

# revive285 top end Citizen Input Summary

Issue 3 – Preliminary Solutions (August 2007 through November 2007)

## INTRODUCTION

The Citizen Input Summary is designed to provide the project team with an overview of the issues, concerns, and suggestions provided by the public during separate phases of the project. It provides information that must be taken into account before the project team makes key decisions. During this portion of the Preliminary Solutions phase of the project, tools were geared toward receiving input on identifying and evaluating alternatives (combinations of strategies) for detailed study. Additional input was also solicited regarding issues and opportunities, project impact issues/concerns, overall conduct of public participation activities, and potential solutions.

The following summary is organized by the different types of input received and includes:

- Perceived area transportation problems
- Project need
- Key project impact issues and concerns
- Potential strategies and solutions suggested by the public for use in the corridor
- Conduct of public participation activities

An overview of media-related topics is also included as an indicator of public perception regarding this project and associated issues. Finally, a history of public participation tools used to date is provided at the end of this summary.

Additional details and specifics on any information presented below will be provided to project team members by the public involvement team upon request.

## Data Sources

The public involvement team used several data sources to compose the Citizen Input Summary. These data sources are summarized in the table below.

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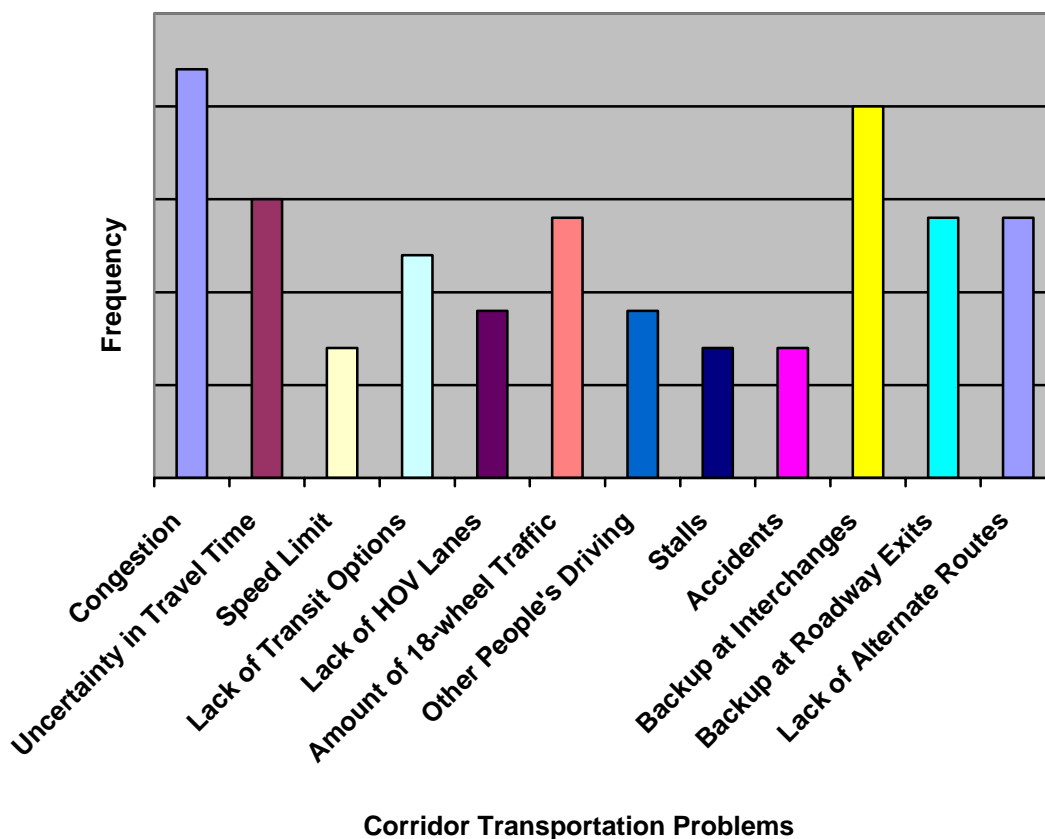
Data Source	Notes
Written Comments	Includes input provided via email, U.S. mail, hotline, and online surveys from July 2007 through November 2007, as well as those received during Round 3 public information open houses (PIOHs)
Issues and Opportunities Survey	17 surveys completed online since previous Citizen Summary
Need and Purpose Survey	4 surveys completed online since previous Citizen Summary
Project Alternatives Survey	32 surveys completed/returned (input gathered at Round 3 PIOHs and survey posted online)
Project Strategies Survey	8 surveys completed online since previous Citizen Summary
Rate Our Project Team	29 surveys completed/returned (provided at Round 3 PIOHs and posted online)
Input Provided During Stakeholder Interviews and Other Outreach Activities	Includes input from activities conducted from July 2007 through November 2007
Input Provided During Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting	Includes input from September 6, 2007 and October 2, 2007 meeting
Input Provided During Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Meeting	Includes input from September 12, 2007 meeting
Input Provided During Agency Scoping Meetings and Management Briefings	Includes input from September 14, 2007 agency scoping meeting and August 10, 2007 management briefing

