

**US 9W  
TRANSPORTATION AND  
LAND USE STUDY**

Summary of Public Input from  
The Selkirk Bypass Alternatives Workshop

Prepared by the  
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For the  
Town of Bethlehem

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## BACKGROUND

Building on the Town of Bethlehem's Comprehensive Plan and the New York State Department of Transportation's (NYSDOT's) project development work for the Selkirk Bypass, the *Route 9W Corridor Study* is moving toward developing a transportation plan that will guide the development of a multi-modal transportation system that is supportive of the town's economic development goals, and respects and strengthens residential neighborhoods along the corridor. One of the study's objectives calls for a review of the feasibility of constructing a new road to bypass Maple Avenue in the hamlet of Selkirk (the Selkirk Bypass). The study team has identified three different bypass options that could improve safety and quality of life for residents who live along Maple Avenue and to support the Town's land use and transportation vision for the corridor.

A second public workshop of the *US 9W Transportation and Land Use Study* was held on March 22, 2007 at the Becker Elementary School. The purpose of the workshop was to provide the community with technical information gathered thus far for three Selkirk Bypass alignment alternatives. In return, the study team asked participants to fill-out a ratings sheet to evaluate how well they thought the three Selkirk Bypass alternatives satisfied the study's planning objectives established for the Selkirk Bypass.

More than 100 Bethlehem residents attended the workshop. Most, roughly 50 percent of participants, live in the Selkirk area. Glenmont residents comprised about 30 percent of workshop participants, Clapper Road area residents made up 15 percent of the group, and the remaining 5 percent lived elsewhere in Town. Of the over 100 participants, 54 returned the ratings sheet, representing a 54% response rate of those surveyed.

Background material that provided context for the workshop is set forth in the report, *Draft US 9W Profile, Selkirk Bypass Review of Prior Work* and the workbook prepared for this workshop. Both documents are posted on the Town's website. The workbook is included as Appendix A of this report.

This report provides a summary of the ratings sheet responses. The responses were disaggregated and grouped according to a self-reported neighborhood area (Selkirk, Glenmont, Clapper Road) in order to control for some of the geographical bias. The first section of the report summarizes the responses from the meeting regarding the participants' perception of the relative importance of the planning principles. The next section explores respondents' ratings of the ability of each alternative alignment to meet each principle. The final section briefly summarizes the open-ended comments that were provided by workshop participants.

## COMMUNITY REACTION TO THE PROPOSED GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Five planning principles or objectives were designed to help guide the evaluation of the three bypass options. These principles were presented to the workshop participants for comment. For each guiding principle, each participant was offered three options to express their opinion: “Critical Importance”; “Important, Not Critical”; and “Not Important”. In the analysis, the responses were displayed as “100% Stacked columns” which provide one way to visually represent the relative rankings of each principle. The coloring format used in these charts, shown on the next page, provides a method of viewing the principles side-by-side comparing them according to the percent of respondents who find the principle *Important* (“critical importance” and “important, not critical”) versus *Not Important*.

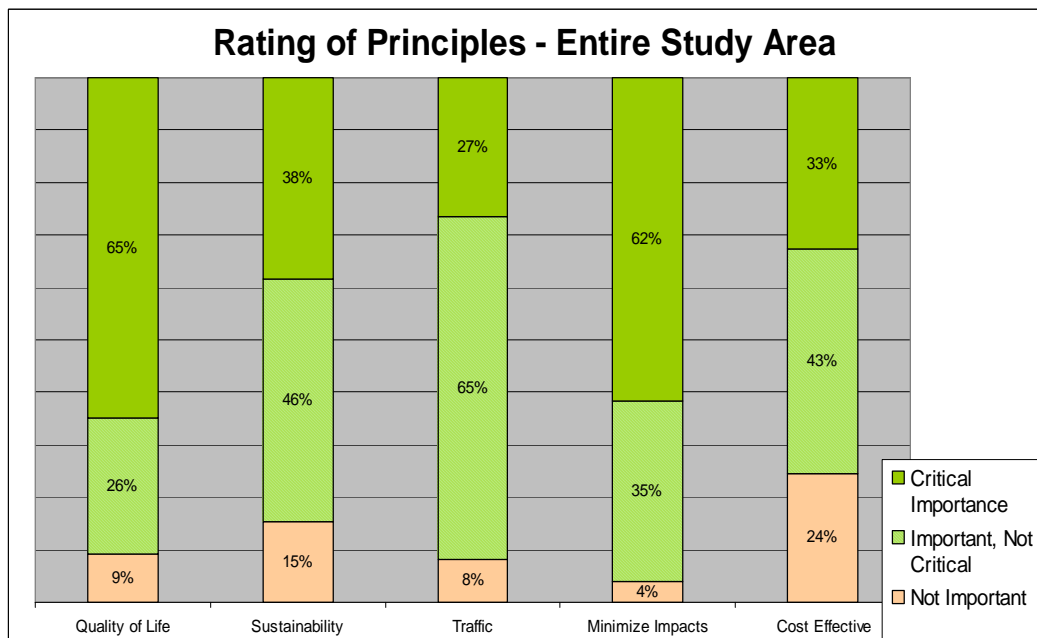
### Planning Principles Used to Assist in Evaluation of Selkirk Bypass Alignment Alternatives

