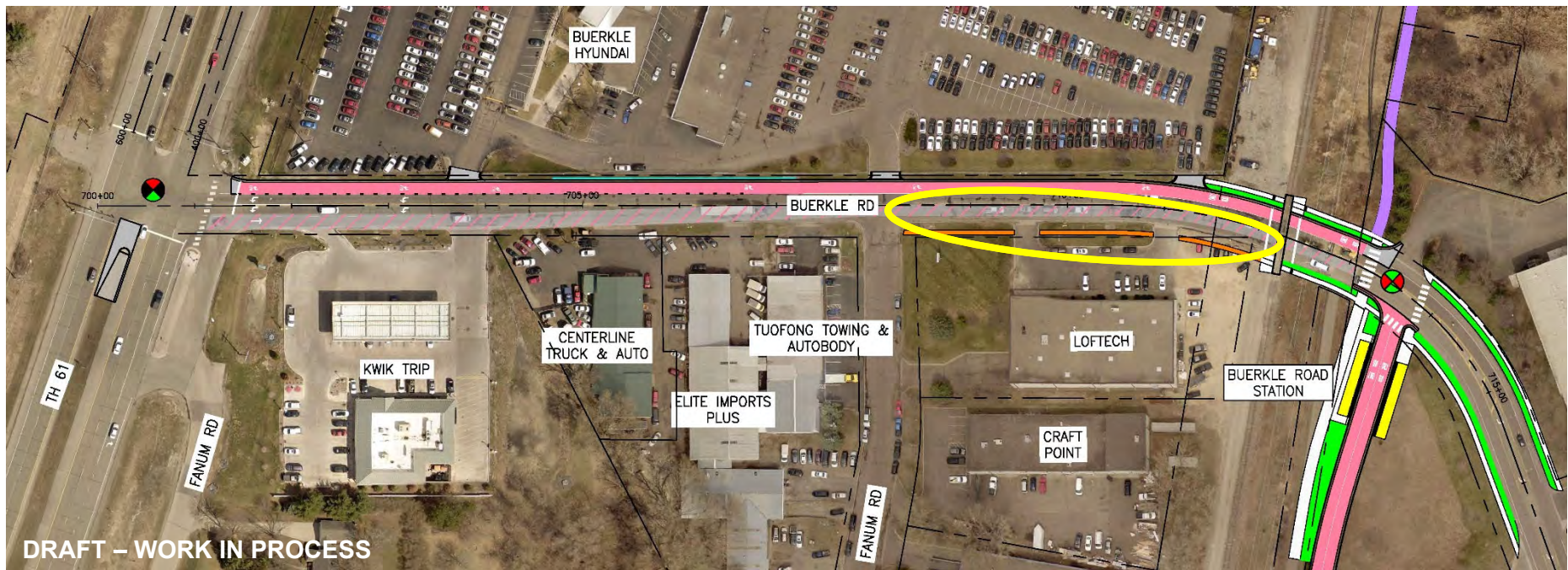
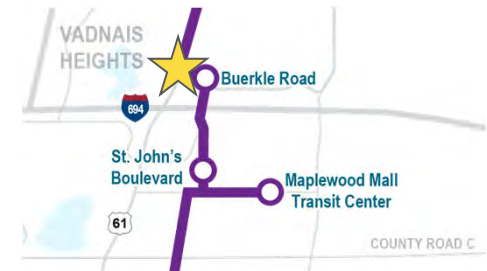
## Potential Refinements to 15 Percent Plans

- Evaluate two options for the Highway 36 station in the Environmental Assessment: platforms only and platforms plus joint use parking (surface lot plus one level) in Harvest Park.



