



Reinvent Veterans Parkway

Our Community Vision

Engagement Summary Report: Phase 3

7 January 2026

Prepared for the McLean County Regional Planning Commission by Design Workshop



DESIGNWORKSHOP

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Engagement Methods

Summary

This report provides a summary of the engagement methods and input collected for Phase 3 of the Reinvent Veterans Parkway project. The objective of this phase of engagement was to provide detailed information on and receive public feedback on corridor design alternatives and broader network recommendations. Within Phase 3, the following outreach strategies were deployed:

In-Person Public Open Houses

Two public open house events were held on the evenings of November 4th and 5th with approximately 30 attendees total. The event on November 4 was held at the Moose Lodge at 614 IAA Drive in Bloomington, and the November 5 event was held at the Bloomington Public Library. These events provided opportunities for community members to provide feedback on corridor design alternatives and broader corridor-area network improvements. Feedback was also collected on potential future development types within the corridor area as well as high-level visions for the corridor's future. At each event, the project team led with a group presentation and then presented design alternatives and network improvement concepts on display boards organized around the room. Organized into discrete stations, the boards provided interactive opportunities for participants to provide feedback, including:

- Sticker preference exercises
- Sticky note comments
- Anonymous comment cards
- Conversations with project team members

Virtual Public Open House

A virtual public open house was held the evening of November 12, using the Zoom platform. Eight community members attended the virtual public open house. The content of the presentation matched the content of the in-person open houses, although direct engagement involved interactive digital polling utilizing the Mentimeter platform. The event also featured a question-and-answer period at the conclusion.

Business Community Meeting

A presentation was offered to invited members of the broader business community on November 4 at the Moose Lodge at 614 IAA Drive in Bloomington. The content of the presentation matched the content of the public open houses, although direct engagement involved interactive digital polling utilizing the Mentimeter platform. The event also featured a question-and-answer period at the conclusion.

Promotional Methods

The four engagement events were promoted through a series of different channels:

- Social media posts on MCRPC accounts
- Project website update with meeting information
- Press release (with WGLT and The Pantagraph both publishing stories)
- Flyers distributed to partners
- Email invitations to previously identified stakeholders and process participants, including special invitations to members of the business community.

Key Takeaways

Community feedback reflects a shared vision for transforming Veterans Parkway into a safe, accessible, and vibrant corridor that balances mobility with livability. Residents recognize the need to maintain traffic efficiency but prioritize safety and multimodal improvements. The strongest feedback themes center on improving intersections, enhancing pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, addressing safety at Empire Street, and fostering mixed-use redevelopment along the corridor.

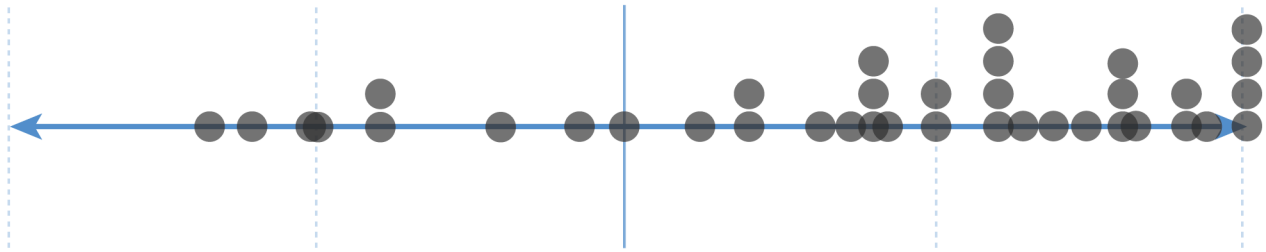
Corridor Vision

Participants at all four events were asked to take part in an exercise in which they indicated¹ how they identified with two different corridor vision statements that were intended to serve as opposite potential future outcomes. The results from all four events are combined in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Corridor Vision Spectrum:

Veterans Parkway should be a highway bypass that efficiently moves a high volume of vehicles quickly through the region.

Veterans Parkway should be a lively urban multimodal corridor where people come together to live, shop, work, recreate, and build community.



