

ReVision Florence Outreach Survey Summary

On behalf of the Florence Urban Renewal Agency (FURA), the City of Florence conducted an outreach survey regarding the ReVision Florence streetscape project. The goal of this outreach survey was to build upon the feedback that was received at the FURA open house earlier in the year when the design concepts or ReVision Florence were presented to the community. Since the initial open hours, the FURA Board, City Council, and City staff have provided both written communication and in-person communication with key stakeholders in the affected area, key members of our community, interested citizens, and the general public. This general outreach has been provided in the form of the City newsletter, City website, weekly City Manager radio program, FURA and City Council meetings, face-to-face meetings with property and business owners, and discussions with individuals as they ask general questions about the project.

The survey was sent out on September 22, 2016, to 665 recipients from the City's various email distribution lists. It was also posted on the City's social media accounts and shared with several local social media groups. A copy of the survey can be found in Attachment 1. As of Monday, October 24, 2016, the City received 106 survey responses with the results demonstrated below.

Project Awareness

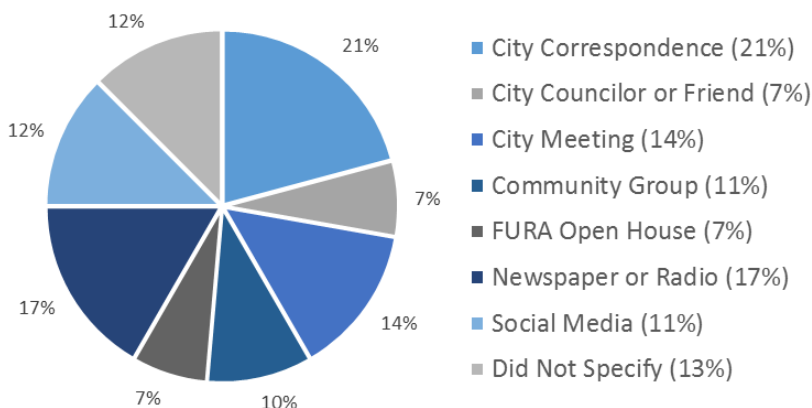
With all of our outreach over the past year on this project, we wanted to know if our respondents had heard about this project prior to either being sent the survey or finding in on social media. Of the 106 respondents, 72 of them stated that they had previously heard about ReVision Florence. Of those 72 respondents, 63 shared how they heard about ReVision Florence. The majority of respondents had heard about ReVision Florence through some form of City Correspondence, which included the City Newsletter. Information shared via the Siuslaw News, KCST, and KXCR made up the Newspaper or Radio category. Several others had heard about ReVision Florence via the various City Meetings, including the City Council, FURA, and Planning Commission. Another means of

Had you heard of ReVision Florence prior to the survey?

Yes, 68%

No, 32%

How did you learn about ReVision Florence?



communication that seems to have been effective is the City's Social Media accounts, as well as discussions at various Community Groups, which included the Chamber of Commerce, the Florence Garden Club, Rotary, and the West Lane Emergency Operations Group.

Through this process, we thought it would be important to hear how people view the current condition of the Highway 101 corridor that is proposed to be revitalized through ReVision Florence, and what they think about the design concept. To do this, we asked two simple questions after providing a brief overview of the project and the conceptual design. We wanted to know what respondents' general comments regarding the existing conditions along Highway 101 and their general comments regarding the proposed ReVision Florence streetscape conceptual design. Since these two questions were qualitative in nature, it is difficult to quantify them. In reviewing the answers, key phrases, words, and themes were pulled out to create word clouds that best represent the comments received. The full responses to both questions are available upon request.

The overall response to the current conditions (right) of the Highway 101 corridor in between the bridge and the Highway 126 intersection was that of needs improvement and that it is not representative of what Florence has to offer, while there were a few respondents who liked it the way it is. There was an underlying feeling of the corridor not being safe for pedestrians and bicyclists, as well as being unappealing, uninviting, ugly, and outdated.



While respondents presented their feedback on the corridor's current conditions they also provided their thoughts on what could be done to improve the area (left). Respondents overwhelmingly outlined the need for landscaping, signage, and an Old Town entry as key components that would improve the area. These items were supported by the need to create an identity for the corridor that is visually appealing and will spur economic development and tourism. It was also noted by many respondents that there was a desire to continue improvements on Highway 101 further north.

The response to the ReVision Florence design concept was positive overall. We received some good feedback on elements of the design, what people liked, and what they didn't like. The feeling of the design elicited descriptions such as exciting, overdue, beautiful, improvement, inviting, appealing, and attractive. There was a theme throughout the comments that the improved sidewalks, bike lanes, and lighting made the corridor safer and would slow traffic.



