

I-49 North Inner City Connector

January 17, 2025

MPO Update Meeting



Project Team



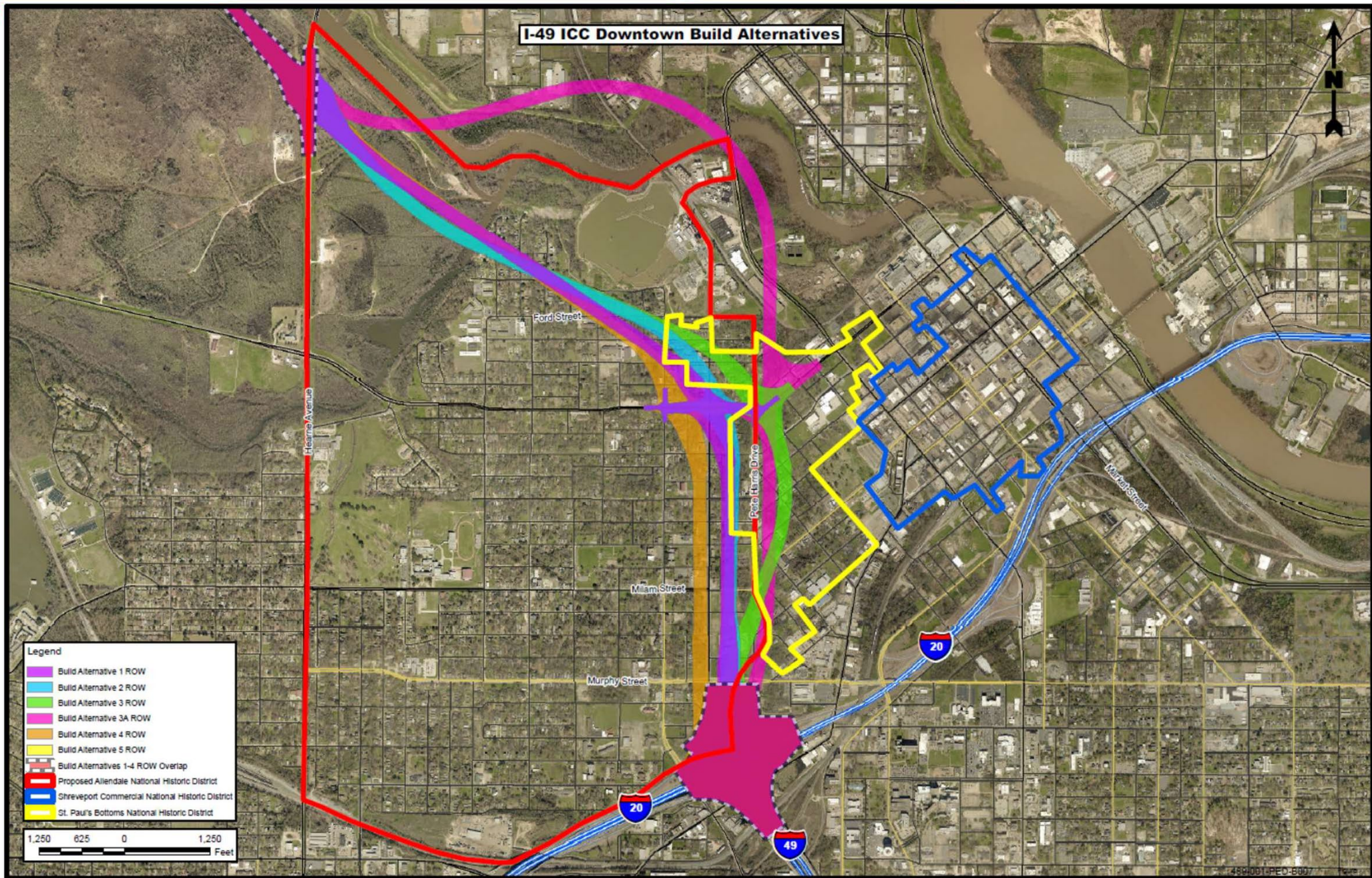
Project Update

- Quick Refresh of the Build Alternatives
- Cultural and Historical Update
- Context Sensitive Solutions/Community Connections
- Traffic Update
- Timeline

