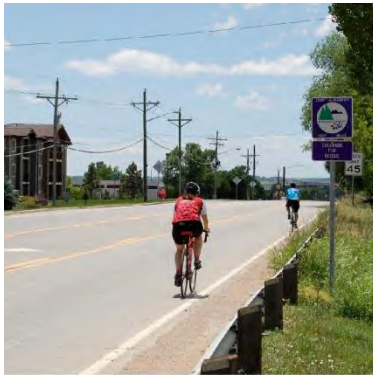


42 Gateway

Alternative Analysis Report

June 2013



Prepared for:



In Cooperation with:



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Executive Summary

The 42 Gateway Project is an infrastructure improvement study that seeks to influence the form, function, character, and accessibility of the Highway 42 Revitalization Area and Downtown Louisville. The Project was a joint effort between the City of Louisville (the City), Boulder County, the Regional Transportation District (RTD) and the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT). The study area included State Highway 42 (SH 42) from Lock Street to Paschal Drive and a connection between Downtown Louisville crossing the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) railroad through the City's Revitalization District.

The purpose of the 42 Gateway project is to provide mobility and access for a broad range of ages and abilities within and through the study area by providing safe, convenient, and efficient multi-modal transportation infrastructure. The project will meet existing and future needs, support the implementation of adopted community plans, reflect both the urban and rural character of the area, ensure an environment for life, work and play as well as create a Louisville gateway.

The Project recommends completing SH 42 as a context sensitive, multi-modal, three-lane highway which is supported by enhanced local street network connections. Together, the preferred highway alternative and local network enhancements provide a community and stakeholder accepted solution which accommodates 20-year traffic forecasts, addresses business and neighborhood accessibility needs, mitigates roadway safety concerns, and resolves multi-modal deficiencies currently present along the corridor. The preferred alternative offers solutions for all modes of travel while supporting the future land use expectations of the City's redevelopment district and strengthens the livability of the surrounding neighborhoods. The complete package of improvements is based on extensive technical analysis, stakeholder feedback, and community input. The decision-making process that influenced these recommendations is provided throughout this report.

The Project also advances the design of the "Gateway" for the Northwest Rail Corridor to the City of Louisville. The pedestrian underpass also connects downtown Louisville to the City's Revitalization District. This study identifies the physical constraints present at the Gateway location and recommends a feasible solution to these constraints. The recommended underpass is based on extensive coordination with the BNSF railroad and community interests. The underpass design and submittal to the railroad is presented later in this report.

The improvements recommended as a part of this Project provide guidance on the needed infrastructure to promote redevelopment in the City's Revitalization District. However, implementation of the recommended improvements will be based upon approval from City Council and available funding.

Introduction

The City of Louisville, in partnership with Boulder County, RTD and CDOT have partnered to improve the SH 42 corridor and the City's revitalization district, both for Louisville's citizens and business owners, and to address regional transportation needs. These improvements include pedestrian and bicycle facilities, transit accommodations, roadway network enhancements, corridor improvements, and intersection modifications.

The study adheres to the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) process. In this way, this project meets the standards established by National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and can serve as a predecessor to a NEPA level analysis which is necessary for maintaining Federal Funding eligibility. The report documents the decision-making process and alternatives analysis that were undergone by stakeholders in order to arrive at a preferred alternative for SH 42 and the City's Gateway pedestrian underpass.

Project Overview

The City developed the *42 Gateway Plan* as an integrated infrastructure implementation plan to advance the planning, stakeholder involvement, public outreach, and preliminary engineering of *Highway 42 Revitalization Area Comprehensive Plan Amendment*. The two areas of infrastructure focus were:

- A South Street connection between downtown Louisville and the City's revitalization district, crossing under the BNSF Railway right of way and creating a multi-modal connection to the proposed RTD's Northwest Commuter Rail station and providing a regional bicycle and pedestrian connection between the Goodhue Ditch Trail and the Coal Creek Trail; and
- A context sensitive and multi-modal corridor design and implementation plan for SH 42 between Lock Street and Paschal Drive (the northern city limits).

Highway 42 Revitalization Area Comprehensive Plan Amendment

The Louisville City Council initiated the *Highway 42 Revitalization Area Comprehensive Plan Amendment* in 2000 to consider possible changes in the area bounded on the north by South Boulder Road, on the south by Pine Street, on the west by the BNSF Railway tracks, and on the east by SH 42. The plan recommended that this area redevelop over time as a mixed-use, transit-oriented neighborhood that functions as an extension of downtown. The plan included the Gateway pedestrian underpass, medium- to high-density residential projects, and a mix of shopping, restaurants, offices, and so on, as a part of the revitalization district. The plan identified the existing neighborhoods in the revitalization district and stated that they would be preserved and strengthened. The Louisville City Council adopted the *Highway 42 Revitalization Area Comprehensive Plan Amendment* in 2003. The City codified the Amendment through the adoption of new zoning and design guidelines in Section 17.14 in the Louisville Municipal Code (LMC) in 2007. The *42 Gateway Plan* is the next step in implementing the recommendations of the *Highway 42 Revitalization Area Comprehensive Plan Amendment*.

Study Area

The study area for the project includes all land within a quarter mile of the proposed RTD's Northwest Commuter Rail Louisville station platform, as well as all the area within 300 feet of SH 42 right of way between Lock Street and Paschal Drive.

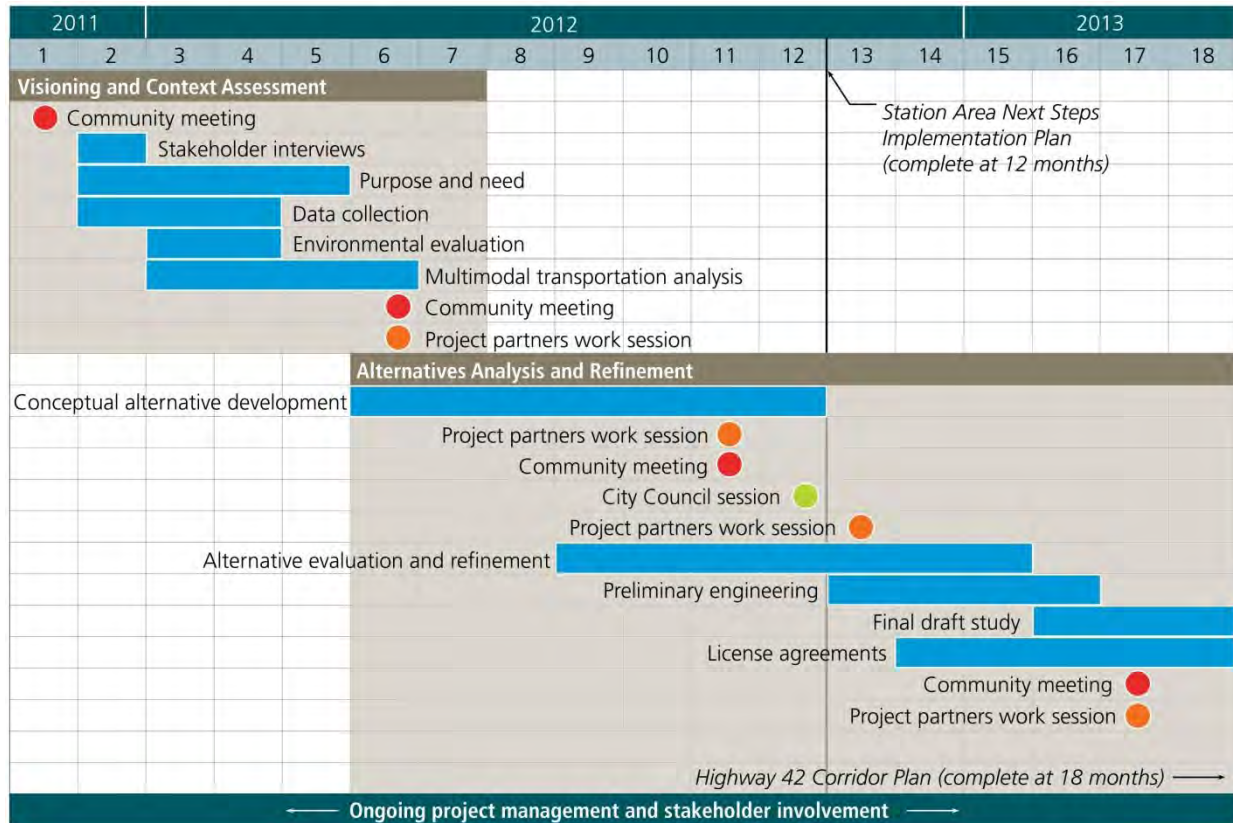
Figure 1. Project Study Area



Timeline

The SH 42 corridor portion of the project was completed within an 18-month timeline and the underpass was completed in 12 months. Both projects started early in November 2011. Figure 2 shows the major milestones of the project.

Figure 2. Project Timeline



Funding

Funding for the study was provided by the City, CDOT, Funding Advancement for Surface Transportation & Economic Recovery (FASTER) funds, RTD, Federal Congestion Mitigation Air Quality Grant (CMAQ), and Boulder County transportation funds.

Collaborative Decision Making and Stakeholder Involvement

Agency coordination was a fundamental part of the advancement of this project. The decision-making process involved several agencies and stakeholders working collaboratively to achieve consensus on the major decisions.

