Lowry Avenue Station Design Update

January 14, 2025

METRO BLUE LINE EXTENSION

BROOKLYN PARK | CRYSTAL | ROBBINSDALE | MINNEAPOLIS

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL

Hennepin

Federal Transit Administration

Today's Topics

- Project Overview
- Lowry Avenue Station Design Review
- Next Steps

Project Overview

METRO

Blue Line EXTENSION

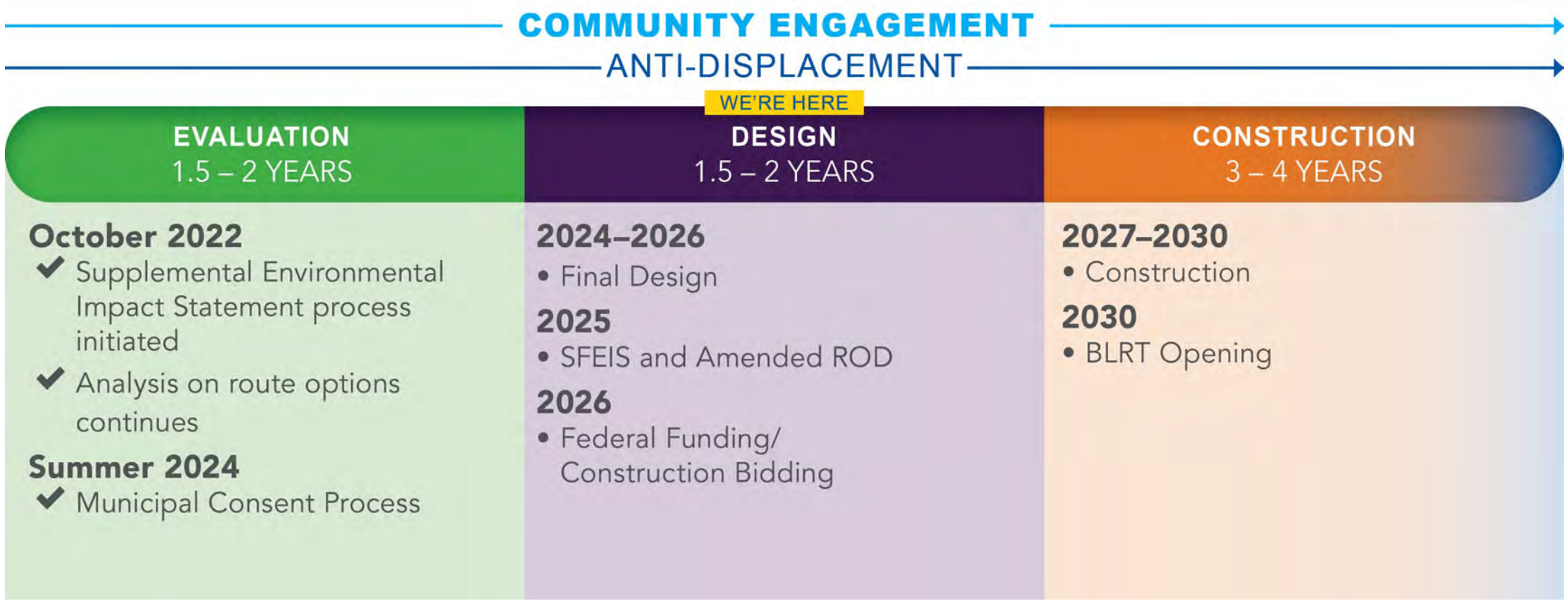
- 13.4 miles & 13 new stations
- Connecting Minneapolis, Robbinsdale, Crystal, Brooklyn Park and surrounding communities to fast, frequent, all-day service across the METRO system
- Single seat ride to existing Blue Line stops downtown, MSP Airport, and Mall of America
- Focus on building community prosperity through anti-displacement strategies before, during, and after construction

Next steps

- ✓ Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement: Spring 2024
- ✓ Municipal Consent : Summer 2024
- Supplemental Final EIS and Amended Record of Decision: Summer 2025
- Final Design: 2024-2025
- Anticipated construction start: 2026-2027
- Anticipated opening: 2030

All schedules are subject to change

Project Timeline



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Lowry Avenue Station Design Review

Lowry Ave Station Overview

- Objective of Lowry Ave Station
- History of Station Design
- Reason for Design Review
- Design Review Process
- Additional Analysis of Option A - Municipal Consent design

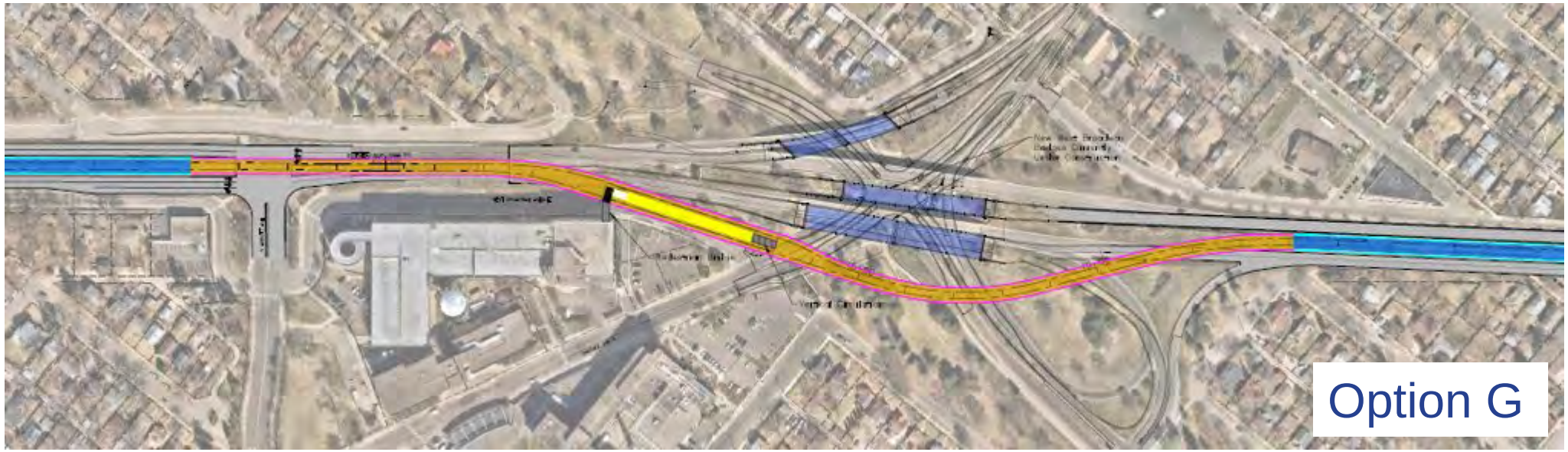
Objectives of Lowry Ave Station

- To serve park users
- Improve transit access to hospital
- Increase mobility of community members in an accessible and reliable way throughout the area
- Easy to use station that integrates with surrounding environment and community

