



**250 Bypass/McIntire Road Interchange  
Citizen Informational Meeting  
June 14, 2006  
SUMMARY of Comments**

**Summary of Comments Received**

The second Citizen Informational Meeting for the Route 250 Bypass Interchange at McIntire Road project was held on June 14, 2006, at the Charlottesville High School from 4:00 PM to 7:30 PM. Attendees viewed displays about the project including the purpose and need, traffic studies, environmental resources in the project study area and potential impacts, and a range of alternatives initially considered. Thirteen conceptual alternatives were presented for review and discussion. Attendees were asked to provide their comments based on the display boards.

Forty-seven persons signed the workshop attendance list; fifteen people submitted comments. Five emails and seven additional comment forms were received within the advertised comment period that ended on Saturday, June 24, 2006.

This summary of the comments and suggestions received at the public workshop and through the comment period is not a scientific sample, but rather represents the views of those who chose to provide comments.

**GENERAL SUMMARY and KEY POINTS**

The majority of those offering comments were positive in their responses and offered preferences and recommendations, as prompted by the comment form. A few comment forms expressed opposition to any build alternative. Some of the major themes that wound through all of the responses include:

- Identifying the project's link to the Meadowcreek Parkway project
- Treatment of the Park Street Ramps
- Protection of resources
- Use, unfamiliarity, and traffic patterns through the roundabouts
- Pedestrian and bicycle access to and through McIntire Park
- Pedestrian and bicycle safety when crossing the Route 250 Bypass

When asked to indicate whether they agreed with the Project Team's recommendation for alternatives to be retained for detailed study, most agreed. However, when asked to rank their preference for an alternative, the responses were scattered – no single alternative stood out among the choices. Respondents were divided in their preference for a roundabout or multi-lane signalized intersection, strongly requested separation of vehicular and pedestrian/bicycle traffic, were divided in their preference for an underpass or overpass for pedestrian/bicycle traffic, expressed a variety of preferences for the visual/landscape options presented, and indicated a preference for trail option four.

Specific responses to each of the questions are summarized below.



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***Display Board 2 – Public Involvement/Steering Committee/Public Comments Display  
Are there other methods our Team should use to communicate the project information better?***

The majority of those offering comments were satisfied with the communication efforts of the Project Team in conveying information about the project, with most identifying public meetings (12) and print media (8) as the media from which most information is received. Three people offered suggestions for better communication, including: sending more timely email reminders of the public meetings, presenting the information at other organizations' venues, and adding more details to the announcement (which CHS entrance?). One response felt that the progression of ideas in the displays should be more apparent, and one suggested holding a public meeting on the site.

***Display Board 3 – Project Purpose and Need/Goals and Objectives  
Do you feel the draft Project Purpose and Need adequately and clearly defines the conditions and intent of the project?***

Of the responses received for this question, many felt the Project Purpose and Need had in fact clearly stated the goals and intent of the project (13 responses). Some were concerned that the Purpose and Need assumed the construction of Meadowcreek Parkway and limited the analysis to just the interchange instead of the roadway network. One respondent felt the text was too technical, and another thought the need was not convincing.

***Do you have any comments, suggestions or additions to the Project Purpose and Need or Goals and Objectives?***

Responses noted that a project goal should be a safe, functioning intersection; the Purpose and Need should address the Meadowcreek Parkway's impact on the site and the traffic impacts of the Parkway; and that the design should be familiar to US drivers. One response indicated a need to discourage vehicle use and encourage walking, biking and use of public transportation. Another response indicated a need to address traffic issues at Birdwood and Hillcrest Roads.

***Display Board 4A – Alternatives Considered but Not Recommended for Further Evaluation  
Should any of these alternatives be retained for detailed evaluation? If yes, which should be retained and why?***

Of those responding, 14 indicated agreement with the Project Team choices and three disagreed. Optional alternatives to be retained included G, because it does not strive to be a "gateway" and does fit in the terrain, and G-1. One response indicated that they couldn't choose intelligently without knowing more about issues/projects outside of this project, one response indicated no-build, and one indicated a preference for those that use less space.



