



MEMO TO TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

Agenda Topic on the Transportation Commission Agenda

From: Miranda Carson, Coordination Planner **Meeting Date:** August 2, 2021
Presenter: Miranda Carson **Estimated Time:** 5 minutes
Topic: Staff Communications

Below are summaries of relevant correspondences received by City Staff since the last TC meeting.

Pathway Crossing Concerns Presentation

July 6th, Ryan Lancaster presented the attached presentation to the Meridian City Council.

City Council Letter to ACHD Commission Regarding Pathway Crossings

Following a presentation and discussion of pathway crossings on local streets at the July 6th City Council meeting the attached letter was sent to the ACHD Commission on July 12th.

Commissioners Goldthorpe and McKinney responded on July 12th.

Dear Mayor:

Yes, it sounds like another meeting is definitely in order, especially since it appears to me anyway that you have received some misinformation about the safety of these pathways and the recent history of our public process.

Regards,
Kent Goldthorpe

President Goldthorpe and Mayor Simison,

I agree that a joint meeting would be very helpful. Furthermore, I think it would be good to have representatives of the Meridian City Council and Transportation Commission, as well as ACHD design experts in attendance, so that we can consider all the relevant factors related to the proposed multi-use pathways.

Dave McKinney

At this time that meeting has not been set. Staff will keep the TC update on the progress of this item.

Transportation Commission: Sidepath Crossing Concerns

CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION

RYAN LANCASTER, P.E., PTOE, COMMISSIONER

JULY 6, 2021

Action Requested

- Provide City sidepath crossing preferences to ACHD Executives, Commission, or both



