

MOBILITY SUMMIT – SUMMARY

March 11, 2017 | 9:00 am to 1:00 pm | Sprint Pavilion



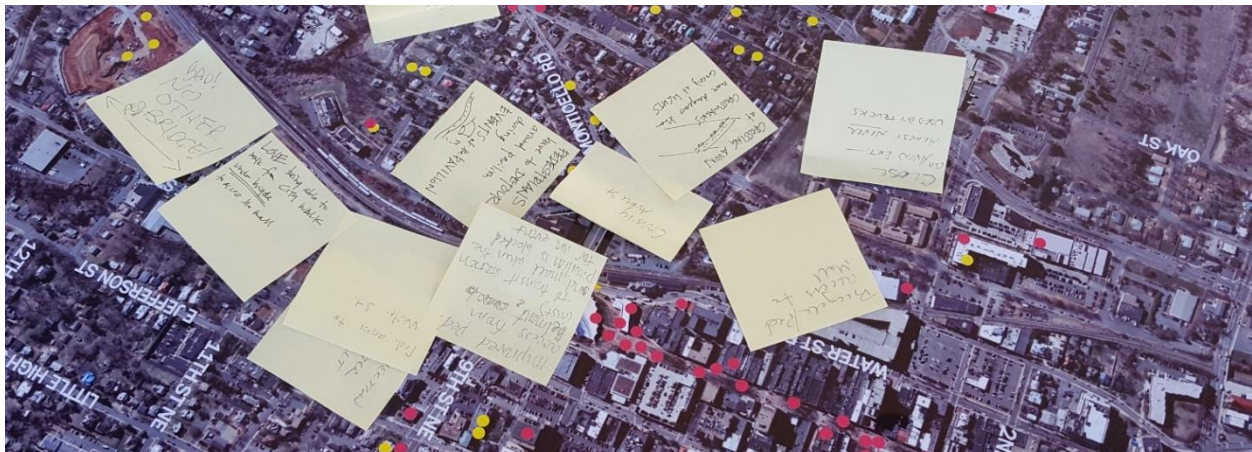
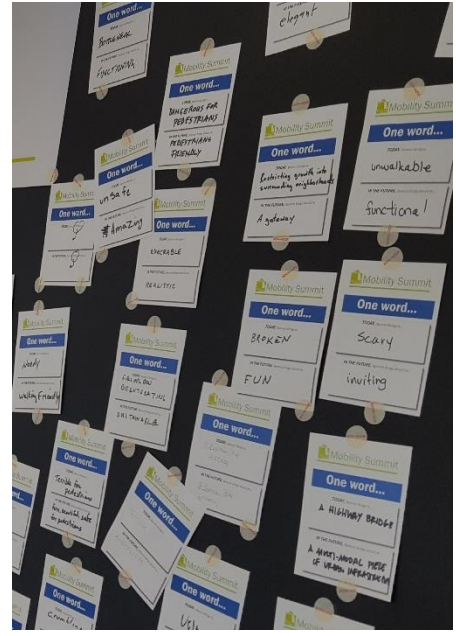
The Belmont Bridge Mobility Summit, held on March 11, 2017, drew nearly 100 people to the Sprint Pavilion in downtown Charlottesville to discuss issues and needs related to the replacement of the Belmont Bridge. Participants provided input on the future design through a combination of interactive stations and guided walking tours of the study area, and had an opportunity to have one-on-one conversation with the consultant team and city staff. At sign-in, participants received an information handout, a rack card with more detail on upcoming events, and a passport to guide them through the various stations.

Six interactive exercises generated **1,679 data points** and several walking and biking tours of the study area were held. This document briefly summarizes the community input data collected at the Mobility Summit and offers stakeholders the opportunity to see the thoughts of others in the community. In addition to data collected in person, the event served as the launch for an online survey, which will continue to collect input data through mid-April. The combination of these two datasets will provide enhanced focused about community priorities leading into the next community input event – a design charrette scheduled April 17–19.

