



**BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN SUBCOMMITTEE
OF THE TRANSPORTATION SAFETY & ADVISORY COMMISSION
CITY OF HARRISONBURG, VIRGINIA**

TO: Bicycle & Pedestrian Subcommittee Members

FROM: Thanh Dang, Public Works Planner

DATE: July 26, 2011

RE: Bicycle & Pedestrian Subcommittee Meeting Summary for Monday July 25, 2011

The Bicycle & Pedestrian Subcommittee met on Monday July 25, 2011 at 6:00pm in the Community Development classroom, 409 South Main Street, Harrisonburg. Meetings are always open to the public and citizens are encouraged to attend.

Members present included: Thomas Jenkins and Carl Droms.

Advisory members, and guests present included: Thanh Dang (Public Works), Adam Fletcher (Planning & Community Dev.) Bill Blessing (Transportation Safety & Advisory Commission), Lee Eschelman (JMU), Nicolas Detweiler-Stoddard (EMU/Northend Greenway), Zenaida Hall (Tourism), Karl Shank, John Roller, Travis Layman (Rockingham Co. Bike Advisory), and Erin Layman.

1. Special Presentation: Harrisonburg Tourism

Zenaida Hall introduced herself as Harrisonburg Tourism's Marketing and Media Coordinator. She distributed a handout (see Attachment B), which details resources and partnerships between Harrisonburg Tourism and bicycling. She went over the handout and encouraged Subcommittee members and citizens to contact her if they have additional resources and information to share that can be added to Tourism's website and resources at the Hardesty Higgins House Visitors Center.

Harrisonburg Tourism has touted the Harrisonburg area's bicycling resources for several years now, creating a positive image of Harrisonburg as a bicycling destination. Ms. Hall requested Subcommittee and citizen assistance with developing a comprehensive listing of annual bicycling events in our area for the Harrisonburg Tourism website. This listing would help attract new and returning visitors to the Harrisonburg area. She may be contacted at zenaidah@harrisonburgva.gov.

There was a group discussion about the economic benefits that bicycle tourism brings to our area. Ms. Hall also stated that she has been talking with Mr. Jenkins about acquiring data on bicycling events for an economic impact study for the Harrisonburg and Rockingham areas.

Ms. Hall commented that Rocktown Trails at Hillendale Park has been a great media talking point and engages a broader audience into mountain biking. She also shared a copy of Spokes Magazine that features “Biking Battlefields”, and idea she also would like to see promoted in the Harrisonburg-Rockingham area. We have an area rich in Civil War history.

Mr. Blessing asked if gaps in infrastructure were identified when the bicycling routes were identified for bikethevalley.org’s website. He is specifically interested in coordination between bikethevalley.org’s efforts with City bike planning, Rockingham County bike planning, and MPO bike planning. Ms. Dang noted that bikethevalley.org is managed by the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission (CSPDC) who also staffs the Rockingham-Harrisonburg MPO (HRMPO).

Mr. Layman, introduced himself as a member of the Rockingham County Bicycle Advisory Committee that is working to create bylaws for a future Rockingham County Bicycle Committee. The committee will be presenting the proposed bylaws to the Rockingham County Board of Supervisors in August. Ms. Dang provided an overview of the HRMPO Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan and added that she believes the plan is on hold until Rockingham County has established their next steps.

Ms. Dang stated that most of the routes identified on bikethevalley.org are routes for on road bicycling that have not had improvements made to them for bicyclists and therefore are primarily used by more experienced bicyclists. She believed that City, County, and MPO planning would focus on improving and building new facilities to provide the general population and families with opportunities to bike for transportation and recreation. There was a group discussion that area tourism would benefit from any new bicycling facilities that were developed.

Harrisonburg Tourism’s bicycling information resources can be found here: <http://www.harrisonburgtourism.com/Bicycling-Cycling-Mountain-Biking>. Ms. Hall can be contacted at zenaidah@harrisonburgva.gov.

2. New Bike Lanes – Lucy Drive, South Avenue

Ms. Dang presented that new bike lanes have been installed on Lucy Drive between Reservoir Street and Evelyn Byrd Avenue, and on South Avenue between South High Street and South Main Street.

