



Atlanta Avenue Railroad Crossing Improvements Public Workshop #4: Q&A Summary

Main Session and Pedestrian/Bicycle Discussion Group

Question/Comment	Answer	Follow-up Question/Comment	Response
<p>What is the purpose of the decorative wrought iron fence?</p>	<p>We noticed a fair number of high school students walking home from high school or going into high school in the morning. We anticipate them using the route near the road that we have depicted, and we wanted to include this fence to help direct and encourage pedestrians to cross using the facility.</p>		
<p>My concern with the crosswalk on the west side of the north intersection is the likely number of motorists turning right on red who may not look for people walking.</p>	<p>We anticipate using leading pedestrian intervals (LPIs) at this intersection. This operation has been found to reduce pedestrian conflicts with right-on-red motorists.</p> <p>Additionally, the right turn radius will be set using the smallest radius that can accommodate the intersection's design vehicle. The smaller radius will reduce turning vehicle speeds and thus reduce the potential for conflicts.</p> <p>As we develop the signal timing, we will evaluate the potential to prohibit right turns when the pedestrian button is activated.</p>		

Question/Comment	Answer	Follow-up Question/Comment	Response
<p>Would the sidewalk on the southside of the Adair/College intersection be widened?</p>	<p>We would like to widen this sidewalk but the right of way there is very constrained. There are some large GA Power transmission poles on the north side of College Avenue between College and the railroad, and these limit any roadway adjustment towards the railroad. We know there are a lot of students coming through there from Oakhurst. We do think with the new signal at Olympic Place and if alternative two or three is implemented, that we'll see more volume going through the proposed facilities and less demand on that sidewalk. Nonetheless, we will plan to widen the sidewalk, if possible.</p>		
<p>Regarding alternative #2 -- I like the idea of there being a designated space for bicyclists that is off a pedestrian path, but given that neither Howard nor College have designated bike paths, would there be specific connection points to facilitate connection to either the path on Howard or the street on College?</p>	<p>Two stage bike left turn boxes would be an alternative we would evaluate at the intersections. Alternatively, cyclists can navigate this path in the same manner as they would navigate other intersections without bike lanes on all approaches, by claiming the lane going the direction one wishes to ride. However, we know that some cyclists will be uncomfortable using the roadway and intersections. Therefore, if possible, we anticipate the sidewalk/trail facility will be maintained at 10 feet.</p>		

Question/Comment	Answer	Follow-up Question/Comment	Response
<p>Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Will there be a leading pedestrian interval at signals? 2. How will you minimize conflicts between right turning EB Howard traffic and crosswalk users? 3. Will you use cyclist detection technology at signals, rather than just “beg” buttons? 	<p>We anticipate using leading pedestrian intervals (LPIs) at this intersection. This operation has been found to reduce pedestrian conflicts with right-on-red motorists.</p> <p>Additionally, the right turn radius will be set using the smallest radius that can accommodate the intersection's design vehicle. The smaller radius will reduce turning vehicle speeds and thus reduce the potential for conflicts.</p> <p>As we develop the signal timing, we will evaluate the potential to prohibit right turns when the pedestrian button is activated.</p> <p>We may add bicycle-specific detection during final design. We will look at what type of detection is specified for each intersection (video or loop), and the capacity of the signal controller hardware to determine if this can be implemented.</p>		
<p>Is there going to be eminent domain taken on 708 and 704 College to make way for the sidewalk that curves away from the street?</p>	<p>We don't anticipate needing to acquire any private property. That doesn't mean that's an absolute no, but certainly our goal is to provide the improvements entirely within the public right of way or occupied right of way through that area.</p>	<p>I am curious about a couple of things. One is with the proximity of my driveway to this new proposed intersection. Are there going to be considerations for me to be able to make a left turn into my property and a left turn out of my property?</p>	<p>Yes. To turn into your property, the driver would use the through lane like they would with any two-lane roadway. Coming out of your driveway, for left turn out and to cross the railroad, you will be able to merge into traffic from your driveway so you shouldn't have any prohibitions on those terms.</p>

Question/Comment	Answer	Follow-up Question/Comment	Response
<p>I use the intersection as an adult cyclist and with children, it's critical to have the signalized crossing at Olympic for cyclists traveling from the south to downtown Decatur (option 3) what is the con to option 3?</p> <p><i>Clarification: what are the reasons alternative 2 or 3 would not be selected, considering they seem to be a "no brainer" for cyclist accommodation?</i></p>	<p>The challenge we have is crossing the railroad itself and the width that would be allowed by CSX. They may restrict us to a narrower crossing than would allow for facilities on both sides of the connector. We are planning to ask CSX to allow placement of the sidewalk/trail facility outside the RR crossing gates.</p>	<p>I think short segments of bike lane, like what is proposed on alternative two, can actually be more dangerous for cyclists because you're leaving an environment where you're in the roadway on Howard or College and then cars and the cyclists have to understand that now you're in a bike lane and you're about to come right back out of a bike lane. From my experience, and I'm a hardcore road cyclist, I'd rather there not be a bike lane and I would just be in the travel lane because I think it just creates a conflict.</p>	<p>I would encourage you to look at the options that we are evaluating for Howard Avenue refined. We have a buffered bike lane option there and a cycle track as well and if those are favored, then that might bring alternative two a little bit more benefit.</p>
<p>Why have you not created a cross walk at Adair and College on the east bound side of the intersection?</p>	<p>That's to provide queuing space on the westbound approach of the extension and for the purpose of signal phasing and timing. The pedestrian crossing would occur concurrent with the left turning vehicles from the extension to reduce the potential for conflicts. We do not typically place a crosswalk across this movement.</p>	<p>So, you're leaving a signal at Olympic place and you're essentially prioritizing the movement of cars there over the movement of pedestrians at that intersection because you're going to ask those traveling westbound to go an entire block to be able to cross the road, basically, or cross on the west side then cross Adair. I understand car-based engineering thinking, and that's essentially what this is, I get it.</p>	<p>Only four parcels may experience additional detours with the crosswalks placed as shown on alternatives 2 and 3: those between the crosswalks at the extension and at Olympic Place.</p> <p>If alternative 1 is selected, pedestrians coming from or going to the east would be required to make a slight detour to cross on the west side of the connector. This is typical for (predominantly) T-intersections as it prevents left turning motorists who have no other potential conflicts from crossing the WALK controlled pedestrian movement. Because College is a State route, we also have to comply with GDOT criteria.</p>

