

WELCOME



N. WATER STREET PROJECT PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT MEETING

OPEN HOUSE

Please sign in, view materials, ask questions
and share your thoughts



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www.engage.milwaukee.gov/water-street-project

CITY OF MILWAUKEE



This project aims to reimagine the corridor as a vibrant, multimodal street that supports current and future transportation modes and land uses. The following plans, policies and priorities are helping to guide the City and its partners.

CONNEC+ING MKE: DOWNTOWN PLAN 2040

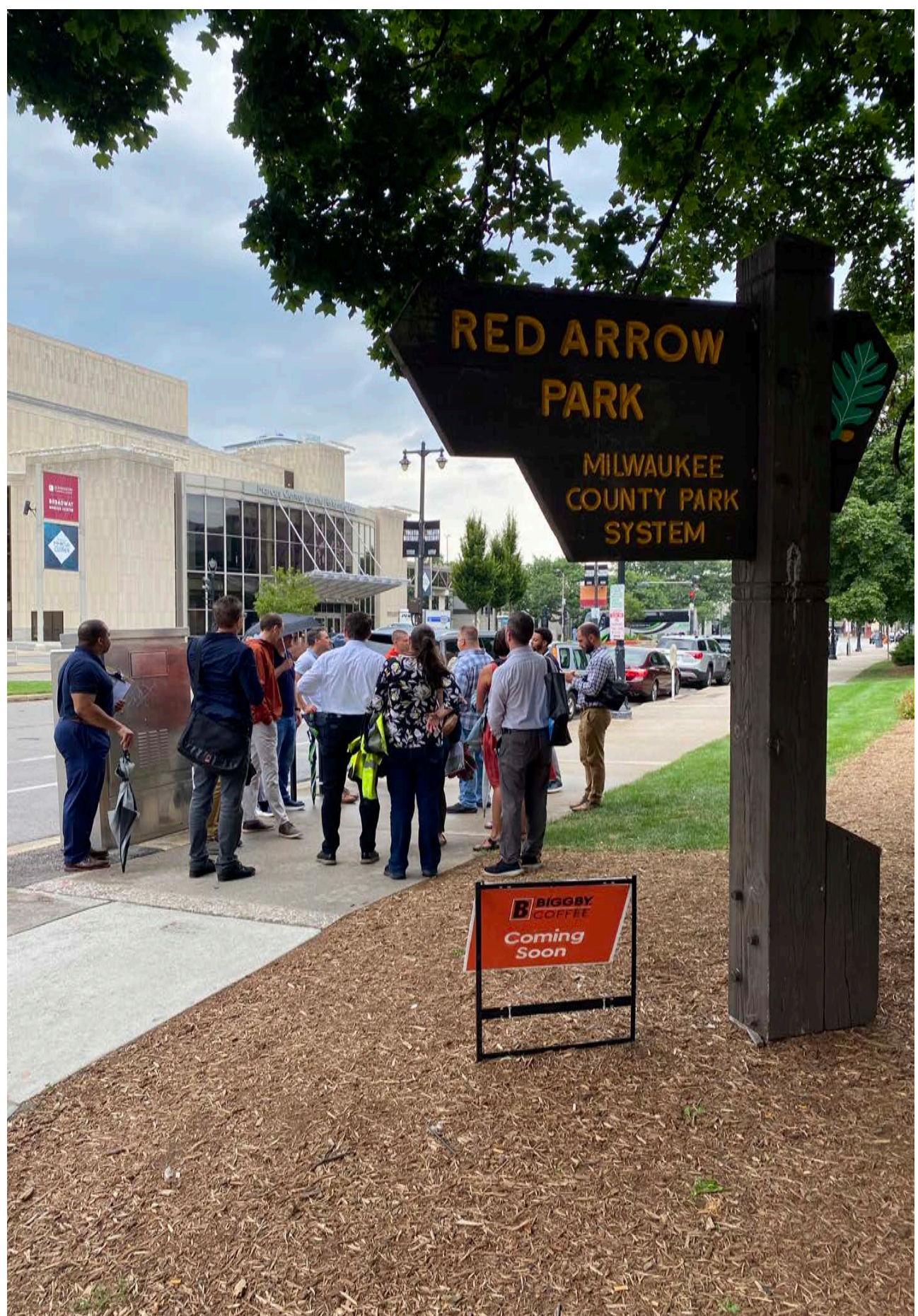
Water Street has been identified as a catalytic project that should prioritize transit and pedestrian use, with enhanced public spaces.

COMPLETE STREETS POLICY

Aims to create safe, comfortable and convenient streets for all users, promote equitable access across neighborhoods and support economic and environmental sustainability.

VISION ZERO

Adopted in 2022 with a goal of eliminating serious injuries and fatalities from traffic crashes by 2037.



Corridor walk and agency workshop, July 2024

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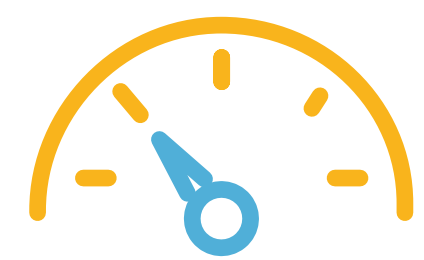
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PROJECT OVERVIEW

The City of Milwaukee Department of Public Works is leading a redesign for the full reconstruction of N. Water Street from E. Kilbourn Avenue to E. Pleasant Street.

