

## Highway 93 South Corridor Plan – Visioning Workshop Notes

The workshop was held from 5:30-8:30pm on Tuesday, January 8, 2019. Approximately 65 citizens participated.

Forty participants indicated where they lived in the Whitefish area. Of those, 15 lived within the City of Whitefish and the remainder lived in the County. Only five lived in the Corridor (two in City limits and three in the County). Of the 25 participants living outside City limits, one lived north of the City, eight lived west of the City, six lived east of the City, and 10 lived south of the City.

Fifteen participants selected the image of a median they most liked from a photo board.

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|---|--|
| <p>Six preferred this median landscaped with grass, small trees and shrubs:</p>                   |    |
| <p>Four preferred this median landscaped with drought resistant vegetation:</p>                   |   |
| <p>Three preferred this median landscaped with small trees and shrubs (exists on Hwy 93 West)</p> |  |
| <p>One preferred this grass median:</p>   |  |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>One preferred the existing two-way left turn lane median</p> |  |
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Two other images of medians were not selected by any participants; one was a median with pavers (no vegetation) and one was a mix of raised median with grass and a two-way left turn lane.

Seventeen participants selected their preferred streetscape image from a group of six images.

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|---|--|
| <p>Thirteen preferred this streetscape with a mix of raised landscaped median and two-way left turn lanes, landscaped boulevards, bike lanes and on-street parking.</p> |    |
| <p>Two preferred the streetscape with landscaped boulevards and buildings oriented toward the front of the lots with parking hidden behind.</p>                         |   |
| <p>Two preferred the streetscape with buildings oriented toward the road with outside dining options on the sidewalk.</p>   |  |

The three images that were not selected depicted streetscapes with more commercial strip development; low building heights, abundant parking in front of the buildings, and wide roadways.

Sixteen participants selected their preferred images of bike lanes from six images.

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|--|--|
| <p>Eleven people preferred a bike lane separated from traffic by an elevated curb plus pavers.</p> |    |
| <p>Two people like the bike lane protected by a double stripe with chevrons.</p>                   |    |
| <p>Two people preferred the bike lane protected by a single painted line.</p>                      |  |
| <p>One person selected the bike lane buffered by flexible bollards.</p>                            |  |

The two images not selected showed a bike lane painted green with a double stripe and chevron as a buffer, and a curb protected, elevated bike lane without any additional separation between the curb and the lane.

**WHAT ARE THE BEST PLACES OR FEATURES OF THE CORRIDOR?** Participants were asked to locate or identify their favorite places or features on a map of the Corridor. After all the places and features were identified, each group was asked to list

their top three favorite features or places. Top three places or features identified by each group are listed below, followed by other places/features, if identified.

Group 1:

- View from Highway 40 to the north
- Landscaping (boulevard on the north end and along the southern part with sidewalks)
- No franchise architecture

Group 2:

- Visual of Big Mountain and town coming down hill into Whitefish (perspective)
- Mix of residential and commercial with varied residential types – visual break-ups, access, highway setbacks
- River, landscaping (more mature trees), open and green spaces, bike paths and sidewalks
- Smaller signage (good sign regulations, no neon, has character)
- Different sizes of buildings, breaking up larger buildings, height restrictions to maintain views

Group 3:

- River/building heights/viewshed
- Greenway/forests/open spaces
- Traffic flow/signage/dark skies

Group 4:

- Whitefish River/access
- Intersection at Hwy 40 as a gateway/open space
- Bike trail along river
- View of Big Mountain
- Mature trees on Spokane
- Local serving businesses with plenty of parking

Group 5:

- Viewsheds/open space
- Variation in structures and setbacks/frontage and backage roads
- Meandering sidewalks/landscaping/some streetscapes pleasant
- Natural vegetation
- Limited fast food restaurants

## WHAT IS YOUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF EACH CORRIDOR SEGMENT?

### Segment A

- Culverts replaced with bridge
- River culverts replaced by bridge; bridge is another gateway/greeting area to enter town
- Bridge with river access, lighting, pedestrian friendly
- Remove culverts
- Pedestrian bridge across river
  
