



# I-375 Improvement Project

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT PRESENTATION



# Agenda

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- Project Description and Background
- NEPA Process
- Alternatives Screening
- Preferred Alternative
- Environmental Effects and Mitigation
- How to Submit an Official Comment
- Next Steps



Paradise Valley, 1942



Hastings Street

**Downtown Detroit,  
1949**



Hastings Street

Lafayette Park  
Development

**Downtown Detroit,  
1961**

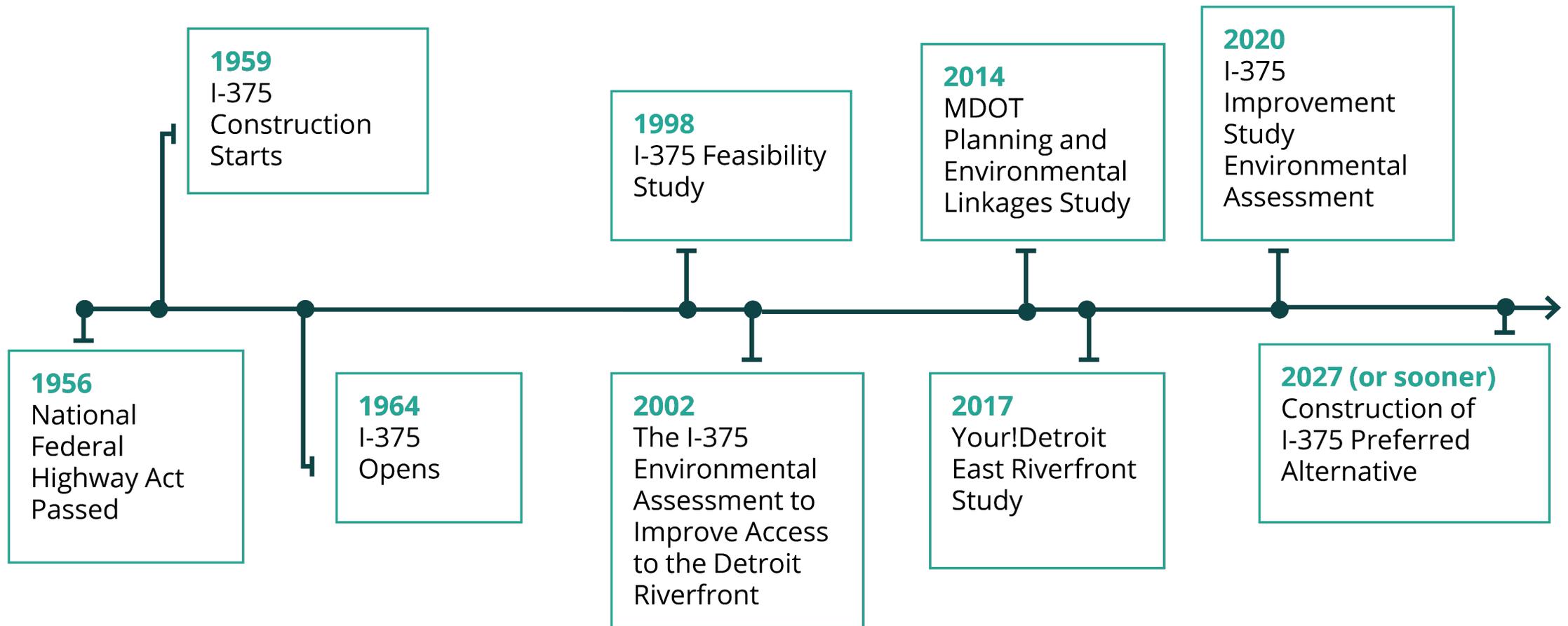


**Hastings Street near Mack Avenue, 1959**

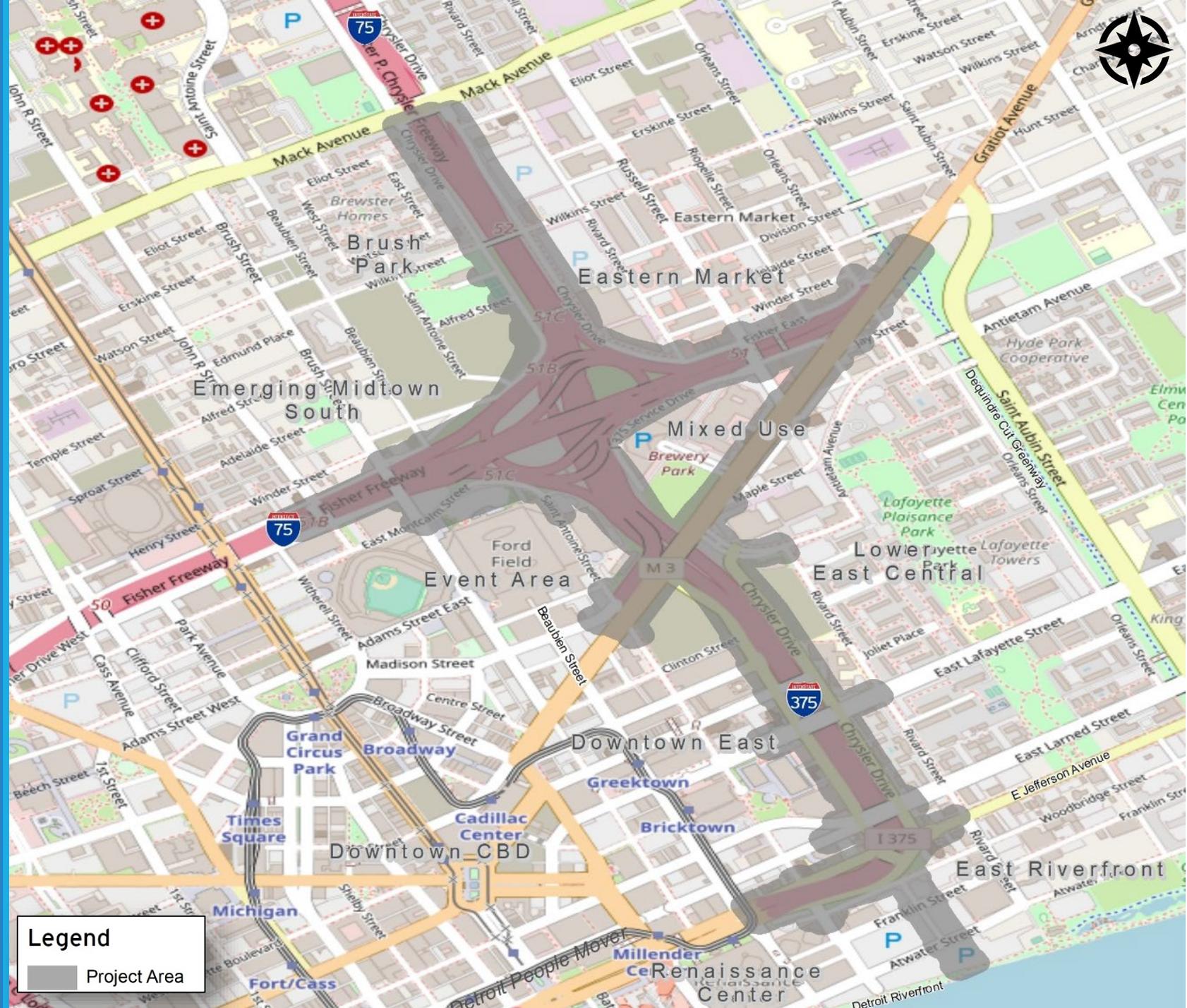


**I-75 Construction, 1961**

# History of I-375



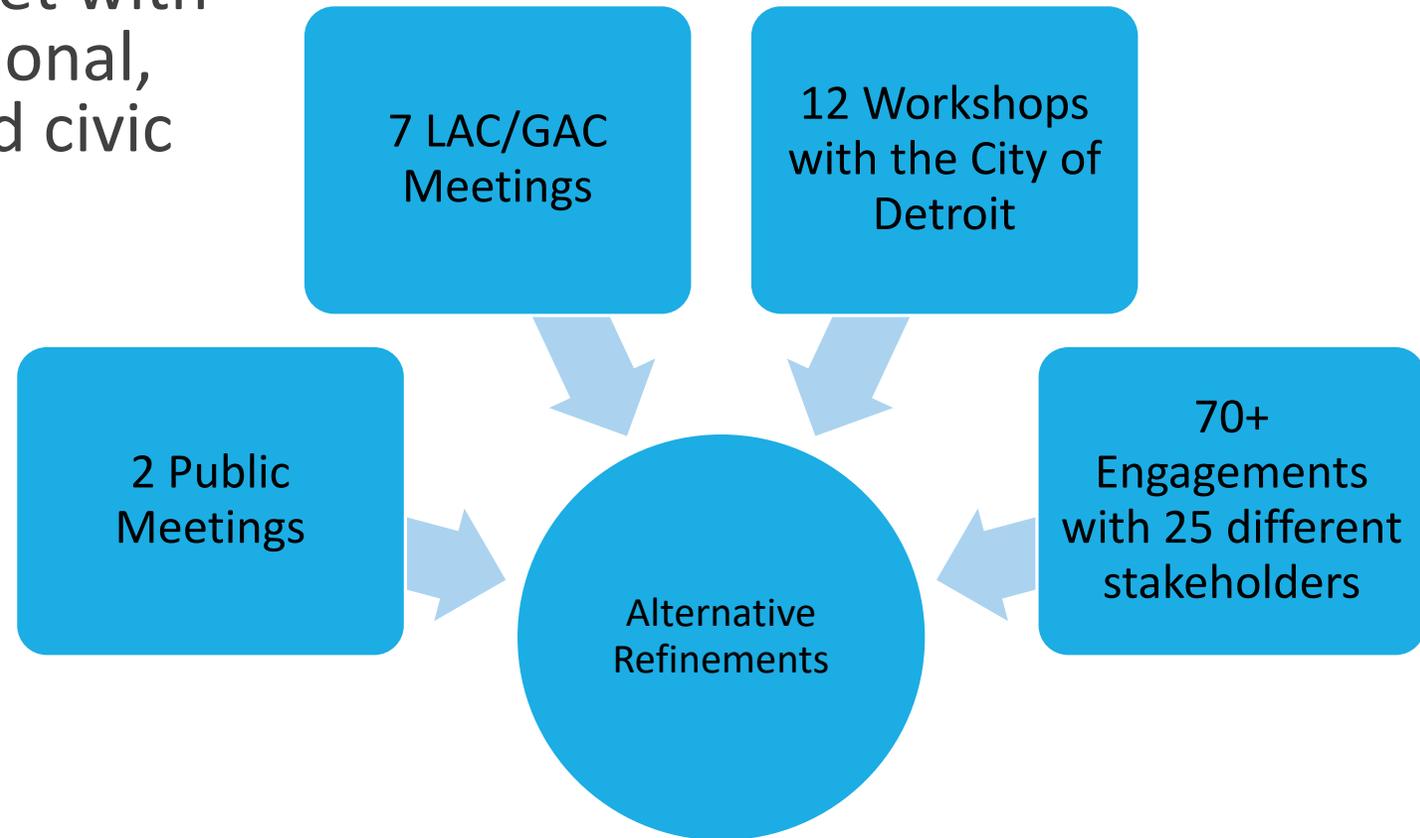
# PROJECT AREA





# Coordination with Stakeholders

Since 2017, the team has met with numerous business, educational, community, faith-based, and civic stakeholders.



# Project Purpose

<b>Address</b>	Address outdated interchange design and deteriorated bridges and roadways with an appropriate solution that considers safety, operations, and long-term lifecycle costs.
<b>Address</b>	Address existing and future transportation needs and roadway safety for all users.
<b>Improve</b>	Improve vehicular and non-motorized connectivity to surrounding area and existing and planned transit services (which may result in improved community health).
<b>Enhance</b>	Enhance access to enable future development and other place-making opportunities.

## share your thoughts, shape the vision

**Community Workshop**  
Tuesday, May 24

Please plan to join us on Tuesday, May 24 for the next community workshop. This will be an opportunity to see how your input from our first community workshop is shaping the future of the East Riverfront. A project presentation will be followed by an open house event and chance to talk with the design team and drop by tables to learn about other riverfront programs and activities being planned. The event is free and open to the public!

The event will be held in Eastern Market's Shed 5 at 2934 Russell Street. A 30-minute presentation will begin at 6:00 pm with an open house following through 8:30 pm. Please hold the date for this exciting opportunity to share your thoughts and shape the vision of your riverfront.

