

**CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA
CITY COUNCIL AGENDA**



Agenda Date:	March 2, 2020
Action Required:	Adoption of Resolution
Presenter:	Kyle Kling, Transportation Project Manager Brian Copeland, Timmons Groups
Staff Contacts:	Alex Ikefuna, NDS Director Tony Edwards, Development Services Manager Kyle Kling, Transportation Project Manager
Title:	Barracks Road/Emmet Street Smartscale Improvement Project – Resolution Confirming Conformance with City’s Comprehensive Plan & Authorization to Commence Final Design

Background:

An average of 23,000 vehicles and 13,000 vehicles travel along Emmet Street and Barracks Road respectively each day. Based on the annual growth in background traffic volumes and recently completed in-fill developments at this intersection, operational performance has continually degraded over the last several years and created an increasingly unsafe bicycle and pedestrian environment. To improve these conditions, the City of Charlottesville applied for, and was awarded more than \$8.6 million through the Virginia Department of Transportation SMARTSCALE prioritization process to implement multimodal transportation improvements at the Barracks Road/Emmet Street intersection. The scope of improvements to be implemented as a condition of receiving these funds generally include the following improvements:

- Improve overall level of services (LOS) and reduce queue lengths at the Emmet Street/Barracks Road intersection by implementing the following improvements:
 - Addition of a northbound dedicated right turn lane on Emmet Street.
 - Creation of an additional dedicated left turn lane on westbound Barracks Road, which will allow for overlapping (simultaneous) eastbound and westbound dual left turn movements.
 - Traffic signal modifications, including enhanced signal timings, to better control vehicular and bike/ped movement through the intersection.

- Create a safer bicycle and pedestrian environment by implementing the following:
 - Improved median widths on all intersection approaches to provide acceptable pedestrian refuge.
 - Extend a shared use path north along Emmet Street and east on Barracks Road for a future trail connection down Meadowbrook Road
 - Implement additional bicycle and pedestrian improvements on the south side of Barracks Road between Meadowbrook Road and Hilltop Road
 - Add a bus pull-off and shelter at the existing CAT stop located on eastbound Barracks Road at Meadowbrook Road.

A Request for Proposals was advertised that included the survey and design of these improvements, as well as the execution of an extensive public participation process. In April 2019, the City of Charlottesville contracted with Timmons Group, an engineering consulting firm, to develop plans for this project.

In addition to the design parameters established by the RFP, Timmons Group researched the City of Charlottesville Comprehensive Plan, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan and Streets That Work Plan. With a firm grasp of the project's purpose and need, in addition to the recommendations offered under these City guidelines, the project team began the public involvement process to solicit neighborhood ideas and feedback on improvement options.

Legal note (provided by L. Robertson, Chief Dep. City Attorney):

Pursuant to Va. Code §15.2-2232, the City's Comprehensive Plan controls the location, character and extent of each feature shown within the Plan, including transportation infrastructure (see Va. Code 15.2-2223(B)). Unless a public facility, public area or use is already shown within the Plan (except for extensions of streets and utilities authorized through the subdivision and site plan approval processes) then that facility may not be authorized, constructed, or established unless and until the general or approximate location, character and extent thereof has been submitted to and approved by the planning commission as being substantially in accord with the City's Comprehensive Plan. Following approval of a proposed project by the Planning Commission as being in accord with the Comprehensive Plan (Va. Code §15.2-2232) City Council may either accept or overrule the Commission's determination.

By the provisions of §15.2-2232, all of the following are subject to Comp Plan review: streets or connections to streets; widening, extension, enlargement of streets; change in use of existing streets; narrowing of streets and vacation of street ROW; new parks and other public areas; public buildings and structures; and public utilities.

Community Engagement:

To help guide the project, the City appointed a project Steering Committee. The process also involved coordination with the following stakeholder groups:

- Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee
- PLACE Design Task Force
- Planning Commission
- Tree Commission

The City of Charlottesville has provided multiple opportunities for the public to provide input into the plan development process. A project website, an on-line survey, individual property owner meetings, meetings with Boards and Commissions, two (2) community events (Public Workshop and Open House) and two (2) steering committee meetings occurred between May 2019 and November 2019. Information presented and gathered at the meetings can be found at www.barracksemmetimprovements.com, however a summary of each event is below:

Project Website:

The Project website (www.barracksemmetimprovements.com) contains information that has been presented to date as part of the process. Information presented includes:

- Project background
- General project scope
- A “project updates” page that provides access to information contained in the VDOT SMARTSCALE application, posting of meeting notices and information presented/gathered from community events and steering committee meetings
- A “contacts” page allowing written communication to be sent to the City PM

Community Event 1: Public Workshop, October 2, 2019

A Public Workshop was held on Wednesday, October 2nd at Walker Upper Elementary School from 5:30 PM to 7:00 PM. The event was set up as an interactive workshop designed to gather input on the project from City and consultant representatives. The event was organized with two (2) exhibit viewing areas, each displaying the same information. Each area contained three (3) intersection improvement options and four (4) Barracks Road bike/pedestrian improvement options for review and consideration by the public. The intersection improvement options featured varying degrees of roadway widening and impact to adjacent slopes/trees on the westbound approach to the intersection on Barracks Road. The bike/pedestrian options included two (2) options for separate in-road bike facilities and two (2) options for a shared use path design approach. Participants were offered the opportunity to provide feedback on each option in a SurveyMonkey online project survey, which opened immediately following the workshop and closed 2 weeks later. Attendees were also given the opportunity to take the same survey in writing at the meeting. Once the online survey period closed and written comments compiled, a summary of survey results and recommended improvements were reviewed with City staff and

presented for consideration at the next steering committee meeting (#2). This presentation and summary of discussion around recommended improvements can be found on the project website.