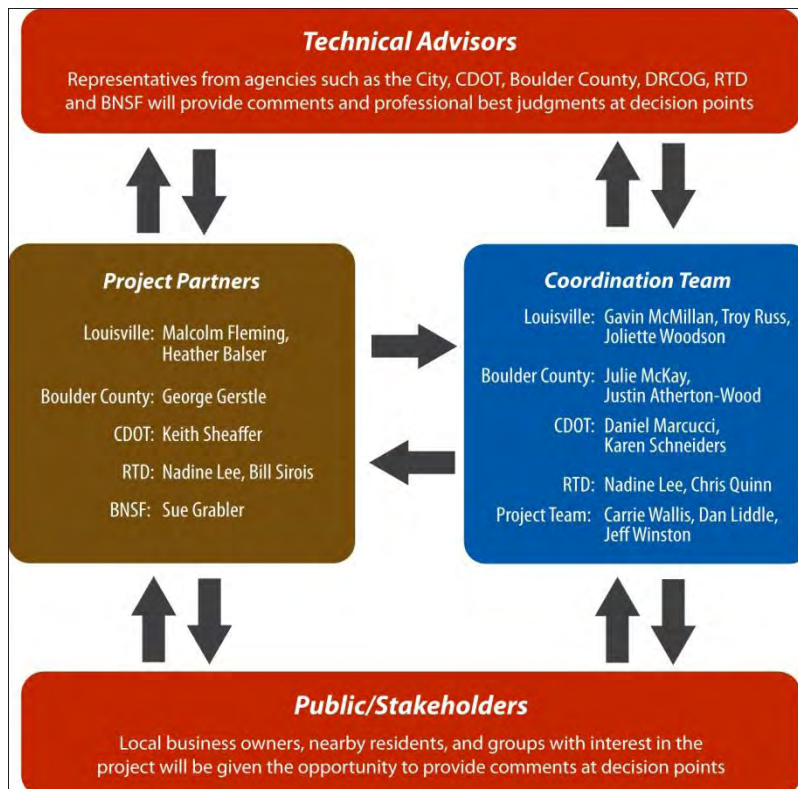
Consensus

Consensus is defined as an agreement built by identifying and exploring the interests of all parties and assembling a composite agreement that demonstrates these varied interests have been satisfied to the greatest extent possible. Consensus was reached when all parties agreed that their major interests had been taken into consideration and addressed in a satisfactory manner. The following agencies were represented in the consensus process:

- City of Louisville
- CDOT
- Boulder County
- RTD
- BNSF Railway

The evaluation and decision-making process occurred at two levels: the coordination team and the project partners. This type of evaluation and decision-making process gave the project a high level of transparency, understanding, and provided many opportunities for stakeholders to help provide input on the alternatives. Those who participated in the evaluation and decision-making process are shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Collaborative Evaluation and Decision Making



Coordination Team

The coordination team supported the collaborative process by overseeing the day-to-day progress of the project and ensuring that the project partners' decisions were incorporated into relevant products. Coordination meetings were generally used as working sessions to raise questions, make decisions, and ensure that progress was in-line with the project goals and objectives. Specific discipline representatives, known as technical advisors, were invited to specific coordination meetings as needed in the process. The coordination team met approximately on a monthly basis throughout the evaluation and decision-making process.

Project Partners

The project partners supported the collaborative process by providing input and making decisions at key points in the project. Each organization was invited to appoint one representative who could speak for their agency. These representatives made key decisions on behalf of their agencies and served as a liaison to their respective agency for this project. Participating members of this group were asked to meet the following requirements for participation:

- Able to represent the breadth of views of their constituency, rather than just representing their personal views.
- Are empowered as decision makers within their organizations or constituencies or otherwise able to commit and bind their constituencies to any agreements of the committee.
- Are familiar with the proposed RTD/Louisville station and underpass area, as well as SH 42 between Lock Street and Paschal Drive and the range of issues associated with these locations.
- Able to be a diplomat—all members should be proactive about seeking areas of agreement and should look for mutually beneficial solutions.
- Able to commit the time necessary to attend at least four meetings during the project, with the understanding that additional meetings may be added if other key decisions arise, and to prepare in advance for each meeting by examining supporting information and materials.

Given the variety of stakeholders, effective decision making was essential to advancing the project. The consultant design team facilitated the process, helped negotiate the technical hurdles, and coordinated the agencies involved. Table 1 lists all meetings held during the decision-making process.

Table 1. Schedule of Major Meetings

Date	Meeting	Main Topics
11/9/2011	Kick-off Coordination Meeting, Walking Audit	Project introduction; schedule
11/9/2011	Community Meeting	Project introduction; schedule
12/12/2011	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Meeting with Louisville Revitalization Commission (LRC)	SWOT analysis
12/14/2011	Coordination Meeting	Data collection and analysis
12/15/2011	SWOT Meeting with Boulder	SWOT analysis
12/15/2011	SWOT Meeting with Lafayette	SWOT analysis
12/16/2011	SWOT Meeting with Property Owners	SWOT analysis

Table 1. Schedule of Major Meetings

Date	Meeting	Main Topics
1/5/2012	SWOT Meeting with CDOT	SWOT analysis
1/18/2012	Coordination Meeting	Review of SWOT results; draft purpose and goals
1/24/2012	SWOT Meeting with RTD	SWOT analysis
2/15/2012	Coordination Meeting	Finalize purpose and goals; discuss alternatives development
3/21/2012	Coordination Meeting	Existing and design year traffic conditions; underpass design requirements and constraints
4/4/2012	BNSF Meeting	Underpass requirements
4/18/2012	Project Partner Work Session	History of corridor and redevelopment area; purpose and goals; traffic volume forecasts
4/19/2012	Community Meeting	Purpose and goals
6/20/2012	Coordination Meeting	Corridor and intersection alternatives
7/16/2012	Interim Meeting with RTD	Station area and platforms
7/17/2012	Access Meeting with CDOT	Alternatives and SH 42 access
8/13/2012	Paschal Drive Meeting with City of Lafayette	Paschal Drive IGA
8/22/2012	Coordination Meeting	Underpass alternatives refinement; highway alternatives and screening process
9/6/2012	LRC Presentation	Underpass design, highway alternatives
9/26/2012	Project Partner Work Session	Underpass alternatives refinement; highway alternatives and screening process
10/3/2012	Community Meeting	Underpass and highway alternatives
11/27/2012	Community Meeting	Underpass and highway alternatives
12/04/2012	City Council Study Session	Review of project
12/18/2012	City Council Regular Meeting	Decision: to support the base alternative for SH 42 and the South Street Gateway

As seen in Table 1, the process slowed after the initial public kickoff meeting to gather data (traffic counts, physical surveys, right-of-way boundaries, etc.) and prepare base mapping and traffic simulations that facilitated the development of feasible alternatives. Meeting agendas are provided in Appendix A.

Walking Audit

To gain an in-depth understanding of the study area conditions, the project team conducted a walking audit with the engaged stakeholders. The walking audit involved walking from Pine Street along SH 42 to Hecla Drive and observing the existing conditions. The group was asked to review the physical conditions of the corridor in relationship to the six principles of a walkable community (accessible, comfortable, convenient, connected, engaging, and vibrant). The group was encouraged to look at all conditions, good and bad, and to turn these findings into solutions as the 42 Gateway Project proceeded to alternative analysis. The Walking Audit materials are provided in Appendix B.



Coordination team members participating in the walking audit along SH 42

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats Analysis

As a first step, and to identify areas of convergent and divergent opinions between the stakeholder groups, various stakeholders participated in a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis. A SWOT analysis is a workshop tool commonly used to identify factors that are supportive or unfavorable to achieving a specific objective.

The SWOT process itself is straight forward and lends itself to short, in-person workshops. Workshop participants are asked to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats as defined in Table 2 and in the context of the agreed upon objective statement. Factors surrounding the achievement of the objective statement are discussed, and placed into one of the four SWOT categories based on if they are external or internal (internal meaning within an agency’s control and external being outside an agency’s control) factors and whether or not the factors are positive or negative towards achieving the specified objective.

Table 2. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats

<p>Strengths (positive internal factors) Factors and views held by the organization that further or support the project</p>	<p>Weaknesses (negative internal factors) Factors and views held by the organization that could hinder the project</p>
<p>Opportunities (positive external factors) Factors outside of the organization’s control that further the project</p>	<p>Threats (negative external factors) Factors outside of the organization’s control that hinder the project</p>

The following agencies engaged with the project team in a SWOT analysis workshop: the City, the Louisville Revitalization Commission (LRC), Boulder County, City of Lafayette, local property owners, CDOT, and RTD. The main topics and points of conversation are summarized in Figure 4. For a complete summary of SWOT results, see Appendix C.

Goals for SH 42

The following goals were developed for SH 42:

- Develop state, regional, and local partnerships to work cooperatively with all stakeholders to identify the preferred alternative
- Provide safe and convenient facilities for users of all ages and mobility levels
- Create a livable and distinctive place that invites users into downtown Louisville and announces the revitalization area
- Develop solutions that are sensitive to the context of the surrounding land uses
- Provide a supportive transportation system that enables urban revitalization and encourages private investment
- Provide safe and efficient access in strategic locations for proposed land uses
- Maximize opportunities for design features that appropriately reflect the context of the corridor
- Balance regional mobility and community livability
- Accommodate future regional transit plans
- Consider and balance the impacts upon natural, social and cultural resources
- Promote regional trail connectivity within the study area
- Design sustainable solutions
- Develop creative, cost-effective, and implementable solutions for immediate and long-term needs
- Emphasize the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists crossing the highway

Goals for the Underpass

The following goals were developed for the underpass:

- Create a safe and inviting connection under the BNSF Railway tracks that builds upon the character of downtown Louisville
- Provide a supportive environment for urban revitalization and private investment
- Maximize opportunities for public art
- Accommodate future regional transit plans
- Consider and balance the impacts upon natural, social and cultural resources
- Develop creative, cost-effective, and implementable solutions for immediate and long-term needs

Community Meetings

Three Community Meetings were held at strategic points through the project. The first meetings was held on November 9, 2011, and introduced the public to the project and reiterate the City's adopted vision for the Revitalization District. The first meeting brought over 60 citizens and business owners to what was the beginning of a The 42 Gateway project. After a presentation on this project and a transportation planning overview, attendees were given the opportunity to answer some broad and open-ended questions about this project and the Louisville community. Some of the major comments include:

- Lower speeds on SH 42
- Bike paths or zones
- Sidewalk or trail on Hwy 42.
- SH 42 functions as a bypass now, allowing those just passing through to avoid the pedestrian areas. Unless there is a major road to replace SH 42 (nearby), this still seems like its most useful function, without it, would there be more auto traffic on Main Street?
- SH 42 south of South Boulder Road should not become US 287 between Arapahoe and South Boulder Road.
- A Louisville by-pass is not good for Louisville.
- If you slow people down as they pass thru Louisville, they are more inclined to stop and buy something.
- 45 MPH prevails on existing SH 42 thru Louisville and Lafayette. For the foreseeable future that should be adequate, but right of way should include provision of easement for 4 lanes.
- Balancing traffic flow with competing place making and people oriented design. Louisville is a great City. Let's keep fast moving cars out of equation.
- Through traffic can choose 287 or 36.