**Walking Tours**  
Wednesday, May 25

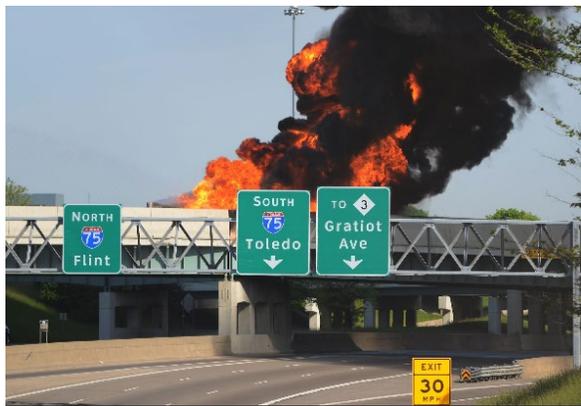
Want to know more about the East Riverfront project and tour the site? Join us for walking tours on Wednesday, May 25, between 4:00 pm and 7:00 pm.

To participate in the tour, meet us at the Outdoor Adventure Center (1801 Atwater St). Each tour will be 60-minutes and a tour will depart every 30-minutes from the Outdoor Adventure Center. From there, we'll tour the riverfront and the surrounding area. The design team will share some of the observations and opportunities that we've started to explore since our initial workshop. The tours are family-friendly and open to all ages.

In the meantime, if you have ideas, questions or concerns, don't hesitate to contact Ritchie Harrison: email: [ritchie.harrison@detroitriverfront.org](mailto:ritchie.harrison@detroitriverfront.org) phone: (313) 566 8206



# Project Need



## Deteriorating

Deteriorating bridge and pavement conditions.

## Outdated

Outdated geometric conditions, such as ramp widths and curvature, which result in elevated crash rates and congestion.

## Lacking Connections

Lacking vehicle and pedestrian connections to the East Riverfront.

## Connectivity

Poor connectivity and confusing access to downtown destinations through I-75/I-375 and Gratiot Avenue Connector.

## Congestion

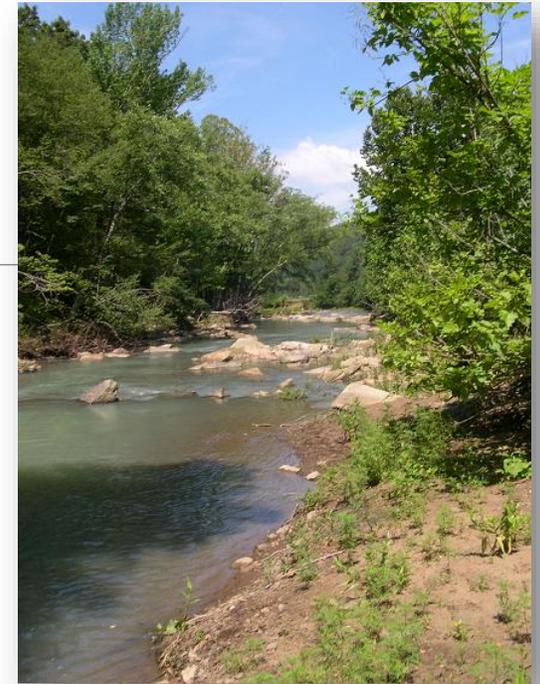
Congestion and safety issues along Jefferson Avenue Corridor due to high volumes and inefficient left turning movements.

## Poor Environment

Poor environment for transit and non-motorized travel.

# What is NEPA?

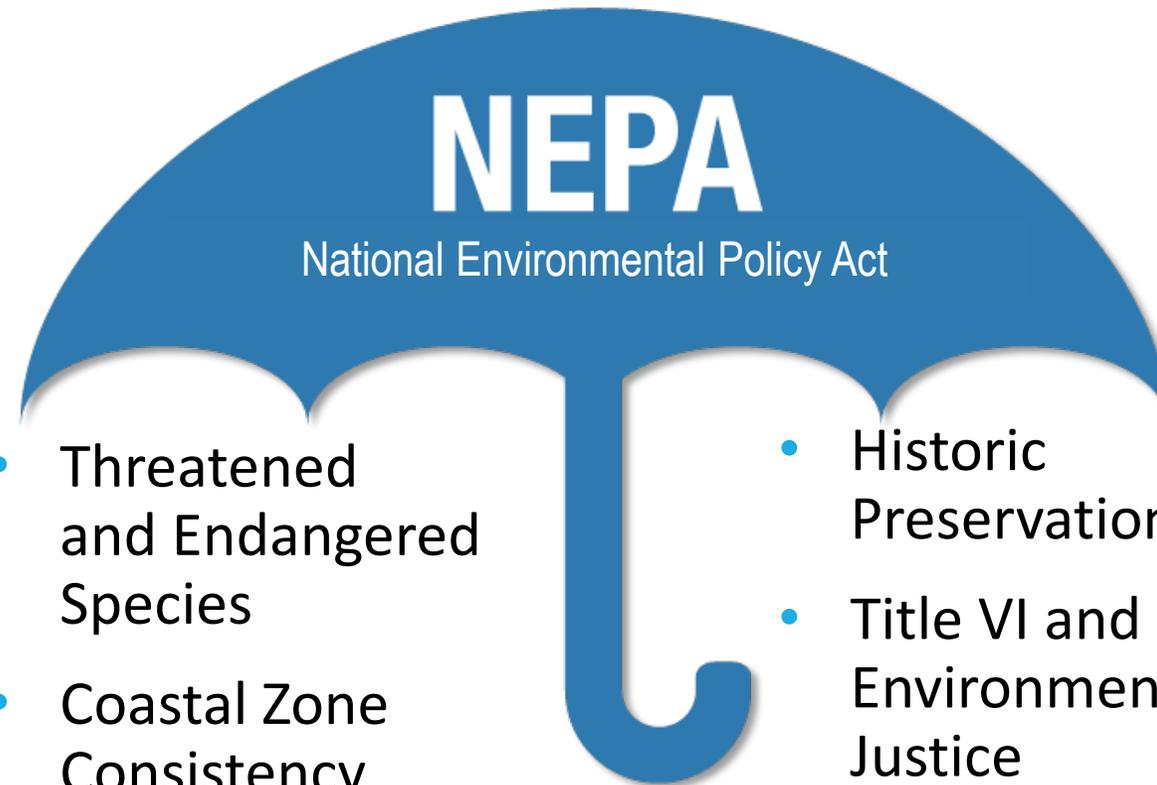
- National Environmental Policy Act of 1969
- All projects receiving federal dollars or federal approval must be reviewed for environmental impacts:
  - Social
  - Environmental
  - Economic





# The NEPA Umbrella

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- Public Involvement
- Wetland and Floodplain Permits
- Farmland Protection
- Water Quality Protection
- Threatened and Endangered Species
- Coastal Zone Consistency
- Air Quality Conformity
- Historic Preservation
- Title VI and Environmental Justice
- Recreation Area Protection
- Noise Abatement
- Sustainable Development
- Community Impact Assessment



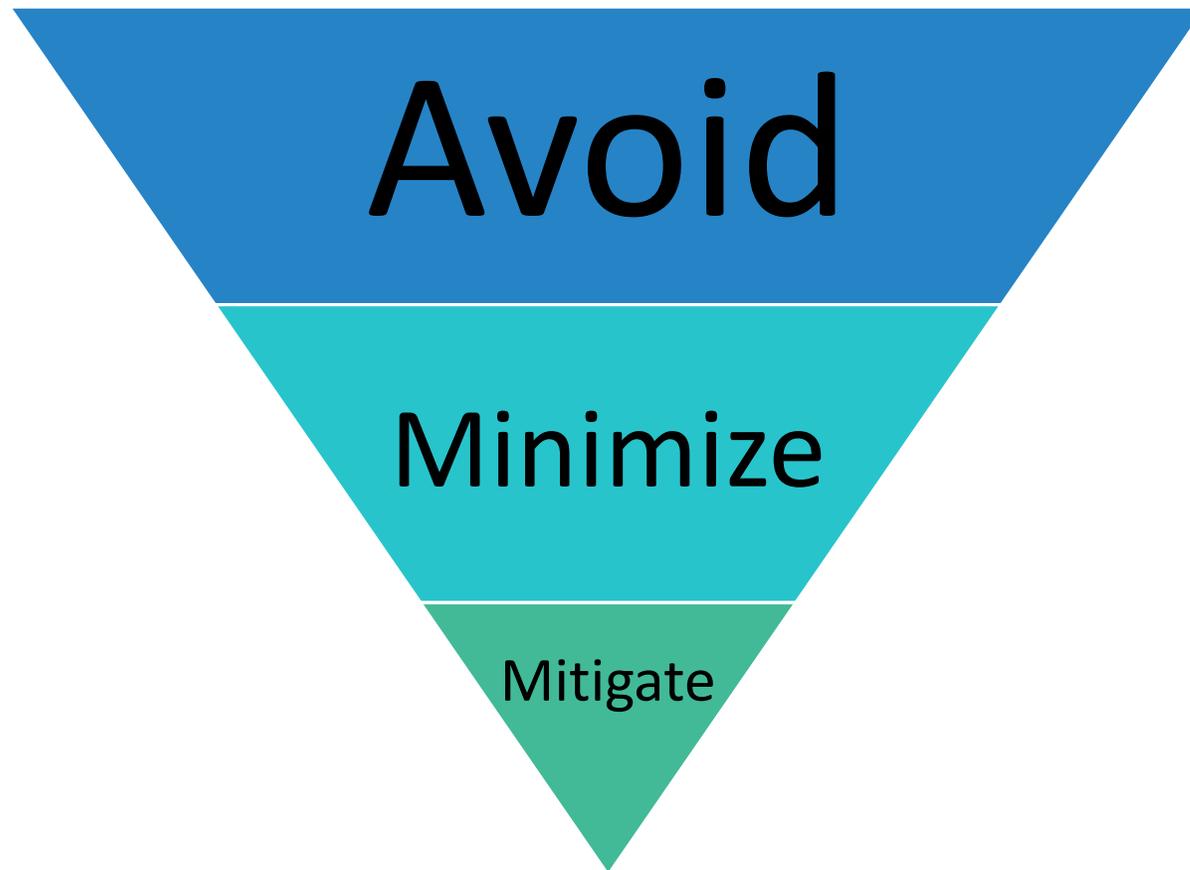
# NEPA Classes of Action

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- Class I – Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)
  - Known significant environmental impacts
- Class II – Categorical Exclusion (CE)
  - No significant environmental impacts
- Class III – Environmental Assessment (EA)
  - Significant environmental impacts unclear

# Avoid, Minimize, and Mitigate Effects

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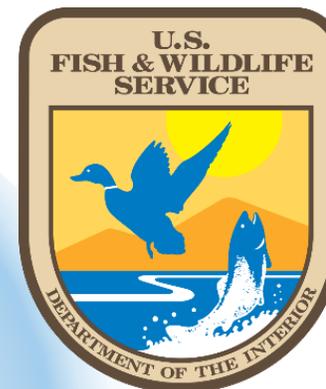


- Creative problem solving between the PM/ESS/Resource Agency to avoid impacts and/or minimize impacts will help to keep your project a Categorical Exclusion
- Mitigation can be as small as planting a tree, to relocating plants, to constructing a new wetland mitigation site

# Regulatory Agency Coordination



US Army Corps  
of Engineers



I-375

Improvement  
Project



# NEPA Commitments

- Use of federal funds requires compliance with NEPA and state/federal permit requirements
- FHWA requires how impacts are avoided, minimized, or mitigated
- For Environmental Assessments, a “Green Sheet” is developed to identify mitigation follow-up to assure the project will have “*no significant impacts*”

## Project Mitigation Summary “Green Sheet”

For the Preferred Alternative

December 2020

I-375 Environmental Assessment

This mitigation summary “Green Sheet” contains the Project-specific mitigation measures being considered at this time. An updated “Green Sheet” will be prepared and included in the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Project. The mitigation items and commitments identified below may be modified during the final design, right-of-way (ROW) acquisition or construction phases of the Project. The Project mitigation will be tracked and sign-off on the mitigation commitments will occur as the Project progresses through the various phases: design, ROW acquisition, construction and maintenance.

### Mitigation Measures

#### 1. Public Transportation

- Early coordination with transit agencies will take place during the development of maintenance of traffic plans to ensure access to transit stops will be maintained during construction. Coordination with transit agencies will be ongoing during the pre-construction and construction phases to ensure that transit riders are given adequate notice of any changes and that any adjustments in transit stops or routes are addressed appropriately.

