

New York Avenue Streetscape and Trail Project Public Meeting #1 Summary

I. King Jordan Student Academic Center (SAC)
Gallaudet University, Washington, DC
February 23, 2017

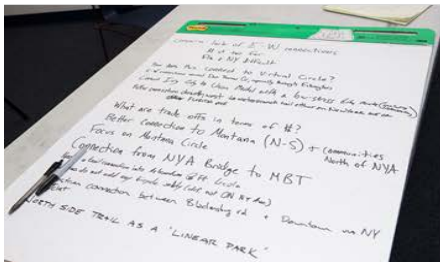


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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The first public meeting for the New York Avenue Streetscape and Trail project was the initial meeting to introduce the project to the community and stakeholders as well as explain the engagement process.

Four (4) public meetings are planned during this project. They will be held in neighborhood locations along and adjacent to the New York Avenue, NE corridor. The purpose of these meetings is to capture concerns and suggestions that will help to shape and define streetscape and trail improvements. Comments received will be considered during the development of preliminary design recommendations for corridor improvements.

1.1 Purpose of the Meeting

The purpose of this meeting was to provide a general summary of the project and what residents and stakeholders can expect during this process, as well as intended outcomes. Specifically, the District Department of Transportation (DDOT) is working to create a cohesive corridor streetscape and trail to serve the community and users of New York Avenue, NE. This project, with input from the community, will identify improvements that include sidewalks, streetlights, plantings, trees, benches, public art and other public space improvements.

Existing corridor conditions were presented to meeting participants to engage and encourage comments and suggestions that will help to develop conceptual design recommendations as the project moves forward.

1.2 Meeting Information

Public Meeting #1 was held on Thursday, February 23, 2017 from 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm at the I. King Jordan Student Academic Center (SAC) at Gallaudet University located at 800 Florida Ave, NE Washington, DC. Gallaudet University is located near the western-end of the corridor project boundary, New York Avenue and Florida Avenue, NE. It is anticipated that the second public meeting will be located near the eastern-end of the corridor project boundary, New York Avenue and Bladensburg Road, NE.

1.3 Format

To inform and engage the community, the public meeting was set-up in an open-house style format with a combination of corridor exhibits and interactive activities. DDOT gave a presentation providing an overview of the project and project schedule, highlighting public engagement. The presentation also provided a description of each project station. DDOT and consultant team members engaged with attendees at meeting board stations and project area roll maps; and engaged in discussion and answer questions.

1.4 Meeting Boards and Activities

1.4.1 Meeting Boards

Boards were developed to provide attendees an overview of existing conditions along the corridor and allow for streetscape and trail improvements to be prioritized and commented on by the community. The following is a list of the boards and roll maps presented:

- **Welcome:** Provided the title of the project with a map highlighting the project corridor and description of each project station.
- **Project Goals:** Description of project goals related to improving the off-street transportation system including project elements, i.e., sidewalks, trail design and bicycle facilities, green infrastructure, crosswalks, etc.
- **Project Schedule:** Served to better clarify the process milestones of the project, highlighting the status of the project and where public involvement will take place as the project progresses.
- **Existing Land Use:** Graphic description of the various land uses, along and adjacent to the project corridor of New York Avenue NE, Florida Avenue to Bladensburg Road. This included, (but not limited to) call-outs for commercial, industrial, residential, mixed-use, parks and schools.
- **Existing Circulation:** Graphic description of current pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular movements within the project area - existing crosswalks, areas lacking sidewalk, areas with non-standard sidewalk and sidewalk in disrepair, and other existing features such as traffic signals, bike trails, Metrobus routes and stops, and Capital Bikeshare locations.
- **Existing Materials and Amenities:** Graphic display of existing site lighting, sidewalk materials, corridor aesthetics, recent streetscape improvements, and vegetation along New York Avenue.
- **Streetscape Standards and Types:** Photos with examples of other streetscape options locations in the District or best practices within DDOT design guidelines and standards – green infrastructure, standard curbs and pavement, and standard furnishings and streetscape.
- **Potential Bicycle Route:** Graphic display of potential trail routes along the corridor to show different bicycle route infrastructure options - a shared use path (north), a cycle track (south) along New York Avenue, and bike lanes.
- **Destinations in the Corridor:** Focus was on specific destinations shown graphically on the corridor project map with call-outs highlighting Gallaudet University, NoMa-Gallaudet Metro Station, Capital Bikeshare locations, Union Market, National Arboretum, Ivy City - Hecht Warehouse District, as well as schools, churches, libraries, and community centers.

