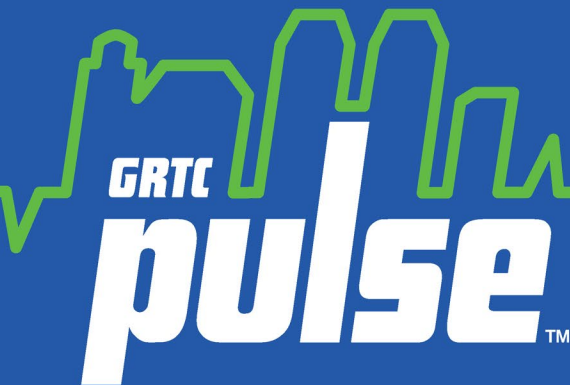


# GRTC Pulse

# North-South BRT

Round 1 Engagement Summary



December 2024

# Round 1 Engagement

## Engagement Objectives

- **INFORM**  
Introduce the N-S BRT preferred corridor alignment
- **CONSULT**  
Gather input from the Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) and the community to inform decision-making
- **COLLABORATE**  
Partner with the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to begin identifying challenges, opportunities, and enhancements to the proposed N-S BRT

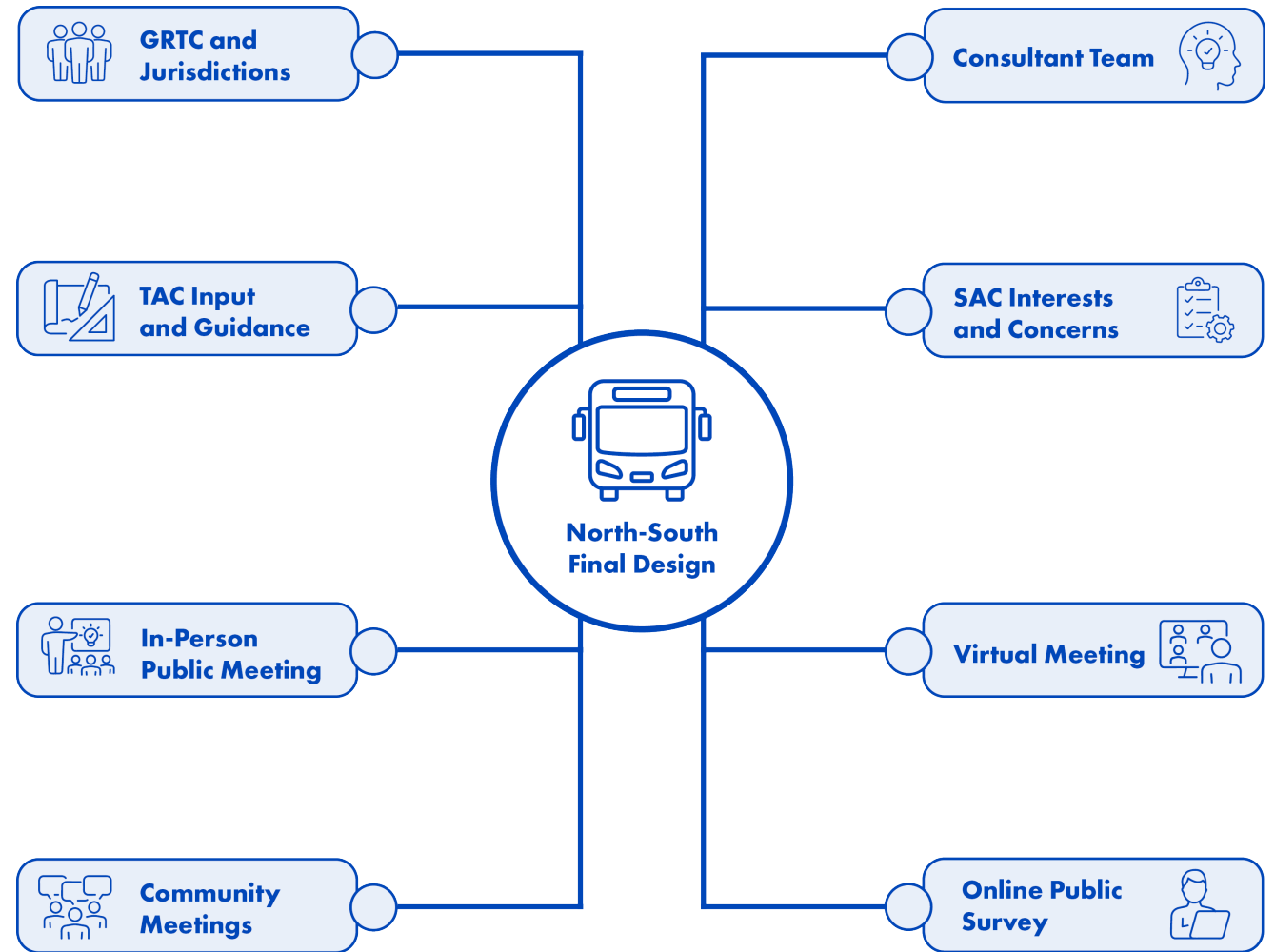
## Guiding Principles

The Community Engagement Plan outlines the following Guiding Principles, which informed the Round 1 engagement objectives described on the left:

- Increase awareness and understanding
- Gather community input to assist in decision-making
- Promote collaboration and partnership
- Develop intentional communication practices
- Foster open conversation through deliberate community outreach
- Ensure the plan establishes and reflects community priorities