On-Line Project Survey:

The SurveyMonkey survey was active from October 2, 2019 to October 16, 2019 (2 weeks). A total of 90 respondents provided feedback on 10 questions. The goal of the survey was to obtain objective feedback on the most significant, and potentially controversial components of the project. The survey obtained quantifiable data from the general public on the following project elements:

- Respondent identification and interest in the project
- Priority Ranking of eight (8) corridor challenges the team should focus on solving
- Public vote on four (4) bike/pedestrian improvement options for implementation along Barracks Road
- Written feedback on three (3) intersection improvement options
- Public vote on whether access to Meadowbrook Road should be left open (full access) or limited to right-in/right-out by extending a raised median through the intersection
- Public vote on whether respondents would bike on Barracks Road if it were made safer.
- Opportunity to provide general written feedback on the project

A summary of survey results are as follows:

Question 1 (name/address information)

- 71 respondents provided personal information while 19 elected to remain anonymous.

Question 2 (interest in the corridor)

- All 90 respondents identified their interest in the corridor
- 50% of respondents own their primary residence within the project limits while nearly 40% indicated they commute through the project area. 22% of respondents are employed by UVA.

Question 3 (prioritization of improvements)

- 81 of 90 respondents provided a ranking (#1 - #8) of their priorities.
- **Improve Pedestrian Safety** received the highest weighted score (considering the cumulative ranking from all respondents).
- **Mitigate Traffic Congestion, Improve Bicycle Infrastructure/Access, Implement Traffic Calming Measures, Preserve Neighborhood Character & Aesthetics, and Maintain Dense Tree Canopy** were all very closely ranked (#2 - #6)
- **Improve Transit Facilities and Add Corridor Lighting** were the lowest ranked priorities (#7 & #8)

Question 4 (bike/ped improvement options)

- 86 of 90 respondents chose their favorite bike/ped improvement option.
- **Options 4** received the most votes as the most favorable option (selected by 30 of 86 respondents), which is to construct a multi-use path with no buffer/planting strip, on the south side of Barracks Road between Hessian and Hilltop Road. This option results in the shortest possible retaining walls.
- **Option 3** was the 2nd ranked option (selected by 27 of 86), which makes the multi-use path options most preferred by the public, rather than a dedicated climbing lane with sidewalk.
- Implementation of a shared use path was clearly preferred over in-road bicycle facilities.

Question 5, 6 & 7 (feedback on intersection improvement options)

- Approximately ½ of respondents provided written feedback on the 3 intersection options presented. Generalized feedback is described as follows:
 - Prefer a dedicated westbound right turn lane, rather than the shared thru-right configuration proposed.
 - Most do not want retaining walls, which Option 1 provides.
 - Many liked having a sidewalk on the north side between Meadowbrook and Hessian Road, which Options 2 & 3 provide.
 - Question 5 (Option 1): 25 of 42 respondents prefer this option, mostly due to preservation of neighborhood character and tree canopy
 - Question 6 (Option 2): 11 of 40 respondents indicated they prefer this option, although most would also prefer Option 3.
 - Question 7 (Option 3): 11 of 40 respondents prefer this option. Most that dislike, do so because of retaining wall and loss to tree canopy.

Question 8 (Meadowbrook Road access)

- 45 of 78 respondents (58%) prefer to convert this intersection to right-in/right-out.

Question 7 (utilization of improved bike facilities on Barracks Road)

- 46 of 87 respondents (53%) indicated they would bike on Barracks Road if it were made safer.

Question 8 (Additional feedback)

- 59 of 90 respondents provided additional written feedback, as generally described below:
 - Most repeated comment: Protect neighborhood character by avoidance or minimization of retaining walls.

- Additional safety improvements needed at the Hilltop Road intersection on Barracks Road, mostly due to poor sight distance making lefts out of Hilltop Road.
- Most are in favor of safer pedestrian/bike environment, but want improvements extended beyond Hilltop/Buckingham.
- Need to do something about speed control/calming.
- Prefer a dedicated right turn lane on WB Barracks to NB Emmet St.

Community Event 2: Open House, November 20, 2019

Project team members held an open house on November 20, 2019, at Walker Upper Elementary School from 5:30 PM to 7:00 PM. The open house allowed the public and stakeholders to view the results of the project survey and conceptual design preferred by City staff. This event was designed as an informal meeting with an InfoGraphic highlighted results of the project survey, large plan view mosaic of the preferred concept design and an illustrative rendering of how the preferred bike/ped improvements may look. All participants were offered the opportunity to discuss the project with City and consultant representatives, as well as provide additional written feedback at the meeting.