Ms. Dang distributed a postcard that was mailed to residents on South Avenue explaining the line markings, noting to the group that this is different than street markings seen previously in the City (see Attachment C). On South Avenue, between the railroad tracks close to High Street to Rockbridge Circle cars are permitted to park on the south side of the street. The bike lane next to the park cars is 6-ft wide; the minimum requirement is 5-ft. Parking is not permitted on the north side of the street. The bike lanes have a bicyclist symbol on the pavement. Harrisonburg Police has been informed of this new configuration.

There was discussion of whether this configuration would be done on other streets. Ms. Dang explained that it could be done on other streets that are wide enough. However, for streets that currently permit on street parking, a petition would be needed from a majority of residents (>75%, but preferred 100%)

living on the street acknowledging that they support removal of on street parking on one side of the street.

3. Trail Lighting

Mr. Jenkins provided an overview of the trail lighting discussion from the last Subcommittee meeting.

Ms. Dang reported that she spoke with Arlington County staff and emailed with representatives from the Hawksbill Greenway in Luray.

Arlington County does not have a lighting policy for trails. Most (possibly all but one) of Arlington County's trails are not lit. They have a policy that all parks are closed at dusk, but it is not really enforced on trails. There also has not been a large outcry from citizens to add lighting.

The Hawksbill Greenway had researched potential cost and related problems regarding lighting, and did not install lighting with their project. They have had several requests from trail users who commute at twilight for lighting, but there are not plans yet to add trail lighting.

Ms. Dang had also met with Brian O'Dell, Harrisonburg Electric Commission (HEC) and explained the difficulty of installing lighting on a project like the Northend Greenway because there currently are no power lines near most of the trail corridor. It would be costly to extend power along the trail.

There was a group discussion regarding cost versus benefits of trail lighting. Comments were made that the Subcommittee did not wish to stall or halt a trail project with lighting requirements, that funds used for trail lighting could be used to extend longer sections of trail, etc. There was general agreement that lighting would be needed at intersections with roadways and other trails. There was also discussion that some businesses adjacent to a trail may wish to have lighting on the trail. Lighting on trails may need to be determined on a case-by-case basis and/or made optional. In either case, for long-term maintenance a standard for light fixtures should be developed for optional lighting.

Ms. Dang will follow up with Brian O'Dell for standard light fixtures. Because 3 Subcommittee members were not present at this meeting, it was agreed by those present that the Subcommittee will meet together offline to discuss this matter further. It was acknowledged that the Northend Greenway group will need some direction on this issue as soon as possible as they continue their design and discussions with property owners.

4. Bicycle Friendly Community Feedback & Walk Friendly Communities

Ms. Dang reviewed the feedback received from the League of American Bicyclists on Harrisonburg's Spring 2011 Bicycle Friendly Community Application, for which the City received Bronze designation. Mr. Jenkins stated that it was nice to see that we are already working on some of the gaps identified in the feedback, e.g. increasing bike lanes, increasing secure bike parking, starting a bicyclists and motorist ticket diversion program, considering to conduct an economic impact study on bicycling, etc. The City will have to reapply for the award in 5 years.

Ms. Dang presented the Walk Friendly Communities Award, which is an assessment tool and award that mirrors the Bicycle Friendly Community Award. It also recognizes the 5E's (engineering, education, encouragement, enforcement, and evaluation). Ms. Dang asked if the Subcommittee is interested in

completing this application. Mr. Jenkins noted this application could help Harrisonburg better identify pedestrian gaps and programs needed to fill those gaps. Ms. Dang will begin working on the application and provide an update at the next meeting. More information about the Walk Friendly Community Award and application is available here <http://www.walkfriendly.org/>.

Mr. Jenkins asked Mr. Eschelman about the Bicycle Friendly University application and designation. Rich Harris, Kyle Lawrence, and Thanh Dang will be presenting to JMU's Institute for Stewardship of the Natural World's Campus Accessibility Committee on August 3rd.

5. Update for projects under design/construction (see Attachment A)

Ms. Dang brought attention to Attachment A and explained the West Bruce Street project, which is new to the list. Mr. Jenkins asked if there have been any complaints received about Bruce Street being reduced to one lane. The Traffic Engineering Division of Public Works has received some phone calls about traffic backing up on Bruce Street to the west, but Ms. Dang believed that delays on Bruce Street were only for a short window of time in the day and did not cause serious problems. Mr. Blessing acknowledged that the Transportation Safety & Advisory Commission expected this delay to occur. There was discussion and appreciation from the group for the new, wider sidewalks and improvements to Bruce Street.