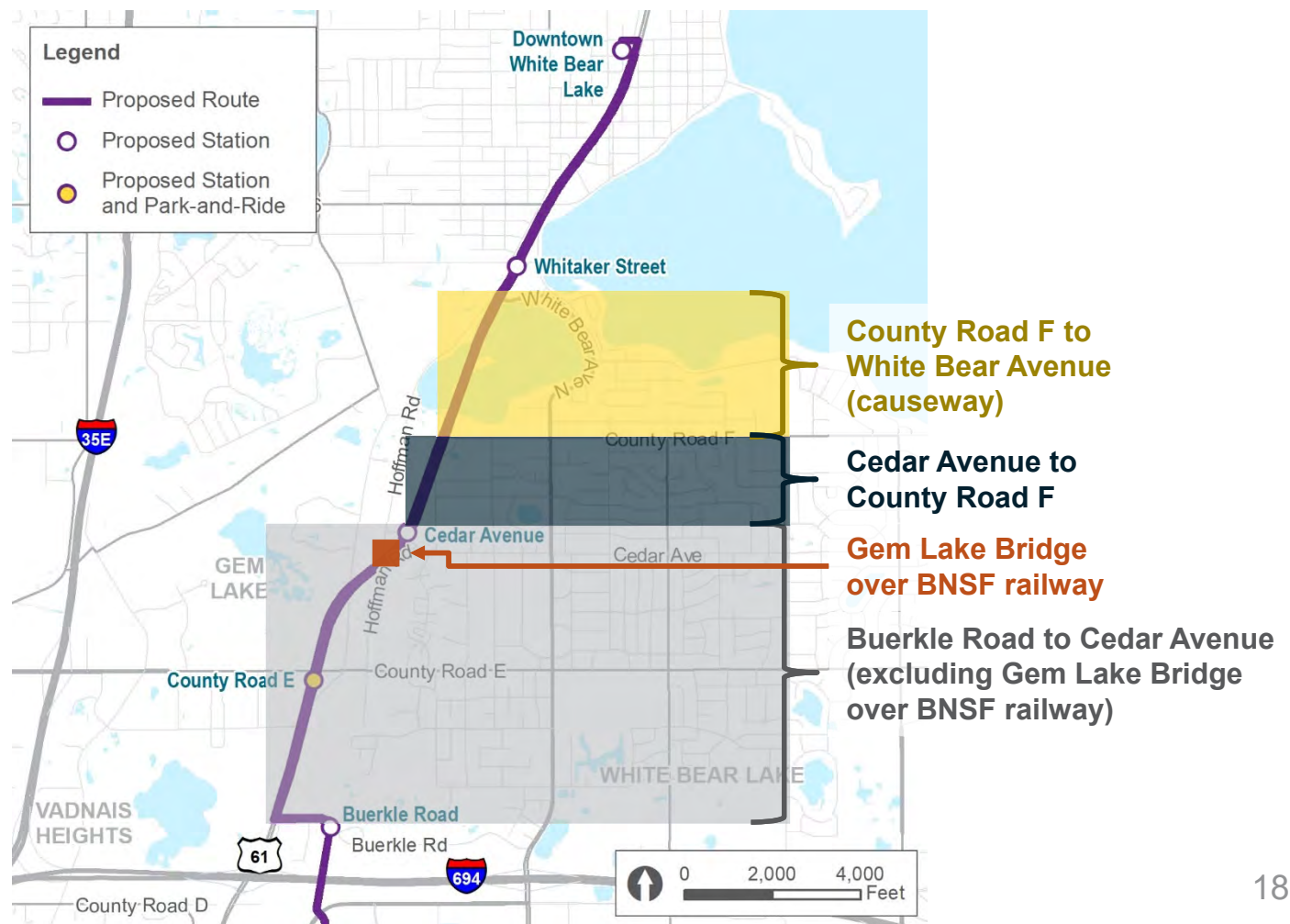
## Potential Refinements to 15 Percent Plans

- Add sidewalk on south side of Buerkle Road through railroad crossing west to Fanum Road.