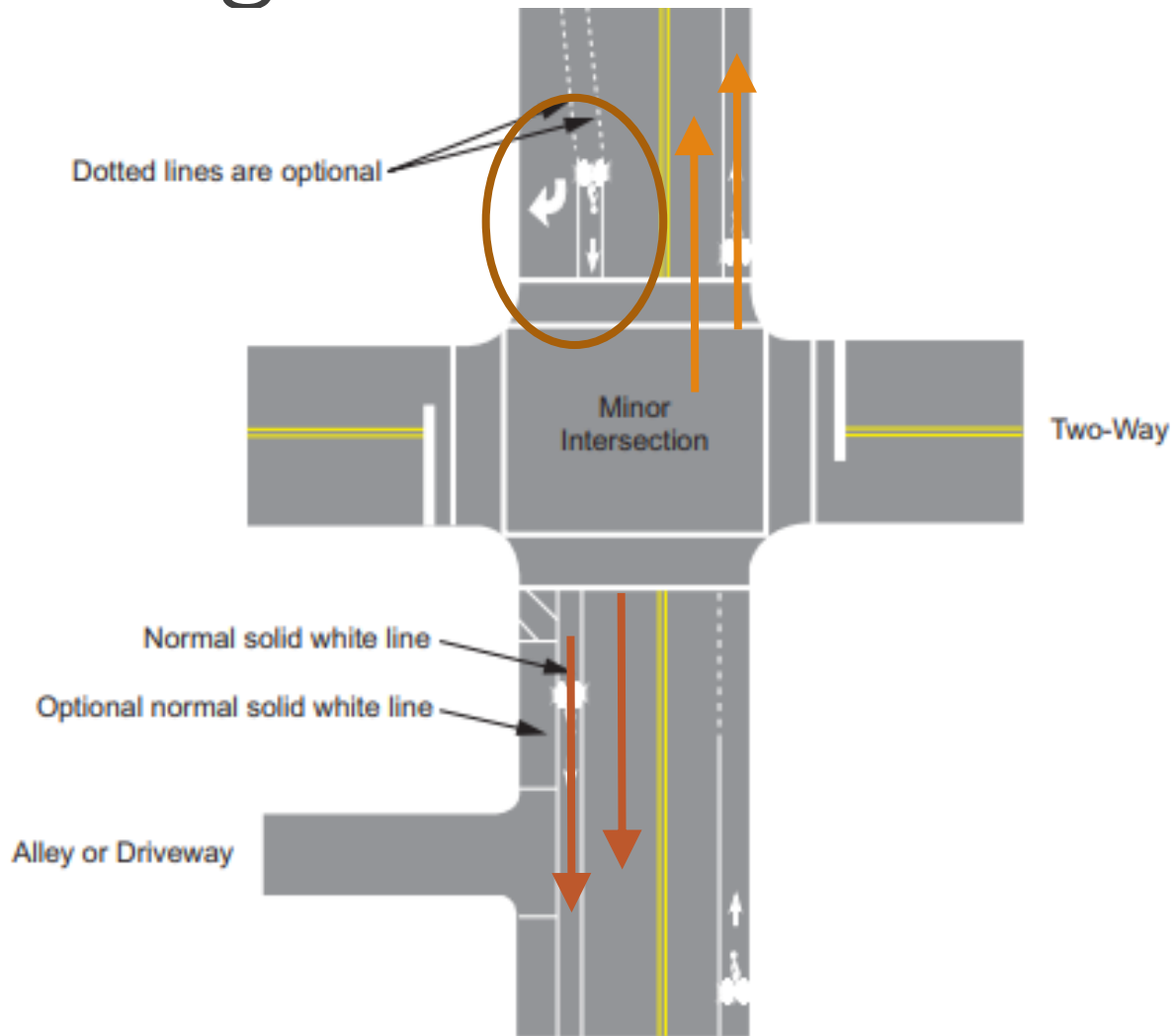
Background

March 3, 2020 letter

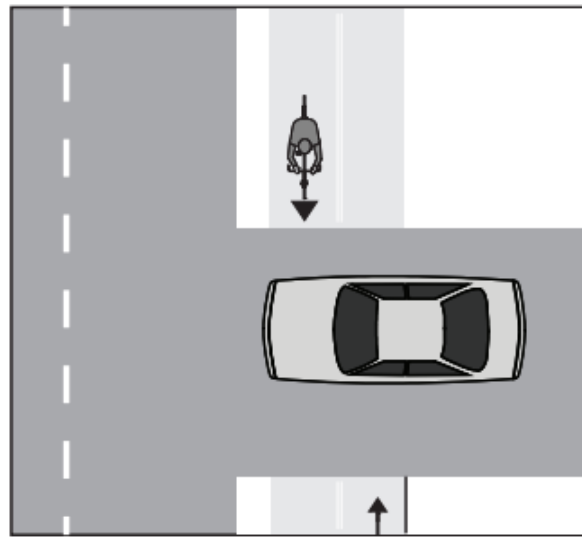
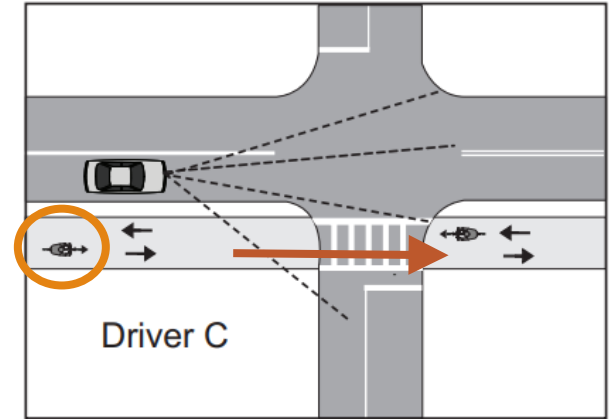
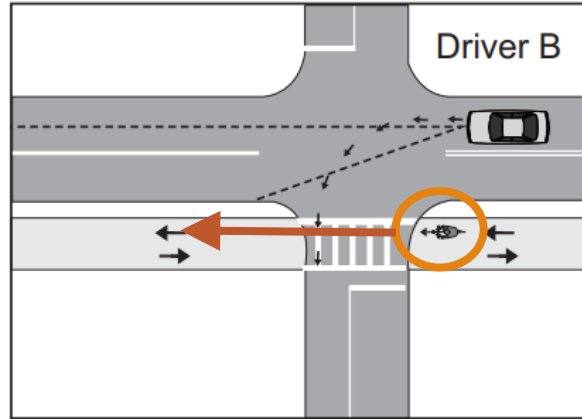
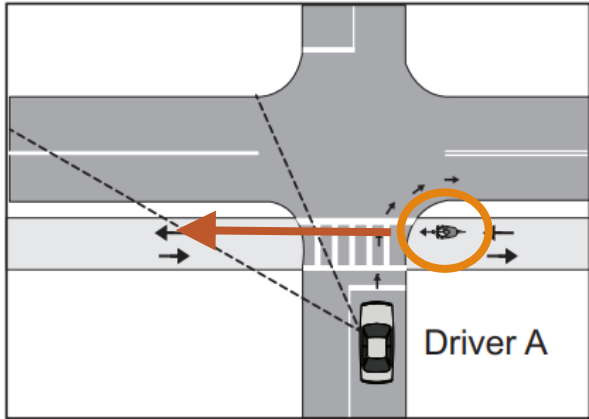
- “Meridian would like to... strongly convey the Meridian City Council’s preference for multi-use facilities...”
- “...multi-use sidewalks and facilities are preferred over bike lanes and narrower sidewalks. ...it is the Meridian City Council’s baseline preference for detached sidewalks...”



