



# **East Baltimore Transportation Report**

**May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018**

**Prepared by:**

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Patterson Park Neighborhood Association

# **Patterson Park Neighborhood Association 2018 East Baltimore Transportation Report**

## **Introduction**

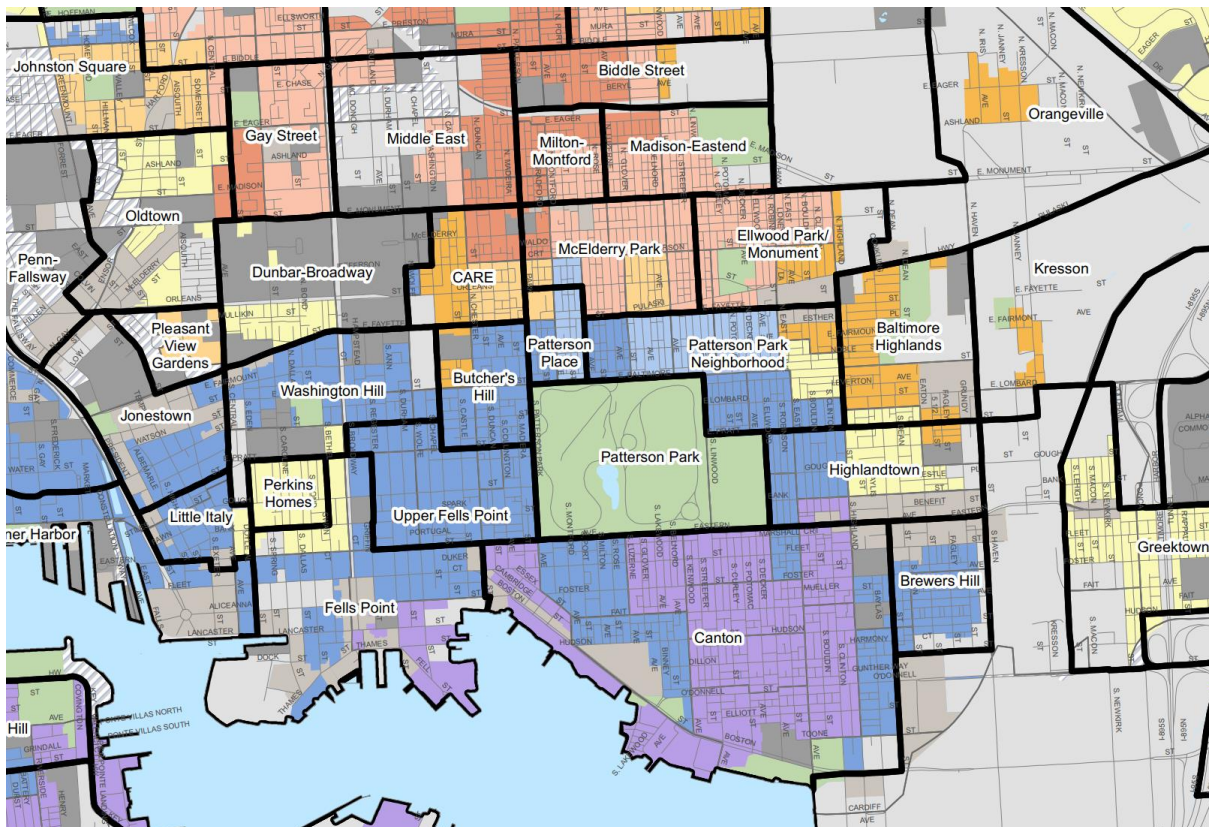
In May 2017, the Patterson Park Neighborhood Association (PPNA) conducted a transportation survey to better understand the issues facing our residents. After extensive outreach to solicit feedback both in person and electronically, our Transportation Committee analyzed the data and formulated several recommendations based on the issue identified and the potential solutions suggested by our community. While there are many issues and areas to address, **our analysis shows that the main goal of our neighborhood residents is to calm traffic and improve pedestrian, bike, and transit infrastructure along the Orleans Street and Fayette Street corridors.** To accomplish this goal, our committee has developed three recommendations for the Baltimore City Department of Transportation (DOT):

- 1) conduct a traffic study to evaluate a road diet for the Orleans Street corridor**
- 2) remove the peak hours parking restrictions on the north side of the Fayette Street corridor**
- 3) install bump-outs and bus bulbs at multiple intersections along the Fayette Street corridor**

We hope that the Baltimore City Department of Transportation will work with us to implement these solutions and ultimately help make both the Orleans and Fayette Street corridors safer and more vibrant for the communities of East Baltimore.

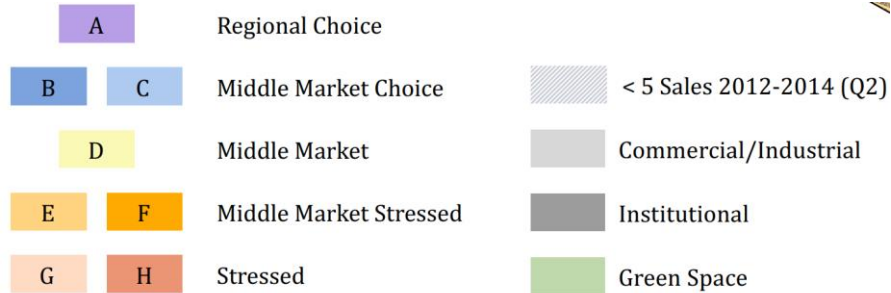
## **Background**

East Baltimore has seen many positive socio-economic trends over the past several years. The presence of Patterson Park and the Canton Waterfront has encouraged significant economic and real estate development in the surrounding neighborhoods. The housing market typology graphic below demonstrates this recent growth, mainly in the areas West, South, and East of the park:



*Figure 1: Housing Market Typology Map – East Baltimore*

**Patterson Park Neighborhood Association  
2018 East Baltimore Transportation Report**



Market Types	# BG	Median Sales Price 2012-2014Q2	Variance Sales Price 2012-2014Q2	Foreclosure 2012-2014Q2 by Residential Parcels	% Vacant Housing Units, 2014	% Owner Occupied, 2014	Permits (>\$10k) as a % of Residential Parcels, 2012-2014Q2	% Commercial & Industrial Land, 2014	% Vacant Residential Lots, 2014	Housing Units per Square Mile, 2014
A	48	\$ 340,685	0.43	1.42%	0.31%	68.12%	6.93%	13.99%	1.27%	6,228
B	82	\$ 192,635	0.47	2.76%	1.30%	40.62%	6.26%	19.98%	2.15%	10,536
C	97	\$ 115,482	0.48	5.57%	1.08%	68.88%	2.45%	8.85%	0.62%	4,712
D	97	\$ 72,714	0.61	5.61%	3.16%	46.68%	3.70%	13.13%	1.76%	5,460
E	92	\$ 39,485	0.73	6.38%	6.07%	49.49%	2.20%	6.23%	1.75%	7,308
F	35	\$ 37,858	0.71	5.92%	4.87%	41.03%	2.13%	54.58%	3.38%	3,752
G	98	\$ 19,517	0.86	4.71%	16.74%	34.11%	1.91%	15.75%	2.64%	8,816
H	60	\$ 11,775	0.97	2.91%	33.73%	21.40%	1.56%	15.13%	9.66%	9,969
Not Classified	44	NULL	NULL	3.65%	8.86%	16.81%	9.83%	26.90%	4.32%	5,778
Study Area	609	\$ 94,511	0.66	4.61%	8.27%	46.74%	3.24%	15.42%	2.63%	7,232

*Figure 2: Housing Market Typology Legend*

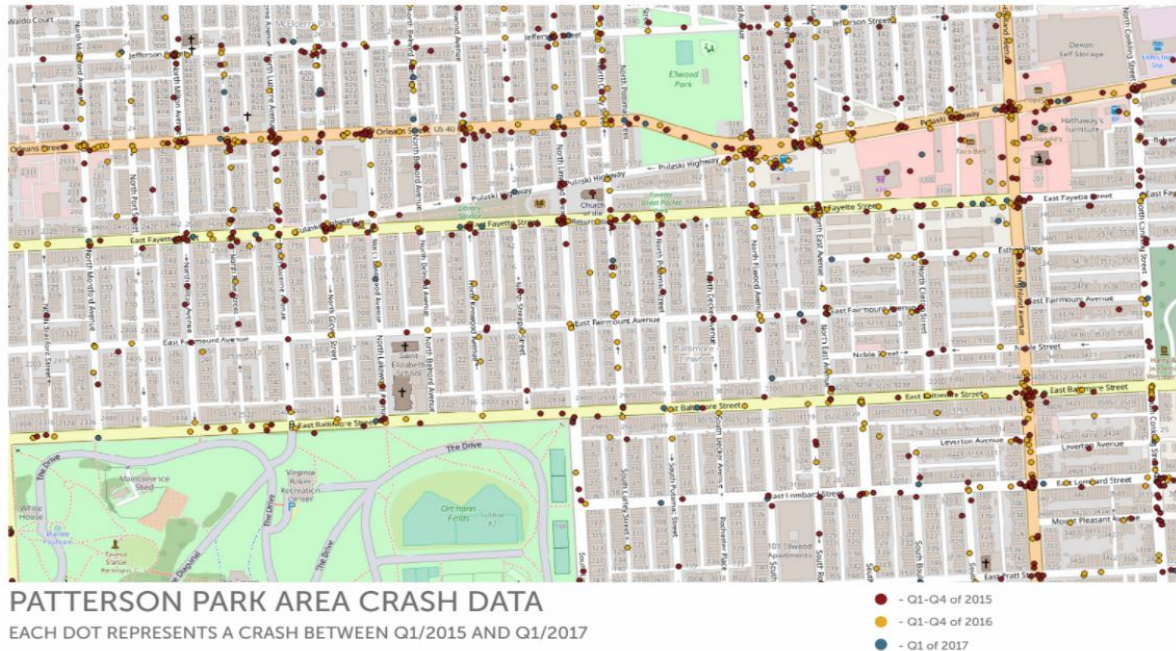
While some areas north of the park have recently seen positive development, the neighborhoods north of Fayette Street remain a highly stressed market, with a higher percentage of vacancies and lower median home values than areas below Fayette. One of the goals of our outreach was to determine what transportation issues may be leading to this lack of socio-economic growth for the neighborhoods north of the park, and what steps could be taken to encourage the recent growth in East Baltimore to continue to flow north.

The Orleans and Fayette Street corridors are key east/west routes in East Baltimore. Orleans Street, part of U.S. Route 40, is one of the main routes into Downtown Baltimore and passes directly through the Johns Hopkins Medical Center. It also runs directly adjacent to William Paca Elementary School and Ellwood Park, both key institutions for surrounding residents. The corridor serves as a key connector between the Patterson Park Neighborhood, McElderry Park, Ellwood Park, and the Johns Hopkins Hospital area. Fayette Street is of similar importance, running adjacent to Library Square and John Commodore Elementary School. Additionally, the street is home to both the Blue and Orange Baltimore Link Lines which connect the Hopkins Bayview area to the Social Security Administration in Woodlawn (Blue) and the West Baltimore Marc Station (Orange). Fayette Street is heavy with pedestrian traffic, including children traveling to nearby schools and neighborhood residents patronizing many of the small businesses along the corridor.

