

Study Findings

Meeting #1 - Walkability and Land Use/Building Condition Survey Results

Walkability

The walkability survey included questions that asked participants to rate factors that influence how easy or difficult it is for pedestrians and cyclists to travel along the corridor. The questions addressed

- the presence, condition, and width of sidewalks
- the presence of crosswalks and ease of crossing the street
- presence of bike lanes
- behavior and speed of drivers
- ease of following safety rules
- aesthetic qualities (pleasant to walk, attractive, clean)

Overall, the survey results indicated that the southern portion of the corridor is more walkable than the northern part, although the entire corridor has substantial room for improvement (see Figure 2). Sidewalks are present in some areas, but many sections are in disrepair, are interrupted by signs or overgrown shrubbery, or are too narrow. Driver speed and behavior was generally good along the corridor. More lighting and crosswalks were noted as areas for improvement.

Land Use and Building Condition

Overall, the land use survey results indicated that the northern portion of the study area is primarily residential, while the southern portion is mostly commercial. With regard to building condition, most structures are in good condition, and most needed repairs are minor. However, there are several structures in need of major repair (see Figure 1 and 3).

FIGURE 1: SUMMARY OF LAND USE AND BUILDING CONDITION SURVEY

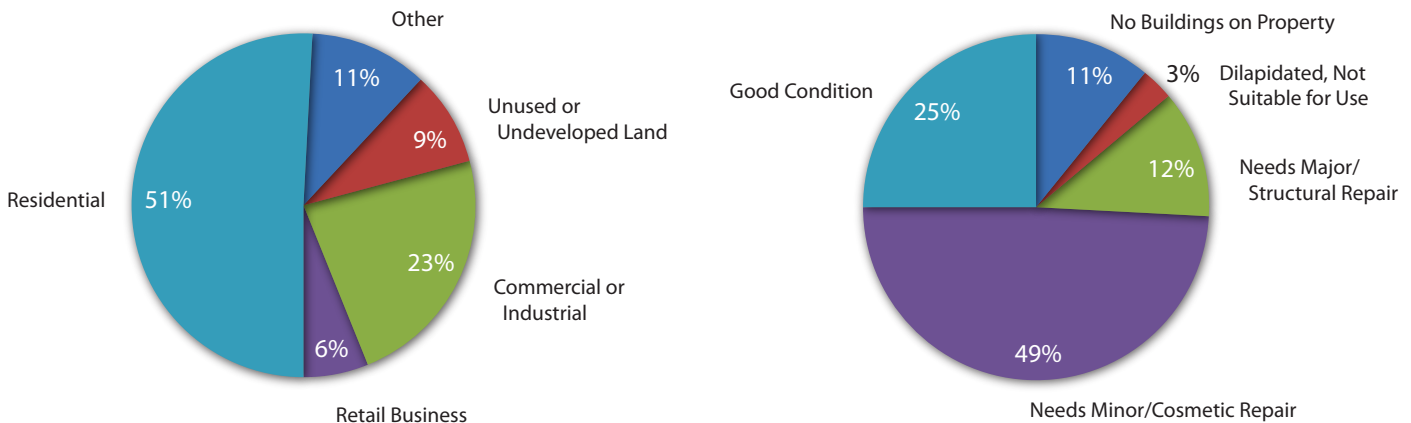
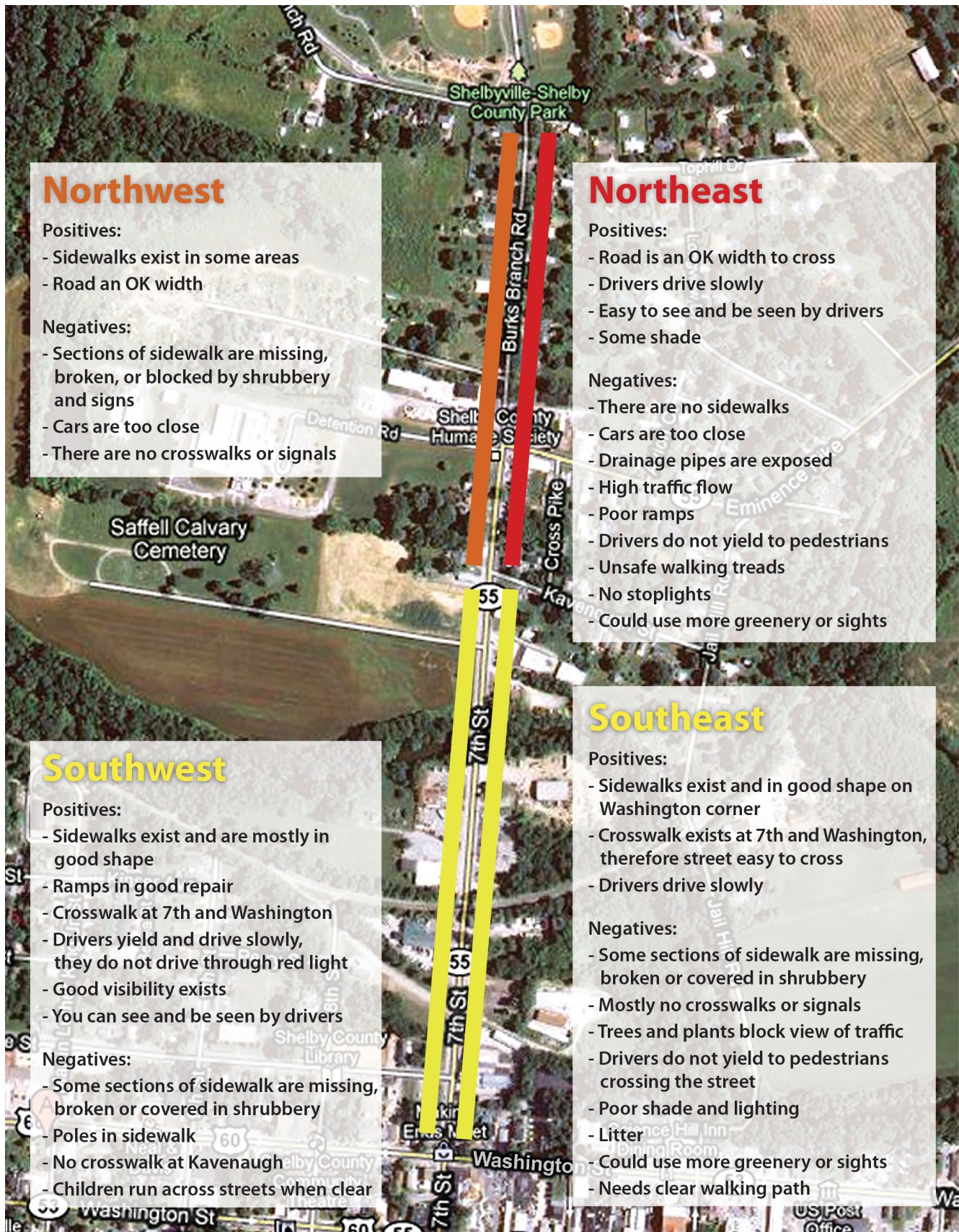


FIGURE 2: WALKABILITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS



Northwest

Positives:

- Sidewalks exist in some areas
- Road an OK width

Negatives:

- Sections of sidewalk are missing, broken, or blocked by shrubbery and signs
- Cars are too close
- There are no crosswalks or signals

Northeast

Positives:

- Road is an OK width to cross
- Drivers drive slowly
- Easy to see and be seen by drivers
- Some shade

Negatives:

- There are no sidewalks
- Cars are too close
- Drainage pipes are exposed
- High traffic flow
- Poor ramps
- Drivers do not yield to pedestrians
- Unsafe walking treads
- No stoplights
- Could use more greenery or sights

