COLORADO
Department of Transportation

I-25: Speer and 23rd Bridge and Interchange Project

Stakeholder Focus Group Meeting 4

July 15, 2025

Meeting Objectives

Navigating the Project:

1. Shared Understanding of the Alternatives Screening Process & Results
2. Shared Understanding of Stakeholders' Concerns and Interests
3. Shared Understanding of Next Steps

Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Process Overview
3. Alternatives Analysis
4. Stakeholders' Concerns, Interests, & Ideas
5. Next Steps

Process Overview

Navigating the Project

Understanding the Project's Process, Challenges, and Goals

Goals

- Existing Conditions Assessment
- Develop Purpose and Need
- Develop Full Range of Alternatives

Public Involvement

Alternatives Analysis

- Design Criteria
- Environmental Resources
- Meeting Purpose and Need

Public Involvement

NEPA

- Confirm Purpose and Need
- Proposed Action Refinement
- Impacts and Mitigation Analysis
- Public feedback considerations
- Federal approval

Alternatives Analysis Process

The **Alternatives Analysis Process** is designed to evaluate and select the best design options based on several criteria. This process involves three levels of screening, each focusing on different aspects to ensure that the chosen alternative meets all necessary requirements and addresses key concerns.

Screening Level	Screening Metrics	Alternatives Evaluated (For the Bridges and Interchanges)	
Purpose and Need 2023 to Early 2024	• Safety • Structural Clearance and Integrity • Bike and Pedestrian Accomodations	**Started with**	23rd Avenue — 3 Alternatives Speer Boulevard — 5 Alternatives
		Ended with	23rd Avenue — 2 Alternatives Speer Boulevard — 5 Alternatives
Comparative Mid to late 2024	• Vehicular Safety • Bike and Pedestrian Safety • Operational Performance • Environmental Impacts • Community Resources Impacts • Constructability and Cost • Maintenance	**Started with**	23rd Avenue — 2 Alternatives Speer Boulevard — 5 Alternatives
		Ended with	23rd Avenue — 1 Alternative Speer Boulevard — 2 Alternatives
Refined Late 2024 to Early 2025	• Vehicular Safety • Bike and Pedestrian Safety • Operational Performance	**Started with**	Speer Boulevard — 2 Alternatives
		Ended with	Speer Boulevard — 1 Alternative

Alternatives Analysis

Purpose and Need Screening

The following questions were developed to **measure how well each alternative meets Purpose and Need.** Alternatives with a response of "no" to any of the questions will not be carried forward to the next level of screening. This is considered fatal flaw analysis.

Interstate Crossing Needs

- Does the alternative provide a crossing of I-25 with adequate vertical clearance of at least 16.5 feet over travel lanes and shoulders?
- Does the alternative reduce the ongoing maintenance requirements and improve the structural integrity of the bridges?

Pedestrian, Bicycle, and Micromobility Device Needs

- Does the alternative improve pedestrian, bicycle, and micromobility connections on 23rd Avenue and Speer Boulevard, and connect to local networks west and east of I-25?

Safety Needs

- Does the alternative enhance safety by improving access to and from I-25 at the following locations:
  - Northbound weave between the 23rd Avenue on-ramp and eastbound Speer Boulevard off-ramp
  - Northbound weave between the eastbound Speer Boulevard on-ramp and westbound Speer Boulevard off-ramp
  - Southbound acceleration lane from Speer Boulevard on-ramp

Purpose and Need Screening Results for 23rd Avenue

23rd Avenue Bridge Replacement Only

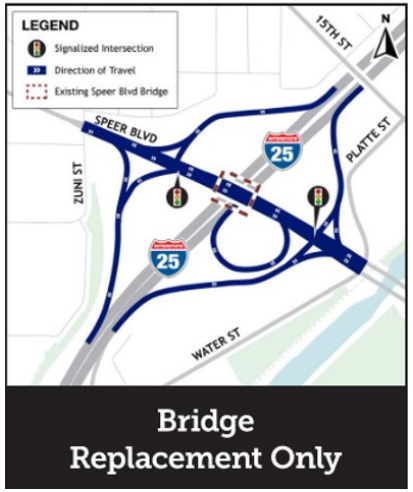
Close 23rd Avenue Access to I-25 (Ramps)

