Multiuse Trail Connector
Alternatives Evaluation
Agenda

- Project Refresher
- Summary of 1st Public Meeting Feedback & Survey
- Summary of Alternatives
- Preferred Alternative Recommendation
- Discussion

Please take the survey!
Project Scope & Timeline

**Scope**

- Identify design criteria & trail route alternatives
- Determine preferred route alternative
- Produce final feasibility study

**Timeline**

- Bulk of project done by late February 2022
- Final report due in May
- Public Meeting schedule:
  - 1<sup>st</sup> – November 17, 2021
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> – January 19, 2022
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> – Early to mid-February

Study Area
Summary of 1st Public Meeting & Survey
Meeting & Survey

- Meeting held November 17, 2021
- Attended by 47 people
- Survey posted before meeting and closed December 2, 2021
  - 162 completed responses
  - Respondees heavily white (89%), male (62%), middle-aged to senior (74% aged 45 or older)
- Where respondees live:
  - 64% respondents were from Westfield proper
  - 25% from MA, mostly Hampden, Hampshire, and Worcester counties
  - 11% from CT, NY, elsewhere
Top Destinations for Walking & Biking

• North side of Westfield, Southampton, Northampton (30 respondents)
• Downtown Westfield (21 respondents)
• Stanley Park (16 respondents)
• West Springfield (4)
• Grocery stores, parks, restaurants generally listed multiple times
### Walking & Biking for Recreation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Number of People</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>55%</td>
<td>of people who walk</td>
<td>and</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41%</td>
<td>of people who walk</td>
<td>and</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>people would walk</td>
<td>and</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Walking & Biking for Transportation: Errands/Commuting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Do not walk or bike for errands/commuting</td>
<td>of respondents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27%</td>
<td>Don’t because the distance is too great</td>
<td>of people who walk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15%</td>
<td>and</td>
<td>of people who bike</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23-25%</td>
<td>Already walk or bike for errands</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18%</td>
<td>Don’t because they don’t feel safe</td>
<td>of people who walk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5-7%</td>
<td>Already walk or bike for work</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24%</td>
<td>and</td>
<td>of people who bike</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Concerns about Safety

Where do you walk or bike where you are concerned about safety, and why are you concerned?

• High traffic roads (20 people) as a general issue
  • Includes lack of separation between cars and people on bikes
• N Elm St & Southampton Road (Route 10/202) mentioned by approximately 15 people
• Western Ave, Russell Road (Route 20), and Route 9 also listed multiple times
• Six (6) people mentioned feeling unsafe at night, in deserted places, and/or when traveling alone
How You Would Use the Connector?
What Matters to You in a Trail?

1. Opportunities to walk or ride fully separated from cars (can’t see them)
2. Opportunities to access existing trails, parks, or other open spaces
What Else you Shared

• Six (6) people expressed a desire for the trail to follow the rail line.
• Five (5) people mentioned the trail connection as part of a regional route or route connecting to New Haven, CT
• Five (5) people commented on the need to get an off-road connection in general, some referring specifically to the desire for something scenic
• Four (4) people would like to see toilets provided
• Others provided connection options they would like to see
Summary of Alternatives & Evaluation
Evaluation Criteria

- Multimodal Connectivity to Community Destinations
- Constructability
- Regional Connectivity
- Safety
- User Experience
- Environmental/Permitting Impacts
Route B & Rail Line

- Public interest in rail trail
- Discussed with Pioneer Valley Railroad
- This portion of PVRR track is high use, and rail usage expected to grow
- For safety reasons, they do not support use of active railyard and tracks up to/just north of I-90
- Route B is not constructable and not under further consideration
Routes A & C
Route A

- Rail adjacent > Montgomery St > neighborhood streets & dams > schools off Southampton Road (Route 10/202)
- Approximately 46% off-street either adjacent to railroad or through dam property
- Relies on collaboration with Pioneer Valley Railroad
Montgomery St
from access drive

Under Pochassic St
Bridge at railyard

Montgomery St at Powder Mill Rd

N Elm St

Railyard
Rail underpass of I-90 at Twiss St

Powder Mill Dr
paper road next to Westfield High

Edgewood St utility corridor

Twiss St/Lockhouse Rd at I-90

Powdermill Brook Dam
Route C

- Union St > Springdale Rd > Industrial Park > Southampton Rd (Route 10/202) to schools
- Entirely on-street
- Sets up east-west connection
Springdale Rd

Springdale/Holyoke Rd

Union St / Springdale Rd intersection

Looking north up Springdale Rd from Union St
Headed north over I-90

Industrial Park Rd

Southampton Rd (Route 10/202)
Preferred Alternative Recommendation
Recommending Route A

- Provides direct connection to/through open space
- Connects dense residential areas and 3 schools via more off-street trail
- Requires trail users to navigate fewer difficult intersections/crossings
- Does have structural needs that require large budget and much coordination
Next Steps

• Develop preferred alternative and cost estimate at planning level
• Identify next steps for public process and stakeholder conversations to move further into conceptual development
• Next public meeting mid-February 2022
• Thoughts? Questions? Contact: engineering@cityofwestfield.org
What are your thoughts?

- Which alternative is your preference?
- What do you most like about that alternative?
- What are your concerns?
- What amenities are you hoping to see?

Please take the survey! https://bit.ly/TrailConnector_Survey2