### AREA TRANSPORTATION PROBLEMS

Input regarding area transportation problems was solicited previously and summarized in the previous Citizen Input Summary. The following information represents citizen input on area transportation issues from August 2007 through November 2007. This is a visual summary of actual input received from the public during various public outreach activities and surveys as well as provided in written comments.

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The following key results from the current citizen input are consistent with our earlier findings:

- Traffic congestion, specifically backups at roadway exits, continues to be the biggest existing issue reported for travelers on I-285's top end.
- Uncertainty in travel times, lack of alternate routes, the amount of truck traffic along the corridor, and the lack of transit options were also identified as existing issues for travelers along I-285.
- Most travelers indicated that they use I-285 to travel to and from work.

### PROJECT NEED

#### Previous Input vs. Current Input

Input regarding the project need and purpose was solicited previously and summarized in the previous Citizen Input Summary. The information below represents citizen input on the project need from August 2007 through November 2007. The following key results from the current citizen input are consistent with our earlier findings:



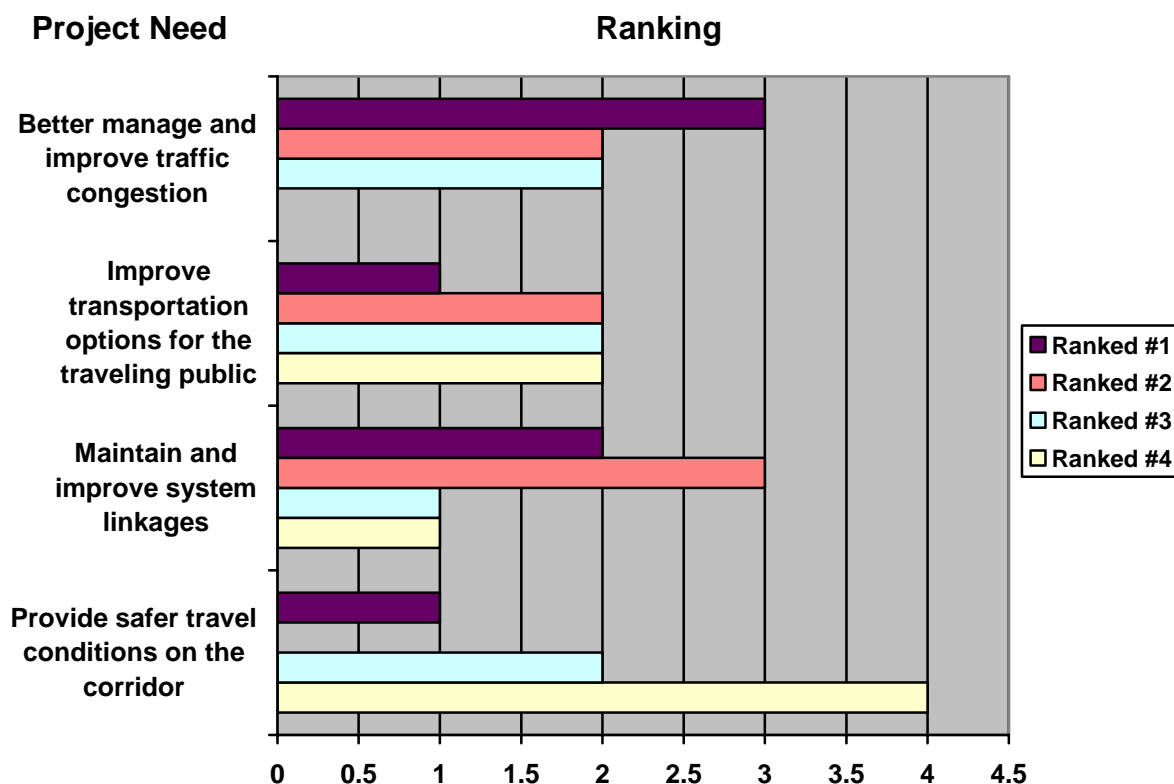
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- Overall, the public continues to agree that travel conditions on I-285's top end are a serious problem that must be addressed.
- Participants indicated that, if no improvements are made to the project corridor, there will be an increase in uncertainty in travel times, safety risks to travelers, worse commute times, and negative effects on quality of life.