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***Display Board 4B – Recommended Range of Alternatives***

***Should any of these alternatives NOT be retained for detailed evaluation? Which one(s) and why?***

Three responses indicated not retaining the no-build alternative. One comment suggested eliminating all alternatives with roundabouts, and four responses indicated issues with Park Street (eliminate those that require Park Street traffic to go through a roundabout; eliminate alternatives that retain the Park Street ramps; solve the problem of Park Street access to Route 250 west; don't keep those that use the land between the rescue squad and Park Street ramps). One comment suggested that Alternatives B, C, D, E, and G take too much land/space and would change the nature of a small road into a highway in the middle of town, and one noted that there were too many alternatives. One commenter suggested that none of the alternatives appeared to meet traffic projection needs.

***What do you feel are the most important resources to avoid or minimize impacts? Choices include: McIntire Park, Rescue Squad, Vietnam Veterans Memorial, Schenk's Branch, Other, All of the Above***

Of the four specific resources, McIntire Park (14) was the most noted, with Schenk's Branch (6) the second most cited resource to avoid or minimize impacts. The Rescue Squad and Veterans Memorial were also recognized (3 each). All of the above was the choice of seven responses. Others noted that both the Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the Rescue Squad could be moved. Additional resources identified as important to avoid or minimize impacts to were MACAA, the wooded cliff to the right of the uphill ramp to Park Street, Meadow Creek and the Rivanna River, neighborhoods, and homes.

***What do you feel are the most important elements that should be considered during the detailed evaluation of the range of alternatives? Choices include: Pedestrian and Bicycle Access, Improved Traffic Flow on the Bypass, Access for Rescue Squad, aesthetics/Context Sensitive Design, Protect Neighborhoods, Minimize Construction Impacts, Accommodate Future Traffic, Park Street Ramps, Closing Hillcrest Drive.***

Although the responses indicated the importance of all of the elements identified, protection of neighborhoods (15) and pedestrian and bicycle access (13) were identified as the two most important to consider, with accommodation of future traffic (10), improved traffic flow on the bypass (10) and aesthetics/context sensitive design (9) the next most important. Less important were access for the rescue squad (6), minimizing construction impacts (6) and the Park Street ramps (5). Other elements considered important were traffic calming, being sure McIntire Park functions for the area, noise levels as a result of the elevation of the Bypass, Hillcrest Drive, and the natural environment/ecology of the area.



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***If you wish to indicate your preference for a particular interchange alternative, please do so below. Rate in order with 1 being the best/most desirable. Choices: A, B, C1, D2, E1, E2, G1, Other***

Alternatives A, C1, E1, E2 and G were most often ranked as first or second preference. Alternatives B, C1 and D2 ranked most often as the third or fourth choice.

***Which of these alternatives do you like the best and why?***

Alternatives A, G1, E1 and E2 received the most favorable comments – respondents cited familiarity with intersections and lower impacts as reasons for preferring A, and lower impacts and simplicity of design for preferring G1. Those who liked Alternative E1 cited improvement of the Park Street westbound ramp, the spread of traffic, and the roundabouts as reasons; those who preferred Alternative E2 noted the solutions to Park Street ramp issues. Some responses felt that information was too limited to allow them to make a choice, and some requested the no-build.

***Which of these alternatives do you like the least and why?***

Many respondents expressed a dislike for alternatives that incorporate roundabouts (B, C1, C2, E1, E2) or seem to be too big, overbuilt or to incorporate too much asphalt (E1, E2, C1, D2). Specific comments noted that A would not provide congestion relief, B doesn't close Hillcrest Road (dangerous access), and that G1 seems to limit traffic options. .

***Display Board 5 – Environmental Inventory***

***Are there any additional natural, socioeconomic or cultural resources in the project area?***

Most respondents did not identify any additional resources. Air/air quality was identified by two comments, and McIntire Park (without the proposed Meadowcreek Parkway) and Schenk's Branch were noted.

***Display Board 6 – Traffic Data/Forecasts/Analysis***

***Describe any specific traffic or safety related problems you have experienced while driving, walking or biking through the Route 250 Bypass/McIntire Road intersection.***

Most frequent comments (3 each) included the lack of sidewalks, backups in various locations, and the difficulty crossing the 250 Bypass on foot or bicycle. Two commented on Park Street ramp traffic merges. The short left turn lane for McIntire Road from 250 was also noted as was traffic using neighborhood roads to avoid the intersection.