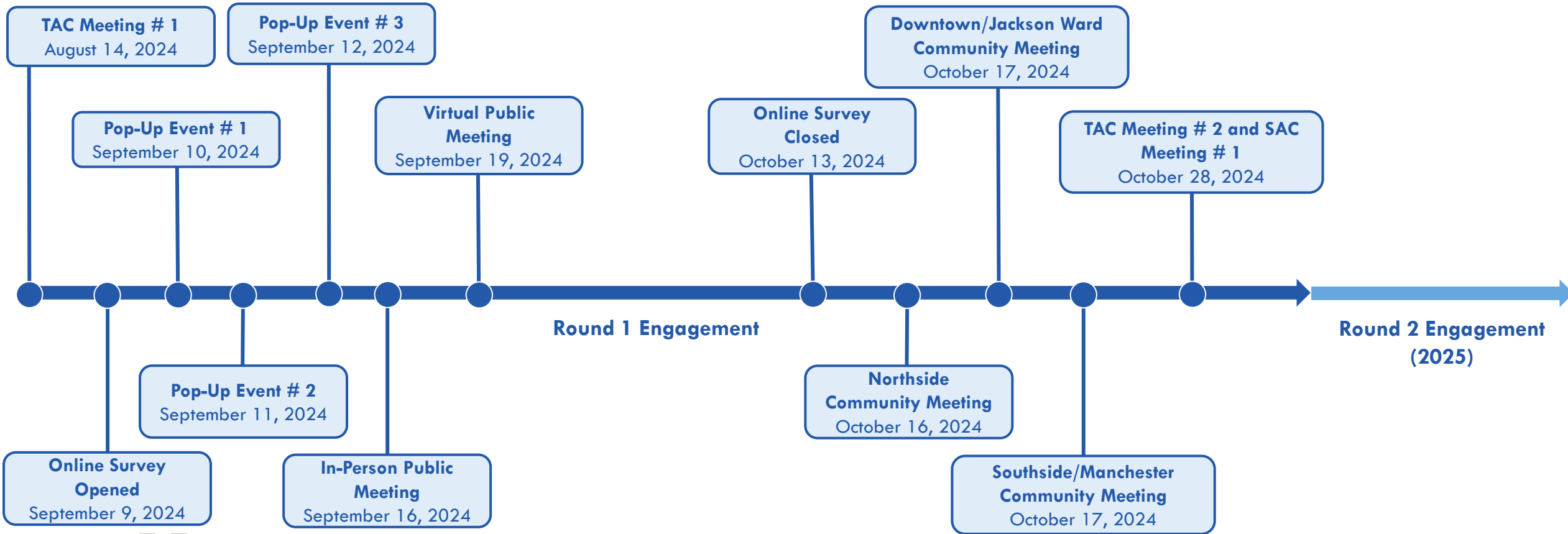
# What We Heard

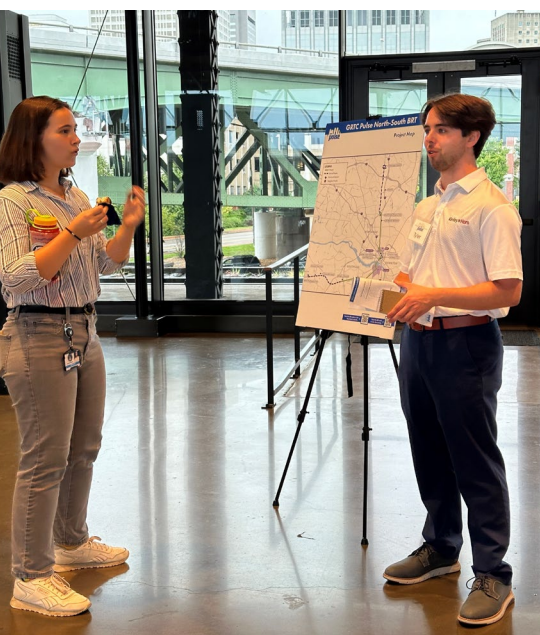
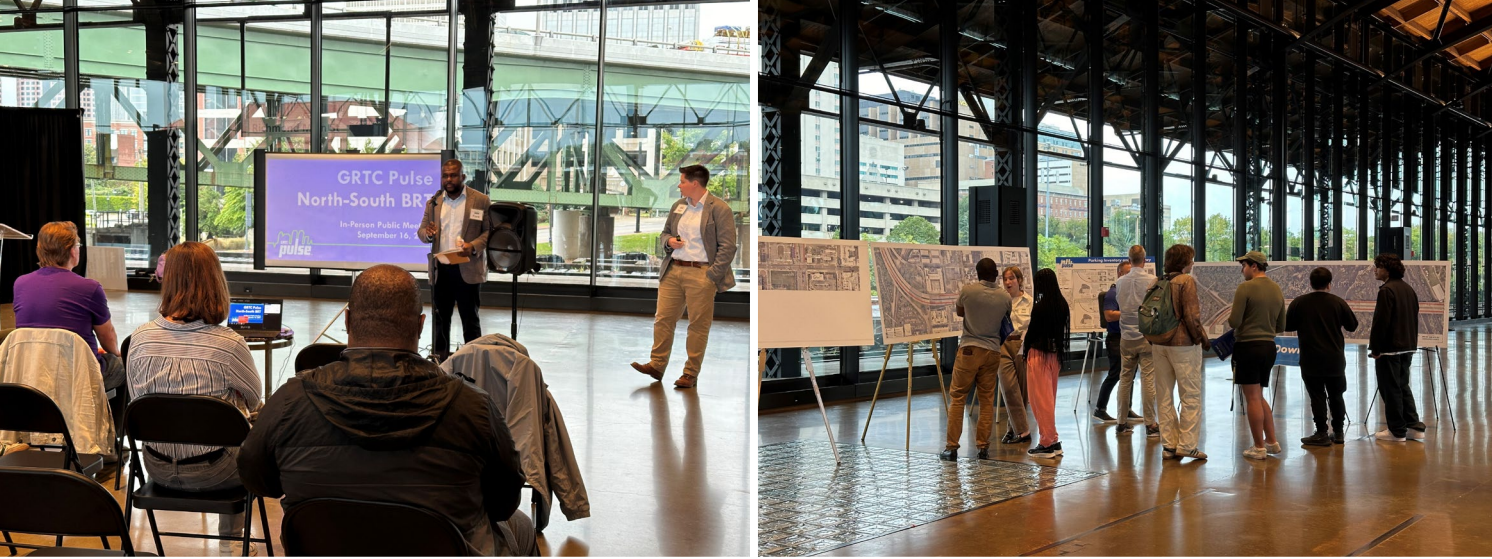
The Round 1 Engagement Summary outlines the results of engagement and provides insight into the public's thoughts and preferences related to the proposed design. In certain situations, the technical recommendation that will be advanced through the environmental review process differs from the survey respondents' preference. Sometimes, this was because further analysis uncovered additional issues or challenges related to design. In other cases, the project team needed to balance the survey responses with other interests, concerns, and guidance. The graphic on the right outlines the different perspectives contributing to the multitude of decisions that must be made for successful completion of the North-South BRT project.



# Round 1 Engagement Activities

Round 2 Engagement will occur in 2025.





# Meetings and Pop-Up Events



170

Meeting Attendees



663

Touchpoints with Community



~173

Community Hours Invested

# Online Survey



301

Participants



6,000+

Feedback Datapoints

# Technical Advisory Committee Meeting #1

*The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) includes representatives from GRTC, local jurisdictions (City of Richmond, Henrico County, and Chesterfield County), and relevant agencies (VDOT, DRPT, and PlanRVA). The TAC evaluates alternatives and provides recommendations to assist decision-making for the North-South BRT preferred corridor alignment.*

# TAC Meeting #1

August 14, 2024

19 Attendees

## Meeting Highlights

- Discussed conceptual station design; TAC recommended carrying the design forward for public engagement
- Discussed entire Phase 1 alignment in detail, including the proposed route, station locations, dedicated bus lanes, and impacts to parking, traffic, and access
  - Discussion began at the Northern terminus in Henrico County
  - The conversation then moved south to the Southern terminus in Chesterfield County
  - The bulk of the conversation focused on the segments within the City of Richmond

## Key Takeaways

- TAC suggested additional conversations with community leaders and adjacent business owners along the corridor
- TAC stressed the importance of aligning the North-South BRT with the City's planning initiatives, for example:
  - The Future Land Use Map
  - Connections with the Fall Line Trail

# Pop-Up Events

*As part of Round 1 engagement, the engagement team facilitated three pop-up events at key locations along the proposed corridor—a food pantry on the Northside, the Downtown Transfer Station, and the Hull Street Library in the Southside. At the pop-ups, community members had the chance to learn more about the North-South BRT, take the survey (either online or using a paper copy), and get information about the upcoming in-person meeting at Main Street Station.*



# Pop-Up Events

493 Interactions



Pop-up attendees were generally in favor of the project, and specifically appreciated the potential for improved north-south connectivity. The three pop-ups included:

- **St. Paul's Catholic Church Food Pantry**
  - September 10, 2024, 9am to 12pm
- **Downtown Transfer Station**
  - September 11, 2024, 11am to 1pm
- **Hull Street Library**
  - September 12, 2024, 3pm to 6pm

“I love the new extension! I think it will help so many people connect to better options and a better lifestyle.”

# Public Meeting

*The public meeting was intended to inform the community about the draft alignment, station locations, station conceptual design, traffic analysis, and parking analysis. The community had the chance to provide feedback on the proposed design and, in select locations, communicate their preference for median- vs. curb-running bus lanes and station locations.*

# In-Person Public Meeting

Main Street Station, September 16, 2024 | 5pm – 7pm

72 Participants

## Meeting Highlights

- Developed conceptual design boards showing proposed route alignments, station locations, and key destinations
- Project overview presentation was held three times to allow attendees to engage in a drop-in style meeting
- Technical team members available for one-on-one discussions to describe design concepts and answer questions
- Public had an opportunity to complete surveys and provide comments

## Key Takeaways

- Attendees supported the proposed balance between benefits and tradeoffs
  - E.g., parking and traffic changes
- Top priorities included:
  - Pedestrian safety within the corridor
  - Connectivity to existing E-W Pulse on Broad Street



# Virtual Public Meeting

Via Zoom, September 19, 2024 | 12pm – 1:30pm

50 Participants

## Meeting Highlights

- Provided an opportunity for community members unable to attend the in-person public meeting to learn more about the project and provide feedback
- Presentation to review the Phase 1 draft conceptual design
- Facilitated question-and-answer period to address questions and concerns submitted by the audience

## Key Takeaways

- Attendees expressed an interest in maintaining trees at station locations
- Attendees expressed an interest in connections to the existing East-West Pulse line
- Attendees stressed the importance of pedestrian infrastructure and pedestrian safety



A composite image showing a map of the Project Corridor and a video thumbnail. The map, titled "Project Corridor", shows the route of the BRT line through Northside, Southside, and Downtown. It includes a legend for Phase I (green line), Future Phases (purple line), Points of Interest (blue dots), and Neighborhoods (purple circles). The video thumbnail shows a person in a Zoom meeting window with the name "Kimley Horn" and a "Sum Sink" label.

# Community Meetings

*To target geographic constituencies most likely to be impacted by the project, property owners immediately adjacent to proposed stations and neighborhood, business, and community organizations active in these areas were identified and invited via physical mailers or email to a series of community meetings focused on specific geographic areas within the project corridor. In addition, GRTC posted advertisements to the meetings on social media, inviting the public at large. At the meetings, community members could engage in targeted conversations with the technical team on the issues and opportunities specific to their neighborhoods, such as tree impacts in Northside, dedicated lanes in Jackson Ward, and on-street parking changes in Manchester.*

# Community Meetings

October 16 and 17, 2024

24 Participants

## Meeting Highlights

The community meetings were an important part of Round 1 engagement. The project team heard neighborhood-specific feedback that helped inform key decisions related to station locations and dedicated bus lane design.

- **Northside | Richmond Urban Ministry Institute**
  - October 16, 2024, 9am to 11am
- **Manchester/Southside | First Baptist Church of South Richmond**
  - October 17, 2024, 9am to 11am
- **Downtown/Jackson Ward | Main Library Branch**
  - October 17, 2024, 2pm to 4pm

## Key Takeaways

- Northside meeting attendees expressed their desire to maintain the tree canopy and improve pedestrian safety.
- Jackson Ward attendees expressed their desire to maintain the historic neighborhood's community character and on-street parking.



# Stakeholder Advisory Committee Meeting #1

*The Stakeholder Advisory Committee (SAC) includes community organizations, non-profits, advocacy groups, chambers of commerce, and representatives from other local agencies. SAC members are uniquely positioned to provide valuable insight into the community's vision for this project as well as their concerns. In Round 1, the engagement team sought to facilitate the SAC's understanding of the GRTC Pulse North-South BRT and gather informed feedback on their community's vision and preferences.*

# SAC Meeting

October 28, 2024

28 Attendees

## Meeting Highlights

At this meeting, SAC members received an overview of the project and were updated on Round 1 engagement results. In addition, the SAC shared their input on the draft conceptual design and were asked to reach out with any additional comments or questions after the meeting.

