



Response to Public Comments

City of Cincinnati BSB Corridor Concept I-W and Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber Footprint Minimization

TO: KYTC and ODOT
FROM: HNTB Corporation
DATE: November 2, 2022
RE: Brent Spence Bridge Corridor Project | ODOT PID 89068 | KYTC Project Item No. 6-17

Introduction

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide a response to comments on Concept I-W for the Brent Spence Bridge (BSB) Corridor Project provided by the City of Cincinnati on September 2, 2022 and the Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber of Commerce (Chamber) on July 11, 2022 (see Attachment 1). The Chamber is a member of the BSB Project Advisory Committee and provided feedback that was similar to comments received from the City. Responses to the City's comments are provided below.

Ramp Refinements

After receipt of the City's comments, ODOT and HNTB met with City staff to discuss potential refinements to Concept I-W in the area between 3rd Street and 7th Street. Following the coordination meeting, HNTB evaluated the following ramp refinements in downtown Cincinnati (see Attachment 2):

- Removing the entrance from 4th Street to northbound I-75.
- Adding an entrance from 3rd Street to northbound I-75.
- Removing the southbound I-75 exit to 5th Street and reducing the number of lanes on the southbound collector-distributor (C-D) road from three to two.
- Reconfiguring the northbound I-75 exit to 5th Street to create a new signalized intersection with the US 50 ramp approximately 300 feet west of Central Avenue.
- Reducing the number of lanes on the eastbound approach to the 5th Street/Central Avenue intersection from four to three.
- Removing the connection between 6th Street and Winchell Avenue.
- Providing a connection between 6th Street and the northbound C-D road and northbound I-75.
- Widening the southbound I-75 ramp to 7th Street from one to two lanes.

The above ramp refinements were found to operate acceptably in both the morning and evening peak travel periods (see Attachment 3), and the City concurred with the findings on October 20, 2022 (see Attachment 4). Therefore, the above refinements will be incorporated into Concept I-W, which is currently being evaluated in a Supplemental Environmental Assessment. Traffic operations at additional intersections in downtown Cincinnati will continue to be evaluated during the preparation of an *Interchange Modification Study* Update for the BSB Corridor Project. Public hearings will be scheduled in



June/July of 2023 to provide additional opportunities to comment on all the improvements included in Concept I-W.

Future Development

The ramp refinements discussed above will open up approximately 9.5 acres of additional land to help the City further its development goals. The BSB Corridor project will not preclude the City from using John Street to support future development, as requested in their comments.

Alternative Modes and Livability

The City also provided comments with respects to alternative transportation modes and promoting a “City feel” as part of the project’s design. The BSB project will install bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure on the following connections across I-75: 6th Street, 7th Street, 9th Street, Linn Street, Freeman Avenue, Ezzard Charles Drive, West Liberty Street, Findlay Street, Bank Street, and Harrison Avenue. In addition, new shared use path will be constructed along Winchell Avenue between 9th Street and Ezzard Charles Drive, including a pedestrian bridge connection to Freeman Avenue. To promote safety for bicycles and pedestrians, the ramp connections with local streets are being designed with lower speed limits. This includes efforts to minimize the footprint of the 5th Street ramps to better support alternative transportation modes and pedestrian crossings at Central Avenue.

Since 2012, KYTC and ODOT have been refining the preferred alternative for the BSB Corridor Project to further reduce the project footprint. Specifically, optimizing interchange geometry by utilizing the land formerly occupied by the Dunnhumby building (444 W. 3rd Street) resulted in a meaningful reduction in the project footprint in downtown Cincinnati. In addition, ODOT will continue to work with the City to identify opportunities for aesthetic improvements throughout the corridor.

Conclusion

KYTC and ODOT support the City’s goals of getting the project done; reclaiming land; improving green space, pedestrian safety, bike facilities, etc.; and keeping a “city feel” on or under bridges for I-75. Several refinements to the 3rd Street, 4th Street, 5th Street, and 6th Street ramps will be incorporated into Preferred Alternative I (Concept I-W) to further those goals. Based on the ramp refinements, there will be approximately 9.5 acres between 3rd Street and 6th Street that can be reclaimed for other uses after construction of the project. In addition, ODOT will continue to support the City of Cincinnati’s efforts to accommodate alternative modes and improve livability during the development of the BSB Corridor Project.