History of Station Design

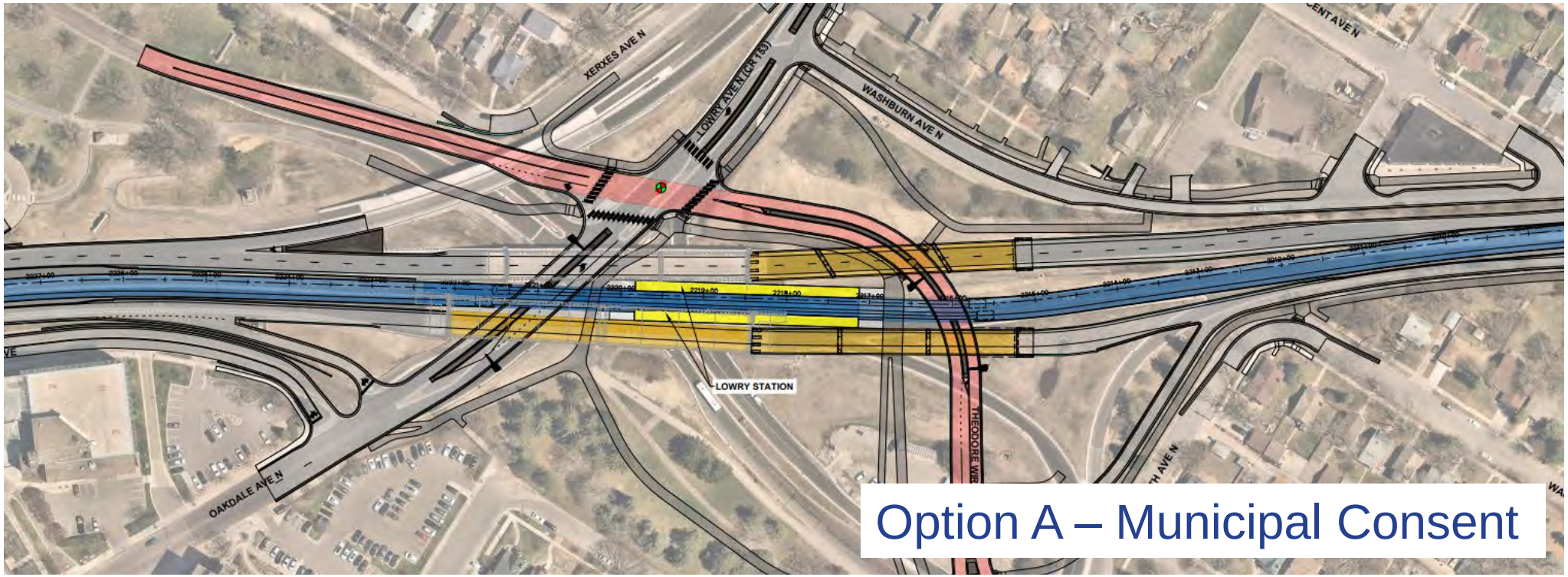
- The 2021 design was elevated on a high bridge to avoid the existing roadway bridges and connect to the hospital parking ramp

- The 2021 station design was changed in 2023 due to community concerns of an elevated station and an LRT bridge



History of Station Design

- The 2023 station design placed the station platform at-grade with the LRT crossing Lowry/Oakdale Ave and Theodore Wirth Parkway



Option A – Municipal Consent

History of Station Design

- Feedback from the 2023 at-grade station design – Option A Municipal Consent:
  - Minneapolis Park + Recreation Board and Cities of Robbinsdale and Minneapolis indicate new design is an improvement
  - Provides direct connections between LRT, the park system, and the hospital
  - Requires modification of a portion of one roadway bridge
  - Increases park space - opens up park views
  - Decreases roadway and path pavement

Reason for Design Review

- In Summer 2024, the project received comments on the Preliminary Design plans from stakeholders
  - Minneapolis Park + Recreation Board expressed concerns about the at-grade crossing of the parkway and impacts to park property
  - North Memorial Hospital expressed concerns about vehicle access to the hospital due to the gate at Lowry/Oakdale Avenue
- In response, project staff are continuing to evaluate the Municipal Consent design and alternative design options

Design Review Process

- Multi-stakeholder workgroup has been meeting to evaluate the Municipal Consent and alternate design options
  - Minneapolis Park + Recreation Board, North Memorial Hospital, City of Minneapolis, City of Robbinsdale, Hennepin County, Metro Transit
- Through the design review, 9 options were evaluated