Mr. Detweiler-Stoddard, with the Northend Greenway, provided an update. Initial engineering estimates for the project are \$1.1 million and New Community Project is beginning their fundraising campaign to raise \$300,000. They have been working on branding, logo, brochures and a website (www.NorthendGreenway.org). They have also been attending community events to get the word out and talking with landowners. On the whole, landowners are eager. The group has also initiated contact with the railroad. The group awaits resolution on the City's plans regarding whether or not there will be a new park at the end of Monroe Street behind Salvation Army. VMRC is interested in possibly extending the trail further to the north and EMU has been discussing opportunities to connect Park Woods trails with the Greenway.

Mr. Detweiler-Stoddard introduced Karl Shank, owner of The Natural Garden, who will be working on the stream restoration and riparian project surrounding the trail. It was noted that the trail and stream restoration projects will be coordinated together as they are able, but they will be funded separately and likely on a separate schedule for completion. Easements may also be pursued separately because they don't want to hold up the trail project. Mr. Shank stated that most of the trail follows Blacks Run, and there is a great opportunity to restore and create linear habitat, improve the health of Blacks Run, reduce flood waters downstream, and make the trail a beautiful destination for visitors. Jon Roller, with Ecosystem Services LLC, will be working with Mr. Shank on the stream restoration and riparian buffers. Mr. Roller added benefits to the Chesapeake TMDL requirements, stormwater management, and educational signage opportunities.

6. Pedestrian Signal Changes around JMU

Ms. Dang shared with the group changes to pedestrian signalization around JMU campus, namely at the intersections of South Main Street and Bluestone Drive, South Main Street and Grace Street, and Cantrell Avenue and Mason Street. Some changes have been implemented. All of these changes were recommended by the Transportation Safety & Advisory Commission. See Attachment D.

Other Business/ Announcements

7. Shenandoah Valley Bicycle Coalition's Business Bike Rack Grant Awards,
www.svbcoalition.org/bikerack

Mr. Jenkins reviewed that SVBC offered a bike rack grant and will be awarding bike racks to 5 local businesses. An announcement will be made shortly with a press release.

8. "Bikable Cities" Webinar with Mia Birk, July 22.

Although this webinar has already passed, Ms. Dang noted that Virginia First Cities who hosted the webinar has recorded it and will have it posted online. Ms. Dang will forward this information to the bike-ped email list when available (To see webinar, go here: <http://virginiafirstcities.com/>). Additionally, Virginia First Cities sent the City a complimentary copy of *Joyride: Pedaling Toward A Healthier Planet*, by Mia Birk, former Bicycle Coordinator for Portland OR. If anyone is interested in borrowing the book please contact Ms. Dang, thanhd@harrisonburgva.gov.

9. Block Party on the 'Burg, August 27, 6-10pm. Contact Basil Hangemanole to volunteer

Block Party on the 'Burg is an event downtown that welcomes back college students and offers them tours of downtown, giveaway, games, and is an opportunity also for education and outreach. Mr. Jenkins stated that Basil Hangemanole, with the Shenandoah Valley Bicycle Coalition, is organizing a display booth on bicycling at this event and is looking for volunteers to help set up and man the booth. If interested in helping contact Mr. Hangemanole at bhangy41@comcast.net.

10. New Bike Lanes on JMU Campus and Campus Closure

Mr. Eschelman announced that JMU has removed on street parking on Carrier Drive between Bluestone Drive and the I-81 bridge and has added bike lanes. There were compliments from the group on the addition of new bike lanes.

There were some questions about JMU campus closure. Mr. Eshelman explained the closures (see Attachment E).

Next Meeting: September 26 at 6pm in the Community Development Classroom, 409 South Main Street

Adjourn

Attachment A: Update on City Projects under design and construction

For the July 25, Bicycle & Pedestrian Subcommittee meeting:

PROJECTS UNDER CONSTRUCTION

- Safe Routes to School: Keister Elementary – Construct sidewalks on South Avenue between S. Dogwood Drive and S. Main Street, Central Avenue between South Avenue and Southampton Drive, and Maryland Avenue between S. High Street and Chestnut Drive. Includes pedestrian signals. Estimate cost: >\$450,000. Funded by VDOT SRTS Program and city funds.
 - UPDATE: Project completed! City staff working with contractors on final invoices.
- West Washington Street – reconstruct and add new sidewalks on the north side of West Washington Street between Liberty Street to the Blacks Run bridge close to Main Street. Curb and gutter also to be replaced. This project funded by the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). Contract price: \$113,000.
 - UPDATE: Construction underway by Contracting Unlimited. Project to be completed August 5.
- West Bruce Street – construct new sidewalk on Bruce Street between Liberty Street next to the Water Street Parking deck. Planter beds added between parking deck and sidewalk improves sight distance for vehicles pulling out of the parking deck onto Bruce Street and reduces vehicle and pedestrian conflict.
 - UPDATE: Construction underway by city forces.

