

# Commercial-Vista Corridor Plan

## Connecting People and Places



## Overview



### Introduction

The purpose of the Commercial-Vista Corridor Plan is to develop a detailed street design and land use plan that can be adopted and advanced as capital improvement projects for engineering and construction.

The Commercial-Vista corridor, the focus of this project, is a distinct area of the City of Salem where auto-oriented commercial development evolved adjacent to unique residential neighborhoods. This commercial district provides a mix of neighborhood services as well as businesses with citywide appeal.

Commercial Street SE and Liberty Road S are main transportation corridors connecting South Salem to downtown. The roadways converge in the study area, creating a complex street network that limits accessibility for all modes of travel. Improvements are needed to better accommodate all modes of travel and serve the area businesses, customers, and neighborhoods.

#### Key Issue:

The study area was developed at a time when little thought was given to non-auto travel. Much of the area consists of commercial properties with a mix of parcel sizes and numerous driveways with few connections between them. This lack of an inviting, attractive circulation system limits future opportunities.

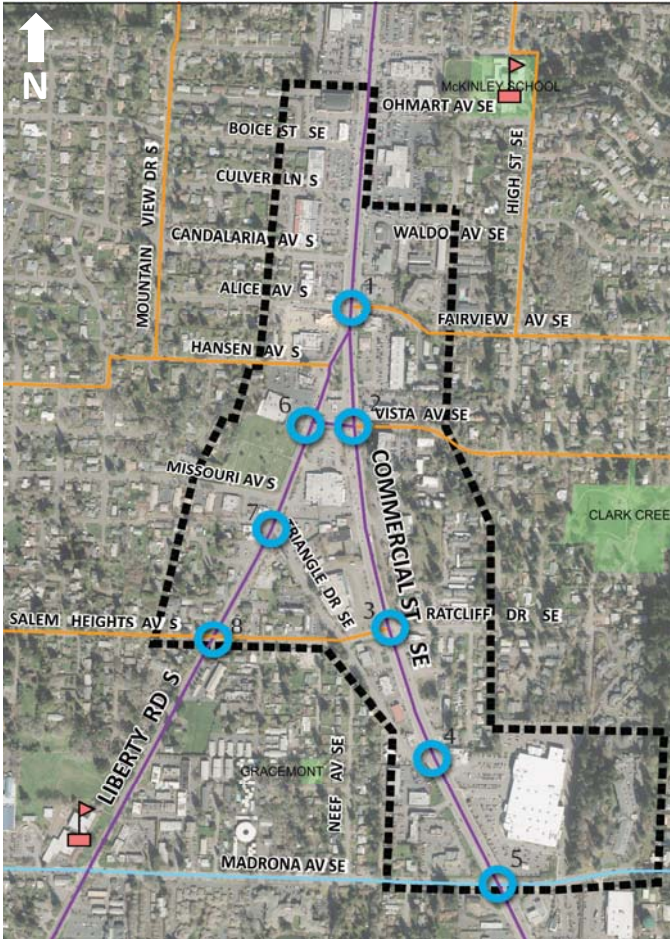
### Project Process

As shown in the project process graphic below, public review and feedback helped guide the corridor and was gathered at three different times throughout the project. The plan is now in its final phase, adoption.



## Existing and Future Conditions

Existing transportation facilities and travel conditions in the study area (see figure below) were evaluated to establish a baseline for existing operations and to assess potential design alternatives and improvements.



Study Area

### Existing Travel Conditions Summary

Commercial Street SE and Liberty Road S are key transportation corridors connecting South Salem to downtown. These roads converge in the project area which creates a complex street configuration that requires careful planning to accommodate all modes of travel.

The project study area also includes several arterial, collector, and local roadway facilities, most of which are not currently constructed to City standards. Several lack curb, gutter and sidewalks along both sides of the roadway.

The existing transportation conditions vary within the study area and are documented in the *Transportation Operations and Safety Analysis Memorandum and Transportation Conditions Booklet* and are summarized below:

- ⇒ **Pedestrian and bicycle facilities** were found to be in poor condition at four study intersections. Segments in poor condition for pedestrian facilities include Liberty Road S, Salem Heights Avenue S/SE, Triangle Drive SE, and Neef Avenue SE. Key segments with poor bicycle facilities include Liberty Road S and Madrona Avenue SE.