While both corridors are a key part of East Baltimore, there have been multiple issues over the years regarding speeding traffic, illegal truck traffic, and crashes with pedestrians. Our committee was able to pull crash data from the past 3 years and plot the accidents on a map of the neighborhood. The results are shown in the figure below:



## Patterson Park Neighborhood Association 2018 East Baltimore Transportation Report



*Figure 3: Crashes North of Patterson Park - 2014-2017*

The data clearly show a high number of accidents along the Orleans Street and Fayette Street corridors, especially around the Library Square area, Ellwood Park, and William Paca Elementary School. This finding aligns directly with residents' concerns for these corridors and is particularly concerning given the high number of children who use the facilities around Library Square and Ellwood Park. In addition to the safety issues identified above, the high-speed traffic makes these areas undesirable for potential homebuyers, driving residents out of East Baltimore and ultimately lowering the tax base for Baltimore City as a whole. The increased vacancies also contribute directly to increased crime and other socio-economic problems that negatively affect these neighborhoods. Thus, if we can improve the safety of these corridors for East Baltimore residents, we can also begin to address the larger economic and social issues currently facing our great city.

### Survey Methodology

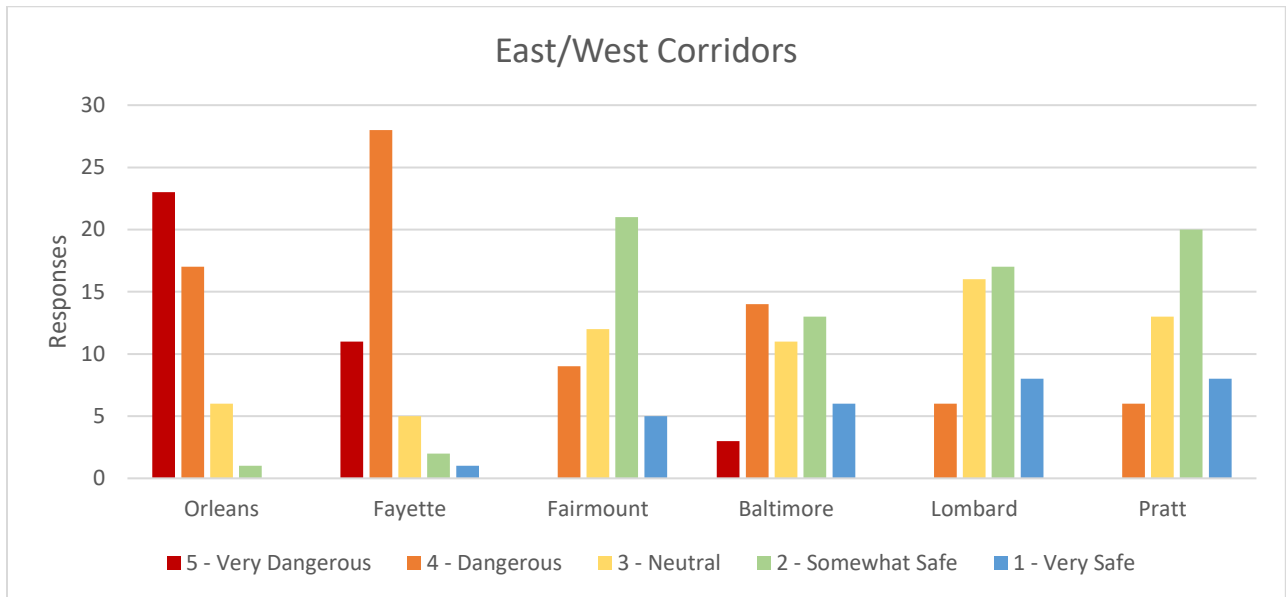
In hopes of addressing the socio-economic and safety issues noted above, the PPNA Transportation Committee developed a survey for the residents of Patterson Park, McEdlerry Park, Ellwood Park, C.A.R.E., Madison-Eastend, Butcher's Hill, Highlandtown, Middle East, and Milton-Montford. Given their proximity to the area of interest, our committee felt these neighborhoods would be able to provide key insights into the sharp divide between the housing typologies north of Patterson Park and identify key solutions that could address the issues identified. Our team developed an online survey that asked residents to rate the overall safety of multiple North/South and East/West corridors, identify their top transportation concerns, and suggest their most preferred solutions to these problems. We distributed the survey through multiple social media platforms, provided in-person surveys at community meetings, and spoke to residents about the main goals of this initiative. We also hosted transportation house meetings, in which a group of community members would gather at a neighbor's house to discuss their transportation concerns and brainstorm potential solutions. The survey remained open for one month, after which our team compiled the data in a centralized location and began our analysis, which consisted of both a quantitative analysis of the results and a qualitative review of the survey responses.