23rd Avenue Braid

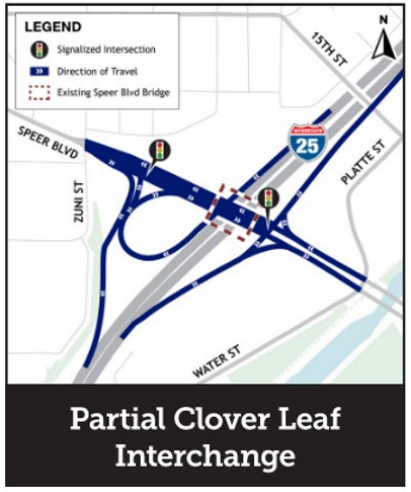
Legend

- Carry Forward
- Do Not Carry Forward

Purpose and Need Screening Results for Speer Boulevard



Bridge Replacement Only



Partial Clover Leaf Interchange

Single-Point Urban Interchange

Speer Boulevard Diamond Interchange

Speer Boulevard Diverging Diamond Interchange

Legend

- Carry Forward
- Do Not Carry Forward

Comparative Screening

Alternatives carried forward from the Purpose and Need Screening, and the No Action Alternative, were then **compared using seven screening metrics.** As the comparative screening process progressed, it was determined that **four screening metrics were major differentiators.**

Screening Level	Screening Metrics	Major Screening Differentiators
Level 2: Comparative	• Vehicular Safety • Bike and Pedestrian Safety • Operational Performance • Environmental Impacts • Community Resources Impacts • Constructability and Cost • Maintenance	• Vehicular Safety • Bike and Pedestrian Safety • Operational Performance • Environmental Impacts • Community Resources Impacts • Constructability and Cost • Maintenance

Comparative Screening Results for 23rd Avenue

23rd Avenue Bridge Replacement Only

Close 23rd Avenue Access to I-25 (Ramps)

