

# **Technical Memo 14: Optimized Scenario Pedestrian and Bicycle Improvements**

## ***Highway 169 Mobility Study***

*Report Version 1.0*

**Prepared for: Minnesota Department of Transportation**

Prepared by:



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# Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements

Although some stations along the route are park-and-rides, accessibility of stations by foot and bike will make ridership much more reliable. There are several pedestrian and bicycle projects that municipalities can complete to prepare for BRT successful service. For more information on local policy of communities where stations are located, please refer to [Technical Memo 7 – Environmental Scan](#).

## Marschall Road

Marschall Road Transit Station is surrounded by multipurpose use trails; a trail is on the east, northbound side of Marschall Road opposite the Transit Station, and on the north side of 17<sup>th</sup> Ave E westbound. Although there is a sidewalk connecting the trail on 17<sup>th</sup> Ave E to the transit station, there is not similar bicycle facility. Riders approaching the station from north of Highway 169 do not have a connection to the transit station from the marked pedestrian crossing at Marschall Road and the northbound Highway 169 entrance ramps. Currently, pedestrians must walk over sloped turf grass to reach the parking lot of the Transit Station.

Connecting the pedestrian pad at the northeast corner of the property to the transit station would complete the immediate network between trails and transit stations for pedestrians.



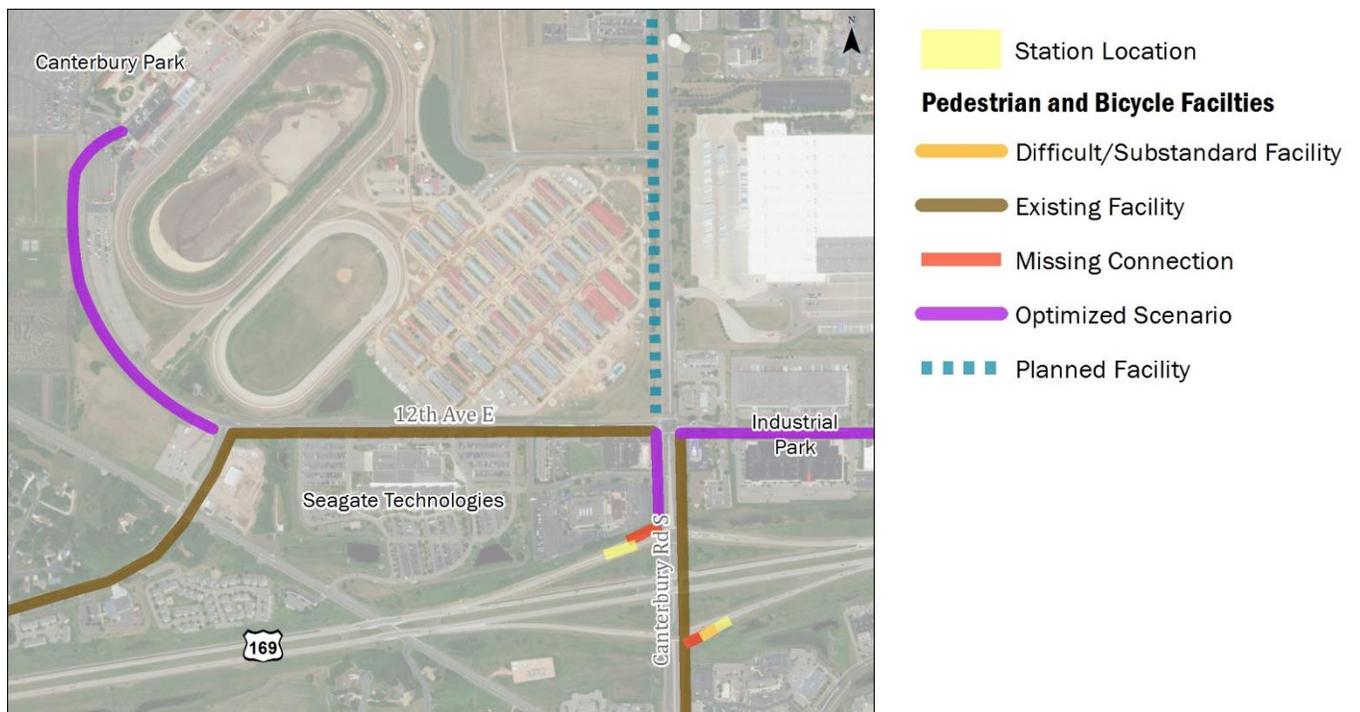
- Station Location
- Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities**
- Difficult/Substandard Facility
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## Canterbury Road

Stations locations at Canterbury road are not designated as near or far-side but are shown far-side in the figure below. There is no connection from a bus stop to Canterbury along the exit ramps. A new facility on the west side of Canterbury north of Highway 169 would connect southbound riders to Seagate and the facility on 12<sup>th</sup> Ave E.

