

# Palisades Trolley Trail & Foundry Trestle Bridge Feasibility Study

## Public Outreach Summary Report: Part 1

**Contract No.**  
DCKA-2017-T-0059

**Category:**  
L – Bicycle and Pedestrian Studies, Planning & Design

**Prepared for:**  
District Department of Transportation  
55 M Street, SE Suite 400  
Washington, DC 20003

**Prepared by:**  
Commun-ET, LLC and Kittelson & Associates, Inc.

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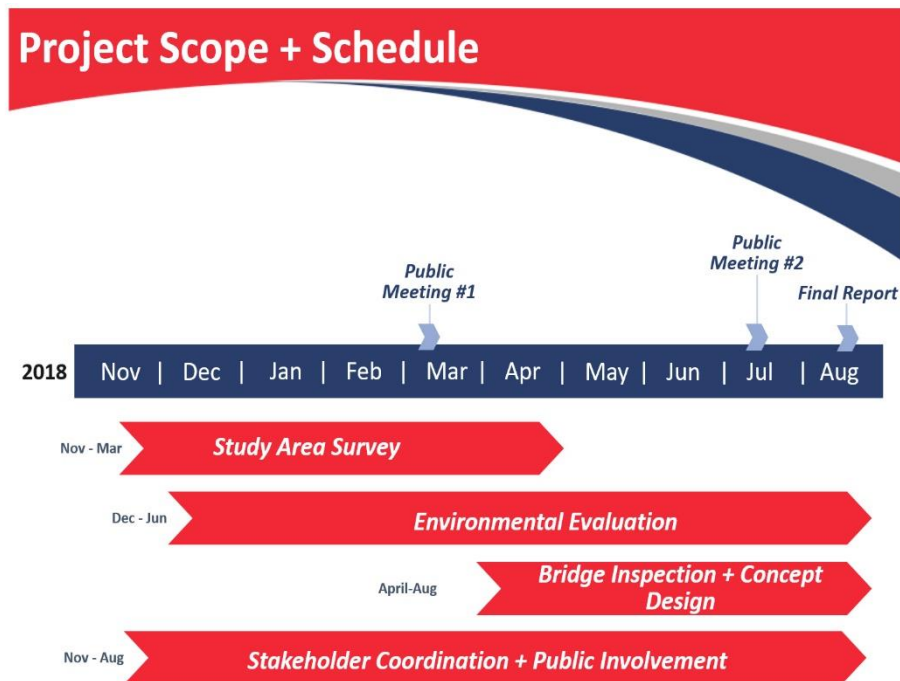
# Palisades Trolley Trail and Foundry Trestle Bridge Feasibility Study

## Public Outreach Report: Part I

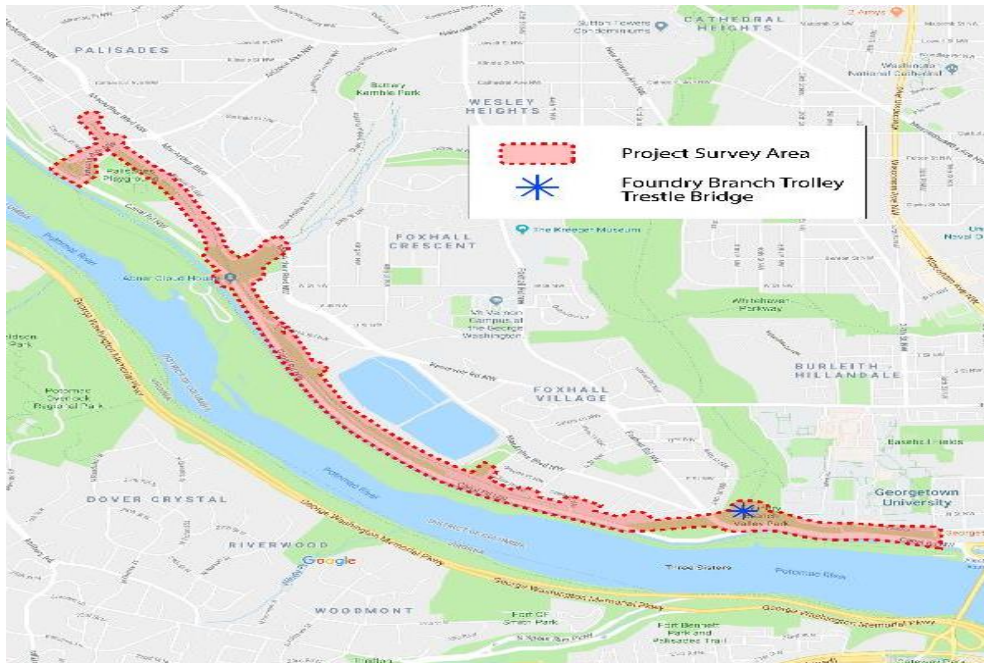
### 1. Project Background:

The purpose of the Palisades Trolley Trail & Foundry Trestle feasibility study is to identify critical issues and challenges in developing a multi-use trail for pedestrians and bicyclists of all ages and abilities on the former Glen Echo Trolley line corridor, an area commonly referred to as the Palisades Trolley Trail. The project will determine if a trail along the corridor would provide a transportation utility for pedestrians and bicyclists. The feasibility study will include a comprehensive survey of the study area to determine topography, utilities, site conditions, and historic resources. In addition, an inspection of the Foundry Branch Trestle Bridge will be completed, and options developed to rehabilitate the Bridge for use by bicycles and pedestrians as part of the Palisades Trolley Trail.

The feasibility study is scheduled to be a 10 month process with key timelines and deliverables noted below in the Project Scope & Schedule graph.



**Study Area:** The study area is the District’s northwest quadrant and is located along the former Glen Echo Trolley line between St. Mary’s Place, NW and Galena Place, NW in the Georgetown and Palisades neighborhoods. The study area includes the abandoned Foundry Branch Trestle Bridge in the historic Glover Archbold Park at Canal Road. A map of the study area can be found on the project website.



**Key Questions to Be Answered by the Study:**

**Foundry Trestle Bridge:**

- What is the cost to save the bridge?
- Can the bridge be removed from a historic resources perspective?
- What are the existing and future liabilities associated with the bridge?