The preferred concept presented at this meeting consisted of implementing improvements at the Barracks Road/Emmet Street intersection that minimize impacts to the adjacent properties while achieving the purpose and need of the VDOT SMARTSCALE application and operational/safety goals of the City. The preferred concept also includes the implementation of a 10' shared use path along the south side of Barracks Road between Emmet Street and Buckingham Road with a 3' curbside grass buffer between cars and pedestrians. This compromised approach offers critical space for unimpeded roadside features (street lighting and roadway signage) while minimizing retaining wall heights and impacts to adjacent properties.

Steering Committee and Stakeholder Meetings

Throughout the process, the design team collaborated with the Steering Committee and various other boards, committees and agencies to receive input and feedback during the design process. The following groups were met with on the following dates:

- Individual Property Owner Meetings: July 23, 2019
- Steering Committee: July 25, 2019 and October 30, 2019
- PLACE Committee: November 14, 2019

Meeting agendas and summaries can be found under the “project updates” tab on the project website www.barracksemmetimprovement.com. Additionally, a Technical committee was formed which is comprised of representatives from appropriate City departments. The technical committee held meetings on the project on July 25, 2019 and October 30, 2019. The technical

committee meetings confirmed input received from the public and stakeholder groups could be technically attained and then maintained.

Planning Commission

The project was presented to the Planning Commission on February 11, 2020. Pursuant to Virginia Code section 15.2-2232, the Planning Commission voted to recommend approval of compliance with the Comprehensive Plan.

During the Public Hearing phase of the meeting, several members of the public signed up to speak. The following topics were raised:

- Desire for the project to prioritize preservation of neighborhood character, particularly as it relates to the height of the proposed retaining wall and impacts to the existing tree canopy.
- Speeding concerns along the corridor
- Lack of safe pedestrian crossing along the corridor.
- Importance of incorporating traffic calming measures along Barracks Road as part of the project
- Importance of adding bicycle and pedestrian upgrades in the corridor.

Standard of Review

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Comprehensive Plan Alignment:

The following denotes alignment with the City of Charlottesville adopted 2013 Comprehensive Plan.

- Land Use
 - Goal 2 - Mixed Use
 - ▶ 2.1: When considering changes to land use regulations, respect nearby residential areas.
 - The project scope was determined using residential feedback and

- with a focus on ensuring the character of neighborhood remains
 - ▶ 2.3: Enhance pedestrian connections between residences, commercial centers, public facilities, amenities and green spaces.
 - This project included enhancements to pedestrian connectivity throughout the corridor
 - Goal 4 - Regional Cooperation
 - ▶ 4.1: Coordinate with Albemarle County and other regional stakeholders to create a link between the City's pedestrian infrastructure and Monticello.
 - Albemarle County and UVA have been active on the Steering Committee
- Community Facilities
 - Goal 2 - Emergency Rescue Services
 - ▶ 2.2: Develop a strategy to address the issue of City-wide and County accessibility so that a quick response time can be maintained.
 - Members of emergency services have been involved with project development through the project Steering Committee. Minimum travel lane widths will be maintained to ensure accessibility by emergency services.
 - Goal 5 – Water Infrastructure
 - ▶ 5.1: Maintain, repair and replace water lines where necessary.
 - Project will minimize impacts to waterlines and replace as necessary. Location of improvements on Barracks Road are on the opposite side of existing waterlines to minimize any impact to these facilities.
 - Goal 7 - Parks and Recreation (Use)
 - ▶ 9.5: Enhance multimodal access to parks.
 - Project improvement will provide access to existing trails and bicycle facilities as well as safer crosswalks at the Barracks/Emmet intersection.
 - Goal 11 - Parks and Recreation (Trails)
 - ▶ 11.1: Fully Implement the Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Greenway Plan that has been approved by City Council.
 - Implementation of shared use path address major need identified in Bicycle and Pedestrian master plan.
- Economic Sustainability
 - Goal 2 - Sustaining Business
 - ▶ Improve multi-modal access to local businesses
 - Project will provide improved bike and pedestrian facilities, as well as a more appealing bus stop, to improve access to local businesses at the Barracks/Emmet intersection and beyond.
- Environment
 - Goal 2 - Urban Landscape & Habitat Enhancement
 - ▶ 2.2: Expand and protect the overall tree canopy of the City and increase the canopy of neighborhoods in an effort to achieve American Forest canopy recommendations (urban: 25%, suburban: 50% and center business zones: 15%).