The Commercial-Liberty “Split” makes it difficult for bikes to continue south on Commercial Street SE



Many roads within the project study area do not have sidewalks such as this stretch of Neef Avenue SE

- ⇒ **Collision analysis** shows a total of nine pedestrian collisions and five bicycle collisions (2009-2013).
- ⇒ **Critical crash rates** for Commercial Street SE and Liberty Road S are 13% and 19% greater than statewide averages for similar facilities, respectively. (2009-2013)
- ⇒ **Transit facilities** operated by Salem-Keizer Transit include two fixed bus routes on Commercial Street SE and another on Madrona Avenue SE.
- ⇒ **Intersection operations** analysis indicated that the Commercial Street SE/Ratcliff Drive SE intersection failed in both peak periods under existing conditions due to high delays on Ratcliff Drive SE.

## Future Travel Conditions Summary

The results of the analysis of future (2035) travel conditions are summarized below:

- ⇒ The Commercial Street SE/Ratcliff Drive SE unsignalized intersection and the Commercial St SE/Madrona Ave SE intersection are projected to fail to meet City standards. Improvements for both intersections are included in the City's Transportation System Plan (TSP).
- ⇒ The future vision of Salem-Keizer Transit proposes changes that are going to increase service reliability along Commercial Street SE and Madrona Avenue SE starting in 2017.
- ⇒ Future pedestrian and bicycle projects can be seen in Tables 12 and 13 of the *Transportation Operations and Safety Analysis* memorandum.

## Urban Design and Land Use Opportunities

The urban design tools and land use opportunities for the study area that are discussed in the *Street Design and Land Use Alternatives Memorandum* are summarized below.

Recommendations for the following design elements were evaluated for each roadway alternative: Development of alternatives considered existing right-of-way conditions and the applicable cross-sections from the TSP, as well as project objectives for motor vehicle mobility, walkability, bikeability, access to transit, and streetscape qualities.

- ⇒ Pedestrian Zone
- ⇒ Furnishing Zone
- ⇒ Street Lighting
- ⇒ Travel and Turn Lanes
- ⇒ Bike Facilities
- ⇒ On-Street Parking
- ⇒ Medians
- ⇒ Curb Extensions

## Tier 1 Facility Alternatives

The objective of the Tier 1, or, "initial" screening was to identify the initial set of alternative improvements in the Study Area for evaluation and refinement, and solicit public input on those alternatives.

Based on an evaluation of the existing network, facility alternatives were proposed in order to

address potential improvements for each study area roadway .

## Summary of Tier 1 Facility Alternatives by Street

The facility alternatives address potential changes to travel lanes, bicycle facilities and the sidewalk corridor. An overview of the Tier 1 alternatives is provided below.

### Commercial Street SE

- ⇒ Alternative 1: Enhanced Bicycle Facilities
- ⇒ Alternative 2: Enhanced Pedestrian Facilities

### Liberty Road S

- ⇒ Alternative 3A: Multiuse Path
- ⇒ Alternative 3B: Liberty Road Reroute
- ⇒ Alternative 4: Major Arterial TSP Standard

### Salem Heights Avenue SE

- ⇒ Alternative 5: Collector "B" TSP Standard
- ⇒ Alternative 6: Parallel Parking on Both Sides

### Triangle Drive SE

- ⇒ Alternative 7: Local TSP Standard
- ⇒ Alternative 8A: Angled Parking
- ⇒ Alternative 8B: Two-Side Parallel Parking

## Public Input and Initial Screening

The initial (Tier 1) screening evaluated community priorities and identified high level tradeoffs. It also included a qualitative assessment based on criteria and scoring methodology identified in the *Transportation Operations and Safety Analysis Memorandum*.

### Public Input

The project team met with neighborhood associations and the project Technical and Stakeholder Advisory Committees, conducted a Public Workshop and posted an online survey to solicit feedback on conceptual land use and street designs for the project area.



Public Workshop #2

Public feedback highlights regarding the Tier 1 facility design alternatives are provided below:

- ⇒ **Alternative 1** - Buffered Bike Lanes was clearly preferred for Commercial Street SE.
- ⇒ **Alternative 4** - Major Arterial TSP Standard was the preferred design for Liberty Road S. However, there was also a strong desire for more near-term improvements to accommodate bicycles (Alternative 3A).
- ⇒ Concern was expressed regarding the impact of **Alternative 3B** - Northbound Liberty Road S Reroute on adjacent businesses and properties.
- ⇒ A modified **Alternative 6** with parallel parking on both sides was viewed positively for Salem Heights Avenue S/SE .
- ⇒ **Alternative 8A** - Adjacent businesses expressed concern regarding the potential loss of parking on Triangle Drive.