Activity Stations

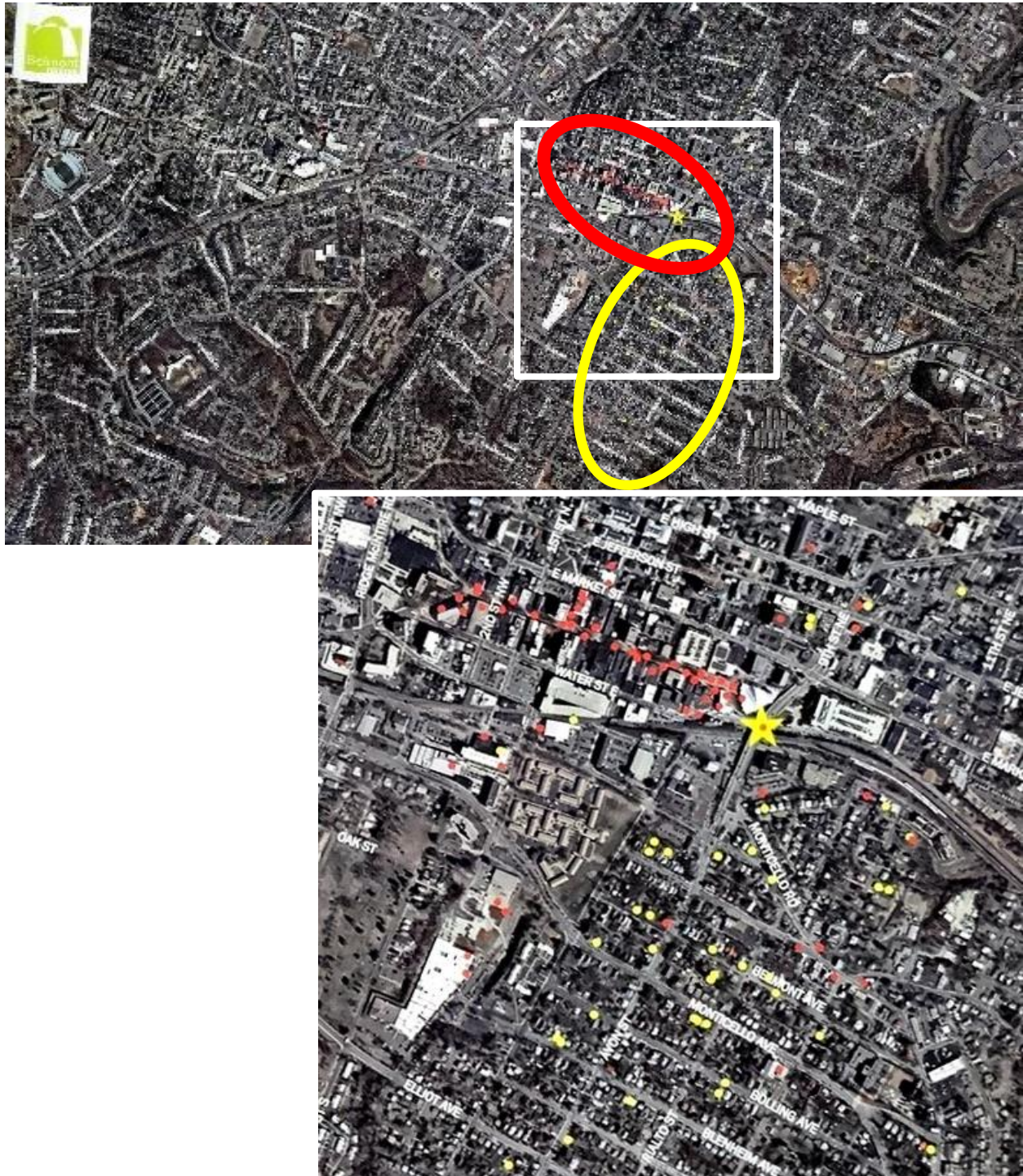
- One Word
- Mapping Exercise
- Priority Pyramid
- Thought Wall
- Visual Preference Survey
- Compatibility Index





MAPPING EXERCISE

To orient participants to the study area and to understand the bridge's role in the mobility of the local community, participants located their home (yellow dots) and destinations they frequently travel to (red dots) on a large map. Approximately **60 home destinations** were noted on the map (mostly in the Belmont neighborhood) and **more than 80 destinations** were identified (mostly downtown). The full map is shown below with the major cluster of home locations circled in yellow and the major cluster of destinations circled in red. An inset map shows the downtown area for more detail.



In addition to placing dots on the map, participants wrote notes regarding obstacles to traveling around the area. Attendees left 23 notes left on the map. The comments below correspond to the locations on the map below.



- | | |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop trail to Biscuit Run 2. Clear pedestrian crossing at Graves/Monticello Road 3. No connection to IX for pedestrians 4. Implement “streets that work” along Aron 5. Fix pedestrian crossing in front of bridge 6. Bikeway from Belmont to McIntire Road is critical 7. Parking issues in Downtown Belmont; support with parking near base of bridge 8. Allow bikes both directions on Monticello Road 9. Crossing Avon at crosswalks is more dangerous than crossing at lights. This spot is an accident waiting to happen 10. Close Old Avon Extension – Almost never used by trucks 11. Missing sidewalk on Rialto between Hinton and Monticello | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Pedestrians have to detour around pavilion during events at the pavilion 13. Crossing Avon Street 14. Improved pedestrian access from Belmont (east) to transit station and mall when the pavilion is blocked for an event 15. Pedestrian access to Water Street 16. Bike connection to Water Street 17. Love being able to walk from City Walk under bridge to access the mall 18. Bad! No other pedestrian bridge! 19. 9th/150/E High going south onto bridge is super congested and can’t handle flow/volume of traffic 20. No sidewalk on Poplar 21. One-way streets 22. Bicycle/Ped access to Mall 23. 6th Street and Garret intersection can be dangerous for cyclists |
|---|---|

PRIORITY PYRAMID

The Mobility Summit introduced 12 design considerations. With the understanding that some tradeoffs may be necessary during the design process, participants told the project team which considerations were important to them.

