



STARS RIDGE ST- W MAIN ST/W WATER ST INTERSECTION STUDY

Public Engagement Summary

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Prepared for



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PURPOSE OF PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Overview

The public engagement process for the STARS Ridge St and W Main St/ W Water St project was designed to meaningfully incorporate community input into key project decisions, particularly the development and refinement of design alternatives. Rather than serving as a standalone outreach effort, engagement activities were structured to align with major project milestones, ensuring that feedback was collected at critical decision points. This approach allowed the project team to understand community priorities early, test potential solutions, and refine a preferred alternative that reflects both technical considerations and public input.

The engagement strategy was structured as a phased and iterative process, with each activity building upon the previous step. Initial efforts focused on understanding existing conditions and community concerns, which informed the development of preliminary alternatives. These alternatives were then presented to the public through a combination of a community meeting and a follow-up public survey to gather detailed feedback. That input, along with coordination with VDOT and the City, guided the refinement of a preferred alternative, which was subsequently presented during a second community meeting for additional public comment. This step-by-step approach ensured continuous opportunities for input and clear connections between feedback and project decisions.

EXISTING CONDITIONS INPUT

Public Survey #1

The first phase of engagement focused on gathering baseline input from the community regarding existing conditions within the project area. **Public Survey #1 was conducted March 24 – April 7, 2025**, to better understand the issues, concerns, and priorities experienced by residents, commuters, and other stakeholders. This early input was critical in establishing a foundation for the project, providing insight into recurring challenges and helping to define the problems that the proposed alternatives would aim to address.

Among **675 participants**, the top issues were regarded pedestrian safety and access, corridor safety/ intersection safety, reducing traffic congestion, bicycle safety and accessibility, and proper pavement markings/signage.

The top comment themes are shown in **Figure 1**.

Figure 1: Public Survey #1 Comment Themes



In addition, the survey gathered input on key topics including perceived safety issues, desired multimodal facilities along the corridor, and the relative importance of various concerns within the study area. Respondents also shared the types of mobility challenges they typically experience when traveling through the corridor. Together, these responses provide a comprehensive snapshot of existing conditions from the community's perspective and help inform the development of project alternatives.

The complete results on public survey 1 are attached in **Appendix 1**.

