



NHX Stakeholder Meeting Notes, Meeting #2

February 2, 2022 | 5:30 p.m.

Wilks Conference Center & Virtual through Zoom

This second North Hamilton Crossing (NHX) Stakeholder Committee Meeting was held as a hybrid meeting which allowed committee members to participate in person or virtually.

PARTICIPANTS

In-Person Participants

Bob Bass
Michael Berding
Andrew Bonham
Bruce Bonham
Judi Boyko
Don Dixon
Dan Foley
Jody Gunderson
Chris Maraschiello
Joe McAbee
Mark Mignery
Pat Moeller
Eric Pohlman
Keith Reiring
Dave Seilkop
Ken Seilkop
Joshua Smith (City Manager)
Susan Vaughn
Brooke Wells
Andy Weltzer
Greg Wilkens
Pat Yingling

Representing

Ross Township/BCTID
Fairfield Township Trustee
Bonham Farms
Bonham Farms
Butler County Administrator
Butler County Commissioners
Great Miami Riverway/Miami Conservancy District
City of Hamilton
Hamilton City Schools
Fairfield Township Trustee
City of Hamilton Fire Department
City of Hamilton Mayor
City of Hamilton City Council
North End/Fordson Heights
Hamilton Precision
Hamilton Precision
City of Hamilton City Manager
City of Hamilton City Council
City of Hamilton
German Village
BCEO
City of Hamilton

Virtual Participants

Luke Morgan
Tim Werdmann
Daniel Tidyman

Butler County Regional Transit Authority
City of Hamilton
City of Hamilton, Clerk

Michael Ryan	City of Hamilton, City Council
Carla Fiehrer	City of Hamilton, City Council
Joel Lauer	City of Hamilton, City Council
Jacob Stone	City of Hamilton, Dept. of Neighborhoods
Scott Hoover	City of Hamilton, Engineering
Neil Cohen	Cohen Recycling
Julie Vonderhaar	Fairfield Township, Administrator
Shannon Hartkemeyer	Fairfield Township, Trustee
Greater Hamilton Chamber	Greater Hamilton Chamber
Kevin Attridge	Kettering Health, Fort Hamilton Hospital
Jackie O'Connell	MetroParks of Butler County
Michael Reuter	Prospect Hill Neighborhood
Jeff Gambrell	RENEW North End Neighborhood
Matt Lengel	Spooky Nook Sports Champion Mill
Wade Johnston	TriState Trails/Green Umbrella
Peggy Bange	Washington Neighborhood
Ellen (no last name provided)	No affiliation provided

Project Team Participants

Dan Corey	Butler County TID
Rich Engle	City of Hamilton
Allen Messer	City of Hamilton
Keith Smith	Ohio Department of Transportation
Caroline Ammerman	Stantec
Scott Connor	Stantec
Matt Crim	Stantec
Steve Shadix	Stantec
Lynn Corbitt	Rasor
Haley Taylor	Rasor
Laura Whitman	Rasor

Public Observers

(Note: Due to the nature of the Stakeholder Committee meetings as working sessions, members of the public are able to come and listen to the meeting discussions, but not participate. Meetings designed specifically to inform the public and gather public input will be held at key points throughout project development).

Greg Bisdorf	In-person observer
Benjamin Gunderson	In-person observer
John Haid	In-person observer
Patrick Mignery	In-person observer
Khair Ragland	In-person observer
Chris Turner	Online observer
Tim's iPad (no last name provided)	Online observer

MEETING SUMMARY

Dan Corey, Director of the Butler County Transportation Improvement District, and Allen Messer, Asst. Director of Engineering for the City of Hamilton, opened the meeting, welcomed participants, and initiated introductions of the project team and those in attendance. Steve Shadix, project manager for Stantec, then gave a short presentation that highlighted the following:

- Role of Stakeholder Committee members:
 - Provide community input and perspective throughout the project development process
 - Represent their community/organization in discussions related to North Hamilton Crossing (NHX) studies, goals, and anticipated project outcomes
 - Share community/organization's questions, concerns, comments with the project team
 - Provide updates to their community/organization
- Five phases of the ODOT Project Development Process (Planning, Preliminary Engineering, Environmental Engineering, Final Engineering/ROW, and Construction)
 - We are currently in the second phase, Preliminary Engineering (PE)
- Goals for tonight's meeting, which are focused on discussing of the conceptual project alternatives presented at the November 9, 2021, Stakeholder Committee meeting:
 - Stakeholders to share any feedback received from their discussions
 - Project team to share additional engineering and evaluation of the concepts
 - Discussion to determine if concepts should be considered for further study
 - Discussion to determine if there are new concept alternatives or if existing concepts should be connected differently

CONCEPT DISCUSSION

As the concept discussion began, project team members passed out the following handouts:

- Conceptual Alternative Overview Map - shows the full route of each alignment alternative on a single map
- Conceptual Alternative Plan Sheets - provides a close-up look of multiple segments of each conceptual alternative
- Evaluation Factor Discussion Sheet - describes each of the factors being considered as part of the evaluation process
- Conceptual Alternative Evaluation Matrix – identifies the results of the preliminary assessment for each alternative

Digital copies were posted in the meeting chat for those participating virtually. These handouts are provided as attachments to these meeting notes.