**Trail:**

- What need is the trail serving?
- Is the trail warranted/needed from a transportation perspective?
- Should the trail be built without the Foundry Branch Trestle Bridge?
- Is there community support for the trail?
- How will the trail connect into the surrounding neighborhoods and other trails?

The purpose of the public meetings was to inform and gather input from the public on the existing conditions and obtain input regarding the following items:

- Key issues/challenges that would need to be addressed to move the project forward.
- Identify thoughts regarding potential environmental impacts of the project
- Identify thoughts regarding urban design elements based on best practices in multi-use trail implementation.

## **2. Public Input Outreach Format:**

The project team decided on **three key formats** to obtain public input regarding stakeholders' opinions of the existing conditions of the trail; as well as determine the community's viewpoint of the trail's current uses, possible proposed uses and connectivity to other trails and neighborhoods. The public input was obtained through the three following activities:

- 1. Public Meeting (66 attendees): March 7, 2019**
- 2. Online Community Survey (499 Responses): March 7, 2019 - April 7, 2019**
- 3. Online Public Comment WikiMap (162 Comments): March 7, 2019 - April 7, 2019**

As part of the public input process, the community survey was created and posted on-line at the project website, <https://ddot.dc.gov/page/palisades-trolley-trail>, to coincide with the public meeting date. The community survey was also provided at the public meeting and participants were able to provide input through ipads and completion of physical copies of the survey with the staff.

After the public meeting, the community was encouraged to continue to provide input through the on-line community survey and the on-line public comment wikimap. The public comment period for the survey and on-line wikimap was March 7, 2019 through April 7, 2019. Throughout the survey period, reminders of the survey timeline were sent out through social media and email updates to the ANCs, community listservs and other stakeholders to encourage input.

### 3. Public Meeting Summary:

This portion of the report provides a synopsis of the March 7<sup>th</sup> public meeting as well as community input obtained during the meeting.

#### 3.1. Public Meeting Location & Notifications:

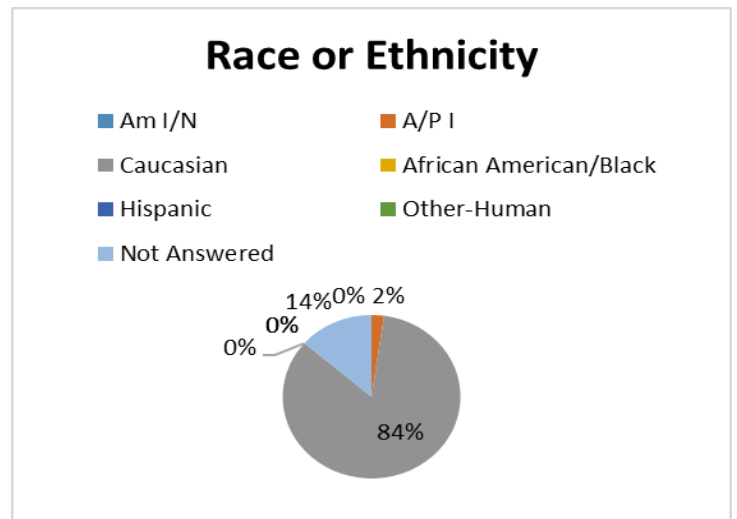
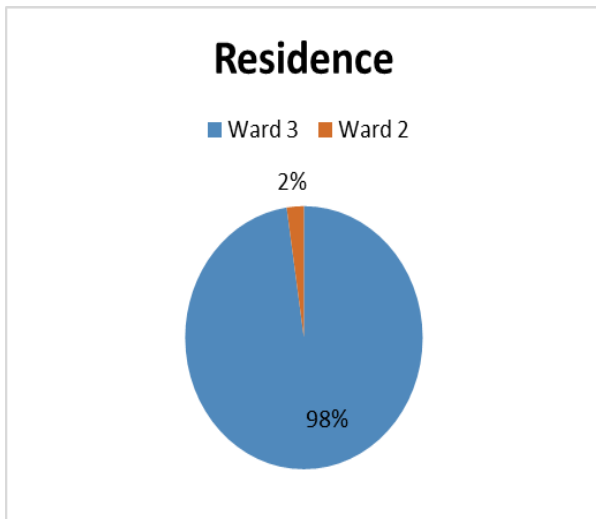
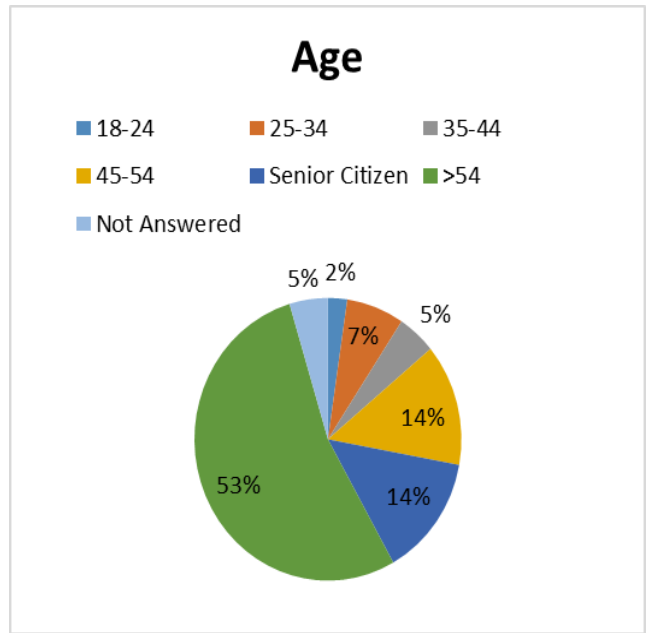
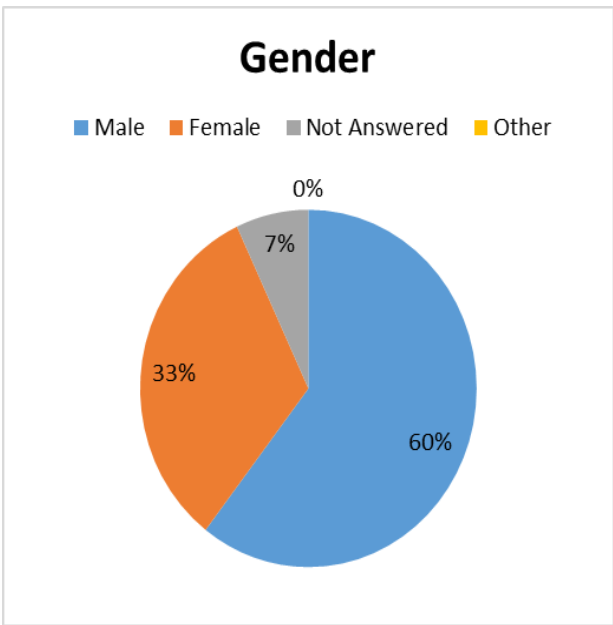
The first Public Meeting was held on March 7, 2019 from 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm at the Palisades Neighborhood Library in the Large Meeting Room, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor and included representatives from DDOT and the project team.