# Highway 61 Typical Section Segments



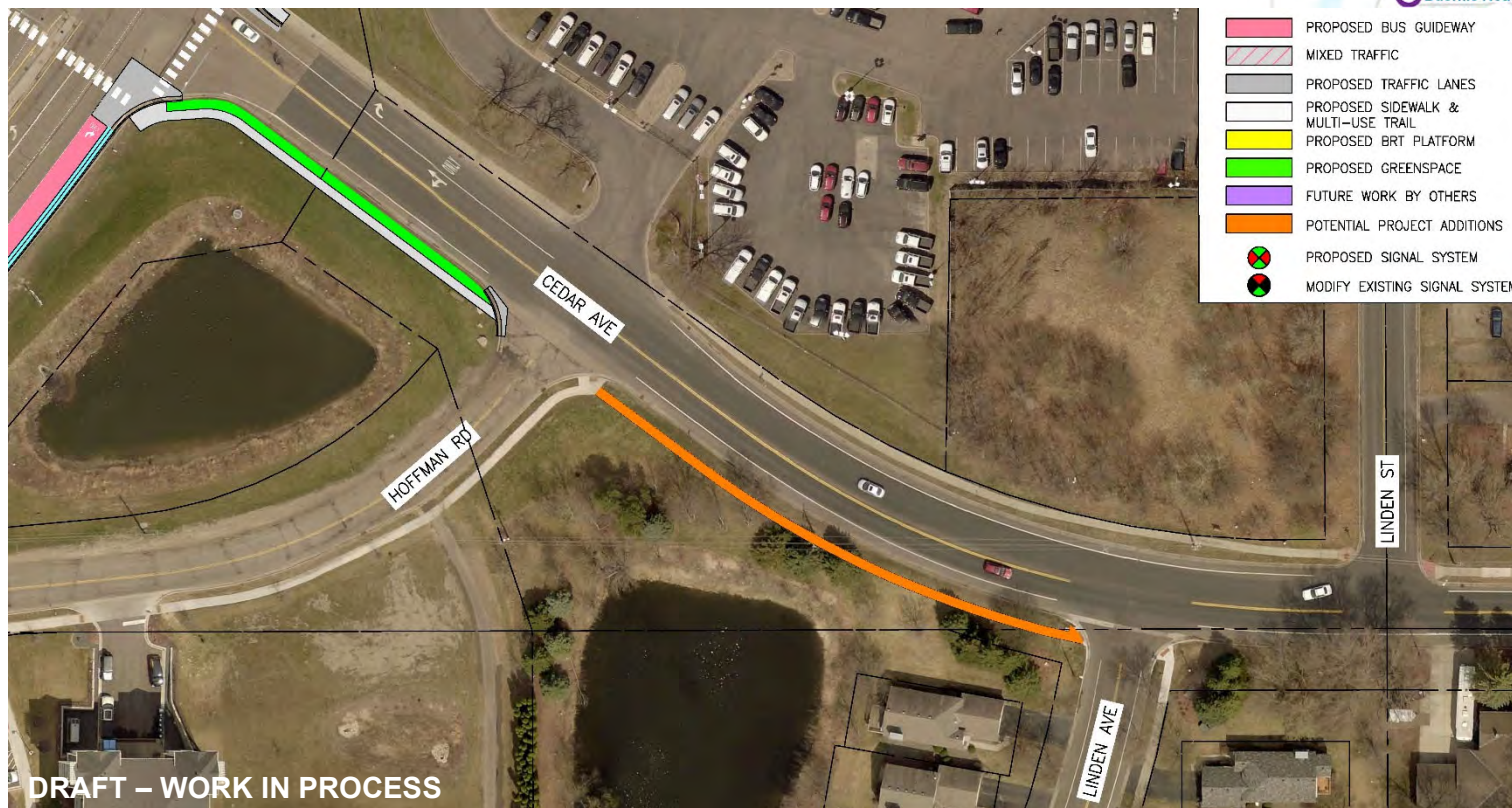


## Potential Refinements to 15 Percent Plans

- Minnesota Department of Transportation coordination:
  - Roadway configuration.
  - Business access and transit lane operations.
  - Pedestrian enhancements.
  - Stations in the clear zone.
  - Constrained areas (Gem Lake bridge and causeway).

## Potential Refinements to 15 Percent Plans

- Add sidewalk on south side of Cedar Avenue from Hoffman Road to Linden Avenue.

