

DAKOTA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Dakota County Western Service Center – Room L139

14955 Galaxie Avenue

Apple Valley, MN 55124

Thursday, November 16, 2023

7:00 PM – 9:00 PM

Agenda

I. Call to Order

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Public Comments:

Anyone wishing to address the Planning Commission on an item not on the agenda may address the Planning Commission at this time (comments are limited to 5 minutes).

IV. Approval of the Agenda

V. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes (October 26, 2023)

VI. Veterans Memorial Greenway Design/Alignment Study Update - Information

(Tony Wotzka – Parks, John Mertens - Planning)

VII. Planning Manager Update and County Board Actions (Kurt Chatfield – Planning Office)

- Met with Rice County, Northfield, and MN DNR to discuss Mill Towns Trail progress and coordination

VIII. Upcoming Public Meetings – Community Outreach

Lebanon Maintenance Shop Virtual Meeting	November 9 th , 6:30pm https://bit.ly/LH-MF
County 42 Western Apple Valley Project Design Kickoff Open House	November 15 th , 4:30pm-6:30pm Apple Valley Senior Center, Yosemite Room
Miesville Ravine Park Reserve Long-Range Plan Open House	November 15 th , 5pm-6:30pm Cannon River Lutheran Church
Delaware Trail Gap – School Safety Project Open House	November 16 th , 5pm-7pm Two Rivers High School, main entrance mezzanine
Vermillion River Watershed Plan Public Meeting	January 16 th , 5-7pm Lakeville Water Treatment Facility
Vermillion River Watershed Plan Public Meeting	January 24 th , 5-7pm Pleasant Hill Library, Hastings

IX. Topics for Next Meeting (Thursday, December 14, 2023)

- Mississippi River Greenway – Long Range Plan

X. Planning Commissioner Announcements/Updates

XI. Adjourn



Meeting Minutes: Dakota County Planning Commission Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes-DRAFT

Date: 10/26/2023

Minutes prepared by Liz Hansen

Location: Western Service Center

Attendance

Members Present

- Jerry Rich
- Amy Hunting
- Barry Graham
- James Guttmann
- Nate Reitz
- Tony Nelson
- Kelly Kausel
- Brady Folkestad
- Lori Hansen
- Michael Esch

Dakota County staff members attending:

- Kurt Chatfield, Planning Manager
- Niki Geisler, Parks Director
- Liz Hansen, Administrative Coordinator
- Joe Walton, Natural Resource Senior Ecologist

Member(s) Absent:

- Mike Cahn
- Jill Smith
- Dennis Peine

Meeting Called to Order

- Time: 7:03 p.m.
- By Planning Commission Chair, Amy Hunting
- Commissioner Kausel joined the meeting at 7:09 p.m.
- Commissioner Reitz joined the meeting at 7:11 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

- The Planning Commission opened the meeting by reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comments

- Comments/Notes: No audience member wished to address an item not on the agenda.

Approval of Agenda

Chair Hunting asked if there were any changes to the agenda.

The Planning Commission advised no changes, additions, or deletions.

MOTION: Commissioner Nelson moved, seconded by Commissioner Hansen, approving the agenda. Voice vote: Ayes – 8 – Nays – 0 – Unanimously Approved

Approval of Minutes (from September 28, 2023)

Chair Hunting asked if there were any changes to the previous meeting's minutes.

The Planning Commission advised no changes, additions, or deletions.

MOTION: Commissioner Graham moved, seconded by Commissioner Folkestad, approving the previous meeting's minutes. Voice vote: Ayes – 8 – Nays – 0 – Unanimously Approved

Item VI. Vermillion River Greenway Natural Resource Management Plan (Hastings) -Action (Joe Walton, Natural Resource Senior Ecologist)

Joe Walton, Natural Resource Senior Ecologist, presented this item. The Planning Commission received an overview of the plan's status, including comments received from the public during the open comment period.

Questions and comments by the Commissioners, along with responses from staff (*italics*):

Planning Commissioners noted that there were not many public comments on the plan. *Staff agreed and stated that the plan was widely publicized in the local newspaper, county web page, and social media. Staff also contacted the DNR and presented to the Hastings City Parks Committee.*

Several Planning Commissioners commented that they thought the plan was widely publicized and that often, there is not the same interest in natural resource management that there may be in other plans.

One of the comments received was on the preservation and management of the mill ruins near the Veteran's Home. *Staff responded that they contacted the City of Hastings and the Historical Society and that this is the*

city's land. Dakota County will interpret the story of the mill, but the City will need to take the lead on preserving and managing the mill ruins.