PROJECT GOALS



Decrease motor vehicle **speeds**



Support existing and future **businesses**



Increase walkability



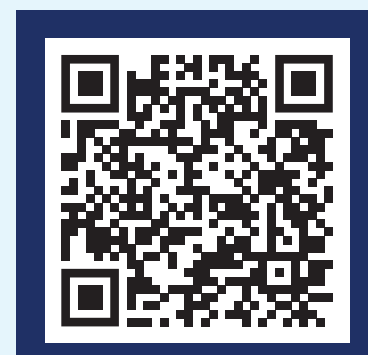
Design with **sustainability** in mind



Enhance transit operations and **rider experience**

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PROJECT CORRIDOR MAP

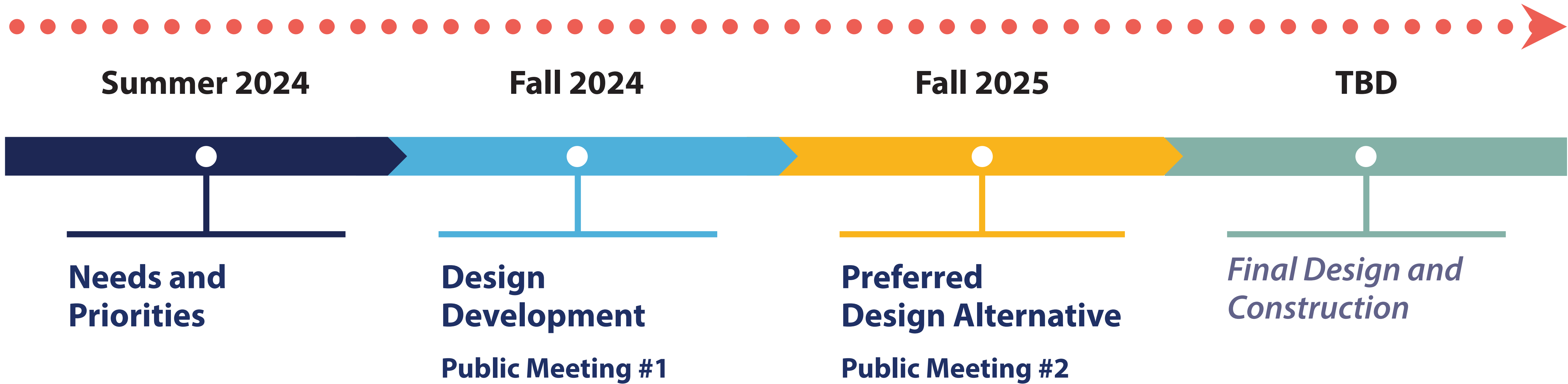
 Project Limits



PROJECT OVERVIEW

In July 2024, the project team held a collaborative agency workshop to develop project goals and identify needs and priorities for the corridor. Throughout the summer, the team collected and analyzed data, evaluated existing conditions and developed three design alternatives which were presented at Public Meeting #1 in Fall 2024. A preferred design alternative has been selected based on alternative analysis and public feedback, and presented at Public Meeting #2 in Fall 2025.

SCHEDULE



PROJECT ACTIVITIES



- Existing Conditions and Data Collection
- Public and Stakeholder Engagement
- Alternative Analysis
- Utility Coordination
- Preliminary Design
- Environmental Analysis



FUNDING

Preliminary design is 100% locally funded through Tax Incremental Financing (TIF). The City is working to identify funding for final design and construction.

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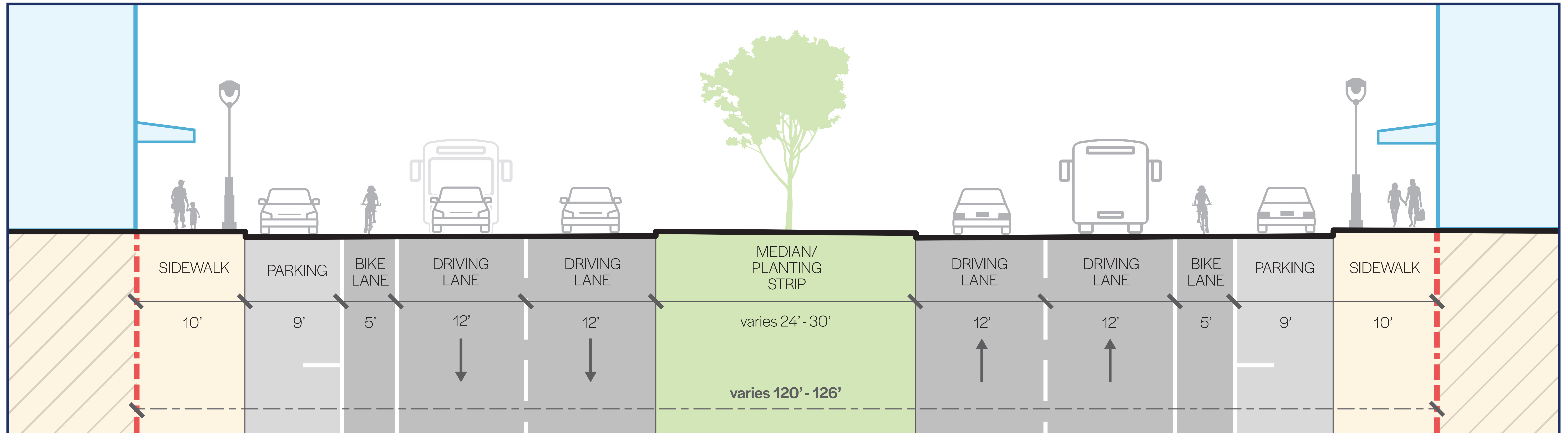
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EXISTING CONDITIONS

N. WATER STREET FROM E. KILBOURN AVENUE TO E. PLEASANT STREET



TYPICAL CROSS-SECTION
WIDTH VARIES BETWEEN 120 AND 126 FEET

- Two driving lanes in each direction
- 10-ft sidewalk width
- Striped bike lanes
- Major transit corridor with four bus routes averaging 5-minute headways between E. Kilbourn Avenue and E. Cherry Street
- On-street parking/curbside space on both sides of the street throughout the corridor
- Land uses include a mix of offices, restaurants and residential properties, with Marcus Performing Arts Center and Red Arrow Park on the southern end

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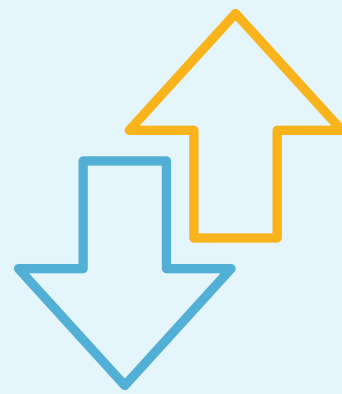
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TRAFFIC AND SAFETY

AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC (ADT): 17,817 VEHICLES

SOUTHBOUND
8,895 VEHICLES



NORTHBOUND
8,922 VEHICLES

- Two-lane streets (one lane in each direction) can typically handle 18,000 to 20,000 vehicles.
- Traffic volumes are higher in the southbound direction during the morning peak period and higher in the northbound direction during the evening peak period.
- The intersections along N. Water Street typically provide a stable traffic flow throughout the corridor (Level of Service C).



