Executive Summary

South Anthony/Wayne Trace

Railroad Grade Separation Study

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Introduction
The purpose of the South Anthony Boulevard Railroad Grade Separation Study is to provide a comprehensive evaluation of various overpass and underpass options for a grade separated crossing of the Norfolk Southern Railroad tracks at South Anthony Boulevard in Fort Wayne, Indiana. The study assessed road improvement options that would enhance traffic flow and safety along the South Anthony Boulevard Corridor with improved access from Wayne Trace, Hayden Street, and adjoining neighborhoods. The main objectives of the study were to:

1. To foster South Anthony Boulevard’s economic growth by reducing congestion at the Norfolk Southern railroad crossing.
2. To identify the best crossing changes to improve safety and remove collision hazards at a high volume railroad crossing.
3. To enhance community connectivity and increase property values for residents of southeast Fort Wayne in accordance with the Southeast Area Development Strategy.
4. To lay the groundwork for long-term Norfolk Southern partnerships and potential future passenger rail transportation to and through the City of Fort Wayne.

Alternatives Analysis
During the early stages of the study, twelve Conceptual Alternatives were developed that provided a range of options in terms of cost, impacts, and benefits. These Conceptual Alternatives included the following:

- Alternative 1 - Underpass with Wayne Trace Perpendicular to South Anthony Boulevard
- Alternative 2 - Underpass on Existing Alignments
- Alternative 3 - Underpass with Wayne Trace Perpendicular to South Anthony Boulevard and Hayden Realigned
- Alternative 4 - Underpass with Wayne Trace Roundabout and Hayden Street Realigned
- Alternative 5 - Underpass on Existing Alignment with Temporary Realignment to the East and Hayden Street Realigned
- Alternative 6 - Underpass on Existing Alignment with Wayne Trace Realigned to Lanternier Street
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- Alternative 7 - Underpass with Realignment to the East and Hayden Street Realigned
- Alternative 7A - Underpass with Realignment to the East, Wayne Trace Roundabout, and Hayden Street Realigned
- Alternative 8 - Overpass with Realignment to the East and Hayden Street Realigned
- Alternative 9 - Underpass with Railroad Adjustments, Wayne Trace Perpendicular to South Anthony Boulevard, and Hayden Street Realigned
- Alternative 10 - Underpass with Railroad Adjustments, Wayne Trace Perpendicular to South Anthony Boulevard, and Hayden Street Realigned
- Alternative 11 - Underpass with Railroad Adjustments, South Anthony Boulevard Realigned, Wayne Trace Perpendicular to South Anthony Boulevard, and Hayden Street Realigned
- Alternative 12 - Underpass with Railroad Adjustments, South Anthony Boulevard Realigned, Wayne Trace Perpendicular to South Anthony Boulevard, and Hayden Street Realigned

The Conceptual Alternatives were evaluated by the study team considering their advantages and disadvantages. The main evaluation categories included:

- Existing and future economic impacts
- Safety improvements
- Right of way impacts
- Compatibility with nearby intersections
- Aesthetics
- Compatibility with local plans
- Pedestrian access
- Cost
- Impacts to the existing infrastructure (primarily the 72 inch combined sewer to the north of the project area)

Based on the evaluation of the Conceptual Alternatives, Alternatives 4, 7, 7A, 8, 11, and 12 were carried forward for additional study as “Preliminary Alternatives.” The other Conceptual Alternatives were eliminated for the following reasons:

- Excessive economic impacts
- Unreasonable anticipated cost compared to expected benefits
- Excessive right of way and other negative impacts
- Improvements were incompatible with nearby intersections
- Improvements were not compatible with pedestrians
- Improvements were not compatible with local plans
- Improvements were not compatible with Norfolk Southern requirements

Each of the Preliminary Alternatives was studied in more detail and evaluated in relation to the main objectives of the study. Based on this evaluation, Alternative 4 would have required several businesses adjacent to the roadway to be relocated. Alternatives 11 and 12 would have required the railroad tracks to be realigned, a very costly and
The railroad also would not allow the horizontal alignment of the tracks to be altered. Therefore, these three alternatives were eliminated.

The remaining alternatives, Alternatives 7, 7A, and 8, were carried forward for detailed study as “Preferred Alternatives.” See Appendix G for drawings of the Preferred Alternatives.

**Alternative 7 - Underpass with “T” intersection at Wayne Trace**  
Alternative 7 consisted of an underpass that would maintain the existing alignment of Wayne Trace. The underpass would require South Anthony Boulevard and Hayden Street to be realigned, while Lanternier Street would be closed. Several driveways within the project area would require realignment, regrading, repaving, shared use, or closure. The bridge structure would carry the two existing Norfolk Southern tracks, as well as a future third track, over the proposed roadway. This would result in a single span structure with a length of approximately 80 feet. This alternative would also impact 66 parcels (10 parcels of which are already owned by the City Redevelopment Commission), requiring several relocations. Alternative 7 had an estimated construction cost of $22,450,000.

