



State Route 279 Corridor Study Community Engagement Report

Fayette County Public Works 2017 SPLOST No. 17 TAT



Mission Statement:

The State Route 279 corridor study recognizes the regional and local importance of the corridor. The primary goal of the study is to address, in cooperation with our state, regional and local stakeholders, issues and concerns related to safety, connectivity and capacity; and formulate multi-modal mobility concepts, proposals, recommendations and projects. Additionally, the study will develop proposals and recommendations to protect the human and natural environment as Fayette County and its cities continue to grow. The projects will formulate a complementary infrastructure improvement plan that will improve the corridor aesthetics and enhance the quality of life of the adjoining neighborhoods.

Chapter 3: Community Engagement Report

1.1 Introduction - Page 4

This section of the report introduces the community engagement report and discusses the structure of the document.

1.2 Stakeholder Committee - Page 4

The details of the stakeholder committee meetings are defined in this section.

1.3 Public Information Open House - Page 6

This segment discusses the proceedings and feedback recieved during the PIOH.

1.4 Target Group Outreach - Page 8

This segment discusses the outreach efforts for targeted population groups.

1.5 Outreach and Tools - Page 9

Media and advertising outreach efforts are highlighted in this section.

1.6 Transportation Committee - Page 11

This section presents the highlights from the Transportation Committee meetings.

1.7 Next Steps - Page 11

This section identifies the next steps and action items for the planning process.

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1.1 Introduction

The core of any transportation study are the citizens who use the corridor. Residents and stakeholders form an important voice for the existing and anticipated future challenges with the transportation system.

Citizens were provided multiple platforms and avenues to engage in the development of the study, including traditional public meetings, stakeholder meetings, online surveys and an interactive project website. These efforts formed the basis of the qualitative analysis, which used a combination of tools to capture citizen views.

“Successful public participation is a continuous process, consisting of a series of activities and actions to both inform the public and stakeholders and to obtain input from them which influence decisions that affect their lives.”
- Federal Highway Administration

Graphic 1 - Three Pillars of Community Engagement



1.2 Stakeholder Committee

The Stakeholder Committee is a critical element in the corridor studies process, ensuring that the plan and process encompasses the full range of community values and desires. The group was selected from six categories represented in Graphic 2.

Graphic 2 - Stakeholder Committee Group



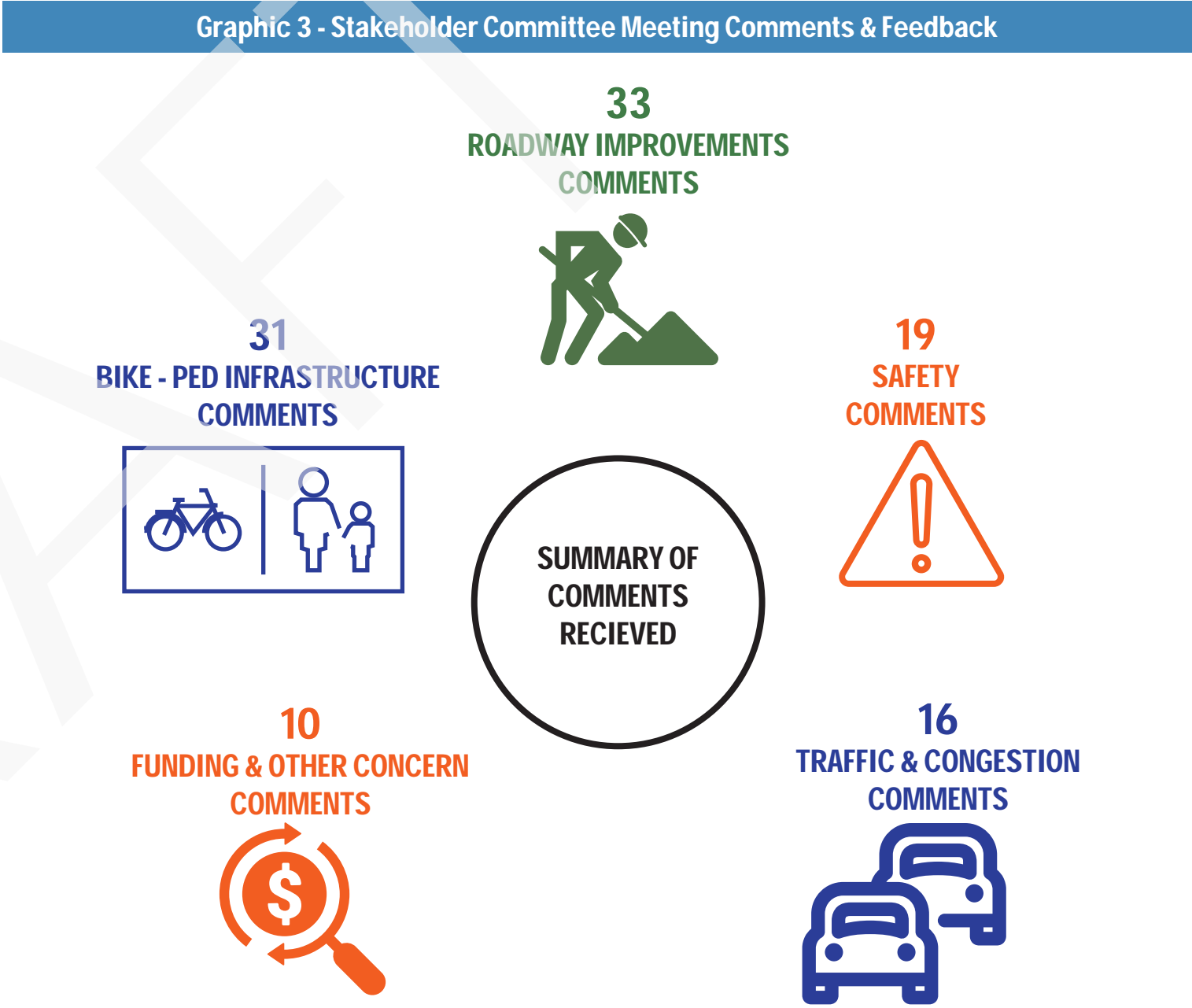
Two stakeholder committee meetings were organized. The first, at the onset of the project to help identify high level challenges and concerns for the corridor. The second, after the first Public Information Open House, detailed out an in-depth SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) Analysis of the corridor and discuss potential projects and prioritization.

• **Meeting 1 -**

The first meeting was held on February 4, 2019 at the Kenwood First Baptist Church. Of the 19 members invited to participate, 12 attended. Represented in attendance were Fayette County, Georgia Department of Transportation, Non – Profits, Media, Institutions, Homeowners’ Associations and Faith Groups were represented. Image 1 shows photographs from the meeting.



Prior to the meeting, stakeholders had the opportunity to identify specific transportation challenges within the corridor at the mapping station. Stakeholders were asked for input via an interactive Word Cloud and Kahoot questionnaire. Graphic 3 represents results from the activities and the overall meeting. Detailed comments and Word Cloud results are attached in the appendix.



• **Meeting 2 -**

The second stakeholder committee meeting for the SR 279 corridor study was held on May 22, 2019 from 5 pm to 7 pm at the Fayette County Public Library. The stakeholder committee meeting was in conjunction with the other three corridors also being studied by Fayette County.

The meeting was workshop style where committee members and county staff worked on three activities, focused on the draft concepts and their priorities. The first activity was the SWOT Analysis (Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, Threats). The second workshop activity was discussing the draft concepts and prioritizing them. The third activity was called “Show me the Money”. To aid further prioritization, each stakeholder was given 1 million dollars in funds to invest in projects. Image 2 shows photographs from the meeting. Detailed comments and Word Cloud results are attached in the appendix.

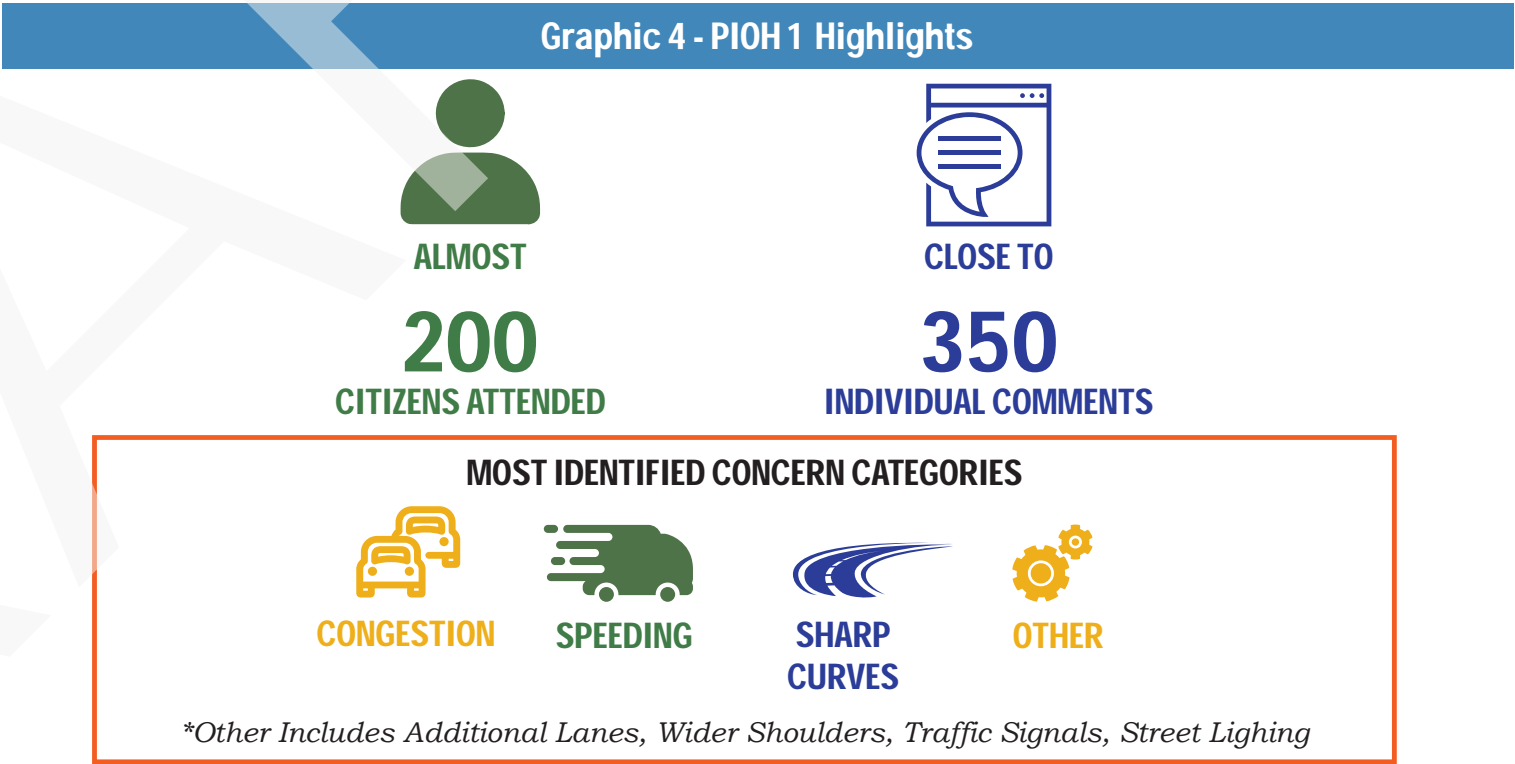


1.3 Public Information Open House

• **PIOH 1 -**

The first Public Information Open House for the SR 279 corridor study was held on March 18, 2019 from 4 pm to 7 pm at the Fayette County Public Library, in conjunction with the other three corridors also being studied by Fayette County.

Citizens were given various opportunities to provide feedback on the current conditions of the corridor, including sticker stations, comment cards and detailed comment forms. Graphic 4 represents highlights from the PIOH. Detailed comments and results are attached in the appendix.



• **PIOH 2 -**

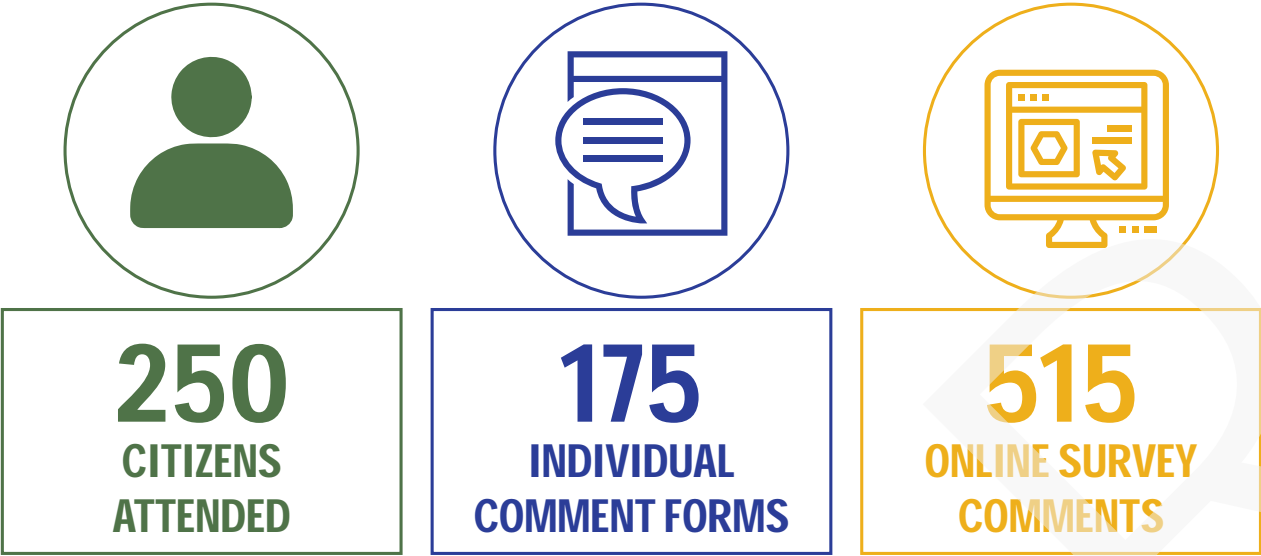
The second Public Information Open House for the SR 279 corridor study was held on July 15, 2019 from 4 pm to 7 pm at the Fayette County Public Library in conjunction with the other three corridors also being studied by Fayette County.

Preliminary project concepts were presented to the citizens. Citizens were given various opportunities to provide feedback on the draft concepts, including sticker stations, online survey stations and detailed comment forms.

Graphic 5 represents highlights from the PIOH. Detailed comments and results are attached in the appendix.



Graphic 5 - PIOH 2 Highlights



1.4 Target Group Outreach

• **The WestBridge HOA -**

The WestBridge HOA public outreach meeting was held on February 10, 2019 at the Home of Shirley Hall in Fayetteville. This focus group meeting was attended by approximately 12-16 subdivision residents. The meeting highlights are enlisted below –

- A brief description of all the corridor studies was presented.
- The first stakeholder meeting organized on February 4, 2019 was discussed, the purpose of the stakeholders and a brief overview of the meeting was presented.
- The residents were explained that this is a community driven study and invited citizens to visit the Fayette County Homepage and keep up with what is going on. Additionally, the citizens were invited to the Public Information Open Houses to share their ideas of the corridor.
- The relocation of the SR 279/SR 85 intersection to meet with Corinth Road was also discussed.

• **North Fayette Community Association -**

The first North Fayette Community Association public outreach meeting was held on February 16, 2019 at the Liberty Baptist Church. This focus group meeting was attended by approximately 50 subdivision residents. The meeting highlights are enlisted below –

- A general overview of all the corridor studies was presented.
- The first stakeholder meeting organized on February 4, 2019 was discussed, the purpose of the stakeholders and a brief overview of the meeting was presented.
- The residents were explained that this is a community driven study and invited citizens to visit the Fayette County Homepage and keep up with what is going on. Additionally, the citizens were invited to the Public Information Open Houses to share their ideas of the corridor.
- Expressed the appreciation for the newly elected President of the Association, Jeff Granier for taking time and serving on the stakeholder committee.
- The residents were explained the need to seek some funding source for implementation of any project that may come out of the study.
- Described the relocation of the intersection of SR 279 and SR 85 to tie into Corinth Road and how this would benefit travel in the area

The second North Fayette Community Association public outreach meeting was held on August 17, 2019 at the Liberty Baptist Church. This focus group meeting was attended by approximately 30 subdivision residents.

The meeting highlights are enlisted below –

- An update was given to the progress of all corridor studies.
- An in-depth discussion of the SR 279 corridor was given to date, discussion of the Existing Conditions Report, traffic/truck and crash data.
- Questions were asked how to slow traffic on SR 279 and what options were being discussed that would allow residences to get out onto SR 279 during peak hours of the day.
- References were given to the Fayette County Web Page to track progress of the study and to participate in the surveys found there.
- Encouragement was given and well received to attend the upcoming Public Information Open House

Image 4 - North Fayette Community Association



• **Northridge Subdivision HOA -**

The Northridge Subdivision HOA public outreach meeting was held on June 30, 2019 at the Kenwood Park Pavilion. This focus group meeting was attended by approximately 20 subdivision residents. The meeting highlights are enlisted below –

- An update was given to the progress of all corridor studies.
- An in-depth discussion of the SR 279 corridor was given to date, discussion of the Existing Conditions Report, traffic/truck and crash data.
- Questions were asked how to slow traffic on SR 279 and what options were being discussed that would allow residences to get out onto SR 279 during peak hours of the day.
- References were given to the Fayette County Web Page to track progress of the study and to participate in the surveys found there.
- Encouragement was given and well received to attend the upcoming Public Information Open House

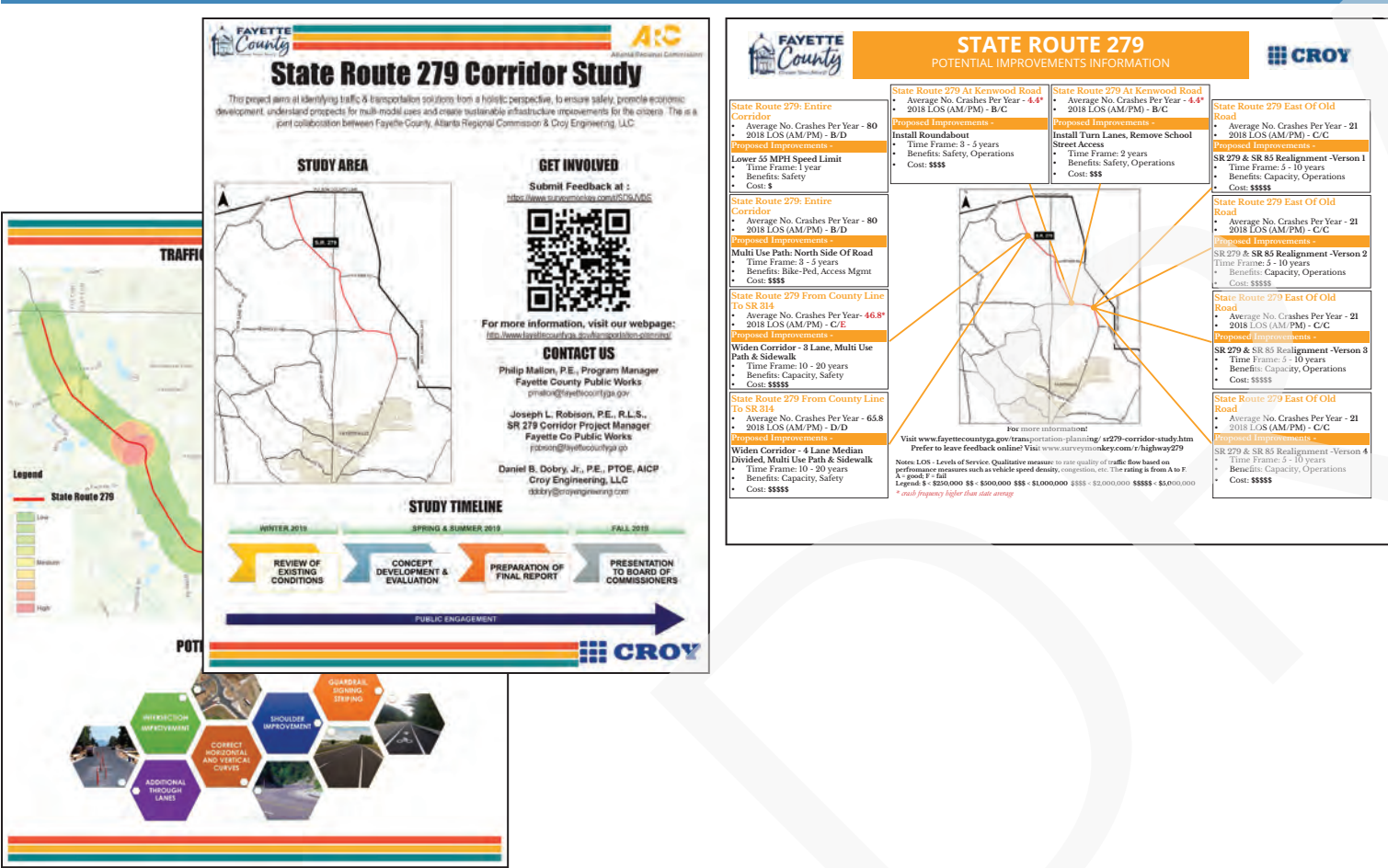
1.4 Outreach Methods and Tools

Outreach efforts relied on a variety of methods and tools to engage diverse audiences and a strong cross-section of the community.

• Project Fact Sheets -

A project fact sheet was created for outreach efforts to provide high-level information to educate the public about the plan. The fact sheet included details on the plan’s purpose and goals, overall process and schedule, traffic volumes and crash data and QR coded links to the survey. The second phase fact sheets provided information on potential improvements, time frame, benefits and cost estimates to help citizens better understand proposed concepts.

Image 5 - Project Fact Sheets



• Project Flyers -

Post-card size flyers were created to send to citizens via email, newspaper distribution, and dispensed at major locations like the library and County offices.

• Project-specific Web Page -

The Fayette County Transportation Planning webpage was used to host corridor study information (www.fayettecountyga.gov/transportation-planning/). Information on the project was provided to the County Communications staff for posting on the site.

The aim of the website was to provide stakeholders and County residents a forum to allow continuous feedback on the corridor study, learn about public meetings, and keep up to the date on the progress of development of the project. The web page was updated with presentations, findings, results, ideas, surveys, and meeting information to foster an ongoing project conversation. Both rounds of online survey were also embedded on the project-specific webpage. All documents uploaded to the website are attached in the appendix.

Image 6 - Website Page



• **Surveys -**

Two rounds of surveys were used during the public outreach, one in each phase. The surveys were available in both an online format and in hard copy (for the PIOH). The first round of survey focused on understanding the overall vision for the corridor. The second round of survey focused on determining preference and priorities for recommending projects.

Image 7 - Survey Page



• **Email Blasts -**

Email blasts were pushed out during the plan’s development to inform citizens of the public information open house and provide information to the survey links. Email blast updates included information on the plan status, dates and information on upcoming public open houses or community events and alerts to take the online surveys.

• **Variable Message Boards -**

Variable Message Boards were used at strategic locations to advertise the two Public Information Open Houses. .

• **Social Media: Facebook -**

City and community Facebook pages were used to inform the community of upcoming events, access to the online suvey, and plan updates during the planning process. Image 8 represents an example of an announcement on the City of Fayetteville Facebook page.

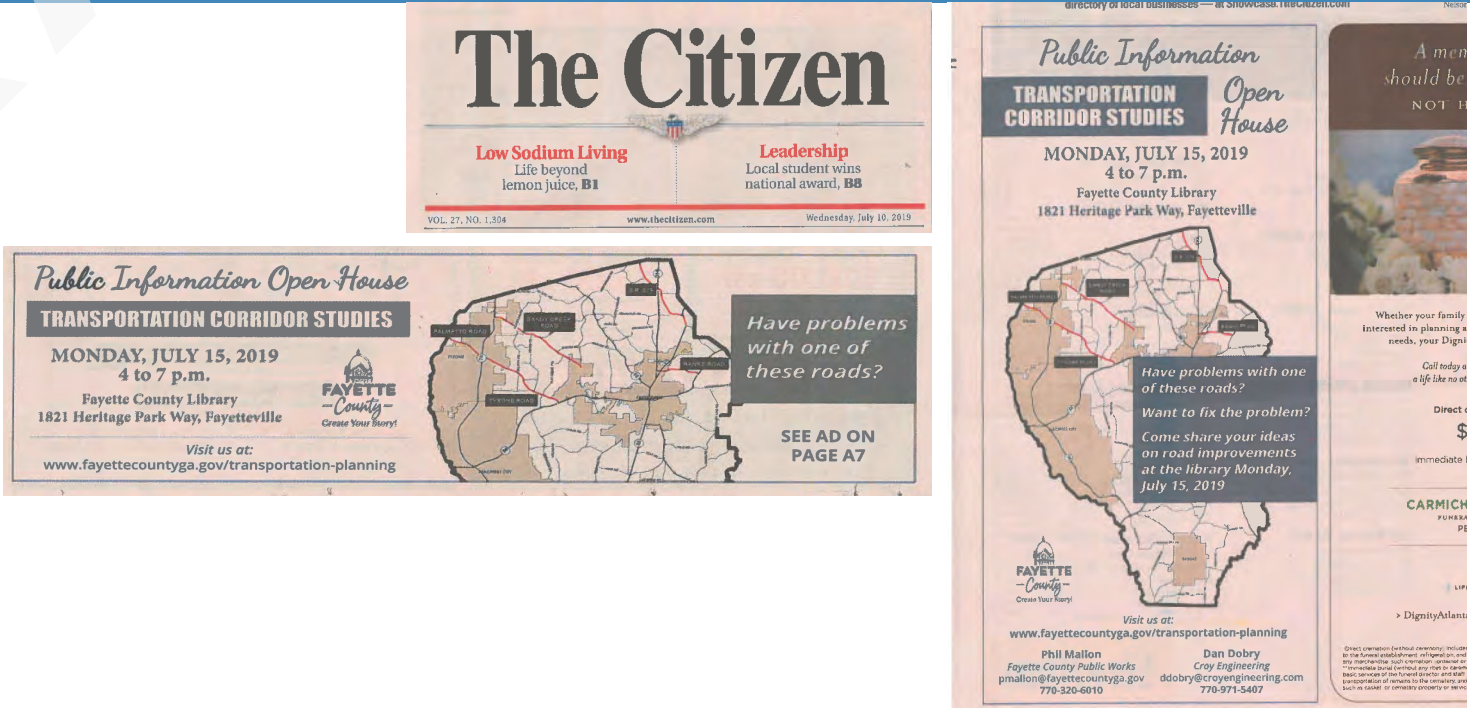
Image 8 - Facebook Page



• **Newspaper Advertisement -**

Newspaper advertisements were printed in The Citizen to inform citizens on upcoming public open houses or community events and are displayed in Image 9.

Image 9 - Newspaper Advertisement



1.5 Transportation Committee

The Fayette County Transportation Committee is tasked with overseeing transportation planning, safety, operations and project delivery issues. The Committee meets monthly and makes recommendations for consideration by the Board of Commissioners. The group was focused on providing feedback and support to the county and consultant in defining the project and identifying potential project outcomes for the study.

Details from the meetings is described beow -

- December 4, 2018 - Presentation was made to introduce the study and teams and to outline the process and outcomes. Handouts were also distributed to gain feedback on the study goals, current perspectives, challenges and desired outcomes for the corridors.
- May 7, 2019 - Presentation was made to provide a recap of the outreach events and the Road Safety Audit, introduce the website page, and discuss the next steps and action items.
- June 4, 2019 - This meeting introduced, discussed and debated the potential improvements for the Sandy Creek Road Corridor and the Tyrone Road - Palmetto Road Corridor.
- July 9, 2019 - This meeting discussions on potential improvements to the Banks Road Corridor and SR 279 Corridor were made. Also included in the discussions were the relocation of the intersection of SR 279 at SR 85 to form a common intersection with Corinth Road.
- *following meeting information to be included*

Image 10 - Transportation Committee In Action

1.6 Next Steps

As aforementioned, once the analysis of the County’s current and projected future transportation needs was completed, the focus of the study was directed towards identifying project concepts including solutions to minimize impacts.

A robust project evaluation and prioritization process was used to evaluate the set of draft recommendations to develop a criteria that aligns with the project’s vision and goals. Additional criterion included right of way impacts, cost estimates, and funding mechanisms.

The Existing Conditions Report, Needs Assessment Report and the Road Safety Audit lay the foundation for the draft GDOT Concept Report, which is included in the appendix of the report.