

SUBJECT: Church Street Improvements (Ninth Line to Bur Oak Avenue)
Environmental Assessment Study

PREPARED BY: Alain Cachola, Senior Manager, Infrastructure and Capital Projects,
ext. 2711
Marija Ilic, Senior Capital Works Engineer, ext. 2136

RECOMMENDATION:

1. **THAT** the staff report entitled “Church Street Improvements (Ninth Line to Bur Oak Avenue), Environmental Assessment Study”, dated September 16, 2014 be received;
2. **AND THAT** the preferred cross section for Church Street Improvements as set out in the Environmental Assessment Study be endorsed;
3. **AND THAT** staff be authorized to issue a Notice of Study Completion for the project which will make the Environmental Assessment Study available for public review for a period of 30 days commencing September 22, 2014;
4. **AND THAT** staff report back as to level of service, operating cost and budget requirements for bike paths and multi-use pathways in Markham;
5. **AND THAT** the configuration of the boulevard be finalized at the design stage;
6. **AND THAT** staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to seek Council’s endorsement of the Environmental Assessment Study for Church Street between Ninth Line and Bur Oak Avenue, and to file the Class Environmental Assessment Study with the Ministry of Environment.

BACKGROUND:

Church Street is an existing east-west roadway, with varying cross sections comprised of 4 lanes between Ninth Line and Country Glen, and 2 lanes east of Country Glen to Bur Oak. This road currently provides access to the Markham Stouffville Hospital, associated medical buildings, Cornell Community Centre, ambulance station, retirement residence, Participation House and Cornell residential community.

YRT and VIVA currently provide service along Church Street with multiple bus stop locations on both sides of the road, passenger waiting areas, and a “Transit Terminal” at the southeast side of Country Glen Boulevard.

The subject section of Church Street has seen an increase in use and traffic due to continued growth of the community. Significant development includes the Hospital expansion, new subdivisions, Retirement Residence, Cornell Community Centre and Fire Station.

Environmental Assessment Study

The City retained Chisholm Fleming and Associates in January 2014 to complete the Class Environmental Assessment to address the required improvements to Church Street, Ninth Line to Bur Oak Avenue.

A Project File Report for the Environmental Assessment Study (Phases 1 and 2), which documents the study process and presents the preferred design alternative for the Church Street Improvements, has been prepared and is proposed to be completed in September 2014. This report illustrates and discusses cross sections and layout between Ninth Line and Bur Oak Avenue.

Staff intend to commence detailed design for Church Street Improvements (Ninth Line to Bur Oak Avenue) upon completion of the Environmental Assessment Study report. Chisholm, Fleming and Associates have been retained to undertake the detailed design. Detailed Design is scheduled to be completed in early 2015.

OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:

RECOMMENDED ALTERNATIVE

The recommended alternative includes the widening of existing Church Street between Ninth Line and Bur Oak Avenue right-of-way to a common road cross section.

The existing road right-of-way width ranges from 23m between Ninth Line and Country Glen, to 17m east of Country Glen. In order to improve the overall level of service, the road is proposed to be widened to a 25m right-of-way, with the following typical cross section as illustrated on *Attachment B*:

- one through lane in each direction,
- a centre left turn lane,
- cycle tracks (boulevard bike path),
- continuous sidewalk,
- bus bays,
- streetscaping.

There will be four points of reduced boulevards; three to accommodate bus bays and one for patient drop off in front of the Health Science Building at 379 Church Street. Cycle tracks and sidewalks will continue through all reduced boulevards, with the exception at the current “transit terminal” at the south east corner of Country Glen and Church Street, where they will merge in order to accommodate VIVA shelter, equipment and passenger waiting area.

Cycle tracks have been incorporated into this corridor per recommendations of the Markham Cycling Master Plan. The preferred layout and cross section were presented to the members of CPAC at the May 15th monthly meeting. CPAC members are in support of the cycle track alternative.

Preferred layout and road cross sections are illustrated on *Attachments A and B*. Staff will review an alternative configuration of the boulevard (*Attachment C*) with Operations and Urban Design departments at the detailed design stage.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

The Environmental Assessment for Church Street improvements has followed the public and stakeholder consultation process requirements as set out in the Municipal Class Environmental Assessment. This consultation process involved the publishing of a Notice of Project Commencement, a public information meeting, correspondence with the potential reviewing agencies and meetings with significant stakeholders.