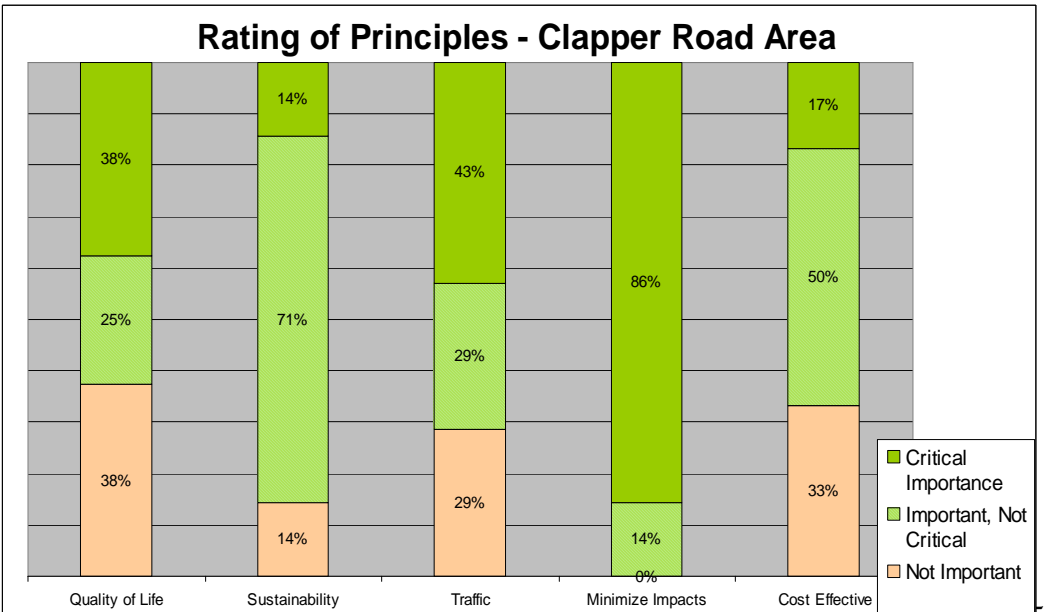
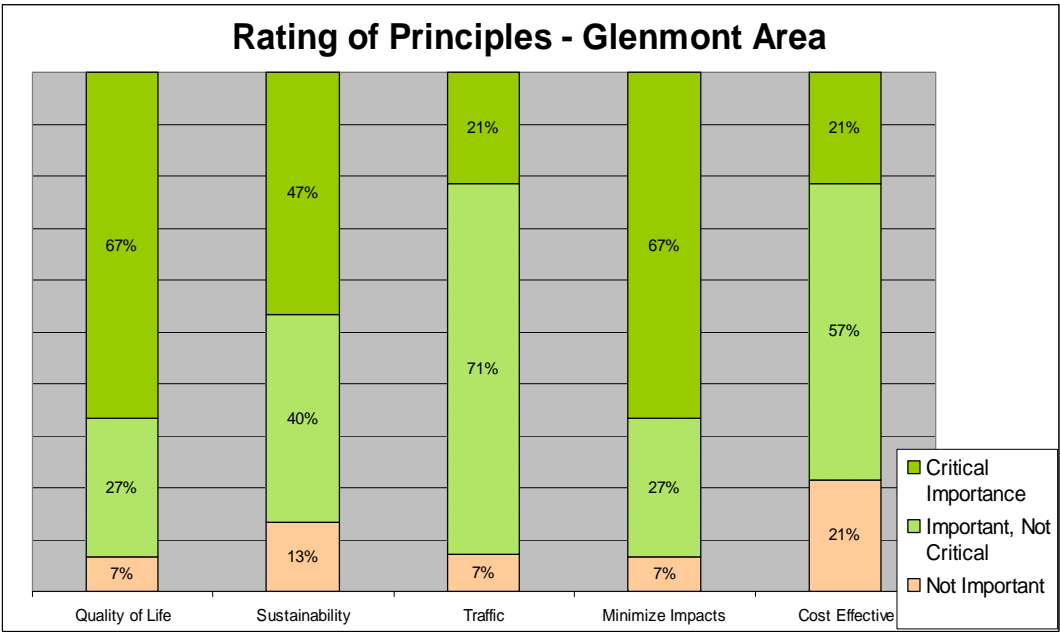
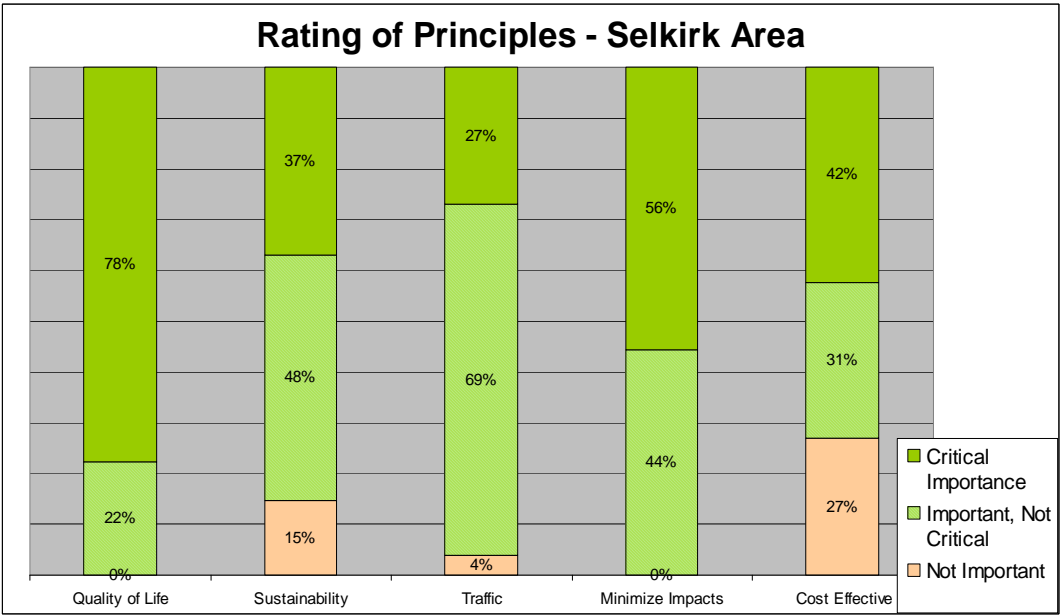
- ***Improve livability and quality of life*** of the Maple Ave Neighborhood by removing tractor-trailer through traffic
- ***Establish sustainable economic development opportunities*** in the Route 9W Corridor area that are consistent with the Town’s Comprehensive Plan and amended zoning law
- ***Reduce the traffic burden on Route 9W*** to lessen the need for capital improvements to that road, allowing increased reliance on management actions to meet needs
- ***Minimize impacts*** on existing residents, businesses and environmental resources in the corridor
- Create opportunity for a ***cost effective*** option that has a strong potential for stimulating desired ***private sector investment and participation***