PRELIMINARY ALTERNATIVES DEVELOPMENT

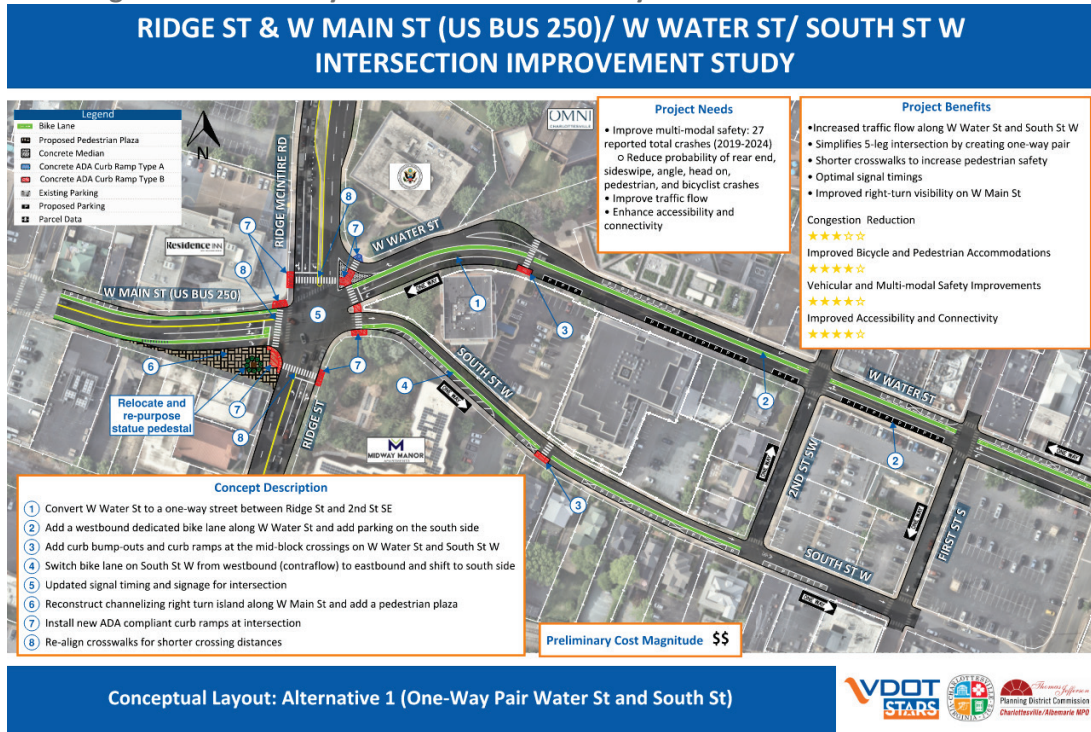
Concept Development

Building on the input received during the existing conditions survey, the project team developed three preliminary alternatives intended to address the key concerns identified by the public. These alternatives were presented during the *First Community Input Meeting on August 14, 2025*, which served as an opportunity to share potential solutions, explain tradeoffs, and gather real-time feedback. This stage marked a transition from problem identification to solution exploration, allowing the public to react to tangible concepts and provide input on specific design elements.

The three (3) preliminary alternatives presented at the community meeting are as follows:

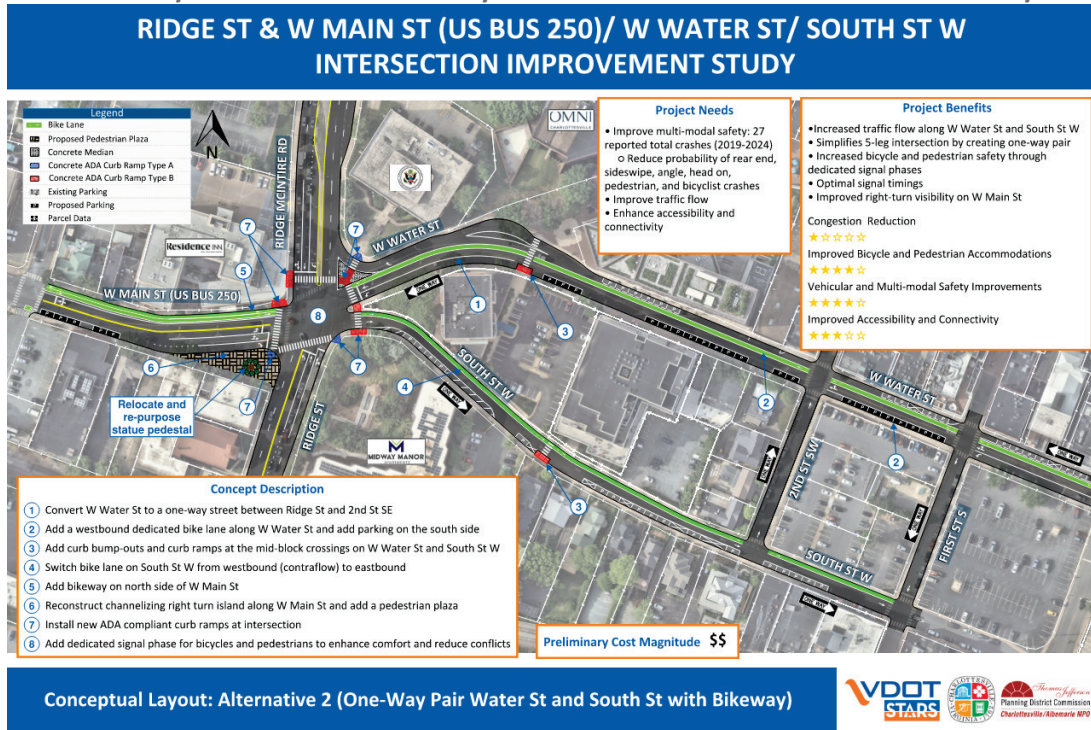
Alternative 1: Converts W Water St and South St W to one-way streets, shortens crossings, creates a pedestrian plaza, incorporates bike lanes, and adds parking (see **Figure 2**).