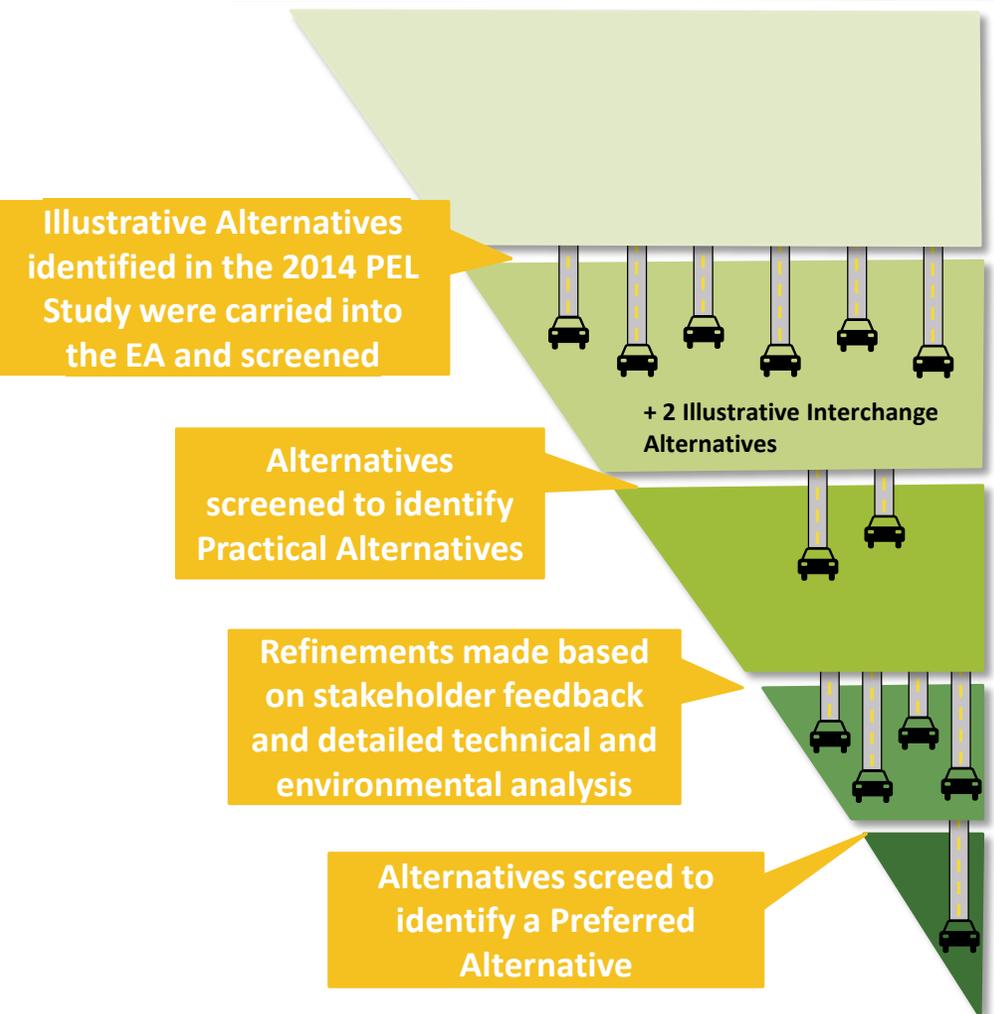
#### 2. Nonmotorized Safety and Vehicular Safety

- Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety** - The Preferred Alternative will create new pedestrian and bicycle facilities in the corridor. The sidewalks along the boulevard will be between 10 feet and 20 feet on the west side of the boulevard and 10 feet on the east side of the boulevard. Cycle tracks will be provided north and south, connecting to existing and planned nonmotorized infrastructure. All pedestrian street crossings, including sidewalk ramps and the crosswalk on the bridge over I-75 will be upgraded to meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards. Best Management Practices (BMPs) for urban and nonmotorized design will be utilized to provide vehicular and nonmotorized traffic safety, such as, the use of protected left-turn signal phases at signalized intersections, enhanced signing, and pavement marking.

If there is future demand and requests for accessible pedestrian signals are received, the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) will conduct an engineering study that considers the needs of pedestrians, as well as the information needs of pedestrians with visual disabilities. The engineering study would make a recommendation as to whether to install these additional signal devices considering the factors listed in section 4E.09 of the *Michigan Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices*.

- Vehicle Safety** - The transition from a freeway section to a boulevard surface street section has been identified as a safety focus. This area will be designed to slow vehicles as they approach the boulevard section. BMPs will be used in this high speed to low speed transition area to improve safety. Potential measures include creating a gateway

# Alternatives Screening



## PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL LINKAGES STUDY

The 2014 Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study defined the project purpose and need and alternatives to address those needs. These were carried forward and refined through the EA process.

## ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT INITIATED

### ILLUSTRATIVE ALTERNATIVES

Six Illustrative Alternatives and two Illustrative Interchange Alternatives were studied further.

### PRACTICAL ALTERNATIVES

Two Practical Alternatives were identified through the Illustrative Alternatives screening and combined with one Interchange Alternative. One Practical Alternative was selected to be further refined.

### PRACTICAL ALTERNATIVES REFINEMENTS

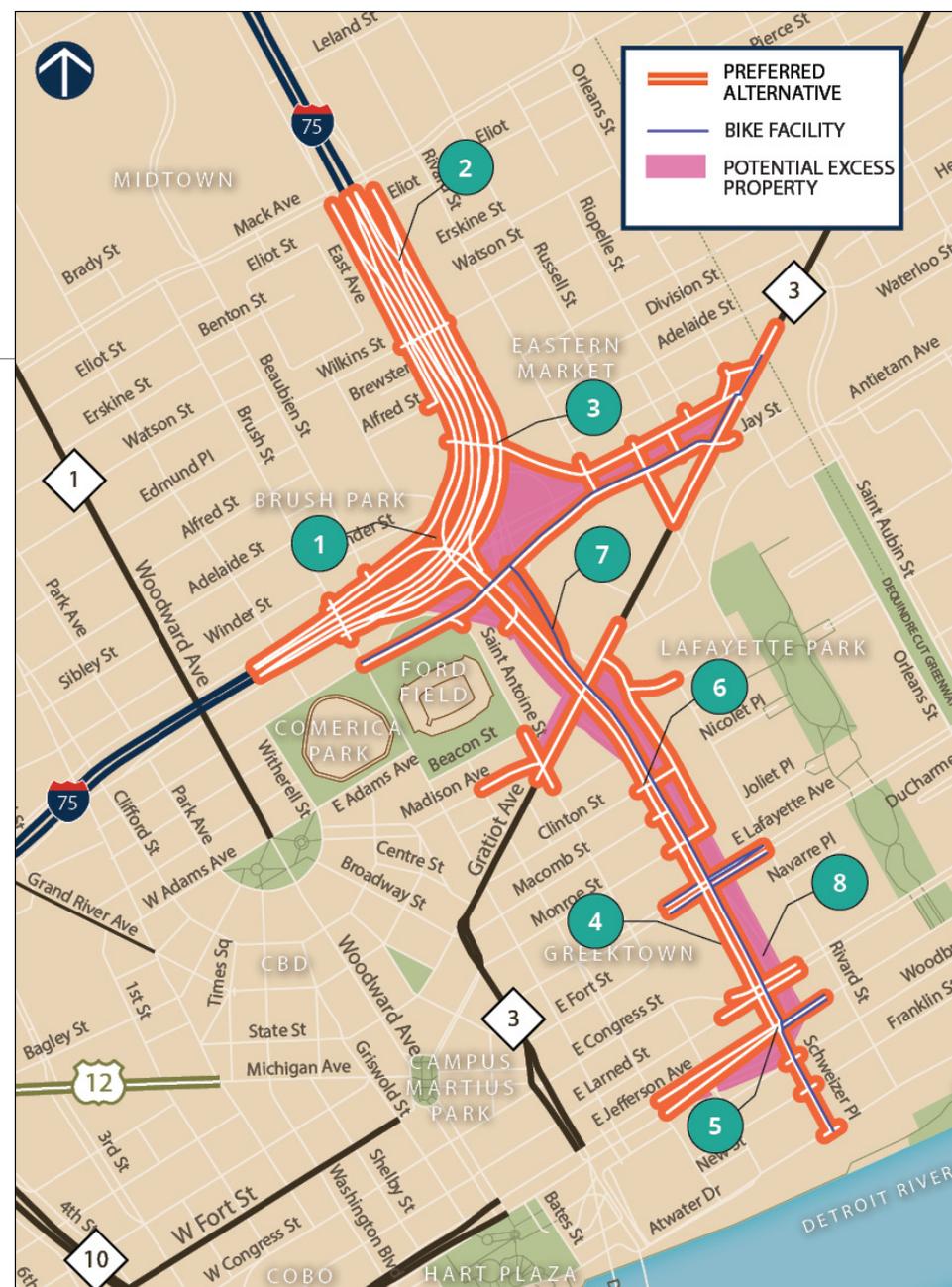
Four refined Practical Alternatives were developed based on a need to further analysis the boulevard and the introduction of a new interchange alternative as a result of stakeholder feedback.

### PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

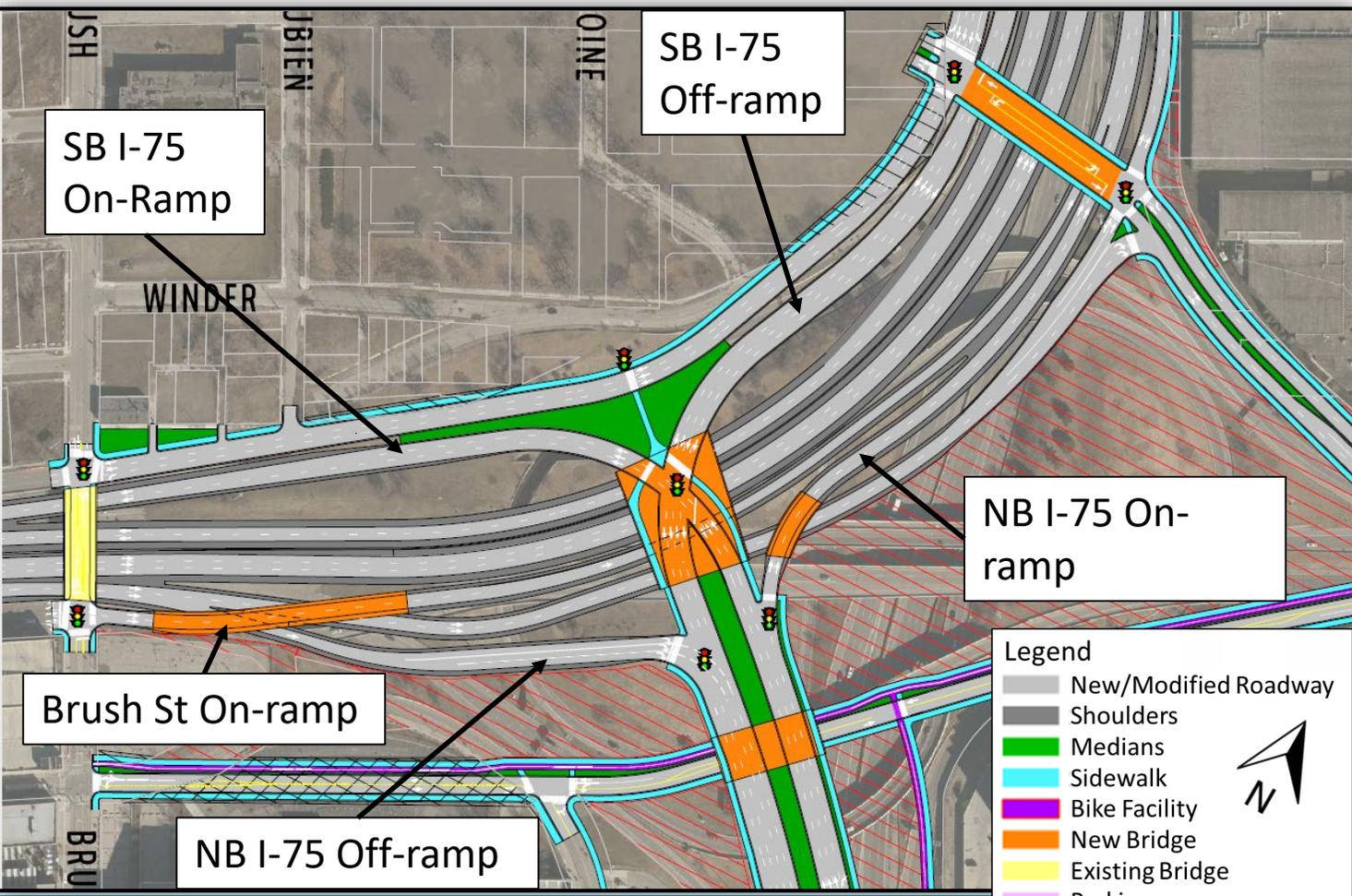
A Preferred Alternative was selected and is analyzed in the EA.

