



DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION

Public Meeting Open House

Project Location: Sioux Falls MPO

Project Number: EM 8050(89)

Date: Wednesday Oct. 28, 2026

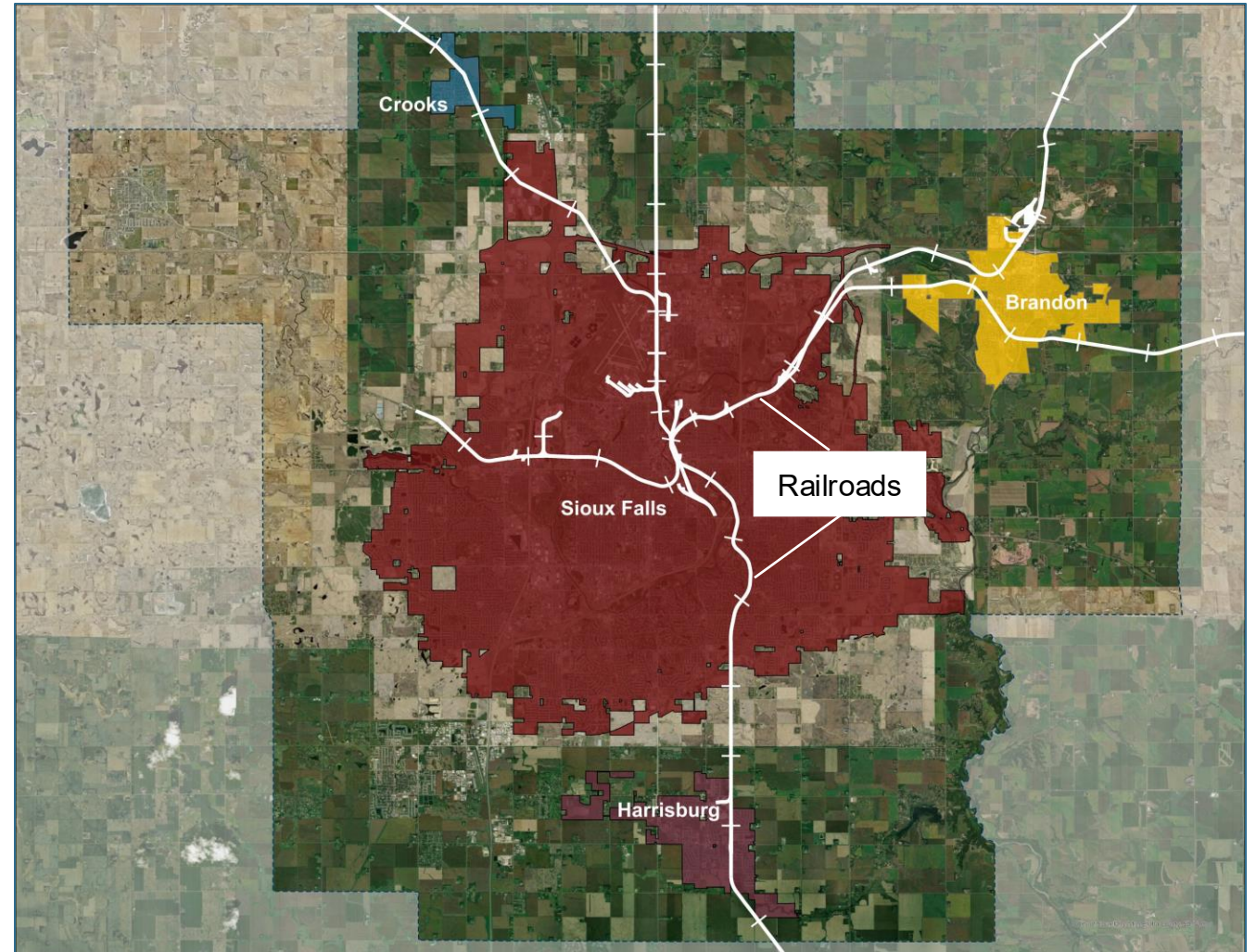
Presenter Name: HR Green

Presenter Job Title: Lead
Consultant

Sioux Falls Railroad Corridor Analysis and Crossing Safety Study

The South Dakota Department of Transportation (SDDOT) received a grant through the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) Railroad Crossing Elimination Program to study 130 public railroad crossings in the Sioux Falls region.

