



**THRIVING
COMMUNITIES**
PROGRAM

Omaha | North Freeway

Visioning Workshop

02/13/2024

Workshop Agenda

9:00 a.m.	Workshop Overview and Introductions
10:15 a.m.	Fifteen-minute Break
10:30 a.m.	Issues, Goals, & Vision Work Session
Noon	Lunch
1:00 p.m.	Tools & Ideas Work Session
2:30 p.m.	Conclusion of Workshop



**THRIVING
COMMUNITIES
PROGRAM**

Workshop Overview and Introductions

Omaha Project Partners



ONE OMAHA



the practice
of democracy



SPARK



Thriving Communities Program (TCP)

14 Communities with focus on:

- Affordable Housing and Anti-Displacement
- Complete Streets and Vision Zero
- Economic Development
- Land Use and Zoning
- Public Engagement



Thriving Communities Program (TCP)

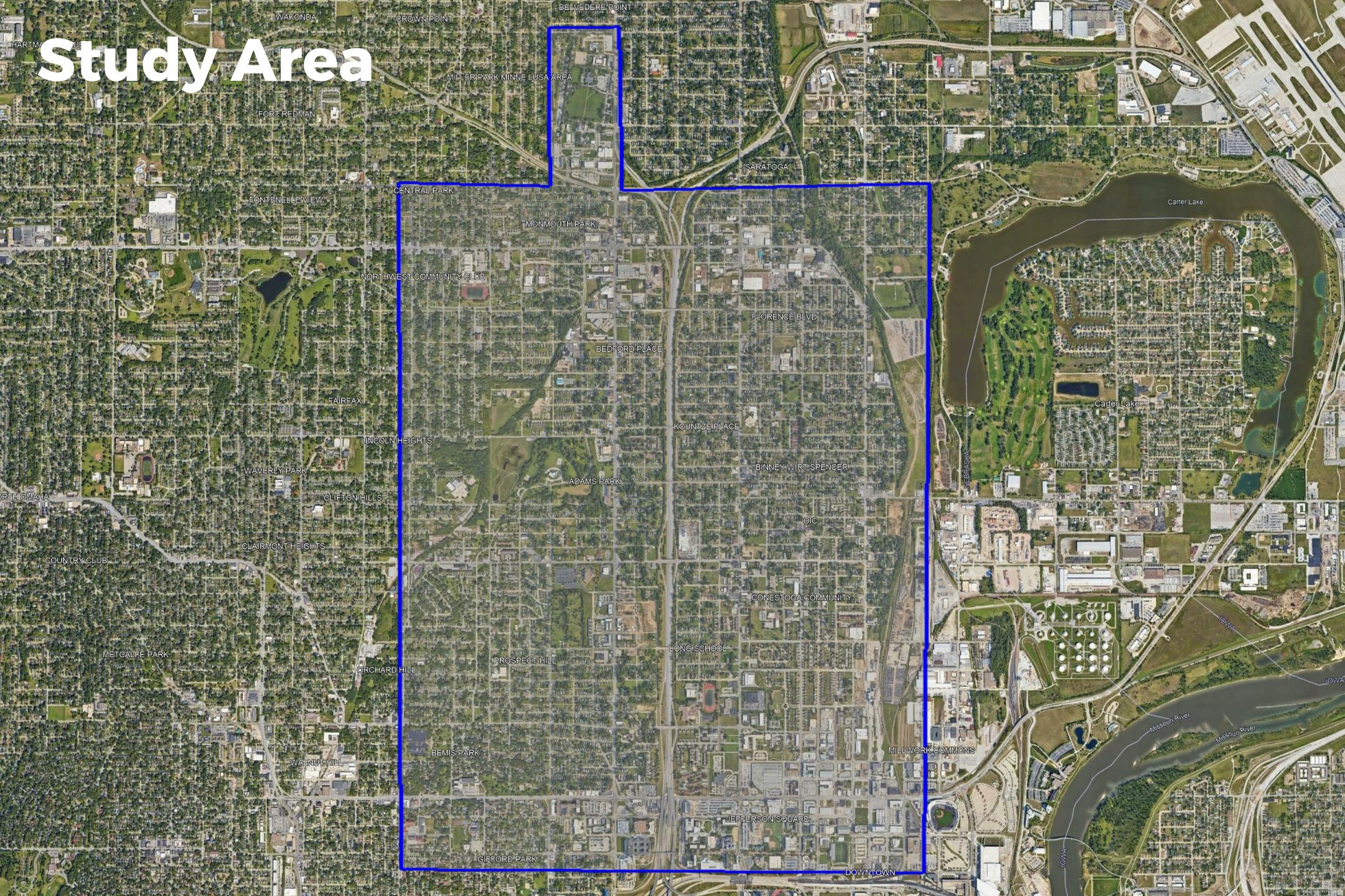
The inaugural USDOT **TCP Complete Transit-Oriented Neighborhoods**

- *The Thriving Communities Program funds tailored technical assistance to under-resourced and disadvantaged communities, helping them better access historic infrastructure investments and deliver transformative projects.*
- Program Goals
 - Technical assistance (TA) and capacity building support
 - Help communities plan and develop a pipeline of comprehensive transportation, housing, and community revitalization activities.
 - Enable communities to find and win funding to drive projects forward

Workshop Overview and Introductions

- Goals of workshop
 - Co-create a broad set of conceptual “tools” or strategies that could help to mitigate the harm of the freeway
 - Foster conversations and collaboration between community partners around what “thriving” looks like for the area around the North Freeway
 - Provide momentum for potential future studies / projects along the corridor

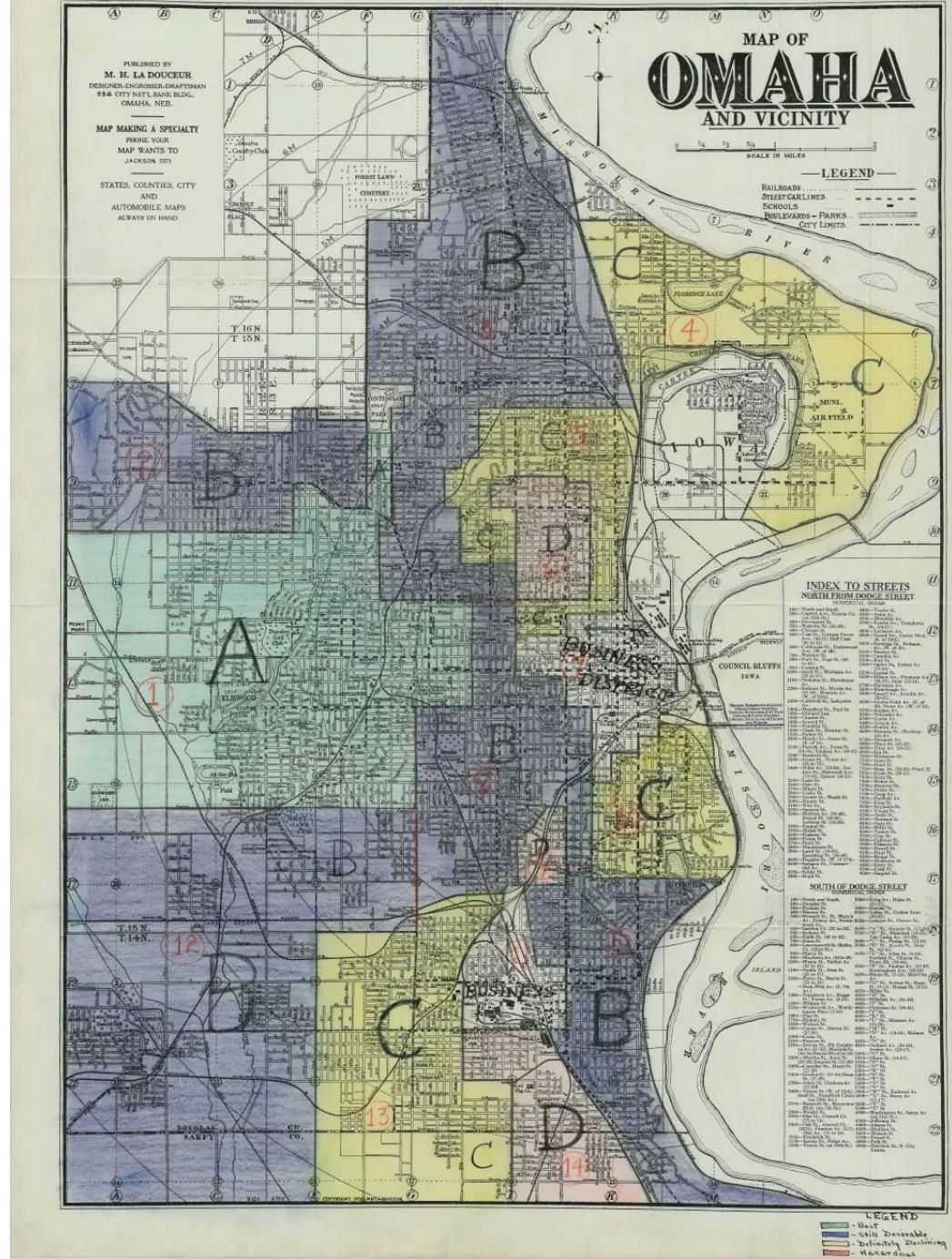
Study Area



North Freeway – Timeline

- **1956** – Idea for a “north expressway” was first conceptualized.
- **1960** – Phase 1 construction began on section from the I-480 interchange to Hamilton St. Neighborhood protests failed to stop project.
- **1973** – Phase 2 construction from Hamilton to Lake St began. Neighborhood protests failed to stop project.
- **1977** – Phase 3 construction from Lake St to Ames Ave began. Neighborhoods protested and successfully prevented construction northward to I-680.
- **1981** – Phase 4 construction from Ames Ave to interchange with 30th, Sorensen Pkwy, and Storz Expressway began.
- **1989** – Construction completed and highway dedicated.