	Aesthetics	Public art has played a role throughout the history of the Belmont Bridge, as evidenced by the graffiti wall. The new design should consider ways to enhance the visual appeal of the bridge. Public art should be maintained (graffiti wall) or expanded.
	Bicycle Facilities	Many people bike across the bridge each day. Some live or work nearby, while others travel the corridor as part of longer trips to work, to school, or for recreation. Enhancing the safety of bicyclists, regardless of skill level, is important.
	Community Connectivity	Belmont Bridge provides a critical link between downtown and the neighborhoods that surround it. The bridge's role as a connector of places, both physically and culturally, should be enhanced through the new design.
	Community Gateway	While the bridge's location limits its role as a gateway to the city as a whole, Belmont Bridge is a prominent entrance to downtown and the front door to many neighborhoods. The design should emphasize the bridge's role as a gateway monument.
	Iconic or Landmark Design	Our city is one that holds architecture and good design in high regard. While the bridge design should address core functional needs, one of the key considerations should be ensuring the new bridge stands out among its surroundings.
	Integrated or Complementary Design	Downtown and the neighborhoods that surround it have an abundance of destinations and prominent features. The focus of the new design should be ensuring that it blends in with its surroundings.
	Intersections and Approaches	While the bridge itself is important, we also need to consider nearby intersections and 9 th Street as it approaches the bridge. Considerations include the look and function of intersections and approaches.
	Landscaping and Public Spaces	How people experience place is significantly affected by the integration of landscaping and activation of public space. The new Belmont Bridge should emphasize the design of these important elements.
	Parking	For years, space beneath and near Belmont Bridge has been used for parking. The new design should recognize the need for this parking while balancing competing needs for the space and the cost to preserve it.
	Pedestrian Facilities	As the main connection between downtown and neighborhoods to the south, Belmont Bridge sees hundreds of pedestrians every day. For this reason, a safe and comfortable pedestrian experience should be a priority.
	Scenic Viewsheds	In some ways, Belmont Bridge is where the urban structure of downtown begins to transition to the scenic mountains of the countryside. For this reason, views of Carter Mountain above and the working railroad below should be preserved.
	Traffic and Travel Speeds	At its core, Belmont Bridge should address traffic needs to and from downtown but in a way that limits excessive travel speeds. Special consideration should be given to traffic operations during the design process.



While each design consideration is important and will play a role in the final design, please select the six most important considerations to you and rank them 1 to 6.

OPTIONAL: Use the space below to explain your selections.

1**2****3****4****5****6**

Priority Pyramid Game Board

For the Priority Pyramid exercise, participants were given stickers representing the 12 considerations and asked to select and prioritize their top six. Each choice was then weighted, with those being ranked as a first priority receiving a higher score than those ranked lower. Fifty-seven attendees completed the exercise, providing more than 340 unique data points.

Top Six Design Characteristics

Pedestrian Facilities

Overall Rank: **1**

Weighted Score: **6.60**

Times Ranked 1st: **21**



Community Connectivity

Overall Rank: **2**

Weighted Score: **3.98**

Times Ranked 1st: **7**



Bicycle Facilities

Overall Rank: **3**

Weighted Score: **3.74**

Times Ranked 1st: **3**



Traffic and Travel Speeds

Overall Rank: **4**

Weighted Score: **3.57**

Times Ranked 1st: **10**



Integrated or Complementary Design

Overall Rank: **5**

Weighted Score: **2.66**

Times Ranked 1st: **2**



Intersections and Approaches

Overall Rank: **6**

Weighted Score: **2.47**

Times Ranked 1st: **4**



Takeaways

- Pedestrian Facilities was ranked as the groups' most prioritized characteristic by a wide margin.
- Functional characteristics ranked much higher than purely aesthetic concerns.
- Based on this exercise alone, the community seems to prefer a more integrated or complementary design rather than an iconic one.

Statistics

Rank	Weighted Score	Times Ranked (1 st)	Times Ranked (total)
Pedestrian Facilities			
1	6.60	21	52
Community Connectivity			
2	3.98	7	41
Bicycle Facilities			
3	3.74	3	41
Traffic and Travel Speeds			
4	3.57	10	34
Integrated or Complementary Design			
5	2.66	2	28
Intersections and Approaches			
6	2.47	4	26
Landscaping and Public Spaces			
7	2.29	0	36
Iconic or Landmark Design			
8	1.59	4	16
Aesthetics			
9	1.57	3	20
Community Gateway			
10	1.26	1	19
Scenic Viewsheds			
11	1.16	2	18
Parking			
12	0.48	0	10

THOUGHT WALL

The Thought Wall allowed participants to express more in-depth concerns, suggestions, or questions. Participants were given 3 sheets of paper and asked to write one thought on each sheet. One sheet was a different color and reserved for their most important comments. After writing their comments, participants posted the comment under a banner representing the design considerations that best represents the thought.

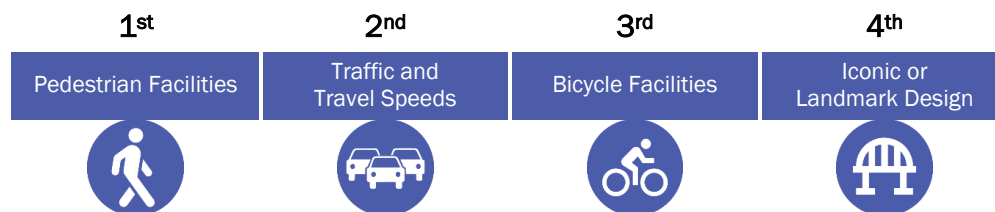
In total, participants shared **87 written comments**, spanning each of the twelve design categories. In addition to providing more detailed feedback, the Thought Wall exercise also helps the project team understand the importance of the different design considerations. By posting their thoughts on the wall, participants reveal a frequency (how many thoughts are assigned to each design consideration) and intensity (how many “most important” thoughts are assigned to each design consideration). As shown below, the limited crossover between frequency and intensity indicates that while the majority of comments focus on a few of the design considerations, a subset of the population feels very strongly about a different set of considerations.

Rankings

FREQUENCY – Top Categories by Total Number of Comments



INTENSITY – Top Categories by Number of “Most Important” Comments



Common Themes

A review of the comments revealed several recurring themes. Below are several comments that show a representative range. Many of these themes are echoed throughout the input received through other exercises.