- Project team has worked to minimize impact to tree canopy along project corridor. Canopy trees will be preserved and/or added throughout corridor to support the City's tree canopy goals.
 - Goal 4 - Water Resources Protection
 - ▶ 4.5: Reduce and/or eliminate stormwater runoff impacts from sites that lack adequate stormwater treatment by incentivizing reductions in overall imperviousness (i.e., effective imperviousness) and encouraging retrofits on developed properties to address stormwater management.
 - The additional of new impervious surfaces has been minimized by the re-purposing of existing pavement though the relocation of the existing curb line, which will also provide a traffic calming benefit and reduce tree canopy impacts.
- Transportation
 - Goal 1 - Complete Streets
 - ▶ 1.1: Increase safe, convenient and pleasant accommodations for pedestrians, bicyclists, and people with disabilities that improve the quality of life within the community and within individual Neighborhoods.
 - This project provides for shared use facilities at the Barracks Road/Emmet Street intersection, as well as on Barracks Road between Emmet Street and Buckingham Road. These shared use paths will be a consistent, accessible width of a minimum of 10'.
 - ▶ 1.2: Provide convenient and safe pedestrian connections within 1/4 miles of all commercial and employment centers, transit routes, schools and parks.
 - This project includes shared use facilities to enable multi-modal connections to transit routes and employment centers.
 - ▶ 1.3: Provide design features on roadways, such as street trees within buffers, street furniture and sidewalk widths that improve the safety and comfort level of all users and contribute to the City's environmental goals.
 - This project proposes a 10' shared use path with street lighting located within a proposed 3' curbside buffer.
 - ▶ 1.4: Explore and implement safe, convenient and visually attractive crossing alternatives to enable pedestrians and bicyclists to cross major thoroughfares.
 - The project provides for improved pedestrian refuge areas crossing all quadrants of the Barracks Road/Emmet Street intersection.
 - ▶ 1.5: Continue to include bicycle and pedestrian accommodations in conjunction with the planning and design of all major road projects, all new development and road paving projects.
 - The project provides for consistent minimum 3' wide curbside buffer between travel lanes and shared use path along Barracks Road between Emmet Street and Buckingham Road. Additionally, a lane width reduction on Barracks Road will be implemented as a traffic calming strategy while minimizing impact to adjacent properties.
 - ▶ 1.6: Consistently apply ADA standards to facility design and ensure that accessible curb ramps exist at all pedestrian crossings where conditions allow.

- Consistent application of ADA standards throughout corridor including curb ramps at all crossings.
 - ▶ 1.9: Seek to expand and anticipate traffic calming where applicable throughout the City in collaboration with neighborhood residents and as part of the development process.
 - Reduction of existing lane widths to 11' is anticipated to aid in traffic calming throughout the corridor.
- Goal 2 - Land Use & Community Design
 - ▶ 2.1: Provide convenient and safe bicycle and pedestrian connections between new and existing residential developments, employment areas and other activity centers to promote the option of walking and biking.
 - This project proposes a 10' shared use path with street lighting located within a proposed 3' curbside buffer to provide safe and convenient access to adjoining neighborhoods and businesses.
- Goal 7 – Regional Transportation
 - ▶ 7.1: Actively work with VDOT, TJPDC, Albemarle County and the University of Virginia to develop a regional transportation network surrounding the City.
 - Representatives from VDOT, Albemarle County, and the University of Virginia are all active on the project Steering Committee and through participation and public events.
- Goal 9 - Infrastructure Funding
 - ▶ 9.3: Coordinate the funding and development of transportation facilities with regional transportation and land use plans and with planned public and private investments.
 - Project is fully funded through SmartScale (HB2)
- Historic Preservation & Urban Design
 - Goal 1 – Urban Design
 - ▶ 1.1: Emphasize the importance of public buildings, public spaces, and other public improvements as opportunities to promote a sense of place and a welcoming environment for residents and visitors.
 - The project will implement strategies that promote neighborhood character and aesthetics while improving bike/pedestrian safety. Context sensitive treatment options will be considered for the appearance of the retaining wall along Barracks Road to maintain a sense of place.
 - ▶ 1.2: Promote Charlottesville's diverse architectural and cultural heritage by recognizing, respecting, and enhancing the distinct characteristics of each neighborhood.
 - This project will improve the pedestrian experience minimizing property impacts and implementing design practices that maintain neighborhood character.
 - ▶ Goal 1.3: Facilitate development of nodes of density and vitality in the City's Mixed Use Corridors, and encourage vitality, pedestrian movement, and visual interest throughout the city
 - The project provides for upgraded pedestrian and bicycle facilities

will enhance the experience of all transportation users of Barracks Road.