### Project Need and Purpose Online Survey Results

The online Project Need and Purpose Survey asks respondents to rank the needs identified for this project. Below is a summary of the responses.



According to the survey results, respondents ranked “better manage and improve traffic congestion” as the top project need, followed by “maintain and improve system linkages.” The least important project need remains “provide safer travel conditions on the corridor.”

The results reported in the previous Citizen Input Summary are different from the most recent results. Previously, respondents ranked “improve transportation options for the traveling public” as the second most important project need.

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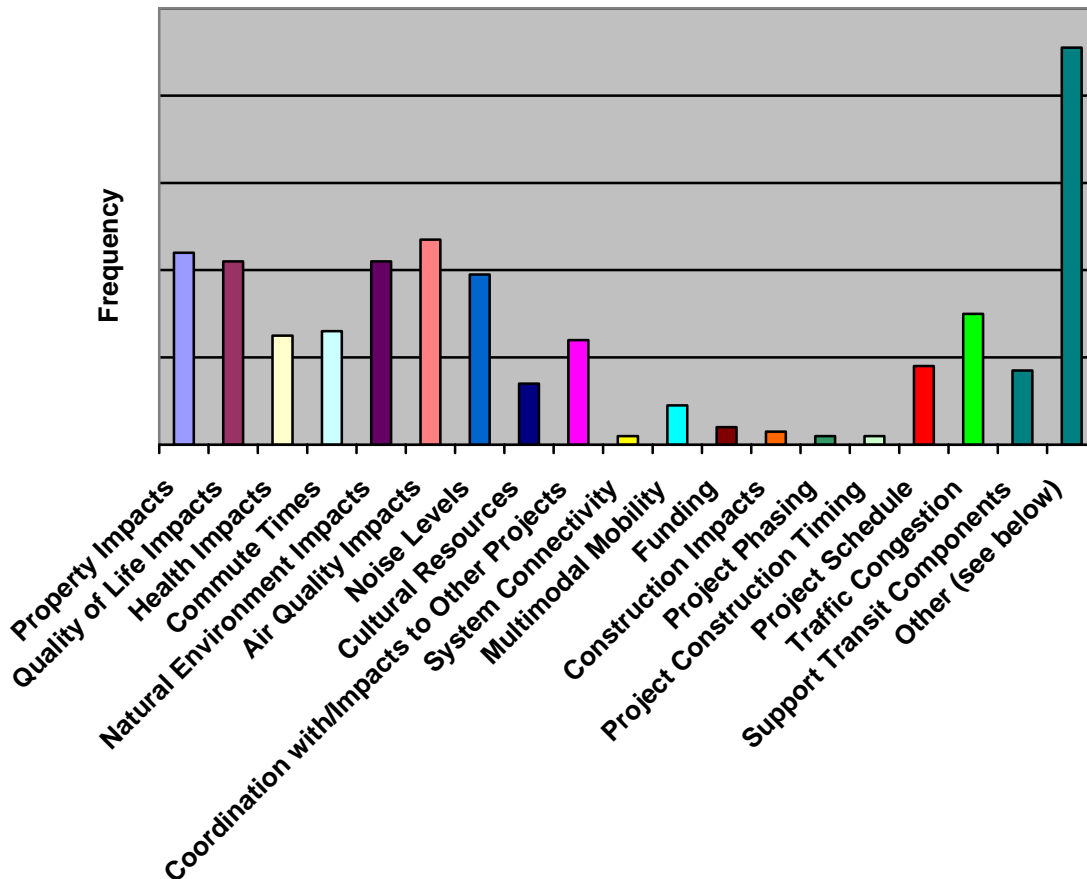
However, if we look at all of the survey responses to date, the results are consistent with the earlier findings that ranked “better manage and improve traffic congestion” as the top project need, followed by “improve transportation options for the traveling public,” with “provide safer travel conditions on the corridor” being the least important need.

