



Crystal Open House – July 27, 2015

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001

We live on Welcome Ave between Corvallis and Fairview. The recent updates to CR 81 increased traffic in our neighborhood due to closures of access points on side streets. We have safety concerns for our neighborhood with the proposed location of the Blue Line LRT. There are a lot of children in the neighborhood, and most of the streets do not have sidewalks. Anything that can be done to keep traffic reroutes off these streets is preferable. In terms of the West Broadway crossing at the current S curve, option 4 seems to be the safest for our neighborhood children.

002

Excellent presentation. All participants were very knowledgeable & willing to share & exchange information. Thank you!

003

For people who currently live on the BNSF property line, what is being done to mitigate noise and vibration concerns? Does this include the noise from crossing signals? Will residents receive any kind of assistance in updating or remodeling their homes to account for the increase in noise and vibration?

004

When we attended the open house at the Crystal community center last week, we were surprised at the low number of residents in attendance. I had a chance to talk with my neighbors last night at our block's Night to Unite event. Our properties are all directly adjacent to the BNSF freight line. About a third of our neighbors hadn't heard anything at all about the Blue Line extension project, another third thought the project was going to be located along Hwy 81 instead of the BNSF line and therefore wouldn't impact us, and the remaining third were under the assumption that our properties would be seized under eminent domain and demolished to make room for the extension so there was no need for us as residents to be involved in the project. One couple at our Night to Unite event had a 7-week-old baby and have owned their house for less than two years, and they were not aware of the Blue Line project at all. Now they have to deal with the implications of being stuck in a house they can't afford to sell, trying to enforce naps and bedtimes with a toddler, first during heavy construction, and then while trains speed past their property 21 hours a day.



This is EXTREMELY troubling to me. The DEIS has identified our block as being moderately-to-severely impacted by noise and vibration from this project. There will be traffic changes at the crossings near us that will greatly impact our neighborhood. While I don't think information is being intentionally withheld from residents, not nearly enough is being done to get current, correct information into their hands, nor is the Community Outreach team contacting those impacted the most to alert them of potential issues and collect their input. Low attendance at public meetings may be due to the fact that few people are even aware of the project's existence. Flyers in door handles with links to websites are minimal efforts that are easily overlooked, discarded as junk solicitation, or even blown away by the wind. People need to be aware of something before they are able to seek out information and give their input, and even then they may not have the resources to do so. The Community Outreach team needs to be making sure that residents are fully informed through any means necessary, at the very least calling or even going door-to-door and speaking to community members face-to-face.

005

Privacy

We currently have a privacy fence and a line of mature trees between our yard and the BNSF freight line. One of the LRT community outreach members mentioned that everything up to the fence line will likely need to be removed to make room for the rail tracks. While we have a reasonable expectation of privacy with the current infrequent freight trains, we are concerned that light rail commuters - particularly those who may choose to stand while riding - will have a clear view over our privacy fence and into our private property.

Health and wellness

Our home is in close proximity to two crossings of the current freight line. The rail warning alarms at the crossings are loud enough they can be heard even from our basement. Since the freight line only seems to run once every 48 hours or so, this is only a moderate nuisance to us. However, the light rail will drastically increase the usage of the crossings and occurrence of rail warning alarms. The light rail will also be running 21 hours a day. This means natural sleeping hours will be at risk of disruption from warning alarms and vibrations, which will be more noticeable in the otherwise quiet and stillness of the night. The DEIS has identified both moderate and severe noise impacts in our neighborhood. Disrupted and reduced quality of sleep will degrade the health and wellbeing of those who live in our area.

Property valuation

Seemingly no projections have been made regarding the impact the light rail project will have on property values. This is in stark contrast to the extensive environmental studies that have been performed. Pressing the project forward without any attempt to analyze what it will do to the value of nearby homes would be a disservice to the community. Individual property values are projected each year by the county for tax purposes, so it would be a reasonable expectation for this information to be provided for this project.

Safety

One of the display posters at the July 27th open house clearly laid out ways to construct safety measures - such as barriers and trenches - between the freight line and the light rail lines. This means the addition of the light rail creates noteworthy physical dangers to its surroundings. Where are the plans to protect nearby homes from these dangers? Also, we live in a neighborhood with a lot of children and seniors but very few sidewalks. What are the proposed changes to pedestrian infrastructure at intersections and crossings to keep residents safe?