**Alternative 7A - Underpass with Roundabout at Wayne Trace**  
Alternative 7A consisted of an underpass with similar characteristics as Alternative 7. The main difference would be that South Anthony Boulevard would be realigned and a roundabout would be provided at the intersection of South Anthony Boulevard and Wayne Trace. Alternative 7A would extend the project limits further south along South Anthony Boulevard, creating a larger grade separation, as the roundabout would require a flatter profile at the intersection with Wayne Trace. Additionally, this alternative would impact 81 parcels (16 parcels of which are already owned by the City Redevelopment Commission), requiring several relocations. Alternative 7A had an estimated construction cost of $26,560,000.

**Alternative 8 - Overpass with “T” intersection at Wayne Trace**  
Alternative 8 consisted of an overpass that would maintain the existing alignment of Wayne Trace. The underpass would require South Anthony Boulevard and Hayden Street to be realigned, while Lanternier Street would remain open. Several driveways within the project area would require realignment, regrading, repaving, shared use, or closure. The bridge structure would span the two existing tracks, as well as a future third track proposed by Norfolk Southern. Norfolk Southern would also require that the structure provide 30 feet of lateral clearance between the centerline of the outermost tracks and the substructure supporting the overpass. This would result in a structure with an overall length of approximately 100 feet. This alternative would impact 94 parcels (14 parcels of which are already owned by the City Redevelopment Commission), requiring several relocations. Alternative 8 had an estimated construction cost of $21,310,000.

For all three alternatives, the proposed new cross section of South Anthony Boulevard would consist of one travel lane in each direction with a continuous left only turn lane. A 12-foot wide strip would also be provided on each side of the roadway for a sidewalk, grass area, or shared use path.
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The Preferred Alternatives were evaluated based these criteria:

- Urban design elements
- Traffic operations
- Railroad impacts
- Right of way impacts
- Maintenance of traffic
- Drainage
- Utility impacts
- Cost
- Environmental impacts
- Public input

Based on the study objectives, technical evaluations undertaken, advantages/disadvantages of the options, and public input, Alternative 7 was recommended for advancement as the preferred alternative. Alternative 7 fulfills the goals established by the City and the public. In addition to providing these benefits, this alternative minimizes overall negative impacts to the project area while still being very cost effective (i.e., within 6% of the cost of the least expensive alternative considered).

Public Input

The public involvement process undertaken during the study built upon earlier public outreach that was completed by the City of Fort Wayne and the Northeast Indiana Coordinating Council (NIRCC) between 2000 and 2008. Public involvement activities during the study included outreach to make information available to the public using traditional media outlets as well as electronic media (such as email and web site postings). There were also multiple opportunities for members of the public to provide input for consideration by the study team. This occurred at open public meetings, focus group meetings, and via email/telephone. Stakeholder groups engaged during the study included neighborhood associations, area property owners and residents, community leaders, transportation managers, public officials, the Fort Wayne Urban Enterprise Association, Norfolk Southern Railroad representatives, regulatory agencies, and area businesses.

An introductory public meeting for the study was held on November 18, 2010. The main comments received from the public at this meeting were:

- Keep Wayne Trace open and determine future routing.
- Keep Hayden Street open and determine future routing.
- Minimize impacts to the corridor businesses near the South Anthony Boulevard and Wayne Trace intersection.
- Assure that drainage is addressed, especially if an underpass is recommended.
- Minimize the length of time for construction and potential road closure.
- Consult with and inform the community throughout the process.
In early 2011, focus group sessions were held with key constituencies potentially affected by the project. Two significant overall themes came out of the focus group meetings:

1. “Respect this area, its history, its commerce, and its people.”
2. “Do something great, make this a better place, or don’t do anything at all.”

The major issues identified during the focus group sessions were related to:

- Train blockages and area street usage
- Projected construction impacts
- Sensitive features to be protected
- Recommended area improvements
- Recommended theme or look to the area when improvements are completed
- Recommended land use improvements

To conclude the study phase of the project, on November 30, 2011, a public meeting was held to receive feedback regarding the three Preferred Alternatives and the study team’s preliminary recommendation of Alternative 7 as the preferred alternative. The meeting focused on the extensive research that had been undertaken and study results. Input received at this meeting was very positive and confirmed the team’s recommendation.

**Conclusion**

It is recommended that Alternative 7 should be advanced for further engineering work and construction funding. It is further recommended that public engagement continue as the project moves ahead to ensure that stakeholders are well informed and that the engineering design team is aware of their concerns and desires.

*Proposed South Anthony Design Concept Plan View*
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Proposed South Anthony Streetscape Rendering
South of Wayne Trace looking North

Proposed South Anthony Streetscape Rendering at Hayden Street looking South