How have other communities addressed highway barriers?

Connectivity Enhancements

Long Street Bridge and Cultural Wall - Columbus, Ohio
North Omaha Trail - Omaha, Nebraska

Highway Caps

Central-70 Cover Park - Denver, Colorado
South Loop - Kansas City, Missouri
ReConnect Rondo - St. Paul, Minnesota

Highway Removal

Park East Freeway - Milwaukee, Wisconsin
Inner Loop East - Rochester, New York

Long Street Bridge and Cultural Wall – Columbus, Ohio



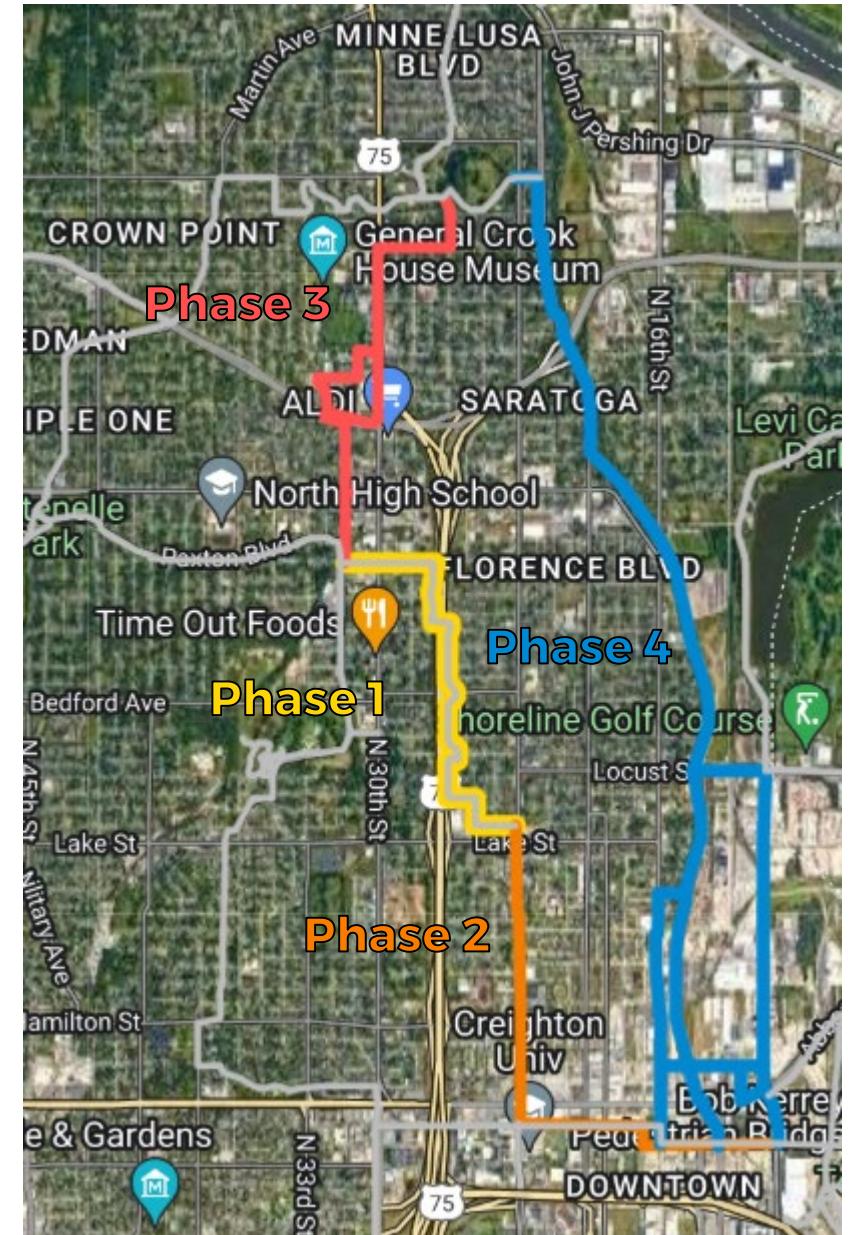
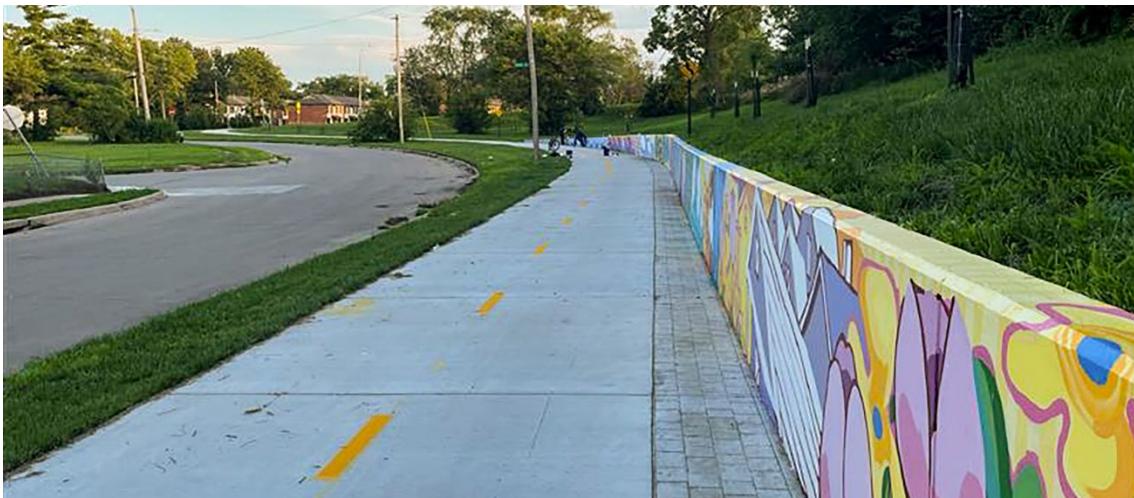
Long Street Bridge and Cultural Wall – Columbus, Ohio



North Omaha Trail

Multi-phase project

- Phase 1 (Completed 2022)
- Phase 2 (In progress)
- Phase 3 – Planned
- Potential Future Phases (Currently Studied)



Central-70 Cover Park – Denver, Colorado



Central-70 Cover Park – Denver, Colorado



South Loop Project - Kansas City, MO



- ~\$217 million highway cap topped with a 4-block long, 5.5 acre urban park
- Completion in 2026

ReConnect Rondo – St. Paul, Minnesota: Goals

- **Neighborhood Reconnection**—Reconnect the neighborhood on both sides of I-94 in ways that serve as a catalyst for community-wide initiatives.
- **Affordable Housing**
- **Equitable Development**
- **Public Health/Green Space**
- **Community Leadership**



ReConnect Rondo – St. Paul, Minnesota



Inner Loop East Removal - Rochester, New York

- Year: 2012
- Goal: reconnect neighborhoods, spur economic development, and provide an appropriately-scaled, complete city street “grid”
- Highlights
 - Replaced highway with a boulevard with street parking and bicycle lanes on either side of the street
 - Created 5.7 acres of land for mixed-use development along a new, walkable boulevard.



Inner Loop East Removal - Rochester, New York

Before (2014)



Before (2014)



After (2014)



After (2014)



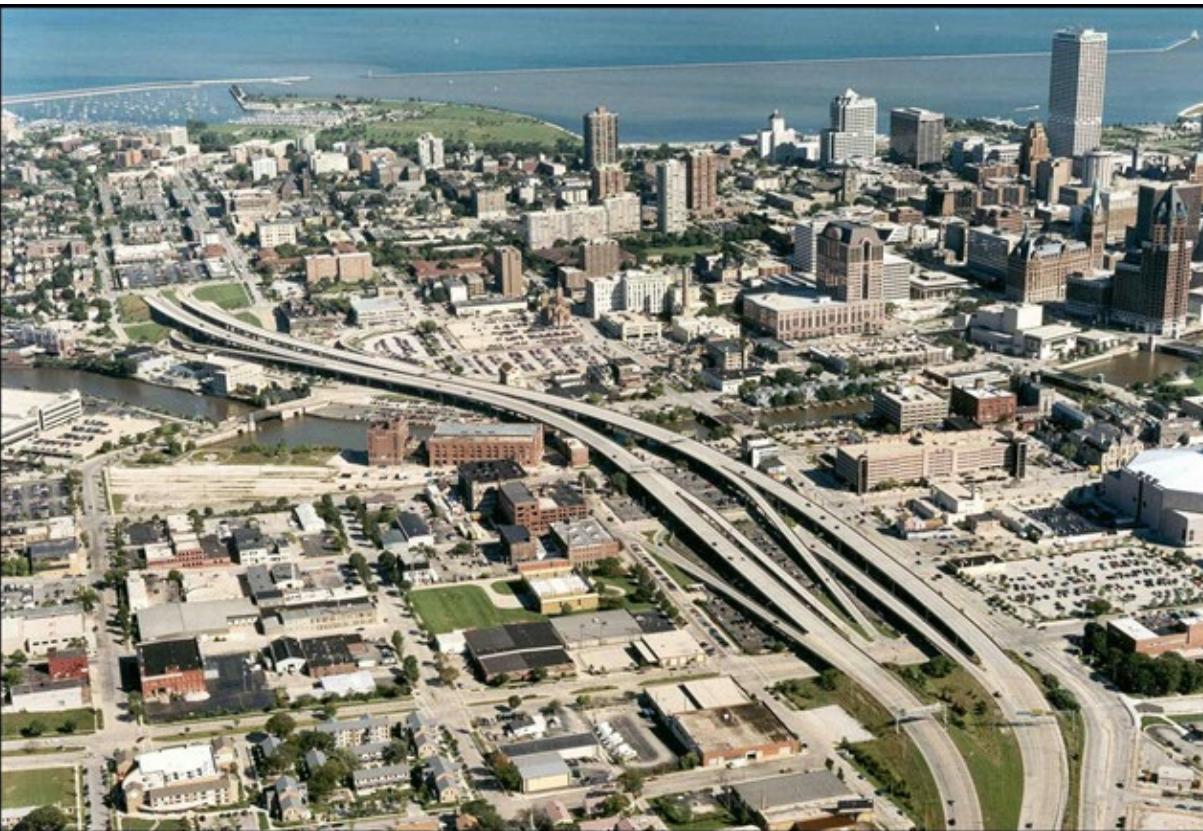
Park East Freeway Removal – Milwaukee, WI