**Notifications:** Members of the public were informed of the public meeting through the project website, social media, ANC updates, civic associations, and community list servs. Project Fact Sheets were also provided with the public meeting notifications to Wards 2 and Wards 3. A presentation was provided to ANC 3D; and ANC 2E was provided information regarding the public meeting notification and project description. Notifications were also sent to local stakeholders for distribution to the public.

#### 3.2. Meeting Attendance & Survey Data Obtained:

A registration table was set up at the entrance of the venue, with sign in sheets for attendees. The registered attendance for the Palisades public meeting was 66 total in attendance with 3 elected officials and the majority of the residents residing in Ward 3. In terms of public comment data obtained, the following is reported: 42 people completed Title VI forms and 31 people completed the Community Survey.

Additional data regarding the demographics of the meeting are noted below as well.



### 3.3 Public Meeting Format:

The project team provided a registration desk displaying project information, the community survey and the project fact sheet for the attendees to pick up prior to entering the meeting room. Once entering the meeting room, displayed boards were provided that featured project scope, existing conditions of the trail area, historical data regarding the Foundry Trestle Bridge, bicycle/pedestrian access issues and connectivity matters. The meeting also provided corridor maps for residents to provide comments regarding other corridor concerns.

The public meeting was an open-house style format with information boards and interactive activities around the room. The meeting began with residents interacting with project team members at the boards and then moving everyone to the auditorium style seating to listen to the Project Manager provide a 15 minute presentation regarding the project scope, purpose, and information regarding key items to be determined by the feasibility analysis. During and after the presentation, there were on-going questions and answers by members of the project team, DDOT staff, and the public who attended the meeting.

### 3.4 Exhibits & Presentations:

Informational boards, including maps and displays were presented at the public meeting, along with a short presentation. DDOT's Project Manager, Michael Alvino, and members of the project team were available to discuss the project with the public throughout the meeting. As noted, both boards and interactive map activities were designed to give attendees an overview of the study, its purpose/need while documenting key public feedback. The following boards were presented:

- **Project Overview:** This board provided information regarding the project study area, project scope/purpose, timeline for the feasibility study and opportunities for public input.
- **Historic Context:** This board provided information regarding the historical context of both the Foundry Trestle Bridge and the former Glen Echo Trolley Line. This board also noted key elements such as historical ownership changes, maintenance elements as well as historical preservation matters.
- **Current Conditions:** This board provided information regarding the current Palisades Trail and ownership conditions
- **Bicycle & Pedestrian Access Issues:** This board provided information regarding pedestrian and bicyclists access issues along this study area, as well as noting access issues impacted by connectivity, safety and topography.
- **Crossings:** This board sought to document concerns regarding bridge and trail crossings along the project study area.



- **Potential Connections:** This board provided information regarding the study area’s possible connectivity to key destinations and other trails, while also seeking input from the public regarding other key connections that could be made.
- **Pedestrian Bridge and Connecting Trail Over Arizona Avenue, NW:** This board was developed by the Arizona Bridge Project Team and highlighted the project scope, status and key issues.

### 3.5 Written Comments Received At Public Meeting:

At the meeting, public comments were obtained through the following avenues:

- Public Comments captured at the Boards-- (noted in this section below)
- Public Comments Received through Title VI data --(noted in this section below)
- A corridor map was presented and attendees were invited to write their comments through sticky notes and post them along the map -- (this data is included in the On-line Public Comment Wikimap data beginning on Page 17 of this report).
- Community Survey Data -- (this data is included in the On-line Community Survey Summary Data beginning on Page 10 of this report)

#### 3.5.1 Public Comments Captured at the Boards During Open House Format of Public Meeting

Below is a summary of comments received by project team members during the open house portion of the public meeting.

- Concerns about bicycle and pedestrian safety at the Foxhall Road/MacArthur Boulevard intersection.
- Concerns about high speed bicycle traffic on the trail in a neighborhood where kids play on the trail; this is an issue on the nearby Capital Crescent Trail.
- Concerns about additional traffic, noise, lighting, and garbage on the trail if it is converted to a multi-use facility.
- Concerns about the cost of three new bridges and the rehabilitation of the Foundry Trestle Bridge. Many see the project as infeasible.
- Desire to keep the trail natural and unpaved and concerns that the Arizona Avenue Bridge project will pave a large portion of the trail.
- Desire to pave the trail so it can be used as a multi-use facility.
- Drainage on the trail is a major problem.

## 3.5.2 Title VI Comments Received From Public Meeting.

The comments noted below were obtained through the Title VI Form at the public meeting and have not been edited or paraphrased.