# Preferred Alternative

- 1 I-75 / I-375 Interchange
- 2 Mack Avenue Braided Ramps
- 3 Brush Park / Eastern Market Connectivity
- 4 City Street-Level Boulevard
- 5 Signalized Intersections along the Boulevard
- 6 Direct Left-Turns along the Boulevard
- 7 Improved Nonmotorized Facilities
- 8 Potential Excess Property

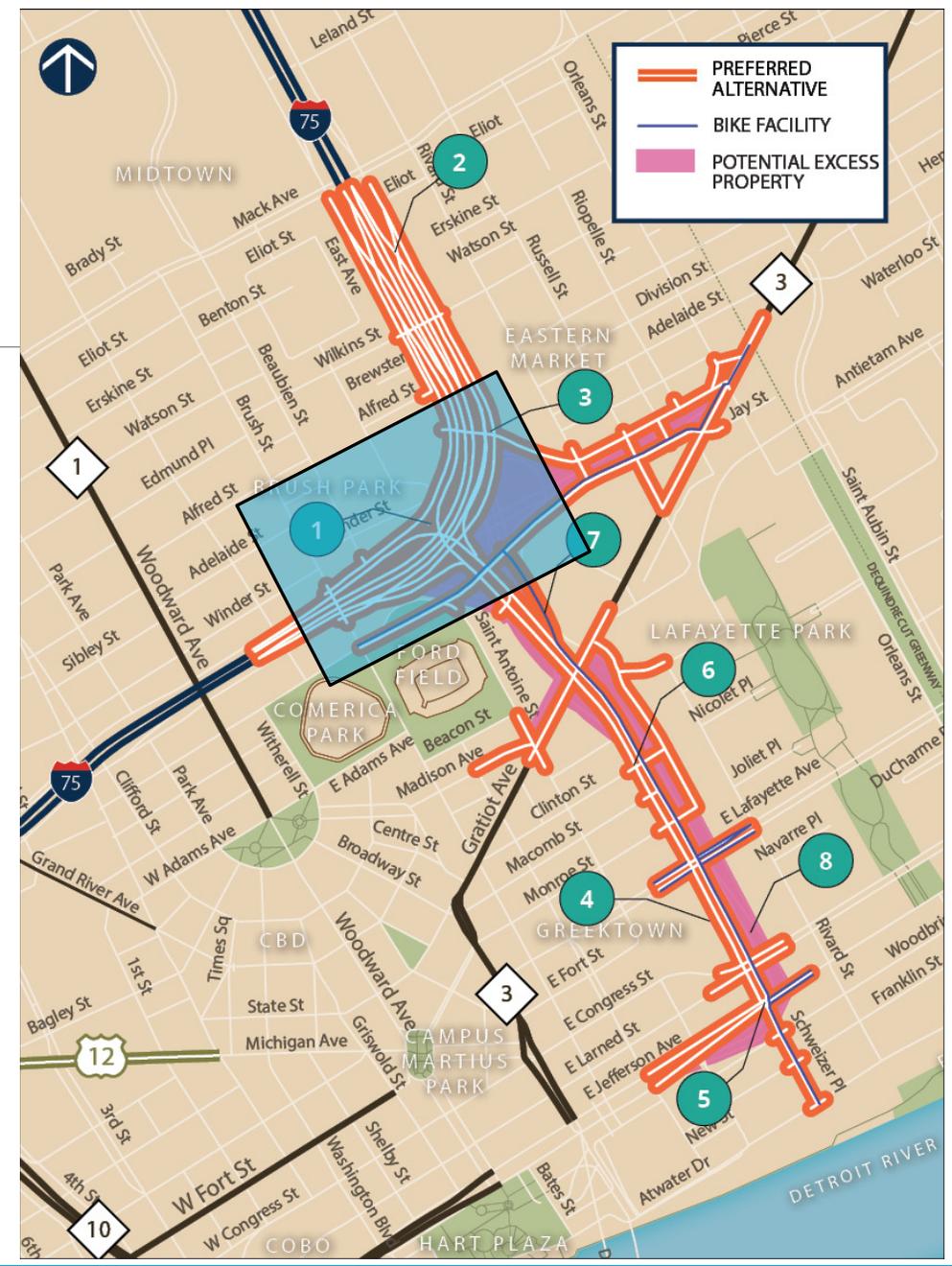


# 1 I-75 / I-375 Interchange



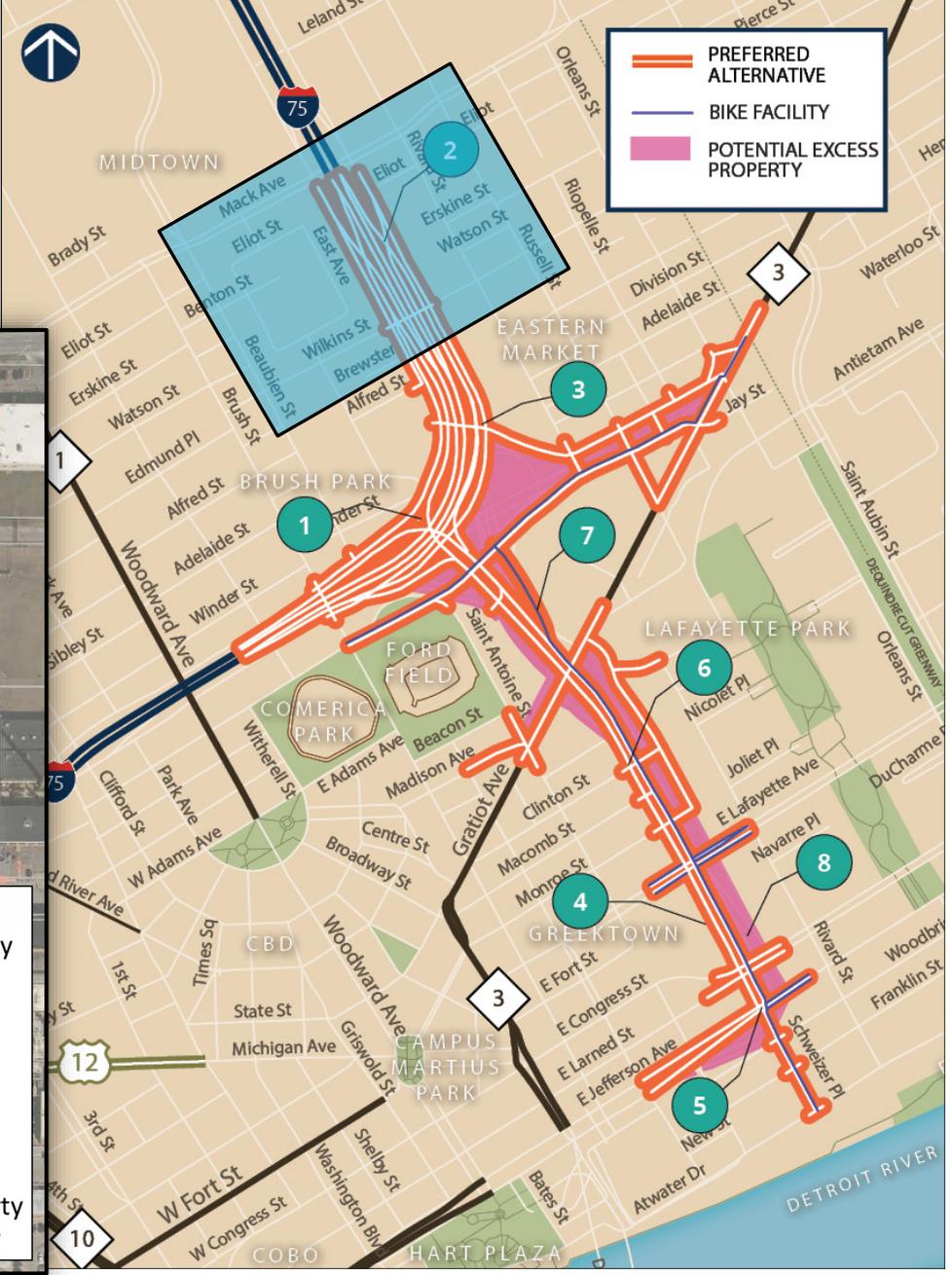
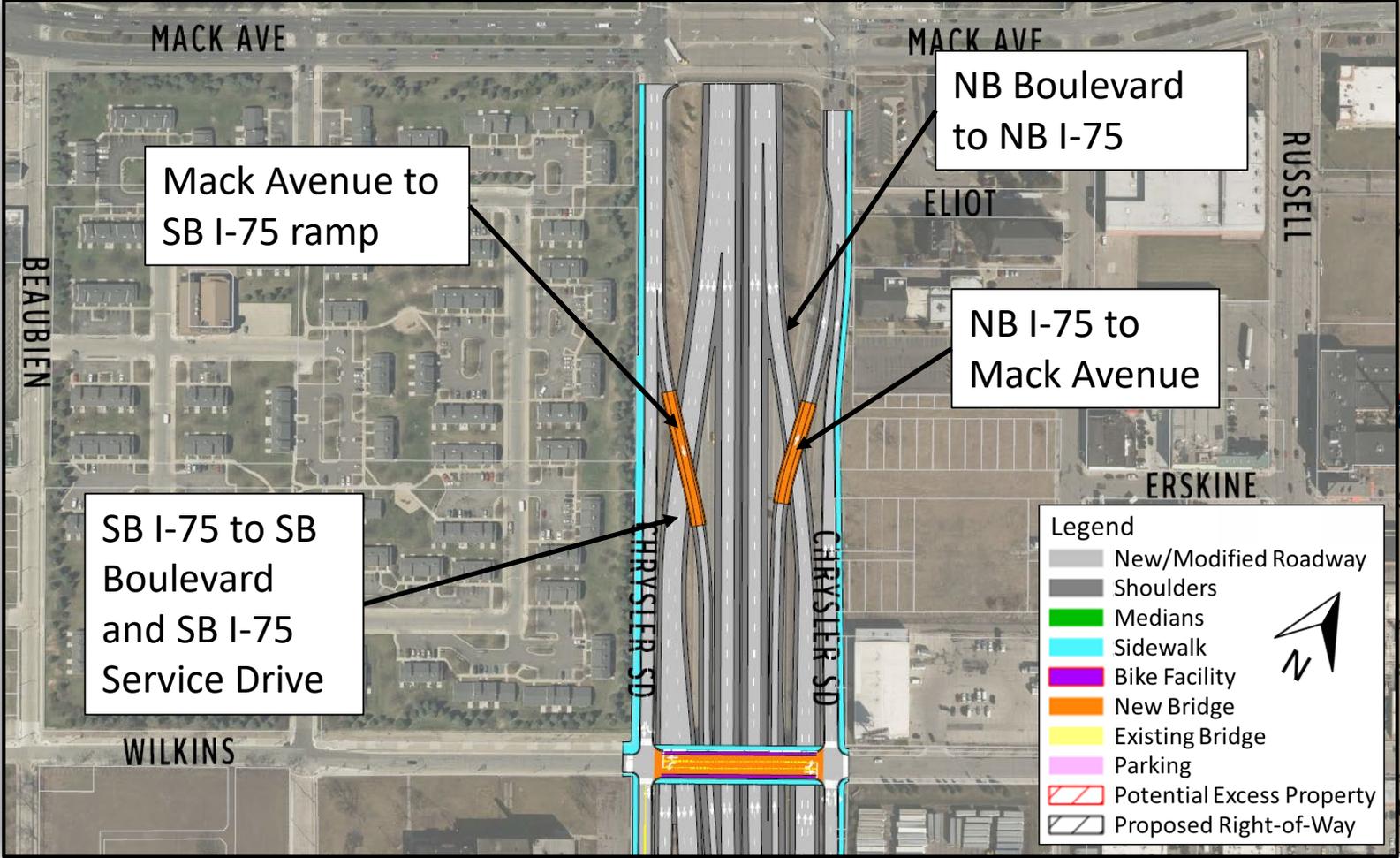
**Legend**

- New/Modified Roadway
- Shoulders
- Medians
- Sidewalk
- Bike Facility
- New Bridge
- Existing Bridge
- Parking
- Potential Excess Property
- Proposed Right-of-Way