The off-street path along 12<sup>th</sup> Ave E near Seagate Technology connects to the existing system of paths across Shakopee. There is no path for people walking or biking to destinations east of Canterbury Road S on 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue into the light industrial park which includes many major employers including the Amazon Sort Facility. There is also no path connecting Seagate station to Canterbury Park, a major employer. Beyond creating a pedestrian facility, Canterbury Park or other nearby major employers may run a shuttle service to help employees reach their destination.

Creating last mile connections to employers from this station will greatly aid commuters.





## Viking Drive

The southbound station is on the west travel lane of W 78th Street before it enters the traffic circle, and the northbound station is on the eastbound travel lane also just east of the traffic circle with Viking Drive and Washington Avenue S. There are multipurpose trails and crossings around three sides of the traffic circle. There is a proposed crossing in the design across W 78th Street between the stations. The trail continues west on Viking Drive to connecting to the trail network in the Golden Triangle.



Pedestrian access reaches west on Viking Drive, east underneath Highway 169, and north on the west side of Washington avenue. The trail ends not far north of the traffic circle, creating a gap in coverage to all the buildings between Washington and Highway 169 north of an electrical substation. Either striped crossings or extending the trail north to West 76th Street on both sides would solve the issue, though offering connections to employment centers on the east side of the street with a path would be the optimal scenario. Because the only facilities are multi use trails, cyclists would encounter the same issues as pedestrians in this area.

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## Bren Road

Nine Mile Creek Trail, completed in Edina in November 2017 after years of effort in planning and implementation, crosses 169 at Bren Road. Nine Mile Creek Trail now connects to the rest of the trail network in Edina and points further east. The trail continues into Minnetonka and connects to the trail network in Opus Campus. In the draft Edina Bicycle Master Plan, there is a planned multipurpose use trail on the east, northbound side of Lincoln Drive.

The far-side southbound station in Minnetonka is being considered, although it would necessitate right-of-way acquisition. Access to United Health Group, a major employer, is complicated by a long crossing with a median refuge at the Bren Road split south of the intersection with Smetana Drive. There is no sidewalk network within United Health Group. Should the far-side station be chosen, a direct connection to United Health Group up the slope would provide greater access.



## Hopkins Road

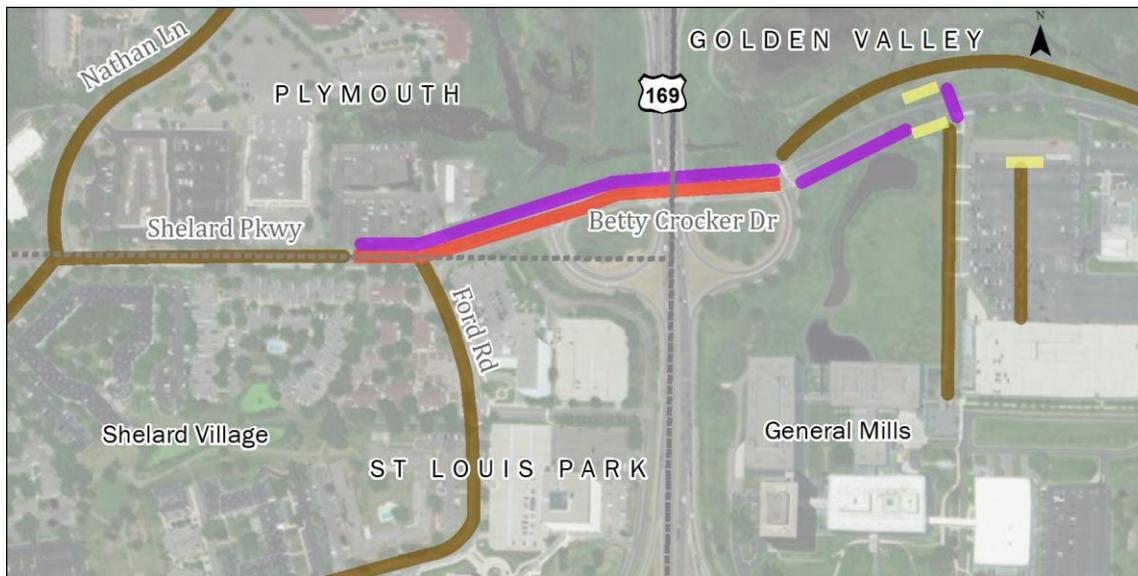
The Hopkins station will be at the Excelsior Boulevard & 8th Avenue Park and Ride, adjacent to downtown and a future Green Line station. There are quality sidewalks in downtown Hopkins, but there is a long crossing over Excelsior Boulevard to get there. Hopkins has spent a lot of resources improving the pedestrian connection into downtown from the future Green Line Extension station. Behind the Park and Ride, the Minnesota River Bluffs Trail connects to the Cedar Lake trail and provides both pedestrians and cyclists access to other parts of Hopkins and to other cities both east and west. This is a challenging intersection, but the pedestrian and bicycle environment is supportive despite Excelsior Boulevard, a busy and wide roadway.

