

CHAPTER 6

6.0 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Engaging members of the public is essential to any effective and inclusive planning process and public involvement has been an integral part of this study. First, steering teams consisting of members of local and regional organizations were formed to guide the study process. These teams regularly met with and worked closely with the Study Team. Two public workshops were held to further involve the general public. Finally, project information and feedback opportunities were provided using a website and social media outlets. Each of these public involvement efforts are described below and additional materials may be found in Appendix D.

6.1 Steering Teams

The Study Oversight Team (SOT) and the Core Technical Team (CTT) were formed to provide insight and guidance to the Study Team throughout the study process. These teams consisted of members of local and regional organizations, including NC Capital Area MPO, Kerr-Tar Council of Governments, Capital Area Transit, NCDOT Transportation Planning Branch, NCDOT Rail Division, NCDOT Division 5, NCDOT Congestion Management, Wake County, Franklin County, Franklin County Economic Development Commission, Town of Franklinton, Town of Youngsville, Town of Wake Forest, City of Raleigh, Kerr Area Rural Transit System, and local business leaders. The teams' primary responsibilities are discussed below.

6.1.1 Study Oversight Team

The Study Oversight Team (SOT) was primarily responsible for the development of project vision and policy. The SOT participated in three interactive meetings throughout the study process. The SOT provided insights as to the desires and needs of the local community. The SOT included the members of the CTT as well as representatives of the Town and other key stakeholders.

6.1.2 Core Technical Team

In addition to participating in policy and vision development, the Core Technical Team (CTT) was responsible for developing the more technical aspects of the project. The Study Team participated in a total of six monthly interactive work sessions with the CTT to discuss technical matters related to transportation, land use, and public involvement. The CTT included members of the US 1 Council of Planning as well as some additional representatives from Franklinton and Franklin County.

6.2 SOT and CTT Meetings

The SOT and CTT were engaged in multiple meetings during the course of the project. More information, including the presentations, agenda, and meeting minutes are available in Appendix D. The following meetings were held (in chronological order):

- **CTT Meeting No. 1/ SOT Meeting No. 1: Kickoff:** A kickoff meeting for the start of Phase II of the corridor study was held December 13, 2011 at the Town of Franklinton Town Hall Annex and included both the Study Oversight Team (SOT) and the Core Technical Team (CTT). Discussion included an introduction to the Consultant team and committee members, a project overview, the project scope and schedule, public involvement, and project vision.
- **CTT Meeting No. 2:** CTT Meeting No. 2 was held February 14, 2012 at the Town of Franklinton Town Hall Annex. Discussion included an introduction of new attendees not present at CTT Meeting No. 1, a review of the last meeting, an overview of the US 1 Council of Planning role and process, a discussion of existing conditions and plans/future vision (including current and future land use, current and forecasted roadway conditions, and transportation plans). Finally, public involvement and next steps were discussed including plans for the first public workshop.
- **CTT Meeting No. 3:** CTT Meeting No. 3 was held March 29, 2012 at the Town of Franklinton Town Hall Annex. One key discussion during this meeting included an overview of the March 6th Public Meeting, including attendance statistics, summary of survey results, and preferences expressed during the dot exercise. An overview of access issues was given and the development of a long-term plan was discussed. A board exercise was conducted in which key issues for each section shown on boards while the CTT members were encouraged to review and discuss roadway alternatives for each section of the US 1 corridor with the given map.
- **CTT Meeting No. 4/ SOT Meeting No. 2:** The fourth meeting of the CTT, held at the Town of Franklinton Town Hall Annex on May 10th, 2012, was also the second joint meeting of the SOT. The discussions in this meeting centered on study alternatives as they relate to land use, bike and pedestrian plans, the Southeast High Speed Rail, and



alignments for local street options. A comparative discussion of study alternatives by project sections (south, central, and north) was held, with committee members offering opinions, concerns, and preferences about the different alternatives.