### Tier 1 Evaluation Criteria Screening

Evaluation criteria were created to aid in decision making and are identified in the *Evaluation Criteria and Scoring Memorandum*. Eleven criteria were established within three goal categories:

- ⇒ Access and mobility
- ⇒ Economic benefit
- ⇒ Provides achievable solutions

The following alternatives scored the lowest and were thus, eliminated:

- ⇒ Commercial Street SE—Alternative 2: Enhanced Pedestrian Corridor
- ⇒ Liberty Road S—Alternative 3B: Northbound Liberty Road Reroute
- ⇒ Triangle Drive—Alternative 8B: Two-Side Parallel Parking

### Advanced Tier 2 Screening

Tier 2 screening involved a more rigorous evaluation of the facility design alternatives, including traffic analysis, multimodal measures, and economic conditions examination.

Detailed information on the traffic and multimodal analysis can be found in the *Tier 2 Screening Assessment Memorandum*.

### Economic Analysis Highlights

Detailed information about the economic analysis is provided in the *Economic Analysis Memorandum*.

- ⇒ Generally , the study area is healthy with a lot of economic activity currently taking place.
- ⇒ Several properties are for sale or recently sold
- ⇒ New construction is leased and healthy
- ⇒ Parking is highly utilized during peak times

### Challenges to Redevelopment

- ⇒ Some properties are not very deep
- ⇒ Expectations of property value by owners may limit short-term development
- ⇒ Remodels will be more feasible than tear downs in the short term
- ⇒ Parking needs will limit denser development types

### Triangle Drive SE Holds the Greatest Opportunity

- ⇒ Land assembly of atypical tax lots would help overcome challenges
- ⇒ Potential to reorient business toward Triangle Drive SE for better pedestrian atmosphere and accessibility

The alternatives were scored using the Evaluation Criteria established in the *Evaluation Criteria Memorandum* and additional Tier 2 criteria:

- ⇒ Planning-Level Cost Estimates
- ⇒ Traffic Operations
- ⇒ Supports Economic Findings
- ⇒ Enhanced Pedestrian Crossings

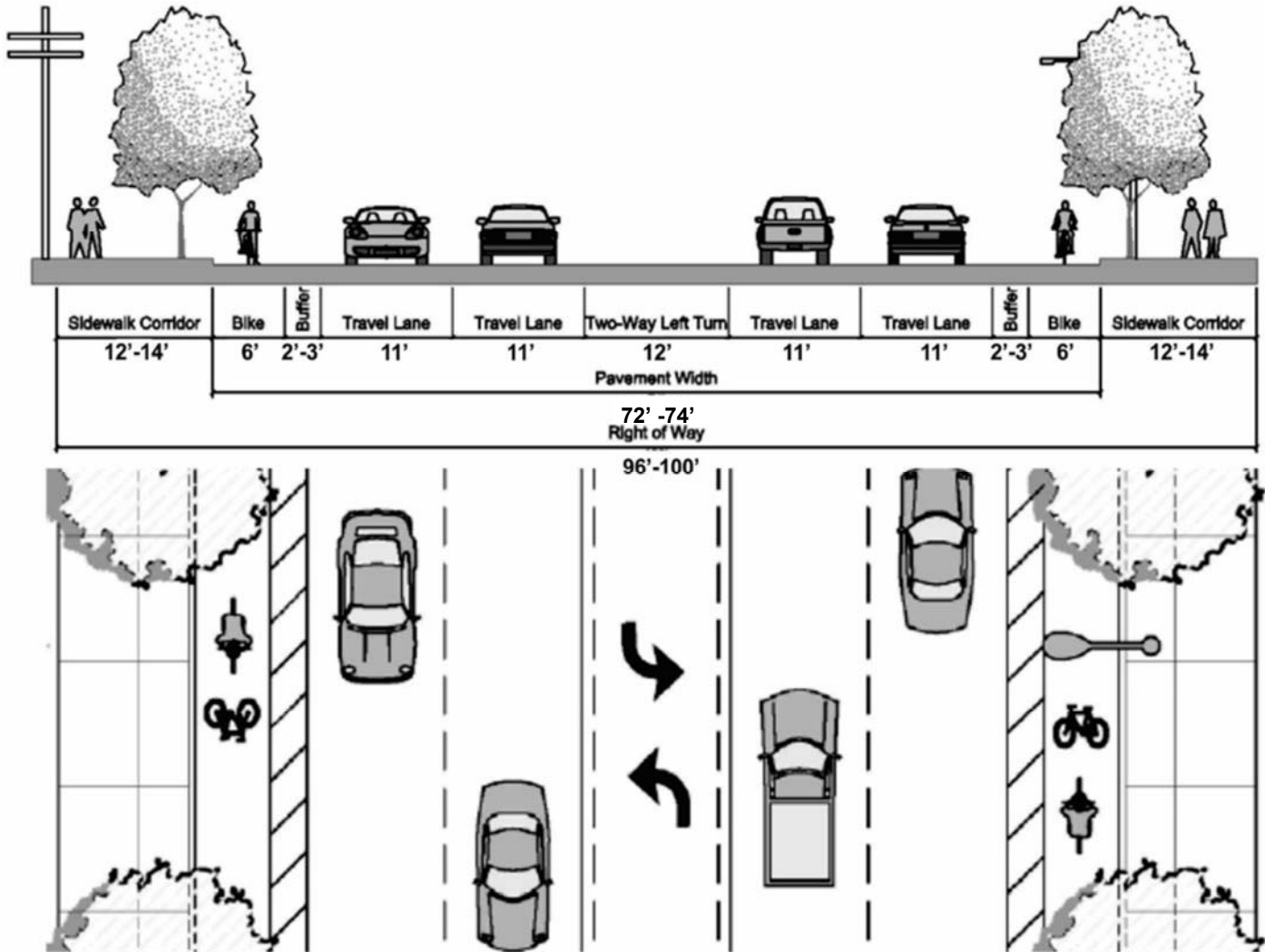
The additional Tier 2 evaluation criteria were combined with the previously scored Tier 1 evaluation criteria to form the final scoring of each alternative.

