

MEETING OF THE MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION BOARD
Thursday, December 2nd, 2021
151 Martin Street, City Commission Room 205, Birmingham, MI

1. Roll Call
2. Introductions
3. Review of the Agenda
4. Approval of Minutes, Meeting of **Thursday November 4th, 2021**
5. **W. Maple Bench Installation Locations**
6. **Woodward Pedestrian Safety Update & Road Diet Resolution**
7. Meeting Open to the Public for items not on the Agenda
8. Miscellaneous Communications
9. Next Meeting – **January 6th, 2022**
10. Adjournment

Please note that board meetings will be conducted in person once again. Members of the public can attend in person at Birmingham City Hall or may attend virtually at <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82477954435> or dial: **929 205 6099 US Toll-free, Meeting ID: 824 7795 4435**

**CITY OF BIRMINGHAM
NOTICE OF IN PERSON MEETING**

NOTICE DATE: November 24th, 2021
MEETING DATE/TIME: December 2nd, 2021 at 6:00pm
MEETING PLACE: City Hall, 151 Martin Street, Birmingham, MI Room 205

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that the regularly scheduled Multi-Modal Transportation Board meeting for the City of Birmingham will be conducted in person, with an option to participate online via zoom as well.

Multi-Modal Transportation Board Meeting Invitation

Topic: MMTB Meeting

Time: December 2nd, 2021 06:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

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https://cms4.revize.com/revize/birminghammi/government/boards/mmtb_agendas.php

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Las personas que requieren alojamiento, tales como servicios de interpretación, la participación efectiva en esta reunión deben ponerse en contacto con la Oficina del Secretario Municipal al [\(248\) 530-1880](tel:(248)530-1880) por lo menos el día antes de la reunión pública. (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964).

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DRAFT

City Of Birmingham Multi-Modal Transportation Board Thursday, November 4, 2021

151 Martin Street, City Commission Room 205, Birmingham, MI

Minutes of the regular meeting of the City of Birmingham Multi-Modal Transportation Board held Thursday, November 4, 2021.

Chair Schafer convened the meeting at 6:01 p.m.

1. Rollcall

Present: Chair Katie Schafer; Board Members Andrew Haig, David Hocker, David Lurie, Tom Peard, Doug White (arrived 6:05 p.m., sat in audience); Alternate Board Member Joe Zane; Student Representative Alex Walters

Absent: Alternate Board Member Amanda Fishburn; Student Representatives Lauren Morris, Justin Schoener

Administration:

Brooks Cowan, Senior Planner (SP)
Laura Eichenhorn, City Transcriptionist (CT)
Scott Grewe, Operations Commander (OC)
Jim Surhigh, Consulting City Engineer (CCE)
Scott Zielinski, Assistant City Engineer (ACE)

Fleis & Vandenbrink (F&V):

Julie Kroll

MKSK: Brad Strader

2. Introductions

3. Review Agenda

4. Approval of MMTB Minutes of August 5, 2021 & October 7, 2021

Motion by Mr. Haig

Seconded by Mr. Peard to approve the MMTB Minutes of August 5, 2021 as submitted.

Motion carried, 6-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Schafer, Zane, Lurie, Haig, Peard, Hocker

Nays: None

Motion by Mr. Hocker

Seconded by Mr. Zane to approve the MMTB Minutes of October 7, 2021 as submitted.

Motion carried, 6-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Hocker, Schafer, Zane, Lurie, Haig, Peard

Nays: None

5. Multi-Modal Transportation Plan Roadway Improvements (2021-2022)
a. Pierce Street, Lincoln to 14 Mile, Bike Lane Options

ACE Zielinski introduced the item.

Mr. Strader presented the item.

OC Grewe informed the Board that there are often speed complaints on Pierce. He cautioned that removing parking could result in further increased speeds.

The Board noted during discussion that none of the options resulted in an ideal set of conditions on Pierce.

After further Board discussion, ACE Zielinski suggested that seven feet on each side of the road be marked off with paint to create visual interference and to observe the impact on speeds. He noted that both the parking lane and the bicycle lane plus a two-foot buffer would be seven feet. He said that would give the City time to observe changes and solicit resident feedback.

Mr. Strader noted that when on-street parking on the southbound side of Eton was removed along with other changes the speeds went down. Residents along Eton also felt safer when the parking was removed because it improved sight distances and reduced crashes.

CCE Surhigh said the painting trial could be done after the road is resurfaced in Spring 2022.

Chair Schafer recommended studying whether the sidewalks should be widened south of Southlawn instead of along the whole length of Pierce. She noted that would help preserve the mature trees north of Southlawn.

Mr. Haig noted that both the current narrowness of the drivelanes and some of the proposed conditions might be particularly difficult for bus drivers going to and from Pierce School.

Mr. Zane recommended getting feedback from Pierce Street residents and members of the Pierce School community, including the bus drivers.

Mr. Zane and Chair Schafer agreed that the item should be re-addressed at a future meeting once more information has been gathered.

6. Bird Street Parking Permit Request

OC Grewe presented the item. He clarified that:

- He was amending the recommended action to be for a permit-exempt time zone from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays without the two hour allowance after a discussion with resident Richard Pourcho.
- Mr. Pourcho reported that this issue preceded Pierce School's parking lot construction.
- This was the first unanimous resident petition OC Grewe has received for the addition of permit parking.
- There is adequate on-site parking for teachers at Pierce, but that they prefer to park on Bird because it is closer to the school.

Public Comment

Mr. Pourcho asked the Board to support the recommendation to add permit parking to Bird.

Motion by Mr. Zane

Seconded by Mr. Peard to recommend to the City Commission the approval of the installation of a permit-exempt time zone from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Bird from Pierce to Edgewood on the south side of Bird on weekdays.

Motion carried, 6-0.

VOICE VOTE

Yeas: Hocker, Schafer, Zane, Lurie, Haig, Peard

Nays: None

7. Sidewalk Prioritization and CIP Recommendations

SP Cowan and CCE Surhigh presented the item.

Mr. Lurie said he suspected too few people would use a sidewalk along Greenwood Cemetery (Greenwood) to justify the cost of installation. He also said he would not be in favor of removing the trees next to Greenwood to install the sidewalk.

Mr. Haig said he also did not think a sidewalk along Greenwood would receive much use.

SP Cowan noted that Oak Ave along Greenwood is part of the Neighborhood Connector Loop and also a major road, which is why the prospect of adding a sidewalk in that location was being raised.

ACE Zielinski said that pedestrians coming from the west heading downtown would be likely to use a sidewalk along Greenwood if it were available.

Mr. Lurie said that pedestrians would still have to cross south at Old Woodward even if they followed the path described.

There was Board consensus that it would be more appropriate to add sidewalks to residential streets with no sidewalk coverage before adding sidewalks to streets that already have a sidewalk on one side. There was also consensus that safety-critical areas with more difficult right-of-ways should be considered as higher priorities.

8. S. Eton Striping and Multi-Modal Enhancements

SP Cowan, Mr. Strader, and Ms. Kroll presented the item.

Chair Schafer noted that she had emailed photo and video of some recent road improvements in Ann Arbor and recommended the Board consider whether some of the aspects of the improvements could be replicated in Birmingham.

Mr. Strader said he would look into the improvements Chair Schafer was referencing.

Ms. Kroll said it might be the Williams Street Bikeway.

In reply to Mr. Peard, Mr. Strader acknowledged that one booklet from the Federal Highway Administration (FHA) advises against installing a level two-way cycle track on a two-way road. He said that if a two-way cycle track were to be installed on a two-way road it is preferable for it to be raised. He clarified that the recommendation from the FHA did not amount to a hard-and-fast rule.

The presenters there have been a lot of innovations in the discipline of enhancing multi-modal options since the original recommendations were made for S. Eton in 2017. They said they would return to the Board with some of those newer options as appropriate.

9. Meeting Open to the Public for items not on the Agenda

Michael St. Germain reviewed his letter and his Birmingham Pedestrians Project submittal which was included at the end of the meeting's agenda packet. He added that improvements to the medians on Woodward where pedestrians wait could increase a sense of pedestrian safety.

Mr. Strader stated that he, Ms. Kroll and Staff would be meeting with MDOT about improving the safety multiple Woodward crossings. He stated Ms. Kroll asked MDOT to conduct a road safety audit at all pedestrian crossings of Woodward, including crossings occurring outside of crosswalks. MDOT was also asked to devise an overall pedestrian crossing plan. He said there were also possibilities of working with Ferndale and other communities along Woodward to advocate for increased safety.

Chair Schafer noted MDOT officials were also in attendance at a recent Commission meeting discussing the issue.

ACE Zielinski summarized improvements being made presently to the Brown/Forest intersection with Woodward. He also summarized condition differences between the Ferndale and Birmingham portions of Woodward.

Ms. Kroll explained how pedestrian clearance intervals are calculated. She said implementation of leading pedestrian intervals could be one option for increasing pedestrian safety along Woodward. She said she would have to pull the permits for Ferndale to know exactly how their crossings are timed.

Mr. Lurie raised concerns about speeds on residential streets.

Mr. Strader said that he and Staff could bring back a previous Board practice of having informational presentations during meetings with lighter agendas, and that traffic calming methods would be a worthwhile topic to study for one of those presentations.

Mr. Zane said he would be interested in learning more about how the decision is made to close off a street to through traffic. He cited Chestnut as one example, saying he thought it would be better to limit through traffic that continues onto Woodward.

Mr. Peard congratulated Chair Schafer and Mr. Haig on their election to the Commission.

It was explained that Chair Schafer and Mr. Haig would be resigning their positions with the Board after their swearings in with the Commission on November 8, 2021.

10. Miscellaneous Communications

11. Next Meeting – December 2, 2021

12. Adjournment

No further business being evident, the board members adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Brooks Cowan, Senior Planner



MEMORANDUM

(Planning Division)

DATE: November 22th, 2021

TO: Multi-Modal Transportation Board

FROM: Brooks Cowan, City Planner
Scott Zielinski, Assistant City Engineer
Commander Scott Grewe, Police Department

SUBJECT: W. Maple Bench Installations

Birmingham has an excess of 12 benches from the downtown Old Woodward & Maple repavement project. The benches were not cut to standard as per the agreement for the downtown design, therefore they were not installed. This has left the City with extra benches to be installed. The City wishes to keep this style of bench on W. Maple as an extension of the downtown bench design.

MKSK was consulted to select ideal locations along W. Maple extending out from downtown for the excess benches. It was recommended that areas along W. Maple near bus stops and along popular routes to the parks and gathering areas be prioritized. Benches placed in locations in between residential neighborhoods and popular amenities can offer resting places for pedestrians in between destinations.

The recommended locations for installation are as follows:

1. W. Maple: Linden Trail – Quarton Lake Trail crossing location
2. W. Maple: near Waterfall Court
3. Quarton Lake Trail – Maple Entrance (north)
4. Linden Park Trail – Maple Entrance (south)
5. Baldwin Road – along sidewalk Rouge bridge
6. Linden Park – along sidewalk near Valley View Lane
7. Maple Road – bus stop
8. Martha Baldwin Park – along sidewalk
9. W. Maple & Westwood – bus stop
10. W Maple and Lutheran Church – bus stop
11. W Maple and First Methodist Church – bus stop
12. W Maple and First Presbyterian Church – bus stop

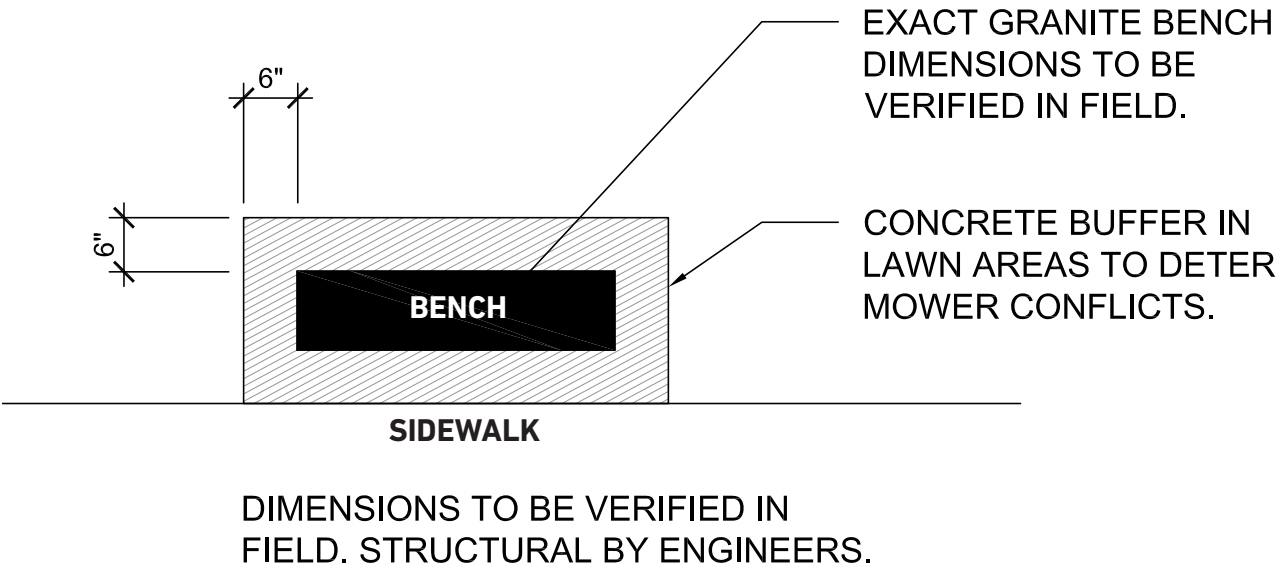
RECOMMENDED ACTION

Make a motion to recommend approval by the City Commisison for the proposed locations for 12 benches along W. Maple Road as indicated in the attachments by MKSK.

BENCH RELOCATION - TYPICAL LAYOUT

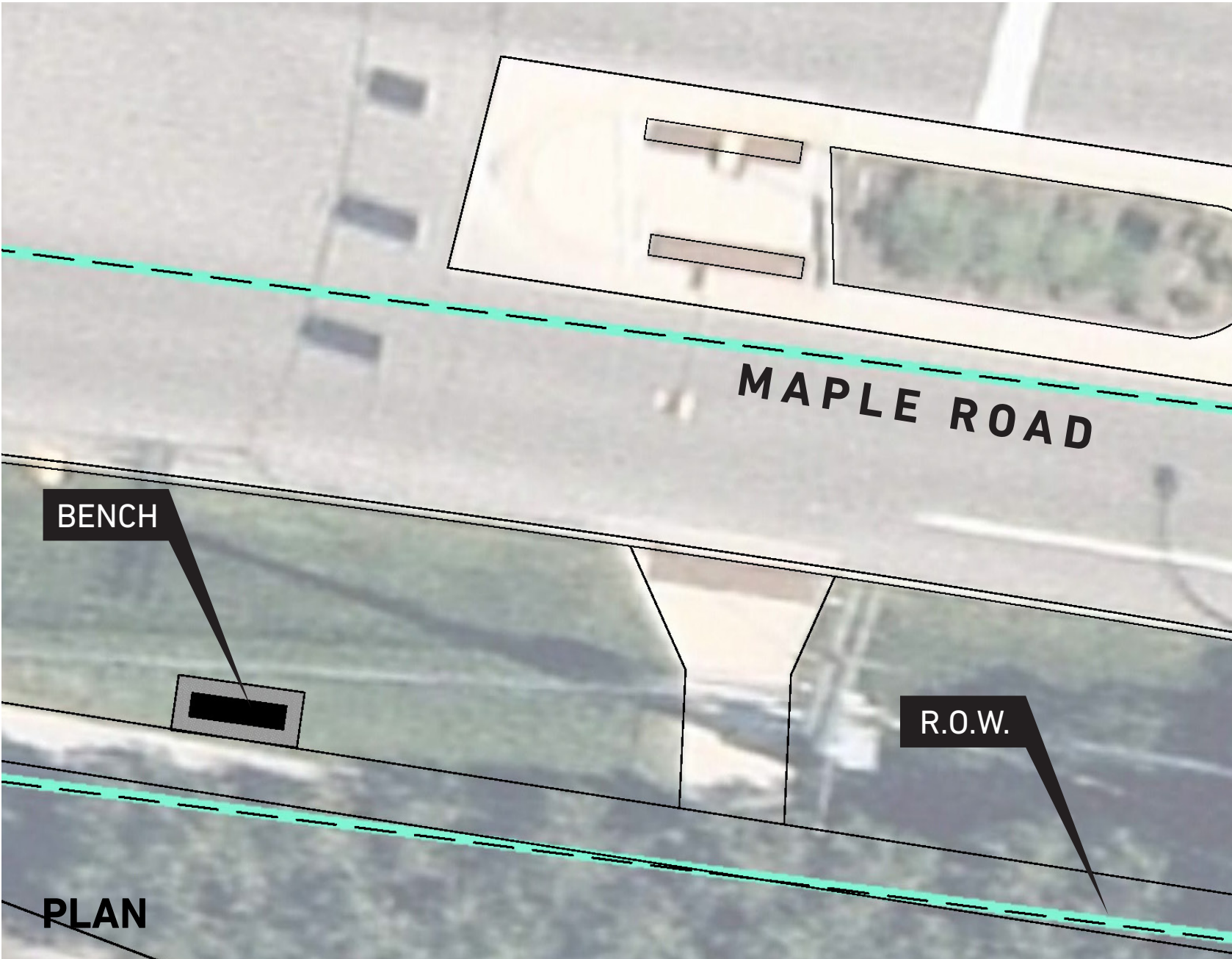


KEY PLAN



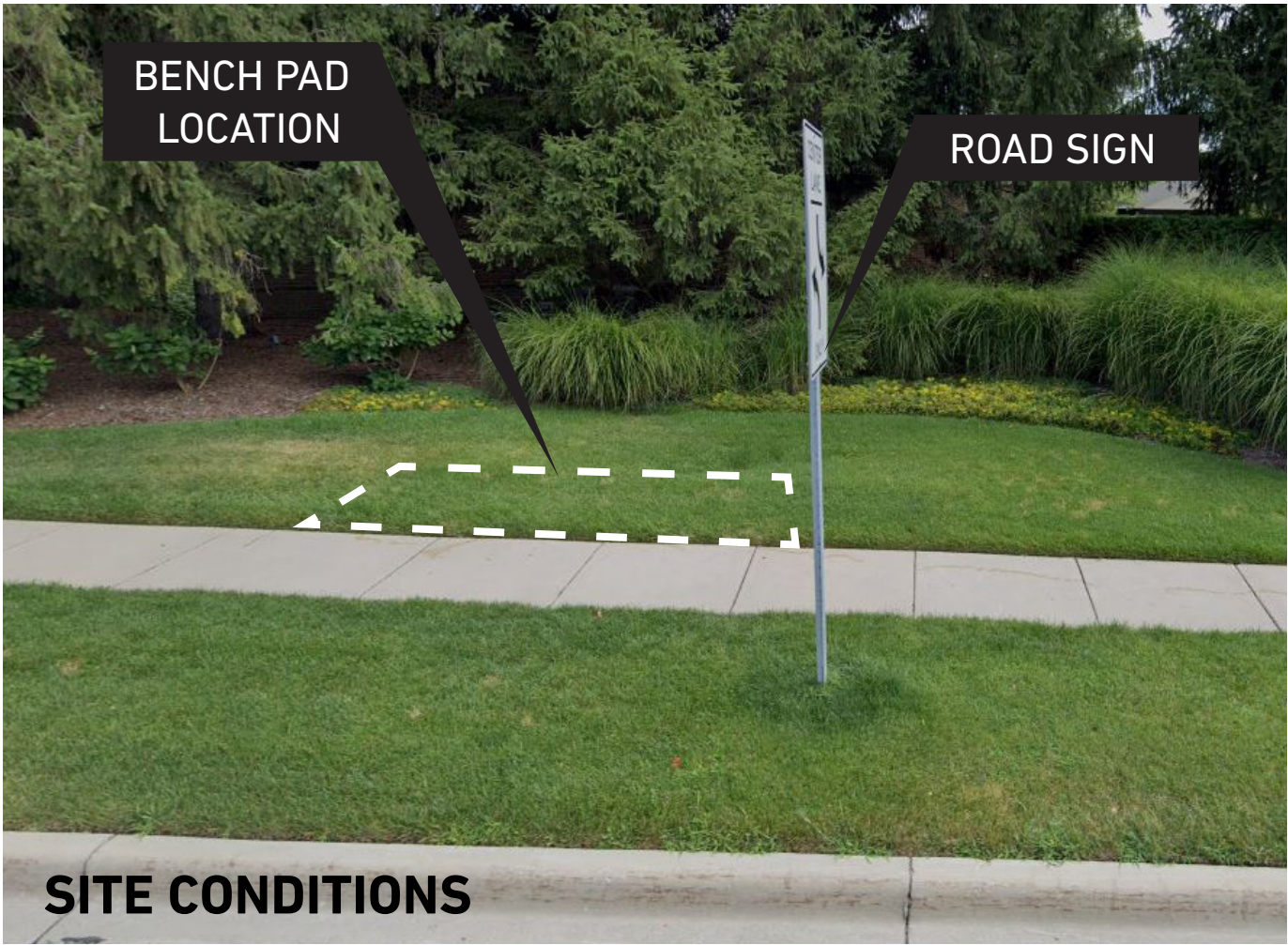
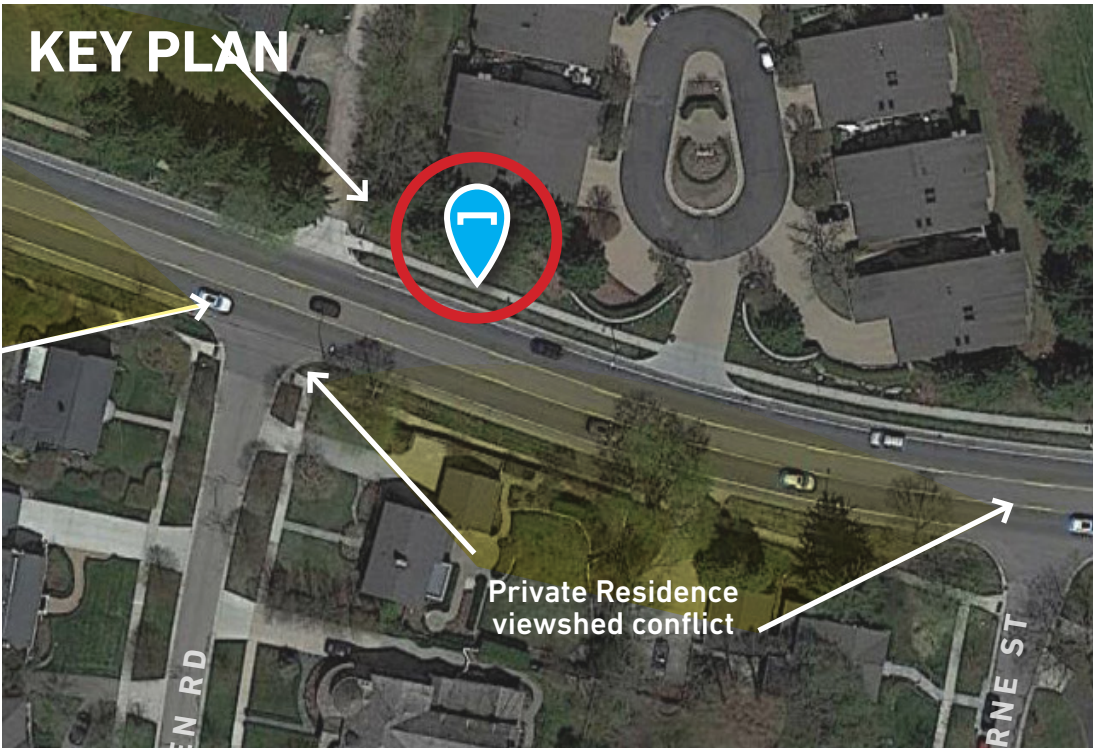
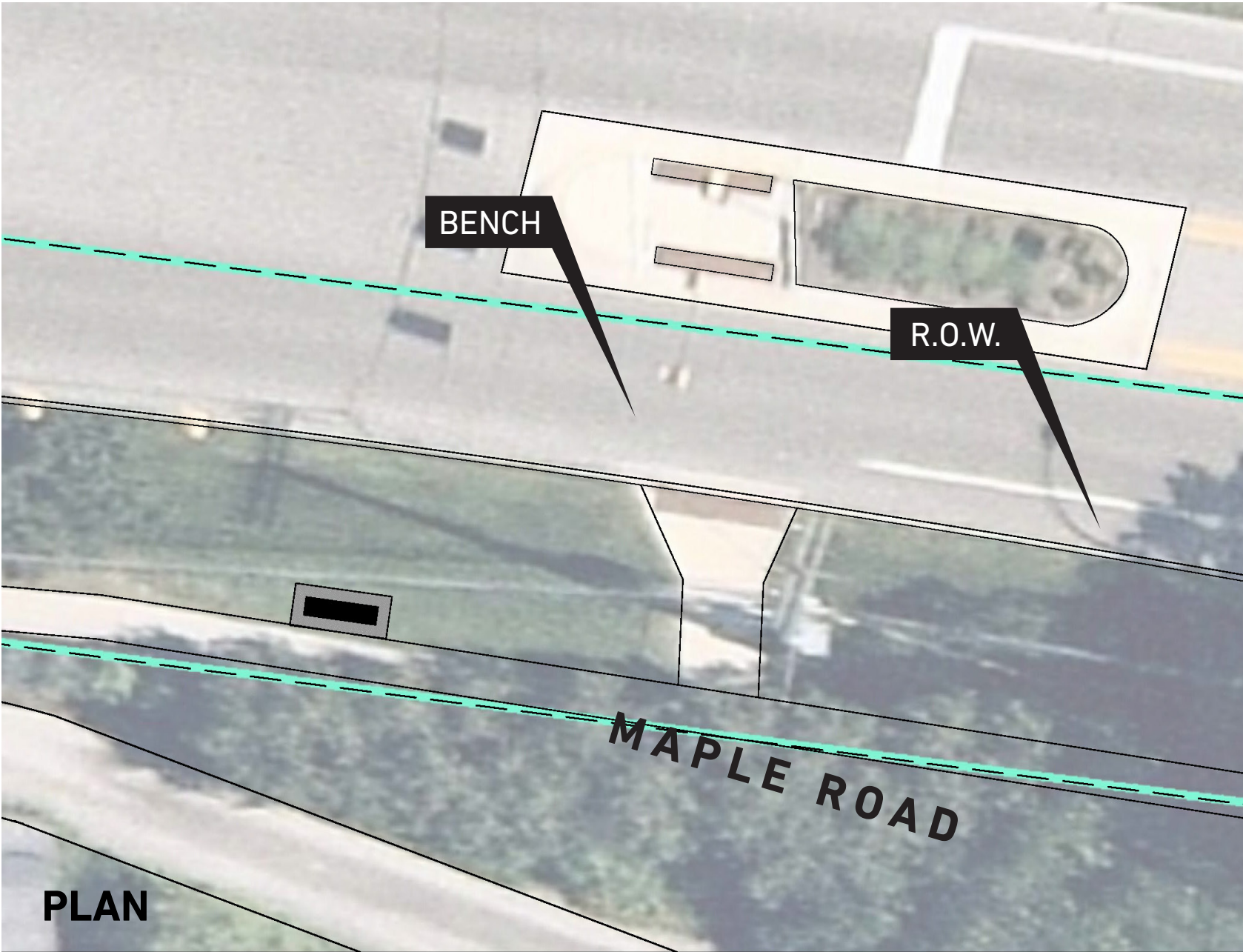
BENCH RELOCATION - LOCATION 1

- Located at midblock crossing
- Avoids fencing
- Avoids utility pole conflict on north side



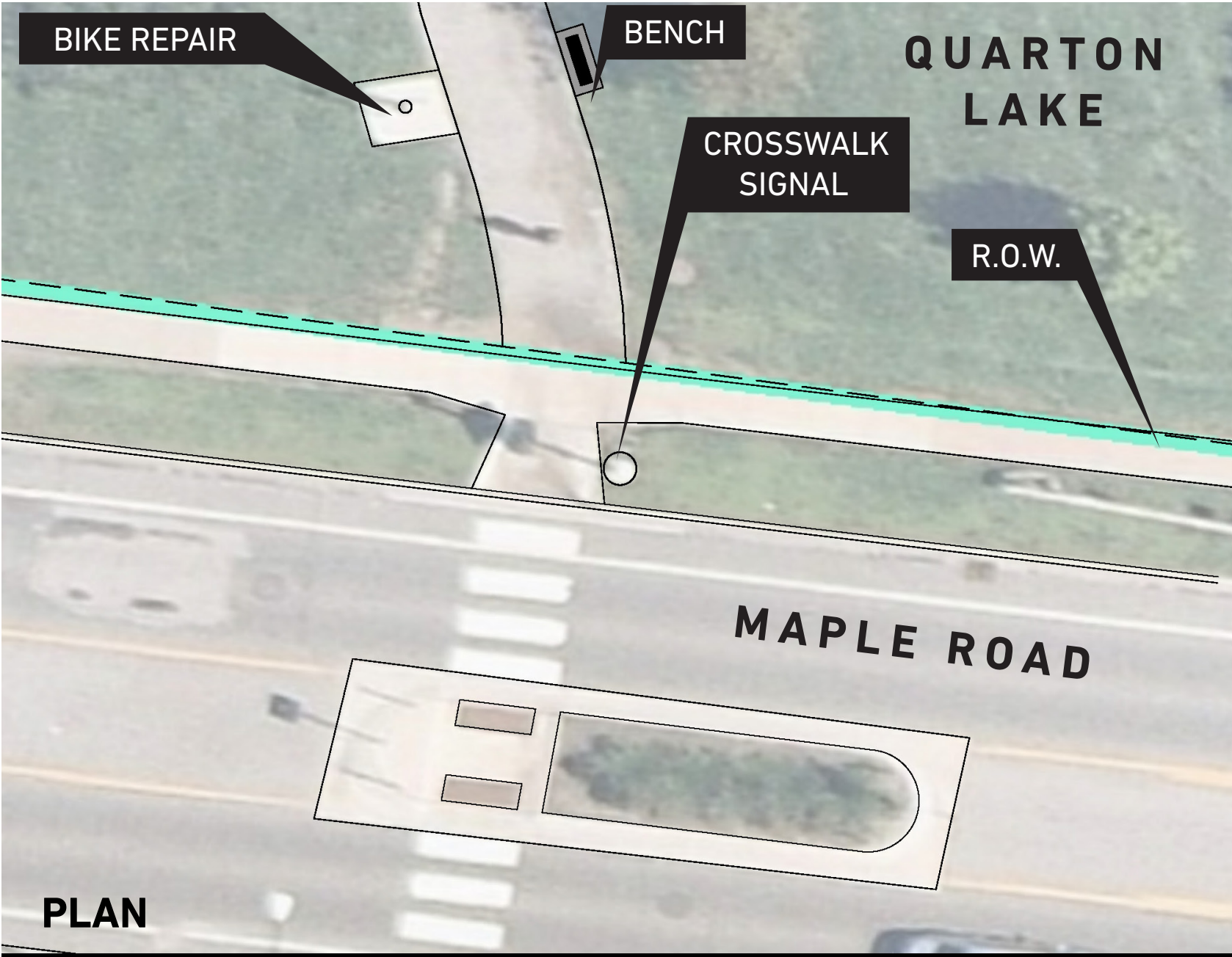
BENCH RELOCATION - LOCATION 2

- Adjacent to road sign indicating center lane
- Private condominiums adjacent, buffered by trees/shrubs
- Open lawn area surrounding