- **Existing Conditions along Potential Bicycle Route Options:** Using the corridor project map, pictures were added from specific locations to show the existing conditions along key potential bicycle route options.
- **Stay Connected:** Provided the various methods – DDOT PM Contact, social media, website - for attendees to stay connected to project status and updates, as well as provide feedback.

1.4.2 Activities

Project boards and roll-maps were developed to allow for the community to provide feedback on corridor priorities and issue areas, and describe their current use of the corridor. The meeting interactive activities included:

- ***What Would a Successful Streetscape Project Mean to You?*** Attendees were given an opportunity to prioritize the type of streetscape elements that are most important – sidewalks and sidewalk crossings, green infrastructure, park spaces, lighting, bike racks, etc. Attendees were given \$35 – a combination of \$5, \$10, and \$20 stickers – to place in the categories most important to them as a user on New York Avenue.
- ***What Would a Successful Trail Project Mean to You?*** For this activity, attendees were asked to respond to three (3) questions using green stickers indicating their preference.
 - **What potential bicycle design do you prefer?** Attendees were asked to choose their preference between *Along New York Avenue* or *Off of New York Avenue*.
 - **If necessary, what are your preferred locations for a trail to cross New York Avenue?** Attendees were asked to choose two (2) locations from the following choices:
 - Tunnel at 4th St.
 - Crosswalk at 4th St.
 - Crosswalk at 9th St.
 - Crosswalk at Fenwick St.
 - Crosswalk at 16th St.
 - **What destinations are important to you?** Attendees were asked to choose two (2) locations from the following choices:
 - National Arboretum
 - NoMa-Gallaudet Metro Station
 - Metropolitan Branch Trail
 - Gallaudet University
 - Other

Additionally, there were two (2) roll maps (116"x40") developed to complement the Streetscape and Trail project station boards to allow for attendees to use post-it notes to write comments, suggestions, concerns or ideas for streetscape and bicycle/trail route options.

2.0 OUTREACH EFFORTS

Outreach for Public Meeting #1 for New York Avenue Streetscape and Trail was key to connecting with the community and ensuring they were informed of the project and the meeting. Community residents, civic organizations, and key stakeholders were contacted through email, and posting and handing out meeting materials.

2.1 Electronic Communication and Social Media

A public meeting notice was developed and distributed via DDOT's Office of Communication, as well as, posted to DDOT social media (twitter and Facebook) accounts. The team contacted community leaders, civic and neighborhood organizations and enlisted their assistance for distribution via their individual listservs and websites.

2.2 Collateral Materials

Meeting notification "Save the Date" fliers were distributed via a grass roots team. The team canvassed the corridor focusing on community meeting locations, as the corridor itself is heavily commercial and industrial. The meeting notices were handed out at the NoMa-Gallaudet Metro Station, Union Market, Hecht Warehouse District at Ivy City, and Gallaudet University. Public Notices were also posted at corridor locations that included Mom's Organic Market, Planet Fitness, Union Market, churches, schools and wellness centers in and around the project area.

2.3 Neighbors and Civic Organizations

Neighborhood and civic organizations, and blogs were also contacted and sent information about the public workshop. These organizations included:

- ANCs 5C, 5D, and 5E
- Bicycle Advisory Council (BAC)
- Gateway to the City (Fort Lincoln)
- Greater Greater Washington
- HechtWarehouse
- Ivy City Civic Association
- NewKidOnEckingtonBlock
- NOMA Bid
- Pedestrian Advisory Council (PAC)
- TheDCBikerBlogger
- TheFrozenTropics
- TheWashCycle
- Trinidad Neighborhood Association
- Urbanturf
- Washington Area Bicycle Association (WABA)

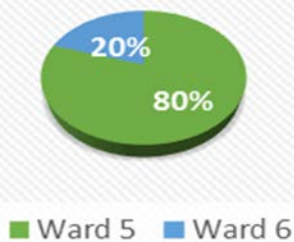
3.0 Attendance

3.1 Attendees

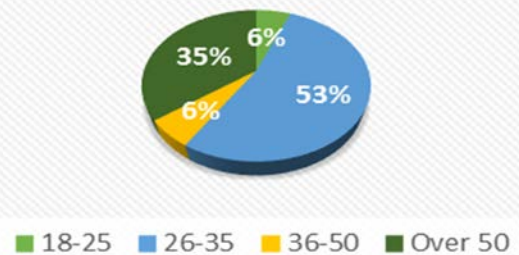
There were thirty-three (33) attendees representing the public, including representatives from neighborhood ANCs and residents directly impacted by the project. Additionally, there were six (6) DDOT staff members, nine (9) consultant team members.

