

Appendix D1

Outreach Summary



Brodhead Road

Corridor Planning Study

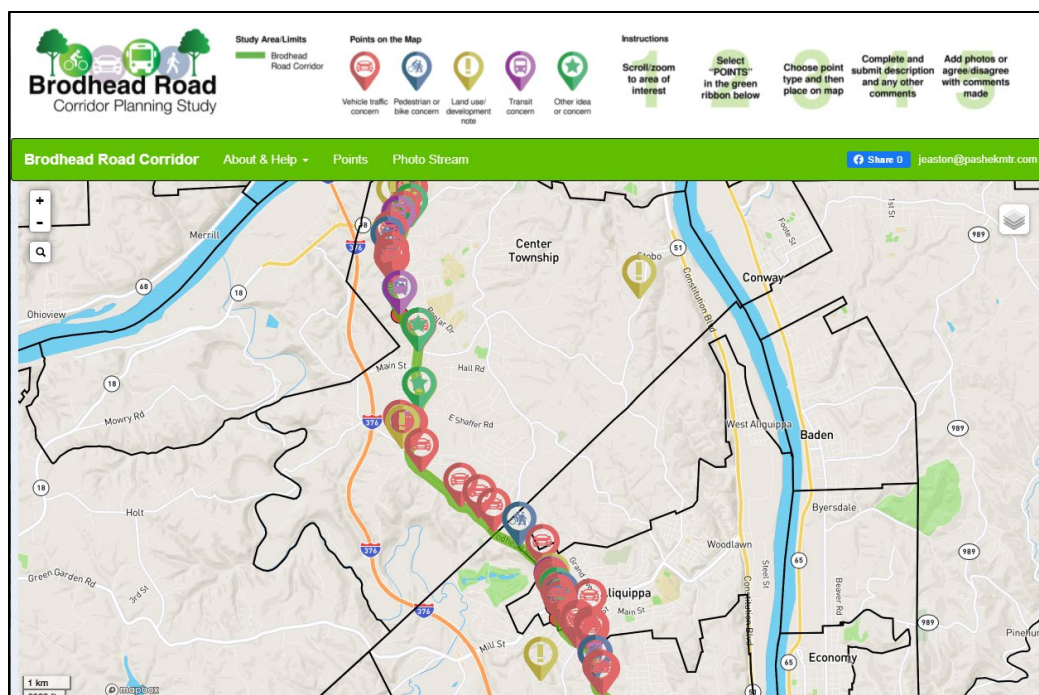
Summary of Public and Stakeholder Outreach

Approach

Public and stakeholder engagement for the Brodhead Road Corridor Planning Study was designed to be effective, efficient and adaptive to the constraints imposed by Covid-19 public health measures. This necessitated prioritizing digital engagement platforms while ensuring that a variety of publicity methods would broadly reach those living and working in the project area, offering all the opportunity to engage with the plan. Early in the timeline, a project website went live and a wikimap was published to collect location-specific comments.

Wikimap

The wikimapping tool became not only a direct public input mechanism well-suited to the 11-mile length of the Brodhead Road corridor and the virtual nature of public involvement in early 2021, but was also useful to the project team as a means of compiling and summarizing site-specific comments from all sources (e.g. field observations, stakeholder comments, public meeting input).



The wikimap directed users to add a point to the map within a category: Vehicle Traffic Concern, Pedestrian or Bike Concern, Land Use/Development Note, Transit Concern or Other Idea or Concern. In total, users recorded 114 points with comments on the wikimap, in addition to 17 comments on existing points. Users were able to click “I agree” or “I disagree” on others’ comments, contribute additional comments and upload photos. Ultimately, this provided a rich dataset of local observations that the project team analyzed and ground-truthed in field work. The most common type of comment was Vehicle Traffic Concern, comprising 55% of all comments received. The project intersection areas receiving the most comments were Five Points and Pleasant Drive.

Initial Survey

The project team launched and promoted an online survey that received 77 responses in February and March 2021. Respondents described their use of the corridor, ranked concerns and provided opinions on walking and cycling, transit, highway connections and anticipated land use and development changes. Many respondents submitted detailed responses to open-ended questions, identifying both site-specific issues as well as more general considerations.

Notable findings:

- Two-thirds of respondents rely on Brodhead Road as part of a regular commute.
- Two-thirds of respondents shop along Brodhead Road.
- Respondents identified work, fresh food and health care services as the most important destinations to have safe, convenient routes.
- 76% of respondents use a passenger vehicle to travel Brodhead Road “almost daily,” while only 4% (three people) walk along Brodhead that often. 91% said they “never” used a bicycle along Brodhead Road, while six people (9%) reported riding along Brodhead at some point.
- The most important general concerns along Brodhead Road were:
 - Entering/exiting traffic – a “major concern” for 78%
 - Road maintenance – a “major concern” for 76%
 - Safety issues at intersections – a “major concern” for 72%.
- The most divisive issue was accommodating bicyclists, which 24% felt was not a concern and 34% felt was a major concern.
- Most respondents (72%) were unsure whether areas of the corridor could be better served by transit.
- 80% identified the I-376 highway connections from Brodhead Road as “very important.” About half of respondents felt the connections could use “minor improvements,” while 38% characterized them as adequate.
- The most popular land use/development concepts were:
 - Increasing opportunities for pedestrian, bicycle and transit access
 - Creating flexibility for adaptive reuse of vacant buildings
 - Preserving green space and tree cover

Survey participants submitted more than 100 comments on open-ended questions, which added context to the findings. More than half submitted contact information to be updated at future project milestones.

