

# Mill Street Pathway Project

## Phase 1 Engagement Summary

May 2023

### OVERVIEW

Hennepin County, in coordination with the cities of Excelsior, Shorewood and Chanhassen, is leading a project to construct a multi-use pathway alongside Mill Street (County Road 82) from 2nd Street in downtown Excelsior to Holly Lane in Chanhassen. The pathway will provide a key connection for users of the existing Chanhassen pathway, through Shorewood, to downtown Excelsior and create a safer way to walk, bike or roll along Mill Street.

In spring 2023, Hennepin County engaged the communities that would be impacted by the future Mill Street Pathway project. The primary goal of this engagement was to equitably inform, consult, and engage area residents and stakeholders in the selection of a preferred design alternative. This report summarizes the first of two engagement phases and the public's input on design alternatives. The upcoming second phase of engagement will focus on sharing the preferred trail alternative with the community.

### ENGAGEMENT PROMOTIONS

Phase 1 engagement activities were promoted in a variety of ways. All materials provided details on upcoming engagement opportunities and directed people to the project website. The following promotional methods were used:

- Project website updates
- Targeted social media advertisements on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter
- Gov Delivery email updates
- Postcard mailing to nearly 1,600 addresses within a quarter mile of the project area
- Tailored community stakeholder emails to Minnetonka Public Schools, St. John the Baptist Church, Excelsior-Lake Minnetonka Chamber of Commerce, Cities of Excelsior, Shorewood and Chanhassen, Excelsior Rotary and South Lake Cycle



Social media promotional graphic

- Doorhanger canvassing to all project area properties
- Installation of 20 promotional yard signs along the project area, in downtown Excelsior and at Excelsior Elementary and Hennepin County Public Library

## ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

An estimated **800 community members** participated in Phase 1 engagement opportunities. The table below includes details for each:

Event	Location	Time & Date	Attendance
Neighborhood Pop-up	Excelsior Elementary School 441 Oak Street, Excelsior MN	5:30-7:30 p.m. Tues, Apr. 11	73
Community Open House	638 Mill Street, Excelsior MN St. John’s Montessori School Gym	5:00-7:00 p.m. Thurs, Apr. 20	46
Online Engagement Site	millstreetpathway.com	April 10 – May 5	681
<b>Estimated Total*</b>	-	-	<b>800</b>

\*This is an estimate because people who attended in-person events may have also visited the online engagement site.

### Neighborhood Pop-up

The Pop-up was hosted at Excelsior Elementary School. The purpose of the event was to meet people where they are in the community and gather input on preferred pathway options. The event layout included project information boards, an interactive voting board, and a table for project handouts, comment cards and demographic questionnaires. The location was selected to engage families and younger community members. Several other events were happening on site including afterschool programming, a dog training course, piano lessons, and basketball practice.



Attendees were greeted by project staff as they entered the building and then asked if they would like to learn about the future pathway and provide their input on design options. Staff determined the amount of time each attendee had and tailored their pop-up experience to level of participation. Those that didn’t have time to participate were handed a project overview handout that included information about the online engagement site.

For many, the pop-up was the first time that they heard about the project. Others came to the location because they received promotional materials and had been following the project development for years. Most participants seemed excited and supported the pathway, while others expressed property impact concerns.

### Community Open House

The open house was hosted at St. John's Montessori School Gym. The purpose of the meeting was to engage area residents, commuters, and other stakeholders about the project and pathway options. The layout of the event consisted of project boards, two tabletop maps (one for each option) and comment form tables. Refreshments were also provided from a neighborhood bakery. The venue was chosen because of its centralized location within the project area.

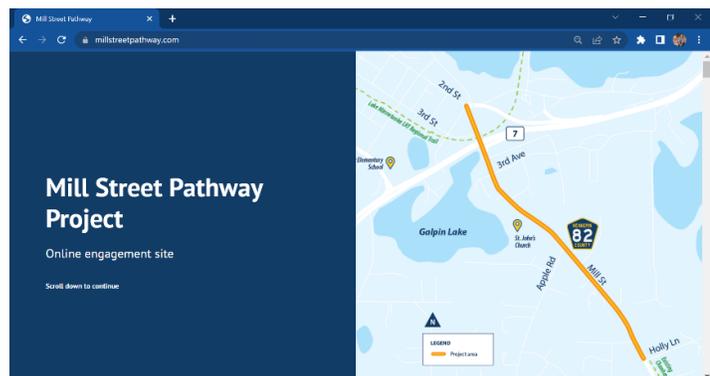


All participants were able to engage with staff and have in-depth conversations (10 minutes or longer). Many attendees wanted a walkthrough tour of the boards with a staff member present so they could ask questions. The tabletop maps were the most popular station because participants could ask location-specific questions and see how the pathway would impact their properties. Tabletop maps could also be marked up with numbered stickers that participants could coordinate with their comment forms.

In general, attendees left with most of their questions answered and many completed comment and demographic forms.

### Online Engagement Site

The online engagement site coincided with the in-person events. The site was open for four weeks to provide many opportunities for community members to participate. The site highlighted project information, shared interactive comment maps for each pathway option, and provided a pathway options preference survey and a demographic questionnaire.



The site was a great way to accommodate community members who couldn't attend the in-person events.

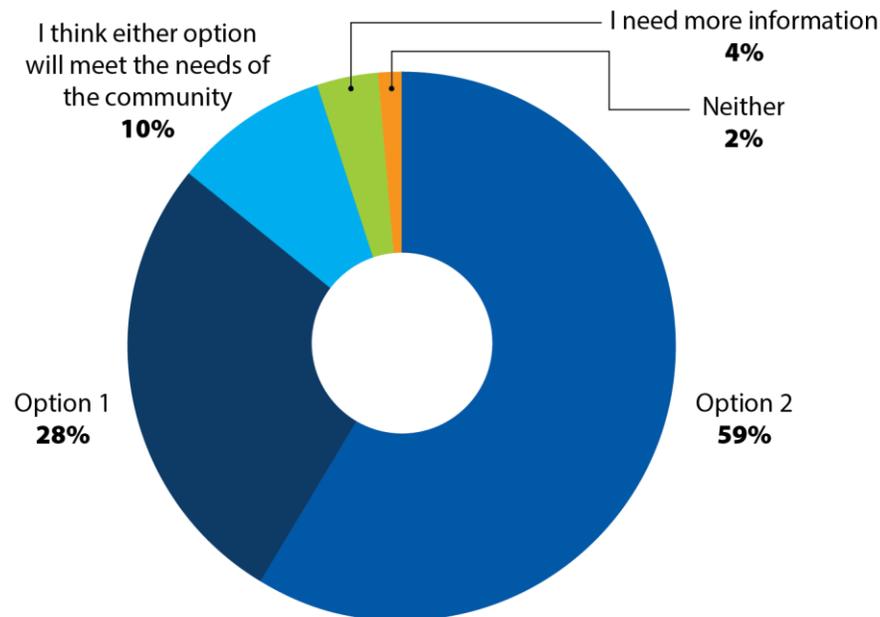
## PUBLIC INPUT RESULTS

---

Public comments and survey results were collected during all three engagement opportunities. 170 comments were submitted by engagement participants and included an assortment of themes ranging from pedestrian and cyclist safety to traffic management and regional trail connections. 165 community members also cast votes for their preferred survey option.