Eighteen (18) completed Title VI forms were collected at the meeting, the following charts below represent the demographic makeup of meeting attendees.

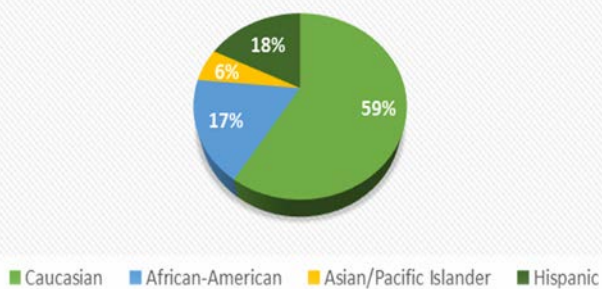
Residence



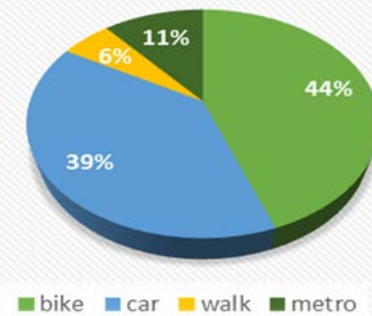
Age



Ethnicity



Mode of Travel



4.0 Comments

Initial comments, feedback, and other input were received via two (2) project stations, two (2) corridor roll maps, and comment and Title VI forms during the meeting.

Additionally, residents, stakeholders and interested parties were also provided an opportunity to give feedback via the on-line survey and interactive map on the project website, www.newyorkavenueproject.com. Interested parties and stakeholders provided comments immediately following the public meeting on February 23, 2017 through March 15, 2017.

Comment Type	# of Comments
General	
Title VI Form	18
On-site Comment Form	4
Public Meeting	
Streetscape Focus Roll Map	15
Bicycle Focus Roll Map	31
Interactive Board #1 (Streetscape Priorities)	19
Interactive Board # 2 (Trail Priorities)	59
Website	
On-line Survey	119
On-line Map	75

The sections below summarize the input received from the meeting and on-line submissions.

4.1 Key Themes

Based on the comments received, including four (4) on-site comment forms, the primary themes that surfaced were:

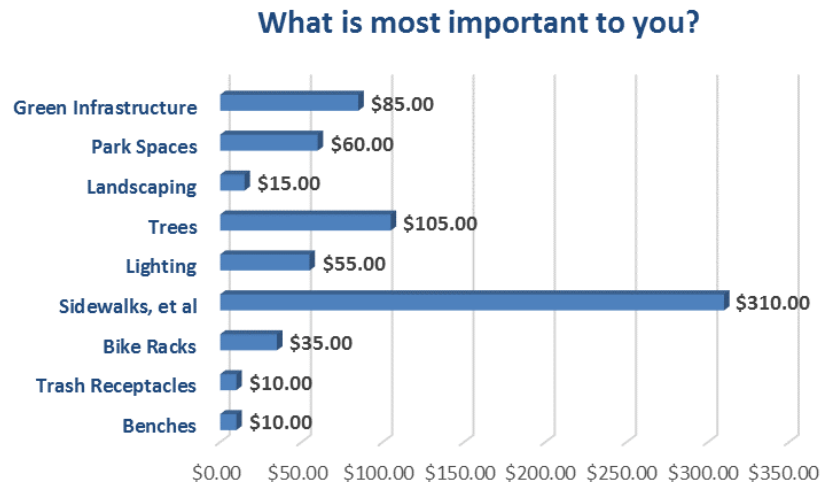
- Bicycle facilities along the corridor
- Sidewalk improvements; provide sidewalks where missing
- Safe pedestrian crossings on New York Avenue
- Vehicular speed along the corridor
- Trail connections to existing bike/pedestrian trails
- Trail connections to adjacent neighborhoods

