INTRODUCTION:

This report summarizes public and stakeholder input received during Phase One and Phase Two of the public outreach effort for the SR 233/Robertson Blvd Multimodal Corridor Study. TJKM developed a dedicated project website to facilitate information sharing and two on-line surveys. RGS supported the project team with workshop setup, facilitation, and promotion; facilitated two stakeholder advisory focus groups; and promoted the on-line surveys through a variety of outreach methods from October 2019 through September 2020. This report provides a summary of these activities and an analysis of survey results.

PHASE ONE OUTREACH

Project Website

The project website was established in August 2019 and has provided the public and stakeholders an information portal for background reports, status updates, and a link to the on-line survey. Background





Existing Conditions Report SR 233 Corridor Plan



documents provided on the website include the draft Existing Conditions Report (released for public comment December 2019) and an interim outreach report (Phase One Outreach Summary). Additional SB-1 funded studies on-going at this time, managed by the City of Chowchilla, are a Truck Study and Stop Sign Inventory. These documents will be posted to the website at a later date. The website also includes presentations from the workshops and Stakeholder Advisory meetings, as well as recordings of the second Stakeholder Advisory Committee meeting and the second public workshop (both held virtually).

Public Workshop One

The September 12, 2019 community meeting was conducted from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at Chowchilla City

Hall. The workshop format included a project overview presentation and map exhibit stations (both background maps and example corridor concepts) for participants to view and provide comments and feedback to the project team. Materials were provided in English and Spanish and translation was available on site.

The workshop was promoted through flyers, on the project website, through various social media outlets. stakeholder meeting announcements, and by email blasts. Participants included community members, stakeholder group representatives and elected officials. Additional staff from MCTC, the City of Chowchilla, and Madera County were also in attendance. The workshop had between 8 and 10 participants during the course of the evening. The full presentation is included as an attachment to the report. Comments from the workshop are summarized on the next page.





Workshop Comments:

Verbal comments from participants were summarized by the project team as follows:

Biking & Bike Facilities:

- Biking etiquette is a problem (cyclists are riding all over streets and sidewalks without following ordinances). Biking education is needed for both bicyclists and motorists.
- Bridge overcrossing for bicyclist needs improvement

Pedestrian Facilities:

- Sidewalks and crosswalks need repair (particularly 15th Street to Front and West of 15th)
 this includes uneven and/or no sidewalks
- Additional signal crossings are needed
- Additional high school/school crossings are needed
- Pedestrian crossing near baseball park is dangerous
- Intersection at 5th & Robertson near senior center needs improvement

Street Lighting

 Lighting from 11th to 13th Streets on Wilson near the junior high is poor and the school has multiple evening events

Roadway Issues

- Traffic safety on Robertson
- Existing freeway congestion
- Congestion/traffic queuing at Robertson/SR233 @ 99
- Cut-through traffic damage to infrastructure
- Truck route designation hurts downtown businesses
- Parents picking up children near Taco Shop at SR99 contributes to congestion and queuing issue
- Roadway flooding is a concern in the corridor, especially near 2nd, 3rd & 5th Streets
 Transit
 - Connections are needed to Merced, Planada & LeGrand; senior bus once per weeks for shopping is not enough; transit service needs to be synced with service in Merced
 - Lack of public transit to the North Valley

Parking

- Parking is an issue near downtown shopping
- Robertson Blvd in particular needs more parking (not less)

Economic Development

 Additional support in the way of infrastructure improvement is needed for downtown businesses along Robertson Blvd

Pop-Up Event



On October 31, 2019 the project team attended the Harvest Festival held by the Chowchilla Memorial Healthcare District. The vent was held at the district's skilled nursing facility on Ventura



Avenue in Chowchilla. The project team set-up the exhibits from the September public workshop and laptop computers set to the on-line survey and invited residents to view exhibit boards, fill-out the on-line survey, and ask any questions of the planning team. Bi-lingual staff were available for Spanish speaking residents and project cards for



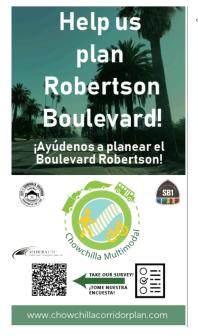
participants to share with other residents were handed out. The team disturbed in excess of 250 project cards at the event.

