

Executive Summary

E.1 Introduction

The Fuller Road Station is an opportunity to optimize the mobility in an area of the City of Ann Arbor that has several transportation opportunities and challenges. The opportunities include a link with the railroad track which currently provides Amtrak service, and is also planned to support commuter rail service to Detroit in the next few years. The potential future signature service line is currently in the study phase as another opportunity to link with the existing and future transit services, as well as parking and non-motorized facilities. The challenges include the congested intersections in the vicinity of the site, and the unique roadway network that has developed as a result of the physical barriers created by the Huron River, the railroad, and the topography of the land.

Phase 1 of the Fuller Road Station development includes 1,088 parking spaces, and bus staging will be facilitated at the intermodal facility. The future phases include an additional 592 parking spaces, and service for Amtrak, commuter rail, bus transit, and a future potential signature service line will be provided at the intermodal facility and the train station. Covered bicycle parking will be provided as part of phase 1, and a bicycle station, including a number of amenities, will be provided as part of future phases.

E.2 Site Opportunities

The site opportunities that are leveraged with respect to servicing several modes of transportation include the following:

- Access to the Medical Center Campus, which employs approximately 14,000 employees on the "hill" surrounded by East Medical Center Drive (EMCD), Fuller Road/Glen Avenue, Huron Street, and Ann Street.
- Access to the large amount of residential housing located north of Fuller Road.
- Access to the Norfolk Southern railroad tracks, which will support the relocated Amtrak station in the future, as well as the proposed commuter rail service to Detroit.
- Proximity to the future potential signature service line and station, pending the outcome of the Ann Arbor Connector Feasibility Study.
- Improves additional pedestrian permeability along the north edge of the Medical Center Campus by providing a future skywalk over the railroad tracks, and possibly a future skywalk over EMCD as well.
- Provides an off-street area for transit users to interface with the UM and AATA bus services.
- Provides for a number of non-motorized amenities, including covered bicycle parking and a future bicycle station.
- Provides a location for pick-up and drop-off to serve the many transportation modes and options, as well as a location for Medical Center Campus employees.

E.3 Fuller Road / East Medical Center Drive / Maiden Lane Intersection

As traffic volumes increase with traffic associated with other developments and the Fuller Road Station traffic, the capacity of the Fuller Road / EMCD / Maiden Lane intersection can be expanded marginally under traffic signal con-

trol. However, it will remain operating at a poor level of service due to the physical constraints presented by the bridges that are in close proximity on three approaches. Converting the intersection to a roundabout would greatly reduce the congestion level while simultaneously reducing emissions and pollutants, and avoids impacts to the bridges. The conversion of the intersection to a roundabout is not included in the Fuller Road Station project, and will be constructed as part of a separate project. It would be preferable to convert the intersection to roundabout as the next improvement to the intersection, rather than to construct any additional improvements that utilize traffic signal control.

E.4 Traffic Conditions Summary

For the existing traffic conditions, there are a number of intersections in the vicinity of the development that are not operating at an acceptable level of service, and options for improving these intersections are as follows:

- Add an eastbound-to-southbound right-turn lane at the Fuller Road / EMCD / Maiden Lane intersection.
- The capacity of the Glen Avenue/Fuller Street intersection can be increased by providing a protected left-turn phase (green arrow) for the northbound-to-westbound movement.
- The Main Street/Depot Street intersection would benefit from a westbound-to-northbound right-turn overlap phase, which would operate simultaneously with the southbound-to-eastbound left-turn phase.

For the 2012 background (no-build) traffic conditions, the following intersection improvements are needed:

- Add a westbound-to-northbound right-turn lane at the Fuller Road / EMCD / Maiden Lane intersection.
- The Glen Avenue/Catherine Street intersection operations could be enhanced by simplifying the traffic signal phasing, which could be accomplished in a number of ways. One option would be to convert Catherine Street to one-way operation between Glen Avenue and Ingalls Street, and there are also other options that could be explored.

For the traffic conditions in 2012 for the phase 1 build-out conditions, the improvements necessary to support either scenario do not require roadway improvements, and are limited to traffic signal timing adjustments, traffic signal phasing improvements, and/or lane assignment changes.

For the 2035 background (no-build) conditions, no further physical improvements are necessary, assuming that the Fuller Road / EMCD / Maiden Lane intersection is converted to a roundabout.