Build Alternatives Refresh

- The project presently has four build through build alternatives (Build Alternatives 1, 2, 3, and 3A) and one build around build alternative (Build Alternative 5) under consideration
- Build Alternative 3A was developed to serve as a build alternative that would remove or lessen impacts to potential Section 4(f) properties
- The following two slides show the build through alternatives and a closeup of Build Alternative 3A with two interchange options

Section 4(f) refers to the original section within the US Department of Transportation Act of 1966 which established the requirement for consideration of park and recreational lands, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and historic sites in transportation project development.

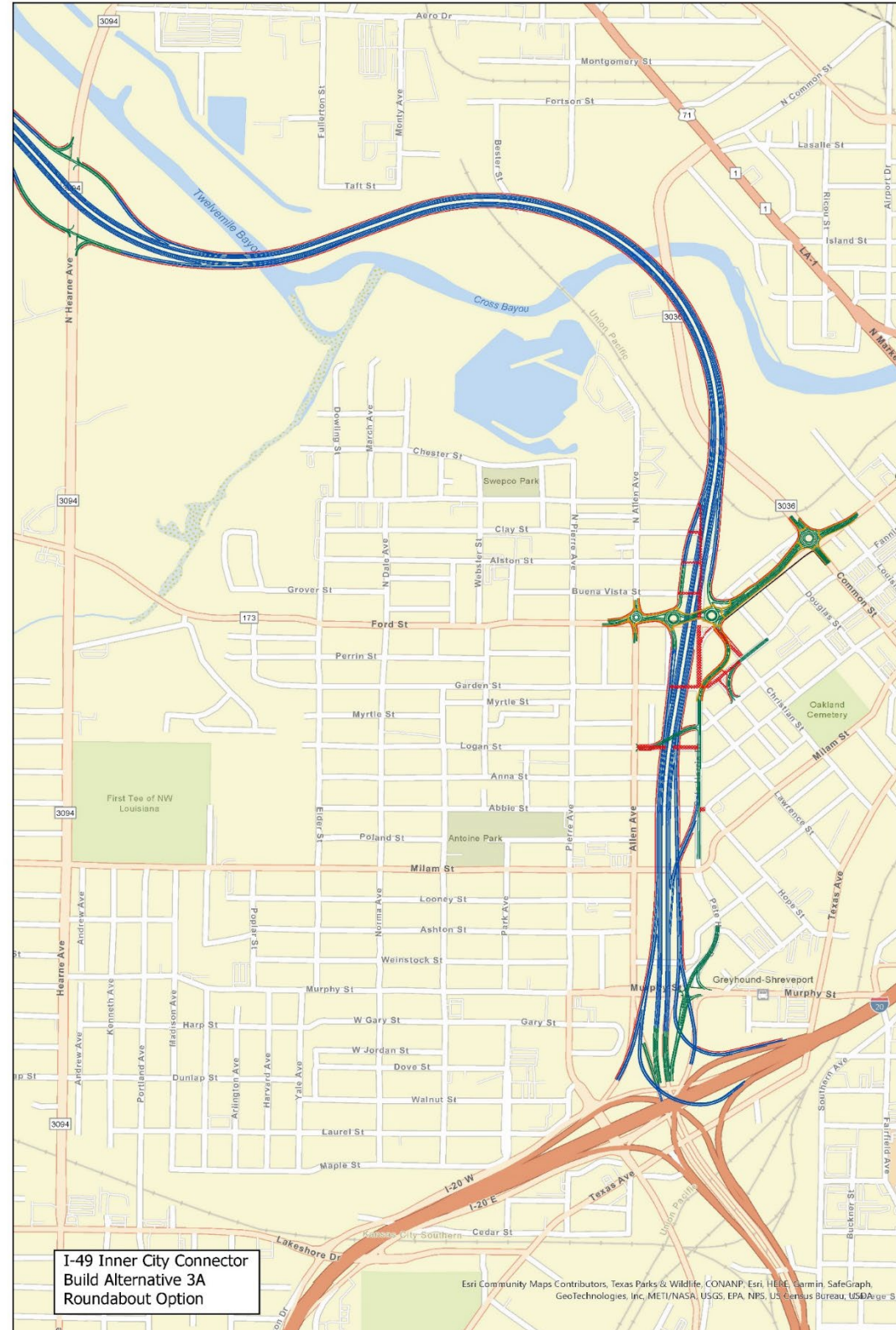
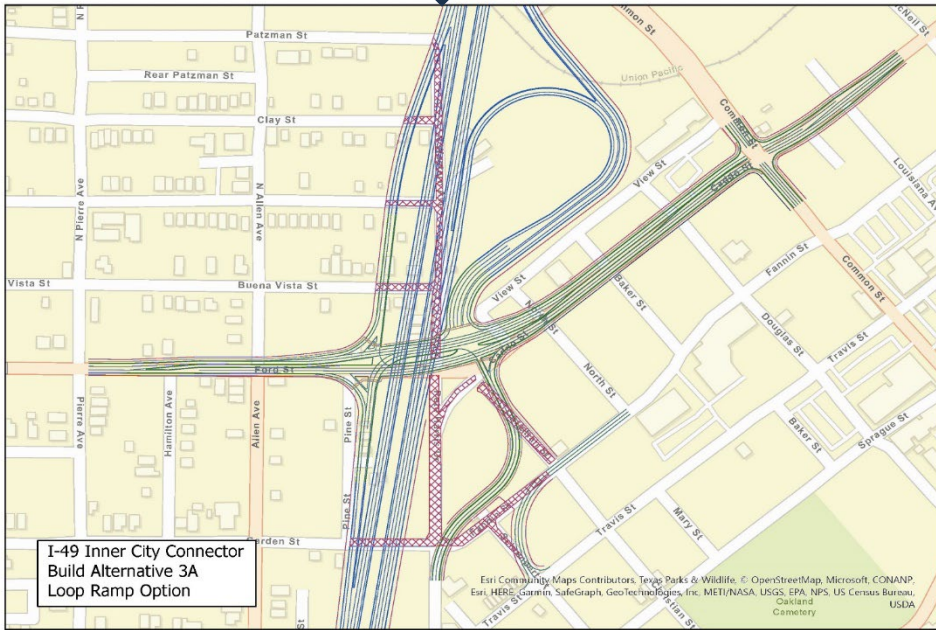