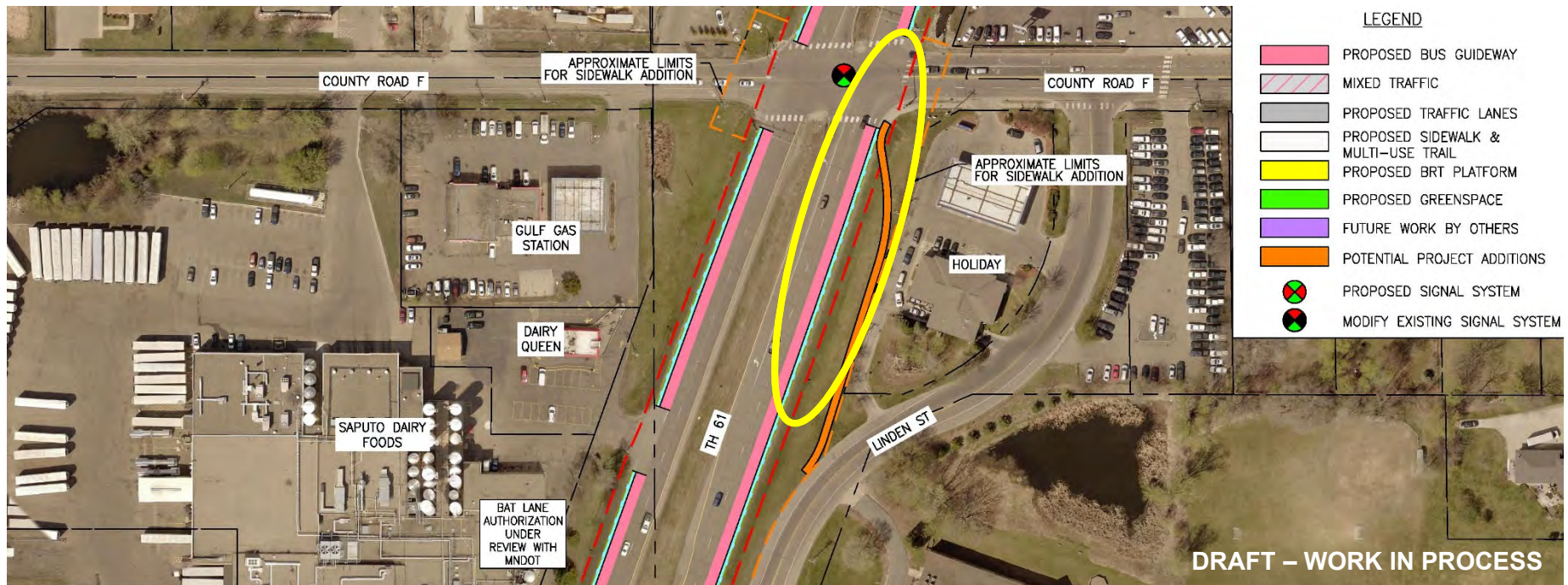
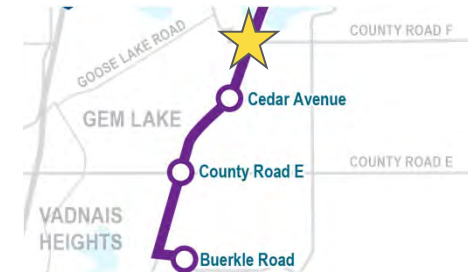