For a full summary of comments received, please visit <http://www.the42gateway.com/project-work/kickoff-meeting-results/>.

A second meeting was held on April 18, 2012, and generated good conversation and insight from community leaders and citizens regarding the project purpose, project goals and existing conditions. The results of the SWOT analysis were presented at this meeting. Attendees provided comments on the existing conditions and the project goals. Some of the major and reoccurring comments included:

- Please widen Highway 42 for bike and pedestrians.
- Slow down traffic in Highway 42.
- Spruce Street should be closed at Highway 42 for safety and to lessen cut through (right in, right out will still be a hazard)
- Why no sidewalk built here? It can still be added and should be.
- Please lower the speed limit.
- Add an inviting sign and encourage public use.

In general, the attendees expressed an interest to see the Highway 42 goals oriented towards making the highway a safer, more user friendly environment, particularly for bicycles and pedestrians.

The third community meeting was held October 3, 2012, to present and discuss the project alternatives. After a presentation providing a project update and a review of transportation planning, attendees were given the opportunity to review the alternatives considered at each intersection. For the presentation and meeting materials, see Appendix A, Meeting Materials.



In addition to community meetings, the public was able to provide input at any time throughout the project via the project website, <http://www.the42gateway.com/>. Over the life of the project, many comments were received. Appendix L, Comments from Website, documents all of the comments received.



Welcome

This is **The 42 Gateway** project website. Here you can find everything about the project.

We can not emphasize strongly enough that this is **your project**. So get involved and tell us (and the city) what is important to you.



WHAT IS THIS PROJECT?

- A design and implementation plan for **Hwy 42** between Lock Street on the south and Paschal Drive on the north that balances the needs of the region and the City of Louisville.
- Design of a pedestrian and bicycle South Street connection between Downtown Louisville and the Revitalization District across the railroad tracks.

WHAT CAN BE FOUND HERE



Please **leave us a message**, sign up for a **e-mailing list**, see when and where **upcoming meetings** are, give us feedback, or find contact information for key people.



Here you will find both **background information** about the project and **current project** reports, presentation materials, and alternatives that are under review.



Get involved, this project is about **your goals, not ours**. Here are **questions**, interactive maps, and places for you to provide us with insight into your community.



News and information like meeting changes, reports, progress updates, milestone completion, and general information will be kept here.

Highway Alternative Development and Analysis

The first technical step in the alternatives analysis process documented the existing conditions of all properties within 300 feet of SH 42 between Lock Street and Paschal Drive. Existing conditions include factors such as environmental conditions, traffic operations, and documentation of overall character. This section summarizes the existing conditions of the 42 Gateway Project. For a full summary, see Appendix D, Environmental Existing Conditions, and Appendix E, Future Traffic Volume Forecasts.

Existing Conditions

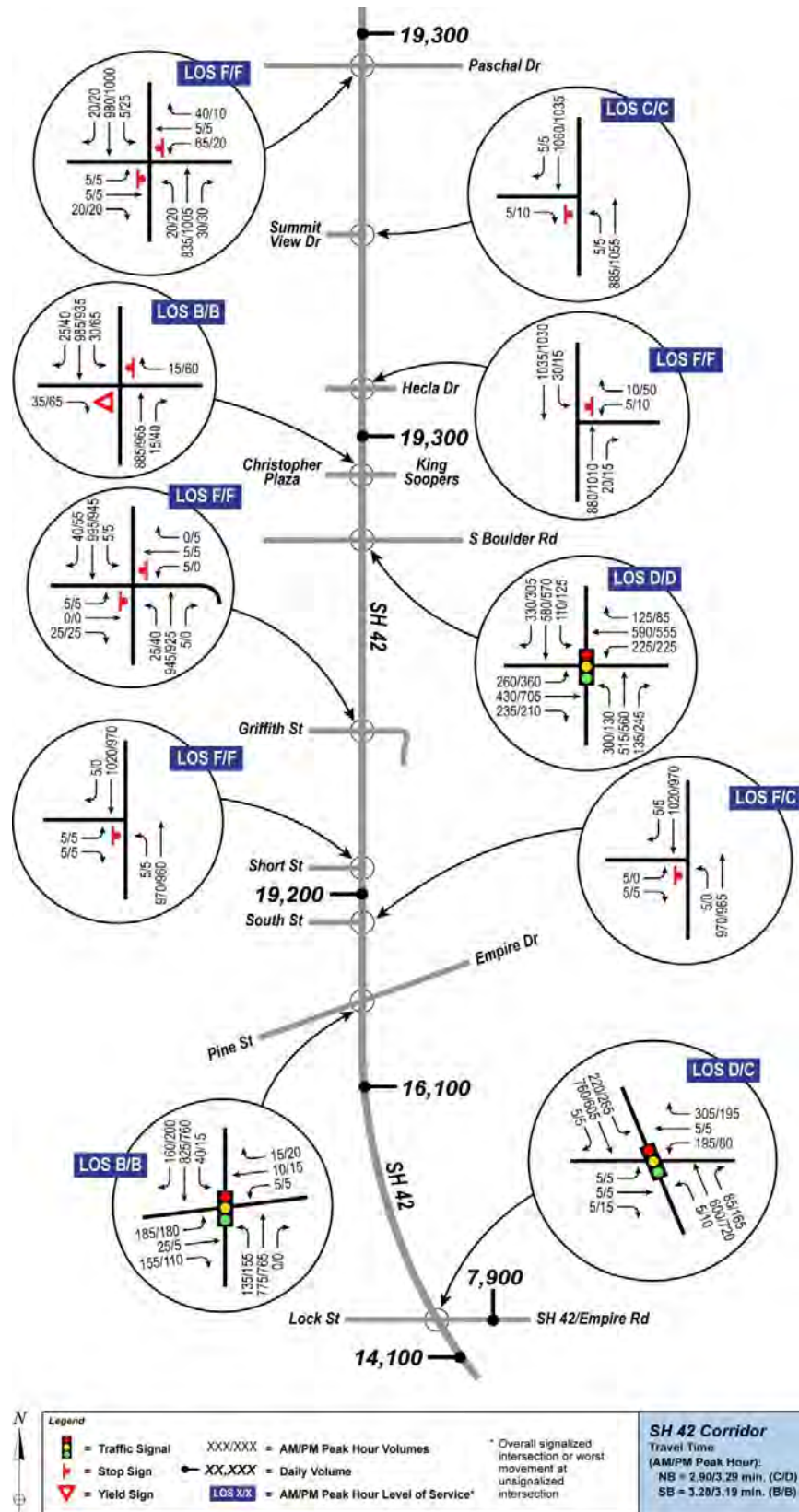
The SH 42 corridor from Lock Street to Paschal Drive can generally be physically characterized by relatively flat terrain on a straight, north-south alignment. The highway is currently situated in higher-speed, automobile-oriented environment, with the majority of the corridor being agricultural, industrial, and suburban strip retail land uses. The roadway provides limited pedestrian and bicycle facilities. Based on the physical condition of the corridor, traffic operations, and desired land uses, there are three distinct sections of the highway: from Lock Street to Pine Street, Pine Street to South Boulder Road, and South Boulder Road to Paschal Drive. The posted speed limit along the corridor from Lock Street to Pine Street is 40 miles per hour (MPH), 45 MPH from Pine Street to South Boulder Road and 50 MPH from South Boulder Road to Paschal Drive.

From Lock Street to Pine Street, the highway is a two-lane, rural highway with agriculture land uses on the east side and residential land uses setback on the west side of the roadway. Pine Street is the primary gateway intersection accessing downtown Louisville to the west. Between Pine Street and South Boulder Road, the highway parallels the Miner's Field neighborhood, the Little Italy neighborhood, and pockets of light industrial uses on the west. Two key section of this portion of the corridor (between South and Griffith and between Harper and South Boulder Road) represent the core area of the City's revitalization district. The Harney-Lastoka Open Space and the Louisville Sports Complex are located on the eastside of the highway. South Boulder Road is a major east-west corridor in Boulder County and its intersection with SH 42 represents the highest traffic volumes in the corridor. Two through lanes with dual left turns and auxiliary right turn lanes in each direction, surrounded by suburban commercial developments. The highway tapers back to a two-lane, rural highway north of South Boulder Road to Paschal Drive. This northern section of the corridor is primarily surrounded by agricultural land that is developing as suburban neighborhoods.

Traffic Characteristics

During the morning peak period (8:00 a.m.), it takes the average northbound driver approximately 2 minutes and 54 seconds to travel SH 42 from Lock Street to Paschal Drive. Similarly, it takes the average southbound driver approximately 3 minutes and 17 seconds. During the evening peak period (5:00 p.m.), it takes the average northbound driver approximately 3 minutes and 17 seconds to travel the corridor. Similarly, it takes the average southbound driver approximately 3 minutes and 11 seconds to travel the same route. Existing traffic operations are shown in Figure 5.

Figure 5. Existing Traffic Operations



Accident History

The Louisville Police Department reported 155 accidents from January 2005 to August 2011 along the project corridor. The 155 accidents involved 331 automobiles, resulting in 62 injuries and 1 fatality. The fatality reported just north of Short Street occurred in 2011. A second fatality occurred near the intersection of Griffith since the completion of the analysis.