Figure 2: Preliminary Alternative 1 – One-Way Pair for Water St and South St



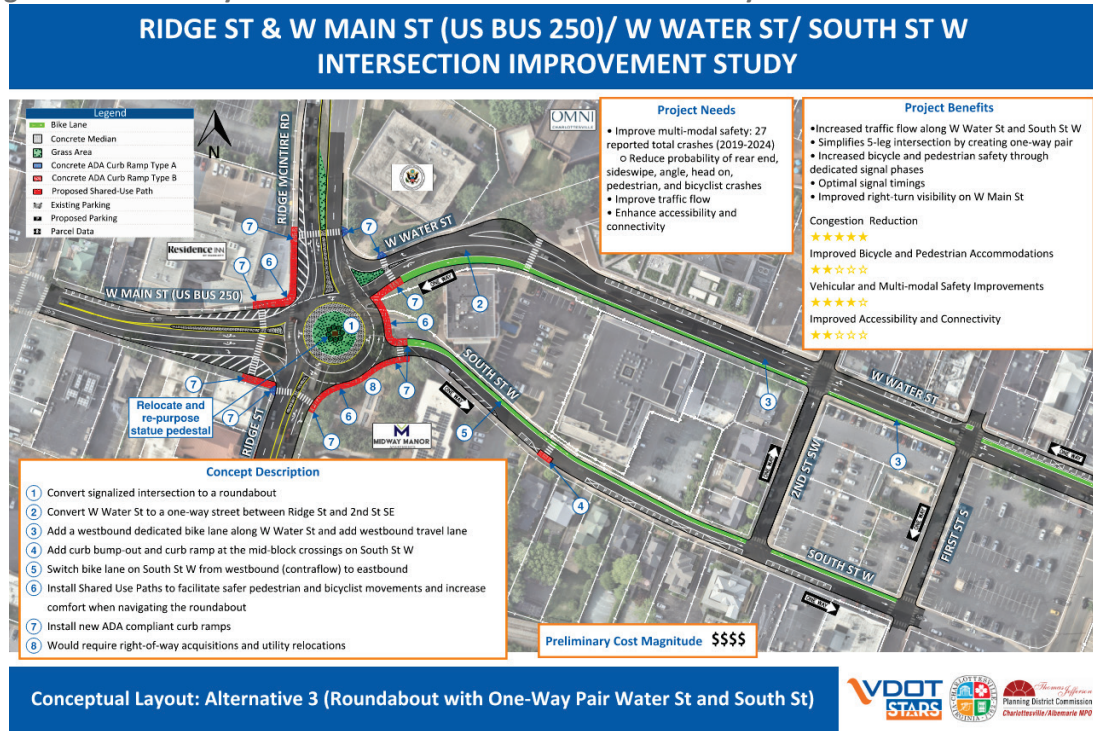
Alternative 2: Converts W Water St and South St W to one-way streets, creates a pedestrian plaza, includes a dedicated pedestrian and bike signal phase, and incorporates bike lanes, and adds parking (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Preliminary Alternative 2 – One-Way Pair for Water St and South St with Bikeway on Main St



Alternative 3: Replaces the intersection with a roundabout, converts W Water St and South St W to one-way streets, incorporates bike lanes and shared use paths, and adds parking (see **Figure 4**).

Figure 4: Preliminary Alternative 3 - Roundabout with One-Way Pair for Water St and South St



The summary sheets of the preliminary alternatives are attached in **Appendix 2**.

Public Survey #2

Following the community meeting the **Public Survey #2 was conducted August 14 – August 28, 2025**, to evaluate the three preliminary alternatives.

Among **600 participants**, **Figure 5** shows the rating of each concept on a one (1) to five (5) scale with 1 being the least preferred and 5 being the most preferred.

Figure 5: Preliminary Alternatives Rating
Rate each of the following concepts from a scale of 1 to 5.
(1 being least preferred 5 being most preferred)

Alternative 1 (One-Way Pair Water St and South St)	4.3
Alternative 2 (One-Way Pair Water St and South St with Bikeway)	4.9
Alternative 3 (Roundabout with One-Way Pair Water St and South St)	3.5

Alternative 1: Ranked 4.3/5

Respondents had positive sentiment about accessibility for pedestrians and bicycles and increased overall safety. Some concerns were raised about the bike lanes located directly next to parking spots.

Alternative 2: Ranked 4.9/5 (highest)

Respondents had positive sentiment about accessibility for pedestrians and bicycles and increased overall safety. Some concerns were raised about the connectivity of the bike lanes from Main St to Water St and South St.

Alternative 3: Ranked 3.5/5

Respondents had positive sentiment about accessibility for pedestrians and bicycles and increased overall safety. Comments had mixed reviews about the roundabout, with some liking the efficiency but others concerned about the higher cost.