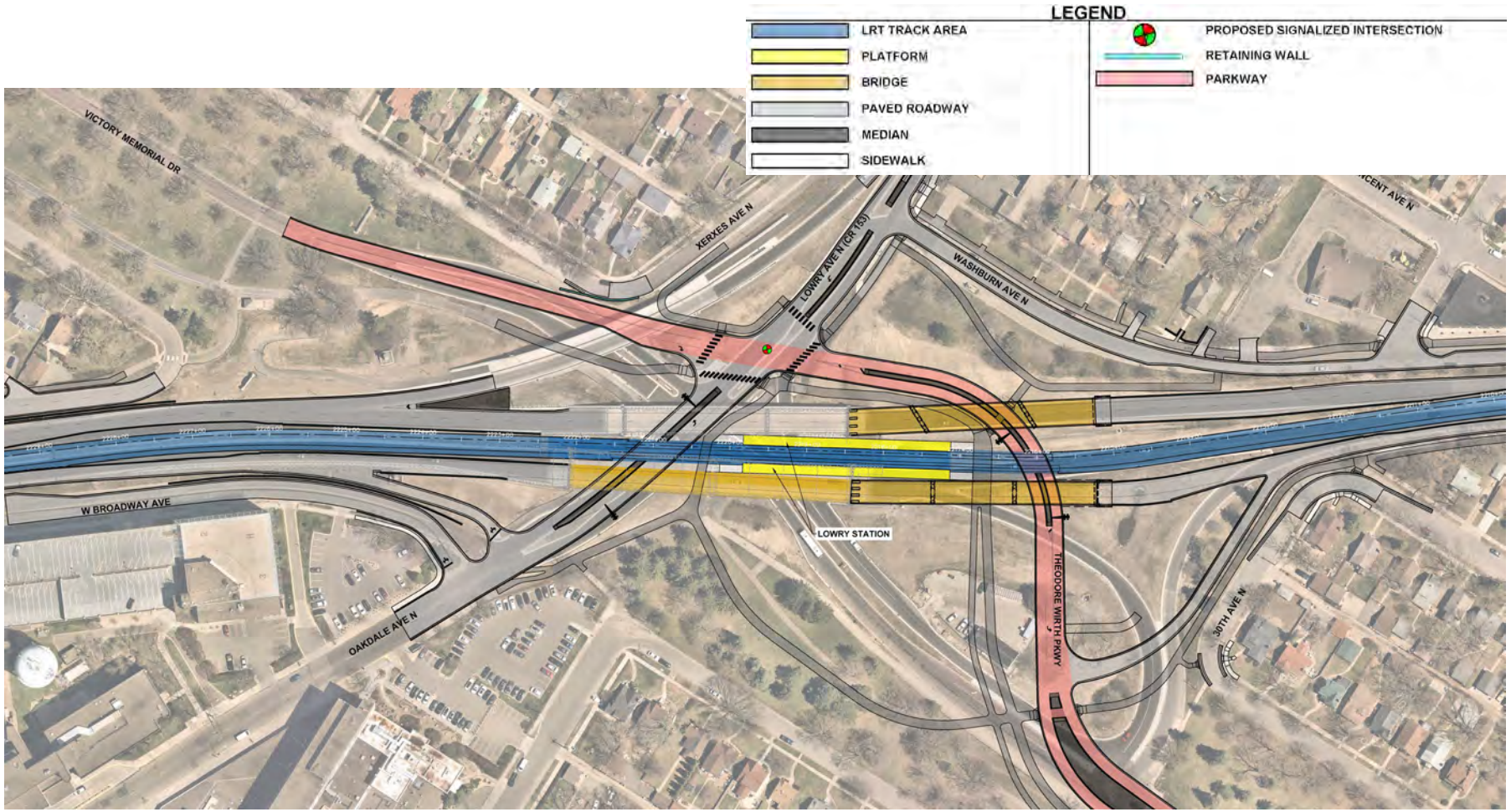
Evaluation Matrix

Better than option A | About same as option A | Worse than option A

	Option A – Municipal Consent Design	Option B	Option C	Option D1	Option D2	Option E	Option F	Option G	Option H
Station accessibility, safety, experience	At-grade station maximizes accessibility, integrated station within park provides positive user experience, visible platform improves safety	Underground station not visible from surrounding area, poor transit rider experience, no eyes on platform creates safety concerns	Station in trench and less visible from surrounding area, poor transit rider experience, less eyes on platform creates safety concerns	Elevated station requires several new bridges to get transit riders to platform	Elevated station requires several bridges to get transit riders to platform	At-grade station maximizes accessibility, integrated station provides positive park user experience, visible platform improves safety	At-grade station maximizes accessibility, integrated station provides positive park user experience, visible platform improves safety	Elevated station requires several bridges to get transit rider to platform	At-grade station maximizes accessibility, integrated station provides positive park user experience, visible platform improves safety
Park and trail impacts	Requires rerouting of parkway and trail, at-grade gated crossings of trail and parkway next to station. Creates additional park space.	Parkway and trails do not cross LRT	Parkway and trails do not cross LRT	Parkway and trails do not cross LRT	Parkway and trails do not cross LRT	Parkway and trails go under LRT in trench	Parkway and trails do not cross LRT or Lowry	Additional bridge detracts from park experience	Parkway and trails do not cross LRT or Lowry
Hospital traffic, access	Gated crossing at Oakdale/ Lowry may create average of 25 second delay on 10% of trips, could be mitigated by alternate wayfinding/routing for hospital	No gated crossings, no interruption to hospital access	No gated crossings, no interruption to hospital access	No gated crossings, no interruption to hospital access	No gated crossing of LRT, no interruption to hospital access	No gated crossing of LRT, no interruption to hospital access	No gated crossing of LRT, no interruption to hospital access	No gated crossing of LRT, no interruption to hospital access	No gated crossings, no interruption to hospital access
Area traffic operations, connectivity	Maintains existing road network	Roadway connections same as existing	Roadway connections same as existing	Adds a traffic signal south of the station at Washburn	Adds two LRT crossings on West Broadway, crossing at angle creates driver safety concerns	No parkway connection at Lowry/County Road 81, good connection otherwise	No parkway connection to Lowry/County Road 81, two LRT crossings on W Broadway	Maintains existing roadway network	No parkway connection at Lowry/County Road 81, good connections otherwise
Neighborhood connectivity	Station provides convenient access for neighborhoods	Underground station disconnected visually from surrounding neighborhood	Station in trench and disconnected visually from surrounding neighborhood	Elevated station disconnected from neighborhood	Elevated station disconnected from neighborhood	Station provides convenient access for neighborhoods	Station provides convenient access for neighborhood, less roadway crossings to access station	Elevated station disconnected from neighborhood, farther distance for Minneapolis neighborhood	Station provides convenient access for neighborhoods, less roadway crossings to access station
Impacts to new bridges	Keeps existing three bridges but modifies southbound County Road 81 bridge to reduce overall width	Southbound and northbound County Road 81 bridges are removed and replaced	Southbound and northbound County Road 81 bridges are removed and replaced	Southbound County Road 81 bridge is removed and replaced	Southbound County Road 81 bridge is removed and replaced	Maintains existing three bridges; southbound County Road 81 bridge is modified to reduce overall width	Northbound County Road 81 and Lowry on-ramp bridges are removed and replaced, existing County Road 81 southbound bridge is re-used	Keeps existing bridges	Northbound County Road 81 and Lowry on-ramp bridges are removed and replaced; keeps existing County Road 81 southbound bridge
Constructability, construction impacts	Less complex foundation construction	Constructability challenges with existing piling and complexity of design, multiple additional years construction duration and disturbance	Constructability challenges with existing piling and complexity of design, multiple additional years construction duration and disturbance	Constructability challenges with existing piling, moderately complex design	Constructability challenges with existing piling, moderately complex design	Significant construction disruptions/extended duration needed for retaining walls due to extensive construction	Constructability challenges with existing piling and complexity of design, multiple additional years construction duration and disturbance	Constructability challenges with existing piling and complexity of design due to height and length of bridge, multiple additional years construction duration and disturbance	Extensive bridge constructability challenges with existing piling and complexity of design, multiple additional years construction duration and disturbance
Cost	Comparatively lower cost	Very high cost	Very high cost	Comparatively lower cost	Higher cost	Higher cost	Higher cost	Higher cost	Higher cost

Option A – Municipal Consent Design

- At-grade station and crossing
- Preserves and modifies new bridges over Lowry
- Visible and accessible to the community

