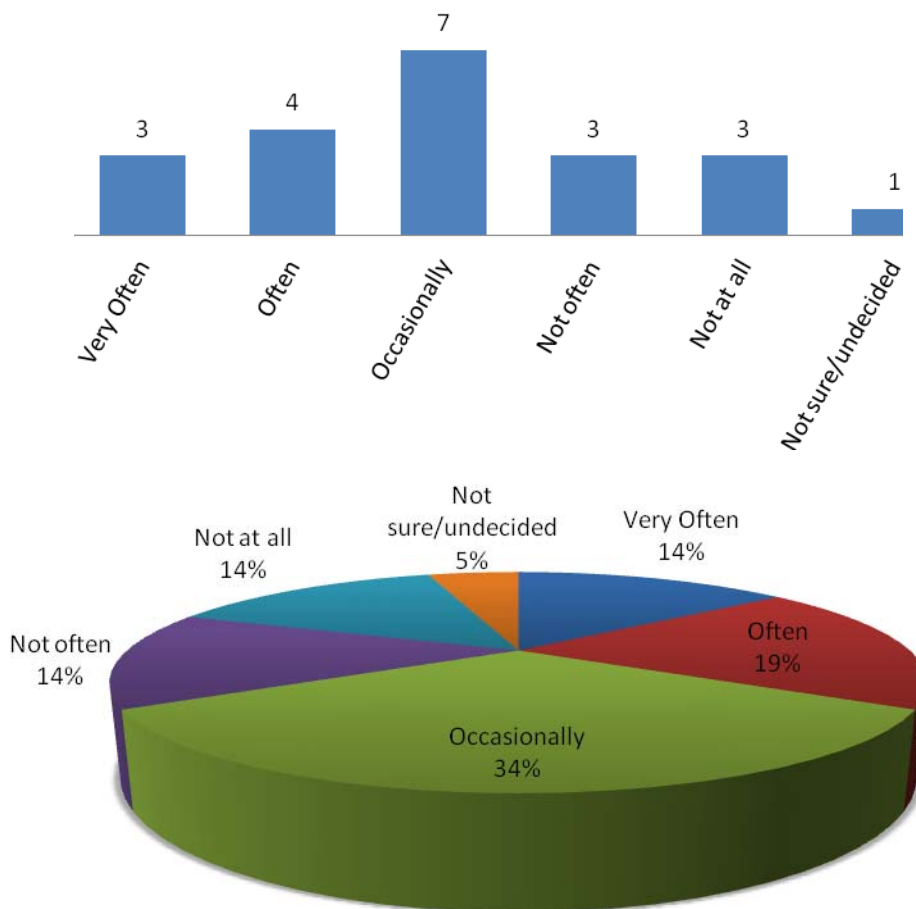


A total of 22 comment sheets were received between the time of the Open House Meeting and the deadline for comment submission, April 17, 2013.

Question 1: How often will you use any of the proposed bicycle and pedestrian connection options?