- **CTT Meeting No. 5:** CTT Meeting No. 5 was held June 14, 2012 in the Town of Franklin Town Hall Annex. Discussion focused on land use opportunities and restrictions, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, transit, and the Southeast High Speed Rail. The long-term plan for US 1 was discussed, including how and when to transition from interim to ultimate improvements relative to congestion thresholds. Proposed improvements to other roadways in the local road network were also discussed. Phasing was discussed by project section (south, central, and north). The meeting concluded with a discussion of schedules and next steps, specifically on plans and logistics for the July 19 Public Meeting.



- **CTT Meeting No. 6/SOT Meeting No. 3:** CTT Meeting No. 6 was held August 30, 2012 in the Town of Franklin Town Hall Annex. Discussion focused an overview of the July 19th Public Meeting, final project recommendations, phasing and cost estimates, revisions to the Memorandum of Understanding, the Draft Report, and presentations to local board meetings. Revisions to the phasing plan since the previous meeting particularly focused on accelerating the Bert Winston Extension project as a priority over the Bert Winston Road intersection. Coordination issues related to the SEHSR and updated cost estimates were presented.

A key element of this meeting was that it served as both a steering committee meeting for the project, as well as serving as an official meeting of the US 1 Council of Planning. The Council voted to recommend adoption of the revised Memorandum of Understanding, and considered changes to the Council's bylaws. The Council was generally in agreement with the recommendations of the US 1 Corridor Study Phase II, but chose to hold off on formal endorsement until the local governments involved had endorsed the study.

6.3 Outreach to the General Public

Outreach to the general public was encouraged throughout the project process. From the beginning of the project, a project website was maintained to provide current information on the study. In addition, interviews with stakeholders were held at an early stage of the project to identify key concerns and potential opportunities.

6.3.1 Website and Social Media

For a plan to be successful, it is critical to engage the community and residents in and around the study area to obtain maximum input on pressing issues and create a vision. It is also important to educate the public, elected officials and other interested stakeholders on the project and its strategies.

As part of this effort of public education and information on the US1 corridor, the planning team worked with the SOT and the CTT to create a project website to serve as a one-stop platform for all the context, minutes and deliverables on the project. The website www.us-1corridor.com was organized in the following major sections:

- **About the Project:** consists of all the background information for the project, including the purpose of the study and information on the steering committee teams.
- **Community Involvement:** consists of information on upcoming events, meetings and meeting summaries, including presentations / information presented during the public workshops. The online version of the COMPASS survey was also housed under this section.
- **Plan Documents:** consists of the products created during the planning process and the final documents and reports generated from the study.
- **Resources:** consist of other major links used as resource for the project and also the QR code for the website.
- **Contact Us:** a section which could be used by the public to ask questions or sign up for the e-newsletters.

To encourage public involvement social media pages – Facebook and Twitter were set up so that general public could get information and learn about the major highlights and also provide their input. E-newsletters were also emailed out to provide periodic updates and information on the upcoming events and important project highlights.

6.3.2 Interviews with Key Stakeholders

In the initial stages of the project, a series of key stakeholders were identified for interviews relating to the US 1 study. The purpose was to receive input on the local area and the desires and needs of the local communities. In addition, input as to the desires and outcomes for the US 1 study were discussed. As part of this process, nine interviews were conducted with the following people:

- Ronnie Goswick, Director, Franklin County Economic Development Commission
- Elic Senter, Mayor, Town of Franklinton
- Tammy Ray, Planning Administrator, City of Franklinton
- Anita Fuller, Commissioner, City of Franklinton
- Angela Harris, Manager, Franklin County
- Scott Hammerbacher, Planning Director, Franklin County
- Mark McArn & Mark Thompson, Owners, Brassfield Commercial
- Brian Pate, Vice President and Sales Manager, Fonville Morisey Real Estate & Greater Franklin County Chamber of Commerce

Summaries of each of the interviews are included in Appendix D. A summary of the key findings from the stakeholder interviews is shown in Table 6-1.

6.4 Public Workshop #1

6.4.1 Overall Result

The first Public Workshop was held on March 6, 2012, at the Old Franklinton High School Auditorium in Franklinton. A total of 44 people attended, based on attendance sheets. This total included 30 from the general public, nine representatives from local government, and five representatives from the US 1 Council of Planning SOT and CTT. A copy of all public meeting materials is available in Appendix D.