Question/Comment	Answer	Follow-up Question/Comment	Response
<p>How will you handle cycling transitions to facilities on Howard under alternative 2?</p>	<p>We anticipate those cyclists using the path will continue using the path. If you're a cyclist and in the bike lane on that crossing, if you're going to go east and if you are comfortable in the roadway, you can make your turn and merge into the eastbound traffic. The transition area would be dashed, that is the appropriate marking for a lane change so you would be cycling as a motorist on Howard. If you wish to go on to the pathway, then there is a truncated dome area where you'll easily be able to turn and go east on Howard. A similar technique would be used for turning left.</p>	<p>It's just a funky connection point, particularly if you go with the buffered bike lanes on both sides, which is standard practice. You don't have a lot of turning conflicts in this particular situation so you can probably do the two-lane cycle track without a huge issue, because I think the only conflicts, I can think of are at the Valero station. Traditionally, you'd want to have your buffered bike lanes on either side of the road because of conflicts and if you did that in this case, then you're going to have some significant issues at this intersection trying to connect those two things. So particularly given the fact that you've got crosswalks and no sort of acknowledgment that cyclists might be using the same facility and especially assuming they're going to follow pedestrian rules, I don't think it really answers the question as it relates to the two way [bike lane] facilities.</p>	<p>I think the alternative that we end up using for the connector is going to be influenced heavily by any changes on Howard. I would encourage you to get your input in on those facility types, because I think that will really influence which alternative we use. I think we are probably going to end up with alternative three but again, it depends on what the community prefers on Howard Avenue. Bike lanes are a tricky thing, and this is a situation where right now we have shared use paths.</p>

Question/Comment	Answer	Follow-up Question/Comment	Response
<p>Have you done an assessment of the pedestrian storage needs before and after school at the path crossings?</p>	<p>We have done observations there and we have an idea of the cohort size. That's one of the things we'll be doing as we move into the pedestrian design emerging from here to ensure that we have the adequate storage given the cycle length and the phasing that we have there. We do know from direct observation that the crossing guards have done an excellent job of shepherding the students through there. and the students are extremely compliant with the crossing guards in that area. Right now, there are probably numerous crossing guards that assist with the navigation of the students through that area. We believe fewer, but some, will be needed with this new configuration. We do not have any real confinements on the north side of College Avenue, or either side of Howard Avenue. We've got plenty of real estate to work with, with the possible exception of the south side of College Avenue, where we're constrained with right of way.</p>		
<p>What is the difference in right of way over the tracks between [alternatives] 2 and 3?</p>	<p>Alternative two will require thirty-eight-foot gates and that leaves a one- or two-foot buffer from the gate's vertical element and the outside edge of the wide sidewalk. For alternative three, we'd be using thirty-one-foot gates there with the same one or two feet of horizontal separation from the vertical portion of the gate to the backside of the shortest path. We are planning to ask CSX to allow placement of the sidewalk/trail facility outside the RR crossing gates. This will allow a sidewalk/trail facility of 10 feet and allow us to fit the RR gates comfortably.</p>		

Question/Comment	Answer	Follow-up Question/Comment	Response
<p>Do you have an idea as to how long the construction would take, and how long each intersection and road would be detoured or out of use?</p>	<p>One of the big benefits of this crossing location is that it allows the functioning of the existing crossing while this new one is being built so there's really not going to be long closures or detours occurring with that. It's going to be part of our phasing plan. We're not anticipating any vertical change in College Avenue; we may have some change in Howard, but we will be looking into that and have more information probably later this spring and certainly next summer. Our goal is to be able to let the project out for bids at the end of next year. I think we're going to know a lot more then, but we will be posting the information as we have it on the project website and we're making periodic presentations and updates to city commissioners.</p>	<p>I'm just thinking that those two new intersections are still going to have to be detoured while they're made. I understand that we will have the existing land and everything still there.</p>	<p>We anticipate we're going to know more on those details in the summertime. At this point, we're focusing on bicycle pedestrian accommodation and then we'll be moving into the 60% plans, presenting that to the city commission, and then the 100% plans. That's the time we'll be doing the maintenance of traffic plans and at that time we'll have a better picture on those topics. There will be some detours and some closing with this location, but it will be minimal compared to other intersections.</p>
<p>Is there a reason why the shared use PATH is not 10 ft (instead of 8) in options 2 and 3?</p>	<p>Alternative two does not have shared use paths, these are technically sidewalks and the bikeway use is primarily going to be accommodated via the bike lane. That does not mean that you can't bicycle on the path, but for the purposes of the design and permitting with CSX, this is the configuration and the nomenclature we would be using. For alternative three, these are indeed shared use paths, and they would have to be narrowed down so that we would be able to comply with CSX's maximum sidewalk width and bikeway width proportions. These are what we anticipate we can get approved by CSX. We haven't submitted plans yet, but they have reviewed the concept location and are good with that. Now the details will start with the vertical and the horizontal design.</p>		