DRAFT – WORK IN PROCESS



## Potential Refinements to 15 Percent Plans

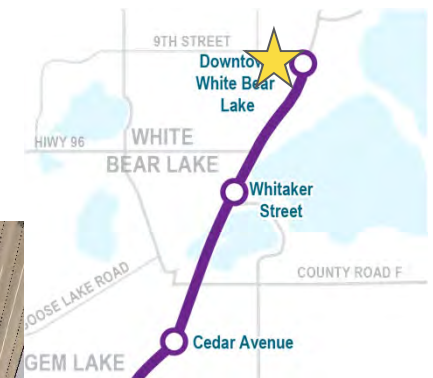
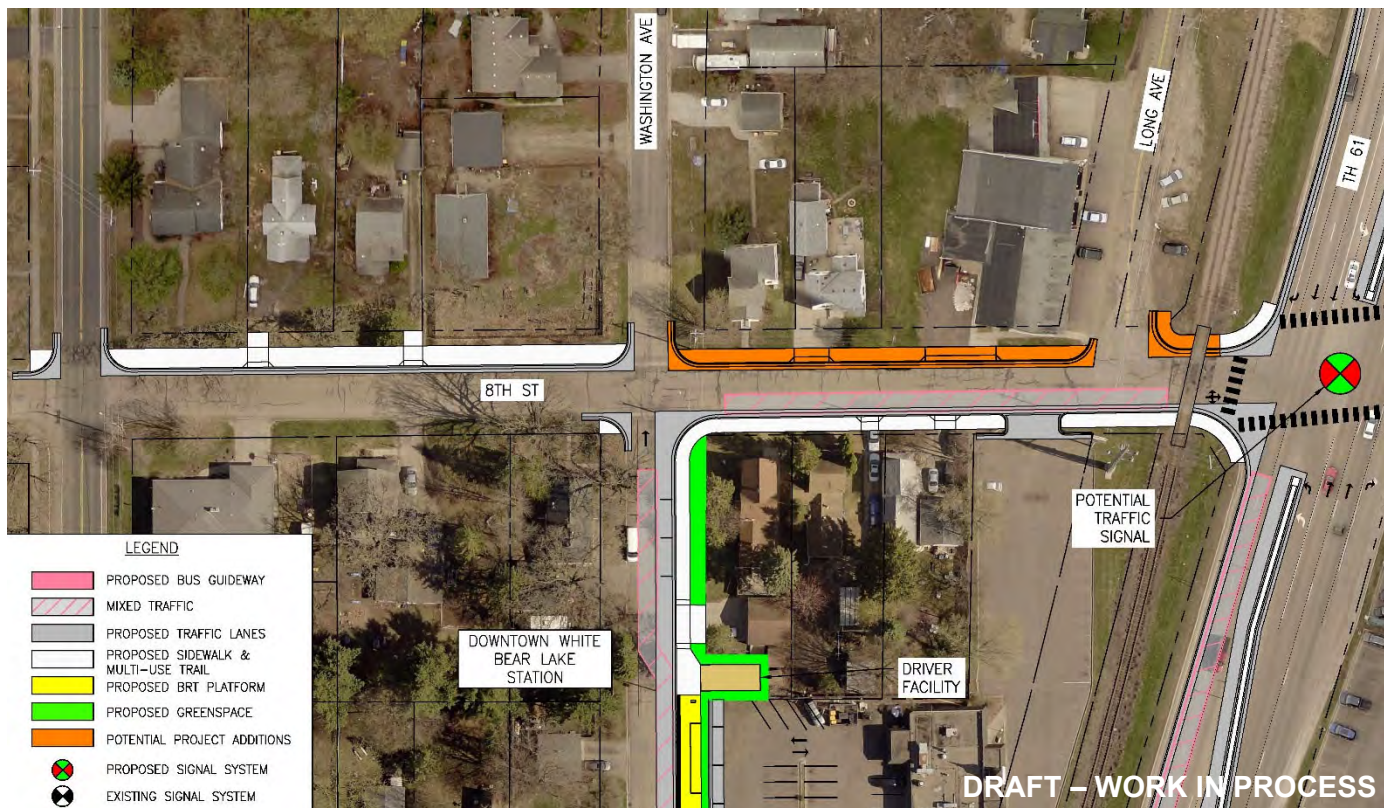
- Add sidewalk from Linden Street to County Road F.





## Potential Refinements to 15 Percent Plans

- Add sidewalk on north side of 8<sup>th</sup> Street between Washington Avenue and Highway 61.



## Ongoing Discussions/Evaluations

- Robert Street area.
  - Minimize parking impacts.
  - Metropolitan Center for Independent Living access.
- Jackson Street design.
- Payne Avenue station.
  - Platform location and intersection design.
- Phalen Boulevard design.
  - Consistency with Saint Paul Bicycle Plan.
- Larpenteur Avenue station area sidewalk connections.



## Ongoing Discussions/Evaluations

- Guideway/trail crossings of low-volume streets in Maplewood.
- County Road E platform location and design.
- Maplewood Mall Transit Center design.
- Platform height.

## Next Steps

- Continued coordination with Metro Transit, Minnesota Department of Transportation and local municipalities through the issue resolution team process.
- Utilize 15 percent plans for evaluation in the Environmental Assessment.



# Environmental Update

## Review of Field Activities

- Phase II Environmental Site Assessment:
  - Environmental and geotechnical borings.
  - Soil boring activity began January 6 and will continue through mid-March.
  - Beginning in public right-of-way.
  - Project staff are coordinating right of entry requests for approximately 25 private parcels.