A commissioner mentioned that attending local farmers markets may be a good way to engage residents on natural resource management plans. *Staff agreed with the comment.*

There was a discussion on cost-share incentives for managing natural resources on adjacent private land. *Staff provided an overview of the County's voluntary easement program, along with landowner obligations and county cost share for managing protected land.*

A commissioner mentioned that there are now some new best management practices for managing buckthorn, citing recent research by the University of MN. Buckthorn can be managed by planting aggressive native plant species that compete with and suppress buckthorn. *Staff responded that the research was promising and that buckthorn is the symptom of the problem within a crumbling ecosystem.*

A commissioner mentioned that Dakota County has been very innovative in its natural resource management techniques, such as using goats to control invasive species. *Staff agreed with the comment.*

MOTION: Commissioner Graham moved, seconded by Commissioner Nelson, recommending to the Physical Development Committee of the Whole to adopt the Natural Resource Management Plan for the Vermillion River Greenway Hastings Segment. Voice vote: Ayes – 10 – Nays – 0 – Unanimously Approved

Planning Manager Update and County Board Actions

Comments/Notes: Kurt Chatfield, Planning Manager, provided the Planning Commission with an update on the following County Board Actions:

- Authorized acquisition of the Schiela Trust property for the Veterans Memorial Greenway
- Provided direction on greenway cost-share policies and practice

Upcoming Public Meetings – Community Outreach

Lebanon Maintenance Shop Open House	October 24 th , 4:30-6:00pm Lebanon Hills Regional Park Visitor Center
Lebanon Maintenance Shop Virtual Meeting	November 9 th , 6:30pm https://bit.ly/LH-MF
Vermillion River Watershed Plan Public meeting	Late November TBD

Topics for next meeting (Thursday, November 16, 2023)

Kurt Chatfield, Planning Manager, let the Planning Commission know that there is one item on the schedule for next month's meeting:

- Mississippi River Greenway – Long Range Plan

Planning Commissioner Announcements/Updates:

A commissioner attended the Lebanon Hills Maintenance Shop Open House and inquired about whether funding was available to restore the current shop location. *Staff responded that there is funding in the budget to remove the old shop and stabilize the existing site with native vegetation. The County will need to decide the long-range future for the site through a separate study that looks at the future of Camp Sacagawea, either at its current location or at the old shop location.*

Commissioners discussed the need for public engagement about what to do with the old shop location, with comments about the quality of natural resources near the existing shop, the needs for the camp, and other needs such as accessible public bathrooms in the area.

Adjournment

Chair Hunting asked for a motion to adjourn.

MOTION: Commissioner Folkestad moved, seconded by Commissioner Hansen, to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 p.m. Voice Vote: Ayes – 10 – Nays – 0 – Unanimously Approved.

Next Regular Meeting: Thursday, November 16, 2023, at 7:00 p.m., Dakota County Western Service Center, Apple Valley

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Hansen, Administrative Coordinator

DAKOTA COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

DATE: NOVEMBER 16, 2023

AGENDA ITEM: Veterans Memorial Greenway Update

PREPARED BY: TONY WOTZKA & JOHN MERTENS

PURPOSE

Provide Planning Commission:

1. *An overview and update on alignment, land acquisition, and engineering activities on the Veterans Memorial Greenway and memorial nodes*
2. *An overview of engineering concepts, railroad coordination, public engagement, and city coordination with 105th Street.*

BACKGROUND

The Veterans Memorial Greenway (*formerly Rich Valley Greenway*) is a proposed regional trail and open-space corridor that will provide a link between Lebanon Hills Regional Park and the Mississippi River in central Dakota County. The five-mile corridor stretches east and west within Egan and Inver Grove Heights, which follows the adopted Rich Valley Greenway master plan corridor. The Veterans Memorial Greenway will provide neighborhood access points connecting single-family residential neighborhoods, local park connections, and rural and undeveloped open space (Attachment: Project Location). The memorials along the trail will be planned and constructed in partnership with Veterans groups.

The Veterans Memorial Greenway will present unique and exciting user opportunities to traverse over and under highways and across water bodies and railroads, coupled with views of unique and picturesque natural resource elements.

The 2017 adopted master plan did not include 105th Street as a preferred or alternative alignment for the greenway. A January 3, 2020, Preliminary Engineering Study (*Attachment: Preliminary Engineering Study*) provided challenges and opportunities, property ownership details, and preliminary project costs that were the result of up to seven alternatives between the Pine Bend Landfill and 105th Street that utilized a mix of public and private land, including Flint Hills property. 105th Street was identified as the preferred alignment because it provided the least amount of impact to private property, was more cost-effective, was the least impactful to natural resources by means of earthwork and vegetation removals, and avoided land that would require land deals or easements in Railroad right-of-way. The Preliminary Engineering Study included four different alternatives along 105th Street, including:

1. Widening pavement and adding an on-street greenway with bike lanes
2. Widening pavement and adding an on-street greenway
3. Maintaining existing roadway and constructing off-street trail with a drainage swale (*Evaluated further in preliminary design phase*)
4. Incorporating a curb and gutter and turf boulevard with off-street trail (*Evaluated further in preliminary design phase*)

Preliminary engineering for the greenway officially started in the fall of 2020. Several iterations of a 105th Street alignment have been developed at a preliminary design level to meet Dakota County Greenway standards and minimum city street, snow storage, and drainage requirements that have been refined to keep the greenway in public right-of-way and balance, limit, or eliminate any private property construction impacts along 105th Street.

