

WISSAHICKON GATEWAY PLAN PUBLIC OUTREACH SUMMARY, OCT - NOV, 2017

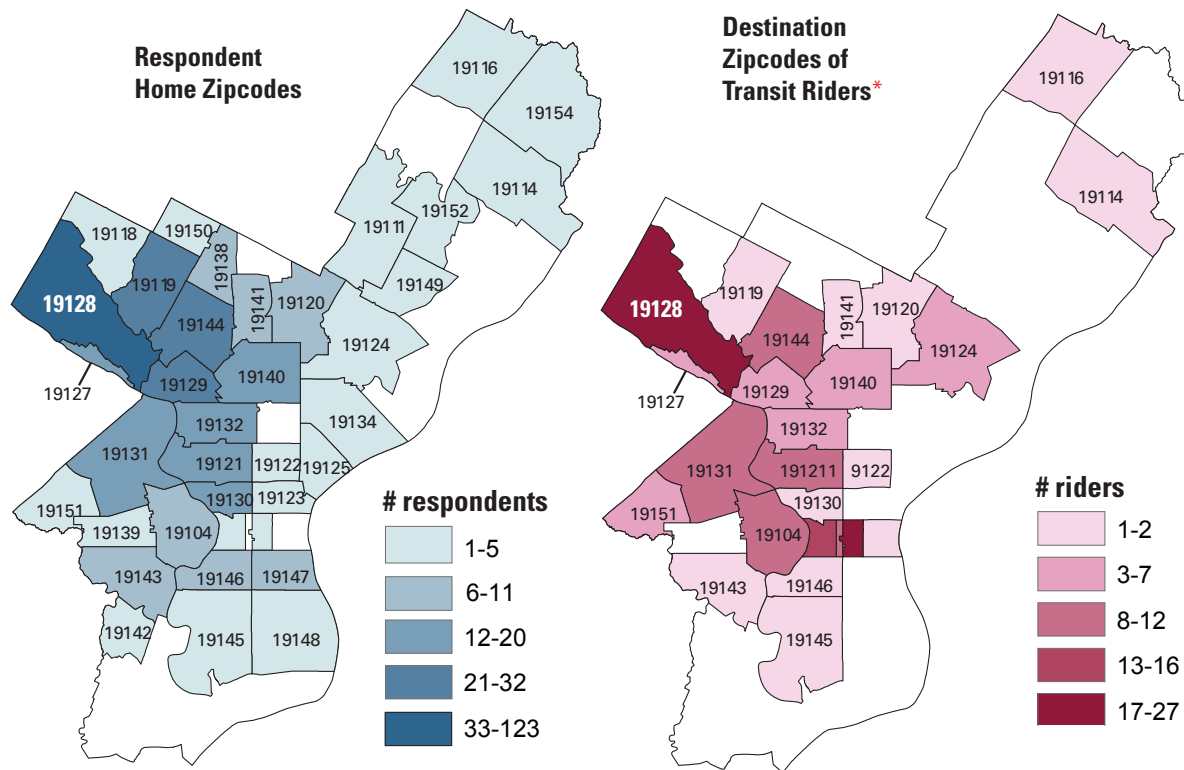


The Wissahickon Gateway Plan is a twelve-month study to coordinate the expansion of the Wissahickon Transportation Center, the extension of the Schuylkill River Trail, roadway improvements on Ridge Avenue and Main Street, new development, and public space and aesthetic improvements. As part of the public outreach efforts for the Wissahickon Gateway Plan, City Planning staff surveyed users of the Wissahickon Transportation Center, Wissahickon Train Station, Schuylkill River Trail, and the Wissahickon Valley Trail. The survey was designed to ask people how they travel through the Wissahickon Gateway area, their opinion of its current conditions and how the area could be improved. The staff at Michael Baker, International, the engineering consultant for the project, and the Clean Air Council provided valuable assistance. Participants could also take the survey online. A total of 486 responses were collected.