POSTED SPEED LIMIT: 30 MPH

Average Speed: 30.6 mph

Over 30 mph: 53.1%

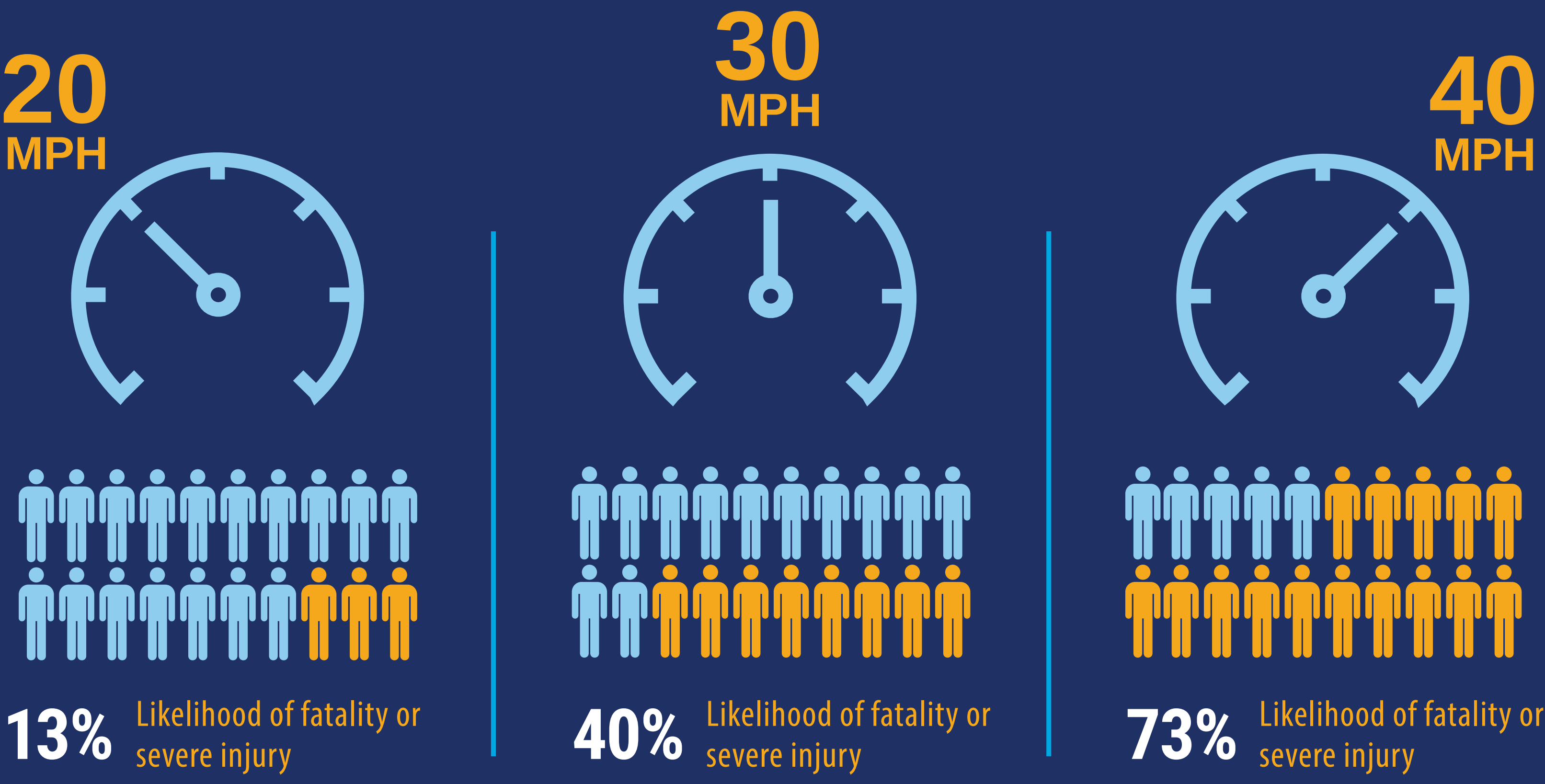
Over 40 mph: 21.1%

Note: Traffic data from 48-hour count, April 16-17, 2024

LIKELIHOOD OF PEDESTRIAN FATALITY OR SEVERE INJURY BY VEHICLE SPEED

The faster people drive, the higher the risk of serious injuries and fatalities from traffic crashes involving people walking or biking.

This project includes several design changes to slow down traffic on N. Water Street, which is key to reducing serious injuries and fatalities from traffic crashes, and achieving Vision Zero.



Source: Tefft, Brian C. Impact speed and a pedestrian's risk of severe injury or death. Accident Analysis & Prevention. 50. 2013

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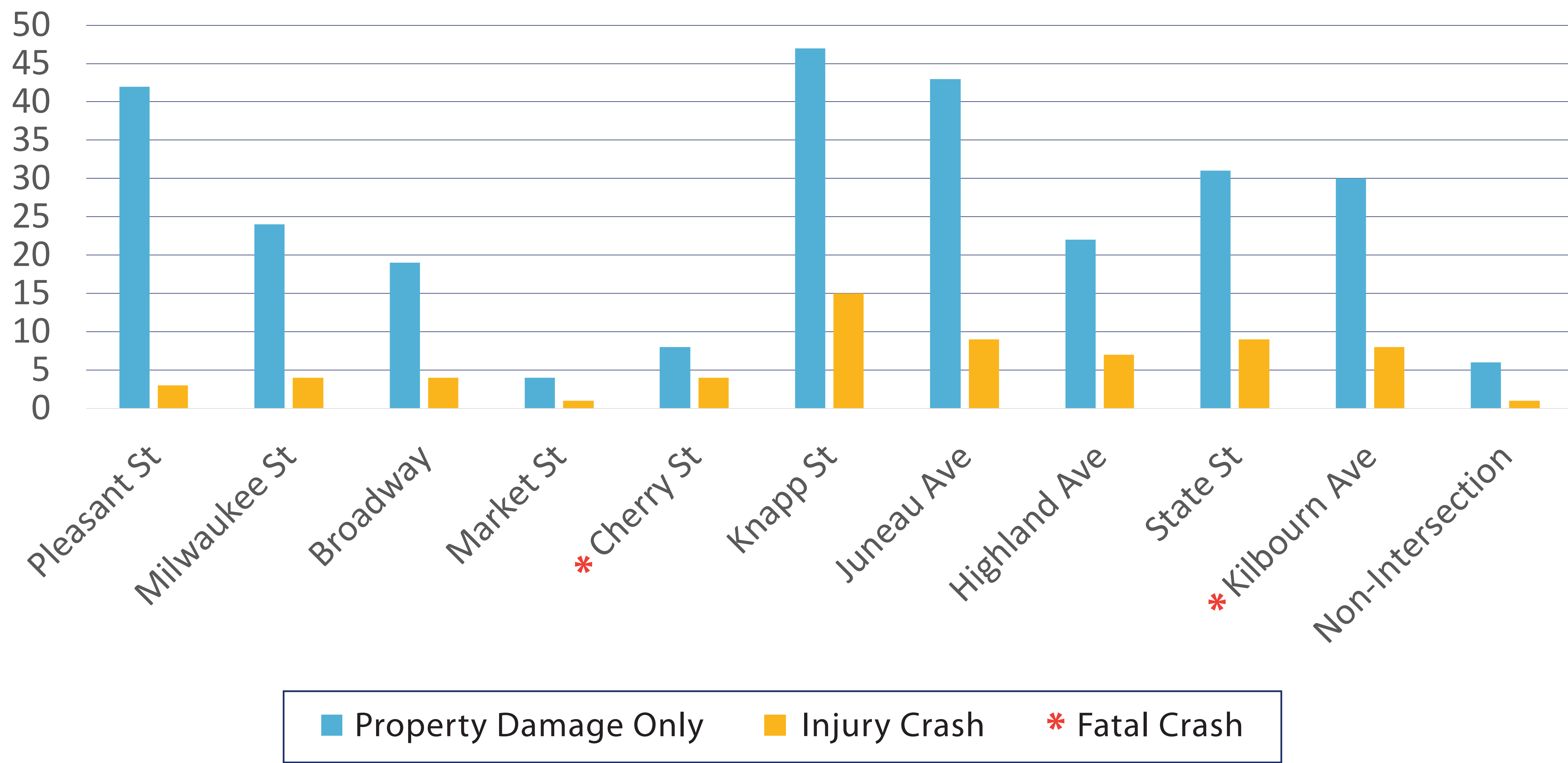
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CRASH HISTORY 2018-2023*

TOTAL CRASHES BY INTERSECTION



Corridor Length:

341 total crashes

2 fatalities

18 pedestrian and **3 bicyclist** crashes with **2/3 of crashes at night**

276 crashes caused property damage



Crash rates on Water Street are significantly higher than average compared to similar types of streets.



This corridor is **listed on the City of Milwaukee's bicyclist and pedestrian high injury networks (HIN)** due to the high number of past and predicted crashes.



Need for Design Changes:

Without redesigning these HIN streets, fatal and serious injury crashes would be expected to continue.

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**Note: Data excludes 2020*

MULTIMODAL NETWORK

LEGEND

BUS ROUTES

- GRE GreenLine
- 15 Route 15
- 18 Route 18
- 33 Route 33
- 57 Route 57 (current)

57 Route 57 (temporary closure)

The 57 bus is re-routed to E Knapp St/W McKinley Ave while the Cherry St bridge is under construction.