Traffic

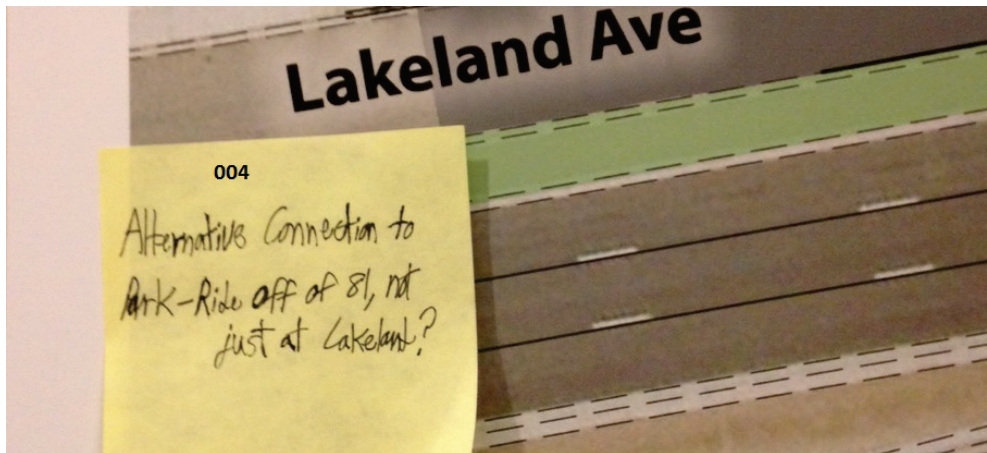
Some of the proposed solutions to address the rail crossings on Broadway Ave would increase automobile traffic along Fairview and Welcome Ave, where we live. There are many children in our neighborhood who are used to running, biking, and playing in the street, which has no sidewalks. I strongly advocate any crossing option that avoids increasing traffic along these streets.

Better route?

It appears a great deal of effort is being spent attempting to squeeze the light rail into the path for the currently existing freight line. Wouldn't Bottineau Blvd itself be an all around better place to lay light rail tracks? With the six lanes plus frontage roads and vacant adjacent properties, it seems like there is plenty of room available. The complications of the Corvallis and Broadway crossings would disappear. Tracks would be further away from homes, alleviating concerns for safety, privacy, noise and vibration. Laying tracks right down the median might even be a creative way to mitigate impacts to traffic flow.

006

Alternative connection to Park-Ride off of 81, not just at Lakeland?



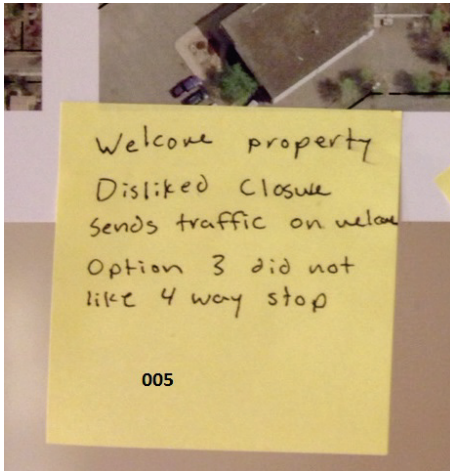


METRO Blue Line LRT Extension (BLRT)

5514 West Broadway Avenue, Suite 200, Crystal, MN 55428 www.bluelineext.org

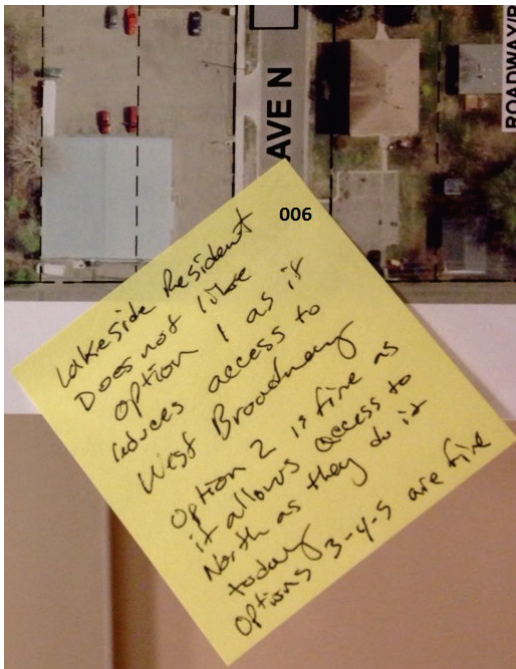
007

Welcome property
Disliked closure sends traffic on welcome
Option 3 did not like 4 way stop