## Key Takeaways

- SAC members interested in ensuring safe and efficient access for bicyclists
  - Speeding
  - Potential bus/bike conflicts
  - Connections with existing bike infrastructure and trails
- Project team described the traffic analysis and coordination with various project stakeholders, such as the City of Richmond and VDOT



# Technical Advisory Committee Meeting #2

*At the second TAC meeting, the project team shared an overview of issues and themes from the first round of public engagement, and how public feedback—paired with additional analysis—informed revisions to the draft conceptual design. The project team reviewed these proposed changes with the TAC, who provided feedback.*

# TAC Meeting #2

October 28, 2024

32 Attendees

## Meeting Highlights

- Project team and TAC considered the public's preferences related to station locations and dedicated bus lanes at select locations along the corridor
  - In some cases, the public's preference aligned with the technical recommendation
  - In others, additional analysis uncovered issues that would make the public's preference challenging to implement

## Key Takeaways

- TAC approved the recommendation to add stations on 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> streets at Broad to the conceptual design.
- TAC approved the recommendation to move the southbound station at North Avenue

301 Participants

# Public Survey

*As part of Round 1 engagement, the public was able to take part in a survey hosted on the platform JotForm and available at events in paper copy. The survey was open from September 9, 2024, through October 13, 2024. The survey allowed participants to provide open-ended comments for each segment of the draft conceptual design. In addition, survey participants could share their preference for curb vs. median dedicated bus lanes and station pair locations in select locations.*

***The engagement team used keyword searching to organize and summarize the themes and takeaways from the open-ended comments.***

# Survey Results Introduction

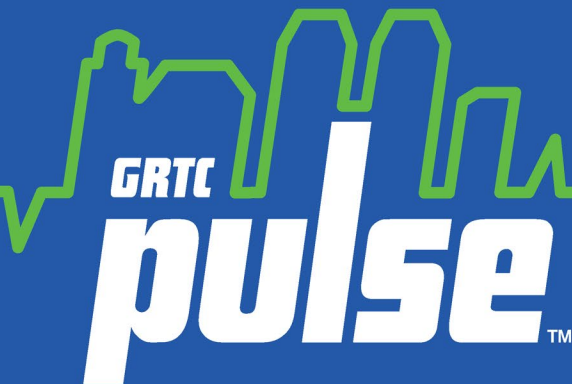
The following slides provide an overview of the feedback received from the public survey. Results are organized north to south. Three types of questions were asked:

Open-ended questions on the draft conceptual design segments	Multiple-choice preference questions	Optional demographic information
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parking Impacts</li> <li>• Tree Impacts</li> <li>• Traffic Impacts</li> <li>• Property Impacts</li> <li>• Station Locations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chamberlayne Avenue Curbside vs. Median-Running Bus Lanes and Stations</li> <li>• Midlothian Turnpike Curbside vs. Median-Running Dedicated Bus Lanes</li> <li>• Midlothian Turnpike End-of-Line Station Locations</li> <li>• Midlothian Turnpike Station Locations</li> <li>• 9th Street Station Locations</li> <li>• Hull Street Station Locations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is your race?</li> <li>• What is your household's estimated annual income?</li> <li>• What is your home ZIP code?</li> </ul>

# Keyword Analysis

## *Open-Ended Questions*

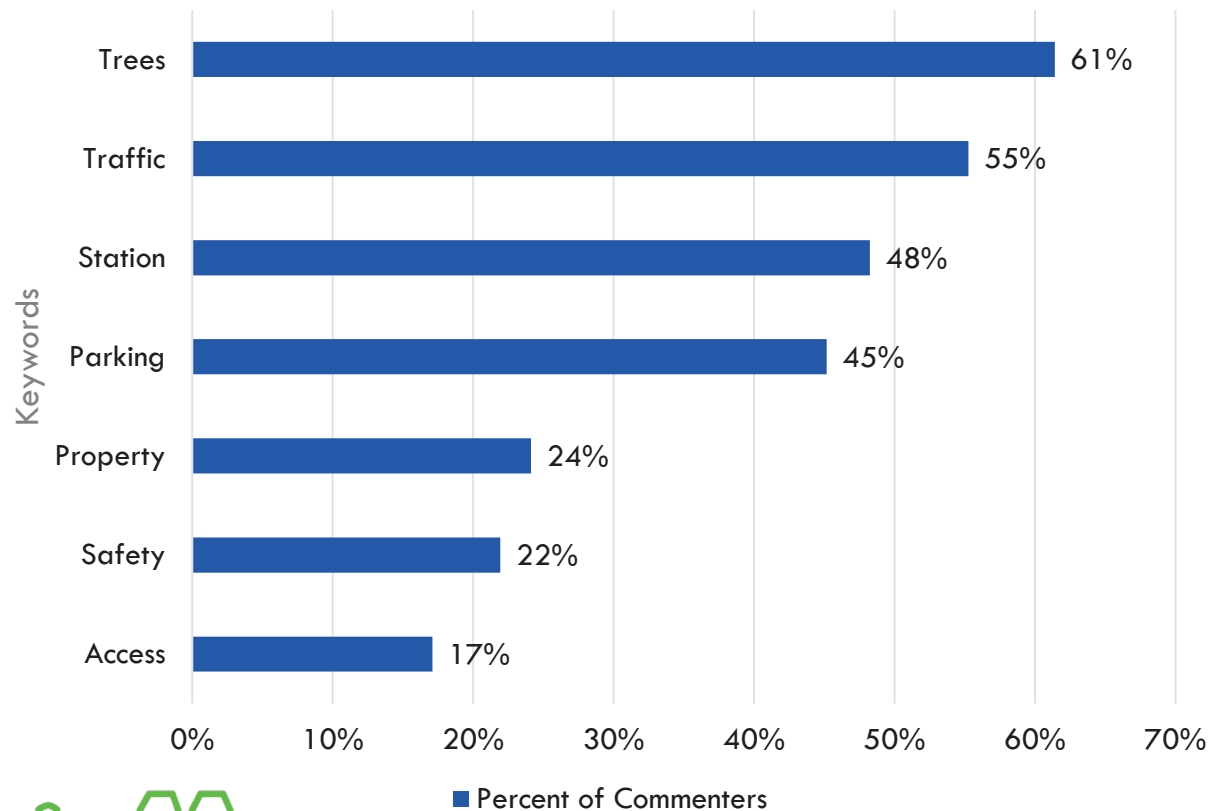
The engagement team used keyword analysis to help uncover important themes in the open-ended comments received from the public during the public survey. The list of keywords was developed using the themes and topics of interest uncovered from the in-person and virtual meeting. The keyword analysis helped determine the topics that warranted additional analysis to uncover the public's preferences and goals. **The next eight slides are organized with the results of the keyword analysis.**



# Azalea Avenue Preliminary Concept

## Key Takeaways and Concerns

229 Commenters



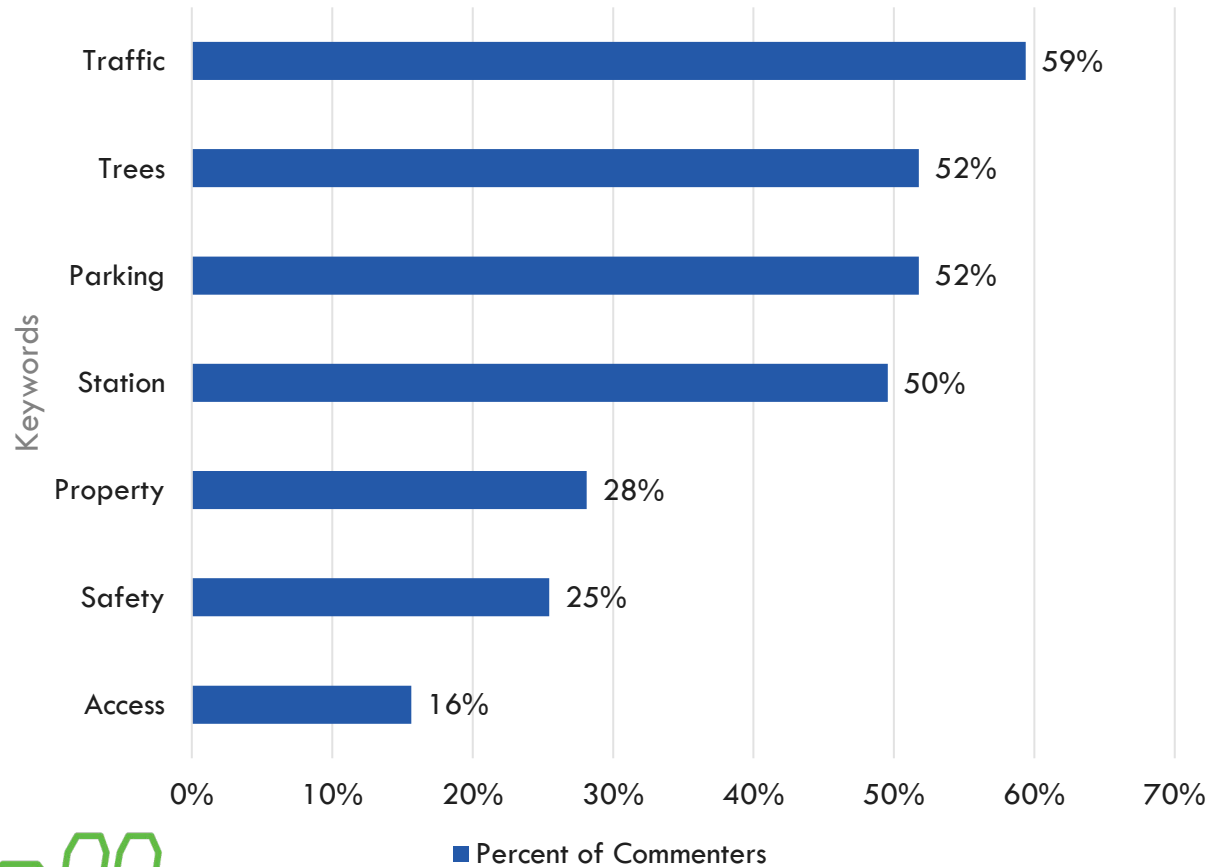
On Azalea Avenue, participants expressed interest in topics related to **tree impacts, speeding and traffic, and station accessibility**. Other topic areas included park-and-ride locations, maintaining access, safe pedestrian crossings, and TOD potential.

