
Public Open House Summary

Highway 5 Improvement Project – Design Phase
September 27, 2023



Highway 5
Improvements



CARVER
COUNTY

Project Overview

Carver County and key partners are embarking on a series of improvements to Highway 5, including expanding the highway from two to four lanes west from Highway 41 in Chanhassen to Downtown Victoria. The project also includes:

- Intersection improvements
- Evaluation of crossing options for Lake Minnewashta
- Reconstruction of Rolling Acres Road between Interlaken and 78th Street to reduce traffic speeds and improve safety for all users
- Safety improvements for people walking, bicycling, and rolling, including an improved crossing for the Lake Minnetonka LRT Regional Trail



Figure 1: Map of Highway 5 Improvement Project area

The Highway 5 project aligns with the vision set forth in the Arboretum Area Transportation Plan (AATP) to address the following community priorities:

- Reducing traffic congestion
- Improving road safety
- Enhancing walking and bicycling conditions and connections
- Respecting the environment
- Connecting local destinations

The first phase of public engagement for this project began in the fall of 2023 and included a public open house event. See below for a summary of the public open house, including outreach methods, meeting materials, and a summary of public feedback.

Public Open House

Overview

The project team hosted a public open house at the University of Minnesota Landscape Arboretum on Wednesday, September 27, 2023 from 4:30 – 6:30 p.m. The purpose of the event was for attendees to review the recommended visions from the AATP, review the proposed design options for Highway 5 and 82nd Street, and see the latest project schedules and funding status. Over 239 people attended the event and over 19 organizations were represented.

Outreach methods

The event was promoted through a variety of methods, including webpage and email updates, social media, a postcard mailing, and a meet and greet event.

Webpage: The [project webpage](#) was created in July 2023. An update about the public open house was posted on August 25.

Email updates: An email update on all projects from the AATP, including Highway 5, was sent to the AATP email list of over 1,200 addresses in August. An invitation to the open house was sent on August 30 to the Highway 5 email list of over 700 email addresses. A reminder email was also sent to the Highway 5 email list on September 25. The City of Victoria included a notice in their September 15 email newsletter.

Postcard mailing: A postcard about the public open house was mailed on August 28 to over 2,300 property addresses along and near the project area.

Social media: A targeted social media advertisement about the public open house ran from September 13 through 17 and made over 5,800 impressions. Organic social media posts about the event were posted to the Carver County Public Works Facebook and Twitter pages on September 6 and 25.

Meet and greet: On September 20, the City of Victoria hosted an event for business owners to learn more about the project and the public open house. Twenty-three people attended. Handouts about the project and invitations to the public open were distributed and timeline information was shared



Meeting materials

The following materials were provided at the public open house. After the event, meeting materials were posted to the project webpage. An email update was sent on October 5 to the Highway 5 email list to inform subscribers that the materials are available [online](#).



Display boards: Exhibits at the public open house included display boards with information about the project purpose, schedule, funding, environmental review process, and traffic noise analysis. There were also display boards about the evaluation of Lake Minnewashta crossing options and the Minnewashta Parkway traffic study.

Layouts: Large, detailed layouts of the Highway 5 and Rolling Acres Road proposed improvements were displayed for attendees to examine and add written comments.

Handouts: Two handouts were provided to attendees. One included a project description, map, schedule, and contact information. The other had a numbered map with corresponding descriptions of each improvement area. The numbers also corresponded to numbers on the larger detailed layouts.

Video: A video was shown about how displaced left-turns work and their benefits.

Comment cards: Comment cards were provided to capture public feedback. The cards included space for attendees to write their name, email address, and nearest intersection, and prompted them to note any opportunities or challenges they saw in the presented plans.

Contact cards: Contact cards with the project webpage, phone number, and email were provided.



What we heard

The project team welcomed 239 total attendees at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum. Twenty-seven comment cards were received and 78 post-it notes were placed on the printed layouts. A summary of these comments is organized geographically from west to east below. Project staff at the event discussed comments and questions with attendees, and follow-up information will be provided online.

Commercial Avenue Roundabout: A number of commenters expressed dissatisfaction with the restriction on left turns on 80th Street, dislike for roundabouts in general, and concerns about danger due to driver inattention. Some commenters noted that the proposed design does not accommodate Victoria businesses and neglects homeowners' concerns. One commenter questioned the necessity of sidewalks around the roundabout.

Highway 5 and Stieger Lake Lane: Some commenters expressed concerns that the planned improvements do not accommodate future development and raised questions about long-term planning and consideration for growth in the downtown district.

Highway 5 and Kochia Lane/Park Drive: Some commenters expressed challenges navigating the area east of Madelyn Creek Park. There were requests for a traffic light due to the perceived danger, especially with the opening of Kochia Lane and increased traffic. The need for sound barriers was emphasized, reflecting concerns about potential noise impacts. There were also concerns about potential impacts to air quality for the 78th Street neighborhoods. Attendees also voiced concerns about the sight lines at Kochia Lane and excessive vehicle speeds.

Highway 5 and Rolling Acres Road: Commenters emphasized the importance of prioritizing safety, particularly considering the challenging aspects of Highway 5, which involve sudden braking on uphill sections. Concerns were raised about the crest of the hill blocking the traffic signal and obstructing visibility, posing potential hazards for drivers. There were concerns about noise, with one resident requesting a fence to maintain privacy for homes near Parkview Lane. There was also concern about environmental impacts, noise levels, travel disruptions during construction, and westbound detours.

Interlaken Roundabout and Rolling Acres Road area: Commenters expressed frustration with congestion on Rolling Acres Road during peak times, especially in the Swiss Mountain neighborhood. There was emphasis on the need for improved access points, suggesting the ability to access to and from St. Moritz Street to alleviate traffic on Interlaken. A commenter proposed safety improvements for Mount Olivet Lutheran Church's driveway, including widening and flattening the grade. There were concerns about the planned roundabout at Interlaken.



Lake Minnetonka LRT Regional Trail crossing: One commenter said they wanted to see the regional trail crossing prioritized as soon as possible to increase safety.

Bavaria Road Trail: There was strong community support for the trail, with some commenters expressing the project as crucial and a mandatory expectation. Commenters emphasized that the project needs to prioritize connections to various trails and provide more opportunities for pedestrian walkways to address safety concerns.



Highway 5 and Minnewashta Parkway: Commenters highlighted concerns about traffic safety, access, and potential disruptions to the Minnewashta Parkway neighborhoods. There were worries about the efficiency of traffic flow with three directions entering a single entrance and concerns with residents getting stuck in traffic during big events at the University of Minnesota Landscape Arboretum. The possibility of a roundabout was suggested for better traffic flow, and there was a request to reduce or mitigate traffic on Minnewashta Parkway. Suggestions included flashing stop signs, lower speeds, and pedestrian facilities.

Lake Minnewashta crossing: Commenters noted concerns about the construction and impact of a house on the property between the highway and the lake. There was apprehension about the residential access to Highway 5, the potential traffic safety issues, and environmental impacts, particularly regarding the proximity to the lake and wetlands.

Crimson Bay Road and Highway 5: A resident near Crimson Bay Road expressed concerns about potential traffic issues and requested safer access to bike and walking trails, emphasizing a desire for improved pedestrian safety and accessibility. However, there was a generally positive response about the planned Crimson Bay Road improvements.

Highway 41 and 78th Street: Commenters emphasized the need for improved traffic safety. They noted visibility challenges for left turns onto 78th Street from Highway 41. One commenter suggested a traffic light, and another suggested a bypass lane on Highway 41 for vehicles heading north that use the right lane to go straight. Commenters were interested in pedestrian safety and advocated for a pedestrian under/overpass to connect to the trails.