PROJECTS UNDER DESIGN/ PLANNING

- Bluestone Trail Phase I – Construct a 10-ft wide shared use path between Port Republic Road at Bluestone Drive to Stone Spring Road across from RMH Wellness Center. Estimated cost: >\$600,000. No funding yet available.
 - UPDATE: The City has hired Rich Edwards/International Mountain Bicycling Association to provide consultation services on the concept plan and design of the trail. Mr. Edward's first deliverable, field reconnaissance information, is not anticipated to be received until mid-August.
- Chicago Avenue/ Mt. Clinton Pike Corridor Study – study focuses on Chicago Avenue from Gay Street to Mt. Clinton Pike, Mt. Clinton Pike from Lincolnshire Drive, just beyond the City line, to Virginia Avenue (VA Route 42), and Park Road and Parkwood Drive where they run through the campus of Eastern Mennonite University (EMU) and Eastern Mennonite High School (EMHS). The corridor study will develop recommendations for traffic, engineering, and land use for the corridor, along with a series of conceptual engineering sketches to initiate further engineering design for future roadway improvements. Public involvement documents and more information at www.ChicagoAvenue.org.
 - UPDATE: 91 public comments were received in April and May. City staff presented project update to City Council. City staff and consultants continue working on study. Study report to be completed in late-Summer 2011.

- Chicago Avenue/Mt. Clinton Pike Walking Path (Temporary Improvements) - construct and delineate a level, hard-surfaced walking path on the west side of Chicago Avenue from Greystone Street to Mt. Clinton Pike and on Mt. Clinton Pike from Park Road to the Common Grounds shopping center. Construction anticipated to begin 2012.
 - UPDATE: City right-of-way agent currently meeting with property owners to request donation of easements for the walking path.

- East Market Street Sidewalk Phase III – Construct a 5-ft wide sidewalk with 3-ft grass strip on south side of East Market Street between University Boulevard and Evelyn Byrd Avenue. Estimated cost: >\$212,000. Funded by VDOT Highway Safety Improvement Program.
 - UPDATE: Project design is completed and plans submitted to VDOT for final review. Construction anticipated to begin in Spring 2012.

- Safe Routes to School: Waterman Elementary School – Sidewalks on west side of Chicago Avenue between 2nd Street and Rockingham Drive, bike lanes on Chicago Avenue between Gay Street and Rockingham Drive, sidewalk on south side of 3rd Street between Collicello Street to Stuart Street, sidewalk on east side of Stuart Street, sidewalks on both sides of Virginia Avenue from about 2nd Street to 5th Street. Estimate cost: >\$500,000. Funded by VDOT SRTS Program and city funds.
 - UPDATE: Engineering design continues by city staff. Waiting for Right of way authorization from VDOT to begin right of way negotiations with property owners. Project construction anticipated to begin in Spring 2012.

- Thomas Harrison Middle School shared use path – Construct a path from Wyndham Wood Drive to Thomas Harrison Middle School and West Market Street. This project is in the planning phase and is not yet funded.
 - UPDATE: Thomas Jenkins has made contact with property owners on Wyndham Drive to initiate discussions. Bicycle & Pedestrian Subcommittee members and staff to meet onsite on July 18 to determine next steps.

- Trail Locator System Signage: City staff from Public Works, Parks & Rec, Fire, Police, Emergency Communications Center, IT, etc. working on a system for emergency locator signage for existing and new trails.
 - UPDATE: Dan Fadula and Rich Edwards will install flexible fiber posts at Rocktown Trails as time permits (may not be until Fall). Fire Department will review location of signs before stickers with emergency information are applied. For other city trails, Thank is still working on developing signage design sample for team review.