BUILD ALTERNATIVE 3A

ROUNDBOUT OPTION AT CADDO/FORD



LOOP RAMP OPTION AT CADDO/FORD



Cultural/Historic Update

- Archaeological and standing structure surveys for Build Alternative 3A were completed and summary report provided to the SHPO in September 2024
- Comments from the SHPO were addressed and DOTD resubmitted the final Cultural Resources Survey Report in early November 2024
- DOTD is contacting participants to arrange for the next Consulting Parties Meeting, specifically they are reaching out to the National Park Service reviewer assigned to the project under the National Historic Landmark Program and to the Waterworks Museum while the final Cultural Resources Survey Report is under SHPO review
- Due to the holidays, the meeting is likely to be set in January 2025, no date has been secured as of today's meeting

Context Sensitive Solutions

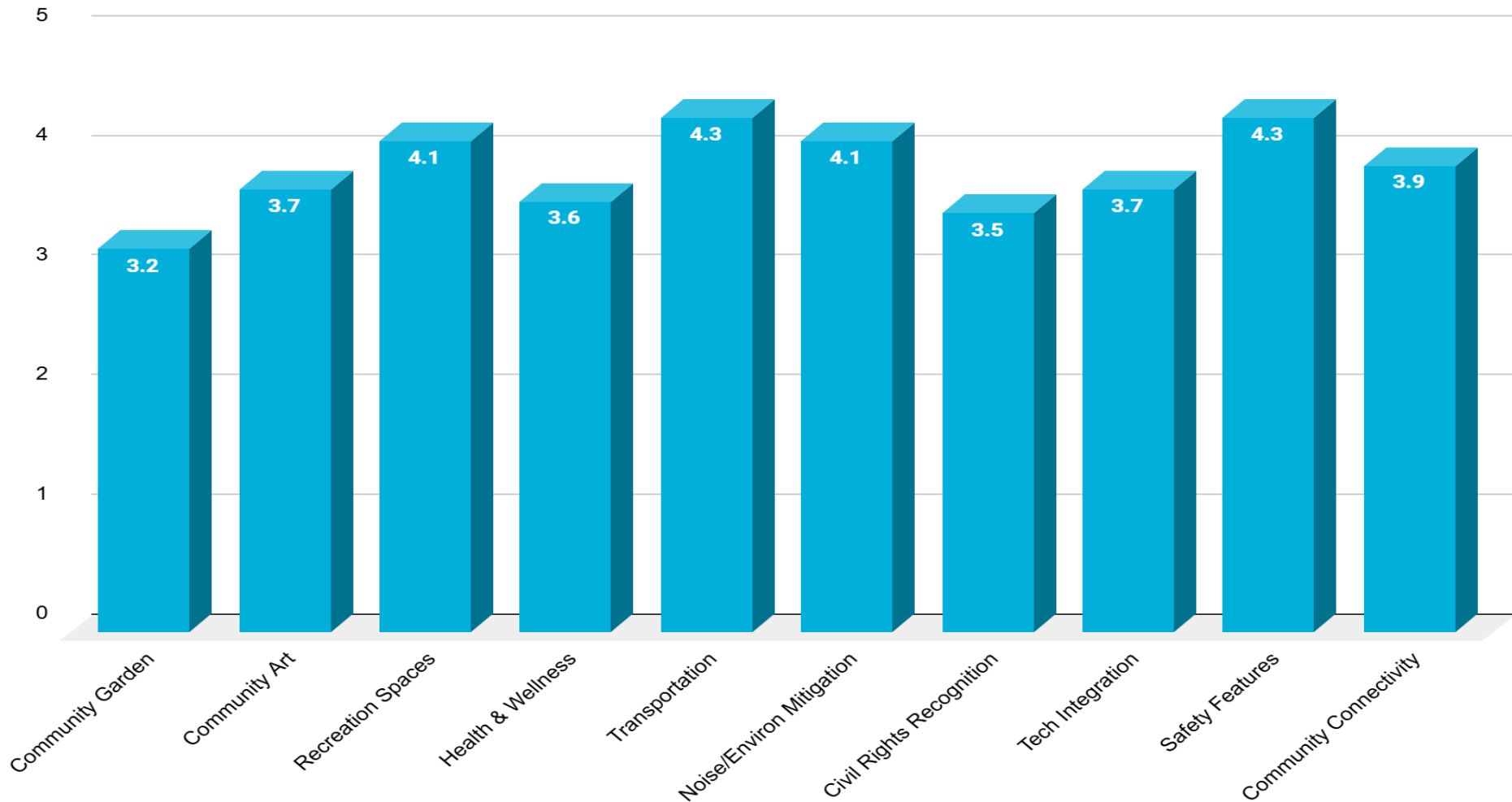
- CSS stakeholder subcommittee was fielded from members of Citizens Advisory Committee and additional community representatives
- Meetings held in October 2024
- CSS team shared suggestions for improvements with attendees based on field observations and prior comments (2012 through 2021)
- Community prioritization survey was shared with meeting attendees and posted online for further public input
- Media release was sent to area outlets to encourage public participation in survey