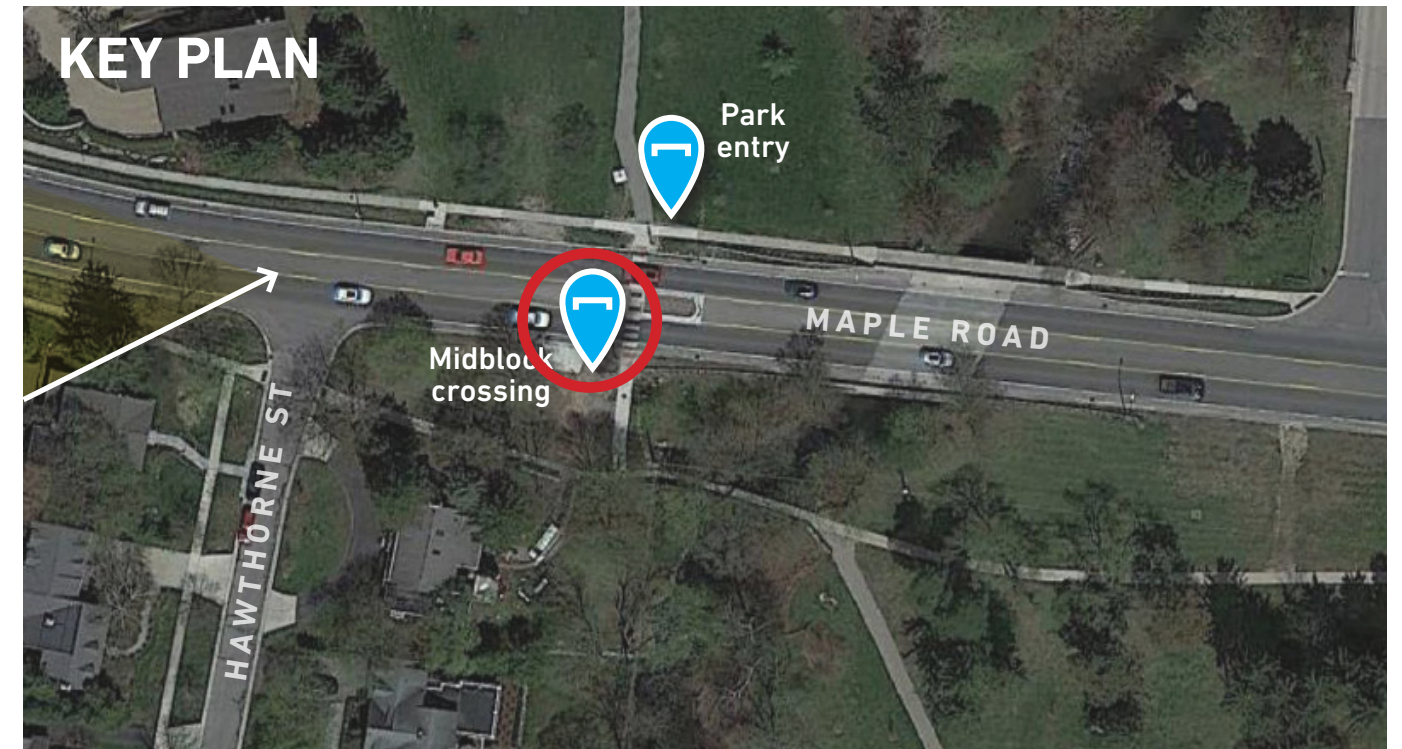
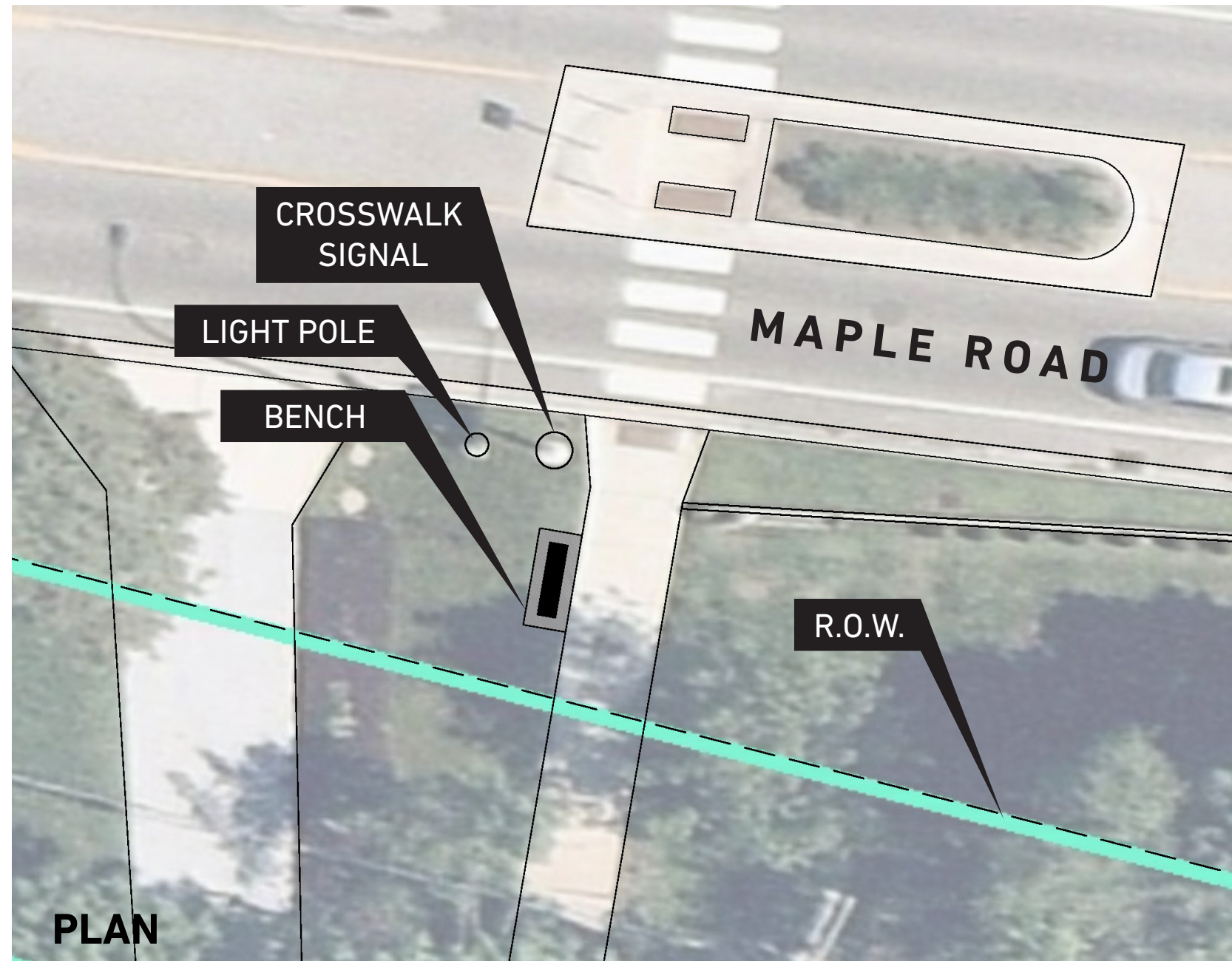
BENCH RELOCATION - LOCATION 3

- Located at midblock crossing
- Adjacent to bike repair station



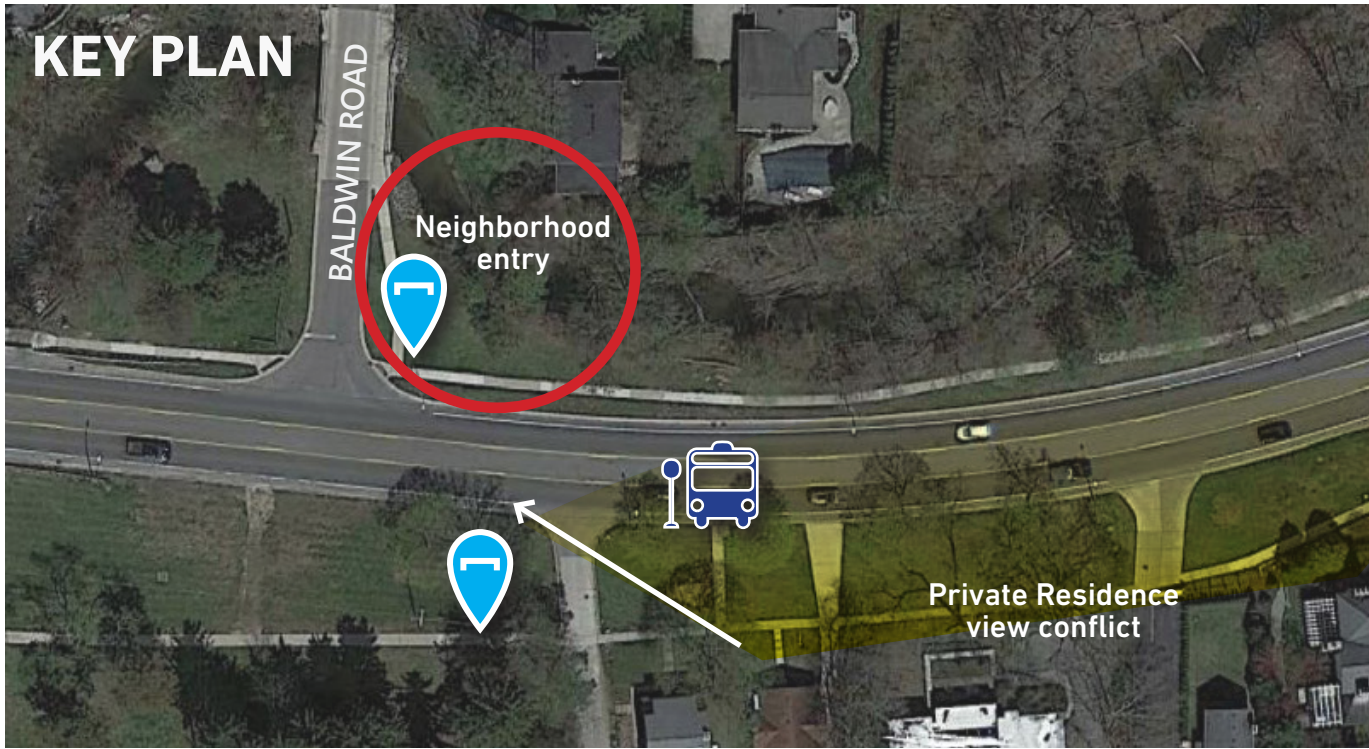
BENCH RELOCATION - LOCATION 4

- Midblock crossing on Maple Road
- Adjacent to crosswalk signal and light pole
- Guard rail on the opposite side of sidewalk
- Location ideal to direct pedestrian traffic south



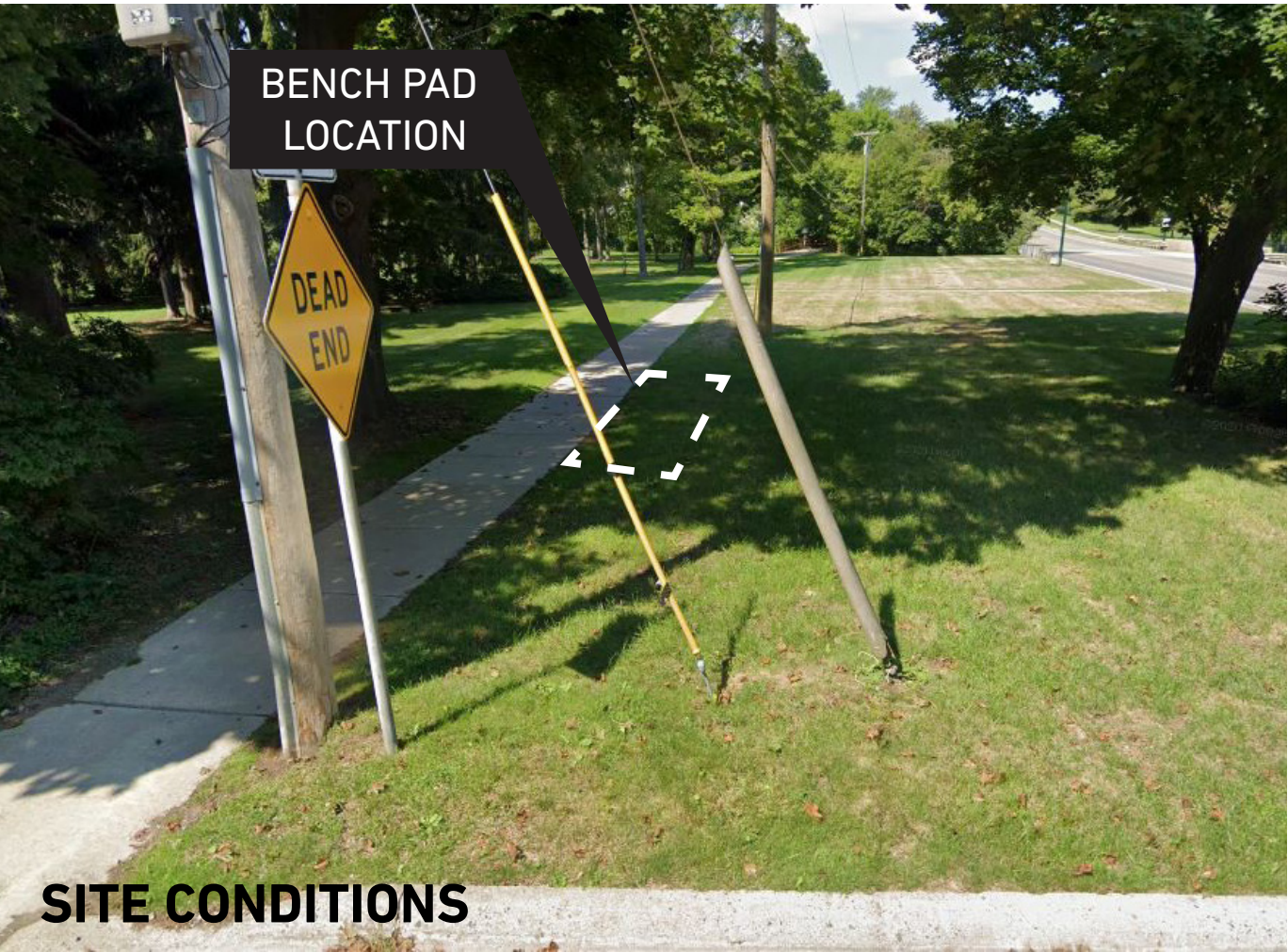
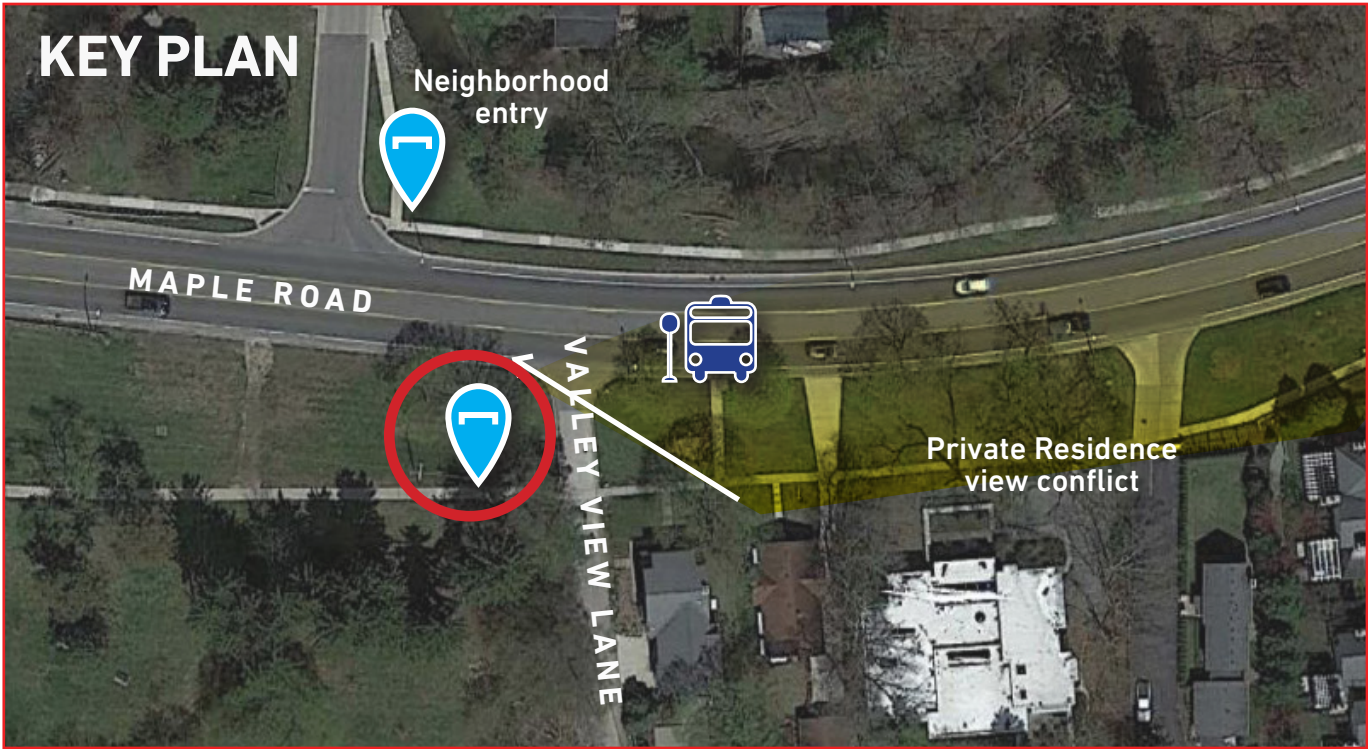
BENCH RELOCATION - LOCATION 5

- Adjacent to bridge, deters foot traffic to drain
- Open lawn area



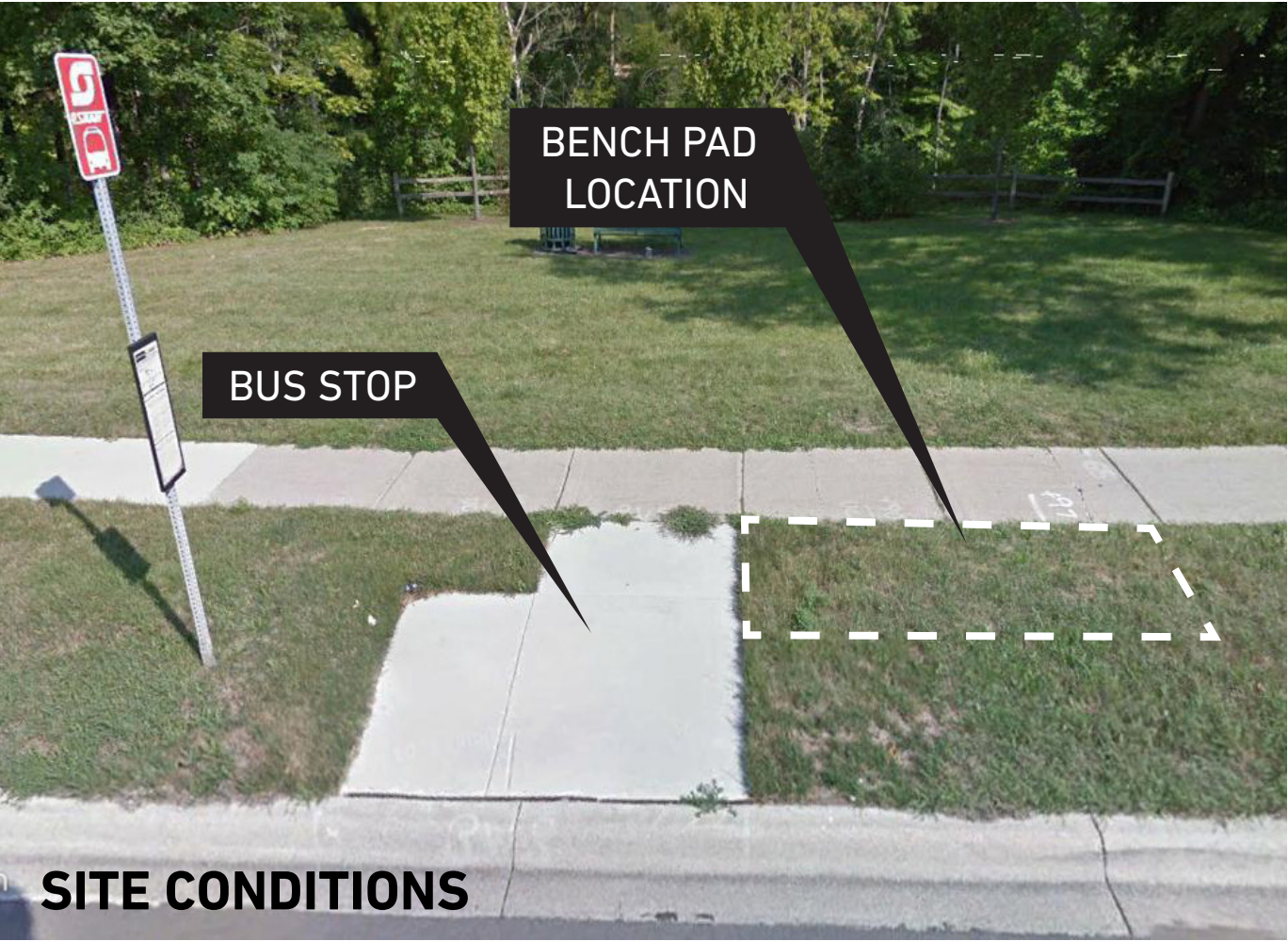
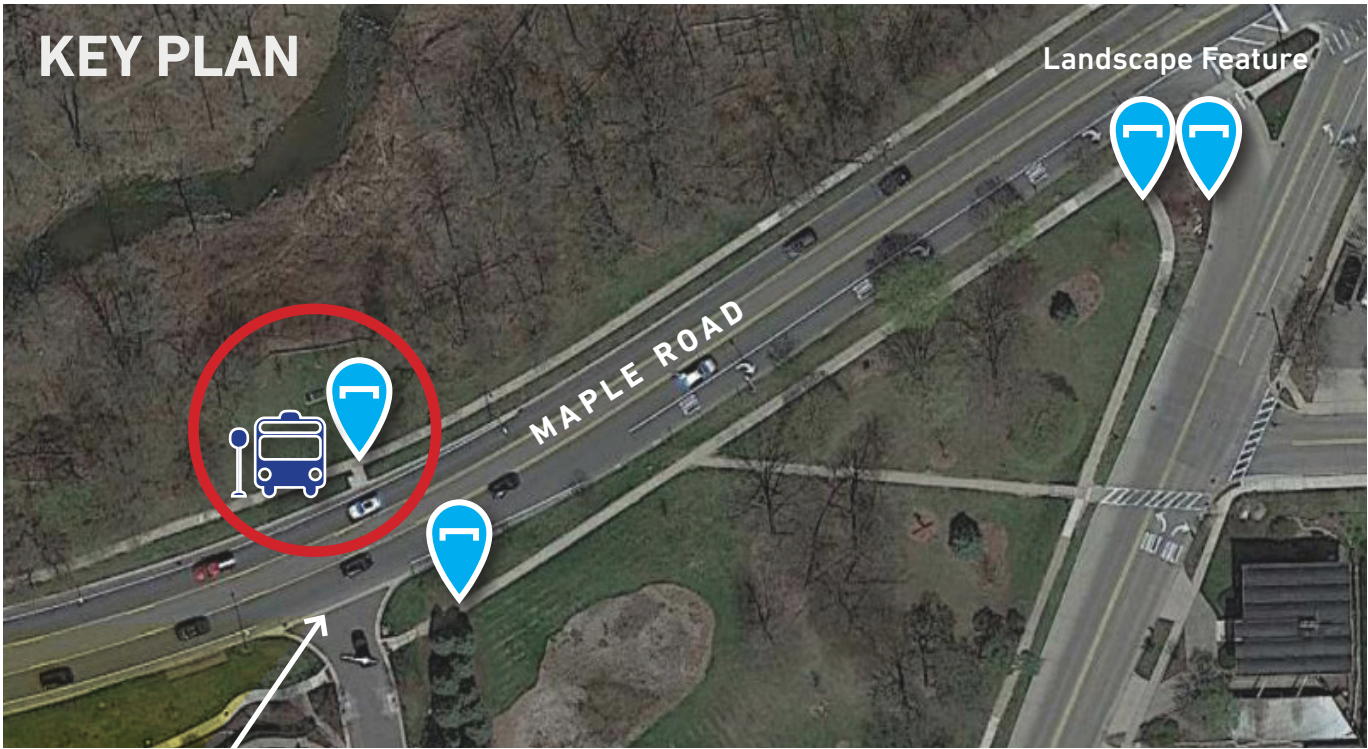
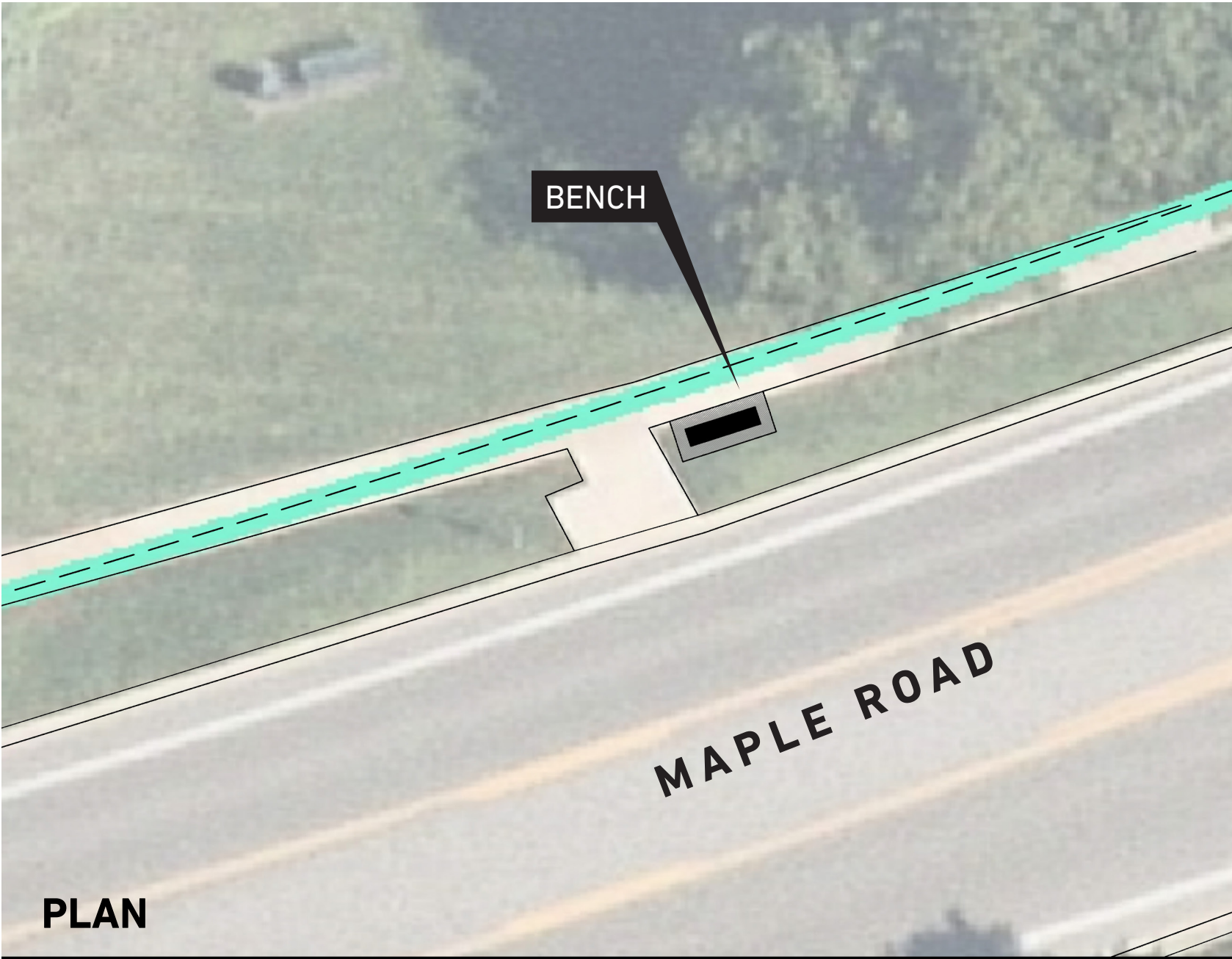
BENCH RELOCATION - LOCATION 6

- Adjacent to Valley View Lane (private road)
- Electrical pole
- Large shade trees