For the 2035 conditions with future development phases, no additional physical improvements are necessary, assuming that the Fuller Road / EMCD / Maiden Lane intersection is converted to a roundabout.

E.5 Site Access Summary

For the phase 1 scenario, an exclusive right-turn lane is recommended at the west Fuller Road Station parking deck drive because of the number of vehicles anticipated to utilize the drive during peak-hours. The existing crossovers in the Fuller Road median are relocated to serve the Fuller Pool and the Fuller Road Station.

For the future phases scenario, a right-turn bay is recommended at each of the three site drives because of the number of vehicles anticipated to utilize the drives during peak traffic hours. The eastbound-to-westbound median cross-over movement does not operate at an acceptable level of service in the afternoon peak hour due to the volumes of vehicles leaving the parking deck and heading west on Fuller Road, and traffic signal control may be required as the Fuller Road Station approaches full build-out.

E.6 Non-Motorized Improvements

The following non-motorized improvements are recommended, which complement the recommendations of the City's Non-Motorized Plan and the goals of Fuller Park:

- For phase 1, the non-motorized trail along the frontage of the development site will be widened to current non-motorized trail standards and relocated closer to Fuller Road at the development driveways.
- For phase 1, pedestrian mobility across Fuller Road will be improved through an additional mid-block pedestrian crossing located between the Fuller Road / EMCD / Maiden Lane intersection and the existing Fuller Pool driveway.
- For phase 1, Fuller Road on-street bicycle lanes will be added to eastbound and westbound Fuller Road along the site frontage within the influence of the proposed driveways.
- For phase 1, covered bicycle parking within the intermodal facility will be provided.
- For future phases, a bicycle station and other amenities are programmed.
- For future phases or in connection with the roundabout construction, on-street bicycle lanes are planned between the EMCD/Maiden Lane intersection and the train station driveway for eastbound and westbound Fuller Road.
- Additional connections to the existing and future paths within Fuller Park are also recommended, including the planned Fuller Road underpass at the Huron River.
- When the Fuller Road / EMCD / Maiden Lane intersection is converted to a roundabout, the section of Fuller Road between Fuller Street and East Medical Center Drive could be restriped to include an on-street bicycle lane in each direction.

E.7 Future Phase Considerations

There are some critical items associated with future phases that will require further evaluation:

- The number of parking spaces assigned to each program element was estimated for the purposes of this transportation study, and these parking numbers have not been confirmed or endorsed by the City or the stakeholders of this project. However, the parking demand in the vicinity of the site is high and is expected to remain high due to the proximity to the Medical Center Campus, and therefore it is nearly certain that the peak daily parking occupancy of the Fuller Road Station will be approximately 100% in future years. As a result, the findings of the transportation study are expected to be representative of the future conditions, regardless of the number of parking spaces assigned to the various program elements.
- The estimated amount of bus traffic that will use the Fuller Road Station upon build-out is 30 buses per hour and approximately 500 buses per day. However, the transportation study does not address the bus route configuration and/or new bus routes that may be necessary to support all the program elements. The bus routes will most likely be redefined over time as the Amtrak, commuter rail, and signature service line are added to the Fuller Road Station program.

- The potential future signature service line will have a significant impact on mobility on the Fuller Road corridor and the study area. The estimated traffic volume growth is 8% over the next 26 years (by 2035), based on information provided by the Washtenaw Area Transportation Study (WATS). For the purposes of the transportation study, this additional traffic was assumed to be accommodated by the signature transit line. Although no reliable estimate has yet been made, the potential impact of the signature service line is likely to be greater, resulting in traffic conditions that are “conservative”. Assuming that the potential impact will in fact be greater, the signature transit line will reduce the traffic volumes on Fuller Road to a greater extent than what is represented by the transportation study. To provide additional information on how sensitive the future traffic conditions are with respect to the signature service line, the 2035 traffic conditions were evaluated with and without the signature transit service. The ongoing Ann Arbor Connector Feasibility Study will address the influence of the signature transit line on traffic and transit mobility to a greater extent.

Perhaps the most difficult program element to reliably estimate is the amount of pick-up and drop-off activity that might be experienced, particularly for the future phases. The estimated amount of pick-up and drop-off activity is based on observed conditions at the Medical Center Campus, the existing Amtrak station, and other comparable sites. The pick-up and drop-off access drive adjacent to the train station may not be sufficient to service all of the potential users at the Fuller Road Station, and so this program element will need to be revisited prior to moving forward with future phases.