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December 9, 2025, City Council Meeting

Title

North Mason Street Demonstration Project Summary and Upcoming Corridor Study

Summary

In July, the City installed a Demonstration Project on North Mason Street that temporarily reconfigured traffic and opened up space for other uses, including a Block(s) Party that was held on July 12. A primary purpose of the Demonstration Project was to collect public input and traffic data on the temporary changes, a summary of which is being provided today. Through coordination with the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), a study will be completed to evaluate options, including some that were not part of the demonstration project, for permanent changes that could enhance the street for people walking, driving, and biking. This study will be informed by the feedback and data from the Demonstration Project, as well as by the desires expressed in the Northeast Neighborhood Small Area Plan and will identify a preferred alternative for North Mason Street. Staff are providing a summary of the feedback and data from the Demonstration Project, as well as an overview of the upcoming North Mason Street Corridor Study.

Recommendation

Option 1. Complete the North Mason Street Corridor Study to identify a preferred alternative for North Mason Street.

Fiscal Impact

The North Mason Street Corridor Study is being funded by the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). No impact to City budget.

Context & Analysis

In July, the City installed a Demonstration Project on North Mason Street that temporarily reconfigured traffic and opened up space for other uses, including a Block(s) Party that was held on July 12. The effort was the result of a Complete Streets Leadership Academy, which many City staff and neighborhood members participated in, led by the nonprofit Smart Growth America and funded through the Community Connectors Program. The Demonstration Project included changing the number of vehicle lanes on Mason Street and changing three signalized intersections

to be roundabouts or controlled by stop signs. A primary purpose of the Demonstration Project was to collect public input on the temporary changes, to inform a potential permanent project to improve North Mason Street and address concerns and challenges that were identified through the Complete Streets Leadership Academy and Northeast Neighborhood Small Area Plan. Over 1500 responses were submitted to the survey that was open for people to provide their experiences and thoughts. Additionally, vehicle count and speed data were collected, along with counts for people walking and biking. All of the data and survey responses are summarized in the first two pages of the attachment.

Through the Complete Streets Leadership Academy, City staff and local residents, along with Smart Growth America staff and technical consultants, identified concerns and challenges along the North Mason Street corridor. Through this process, a Demonstration Project was identified that sought to address those concerns, particularly for people walking on the corridor, and this Demonstration Project was implemented. However, many permanent options were not able to be considered due to the constraints of a temporary project. Through coordination with the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the North Mason Street Corridor Study will be completed to evaluate options for permanent changes that could enhance the street for people walking, driving, and biking. This study will be informed by the feedback and data from the Demonstration Project, as well as by the desires expressed in the Northeast Neighborhood Small Area Plan. The Goals and Principles written on the 3rd page of the attachment highlight the desires and feedback the City has heard. Additional public engagement will be completed in early 2026, during the study process. The result of the North Mason Street Corridor Study will be a preferred alternative for North Mason Street, which may be very similar to existing conditions, similar to the Demonstration Project, or identify a different concept for changing the street. This study is anticipated to be completed in summer 2026, to allow the option to submit an application for funding through the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) SMART SCALE program, should the preferred alternative be a change that could be funded by this funding source.

Options

1. Complete the North Mason Street Corridor Study to identify a preferred alternative for North Mason Street.
2. Provide alternative direction.

Attachments

1. North Mason Demonstration Project Summary
2. Presentation