ATTACHMENT B: HARRISONBURG TOURISM HANDOUT



BIKING IN & AROUND HARRISONBURG

Harrisonburg Tourism's mission is to create economic opportunity for our community through the promotion of key tourism niche markets: Road Biking and Mountain Biking

Harrisonburg Tourism is committed to providing access to road biking and mountain biking trails information, re-direct visitors to services and related businesses in Harrisonburg, support promotion of cycling events in Harrisonburg and Rockingham County, market Harrisonburg as a cycling community and increase media coverage for Harrisonburg as a premier destination for cyclists.

Resources:

- This is Harrisonburg Tourism's bicycling webpage, <http://www.harrisonburgtourism.com/Bicycling-Cycling-Mountain-Biking>. Please contact Zenaida if you have suggestion for additions or improvements. This is a great opportunity to showcase bicycling in our region to visitors or potential visitors.
- Promotion of events through traditional media and social media - [Harrisonburg Tourism Press Room](#) and Facebook- <http://www.facebook.com/HarrisonburgTourism> Twitter <http://twitter.com/#!/HarrisonburgVA>
- Hardesty-Higgins House Visitor Center- redirect to City services and the Visitor Center provides printed routes, promotional materials to visitors and links from our webpage. Harrisonburg Rockingham Visitor Guide presence for cycling with 75,000 distributed annually.
- [Rocktown Trails at Hillendale Park](#) -This trail is a joint effort of volunteers and the International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA). The trail system offers three different levels of difficulty to appeal to a complete spectrum of runners, walkers and cyclists from novice to expert. This is a huge offering for families and beginner mountain bikers and is heavily promoted by the Visitor Center and marketing efforts.
- City of Harrisonburg, Harrisonburg Bicycle & Pedestrian webpage, www.harrisonburgva.gov/bikeped. You can find here information and weblinks to Harrisonburg's Bicycle Friendly Community Award, Bicycle & Pedestrian Subcommittee information, etc.
- [Shenandoah Valley Bicycle Coalition](#) is a 300-member strong organization that sponsors numerous rides and events throughout the year, advocacy, and trail work. They are also engaged in community planning, advocacy and safety. Events include the Annual Shenandoah

Valley Bicycle Festival held in July and the Annual Shenandoah Valley Century held in September. SVBC also host the Mountain Bike Festival in October.

Partnership:

- Bike the Valley, www.bikethevalley.org This was a grant investment awarded Tourism Marketing Funding from the Virginia Tourism Corporation. Harrisonburg Tourism along with regional partners including lead partner - the Central Shenandoah Valley Planning District Commission to produce resources and a rack card to drive visitation for cycling in the Valley to www.bikethevalley.org.
- This resource serves Harrisonburg, Rockingham, Augusta, Bath, Highland, and Rockbridge. The group has identified and mapped over 40 on-road bicycle routes throughout the region. These routes and associated information can be found on the website. The maps, including turn-by-turn directions and elevation profiles and are downloadable. Other important information can be found on the website including links to local bicycle clubs and shops, safety tips and rules of the road, bicycle tours and events as well as links to each of the cities and counties in the region. Please contact Phil Alexander, with CSPDC, at phil@cspdc.org if you are interested in helping or have information to share.
- Marketing –Tourism Rack Cards related to Bike The Valley. This is a resource for the Central Shenandoah Valley to drive visitation to their website. Electronic Rack Card attached – Distribution includes all Virginia State Welcome Centers, Canadian markets, partner sites throughout the Shenandoah Valley and requests for information.
- On the Road Promotions- State Welcome Centers, Events, Conferences and Tourism Blitz
- Marketing- Harrisonburg Tourism continues market Harrisonburg as destination in publications and on-line. The Tourism office offers buy-down opportunities for marketing in Spokes Magazine, Blue Ridge Outdoors and Breathe Magazine.

Blue Ridge Outdoors Magazine (BRO)-Demographics and circulation size and location-BRO is the largest outdoor sports magazine in the Southeast with a total circulation of 110,000 and a readership of 348,920 per issue. Seventy-four percent (74%) of BRO readers say they cycle frequently according to BRO.

Breathe Magazine- Bi-monthly women’s health and sports magazine – publishing adjusted for 2011 to 100,000 in annual distribution.

SPOKES Magazine- Demographics and circulation size and location - is distributed free of charge to health clubs, bicycle stores, fitness centers, triathlon stores, YMCAs, YWCAs, health food stores, athletic shoe stores, youth hostels, and at major bicycling events throughout the region- Central Pennsylvania/Baltimore/Washington/northern Virginia area- monthly magazine with 25,000 per issue and 75,000 in readership publishing 9 times a year.

