Safe Access to Parks

Copeland Park

Regional Park Pilot
Final Fix-It Ideas

December 2021

SAFE STREETS NOW
VISIONZERO
ONE TRAFFIC DEATH IS TOO MANY

Hillsborough TPO
Transportation
Planning Organization

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I. Introduction

The Hillsborough Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) is conducting a Safe Access to Parks pilot project to develop a process that can be replicated throughout the County to implement safety countermeasures that improve access to parks with a focus on speed management. A toolbox of safety countermeasures, building on the 2019 *Speed Management Action Plan*, was developed as part of this process. This pilot project includes three different types of park facilities in Hillsborough County (local, regional, and linear) whose contexts and transportation safety issues broadly represent other facilities in the region, such that the findings from this pilot project can be applied elsewhere in the County. The project scope includes the following tasks:

1. Identify parks to include in the pilot project
2. Conduct a detailed existing conditions assessment of each park location
3. Solicit public feedback
4. Develop a toolbox of safety countermeasures
5. Apply countermeasures to each park location

This report documents the results of Task 3 and Task 5, including a summary of the public feedback process and results, as well as the safety countermeasures identified for each park location. Project materials are available on the TPO's website: https://planhillsborough.org/park-study/.

A. Park Selection Process

A quantitative process was developed that primarily considers equity and transportation safety metrics to identify candidate parks within Hillsborough County. Of the approximately 230 regional parks within the County, defined as a park greater than 5 acres with a wide range of active and passive amenities, and serving a large population area, **Copeland Park** was ranked one of the highest based on a combination of equity and safety factors. When considering the level of prior investment in the area (minimal), it was selected for inclusion in this pilot project.

Additional details are provided in a technical memorandum dated May 3, 2021, that can be found on the TPO's website. Other parks selected for inclusion in the pilot are the Upper Tampa Bay Trail (linear), and Sulphur Springs Park/River Tower Park (local and passive regional), with separate existing conditions assessments prepared for those parks.

Copeland Park Entry on N 15th Street

B. Existing Conditions Assessment

An existing conditions assessment was prepared for each park to document the key characteristics of the park and the surrounding transportation context, including the following information for the roadway network that provides primary access to the park facility:

- Description of transportation network for all travel modes, with a focus on the pedestrian, bicycle, and transit networks
- Assessment of the speed of people driving on roadways around the park
- Collision assessment for all travel modes with a focus on vulnerable roadway users (people walking and bicycling)

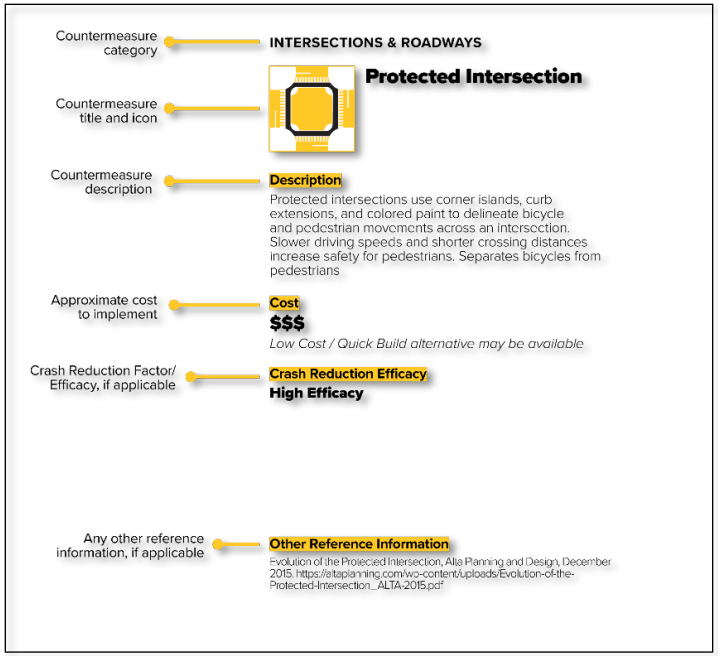
Based on the existing conditions assessment, areas where specific community feedback was desired were identified to include in the public outreach campaign and preliminary opportunities to improve transportation connections to the park were developed. More details can be found in the existing conditions report available on the project website, available at https://planhillsborough.org/park-study/.

C. Countermeasure Toolbox

A toolbox of engineering countermeasures was developed to aid in the selection of potential transportation system enhancements that could be considered around each park area with the following categories:

1. Bikeway Facilities
2. Intersection and Roadway Design
3. Walking Facilities
4. Signals
5. Signing and Striping
6. Other

Over 90 countermeasures were identified with an example shown to the right.



Example Countermeasure

Where data is available, **Crash Reduction Efficacy** is also provided. For the crash reduction efficacy, some measures include a qualitative range of low, medium, or high when limited information is available. For others, a crash reduction factor (CRF) from the Federal Highway Administration's Crash Modification Clearinghouse is provided for illustrative purposes only to illustrate a potential range. More details are provided in the Toolbox available on the project website.

The remainder of this report provides an overview of the public engagement process, with a summary of the specific feedback related to Copeland Park as well as the initial potential improvements, or fix ideas, developed for the roadways surrounding and connecting to the park.

II. Public Outreach Process and Results

Public outreach for the Safe Access to Parks pilot project was conducted in several ways, including collaboration with an agency stakeholder group, online public outreach, and in-person public outreach. Additionally, regular presentations were made to the Hillsborough TPO committees to provide updates on the project and to receive feedback. Each of these outreach elements is described in more detail below.

A. Public Outreach Process

1. Stakeholder Group

A project stakeholder group was established during the scoping process for the project to provide input on the overall scope of work and to help inform the overall project goals. This stakeholder group consists of staff from Hillsborough County, the City of Tampa, and the Hillsborough TPO, and includes staff from multiple departments, including planning, engineering, and parks and recreation. The goal was to establish a group with a diverse background to provide unique insights into the project.

In addition to the scoping meeting, the group met three times, including a project kick-off meeting, a meeting to review and discuss the existing conditions assessment, and a meeting to review and discuss the countermeasure toolbox and application of the toolbox to each park.

Feedback from the stakeholder group was overwhelmingly positive and their ideas have been incorporated into this final document, including a change of name for the project and two additional fix ideas around Copeland Park (no fix ideas were removed based on feedback). The project was initially called the Park Speed Zone Pilot Study. However, the project evolved and some of the strategies identified go beyond only speed management. The project was renamed Safe Access to Parks to better reflect that the overall purpose of the project is to improve transportation safety on roadways surrounding and connecting to parks, which includes speed management strategies, but other improvements as well.

In addition to project stakeholder group outreach, the project was presented to the following committees and their feedback was incorporated into the overall process. Members of these committees also assisted to sharing information about the project and public outreach with their networks.