- ▶ 1.4: Develop pedestrian-friendly environments in Charlottesville that connect neighborhoods to community facilities, to commercial areas and employment centers, and that connect neighborhoods to each other, to promote a healthier community.
 - This project provides for upgraded multi-modal connection from surrounding neighborhoods to shopping centers, restaurants and transit facilities.
- ▶ 1.5: Encourage community vitality and interaction through the incorporation of art in public spaces, neighborhoods, signage, and gateways.
 - Opportunities to provide aesthetically pleasing retaining walls treatments will be considered in the design.
- ▶ 1.6: Encourage the incorporation of meaningful public spaces, defined as being available to the general public, into urban design efforts.
 - The creation of a safe and consistent pedestrian space will encourage the use of Barracks Road by all modes of transportation.
- ▶ 1.7: Promote design excellence for public projects and installations at all scales.
 - The extensive public participation process ensures excellence in design of improvements that meet the needs of all users of the Barracks Road corridor.
- Goal 4 - Resource Inventory
 - ▶ 4.2: Continue to identify and survey additional significant individual properties located outside historic districts. In addition to historic buildings, consider significant buildings from the recent past (less than 50 years old), structures such as sculptures, landscapes such as public spaces and cemeteries, and archaeological sites.
 - Identified cultural and historic resources prior to the development of concepts. Worked closely with neighborhood to help maintain existing neighborhood characteristics
- Goal 7 - Comprehensive Approach
 - ▶ 7.8: Coordinate with the Public Works and Parks Departments regarding maintenance and construction that would affect historic features of the City's neighborhoods. Where possible, maintain and repair granite curbs, retaining walls, distinctive paving patterns and other features instead of replacing them.
 - Coordination underway with Public Works and Parks Departments. The project specifics have been coordinated with staff through the formation of a technical committee.
 - ▶ 7.11: Encourage retaining and replenishing shade trees, particularly large trees where possible, in all neighborhoods as we strive to make the City more walkable.
 - Replenishment of Shade trees planned along Barracks Road corridor
- Goal 8 - Entrance Corridors

- ▶ 8.4: Use street trees, landscaping, and pedestrian routes to provide shade, enclosure, and accessibility in streetscapes.
 - Preservation of existing tree canopy and replenishment of shade trees planned along Barracks Road corridor
- ▶ 8.7: When appropriate, coordinate the City's Entrance Corridor Design Guidelines with Albemarle County's Design Guidelines. Encourage continuity of land use, design, and pedestrian orientation between contiguous corridors in the City and County.
 - Guidelines referenced to promote continuity of land use, design, and pedestrian orientation

Recommendation:

Staff recommends approval of the preferred Conceptual Design Concept and authorization to proceed with commencement of the final design phase of the project.

Attachments

Resolution of the Charlottesville Planning Commission

Resolution for City Council

Project Presentation

PLACE Design Task Force Project Recommendation

Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee Project Recommendation

Tree Commission Project Recommendation

**RESOLUTION
OF THE CHARLOTTESVILLE PLANNING COMMISSION
RECOMMENDING THE BARRACKS/EMMET IMPROVEMENT
PROJECT IS IN CONFORMANCE WITH THE CITY'S
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

Whereas, this Planning Commission held a public hearing on the proposed Barracks/Emmet Improvement Project concept, after notice given as required by law, NOW THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED that this Planning Commission confirms that the general character, location and extent of the proposed improvements are substantially in accord with the City's adopted Comprehensive Plan or part thereof.

Adopted by the Charlottesville Planning Commission, the 11th day of February, 2020.

Attest: _____

Secretary, Charlottesville Planning Commission

RESOLUTION
FINDING THAT THE PROPOSED BARRACKS/EMMET IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
IS SUBSTANTIALLY IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE
CITY'S COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

WHEREAS, on February 11, 2020, after notice given as required by law, the Charlottesville Planning Commission and Charlottesville City Council jointly conducted a public hearing to review the preferred conceptual design of the Barracks/Emmet Improvement Project ("Project") for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan for the City of Charlottesville (2013) ("Comprehensive Plan"); and

WHEREAS, on February 11, 2020, the Planning Commission adopted a resolution approving the general or approximate location, character and extent of the Project as being substantially in accord with the Comprehensive Plan; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED that, upon consideration of the Planning Commission's recommendation, the City Council hereby concurs with the Planning Commission's approval of the general or approximate location, character and extent of the Project as being substantially in accord with the Comprehensive Plan. Upon the adoption of this Resolution, staff is hereby authorized to proceed with final design of the Project for construction.

DRAFT Memorandum

From: PLACE Task Force
To: Charlottesville Planning Commission
Date: November 25, 2019
Re: Barracks-Emmet Intersection and Street Improvements

The PLACE Task Force appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on the improvements being explored for the Barracks-Emmet Intersection project. Members of PLACE have been involved in the process so far, sitting on the Citizens Steering Committee as well as participating in public open houses. The City project manager and lead consultant have also reviewed the project with PLACE. Our consensus and recommendations in this memorandum are based on the most recent information provided by the City and the consultant, including at the most recent PLACE meeting, on November 14, 2019.

Based on our vote at the end of the most recent meeting, we make the following determinations:

- *Overall*
We support the project overall, and encourage the City to complete pedestrian, bicycle, and transit improvements in the corridor as part of the effort to address increasing traffic congestion.

The Barracks/Emmet project will realize a critical component of the City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan and the Plan's objectives to provide a viable network of alternative transportation choices in the City. An alternative to private vehicles is critical to the City's long-term economic growth, provision of equitable access, and sustainability.

- *Intersection of Barracks/Emmet*
We support Option 1 at the intersection of Barracks/Emmet.

Option 1 is the most minimal option presented by the consultant, which has the least impact on the tree canopy and does not require retaining walls below Hessian Road.