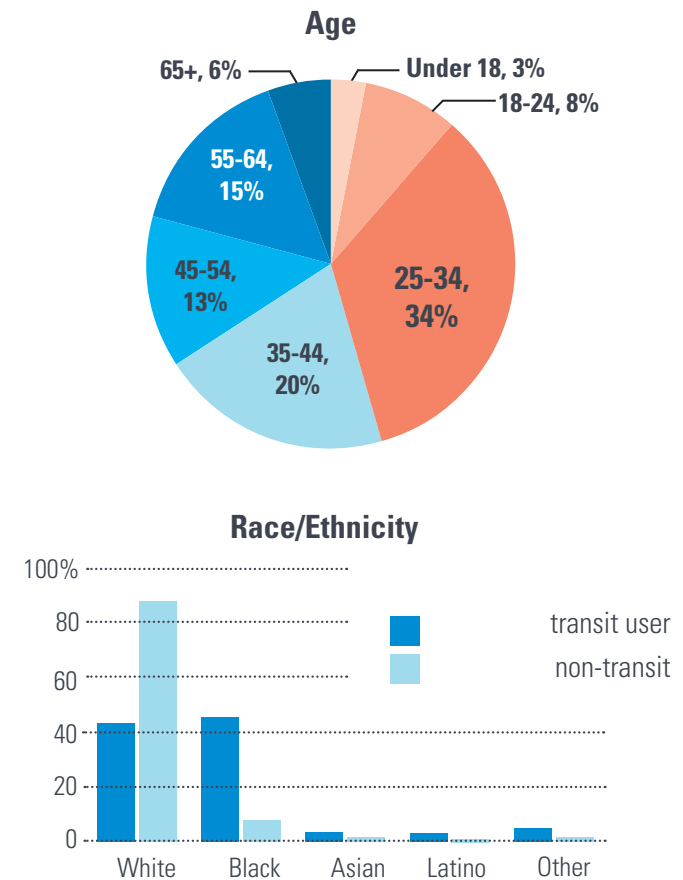
In addition to the survey, City Planning staff held a public meeting to gather feedback on October 30th at the Gustine Recreation Center in East Falls. 85 people attended this meeting. A second meeting is planned for Spring 2018 to present plan recommendations.

SURVEY RESULTS - DEMOGRAPHIC AND SPATIAL DATA

A plurality of survey respondents (25 percent) live in the 19128 zip code, which is home to the neighborhoods of Roxborough, Wissahickon, and Andorra. Another 25% live in the adjoining zip codes of 19119, 19127, 19129, 19131, and 19144. However, only 10% of respondents' final destinations were in the 19128 zip code*. This is most likely due to transit riders who were on their way to work, as 23 percent indicated that they were headed to Center City or University City. King of Prussia was the most common suburban destination.



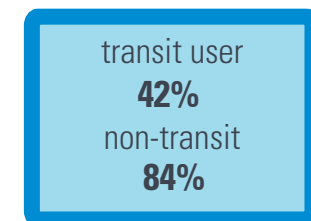
Demographics of Respondents



Survey respondents were asked a number of optional demographic questions. Age and gender were similar across users of all travel modes. Ethnicity and car ownership differed by travel model. Black respondents comprised 47 percent of transit users surveyed and only 8 percent of those who do not use transit in the area were black. On the other hand, 45 percent of transit users surveyed were white, compared to 87 percent of non-transit users. While 58 percent of transit users surveyed did not own a car, the share of non-transit users who lacked a car was only 16 percent.

* only transit users were asked about their final destination

Car Ownership



SURVEY RESULTS - TRANSIT USERS

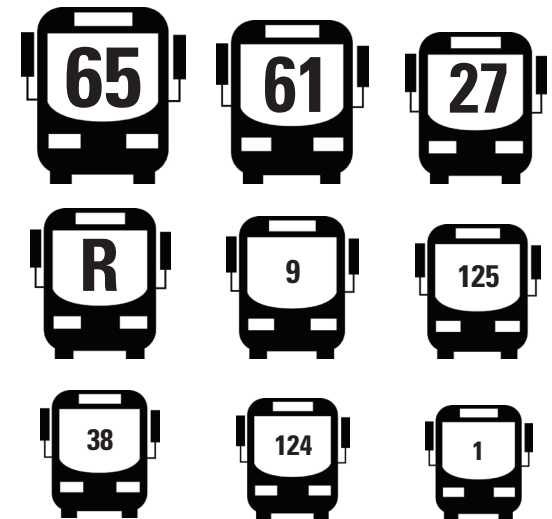
Of 486 total respondents, 288 indicated that they were a transit rider and used the Wissahickon Transportation Center, the Wissahickon Train Station, and/or nearby bus stops.

