

Four Mile Run Drive Complete Streets Phase 2: South Walter Reed Drive to South Nelson Street

Proposed Concept Engagement – August 2022

Project Background

This section of **S. Four Mile Run Drive between S. Walter Reed Drive and S. Nelson Street** will pilot a roadway reconfiguration identified in the Four Mile Run Valley Area Plan. The project can be implemented using low-cost, interim measures to facilitate easy installation and evaluation. The data collected will help determine the viability of longer-term roadway reconstructions that could potentially add sidewalks, landscaping, and green infrastructure as appropriate.

The County’s Vision Zero Action Plan, adopted in 2020, highlights South Four Mile Run Drive as part of the County’s High-Injury Network (i.e., corridors in the county with higher densities of crashes resulting in a serious or fatal injury). It also identifies the intersection of South Four Mile Run Drive and South Walter Reed Drive and Shirlington Road and 27th Street South, which are located on either end of the project corridor, as crash hotspots.

County staff will assess and address safety issues along South Four Mile Run Drive as part of this project, as well as other projects and initiatives, to continue working toward safer conditions throughout the corridor.

For more information on the project’s background, history, goals and planning basis, please visit the [project website](#).

Goals and Basis

- Support Jennie Dean Park renovation by **ensuring safety for pedestrians** while also **maximizing on-street parking** and **maintaining appropriate traffic flow**.
- Provide a **continuous pedestrian pathway along S Four Mile Run Drive**. The pathway will run along the north side between Shirlington Road and Nelson Street and transition to the south side between Nelson Street and Walter Reed Drive.
- **Enhance ramps and shorten pedestrian crossing distances** at S Nelson Street to increase pedestrian safety and access to Jennie Dean Park, nearby trails and other destinations in Green Valley and Shirlington.
- **Reduce vehicle speeds** (currently averaging about 10MPH above the speed limit) to improve safety for all road users.
- **Improve safety and accessibility to nearby bus stops (ART Routes 75 & 87, Metro Routes 10B, 23A/B/T)** for transit users.
- In order to achieve project goals, a **roadway reconfiguration** is necessary for this section of Four Mile Run Drive, as indicated in the [Four Mile Run Valley Area Plan](#).

- **Address safety issued** identified in the [Vision Zero Four Mile Run Drive Safety Audit](#), conducted because S Four Mile Run was identified as being part of Arlington’s High-Injury Network.

Public Engagement

In August 2022, the project team collected feedback on the proposed concept designs via virtual meetings and an online feedback form. The proposed concepts were presented to the Green Valley Civic Association on August 16, 2022 at a special meeting, and to the general public on August 17, 2022 at a virtual public meeting hosted by the County. At each meeting, the project team presented the basis for design, a summary of existing conditions feedback, and the two design concepts. Feedback on each concept was collected from attendees. The concepts were also presented to the public in an online feedback form, which was open for two weeks.

To allow for additional outreach and coordination with stakeholders, the County has revised the project timeline.

Revised Project Timeline

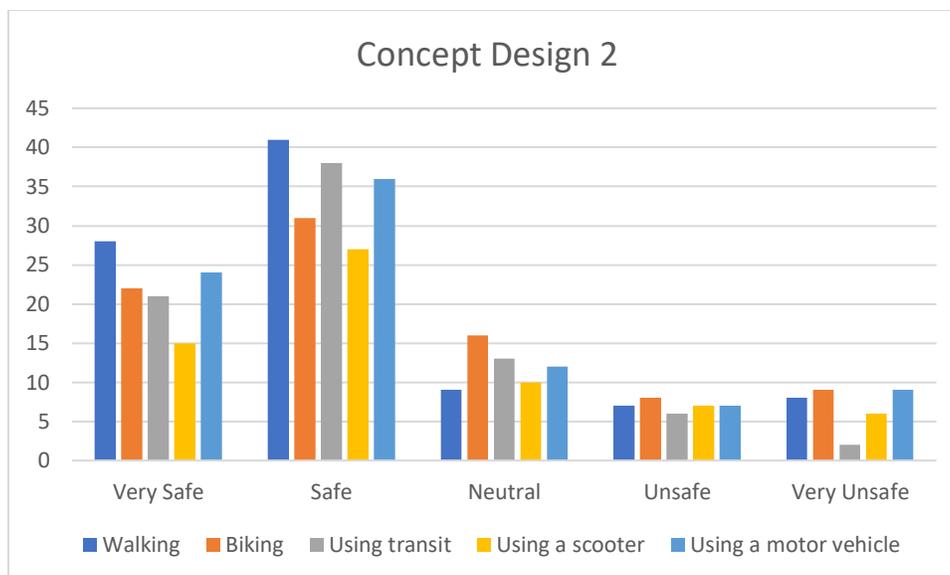
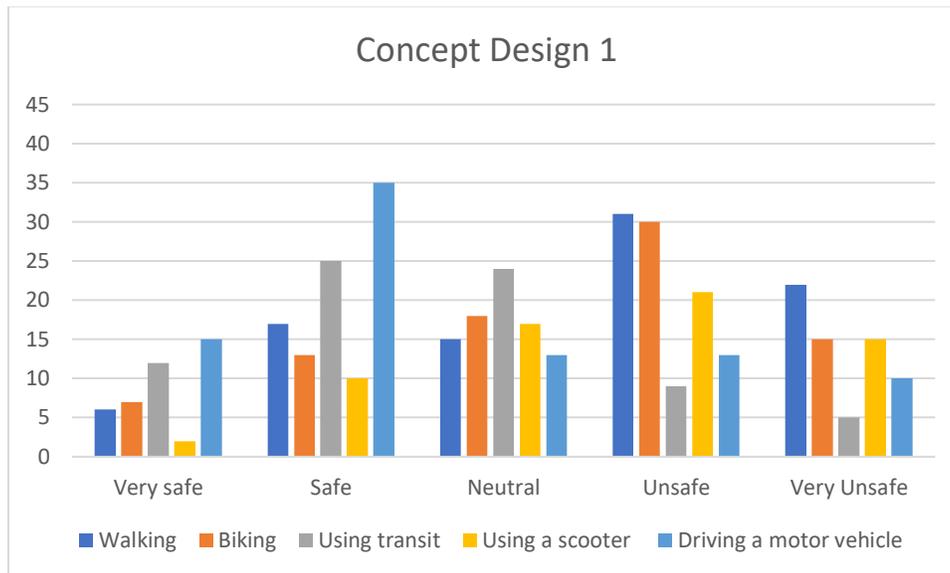
- Fall 2022 – The County hosts additional meetings with business owners and other stakeholders to discuss modifications to the concepts.
- Winter 2022/2023 – The design concepts are updated to address stakeholder concerns. Modifications will include changes to intersections and driveways and the exploration of alternate barrier materials.
- Winter 2023 – The updated concepts are presented to the public for feedback.
- Spring 2023 – The preferred concept is refined, reviewed, and finalized by the County. The final design is shared with the public prior to implementation.
- Summer 2023 – The County installs the interim design.