23rd Avenue Braid

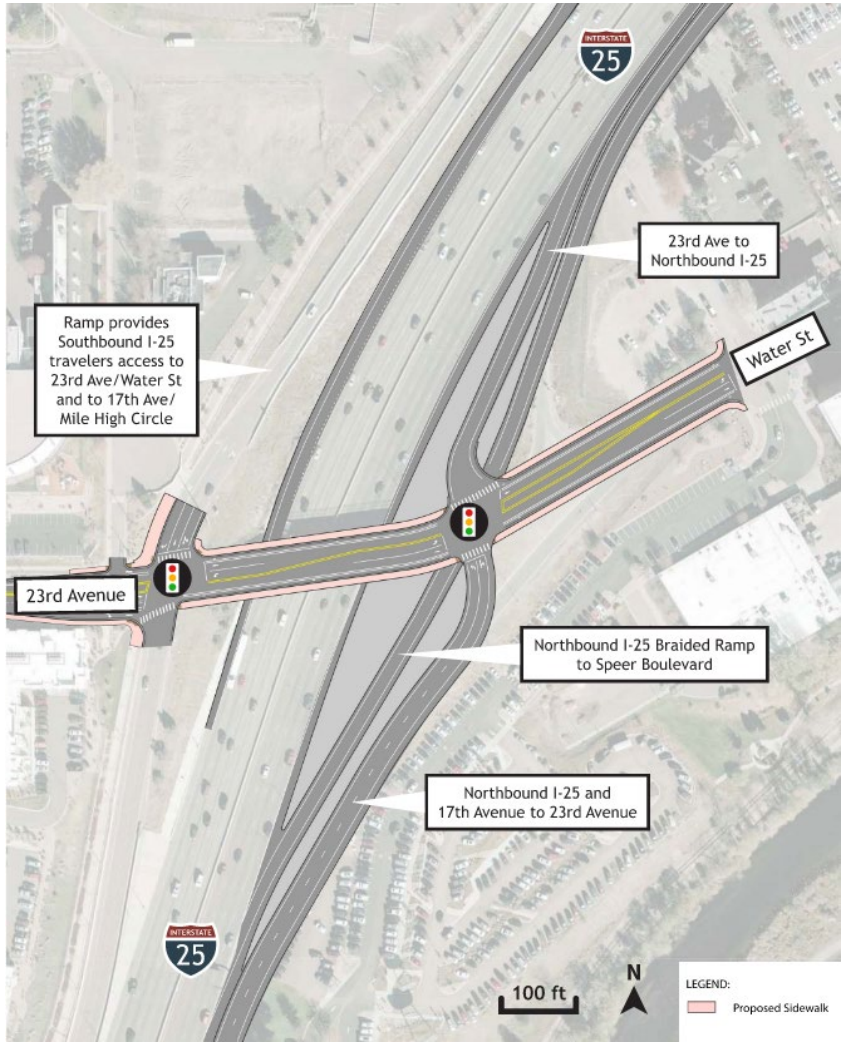
Legend

- Carry Forward
- Do Not Carry Forward
- Not Applicable

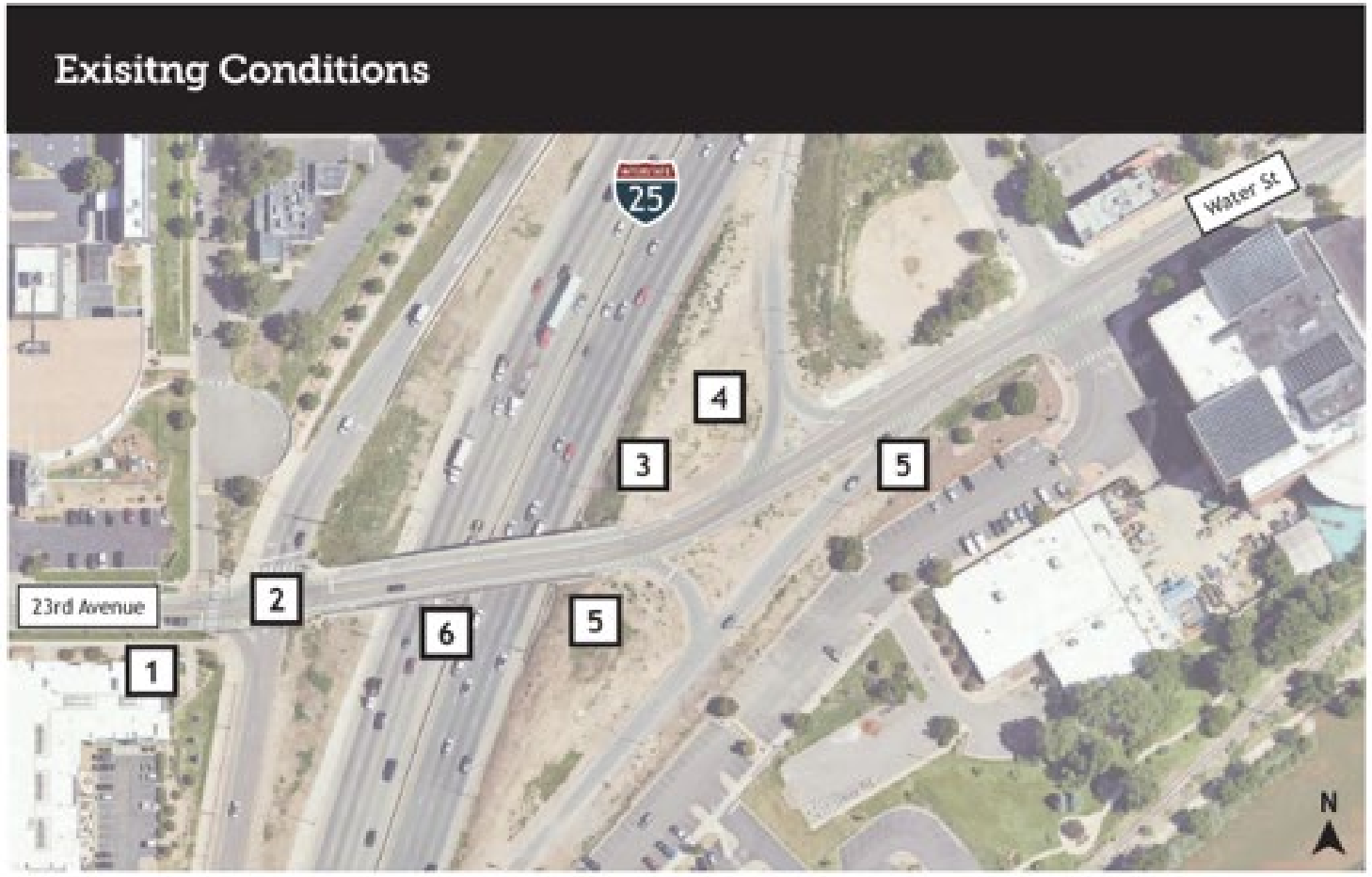
Recommended Alternative for 23rd Avenue

The **23rd Avenue Braid** is recommended as the Proposed Action to be evaluated during the NEPA process because it balances the needs of all local stakeholders. Specifically, it achieves this balance because it:

- Improves Safety on I-25 by increasing the distance to merge
- Enhances safety for everyone using 23rd Avenue – whether walking, biking, or driving
- Maintains I-25 access for nearby homes, community resources, and businesses
- Accommodates the entire community – including residents and families in nearby neighborhoods, business owners and their customers, people walking and biking, as well as emergency services and city operations



Existing Bike and Pedestrian Safety Problems for 23rd Avenue



1. Eastbound bicyclists must share a lane with right-turning vehicles. High traffic volumes make this uncomfortable for some bicyclists.

2. Vehicles have a free left turn (WB 23rd to SB I-25 on ramp) and drivers can misjudge the gap for bikes coming down the hill going into downtown, resulting in near misses.

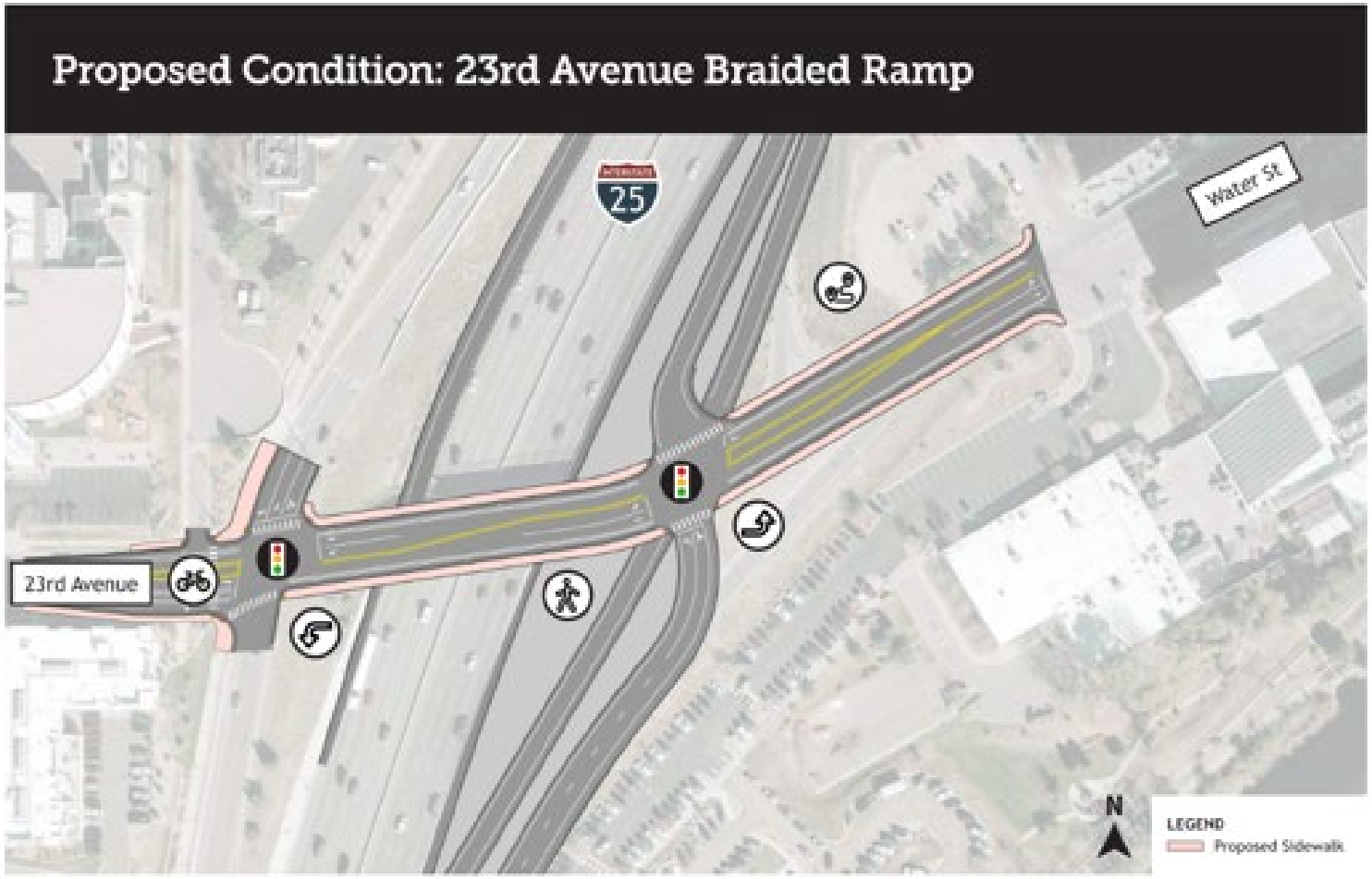
3. There is a gap in the sidewalk through this section forcing pedestrians to walk in the dirt shoulder. This does not meet current accessibility standards.