## Rating of Principles

Workshop participants generally considered all five principles to be important. Respondents seemed to be especially supportive of actions that would improve the livability of the Maple Avenue neighborhood and that would be the least disruptive, even if it meant choosing a more expensive alternative.

As shown in the attached charts, the priorities of each of three corridor neighborhoods were similar. Residents want the three neighborhoods to see a project that improves their quality of life while keeping impacts to a minimum. Cost is important but concerns them the least.



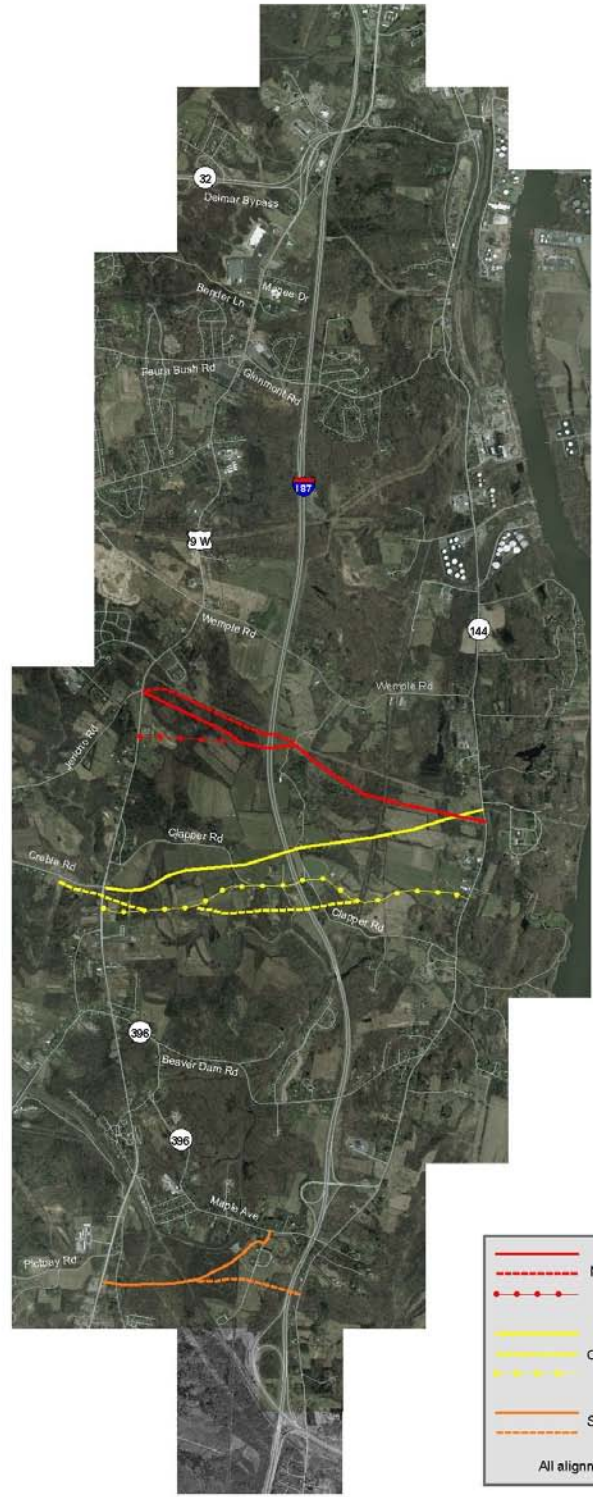


## EVALUATION OF ALTERNATIVE ALIGNMENTS

This section reports on the preferences for each alignment option. This was determined through a rating of each alignment option according to its *ability to achieve* each stated guiding principle. For each of the three alignment alternatives, the participant was given the option of rating whether it “Best Achieves”, “Should Achieve”, or “Does Not Achieve”. The same “100% Stacked Columns” chart style was used to compare the alternatives side-by-side.

This rating system does not explicitly lead to an endorsement of any specific alignment option. The rating of *most preferred* is decided upon based on the individual's perception of each alternative's ability to best achieve the guiding principles, it is not necessarily stating that this is the alignment they want. The ratings sheet did not provide an option for the respondent to state their personal choice for the alignment. This was addressed by many of the respondents in their comments on the bottom or back of the scoreboard.

