



**Meeting
Notes**

Attendees: Jesse Bridges, Mark Colgan,
Greg Bakos, Dan Peck, Erin
Parizo, Drew Gingras, Brad
Ketterling, Michael Willard,
and public participants

Date/Time: October 15th, 2013
6:30 PM – 9:00 PM

Project No.: 57634.00

Place: Burlington Police Dept.
Community Room

Re: **Conceptual Improvements Public
Meeting**

Burlington Bike Path
Rehabilitation Project

Notes taken by: VHB

1. Introductions

- a. Jesse Bridges introduced himself on behalf of the City of Burlington Department of Parks and Recreation and mentioned that while Jen Francis (Project Manager for the City) was hoping to attend, she was not able to due to other project deadlines.
- b. Jesse then handed the presentation over to Mark Colgan from VHB who introduced the project team.
 - i. Mark Colgan is the Project Manager with VHB. Greg Bakos is the lead Project Engineer and will be assisted by Erin Parizo, Dan Peck and Drew Gingras. Mike Willard was also introduced as the lead Landscape Architect for the project with SE Group.

2. Project Overview/Area/Development Process

- a. Mark then proceeded through the project overview, area and development process slides.
 - i. When the geotechnical borings were brought up, a meeting attendee asked what the borings are testing for.
 - Mark answered this stating that these borings are done to get an overall understanding of what exists under our project area. We will gather information including depth of the aggregate surface, what the existing sub-base includes, and then what is even further down below our sub-base.

3. Design Considerations

- a. The presentation was then passed to Greg Bakos to go through information regarding the key design considerations.
 - i. One of the first comments Greg made was in regards to the fact that there is potential to make the Burlington Bike Path “Much more than just a recreational path.”
 - ii. A resident made the comment that this bike path is much more than just a recreational path, it’s a transportation corridor as well.

- b. Mike Willard then spoke about the vision for the project in terms of placemaking along the path at existing parks or creating new places along the way.
- c. Greg stepped back in to discuss the general proposed improvements.
 - i. A resident raised the concern of promoting both pause places and an increased width of the path. The point was made that there is an increased probability of conflict if you encourage an increased width (which will lead to a greater number of users traveling at greater speeds) as well as more places to stop and “pause” along the path.
 - Greg and Jesse both responded to this concern stating that a design feature of proposed pause places would include sufficient clearance from the path. It is not the intention for any of the pause places to actually exist on the path itself. They will all have a clear zone to some degree that provides an area for users to take themselves completely off of the path itself to avoid any possible conflicts with oncoming users. Jesse brought up the point of potential queuing at pause places and how this is also a consideration when designing pause places.

4. Proposed Improvements

- a. A resident responded to the proposed typical by asked if the 11 foot width takes into consideration the projected future increase in use of the path.
 - i. Greg spoke up in response to the concern stating that this figure was pulled from today’s standards and that we are working with a tight corridor as is. Jesse also chimed in stating that the possibility of future growth is on the minds of the City as well.
- b. An attendee asked if there is a speed limit on the bike path.
 - i. There is not a speed limit on the bike path. However, there is guidance on what the design speed should be for a path like this and 18-20mph is the standard per Greg. The Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC) completed a study and discovered that users travel at an average of 13-15mph in the downtown area.

5. Section 0

- a. Erin took on the presentation of the section-by-section improvements starting at Section 0 which runs from Queen City Park Road to the entrance to Oakledge Park at Austin Drive.
- b. A member of the public asked, if it is the intention going forward to have bicycles travel on both sides of Home Avenue as they currently do.
 - i. A response was given that, yes, it is intended to have bicycles travel along both sides of Home Avenue but that the existing striping would be improved. Travel lanes would be narrowed to 10’-6” to 11’ wide which would result in shoulders at a width of 4-5’. Shoulders may also possibly be painted or marked to alert motorists of regular bicycle traffic in the area.
- c. A resident inquired about the length of Section 0.
 - i. Erin answered this with a response that Section 0 is approximately 0.90 miles in length.
- d. Another resident spoke up regarding the intersection of the path outlet and the railroad tracks that cross Home Avenue and asked if any other considerations are going to be made regarding the RR crossing for both motorist and bicycle traffic? They expressed concern that this area is very narrow because of the median islands.
 - i. The only proposed change to this intersection shown in the presentation was the Intersection Scoping Study plan for the area. It was touched upon that other considerations for the

intersection are being made as it is recognized that this is a problematic area for all types of users (bicyclists, pedestrians and motorists). This includes the proposed Champlain Parkway improvements that will occur near this intersection.