008

Lakeside resident does not like option 1 as it reduces access to West Broadway
Option 2 is fine as it allows access to North as they do it today
Options 3-4-5 are fine



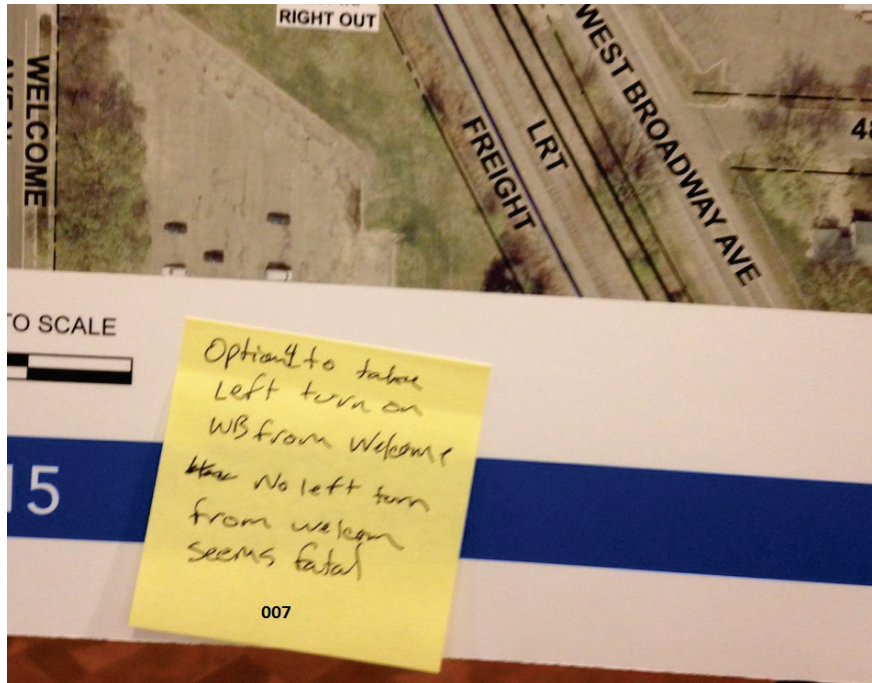


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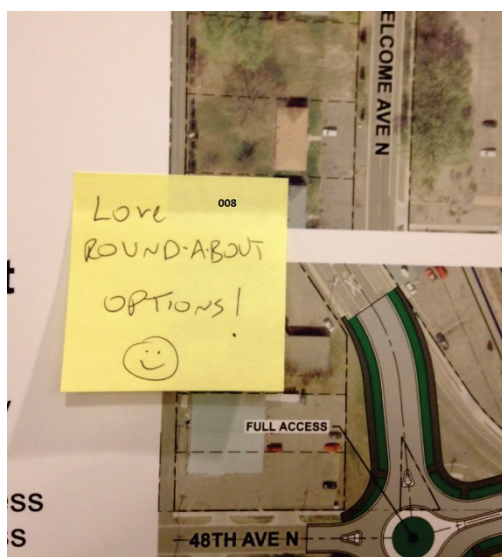
009

Option 4 to take left turn on WB from Welcome
No left turn from Welcome seems fatal