### Preferred Facility Alternatives

The preferred alternatives for each street, having scored the highest in the Tier 2 screening, are shown in the following diagrams.

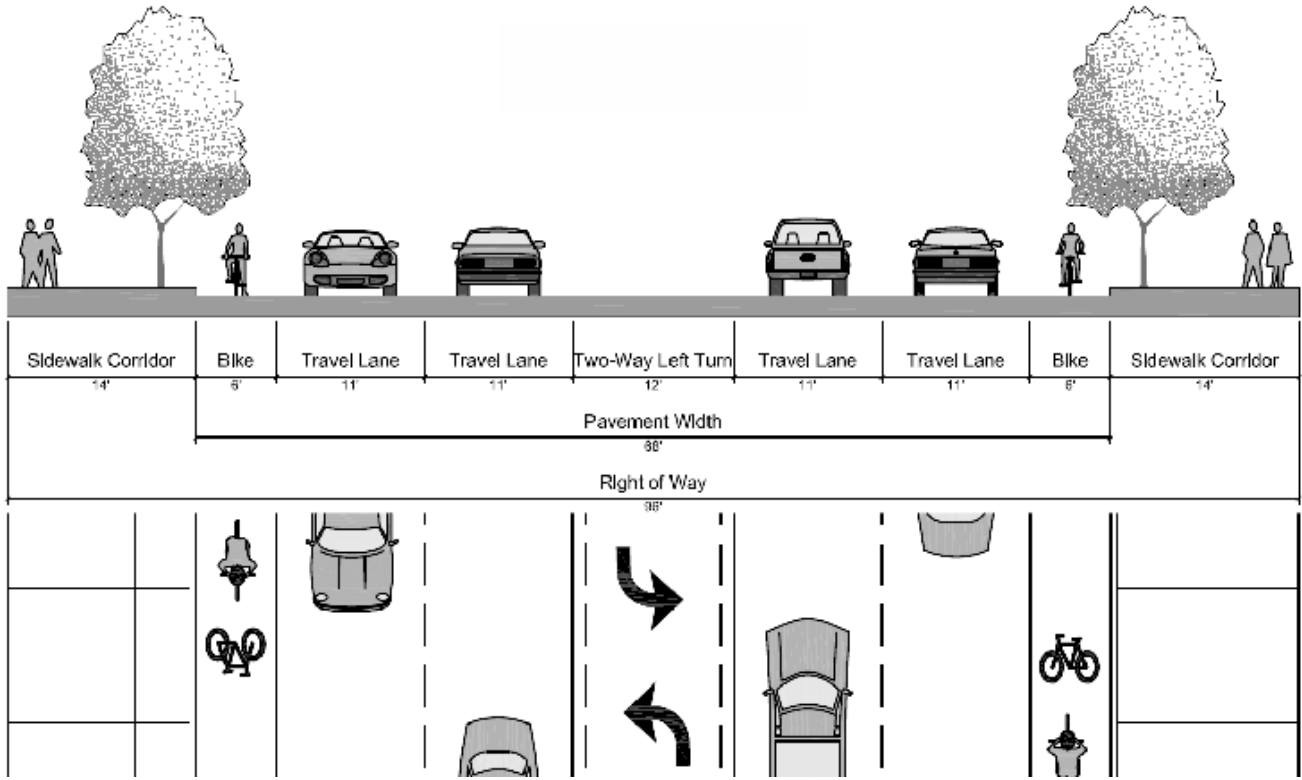
Note that Alternative 5 on Salem Heights Avenue was selected as the preferred facility alternative over the previously mentioned Alternative 6. This is because Alternative 5 provides better bike connectivity.

