

MEMORANDUM

To: Steering Committee Meeting Attendees

From: Brian McPeters, Kimley-Horn

Date/Time: March 8, 2018 | 5:30pm to 7:30pm

Subject: E. High Streetscape Project
VDOT Project #U000-104-298/ UPC #109480
Steering Committee Meeting #1 Summary

PURPOSE

At the first Steering Committee meeting, members discussed the purpose of the committee and how other groups will be involved, identified factors for success, and established preliminary needs and priorities to inform the activities for the Streetscape Summit on April 21, 2018.

1. Established project background, history, process, and schedule
2. Discussed the approach to the April 21st Streetscape Summit

Agenda

5:30 to 6:00	<i>Presentation</i>	Project Overview <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Project History• Process and Schedule• Previous Plans• Existing Conditions
6:00 to 6:10	<i>Discussion</i>	Steering Committee – Overview and Introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Role of the Steering Committee• Introductions – One Word Activity with Discussion
6:10 to 7:10	<i>Facilitated Activities</i>	Streetscape Vision Existing Conditions Design Elements
7:10 to 7:15	<i>Presentation</i>	Next Steps <ul style="list-style-type: none">• MetroQuest Survey (opens mid-April)• Streetscape Summit (April 21, 2018)
7:15 to 7:30	<i>Public Comment</i>	

Summary

This was the first Steering Committee meeting between representatives from Kimley-Horn, the City of Charlottesville, and various neighborhood association and commission representatives for the East High Streetscape Project. Below is a brief description of the items discussed.

Project Overview

Project History

- This project is a smart-scale project with \$5.6 million budget. The focus of the project is streetscape design.
- The city would like to underground utilities, if possible. The differential cost between overhead to overhead relocation and overhead to underground will be considered a betterment to be paid for by the City.
- Improvements include reducing vehicular lanes down to one lane in each direction with a center turn lane at intersections and adding bike lanes and wider sidewalks.
- This project is a continuation of the Belmont Bridge Replacement project and directly connects to the Belmont Bride Replacement project at the intersection of 9th Street and E. Market Street.
- The foundation and planning for the East High Streetscape project was identified as part of the planning process for the City's Strategic Area Investment (SIA) plan, which is available on-line at the [Strategic Area Investment \(SIA\) plan website](#).

Process and Schedule

- The schedule begins with a 4- to 6-month period of public engagement and conceptual design.
- Public engagement activities will include an online MetroQuest survey and two large format public meetings (one Streetscape Summit in April and one Open House in June).
- The Streetscape Summit to be held on April 21, 2018 at City Space.
- The Open House will be held on a to be determined date in June. Location also is to be determined.
- A Public Hearing is expected in the Fall of 2018.
- Right-of-Way acquisition is expected to start in 2019, followed by construction in 2020.
- Construction activities will be coordinated with the Belmont Bridge project because a portion or entirety of the construction duration will overlap.

Existing Conditions

Keith Aimone (KH) discussed the existing conditions of the project. Keith noted that the corridor can be divided into three context zones based on uses in the streetscape. Kimley-Horn will be mindful of these context zones and how they affect the character and design of the streetscape. The technical committee noted that consideration also needs to be given to how future redevelopment will affect the corridor. The potential influence of redevelopment (i.e. zoning changes, etc.) and the varying adjacent zoning districts is important. Kimley-Horn mentioned that it would be easy to show building location changes from built condition to future condition on typical sections.



Brian McPeters also walked through each project intersection within the project limits and established a baseline rating for each intersection’s ability to move traffic, existing traffic queues, bicycle accommodations and pedestrian accommodations. It was noted that Kimley-Horn will be evaluating the feasibility and warrants for removal of the existing signal at E. Market Street and 7th Street.

Facilitated Activities

The meeting included three facilitated activities. The intent of this portion of the meeting was two-fold. First, the discussions provided insight into issues, needs, and considerations for the design process. Second, the activities provided a preview of activities planned for the Streetscape Summit.

One Word

During introductions, committee members were asked to use one word to describe the study corridor today and one word to describe their ideal vision for the future.