Public comments have been received via direct discussions with elected officials, emails and public meeting comments. Project staff have reached out to almost 70 private property owners in 2023 along or near the 105th Street corridor to discuss the project and mitigate any concerns. Project staff continues to have both positive and supportive feedback for the project as well as those that have expressed concern or opposition.

The interpretive memorial plan, which included eight memorials along the corridor, was adopted by the Dakota County Board of Commissioners on July 18, 2023.

Veterans Memorial Greenway – Design & Tentative Construction Schedule

For the central section, which is labeled as Phase I (*Alameda Path to Rich Valley Park*), we have full land control with fully executed Flint Hills easements and some other minor construction easements along Cliff Road. We are coordinating with the City of Inver Grove Heights for the trail connection into Rich Valley Park as part of the final design development, and construction is expected to begin in Q1 of 2024.

The western section, which is labeled as Phase II (*Dodd Road to Alameda Path*) title work was completed this fall. Project staff met with property owners near Lakeside Park in June of 2023 to discuss the project and proposed alignment. Appraisals of private properties that have temporary or permanent easement needs will occur in early 2024, which will also include acquisition offers. The project team will continue to coordinate with Xcel Energy, Great River Energy, CP Railroad, and MnDOT on required easements or permits over the next year.

The eastern section, which is labeled as Phase III (*Rich Valley Park to Mississippi River Greenway*) will follow a similar timeline as Phase II in 2024 and 2025, with tentative construction scheduled for 2026. The proposed trail alignment along 105th was moved to Phase III in order to adequately address concerns from residents and research options. Project staff coordinated with individual properties owners in August 2023 to provide project updates, discuss questions, and comments or concerns on the alignment. The project team will continue to coordinate with Xcel Energy, UP Railroad, and MnDOT on required easements, permits, and design-related details.

Based on the results of the current design study, staff recommends that the County continue to pursue the 105th street corridor as the preferred alignment for the greenway. A presentation is tentatively scheduled at the Physical Development Committee of the County Board for December 12, 2023, to seek direction on coordination with the City of Inver Grove Heights and the next steps in the study process.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment: Phasing Map

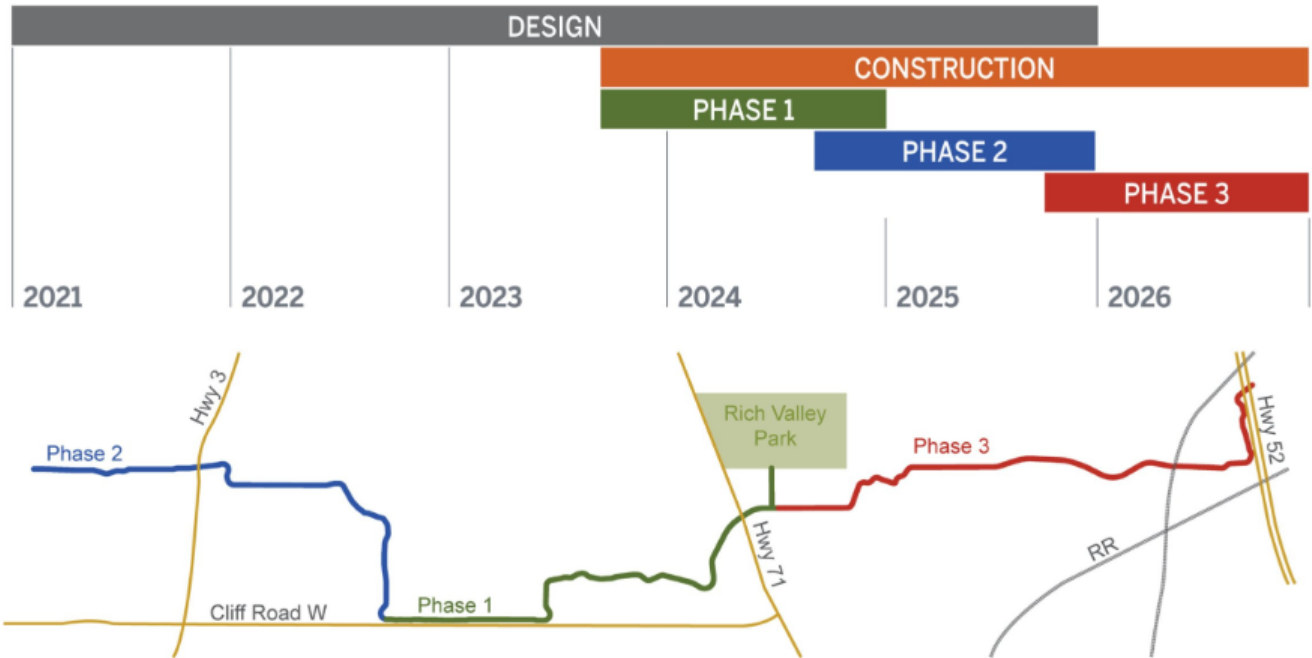
Attachment: Working/Preferred 105 Preliminary Design Alignment

QUESTIONS

The following questions are intended to help assist in review of the packet materials.