21 responses to this question

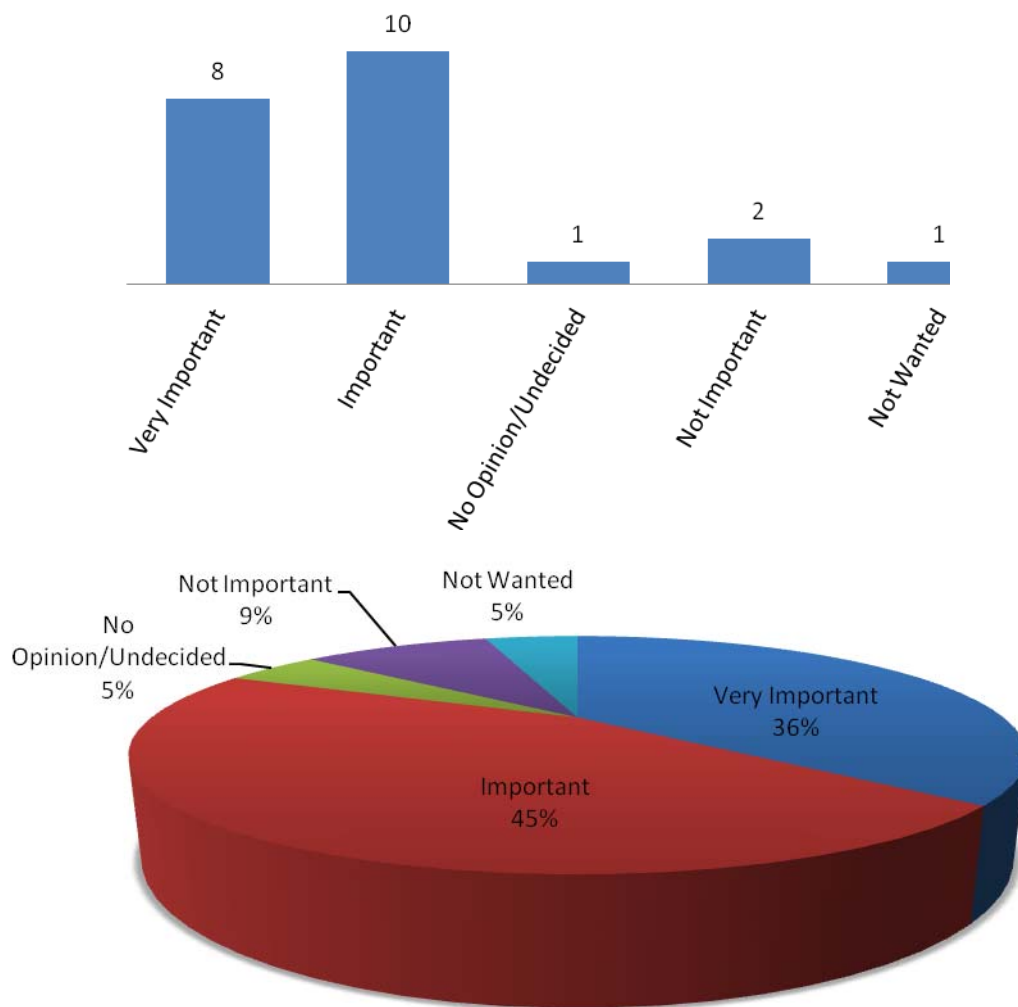
The responses to the first question form a bell-shaped distribution. Seven out of twenty-one people indicated that they would use the connection options “occasionally,” four people indicated they would use the connection options “often,” and three groups of three people each indicated that they would use the connection options either “very often,” “not often,” or “not at all.” One person was undecided whether they would use the connection options. One person declined to answer the question.



Question 2: A bicycle-friendly connection directly to the east side of the bridge (i.e., the Graehl Park side) is:

22 responses to this question

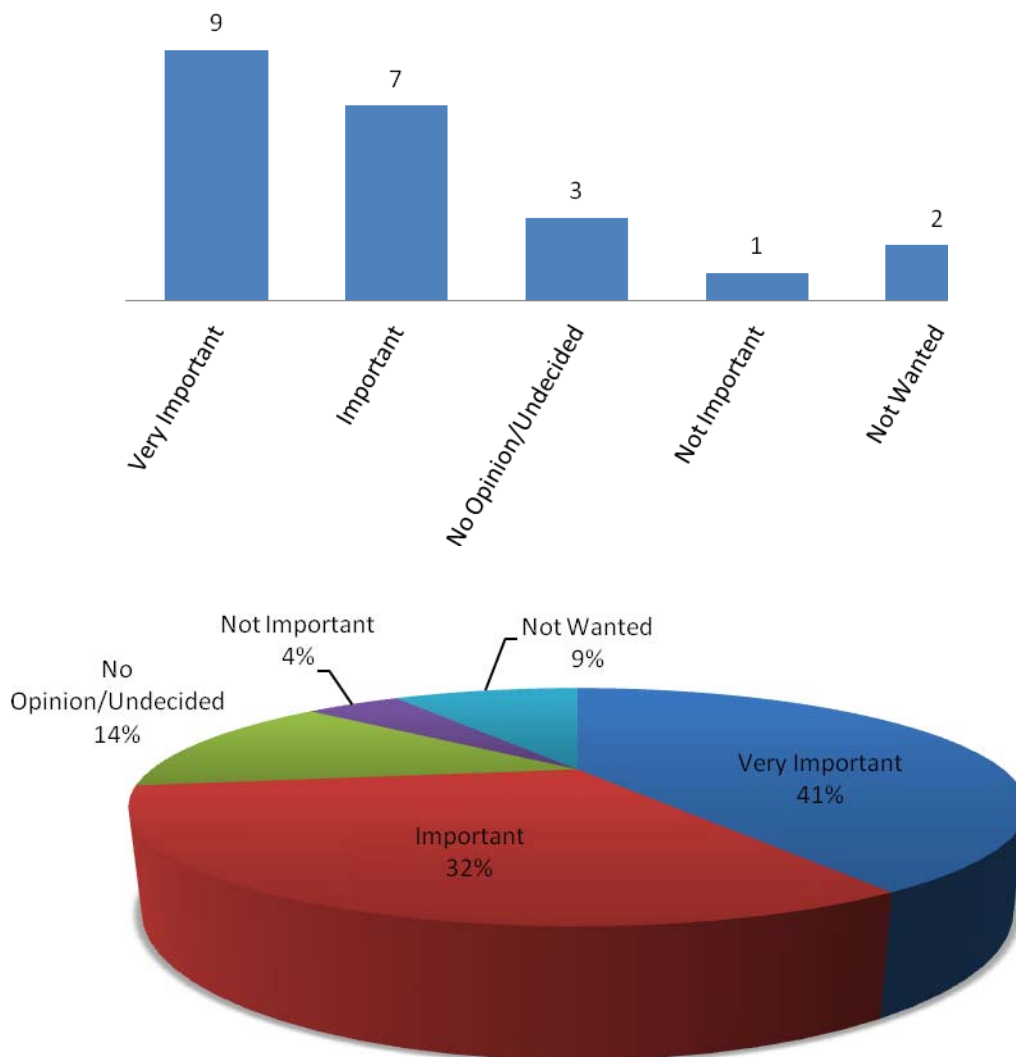
The majority of responses to the second question trend toward “important.” Eight out of twenty-two people indicated that they think this connection option is “very important”, and ten people indicated they think this connection option is “important.” One person had no opinion or was undecided about this option. Two people indicated that this connection option was “not important”, and one person indicated that the connection option was “not wanted.”



Question 3: An underpass pathway below the north end of the bridge (i.e., the Graehl Park end) is:

22 responses to this question

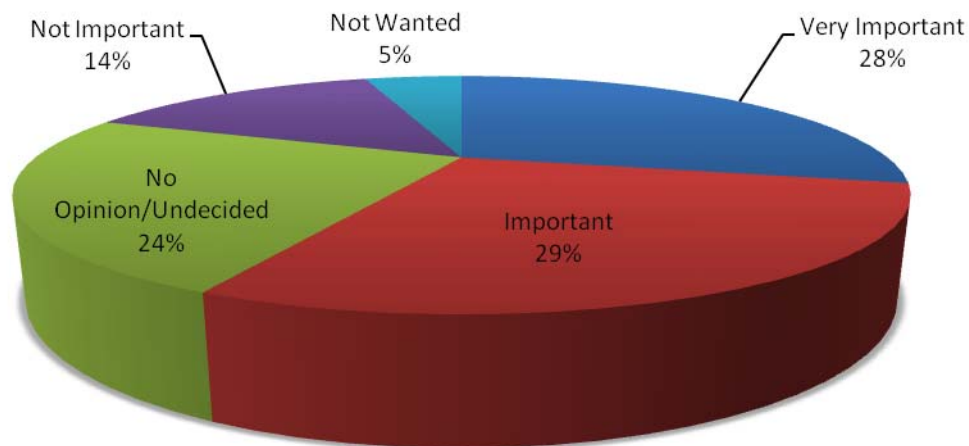
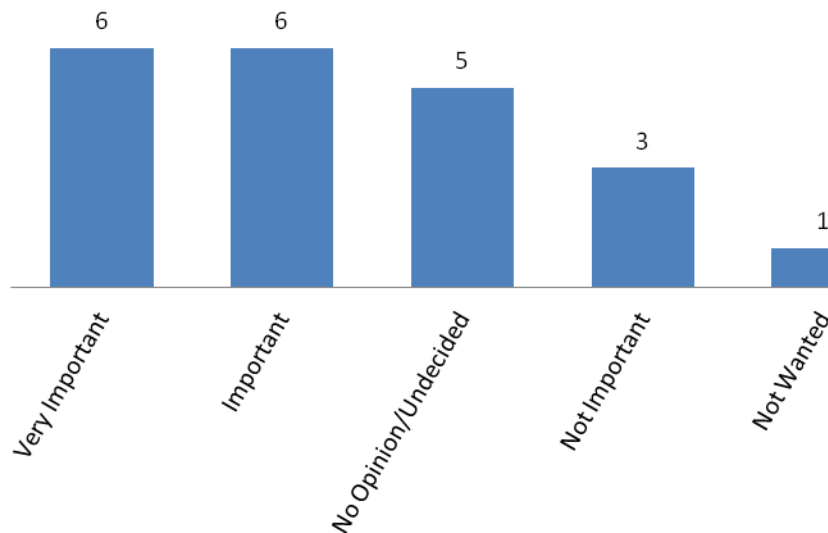
The majority of responses to the third question trend toward “very important.” Nine out of twenty-two people indicated that they think this connection option is “very important”, and seven people indicated they think this connection option is “important.” Three people had no opinion or were undecided about this option. One person indicated that this connection option was “not important”, and two people indicated that the connection option was “not wanted.”



Question 4: A connection from the west side of the underpass directly to the bridge sidewalk is:

21 responses to this question

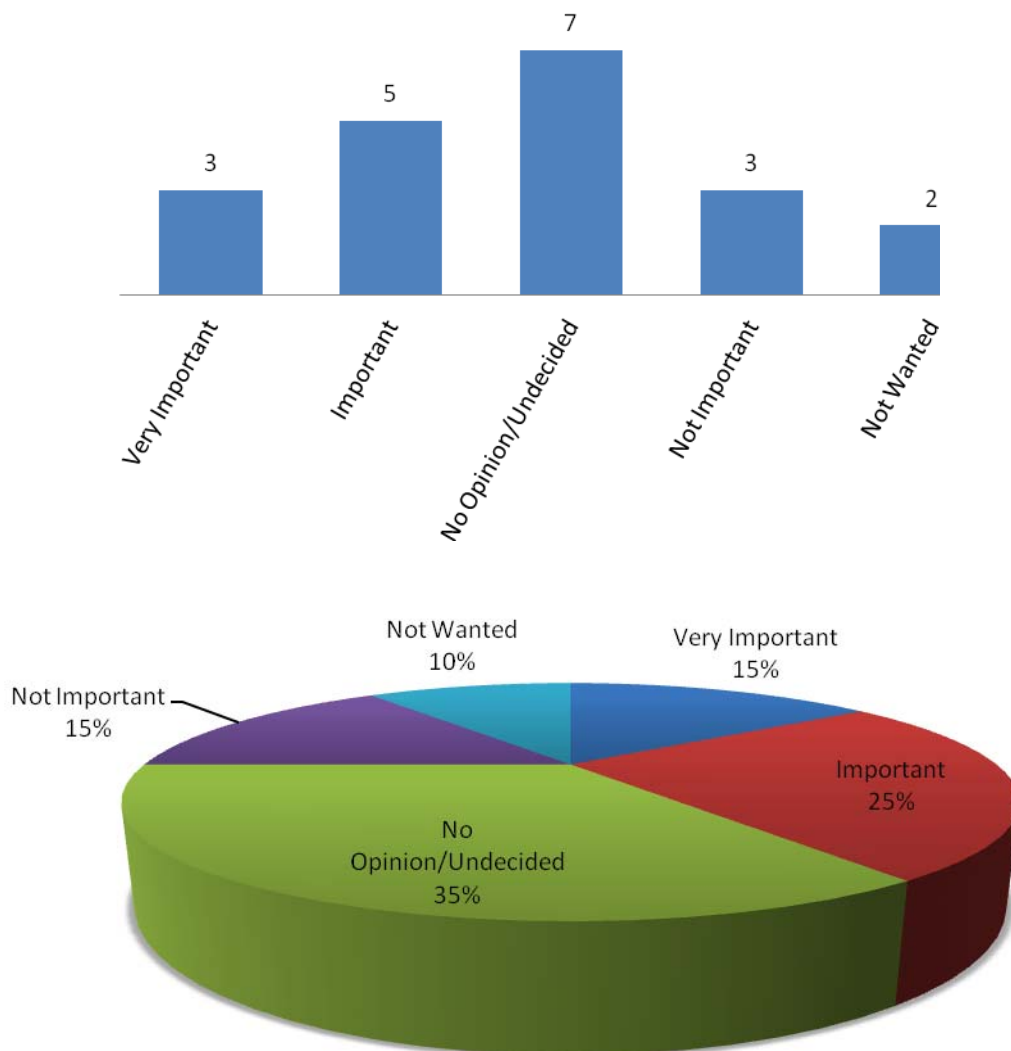
The comment form asked respondents to consider their answer to question three when answering question four. The majority of responses to the fourth question trend toward “very important.” Six out of twenty-one people indicated that they think this connection sub-option is “very important”, and six people indicated they think this connection sub-option is “important.” Five people had no opinion or were undecided about this sub-option. Three people indicated that this connection sub-option was “not important”, and one person indicated that the connection sub-option was “not wanted.” One person declined to answer this question.