“Safe bike and pedestrian facilities – separate from vehicular traffic and one another”

“Easy and attractive access from neighborhood to downtown.”

“Pedestrian access is key; it shouldn't feel like you are risking your life to cross it.”

“I live in Belmont and work downtown. I use the bridge multiple times per day. efficiency of traffic flow is my top priority. Let's find a way to avoid traffic backups on Avon and 9th Street and make turns from Market Street less painful.”

“Our community is known for its beauty. Having a bridge that incorporates a beautiful design by allowing an entrance to downtown that says ‘us.’”

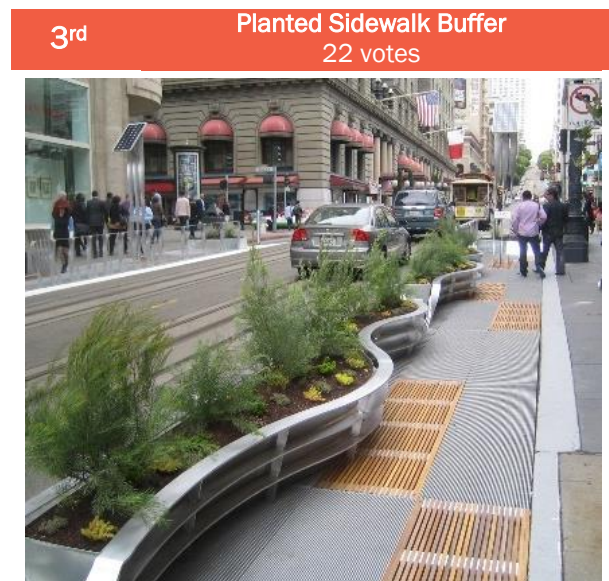
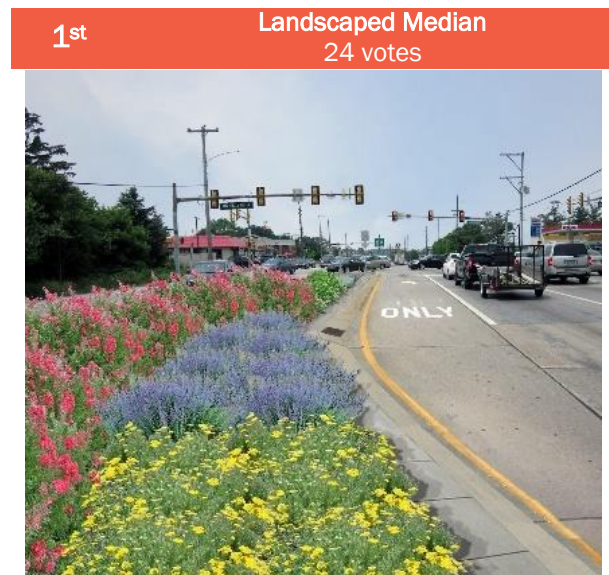
A full, unedited list of comments collected during the Thought Wall is provided the end of this summary.

VISUAL PREFERENCE SURVEY

To better understand the community's aesthetic preferences, participants were presented with four boards displaying various styles of landscaping, lighting, public spaces, and street facilities. Participants used dots to vote for their three favorite images on each board.

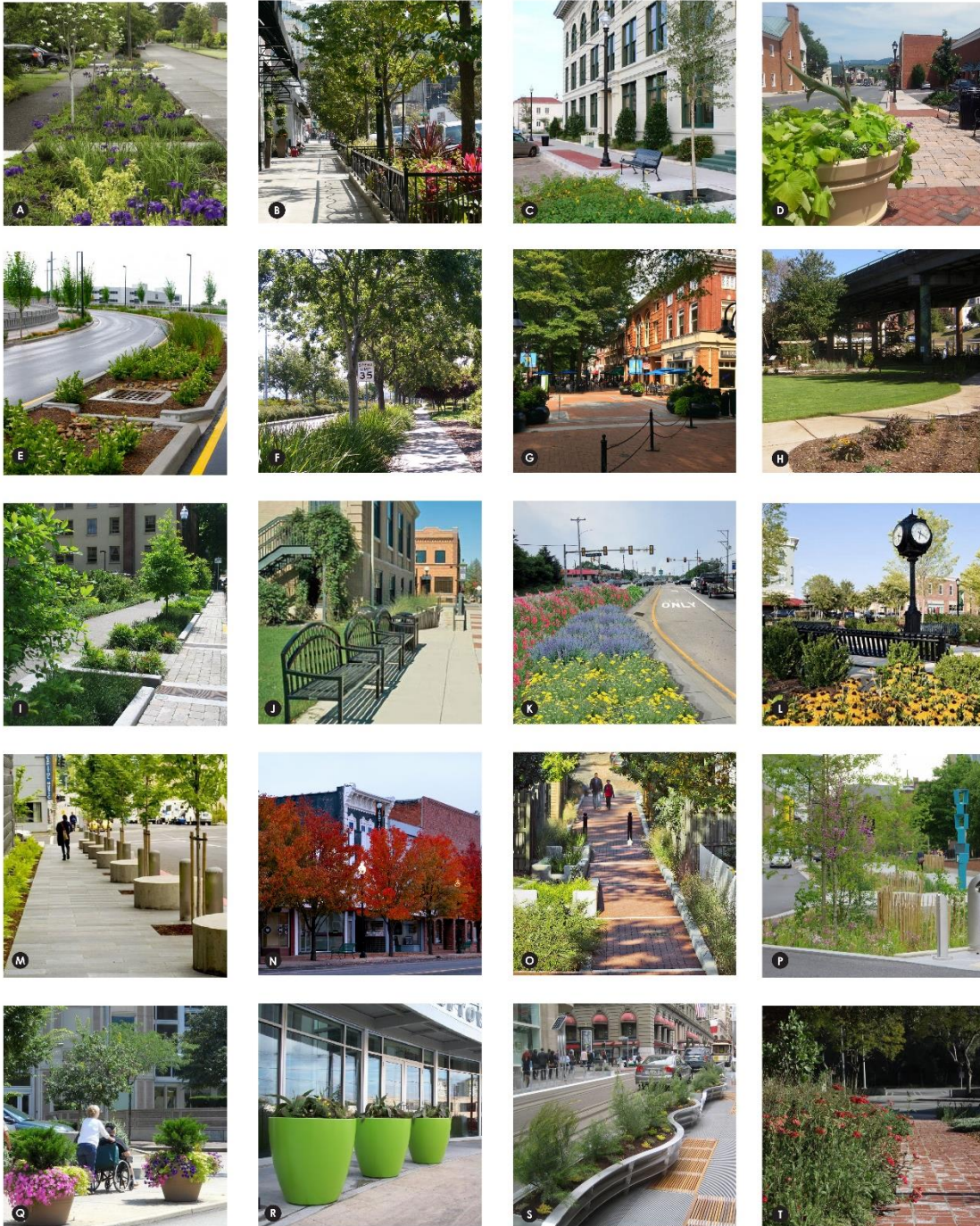
By the end of the workshop, **more than 900 votes** were placed on the boards. Shown below are the top three images by total votes from each category. While the design of Belmont Bridge likely will not replicate any of the images, the visual preference survey provides a helpful starting point for conversation about design decisions. *(Note: The image labels included in the results were not shown at the Mobility Summit.)*