Trees	Traffic	Station Locations
<b>198</b> Total Comments	<b>185</b> Total Comments	<b>181</b> Total Comments
<b>70</b> Expressed Concern About Tree Impacts	<b>42</b> Expressed Concern About Traffic Impacts	<b>30</b> Expressed Concern About Station Impacts
<b>128</b> Positive Response/ Not Concerned	<b>143</b> Positive Response/ Not Concerned	<b>151</b> Positive Response/ Not Concerned

# Chamberlayne Avenue Preliminary Concept

## Key Takeaways and Concerns

224 Commenters



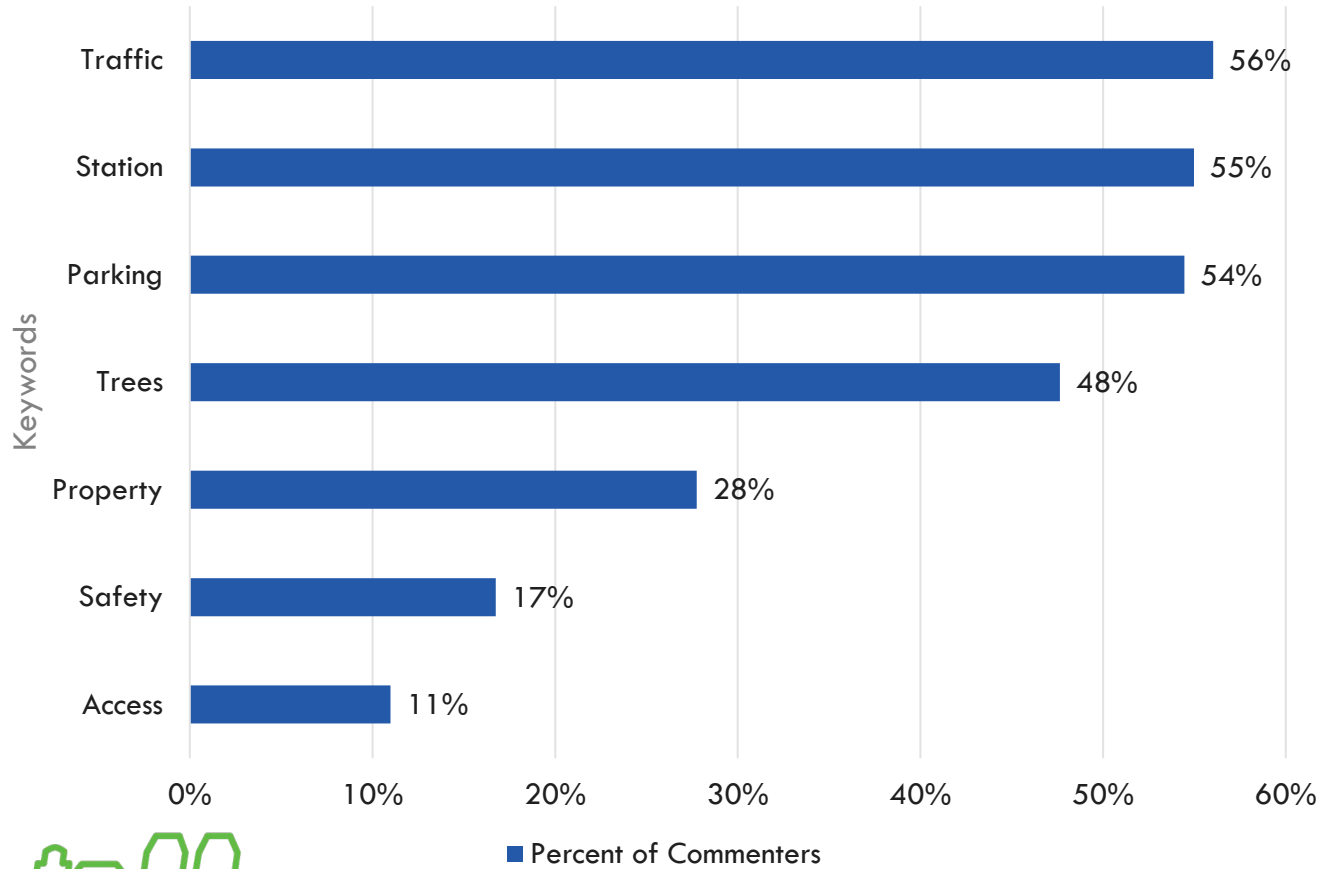
On Chamberlayne Avenue, participants expressed interest in topics related to **speeding, loss of tree canopy, loss of street parking, and spillover parking impacts**. Other topic areas included maintaining neighborhood character and integration with local bus service.

Traffic	Trees	Parking
<b>186</b> Total Comments	<b>181</b> Total Comments	<b>174</b> Total Comments
<b>42</b> Expressed Concern About Traffic Impacts	<b>57</b> Expressed Concern About Trees	<b>44</b> Expressed Concern About Parking
<b>144</b> Positive Response/ Not Concerned	<b>124</b> Positive Response/ Not Concerned	<b>130</b> Positive Response/ Not Concerned

# Leigh Street Preliminary Concept

## Key Takeaways and Concerns

191 Commenters



On Leigh Street, participants expressed interest in topics related to **traffic**, **station access**, and **changes to on-street parking**. Other topic areas included emergency vehicle access and narrowing street to one lane.

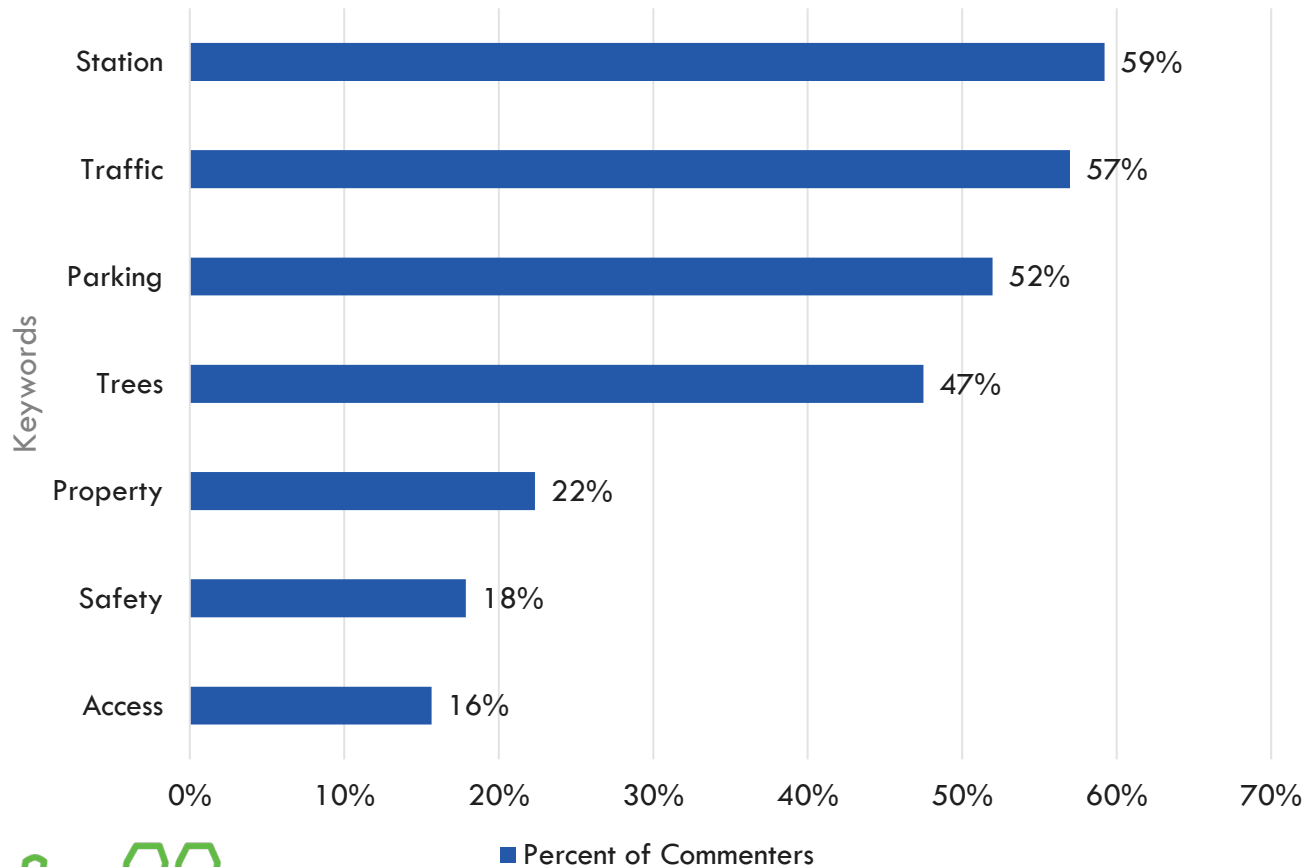
Traffic	Station Locations	Parking
<b>124</b> Total Comments	<b>152</b> Total Comments	<b>156</b> Total Comments
<b>15</b> Expressed Concern About Traffic Impacts	<b>16</b> Expressed Concern About Station Locations	<b>39</b> Expressed Concern About Parking
<b>109</b> Positive Response/ Not Concerned	<b>136</b> Positive Response/ Not Concerned	<b>117</b> Positive Response/ Not Concerned