A summary of what we heard through the community engagement process follows.

Community Engagement Summary

Overall, respondents to the online engagement indicated that Concept 2 would make them feel safer, regardless of travel mode.

The following two graphs depict responses to the survey prompt: “Overall, how safe would Concept Design 1/Concept Design 2 make you feel while traveling along S. Four Mile Run Drive while using the following modes of transportation?” There were 95 total respondents to this question.



- **In response to Concept 1**, responses indicated that respondents **changed whether they would feel safe or unsafe depending on which mode** they used to travel on S. Four Mile Run Drive.

- The majority of respondents (66% of respondents) indicated they would feel **safe or very safe while driving a motor vehicle**.
- The majority of respondents (70%) indicated that they would feel **unsafe or very unsafe while walking**.
- **In response to Concept 2**, responses generally indicated that users would **feel safe or very safe, regardless of travel mode**.
 - The majority of respondents (79%) indicated they would feel **safe or very safe while driving a motor vehicle**.
 - The majority of respondents (82%) indicated that they would feel **safe or very safe while walking**.

Public feedback included concerns about specific elements of the concept designs. These concerns include:

- Use of jersey barriers
 - Some business owners expressed concern that the Jersey barriers and modified driveways would negatively impact access to their businesses and their business operations.
 - Other community members expressed that installing a walking zone using only pavement markings was an inadequate solution. Some even expressed that they felt a painted walkway without a physical barrier would result in a more dangerous environment for people walking than the existing condition.
 - There was also an expressed sentiment that the presence of Jersey barriers on the corridor prior to the construction of the long-term vision would make the corridor feel uninviting and “like a construction zone”.
- On-street parking design
 - Some respondents noted the high demand for large vehicle or commercial vehicle parking, fearing that if these spaces were removed from Four Mile Run Drive, those vehicles would relocate into the adjacent residential neighborhoods.
 - Some respondents expressed concern over the use of back-in angled parking, fearing that drivers would create additional traffic conflicts when stopping to reverse into a space.

Open-ended feedback summary

Concept 1

- The majority of written comment respondents to the feedback form (38) said that the painted walkway is inadequate. Some respondents (9) even suggested that implementing the walkway without any form of barrier would be more dangerous than existing conditions. Others (10) said that if Concept 1 is implemented, the County should work towards implementing Concept 2 in short order.
- Of the respondents who said that the painted walkway is inadequate, 15 said that they fear the walkway would be used as a parking lane and 10 said that the walkway would still allow high-speed turns across the sidewalk.

- There were some concerns about the vehicle changes. 5 respondents expressed concerns over the safety of the lane reduction concept, and 5 expressed concerns that back-in angled parking would introduce conflicts.
- 5 respondents expressed a desire for bike accommodations.

Concept 2

- Several respondents (36) clearly stated that Concept 2 is their preferred concept. 19 respondents identified the presence of the Jersey barriers as the element that made this concept feel safer.
- Respondents also noted that the narrowed driveways help control turning speeds (10), as does reducing the number of curb cuts (5).
- 8 respondents said that they feel that the lane reduction and angled parking would help control vehicle speeds.
- 3 respondents noted that they felt that the lane reduction would be dangerous.
- 3 respondents noted that the Jersey barriers are unsightly and undesirable. Some noted that they could be used as an opportunity to introduce public art, while others suggested the use of alternate materials such as bollards or planters.
- 4 respondents expressed a desire for bike accommodations.

Next Steps

Implementation of the interim solution has been deferred to Spring 2023. The project team will explore the use of alternate materials and conduct additional outreach with local stakeholders before adjusting the concepts. The concepts will be presented to the public again in early 2023 before construction.

More Information

Project Page: <https://www.arlingtonva.us/Government/Projects/Project-Types/Transportation-Projects/South-Four-Mile-Run-Drive-Complete-Streets-Project>

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