

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

Existing Conditions Engagement – June 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 to 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.

## Public Engagement

In June 2022, the project team executed four different engagement activities to identify concerns related to existing conditions. The general public was invited to a virtual public meeting on June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2022 at which County staff discussed the corridor's transportation goals as defined in the Four Mile Run Valley Area Plan and asked for additional, supplementary commentary related to each. The goals and feedback questions were also presented in an online feedback form, which remained accessible via the project website for two weeks.

To target local businesses and frequent users of the corridor, County staff also canvassed businesses along this segment of South Four Mile Run Drive after the virtual public meeting. County staff spoke with owners, managers, and employees of local businesses who were available at the time of the canvassing; in the absence of the appropriate party, the County left behind flyers with links to the online feedback form and contact information. On the same day, County staff also presented project information and instigated conversations with local passers-by with the intent of engaging frequent visitors to the corridor. Local users were prompted to identify issues they commonly experienced when walking or rolling through this segment of South Four Mile Run Drive.

This feedback will support the development of preliminary roadway reconfiguration designs based on the interim-condition recommendations in the Four Mile Run Valley Area Plan. The Area Plan was adopted in 2018 as the result of several rounds of public engagement meetings and engagement with local stakeholders, including civic associations, local businesses, and advisory groups. The Area Plan identified overall transportation goals for the corridor and developed a highly conceptual illustration of a proposed interim condition which served as the basis for the preliminary design alternatives.

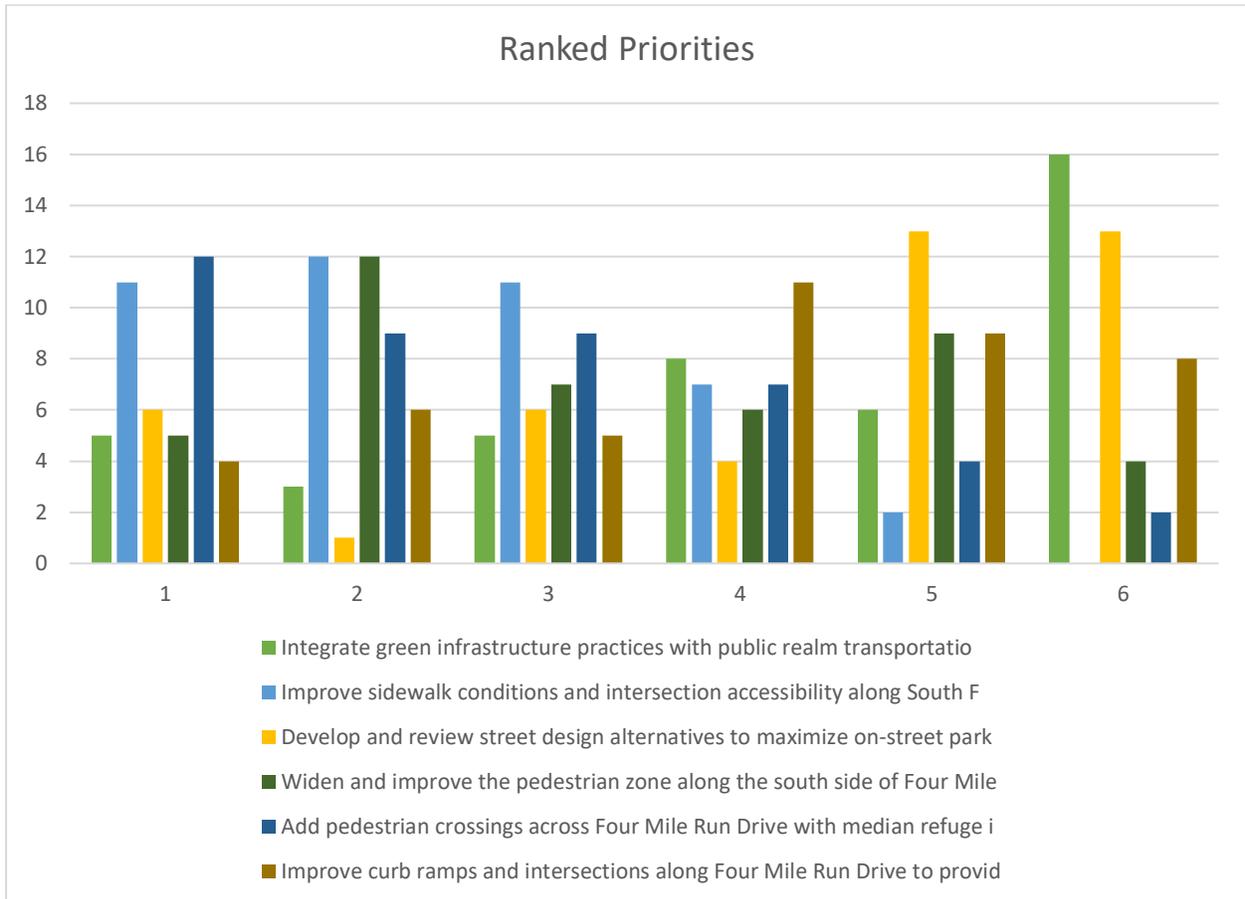
### Project Timeline:

- July 2022 – County staff develops preliminary concepts based on existing conditions feedback
- August 1<sup>st</sup> thru August 15<sup>th</sup> 2022 – Preliminary concepts are presented to the public for comment.
- August 15<sup>th</sup> thru 31<sup>st</sup> 2022 – The preferred concept is finalized and developed into a construction document.
- Early September 2022 – The interim roadway reconfiguration is implemented via the County's annual repaving program.

### What We Heard

Overall, public response indicated the desire for safer, more visible, and more controlled pedestrian crossings and for more consistent pedestrian access along the south side of the street. Employees and business owners also noted a desire for additional on-street parking and expressed concern over vehicles parked on South Four Mile Run Drive long-term.

The following graph depicts responses to the survey prompt: “Help us understand your priorities for this section of roadway, based on the Four Mile Run Valley Master Plan. Please number your priorities 1-6, where 1 is your first priority.” There were 43 total respondents to this question.



- **“Add pedestrian crossings across Four Mile Run Drive with median refuge islands at Oxford Street, Oakland Street, and Nelson Street”** was selected as the first priority by 28% of respondents and the second priority by 21% of respondents.
- **“Improve sidewalk conditions and intersection accessibility along Four Mile Run Drive as part of a complete streets project”** was selected as the first priority by 26% of respondents and the second priority by 28% of respondents.
- **“Develop and review street design alternatives to maximize on-street parking, while also ensuring safety for pedestrians and maintaining appropriate traffic flow”** was ranked as the first priority by 14% of respondents.

## Engagement Summary

### *Intersection and Crossing Safety*

- Respondents noted that drivers speed on South Four Mile Run Drive and often do not look for or yield to pedestrians at marked crosswalks. Some respondents noted flashing beacons at crosswalks seemed insufficient and that a partial pedestrian signal or HAWK signal would be preferable.
- Respondents to the online feedback form expressed a slight preference for curb extensions over median refuge islands to improve pedestrian crossings. One respondent noted that curb extensions would more effectively improve the visibility of pedestrians to oncoming traffic.
- Respondents noted that parked cars obstruct visibility at intersections. One respondent noted that they needed to “practically stand in the road” to check for oncoming traffic.
- Multiple respondents cited additional concern for seniors or children trying to access AFAC or Jennie Dean Park.

### *Sidewalk Conditions*

- Respondents noted that between South Nelson Street and South Oakland Street, the sidewalk on the south side is inconsistent and often leaves pedestrians unsure of where to walk. Some noted that they make multiple crossings across South Four Mile Run Drive to avoid walking on the south side of this block.
- Several respondents noted that frequent movements across driveways (especially in front of autobody shops) make walking on the south side feel particularly unsafe.
- Several respondents noted frustration with vehicle blockages on sidewalks.
- Business owners expressed concerns about a walkway between Nelson Street and Oakland Street potentially impacting access to their businesses.

### *Traffic and Parking*

- Several respondents expressed a desire for additional on-street parking along South Four Mile Run Drive.
- Respondents expressed mixed reactions to the angled parking spaces in front of Jennie Dean Park. Some noted that the spaces felt unsafe because of the need to stop traffic while maneuvering into a space, while others expressed approval that angled spaces could potentially increase the number of spaces along the corridor.
- One respondent expressed concern over the ability to enter South Four Mile Run Drive from side streets during peak hours if the roadway were reduced to one lane in each direction.

## Next Steps

The project team is looking for opportunities to incorporate the existing conditions feedback as we develop two alternative preliminary designs. We will present the preliminary concepts to the public in early August 2022 and finalize the preferred concept in late August 2022. Construction is tentatively slated to commence in early September 2022.

A virtual public meeting to discuss the proposed alternative designs will be held on Thursday, August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Feedback will also be solicited via an online feedback form between August 4<sup>th</sup> and August 15<sup>th</sup>.

## **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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