- Citizens Advisory Committee
- Technical Advisory Committee
- Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee
- Livable Roadways Committee
- Policy Committee

2. Online Public Outreach

Due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic conditions at the time this study was prepared, including the Delta surge in late summer/early fall, much of the early public engagement was conducted through online tools. Numerous neighborhood groups in the vicinity of all park locations were contacted and information about the project provided. Social media was extensively used to promote the project.

A website to share project information was developed, with links to an online web map and an online survey. The web map and survey were developed in both English and Spanish and were open to the public from mid-August through early November 2021. Between the three parks, there were over 95 unique responses to the online survey and over 115 comments on the web map. The results for Copeland Park are discussed in Section 3. To help inform people who use the park on a regular basis about the outreach, yard signs and flyers were placed around the park and distributed to people who have connections to the park.

Yard Signs and Flyers that were Placed Around Each Park

3. In-Person Public Outreach

In-person outreach events were conducted at all three pilot locations on Friday, October 29, 2021. The Upper Tampa Bay Trail event was held at the Channel Park Trailhead from 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM, while concurrent events took place at Sulphur Springs Park and Copeland Park from 3:00 PM to 5:00 PM. At all events, team staff discussed the background and purpose of the project with participants and explored ideas to make access to the parks safer by all modes of travel. This feedback focused on reactions to initial concepts previously identified by the team and new ideas generated by participants.

Feedback from children from the Copeland Park after-school program, as well as their guardians and park staff, provided most of the feedback. Members of the consultant team also walked around the park to solicit feedback from park users. Native Spanish speakers also participated in collecting feedback and some of the interviews were conducted in Spanish. Overall, feedback from about 25 people was recorded during the in-person public outreach event.

In-Person Public Outreach Invitation

In-Person Public Outreach October 29, 2021

B. Public Outreach Results

The online public outreach yielded 48 unique comments from the online map and four responses from the online survey questions. An additional six people provided feedback for all parks.

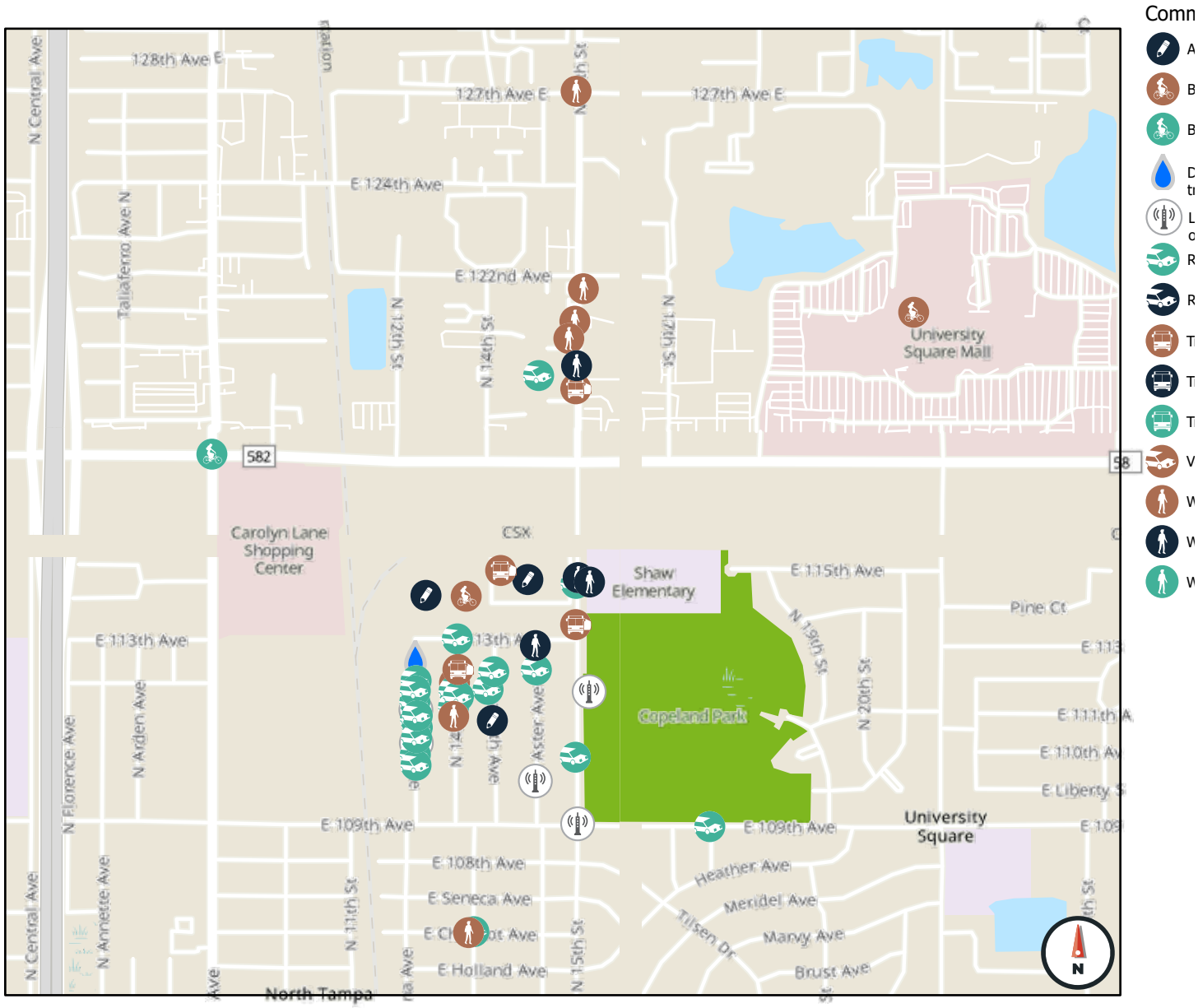
Links to the online map were provided on the TPO's project website as well as through social media. People were able to identify comments related to different aspects of the transportation system, as well as other specific issues. The location of each comment is shown on **Figure 1** with a summary of the comments provided in **Table 1**. All the comments by issue type are provided at the end of this report in **Table 2**, with some highlights below:

- We do not have really any bike infrastructure, so bikers use the sidewalk, and this has caused multiple collisions with pedestrians and is overall very dangerous. The bike lanes that we do have are very narrow. I have a friend who was recently struck by a car while using one of these bike lanes and said he will always use the sidewalk from now on because of how dangerous it is- we need protected bike lanes.
- 109th and 15th needs more light because it gets very dark here. There are a lot of young children that walk this area as well as a lot of homeless that congregate in these dark areas which makes for a dangerous situation.
- We need SPEED BUMPS! People speed down this road because they use it as an alternate route and we have had multiple accidents, property damage, and pet deaths as a result. We need any sort of speed prevention infrastructure ASAP.
- More quality sidewalks.
- Fix the roads. Sidewalks are ill-maintained and dangerous.
- We need better infrastructure for pedestrians- we need sidewalks and more pedestrian crossings/beacons.