# Route 9W/Selkirk Bypass Alignment Alternatives

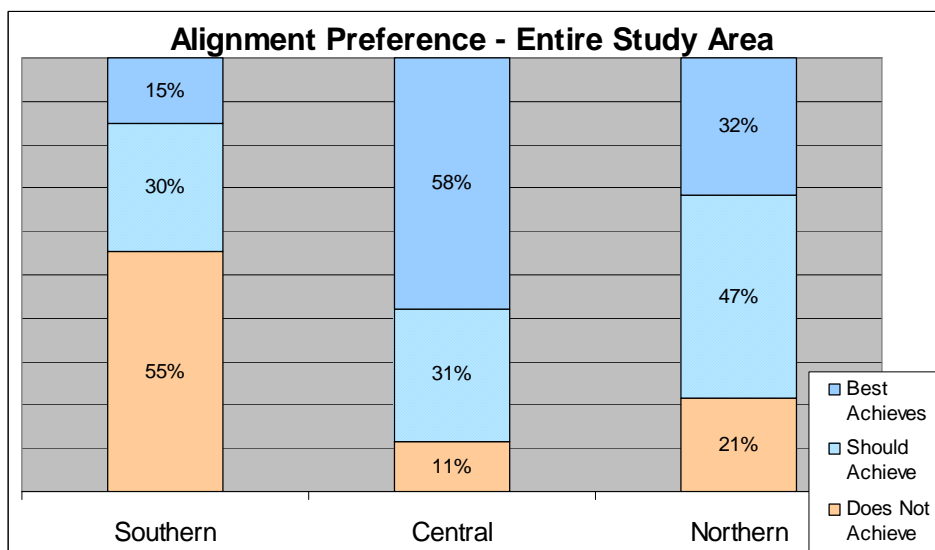




**All Respondents - Alignment Ratings**

The **central alignment** received the highest rating relative to meeting the principles with 58% of respondents assigning “Best Achieves” as averaged across all five principles. When the selection of “Should Achieve” is added, an average of 89% (“Best Achieves” + “Should Achieve”) of the respondents indicate that the central alignment has the strongest chance of meeting the stated principles. Seventy percent (70%) of the respondents view this option as the best alternative for alleviating the traffic on 9W. Averaged across all 5 principles, 11% of respondents assigned a rating of “Does Not Achieve” to the **central alignment**, while 55% and 21% assigned this rating to the **southern and northern alignment**, respectively.

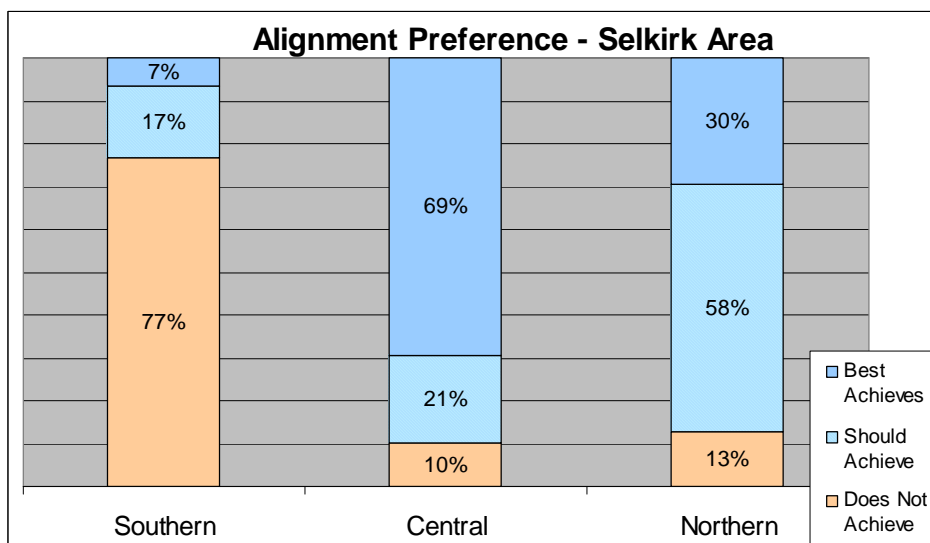
Rating of Alternative Alignments									
All Respondents									
100% of Respondents									
	Southern Alignment			Central Alignment			Northern Alignment		
	Best Achieves	Should Achieve	Does Not Achieve	Best Achieves	Should Achieve	Does Not Achieve	Best Achieves	Should Achieve	Does Not Achieve
Quality of Life	17%	39%	43%	65%	27%	8%	38%	38%	24%
Sustainability	7%	22%	72%	57%	35%	8%	38%	51%	11%
Traffic	13%	29%	58%	70%	24%	6%	18%	53%	29%
Minimize Impacts	33%	33%	33%	37%	37%	26%	23%	45%	32%
Cost Effective	4%	24%	71%	62%	30%	9%	42%	47%	11%
AVERAGE	15%	30%	55%	58%	31%	11%	32%	47%	21%



### Selkirk Area – Alignment Preference

The **central alignment** received the highest rating relative to meeting the principles with 69% of Selkirk respondents assigning “Best Achieves” as averaged across all five principles. When the selection of “Should Achieve” is added, an average of 90% (“Best Achieves” + “Should Achieve”) of the Selkirk respondents indicate that the central alignment has the strongest chance of meeting the stated principles. Eighty one (81%) of these respondents view this option as the best alternative for alleviating the traffic on 9W. Averaged across all 5 principles, 10% of Selkirk respondents assigned a rating of “Does Not Achieve” to the **central alignment**, while 77% and 13% assigned this rating to the **southern and northern alignments**, respectively.