Landscaping



Overall, the votes for the landscaping choices were the most evenly spread with many people preferring different styles of landscaping. However, the top choices generally feature native or natural planting that help to define a buffer between travel modes.

Landscaping

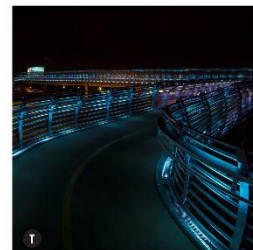
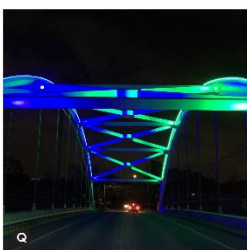
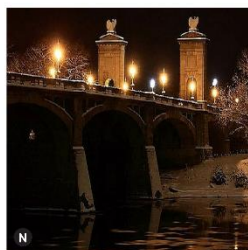
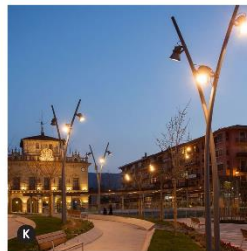
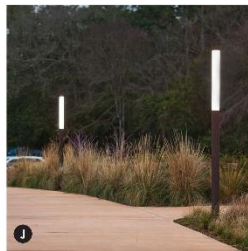
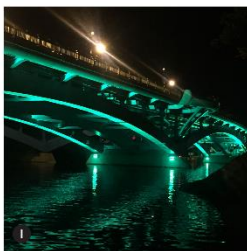
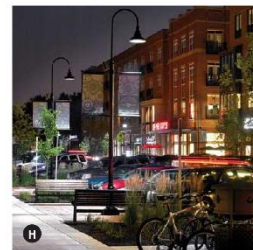
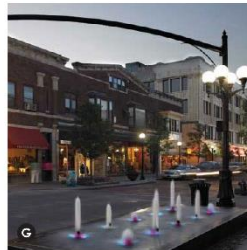
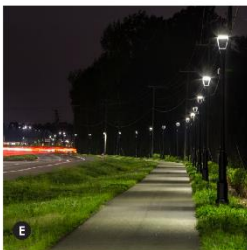
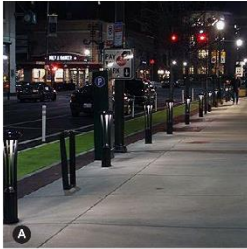


Lighting

1st**Bridge Walkway Lighting**
34 votes**2nd****Uplit Trees, Walkway lighting**
27 votes**3rd****Classic Streetlights**
22 votes

A clear preference was stated for lighting that brightly and attractively illuminates the walkway, in keeping with participants' prioritization of pedestrian facilities. Architectural detailing, such as uplit trees or the illumination of bridge railings is a welcome addition for aesthetically-minded residents.

Lighting

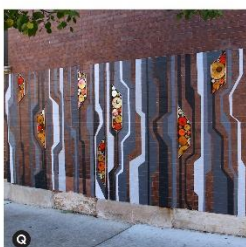
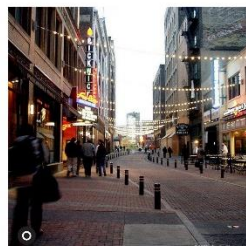


Public Spaces

1st**Repurposed Space**
44 votes**2nd****Recreational Park**
24 votes**3rd****Outdoor Gathering Space**
17 votes

Though it is more difficult to discern a trend in the top public spaces, a note left on the board expressed a desire for a place to “stop and chat with friends we run into.” This desire comes through in these photos and many other of the top choices, all of which provide ample seating and programming opportunities for all ages. Of particular note is an emphasis on public spaces easily integrate into their surroundings.