- A trail under Spokane Ave
- Continuous trail and park along river
- Connected river trail, view of and access to river
- Separated bike lane/path
- Bike path is extended
- Separated bike path extended south with safe crossing over Spokane Ave
- Sidewalks separated from highway with green boulevards
- Pedestrian friendly
- Opportunities for using alternative modes of transportation (not just vehicles)
- Mass transit stops
  
- Public greenspace to the river
- Natural wetland areas used for seasonal public recreation
- Pull out area for water craft – small park/open space
- Mature trees
- Enhanced river views
- Buffer between road and sidewalk
- Greenways/open spaces/landscaping
- Landscaped median, setbacks/boulevard
  
- Has downtown charm with emphasis on river access
- An entry into Whitefish – small scale architecture, small town personality, extended further south than where it is now
- Older buildings have character
- Transition between residential and commercial; single and 2+ story buildings
- Community art sculpture as a landmark
- Old town character maintained: livable, professional office, unique architecture that serves to differentiate between downtown core and WB-2 commercial (transition)
- Mixed uses – commercial with residential
- Small-scale buildings

- Community first
- Truck route
- Efficient traffic

### **Segment B**

- Landscaping/trees
- Lots of green space, public parks to serve residential
- Landscaped median/boulevards
- Enhanced landscaping on edges of highway
- Continuity of viewsheds, greenways, open spaces intermixed
  
- Parking is behind buildings
- Parking areas pushed back, buildings pulled forward (parking not on highway frontage)
  
- Pedestrian emphasis
- Whitefish Trail is completed
- Enhanced walkability between neighborhoods – pedestrian bridges, reduced roadway widths at specific crossings, more centralized pedestrian crossings
- Bike lane/mass transit/alternative modes of transportation/pedestrian friendly/crossings over highway
- Separated bike paths connect to river trail
- Lighting at pedestrian/bike scale
- A transportation hub for mass transit (like Apgar) – Eagle Transit, Snow Bus, car park & ride
- Use of and access to river
- Smaller pocket parks – keep kids closer to home with amenities
  
- Slower speed limit, slower speeds
- Whitefish Ave and Baker Ave extensions are completed
- There are more east-west routes
- ROW designed to slow down traffic – reduced setbacks and median, opportunities for multi-modal transportation
- Reduced highway accesses and more backage road connections
- Medians, controlled access, frontage roads
- Roundabout/gateway to announce arrival in Whitefish
- Gateway/you've arrived
- Easy transition into Whitefish- gateway
- Softer, more appealing approach to town
- Dedicated lanes and reduced highway approaches

- There is a mix of land uses: commercial with residential in back
- Mix of residential and commercial with more green space
- Whitefish architecture: mountain modern, historical design, no franchise architecture
- Variety of building architecture and scales
- Architectural standards specific to this area
- Height restrictions close to highway to maintain viewsheds
- Mixed uses, more active pedestrian streets
- Transition from pure commercial to residential, includes uses that residents need close by
- Zoning – blending/transitions north-south and east-west; focus commercial on highway, then higher density residential to E/W of highway, then lower density residential further out; same transition in bulk/scale of commercial from S to N approaching Segment A
- Pocket neighborhoods
- Modest signage
- Personality of Segment A is extended southward
- Infill – multiple types of residential
- Overhead lights redesigned
- Signage and dark skies ordinances