- *Barracks Road to Hilltop Road*
We support the City's Preferred Option.

The Preferred Option maintains a 3' buffer between the roadway (11' travel lanes) and a shared-use path. A narrow planted lawn median between the curb and shared-use trail provides several benefits: it's a safer place to put street lights, it provides a buffer for pedestrians and cyclists, and it could have some traffic calming effect on vehicular traffic by making the 11' width of the pavement is clear to drivers rather than presenting a continuous stretch of pavement.

Given our support, we also make the following recommendations for design and further analysis in the next phase of the project:

- *Transit at Barracks/Emmet*

The bus stop on the north side of Barracks will be difficult to access in Option 1, and the City and consultant should explore possibilities to improve the bus stop and access to it.

- *Retaining Wall Design*

The next iteration of the project should focus on the design of the retaining walls. The design for the proposed retaining walls should minimize wall height and reduce the "highway" effect of the soldier pile wall by employing a neighborhood-friendly character to the wall face. The walls should have a simple, unfussy, appropriately scaled character. The design team should prepare a full elevation of the proposed wall so everyone can assess its impact. The wall height should step at regularly designed intervals, have an attractive coping to give it a finished appearance, and terminate in a way that's integrated into the landscape.

Retaining wall design considerations include:

- Planted walls
- Brick or stone walls
- Tiered walls with small setbacks to reduce overall wall bulk
- Examine current code and design approaches to eliminate or limit guard railing/fencing on top of retaining walls

- *Tree Canopy*

Wherever possible, retain existing large trees. Where trees are lost, replace if adjacent property owners are interested. On replacement, use large trees that will contribute more quickly to the canopy over the roadway.

- *Transition at Eastern Terminus of Project*

The design needs careful consideration to ensure a safe and compatible integration of new elements with the current conditions at the eastern terminus of the project area, i.e. where the new trails and lanes have to connect to existing sidewalks and roadways.

- *Buffer at Top of Barracks Road*

While a consistent buffer is an important part of the City's Preferred Option, we encourage the examination of the effects of narrowing or removing the buffer for the last 100' feet of the shared-use path at the top (east end) of Barracks Road, in order to reduce retaining wall heights below 7' in this stretch.

- *Trash Receptacles*

The design should include trash cans along the shared path, accommodated if possible in the buffer area.

February 7, 2020

To: Planning Commission, City Council, city staff, Timmons Group
From: Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC)

Firstly, BPAC applauds the city and Timmons Group for moving forward with the bicycle and pedestrian improvements through the Barracks/Emmet corridor, as these will implement part of an important arterial bicycle route from the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. BPAC agrees that the new preferred option and its buffer strip will provide the greatest degree of safety for vulnerable road users as well as create a more pleasant atmosphere for citizens. The buffer strip also provides a location where utility vaults and signage can be placed without interfering with the path. Lamp posts and other impediments to movement through the shared path should be avoided for safety reasons. BPAC asks that a tree steward be consulted regarding replanting in the area behind the retaining wall which would allow for increased enjoyment of the corridor by pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers.

The buffer strip would allow for implementation of proper cross-slopes across driveway intersections for better ADA accessibility. The current plans don't seem to address ADA accessible facilities, such as wheelchair rest areas on the slope which would greatly enhance the utility of this path. Sloping the buffer strip itself would allow for small variations in the height of the shared path relative to the roadway to decrease the perceived height of the retaining wall. Reduction of buffer width for the last 100' of the eastern terminus of the shared path is also worth exploring to reduce the maximum wall height in that short section.

For the intersection of Barracks and Emmet itself, the pedestrian islands and shortened crossing distances will be a great boon for people walking in the area, particularly families, the elderly, and people with disabilities. There is a question as to whether there will be pedestrian buttons on the pedestrian islands. Several people have expressed how the current intersection has insufficient crossing times and having pedestrians, particularly disabled citizens, stuck halfway through a crossing is an unacceptable outcome. Although BPAC understands the possibility of drainage issues, we urge you to consider the addition of a raised crosswalk in the slip lane in front of CVS. The plans for signaling the slip lane are necessary and will greatly enhance pedestrian safety.