**Commercial Street SE**  
Alternative 1: Enhanced Bicycle Facilities

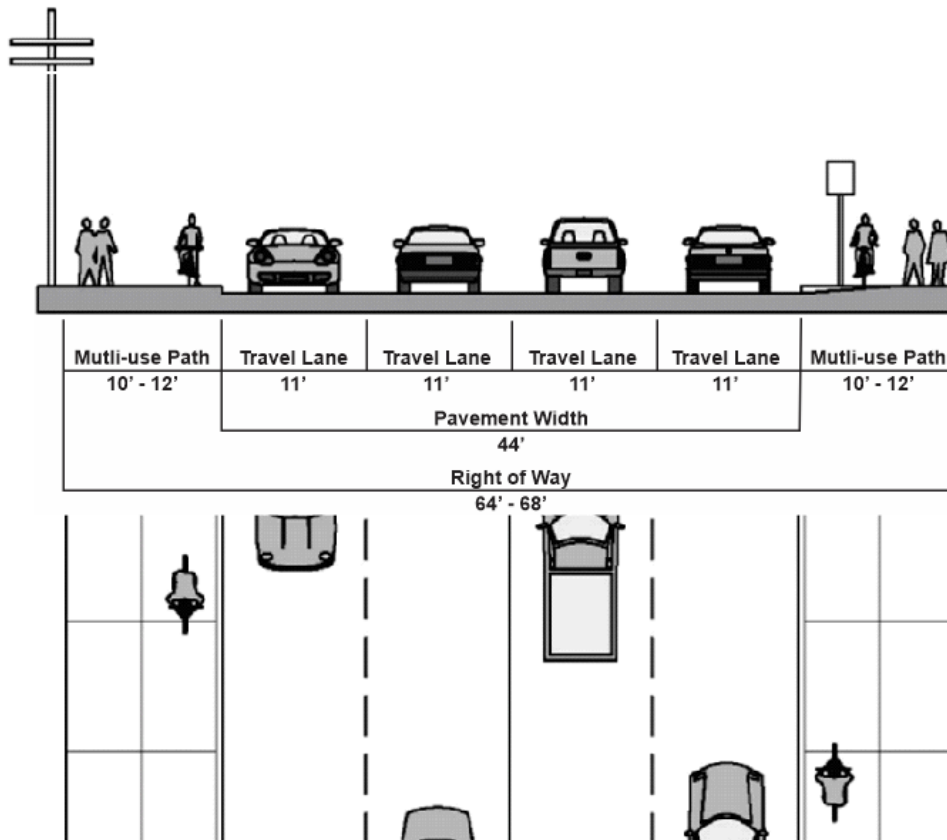


## Liberty Road S

### Alternative 4: Major Arterial TSP Standard (Long Term)

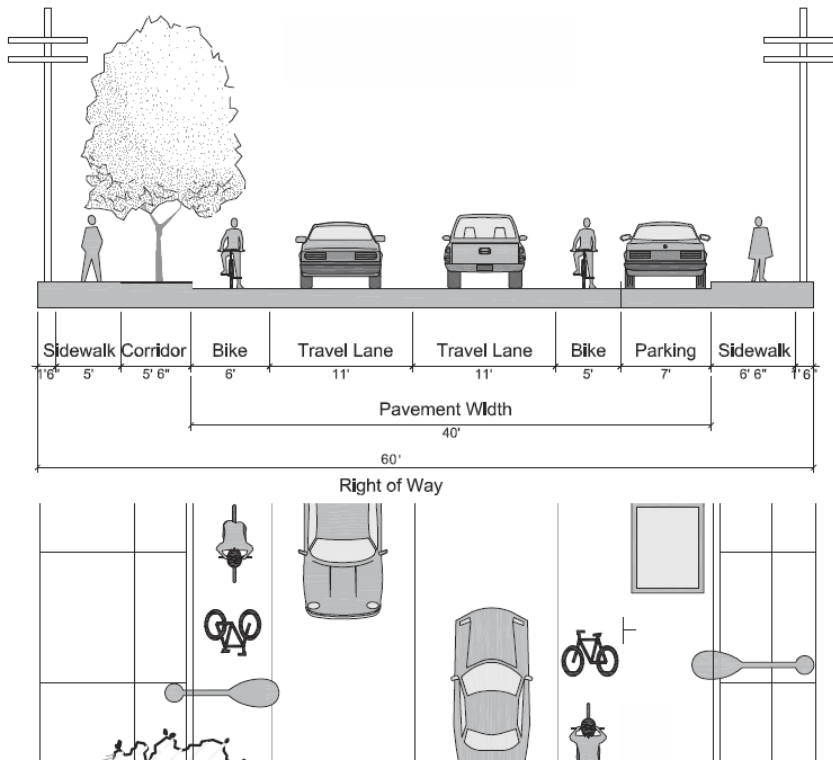


### Alternative 3A: Multiuse Path (Short Term)



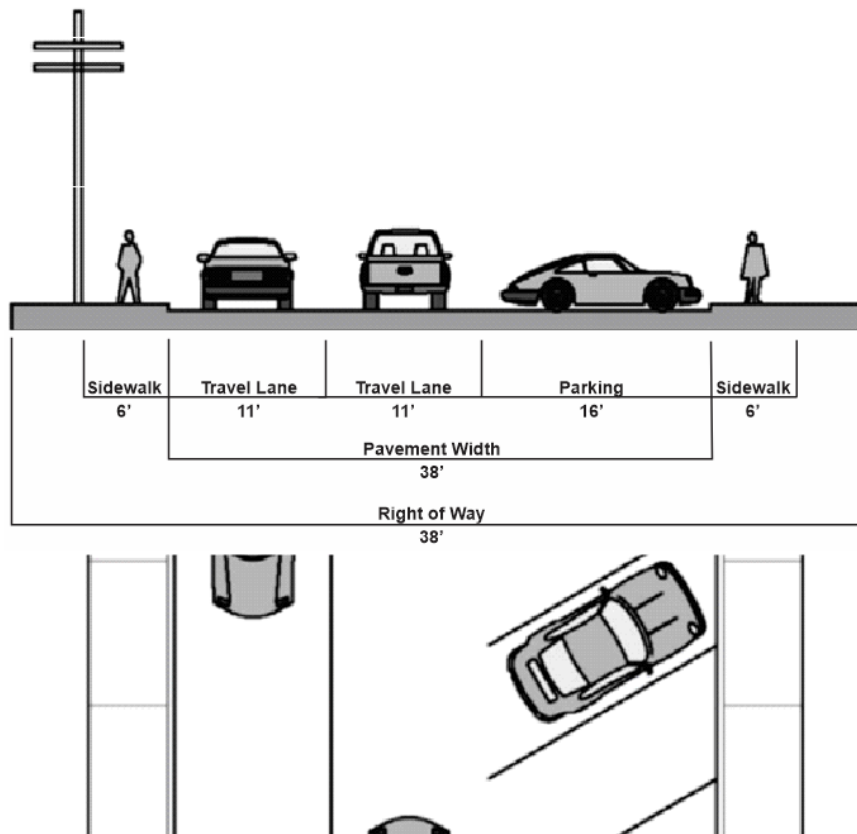
## Salem Heights Avenue SE

### Alternative 5: Collector "B" TSP Standard



## Triangle Drive SE

### Alternative 8A: Angled Parking



## Implementation Phasing and Planning Level Cost-Estimates

Preferred alternatives that could potentially be implemented in phases are summarized in the table below. Planning-level cost estimates were developed for each of the advanced alternatives and are also shown in the table below. All costs shown are planning-level estimates in 2015 dollars and are subject to change. Pedestrian crossing treatments and bicycle accommodations at the Commercial Street SE - Liberty Road S "Split" could be constructed separately and in advance of corridor projects.

Corridor Segment	Short-Term	Long-Term	Estimated Cost
Commercial Street SE	Re-stripe or overlay road surface to narrow travel lanes and add buffered bike lanes	Complete the design by widening the pedestrian corridor by moving curbs and adding streetscape elements	Short-Term: \$240,000  Long-Term: \$4.2 Million
Liberty Road S*	Add a multi-use path to the existing corridor	Reconstruct road to Salem's Major Arterial standard	Short-Term \$1.6 Million  Long-Term: \$3.9 Million
Salem Heights Avenue SE	Reconstruction to the City's Collector B standard could be implemented as redevelopment occurs or as funding sources are identified		\$1.4 Million
Triangle Drive SE	Redevelopment and addition of angle parking could be implemented as redevelopment occurs or as funding sources are identified		\$1.5 Million

\* This estimate is for the study area portion of Liberty Road S. Additional improvements are needed to Liberty Road S extending south to Browning Avenue S.