### Pathway Options Survey

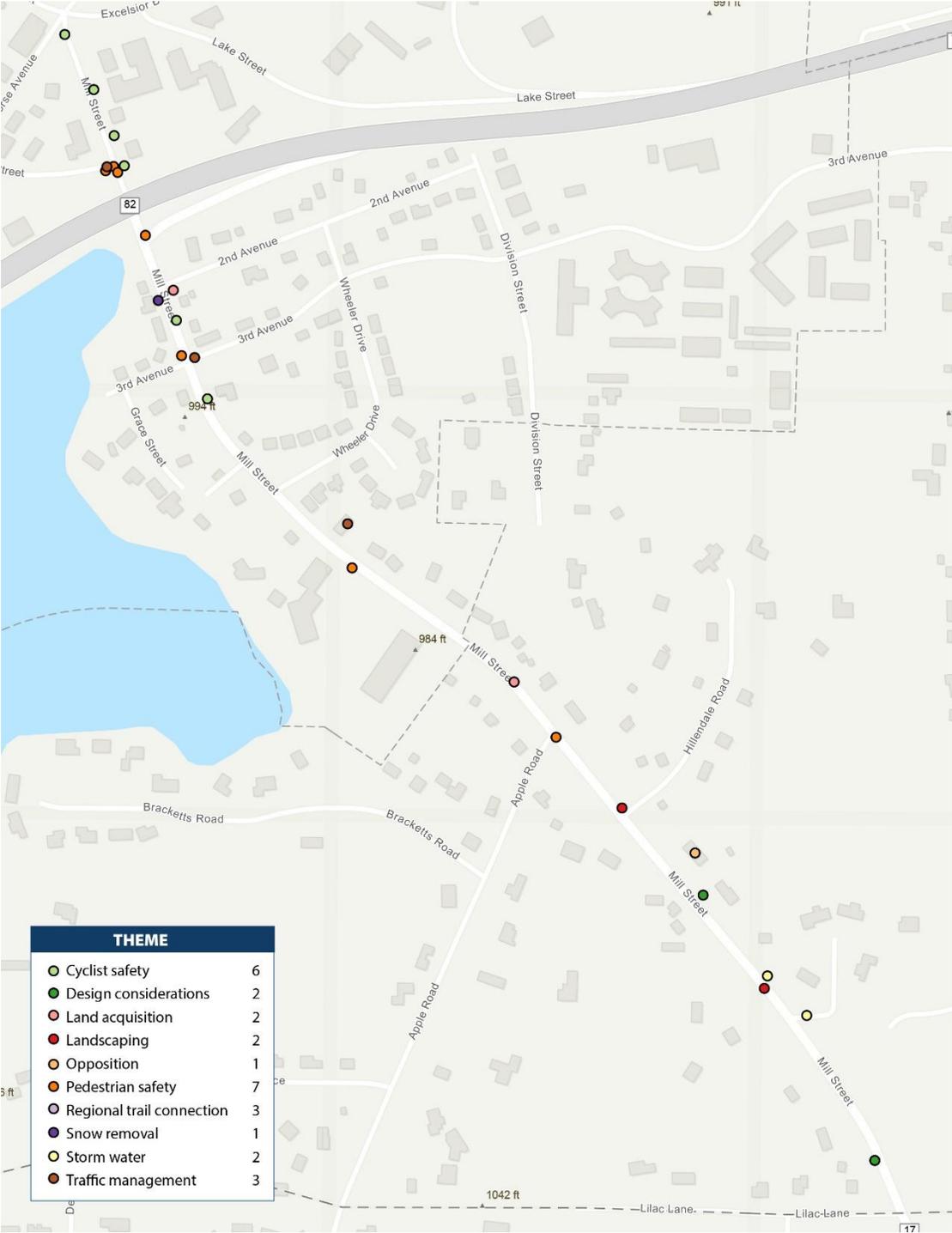
Participants were asked to vote for their preferred pathway option. Option 2 was favored by 31%. See chart below for detailed results.



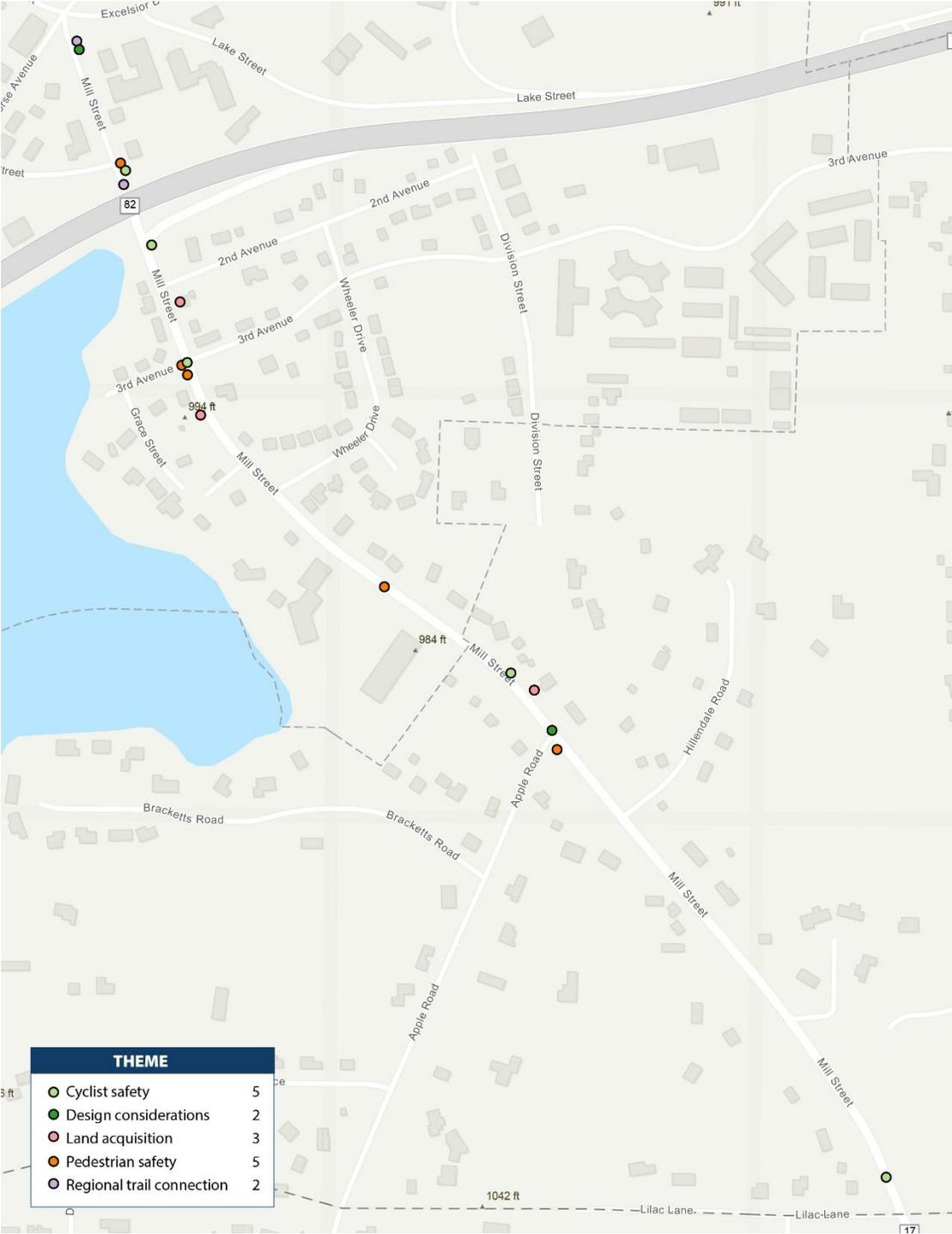
### Interactive Comment Map

Comment maps for each pathway option were provided to both open house attendees and online engagement site participants. The image below summarized the results of both interactive maps. Comments were largely concentrated in areas on either side of the Hwy 7 bridge and spoke to pedestrian and cyclist safety, regional trail connections, land acquisition and traffic management.