4. In the evening, westbound traffic backs up from the existing traffic signal. These cars leave a gap to allow for eastbound traffic to turn left onto the I-25 on-ramp; however, these eastbound cars cannot easily see westbound bicyclists. This results in near-misses.

5. The placement of the stop sign and the geometry of the roadway makes it difficult for drivers exiting I-25 to see oncoming eastbound vehicles and bicyclists.

6. There is no sidewalk on the south side of the bridge. This forces pedestrians to either cross the street or walk in the bicycle lane.

Potential Bike and Pedestrian Safety Solutions for 23rd Avenue (Part 1)



The existing bicycle lane could be extended to the intersection eliminating the need for eastbound bicyclists to mix with right-turning vehicles. This could be paired with a leading pedestrian interval (LPI) at the traffic signal, which would allow pedestrians and bicyclists to begin crossing the intersection a few seconds before vehicles are given a green light.

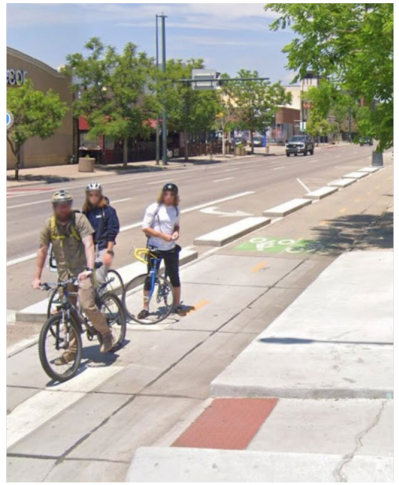
A dedicated westbound left-turn lane would create the opportunity for a protected left-turn arrow to be installed at the intersection.

Addition of a sidewalk on the south side.

A dedicated eastbound left-turn lane would create the opportunity for a protected left-turn arrow to be installed at the intersection.

New sidewalk to close the existing north sidewalk gap between the ramp and 7th Street.

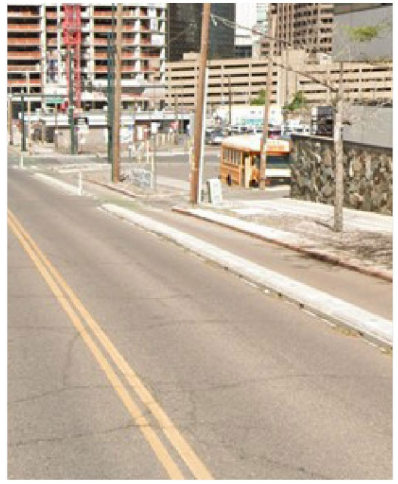
Potential Bike and Pedestrian Safety Solutions for 23rd Avenue (Part 2)



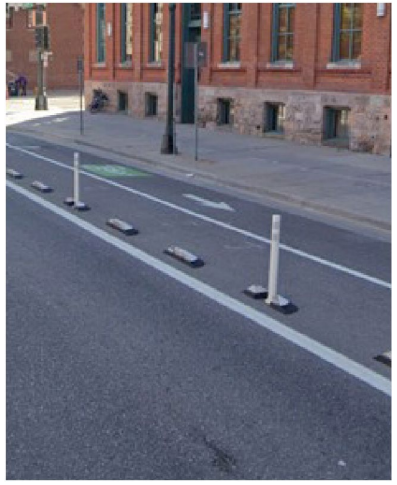
Concrete curb protected two-way bike lane.

Concrete barrier with striped buffer protected bike lane. Painted barrier makes the design more aesthetically pleasing.

Raised, sidewalk-level bike lane with streetside buffer. Different colors of pavement are used to distinguish between the bike lane and pedestrian route.



