Northeast 65th Street Vision Zero Project
Proposals From A Roosevelt High School Student

Joe Mangan

PROPOSALS:

1. Extend raised cycle tracks down 65th Street Northeast. **Please do not consider** any other form of bike lane, even temporarily, for a few reasons:

a. It is preferable to invest all the resources necessary to truly improve the safety of 65th Street once, and only once. The city's planning office has previously drafted plans calling for raised cycle tracks on 65th Street, and the current redesign process of 65th should follow through with those plans the first time bike lanes are installed. If not, the city will be obligated to return later and upgrade any lanes to higher-quality raised cycle tracks (the only true form of bike infrastructure). That's a waste of time and money. Just do it right the first time. If the city can't find the capital to invest in high-quality infrastructure, wait until it can. **It is simply a bad investment to throw money at something the city will only have to improve upon later.**

b. Raised cycle tracks are safer, and thus feel safer, than the traditional paint-and-pole Seattle "bike lane." **Given the project's goal (a 65th Street that is safer for all), shouldn't investing in the safest possible infrastructure be a good, logical idea?** In addition, safer bike infrastructure makes people more likely to use the lanes – and that's important on a street that is notoriously unsafe, especially to future light-rail riders and Roosevelt students who may want to use them as a driving alternative.

c. These bike lanes will travel past a school of nearly 2,000 teenagers who just want to get their license and drive. Legally, many cannot carpool to school, and those that can often don't. Few use any other form of transport in the morning. Parking is so terrible that one must arrive 45 minutes early just to find parking near the school. If *any* parking is removed, a generation that already dislikes bike lanes will come to truly hate them. While removing car infrastructure may be seen as a positive benefit by many (such as myself), the majority of Roosevelt students disagree – and it's the better decision overall to improve their perception of bike lanes, even if it means keeping the parking spaces that incentivize Seattle's car culture. **Do not remove any parking.** Regardless, they certainly won't be impressed with some paint and poles. **View this as a campaigning opportunity: invest in good bike infrastructure, and their perception of bike lanes will be positively changed forever.** Better bike lanes will do a better job convincing students why they should stop driving to school.

d. If any Seattle resident were to travel to Amsterdam or Copenhagen, they would be amazed at the sheer quantity of cyclists and the quality of their raised bike network. **The city should take notes from the places that do bike infrastructure best, and place quality over quantity.**

2. Continue the separated, single-direction lanes currently placed on the Cowen Park Bridge all the way up 15th until they reach the intersection with Northeast 68th Street, so Roosevelt students can actually bike, in a bike lane, all the way to the school.

3. Invest in a tram system beginning near Magnuson Park, down NE 65th Street, and looping back around near the Woodland Park Zoo. It would increase the accessibility of Magnuson, Greenlake, Woodland Park Zoo, Cowen Park, businesses, the future light rail station, and several schools. A tram route is superior to a simple bus route because:

a. Tram lanes are visible. I've been a Roosevelt student for almost four years now, and I have lived in Seattle all my life. I rode the bus every day after school either home, or to crew practice the first two and a half years of my time at Roosevelt (I quit riding it because it frequently took me nearly an hour to get home on the bus, despite the fact that my house is only a 10 or 15-minute drive away). **Despite all my time in the Roosevelt area, I could not tell you what bus route travels down 65th Street.** I don't even know if one exists. I'd have to download an app or research it. But if such a route had large, obvious stations and gleaming tracks running all the way down the street, it would be hard not to know it exists. The necessity of researching a route would be eliminated. And that's extremely important, given the convenience of the competition (cars). **Invest in better transit.**