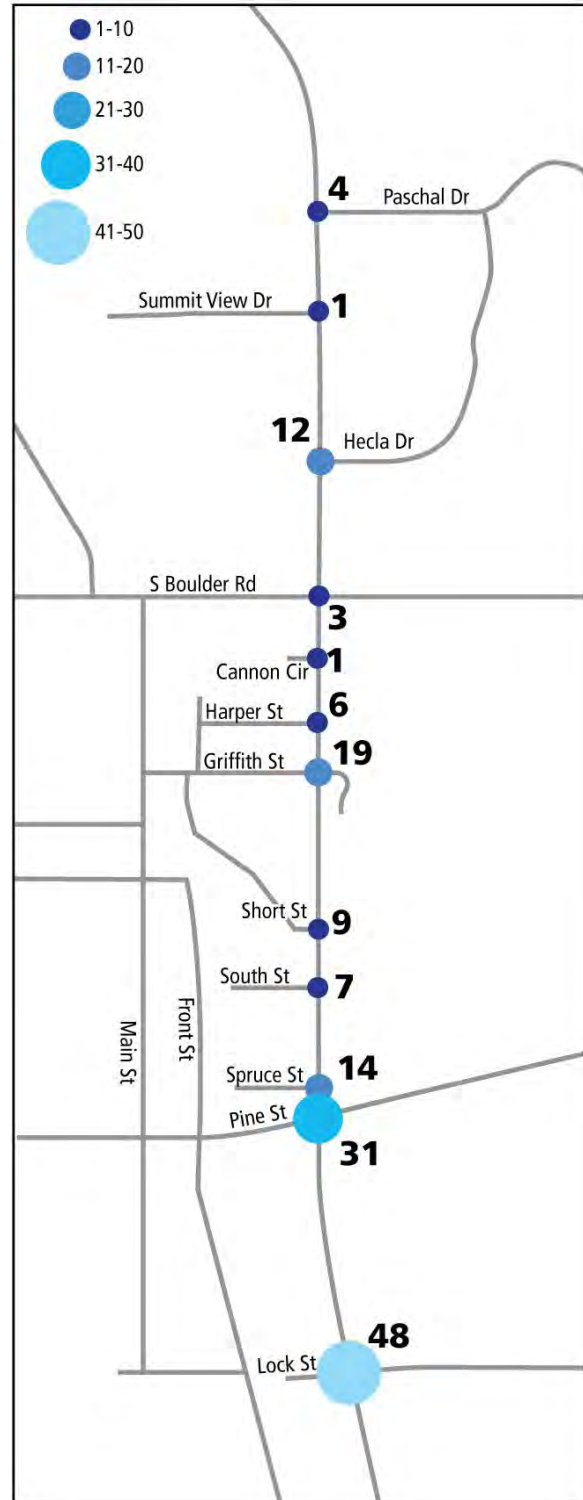
There are three intersections with high accident concentrations: Lock Street/Empire Road, Pine Street/Empire Drive, and Griffith Street. At Lock Street/Empire Road and Pine Street/Empire Drive, careless driving and failure to stop or yield account for more than 60 percent of the accidents (63 percent and 74 percent, respectively). Reported accidents by intersection are shown in Figure 6. For the complete Safety Assessment Report, see Appendix F.

2035 Future No-Action Conditions

There are several changes that are assumed to be part of the No-Action conditions, including the following intersections:

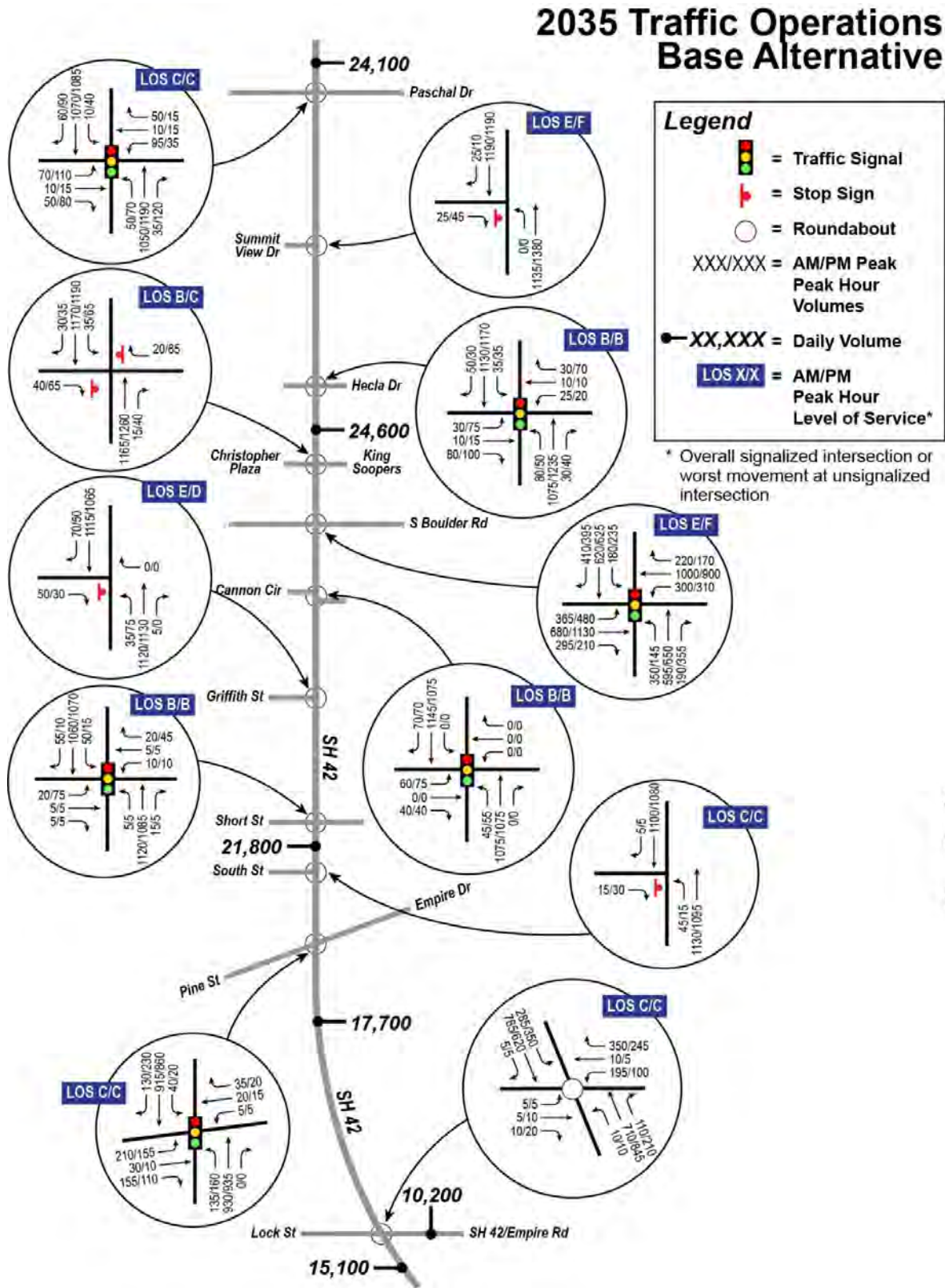
- Paschal Drive – the intersection will be signalized as part of the Steel Ranch development in Louisville and the Indian Peaks development in Lafayette on the west side of the corridor.
- Hecla Drive – the intersection’s signalization will occur as Boulder County develops the Alkonis Property on the west side of the intersection.
- Cannon Circle – a new full access signalized intersection will be installed with retail/commercial development on the west side of the intersection.
- Short Street – the intersection will be signalized as part of the redevelopment of the City’s Revitalization District and the construction of the new trail connection between downtown (Downtown Gateway - BNSF underpass) and trails/parks facilities on the east side of SH 42. This signal will also serve the proposed Lafayette Soccer fields and eventual parking facilities for RTD’s Northwest Rail station.

Figure 6. Louisville Police Department Reported Accidents



Under the No-Action 2035 conditions, the SH 42 corridor experiences operational issues with traffic building up along the highway during the peak hours, as shown in Figure 7. The South Boulder Road intersection is projected to operate at a level of service (LOS) F in the evening peak hour with 2- to 3-minute delays on the eastbound approach, the northbound through movement, and southbound left-turn movements.

Figure 7. 2035 No-Action Traffic Operations



At Griffith Street, the unsignalized, full-movement intersection would operate at LOS F during both peak periods with substantial delay for drivers turning attempting to enter SH 42 from Griffith. The Griffith intersection also presents increasing pedestrian crossing issues as residents continue to cross SH 42 at this unsignalized location to get to the open space and trails east of the roadway. The traffic signals at Short Street, Pine Street, and Lock Street would operate with acceptable overall LOS, but substantial northbound and southbound queues would build during the peak hours and impact upstream intersections.

Alternatives Evaluated

Alternatives were developed for the highway and for every intersection on SH 42 from Paschal Drive to Lock Street. Highway alternatives were developed that included three-lane with local street network enhancements option and a five-lane configuration. A three-lane with local network configuration is similar to existing highway conditions, with one through lane. Improvements would include a physical median and specific intersection improvements at Locke Street. Local network enhancement would create local access connections parallel to SH 42 between Pine Street and Paschal Drive. The five-lane configuration would add a through lane in both directions.

Five-Lane Alternative

The forecasted travel time to travel the highway between Paschal Drive and Lock Street was compared for three-lane and five-lane corridor alternatives that included the preferred configurations from the intersection alternatives evaluation. Travel time savings for the five-lane facility in the peak hours is estimated to be less than 1 minute faster than three-lane option. A complete comparison of 2035 travel times is illustrated in Table 3.

Table 3. 2035 Corridor Travel Times

Scenario/Direction	Morning Peak (minutes)	Evening Peak (minutes)
2035 No-Action		
Northbound	4.84	6.01
Southbound	4.85	4.98
2035 Five-Lane		
Northbound	4.20	4.76
Southbound	4.02	3.97
2035 Three-Lane		
Northbound	4.44	5.65
Southbound	4.55	4.86

Expanding the corridor to five lanes would require the acquisition of private property and publically owned open space for right of way. Impacts would include required acquisition of historic properties such as Miner's Field and residential property in Little Italy and Miner's field.

Right-of-way requirements of the five-lane alternative along the impacts on historic and natural resources were deemed to be impractical given the limited travel time savings. As a result the five-lane alternative was eliminated from consideration. Traffic projections further suggest that one lane in each direction will be sufficient to carry the necessary traffic, as long as there are turn lanes and acceleration/deceleration

lanes at the major intersections. Multi-lane configurations of South Boulder Road and Lock Street will remain. Construction limit impacts for the five-lane alternative are illustrated on Figure 8.