- Year: 2003
- Removed underutilized highway spur and replaced with an at-grade, six-lane boulevard and re-connected street grid.
- Opened up 24 acres of downtown property for redevelopment resulting in over \$1 billion in total development
- Developed with a Community Benefits Agreement that required:
 - 20% of housing built on county-owned land be designated as affordable
 - 25% of the construction contracts go to Minority Business Enterprises, and
 - 5% of the construction contracts go to Women's Business Enterprises

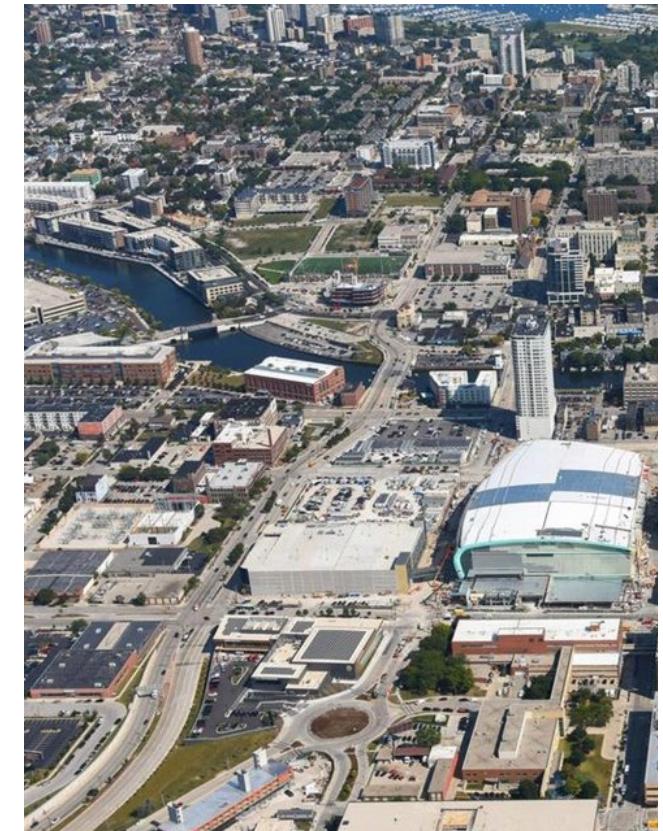


Park East Freeway Removal – Milwaukee, WI

Before



After



Break



Reconvene at 10:30



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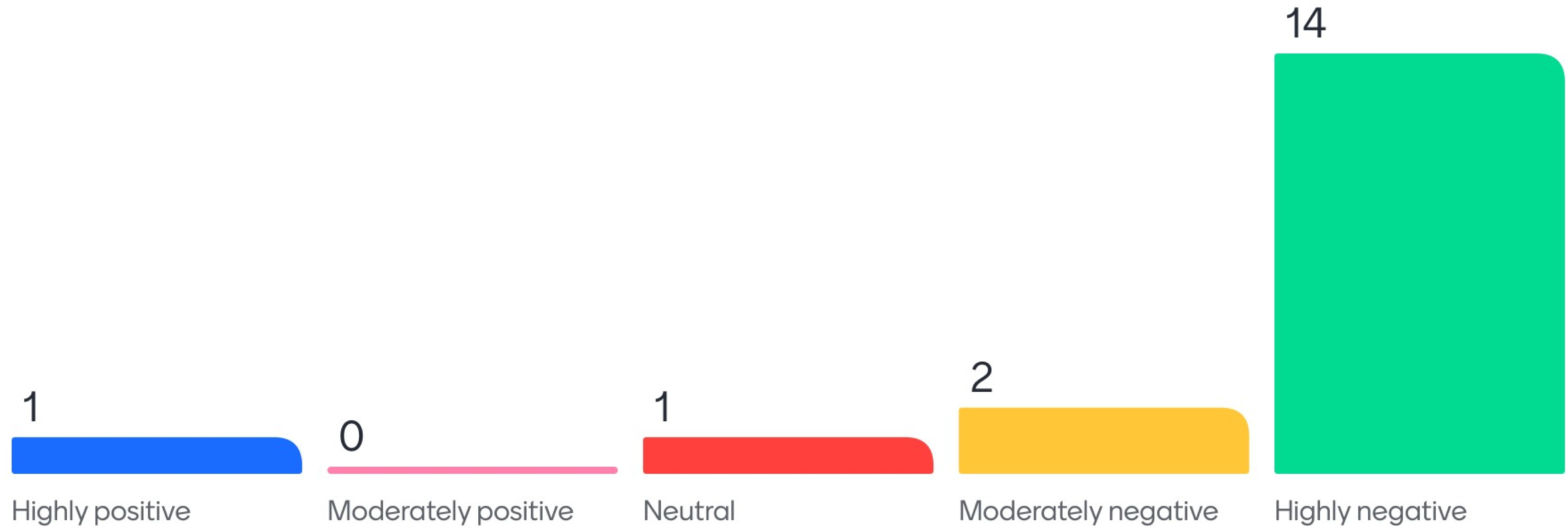
Issues, Goals, & Vision Work Session

Instructions



Issues

Overall, the North Freeway's impact on the community has been...



Please give us an issue that is affecting the North Freeway area that must be addressed.

Accessibility

East-West Connectivity

Safety

Displacement, economic development

Connectivity and Access for multiple modes of transportation

Equitable development

Lack of Transit

Displacement, affordable housing, equitable redistribution of reclaimed land

Please give us an issue that is affecting the North Freeway area that must be addressed.

CONNECTIVITY

The lack of economic development and growth from large commercial business like grocery stores to small businesses that create a healthy economy.

Environmental/air quality impacts

Transportation and access resources

sustainable living

Economic development

Displacement/Removal of Housing/Removal of Communities

Connectivity

Please give us an issue that is affecting the North Freeway area that must be addressed.

Connectivity

Economic and housing development. Displacement and equitable representation

Connectivity and access

Lack of connectivity

Opportunities

Walkability

healthy environment

Air quality

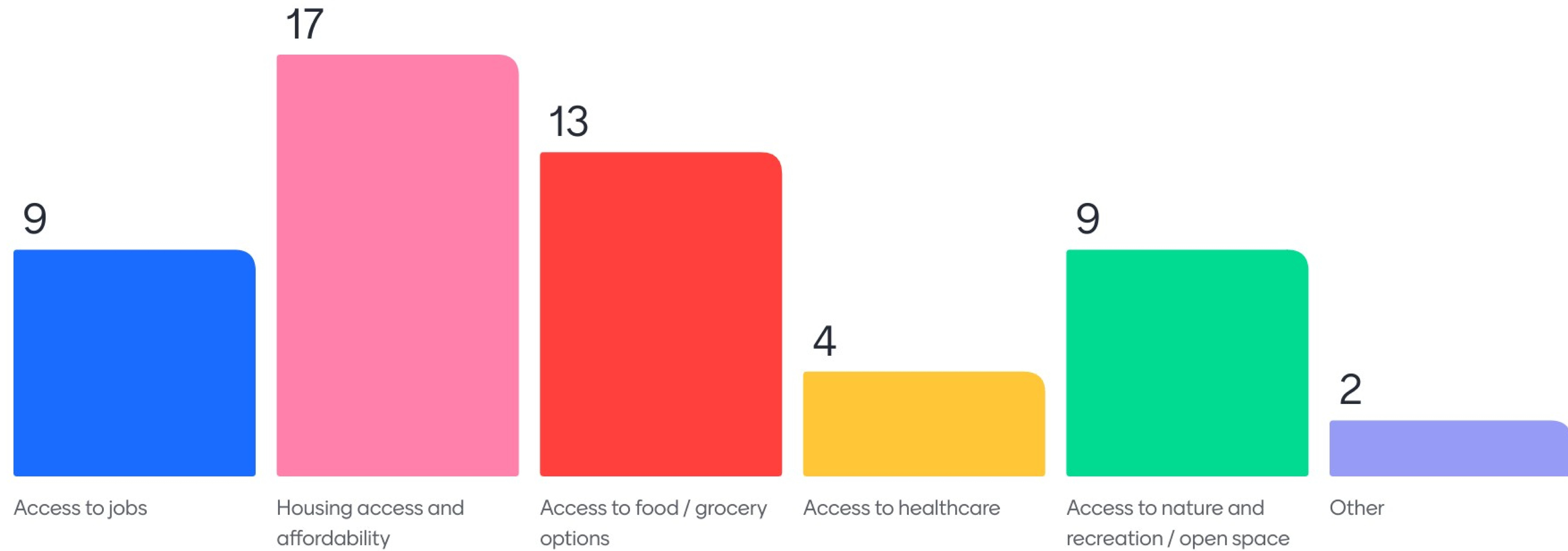
Please give us an issue that is affecting the North Freeway area that must be addressed.