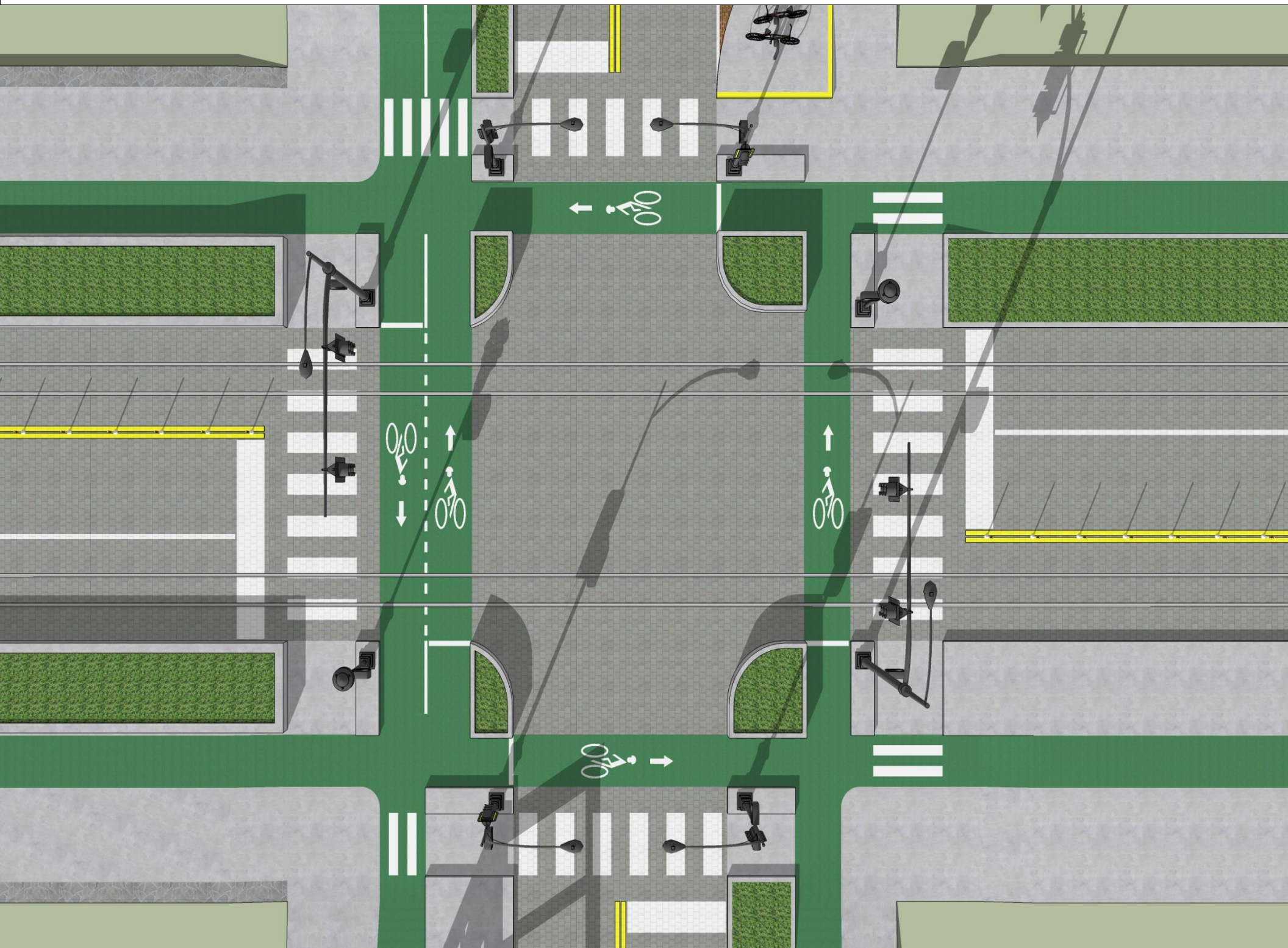
b. Other light rail stations (such as the Stadium Station near the University of Washington) have been built without good, clear public transit connections, few safe bike connections, and limited parking. The Roosevelt station doesn't seem to have any planned parking areas, and it will be next to multi-story apartment buildings and a school of 2,000 teens who insist on driving themselves to school. **While raised cycle tracks would help the situation, a good, clear public transit route is essential to the success of the station.**