Question/Comment	Answer	Follow-up Question/Comment	Response
On alternative 2, would the bike lane be a protected bike lane?	If you mean protected in terms of barrier separation, then there is not enough width. This configuration is at the maximum gate width of thirty-eight feet so this would be the configuration with a single stripe. I would note that the motor vehicle speeds in this area are going to be fairly slow because this is a very short connection so the need for buffering is going to be minimal.		
Could we include a speed hump crossing for pedestrians to cross Olympic Place from the alley trail? This is happening all the time, it's the way pedestrians cross Olympic.	This should be possible.		
Has any discussion occurred about paving the Olympic Alley Trail?	This should be possible.		
I like the location of Ped Crossings on the south side. Do we need all 4 crosswalks on the north side?	We typically place crossings on all four approaches to a signalized intersection. This is particularly true when there is the potential for crossings to occur on all approaches, as is the case here.		
Are there no alternatives for the motor vehicle lanes? The drastic widening of College and Howard is troubling.	During the previous public meetings, we heard multiple comments regarding the storage length for the left turn from College onto Mead. Many people also expressed concerns about traffic waiting for the railroad backing up onto either Howard Avenue or College Avenue. The lanes added on Howard and College were designed to minimize the addition of pavement width while addressing the storage concerns.		

Question/Comment	Answer	Follow-up Question/Comment	Response
I just saw the alley between Mead Rd and Olympic Place (Google maps). I feel uncomfortable about making this into a significant thoroughfare for people walking. Would it be improved if that alternative is chosen?	The Olympic trail is already in place and improvements to make it more walkable and bikeable can be considered.		
What is the cost of each of the three alternatives? All 3 have nice connections from north to south. We know a number of bikers don't use either the bike path or the protected (by planters) bike lanes but instead use the northern side of Howard, e.g., to travel Howard OR College, ignoring bike paths.	We have not developed cost estimates for the alternatives at this concept phase and will likely only develop one for the chosen alternative. The alternative will most likely be chosen based on functionality at the intersection and level of safety.		
What is the width of the McDonough Street RR gate?	Each gate is approximately 31 feet as measured from an aerial.		
Was any consideration made about possibly adding bike lanes along a portion of College Avenue? If any paving is being installed along College, it would be relatively easy to add extra width.	College Avenue is restricted by homes on the south and by large transmission lines on the north. This severely limits our ability to add shoulders on College.		
It appears that this plan would not change the parking along Howard Avenue. Is that correct?	We expect to maintain or increase the parking on the north side of Howard Avenue.		

Question/Comment	Answer	Follow-up Question/Comment	Response
<p>Can you provide historical and/or current ped/bike use and injury data for this area? And potential impact of each alternative on these types of use and injury?</p>	<p>We do not have any historic pedestrian and bicycle volume data. Crash data is available. Reported incidents are generally related to turning motorists across the expansive intersection areas on Howard Avenue. All alternatives will reduce the conflict areas. Additionally, the removal of the skew at the intersections will provide for slower and more detectable potential conflicts, making it easier to avoid collisions. Signalization will also be altered, likely to include leading pedestrian intervals, shown to reduce turning conflicts.</p>		
<p>Does this project offer an opportunity to improve the sidewalk along the south side of College Ave?</p>	<p>With the exception of the area directly across from the connector, we do not anticipate moving the curblin on the south side of College Avenue. This limits the improvements we can make beyond basic ADA compliance improvements.</p>		
<p>It looks like you are adding a bump out on the west sidewalk on Olympic...Is that intended to slow traffic turning south onto Olympic?</p>	<p>That bump appears on the survey. It likely represents existing debris and vegetation. While this will be cleaned up, we do not anticipate modifying this radius.</p>		
<p>It appears that the "planters bike lane" along the south side of Howard Avenue will be removed around this intersection. Is that correct?</p>	<p>This is correct.</p>		

Question/Comment	Answer	Follow-up Question/Comment	Response
<p>Is there a reason why we would not go with those options (alternatives 2 and 3) given the additional safety and conveniences?</p>	<p>These alternatives were designed to accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists while also complying with CSX gate widths. So while alternatives 2 and 3 may provide additional safety and convenience, it is dependent, in part, on CSX approval. We are planning to ask CSX to allow placement of the sidewalk/trail facility outside the RR crossing gates. This will allow a sidewalk/trail facility of 10 feet and allow us to fit the RR gates comfortably.</p>		
<p>Wide intersections are especially dangerous for people on bikes, in wheelchairs, and on foot. The widening of Howard and College to four lanes at the northwest and southwest sections is extremely troubling and will present dangers to all users, especially the schoolkids. This is a significant step backwards. I am shocked that you present no alternatives to this but only minor alternatives that don't address the main issue: the dangerous widening of the streets and intersections. We need to rethink the motor vehicle lanes.</p>	<p>During the previous public meetings, we heard multiple comments regarding the storage length for the left turn from College onto Mead. Many people also expressed concerns about traffic waiting for the railroad backing up onto either Howard Avenue or College Avenue. The lanes added on Howard and College were designed to minimize the addition of pavement width while addressing the storage concerns.</p> <p>The designs are all being developed to reduce turning speeds, accommodate stacking motor vehicles, minimize increased pavement, and improved angles to reduce the potential for conflicts.</p>		
<p>Option #2 or 3 is a must because it allows for pedestrians coming from the east to the west and desiring to get to the north side of Howard to only execute 2 crossings. We need to reduce the number of times people must cross the road.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>		

Question/Comment	Answer	Follow-up Question/Comment	Response
No bike lane that is unprotected (i.e., that lacks physical separation from motor vehicles) should be envisioned for projects of this type in 2020.	Thank you for your comment.		
I vote for alternative # 2!	Thank you for your comment.		
I do not think we need to keep adding to the width of the cross and should allow for bikes to utilize the path as provided in Option #3 vs adding more width to the crossing.	Thank you for your comment.		
Offhand, alternative 3 looks most appealing with respect to pedestrian/biking flow.	Thank you for your comment.		
I'm also appreciative of the level of detail you have given us on these design alternatives. This is a GREAT workshop/hearing! Thank you!	Thank you for your comment.		
Pedestrians and bicyclists are DEEPLY affected by numbers of lanes. Please address my comments here.	We are reviewing all comments and incorporating them to the degree we can into the plans.		
Will you address drainage issues at Olympic so pedestrians do not walk through puddles when it's raining?	This project will be designed to mitigate additional drainage needs associated with the improvements being made and, where possible, improve existing drainage problems.		
I use this intersection regularly as an adult cyclist, and with children, I think it is critically important to have the access from Olympic via the options #2 and #3.	Thank you for your comment.		