Continuous concrete curb protected bike lane.



Bike lane with flex posts and Zicla curbs. Reflective posts and curbs make more visible to drivers at night.

Concrete curb protected bike lane with colored buffer.

Comparative Screening Results for Speer Boulevard

Bridge Replacement Only

Partial Clover Leaf Interchange

Single-Point Urban Interchange

Speer Boulevard Diamond Interchange

Speer Boulevard Diverging Diamond Interchange

Legend

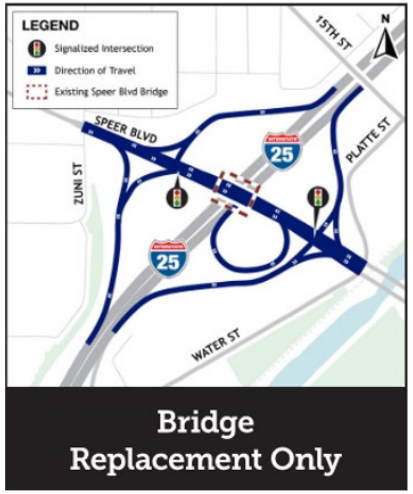
- Carry Forward
- Do Not Carry Forward
- Not Applicable

Refined Screening

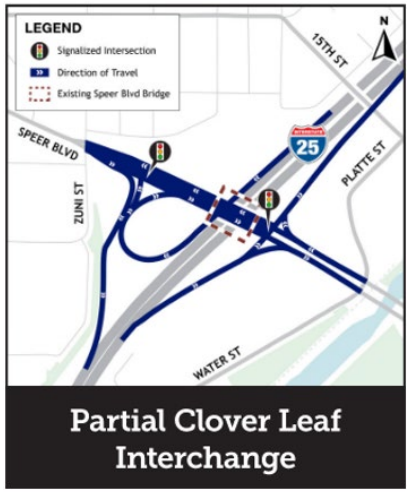
Alternatives carried forward from the Comparative Screening were then **evaluated at a more refined level to ensure that the final recommended alternatives are the best available options.** For an alternative to be chosen as the best option, it needs to improve safety for everyone, provide a crossing of I-25 with adequate vertical clearance, and consider the needs and feedback from the community and stakeholders.

Screening Level	Screening Metrics
Level 3: Refined	• Vehicular Safety • Bike and Pedestrian Safety • Operational Performance