# 8<sup>th</sup> Street/9<sup>th</sup> Street Preliminary Concept

179 Commenters

## Key Takeaways and Concerns



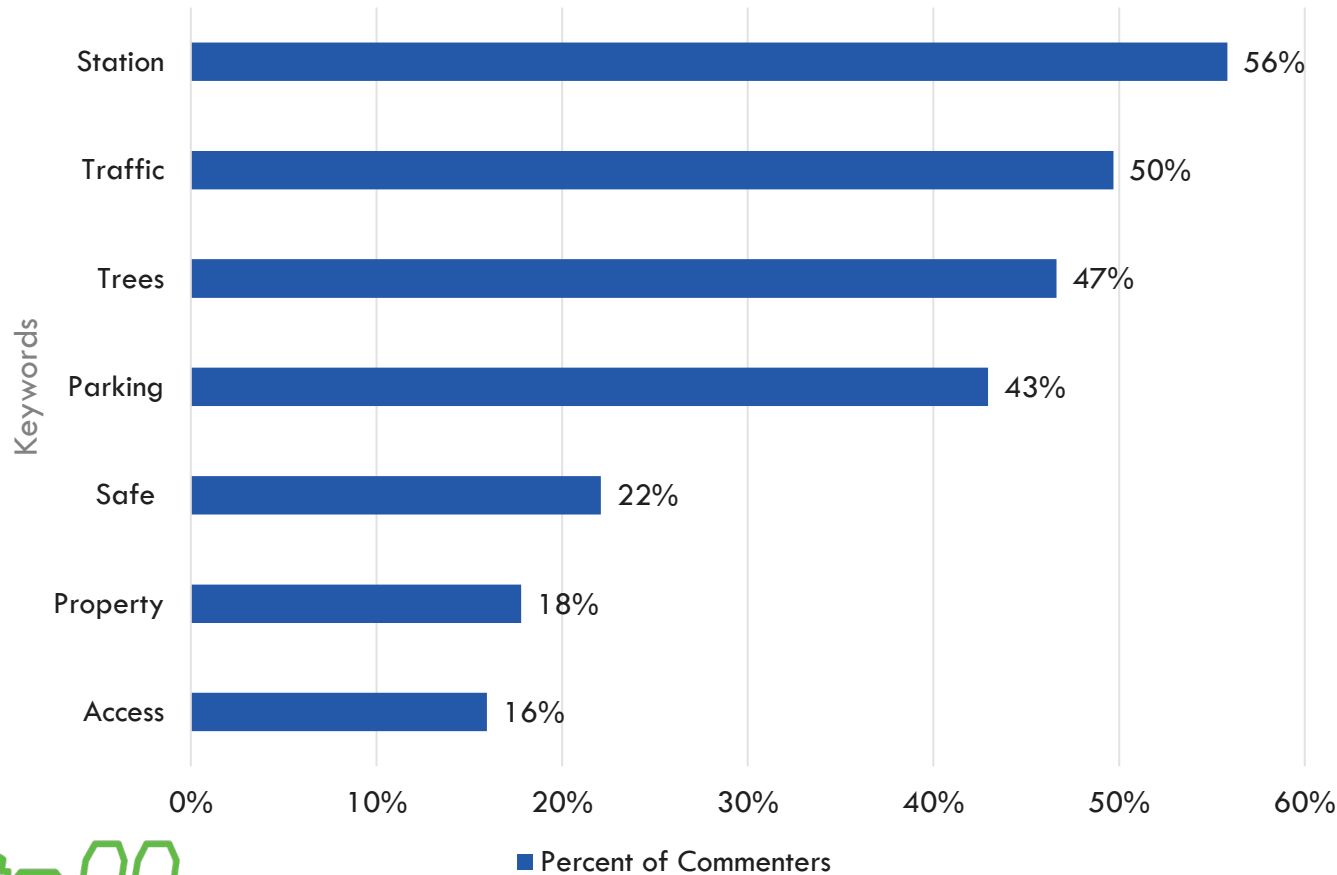
On 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Streets, participants expressed interest in topics related to **connectivity to the existing Pulse through additional stations, rush-hour traffic management, and on-street parking**. Other topic areas included impacts to loading zones.

Station Locations	Traffic	Parking
<b>147</b> Total Comments	<b>140</b> Total Comments	<b>145</b> Total Comments
<b>14</b> Expressed Concern About Station Locations	<b>20</b> Expressed Concern About Traffic	<b>25</b> Expressed Concern About Parking
<b>133</b> Positive Response/ Not Concerned	<b>120</b> Positive Response/ Not Concerned	<b>120</b> Positive Response/ Not Concerned

# Commerce Road Preliminary Concept

## Key Takeaways and Concerns

165 Commenters



On Commerce Road, participants expressed interest in topics related to **station connections to the Fall Line Trail, additional station requests, current high-speed traffic, and tree impacts**. Other topic areas included the need for safe crossings and pedestrian safety.

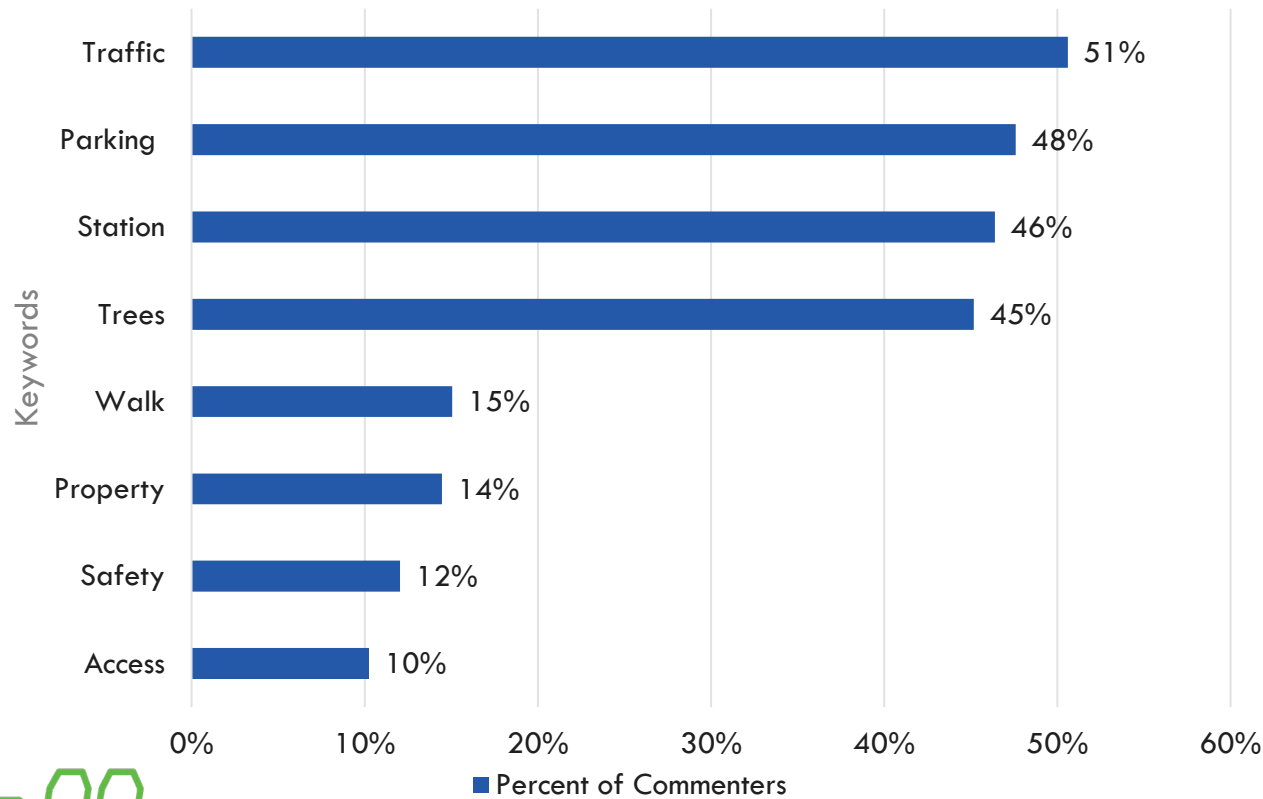
Station Locations	Traffic	Trees
<b>129</b> Total Comments	<b>130</b> Total Comments	<b>127</b> Total Comments
<b>3</b> Expressed Concern About Station Locations	<b>10</b> Expressed Concern About Traffic	<b>2</b> Expressed Concern About Trees
<b>126</b> Positive Response/ Not Concerned	<b>120</b> Positive Response/ Not Concerned	<b>125</b> Positive Response/ Not Concerned

# Hull Street Preliminary Concept

## Key Takeaways and Concerns

166 Commenters

On Hull Street, participants expressed interest in topics related to **traffic calming measures, gaps between station locations, and support for parking reductions**. Other topics included pedestrian and cyclist safety, shade trees at stations, and a preference for median-running buses.