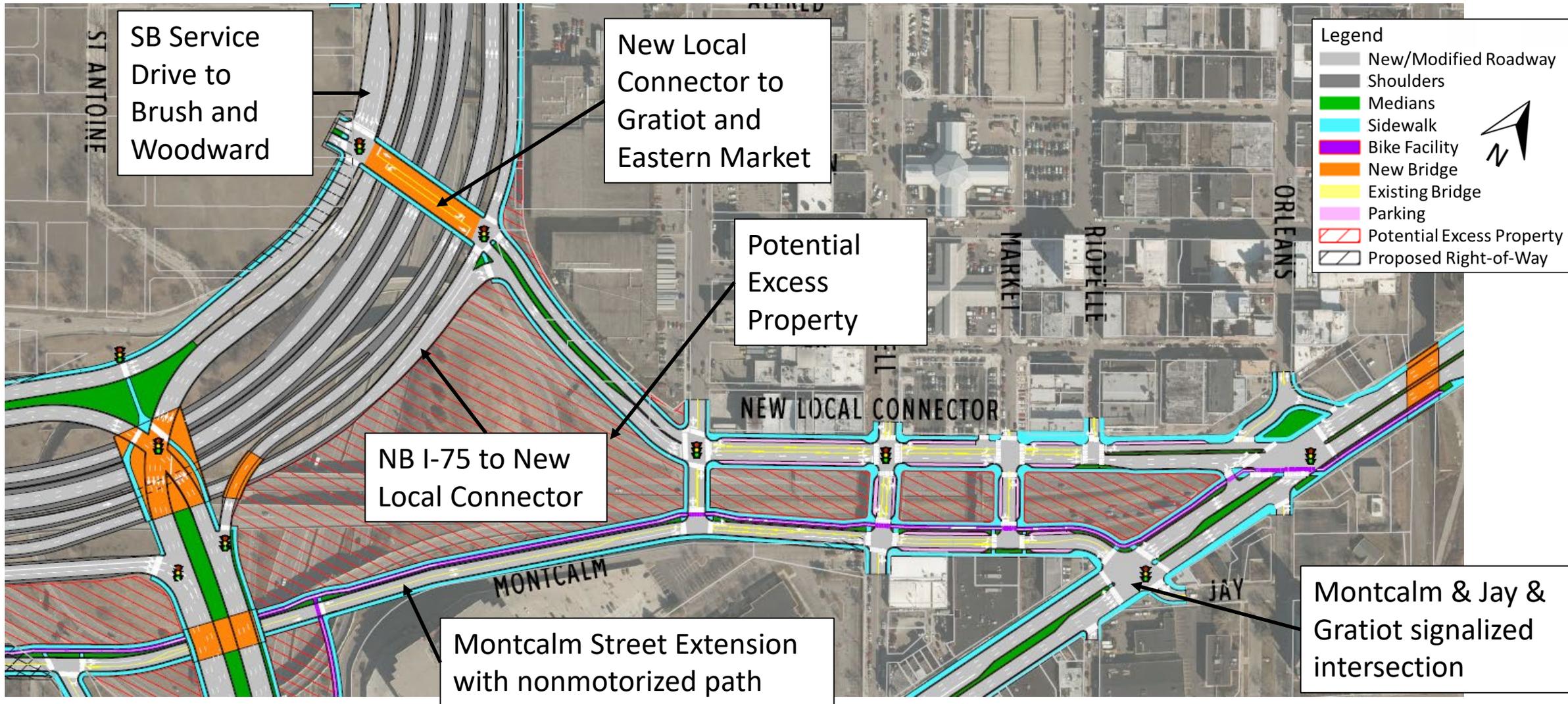
# 2

# Mack Avenue Braided Ramps



3

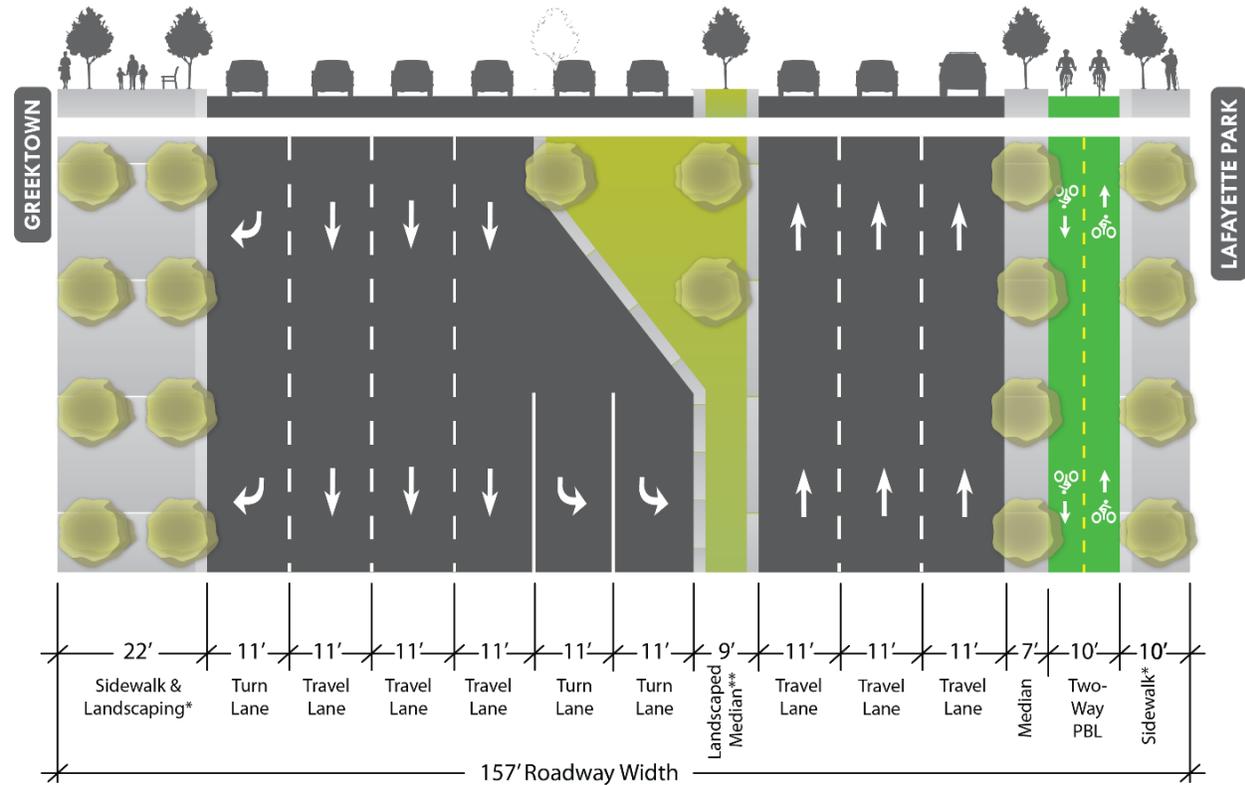
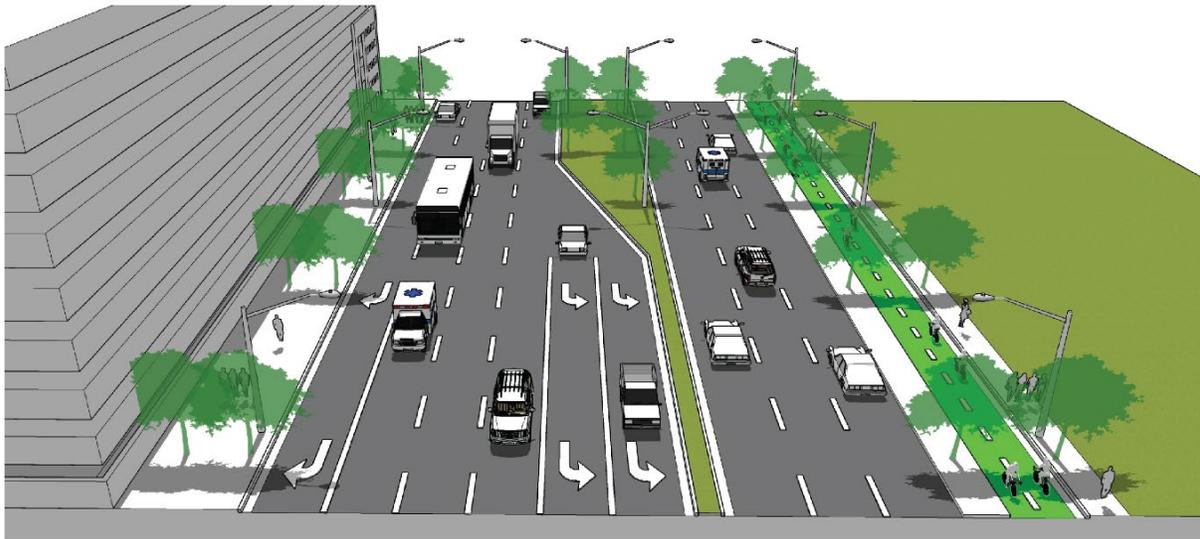
# Brush Park / Eastern Market Connectivity



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# Preferred Alternative with City Street-Level Boulevard at Lafayette Ave.