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## General Mills

There are two possible stations for General Mills, one on Betty Crocker Drive and the other nearby in the parking lot. General Mills notably has very good pedestrian paths from the parking lot (and both stations) to the campus, and could be used as an example for other major employers along the corridor.

There is a trail north of Betty Crocker drive that connects to the greater St Louis Park and Golden Valley bike networks, but that does not directly connect across Highway 169 on Betty Crocker Drive to Shelard Parkway, an area with many homes and dense population. Creating a connection over Betty Crocker with the update of the bridge is a great first step to connecting the station to more riders. Careful collaboration between the three effected municipalities will allow them to expand their connected trail networks by closing this gap.



## Winnetka Avenue

A Winnetka Avenue northbound station is on the westbound side of the intersection of Winnetka and Highway 55 underneath a pedestrian bridge. The southbound station is directly across the highway from the northbound station, also underneath the pedestrian bridge.

Pedestrian access from the north to the southbound station has been improved with the removal of tessellating brick sidewalk on the southbound side of Winnetka right next to the curb, which was replaced with concrete slab in the fall of 2017. The Luce Line Trail is less than half a mile north up Winnetka. From the south to the northbound station, there is a dedicated off-street trail that allows

for access to the pedestrian bridge. Although the pedestrian crossings at Winnetka and Highway 55 look intimidating, there are many opportunities to avoid them altogether.

Bicyclist access is hampered by a lack of any bike facilities north of Highway 55 between the Luce Line Trail and the southbound station. There is a dedicated off-street trail for bikes and pedestrians south of the intersection that connects to the pedestrian bridge and the Golden Valley bicycle network, which also gathers anyone coming from the east of the stations at intersections further south.

### Douglas Drive

The station at Douglas Drive is directly before the intersection of Douglas Drive in the direction of travel. The current pedestrian and bicycle facilities are scant on both sides of the highway, except for the Luce Line Trail a few blocks north of the southbound station. An improved crossing for trail users to the station would need to be created, as none exists. The pedestrian crossings across the



highway are poor and dangerous; there would need to be significant improvements to make them safe and attractive.

Pedestrian Access on the south side of the highway is stymied by a lack of sidewalk on Olson Memorial Hwy Service Road east of Douglas, pictured left. There are no sidewalks or bicycle facilities on residential roads south of the highway and service road, but they look low-traffic enough to be supportive of at least biking.

In the optimized scenario, sidewalks would be added along nearby streets and crossings improved.



## Theodore Wirth Parkway

This station would be on the western-most edge of Theodore Wirth Park. Both pedestrians and bicyclists are connected to the Minneapolis and Golden Valley trail systems by the Luce Line and Grand Rounds trails nearby. Immediate connections to those trails and crossings are not perfect, but supportive of people walking and biking.



On the north side of Highway 55, the sidewalk is disrupted by a loading bay. If the sidewalk is extended or connected to the crossing at Meadow Lane N, this station could be a good connector to job centers located west of the park. In the optimized scenario, textured pavement, paint, or some combination of both will be used to close this small gap.

There are no meaningful bicycle connections southwest of the station, though to the north there is a connection to the Luce Line Trail to travel westward.



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## Penn Avenue

Both northbound and southbound stations are on Highway 55 east of Penn. The crossing from one side of Highway 55 to the other at Penn is notoriously dangerous, but likely due for an update with either the Blue Line LRT extension planned in the median at this location.

This location is connected to the Minneapolis sidewalk network, which despite age and areas of disrepair, spans nearly the entire city. Currently there is no bicycle facility on Penn, but there are bicycle facilities 2.5 blocks south on Glenwood and 4 blocks north on Plymouth that connect to the larger bicycle network.