Project Area Flyers, Business Outreach & Survey Promotion

The project team spent the day of December 10, 2019 walking the Robertson Boulevard corridor to talk with business owners about the project, and to hand out flyers and project cards promoting the project website. Approximately 100 flyers and projects cards were disseminated. Owners (or employees) were asked to



display posters and hand out project cards and encouraged to get in touch with outreach staff for presentations at any upcoming meetings. Residents/business owners were also



asked to spread the word via their social networks and



other civic groups they participated with. Flyers were also distributed to schools in the Chowchilla Elementary School District and Chowchilla Union High School. In addition, the survey was promoted via the on-line and print versions of *The Chowchilla Chatter* during the month of January.

Stakeholder Focus Group

The stakeholder focus group met on January 22, 2019 from 5pm to 7pm at City of Chowchilla City Hall. The forum was attended by eight participants and staff from

City of Chowchilla, MCTC, Madera County Health Department representative, community representatives, and the consultant team. Exhibits from the public



workshop in September were set-up and reviewed, followed by an update on public outreach activities and an open forum discussion facilitated by the consultant team. Summarized comments and concerns expressed are captured in the table below.

Summary of Stakeholder Group Discussion:

Additional Issues Identified During Meeting:

- Safety for pedestrians & bicyclists are primary issues
- The 99/Robertson overpass continues to be a source of congestion
- Roundabout project has not been incorporated in the study process
- Non-compliance with ADA is an issue in the corridor
- Train crossing is an issue
- Additional effort is needed to insure the all upcoming plans and developments are considered
- Differing opinions on how parking should be handled in downtown/on the corridor; some would prefer a reduction in parking to provide better protection for bicyclists, while area business owners would like better parking facilities to attract more customers to the area

 Trucking community and area business owners need to weigh in on the truck study before it is finalized as recommendations could impact area businesses

Funding Potential:

- The consultant team highlighted that a list of funding sources has already been identified for which the City and/or County can consider applying for. The team indicated that the study would include an implementation plan and suggested improvements for each funding source
- Participants requested that project phasing be considered in the implementation and funding plan

Identification of an Early Action Plan

 Consultant team focused the meeting discussion on already identified issues and suggested that the implementation plan include early, mid, and long-term projects. Identification of high-profile, lower-cost improvements that could be completed quickly to build public trust in the plan and the funding process

Public Outreach

- Suggestion that in addition to flyers distributed to schools, that paper surveys be provided to students to take home and return
- High school students could be used for flyer distribution to obtain public service hours
- Further discussion of a focus group conducted directly with select classes at the high school
- Plans to be made for the project team to present to both the Chowchilla Planning Commission and City Council
- Other potential outreach venues: Civic clubs (i.e. Lions Club, Lioness Club, Friends of the Library). Student outreach events can include Bike Rodeo, Junior Fair Stampede.
- MCTC presentation should be scheduled for February.
- Phase 2 public outreach should include visualizations of proposed/potential solutions in the context of the SR 233/Robertson Blvd corridor or at least visualizations in a similar context. Stakeholder group participants also emphasized the final report should include case studies of implementation of proposed solutions in similarly sized jurisdictions.

Phase One Survey Analytics

The following key takeaways and the graphs that follow are based on a survey conducted on-line via Survey Monkey that was live on the project website from August 2019 through

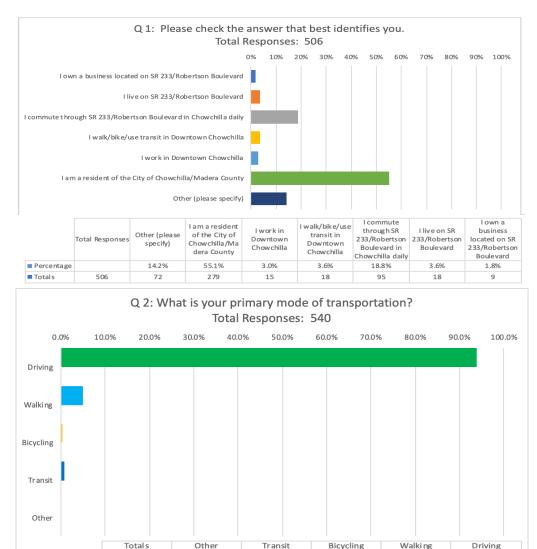
February 2020. The number of responses varied by question, ranging between 176 and 218. In addition to the on-line surveys, paper surveys were provided to students at two schools proximate to the project area in January 2020 - Wilson Middle School and Merle L. Fuller Elementary. Paper surveys returned numbered 323, with responses per question ranging from 270 to 323. Question 10 was not applicable to the paper survey group as all respondents received the survey from their respective children's schools.

