

## East Brookings Business & Industry Association

July 18, 2021

Dr. Willert and the Brookings School Board,

We are reaching out to briefly tell you about East Brookings Business and Industry Association (EBBIA), our support for east Brookings, and why we'd like your support with furthering development east of I-29.

The purpose of EBBIA is to proactively advance development in East Brookings, in support of attracting new businesses and growing current businesses, and enabling people to work, shop, play and live in our East Brookings neighborhood.

What has happened east of I-29? It has grown a lot. Since Daktronics started its campus in the middle of a cornfield east of I-29, the number of businesses in east Brookings has grown from about 5 to nearly 70, including manufacturing, processing, research, and customer services, as well as hotels and restaurants, the Swiftel Center and the Larson Ice Arena.

We thank the City for its support for east Brookings, including:

- The Swiftel Center and the Larson Ice Arena
- Purchasing the DOT property and working toward a "Marketplace"
- Improving the roads, most recently:
  - Building 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue from the grove north of Larson Ice Center to the US14 Bypass
  - Building 34<sup>th</sup> Avenue south from 8<sup>th</sup> Street South to 32<sup>nd</sup> Street South
- Funding for the I-29 interchange 130
- Various other infrastructure improvement projects including water, sewer, electrical, and communication capability

As we continue to grow Brookings east of I-29, we recognize both a challenge and an opportunity in attracting and retaining people to live and work in Brookings. We recognize the challenge many businesses are having in recruiting people to fill their open positions, and that limited available housing may be contributing to this challenge. We also see a great opportunity to increase available housing by supporting our neighborhood community Aurora in east Brookings.

As you may know, Aurora is part of the Brookings School District. More than 200 of Brookings students this past school year live in the Aurora zip code. It's important to note the rate of growth in Aurora continues to trend upward with the addition of 10-20 houses per year.

We believe growth in Aurora is good for Brookings. And we foresee a future, likely within a decade or two, where Aurora would have sufficient population to support a K-3 school in our district. The mayor of Aurora has offered to host a community meeting with Dr. Willert to talk about the idea of a future school in Aurora.

EBBIA is encouraging infrastructure improvements to support and hopefully accelerate Aurora's growth. A key infrastructure opportunity catalyzed by the development of Brookings new I-29 interchange 130, is improvement of 2.5 miles of 214<sup>th</sup> Street that connects the new interchange directly to Aurora. We believe improvements to 214<sup>th</sup> Street would:

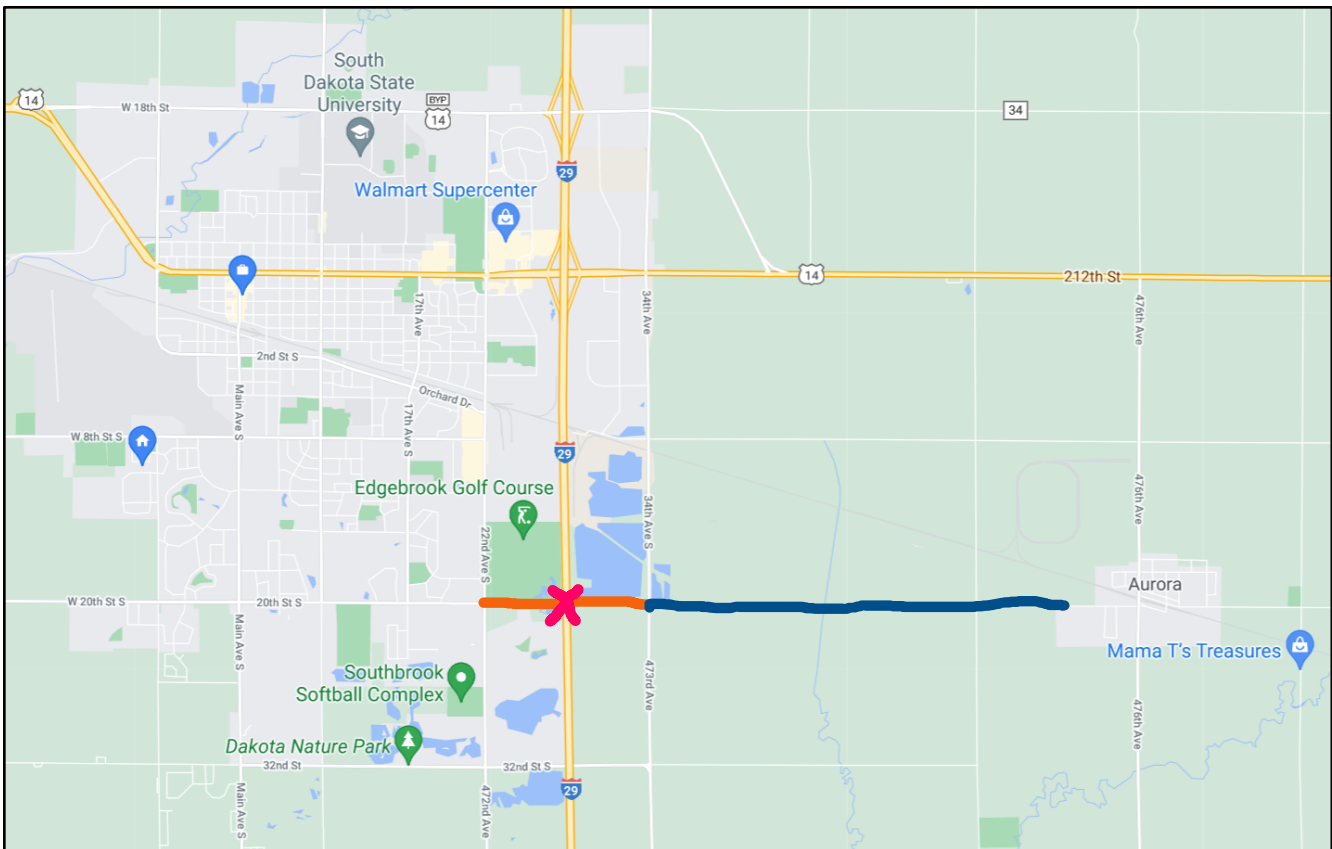
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- Provide a safe, direct route from Aurora to Brookings for current and future families and students to commute to Brookings schools and related activities
- Demonstrate a visible commitment to Aurora, a growing community in the Brookings School District
- Enable further infrastructure and development between Brookings and Aurora

EBBIA is asking the Brookings School District for a letter of support for the improvement of 214<sup>th</sup> Street from the eastern edge of I-29 to Aurora in order to better connect our school district.

Regards,

Al Kurtenbach, Chair



The pink X is the site of the new I-29 interchange 130.

The orange line represents the paved roadway included with the new interchange.

The navy-blue line represents the section of 214<sup>th</sup> Street that is currently a minor gravel township road and is the section we're seeking support for improvement.