6.4.2 Compass Survey

In order to identify issues, preferences and priorities for US 1 and establish a vision for the corridor, the planning team prepared a visual preference and short answer survey



Table 6-1. Key Findings for Stakeholder Interviews

Topic	Findings
Critical conditions impacting land use and potential development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NC56 Bypass • SEHSR and railroad crossings • Water supply and watershed restrictions on development density
General observations or comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perception of future demand for residential and supporting commercial • Trip patterns for local commuters • Capitalize on development around future interchanges • Need to increase tax base
Major concerns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Character and aesthetics of US 1 and the local network • US 1 improvement and potential negative effects on local businesses (purchase of property, relocation, etc.) • Connectivity • Accessibility during transition / interim phases
Major improvements desired	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Streetscape improvements • Pedestrian / bike connectivity improvements • Transit improvements • Commuter rail, SEHSR depot (Franklinton economic development)
Potential development or major issues in south project segment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mostly residential, but also appropriate for industrial park • Concern about increased traffic from new developments • Limited by critical watershed conditions – cannot support high density development • CSX right-of-way realignment
Potential development or major issues in central project segment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revitalize Downtown Franklinton • Cedar Creek area – major development opportunity • North of US1 has long-term potential but also has infrastructure and service delivery issues • NC 56 bypass could have major impact – but long-term • SEHSR challenging to connectivity
Potential development or major issues in north project segment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation area • Some potential around Griffin Trucks – long-term and mostly residential

featuring images of development, public spaces, and transportation improvements to help the stakeholders consider and identify the most appropriate conditions for the study area. Entitled the Compass survey, it was divided into the following main categories:

- Development and Open Space (images and questions)
- Transportation (images and questions)
- Participant Demographics (“Tell me about yourself”)

A hard-copy version of the survey was administered at the first Public Workshop, and was later made available online for two months to encourage additional public input. In all, forty surveys were compiled and analyzed with 84 percent of the participants having lived or worked in the area for over twenty years. In addition, most of the respondents were over 51 years of age. There is a strong reliance on single-occupancy vehicles as the dominant mode of transportation as 73 percent of the respondents reported travelling to work or school alone in a car; and 52 percent driving more than ten miles each day. Other observations from the COMPASS survey analysis are included in Table 6-2.

6.4.3 Dot Survey

Members of the public at the first Public Workshop were also invited to express their preferences on transportation and land use issues in the area by participating in a Dot Survey. Each participant was given a set of colored dots and directed to place them on study area maps with the following instructions:

- Put a red dot on places where you want to preserve and see no change
- Put a green dot on places where you want to see improvements, new development, or redevelopment
- Put a yellow dot on places that are important destinations for you in the area
- Put a blue dot on the two most critical intersections on the US 1 and explain your reasons on the note card.



Major findings of the dot exercise were:

- Residential lots located on the west side of US 1 across from US 1A Park Avenue is concerned about losing their access

Table 6-2. Key Findings for Compass Survey

Topic	Findings
Land Use and Development in South Section	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The respondents scored “retail” as the highest and most appropriate land use in the image section, whereas Farms/Agriculture and Business Parks/Corporate Campuses were preferred the most in the multiple-choice questions. • Suburban office, and to some degree flex space, was preferred over conventional manufacturing. • Light Industrial scored third highest in the question answer section in contrast to the image section, indicating that there are other elements (design, buffer, layout, etc.) related to this land use which should be addressed to make it more appropriate for the area. • There was also support for suburban type Subdivisions residential and Town-Center Subdivisions with mixed developments. • Heavy industrial was ranked the least desirable by the survey participants.
Land Use and Development in Central Section	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The most important priority in this segment was the preservation of Franklinton’s traditional land use pattern and infill redevelopment compatible to the existing businesses and character. • New commercial development (including strip commercial) is appropriate but must be well-designed and compatible with existing structures and include mixed use opportunities. • There was also support for senior housing and mixed use residential developments along with the traditional single family residential development.
Land Use and Development in North Section	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farm/rural character preservation was highly desired with some support for low-density single developments. • Other developments like commercial, manufacturing or office did not receive much support for the northern segment.
Open Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preservation of natural landscapes, including farms, was most desired with a need for community-based open space (local parks, playgrounds). • Active recreation facilities and outdoor event space are desired, compatible with the rural/suburban form of the study area.
Transportation in US 1 Corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was general consensus for converting US 1 Corridor into a freeway, with the prime concern being accessibility, especially for the existing businesses. • The image preferences indicated the desire to maintain the rural character and be compatible with the context. • Street maintenance and traffic safety were other major issues identified.
Transportation on Local Road Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A strong character for the secondary road network was desired with smaller-scale road / streets being generally preferred. • There was a considerable support for improving the bicycle and pedestrian connectivity within the study area with concentrating the improvements more in Franklinton Downtown. • Street/Road Maintenance was in general the most important issue identified for South and Central segments, with traffic speed and safety and lack of transit service identified as other issues. • Traffic safety was the prime concern for the Northern Segment.