4.2 Interactive Activities

4.2.1 Activity Boards

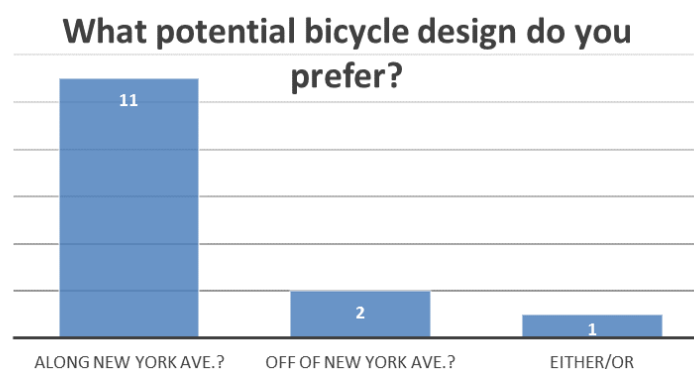
What Would a Successful Streetscape Project Mean to You?

Attendees were asked to prioritize streetscape elements by placing any combination of \$35 - \$5, \$10, and \$20 stickers – in those categories important to them. The following summarizes attendee priorities.

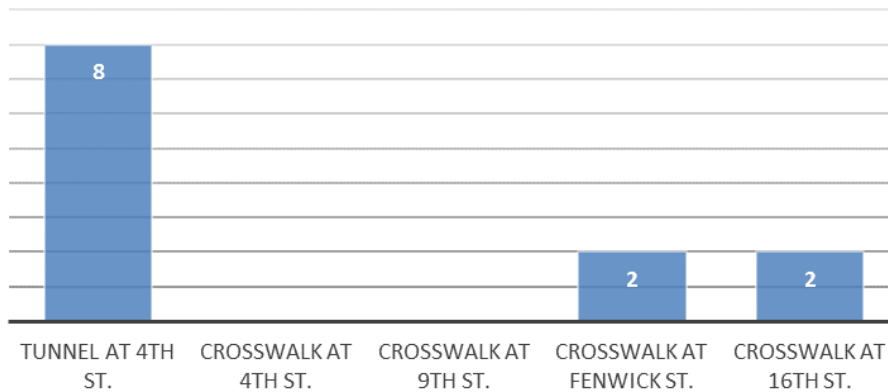


What Would a Successful Trail Project Mean to You?

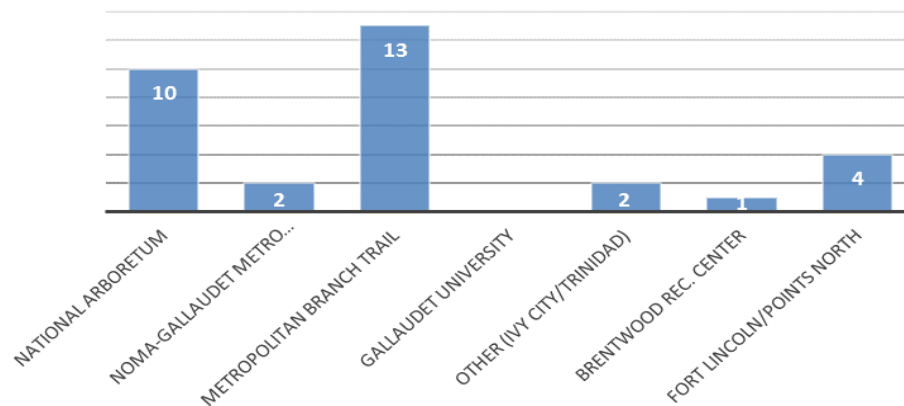
At the meeting, attendees were asked to respond to three (3) questions focused on bike design preference, preferred New York Avenue trail crossing, and important destinations. Using green stickers, attendees indicated their preferences. The following summarizes their preferences.