Table 1: Online Map Comment Type Summary

Comment Type	Number of Comments	Percent of Comments
Roadway Operations – People drive too fast	21	44%
Walk – Inadequate, missing, or unsafe crosswalks	10	21%
Lighting – Insufficient Street lighting that make it uncomfortable to walk or bike at night	5	11%
Transit – The bus does not come frequently enough	4	8%
Another issue – please explain	4	8%
Bike – Inadequate or missing bikeways (trails, bike lanes, etc)	3	6%
Drainage - Drainage issues create a barrier to walking, biking or taking transit during and after rain	1	2%
Total	**48**	**100%**

Source: Fehr & Peers, 2021



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The survey was developed to ask more direct and open-ended questions of park users, including asking about typical travel modes to the park, ease of access, specific locations where people feel unsafe walking or bicycling to the park, and specific ideas for improvements. Some key highlights of this feedback are summarized below. Due to the small sample size for Copeland Park, some of the results are combined with all the parks, while some results are for Copeland Park specifically.

- *How do you typically get to the park or trail?*
  - Of the 88 people total across all parks who answered this question, 17 percent walk, 42 percent bicycle and 38 percent drive a car. The remaining do not actually go to the trail or park. Of the 4 people who answered this question for Copeland Park, 2 (50 percent) walk, 1 drives (25 percent) and 1 bikes (25 percent).
- *How easy or difficult is it for you to get to/from parks and trails, with 0 being the hardest and 10 being the easiest?*
  - Of the 81 people who answered this question overall, the average score was 6.7. For Copeland Park, of the 4 people who answered this question, the average score was 6.5, meaning that people think it is slightly harder to access Copeland Park than either Sulphur Springs or the Upper Tampa Bay Trail.
- *When thinking about going to the park or trail, where do you feel unsafe walking or bicycling and why?* Here are the specific responses related to Copeland Park:
  - Any of the major East-West Roads (Fowler, Busch, Waters) and some of the others (Bird St. / Bougainvillea Ave). They have high volumes of traffic going high speeds, and either no bike lane or ones that are too close to traffic.
  - Nowhere
  - Crossing wide highways that have many lanes, in order to get to the park.
  - Crossing streets. Stop signs seem to be advisory at best, speed limits are ignored.
- *Does the behavior of people driving, like speeding or not paying attention, make you not walk or bike to the park or trail?*
  - Of the 72 people total across all parks who answered this question, 40 percent responded "Yes", 33 percent responded "No", and 27 percent responded "Sometimes". Of the 4 people who answered this question for Copeland Park, 2 (50 percent) said "Yes", 1 said "No" and one said "Sometimes".
- *Are there specific locations where you would like to see marked crosswalks connecting to the park or trail?* Here are the specific responses related to Copeland Park:
  - Good maintenance of the street, curbs are also needed.
  - Crossing over driveways along the highway
  - Not specifically. There needs to be safe crossings across the major roadways.
- *Would you walk, bike or take transit more to the park or trail if it was safer?*
  - People would be more likely to walk or bike to parks and trails if access is easier. Improved transit would not result in a lot of additional trips to the park or trail.
- *Are there specific locations where more street lighting is needed? Please tell us where.*
  - Specific locations around Copeland Park were not identified beyond the locations identified using the crowdsource map.
- *Are there drainage issues that affect your travel during and after periods of rain? Where?*

- Specific locations around Copeland Park were not identified beyond the locations identified using the crowdsource map.

- *Please share other suggestions for improvements that would help you access parks and trails in your neighborhood.*
  - The general look of 15th street- it looks shabby and uncared for, especially on the Copeland Park side. The same is true for 109th. The sidewalks on 15th are very narrow
  - Sidewalks on all of 109th.
  - Make road like 22nd street bicycle friendly. This could most easily be done by widening a sidewalk and marking it for bicycles.
  - A network of trails throughout the region that connects the parks.

Some canopy cover to block out the sun somewhat with trees as I walk during the daytime in the summer would be helpful.

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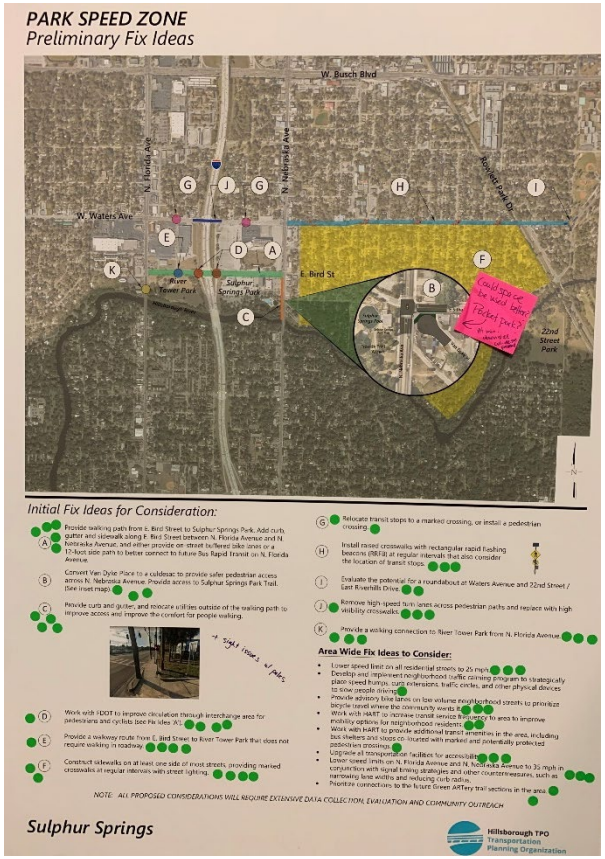
Sample Comments Received

III. Countermeasure Toolbox Application

This chapter details the application of the countermeasure toolbox to Copeland Park based on the existing conditions assessment and feedback provided from the Community during the online and in-person public outreach. The image below shows the initial reaction to the application of the countermeasures. Participants were provided with red and green dots to denote ideas that they were supportive of (green) and ideas that they did not support (red). In the discussion of specific countermeasure ideas, the initial level of public support is indicated. No ideas received a "no" vote, and an absence of a vote does not mean community support was lacking, rather participants preferred other ideas. In the following discussion, these ideas will be denoted by "●" in the same quantity as the public noted.