Figure 8. Five-Lane Construction Limit Impacts



Intersection Alternatives

Context-sensitive alternatives were developed for each intersection along the corridor. Intersection alternatives evaluated intersections types such as:

- Right-in, right-out access
- Three-quarter access
- Full movement intersection
- Signalized intersection (with offset lefts)
- Two-lane roundabout
- Street closures with public amenities - "mews"

The following section summarizes the three-lane alternative's individual intersection improvements and why the preferred alternative was selected based on the project's purpose and need statement and established project goals. The preferred alternative for the highway is a combination of the intersection modifications and access management strategies. Local street network improvements are critical to the ultimate success of the three-lane alternative. Local network enhancements will allow residents and employers in the corridor to access their homes and businesses without using SH42. These local network connections will extend the ultimate capacity of a three-lane SH42, preserving the small town character of Louisville. The ultimate configuration of the corridor and individual intersections is dependent on enhancement to the City's local street network. Recommended local network improvements are shown in

Figure 9 will enable CDOT and the City to manage access on SH42 and improve the roadways efficiency and safety. The plan outlines a staged implementation strategy to further manage access to the SH42 corridor as local network connections are improved.

Figure 9. Future Roadway Network



Table 4 summarizes the alternatives considered at individual intersections.

Table 4. Intersection Alternatives Considered

Intersection	Alternatives Considered
Paschal Drive	Signalized intersection with offset lefts 1-lane roundabout 2-lane roundabout
Summit View Drive	$\frac{3}{4}$ access right in, right out access
Hecla Drive	Signalized intersection with offset lefts
Cannon Circle	$\frac{3}{4}$ access Full-movement intersection
Harper Street	Right-in, right-out access
Griffith Street	$\frac{3}{4}$ access Full-movement intersection
Caledonia Street	$\frac{3}{4}$ access
Short Street	Signalized intersection with offset lefts
South Street	$\frac{3}{4}$ access; Right-in, right-out access
Spruce Street	Closure with turnaround Closure with mews
Pine Street	Signalized intersection with offset lefts 2-lane roundabout
Lee Street Connection	Internal roadway network connection
Lock Street	2-lane roundabout

Paschal Drive

Pascal Drive is assumed to be signalized in the future as part of the Steel Ranch and Indian Peaks developments. Two alternatives considered included a signalized intersection with offset left turn lanes as well as a one and two-lane roundabout.

The future traffic volumes to/from the Steel Ranch development were taken from the development traffic impact study. The LOS for a signalized intersection is estimated to be LOS C in the 2035 in both the morning and evening peak hours. The LOS for a one-lane roundabout is estimated to be LOS F in the 2035 morning and evening peak hours with the northbound and southbound approaches experiencing delays of over 3 minutes. A two-lane roundabout alternative would operate at LOS B during the 2035 morning peak hour, but would also create issues with right-of-way impacts, as well as some real difficulties for pedestrian, bicycle facilities and transit service through the intersection. Based on the

alternatives analysis, the recommended alternative for Paschal Drive is the signalized intersection with offset left-turn lanes, as shown in Figure 10.

The signalized alternative will be designed for sidewalks, bike lanes, and transit stops, as needed. Offset left-turn lanes with a raised median separation will improve vehicle sight lines and provide a refuge for pedestrians crossing SH 42. Over-time, as local street network connections occur through the Street Ranch Development, the project team recommends minimizing the number of separate right-turn and acceleration lanes to facilitate multi-modal movements and improving by reducing the crossing distance, reducing turning traffic speeds, and allowing RTD bus stops to remain within the travel lane (making it easier for buses to move back into traffic after a stop).

An eastbound to southbound acceleration lane will be constructed with the Steel Ranch Development in the near-term. However, it is recommended this acceleration lane be removed as local street connections occur. CDOT requires completion of an updated traffic study that would include new traffic counts and the construction of a new parallel roadway to SH 42 between Paschal and South Boulder Road before the acceleration lane can be considered for removal.

Summit View Drive

The preferred road configuration between Paschal Drive and Summit View Drive is one lane in each direction. The addition a median, on-street bike lanes and a sidewalk on the west side are included as the preferred alternative. Right-in-and right-out access points shall be maintained between these intersections.

Alternatives considered for Summit View Drive intersection include a right-in/right-out and a $\frac{3}{4}$ -movement intersection (accommodating a northbound left). The $\frac{3}{4}$ -movement intersection would operate similar to the right-in/right-out configuration and is consistent with the configuration in the Steel Ranch development traffic impact study. A speed table, or raised crosswalk, will be added to the pedestrian crossing on the west side of SH 42, as seen in Figure 11. As local street network connections occur between Paschal Drive and South Boulder Road, it is recommended to further restrict access to Summit View Drive to a right-in-right-out configuration.

Hecla Drive

From Summit View Drive to Hecla Drive, the preferred near-term road configuration is one lane in each direction a continuous left-turn lane with bike lanes and a sidewalk on the west side of the roadway. In the long-term, as local street connections occur, it is recommended a raised median be introduced and private access points be limited to right-in-right-out configurations, as shown in Figure 11.

Half-way between Summit View Drive and Hecla Drive, a pedestrian and trail underpass will be constructed. This underpass will facilitate a trail crossing of SH42, connecting the Steel Ranch Community to the North End Neighborhood. Ultimately, this underpass will provide a City-wide connection linking the City of Lafayette and Wanaka Lake to Louisville's: Hecla Lake, north open space, Harper Lake, Davison Mesa, Boulder County's Marshall Mesa, and ultimately Eldorado Canyon State Park. Sidewalks are included on both sides of the road from Hecla Drive to the trail underpass, and only on the west side north of the trail underpass.

The recommended alternatives for Hecla Drive intersection includes a traffic signal with offset left-turn lanes and transit prioritization. The LOS for a signalized intersection is estimated to be LOS B in the 2035 morning and evening peak hours. A second southbound through lane is developed north of Hecla Drive that will operate as a shared through/right lane. These lanes connect to the southbound through lanes

that exist at South Boulder Road. Northbound SH 42 has two through lanes extending north of Hecla Drive where the outside through lane merges to one lane. The highway transitions into the current configuration between Hecla Drive to South Boulder Road, with slight modifications to the existing island median and the introduction of speed tables through the dedicated right turn lanes.

The intersection improvements will be designed for sidewalks, bike lanes, and transit stops, as needed. Offset left-turn lanes with a raised median separation will provide a refuge for pedestrians crossing the highway. Minimizing the number of separate right-turn and acceleration lanes will also facilitate multi-modal movements by reducing the crossing distance, slowing down turning traffic, and keeping bus stops within the travel lane.

Figure 10. Paschal Drive Preferred Alternative



Figure 11. Summit View Drive and Hecla Drive Preferred Alternative



South Boulder Road

No intersection alternatives were considered for South Boulder Road. The intersection is assumed to remain as it is today because intersection improvements and reconstruction took place in 2010. The LOS under the 2035 conditions is expected to be LOS E in the morning peak hour and LOS F in the evening peak hour. This section will include, transit signal prioritization, speed tables for the right-turn lanes, minor landscaping improvements and other transitional improvements, as shown in Figure 12. Access points are maintained. Between South Boulder Road and Cannon Circle the highway transitions from five-lanes to three-lanes.

Cannon Circle

A traffic signal is the recommended alternative at Cannon Circle as agreed upon with the development on the west side of the highway. The traffic signal will include offset, or skewed, east and west approaches to accommodate full access to the Harney Lastoka Open Space farmstead driveway. This skew is shown in Figure 13. The signal timing for this intersection will be split phased. The LOS for this intersection is estimated to be LOS B in the 2035 morning and evening peak hours.

Harper Street

From Canon Circle to Harper Street, the road will maintain one-lane in each direction, similar to existing conditions, with the addition of a raised median, bike lanes, a sidewalk on the west side. A recreational crusherfine trail will be provided the east side within the Harney-Lastoka Open Space.

The only alternative recommended for Harper Street is a right-in, right-out configuration. Harper Street should be modified to restrict access, only allowing right in and right out in the southbound direction to prevent any conflict with on-coming traffic. Access would not be provided to Harper Street in the northbound direction.