Public Spaces

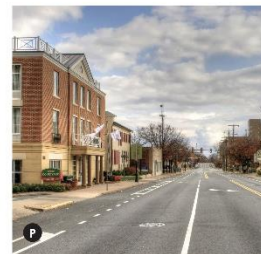


Streets

1st**Cycletrack and Wide Sidewalk**
60 votes**2nd****Buffered Bike Lane**
50 votes**3rd****Bridge Side Path**
34 votes

As a general trend, participants are most interested in clearly separated bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Each of the top choices show bicycle and/or pedestrian facilities that are separated from the street by landscaping, bollards or a concrete barrier. The images reflect an emphasis on safe and stress-free travel experiences for bicyclists and pedestrians of all comfort levels.

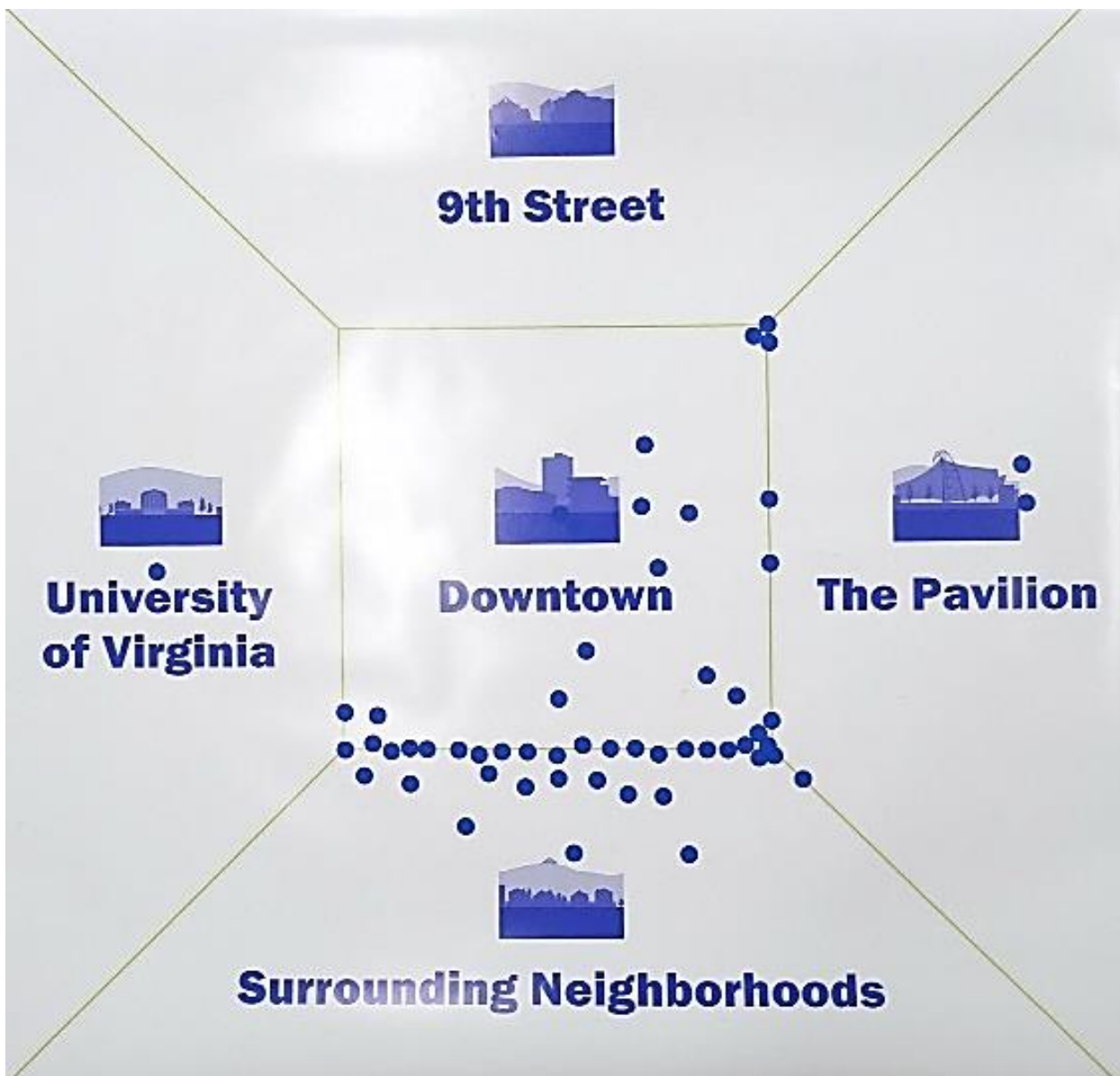
Streets



COMPATIBILITY INDEX

The compatibility index activity helped determine which area (or features) of Charlottesville the bridge should be designed to be compatible with. A large poster was split into five areas, representing 9th Street, the Pavilion, Surrounding Neighborhoods the University of Virginia, and Downtown. Participants were asked to place a dot on the area from which they would like to see the bridge draw inspiration from. The overall results are shown below.

Overwhelmingly, most participants placed their dots on the line between Downtown and the Surrounding Neighborhoods. **84% of the dots were placed on Downtown, Surrounding Neighborhoods, or on the line separating these areas.** This activity clearly indicates a preference for the design to serve as an aesthetic link between the two areas and draw inspiration from each side.