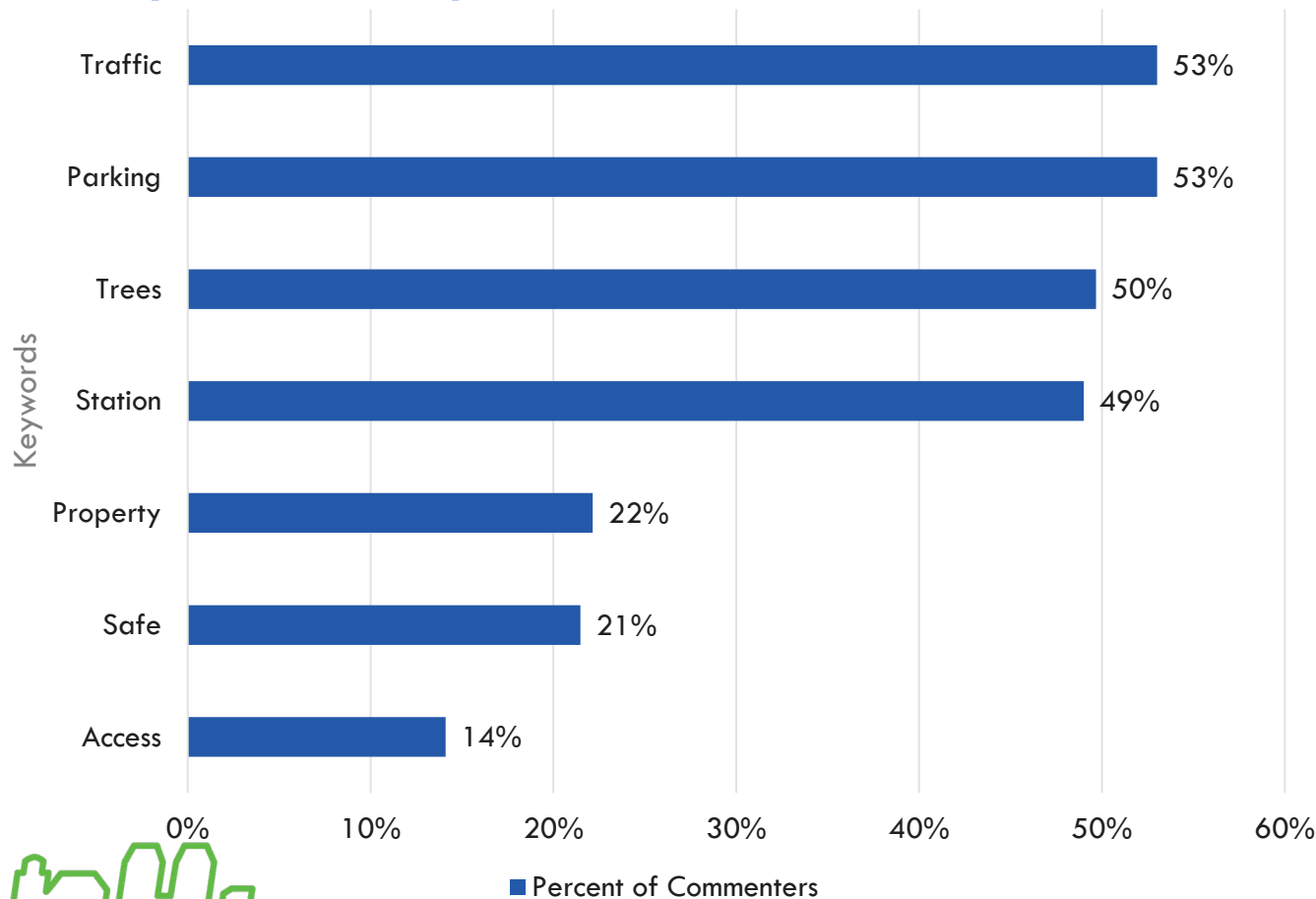


Traffic	Parking	Station Locations
<b>129</b> Total Comments	<b>137</b> Total Comments	<b>129</b> Total Comments
<b>16</b> Expressed Concern About Traffic Impacts	<b>9</b> Expressed Concern About Parking Impacts	<b>9</b> Expressed Concern About Station Locations
<b>116</b> Positive Response/ Not Concerned	<b>128</b> Positive Response/ Not Concerned	<b>120</b> Positive Response/ Not Concerned

# Belt Boulevard Preliminary Concept

## Key Takeaways and Concerns

149 Commenters



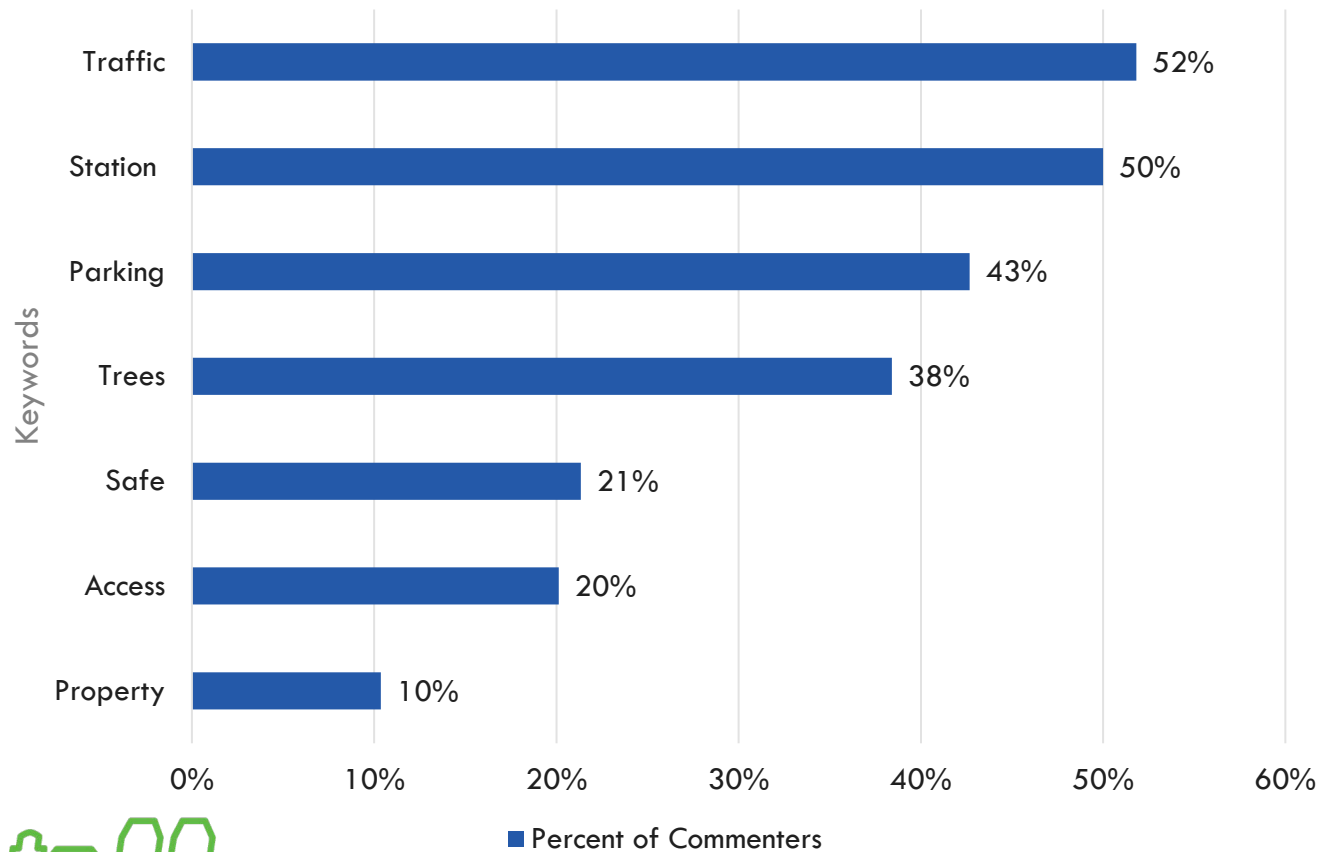
On Belt Boulevard, participants expressed interest in topics related to **traffic impacts, changes to current parking, and shade trees at stations**. Other topic areas included a median-running buses preference, improved pedestrian infrastructure, and Southside Plaza Intersection Design.