Transit riders at the Wissahickon Transportation Center and nearby bus stops take a variety of bus routes. The most popular bus route for those who took the survey was Route 65, with 16 percent of respondents taking this route from the WTC or as a transfer. This route was closely followed by Routes 27, 61, R, and 9. It should be noted that some transit riders indicated that more than one route could get them to their destinations and that responses may not fully reflect the transit route they used that day. Roughly 17 percent of transit riders in this survey reported taking the Regional Rail, either from Wissahickon Station or another station, as part of their commute.

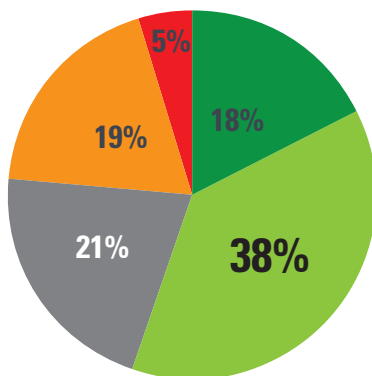
The vast majority of transit riders who took the survey, or 78 percent, rely on SEPTA for their work commutes. A quarter of those users travel through the Wissahickon Gateway every weekday. Just over half, or 56 percent, of respondents traveling for work transfer onto at least one other route. The average travel time for all survey respondents was roughly 45 minutes, with 26 percent of trips being less than a half hour and 29 percent of trips being longer than one hour.

Over half of respondents reported being either very or somewhat satisfied with SEPTA service and facilities at the WTC.

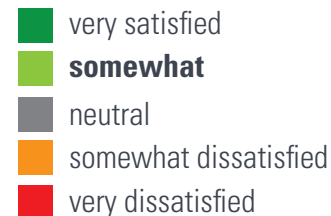
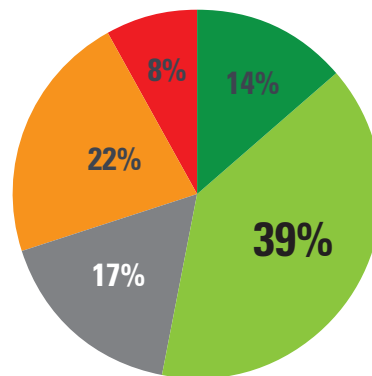
Most Traveled Bus Routes



Satisfaction with SEPTA Transit Service at WTC



Satisfaction with SEPTA Waiting Area and Facilities at WTC



Average Trip Time



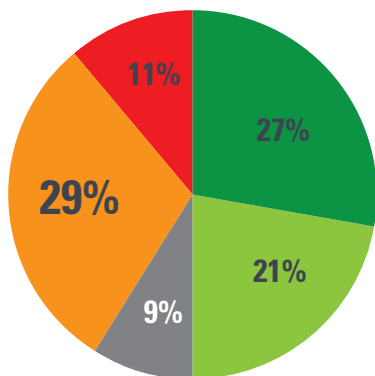
SURVEY RESULTS - TRAFFIC SAFETY

Two-hundred forty-one survey respondents indicated that they used the Wissahickon Gateway area as pedestrians, runners, or cyclists. These respondents were more concerned about unsafe traffic conditions than transit users or drivers who do not bike, run, or walk there. While 48 percent of all respondents feel somewhat or very safe crossing or traversing along the street in the Wissahickon Gateway area, only 28 percent of pedestrians, runners, or cyclists characterized their experience with traffic as safe. On the other hand, 40 percent of all users and two-thirds of pedestrians, runners, and cyclists responded that they feel unsafe.