6. Section 1

- a. A common concern amongst the audience is the existing boulders in Section 1. People expressed that they would like to see this done away with from the path completely.
 - i. This concern was brought up just before the plan for improvements at Austin Drive was shown which displays the boulders being replaced by removable bollards. Erin also voiced that the plan is to eliminate any and all boulders in Section 1 as well as the rest of the path.
- b. The re-alignment along the western edge of the southern Oakledge Park parking lot was presented which received a positive response for the most part; however a few questions/concerns were brought up by the audience.
 - i. One attendee asked if the path runs along the edge of the parking lot, will people who get out of their cars be able to cross the path from the location they parked or will they have to walk to the parking lot access path?
 - A response was given that there would essentially not be a way to control where individuals cross the path after parking and that this will be taken into consideration when designing the safety measures around the re-alignment of the path.
 - ii. Another attendee also spoke up and said that no matter what is done with the path through there, many users (including themselves) will still continue to cut through the parking lot and re-connect with the path at the northern pavilion because it is a shorter distance to travel and there is less of a grade.
 - Erin gave a response to this that it is recognized this route may still be used and we will look into how we can improve it.

7. Section 2

- a. A resident asked if there are any plans to disallow parking on either side of Harrison Avenue.
 - i. This was answered by Erin stating that there are no present or future plans for the rehabilitation project to have any effect on parking along Harrison Avenue.
- b. A resident of the area voiced a concern about the existing pavement markings along Harrison Avenue, primarily the sharrows, and how they are too far to the right. They believe the sharrows should be centered in the roadway.
 - i. Greg recalled taking note of this during the public ride and voiced his agreement with the comment. He provided assurance that this change will be taken into consideration with the design of the area as there is new accepted guidance on their positioning in the roadway.
- c. Another attendee agreed with this notion and took design considerations a step further by suggesting utilizing the green paint idea in this area for the path.
 - i. This suggestion was noted by Greg.
- d. A resident of the Harrison Avenue area asked if there are any plans for the connection to Sears Lane to be improved during the rehabilitation process. Another resident spoke up and stated that the timber guardrail impeding on the connection should be removed. It was also suggested that wayfinding should be drastically improved in this area. They cited that there are frequent occurrences of residents having to explain to path users where they are and which direction they

should be heading in. A number of concerns regarding the general lack of space in the area were made as well.

- i. All of these comments were recorded and will be considered in the design and they are right along the same lines as what we are thinking for the area.
- e. While ADA accessibility was positively received by the public, a ramp at the Blodgett Building raised a few concerns. A few people are concerned with the possibility of individuals cycling down it at high speed or up it at high speeds and conflicting with other path users at the blind corner that would be created by the Blodgett Ovens building.
 - i. These concerns were noted and a response was given that this will have to be taken into consideration here for all users. The possibility of chicanes and signing will also be taken into consideration to make the access safer.
- f. A resident spoke up in reply to the idea of raised and patterned pavement at the intersection of the path and Harrison Avenue, stating that they have concerns over the cost of the change and potential for damage caused by snow plows.
 - i. Erin responded to this by stating that his concern will be considered and that all proposed raised pavement is on the path itself, therefore for the time being it is not believed that damaged caused by plows will be a concern.

8. Section 3

- a. There were no comments made in response to the proposed improvements for Section 3.