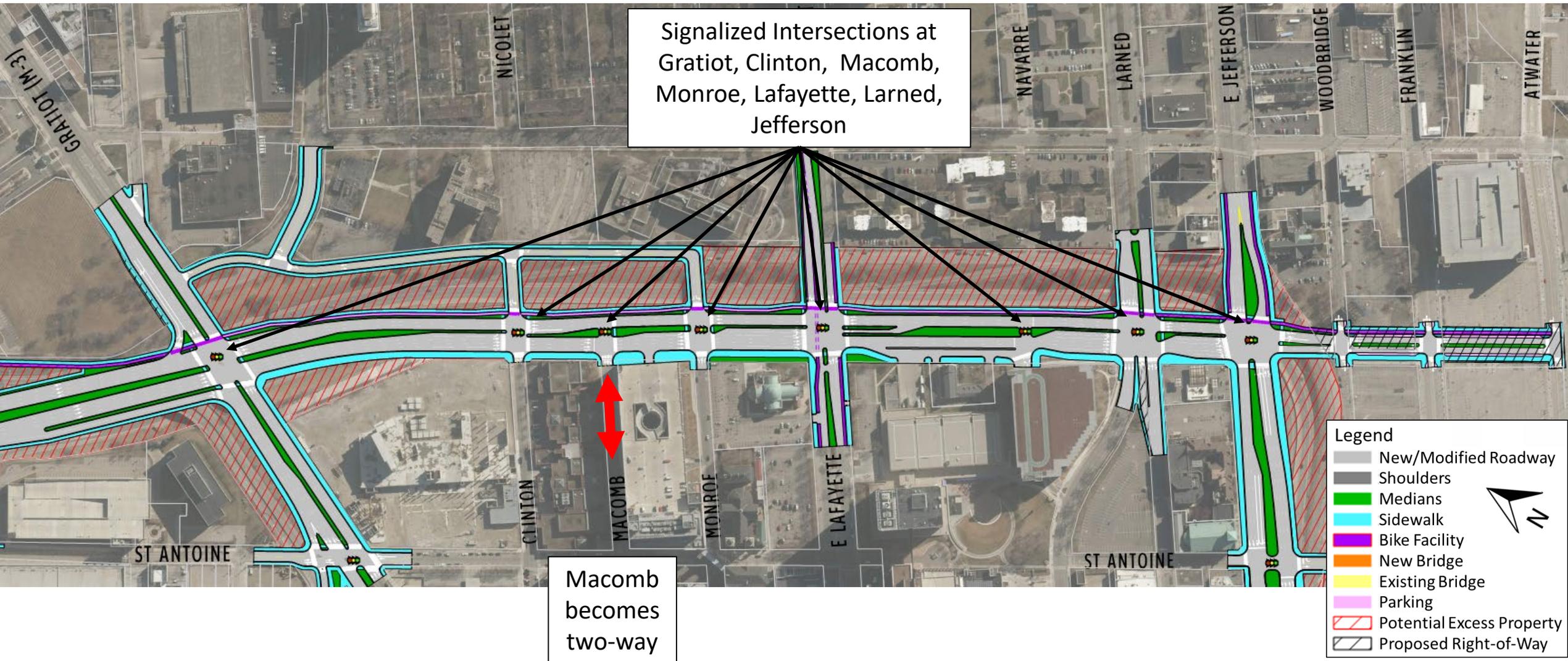
## Boulevard looking North



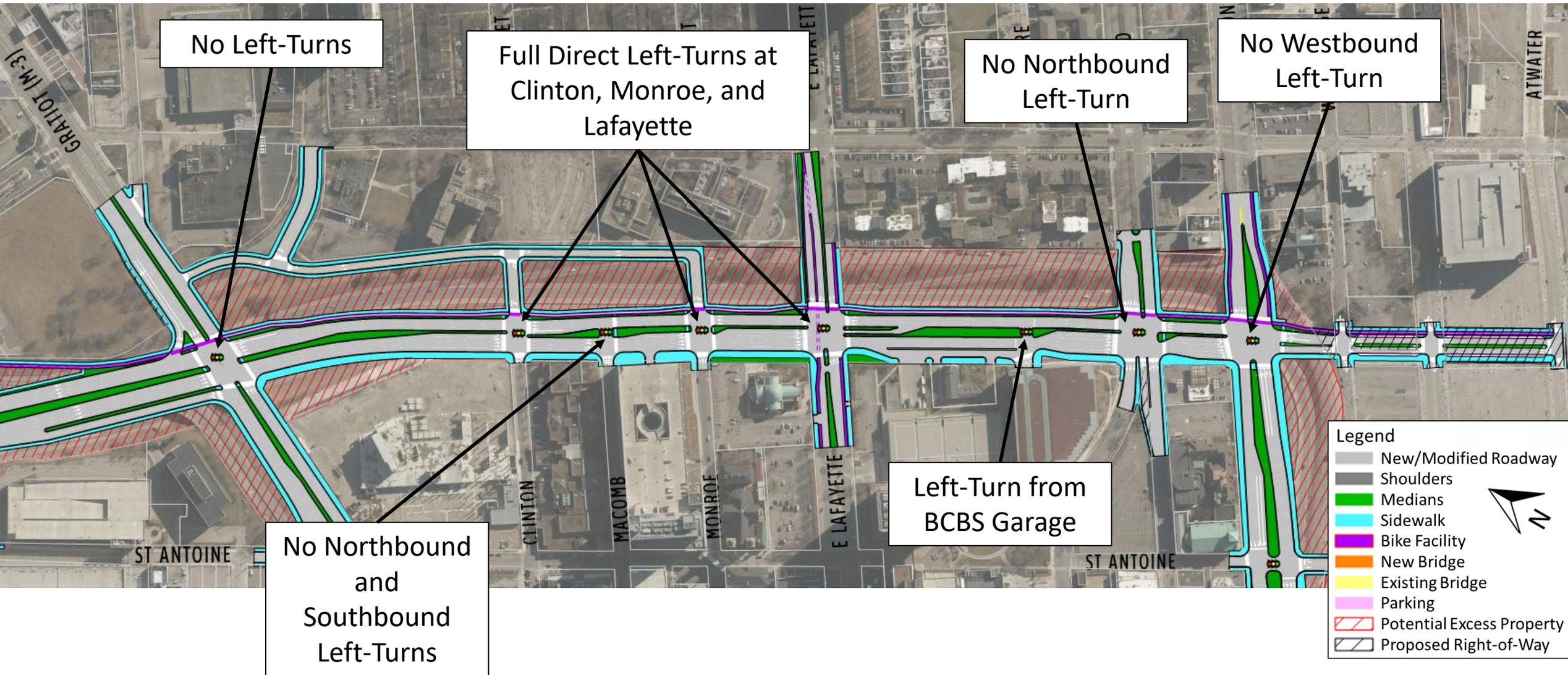
\* Includes 2' curb and gutter

\*\* Includes 2' curb and gutter on both sides

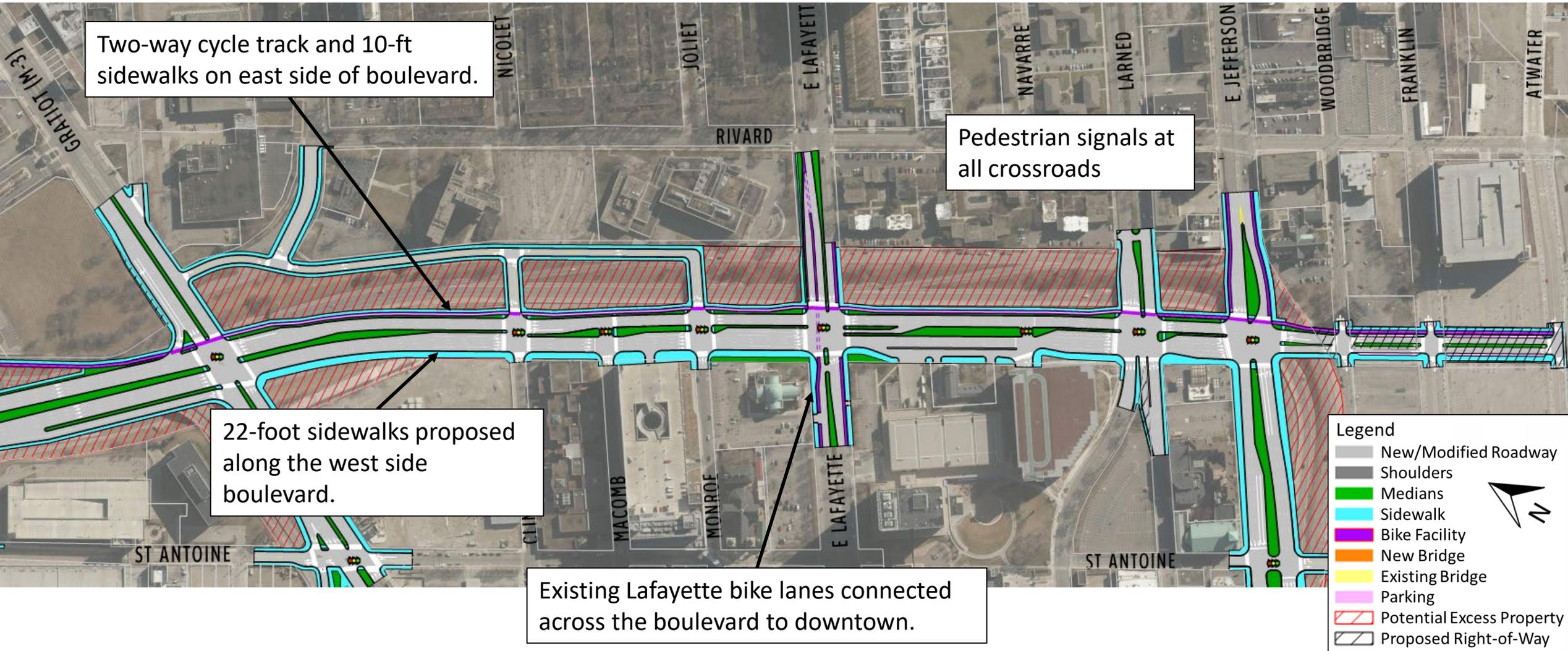
# Signalized Intersections along the Boulevard



# 6 Direct Left-Turns at Most Intersections



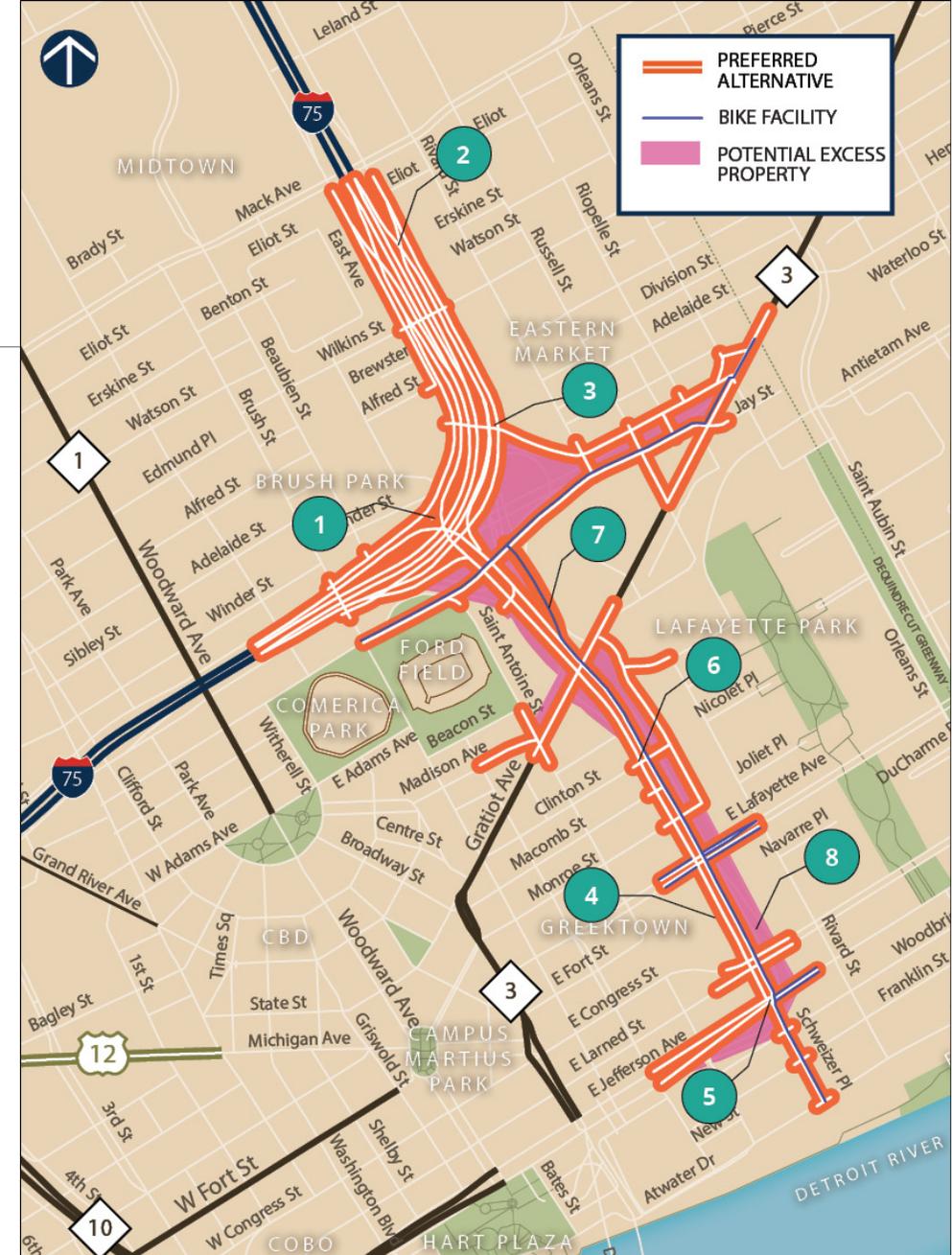
# 7 Improved Nonmotorized Facilities



## 8

# Potential Excess Property

- Approximately 31 acres of potential excess property could be available for future development
- Any land determined to be excess property will be handled in accordance with FHWA and MDOT standard practices.
- The excess property may be suitable for sale or other use



EXISTING



Google Earth  
2018 Aug 20 10:24 AM

EXISTING



PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE



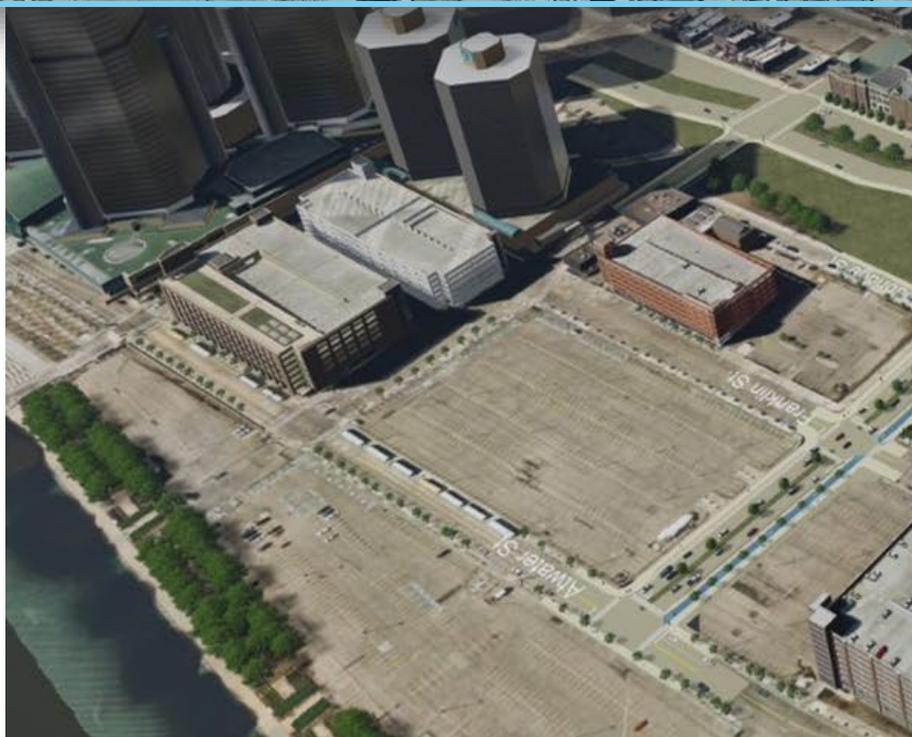
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**EXISTING**



**PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE**

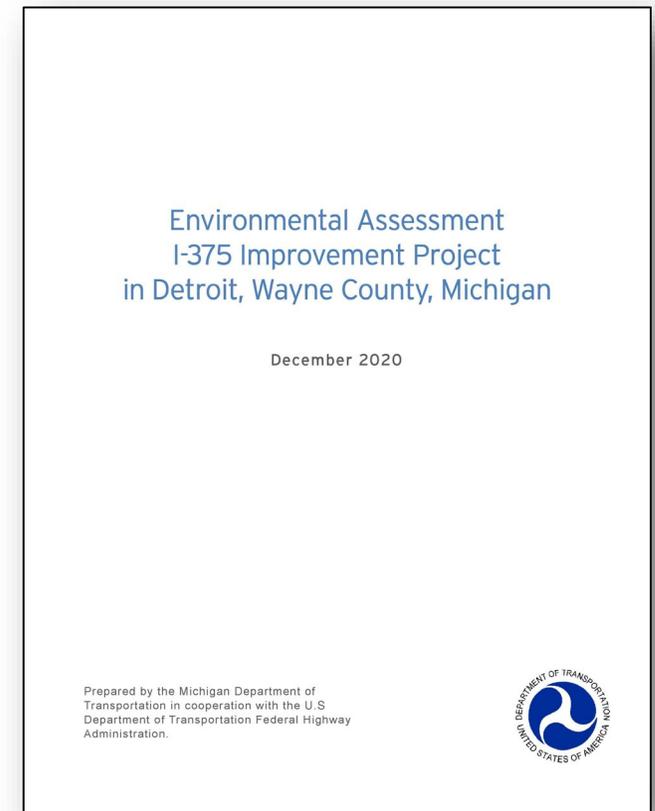


# Nonmotorized Views



# Environmental Assessment

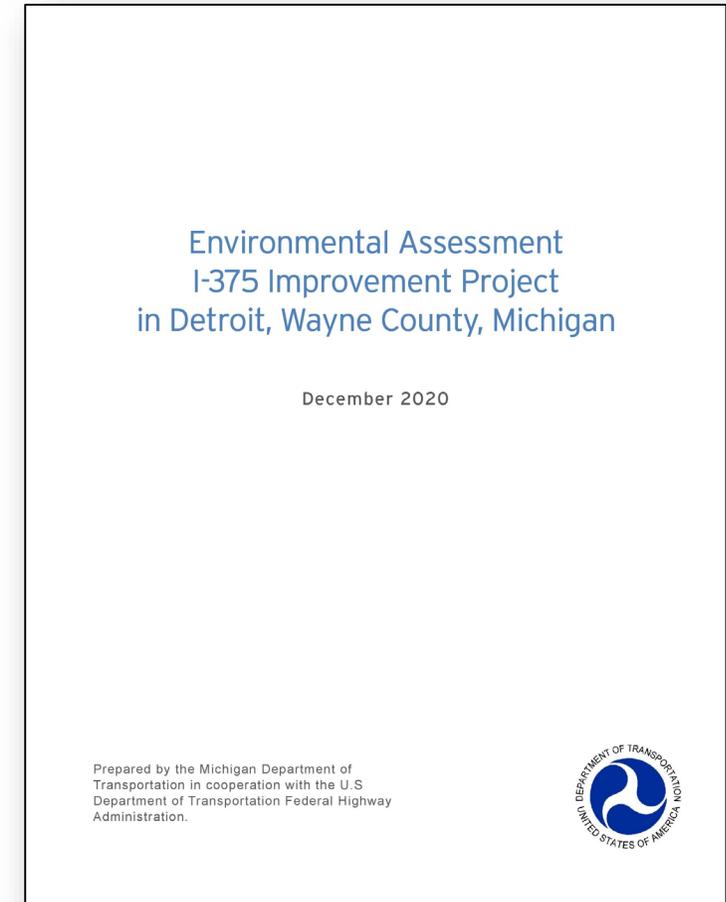
- Available at [www.Michigan.gov/I375Study](http://www.Michigan.gov/I375Study)
- Due to public health guidelines, public copies are not accessible. Electronic or paper copies can be made available by contacting Monica Monsma at (517) 335-4381 or [MonsmaM@Michigan.gov](mailto:MonsmaM@Michigan.gov)





# Environmental Assessment

- Examined impacts to cultural, natural, social and economic resources
- Published in January 2021
- Public Hearing on January 28, 2021 at the Former UAW-GM Center for Human Resources at 200 Walker Street in Detroit from 4-8 PM
- Comments can be received until February 19, 2021



# Summary of Environmental Effects

Study Parameter	Effect	Mitigation
Public Transportation	Providing infrastructure to support expanded transit service, improved bus stop placement, and improve east-west connectivity.	Temporary or permanent bus stop location and route detours will be coordinated with DDOT/SMART.
Vehicular	Addition of more intersections. Benefit from reduced speeds at the boulevard and eliminating the Jefferson Avenue Curve.	Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be utilized to reduce speeds, such as traffic calming measures.
Non-Motorized	Addition of marked pedestrian crossings, two-way cycle track and new connections to the riverfront and east-west. Increased number of conflict points with vehicles	BMPs for non-motorized design will be utilized to improve vehicular and pedestrian safety, such as countdown signals, refuges islands, and protected left-turns.
Parking	449 spaces removed	None
Environmental Justice and Title VI	Not disproportionately high or adverse	None

# Summary of Environmental Effects

Study Parameter	Effect	Mitigation
Right-of-Way	3.2 acres of Fee Simple Acquisition 0.9 acres of Temporary Easement	The purchase of property will be conducted in accordance with state and federal laws. All temporary grading easement areas will be returned to existing condition or better.
Historic Resources	No adverse effect	MDOT will maintain access to historic properties and conduct monitoring where necessary during construction.
Air Quality	None	None
Noise	27 Impacted Noise Receptors	There is no feasible way to build a noise wall that provides enough benefit for the receptors.
Contaminated Properties	Potentially 12	MDOT will complete additional site investigation for sites within the Project footprint during final design.



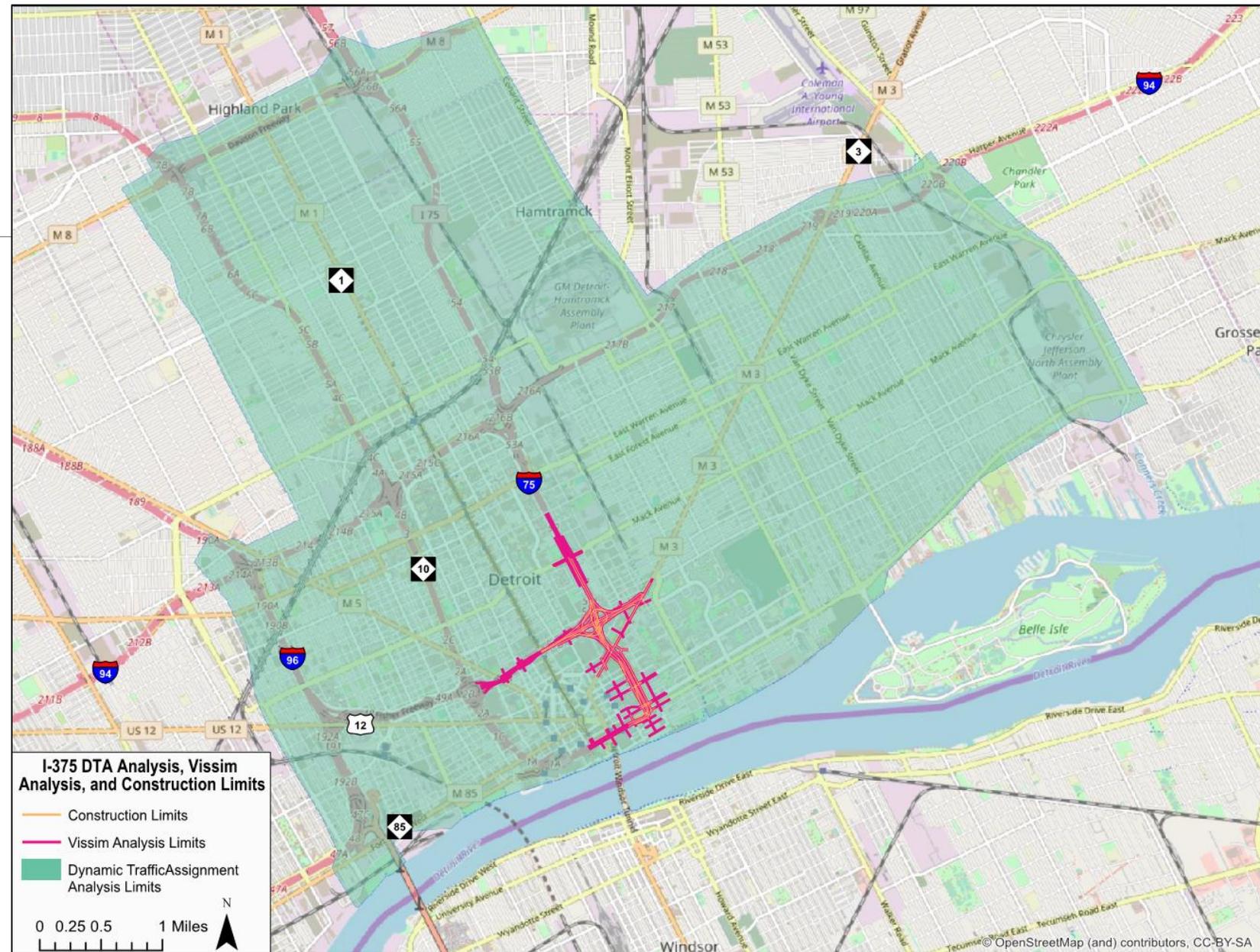
# Summary of Environmental Effects

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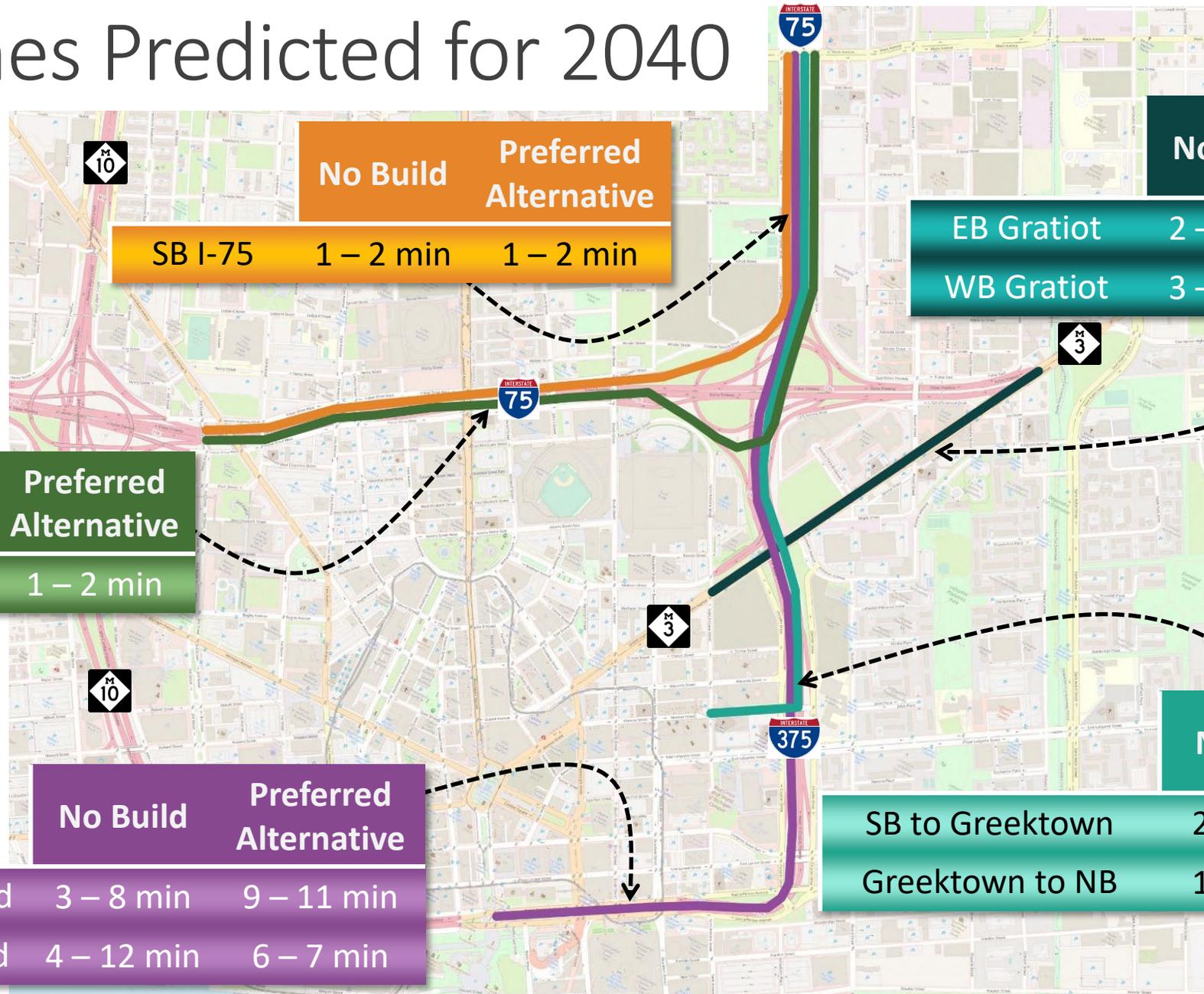
Study Parameter	Effect	Mitigation
Section 4(f)	Temporary impacts to Dequindre Cut Greenway and Riverwalk/Iron Belle Trail. Temporary impacts to Holy Family and Mrs. Solomon Sibley House.	Access will be maintained during construction and when construction has been completed, the properties will be returned to existing condition or better.
Natural Resources	None	The existing natural and ornamental vegetative cover, including trees, will be preserved and replaced where possible.
Water Resources	Design in impervious surfaces to 80.8 acres, 9% less than existing	Project will protect water quality and will minimize overall impact on aquatic resources.
Short-term Construction	Temporary impacts to traffic, soil erosion, sedimentation control, construction air quality/noise/vibration.	MDOT will follow MDOT Standard Specifications for Construction for mitigation.