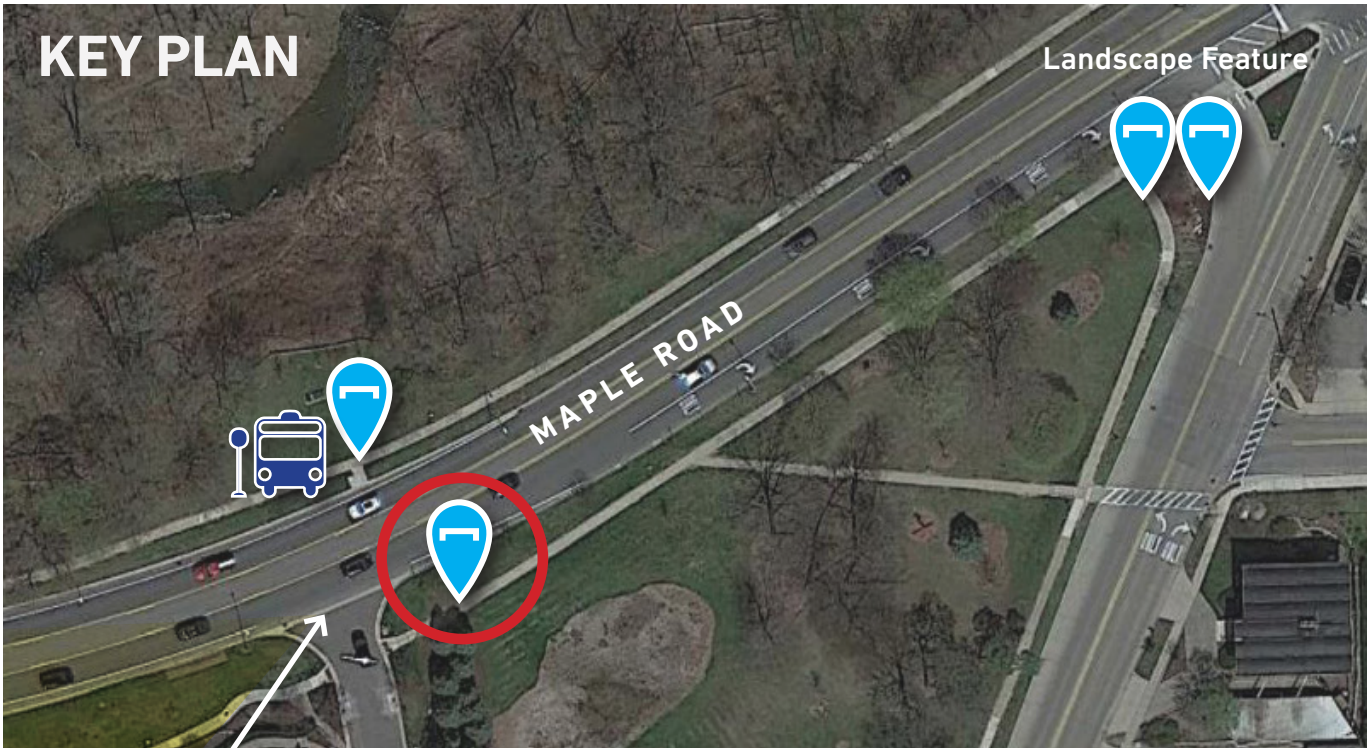
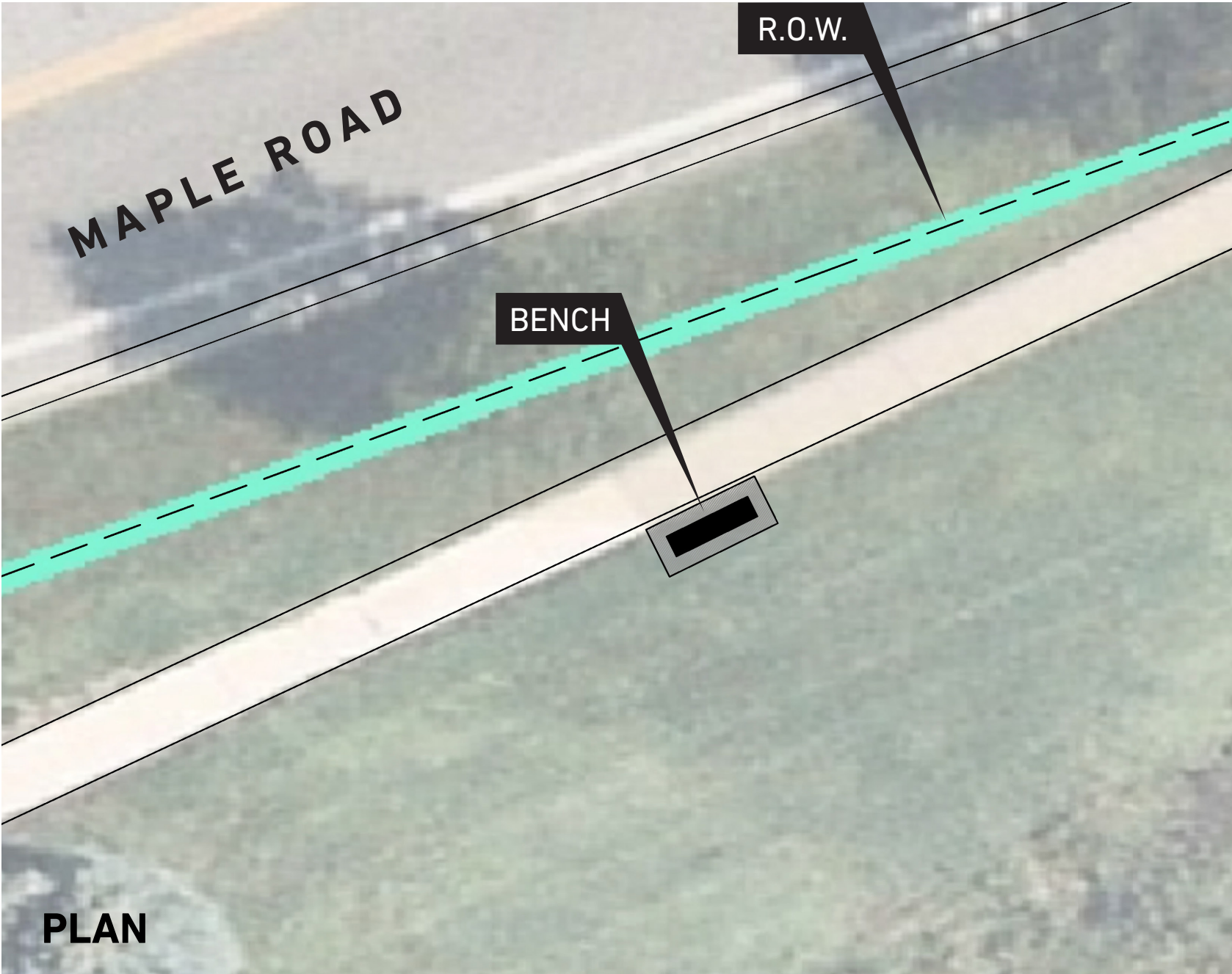
BENCH RELOCATION - LOCATION 7

- Adjacent to stop
- Open lawn area



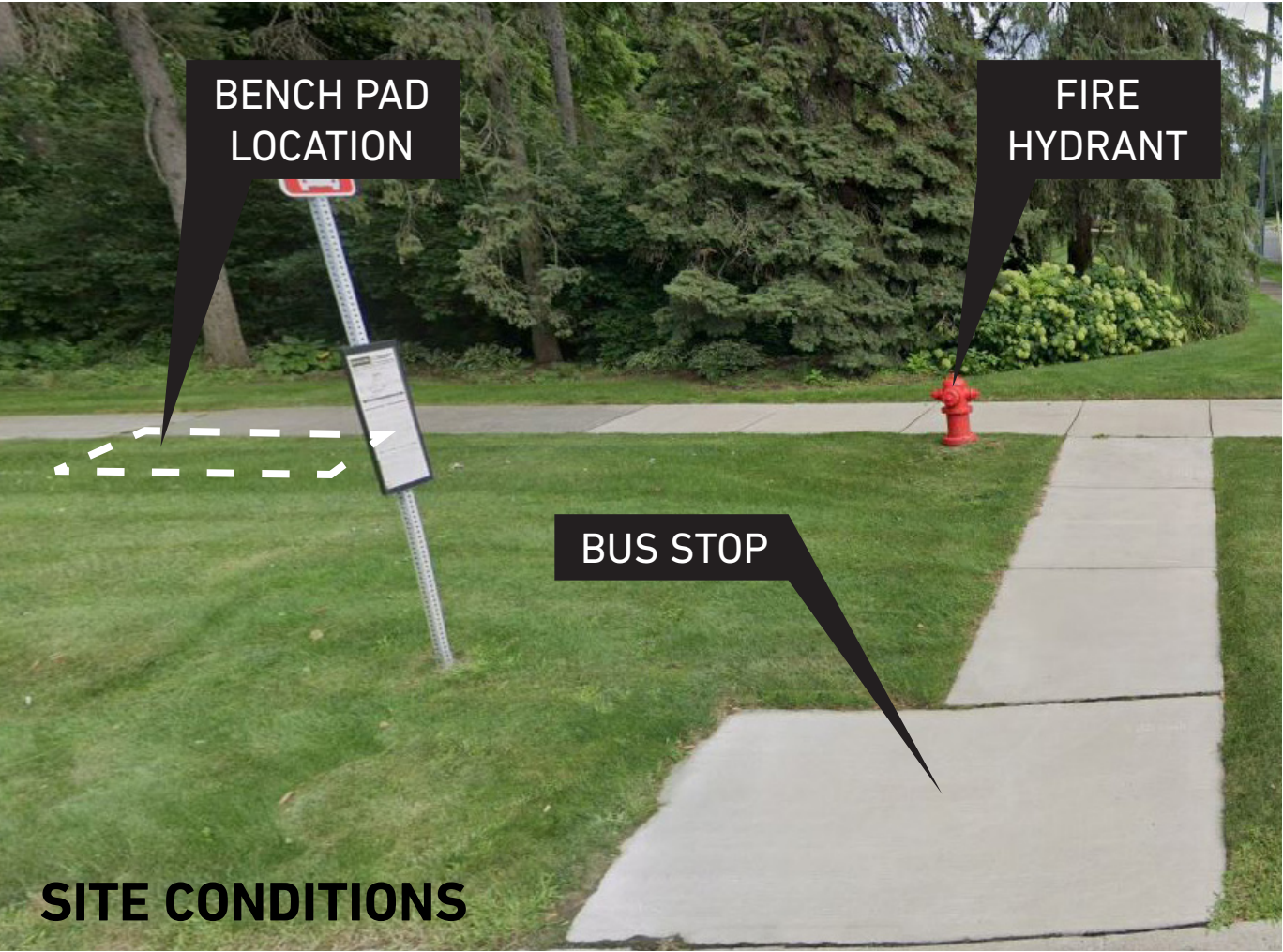
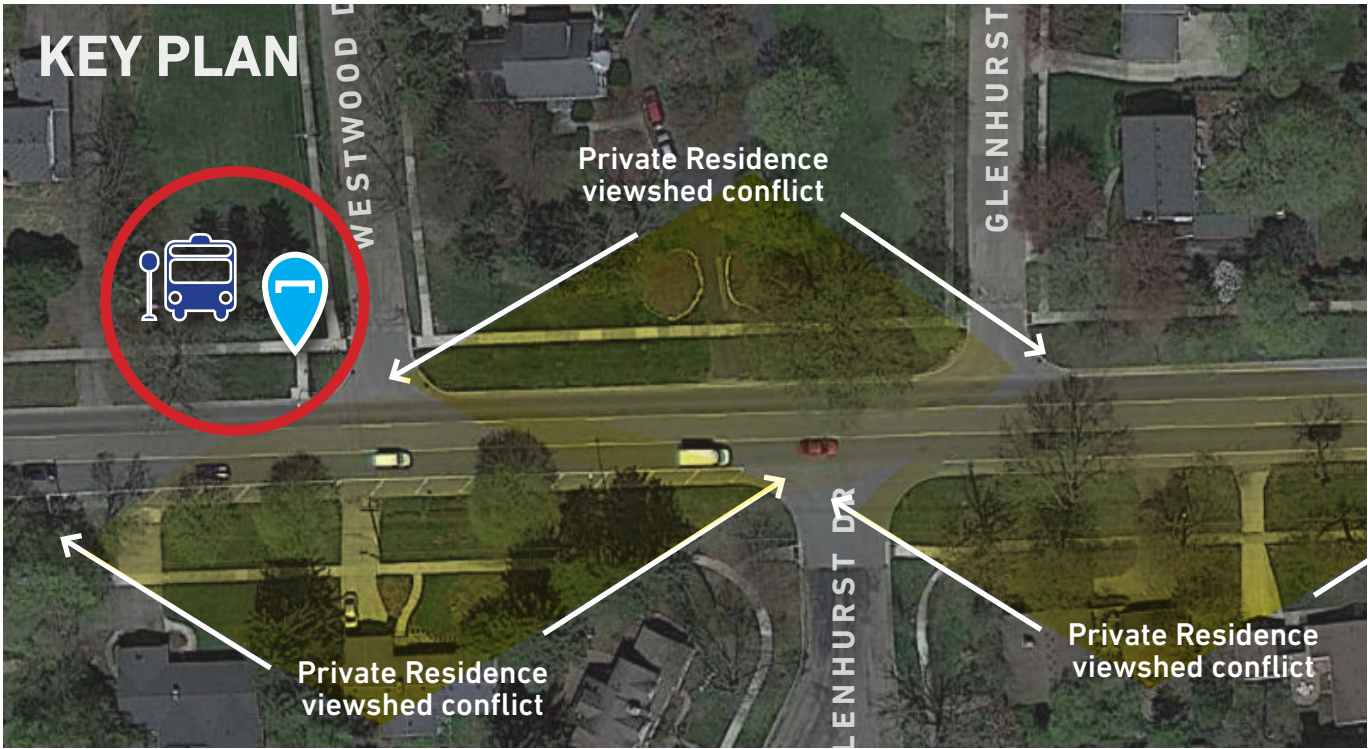
BENCH RELOCATION - LOCATION 8

- Located within public park



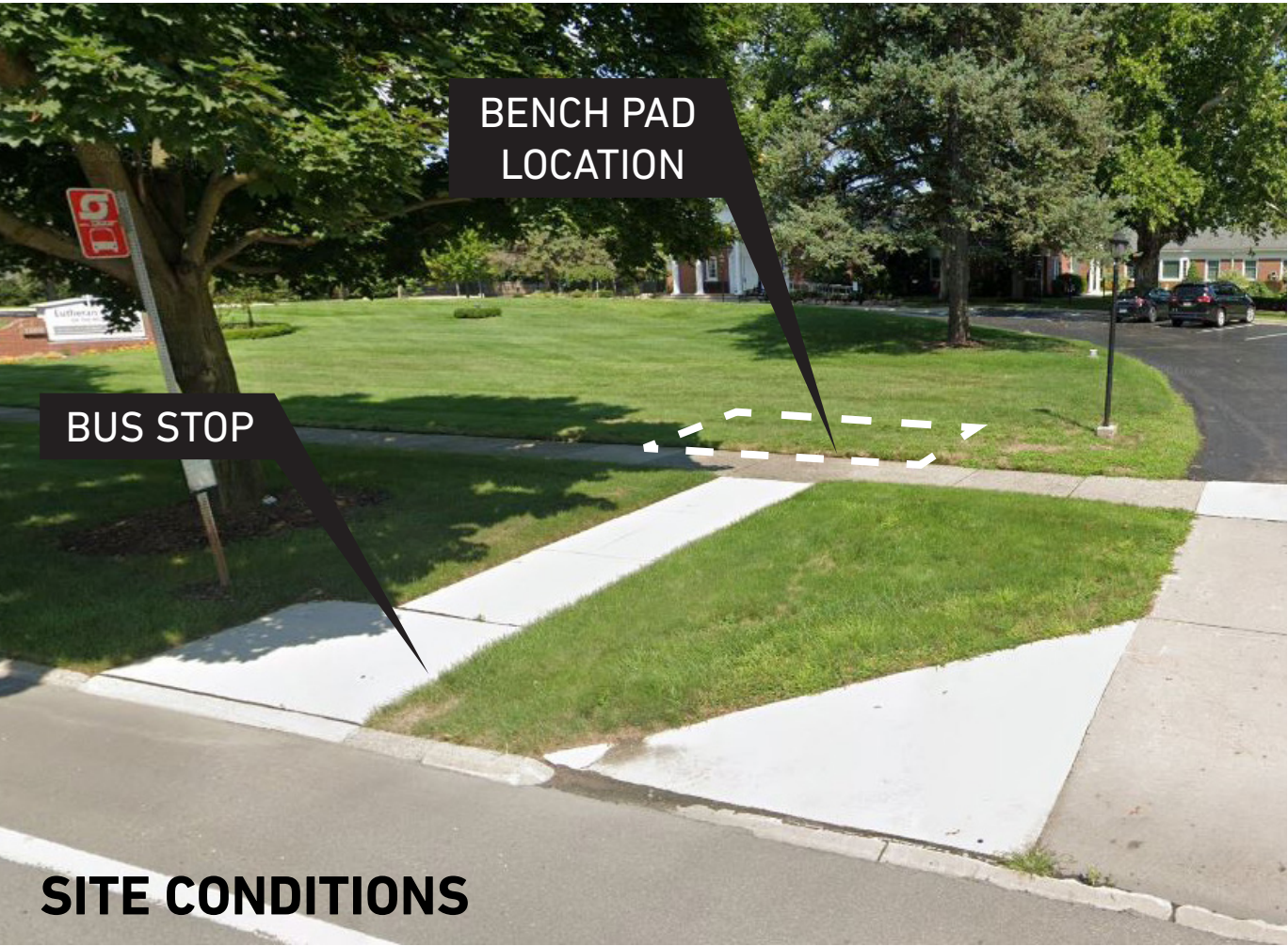
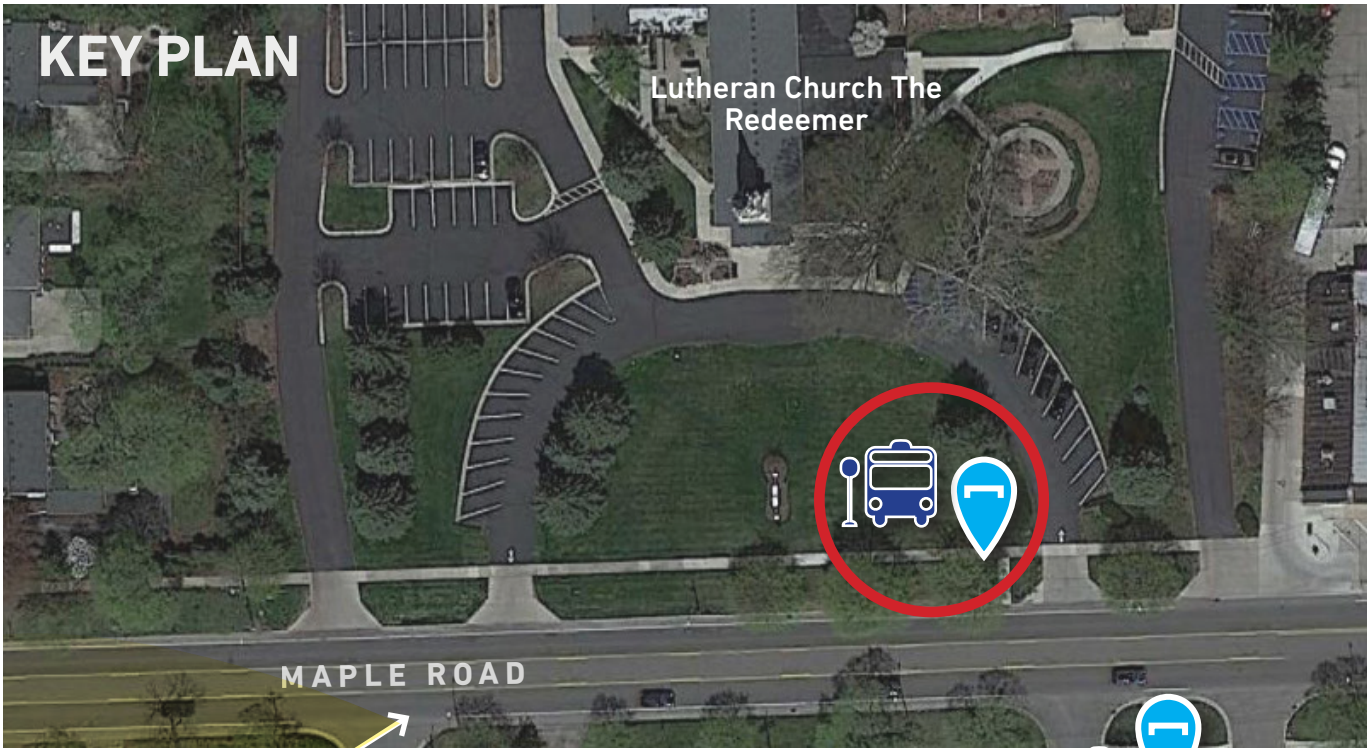
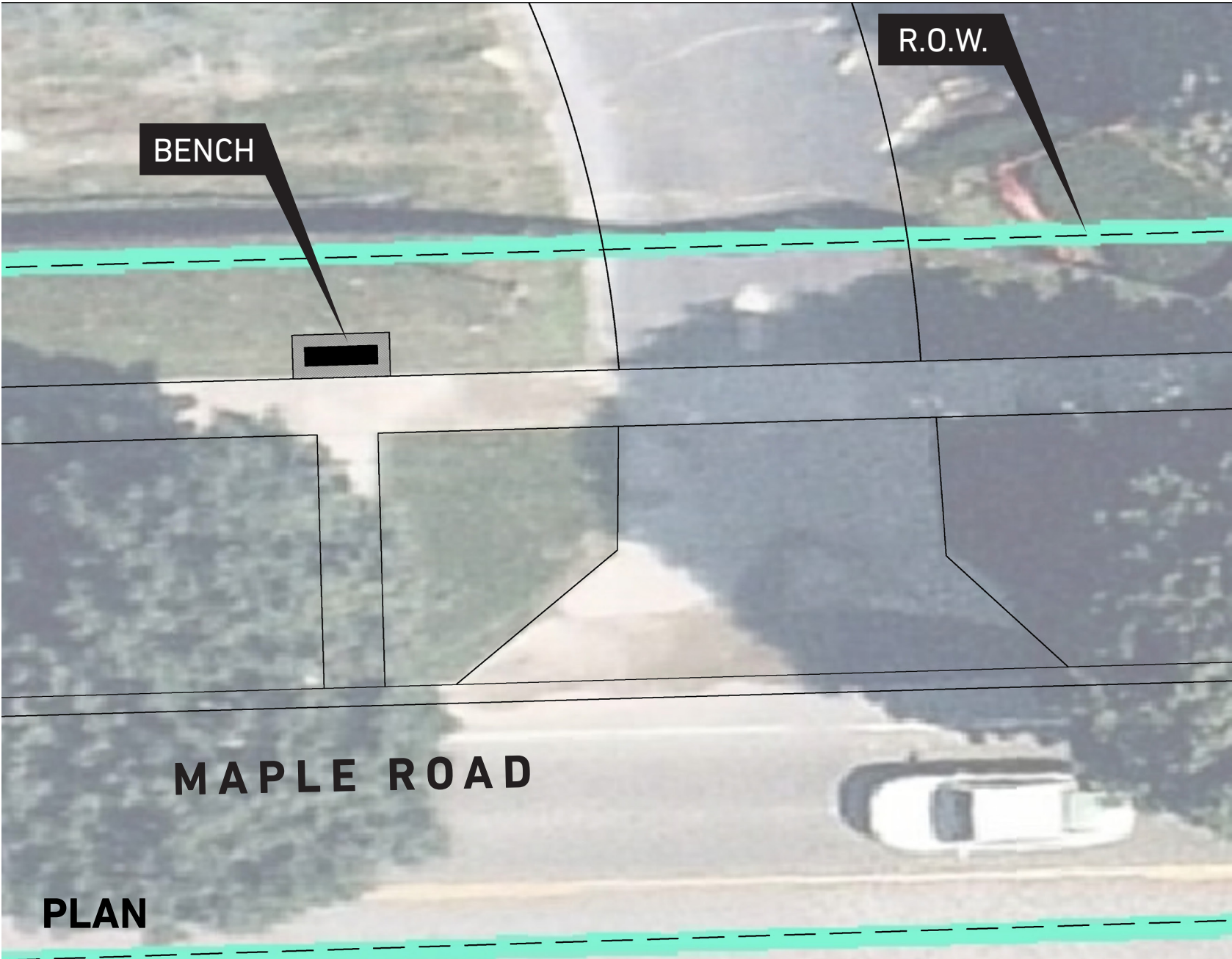
BENCH RELOCATION - LOCATION 9

- Located near existing bus stop



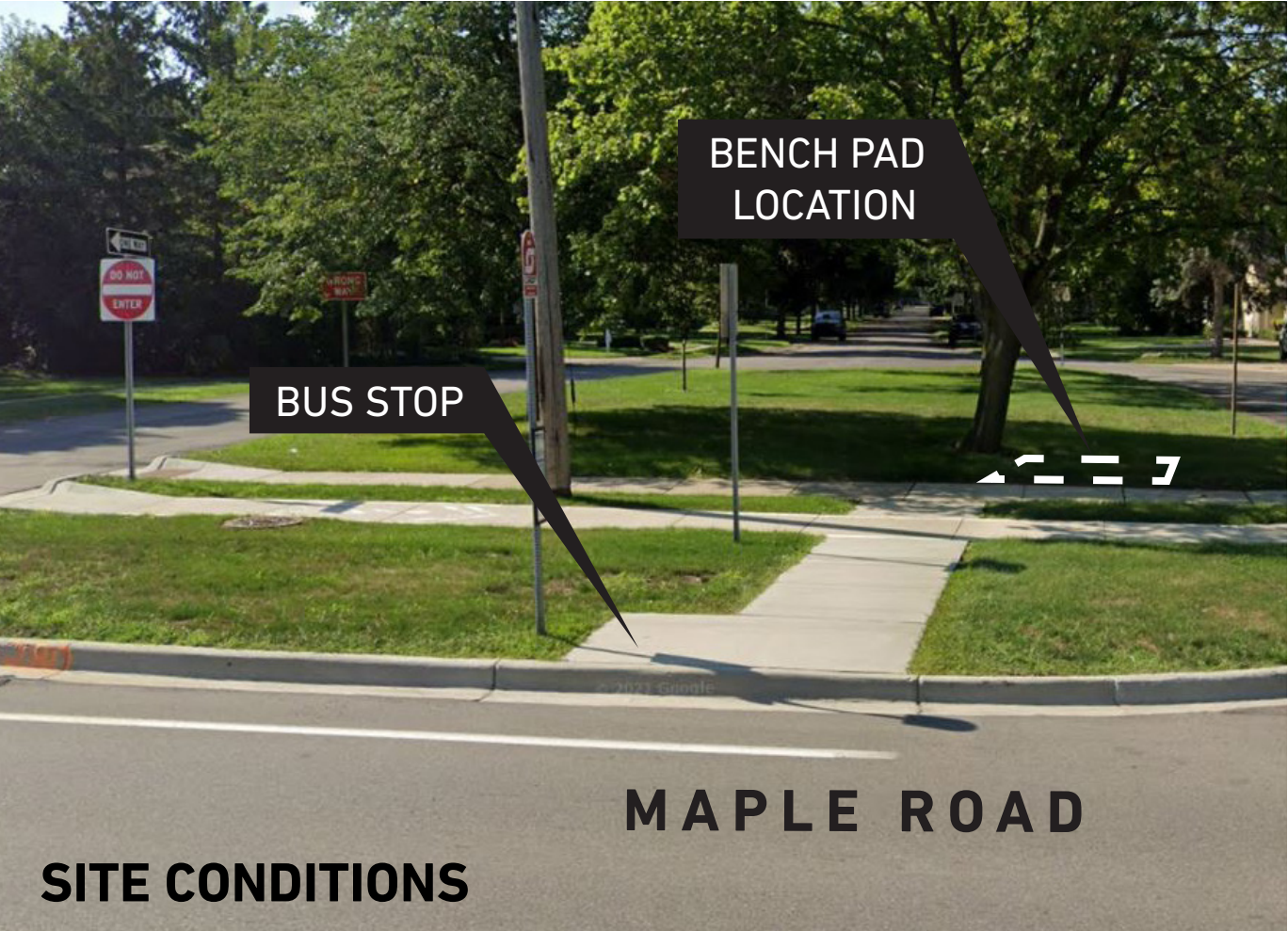
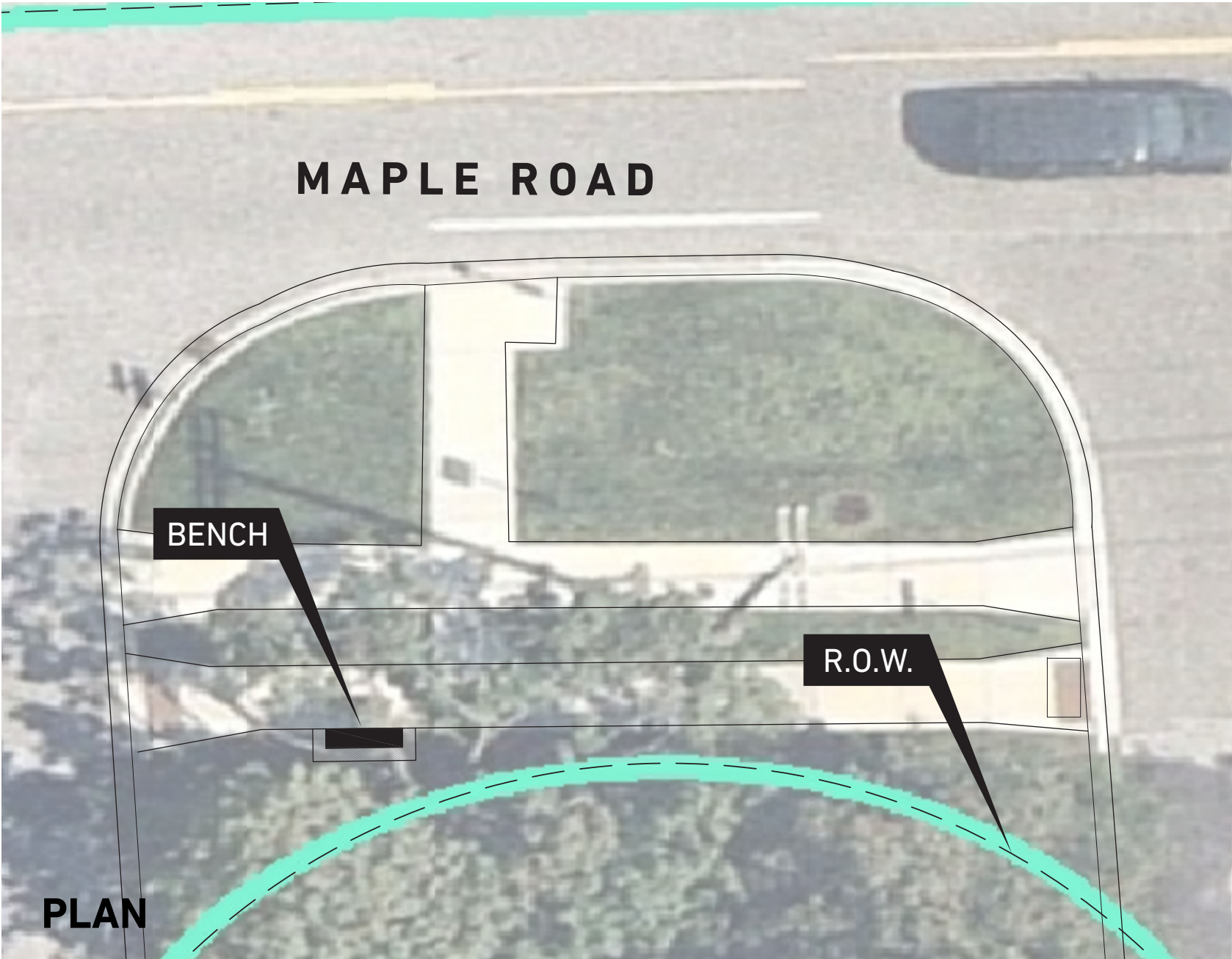
BENCH RELOCATION - LOCATION 10