**Patterson Park Neighborhood Association  
2018 East Baltimore Transportation Report**

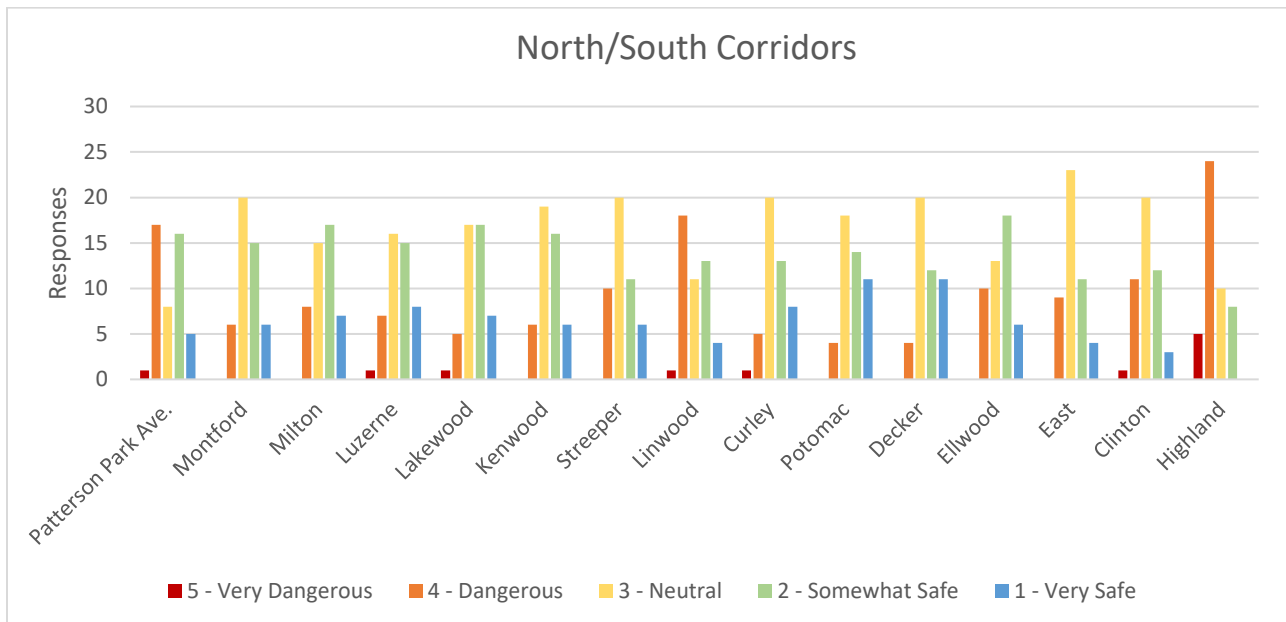
**Survey Results & Analysis**

*Corridor Analysis*

The initial goal of the survey was to determine which corridors in the neighborhood residents find dangerous and attempt to understand the root causes. To do this, we had residents provide a rating of 1-5 for several north/south and east/west corridors, with 1 being extremely safe and 5 being extremely dangerous. Once we determined which corridors were deemed dangerous, we began to look at the existing conditions of these corridors vs. safe corridors and analyze the key causes for the difference. Below are two graphs showing the results for the corridor ratings.



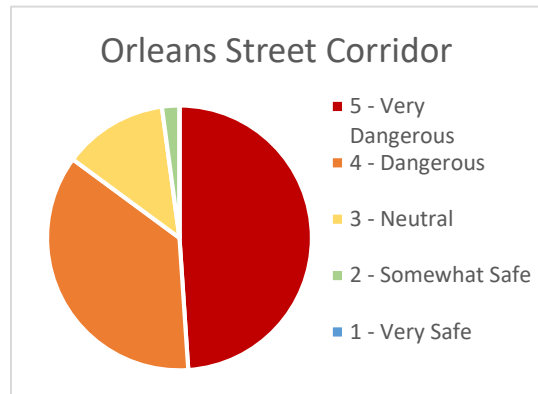
*Figure 4: East/West Corridor Safety Ratings*



*Figure 5: North/South Corridor Safety Ratings*

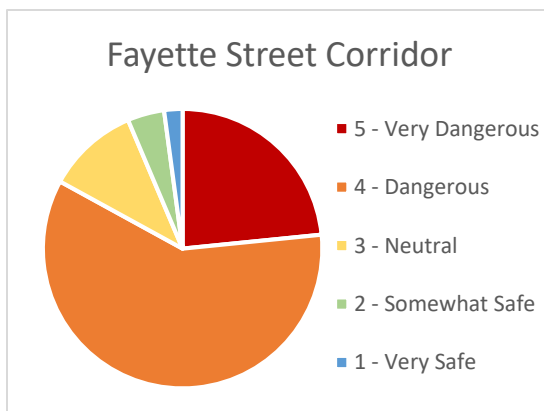
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2018 East Baltimore Transportation Report**

From the data above, it is clear that the most dangerous east/west corridors are Orleans Street and Fayette Street. Almost 75% of participants identified Orleans Street as a dangerous corridor, with over 50% classifying it as “Very Dangerous”. One respondent noted, “It’s basically a highway through a residential neighborhood. How can we expect families to live nearby when cars are speeding directly past your front door?”. The street design, two-lanes of traffic in each direction with no parking to buffer the sidewalk, offers pedestrians no protection from the high-speed vehicles. Traffic on Orleans typically moves at over 40MPH, a speed which causes pedestrian fatalities in 95% of accidents (as opposed to 45% for speeds of 30MPH and 5% for 20MPH). Additionally, this corridor is heavily traveled by pedestrians, including children walking to school, employees walking to Hopkins, and senior citizens running daily errands. While we will dive more into recommendations later in the report, it is clear that a road diet and significant traffic calming is needed to make this corridor safe for our neighborhood residents.



*Figure 6: Orleans Street Safety Analysis*

Fayette Street presents similar challenges to Orleans, with over 83% of residents classifying the corridor as dangerous, and 23% classifying it as “Very Dangerous”. One issue residents identified are the peak hour parking restrictions, which lead to high-speed traffic in the right lane directly adjacent to the sidewalk. This creates a dangerous situation for pedestrians and people waiting at the multiple bus stops along the Fayette Street corridor. Moreover, residents feel that the safety of the people living in East Baltimore is being compromised so commuters from outside Baltimore can drive faster through their neighborhood. “These commuters are typically not city residents, and it’s unfair to prioritize these non-taxpayers over the people who live here and want to see our neighborhood grow”, noted one resident. Removing the peak hours parking restrictions and implementing additional traffic calming measures would make the corridor safer, add new