WALKABOUTS AND BIKEABOUTS

In addition to hands-on activities at the Pavilion, some participants chose to participate in walkabouts and bikeabouts to learn more about the bridge and engage directly with the design team. During two “walkabout” tours, small groups took an extended walking tour of the bridge and surrounding neighborhoods with discussions of the project history, challenges, and opportunities along the way. Approximately 15 people participated in each tour. A bikeabout offered a different way to see the area, and a first-person view of some of the bicycle facilities and mobility challenges surrounding the bridge. Organizers of the bikeabout were on hand throughout the morning to answer questions and foster discussion on active transportation.

Some of the comments and feedback gathered by the design team during the walkabout and bikeabouts included:

- The bridge should be designed to be integrated into the overall community fabric.
- Traffic speed is a significant concern. Can we design to calm traffic? Pedestrian crossings need to be re-designed to be safer.
- Access for delivery trucks to commercial sites east and west of bridge is challenging and should be improved if possible.
- Could the intersection at Monticello and Graves be re-worked to create public space?
- The missing sidewalk segments between 9th and the Belmont neighborhood need to be connected.
- Creating a safe, comfortable, and functional Pedestrian and bicycle environment on bridge is critical.
- Will railroad require a security fence above the railing? If required, it needs to be aesthetically pleasing and not eliminate preferred viewsheds.
- Selected viewsheds from bridge should be preserved. The community should help define the viewsheds and consider impact of potential development sites on those views.
- Vertical connections need improvement and could be design features.
- Safety under the bridge is critical. The design needs to address public safety issues, with consideration given to an active space that could deter unwanted activities.
- The path from the bridge to the mall adjacent to the Pavilion is too steep and too narrow.
- Development/redevelopment on both sides of the bridge could help integrate the bridge.
- Parking under the bridge is not sacred in that location. Consider better use of the parking area by repositioning the parking nearby, potentially along Avon and in planned deck on Market Street.
- The bridge is not a gateway monument and is more critical as a connection between north and south. It is not a definition of different places.



COMMENT FORMS

Comment forms were available at the event for participants to provide feedback outside of the organized activities. Two comment forms were collected at the end of the event:

- *I support keeping 3 lanes at Market and 9th Street to allow 2 turn lanes.*
 - *Do not replace. Repair.*
-

THOUGHT WALL COMMENTS

The following section shows each comment received as part of the Thought Wall activity. The comments are unedited and have been organized by design consideration category and noted as either a priority comment or general comment.

Bicycle Facilities

Priority Comments

- Design like lanes that don't fill up with debris and broken glass. Flats suck!
- Safe bike and pedestrian facilities- separate from vehicular traffic and one another
- I cycle from Belmont and UVA and the most dangerous intersection. I go through Avon/ Hinton intersection on the way home (I avoid it on the way to work!) I usually ride on the side walk up Avon, then get off the bike and cross Avon in the broken crosswalk. Need help with this!!
- Give cycling the space it obviously, needs in this beautiful city. Let's make it a model for the rest of the world.

General Comments

- Design bike lanes that ensure cyclists are compelled to obey traffic laws.
- Split forms to follow functions mobility and transportation do overlap, but they are not the same things
- Separate and safe walking
- Separate and safe bicycling
- Safe, separate bike lanes.
- Think fun
- Safe, separated, protected, good access and egress

Community Connectivity

Priority Comments

- Great opportunity to improve existing system. please don't miss out. worse than you started with is always an option.
- Any chance of having a temporary bike/ pedestrian bridge during construction?

- This event is an amazing experience but you're not done. you need to do this again- maybe use key rec center for your next event, on site is very important.
- You can't lose access to downtown and public perception about ease of access to downtown needs to improve not decline.
- The purported available funding for new bridge is \$23 million. this is a serious fiscal constraint. while a wish list of desirable design elements may be interesting, it's a bit like a letter to Santa. There's no way everything can be delivered or purchased. what is needed from expert consultants is an analysis with projected cost of feasible designs. Window shopping is fun; the reality if this project is limited choices and, so far, a lack of integration into a wider area transportation plan.

General Comments

- Should be one city, well connected not separate districts.

Community Gateway

Priority Comments

- gateway to city should have the same character as the downtown mall.
- Think Destination! Like the mall.
- Easy and attractive access from neighborhood to downtown.

General Comments

- Work with city's SIA, bike pedestrian plan, small area plans- coordinate
- Welcoming multi modal connections
- Create a threshold between downtown and Belmont.

Iconic or Landmark Design

Priority Comments

- Think high line!
- Iconic Design - Multimodal/integrated, Landscape design/public spaces
- Iconic Design - Integrating multi-modal transportation w/ landscape & public space
- Our community is known for its beauty. Having a bridge that incorporates a beautiful design by allowing an entrance to downtown that says "us"

General Comments

- Make a solar power bike path. Integrate PV panels into architecture
- Design is not equal to huge cost. Smart, unique, iconic. Focus on entry portal to the city and Belmont.
- Belmont Bridge is a landmark and key architectural future of downtown. I think it should be iconic and memorable.
- Let's build something that will last. Spend money on quality materials and structure, not unnecessary design elements.

Integrated or Complementary Design

Priority Comments

- Belmont Bridge is a link in the community fabric - critical to connect vehicle, pedestrian, bicycle - all users both to downtown and downtown to Belmont or N. downtown & to SIA.

General Comments

- Interconnectivity- Residential Belmont - Bridge - Commercial Belmont - Bridge- Downtown Mall
- Create viable connections to adjacent commercial spaces
- Walk, bike, drive all integrated sounds nice- is it really possible? Are we just being academic and impractical?
- Design, quality, and detailing
- Intimate neighborhood activity- e.g. retail, etc.