- Bus stop
- Adjacent to Lutheran Church
- Large shade tree



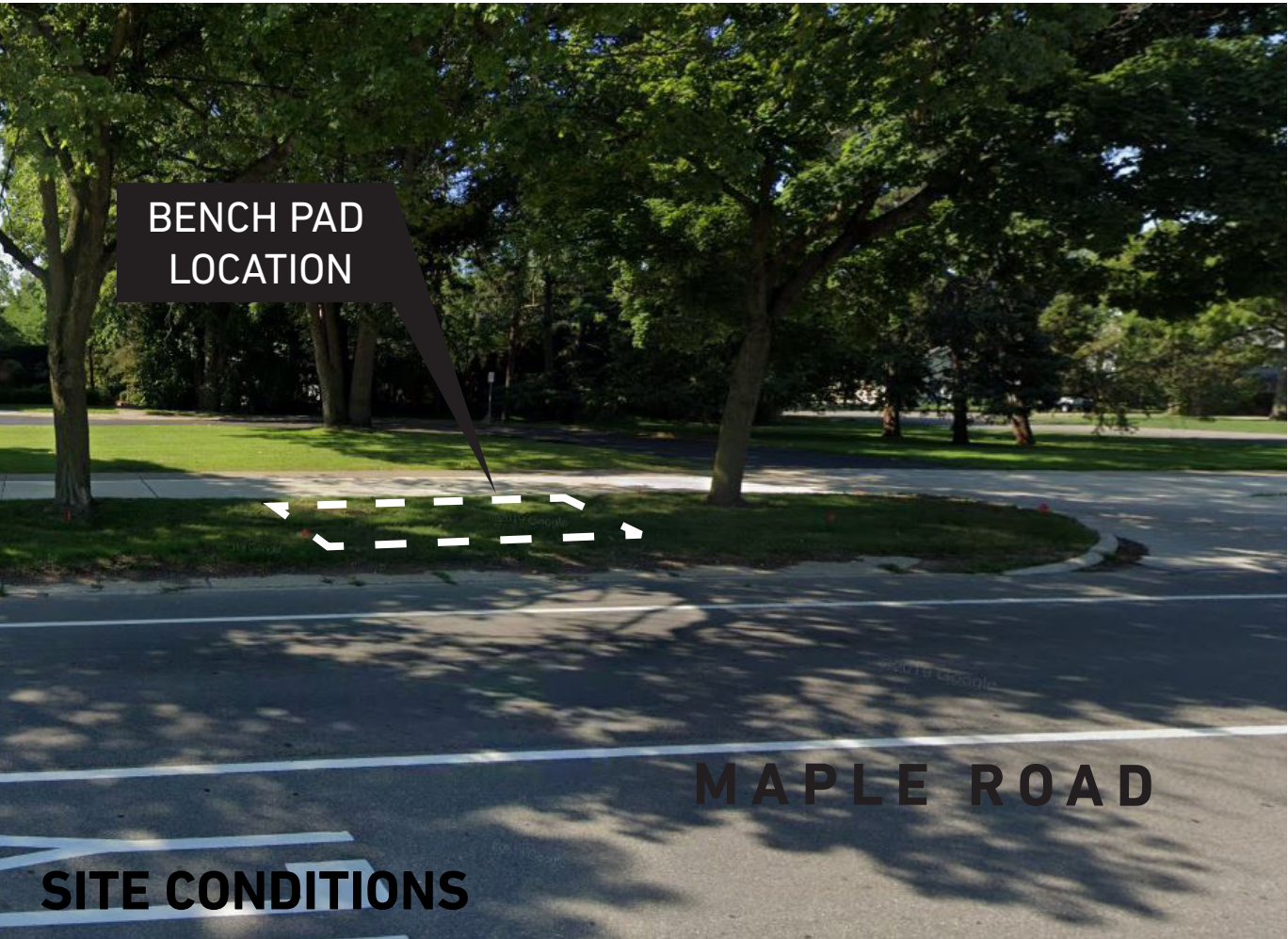
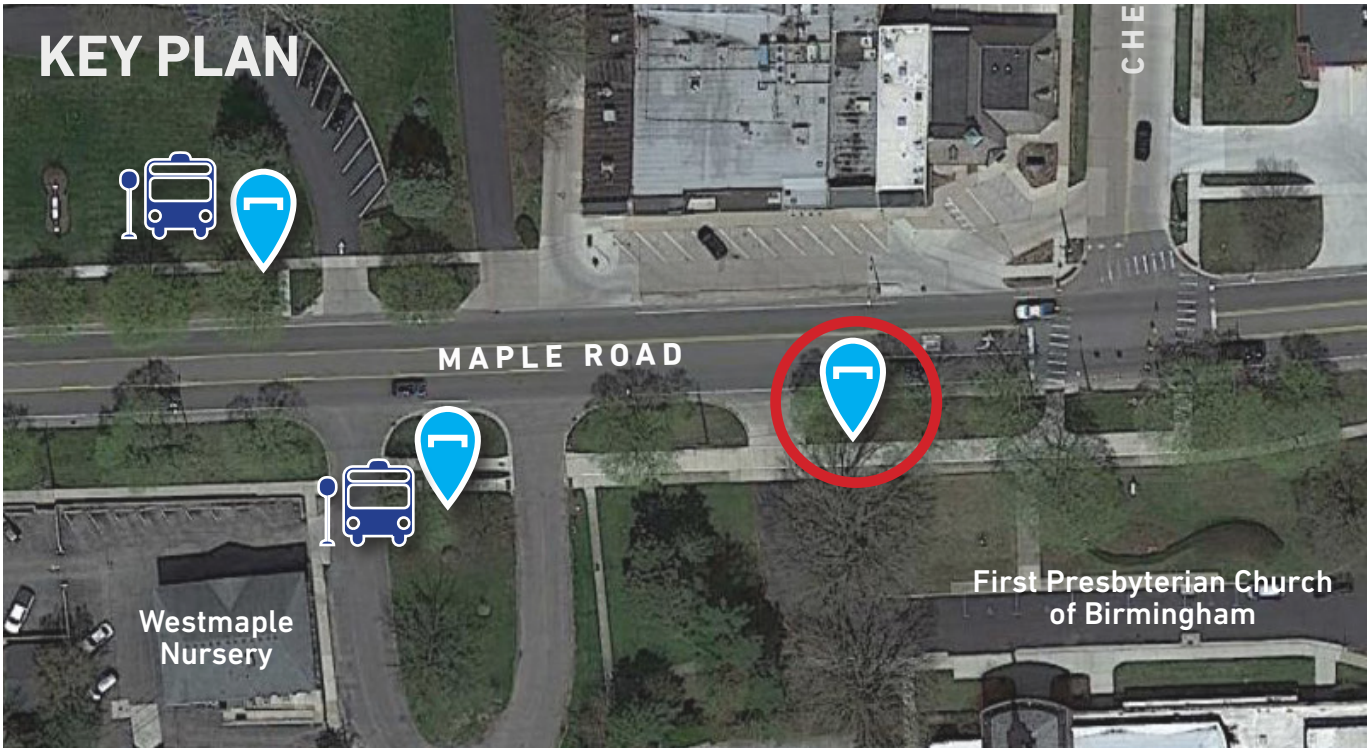
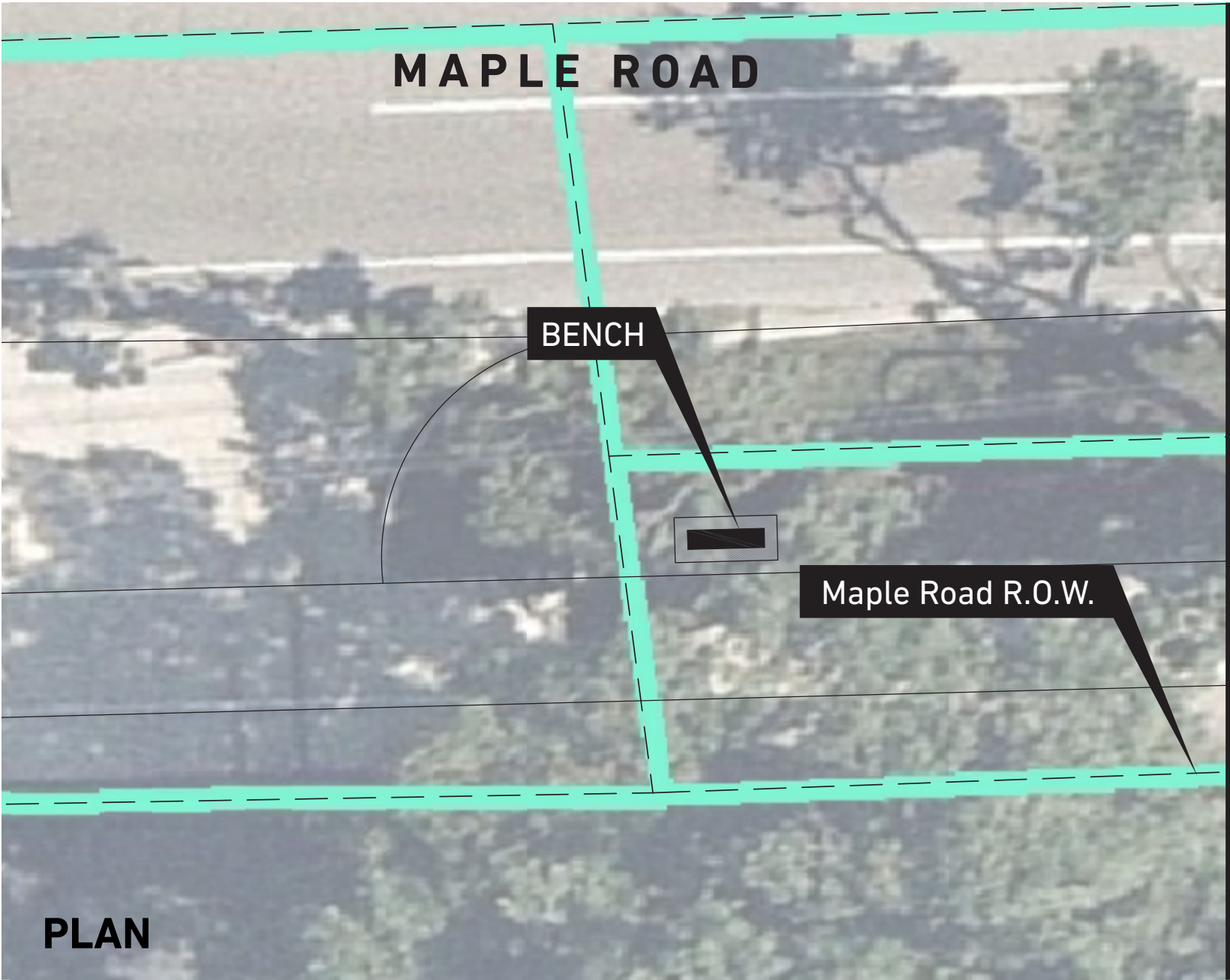
BENCH RELOCATION - LOCATION 11

- Adjacent to bus stop
- Large shade tree
- Avoids bike lanes



BENCH RELOCATION - LOCATION 12

- Located at terminating vista
- Does not encroach on school site



DATE: November 24th, 2021

TO: Multi-Modal Transportation Board

FROM: Brooks Cowan, City Planner
Scott Zielinski, Assistant City Engineer
Commander Scott Grewe, Police Department

SUBJECT: Woodward Ave Pedestrian Safety and Road Diet Considerations

INTRODUCTION:

Woodward Avenue bisects the City with an eight-lane divided roadway that is under the jurisdiction of the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT). The combination of vehicular traffic volumes, traffic speeds, and pedestrian crossing distance have been a frequent concern. Recently there was a pedestrian fatality that again focused attention on the problems.

There have been a series of meetings and communications with MDOT staff. A number of safety measures have been identified to improve safety at the existing pedestrian crossings which in the near term include improved signage, lighting, and pedestrian signalization. MDOT has also been asked to conduct a Road Safety Audit and other studies in the next few months. There have also been conversations with MDOT about changes to the access between Woodward Ave and Old Woodward, plus additional pedestrian crossings along Woodward Ave. Longer-term considerations discussed include a road diet to reduce the Woodward Avenue pedestrian crossing distance, and reduced vehicle speeds to enhance safety.

Based on recent discussions, including at recent City Commission and Multi-Modal Transportation Board meetings, City staff and consultants are developing a comprehensive list of items to study ways in which pedestrian safety on Woodward Avenue can be enhanced with both short term and long term improvements. This memorandum outlines the City's expectations of items to be reviewed by MDOT.

BACKGROUND:

At the City Commission meeting on October 25, 2021, representatives from the Michigan Department of Transportation ("MDOT") appeared before the Commission in response to public pressure to address the urgent safety concerns at the pedestrian crossing at Woodward and Brown/Forest. Birmingham has experienced two pedestrian fatalities on Woodward this past year and intends to implement all safety measures possible to prevent such incidences from occurring again. Since the October 25, 2021 City Commission meeting, the City has received a formal commitment letter from MDOT outlining MDOT's plans to address the pedestrian safety concerns at Woodward Ave and Brown/Forest.

The City has also began the process of applying to MDOT for a “road diet” on Woodward in order to reduce the number of travel lanes for cars and to create a complete street that is accessible to all modes of transportation for people of all ages and abilities. MDOT has a Road Diet Checklist which consists of requirements that a City or corridor must satisfy in order to qualify for a lane reduction. Currently, the City’s transportation consultants are conducting all of the background research and studies to meet all of the requirements outlined in MDOT’s Road Diet Checklist.

In order to finalize the City’s Road Diet application for review and approval by the City Commission early in 2022, staff recommends that the MMTB review the “road diet” recommendations in Birmingham’s master plans, as well as MDOT’s Road Diet Checklist requirements, and provide input on the list of items the City of Birmingham expects MDOT to review in relations to enhanced safety features on Woodward Avenue.

BIRMINGHAM COMPLETE STREETS POLICIES, TRANSPORTATION PLANS, MASTER PLANS, & REGIONAL PLANS

The MDOT Road Diet Checklist requires that the applicant adopt a Transportation Plan, Master Plan, and/or Complete Streets Policy and that recommendations from such policies and plans be considered during planning and design of the Road Diet.

On July 11, 2011, the City Commission approved a resolution to formally support complete streets principles in the City of Birmingham. On July 25, 2011, the City Commission approved a resolution to formally support regional transportation planning coordination with neighboring jurisdictions.

In regards to relevant plans, Birmingham has adopted a Multi-Modal Transportation Plan (2013), a Downtown 2016 Plan (1996), and a Triangle District Plan (2007). All of the plans listed above have road diet recommendations related to pedestrian and non-motorized safety for Woodward Avenue. The recommendations within all of the City’s Master Plans share a consistent theme that pedestrian safety improvements for Woodward need to be addressed and that changes should be made to slow automobile speed, reduce pedestrian crossing distance, and enhance non-motorized and public transit options. **The following is a summary of Birmingham’s transportation and master plan recommendations related to a “road diet” for Woodward Avenue.**

Multi-Modal Transportation Plan (2013):

Birmingham’s Multi-Modal Transportation Plan (MMTP) recommends a specific concept plan for Woodward Avenue. The concept plan includes reducing Woodward’s designated automobile traffic lanes from four lanes to three in each direction and converting the 4th lane to a designated bus only lane. The plan also calls for an enhanced median with space for planters and bus shelters to provide a larger separation between Woodward Ave and the business access drive. A bike lane along the Woodward Ave access drive is also recommended. Extra space for the bike lane would be accomodated by shifting the angled parking in the access drive to parallel parking.

The Multi-Modal Plan also recommends a traffic signal on northbound Woodward Ave at Forest Ave. Southbound Woodward Ave currently has a partial traffic signal At Woodward and Brown where there is a pedestrian crosswalk. The MMTP recommends additional signaling for northbound traffic to protect pedestrians at

this location all the way across Woodward from Brown to Forest. Enhancements to crossing safety for pedestrians and cyclists are also recommended at Bowers and Lincoln with colored sharrows, and pedestrian crosswalk improvements at Oak Avenue and Oakland Avenue.

Downtown 2016 Plan (1996):

Several transportation recommendations from this 20 year old plan have already been implemented. Birmingham's Downtown 2016 Plan has an entire section titled "Circulation" that is dedicated to improvements that will calm traffic and enhance pedestrian safety. Such recommendations include narrowing the roads to reduce crossing distance, adding on-street parking to help slow down traffic speeds, improved crosswalk striping, and making traffic signal timing more accommodating for pedestrians. The plan addresses the need to provide more safety measures along Woodward Avenue as well (Woodward Avenue is referred to as Hunter Boulevard in the plan). The plan states "Hunter Boulevard is an eyesore and difficult to cross." The plan recommends an improved boulevard section with landscaped service roads at its side to beautify the thoroughfare and create an environment more adapted to pedestrians. It is also recommended in the Downtown Plan that the City coordinate with MDOT to have a traffic circle installed at the intersection of Woodward and S. Old Woodward.

Triangle District Urban Design Plan (2007):

The Birmingham Triangle District Plan covers the east side of Woodward Avenue from Ruffner Ave to E. Maple. The Triangle District Plan's recommendations for the Woodward Corridor include reducing Woodward Avenue to three lanes in each direction, reducing the speed limit to 35 mph, and eliminating some of the driveways and intersecting streets that create conflict points for through traffic and local traffic. This includes additional traffic signals, specifically at Forest Street, improved crosswalks, moving or removing u-turn lanes, and shortening turn lanes. In reducing Woodward from four lanes to three, the Triangle District Plan recommends the fourth lane be converted to a separate service drive that functions as a local street with on-street parking and is lined with landscaping and trees as a buffer from Woodward Ave. Automobile ingress and egress for the Triangle District is also emphasized as recommendations are to rearrange road alignments connecting to Woodward Ave to require 90 degree right turn movements instead of rapid 45 degree off ramps into the neighborhood. Doing so reduces traffic speeds and improves safety for pedestrians.

The City of Birmingham has also been included in multiple regional plans regarding recommendations for complete streets and rapid transit on Woodward Avenue. These multi-jurisdictional plans involved presentations to the City of Birmingham and public open houses at Birmingham's Baldwin Library. The following is a summary of such plans:

Woodward Ave Complete Streets Plan (Woodward Ave Action Association – 2015)

The Complete Streets Plan recommends a bikeway along Woodward, with additional pedestrian crossings. Woodward Ave is proposed to be reduced from four lanes to three in both directions, with the addition of new transit only lanes. An enhanced access drive for businesses would be separated from Woodward by a larger median with planters and trees. Parallel parking, a cycle track, and an

enhanced pedestrian zone would be between the access drive and the commercial area.

Woodward Avenue Rapid Transit Alternatives Analysis (SEMCOG – 2014)

The Rapid Transit Study supports a transit only lane (for portions of Woodward Ave) consisting of either conversion of a traffic lane or a new lane placed in the median. Various other improvements are recommended to reduce transit travel times, and to consolidate bus stops into fewer “super stops”.

Mobility Oriented Development Plan (2019)

The Mobility Oriented Development Plan (MOD), completed in 2019, also had a series of recommendations to improve accessibility for pedestrians (including both along and crossing Woodward Ave.) and transit, with support to improve access to “Fast Stop” locations.

EXPECTED ITEMS OF STUDY FOR MDOT:

The following is a list of expected work for MDOT to conduct in their review of Woodward Avenue in consideration of a road diet, enhancing pedestrian safety measures, and implementing recommendations from Birmingham’s transportation and master plans. The Multi-Modal Transportation Board may wish to provide comments on additional items they wish to have MDOT review.

- Perform an MDOT Road Safety Audit through the City of Birmingham, from Quarton (16 Mile Road) to 14 Mile Road.
- Perform a Road Diet Study to reduce Woodward Avenue to a six-lane divided boulevard through the City of Birmingham from Quarton Road (16 Mile Road) to 14 Mile Road.
- Evaluate the pedestrian crossings at both the signalized and unsignalized intersections. Calculate gaps available at unsignalized pedestrian crossings and identify additional potential pedestrian crossing locations to facilitate safe access for pedestrians across Woodward Ave.
- Review signal timing along Woodward and identify locations where pedestrian walk times and clearance intervals can be increased.
- Review the use of services drives/parking areas along Woodward Ave. and determine how they may be utilized to achieve the City’s goals for pedestrian connectivity and reducing vehicle speeds.
- Review SMART bus stops and pedestrian connectivity and access across Woodward to them.
- Redesign the access at the S. Old Woodward & Woodward Ave. intersection to improve the safety, operations and pedestrian connectivity at this intersection.

A Road Diet Checklist is provided in the attachments. The checklist review is for MDOT to conduct, however City staff has commented in the checklist what has been accomplished and what is in the process of review by the City’s traffic engineering consultants as a status update for the Multi-Modal Board and City Commission.

ATTACHMENTS:

- MDOT Road Diet Checklist
- October 25, 2021 City Commission Memo regarding Woodward Ave pedestrian safety correspondence with MDOT (relevant letters attached)
- November 22, 2021 City Manager's Report – Woodward Pedestrian Safety Update
- Birmingham's Complete Streets Resolution
- Birmingham's Regional Transportation Resolution
- Multi-Modal Transportation Plan (2013) - Woodward Corridor Recommendations
- Birmingham Downtown 2016 Plan - Woodward Corridor Recommendations
- Triangle District Urban Design Plan (2007) - Woodward Corridor Recommendations
- Woodward Avenue Action Association Complete Streets Plan (2015) – relevant pages
- Woodward Avenue Rapid Transit Alternatives Analysis (2014) – relevant pages
- RTA Mobility Oriented Development Plan (2019) – relevant pages

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Make a motion to recommend that the City Commission approve a formal resolution in support of a Road Diet as required by the Michigan Department of Transportation to support a Road Diet application for Woodward Avenue;

AND

To recommend that the City Commission approve a formal request for MDOT to study pedestrian safety enhancements as identified in the Expected items of Study section of this report.

**RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF A ROAD DIET AND ENHANCED
PEDESTRIAN SAFETY MEASURES FOR WOODWARD AVENUE
FROM QUARTON ROAD TO 14 MILE**

WHEREAS, a Road Diet is considered to be any reduction in the number of through lanes along a roadway segment;

WHEREAS, the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) requires a local municipality applying for a Road Diet to approve a formal resolution in support of the Road Diet prior to reviewing the viability of traffic lane reductions;

WHEREAS, the City of Birmingham approved a Complete Streets Commitment Resolution on July 11, 2011 to ensure safe and convenient access for all roadway users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and drivers of all ages and abilities;

WHEREAS, the City of Birmingham approved a resolution in support of regional transportation coordination on July 25, 2011 to encourage and support multi-modal transportation infrastructure for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders;

WHEREAS, several existing City of Birmingham transportation plans and master plans recommend a reduction in traffic lanes on Woodward Avenue and the addition of enhanced safety features for pedestrians to make Birmingham's Woodward Corridor safer for pedestrians, bicyclists, and public transit riders;

WHEREAS, complete streets to support and invite multiple uses, including safe, active, and ample space for pedestrians, bicycles, and transit are more conducive to the public life and efficient movement of people than streets which are primarily designed to move automobiles;

WHEREAS, increasing active transportation such as walking, bicycling, and public transportation offers the potential for improved public health, economic development, a cleaner environment, reduced transportation costs, enhanced community connections, and more liveable communities;

WHEREAS, reducing a travel lane on Woodward Avenue as part of a Road Diet will shorten the travel distance for pedestrian crossings, enhancing pedestrian safety by reducing the time spent crossing traffic lanes;

WHEREAS, enhanced pedestrian safety features on Woodward Avenue will heighten pedestrian crossing awareness and will signal to drivers that they must slow down and yield to pedestrians;

WHEREAS, reducing Woodward Avenue's speed limit to 35 miles per hour will increase safety for pedestrians, bicyclists and transit riders crossing or traveling along Woodward Avenue;

WHEREAS, reducing a travel lane on Woodward Avenue as part of a Road Diet will improve Birmingham's east and west connection which will enhance pedestrian mobility between Birmingham's neighborhoods and commercial corridors;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Birmingham City Commission hereby declares its support of a Road Diet and enhanced pedestrian safety measures for Woodward Avenue from Quarton Road to 14 Mile and requests the full support of MDOT to implement the same

I, Alex Bingham, City Clerk of the City of Birmingham, Michigan do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of a Resolution adopted by the Birmingham City Commission at its regular meeting held _____.

Alex Bingham, City Clerk

ROAD DIET CHECKLIST

The Road Diet Checklist is a tool for Department staff to utilize when analyzing a roadway segment for a potential road diet. All items should be considered, but are not required (unless otherwise noted). Department staff should use the completed checklist along with engineering judgment to determine if a road diet should be implemented. A Road Diet is considered to be any reduction in the number of through lanes along a roadway segment.

The completed checklist must be presented to the Engineering Operations Committee (EOC) for information only prior to being implemented on the road. Completed checklists should be sent to Mark Bott, Engineer of Traffic and Safety, for placement on the next available EOC Agenda.

ROAD DIET LOCATION

TSC		County		City/Village/Township City of Birmingham, Michigan
Route	CS	BMP	EMP	Location Description
JN (if app)	Completed By		Date	

GENERAL ITEMS

(City of Birmingham Comments in Blue)

<div>Yes</div> <div>No</div>	<p>The Road Diet is being proposed by an entity other than the Department. <i>If this item is 'Yes', the next item is required.</i></p> <p><i>The City of Birmingham is proposing the Road Diet.</i></p>
<div>Yes</div> <div>No</div>	<p>The local municipality's governing body has passed a formal resolution in support of the Road Diet.</p> <p><i>The City of Birmingham is in the process of reviewing a formal resolution in support of the Road Diet. City Commission is expected to review a recommendation in the beginning of 2022.</i></p>
<div>Yes</div> <div>No</div>	<p>The local municipality (city/village/township) within which the Road Diet is being considered has adopted a Transportation Plan, Master Plan and/or Complete Streets Policy. <i>If this item is 'No', the next item is not applicable.</i></p> <p><i>The City of Birmingham has approved a resolution to support complete streets (2011), has adopted a Multi-Modal Transportation Plan (2013), a Downtown 2016 Plan (1996), and a Triangle District Plan which all recommend road diet considerations for Woodward Avenue.</i></p>

<div>Yes</div> <div>No</div> <div>N/A</div>	<p>The Transportation Plan, Master Plan and/or Complete Streets Policy have been considered during the planning and design of the Road Diet.</p> <p><i>The City of Birmingham's Multi-Modal Board and City Commission will review all relevant Transportation and Master Plans in the process of reviewing a formal resolution in support of the Road Diet.</i></p>
<div>Yes</div> <div>No</div>	<p>The Road Diet will result in on-street parking where it does not currently exist. If this item is 'No', the next item is not applicable.</p>
<div>Yes</div> <div>No</div> <div>N/A</div>	<p>A formal agreement between MDOT and the local municipality indicating the local municipality's responsibility in participating in funding the project and future maintenance of the on-street parking areas has been drafted.</p>
<div>Yes</div> <div>No</div>	<p>The Road Diet is located within a CMAQ nonattainment or maintenance area. If this item is 'No', the next item is not applicable.</p>
<div>Yes</div> <div>No</div> <div>N/A</div>	<p>The proposed lane configuration has been analyzed for air quality conformity and is determined to be acceptable.</p> <p><i>Air quality will be analyzed upon review of a formal design.</i></p>
<div>Yes</div> <div>No</div>	<p>The Road Diet will utilize federal funding. If this item is 'No', the next item is not applicable. If this item is 'Yes', the next item is required.</p>
<div>Yes</div> <div>No</div> <div>N/A</div>	<p>The FHWA Area Engineer has been informed of the Road Diet.</p> <p><i>To be completed</i></p>
<div>Yes</div> <div>No</div>	<p>A public meeting to which all road users were invited, including area residents/business owners and commuters, has been held. This item is required. Provide details of public feedback in COMMENTS section.</p> <p><i>A public meeting discussing the Road Diet will be held at the Multi-Modal Board on December 2nd, 2021 and City Commission in early 2022.</i></p>

COMPLETE STREETS ITEMS

<div>Yes</div> <div>No</div>	It is predicted that the Road Diet will result in an improvement in mobility for non-vehicular transportation modes.
<div>Yes</div> <div>No</div> <div>N/A</div>	Accommodations for non-motorized users (i.e. bike lanes, pedestrian refuge islands) have been incorporated into the design of the Road Diet where appropriate.
<div>Yes</div> <div>No</div>	Bus routes exist within the Road Diet influence area. <i>If this item is 'No', the next item is not applicable.</i>
<div>Yes</div> <div>No</div> <div>N/A</div>	Accommodations for maintenance of safe bus loading and unloading zones have been incorporated into the design of the Road Diet where appropriate.
<div>Yes</div> <div>No</div>	An at-grade railroad crossing exists within the Road Diet influence area. <i>If this item is 'No', the next item is not applicable.</i>
<div>Yes</div> <div>No</div> <div>N/A</div>	Accommodations have been incorporated into the design for commercial and transit vehicles that must stop at the at-grade railroad crossing.

