

375 IMPROVEMENT PROJECT MEETING SUMMARY

SUBJECT	375 Improvement Project Advisory Committee Meetings
MEETING SITE	University of Detroit Mercy School of Law, 651 E. Jefferson Ave., Detroit MI 48226 Room 347
DATE/TIME	June 21, 2017 Government Advisory Committee, 2PM - 4PM (EST) Local Advisory Committee, 5PM - 7PM (EST)

The second set of advisory committee meetings for the I-375 Improvement Project were held on June 21, 2017 at the University of Detroit Mercy School of Law. In attendance at the meetings were representatives from the community, churches, businesses, education, and government. The Government Advisory Committee (GAC) was attended by 11, and the Local Advisory Committee (LAC) was attended by 24.

The agenda was focused on a project updates including the review of the May 17th Community Conversation and comments received, traffic updates, evaluation criteria and the alternatives refinement. MDOT, the City of Detroit, and the project consultant, HNTB, presented on these topics. The committee was also asked to report back on any items of interest from their respective organizations.

For each agenda item, the team received feedback from the committees. After presenting on the comments received at the Community Conversation the following themes were discussed:

- Engagement of people west of the corridor
- Increased traffic on Jefferson
- Difficulty engaging downtown
- Reaching out to the “user” community
- Overrepresentation of a specific group

Next up, the team presented on the evaluation criteria that will be used to narrow the Illustrative Alternatives down to two Practical Alternatives. Feedback below was obtained from the committees.

- The criteria under the purpose are weighted heavier allowing the criteria under needs to be distinguishing factors.
- Suggested a separate section for transit and include criteria for transit compatibility.
- Suggested revising the criteria for impacted residential and business to differentiate between direct and indirect impacts.
- Questions over how air and noise are being addressed through the criteria.
- Historical properties are being addressed through Section 4(f), however a property must be listed or eligible for listing on the National Register to qualify as a 4(f) property.
- Discussion included criteria to screen which alternative will provide a buffer between downtown and neighborhoods east of the corridor.
- Suggested criteria that evaluates the impacts and opportunities for economic development.
- Make the language for vehicular traffic connectivity to riverfront clearer.
- Questions or suggested criteria for how each of the alternatives will address commercial activity.
- Questions over how the criteria define recreation and medical facilities.

After reviewing the evaluation criteria, the project team updated the LAC and GAC on the traffic counts that took place May through June at 40 sites, including new bicycle and pedestrian counts. The committee was curious as to what times the data was collected, the area covered, level of service, and how the SEMCOG model would function.

Lastly, the agenda covered local items for sharing. It was reported that there is a blinking stop sign along the Jefferson ramp that has become twisted, causing ramp traffic to stop, instead of the service drive traffic. It was also reported by Representative Stephanie Chang that she will be conducting an independent survey in her district to gain insight on project preference.

The next set of meetings will be held in early to mid-August after the alternatives refinement and screening is complete.

375 IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

GOVERNMENTAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE AGENDA

SUBJECT 375 Improvement Project Governmental Advisory Committee Meeting

MEETING LOCATION University of Detroit Mercy School of Law, 651 E. Jefferson Ave., Detroit MI 48226, Room 347

DATE/TIME June 21, 2017, 2:00PM-4:00PM

1. Welcome

2. Introductions of Advisory Committee Members

3. Review of May 17th Community Conversation

- A. Comment Summary
- B. GAC Feedback

4. Project Updates

- A. Discuss Alternative Screening Criteria
- B. Traffic Analysis update
- C. Alternatives refinement Update

5. Local Items for Sharing

- A. Advisory Committee members are encouraged to share items of interest from their respective organization(s) that may impact the 375 Improvement Project or other Advisory Committee members

6. Other

7. Next Meeting

- A. Next Meeting Date and Location TBD
- B. Specific agenda topics to cover for next meeting?