*Figure 7: Fayette Street Safety Analysis*

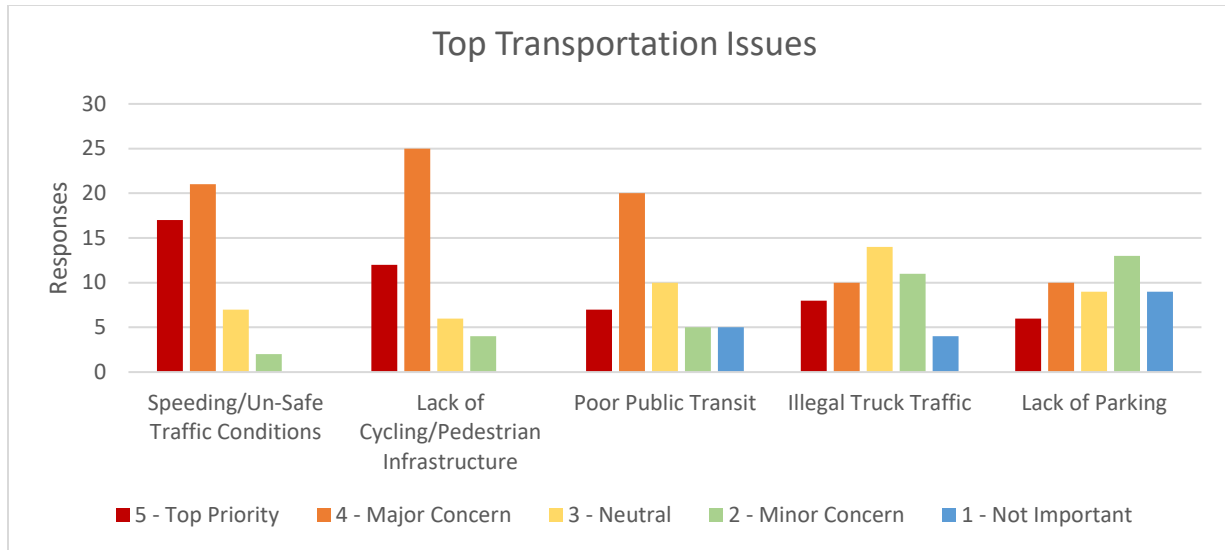
parking spaces for residents, improve the overall vitality of the corridor, and encourage long term economic development.

Unlike the east/west corridors, the north/south corridors were generally viewed as fairly safe by neighborhood residents, with Patterson Park Avenue and Highland Avenue being the two considered most dangerous. Because neither corridor was viewed as very dangerous by more than 10% of residents who responded, we chose to focus our analysis on the east/west corridors identified above. However, we still believe that traffic calming measures (bump-outs, improved crosswalks, road diets) and pedestrian infrastructure improvements should be implemented on Patterson Park Avenue and Highland Street to address the concerns of our residents.

*Transportation Issues & Desired Improvements Analysis*

The second portion of the survey focused on the major transportation issues residents were concerned about, regardless of location. The result of our analysis are captured in the graph below.

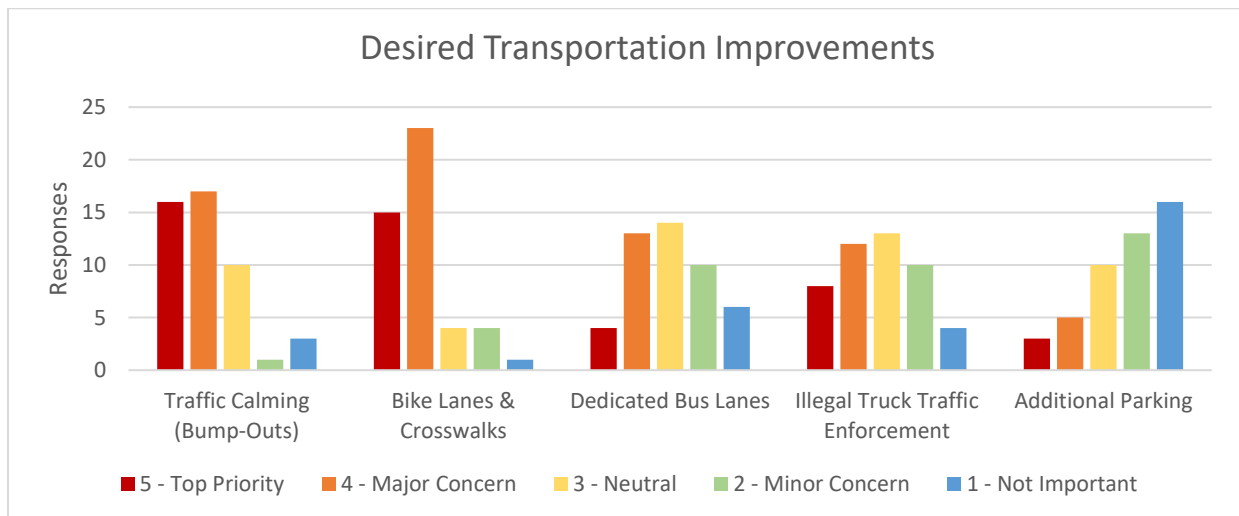
**Patterson Park Neighborhood Association  
2018 East Baltimore Transportation Report**



*Figure 8: Top Transportation Issues*

Looking at this graph, we can see that high-speed traffic is the largest concern among neighborhood residents. One respondent noted, “It seems that Baltimore City cares only about moving cars through our neighborhood as opposed to the people and families who actually live and pay taxes here.” Residents also noted the lack of adequate pedestrian infrastructure and poor public transit. While the Fayette corridor is home to the Blue and Orange bus lines, residents expressed concerns that busses must continually merge back into traffic from bus stops. Moreover, many residents felt un-safe waiting at bus stops during the morning rush hours, noting that the lack of parked cars on Fayette puts high-speed traffic too close to pedestrians. Regarding bike lanes, one resident noted that there is essentially no bike infrastructure north of Baltimore Street. “Fayette and Orleans are main routes into the city that bikers could potentially use, eliminating additional car traffic and quickening the commute for everyone. As constructed you could easily add bike lanes to Fayette and Orleans, though ideally these would be protected facilities to encourage family ridership.”