Please send requests for event information, cooperative marketing opportunities, website resource comments and suggestions to Zenaida Hall at zenaidah@harrisonburgva.gov

Plan Your Adventure in **Harrisonburg, VA**



For heart-pumping outdoor recreation and the Valley's best local trails and road rides; plan your adventure in the Bicycle Friendly City. Home to annual cycling events, the Shenandoah Valley Century Ride, the DR100 Ride/Run/Walk and weekly cycling events.



Hardesty-Higgins House Visitor Center
Harrisonburg Tourism & Visitor Services
212 S. Main Street
Harrisonburg, VA 22801 | 540.432.8935



Bike the Valley resources available at the Hardesty-Higgins House Visitor Center or visit us online.

www.HarrisonburgTourism.com

Sample Ad from Spokes Magazine.

NOTICE: CHANGES TO SOUTH AVE



In an effort to make bicycling safer in our community, the City of Harrisonburg has added bike lanes on South Avenue with the recent street paving and maintenance project.

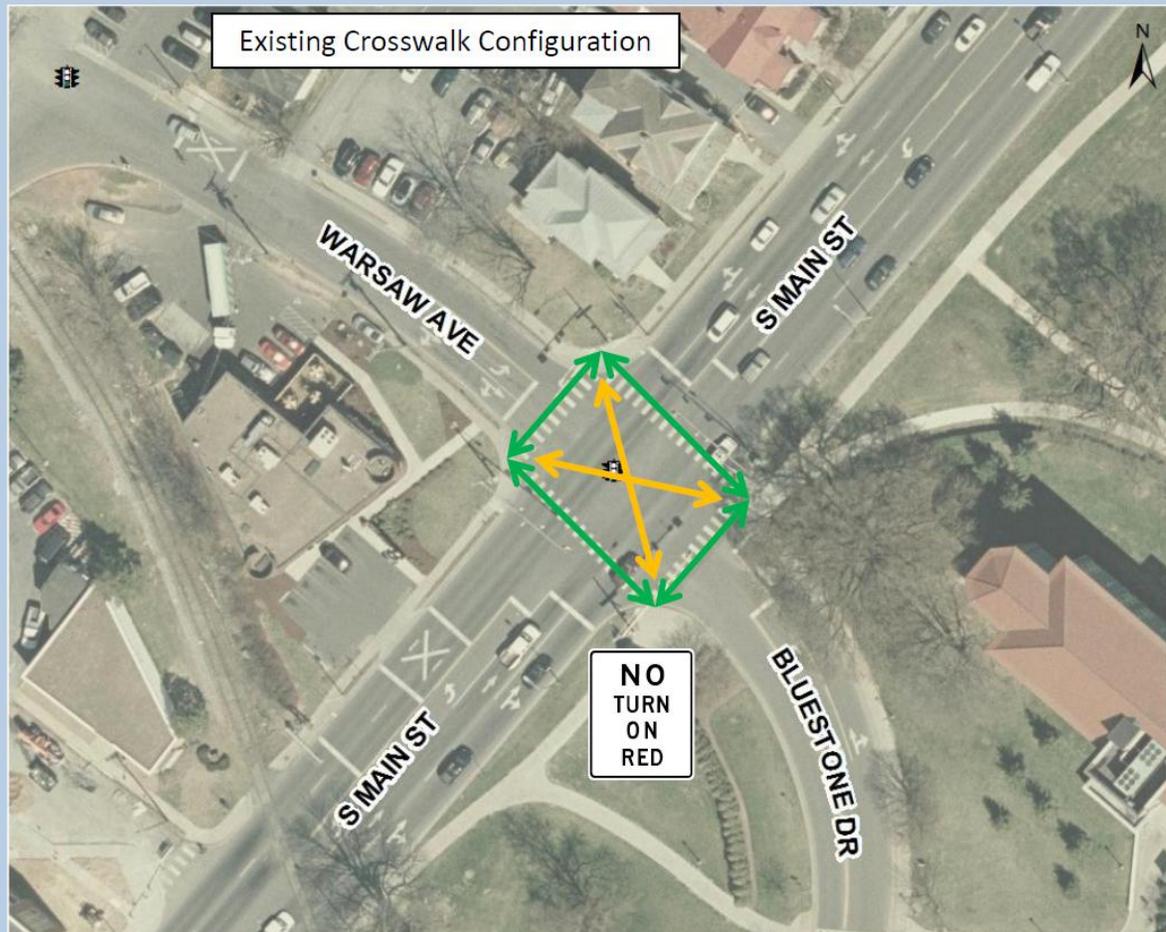
Between Rockbridge Circle and the railroad tracks closest to South High Street, vehicles may park in the area designated between the curb and the eastbound bike lane. Please watch for bicyclists when pulling in and out of the parking area.