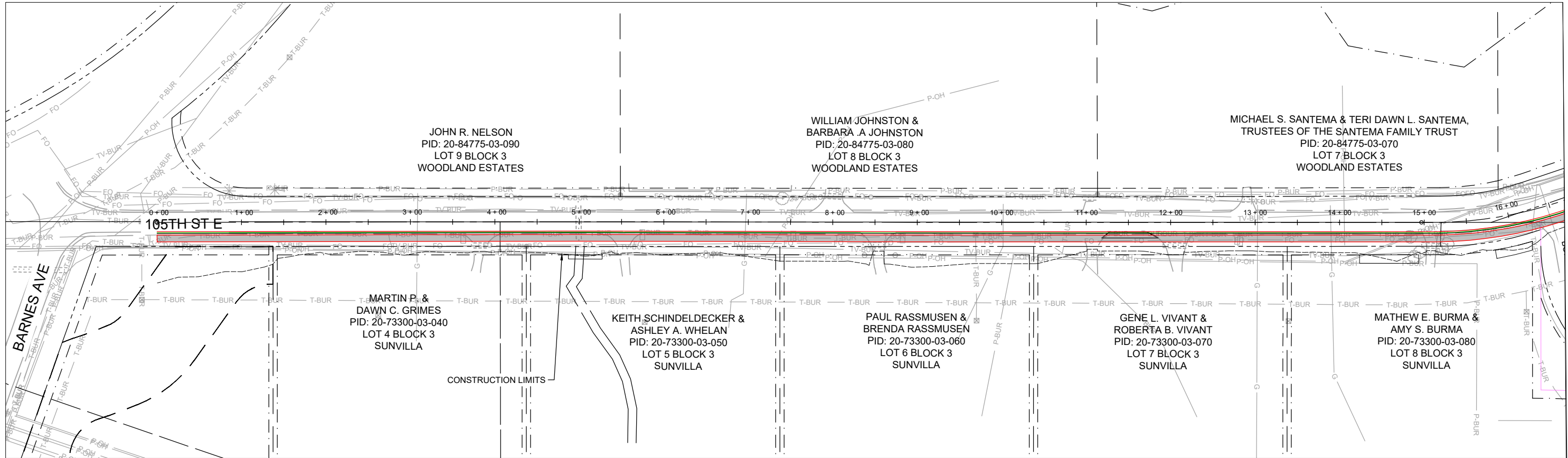
1. Do you have any questions on the design/engineering components of the project?
2. Do you have any questions about the 105th alignment, design or future coordination needs?
3. Do you have any questions about the construction phasing or memorial nodes?

Design & Tentative Construction Schedule

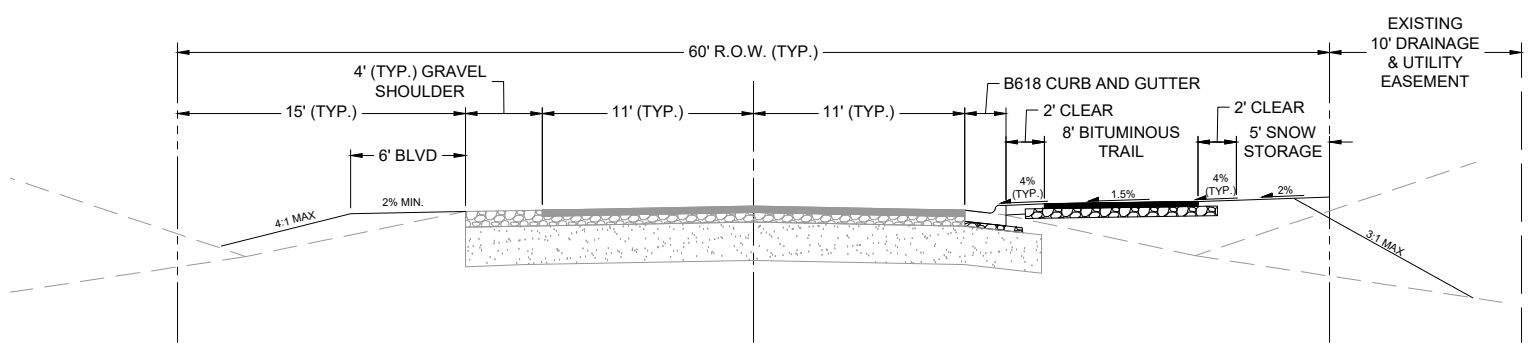


Construction timeline will be determined at a future date.

