

## 13<sup>th</sup> Street S – Project and Engagement Summary

### Background

#### Why is the County looking at making changes to 13th Street S?

In 2017, the Neighborhood Complete Streets (NCS) program asked residents to submit applications to share their "problem street" locations. 13<sup>th</sup> Street S was nominated and selected for a Pilot Project in February 2019. Staff attempted to find a tactical solution to address the deficiencies with the street, but it proved to not be an appropriate location for an interim measure. When the scoring of all the nominated locations was completed, after 13<sup>th</sup> Street S was picked for a Pilot Project, we learned that it was a high-ranking project on the ranked list of potential projects. Staff recommended that the project be reconsidered as a Capital Project, and the Neighborhood Complete Streets Commission (NCSC) agreed, directing staff to scope a capital project design for this stretch of roadway.

#### What are the goals of this project?

The goal of this project is to provide a continuous, grade-separated sidewalk on one side of 13<sup>th</sup> Street S, between S Walter Reed Drive and S Glebe Road. This includes providing accessible ramps and improved crossings to increase safety and access for all people using this neighborhood street connection.

Sidewalk is already provided on the south side between S Highland Street and S Glebe Road, but no suitable sidewalk is provided between Walter Reed and S Highland Street. The existing curb ramps have obstructions and do not meet the standards of the American Disabilities Act (ADA). Additionally, the existing sidewalk on the north side of S 13<sup>th</sup> Street between S Walter Reed Drive and S Irving Street is narrow and at-grade, allowing cars to drive and park on the sidewalk. This project seeks to make improvements to address these deficiencies while balancing preservation of on-street parking and avoiding relocation of existing utilities.

### Public Engagement

County staff developed preliminary concept designs for two options to address the safety concerns on 13<sup>th</sup> Street S. With the support of the NCSC, staff took the following steps to gather public feedback on the project and options:

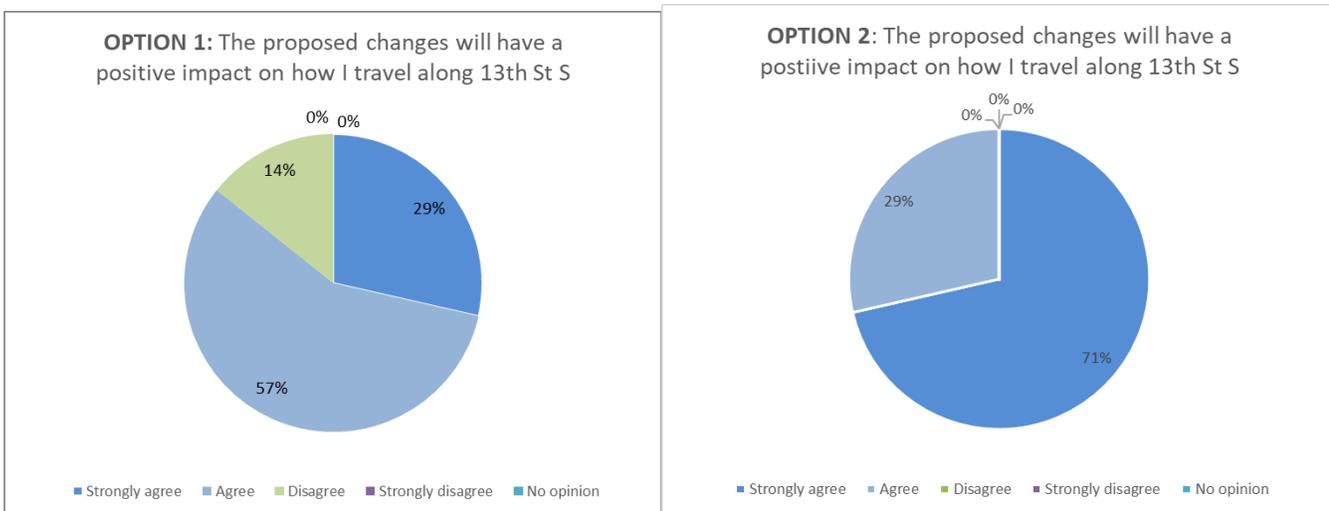
- Met on-site with the President of the Douglas Park Civic Association
- Arranged multiple on-site meetings with property owners in the project area
- Presented at the Douglas Park Civic Association
- Hosted a project webpage with project plans and opportunities to provide feedback
- Provided an online feedback form linked to the project webpage and promoted through county communication channels
- Presented at the NCS Capital Projects Open House, with opportunities to ask questions and provide feedback to staff