Preferred trail locations to cross New York Avenue

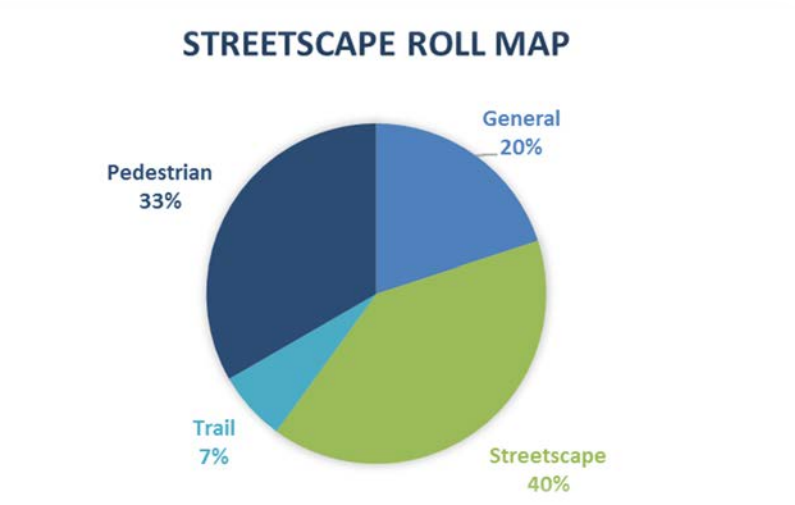


What destinations are important to you?

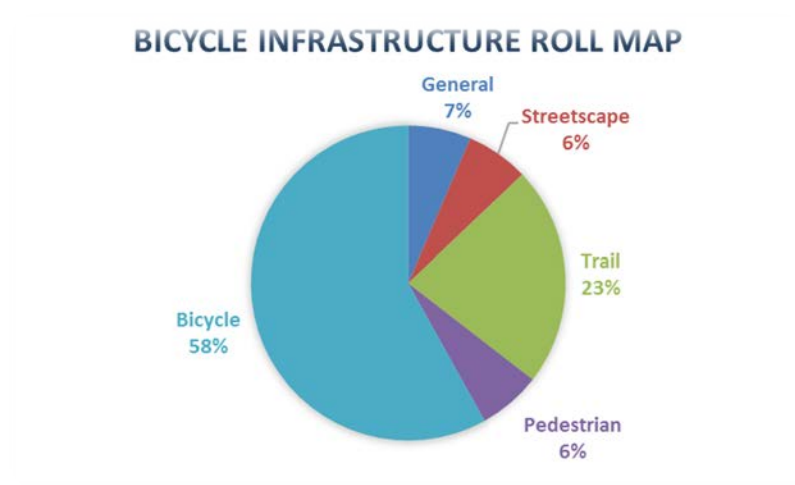


4.2.2 Corridor Roll Maps

Streetscape Roll Map: Fifteen (15) comments were provided by meeting attendees on the roll map focused on streetscape elements and improvements.



Bicycle Infrastructure Roll Map: Thirty-one (31) comments were provided by meeting attendees on the roll map focused on bicycle and trail routes.



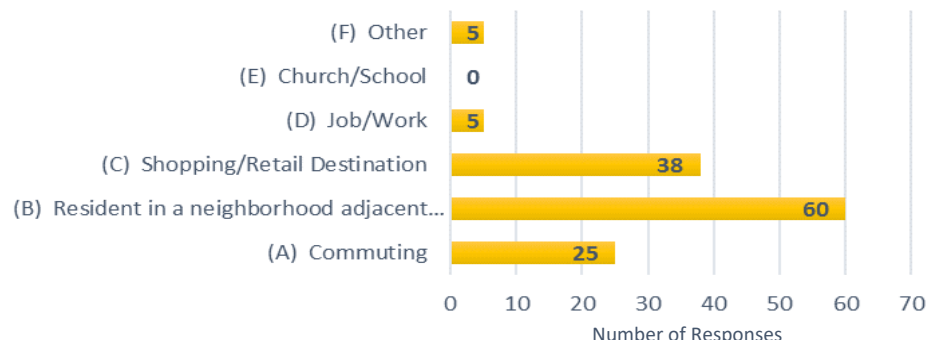
4.3 Survey

A survey was developed for meeting attendees and visitors to the project website. The survey was comprised of 11 questions and an 'Additional Comments' section. One hundred and nineteen (119) surveys were completed. For many of the questions, respondents could select multiple responses. The table below reflects the total number of responses and comments for each question.

Survey Questions		# of Responses/Comments
1	How do you use New York Avenue from Florida Avenue to Bladensburg Road?	133
2	What time do you typically use New York Avenue?	133
3	What do you like most about current conditions of New York Avenue? (Please write your ideas below)	71
4	Please select three streetscape improvements that you think should be a priority along the New York Avenue corridor?	377
5	What are the existing issues or barriers to using New York Avenue as a pedestrian and/or bicyclist?	96
6	What potential bicycle route do you prefer?	125
7	If the bicycle route is along New York Avenue, which side of the road would you prefer for the route?	115
8	If necessary, what are your preferred locations for a trail to cross New York Avenue? (pick two)	189
9	If the bicycle route is off New York Avenue, what is your preferred bicycle route infrastructure?	126
10	What should be the main goal of the bicycle accommodations?	128
11	What destinations are the most important to you within the corridor? (pick two)	262
	Additional Comments	30

The following tables summarize detailed responses.