375 IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

LOCAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE AGENDA

SUBJECT 375 Improvement Project Local Advisory Committee Meeting

MEETING LOCATION University of Detroit Mercy School of Law, 651 E. Jefferson Ave., Detroit MI 48226, Room 347

DATE/TIME June 21, 2017, 5:00PM-7:00PM

1. Welcome

2. Introductions of Advisory Committee Members

3. Review of May 17th Community Conversation

- A. Comment Summary
- B. LAC Feedback

4. Project Updates

- A. Discuss Alternative Screening Criteria
- B. Traffic Analysis update
- C. Alternatives refinement Update

5. Local Items for Sharing

- A. Advisory Committee members are encouraged to share items of interest from their respective organization(s) that may impact the 375 Improvement Project or other Advisory Committee members

6. Other

7. Next Meeting

- A. Next Meeting Date and Location TBD
- B. Specific agenda topics to cover for next meeting?

What We Heard

from the COMMUNITY CONVERSATION on the I-375 IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

I-375 was built as a gateway to Downtown Detroit in 1964. After 50 years of use, it needs to be reconstructed. **MDOT is deciding what to do with the corridor.**

A Community Conversation on the future of the I-375 corridor was held on May 17, 2017 at Eastern Market. 84 people who live, work, and are otherwise invested in the corridor attended.

TRAFFIC & CONGESTION

No alternative will relieve existing congestion within the corridor

- Mitigate traffic coming from the highway, especially if the freeway is brought to grade
- Look to incorporate surrounding streets like Mack Avenue into the study

MULTIMODAL

Many people are interested in making the corridor safer and more accessible to people walking and riding bikes

- Allow for more non-motorized options to access the corridor
- Create safer interactions between different modes of travel

PEDESTRIANS

Many people cross I-375 on foot and call the experience “poor”, “dangerous”, and a “death trap”

- Focus on safety, access, and amenities for pedestrians
- Improve pedestrian access with sidewalks, signals, and better separation from traffic

CONNECTIVITY

Many people cross I-375 to get to/from downtown Detroit and Lafayette Park

- Preserve the existing access and improve connectivity between the two sides of the corridor
- Provide additional connectivity to the riverfront

SAFETY

Traveling the corridor is confusing and dangerous for all users

- Put the safety of people walking and riding bikes over moving cars
- Improve crosswalks and fix crumbling sidewalks
- Reduce automobile accidents caused by unsafe merging, weaving, and backups

DEVELOPMENT

New development should match the existing character of the area

- Establish a sense of place for the surrounding neighborhoods
- Create opportunities for minority businesses

TRAFFIC NEIGHBORHOODS SAFETY PEDESTRIAN DEVELOPMENT CONGESTION MULTIMODAL CONNECTIVITY HISTORY

PROTECT NEIGHBORHOODS

Preserve the character of the existing neighborhoods

- Provide a buffer to Lafayette Park from downtown and the corridor
- Protect the integrity and stability of the surrounding neighborhoods

HISTORY

I-375 was placed through the historic Paradise Valley and Black Bottom neighborhoods

- Acknowledge and memorialize the history of the corridor and surrounding areas
- Retain the quality of life in Lafayette Park as a historically significant neighborhood

CONTACT US

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VISIT OUR WEBSITE

www.michigan.gov/i375study



WHAT'S NEXT

The Community Conversation was just the beginning of the process. Here's what's coming next and how you can learn more.