Today	In the Future
Utilitarian	Bike-Friendly
Challenging	Safe & Friendly
Messed-up	Beauty (Gateway)
Sub-urban	Urbane
Suburban	Walkable
Disjointed	Enjoyable
Forgotten	Threshold
Mixed-Use	Entrance
Hodge-Podge	Tree-Lined

S. C. O. R. E.

The second activity led by Jonathan Whitehurst consisted of each committee members identifying Strengths, Challenges, Opportunities, Risks, and Expectations. The purpose of the activity was to spur conversation among the committee and to explore the overlaps between the strengths/opportunities and challenges/risks. The following table summarizes recurring themes:

Strengths

Location	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proximity to downtown • Wide right-of-way • Mixed-use neighborhoods, mixed income residences, big and small homes
Connections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connecting downtown to residential areas • Linking different areas of the city
Aesthetics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce a visual streetscape that announces arrival to the central business district
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement more Streets That Work designs • Potential for a strong corridor • Opportunity to make improvements • Building upon the new bridge design



Challenges

Traffic Flow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining traffic flow on fewer lanes • Reconfiguring the Lexington/East High intersection
Multimodal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing pedestrian and bike flow • Enhancing bicycle and pedestrian safety and mobility through and across the corridor
Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gathering input from a cross section of the community • Managing expectations
Land Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attracting more density • Keeping the corridor from becoming a commercial corridor
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dealing with existing structures, driveways, intersections, and utilities • Coordinating with Belmont Bridge project

Opportunities

Travel Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encouraging other travel modes without sacrificing traffic flow • Offering better options for walking and biking travel as density increases • Providing more pedestrian accommodations such as benches and trash cans • Encouraging development (shops, restaurants, coffee shops) to get more people walking
Gateways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a proper entry point to the downtown Historic District • Coordinating with and enhancing the Belmont Bridge project
Aesthetics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beautifying the corridor • Burying utilities
Lasting Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making long-term improvements to the corridor • Providing a basis for community and government consensus on future development of area/corridor • Making the corridor more urban • Setting city standards for future projects (e.g., street furniture, lighting, signage)

Risks

Traffic and Travel Options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overcompensating for one use • Continued/increased evolution of corridor as an urban (semi-) expressway • Attracting more development and the resulting traffic
Disconnects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible disconnect between transportation/infrastructure and redevelopment of SIA area • “One and Done” community consultation • Could feel piece meal without other projects • Transition from end of project to Free Bridge • Limited interaction with property owners
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unintended consequences • Lack of funding for all desired improvements

Expectations

<p>Travel Options</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easier to walk and bike without sacrificing traffic flow • Making transit more viable • Improved function and safety and lower travel speeds • A good place to be whether you live along the corridor or only experience it as an entrance to downtown.
<p>Connectivity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vital and necessary transportation route that also enhances the urban/residential environment • To be safely multimodal connection from bridge and downtown and neighborhoods to the north and east • Walkable access to Belmont and downtown • Extending the project to Free Bridge
<p>Land Use and Urban Design</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixed retail/commercial/residential along corridor • Attractive transition between downtown and residential neighborhoods • Coordinating with comprehensive plan and other City processes

Design Elements

Given the constraints (e.g., budget and space) of the project, it will be important to have the public and stakeholders weigh in on priorities and tradeoffs. During the Streetscape Summit and as part of the online survey, participants will be asked to prioritize a series of design elements. The technical committee was asked to review a preliminary set of design considerations, indicate the importance of each category. Finally, committee members were asked to rank the categories. They were given the option to add a category if desired. This activity helped the project team better understand the design considerations, particularly how priorities and tradeoffs should be communicated to and evaluated by the public.