Pathway Option 1 Comment Map



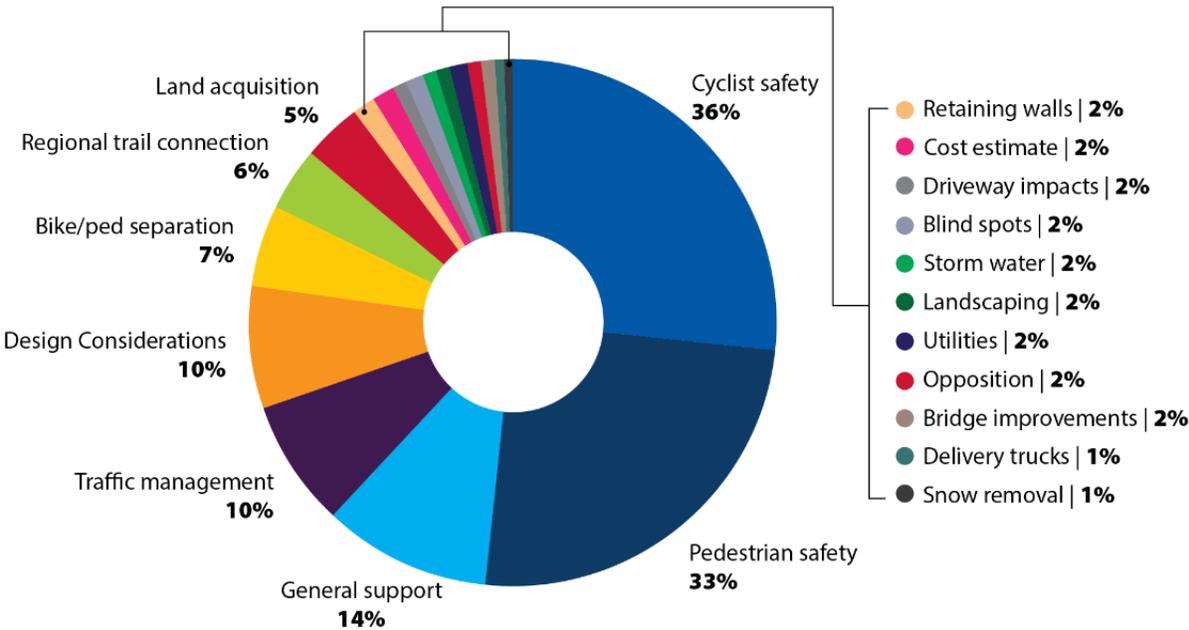
Pathway Option 2 Comment Map



## Open-ended Comment Themes

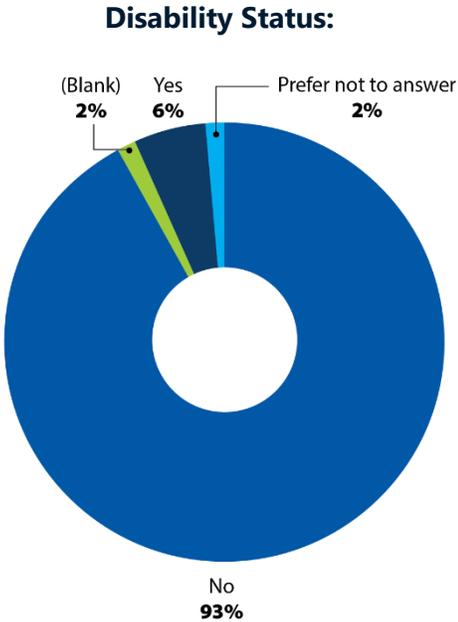
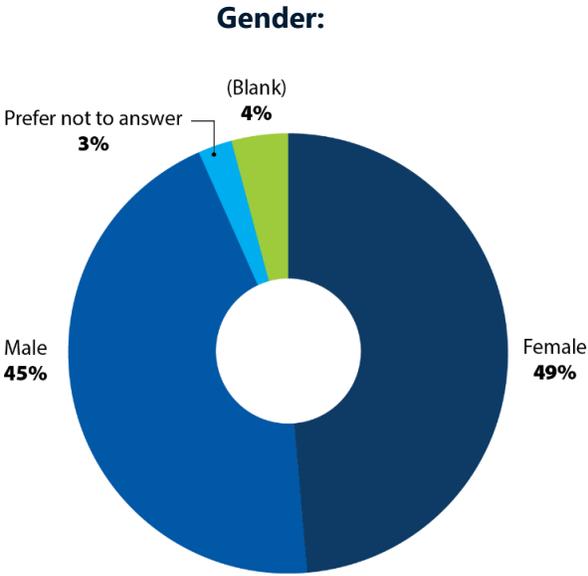
In total, 19 different themes were mentioned throughout the 170 comments received. The following themes were mentioned the most:

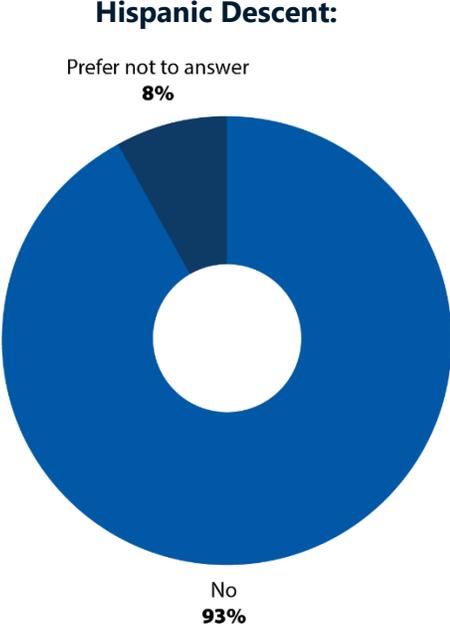
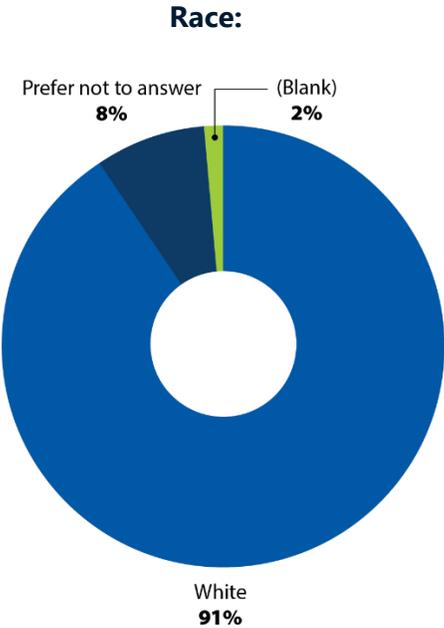
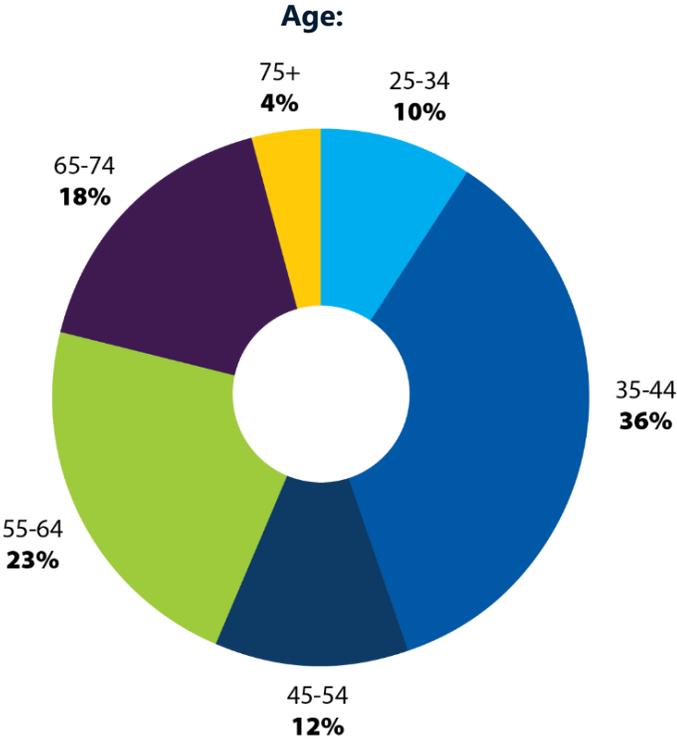
<b>Cyclist Safety</b> (36% of total comments)	Comments that mentioned <b>cyclist safety</b> were submitted from a wide range of individuals. Many were parents of young children and others were advanced cyclists. The overall sentiment was excitement for no longer being forced to ride alongside traffic on the shoulder. Many found it dangerous and unsafe for everyone. Opinions differed on whether or not bikers should be on a mixed-use pathway with pedestrians.
<b>Pedestrian Safety</b> (33%)	Comments that mentioned <b>pedestrian safety</b> were very diverse. Some discussed families wanting to walk on Mill St. with kids, and others voiced their concerns for the elderly and pets. Almost all comments under this category mentioned the increasing volume of traffic along Mill St and how pedestrian safety would be improved if there was a physical division between vehicles and pedestrians. Additionally, many comments included the desire to add crosswalks at various locations along Mill St. to connect the pathway on the east side with destinations on the west.
<b>General Support</b> (14%)	Comments under this category didn't include great project-specific detail. Rather, they expressed <b>gratitude and excitement</b> that this project was happening and how beneficial it will be for daily life. Many of the commentors explained how they were long-time residents and could not wait for this improvement. Others said they were new families to the area and appreciate the safety improvements.
<b>Full Results</b>	The chart below details the full list of comment themes and how often they were mentioned. The interactive map comments above are included in the results below.