Griffith Street

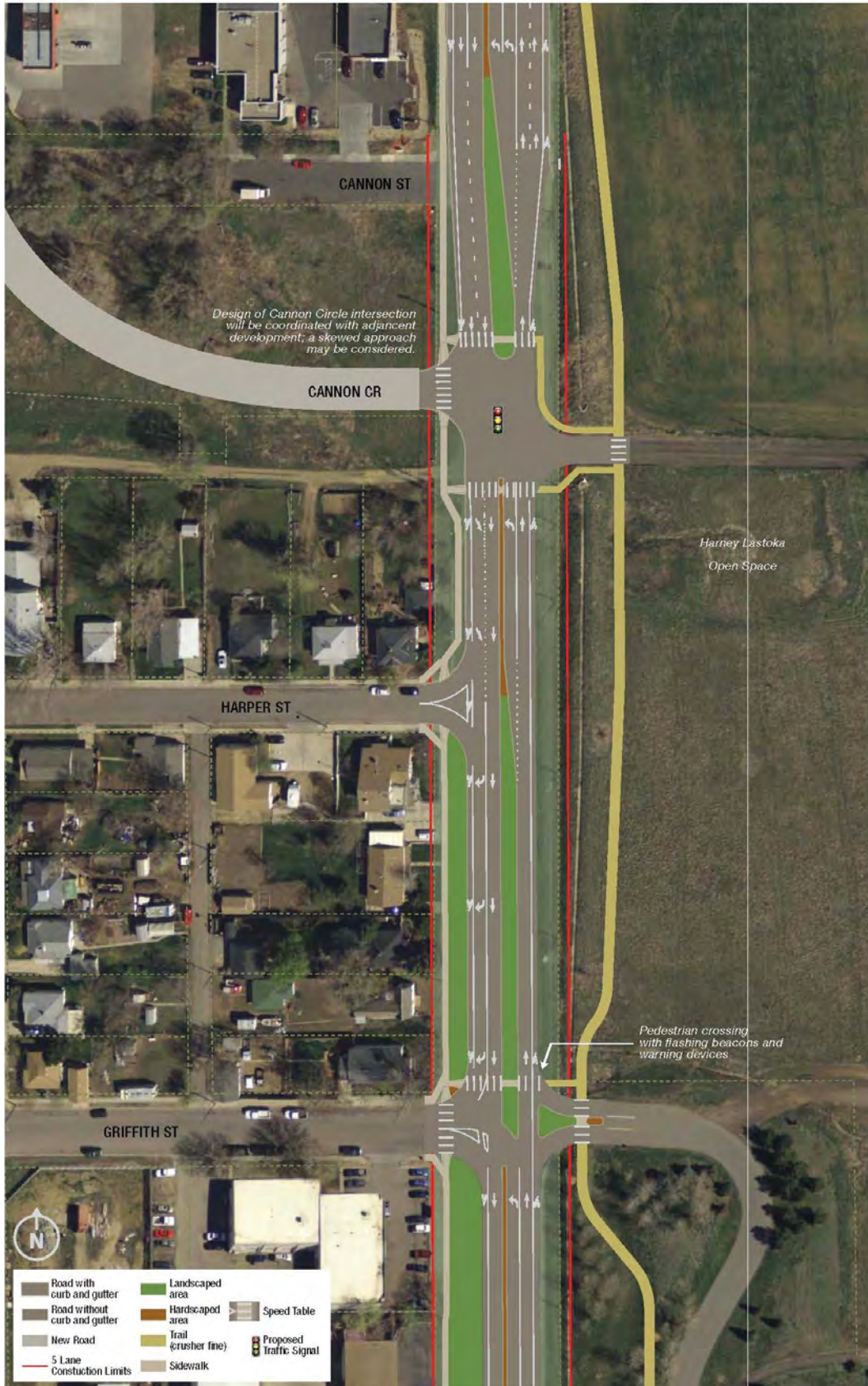
The preferred configuration between Harper Street and Griffith Street is one-lane in each direction with a raised median, bike lanes and includes sidewalk on the west side and the recreational trail on the east side. There is a dedicated right-turn lane in the southbound direction, as shown in Figure 13. The driveways accessing the highway between Harper Street and Griffith Street are recommended to be eliminated with access provided from an improved alley at the back of the properties. CDOT will require that this be documented and an access modification to be submitted to make this a formal agreement. Under the preferred alternative, alley improvements will be provided by the City.

Alternatives considered for Griffith Street include an unsignalized, full-movement intersection as well as a $\frac{3}{4}$ -movement intersection. The unsignalized, full-movement intersection at Griffith Street would operate at a LOS F for the 2035 morning and evening peaks with very high side street delay. The unsignalized $\frac{3}{4}$ -movement intersection would operate at a LOS E during the 2035 morning peak hour and at LOS D during the 2035 evening peak hour. A raised median on the north leg of the intersection would provide a pedestrian refuge in the center of the highway to facilitate the desired pedestrian crossing at this location. The preferred alternative would be the unsignalized $\frac{3}{4}$ -movement intersection that restricts access, only allowing access to the west in the southbound direction. Access to the east and west will be provided in the northbound direction. The introduction of the $\frac{3}{4}$ movement will occur concurrent with the construction of the City of Lafayette Soccer fields and internal street connections between Griffith and South Boulder Road.

Figure 12. South Boulder Road



Figure 13. Cannon Circle, Harper Street and Griffith Street Preferred Alternative



Caledonia Street and South Street

From Griffith Street to the proposed signalized intersection at South Street, the road will maintain one lane in each direction with a raised median, bike lanes and includes a sidewalk on the west side and the recreational trail on the east side. Full access points are maintained in the near term. However, as the Cannon Street connection between Griffith and Short Street occurs, the City recommends introducing the raised median and limiting business access to right-in- right-out configurations. The proposed Caledonia Street connection is a long-term expectation of private development. This street will only be developed with properties redevelopment. The final configuration is included as a part of the recommended alternative and will be included with restricted access to the highway as a right-in, right-out intersection, as shown in Figure 14.

Short Street is the anticipated location for access to the existing Louisville/Lafayette Sports Complex, Louisville Revitalization District, and the proposed Northwest Rail RTD station overflow parking area. A traffic signal is assumed at this location as agreed upon with the construction of the BNSF underpass that will facilitate the trail connection and redevelopment in addition to the development of the RTD station area for downtown Louisville. The Short Street intersection is shown in Figure 14. The LOS for a signalized intersection is estimated to be LOS B in the 2035 morning and evening peak hours. The signal provides added safety for pedestrian crossing of the highway.

The intersection improvements will be designed for sidewalks, bike lanes, and transit stops/and prioritization as needed. The offset left-turn lanes with a raised median separation will provide a refuge for pedestrians crossing SH 42. Minimizing the number of separate right-turn and acceleration lanes will also facilitate multi-modal movements by reducing the crossing distance, slowing down turning traffic, and keeping bus stops within the travel lane.

Figure 14. Caledonia Street and Short Street Preferred Alternative



South Street

From Short Street to South Street, the road is one lane in each direction with bike lanes and includes a sidewalk on the west side and a recreational trail on the east side.

The preferred alternative at South Street includes a $\frac{3}{4}$ -movement intersection. The unsignalized $\frac{3}{4}$ -movement intersection would operate at a LOS E during the 2035 morning peak hour and at LOS D during the 2035 evening peak hour. South Street would be modified to restrict access, not allowing access from the west to northbound highway. The planned downtown connection into Louisville is planned at South Street under the BNSF tracks as described later in this report.

Spruce Street

From South Street to Spruce Street, the road is one lane in each direction with a raised median, bike lane and includes a sidewalk on the west side and a trail on the east side. Access points are maintained. After the completion of the planned internal roadway network, Spruce Street will be closed to highway access, and a mews, or landscaped area, will be included along the closure/highway. The Spruce Street closure and mews is shown in Figure 15.

Two-local network connections are required in association with the closing of Spruce Street: 1) Extending Cannon Street between South Street and Short Street; and, 2) Extending Lee Street from Spruce to Pine Street. The Cannon extension is expected to occur with the redevelopment of the City's revitalization district. The Lee Street extension will require City initiative and shall only occur when redevelopment request along the north side of Pine Street occurs.

Pine Street

Just north of Spruce Street, the roadway section expands from one lane in each direction to include right- and left-turn lanes. Bike lanes are also included. A detached sidewalk is included on the west, and the recreational trail through the Harney Lastoka Open Space starts on the east side starting at Pine Street and extending to the north.

Alternatives considered for Pine Street included a signalized intersection and a roundabout. The LOS for a signalized intersection is estimated to be LOS C in the 2035 morning and evening peak hours. An eastbound free right-turn lane with a southbound acceleration lane facilitates traffic movement from downtown Louisville to southbound SH 42. The LOS for a two-lane roundabout is estimated to be LOS C in the 2035 morning and evening peak hours. The two-lane roundabout would create issues with where to add and drop the extra lanes, perceived difficulties for bike lane and transit stop locations, and property impacts surrounding the intersection. The recommended alternative is the traffic signal with offset left-turn lanes.

The signalized intersection will be designed for sidewalks, bike lanes, and transit stops/and prioritization as needed. The southbound right-turn lane and acceleration lane may be designed and operated as a bus queue jump lane when transit is introduced to the corridor. Offset left-turn lanes with a raised median separation will provide a refuge for pedestrians crossing the highway.

Figure 15. South Street, Spruce Street, and Pine Street Preferred Alternative



Lee Street Connection

A new connection is proposed to connect Lee Street to Pine Street. As discussed earlier, the ultimate preferred highway alternative is dependent on additional transportation facilities being built internally to the city street network. The Lee Street connection is a key connection needed to establish this internal network. The City will initiate this connection as the surrounding land redevelops. The Lee Street connection is shown in Figure 15.

Lock Street

From Pine Street to Lock Street, the road is one lane in each direction with a raised median and bike lanes. Sidewalks are not included in this section of the highway, as seen in Figure 16. Near Lock Street, the section expands to two lanes in the southbound direction in advance of the intersection, while in the northbound direction the two lanes from the intersection merge into one.

The two intersection types considered at this location include the existing traffic signal and a two-lane roundabout. The LOS for a signalized intersection is estimated to be LOS C in the 2035 morning peak hour and LOS D in the evening peak hour. The LOS for a two-lane roundabout is estimated to be LOS C during the 2035 morning and evening peak hours. The recommended alternative at Lock Street is the two-lane roundabout. The roundabout will realize the operational benefits, establish speed expectations and become the southern gateway into the city. Landscaping features, way finding, and other gateway elements will be incorporated into the design of the roundabout to create a distinct gateway.

Figure 16. Lock Street Preferred Alternative



Traffic Operational Analysis

The complete highway corridor alternative was established by combining the recommended intersection configurations at each location and in part, based on the operational analysis. The operations of the intersection alternatives are summarized in Table 5 and fully explained in Appendix H, Multimodal Transportation Assessment memo.