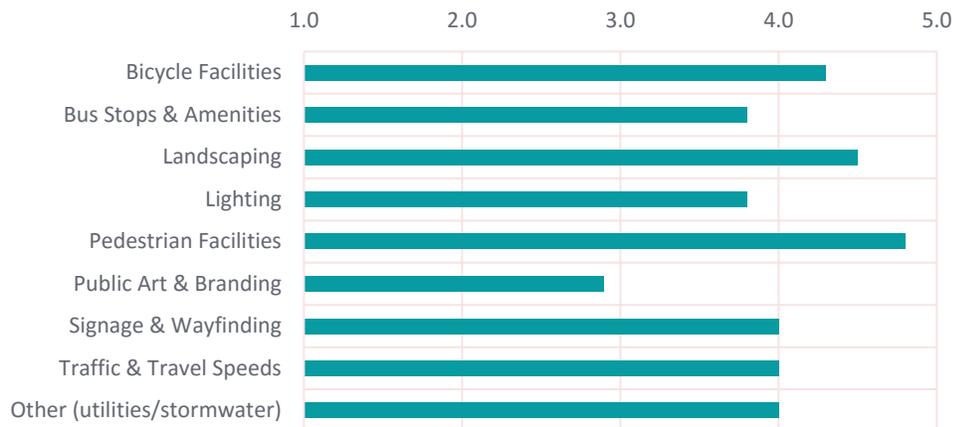
The eight design considerations were:

- Community Gateway
- Improved Approaches
- Innovative Design
- Landscaping
- Lighting
- Multimodal Design
- Scenic Viewsheds
- Travel Speeds

On a scale of 1 to 5 (with 1 being not important at all and 5 being very important), participants identified Pedestrian Facilities, Landscaping, and Bicycle Facilities as the most important considerations. This compared favorable to the feedback received from the Technical Committee, which ranked Bicycle Facilities, Pedestrian Facilities, Bus Stops & Amenities, and Lighting as most important.



Importance (Steering Committee)



When asked to rank the design considerations, the same three categories remained at the top of the list (Pedestrian Facilities, Bicycle Facilities, and Landscaping).

Ranking	Design Consideration	Average
1	Pedestrian Facilities	1.40
2	Bicycle Facilities	3.70
3	Landscaping	3.80
4	Traffic & Travel Speeds	4.56
5	Lighting	4.89
6	Signage & Wayfinding	4.89
7	Bus Stops & Amenities	5.30
8	Other (utilities/stormwater)	7.00
9	Public Art & Branding	7.22

This activity served a dual purpose of helping the project team understand how to communicate the design considerations to the public as part of the Streetscape Summit and the MetroQuest survey. In particular, the committee encouraged a clear definition for the Traffic & Travel Speeds category by referencing slower (or safer) travel speeds.

Agency Needs

- Utilities has a project on High
 - Consists of replacing the 6" line with at least a 12" line from Market St. to 250
 - Possibly a 16 or 18" line
- ADA notes difficulty crossing at 9th. There are missing curb cuts and missing curb ramps
 - Issues also at 10 & Locust crossing

Questions & Concerns from Committee

- It was suggested the Kimley-Horn provide as much detail as possible regarding land acquisitions. Specificity on this topic is very important to the public.
- There was a question regarding the cost estimate to underground the utilities.
 - Kimley-Horn does not yet have a cost estimate for the duct bank needed to underground utilities.
- On facilitated activity #3, there should be clarification on wayfinding, signage, and lighting. There should also be clarification on traffic and travel speeds (i.e. safer travel speeds, control of traffic volume, efficient traffic flow).
- There is a need for signage for Summit in the neighborhoods
- A Steering Committee member asked if the City had a request for streetscape past 10th Street.
 - No

Public Comment

- There should be localized outreach to the public for the project. The City should expand meetings and reach out to the public at gatherings within neighborhoods such as at annual picnics or events.
- There should be additional/earlier walking tours during the Streetscape Summit to minimize conflicts with the Democratic Caucus occurring on the same day in the afternoon.

Name	Organization
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> David Katz	Belmont Carlton Neighborhood Association
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lena Seville	Bike and Pedestrian Advisory Committee
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rosamond Casey	Little High Neighborhood Association
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Greg Jackson	Little High Neighborhood Association
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Eberhard Jehle,	Martha Jefferson Neighborhood Association
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Michael Wheelwright	North Downtown Neighborhood Association
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lisa Green	Planning Commission and Entrance Coordinator
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Brian Menard	Tree Commission REP
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Carl Schwartz	BAR
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Keith Aimone	Kimley-Horn
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Brian McPeters	Kimley-Horn
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jonathan Whitehurst	Kimley-Horn
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Courtney Simpkins-Tuck	Kimley-Horn
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Tim Motesh</i>	<i>City of Charlottesville</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Brennen Duncan</i>	<i>City of Charlottesville</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	