- All at-grade crossings in the study area will be evaluated for opportunities to improve safety, mobility, and operations.
- Recommendations from this study will focus on identifying priorities for action and next steps the project partners can make.



Study Partners

SDDOT is the lead agency and is responsible for administering the FRA grant that funded the project.

Other project partners include:

- Sioux Falls Metropolitan Planning Organization
- South Eastern Council of Governments (SECOG)
- Cities of Brandon, Crooks, Harrisburg, and Sioux Falls
- BNSF Railway
- Ellis & Eastern Rail

Purpose of the Open House

Involve the public in
the planning and
design process

Provide a project
overview

Gather input and
comments



- ✓ **Background information**
- ✓ **Identify initial areas of interest**
- ✓ **Project schedule**

Background Information

The area is served by three railroad companies: BNSF Railway, Dakota and Iowa Railroad, and Ellis & Eastern Railroad.

All trains operating in Sioux Falls and the surrounding area are freight trains; there is currently no passenger rail service.

The interaction between trains and local traffic can create safety risks and operational challenges, affecting both roadway mobility and rail operations.

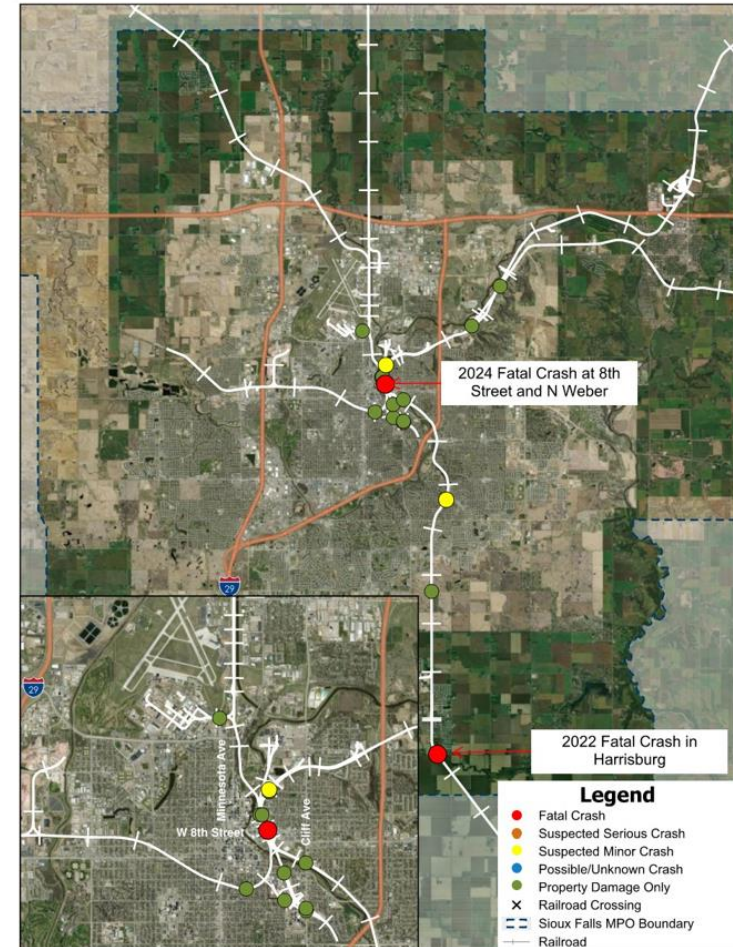
Railroad Crash History (2016-2025)

23 Train-related crashes reported
(10-year period from 2016-2025)

- Two (2) fatalities:
 - Downtown Sioux Falls (pedestrian)
 - Harrisburg (vehicle)

During the same period, there were also 75 crashes at railroad crossings which did not involve trains.