SPRING 2017



Community Conversation introducing the alternatives



Advisory Committee Meetings



Technical Analysis

SUMMER 2017



Neighborhood and Business Outreach Meetings



Advisory Committee Meetings



Technical Analysis



Narrow **6** Illustrative Alternatives to **2** Practical Alternatives



Public Information Meeting

FALL 2017



Preparation of the Environmental Assessment Report



Advisory Committee Meetings

WINTER 2018



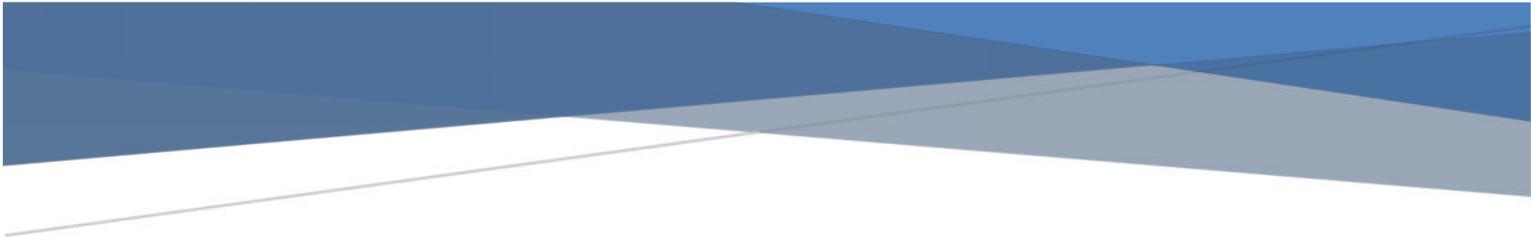
Public Hearing



Identify a Preferred Alternative



Public Information Meeting to Review the Preferred Alternative and Next Steps



I-375 COMMUNITY CONVERSATION #1 SUMMARY

May 17, 2017

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1 Introduction

The I-375 Improvement Project will address the need for updates to the timeworn infrastructure, including the roadway and bridges. The corridor has been the subject of multiple studies in the past including early 2000's and again in 2014. The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) is preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) to clear identified improvements in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). In the initial phase of the EA, MDOT hosted a Community Conversation to reintroduce the project to the community, explain the EA process, and reopen the dialogue for the future of I-375.

2 Community Conversation

A Community Conversation was held on May 17, 2017 at Eastern Market in Shed 5. The location was selected to accommodate those who live and work in the corridor, as well as other invested stakeholders in the project. The sign-in sheets recorded a total of 84 attendees.

Table 1: Meeting Logistics

Date/Location	Location	Time	Attendance
May 17, 2017	Eastern Market, Shed 5 2934 Russell Street Detroit, MI 48207	5:00 PM – 7:30 PM	84

3 Notifications

A press release was issued on May 2, 2017 notifying the public of the Community Conversation. MDOT also reached out to the community through the two project advisory committees, asking every member to reach out to their communities to share the invite.



4 Materials

The public was first welcomed at a registration table where they were asked to sign-in. They were then invited to speak with staff and review roll plots that were laid out detailing each alternative. The meeting was organized around a presentation given by MDOT and the City of Detroit, with two roundtable breakout discussions. The first roundtable discussion engaged the group on “Why Here? Why Now? And Purpose and Need”, and the second roundtable discussion focused on the review of the Illustrative Alternatives. The Shed was outfitted with 19 round tables for attendees, with a project facilitator at each table to moderate the breakout conversations and record comments.

Each seat was set with an informational placemat and kicker card with project contact information. The placemats contained a project description, area map, timeline, and comment section. The placemats were collected at the end of the meeting and recorded as comments for the EA. Also at the tables was a reference book containing the NEPA process, the project’s Purpose and Need, and each of the existing Illustrative Alternatives accompanied by a description. Lastly, an existing transit map of the area was included at each table.

5 Comments

At the meeting attendees were encouraged to submit comments in a variety of ways. Comments were collected on MDOT comment forms spread throughout the meeting space, on the placemats set up at each seat, and at the tables as facilitators scribed comments during the roundtable discussions. All of the comments were compiled into a database for inclusion in the EA process.



5.1 Multi- Modal

Multi-modal access was mentioned frequently at the meeting. Stakeholders expressed concern with the accessibility of pedestrians, vehicles and bicycles. Comments reflected the desire to have more bicycle and pedestrian friendly access to the corridor, as well as more non-motorized options. Stakeholders were receptive of more bike lanes, improved conditions for all modes, and better interactions between the different modes of travel.