Attachment 1: City of Cincinnati and Cincinnati USA Chamber of
Commerce Comments

September 2, 2022

To: Stefan Spinoso, Ohio Department of Transportation
From: John Brazina, City of Cincinnati,
RE: Brent Spence Bridge Corridor Concept I-W comments

The City of Cincinnati has the following objectives/goals for the BSB:

1. Get the project done
2. Reclaiming land
3. Improving green space, pedestrian safety, bike facilities, etc.
4. Keep a "City feel" on or under bridges for I-75

With the above goals in mind, The City of Cincinnati has reviewed the Brent Spence Bridge Corridor Project – Concept I-W (BSB) and offers the following comments:

The City would like to evaluate options that would maximize the developable land between Central Avenue and the Interstate network. (Exhibit A) We would ask that ODOT evaluate the following options to help achieve that goal:

- Remove the ramps that access from 4th Street.
 - An additional ramp from 3rd Street to NB I-75.
- Minimize the footprint of the 5th Street ramps.
 - The NB ramp to 5th Street can create a T-intersection with the other ramps coming into 5th Street.
 - Shift the C-D road to the west since the 4th Street ramp is gone.
 - Potentially move to a two-way 6th Street.
- Direct connection from 6th Street to the mainline I75 northbound.
 - With the removal of the 4th Street ramp to the mainline a direct connection from 6th St should be created.
- Support future development
 - The City anticipates John Street being used to support future development in the space created in this area.
 - As design moves forward, ODOT and the City should make sure the interstate design doesn't preclude John St being used to support potential back of house uses for development.

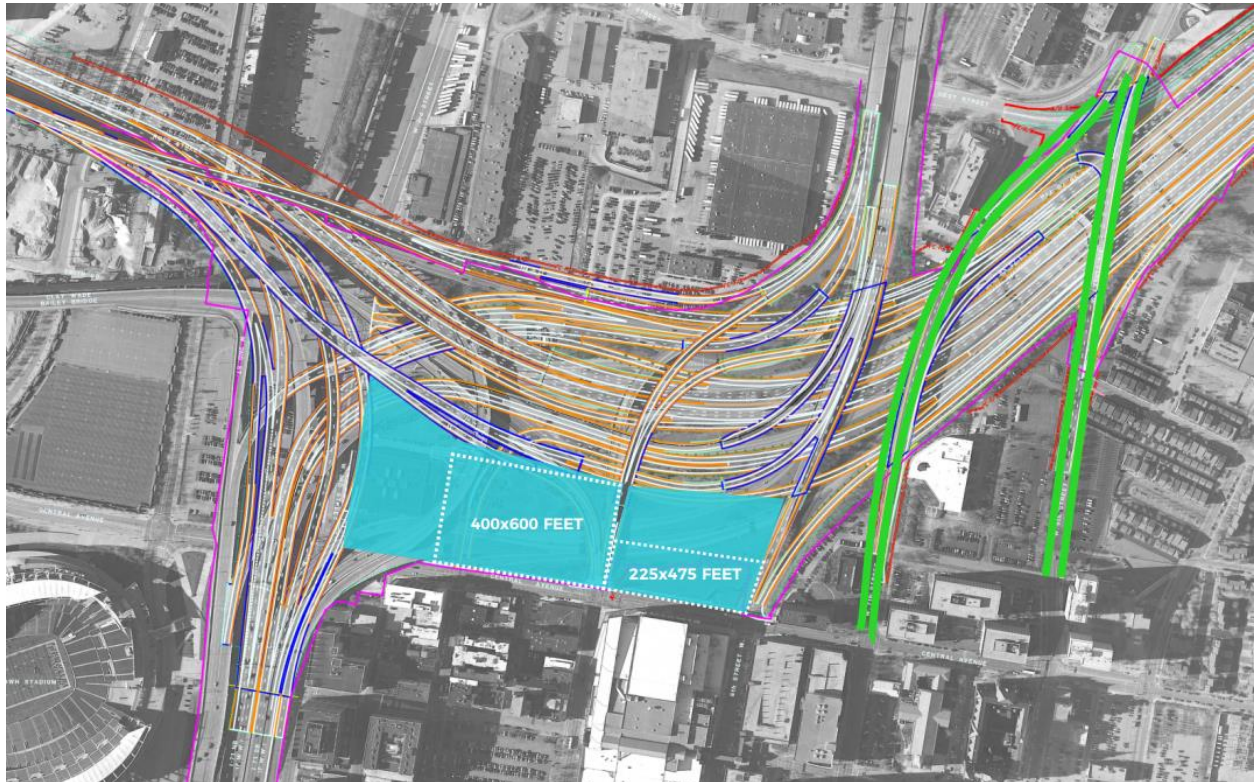
The City is also open to options that would increase alternative modes of transportation and improve livability of the communities along the I-75 corridor.