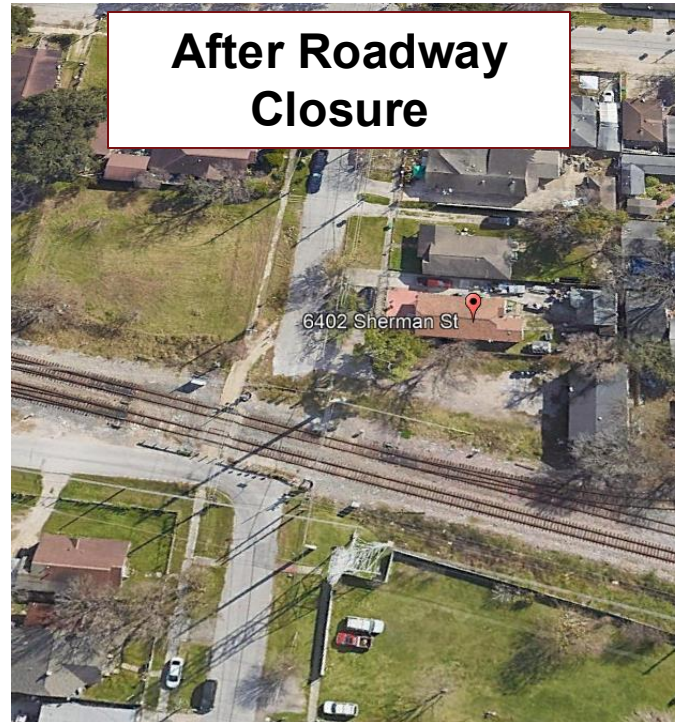
Map showing train crashes in the study areas from 2016 to 2025



What is a Railroad Crossing “Elimination”?

Elimination of an at-grade railroad crossing involves removing the interaction or conflict between a train and vehicle or pedestrian traffic.

Example of Crossing Elimination from Houston, TX that involved closing the roadway.



Common methods for eliminating a railroad crossing include:

- Close the roadway
- Remove railroad tracks
- Build a grade separation (for example a bridge)

Factors in Crossing Elimination Decisions

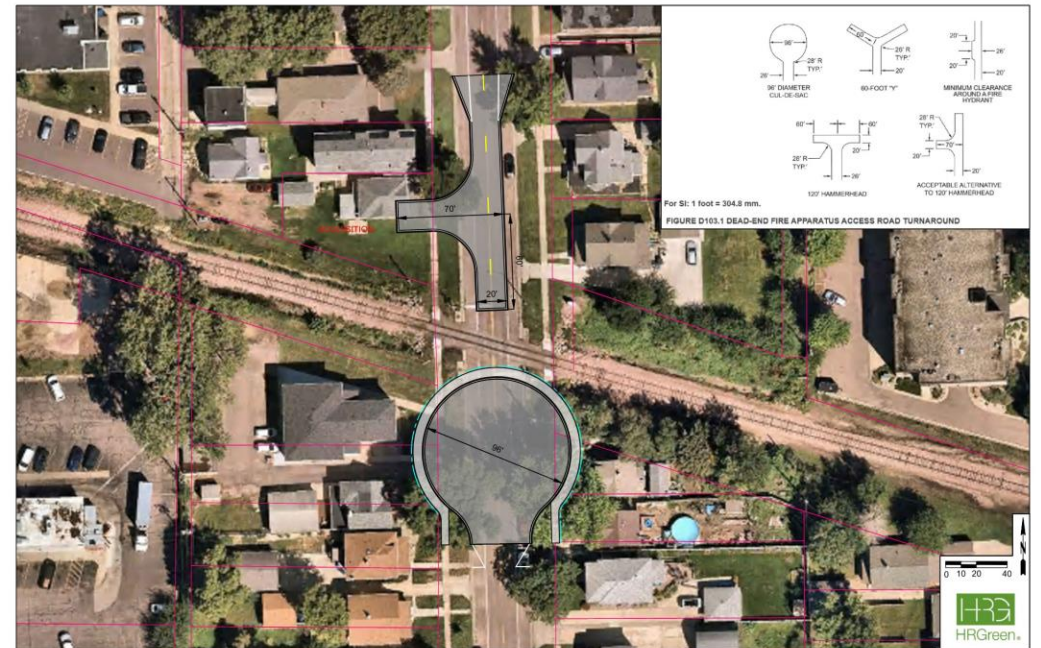
Initial factors the project team will be considering for decisions about whether a crossing should be eliminated include:

- **Safety** – is there a crash history?
- **Mobility** – how is traffic impacted?
- **Security** – will emergency services be impacted?
- **Property impacts** – how are homes or businesses impacted? Utilities?
- **Environmental resources** – Are sensitive resources in the area?

Public and Agency Feedback is also important.
Your input about these or other factors is valued!

Picture showing an example of crossing closure using a cul-de-sac and hammer.

Note: This visualization is for illustrative purposes only and does not represent specific proposed plans for a crossing elimination.

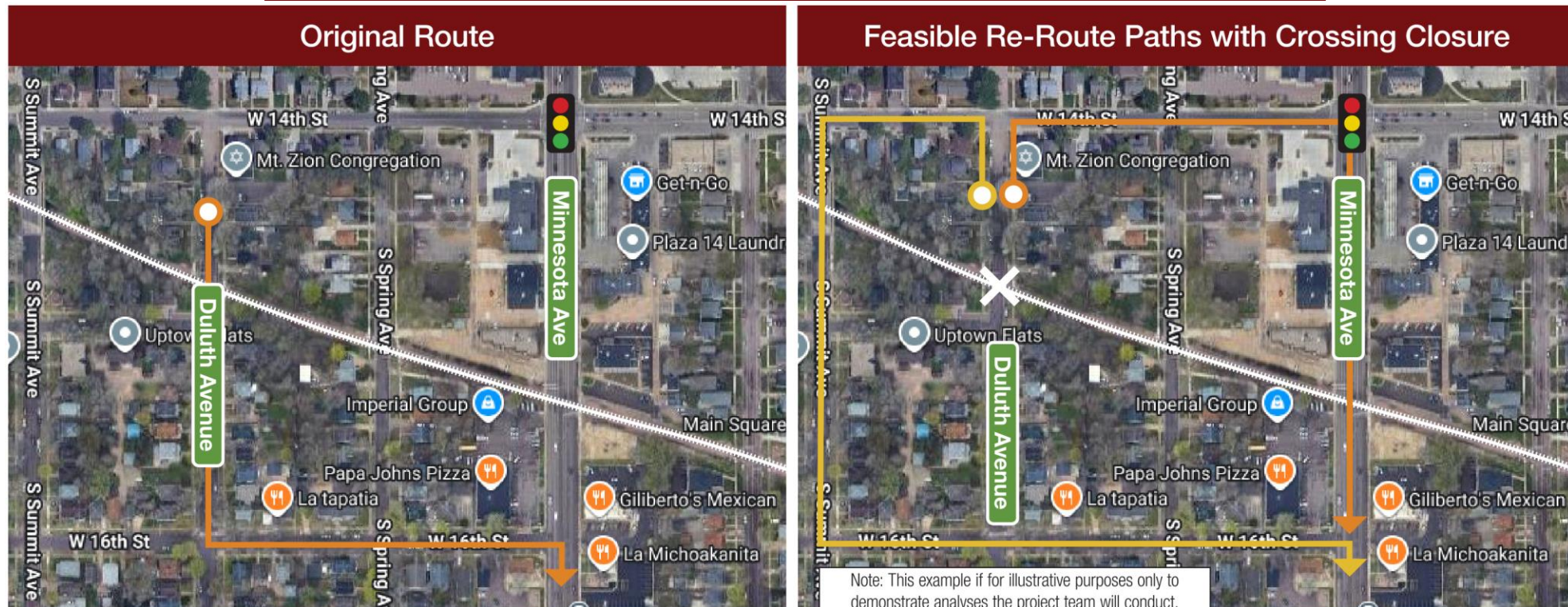


Example Considerations For Closure

Road closures would impact travel patterns and available routes for motorists – this can result in longer travel times and higher traffic volumes for adjacent roads.