### **PROJECT IMPACT ISSUES AND CONCERNS**

While input regarding area impact issues and concerns was solicited previously and summarized in the previous Citizen Input Summary, the information below represents all citizen input on area impact issues and concerns to date. This is not a prioritization of public issues and concerns by the project team. This is a visual summary of actual input received from surveys and comments received via U.S. mail, email, and other various public involvement activities.

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## Issues and Concerns

Key project impact concerns to date (in order of frequency of responses) include air quality, property impacts, natural/environmental, quality of life, and noise levels.

Additional issues and concerns expressed infrequently by the public and categorized under “other” include concerns regarding lack of capacity, speed limit enforcement, the project process, water quality impacts, wildlife impacts, making truck lanes mandatory, bicycle/pedestrian improvements, connectivity, access, operations, safety, and agency coordination.

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## POTENTIAL STRATEGIES AND SOLUTIONS

### Types of Improvements

According to the online Issues and Opportunities Survey, the top four types of improvements respondents would like to see include interchange improvements, separating truck traffic from regular traffic, building or improving alternate routes, and additional transit options in the corridor.

### Online Project Strategies Survey Results

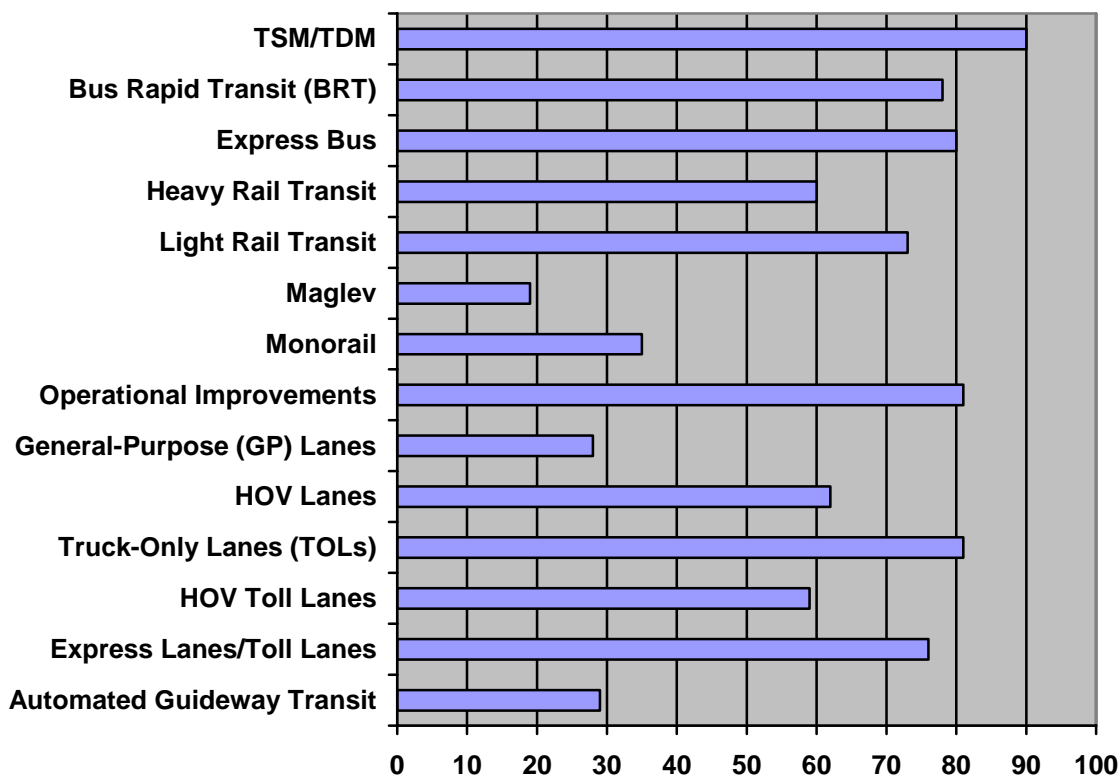
The Project Strategies Survey asked respondents to review the draft results from the project team's initial screening of strategies, which were identified based on public input, the existing conditions analysis, the project need and purpose, and a review of previous studies, plans, and projects. After reviewing this information, respondents were asked to provide their thoughts on whether strategies should be considered for additional study.

The chart below depicts the percentage of respondents that thought a strategy should move forward. This percentage is based on the number of comments provided for each strategy. This is not a prioritization of project strategies by the project team. This is a visual summary of actual input received from the online Project Strategies Survey to date.