- McGhee Farms family is concerned about access between their properties and US 1. In addition, they are interested in rural preservation.
- The segment of US 1A South Main Street located one quarter mile north of the US 1 junction south of Franklinton was identified as needing improvement.
- Concerns voiced out by residents in a subdivision north of NC 56; they desire roadway and access improvements.
- The dot map scroll can be reviewed in Appendix D.

6.5 Public Workshop #2

The second Public Workshop was held Thursday, July 19th at the Old Franklinton High School, from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. This workshop differed from the first in that it was formatted as an open house with no formal presentation. A copy of all public meeting materials is available in Appendix D. A variety of informational boards were available to view, and were arranged in stations according to theme. The four themes included:



- US 1 Improvements (including the Freeway and Superstreet Alternatives),
- Land Use
- Bicycle & Pedestrian Accommodations, and
- Project Phasing.

Boards were also presented to summarize the results of the Compass Survey from Public Workshop #1. Study Team members were present throughout the meeting to provide explanation and answer questions about the project.

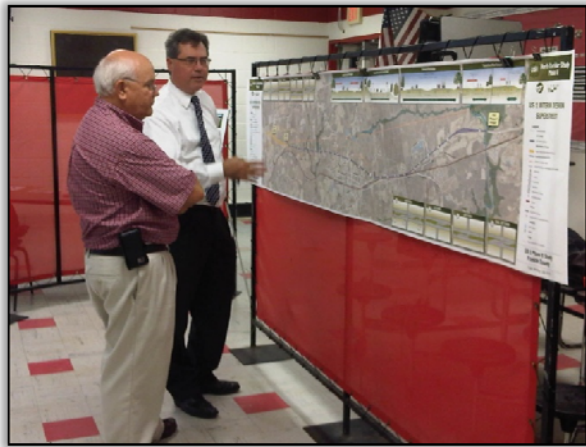
The workshop was attended by members of the general public along with representatives from local businesses, government, and agencies. A total of 13 people attended. Some written comments were collected from attendees. These comments are summarized below:

- “Keep East Mason Street railroad crossing open. This is not only good for the Town of Franklinton by makes school bus transportation routes more efficient.”

- “Expedite compensation of Right of Way impacted by proposed highway expansions and improvements. If this is not done, this is a very heavy negative economic burden.”
- Comments were received regarding the current or potential closure due to the Southeast High Speed Rail.

Public comments also included:

- Concern about construction impacts required as part of upgrading/ improving the existing NC 56 intersection. The specific concern was the Family Dollar shopping center in the northeast quadrant of the interchange.



- Concern about access restrictions and impacts from the local street improvements on NC 56 just west of the existing interchange. The primary concern was a 10 acre lot in the southwest quadrant of the interchange.

- Multiple comments about the impacts that SEHSR would have on closing at-grade crossings in Franklinton. In particular, there were concerns about the proposed closure of Mason Street.

- General approval of the proposed Freeway with Local Street concept. The Superstreet improvements were also generally viewed as favorable. There was a general consensus that improvements will be required on US 1.
- Interest was expressed in providing a commuter rail station in Franklinton even if a high speed rail stop cannot be provided. There was interest in producing a cost-benefit study of this type of facility to potentially qualify for federal or state funding.