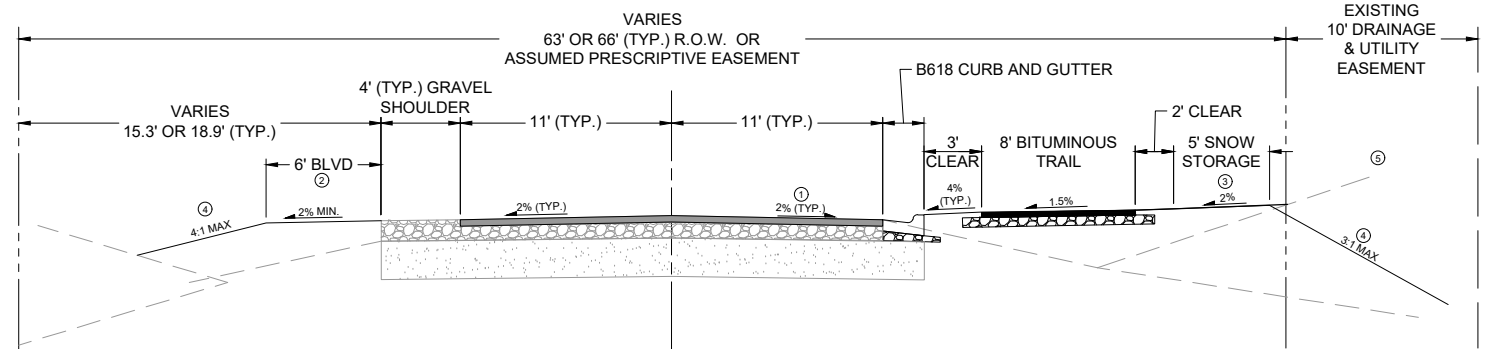
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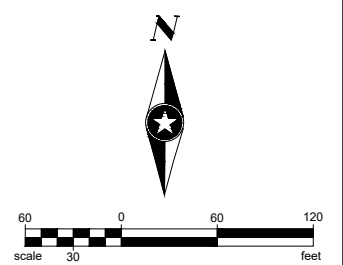
105TH ST E PROPOSED ALTERNATE SECTION A
BARNES AVE TO BARNES WAY (FACING EAST)



105TH ST E PROPOSED ALTERNATE SECTION B
BARNES WAY TO BRENT AVE (FACING EAST)



OPTION 4			
LINE	PROPERTY ID	OWNER	CONSTRUCTION LIMITS SQ FT
1	20-73300-03-040	MARTIN P. & DAWN C. GRIMES	2,380
2	20-73300-03-050	KEITH SCHINDELDECKER & ASHLEY A. WHELAN	2,854
3	20-73300-03-060	PAUL RASSMUSEN & BRENDA RASSMUSEN	5,875
4	20-73300-03-070	GENE L. VIVANT & ROBERTA B. VIVANT	2,333
5	20-73300-03-080	MATHEW E. BURMA & AMY S. BURMA	3,073



SEH Project	157442	Rev.#	Revision Issue Description	Date	Rev.#	Revision Issue Description	Date
Drawn By							
Designed By							
Checked By							

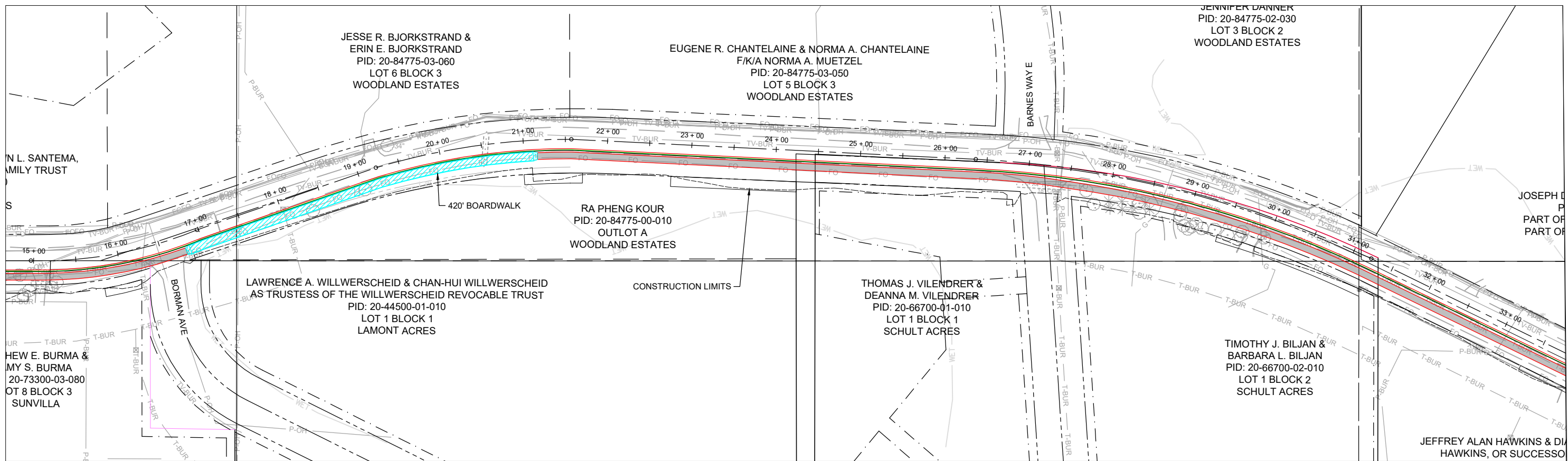
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PLAN WAS PREPARED BY ME OR UNDER MY DIRECT SUPERVISION AND THAT I AM A DULY LICENSED PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER UNDER THE LAWS OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA.

