

# Targeted Improvements Proposal: 76<sup>th</sup> Street HAST Crossing

--Submitted by City of Milwaukee Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committee—

Last update: September 18, 2023

**Issue:** The Hank Aaron State Trail (HAST) crossing at 76<sup>th</sup> Street (near State Fair Park, bordering West Allis' city limits) is one of the busiest crossings on the entire trail. There are four lanes of opposing traffic, with a very narrow median in between. This median strip cannot usually accommodate the amount of cyclists trying to cross, and motorists are often racing through the crossing at higher speeds without giving right of way to trail users.

The city of West Allis' boundaries lie just a few blocks to the south of the crossing. While 76<sup>th</sup> Street has a wide median and two lanes of traffic within the city of West Allis, 76<sup>th</sup> Street immediately widens to four total lanes once it crosses into Milwaukee; and the median strip narrows considerably. Because of this, northbound drivers are often beginning to suddenly accelerate just as they encounter trail users attempting to cross.

**Goal:** Improve safety conditions at the 76<sup>th</sup> Street Crossing, which is arguably the most unsafe crossing on the entire HAST.

## Considerations and Recommendations:

- Adding 4' bumpouts on both sides of 76<sup>th</sup> in the parking lane, either permanently or using bollards and paint.
- Creating a consistent and wider median from Adler St./W. Main Street all the way to Pierce Street at the West Allis boundary. (8' to 10')
- Painting the cyclist chevron symbol on 76<sup>th</sup> street at appropriate points to further alert motorists of the crossing.
- Raising the crosswalk at the trail crossing to make pedestrians and cyclists more visible.
- Increasing lighting at the trail crossing where possible, again to make pedestrians and cyclists more visible.
- If possible, reducing 76<sup>th</sup> Street to one lane in each direction from Pierce to Main.

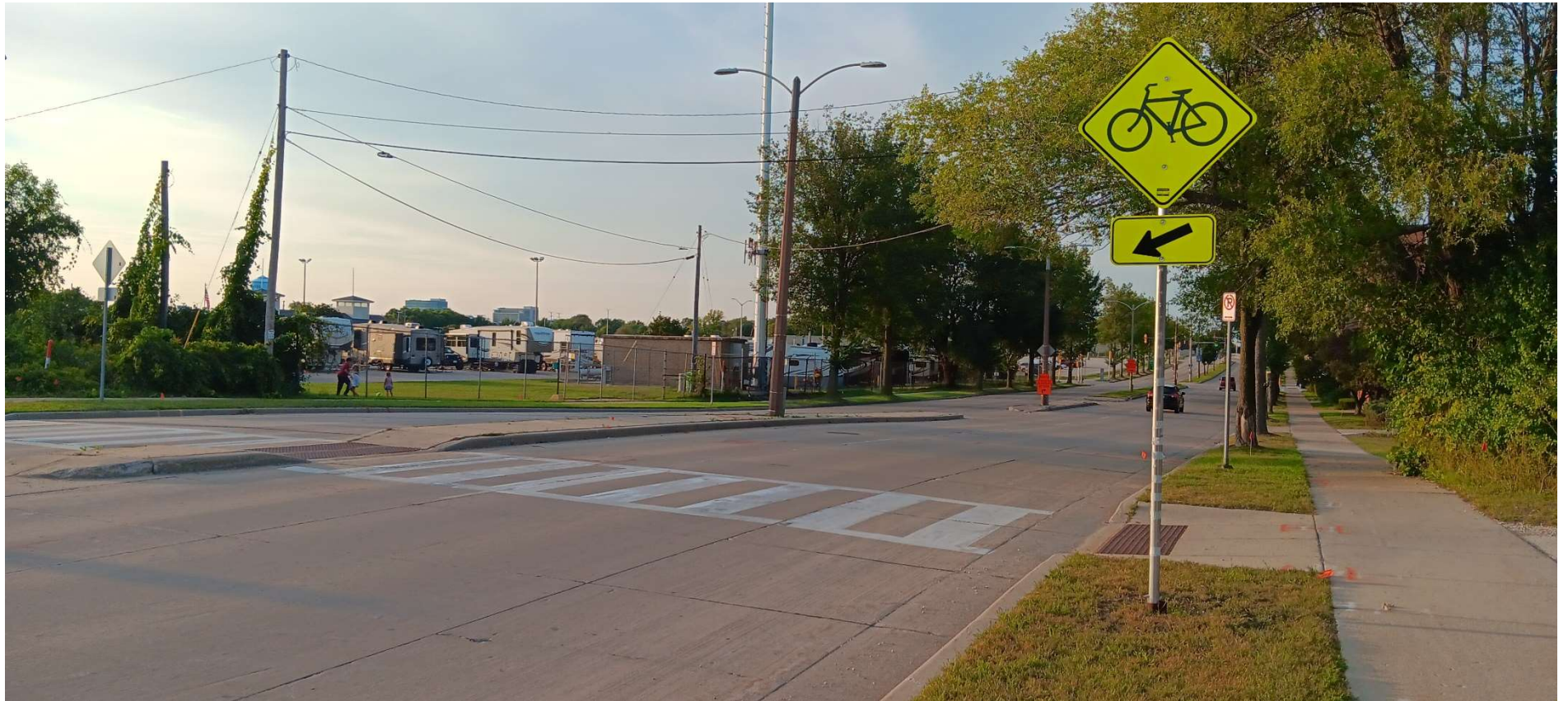
## Visuals:

(see following pages)

Picture A: The HAST crossing at 76<sup>th</sup> Street, looking west while on the trail.



Picture B: The HAST crossing at 76<sup>th</sup> Street, looking north from 76<sup>th</sup> Street.



Picture C: Close-up of the narrow median strip in the middle of the trail crossing. The median measures approximately **6 feet wide**. For reference, The Federal Highway Administration recommends medians to be 8 feet or more wide for pedestrian comfort and access.



Picture D:

The author's wife's bicycle on the trail crossing median. Note that the median is so narrow that the bicycle comes perilously close to traffic; and can barely accommodate any more cyclists trying to cross.



PICTURE E:

View of 76<sup>th</sup> Street while standing on the trail crossing median, looking south towards 76<sup>th</sup> & Pierce and the City of West Allis. Note that 76<sup>th</sup> Street immediately widens—and its median narrows—once 76<sup>th</sup> Street reaches the Milwaukee city limits.



Picture F:

76<sup>th</sup> & Pierce, looking south. Note that West Allis has both sides of the streets narrowed to one lane; a bicyclist chevron; and a wider and more aesthetically pleasing median strip that measures approximately **16 feet wide** (more than twice as wide as the median at the trail crossing a few blocks to the north.).



Picture G:

View of 76<sup>th</sup> Street while standing on the trail crossing median, looking north towards 76<sup>th</sup> & Main. There are four lanes of traffic, plus on-street parking for northbound traffic. Southbound traffic will often come towards the trail crossing at very high speeds.





Picture H:

Example of traffic calming at a direct crossing, midblock. Though physical, permanent bumpouts as shown would be ideal, this could also be done with new street painting and bollards.

