

Improvement Alternatives

COMMUNITY OUTREACH SUMMARY

May 2007



Huron River Drive Improvement Alternatives

Community Outreach Summary

City of Ann Arbor
5-1-07

Introduction

Project Background

Huron River Drive is a winding two-lane bituminous road that borders the Huron River to the north and the City-owned Bird Hills Park to the south. The vehicle lanes are approximately 11-feet wide. Steep slopes, dense vegetation, protected natural species, and wetlands characterize the land immediately adjacent to the roadway. In some stretches, there is no shoulder, but only a drop-off to the wetlands below. The road is a popular route for recreational bicyclists and motorists seeking a scenic drive. It is also a throughway for residents who live northwest of Ann Arbor and those traveling to the neighboring village of Dexter, Michigan. Based on recent traffic counts, approximately 2300 vehicles per day use the road.

The bituminous surface of the road is in poor condition. It was last surface treated in the 1990's and has not been resurfaced since. Its continued deterioration is cause for response by the city, as it cannot go untreated much longer without consequence. The City conducted a topographic survey of the roadway in June 2006 in anticipation of improving the road. During the survey, many citizens and community organizations contacted City staff to express their concerns and desires for the direction of the project.

The City's 2007 Non-Motorized Plan identifies Huron River Drive as a second-tier prioritization for bike lanes on paved shoulders. The Natural Features Guidelines protect landmark trees, steep slopes, wetlands, woodlands, and other natural features found along both sides of the road, and identify many of them as Highest Concern. A balance will need to be struck between these and other city plans and ordinances.

It is the goal of City staff to address the deterioration of the roadway in the way that best reflects the values of our community at large.

Note: Huron River Drive is often referred to as HRD throughout the document.

Outreach & Engagement Strategy

Throughout the process the project team provided multiple opportunities for community interaction and input. This was facilitated first and foremost by the broad based representation of the Design Advisory Committee (DAC). In addition, there were Focus Group meetings tailored to groups with specific interests and expertise, a Public Workshop where interested citizens could voice their opinions and concerns about the various project options, and an outdoor Public Gathering along the project corridor for three hours on April 21st. Simultaneously, comments and suggestions were solicited through a Public Survey, as well as through email and voice messages sent to project leaders with the City.

Summary of Comments

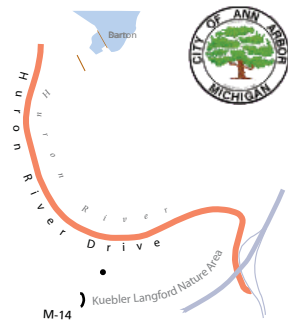
This document is a compilation of responses from those who attended the April 2nd Public Workshop, the April 21st Public Event, those who filled out the Public Survey, and those who sent emails and letters to the City up to April 23rd. A majority of those who commented prefer the option to keep Huron River Drive open to motor vehicles. Many of the neighbors in the area are concerned that if HRD were closed to vehicular traffic that a lot of the cars would detrimentally increase traffic through their neighborhoods, particularly on Maple, Newport, Foster, Warrington, Sunset, and Bird Roads. Many, including bicyclists, have said they are fine with the current 22' width of the roadway as long

as the paving is in good shape and is durable for a reasonable period of time. Reducing the speed limit to 25mph was noted repeatedly.

Some have asked that the road be widened. This option will have other impacts due to topographic limitations on each side of the road, sensitive environmental species in those areas, and potential aesthetic changes from the current condition. Some have also asked for consideration of a raised boardwalk on one side of the road or the other. A number of respondents would like to see a connecting tunnel below the railroad to Bandemer Park for bikes and pedestrians. Some would like to see a better connection at the HRD/Main Street intersection.

HURON RIVER DRIVE

City of Ann Arbor
Improvement Alternatives



Location Map

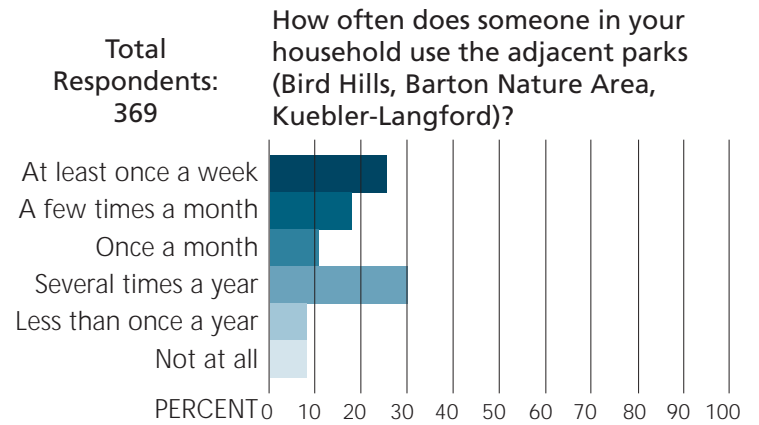
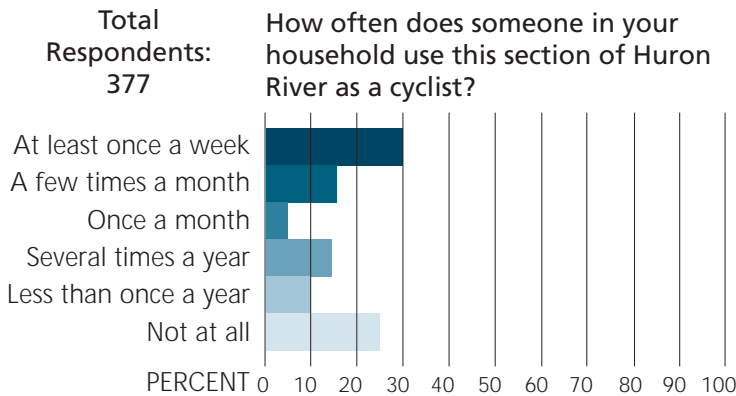
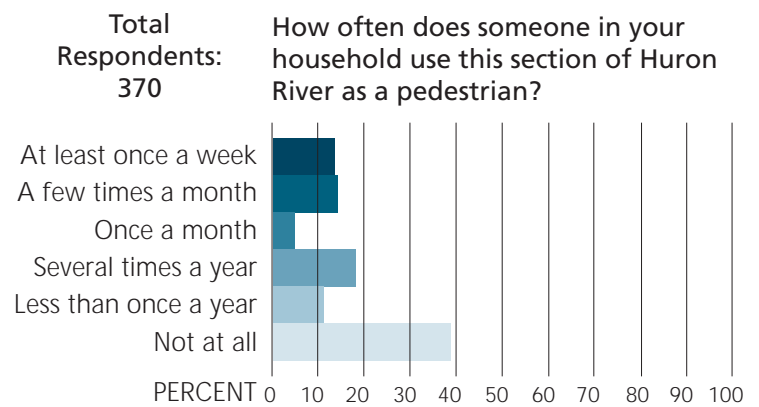
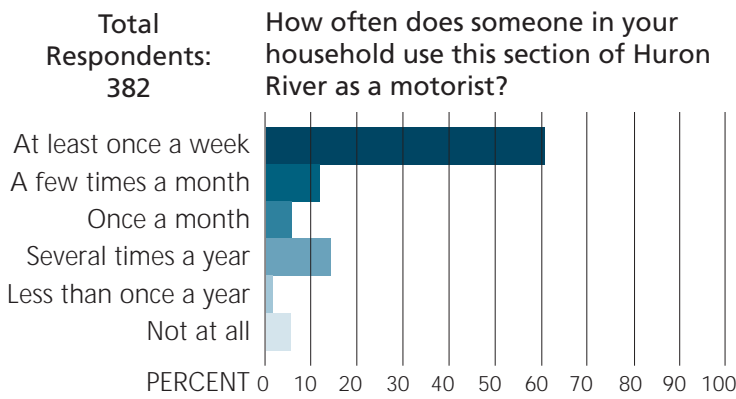
This section of Huron River Drive from N. Main Street to Bird Road is in very poor condition. Complexities exist that make repaving for continued use by motor vehicles a challenge. This calls for a reevaluation of the standard practices for improving this roadway.

The goal is to strike a balance among many different users (motorists, joggers, hikers, cyclists, paddlers, etc.) that also considers the ecological diversity along this scenic section of Huron River Drive.

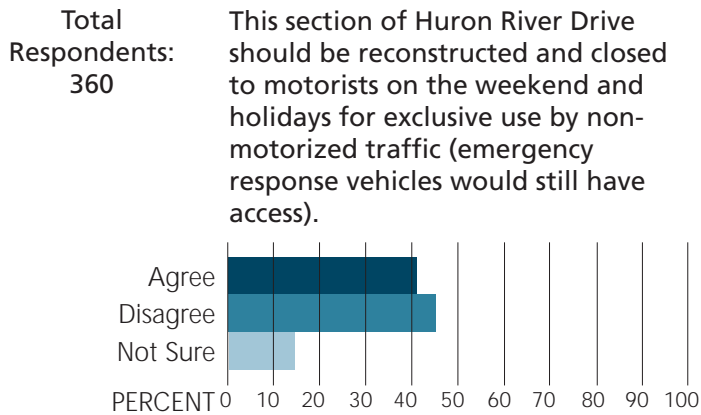
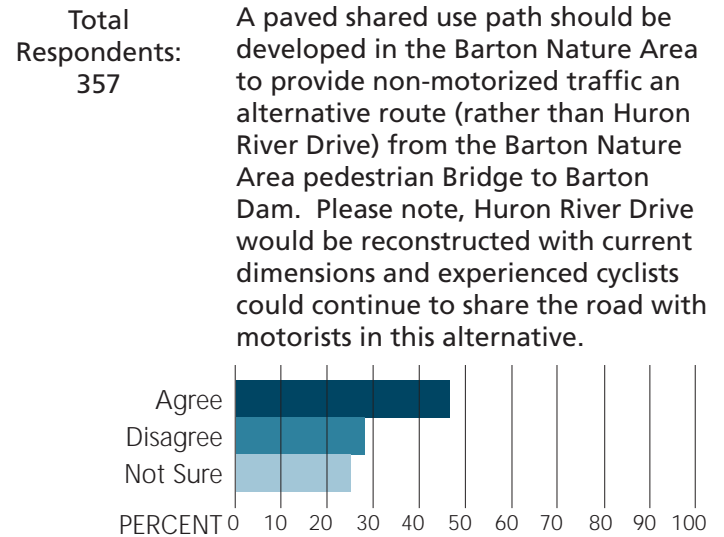
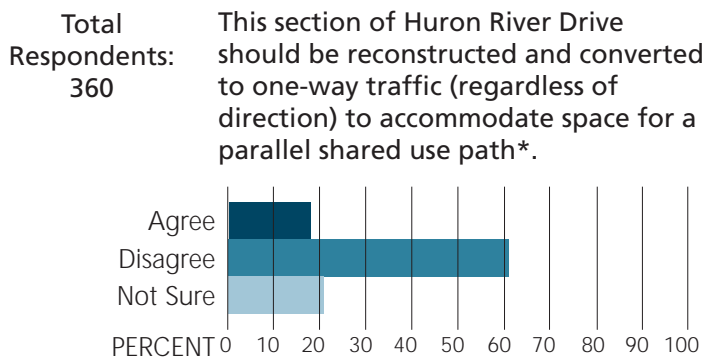
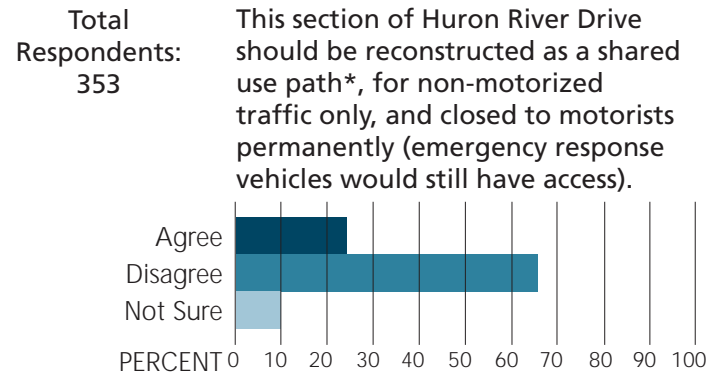
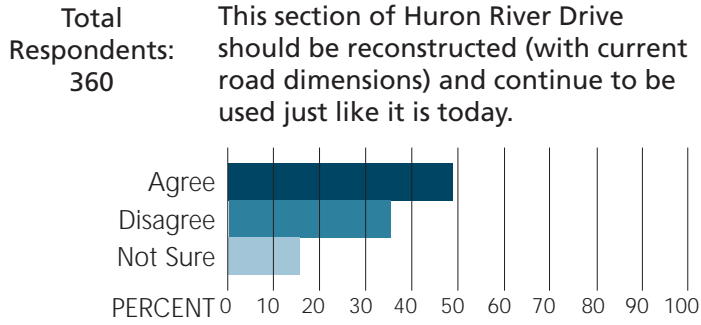
SURVEY RESULTS

for MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

403 total surveys



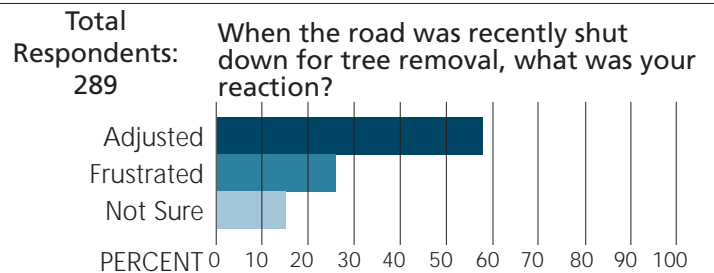
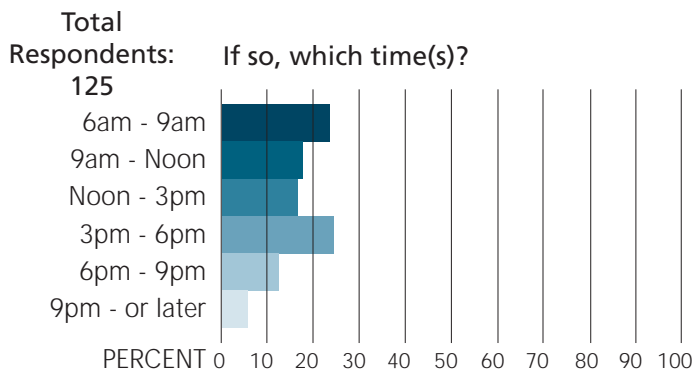
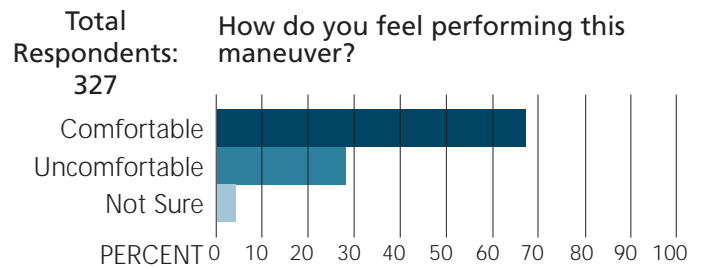
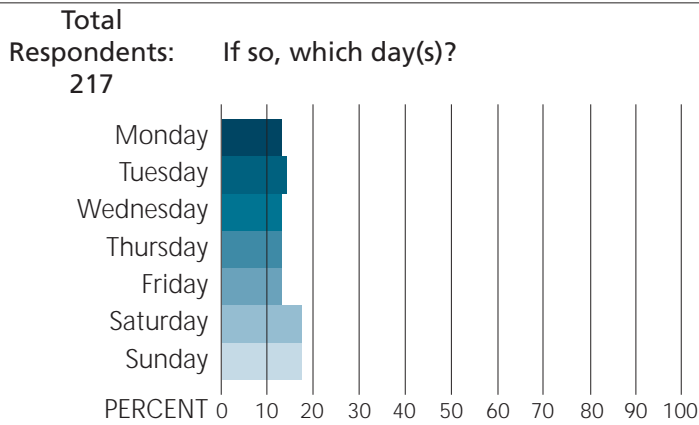
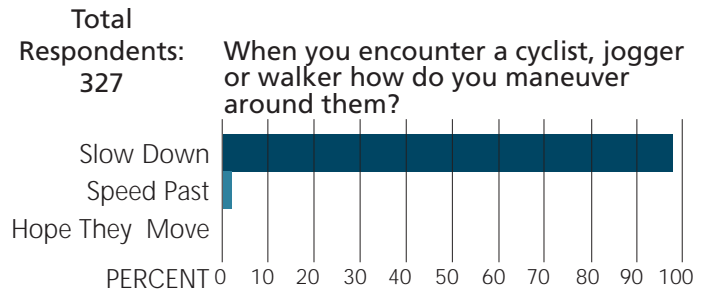
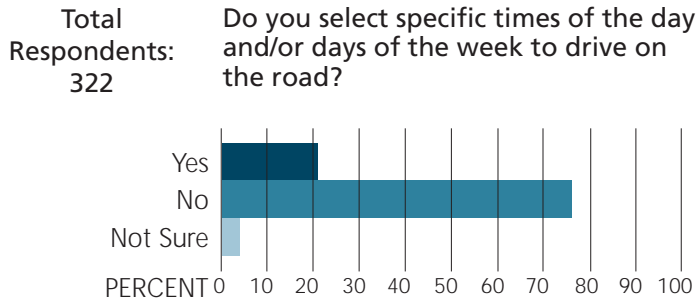
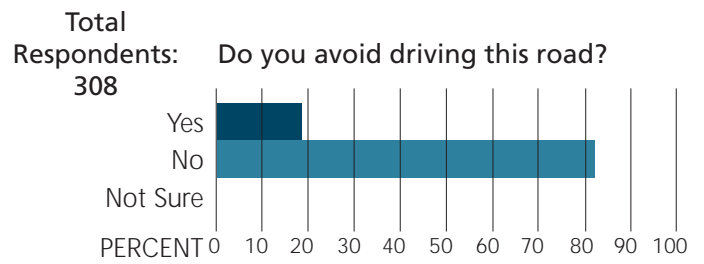
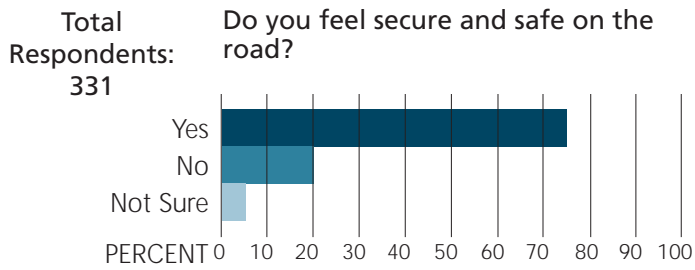
PLEASE INDICATE YOUR LEVEL OF AGREEMENT WITH EACH OF THE FOLLOWING IMPROVEMENT ALTERNATIVE SUGGESTIONS (Be aware that each alternative will require further study to determine its feasibility):



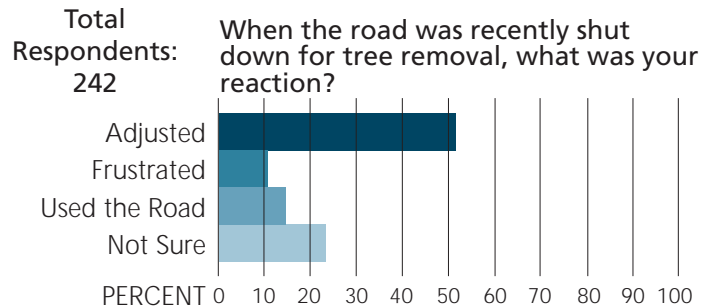
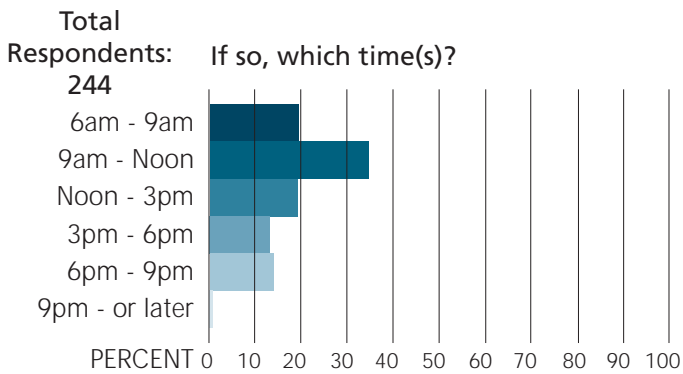
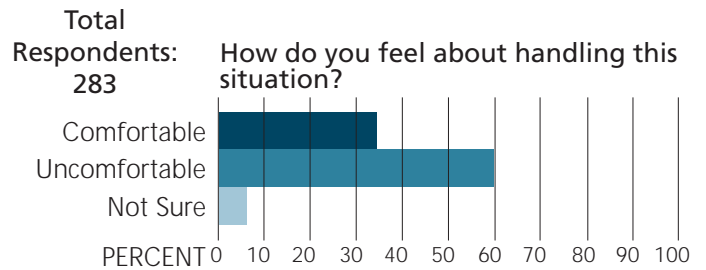
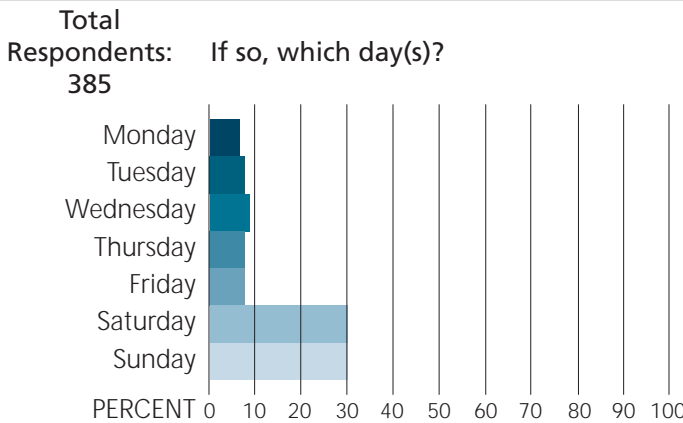
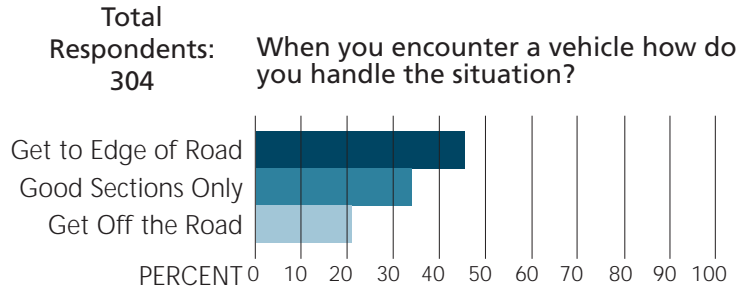
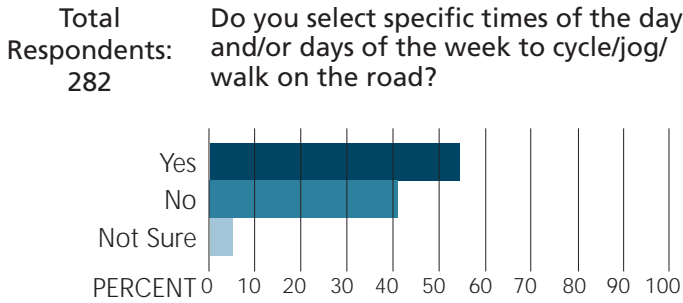
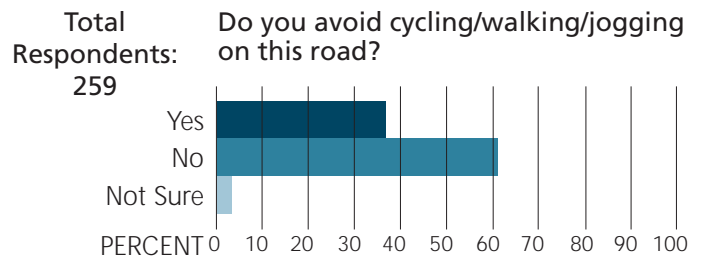
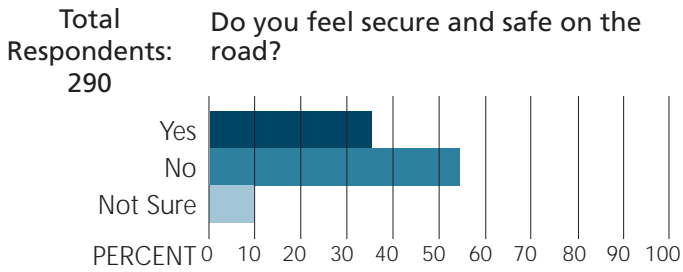
***Shared Use Path Definition:**