PRELIMINARY

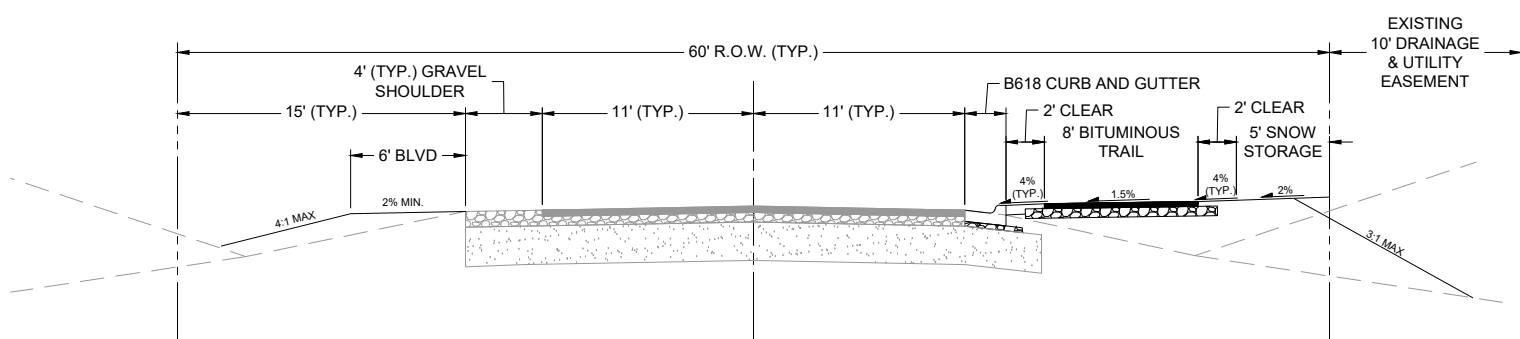
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LICENSED NAME: _____ LICENSE NO.: _____

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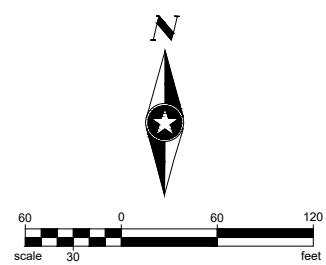
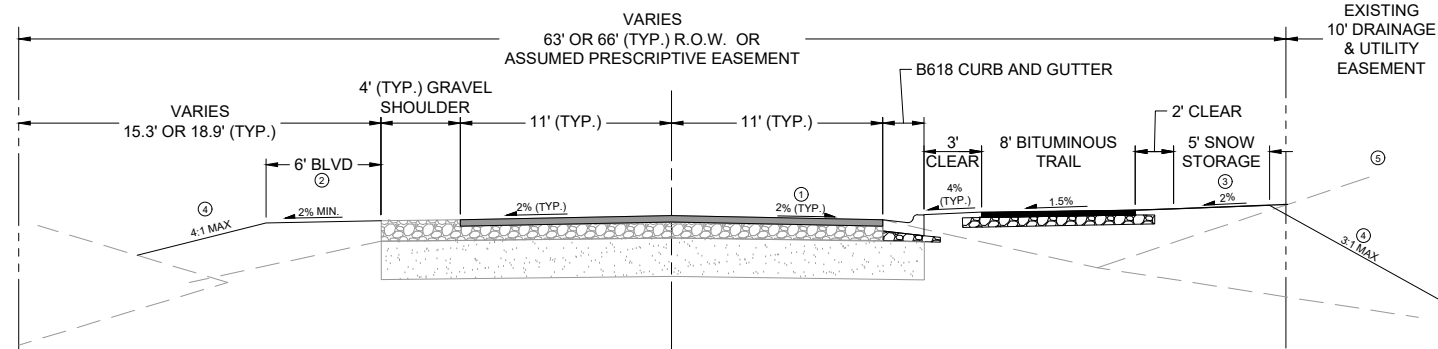


105TH ST E PROPOSED ALTERNATE SECTION A
BARNES AVE TO BARNES WAY (FACING EAST)



