

Comment Cards

The following are transcribed comment cards received at the April 25 Open House.

Walk/Bike-friendly infrastructure creates/heightens community – exciting stuff!

A bike lane on 8th Ave is the most ill-conceived, illogical, irrational proposal I have been exposed to in a long time. This will cause horrible traffic problems and exacerbate the current traffic problems. DO NOT close a lane on 8th Ave S. Really bad idea.

Traffic on 8th Avenue is bad enough now and will be getting worse when the multi family dwellings fill – YOU ARE TAKING AWAY LANE FOR CARS SO BIKES WILL HAVE A LANE?!?!
DO NOT close a lane on 8th Avenue – TERRIBLE idea!!!!

Please make 8th safer to cross on foot. It is currently a death trap. Will growth on this corridor, a road diet is essential!

Making Nashville more bike and ped friendly is very important. This proposal for 8th Ave will help in making progress. I hope we were able to make this work.

What was done in Phase I – I advocate for in Phase II. Center left turn lane, bike lanes, streetscape buffer, and sidewalks. I bike from & to Downtown & Berry Hill weekly and would like to feel safe on 8th Ave. Also, more crosswalks. Have the 8th bus be more frequent

Would like some data where going from 4 lanes to 3 has been done. Like the safety of 2 lanes & turning but does it hurt traffic flow?

Phase II is madness...makes zero sense for anyone, commuters, businesses, residents etc... Phase I makes some sense, but if we are removing 2 previous lanes of traffic to add a turning lane & 2 huge bike lanes, far more thought needs to be put into it. My favorite city in the world is Copenhagen, and it is a world-class biking culture. Nashville will never be that...we are too hot for 5+ months of the year. To take an entire lane and give it to bikes is silly. Just look at new bike lanes are currently being utilized in Nashville. They are not. We are all for walkability & safety, but two dedicated bike lanes are a waste of space. Sidewalks should be the priority, along with crosswalks & some additional lights to slow traffic. My 2 cents.

Ample lighting is important for safety especially with increase of violent crime in Spring 2017 (Wedgewood murder). Bike to downtown will be good to decrease drinking & driving. Excited that this is a near future reality. Need permeable green spaces for stormwater management.

1. Really cool! Excellent presentation & encouragement of public participation
2. I would like to see more focus on green spaces along the corridor to address water permeability & urban health
3. Possible to create a continuous bike lane down 8th Ave to connect down Korea Veterans to Davidson to Shelby Bottoms

I like the proposal and trust it won't make driving times on 8th Ave worse. I'm most interested in a livable and vibrant city street.

The plan for phase I is one of the most ridiculous proposals I have ever witnessed in my 88 yrs of citizenship in Nashville. Take the money and complete the sidewalks. To spend millions to accommodate bicycle riders on a major U.S. thoroughfare is a terrible waste of money.

Road diet is an excellent & necessary step for 8th Ave. Buffering the sidewalk from traffic w/ parked cars and adding bike lines will increase safety for bikers and

pedestrians. It will stop traffic from weaving between 2 lanes by creating a turn lane. Please put in more crosswalk & walking signals, too. Great plan!

Safety issues?
Too crowded

Cutting 8th Ave from 4 lanes to 2 lanes will NOT solve a traffic problem. Not enough people will walk or bike to make up for the increased congestion. We can't appease a small group (bikes) at the inconvenience of all the car traffic.

A traffic light is needed at 8th and Drexel. Thanks for your good work.

Bike lanes are future!!

8th is a very inhospitable street right now, but it has huge opportunity to be a place where people want to be (rather than just get through). Reducing # of lanes would be a huge safety and livability improvement for everyone (including cars!)

Please put a traffic light or caution at 8th & Drexel.

Great idea!
We need as many crosswalks as possible!

I think you are asking for a traffic nightmare if you take it from 2 lanes to one on each side plus a center turning lane. It is bad enough as it is but I think you would be compounding the problem by proceeding w/ Phase II.

I'd love to see bike lanes and safer walkability on 8th Ave. I'm happy to sacrifice slightly more congestion during rush hour to be able to walk to neighborhood businesses on 8th Ave.

We should put a new priority on the citizen of the city! This means more equal space, infrastructure, dollars spent on the pedestrian realm! Compare square footage and cost requirement of pedestrian to a speeding car.

Plans looks great overall. A multimodal corridor is an absolute necessity here. Prioritizing other modes of transportation and making 8th Ave safe for biking & walking is the only way forward. Ensure safe ways to cross the street and make this area a destination rather than a highway for cars. This is also a major connector for the growing bike network in Nashville and needs safe, protected bike lanes.