Notice of the first public meeting was advertised in the local newspaper and delivered to all property owners in the study area. A Public Information Meeting was held at the Cornell Community Centre on April 30th, 2014. The meeting was conducted as an informal drop-in center to introduce the study, provide overview, identify problems in the area, present possible alternative solutions and to solicit public input. The alternatives illustrated possible road cross sections, with opportunities for bike lanes (shared or dedicated on-road, and cycle tracks).

Information and comment sheets were made available to all attendees. A total of five people attended the meeting, including local residents, the area Councilor, YRT representative and a CPAC member. Comments provided by the public were positive with regards to the cross section and layout.

YRT requested information on the geometry of the bus bays and ability for boulevards to accommodate their existing amenities. In order to allow for the required facilities, we have adjusted the cross section at the existing “transit terminal” by merging the cycle track and sidewalk. Appropriate signage and details will be finalized during detailed design. The location and length of the bus bays were provided by VIVA/YRT through the consultation process and are included in the layout of the road. Further discussions will be held at the detailed design stage to confirm the details of their requirements, such as final shelter locations and bay taper lengths.

Staff was also requested to review an opportunity to construct a roundabout at the intersection of Church Street and Bur Oak Avenue. A feasibility study was conducted that analyzed safety, economic impact, and property requirements. Due to cost for construction of the roundabout, property requirements, and as the existing intersection will function at a high level of service, staff recommends that the all-way stop be maintained as the preferred option for the intersection with provision for future signals.

As part of the Environmental Assessment process, a considerable number of meetings and correspondence have taken place with major stakeholders, agencies and affected property owners to discuss their concerns and to attempt to find an acceptable cross section.

LAND REQUIREMENTS

In order to implement the recommended cross section, lands have been acquired from Markham Stouffville Hospital and conveyed to the City to allow for a buildout of a 25m right-of-way.

OPERATIONS AND MAINTENANCE

The Operations Department has confirmed that the proposed enhanced streetscape design with on boulevard bike paths will result in higher life cycle, operating and maintenance costs for this section of Church Street. Service levels and future budgets will have to be increased to meet the additional demands of the proposed urban streetscape / infrastructure. Staff will report back to Council regarding the level of service, and cost to operate and maintain bike paths and multi-use pathways in boulevards throughout Markham.

CONSTRUCTION SCHEDULE:

Detailed design will commence once the Environmental Assessment is filed in September 2014. Upon completion of detailed design in early 2015, utility relocation and tender process will follow with the contractor award in the spring of 2015 and anticipated construction start in the summer of 2015.

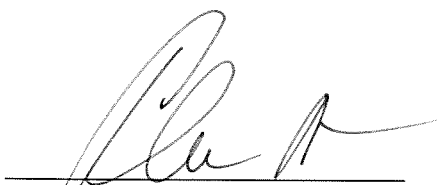
FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

The construction cost of the Church Street Improvements from Ninth Line to Bur Oak Avenue was estimated at \$1.7 million. The road is to be funded by Town Wide Hard Development Charges under the existing 2014 Capital Budget. A more detailed cost estimate will be provided during the detailed design stage.

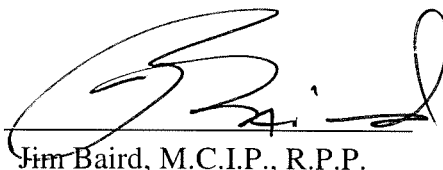
BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:

Operations and Urban Design departments have reviewed this report and their comments have been incorporated.

RECOMMENDED BY:



Alan Brown, C.E.T.
Director of Engineering



Jim Baird, M.C.I.P., R.P.P.
Commissioner, Development Services

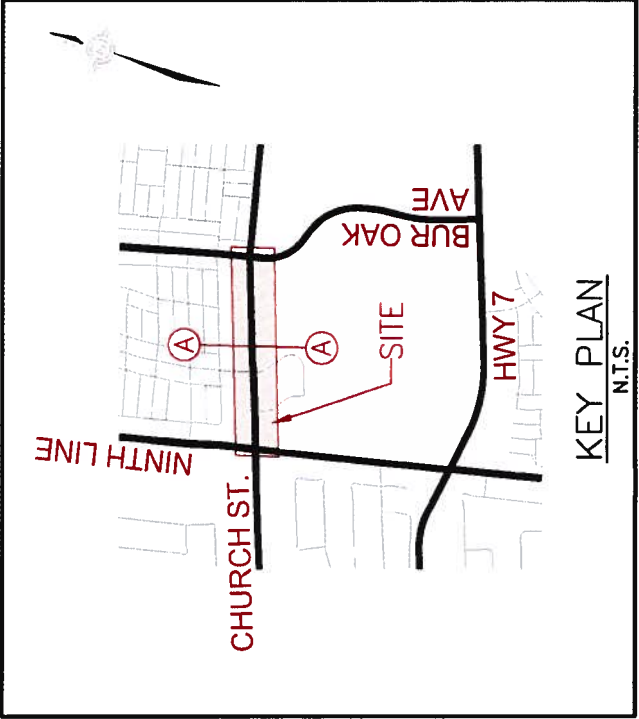
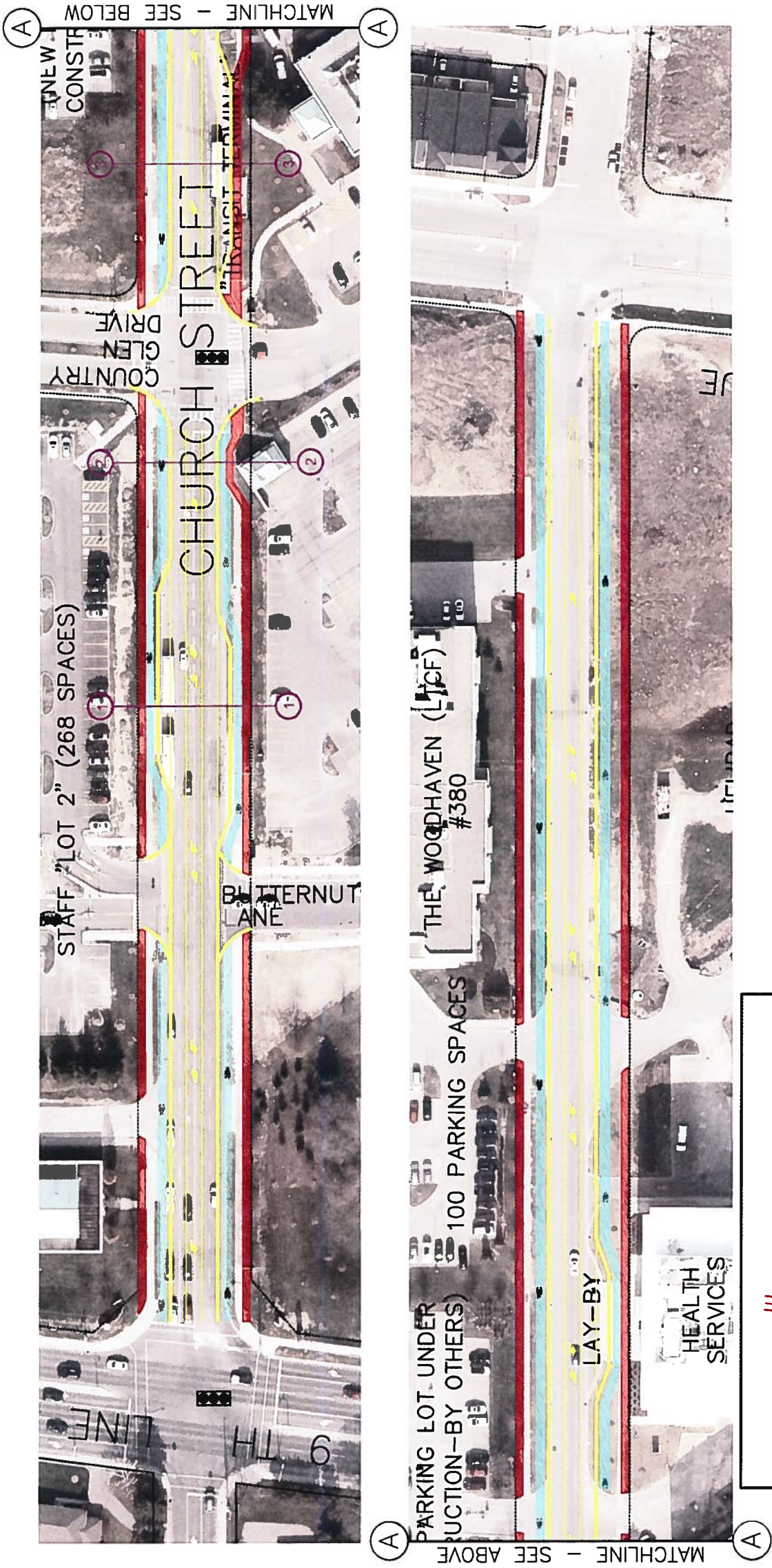
ATTACHMENTS:

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|----------------|--|
| Attachment A - | Recommended Alternative – Layout |
| Attachment B - | Recommended Alternative – Cross Sections |
| Attachment C - | Alternate Typical Cross Section |

ATTACHMENT A

CHURCH STREET IMPROVEMENTS (NINTH LINE TO BUR OAK AVENUE)

CONCEPTUAL LAYOUT



CONCEPTUAL DESIGN - BOULEVARDS

CYCLE TRACK, SIDEWALK AND UTILITY/STREETSCAPE CORRIDOR LAYOUT
TO BE FINALIZED DURING DETAILED DESIGN

LEGEND

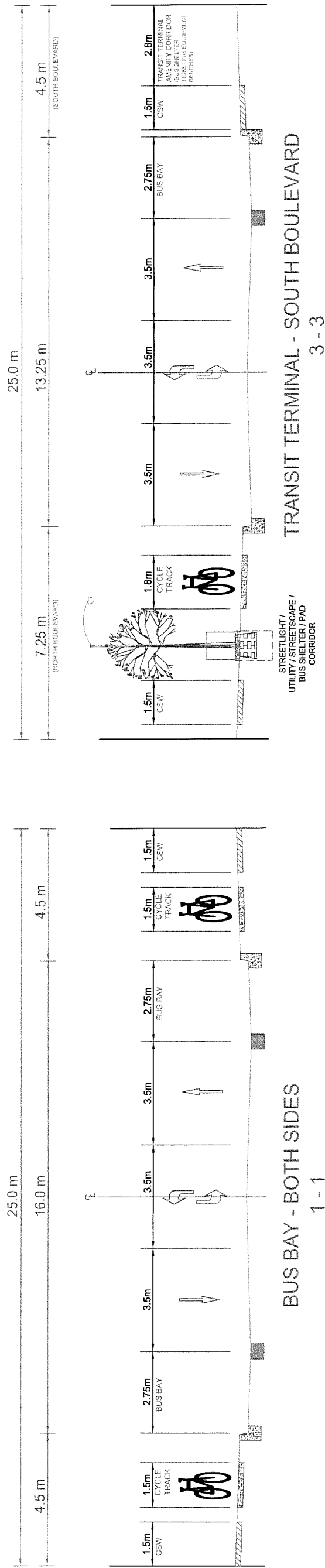
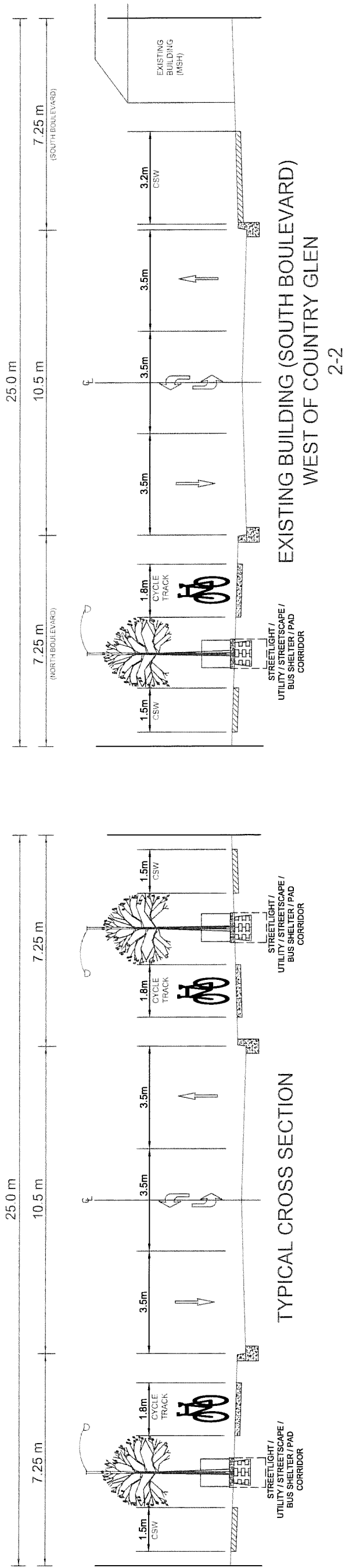
CYCLE TRACK

SIDEWALK

CURB

CHURCH STREET IMPROVEMENTS (NINTH LINE TO BUR OAK AVE.)