- City standard bike and pedestrian infrastructure should be installed on all connections across the interstate.
- Check the design speeds of all the ramps in this area. Especially the ones going to/from City street network.
 - Design all curves for the minimum design speed possible to help slow traffic and potentially minimize the footprint.
- The City is open to changes that allow for consolidation of entrances/exits that might shrink the footprint. These changes could allow changes to traffic flow in the urban core (ie: two-way conversions)

- To create an improved experience for non-motorists crossing the BSB footprint, including narrow caps that allow for green space and street trees. To the extent that there are opportunities to meaningfully shrink the footprint and decrease the distance required to cross from downtown to Queensgate or Queensgate to the West End.

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment. The City looks forward to being a partner with ODOT as we move forward on this exciting project. If you have any questions on the comments provided, please contact Bryan Williams or me.

EXHIBIT A:



Spinosa, Stefan

From: Pete Metz [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, July 11, 2022 9:19 AM
To: Spinosa, Stefan
Cc: Jill Meyer
Subject: BSB - Footprint Minimization Exercise
Attachments: bsbconcepts_6_30_2022v2.pdf

Stefan –

Attached please find the map that was developed over the last month+ with stakeholders we convened to identify and quantify the valuable minimum thresholds for developable land should it be possible to retain it in the design build phase of BSB. A few things worth noting:

1. The Blue sections are the desired areas, while the dotted lines delineate the minimum thresholds for Convention Center opportunities to the west.
2. The green lines indicate the areas where I understand the City and ODOT are discussing Long Street style treatment on connection points across the footprint. Throughout the room there was excitement for this concept and support for it. We included it here to make sure you understood that we were aligned in talking about both.