Table 5. Intersection Operations

Intersection/Alternative	2035 AM Peak Hour		2035 PM Peak Hour	
	LOS	Delay	LOS	Delay
Paschal Drive				
*Signalized with Offset Lefts	C	22.3	C	21.8
Roundabout (2 lanes)	B	13.4	C	20.2
Summit View Drive				
Unsignalized Right-in/Right-out	E	46.3	F	56.9
*Unsignalized $\frac{3}{4}$ Movement	E	49.2	F	58.7
Hecla Drive				
*Signalized with Offset Lefts	B	10.2	B	12.0
South Boulder Road				
*Signalized (existing configuration)	E	66.5	F	111.0
Cannon Circle				
*Signalized with Eastbound Leg	B	15.0	B	19.3
Griffith Street				
Unsignalized Full Movement	F	917.5	F	738.8
*Unsignalized $\frac{3}{4}$ Movement	E	39.3	D	27.9
Short Street				
*Signalized	B	10.5	B	13.3
South Street				
*Unsignalized $\frac{3}{4}$ Movement	C	23.3	C	23.5
Pine Street/Empire Drive				
*Signalized- Offset Lefts & Eastbound Free Right	C	28.8	C	22.5
Roundabout (2 lanes)	C	17.0	C	15.2
Lock Street/SH42 (Empire Road)				
Signalized	C	28.8	D	47.8
*Roundabout (2 lanes)	C	22.4	C	15.9

***Recommended alternative**

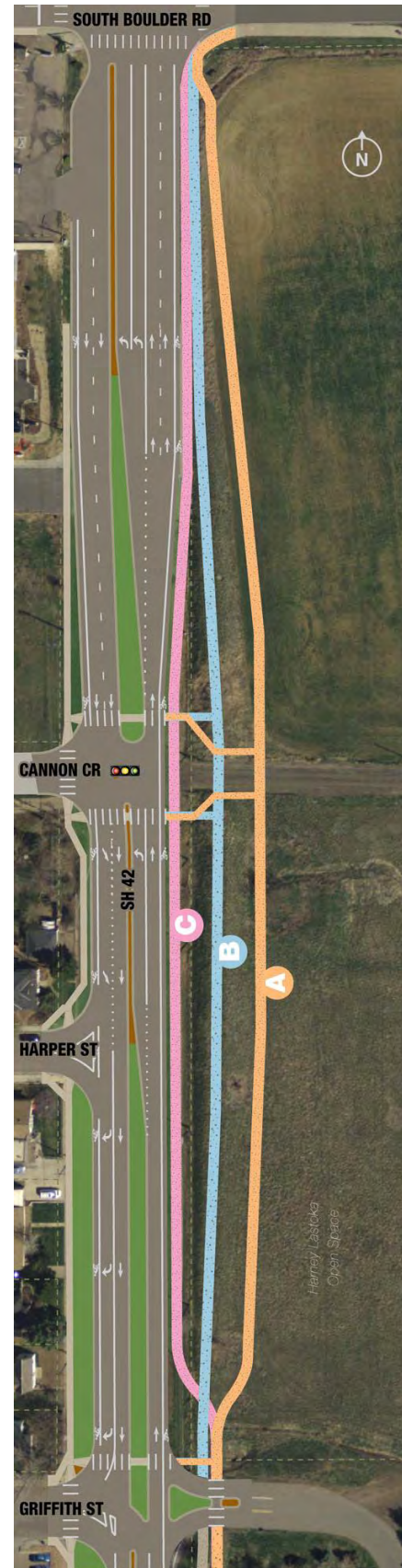
Trail Routes

One of the other major goals of the project is to provide improved trail connections throughout the corridor. The following alternatives were considered for a trail on the west side of the highway along the open space:

- **No-action.** The no-action alternative would not require any investment, but would not provide any additional connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists.
- **Trail adjacent to SH 42.** The trail would have minor impact to open space. Pedestrians and cyclists using the trail would be located immediately next to traffic. Option C in Figure 17 shows this alignment.
- **Trail atop the irrigation berm in the open space.** The pedestrians and cyclists would be moved away from the highway; however, there would be impacts to the open space and irrigation facilities. Option B in Figure 17 shows this option.
- **Trail adjacent to the east side of the berm.** This trail alternative would be located on the east side of the berm. This location would provide the best overall experience for trail users because it would provide the greatest buffer from the traffic, noise, and visual impacts of the highway. Option A in Figure 17 shows this alignment.

Extensive coordination has been conducted with Boulder County and the City of Lafayette on the potential trail alignment. The preferred alignment is to the east side of the berm, which has been agreed upon by owners, but will require an amendment to the open space master plan.

Figure 17. Trail Route Options



Costs and Roadway Implementation

The implementation of the Highway 42 Corridor improvements will require the cooperation of a number of vested partners. The nature of the recommended improvement will require a stage approach and will ultimately be timed with the private development community and their ultimate construction of the City's local street network improvements. It is currently anticipated this project will be implemented in two-phases: near term (0-5 years) and the long-term (5+ years).

City staff is currently pursuing the near-term initiatives as a single project in cooperation with Boulder County and the Colorado Department of Transportation. The following tables outline the recommended phasing and total costs of the project. The initial project assumes no local street network enhancements being implemented. Long-term improvements and further access controls and safety improvements for the corridor should occur with local street network enhancement provided by the private sector through the development review process.

Table 6. Implementation Table

IMPROVEMENT	NEAR TERM (0-5 Years)		LONG TERM (5+ Years)		PARTNERS		
	Configuration	Cost (in thousands)	Configuration	Cost (in thousands)	CDOT	Boulder County/ Lafayette	Private Land Owners
<i>Paschal Drive Intersection</i>	<i>Signalized, full movement</i>	\$425	<i>Complete</i>	\$0	X	L	
Paschal Drive to Summit View Drive Segment	Final configuration with southbound acceleration lane at Paschal Drive	\$1,200	Removal of southbound acceleration lane at Paschal Drive when local street network connects from Paschal Drive to South Boulder Road	\$50	X		X
<i>Summit View Drive Intersection</i>	<i>Unsignalized, 3/4 movement</i>	\$0	<i>Unsignalized right-in, right-out upon extension of Hecla Drive to SH 42 and extension of Kaylix Avenue to Hecla Drive</i>	\$0	X		X
Summit View Drive to Hecla Drive Segment	Final configuration without median	\$1,750	Final configuration upon extension of Hecla Drive to SH 42 and extension of Kaylix Avenue to Hecla Drive	\$200	X		X
<i>Hecla Drive Intersection</i>	<i>Unsignalized, full movement</i>	\$0	<i>Signalized, full movement upon extension of Hecla Drive</i>	\$425	X		X
Hecla Drive to South Boulder Road Segment	Final configuration	\$1,400	Complete	\$0	X		
<i>South Boulder Road Intersection</i>	<i>Current configuration with addition of raised crosswalks at free right turns</i>	\$50	<i>Complete</i>	\$0	X		
South Boulder Rodd to Cannon Circle Segment	Final configuration	\$1,000	Complete	\$0	X		X
<i>Cannon Circle Intersection</i>	<i>Unsignalized, full movement</i>	\$0	<i>Signalized, full movement upon extension of Cannon Circle</i>	\$425	X		X
Cannon Circle to Griffith Street Segment	Final configuration including a commitment from the City to plow the alley between Harper Street and Griffith Street as well as alley lighting improvements	\$1,300	Complete		X		X
<i>Griffith Street Intersection</i>	<i>Unsignalized, full movement</i>	\$0	<i>Unsignalized, 3/4 movement upon signalization of Short Street and Lafayette ball fields entrance completion</i>	\$100	X	L & BC	
Griffith Street to Short Street Segment	Final configuration without median	\$2,250	Final configuration upon extension of Cannon Street between Griffith Street and South Street	\$200	X		X
<i>Short Street Intersection</i>	<i>Signalized, full movement upon completion of underpass of railroad tracks at South Street and a signal warrant</i>	\$425	<i>Signalized, full movement with connection to ball fields</i>	\$100	X	L	
Short Street to South Street Segment	Final configuration	\$650	Complete	\$0	X		

IMPROVEMENT	NEAR TERM (0-5 Years)		LONG TERM (5+ Years)		PARTNERS		
	Configuration	Cost (in thousands)	Configuration	Cost (in thousands)	CDOT	Boulder County/ Lafayette	Private Land Owners
South Street Intersection	Unsignalized, full movement	\$0	Unsignalized, 3/4 movement when Cannon Street extends to South Street	\$0	X		X
South Street to Pine Street Segment	Final configuration	\$2,600	Complete	\$0	X		
Pine Street Intersection	Signalized, full movement	\$425	Complete	\$0	X		
Pine Street to Lock Street Segment	Final configuration	\$1,000	Complete	\$0	X		
Lock Street Intersection	Roundabout	\$3,000	Complete	\$0	X		

Local Network Connections (costs to be determined)

- Kaylix Avenue through Davidson Highline
- Kaylix Avenue cross access easement through Christopher Plaza
- Lee Avenue extension

Trail Connections

Trail Connections	Cost
Underpass at Summit View Drive	Incorporated into Summit View Drive to Hecla Road Segment
Harney Lastoka, soft surface open space trail	Incorporated in all roadway segments from South Boulder Road to Pine Street
Soccer field trail extension to Coal Creek Trail	Incorporated into Griffith Street to Short Street Segment

Transit

A transit route alignment along SH 42 was considered as a part of this project. Population and employment densities along the potential route are anticipated to more than double from 2010 to 2035, which is an indication that the routes may provide needed transit service in the future. Furthermore, RTD's north-south transit coverage in the Northwest corridor between McCaslin Boulevard and US287 in Lafayette is insufficient.