### **Segment C**

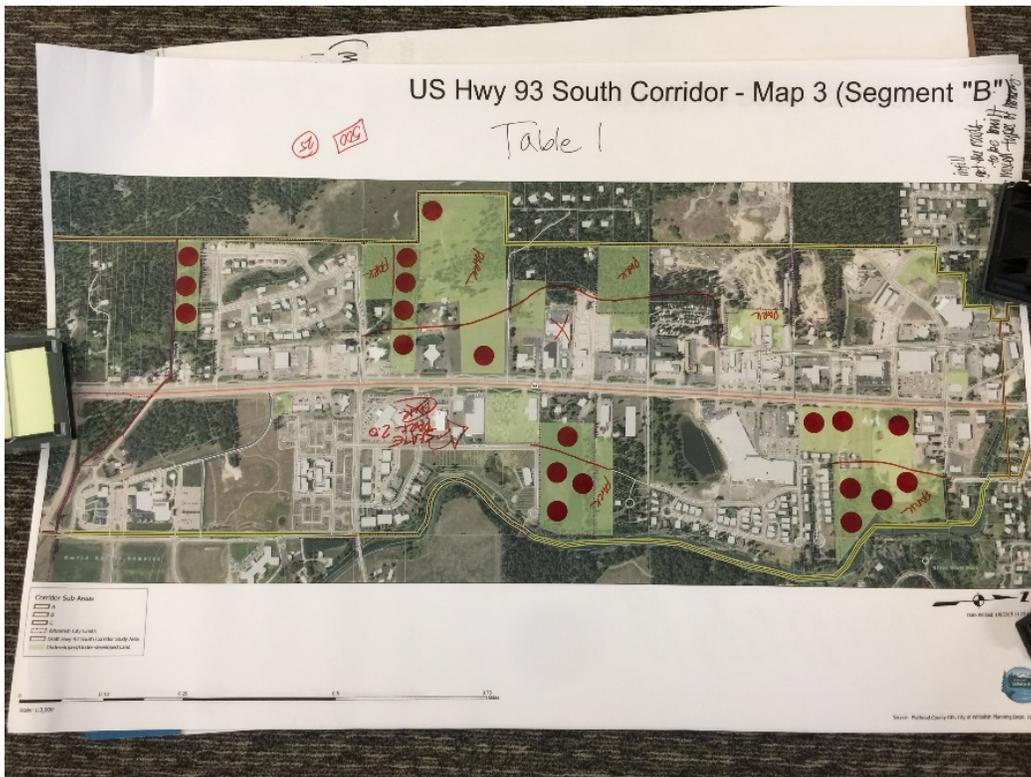
- Slower speed limit
- Traffic calming
- Remains a high-speed highway
- Frontage roads with reduced speed limit
- Shared accesses to highway with backage roads
- Natural features
- Green as possible – better buffer, welcome to WF
- Green/landscaped setbacks
- Welcome Pocket Park at Hwy 40 intersection
- Consistent Wayfinding signs (welcoming/experiences)
- Bike trail (highway – Blanchard Lake Road – Karrow)
- Bike path in MDOT ROW
- Separated bike lane off the highway
- Bike path all the way to Kalispell
- Mass transit opportunities/ park & ride
- Second transportation hub – park & ride into town

- Any opportunity for affordable housing
  - Small-scale, attractive architecture, landscaping
  - Key entrance – “gateway” zoning (Billings, Bozeman, Kalispell)
  - Mix of uses
  - Continuation of Segment B south through Segment C
  - Commercial redevelopment possible
  - Less sprawl
  - Commercial uses further back off highway, mixed with mature trees so not visible from hwy
  - Office park developments with open spaces
  - Mix of building heights
  - Higher density towards the back of properties with backage roads/ hidden with tree buffers
  - More residential looking design guidelines for commercial buildings to mirror Segment A (classic/western)
  - Remains rural residential/not commercial
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- No sewer extension – keep it small scale commercial
  - Keep it rural, but annex into City if continues to be commercially developed
  - Joint, cooperative planning and zoning with county

## **WHERE AND WHAT TYPE OF RESIDENTIAL UNITS SHOULD GO IN SEGMENT B?**

With the clarification that the question was not about whether this should or should not happen, participants were asked how 500 new residential homes and apartments could be built in Segment B of the corridor in a way that maintains the values they described through the visioning exercise. Each group was given 20 stickers, each representing 25 housing units and a map of Segment B showing undeveloped or underdeveloped areas that could potentially be used for housing. The groups placed the stickers on the map where they thought housing could go and indicated the type of housing that would be appropriate there.