4. Add pedestrian and bicycle specific timing routes to the intersection of 65th Street and 15th Avenue, as well as the intersection of 65th and 12th Avenue. Many Roosevelt students walk to Whole Foods, Taco Del Mar, or Bartell's during lunch, and the available waiting space on the corners of the intersection with 65th and 12th is limited – obviously a safety hazard (especially when some students struggle to find room on the sidewalk and out of the street). In addition, left and right turning traffic is held up at this intersection by these swarms of students, and at some point, drivers always get impatient. Just give pedestrians and cyclists their own timing sequence, allowing them to all cross simultaneously and be on their way.
5. Implement textured brick road paving on 65th Street, 15th Avenue, and on 12th Avenue near Roosevelt High School. Traffic calming is essential in this area. Make the brick paving in the parking lane even rougher, to disincentivize drivers from using it as an extension of their lane width (which would allow them to speed up).
6. Add traffic lights to the intersection of 15th and 68th next to Roosevelt. Currently the right-of-way is given to drivers on 15th Avenue (over drivers on NE 68th Street, who have a stop sign). After school, swarms of students walk out of the building and continuously fill the crosswalk. Drivers are expected to stop for the pedestrians, which they do. Primarily south-bound drivers gradually back up to NE 69th Street, simply because the swarm of students leaving the building almost never ends. Eventually, drivers become frustrated, and thus dart between narrow, approximately 10-foot-wide gaps of crossing students. Another safety hazard. Curb bulbs should be implemented to shorten the crossing distance and to slow down drivers in this school zone, and traffic signals should also be implemented. Traffic congestion would be alleviated significantly, and the intersection would be much safer for crossing students, especially if pedestrian specific timing is implemented.

7. Add traffic lights to the intersection of 15th Avenue NE and NE 66th street. Parents pick up their kids on 66th street, however cars often back up on 15th and block the intersection, which is a nightmare for the parents trying to get out of 68th. This would also further slow down cars on 15th Avenue (part of a school zone).
8. Add two pedestrian-activated crossings on NE 65th Street, to distribute the volume of students walking to Whole Foods away from other intersections, thus increasing the overall safety of the area.
9. My final proposal is to make 12th Avenue Northeast a two-way street. As is, it's essentially a miniature speedway running past the local high school, and past a future light rail station (and low-income housing block). Just make it a two-way street. It is doubtful that traffic counts provide adequate support for having this street be a one-way. Regardless, it should be a two-way street, as cars simply need to slow down, and contra-flow traffic would do that.
10. Reduce the number of lanes on 65th to only one in each direction (two lanes total). Of course, widen the roadway to three lanes at intersections with 65th, in order to add safe, designated turning lanes. While there are four lanes total currently (two in each direction), the left lane is essentially useless, as a car frequently has to turn left, and thus must yield to oncoming traffic. This forces traffic behind the turning vehicle to stop and wait, or to merge into the right lane and go around it, causing congestion near the intersection (and a hazardous safety situation). Reducing the number of lanes between the intersections should not be a problem. I also checked the traffic counts, and they only barely provide adequate support for two travel lanes. In addition, removing this lane allows the sidewalk to be widened, and also provides adequate room for the raised cycle tracks and wide planting strips. This encourages people to walk and bike over driving, which is good for physical health, air quality, traffic congestion, business, safety, and noise pollution. The increase in pedestrian and bike mobility in the area, along with the proposed tram line, would link more people to the light rail station, giving them an alternative to driving (most traffic on 65th is just people trying to get to the highway), providing further support for removing the lanes. Crossing distances would also be reduced, further improving safety.