9. Section 4

- a. A presentation attendee spoke up in regard to the bridges along the path, stating that state standards say bridges should be 2 feet wider than the path at each end. The same attendee expressed concern about the condition of the bridge decks as well and hopes that repair measures will be looked into.
 - i. Mark responded to this saying that these are all great comments and that we will be investigating the bridges further and will do our due diligence with them, making sure they are all up to the necessary standards.
- b. Erin brought up the width at Barge Canal and how this was one of the biggest concerns of the section.
 - i. An attendee responded to this by mentioning that they would personally like to see the path much wider in this section. It'd be nice to have something cantilevered out, and not just a few feet, but something more along the lines of the width of the boardwalk in Waterfront Park with lookouts.
- c. Someone spoke in response to drainage issues along the Barge Canal and asked, is there any concern with the drainage from the railyard causing damage rather than the damage coming from lake flooding?
 - i. Mark responded to this, mentioning that it is known that the flooding issues in this area are primarily caused by the lake with all other possible sources being secondary concerns.
- d. A resident suggested the idea of the installation of pause places without necessarily having to widen the path, particularly along the Barge Canal.
 - i. Erin responded to this saying that any and all solutions are being considered for this section.

- e. An attendee raised a concern for wayfinding through Roundhouse Park saying that the area could use some improved wayfinding measures and signing.
- f. Signage and wayfinding as you approach “the triangle” near Perkins Pier was brought up as a concern as well by a few attendees.
 - i. Erin responded to these concerns mentioning that the entire area was going to be redone through a Public Investment Action Plan (PIAP) proposal and that these concerns will be addressed through this project and the bike path project.

10. Section 5

- a. A resident brought up the fact that there are not many (if any at all) east/west connections between Sections 2 and 5 and asked if there has been any coordination with the railyard enterprise project regarding a connection between these sections.
 - i. Jesse responded to this stating that this isn’t necessarily a focus of this project but more connections to amenities east/west of the path are always being considered.

11. Section 6

- a. Many comments were made regarding the intersection of the path and Maple Street, all of which were noted as shown below:
 - i. An attendee brought up the idea of placing a stop bar as you’re coming into the Perkins Pier lot to stop motorists before the path or some kind of signage mentioning “stop here to wait for attendant” as well.
 - Jesse responded to this bringing up the fact that this could cause congestion issues with trucks/boats waiting to access the pier which could end up stopped on the RR tracks for an extended period of time which can’t be allowed to happen. He also said he recognized the concern here and necessary design considerations will be made.
 - ii. Someone commented on the Intersection Scoping Study plan, stating that they see we have the crossing striped as a crosswalk and wondered about some kind of crossing marking that is particular to ‘this is a bike path’.
 - Others agreed with this notion and Erin responded by saying that a crossing marking for the path is definitely being considered within the design as there are a number of areas (including this one) where it would be beneficial to make sure motorists are aware that these are more than just pedestrian crossings.
 - iii. One attendee brought up the access to the path coming from Maple Street because they constantly get on the path in this location. Their main concern involved the westbound to northbound turn from Maple Street onto the path because a sharp 90 degree angle exists here. It was asked if we can find a way to create a safer transition safer onto the path here. Can we just soften the outer radius?
 - Erin noted that this is considered to be one of the higher volume access points to the path and that this intersection will be looked at much more closely to make sure we come up with a solution that considerably improves the existing conditions.
 - iv. It was pointed out that there is an aggressive skew at the intersection and another attendee asked if this was at all unique or necessary in this area.
 - Erin recognized the skew in the path and pointed out that while it is a far from ideal layout, it is there because of the utilities in the area.

- Jesse responded to the number of concerns as well saying that we are designing the mainline but so many of these connections need to be looked at closer as many of them are major access points, especially this particular intersection.
- v. Another presentation attendee pointed out that there is a lot of room to move the path west but recognized there is currently a parking lot restricting that from happening. You might be able to gradually smooth out the edge of the parking lot as well which could result in a loss of parking spots but would provide a safer and easier passage.

12. Section 7

- a. A resident expressed concern with installing the proposed typical section through the concrete area of Section 7 stating that it is not a good idea to dig out areas for the gravel shoulders.
 - i. This concern was alleviated when Erin showed our proposal of an 8 foot wide delineated (with green paint or similar) path through this area and how the shoulders would not be included in this area as this will likely be a path spur in the future.
- b. Jesse summarized some of the PIAP work and mentioned the idea of moving the entire path through this section to the west side of the RR tracks. He brought up his meeting with one of the property owners that day and said that he is in support of seeing what the concept would look like and moving forward from there.
- c. A resident mentioned the idea of painting the entire path green stating that it would allow for minimal measures to be taken the rest of the way in regards to delineation and wayfinding. It would also act as the path's "trademark" and make it much more definable for all the users.
 - i. Jesse has been onboard with this idea from the beginning and expressed his support of it.