Equity

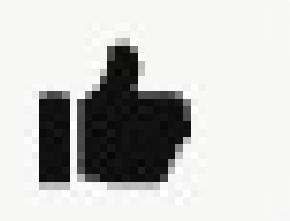
Access

Investment

What daily needs do you think most need to be addressed for the community in the North Freeway area? (Select your top 3)



Goals



What impacts would you like a reimagined or improved North Freeway corridor project to have on the surrounding community?

Redesign through a lens of the Principles of Environmental Justice

3

Popular

Heath benefits- longer life expectancy + higher quality of life

3

Popular

Community led design. Increased connectivity.

3

Popular

Empowerment, prosperity, ownership

2

Create a space for businesses of color to thrive, create a space for people to gather, create space for art, create a space for agriculture

2

Unifying the community!

1

Revitalization!!

1

Huge positive community benefit

1

What impacts would you like a reimagined or improved North Freeway corridor project to have on the surrounding community?

Do no harm new projects.
Example Truck Route
Make N.O. look like thriving
zipcodes

1

Community
sovereignty and self-
determination

1

Climate change
solutions oriented
programming

1

Increasing the
longevity and quality of
life

1

A BLACK WALL STREET.
BLACK BANKING.
EDUCATION, HEALTHCARE,
ARTS, STORE FRONTS.
ENTERTAINMENT,
AGRICULTURE,
SUSTAINABILITY AND
WEALTH BUILDING
EDUCATION AND SUPPORT
CENTERS ETC WITH
AWARENESS

1

Utilizing the Jemez
Principles for Democratic
Organizing as a model for
community leadership +
engagement

Reimagination of what the
urban form can mean to the
local community

Spurring community
driven economic
development

What impacts would you like a reimagined or improved North Freeway corridor project to have on the surrounding community?

Improving individual mindsets with visual improvement in the community

Walking and bike path. Lighting and shelter for walking paths

Increase in jobs, businesses and housing. Entryway that welcomes and encourages people to come to North Omaha

I would like a reimagined or improved North Freeway corridor project to address racial inequities in housing, health, and transportation.

Mixed housing, access to mental health health issues that affect the demographics of community. More businesses. Better public education and SAFETY.

Better public housing.

What impacts would you like a North Freeway project to have on the area's transportation network?

More options

Easier access to transit

Safety

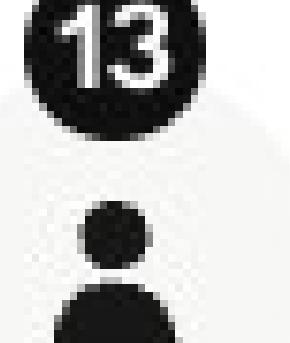
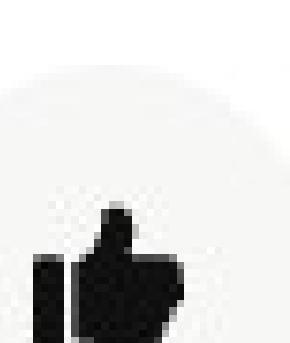
Improved safety... from freeway traffic to pedestrian... from crossing the freeway to traveling through neighborhoods.

Light rail corridor

Increased safe access and options

Higher levels of connectivity, especially for pedestrian, Bicyclist, and transit.

Bike share access



What impacts would you like a North Freeway project to have on the area's transportation network?

Positive impact on all modes of transportation

Multimodal Options

Multi modal modes of transportation

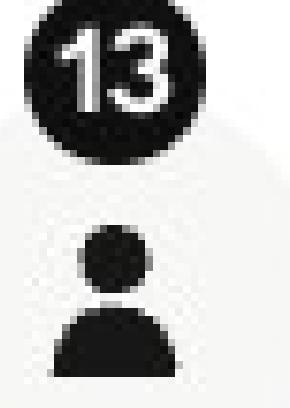
Bike trails, busing around the metro including Council Bluffs, Bellevue, Ralston, Papillion, Millard, Blair and throughout Omaha

Bus Rapid Transit

Multiple affordable and accessible transportation options.

Light Rail

Create a space for people to walk/bike with shelter from the elements, create a space for people to wait for the bus with shelter from the elements including emergency call buttons and first aid



What impacts would you like a North Freeway project to have on the area's transportation network?

Off the street trails

Connectivity of projects

Less single occupancy vehicle travel

edible landscaping along trails

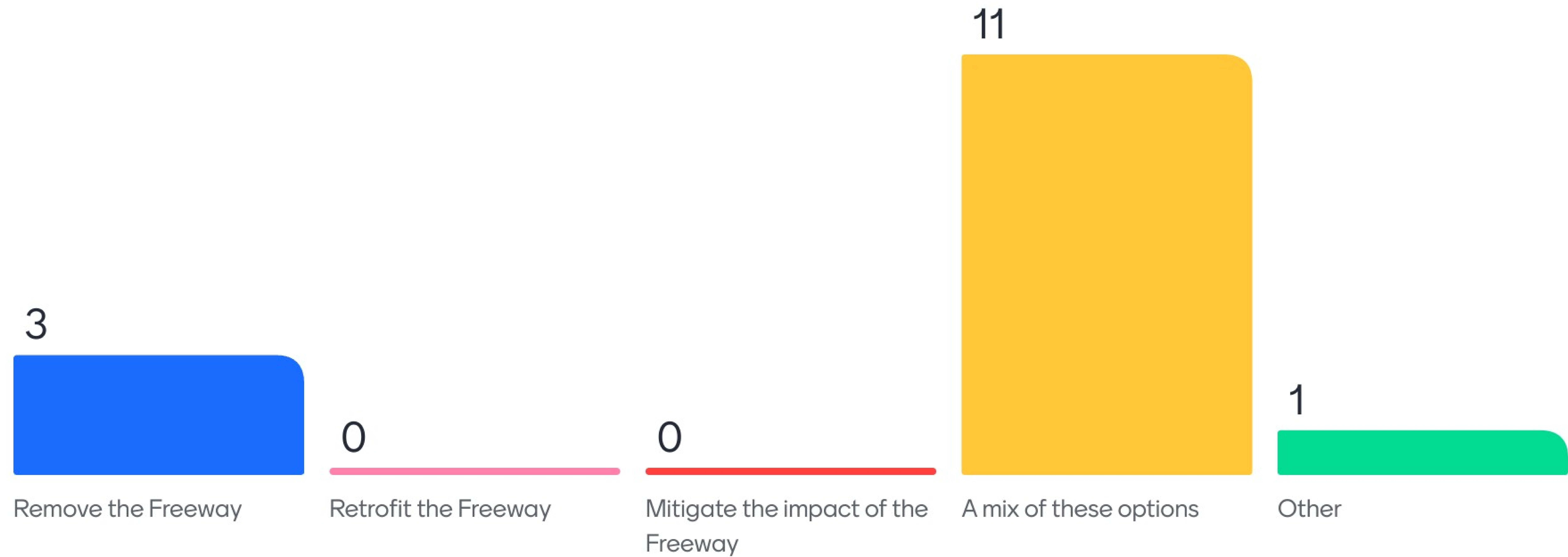
Pocket parks and green spaces inbetween

Shuttles to large work sites



13

What should be the focus or outcome of a potential future North Freeway project?



What are the locations or destinations in the North Freeway area that are most important to improve connectivity and access to?

North Omaha Transit
Center, Metro
Community College

9

Popular

North Omaha Transit
Center

7

Along North 24th Street 24th
and Lake area 75 North
Housing units Eppley Airfield
Parks and Schools Police
Station Educational entities

6

Exits into
neighborhoods are not
spaced equitably

6

30th & Ames : thee Hwy
75 & Sorensen PKW
knot

6

Highlander/75 North
and potential
development east of
the freeway.

5

Equitable health care,
food sourcing,
community
engagement centers

6

Missouri River

4

What are the locations or destinations in the North Freeway area that are most important to improve connectivity and access to?

Shopping venues

3

Blackburn High School
and the Boys and Girls
Club

2

North Omaha Transit
Center

2

Grocery stores

2

Sorensen Parkway,

1

Vision

Please give us one (1) word that you would use to describe the note. (Freeform)

44 responses



Please give us one (1) word that you would like to describe the North Freeway Area tomorrow?

47 responses



What is the most important aspect of the vision for the North Freeway Area that you would like the vision statement to contain?

Self determination

The community

Being community led

Community empowerment

community

Economically Empowering Area

Multimodal options for transportation

Community ownership and opportunity

What is the most important aspect of the vision for the North Freeway Area that you would like the vision statement to contain?

Redress harm caused by urban renewal

Being transformative for community

Climate justice

Community Empowerment

Preservation - physical, cultural, social

Reclaiming space for the existing community

Environmental Justice

Inclusive Community

What is the most important aspect of the vision for the North Freeway Area that you would like the vision statement to contain?