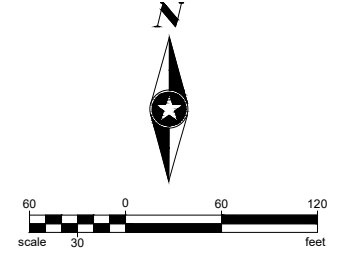
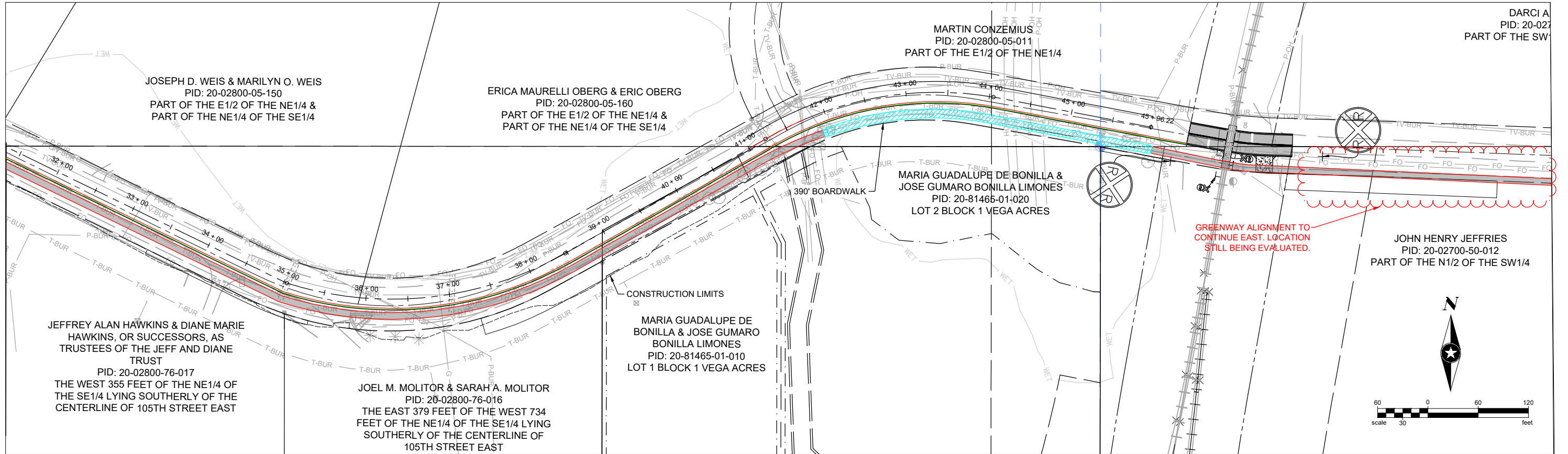
OPTION 4			
LINE	PROPERTY ID	OWNER	CONSTRUCTION LIMITS SQ FT
6	20-44500-01-010	LAWRENCE A. WILLWERSCHIED & CHAN-HUI WILLWERSCHIED AS TRUSTEES OF THE WILLWERSCHIED REVOCABLE TRUST	NA
7	20-84775-00-010	RA PHENG KOUR	1,204
8	20-66700-01-010	THOMAS J. VILENDRER & DEANNA M. VILENDRER	1,910
9	20-66700-02-010	TIMOTHY J. BILJAN & BARBARA L. BILJAN	3,679

105TH ST E PROPOSED ALTERNATE SECTION B
BARNES WAY TO BRENT AVE (FACING EAST)

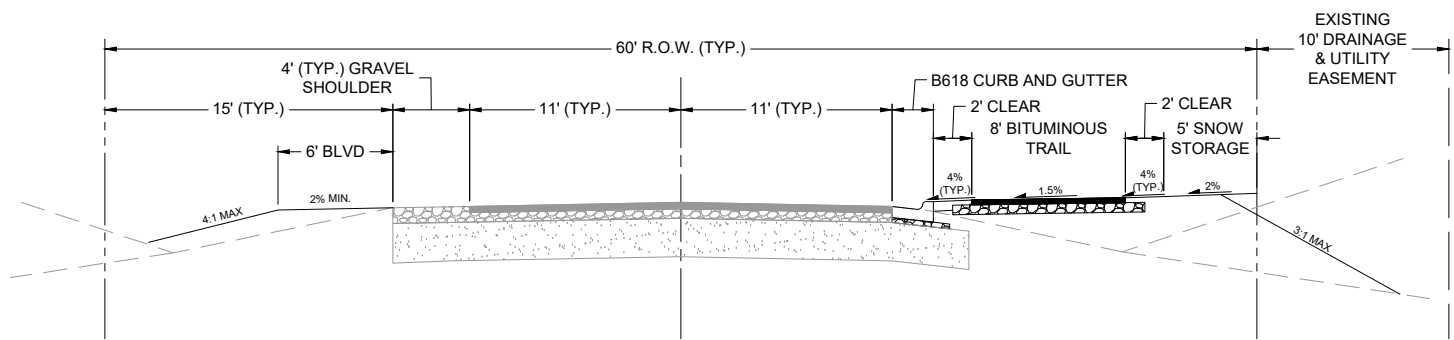


SEH Project	157442	Rev.#	Revision Issue Description	Date	Rev.#	Revision Issue Description	Date
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Designed By							
Checked By							


 I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PLAN WAS PREPARED BY ME OR UNDER MY DIRECT SUPERVISION AND THAT I AM A DULY LICENSED PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER UNDER THE LAWS OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA.
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 LICENSE NO. _____
 DATE _____ LICENSE SIGN DATE _____