5.2 Traffic and Congestion

Traffic was the most popular themes mentioned in comments. Comments cited the need to mitigate traffic, especially if the freeway is brought to grade. Concerns mentioned were the impact to the other local roads, congestion at the Lafayette exit due to Greektown and special events, the negative impacts to traffic from the I-75/I-375 Interchange, and the increase in traffic as downtown Detroit continues to grow. It was also expressed that none of the alternatives would be adequate to address the traffic problems that are happening currently. Recommendations included incorporating Mack Avenue into the study, widening the Mack Avenue exit, and slowing traffic.

5.3 Pedestrian

Comments about pedestrians focused around safety, access, and amenities. Feedback reflected that users feel the facility is not user-friendly or a walkable space, specifically going east or west across I-375. The walking conditions were referred to as “poor”, “dangerous”, and a “death walk”. Many of the commenters noted that they cross I-375 on foot and would like to see pedestrian access improved, including improvements to sidewalks, signals, and separation from vehicular traffic.



5.4 Connectivity

Stakeholder commented that they interact with I-375 in a variety of ways. They use it to travel to and from downtown Detroit, cross it to get to and from Lafayette Park and surrounding neighborhoods, access to events, restaurants, education, and church. Comments expressed the desire of the community to both preserve the existing access and to improve connectivity. One area that received support for additional connectivity, is access to the Riverfront. Comments came in on both sides to bridge the division created by the freeway, with some wishing to preserve the connectivity to downtown from the north for commuters and others wishing to repair the gap between downtown and the neighborhoods to the east.

5.5 Development

Concern was expressed over what kind of development would result from any alterations to the I-375 corridor. Comments called for the new development to match the existing character of the surrounding land uses, specifically the residential uses, and to create a sense of place. The question was also raised as to how

the developable land is procured and what the process is to determine its future use. Stakeholders also questioned the possibility of developing parking with the available land. It was noted that there is potential to create opportunities for minority businesses.

5.6 Safety

Safety concerns surrounded the experience of all users on I-375, calling it confusing and dangerous. Frequently mentioned was the safety needs of bicyclists and pedestrian on the corridor and the need to improve crossings, crumbling sidewalks, and adding bike lanes. Also mentioned were the unsafe merging, weaving, and backups that lead to accidents on the freeway. Some comments recommended putting people first over cars, and shifting the focus away from a car-centric space.

5.7 Protect Neighborhoods

With I-375 as a divider between downtown and the neighborhoods to the east, many comments came in requesting that, regardless of the outcome, the character of the neighborhoods be preserved. The neighborhoods surrounding Lafayette were specifically mentioned. Comments requested the need to protect the integrity and stability of the neighborhoods by providing a buffer, and by preventing an increase in noise.



5.8 History

In both the oral and written comments, it was expressed that the project should include a memorialization to acknowledge the history of the corridor and its placement through the historic Paradise Valley and Black Bottom neighborhoods. Requests were made to repair the division made by the corridor and the possibility of renaming the road Hastings Street if it does become a boulevard. Also, Lafayette Park residents want to retain quality of life as a historically significant neighborhood.

6 Conclusion and Next Steps

The Community Conversation presented updated project information, requested feedback on next steps, and facilitated an open dialogue between stakeholders, MDOT and the City of Detroit. Almost all the feedback acknowledged the need to improve I-375, regardless of the selected alternative. Comments came in to support all the alternatives, requests to improve traffic and congestion, and improve access for all modes.

Following the I-375 Community Conversation, the team will continue to analyze the feedback received and engage the community. The project has two advisory committees, that meet monthly to provide feedback on the project and relay that information to their respective organizations. In addition to stakeholder engagement the team will begin the technical analysis, including screening the alternatives down from six Illustrative Alternatives to two Practical Alternatives. The Project will return at that point to present new information to stakeholders at another community conversation.