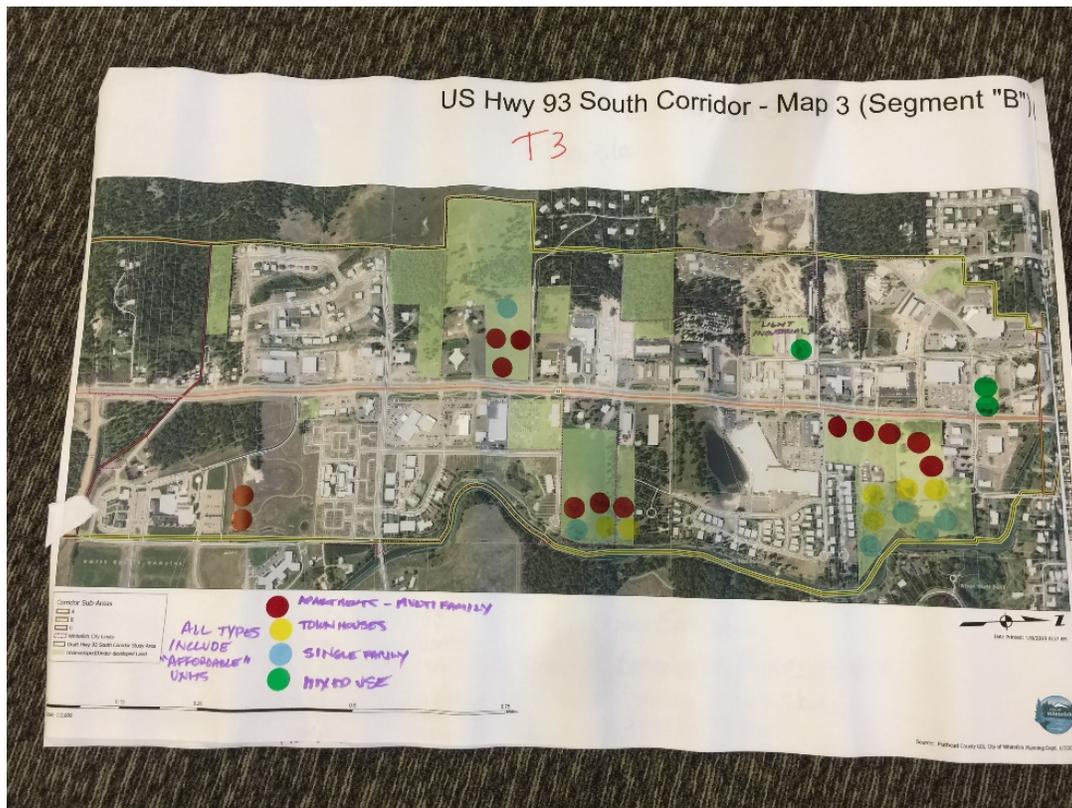
Group 1 indicated 175 units could go on the east side of the highway at the old hospital site and north of Greenwood Avenue; 100 units on the east side of the highway north of Lenna Joy, 100 units on the west side of the highway north of JP Road but south of the Baptist Church, 25 units directly west of the highway as infill between the Baptist and Mormon churches, 25 units far west of the highway with substantial parklands between the highway and housing, and 75 units directly south of the Great Northern subdivision on the west side of the highway. The group indicated several large areas that should be retained as park spaces.