Key Survey Takeaways:

Percentage

Total Responses

- Respondents represented all categories of participants with the majority being either daily commuters on the SR233 corridor or residents of Madera County that utilize the corridor intermittently. Anecdotally, this are travelers coming to downtown businesses or offices
- Despite the widespread support for biking and walking improvements in the corridor, the majority of respondents travel by automobile.



0.7%

4

0.4%

2

5.0%

27

0.0%

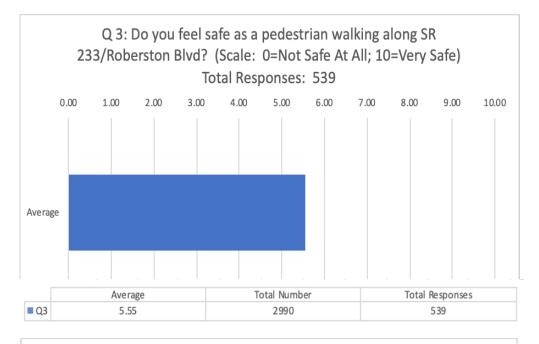
0

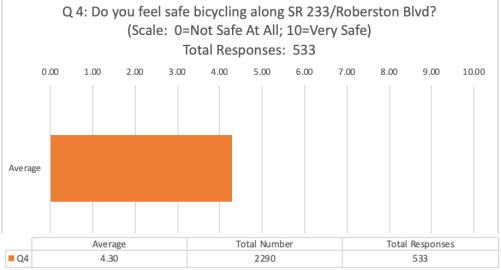
540

93.9%

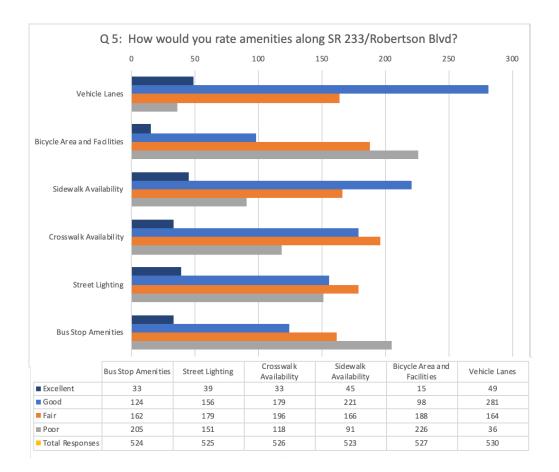
507

 Safety in the corridor is rated as average for both pedestrians and bicyclists, with bicyclists feeling more traffic stress overall than pedestrians.

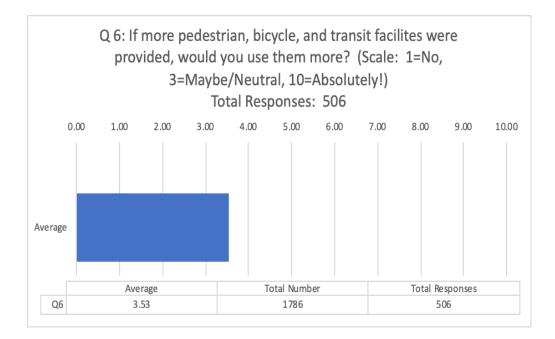




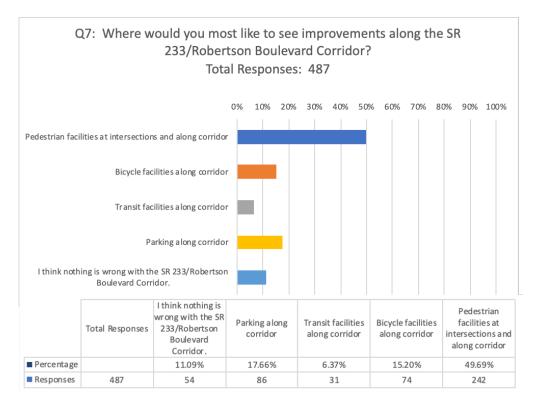
In rating the quality of infrastructure in the SR 233/Robertson Blvd corridor, respondents were most likely to rate bicycle area & facilities as poor. In total, nearly 79% of respondents rated bicycle infrastructure as fair or poor. This is followed closely by bus step amenities, where 70% rated this amenity as fair or poor, and crosswalk availability at 60% fair or poor.