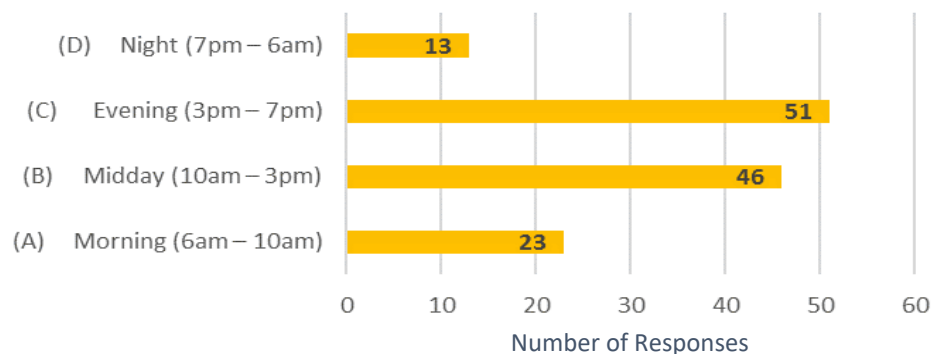
How do you use New York Avenue from Florida Avenue to Bladensburg Road?



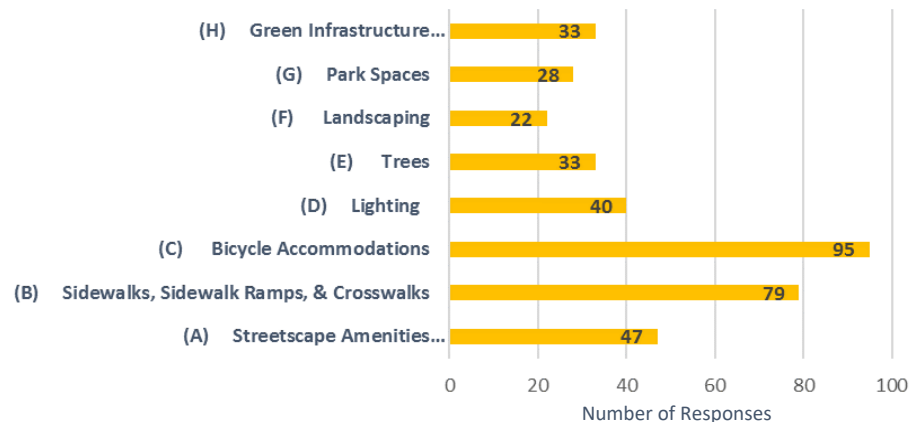
A summary of use comments noted here by 'Other' include:

- Travel in/out of the District to Maryland
- Direct route to the Arboretum
- Connection between neighborhoods and Ivy City/Hecht Warehouse development

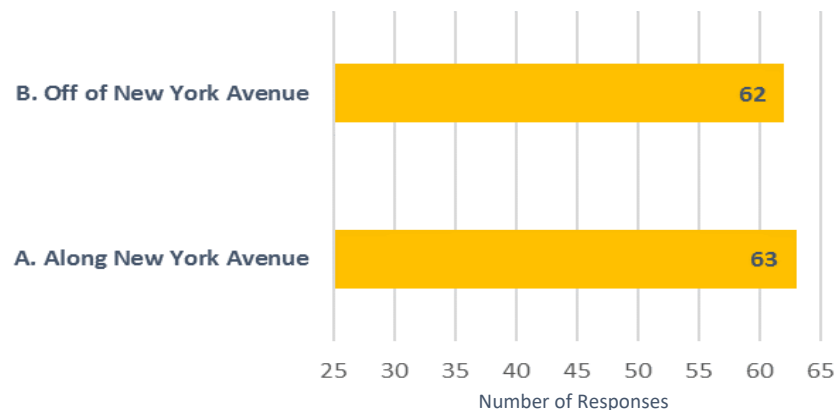
What time do you typically use New York Avenue?



