



## Open House 1 Summary

NOVEMBER 25, 2019

### Overview

The first open house for the Penn Avenue Corridor Study was held on November 14, 2019 from 4 to 7 p.m. at Sheridan Hills Elementary School in Richfield. The purpose of the open house was to provide an overview of the study and to collect feedback from community members on transportation and land use issues and opportunities in the Penn Avenue study corridor.

The meeting was conducted in an open house format where participants were asked to view project materials and leave comments with project staff, on comment forms or on project layouts. An online comment form was also posted on the project website and promoted as a virtual open house for those who could not attend the meeting in person. Project materials included aerial maps of the project corridor, a visioning exercise and poster boards that included information on the project background, purpose, timeline and goals. Approximately 90 people attended the open house. Approximately 150 comments were left on the project maps, 25 people filled out comment forms, and 57 people submitted online comments.



*Participants share feedback on existing corridor conditions and needs with project staff*





## Promotion

The open house was promoted through multiple methods to reach a broad cross-section of the community. The following table shows the meeting promotions.

Meeting Promotion
Postcard mailed to 2,700 nearby properties from 70 <sup>th</sup> Street to Hwy 62 and from Xerxes Avenue to I-35W
Social media posts by the City of Richfield (Facebook, Twitter, Sweets Streets website)
Postcard distributed to storefront business along Penn Avenue between Hwy 62 and 68 <sup>th</sup> Avenue
Emailed City of Richfield Council Members
Emailed City of Richfield Sweet Streets Subscribers
Emailed Hennepin County Transportation Subscribers
Shared with businesses/public groups
Publicized on city's message board at city hall
Sweet street lawn signs on Penn Avenue
Posted on city's calendar

## Highlights

The following are the key findings from the comments collected, including verbal comments made to staff, written comments left on maps at the meeting, written comment forms, and an online comment form.

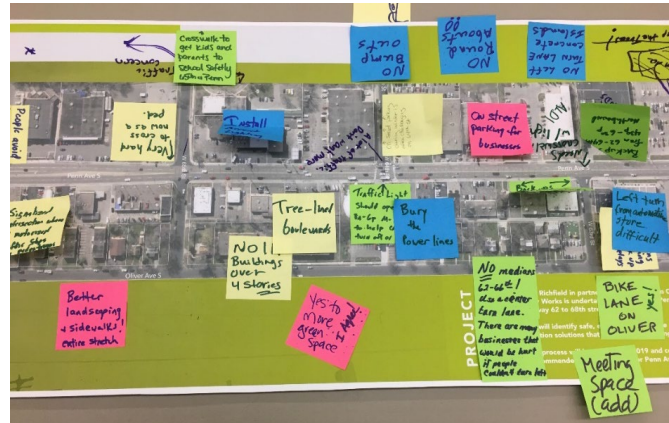
- A majority of people either use Penn Avenue to visit a business on the corridor or to access an area beyond the corridor
- Most people use a vehicle to access Penn Avenue or to travel through the area
- Some people want to keep Penn Avenue a 4-lane road while others would prefer Penn Avenue become a 3-lane road with a designated turn lane
- Most people don't walk or bike along Penn Avenue, but would like to see walking and biking improvements made to the area
- Several people said sidewalks are in poor condition and that it feels unsafe to walk on and across Penn Avenue
- Many comments were made about the condition of the road and sidewalks; potholes, irregular pavement, unlevelled manholes, narrow sidewalks with little separation from traffic, and poor crosswalks (or no crosswalks)
- Several people recommended adding green space, more trees and shrubs
- Opinions were split regarding roundabouts; some want them, others prefer intersections with traffic signals





## Comments

Below is a summary of the comments from participants at the Penn Avenue Corridor Study Open House, organized by topic. Comments were received through conversations with project staff, comment forms, and notes made on the tabletop map and interactive boards. An online comment form was also posted on the project website and promoted for those who could not attend the meeting. Eight project team members were available to answer questions and to record notes on the conversations they had with participants. The percentages reported below are based on the in-person open house comment forms and online survey.



Community members added notes on the tabletop map about areas of concern and needed improvements

## Destinations

- Most people said they travel on Penn Avenue to visit a business or restaurant on the corridor (88%), or to travel through the corridor to access a location outside of the study area (79%)
- Most people use their car when traveling to or through the corridor (90%), while others would like to bike (18%) or walk (16%) if improvements were made

## Streetscape and aesthetics

- Several people had concerns about the appearance of the corridor (66%). Many people want updated buildings on the corridor to make them more appealing to visitors
- Several people suggested adding trees, bushes, etc. to the corridor (45%). Several others suggested adding decorative, pedestrian scape streetlights

## Intersections

- Opinions were divided regarding roundabouts; some people like roundabouts while other prefer intersections with traffic signals
- Several people commented that the intersections at 64th Avenue and 65th Avenue are especially unsafe for crossing
- A few people expressed concern about unsafe crossings at controlled intersections
- A few people suggested adding more signalized intersections as mid-block crossings at unsignalized intersections or very dangerous today





## **Pedestrian facilities**

- Many people expressed safety concerns with sidewalks that are too close to the road and advised adding a buffer between the road and the sidewalk
- Many people commented that the sidewalks are in poor condition and not accessible for people rolling
- Many people said the bridge over Hwy 62 is dangerous to travel by foot
- Several people suggested adding a center median and a few people advised using bump outs to help walkers cross Penn Avenue
- A few people were concerned about shared trails; pedestrians expressed concern about their safety when sharing a trail with bicyclists