We also asked survey respondents to rank their most desired improvements given the issues noted above. The graph below captures the results:



*Figure 10: Desired Transportation Improvements*

**Patterson Park Neighborhood Association**  
**2018 East Baltimore Transportation Report**

Based on the top transportation issues identified, it is not surprising to see traffic calming as the highest priority for residents. Respondents noted multiple types of traffic calming measures they would like implemented, including road diets, concrete bump-outs, improved crosswalks, and the removal of peak hour parking restrictions. In addition to traffic calming, respondents also showed a strong desire for additional bike lanes along the Fayette, Orleans, and Patterson Park Avenue corridors. One resident commented, “Our neighborhood prospers when everyone feels safe travelling, regardless of which mode of transportation they choose. By prioritizing cycling and pedestrian infrastructure, we can reverse years of car-first planning that has made our neighborhood unsafe and negatively affected the vitality of our corridors.” While the other 3 improvements received relatively neutral responses, the problem of illegal truck traffic on the Fayette Street corridor was raised in many of the survey comments. Residents noted seeing cracks in their house walls and foundations as a result of the illegal traffic, and expressed great frustration at the lack of enforcement over the past several years. “If these trucks were properly cited and fined, the city would have more revenue to make some of the other transportation improvements noted in the survey”, noted one resident.

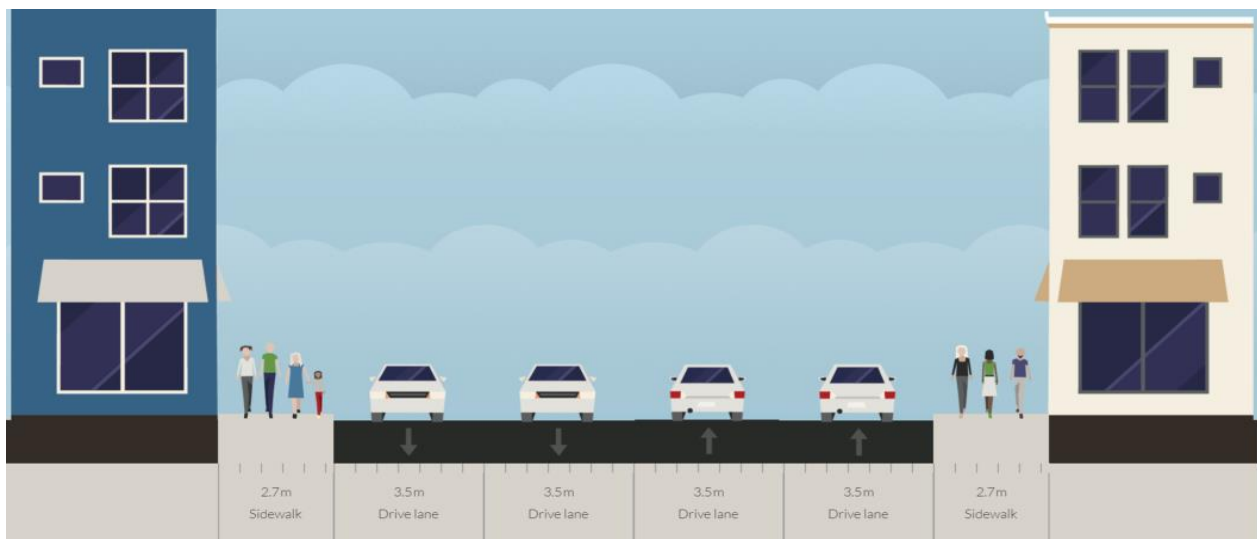
**Recommendations & Next Steps**

As our survey results and analysis show, there are major concerns from East Baltimore residents around high-speed traffic and a lack of pedestrian, cycling, and transit infrastructure on the Orleans Street and Fayette Street corridors. Combining our analysis with input from local transportation professionals, we have developed the following 3 recommendations to address these issues.

- **Recommendation #1 – Conduct a traffic study to evaluate a road diet for Orleans Street.**

Simply put, our residents feel that the current traffic configuration on Orleans street encourages high-speed traffic that makes residents unsafe and contributes to the surrounding neighborhood blight. While areas south of the park with slower one-way streets have seen incredible development over the past several years, areas north of the park have experienced less growth, and we feel Orleans Street is one of the main culprits. To address this issue, we would like the Baltimore City DOT to conduct a traffic study that examines the effect of reallocating one lane of traffic in each direction to parked vehicles and a protected bike lane.

To better visualize our proposed re-allocation of street space we would like studied, we have included a mock-up of existing and proposed street conditions for Orleans Street.



*Figure 11 – Existing Conditions @ Orleans Street Corridor*



**Patterson Park Neighborhood Association  
2018 East Baltimore Transportation Report**



*Figure 12 – Proposed Re-Allocation @ Orleans Street Corridor*

Our proposed design accomplishes multiple goals. First and foremost, it significantly increases pedestrian safety by creating a buffer of parked cars between traffic and pedestrians. The narrower lanes, while still wide enough to meet Baltimore City truck route standards, will help calm traffic and reduce the constant speeding in the corridor. Moreover, by decreasing the travel lane widths, we can accommodate both a protected bike lane and sidewalk tree pits, which addresses the other major issue of poor cycling and pedestrian infrastructure. Our proposed design essentially transforms the Orleans Street Corridor from an urban highway cutting through a neighborhood into a Complete Street that supports the varied transportation needs of nearby residents, creating a more livable environment for current and future residents in the process. Our hope is that the Baltimore City DOT will conduct a traffic study to provide more data on our proposed design and ultimately make our neighborhood and East Baltimore safer for community residents.

- **Recommendation #2 – Remove the peak hours parking restrictions on the north side of the Fayette Street corridor.**

Residents consistently noted that two-lanes of moving traffic created by the parking restrictions on Fayette Street create an unsafe environment for pedestrians, bikers, and public transit commuters. Cars often cut into the right lane to speed past slower moving traffic, creating an extremely dangerous condition for the hundreds of children walking to school or waiting for the next bus. Additionally, two lanes of moving traffic create a very dangerous commute for cyclists using Fayette Street. The same speeding cars noted above often beep aggressively at cyclists commuting to Hopkins and Downtown. Many of these bikers end up flocking to Baltimore Street, where the street design allows cars to safely pass bikers. By discouraging bikers from using our roads, we are ultimately encouraging more people to use cars and further congesting our city streets with inefficient single-occupancy vehicles.