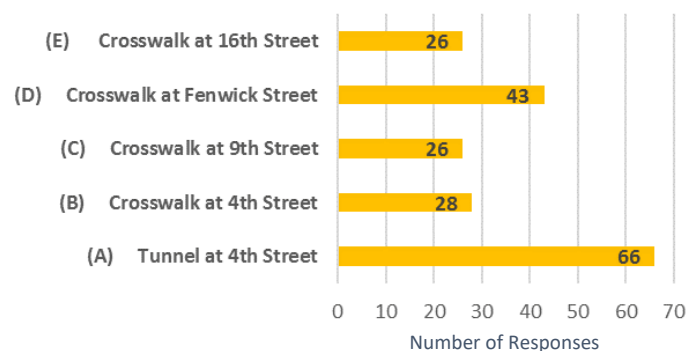
Select three streetscape improvements you think should be a priority



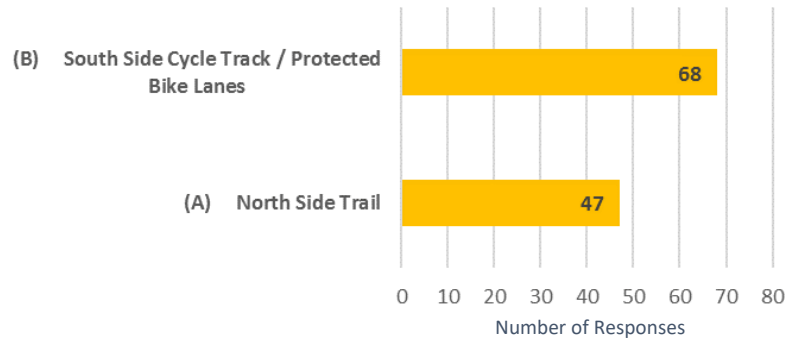
What potential bicycle route do you prefer?



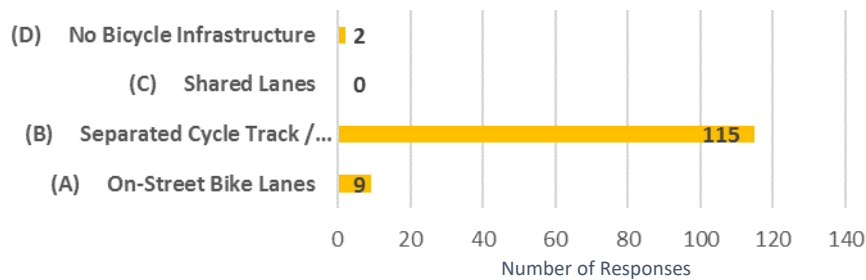
What are your preferred locations for a trail to cross New York Avenue



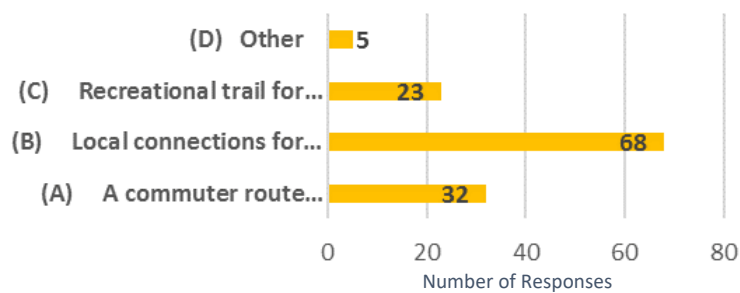
If bicycle route is along New York Avenue, which side of the road do you prefer?



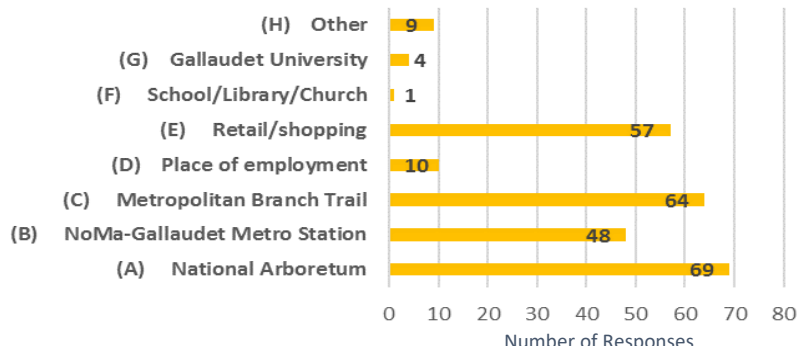
If bicycle route is off New York Avenue, what is your preferred route infrastructure



What should be the main goal of the bicycle accommodations?



