*[Explanation of input as provided by Virginia: I addressed the first question and my response to that will also address items in questions 2, 3, 4, and 6. Some of the statements could be used again in those questions. I believe it goes over four thousand characters, but we can modify what we do or do not use.]*

One of the ongoing goals of Complete Streets is to continue to focus and expand on creating sidewalks and trails that promote pedestrian access and use by everyone including people with limitations and disabilities. We have incorporated this in our Borough plans with a checklist that must be completed by our Borough planner, designers, and engineers in any plans they bring before the Borough.

Accessibility to our sidewalks and trails can enrich livability in our community. Sidewalks and trails with pedestrian-friendly elements such as curb ramps, benches, safety bollards, rest or shelter stops, mediums to hold pedestrians on wide streets, proper signage, and streets that also are aesthetically pleasing will attract walkers, bikers, runners, as well as people interested in going on a wheelchair excursion and also those people who are using canes, crutches, handicap walkers, baby carriages, and even service dogs.

Those neighborhoods that have pedestrian-friendly areas encourage more people to get out in the area and that helps those areas to become safer because more people are visible and on the streets. Now residents would have more choices where to spend their time. Young children could use curb ramps while on their bikes and use their bikes more often. Our seniors could walk more while enjoying our parks possibly joining or establishing walking groups and gaining new friendships and a new level of independence.

People that live and work in the area may now decide to walk or bike to work if we have a safe connectivity to the area. Instead of taking their cars out to go to a local store for a small pickup, or to a library, school, or a recreation area they may decide to walk or bike instead of drive.

More people might be interested in walking, biking, or traveling in a wheelchair in our downtown area if we have bollards and if we bring to reality changing Throckmorton to a one way street. People would feel protected from the traffic on Highway 35 and safer on a one way street. Now they might be more interested in visiting our stores downtown because they will feel safer and they don’t have to worry about the shortage of parking. We could also help our local businesses there by making sidewalks wider where possible and to eliminate problems with loading and unloading supplies. This gives us the opportunity to spruce up the downtown with some trees appropriate for the area as well as landscaping and other amenities such as attractive street lamps and possibly bike kiosks. Besides shopping our residents might enjoy walking on wider sidewalks with their family and friends and enjoy more exercising and socializing.

More safety concerns will be addressed because with more people on foot we will expand our street watchdog committee from the Traffic Advisory Committee to include residents. As they are on foot, bikes, or wheelchairs they will also see where the potholes are, overhanging trees, excessive snow on sidewalks, sidewalk surfaces in poor repair with uneven, broken, or raised concrete or slabs. Fragments of concrete detaching from buildings, water traps that turn to ice, and obstacles on walkways can be reported. Also tree root damage can be noted.

The Traffic Advisory Committee can continue to work on their design for an intersection checklist identifying a street’s name, the name of the cross street, how many lanes are on the street, are there left turns, are there right turns, is there a turn on red permitted, is parking permitted on the street, are there curb extensions, is there a medium pedestrian holding area, is there signage, and making notes of the condition of the stripping in the street. The checklist could be modified for add ons and for the different type of streets.

All of these recommendations and established practices improve the quality of life of all our residents of all ages. With people being more active it decreases obesity, they continue to maintain or build independence, they gain new experiences, establish new routines, establish new friendships, possibly develop an exercise program and in the end enjoy our town even more.