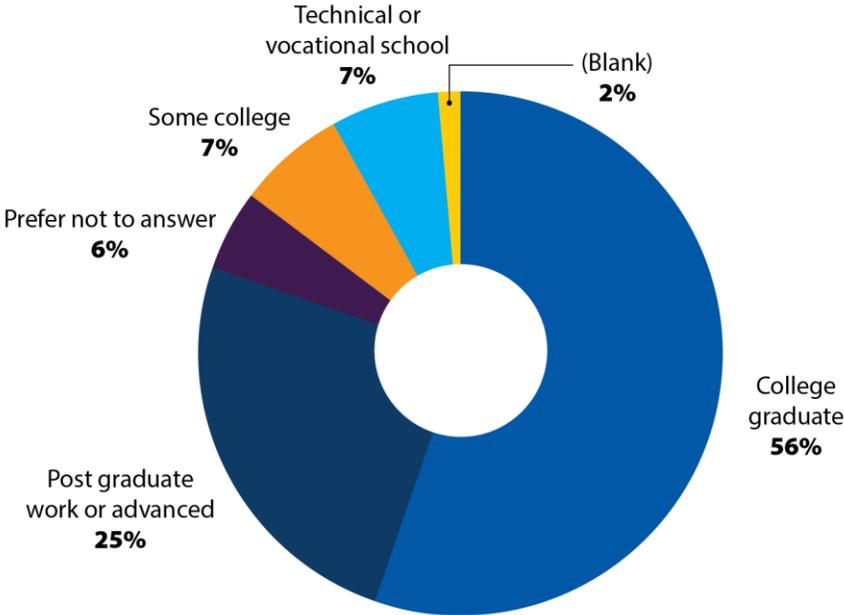
Summary of Participant Demographics

Participants reported the following demographic information voluntarily and anonymously at all engagement opportunities.

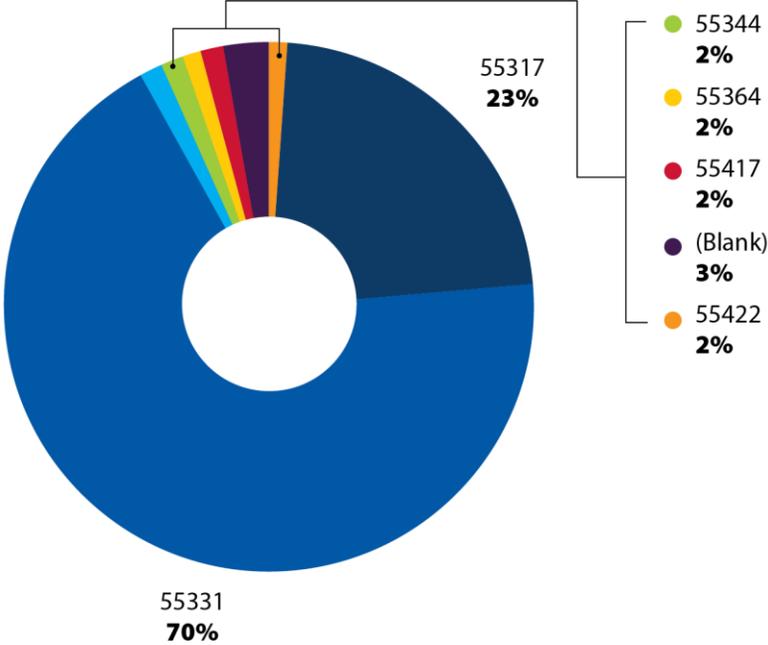




**Education Level:**



**Zip Code:**



## Appendix A: Online Engagement Site Stats

- Total visitors: 681
- Average visit length: 0:36
- Majority of engagement occurred on Apr. 11
- Visitor acquisition (results include overlaps):
  - Direct visits: 484
  - Total referrals: 144 (100 were from hennepin.us)
  - Organic search: 31
  - Organic social media: 29
- Visitor devices:
  - Desktop: 39.6%
  - Mobile: 56.5%
  - Tablet: 4%

## Appendix B: Open House Sign in Sheet

Name	Business or Organization	Physical Address	How did you heard about the meeting?
Jesse Nelson		712 3rd Ave, Excelsior	Sign/Email
Meghan Becker		6180 Cathcart Dr, Excelsior	Sign
Sam Kraemer		539 Mill St, Excelsior	
Lucy Hicks		201 Mill St, Excelsior	Email
Anne Hammer		600 Mill St, Excelsior	Email
Chip Meyer		600 Mill St, Excelsior	
Patrick		Water St	City
Karen Smith		531 Division St	
Kelly Lampe		21360 Christmas Ln.	Facebook
Gary Harju		5985 Mill St	Postcard
Tim & Lynne Powers	Resident	6075 Brand Cir, Excelsior, MN	Website
John Kunitz	Resident	6441 Bretton way, Chanhassen	flyer
Tom & Sue Judd	Resident	520 Cedar Lane	Catherine Judd
John & Julie Knight	Resident	540 Mill st	
Jerry Kurbu	Resident	610 Lyman Place, Excelsior	
Bob Fisk	Resident	400 Mill St	
Todd Carlson	Resident	634 & 600 3rd Ave	
Linda Swanson & Bruce Lorentson	Resident	401 Mill St	Someone visited our place
Jay Rudnick	Resident	512 Grace St	Postcard
Maria Frisch	Son attends school in area	11266 50th Pl N, Plymouth, MN 55442	Sign
Francesca Landon		620 Fox Hill Dr	Cat Judd
John McElmary		6180 Mill St	
Dan Pesek		631 Mill St	
Katherine Murphy		703 2nd Ave	Mail
Laura McCullough		6470 Bretton Way	
Colin McCullough		6470 Bretton Way	Mail
Tom & Noreen Andrews		22375 Bracketts Rd	Mail/Sign
Nate & Kirsten Studer		21740 Lilac Lane, Excelsior, MN 55331	Sign/Email
Chris Landon		620 Fox Hill Dr, Chanhassen MN	Spouse
Paul Henninger		5935 Mill St	Friend
John Kroll		6601 Mulbury Circle, Chanhassen, MN 55317	Sign/Email
Findley Williams		6065 Mill St	
Greg & Diane Elliot		1050 Holly Ln, Shorewood, MN	Email
Morgan Dewly	City of Excelsior		
Andrew Murphy		403 2nd Ave Excelsior MN	
Kathy Bakken		5885 Mill St	Kathybg29@gmail.com
Zach Farrel		22830 Murray St, Shorewood	
Matt Junes		6700 Mulberry Cir, Chanhassen	MatthewHjunes@gmail.com
Andrew Judd		192 2nd st, Excelsior	HDR