Question/Comment	Answer	Follow-up Question/Comment	Response
Vehicular cycling really isn't an accepted engineering practice anymore.	Thank you for your comment. We are putting in protected bike lanes where possible.		
When Hugh Saxon showed me this plan a few weeks ago, that green area to the west of Mead in the middle of College seems wasted to me. There is only room for possibly two or three cars to be in the queue for the left turn eastbound onto the Adair crossing light. He had said that he might consider making a "do not block the box" at Mead and continue the left turn west past the intersection.	We anticipate a "do not block" treatment will be included at this intersection.		
The advantage of the bike lanes is that it gets you a bit more right of way.	Thank you for your comment.		
Alternative 2 and 3 are much better from a cycling perspective because it allows a protected access to the bike path by using Mead/Olympic Alley.	Thank you for your comment.		
Thank you! I think I like alternative 3 the best. Would be great to try to get the 10 feet at the track crossings.	Thank you for your comment.		



Traffic Calming and Howard Avenue Refined Discussion Group



LANDIS EVANS
+ PARTNERS
formerly Sprinkle Consulting

Question/Comment	Answer	Follow-up Question/Comment	Response
<p>Will 2 lanes be maintained for much of Howard Ave? It looked like there would be an additional third lane. If that is only a turn lane, what is the extent and how would it affect the buffer lanes?</p>	<p>Only in the areas of the intersection, where there are turn lanes, are we looking at having to remove the buffer completely. On the north side of the road, we could either put in a buffer or pull the curb down and the intent of that is to provide better sight lines for people who are exiting Adair and largely making that right turn. We will be able to maintain most of the buffers but there may be some very short sections where it is eliminated on one side or the other.</p>		
<p>Do these midblock cycle tracks et. al. just disappear when you get to the intersection at Adair? It looks like they just get pushed aside in favor of widening Adair to 4 lanes which is exactly what our neighborhood fought hard to eliminate a few years ago.</p>	<p>When we started looking at the alternatives for bicycle and pedestrian facilities along the mid-block, what would have to happen at the intersection is that we would design a transition from the roadway back up to the path so bikes and peds wouldn't exactly disappear from the roadway but a transition would be designed to allow people who are using that facility to move from the road smoothly up onto the PATH system and then once you get to the intersection, it would probably be moved back to the road for a little bit past the Valero Station and then be moved back up to the pathway.</p>	<p>Why? It does not seem justified just to accommodate traffic for one hour during rush hour</p>	<p>The reason that right turn lane was designed that way was for the railroad crossing. When we did the analysis, we looked at the frequency and the time of railroad crossings as well as the potential storage we would need for the right turners to queue up when the railroad crossing was occurring. That, in addition to the peak hour traffic, is what was used to set that right turn lane length. That was also based upon discussions with Georgia DOT and the Railroad.</p>
<p>Are the terracotta planters self-watering?</p>	<p>Yes, if that is the scheme that goes forward.</p>		

Question/Comment	Answer	Follow-up Question/Comment	Response
Would you remove parking instead of buffer where you need a left turn?	The intent is to maintain the parking where it currently exists. We believe we can do that by shifting the road slightly to the south. So as of right now, the plan is to maintain or expand the existing parking.	You've got a situation where you've got a left turn, not at the signalized intersection, but at an unsignalized intersection. I'm assuming those left turns remain. If those turns do remain, then the buffer for whatever you do for accommodating cyclists to pull them off the path, will that go away where you've got unsignalized left turns?	At the unsignalized left turns, the only one that would be modified is the one at Atlanta. There's already a left turn lane there. We still have this buffer north of the Valero Station and this is the area where we would be moving the facility. There is no parking here, so we would be shifting the trail into this buffer area.
How do you plan to address curb cuts at Valero?	There appears to be an opportunity to limit the curb cuts at the Valero station.		
Have you done a parking study?	We have not done a parking study yet.		
So, you are reinserting parking and removing left turns?	The area that we looked at for our study just included the areas where there are currently buffers and we don't see removing any turn lanes in those areas. The only place we would actually be matching the existing roadway conditions are just to the east and west of the immediate railroad crossing. That would tie into the lane lines of what's out there right now.		

Question/Comment	Answer	Follow-up Question/Comment	Response
<p>Adair is fairly narrow and it's currently difficult for cars to pass. Will parking be eliminated especially near the intersection?</p>	<p>Theo Petritsch (Civil Engineering Consultant): If you are talking about on Adair, we had not planned on it. There are some requirements that prohibit parking near a signalized intersection. We would probably clarify what that distance is but unless strong recommendations are made by people that they want parking removed upon that street, I do not know that we would be removing any more than we must to comply with the law.</p> <p>David Junger (City of Decatur Assistant City Manager): It probably would not be too inconsistent with what is there today, given that an existing stop sign is there and there are distances that you're not supposed to walk within a stop sign so I would anticipate the proposed facility being very similar.</p>		
<p>What is the proposed crossing distance at Adair and Howard? How is it changing from current conditions?</p> <p>Same question for Adair and College going south and turning west?</p>	<p>We will be lengthening the crossing distance for the pedestrian at the Howard/Adair intersection from about 30 to 40 feet (between the white stripes) in the North-South direction but curb to curb is currently 50 feet of walking distance which would change to 40 feet in the proposed conditions. On College/Adair, the crossing distance is going to get larger, but it will be signalized.</p>		
<p>Will we be able to view and weigh in on the alternatives you presented?</p>	<p>Yes. That is the reason we're having this session. Any comments you wish to make, please make them in writing. Although this video is going to be maintained forever, if you can make them in writing, we would appreciate it.</p>		