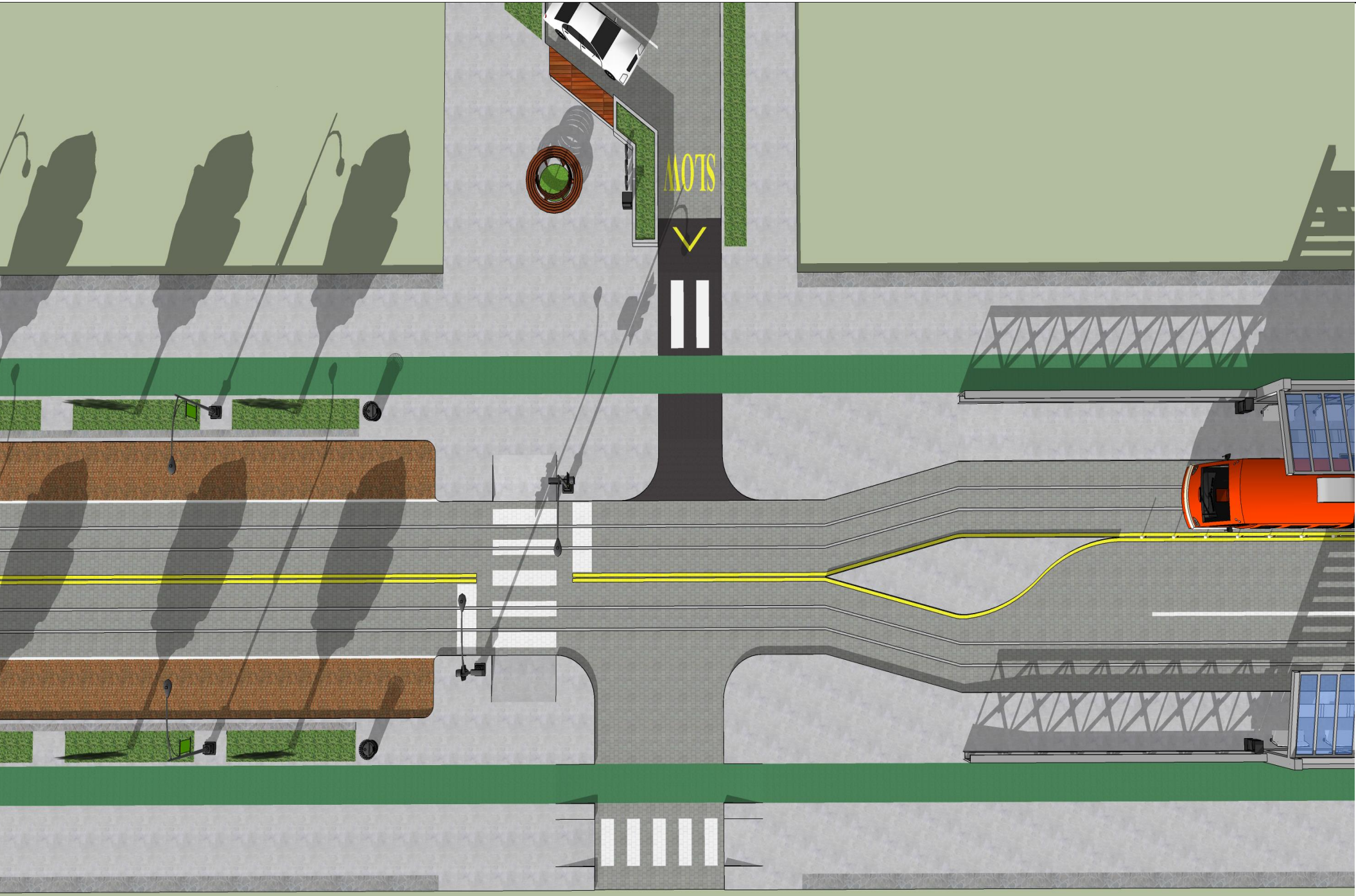

Traffic signals and curb bulbs.
Bidirectional raised cycle track continued past Roosevelt.
Speed Bumps.
Traffic signals and curb bulbs.
Speed bumps and stop signs.
Elevated crossings.
Speed Bumps.
Pedestrian-activated crossings and curb bulbs.
Dedicated left turn lanes.
Tram Stop.
Dedicated left turn lanes.
Parking strips
Tram Stop.