Additional Questions/Comments
I am against this project. It would provide no connection value and reduce further livelihood left in our neighborhood. Thanks for organizing.
I see no reason for this development; Bikes and walkers
The path is perfect as is! If the city is flush fix the potholes! Reduce taxes, did I say fix potholes!!! Stop paving/graveling Paradise
Do not want anymore paving! There is bike access on cc trial and street and canal. Need to preserve the little green space left for walking. Grading and grass perhaps some pea gravel plus drainage would be welcome, but are over run by vehicles as it is. No more! Bicycles do not mix!
We are a walk do neighborhood with two bike trails/lanes in close proximity to the proposed trial. Its not clear to why this is.
Please explore the feasibility of a bridge from the northwest corner of the Palisades Park (woods), across Arizona Ave to connect to the Canal Road bridge at roughly the same elevation. Also please converse an open meeting specifically about the details of construction of Arizona Ave foot bridge to re-adjoining trial.
I appreciate the thorough work you've done but must register my dismay at the prospect of large outlays of another trail project in a trail rich area. The sacrifice of the natural landscape to the narrow interests of a few. The environmental impact of removing green space. The creation of an expensive trial that would deposit people on the top of a steep hill - the Exorcist steps! I strongly oppose building bridges in our park areas, surfacing the trail with anything other than grass or doing anything to the trail other than improving drainage. If ADA accessibility is the aim, I think a far better use of funds would be to make the sidewalk along canal rode (along side Georgetown U) safer with barriers to speeding traffic so that the mostly gentle slope from MacArthur to M Street could be taken advantage of. More sense to me than multiple bridges over hilly terrain.
Can someone or project manager for the Arizona bridge project contact me. I live on Carolina Place, and had heard that the bridge was going to be rebuilt and or improved. But the map shown tonight shows a far greater footprint along the former trolley trail and down to my street. I am interested in learning more.
Very disappointed to learn the project manager for the Arizona bridge part was not here as we were promised more input on the trail that's across the chain bridge at Battery Kimble. We don't feel the DDOT people been forthright. We feel steam rolled by the project. We prefer the trail left natural but kept up.

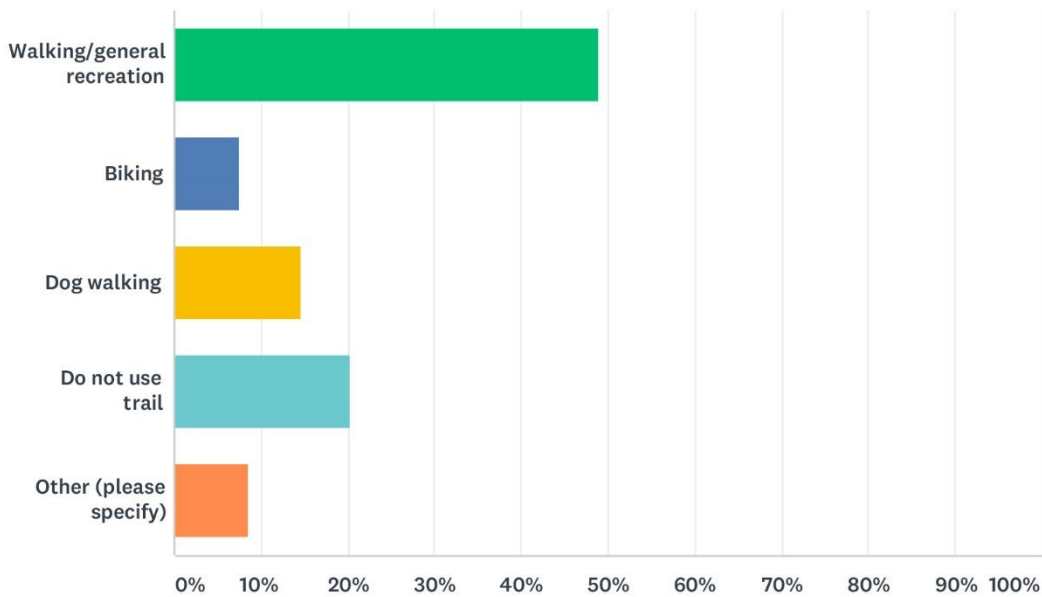
<p>Not enough time to commute, ask questions to get information. We have been given misinformation, lack of feedback from project officials, managers and etc. No information about decisions made about the feasibility studies -outcome of those studies. Definitely not unfair of this project as it exists now, would have suggestions of how it could be improved.</p>
<p>Trolley trail should remain as is except for drainage improvements; no lighting.</p>
<p>Concerns about the trail and most importantly about the noise.</p>
<p>Conditions about the trail</p>
<p>Thank you for the thorough work done by DDOT and consultants. We appreciate the surveys, maps, questionnaires and meetings as a way to give information. All members of our household (4) use the trail several times a week at various times of the day for rest and recreation. We walk our dogs there and meet neighbors. We would prefer the preservation of the natural environment as is; these natural areas are disappearing. We also want the ability to walk our dogs there and the trail for the bikes would be perfect for this.</p>
<p>I am opposed to altering the nature trail. There are adequate alternate widely used trails that run nearby to this and into Georgetown. In fact you can the C and O Canal and Capital Crescent Trail form the Trolley Trail. Nature and wildlife will be destroyed by this project. This is a complete waste of tax money. I do not want bicycles speeding by on this trail.</p>
<p>This project has potential but I have a nagging concern that DC transportation needs to call for a mass transit rail line of some sort in NW quadrant between the red line and the Potomac River. Given how hard it is to build the Purple line. I see this old streetcar right of way as the most promising possibility for a route. A river road trail project might be very costly. I am interested in this issue of connections with the Capital Crescent trail.</p>
<p>Management of meeting was poor. Trail advocates were allowed too much time and neighborhood participants were cut off.</p>
<p>The stretch of the trail on Potomac Ave. runs directly in front of seven homes on a dead end. Having busy bikes immediately in front of these homes would negatively impact the homes in terms of privacy, noise from the homes.</p>
<p>Over crowded</p>
<p>This project is a ridiculous waste of taxpayer resources and should be stopped immediately for following reasons. Cost cannot be justified. There already is a paved bike trail (Capital Crescent) and two paths less than nudge from the proposed trail. There is no need for another bike trail. The money should be used in other parts where its needed. There is virtually no green space in Palisades.</p>
<p>I disagree with money being spent on something that is little to no use for the community or the neighborhood. I develop homes across DC and I know there are neighborhoods with no options for hiking/biking/walking paths. This is only adding to the two homes in the city.</p>

## 4. On-Line Community Survey Summary Data

As noted in the report earlier, the community provided input through a customized survey tool during both the public meeting and through the on-line survey period of March 7, 2019 through April 7, 2019. The Palisades Trolley Trail and Foundry Trestle Feasibility Study's Survey received 499 responses during this timeframe. A summary of the survey responses is provided below.