Question/Comment	Answer	Follow-up Question/Comment	Response
<p>I am also concerned about traffic backing up on Adair due to the red light. It is a narrow street with driveways, street parking on one side, and pedestrians. Have you looked at this?</p>	<p>The entire system of intersections has been looked at and timed with peak hour traffic volumes to see how far traffic is going to back up, and what the maximum delay at the intersection is going to be. We have looked at the other intersection compared to the existing stop condition that's out there right now. While we would be fibbing if we told you exactly what the queues were, we can say that they were either very close or less with a traffic signal than they are under stop control, particularly in the peak hours.</p>		
<p>Will the pedestrian islands in the middle of the crosswalks on Howard be maintained? This was one of the best aspects of the recent traffic calming improvement project on Howard for ped safety?</p>	<p>Yes, it would be our plan to keep the road crossing distances to the two lanes that we have narrowed at Greenwood Circle as well as Drexel Avenue.</p>	<p>That's good because it helps when you're crossing with kids to be able to have a halfway stop.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>
<p>Is there a "don't block the box" for both south signals? And are there pedestrian lights at both signals?</p>	<p>Everywhere you see a pedestrian crossing, there will be a pedestrian signal. With respect to the "don't block the box" signal, it is very likely we will be putting one at the Olympic intersection. We will also be considering one at the Adair intersection as well as College/Mead depending on GDOT approval.</p>		

Question/Comment	Answer	Follow-up Question/Comment	Response
<p data-bbox="107 142 447 201">Will cyclist detection technology be used at signals?</p> <p data-bbox="107 240 447 298">Will there be a leading pedestrian interval at signals?</p>	<p data-bbox="485 142 976 654">Theo: It might be time of day specific for the leading pedestrian interval (LPI). It's possible that we'll look at putting one of those in during school periods with kids crossing the street. We'll be discussing the operations with the city when we do that so it's very possible we could use LPIs. With respect to the bicycle detection, there will be a way for bicyclists to be detected to cross, whether it's video, the new infrared, or if we have to mark loops on the pavement. If there's an exclusive bike lane, if we have to specify a secondary loop in the bike lane, although we shouldn't need that, bicyclists will be detected in this section through one technology or another.</p> <p data-bbox="485 693 976 979">David: Historically, the City owns and operates the indicators in Decatur. We have implemented new technology on Tally and Columbia, it's the latest technology infrared detection for the pedestrian crossing. Similar technologies can be implemented here, it is definitely something that we're interested in to reduce the touch points on pedestrian poles.</p>	<p data-bbox="993 142 1463 201">I am a little concerned about the LPI being restricted to just the school traffic.</p>	<p data-bbox="1501 142 1808 168">The LPI will be running 24/7</p>

Question/Comment	Answer	Follow-up Question/Comment	Response
<p>the planters in the diagram are on the opposite side of the road currently. is the plan to move the planters to the north side?</p>	<p>We are planning to have them stay where they are [if the planters are to remain]. You have to have a certain distance away from the road before you put an obstacle and we don't want to put something where cars are going to get damaged if they're traveling at speed. So, with some of the planters, depending on the size we can use, and type of vegetation we want to put in them, it may be possible to put them on one or both sides of the street at some locations. So, while they're shown on the south side of the street [in the Terracotta Planters Midblock diagram], we could conceivably put some on the north side of the street as well.</p>	<p>On the first diagram you showed (Howard/ Adair Streetscape alternative: striped shoulder with existing planters). It was showing the planters on the north.</p>	<p>At mid-block, the lanes are going to match where they are today. At this intersection, we are pulling the lanes to the south to provide more sight distance for Adair street exiting on to Howard and the planters would be moved to the north side.</p>
<p>Will there be parking blocks between the round planters as are currently in place between the rectangular planters? Those prevent riders from re-entering the roadway from the bikeway.</p>	<p>That is something we could look at and discuss. I think that we need to provide opportunities for bicyclists to move back and forth but we may rearrange them somewhat if the city decides that. If the city has decided they need them and they put them there for a reason, then we can rearrange them to make sure that on the approaches to intersections where a bunch of cyclists would likely want to relocate to the roadway, that we make it easier for them to relocate to do so.</p>	<p>I prefer to see fewer of them. It's very hazardous to me to be riding in that bikeway and get back on to Howard to turn on to Commerce. I have to really be very careful here that I don't run into something.</p>	<p>There's no reason that it has to wait for any design to be done. Mr. Junger just heard it and he can send it over to his people and maybe they can take one or two of those out for you or something similar.</p>

Question/Comment	Answer	Follow-up Question/Comment	Response
<p>If we opt for protected/buffered bike lanes on Howard midblock, what happens to those lanes when they reach the intersection? To be safe, they would need to continue through the intersection.</p>	<p>If we put buffered bike lanes on the roadway, they will continue through the intersection and will continue to a reasonable point. You can't have a bike lane at the approach side of an intersection because that makes you merge to the intersection; we won't ask anybody to do that. We understand that the bike lanes have to go to a point where termination makes sense, likely at a traffic signal where we could route the bicyclists. We would continue on for a short distance to the intersection, but we would give bicyclists an opportunity to move back onto the path and let them know that their bike lane is disappearing after the intersection. We will give them the opportunity to ride continuing in the street or to move back up onto the path system.</p>	<p>I really am concerned about the intersection, especially the new Adair intersection, which is so wide with basically four lanes on the west side there. That's going to be very dangerous for people on bikes and on foot, especially that right turn lane when motorists would be heading south from Howard. So, we really need to think about those intersections in terms of how to make sure that people can get through them safely</p>	<p>They can't run the through lane at the same time as we're running a right turn lane. That's not allowed. This is all going to be signalized and it will be appropriately phased to prevent conflicting movements.</p>
<p>Is there perhaps an opportunity to increase the width of the shoulder on the north side of Howard near the intersection with Drexel Avenue? (Right now, it is quite minimal.)</p>	<p>We're definitely considering how the corridor will look with these options. The intersection of Drexel Avenue could definitely be considered. We could push those travel lanes to the south a little bit to create more of a buffer at the intersection of Drexel.</p>	<p>I don't want to be a stickler about every little detail, but it seems like that one property right there on the corner is very tight.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>
<p>It would be great to have bike lanes on both the north and south side (north side in particular because it is currently without a lane and leads directly to MARTA). Is there enough room to have a parking-protected bike lane on the north side (in addition to the southside bike lane)?</p>	<p>We'll have to look at it. It's a good suggestion. We're going to want to maintain the parking for the people who want it at the Friends' building and people like that along the north side of the roadway, but we can certainly look to see if a bikeway behind the parking is viable.</p>		