A wide pathway that is separate from a roadway...or located completely away from a roadway. A Shared Use Path is shared by bicyclists and pedestrians. From the *City of Ann Arbor Non-motorized Transportation Plan—2006*

QUESTIONS for DRIVERS



QUESTIONS for CYCLISTS/JOGGERS/WALKERS



General Comments – Paper Survey Results

Can you think of any other alternatives or is there anything else you would like to tell us about this section of Huron River Drive? Please explain:

1. Speed limit of 25mph.
2. Bike path on uphill side of Huron River Drive with water management and culverts under HRD to conduct water to river (shared use with bike lane).
3. Keep it open.
4. Find a way to share the road.
5. If they keep it open to cars, use speed bumps.
6. We should continue to share the road as we have done all along. There are a dozen good reasons to keep the road open to cars. If they can build roads through the Rockies, your engineers should be able to do this.
7. Increase shoulder and make speed limit 25mph.
8. Keep current use as #1 priority.
9. Closing the road would increase traffic in other areas. Keep the road open.
10. Should remain open as there is no good alternative to traffic/detour almost three times the distance and much more time and congestion.
11. Best for river and for recreation and for natural areas to close road and connect parks. Path connect to Bandamer and Argo over/under railroad.
12. Entrance at either end. E.g., LED signs, then use imagination and expertise for other alternatives.
13. Please add a bike/ped path with a Jersey Barricade.
14. To continue one-way pedestrian/cycle all the way to Dexter.
15. In the future develop new road alignment following (north of) railroad tracks—utilizing new bridges, etc. This existing road should be removed.
16. Will the county be looking at repairing some/all of the poor pavement sections west of Bird Hills Road?
17. Enforce the speed limit. That would reduce auto traffic.
18. Repave for motorists. Construct shared path on hill (south of HRD)—just like Huron River Parkway between Geddes and Washtenaw.
19. Construct bike path up on hill (like Huron Parkway) and repair road.
20. Close the road—period. Maintain it for non-motorized use.
21. Speed limit; speed bumps on HRD; also on Warrington where diverted traffic might go; traffic light at Newport and Miller due to increased traffic.
22. Nothing new. Drivers enjoy this road, too, but reduce the speed limit to 25 to protect all.
23. I would prefer that HRD be closed to motorized traffic (thru-traffic) and parking areas be maintained on either end.
24. 25mph speed limit; good drainage.
25. How about constructing a raised bicycle path above the road? A toll road for motorized vehicles? More traffic enforcement—speed limits along all of HRD.
26. Enforce the speed limit.
27. Closing the road at several times during the week—at low use times—would enhance use for all.
28. Widen the road, include bicycle paths and make Hilltop area a city park.
29. Close this section of HRD Friday, Saturday and Sunday 9-12 every week.
30. Close drive three times per month April to October.
31. This was beautiful along the Cambridge side of the Charles River in Boston. (Referring to closing on weekends and holidays.)
32. Add bike lanes to HRD.
33. Slight widening of the road would be good, but we don't, as cyclists, need separate lanes. 25mph.
34. An exceptional view for pedestrians.
35. I commute via car every day on HRD. This is a beautiful part of my day. My home is on HRD. I also love to bike on HRD. Finding a good way to share this wonderful resource is a high priority to me. The City also needs to create a safe way to get to and from HRD from Ann Arbor. The Ann Arbor portion of a bike commute to UM is too dangerous for me to do as things stand now.

Paper Survey Results – Comments Only

36. Good discussion, thank you.
37. If this section is closed, the City should improve Newport Road with sidewalks and bike lanes. I firmly believe closing the road is a big mistake. It will shift traffic into our neighborhoods.
38. Leave it alone. The High School and its consequent traffic is enough “improvement.”
39. Widen road for bikes and cars. We need bike paths and car lanes.
40. Speed bumps for cars would be okay to promote safety.
41. There are many alternatives for bikers and hikers. Why force motorists to drive way out of their way and waste gas for the few months and few bicyclists that might use it.
42. No cars.
43. Concern that cars will consume a shared-use path; concern that too much traffic will come onto Newport Road with HRD closed.
44. Very concerned about possible closure and increased traffic on other City roads and M-14/Miller (Maple?) interchange.
45. At least fix the road and put in bike lanes before someone is killed.
46. This would make an excellent park.
47. Too narrow—drivers are nuts.
48. I think it’s important to maintain access for cars, people with disabilities, fisher people, and elderly. Closing is an arrogant option. Entrance area at each end to slow traffic posted with signs explaining mixed use.
49. My concerns relate to the effect of closure on traffic diversion to streets like Minglewood. One option might be to close from Foster/Newport to Main Street except for homes on HRD.
50. I think it would create too much chaos and traffic on Newport and Maple Roads.
51. Rebuild road, enviro sensitively. Add Barton lane like boardwalk 4’ wider along riverbank for bikers, joggers, strollers. Link with pedestrian/bike system along Main Street to downtown to new Skyline High School and to Bandemer.
52. Better maintenance, trees, drainage, etc.
53. I do not want the Warrington, Newport, Sunset residential areas to be disrupted by lots more traffic.
54. For cyclists, this section would only be 5 to 6 minutes of a 1 to 2 hour ride. Not worth it to destroy the adjacent neighborhoods.
55. Build a boardwalk for cyclists along the edge of the road.
56. Make the road go along the railroad and make the current road into a path.
57. My concern is the traffic diverted to neighborhoods. Perhaps the cyclists could come into the neighborhoods instead. Bike lanes and car use road option preferred.
58. Close it only if it will reduce traffic in the upstream stretch.
59. The poor road condition currently makes it very dangerous for cyclists.
60. Add speed bumps to HRD.
61. At least widen for peds.
62. How wonderful to have a beautiful drive. So many motorists enjoy this rare, natural area it would be a crime to take that away to please many fewer people. Widen it a little and put in some drains. One reason for choosing our home was the beautiful drive.
 1. Shared-use paths don’t work well.
 2. Leave path in relatively natural condition—discourages exhibitionists (as seen at Bandemer Park).
 3. or, two paths, one for bikes, one for walkers.
63. This road is vital to our family. Without it our daily commutes would double and would be horribly inconvenient.
64. Repair the road and continue its use as before.
65. I would hope that a group of this size would come to a city council meeting and share their concerns.
66. Closing the road during the week would be a disaster for our household and people who live in our neighborhood. It is our access to the emergency room. We access downtown that way multiple times a day. Re-routing traffic down Warrington will be dangerous for all the toddlers that live on that street. There are seven little kids within thirty feet our just our home.
67. We will clean it up. The road should not be closed.

Paper Survey Results – Comments Only

68. One-way to town in the morning, one-way back in the evening.
69. Pedestrians already have an alternative. Cyclists may collide with them if they walk in the middle. Gallup Park is an example of this. Need a safe route from downtown Ann Arbor to HRD. Bike path/lane on Main Street.
70. Road should be widened (coordinated with County) all the way to Dexter to allow for two-way traffic and safe shared-use path for cyclists and pedestrians.
71. Reconstruct with periodic, alternating side bike lanes to allow passing. One-way sounds best.
72. HRD should be reconstructed with traffic calming measures (speed bumps, etc.) to keep cars at safe speeds and widened if possible.
73. Please think about the impact to surrounding neighborhoods that increased motorized traffic will have. Concerns for safety of our children walking to Jr. High and elementary schools down Sunset Road that has zero lawn extensions.
74. If section is closed, motorists would cut through the nearest neighborhood: Main to Sunset to Newport and overload this area, which is already overloaded with traffic. Bikers don't use this section that much because we/they don't want to end up on Main Street.
75. Don't want double traffic on Newport.
76. I strongly support the reconstruction of HRD as a shared use path and closed permanently to motorists between Main and Bird.
77. Connect shared use path with other parks.
78. Connect parks for cyclists.
79. One-way, weekends and holidays.
80. Connect foot of HRD to Bandemer to create great commute downtown.
81. Closed to motorized traffic and shared use path preferred.
82. Dedicate 4 to 5 weekend days/year for non-motorized traffic, it would maximize recreational use.
83. Build bike/walking path off auto road between road and river.
84. We use this road every day. We will fight any attempt to close this road.
85. My particular concern is regarding the re-routing of HRD traffic onto Newport with effects then on Miller and onto Maple, which will already be getting a big increase of use with the High School. Was that anticipated when designing the Maple Road roundabout?
86. What about future plans? I am looking for ways to bike and walk in beautiful areas without having to drive. What I'm doing now is difficult, loud and ugly.
87. Reconstruction with bike lanes and two-way auto traffic as is now. Roadway is properly maintained and ditches kept open for proper drainage.
88. Make a two-lane bike path down HRD in addition to reconstructing the road. People need the easy access to M-14 from this area. If you close HRD to motorists, then Newport will need to be developed for true multi-use with two lanes for bikes.
89. I live off Warrington, use this road several times a day. I also grew up off Wagner, and have traveled this road every year of my life. Although it would inconvenience me, and possible increase traffic in my neighborhood, I believe it is time to stop dumping resources into a road that continually crumbles under the environmental effects of year-round use. A park or one-way/partial use would be my preference.
90. Close Bird and Warrington if you close HRD.
91. Just share the road safely.
92. Please close this section of HRD to motorized traffic. It would become a wonderful addition to the oxbow, Bird Hills Park and other ways to drive.
93. Pave a bike lane along existing road (resurface). How about a Woonerf (pedestrians and bicyclists have legal priority over motorists) or Complete Street (accommodating all modes of travel)?
94. If road shoulder could be expanded 8" on one side to create safer bike and pedestrian way.
95. Keep the road open. The traffic will choke Newport, especially with the new school opening. Your Newport neighbors do not want HRD closed. Keep it as is.
96. Fix the road. There should be attention paid to the majority of users not just the bikers/walkers.
97. Keep road open and add a bike lane? Would Bird Road be open for traffic?