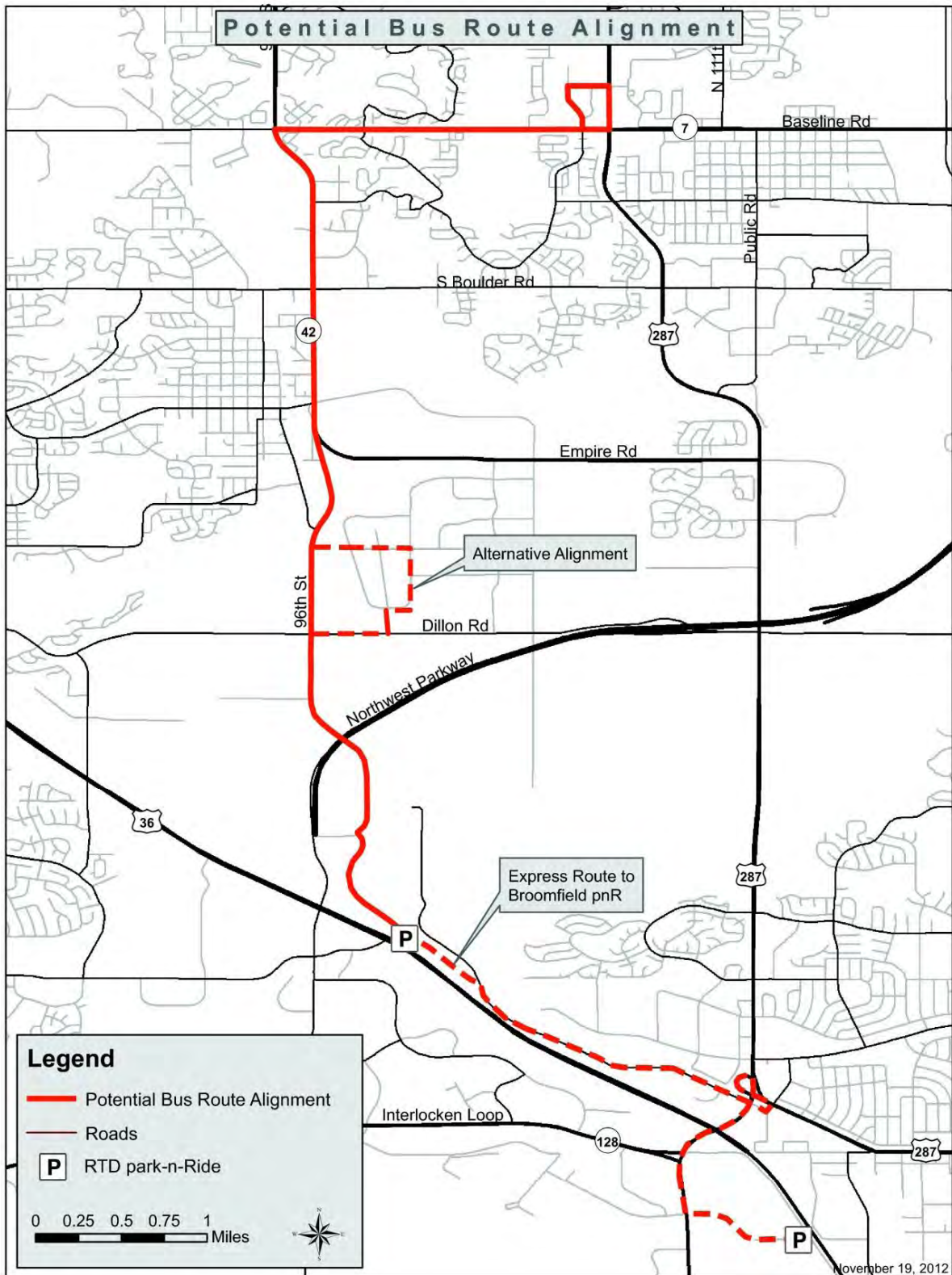
Route comparison and ridership analysis for a potential enhanced local transit route along SH42 connecting Erie, Louisville, and Lafayette with park-n-Rides (PnR) along US 36 was conducted for Boulder County in 2007. Two route alignments were under consideration, including one route concept advanced by RTD service planners. The first option, recommended by Boulder County and known as the 96L Option, was to create a new route with an alignment extending from the Erie Community Center to the East Flatiron Circle PnR. The second option, developed by RTD, included the modification/extension of existing routes (Route 76 and the JUMP) rather than the creation of a new route.

The analysis of these two route options showed the RTD Option resulting in a greater increase in boardings and linked transit trips than the 96L Option. The 96L Option, however, would provide greater access to many residential areas of Louisville. Both options were anticipated to carry comparable costs. In 2008, a new bus route, the Lynx, began operating between downtown Louisville and the US 36 corridor. Additionally, the existing JUMP route was extended to the town of Erie. In 2010, the Lynx service was discontinued as part of RTD's May 2010 service changes.

The route alignment considered for this project is similar to the 96L alignment considered in 2007, but does not travel west of SH 42 into Louisville or extend north to Erie, as seen in Figure 18. For this analysis, it was assumed the route would begin in the Wal-Mart parking lot northwest of the US 287/SH 7 intersection. The "base alignment" route would follow Baseline Road, SH 42, and 96th Street before stopping at the US 36/E Flatiron Circle PnR. From there, the route would extend as non-stop express service to the US 36/Broomfield PnR adjacent to the Firstbank Event Center. In addition, an alternative route alignment was considered with stops at the future Colorado Technological Center (CTC) east of 96th Street and north of Dillon Road. A future variant would be considered as the 400 acre Phillip 66 property develops.

Providing transit service along the corridor is a mix of meeting the needs of the surrounding communities while offering the highest potential for ridership in a cost-effective manner. Local mobility needs, gaps in the current transit system, future land use plans, potential ridership estimates, and cost effectiveness should all factor into the final route determination. For a full summary of socioeconomic data and potential ridership, see Appendix I.

Figure 18. Potential Bus Routes



Redevelopment Area and “Gateway” Underpass

The proposed pedestrian “Gateway” underpass of the BNSF Railway line is located adjacent to the intersection of South Street and Front Street in Downtown Louisville. The underpass must meet BNSF, American Railway Engineering and Maintenance Association, and Louisville structural design criteria, which limits the design of the structure and basic geometric framework. Work was completed to determine the structure type and horizontal/vertical clearance.



Proposed underpass location, looking east from South Street.

Redevelopment Area

The mixed-use redevelopment area (MURD) is a key component of this project. The redevelopment area is the land surrounded by South Boulder Road, SH 42, Pine Street, and the BNSF railroad, as shown in Figure 19. This area was recently rezoned from industrial to a combination of mixed-use residential and commercial specifically to enable redevelopment. The current level of building intensity is significantly lower than that envisioned in the City’s Master Plan. The mixed-use residential and commercial areas have potential to provide approximately 750,000 square feet of additional development.

Figure 19. Land Use Plan



The character of both the former industrial areas and existing commercial are envisioned to change significantly over time. Industrial is no longer permitted anywhere in the Mixed-use Redevelopment Area. Secondly, the new CC and MU-R districts will increase the mixing of uses in a pedestrian, or urban character. The end result is a gradual transition of the redevelopment area from a highway-oriented, light-industrial, pedestrian un-friendly area to a more intensely developed mix of commercial and residential uses (more “main street”-like), that is pedestrian-friendly, and functions very much as a walk-able extension of the downtown.

Design constraints

To meet the goals established for the downtown connection, the project team determined that the structure should be wide and inviting for pedestrians and cyclists. Figure 20 shows the conceptual underpass entrance looking east from South Street. To be successful, it is vital that development adjacent to the underpass create a continuous, pleasant experience to draw users back and forth from downtown and the redevelopment area.

Figure 20. Underpass Entrance, Looking East



Two structure types were originally evaluated by the project team: steel through plate girder and precast concrete double cell box beams. These structure types were used because they are regularly used for railroad structures, provided minimal structure depths, and are cost effective. A precast concrete box culvert was considered but was eliminated due to limited maximum width available, the time to construct a box this size required a shoo-fly, and it was less aesthetically pleasing than other options. A bridge using railroad standard structure spans and types therefore was selected.

The structure depth was an important consideration in the development of the underpass alternatives. It is desirable for the structure opening to be viewed from street level making it more inviting for users. On the downtown side (west side) there is approximately 4 feet 5 inches between the existing ground and top of rail requiring excavation to complete the underpass. The rail elevation cannot be raised at this location. Originally, the design proposed a 10 feet vertical clearance; however, an underpass height of 9 feet was selected to reduce the excavation and the combination of stairs, ramps, and cycle track that will connect pedestrians and cyclists from the underpass to Front Street.

The concept submittal was made to the BNSF Railway in summer 2012. After review of the conceptual plan, elevation and typical section for the underpass, BNSF Railway recommended using steel rolled beams with steel pan ballast deck. Given the City's desire for a 32-foot clear span, the BNSF Railway provided a similar example structure design for this span type that provided the same structure depth as the through plate girder. BNSF Railway strongly prefers the rolled beam structure based on maintenance and potential impacts to train operations.

An existing fiber optic line is located inside BNSF right of way on the east side of the existing tracks. The fiber optic line is "Longhaul Fiber" that is part of an intercity program that is connected nationally. It has 12 ducts cased in a 10-inch diameter high-density polyethylene pipe. Two potholes were conducted locating the line at 52 inches and 62 inches below existing ground. The proposed underpass excavation requires that the line be relocated.

The lowering of Front Street was evaluated to reduce the vertical elevation between the underpass and street level while improving the line of sight. Utilities within the intersection include storm, water, gas, and electric. It was decided to lower the grade to the extent practical while minimizing impacts to utilities and avoid street reconstruction outside of the intersection area.

One consideration was maintaining sufficient width on Front Street to allow two-way operations. This affects the width available between the end of the underpass structure and the ramps/stair structures. The end of the underpass structure shall be placed a minimum of 25 feet from the centerline of existing track.

Other Considerations

Coordination with the BNSF Railway was completed through direct communications, site review, and a 30 percent submittal. The 30 percent submittal is attached in Appendix J. The following are major agreements reached:

- BNSF Railway will construct the proposed bridge foundation and superstructure. The work will be completed while maintaining active railroad traffic eliminating the need for a shoo-fly. The City will pay BNSF for this work.
- The initial construction will involve the abutments for the existing track and a future track on the east side. The bridge for the existing track will be constructed initially with the future bridge to be place when needed. RTD asked that the design for the second bridge be approved by BNSF Railway as part of the initial work.
- The City will install fence along the right of way.
- Use tight mesh 10-foot tall fencing on each side of the structure in place of a canopy structure.
- After BNSF constructs the abutments and bridge, the City will excavate below and construct wall facings, connections, and other associated work.

The BNSF Railway will still install their required walkway structure on the west side of the structure and then the approved tight mesh 10-foot tall fencing to each side of the structure. They also advise that the City can attach some BNSF Railway approved artwork, so long as it does not interfere with train operations and the City maintains the artwork and possibly the fencing per the standard BNSF Construction & Maintenance Agreement. This will include railroad flagging if maintenance is needed because the maintenance would be within the 25-foot standard clearance zone. BNSF Railway is willing to forgo the pedestrian canopy on each side of the bridge structure if the fencing meets their criteria.

BNSF Railway is agreeable to these conditions and the City has agreed to fence the right of way to the public crossings on each end of the proposed Louisville Gateway Structure, which will direct pedestrians to the pedestrian underpass. They also cited the City's willingness to install the double structure width bridge abutment for a future second structure during the initial bridge construction.