# Detailed Traffic Analysis

- Detailed Microsimulation Model of the Corridor using 2040 Traffic Volumes (in pink)
- Dynamic Traffic Assignment Model developed for a larger study area (in green)
- ~12% increase in traffic to the year 2040
- 20% to 40% diversion from the I-375 corridor to other routes within downtown Detroit



# Travel Times Predicted for 2040



	No Build	Preferred Alternative
SB I-75	1 – 2 min	1 – 2 min

	No Build	Preferred Alternative
EB Gratiot	2 – 3 min	2 – 3 min
WB Gratiot	3 – 4 min	3 – 4 min

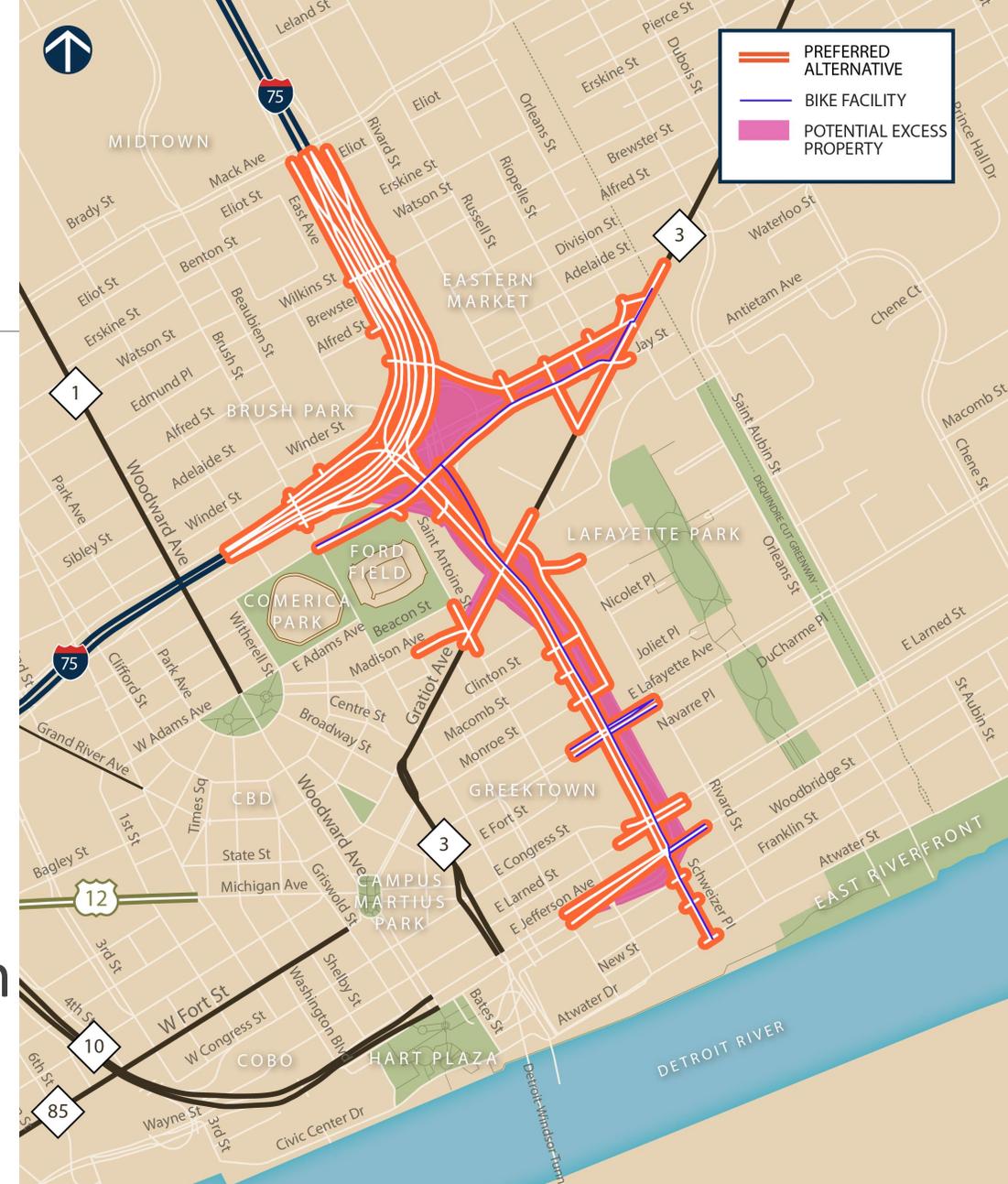
	No Build	Preferred Alternative
NB I-75	7 – 8 min	1 – 2 min

	No Build	Preferred Alternative
NB Boulevard	3 – 8 min	9 – 11 min
SB Boulevard	4 – 12 min	6 – 7 min

	No Build	Preferred Alternative
SB to Greektown	2 – 4 min	3 – 4 min
Greektown to NB	1 – 2 min	3 – 4 min

# How do I get from here to there?

- Updated I-75 / I-375 interchange design allows more access to Eastern Market and Brush Park
- Montcalm Street Extension allows more connectivity from Events Area and Eastern Market
- Boulevard provides better access between north and south and between east and west





# How to submit a Comment

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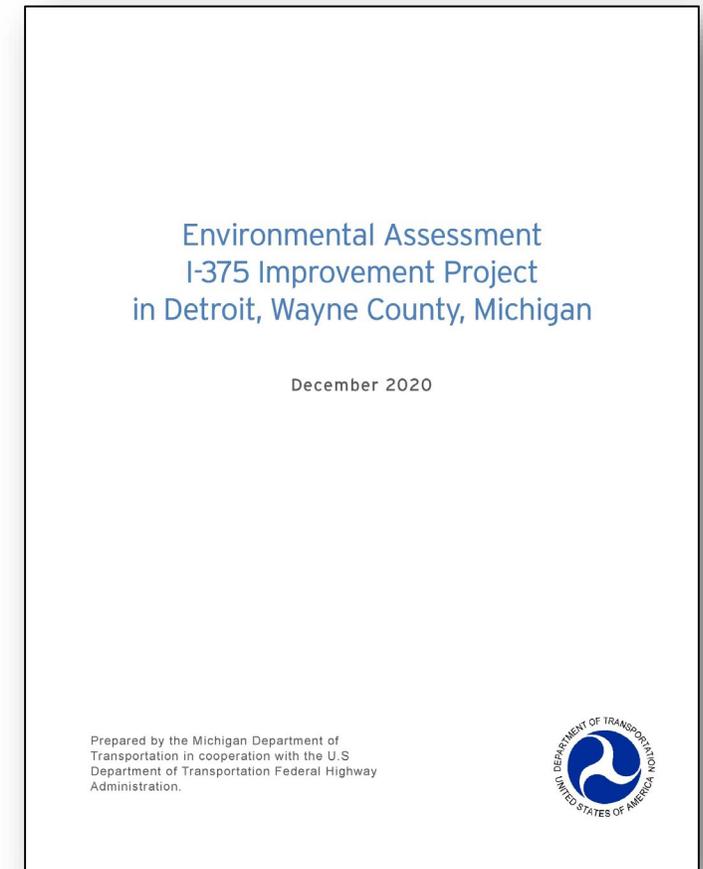
## Email:

[MDOT-I-375Corridor@Michigan.gov](mailto:MDOT-I-375Corridor@Michigan.gov)

## U.S. mail:

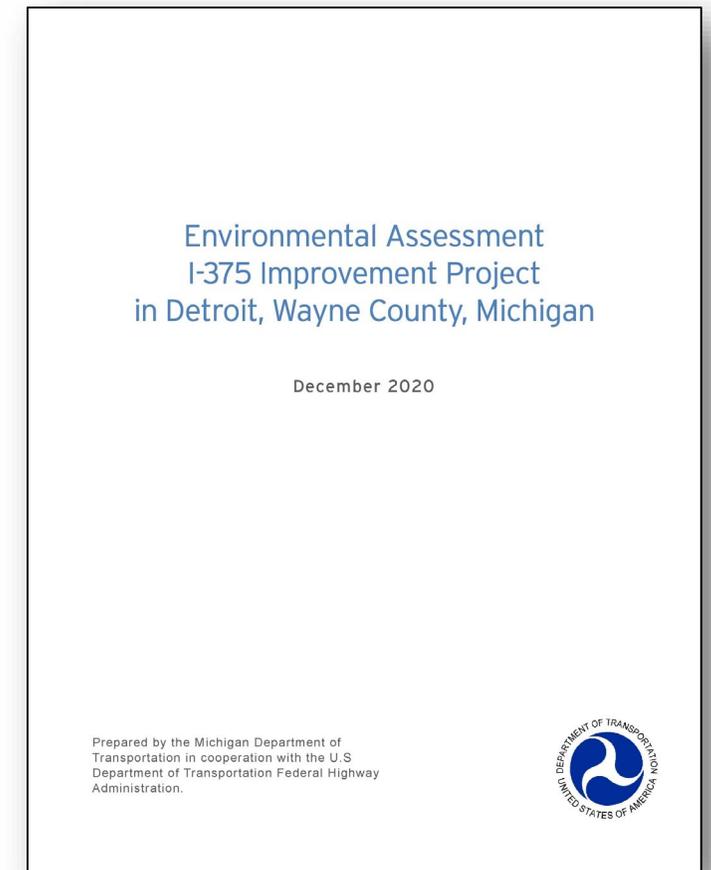
Michigan Department of Transportation  
Attn: Monica Monsma  
P.O. Box 30050  
Lansing, MI 48909

Comments must be received by February 19, 2021



# Next Steps in Environmental Process

- Public Comment Period will end on February 19, 2021
- FHWA and MDOT will review and evaluate public comments received during the months of March and April 2021
- If no significant impacts are identified, FHWA will issue a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) which includes response to comments and a revised (errata) EA as appropriate
- It is expected the Environmental Process will be completed by the end of May 2021
- If FHWA identifies significant impacts, a FONSI will not be issued and an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be conducted on the corridor



# Tentative Project Timeline



## DE-DESIGNATION PROCESS

The project requires the permanent de-designation of I-375, which is the removal of this section of highway from the Interstate System of Highways. Additionally, it would designate the boulevard as a non-freeway National Highway System route.



## FINAL DESIGN PHASE

MDOT will develop a traffic plan to maintain temporary access for residents and businesses during the construction period. The event area will undergo a separate analysis that will result in permanent changes to the design. The final design of the corridor will be completed and local stakeholders will be engaged during this phase of the project for additional feedback before work begins.



## CONSTRUCTION

Currently, the project is planned to start in spring 2027. MDOT will continue to evaluate opportunities to perform the project earlier. The project team will work closely with stakeholders throughout design and construction.



# Thank you!

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[WWW.MICHIGAN.GOV/I375STUDY](http://WWW.MICHIGAN.GOV/I375STUDY)