

CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA



Agenda Date:	March 15, 2021
Action Required:	Resolution
Presenter:	Erin Atak, Grants Coordinator
Staff Contacts:	Erin Atak, Grants Coordinator Brennen Duncan, Traffic Engineer
Title:	Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Ridge Street Priority Neighborhood Improvement Projects

Background:

The City of Charlottesville is an entitlement community for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. Each year a process occurs to allocate funds to eligible projects throughout the community. As part of that process, Council designates a priority neighborhood to receive an allocation of funding. A Priority Neighborhood committee is established to prioritize eligible projects to receive funding. The Ridge Street Neighborhood is the CDBG Priority Neighborhood for FY 20-21, FY 21-22 and FY 22-23 as approved by City Council on September 16, 2019.

According to the 2018-2022 CDBG Consolidated Plan, CDBG Priority Neighborhoods are neighborhoods in the City in which CDBG funds target persons living in low to moderate income areas. The goal is to enhance and improve access to neighborhood amenities. “Neighborhood” corresponds to the eligible census tract that encompasses the Ridge Street area.

Discussion:

The Council appointed Ridge Street Priority Neighborhood Taskforce identified priorities to address blight within the Ridge Street community. A neighborhood survey was developed and administered, and a series of public Taskforce meetings were held to gather feedback within the neighborhood. Survey results can be accessed [here](#). Additionally, the Ridge Street Priority Neighborhood Taskforce conducted a walkthrough of the community area to conduct outreach with neighborhood members, discuss concerns directly with the community, and identify problem areas that could potentially be addressed through CDBG funds.

The Ridge Street Priority Neighborhood Taskforce identified priorities included maintenance concerns, traffic/pedestrian safety, housing, transit, and issues relating to installation and repair of sidewalks. Similar findings from the 1996 Ridge Street Neighborhood Study and the 1998 Ridge Street Taskforce report also highlight the same identified problems in the Ridge Street neighborhood concerning sidewalk improvements and the need for traffic control and safety. After reviewing the survey data and consulting with City Staff on project feasibilities, the Taskforce has identified several projects for CDBG funding recommendation, including traffic signage and projects for sidewalk improvement.

As a result of this work, the Ridge Street Priority Neighborhood Taskforce identified the following projects for City Council CDBG funding recommendation:

1. Traffic Calming Project Recommendations (Estimated \$25,000)
 - a. Adding Speed Limit Sign at Ridge St before Lankford Ave
 - b. Adding Speed Limit Sign between Hartman's Mill and Raymond Rd.
 - c. Adding Speed Limit Sign between 900-1000 block of Ridge St.
 - d. Adding a flashing Speed limit sign between 700-850 block of Ridge Street
 - e. Adding a flashing crosswalk sign for the South First and Elliot Ave Intersection
 - f. Adding a flashing pedestrian crosswalk for Old Ridge St and 5th St crossing

2. Sidewalk Project Recommendations (Estimated \$220,000).
 - a. East side of Brookwood Dr and Ridge Intersection: Adding sidewalk and retaining wall to fill missing gaps
 - b. North Side of Baylor Lane and Raymond Rd Intersection: Adding Sidewalk
 - c. East Side 6th St SE: Adding sidewalk

Community Engagement:

Since September 2020, City staff has engaged the Ridge Street Priority Neighborhood Taskforce in a series of public meetings. The Taskforce identified the need for CDBG Priority Neighborhood funds to address neighborhood issues related to blight (maintenance concerns, traffic/pedestrian safety, and installation and repair of sidewalks). The following reports the number of times the Ridge Street Priority Neighborhood Taskforce met throughout the community engagement processes.

For all public community/neighborhood meetings, the virtual zoom registrations was made available through the City website. Several mailings were sent to Charlottesville Redevelopment and Housing Authority (CRHA) staff, Public Housing Association of Residents (PHAR) staff, and Piedmont Housing Alliance (PHA) staff to encourage all residents to join virtually to voice any and all concerns at the Ridge Street Priority Neighborhood Taskforce meetings.

- September 23, 2020: Ridge Street Priority Neighborhood Taskforce met virtually to brainstorm ideas for improving the Ridge Street neighborhood area and discuss opportunities for community engagement.
- October 23, 2020: City Staff, neighborhood members, and nonprofit organization groups discuss Ridge Street neighborhood priorities at neighborhood resident home and conduct Ridge Street walkthrough.
- October 28, 2020: Staff presented community survey feedback received to date with the Ridge Street Priority Neighborhood Taskforce.
- November 5, 2020: Staff met with Charlottesville Redevelopment and Housing Authority (CRHA) Redevelopment Committee virtually and provided a brief presentation about the Ridge Street Priority Neighborhood Taskforce priorities which included information about the upcoming Taskforce meeting.
- November 13, 2020: Ridge Street Priority Neighborhood Taskforce met in person to walkthrough the Ridge Street neighborhood to identify areas of concern in person and conduct outreach with neighborhood members.
- November 18, 2020: Ridge Street Priority Neighborhood Taskforce met to brainstorm ideas for improving the community. Taskforce narrows down project priorities.
- December 16, 2020: City Staff present cost estimates and reports to Ridge Street Priority Neighborhood Taskforce.
- January 27, 2021: City Staff present cost estimates and reports to Ridge Street Priority Neighborhood Taskforce.
- February 24, 2021: Ridge Street Priority Neighborhood Taskforce recommends traffic signage

and sidewalks for City Council approval.

Alignment with City Council’s Vision and Strategic Plan:

Approval of this agenda item aligns directly with Council’s vision for Charlottesville to have a **Green City and Quality Housing Opportunities for All**. It contributes to a variety of Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives including: Goal 2: A Healthy and Safe City; and Goal 3: A Beautiful and Sustainable Natural and Built Environment.

Budgetary Impact:

There is no impact to the General Fund. Funds are currently appropriated for this project through CDBG. Grant funding is also appropriated for all aspects of design and construction.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends approval of the resolution.

Alternatives:

If the resolution is not approved, the City will not be able to expend the amount of funds within the Ridge Street Priority Neighborhood allocations and would put the City at further-risk for expending funds on a timely basis due to the fact that a large amount of CDBG funding is held for this project. Professional services including environmental review records, and engineering services have begun preliminary background work to expedite timeliness processes. Non-approval of this item would delay the CDBG spending schedule.

Attachments:

Resolution Approving Ridge Street Priority Neighborhood Taskforce Project Recommendations

RESOLUTION
RIDGE STREET PRIORITY NEIGHBORHOOD FUNDS

WHEREAS, on September 16, 2019 and May 4, 2019 City Council of the City of Charlottesville recommended Ridge Street as the priority neighborhood for FY 2020-2021, FY 2021-2022, and FY2022-2023;

WHEREAS, the Ridge Street Priority Neighborhood Taskforce recommends the following projects for City Council approval:

1. Traffic Calming Project Recommendations (Estimated \$25,000)
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BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Charlottesville, Virginia that the Community Development Block Grant funds for FY 2020-2021, FY 2021-2022, and FY2022-2023 be allocated for the Ridge Street Priority Neighborhood Taskforce project recommendations as presented on March 15, 2021.

Approved by Council
March 15, 2021

Kyna Thomas, CMC
Clerk of Council