Intersections and Approaches

Priority Comments

- The bridge is an important pedestrian & bike & wheelchair even skateboards, etc. to Belmont but also city oars (Belmont, Quarry, Revives (?)) SIA, Rivanna Trak, Monticello, and more south of town. But access points to bridge are dangerous and cumbersome (especially during concerts). Safety, connectivity, beauty, and functionality

General Comments

- Pragmatism - We just need a bridge, nothing fancy. No one I have spoken with in Belmont wants to blur the boundaries. A bridge to go over railroad tracks & trains works well.
- Utilitarianism is best left to terragni

Landscaping and Public Spaces

Priority Comments

- Chat nook- Place a stop and chat outside of pedestrian path

General Comments

- Sustainability in construction so we don't have to do this again soon
- Provide real opps for creating a new "place" on the Belmont side- create new uses and retail/ convenience/ work spaces and residential/ perhaps live/work opps some arts presence- "retail" art like on the bridge to the Vatican- haha
- Think stormwater runoff management! Budget! Think of pollinators!
- Lets have fun
- Design the underside of the bridge
- Tree shade is critical!
- Don't go cheap Charlottesville deserves unique and the best

Parking

Priority Comments

- Under Bridge Safety- Create building there? Fill in the non visible space. There has been anti-semantic graffiti and threats in the parking area below the bridge. Multiple instances for years ongoing. Because at the railroad tracks, the dead end streets, the height of the downtown mall, etc. under the bridge just isn't visible, even if well lit.
- preserve the parking under the bridge!!!

General Comments

- Facilitation of parking is essential in bridge design. I.E. entrance to parking off the bridge.
- Parking? Downtown? for those who walk downtown? For those who drive downtown?

Pedestrian Facilities

Priority Comments

- Currently Belmont Bridge has too much traffic and too much emphasis on vehicles. place equal importance on pedestrian and bicyclists' needs. Views, Create a place, connect each side to urban fabric
- Separate pedestrian bridge (like early competition entry)
- Facilitate public access despite private events. Ex: pedestrian access from Belmont onto the mall when the Pavilion is blocked for an event.
- Safe pedestrian access and crossing
- Pedestrian experience/ safe/ attractive/ experiential/ include some history/ cultural/ other interpret./ good ingress and egress at both ends- sense arrival to downtown and Belmont/ views too
- Better wheel chair access

General Comments

- Pedestrian access is key it shouldn't feel like you are risking your life to cross it.
- just a memory: Walking access the bridge with my 5 year old daughter I always felt like I needed to protect her by walking on the street side of the sidewalk. I felt the danger of the cars and needed to put myself between her and the cars. Please fix this for future moms!
- Ensure pedestrians access to/from Water Street from Belmont.
- Pedestrian Connectivity
- Pedestrian Amenities
- I would love to see a couple of mini bridges over Avon Street and/ or Belmont Bridge for the use of pedestrians. Crossing the street is too exciting now, even with the crosswalk lights. Budget permitting! As for pedestrian paths across the bridge, sidewalks are good enough. Don't get too fancy and waste money.
- please make it so that pedestrians and bicyclists are on an even footing with vehicle or even in a better place than vehicles.
- Cross walk lights no one pays attention to the light!
- Don't miss this opportunity to make a pedestrian and alternate transportation fictional connection to South side of bridge.

- Safety first

Aesthetics

Priority Comments

- None

General Comments

- Aesthetically pleasing but not an icon
- Completely clear
- I love Charlottesville

Scenic Viewsheds

Priority Comments

- None

General Comments

- Don't forget the experiential issues of people in cars including sunsets and mountain views.
- Preserve the scenic pause from the middle of the bridge over the barn to Dudley Mountain.
- love watching the trains from the bridge.
- preserve the ability for pedestrian passerby on the bridge to experience concepts- they are community efforts- tickets buy the experience INSIDE the pavilion but we all put up with music we don't like and enjoy the music we do like.
- Allow bridge pedestrians to enjoy pavilion concerts without a ticket. Tickets buy the experience of being inside the pavilion. the community graciously puts up with music they don't like in exchange for being able to hear what they do.
- Need a place to sit on the bridge to view the sunsets!

Traffic and Travel Speeds

Priority Comments

- Safety overall
- While bridge is under construction better painted arrows on both sides to show flow of traffic- Lower enforced speed.
- Traffic flow during construction- how is it not going to be a nightmare? should I just plan in walking 2 miles every day to work and miles home- in the dark? is the plan to just re build or to "improve" the design and how practical are we being? how long will it take and what's the cost?
- Traffic flow at rush hour- during construction and rush hour bridge lanes are all inbound 7:30-3 to help protect side streets leading to bridge and 4:30-6 outbound only.
- I live in Belmont and work downtown. I use the bridge multiple times per day. efficiency of traffic flow is my top priority. Let's find a way to avoid traffic backups on Avon and 9th Street and make turns from Market Street less painful.

- Don't lose sight of the fact that this bridge needs to carry traffic (vehicle, pedestrians, bikes) on an important thoroughfare for the next 50 years. vehicular traffic, which is already heavy and will only continue to grow, needs to flow freely as possible. limiting re design to one lane in each direction is short sighted.
- Pedestrian and bicycle safety
- Ensure turn lanes are of sufficient length.

General Comments

- Traffic/ Act transportation intersections broken. can you keep auto speeds controlled and safe with people/ bike/ wheel chair/ stroller crossing at back end?
- Traffic Flow/ intersection that does not back traffic up past market St regularly.