13. Section 8

- a. After the proposed typical section and re-alignment were shown, an attendee expressed that it is crucial to design the path in this section to withstand vehicle weight.
 - i. Erin said that the team is well aware of this design consideration and that the path will be able to withstand the necessary vehicle loads throughout the entire path.
- b. A resident brought up the idea of gentle segregation of "different bicycle users" in this area. They proposed the idea that we could have the path along the water through Waterfront Park be usable by slower moving bicycles and have other users encouraged to take the new alignment through the east side of Waterfront Park if they'd like to travel at higher speeds.
- c. An attendee stated that the area of sections 6-8 is an area of the path where people will have to compromise and accept that this is a mixed use area. This is an area that is different from the rest of the path in terms of how the path is being used. This is not a section where high speeds and ease of commute should necessarily be encouraged. Those things should still be considered but for the most part, this is a 'go slow' zone.
- d. Another attendee requested an increased usage of "KEEP RIGHT" paint markings, noting that this is typically the cardinal rule for paths of this nature and needs to be better communicated in our area.
 - i. Erin responded to this stating that an increase of these markings will certainly be considered along the path, especially in higher volume areas.
- e. A question was raised about Depot Street and whether or not there are any proposed changes for the street itself.

- i. Given that Depot Street is not along the bike path and doesn't have a direct effect on it, we're not looking into potential improvements to Depot Street.
- ii. Jesse spoke up in response to the Depot Street questions and said that the DPW is well aware of the issues in the area.
- iii. The question lead to discussion about how cyclists would access the path from Depot Street and that perhaps the access road section closest to Lake Street should be paved and designed for additional access.
 - This concern was noted and agreed with as this would provide better access for trucks as well.

14. Section 9

- a. After the proposed typical section for the Urban Reserve was presented, a resident asked if we could use the grasscrete for the drive in this section.
 - i. Jesse responded to this mentioning that while the grasscrete would be great to have in this area, it's a very long a drive and the cost would likely be too high.
- b. A resident expressed concern with the proposed drainage measures and stated they don't believe that leading water under the path is going to be sufficient.
 - i. Erin replied to this concern mentioning that these are (very) preliminary drainage plans/measures to be taken. She also mentioned that a complete evaluation of the drainage in the area will be done and mitigation will be designed as needed.
- c. Jesse brought up the fact that he believes the Urban Reserve is the worst area along the path and should be at the forefront of the construction schedule when the project moves to that phase.
- d. An attendee asked about the possibility of swapping the location of the path and the gravel road in the proposed typical for the Urban Reserve.
 - i. Jesse responded to this saying that one of the primary uses of the road is access to the east and that the road is currently placed where it should be. Switching them would create a double cross which we want to avoid and we also want the path to be the dominant westerly feature.
- e. An attendee expressed concern in simply paving over the existing area in this section stating that the portion in Section 9 just north of the curve has some serious drainage issues and some noticeable sinking in the pavement here has occurred. They believe paving over it will make it look better but the sinking and undulating issues will continue to persist unless the sub-base is investigated.
 - i. Erin responded to this concern saying that our pavement group is looking at sub-base as much as surface treatment and that the results of the test pits will tell us exactly what we'll need to look into for sub-base rehabilitation.

15. Section 10

- a. Only a few comments were made in response to the proposed changes for Section 10
 - i. Wayfinding was brought up as a concern and Jesse voiced that he thinks it is crucial in the area to increase awareness of what is around the path (North Beach, Burlington High School, North Beach Campground, etc.)
 - ii. An attendee voiced their support of the proposed measures at the four way intersection of the path and access to the beach and campground.