Removing the peak hour parking restrictions will eliminate much of the speeding traffic that currently occurs along Fayette Street. The added buffer of parked cars between moving traffic and the sidewalk will create a much safer environment for the many pedestrians and cyclists who use the street. Pedestrian routes and bus stops will be much safer for the many children who use the corridor every day. Additionally, as traffic slows, the corridor will become more vibrant and desirable, ultimately

**Patterson Park Neighborhood Association  
2018 East Baltimore Transportation Report**

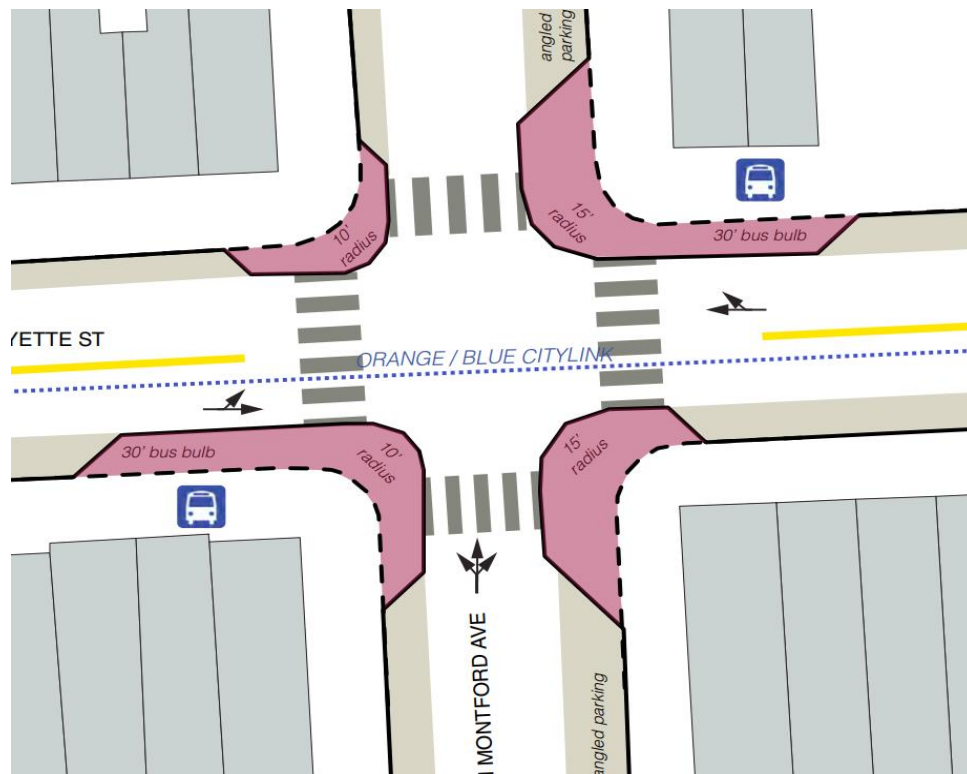
encouraging outside investment and improving the socio-economic gap that exists among the north and south sides of Fayette Street. Given these benefits, we feel that the Baltimore City DOT should immediately begin removing the peak hour side parking restrictions on the north side of the Fayette Street corridor.

- **Recommendation #3 – Install bump-outs (concrete or flex posts) and bus bulbs at multiple intersections along the Fayette Street corridor.**

Once the peak hour parking restrictions are removed, bump-outs can be installed to slow traffic, improve pedestrian safety, and improve travel times for public transit by eliminating merge time for buses. For intersections without a bus stop, we recommend installing standard bump-outs and improved crosswalks. Below is a mock-up showing the existing conditions and new bump-outs at an existing intersection, along with a plan view of a similar installation.



