



Reconnecting the
EAST SIDE

Reconnecting the East Side Community Advisory Group Meeting #4

Share Your Voice. Let's Build a Better US-71!

Tuesday, February 24, 2026, from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

THANK YOU TO OUR HOST!

Mary Williams-Neal Community Center

3801 Emanuel Cleaver II Boulevard, Kansas City, MO 64130





Community Advisory Group Goals

- Shepherding the Reconnecting the East Side project
- Helping gain community consensus related to how best to improve US-71
- Addressing the **1985 Federal Consent Decree**



Community Advisory Group Members

- Darrell Curls, 5th District
at Large City Councilperson
- Ryana Parks-Shaw,
Mayor Pro Tem
- Christian Tabernacle Church
- BikeWalk KC
- Town Fork Creek Neighborhood
- Blue Hills Neighborhood
- Eastern 49/63
- Noble and Gregory Ridge /
My Region Wins
- Marlborough Community
Coalition
- Swope Park Coalition
- Urban Summit
- Justice and Dignity Center
- Southtown Council

Today's Agenda

- **Introductions**
- **Evaluating the Alternatives**
 - Methodology
 - Initial Alternatives
 - Refined Alternatives
 - Draft Recommendations
- **Next Steps**



The poster features the Kansas City logo and the title "Reconnecting the EAST SIDE" with the subtitle "Prioritizing Safety and Connection". Below this are four icons: an information 'i' icon, a speech bubble icon, a calendar icon, and an '@' email icon. A large thought bubble contains the text "REFINE THE VISION". The background shows a blue-tinted image of people at a community meeting. A QR code is located in the bottom right corner.

Visit the project website to learn more and submit feedback:
ReconnectEastSide.com

Reconnecting the East Side involves not only restoring key connections but also reviving economic, social, residential, civic, and spiritual connections.

Safety and consideration of areas of influence and impact are essential elements within the US-71 Corridor.

Reconnecting the East Side | 1

Study Area

- Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. on the north
- 85th Street on the south
- Paseo Boulevard on the west
- Swope Parkway on the east



The Process

Phase 1 – Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study

- Planning
- Purpose and Need
- Initial Alternatives
- Refined Alternatives

Phase 2 – Federal Consent Decree

- Federal Consent Decree process

Phase 3 – NEPA and Conceptual Design*

- Further refined alternatives

**Phase 3 may commence if the Federal Consent Decree is amended*



Project Partners

Collaborating with the East Side Community, Project Ambassadors, Community Advisory Group, and Technical Advisory Group, the project team is ensuring technical expertise and community priorities are integrated into the project's development and implementation.



Methodology for Evaluating Alternatives

Purpose of the Project

Project Needs

Additional Community Goals



Purpose of the Project

The purpose of the Reconnecting the East Side project is to address safety, multimodal access and mobility, and congestion challenges on the US-71 corridor.

Project Needs

- **Improve safety:** The US-71 Corridor crash rate is twice the statewide average and has a high number of fatal and serious injury crashes.
- **Enhance multimodal access and mobility:** The US-71 Corridor is a barrier for east-west multimodal access and mobility in the Study Area.
- **Reduce congestion:** The US-71 Corridor is congested during peak hours and impacts Study Area residents in multiple ways.

Additional Community Goals

- Address the existing effects of US-71 Highway on nearby properties and residents.
 - Promote opportunities for economic development and affordable housing that builds on existing efforts and makes US-71 a neighborhood amenity and regional destination.
 - Address public health issues.
- Implement feasible and cost-effective solutions.
- Develop stronger partnership with the local community so that corridor improvements reflect community priorities.

Evaluation Criteria

- **Project Needs**

- Safety
- East-West Multimodal Access and Connectivity
- Corridor Congestion

- **Community Goals**

- Economic Revitalization
- Public Health

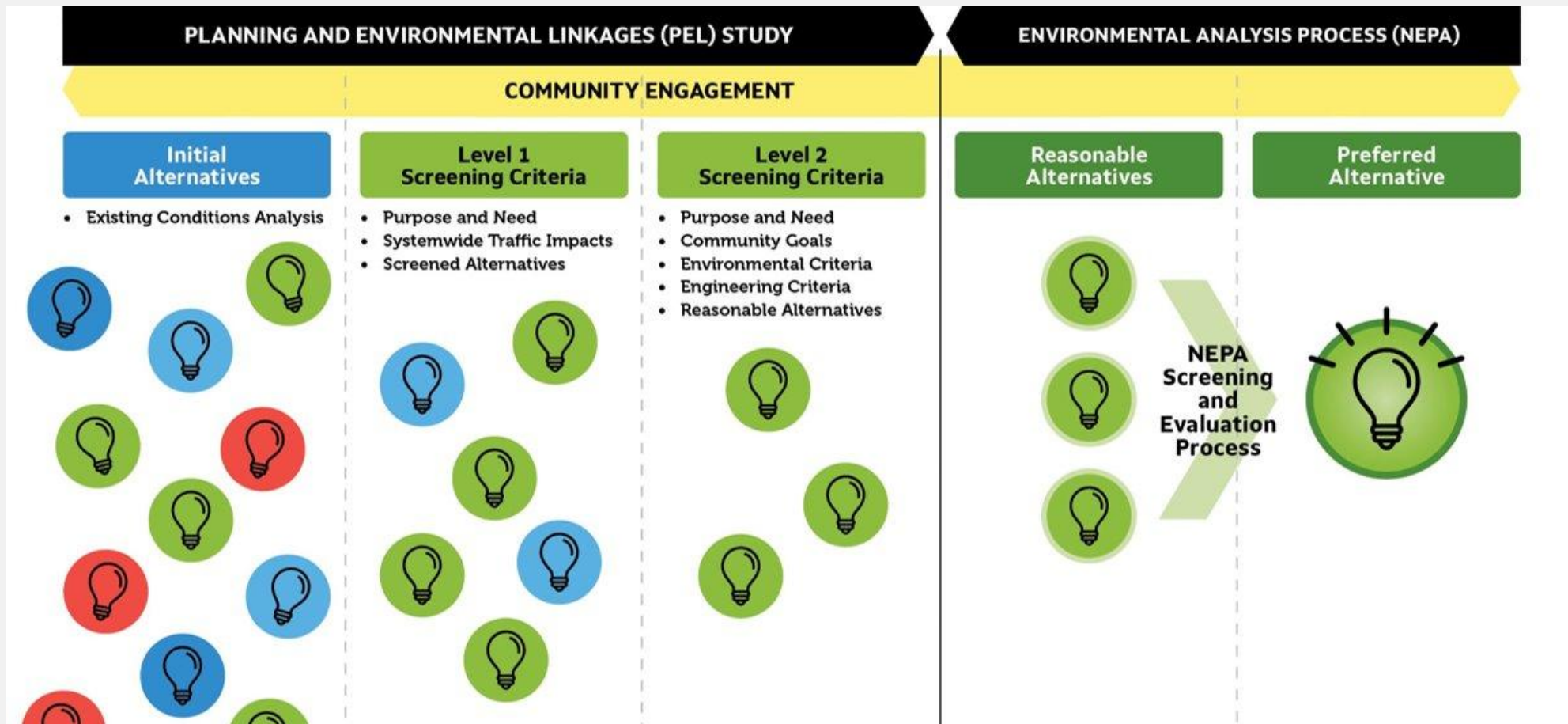
- **Environmental**

- Social Environment
- Built Environment
- Natural Environment

- **Engineering**

- Constructability and Design Complexity
- Estimated Construction and Associated Costs
- System Resiliency and Maintenance
- Systemwide Network Impacts