16. Section 11

- a. A resident pointed out that it is always good to take note of foot/stamped down paths that have been created over time by consistent usage of users.
 - i. Erin responded to this stating that she agrees with this thought as these types of stamped down paths indicate the preferences of the users.
- b. An attendee mentioned that the stamped down path leading off of the trail at the North Beach underpass towards Burlington High School provides a great possible “bike-to-school” connection and encourages creating/paving an actual spur towards BHS.
- c. A resident recognized that the access culverts were not a part of this project but wanted to voice a concern about their appearance and that they believe these should be rehabilitated as soon as possible.
- d. A resident asked if anyone knows if the timber ties are still underneath the path at Rock Point Bridge.
 - i. A few people spoke up in response, stating that all of the ties were removed a while ago but as a result, there are dips and undulations in the path that make for an unpleasant ride through this particular section.
- e. Drainage was brought up as a concern/design consideration and someone wanted to make it known that there are a large number of frost heaves that develop in the shoulder seasons because of the poor drainage in this area.
 - i. Erin replied to this concern stating that sub-base and drainage is being evaluated and will continue to be looked at in this section.

17. Section 12

- a. There was a resident present who also was on the public ride and they mentioned a desire to see stop signs “flipped” at some private drives. These locations were primarily Little Eagle Bay Road and Beachcrest Drive.
 - i. Erin responded that through the Intersections Scoping Study, flipping the stop signs is being considered at Little Eagle Bay and North Beach Extension. Beachcrest Drive was not included in the study but can be looked at more closely through this project.
- b. After the Stop sign discussion, many of the presentation attendees voiced concern over sight distances and safety at the intersection of Little Eagle Bay Road.
 - i. Jesse mentioned that because of legal documentation from the past there are limitations in this area as to what can be done for improvements.

18. Section 13

- a. The subject of the treatment of the crosswalk on Shore Road was a popular discussion topic. Individuals were speaking up about how they would like to see the path crossings marked differently than a standard red painted/stamped crosswalk to alert motorists that the crossing is more than just a pedestrian crosswalk.
 - i. Erin responded to this saying that a different type of treatment for the path crossings is being looked at as it is crucial that any and all users that interact with the path at these intersections should be aware that these crossings are not standard pedestrian crosswalks.
- b. A resident mentioned a concern with the existing location of stop bars prior to the intersections and asked if there is a general plan to move the bars closer to the intersection.

- i. Greg responded to this comment saying that moving the stop bars is dependent on the intersection itself, but for the most part the goal is to move them closer to the intersection.
- c. The idea of yield triangles on the path to alert path users of upcoming pedestrian interactions was also suggested by an attendee.
 - i. Erin replied to this saying that the recommendation will be recorded and taken into consideration moving forward.

19. Section 14

- a. There were no comments made in response to the proposed improvements for Section 14.

20. Section 15

- a. A resident expressed interest in improved wayfinding to get to Starr Farm Park from the bike path. They noted that the Dog Park is easy to access but not many people use Starr Farm Park primarily because they are unaware it exists.
 - i. Jesse replied to this and stated that all opportunities are being considered for increasing wayfinding in all sections of the path, especially those that would lead to a park.
- b. Greg mentioned that it is believed we should take full advantage of all ROW for the bike path and clear out vegetation that is creeping in so sight distance is not an issue where possible along the corridor.
- c. John Bossange chimed in and mentioned that the City owns a lot more land than you would think when looking at the path, especially at the intersections and that he believes there is an opportunity to eliminate all sight issues at these problem areas.
- d. Jesse brought up the framing of the path in the northern sections. He mentioned that while clearing is great for sight distance purposes, it should not be overdone to the point where the canopy that frames the path is being affected.
- e. A resident raised a point about South Burlington that they have taken the approach of clearing underbrush which allows for increased visibility in the area of their recreational paths.
 - i. This was noted and replied to as an approach that will be further looked into.

21. Section 16

- a. There were no comments made in response to the proposed improvements for Section 16.

22. Turning Point 'Other' Responses

- a. After the presentation of the Section Improvements was completed, "Turning Point" questions were asked to those in attendance to get a discussion going about a few different things. The results of the questions are attached here and can be found in the presentation, but notes for the responses that fell under the "Other" responses are summarized here:
 - i. 'Commuting with family' was mentioned as an "other" in response to "What is your primary reason for using the bike path?"
 - ii. Regarding the most important change that can be made to the path, a resident stated that if they had a choice between widening and repairing surface conditions, they'd go with improving surface conditions.
 - iii. A resident, who had previously brought up his concerns with the sub-base, reiterated that the depth/what exists under the path remains to be his biggest concern in terms of physical changes.