Vehicles are prohibited from parking in the bike lane on the north side of South Avenue.

If questions, please call Thanh Dang at Harrisonburg Public Works. (540) 434-5928. Thank you!



S Main Street & Bluestone Drive Crosswalk Reconfiguration



S Main Street & Bluestone Drive Crosswalk Reconfiguration

Remove Exclusive Crosswalk Phase,
Pedestrians Use Standard Crosswalk Configuration
Allow Right Turn on Red for All Directions

Implement Leading Pedestrian Interval for Southern Leg



S Main Street & Grace Street

Modification of Right Turn on Red Restriction

Problem

Driver frustration with right turn on red restriction during periods when very few pedestrians are present



S Main Street & Grace Street

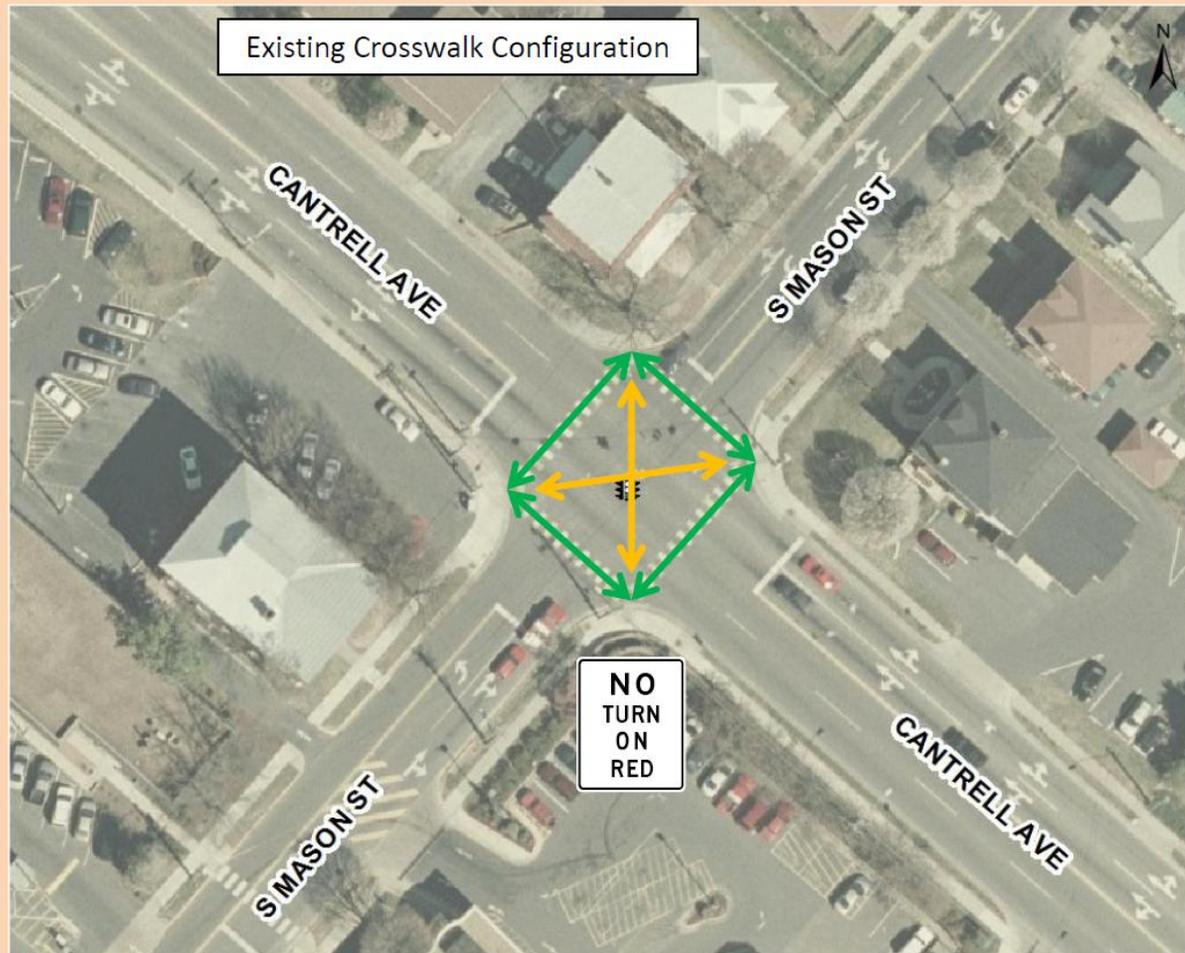
Modification of Right Turn on Red Restriction

