RICE STREET VISIONING STUDY

NENO Transportation Committee

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Vision for Rice Street between Wheelock and Pennsylvania
Promote economic growth and community investment by
- providing business opportunities
- creating an inviting environment
- enhancing pedestrian safety
- maintaining and augmenting transit service
- improving vehicle safety

Timeline
- Preliminary Design: Aug 2020 - Aug 2021
- Implementation: 2022 and beyond
Engagement Strategy

• Work with the community
• Invest in community institutions
• Build relationships and capacity
• Look to the long term
Phase 2 Engagement: October-December 2020

**Toolbox Phase Engagement Snapshot**
- 11 Emails sent
- 8 Stakeholder meetings
- 1 Open house
- 4 Pop-up events
- 2,066 Email subscribers
- 319 Survey responses
- 6 Surveys

**Online Engagement Timeline**
1. Aug. 12, 2020
   - Potential pedestrian and bicycle design solutions
   - 70 Survey responses
2. Aug. 26, 2020
   - Transit design solutions
   - 50 Survey responses
3. Sep. 9, 2020
   - Streetscape design solutions
   - 58 Survey responses
4. Sep. 30, 2020
   - Vehicle and traffic design solutions
   - 68 Survey responses
5. Oct. 22, 2020
   - Neighborhood design solutions
   - 53 Survey responses
6. Nov. 18, 2020
   - Digital open house
   - 20 Survey responses
Phase 2 Engagement: October-December 2020

**PEDESTRIAN & BICYCLE SURVEY**

- High-visibility crosswalks
- Pedestrian lighting
- School zone speed limit
- Pedestrian traffic signal
- Rapid flashing beacon
- Leading pedestrian signal
- Median refuge island
- Curb extensions
- Sidewalk
- Triangular-duct
- Curb corner
- Manhattan-style bike lane

70 Total

**STREETSCAPE SURVEY**

- Enhanced street furniture
- Community branding
- Wayfinding
- Bike racks
- Community development
- Art in a pedestrian space
- Art on vertical infrastructure
- Public art
- Public space
- Public parks
- Pedestrian pathways
- Crosswalks

68 Total

**TRANSIT & VEHICLE SURVEY**

- Enhanced transit
- Business access
- Bus stops
- Cycle tracks
- Shared use
- Bus lanes

60 Total

**NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN SURVEY**

- Sidewalks
- Pedestrian access
- Separated bike lanes
- Planting
- Sidewalk
- Sidewalk access

53 Total
TOOLBOX SURVEY COMMON THEMES

**Needs**
- Prioritize businesses, transit, non-motorized users and vulnerable populations (children, elderly, disabled).
- Maintain current traffic flow and lanes.
- Safer pedestrian infrastructure (wider sidewalks, medians, pedestrian lighting).
- Traffic calming devices (narrowing lanes).
- Safer bicycle infrastructure (protected bike lanes rather than advisory or shared bike lanes).
- Maintain or increase amount of parking.
- Placemaking (attractive infrastructure, green spaces, art, community branding, historical plaques).

**Concerns**
- Bus and bike lanes impact on traffic flow.
- Traffic speed and congestion.
- Impacts of limiting side street access.
- Right-of-way space.
- Diversion of traffic to side streets.
- Bike lane usage in winter.
- Winter maintenance of non-motorized facilities.
- Access to businesses.
- Improvement costs.
Community Liaison Update

- Wrapping up pop-up events
- Developing activity book and inserts
- Forming community partnerships
- Prepping for spring with mobile engagement vehicle
- Other ideas…
Rice Street Receiver
Phase 1-2 Takeaways

• Give high priority for **pedestrian and traffic safety**, particularly at intersections and crossings.

• Carefully consider **bicycle and transit facility options** and how they fit with other modes.