Question 5: A sidewalk from the underpass along (west) Front Street, continuing to 2nd Street is:

20 responses to this question

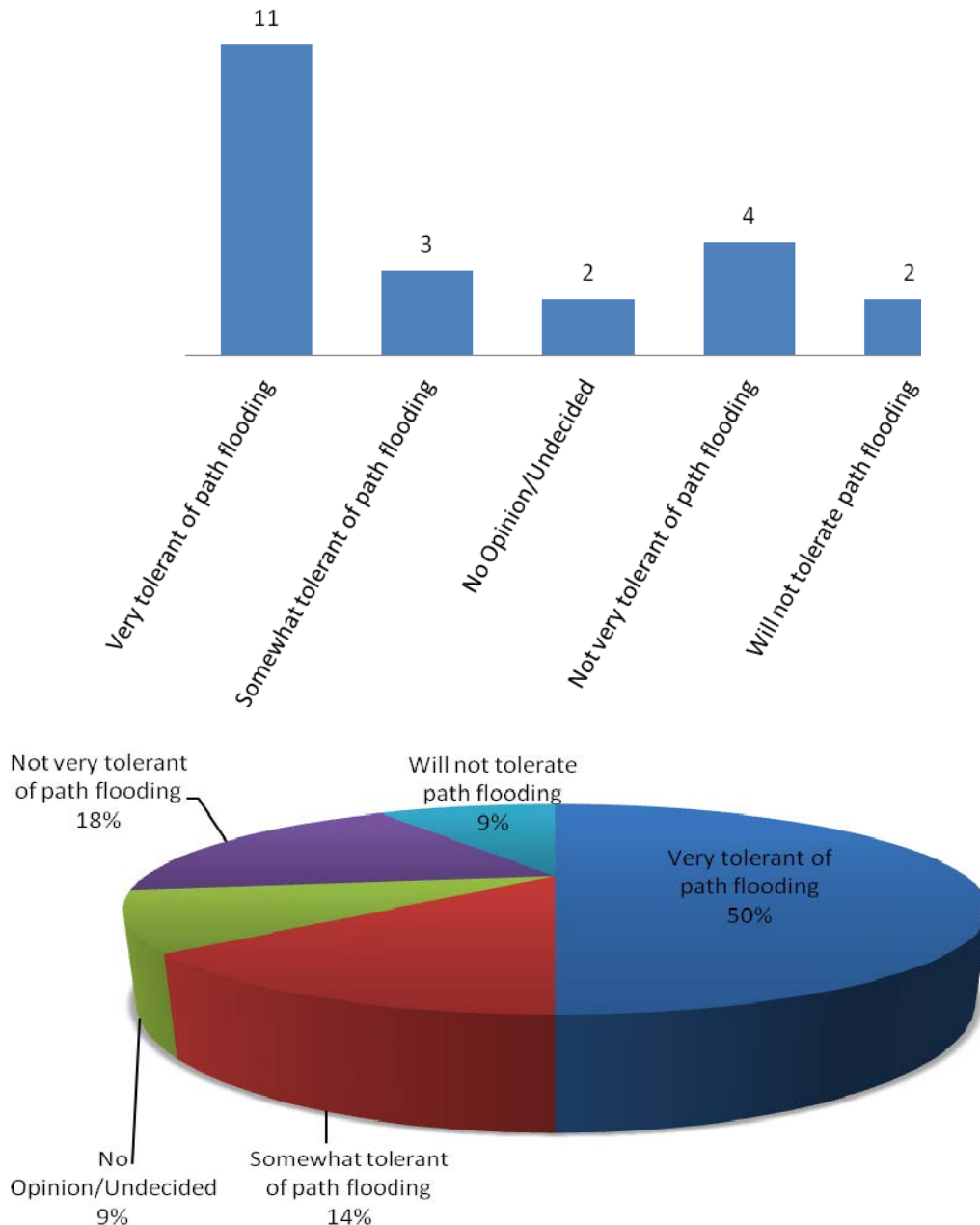
The comment form asked respondents to consider their answer to question three when answering question five. The majority of responses to the fifth question trend toward “No Opinion/Undecided.” Three out of twenty people indicated that they think this connection sub-option is “very important”, and five people indicated they think this connection sub-option is “important.” Seven people had no opinion or were undecided about this sub-option. Three people indicated that this connection sub-option was “not important”, and two people indicated that the connection sub-option was “not wanted.” Two people declined to answer this question.