What two destinations are the most important to you within the corridor?



The following survey questions were open-ended, allowing attendees to provide feedback in their own words. Below are the major themes that emerged.

What do you like most about current conditions of New York Avenue? (Please write your ideas below).

- New York Avenue provides direct access to downtown DC.
- The new commercial development in Ivy City (Hecht Warehouse District)
- Traffic flows smoothly; great for cars.

What are the existing issues or barriers to using New York Avenue as a pedestrian and/or bicyclist?

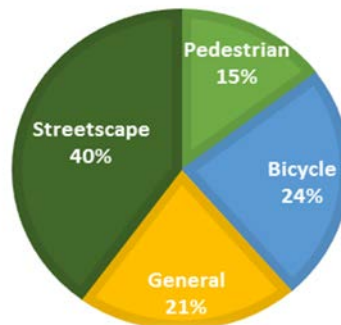
- The high-speed, large volume of traffic, lack of ADA accessibility, lack of sidewalks, and lack of crosswalks deters pedestrians and bicyclists from New York Avenue in its current state.
- New York Avenue seen as catering to commuters and not the residents.
- Lots of hard to cross intersections; cars travelling at high rates of speed.
- There are no bicycle facilities.

4.4 Interactive Map

An interactive map (wikimap) of New York Avenue (Florida Avenue to Bladensburg Road) was developed and placed on the project website for a period of 2.5 weeks following the public meeting to provide an additional opportunity for residents to provide comments and suggestions. Seventy-five (75) comments were received, the category breakdown is as follows:

INTERACTIVE MAP COMMENTS

■ Pedestrian ■ Bicycle ■ General ■ Streetscape



The key themes that emerged from this set of comments are summarized below.

- Bicycle
 - **Safe bicycle infrastructure:** Residents like the direct route to downtown DC, but are concerned with their safety relative to the speed and volume of New York Avenue traffic. The existing sidewalks are not wide enough to accommodate both bicycles and pedestrians or are missing entirely.
 - **Connections:** Residents and users of New York Avenue would like to see connections to existing trails and adjacent neighborhoods like Fort Lincoln located North of the project area; and improvements to North-South connections between Ivy City and Brentwood neighborhoods.
- Pedestrian
 - **Sidewalks:** Concerns with the condition of existing sidewalks and crosswalks – missing, cracked, narrow; crossings at major intersections; and pedestrian signals (not enough time) – make it challenging to move around safely in the corridor.
 - **Traffic calming:** Residents noted the need for traffic calming (safety) measures to slow down vehicles, particularly at high volume intersections like the Montana Avenue/Mt. Olivet Circle.
- Streetscape
 - **Trees/Green space:** Residents and stakeholders noted the need for trees and the creation of green spaces (small parks) where available to continue and provide improved corridor aesthetic started with the artwork on the bridge.
 - **Sidewalks/Crosswalks:** Improvements to the sidewalks to make for safe passage through the corridor are encouraged, including the removal (relocation) of utility poles. The utilization of existing infrastructure (old rail bridge at T Street) and bump-outs to shorten crossing distances were also mentioned as improvements to create a walkable corridor.

- **Green Infrastructure:** The use of permeable materials for sidewalks, driveways and entrances, and green medians to reduce run-off were suggested throughout the corridor.
- General
 - **Intersection improvements:** Intersection improvements and connections for safety were noted at the Florida Ave., 4th/Penn St., and Montana Ave. locations. Suggestions for a “circle” (roundabout) at the Montana Ave. intersection were noted as well.

4.5 Other Comments

Additional comments were collected in an open-ended forum from the surveys, general comment cards and on the Title VI forms. Those comments echo many of the remarks noted throughout this section, and are summarized below.

- A desire for formalized bicycle facilities along New York Avenue.
- Connections to neighborhoods north of New York Avenue (Fort Lincoln, National Arboretum), existing trails and bike lanes (Metropolitan Branch and Anacostia Trails).
- Traffic calming measures to slow traffic to make New York Avenue safe for cyclists and pedestrians.
- Streetscape elements to improve the look and safety of the corridor, including crosswalks, sidewalks, lighting and trees/landscaping.

5.0 APPENDIX

- Comment Forms (On-site)
- Title VI forms
- Sign-In Sheets
- Roll Map Comments
 - Streetscape
 - Bicycle
- On-line Survey detailed summary
- On-line Interactive Map Comments