Context Sensitive Solutions

➤ Respondents were asked to rank the following features in order of importance with 1 being the least important and 5 being the most important:

- Community Garden
- Community Art Projects
- Multigenerational and Accessible Safe Recreation Spaces
- Equitable Access to Resources Supporting Physical/Mental Wellbeing
- Enhanced Regional Transportation Accessibility
- Noise and Environmental Impact Mitigation
- Civil Rights Recognition
- Technology Integration
- Safety Features
- Community Connectivity, Mobility, and Accessibility

Survey Responses

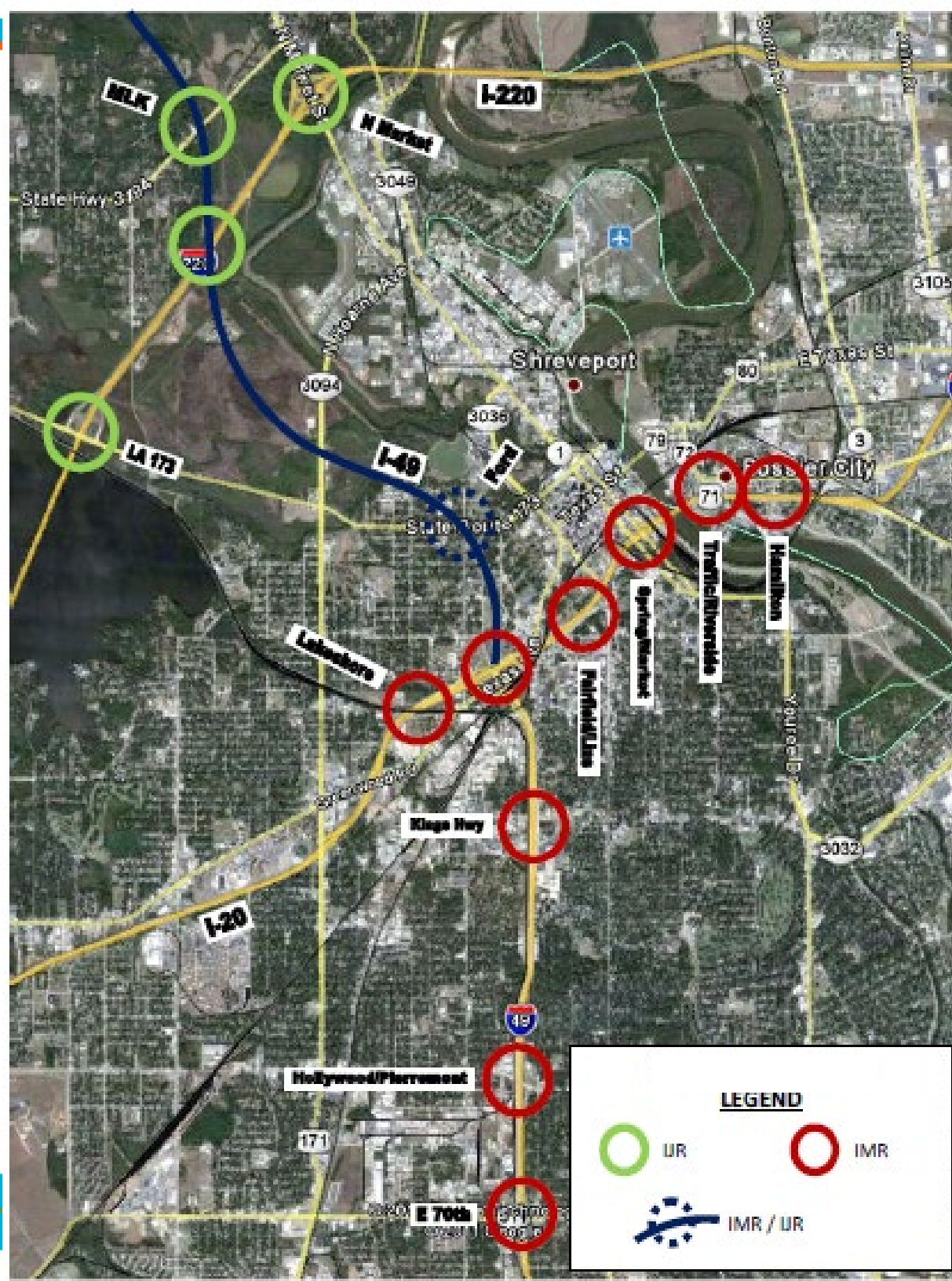


Respondents had an average of 31 years of community involvement

Traffic Study Update

- Revised traffic volume projections have been approved by DOTD and FHWA
- A draft EIS traffic study is in development for submittal 1st quarter 2025
- Interchange Access Approvals will be required to complete the I-49 / I-20 interchange and the I-49 / I-220 Interchange
- The geographic coverage for the interchange access approvals is substantial– 13 interchanges will be analyzed (see following map)

Interchange Access Approvals - Analysis Coverage (13 Interchanges)



Where do we go from here?

- We have provided the draft alternatives chapter for the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to DOTD and FHWA to allow for the selection a preferred alternative
- We are planning to meet to discuss the chapter before the end of January 2025
- With the identification of a preferred alternative, the draft EIS can be completed and submitted, presumed in the first Quarter of 2025
- Any further documentation as required by FHWA to evaluate Civil Rights inquiries will also be submitted with the draft EIS

Where do we go from here?

- Multiple technical studies will be required to be completed and submitted with the draft EIS that for the most part cannot be initiated until a preferred alternative is identified; these include:
 - Wetlands Finding
 - Phase I Environmental Site Assessment
 - Air Quality Assessment
 - Noise Assessment