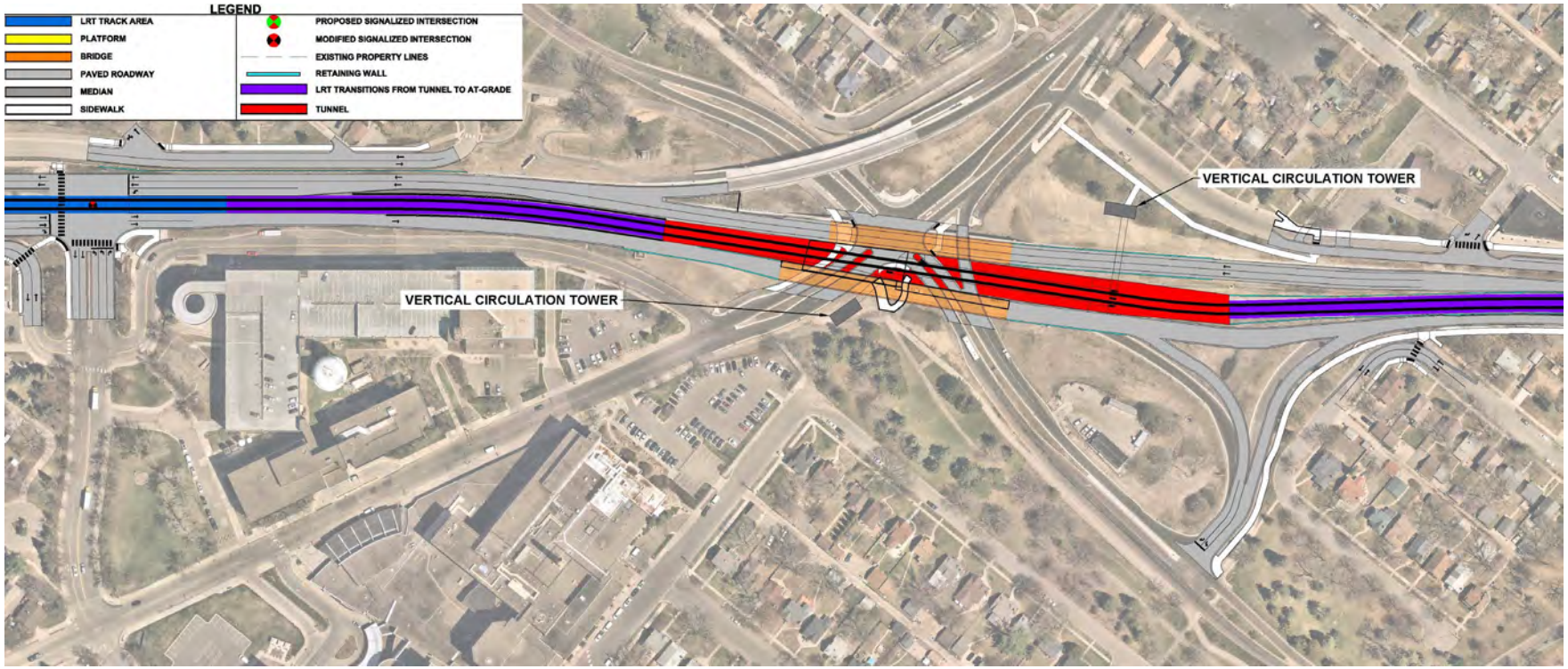


Option A – Municipal Consent Design

- At-grade station
- Designed to work with existing infrastructure investment
- Creates potential new park space
- Opportunity to modify EMS response route and timing
- Identified in SDEIS

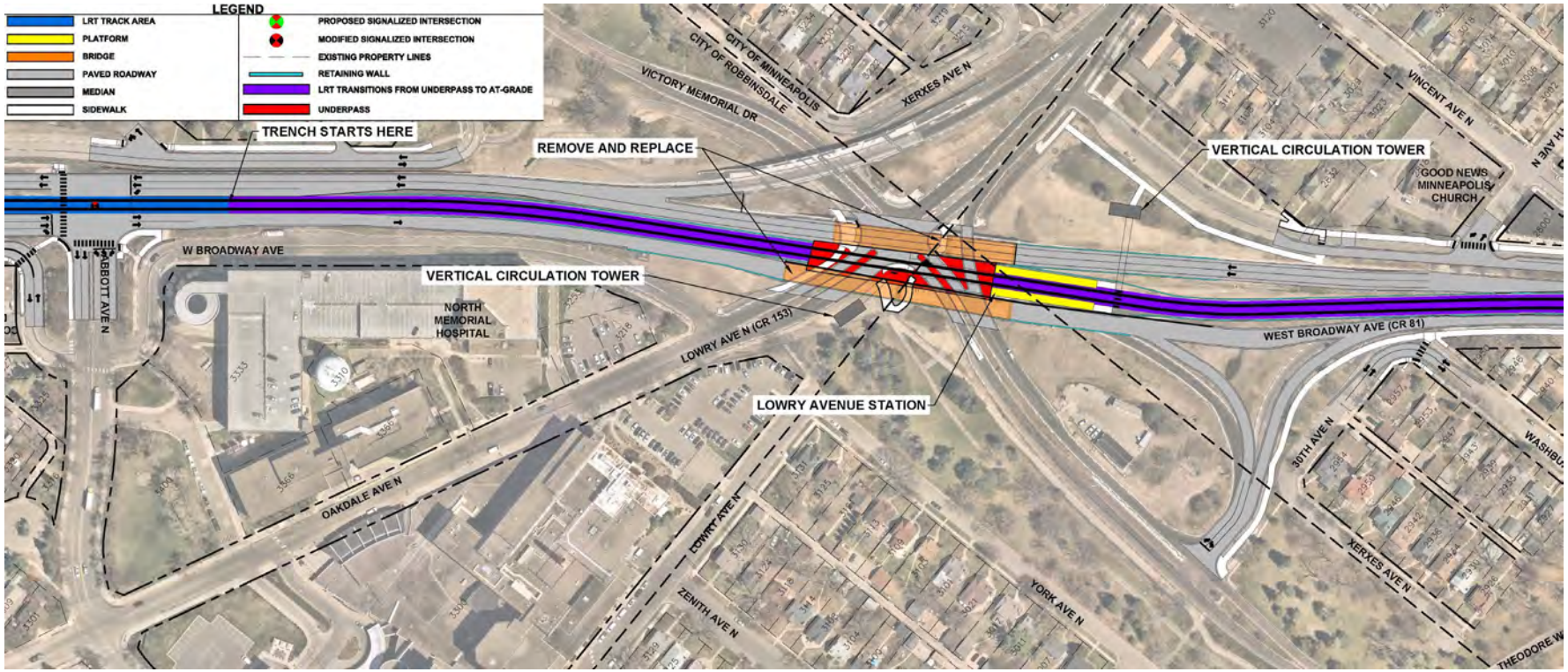
Option B – Tunnel

- Station underground below West Broadway Ave (CR81) bridges
- Grade separated from Parkway
- Roadway network stays unchanged from existing conditions