# Appendix C: Additional Event Photos

## OPEN HOUSE



POP-UP PHOTOS



# Appendix D: Active Transportation Committee Meeting Minutes

## ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

---

**Date:** Monday, March 20, 2023

**Time:** 4 – 6 p.m.

**Location:** Microsoft Teams conference call meeting

### Committee Members:

- ✓ Tammy McLemore, Dist. 1
- ✓ Gilbert Odonkor, Dist. 1  
Billy Binder, Dist. 2
- ✓ Jenny Ackerson, Dist. 2
- ✓ Laura Mitchell, Dist. 3
- ✓ Dave Carlson, Dist. 3  
Larissa Lavrov, Dist. 4
- ✓ Haley Foydel, Dist. 4
- ✓ Lou Dzierzak, Dist. 5
- ✓ Courtney Costigan, Dist. 5
- ✓ Luke Van Santen, Dist. 6
- ✓ Lou Miranda, Dist. 6
- ✓ Greg Anderson, Dist. 7
- ✓ Lee Newman, Dist. 7

### Ex-Officio Members:

- ✓ Jordan Kocak, HC Public Works
- ✓ Dan Patterson, HC Public Works
- ✓ Arman Rajaeian, Metro Transit

### Guests:

- ✓ Danny McCullough, Three Rivers
- ✓ Naveen Mallipaddi, HR Green
- ✓ Bob Byers
- ✓ JoNette Kuhnau, Kimley-Horn
- ✓ Jasna Hadžić-Stanek, Minneapolis
- ✓ Jason Staebell, HC Public Works

## NOTES

---

- **Approval of the February 2023 minutes** 4:01 – 4:03
  - Dave Carlson corrected a typo regarding bus-only lanes being “new” rather than “now.” Dave Carlson moved to approve the February 2023 minutes; Lou Miranda seconded. The minutes were approved by voice vote.
- **Welcome new ATC members** 4:05 – 4:15
  - Jordan Kocak introduced new member from District 4, Larissa Lavrov. He also said current members Dave Carlson, Laura Mitchell, Haley Foydel and Lou Miranda were reappointed by their respective commissioners.

- Larissa Lavrov introduced herself and described her interest in biking and walking. Walking is her favorite form of transportation.
- ATC members each introduced themselves and a little about why they're interested in the Active Transportation Committee.
- **Mill Street trail project** **4:15 – 4:52**
  - Luke Sandstrom with Hennepin County Public Works introduced himself and the Mill Street Trail project in Excelsior and Shorewood.
  - Project Web site is <https://www.hennepin.us/millstreet>
  - The area has been studied and talked about for a long time, 10-20 years with a county-funded study in 2019-2020.
  - Luke brought a couple of layouts for review.
  - Last presented to ATC in December 2022.
  - Some parking in Excelsior, no parking Shorewood.
  - We've gotten input to keep impacts to private property low and impacts to trees.
  - 4' shoulder, 11-foot lane 11-foot lane, 4' shoulder plus 2' gutter pan, 6' Blvd. 10' trail on east side.
  - 10-foot trail is as narrow as we would like to go for people biking, walking, using strollers. Boulevard will have trash collection, a lot of utilities, snow storage and a buffer between the trail and roadway.
  - Option 1: We had assumed we would touch only the east side. Now this project is a complete mill and overlay and adding curb in Shorewood where there isn't some now, will shift entire roadway west by 2.5 feet.
  - Option 2 removes shoulders altogether, moves centerline 6.5 feet west to reduce impact to property and trees. 11-foot lanes with 2-foot gutter pan
  - Luke showed a plan view of option 1, starting at the southern end in Carver County, where we would tie into existing trail.
  - Toward north part of project, at 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue with the retaining walls. This location would narrow roadway to 11 feet with no shoulders; shoulders drop on either side.
  - Retains median at 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue.
  - 10-foot path all the way to five corners
  - Option 2 at retaining walls would be 11.3 feet to avoid a strip of grass that would be too narrow to survive.
  - Option 2 would widen sidewalk from 4 feet to 6 feet.
  - Other considerations
    - Mail delivery, waste, recycling
    - Speed enforcement and management
    - Side slopes and grades
    - Stormwater management
    - Future projects
    - Alternative with shoulders

- 4' shoulder with 2' gutter
- 5' shoulder
- Full 6' gutter pan

Curb extensions bumpouts, natural crossings associated with schools?  
 Would lose the shoulder at those intersections and people biking would have to enter the general lane.

- Winter 2022 complete field survey, preliminary design
- April Prelim layout, first round of public engagement with April 4 virtual open house  
 Popup April 11 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Open house at St. John on 4/20 from 5-7 p.m.
- June final geometric design
- July Final geometric layout approval
- June-December 2024 final design
- Summer 2025 construction
- Presented to city of Shorewood Parks Commission, consensus was for 4-foot bikeable shoulders.
- Greg Anderson: Looks like you made some good strides.
- Dave Carlson: I am much, much in support of the bikeable shoulders, they're adequate for people currently biking the corridor. It is an important corridor that goes north-south connecting to Pleasantview Road, Excelsior and Shorewood. The curb extensions would drop the bikeable shoulder at intersections. Something not often pointed out is pedestrians don't always like bumpouts, as they're standing right next to traffic.
- Luke Van Santen: One of the options was the 6-foot full gutter pan, I don't know how others perceive those, I'm sure more durable, but they're not really awesome for biking. They have expansion joints every 8 or 10 or however many feet, they get hit by plows. I would see that as a super last-ditch option.
- Lou Miranda: The bumpouts, is it possible where it would be a little island that wouldn't affect the bike lane per se? Luke Sandstrom: We hadn't considered that to this point. Are there locations you have in mind that would help me visualize that?  
 Jordan Kocak: Nothing immediately comes to mind. There are a couple a couple of locations where the project is considering medians in the middle to benefit pedestrians theoretically without affecting the shoulder.
- Lou Miranda: Maybe rebuilding that wall where the road gets narrow. Pinch points for cars are dangerous points for people walking and biking.
- Greg Anderson: Is there one key place for an RRFB that would get used, to encourage people to slow down and anticipate activity? Luke: We've been tracking connecting the regional trail to regional trail, on the north side of the project. The church and school as well as the school ¼ mile west of Mill Street. Tricky thing is we try to be data-driven when making decisions to install enhanced crossings like that when it's a new trail. We'll work with planning to update counts in the future to look at whether

we should construct it in the future. We could identify locations to make sure we're set up with this project so we can add an RRFB or similar later. Greg Anderson: Knowing how it will get used, I would think that will be a good safety improvement.

