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City of Terrell Hosts Complete Street and Quiet Zones Open House

The Terrell City Council hosted a Complete Streets and Quiet Zones Open House on February 28, 2023. Over seventy members of the public attended, providing input on preliminary concepts for improving US80, Spur 226 and Railroad Crossings in the downtown area. Ian Dowl, Vice President of Community Engagement for JBJ Management is leading public involvement efforts for the City. Mr. Dowl opened the meeting by emphasizing the importance of citizens and local businesses participating in the process, “We are here to get your input, so let us know what you think.”

Kimley Horn is the engineering firm leading the technical work. Their efforts provided five options for US80 between Rockwall and Virginia. One option is essentially to make little or no changes to the pavement and sidewalks while only enhancing landscaping. The option providing the most space for pedestrians, redevelopment and additional parking provides for changing US80 into a one way couplet with eastbound traffic on Moore and westbound traffic on Nash, thereby creating a walkable downtown zone. Other options focused only on Moore Avenue and included variations with or without on-street parking or turn lanes. Attendees learned about and provided input on all the options.

Because of the proximity to the railroad tracks, the work also includes plans for a downtown Terrell Quiet Zone. Quiet Zones are a federally regulated program in which there are no train horns sounded. In order to create a Quiet Zone in downtown Terrell an extensive number of automobile and pedestrian safety measures need to be designed and installed at all of the railroad crossings in downtown Terrell. Preliminary schematics of these ideas were discussed. Final plans must be approved by TXDOT, UPRR and the federal government.

Raylan Smith, the City's Downtown Project Manager stated, "We had an amazing turnout last night and appreciate the feedback. We will work through community comments and continue to receive feedback through the end of the month. We look forward to bringing back more information in the near future."

City Manager Mike Sims provided an overview of funding for the proposals, noting that the initial planning and engineering funds were provided by the 2019 County Transportation Bond Program. Implementation funds for construction are hoped to come through a combination of funding from Terrell's Park and Downtown Improvement Corporation matched with Regional, State and Federal grant sources.

More information, including a video of the presentation from the open house, can be accessed through Terrell's website at cityofterrell.org.