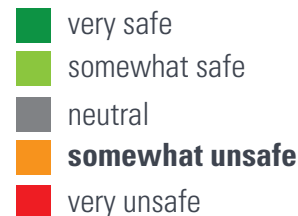
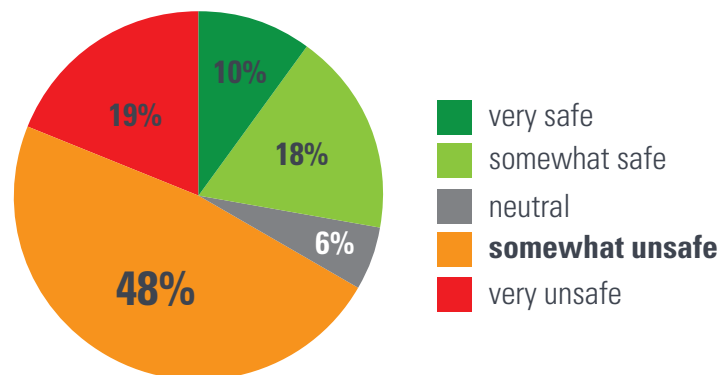
There was a general agreement among all users of factors that make the area unsafe. Even 47 percent of users that identified as pedestrians, runners, or cyclists indicated that cyclists maneuvering through congested traffic contributes to unsafe conditions along Ridge Avenue or Main Street. Respondents said speeding vehicles were the top cause of unsafe conditions, followed by cyclists maneuvering through congested traffic, poor visibility from buses, not enough space in the right-of-way, and unclear signage.

There was a consensus among respondents of all travel modes that separating bicycles from vehicular traffic, either through a protected bike lane or waterfront trail, would help make Ridge Avenue and Main Street safer for everyone. Respondents preferred pedestrian improvements such as widening the sidewalk and upgrading lighting to improve safety. Better signage or lane striping (136), improved signalization (134), shorter street crossing distances (80), and upgrades to ADA ramps (70) were also selected by respondents.

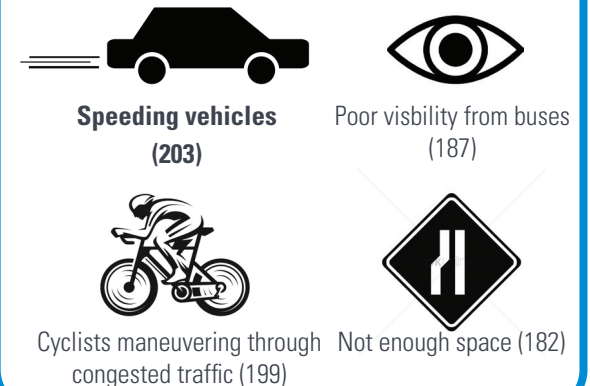
**Sense of Traffic Safety Within
Wissahickon Gateway Area
(all respondents)**



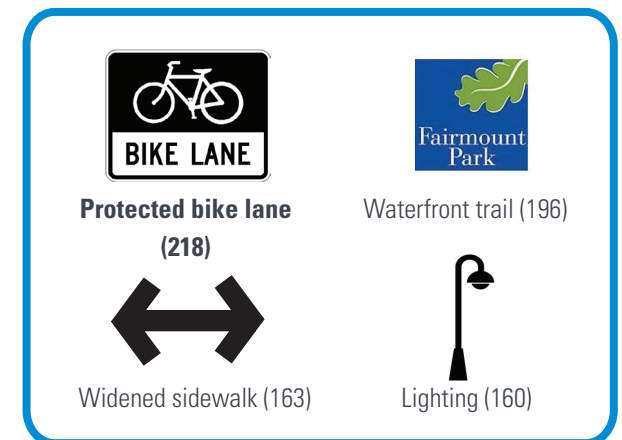
**Sense of Traffic Safety Within
Wissahickon Gateway Area
(pedestrians, runners, cyclists)**



What makes this area unsafe?



What improvements would make you feel safer?



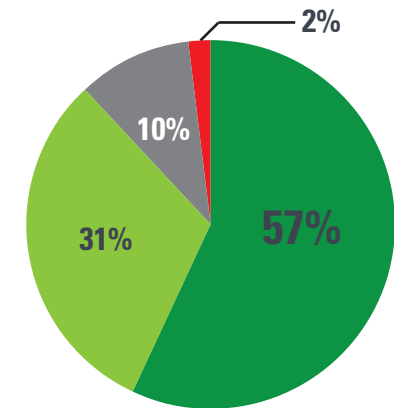
SURVEY RESULTS - TRAIL AND COMMERCIAL AMENITIES

Recreation and bicycle and pedestrian commuters were excited by the prospect of a waterfront trail. When asked if the Schuylkill River Trail were extended from Kelly Drive to Lower Merion Township over the Pencoyd Bridge, 57 percent of pedestrians, runners, and cyclists responded that they would frequently use this trail segment, with another 31 percent responding that they would use it only occasionally. Only 2 percent responded that they would not use that trail segment.

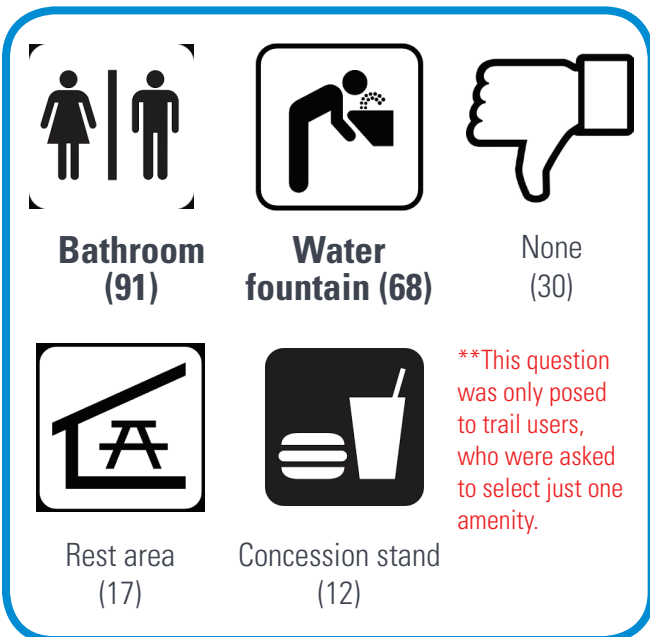
Trail users also liked the idea of some sort of “comfort station” that could be installed at the juncture of the Wissahickon and potential Schuylkill River Trails. Ninety-one (39 percent) of these respondents indicated that a bathroom was their top choice, followed by a water fountain (29 percent), a rest area (7 percent), and a concession stand (5). Some respondents added their own options, such as a bike repair station.

All respondents were asked what types of commercial amenities they would use if they were available nearby. A cafe was the most popular option, closely followed by convenience food, restaurant, or just a bathroom.

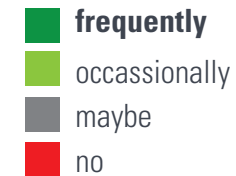
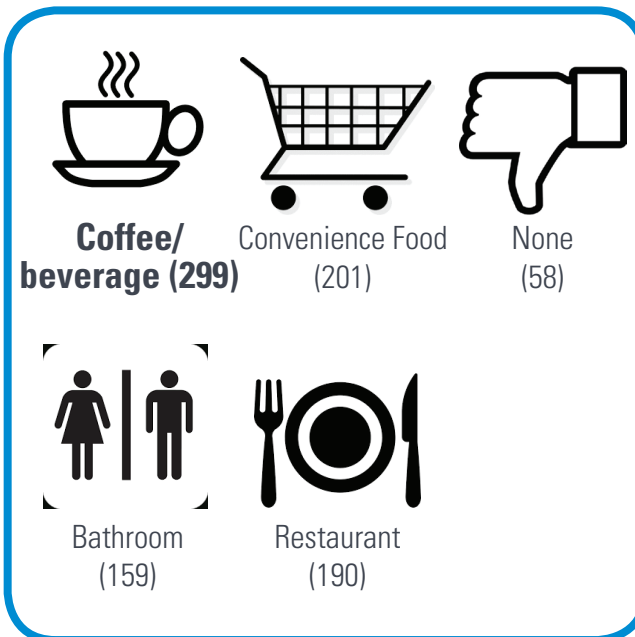
Would you use this trail?



What recreation amenities would you use?**



What commercial amenities would you use?



WISSAHICKON GATEWAY FIRST PUBLIC MEETING | OCTOBER 30, 2017

The first of two public meetings for the Wissahickon Gateway plan took place on October 30, 2017 at Gustine Recreation Center at 4868 Ridge Avenue in East Falls. The meeting attracted 85 participants from throughout the City, but the majority came from the nearby neighborhoods of Wissahickon, East Falls, Manayunk, and Roxborough.

Meeting participants gave input on how to improve the Wissahickon Gateway. This will guide recommendations in the Wissahickon Gateway plan. City Planning, SEPTA, Parks and Recreation, and Michael Baker, International staff facilitated feedback during an open house style meeting.

The results of these exercises are summarized on the following pages. The second and final meeting will be held in Winter/Spring 2018.

In addition to exercises where attendees voted for their preferences, staff gathered additional comments, including:

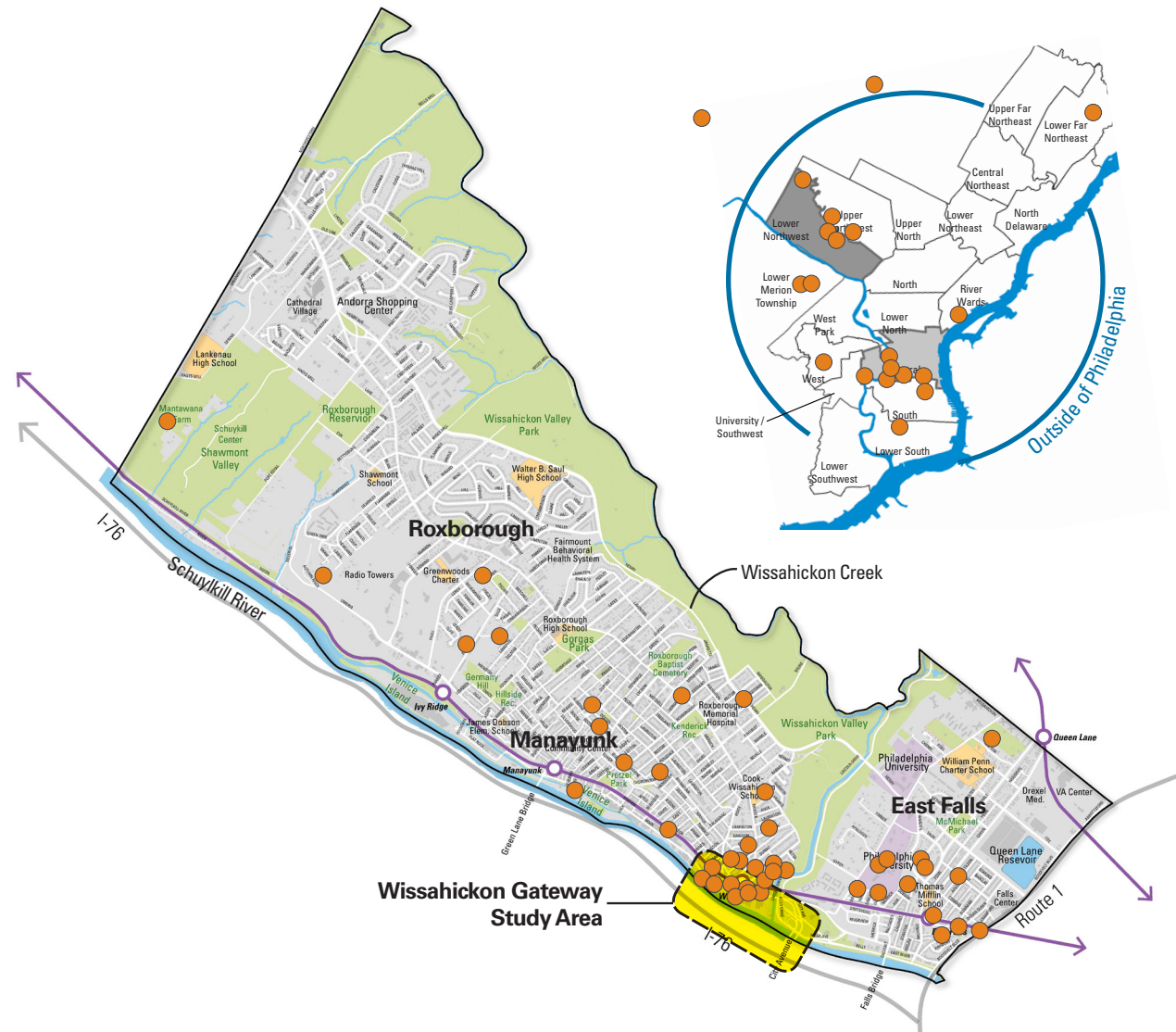
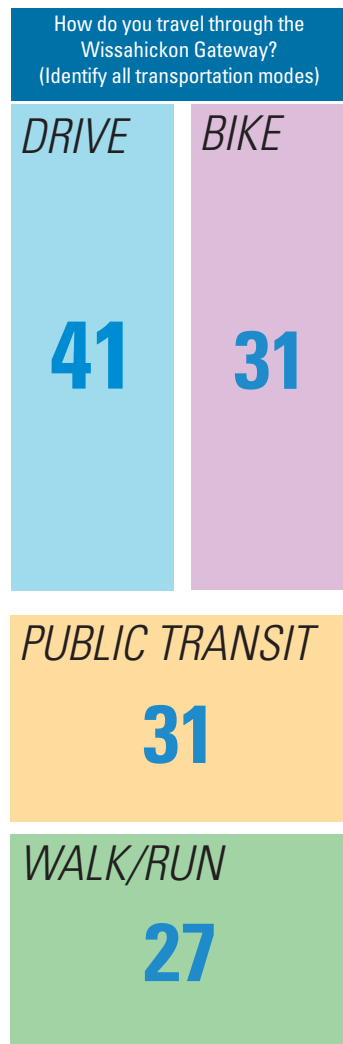
- Need for a Kiss and Ride drop off area
- Ensure new development is connected to Lower Merion
- A bike shop would be useful for people biking on trail
- There is flooding at the bus stop on the north side of Ridge Avenue
- Development should be oriented towards Main Street instead of the Schuylkill River
- Sidewalks need to be maintained
- Trails need to be wide enough for bicyclists and pedestrians
- Connect the trail network to the Wissahickon Train Station
- Create a safe way to cross the highway interchange
- Public parking is needed for the entrance to the Wissahickon Valley Trail
- Gateway signage for Roxborough



WHERE DO YOU LIVE?

HOW DO YOU TRAVEL THROUGH THIS AREA?

The meeting attracted 85 residents from throughout the city and region, but the majority of participants live in the adjoining neighborhoods of East Falls, Wissahickon, Manayunk, and Roxborough. Participants were asked about how they travel through the Wissahickon Gateway area. The results demonstrate its multi-modal nature. Driving was the way most participants traveled, closely followed by biking, public transit, and walking or running.

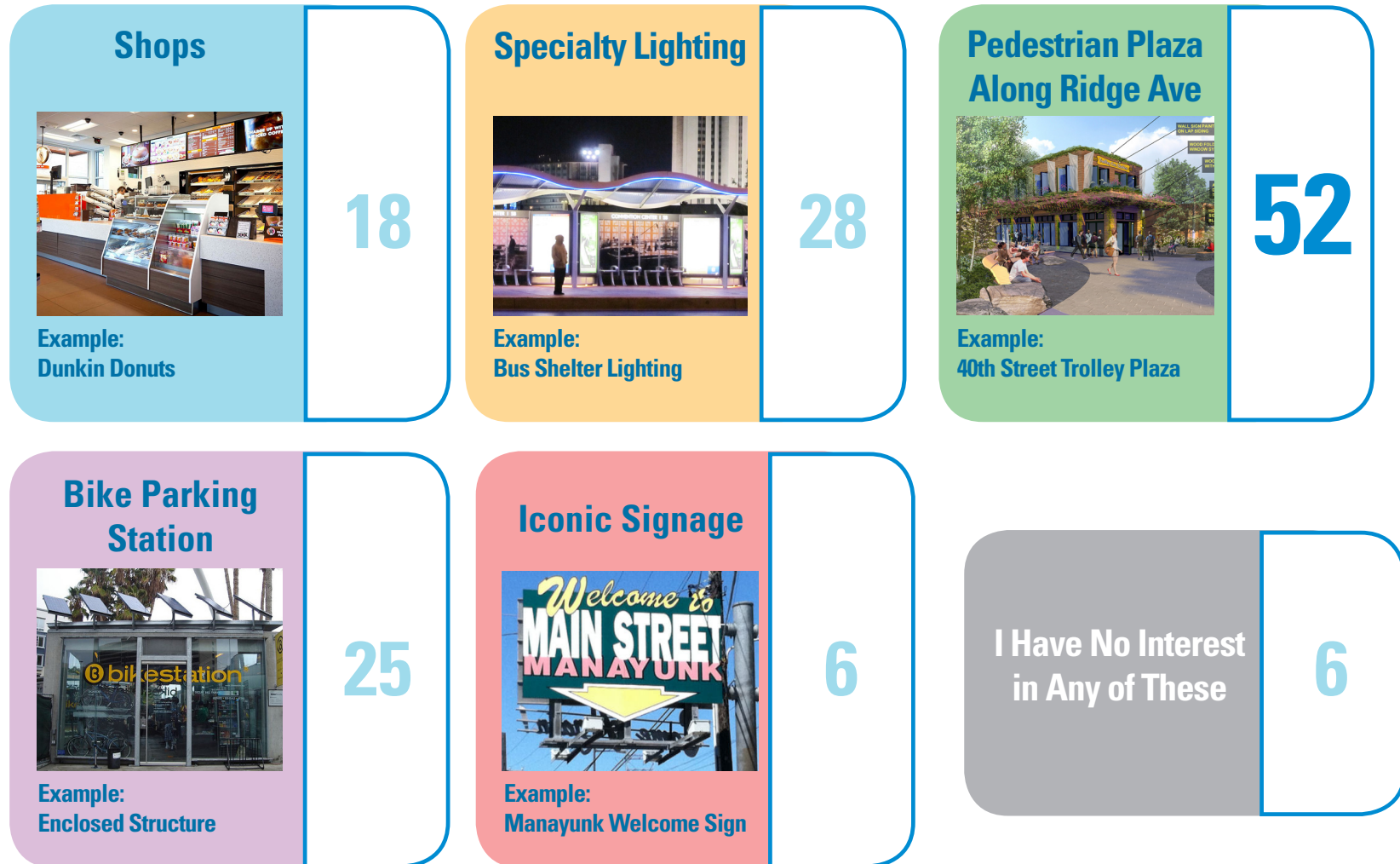


TRANSIT AMENITY PRIORITIES

Participants were asked to prioritize which transit amenities should be part of the new Wissahickon Transportation Center. A pedestrian plaza along Ridge Avenue was the most popular, followed by specialty lighting, a bike parking station, shops, and iconic signage.

Additional comments suggested heat lamps, an Indego bike share station, a welcome sign for Ridge Avenue, and seeking local businesses to occupy the shop.

Please choose TWO that should be incorporated into the new Wissahickon Transportation Center:



DEVELOPMENT PREFERENCES

Meeting participants preferred higher-density mixed-use development such as apartments with retail on the first floor and offices/hotel. Fewer participants preferred exclusively residential or commercial developments. Only three participants supported each of the industrial development options of warehouse or self-storage facilities that are permitted by the current I-1 zoning and currently exist on the site.

Additional comments included the desire to keep the movie theater, encourage local businesses, develop a nature center, and create design standards to prevent “cookie cutter” development and to consider the flood plain.

Please choose your top TWO preferences for new development in the area:

These images represent the type of development that is likely, given current market demand in Philadelphia.

Residential uses are in highest demand.

Zoning decisions guide the use and size of future development.

The current zoning of the planning area is predominantly for light industrial uses.

Warehouse and self-storage facilities represent no change in zoning.



OPEN SPACE, TRAIL, AND PLACEMAKING PRIORITIES

Meeting participants were asked to prioritize open space, trail, and placemaking options. Public bathrooms and drinking fountains were the most popular ideas for reusing the existing Wissahickon Transportation Center, followed by refreshments or cafe, a bike share station, and an information center. River views were the most popular trail feature, followed by sitting areas and storefronts along the trail. Participants preferred large scale landscaping as a gateway (aka entrance) treatment, which was closely followed by unique paving and lighting, and public art installations.

Additional comments suggested including bike parking at the new “comfort station” or along the trail and to employ a park ranger to patrol the area.

Please prioritize investments for each of the following

<p>Reuse of the Existing Wissahickon Transportation Center (CHOOSE TWO)</p>	<p>Information Center</p>  <p>17</p>	<p>Bike Share Station</p>  <p>33</p>	<p>Refreshments or Cafe</p>  <p>35</p>	<p>Public Bathrooms & Fountains</p>  <p>51</p>
<p>Trail (CHOOSE ONE)</p>	<p>Storefronts Along Trail</p>  <p>13</p>	<p>Sitting Areas</p>  <p>28</p>	<p>River Views (Tree/Brush Removal)</p>  <p>35</p>	
<p>Gateway Treatments (CHOOSE TWO)</p>	<p>Iconic Signage</p>  <p>16</p>	<p>Public Art Installations</p>  <p>32</p>	<p>Large Scale Landscaping</p>  <p>45</p>	<p>Unique Paving & Lighting</p>  <p>41</p>