Evaluation Process

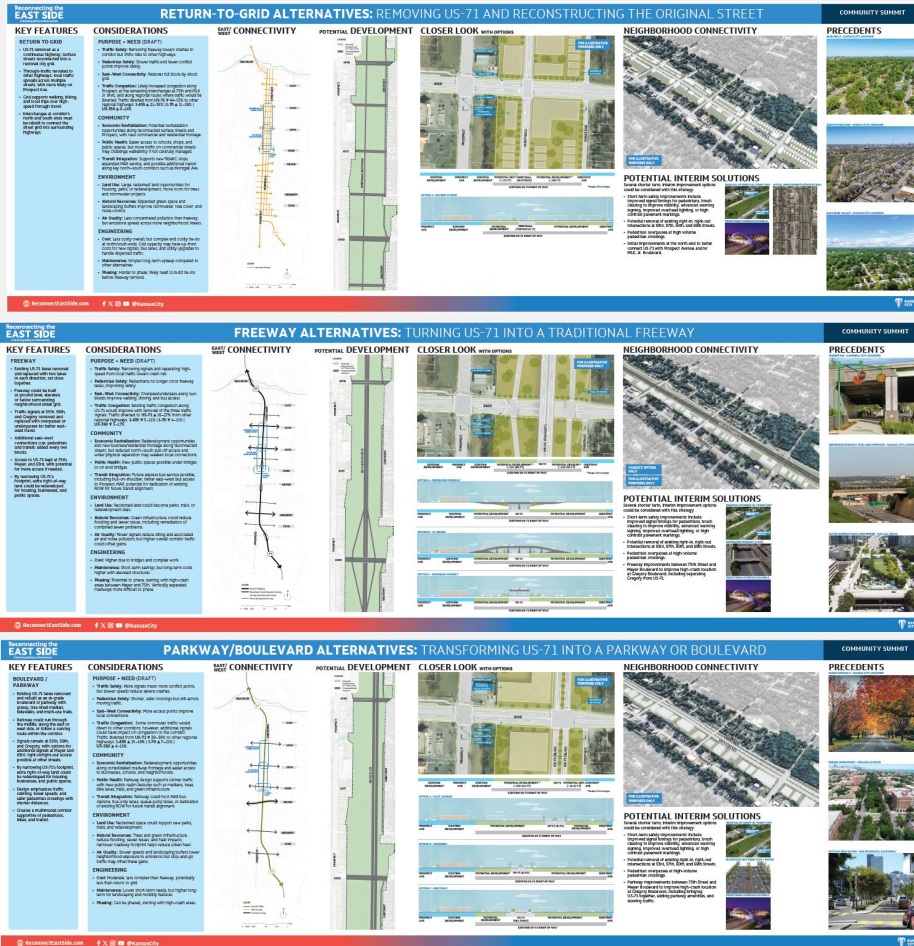




Initial Alternatives

- Your visions for a reimagined US-71
- Screening of Return-to-Grid Alternatives

Three Visions for US-71



- **Return-to-Grid:** Taking away US-71 completely and reconstructing the neighborhoods' original street network.
- **Freeway:** Turning US-71 into a traditional freeway with overpasses, interchanges, fewer traffic signals, and more.
- **Parkway/Boulevard:** Transforming US-71 into a parkway/ boulevard with traffic signals, bridges, and other improvements.

Three Visions for US-71

Alternatives include enhancements such as pedestrian, bicycle, transit infrastructure, lighting, art, recreational features, overpasses, underpasses, and/or land bridges, as well as the development of attainable housing and locally-owned businesses, that serve the needs of East Side neighborhoods.

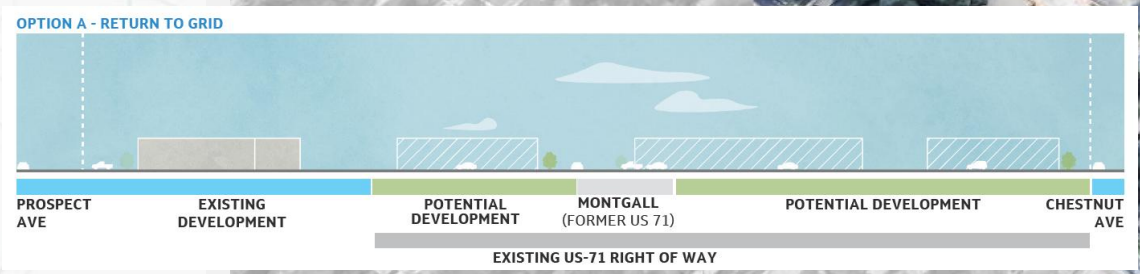
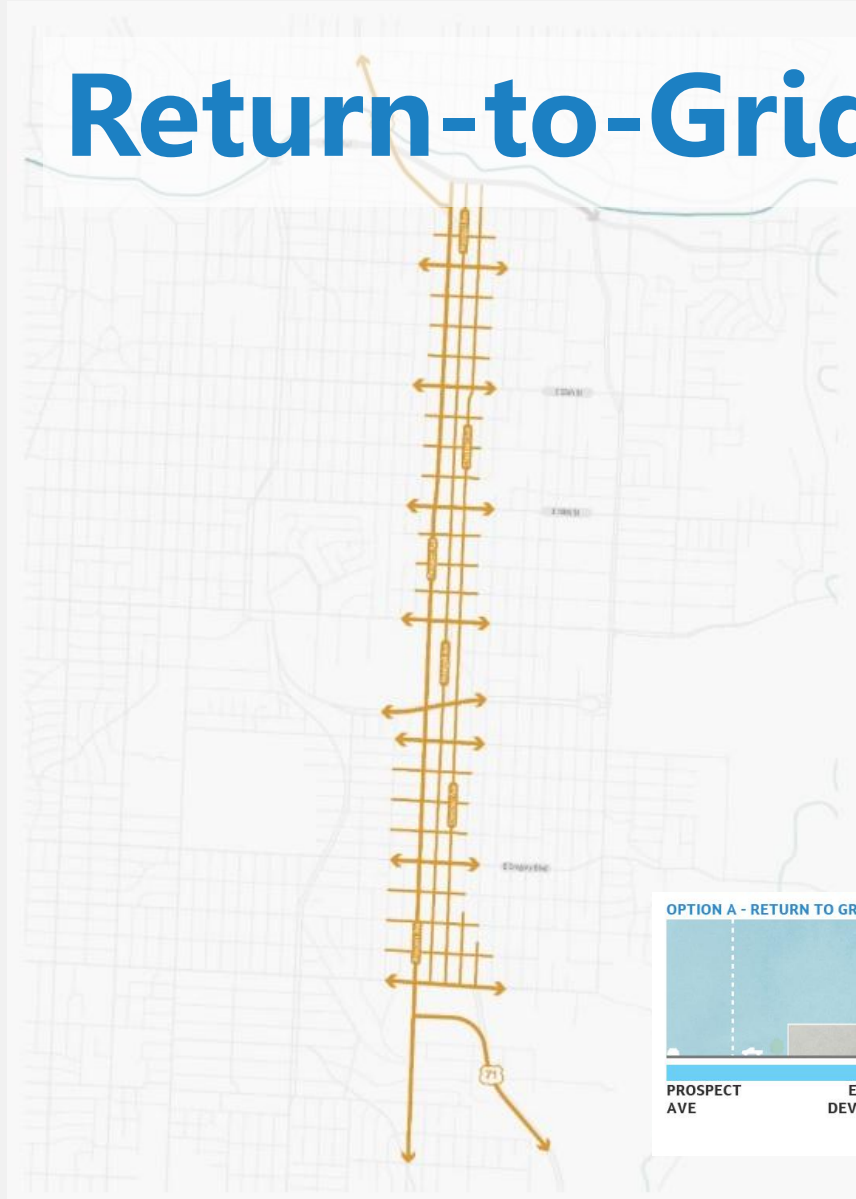


No-Build Alternative

Advantages	Disadvantages
• Few to no environmental impacts because this alternative does not include any new construction. • Lowest cost among all alternatives - provides for maintenance of the existing facility only. • No temporary or permanent disruptions to vehicular travel.	• Does not address any project needs identified in the Purpose & Need statement. • Not supported by stakeholders. Near unanimous support that the existing facility needs improvement.  NEPA Requirement: Carry the No-Build Alternative through the NEPA process.



Return-to-Grid Alternative



Return-to-Grid Alternative

Community Comments

- Excited for neighborhood reconnection, new development, safe streets, and opportunities to right historic wrongs
 - Could restore the community but may also be impractical
 - Boldest alternative for healing past divisions and fostering walkable, vibrant communities
 - Concerns about increased congestion, longer commutes, disruptions of established traffic patterns, and risk of underutilized or isolated areas if redevelopment doesn't happen
- Fears about gentrification and displacement
 - Removing US-71 could “take us back to the stone age” and be an “insult to those of us who sacrificed our homes and community fabric” to make way for the highway
 - Concerns about loss of a north-south route
 - Need for robust transit solutions and anti-displacement policies

Return-to-Grid Alternative

Advantages	Disadvantages
• Improves east-west connectivity, multimodal access, opportunities for economic revitalization, and improved public health along the corridor. • Lower travel speeds, potential improvements in noise and air quality. • Potential improvements to land use and community impacts with minimal impact to natural resources. • Moderate cost for construction overall. • Simpler long-term maintenance compared to other alternatives.	• Substantial diversion of traffic to other regional highways and may also increase congestion in the Study Area. • Increase in number of intersections and vehicular conflict points throughout the Study Area. • Complex and costly tie-ins at north and south ends of corridor. • Substantial public opposition due to potential negative effects of removing the existing US-71 facility.