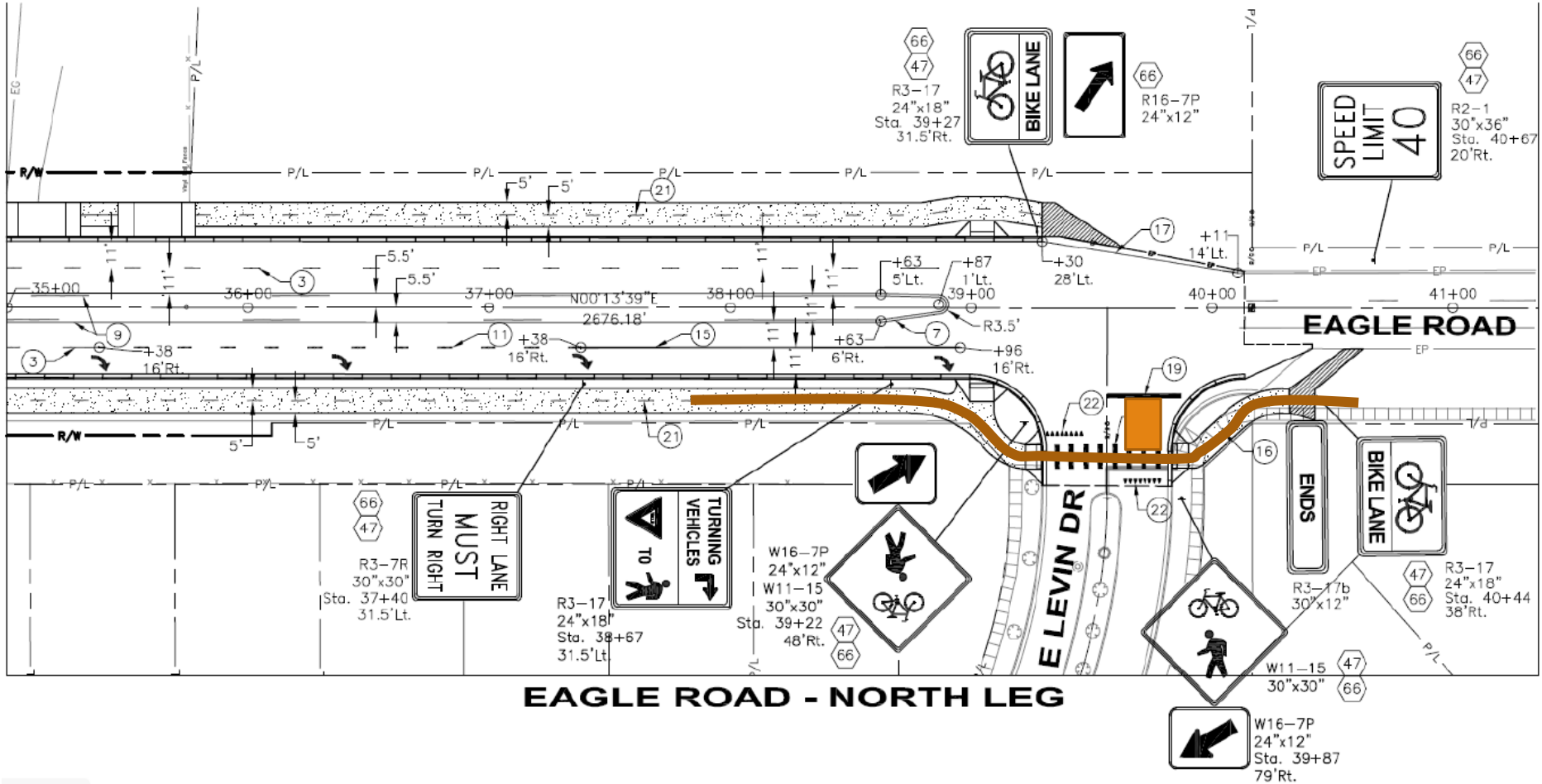
Challenges



Challenges



ACHD Solution



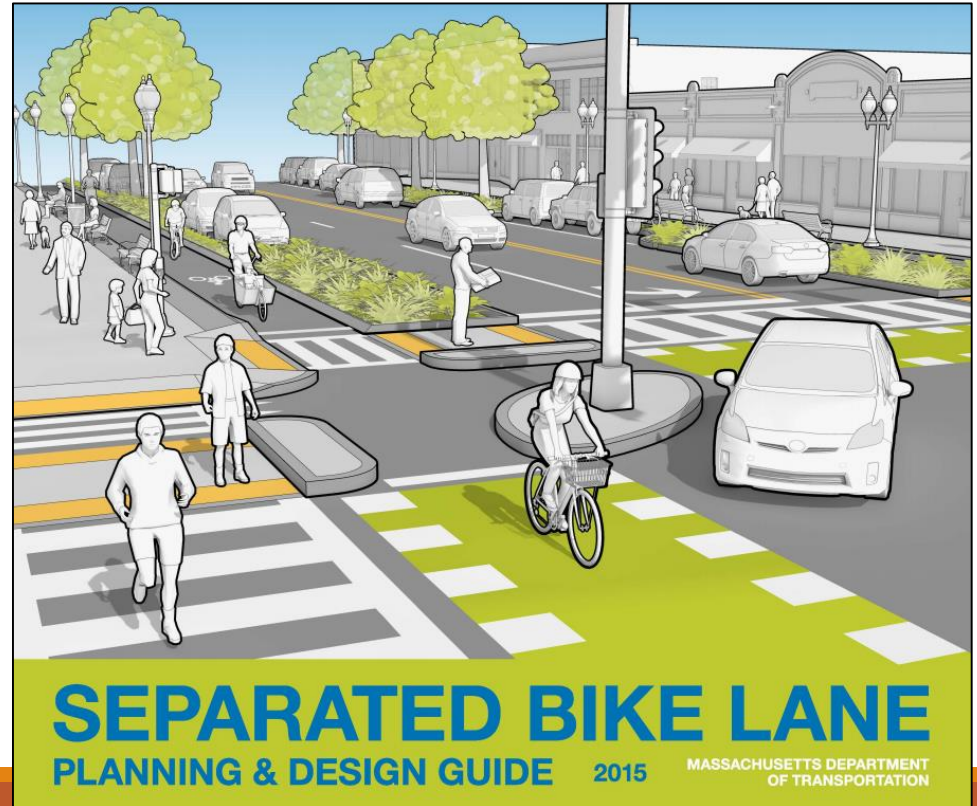
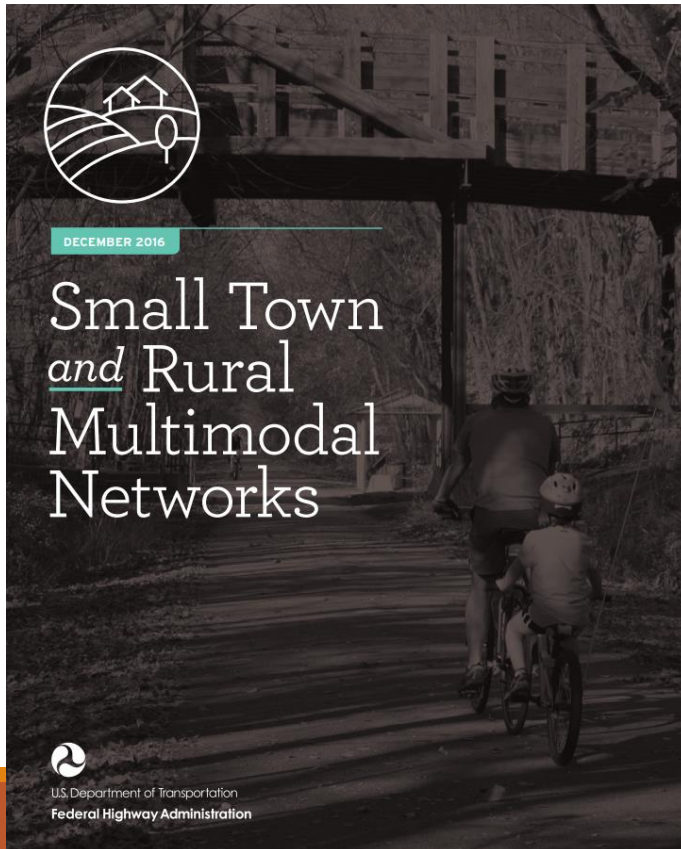
EAGLE ROAD - NORTH LEG