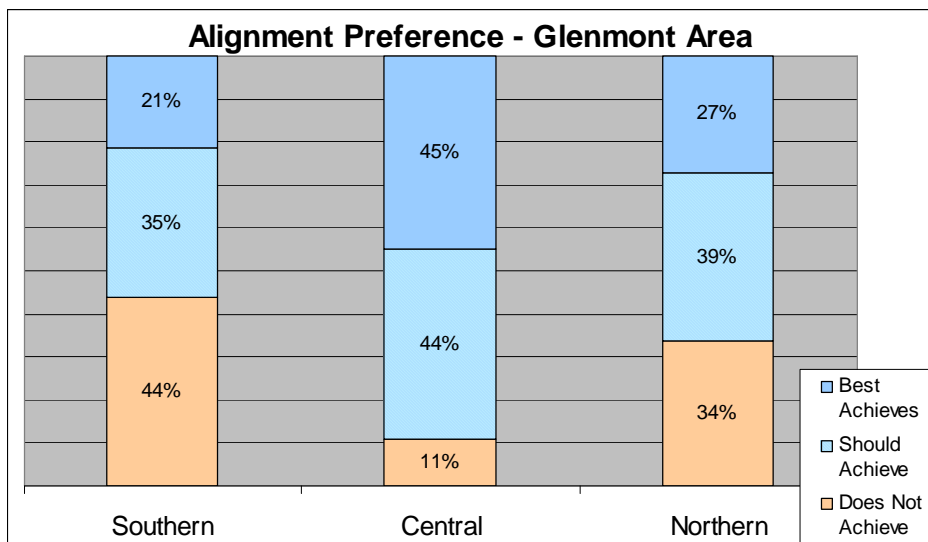
Rating of Alternative Alignments									
Selkirk Area Respondents									
50% of Respondents									
	Southern Alignment			Central Alignment			Northern Alignment		
	Best Achieves	Should Achieve	Does Not Achieve	Best Achieves	Should Achieve	Does Not Achieve	Best Achieves	Should Achieve	Does Not Achieve
Quality of Life	9%	27%	64%	80%	16%	4%	41%	45%	14%
Sustainability	0%	5%	95%	64%	32%	4%	33%	62%	5%
Traffic	5%	24%	71%	81%	15%	4%	10%	71%	19%
Minimize Impacts	19%	24%	57%	52%	17%	30%	26%	52%	22%
Cost Effective	0%	5%	95%	70%	22%	9%	38%	57%	5%
AVERAGE	7%	17%	77%	69%	21%	10%	30%	58%	13%



**Glenmont Area – Alignment Preference**

The **central alignment** received the highest rating relative to meeting the principles with 45% of Glenmont respondents assigning “Best Achieves” as averaged across all five principles. When the selection of “Should Achieve” is added, an average of 89% (“Best Achieves” + “Should Achieve”) of the Glenmont respondents indicate that the central alignment has the strongest chance of meeting the stated principles. Fifty three (53%) of these respondents view this option as the best alternative for alleviating the traffic on 9W. Averaged across all 5 principles, 11% of Glenmont respondents assigned a rating of “Does Not Achieve” to the **central alignment**, while 44% and 34% assigned this rating to the **southern and northern alignments**, respectively.