Solution

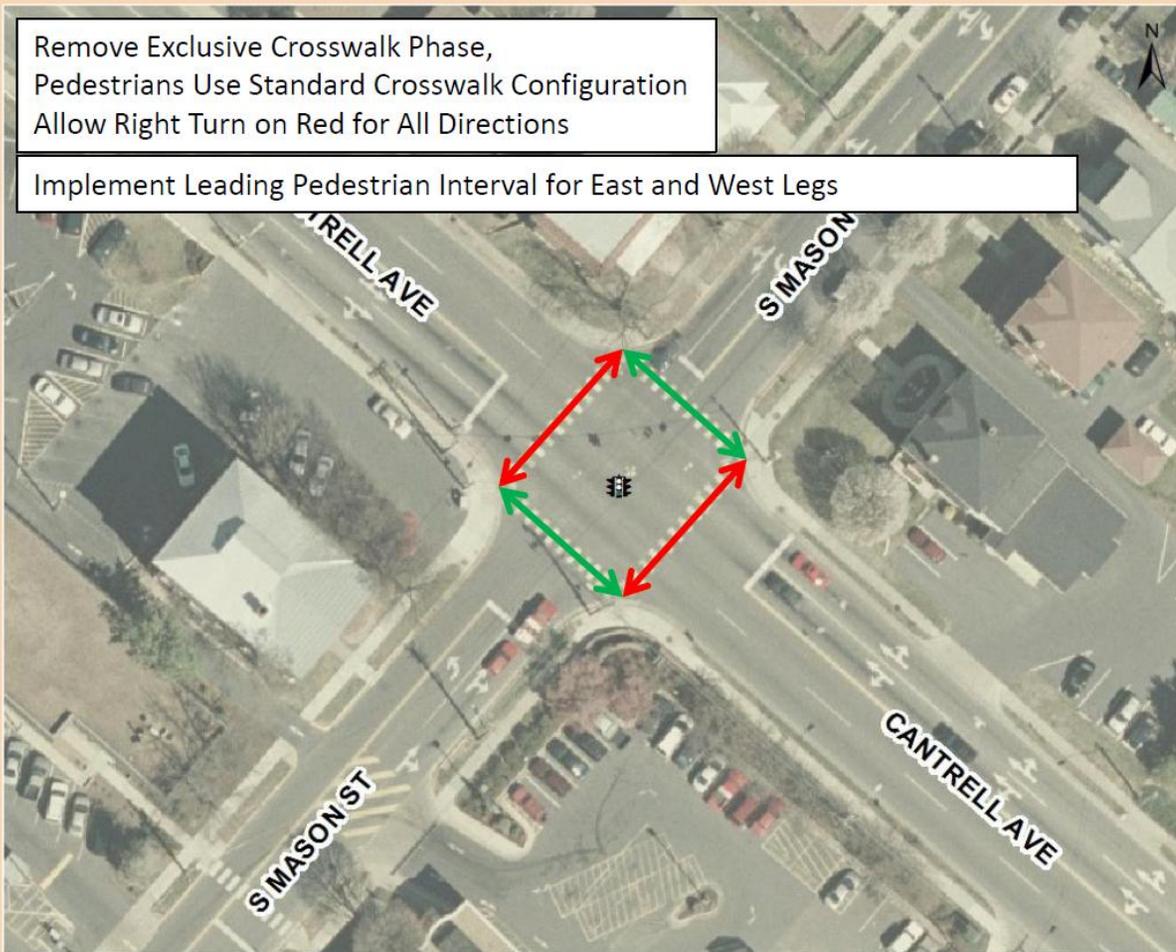
Allow right turn on red during evening hours when pedestrian volumes are minimal



S Mason Street & Cantrell Avenue Crosswalk Reconfiguration



S Mason Street & Cantrell Avenue Crosswalk Reconfiguration



ATTACHMENT E: CAMPUS GATE CLOSURE