Reconnecting a community that was divided by greed and deception.

Reclaiming space for the existing community

Being an example to the nation on creating sustainable communities

Community based compact

Being climate friendly

Inviting and thriving

Wholistic

True community engagement, equity, and inclusion.



What is the most important aspect of the vision for the North Freeway Area that you would like the vision statement to contain?

Green!

Access, connectivity and welcoming are essential aspects. Leads to thriving communities.

Holistic and clean

Connection to destinations, resources and opportunities with continuous innovative approaches for progression and accessibility from our community with accountability measures to get needs met

Community participation

As soon as possible

Is there a timeline or horizon for accomplishing this vision that you would like to see in the vision statement?

5 years

2025

Within the next 10 years

Within the next 3-5 years

2030

3 - 5 years

By 12/2027

25 years

Is there a timeline or horizon for accomplishing this vision that you would like to see in the vision statement?

5 years

A promise for completion in 10 years.

The work will never be fully “accomplished” - needs to be ongoing

next decade

2030

Fair reasonable timeline for each goal to be achieved but continuously reevaluating how we can always improve is imperative and never ending

I would like to see it start immediately and have an end date, like 2028.

Continuous development as needed

Is there a timeline or horizon for accomplishing this vision that you would like to see in the vision statement?

As long as it takes to make sure that everything is square. The city is already plagued by rushed projects and endless construction.

Lunch



Reconvene at 1:00



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Tools & Ideas Work Session

General Agenda for this 90 minutes...

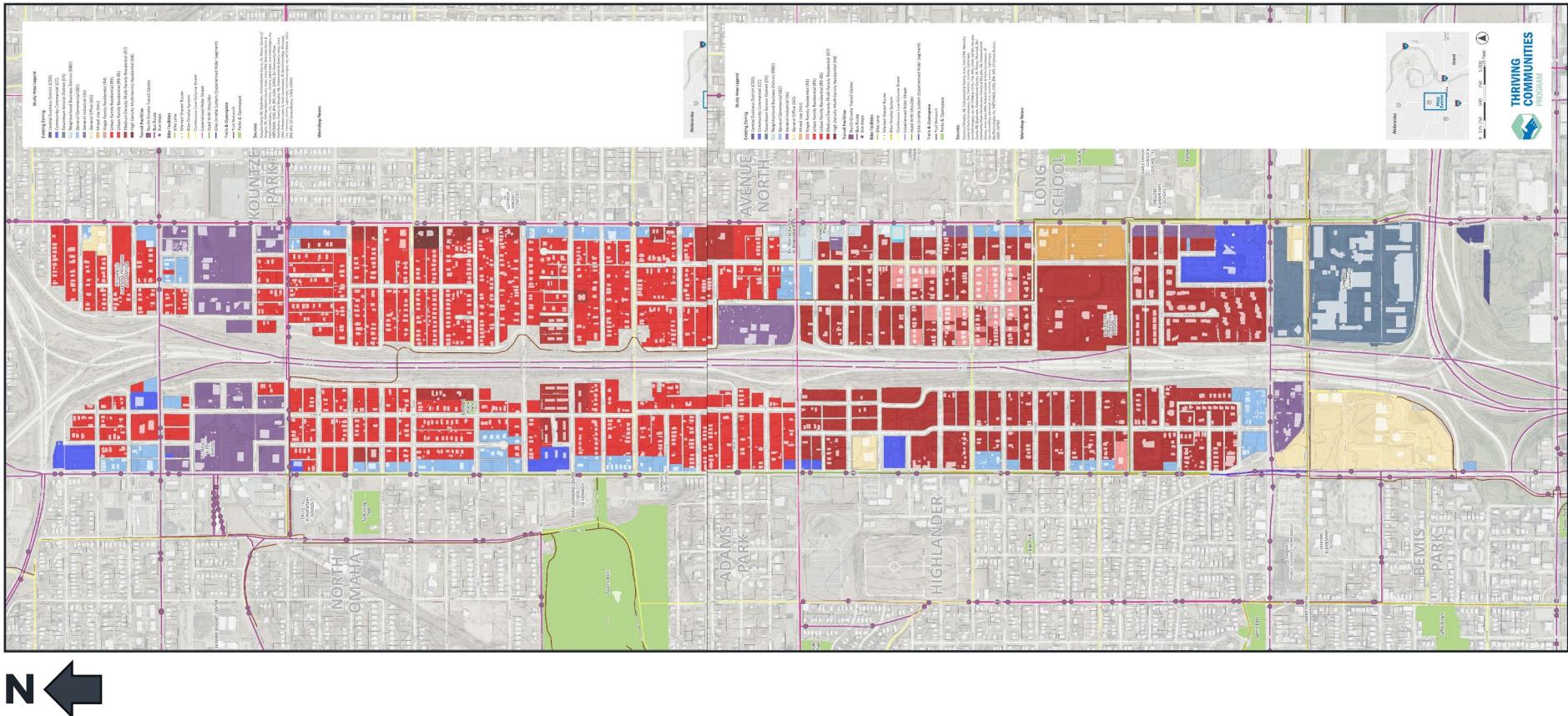
- **15-minute presentation**
- **60-minute collective discussion / worksession**
- **15-minute report back**

Purpose of this Worksession...

- **Provide a brief overview of the maps and the tools that we'll be using today.**
- **Conduct a worksession with the maps and tools to develop a “concept”.**
- **Determine what / where tools are most appropriate along the corridor.**
- **Refine and identify preferences for tools or remove tools from consideration.**
- **Identify any tools or solutions that may be missing from this list.**
- **Document this discussion on the maps...**