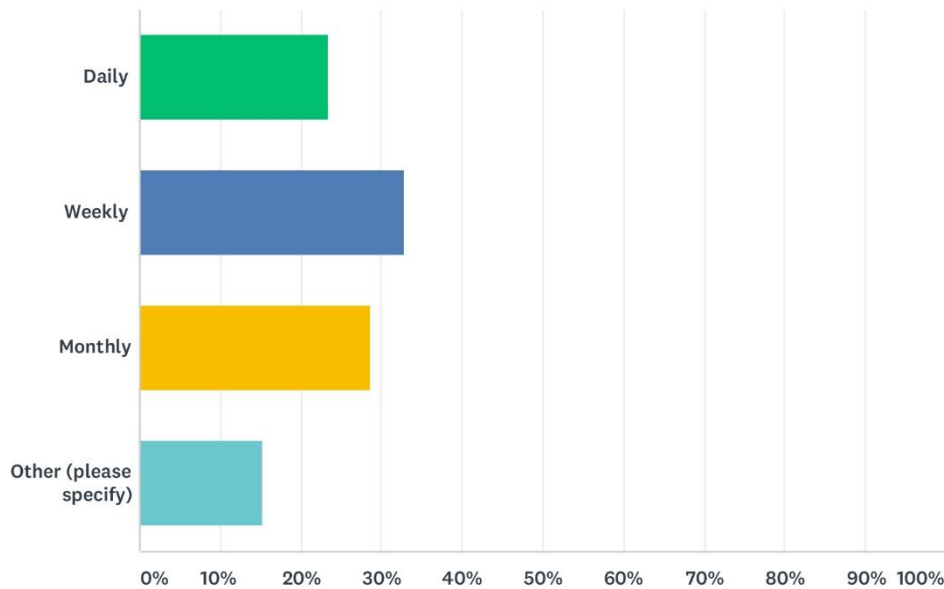
### How do you currently use the Palisades Trolley Trail?

Almost 50% of respondents use the trail for walking/general recreation; 20% do not use the trail. Less than 10% use the trail for biking. Other uses described by respondents include running, gardening, birding, and picnicking.



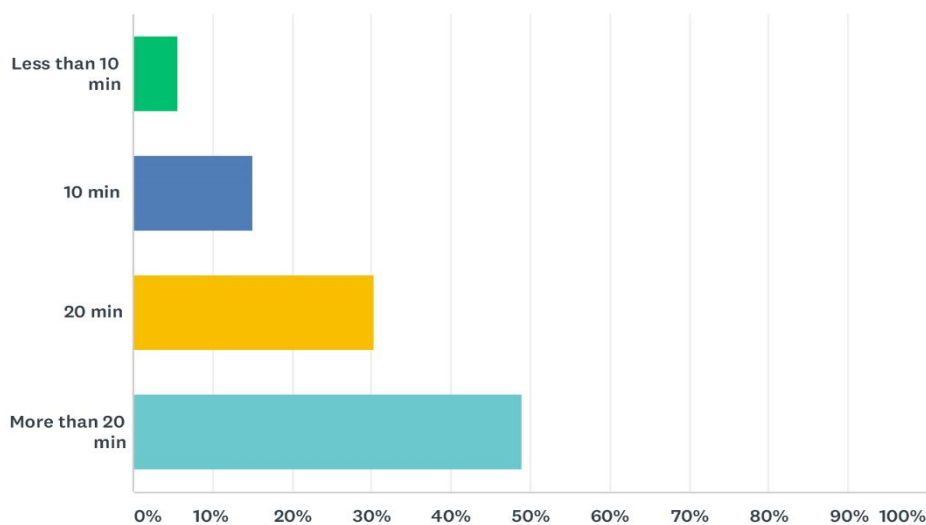
### If you use the trail, how often are you on the Palisades Trolley Trail?

Trail usage is relatively evenly split between daily, weekly, and monthly, with weekly usage the highest among respondents at 32%. Other timeframes described by respondents include once or twice a month, a few times a year, and rarely.



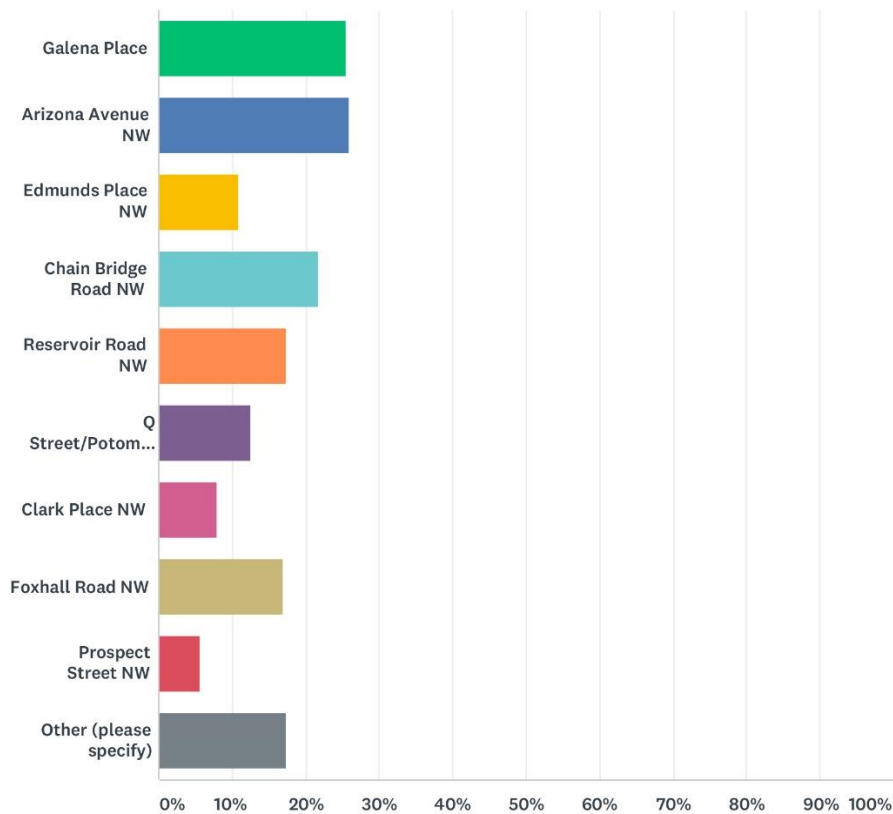
### If you use the trail, how much time do you typically spend on the Palisades Trolley Trail?