Thanks! Call with any questions,

Pete

PETE METZ

DIRECTOR, THE CONNECTED REGION

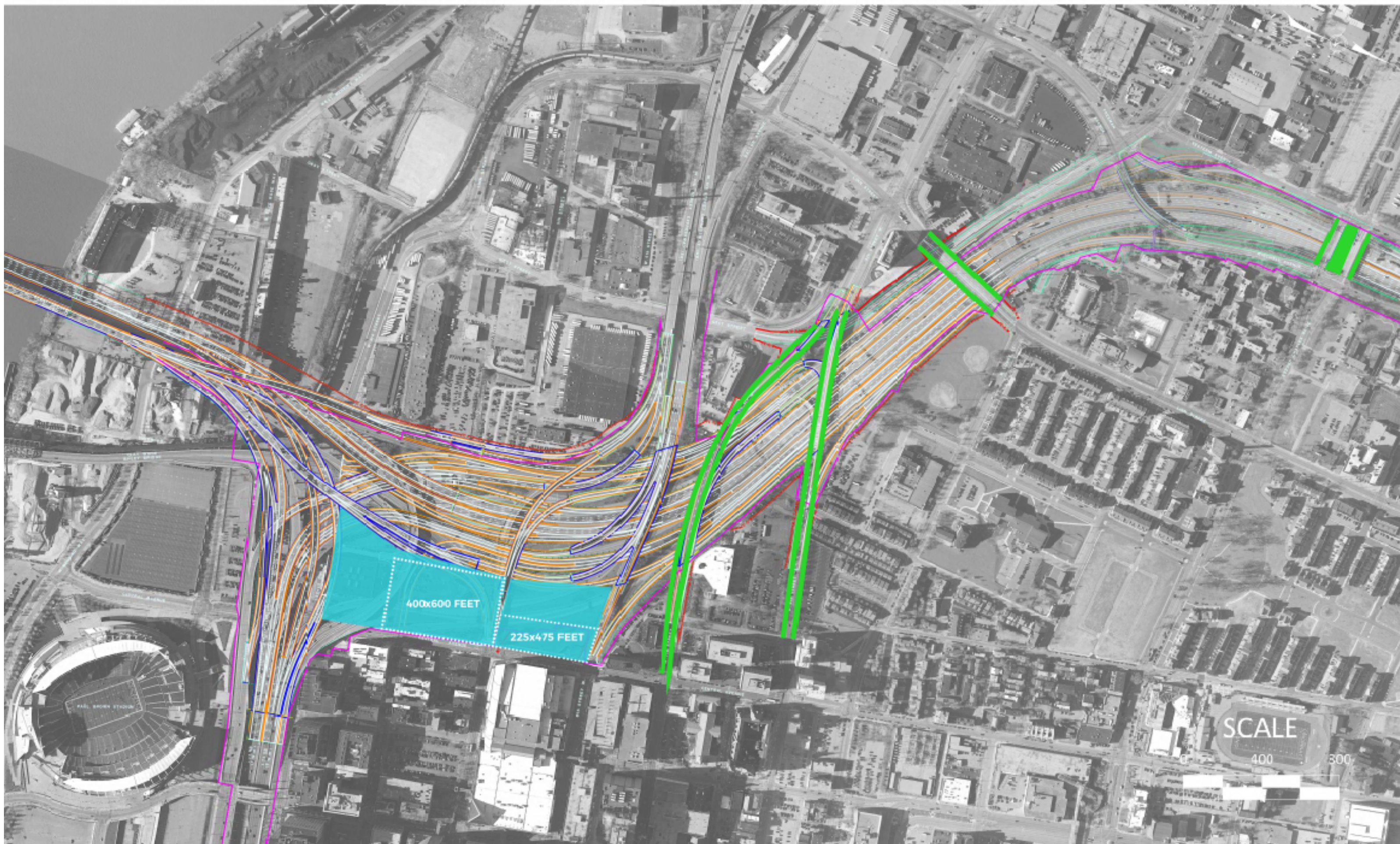
CINCINNATI USA REGIONAL CHAMBER

3 East Fourth Street, Suite 200, Cincinnati, OH 45202

cincinnati-chamber.com | theconnectedregion.com

CAUTION: This is an external email and may not be safe. If the email looks suspicious, please do not click links or open attachments and forward the email to csc@ohio.gov or click the Phish Alert Button if available.

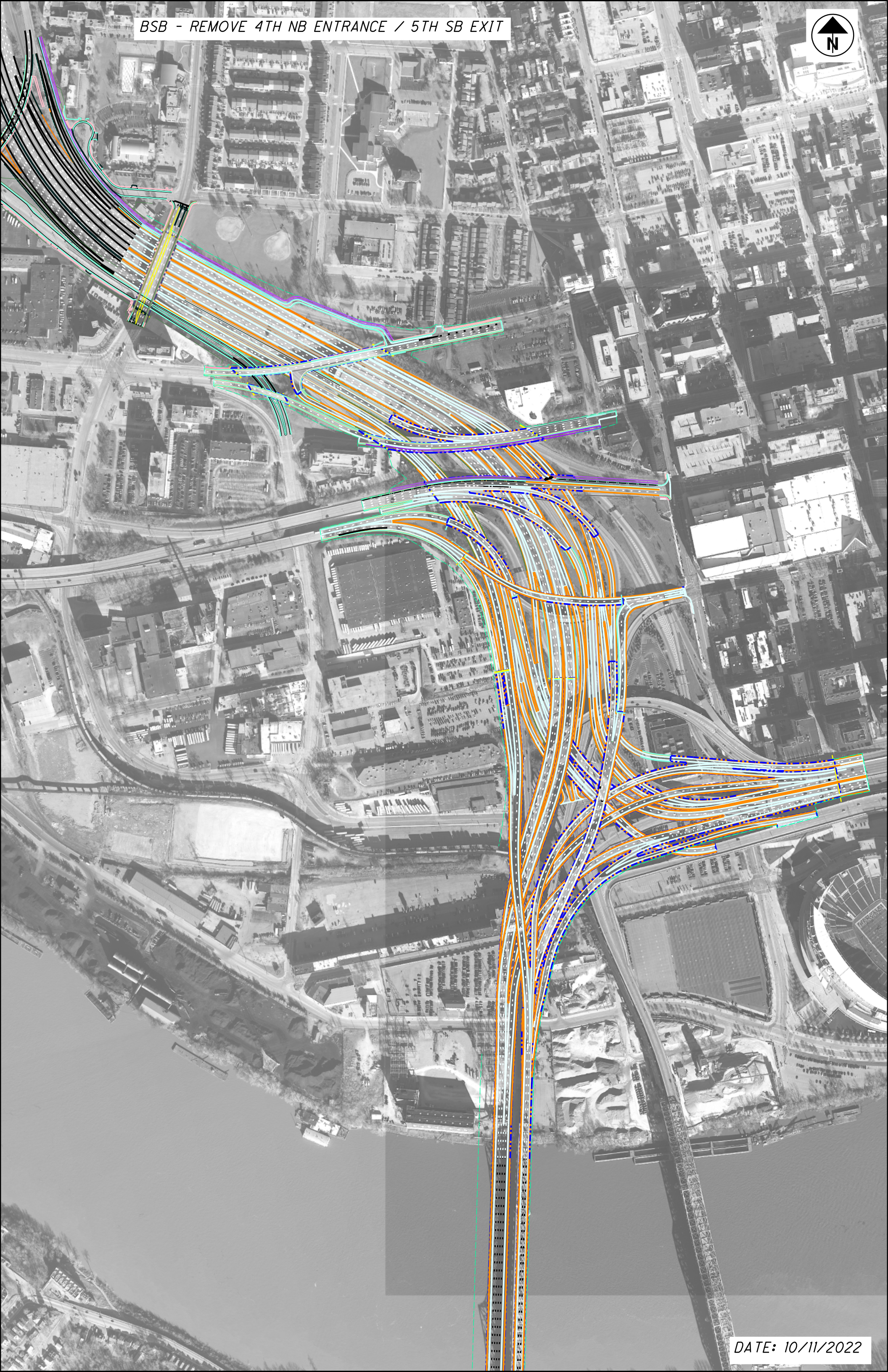
BRENT SPENCE BRIDGE CORRIDOR DESIGN BUILD PROJECT - CONCEPT I-W
(ODOT PID 116643 & KYTC KENTON COUNTY 6-17)