There was positive feedback on the landscaping and added greenery with the caveat that vegetation needed to be kept short in order to retain visual access to the local businesses. Specific landscaping requests included adding flower baskets, incorporating rhododendrons, and utilizing the native species to the area. The incorporation of public art was received well by most, while some did not appreciate it. The concern was that it would be kept tasteful and understated. Many did not want it to become distracting or overwhelming. There were a few comments that expressed the desire to utilize vegetation as public art focuses.

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in several of our meetings. As the project progresses, the actual design will include more public input and be finalized. With most items, there were some who did not like it. As we develop the final design we can address some of the expressed concern. In addition to the arch, there were comments on the medians. Some respondents liked them, while others didn't want them included. One item of note, the design concept that was presented in the survey was not the final design and several of the initial medians proposed in the concept have been removed.

As mentioned previously, there were a few who would like the area to remain the way it currently is today as a way to keep the small town feeling. Those comments often centered around the idea that spending funds on ReVision Florence was not their priority. Some had suggestions on where the funding should be spent, such as education. Those concerns would require education on how different services are funded within our community and where the funding for this project would come from. This will be a task as we move forward with the project planning and design, as well as construction if directed so by FURA.

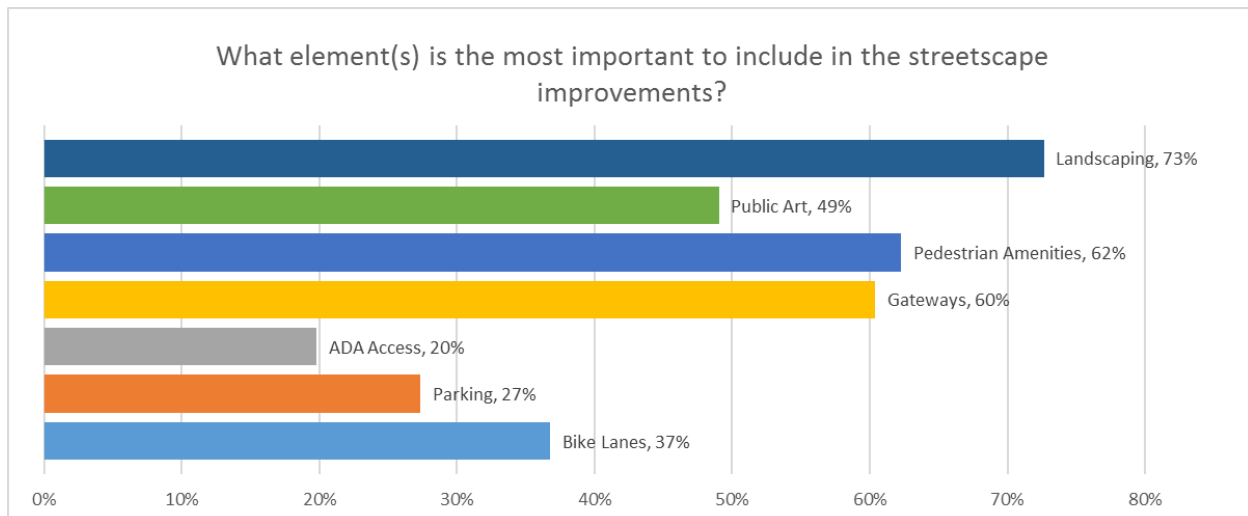
Building upon the comments of why are we funding this project, there were several that liked the project but had the question of how would the funding gap be made up. This is reasonable to ask as we are working on that very question. As we move forward through the 30% Design Acceptance Package (DAP), we will have a more accurate estimate from the engineers on the project costs. The initial estimates were very high level based on the concept. We continue to seek funding from our government partners and will do so as we progress to finalize a funding package.

In addition to the comments received on the design concept, we received input outside the scope of work of this project. Similar to the previous question, there is the desire to continue improvements north along Highway 101 to extend through Florence. There were also many comments about the condition of the buildings along the corridor and that they need a face lift. We have recognized this through our recent FURA projects and there were recommendations to revive the façade improvement program or something similar. This project is seen as an economic development driver with the goal of the positive outcomes from ReVision Florence resulting in surrounding property owners improving the curb appeal of their properties as well as triggering interest in the area from potential developers and new businesses to fill the vacant spaces.

Project Elements

Throughout the project, the FURA Board has discussed which elements they thought were important to incorporate into the streetscape design with ReVision Florence. Several elements of the project were already scheduled to be included into the ODOT pavement rehabilitation project for this section of Highway 101. ODOT was scheduled to repave the roadway, restripe the travel lanes, add striping to indicate bike lanes, and make need ADA accessibility improvements to several of the sidewalk intersections.

As a result of the FURA discussion, coordination with ODOT, and in speaking with the public at the FURA Open House, seven elements stood out as important to include. Those include defining bike lanes, improving parking, ADA accessibility, gateway features, pedestrian amenities, incorporating public art, and providing landscaping along the corridor. Respondents of the survey were asked to choose which of these item were the most important to them. They were not limited on how many they could choose.