GEOMETRIC, OPERATIONS AND SAFETY ITEMS

<div>Yes</div> <div>No</div>	Turning movements at all signalized and major un-signalized intersections are acceptable for the appropriate design vehicle.
<div>Yes</div> <div>No</div> <div>N/A</div>	Where on-street parking is proposed, intersection sight distance at all affected intersections is acceptable.
<div>Yes</div> <div>No</div>	<p>The Geometric Design Unit has reviewed and concurs with the Road Diet.</p> <p><i>To be done</i></p>
<div>Yes</div> <div>No</div>	<p>A SYNCHRO analysis for proposed conditions and future traffic volumes (a) shows that a reasonable Level of Service (LOS) will be maintained during the peak hour at all signalized and major un-signalized intersections. A reasonable LOS is defined as D or better for urban and C or better for rural/between.</p> <p><i>In Progress</i></p>
<div>Yes</div> <div>No</div> <div>N/A</div>	<p>Delay mitigation techniques have been incorporated into the design for individual intersection movements that are predicted to operate at LOS D or worse according to the SYNCHRO model.</p> <p><i>To be determined</i></p>
<div>Yes</div> <div>No</div> <div>N/A</div>	<p>Potential timing and/or phasing changes to existing traffic signals have been vetted through the Traffic Signals Unit for incorporation into the Road Diet.</p> <p><i>To be done</i></p>
<div>Yes</div> <div>No</div>	The route on which the Road Diet is being considered is a Freeway Emergency Route.
<div>0</div> <div>>0</div> <div>(list below)</div>	<p>Historically, how many times per year has freeway traffic been diverted to the route on which the Road Diet is being considered as the result of an incident or emergency? <i>If this item is '0', the next item is not applicable.</i></p> <p><i>To be determined by MDOT</i></p>

Yes No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	Additional features (i.e. special signal timing plans) have been incorporated into the design of the Road Diet to mitigate delays and congestion associated with the diversion of traffic during a freeway closure. <i>To be completed</i>
Yes No	A Highway Safety Manual analysis predicts an overall crash reduction as a result of the Road Diet under future traffic volumes (a). <i>To be determined</i>
Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	A Road Safety Audit has been conducted for the Road Diet. <i>If this item is 'No', the next item is not applicable.</i> <i>The City of Birmingham has requested that MDOT conduct a Road Safety Audit.</i>
Yes No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A	The Road Safety Audit Team recommended that the Road Diet be implemented.

(a) Future traffic volumes refer to 15-20 years out when reestablishment of curb lines is required; 3 years out when only pavement marking and signing changes are required. Seasonal fluctuations in traffic volumes, if they exist, should also be considered.

COMMENTS (Attach additional pages if necessary)



MEMORANDUM

City Manager's Office

DATE: October 20, 2021

TO: Thomas M. Markus, City Manager

FROM: Jana Ecker, Assistant City Manager

SUBJECT: Woodward Avenue Pedestrian Safety Issues

INTRODUCTION:

On September 17, 2021, a second fatal pedestrian accident occurred on Woodward Avenue at the pedestrian crossing at the Brown/Forest intersection. Previously, Wesley Stamps was also fatally injured crossing Woodward on August 8, 2020 in the same vicinity. As a result, the City received extensive public outcry calling for Birmingham to address the safety concerns with this dangerous intersection. However, the entire 200' wide Woodward Avenue right-of-way is owned and controlled by the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and not by the City. Thus, the City has no jurisdiction over Woodward Avenue, and the design of the roadway is entirely controlled by MDOT, including the location and timing of all vehicle and pedestrian traffic signals, all pedestrian crossings (whether at grade, below grade or on a bridge over Woodward), intersection geometry, speed limits and roadway maintenance and improvements.

BACKGROUND:

Birmingham and many other Woodward communities have spent the last several decades working to enhance the Woodward Corridor through the use of pedestrian scale building placement and design, multi-modal amenities, landscaping and other measures to create a human-scale, safe and comfortable corridor for all of our residents, of all ability levels, using all modes of transportation. However, cities do not have the jurisdiction to make required safety improvements in the Woodward Avenue right-of-way.

Over the past several years, the City has repeatedly expressed ongoing safety concerns for pedestrians at the intersection of Woodward and Brown/Forest to MDOT officials. Specifically, the City has requested the addition of a signal to improve the pedestrian crossing over the northbound lanes of Woodward, the addition of an overhead HAWK signal, pedestrian signals, crosswalk enhancements, as well as traffic calming measures to be implemented along the corridor.

The City has continued to press MDOT to invest in pedestrian crossing improvements at the intersection of Woodward and Brown/Forest, and others along the corridor. City officials were able to organize a meeting with MDOT officials on site last month. At the conclusion of the meeting on September 22, 2021, City officials advised MDOT that immediate action was needed to improve pedestrian safety. The City requested additional signage, lighting, pavement markings or even the addition of containers of pedestrian high visibility orange fluorescent crossing flags on both sides of the Woodward crossing, and to have one or more of these safety measures installed within one week. City officials also asked MDOT to schedule a Road Safety Audit as soon as possible.

Over a month has now passed, and MDOT has not installed any permanent or temporary pedestrian safety measures at the Woodward and Brown/Forest pedestrian crossing. The City has reached out to Governor Whitmer and State legislators to request assistance in compelling MDOT to address the safety concerns at Woodward and Brown/Forest. MDOT officials have not formally provided any commitment to install or implement any pedestrian safety measures, nor scheduled a Road Safety Audit.

However, the City was informed by Ms. Swanson, Oakland TSC Manager with MDOT during a telephone call on October 18, 2021, that MDOT had approved the installation of flashing beacons on the crosswalk signage on both sides of Woodward to be installed as soon as possible, funded by MDOT. Ms. Swanson also indicated that MDOT had approved installation of a new traffic signal for the northbound lanes of Woodward, and the addition of pedestrian countdown signal heads on both the southbound and northbound lanes of Woodward, to be funded by MDOT, and installed in the summer of 2022. Ms. Swanson indicated that she was drafting a letter outlining this formal commitment, which she expected to complete by the end of the week.

Ms. Lori Swanson, Oakland TSC Manager, and Ms. Kimberly Webb, Metro Region Engineer, with the Michigan Department of Transportation will be in attendance at the City Commission meeting on October 25, 2021 to update the public regarding MDOT's immediate and long term plans to address the ongoing pedestrian safety issues at Woodward and Brown/Forest.

Since the on site meeting with MDOT representatives, City staff conducted a site inspection of the MDOT right-of-way to survey existing vegetation to determine if any tree trimming was needed to address sight distance concerns. City staff found that there are no trees, tree limbs or other vegetation obstructing sight distance for pedestrians or drivers, nor any vegetation obstructing any of the existing street lighting located in the MDOT right-of-way.

Since the on site meeting, City staff has also surveyed the existing street lighting in the vicinity of the Brown/Forest crosswalk and noted that there are lighting issues in the MDOT right-of-way. Accordingly, City staff also met with a representative of DTE to discuss potential improvements to the overhead street lighting in the MDOT right-of-way. Current deficiencies were noted with regards to overall illumination levels, and light distribution at grade in the vicinity of the Woodward and Brown/Forest pedestrian crossing. After a review of available options, the City Manager has committed to making the lighting improvements to replace the existing high pressure sodium luminaires with new LED luminaires on Woodward from Lincoln to Maple, subject to receipt and approval of the appropriate DTE agreements. In addition, the City Manager has committed to purchasing upgraded LED luminaires to provide brighter lighting at the Woodward and Brown/Forest pedestrian crosswalk, subject to receipt and approval of the appropriate DTE agreements.

Mr. Brandon Faron, DTE Community Lighting Account Manager, will be in attendance via Zoom at the City Commission meeting on October 25, 2021 to respond to any questions on the proposed new lighting.

As mentioned above, the City has received extensive public outcry calling for safety improvements at the Woodward and Brown/Forest pedestrian crossing. Local residents contacted Channel 4 news, WDIV, and on October 14, 2021, Channel 4 ran a segment on the 11:00pm news, with a follow

up web article on October 15, 2021. Clinton Baller purchased and installed pedestrian crossing safety flags, and installed them on either side of the Woodward and Brown/Forest crosswalk. Since the meeting with MDOT officials, City staff has also conducted research into the use of pedestrian flags to increase the visibility of pedestrians in marked crosswalks, and studied other communities that have used the flags as tools to enhance the safety of pedestrians. Based on this research, City staff recommends seeking approval from MDOT for the pedestrian crosswalk flag system that has already been installed on Woodward at Brown/Forest.

LEGAL REVIEW:

The City Attorney has reviewed the proposed agreement with DTE to upgrade the LED lighting on Woodward and has no objection as to form or substance.

FISCAL IMPACT:

As the City does not own or control Woodward Avenue, the City does not have a budget allocated for safety upgrades. However, the City Manager has indicated a willingness to cover the estimated \$23,340 in costs quoted by DTE to install upgraded LED lighting on Woodward to enhance the visibility and safety of pedestrian crossings on Woodward, and to pay for the replacement of pedestrian safety flags as needed.

PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS:

With two pedestrian fatalities having occurred during the past 14 months, there has been media coverage of both the fatal accidents and the need to address the pedestrian safety issues at the intersection of Woodward and Brown/Forest. Local residents have reached out to the City to express their concerns, and the City has responded through discussions at public meetings, social media, and correspondence with MDOT, the Governor and our State legislators, with copies to local news media. The pedestrian safety issues were discussed with Senator Mallory McMorrow personally at the October 4, 2021 City Commission meeting, and with Representative Mari Manoogian on October 20, 2021 via Zoom.

SUMMARY:

The City requests that MDOT take immediate corrective action at the pedestrian crossing at Woodward and Brown/Forest through the installation of pedestrian signals, LED Enhanced Warning signs, advance yield lines, positive offset lighting and/or pedestrian hybrid beacons or other safety measures.

City staff recommends upgrading Woodward Avenue's median lighting, in the MDOT right-of-way, to LED lighting between Maple Road and Lincoln St., and to include higher illumination LED lighting at the Woodward and Brown/Forest pedestrian crossing to enhance the safety of the crossing. DTE can complete the project in this area by the end of the year if approved. This work will both improve pedestrian safety in this area, and will also reduce lighting costs over time.

City staff also recommends seeking approval from MODT for a pedestrian crosswalk flag system on Woodward Avenue at the Brown/Forest crossing to increase the visibility of pedestrians and improve driver awareness.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Letter from Manager Markus dated September 23, 2021
- Letter from Police Chief Clemence dated October 4, 2021

- Letter from Senator McMorrow and State Representative Manoogian received October 4, 2021
- Letter from Assistant City Manager Ecker dated October 8, 2021
- Letter from Assistant City Manager Ecker dated October 13, 2021
- Engineering Department report and agreement with DTE for upgraded LED lighting on Woodward
- Police Department report on pedestrian crosswalk safety flags

SUGGESTED COMMISSION ACTION:

Make a motion adopting a resolution approving the DTE Purchase Agreement to upgrade to LED lighting on the Woodward Avenue median between Maple Road and Lincoln St.;

Further to authorize and direct the City Manager to sign the DTE Lighting Agreement with funding to be provided from Account #401-901.010-981.0100, in an amount not to exceed \$23,340.00.

AND

Make a motion authorizing the Chief of Police and the City Engineer to seek approval from the Michigan Department of Transportation for a pedestrian crosswalk flag system on Woodward Avenue at Brown/Forest;

Further to approve the Chief of Police to purchase additional pedestrian crosswalk flags as needed and to charge this expenditure to the Major Streets Fund Traffic Controls operating supplies account # 202-303.001-729.0000.



September 23, 2021

Ms. Gretchen Whitmer, Governor

Ms. Mari Manoogian, State Representative, 40th House District

Ms. Mallory McMorrow, State Senator, District 13

Re: Pedestrian Safety Concerns on Woodward Avenue

It is with great sadness that I pass along the news that we had yet another fatal pedestrian accident this past weekend on Woodward Avenue that involved the loss of life of one of our residents. This is the second pedestrian fatality that has recently occurred at the pedestrian crossing at the Brown/Forest intersection in Birmingham south of Maple Road. In August 2020, there was another pedestrian fatally injured attempting to cross Woodward at the same intersection.

Extensive public outcry has been received in my office, by our City Commission members and City staff this past week calling for Birmingham to address the safety concerns with this dangerous intersection. However, as you are aware, the entire 200' wide Woodward Avenue right-of-way is owned and controlled by the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and not by the City. Thus, the City has no jurisdiction over Woodward Avenue, and the design of the roadway is entirely controlled by MDOT, including the location and timing of all vehicle and pedestrian traffic signals, all pedestrian crossings (whether at grade, below grade or on a bridge over Woodward), intersection geometry, speed limits and roadway maintenance and improvements. The City's only role in the design and improvement of Woodward Avenue is to investigate incidents, record observations and request assistance and action from MDOT.

Over the past several years, the City has repeatedly expressed ongoing safety concerns for pedestrians at the intersection of Woodward and Brown/Forest to MDOT officials. Specifically, the City has requested the addition of a signal to improve the pedestrian crossing over the northbound lanes of Woodward, the addition of an overhead HAWK signal, pedestrian signals, crosswalk enhancements, as well as traffic calming measures to be implemented along the corridor.

The City continues to press MDOT to invest in pedestrian crossing improvements at the intersection of Woodward and Brown/Forest, and others along the corridor. In fact, the City reached out to MDOT officials through our transportation consultants this summer to attempt yet again to persuade MDOT of the clear danger for pedestrians crossing Woodward Avenue at Brown/Forest. Several weeks ago a meeting was finally scheduled with MDOT officials and traffic engineers to meet on site to discuss our ongoing safety concerns for pedestrians at this intersection. Earlier this week, MDOT officials requested cancellation of this on site meeting due to predicted rain and cold weather. Naturally, this was not well received by the City given the fatal accident that occurred this past weekend. MDOT agreed to meet as originally planned.

This morning, myself, Birmingham Police Chief Clemence, Commander Scott Grewe, City officials from the Planning and Engineering Departments and the City's transportation consultants all met on site, in the rain, to impress upon the two MDOT officials present the clear and present danger at this intersection and the need for immediate action to prevent further injury or death. It was clear from the ensuing discussion that the MDOT officials in attendance did not have the authority to offer any short term or long term solutions to the ongoing safety issues at the intersection of Brown/Forest. We were advised that MDOT could start by conducting pedestrian and traffic counts, perhaps request a Road Safety Audit and study the area to determine what improvements may be warranted.

In response, the City advised MDOT short term efforts needed to be made immediately to address the safety issues and to at least improve pedestrian safety while all of the appropriate studies are conducted. Unfortunately, the City has been told on several occasions in the past that MDOT would conduct safety assessments and studies at this intersection, and get back to us with recommendations. Yet, the dangerous situation remains and another fatality has occurred.

As the top elected officials in Michigan, each of you has the opportunity and obligation to provide executive and legislative oversight for the Michigan Department of Transportation to ensure that the health, safety and welfare of our citizens is protected, and that MDOT takes immediate and appropriate action to address dangerous conditions on our roadways to prevent further loss of life.

Birmingham and many other Woodward communities have spent the last several decades working to enhance the Woodward Corridor through the use of pedestrian scale building placement and design, multi-modal amenities, landscaping and other measures to create a human-scale, safe and comfortable corridor for all of our residents, of all ability levels, using all modes of transportation. However, cities do not have the jurisdiction to make the required safety improvements in the Woodward Avenue right-of-way, but the State of Michigan does have this obligation.

The City of Birmingham asks that MDOT stop spending valuable resources and time on an ITS interstate traffic messaging system on Woodward while ignoring the pressing pedestrian safety issues. The addition of interstate-scale equipment and signage will have a significant negative impact on the aesthetics of the corridor and will not be compatible with the efforts of Birmingham, Royal Oak, Ferndale, Pleasant Ridge, Detroit and other local communities to create a less auto-centric corridor. It is incumbent upon MDOT to prioritize and allocate limited funding to those projects that are in fact necessary and valuable for enhancing the safety of our transportation infrastructure, for all users. The City of Birmingham understands that there are many other components of our transportation infrastructure along Woodward that are in dire need of funding, including but not limited to, pedestrian crossing improvements, the provision of a continuous and safe sidewalk network, bicycle infrastructure and traffic calming measures.

The City of Birmingham requests that each of you exercise your executive oversight and require MDOT to prioritize funding along Woodward for the improvement of the pedestrian environment over the vehicular environment, and specifically for safety improvements at the intersection of Woodward and Brown/Forest before another fatality occurs.

Yours truly,



Thomas M. Markus,
City Manager

Cc: Birmingham City Commission
Birmingham Eccentric (Open Letter)
Downtown Publication (Open Letter)



BIRMINGHAM POLICE DEPARTMENT

MARK H. CLEMENCE, CHIEF OF POLICE

October 4, 2021

Ms. Gretchen Whitmer, Governor

C/O: Ms. Amanda Dietlin, Community Affairs Liaison – Office of the Governor

Ms. Mari Manoogian, State Representative, 40th House District

Ms. Mallory McMorrow, State Senator, District 13

Mr. Chuck Moss, Oakland County Commissioner, District 12

RE: Pedestrian Safety Concerns on Woodward Avenue – Site Visit

To All,

As you all are aware, the City of Birmingham has had two pedestrian fatalities on Woodward Avenue near Brown/Forest over the past 13 months. As a police officer working in the City for the past 37 years, I can assure you that this loss of life is unprecedented and totally unacceptable to me as the chief of police, to our entire City staff and to our community members. As the elected officials for our City, I would like to invite you to come to your constituent community and meet with me and other City staff to observe the area for yourselves. A site visit would allow the City the opportunity to show each of you first hand where the safety concerns are and discuss potential solutions with you. The primary reason for requesting that you attend a site visit is to detail the urgency of the City's situation and that we move forward together with actions that will lead to swift and immediate changes to dramatically improve the safety of pedestrian and vehicular safety at this location.

I understand that Woodward Avenue is under the jurisdiction of the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT). The City is working with MDOT to improve the pedestrian

crossings in the area and looking at other possible enhancements that would improve both pedestrian safety and have an impact on traffic calming. It is our hope, that with your assistance, the City can see this process streamlined in order to expeditiously create a safe environment for all. While we have met at the site with MDOT, their record of accomplishment for addressing safety concerns at this location has been buried in bureaucracy. That situation cannot continue. MDOT must address these safety concerns at this location as soon as possible. Once this immediate concern has been addressed, the City would like to move forward with a more comprehensive examination of Woodward Ave to address pedestrian safety as a whole and to integrate the road into the fabric of our "walkable" community. I am quite certain that all of the communities along the Woodward corridor share this desire. It should be noted that Birmingham is unique in that Woodward Avenue effectively runs through the middle of the city. It is imperative that residents on both sides of Woodward Ave are able to safely traverse Woodward Ave in order for our community to truly be united.

In the interest of time, I would be happy to coordinate the site visit. I propose the last week of October (October 26, 27, and 28) or the first week of November (November 2, 3, and 4). Please email me at mclemence@bhamgov.org or call me at 248-530-1875 with your availability on these dates. I look forward to the opportunity to expand your understanding of the safety issues present and to discuss potential solutions.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. H. Clemence". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "M." and last name "Clemence" clearly distinguishable.

Mark H. Clemence

Chief of Police



13TH DISTRICT
BINSFELD OFFICE BUILDING
P.O. BOX 30005
LANSING, MI 48209-7526

MICHIGAN SENATE
STATE SENATOR MALLORY MCMORROW

PHONE: (517) 373-2523
FAX: (517) 373-5669
senmmcmorrow@senate.michigan.gov
senate.michigan.gov/mcmorrow

Dear City Manager Markus,

Thank you for reaching out to our office regarding the public safety concerns at the pedestrian crossing at the Brown/Forest intersection in Birmingham. After receiving your letter and hearing concerns from a number of residents, our office reached out to the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) to ensure they are aware of the seriousness of this issue and the steps the department is taking to ensure it gets addressed swiftly. MDOT responded to our office with their solutions for improvements to this pedestrian crossing, their communication is shared below.

What has been done so far:

- MDOT met internally to discuss possible solutions to improve pedestrian safety.
- MDOT collected pedestrian counts for the Woodward at Forest/Brown crosswalk for two days:
 - 9/8/2021, 4:00 pm -5:00 pm, 17 pedestrians crossed (three elderly pedestrians were included and counts as two pedestrians)
 - 9/9/2021, 8:00 am to 9:00 am, 9 ped crossed

MDOT had an onsite meeting with Birmingham's City Manager and city officials at the Woodward/Forest Ave. pedestrian crossing. During the field visit, the team observed pedestrian activity, reviewed intersection geometry, and identified a few immediate action steps for both the city of Birmingham and MDOT.

Immediate action steps for MDOT:

- The Oakland TSC staff will observe pedestrian activities from Forest Ave. to Hazel Street to determine if Forest Ave is the best location for pedestrians to cross.
- MDOT is exploring installing flashing beacons on northbound Woodward Avenue on the existing pedestrian ahead crossing signs.
- MDOT will deploy the speed radar trailer on Woodward Ave.
- MDOT will investigate installing pedestrian countdown signals for SB Woodward at Forest/Brown crosswalk.
- MDOT will evaluate installing a traffic signal with pedestrian countdown signals for NB Woodward at Forest/Brown crosswalk.
- TSC is determining if a pedestrian RSA should be completed.

Actions Steps of City Identified by MDOT:

- The city will investigate removing grown tree branches to improve sight distance.
- The city will investigate installing/changing overhead streetlights.
- The city will provide MDOT with a list of upcoming special events so MDOT can observe and conduct a pedestrian count study.
- The city will provide possible origins and destinations on both sides of Woodward Avenue.
- The city will provide input regarding any pedestrian activity to the south of Forest Ave such as pedestrians crossing near Speedway or transit stops.

As this project is currently in the study phase, MDOT is not able to provide us with a specific timeline, however, we have been assured this is a top priority and has been expedited. We will continue to provide updates as we work with MDOT on identifying solutions at the state level.

Sincerely,



Mallory McMorrow
State Senator
13th District



Mari Manoogian
State Representative
40th District

Cc:

Birmingham City Commission



October 8, 2021

Ms. Gretchen Whitmer, Governor

Ms. Mari Manoogian, State Representative, 40th House District

Ms. Mallory McMorrow, State Senator, District 13

Re: Pedestrian Safety Concerns on Woodward Avenue

Today, it will have been four weeks since we had yet another pedestrian fatality occur on Woodward Avenue at the pedestrian crossing located at the Brown/Forest intersection in Birmingham.

City Manager Tom Markus wrote to each of you on September 23, 2021 and requested your assistance to exercise your executive and legislative oversight and require the Michigan Department of Transportation ("MDOT") to take immediate action to correct the dangerous conditions on Woodward at Brown/Forest to prevent further loss of life. City Manager Markus also requested your assistance to require MDOT to prioritize future funding along Woodward for the improvement of the pedestrian environment.

As noted in our previous letter, extensive public outcry has been received from City residents asking for immediate improvements to address the safety concerns at the dangerous intersection of Woodward and Brown/Forest, and concerns continue to come in from citizens. However, the entire 200' wide Woodward Avenue right-of-way is owned and controlled by MDOT and not by the City. The City's only role in the design and improvement of Woodward Avenue is to investigate incidents, record observations and request assistance and action from MDOT.

In response to our previous correspondence, the City received a joint response letter dated October 4, 2021 from State Senator McMorrow and State Representative Manoogian. This letter stated that both offices reached out to MDOT to ensure they were aware of the seriousness of the safety issues at Woodward and Brown/Forest, and to inquire as to the actions taken by MDOT to swiftly address the dangerous conditions. The letter states that MDOT responded to their request with the following solutions for improvements to this pedestrian crossing:

What has been done so far:

- MDOT met internally to discuss possible solutions to improve pedestrian safety;
- MDOT collected pedestrian counts on September 8 and 9, 2021 for the Woodward at Brown/Forest crosswalk area; and
- MDOT met onsite with City officials and identified action steps for both the City and MDOT.

Immediate Action Steps for MDOT:

- The Oakland TSC staff will **observe** pedestrian activities from Forest to Hazel on Woodward to determine if Brown/Forest is the best location for pedestrians to cross;
- MDOT is **exploring** installing flashing beacons on NB Woodward on the existing pedestrian ahead crossing signs
- MDOT will deploy the speed radar trailer on Woodward;
- MDOT will **investigate** installing pedestrian countdown signals for SB Woodward at Brown/Forest
- MDOT will **evaluate** installing a traffic signal with pedestrian countdown signals for NB Woodward at Brown/Forest
- TSC is **determining** if a pedestrian RSA should be completed. (Emphasis added)

Action Steps of City Identified by MDOT:

- City will investigate removing grown tree branches to improve sight distance;
- City will investigate installing/changing overhead streetlights;
- City will provide MDOT with a list of upcoming specials events so MDOT can observe and conduct a pedestrian count study;
- City will provide possible origins and destinations on both sides of Woodward; and
- City will provide input regarding any pedestrian activity to the south of Forest such as pedestrians crossing near Speedway or transit stops.

While the City appreciates the efforts of Senator McMorro and State Representative Manoojian to reach out to MDOT for a status update, MDOT's response as outlined in the October 4, 2021 letter continues to demonstrate a lack of urgency to address the clear and present danger to pedestrians at the intersection of Woodward and Brown/Forest.

MDOT's response also conflicts with information provided to the City. MDOT has indicated that so far they met internally to discuss possible solutions to improve pedestrian safety, they have collected pedestrian counts for the Woodward and Brown/Forest intersection, and that they have met with City officials on site. However, when City officials met on site on September 22, 2021, the MDOT representatives stated that they had not conducted any pedestrian counts at the intersection.

MDOT's response further provides that their staff will observe pedestrian activities from Forest to Hazel on Woodward, they will explore installing flashing beacons at the Brown/Forest crosswalk, investigate installing pedestrian countdown signals, evaluate adding a new traffic signal, and determine if a pedestrian Road Safety Audit should be completed. Each of these statements were offered as "solutions for improvements to this pedestrian crossing". Yet these "solutions" involve MDOT agreeing only to observe, explore, investigate and evaluate existing conditions and crossing improvements, with no commitment whatsoever to install or implement any permanent improvements. The only site change MDOT proposes is to temporarily deploy a speed radar trailer on Woodward.

However, MDOT's response assigns specific action items and site improvements to the City of Birmingham. This is clearly a deflection of responsibility for the safety, design and operation of Woodward to the City, despite the fact that MDOT owns and controls the entire 200' width of Woodward Avenue. It should also be noted that the information requested from the City with

regards to upcoming special events and possible origins and destinations on Woodward in the vicinity of the Brown/Forest pedestrian crossing were provided directly to the MDOT representatives present at the site visit on September 22, 2021.

Since the site meeting with MDOT representatives, City staff has conducted a site inspection of the MDOT right-of-way to survey existing vegetation to determine if any tree trimming was needed to address sight distance concerns. City staff found that there are no trees, tree limbs or other vegetation obstructing sight distance for pedestrians or drivers, nor any vegetation obstructing any of the existing street lighting located in the MDOT right-of-way. City staff has also surveyed the existing street lighting in the vicinity of the Brown/Forest crosswalk and noted that there are lighting issues in the MDOT right-of-way.

Accordingly, City staff also met with a representative of DTE earlier this week to discuss potential improvements to the overhead street lighting in the MDOT right-of-way. Current deficiencies were noted with regards to overall illumination levels, and light distribution at grade in the vicinity of the Woodward and Brown/Forest pedestrian crossing. After a review of available options, the City Manager has committed to making the lighting improvements to replace the existing high pressure sodium luminaires with new LED luminaires on Woodward from Lincoln to Maple, subject to receiving the appropriate DTE agreements. In addition, the City Manager has committed to purchasing upgraded LED luminaires to provide brighter lighting at the Woodward and Brown/Forest pedestrian crosswalk, subject to receiving the appropriate DTE agreements.

At the conclusion of the on site meeting on September 22, 2021, City officials advised MDOT that immediate action was needed to improve pedestrian safety. The City requested additional signage, lighting, pavement markings or even the addition of containers of pedestrian high visibility orange fluorescent crossing flags on both sides of the Woodward crossing, and to have one or more of these safety measures installed within one week. City officials also asked MDOT to schedule a Road Safety Audit as soon as possible.

Four weeks have now passed, and MDOT has not installed any permanent or temporary pedestrian safety measures at the Woodward and Brown/Forest pedestrian crossing. MDOT officials have not provided any commitment to install or implement any pedestrian safety measures, nor scheduled a Road Safety Audit.

The City of Birmingham has continued to reach out to MDOT over the past month and has specifically requested the consideration of the following safety improvement alternatives for emergency implementation at the Brown/Forest pedestrian crossing:

1. The installation of pedestrian signal heads at the existing west leg of the intersection;
2. The installation of LED Enhanced Warning signs;
3. The installation of advance yield lines and signage on NB Woodward at the uncontrolled crossing, as recommended on page 27 of MDOT's Best Design Practices manual;
4. The installation of additional lighting, with a positive offset, as recommended on page 33 of MDOT's Best Design Practices manual; and/or
5. The installation of a Pedestrian Hybrid Beacon, a pedestrian traffic signal or a grade separated crossing to comply with MDOT's Type D crossing standards.

The only response the City has received from MDOT to date was an email that indicated that MDOT was currently working on a guidance document for the installation of LED Enhanced Warning signs, but the document was still being reviewed by the Traffic Safety Statewide

Alignment Team and had not yet been finalized. Despite this response to delay consideration of LED Enhanced Warning signs, these signs are already installed and in use on I-75 within Oakland County and could certainly be considered for the Brown/Forest crossing on Woodward. Advance yield lines, overhead crossing signage with beacons and rapid flashing beacons are also currently in use on Telegraph due to previous pedestrian fatalities, and could immediately be installed on Woodward at the Brown/Forest pedestrian crossing to prevent additional injury or death.

The City of Birmingham has requested pedestrian crossing improvements at Brown/Forest for many years, and has been told on several occasions that MDOT would conduct safety assessments and studies at this intersection, and get back to us with recommendations. The same answer is given each time...MDOT will study the issue. Yet, the dangerous situation remains.

Once again, MDOT has indicated in their response to Senator McMorrow and State Representative Manoogian that they are currently "in the study phase" and thus unable to provide a specific timeline for the implementation of pedestrian safety measures on Woodward at Brown/Forest. This is simply not enough. Two pedestrians have lost their lives at this intersection over the past 13 months, and still no improvements have been made. Years have passed in which MDOT has had more than enough time to study the issues at this crossing. Immediate action is needed, and it is incumbent upon each of you as elected officials to ensure that pedestrian improvements are installed and/or implemented immediately to protect the health, safety and welfare of our citizens.

