



**HARRISONBURG | VA**  
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May 27, 2025 City Council Meeting

**Title**

Presentation on the N. Mason Street Complete Streets Demonstration Project  
-- Amy Snider, City Manager's Office and Tom Hartman, Department of Public Works

**Summary**

The N. Mason Street Complete Streets Demonstration Project is a product of the Community Connectors Program and the Complete Streets Leadership Academy. City staff and residents of the Northeast Neighborhood collaboratively designed a road reconfiguration of N. Mason Street to be implemented as a demonstration project in July 2025. This presentation will share about the Complete Streets Leadership Academy and provide an overview of the upcoming temporary changes to N. Mason Street as part of the demonstration project. This item is informational only and requires no action.

**Fiscal Impact**

The Complete Streets demonstration project is grant funded through Smart Growth America and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. If the implementation exceeds available grant funding, the City Manager has approved for the remainder of the expense to be funded through the Department of Public Works General Fund budget in order to ensure the demonstration project can be fully implemented as designed with community input.

**Context & Analysis**

Harrisonburg was selected in September 2023 to be the recipient of a Community Connectors Program grant through national nonprofit Smart Growth America and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The grant of \$130,000 is focused on building local capacity to co-design projects alongside impacted communities to advance new transportation infrastructure projects that repair damage from divisive infrastructure. The Harrisonburg team is led by the Northeast Neighborhood Association, Shenandoah Valley Black Heritage Project, Harrisonburg Downtown Renaissance and the City government. The City of Harrisonburg Community Connectors Program received additional Technical Assistance support from Smart Growth America to conduct a Complete Streets Leadership Academy focused on N. Mason Street. N. Mason Street as it is currently designed is a remnant of Urban Renewal and is a physical barrier between Downtown and the Northeast Neighborhood.

The Complete Streets Leadership Academy is offered by Smart Growth America to communities across the United States. The Academy combines a series of virtual sessions and in-person workshops to develop and deploy community-led quick-build projects to test potential changes to streets; engage the community and solicit feedback in a more creative forum; and educate local city staff, advocates, and residents about transportation issues. Program participants are city or county staff, engineers, planners, public health practitioners, and community advocates. The sessions and workshops cover the basics of quick-build projects including site selection, design, community engagement, and data collection, and how to use the experience to create long-term change. Participants design and deploy a quick-build project during the program and consider how to apply the lessons learned from the demonstration to inform future projects and the processes needed to support its development. An important objective of a Complete Streets Academy is build relationships between advocates, residents, and local staff— fostering partnerships that will hopefully continue after the Academy.

N. Mason Street Complete Streets Leadership Academy participants were:

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| 1. Matthew Bucher,<br>Northeast<br>Neighborhood<br>Resident        | 6. Charles Byrd Sr.,<br>Northeast<br>Neighborhood<br>Resident                  | 12. Matthew Huston,<br>City of<br>Harrisonburg   |
| 2. Kyle Lawrence,<br>Northeast<br>Neighborhood<br>Resident         | 7. Karen Thomas,<br>Northeast<br>Neighborhood<br>Association                   | 13. Nyrma Soffel, City<br>of Harrisonburg        |
| 3. Valerie<br>Washington,<br>Northeast<br>Neighborhood<br>Resident | 8. Monica Robinson,<br>Shenandoah Black<br>Heritage Project                    | 14. Thanh Dang, City<br>of Harrisonburg          |
| 4. David Stuart,<br>Northeast<br>Neighborhood<br>Business Owner    | 9. Andrea Dono,<br>Harrisonburg<br>Downtown<br>Renaissance                     | 15. Tom Hartman, City<br>of Harrisonburg         |
| 5. Taya Whitley,<br>Northeast<br>Neighborhood<br>Resident          | 10. Duane Bontrager,<br>Harrisonburg<br>Redevelopment and<br>Housing Authority | 16. Jakob zumFelde,<br>City of<br>Harrisonburg   |
|  | 11. Michael Parks, City<br>of Harrisonburg                                     | 17. James Polhamus,<br>City of<br>Harrisonburg   |
|  |  | 18. Tim Mason, City of<br>Harrisonburg           |
|  |  | 19. Amy Snider, City<br>of Harrisonburg          |
|  |  | 20. Lauren Nofsinger,<br>City of<br>Harrisonburg |

The Academy included three training sessions held in January and February 2025:

- 1) Kickoff and intro to complete streets and selected transportation concepts
- 2) Intro to quick builds
- 3) Data and storytelling

The Academy participants gathered in-person March 13-14 in Harrisonburg with Smart Growth America staff and engineering firm Stantec for a 1.5 day workshop and site visit. This focused on continued learning about community engagement and designing a Complete Street, as well as conducting a walk audit of the corridor and hosting an open house inviting the neighborhood to tell us what they want to see changed about N. Mason Street. The site visit ended with Academy participants designing the desired changes to N. Mason Street.

City staff in partnership with Stantec then converted the conceptual design created by the Academy participants into an engineered design suitable for implementation. The Department of Public Works will implement the changes to N. Mason Street July 7-10. Before and during the implementation Public Works will collect vehicular and pedestrian user data in order to measure the impact of the changes. The demonstration project is anticipated to be in place until early August.

Community event will be held on the reconfigured N. Mason Street July 12 from 3pm-7pm to invite the community to experience the changes to the street.

**Attachments**

1. Memorandum
2. PowerPoint