Traffic	Parking	Trees
<b>118</b> Total Comments	<b>121</b> Total Comments	<b>118</b> Total Comments
<b>8</b> Expressed Concern About Traffic Impacts	<b>17</b> Expressed Concern About Parking Impacts	<b>7</b> Expressed Concern About Trees
<b>111</b> Positive Response/ Not Concerned	<b>105</b> Positive Response/ Not Concerned	<b>112</b> Positive Response/ Not Concerned

# Midlothian Turnpike Preliminary Concept

## Key Takeaways and Concerns

164 Commenters



On Midlothian Turnpike, participants expressed interest in topics related to **traffic impacts**, **station access**, and **parking changes**. Other topic areas included adding trees in medians, shade trees at stations, safe pedestrian crossings, and support for Transit Oriented Development (TOD).

Traffic	Station Location	Parking
<b>125</b> Total Comments	<b>125</b> Total Comments	<b>122</b> Total Comments
<b>12</b> Expressed Concern About Traffic Impacts	<b>7</b> Expressed Concern About Station Location	<b>4</b> Expressed Concern About Parking
<b>114</b> Positive Response/ Not Concerned	<b>119</b> Positive Response/ Not Concerned	<b>119</b> Positive Response/ Not Concerned

# Chamberlayne Avenue

*Respondent Preference—Curbside vs. Median-Running Bus Lanes and Stations*

In this survey question, participants could indicate whether they preferred the **curbside dedicated bus lane and School Street station option**, or the **median-running dedicated bus lane and Tazewell Street station option**.

<b>A: Curbside bus lane and School St station</b>	<b>B: Median-running bus lane and Tazewell St station</b>
<b>64.2%</b>	<b>35.8%</b>

# Midlothian Turnpike

*Respondent Preference—Curbside vs. Median-Running Dedicated Bus Lanes*

In this survey question, participants could indicate whether they preferred **the curbside station option** (with no dedicated bus lane) or **the median-running dedicated bus lane and station option**.

A: Curbside station option	B: Median-running bus lane and station option
52.8%	47.2%

# Midlothian Turnpike, End of Line

*Respondent Preference—Station Location*

In this survey question, participants could indicate whether they preferred end-of-line station pair at Stonebridge Plaza Avenue, either on the **north side of Midlothian Turnpike**, or on the **south side of Midlothian Turnpike**.

A: North Side of Street	B: South Side of Street
61.5%	38.5%



# Midlothian Turnpike

*Respondent Preference—Station Locations*

In this survey question, participants could indicate whether they preferred a station pair at **Arcadia Street** or **Carnation Street**. Both options would be designed as median stations.

<b>A: Arcadia Street</b>	<b>B: Carnation Street</b>
<b>58.8%</b>	<b>41.2%</b>

# 9<sup>th</sup> Street at the Downtown Transfer Station

*Respondent Preference—Station Locations*

In this survey question, participants could indicate whether they preferred a station pair at **Leigh Street** or **Clay Street**.

A: Leigh Street	B: Clay Street
63.8%	36.2%

# Hull Street

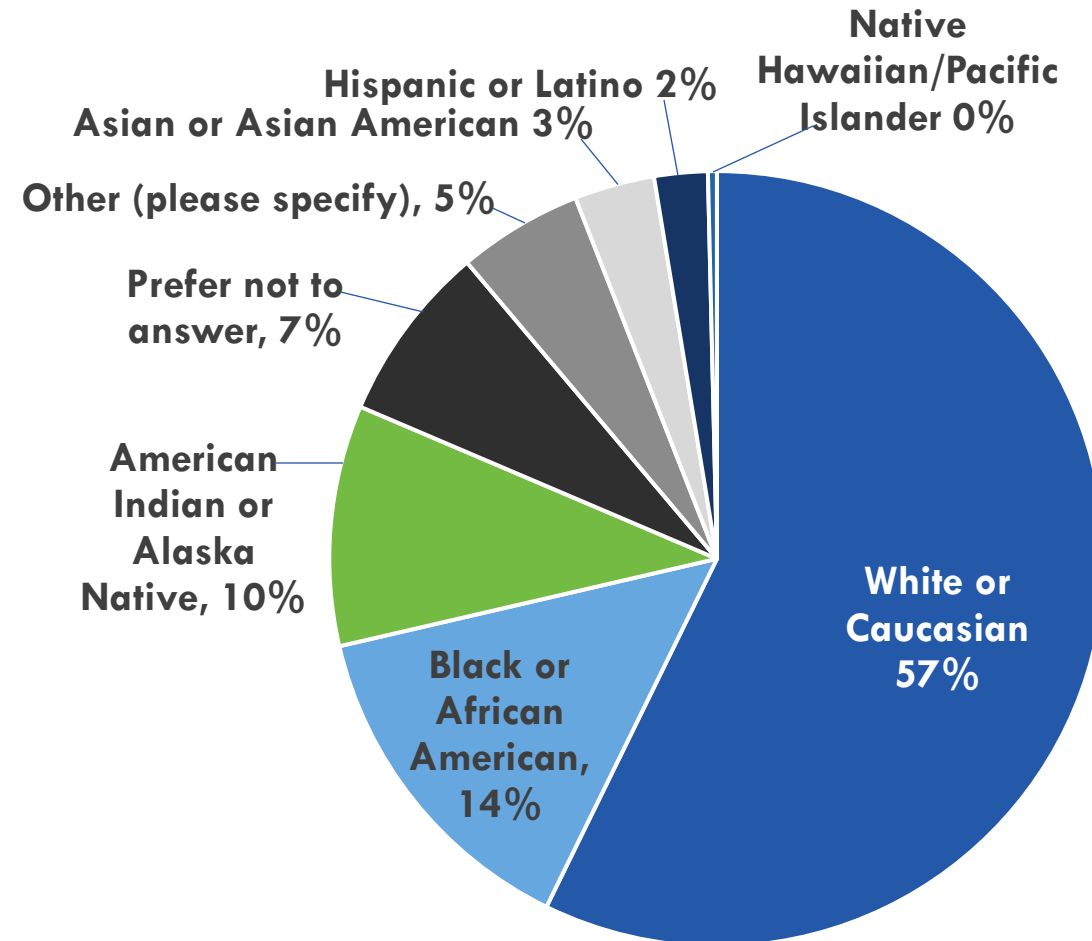
*Respondent Preference—Station Locations*

In this survey question, participants could indicate whether they preferred a station pair at **Broad Rock Road** or **29<sup>th</sup> Street**.

<b>A: Broad Rock Road</b>	<b>B: 29<sup>th</sup> Street</b>
<b>60.0%</b>	<b>40.0%</b>

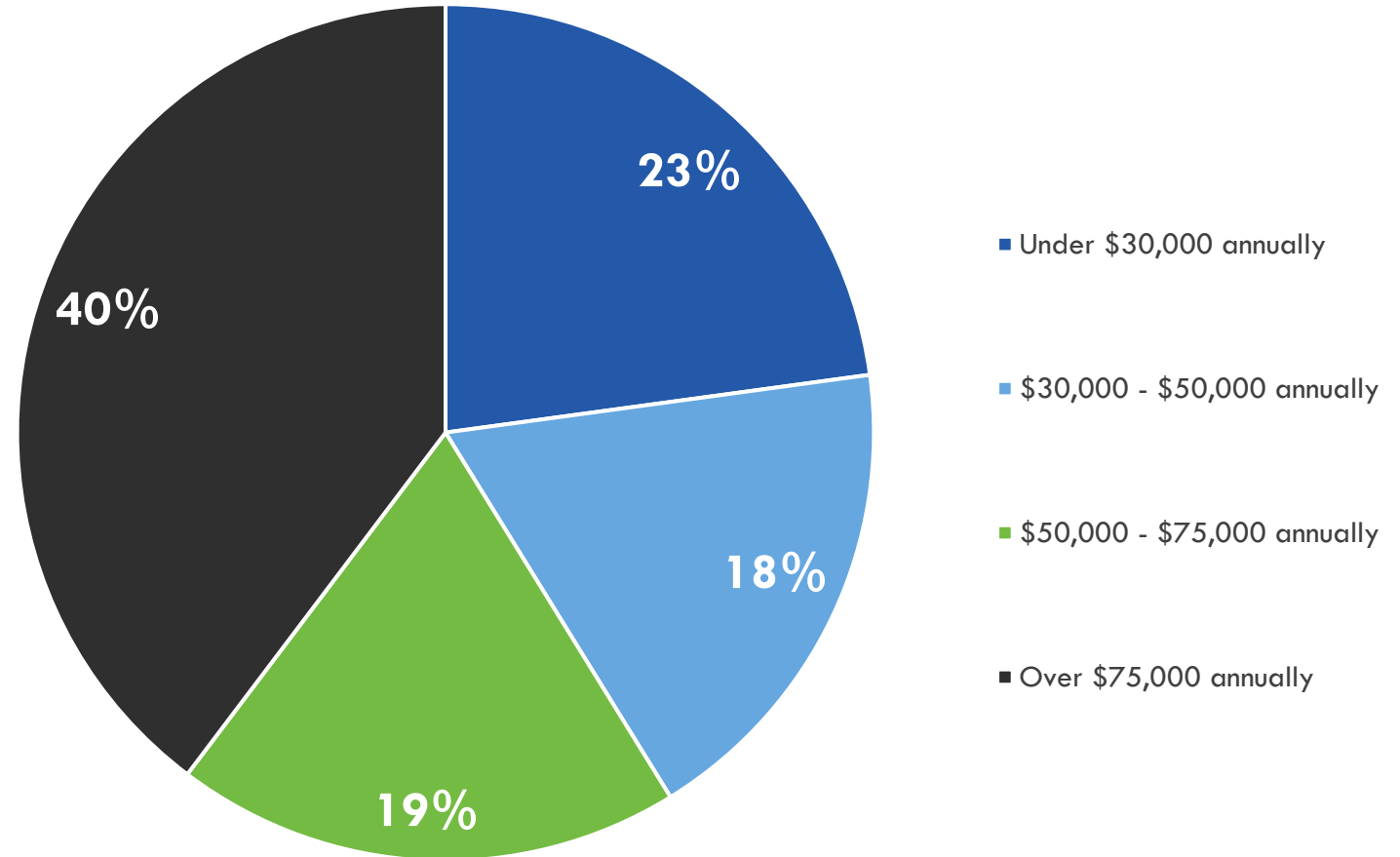
# What is your race?