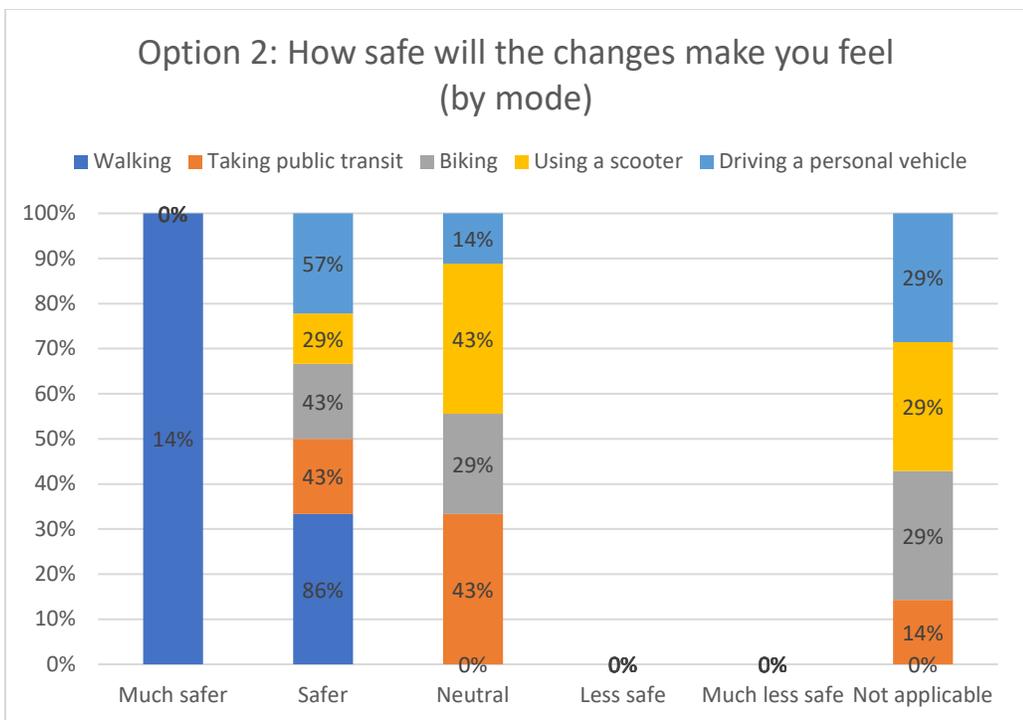
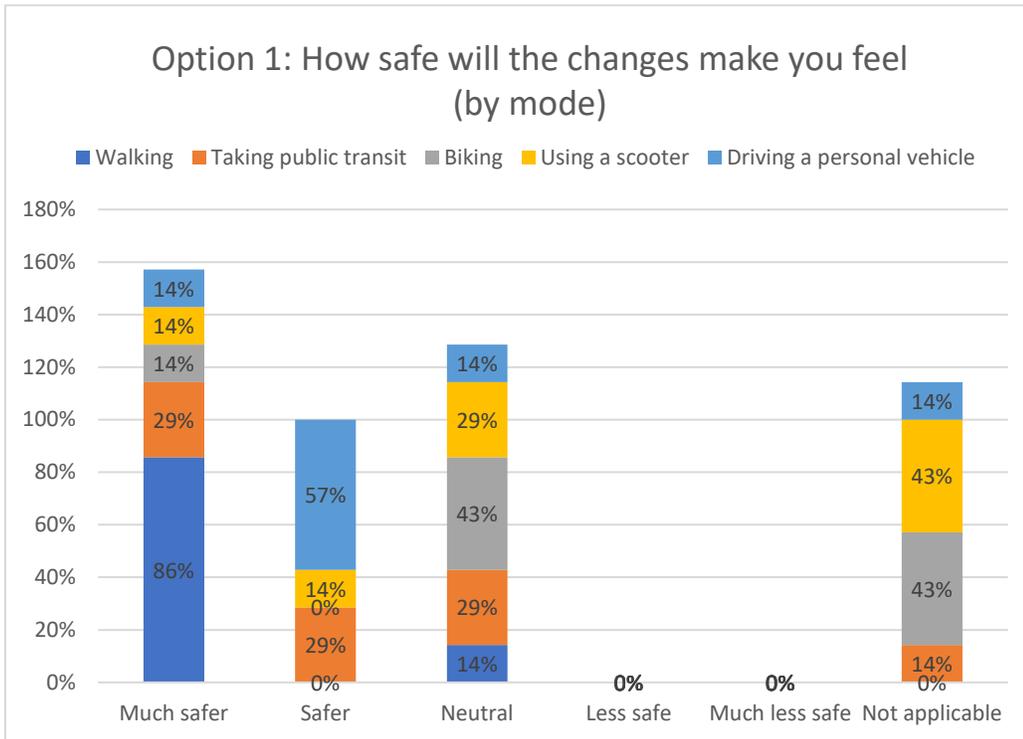
**What we heard:**

Overall, feedback indicated support for street improvements, specifically in favor of constructing new sidewalk where the existing sidewalk is unsafe (at grade, extremely narrow, obstructed, and not ADA compliant). Staff also heard concerns about stormwater flow, which was observed by staff on-site.

Some feedback received expressed concern that the project would not provide a sidewalk on both sides of the street. Presently, there is not enough county-owned right-of-way to provide sidewalk on both sides of the street. A lack of county-owned right of way means this alternative would have significant impacts to frontages, involve obtaining expanded right-of-way or permanent easements, and extensive utility conflicts. As such, we are not able to accommodate this feedback as it is beyond the scope and available budget of the project. The County’s Master Transportation Plan (MTP) calls for sidewalk on at least one side of every neighborhood street, so the proposed scope is consistent with the minimum standard set by the MTP.

Broadly, the feedback staff received was that both options (south or north side) would make people feel safer traveling along 13<sup>th</sup> Street S, though the preference was for the sidewalk between Walter Reed and S Highland Street to be located on the south side (Option 2). No respondents indicated either option would make them feel less safe or much less safe traveling through any mode of transportation.





## Results

Staff considered the feedback received from the public and adjacent property owners, existing utility conflicts, and the need for multiple permanent easements when evaluating the proposed project

plans. Staff opted to pursue Option 1, which provides a sidewalk on the **north** side of 13<sup>th</sup> Street S between Walter Reed and S Highland Street. This option meets the project goals of providing a safe, accessible sidewalk connection within the existing site constraints and in collaboration with directly affected property owners. In order to incorporate feedback received about on-street parking and storm water conditions, project designs were updated to include more extensive driveway aprons as well as curb and gutter work.

#### More information

- Review the project page: [https://projects.arlingtonva.us/projects/13th-st-s-from-walter-reed-dr-to-  
glebe-rd-improvements/](https://projects.arlingtonva.us/projects/13th-st-s-from-walter-reed-dr-to-glebe-rd-improvements/)
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