The City of Birmingham requests your intervention to compel MDOT to take immediate corrective action at the pedestrian crossing at Woodward and Brown/Forest through the installation of pedestrian signals, LED Enhanced Warning signs, advance yield lines, positive offset lighting and/or pedestrian hybrid beacons or other safety measures. Further, the City requests your assistance to compel MDOT officials to appear before the Birmingham City Commission on October 25, 2021 to inform the public of both immediate and long term plans to address the pedestrian safety issues on Woodward at Brown/Forest to reduce the clear and present danger to our citizens.

Yours truly,

Jana L Ecker,
Assistant City Manager

Cc: Paul Ajegba, Director, MDOT
Chuck Moss, Oakland County Commissioner
Thomas Markus, Birmingham City Manager
Birmingham City Commission
City Department Heads



October 13, 2021

Ms. Gretchen Whitmer, Governor

Ms. Mari Manoogian, State Representative, 40th House District

Ms. Mallory McMorrow, State Senator, District 13

Re: Pedestrian Safety Concerns on Woodward Avenue

Birmingham City Manager Tom Markus wrote to each of you on September 23, 2021 and requested your assistance to exercise your executive and legislative oversight and require the Michigan Department of Transportation ("MDOT") to take immediate action to correct the dangerous conditions on Woodward at Brown/Forest to prevent further loss of life. City Manager Markus also requested your assistance to require MDOT to prioritize future funding along Woodward for the improvement of the pedestrian environment.

Birmingham Police Chief Clemence wrote to you on October 4, 2021, again seeking your assistance to motivate MDOT to immediately address pedestrian safety concerns at the intersection of Woodward and Brown/Forest. And further, to request that MDOT move forward with a comprehensive review of Woodward Avenue to address pedestrian safety as a whole and to integrate the road into the fabric of our walkable community.

I also wrote to each of you again on October 8, 2021 requesting your intervention to compel MDOT to take immediate corrective action at the pedestrian crossing at Woodward and Brown/Forest through the installation of pedestrian signals, LED Enhanced Warning signs, advance yield lines, positive offset lighting and/or pedestrian hybrid beacons or other safety measures.

To date, more than four weeks after the second pedestrian death occurred at the intersection of Woodward and Brown/Forest, MDOT has not made any permanent or temporary improvements to the existing pedestrian crossing despite ongoing requests for immediate action.

What has MDOT done? They have placed a speed trailer in the median in the vicinity of the crosswalk. In addition, on October 12, 2021 MDOT officials advised the City's transportation consultants at Fleis and VandenBrink that a quote has been requested from the Road Commission for Oakland County ("RCOC") for the following:

- The installation of pedestrian signal heads on the southbound leg of the Woodward and Brown/Forest intersection on the existing signal equipment; and

- The installation of a flashing beacon to the existing advance crosswalk signage located in advance of the marked crosswalks on both the northbound and southbound lanes of Woodward.

While the installation of pedestrian signal heads on the southbound leg of the intersections would certainly enhance the safety of this portion of the pedestrian crosswalk, the addition of flashing beacons to existing signage will likely have a minimal effect on enhancing pedestrian safety in the crossing on the northbound leg of the intersection. Safety measures that would directly improve the safety of pedestrians on the northbound leg include the installation of LED Enhanced Warning signs, advance yield lines, positive offset lighting and/or pedestrian hybrid beacons at the pedestrian crossing, as previously requested by the City of Birmingham.

With that being said, the City is thankful that MDOT has now recognized the pedestrian safety concerns at the intersection of Woodward and Brown/Forest, and has agreed that physical improvements are necessary to ensure the safety of pedestrians at this location. The City certainly supports the installation of the above elements offered by MDOT as an interim measure.

However, MDOT has also advised that they do not have any funding available to implement even the above interim improvements, but that they are able to install the pedestrian signal heads and flashing beacons immediately if the City is willing to fund these improvements. Once again, MDOT's response is to deflect responsibility for safety issues in their right-of-way to the City of Birmingham, despite the fact that MDOT owns and controls the entire 200' width of Woodward Avenue.

This latest response from MDOT raises yet more questions:

- When will the estimated costs be available from the RCOC?
- Is MDOT requesting that the City of Birmingham pay for needed safety improvements on a roadway under MDOT's jurisdiction?
- Is MDOT asking the City of Birmingham to front the costs of these interim safety measures and then reimburse the City these funds at some specified future date?
- If so, when will MDOT be able to free up money to reimburse the City of Birmingham?
- Is it standard practice for MDOT to shirk responsibility for the design, operation and safety of State owned roads and deflect them onto local communities?
- How is it that MDOT has no money available to address clear and pressing pedestrian safety issues only two weeks into the start of their fiscal year?

MDOT continues to demonstrate to the citizens of Birmingham, and all Michigan residents, a lack of urgency to address clear and present danger to pedestrians on roadways owned and operated by MDOT. I implore each of you as elected officials to ensure that pedestrian improvements are installed and/or implemented immediately to protect the health, safety and welfare of our citizens.

Once again the City of Birmingham requests your intervention to compel MDOT to take immediate corrective action at the pedestrian crossing at Woodward and Brown/Forest through the installation of pedestrian signals, LED Enhanced Warning signs, advance yield lines, positive offset lighting and/or pedestrian hybrid beacons or other safety measures. Further, the City requests your assistance to compel MDOT officials to appear before the Birmingham City Commission on

October 25, 2021 to inform the public of both immediate and long term plans to address the pedestrian safety issues on Woodward at Brown/Forest.

Yours truly,

Jana L Ecker,
Assistant City Manager

Cc: Paul Ajegba, Director, MDOT
Chuck Moss, Oakland County Commissioner
Thomas Markus, Birmingham City Manager
Birmingham City Commission
City Department Heads

Manager's Report – Woodward Avenue Updates

At the City Commission meeting on October 25, 2021, representatives from the Michigan Department of Transportation ("MDOT") appeared before the Commission in response to public pressure to address the urgent safety concerns at the pedestrian crossing at Woodward and Brown/Forest. As outlined in numerous letters to MDOT, Governor Whitmer and State legislators, the City requested that MDOT take immediate corrective action at the pedestrian crossing at Woodward and Brown/Forest through the installation of pedestrian signals, LED Enhanced Warning signs, advance yield lines, positive offset lighting and/or pedestrian hybrid beacons or other safety measures. The MDOT officials present committed to the immediate installation of flashing lights for the pedestrian crossing signs to draw attention to the crosswalk, and to the installation of a new signal for northbound Woodward to stop traffic, as well as pedestrian signals for both the north and southbound lanes of Woodward in 2022.

Since the October 25, 2021 City Commission meeting, the City has received a formal commitment letter from MDOT (attached) outlining MDOT's plans to address the pedestrian safety concerns at Woodward and Brown/Forest. In addition, City officials have met via Zoom to discuss the design and layout of temporary measures to install the flashing lights on the crosswalk signs on both northbound and southbound Woodward. MDOT proposes to provide power for the flashing lights using overhead lines to allow for installation of the lights immediately. MDOT advised that this is a temporary condition to allow for immediate implementation. MDOT stated that they will study running electricity underground as part of the final signal design plan. On November 17, 2021, City staff met onsite with MDOT staff and Road Commission of Oakland County ("RCOC") staff (who will be installing the flashing lights) to finalize temporary pole locations to minimize conflicts with existing trees. Finally, MDOT officials have confirmed that the new traffic and pedestrian signals are currently in the design phase, and MDOT has committed to continue to involve the City in the design and planning process. Installation of the new signals is anticipated in the fall of 2022. The City has also began the process of applying to MDOT for a "road diet" on Woodward in order to reduce the number of travel lanes for cars and to create a complete street that is accessible to all modes of transportation, for people of ages and abilities. Currently, the City's transportation consultants are conducting all of the background research and studies to meet all of the requirements on MDOT's Road Diet Checklist. City staff will continue to work with our consultants and the Multi-Modal Transportation Board to complete all of MDOT's requirements, and finalize our application for review and approval by the City Commission early in 2022.

In addition to the intersection improvements discussed above, the City Commission also approved funding an upgrade to Woodward Avenue's median lighting located in the MDOT right-of-way. Approved upgrades included a conversion to LED lighting between Maple Road and Lincoln St., and to higher illumination LED lighting at the Woodward and Brown/Forest pedestrian crossing to enhance the safety of the crossing. DTE committed to completing the lighting improvements by the end of the year. As of November 12, 2021, DTE has completed the installation of the LED lighting approved by the City Commission on October 5, 2021. The upgraded LED lighting will enhance pedestrian safety at Woodward and Brown/Forest, and will reduce lighting costs over time.

Finally, the City Commission also directed City staff to seek approval from MDOT for a pedestrian crosswalk flag system previously installed on Woodward Avenue at the Brown/Forest crossing.

An application was submitted to MDOT immediately following the City Commission meeting on October 25, 2021 and was subsequently approved by MDOT. Shortly thereafter, the pedestrian flags and containers were removed by an unknown party. Replacement equipment is on order and will be installed in the same location in accordance with MDOT's approval upon receipt.



**BIRMINGHAM CITY COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING, JULY 11, 2011
RESOLUTION # 07-185-11**

Present: Commissioners Dilgard, Hoff, McDaniel, Moore, Nickita, and Sherman
Absent: Mayor Rinschler

MOTION: Motion by Hoff, seconded by Dilgard:
To formally support the Complete Streets principles in the City of Birmingham:

WHEREAS, Complete Streets are defined as a design framework that enables safe and convenient access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and drivers of all ages and abilities: and

WHEREAS, the Michigan Legislature adopted Public Acts 134 and 135 of 2010 to enact Complete Streets legislation that requires the Michigan Department of Transportation to consider all users in transportation related projects; and

WHEREAS, Complete Streets are achieved when transportation agencies routinely plan, design, construct, re-construct, operate, and maintain the transportation network to improve travel conditions for bicyclists, pedestrians, transit, and freight in a manner consistent with, and supportive of, the surrounding community; and

WHEREAS, development of multi-modal transportation infrastructure, including accommodations for pedestrian, bicycle, and transit riders, offers long-term cost savings by reducing costly infrastructure retrofits and opportunities to create safe and convenient non-motorized travel; and

WHEREAS, streets that support and invite multiple uses, including safe, active, and ample space for pedestrians, bicycles, and transit are more conducive to the public life and efficient movement of people than streets designed primarily to move automobiles; and

WHEREAS, increasing active transportation (e.g. walking, bicycling and using public transportation) offers the potential for improved public health, economic development, a cleaner environment, reduced transportation costs, enhanced community connections, social equity, and more livable communities; and

WHEREAS, existing City of Birmingham plans and policies already support principles that facilitate progress toward developing a network of Complete Streets consistent with the objectives of the Michigan Complete Streets legislation and with the practices promoted by the National Complete Streets Coalition; and


WHEREAS, Complete Streets principles have been and continue to be adopted nation-wide at state, county, MPO, and city levels in the interest of proactive planning and adherence to federal directives that guide transportation planning organizations to promote multi-modal transportation options and accessibility for all users; and

WHEREAS, the adoption of this Complete Streets Proclamation allows the City of Birmingham to remain competitive in the pursuit of future state transportation project funding.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City of Birmingham City Commission hereby declares its support of Complete Streets policies and further directs City staff to develop a set of proposed policies and procedures to implement Complete Streets practices to make the City more accommodating to all modes of travel, including walkers, bicyclists and transit riders, of all ages and abilities.

VOTE: Yeas, 6
 Nays, None
 Absent, 1 (Rinschler)

I, Laura M. Pierce, City Clerk of the City of Birmingham, do hereby certify that the above is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted by the Birmingham City Commission at their regular meeting of July 11, 2011.



Laura M. Pierce
City Clerk





**BIRMINGHAM CITY COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING, JULY 25, 2011
RESOLUTION # 07-196-11**

Present: Mayor Rinschler, Commissioners Dilgard, Hoff, McDaniel, Moore, Nickita, and Sherman
Absent: None

MOTION: Motion by Hoff, seconded by McDaniel:
To support Regional Transportation Planning:

WHEREAS, existing City of Birmingham plans and policies already support principles that facilitate progress toward developing a network of Complete Streets to promote multi-modal transportation options and accessibility for all users;

WHEREAS, development of multi-modal transportation infrastructure, including accommodations for pedestrian, bicycle, and transit riders, offers long-term cost savings by reducing costly infrastructure retrofits and opportunities to create safe and convenient motorized and non-motorized travel;

WHEREAS, multi-modal regional transportation planning, including a Regional Public Transportation System, is vital to the needs of the metropolitan Detroit Region, including Macomb, Wayne and Oakland Counties ("the Region");

WHEREAS, multi-modal regional transportation planning, including a comprehensive Regional Public Transportation System, is core to a sound economic development strategy for Birmingham and the Region;

WHEREAS, SEMCOG has indicated a good transit system can attract development, businesses, tourism, and conventions, and helps to connect people to jobs, making the Region more economically competitive;

WHEREAS, the economic viability of the Region depends on the ability of workers to get to jobs using a comprehensive Regional Public Transportation System that includes multi-modal transportation alternatives, including the provision of both fixed transit routes and flexible para-transit;

WHEREAS, the basic needs of some residents of the Region can only be met through the provision of multi-modal transportation options, including a Regional Public Transportation System (ie. For travel to medical office visits, grocery shopping etc.);

WHEREAS, increasing active transportation (e.g. walking, bicycling and using public transportation) offers the potential for improved public health, economic development, a cleaner environment, reduced transportation costs, enhanced community connections, social equity, and more livable communities;

WHEREAS, multi-modal regional transportation planning, including a Regional Public Transportation System, will provide mobility options to local residents of all ages and abilities;

WHEREAS, streets that support and invite multiple uses, including safe, active, and ample space for pedestrians, bicycles, and transit are more conducive to the public life and efficient movement of people than streets designed primarily to move automobiles;

WHEREAS, The City of Birmingham has supported area-wide public transit by being an "opt-in" community in support of SMART since the system was established in 1996;

WHEREAS, the City of Birmingham recently declared its support of Complete Streets policies and directed City staff to develop a set of proposed policies and procedures to implement Complete Streets practices to make the City more accommodating to all modes of travel, including walkers, bicyclists and transit riders, of all ages and abilities;

WHEREAS, Complete Streets are only achieved when transportation agencies routinely plan, design, construct, re-construct, operate, and maintain the transportation network to improve travel conditions for bicyclists, pedestrians, transit, and freight in a manner consistent with, and supportive of, the surrounding communities;

WHEREAS, the City of Birmingham has supported regional planning efforts through its ongoing membership in regional organizations, including SEMCOG and the Woodward Avenue Action Association;

WHEREAS, the communities in South Oakland County along the Woodward corridor have an opportunity to obtain federal grant funding to study the possibility of the future extension of light rail north along Woodward into Oakland County;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Birmingham is committed to working directly with other local jurisdictions along the Woodward corridor to seek funding opportunities to study the future extension of light rail north along Woodward from the northern terminus of the light rail system currently proposed by the City of Detroit into Oakland County;

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent electronically to all municipalities in Oakland County along the Woodward corridor, all Oakland County Commissioners, County Executive L. Brooks Patterson, and Mayor David Bing, City of Detroit.

VOTE: Yeas, 7
 Nays, None
 Absent, None

I, Laura M. Pierce, City Clerk of the City of Birmingham, do hereby certify that the above is a true and correct copy of a resolution adopted by the Birmingham City Commission at their regular meeting of July 25, 2011.



Laura M. Pierce
City Clerk



MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN

November 25, 2013



for consideration by:



submitted by:



THE GREENWAY
COLLABORATIVE, INC.



5.3 WOODWARD AVENUE

Concurrent with the development of this plan are two regional planning efforts that address the entirety of Woodward Avenue to determine how this iconic corridor can integrate new transit alternatives and become a true complete street. The recommendations in this report are to help inform those studies. While Woodward Ave’s transition to a true complete street will take some time, some elements, such as improving the crossing at Oak Street can be undertaken immediately that will provide safety and mobility improvements.

During the Visioning Workshop participants were asked about their vision for the Woodward and overall there was a desire to create more of a “Main Street” feel along the corridor. Some of the key items that were identified for this corridor included parallel parking, a designated transit lane, sidewalks, landscape buffer and a designated bicycle facility in the form of a bike lane or one-way cycle track.

CONCEPTUAL DESIGN:

Using the space between the buildings and the travel lanes, a “Main Street” area within the Woodward Corridor is created. The following conceptual design provides a more pedestrian scaled area that incorporates on-street parking with a service drive, sidewalk, and bike lane that are all buffered from Woodward Avenue by a landscaped median and transit lane.



KEY ELEMENTS:

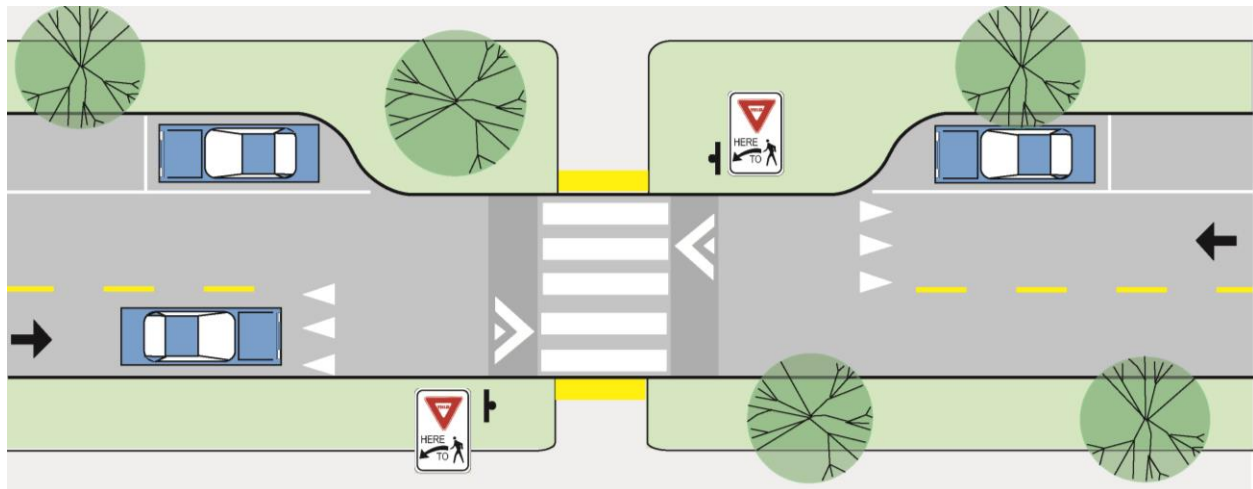
- Parallel parking between the service drive and sidewalk
- 8' wide sidewalk
- 8' wide landscape buffer with areas for transit stops
- Outside motor vehicle lane designated as transit lane
- Bike lane along left side of service drive and buffered from Woodward Avenue
- Trees and café areas extend into parking spaces as appropriate for context
- Curb extensions and pedestrian crosswalks provided at transit stops
- Bicycle parking provided on curb extensions near transit stops
- Pedestrian scale street lighting with flower baskets and/or banners
- Decorative brick pavers used in the service drive and parking areas
- "Pork-chop" diverters provided in unused areas of intersection where local roads intersect Woodward Avenue at an angle
- Green pavement markings placed in areas where there is potential for conflict between bicycle and automobiles to increase visibility of the bike lanes



PROPOSED ROAD CROSSING IMPROVEMENTS ON WOODWARD AVENUE:

A raised crosswalk is proposed across the service drive on the northeast corner of Woodward Avenue and E Maple Road.

Raised crosswalks are crosswalks constructed 3" to 4" above the elevation of the street and serve as a traffic calming measure by extending the sidewalk across the road and bringing motor vehicles to the pedestrian level. By extending the sidewalk across the road at an elevation the raised crosswalk reduces vehicle speeds and improves pedestrian visibility.



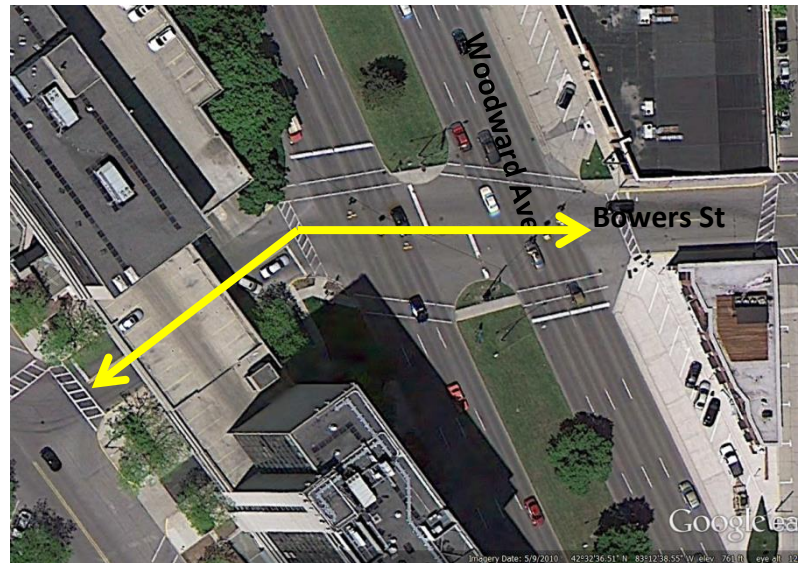
The Michigan Department of Transportation has proposed a full traffic signal in both directions at or near the intersection of Forest Avenue.

Currently, southbound traffic is stopped at the crosswalk by a signal, but the northbound traffic is not controlled by a signal. Pedestrians crossing the four northbound lanes at a gap in traffic frequently conflict with motorists turning right from Forest Avenue.

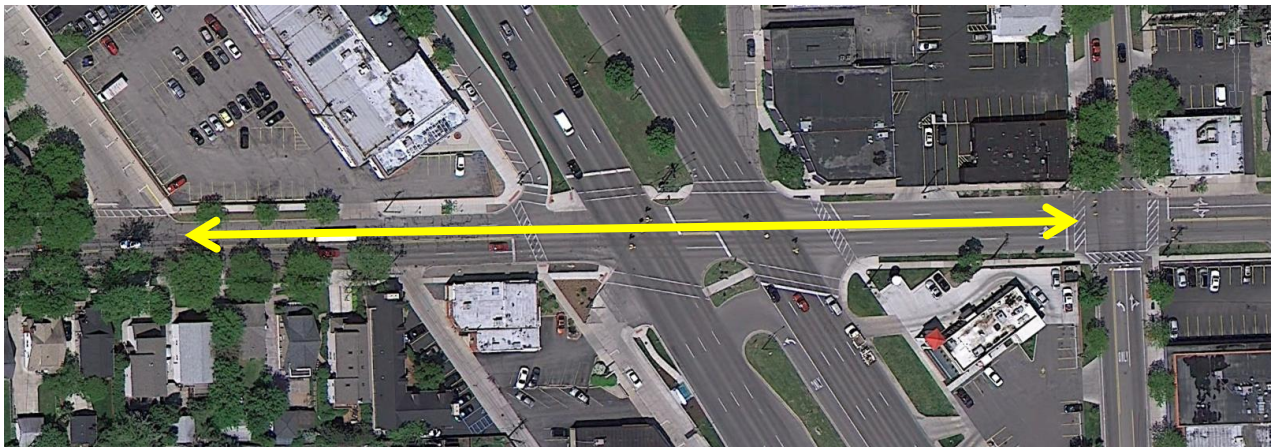


Colored Shared Lane Markings are proposed on Bowers Street through the Woodward Avenue intersection to help bicyclists cross the road.

Colored pavement with Shared Lane Markings increases visibility of the facility identifies potential areas of conflict and reinforces priority to bicyclists through the intersection.



Colored Shared Lane Markings are proposed on E Lincoln Street between Ann Street and Adams Road to help bicyclists navigate through the intersection.



Colored pavement with Shared Lane Markings increases visibility of the facility, identifies potential areas of conflict and reinforces priority to bicyclists in conflict areas.

This improvement may be implemented as part of a 2014 road resurfacing project as noted under CIP Opportunities.

A new pedestrian signal is proposed at Oak Avenue to help pedestrians and bicyclists cross Woodward Avenue.

Currently, there is a signal at Oak Avenue on Woodward Avenue but no pedestrian crossing. It is important to provide a crossing here, as it is part of the east-west neighborhood connector route along Oak Avenue and Derby Road that provides an alternative to Maple Road. Also, there are limited road crossing opportunities on Woodward Avenue between Maple Road and Quarton Road.

CONCEPTUAL ROUTING:



Provide Enhancements to the Pedestrian Environment at Road Crossings along Woodward Avenue.

Due to Woodward Avenue's significance as a regional motor vehicle corridor it should be noted that there is not much that can be done to change the signal timing and it should be expected that most pedestrians will probably end up spending a cycle of the light in the median. Waiting in the median of Woodward Avenue can be an intimidating environment for pedestrians so enhancements should be made if pedestrians are expected to spend any period of time out there. In order to provide a better sense of enclosure and protection and make the median more pedestrian friendly the following enhancements should be considered:

- Art
- Landscaping
- Low retaining walls that provide seating opportunities and a physical separation from the roadway
- Overhead structures that add visual interest and enclosure

All enhancements should be designed such as to not impede visibility between pedestrians and motorists.



IN THE CITY OF FERNDALE A CROW'S NEST SCULPTURE WAS INCORPORATED IN THE MEDIAN AT WOODWARD & 9 MILE

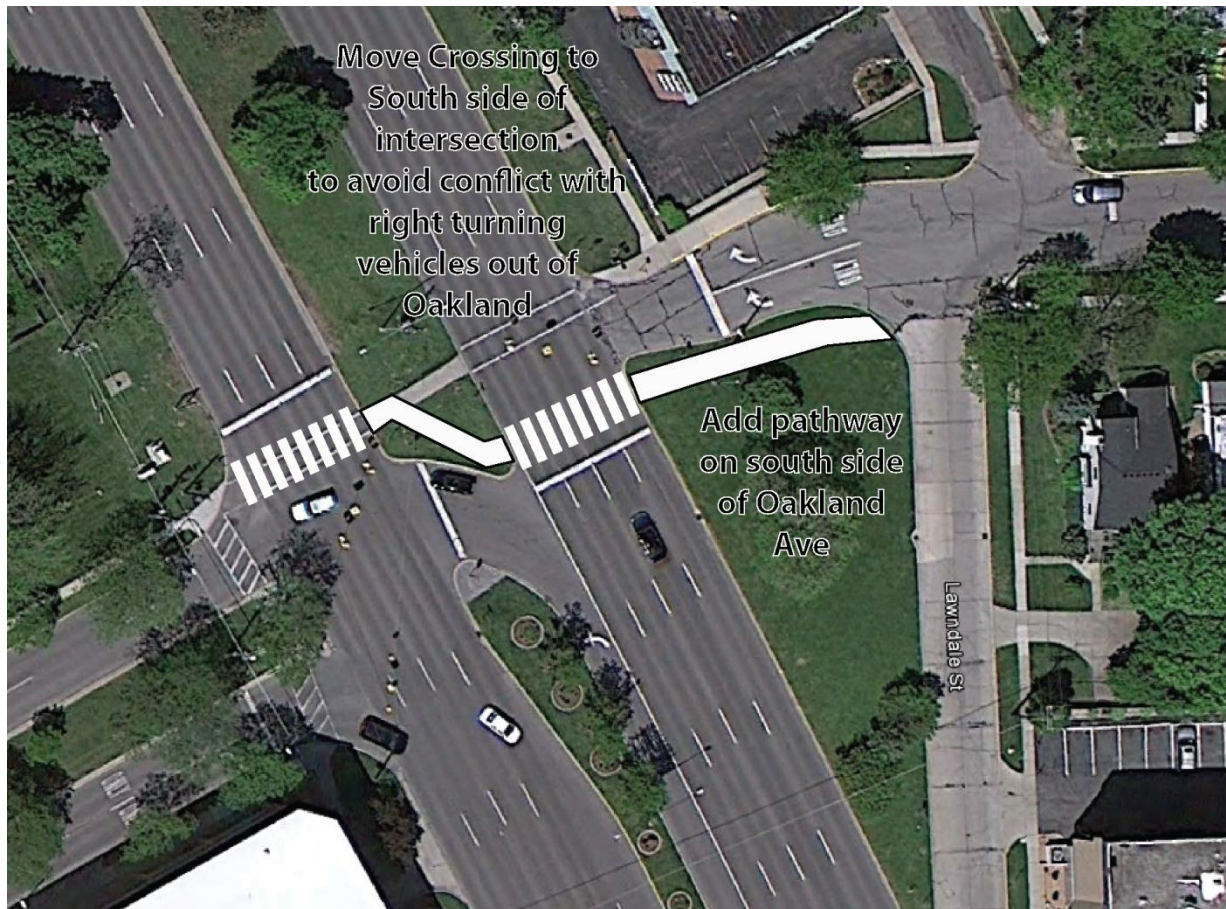


A SHELTER IS PROVIDED IN THE MEDIAN ON GRAND RIVER IN EAST LANSING

Provide for two-way bicycle traffic at intersection with Oakland Avenue

Oakland Avenue is indicated at a bike route connecting downtown to the neighborhoods on the west side of Woodward Avenue. Presently, Oakland is one-way for one block just east of Woodward Avenue and is comprised of two right-only turn lanes. This presents a number of challenges. First, the right turning movements from Oakland Avenue to northbound Woodward Avenue conflict with pedestrians and bicyclists in the crosswalk. Second, east-bound bicyclists crossing Woodward are forced onto a narrow sidewalk and have an awkward entrance back onto Oakland Avenue.