Mr. Shadix reminded participants that the project area is located in an urban area that contains high concentrations of development. In this setting, there are no easy alternatives; all options will impact something in some manner. This group's goal is to work to identify options that will achieve the goals of the project while minimizing negative impacts to the greatest degree possible. He also reminded the group of the primary and secondary needs that the project is being developed to address:

- Primary needs:
 - Improves mobility/congestion on local road network

- Improves east-west connectivity
- Improves lack of grade-separated railroad crossings
- Improves lack of sufficient river crossings
- Secondary needs:
 - Support economic development
 - Improves bike/pedestrian connectivity within the City and to the regional/state shared-use trail system
 - Improves multi-modal linkage, including bus transportation options

Before discussing the individual alternatives, Mr. Shadix noted that at this stage in project development, no alternative is favored over another. Alternatives are labeled (A through G) based on the order they cross the Great Miami River, running from north to south. He explained that the project team is looking for input from committee members regarding whether an alternative should be advanced for further study or removed from consideration. He noted that to fulfill National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) regulations, group consensus is needed when recommending elimination of an alternative and the rationale for doing so must be enumerated. As part of this discussion, Keith Smith, Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT), reminded the group that all alternatives under consideration will have some impacts, though in varying degrees.

Mr. Shadix explained that the project team is still many months away from identifying a preferred alternative for the project. While some alternatives may not be advanced for further consideration per group consensus, all those remaining will undergo additional refinement and will be reviewed by committee members at the next meeting (likely to be held in late March/early April). Deciding to advance an alternative for further study is not an endorsement of the alternative; rather it is an opportunity to gather more information to assist with decision-making.

Alternative A

Alternative A begins with a proposed roundabout connecting NW Washington Boulevard and North B Street, crosses Combs Park, and then crosses a new bridge over the Great Miami River. The alignment would bridge over US 127 (and include a hook-shaped connection to 127), bridge over the railroad tracks, cross the floodplain and Bonham farm before crossing a bridge over the hydraulic canal to tie into Neal Boulevard at the intersection with Joe Nuxhall Boulevard. The route would continue south on Neal Boulevard before shifting to the southeast just past Greenwood Avenue to cross to SR 4, turn south to run on the east side of the Butler County Engineers Office (east of the fairgrounds), across Princeton Road and connect with SR 129 via Hampshire Drive.

Evaluation Matrix Considerations (refer to the Evaluation Matrix for more detail)

The alternative:

- Meets all primary needs and most secondary needs; it has the potential to improve multimodal linkage.
- Would:
 - Clip the northeast corner and east edge of Greenwood Cemetery (impacting less than one acre).

- Bisect Combs Park and would have minor impacts on the Great Miami River Recreational Trail.
 - Impact more than 20 acres of floodplain and less than 20 acres of farmland.
 - Have a potentially medium level of impact on regulated hazardous materials sites located in or near the alignment.
 - Potentially require less than 10 relocations and more than 40 acres of right-of-way (ROW).
 - Cross three additional small streams and impact areas with multiple community facilities and underserved populations.
- Is estimated to reduce peak hour drive times on High Street by 12% (AM) and 10% (PM).
 - Has an estimated construction cost of \$80M - \$90M, plus \$15M- \$25M for ROW acquisition.