010

Love round-about options! 😊



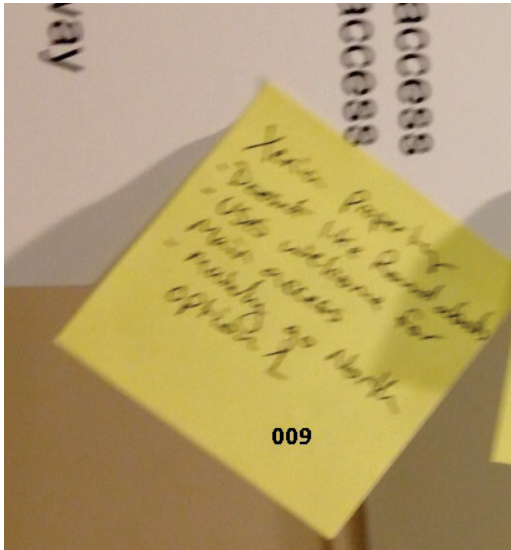


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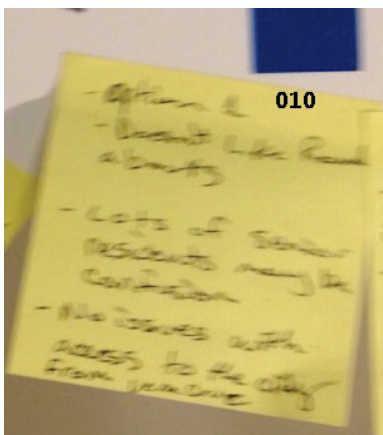
011

Xenia property
Doesn't like roundabouts
Use Welcome for main access
Mainly go north
Option 1



012

Option 1
Doesn't like roundabouts
Lots of senior residents may be confusion
No issues with access to the city from Vera Cruz



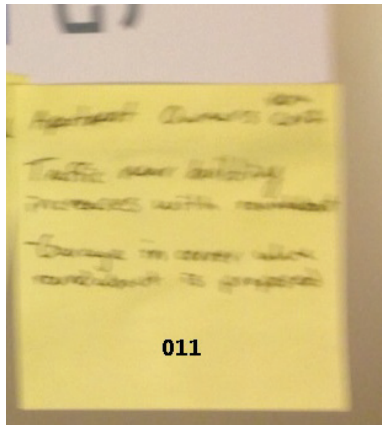


013

Apartment owners Vera Cruz

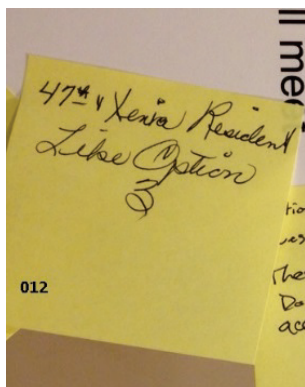
Traffic near building increases with roundabout

Garage in corner where roundabout is proposed



014

47th & Xenia Resident Like Option 3





METRO Blue Line LRT Extension (BLRT)

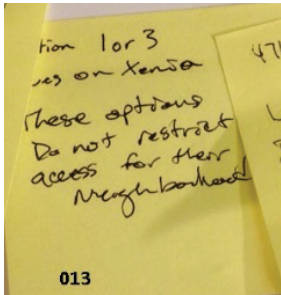
5514 West Broadway Avenue, Suite 200, Crystal, MN 55428 www.bluelineext.org

015

Option 1 or 3

Lives on Xenia

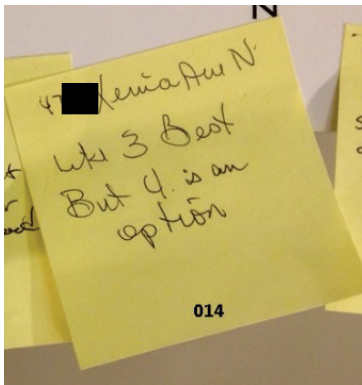
These options do not restrict access for their neighborhood



016

47xx Xenia Ave N

Like 3 best but 4 is an option

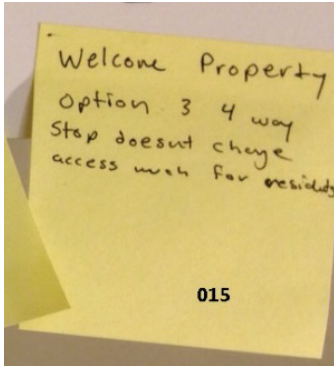




017

Welcome Property

Option 3 4-way stop doesn't change access much for residents



018

OPT 3 because I will still have access to 48th Welcome - Xenia

