



TRI-COUNTY BICYCLE ASSOCIATION

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July 6, 2021

SUBJECT: Intersection of Lake Lansing Road, Towar Avenue, and Birch Row Drive

To Whom It May Concern:

The Tri-County Bicycle Association (TCBA) supports infrastructure projects that improve safe cycling and walking. We applaud the City of East Lansing and Meridian Township in creating a four-mile loop on the eastern segments of the Northern Tier Trail (see Figure 1). TCBA's main concern about the creation of this loop is the redesign of the Lake Lansing/Towar Ave./Birch Row intersection to make it as safe as possible for pedestrians and cyclists to cross. Currently the southeast corner of this intersection has no marked crossings across the slip lane and Lake Lansing Road (Figure 2). Presently this corner has few cyclists and pedestrians. Numbers will increase when Meridian Township constructs a pathway along the western side of Towar Drive (see the black line on Figure 1) and when the Ingham County Road Department (ICRD) reconfigures Lake Lansing Road to include bike lanes.

TCBA did favorably view the concept that East Lansing proposed in 2020. It redesigns the intersection into a conventional four-way stop that was straightforward and friendly for non-motorized users (See Figures 3 & 4). The cost would be \$400,000.

After some study, ICRD came to two conclusions. First it considers the current situation with the slip lane “operates smoothly and safely.” Secondly, the East Lansing proposal would generate more rear-end crashes. The Department offered an alternative “T-curve option” which would retain the slip lane and reconfigure traffic flow for Towar Avenue and Birch Drive (See Figure 5). The cost would be between \$800,000 and \$1,000,000.

Since ICRD feels the current configuration to have a “low existing crash frequency,” it will not contribute any funds to the T-curve option. The additional funds would have to come from elsewhere: federal safety grants, the City of East Lansing, Meridian Township, the County Trails & Parks millage, etc...

Given the expense of the T-curve option, TCBA has decided that safety improvements to the current configuration would be an acceptable option for the foreseeable future (See Figure 6). The safety improvements need to include:

1. Pedestrian activated crossing signals for all directions
2. Audible crossing signals for all directions
3. ADA compliant ramps for all directions
4. Painted crosswalks at the intersection
5. Maintenance of adequate sight distances on the east bound lane of Lake Lansing Road before the intersection
6. Installation of warning signs and traffic flashers west of the intersection indicating foot and bike traffic ahead
7. Extend the side path on the West/South side of Lake Lansing to the user-actuated signal at Northgate Drive, providing a fully signalized crossing for Lake Lansing East-West non-motorized traffic

TCBA feels that the addition of the above features has the potential to provide safe crossing of this key feature of a fine project. The club will monitor this intersection to see if these changes will protect non-motorized users.

Sincerely,

Pat Kelley, President

XC:

Tim Morgan, Ingham County Parks Department

Nicole Wallace, Ingham County Parks Department

William Conklin, Ingham County Road Department

Wendy Wilmers Longpre, East Lansing Parks, Recreation, & Arts

Younes Ishraidi, Meridian Township Public Works and Engineering

Figure 1

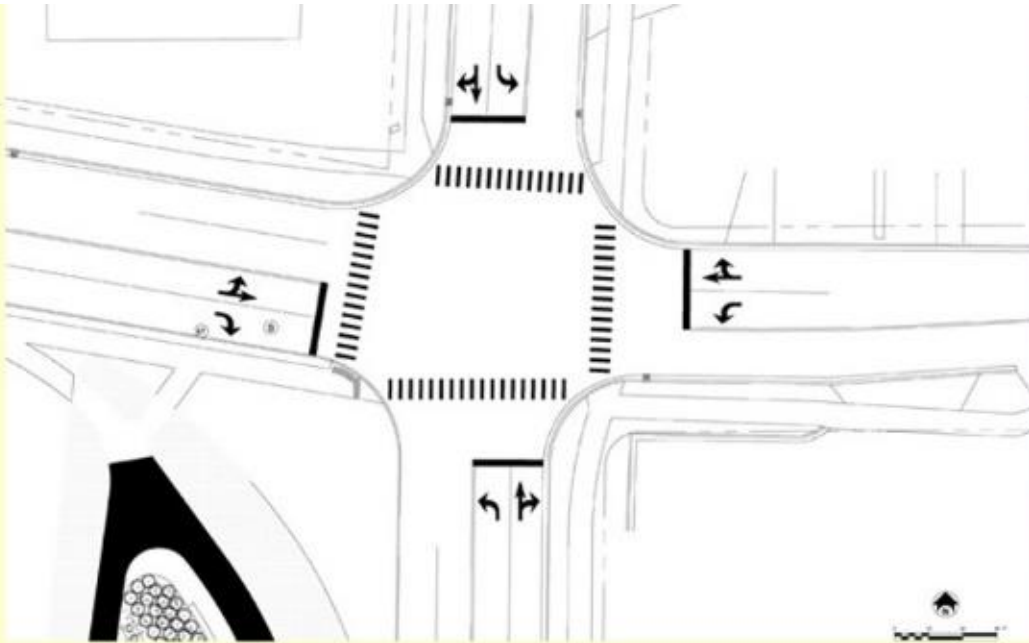
Loop on the Northern Tier Trail



Figure 2
Current Design of the Intersection



Figure 3

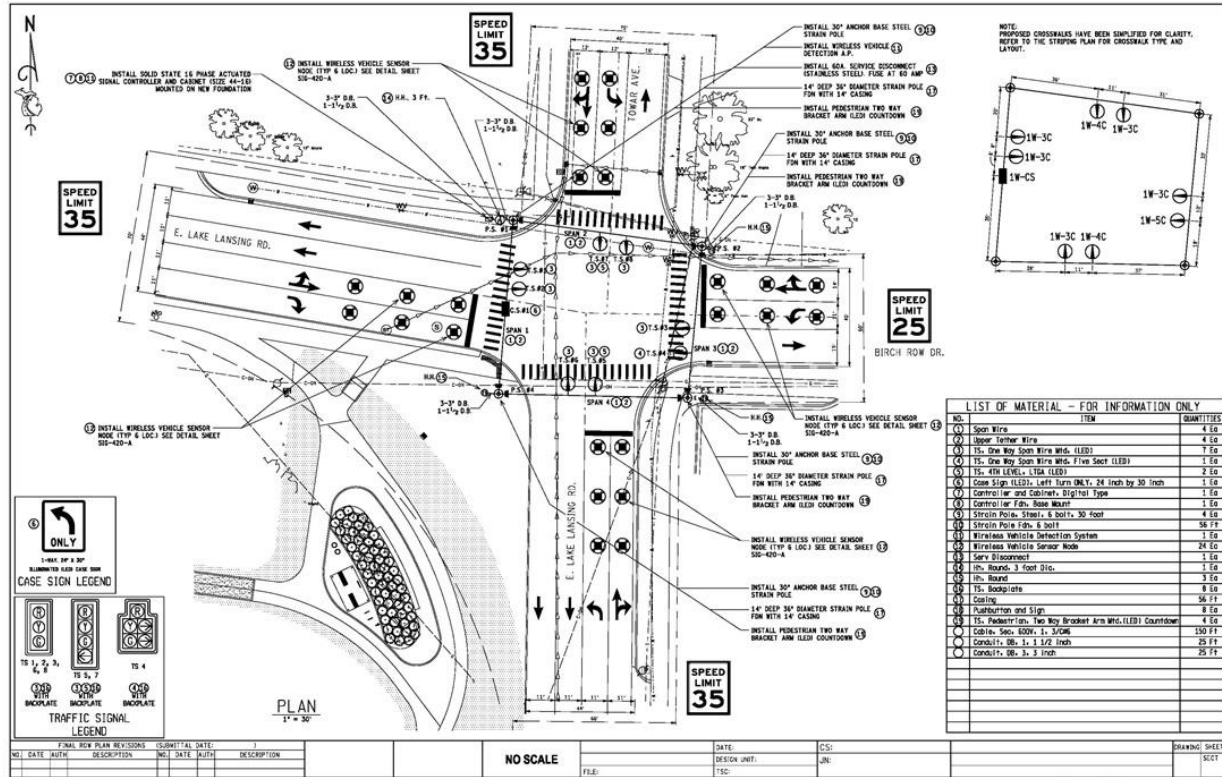


Proposed by East Lansing: “Reconstruct the Lake Lansing Road intersection and install new signals. Estimated cost: \$400,000”

SOURCE: *City of East Lansing. Ingham County Trails and Parks Millage Projects Update*