Question/Comment	Answer	Follow-up Question/Comment	Response
<p>On the north side of Howard, just west of Adair, parking spaces allow a little parking for the Quaker Meeting. In the current design, do those parking spaces remain?</p>	<p>Yes, we are not removing any of that, we have designed this, so we don't have to remove any of the parking. We may shift one, but we maintain the same number of parking spaces for the Friends Meeting on the north side of the road. We recognize that on-street parking is a premium and it's something we don't want to reduce at all.</p>		
<p>Can we make the painted 'medians' more permanent with rubber options or paved raised level?</p>	<p>Right now, they're painted areas with a pedestrian crossing sign. We're interested in options like that, creating a more permanent midblock crosswalk for pedestrians.</p>		
<p>Will there be curb cuts to allow travel between the "planter-protected lane" (which is not continuous) and the off-road trail?</p>	<p>There will be a way to get to and from that facility from the PATH trail, at least at the end points, or there may be some driveways you could use east of the intersection. For instance, for a two-way cycle track, there will be a ramp prior to the intersection so you will be able to access the path from the roadway and the roadway from the path, at least at the end of the facilities and every driveway.</p>	<p>I'm picturing it with the current protected path which will disappear at the intersection itself. That was my concern, that it not disappear and leave anyone unable to access it from the bikeway and back.</p>	<p>we will provide a ramp, particularly where we are eliminating space on the road, to get people back up to the path. That's a treatment that's been used in numerous places around the country, the cultural trail and Indianapolis comes to mind immediately, but Australia has also done that. We would absolutely move people from the roadway back up to the path prior to eliminating any facility on the roadway.</p>

Question/Comment	Answer	Follow-up Question/Comment	Response
<p>Where are you realistically planning for chicanes?</p>	<p>Any traffic calming effort that would be done along the local roads is a collaborative effort with the community. I can tell you that while Adair and Mead are both very narrow roads, Landis Evans just did a very narrow road and we put a chicane which actually narrowed the roadway down to one lane through the chicane so it's possible, but it's going to be something that's going to have to be worked out with the local community. What traffic calming treatments, what location, and along what road will be something that will have to be worked out with the community and be appropriate for the specific location on the roadway.</p>		
<p>Is it possible to get more of a buffer on the north side at Greenwood and Howard? Also, it would be great to have a bike lane on the north side.</p>	<p>We cannot say at this time. We are certainly willing to look at it.</p> <p>It's definitely something we've heard since we implemented the road project, and it's something we thought a lot about. We want to make sure that anything that we do on the periphery of the project is consistent and complements the project.</p>	<p>It's just that the sidewalk between Greenwood and the next intersection, where the businesses and the nursery school are over there is very narrow. If there could be a buffer on the north side anywhere over there, we would greatly appreciate it.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>

Question/Comment	Answer	Follow-up Question/Comment	Response
<p>I would like to understand when or if there are actually any traffic calming measures planned.</p>	<p>Theo: The answer is right now there is not. That would be an effort that would be undertaken separately. This study was not designed to incorporate that. Those issues came up after the study was started so that would be a different traffic calming evaluation undertaken by the city.</p> <p>David: As we proceed with implementing this intersection's improvements, we will continue to monitor traffic on Mead and Adair. We are happy to engage with the residents along their street if they've got additional concerns and we can walk through our typical traffic calming process. If the resident petition is required, we will guide you through that process on any type of traffic calming improvements.</p>		
<p>Why is the turning radius so loose at Howard and Adair moving south from the east bound lane?</p>	<p>The turning radii will be designed to be as small as possible while still accommodating the intersection design vehicle</p>		
<p>Will the terracotta planters have a plastic liner? If not, the plants will dry out very quickly.</p>	<p>More accurately, they are terracotta-colored planters. They are plastic and are similar to those shown in the plan view alternative for a striped shoulder with existing planters (see Traffic Calming Presentation).</p>		
<p>It can't be (in reference to the crosswalk length being shorter in proposed conditions). You are crossing three lanes of traffic under current conditions.</p>	<p>The length of the <i>crosswalk</i> is the same or reduced. However, the intersection will now be controlled with traffic and pedestrian signals.</p>		

Question/Comment	Answer	Follow-up Question/Comment	Response
Just a suggestion to tighten the angles of these turns though I'm sure GDOT isn't supportive. This would slow traffic at the intersection.	The turning radii will be designed to be as small as possible while still accommodating the intersection design vehicle		
Option D removes sightlines for cyclists in the bikeway who may want to reenter the roadway.	Whichever alternative is selected, adequate sight distances will be provided for all users on the approaches to conflict areas.		
I like the mid-block alternative of the two-way cycle track with the concrete curb or planters protecting cyclists from motorists.	Thank you for your comment.		
Appropriately phased? The turn lanes are dangerous. We need to think very carefully about them.	<p>The turning radii will be designed to be as small as possible while still accommodating the intersection design vehicle. The intersections will all be right angles. These two features will reduce turning speeds under what are currently prevalent with traffic turning at either of the two skewed locations.</p> <p>The phasing referred to includes leading pedestrian intervals which have been shown to reduce conflicts, and possibly on-demand no-right-on-red signs when pedestrians/bicyclists are present.</p>		
I dislike two-way cycle tracks because motorists crossing them must look two ways at once. please don't install them.	Thank you for your comment.		
I do not support the addition of bike lanes...no one uses the current one, eliminate as much pavement as possible.	Thank you for your comment.		