- The same individual mentioned concern over the path withstanding heavy vehicle use.
- iv. When we got to the “What placemaking features would you like to see added?” question, a large number attendees stated that they would select “All of the Above” if it was an option.
 - This was very telling that people want to see a large increase in these types of features.
- v. Regarding placemaking, an attendee stated that it would be great to see rest stops, seating areas, shelter, etc. along the path, and that a focus on users that might not be able to go long lengths at one time would be great. They also brought up the issue of bad weather and how it’d be nice to be able to seek shelter somewhere.
- vi. A resident suggested looking into a cost/benefit analysis regarding ongoing maintenance of the path when we posed the question of “Primary concerns” with the construction of the path.
- vii. Someone else spoke up about looking at cost/benefit analysis but it was related to tourism and the construction of placemaking features that would create a bigger vision of the path and make it a “can’t miss destination” of Burlington.
- viii. The language barrier was brought up for signage along the path and the popular result from the discussion was the use of international symbols rather than multiple languages on the same sign.
- ix. A resident asked if they will be closed off during the construction of the bike path. What will the detour be like and will they know of closures ahead of time?
 - Mark responded to this concern stating that our number one goal is to keep the path open during construction through all means necessary. If this is not possible, the ease of use and accessibility to any required path detours will be a primary consideration when planning construction.
- x. A resident spoke up with a request to follow through with communication. They asked if it’s possible to provide informational maps of the detour route if they end up being used. Can these be placed at the beginning/end of the detours? Also, can the information be released in a number of ways ahead of time so people are perfectly clear on detour information?
 - This idea will absolutely be taken into consideration when we plan potential detours and the outreach/awareness of path construction.
 - Along this same idea, an individual who seemed to have some input in local websites, particularly the “Lake Champlain Bikeways” website, mentioned that if he received information about closures/detours, he could get this information out on this website which would be great for outreach purposes because of how many people visit this website amongst others. He mentioned that Local Motion would be another great website to distribute this information to.
- xi. Going off of the discussion about detour routes, an attendee asked if it would be possible to tie the use of detours in with the development of bicycle infrastructure along roadways. For example, detouring off of the barge canal onto the Pine Street corridor or Southern Connector.
- xii. The question regarding the name of the path prompted a number of different responses. The first of which was the question, why didn’t you include the Island Line Trail as an option?
 - It was mentioned that these names were not included because this project is focusing on solely the Burlington portion of the trail and we would not want there to be confusion over how much of the path the public thought was being rehabilitated.

- xiii. A resident expressed serious concern with renaming the path, stating that if it is renamed, it could actually confuse users and lose the existing brand of the Burlington Bike Path. They believe it should remain the 'Burlington Bike Path' because that is what so many local businesses have always referred to it as and it's what many frequent travelers to the area know it as.
 - It came to be understood that "Burlington" certainly needs to be in the title.
- xiv. A resident mentioned that he would really like to see the access to Charlie's Boathouse improved because as it is now, it plunges quickly off of the path and is unsafe for many users, as well as two-way traffic.
- xv. After the group discussion had concluded, a resident mentioned to Erin that they would really like to see more lighting and geological placemaking along the path.

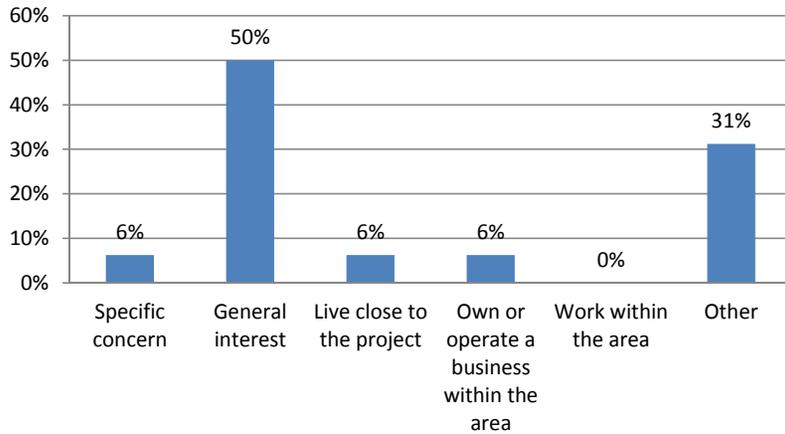
The recorder has attempted to summarize discussions held during this meeting as accurately as possible. If there are any items that are misrepresented, please contact the recorder within ten working days. In the absence of any corrections or clarifications, it will be understood that these notes accurately summarize the discussions at the meeting.