Attachment 2: Proposed Ramp Refinements

BSB - REMOVE 4TH NB ENTRANCE / 5TH SB EXIT





Attachment 3: Traffic Analysis

Concept I-W Traffic Analysis: Design Refinements based on City of Cincinnati Comments

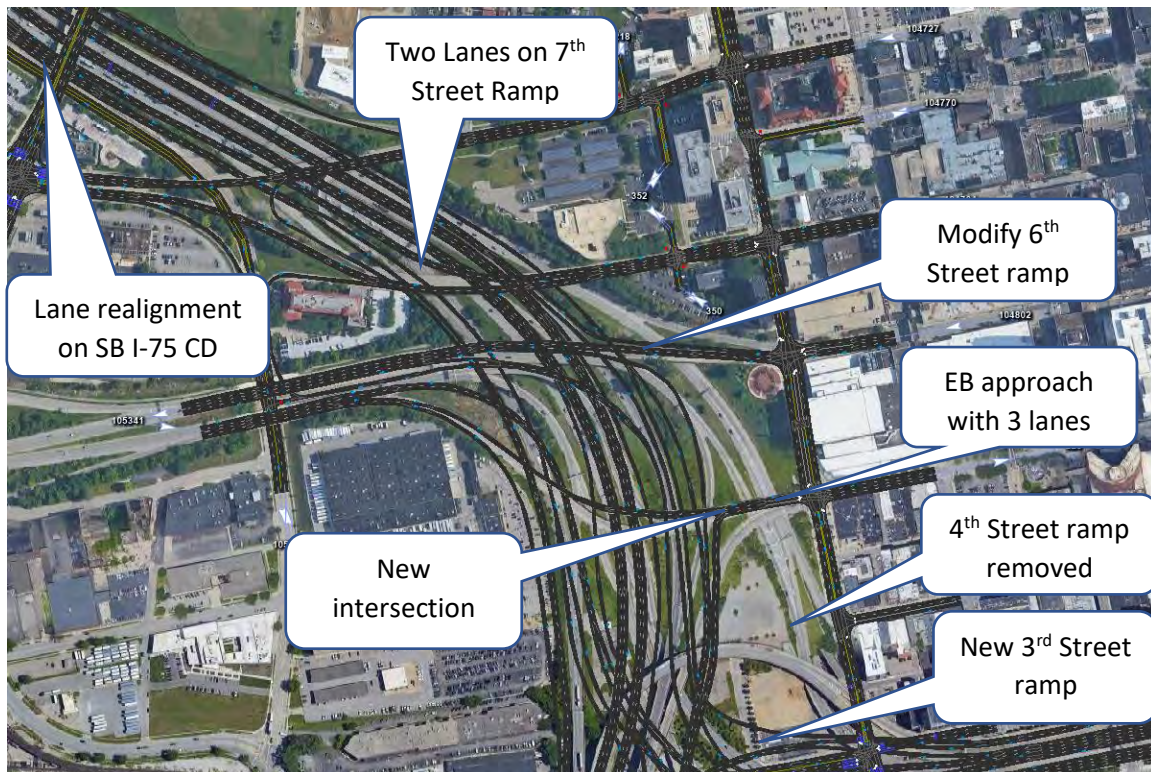
Summary

TransModeler traffic microsimulation models were used to evaluate proposed geometric changes to Concept I-W based on City of Cincinnati comments. The models use the methodology documented in the BSB Traffic Operations Report with 2050 planning level traffic volumes. The design modifications proposed by the City of Cincinnati include:

- Removal of SB I-75 Exit to 5th Street
- Removal of the NB I-75 entrance from 4th Street
- Addition of NB I-75 entrance ramp from 3rd Street
- Modification of 6th Street ramp geometry
- New signalized intersection between the NB I-75 exit ramp and US 50
- Reduced lanes for EB approach at 5th Street & Central Avenue Intersection

Due to traffic impacts from the 5th Street ramp removal, additional improvements are recommended for SB I-75 CD and SB I-75 exit ramp to 7th Street. With these proposed changes the traffic operations are acceptable in the project study area captured in the TransModeler network. The IMS forecasts and operations analysis will include additional intersections east of Central Avenue, which will provide a final analysis to understand the traffic impacts of the 4th Street ramp removal. The proposed geometric refinements for Concept I-W are shown in the figure below.