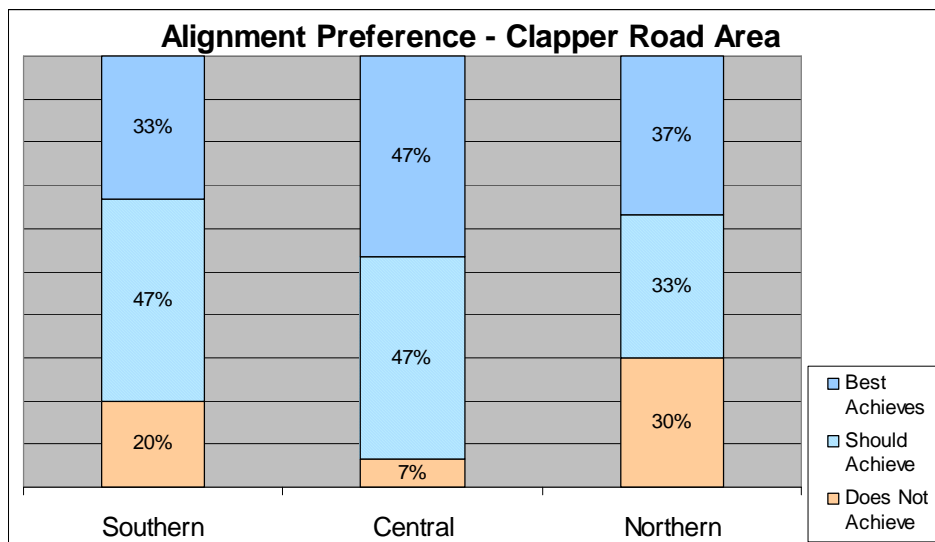
Rating of Alternative Alignments									
Glenmont Area Respondents <span style="float: right;">28% of Respondents</span>									
	Southern Alignment			Central Alignment			Northern Alignment		
	Best Achieves	Should Achieve	Does Not Achieve	Best Achieves	Should Achieve	Does Not Achieve	Best Achieves	Should Achieve	Does Not Achieve
Quality of Life	27%	40%	33%	50%	43%	7%	29%	36%	36%
Sustainability	7%	33%	60%	40%	47%	13%	33%	53%	13%
Traffic	20%	33%	47%	53%	40%	7%	27%	27%	47%
Minimize Impacts	47%	40%	13%	29%	50%	21%	13%	33%	53%
Cost Effective	7%	27%	67%	53%	40%	7%	33%	47%	20%
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>34%</b>



### Clapper Road Area – Alignment Preference

The **central alignment** received the highest rating relative to meeting the principles with 47% of Clapper Road Area respondents assigning “Best Achieves” as averaged across all five principles. When the selection of “Should Achieve” is added, an average of 94% (“Best Achieves” + “Should Achieve”) of the Clapper Road area respondents indicate that the central alignment has the strongest chance of meeting the stated principles. Sixty seven (67%) of these respondents view this option as the best alternative for alleviating the traffic on 9W. Averaged across all 5 principles, 7% of Clapper Road area respondents assigned a rating of “Does Not Achieve” to the **central alignment**, while 20% and 30% assigned this rating to the **southern and northern alignments**, respectively.

Rating of Alternative Alignments									
Clapper Area Respondents									
15% of Respondents									
	Southern Alignment			Central Alignment			Northern Alignment		
	Best Achieves	Should Achieve	Does Not Achieve	Best Achieves	Should Achieve	Does Not Achieve	Best Achieves	Should Achieve	Does Not Achieve
Quality of Life	33%	50%	17%	33%	50%	17%	17%	33%	50%
Sustainability	33%	50%	17%	67%	33%	0%	67%	0%	33%
Traffic	33%	33%	33%	67%	33%	0%	17%	50%	33%
Minimize Impacts	50%	33%	17%	17%	67%	17%	33%	50%	17%
Cost Effective	17%	67%	17%	50%	50%	0%	50%	33%	17%
AVERAGE	33%	47%	20%	47%	47%	7%	37%	33%	30%



## COMMENTS

Many of the respondents included comments on the bottom or back of their scorecard. Reading these, they seem to support the previous findings indicating a preference for the central alignment.

### ***Main Comments***

- "FORGET THE SOUTHERN ROUTE!!!"
- "Central Route is the best option."
- "The CENTRAL alternative best meets the initial goal of a true Selkirk bypass. Trucks crossing 9W from Creble Rd. would best reduce the traffic on 9W."
- "Preferred option is the "Central" option. Best chance for it to succeed with least impact on existing residential neighborhoods."

There were a few concerns expressed by Clapper Road area residents. These are mainly concerned with the proximity of this alignment alternative to their property or their households.

### ***Clapper Road Comments***

- "Southern - Best for my purposes. Central - This would put a truck route on my doorstep. Northern - Turns potential property into highway."
- "I live in Clapper Farm, a historic property, whose house was built in 1840 and barns in 1880's. Your yellow dashed line goes right THROUGH my house and barns. THAT'S what's important to me - PLEASE consider not tearing down my historic property."