Meridian Concerns

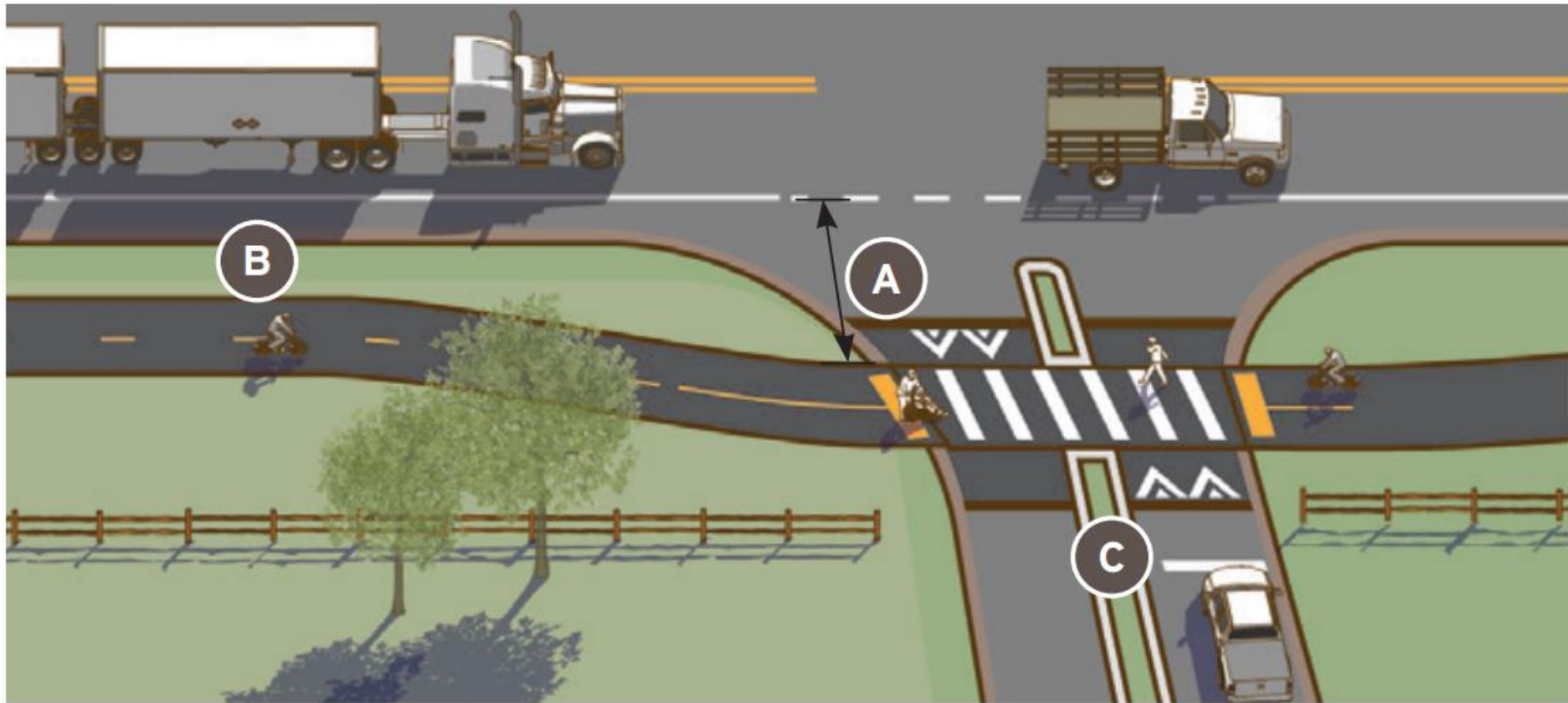
- “Meridian staff have expressed concerns with ACHD staff about new designs... and the visibility conflicts it creates.”
- “ACHD staff... are acting as they have been directed and any changes will have to come from the executive level.”

Design Origin

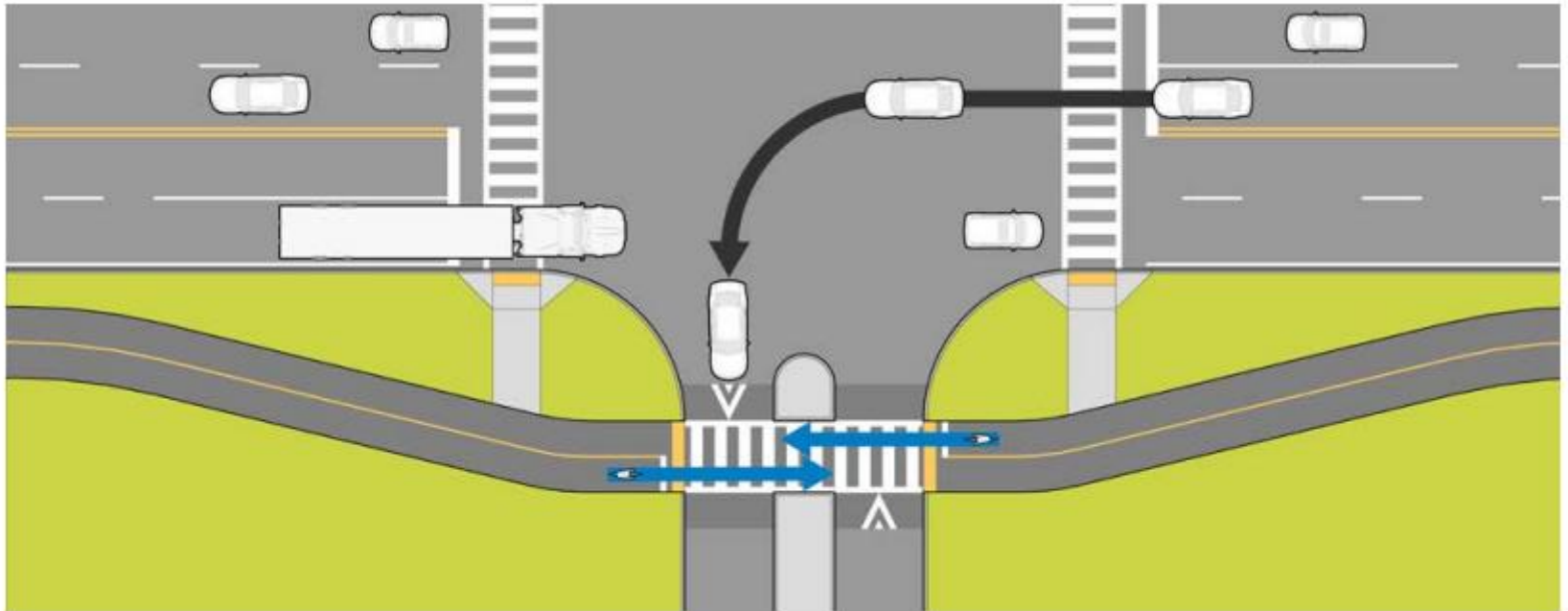
- FHWA *Small Town and Rural Multimodal Networks*
- Massachusetts DOT *Separated Bike Lane Planning & Design*