Public Preference on Initial Fix-Ideas

A. Overview

The countermeasure toolbox described previously was applied to the roadway network surrounding and connecting to Copeland Park, as presented on **Figure 2.** Potential transportation system improvements are shown for specific locations, as well as areawide considerations. It is the intent that the appropriate agency will consider the various ideas in their planning and capital improvement processes, and that this document will serve as a starting point to identify potential projects for further evaluation. In the Copeland Park area, projects could be undertaken by the City of Tampa, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), Hillsborough Transportation Planning Organization (TPO), Hillsborough Area Regional Transit (HART), and the Hillsborough County Public School District. For the ideas shown on Figure 2, they are organized below by the most applicable countermeasure category, as some fix ideas could fall into several categories. The agency that would be responsible for further planning and implementation is also shown. Most strategies fall under the Intersection and Roadway Design, and Walking Facilities categories.

B. Bikeway Facilities

Aside from bicycle lanes on Fowler Avenue, which are uncomfortable for most people based on the volume and speed of vehicle traffic on Fowler Avenue, there are no other dedicated bicycle facilities in the area. Two Safe Access Strategies were identified specifically related to bicycle facilities, as included in the Area Wide Ideas on Figure 2.

1. Provide advisory bike lanes (Area Wide) on low volume neighborhood streets to prioritize bicycle travel where the community wants it. (Picture bike lanes on both sides of the road with vehicles sharing the middle at low speeds.)

Example of Advisory Bike Lane on Residential Street

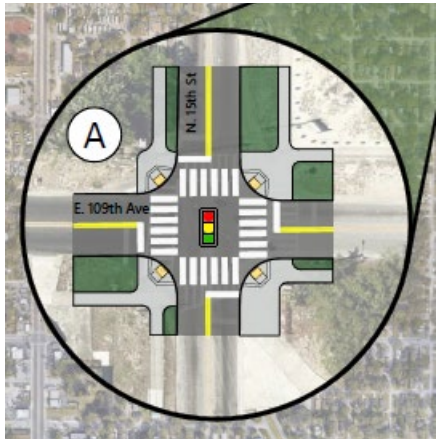
The concept of an advisory bike lane is relatively new in Florida. It is a striping configuration which provides for two-way motor vehicle and non-motorized traffic using a center lane and edge lanes on either side. The center lane is dedicated to, and shared by, motorists traveling in both directions. Vulnerable road users including cyclists or pedestrians have right-of-way in the edge lanes, but motorists can use the edge lanes, after yielding to people there, to pass other vehicles. This type of configuration can be appropriate on low volume, low speed streets, especially ones without sidewalks or other dedicated right-of-way for people bicycling, similar to some of the neighborhoods surrounding Copeland Park. As this type of treatment has not been implemented in the Tampa Bay area, extensive outreach and education would be needed for a successful implementation. There may be some opportunities for a temporary pilot of this treatment with low-cost materials to demonstrate proof of concept for the residents and decision makers. (City of Tampa)

2. Prioritize connections to the future Green ARTery trail (Area Wide and shown as M and N on Figure 2) sections in the area. Although the final alignment of the Green ARTery trail has not been identified, it is expected to traverse this area. Providing a connection and wayfinding from the trail to Copeland Park will expand the number of people who have access to the park via non-motorized travel options. (TPO in coordination with the City of Tampa) ●●

C. Intersection and Roadway Design

Much of the roadway infrastructure in the area was designed and constructed at a time when design standards prioritized the expedient movement of vehicles over the movement of people. Since this area was built, design standards have evolved and there are opportunities to reconstruct intersections to balance the travel of all roadway users, slow the speed of people driving, and implement more effective traffic calming measures than those already in place.

3. Tighten corner radii to decrease pedestrian crossing distance **(*Idea A*** on Figure 2**).** This could be applied to many intersections in area, including E. 109th Street at N. 15th Street. The purpose of this improvement is to decrease the overall pedestrian crossing distance, which reduces exposure to other roadway users, and slows the speed of people turning across the crosswalk to improve tansportation safety outcomes. (City of Tampa) ●●



Example Intersection Modification

4. Replace speed humps along E. 109th Avenue and add marked crossing locations (Idea C). The existing speed humps along E. 109th Avenue no longer meet current best practice design guidelines and based on resident feedback, are not effective at slowing the speeds of people driving along the corridor. Modifications to traffic calming devices on E. 109th Avenue should be coordinated with Safe Access Strategy 7. (City of Tampa)

5. Implement improvements identified as part of the N. 15th Street Corridor Improvement Project (Idea L), including modifications to the intersection of N. 15th Street at Fowler Avenue to reduce the curb radii to slow people turning from N 15th Street to Fowler Avenue. (FDOT and Hillsborough County) ●

6. For all streets with blocks greater than 600 feet in length (Area Wide), like Lantana Avenue and N. 14th Street, consider speed humps at regular intervals, along with additional pedestrian infrastructure, like additional (and wider) sidewalks, and more street lighting, both of which can help slow down drivers. (City of Tampa)

7. Develop and implement neighborhood traffic calming plan (Area Wide) to strategically place speed humps, curb extensions, traffic circles, and other physical devices to slow people driving. (City of Tampa)

D. Walking Facilities

Most of the Safe Access Strategies fall under the Walking Facilities category, as the focus of providing safe access to parks is improving facilities for people to walk or bicycle to area parks. As many walking facilities can also double as bicycling facilities, especially for children and families, some of the strategies also accommodate bicycle travel.

8. Provide a 10 - 12-foot path on one side of street for shared bicycle and pedestrian travel (Idea B); provide continuous curb and gutter, creating additional distance and buffer between pedestrians and the road. (City of Tampa)

9. Provide wider sidewalks and shade trees (Idea D); create safe off-road connections between adjacent businesses to reduce driveway-sidewalk conflicts and improve accessibility between destinations. The walking environment along E. Fowler Avenue is uncomfortable due to relatively narrow sidewalks, lack of shade, and lack of consistent connections between the sidewalk and adjacent businesses. FDOT is undertaking a detailed study of E. Fowler Avenue, including this portion of the corridor, to provide high quality transit facilities. Improvements

to the pedestrian realm would support increased transit ridership. (FDOT)

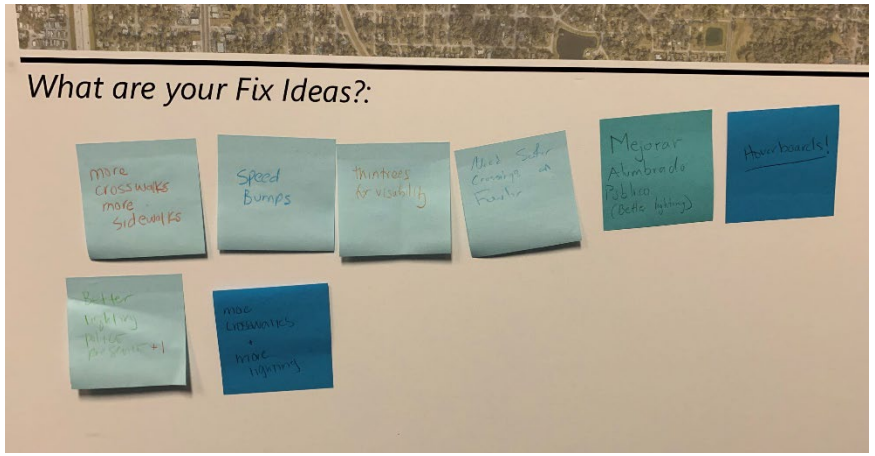
10. Provide wider sidewalks connecting to the park and school (Idea E). Sidewalks along N. 22nd Avenue are highly constrained and do not permit side-by-side travel. Improvements to the pedestrian infrastructure could promote more walking to Witter Elementary School on the corner of E. 109th Avenue and N. 22nd Street. (City of Tampa) ●●●●