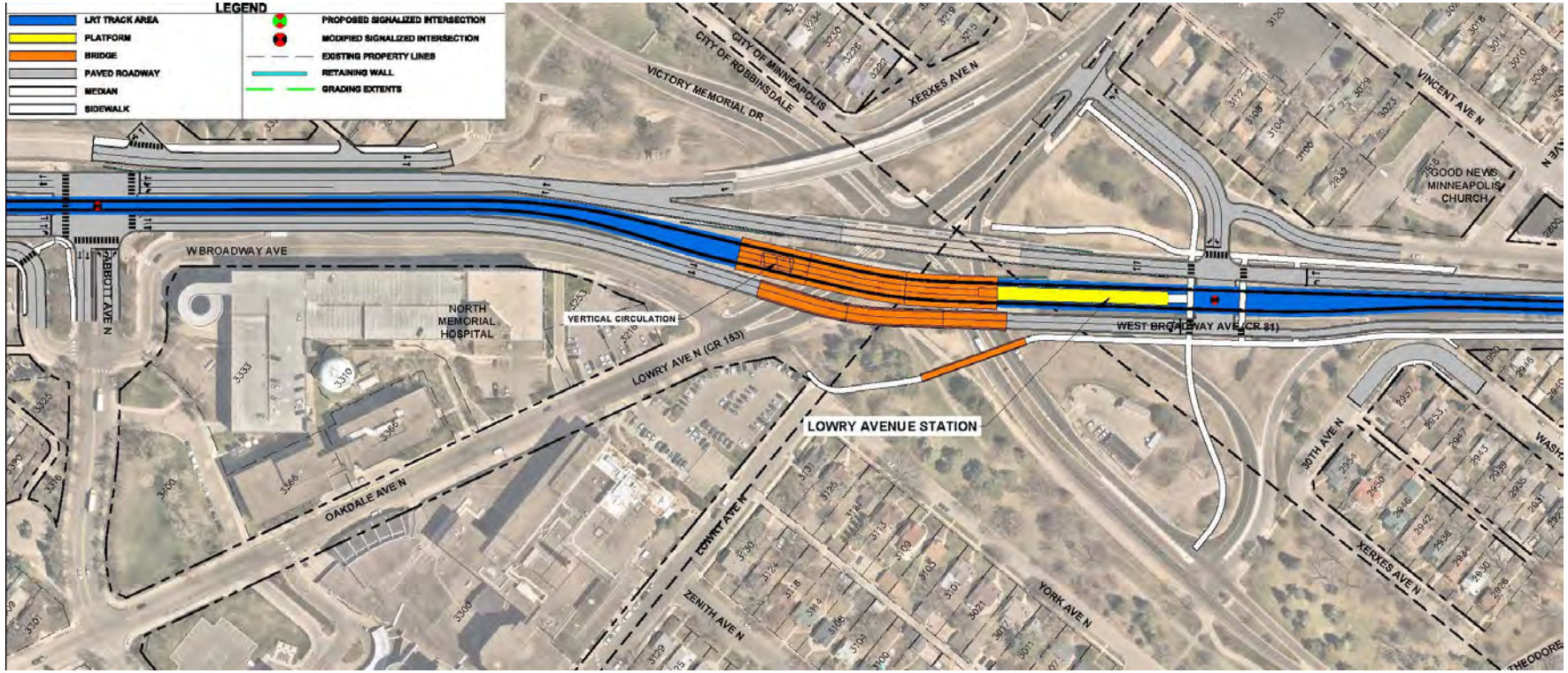
Option C - Trench

- Station underground below West Broadway Ave (CR81) bridges
- Grade separated from Parkway
- Roadway network stays unchanged from existing conditions



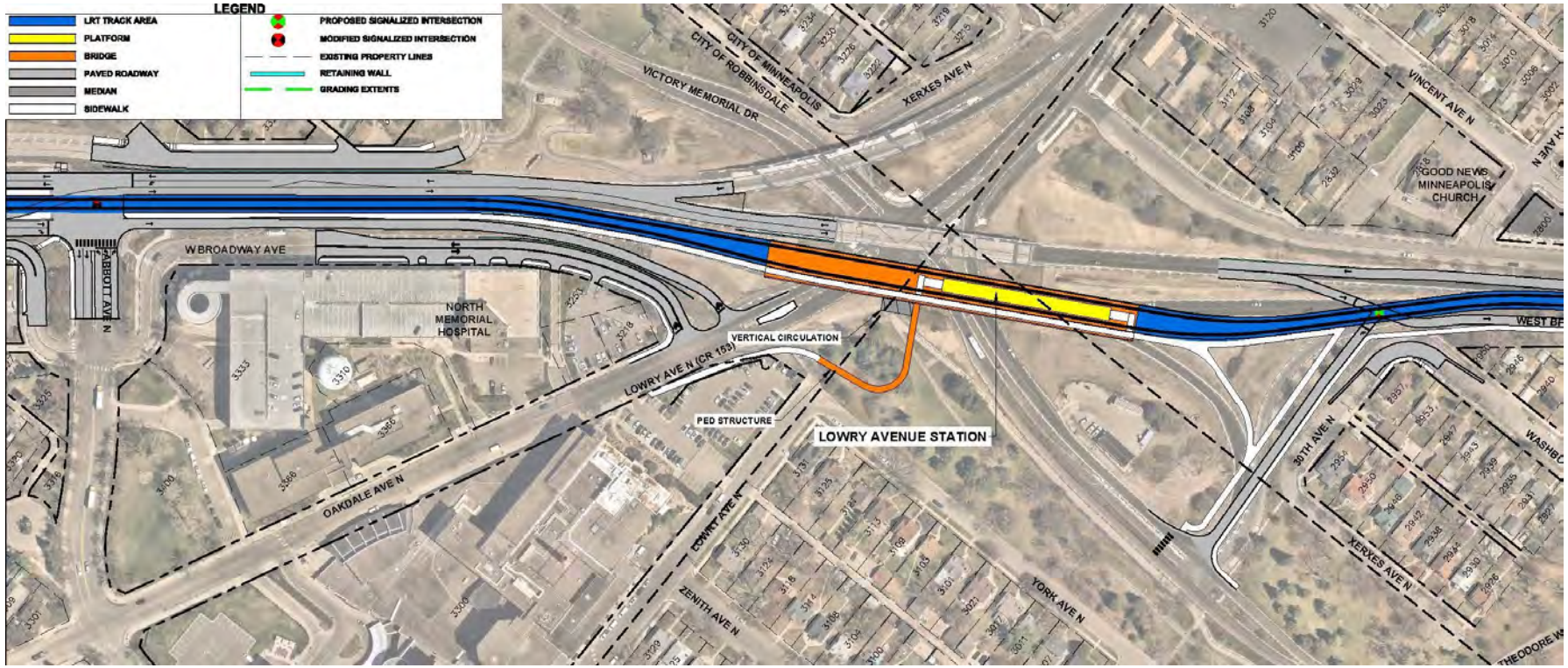
Option D1 - LRT Center Running at the Same Elevation as West Broadway Ave (CR 81) Bridges

- Station at the same elevation as West Broadway Ave bridges
- Grade separated from Parkway
- Adds one signalized intersection south of station that connects to Lowry Ave through Washburn Ave
- Slip ramp to Washburn Ave from northbound West Broadway Ave is removed.