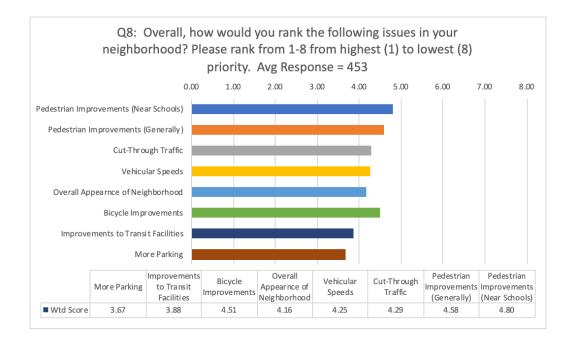
 Survey takers were neutral on whether they would use bicycle, pedestrian, and transit improvements if they were more available. The question should be further explored when corridor concepts are developed. Specific concepts in each category can be gauged for increased usage and desirability to residents likely to use them. This is further supported by responses to Q7.



 By a wide margin respondents rate the need for improved pedestrian facilities at intersections on the corridor as the most needed improvement. Fewer than 10% cited transit facilities.

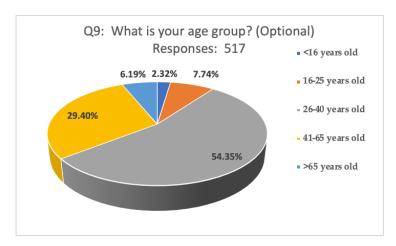


 When asked to rate issues in general in respondent's neighborhood, pedestrian improvements near schools and pedestrian improvements in general were rated



as the biggest issues, followed by bicycle improvements. Only transit facilities and lack of parking ranked lower than a 4 (weighted score).

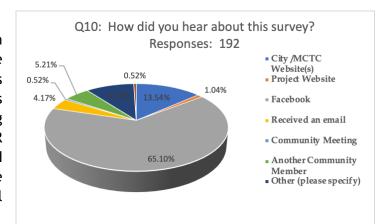
 Taken in total, the survey responses indicate that pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure in general are the most needed improvements as ranked by survey takers. While we note that the age profile skewed heavily to 26-40 year-olds, likely due to the fact that over half the respondents were parents of school-age children, overall ratings between the two groups (on-line survey takers and paper



survey takers) were not dissimilar even though on-line survey takers were on average older. However, it is likely that pedestrian improvements near schools ranked has higher due to the number of parents of school-age children taking the survey.

 While pedestrian improvements have a clear priority, survey takers have expressed support for transit improvements, street lighting improvements, parking improvement/reconfiguration, and traffic calming to address vehicle speeds and cut-through traffic.

- While safety concerns do not appear paramount in survey results, comments received during the workshop and in the stakeholder focus group place a higher emphasis on safety.
- Survey findings provide context for prioritizing bicycle and pedestrian improvements; however, it is clear that solutions that address multiple areas of concern will have a higher return on investment dollars versus single-mode solutions.
- Phase outreach two should include visualizations of solutions in a context as similar as possible to existing conditions in the SR 233/Robertson Blvd corridor, as well as case studies of successful implementations.

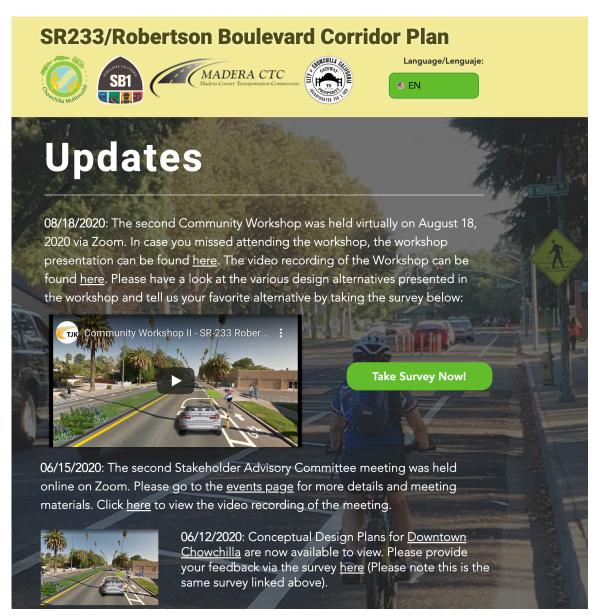


• Finally, the second round of public and stakeholder outreach will be focused on electronic delivery of content. Facebook was by far the most effective way of communication, followed distantly by email and word-of-mouth.

PHASE TWO OUTREACH

During Phase Two of the project, the team utilized the phase one public outreach results to shape the final concepts to be proposed as priorities for the study based on research data, technical analyses completed, and available financing opportunities.

The Phase Two public participation was reshaped as the result of social distancing measures that are still in effect. Besides similar use of the website as with Phase One (www.chowchillacorridorplan.com), electronic communication across all social media platforms was used, as well as email blasts and electronic newsletters/forums from the stakeholder group and project team. Anyone that provided an email address was contacted directly with regular updates and the website was updated with the latest information.









Stakeholder Focus Group Two

The stakeholder focus group (Stakeholder Advisory Committee) met for a second time on June 15, 2020, from 5:30pm to 7pm. The meeting was held virtually, via the Zoom meeting platform. The focus of the meeting was to allow the stakeholders to view the potential corridor alternatives and to help the project team refine these prior to presenting them to the public. Besides the project team, two members of the Stakeholder Advisory Committee attended the virtual meeting; others provided input after viewing the recording of the meeting on the project website.

TJKM, with set-up and meeting facilitation support from RGS presented the three alternatives for the downtown core of Chowchilla (Segment C), as well as information on the other segments of the study corridor. The presentation and project alternatives are posted on the project website for viewing.

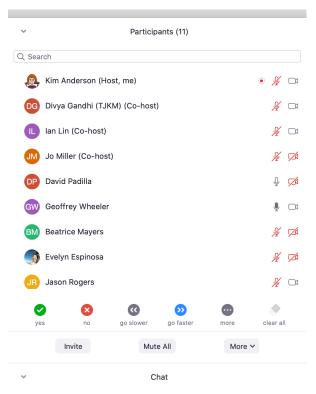
There was support for all alternatives; however, there was some concern on removal of all diagonal parking in the downtown area with Alternative 2. Parking removal was also a concern of downtown businesses in the first public outreach phase. Additional discussion centered on plans for the area near the Wilson school.

As a result of the stakeholder advisory meeting and additional comments from Caltrans, a fourth alternative was developed and used for the second public workshop and for the subsequent virtual public workshop.

Public Workshop Two

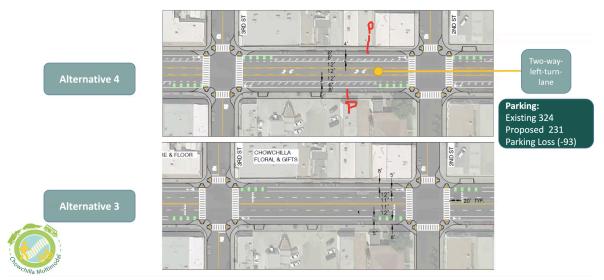
The second public workshop was conducted on August 18, 2020 from 5:30 pm to 7:00pm. The meeting was held virtually via the Zoom platform; live interpretation was available in Spanish for any members of the public requesting this service.

Besides the project team, six participants attended the workshop representing Caltrans, the City of Chowchilla, the Stakeholder Advisory Committee, and members of the public. The presentation for the public workshop was similar in scope to the presentation at the stakeholder workshop, except for the suggested modifications to the alternative designs and the addition of the fourth alternative based on previous stakeholder and Caltrans comments. The team used



in-meeting tools to highlight important concepts to aid understanding and answer questions on the alternative corridor designs.

Segment C, Alternative 4: Two way left-turn lane



As with the stakeholder meeting, in-meeting polling was utilized after the presentation and participants were encouraged to ask questions and/or elaborate on their responses to the polling questions. Concerns raised with the concepts during the workshop centered on the following:

- Landscaped medians: concerns that the landscaping will not be cared for and become unsightly, and concerns that the money for landscaping could better be spent on other improvements [City staff indicated that any new landscaping would be xeriscape with low to no water usage and that the city would be responsible for maintenance]
- Impacts to traffic flow if the number of lanes were reduced (i.e. road diet); many of these concerns were in reference to at grade train tracks with several trains per day backing up traffic [TJKM staff indicated that traffic analysis was done for peak usage with indications that two lanes would be sufficient, but that staff would investigate further the number and timing trains to determine additional impact]
- Concern with protected bike lines necessitating cyclists to move out of the bike line for left turns
- A suggestion that sidewalks should be prioritized: specifically repair and connectivity [City staff indicated that most of the sidewalks are in the Caltrans right-of-way and the City is working with Caltrans to address ADA compliance. Staff also indicated that sidewalk repair is the responsibility of property owners but that the City is looking for ADA and Active Transportation program grants to address the issues]
- On-going concerns with ADA and pedestrian/bike improvements at the intersection of Robertson Boulevard with SR 99 [City staff indicate that some design concepts have been proposed but are likely five to ten years away]
- City staff also reminded participants that the City, MCTC, and Caltrans have been working on environmental documents for another project that would add two roundabouts with ADA improvements

Once the workshop was complete, survey questions and a recording of the workshop was added to the project website so that those unable to attend would be able to voice their opinions on the alternatives and answer the other questions presented at the workshop.

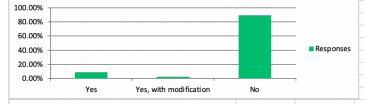
Phase Two Survey and Website Analytics

As of the close of the virtual workshop and on-line survey, September 15, 2020, 185 survey responses were received. Survey questions from phase two of the outreach program focused on alternatives developed in response to phase one survey results. Questions one through four asked participants whether they could support the alternative as presented or could support it with modifications. Questions five through eight asked for clarification on concerns gleaned from the first round of outreach to aid the project team in further analyzing conceptual designs. Question nine was openended and asked for any additional comments and concerns. No survey respondents answered this question. However, some feedback was left on the website; those comments are summarized later in this section and included at Attachment X. The presentation and survey were available in both English and Spanish. The results of the on-line survey are detailed in the graphics below and on the following pages.

QUESTION 1

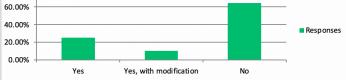
Segment C support thi plan for SR alternative	of Downtow s alternative 233 - Rober includes a r ndscaped m aces)?	tion for Alternative 1 of n Chowchilla, do you a as a potential corridor tson Boulevard (This oad diet, protected nedian and 227 on-street		
Yes	Answe	r Choices	Response	
	dification		7.57%	14
Yes, with modification			3.78% 88.65%	164
NO			Answered	185
			, allowed a	
	of Segme	the presentation for ent C of Downtown	n Chowchilla	
1 (of Segme do you potenti Robertsc		or Alternative n Chowchilla ative as a r SR233 - s alternative	Э
1 (of Segme do you potenti Robertsc	ent C of Downtow support this altern al corridor plan fo on Boulevard (This	or Alternative n Chowchilla ative as a r SR233 - s alternative	Э
1	of Segme do you potenti Robertsc	ent C of Downtow support this altern al corridor plan fo on Boulevard (This	or Alternative n Chowchilla ative as a r SR233 - s alternative	Э
1 (100.00%	of Segme do you potenti Robertsc	ent C of Downtow support this altern al corridor plan fo on Boulevard (This	or Alternative n Chowchilla ative as a r SR233 - s alternative	Э
1 (100.00% 80.00%	of Segme do you potenti Robertsc	ent C of Downtow support this altern al corridor plan fo on Boulevard (This	or Alternative n Chowchilla ative as a r SR233 - s alternative otected	Э
1 (100.00% 80.00% 60.00%	of Segme do you potenti Robertsc	ent C of Downtow support this altern al corridor plan fo on Boulevard (This	or Alternative n Chowchilla ative as a r SR233 - s alternative otected	9 a,
1 (100.00% 80.00% 60.00% 40.00%	of Segme do you potenti Robertsc	ent C of Downtow support this altern al corridor plan fo on Boulevard (This	or Alternative n Chowchilla ative as a r SR233 - s alternative otected	9 a,

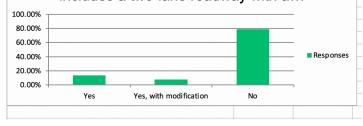
Based on the presentation for Alternative 2 of Segment C of Downtown Chowchilla, do you support this alternative as a potential corridor plan for SR233 -Robertson Boulevard (This alternative includes a four-lane roadway,...



QUESTION 3

Based on the presentation for Alternative 3 of Segment C of Downtown Chowchilla, do you support this alternative as a potential corridor plan for SR233 -Robertson Boulevard (This alternative includes a four-lane roadway, Class II...

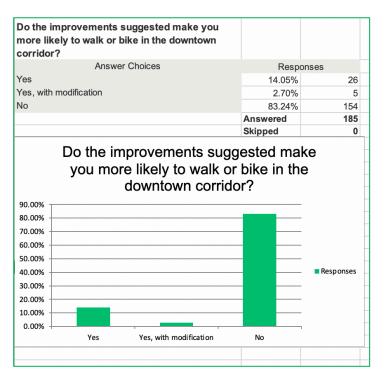




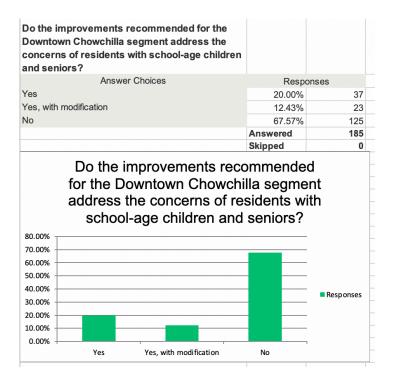
QUESTION 5

Do the concepts presented address the dual concerns of needed parking in Downtown Chowchilla and the need for increased safety of bicyclists and pedestrians?		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	20.00%	37
Yes, with modification	13.51%	25
No	66.49%	123
	Answered	185
	Skipped	0

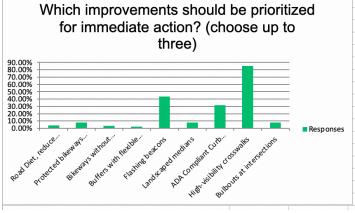
Do the concepts presented address the dual concerns of needed parking in Downtown Chowchilla and the need for increased safety of bicyclists and pedestrians? 70.00% 60.00% 50.00% 40.00% 30.00% Responses 20.00% 10.00% 0.00% Yes Yes, with modification No



QUESTION 7



	Skipped	0
	Answered	185
Bulbouts at intersections	8.11%	15
High-visibility crosswalks	85.41%	158
ADA Compliant Curb Ramps	31.35%	58
Landscaped medians	8.11%	15
Flashing beacons	43.24%	80
Buffers with flexible posts	2.16%	4
Bikeways without parking protection (Class IV separated)	3.24%	6
Protected bikeways (parking protected Class IV separated bikeways)	8.11%	15
Road Diet, reduce travel lanes from four to two in specific locations (prioritized in the downtown area)	3.78%	7
Answer Choices	Responses	
Which improvements should be prioritized for immediate action? (choose up to three)		



In examining the survey results, there is not majority support for any of the alternatives; however, Alternatives 3 and 4 received the most "yes" and "yes, with modifications" submissions, with combined 35.68% and 21.08% respectively. Judging by comments at the workshop, stakeholder group, and those received from the website during the survey, concerns about congestion in the downtown area at peak travel times (especially with the potential bottlenecks from the at-grade train crossing), potential loss of parking, and lack of support for a median solution are driving these choices.

About a third of respondents felt that the concepts addressed the dual concerns of needed parking and the need for increased safety of bicyclists (answered either "yes" or "yes with modifications." This is in keeping with support for Alternatives 3 & 4, which preserve the greatest amount of downtown parking. Again, about a third of respondents thought the alternatives addressed both the concerns of school-age children and seniors. Approximately 17% of respondents indicated they would bike or walk more in the corridor with the proposed corridor safety solutions - this response would be expected given the low baseline of residents that currently walk or bike in the area.

Finally, when asked about prioritizing improvements for early action, there were three distinct choices over and above all others:

- High-visibility crosswalks (85.41%)
- Flashing crossing beacons (43.24%)
- ADA curb-ramps (31.35%)

While, there was some support to each of the individual solutions presented, the least favored improvements were:

- Separated bikeways without parking protection (3.24%)
- Road Diet: reduction in travel lanes from 4 to 2 (3.78%)

The rest of the suggested improvements: parking protected separated bikeways, bulbouts at intersection, and landscaped medians all received 8.11% favorable support.

The issues with the alternatives cited in the website comments section can be broadly summarized as:

- The roadway is fine as is and does not require improvement; money should be spent housing production or economic development
- Focus efforts on the SR 99 / Robertson Blvd intersection/interchange
- Bicycle infrastructure improvements are not needed as there are no convenient destinations and it is often too hot for bicycling; medians would impede turning movements
- A need to include complete curbs and gutters along the corridor

Comments are included in their entirety as an attachment.

Eblasts & Social Media Outreach

Prior to the workshop date, various social media banners were distributed to the project team and community partners for distribution on their own social media platforms, including Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and Instagram. Banners were produced in both English and Spanish.

Concurrently, flyers were placed on the project website, announced by the City of Chowchilla in their newsletter, and promoted by other stakeholders through their regular communication channels.





11 🖸 🖸

Madera County Transportation Commission

Join us for an online community workshop to comment on potential upcoming improvements designed to make the SR 233/Robertson Boulevard safer for all modes of transportation. More information is detailed in the English and Spanish flier posted below.



Emails were sent to 72 individuals on August 11the and August 18th; the database included anyone that had previously attended a workshop or filled out a survey as long as an email address was provided.

workshop Once the concluded the evening of August 18 and all materials were available on the website, follow-up emails were sent to the database same on 28 August and September 8, 2020. Between 30% and 50% of emails were opened, and website traffic indicates increases in traffic around the dates

² Comments 4 Shares

of the email communications. Email examples are included below.

Thank-you for your input on potential improvements for SR 233/Robertson Blvd! Please join us for a second workshop to view new corridor designs. On behalf of the project team working with the City of Chowchilla and the Madera County Transportation Commission (MCTC) we are sharing new information about an important planning study seeking to improve transportation options (for autos, trucks, bicycles & pedestrains) on Robertson Blvd / SR233 through Chowchilla. Additional information and previous presentations can be found on the project website here: s://www.chowchillacorridorplar



U Ν

MADERA CTC

(f) Share

N/

Reunión Virtual en Lìnea

Virtual Workshop Survey Closes September 15!

If you missed our August 18th workshop, you can still tell us what you think of new designs for the SR233/Robertson Blvd corridor!

Visit the project webpage

at https://www.chowchillacorridorplan.com/ to see potential designs to improve safety for all users, view our presentation from the workshop and a recording of the event - then take our survey!

On behalf of the project team working with the City of Chowchilla and the Madera County Transportation Commission (MCTC) we thank-you for your previous willingness to share your thoughts and ideas. Let us show you how we've responded to your feedback. Your help with this important planning study seeking to improve transportation options (for autos, trucks, bicycles &

PROPOSED



PROPUESTO

Website analytics indicate 340 visits by 288 unique visitors between August 5 and September 2, with traffic increasing substantially between the day of the workshop, August 18 and the close of the survey on September 15. Overall, in the four weeks between those two dates, 678 unique individuals visited the website a total of 805 times.



NEXT STEPS

The project team will synthesize all of the public and stakeholder outreach, update technical work as indicated to include any additional information as required to address issues or concerns identified, finally, to assess design concepts and solutions against metrics that will help prioritize projects against the overall project goals of equity, mobility/connectivity, safety, air quality benefits (sustainability), costs/ease of implementation (efficiency), and consistency with other city or county-level planning documents.

Once all the technical analysis is complete, final recommendations on corridor designs, individual prioritized solutions, and a summary of potential funding sources will be presented in a draft report for further stakeholder and public review.