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## Percentage of Respondents Indicating Strategy Should Be Considered



## POTENTIAL ALTERNATIVES

During the Round 3 PIOHs, the public was asked to review the alternatives being recommended by the project team for detailed evaluation and complete the *Tell Us What You Think* survey, which was designed to solicit input on these alternatives. The public was asked the following:

1. Which of these alternatives is most appealing to you and why?
2. Which of these alternatives is least appealing to you and why?
3. Is there an alternative that addresses the project needs that the project team overlooked?

Space for the public to make additional comments was provided on the back of the survey. This survey was also posted online.

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The following table provides a brief summary of the overall public reaction to the alternatives based on the results from the *Tell Us What You Think* survey, as well as written and verbal comments submitted by the public.

**Results from *Tell Us What You Think* Survey**

Alternative	Most Appealing	Least Appealing	Additional Comments
No build	4	6	Some found this alternative most appealing because they felt that building more roads would only cause more congestion and not solve the problem. Others found this alternative least appealing because they felt that something must be done to improve I-285's top end.
TSM/TDM	3	0	Respondents commented that this alternative was appealing because they felt that it could be implemented in the existing footprint.
FTA Baseline	0	1	No comments provided.
HOV, BRT, GP	0	0	No comments provided.
HOV, BRT, TOL	5	0	Respondents found this alternative most appealing because it encourages transit and does not include GP lanes.
HOV, GP, TOL	5	1	Respondents found this alternative most appealing because it separates truck traffic, spreads traffic out, and increases safety.
BRT, GP, TOL	1	0	Respondents found this alternative most appealing because it encourages mass transit (BRT), separates trucks from cars (TOL), and allows flexibility for variable mixes of traffic (GP).