*Figure 13 – Existing Conditions and Proposed Bumpouts @ Fayette/Montford*

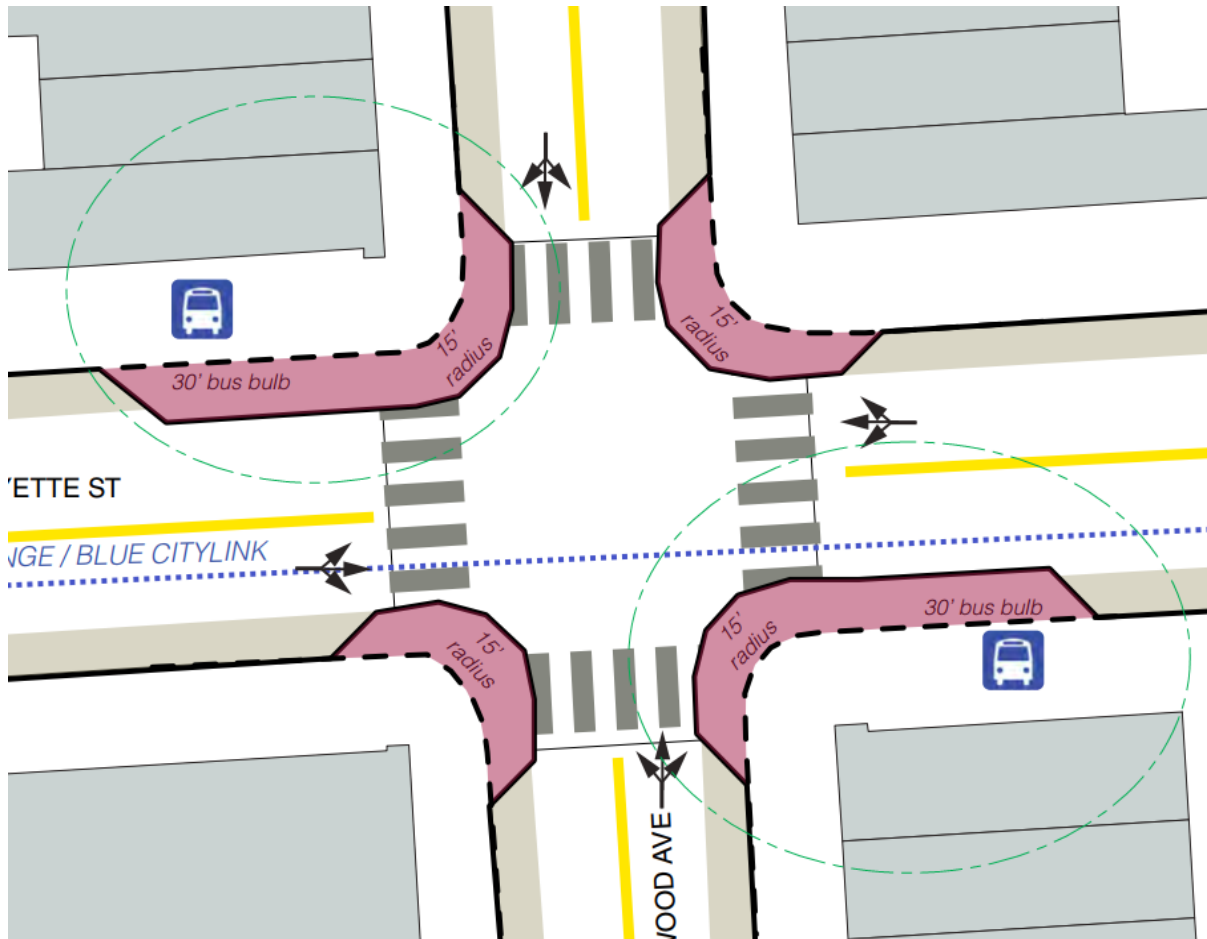


*Figure 14 – Concept Plan of Bumpouts & Bus Bulbs @ Fayette/Montford*

**Patterson Park Neighborhood Association  
2018 East Baltimore Transportation Report**

As you can see, these bump-outs decrease the crossing time for pedestrians in all directions while increasing their visibility to oncoming drivers. Moreover, they narrow the travel lanes which calms traffic and reduces speeding, increasing the overall safety of the corridor. The bump-outs shown above are concrete, but simpler designs using flexposts, planters, and street art can be installed for a fraction of the cost.

For intersections with bus stops, we recommend installing bus bulbs, which are bump-outs with an extended boarding area for buses. A sample concept plan is shown below:



*Figure 15 – Concept Plan for Bus Bulbs @ Fayette/Ellwood*

The bus bulbs provide the same pedestrian safety and traffic calming advantages of a normal bump-out. However, the expanded boarding space allows for buses to accept passengers while remaining in the travel lane. This eliminates the wasted time buses spend merging back into traffic and drastically improves overall travel times for buses in corridors with multiple stops like Fayette Street. Better travel times eliminate delays and encourage more people to use public transportation, which ultimately decreases the number of cars on the road and reduces traffic congestion. Moreover, the benefits will be twofold for Fayette Street given that both the Blue and Orange CityLink Bus Lines use the corridor as their main East Baltimore thoroughfare. Since public transit has been shown by multiple studies to be a driver of external investment and economic development, adding these bulbs will contribute to our long-term goal of improving the socio-economic status and neighborhood vitality north of the park and of East Baltimore as a whole.

**Patterson Park Neighborhood Association  
2018 East Baltimore Transportation Report**

**Conclusion and Next Steps**

Based on the data and analysis presented in this report, residents of East Baltimore have significant concerns regarding the high traffic speeds along the Orleans and Fayette Street corridors. Community members feel that pedestrian safety and adequate public transportation have been sacrificed to accommodate high-speed automobile traffic primarily for suburban commuters. Moreover, these high-speed corridors are detrimental to the neighborhood vitality, public health, and long-term sustainability that encourage community growth and development.

Given these results, our neighborhood is requesting that our Baltimore City Department of Transportation initiate steps to calm traffic, improve multi-modal transportation, and strengthen pedestrian infrastructure along the Orleans and Fayette Street corridors. Implementing these changes will not only make our neighborhood safer for residents, it will provide numerous additional benefits including improved public health, increased economic activity, and activated community spaces that enhance the vitality of East Baltimore. Ultimately, these changes will help address the socio-economic divides that currently separate various communities, strengthening East Baltimore as a whole and creating vibrant, safe, and healthy neighborhoods for future generations.

**Acknowledgments & Contact Information**

This report would have not been possible without the input and feedback from the many residents of East Baltimore who took the time to share their concerns with our committee. We would like to extend our deepest gratitude to the residents of East Baltimore, including community members from McElderry Park, Ellwood Park, C.A.R.E., Butchers Hill, Patterson Park Neighborhood, Highlandtown, Madison-Eastend, Middle East, and Milton-Montford. All of the analysis, recommendations, and eventual changes resulting from this report are reflections of these citizens and their desire to continually improve their community.

We would also like to thank the neighborhood stakeholders, businesses, and organizations who supported our Transportation Report. These stakeholders have an interest in increasing neighborhood vitality and providing support for multi-modal transportation, which have both been shown to increase economic activity. The services these businesses and organizations provide to our neighborhood are a key component of our community, and we appreciate their willingness to support our survey.

Finally, we would like to thank our elected representatives and city organizations who provided input and technical expertise for this report. Their support was critical to the community outreach and final recommendations developed in this report.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to email the PPNA Transportation Committee at [transportation@pattersonparkneighbors.org](mailto:transportation@pattersonparkneighbors.org) or reach out to our Chair Collin Hayward at 410-440-8489. We appreciate all feedback and will respond to all inquiries right away. Thank you!