Stakeholder Interviews

The stakeholder contact list for this project included 80 names representing a variety of organizations with interest in the Brodhead Road Corridor:

- Beaver County Commissioners
- County officials and staff
- PennDOT District 11
- Municipal officials and staff from study-area municipalities and surrounding communities
- Port Authority of Allegheny County
- Beaver County Transit Authority
- Aliquippa, Central Valley and Hopewell school districts
- Beaver Valley Intermediate Unit
- Community College of Beaver County
- Penn State Beaver Campus
- Beaver County Career and Technology
- Airport Corridor Transportation Association
- Western Pennsylvania Wheelmen Bicycle Club
- Ohio River Trail Council
- Beaver County Partnership for Community and Economic Growth
- Beaver County Chamber of Commerce
- Local developers, major landholders and business owners
- Public safety and first responders

Stakeholders provided input in a combination of one-on-one interviews and focus groups. The project team conducted follow-up conversations as needed to gain additional insight. Overall, information gained from these contacts supplemented technical data collection and added context to the identification of existing transportation and safety conditions and future needs. Detailed notes from each stakeholder conversation are on file.

Public Meeting 1

The first public meeting for the Brodhead Road Corridor Planning Study took the form of a virtual open house held online March 3 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. The event had 111 registrants and 61 unique attendees. The project team promoted the meeting in preceding weeks primarily via circulating flyers and arranging email blasts from local stakeholders, in addition to social media

posts and making a local radio appearance.

The meeting began with an introduction of the project team and an overview of the project background, schedule, approach and expected outcomes. The team reviewed next steps and fielded questions from attendees. At that point, attendees were invited to join breakout groups of their choice. Project team members hosted separate rooms on safety; congestion; pedestrians, bikes and transit; land use and development; and other ideas and concerns. Hosts recorded comments live on the project wikimap, which was visible to attendees of each breakout.

The project team paused during the presentation to pose interactive poll questions to attendees. Responses revealed the following:

- Attendees use Brodhead Road in a variety of ways, most popular among which were access to small businesses, access to I-376, visiting friends/family and access to restaurants.
- The top-ranking favorite Brodhead Road destination among attendees was Harold's Inn, followed by the Hopewell Shopping Center.
- Attendees felt strongly that the most important study goal is congestion reduction, system reliability and safety.
- Hopewell Township was the study area community with the highest number of residents in attendance, followed by Center Township.

Conversation in the breakout rooms was “where the rubber hit the road,” as one attendee put it. The smaller-group format allowed for greater participation among attendees, allowing the project team to collect many comments from a variety of perspectives. Attendees were free to move between topic breakouts, and many chose to contribute in more than one. The project team recorded location-specific comments on the project wikimap and more general comments in the project notes.

Public Meeting 2

The second public meeting for this project was a virtual open house held online August 18 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. The event had 92 registrants and 44 unique attendees. The project team promoted the meeting in preceding weeks primarily via circulating flyers and arranging email blasts from local stakeholders, in addition to social media posts.

The public meeting attracted coverage from the [Beaver County Times](#), which presented the proposed alternatives for key locations and encouraged readers to visit the project website to provide feedback.

The meeting began with a brief review of the project overview. The team then provided an update on the analysis of existing and future conditions, including a summary of public and stakeholder outreach to date, issues and area of concern (safety, mobility, accessibility, operations) and future growth expectations per regional forecasts and the known and approved pipeline of local

development.

The team then invited attendees to join breakout groups of their choice to review and provide feedback on improvement alternatives for geographic areas of focus along the corridor:

- Center Township Commercial Area
- Center Township Residential and School Area
- Aliquippa Commercial Area
- Hopewell Township Schools and Shopping Center
- Five Points

Project team members in each breakout room shared slides to illustrate proposed alternatives and encouraged free-flowing conversation among attendees in response. They also provided a link to an online survey where attendees could follow along to answer questions about each alternative presented. Notes from each breakout section provided valuable direction to the project team, as did the survey responses submitted.

Alternatives Survey

The project team shared links to the online survey for each breakout room via email following the meeting to the project email blast list, which included anyone who had registered to attend either of the public meetings. This allowed those who were unable to attend the opportunity to review the proposed alternatives and provide feedback. The total number of responses by breakout were as follows:

- Center Township Commercial Area: 18
- Center Township Residential and School Area: 23
- Aliquippa Commercial Area: 17
- Hopewell Township Schools and Shopping Center: 17
- Five Points : 17

The survey responses ranked preferences for alternatives at various locations and included responses to open-ended questions that provided insightful details that helped the Steering Committee refine and prioritize alternatives.