The Franklin Pike Multimodal Study, June 2016 (the “Study”) is a disastrous proposal that will harm many Nashville residents and businesses. Those harmed include residents living south of I-440 and those along alternate north-south routes, such as Lealand Lane, Granny White Pike, Belmont Boulevard and Bransford Avenue on both sides of I-440. This fatal flaw is the result of several mistakes. Fortunately, an alternative exists that can benefit everyone while harming no one.

Failure to consider impact on affected residents without any corresponding benefits

The Study’s first mistake is that it looked at only 1.1 miles (the “Study Corridor”) of an 8.7 mile route. Franklin Pike is currently four-lane the complete 8.7 miles from downtown to the Williamson County line. Reducing the 1.1 mile Study Corridor, located in the middle of the Franklin Pike route, from four travel lanes to two travel lanes will create a bottleneck in both directions and cause unnecessary traffic congestion along the remaining 7.6 miles of Franklin Pike. Instead of focusing exclusively on the 1.1 mile Study Corridor, the Study should have considered the entire 8.7 mile route.

In exchange for the loss of two travel lanes in the middle of the critical Franklin Pike route, the Study proposes bike lanes to nowhere. Replacing already congested car lanes with non-connected bike lanes is a recipe for disaster. The proposed bike lanes would be an incomplete segment that is only 1.1 miles long. This incomplete segment would not connect to any existing bike lanes or bike destinations, such as parks.

Under the Study’s proposals, the tradeoff for significant harm to drivers would be minimal, if any, benefit to bikers. Bikers who live outside the Study Corridor would see no benefit because no existing bike lanes from outside the Study Corridor would connect to the proposed incomplete bike lane segments.

Failure to consider impact on affected residents and businesses along alternate routes

The Study also does not consider the detrimental impact on alternate routes when traffic shifts in response to the artificial bottleneck resulting from implementation of the Study’s proposals. The Study looked east to a rail line on the other side of Nolensville Pike and west to West End Avenue for limited demographic and housing purposes. (Study at 2.5.) But the Study overlooked how drivers seeking to avoid this new bottleneck would impact nearby areas.

Remarkably, the Study area map of this expanded demographic area refers to several alleys but does not even label Belmont Boulevard, one of the primary routes that will be congested with cars seeking to avoid the Franklin Road bottleneck that implementation of this Study will create.

The Study blithely states that “I-65 is directly parallel to the corridor and offers a more appropriate location for north-south trips between downtown Nashville and areas along and outside of I-440.” (Study at 4.5.) Had the Study process included consultation of residents south of I-440, it would have been clear that, in the event Franklin Pike is reduced from four travel lanes to two, these residents are much more likely to get downtown using routes such as Lealand Lane, Granny White Pike, Belmont Boulevard and Bransford Avenue, rather than I-65. For example, I-65 would be my last choice to travel between work and home because using I-65 is a 7.0 mile trip, whereas routes using Franklin Pike, Lealand Lane, Granny White Pike or Belmont

Boulevard are about 4.4 to 4.5 miles each. Moreover, traffic on I-65 has gotten so bad recently that residents farther south likely consider it an unviable alternative. The increasing congestion on I-65 is illustrated by the annual daily traffic count included in the Study, a count that ends at 2015 and has certainly gotten much worse in the last two years. (Study at 2.11.)

Before any of the Study's proposed changes to traffic lanes on Franklin Pike are implemented, governmental authorities should evaluate how these changes would affect residents and businesses along alternate routes, such as Lealand Lane, Granny White Pike, Belmont Boulevard and Bransford Avenue, and cross-streets that will be used as cut-throughs to get to these alternate north-south routes.

Lack of notice to affected residents and businesses

Due to lack of notice, less than 100 people are dictating a terrible result that will harm thousands of Nashville residents daily.

The Study process did not seek input from residents who live outside the 1.1 mile Study Corridor. I drive through the Study Corridor at least twice daily and never knew the Study was occurring. A year after the Study was completed in June 2016 and within approximately three months of implementation, electronic message boards were first placed along the route to alert drivers of the April 25, 2017, open house inconveniently located at Room in the Inn. Moreover, I have seen no evidence of any notice provided to residents and businesses along the alternate north-south routes and cut-through streets that will be harmed as traffic shifts to avoid this new bottleneck.

The lack of notice is highlighted within the Study itself, which states that more than 70 individuals (which included Steering Committee members and elected officials) participated in a February 27, 2016, mobility fair and 19 comment cards were provided during the three-day design charrette in April 2016. (Study at 3.2, 3.9, 3.10.) Thus, less than 100 people participated in the Study process.

