



City of Harrisonburg

City Hall
409 South Main Street
Harrisonburg, VA 22801

Meeting Minutes - Final Bicycle and Pedestrian Sub-Committee

Monday, September 22, 2025

6:00 PM

City Hall Room 11

1. Welcome and Introductions

In attendance at the meeting were subcommittee members Sumeet Gudi, Stephanie West, Jared Wark, John Bowers, Jay Dedman, David Ehrenpreis, and Transportation Safety & Advisory Commission member Kyle Lawrence. Also in attendance were city representatives Jakob zumFelde, Timothy Mason, James Polhamus, as well as JMU representative Valerie Kramer. New Public Works Outreach and Communications Specialist Maya Waid was also present and introduced to the subcommittee. The meeting was held at City Hall in Room 11.

Attachments: [2025-09 Subcommittee Presentation](#)

2. Public Comments

There were no public comments at this time.

3. Overview of Traffic Signal Operations

Timothy Mason presented a summary of traffic signal operations in the city, including an overview of signal timing, corridor coordination, and crosswalks. Jared Wark asked whether the city makes traffic signal operational changes on a fixed schedule or as needed. Timothy Mason responded that the city tries to evaluate and change each corridor roughly every 3 to 5 years but has the flexibility to make changes as needed. Jakob zumFelde added that signal timing changes along South High Street would be an upcoming example of this approach. Regarding how the city evaluates Measures of Effectiveness (MOE), Kyle Lawrence inquired about level of service (LOS) from the pedestrian perspective. Timothy Mason responded that pedestrian (LOS) is based on the average wait time and that lower cycle lengths, Ped-Recall and Rest-in-Walk can help improve this. Timothy Mason elaborated that the city tries to balance plenty of ped crossing time with vehicle throughput and cited weekend signal changes Downtown as a recent example of improving pedestrian level of service. Jakob zumFelde added that cycle length is the main driver that influences how long people wait at a traffic signal and that there are always tradeoffs when changes are made. Jakob zumFelde explained that Public Works staff calculates ped walk times based on ADA guidance which Timothy Mason articulated was roughly 3.5 feet per second. Stephanie West asked if it was possible to adjust signal timing based on the time of day. Timothy Mason responded that signal timing can be adjusted in various scenarios including by

time of day, day of week, when there's a crash, and more. Timothy Mason concluded that Public Works staff try to be proactive, look at every intersection, and want to hear from the public if they notice that an intersection has a signal detection issue.

4. Bicycle Signal Guidance

Jakob zumFelde explained that the city follows the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) and its Virginia supplement. He explained that while the MUTCD provides guidance on the use of bicycle signals, the Virginia MUTCD does not allow bike signals, pointing to state code. Jakob zumFelde said that this directly affects in-design protected bike lanes on both Port Republic Road and Liberty Street. Jakob zumFelde added that the city will instead install "Bikes use Ped Signal" signs at signalized intersections for both projects. Jakob zumFelde clarified that because the Port Republic Road cycle track is funded through the state's SMART SCALE program, the city must adhere to VDOT's rule of no bike signals or risk losing project funding. Green bike 'crosswalks' however, as part of both projects, will still be included.

Valerie Kramer expressed concern that Harrisonburg Police are currently ticketing bikers at the intersection of MLK Jr. Way and South Main Street who use the ped signal. Jakob zumFelde responded from discussions with Sgt. Westfall and the Harrisonburg Police, the understanding is that if a bicyclist is in the bike lane, they are considered a vehicle and must obey the traffic signal. However, if a bicyclist is on the sidewalk or shared use path, then they are considered a pedestrian and can use the ped signal to enter at the crosswalk. James Polhamus added that because both the Port Republic Road and Liberty Street cycle tracks would be physically separated facilities from the vehicle lane, a "bikes use ped signal" approach would be appropriate. Kyle Lawrence stated that he would like to see Leading Pedestrian Interval (LPI) used for the Liberty Street cycle track. Jakob zumFelde indicated that this is where things get complicated regarding Virginia's code, and his understanding from discussion with Sgt. Westfall (Harrisonburg Police Department) is that LPI would not be allowable. Timothy Mason responded that LPI is a program change and would be easy to include retroactively if allowed. Valerie Kramer and Stephanie West both articulated their desire to see enforcement consistency regarding bikes using ped signals in the city and expressed concern that the current Harrisonburg Police enforcement practice is disincentivizing biking for people in the city.

