

Memo

To: CA-MPO Policy Board

From: Jessica Hersh-Ballering, Transportation Planner

Date: January 27, 2021

Re: Potential Bicycle and Pedestrian Crossing of the Rivanna River

Background: In early 2020, VDOT consultants conducted a feasibility study on two potential routes for a bicycle and pedestrian bridge across the Rivanna River in the vicinity of Riverview Park. TJPDC staff, VDOT, City of Charlottesville, and Albemarle County hosted a public workshop on the evening of November 12th to inform the public of the results of the feasibility study and gather feedback from the public. TJPDC staff also received over two dozen emails on the project between 11/8 and 12/1.

Questions and comments from both the workshop and emails were recorded and determined to fall into the following categories:

- Technical considerations
- Project cost
- Project accessibility and connectivity
- Environmental concerns
- Parking concerns
- Impacts (of increased use) on community character

Discussion around this project offered residents an opportunity to voice pre-existing concerns regarding the overuse of Riverview Park and related parking concerns, as well as traffic concerns related to new commercial uses in Woolen Mills.

In summary, while neither of the two route options garnered clear support, those who stated their feelings about the project generally spoke positively about a bicycle and pedestrian crossing of the Rivanna River. This is consistent with previous public engagement done to create earlier planning documents.

Recent work: TJPDC, Albemarle County, City of Charlottesville, and VDOT staff met following the online workshop to answer questions that were emailed and/or remained unanswered at the end of the online workshop. Staff paid special attention to a question repeatedly asked by the public regarding the additional route options presented to staff before the consultants investigated the two route options in their feasibility study. All of the following materials can be found on the TJPDC website at this time:

- The feasibility study from the consultants
- A recording of the Nov 12 workshop
- A summary of public feedback (workshop and emails)
- A Q&A sheet for questions that remained unanswered at the end of the workshop
- A PDF of the original 6 options that staff narrowed down to 2 (with a brief explanation as to why four options were disregarded)

Next steps: Albemarle County and City of Charlottesville will need to determine if they would like to pursue this project further and, if so, how they would like to proceed.

TJPDC staff will pass along any additional comments received on the project to the relevant contacts at Albemarle County and City of Charlottesville.