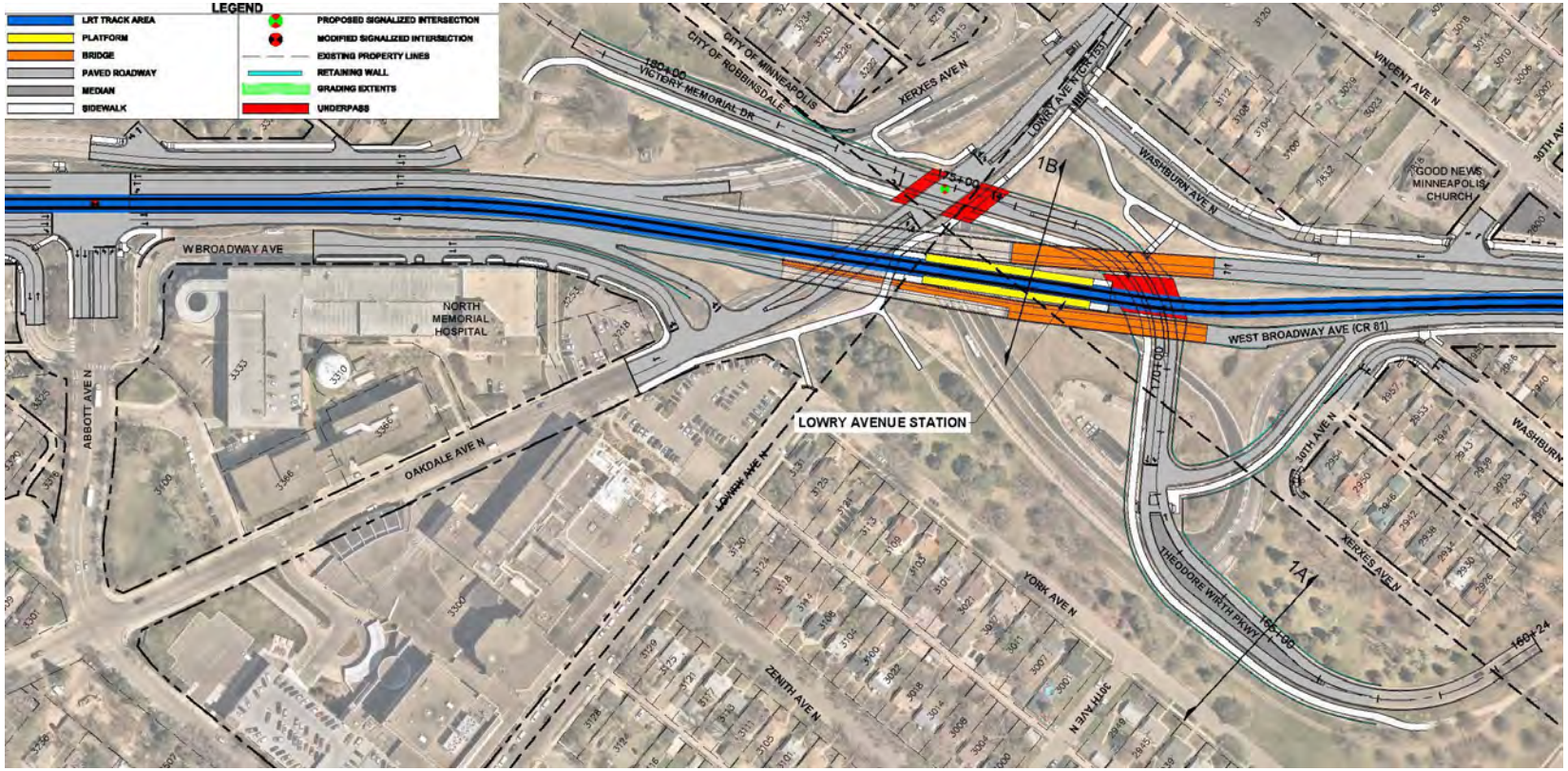
Option D2 - LRT Center Running at the Same Elevation as West Broadway Ave (CR 81) Bridges

- Station at the same elevation as West Broadway bridges between to the side of West Broadway Ave
- Grade separated from Parkway
- Adds two at-grade signalized track crossing of West Broadway