Question 6: Given the relative costs, how tolerant are you toward flooding of the underpass pathway?

22 responses to this question

The comment form asked respondents to consider their answer to question three when answering question six. The majority of responses to the sixth question trend toward “very tolerant of path flooding.” Eleven out of twenty-two people indicated that they are “very tolerant of path flooding”, and three people indicated they are “somewhat tolerant of path flooding.” Two people had no opinion or were undecided about their tolerance toward path flooding. Four people indicated that they are “not very tolerant of path flooding”, and two people indicated that they “will not tolerate path flooding.”



Analysis of Results

In the first question, seventeen respondents indicated that they would use the facility at some time, and three indicated that they would not use the facility at all. One person was unsure or undecided. One person declined to answer the question.

- Seventeen out of twenty people, or 85.0% of those who indicated they definitively would or would not use the connection options, indicated they would use them.
- Seven out of twenty people, or 35.0% of those who indicated they definitively would or would not use the connection options, indicated they would use them either “very often” or “often”.
- Seven out of twenty people, or 35.0% of those who indicated they definitively would or would not use the connection options, indicated they would use them “occasionally.”
- Three out of twenty people, or 15.0% of those who indicated they definitively would or would not use the connection options, indicated they would not use them often.
- Three out of twenty people, or 15.0% of those who indicated they definitively would or would not use the connection options, indicated they would not use them at all.