11. Replace school crossing with raised crosswalk (like a speed hump across the roadway) **and rectangular rapid flashing beacon** (RRFB) ***(Idea F)***. The high visibility crossing of N. 15th Street at Shaw Elementary School has become faded, which reduces its effectiveness. Providing a raised crosswalk would increase the visibility of the crossing, and slow people driving at all times of day. Installation of an RRFB would improve the yielding rates of people driving to people crossing at all times of day. (School District / City of Tampa) ●●

12. Provide a walking route from N. 15th Street to the internal park walking trail system that does not require walking in the roadway ***(Idea G)***. Currently, people walking to the park have very few ways to access the park on foot and more dedicated pedestrian access points and pathways to key destinations would encourage more walking to the park. (City of Tampa) This improvement should be coordinated with Safe Access Strategy 15, below.

13. Provide marked crosswalks connecting to the park and school (Idea H). At the intersection of E. 113th Avenue at N. 15th Street, there is not a marked crosswalk across N. 15th Street, although it is a legal crossing. The closest marked crosswalk is over 400 feet to the north and 1,300 feet to the south. This improvement should be coordinated with Safe Access Strategy 14, below. (City of Tampa) ●●

14. Add a sidewalk to the north side of E. 113th Avenue to connect high density residential developments to the park and school ***(Idea I)***. This improvement should be coordinated with Safe Access Strategy 13, above. (City of Tampa)



Additional Ideas for Transportation Safety

15. Provide additional accessible connections from E. 109th Avenue and N. 15th Street to the internal park trail system (Idea J). There are few ways that someone can access the park on foot, in a wheelchair, or on a bicycle from the surrounding street system. This improvement should be coordinated with Safe Access Strategy 12, above. (City of Tampa) ●

16. Work with the School District to improve access for people walking and biking to school, as well as improve walking connections between the area schools and the park ***(Idea K)***. School access to both Shaw and Witter Elementary schools prioritizes moving cars, versus providing pedestrian access. Improving the pedestrian access locations could reduce the number of families who drive their students to school, further reducing vehicle congestion. This improvement should be coordinated with Safe Access Strategies 10 and 11 above. (School District / City of Tampa) ●

17. Add sidewalks to all streets where sidewalks are not provided on at least one side of the street, like E. 108th Avenue ***(Area Wide)***. This improvement should be considered in combination with Safe Access Strategy 1 to provide a prioritized walking area for people within the right-of-way as construction of sidewalks may be cost prohibitive in the near-term. (City of Tampa)

18. Increase lighting levels in the area to provide a consistent level of lighting along streets, with a focus on intersections and roadway crossing locations ***(Area Wide)***. Insufficient lighting for overall safety and transportation safety was identified as a concern by many residents. (City of Tampa) Although no stickers were placed by this Safe Street Strategy, many of the conversations with people in the park as well as online feedback reflected a desire for more street lighting in the general area.

19. Upgrade all transportation facilities for accessibility (Area Wide). Many of the transportation facilities in the area do not meet current Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards. Required upgrades to the facilities are opportunities to provide additional enhancements that not only benefit those with disabilities, but everyone who lives in the neighborhood. Curb ramp improvements benefit those in a wheelchair, but also help people who might have small children in strollers or use micro-mobility devices like scooters. (City of Tampa)

E. Signals

While only one specific stand-alone strategy was identified in this category, it is expected that as Safe Access Strategies are refined, signal strategies would be incorporated, including considerations for reduced cycle lengths along E. Fowler Avenue to decrease the delay for people waiting to cross the street.

20. Evaluate signal timing strategies to reduce red light running and conflicts between roadway users (Area Wide). This Safe Access Strategy was added in response to feedback from the Stakeholder Group. A high frequency of red-light running and people driving making unsafe turning movements on redlights were noted from Stakeholders. Evaluating and implementing signal timing and phasing strategies could reduce the frequency of red-light running and right-turn on red movements that conflict with other roadway users could improve transportation safety outcomes. (City of Tampa and FDOT)

F. Signing and Striping

While only one specific stand-alone strategy was identified in this category, it is expected that as Safe Access Strategies are refined, signing and striping strategies would be incorporated, such as advance stop bars at controlled locations to increase visibility of people crossing the street, upgraded roadway striping to enhance visibility, and improved wayfinding to help people navigate the area.

21. Paint Conflict Zones (Area Wide). This Safe Access Strategy was added in response to community feedback. Evaluate the use of green paint in bicycle lanes and conflict zones with a special emphasis on roadways with bike lanes connecting to the trail and other area parks and schools. (Hillsborough County, TPO and FDOT)