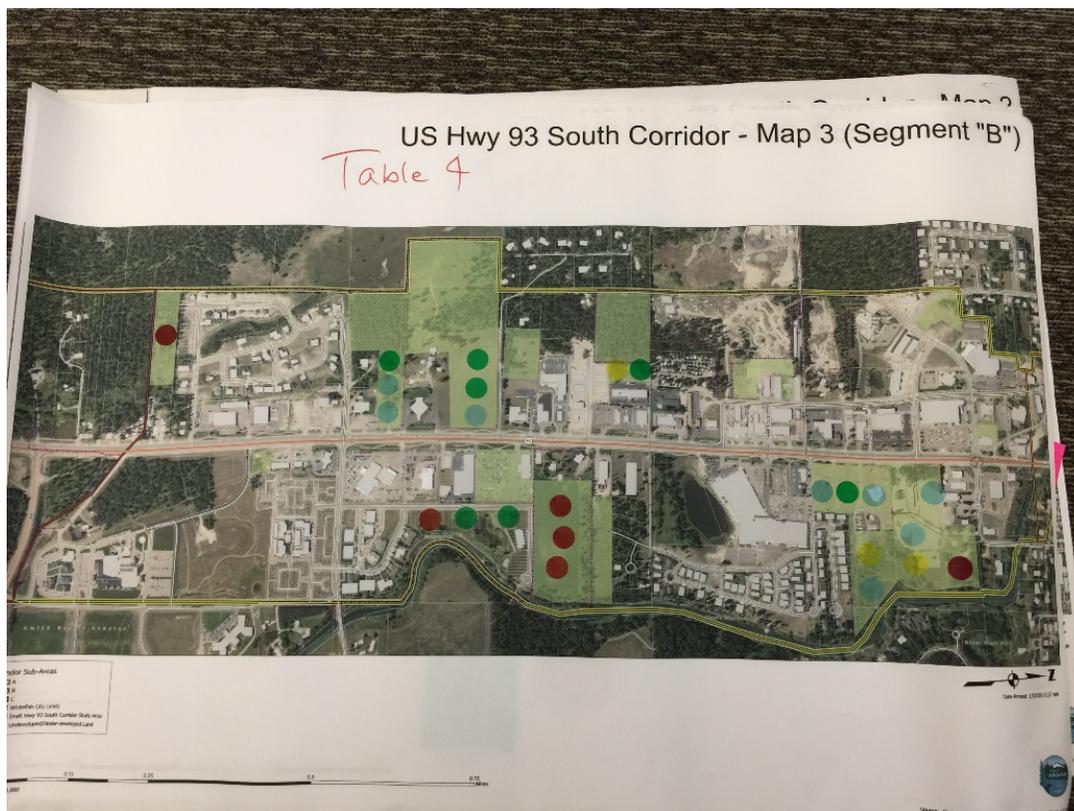
Group 2 indicated where 575 units could go in the Segment. They also located 175 units on the old hospital site and north of Greenwood Avenue; the group specified that units closest to the highway should be mixed use with commercial, and on the river side the units would be high and medium density residential units. The group indicated that 125 units could go north of Lenna Joy and another 50 units of mixed use residential could go adjacent to the highway at the now vacant location of De Pratu Ford. One the west side of the highway, the group thought that 25 units could be located near The Wave recreation facility, 25 units to the west of Baker Avenue, and another 25 units northwest of the Whitefish Crossing apartments. South of the Mormon church, the group indicated 50 mixed use residential units be constructed behind commercial along the highway, and 75 single family homes could be located further to the west. Twenty-five units could also be located just south of the Great Northern subdivision.



Group 3 put most of their density on the north end of Segment B with 325 units spread out over the old hospital site and north of Greenwood Avenue. Multi-family apartments would be located closest to the highway, with single-family homes along the river and townhouses in between. Likewise, 150 units were depicted north of Lenna Joy, with multi-family apartments closer to the highway, and single-family homes and townhouses nearer to the river. The group also thought putting 50 multi-family apartments on the current hospital site would be good, although North Valley Hospital has its own approved neighborhood plan that does not include residential at this time. On the west side of the highway, the group put 50 mixed units at the northwest corner of the 13<sup>th</sup> Street intersection, currently the location of a vacant casino. Twenty-five mixed-use units were also located along Baker just south of 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Finally, the group put 100 units on the parcel between the Baptist and Mormon churches; 75 multi-family apartments near the highway and 25 single-family homes further from the highway.



Group 4 placed enough stickers for 600 units, although 75 of those extra units were placed in a location along Shiloh Avenue that has already been approved for townhouses. Most residential density was again thought to be most appropriate at the old hospital site and north of Greenwood Avenue with 225 units put in that location. Another 75 units could be located north of Lenna Joy, along with the 75 units along Shiloh Avenue described above. On the west side of the highway, the group thought 50 units just north of the existing Whitefish Crossing apartments would be appropriate. Additionally, 75 units could go between the Baptist and Mormon churches, and 75 units could be located south of the Baptist church. A final 25 units were placed south of the existing Great Northern subdivision.



Group 5 put 250 units on the old hospital property and 25 more units just to the south, north of Greenwood Avenue. It also placed 50 units south of the Mountain Mall on property that has already been approved for residential uses through the Planned Unit Development (PUD) process; the development was approved when the zoning allowed short-term rentals in this district. The group put another 50 units north of Lenna Joy. On the west side of the highway, the group put 25 units to the northwest of the Whitefish Crossing apartments, and 100 units on the properties north of JP Road.