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***What intersection type do you feel is the most appropriate for this location? Choices are: 2-Lane Roundabout, Multi-lane Signalized Intersection***

Respondents were almost equally divided as to which is more appropriate choice. One respondent was concerned about the safety of roundabouts and whether automobiles would stop for pedestrians, and one indicated the importance of proper design for the roundabout.

***Display Board 7A – Urban Design/Landscape***

***From a motorist’s perspective, which landscape/visual environment option is best for safety and orientation around the interchange? Choices are the Enclosed Woodland, the Clearing, and the Parkway Corridor, each with or without an open NW corner.***

The majority of those responding indicated that the Clearing (3) or the Clearing with open N/W Corner (4) would be best from a safety perspective; one cited good sight lines and another the symmetry as key to intersection navigation. The Enclosed Woodland was the preference of three respondents, and the Parkway Corridor with or without the open corner was preferred by two. One comment preferred the option with the most trees, one response indicated that function was more important than landscape, and one response called for an overall landscape plan for the roadway.

***From a pedestrian/cyclist’s perspective, which landscape/visual environment option is best for safety and orientation around the interchange?***

Just 11 persons commented on this question. The majority of those responding indicated the Enclosed Woodland (3) or Parkway with open NW corner (3) as the best option. The Clearing was preferred by two respondents. One preferred any option without an open corner view of McIntire Park to preserve the view of those in the Park. One comment noted that woods further from pedestrians will increase their visibility and sense of safety especially at dusk or at night, and one suggested that the option should create a sense of separation of trail from roadway. One comment requested the question be asked from a “park users’ perspective”.

***Which option would be your preferred visual setting for the interchange?***

Just ten persons commented on this question. The Enclosed Woodland and Parkway Corridor were the preferred visual setting of two comments each, and the Clearing with open NW corner was preferred once. Two comments suggested this detail was less important than function, and two comments indicated a preference for the No-Build Alternative.

***Display Board 7B – Urban Design/Trails***

***What trail elements do you feel are most important? Choices: Minimize at-grade crossings, Separate facilities for pedestrians and bikes, Separation from roadway, Access across McIntire Road in the park.***



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Separation from the roadway was noted most often (15 responses) as most important, and access across McIntire Road in the park was the next most important (12). Minimizing at-grade crossings was also considered important (10 responses). Separate facilities for pedestrians and bikes was noted as most important by 5 responses.

***Which type of roadway crossing would you prefer? Choices: Pedestrian Overpass, Pedestrian Underpass, Other***

There was no preference indicated between a pedestrian overpass (9 responses) and a pedestrian underpass (9 responses). Three responses indicated “Other”, with one suggesting that safety issues dictate the choice.

***Which trail option functions best in relation to trail safety and community accessibility? Five options were provided.***

There was a clear preference for option 4 (8 responses), which would provide a trail on the west of McIntire Road overpassing 250, a trail on the east side close to Schenk’s Branch (passing under 250), and an overpass of McIntire Road Extended north of the interchange. The other variations received one or two responses each. Two respondents noted the importance of separation of pedestrians and automobiles.

***Which trail option do you prefer for orientation and proximity to vehicular traffic?***

Option 4, described in the previous question, was most preferred (6 responses).

***Display Board 7C – Urban Design/Bridges***

***What bridge type is most appropriate for this location? Choices: Steel Girder, Monticello Arch, Masonry Arch, Concrete Arch, Steel Span w/ Masonry Piers, Steel Frame, Other.***

The masonry arch bridge ranked most appropriate by those responding (7 responses), followed by the steel span with masonry piers (6), other (5), Monticello arch (4), concrete arch (2), and steel girder or steel span with masonry piers (1 response each). Some of the comments included issues of aesthetics, cost, safety as guiding the choice.

***Which bridge type is the best gateway/portal for the interchange? Choices: Steel Girder, Monticello Arch, Masonry Arch, Concrete Arch, Steel Span w/ Masonry Piers, Steel Frame, Other.***

The masonry arch was ranked as the best gateway/portal bridge, with eight responses, followed by the steel span with masonry piers (4 responses), the Monticello arch (3 responses), the concrete arch or other (2 responses each), and the steel girder (1 response). Additional comments indicated that it was unimportant, that the pedestrian bridge was more important, and the issues of aesthetics, safety, efficiency and cost were noted.