More than 75% of participants identified with a vision closer to the “lively urban multimodal corridor” statement, including 53% whose vision landed in the furthest-right quadrant—indicating strong alignment with that vision. No participants indicated a vision on the furthest left end of the spectrum, while 10.5% of participants indicated a vision completely aligned with the “lively urban multimodal corridor” statement.

Multimodal Network Improvements:

Across activities, participants expressed strong and consistent support for improving pedestrian, bicycle, and transit user infrastructure and safety. Specifically, participants were in strong support of additional crosswalks and re-timing signals to allow pedestrians to cross the corridor in one signal cycle. Several participants indicated they would travel in the area on foot more often if it was easier and safer to cross Veterans Parkway.

Participants expressed mixed feedback about grade-separated crossings. They understood the potential safety benefits but expressed pessimism that people would go out of their way to use them and that they were worth the cost. The general consensus was that they may make sense in limited, specific locations.

¹ In-person Open House participants placed a sticker along a spectrum between the two sentences. Business Community Meeting and Virtual Open House participants engaged the two statements via the Mentimeter online polling platform, where they were asked to allocate a total of 100 points to each statement. Allocating 100 points to one statement meant they fully agreed with that statement, and allocating 50 points to each statement meant their vision was directly in the middle of the two statements. The points-based virtual polling has been translated to dots on a spectrum in Figure 1.

Most participants expressed a positive reaction to shared-use paths and understood their utility as mobility infrastructure for people who cannot or choose not to drive. Several participants expressed that these paths would not be high-quality recreational trails but could provide some useful connections to recreational trails.

Participants also expressed a desire to update bus stops and transit routes for improved north-south connectivity in the corridor area.

Corridor Design Alternatives:

Preferred Alternative:

Participants were asked to identify their preferred corridor design alternative. Almost all event participants expressed significant concern over the viability of a four-lane concept. Among the four events, most participants were roughly evenly divided between Alternative A and Alternative C.

Figure 2: Corridor Design Alternatives:

What is your preferred alternative?

	Total	Business Community Presentation	Public Open House 1	Public Open House 2	Virtual Open House
<i>Sample Size</i>	40	14	12	7	7
Alternative A: Six-Lane Upgrade	42.5%	42.9%	58.3%	28.6%	28.6%
Alternative B: Four-Lane Conversion	12.5%	7.1%	0.0%	28.6%	28.6%
Alternative C: Intersection Focus	45.0%	50.0%	41.7%	42.9%	42.9%

Travel Time Trade-Offs:

Participants were asked to consider the trade-offs between improved safety and pedestrian access for all alternatives compared to anticipated increased vehicle travel times (see Figure 3). Among all four events, more than 90% of participants indicated they would trade a few extra minutes of travel time for improvements to safety and pedestrian access, including nearly half who indicated any extra travel time was worthwhile. Every participant agreed at least one or two minutes of extra travel time was a worthwhile trade-off.

Priorities and Costs

Participants were asked to identify with one of three statements that best aligned with their perspective on prioritizing Veterans Parkway improvements compared to other priorities and considering potential project costs (see Figure 4). Among all four events, more than 97% of participants responded that at least some spending on Veterans Parkway is needed. Two-thirds of participants indicated that spending on Veterans Parkway should not come at the expense of funding “other priorities that need attention as well.”

Figure 3: Travel Time Trade-Offs:

What is your perspective on the trade-offs between improved safety and pedestrian access compared to increased vehicle travel times during the highest-traffic periods?

	Total	Business Community Presentation	Public Open House 1	Public Open House 2	Virtual Open House
<i>Sample Size</i>	37	13	11	6	7
Any extra travel time increase is worth improvements in safety and pedestrian access.	45.9%	30.8%	63.6%	33.3%	57.1%
It's worth a few extra minutes.	44.4%	38.5%	18.2%	33.3%	42.9%
It's worth an extra minute or two but not more.	21.6%	30.8%	18.2%	33.3%	0.0%
No extra travel time is worth improvements in safety and pedestrian access.	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Figure 4: Priorities and Costs:

What is your perspective on prioritizing Veterans Parkway improvements and estimated costs?

