



D Avenue Improvement Project

Designing for stormwater, pedestrian, and pavement needs

OPEN HOUSE SUMMARY

October 26, 2017 6:30-8:30 p.m.

An open house was held on Thursday, October 26, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the Adult Community Center for the D Avenue Improvement Project. More than fifty neighbors attended.

The purpose of the open house was to update neighbors with design details for stormwater, pedestrian, and pavement improvements to D Avenue between State and 10th Streets. The May 2017 open house had presented two road improvement concepts – meandering or straight. During the summer, the City and consultant team moved forward with design of the “meandering” road alignment. The October 26 open house provided an opportunity to see and comment on the 60% design details. Neighbors were invited to provide feedback on design details, and staff and consultants were available to answer questions. The open house included information and graphics on the location of improvements (road, sidewalks, parking, stormwater features) within the right-of-way, landscaping, stormwater management, and general construction issues and schedule.

The target audience for the open house was neighbors on or around D Avenue and the broader First Addition neighborhood. Announcement of the meeting was made through the website, email to interested parties, postcard mailing to over 1000 addresses covering the entire First Addition Neighborhood (FAN), an article in the citywide October Hello LO newsletter that referenced the upcoming open house, and posts on the city’s social media accounts. The date was also shared with attendees at the October FAN Meeting.

The meeting was an open house with no formal presentation. There were four information stations:

- **Background** – Information was shared on the project area and scope of improvements, what we’ve heard from neighbors and the project schedule.
- **Design** – Design details were shared for the length of the project corridor from State to 10th Streets for the meandering alignment. There was additional design detail at key cross sections. The station also included a review of the concepts explored in the spring.
- **Landscaping/Stormwater Management/Visuals** – The graphics showed sample imagery of landscaping, stormwater planters, planting palettes, and other visual concepts, such as lighting and materials. There was information on tree removal/protection.
- **Construction** – A general construction schedule, known coordination issues, and potential staging ideas were shared. Road closures and access issues were highlighted.

The display graphics are available on the website under ‘materials’ at www.d-ave.org.

What We Heard – Key Themes

The following is a summary of what was heard from neighbors through conversations with staff and consultants, and through written comments. Attendees were specifically encouraged to comment on the conceptual visuals and information shown for landscaping, lighting, parking, materials, and construction. During the open house, there were many questions about project costs, construction staging including access and closures, ways to protect trees, and specific sites with stormwater drainage issues.

Support for the project and design – Most of the open house attendees shared support for the project, the pedestrian improvements, and the “meandering” alignment concept that had been moved forward to 60% design and presented at the open house. There were a few attendees who do not feel the overall design is consistent with the neighborhood history or character or who were concerned that traffic may be diverted to other streets to avoid the meandering roadway. However, most who attended the open house expressed support for the design and shared their appreciation for the update and graphics.

Support for pedestrian improvements – Most of the open house attendees were supportive and ready to see the new sidewalk built. There were a few comments of concern on the aesthetics/color of pedestrian safety/ADA features.

Support for landscaping and stormwater management planters – Most of the conversations and comments were supportive of the landscaping and stormwater features the project team presented. Many neighbors expressed support for planting native plants and the plant palette shown. Quite a few were eager to see the plantings established. Some neighbors were concerned about the tree removal and replacement process, and supported efforts to limit tree removal. A few neighbors requested specific additional trees be removed. Regarding raingarden/stormwater planters, there were a few concerns about how they affected parking areas. Ongoing maintenance of the planting areas was raised by a few neighbors, but was often coupled with suggestions on how to ensure success of the plantings.

Mixed feeling on lighting – Of all the design details, lighting received the most concern. Several liked that there was an increase in the lower height lighting for pedestrians. Some suggested dimmer lighting to prevent light pollution. A few neighbors thought that the proposed lighting did not fit the neighborhood feel of First Addition and created an uncharacteristic urban aesthetic. A few suggested the designers continue to explore the concept for lighting.

Eighteen comment forms were collected. The transcribed comments from the forms are on the following pages for detail and as a project reference.

RECORD OF COMMENT FORMS

Below are the written responses transcribed from the individual comment forms received at the meeting. Eighteen comment forms were collected from the 54 attendees.

1. Please talk with project staff. Do you have thoughts about the design details shown or planning for construction?

Landscaping	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Repeat of the 10th Street Disaster• I like the use of native plants, the rain gardens, new trees.• I like what you propose...• Native plants. Retain large trees. Plant large native trees (Fir, Hemlock and Cedar). Take care to not disturb trees.• Please don't remove large Douglas fir trees!• Each tree removed should be replaced by a tree (no net loss). Large enough to survive. The contractor should commit to irrigation for 2 years post planting to ensure plants are established.• So happy to see lots of native plantings being proposed. It is so important to plant as many natives as possible.• If landscape on D St. in construction zone is disturbed we are expecting plants will be replaced.• Rain gardens are wonderful!• Agree with low profile native plants. We have quite a bit of sightline obstruction in LO at intersections so good plan!• Really good• There are four (4) rain gardens at the two corners of my lot planned. I would like to understand the impact to my/lot as well on the parking and why so many are needed at this area.• Not happy with the extent of removal of existing vegetation. Based on similar "rain gardens" seen in other parts of the Metro area, the rain gardens appear likely to become weed infested eyesores. "Non-native" or "invasive" should not be used as justification for removal of large, significant specimens.• Removal and replacement of trees in front of townhouses at 188, 186, 184, 182, and 180 D Ave would be a great improvement.
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Lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed lighting doesn't fit in the neighborhood. Bad idea. • I walk to the library sometimes after dark so I appreciate the additional lighting. Personally, I prefer the low-level sidewalk lighting instead of the tall intersection lighting which contributes to light pollution. • Good! • Minimal Lighting • It will be wonderful to have more lighting in the neighborhood. It is very dark. • Can 'low' sidewalk lighting not match downtown sidewalk fixtures and be unobtrusive and shield down to not add to light pollution in neighborhood? • Lighting looks good. • Love the sidewalk lighting! Would like to see more in LO. • Awesome lighting is an issue in First Addition especially in the early spring and fall. • Very concerned about the sidewalk lighting. I question the need for it given the new street lights and also dislike the look at it relates to the community feel plus impact on homes/livability. • The small lights on sidewalk detract from the neighborhood "feel" in the rest of 1st Edition. I think it is a waste of money. • Although reasonable, street lighting is desirable, care should be taken to prevent "light pollution" which impacts wildlife and human sleep patterns. • Keep lighting at night fairly dim, please • Like proposed lighting in front of townhouses as well.
Parking Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This project looks nothing like First Addition. Doesn't fit in any way. • Works! • We need at least one guest parking spot on west side of D, in front of house and access to sidewalk from passenger side of car. • Good if paved. Please no signage. • Parking areas will be severely restricted along "D" resulting in overflow into the other neighborhood areas. The rain gardens are responsible for a large portion of the lost parking.
Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You will remove way too many trees. Bad idea. • Hoping neighbors will get adequate notice of road closures - couple days at least. • The earlier the better! • Keep impact on trees to minimum. • I liked the block by block construction sequence along B Ave (stormwater project). Everyone knew which block construction work make non-accessible. Inaccessibility was limited and predictable. • My only concern is potentially having final paving and landscape shift to spring 2019. That would be awfully disruptive! • We need this roadway reconstruction not only on D Ave but elsewhere in First Addition. • If approved in winter, what is the time line to start/complete construction? • I do not like the "meandering" design. I do not expect it to actually impact traffic flow and it increases cost and complexity. • Significant closures will push traffic into other routes putting children and pets at hazard.

2. Is there anything else you would like us to know?

- Do not meander the street. It will displace traffic onto C + E. It violates the historic grid pattern. Bad, bad idea.
- Good work! I can't wait to walk it!
- Keep neighborhood character.
- I want to see a commitment to sufficient periodic maintenances of the bio swales. This should be in the form of a maintenance guideline with a time schedule which is made available to neighbors.
- I have concern that meandering design is clearly promoted in the "concepts" material. People I am hearing are asking is the decision already made? It looks like it is. I have concern that the meandering design undercuts our classic FAN Grid - so obvious in the maps in our neighborhood plan. The 10th St. meandering sidewalk is a border between the FAN grid and Forest Hills meandering -curved roads. The classic FAN grid look with our alley system is an historic platt look. I believe it should be valued and accentuated. It is part of the LO history in FAN that can be and should be saved. Appreciate you having the comment sheet.
- It will be so good to have the drainage improved in the neighborhood. It is a critical issue. Thank you.
- Need room for 3 city trash container (trash, rec, green) in addition to parking space.
- Great plans! Thank you for listening!
- Please proceed!
- Overall the design seems to be making the community feel more commercial, eliminating our country feel. I'd rather not feel like I'm driving in downtown Portland. I prefer the "quaintness" of our existing community.
- The "meander" concept seems ill-advised and was promoted as a way to save trees. The diagrams show only one less tree being removed, hardly a significant justification to violate the general street layout. The meander on "D" is likely to cause significant extra traffic on adjacent streets as vehicles attempt to avoid the annoyance of the meander.
- We can't wait for the pathway for a safe journey walking/biking to school. Thank you! Great job presenting all aspects to the public (retired G.C. who developed properties and retired teacher! :)
- Thank you for being so conscientious about design and asking for input!