Almost 50% of respondents spend more than 20 minutes on the trail and 30% spend 20 minutes. Only 5% use the trail for less than 10 minutes.



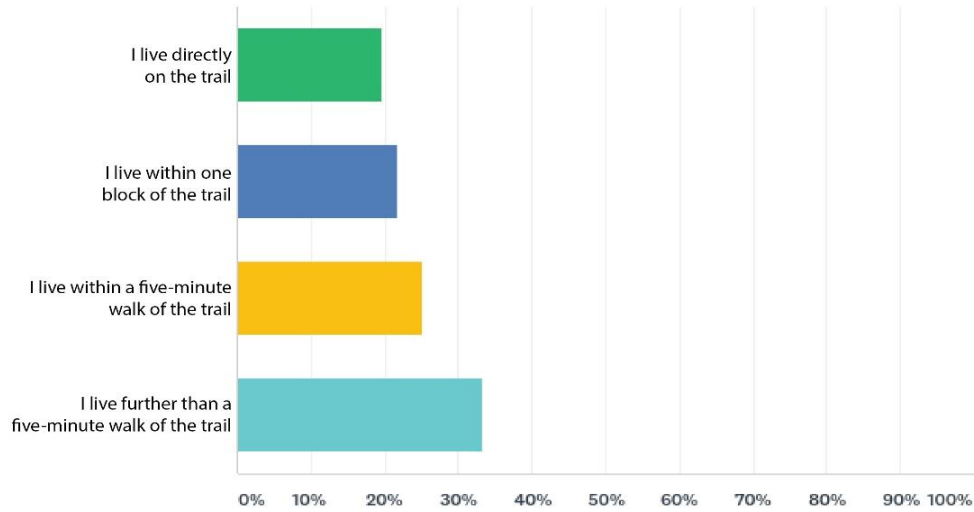
### Where do you currently access the Palisades Trolley Trail?

Galena Place, Arizona Avenue NW, and Chain Bridge Road NW all were listed by more than 20% of respondents. Prospect Street NW and Clark Place NW were both listed the least with less than 10% of respondents at each location. Other access point locations listed by respondents include Sherier Place, Hutchins Place, the Palisades Recreation Center parking lot, Canal Road, and residents' backyards.



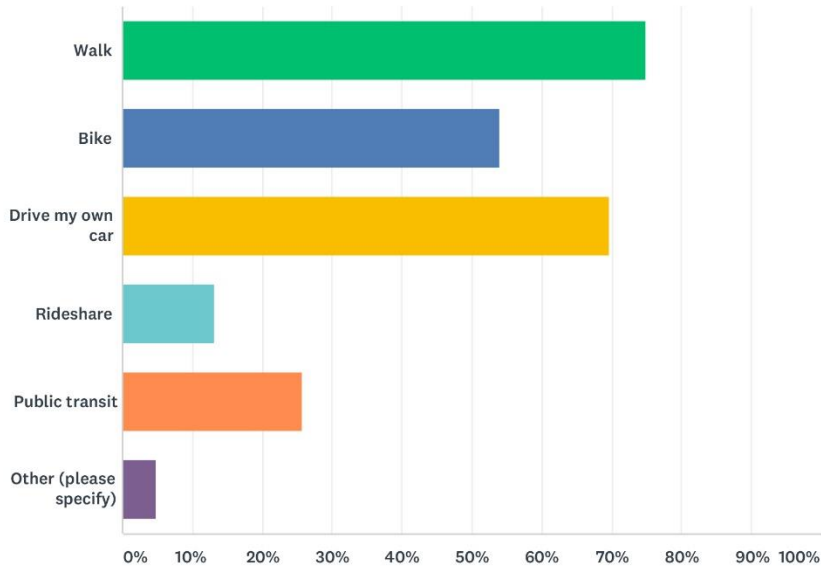
## Where do you live relative to the Palisades Trolley Trail?

More than 30% of respondents live further than a five-minute walk of the trail. Respondents are relatively evenly split between the other three categories of directly on the trail, within one block of the trail, and within a five-minute walk of the trail.



**How do you typically move around the Georgetown/Palisades neighborhoods? (mark all that apply)**

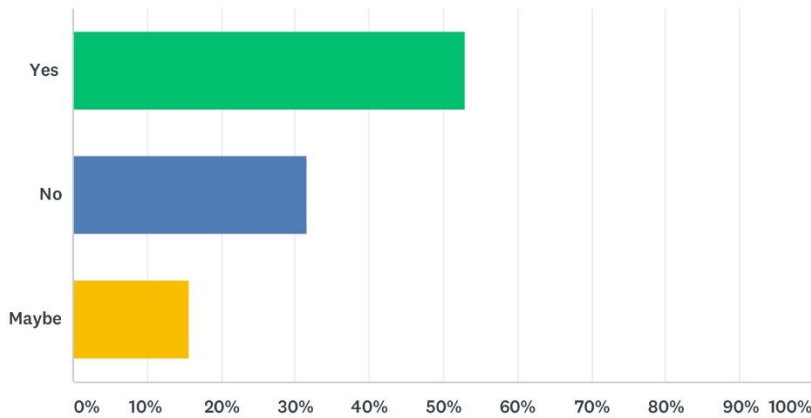
75% of respondents walk and 70% drive their own car; over 50% bike. 25% use public transit and 13% use rideshare. Other modes listed by respondents include scooters and running/jogging.





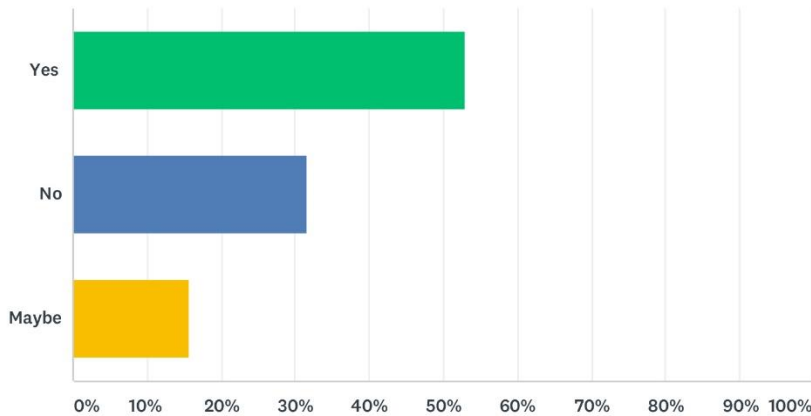
**If there was a multi-use trail, would you use it for transportation to access the Georgetown commercial district and/or Downtown DC?**

Over 50% of respondents would use a multi-use trail to access Georgetown/Downtown DC, while 31% would not use the trail. 15% might use the trail.