- o Luke Van Santen: Looking at the four-foot bikeable shoulder, could those be raised to be at the same elevation as the trail? I ask first observing that there have been higher speeds reported here and the road I suspect is still going to appear amply wide with 11-foot lanes, 4-foot shoulder and 2-foot gutter. Luke Sandstrom: It's a really good question, not something we've evaluated at this point. We, off the cuff, would have to account for drainage, account for transitions at intersections. There could be a safety benefit. If we set it up that way, we might need more space. The under-grade issues keep coming up with private property impacts. We don't like to lead with minimums, we like to make things that are safe and meet needs, but we're already pretty much at minimums due to private property. I can work with our designers to see if that could work with our existing footprint or if it would require more space and whether the cities would find the benefit worth it.
- o Luke Van Santen: Regarding the turning motion at 3<sup>rd</sup> to get to the regional trail, which seems like it would be *the* spot other than the school crossing for an RRFB. But it also looks narrow, and I don't know if it would fit. You mentioned hills and retaining walls on the east side.: Luke Van Santen: This came up with early discussions with Excelsior, and the city would like a direct connection with the trail, the issue is the elevation. It's very steep, you'd need a switchback and really go above and beyond the scope of this project and additional funds. We'll keep it in mind so a future connection could tie in without a lot of reworks. So, it's not in this project but it's on the radar.
- o Luke Van Santen: If second option is put forward, where the shoulders drop in this area, any biking or waling traffic would be routed onto the trail and there would have to be appropriate signage, right? Luke: They could bike on the trail or if they're comfortable in the travel lane. Jordan Kocak: Both options don't have shoulders, right? Luke: Right, we're constrained by the bridge deck. There would be signage because of that transition.
- o Dave Carlson: Regarding the different heights of the bike lane vs. general lane, it's not a good idea because as Luke pointed out you have drainage issues, if you have a narrow shoulder, you might have to leave the shoulder to avoid obstacles, or to turn left. With a bike trail it makes sense, but not so much for a shoulder. It also becomes redundant with the bike trail. I certainly would keep it at the same level. Luke: Another concern is with maintenance; we wouldn't clear it with our plows if it's at a different elevation. Also issues with mailboxes in the boulevard and how would the vehicle access those, garbage and recycling. It would open a can of maintenance concerns. Dave: You also would lose the emergency pull-off for cars. Jordan: It is a shoulder, not a dedicated bike facility with other uses besides just biking. That's another reason the

bumpouts are given a little more consideration. In my mind it's not as critical that they are continuous. The real dedicated facility on the corridor is going to be the trail.

- Greg Anderson: I don't know if drainage is an issue, as you approach the bridge, can there be a gap in the curb so people can transition off the shoulder onto the trail?

Luke: We haven't looked at that thus far. We for sure would figure that out in design working with our planning staff. Dave Carlson: West End at Zarthan and Cedar Lake Road has one.

- Jordan Kocak: Often at decision points in a project the ATC likes to weigh in with a resolution. Right now, you have two options you plan to take to the public. Next round of engagement would be in June. Are you looking for between now and then to find the preferred option to bring forward? Luke: Correct. We're meeting with the public in April. We'll add the comments we're heard tonight along with those from the city and the public and bring that back. I'm open to a resolution now or later on. Jordan: The committee might weigh in on a decision early on and then again in a second resolution later on. Any resolution would be in April if the committee did do an early one.
- Greg Anderson: The District 7 reps can get together and figure out a resolution.
- Luke: There will be yard signs, popup events, social media postings, the open houses. Watch for those.

- **Member Announcements**

4:52 – 5:07

- Jordan Kocak: I got a message from Michael Samuelson. He wanted me to share for you knowledge that the Plymouth Avenue bridge over 94 in Minneapolis is going to be closing this spring possibly as soon as May for a redecking project. The work probably won't finish until October. It's a major bike network connection, so just be aware it won't be available. When it's done, right now it's just delineators separating the bikeway. They will be putting in a curb-separated bikeway. I'll forward the email from him to the group.
- Jordan Kocak: In terms of the process for a couple of things for the new members. Generally, we follow Robert's Rules of Order for motions and discussion and resolutions. The regulations are the formal way the ATC takes a position on a topic. When there's a desire for a resolution, we identify that from members and the members from the affected district put together a draft resolution and in the next meeting typically the ATC considers it.
- Lou Dzierzak: This whole project evaluation, one of the huge benefits is a bridge between old members, new members and new members to come. That got me thinking about a resource library, a glossary or access to big picture plans for the whole metro or Hennepin County where people can look at what the biggest picture is. With internal and external documents. This group has so much experience and varied interests. I know I have alerts for bikes and transportation and different things, I

wonder if there would be a place to put together studies or best practices or sharing awards. The evaluation is a wonderful tool and adding a library would contribute toward the same ends. Jordan Kocak: The first thing that comes to mind is the ATC Web site. It is public facing; anyone could view those things. Otherwise, a Google drive, but that's not really county endorsed. It may be something to think about a little more.

- Courtney Costigan: Happy birthday, Jordan! Members did not sing Happy Birthday to You.
- Lou Miranda: An important topic we deal with a committee is equity and climate change. Today the IPCC release a report today, call the Synthesis Report. It seems like basically they feel like nobody's listening to them. They took reports from before and put them together. They included a summary for governments and committees. It's general and for a worldwide audience, so not very specific, but it's worth reading and shows how concerned scientists are.
- Luke Van Santen: House file 677 and SN 912.712 are the accompanying bills for an overarching bike legislation at the state. Include increased funding for SRTS, clarification on laws, the Idaho stop. Not sure on its status for moving out of committee for consideration. I hope if anyone's interested in SRTS they will contact their representatives or committee members to voice support. Jordan Kocak: I have asked someone from IGR to come give this group an update on what was passed once the session is over.
- Jordan Kocak: HC Bike Friendly Community survey is open through April 5. We've been ranked at silver level, not sure if we'll make it to Gold. It took much less than 15 minutes to complete. It's not arduous.
- Tammy McLemore: William/Bill Dooley was the co-author on that legislation. I'm in Major Taylor as was he, he was working on it up until a few days before he passed. Bill will be missed; he was a longtime transportation advocate.
- Dave Carlson: Bike Alliance of Minnesota doesn't have any new information on their Web site about the bills. It's probably still in one or two committees. I can find out from Dorian Grilley and share with Jordan what the status is.

- **Adjournment**

5:07

- Courtney moved to adjourn the meeting. Lou Miranda seconded. The meeting adjourned at 5:07 p.m.

Next meeting:

April 17 | 4 – 6 p.m.

In-person room LL 0300 Government Center and remote via Microsoft Teams

## Appendix E: Shorewood Park Commission Minutes

### **PARK COMMISSION**

---

**Date:** Tuesday, March 14, 2022

**Time:** 7 – 8:30 p.m.

**Location:** Shorewood City Hall, 5755 Country Club Rd, Shorewood, MN 55331

### NOTES

---

Convene Park Commission Meeting: Chair Hirner convened the meeting at 7:01 p.m.

- **Roll Call**
  - Present: Chair Hirner, Commissioners Levy, Garske, Wenner, Czerwonka City Council Liaison Sanschagrin; Parks and Recreation Director Crossfield; Planning Director Darling; and City Engineer Budde
  - Absent: None
- **Review Agenda**
  - Chair Hirner noted that he would like to add election of Chair and Vice-Chair to the agenda as item 5.C.
  - Levy moved to approve the agenda, as amended. Garske seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

### Approval of Minutes

- **Park Commission Meeting Minutes of February 14, 2023**
  - Garske moved to approve the minutes of the February 14, 2023 meeting, as written. Levy seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

### Matters From the Floor

- There were none.

### New Business

- **Mill Street Trail Project**
  - Planning Director Darling gave background information on the Mill Street trail project and noted that the City had been working with the County since about 2018. She stated that plans became a bit stalled due to COVID-19, but have begun moving forward once again. She stated that there are plans for right-of-way acquisition to move forward beginning in 2024 and construction in 2025. She stated that the City completed a feasibility report which was essentially the first look at where to put the trail in and its impact. She introduced Luke

Sandstrom who is the project manager who has been assigned to this project from Hennepin County.