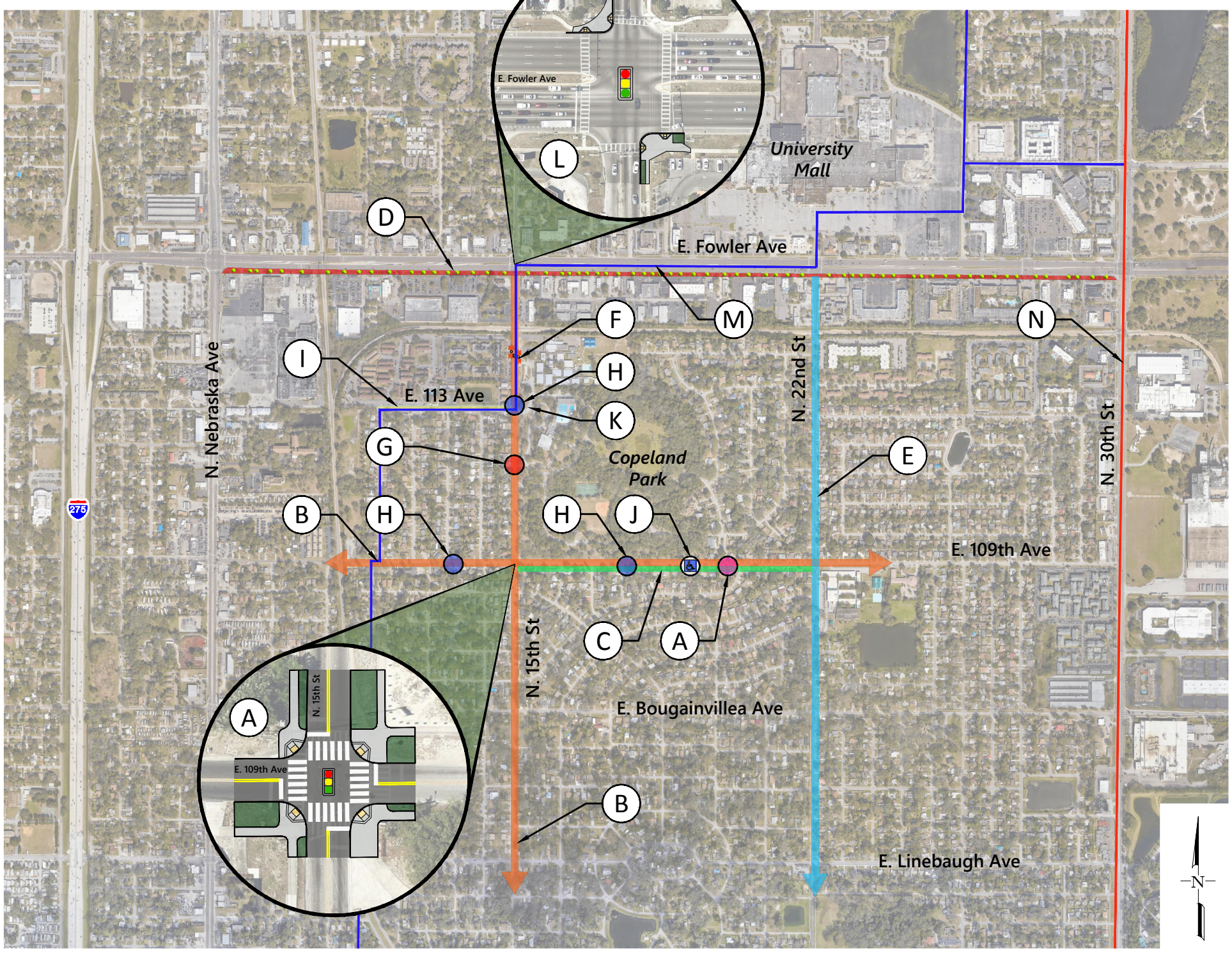
G. Other

Several strategies were identified that fall into the other category

22. Lower speed limit on all residential streets to 25 mph (Area Wide). The City of Tampa plans to lower the speed limits on all residential streets within the city. Lowering speed limits should also be done in concert with other design changes to reinforce lower design speeds. Many of the Safe Access Strategies identified aim to reduce the speeds of people driving to a more reasonable level given the residential context of the neighborhood surrounding the park. (City of Tampa)

23. Work with HART to increase bus service frequency to area to improve mobility options (Area Wide) for neighborhood residents. While transit is provided to the area, it is not frequent and does not serve residents' needs well. Improving the frequency of transit service coupled with other projects that improve walking connections could improve mobility options for many residents of the area. (HART)

SAFE ACCESS TO PARKS



Preliminary Fix Ideas for Consideration:

(A) Tighten corner radii to decrease pedestrian crossing distance. (see example above at E. 109th Avenue and N. 15th Street). This could be applied to many intersections in area.

(B) Provide 10 - 12 foot path on one side of street for shared bicycle and pedestrian travel; provide continuous curb and gutter, creating additional distance and buffer between pedestrians and the road.

(C) Replace speed humps along E. 109th Avenue and add marked crossing locations.

(D) Provide wider sidewalks and shade trees; create safe off-road connections between adjacent businesses to reduce driveway-sidewalk conflicts and improve accessibility between destinations.

(E) Provide wider sidewalks connecting to the park and school.

(F) Replace school crossing with raised crosswalk (like a speed hump across the roadway) and rectangular rapid flashing beacon (RRFB).

(G) Provide a walking route from N. 15th Street to the internal park walking trail system that does not require walking in the roadway.

(H) Provide marked crosswalks connecting to the park and school.

(I) Add a sidewalk to the north side of E. 113th Avenue to connect high density residential developments to the park and school.

(J) Provide additional accessible connections from E.109th Avenue and N. 15th Street to the internal park trail system.

(K) Work with the School District to improve access for people walking and biking to school, as well as improve walking connections between the school and park.

(L) Implement improvements identified as part of the N. 15th Street Corridor Improvement project, including modifications to the intersection of N. 15th Street at Fowler Avenue to reduce the curb radii to slow people turning from N 15th Street to Fowler Avenue.

(M) Proposed USF Green ARTery Trail Alignment - Alternative 1

(N) Proposed USF Green ARTery Trail Alignment - Alternative 3

Area Wide Fix Ideas to Consider:

- Lower speed limit on all residential streets to 25 mph.
- Add sidewalks to all streets where sidewalks are not provided on at least one side of the street, like E. 108th Avenue.
- Increase lighting levels in the area to provide a consistent level of lighting along streets, with a focus on intersections and roadway crossing locations.
- Develop and implement neighborhood traffic calming program for this area to strategically place speed humps, curb extensions, traffic circles, and other physical devices to slow people driving.
- For all streets with blocks greater than 600 feet in length, like Lantana Avenue and N. 14th Street, consider speed humps at regular intervals, along with additional pedestrian infrastructure, like additional (and wider) sidewalks, as more street lighting, both of which can help slow down drivers.
- Provide advisory bike lanes on low volume neighborhood streets to prioritize bicycle travel where the community wants it. (Picture bike lanes on both sides of the road with vehicles sharing the middle at low speeds.)
- Work with HART to increase bus service frequency to area to improve mobility options for neighborhood residents.
- Prioritize connections to the future Green ARTery trail sections in the area.
- Upgrade all transportation facilities for accessibility.
- Evaluate the use of green paint in bicycle lanes and conflict zones with a special emphasis on roadways with bike lanes connecting to the trail and other area parks and schools.
- Review and adjust signal timing and phasing at all intersections on major corridors with a focus on reducing red-light running. Consider no right-turn on red prohibitions at major intersections around the park.

NOTE: ALL PROPOSED CONSIDERATIONS WILL REQUIRE EXTENSIVE DATA COLLECTION, EVALUATION AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Figure 2

Copeland Park

Hillsborough TPO
Transportation
Planning Organization

Jan 12, 2022

IV. How to Guide

The Hillsborough TPO conducted this Safe Access to Parks pilot project to identify a process that can be replicated by other agencies in Hillsborough County. The following provides information related to the process with an estimate of the expected level of effort per park location. Some of the materials prepared as a part of the pilot process can support additional park locations, such as the ranked list of park locations and the countermeasure toolbox.