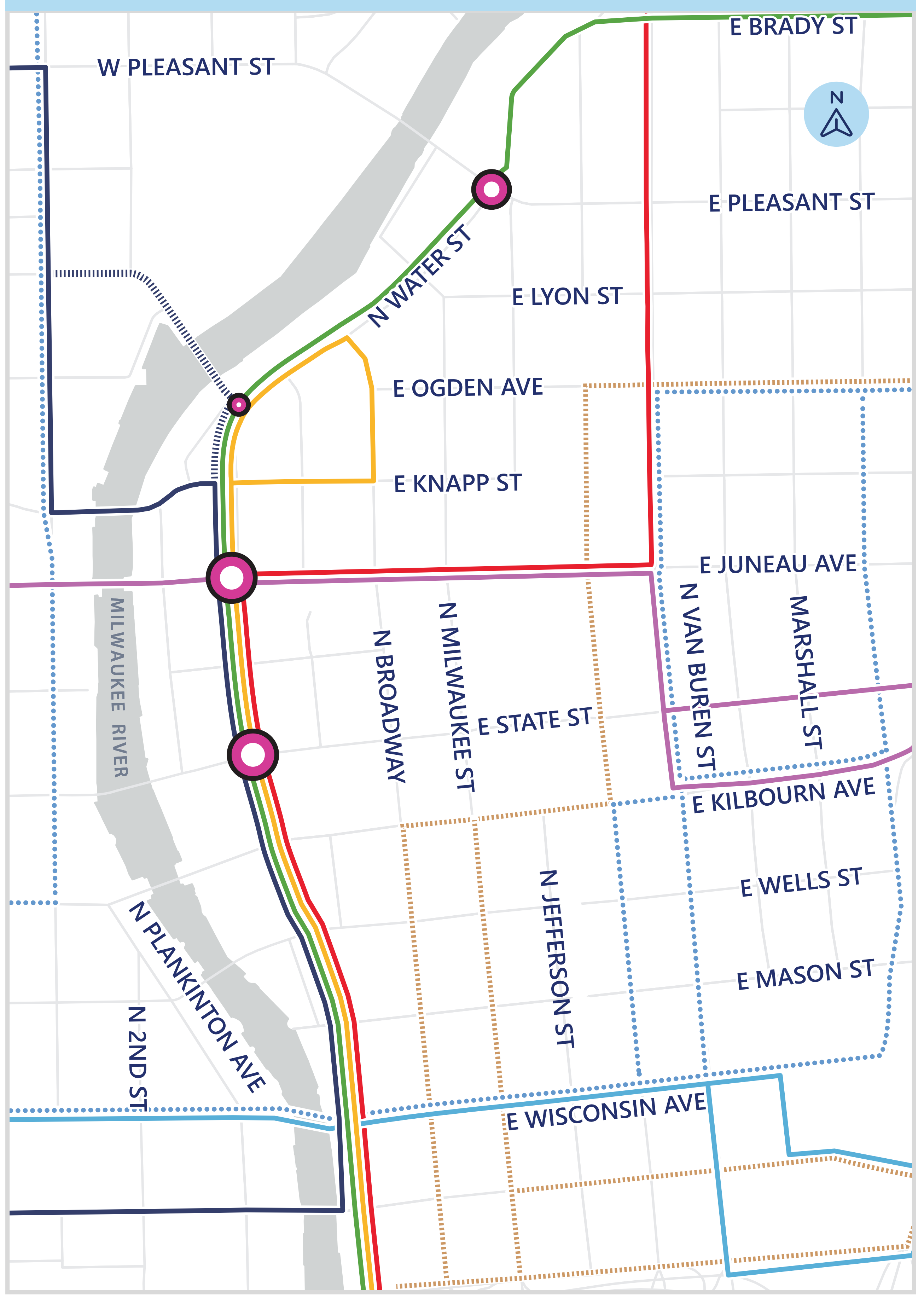
Other bus routes

OTHER TRANSIT OPTIONS

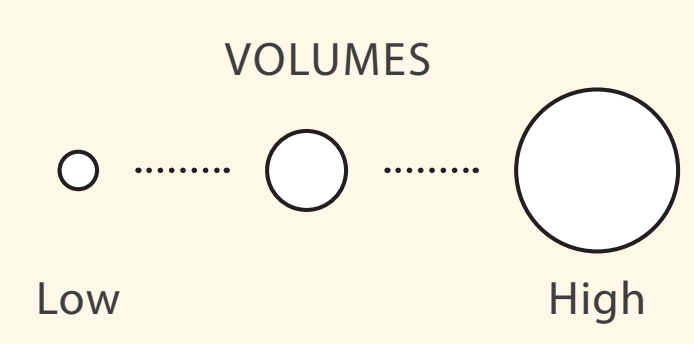
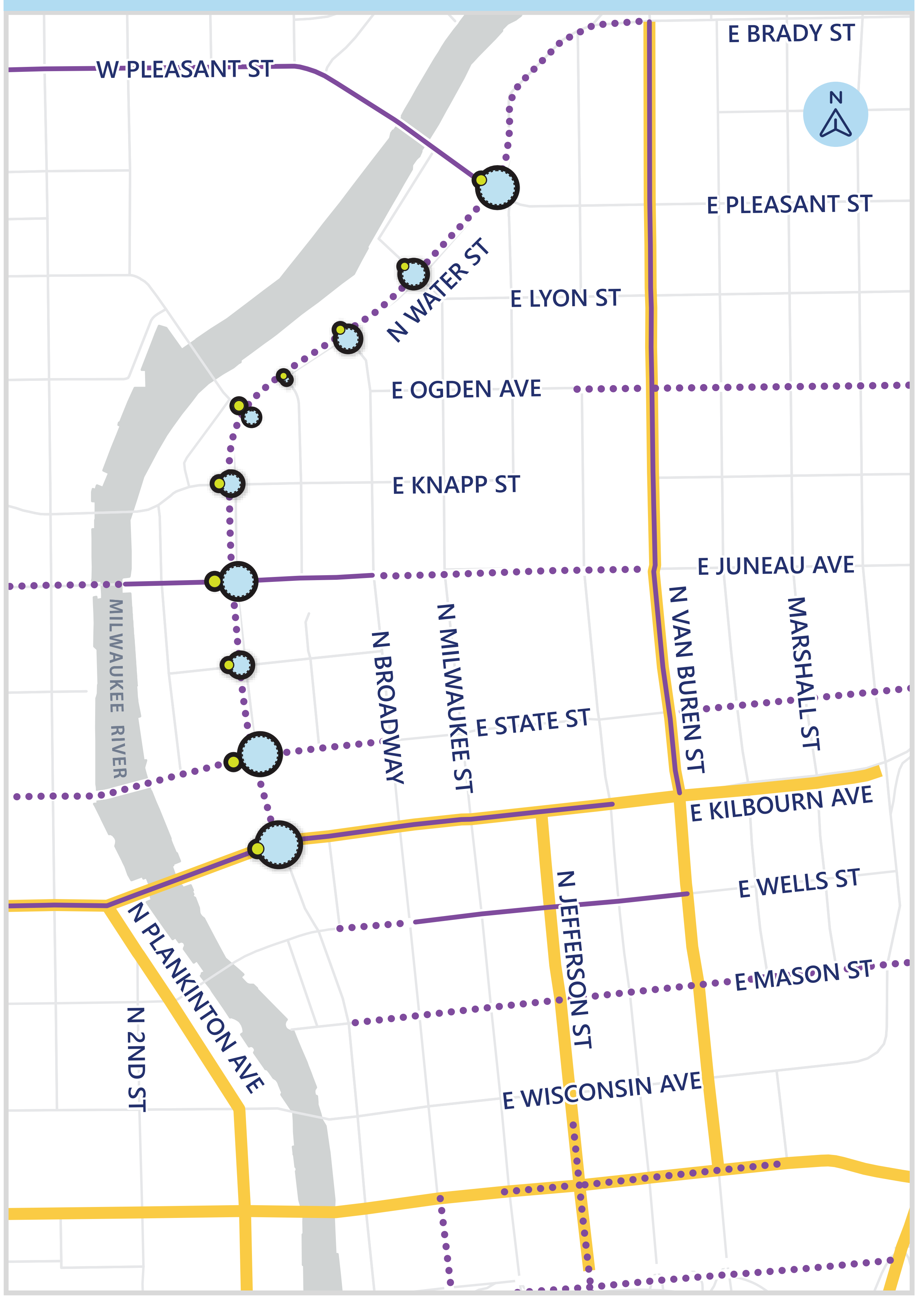
- CONNECT 1
- Hop Streetcar

Boardings and alightings by stop, September-October 2024 (MCTS)

TRANSIT NETWORK AND USAGE



PEDESTRIAN AND BIKE NETWORK USAGE



MODAL VOLUME COMPARISON

The size of the circle represents the number of pedestrians, bicyclists and bus riders at each intersection. A small circle is a lower volume in comparison to a large circle.

- Bus Ridership
- Bike
- Pedestrian

LEGEND

BICYCLE FACILITIES

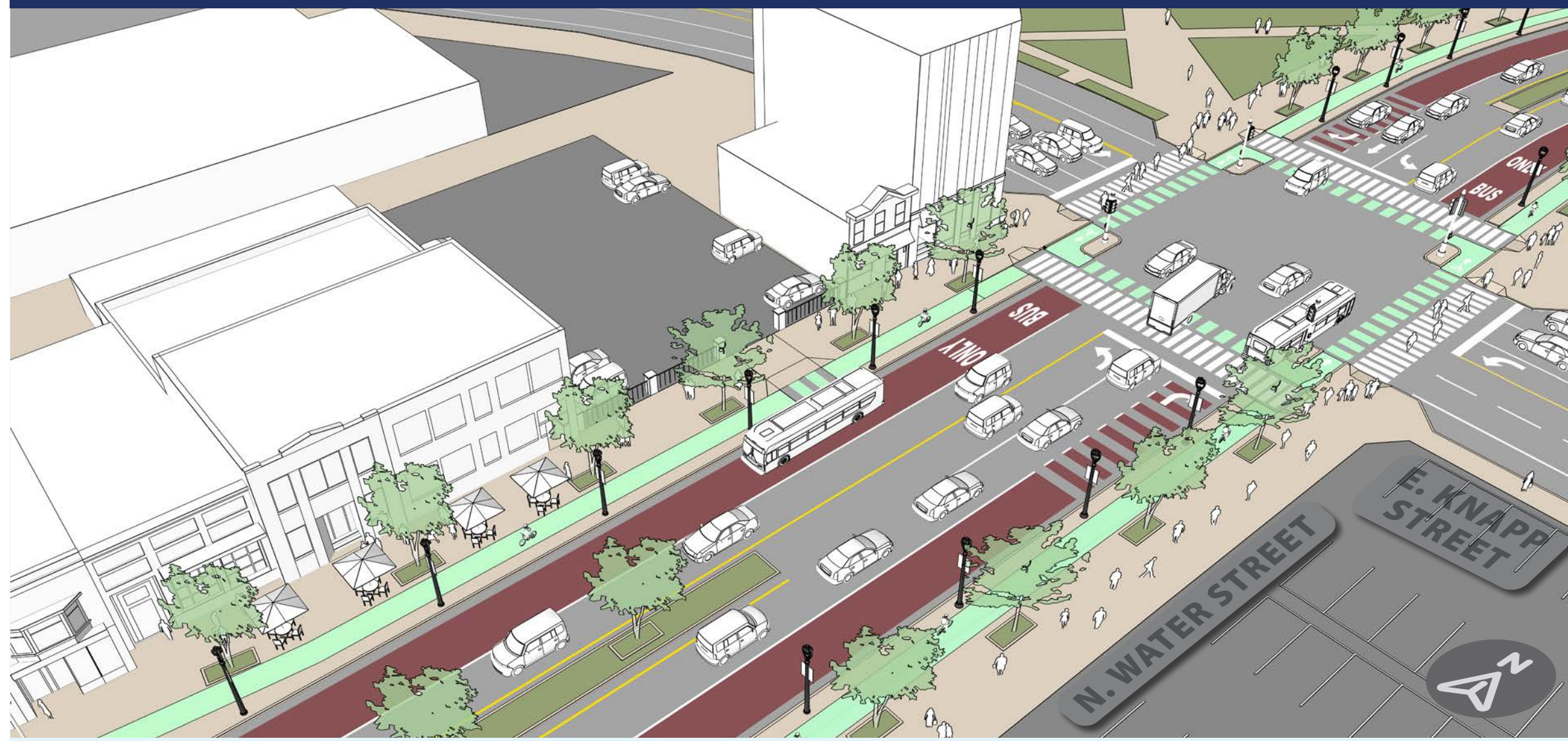
- Bike lanes
- Protected bike lanes
- Priority bike network

Pedestrian and bicyclist crossings: Peak hour data collected April 16, 2024

DESIGN ALTERNATIVES SUMMARY

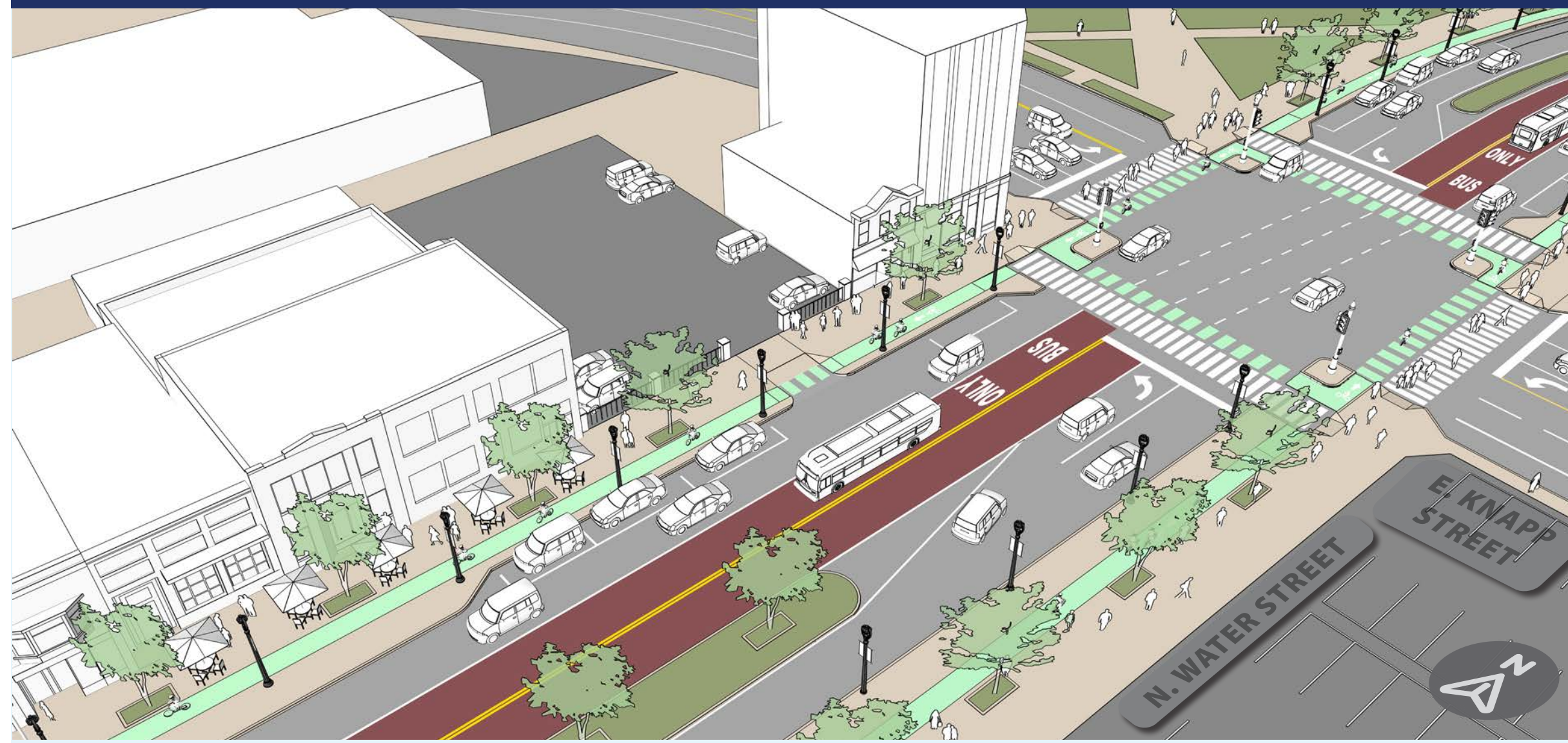
All three design alternatives that were considered offer one driving lane and a parking/loading zone lane in each direction, wider sidewalks, opportunities for streetscaping and green infrastructure and pedestrian crossing improvements. Key design elements for each alternative are below.