Intersection of 15th Avenue Northeast and NE 65th Street



Tram Stop and Intersection of 15th Avenue Northeast and NE 65th Street

Pedestrian-Activated Crossing and Intersection of NE 65th Street with 14th Avenue NE

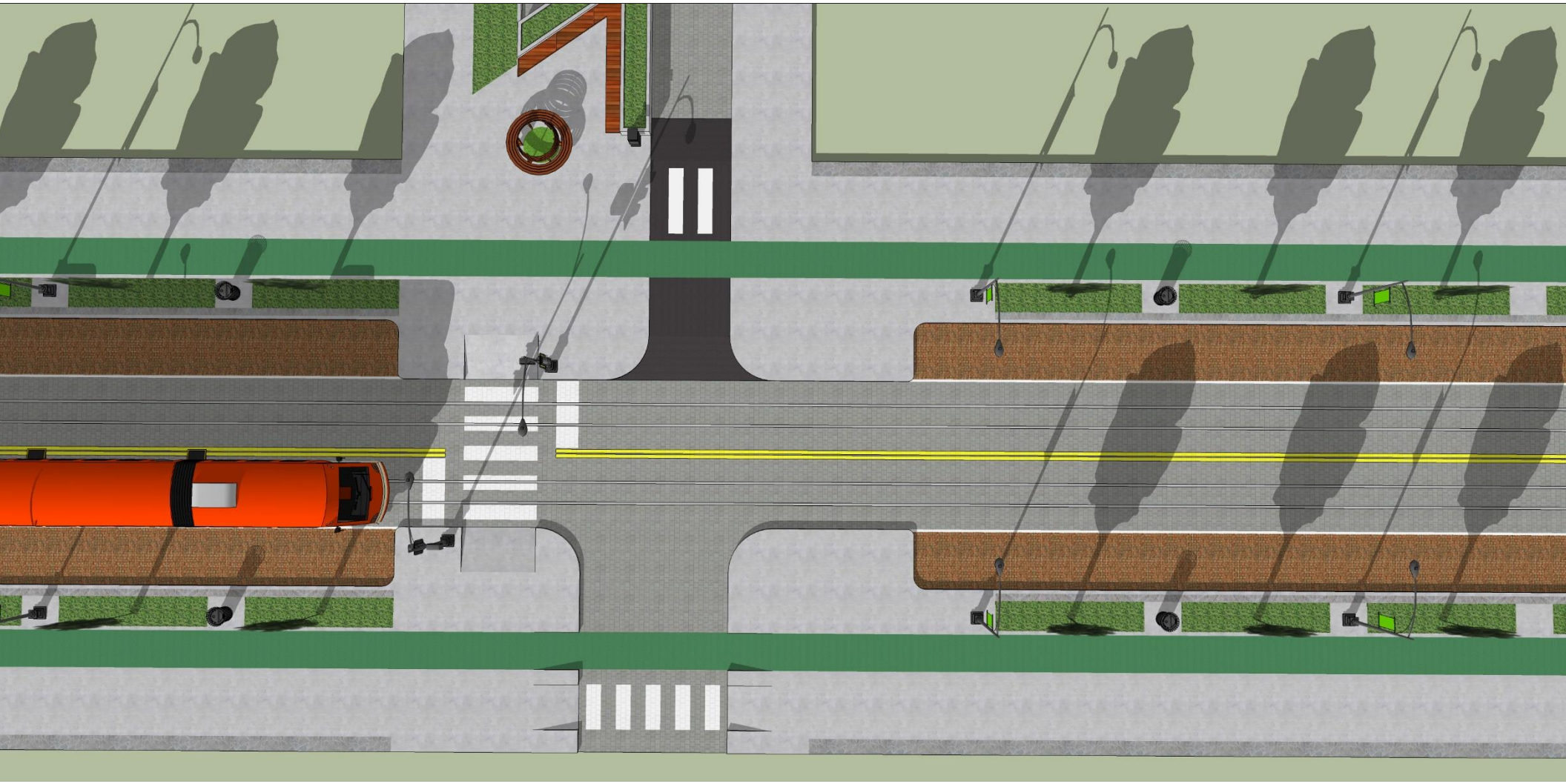


Pedestrian-Activated Crossing and Intersection of NE 65th Street with 14th Avenue NE