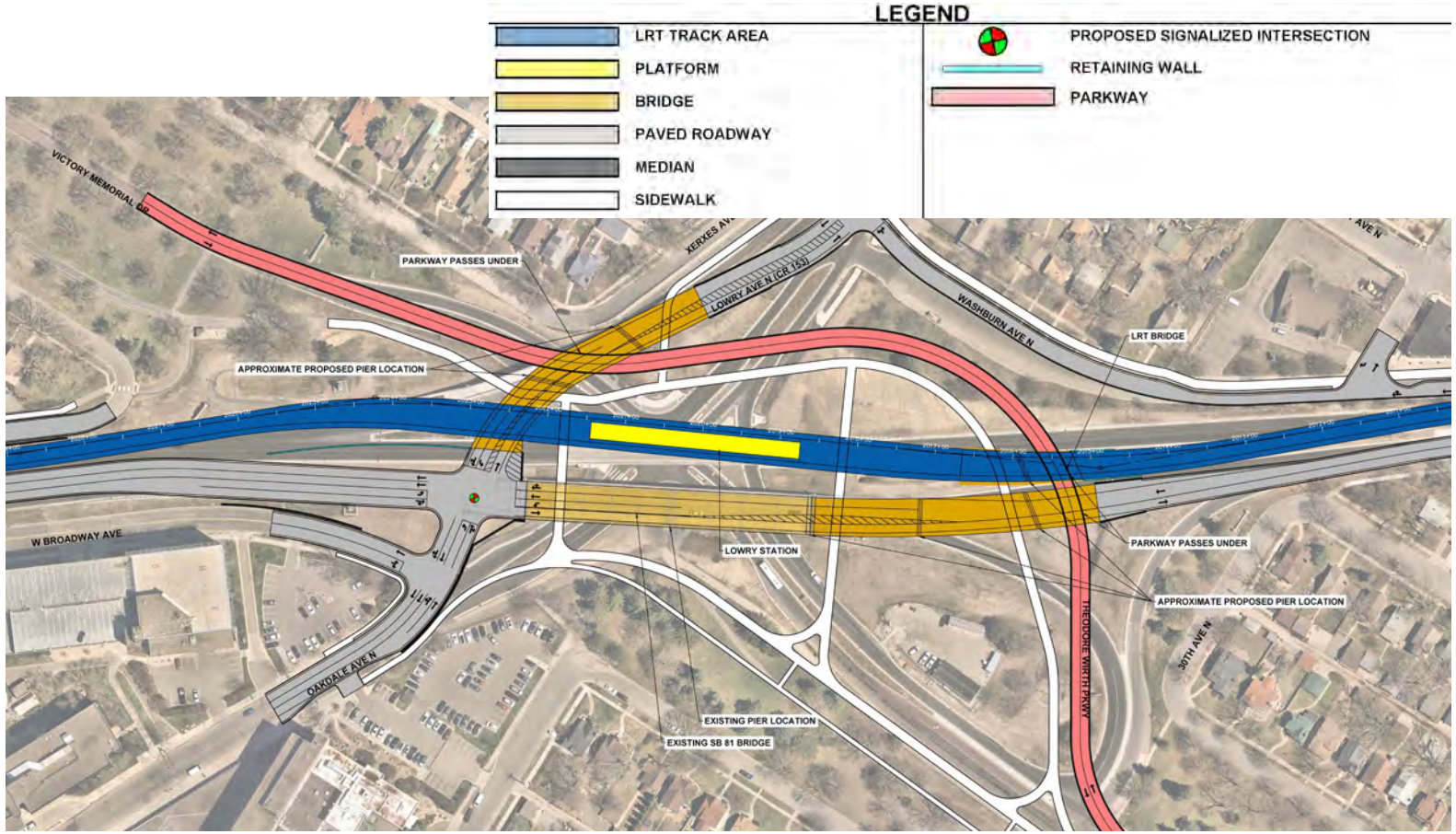
Option E – Parkway Under LRT

- Station stays at-grade
- Grade separated as Parkway goes under the LRT
- Parkway goes under Lowry Ave as well, so a connection is no longer available

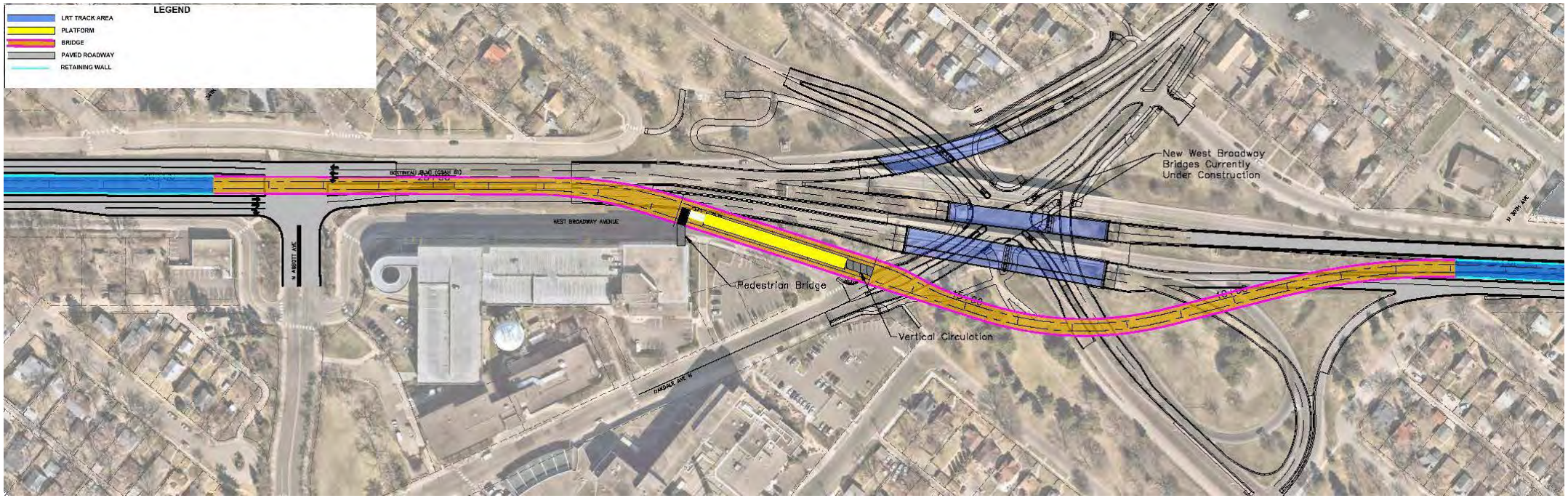


Option F – Parkway, Trail, and Lowry Under LRT

- Station at-grade with West Broadway Ave (CR 81)
- At-grade cross-overs with West Broadway Ave
- Grade separated as Parkway, trail, and Lowry Ave go under the LRT