Alternative A Discussion Points

- The approximate footprint on properties is indicated by the green dashed lines on the plan sheets. These lines attempt to identify the worst-case extent of impact. Also, the Relocations row on the Evaluation Matrix indicate the number of residence and/or business relocations that would be required for each alternative.
- There was some discussion about what zoning changes would be needed to support this alternative, but City representatives said that any zoning changes would be conducted outside of this project.
- It's anticipated the NHX road would consist of two lanes of traffic going in each direction. Preliminary engineering drawings have also included a shared-use path on one side of the road and sidewalk on the other. A tree lawn is planned between the street and the paths on both sides. Design speed is 35 mph.
- A Fairfield Township representative noted that feeding traffic onto Princeton Road was an issue and suggested that alternatives under consideration in this area include improvements to help alleviate issues at the intersection of Princeton and Hampshire Drive. Mr. Shadix noted that it's already anticipated that project will include necessary accommodations at intersections based on traffic analysis, even though improvements are currently shown only to intersections with US 127, SR 4 and SR 129. The project team will examine improvements anticipated at the Princeton/Hampshire intersection for the next meeting.
- South of the intersection of Joe Nuxhall Boulevard and Neal Boulevard, Alternatives A, B, C, and D all follow the same alignment.
- Several committee members expressed concerns about Alternative A and its impact on property owners, nearby schools along NW Washington Boulevard, and cost, and suggested that it be removed from consideration. [Later in the meeting, a committee member said he thought the proposed river crossing for Alternative A might be good to keep for further study.]

Next Steps for Alternative A

- Stakeholder Committee consensus was to drop Alternative A from further study due to significant impact on properties, construction and ROW costs, and potential traffic impacts to schools. However, the river crossing associated with Alternative A was brought up later in the meeting to possibly be combined with another alternative.

Alternative B

Alternative B begins at the Lagonda Avenue & North B Street intersection and bridges across the Great Miami River just north of the hydraulic dam. The alignment connects with US 127 and crosses over the railroad and floodplain (southwest corner of the Bonham Farm), then bridges across the hydraulic canal just past the power plant before turning east through the northern portion of LJ Smith Park and tying into Joe Nuxhall Boulevard. The remaining portion of the alignment follows the same path as Alternative A.

Evaluation Matrix Considerations (refer to the Evaluation Matrix for more detail)

This alternative:

- Meets all primary needs and most secondary needs and has the potential to improve multimodal linkage. However, the west end of the alternative ties into Lagonda with no direct connectivity further west.
- Would:
 - Clip the northeast corner and east edge of Greenwood Cemetery (less than one acre).
 - Bisect Combs Park and LJ Smith Park and would have minor impacts on the Great Miami River Recreational Trail.
 - Impact between 10 and 20 acres of floodplain and less than five acres of farmland.
 - Have a potentially high level of impacts to regulated hazardous material sites located in or near the alignment, due to its proximity to the Chem-Dyne Superfund site.
 - Potentially require less than 10 relocations and more than 30 acres of ROW.
 - Cross three additional small streams, one identified wetland, and impact areas with multiple community facilities and underserved populations.
- Is estimated to reduce peak hour drive times on High Street by 13% (AM) and 9% (PM).
- Has an estimated construction cost of \$75M - \$85M, plus \$15M- \$25M for ROW acquisition.

Alternative B Discussion Points

- In order to tie the bridge over the Great Miami River into US 127, the grade of US 127 will have to be raised approximately 10 feet.
- There are three different options shown for the intersection of Joe Nuxhall Boulevard, Neal Boulevard and Campbell Drive in Alternatives B, C and D, but these could be swapped easily between alternatives:
 - A “T” intersection similar to the existing intersection. The project team expects that a traffic signal would be needed. This is shown currently with Alternative B.
 - A curved connection between Joe Nuxhall and Neal to provide continuous travel along the corridor, with a stop sign controlled intersection approach of Campbell Drive. This would be the most impactful intersection option to the cemetery. This is option is shown with Alternative C.
 - A double lane roundabout. This would allow an almost continuous flow of traffic for all three roadways segments, while slowing the speed of travel down through the intersection. This would be less impactful on the cemetery than the curve. This option is shown currently with Alternative D.
- Currently, Lagonda is a dead-end street and westbound traffic would be required to turn at North B Street. A committee member suggested making Lagonda a through-street to Eaton. The project team said they can look at the options and associated costs.

- The committee discussed the impact on the Bonham farm. A Bonham representative said that they like Alternative B better than Alternative A.
- One stakeholder noted that of all the routes shown, Alternative B is likely the only option he could support, if it could be made to work.
- A city representative suggested a hybrid approach for Alternative B where the alignment crosses the river and connects with US 127 and follows US 127 south to one of the connections depicted for Alternatives C, D, or E and follows one of those alignments. It was noted that this concept could also work with the Alternative A river crossing alignment if it was adjusted to tie directly into US 127. Several committee members were interested in looking into this option further.
- A Fairfield Township representative suggested relocating the east end of alignments A through F to avoid connecting with Hampshire Drive, citing concerns about the elevation difference between SR 4 and Princeton.
 - Mr. Shadix noted that a new alignment would have the same elevation challenges wherever it runs in the area. He also said that the hillside would need to be excavated and the road would be constructed in a trench for a significant portion of the length. Since the road would be in a trench, many in the subdivision located to the east of the alignment would not see the road.
 - A Fairfield Township representative suggested running the alignment back west along Heaton and connecting with SR 4 at North Fair Avenue to avoid the grade issue. Mr. Shadix said that the project team could look at the option, but expressed concern with running the alignment past schools on North Fair due to school-age pedestrians.
- Other comments shared during the Alternative B discussion included:
 - If traffic coming off of the Butler Regional high-speed facility is not given the option to divert at Hampshire, then more back-ups will occur on High Street (SR 129).
 - While modeling the proposed alternatives, the project team observed that, in general, the closer the alternatives are to High Street, the more impact they have with diverting traffic off of High Street.
 - It was suggested that Phase 3 of the alternatives be eliminated so that they end at SR 4. Traffic could be routed along SR 4 to Bypass 4, and an eventual connection with SR 129. It was noted that the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) has already completed improvements at SR 4 & Bypass 4. This route could potentially be utilized for this project to avoid the need to create a trench alongside the subdivision and Butler County Engineer's Office.
 - It was noted that improvements may be needed at the intersection of Princeton Road and Bypass 4.

Next Steps for Alternative B

- The committee agreed to advance Alternative B for further study, but several members requested that the project team also look into the following modifications:
 - Move the alignment to the west side of Butler County Engineer's Office and away from the subdivision. It was suggested this may be more favorable.
 - The project team will conduct some travel time analysis to see if using existing Bypass 4 to connect to SR 129 seems feasible.

Alternative C

Begins at relocated Rhea Avenue & North B Street and bridges across the Great Miami River between Black Street and the hydraulic dam. The alignment would connect with US 127 and bridge over the railroad. The alignment then crosses the Chem-Dyne site and LJ Smith Park, before intersecting with Joe Nuxhall Boulevard, which it follows to the intersection with Neal Boulevard. The remaining portion of the alignment follows the same path as Alternative A.

Evaluation Matrix Considerations (refer to the Evaluation Matrix for more detail)

This alternative:

- Meets all primary needs and most secondary needs and has the potential to improve multimodal linkage. The west end of the alternative ties into a relocated Rhea Avenue to provide connectivity further west (this connection could be shifted to Gordon Avenue if desired, as shown in the concept drawings for Alternative D)
- Would:
 - Impact the northeast corner and east edge of Greenwood Cemetery (possibly greater than one acre, depending on the type of reconfiguration chosen for the Joe Nuxhall and Neal intersection).
 - Bisect LJ Smith Park and have minor impacts to the Beltline and Great Miami River Recreational trails.
 - Impact less than one acre of floodplain and would not impact any farmland.
 - Have a potentially high level of impacts to regulated hazardous material sites located in or near the alignment, especially due to its crossing of the Chem-Dyne Superfund site.
 - Potentially require more than 10 relocations and more than 30 acres of ROW.
 - Cross four additional small streams and impact areas with multiple community facilities and underserved populations.
- Would be in close proximity to the power plant located on US 127 with possible impacts to several of its accessory buildings.
- Is estimated to reduce peak hour drive times on High Street by 12% (AM) and 9% (PM).
- Has an estimated construction cost of \$55M - \$65M, plus \$15M- \$25M for ROW acquisition.

Alternative C Discussion Points

- This alternative would require raising US 127 approximately 13 ft to facilitate the connection of the new street with US 127.
- The alignment would cross the Chem-Dyne property. The street would be built on fill to raise it above the property as opposed to cutting into the existing ground. However, bridge foundations will still need to be installed to cross the railroad. Mr. Shadix noted that this is a concern, as there could be potential issues associated with excavation on the Chem-Dyne site.
 - The current owners of the Hamilton Precision property expressed concern that the proposed alignment would directly impact their building.
- In response to a question received regarding improvements needed on North B Street, Mr. Shadix noted that at this time, widening of North B Street is not anticipated because traffic is expected to diverge north, south and west from the bridge. However, as the project moves forward, the project team will continue to check traffic projections to see if widening North B Street up to NW Washington Boulevard is required.

- A committee member expressed a preference for the new bridge crossing to be located further away from Spooky Nook which would give residents and locals a way to get around the complex, even when it's at its busiest. The proposed crossing location for Alternative C may be too close to the facility.
 - Another committee member agreed with these comments and also noted that the river crossing location proposed for Alternatives C, D, and E impacts prime riverfront property. Having a bridge crossing there could impede growth opportunities for the site.
 - One committee member indicated that the proposed crossing location for Alternative B might be best option due to its having the least amount of impacts.
 - Another member shared a personal preference that the river crossing location be moved further south, perhaps to an extension of Knightsbridge Drive to US 128; if not there, at least away from Spooky Nook.
 - In response to a question asked about the existing Black Street bridge, Mr. Shadix said that the new river crossing would replace the Black Street bridge for vehicular traffic due to its age and the inability to widen the existing bridge. The City is not looking to demolish the bridge, however. By taking vehicular traffic off of it, the bridge might be able to be maintained for pedestrian/bicycle traffic. [NOTE: The new bridge is currently being designed as a four-lane bridge (two lanes each way), with a sidewalk on one side and a shared-use path on the other.]
 - In response to a question asked about using the Alternative A river crossing alignment, Mr. Shadix said that if the bridge crossing were to be located between NW Washington Boulevard and tied directly to US 127 in that vicinity, it's likely that it won't be necessary to raise US 127 beyond possibly a foot or two – the project team will have to look at flood elevations to confirm.
- Mr. Shadix noted that at the November Stakeholder Committee meeting, a member suggested an alignment further east using North Eastview Parkway from SR 4, north through the nature preserve/bird sanctuary, across the canal, and across the farm. The project team looked into this suggestion and determined that the resulting impacts on the nature preserve, a Section 4(f) property, would make the concept more difficult to justify in terms of NEPA, especially compared to the other options being discussed. Further, the impacts to the floodplain for this alternative would be similar to those in Alternative A, which the Stakeholder Committee has already recommended dropping. Therefore, the project team recommends no further study of this suggestion.

Next Steps for Alternative C

- The committee agreed to advance Alternative C for further study.

Alternative D

Begins at Gordon Avenue and North B Street and bridges across the Great Miami River between the hydraulic dam and Black Street Bridge (the starting point could be shifted to relocated Rhea Avenue, if preferred). The alignment would connect with US 127, then shift to the southeast and bridge over the railroad tracks near Joe Nuxhall Boulevard. The alignment would then follow Joe Nuxhall to Neal Boulevard. Any one of the three intersection options could be used here ("T" intersection, curved roadway, or roundabout) and the remaining portion of the alignment would follow the same path as Alternative A.

Evaluation Matrix Considerations (refer to the Evaluation Matrix for more detail)

This alternative:

- Meets all primary needs and most secondary needs and has the potential to improve multimodal linkage. The west end of the alternative ties into Gordon Avenue to provide connectivity further west.
- Would:
 - Impact the northeast corner and east edge of Greenwood Cemetery (impacting possibly greater than one acre, depending on the type of intersection reconfiguration chosen for the Joe Nuxhall/Neal intersection).
 - Have minor impacts to LJ Smith Park and the Beltline and Great Miami River Recreational trails.
 - Impact less than one acre of floodplain and would not impact any farmland.
 - Have a potentially high level of impacts to regulated hazardous material sites located in or near the alignment due to its proximity to the Chem-Dyne Superfund site.
 - Potentially require more than 10 relocations and more than 30 acres of ROW.
 - Cross three additional streams and would impact areas with multiple community facilities and underserved populations.
- Is estimated to reduce peak hour drive times on High Street by 9% (AM) and 6% (PM).
- Has an estimated construction cost of \$65M - \$75M, plus \$15M- \$25M for ROW acquisition.

Alternative D Discussion Points

- By curving the alignment to the southeast after crossing US 127, the new NHX road would be closer to the existing grade and US 127 would only need to be raised a foot or two.

Next Steps for Alternative D

- The committee agreed to advance Alternative D for further study.

Alternative E

Begins at relocated Rhea Avenue & North B Street (could be moved to Gordon Avenue., if preferred) and bridge across the Great Miami River between the hydraulic dam and the Black Street Bridge. The alignment would connect with US 127, then shift to the southeast and bridge over the railroad tracks near Joe Nuxhall Boulevard. The alignment then follows Joe Nuxhall Boulevard to North 9th Street, curves southeast to connect with Heaton Street, and continues east to an intersection with SR 4 in the vicinity of the firehouse. The alignment would then cross through the parking lot of the Butler County Educational Service building, connect to Gilmore Avenue, and continue across North Fair Avenue. The alignment would run east behind the Butler County Children Services Board, Juvenile Justice Center and Butler County Board of Developmental Services buildings, turn southeast going behind the Humane Society, and then turn south to cross Princeton, west of the existing Hampshire intersection. It would then tie back into Hampshire Drive and SR 129.

Evaluation Matrix Considerations (refer to the Evaluation Matrix for more detail)

This alternative:

- Meets all primary needs and most secondary needs and has the potential to improve multimodal linkage. Ties to a relocated Rhea Avenue to provide connectivity further west.

- Would:
 - Run along the southwest corner of Greenwood Cemetery.
 - Have minor impacts to LJ Smith Park and the Beltline and Great Miami River Recreational trails.
 - Impact less than one acre of floodplain and would not impact any farmland.
 - Have a potentially medium level of impacts to regulated hazardous material sites located in or near the alignment.
 - Potentially require more than 50 relocations and more than 20 acres of ROW.
 - Cross five additional streams and would impact areas with multiple community facilities and underserved populations.
- Is estimated to reduce peak hour drive times on High Street by 13% (AM) and 11% (PM).
- Has an estimated construction cost of \$65M - \$75M, plus \$15M- \$25M for ROW acquisition.

Discussion Points for Alternative E

- It was suggested that this alternative could terminate at SR 4 or North Fair Avenue and use North Fair Avenue to connect with SR 129, or continue on as proposed to connect with SR 129 at Hampshire Drive.
- This alternative, as well as the other remaining alternatives (F & G) would impact a significant number of buildings (more than 50). The project team noted that if this alternative is developed further, these impacts may be able to be reduced by narrowing the project footprint using retaining walls, but there would still be a large number of building impacts.
- The North End neighborhood representative said the neighborhood does not support this alternative due to the magnitude of impact to the North End neighborhood.
- It was observed by a stakeholder, judging by the aerial map, that there appears to be a number of vacant properties along the alignment near North 9th Street. Several committee members noted that there may actually be more vacant parcels than what is shown since the image in the map was several years old.
- Mr. Shadix noted that routing the NHX alignment along North 9th Street provides one of the more direct alternative routes for the project. A discussion followed regarding the possibility of moving the alignment slightly east to travel along Miami Street instead to reduce impacts to the neighborhood by bordering the cemetery instead of cutting through the residential areas.
 - Miami is also a direct route.
 - Miami runs along the west edge of Greenwood Cemetery, which is recognized as a historic cemetery. As such, anything affecting the cemetery would be considered a significant impact. However, if the project stays away from the cemetery and just travels along the street next to it, the level of impact may be reduced.
 - Some committee members liked the idea of using Miami instead of North 9th; others did not. The project team will look at the concept in more detail and will share their findings at the next Stakeholder Committee meeting.
- A Fairfield Township representative said they are comfortable with considering Alternative E as an option up until it starts to go up the grade past North Fair Avenue. He also noted that this route appears to be further away from the homes in the Zoellners Place subdivision than other options.

- It was noted that the width of the road corridor would be between 70 and 75 ft – just slightly wider than Joe Nuxhall Boulevard is today.
- The new road would be about 500 - 600 ft from residential property lines.
- There was concern about the impact this alternative would have on Princeton Road. Also, it was noted that this alternative included turn lanes to/on Princeton, but other alternatives did not. Mr. Shadix said that as alternative development moves forward, the project team will be looking to determine if the intersection with Princeton should be signalized rather than relying on the stop signs that exist today. Also, the project team would include turn lanes on the other alternatives at Princeton Road as needed based on traffic analysis; they just didn't draw them in yet. More information will be shared at the next Stakeholder Committee meeting.

Next Steps for Alternative E

- The Stakeholder Committee agreed to advance Alternative E for further study but emphasized a desire to reduce its impacts by moving a portion of the alignment from North 9th Street to Miami Street.

Alternative F

*Begins at North B Street, north of Wayne Avenue (just south of the new entrance to Spooky Nook) and bridges across the Great Miami River between Black Street and High/Main Street. The alignment approximately follows Village Street through German Village to an intersection at US 127 and crosses **under** the railroad tracks. It would then follow Heaton Street before turning southeast to intersect with SR 4 near the firehouse. The alignment would then cross through the parking lot of the Butler County Educational Service building, connect to Gilmore Avenue, and continue east to pass just south of the fairgrounds before turning south to follow the alignment suggested in Alternatives A, B, C, and D to reach SR 129.*

Evaluation Matrix Considerations (refer to the Evaluation Matrix for more detail)

This alternative:

- Meets all primary needs and most secondary needs and has the potential to improve multimodal linkage. However, the alignment ties to a potentially relocated entrance to Spooky Nook with no direct connectivity further west.
- Would:
 - Run along the southwest corner of Greenwood Cemetery.
 - Have minor impacts to Moser Park and the Beltline and Great Miami River Recreational trails.
 - Impact less than one acre of floodplain and would not impact any farmland.
 - Have a potentially medium level of impacts to regulated hazardous material sites located in or near the alignment.
 - Potentially require more than 50 relocations and more than 20 acres of ROW.
 - Cross eight additional streams and would impact areas with multiple community facilities and underserved populations.
- Is estimated to reduce peak hour drive times on High Street by 17% (AM) and 16% (PM).
- Has an estimated construction cost of \$50M - \$60M, plus \$25M- \$35M for ROW acquisition.

Discussion Points for Alternative F

- This alternative impacts the German Village Historic District which is considered a significant impact; there would also be a large number of buildings affected. In terms of traffic, this alternative is closer to High Street and would divert higher amounts of traffic from that corridor.

POST MEETING NOTE: The German Village Historic District is a National Register of Historic Places historic district and would be given protection by State Historic Preservation Office and Department of Interior under Section 4(f) of the Code of Federal Regulations. Since there are other Feasible and Prudent Alternatives, this district would likely not be able to be impacted.

- Multiple committee members expressed significant dislike of this alternative stating that it would have a detrimental impact on neighborhoods and historic districts and requested that it be removed from further consideration.
 - These neighborhoods are very walkable and routing the NHX alignment through them would put residents and pedestrians at undue risk.
 - An alignment such as NHX does not fit the context of the historic neighborhoods.
 - The alternative provides little to no separation of traffic from the Spooky Nook sports complex.
 - Phase 1 of Alternative F [connecting North B Street to US 127] is the main reason for concern with this alternative.
- Committee members discussed the possibility of looking into several other options:
 - Consider the hybrid option that includes a river crossing that terminates at US 127, then figure out the least disruptive path to SR 4 once you get further south on 127.
 - Look into using improvements that have already been made at Bypass 4. The needed infrastructure is there and currently the road in that area appears to be under-utilized.
 - One committee member expressed concern with this idea thinking that people might turn into the Walden Ponds subdivision when trying to get to SR 129. This is an undesirable impact on the residential neighborhood, plus, Walden Ponds feeds into Princeton, not SR 129.
 - Conduct a timing study that evaluates the use of SR 4 as a possible alternate connection.
 - Consider improvements at intersections with Walden Pond and Princeton.
- A North End community representative said their community does not support this alternative unless the impact on residential properties can be reduced.

Next Steps for Alternative F

- Stakeholder Committee consensus was to drop Alternative F from further study due to significant impact on properties, residences, historic districts, and pedestrians.

Alternative G

*Begins at the intersection of Wayne Avenue & North B Street and bridges across the Great Miami River, following Buckeye Street to an intersection with US 127. East of US 127, the alignment curves to the southeast and travels **under** the railroad tracks to connect with Dayton Street. The alignment follows Dayton Street to North Fair Avenue, then follows North Fair Avenue south to SR 129.*

Evaluation Matrix Considerations (refer to the Evaluation Matrix for more detail)

This alternative:

- Meets all primary needs and most secondary needs and has the potential to improve multimodal linkage; ties to Wayne Avenue to provide connectivity further west.
- Would:
 - Have minor impacts to Marcum Park and the Beltline and Great Miami River Recreational trails.
 - Impact less than one acre of floodplain and would not impact any farmland.
 - Have a potentially medium level of regulated hazardous materials located in or near the alignment.
 - Potentially require more than 40 relocations and more than 10 acres of ROW.
 - Cross three additional streams and would impact areas with multiple community facilities and underserved populations.
- Is estimated to reduce peak hour drive times on High Street by 21% (AM) and 17% (PM).
- Has an estimated construction cost of \$50M - \$60M, plus \$10M- \$20M for ROW acquisition.

Discussion Points for Alternative G

- This alternative impacts the German Village Historic District and the Dayton-Campbell Historic District which is considered a significant impact. There would also be a large number of buildings affected. In terms of traffic, this alternative is closest to High Street and would divert higher amounts of traffic from the High Street (SR 129) corridor. It should be noted that this is also the shortest alternative in length as it terminates at North Fair Avenue and SR 129 instead of Hampshire Drive and SR 129.

POST MEETING NOTE: The German Village Historic District is a National Register of Historic Places historic district and would be given protection by State Historic Preservation Office and Department of Interior under Section 4(f) of the Code of Federal Regulations. Since there are other Feasible and Prudent Alternatives, this district would likely not be able to be impacted.

- This alternative would involve expanding existing streets to four lanes, both directions. To do this, on-street parking would have to be removed and could not be replaced, nor would it be possible to provide turn lanes at intersections without additional building impacts.
- A committee member observed that by tying into Wayne Avenue on the west side (which is not far from Main Street), Alternative G would not disperse much traffic away from the SR 129 corridor where it is today.

Next Steps for Alternative G

- Stakeholder Committee consensus was to drop Alternative G from further study due to significant impact on properties, residences, historic districts and pedestrians.

ACTION ITEM SUMMARY

- The Stakeholder Committee recommended that alternatives A, F, and G be dropped from further study.
- The following mix and match configurations were requested for additional study:
 - Use the river crossing shown in Alternatives A or B to connect with Alternatives C, D, or E in an effort to find best route.
 - For Alternative E, look at using Miami Street instead of North 9th Street.
 - Use North Fair Avenue as a connection to SR 129.
- Other issues to be considered further include:
 - Provide more buffer for residential areas throughout the project area (particularly in the North End neighborhood and along Fairfield Township neighborhoods).
 - Conduct a travel time study using Bypass 4 and SR 4 as a possible connection to SR 129 in order to better utilize improvements that have already been made at Bypass 4.
 - Explore extending Lagonda Avenue to Cleveland Avenue or Eaton Avenue for additional connectivity to the west.

NEXT STEPS

- Mr. Shadix asked committee members to share the information and discussion points from tonight’s meeting with the groups/organizations/neighborhoods they represent. Comments are welcome and should be shared with Allen Messer or Dan Corey:

Allen Messer
Assistant Director of Engineering
City of Hamilton
345 High Street | Hamilton, OH 45011
Allen.Messer@hamilton-oh.gov
(513) 785-7286

Dan Corey
Director
Butler County Transportation Improvement District
1921 Fairgrove Avenue | Hamilton, OH 45011
danc@bctid.org
(513) 431-1229

He also asked the committee to bring back feedback from the community regarding which configuration they might prefer for the Joe Nuxhall/Neal intersection: “T” intersection, curved roadway, or roundabout.

- The project team’s next steps are to further refine the remaining Alternatives (B, C, D, & E) as well as study the variations discussed during the meeting. The project team will try to share project materials with committee members before the next meeting so members will have a chance to review them prior to the discussion.
- The next Stakeholder Committee meeting will likely be at the end of March or in early April. From there, the project team will draft a Feasibility Study, the content of which will be taken to the general public for review and input through a public meeting held in early summer. The project team would like to meet with the Stakeholder Committee prior to the public meeting to review the materials that will be shared and seek assistance in getting the word out about the public meeting. After the public meeting, the Feasibility Study will be finalized and the project will move further into the preliminary engineering phase, which will include more hands-on field studies.

Mr. Shadix thanked committee members for their continued participation and the meeting adjourned at 7:42 p.m.

POST MEETING NOTE

Following the Feb. 2 Stakeholder Committee meeting, ODOT reviewed the group's comments and recommendations, particularly in regards to eliminating Alternatives A, F, and G from further consideration.

Using the parameters of its Project Development Process and National Environmental Policy Act requirements as a guide, ODOT agrees that Alternatives F and G should be removed from further study. This is largely due to the anticipated impacts on the German Village Historic District and the Dayton-Campbell Historic District. Historic Districts that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places (as these areas are) are afforded protection under Section 4(f), which says that impacts can only occur to these resources if no "Feasible and Prudent Alternative" exists. As seen at this stage of development, there are other alternatives that could avoid these resources. Therefore, Alternative F and G have been removed from further consideration.

Considering Alternative A, ODOT feels that the alternative warrants further investigation as the reasons given for eliminating the alternative have not yet been defined at a level of detail that would allow it to be dismissed. Also, it was noted later in the Stakeholder Committee meeting that elements of Alternative A could possibly be combined with elements of other alternatives to create a new, viable option. Therefore, further study is needed to better understand the potential impacts, costs, and benefits that the alternative and its components offer. It may very well be that the Feasibility Study will ultimately drop Alternative A as it is currently configured from further consideration, but elements may be able to be carried forward.

Ultimately, the outcome of the Feasibility Study will be a limited number of feasible alternatives to be further studied in an Alternative Evaluation Report, finally yielding a Preferred Alternative for further development. As mentioned in the Stakeholder Committee meeting, the Preferred Alternative could possibly result in a multi-phase plan that can take some time to complete. It is not uncommon to revisit the area's needs over the course of development and revise that plan, if needed. Therefore, it is important at this stage to completely vet all of the known current and future issues as fully as possible. Following ODOT's Project Development Process and utilizing tools such as the Purpose and Need development, feasibility studies and Alternative Evaluation Report are proven methods to ensure that the identification of a preferred project alternative follows a federally-approved evaluation process, which not only helps to yield a well-developed project, but also allows the project to pursue Federal funding for further development and construction.