Question/Comment	Answer	Follow-up Question/Comment	Response
I would like to clarify that people do use the bike lanes, but with the option of the path they aren't using what's there currently.	Thank you for your comment.		



Streetscape and Amenities Discussion Group



LANDIS EVANS
+ PARTNERS
formerly Sprinkle Consulting

Question/Comment	Answer	Follow-up Question/Comment	Response
Over the last couple of years, the planters have become a butt of jokes. I understand the need for such traffic calming devices. Is it possible that the lanes on Howard Avenue can actually be reduced to eliminate the need for the planters?	Our goal is to minimize the width of the lanes as much as possible and to enhance the streetscape. The planters can be removed, it's an open discussion at this point and we're certainly interested in hearing the community's input. In the traffic calming section, there will be a further discussion of how the lanes on Howard can be utilized as well as that remnant paved area.		
Is it possible to include Beecatur in this planning?	Yes, in fact our arborist, Kay Evanovich, is very involved in Beecatur and we've looked at opportunities throughout the city and encouraged bee habitat in the cemetery and legacy park. I think this could be a fine opportunity to encourage bee habitat.	If I could just emphasize that I would really like to see that be a substantial project, not just a little bit of consultation, if it is at all possible. This is an amazing opportunity to have a large swath of planting space that could really be a source of pride for the city of Decatur. As people drive into Decatur, we could even get with the Roslyn Carter Project, which is promoting large mass plantings along roadsides. I just wanted to ask that you consider that. Thank you.	This is actually a terrific opportunity in general to add green space to Decatur. There would be quite a bit of pavement being removed when this project goes forward and a great opportunity to improve the landscape and streetscape in the whole corridor. We're lucky to have a railroad corridor that is almost like a parkway. It is a limited amenity because of the railroad regulations for use, but as an open space and an opportunity to plant, it's very generous.
Is the 6' decorative fence just for the "refurbished" section?	It is going to be limited to this intersection. The extent of the decorative fence that's proposed will have to do with the construction budget but also trying to minimize the number of pedestrians crossing outside of the intersection. We're going to look carefully at the length of the fencing and with additional planting, help move people towards the Adair street crossing.	Would a four-foot fence result in the same thing? It just seems friendlier than six feet.	Our concern is with kids wanting to climb the fence. We are concerned with the aesthetics of that as well, so our goal is to have some proposed planting in front of the fence so it doesn't look just like a stark fence out on the middle of the railroad corridor. We can have a further discussion on the height of the fence with the city and if you and your community feel that four feet is more appropriate, I'm sure the city would be open to discussing that further.

Question/Comment	Answer	Follow-up Question/Comment	Response
<p>I'm assuming there will be "minimal" changes, if any, to the area to the west. (I'm very okay with that). Am I correct in this assumption?</p>	<p>There is minimal amount of improvements that are proposed to the west of the railroad crossing. While there will be some grading impacts that may occur, our goal is to minimize any impact to existing tree canopy, and we'll be looking at that very closely. There may be some drainage improvements that need to occur, as well as some additional landscape enhancements that will be proposed. The PATH Trail may also have to be slightly modified to meet the proposed new Adair Street intersection.</p>	<p>Yeah, that's great for me because I just love that great big open expanse of green grass. I think that's a great opportunity for Beecatur type stuff and for some creativity there. I just love sort of the simpleness and the expanse of that grass and the big trees.</p>	
<p>Is there a plan to add streetlights on W Howard Ave between Commerce Drive and Atlanta Ave? It is very dark due to the trees at the moment.</p>	<p>If you're talking about between Commerce and Atlanta, that's a little bit different streetscape than at the Atlanta Avenue Crossing. It's possible we will add streetscape lighting to the commercial area where the actual office is, but we would want to look at our regular street light program for the residential neighborhood along Howard between, say, Greenwood Circle and Commerce Drive. We can look at that independently of this project. If we need the lighting along that corridor, that's something we can look at as a standalone project.</p>		
<p>The Quaker Meeting house has used the small bits of parking along Howard Avenue just west of Adair. This proposal removes that parking, correct?</p>	<p>Most of the alternatives presented maintain parking or provide the opportunity to expand parking. The alternatives shown in this session, without bike facilities on both sides of Howard Avenue, would allow for maintaining or expanding parking.</p>		

Question/Comment	Answer	Follow-up Question/Comment	Response
<p>Would it also be possible to plant trees in lieu of using planters due to our need for CO2 and shade in times of global warming?</p>	<p>Yes, we're proposing in this sketch that there are additional street trees that are proposed along Howard Avenue. So, yes, I think it is an alternative to possibly eliminate those planters and in some cases, go with the street tree planting and minimize the amount of asphalt that would remain along Howard Avenue. The traffic calming session also provides several alternatives that look at the cross section of the road and how it will be treated. In some cases, those alternatives may include the elimination and minimization of the road to its full extent only, including the lanes, and everything else will be greenspace. An alternative possibility is providing more of a permanent island as a way to separate the lanes from the pedestrian way, maintaining the planters, or having islands treated with additional landscape.</p>	<p>I just wanted to add to this enhancement discussion that we may also talk about CO2 levels and shade and just recognize that we're living in a time of global warming and that our kids walk there, but they also breathe the CO2 from their cars.</p>	
<p>Can we make the new path crushed gravel vs. paved?</p>	<p>I think the first concern would be that it's ADA accessible and then the second concern would be that the path is currently being utilized by bikes as well. These two concerns would take precedent over the treatment of the path and what the final material would be. So, depending on the alternative for the roadway section, that could impact how the path is treated. There are some seating areas that are proposed and a wider sidepath area that's proposed. The areas under the benches could possibly be treated with more of a pervious type of pavement that would allow for permeability of water. That's a consideration I think we can discuss further with the city. That's a good suggestion.</p>		