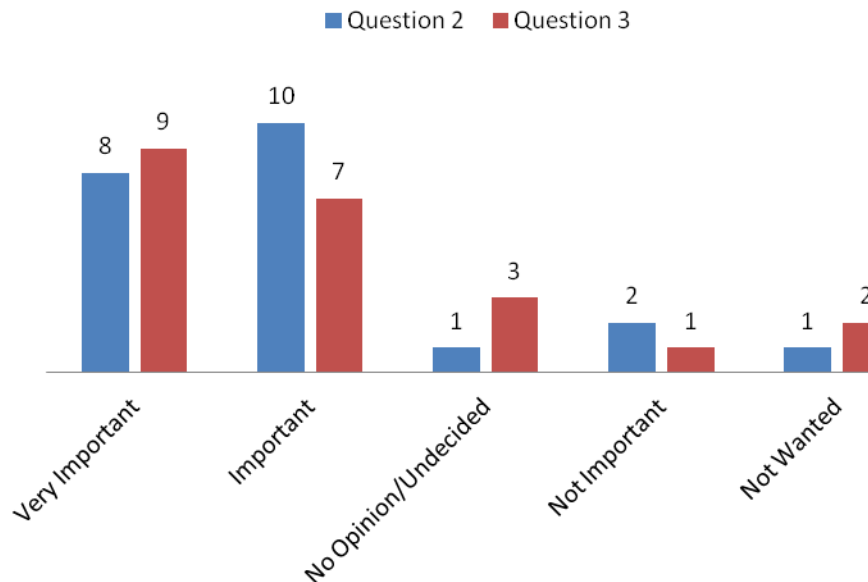
The second question asked respondents to consider how important a bicycle-friendly connection directly to the east side of the bridge is to them; answers trended toward “Important”, closely followed by “very important”.

- Eighteen out of twenty-two people, or 81.8%, indicated the connection option presented in question two was either “very important” or “important.”
 - Eight, or 36.4%, indicated the connection option was “very important.”
 - Ten, or 45.4%, indicated the connection option was “important.”
- One person indicated “no opinion/undecided.” (4.5%)
- Two people indicated the connection option was “not important” (9.0%), and
- One person indicated the connection option was “not wanted.” (4.5%)

The third question asked respondents to consider how important an underpass pathway below the north end of the bridge is to them; answers trended toward “Very Important”, closely followed by “important”.

- Sixteen out of twenty-two people, or 72.7%, indicated the connection option presented in question two was either “very important” or “important.”
 - Nine, or 40.9%, indicated the connection option was “very important.”
 - Seven, or 31.8%, indicated the connection option was “important.”
- Three people indicated “no opinion/undecided.” (13.6%)
- One person indicated the connection option was “not important” (4.5%), and
- Two people indicated the connection option was “not wanted.” (9.0%)

Comparison of Responses Questions 2 and 3



In general, the responses indicated that a connection option is “important” or “very important”. The one connection type that is favored over the other is less clear, and it is almost too close to call from the small sample. Looking at the expressed reasons for NOT wanting one or the other connection options may provide insight.

- One person indicated a response of “not wanted” for both Questions 2 and 3. This same person declined to answer the first question. In handwritten comments regarding Questions 3, 4 and 5, this was written:
“There are sexual assaults that occur on the underpass and they won’t be seen, maybe this more dangerous. Is this taken into consideration?”
- One person indicated a response of “not wanted” for Question 3. This same person indicated that the connection option in Question 2 was “important”. This person also indicated in Question 6, “will not tolerate path flooding”, and hand wrote this comment to clarify:
“Having a path under the bridge is not desirable – too many people (drunks) hang out there – out of sight, out of mind. Also flood risk is too high & it will be just like under Peger Rd. bridge. I’d prefer that the path connect in front of Bettisworth North – just take the path up to Wendell Bridge, and then only use the one existing underpass on the south side of the river.”

Note: the above comment directly contrasts against the hand written comment of another person which reads:

“As a property owner adjacent on N side – 1) prefer path under bridge on N side w/ramp on west side. 2) please consider a design that discourages use by public inebriates.”

- One person indicated a response of “not important” for Question 2. This same person indicated that the connection option in Question 3 was “important”. This person also indicated, for Question 1, that they would not use the connection options at all, and hand wrote this comment to clarify:
“Primarily only interested as a contractor interested in building this project.”
- One person indicated a response of “not important” for both Questions 2 and 3. This same person indicated, for Question 1, that they would not use the connection options at all. There were no handwritten comments clarifying the responses.

Other hand written comments (not otherwise identified above) specifically in support of either a direct connection option or an underpass pathway connection option include the following:

“Access under bridge is very important from ease & safety standpoint. Coming only from limited experience of area – I would think access of all means on east side is most important. More traffic – foot & bicycle.”