DESIGN ALTERNATIVE #1 RIGHT-SIDE BUS-ONLY LANES



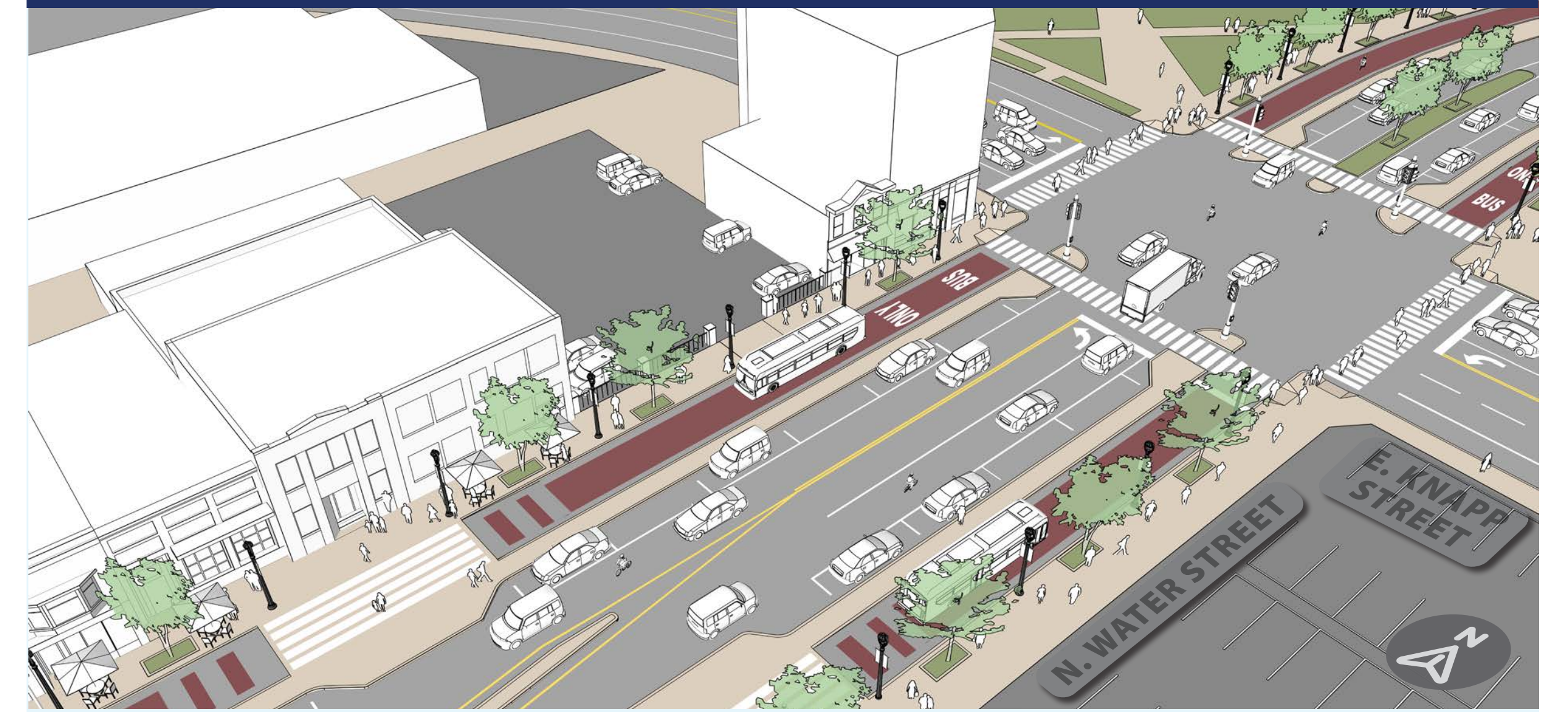
- Raised protected bike lanes
- Dedicated bus-only lanes; adjacent to travel lanes

DESIGN ALTERNATIVE #2 CENTER-RUNNING BUS CORRIDOR



- Raised protected bike lanes
- Dedicated bus-only lanes; partially separated from travel lanes with median
- Median provided for pedestrian refuge where feasible
- Street is physically and visually narrowed

DESIGN ALTERNATIVE #3 SEPARATED BUS CORRIDOR



- Dedicated bus-only lanes; separated from travel lanes
- Median provided for pedestrian refuge where feasible
- Street is physically and visually narrowed

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WHAT WE HEARD

PUBLIC FEEDBACK SUMMARY

DPW heard the following themes about each alternative through stakeholder meetings, at the Public Involvement Meeting #1 and submitted comments.