## **Bicycle facilities**

- Some people want to bike along Penn Avenue but don't because it feels unsafe
- Some people expressed concerns that adding designated bike lanes on Penn Avenue would reduce the number of driving lanes
- A few people preferred adding on-street bike facilities, while others preferred off-street bike facilities
- Several people commented that the Penn Avenue bridge over Hwy 62 is dangerous to travel by bike and on foot
- A few people suggested adding a bike route on Oliver Avenue rather than Penn Avenue, with a bike bridge for Oliver Avenue over Highway 62
- A few people commented that having traditional bike lanes on Penn Avenue would be unsafe with the high number of driveways and cross streets on Penn Avenue

## **Vehicle facilities**

- Most (90%) people frequently use their car to visit or travel through Penn Avenue
- Several people expressed concern about distracted drivers and high vehicle speeds on Penn Avenue that make it unsafe

## **Vehicle lanes and driveways**

- Many people want to keep Penn Avenue a 4-lane road while many others would prefer Penn Avenue become a 3-lane road with a designated turn lane
- Several people advised adding a designated turn lane, but also acknowledge doing so may create delays during peak travel times
- Many people feel the driveways along Penn Avenue are challenging to turn into and out of. Of note are the entrances to Lunds and Byerlys, and Aldi

## **Congestion and delay**

- Many people noted that congestion and delay were one of their top traffic-related concerns on the corridor (56%)
- Several people expressed concern that new residential and additional development would cause more delay along the corridor







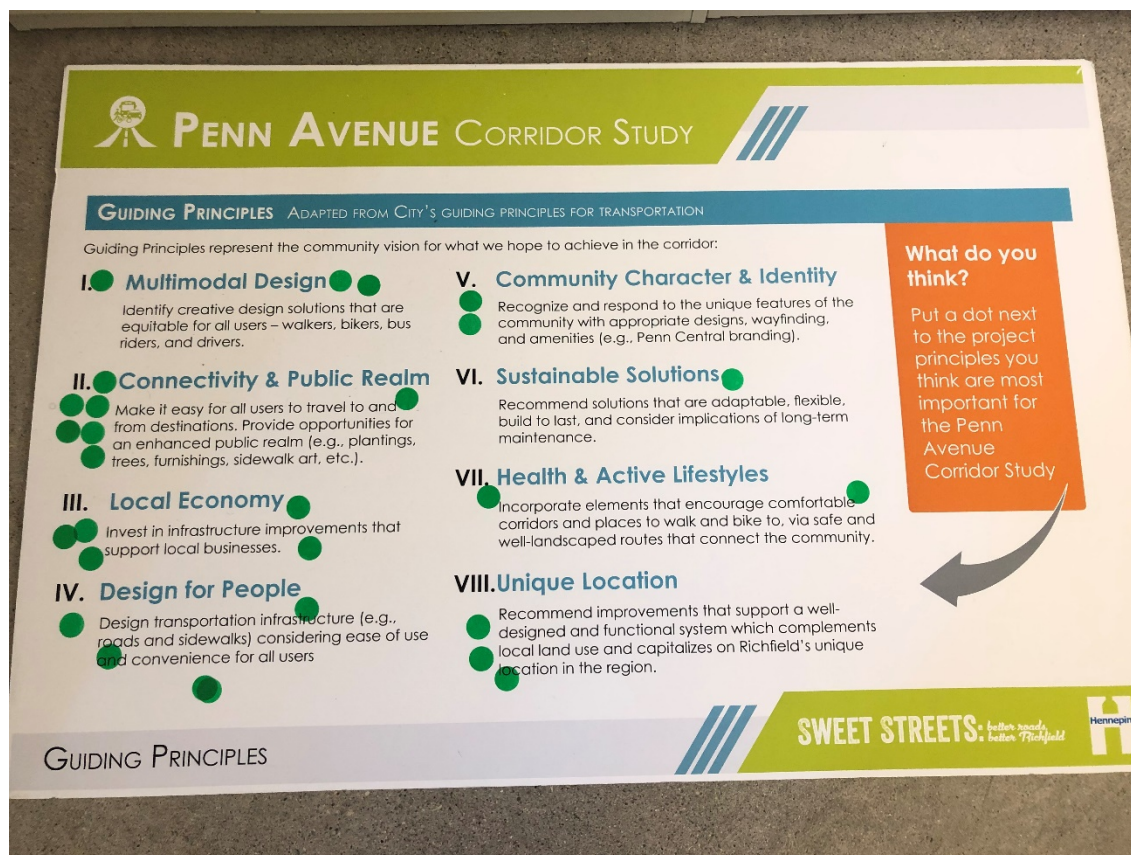
- A few people commented about poor visibility near the Lund's parking lot entrance/exit and Highway 62

## Parking

- Several people said its challenging to find parking near the business they frequent and suggested on-street parking would help
- Several people said the on-street parking on side streets make it difficult to turn on and off of Penn Avenue
- Some people suggested the addition of a public off-street parking facility or a 'district-parking' concept
- A couple of people in attendance representing corridor businesses expressed concern about losing their driveway access

## Guiding Principles

- Participants most frequently chose "Connectivity and Public Realm" as the most important for Penn Avenue. The next most frequent were "Local Economy" and "Design for People."



Community members added 'dot' stickers to identify the guiding principles most important for Penn Avenue.