Return-to-Grid Alternative

				Alternatives	
#	Type	Category	Metric	No Build	Return to Grid
1	Project Needs	Improve Safety	Reduce total crash rates		
2			Reduce conflict points		
3			Reduce fatal and serious injury crash rates		
4		East-west multimodal access and connectivity	Provide additional pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular crossings across US-71		
5			Provide access to public transit routes and MAX BRT stations		
6			Provide safe crossings at or near informal/uncontrolled pedestrian crossing locations on US-71		
7		Corridor congestion	Improve Level of Service (LOS)		
8	Community Goals	Reduce existing effects of US-71 on properties and residents	Provide opportunities for economic development and affordable housing		
9			Address public health issues - noise, air quality, opportunities for activity		
10		Implement feasible and cost effective solutions	Project can be funded, project can be phased		
11		Partnership with local community and community priorities	Local population has been engaged, has provided meaningful input on alternatives, and alternatives reflect community priorities		

-  Does not meet criteria
-  May meet criteria, needs additional investigation
-  Meets criteria

Return-to-Grid Alternative

- **Public Support** – Some pockets of support but majority of community felt this was 'going in the wrong direction.'
- **Regional Traffic** – Would result in significant shift (~50% diversion) in traffic to other regional highways.
- **Traveler Safety** – Increase the number of intersections and vehicular and vehicular/pedestrian conflict points throughout the Study Area.
- **Local Traffic Congestion** – Remaining traffic either uses residential streets or complex ties-ins at north and south ends.



**Project Team
Recommendation :**
Eliminate from further
consideration

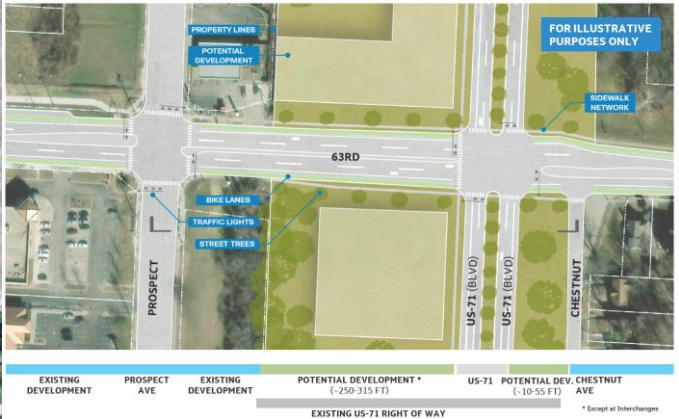
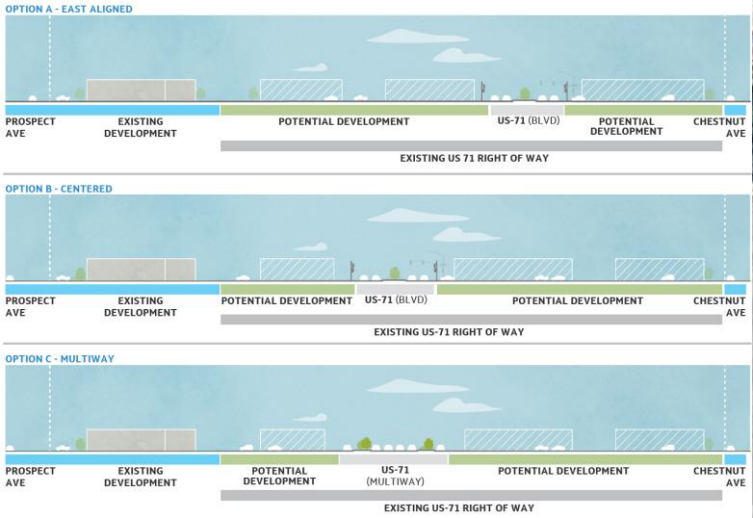


Reasonable Alternatives

- Further refinement of Boulevard and Freeway Alternatives
- Draft Evaluation of Alternatives



Boulevard Alternatives





Boulevard Alternatives

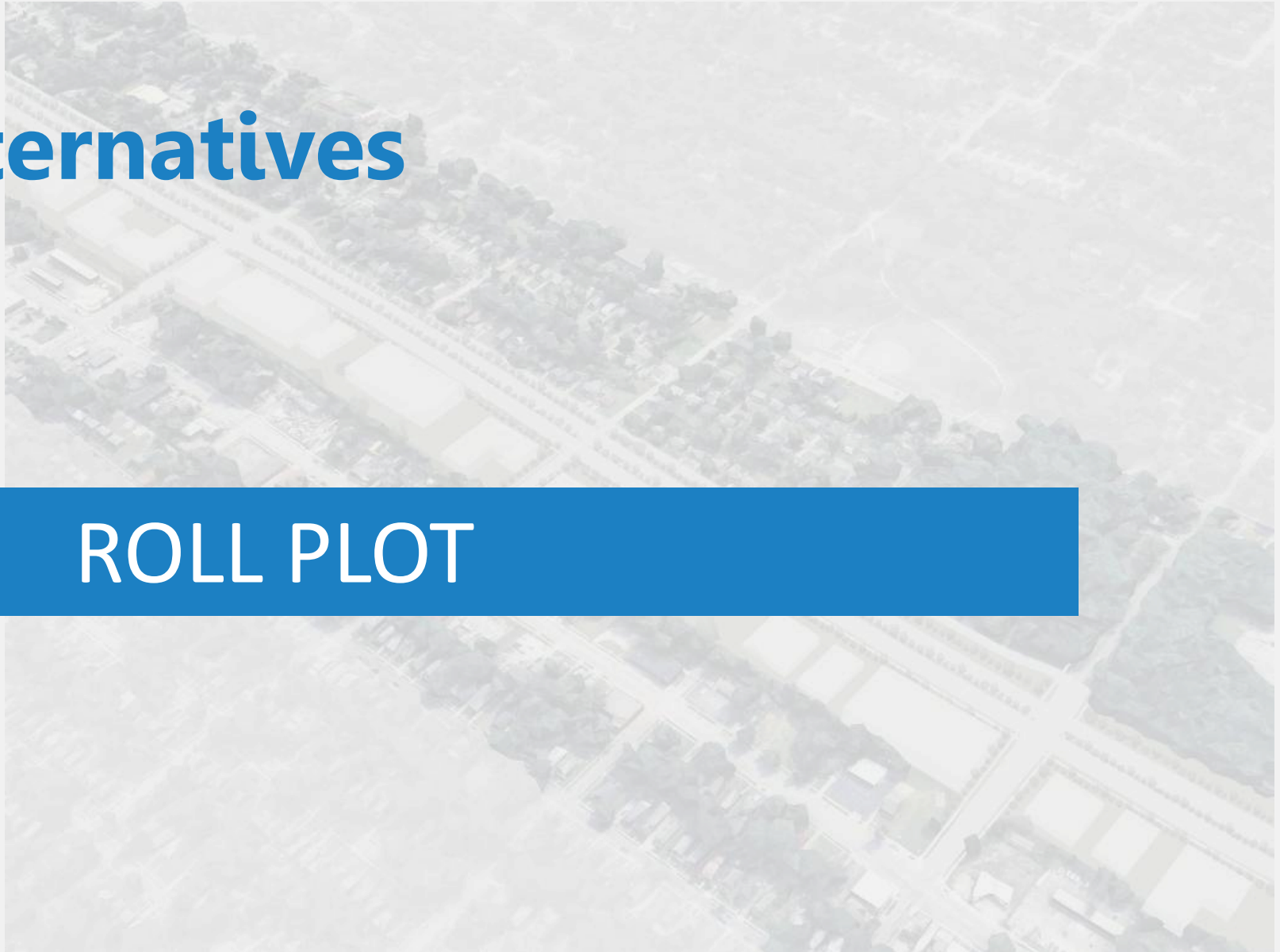
ROLL PLOT

LEGEND

US 71 Right of Way
US Highway 71



0 0.005 0.010 0.015 0.020 Miles



Boulevard Alternatives

Community Comments

- Opportunity for human-scale, walkable corridor with green space, beautification, and opportunities for economic and community revitalization
- Worry about congestion, maintenance, and whether the boulevard would truly improve safety or connectivity – concept may not be different enough from current conditions and shift traffic problems rather than solve them
- A public-transit-friendly option



LEGEND

US 71 Right of Way
US Highway 71



0 0.125 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 Miles

Boulevard Alternatives

Advantages

- Reduces traffic speeds and volumes and therefore may reduce crash severity.
- Creates a multimodal corridor supportive of pedestrians, bicycles, and transit.
- Improves multimodal east-west connectivity through additional at-grade local connections to the parkway multimodal corridor.
- Potential opportunities for economic development and infill development due to excess ROW.
- Moderate construction costs.

Disadvantages

- Long term maintenance needs for landscaping and multimodal mobility features.
- Additional signalized intersections increase congestion, delay and conflict points along the corridor, potentially increasing crash frequency.
- Likely increases congestion and crash rates on other regional highway routes due to traffic diversion from US-71 to other major routes.