Overall feedback focused prioritizing safety for pedestrians and bicycles with the proposed sidewalks, shared use paths, and bike lanes. Respondents also emphasized proper signage and markings to ensure drivers can easily understand and adjust to the new configuration of one-way streets. The full sentiment analysis on public survey 2 is attached in **Appendix 3**.

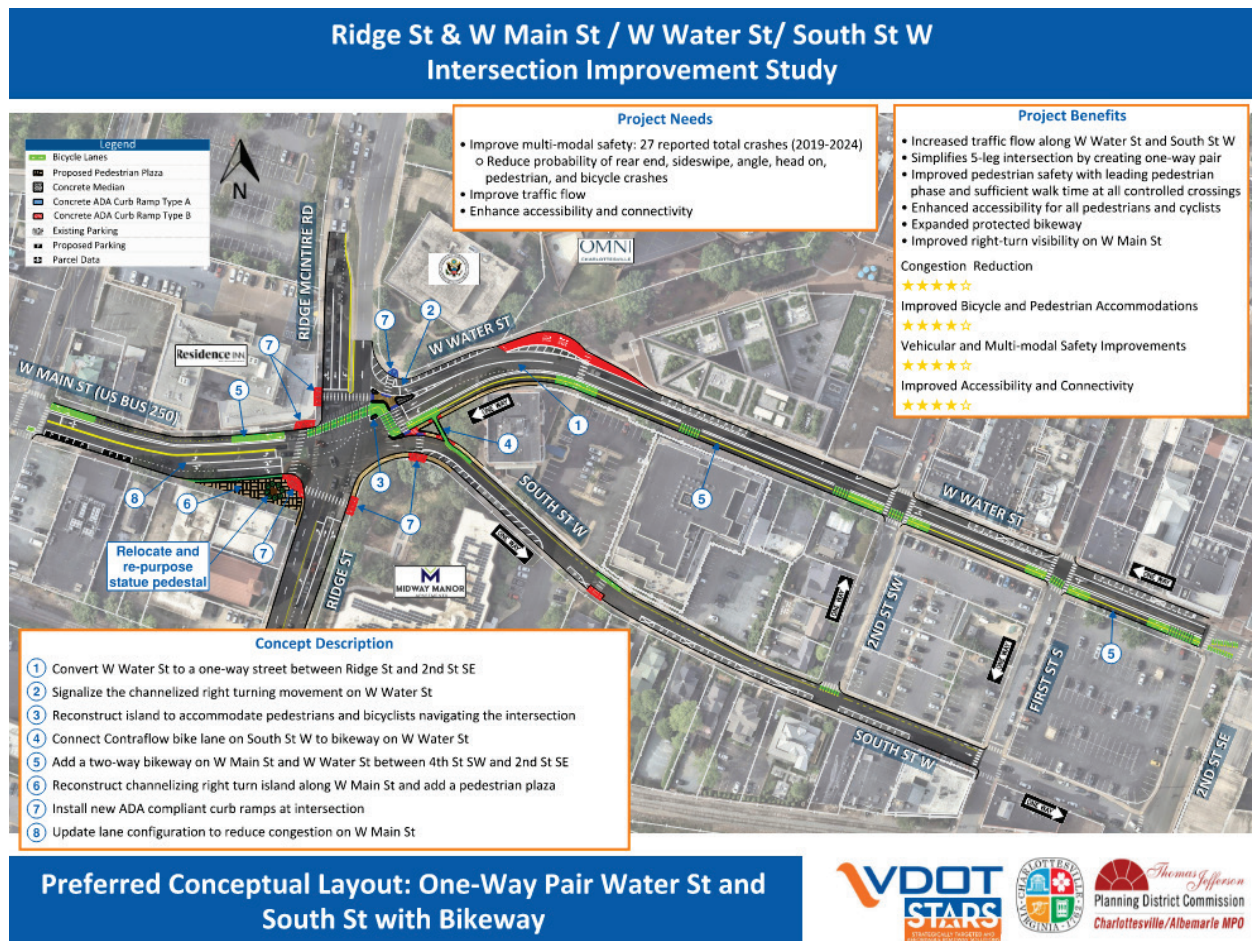
PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Concept Development

The preferred alternative was developed through a combination of public input received during both engagement phases and coordination with VDOT and City stakeholders. Feedback from the community meeting and Public Survey #2 was carefully reviewed to identify common themes, preferences, and concerns. The Preferred Alternative Concept was developed from Preliminary Alternative 2 and refined to better address operational performance and multimodal connectivity within the study area. In addition, the concept incorporates the continuation of the bikeway along W Water Street, enhancing connectivity and providing a more consistent and accessible facility for cyclists. These refinements reflect a balanced approach that responds to not only operational needs but also community priorities, project goals, and feasibility considerations.

