



I-375 PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE SUMMARY

December 05, 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). MDOT narrowed the initial study down from six Illustrative Alternatives to two Practical Alternatives and hosted a Public Open House to discuss progress with the community, and further the dialogue for the future of I-375.

2 Public Open House

The Public Open House, the second public meeting held by MDOT for the Project was held on December 5th, 2017 at the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Adventure Center. 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 110 attendees.

Table 1: Meeting Logistics

Date/Location	Location	Time	Attendance
December 5, 2017	Michigan Department of Natural Resources Adventure Center 1801 Atwater St Detroit, MI 48207	4:00 PM – 7:30 PM	110

3 Notifications

Two press releases were issued on November 20, 2017 and November 28, 2017 respectively, notifying the public of the Public Open House. MDOT also reached out to the community through the two Project advisory committees, the Local Advisory Committee and Government Advisory Committee, asking every member to reach out to their communities to share the invite.

4 Materials

The public was welcomed at a registration table where they were asked to sign-in. They were then invited to speak with staff and discuss materials in the room using an open house format. There were tables with large roll plots detailing and comparing the two Practical Alternatives and the No-Build Alternative. Display boards were set up in stations around the room. These stations included:

- A station for the NEPA process and the purpose and need.
- The screening process
- Traffic operations and travel time

In the front, a large screen featuring a video of the Boulevard and No-Build Alternatives displayed a side-by-side comparison of the two Alternatives. The video was detailed, with realistic 3-D models of the Boulevard (Practical Alternatives 4 and 5) and No-Build Alternatives, real traffic modeling, and text descriptions of the differences between them. Scenes were made up of intuitive angles for displaying the most critical parts of the Project. The viewer experienced the differences between the Boulevard and No-Build Alternatives from a fly-through perspective.

The meeting was organized around two presentations given by MDOT and the City of Detroit, each followed with a return to an open house format. The presentations updated the public on Project progress, including the purpose and need, the NEPA process, alternative screening process, refinements and the two Practical

Alternatives, traffic operations, and future land use possibilities. After each presentation, the public was encouraged to interact with staff at the tables and boards and to submit comments for inclusion in the EA.

5 Comments

At the meeting, attendees were encouraged to submit comments by filling out comment forms, emailing the Project email, and contacting the project manager directly via phone/email. Comments were collected on MDOT comment forms spread throughout the meeting space. All the comments were compiled into a database for inclusion in the EA.

5.1 Multi-Modal Access

Multi-modal access was a key interest of all stakeholders at the meeting. Suggestions included separated bicycle paths/lanes, separated sidewalks, and reasonable speed limits. Comments on non-motorized connections were mainly focused on safely crossing the corridor east/west, whereas comments on motorized connections were mainly focused on traveling north/south efficiently through the corridor.



5.2 Traffic and Congestion

Traffic and congestion was the most popular theme mentioned in comments. The ability to maintain sufficient flow of traffic in and out (north/south) of downtown was especially critical to intercity commuters. Traffic signals and timing as well as limited direct access were cited as reasons for the suspected slowdowns. Intra-city commuters were more concerned with potential traffic buildup on the proposed Gratiot intersections and the ability to travel east/west. Although most of the public was pleased with the Practical Alternatives and the I-375/I-75 Interchange, some comments voiced a preference for the No-Build Alternative. Preservation of the Gratiot Connector was mentioned in comments over concern of diverted truck traffic on the proposed Gratiot intersection, leading to increased noise and congestion.



5.3 Safety

Safety concerns were primarily voiced by pedestrians and bicyclists. Residents are skeptical of the ability to safely cross the boulevard, especially during rush hour traffic. They believe it is likely that traffic will disregard traffic signals and speed limits. Suggestions included separation of traffic and pedestrians, lower boulevard speeds, and reduced lanes. Local bicycle riders share a similar concern about sharing the road with aggressive traffic. Bicycle riders desire separated bike paths and protected intersections to increase safety.

5.4 Development

Much of the interest relating to development was rooted in the debate between the Practical Alternatives 4 and 5. The locals tended to desire the boulevard be on the downtown side (Practical Alternative 5) to give a buffer in between the neighborhoods as well as maximizing the available land. There was equal interest in both commercial/residential development and greenspace with trees. Some comments suggest that if the

released land is redeveloped, it should be redeveloped with historical context to maintain the spirit of the Project.

5.5 Protect Neighborhoods

Residents from local neighborhoods, mainly Lafayette Park, expressed concern over preservation of the neighborhoods east of I-375. The primary concern was increased noises from vehicles accelerating up and down a boulevard. There was a preference conveyed in the comments for the boulevard and development on the downtown side (Practical Alternative 5) to mitigate sound from the neighborhood.

5.6 History

Historical consideration remains a key interest for this Project. Comments were made suggesting any future the boulevard be named to honor the history of the area. Desire was expressed to preserve current historical resources (Christ Church and Holy Family Roman Catholic Church). A boulevard on the neighborhood side is preferred by Holy Family Roman Catholic Church because it best preserves access and parking. Lafayette Park residents also want to preserve the historical character of the neighborhoods.



6 Conclusion and Next Steps

The Public Open House presented the refined two Practical Alternatives, requested feedback, and facilitated an open dialogue between stakeholders, MDOT and the City of Detroit. A greater public understanding of the Project status and continuation of the process was achieved. Public feedback gave insight on the most important concerns for the I-375 Improvement Project. Comments consisted of concerns regarding multi-modal access, traffic and congestion, safety, protection of neighborhoods, and history.

Following the Public Open House, the team will continue to analyze the feedback received from the public, resource and regulatory agencies, and stakeholders. Findings will be presented at a Public Hearing after the release of the EA and during the public review of the document. MDOT will refine the design and progress towards a selected Preferred Alternative.