- Luke Sandstrom stated that the conversation about this project has been happening for over ten years, so he is happy that it has finally moved its way into the County's CIP and budget. He gave a brief presentation about the location of the Mill Street Trail Project that will go from downtown Excelsior through Shorewood to, and possible a bit past the County line. He explained that the intention is to connect to the regional trail that comes up through Chanhassen along the east side of Mill Street. He reviewed some of the design details and features and noted that there will need to be accommodations made for things like utilities, mailboxes, garbage cans, and snow removal. He stated that their plans call to shift the centerline of the roadway to the west a bit in order to provide more space on the east side for the trail and reviewed two of the design possibilities. He stated that beginning in April, they will begin public engagement and will host a series of open houses and pop-up events in addition to an on-line open house that will be live for the entire month. He stated that the final layout and design will be compiled based on all the feedback they receive. He reviewed the proposed schedule and timeline for construction and explained that they are looking to build this project in the summer of 2025. He highlighted some things that were included in the City's feasibility report that impacted 17 trees and explained that in their two alternates, they are looking at impacting up to 10 trees with Option 1 (no shoulders), or up to 20-24 trees with Option 2 (with shoulders) but noted that the County forestry department will be completing a tree inventory of the corridor. He encouraged people to contact him if they had any comments or questions about the project.
- Chair Hirner stated that he has driven down this roadway quite a bit and on the Chanhassen side the shoulders are a bit wider. He asked about the numbers of people using the shoulders versus the pathway that is alongside the roadway.
- Mr. Sandstrom explained that they have some pedestrian/bike counts that both counties have done, but they were done in the midst of the pandemic. He explained that they plan to do some more counts this spring that they hope will be helpful. He stated that they will also do counts once the trail is open to see the most common crossing points to determine if they need to be upgraded or enhanced.
- Commissioner Levy stated that she drives through this area frequently. She stated that there is a speed change that goes from 45 mph to 30 mph which is sometimes hard to remember. She asked if there was a plan to make this more consistent through the area.
- Mr. Sandstrom stated that the City of Shorewood already restricts parking on their shoulders and Excelsior does not. He stated that they would be looking to perhaps remove parking in Excelsior and noted that he believes at that point the County would be supportive of lowering the speed limit to make it consistent, but it would have to be done in agreement with the cities.

- Commissioner Levy stated that the bridge has no leeway and asked if the plans were for it to remain the same.
- Mr. Sandstrom explained that they are limited by the current bridge of Highway 7 but have made a note about widening it when there may be re-decking in the future.
- Commissioner Levy stated that there is a section where people have put in stone retaining walls and asked how those would be navigated.
- Mr. Sandstrom stated that there are two block walls in Excelsior just south of 3rd and explained that the current plan was to look at narrowing down the roadway to just the travel lanes, because in this area, they are essentially stuck between the two walls.
- Commissioner Garske asked if this was the only location where the bike lanes would have to be restricted in this manner.
- Mr. Sandstrom stated that because of site constraints, the only locations it would be restricted in this manner would be this area as well as the bridge.
- Commissioner Garske asked if the two options were essentially the same cost for construction.
- Mr. Sandstrom stated that they have a cost participation policy with the partner cities. He explained that from the cities point of view, the option with the non-bikeable shoulders would be a bit cheaper. He explained that if there is a narrower road section, less right-of-way acquisition is needed.
- Commissioner Wenner asked about the west side and if there would be any right-of-way or infringement on properties.
- Mr. Sandstrom stated that it would all be on the east side.
- City Engineer Budde stated that the City is trying to add watermain in and along this corridor in conjunction with this project. He stated that the idea is to get in while the County is doing their work so the area is only disturbed once. He stated that in order to do this, the City may need some permanent easements and may potentially have watermain on the west side.
- Chair Hirner asked if there was a desire on this project to continue bikeable shoulders as far as they can.
- Mr. Sandstrom stated that was why they are trying to get input from the cities and the public to see what their preference is.
- Commissioner Wenner asked if the 11 foot travel lane was a minimum width.
- Mr. Sandstrom explained that for the speed and for the type of road, because it is one-way, both ways, they would not go below 11 feet.
- Chair Hirner asked City Engineer Budde about the additional traffic near the Catholic church and if the City had any thoughts on what the impact of a trail may be, with or without bike lanes.
- City Engineer Budde stated that there have been a few meetings and they have given some initial feedback but does not think they have been able to dive into some of the very specific details at this point. He stated that his perspective is that when you think about the larger

- context, a lot of Chanhassen roadways are generally pretty healthy, with wide shoulders, so he would envision a fair amount of people wanting to use bikeable shoulders. He stated that if they get to the City and neck it down with no bike lanes, it will be a very abrupt change and feel. He stated that he understands that everybody, in theory, wants less pavement, however it will be important to think about how it will be used and the potential consequences of really narrowing it up to 11 foot lanes.
- Commissioner Wenner asked how much contact there had been with the residents who will be impacted.
  - City Engineer Budde stated that when the feasibility study was done, there was some public engagement but thinks that Mr. Sandstrom and his team are really trying to push a lot more of that contact with things like the open houses and other public engagement.
  - Mr. Sandstrom referenced the feasibility lead by the City and noted that it was just exclusively within the City limits and the 2020 study that the City of Excelsior led was in conjunction with Hennepin County which showed the entire section.
  - Commissioner Levy asked what would be planted within the 6 foot boulevard space.
  - Ms. Sandstrom stated that at this point they are just planning for grass but there has been some discussion about putting in trees. He stated that they are open to options other than grass but it would have to be confirmed with the power authorities to see what would be allowed.
  - Commissioner Garske asked if this trail would eventually connect to the arboretum or if there were plans to connect it to other parts of the trail system.
  - Mr. Sandstrom stated that with the north end of the project it could be taken all the way to the five corner area, but if you go a block short and take a left, you can get to the Minnetonka Regional Trail as well.
  - Planning Director Darling stated that she knows that it also goes all the way down to Highway 5.
  - Chair Hirner thanked Mr. Sandstrom for attending and noted that today's presentation has been very informative.
  - There was a consensus of the Commission that their initial preference for bike lanes to be incorporated into the project
- **Movie in the Park**
    - Parks and Recreation Director Crossfield stated that because last year's event was a rain out, this would be a reschedule of the same movie. She stated that the movie will be Jungle Book and noted that they are working to schedule a date.

### Old Business

- **Freeman Concessionaire**

- Parks and Recreation Director Crossfield reviewed the options for concessions at Freeman Park. She explained that the first option would be for the Athletic Association to operate an initial pilot phase between April and June, Monday through Thursdays, 5:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. She stated that they would plan to hire their own site coordinator to be the point person between the City and the concession stand. She explained that they were proposing a \$500 building usage fee and noted that they would also need to enter into an agreement with the City that would need to be approved by the City Council. She noted that there may be the need for updated refrigerators and freezers. She reviewed the other possible options and noted that staff was recommending that the City enter into an agreement with the Athletic Association.
- Chair Hirner asked which Athletic Association this would be with.
- Parks and Recreation Director Crossfield explained that it would be Tonka United.
- Chair Hirner asked if the City would also give them rights to offer concessions for weekends when there are tournaments since they only mentioned operating Monday through Thursday evenings.
- Parks and Recreation Director Crossfield explained that they had only expressed interest in running it from Monday through Thursday and noted that they may have different plans for tournaments.
- Commissioner Levy asked what types of events there would be where there would be no concessions available.
- Parks and Recreation Director Crossfield stated that there would not be concessions for baseball because they run their own concessions out of the south part of the park. She stated that Tonka United believes that their biggest demand for concessions will be on the weekdays.
- Chair Hirner asked about the \$500 building usage fee and how it compared to what was charged for the previous user.
- Planning Director Darling stated that she believes it is a slightly more than what was charged in the past.
- Parks and Recreation Director Crossfield noted that the \$500 fee was proposed by the Athletic Association. She reminded the Commission that this is a proposed pilot program so the Athletic Association would evaluate whether or not they wanted to continue running it for the remainder of the summer at the end of the initial period.
- Chair Hirner suggested that the City look into the possibility of coming to an agreement with Pepsi or Coke in order to help pay for some of the necessary equipment, but offer their products for sale.
- Commissioner Levy asked if there were general rules for the use of the facility, such as not playing loud music.