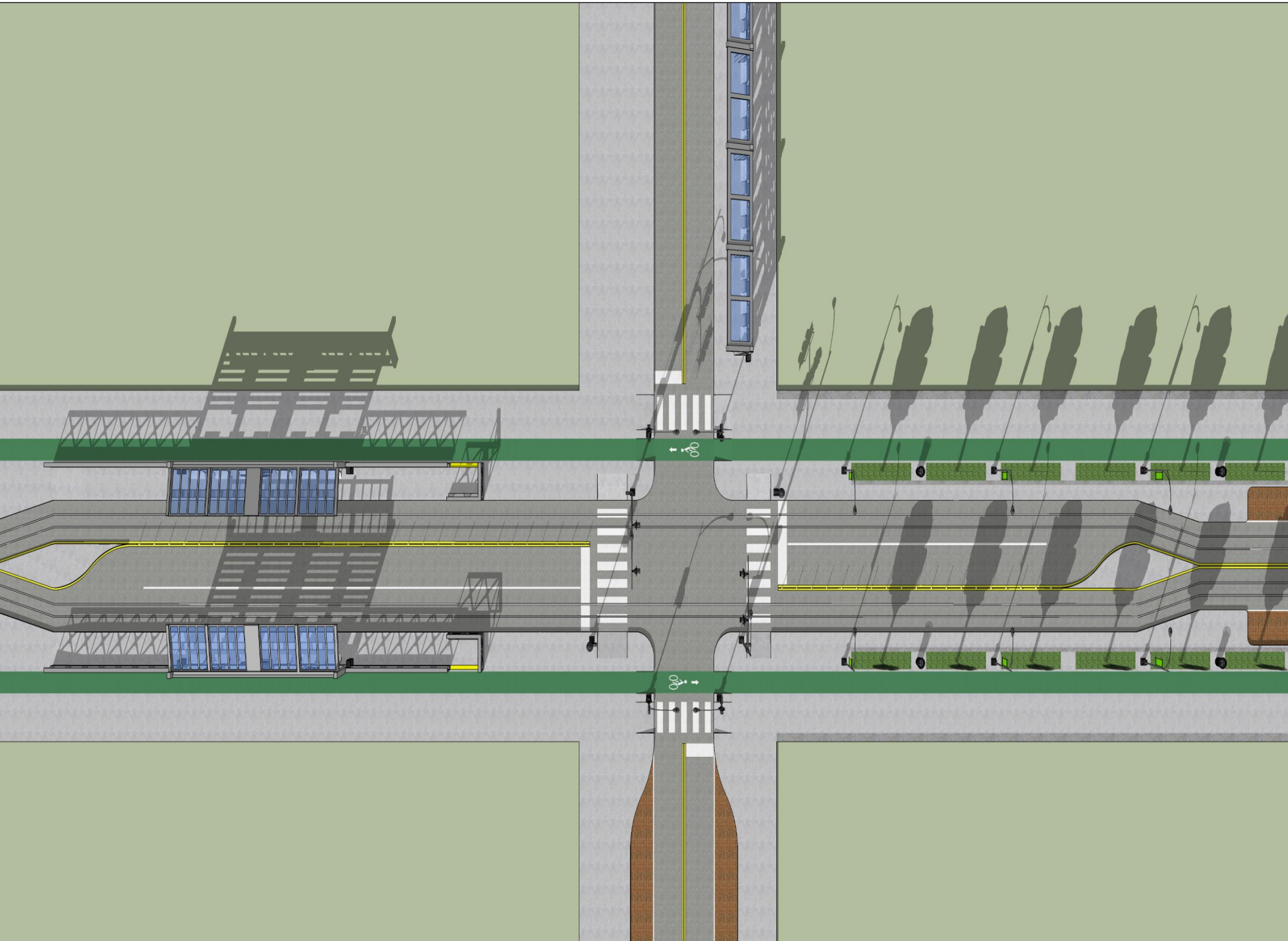
(Street View)

Streetscape of NE 65th Street Between Brooklyn Avenue and 14th Avenue Northeast

Pedestrian-Activated Crossing and Intersection of NE 65th Street with Brooklyn Avenue NE



Tram Stop, Improved Bus Stop, and Intersection of NE 65th Street and 12th Avenue NE



Tram Stop, Improved Bus Stop, and Intersection of NE 65th Street and 12th Avenue NE

(Street View from NE 65th Street Looking at The Site of The Future Light Rail Station)