The preferred alternative, shown in **Figure 6**, was presented during the *Second Community Input Meeting on January 22, 2026*.

Figure 6: Preferred Alternative – One-Way Pair for Water St and South St with Bikeway



The supplemental display boards of the preferred alternative that were presented at the second community meeting are attached in **Appendix 4**.

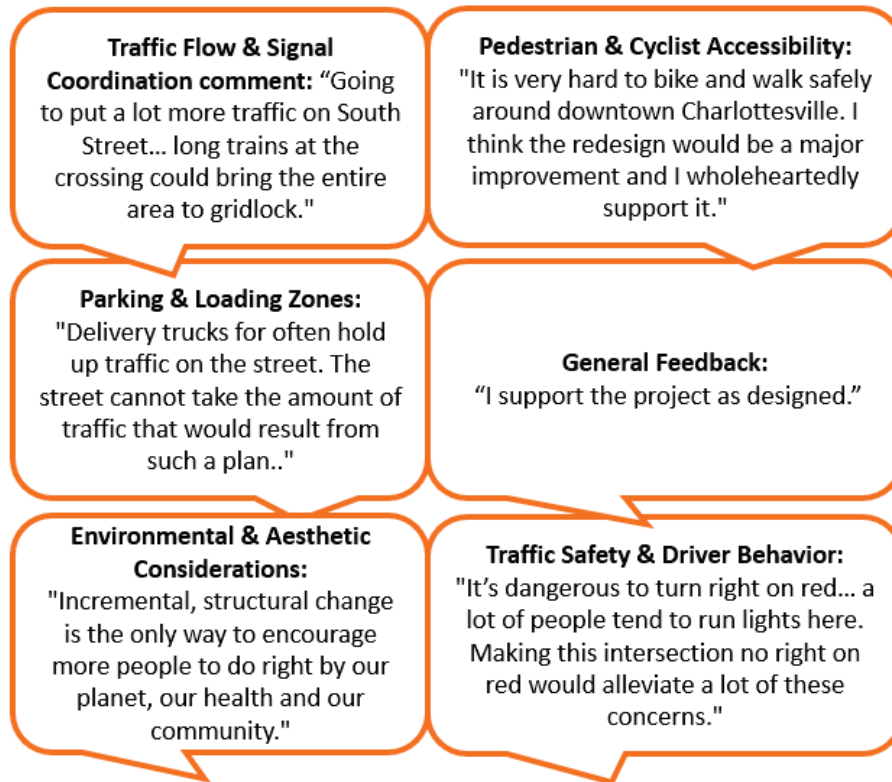
Preferred Alternative Public Feedback

The second community meeting was conducted to present the preferred alternative to the public and provide an opportunity for additional feedback. This meeting allowed participants to see how their earlier input influenced the design and to respond to the proposed solution in its more refined form. Following the meetings a *formal comment period was provided January 22 – February 12, 2026*, to allow the public additional time to review the Preferred Alternative and submit feedback.

Among **67 participants**, the feedback was 49% positive, 37% negative, and 13.5% mixed/neutral. Key themes included pedestrian and bike safety, driver behavior, multimodal access, and environmental and aesthetic considerations. Many comments supported improved safety, reduced congestion, and better connectivity of the preferred design. The full public sentiment analysis on the preferred alternative is attached in **Appendix 5**.

The top comment themes are shown in **Figure 7**.

Figure 7: Preferred Alternative Comment Themes



SUMMARY

Key Takeaways Across All Engagement

Across all phases of engagement, several consistent themes emerged that reflect the community's priorities and concerns. These themes provide a comprehensive understanding of how public input evolved throughout the process. Feedback collected through surveys and community meetings directly informed the evolution of design alternatives and the selection of the preferred alternative.