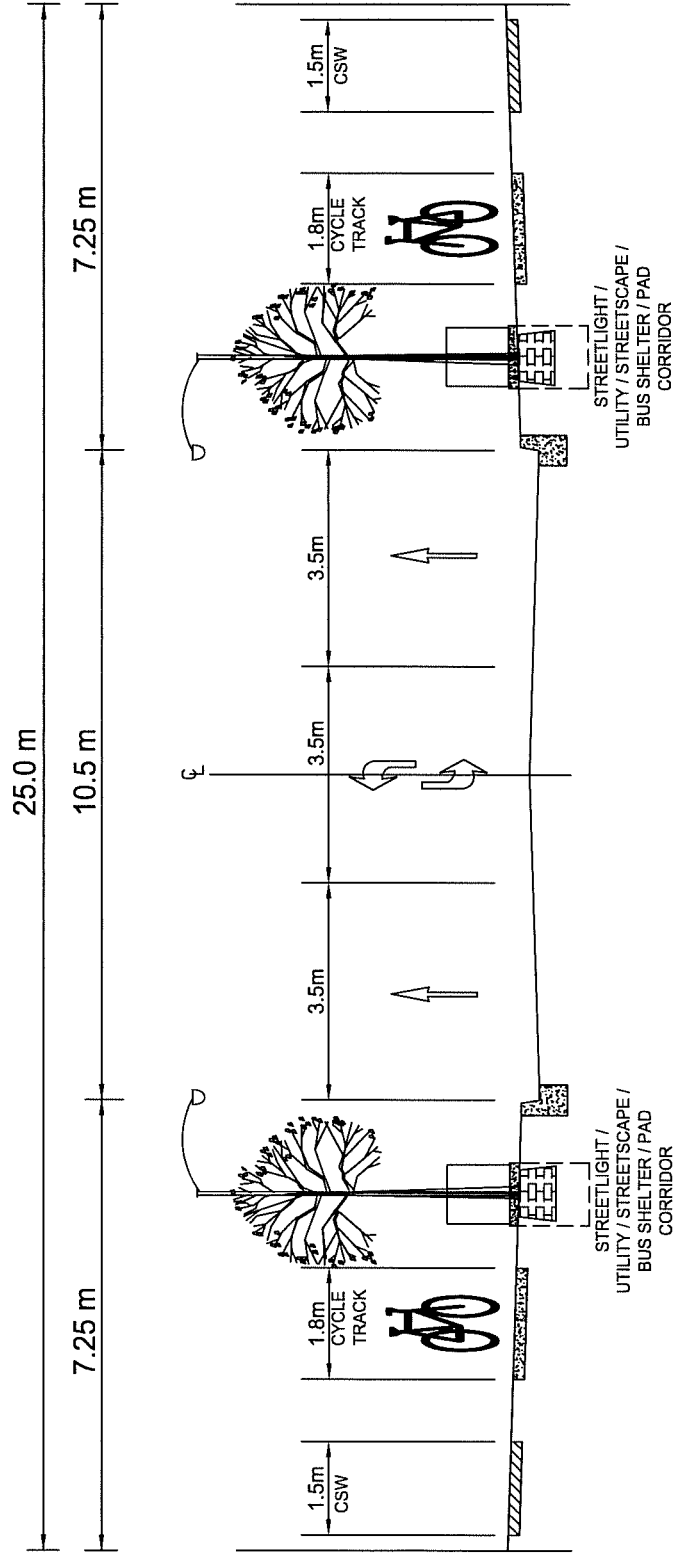
CROSS SECTIONS



NOTE:
LOCATION AND LAYOUT OF CYCLE TRACK AND STREETSCAPE / UTILITY CORRIDOR WITHIN BOULEVARDS TO BE FINALIZED DURING DETAILED DESIGN, IN CONSULTATION WITH OPERATIONS AND URBAN DESIGN DEPARTMENTS

CHURCH STREET IMPROVEMENTS (NINTH LINE TO BUR OAK AVE.)

ALTERNATE CROSS SECTION (TYPICAL)



NOTE:
LOCATION AND LAYOUT OF CYCLE TRACK AND STREETSCAPE / UTILITY CORRIDOR WITHIN BOULEVARDS TO BE FINALIZED DURING DETAILED DESIGN, IN CONSULTATION WITH OPERATIONS AND URBAN DESIGN DEPARTMENTS