Vehicle mobility is not the only consideration; impacts to pedestrian travel patterns can be more notable.

Example of Crossing Closure At Duluth Ave in Sioux Falls



Factors in Crossing Elimination Decisions

Not every location is a good candidate for crossing elimination. Other safety measures will be considered for existing crossings, examples include:

- **Use of Dynamic Message Signs (DMS)** to alert motorists about the presence of trains and advising alternate routes,
- **Interconnecting traffic signals** adjacent to crossings for coordinated timing of signals and railroad safety devices,
- **Installing gates and medians** for vehicles and pedestrians, or
- **Sign or lighting** improvements

Example of DMS to alert drivers about a train at a crossing and advise them to take a different route. **Note:** This is an AI Generated Image.



Initial “Areas of Interest” for the Study

Based on initial analysis of the study area and feedback from partners, six areas stand out as representative locations for issues to be addressed in the region:

- Foundation Park (near Crooks)
- Cliff Avenue/Avera McKennan Hospital Campus
- Rice Street/Holly Boulevard Corridor
- South of 12th Street, All Saints Neighborhood
- 60th Street/Minnesota Avenue Corridor
- Rural Railroad Crossings

Descriptions of each area are provided on the following slides

Area of Interest – Foundation Park Area

Foundation Park Area: Major land use changes are proposed in this area, with industrial, commercial, and distribution center uses creating new transportation needs.

Multiple Industries are anticipated to come into the area



Crossing (ID: 097252V) at 259th near Foundation Park. As Traffic demand increase, gates might be needed



Area of Interest – Cliff Avenue

Cliff Avenue: Two crossings close to each other at the Avera McKennan hospital campus and near the Big Sioux River stand out as safety risks on a high-volume road corridor.

Crossing (ID: 085951L) on Cliff Avenue. The tracks serves the Egger Steel. Avera McKennan **employees** cross the tracks to access parking



Crossing (ID: 075469W) on Cliff Avenue



Area of Interest – Rice Street/Holly Blvd Corridor

Crossing (ID: 186700W) on Rice Street. It is close to other two crossings (186699E and 097873R) and a mobile home park

Rice Street/Holly Blvd Corridor: This heavily used corridor between Brandon and Sioux Falls features several crossing conflicts and substantial travel delays caused rail crossings and switch yard movements.

