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Executive Summary of 2nd Open House for the South New Street Streetscape Design

April 2, 2019



LEHIGH
UNIVERSITY



Executive Summary

ABOUT THE PROJECT

In 2018, WRT proudly began a collaboration with the City of Bethlehem to redesign the South New Street streetscape with a vision that celebrates the unique character of south Bethlehem while improving **SAFETY & ACCESSIBILITY**, **CONNECTIVITY**, and **IDENTITY** for residents and visitors. The streetscape design proposed for this project will serve as a benchmark for future streetscape projects within the SouthSide.

South Bethlehem has experienced an urban revitalization into an arts, culture, and entertainment destination since the Bethlehem Steel plant closed its doors after a century of operation. The WRT team envisions South New Street as a prominent gateway streetscape to the SouthSide, enhancing the cultural and institutional environment and providing a strong identity. A successful project will improve how people arrive to the SouthSide, get to Lehigh University, and experience a diversified residential and commercial corridor.

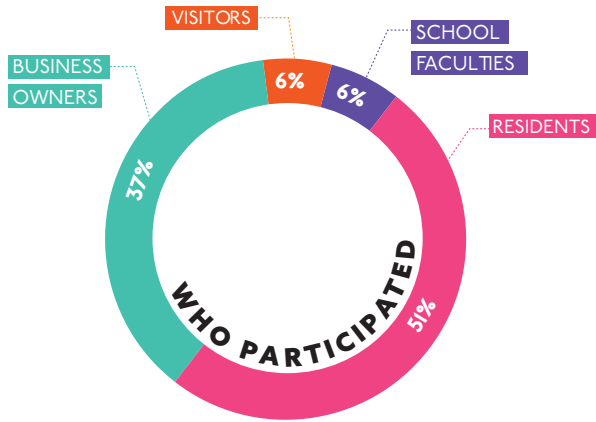
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

On March 26th 2019, the project team held the 2nd open house at the Banana Factory Arts Center to share the design progress to-date. WRT team gathered input primarily through **CONCEPT SITE DESIGN BOARDS**, **DESIGN SCORE CARDS**, and **POST-IT NOTES**. The **STREETSCAPE DESIGN CONCEPT** were prepared with preferred programming from the 1st open house Visioning Session (October 17th, 2018). Participants shared how they currently use the South New Street & Greenway Trail Park, what kind of physical, programmatic, and operational changes they would like to see, and how these desired programs can be accommodated into the streetscape design. Using the design score card exercise and the post-it notes the team was able to collect diverse and constructive input from the participants.

This is the second of three-parts community engagement events.



WHAT WE LEARNED



SAFETY & ACCESSIBILITY

Participants scaled average 8 out of 10 regarding how successful the concept in delivering a safe and accessible pedestrian environment and streetscape design for South New Street.

- **3rd Street & South New Street intersection** is the gateway to the Southside. Need more improvement attention at this intersection with a clear pedestrian crossing signs.
- First block of eastern side of South New Street needs to be more pedestrian friendly.
- Consider provide parklet-like space at the Zest/Parking Garage building with tables & chairs to activate the space between two buildings.
- The proposed greenway path on eastern side provides a great park space where southside community could interact. Consider picnic tables, performance space etc.
- **Farrington Square** should provide performance space with tables & chairs.
- Lighting design: Participants generally favored the **catenary lights/mesh** but wanted to make sure to keep the **historical pole mounted lights**. The tree and bench lighting are generally favored.
- Planting Design: Landscaping has the potential to make a significant impact to the appearance and perception of South New Street. Consider winter-interest plants to keep the area looking attractive throughout the year.
- Southside community would love to have a central location for outdoor gathering, enjoy a book or meal!

CONNECTIVITY

Participants voted bus shelter amenities like **ART, LIGHTING** and **SEATING** could enhance this location at the South New Street.

- The proposed bus shelter and pavilions are great at creating continuity along the eastern side of the street, but they seem to be a weak welcome point for entry to the Greenway Trail Park.
- **Proposed bus shelter location** may back up the traffic to 4th Street.

IDENTITY

Participants voted **LIGHTING, PLANTING** and **FURNITURE** could define a unique identity for the South New Street.