 - Conceptual Stage Relocation Plan
 - Section 4(f) Documents
 - Environmental Justice

*The Environmental Justice report has been initiated, as it is not dependent on the identification of the preferred alternative

Current Project Schedule

- **4th Quarter 2024** – Submit draft Alternatives Chapter of the EIS for the identification of a preferred alternative (completed)

- **1st Quarter 2025** – Continued Development of draft EIS
 - Will include a “preferred alternative”
 - Will include more detailed environmental evaluation
 - Will include required technical studies
 - Traffic Study update will be concurrent

- **2nd Quarter 2025** – Legal Sufficiency Review of Draft EIS by FHWA*
 - Review by FHWA
 - Concurrent review of Civil Rights Inquiries

* Review times may be longer than 60 days, which could result in schedule slippage

Project Schedule (continued)

- **3rd Quarter 2025** – Publish draft EIS
 - Assumes 30 days to address comments from Legal Sufficiency Review
 - Must notice public and provide a minimum 30-day review period prior to Public Hearing
- **4th Quarter 2025** – Public Hearing
 - Public can make comments up to 10 days following the Hearing
 - Responses to public comments must be included in final EIS
- **1st/2nd Quarter 2026** – Submit final EIS and draft Record of Decision (ROD) to FHWA
- **3rd/4th Quarter 2026** – ROD approval by FHWA

Project Schedule - Notes

- The 2nd Quarter 2025 Legal Sufficiency Review starts procedural reviews that are bound by regulatorily required time frames
- Updates will continue to be provided to the MPO once per quarter

Closing Comments

- For the inner-city build through alternatives, the intent has always been to work with local officials and citizens to use the project as a catalyst for community revitalization
- If one of the inner-city alternatives is selected as the preferred alternative, we will need and expect the business sector to step forward, not to fund the infrastructure, but rather to invest in the community even if that investment does not show a near-term return

Questions?