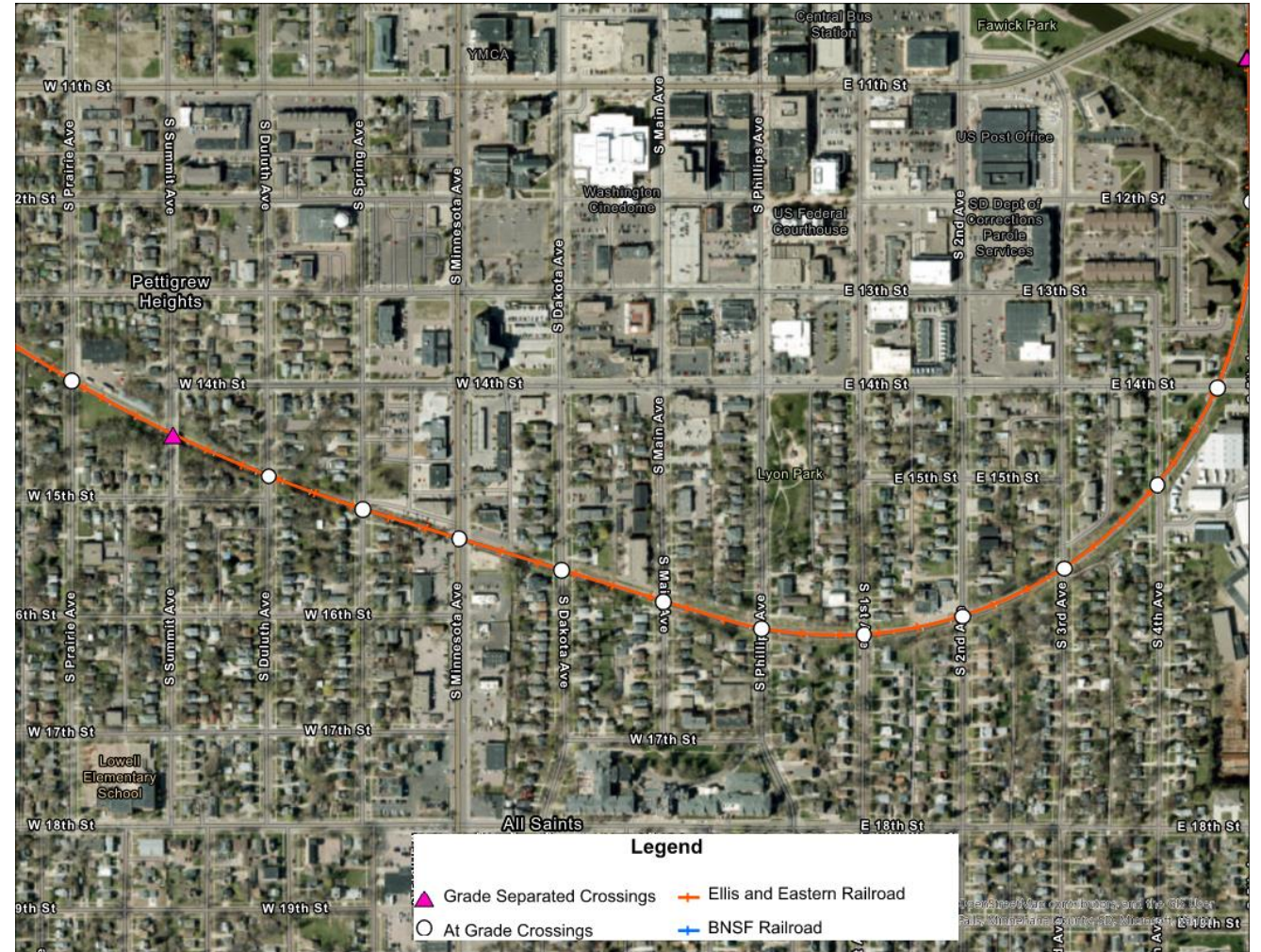
Grade separation has been recommended for a crossing in this corridor in previous studies



Area of Interest – South of 12th Street

Picture of the closely spaced crossings in the All Saints Neighborhood.

South of 12th Street: This residential area (All Saints Neighborhood) features several closely spaced at-grade crossings. Select closures could potentially be made with minimal impact to local travel patterns but could create other impacts to properties.



Area of Interest – 60th Street (Near Minnesota Avenue)

Picture of the crossing (ID: 381679D) on 60th Street

60th Street (Near Minnesota Avenue): Previous studies of the corridor identified grade separation as a potential improvement for this valuable east-west corridor



Area of Interest – Rural Railroad Crossings

Rural Railroad Crossings:

Locations like the 274th Street in Harrisburg (Where a fatal crash occurred prior to the installation of gates) will be reviewed for safety risks.

Some of the recommendations might include closing the crossings if there is a low traffic and viable roadway alternatives.