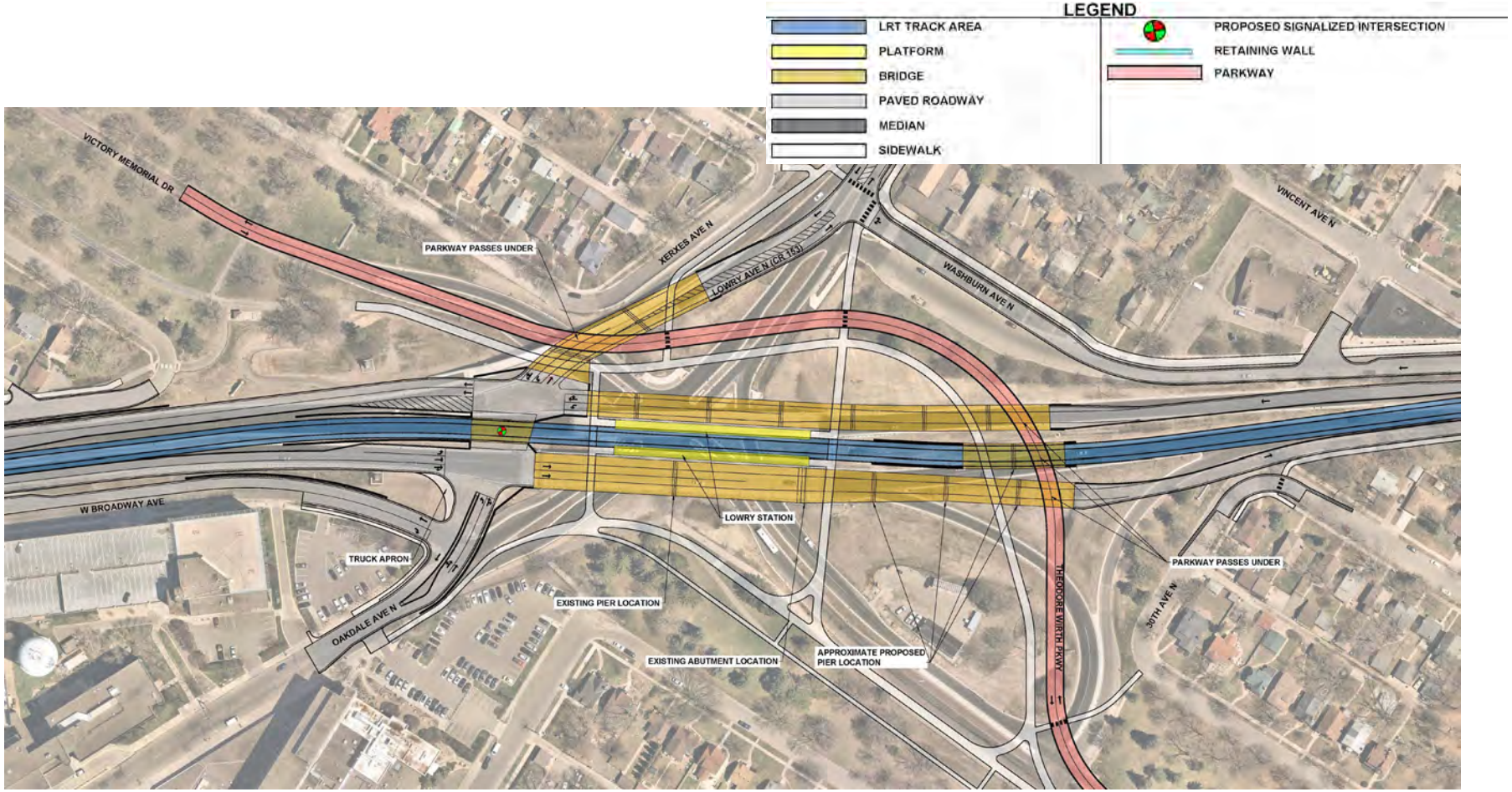
Option G - Flyover



- Station elevated above and around roadway network
- Grade separation from roadways

Option H – at-grade station-no crossings

- At-grade station
- No at-grade LRT crossings
- Removes and reconstructs 1 of 3 bridges over Lowry and adds 2 new bridges



Option H – at-grade station-no crossings

- At-grade station
- No gates for LRT crossings
- Parkway and trail bypass Lowry Ave, West Broadway Ave (CR 81), and LRT Tracks
- Lowry intersection with CR 81 on bridge over LRT
- Creates potential park space

Additional Analysis of Option A - Municipal Consent Design

Ped/Bike volumes along parkway

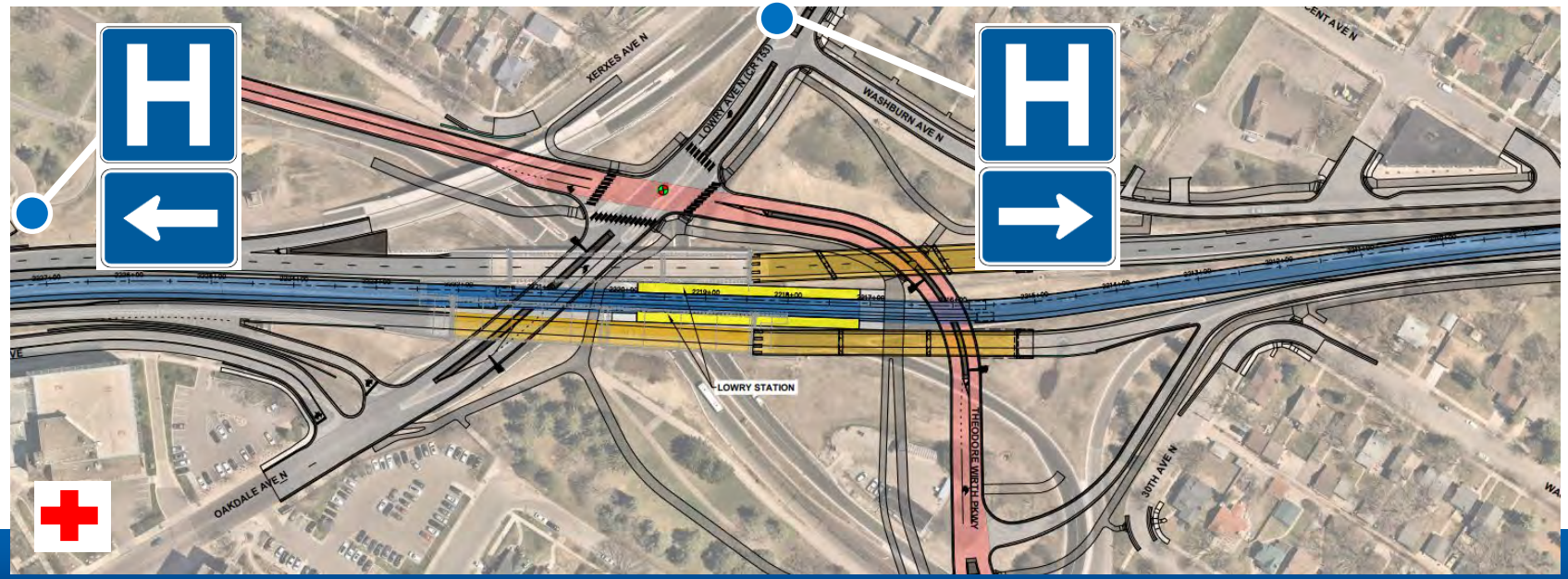
- Daily peds + bikes (both directions) = 360
- Ave hourly peds + bikes (both directions) = 25
- **Potential for delay at a gate:**
- If a driver encounters a gate, their average delay is forecasted to be 25 seconds
- About 90% of the time the gates are up (varies day vs. night)

Emergency trips on Lowry/Oakdale Ave: about 1.3 vehicles every hour

Additional Analysis of Option A – Municipal Consent Design

Wayfinding to Hospital

- Emergency and personal vehicles would be routed to Abbott Ave N to avoid the gated LRT crossing at Lowry/Oakdale Ave
- Hospital wayfinding signage will be installed along the route to guide vehicles



Next Steps

- Project team will review public feedback to inform final recommendation
- Continued coordination with Minneapolis Park + Recreation Board, North Memorial Hospital, and the Cities of Robbinsdale and Minneapolis
- Continue with 4(F) evaluation

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