



# City of Harrisonburg, Virginia

OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT  
320 EAST MOSBY ROAD  
HARRISONBURG, VIRGINIA 22801  
(540) 434-5928

STREET MAINTENANCE  
TRAFFIC ENGINEERING  
TRANSPORTATION PLANNING  
REFUSE/ RECYCLING  
CENTRAL STORES

TO: Kurt Hodgen, City Manager

FROM: Thomas Hartman, PE, Assistant Director of Public Works

DATE: September 26, 2017

RE: Resolution for VDOT Transportation Alternatives Program Grants

**Summary:** The Public Works Department is requesting City Council consider adopting a Resolution for three (3) projects to compete for a VDOT Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) grants.

**Background:** The TAP program is a reimbursement program administered by VDOT that may be used for projects that meet certain criteria for enhancing surface transportation for non-motorized modes of travel. The program funds up to 80% of the project, and requires a 20% minimum match by the locality. Following this round of applications, the TAP schedule is moving to a two-year schedule. The next application cycle will be in the fall of 2019. Pending City Council approval, Public Works will prepare the following three applications to compete for funds:

Phase III of the Downtown Streetscape Project: This project is part of a comprehensive hardscape and landscape project that will enhance the beauty, vitality, and safety of Harrisonburg's downtown historic district. The enhancements will improve the downtown walkability, street infrastructure, and aesthetics. This project will include a complete reconstruction of sidewalks, crosswalk enhancements including pedestrian signals, traffic signals, signage, curb and gutter, and utility work along both sides of US Route 11 (Main Street) between Elizabeth Street and Wolfe Street. The improvements will follow the design guidelines included in the Downtown Streetscape Plan ([www.harrisonburgva.gov/downtown-streetscape-plan](http://www.harrisonburgva.gov/downtown-streetscape-plan)), including brick sidewalks and decorative crosswalks and traffic signals. See attached sketch.

This project is a major component of the City's Downtown Streetscape Plan, which identifies strategic public investments that contribute to the economic strength and vibrancy of the downtown district, and is included by reference as part of the City's Comprehensive Plan and Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan. Phase I of the project was completed in 2009, and Phase II was completed in 2014.

This project was awarded \$469,332 in TAP funds in 2015, with \$117,333 provided in local matching funds. However, all bids received were significantly over budget, and the project could not be built without additional funding. This grant application is being made to obtain the additional \$283,075 necessary to build the project, by requesting \$226,460 from the TAP program, with a local match of \$56,615.

Federal Street Shared Use Path: This project includes design and construction of a shared use path on Federal Street, from E. Market Street to E. Elizabeth Street, as the first step in transitioning Federal Street from a two-way local street in downtown Harrisonburg with substandard biking and walking features, to a one-way local street with a shared use path on the west side and sidewalk on the east side. The project concept was adopted in the City's 2014 Downtown Streetscape Plan, in the 2017 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, and in the Northend Greenway conceptual plan. These plans are incorporated by reference in the City's

Comprehensive Plan. The Federal Street shared use path is planned to connect the Northend Greenway to the Bluestone Trail by way of downtown, to eventually provide a seamless, dedicated north/south bicycle and pedestrian route in the City of Harrisonburg. Design elements specified in the Downtown Streetscape Plan will be used on this project. See attached sketch.

This project was initiated because development occurring on this block will require frontage improvements, as specified in the City's Design and Construction Standards Manual. An agreement with the property owner was negotiated in which Public Works would apply for a TAP grant for this project, and the property owner would contribute engineering costs that would count towards the 20% required local matching funds. The estimated total project cost is \$399,915. The grant request will be for \$319,932, with \$79,983 in local matching funds, less the provided engineering costs.

Park Road Pedestrian Improvements Project: This project includes the enhancement of Park Road with aesthetic and safety features through the Eastern Mennonite University (EMU) campus to ultimately create a safer and more attractive environment for pedestrians in this high pedestrian volume area. Specific improvements include the widening of two decorative stamped asphalt crosswalks, upgrading of two additional crosswalks to decorative style, and the addition of one new crosswalk, all with ADA compliant curb ramps, and all crosswalk sign posts to include retroreflective panels. Also included are flashing beacons on school zone advanced warning signs at the perimeter of campus, and a Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon with passive detection and actuation at the highest volume crosswalk. See attached sketch.

Pedestrian improvements to Park Road were requested by EMU administration after a student was struck by a vehicle in the University Commons crosswalk in 2016. Public Works and EMU met to discuss and price various options in the winter and summer of 2017. The total estimated project cost is \$143,990. The grant request is for \$115,192, with \$28,798 in local matching funds. EMU has agreed to provide all matching funds for the project, in return for the City applying for and administering the grant and project, and assuming the long-term maintenance of the infrastructure.

**Key Issues:** None.

**Environmental Impact:** None foreseen. Environmental documents will be prepared for all funded projects, as the funds are of federal origin.

**Fiscal Impact:**

Phase III of the Downtown Streetscape Project: The 20% local match is \$56,615.

Federal Street Shared Use Path: The 20% required local match is \$79,983.

Park Road Pedestrian Improvements Project: The 20% local match is \$28,798. All of the match will be provided by EMU.

**Prior Actions:**

Phase III of the Downtown Streetscape Project: This project was awarded \$469,332 in TAP funds in 2015, with \$117,333 provided in local matching funds. However, all bids received were significantly over budget, and the project could not be built within the available budget.

Federal Street Shared Use Path: A signed agreement to cost-share has been obtained from the property owner.

Park Road Pedestrian Improvements Project: None.