Crossing (ID: 381639F) at 274th Street in Harrisburg

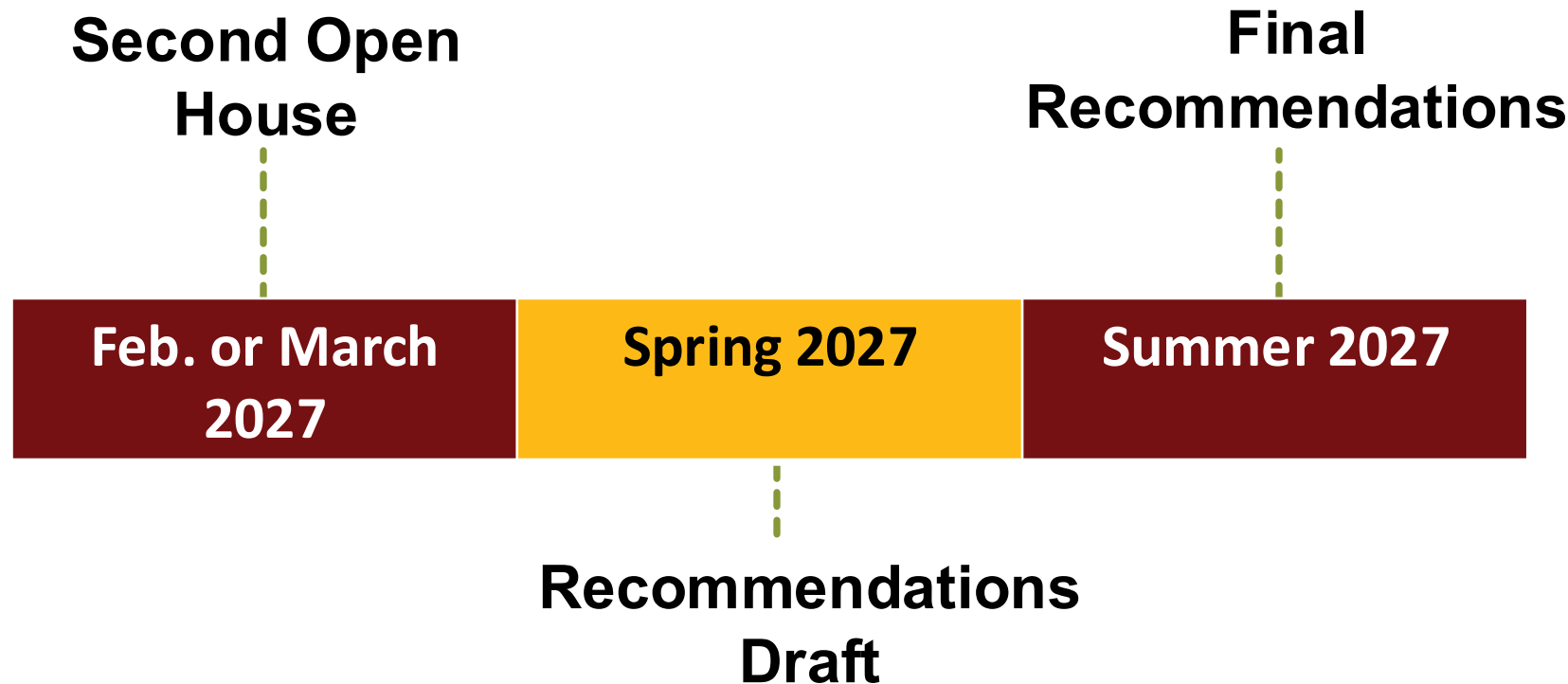


Crossing (ID: 381689J) at 255th Street in Renner



Project Schedule and Next Steps

This study will not directly lead to construction projects. However, its findings may help secure funding for future improvements through grants and other funding programs.



Questions or Comments?

To provide input, please visit the project website and submit your comments by **Monday Nov. 30, 2026**.

You may also submit questions or comments to the following contacts:

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Visit the Project Website: <https://dot.sd.gov/projects-studies/studies/special-studies/sioux-falls-railroad-corridor-analysis-and-crossing-safety-study/>

Or Scan the QR
Code to Visit the
Project Website



THANK YOU!!