### Pedestrian Crossing Treatments

Wide cross sections along Commercial Street SE and long expanses between signalized intersections on both Commercial Street SE and Liberty Road S create a difficult environment for pedestrians to safely and efficiently travel to and from land uses and transit stops in the area.

Four locations for pedestrian crossing treatments were identified to help enhance pedestrian crossings:

- ⇒ **Commercial Street SE/Waldo Avenue SE**
- ⇒ **Commercial Street SE between Vista Avenue SE and Ratcliff Drive SE**
- ⇒ **Commercial Street SE/Triangle Drive SE**
- ⇒ **Liberty Road S/Missouri Avenue S**

The first three pedestrian crossing locations are across Commercial Street SE and involve a pedestrian refuge median, striped crosswalk markings, and a rectangular rapid flashing beacon (RRFB) that is pedestrian-activated and requires vehicles to yield to pedestrians when the yellow lights are flashing.

The fourth crossing location is along Liberty Road S and does not include a median in the short term due to the lack of a center left turn lane.

More information on the recommended pedestrian crossing treatments can be seen in the *Recommended Project Design and Land Use Booklet*.

### Commercial Street SE/Ratcliff Drive SE Signalized Intersection

This unsignalized intersection fails to meet the City of Salem's operating standards due to traffic delays on Ratcliff Drive SE. A signal at this location would ensure that motor vehicles on Ratcliff Drive SE would have a signal phase and would also provide a signalized pedestrian crossing that would help support pedestrian safety and mobility as well as support neighborhood access on the corridor.

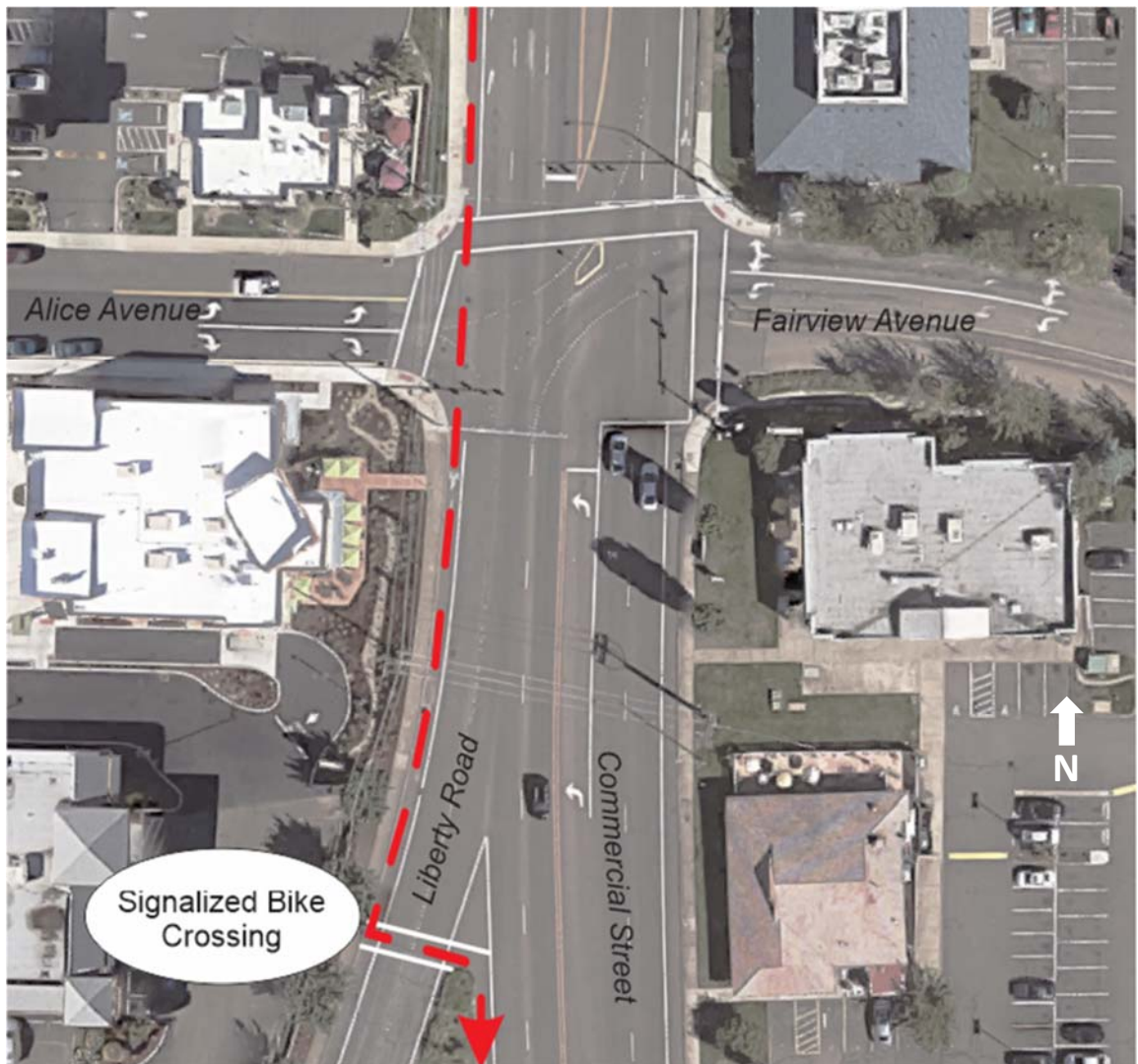
A new signal at this location will have a slight impact to the PM peak hour progression of northbound traffic along Commercial Street SE due to the existing traffic signal spacing.