The results of this survey question matched what the FURA Board and staff had been hearing anecdotally in that there is a desire to make the area more aesthetically pleasing through landscaping, public art, gateway treatments, and pedestrian amenities such as better lighting, benches, bicycle racks, trash receptacles, etc. Those treatments to the streetscape will transform Highway 101 from a simple transportation corridor to more of a city street with a safer feel for multi-modal transportation. Bike lanes and parking were also important to not based on their level of priority. The current roadway is vast and incorporates areas for bicyclists and parked cars on the sides. Unfortunately, those areas are currently not marked or designated for those purposes. ReVision Florence will help to define the roadway uses.

We thought it important to ask the respondents if there were any elements that they thought we missed. Forty respondents stated that there were other items that should be included. Those items included:

Are there any elements that you think should be added to the ReVision Florence project?

No, 62%

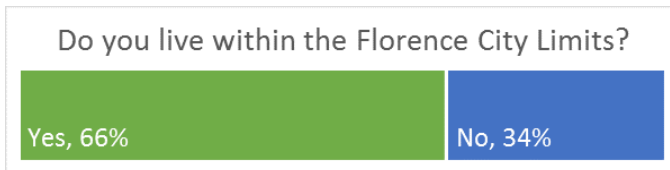
Yes, 38%

- Revitalization of Existing Buildings
- Design Standards/Architectural Guidelines
- Hanging Baskets & Planter Boxes
- Banners Representing Florence
- Include Rhododendrons
- Water Fountains & Vertical Elements
- Festive Lighting (Tree Lights)
- Rain Shelters
- Defined Crosswalks with Lights
- Crosswalk North of Bridge at the Staircase
- Bicyclist & Pedestrian Enforcement
- Raised Dividers in Center Turn Lane
- More Beautification in Old Town
- Dog Friendly Elements
- Slowing Down Traffic
- Better Traffic Control at Kingwood
- Redo Highway 101 & 126 Intersection
- Roundabout at Highway 101 & 126
- Traffic Lights on Highway 126 at Spruce Street and Quince Street
- RV Parking & Parking for Special Events
- Attracting People North of 9th Street
- Highlight Public Transportation
- Solicit Input from the Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua, & Siuslaw Indians
- Include Native Plants with Tribal Significance
- Highlight Commercial/Sport Fishing Industry
- Incorporating Community Volunteerism

These items can be evaluated by the FURA Board for possible inclusion into the final design, including suggestions such as types of plantings, public art, or other specific features.

About the Respondents

As with any solicitation of input, it is important to know who you are hearing from. We asked respondents if they lived within the Florence City limits, and, if not, where they lived. Seventy of our respondents lived within the City of Florence. Of the thirty-six who lived outside the City limits, fourteen live within the Urban Growth Boundary (UGB), eight live north of Florence, eleven live south of Florence, two live east of Florence, and one lives in Eugene. The respondent pool was overwhelmingly local to the Florence area.



We also inquired as to whether they owned or operated a business in Florence. Twenty-four of the respondents stated that they owned or operated a business in Florence. The majority of those businesses were located in either in Old Town or along Highway 101. We have worked to communicate with the businesses

within the Urban Renewal District, as well as the greater Florence area, about the project. It is the goal of FURA and the City to keep these business community involved in ReVision Florence since it will have an impact on economic development in our community as well as a direct impact on the businesses along the corridor, both during and after the project is constructed.

The City continually strives to increase our ability to communicate with the public about ReVision Florence and the many other projects and services that we provide. Through this survey, sixty-three respondents signed up to receive the City newsletter via email. We will continue to provide information on this project via the newsletter, social media, the City website, at meetings, and through one-on-one conversations.

Conclusion

The overall response to ReVision Florence via this survey was in line with the general response that we have received over the past year. The majority of people are positive and excited about the streetscaping that will be incorporated along the Highway 101 corridor between the Siuslaw River Bridge and the Highway 126 intersection. There is an overall feeling that it has been neglected and needs a face lift. Again, there were still the individuals who do not think there is a problem with the current conditions and think the funding could be spent elsewhere. These are expected, provide a different perspective, and are appreciated. Those viewpoints can be built into the design by building on what people love about Florence and enhancing those elements. The City understands the desire to keep the small town feel and that it is the reason many people move to Florence, including many local officials.

The majority of citizens do not see the difference between ODOT and the City of Florence when it comes to the maintenance and responsibility of the State highway. As a City, we understand that and know that partnering with ODOT on the highway rehabilitation they have planned for this stretch will allow the project to be done in a cohesive manner. The coordinated project will occur in two phase, with each entity completing their portion of the project. The resulting outcome should be seamless to the public as they see a completed streetscape and repaved highway.