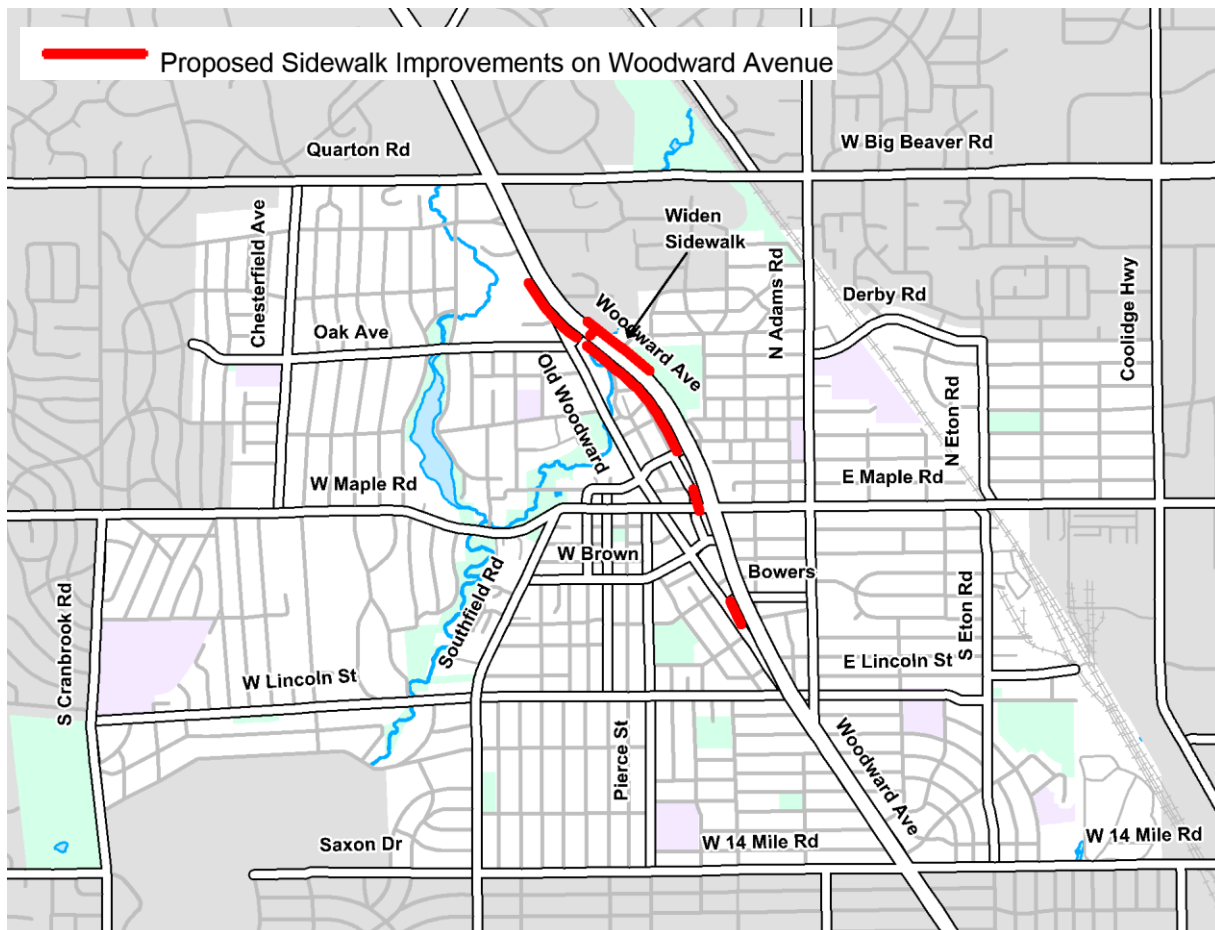
To address this situation, the crosswalk on north-bound Woodward is proposed to be moved to the south side of the intersection. This eliminates the conflict with right turning vehicles from Oakland Avenue onto north-bound Woodward Avenue. Also, a shared-use pathway is proposed on the south side of Oakland Avenue for the one block which the road is one-way to allow bicyclists to by-pass this one block and easily merge back into the two-way traffic east of Lawndale Street.



PROPOSED SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENTS ON WOODWARD AVENUE:

It is recommended that the City of Birmingham work with MDOT to implement the proposed sidewalk improvements.

- Complete sidewalk gaps along the west side of Woodward Avenue in the City of Birmingham
- Widen Sidewalk on east side of Woodard Avenue between Oak Avenue and the proposed pathway in Poppleton Park to 10' wide to accommodate bicycle and pedestrians. When implementing it is probably more appropriate to remove the old sidewalk and rebuild a new 10' wide pathway for this segment.



WOODWARD AVENUE IMPLEMENTATION:

Since Woodward Avenue is under MDOT jurisdiction it is recommended that the City of Birmingham work with MDOT to ensure the proposed recommendations along Woodward Avenue are implemented.

DOWNTOWN BIRMINGHAM 2016

*A Master Plan for the
City of Birmingham, Michigan*

1 November, 1996
FINAL REPORT
(REVISED)

RECOMMENDATIONS, APPENDICES & IMPLEMENTATION

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Community Planning and Traffic Engineering

The Green Group, Inc.
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Mckenna Associates, Inc.
Community Planning and Urban Design

CIRCULATION 1

Finding: Traffic is too fast on certain downtown streets for the comfort and safety of pedestrians. Also, some downtown streets are too wide for traffic needs.

Discussion: Unnecessarily wide streets adversely affect the pedestrian and the business environment of a downtown. Wide streets encourage speeding, increase the distance a pedestrian must cross at an intersection, and restrict the amount of streetscape available for non-vehicular use. Although the comfort of the pedestrian is a subjective measure, the issue of safety is not. An accident at less than 20 m.p.h. rarely leads to a fatality. Furthermore, retail thrives on high volumes of traffic moving slowly past shopfronts, creating the opportunity for drive-by shopping. High-speed vehicles also limit the ability of bicycle traffic to share the thoroughfare.

Recommendation: Adjust certain downtown street widths in a variety of ways to better accommodate pedestrians and calm traffic as follows:

- Maintain street widths along Maple Road (between Hunter and Poppleton). Control the possibility of cut-through traffic from the enlarged Kroger store by adding a choke point on Poppleton at Knox and a traffic signal at the Maple and Poppleton intersection. Diagonal street closures are not advised at this location because of the political divisiveness of their potential traffic impacts.
- Restore two-way traffic to Martin (between Southfield and Pierce) and Park Streets (between Maple and Hamilton). These one-way trajectories are a nuisance to pedestrians, while two-way traffic helps to slow down cars.
- Redesign the street pavement along North Woodward Avenue so that traffic slows down to a speed commensurate with the pedestrian setting of the "Arts District." This would involve rebuilding Woodward between the Ring Road and Oak Street by installing diagonal parking on both sides or along a newly created median.
- Provide diagonal parking to serve Booth Park on the south side of Harmon Street.
- Add parallel parking to both sides of Chester Street between Maple and Brown. This will slow down traffic on the north-south leg of the Ring Road, partially



Illus. 20. Woodward Avenue at Gallery Row is unnecessarily wide, allowing cars to move too fast. The addition of a median would control speed and increase parking.

redistribute traffic to the north-south leg of Southfield Road (between Maple and Brown), and enhance the use of the Chester Street Garage by making it pedestrian-accessible from downtown.

- Add parallel parking to one side of Willits Street between Woodward and Chester, and to both sides of Brown Street between Woodward and Chester. This street narrowing will slow down traffic on both of the east and west legs of the Ring Road.
- Consider installing a linear trolley on Woodward from Oak Street to Lincoln Street.

References: The difficulty in crossing streets was a recurring topic of public meetings during the charrette.

- Precedent: downtown Charleston, S.C., where parking lanes are 7 feet wide and travel lanes are 10 feet wide.
- For traffic speed affecting retail, see GPG.
- Excerpts from the *ITE Guidelines for Residential Street Design*, Appendix C – 1, and the *AASHTO Manual and Skinny Streets for Residential Neighborhoods*, Appendix C – 2.
- Appendices C – 3, C – 4, C – 6, and C – 7.
- Illus. 20.

CIRCULATION 2

Finding: Some intersections are perceived by pedestrians as difficult to cross.

Discussion: Improvements on Ring Road have increased its traffic flow by only 2 percent. Vehicular use is only 29 percent of the road's capacity, yet its excessive speed prevents pedestrians from feeling comfortable crossing at the all-important intersections. Traffic speeds are high, partly because of the very wide curb radii, which are more appropriate to a highway than to a downtown. These stream-form geometries, including the "banana" and "pork chop" medians of the free right turns, contribute to the prevailing atmosphere of the Ring Road as an auto-dominant environment.

In addition, because the zebra crosswalk striping at the larger intersections is too narrow, too lightly hatched, and too worn out to be effective, supplemental sign boards have had to be installed.

Recommendation: Adjust certain downtown street widths in a variety of ways to better accommodate pedestrian use of crosswalks and to calm traffic.

- Reconfigure the intersection of Maple Road and Park-Peabody to provide greater mobility for drivers and pedestrians. Add a short/long phase (15 sec./45 sec.) traffic signal, with a free right and no left turn. This will tend to reduce stacking at the short block to the west of the intersection. Reduce the corner radii on only the northeast and southeast corners of the intersection, thereby creating a comfortable pedestrian crossing on east side of Park-Peabody, while maintaining free-flow right turns on the other.
- Reattach the large pork chop island to the northeast corner of the Woodward Avenue and Oakland Street intersection, and restore it to park land or urban uses. This will reduce the crossing distance for pedestrians. The right turn from westbound Oakland onto northbound Woodward, now made in a separate section of the roadway, will be made in the normal manner from the right-hand lane of the existing roadway.
- Reconfigure the northwest corner of the intersection of Chester Street and Maple Road by eliminating the dedicated right-turn lanes from southbound Chester onto westbound Maple. Reattach the pork chop island as a bulb-out. In a similar manner, reattach the pork chop island at the intersection of Chester and Willets to create a bulb-out at the other end of the Chester block. The resulting reconfiguration creates a parking or drop-off lane for the Christian Science Church, which was specifically requested by church representatives.
- Reconfigure the southwest corner of the intersection of Chester Street and Maple Road by eliminating one of the two right-turn lanes from Maple onto southbound Chester and by reducing the curb radius. This will substantially reduce the speed of cars making this turn and restore pedestrian accessibility to the Chester Street Garage.
- Reconfigure the street closure on Chester Street at Brown Street, replacing it with a single-lane choke point and a locked gate accessible to emergency vehicles.
- Reconfigure the northeast corner of the intersection of Woodward Avenue and Brown Street by using a bulb-out to reclaim the small traffic island as streetscape for



Illus. 21. This sign is a symptom of a place badly in need of a pedestrian-friendly redesign.



Illus. 22. Most of the trajectory of the Ring Road is too wide for the traffic it must carry (it is at 29 percent capacity). It can easily be narrowed by parking.

pedestrians. The right turn from Brown onto northbound Woodward, now made from a separate lane, would be made in the conventional manner.

- Create circular traffic islands at the northwest and southeast corners of the intersection of Maple Road and Woodward Avenue. These islands will shorten pedestrian crossing distances. In addition, one island creates a site for the Civil War Monument at a location approximating the historic one, while the other island is a site for a future civic monument.
- Repaint the pedestrian crossings to modern standards.

References:

- Glatting Jackson Kercher.
- Research state standards, since these streets are usually Michigan Department of Transportation roads.
- Appendices C – 4, C – 5, C – 6, and C – 7.
- Illus. 21, 22, and 23.



Illus. 23. This "pork chop" island is associated with high-speed highway engineering, not a downtown.

CIRCULATION 3

Finding: Neighborhood residents are concerned about cut-through traffic.

Discussion: Cut-through traffic is a problem notoriously difficult to alleviate. Closing streets is certainly not a solution, because the traffic is simply redirected along parallel streets. A more subtle maneuver is to install traffic-calming measures, because of the fact that cars are not intrinsically dangerous until they are permitted to move fast. A careful balance must be struck between the motorists' rights and the community environment. Avoid the premature installation of overly restrictive traffic-calming techniques, as this sets a precedent that may not be sustainable. Some calming measures cannot be used at additional locations, even within the same neighborhood.

Recommendation:

- Maintain the City policy of not closing through access on any street.
- Study and apply a series of traffic-calming measures, such as choke points, speed humps, diagonal parking, and bike lanes. These techniques are preferred over street closings, because they reduce volume and speed

but do not restrict access. Traffic-calming measures should be part of a careful program; if not, they can be piecemeal and divisive.

- Generally update the design and operation of neighborhood streets (outside of the Master Plan area) with the implementation of a street width policy that tailors streets to their specific use and function and prevents unnecessary widening.

References: Glatting Jackson Kercher has prepared a “decision tree” with criteria for selecting street widths, which is not part of this Master Plan (see Appendix C – 8.).

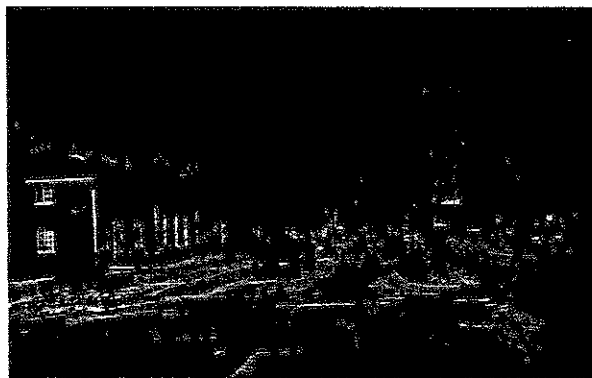
- Precedent: Speed humps are now used in Farmington Hills to calm traffic.
- Appendices C – 1 and C – 2.

CIRCULATION 4

Finding: Hunter Boulevard is an eyesore and is difficult to cross.

Discussion: The problem is that Hunter Boulevard, despite its appellation, is designed as a highway, which is a high-speed thoroughfare, as opposed to a boulevard, which is a thoroughfare designed to traverse an urban fabric. Hunter Boulevard is not within the jurisdiction of this Master Plan. However, the recently published recommendations of the Woodward Avenue Corridor Study made excellent sense in proposing that Hunter have a boulevard section. A boulevard, with landscaped service roads at its sides, would beautify the thoroughfare dramatically and create an environment markedly more adapted to pedestrians.

On a related matter, MDOT is preparing to implement their first traffic circle as a demonstration project. There is hardly an intersection anywhere that is calling for the resolution of a traffic circle more obviously than the southern intersection of Woodward and Hunter. A traffic circle in combination with the proposed sculpture would create an unforgettable entrance to Birmingham. This is important, as it is currently quite possible to drive past Birmingham without knowing it.



Illus. 24. This small portion of boulevard section should be used as the model for the remainder of Hunter Boulevard.

Recommendation: This Master Plan endorses the boulevard recommendations of the Woodward Avenue Corridor Study and urges the City Commission to apply soon for the MDOT demonstration project, which will probably have a very protracted schedule.

References:

- Allan Jacobs, *Great Streets* and videotape on boulevards.
- Illus. 24.

CIRCULATION 5

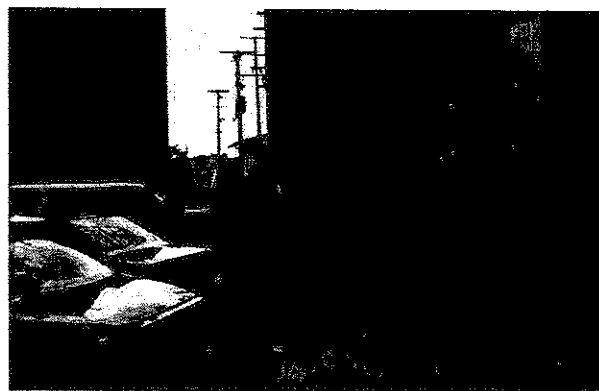
Finding: The alleys behind commercial buildings may not be used to their full potential.

Discussion: There are several alleys downtown. Some of them are undeniably picturesque and among the most interesting spaces in Birmingham. There is a natural tendency to consider them candidates for gentrification, but it must also be remembered that the primary function of an urban alley is to service shops, particularly for deliveries and trash removal. Most alleys should be kept neat and well lit, the buildings painted, and the graffiti immediately eliminated, but the service function should not be compromised. There are, however, other alleys that are only lightly used for service. These may be differentiated by the designation "passage," which indicates a pedestrian function. Passages may be held to a higher standard, similar to sidewalks, and maintained and patrolled by the City accordingly. Outdoor dining in particular, which is already occurring, should be encouraged.

Recommendation: Designate downtown alleys as either "alleys" or "passages" according to the plan in Appendix C - 9. Alleys should remain as service places, while passages should be treated as sidewalks.

References:

- Precedent: The passage at Via Mizner off Worth Avenue in Palm Beach, Florida.
- Appendix C - 9.
- Illus. 25.



Illus. 25. Alleys are necessary to service downtowns. They should be clean and well-maintained, but not gentrified.

CIRCULATION 6

Finding: There is a green corridor adjacent to downtown Birmingham.

Discussion: The public park, which is an extension of the Rouge River regional corridor, provides an opportunity for bicycle and pedestrian connections to the CBD and Booth Park. Residents of the neighborhoods to the east and north, particularly children, would use and enjoy a trail along this greenway. The trail need not be extended past the City line to other municipalities.

As to the prospect of crime, pedestrian traffic on the trail would actually help deter crime. Crime in a public place is inversely proportional to the number of people who use it.

Recommendation: Develop a trail to the downtown, taking advantage of the publicly owned Rouge River corridor. To minimize its environmental impact, the trail's paving should be as light as possible.

References:

- Oscar Newman, *Defensible Space*.
- Appendix C – 9.

CIRCULATION 7

Finding: A concern exists that adjacent neighborhoods will be significantly affected by increased traffic produced by the proposed downtown growth.

Discussion: The existing street system of neighborhoods surrounding downtown does not directly connect with major thoroughfares and does not offer reasonable short cuts for CBD traffic. The proposed retail anchor locations are planned along the Ring Road or major thoroughfares to keep traffic away from neighborhoods.

Recommendations: Closely monitor vehicular traffic in adjacent neighborhoods and modify or introduce traffic-calming techniques as appropriate.

Reference: Observations of the planning team.

CIRCULATION 8

Finding: A concern exists that a psychological and physical barrier is created by Chester Street's status as a leg of the Ring Road.

Discussion: This report acknowledges that Chester may not be the appropriate southwest leg of the Ring Road.

Recommendation: Further studies should be undertaken to evaluate the feasibility of Southfield Road (between Maple and Brown) becoming a leg of the Ring Road.

Reference: Observations of the planning team.

RETAIL

Birmingham is *not* a mall and this Master Plan does not attempt to turn the City into one. However, the retail recommendations are intended to maintain Birmingham as a viable and successful shopping district, offering a variety of goods and services desired by its residents and visitors alike.

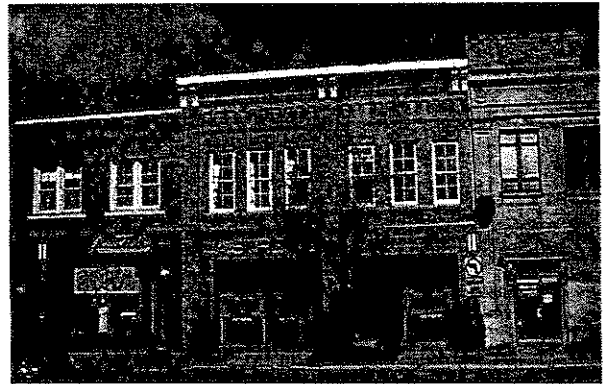
RETAIL 1

Finding: The Study Area is made up of five primary commercial areas: the Central Business District, North Woodward, South Woodward, Bowers, and East Maple.

Discussion: Each of the five commercial areas is defined by its size, character of roads, types of businesses, quality of shops, and continuity in retail frontages. Each of the five areas has a distinct shopping character, user group, and purpose.

Recommendations:

- Enlarge the CBD shopping area by merging it with the South Woodward, Bowers, and East Maple commercial areas.
- Retain North Woodward's gallery area as a unique Birmingham shopping district.
- Connect all areas to each other by reducing apparent and actual physical barriers, by connecting discontinuous retail frontages, and, in some cases, by installing



Illus. 26. Improve retail by taking advantage of Birmingham's urban attributes, not by turning the City into a mall.

TRIANGLE DISTRICT URBAN DESIGN PLAN



Circulation

To supplement the streetscape and walkability improvements, there are a number of roadway improvements recommended through the Triangle District. Some will enhance traffic operations and safety, while others are intended to make the district more walkable.

Maple Road (A). Maple Road between Woodward and Adams should be converted from two lanes in each direction to an imbalanced roadway configuration, for example with two westbound lanes, one eastbound lane and a center turn lane, as depicted in A1. This configuration would improve access into the Triangle along Elm Street and to the businesses along Maple without widening. Additionally, intersection improvements should be made at Elm and Maple to better emphasize this entrance to the Triangle District.

Hazel Street (B). The segment of Hazel between Woodward and Elm could be closed to minimize the number of access points along Woodward Avenue and minimize cut-through traffic in the residential neighborhood. The new space could be used as open space or could be conferred to a property owner or developer in a beneficial exchange.

Woodward/Elm (C). There are a number of options for the short block of Elm Street between Bowers and Woodward Avenue (C). Because of the slight angle from Woodward Avenue, traffic on Woodward Avenue tends to enter Elm at high speeds. In addition, the intersection with Bowers has limited sight distance because of building placements and a narrow right-of-way. The intersection of Elm at Woodward should be reconfigured to require traffic entering the District at Elm to make a right turning movement rather than merely veering right (C1). This would slow traffic and improve safety for pedestrians and motorists. Additionally, this portion of Elm south of Bowers could be converted to southbound traffic only with the former northbound lanes converted to angled street parking (C2). Alternatively, this segment could be vacated altogether and used as open space or developable land for an adjacent parcel (C3).



Inset of Worth Realignment

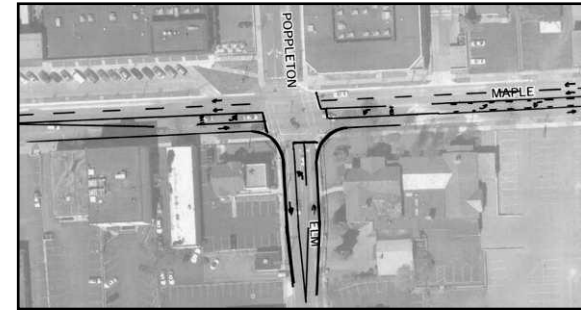
Circulation Recommendations

Woodward/Worth (D). The intersection of Worth Street at Woodward Avenue shares many of the same problems as Bowers discussed above. It is recommended that this intersection be reconfigured to form a right angle, greatly slowing traffic and creating the opportunity in the vacated right-of-way for a small greenspace with public art, landscaping, and wayfinding signs.

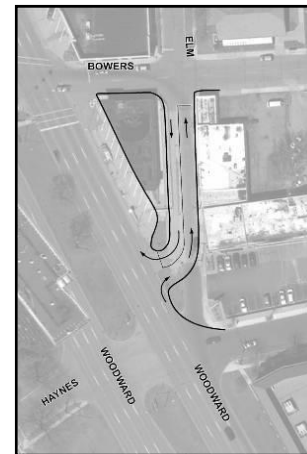
Worth Street (E). Currently Worth Street ends at Haynes Street. This prevents circulation between the Triangle District's northern and southern halves. Worth should be realigned parallel to Woodward Avenue and extended to Bowers. This will improve north/south interior connectivity within the Triangle District and better link the north and south halves of the District, which will help support redevelopment of this area. This road reconfiguration will also allow the creation of Worth Plaza in the heart of the Triangle District. The alignment of Worth Street will be through the rear of the Boarder's parking lot and buildings currently located between Bowers and Haynes. Therefore Worth Street realignment will need to be done in conjunction with the development of a parking structure and redevelopment of the properties on the north side of Haynes. The specific alignment shown on this plan is conceptual and could be varied, provided the ultimate alignment created Worth Plaza.

Bowers Street (F). Bowers Street should also be emphasized as an east/west connector corridor that connects the residential areas east of Adams to the Triangle District and Downtown.

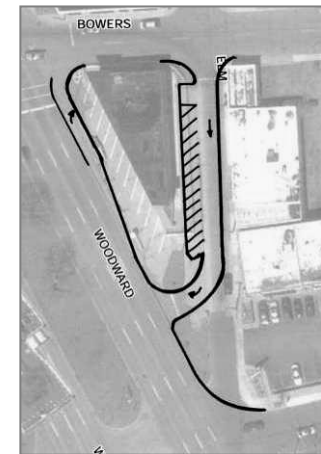
Additional traffic modeling and detailed geometric designs will need to be evaluated further by the City's traffic engineer prior to implementing these recommendations.



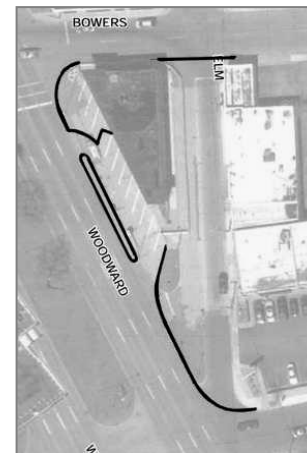
Maple Road (A1)



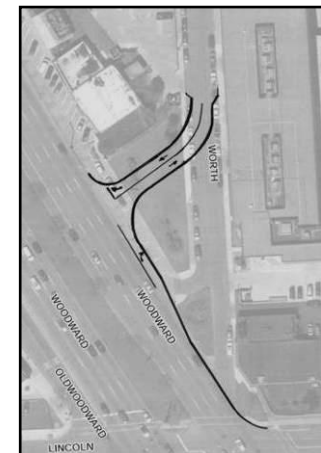
Woodward/Elm (C1)



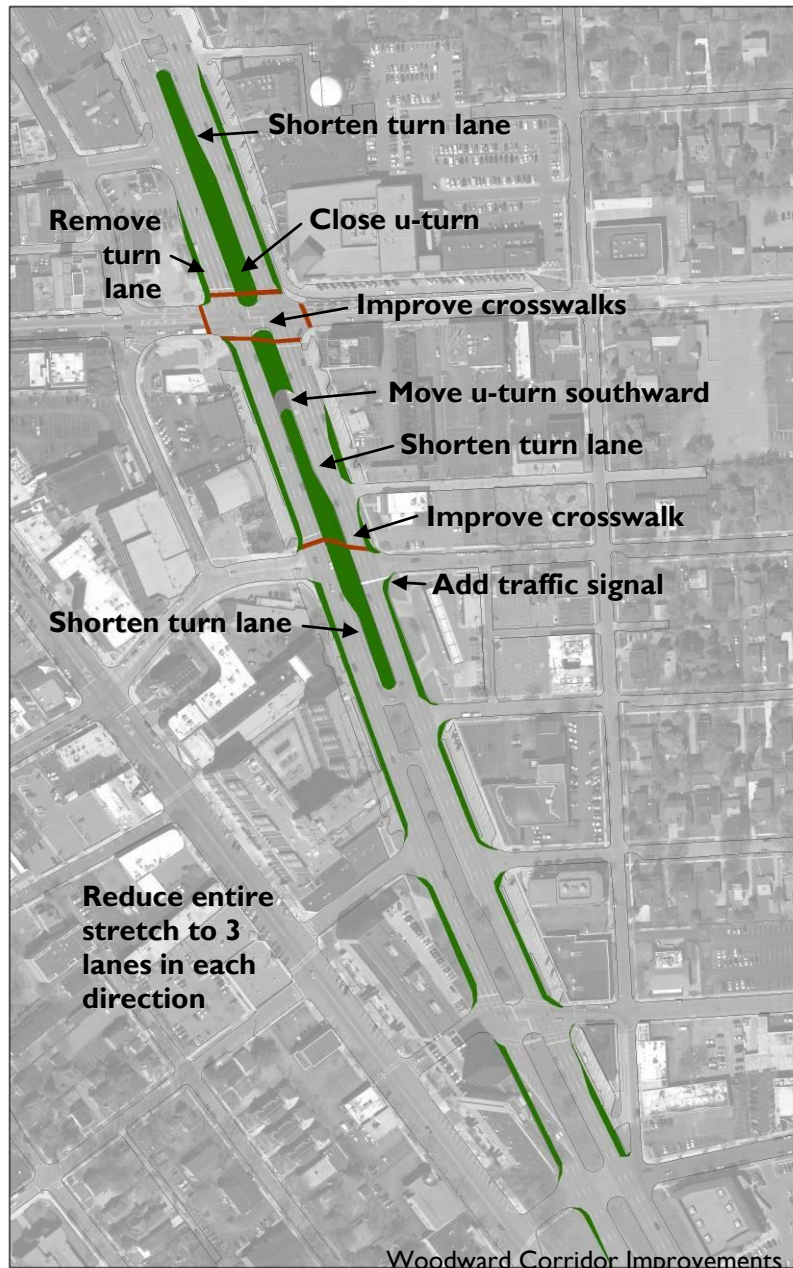
Woodward/Elm (C2)



Woodward/Elm (C3)



Woodward/Worth (D1)



Woodward Corridor Improvements

Woodward Avenue is the principal roadway that passes through the City and links Birmingham to the other communities along the corridor from Downtown Detroit to Pontiac. This roadway has been designed and improved to handle large volumes of traffic and currently carries approximately 65,000 vehicles per day with four lanes in each direction. As this roadway was modified to handle increasing volumes of traffic, its suitability for pedestrians diminished. This plan recommends potential changes to Woodward Avenue to become a grand, tree-lined boulevard, lined with distinctive buildings and a street design that accommodates vehicles, but also would be more inviting for pedestrians to cross and walk along the roadway.

Alternatives for improving Woodward Avenue are listed below:

- Create a stronger sense of enclosure along the corridor to help contain the large scale of the wide right-of-way, make the environment more comfortable for pedestrians, and induce traffic to drive slower. This can be achieved by the combination of taller buildings along the corridor and more street trees in the medians and along sidewalks.
- Eliminate some of the driveways and intersecting streets along Woodward that create conflict points for through traffic and local traffic. This will help improve vehicular and pedestrian safety and alleviate conflicts.
- Reduce the speed limit to 35 mph to make it safer for pedestrians and for drivers and their passengers.
- North of the Maple intersection, shorten the northbound u-turn lane to increase the width of the median for pedestrians. The southbound u-turn may be eliminated to increase the median for pedestrians; however this would need to be studied further to determine the impact to southbound to northbound movements.

- North of the Maple intersection, remove southbound right turn lane into Downtown and convert the westernmost travel lane to a right turn lane to reduce distance a pedestrian must travel to cross the roadway.
- Move northbound median south of Maple further away from the intersection to reduce the potential conflict with pedestrians in the median.
- Add a northbound signal at Forest to facilitate pedestrian crossing at the crosswalk. A signal already exists in the southbound direction and MDOT should consider the additional signal if it is timed to operate with the one at Maple.
- Shorten southbound u-turn lane south of Forest to increase the distance between pedestrians in the crosswalk and vehicles.
- Upgrade the Maple-Woodward intersection signals to mast-arm signals to improve the visual character of the area.
- Add pavers to crosswalks the existing crosswalks at Maple, Forest, and Bowers to improve the visual character of the area, to more clearly identify the pedestrian zone to drivers, and to enhance the secondary crossings of Forest and Bowers.
- Improve the existing at-grade crossing at Maple by adding to the median pedestrian elements such as a shelter depicted to the right. Such improvements can provide a resting place for pedestrians who cannot cross the entire extent of Woodward at once. A structure would also protect pedestrians from vehicles, induce vehicles to slow down, and provide some comfort to pedestrians standing in the median of a busy intersection.
- An above-grade crossing of Woodward not recommended at this time, given the construction and maintenance costs and the lack of large “anchor” destinations to serve as terminating points. Some type of elevated crossing could be worth reconsideration if conditions change in the future.