	 WHAT YOU LIKED	 WHAT YOU DIDN'T LIKE
DESIGN ALTERNATIVE #1 RIGHT-SIDE BUS-ONLY LANES	• Strong support for protected bike lanes • In favor of wide sidewalks • Liked the familiarity of a typical bus lane configuration	• Pedestrian crossing distance is seen as long • Street isn't physically narrowed • Concern about the misuse of and conflict with the bus lanes
DESIGN ALTERNATIVE #2 CENTER-RUNNING BUS CORRIDOR	• Strong support for protected bike lanes • In support of physically narrowing the street • Opportunity to improve bus flow, travel time and reliability	• Sidewalk width is reduced compared to other alternatives • Concern about accessibility and increased crossing distance to reach median bus stops
DESIGN ALTERNATIVE #3 SEPARATED BUS CORRIDOR	• Street design may promote slower speeds • Seen as a functional and attractive environment • Strong support for protected bus lanes	• No dedicated bike infrastructure; seen as the least bike-friendly option • Mixed opinions on the use of space for sidewalks and medians over bike lanes

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ALTERNATIVE ANALYSIS

SCREENING PROCESS

Process Public
Feedback

Conduct
Alternative Analysis

Hold Agency
Coordination
and Workshop

Identify
Preferred Design

CRITERIA

Decrease motor
vehicle speeds

Increase walkability

Enhance transit operations
and rider experience

Intersections & transitions

Operations & maintenance

Parking & loading zones

Costs

DESIGN ALTERNATIVE #1 RIGHT-SIDE BUS-ONLY LANES

Does not visually narrow the street

Long crossing with no median refuge

- Familiar approach, fits in with expectations
- Bus stop locations may be more flexible
- Reliability can be impacted by curb lane use

- Simple transitions at project limits

- No significant difference

- Loading zones not impacted, parking considerations are independent of alternative selection

- Cost differences are expected to be marginal

DESIGN ALTERNATIVE #2 CENTER-RUNNING BUS CORRIDOR

- Median helps visually and physically narrow the street

- Median refuge for crossing

- New approach and learning curve
- Transit riders must cross travel lanes
- Bus stop locations become more permanent
- Improved reliability and reduced conflicts

Transitions need consideration but are feasible

- No significant difference

- Loading zones not impacted, parking considerations are independent of alternative selection

- Cost differences are expected to be marginal

DESIGN ALTERNATIVE #3 SEPARATED BUS CORRIDOR

REMOVED FROM CONSIDERATION

- Conflicts for people exiting parked cars
- Concerns with bus operations and potential obstructions
- Lack of bike accommodations

- This alternative matched the criteria better
- The alternatives were equal with this criteria

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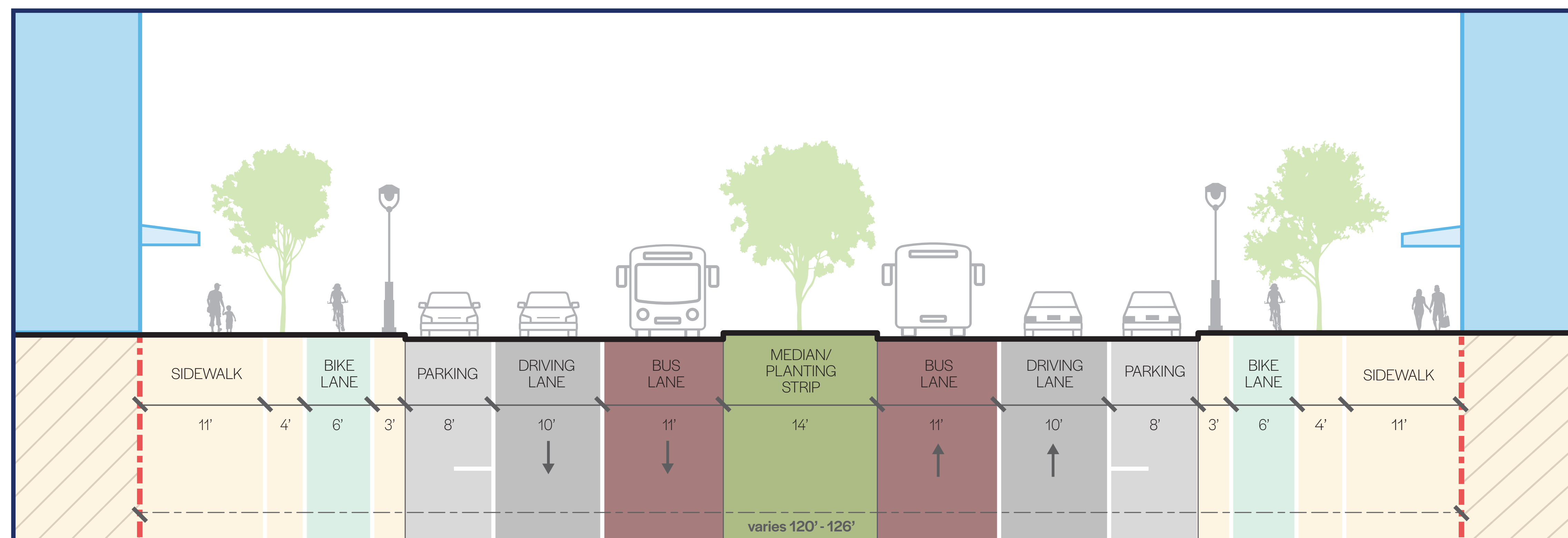
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PREFERRED DESIGN

CENTER-RUNNING BUS CORRIDOR

N. WATER STREET FROM E. KILBOURN AVENUE TO E. PLEASANT STREET



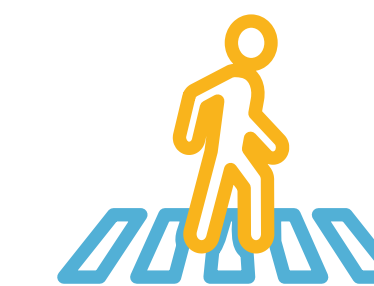
TYPICAL CROSS-SECTION

WIDTH VARIES BETWEEN 120 AND 126 FEET

DESIGN BENEFITS



Reduce motor vehicle speeds through physical and visual street-narrowing measures



Improve walkability with widened sidewalks and shorter pedestrian crossings



Enhance transit operations and rider experience with improved transit reliability and reduced conflicts with other users

NEXT STEPS

Continued Stakeholder Coordination

Design Refinements

Final Design (pending funding)

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PREFERRED DESIGN

N.WATER STREET AND N. MILWAUKEE STREET (LOOKING NORTH)



N.WATER STREET AND E. KNAPP STREET (LOOKING SOUTHWEST)



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PREFERRED DESIGN

N.WATER STREET AND E. HIGHLAND AVENUE (LOOKING SOUTH)



N.WATER STREET AND E. STATE STREET (LOOKING SOUTHEAST)



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