Southwest

Positives:

- Sidewalks exist and are mostly in good shape
- Ramps in good repair
- Crosswalk at 7th and Washington
- Drivers yield and drive slowly, they do not drive through red light
- Good visibility exists
- You can see and be seen by drivers

Negatives:

- Some sections of sidewalk are missing, broken or covered in shrubbery
- Poles in sidewalk
- No crosswalk at Kavanaugh
- Children run across streets when clear

Southeast

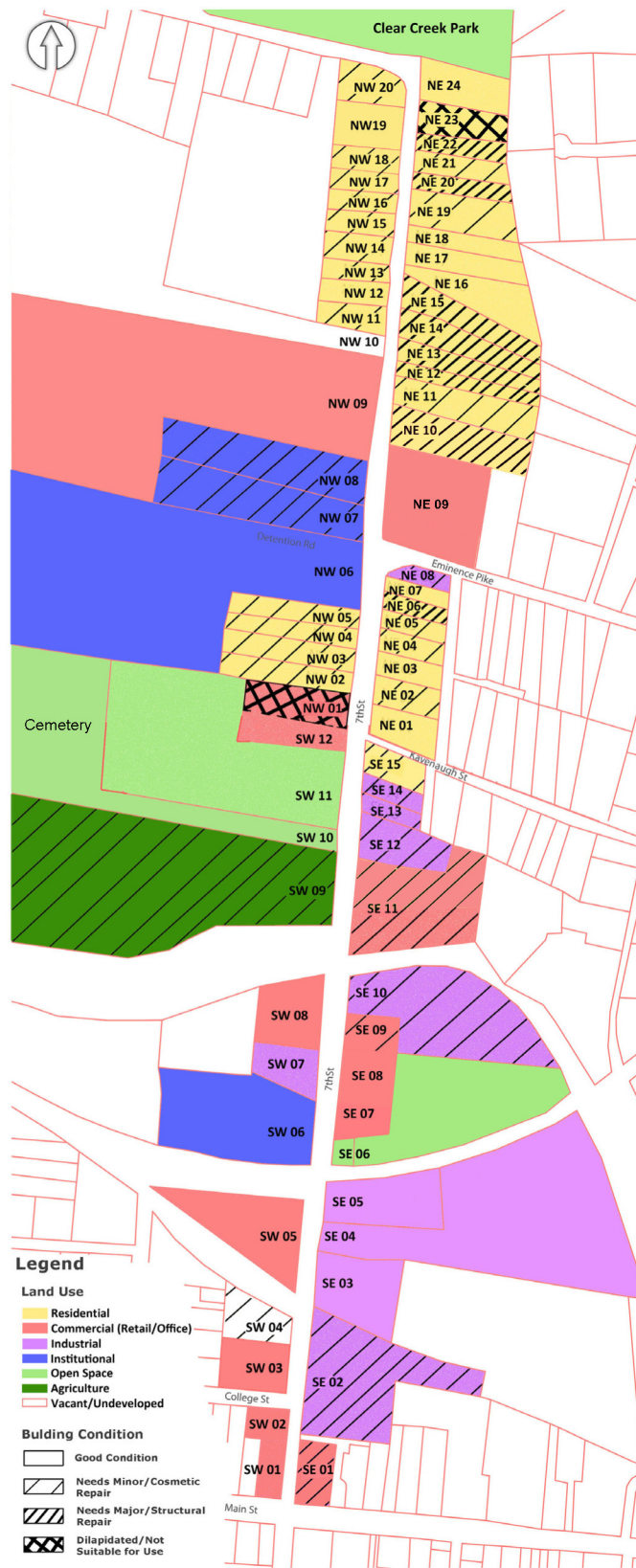
Positives:

- Sidewalks exist and in good shape on Washington corner
- Crosswalk exists at 7th and Washington, therefore street easy to cross
- Drivers drive slowly