Boulevard Alternatives

• Purpose & Need Considerations

- **Traffic Safety** – Significant concerns with ability to reduce overall traffic safety, including pedestrian safety.
- **East-West Connectivity** – Still requires direct interaction with U-71. Does provide more/better connections.
- **Corridor Congestion** – Minimal improvements in traffic congestion plus potential to divert traffic to other regional highways.

Legend - Purpose & Need Criteria

- ✗ Alternative does not meet the criteria
- Alternative partially meets the criteria or additional investigation required
- ✓ Alternative meets the criteria

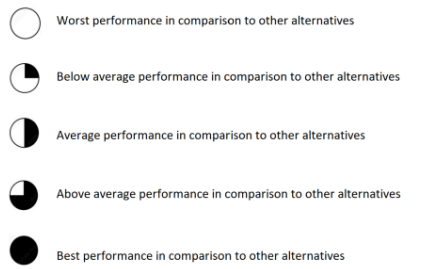
				Alternatives		
#	Type	Category	Metric	No Build	Multiway	Boulevard
1	Need	Improve Safety	Reduce total crash rates	✗	—	—
2			Reduce conflict points	✗	✗	✗
3			Reduce fatal and serious injury crash rates	✗	—	—
4		East-west multimodal access and connectivity	Provide additional pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular crossings across US-71	—	—	—
5			Provide access to public transit routes and MAX BRT stations	✗	✓	✓
6			Provide safe crossings at or near informal/uncontrolled pedestrian crossing locations on US-71	✗	✓	✓
7		Corridor congestion	Improve Level of Service (LOS)	✗	—	—

Boulevard Alternatives

Community Goals

- **Economic Opportunity** – Provides additional development opportunities.
- **Public Health** – Reduced total traffic volumes along with slower traffic should see public health improvements
- **Community Support** – Strong support from public.

Legend - Comparative Alternative Performance Criteria



				Alternatives		
#	Type	Category	Metric	No Build	Multiway	Boulevard
8	Community Goal	Reduce existing effects of US-71 on properties and residents	Provide opportunities for economic development and affordable housing			
9		Reduce existing effects of US-71 on properties and residents	Address public health issues - noise, air quality, opportunities for activity			
10		Implement feasible and cost effective solutions	Project can be funded, project can be phased	N/A		
11		Partnership with local community and community priorities	Local population has been engaged, has provided meaningful input on alternatives, and alternatives reflect community priorities			

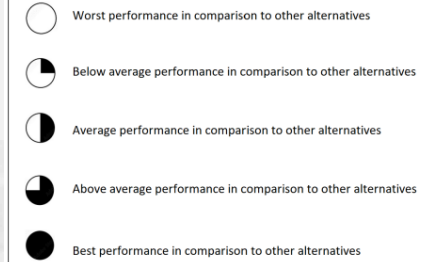


Boulevard Alternatives

Engineering Considerations

- **Systemwide Traffic** – Diverts approximately 30% to other facilities
- **Construction Costs** – Moderate
- **System Resiliency** – Additional delays for incident management, emergency services and general maintenance requirements.

Legend - Comparative Alternative Performance Criteria



						Alternatives	
#	Type	Category	Metric	No Build		Multiway	Boulevard
28	Engineering Criteria	Constructability and Design Complexity	Degree of roadway geometric complexity, grade changes, traffic pattern changes, or railroad impacts	100%		25%	25%
29		Constructability and Design Complexity	Phasing, implementation, maintenance of traffic feasibility	100%		25%	25%
30		Constructability and Design Complexity	Estimated bridge deck area	100%		100%	100%
31		Construction and ROW Costs	Construction Cost order of magnitude	100%		50%	50%
32		Construction and ROW Costs	Right-of-way Cost	100%		25%	100%
33		Subsurface/Utility Risk	Potential utility impacts and need for utility relocation (number of known utility impacts)	100%		25%	25%
34		Subsurface/Utility Risk	Potential geotechnical/subsurface impacts	100%		25%	25%
35		Systemwide Traffic Impacts	Percent increase in Vehicle Hours of Delay on DTA Study are major routes vs. baseline - less than 5 percent increase in VHD percentage changes vs baseline is preferable	N/A		50%	50%
37		Systemwide Traffic Impacts	Peak hour volumes on DTA study area major routes vs. baseline			50%	50%
38		System Resiliency and Maintenance	Maintenance considerations (snow removal, vegetation management, debris removal)	100%		0%	0%
39		System Resiliency and Maintenance	Incident management considerations	100%		50%	50%
40		System Resiliency and Maintenance	Emergency response considerations	100%		50%	50%

Boulevard Alternatives

Environmental Considerations

- The proposed footprint is relatively the same for all reasonable alternatives resulting in similar impacts.
- Overall, no significant environmental concerns

Legend - Comparative Alternative Performance Criteria

Worst performance in comparison to other alternatives

Below average performance in comparison to other alternatives

Average performance in comparison to other alternatives

Above average performance in comparison to other alternatives

Best performance in comparison to other alternatives

				Alternatives		
#	Type	Category	Metric	No Build	Multiway	Boulevard
12	Environmental Criteria	Community Impacts and Sensitive Receptors	Distance of alternatives from residential areas, schools, parks, churches and healthcare facilities			
13		Community Impacts and Sensitive Receptors	Potential changes in air quality and noise levels affecting sensitive populations			
14		Community Impacts and Sensitive Receptors	Avoid impacts to community resources			
15		Land Use, Displacements, Parks • Rec, and Historic Resources	Avoid residential and commercial structures displacements			
16		Land Use, Displacements, Parks • Rec, and Historic Resources	New right-of-way required for construction			
17		Land Use, Displacements, Parks • Rec, and Historic Resources	Avoid impacts to Section 4(f) or 6(f) properties			
18		Land Use, Displacements, Parks • Rec, and Historic Resources	Enhance recreational connectivity and trails			
19		Land Use, Displacements, Parks • Rec, and Historic Resources	Avoid historic resources impacts			
20		Socioeconomic	Economic impacts to downtown business area			
21		Socioeconomic	Freight and shipping impacts			
22	Natural Resources and Hydrology	Socioeconomic	Construction employment			
23		Natural Resources and Hydrology	Avoid wetland impacts			
24		Natural Resources and Hydrology	Avoid stream impacts			
25		Natural Resources and Hydrology	Avoid floodplain impacts			
26		Natural Resources and Hydrology	Minimize stormwater system impacts			
27		Natural Resources and Hydrology	Avoid impacts to threatened and Endangered Species, critical habitat, and forested areas			

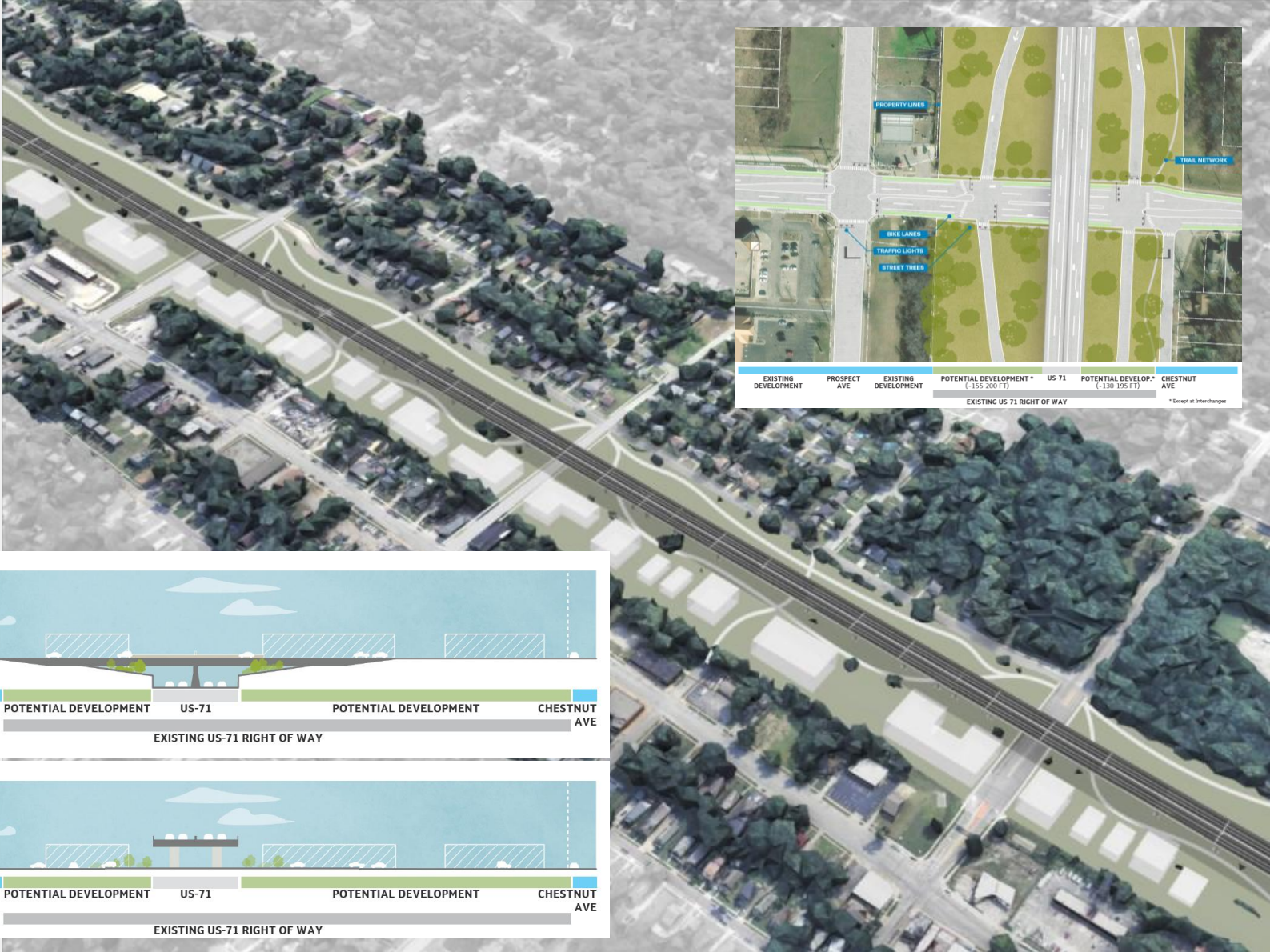
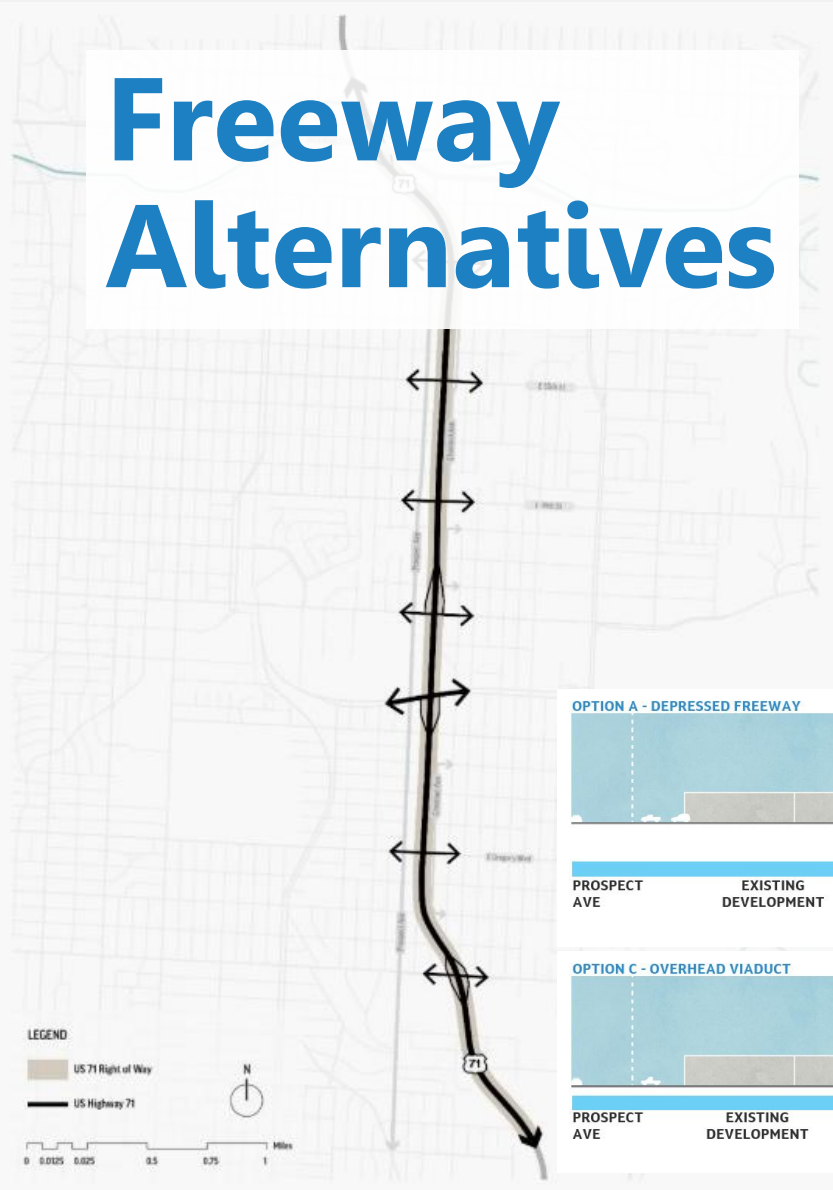
Boulevard Alternatives

- **Public Support** – Large pockets of support but some worry about congestion, maintenance, and whether the boulevard would truly improve safety or connectivity.
- **Regional Traffic Diversions** – Would result in a significant (~30%) shift in traffic from US-71 to other regional highways.
- **Traveler Safety/Congestion** – Additional signalized intersections would increase congestion, delay and conflict points along the corridor, potentially increasing crash frequency.

✗ Project Team Recommendation:
Eliminate from further consideration



Freeway Alternatives





Freeway Alternatives

ROLL PLOT

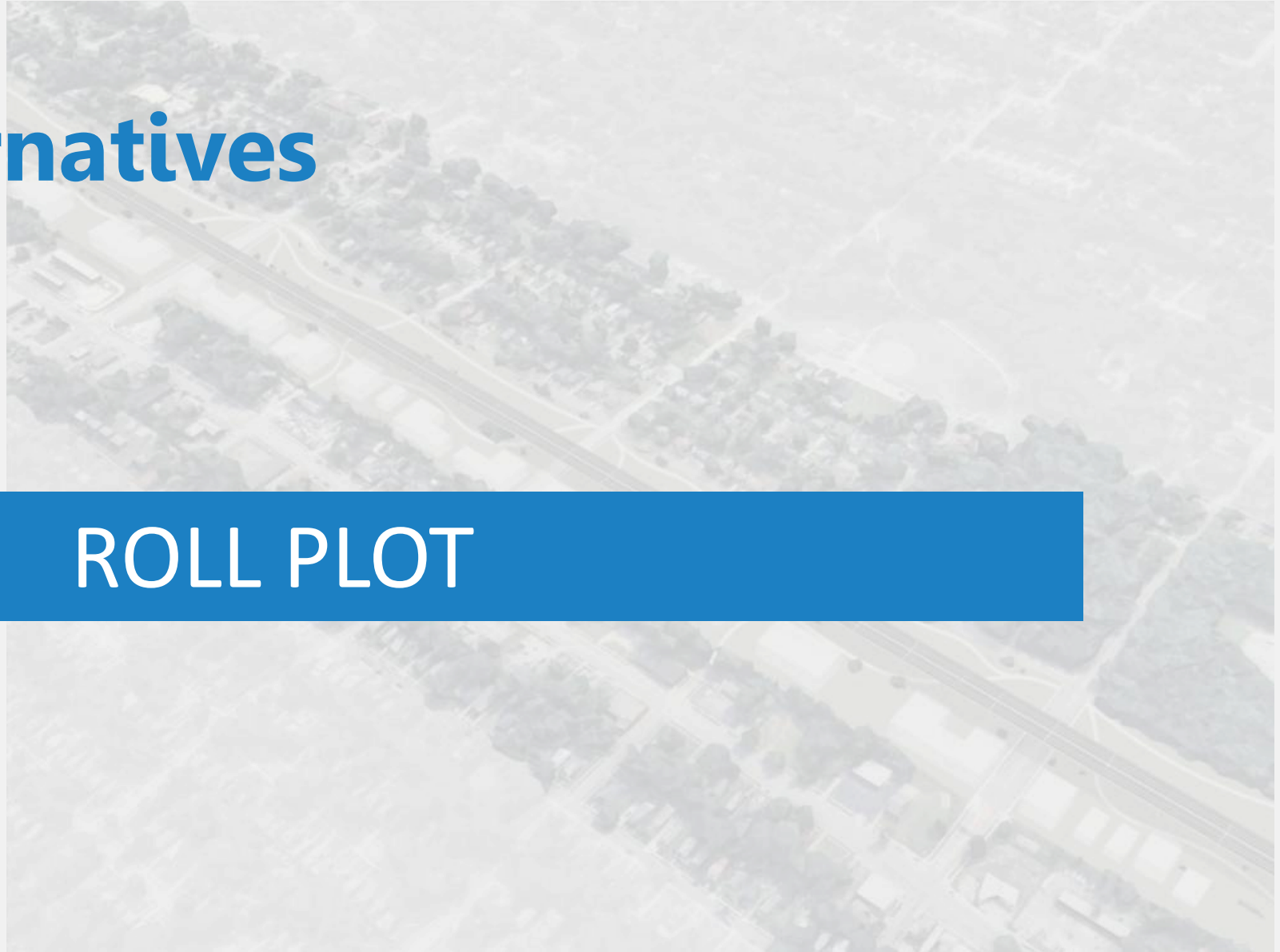
LEGEND

US 71 Right of Way

US Highway 71



0 0.0005 0.001 0.002 0.003 0.004 0.005 Miles



Freeway Alternatives

Community Comments

- Opportunity for improved traffic flow, reduced congestion, economic development, and regional connectivity
- Essential for a growing city and maintaining efficient north-south travel
- Concerns about environmental harm, noise, pollution, and further neighborhood division

- Primarily benefits suburban communities rather than local residents
- Design features that reconnect neighborhood, e.g., via a depressed freeway with overpasses, green infrastructure, and pedestrian bridges
- Transit integration
- Most straightforward option for addressing traffic but less transformative for community cohesion
- Potential to blend a freeway for US-71 with “parkway-esque” improvements for Prospect Avenue or a boulevard with transit integration and green amenities

Freeway Alternatives

Advantages

- Meets all elements of the Purpose & Need including improving safety, east-west connectivity, and congestion relief.
- Also provides opportunities for economic revitalization and the potential for improving public health along corridor.
- Minimizes impacts to travel networks, utilities, and ROW.

Disadvantages

- Long-term maintenance costs higher for structures.
- Would induce additional traffic currently using other regional highways.
- Highest cost for construction.

Freeway Alternatives

• Purpose & Need Considerations

- **Traffic Safety** – Expected improvement in both severity and frequency of crashes. Provides separation between cross streets and mainline US-71.
- **East-West Connectivity** – Provides additional connections along with physically separating those movements.
- **Corridor Congestion** – Significant improvements in regional traffic congestion.

Legend - Purpose & Need Criteria


Alternative does not meet the criteria


Alternative partially meets the criteria or additional investigation required


Alternative meets the criteria

				Alternatives		
#	Type	Category	Metric	No Build	Highway-Depressed	Highway - Viaduct
1	Need	Improve Safety	Reduce total crash rates	✗	✓	✓
2			Reduce conflict points	✗	✓	✓
3			Reduce fatal and serious injury crash rates	✗	✓	✓
4		East-west multimodal access and connectivity	Provide additional pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular crossings across US-71	▬	✓	✓
5			Provide access to public transit routes and MAX BRT stations	✗	✓	✓
6			Provide safe crossings at or near informal/uncontrolled pedestrian crossing locations on US-71	✗	✓	✓
7		Corridor congestion	Improve Level of Service (LOS)	✗	✓	✓

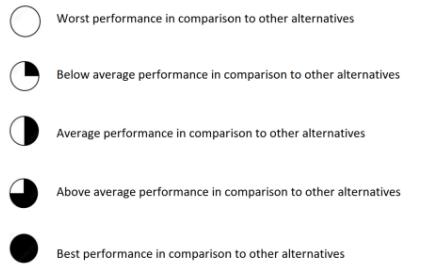


Freeway Alternatives

Community Goals

- **Economic Opportunity** – Provides additional development opportunities.
- **Public Health** – Shifting lanes to the middle and the depressed section provides public health improvements. Viaduct option could increase both noise and air quality concerns.
- **Community Support** – Strong support from public.

Legend - Comparative Alternative Performance Criteria



				Alternatives		
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11		Partnership with local community and community priorities	Local population has been engaged, has provided meaningful input on alternatives, and alternatives reflect community priorities			



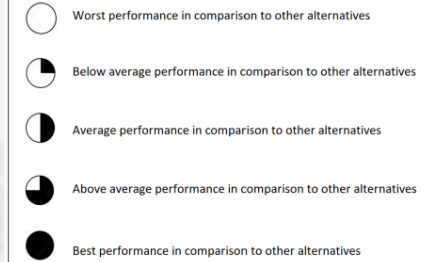


Freeway Alternatives

- **Engineering Considerations**

- **Systemwide Traffic** – Attracts additional traffic to US-71. Overall improvements in reducing regional traffic congestion.
- **Construction Costs** – High
- **System Resiliency** – Reduced delays for incident management, emergency services and general maintenance requirements.

Legend - Comparative Alternative Performance Criteria



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Freeway Alternatives

Environmental Considerations

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- Overall, no significant environmental concerns

Legend - Comparative Alternative Performance Criteria

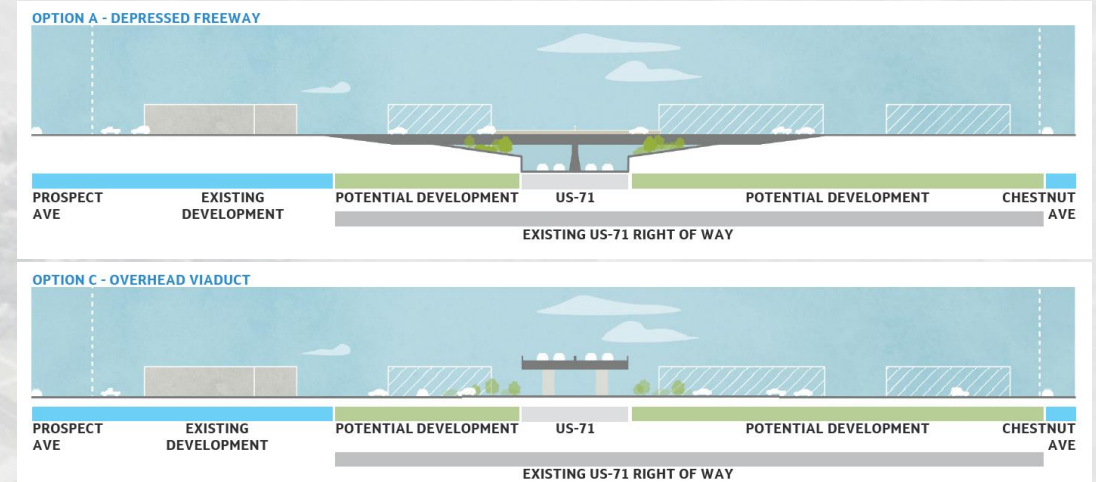
-  Worst performance in comparison to other alternatives
-  Below average performance in comparison to other alternatives
-  Average performance in comparison to other alternatives
-  Above average performance in comparison to other alternatives
-  Best performance in comparison to other alternatives

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18		Land Use, Displacements, Parks • Rec, and Historic Resources	Enhance recreational connectivity and trails			
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22		Socioeconomic	Construction employment			
23		Natural Resources and Hydrology	Avoid wetland impacts			
24		Natural Resources and Hydrology	Avoid stream impacts			
25		Natural Resources and Hydrology	Avoid floodplain impacts			
26		Natural Resources and Hydrology	Minimize stormwater system impacts			
27		Natural Resources and Hydrology	Avoid impacts to threatened and Endangered Species, critical habitat, and forested areas			

Freeway Alternatives

Reconfiguration with Community Access and Frequent Grade-Separated Connections

- **Public Support** – Strong public support if you minimize the footprint, provide better east-west connections and open up opportunities for development in the vacated spaces.
- **Traveler Safety** – Would reduce the total number of traffic incidents, including pedestrian incidents, by physically separating the east-west city streets from the US-71 traffic.
- **East-West Connectivity** – Provides for additional (~every two blocks) connectivity between residences on east to businesses along Prospect, including both vehicular and pedestrian access.
- **Local Traffic Congestion** – Best overall improvement in both local and regional traffic congestion.



Project Team Recommendation:

- Recommend to be carried forward into future studies and to be part of the Consent Decree request.
- Decide whether to elevate or depress during later NEPA phase.

Phasing for Interim Improvements

Responsible Stakeholder	Suggested Mitigation Strategy
Right in - Right out	
KCMO (Parks & Rec)	Brush clearing
MoDOT/KCMO	Remove access to US-71
Signalized Intersections	
MoDOT	No right turns allowed on red
MoDOT/KCMO	Remove fixed objects/move back from clear zone
MoDOT	Continental crosswalk markings at pedestrian crossings
MoDOT	Pedestrian Signal - LPI, extend timing, exclusive LT protocol
MoDOT	Improved pavement maintenance (potholes)
MARC	Signal timing optimization
KCMO (Parks & Rec)	Clear vegetation - sight lines
MoDOT	Pedestrian refuge island/shorter crossings
MoDOT/KCMO	Education, safety corridor, no cell phone area
MoDOT	Pedestrian fence to prevent illegal crossings

*Recommended
Short-Term
Improvements
from Road Safety
Audit
(This year or next)*



Phasing for Interim Improvements

Responsible Stakeholder	Suggested Mitigation Strategy
Right in - Right out	
MoDOT	Review Existing or Add Deceleration/ Acceleration lanes
MoDOT	Increase shoulder width
KCMO	Reduce speeds, add speed cameras and/or "Your Speed" signs
Signalized Intersections	
MoDOT	J-turns from US-71
MoDOT	Extend deceleration lanes

*Recommended
Mid-Term
Improvements
from Road Safety
Audit
(Next 2-3 years)*

Phasing for Interim Improvements

Responsible Stakeholder	Suggested Mitigation Strategy
Right in - Right out	
MoDOT	Build overpasses for these locations over US-71
Signalized Intersections	
MoDOT/KCMO	Grade separation -build to grade separated, limited access highway - PEL Alternative
MoDOT/KCMO	Make it into a parkway
MoDOT/KCMO	Add pedestrian bridges at all (3 signalized and 3 unsignalized)
MoDOT/KCMO	Hybrid highway / frontage / bus lanes
MoDOT	Narrower lanes
MoDOT	HOV lanes (1 lane)
MoDOT	High-capacity transit - reduce volumes

*Recommended Long-Term
Improvements from Road
Safety Audit
(Next 3-?? years)*

Phasing for Interim Improvements

Reconfiguration with Community Access and Frequent Grade-Separated Connections

Project Team Phasing Recommendation:

- **Step 1:** Work with MoDOT to determine which short-term improvements (brush clearing, pedestrian improvements, etc.) will be completed and which party will be responsible.
- **Step 2:** Identify mid-term improvements that can occur after Consent Decree, such as:
 - Removal of right-in, right-out access points
 - Improve acceleration/deceleration lanes, turn lanes and/or enhanced shoulders.
- **Step 3:** Phase long-term improvements
 - **Phase 1 – 75th St. to Meyer Boulevard:** Design and construction south of Meyer to shift lanes to the middle and provide grade separation at Gregory Boulevard.
 - **Phase 2 – 63rd to MLK, Jr. Blvd:** Design and construction north of 63rd Street including new interchange at 55th Street.

After the Consent Decree has been lifted, design could start relatively quickly on the Gregory Blvd (75th to Meyer) section.



Discussion

- How likely are you to SUPPORT the initial recommendations? Why?
- What would IMPROVE the recommendations?
- What OTHER comments or questions would you like to share?

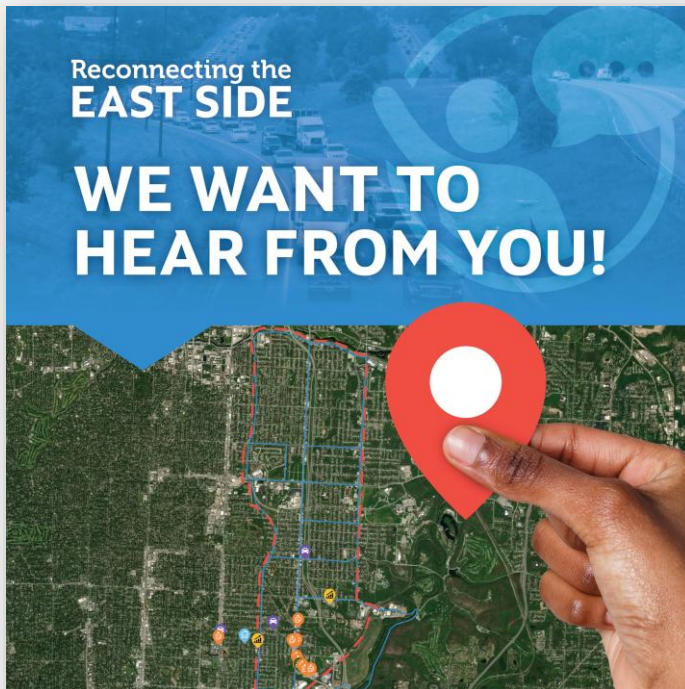


Next Steps

- Continued community engagement
- Finalize PEL study recommendations
- Start Federal Consent Decree Process



Next Steps



Community Summit #4 – Refined Alternatives (Apr. 7, 2026)



Community + Technical Advisory Group Meetings (May 2026)



Listening Sessions with Neighborhoods and Others (ongoing)



Draft PEL Study Document (June/July)



Finalize PEL Study (Summer)



Phase 2 – Consent Decree Process (Now through Fall 2026)



Phase 3 – Environmental (NEPA) and Preliminary Design (2027-2028)



Phase 2 Next Steps

Implementing a recommended alternative for US-71 requires modifying or dissolving the **1985 Federal Consent Decree**. We cannot do it without you.

Share Your Voice. Let's Build a Better US-71!

PHASE 2

Addressing Consent Decree

Oct '25 - Dec '26

UPDATES

» Federal Consent Decree Process



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Reconnecting the
EAST SIDE
Prioritizing Safety and Connection

Refine the Vision
of **US-71**

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We are envisioning a safer, more equitable, accessible, and connected future, together.

Reconnecting the East Side is not just a physical reconnect, but economic, social, residential, civic, and spiritual reconnection – not from one side of the highway to the other, but from the past to the future.

Focused on providing safe transportation improvements for the community, the Reconnecting the East Side project also aims to address some of the long-standing issues created when US-71 Highway construction divided neighborhoods, from Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard on the north to 85th Street on the south and from Paseo Boulevard on the west and Swope Parkway on the east.

Led by Kansas City, in partnership with the Missouri Department of Transportation (MoDOT) and the Mid-America Regional Council (MARC), this project is about more than roads – it is about physically restoring the heart of the East Side, by listening to its residents, identifying early action projects, and framing a long-term vision that can be implemented over the coming years.

Save the Date

Family Friendly
COMMUNITY SUMMIT #3!

Refine the Vision

Review initial alternatives and refine the visions for Reconnecting the East Side.

Refine the Vision Here!

Reconnecting the East Side Engagement Map

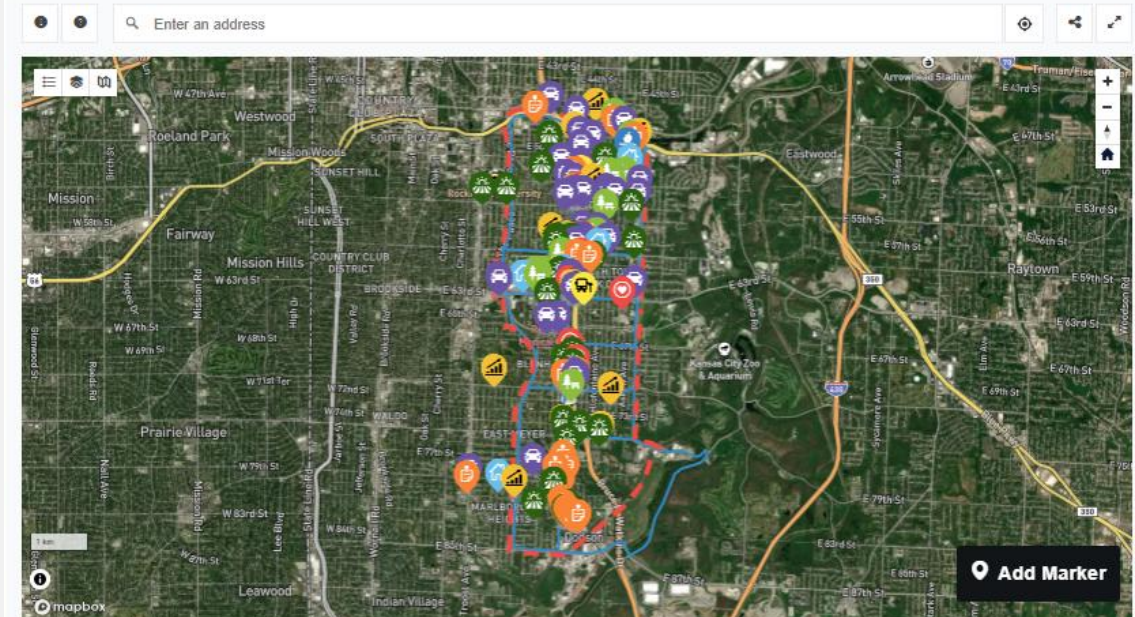
This Engagement Map allows East Side audiences to share their issues and feedback about land use, green space, housing, economic development, public health, education, traffic safety, transit, and other issues. This information will help to inform the ongoing work of the Reconnecting the East Side project.

Zoom in and navigate to a spot on the map you would like to indicate where you would like to share your issue or feedback. Click 'Add Marker' to drop your marker in the correct category to indicate where you would like to share your issue or idea. You can also upload photos.

Click the Information (i) icon just below to learn more about the marker categories.

Click the Question Mark (?) icon just below to learn more about how to interact with this Engagement Map.