Refined Screening Results for Speer Boulevard



Bridge Replacement Only



Partial Clover Leaf Interchange

Single-Point Urban Interchange

Speer Boulevard Diamond Interchange

Speer Boulevard Diverging Diamond Interchange

Legend

- Carry Forward
- Do Not Carry Forward
- Not Applicable

Recommended Alternative for Speer Boulevard

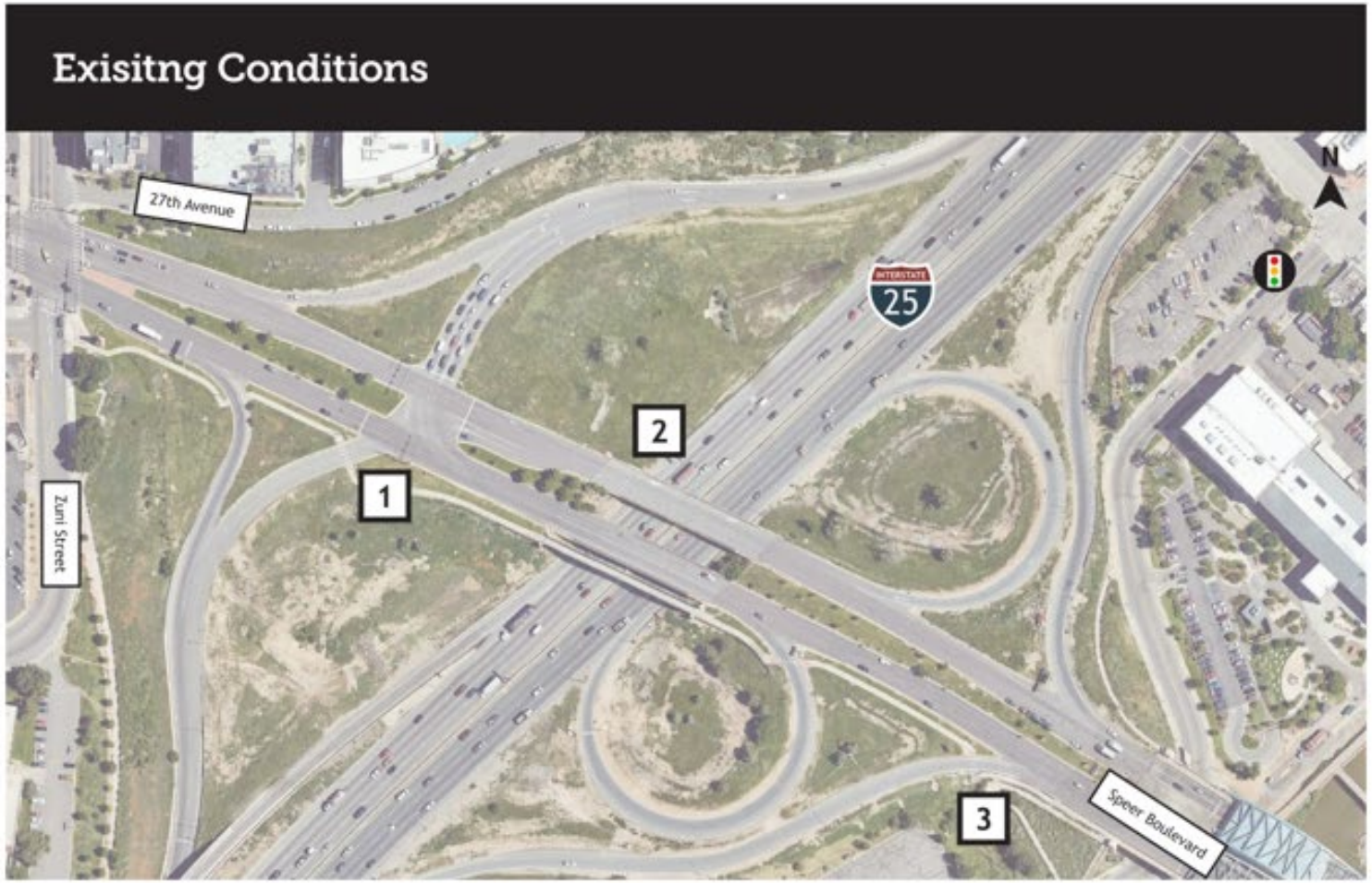
The **Speer Boulevard Diverging Diamond Interchange** is recommended as the Proposed Action to be evaluated during the NEPA process because it best supports safety for everyone.

- When compared to traditional diamond interchanges, Diverging Diamond Interchanges generally experience 15% fewer crashes, and 45% fewer crashes resulting in a fatality or serious injury

- Diverging Diamond Interchanges remove left-turn conflicts, which improves safety for pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers alike