In the long term...

As a long-term goal, the City should pursue a reduction in the number of lanes to three in each direction for through-traffic. A fourth lane could be a separate service drive that functions as a local street with on-street parking. Access points to the main through lanes would be minimized to improve the efficiency of traffic flow. Local service drives can be used to access the businesses that line Woodward Avenue. This would make additional right-of-way available for wider sidewalks in front of businesses and would reduce the distance pedestrians must travel to cross the main throughway. This recommendation must be carefully considered and requires further investigation. It must be modeled by the City’s traffic engineer to ensure that traffic will not spill over to secondary streets like Adams and Maple. It also would require significant coordination with MDOT.



Illustrative Concept of Woodward Avenue Pedestrian Improvements

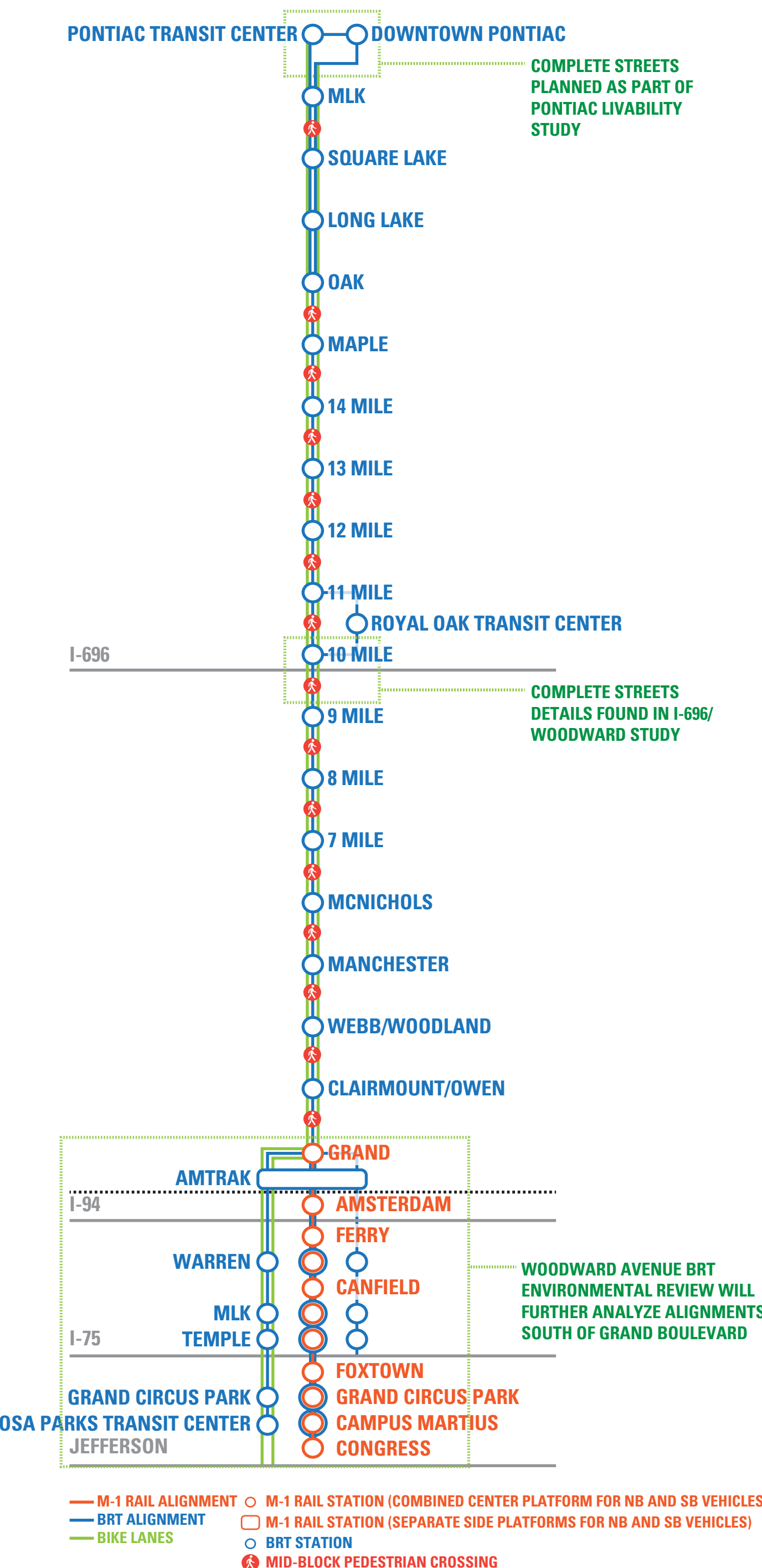
Woodward Avenue

COMPLETE STREETS

WOODWARD AT A GLANCE...

Woodward Avenue is an iconic urban scenic byway and the spine of the Detroit metropolitan region that traverses eleven communities from Downtown Detroit to the City of Pontiac. Woodward Avenue is perhaps the most critical corridor in the region and state as 1 in 10 Michiganders live along Woodward Avenue. It also represents the "Main Street" of many corridor communities, including Detroit, Highland Park, Ferndale, and Pontiac.

The future Woodward Avenue vision paints a picture of a livable, walkable, pedestrian, and transit-friendly multi-modal corridor. Building upon the future rapid transit, it aims to create a different future for Woodward Avenue that focuses on being a safe, secure, stable, well-linked, and economically stimulated place for its communities.



COMPLETE STREETS RECOMMENDED ELEMENTS FOR WOODWARD AVENUE



Street Trees

A consistent layout of street planting will bring order to Woodward Avenue and create spaces that will improve each neighborhood's identity. The proper design of irrigation and establishment of landscape maintenance protocols will help street trees to reach maturity. Mature plantings in ordered, urban streetscapes exude a sense of calm and stability. Street trees will also provide environmental benefits and assist in calming traffic.



Pedestrian Zone

Providing ample space within the pedestrian zone will synthesize a variety of activities, including the movement of pedestrians and outdoor dining/retail operations. Enhanced pedestrian crossings with curb extensions and pedestrian refuge islands (where feasible) at mid-block locations and major intersections will improve connectivity and safety for pedestrians throughout the corridor.



On-Street Parking

Maintaining on-street parking spaces (where feasible) will increase the viability of business along the corridor and will have a traffic calming effect on adjacent general purpose lanes.



Branding

Building on the brand established by the Woodward Avenue Action Association (WA3) will provide consistency and recognition throughout the corridor, further enhancing its sense of place. This brand can be applied to signage, wayfinding, kiosks, and many other elements.



Cycle Tracks

Raised cycle tracks will be constructed adjacent to sidewalks but will be delineated from pedestrian zones by unique paving colors or materials. Raised bicycle facilities will foster a greater sense of safety for less advanced cyclists and also reduce maintenance challenges.



Stormwater Management

Streetscape vegetation will be designed and programmed to filter stormwater from impervious surfaces. These elements improve the aesthetics of the street and will act as buffers between different modes of travel.



Mixed-Use Development

Complete streets will produce greater volumes of all types of travel, providing the foundation for intensified private development that combines uses. Ground floor retail with a high percentage of windows can help activate the street.



Furnishing

Streetscape elements, such as lighting, benches, trash receptacles, informational kiosks, bike share facilities, and many others, will have a powerful effect on the identity of the corridor if designed as a unified brand.



Rapid Transit

Two rapid transit systems, M-1 Rail (in construction) and Woodward Avenue bus rapid transit (BRT) (planned), will provide premium transit service throughout the corridor and are projected to serve over 40,000 users each day.



VISION

Woodward Avenue will be a complete street that provides safe and efficient means of travel for all users; creates excellent quality of place that benefits local residents; builds value for property; and inspires visitors to return.

MISSION

All stakeholders shall work together to create a cohesive corridor plan that balances the needs and benefits of all users, neighborhoods, and communities that is significantly completed by 2025.

Woodward Avenue

COMPLETE STREETS 14 MILE ROAD TO QUARTON ROAD

EXISTING CONDITIONS

This segment, between 14 Mile Road and Quarton Road, extends through the City of Birmingham and a portion of Bloomfield Township. The right-of-way is 200', consisting of eight (8) vehicle travel lanes, a wide median, and 6' sidewalks on both sides of the street. Street trees and lighting are present within the sidewalk and median in select locations throughout this segment. The space between the sidewalk and vehicle travel lanes varies from block to block, including a variety of conditions e.g. grass lawns, slip roads with parallel parking, and slip roads with angled parking. Transverse crosswalk design (12" parallel lines to delineate the edge of the crosswalk) is used within this segment at most intersections and mid-block locations.

SEGMENT COMMUNITIES

Birmingham and Bloomfield Township

RECOMMENDATIONS

Between 14 Mile Road and Quarton, the existing eight (8) vehicle travel lanes will be reduced to six (6). This reduction allows for this segment to be redesigned as a multiway boulevard that will include dedicated transit lanes physically separated from vehicle travel lanes, an enhanced pedestrian zone, two-way raised cycle tracks on each side of the street, and on-street parking on both sides of the street separated from traffic by an 8' landscaped median.

The two-way raised cycle tracks will be 8' in total width and will be accommodated adjacent to the sidewalk. The cycle tracks will include two 4' bicycle only lanes, delineated from the sidewalk by unique paving colors or materials and bicycle lane word, symbol, and arrow markings (MUTCD Figure 9C-3). A 3' buffer and curb will separate the cycle tracks from on-street parking.

The remaining 10' will accommodate the pedestrian-only zone. Sidewalks will be constructed with enhanced finishes and materials consistent with the overall design of the corridor, although unique patterns and colors can be used to identify this segment. Continental crosswalk design will be used for all crosswalks (12" bars perpendicular to the path of travel) and may be further accented with colored paint.

Vegetation within this segment will consist of mature street trees planted no more than 40' apart to provide a consistent canopy. The trees can be planted in designated tree grates or within vegetated planters (located both at the edge of the sidewalk and in the median), which will use a combination of soils, mulch, and plants that help filter stormwater.

Furnishing within this segment will be consistent with the design of the corridor, although unique patterns and colors can be used to identify this segment. Furnishing elements may include seating, trash receptacles, bicycle parking, wayfinding, and lighting. Branding established by WA3 will be incorporated within wayfinding elements and permanent/seasonal banners.



RAPID TRANSIT

Dedicated bus rapid transit lanes will provide premium transit in this segment



CYCLE TRACKS

Two-way raised cycle tracks (NB + SB) adjacent to sidewalk with 3' buffer from on-street parking



PEDESTRIAN ZONE

Reconstructed sidewalks, enhanced pedestrian crossings with curb extensions, and pedestrian refuge islands



FURNISHING

Amenities consistent with Woodward corridor, including space for outdoor dining and bike share facilities



STREET TREES

Mature street trees in planters and/or grates spaced 40' apart



STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

Permeable paving materials for all sidewalks and filtration planters 40' apart



BRANDING

Signage, wayfinding, colors, and materials consistent with Woodward brand



ON-STREET PARKING

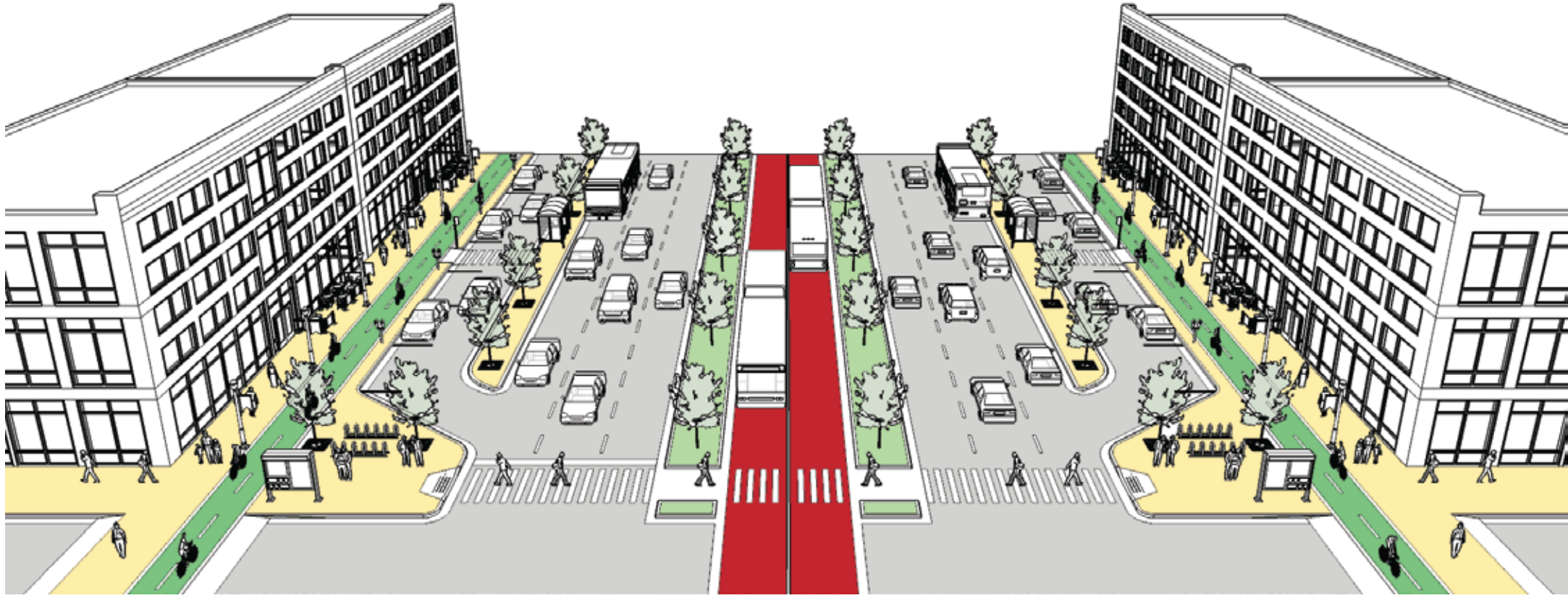
On-street, parallel parking accommodated within multiway boulevard

VISION

Woodward Avenue will be a complete street that provides safe and efficient means of travel for all users; creates excellent quality of place that benefits local residents; builds value for property; and inspires visitors to return.

MISSION

All stakeholders shall work together to create a cohesive corridor plan that balances the needs and benefits of all users, neighborhoods, and communities that is significantly completed by 2025.



TYPICAL CROSS SECTION: 14 MILE TO QUARTON
RIGHT-OF-WAY = 200'



Woodward Avenue Rapid Transit Alternatives Analysis Locally Preferred Alternative

Prepared for

Southeast Michigan Council of Governments

SEMCOG

2014

Prepared by

Parsons Brinckerhoff

In Association With

HNTB Michigan

LSL Planning, Inc.

Hamilton Anderson Associates

Elnora Austell & Associates

Archive DS

5.1.3 QUARTON ROAD TO 14 MILE ROAD

This segment represents the portion of Birmingham that is located along the Woodward Avenue corridor.

Mainline alignment

This alignment alternative maintains service along Woodward Avenue throughout this entire segment.

Station Locations

6. Oak Avenue Station (Tier 3)

A station is recommended north or south of Oak Avenue to directly serve the northern portion of Downtown Birmingham and adjacent neighborhoods. This station could be constructed within the center of the median to serve both NB and SB median-edge transit lanes. Additionally, adjacent land between Woodward Avenue and Old Woodward Avenue could be redeveloped as surface or structured parking to and integrated into the system with signalized mid-block pedestrian crossings to designate this location as a P&R station. This is a Tier 3 station due to lower ridership projections and lower development potential.

7. Maple Road Station (Tier 2)

A station is recommended south of Maple Road to directly serve the Downtown Birmingham core and Triangle District. This station could be constructed within the center of the median to serve both NB and SB median-edge transit lanes. This is a Tier 2 station due to moderate ridership projections and direct access to Downtown Birmingham.

8. 14 Mile Road Station (Tier 3)

A station is recommended north of 14 Mile Road to directly serve Birmingham's South Gateway and adjacent neighborhoods. This station could be constructed within the center of the median to serve both NB and SB median-edge transit lanes. This is a Tier 3 station due to lower ridership projections and lower development potential.

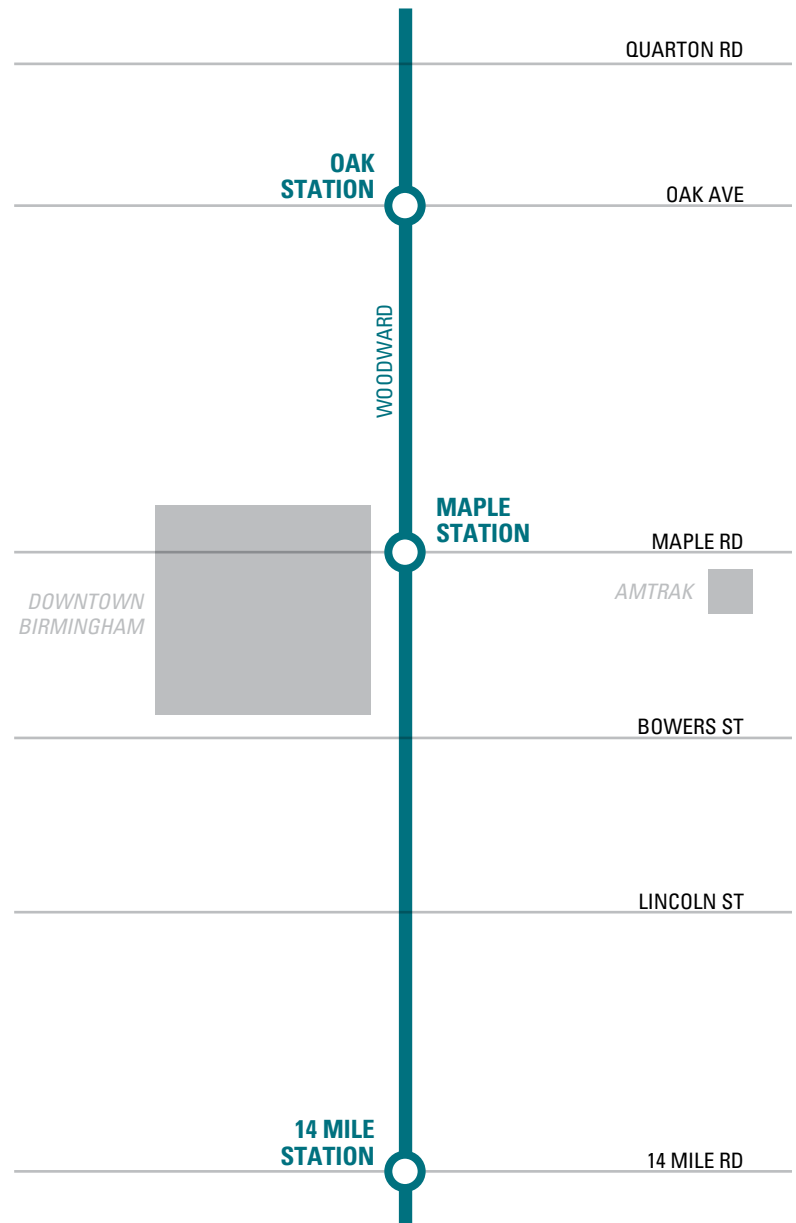


FIGURE 5-6. ALIGNMENT AND STATIONS, QUARTON ROAD TO 14 MILE ROAD

Cross section

The recommended cross section for this segment consists of exclusive, median-edge running transit lanes. Existing median-edge general purpose lanes would be converted to transit lanes. No alteration or reconstruction of the median is recommended. Transit lanes will be delineated from general purpose lanes by a solid white line, red paint, and standard BUS ONLY pavement markings (MUTCD 3D-01). See **Figure 5.7** below.



FIGURE 5-7. CROSS SECTION, QUARTON ROAD TO 14 MILE ROAD

5.1.4 14 MILE ROAD TO 10 MILE ROAD

This segment represents the portions of Berkley, Royal Oak, and Huntington Woods that are located along the Woodward Avenue corridor. There are two alignment alternatives for this segment that are recommended for further analysis.

Mainline alignment

This alignment alternative maintains service along Woodward Avenue throughout this entire segment.

Royal Oak alignment

This alignment alternative represents a potential “local” service that could be integrated directly with “express” service provided by the mainline alignment. This alignment would provide direct access to Downtown Royal Oak by traveling east/west on 11 Mile Road and north/south on Lafayette and Washington Avenues.

Station Locations

9. 13 Mile Road Station (Tier 2)

A station is recommended south of 13 Mile Road to directly serve Beaumont Hospital. This station could be constructed within the center of the median to serve both NB and SB median-center transit lanes (which would require the transit lanes to veer slightly to access the station), or separate stations could be constructed within the edges of the median to serve the NB and SB median-center transit lanes separately. This is a Tier 2 station due to moderate ridership projections and direct access to Beaumont Hospital.

10. 12 Mile Road Station (Tier 3)


A station is recommended north or south of 12 Mile Road to directly serve Downtown Berkley and adjacent neighborhoods. This station could be constructed within the center of the median to serve both NB and SB median-center transit lanes (which would require the transit lanes to veer slightly to access the station), or separate stations could be constructed within the edges of the median to serve the NB and SB median-center transit lanes separately. This is a Tier 3 station due to lower ridership projections, lower development potential, and moderate access to Downtown Berkley.

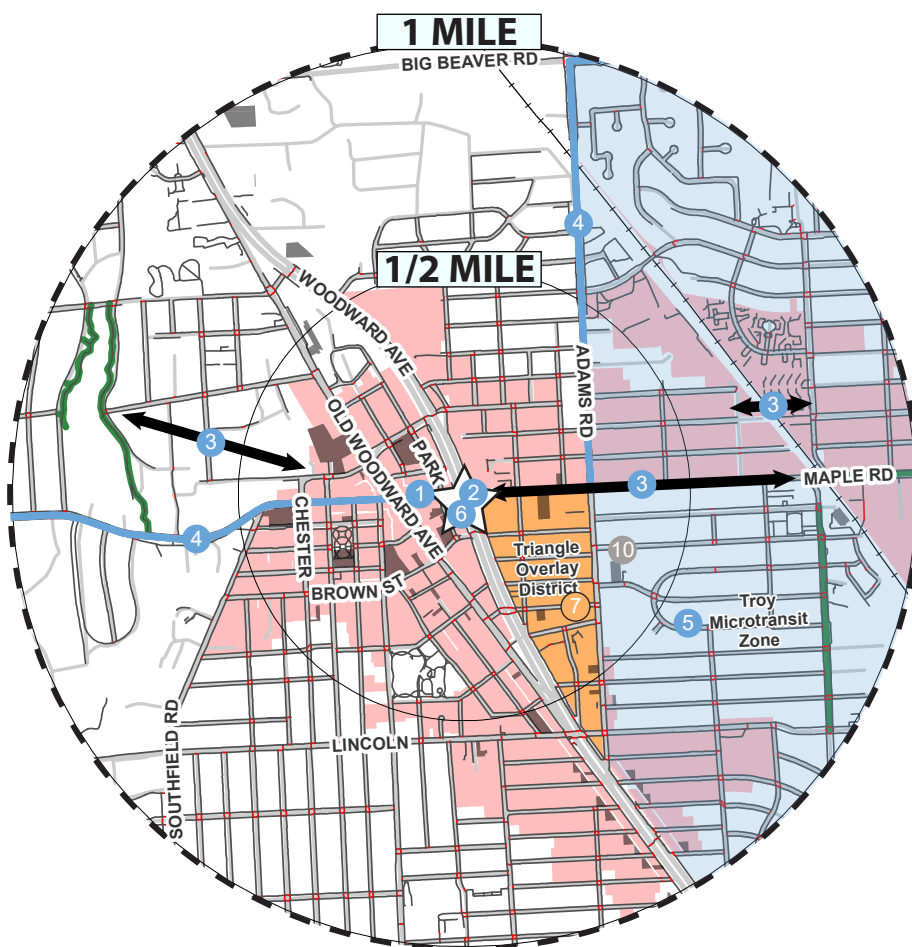













Mobility-Oriented Development Study

ACTION PLAN

December 2020





Typology	 TOWN CENTER
Destination Overlay(s)	 STATION AREA  SATELLITE
Mode(s) of Emphasis	 
Readiness	



-  Station
-  High Short Trip Demand Areas
-  Parking
-  Planned Microtransit Zone
-  Planned SMART Routes
-  Low-Stress Bike Facilities
-  High-Stress Bike Facilities
-  Sidewalks
-  Crosswalks
-  Roads
-  Railroads

Woodward Avenue and Maple Road is a “Strengthen” station with key opportunities to improve connectivity readiness by safely and comfortably accommodating pedestrian connections between transit services, providing more direct routes with higher frequency to regional destinations, and better accommodating biking, micromobility, transit, and microtransit. The residential population falls short of the 7,900 expected for the Town Center ½-mile area, and greater density could be fostered by encouraging affordable housing, and freeing up more land for development.

	Recommended Action	Implementer	
1	Add lighting along E Maple Rd.	City of Birmingham	Short Term
2	Enhance pedestrian crossing safety at the Woodward Ave and Maple Rd intersection.	MDOT -- Safety Audit	
3	Improve sidewalk, crosswalk, and bike network connectivity to high short trip demand areas.	City of Troy to the east, City of Birmingham and MDOT (Woodward Ave) to the south, and adjacent property owners for sidewalks	
4	Increase frequency on SMART Crosstown Route 780 (as recommended in 2020 SMART Path Plan).	SMART, City of Birmingham, and employers -- potential CMAQ funds and/or Employers Transit Subsidy as part of TDM program	
5	Add microtransit service with coverage of Downtown Birmingham, the Triangle District, the Rail District, the Troy Amtrak station, and remote parking areas, building off of the recommended Troy Microtransit Zone from the 2020 SMART Path Plan .	SMART, Cities of Birmingham and Troy, and employers -- potential CMAQ funds and/or Employers Transit Subsidy as part of TDM program	
6	Develop a mobility hub with e-scooters, bike parking, a bikeshare station, bus stop seating and/or shelter, and real time travel information.	SMART and City of Birmingham	Long Term
7	Expand bike parking requirements from the Triangle Overlay to the Downtown Overlay District. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could include long-term bike parking requirements and specifics and design, location, etc. • Incentivize bike parking by allowing reductions in vehicular parking minimums. 	City of Birmingham -- Zoning	
8 area wide	Include pedestrian-friendly site design standards .	City of Birmingham -- Zoning	
9 area wide	Promote shared parking opportunities and use of commercial parking for other users off-hours for areas outside of the parking assessment district.	City of Birmingham	
10	Reduce parking requirements east of Woodward Ave and promote infill opportunities and density on surface lots.	City of Birmingham -- Zoning	

Typology	
Destination Overlay(s)	
Mode(s) of Emphasis	
Readiness	



- ☆ Station
- Planned Microtransit Zone
- Sidewalks
- Crosswalks
- Roads
- +++ Railroads
- Potential Drop-Off and Pick-Up Zones

Woodward Avenue and 14 Mile Road is a “Plan” station with key opportunities to take first steps towards connectivity and regulatory readiness. The most significant opportunities are to provide more direct routes with higher frequency to regional destinations, accommodate ride-hailing and park and ride, and update zoning and future land uses to be consistent with the two to three stories of residential and mixed retail envisioned for a Neighborhood Center.

	Recommended Action	Implementer	
1	Add lighting at northeast corner of Woodward Ave and 14 Mile Rd intersection.	MDOT (Woodward Ave) and City of Birmingham (14 Mile Rd)	Short Term
2	Enhance pedestrian crossing safety at the Woodward Ave and 14 Mile Rd intersection.	MDOT -- Safety Audit	
3	Connect the sidewalk and crosswalk network across the rail line to the Troy Transit Center and nearby shopping.	Canadian National Railway, and Cities of Birmingham and Royal Oak	
4	Implement the Troy Microtransit Zone as recommended by the 2020 SMART Path Plan .	SMART and Cities of Birmingham, Royal Oak, and Troy -- potential CMAQ funds and/or Employer Transit Subsidy as part of TDM program	
5	Consider upgrades to alley designs as another route for pedestrians and bicyclists.	City of Birmingham	
6	Manage the curb to designate a rideshare drop-off and pick-up zone.	City of Birmingham and MDOT -- Curbside Management Plan	
7	Add park & ride with a rideshare drop-off and pick-up zone. Potential lot at IXL Learning Center.	City of Birmingham and MDOT -- land lease agreement, potential CMAQ funds	Long Term
8 area wide	Consider adopting a TOD Overlay that potentially includes the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Permit limited mixed-uses (residential above office/retail) for properties along Woodward Avenue. Allow building heights to be between 2-3 stories high. Minimum front yard setback reduced to 10 feet (instead of 25 ft) for multi-family district. Incentivize bike parking with reduction on parking minimums. Allow for parking to be located off site within 600 feet or more (instead of 300 ft in Zoning Ordinance). 	City of Royal Oak -- Zoning	
9 area wide	Consider extension or adoption of TOD overlay along Woodward Avenue and 14 Mile to promote greater mixture of uses and density (allow building heights up to 2-3 stories).	City of Birmingham -- Zoning	
10 area wide	Include pedestrian-friendly site design standards .	Cities of Royal Oak and Birmingham -- Zoning	

From: <russwdixon@aol.com>
Date: Mon, Nov 22, 2021 at 2:13 PM
Subject: Mini-Roundabouts
To: <city-commission@bhamgov.org>
CC: <tmarkus@bhamgov.org>

Greetings:

I've shared this suggestion before, but after reading an article in yesterday's New York Times, I thought it might be timely to share it again. The article was written by Cara Buckley and is titled "The Midwestern City Where Rounder Is Greener". It describes the replacement of traditional intersections with roundabouts in Carmel, Indiana that's improved safety, saved fuel, and reduced carbon emissions.

I realize that roundabouts are controversial, but I believe they are a feasible option to low volume, residential, four-way stops. Specifically, I'm referring to mini-roundabouts. Single lane and a raised "pitcher's mound" in the center. The spherical mound in the center keeps the overall diameter smaller and allows trucks to simply drive over it when driving straight or turning left. I've driven many in the UK and have found them preferable to four-way stops.

I frequently travel the intersections of Lincoln and Torry, and Lincoln and Eton, and believe that either location could serve as effective tests of their usefulness. I've simulated roundabout style left turns at the Lincoln and Eton intersection within the currently paved area; so they would be similar in impervious surface area.

This is nothing more than a casual suggestion for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Russell Dixon