

US 70 East Corridor Study Phase 1

Summary of Public Engagement: Round 2

The US 70 East Corridor Study's second round of public engagement occurred between August 21 and September 18, 2023. During this round of public engagement, feedback was requested on the features of the two alternative design concepts that the Study team developed. The following public engagement and information sessions were made available:

In-person and Online Meetings:

- August 21 – Virtual Meeting
- August 26 – In-person at the P.O.O.F. Community Center
- August 31 – In-person at the P.O.O.F. Community Center
- September 7 – All-day drop in at the Bethesda Ruritan Club facility

A total of 81 people attended the in-person meetings, and 73 people attended the virtual meeting.

Online and Print Survey:

An online and print survey was developed which incorporated questions with images of the two alternative design concepts. A total of 195 survey responses were received.

Community Engagement Ambassadors:

The public engagement consultant utilized community engagement ambassadors to extend outreach to minority and low-income community stakeholders to ensure equitable community engagement.

PUBLIC FEEDBACK

Key Takeaways

- Minimizing contact between bicyclists, pedestrians and cars was prevalent for reasons of safety and making the experience of all travelers more pleasant.
- The concept's ability to create greenway connections was prevalent.
- Concern that U-turns throughout the concept leads to longer travel times and will not sufficiently address congestion.
- More than 1/3 of comments were supportive of infrastructure that supports bicycle, pedestrian, and public transit along the corridor.
- 22% are still interested in seeing the corridor converted to a freeway; a portion of these respondents stated that the parallel roads were a positive addition to the Alternative 2 concept.

Alternative Concept 1: 4-Lane Boulevard

Top 5 Supportive Responses to Design Features of Alternative 1

1. The future grade separated paved greenway connection to Briar Creek / East Fork Creek.
2. The 5 new crosswalks with pedestrian refuge at the signalized U-Turn intersection at future Angier Road Extension.
3. 4 proposed crosswalks and multi-use path connections to US 70.
4. Crosswalks at Page Road and Future Page Road Extension.
5. 12% of the respondents indicated no need to do any of the proposed design enhancements.

Alternative Concept 2: 4-Lane Boulevard with Parallel Roads

Top 5 Supportive Responses to Design Features of Alternative 2

1. The future bridged paved greenway connection to Lick Creek Trail and trail connection at Briar Creek / East Fork Creek.
2. 3,170 feet of additional sidewalk / multi-use path.
3. Diversion of local trips on parallel roads.
4. Closure of 50 driveways on US 70 to improve safety and flow of vehicles and provide businesses fronting US 70 alternative bidirectional access via parallel roads.
5. 9.5 ft grass strip buffer along parallel roads for bicyclist and pedestrian comfort and could provide opportunities for future transit service along parallel roads.