FHWA Small Town and Rural

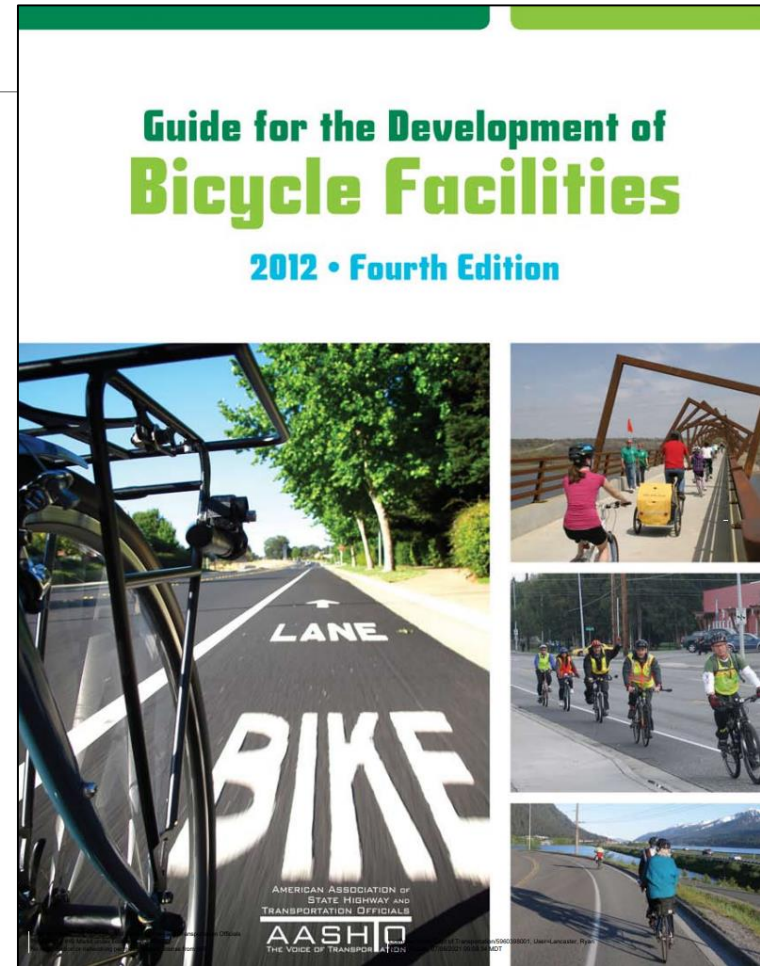


Massachusetts DOT



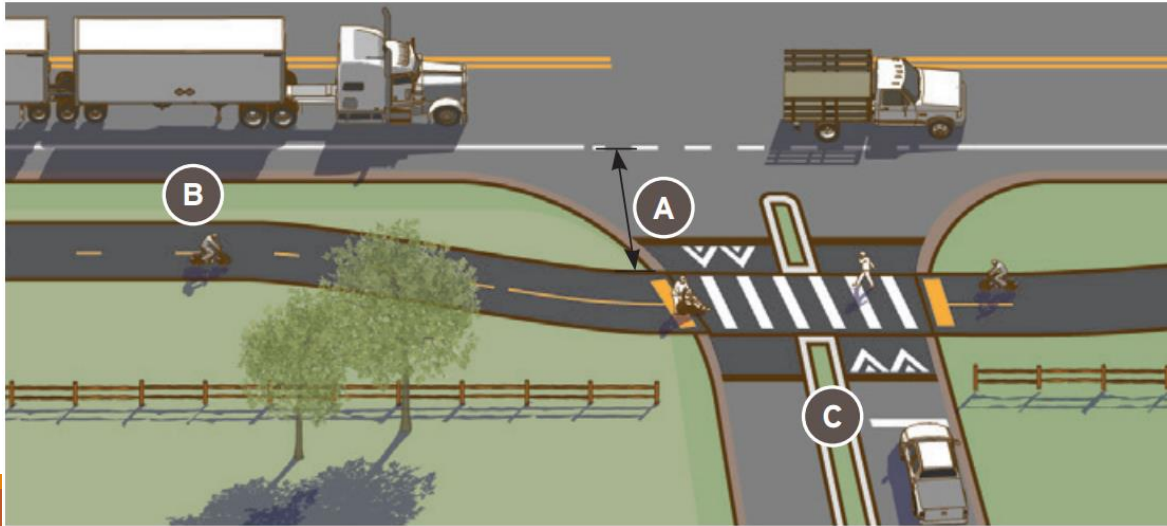
AASHTO

- “On roads with speed limits of 50 mph or greater, increasing the separation from roadway is recommended to improve path user comfort and potentially reduce crashes.”
- “At lower speeds, greater separation does not reduce crashes; therefore **the sidepath should be located in close proximity to the parallel roadway at intersections**, so motorists turning off the roadway can better detect sidepath riders.”

