

**CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA**



Agenda Date:	June 6, 2022
Action Required:	Resolution
Presenter:	Jack Dawson, City Engineer
Staff Contacts:	Stacey Smalls, Director of Public Works Director Tony Edwards, Public Works Development Services Manager Jeanette Janiczek, UCI Program Manager
Title:	Administration Change – Route 250/Hydraulic Road Turn Lane Extension Cancellation – West Main Streetscape (Phases 1, 2 & 3), Emmet Street Signal Coordination, Pedestrian Improvements at Monticello Avenue/Ridge Street & Preston Avenue/Grady Avenue Intersection Improvements

Background: On May 16, 2005, the City entered into an agreement with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to participate in the Urban Construction Initiative (“First Cities”) Program (UCI). Through this program, the City is responsible for administering its urban system construction program – design, right-of-way acquisition, utility relocation, and construction. The roadway program is funded through a variety of state and federal grant programs (ex. SmartScale, Revenue Sharing, State of Good Repair, Highway Safety Improvements) as well as local funding. VDOT continues to be an important partner providing guidance, oversight for the Federal Highway Administration as well as other regulatory agencies, authorization to advance projects throughout the development process as well as the aforementioned grant opportunities to fund the program. The City may also request for VDOT to provide support activities (ex. survey, coordination for historic resources) or to administer a project in its totality as a means for the City to successfully deliver projects in a timely manner for the public’s benefit.

Discussion: Since 2005, the City’s transportation program has grown to 34 projects totaling approximately \$185 million. City staff has reviewed and will continue to review the overall portfolio of projects to evaluate these projects in relation to current as well as future local funding obligations, schedule commitments/deadlines, staffing capacity and current as well as forecasted bidding/pricing environment within the transportation industry. A work session with City Council and the Planning Commission was held on May 24, 2022 to identify steps forward to ensure priority transportation projects are allocated the necessary resources to steadily advance.

As a result of this meeting, the following actions are being proposed to streamline the portfolio and ensure projects are aligned with the City’s Vision and Strategic Plan for the City as a whole:

1) Request VDOT Administer the Route 250/Hydraulic Road Turn Lane Extension project (UPC 116906)

The City applied to VDOT for X funding to extend the eastbound Route 250 Bypass left turn lane onto Hydraulic Road to eliminate the safety conflict of vehicles blocking the mainline lanes in the FY2021-22 Revenue Sharing Grant Program. The City was awarded \$118,277 in state funding which will require \$191,723 in local funding to fully fund the \$300k project when funding is available in FY2025. \$150k in local CIP funds has been identified under P-01038 with the remaining \$41,723 coming from Citywide Traffic Improvements under P-00697.

VDOT is currently administering several projects within the Route 29/Hydraulic Road/Route 250 Bypass triangle. Staff proposes to request VDOT also administer the Route 250/Hydraulic Road Turn Lane Extension project, to benefit from efficiencies gained in adding a task/construction activity to projects already being administered in the area as well as better pricing due to economies of scale. This would also remove the burden of the City administering another standalone project.

2) Cancel the Pedestrian Improvements at Monticello Avenue/Ridge Street project (UPC 113915)

The City applied for a project to improvement pedestrian facilities at Monticello Avenue/Ridge Street in the FY2019 Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety program. The City was awarded \$209,500 in state and federal funding to begin design in FY2020. The City also applied for a SmartScale grant in FY2022 for 5th Street SW Corridor Improvements between West Main Street and Cherry Avenue/Elliott Avenue and was awarded \$8,738,020 in federal and state funding. Since the award of the SmartScale project which includes the Monticello Avenue/Ridge Street intersection, City staff and the VDOT has been researching means to combine the grant funding to no avail.

Therefore, it is recommended to cancel the Pedestrian Improvements at Monticello Avenue/Ridge Street project to avoid constructing improvements now that would need to be removed and reconstructed with the larger SmartScale 5th Street SW Corridor Improvements project. Work product created to date would be used in the larger project.

3) Cancel the Emmet Street Signal Coordination project (UPC 106529)

The Emmet Street Signal Coordination project was created when the state fully funded the Route 29/Route 250 Bypass Interchange (Best Buy) project. The former Revenue Sharing funds totaling \$2 million (\$1 million state, \$1 million local) were used to create the Emmet Street Signal Coordination project which was originally proposed to upgrade signal equipment to improve communication and coordination between signals controlled by the VDOT and signals controlled by the City along the Route 29 corridor. The project's scope has been evolving since its inception as different technologies were explored, existing signal infrastructure evaluated, the number of signals needed to institute the needed improvements increased and the bidding/pricing environment escalating faster than expected. An additional \$550,000 in local funding also still needs to be identified.

It is recommended that this corridor wide component project be cancelled, and individual intersections be identified for full signal replacements to ensure the City address its infrastructure and maintenance needs in a holistic, prioritized manner rather than replace individual components.

4) Cancel the West Main Streetscape project - Phases 1, 2 & 3 (UPC 113176, 113177 & 118874)

The City created a four part phasing plan for the West Main Streetscape project to construct viable, functional segments while improving its ability to compete for grant funding opportunities. Phase 1 was funded with \$3,275,891 in state Revenue Sharing funds and \$13,422,859 in local funding. Phase 2 was partially funded with \$4,009,265 in state Revenue Sharing and SmartScale funding as well as \$3,138,388 in local funding leaving a shortfall of \$6,376,130 still needed. Phase 3 was fully funded with \$10,874,697 in state and federal SmartScale funding. Phase 4 is estimated at \$14,375,050 without any funding identified or committed.