**The City With The Planned Future**

**Alternatives:** None.

**Community Engagement:**

Phase III of the Downtown Streetscape Project: The Downtown Streetscape Plan that identified this project as a need was adopted in July, 2014. Two public meetings were held in 2013 for public involvement and feedback during plan development. A public hearing regarding the 2015 grant application was in October, 2015.

Federal Street Shared Use Path: The Downtown Streetscape Plan that identified this project as a need was adopted in July, 2014. Two public meetings were held in 2013 for public involvement and feedback during plan development. The Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan that identified this project as a need was adopted in 2017. Public meetings and focus groups were held in 2015 and 2016 for public involvement in the plan development. The Northend Greenway concept plan was adopted in 2013. The project was born out of a citizen-led initiative. Citizens continue to raise funds to partner with the City on amenities for the greenway.

Park Road Pedestrian Improvements Project: Public Works has met and corresponded with EMU administration and staff multiple times since late 2016 to develop this project. One of the five crosswalks was identified for needed improvement in the 2017 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. Public meetings and focus groups were held in 2015 and 2016 for public involvement and feedback into the development of the plan.

A public hearing will be held at the September 26, 2017 City Council meeting for public input on these grant application.

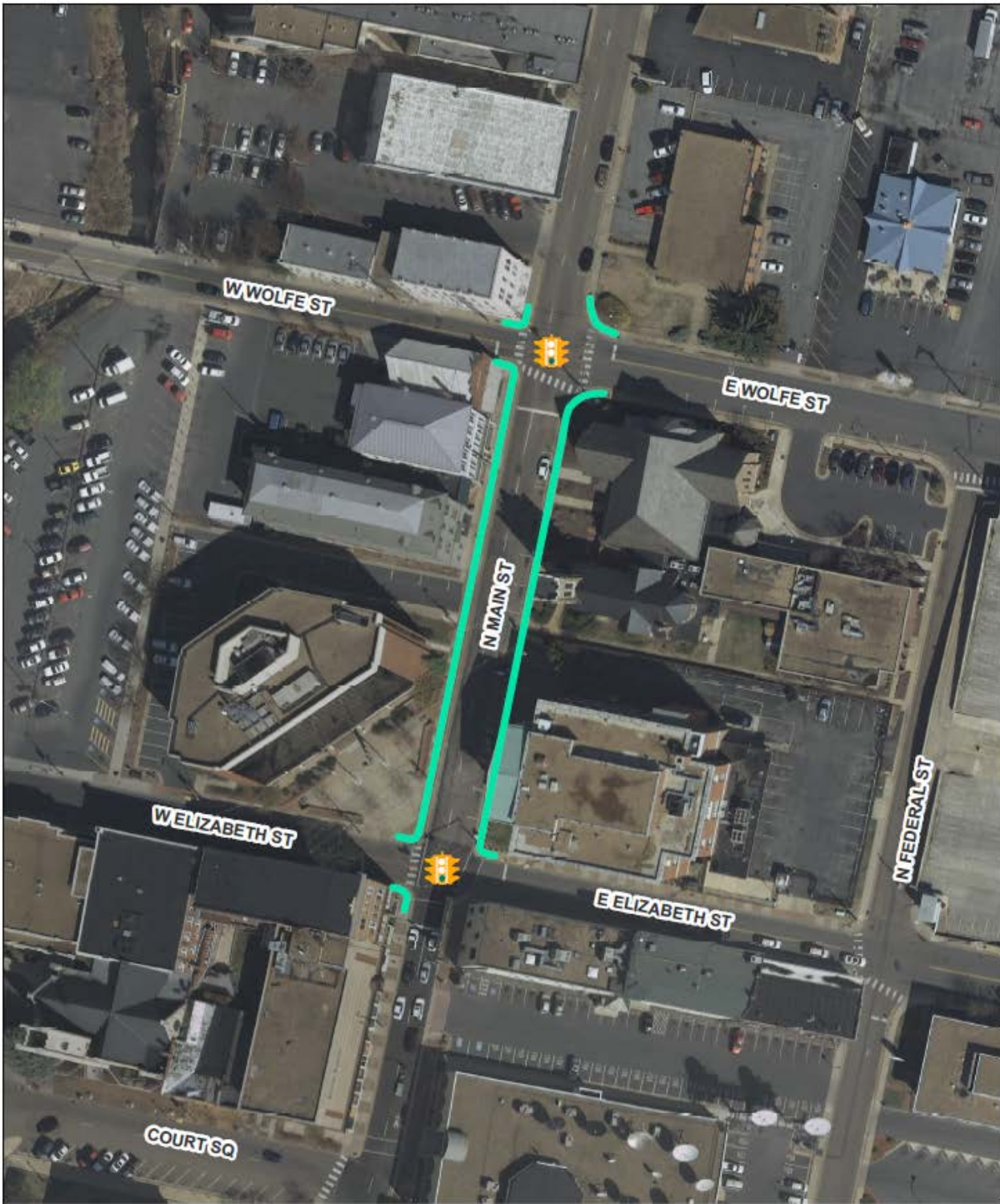
**Recommendation:** Adopt Resolution.

**Attachments:** Graphic representations of each project.

**Review:**

*The initiating Department Director will place in Legistar, in sequence of transmittal, the names of each department that must initial their review in order for this item to be placed on the City Council agenda. The completion of review only addresses the readiness of the issue for Council consideration. This does not address the recommendation for approval or denial of the issue.*

Phase III of the Downtown Streetscape Project:



**Legend**  
— Sidewalk Replacement  
Traffic Signal Replacement

**Main Street Streetscape - Phase 3**  
Project Detail

0 50 100 Feet

**The City With The Planned Future**

Federal Street Shared Use Path:



**The City With The Planned Future**

Park Road Pedestrian Improvements Project:

