

PUBLIC INPUT ON EXISTING AND FUTURE CONDITIONS

The first public workshop for the Ulster Route 9W Mobility Plan was held online as a “Join at Your Own Pace” presentation. The online presentation was available for review and public comment on the study website <https://ulster-route9w-uctc-ulstercounty.hub.arcgis.com/> from Monday June 26, 2023 through Monday July 31, 2023. The meeting was well advertised by a press-release carried by Hudson Valley One for two weekly cycles, a direct mailing to over 130 businesses in the town, social media and web posts by the Ulster County Government and Town of Ulster, and flyers posted at businesses throughout the study area. The meeting was attended with over 65 unique views of the recorded presentation. The online presentation began with an introduction by Brian Slack, Principal Transportation Planner for the Ulster County Transportation Council (UCTC) and Ulster Town Supervisor James Quigley. An overview of the study goals, analysis, and general needs was presented by Jesse Vogl (Creighton Manning). The purpose of the public workshop was to inform the public about this transportation planning study, let them know the different methods by which they can provide comments, provide the public with an initial understanding of the existing conditions and needs, and obtain input from the public on transportation issues and ideas that should be considered as the study progresses.

Meeting attendees had several opportunities to provide input and offer comments including a survey with multiple choice and open ended response questions, an online mapping exercise with the ability to place geo-located comments, and via email to the project team. The project website address was shared and participants were encouraged to provide additional comments.

Survey Responses

The online presentation directed the public to complete an online survey to provide input on the existing corridor operations and issues. As of the close of the comment period (July 31, 2023), 74 surveys were completed. The survey prompted respondents to provide input on the project goals, how they currently use the corridor, and identify issues/concerns with corridor operations and safety.

In general, the public agreed with the stated study objectives of reducing traffic congestion and improving safety, multi-modal mobility, and corridor aesthetics. When asked to prioritize these objectives, safety and multi-modal access ranked highest. Figure 1 summarizes the public priorities.

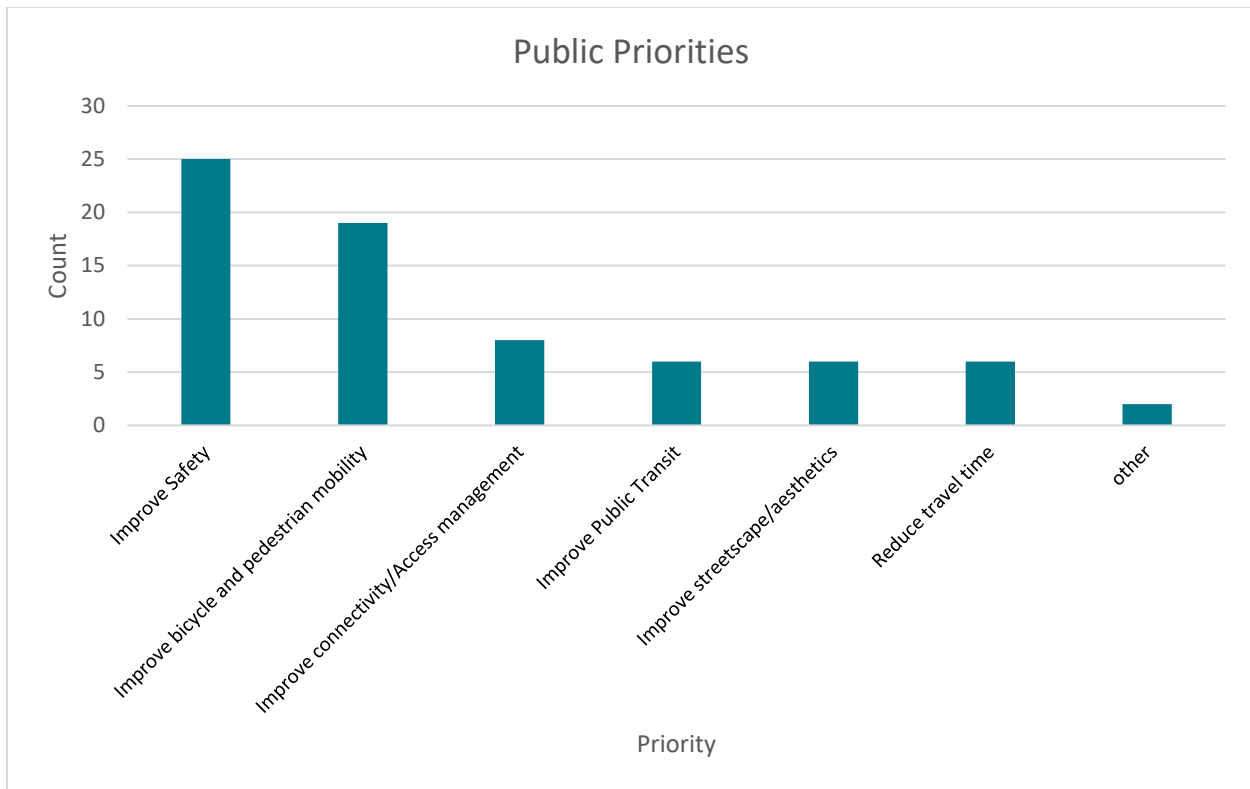


FIGURE 1: PUBLIC PRIORITIES

In addition to the study objectives, respondents were asked to provide input on traffic congestion. The survey responses indicate that congestion occurs most frequently on weekends and weekday afternoons, although approximately one third of respondents also noted that congestion is a concern during the morning and afternoon periods as well. Approximately half of the survey respondents indicated a preference to reduce congestion while traveling straight along Route 9W, while the other half prioritized reducing congestion while turning to and from homes, businesses, and side streets.

The final set of multiple choice questions asked respondents to provide input on how they currently use the corridor. Relative to trip purpose, shopping and errands was cited as the most frequent reason for travelling on the Route 9W corridor, followed by medical appointments, which generally aligns with the land uses within the corridor. The majority of respondents (90%) stated the use of automobiles as their primary mode of travel. Figure 2 shows how frequently respondents use each mode in the Route 9W corridor, and reinforces that automobile travel is the most frequent, although many respondents indicated that they do walk or bike in the corridor occasionally.

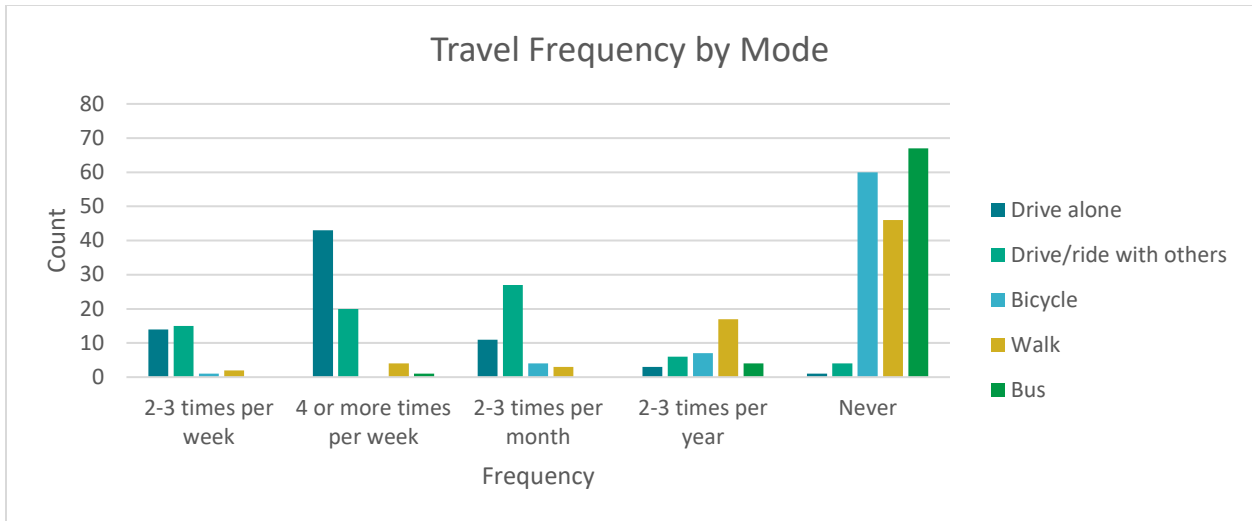


FIGURE 2: TRAVEL FREQUENCY BY MODE

Additionally, although the majority of respondents don't currently walk in the Route 9W corridor, approximately 55% indicated that they would be willing to walk if the corridor were improved, and additional 15% stating that they would possibly consider walking in the future, indicating the need for multi-modal accommodations.

Beyond the multiple choice questions, respondents had the opportunity to provide open ended comments on concerns and improvements for the corridor. The most common concerns in the corridor were pedestrian and bicycle connectivity and safety, observations of aggressive or unsafe driving, traffic congestion, and aesthetics. Ideas for corridor improvements include bicycle lanes, sidewalks, intersection and streetscape improvements to improve pedestrian comfort and safety, and changes to traffic operations including signal operation and turn restrictions. Figure 3 summarizes the identified concerns while Figure 4 summarizes the input on improvements.

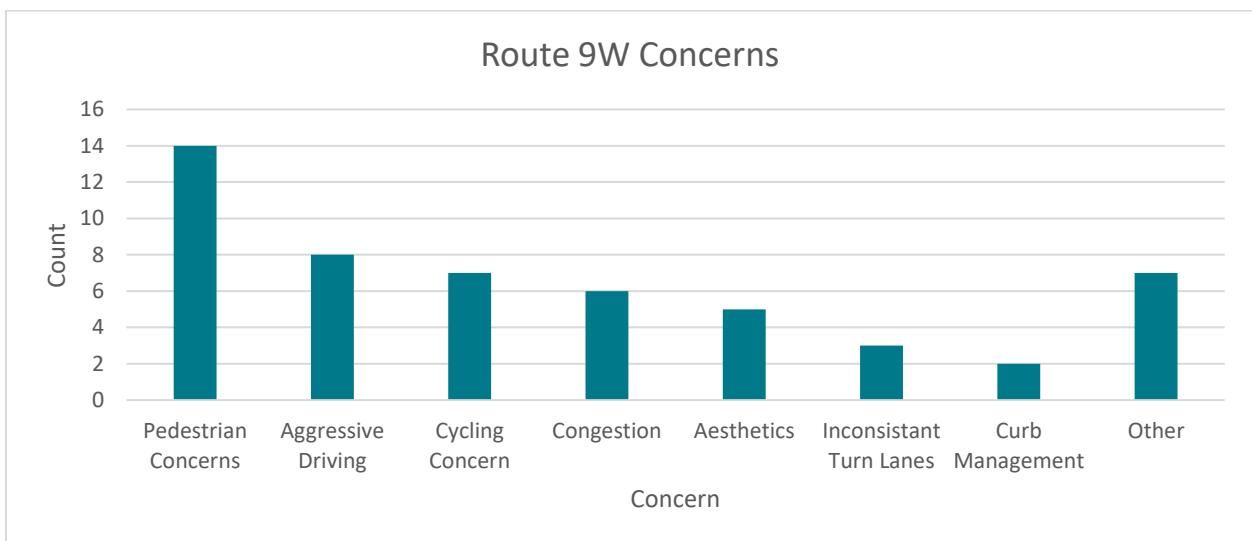


FIGURE 3: ROUTE 9W CONCERNS

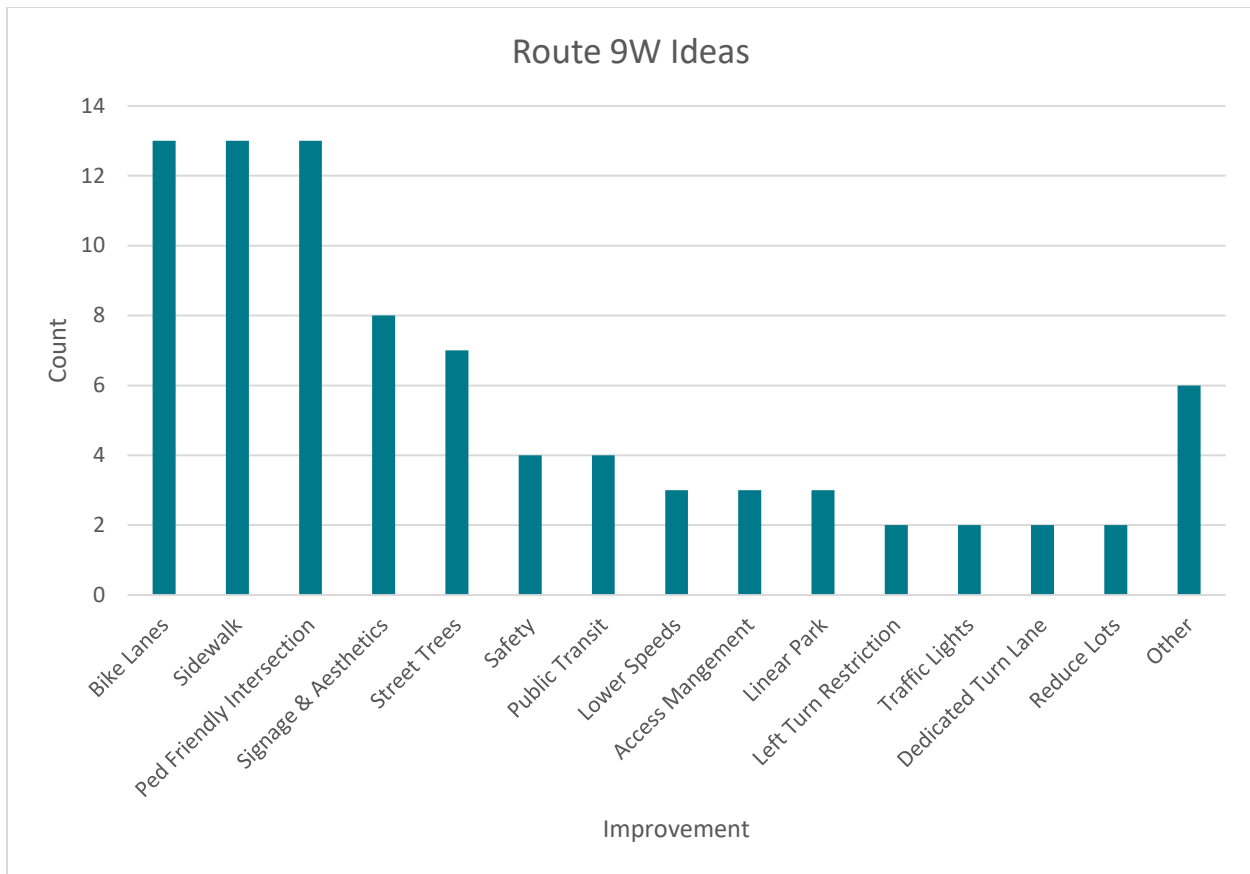


FIGURE 4: ROUTE 9W IDEAS

The online “Join at Your Own Pace” workshop also directed the public to provide geo-located comments using a mapping survey. This survey allowed respondents to place a pin on a map and type an open ended response indicating possible concerns or ideas associated with the designated location. A review of the responses indicates that the majority of locations identified lack of pedestrian infrastructure and areas of pedestrian discomfort. Several other locations were identified for concerns related to illegal left turns or traffic delays. Figure 5 shows the geo-located comments by type.

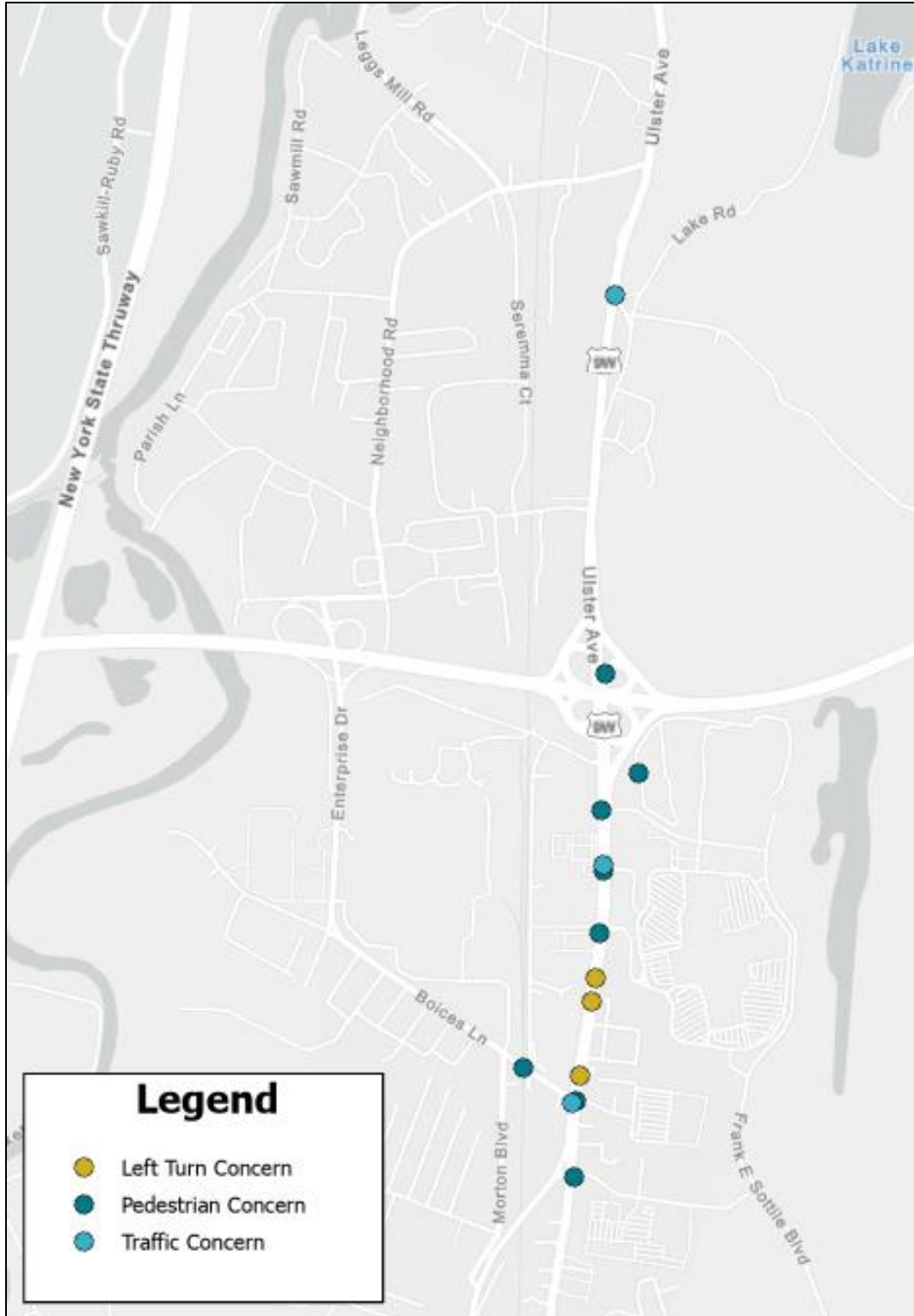


FIGURE 5: GEO-LOCATED COMMENTS