## Bicycle Accommodations at the Commercial Street SE—Liberty Road S “Split”

It is currently difficult for southbound bicyclists to continue along Commercial Street SE due to the barrier of the Commercial Street SE-Liberty Road S “split,” which requires bicyclists to cross two lanes of uncontrolled vehicle traffic just south of the Commercial Street SE/Alice Avenue S intersection. The recommended solution is discussed below and illustrated in the picture to the right.

This option would include southbound bicyclists traveling along Liberty Road S through the Commercial Street



*Bicycle Accommodations at the Commercial Street SE—Liberty Road S “Split”*

SE/Alice Avenue S/Fairview Avenue SE intersection for a short distance until reaching a bicycle signal that directs bicyclists across Liberty Road S just north of the island between the “split.”

Bicyclists would activate this signal and cross during the newly added protected northbound left turning phase at the Commercial Street SE/Alice Avenue S/Fairview Avenue SE intersection. Once the bicyclists are given the right of way to cross, they can continue traveling south onto Commercial Street SE.

### Policy Recommendations

In addition to physical improvements to the streetscape, development regulations could be modified to help direct future development in this and similar commercial corridors to promote economic vitality, safety, and visual character. Such modifications to the City’s development code or the Salem TSP are outlined in the *Recommended Project Design and Land Use Booklet*.

## Resources

This overview together with the completed technical memorandums and booklets make up the entirety of the Commercial—Vista Corridor Plan. Below is a list of technical memorandums and booklets included in the plan.

⇒ ***Transportation Conditions Booklet*** (November, 2014)

Identifies existing and forecast conditions and summarizes operational and safety deficiencies.

⇒ ***Transportation Operations and Safety Analysis Technical Memorandum*** (December 3, 2014)

A technical evaluation of both the existing and future physical and operational conditions of Commercial Street SE and Liberty Road S.

⇒ ***Urban Design, Streetscape, and Land Use Booklet*** (December, 2014)

Documents existing conditions and opportunities as well as illustrates different approaches to street design and land use.

⇒ ***Evaluation Criteria Memorandum*** (February 5, 2015)

Identifies qualitative and quantitative criteria that will be used to evaluate alternatives.

⇒ ***Revised Street Design and Land Use Alternatives Technical Memorandum*** (March 31, 2015)

Summarizes street design and land use alternatives for the Commercial-Vista Corridor project area.

⇒ ***Economic Analysis Technical Memorandum*** (May 15, 2015)

Summarizes baseline conditions and public input received to date through an economic development lens.

⇒ ***Facility Design and Land Use Alternatives Technical Memorandum*** (June 8, 2015)

Documents the preferred facility alternatives for each roadway.

⇒ ***Recommended Project Design and Land Use Options Booklet*** (July 6, 2016)

Conveys the community's desires for upgraded street designs and related urban design components of Commercial Street, Triangle Drive, Liberty Road S, and Salem Heights Avenue.

⇒ ***Tier 2 Screening Assessment Technical Memorandum*** (July 13, 2015)

Summarizes the traffic analysis comparisons of the advanced alternatives.