**How important to you is the rehabilitation of the Foundry Trestle Bridge over Glover Archbold Park for use by bicyclists and pedestrians?**

Over 35% of respondents think the rehabilitation of the Foundry Trestle Bridge is very important. Roughly 50% of respondents think the Bridge is either somewhat important or not important.



**Please provide any other comments here:**

The main topics and issues discussed in the write-in comments are listed below with the number of responses received for each topic.

<b>Comment Topic</b>	<b>Number of Responses</b>
Maintain the trail as a natural environment	59
<b><i>Paving/Trail Surface</i></b>	
Keep it grass/natural	57
Crushed Stone/Gravel Preferred	10
Paved Trail Preferred	13
Concerns about bicycle traffic on the trail	62
Want to be able to bike on the trail	49
Want more access to the CCT/C&O Towpath Trails	35
Provide a new CCT connection instead of multi-use trail on PTT	22
Concerns about drainage/erosion of the trail	30
Concerns about additional traffic on the trail disturbing residents	41
Concerns about cost of building the trail	19

## 4. On-line Public Comment WikiMap Data

As noted earlier in the report, an Online Public Comment Wikimap was the third interactive format created to obtain public input regarding the Palisades Trolley Trail and Foundry Trestle Feasibility Study. The Online Public Comment Wikimap tool received 162 comments while open from March 7, 2019 through April 7, 2019. The comments are categorized by issues/concerns and opportunities/ideas for the study area; they reflect both support for and opposition to a paved, multi-use trail facility. Topic areas addressed in the comments include the following:

### Opportunities/Ideas

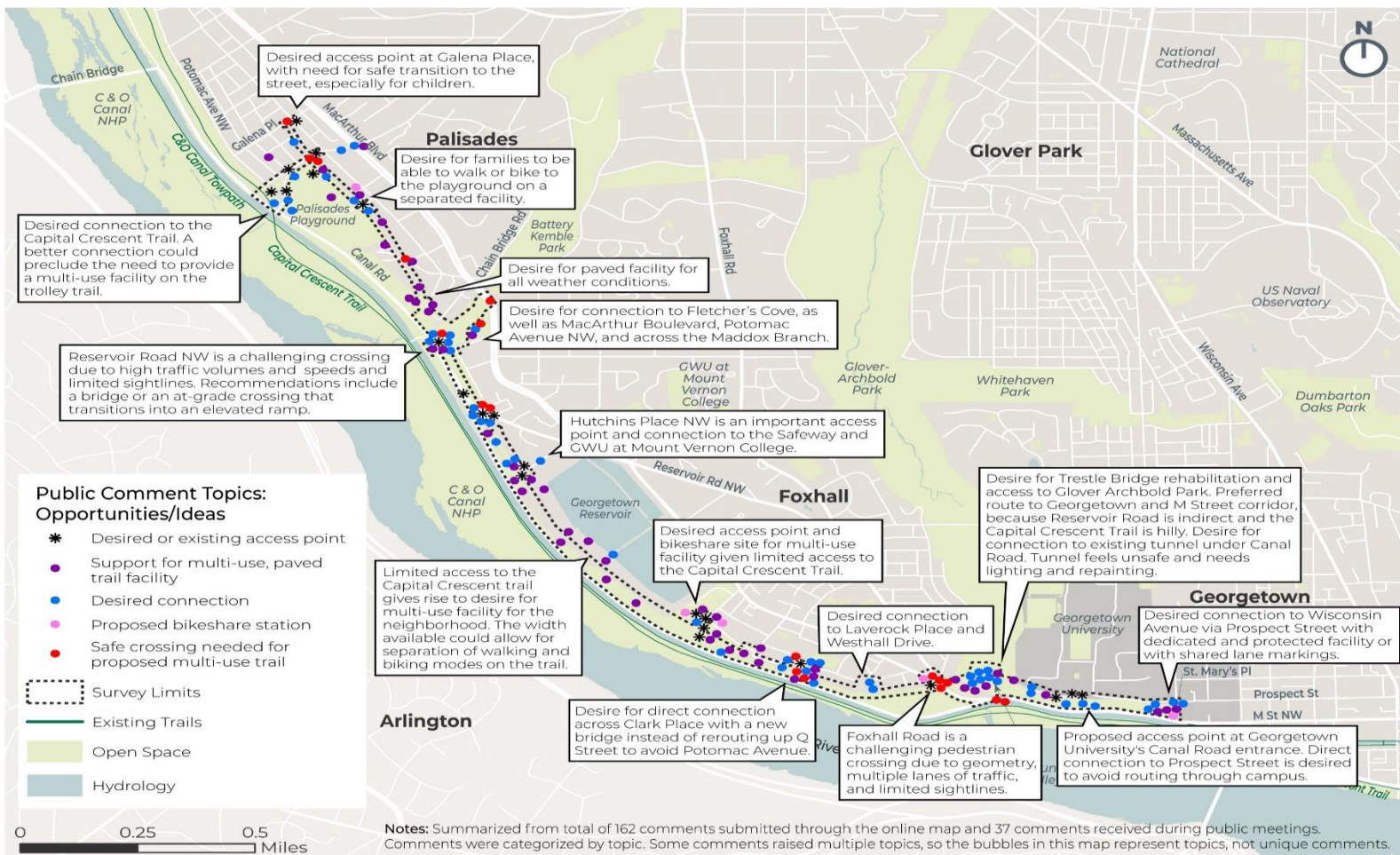
- Desired or existing trail access point
- Support for multi-use paved trail facility
- Desired connection
- Proposed bikeshare station
- Safe crossing needed for proposed multi-use trail

### Issues/Concerns

- Maintain natural state of trail; opposed to paving
- Lighting/increased traffic concerns
- Parking concerns
- Mode conflicts between pedestrians and bicyclists
- Drainage Issues

Summary maps of the Opportunities and Issues comments are shown on the following pages.