### Missing Alternatives Identified

- HOV, GP, barrier-separated TOL, and BRT
- Light rail transit
- Parallel facilities (Northern Arc, two outer perimeters – one 10 miles out and another 25 miles out)
- HOV/TOL
- Express lanes and local connector roads
- Express bus/BRT hybrid (i.e., traditional buses operating on a dedicated travelway at a few critical locations. For example, southbound I-85 to westbound I-285 HOV/express bus ramp and eastbound I-285 to northbound I-85 HOV express bus ramp), with HOV, HOT managed toward optimizing transit performance (i.e., limit HOV lane to three or more if necessary, and don't sell out the capacity to single-occupancy vehicle toll payers).
- Subdivide lanes with either combinations of collector/distributor lanes, HOV lanes, and/or TOLs.

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## Comments on Project Alternative Design Considerations

- Put through traffic on another layer above the current system.
- Tolls do not encourage travelers to use carpooling or transit options.
- Do not double-deck the system.
- Consider tunneling for trucks.
- Consider reversible HOV lanes (like in Virginia on I-95).
- Put a toll on 100 percent of the lanes in the corridor.
- Make truck lanes mandatory.

## Other Solutions Offered by the Public

The public suggested additional solutions in the following key categories:

- Interchange and ramp improvements
- Parallel facility improvements (new and existing roadways)
- Policy recommendations regarding TOL restrictions, lane usage for alternative fuel vehicles, land use, and property acquisitions
- Short-term solutions
- Surface street improvements
- Transit incentives
- Improved signage
- Bicycle and pedestrian improvements
- Improvements to connecting facilities

## Existing Conditions Comments

The project team conducted several stakeholder interviews with area hospitals (St. Joseph's Hospital, Northside Hospital, WellStar Hospital of Windy Hill) to gather information on how hospital business is impacted by congestion on I-285 and possible solutions. Summaries of these interviews are available upon request.

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### PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ACTIVITIES

The following list highlights key information provided by the public that the public involvement team should use to shape future activities:

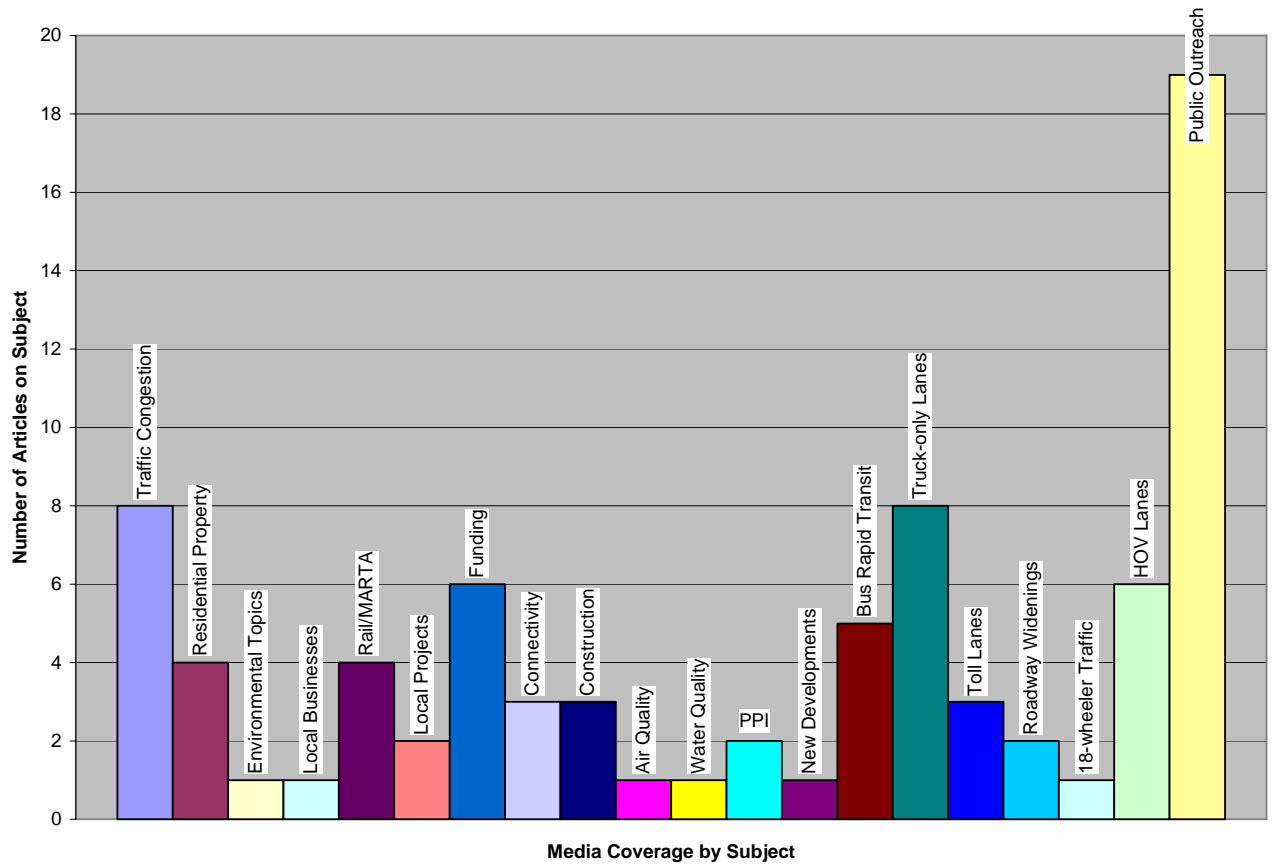
- Input received indicates that we can best *provide* information to the public in the following ways:
  - Project information – via the web site, public meetings, and email
  - Upcoming public meeting notifications – via email notifications and signs along the roadway
- Input received indicates that the best way to *gather* input from the public is via public meetings and online surveys.
- The majority of the public thinks that information provided by the public involvement team is clear and easy to understand and that they are given an opportunity to provide comments and ask questions regarding the **revive285 top end** project.
- The majority of public input rates the overall efforts of the public involvement team as above average.