41% of respondents who opted to provide a response to this question identify as a member of a minority race or ethnicity, compared to 30% of the total service area's population. 57% identify as white, compared to 56% of the total service area's population.



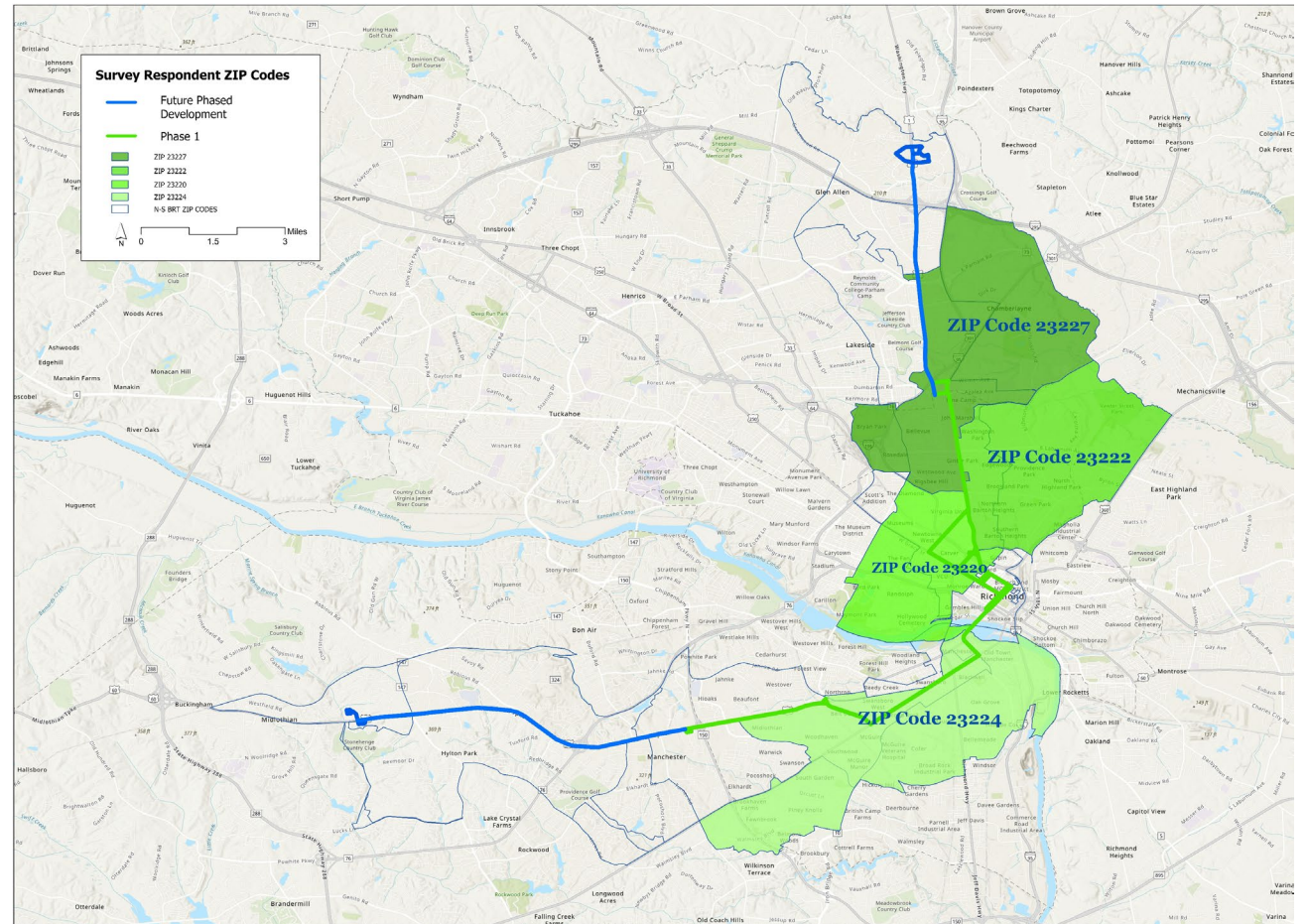
# What is your household's estimated annual income?

59% of respondents to this question are part of households that earn \$50,000 or more each year, compared to the 74% of households in the service area. 41% of respondents make less than \$50,000. In comparison, 26% of households report earning less than \$50,000 annually.

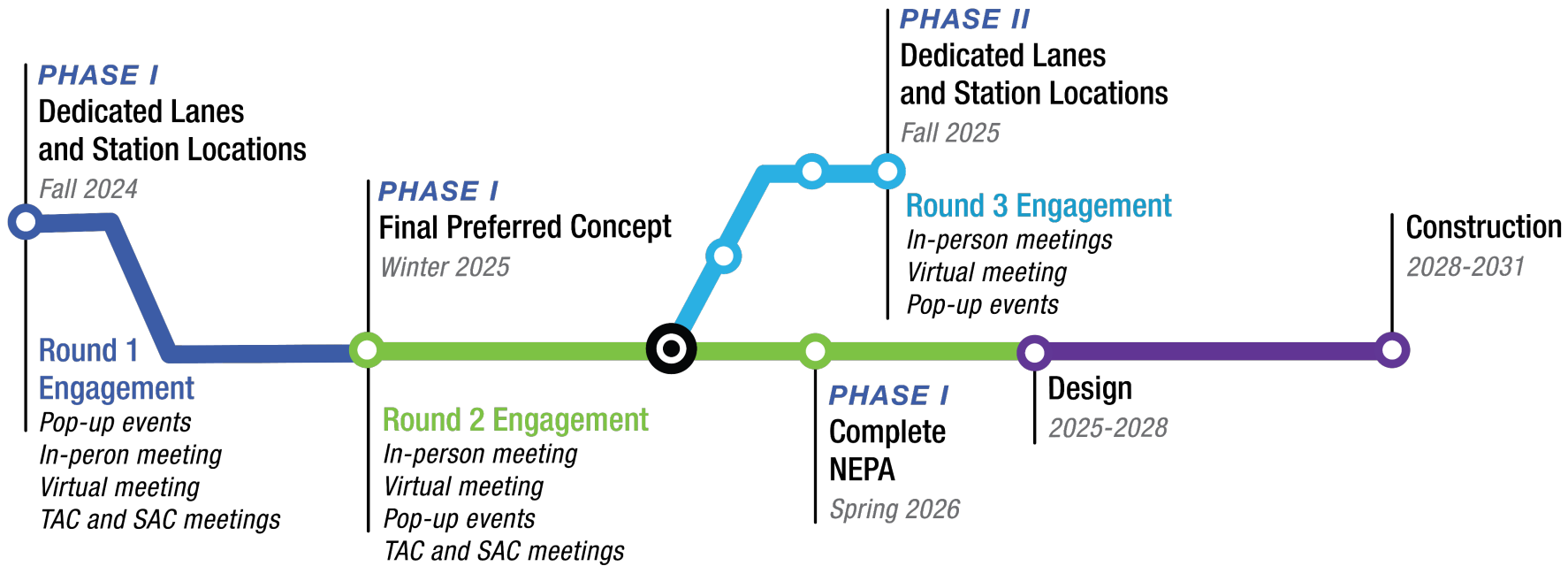


# What is your home ZIP code?

Most survey respondents who reported their home ZIP Code live in **23227** and **23222**.



# What's Next



Like Round 1, Round 2 engagement will occur in 2025 and will include public meetings (in-person and virtual), pop-up events, and meetings with the TAC and SAC.

# Continuous Improvement Recommendations

Engagement Preparation	Survey	Public Meetings	Virtual Meeting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create an engagement calendar</li> <li>• Create a social media rollout plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limit open-ended question boxes by focusing on structured questions, with a voting scale for some questions</li> <li>• Place a navigation page at the beginning of the survey as the landing point</li> <li>• Provide options for respondents to limit survey fatigue</li> <li>• Provide graphics and color coding to organize content for participants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan for pop-up events that help reach the full extent of the community</li> <li>• Include hand-out maps and hard-copy surveys at public meetings</li> <li>• Continue to focus on the technical details when showing the corridor alignment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designate one team member to sort and seek feedback on questions ahead of Q&amp;A session</li> <li>• Designate another team-member to field questions to facilitator(s)</li> <li>• Retain a bank of alternate questions for presenters to turn to if needed</li> </ul>