Based on direction from City Council, it is recommended that the \$55.5 million West Main Streetscape project be cancelled.

5) Cancel the Preston Avenue/Grady Avenue Intersection Improvements project (UPC 118873)

The City submitted a grant application to improve safety and operations for the vehicular, pedestrian and bicyclist facilities for the Preston Avenue/Grady Avenue Intersection. This project was awarded \$7,743,498 in state and federal funding with an estimated start date for design of FY2026. During the public participation process before an application was officially submitted, it was determined that the City should conduct a corridor planning study of Preston Avenue to determine a holistic plan for the corridor and allow for additional public input. A Capital Improvement Plan request for \$125,000 was submitted in the FY2023 Budget Process and it was denied for the next 5 years in the budget cycle.

It is recommended that this project be cancelled until a corridor study can be completed for Preston Avenue.

Community Engagement: Each of these projects has had public meetings regarding their development and grant submission which includes City Council meetings. The recommended actions above were discussed and developed during the public work session with City Council and the Planning Commission on May 24, 2022.

Alignment with City Council's Vision Areas and Strategic Plan: Approval of this agenda item upholds the City's commitment to create "a smart, citizen-focused government" by "continually working to employ the optimal means of delivering services, and our decisions are informed at every stage by effective communication and active citizen involvement." In addition, it would contribute to Goal 2 of the Strategic Plan, Be a safe, equitable, thriving, and beautiful community; Objectives 2.3. Provide reliable and high quality infrastructure and 2.6. Engage in robust and context sensitive urban planning.

Budgetary Impact: The VDOT may request reimbursement of previously expended state and federal funds on cancelled projects.

- By requesting the VDOT administer the **Route 250/Hydraulic Road Turn Lane Extension project**, there is no change in the budgetary impact. However, there is a local funding match required in the amount of \$190,000, that will be funded by reprogramming local dollars previously budgeted for the Hydraulic/250 Turn Lane project and the Citywide Traffic Improvements projects.

- By cancelling of the **Pedestrian Improvements at Monticello Avenue/Ridge Street project**, there would be no budgetary impacts, as only a minimal amount of local funds have been expended on this project.
- By cancelling of the **Emmet Street Signal Coordination project**, the VDOT may request reimbursement of \$103,216 in previously expended state funding. The remaining \$92,784 in local funding would be available for reappropriation by City Council to another priority projects.

By cancelling of the **West Main Streetscape project - Phases 1, 2 & 3**, the VDOT may request reimbursement of \$63,178.87 in previously expended state funding.

- By cancelling of the **Preston Avenue/Grady Avenue Intersection Improvements project**, there would be no budgetary impact as no funding has been expended.

Alternatives: City Council may alter the resolution to have the City administer the Route 250/Hydraulic Road Turn Lane Extension project or proceed with administering any or all of the following four projects: 1) Pedestrian Improvements at Monticello Avenue/Ridge Street project, 2) Emmet Street Signal Coordination project, 3) West Main Streetscape project - Phases 1, 2 & 3 **and/or** 4) Preston Avenue/Grady Avenue Intersection Improvements project.

Recommendation: Staff recommends approval of the attached resolution outlining the actions contained within this memo.

Suggested motion: "I move the RESOLUTION authorizing changes to or cancellation of various state-funded transportation projects locally administered by the City of Charlottesville"

Attachment (1): Proposed Resolution

RESOLUTION

Authorizing changes to or cancellation of various state-funded transportation projects locally administered by the City of Charlottesville

WHEREAS the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and the City of Charlottesville (City) are committed to the delivery of transportation projects for the public's use and safety with the City of Charlottesville; and

WHEREAS the City desires to reduce the number of projects for which local administration is required by contract or agreement with VDOT; now therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Charlottesville THAT:

1) The City Manager is authorized to request that VDOT administer the Route 250/Hydraulic Road Turn Lane Extension project (UPC 116906). If VDOT agrees, any local City funding previously appropriated for UPC 116906 are hereby re-appropriated for expenditure as any local funding match required in connection with VDOT's administration of this project;

2) The City Manager is authorized to cancel the Pedestrian Improvements at Monticello Avenue/Ridge Street project (UPC 113915);

3) The City Manager is authorized to cancel the Emmet Street Signal Coordination project (UPC 106529);

4) The City Manager is authorized to cancel the West Main Streetscape project - Phases 1, 2 & 3 (UPC 113176, 113177 & 118874);

5) The City Manager is authorized to cancel the Preston Avenue/Grady Avenue Intersection Improvements project (UPC 118873);

The Charlottesville City Manager is hereby authorized, on behalf of the City of Charlottesville and the Charlottesville City Council, to execute all documents and to take any and all other actions, including, without limitation, reimbursement of state funding previously received by the City for a project, as may be necessary to cancel or terminate any locally administered project agreements, to cancel or terminate any grant agreements, and to take any other actions necessary to implement the actions authorized by this Resolution.