A. Select Park Location

As a part of the pilot process, evaluation criteria that focused on transportation safety and equity were developed and a numerical score was assigned to each park location in the County. Understanding who would benefit from park access improvements and determining if there have there been area improvements recently can help in the finalization of a study park. Other factors to consider include community feedback and ability to combine with other projects to maximize potential benefit.

B. Existing Conditions Assessment

Understanding the transportation context around and connecting to the park location is important to understand barriers to park access. The existing conditions assessment should include the following elements:

- Description of the park and any passive or active uses
- Description of the surrounding transportation system, including connecting roadways, transit, presence/absence of facilities for people walking and bicycling, barriers to park access
- Transportation system assessment including collision review and if available, traffic volumes and vehicle travel speed data
- A field review should be conducted, preferable with multiple members of the evaluation team to gain additional insights

C. Public Outreach

Public outreach can include a variety of approaches, including establishing a Stakeholder Group to provide feedback at various project stages, soliciting feedback from members of the public in-person and online, and sharing project information with elected officials. Engaging with the community can help identify challenges that are not readily apparent in the data and help to refine potential countermeasures such that there is confidence that they could be supported for implementation.

D. Identify Potential Countermeasures

Based on the existing conditions assessment and feedback from the public, the countermeasure toolbox developed as a part of this project should be used as a starting point to identify potential Safe Access to Parks strategies. A range of potential improvements is likely to be identified, with some that could be implemented in the near-term, such strategies that include enhanced paint and signs. Many strategies that will be the most effective, such as constructing new sidewalks, and adding separated bicycle facilities, will likely take time to design, secure funding, and construct.

E. Next Steps

This pilot project ends with the identification of countermeasures for each of the park locations selected for inclusion in the study. As the Hillsborough TPO does not have the jurisdiction to implement identified improvements, the next steps include working with the appropriate jurisdiction or agency partner to advance some of the fix-it ideas into more detailed planning studies and ultimately a capital improvement plan/work program. This pilot process and supporting documents can also be used to help secure additional funding, such as grants, that could be used to advance specific fix-it projects.

F. Level of Effort

It is expected that future Safe Access to Parks evaluations would be advanced by the Hillsborough TPO, Hillsborough County, City of Tampa, City of Temple Terrace and City of Plant City. Some agencies may opt to lead the studies in-house while others may opt to use outside support. Depending on the type of park, extent of the study area, and availability of data, the level of effort for outside support is estimated in the range of 100 to 200 hours per park, with some potential for economies of scale should multiple parks be included in a single study.

Table 2: Online Map Comments

Comment Type	Votes[1]	Comment
Walk – Inadequate, missing, or unsafe crosswalks	1	My son attends Shaw Elementary but it is dangerous for him to simply cross the street from our home to go to school. We have one area to cross, but without the crossing guard there it is nearly impossible to do so safely. There needs to be more infrastructure in this area to provide safe ways for our children to be able to cross 15th to go to their school and to Copeland Park. There should also be more visible and adequate sidewalks from the school to the park for the children to enjoy.
Walk – Inadequate, missing, or unsafe crosswalks	1	There is only one place to cross the street and only one crossing guard to get to Shaw Elementary. However, we have a lot of kids that walk to school. Thankfully, we have a strong community who checks up on one another to help but we need proper and adequate infrastructure to help the kids in this neighborhood have a safe way to get to school every day.
Walk – Inadequate, missing, or unsafe crosswalks	1	15th street has had a lot of pedestrian deaths. A friend of mine died a couple of months ago when trying to walk to a nearby bus stop. The raised crosswalks that have recently been put in definitely help, but there should be more flashing pedestrian beacons to make sure that the cars actually slow down and let pedestrians cross.
Walk – Inadequate, missing, or unsafe crosswalks		There needs to be a better entrance to the school for all of the kids in this neighborhood who need to walk to get there.
Walk – Inadequate or missing sidewalks		There are no sidewalks in this neighborhood for the children to ride their bikes on, so they are forced to ride bikes in the street. This is extremely dangerous since we also have a lot of speeders down this road.
Walk – Inadequate or missing sidewalks	1	The sidewalks need to be properly maintained. My son rides his bike to work and because of some roots in the sidewalk, he crashed his bike and broke his arm. Please maintain the sidewalk facilities better so that this does not happen!
Walk – Inadequate or missing sidewalks	1	There are no sidewalks here! My family and I all share one car and it is very dangerous when we have to leave our apartment to go run errands by walking. There are no sidewalks and in order to avoid being hit by cars, we have to walk in the sloped, grass area.
Walk – Inadequate or missing sidewalks		We need better infrastructure for pedestrians- we need sidewalks and more pedestrian crossings/beacons.

Table 2: Online Map Comments

Comment Type	Votes[1]	Comment
Walk – Inadequate or missing sidewalks		Fix the roads. Sidewalks are ill-maintained and dangerous.
Walk – Inadequate or missing sidewalks		More quality sidewalks.
Transit – The bus does not come frequently enough	1	I would like it if the buses were a little more reliable because if I know I have to be somewhere at 9 AM I have to be on the 7 AM bus to get there because of how slow they are and the excessive amount of stops per bus- maybe they should have more buses so they can be quicker.
Transit – The bus does not come frequently enough		There should be more school buses and buses in general in the area.
Transit – The bus does not come frequently enough		We need more dependable public transit. The bus is not reliable and comes around every 30 minutes (but not consistently) and we have to wait an hour or more on the weekends for the bus. We need more buses, more routes, and an overall better bus system for those of us that depend on it.
Transit – The bus does not come frequently enough		I would like it if the bus system worked better- they are not reliable because they are not always on time. We need more routes and perhaps more buses so that they can have less stops and get you to your destination quicker.
Roadway Operations – People drive too fast		We desperately need speed prevention! Multiple people, including myself, have lost a pet due to the high number of speeders in this area, and there have also been lots of accidents on this street due to this issue. This is particularly infuriating because we live in a school zone as well so we have a lot of children in the neighborhood who should be able to walk safely to school but because of how badly everyone speeds, the parents in this neighborhood do not feel safe letting their children walk to the nearby school or park. Please place speed bumps, speed treads, or even speed traps to try and discourage the many drivers that use this road as a thorough-road from speeding.
Roadway Operations – People drive too fast		Cars always race up and down 15th street which is dangerous because there are a lot of kids there.

Table 2: Online Map Comments

Comment Type	Votes[1]	Comment
Roadway Operations – People drive too fast		Lots of speeders on 14th and Chilkoot- speedbumps would really help in this area.
Roadway Operations – People drive too fast		Really bad speeding problem in this neighborhood! It is very problematic because there are children walking to and from school on these streets where people speed. We need more speed prevention mechanisms like more speed bumps and pedestrian crossings
Roadway Operations – People drive too fast	1	I would love to walk around with my young children but I feel unsafe in this neighborhood. My son is unable to ride his bike outside because of how bad people speed down our street.
Roadway Operations – People drive too fast		I do not feel safe walking outside of my apartment complex because there are a lot of speeders in this area. Thankfully, I have a car that I can utilize because there are not any other safe options in this area.
Roadway Operations – People drive too fast		Really need speed bumps and other speed prevention strategies especially since there are a lot of children walking to school in this area and a lot of speeders.
Roadway Operations – People drive too fast		Better transportation infrastructure and options. People speed very bad down our residential streets and near our schools. We desperately need speed management infrastructure like speed bumps, pedestrian crossings, beacons, and speed measurements.
Roadway Operations – People drive too fast		We really really need speed bumps on this road! The children in this neighborhood cannot go outside to play because of how many reckless drivers speed down this road every single day. There have been multiple instances of accidents and property damages due to people speeding down this road even though we reduced the speed limit to 15.
Roadway Operations – People drive too fast		Please please add speed bumps and other speed management to our street. I would love to be able to walk down our street or let my children play outside without being worried that they are going to get hit by a car.
Roadway Operations – People drive too fast		We need SPEED BUMPS! People speed down this road because this use it as an alternate route and we have had multiple accidents, property damage, and pet deaths as a result. We need any sort of speed prevention infrastructure ASAP.

Table 2: Online Map Comments

Comment Type	Votes[1]	Comment
Roadway Operations – People drive too fast		Speed bumps are a necessity in this area since everyone speeds and doesn't care.
Roadway Operations – People drive too fast		We have a lot of speeders in this neighborhood and need more speed prevention measures. More stop signs in neighborhoods.
Roadway Operations – People drive too fast		Speed bumps! Many kids in the neighborhood and a lot of speeders.
Roadway Operations – People drive too fast	1	Not as much speed management infrastructure in our neighborhood as in other neighborhoods. More money needs to be invested here. Children cannot walk to school because it is not safe.
Roadway Operations – People drive too fast		I have had to grab children from off of the streets and tell their parents to keep them in the front yards so they do not get run over. All the neighbors here constantly talk about the need for speed bumps and we really need the county to hear our plea before we lose one of the children of this neighborhood to something that could have been prevented by more speed bumps.
Roadway Operations – People drive too fast	1	SPEED BUMPS DESPERATELY NEEDED. Almost all of the problems we face as a neighborhood would be solved if we had speed bumps put in.
Roadway Operations – People drive too fast		We have seen many close calls and are very scared for the children in this neighborhood because people speed very badly down these roads and do not even stop at the few stop signs that we have. The streets are poorly designed and there needs to be more stop signs placed at intersections for drivers coming from all ways. Also, the speed limit is even posted in the neighborhood! I think it would be a good idea to place some signs, perhaps those that measure the speed limit as you drive by would be a good idea to slow down drivers, but most importantly are the speed bumps.
Roadway Operations – People drive too fast		SPEED BUMPS are badly needed.
Roadway Operations – People drive too fast		We need speed bumps

Table 2: Online Map Comments

Comment Type	Votes[1]	Comment
Roadway Operations – People drive too fast	1	The speed bumps are insufficient to keep people from going faster than the posted speed limit. A few months ago, they did a project to divert water to the retention pond a lot better and had to divert the traffic to 109th Ave and they had buses and beer trucks and more cars for a couple of months. The traffic is STILL bad and it should not be and all they need are a few more speed bumps, or, how bout cameras to catch the perps lol. The worst offenders are the police who don't mind launching their suv's going about 60, you know, they do not pay for the maintenance or shocks, etc. Some more speed bumps would probably solve this.
Lighting - Insufficient street lighting that make it uncomfortable to walk or bike at night	1	There are streetlights needed at Copeland Park to improve security and safety.
Lighting - Insufficient street lighting that make it uncomfortable to walk or bike at night		109th and 15th needs more light because it gets very dark here. There are a lot of young children that walk this area as well as a lot of homeless that congregate in these dark areas which makes for a dangerous situation.
Lighting - Insufficient street lighting that make it uncomfortable to walk or bike at night		We need more security in this area and more lighting would help with that
Lighting - Insufficient street lighting that make it uncomfortable to walk or bike at night		Please consider improving security in this area; adding more lighting would be a good place to start.

Table 2: Online Map Comments

Comment Type	Votes[1]	Comment
Lighting - Insufficient street lighting that make it uncomfortable to walk or bike at night		More safety needed in this neighborhood- more lighting would help
Drainage - Drainage issues create a barrier to walking, biking or taking transit during and after rain		The road slopes down towards the edges and although the houses near the center of the street are usually fine and can evade flooding, but the water accumulates down the sloped edges of the end of the road. This is inconvenient for us trying to walk around the neighborhood and causes a lot of cars to hydroplane in those areas when trying to make those sharp turns.
Bike – Vehicles not sharing the road with bikes	1	I ride my bike from my home across the street from Copeland Park to the Walmart near Nebraska and Bearss. When the left light turns yellow, the cars will still turn even though there is the sign for pedestrian crossing. They do not give the pedestrian the right of way. I will not ride on any bike lanes in this area because cars use it as a third lane. Even if I use flashlights, the cars do not see me and get extremely close to me so I have to use the sidewalk to get to work as much as I can.
Bike – Inadequate or missing bikeways (trails, bike lanes, etc)		We need protected bike lanes since we have so many bicyclists and pedestrians all trying to use the same narrow sidewalk
Bike – Inadequate or missing bikeways (trails, bike lanes, etc)		We do not have really any bike infrastructure so bikers use the sidewalk and this has caused multiple collisions with pedestrians and is overall very dangerous. The bike lanes that we do have are very narrow. I have a friend who was recently struck by a car while using one of these bike lanes and said he will always use the sidewalk from now on because of how dangerous it is- we need protected bike lanes.
Bike – Inadequate or missing bikeways (trails, bike lanes, etc)	1	I would like to be able to bike to University Mall ("RITHM") safely, right now there are many bicyclists but not enough dedicated bike lanes or trails. There is a lot of traffic congestion in the Uptown neighborhood and this presents a safety concern that should be addressed!
Another issue – please explain		There needs to be more transportation options- especially for those on disability. For example having some sort of shuttle service to take us to and from work or to do groceries would be really helpful.

Table 2: Online Map Comments

Comment Type	Votes[1]	Comment
Another issue – please explain		There should be more options for public transportation and they should be more accessible. Just because it is an option doesn't mean that it is actually able to be utilized by the people who need it. And just because it is for the public, doesn't mean it should be lower quality. For example. I have gotten stranded after my doctor's appointment by the Medicaid cabs- they are not reliable.
Another issue – please explain		We need more accessible options for public transit.

Notes:
1. Users were given the option to vote for, or agree with, other users' comments.
Source: Fehr & Peers, 2021