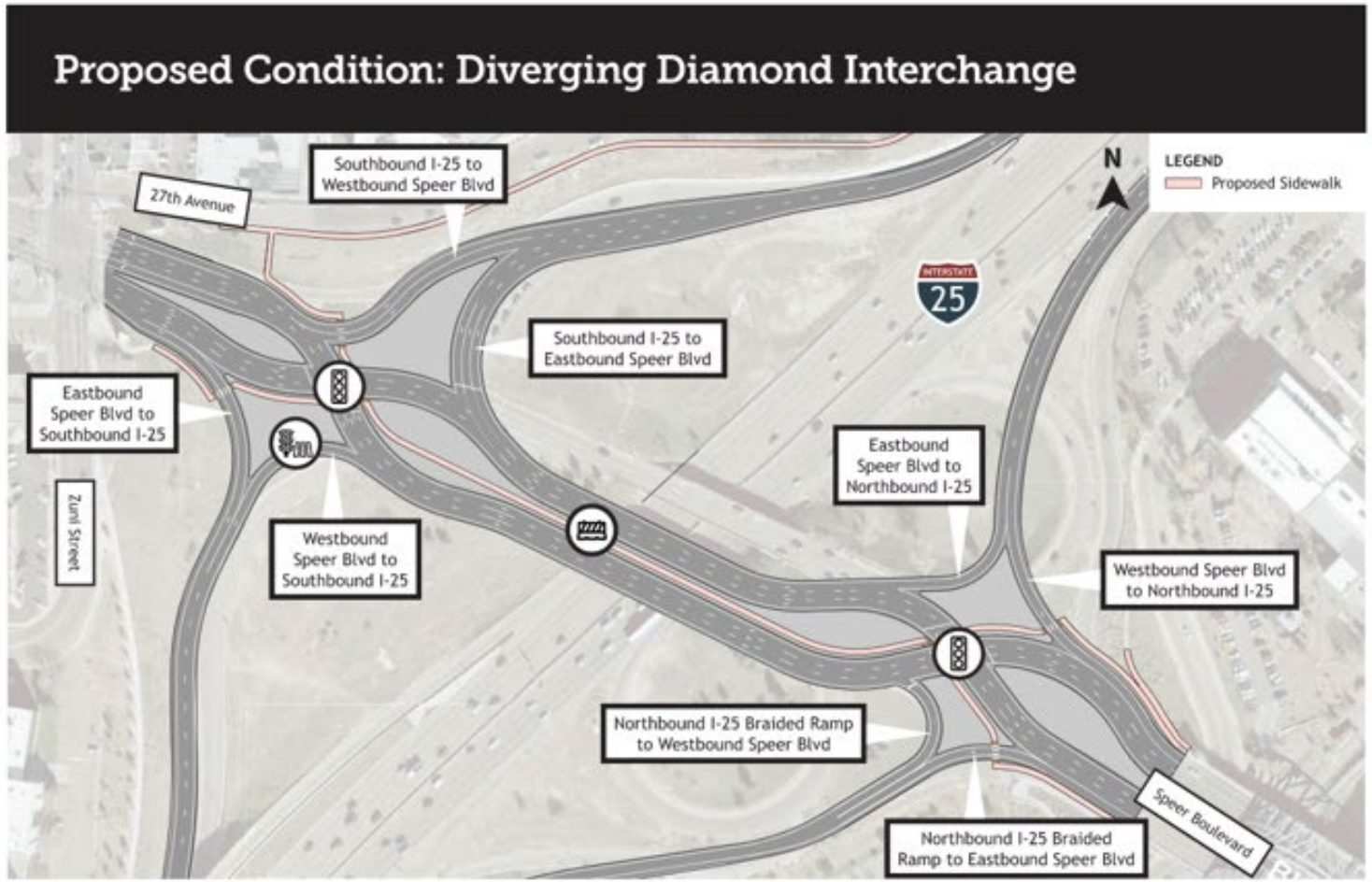
- Diverging Diamond Interchanges also provide short and convenient crossings, as well as a wide barrier protected center path for cyclists and pedestrians

Existing Bike and Pedestrian Safety Problems for Speer Boulevard



1. Large distance between left-turning vehicles and pedestrian crossing.
2. No sidewalk on the north side of the bridge.
3. Vehicles exiting the interstate are at higher speeds when approaching the uncontrolled pedestrian crossing.

Potential Bike and Pedestrian Safety Solutions for Speer Boulevard



Signalized non-motorist crossing.

Barrier separated area for non-motorist users.

Signalized non-motorist crossing.

Examples of Diverging Diamond Interchange Features

This is an example of a Diverging Diamond Interchange (DDI) in Superior, CO near US36 at McCaslin Boulevard Bridge.

Features of a DDI include a center walk and bikeway as a multi-use path, a wide center path, which provides safe and comfortable travel for bikes and pedestrians and micromobility users.

Recommended Proposed Action

The 23rd Avenue Braid and the Speer Boulevard Diverging Diamond Interchange have been combined into one recommended design that will move forward for further study and detailed design.

This recommended design, known as the Proposed Action, will be compared to the No Action (No Build/Do Nothing) in the NEPA analysis process.

Public Involvement will remain a key part of the process moving forward.

Stakeholders' Concerns, Interests, & Ideas

Discussion (Part 1)

Do you have questions or comments regarding the project's decision-making, or other process considerations?

Discussion (Part 2)

Are there any potential impacts of this project that you are concerned about?

Discussion (Part 3)

What general comments or questions do you have for the project team?

Next Steps

Design and Study Schedule

2023

Data collection and preliminary alternatives development

Early 2024

Purpose and Need Screening

Mid 2024 to Early 2025

Comparative and Refined Screening

Late 2025 to Mid 2026

NEPA analysis and documentation; initiate preliminary design

Next Steps

2026 and Beyond:
Final Design and Construction

Identify construction delivery method, identify construction funds and finish design