Paper Survey Results – Comments Only

98. An alternative route, if HRD is shut down (either permanently or just on weekends), is Sunset Road. Sunset Road is a quiet neighborhood road that is shared by joggers, cyclists, people walking their dogs, etc. It would be extremely dangerous to put another 1000+ cars/day on this road. There are blind spots (hills, turns) on Sunset. Cars rushing to work in the morning would be a disaster. Keep it open.
99. Wish road had a safe, clearly marked bicycle path/area. Thanks for asking.
100. If roadway was regarded/repaved, HRD could remain dual use. I drive/cycle/run on it today.
101. Put a path along or near southern side of HRD.
102. Bike lane. Repave.
103. First choice is reconstruct current road and use like it is today.
104. We drive it—major thoroughfare.
105. Close to traffic on weekends and holidays only.
106. Divert water away from road—culvert drain and cut trees back. Keep road open to cars.
107. New road following “pedestrian bridge” (railroad line through Barton Nature Area) for motorists.
108. Reconstruct road, keep new road open both ways to cars, build “boardwalk” for joggers, walkers and bikes.
109. Solid paving and speed limit enforcement would solve 95% of problems.
110. Can we connect Huron River Drive and Bandemer? There is a walking path there.
111. If feasible based on traffic counts, costs, etc. Prefer 1) open to motor vehicles; 2) make one way for vehicles changing direction to accommodate rush hour traffic; 3) make road shared-use with one lane motor vehicles; 4) close on weekends and holidays.
112. Like a raised wooden shared-use trail along the road.
113. Reconstruct road properly. Lower speed limit to 20mph from May to October and enforce it. Let it be HRD—it will be ruined closing it. Everyone should enjoy this road: bikes, motorists, joggers, etc.
114. Reconstruct the road but make it safer. I would favor limited Sunday morning and holiday closures sometimes. Put in bike lanes if possible, or proper conduct signs at entrances to HRD for bicycle users.
115. Reconstruct, but make it wider.
116. Concern that it would invite non-sophisticated users to the rest of Huron River Drive
117. This roadway is a scenic drive and should be preserved as a roadway.
118. Repair and lower speed limit.
119. A sign stating that cyclists ride in a single file line along the road.
120. Widen roadway.
121. Widen roadway.
122. Divert motorized traffic along railroad.
123. Improve road edges during reconstruct.
124. In addition to closing HRD, the section of Bird Road Passing through Birds Hill Nature Area should also be closed.
125. No alternatives other than resurfacing. Quality of resurface work needs to be improved.
126. Constructing a walking path separate from the road.
127. Traffic calming should be considered to make the road feel more residential rather than a thoroughfare.
128. Widen road.
129. Widen road.
130. Widen road.
131. Preservation of the canopy.
132. Concerns about safety at N. Main intersection.
133. Support motorized closure of HRD, with shared path along RR.
134. Support separation of roadway and pathway.
135. Close HRD to all motorized traffic, except for cars with handicap permits.
136. Closing HRD to motorized traffic would increase the quality of life in the area by protecting the Huron River and adjacent sensitive natural areas.
137. Separate bike path across river at the old Whitmore Lake Road Bridge and through Baron Hills and back across at Fosters Bridge.
138. Paving Bird Road

Paper Survey Results – Comments Only

139. Divert heavy commuter traffic from HRD.
140. Concerns for concurrent construction on Maple Road and HRD. Thoughts that Maple Road may be avoided and HRD used more frequently when new High School is complete.
141. Widen road.
142. Would like present usage to remain, with an addition of a bike lane.
143. Quality shoulder construction.
144. Support bike lane construction.
145. Concerns about Maple Road construction. People that would like to avoid roundabouts on Maple Road need alternatives such as HRD.
146. Need HRD open for people wishing to avoid school traffic along Maple Road.
147. Support idea of building road along railroad.
148. Support widening of HRD for bike lane or adding bike lane along Bird Road.
149. Support widening of HRD. Should be open to all types of traffic. Additional path connections in surrounding area could be improved for recreational use.
150. Support reconstruction of HRD with reduced speed limits and closure to truck traffic.

DRIVING:

Do you avoid driving on this road?

If yes, please explain.

1. Dangerous driving section.
2. Too narrow to share.
3. To give bikes quiet, safe rides.
4. Terrible pavement.
5. Avoid weekends so bikers can use it.
6. Don't want to hit someone.
7. Better alternatives exist to travel from A2 to Dexter.
8. Unless it's to go somewhere along the river, I leave it to the cyclists.
9. I use the road as a cyclist and believe this should be its primary use.
10. Unless I have time to sightsee.
11. Don't need to.
12. Out of the way—end up on busy North Main Street.
13. Because it is dangerous for cyclists.
14. Poor conditions.
15. Surface condition.
16. May in future when school gets out. Once the High School is built I'm worried about the new drivers.
17. I like to leave it for cyclists, so I take alternatives when possible.
18. Don't avoid the drive except at extreme times (excess water/mud on road).
19. Bad maintenance.
20. There are better car routes west: Jackson Road, I-94.
21. I use the road as a cyclist. This should be its primary use.
22. Dangerous—to avoid cyclists I go other ways. Many other places to drive instead.
23. Road is in bad shape and I prefer to reduce traffic and bike more.
24. Use only when it's the most direct route.
25. Poor quality of surface.
26. I use it as my main ingress/egress to home on Bird.
27. Road surface just too bad.
28. I live on at Warrington and HRD and all the household uses HRD for daily driving, walking and biking.
29. Make it easier for bicyclists.
30. Avoid times when many non-motorized users are heavily present.
31. Do not like to share the roadway with recreational users.
32. Only when in a hurry.
33. Area better suited for recreational use.
34. Only during icy weather conditions.
35. Due to unsafe intersection at N. Main Street.
36. Due to size of potholes.

What are your concerns about cyclists/joggers/walkers on the road?

1. None.
2. Many cyclists and joggers do not keep to side. Many do not signal.
3. We co-habitate nicely—just like all over the City! We just need to get repaired.
4. Safety
5. Some drivers speed.
6. Riding abreast.
7. None.
8. Somewhat dangerous because road is too narrow and some drivers go too fast.
9. There is room for everyone.
10. I would like firmer shoulders so bicyclists and walkers can stay to the right; drivers need to be patient.
11. Cyclists for the most part are good. Some don't yield to traffic (move to the side of the road). Need to maybe police and give tickets to people not obeying traffic rules (bikes and cars).
12. Getting hit.
13. Cars don't treat bikes safely.
14. If road is maintained, e.g., no potholes, rough areas, etc., then fine.
15. No space with cars.
16. Hitting them on corners when visibility is low.
17. That it's hard for them to enjoy themselves.
18. Their safety.
19. Situation on HRD is somewhat better than other county roads. It's expected that there will be runners and cyclists using the road. And the speed limit is lower.
20. Share the road. Welcome them.
21. None.
22. We can all share.
23. Am afraid I will hit them.
24. No shoulders; traffic too fast.
25. Some seem a bit oblivious at times. Most are well aware of the ramifications of tangling with an auto.
26. Cyclists currently do not have a wide shoulder, so are intermixed with traffic.
27. I'm waiting for a tragic accident as the result of careless, speeding drivers.
28. That they will be hit and killed by unaware motorists. Last year a work truck nearly flattened us on a curve. Had to lock brakes to avoid hitting us.
29. Safety.
30. Safety.
31. Bad, inconsiderate drivers.
32. Safety.
33. Fully support.
34. Giving enough berth—don't drive on this stretch very often at all.
35. It's a good place to run.
36. Not a great combination.
37. That someone could be injured. That cyclists may block the road causing frustration. Dangerous drivers.
38. Should be accommodated with a side lane.
39. Cars go too fast; need speed bumps. Sometimes multiple cyclists block the entire lane instead of riding single file.
40. I haven't seen it as a problem.
41. Safety.
42. They can get hit.
43. None—not safe.
44. Riding potholes.
45. No concerns, I think drivers should be aware of the multiple uses.
46. Cyclists more than 2 abreast.
47. Cyclists not being safe—riding in middle of road.
48. Not enough room.

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49. I am concerned that someone will be hit. Because of carelessness on the part of biker or vehicle driver.
50. Safety for all.
51. Everyone, including motorists have a right to use the road unimpeded.
52. My concern is only about cyclists. They are not courteous to walkers or vehicles. I've had to move off the road for cyclists.
53. Concern with drivers who speed and those who do not pay attention to bikers.
54. Dangerous because of vehicles with "hot rod" drivers.
55. If they are truly the main concern, build them a bike path.
56. Cars do not give consideration to the vulnerability of bicyclists and their rights. Some even behave aggressively.
57. Cars go too fast.
58. They are inconsiderate.
59. There are lots of other places to walk and bike and not such good alternatives for drivers.
60. They have a right, but should not force road closure.
61. None, share the road.
62. It isn't safe for cyclists/joggers/walkers in its current state.
63. Abide by laws and courtesy.
64. Their safety—sometimes they don't follow good safety rules and it's hard to pass.
65. Multi-use made it dangerous. Inexperienced bikers do not mix safely with dogs, kids and buggies.
66. Bad road surface very dangerous.
67. Cyclists riding three abreast is a hazard. They should be courteous to drivers.
68. Road not wide enough—they need their own safe space.
69. Ipods.
70. It is dangerous because of an increasing number of rude motorists who don't share the road.
71. Safety.
72. We need to share the road.
73. Share with motorists. Live and let live.
74. I am an avid cyclist myself and have no problem sharing the road.
75. Hitting them.
76. They need safer way to use this roadway all the way to Dexter.
77. Bikers not moving to single file when cars approach. It is narrow so would be safer for everyone if they were single file.
78. I confess, I don't need to drive it often and would be delighted to live in a community where I or anyone could walk/bike it.
79. I want them to be safe from drivers.
80. Someone is going to get hit.
81. Safety.
82. None.
83. They are not all experienced and sometimes refuse to go single file.
84. Insufficient space.
85. They have responsibility; act safely.
86. I have often (2-4 times per week) jogged on this portion of HRD and felt safe.
87. I understand that this is a dual use roadway and drive accordingly.
88. Share.
89. None.
90. They don't go single file.
91. Sharing the road.
92. Too close for comfort.
93. Two riders riding abreast may be legal, but on this road it's unsafe.
94. That someone will get killed.
95. Safety for all.
96. Scary to come on them around corners.
97. All should enjoy the road, along with motorists, all should be courteous.
98. Need a wider shoulder.
99. Bikers take too great a risk going in the middle of the road. Please use sense.

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100. Joggers should stay off the road and use trails. Bicyclists are fine if they use courtesy. They are a hazard when riding two abreast. Put bike lanes in if at all possible.
101. Road was not shut down during rush hours.
102. They should have a safe option, too.
103. None – caution.
104. While cyclists can bike two abreast, when it is more than 20 cyclists this is a traffic hazard.
105. Worry about them.
106. Some cyclists don't stay on the edge and move to where there is "good pavement". Repaving will help this.
107. The decision making process.
108. Dangerous conditions; should be separate pathway for joggers and cyclists.
109. Are uncomfortable and feel that joggers and walkers should use alternate route across Barton Nature Center.
110. Difficult to see traffic on curved sections.
111. It would be great to have a bike path/shared path, but not as substitute of a paved roadway.
112. Concerns when cyclists ride 2-3 in a row across roadway.
113. Cyclists riding in a row across roadway.
114. Cyclists riding in the middle of the road to avoid potholes.
115. Support road closer to protect safety of the cyclist/joggers/walkers.
116. Drivers' impatience.
117. Cyclists should ride single file.
118. Cyclists should ride single file.
119. Truck traffic.
120. Cyclists riding along the center of the road.
121. Failure to yield.
122. Speed of vehicles that share same roadway.
123. Not enough room for walkers/joggers.
124. Cyclists not riding single file.
125. Not sharing the road with motorists.
126. Lack of safe surface for walking/riding.
127. Should not have to share road with traffic.
128. Unsafe road surface.
129. Not sufficient space.
130. Not sufficient space.
131. Not safely accommodated by current conditions.
132. Unsafe conditions due to speeding cars.
133. Unsafe conditions along curved portions.
134. Unsafe road conditions.
135. Impatient and speeding cars.
136. Absence of safe shoulder.
137. Not safe for family cycling.
138. Speeding motorists.
139. Lack of shoulder is unsafe.
140. Failure to yield.
141. Create unsafe conditions when trying to avoid potholes.
142. Lack of space for cyclists/walkers/joggers and motorists to share roadway.
143. Unsafe when cyclists do not ride in a single file line.
144. Drivers not understanding that cyclists had same rights for road use.
145. Exceeding 2 abreast rule.
146. Lack of trust for drivers creates unsafe conditions.

CYCLING/JOGGING/WALKING:

Do you avoid cycling/jogging/walking on this road?

If yes, please explain?

1. Afternoons and rush hours.
2. Safety, drive with caution.

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3. Too many potholes for biking.
4. Vehicles routinely “buzz” peds/cyclists.
5. In its current condition it’s dangerous.
6. It is not safe.
7. I use this because it’s one of the few ways to get out of town.
8. It’s too dangerous.
9. Not much room for maneuvering on the side.
10. Cars too fast.
11. Too dangerous.
12. Not safe, no room.
13. It’s so beautiful and wonderful for pedestrian uses that it’s worth dealing with the cars.
14. Cars, I have a stroller that’s too wide for the side of the road.
15. Terrible pavement.
16. I like my life.
17. Due to road quality, I often avoid this section by going through Barton Hills.
18. Weekday work traffic times; morning less dangerous than later in the day.
19. Cars don’t slow down.
20. Dangerous.
21. Use the trails as an alternative.
22. Choose to walk in woods or residential areas with sidewalks.
23. Bad surface/potholes.
24. Rush hour.
25. Right now it’s too rough with potholes.
26. Avoid rush hour.
27. I was almost killed riding north on Main and trying to cross to HRD. Also, I feel very unsafe riding on North Main.
28. It’s scary, but sometimes we do it.
29. To avoid accidents.
30. It’s not a pedestrian road for all that the view is nice.
31. Too afraid of cars.
32. Sometimes during heavy car traffic we avoid the road.
33. Not enough shoulder. I walk and bike elsewhere.
34. It’s not safe, no shoulder and curvy road.
35. Would love to cycle, jog and walk. Wish it were safer.
36. Too rough pavement, too dangerous.
37. Families need a safe way to bike downtown from here.
38. Cannot relax knowing there are blind spots and potentially reckless drivers.
39. Not safe except when the road is closed.
40. It’s really bad so I go around. It’s a great loss.
41. The only time I ride on this road is Sunday from 9 to noon.
42. I will not let my children ride on the road.
43. Forces to use alternates due to traffic.
44. I use the wood chip path across Barton Nature area on mountain bike regularly.
45. Cars cut off cyclist/jogger/walker along curves.
46. Due to road conditions.
47. Too dangerous for running.
48. Condition of edge of the road is unsafe.
49. Only during busy times of the week.
50. Poor condition of roadway.
51. Unsafe conditions at N. Main intersection.
52. Unsafe to share road with cyclists/walkers/joggers.
53. Not a safe environment for walking and jogging.
54. Due to poor condition of road.
55. Due to weather conditions and time of day.

What are your concerns about motor vehicles on the road?

1. Some drivers speed and take chances with lives of joggers and cyclists.

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2. Speed—lack of driver concern for safety.
3. The road is primarily for motor traffic. Walkers, joggers and bikers need to share it carefully.
4. Aggressive/dangerous driving; motorists abusive towards peds/cyclists.
5. Many drive too fast. Many come too close.
6. Lack of seeing around the bend.
7. Speed of cars.
8. None.
9. Speeding.
10. None. Motorists expect cyclists and seem to be considerate.
11. Too fast and clueless.
12. Unsafe for all as long as it isn't maintained.
13. My safety with cars who are not patient about sharing the road.
14. My safety as a cyclist.
15. This is a marvelous resource for all users, but could be improved for multiple-speed use in lots of ways.
16. Road's too narrow—cars and bikes can't coexist safely.
17. Speed—drivers not being careful.
18. They aren't paying attention or are going too fast.
19. Their speed.
20. Speed limits not enforced; not enough passing room.
21. Drivers speeding and going over the speed limit on blind curves.
22. They speed, going over yellow line on blind curves.
23. Too fast, too impatient, too dangerous.
24. Speed.
25. As a cyclist, cars are sometimes too fast and too close.
26. Lots of curves—hard for vehicles to see pedestrians/cyclists.
27. Want them to cross the solid yellow line to pass cyclists.
28. Too fast and impatient for the conditions.
29. I don't drive on this stretch—but I like to walk/jog on it without cars—concern about increased traffic on Bird Road. Cost of reconstruction?
30. Their speed—difficult to move of the way given road conditions. Road conditions, esp. on shoulder, make for dangerous footing.
31. Route is necessary for good access from NW Ann Arbor into town. Consider speed bumps.
32. Too many cars and lousy pavement.
33. Speeding and occasional inattentiveness.
34. Some are not as conscious of cyclists and joggers.
35. There are crazy drivers out there.
36. Going too fast.
37. None.
38. Concerns about cyclists, not cars. Drivers give you space—I am a jogger.
39. Some people do not adhere to speed limit.
40. Speeders.
41. Should be prohibited.
42. Between M-14 and the river there needs to be more than one E/W route than Newport for emergency vehicles.
43. Road rage.
44. The combination of no shoulder and potholes makes the road very dangerous for cyclists.
45. Unsafe surface as is.
46. Share the road.
47. Can't trust drivers (cell phones, radio, etc.).
48. Abide by laws and courtesy.
49. There should be a time on the weekends without cars so families can walk/bike.
50. Interactions between cyclists and motorists can be hostile; heavy use by all types of users can increase the potential for injuries. People need to be educated that everyone has a right to use this road. Safety is most important to me. My responsibility is to be visible and conduct myself safely; this does not mean cowering off to the side of the road.

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51. Drivers drive too fast—corners with no visibility.
52. Police should heavily ticket motorists for unsafe passing and speeding. I basically force the motorist to pass safely.
53. There are no good bike routes to get from town to HRD.
54. Need to slow vehicles.
55. None.
56. Drivers need to be more considerate. They exceed the speed limit and there is little police enforcement.
57. Cars should continue to be used.
58. Drive too fast. Don't respect share the road rules.
59. Safety of walker.
60. Cars are not aware of law related to cyclists.
61. Motorists tend to be reasonable near Ann Arbor, but tend to get less friendly further out.
62. Safety, speed, poor sight lines.
63. Being hit.
64. The road was built for cars. It can be shared. It's not right to push the car traffic to other neighborhoods with more houses, kids, etc.
65. Need to stop it or keep it separated from bikers.
66. Concerns about vehicles finding alternative routes through neighborhoods and worried about Warrington/Newport intersection (lots of accidents 1996/97 when they upped speed limit from 25-40mph on Newport).
67. If it's going to be expensive to fix, why do it? There are no places where I can take my mom in a walker and park near paved beauty.
68. We need to share the road with motorists. We need an additional bike path.
69. Safety.
70. Share the road.
71. Go too fast.
72. Speed.
73. It's easier riding when motorists expect bikes. Scary dealing with inexperienced walkers and kids on bikes. Used to runners and experienced bikers.
74. Poor condition of roadway makes it very difficult to make way on shoulder as a cyclist.
75. Danger.
76. Share.
77. Speeding, inconsiderate drivers. Poor condition at edges are unsafe.
78. Speed-speed-speed.
79. My concerns about motor vehicles on that part of HRD are the same as my concerns for motor vehicles on any road. Some drivers are not patient enough to wait for a clear line of sight before they pass, and even then they often pass my bike too close.
80. I want to get over to the side, but sometimes that move is dangerous.
81. Sharing the road.
82. Too close for comfort.
83. They drive too fast.
84. Most are very respectful, but speed and density make it scary.
85. Bikers should ride single file.
86. Drivers going too fast.
87. No speeding.
88. Motor vehicles drive too fast. Drivers can't see around curves. Shoulders are way too narrow for bicyclists and emergencies.
89. It can be very dangerous. As the cars get bigger and drive faster, it has only gotten worse.
90. They are not concerned enough for non-motorists.
91. Not enough space for bikes and cars unless entire length of HRD is widened. It doesn't make sense to just widen this section.
92. The quality of life issue for people who live near HRD.
93. Potholes
94. Motorist exceeding speed limit.
95. Speed limit
96. Excessive speed
97. Condition of the road.

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98. New drivers to Skyline High.
99. Pavement condition.
100. Cars far exceeding speed limit.
101. Additional traffic from Skyline Drive.
102. Drivers paying attention to views rather than driving.
103. Noise, wear, and disruption to natural processes.
104. Not sufficient space.
105. High speeds.
106. Too many people use road for their daily commute.
107. Lack of courtesy.
108. Drive too close to cyclists while passing.
109. Speeding and swerving around potholes.

OTHER COMMENTS FROM APRIL 21 PUBLIC SITE WALK OF THE PROJECT CORRIDOR:

1. Newport is already stressed to the max by traffic for Wines and Forsythe Schools.
2. Please post the complete history of the Huron River Drive—initial construction, geology, Dam construction.
3. Fix the road and let everyone use it. Designate as a “Park Road” with 25mph for lower sightline requirements.
 - Enforce the speed limit.
 - Raise the priority on improving the bike access from Ann Arbor to Huron River Drive.
 - Raise the priority on the Border-to-Border plan, particularly linking the parks for bikes.
4. Closing the road will divert traffic:
 - =increased distance driven x traffic count x cost/mile = \$967,000/year increased cost to motorists; increased drive time is 107,000 hours/year; increased fuel use is 77,000 gallons/year.
5. There is no option of the survey for repaving (vs. reconstructing with Federal funds.)
6. As a Skyline parent, keep it open! We will need it starting 9/2008.
7. All that is needed is a consistent shoulder.
8. Sunset is used by UM track, bikers, walkers, and children playing who live there. It will be choked with traffic deaths. Keep the neighborhoods free of out-of-neighborhood traffic. Put it on Huron River Drive where there are no kids in the street.
9. Many visitors today are from out-of-town or from far parts of the city and will not be affected by road closure.
10. There is no option on the survey for drivers who use the road daily or more than once a day.
11. I was at the meeting last Wednesday (April 4th) and appreciated the presentations and participation. I live on Salisbury Lane and have a critical interest in the plans. As a result of the meeting, I came away with three conclusions:
 1. Reconstruct Huron River Drive.
 2. Reduce the speed limit.
 3. Eliminate all truck traffic.

I do believe that these recommendations represent the majority views of continuing to keep the road open for those who value the beauties of nature whether driving, walking or bike riding without the danger of trucks and speeding cars.
12. I have been an Ann Arbor resident for 46 years and cannot believe one of the options for this 1-mile section of Huron River Drive is to close it to vehicles? The beauty of this section is among the best of the whole way to Dexter along the river. Our family has enjoyed it from the car view, motorcycle, and bicycle. I think that access should be permitted for the fisherman, canoes, kayaks, and outdoor enthusiasts. The new construction should make the road as wide as possible with excellent construction practices, proper drainage and designed to last 30 years!

The Huron Parkway reconstruction is a recent example of a well-done project using steel to retain steep embankments and end up with a pleasing appearance.

Another idea is to make a 25-mile/hour speed limit for this section because of the curves and lack of shoulders.

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13. In Natural Area Preservation area (Barton Nature Area), we prefer to see the nature path remain so. Use Huron River Drive as shared use for motor and bike traffic.
14. Make Huron River Drive a scenic parkway with 25mph speed limit from Main Street to Mast Road.
Please consider widening road to accommodate bike path.
15. As someone who has used this road to get to work every day, to get to the hospital in a serious emergency, and who believes the road should be fixed and stay open, I think it's a travesty to poll out-of-town bikers, people who use the park every now and then. You will have to change the roads in the neighborhoods—that will cost more.
16. Do not close this road. Your surveys need to poll the neighborhoods nearby in a serious manner.
17. This was a helpful event! I live in the area and strongly feel we should continue to share the road. Closing the road will create major problems in the local neighborhoods with increased traffic making already dangerous turns onto Newport, which is ill-equipped to carry more traffic, has three schools, etc. You are soliciting surveys from everyone who passes by—large groups of bikers from out of A2 (Northville, etc.) should not be considered in the surveys. They don't pay taxes here, don't need the roads to get to work or emergency room at hospital.
18. I saw 6 wildflower types in bloom that I could appreciate because I was walking. As a canoeist it would be cool to have a stretch of the river with no motor vehicles on either side—wildlife.

Public Workshop Comments

Below are the comments made by participants at the Public Workshop on April 4th, 2007. There were also many questions asked at the meeting. Those will be addressed in a separate document.

1. I'm discouraged about the short notice and skeptical that a decision has already been made. The road is a lifeline for me. I'm concerned about traffic in the neighborhoods. The road is very important for many reasons: beauty, nature and aesthetics. Closing is not an option. Traffic would be diverted through two school zones. Walkers have other options. Vehicles have co-existed with bikers for years. The rest of Huron River Drive is just as bad condition. I'm satisfied with the current conditions. We might just have to pay for the beautiful drive with a few bumps in the road.
2. I applaud the process, but do not support closure or any increase in traffic on Newport. I'm concerned that money is a driving force and to rebuild the road would be difficult and costly, but the City is looking for the cheap solution like a path. I want the right solution, not the easy one.
3. I'm opposed to closure because the new High School is coming and that traffic would be dumped on to Maple and Newport. It would create traffic problems there so people could play in the park. Look at the Blue Ridge Parkway for a similar example of a multi-use roadway.
4. I wasn't notified soon enough.
5. Huron River Drive is an emergency route to get to the emergency room. There are schools nearby. What if there had to be an emergency evacuation? Consider legal liability for loss of direct access if indirect routes are the only alternative. This might create a health hazard. Life and death is more important than joggers and bikers.
6. It's a gorgeous route along Huron River Drive. I use it every day. There are traces all along it to Wagner of a stone wall. This was possibly once an old railroad bed that might have created problems for drainage. The original pavement might not have been well designed or constructed. Proper engineering is long overdue. Closing HRD is unacceptable. On weekends I pass more bikes and joggers than cars and it works okay now.
7. Bikes and autos are compatible. It's all part of being polite. The graphic shown is misleading. The route to Newport would become Warrington, since it's paved. Traffic would flow through a neighborhood with children at too high a speed. Though the speed limit on HRD is 35, cars travel at 40mph. The Newport/Warrington intersection is on a hill with poor visibility. It's a safety hazard. The alternate route on Newport passes schools. Closing HRD would be a disaster.
8. The Mayor once proposed closing HRD on the weekends and the Road Commission said no. There's a hidden agenda now to close the road. Users are residents. I find it curious that the consultants are landscape architects. They usually come after the engineers. First develop the criteria to evaluate alternatives, not the other way around. Personal bias enters in when the alternatives are developed first.
9. Put the Design Advisory Committee schedule on the web.
10. Glad for the public process. I've seen at least four repavings, some better than others. Reincorporate retaining walls into the design. There have been bad design decisions over the years. Foster Bridge taught that inconvenience is a good thing. It encourages patience, just as cars co-existing with bikes do. HRD is a gorgeous drive. Don't close it. Bikers create a hazard

- by riding three to four abreast on weekends. The counts are not accurate. Notification period was not adequate. Not everyone uses email for notification.
11. I'm disappointed in the graphics because they didn't look up Bird Road. Hills create bad sight lines. Busses can't always make it up Bird Road in the winter.
 12. I think the discussion is leaning toward keeping HRD open for resident access. Rock Creek Park has ten to twenty times more traffic than HRD but closing couldn't be rescinded due to popularity. The solution is to make HRD a shared use road for all but for one lane of vehicles only. This should be regulated by traffic lights at each end and cars could alternate directions. There would be a maximum of a five-minute wait at each end.
 13. I'm dismayed that there are no cost estimates, since the exercise was begun due to costs. It will be inconsistent if Federal money requires widening the road. Costs could be greater than just construction due to impacts on neighborhoods. Also consider costs to improve Bird, Newport, and surrounding roads. I speculate that due to increased loads and use, Newport would eventually have to be widened, too.
 14. It's odd to divert traffic along a road with no driveways (HRD) to roads with driveways. This doesn't make sense from a user standpoint. Pedestrian and biker use is intermittent, while vehicles are more regular. Closing HRD is not an effective use of the resource. It denies access to a scenic benefit to those who can only get there by car. User patterns indicate that they prefer the HRD corridor to the Barton Nature Area route. The shared path through Barton Nature Area would be a great idea, but the users wouldn't see the Huron River like they do on HRD. An elevated boardwalk similar to that along Barton Drive would separate uses and address the natural features.
 15. I hope the new road lasts longer than two to three years. Protect the sides of the road. These deteriorate first. Bikers rely on a good roadway edge.
 16. All of Ann Arbor has a stake in the road. Cyclists are okay with shared road if pavement is decent. Be cost effective. Barton Hills Village should have to pay for improvements, too.
 17. Commuters from Loch Alpine use HRD as well as those going to the hospital. The alternate route would be on Miller and add an additional burden there. HRD is an asset to the community for all users. I can live with occasional closures, but not permanent. Ideal is a reconstruction project. Prefer repave to closure.
 18. There is concern that HRD should not become an urban freeway. What has been done to enforce the speed?
 19. HRD is a lifeline for commuting. Closing it would be a mistake. There are three nearby schools with children present.
 20. There could be a new road built along the railroad tracks in Barton Nature Area.
 21. You should develop criteria first to evaluate the alternatives before you promulgate them. You need that to weigh the comments, not simply noting all the comments.
 22. I'm not in favor of closing the road.
 23. I'd like you to share the protocol of the data collection. HRD is a unique part of Ann Arbor. The vision should be to respect the history, sharing the road with all. Take time to engineer it right and keep its uniqueness, not close to anyone's use. Widening by six inches on each side would make a difference.

24. I'd appreciate more notice in the future. Don't turn Bird Road into a highway. HRD works well for multiple users. It helps everyone to appreciate the life and beauty along the drive. It needs to be scenic from all sides, even from across the river in Barton Nature Area. Drainage must be addressed better. Reconstruct it but keep it as it is.
25. I fully support closure to motorized traffic. Please be open-minded. This is a unique opportunity to create a gem of a park in the city. It will make Ann Arbor a better place to live. We can properly engineer nearby roadways to handle the traffic. Now HRD is a nearly ten-mile stretch of major thoroughfare. Closing this small stretch would have an impact on the entire length, lessen traffic and make it more like a neighborhood.
26. Graphics fail to show a repair and share option. Reconstruct the roadway only if traffic is to remain. Reconstruction will occur under any scenario due to the need to deal with the underground utilities.
27. Criteria are very important. Use by bikers could increase challenges, both environmental and economic. This could be overcome with an elevated walkway as part of a wider collaboration with the Border-to-Border Trail.
28. You can't cut into the hills without doing massive environmental damage. Federal money will require that the shoulders be widened as well as require huge retaining walls. The road should be reclassified as a "Park Road" with reduced speeds, and clear lines of sight. There should be restrictions along this road of salt use, trucks and speed.
29. I am a recreational cyclist. It is unconscionably unsafe to ride along the road as it is. It's an accident waiting to happen. It's broke, so fix it. Keep it a public road, not a multi-use path. Cyclists are better off in traffic than with pedestrians. They have to take their chances, follow the rules of the road and go with traffic. There's not enough parking area to make it a park. Access from Bird road is unmanageable for small tired bikes. The best solution is a separate pedestrian path and let the bikers use the road.
30. I would agree to closing this section of HRD if it would help with the safety of cyclists and runners and help hold down the speeding of cars / motorcycles on HRD.
31. I live in the Loch Alpine subdivision. I don't believe that we were notified and I think it would be a good idea to include us in future conversations. Huron River Drive is a major and much loved commuter artery.
32. There are paved roads in the mountains that work! Do a traffic count when most residents are here and the University is in session.
33. Traffic counts mean nothing for North Maple when three traffic circles haven't been built yet.
34. If you close the road, you'll have to have reasonable alternative routes. If you leave it open you'll be able to drain (disperse?) traffic along alternative routes.
35. Please go farther down the road with your signs to include more users.
36. Do not close road. It should be open to all. Reconstruct it properly and add good pavement and shoulders for bikers and walkers.
37. Reduce speed from May to October, on weekends only, to twenty miles per hour and enforce it.

38. HRD is at the bottom of a steep north-facing slope. It often has ice on its surface, even when other roads are dry. This is an especially hazardous condition for new drivers—like those who will attend the new Skyline High.
39. Put pullovers in occasional spots where bikers can pull over for motorists to pass. Walkers can walk elsewhere. There are plenty of trails.
40. I live on Warrington. I don't think it would be appropriate to send commuter traffic from a non-residential road such as HRD through residential streets like Warrington, Newport, etc.
41. The less pavement the better. If restrictions were implemented such as a one-way street, speed bumps, weight restrictions, etc., people would find new ways to exit and enter the area.

Public Input – Email & Voice Messages

Below are the email comments and voice messages received from City and Township residents through April 23rd, 2007. Most email and voice message comments were related to preference on keeping the road open or closing the route to vehicular traffic.

HURON RIVER DRIVE – MAINTAIN VEHICULAR TRAFFIC

1. Opposed to closing HRD. Repaving is needed but bike lanes or converting to a shared use path is unnecessary.
2. Want the road repaved. It needs to be maintained for car traffic. It is an alternate route if the highway is backed up. It would be nice to have more side pavement for bikers.
3. Resident on Warrington Drive opposed to closing HRD. The road is one of the highlights of beauty in the County. Would still like the road to remain 2-way for vehicles. Closing the road would be a tremendous inconvenience.
4. Resident on Maple road north of the Foster Bridge takes Huron River Drive to drive to campus every morning. I drive slowly, letting the occasional speeder pass me, and with the window down, so I can hear the bird songs and the sounds of the forest. I enjoy the beauty of Barton pond, sometimes calm and sometimes stormy. I glance at the birds perching in the ice in the winter and happily swimming in the summer. The 10 minutes I spend in the drive are the best of my day, and I would be very upset if the drive was closed down. Is it necessary to reach that extreme? can it be parched up? I would like to suggest lowering the speed limit to 25 miles per hour, and enforcing the limit with the occasional patrol car. This would discourage those who take the drive to avoid the traffic lights of other inbound roads, but would let us who relish the beauty of the road to still enjoy it.
5. A resident of Bird Hills Road is concerned about closing HRD and diverting more traffic onto Bird because of the large number of walkers along that road on weekends. Bird Road has two large, blind hills and she has both almost been hit (as a walker) and almost hit walkers (as a driver) going over the crests of the hills. If more traffic were diverted, speed bumps would almost certainly be needed. We discussed possibly closing HRD north of Bird (and thus capping Bird Rd off) but she was also concerned about diverting traffic onto Warrington.
6. I am opposed to any closure of any portion of Huron River Drive.
If a bicycle path can be added, it may work to benefit more people.
7. I use Huron River Drive at least 3-4 times weekly to get to various locales including AA City, AA Twp and Townships to the west, Webster and Dexter. My usual access point is off Main Street though not always.

8. Last week, I had an appointment on W. Huron River Drive, and the tree removal blockade was in effect. My route through town went along Main to Miller and to Newport Road down to HRD. This took an extra 10 minutes and I passed 3 school zones. This is a real danger to kids and pedestrians if this were to become permanent!
9. This road should remain open to vehicle traffic. This road is a collector road with many streets feeding into it. It serves as one of only three entrances into the city from the northwest side of Ann Arbor Township. Fire and police also use the route. Having had three occasions recently to need an ambulance, using Huron River Dr. was very significant in reaching the Hospital in a timely manner. Elderly and disabled persons have been seen enjoying the views along the road while traveling by car. I trust both residents and users of the road can continue to share this unique ambiance.
10. I'm a 44yr old currently living in the Lansdowne neighborhood. I'm a member of both the AABTS and the Ann Arbor Velo Club (AAVC). I've been using Huron River Drive (HRD) as a cycling route since the late 1970s. My typical route uses the section between Main St. and Bird Hills Rd. and I can attest to it's current poor condition. Over the course of the last 3 yrs or so the deterioration has forced me to ride more of that stretch in the center of the traffic lane, although it's not yet impassible. As a motorist I'd like to see two-way traffic maintained on this stretch if possible. As a cyclist I don't feel that widening of the road is needed and would be in favor of repaving at the current width, with the same or similar shoulder condition. This would be my favored way forward. If auto traffic is reduced to a single one-way lane, or eliminated, I would ask that wider than standard bike lanes be used if possible. Particularly with a one-way traffic scheme, it would be difficult for one bike rider to pass another, with both traveling against the auto traffic flow, in a standard width bike lane. Same would apply with a bike rider passing a runner or walker within the bike lane width. If the connection from HRD to Main St. is maintained I would be interested in suggestions regarding improved safety at the cross-over from northbound Main to HRD. Even as an experienced cyclist I sometimes have difficulty moving from the far right of the right lane on Main over to the left turn lane. I believe that it's been suggested to create some sort of paved loop under the M14 bridge to allow pedestrians and cyclists to avoid the left turn. I'd be interested in this kind of proposal.
11. Resident on River Pines by Wagner likes the one-way option better than diverting traffic to Bird Rd or Warrington. Either direction is okay, but outbound might be better. How will people access the pedestrian bridge to Barton Park if the road is closed? Removing the dam is a reasonable idea, as is the Bandemer Park tunnel connection.
12. As a resident of the Newport Creek subdivision I also oppose the closing of the road. It is clear to me that this would increase traffic on Newport Road. Unfortunately Newport Road does not have sidewalks for the many children who choose to walk to and from Wines and Forsythe along this route. Newport Road needs to be kept as safe as possible for these children. An increase in traffic would not help that goal.
13. Huron River Drive is in terrible disrepair and something needs to be done to fix it. It would certainly help the safety of bikers if a shoulder could be added to the road. I know bikers love to use this road but as it exists now it is not a safe road for cars and bikes to use together. The majority of users are automobiles and this route is a connector to the expressway. First and foremost it should be repaired to accommodate automobile traffic.
14. I am a city of Ann Arbor resident living in the Newport Road region north of M14. Like many in the northwest corner of Ann Arbor, and the surrounding townships, I rely heavily on Huron River Drive for my basic work and personal commutes seven days a week. Neither Maple Road

nor Newport Road are viable alternative traffic routes. As such, I absolutely object to the notion of closing any portion of Huron River Drive to two-way motor vehicle traffic either on weekdays or weekends.

15. We bike Huron River Drive often and encourage the city to reconstruct to add a bike path (or at least a safe shoulder). Cyclists don't mind sharing the road, AS LONG AS IT IS SAFE! We also suggest a path for bikes under M14 to try to cross Main Street in a safer manner than is now available.
16. As someone who uses the road every day, I agree, but not due to any necessity of use. The aesthetic pleasure and relaxation I get driving down Huron River Drive is priceless. When I make the turn off Main Street, all weight lifts off my shoulders, calm descends and the cares and worries of the workplace depart. This scenic stretch of road is one of Ann Arbor's treasures, one that is accessible to all. Any future plan should keep the road open the vast majority of the time (my idea on bikes/non-motorized transport would be to close HRD from Ann Arbor to Dexter on the 4th Sunday of every month from May through September. This could be a major tourist attraction and there are really not that many driveways). If reconstructed, you should try to add some width to accommodate cyclists. Some "vistas" should also be cleared, so motorists can catch more glimpses of the river. Please keep my "decompression chamber" available.
17. Close HRD to bicycles - they are a nuisance.
18. HRD works fine as is. Enjoys convertible rides and sharing the road with bicyclists. Don't close it. Leave as is. Put up "share the road" signs.
19. Opposes closing HRD in any way, shape, or form. Feels fine about sharing the road with bicyclists. Strongly vote for reconstruct in existing width.
20. Road should be open to traffic to everyone at all times. Don't spend money on bike lanes. Too expensive. HRD is very special place. Keep open to vehicles.
21. Reconstruct in existing width. Leave open to motor vehicles. Make cyclists pay for bicycle for their paths. They don't use the ones they have anyway.
22. One Resident's Comments:

Joggers. Joggers do not typically use Huron River Drive. This is not because the road is in bad shape and full of traffic. It is primarily because the dirt trails in Bird Hills Park and the wood chip path over by Barton Dam are more interesting and much easier on the knees. For most joggers, automobile traffic on Huron River Drive is not an issue.

Walkers. Walkers, including me and my family have no need to walk on Huron River Drive. The trails in Barton Dam, Bird Hills Park, Kuebler-Langworth Park and Hilltop Park are much more enjoyable. From these walking areas you can easily cut over to Argo Park and on to other areas of the city on foot. Where you do see a lot of walkers is on Bird Road and Newport Road. In fact, hundreds of pedestrians walk down Bird Road on the nice weekends to get to Barton Dam and Bird Hills Park. What happens to those pedestrians if cars are routed down those roads? Are we going to construct pedestrian walkways on Bird and Newport Road also? It's scary enough now walking on Bird Road when cars sometimes come speeding over those blind hills. I can't imagine what it will be like if the traffic load is increased because Huron River Drive is closed.

Bikers. It is our experience that most bikers who live inside the City of Ann Arbor start at Forsythe School and take Newport Road out of town. Then, they either take Bird Road down to Huron River Drive or continue on Newport Road until Foster Road where they cut over to

Huron River Drive and out of town. While the Newport Road pavement is in pretty bad shape in spots, this way is a lot more convenient for in town residents who bike because they don't have to ride on Main Street to get to Huron River Drive. North Main Street between Depot and M-14 has very heavy traffic because of cars entering and exiting the freeway and it will have even more traffic if Huron River Drive is closed. Clearly, this cannot be a good option for bikers. Yes, there are some bikers that drive to the parking lot at the footbridge near Hilltop Mark and then use that section of Huron River Drive, but they don't seem to have a problem sharing the road.

Bird Road. Why would you even THINK of closing Huron River Drive to cars at Bird Road? Where do you think the cars would go? Up Bird Road to Newport, of course. Bird Road at Huron River Drive goes through the Northwest corner of Bird Hills Park. It is dirt, about 1 and ½ lanes wide with steep hills, has limited site distance and has large trees on both sides of the road. It is constantly used by deer, walkers, joggers and bikers. Why would you want to cause severe safety problems, not to mention environmental damage to one of the most beautiful roads of our city by routing 2,000 + plus cars at day up Bird Road? Running that kind of traffic through a nature area? This is crazy.

Environmental Concerns. It was mentioned that it would be better for the environment to close Huron River Drive between Bird Road and Main Street. What about the huge hit on the environment and our quality of life that closing Huron River Drive will cause? In particular, I'm referring to the fact that over 2,000 cars a day will have to drive several miles further than they used to to get to their jobs and other destinations. This means, more gas will be wasted, more air pollution will be generated and our other busy roads (Newport, Miller & North Main) will be even more congested. The environmental impact on the city as a whole has to be significantly greater if we close Huron River Drive than if we don't.

Citizen Access to Our Natural Resources. Many of our citizens cannot walk, run or ride a bike, yet they deserve the right to see the beauty of the Huron River also. If we close Huron River Drive through that beautiful stretch, they will be denied that right. Almost every National Park in our country has scenic roads running through it so that everyone can see some of the beauty, not just those that are willing to hike in to see it. Why aren't these people being taken into consideration?

Weighting the Needs of Users of Huron River Drive. The consultant said that the varying needs regarding Huron River Drive have not been given any weights. Why not? Doesn't a resident who drives on Huron River drive to work year round have a higher priority than a biker who uses Huron River Drive for five to six months out of the year on weekends?

Closing Huron River Drive for 3 Hours on April 21st. As a final note, please, please, please close Bird Road at Newport Road and at Huron River Drive on that day. Have the cars on Huron River Drive turn around at the parking lot at Barton Dam and go back the other way. Bird Road (the dirt part) is fragile in the spring and too much erosion will occur with large volumes of traffic. DO NOT route cars up Bird Road on that day.

23. My opinion is that it would be a crime to close Huron River Drive. Here are some reasons:

- 1) It is one of the most scenic roads in Arbor;
- 2) many, many people enjoy a ride there either on bicycles or in a car;
- 3) if closed, Warrington Rd and Newport road would be flooded with traffic. Most of these roads do not have sidewalks; many people walk, jog, bicycle on these roads. There are 2 schools on Newport rd. Obviously not safe ...;
- 4) considering that we soon will have Skyline High School, closing one of the ways to get to the school does not make sense;

My suggestions would be to keep it simple: repave the road, keep it as a 2 lane road, consider closing the road for motorists one Sunday (or every Sunday) each month during the summer, lower the speed limit to 25 m/h to make it safer for bicyclists and have the police vigorously enforce it.

24. I favor keeping both traffic lanes open on Huron River Dr. and adding in two bike lanes to make the road safer for cyclists.
25. My preference would be:
- A. Make motor vehicle use one way heading west – this alone would reduce traffic enough to make other uses more viable, plus provide the space for a pair of biking walking lanes on either side of the road for two way bike/hike/running use.
 - B. Reduce the speed limit to 25 mph on weekends starting at sunrise Saturday.
 - C. Close the road only 2x per year – at some defined season start and for the Dexter-Ann Arbor run.
 - D. My offer to Mayor Hieftje still stands: I am willing to pay for bike way signage and would like to honor my deceased son in so doing.

Alternative

If even one way use proves to be too hard of a fight, then try to reduce the speed limit at all times to 25 mph.

Background

I am a frequent user of Huron River Drive, a member of the AAVC, past member of the AABTS and WBWC and lived on Warrington in the past. I along with many others do volunteer hazard marking, limb removal, right of way pruning and so forth to make the route safer.

The main issue as I see it is that the combination of poor road condition, narrow lanes (and cost/difficulty with widening), traffic speed and traffic volume make Huron River Drive throughout the route to Dexter incompatible with its uses.

... reducing traffic volume, traffic speed and improving the road condition are the most important first steps. If the traffic is slow enough, and infrequent enough, a cyclist can dodge the potholes and cracks and deal with a poor shoulder.

You should know that the junior team of the AAVC do not use the section that is under discussion except to cool down after their return from points west, due to road condition, blind corners, narrow lanes and the difficulty with crossing Main to get to Huron River Drive. Hence, any solution will have to deal with the Main crossing to have the greatest impact.

26. As a walker, may I register my opinion about HRD? I would say:
- 1. Do not close it to traffic.
 - 2. Do not make it one-way.
 - 3. BUT DO SLOW THE SPEED OF THE TRAFFIC down to 20 or 25, perhaps with narrowing, or objects crowding the sides (bollards, raised curb....?).
 - 4. Do not widen the road, but somehow put in a path for walkers, which is separate from bikes and cars (perhaps a raised sidewalk).
27. I attended the meeting held at Forsythe school last week. You stated that the idea of closing Huron River drive was just one idea. I did not see an engineering plan (a road closure picture was made available) that showed us how you would maybe cut away part of hill to create a better drainage off of Bird Hill and have it go under instead of over the road. I wonder why? IS that because you have no intention of doing that? Again as you heard at the meeting closing the road would impact neighborhoods that are not designed for over 2500 cars daily to travel on them.

- What occurs beyond Bird Hills? We still have two lanes with runners and bikers that travel all the way to Dexter for fun. Would cars park in neighborhoods to access this closed Huron River dr.? We don't need another park we need a road that is engineered to stay in working condition.
28. I live on Sunset Road and am concerned that a closing of the River Road would result in even faster moving traffic on Sunset Road. Already a majority of the traffic speeds on Sunset, perhaps in part due to the fact that very few residents leave their cars parked on the street, but also no doubt because there are only two stops its entire length. It is a well used pedestrian and recreational path with bikers, school children, dog walkers, strollers, runners and residents along the sidewalk and road. It is also well used (unfortunately for the persons previously listed) by buses, trucks and commuters that for the most part do NOT observe the speed limit. If there would be a closing of the Huron River Road, where would the daily 2,000+ vehicles be routed? Sunset Road has enough fast moving traffic already. Please take this into consideration in making your decisions.
 29. Before moving to Ann Arbor to be dean of the U-M School of Music, Theatre & Dance, I lived in the Washington DC area. As you may know, the nicest road in that city is Rock Creek Park which, as the name subtly implies, runs along Rock Creek, and through an urban national park. The road is in heavy use as a commuter route during the week, but on weekends becomes a traffic-free recreational area (biking, hiking in warm weather, cross-country skiing back in the days before global warming ruined that). I wonder if this is a solution under consideration for Huron River Drive? It might allow simply re-paving without a bike path, while still accomplishing the same end of weekend recreation.
 30. Closing HRD is a dreadful idea. It would cause terrible traffic disruption on the surrounding roads.
 31. I live off Maple road north of the Foster bridge, and I take Huron River Drive to drive to campus every morning. I drive slowly, letting the occasional speeder pass me, and with the window down, so I can hear the bird songs and the sounds of the forest. I enjoy the beauty of Barton pond, sometimes calm and sometimes stormy. I glance at the birds perching in the ice in the winter and happily swimming in the summer. The 10 minutes I spend in the drive are the best of my day, and I would be very upset if the drive was closed down. Is it necessary to reach that extreme? Can it be parched up? I would like to suggest *lowering the speed limit to 25 miles per hour*, and enforcing the limit with the occasional patrol car. This would discourage those who take the drive to avoid the traffic lights of other inbound roads, but would let us who relish the beauty of the road to still enjoy it.
 32. Thanks for your e-mail. I am 75 yrs old and have lived in AA since the early 30's. I am dead set against closing Huron River Drive from N. Main St. to Bird Road on a permanent basis. That would eliminate most of the senior citizens, handicapped people who need a car, young children (our grandchildren) who couldn't walk that far. I have suggested splitting the road and making it one way so both it can be accessed by all who wish to use it.
 33. Feel strongly that HRD must stay open. If closed, it would cut off access for many people to downtown.
 34. Wants it fixed. Kept open to vehicles. Ok sharing road with bicyclists. Wants police patrol to keep speed down so safer for peds and bikes.
 35. I have been a resident of Ann Arbor for 33 years and I have used and looked forward to using Huron River Drive for every one of these 33 years. I'm writing this e-mail to give my view of the five ideas that were put forth in an Ann Arbor News article recently. I think you should only

consider and/or go with ONLY items ONE or TWO. Reconstructing as is or with new bike path. The last three should be out of the question entirely!! Since when has that drive only now starting to become the personal pleasure of the bicyclist only?? There are many of us who enjoy the use of that road specifically in the EVENINGS! and especially ON THE WEEKENDS!! for scenic relaxing drives with our sports cars, motorcycles, cars with moonroofs, or just our regular vehicles. Many of us work in the city or have crazy commutes and this drive is looked forward to in order to get a country and relaxing view of nature on our way to Dexter for ice cream to the parks, or what ever. We who have used Huron River Drive for years also know that avoiding and looking out for bicycle riders is part of the experience and part of the price for sharing the road. Personally, it has never been an issue unless a bicycle rider refuses to move over which they are supposed to do when cars approach. I also pass with extreme caution. Many of us have ridden or ride bikes so we understand the necessity for caution on both rider and driver. Hopefully you are getting more responses like this. If any of the other options are moved forward with I for one will be looking to holding those responsible for this debacle of ideas or prospective moves by way of the ballot box, recalls, and no votes on any other city funding for projects or millage renewals.

36. This has to be the dumbest idea of all time over there in City Engineering. Do you not have enough work to do that you have time to think up such errant nonsense?

37. I have two questions for you this morning. At the April 4 meeting, although questions and comments were expressed and encouraged, relative to future alternatives for the stretch of Huron River Drive, between North Main and Warrington, you and others kept referring to "the project." I found that terminology confusing. It made me think that considerably more definition already exists for dealing with this road than entertaining questions and comments about supposedly unexplored, maybe even unthought of, alternatives would imply. To hear, for example, that the City has applied, or intends to apply, for Federal resurface funding strongly suggests that "the project", whatever it is, has more definition at this point than your audience was told. Having some experience with funding applications, I doubt that the City can apply for in the neighborhood of a million dollars without supplying fairly significant details as to the intended and expected use for it. Telling the Federal Government that the City really doesn't know what will happen with 1.2 miles of the road involved and that it has just begun to collect thoughts and questions, to brain storm, and to get the citizenry involved doesn't seem like the stuff of serious applications. Therefore, precisely what is meant by "the project?"

Second, who is on the advisory committee? I was very surprised that the names of the committee members were not disclosed on April 4. If the questions and comments at the April 4 meeting were at all indicative of the audience's attitude, you and the facilitators had to come away from that evening with an appreciation that the City has a problem of credibility. Being slow to post the meeting's questions and comments on the City's site, not being quick to disclose the membership of the committee and how it was chosen, having landscape architect involved while saying that no real engineering has been done, and saying or doing anything that even remotely implies that the public might be an afterthought only intensifies this perception. I look forward to your response.

38. I am emailing you to voice my concern and opinion regarding Huron River Drive (HRD). I live just north of the river by the Foster Bridge. I feel strongly that that portion of HRD should remain open to vehicles and not closed. My preference would be to have it resurfaced with no other changes. Closing it to motorized traffic would be a huge inconvenience to all the people in the area. It is our most direct route to the UM hospital and our church. Please let the decision makers know that we do not want HRD closed.

39. I think it would be ill advised to close Huron River Drive. It seems most cities are starting to encourage alternate routes to there centers not closing them. Has the idea of permeable

- pavement been considered? I have driven on it in France. I know Grand Rapids has used it for parking lots. If we used it on Huron River Dr. {I think} drainage ditches could be eliminated and a bike lane could be possible? It would also be the first road in Michigan made in this fashion... The Feds. might kick in some more money for that.
40. My only thoughts on the repair there is please don't close that road for work until the 3 roundabouts are finished. Those of us on the north side need options for leaving our area to go east, west or south.
 41. I am an avid runner and cyclist and exercise almost everyday in this area. There are many great places to run in this area. Bird Hills and the Oxbow have wonderful paths for running. If there is an issue of runners coming from Ann Arbor that would like to run Huron River Drive(HRD) it can easily be solved by education and signage. Routing runners across the Oxbow and back onto Huron River Drive at the Bird road junction is an easy way to solve your problem. This stretch of Huron River Drive may be a family friendly place to bike but it certainly is not a family friendly place to get to on a bike. Bikers from the North do access HRD by crossing the railroad tracks, however this is trespassing. Main Street going north to HRD is not a family friendly road. The alternative of taking the sidewalk is absolutely dangerous. Having worked at 1250 N. Main I know that drivers exiting parking lots on the east side on N. Main cannot see cyclists on the sidewalk. Again, this issue can be solved by education and signage. Bikers should be routed to Newport to HRD. Many AABTS rides which leave from Wheeler Park take this alternative. Being a resident on Newport I am very concerned about the additional traffic that would be rerouted by the closing of HRD. The inconvenience of a closed HRD when there are great alternatives for cyclists and runners is unreasonable
 42. I think a compromise on the width of a redone Huron River Drive section may be feasible, even for the often tightly constrained width of this Ann Arbor section of HRD. I believe that while there are many places where no significant widening is feasible without damaging the local environment, there are also places where an additional half lane could be provided rather easily. Such short sections could provide "passing areas" into which bikes could move, at continuing speed, when a car backup behind them is forced by opposing traffic. I have recently observed that this approach works very well for cars on very narrow and very winding roads in New Zealand, where alas, many cyclists do not even bother to single up when traffic is encountered.
 43. This road was paid for by taxes on autos, etc and through the gas tax. If bicyclers demand to have portions or ALL of Huron river drive....I demand that they be taxed at least \$100 a year to use it. The roads with bike paths are abused badly. I use Huron river drive several times a week and find that bicyclers love to travel 2, or 3 abreast. It is only a matter of time before someone making the choice between getting hit head on trying to pass these people or trying to slam on the brakes in time behind them --smacks them with their vehicle. Bikers should make their own trails and stay on them. It is totally absurd to close Huron river drive to motorized traffic EVER!!!!

HURON RIVER DRIVE - CLOSE TO VEHICULAR TRAFFIC

1. It should be closed. There are alternate routes to take. The hillside makes it difficult to keep up the road. If you repave it, you will have to redo it in a couple of years.
2. I favor closing the road to vehicles. Commuters should be watching the road, not looking at the scenery. That stretch is one of the most beautiful around the city and is wasted on cars. Let's use the federal money to develop an alternate route.

3. While my wife and I would favor the closure to vehicular traffic, we could see that a compromise of it being one way could achieve goals for both "camps". We are hikers and bikers who are always concerned about the narrowness of the road at that point and the high speeds of cars as they begin or end their travel on the road. A little more space for non vehicular traffic and limiting the vehicles to coming from one direction only would make it a lot safer. The roadway would probably last longer too!
4. This is something that I have thought ought to happen for many years, and I say this despite living on Riverbend Dr. just north of Huron River Drive. This is clearly one of the most scenic areas in Ann Arbor. One Saturday I witnessed a family attempting to ride their bikes along this stretch of the HRD. It was terrifying for children and parents alike, and they had to turn back. Cars do not respect the speed limit and give no quarter to bicyclists. Building bike lanes will require digging into the hill on the south side of the road, thus destroying more of what is actually a unique geological feature in our glacial history. At the very least, the Drive ought to be closed on weekends so that people who live in the city can claim the river and views rather than giving it all to motorists.
5. I am in favor of closing HRD between Main and Bird either permanently or on weekends. The only thing that strikes me is that it would be difficult for local motorists to get to town this summer if both Maple rd near the new high school *and* HRD were closed at the same time.

HURON RIVER DRIVE – OTHER

1. Ann Arbor would be short sighted to deal with only this piece of the eleven-mile stretch from here to Dexter. No money should be spent until a comprehensive plan for the entire stretch is made. Plan to fix the road to Dexter at least, or do nothing. Spending money on this short stretch is overboard and ludicrous. Also, people may not realize that the project area is only 1.3 miles in length.