5. Current Transportation Studies

Jakob zumFelde presented information about various either completed or ongoing studies in the city. Jakob zumFelde clarified that he was mostly only going over the bike/ped components of these studies and that the full studies are all available on the city website. Regarding the Chicago Ave/Waterman Drive study, multiple

subcommittee members expressed interest over a short section of proposed shared use path connecting the existing Friendly City Trail to West Market Street in the proximity of Thomas Harrison Middle School. David Ehrenpreis inquired about the existing gravel path's use and asked if the city would consider a potential temporary measure to make the path more desirable. Jakob zumFelde responded that while the city could evaluate and consider upgrades to the existing path, it is currently a low priority due to better nearby alternatives. Jakob zumFelde added that if the approved Quarry Heights development is built, improving that connection will become a higher priority. Jakob zumFelde explained that the city does have a currently funded HSIP project to install a pedestrian crossing with RRFBs across West Market Street in anticipation of new sidewalk being built on the north side of the roadway. A member of the public inquired about the possibility of trimming back some bushes along Country Club Road to improve the visibility of walkers or bikers along the roadway. Jakob zumFelde responded that Public Works staff is willing to investigate small changes such as vegetation trimming that can have a significant impact on safety. Kyle Lawrence asked if there was funding for the accompanying stormwater component of the Chicago Ave/Waterman Drive study. Jakob zumFelde responded there is not currently, and that those improvements will be needed in conjunction of any transportation improvements made to either roadway.

Regarding the Port Republic Road/Peach Grove/ Neff Ave study, John Bowers asked if the project would be funded through a grant. Jakob zumFelde replied that Public Works staff anticipates an application for the study's preferred alternative in the next round of SMART SCALE. Regarding the Erickson Ave Area study, Kyle Lawrence asked if there were any current development proposals for the area where the North-South connector and East-West connector are proposed. Jakob zumFelde responded that he isn't aware of specific proposals, but the Community Development Department may be aware of things that he is not. One of the study's recommended transportation improvements eliminates the existing bike lanes on South High Street north of the Erickson Ave intersection to make room for a second left turn lane. Jakob zumFelde explained that staff are okay with losing this bike lane due to it being short, disconnected, and used pretty much exclusively by high confidence bikers who ride largely in the vehicle lanes anyway. Jakob zumFelde listed a proposed sidewalk on the west side of South High Street as well as multiple recommended typical sections within the study area that will include bike/ped accommodations as helpful in mitigating this change and expanding overall bike/ped connectivity in this part of the city. Jakob zumFelde also provided updates regarding the Vine Street STARS study and the Virginia Ave (Rt. 42) Pipeline Study, both of which are being undertaken by VDOT and have planned public engagement for later this fall.

Lastly, James Polhamus provided an update on the Railroad Crossing Elimination Planning Grant the city was awarded and recent signed with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA). James Polhamus explained that the study will examine the feasibility of relocating 3.1 miles of the Elkton-Dayton Line (EB) railroad that currently runs east/west through the city and JMU, to serve industrial areas in the northern part of the city and the county. There is a total of 19 at-grade crossings that could be eliminated if the railroad is relocated. James Polhamus added that if the railroad was relocated, the existing ROW could be converted into a shared-use path (rail trail). A member of the public asked if there would be any discussions with the railroad as part of this study. James Polhamus responded that communication with the railroad is expected throughout the process and that public engagement for the study will likely take place in Mid-2026.

6. Project Updates – see attachment

Jakob zumFelde shared that the Country Club Road sidewalk was nearly complete with the goal of having it open by Bike, Walk, and Roll to School Day. A member of the public asked if there are any potential upgrades planned for Country Club Road north of Linda Lane. Jakob zumFelde responded that the corridor is on the city's radar for a future study and that the upcoming Interstate 81 widening project through the city will rebuild the bridge over Country Club Road - his understanding is that this will provide more room to accommodate future bike/ped improvements.

Attachments: [2025-09 Project Updates](#)

7. Other Business/Announcements

Jakob zumFelde announced that the city's Safe Streets for All (SS4A) grant is anticipated to be signed within the coming days. Jakob zumFelde also announced that Bike, Walk, Roll to School Day to school day will be on October 8. Jakob zumFelde next explained that the city will be adding interim safety measures at the Neff Ave crosswalk at the entrance to the JMU Arboretum to ensure people walking and biking are looking both ways when crossing the roadway. Multiple subcommittee members articulated the problem of vehicles speeding on Neff Ave and asked if additional measures such as roadway paint, advance warning, enforcement, or speed radar signs could also be added. Jakob zumFelde responded that Public Works staff will check in with Harrisonburg Police about enforcement of excessive speed but expressed optimism that the permanent solution, which will be installed in Summer 2026, will significantly improve bike/ped safety at the crossing. Stephanie West asked about the status of the survey data relating to the North Mason Street Temporary Demonstration Project. Jakob zumFelde responded that staff are working on a summary of the survey data to be made public. Jakob zumFelde emphasized that some of the concerns from those who responded to the study were the result of the appearance and limitations of the temporary project, and any permanent project would be different from the demonstration project. Jakob zumFelde announced that Public Works hired a new

transportation planner who will start in October. Jakob zumFelde also stated that there will be no Bike/Ped subcommittee meeting in October due the unexpected delay in having the SS4A agreement signed and that the next Bike/Ped subcommittee meeting will be in December. Kyle Lawrence lastly announced that a second round of the public meetings regarding VDOT's ongoing Shenandoah Rail-with-Trail study will be held at multiple locations later this fall.

Adjournment