The less than 100 people who knew about and participated in the Study represent a nearly homogenous point of view that is not representative of the people who actually use Franklin Pike and does not account for the residents and businesses along alternate routes that will be harmed as traffic patterns shift to avoid the Franklin Pike bottleneck. Less than 10% of the handful of people involved in the Study process indicated that the focus should be on how people move through the 1.1 mile Study Corridor. (Study at 3.3.) On the other hand, more than 20,000 people drive through the Study Corridor every day. (Study at 2.2.) That number was from 2014, so the number is certainly higher now. These more than 20,000 people are much more concerned about the car lanes through the Study Corridor than replacing car lanes with bike lanes. This is clearly a case of a tiny minority with focused, special interests dictating a bad result on the vast majority, which was deprived of notice or opportunity to participate in the process until after it was over.

Incorrect or misleading information in Study report

The Study report itself contains incorrect or misleading information. The time charts for traveling through the Study Corridor under the Study's three scenarios are the source of several

problems. Additionally, the Study suggests that other road amenities (such as completed sidewalks and beautification measures) will be included in certain scenarios when they will not.

First, some of the time charts contain contradictory numbers. The Study Corridor is 1.1 miles long and has a 35 mile per hour speed limit. It should take approximately 1.886 minutes to travel through the Study Corridor at the speed limit without any delay for traffic congestion or traffic signals. Under the Study's preferred Scenario B, the 5 p.m. PM Peak Hour "seconds of delay" totals 470.8 seconds, which is 7.847 minutes. (Study at 4.3.) Adding the delay time to the non-delay travel time of 1.886 minutes produces a total travel time of 9.732 minutes through the Study Corridor. Yet, the total 5:00 p.m. Peak Hour travel time through the Study Corridor under Scenario B is listed as 7.3 minutes. (Study at 4.3.) How can the total travel time through the corridor be less than the "seconds of delay"? Both the AM and PM Peak Hour calculations for "Scenario C" have the same problem.

In addition, the Study report does not provide a true apples-to-apples comparison of the time charts. The Study's preferred Scenario B includes 5 p.m. and 4 p.m. Peak Hour analysis, but no such analysis is provided for Scenario A or Scenario C. (Study at 4.2-4.4.)

The Study report also illustrates Scenario B and Scenario C with trees, pole banners, walkers and individuals sitting at tables, while existing Scenario A does not include any of these features. (Study at 4.1-4.4.) This is misleading for several reasons. First, although Scenarios B and C include restriping the Study Corridor, there is no indication that funds will exist to complete sidewalks, plant trees or install banners. Including these amenities in illustrations presents a false comparison. Second, governmental authorities could move forward at this time with the completion of sidewalks, planting of trees and installation of banners without changing the existing four-lane configuration of Franklin Pike. The connection of restriping to sidewalks and other amenities is misleading.

Other illustrations in the Study report are also misleading. For example, the unnumbered page called "The Endorsement" shows sidewalks, retaining walls and café tables that do not exist and would not be included in restriping Franklin Road through the Study Corridor.

Alternative approach

An alternative should be pursued that does not radically reduce the through traffic lanes in the Study Corridor by 50%. Completing sidewalks in the Study Corridor and leaving traffic lanes unchanged is a clear alternative that addresses the top concern of the Study participants while at the same time maintaining traffic flow.

Sidewalks are currently complete from Wedgewood Avenue south to Bradford Avenue. South of Bradford Avenue sidewalks are incomplete. Governmental authorities should complete these sidewalks while leaving existing traffic lanes unchanged.

Walkability was a high priority for Study participants, but adding bike lanes was a very low priority. Study participants listed "Walking" as their first priority. (Study at 3.6.) It was by far their highest priority, with 38% listing it as their number one priority. By comparison, biking was the number one priority of only 6% of participants, and 35% of participants did not even list biking in their top six priorities (out of eight possibilities).

By completing sidewalks where they do not exist from Bradford Avenue south to Berry Road, governmental authorities could address the number one concern of Study participants. At the same time, trees could be planted and banners installed, which would address the beautification concerns that some Study participants have. Under this alternative, traffic lanes should be left as-is, thus, addressing the concerns of walkers and drivers without harming any other user of the Study Corridor.

Conclusion

Taking away car lanes to install bike lanes in an already congested area would be a mistake. Fortunately, an alternative exists that will improve walkability in the Study Corridor without harming Franklin Pike drivers. This alternative will also protect residents and businesses along alternate routes.

I know several members of the Steering Committee. I respect their work on this Study and desire to improve the Study Corridor. Unfortunately, the scope of the Study was too small and notice was insufficient to stakeholders outside the Study Corridor. I hope decision makers will consider the alternatives to implementation of the Study's proposals in order to achieve a fair balance between the needs of those who travel through the Study Corridor and those who live and work within the Study Corridor.

Please keep me advised of the status of the proposals contained within the Study.

Sincerely,



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