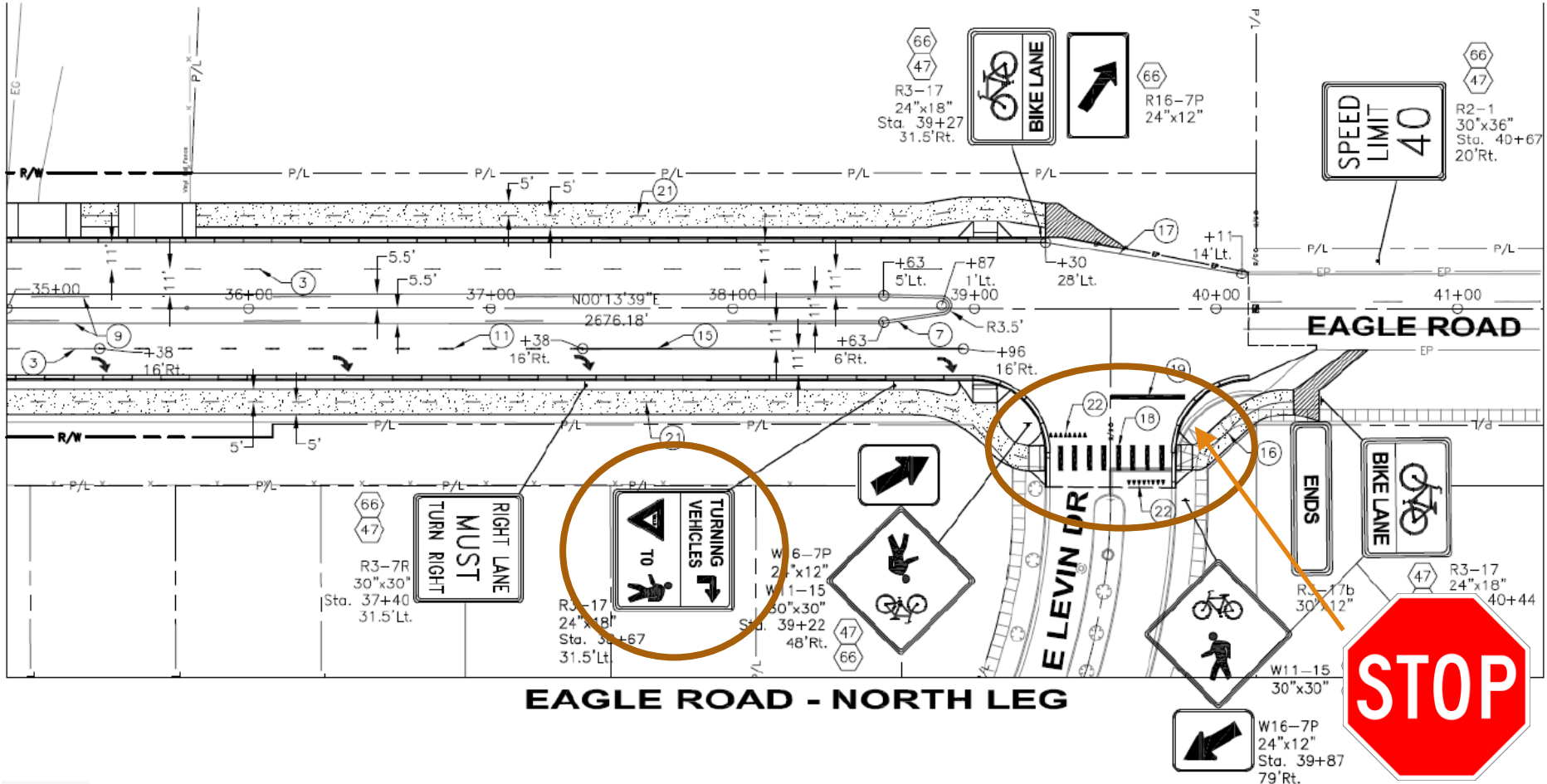


Meridian Concerns

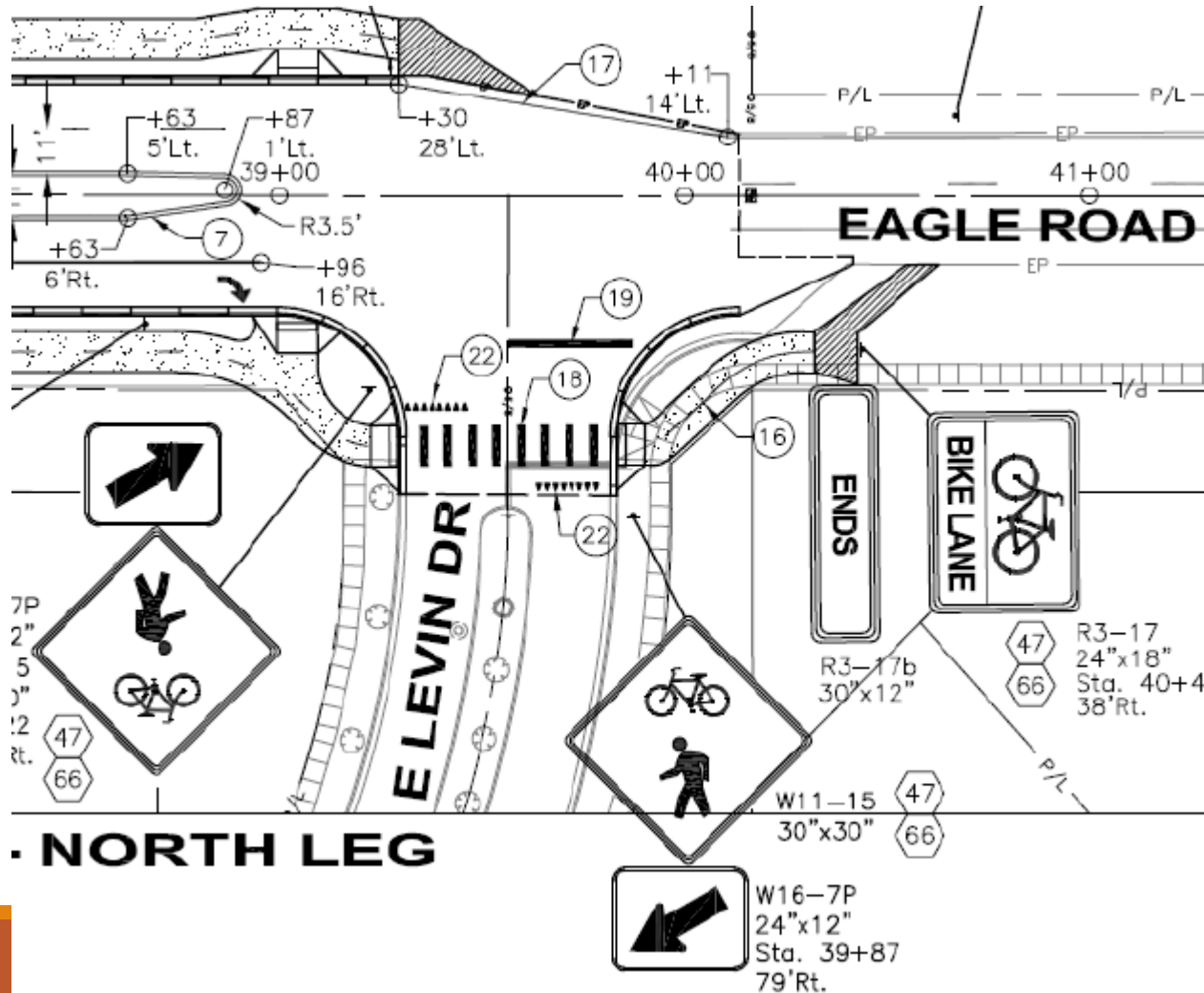
- No local urban examples
- Landscaping, fences, utility poles, signs
- Human Behavior
- Design incorporates some of the design elements
- Conflicting or inappropriately used signs