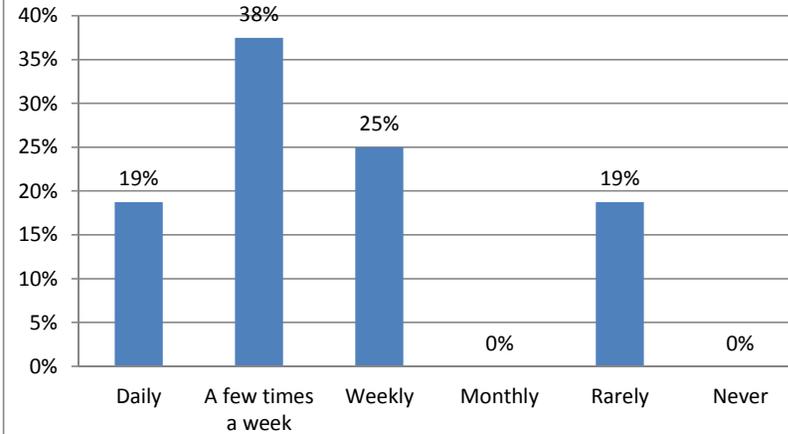
Burlington Bike Path Conceptual Improvements Public Meeting Turning Point Results

Burlington Police Department
1 North Avenue, Burlington, VT
10/12/2013
6:30 PM

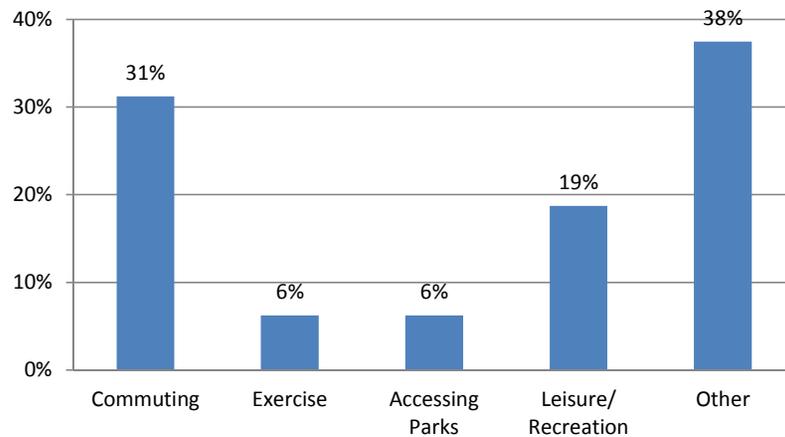
1. What is your primary reason for attending this meeting?



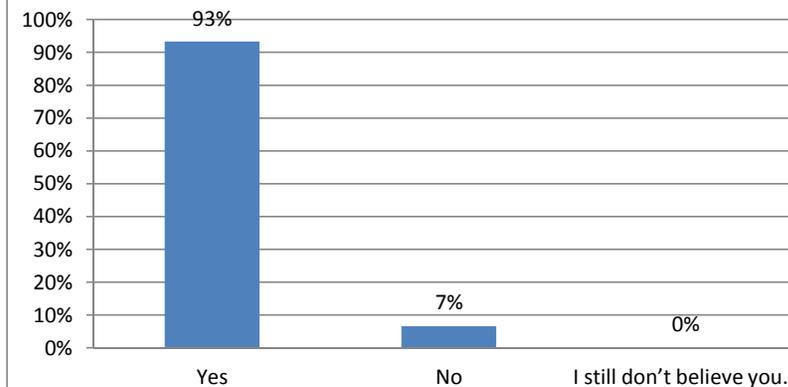
2. How often do you use the bike path?