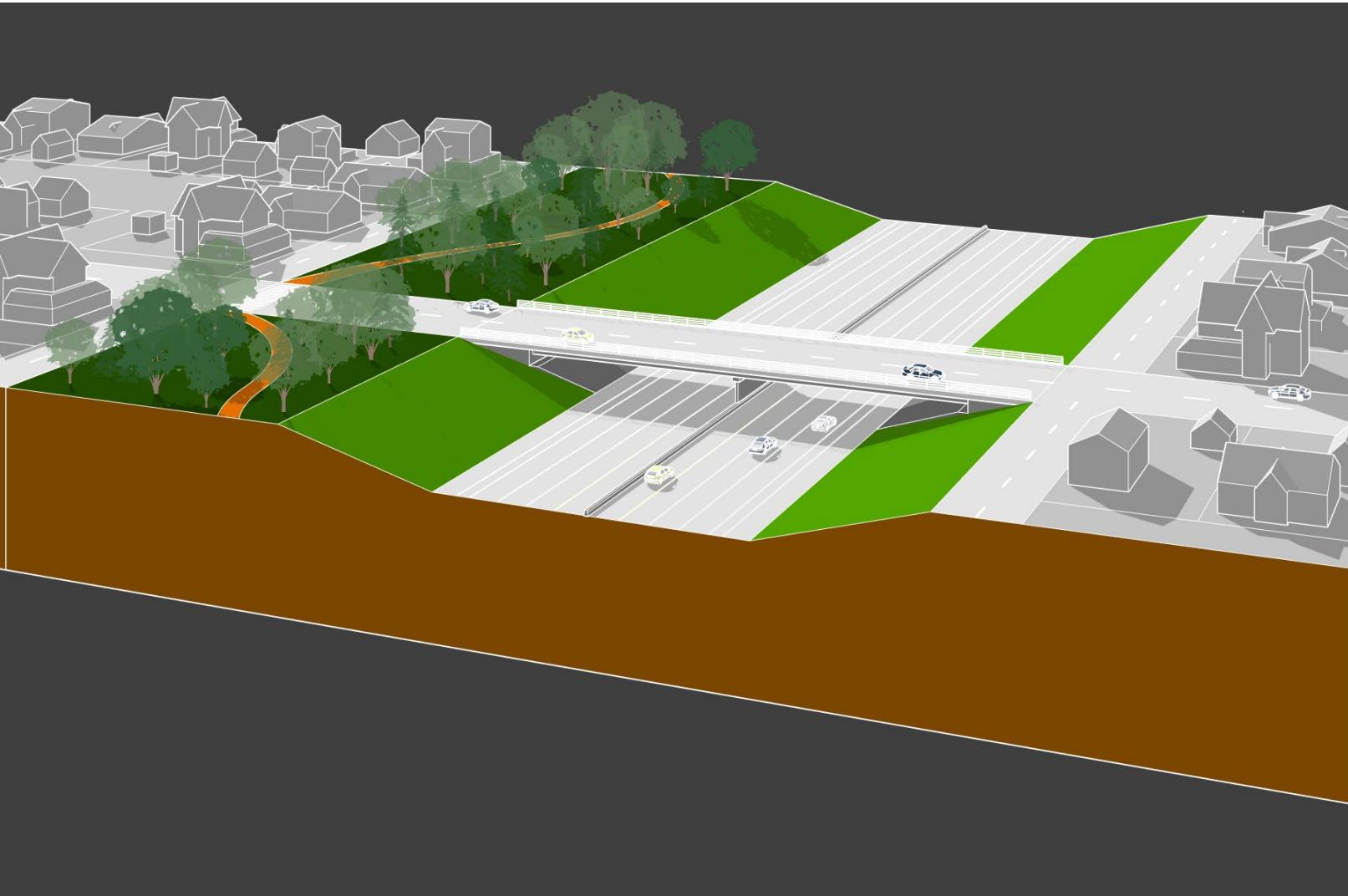
Tools & Ideas Work Session

Work-Session Boards



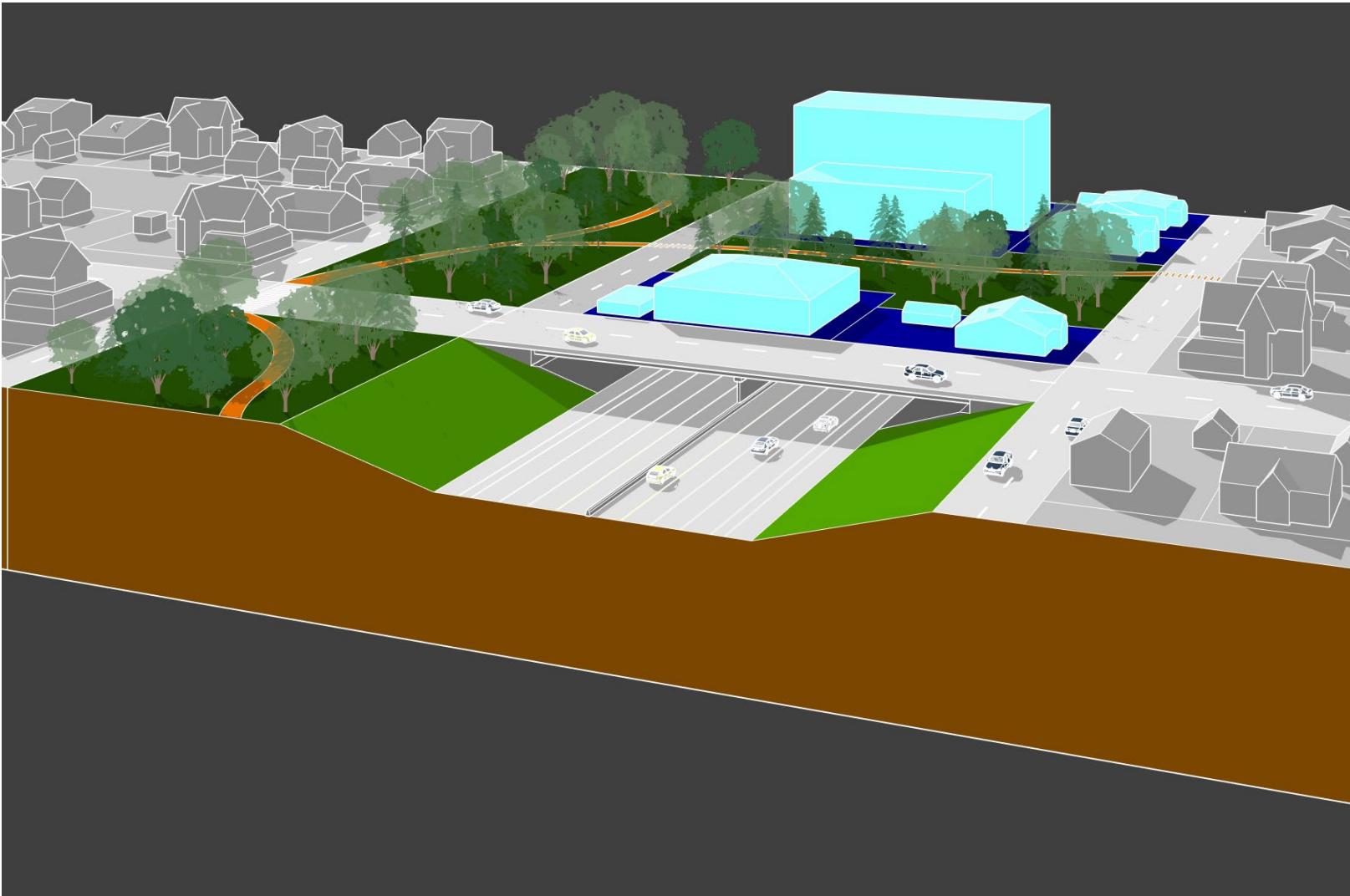
Tools & Ideas Work Session

Existing Condition



Tools & Ideas Work Session

LID Development



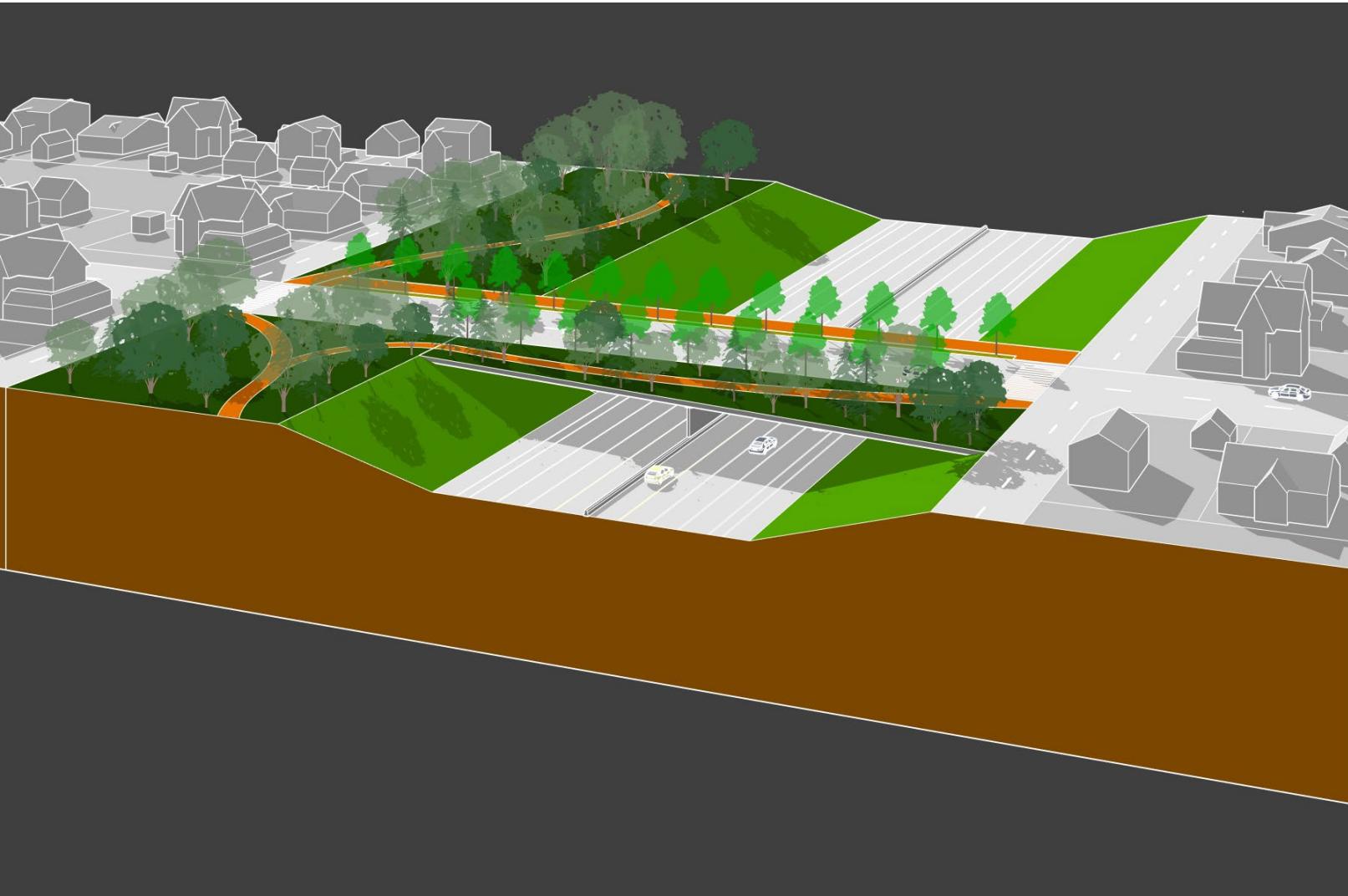
Tools & Ideas Work Session

LID Open Space



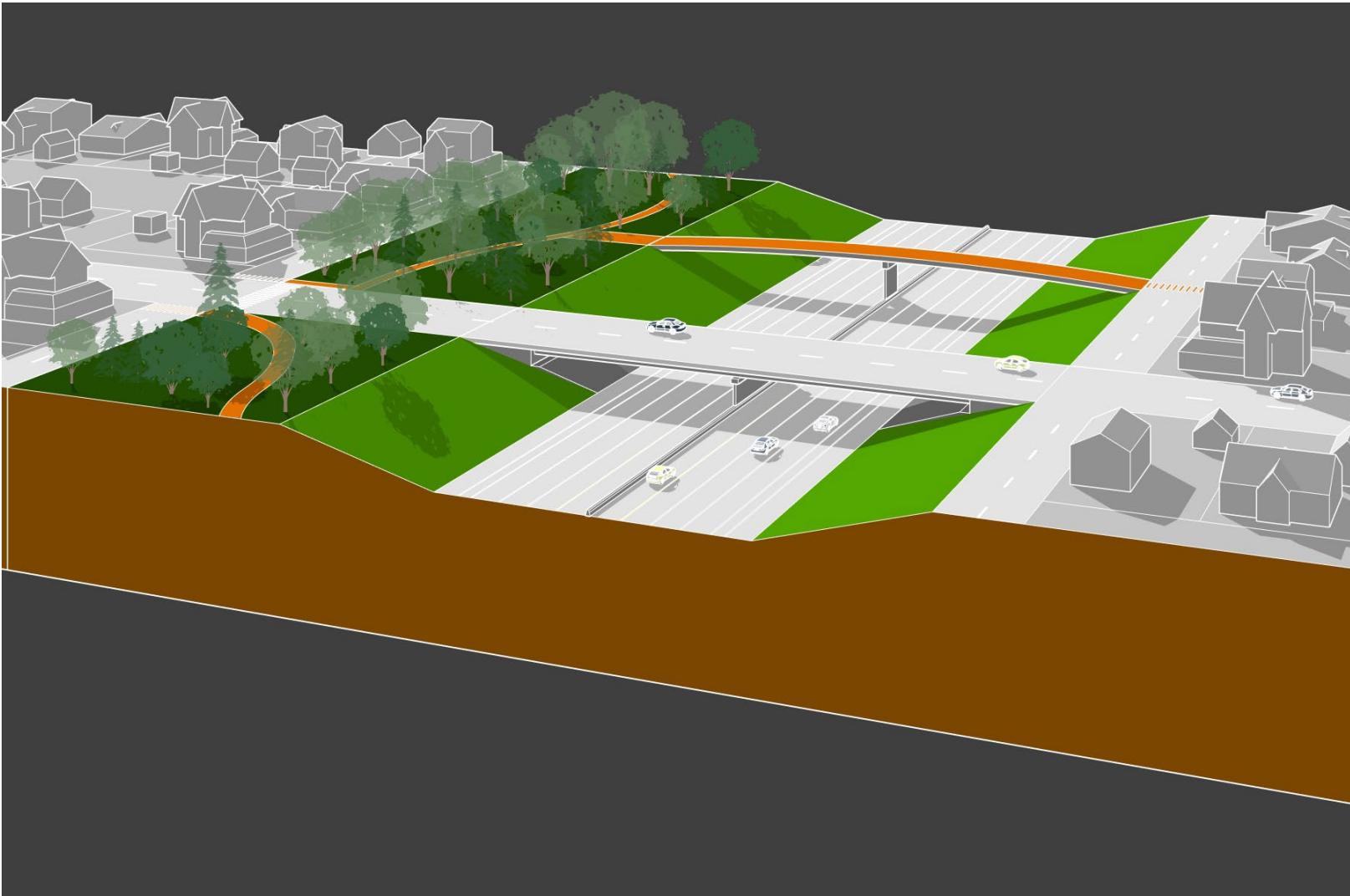
Tools & Ideas Work Session

Improved Bridge



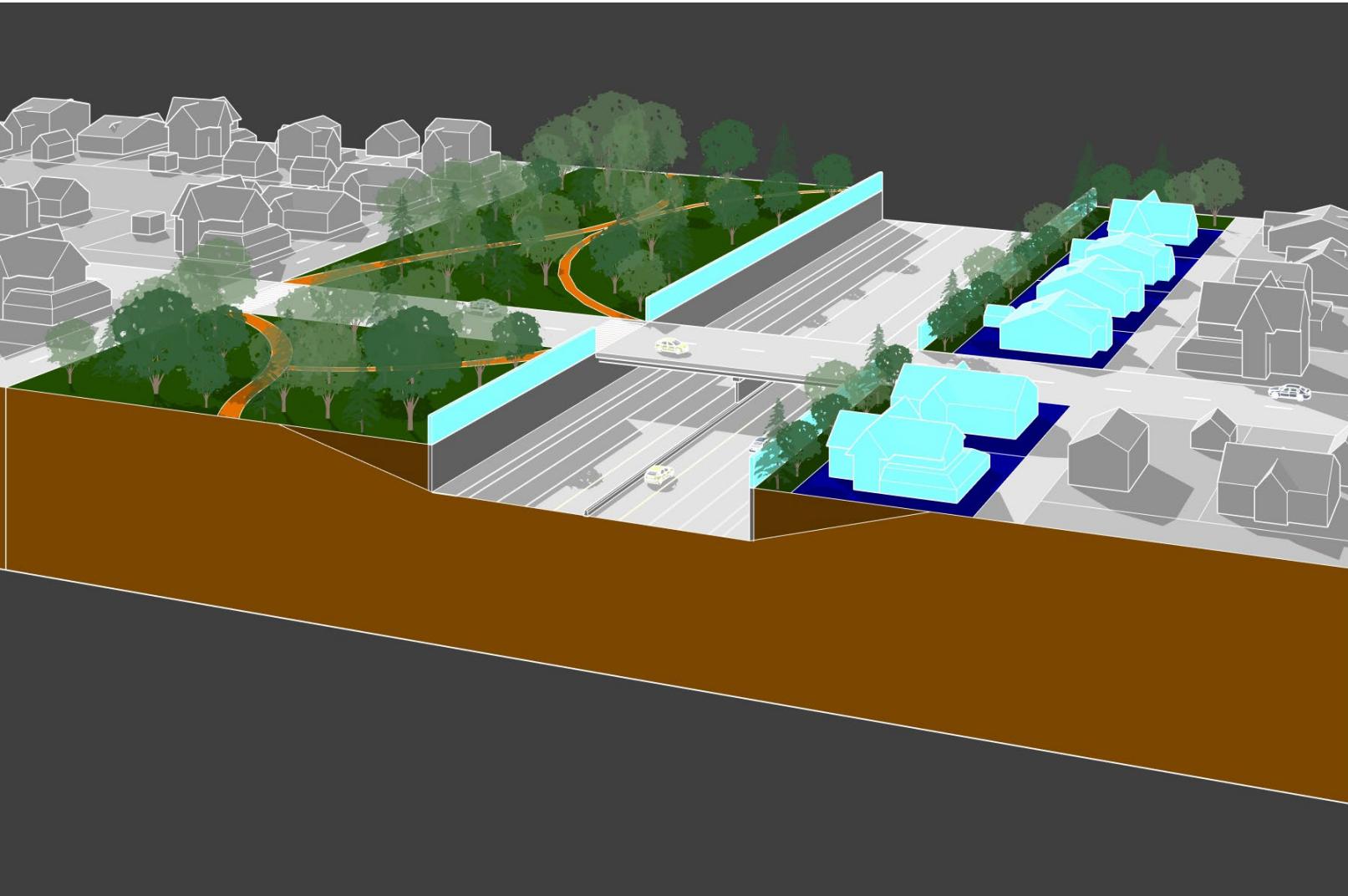
Tools & Ideas Work Session

New Pedestrian Connection



Tools & Ideas Work Session

Trench and Fill



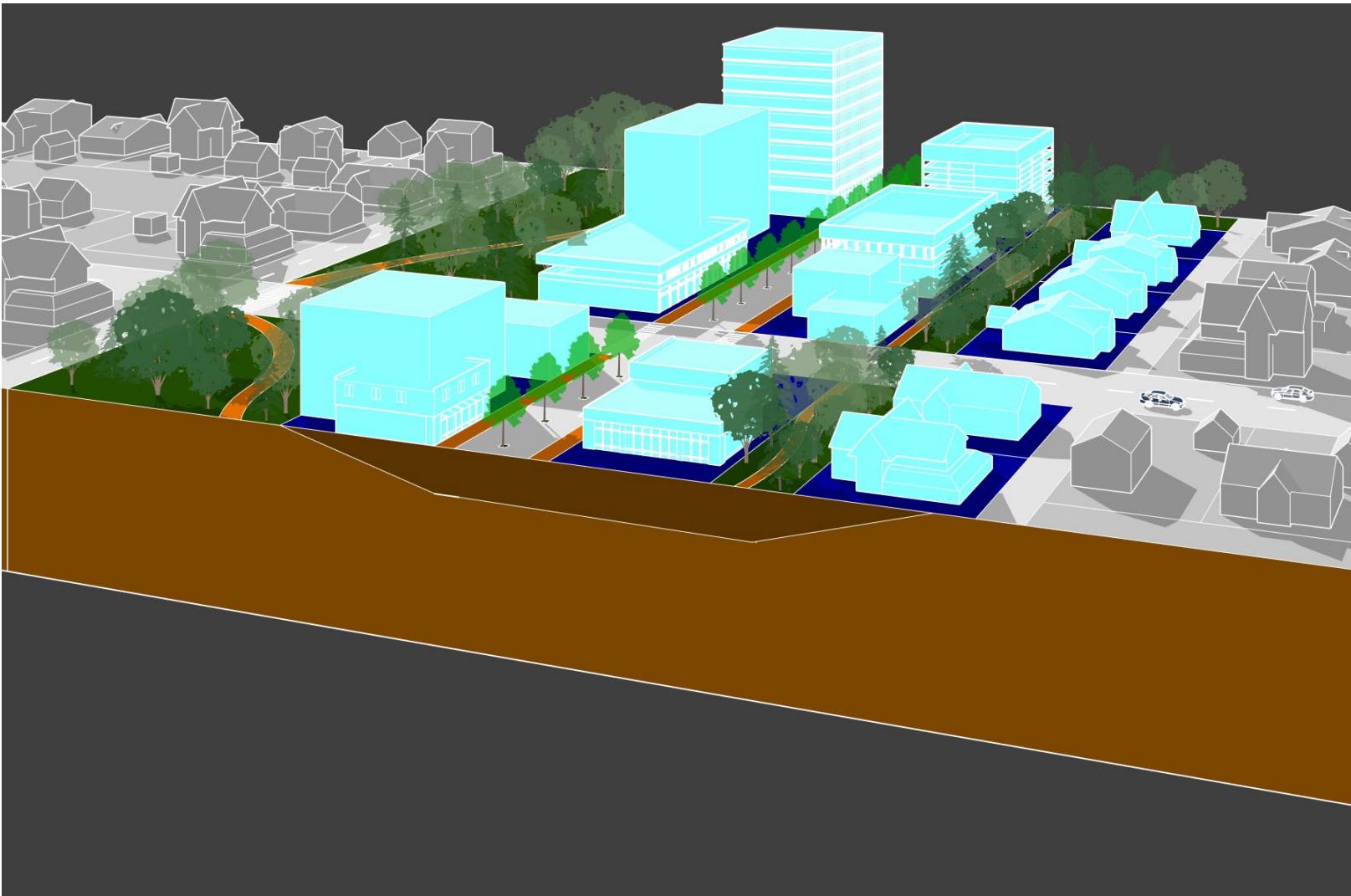
Tools & Ideas Work Session