### IN THE NEWS

The media can reflect as well as generate issues and concerns for the community and the project as a whole. The chart below summarizes topics published in newspapers, newsletters, other web sites, and message boards, as well as topics aired on television and radio, that speak directly about the **revive285 top end** project or other projects or discussions relevant to the project. As the graph demonstrates, the number one topic by far is public outreach, followed by TOLs and traffic congestion.

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### PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ACTIVITIES

The public involvement activities completed since issuance of the previous Citizen Input Summary are listed below. These tools are supplemented with a variety of tools for information dissemination and raising awareness.

Public Involvement Activities			
Purpose	Activity	Audience	Date
Consult	Public Information Open House	General Public	10/23/2007 & 10/25/2007
	Stakeholder Interview	Northside Hospital Stakeholder Interview	8/30/2007
	Stakeholder Interview	WellStar Hospital Interview	8/31/2007
	Stakeholder Interview	St. Joseph's Hospital Interview	7/10/2007
	Survey (Web)	Project Alternatives Survey	10/25/2007
Involve	Small Working Group Meeting	TAC Meeting	9/12/2007
	Small Working Group Meeting	TAC Meeting	3/19/2007
	Small Working Group Meeting	CAC Meeting	9/6/2007
	Small Working Group Meeting	CAC Meeting	10/2/2007
	Small Working Group Meeting	Upper Management Briefing	8/10/2007
	Small Working Group Meeting	Agency Scoping Meeting	9 /14/2007
	Small Working Group Meeting	FHWA-FTA Briefing	10/22/2007
Inform	Field Briefing	Smyrna Kiwanis Golden K Kiwanis Club Briefing	8/14/2007
	Field Briefing	Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce Briefing	10/29/2007

Input received during these activities, as well as comments received via U.S. mail, email, and the web site, will be taken into consideration by the project team during identification of practical project alternatives that support the strategies identified for advancement, refinement of the project need and purpose, and existing conditions information.