3. What is your primary reason for using the bike path?



4. Before coming to this meeting did you know the path extends all the way to Queen City Park Road?

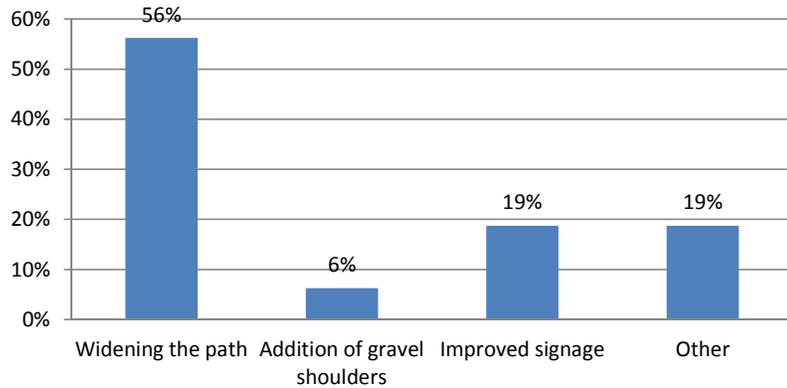




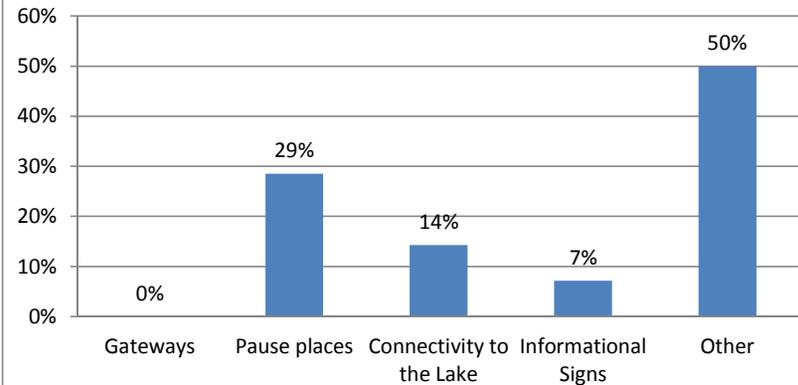
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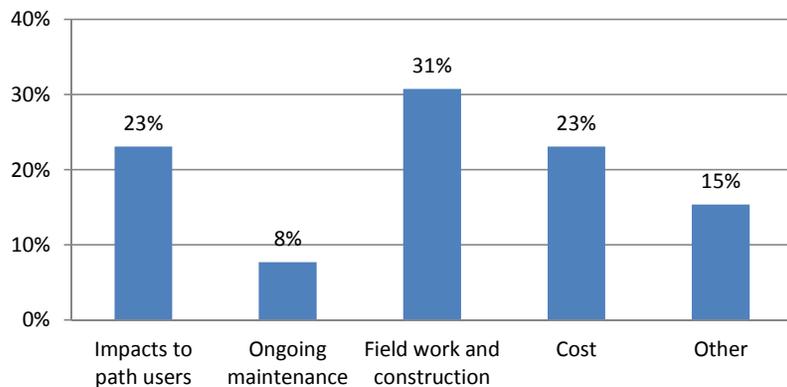
5. What are the most important physical changes to make to the path?



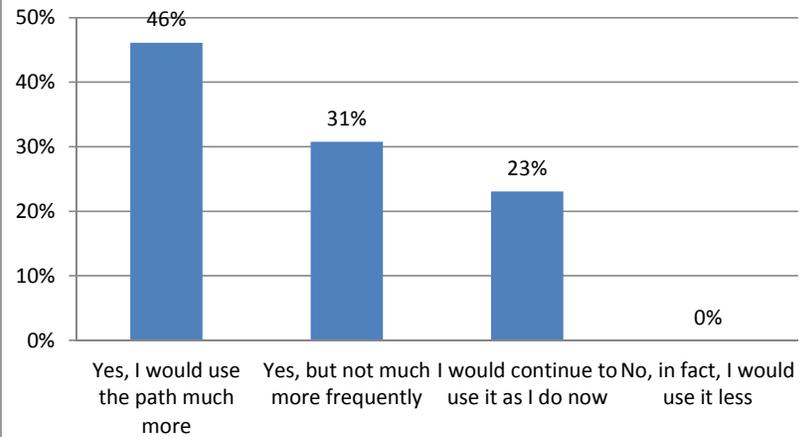
6. What are the most important "placemaking" features we could add?



7. What is your primary concern regarding the bike path reconstruction?



8. Would you use the bike path more often if these changes were made?





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