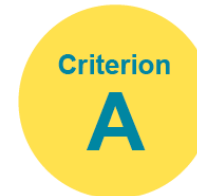
## Section 106 Overview

- Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 requires federal agencies to take into account the effects of their undertakings on historic properties.



3M Administration Building  
Source: National Register Nomination

- A historic property is one that is listed in or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places based on:



ASSOCIATION WITH A  
HISTORICALLY  
SIGNIFICANT EVENT



ASSOCIATION WITH THE  
LIVES OF SIGNIFICANT  
PERSONS



DESIGN OR CONSTRUCTION  
TYPE, STYLE OR METHOD



POTENTIAL TO YIELD  
IMPORTANT HISTORICAL  
OR PREHISTORICAL  
INFORMATION



## Section 106 Overview

### DEFINE THE AREA OF POTENTIAL EFFECTS

The study area for archaeology is typically limited to where the project will disturb the soils. For architecture, the study area is wider, especially around stations, to account for visual effects. As project plans develop, the area of potential effects is refined in consultation with consulting parties (see Who is Involved? below).



### IDENTIFY HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Properties throughout the area of potential effects are inventoried if they will reach 50 years or older at the time the bus service begins. Those with potential significance are evaluated for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.



### ASSESS EFFECTS

The project's potential to impact historic properties is assessed. Adverse effects can include alteration of the historic property or introducing visual or audible elements that diminish the property's historic integrity.



### RESOLVE ADVERSE EFFECTS, IF ANY

If there will be an adverse effect to a historic property, it must be resolved in consultation with the consulting parties. Resolution measures may include avoidance, minimizing effects or mitigating the effect through additional documentation, educational elements and more.

## Section 106 Overview

- Project staff consults with interested stakeholders, including consulting parties, throughout the process.



## LS&M Railroad Corridor Historic District

- Important early direct connection between Saint Paul and Great Lakes port of Duluth (completed in 1870).
- Saint Paul to White Bear Lake Segment is eligible under criteria A, C, and D.
- Features: 1868 and later roadways, grade-separation structures, depots, retaining walls, and sense of path between destinations.



Source: Maplewood Area Historical Society



## Section 106 Update

- Area of potential effects.
  - Both indirect and direct effects.
  - Final to consulting parties in January 2020.
- Survey and evaluation efforts.
  - Architecture/history: ongoing.
  - Archaeology: complete.
  - Lake Superior & Mississippi Railroad (LS&M): complete.
  - Submittals to consulting parties in spring 2020.





## Section 106 Update

- Assessment of effects.
  - Primary focus: LS&M and historic properties near stations and bridges.
  - Submittal to consulting parties in summer 2020.
- Resolution of adverse effects.
  - Consulting party meetings in summer 2020.
  - Draft Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) published for public comment with EA.



Madelaine L. Weaver Elementary School, Maplewood  
Source: Survey reports and 15% plans



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# Schedule Update

## 2020 and 2021 Milestones

- Ramsey County Rail Right-of-Way Design Guide (submit to advisory committees) – February 2020.
- 15 percent plans complete – March 2020.
- Ownership and Maintenance Technical Report – March 2020.
- Station area planning documents (city specific) – March 2020.
- Staff Approved Layout submittal to MnDOT – March to June 2020.
- Visual Quality Manual (corridor wide) – summer 2020.
- Preliminary bridge plans – fall 2020.



## 2020 and 2021 Milestones

- 15 percent plans resolutions of support from municipalities – anticipated summer 2020.
- Environmental Assessment:
  - Publication – December 2020.
  - Comment period and public open houses – December 2020 to January 2021.
  - Environmental decision – April 2021.
- Continue to advance design and transition project to Metropolitan Council – April 2021.



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# Public Comment

## Public Comment

- When commenting, please:
  - Be respectful.
  - Be brief. Limit comments to three minutes to give others an opportunity to speak.
- Public comments will be included in the Policy Advisory Committee meeting summary.
- The Chair reserves the right to limit an individual's comments if they become redundant, disrespectful or are not relevant to the Rush Line BRT Project.





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**Next Meeting**

## Next Meeting

- March 26, 2020.
- 2:30-4:30 p.m.
- Maplewood Community Center.



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# Thank you!



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