- Planning Director Darling stated that they could make sure they have a copy of Chapter 902 that contains the rules for the park.
- Garske moved to recommend approval of the City entering into an agreement with the Athletic Association (Tonka United) with payment of a \$500 building use fee, to offer concessions through a pilot program Monday through Thursday from 5:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. from April through June. Wenner seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.
- **IPM Plan Phase 2**
  - Parks and Recreation Director Crossfield stated that because there was a lack of quorum on the Parks Commission, Phase II of the IPM went straight to the City Council for discussion but had wanted to formally share the information with the Commission. She noted that the Council discussed this at their recent retreat and she anticipates that they will be giving further direction to the Parks Commission at some point in the future.
  - Planning Director Darling suggested that the Park Commission become familiar with the plan and what the consultant has suggested. She noted that the City's budget does not allow for everything to be implemented all at once so the City Council may ask them to weigh in on possible alternatives.
  - Chair Hirner asked if Silverwood would now be added into the IPM since the construction had been completed.
  - Planning Director Darling stated that she believes that they lumped some of the smaller parks together so she did not know if they would re-evaluate Silverwood at this point.
  - Parks and Recreation Director Crossfield noted that she was disappointed that they had not done soil studies like they did at other parks, at Silverwood, because it would have been nice to get their input. She noted that in her opinion, Silverwood is not like the parks that it has been grouped with. She stated that it would be nice if the consultants would go out and do a soil study and take a look at the grass since it wasn't done simply because the park was under construction.
  - Planning Director Darling stated that she will talk to the consultants and see what that may involve.
  - Chair Hirner suggested that the Parks Commission make sure that they have also ready the Phase 1 information as well.
- **Election of Chair and Vice-Chair for 2023**
  - Garske moved to appoint Mike Hirner to serve as Chair. Levy seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.
  - Levy moved to appoint Commissioner Wenner to serve as Vice-Chair. Garske seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.
- **2023 Work Program and Schedule**
  - Chair Hirner reviewed the proposed 2023 Work Program and schedule put together by staff.

- Commissioner Wenner noted that she is a Minnesota Master Naturalist and Tree Care Advisor and stated that she would like to see the Park Commission become more acquainted with City policies with regard to trees. She noted that would also overlap with the IPM and things like Buckthorn removal. She stated that it may also be a good idea for the Commission to take a closer look at the City's tree survey so they have a better understanding of what the City's tree make-up actually looks like.
- Planning Director Darling stated that it may be possible to bring some of this information to the Park Commission but noted that the private development side of tree preservation was handled by the Planning Commission. She stated that they could bring information to the Commission for those that are on public property.
- Commissioner Wenner stated that she could take on working with the Parks survey and the tree survey and let the Commission know what she finds.
- Planning Director Darling stated that may be possible.
- Commissioner Wenner asked what kind of resources the City has for residents who are dealing ash trees or buckthorn.
- Planning Director Darling stated that the City has a program for disease evaluation through Davey Resource Group. She stated that the City contracts with them to provide a certain number of evaluations on private properties. She explained that they would not provide a quote for removal of the trees. She stated City does not require buckthorn removal and noted that per State rules it is not supposed to be transported or planted new. She stated that if people want to remove it from their private property, the City has some wrenches available, that require submitting a deposit and then they can keep the equipment for a week at a time. She stated that they are pretty effective, but it is hard work.
- Chair Hirner stated that the City has had goats in Freeman Park for a few years to help with the buckthorn issue and asked if they were once again considering that as an option.
- Planning Director Darling stated that the City actually had received a grant from the Minnesota DNR for \$50,000 to restore part of the forest in Freeman Park. She stated that she believed the follow up plan following the mechanized removal and daubing was to maintain it with non-chemical means such as the goats, however, this is currently on hold pending details related to the IPM plan.
- Commissioner Wenner asked whether this grant would expire and if pausing the program could mean the City loses those grant funds.
- Planning Director Darling stated that it does expire in 2024 and noted that the City could lose the funds depending on how long things are put on hold.
- Commissioner Wenner stated that she would like to see the Commission take a look at tree information and policies next winter. She noted that they could also take a look at becoming a Tree City U.S.A. and noted that there are programs where the City could have college interns come and take over some of this type of work. She stated that the City could also take

- a look at holding Arbor Day events, tree sales, and find other ways to be more proactive. She reiterated that she would like to see the Park Commission take a closer look at the current tree preservation policy.
- Planning Director Darling stated that the Planning Commission discusses tree removal when they consider most projects.
  - Commissioner Levy stated that she recently read through the bee resolution implementation plan and noticed two things that she did not think the City was really doing. She stated that one was efforts to plant pollinator plants and asked if that was something that Parks Commission would look for. She stated that she wonders if there should be signs at the parks so residents can look and see things and find out the names of things that they could grow in their own backyard. She asked if this type of communication fell under the responsibilities of the Parks Commission.
  - Planning Director Darling stated that it would depend on what the City Council decides is the Park Commission role and noted that she thinks that they are still awaiting more direction from them on that issue.
  - Wenner moved to add an item to the 2023 Work Program and Schedule for the month of December regarding trees in the parks. Hirner seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.
  - Garske moved to approve the 2023 Work Program and Schedule, as revised. Levy seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

### Staff and Liaison Reports/Updates

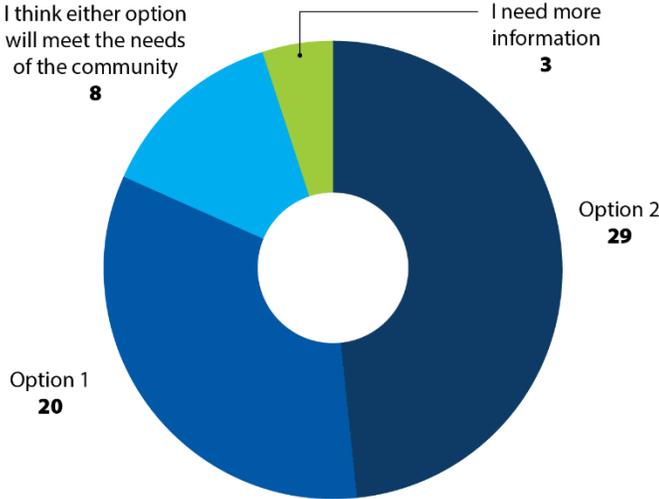
- **City Council**
  - Councilmember Sanschagrín introduced himself and gave an overview of recent Council discussion and actions.
- **Staff: Silverwood Park Grand Opening**
  - Parks and Recreation Director Crossfield stated that she had sent out a poll and it looks like the majority of the votes were to hold the Grand Opening on Tuesday, June 20, 2023. She stated that staff will move forward planning for the Grand Opening for that date.
  - Commissioner Wenner noted that she had looked into the possibility of Ben & Jerry's, but they will be too expensive. She noted that they had directed her to Big Bell who may be a better option for the City.
  - Parks and Recreation Director Crossfield stated that Recreation Specialist Vassar has been researching local ice cream vendors to try to find an option that would work, but will pass along this information to her.
  - Planning Director Darling stated that the City Council will be looking more in depth at the IPM plan and ways to move forward at their March 27, 2023 Work Session meeting.
  - Parks and Recreation Director Crossfield noted that Shore Report is in the works and there will be some Parks and Recreation programs and services that will be promoted.

Adjourn

- Garske moved to adjourn the Park Commission Meeting of March 14, 2023 at 8:33 p.m. Levy seconded the motion. Motion carried 5-0.

## Appendix F: City-specific Voting Results

### Excelsior Pathway Options Voting Results:



### Shoreview Pathway Options Voting Results:

