



Reconnecting the
EAST SIDE

Reconnecting the East Side Community Advisory Group Meeting #5

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

Monday, May 18, 2026, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 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**



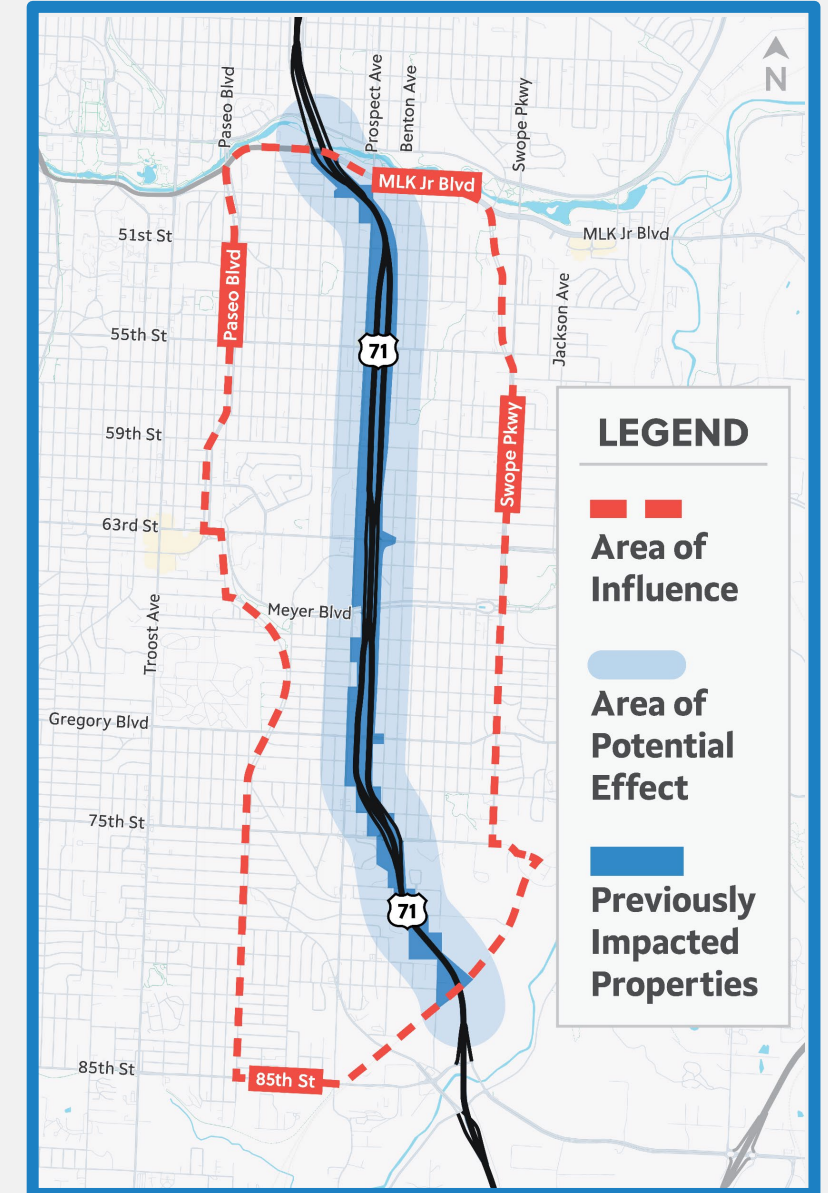
Community Advisory Group Members

- 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

- Process overview
- Alternatives evaluation
- An integrated approach
- Interim improvements
- Next steps





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 Engagement

127

Feedback
Activities

3,248

Individual
Comments

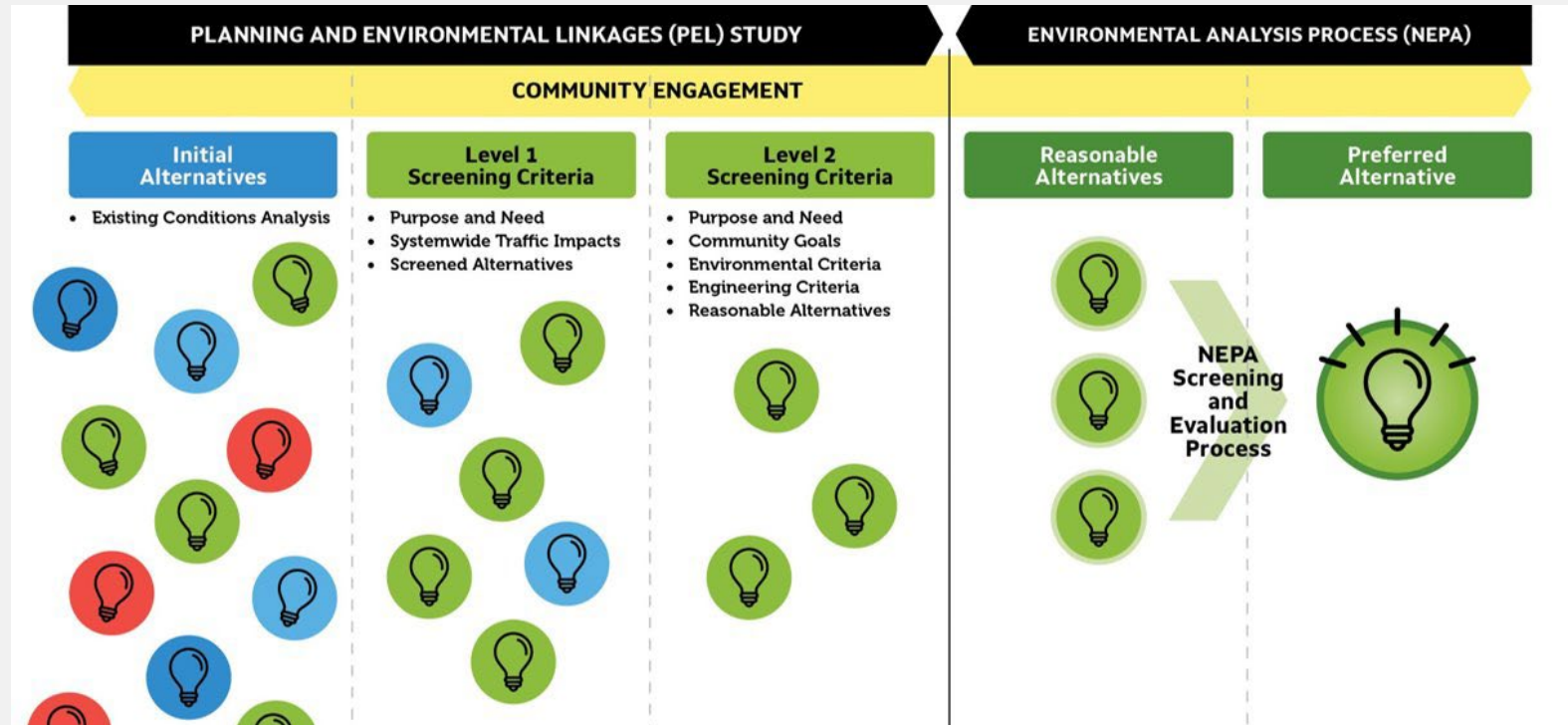
74,099

Words of
Feedback



Alternatives Development and Evaluation

Focus on Community-Driven Alternatives at Each Step



Return-to-Grid Alternative

- **Community Support** – Some 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/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.
- ✗ Alternative considered unreasonable and should be considered for elimination.

Boulevard Alternatives

Reconfiguration with more signalized intersections

- **Community Support** – Strong community 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.
- **Conceptual Construction Cost*** - \$70M - \$90M

**Initial costs are very high-level estimates and subject to change as the alternatives are further refined.*



Alternative potentially unreasonable and may be considered for elimination.

Freeway Alternatives

Reconfiguration with Community Access and Frequent Grade-Separated Connections

- **Community Support** – Strong community support if you minimize the footprint, provide better east-west connections and open opportunities for development in the vacated spaces.
- **Traveler Safety** – Would reduce the total number of crashes, including crashes involving pedestrians, 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.

- **Conceptual Construction Cost*** - Depressed Freeway: \$130-\$150M | Viaduct Freeway: \$270-\$300M

**Initial costs are very high-level estimates and subject to change as the alternatives are further refined.*



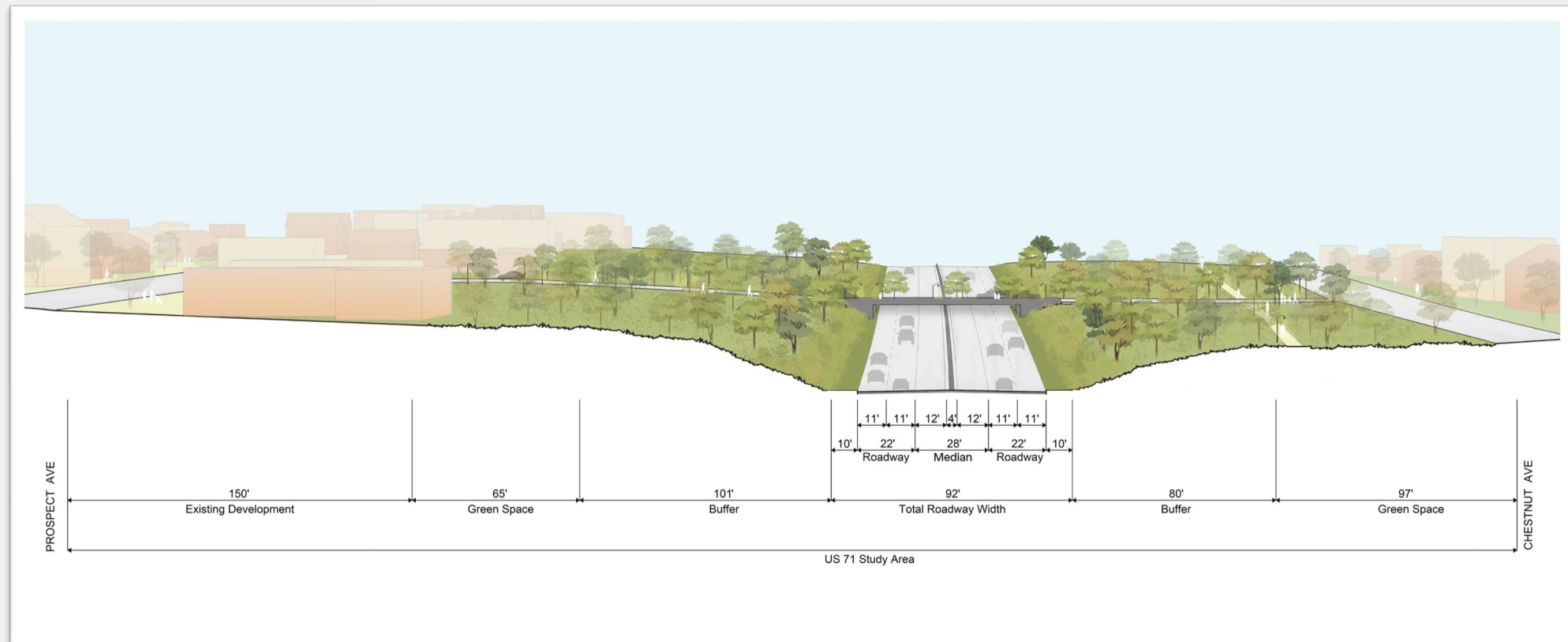
*"A freeway is what we
didn't want the last time..."*

An Integrated Approach

In consideration of all factors, the project team explored an integrated approach: the **Parkway Alternative**.

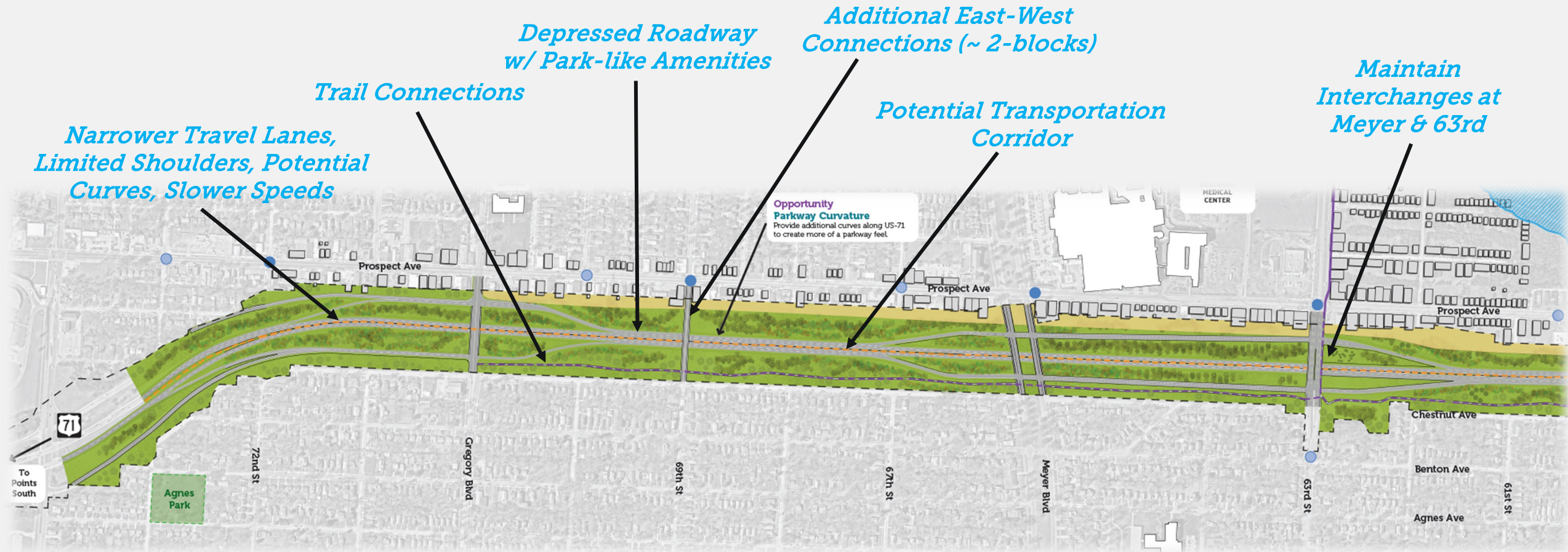
The Parkway Alternative combines many community interests and benefits with a specific focus on prioritizing safety improvements and relieving congestion.

Parkway Alternative



Depressed roadway with a Parkway feel

Parkway Alternative



Parkway Alternative

*Improved Connectivity
across US-71*



Gregory

59th

55th

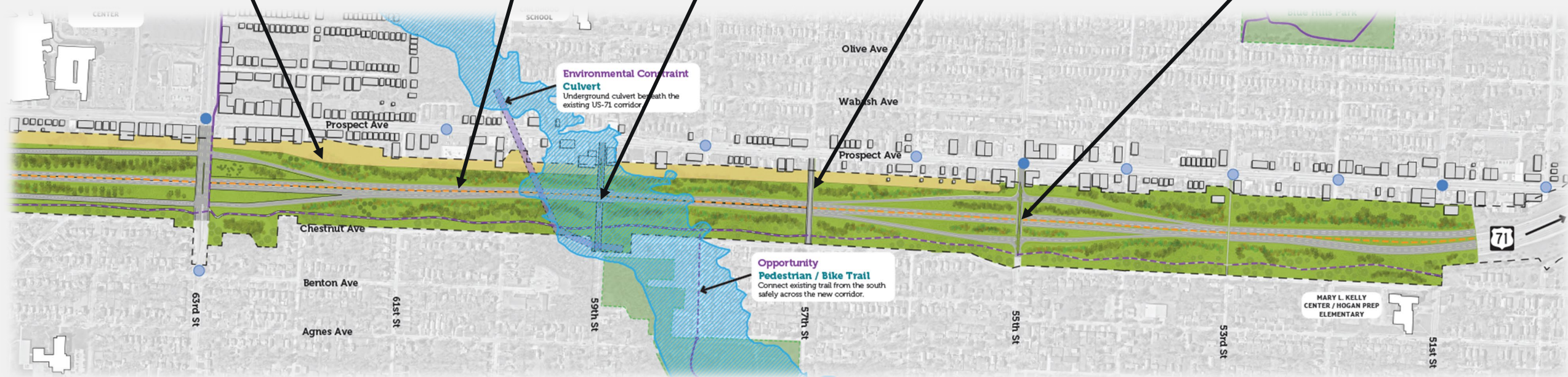
*Potential New Parkland
and/or Development*

*Aesthetic Improvements
between Travel Lanes*

*Remove Signals at
Gregory, 59th and 55th*

*Aesthetic Improvements
for Crossover Bridges*

*New Interchanges at Gregory
& 55th Cannot include
interchange at 59th*



Parkway Alternative

Some examples of what it could feel like ...

Merritt Parkway, CT

Maintained by CTDOT



Parkway Alternative

Some examples of what it could feel like ...

Paseo Padre Parkway, Fremont CA



Parkway Alternative

Some examples of what it could feel like ...

At Gregory Boulevard looking northwest...

- Parkway depressed with vegetated side slopes.
- Cross streets are grade-separated from US-71
- Integration of landscaping, vegetation, trees, etc.
- Reduced interactions with higher speed US-71 traffic.



Parkway Alternative

Some examples of what it could feel like ...

New Gregory Boulevard looking west...

US-71 Parkway running under Gregory Boulevard

- Parkway depressed and out of sight.
- Wider US-71 bridge to create a Boulevard-type feel.
- Easier and safer access for bikes and pedestrians across US-71.
- Reduced interactions with higher speed US-71 traffic.



Parkway Alternative

Some examples of what it could feel like ...

New 55th Street looking west...

US-71 Parkway running under 55th

- Integration of landscaping, vegetation, trees, etc.
- Local art opportunities
- Improved trail connections
- Potential developable land on either side





CLICK TO VIEW VIDEO
FLY-THROUGHS



Parkway Alternative

Reconfiguration with a Parkway feel, improved Community Access and Frequent Grade-Separated Connections

- **Community Support** – Combines the benefits of a freeway with the benefits of a boulevard with the intent to provide a win-win for the community.
- **Traveler Safety** – Would reduce the total number of crashes, including crashes involving pedestrians, by physically separating the east-west city streets from the US-71 traffic.
- **East-West Connectivity** – Provides for additional (~every two blocks) high-quality crossings between residences on the east to businesses along Prospect, including both vehicular and pedestrian access.
- **Local Traffic Congestion** – Best overall improvement in both local and regional traffic congestion.
- **Conceptual Construction Cost** - \$110M – \$120M



Alternative considered reasonable and may be carried forward for further evaluation.

**Initial costs are very high-level estimates and subject to change as the alternatives are further refined.*



Evaluation Results

Project Needs and Community Goals

Type		Category	No Build	Boulevard Alternatives	Freeway Alternatives	Parkway Alternatives
Needs		Improve Road & Pedestrian Safety				
		East-West Multimodal Access & Connectivity				
		Corridor Congestion				
Community Goals		Public Health				
		Economic Revitalization				
		Community Support				Pending Input

The Parkway Alternative scores similar to the Freeway Alternatives for safety and congestion.



Does Not Meet Criteria



Slightly Meets Criteria



Partially Meets Criteria



Mostly Meets Criteria



Meets Criteria

Evaluation Results

Engineering and Environmental Considerations

Evaluation Criteria		How Well Alternatives Meet the Criteria			
Type	Category	No Build	Boulevard Alternatives	Freeway Alternatives	Parkway Alternatives
Environmental	Impacts to Sensitive Receptors				
	Noise and Air Quality				
	Land Use, Displacements, and Historic Resources				
	Enhance Recreational Connectivity & Trails				
	Regional Economic Effects				
	Natural Resources and Hydrology				
Engineering	Constructability and Design Complexity				
	Construction and ROW Costs				
	Subsurface/Utility Risk				
	Systemwide Traffic Impacts				
	System Resiliency and Maintenance				



Does Not Meet Criteria



Slightly Meets Criteria



Partially Meets Criteria



Mostly Meets Criteria



Meets Criteria

Phasing for Interim Improvements

*Reconfiguration with a Parkway feel, improved Community Access
and Frequent Grade-Separated Connections*

Project Team Phasing:

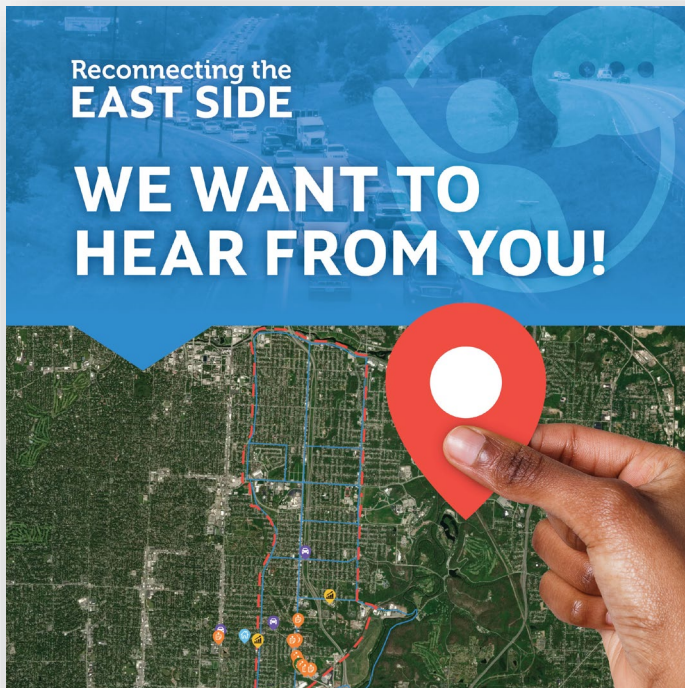
- **Step 1:** Work with MoDOT to determine which short-term improvements (brush clearing, pedestrian improvements, etc.) will be completed and which party will be responsible.
- **Step 2:** Phase additional improvements, ensuring they are consistent with those that can occur long-term and after the Federal Consent Decree process, such as:
 - Design and construction south of Meyer to shift lanes to the middle and provide grade separation at Gregory Boulevard.
 - Remove right-in, right-out access points. Improve acceleration/deceleration lanes, turn lanes and/or enhanced shoulders.
 - Design and construction north of Meyer to shift lanes to the middle and provide grade separation at crossings.

After the Federal Consent Decree has been modified or dissolved, design could start quickly on the Gregory Blvd. (75th to Meyer) section.





Schedule



Community + Technical Advisory Group Meetings (May 2026)



Listening Sessions with Neighborhoods and Others (April-June 2026)



Draft PEL Study Document (June/July 2026)



Finalize PEL Study (Summer 2026)



Phase 2 – Federal Consent Decree Process (Through 2026)



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

Let's Build a Better US-71

Share Your Voice!

- Do you support the **Parkway Alternative?**
 - It would give the route a parkway feel, remove traffic signals, provide narrower lanes and on-and-off ramps for vehicles, promote slower travel speeds, and offer overpasses that serve motorists and pedestrians.
- Comment at:
ReconnectEastSide.com



www.ReconnectEastSide.com

[Home](#) / [Community Summit #4](#)

LET'S BUILD A BETTER US-71

Reconnecting the East Side involves not only restoring key connections but also reviving economic, community, residential, civic, and spiritual connections. We are now reviewing initial alternatives and evaluation criteria.

Let's Build a Better US-71! Share Your Voice: Join us to discuss the draft recommendations for US-71 at Community Summit #4 on April 7, 2026.

Anyone who requires language translation, special assistance or accommodation to attend the meeting should contact the Reconnecting the East Side project team by emailing Contact@ReconnectEastSide.com or calling 816-710-6385.

Save the Date

 Tuesday, April 07, 2026 5:30 pm
Join Us!
St. James United Methodist Church
5540 Wayne Avenue
Kansas City, MO 64110

Presentation and Meeting Materials

Community Summit #4 Engagement

Let's Build a Better US-71 – Share your feedback!

Coming Soon!

Make your voice heard!

Your input will help guide planning, to reflect the needs of impacted neighborhoods and corridor users. Add your comments to our Engagement Map.

Engagement Map

Upcoming Events

Reconnecting the East Side Engagement Map

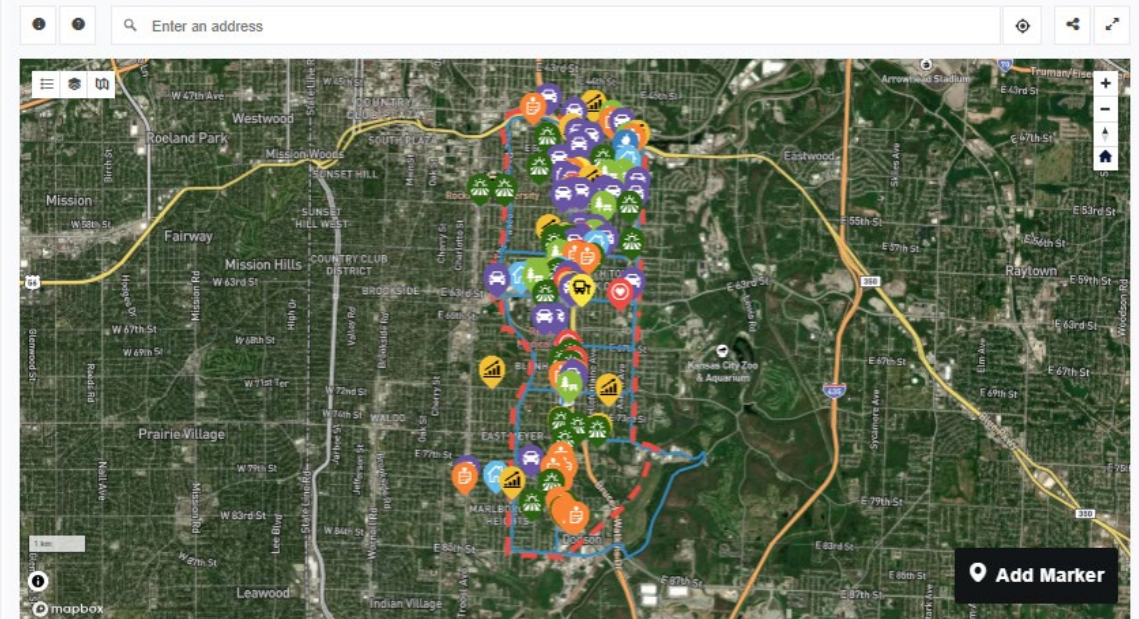
This Engagement Map allows East Side audiences to share their issues and feedback about land use, green space, housing, economic development, public health, education, traffic safety, transit, and other issues. This information will help to inform the ongoing work of the Reconnecting the East Side project.

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.