Negatives:

- Some sections of sidewalk are missing, broken or covered in shrubbery
- Mostly no crosswalks or signals
- Trees and plants block view of traffic
- Drivers do not yield to pedestrians crossing the street
- Poor shade and lighting
- Litter
- Could use more greenery or sights
- Needs clear walking path

FIGURE 3: CURRENT LAND USE MAP



- Legend**
- Land Use**
- Residential
 - Commercial (Retail/Office)
 - Industrial
 - Institutional
 - Open Space
 - Agriculture
 - Vacant/Undeveloped
- Building Condition**
- Good Condition
 - Needs Minor/Cosmetic Repair
 - Needs Major/Structural Repair
 - Dilapidated/Not Suitable for Use

Meeting #2 - Visioning Workshop Responses and Maps

The second community meeting was conducted in two phases. The first was a visioning question and answer session with community participants in which a facilitator asked a series of six questions about the future of the corridor and participants' responses were recorded on flip charts. The second phase was a "design exercise" where the participants divided into five groups, each with a map of the study area. Each group was asked to record on the map their answers to two questions: 1) what would you like to keep the same in the corridor, and 2) what would you like to see changed, and how, in the corridor? The participant responses to the visioning question and answer session are listed below. The maps can be found in Appendix B.



Mayor presents group 1's vision plan



Presentation of group 2's vision plan



Presentation of group 3's vision plan

How would the new and improved 7th Street Corridor look?

- Sidewalks, people, lights
- Greenery, well-maintained
- Trash containers (attractive ones)
- Children crossing street safely
- No power lines visible
- Public art (integrated into sidewalks)

How would the new and improved corridor sound?

- Children
- Conversation
- Bike horns
- Runners out of breath
- Traffic
- Birds
- Water/creek
- Wind through trees
- Train whistling
- Church bells

How would the new and improved corridor smell?

- Flowers
- Food/grills
- Freshly-mown grass

How could we “measure” our improvements?

- Number of people entering/walking into park from 7th Street
- Feedback from visitors and residents
- Linear feet of sidewalks
- Property values
- How often 7th Street is used in promotions or marketing
- Number of cars on 7th Street

What are the reasons for the corridor’s current “less than perfect” condition?

- Lack of restrictions (uses, etc.)
- Lots of rentals
- Lack of enforcement
- Lack of maintenance (public and private)
- People who walk don’t have the resources to make change
- Stigma of walking

If I could change just one thing in the corridor, it would be:

- Multi-use path on both sides of road, sidewalks with drains
- Remove mailboxes on Burks Branch Road
- Work the trailhead into plan
- Remove railroad tracks
- Create green spaces: trees, lighting, etc.
- Improve railroad bridge (paint and clean)
- Rezone or simplify zoning
- Clean-up and repair properties in Snow Hill residential area (including trees)
- Planted median
- Re-routing or minimizing traffic



Presentation of group 4’s vision plan



Presentation of group 5’s vision plan

Meeting #3 - Draft Plan Feedback and Comments from Participants

This section includes a summary of the feedback and comments received from the community participants at Meeting #3 in response to the proposed plan for the study area which itself was developed in response to input received at the previous meetings. In general, the responses to tentative proposals were positive and focused on strategies for implementation of the plan's recommendations rather than changes to the plan.

- The community will support the addition of bike lanes
- Improve or accent the trailhead, which is currently on a 100-year lease from the railroad
- Focus on what can be done in the short-term, or "small gains", to make the area more aesthetically pleasing and cleaner
- A 3-way stop sign at the entrance to the park could be installed for a 6-month trial period to see if it helps solve the traffic problem at that intersection
- Additional access roads into/out of the park are a good idea
- Include "quick-fixes" or phasing of improvements
- Talk with the patio home developer (in the northwest portion of the study area) about obtaining land for a connector road through the proposed development
- Make the final PowerPoint presentation (from Meeting #3) publicly available