(1-13-2020; updated 9-21-2020), p. 69

Figure 4
Details of East Lansing Proposal



- Remove the slip-lane for eastbound traffic
- Install pedestrian activated crossing signals for all directions
- Install audible crossing signals for all directions
- Install ADA compliant ramps for all directions
- Restripe and resign intersection

SOURCE: *City of East Lansing. Ingham County Trails and Parks Millage Projects Update (1-13-2020; updated 9-21-2020), p. 70*

Figure 5
ICRD Proposal

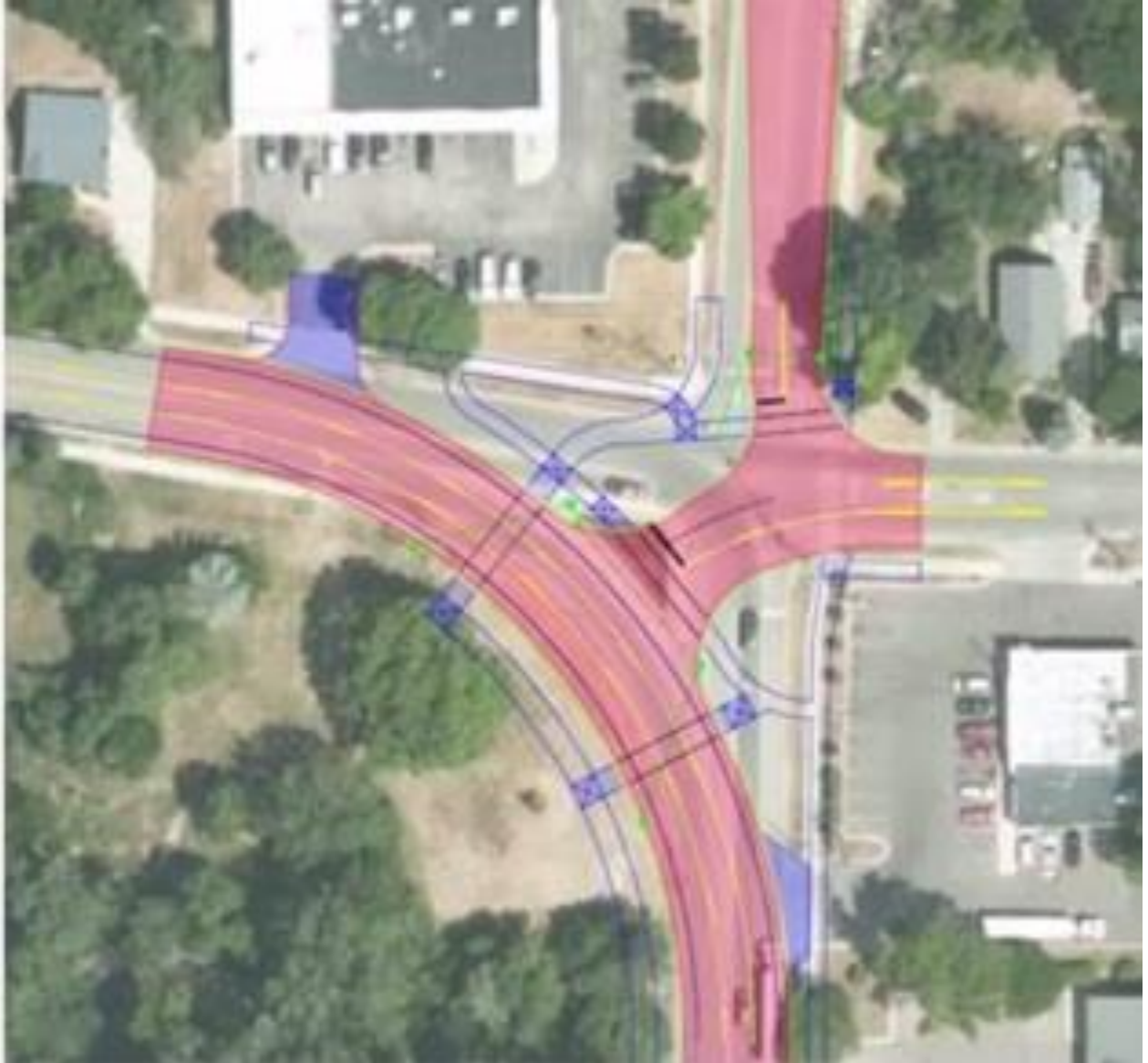


Figure 6
TCBA Option