	Total	Business Community Presentation	Public Open House 1	Public Open House 2	Virtual Open House
<i>Sample Size</i>	36	14	10	6	6
Improving Veterans Parkway is a major priority that needs major investment.	30.6%	35.7%	30.0%	0.0%	50.0%
At least some spending on Veterans Parkway is needed, but I'm concerned about funding other priorities that need attention too.	66.7%	64.3%	70.0%	83.3%	50.0%
Spending on Veterans Parkway improvements should not happen because there are other more pressing priorities.	2.8%	0.0%	0.0%	16.7%	0.0%

Corridor Aesthetics:

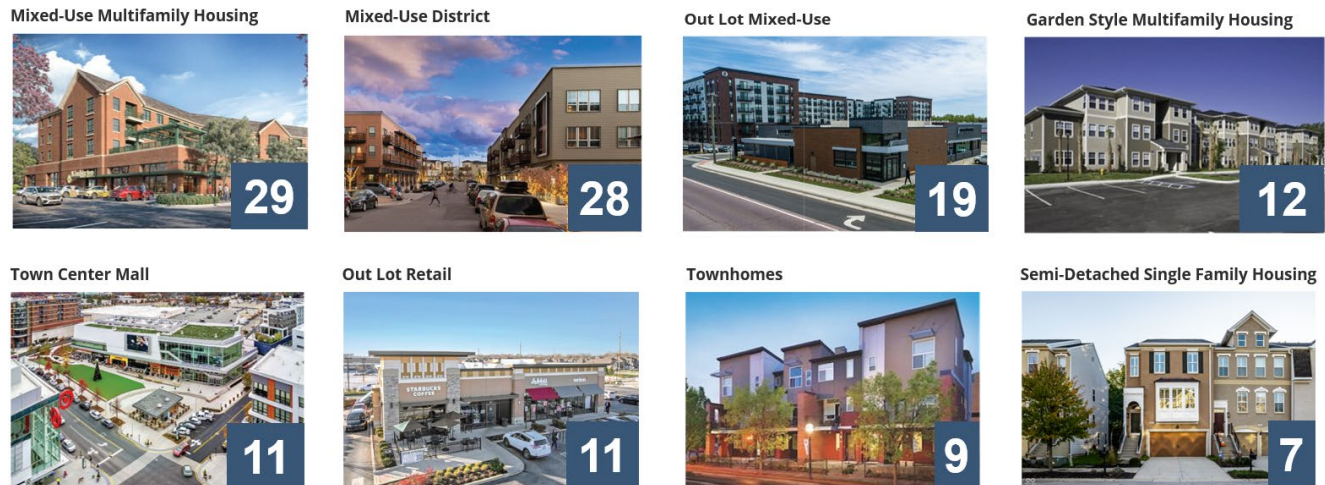
Event participants expressed support for additional trees and landscaping along the corridor and also suggested incorporating more landscaping into corridor parking lots. Some participants expressed a desire to bury overhead power lines to improve aesthetics.

Future Land Use:

Participants at all four events were shown sample images of eight potential development typologies and asked to identify which (if any) they would like to see along the corridor (both immediately along Veterans Parkway and/or within a quarter-mile of the roadway). Participants were invited to select as many as they agreed with. Figure 5 shows each development typology with the number of votes received across all four events. “Mixed-Use Multifamily Housing” and “Mixed-Use District” were the two most popular options, while “Townhomes” and “Semi-Detached Single Family Housing” received relatively light support.

Figure 5: Development Typologies:

What type of development would you like to see? Select as many options as apply.

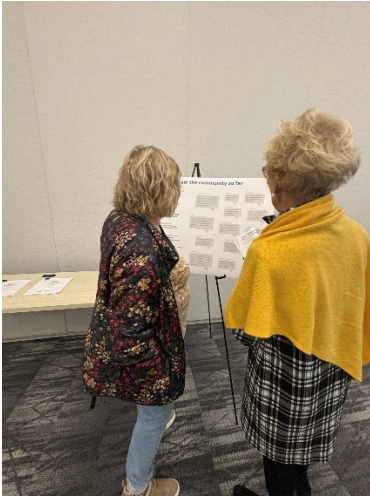


Engagement Event Images

November 4 Public Open House:



November 5 Public Open House:



Appendix A: Detailed Feedback Received

In-Person Public Open House Feedback:

Issues of Concern:

- Underpasses are expensive.
- Empire Street intersection needs to be addressed as a high priority.
- At Lincoln Avenue intersection seems to be the longest wait time to turn left. Turning light is way too short.
- Large trees can create accidents, but shrubs can improve aesthetics.
- 4 lanes would never work. Veterans Parkway needs to be 6 lanes.
- No additional development – Participant doesn't want to be bogged down by more traffic, enough amenities and options as is.
- Not enough lighting
- Concerned about four lane option
- Should we have people walking across a corridor at 45 mph?
- Empire Street Intersection: Traffic engineer went crazy often denying it configuration is too counterintuitive for it to be beneficial.
- Air greatly will decline with increased congestion.
- Keep the six lanes. Let's not go backward.
- Empire Street intersection is the worst and needs to be addressed as part of this process. It needs some recommendations for DOT.
- I'm concerned buses will stop and block a lane.
- Get rid of parking facilities.
- This is more appropriate on Hershey because of the urban feel multimodal concept.

Items of Support:

- Bicycle accommodation should connect to the constitution trail.
- Bicycles on Veterans Parkway are not appropriate—trails make most sense.
- Even people with vehicles have a desire to safely walk across or between businesses so crosswalks and sidewalks are critical.
- To cross safely would encourage people to walk and ride a bike.
- The corridor should have housing that's appropriate for all people walkable, bikeable, accessible with outdoor space where people can downsize housing that's appropriate for all people walkable bikeable accessible with outdoor space where people can downsize / young families.
- Increased crosswalk timing
- Crosswalks at all intersections
- Desire to see more ways to walk to destinations.
- Increase duration of available walk time.
- Underpasses where appropriate
- The multi-use trails are great. Make sure they are wide enough to accommodate micro transit.
- Housing for seniors (not necessarily senior housing age restricted)
- Bicyclists noted desire for another E/W bike underpass similar to what is north of GE, maybe at Lincoln Avenue.

Highest-Need Intersections:

Participants were asked to identify corridor intersections (beyond the Empire Street intersection) that were most in need of improvements. Comments included:

- Light is needed at Fort Jesse east of Veterans Parkway
- At the intersection close to Kroger and Veterans Parkway, the left merge to College Avenue is difficult.
- A pedestrian crossing is needed close to old GE plant.
- The crosswalk time for pedestrians needs to be increased.

- Improve the beautification of the entire corridor planting trees etcetera to soften the corridor.
- Get rid of the overhead wires all along Veterans Parkway, they are an eyesore.
- Better lighting needed all along the east corridor roadway.
- Left turns with signals should be allowed during entire traffic light year the whole corridor.

General Additional Considerations:

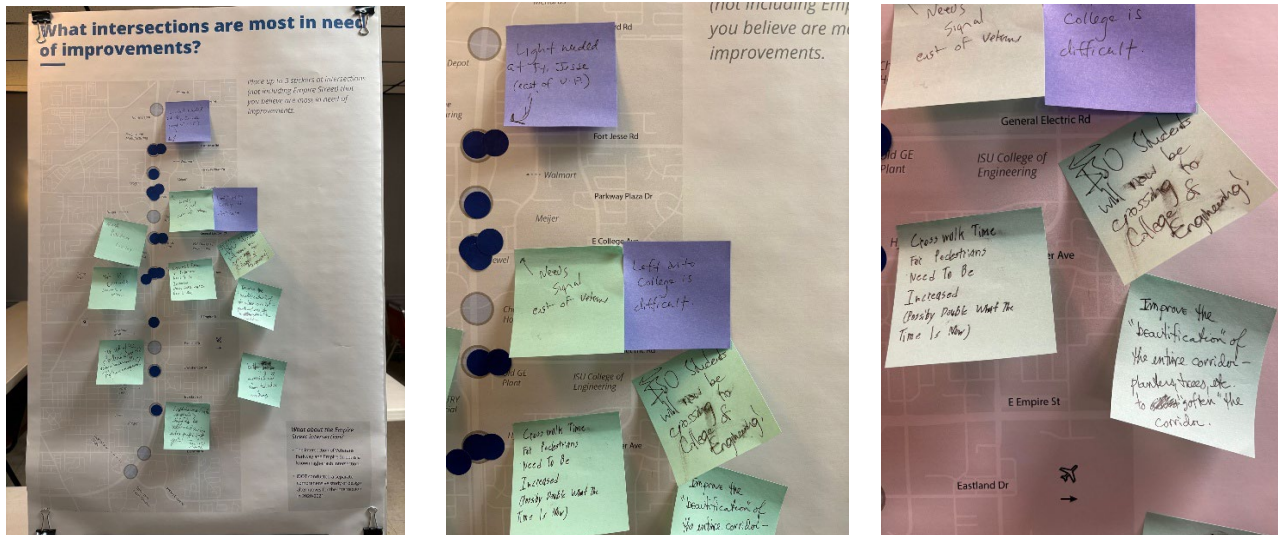
- How does study overlap with the Empire intersection study?
- Clearwater Avenue needs a stairway to connect residents to the grocery store. Why can't they move the bus stops to better connect the residential areas or add another stop at Clearwater?
- Back-filling vacant empty buildings
- Green the parking lots that are overparked
- Used native plantings.
- Could the process look at crosswalks off Veteran's Parkway for example, Eastland at the McDonald's light, rather than at VP?
- Update website with intersections on how alternatives actually fit in current footprints and context.
- Need to identify bus turns and areas to enable a good North and South Veterans bus line.

Corridor Vision:

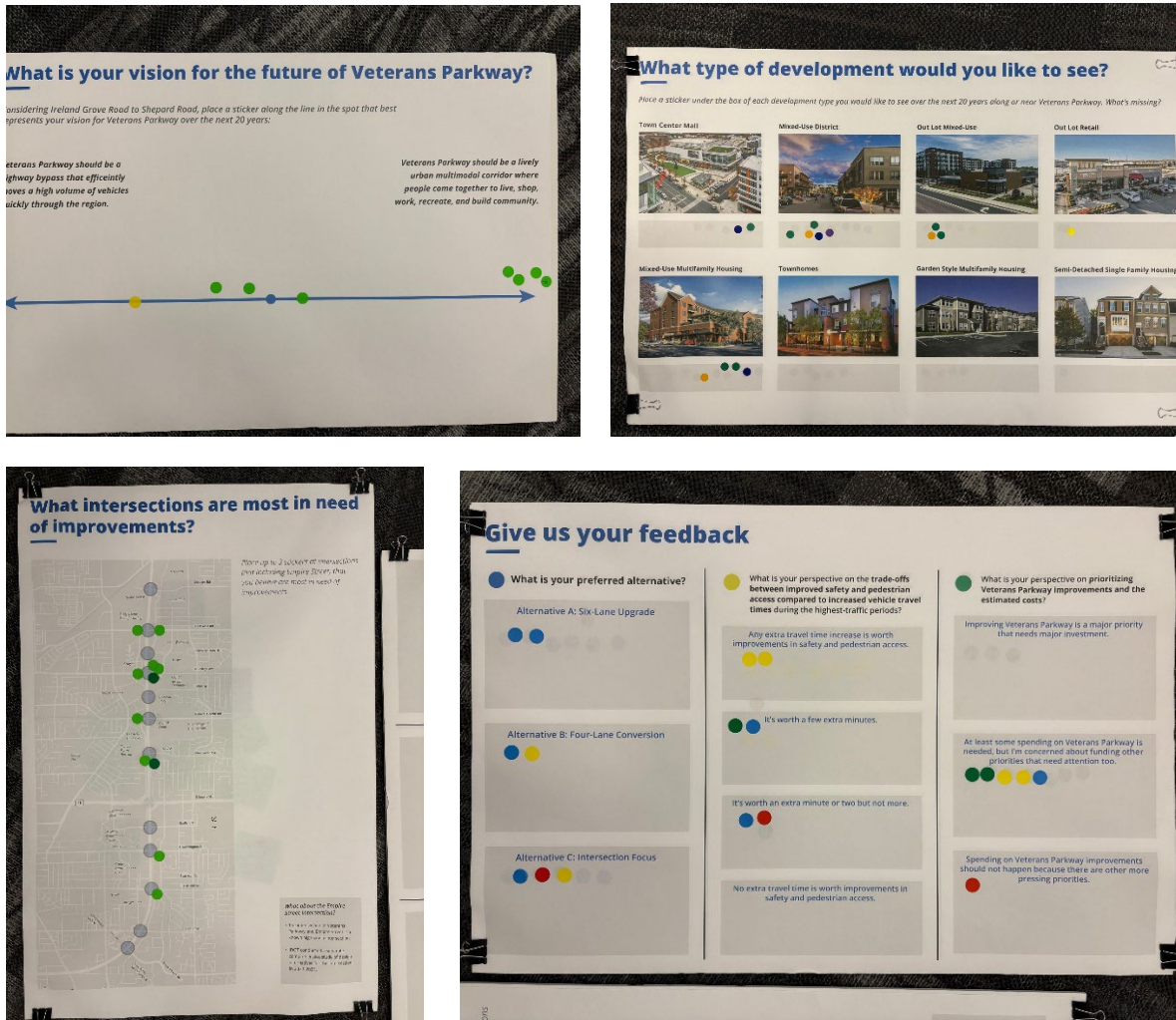
Participants were invited to share their vision for the future of Veterans Parkway by writing on a large, communal piece of paper. Comments included:

- Safe for everyone not just those behind the wheel
- Keep it as 6 lanes total with turn lanes.
- Higher density mixed-use zoning
- More pedestrian safety and bicycle safety more trees and greenway
- Pedestrian and cyclist friendly

November 4th Public Open House Feedback Boards:



November 5th Public Open House Feedback Boards:



Virtual Public Open House Feedback:

Key Question Themes:

- Improving sidewalks, trails, and crossings.
- Enhancing network connectivity.
- Land use and transportation integration.

Open Comments and Questions:

- Jim (WGLT): Asked whether the side paths were intended for biking and walking. TYLin confirmed they are shared-use paths.
- Tricia B: Asked if plans include enhanced traffic enforcement. TYLin noted the design aims to more naturally enforce safer speeds, and that enforcement is likely still needed in the future.
- An anonymous participant asked if the session was recorded. TYLin confirmed the session was recorded.
- Three people shared their appreciation for the project efforts.

General Feedback:

- Participants expressed appreciation for the presentation and recording. No major concerns were raised.

Business Community Presentation Feedback:

General Feedback:

- 4 lanes way too small and short sighted for future
- Make medians less-amenable to people asking for money
- Can power lines be removed at the same time?
- Empire intersection should be addressed simultaneously.
- Please don't decrease space for vehicles.
- Consider how College of Engineering students get to nearby amenities.
- **Comment Card:** Please improve pedestrian and cyclist access along Veterans Parkway. I personally enjoy using my bike for some trips but so much of Veterans is hostile to pedestrians and cyclists that I rarely make such trips additionally my younger brother has a condition that prevents him from driving it's difficult to navigate the Blvd. broadly without a car but Veterans is among the most difficult to Traverse not just along the Parkway but in the neighborhoods and commercial zones nearby as well
- **Comment Card:** I hate Veterans Parkway

Appendix B: Promotional Materials

Reinvent Veterans Parkway Help Shape The Future!

Open Houses



MCRPC invites you to attend one of the upcoming public open houses for the Reinvent Veterans Parkway project.

Share your feedback on roadway design concepts, intersection improvements, and the overall vision for the corridor. Your input will guide next steps!

Tuesday, November 4, 2025

Public Open House 1

6:00 & 7:00 PM presentations

Loyal Order of Moose, 614 IAA Dr., Bloomington

Wednesday, November 5, 2025

Public Open House 2

6:00 & 7:00 PM presentations

Bloomington Public Library, 205 E. Olive St., Community Room #3

Wednesday, November 12, 2025

Virtual Public Open House

6:30 PM presentation | Visit mcplan.org

To Learn More Visit:
www.mcplan.org

*We Look Forward
to Seeing You!*



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Virtual Public Open House | 6:30 PM presentation

To access virtual open house, visit: mcplan.org



To Learn More Visit: www.mcplan.org