• **Support the community** beyond the roadway: economic development, business vitality, public safety, and livability.
Upcoming Engagement

• Focus group discussions by segment
  • Rice & Arlington
  • Rice & Maryland
  • Rice & Front
  • “Bookend” coordination: Rice-Larpenteur and Pennsylvania-Capitol areas

• Spring open house: review and comment on alternatives

• Agency coordination: Metro Transit, planning, parks, economic development, public safety, etc.
Evaluation Goals and Criteria

Transportation

1. Safe pedestrian accommodations
2. Safe bicycle connections
3. Improved transit service
4. Safe traffic operations
5. Welcoming streetscape

Community Context

1. Economic development
2. Workforce development
3. Healthy community
4. Public safety
5. Community-defined goals
DRAFT - RICE STREET PROJECT SEGMENTS
BASED ON EXISTING CONDITIONS

1. Pennsylvania to Atwater
   - Industrial, Commercial, and Office Park uses
   - Off street parking
   - Most distance for building setbacks
   - Railroad bridge crossing

2. Atwater to Maryland
   - Commercial storefronts with Residential immediately behind
   - Minimal off street parking
   - 0' building setbacks
   - Adjacent park space

3. Maryland to Railroad
   - Residences with alley access and front doors along Rice Street
   - Flanked by commercial properties
   - Railroad bridge crossing

4. Railroad to Wheelock
   - Auto-centric businesses
   - Surface lots
   - Railroad bridge crossing
   - Adjacent park space
Key elements

- 4-lane roadway with 11-12’ lanes
- 6’ sidewalks and 4’ boulevards
- Parking during certain hours in outside lanes

NOTE: 4-lane option not considered viable
Concept A
3-Lane Roadway, 2-Way Separated Bike Lane

Key elements

- 3-lane roadway with 11’ lanes
- 6’ sidewalks, 3-6’ boulevards
- Two-way 10’ separated bike lane

OPTION: Omit center lane, add 1-sided parking
Concept B
3-Lane Roadway, Shared Use Path

Key elements
• 3-lane roadway with 11’ lanes
• 7’ sidewalk, 4’ boulevards
• 14’ shared use side path
• **OPTION:** Omit center lane, add 1-sided parking
Concept C
3-Lane Roadway, 1-Sided Parking

- 3-lane roadway with 11’ lanes
- 7’ sidewalks, 5’ boulevards
- 8’ parking lane on one side

- **OPTIONS:** Bump-out or medians at intersections
BRT Project

• G Line stations in Rice project area:
  • Arlington
  • Maryland
  • Front
  • Sycamore
  • Pennsylvania

• H Line stations intersecting
  • Maryland
Issues to Address

**Space:** Constrained roadway = trade-offs for what fits

**Priority:** What are most important goals?

**G Line:** Fitting BRT stations in the right locations

**Timing:** Won’t be all done at once – what is first?

**Details:** Intersection-level designs to follow...
Addressing the Space Question

Acknowledge issue. This is a tough decision!

Recognize needs. What are all the things we want here?

Prioritize the modes. For each mode, determine if it is:

1. Top priority – High quality facility, exceeding standards
2. Medium priority – Facility that meets standards
3. Lower priority – Meets minimum standards, and/or plan for off-corridor accommodation
Corridor Context Assessment

To supplement the technical analysis, inform decisions based on uses and activities along corridor:

- Business and retail – parking, dining, shopping
- Residential areas – walking, biking, green space
- Youth/children presence – visible, safe routes
- Destinations and nodes – safe, accessible, attractive

Plan by segment, plan for whole corridor + network links
### Strategy: Corridor Assessment

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<tr>
<th>Area 1</th>
<th>Area 2</th>
<th>Area 3</th>
<th>Area 4</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Area 1</strong>&lt;br&gt;ATWATER – COMO</td>
<td><strong>Area 2</strong>&lt;br&gt;GERANIUM - ATWATER</td>
<td><strong>Area 3</strong>&lt;br&gt;IVY - GERANIUM</td>
<td><strong>Area 4</strong>&lt;br&gt;WHEELOCK - IVY</td>
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<td><strong>Area Character:</strong> Industrial and manufacturing uses, gateway to/from Rice and the Capitol, connective section w/o many major destinations. Minimal streetscaping elements.</td>
<td><strong>Area Character:</strong> Concentrated retail/commercial uses, 1-3 stories, consistent setbacks, minimal to no streetscape elements, lower concentration of off-street parking, major destination at Lawson Ave.</td>
<td><strong>Area Character:</strong> Concentrated residential uses with transitions to commercial uses, substandard streetscape, regular non-residential off-street parking, major destination at Maryland Ave.</td>
<td><strong>Area Character:</strong> Blended uses with interspersed industrial, transitional space between suburban &amp; urban context, varying setbacks and buffers, regular concentration of off-street parking, major destinations at Nelson Ave.</td>
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Next Steps

Alternative analysis based on feedback and technical evaluation

Targeted community conversations by corridor segment

Report back on refined options by Spring 2021
Thanks!