Complete Removal



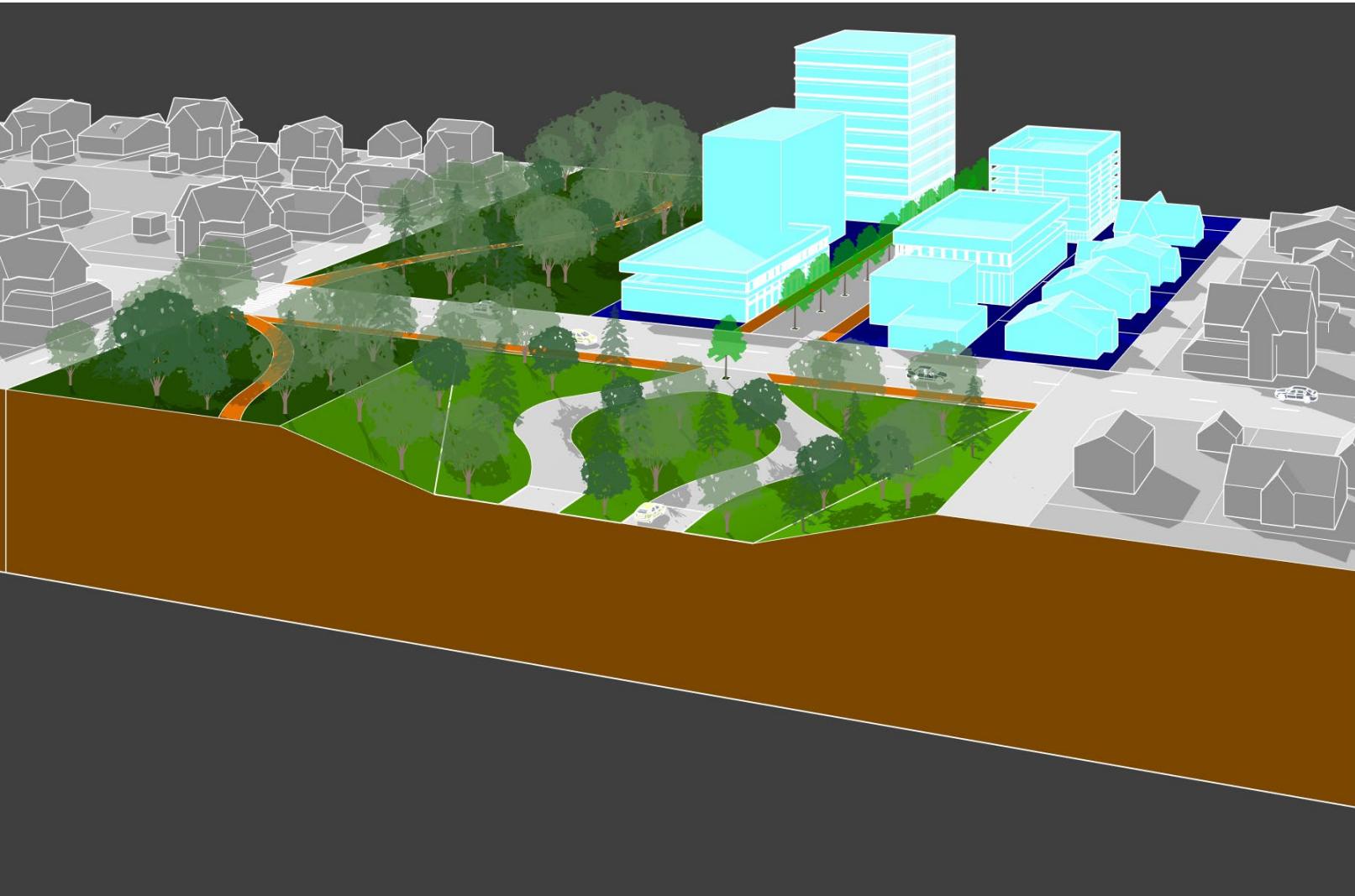
Tools & Ideas Work Session

Complete Removal with Commercial > at-grade boulevard



Tools & Ideas Work Session

Transition > May apply to many tools



Existing



Development



Open Space



Improve Connection



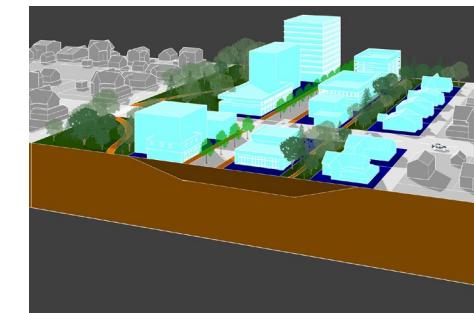
New Connection



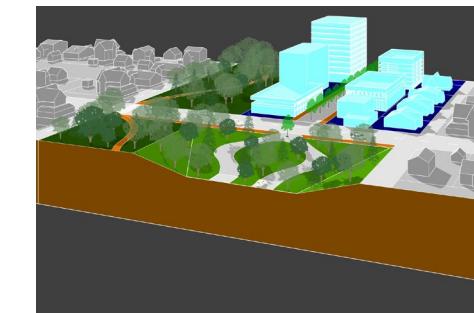
Removal



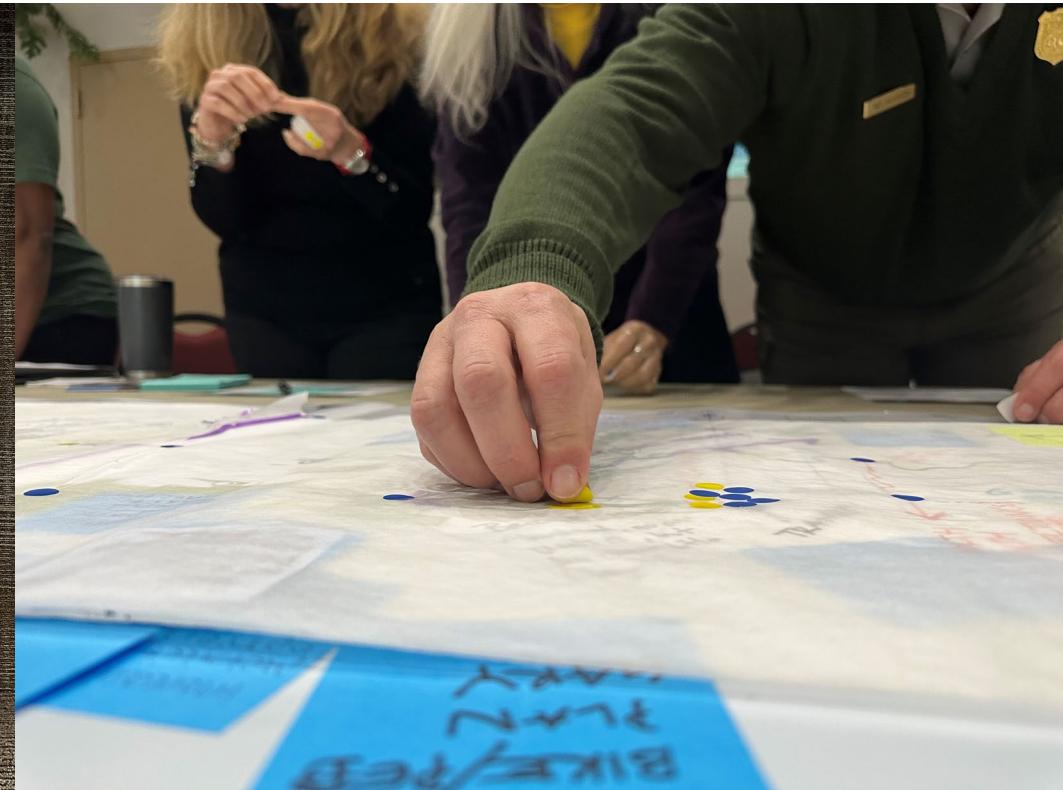
Removal (w/Infill)



Transition



Document on the maps!



Examples of questions we should be considering...

- **Show us where you see the major issues on this corridor.**
- **Do you have preferences on development VS open spaces? What are the pros and cons?**
- **Is there an ideal balance between development and open spaces? And are there locations that make more or less sense for these and why?**
- **Are there locations that are missing connections? Or locations with existing connections that need being improved? Any specific locations where widening a connection is most appropriate?**
- **What are the appropriate uses for connections? Walking? Biking? Transit?**
- **What about full removal? What are the best uses for new land if we consider this? Where are the most appropriate transition areas?**

Thank You!