## Opportunities

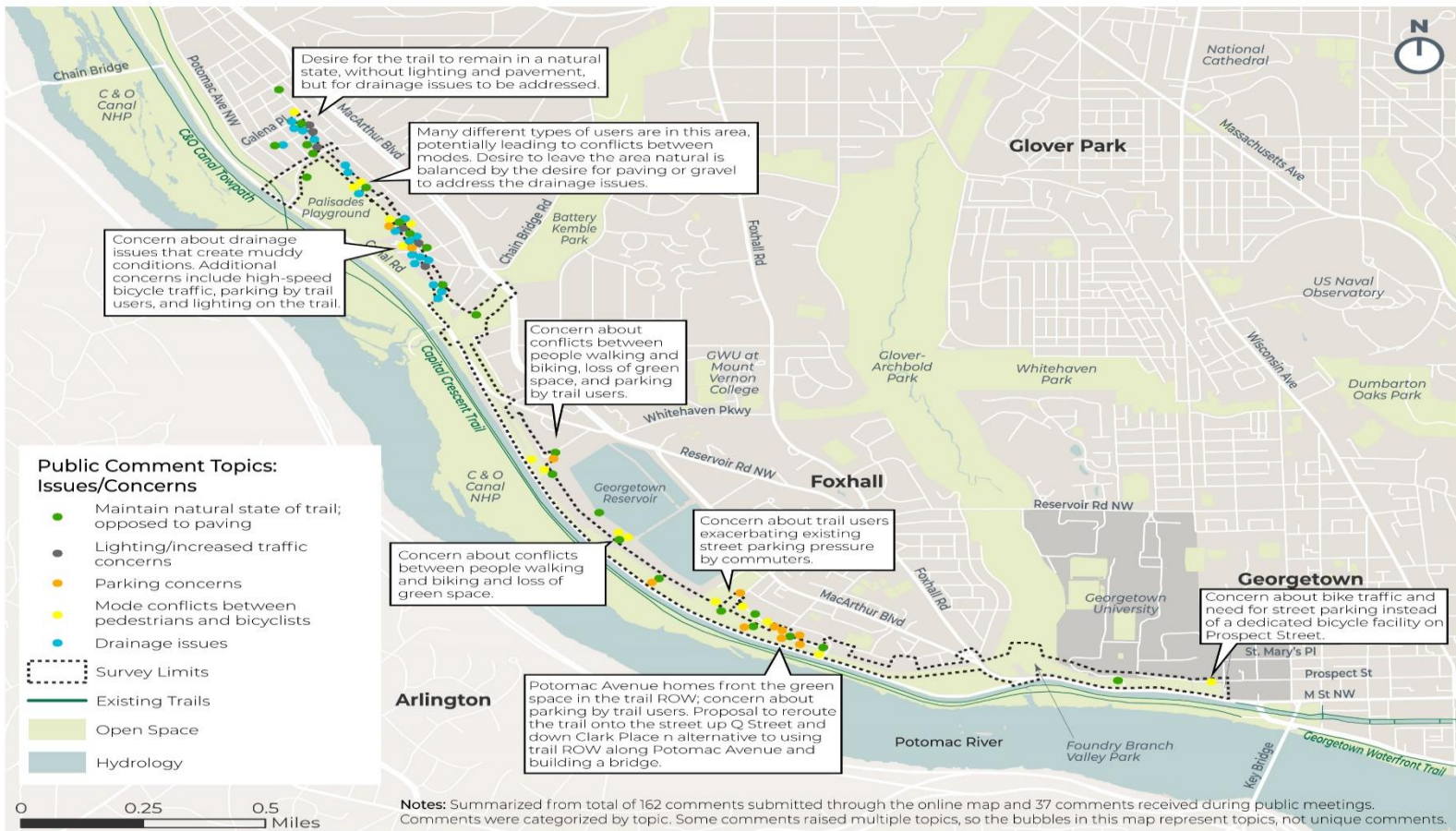


A number of comments noted the benefit of a paved, year-round, all-weather facility, focusing on the potential to address drainage issues between Galena Place and Battery Kemble Park, limited access to the Capital Crescent Trail, and the need for families to be able to walk or bike safely with children. The public identified desired connections from the trail, including to the Safeway in Foxhall, GWU at Mount Vernon College, Fletcher Cove, Georgetown University, and Prospect Street to Wisconsin Avenue. The existing and missing bridge sites, including the Trestle Bridge, Clark Place NW, Reservoir Road, and Battery Kemble Park/Maddox Branch, were also identified as critical gaps along the corridor.

Commenters also identified potential bikeshare station locations, crossing locations that would need safety upgrades if the trail was built, and existing and desired or more formal access points, including near Arizona Avenue NW, Canal Road NW near Fletcher’s Cove, Reservoir Road NW, Hutchins Place NW, Eliot Place NW, Clark Place NW, MacArthur Boulevard/Foxhall Road, the Canal Road tunnel at Foundry Branch Valley Park, and Canal Road at Georgetown University.



## Issues



Concerns about a multi-use trail facility were concentrated near the residential areas between Galena Place NW and Chain Bridge Road NW, and near Hutchins Place NW, Eliot Place NW, and Potomac Avenue NW. The residents abutting trail between Galena Place NW and Chain Bridge Road NW are concerned about lighting and parking adjacent to residential areas. People who walk the trail regularly want to see the green space maintained and are concerned about conflicts with high speed bicycle traffic if the trail were to be paved.

Drainage was the most commonly cited issue at the northern end of the study area, with some members of the public preferring muddy conditions over the prospect of a paved path, while others suggested that drainage improvements would be a positive outcome of potential trail construction. Loss of green space, parking by trail users, and potential conflicts between people biking and walking are also the main concerns at potential access points at Hutchins Place NW, Eliot Place NW, and Potomac Avenue NW.

Georgetown residents are concerned about maintaining street parking on Prospect Street, should an on-street connection be created from the trail toward the east. Some members of the public felt that a third multi-use trail is not needed given the two parallel trails, suggesting that a better connection to the Capital Crescent Trail from Arizona Avenue would preclude the need to pave the Trolley Trail.

## **APPENDIX**

### **Separate Attachments:**

- **Project Boards**
- **Public Meeting Presentation**
- **Community Survey Results**