I-375 Improvement Study - Illustrative Alternatives Screening Criteria

Category	Measurement	Primary Study Area Alternatives						I-75/I-375 Interchange	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2
CONSISTENT WITH PROJECT PURPOSE:									
Addresses deterioration of bridges	Yes=5, No = 0								
Addresses deterioration of pavement	Yes=5, No = 0								
Addresses existing and future transportation needs for all users of all modes and abilities	Yes=5, No = 0								
Improves connectivity to surrounding areas for vehicular traffic	Yes=5, No = 0								
Improves connectivity to surrounding areas for non-motorized users	Yes=5, No = 0								
Improves access to existing and future transit	Yes=5, No = 0								
Accommodates foreseeable changes in mobility technologies, services and demands	Yes=5, No = 0								
Enhances walkability and access	Yes=5, No = 0								
Enables place-making opportunities envisioned in official land use plans	Yes=5, No = 0								
ADDRESSES THE FOLLOWING NEEDS:									
SAFETY									
Reduction in severity of crashes	High = 2, Med.=1, Low = 0								
Reduction of high crash areas	High = 2, Med.=1, Low = 0								
Eliminates or reduces existing design deficiencies	High = 2, Med.=1, Low = 0								
PEDESTRIAN ACCESS									
Creates more separation from vehicular traffic	High = 2, Med.=1, Low = 0								
Provides direct connections to riverfront area	High = 2, Med.=1, Low = 0								
Increases pedestrian capacity in the study area	High = 2, Med.=1, Low = 0								
BICYCLE ACCESS									
Provides for separation of bikes and vehicular traffic	High = 2, Med.=1, Low = 0								
Provides direct connections to riverfront area	High = 2, Med.=1, Low = 0								
Increases bicycle capacity within the study area	High = 2, Med.=1, Low = 0								
COMMUNITY ACCESS IMPROVEMENTS									
Expands access to recreational facilities	High = 2, Med.=1, Low = 0								
Expands access to medical facilities and services	High = 2, Med.=1, Low = 0								
Expands access to community centers and/or amenities	High = 2, Med.=1, Low = 0								
TRAFFIC									
Improves Vehicular Level of Service (LOS)/Capacity on 375 corridor	Better=2 Same =1 Worse=0								
Improves Vehicular Level of Service (LOS)/Capacity on local roads	Better=2 Same =1 Worse=0								
Improves operations of I-375/I-75 interchange	Better=2 Same =1 Worse=0								
Accommodates special event traffic without impacting adjacent neighborhoods	Better=2 Same =1 Worse=0								
Accommodates commercial truck access	Better=2 Same =1 Worse=0								
TRANSIT ACCESS									
Improves connectivity to existing transit services	High = 2, Med.=1, Low = 0								
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT									
Creates the opportunity for future economic development consistent with city plans	High = 2, Med.=1, Low = 0								
ENVIRONMENTAL									
Impacts Section 4(f) properties	No Impact = 2, Deminimus=1, Direct=0								
Number of impacted residential properties (direct)	Low=2, Med.= 1, High = 0								
Number of impacted business properties (direct)	Low=2, Med.= 1, High = 0								
Potential for indirect impacts to residential properties	Low=2, Med.= 1, High = 0								
Potential for indirect impacts to businesses/community planning	Low=2, Med.= 1, High = 0								
Reduces stormwater runoff into DWSD facilities	Low=2, Med.= 1, High = 0								
IMPLEMENTATION									
Capital Cost (\$)	Low=2, Med.= 1, High = 0								
Operational Cost (\$) - (for transportation infrastructure only)	Low=2, Med.= 1, High = 0								
Ease of Implementation/Constructability	Ease = 2, Neutral =1, Difficult. = 0								