Figure 1: Concept I-W Design Refinements







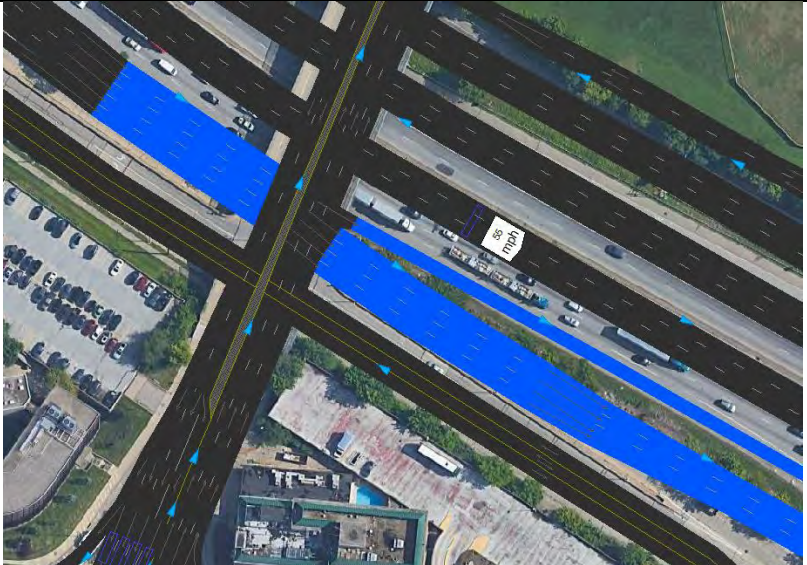
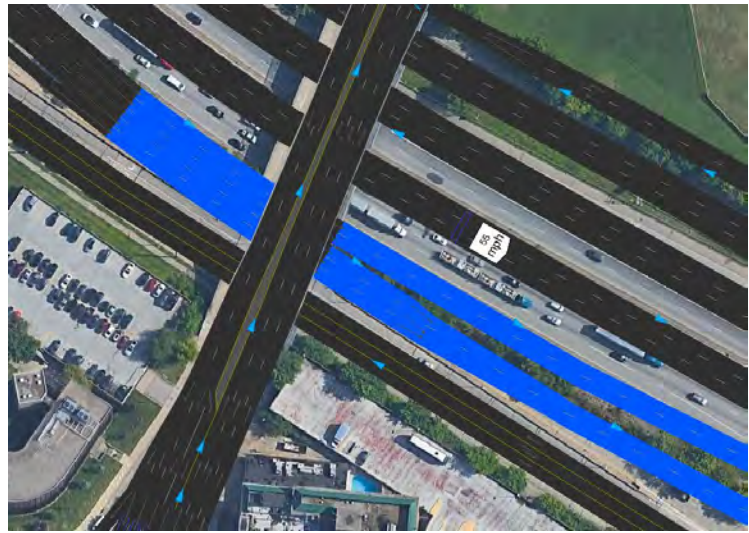
I-75 Exit Ramp Modifications

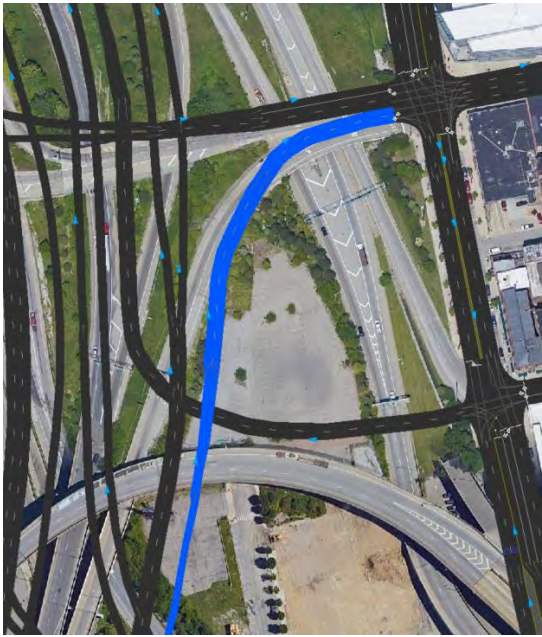
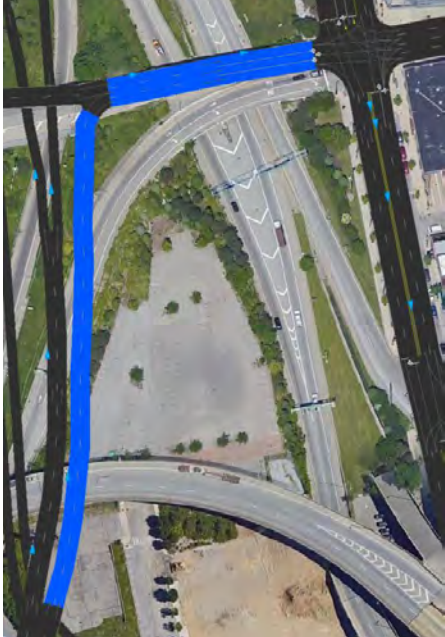
The SB I-75 exit onto 5th St was removed from the Concept I-W design. US 50 and the NB Exit to 5th Street was modified to form a signalized intersection west of Central Avenue. This signalized intersection operates at LOS B or better for both peak hours. The eastbound approach of the 5th Street and Central Avenue intersection is reduced from 4 lanes to 3 lanes. This intersection maintains acceptable operations of LOS B or better.

To accommodate the displaced exiting traffic to 5th Street, a second lane was added to the 7th Street exit ramp. This design change is different from the single lane in Concept I-W but consistent with the existing conditions. The LOS for the SB I-75 CD road before the 7th Street exit ramp changed from LOS B to LOS C during the AM period and remained at an LOS A for the PM period. The volume entering the ramp increased from 3410 vehicles to 6384 vehicles over the course of the 5-hour AM period and 1763 vehicles to 3431 vehicles for the 6-hour PM period. The LOS at the 7th Street and Central Avenue intersection remained at a LOS B for the AM and PM period for this design change.

On the SB I-75 CD road upstream of the 7th Street exit, the road diverges to either 7th Street or continues to 2nd Street, 3rd Street, and Brent Spence Bridge. It was also this section of road where the I-75 exit ramp to 5th Street was located. With the removal of the ramp, a lane was removed from the CD road. The traffic continuing south after the diverge now has three lanes that tapers to two, this tapering distance was shortened to match the distance used in the Concept I design. The LOS for this section changed from LOS B to LOS C during the AM period and remained at a LOS B for the PM period.

A comparison of the Concept I-W geometric changes for the I-75 exit ramps are shown on the following two pages.

Location	Concept I-W	Proposed Changes
SB I-75 Exit to 5 th Removal		
7 th St Exit Ramp		
I-75 S and 7 th St Ramp diverge		

Location	Concept I-W	Proposed Changes
5 th St Exit Ramp	 An aerial photograph of a highway interchange. A blue line highlights a specific exit ramp that curves from the main highway towards the right side of the frame. The surrounding area includes other highway lanes, a grassy median, and some buildings in the distance.	 An aerial photograph of the same highway interchange as in the 'Concept I-W' image. A blue line highlights a different exit ramp path, which is more direct and less curved than the one in the concept image. This represents the proposed changes to the exit ramp design.

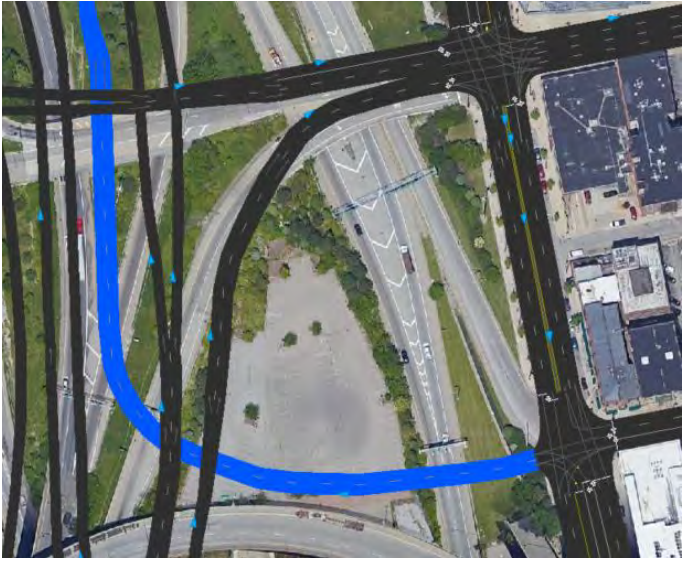
Northbound Entrance Ramp Modifications

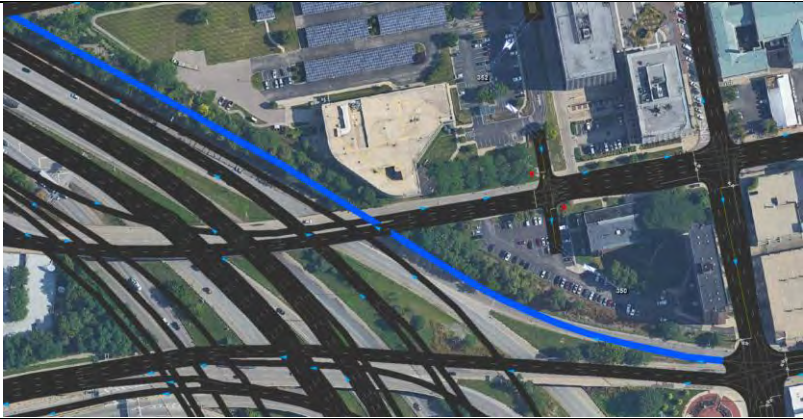

The NB I-75 entrance ramp from 4th Street to the NB CD was removed. The entrance ramp from 3rd Street was modified to include an additional ramp leading to I-75 N to accommodate the displaced northbound traffic. This alteration increased the 3rd Street ramp volume from 829 vehicles to 2553 vehicles over the course of the AM period and 5424 vehicles to 9565 vehicles for the PM period.

The 6th Street entrance ramp no longer goes to the Winchell CD, instead it merges with the NB CD onto I-75 N. The traffic using the 6th St entrance increased from 784 vehicles to 1076 vehicles over the course of the AM period and 1327 vehicles to 1820 vehicles for the PM period. The LOS at the 6th Street and Central Avenue intersection changed from LOS A to LOS B for both the AM and PM period.

As part of the IMS addendum additional analysis will be completed for the 3rd Street intersections at Elm Street and Race Street.

The entrance ramp design modifications for Concept I-W are shown on the following two pages.

Location	Concept I-W	Proposed Changes
4 th St Entrance Ramp		
3 rd St Entrance Ramp		

Location	Concept I-W	Proposed Changes
6 th St Entrance Ramp		



Attachment 4: City Concurrence

From: Williams, Bryan (Urban Planning) [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, October 20, 2022 9:20 AM
To: Spinosa, Stefan <[REDACTED].gov>; Brazina, John <Joh[REDACTED].gov>
Cc: Eric Youngblom <[REDACTED]>; Mark Becherer [REDACTED]; Erica Johnson - IND [REDACTED]; Hans, Stacey D (KYTC-D06) [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: [External Email] RE: BSB - Concept I-W

Stefan,

All of the changes/modifications outlined below are acceptable to the City.
Please let us know if you need anything further from us at this time.

Bryan

From: [Stefan.Spinosa](#) [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, October 14, 2022 12:15 PM
To: Williams, Bryan (Urban Planning) [REDACTED]; Brazina, John <[REDACTED].oh.gov>
Cc: Eric Youngblom <[REDACTED]>; Mark Becherer [REDACTED]; Erica Johnson - IND [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]
Subject: [External Email] RE: BSB - Concept I-W

External Email Communication

Bryan, John,

For your review is updated plan view and planning level traffic analysis for the changes we been discussing based on the attached September 2, 2022 comments.

Included is the following:

- Traffic/City Refinements – Short writeup on the traffic analysis based on City comments
- Concept I-W Segment Reference (for use with Operation Spreadsheets)
- Alt W AM and PM – Operation Spreadsheets for Concept I-W with changes
- 3rd and Elm AM and PM – HCS analysis at 3rd and ELM
- Plan view of changes

The overall changes from I-W resulting from these revisions are:

Remove:

4th NB entrance to NB I-75 CD
SB CD exit to 5th St
6th St access to Winchell

Add:

3rd St NB entrance to NB I-75 CD – merge with NB I-75 CD
6th St NB entrance to NB I-75 CD – add lane to NB I-75 CD
US 50 EB and 5th NB exit new intersection west of Central Ave

Changes:

US 50 EB adds 2nd lane coming into new intersection
SB CD exit to 7th street add lane (2 lanes) at exit from CD (match existing 4 lanes on 7th)

The changes made to Concept I-W shown in the attached are acceptable to ODOT. As a major stakeholder, we want the City's concurrence to include these changes in Concept I-W moving forward. We would be happy to discuss the information in the attached at your earliest convenience if necessary.

Thanks,

Stefan C. Spinosa, P.E.

Brent Spence Bridge Corridor Project Manager

ODOT District 8 Capital Programs
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513.933.6639

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