Meridian Concerns



Meridian Concerns



Who Yields?

Action Requested

- Provide follow-up to March 3, 2020 letter with City preferences for sidepath crossings
- Transportation Commission Recommendation:
 - **the sidepath should be located in close proximity to the parallel roadway at intersections**
 - Mirrors AASHTO guide



Mayor Robert E. Simison

City Council Members:

Treg Bernt
Joe Borton
Luke Cavener

Brad Hoaglund
Jessica Perreault
Liz Strader

July 12, 2021

The Honorable Kent Goldthorpe
Commission President
Ada County Highway District
3775 Adams Street
Garden City, ID 83714

Dear Commissioner Goldthorpe,

The City of Meridian appreciates the partnership between Ada County Highway District ("ACHD") and Meridian, particularly the process involving project design reviews between the agencies. However, recent policy decisions regarding multiuse pathway crossing designs have us concerned and we are asking for ACHD to delay further implementation until a joint meeting can be scheduled to discuss the reasons, validity and our apprehensions.

The Meridian Transportation Commission recently reviewed the pathway crossing in the 95% design for Lake Hazel Road and Eagle Road. After close review, the Transportation Commission brought forth concerns to Meridian City Council on Tuesday, July 6th about the new design placing the multiuse pathway crossing behind and between cars at street intersections, and the visibility conflicts this creates. Meridian City Council discussed the issue and shares these concerns, which are of the same nature regarding the designs of roundabout crossings along Eagle Road in the Victory to Amity project.

While the design treatment may make sense in certain rural conditions, the City of Meridian is not convinced that populated and active residential corridors, with distractions such as landscaping or regular local cross-streets are the appropriate settings for setback crossings. Bike and pedestrian supportive designs are very sensitive to perception, and human behavior can have significant public safety implications on function. Understanding that when a crossing is pulled back from the intersection, the perceived benefit is to allow vehicles to approach without blocking the crossing. However, Meridian staff, Commission members and Council have expressed concern that a vehicle may still just as easily block the crosswalk, and if done, this negates the benefit of the design. Visibility is also reduced with pedestrians and bicyclists meandering between vehicles.

Another concern is human behavior. People take shortcuts and often go to greater lengths to circumvent a process or design. Crossings will likely also take place both where the ramp is and

where a ramp would normally be located. This would lead to multiple points of conflict, upset expectations, and reduce awareness and safety of all travelers.

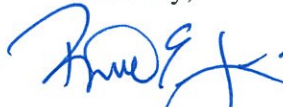
Lastly, landscaping, fencing, utility poles, and conflicting traffic signs in projects create inconsistencies and complicate a driver's ability to perceive pedestrians and bicyclists. This concern is compounded when people are crossing at a location outside of a driver's area of focus and normal expectations.

Since the Transportation Commission concerns were discussed with Council, City staff have also been notified that another project, Locust Grove widening between Overland and Victory, will also be redesigned with a similar treatment. The proposed design change will have additional impacts on private property, and it has been several years since the public participated in what is now intended to be a significantly different treatment for non-motorists.

There may be some well-founded reasons why ACHD is using the proposed design treatments, but these reasons have not been made evident to the Meridian City Council, Transportation Commission, or Planning staff despite repeated inquiries, nor have the concerns expressed been adequately discussed nor addressed. Additionally, there are no similar local urban examples, creating concern with committing to a treatment without testing and experiencing it first. The previously referenced standards for this type of feature are intended for dramatically different environments, such as rural areas, and include elements that are not incorporated in ACHD's proposed designs.

For these reasons, Meridian requests ACHD delay the multiuse pathway design which has pedestrians and bicyclists crossing behind and between cars at street intersections associated with any current and future projects in Meridian. To move forward, we request that the Commission and City Council hold a joint meeting as soon as practical to discuss this element so that the reasoning, logic and safety needs of the proposed features can be resolved for the benefit and safety of Meridian residents.

Sincerely,



Robert E. Simison
Mayor

cc: Ada County Highway District Commissioners
Meridian City Council
Meridian Transportation Commission
Bruce Wong, Ada County Highway District Director
Kristy Inselman, ACHD Senior Transportation Planner
Miranda Carson, Comprehensive Associate Coordination Planner

Deercrest Parking Request Update

Mr. Peters requested restricted parking on Deercrest, Arliss to Linder, but he was unable to secure the property owner signature on the petition required by ACHD. Mr. Peters has since altered his plans, and he is working with property owners to gauge interest in restricting parking on the southside of the street only. To be transparent, I did let Mr. Peters know I have some concern with signing parking restriction adjacent to just 2 parcels. ACHD and Mr. Peters are both in agreement that before ACHD considers any new/altered request, City Staff will update the Transportation Commission for feedback. Staff will keep the TC update on the progress of this item.

Keeping Up With COMPASS

Keeping Up With COMPASS

July 2021

A newsletter for COMPASS members to keep abreast of COMPASS Board, committee, and workgroup actions.

Board of Directors – June 21, 2021

More information: www.compassidaho.org/people/boardmeetings.htm

Next meeting date: August 16, 2021

June Action Items:

- Executive Director Annual Review. Following a discussion in Executive Session, voted to retain the COMPASS Executive Director and delay any decision regarding a salary increase until after discussion of the FY2022 Unified Planning Work Program and Budget.
- FY2021-2027 TIP. Approved an [amendment and Board administrative modification](#) to the FY2021-2027 Regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to change the scope of a culvert replacement project, increase the cost of a public transportation vehicle replacement project, fund projects with new Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA) funding, and balance other project funding.
- High-Capacity Transit. Approved a “locally favored” high-capacity transit option of regional rail on the Boise Cutoff alignment. This option will be reflected in *Communities in Motion 2050* (CIM 2050), including the CIM 2050 Vision for growth and transportation and the overall 2050 public transportation system.
- Fiscal Impact Analysis Policy. Reviewed the newly developed Fiscal Impact Analysis tool and approved a [policy](#) to guide how and when COMPASS staff will use the tool as a member service.

June Information/Discussion Items:

- Legislative Issues. Received a status report on state and federal legislative issues.
- Travel Survey. Received an overview of the 2021 travel survey data study.

- CIM 2050 Vision. Reviewed the process for developing the CIM 2050 Vision (preferred growth and transportation scenario), which will provide the demographic basis for CIM 2050. The draft CIM 2050 Vision will be brought to the Board of Directors for action in the August 16, 2021, Board meeting.

Finance Committee – June 17, 2021 – Cancelled Due to Lack of Quorum

More information: www.compassidaho.org/people/financemeetings.htm

Next meeting date: July 15, 2021

Regional Transportation Advisory Committee – June 23, 2021

More information: www.compassidaho.org/people/rtacmeetings.htm

Next meeting date: July 28, 2021

June Action Item:

- TMA Balancing. Approved actions to balance the Surface Transportation Block Grant program in the Transportation Management Area (TMA).

June Information/Discussion Items:

- Design Effects on Speed. Received an overview how road building and design affects vehicle speeds.
- VRT Planning. Received an update on Valley Regional Transit's (VRT's) regional planning and prioritization processes and timing.
- CIM 2050 Funding Policy. Reviewed the draft funding policy for *Communities in Motion 2050* (CIM 2050). The committee will receive the policy with a request for Board of Director's recommendation in the July 28, 2021, RTAC meeting.
- Travel Survey. Received an overview of the 2021 travel survey data study.

Workgroups

Freight Advisory Workgroup

Meeting date: June 3, 2021

Highlights:

- Provided feedback on the congestion management process toolkit.
- Received an update on the I-84/I-184 corridor operations plan.
- Reviewed the draft workgroup charter for FY2022.

Next meeting date: Summer 2021

Active Transportation Workgroup

Meeting date: June 14, 2021

Highlights:

- Reviewed the COMPASS Participation Plan.
- Reviewed and provided feedback on the COMPASS Congestion Management Process toolkit.
- Discussed the 2050 Regional Pathways and Bikeways Plan in light of Ada County Highway District's new policy regarding bicycle and pedestrian facilities along roadways.

Next meeting date: Late July 2021

Rails with Trails Workgroup

Meeting date: June 30, 2021

Highlights:

- Reviewed work completed to date on rails with trails.
- Discussed the upcoming merger of the Rails with Trails Workgroup with the Active Transportation Workgroup.
- Reviewed the draft FY2022 Active Transportation Workgroup charter.

Next meeting date: None; last meeting for this workgroup. Member are invited to attend the next Active Transportation Workgroup meeting in late July; the merger of the workgroups will officially occur on October 1, 2021.

Access past editions of *Keeping Up with COMPASS* online at www.compassidaho.org/comm/newsletters.htm.

ChindenWest - US 20/26 Construction Updates



Linder to Meridian opens to four lanes tomorrow



All four lanes of Chinden Boulevard, from Linder Road to Meridian Road, are scheduled to open tomorrow (July 8).

Motorists can expect periodic lane closures throughout the summer as crews continue work in the intersections and adjacent to the roadway. All work after July 8 will take place during off peak hours. Periodic flagger control at intersections is also anticipated in the evenings to complete stripping and landscaping.

Locust Grove Road to Meridian is in the property acquisition negotiation phase. Construction is anticipated in 2022. All parties are committed to completing this work as soon as possible to achieve four uninterrupted lanes of traffic, two-in-each-direction, from Eagle to State Highway 16.

We appreciate your patience and remind motorists to always drive with caution through construction areas.

The Idaho Transportation Department would like to thank you for your ongoing patience as we strive to meet the traveling needs of Idahoans.

[Click HERE to watch the ChindenWest Corridor overview video!](#)

We Want to Hear from You!

Visit www.itdprojects.org/chindenwest to provide comment, ask questions and sign up for updates.

Stay Informed

Please visit www.ITDProjects.org/ChindenWest for up-to-date information and opportunities to participate. Contact the project team at ChindenWest@itd.idaho.gov or 208-334-8007.

Chinden West | Idaho Transportation Department | 208-334-8007 | ChindenWest@itd.idaho.gov