Question/Comment	Answer	Follow-up Question/Comment	Response
Can I assume similar enhancements would be provided on the west side of the new crossing?	The west side of the crossing will have a simpler treatment since it is not replacing existing pavement.		
Is there going to be eminent domain taken on 708 and 704 College to make way for this sidewalk that curves away from the street?	There's no plan to use eminent domain. We don't believe we have to acquire any right of way within the existing corridor, we'll be making extensive use of the existing right of way, which is partially owned by the city and partially owned by CSX. All the railroad right of way is owned by CSX, we'll be making use of that and then the College Avenue is a state route so there's no plan and no real necessity to even consider eminent domain for any part of this project.	I asked about that green area to the west of the Mead intersection being continued on as a left turn lane for the East Bound left turners onto the Adair crossing. It looks like it's still blocked off with the green area and we talked about a possible "do not block the box" area there.	This is a preliminary plan. We'll be looking at it again, especially after we get feedback from this meeting, but I think that's definitely something we will consider. Everything we do here will have to be approved by the Department of Transportation and they're a stakeholder who will have a lot of input. We don't want the intersection to be blocked and we need a generous amount of stacking space at each leg of the intersection.
Will this option on the screen (the parklet) be combined with [alternative] #3 that had the negative areas on Howard landscaped as well?	We anticipate significant landscape improvement to the existing Y which will be removed and there will be less landscaping elsewhere on the CSX right of way.		

Question/Comment	Answer	Follow-up Question/Comment	Response
<p>I don't like the idea of dead plants in planters located directly in front of residences. The planters on the south side of W Howard are bad enough. If planters are installed, what additional measures could be taken to keep them from becoming eyesores for the residents who would have to look at them every day?</p>	<p>John Boudreau (Landscaping Consultant): I think the planters are an option that we're interested in hearing your input on in the traffic calming [session] of West Howard Avenue workshop, they're discussing several alternatives that treat the existing section and proposed section. Some of those improvements include the replacement of the planters with either landscape islands. As far as if the planters are to remain, if that's the preference of the community, I think the selection of the plant material is key and that could be an item that needs to be further evaluated so the plant material is a little bit hardier and more sustainable.</p> <p>Hugh Saxon (Deputy City Manager): We would like to consider some options that are more permanent for West Howard. We think the planters have served a purpose and have enabled us to really evaluate how traffic can be calmed on West Howard. The asphalt is generally narrowed for vehicles and we would like to look at other options to provide more green space, and for bicyclists and pedestrians. There are some pretty interesting options in the West Howard [refined] and traffic calming session that we would like to get some feedback on that really do address the planters and the challenge in maintaining them.</p>		

Question/Comment	Answer	Follow-up Question/Comment	Response
<p>Are the paths and sidewalks simply white concrete or will they get a color treatment?</p>	<p>In this concept, we're proposing to treat the PATH trail with the same concrete material that currently exists. There are some other smaller areas, for example the seating area or possibly the treatment at the intersection, where it's been widened or underneath bench areas that possibly could include some pervious pavement. That was a suggestion that was made by another resident to look at providing alternative paving materials. We'll look at that a bit more, see how that holds up and the costs associated with that but those would be some potential areas that we could envision some specialty types of treatment of the pavement.</p>		
<p>So would the redesign of the south side of Howard remove the bikeway area currently between the planters and the curb?</p>	<p>There are design alternatives to remove the existing asphalt that is no longer being used for vehicles. One alternative is to make it more green space, another alternative is to keep it as it currently exists, a third alternative is to add additional medians that can be either hardscape or planted medians. There is also the recommendation of adding a cycle track on the maintained asphalt. Those are some of the design alternatives that were discussed in the traffic calming workshop session this evening and you can view those more thoroughly on the project website.</p>		

Question/Comment	Answer	Follow-up Question/Comment	Response
<p>What is the long-term plan for the entire stretch of Howard? I ask because I do not recommend that you use planters anymore. It is a toxic subject. I DO think we need use this space. Can we create a long stretch of plantings to include trees? I walk here each day and I would like to see trees planted where the planters are. Is this possible?</p>	<p>Long term plan for improvements to West Howard will be considered as part of the project. We are also trying to partner with the PATH Foundation to make permanent improvements to West Howard.</p>		
<p>Will there be curb cuts from the "planter-protected lane" along other portions of Howard to the sidepath so that cyclists using the protected lane can access the sidepath easily?</p>	<p>Yes. Any option we design will provide for intermittent access between the general travel lanes and any on-pavement bike facility.</p>		
<p>I support pulling the path away from the curb and adding a lot of landscape plants along that path. I feel strongly that all plantings be native. I would like to propose that the entire landscape plan be designed in consultation with the Beecatur group. We are a BeeCity and this is a wonderful opportunity to do a very special landscape.</p>	<p>Thank you for your comment.</p>		

Question/Comment	Answer	Follow-up Question/Comment	Response
I use the area between the planters and the curb as a bikeway as the PATH gets quite crowded at times as do the traffic lanes. I would request that the parking stoppers currently between the rectangular planters actually be removed, at least when nearing Commerce where I need to merge back into traffic to turn left.	Yes. Any option we design will provide for intermittent access between the general travel lanes and any on-pavement bike facility. Special consideration will be given to the approaches to intersections.		
I like the idea of permeable pavement.	Thank you for your comment.		
#3 is the clear winner for me.	Thank you for your comment.		