148 contributions so far



THANK YOU FOR COMING TODAY!



Reconnecting the **EAST SIDE**

Missouri Department of Transportation anticipates incorporating recommendations made as part of the PEL study into future NEPA studies, per Title 23 of the US Code, Part 168.

No-Build Alternative

(Community Summit #2)

Focus and Programming

- Address maintenance and safety issues as a series of improvements funded via the City and/or MoDOT's capital improvement budgets

Improvements

- Brush cleanup
- Trash pick up
- Pothole fixes
- Sign improvements
- Roadway striping
- Streetlighting
- Signal timing
- Guardrails





Build Alternative

(Community Summit #2)

- If you could REIMAGINE US-71, what would you do with it?
- What SPECIFIC improvements or changes would you make? Where?
 - *Examples might involve improvements for motorists, pedestrians, bicyclists, mobility device users, transit riders, safety, land use, green space, housing, economic development, public health, education, and/or other issues.*
- HOW do you envision the work being done? WHO is involved with it?





Build Alternatives Explored at Meetings and Online

(June – August 2025)

- ReconnectEastSide.com
- Community Summit 2
- Neighborhood listening sessions, e.g., at 3rd and 5th District Meetings
- Creative Day Arts
- Zoo Mobile Animal Safari – Southeast Branch of the Kansas City Public Library
- City Hall (rotunda)
- Juneteenth Heritage Festival
- Blue Hills Park Resource Fair
- Water Services Department (lobby)
- Club KC Night Swim
- Citadel Neighborhood Community Resource and Connectivity Ice Cream Social
- Club KC Mayor Night Hoops
- Operation Backpack (Swope Park)
- Concerned Clergy
- KC 360
- Tri-Blenheim Health and Wellness Fair
- Washington Wheatley Neighborhood Community Resource Fair
- 816 Day and All That Jazz
- Key Coalition Neighborhood Family Fun Day

Initial Alternatives

- Key Features
- Considerations
- East-West Connectivity
- Potential Development
- Closer Look with Options
- Neighborhood Connectivity
- Potential Interim Solutions
- Precedents

Reconnecting the EAST SIDE

KEY FEATURES

- Freeway**
 - Traffic Safety: Improving signal and separating through and local traffic flows from each other.
 - Traffic Congestion: Reducing congestion along the corridor.
 - Traffic Signal: Improving signal timing and coordination.
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- Additional east-west connections**
 - Improving east-west connections across the corridor.
 - Improving east-west connections across the corridor.
 - Improving east-west connections across the corridor.
- By improving east-west connections**
 - Improving east-west connections across the corridor.
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 - Improving east-west connections across the corridor.

ENVIRONMENT

- **Land Use:** Potential for increased development and higher density.
- **Neighborhood:** Potential for increased development and higher density.
- **Neighborhood:** Potential for increased development and higher density.

ENGINEERING

- **Land Use:** Potential for increased development and higher density.
- **Neighborhood:** Potential for increased development and higher density.
- **Neighborhood:** Potential for increased development and higher density.

Freeway Alternatives: Turning US-71 into a Traditional Freeway

KEY FEATURES

- Freeway**
 - Traffic Safety: Improving signal and separating through and local traffic flows from each other.
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ENGINEERING

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Parkway/Boulevard Alternatives: Transforming US-71 into a Parkway or Boulevard

KEY FEATURES

- Parkway/Boulevard**
 - Traffic Safety: Improving signal and separating through and local traffic flows from each other.
 - Traffic Congestion: Reducing congestion along the corridor.
 - Traffic Signal: Improving signal timing and coordination.
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ENGINEERING

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- **Neighborhood:** Potential for increased development and higher density.

Return-to-Grid Alternatives: Removing US-71 and Reconstructing the Original Street

KEY FEATURES

- Return to Grid**
 - Traffic Safety: Improving signal and separating through and local traffic flows from each other.
 - Traffic Congestion: Reducing congestion along the corridor.
 - Traffic Signal: Improving signal timing and coordination.
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ENVIRONMENT

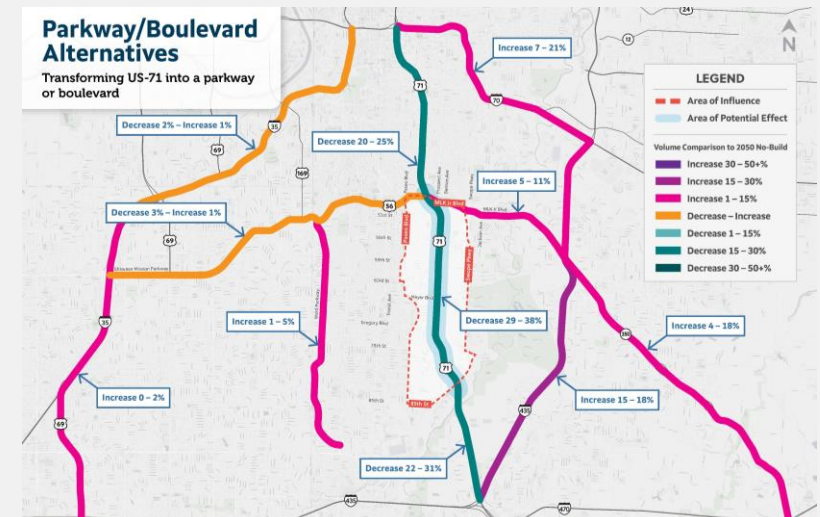
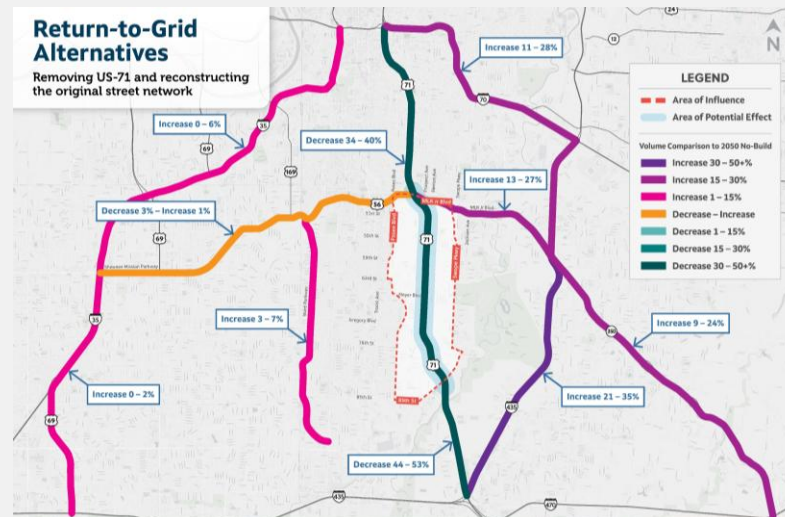
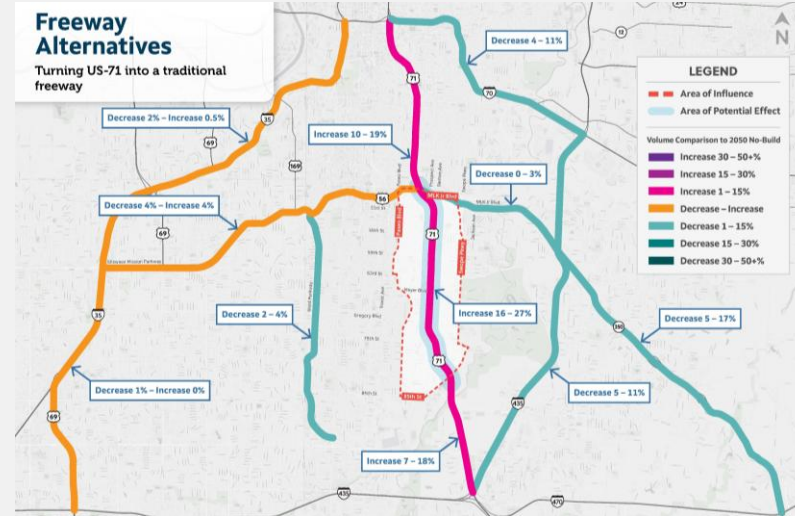
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ENGINEERING

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Regional Traffic Diversions

How will traffic patterns change with each alternative?



Potential Interim Improvements

- Short-term safety improvements include improved signal timings for pedestrians, brush clearing to improve visibility, advanced warning signing, improved overhead lighting, or high contrast pavement markings.
- Potential removal of existing right-in, right-out intersections of 53rd, 57th, 60th and 69th.
- Pedestrian overpasses at high-volume pedestrian crossings.
- Improvements at high crash locations (Meyer to 75th)

REMOVAL OF RIGHT-IN / RIGHT-OUT



PEDESTRIAN OVERPASS EXAMPLE



BLVD/PKWY BETWEEN 75TH + MEYER