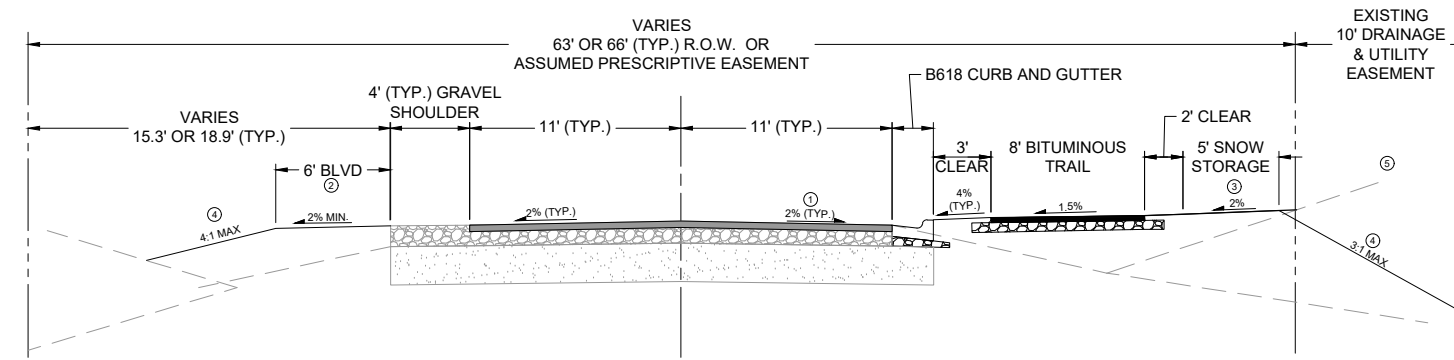


105TH ST E PROPOSED ALTERNATE SECTION A
BARNES AVE TO BARNES WAY (FACING EAST)

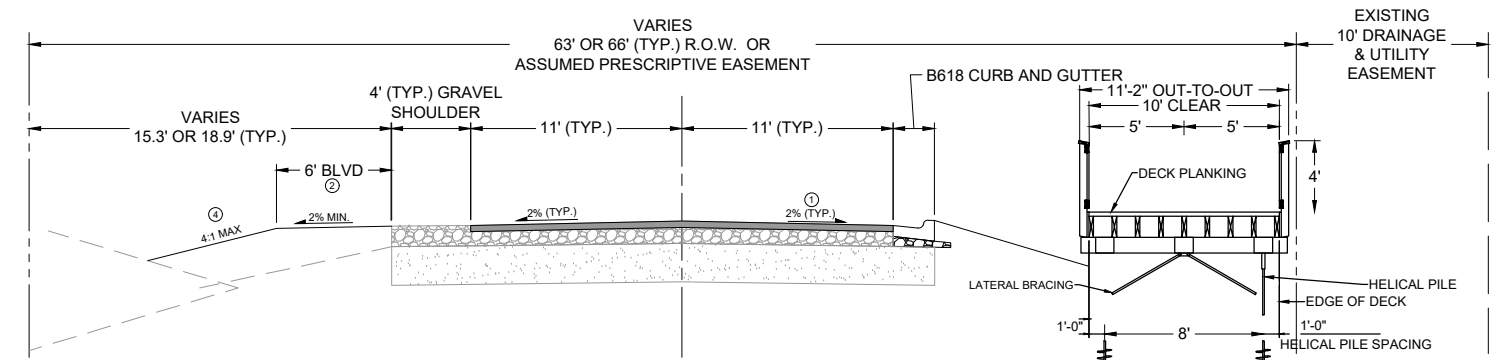


OPTION 4			
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10	20-02800-76-017	JEFFREY ALAN HAWKINS & DIANE MARIE HAWKINS, OR SUCCESSORS, AS TRUSTEES OF THE JEFF AND DIANE TRUST	NA
11	20-02800-76-016	JOEL M. MOLITOR & SARAH A. MOLITOR	3,395
12	20-81465-01-010	MARIA GUADALUPE DE BONILLA & JOSE GUMARO BONILLA LIMONES	3,399
13	20-81465-01-020	MARIA GUADALUPE DE BONILLA & JOSE GUMARO BONILLA LIMONES	193

105TH ST E PROPOSED ALTERNATE SECTION B
BARNES WAY TO BRENT AVE (FACING EAST)



105TH ST E PROPOSED ALTERNATE SECTION C
BOARDWALK (FACING EAST)



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SEH Project	157442	Rev.#	Revision Issue Description	Date	Rev.#	Revision Issue Description	Date
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Checked By							

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PLAN WAS PREPARED BY ME OR UNDER MY DIRECT SUPERVISION AND THAT I AM A DULY LICENSED PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER UNDER THE LAWS OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA.

PRELIMINARY

DATE: LICENSE SIGN DATE LICENSE NO: LICENSE NO

VETERANS MEMORIAL GREENWAY
DAKOTA COUNTY, MINNESOTA

105TH ST - OPTION 5