“I bicycle every Sunday in the summer. I would use it one day weekly. I would cross several times. Also events at Graehl Park I would ride my bike to those so would use the bike ramps. As far as the flooding – it doesn’t matter to me. If it’s flooded, I would just go another way.”

“- ramp access must be provided for/from north ~ for ADA, strollers, etc. ...
- most people travel from Graehl to downtown, bus stop @ Taco King – so I think locating the ramp/stair on the west side of Wendell Street is best – it forces people to cross under road, rather than over road = dangerous.
- underpass must be wide & not too low to perceive unsafe, dark, low, dangerous. –“

“1) Excellent to have all options going under the bridge – thanks!
2) For public service & safety and with an eye to the future growth of our community, it makes the best sense to provide the most convenient options for pedestrians & bicyclists – OPTION 3.
3) It is very important for pedestrian/bicycle safety NOT to connect the pathway from the bridge directly to the east side Front Street. That is a busy parking lot with constant backing vehicles = very unsafe. Please connect to the unfinished (today) pathway parallel to the river. *
*Note: we can seek ADA pathway upgrades in Graehl Park along the river!”

The fourth question asked respondents to consider their answer to Question 3, and to indicate the importance of a connection from the west side of the underpass directly to the bridge sidewalk. Answers trend toward “very important” or “important.”

- Twelve out of twenty-one people, or 57.1%, indicated the connection option presented in Question 4 was either “very important” or “important”, and were equally divided between those two answers.
- Five people, or 23.8%, indicated a response of “no opinion/unsure.”
- Three people, or 14.3%, indicated a response of “not important.”
- One person, or 4.8%, indicated a response of “not wanted.”

The fifth question asked respondents to consider their answer to Question 3, and to indicate the importance of a connection from the underpass along (west) Front Street, continuing to 2nd Street.

Answers trend toward “no opinion”, with a small edge toward “important” rather than “not important.”

- Three out of twenty people who answered the question, or 15.0%, indicated a response of “very important.”
- Five people, or 25.0%, indicated a response of “important.”
- Seven people, or 35.0%, indicated “no opinion/undecided” for the connection option presented in Question 5.
- Three people, or 15.0%, indicated a response of “not important.”
- Two people, or 10.0%, indicated a response of “not wanted.”

The sixth question asked respondents to consider their answer to Question 3, and to indicate their tolerance toward flooding of an underpass pathway, given relative cost consideration. Answers trend toward “very tolerant of path flooding.”

- Eleven out of twenty-two people, or 50.0%, indicated a response of “very tolerant of path flooding.”
- Three people, or 13.6%, indicated a response of “somewhat tolerant of path flooding.”
- Two people, or 9.1%, indicated “no opinion/undecided” for the connection option presented in Question 5.
- Four people, or 18.2%, indicated a response of “not very tolerant of path flooding.”
- Two people, or 9.1%, indicated a response of “will not tolerate path flooding.”

Conclusions

In consideration of direct question answers, hand written comments clarifying those answers, and all other hand written comments not otherwise provided in this document, we conclude the following:

- A new bicycle and pedestrian connection is desired and, if built, will be used.
- There are concerns regarding unwanted social behavior that presently occur under the existing bridge's north end, and fears that creating an underpass pathway through those areas may cause undesirable or unsafe encounters. While we cannot fix the social ills that create this particular condition, we cannot ignore it; we are encouraged to consider designs that discourage congregation under the bridge, mitigate undesired encounters with inebriates, and to consider designs that will promote a safe environment for all users.
- We are encouraged to consider a wider variety of origins/destinations of users, to consider and design the facility to take advantage of existing mass transit stops within or near the project extents.
- We are encouraged to consider a bridge design that does not hinder boat traffic on the river during high water events.
- We are encouraged to consider long term maintenance costs and winter safety.
- We are encouraged to consider creating or matching existing aesthetic theme of other bridges that cross the Chena River in the downtown area.
- If an underpass pathway is built, there is a high degree of tolerance toward flooding, and it was pointed out that an alternate route to the bridge is available (currently the only route) in the event that the underpass is flooded.
- We are encouraged to consider drainage on the bridge, and to provide a design that protects pedestrians on the bridge from water splashed by passing vehicles.