63rd Ave/CSAH 81 Intersection Update: Tonight’s Topics

• April 26 Tour Recap
• At-Grade Improvements
• Pedestrian Bridge Options
• Next Steps
63rd Ave/CSAH 81 Intersection Update: Corridor Management Committee Action

- February 11, 2016 CMC Action:
  “Directs staff to continue its efforts towards development of an at-grade crossing or bridge crossing at 63rd and a pedestrian bridge crossing at Bass Lake Rd for the eventual inclusion in the scope of the project.”
63rd Ave/CSAH 81 Intersection Update: City Letter to BLRT Project Office (BPO)

- April 18 City letter to BPO identified 63rd Ave pedestrian facility as an area of concern and requested:
  - Improved at-grade pedestrian crossing
  - Continued exploration of pedestrian bridge to accomplish 3 goals:
    - Improve ped and bike safety
    - Gateway element
    - Regional trail connection
April 26 Tour Overview
April 26 Tour: Columbia Heights Pedestrian Bridge

- Bridge constructed originally in 1970 due to fatality
- Pedestrian bridge constructed in 2011, replaced former structure
- Elevators were considered for new structure, but eliminated due to maintenance concerns
- Pedestrian bridge owned by MnDOT; maintained by the City of Columbia Heights
- Structure over TH 65 18 ft in height; 6 ft lower than the 24 ft required over CSAH 81
April 26 Tour: Columbia Heights Pedestrian Bridge

- TH 65 4-lane plus turn lanes, 26,000 ADT, 40 mph
- At grade crossings removed
- Schools located on either side of the roadway
- Generally high compliance with school children (helped by educational campaign); poorer compliance with general population
Columbia Heights Pedestrian Bridge
Columbia Heights Pedestrian Bridge
April 26 Tour: 66th & France Ave Intersection Improvements

- Pedestrian bridge awarded regional solicitation funds; at-grade improvements constructed instead
- France Ave:
  - 6-lane with turn lanes
  - 30,000 ADT
  - 35-45 mph speed limit
- Free rights removed
- Roadway: lanes narrowed, wider crosswalks set back from intersection, “Dutch” planted corners
- Median: widened, push buttons and decorative lighting added
66th & France Ave Intersection Improvements
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66th & France Ave Intersection Improvements
April 26 Tour: What We Heard

- Preference for long crossing times, large median refuges, wide visible crosswalks
- MN-65 bridge seemed short easy to walk, preference for switchback over spiral grade
  - Danger of no at-grade crossing option
- Interest in maintenance costs, ownership, cost difference of elevator and ramp
- Pedestrian facility important to transit dependent residential neighborhood
- Provide bridge crossing option
At-Grade Intersection Improvements
63rd Ave/CSAH 81 Intersection Existing
63rd Ave/CSAH 81 Intersection Improvements

• Wider median, add pedestrian push button in median, removal of dual left turn lane

• Pedestrian Crosswalks
  ▪ Widen from 6-8’ ft to 12’ ft for visibility; add black paint for contrast
  ▪ Raise crosswalks in free right turn lanes
  ▪ Add stop bars

• Walk time and distance: 01:52 minutes; 180’
63rd Ave/CSAH 81 Intersection Improvements
Pedestrian Ramp Options
Pedestrian Bridge: Double Switchback, 5%

Distance: 1,654’
Time: 07:53
Pedestrian Bridge: Double Switchback, 5%
Pedestrian Bridge: Double Switchback, 5%
Pedestrian Bridge: Straight Ramp, 8.33%

Distance: 1,230’
Time: 05:52
Pedestrian Bridge: Straight Ramp, 8.33%
Pedestrian Bridge: Straight Ramp, 8.33%
Pedestrian Bridge: Two Elevators

Distance: 433’
Time: 05:04
Pedestrian Bridge: Two Elevators
Pedestrian Bridge: Two Elevators
63rd Ave/CSAH 81 Intersection Improvements

• At-grade improvements for pedestrians will be part of BLRT project

• Pedestrian bridge options:
  ▪ Provide a second option to cross CSAH 81
  ▪ Eliminate conflicts with vehicles, but only if chosen as a means to cross the intersection

• Due to high capital costs, maintenance costs, safety and security concerns, pedestrian bridge options with elevators are not recommended

• Feedback?
63rd Ave/CSAH 81 Intersection Improvements: Next Steps

• BPO to recommend for June 2 CMC meeting:
  ▪ Pedestrian crossing improvements with construction costs estimate (at-grade/bridge)
  ▪ Recommended operations & maintenance responsibilities
More Information

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