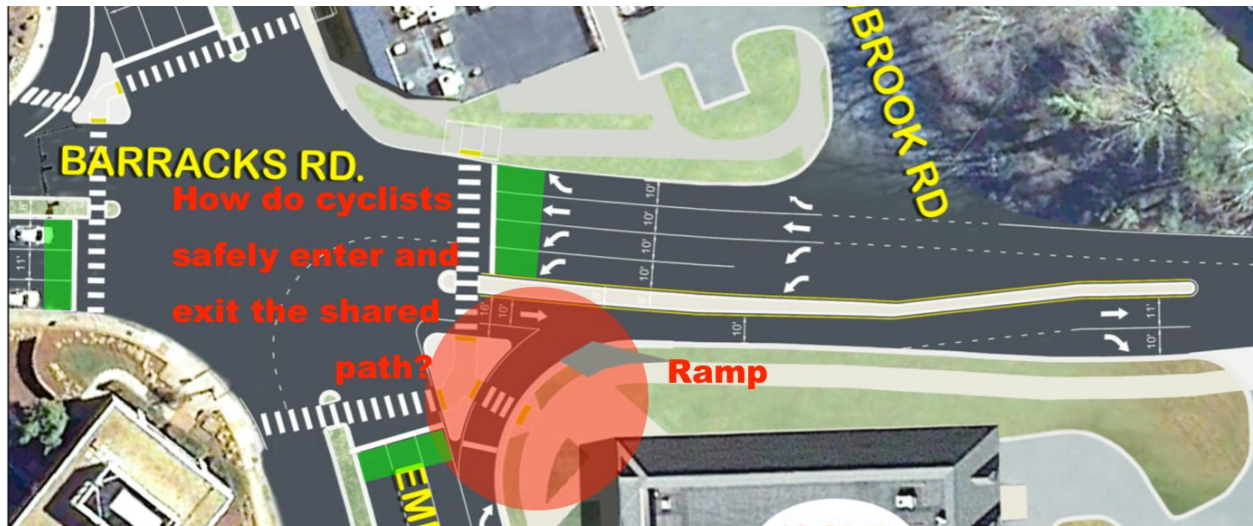
Questions do arise, however, regarding how bicycle traffic can safely enter and exit the shared path from either end. This is particularly concerning for bicycle traffic at the top of Barracks (by Hilltop/Buckingham). Bikes heading westbound on Barracks will have to cross oncoming traffic coming up the hill. This is happening at a curve on a steep grade, so the traffic coming up the hill will be difficult, if not impossible, to see. The same problem presents itself for eastbound cyclists

exiting the shared path as they will need to merge into this traffic coming up the hill since there are no bike facilities on the road. If the northern retaining wall at the bottom of the hill near the intersection of Barracks/Emmet is reduced or eliminated, BPAC strongly recommends investigating whether the resulting cost savings could be applied to extending the shared use path to the traffic signal at Barracks and Rugby Road which is the logical eastern terminus. This would greatly enhance the safety for people biking or trying to cross on foot given the poor visibility at Hilltop/Buckingham although care would still be needed to ensure appropriate transitions at this intersection.



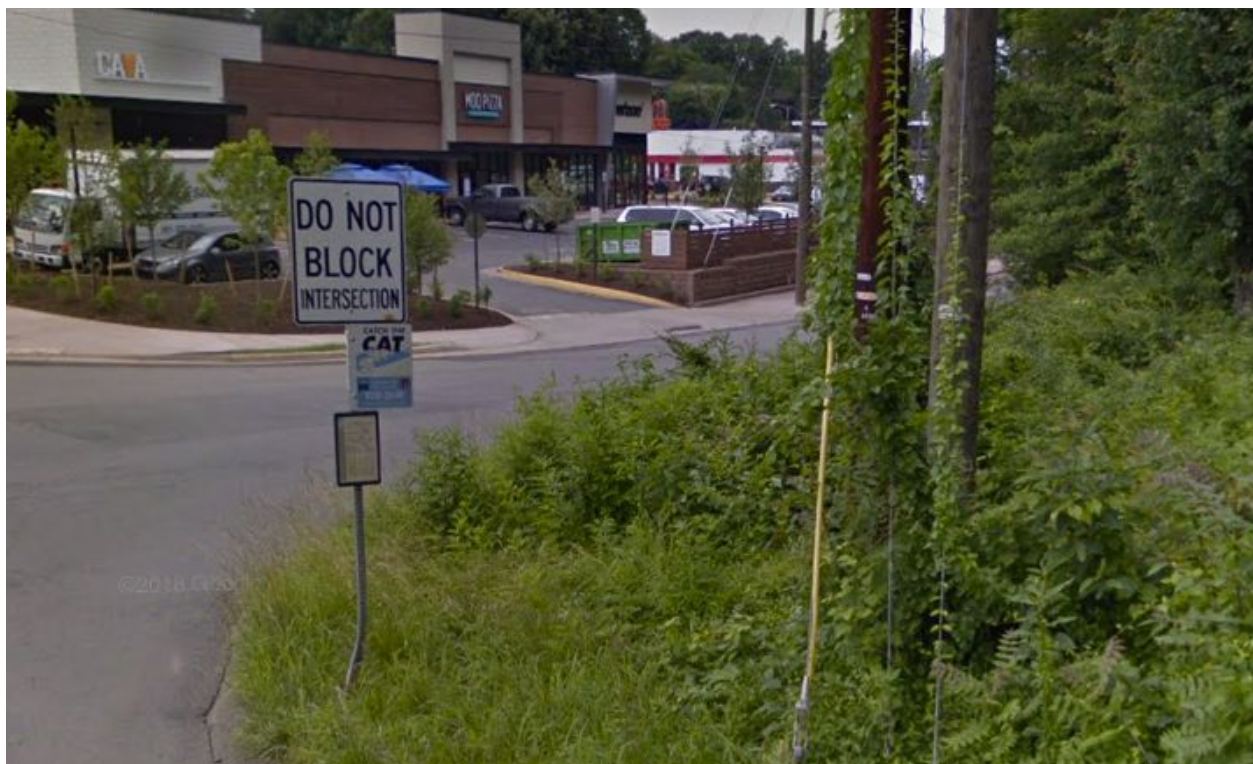
Suggested added path length from Buckingham to Rugby Road lighted intersection

For the Barracks and Emmet intersection, BPAC would suggest the addition of an onramp for bicycles entering the path from the west. This would allow cyclists to access the path without having to dismount to enter through the pedestrian island. In addition, bike boxes added to Barracks and the northbound lanes of Emmet would allow cyclists extra space to clear the intersection and be more visible to motorists. Those cyclists coming downhill on Barracks via the shared path could use the bike box on Emmet to continue westbound on Barracks past the intersection. Faster cyclists opting to take the shared lane down Barracks itself could cross directly starting from the bike box on Barracks.



Barracks/Emmet intersection with suggested changes including bicycle onramp (grey) and bike boxes (green)

We respectfully request that Timmons and the city investigate ways to improve the westbound bus stop at the bottom of the hill near Meadowbrook. The current stop is difficult to access and improving transit access is an important component of the city reaching its sustainability goals.



Current bus stop is not accessible or safe

Finally, we would also ask that pedestrian and bike access be maintained through the corridor during the construction process. Many members of the community have had repeated issues with construction projects in the city limiting pedestrian access which is particularly difficult for disabled members of the community. Please take the time to ensure this access is not restricted during the construction of this project. Any possible pedestrian detours through neighborhoods or private property in this corridor would add between 12 and 27 minutes to a trip for people on foot. This is compared to the 2 to 7 minutes a vehicle would take to detour around the construction to take another street, such as Rugby Road or Culbreth. Putting the convenience of motorists ahead of our most vulnerable road users is not an acceptable excuse to deny adequate access to this path during construction. In the event of any temporary restriction of pedestrian or bicycle access to the corridor, the city should ensure that pedestrian and cyclist detour routes are prominently posted. BPAC offers its assistance with developing safe detour routes if the city would like assistance in this endeavor.

MEMORANDUM

To: Charlottesville Planning Commission
From: Charlottesville Tree Commission
Date: February 11, 2020
Re: Comments on Barracks Road/Emmet Street Improvement Project

The Tree Commission appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Barracks Road/Emmet Street Improvement Project. The Commission offers the following comments and looks forward to commenting further at the February 11 Planning Commission meeting.

1. Preserve Existing Critical Green Infrastructure: The shade provided by green infrastructure significantly reduces the heat effects of accelerating climate change upon all who use a paved street and especially for residents of adjoining neighborhoods. In addition, large-canopy trees provide stormwater and carbon-absorbing benefits as well as enhance the experience of those traversing the street, whether on foot or by bicycle or car. For these reasons, the Commission strongly recommends that every effort be made to preserve the existing green infrastructure of the uniquely green and shaded urban corridor of Barracks Road.
2. Reconsider the Proposed Option: The Commission joined with the overwhelming majority of the project's Steering Committee's in endorsing Option 4 as the best for achieving green infrastructure goals. As compared with the proposed option, Option 4 is likeliest to preserve the dense, mature, large-tree canopy and protect the critical root zone of most of the existing trees. The proposed option essentially trades a significant portion of this canopy for a 3' buffer/grass planting strip that at very best might accommodate small-canopy trees, assuming sufficient soil volume. Even then, any opportunity to plant will be severely limited by lighting, signage, utilities, and snow storage, as the project presentation makes clear. In fact, the next-to-last slide in the presentation addressing the 2016 Streets That Work Plan does not reference trees at all.
3. Soil Volume in Planting Strip: The *Streets That Work Design Guidelines* for a Neighborhood A category street (Appendix C, p. A-26) recommend a planting strip width of at least 4' for small trees. The *Guidelines* also provide that smaller widths can be achieved if the soil volume minimum is met. For small-canopy trees that minimum soil volume is 250ft³. The Commission requests a separate plan showing how this project will provide for a minimum of 250 ft³ per tree of uncompacted soil in order to meet the requirement of the *Guidelines*.
4. Map Tree Inventory to Design Options: Regardless of which option is eventually approved, it is critical to have as clear an understanding of how any walls and setbacks are likely to affect trees present within the Barracks Road corridor. The Commission appreciates that Timmons conducted an extensive and detailed inventory of trees in proximity to the project and was able at the November 20 public hearing to show some preliminary mapping of the inventory to the proposed design option. This mapping should be completed as only in this way can we fully understand which of the medium and large canopy trees in good condition might be affected by this project.

Barracks-Emmet Intersection Improvements

CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE CITY COUNCIL

MARCH 2, 2020



TIMMONS GROUP

AGENDA

- **PROJECT SCOPE & SCHEDULE**
- **PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROCESS**
- **CONCEPTUAL DESIGN**
- **PLANNING COMMISSION
RECOMMENDATION**



PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT

**TO IMPROVE THE
OPERATIONAL
PERFORMANCE OF THE
BARRACKS/EMMET
INTERSECTION WHILE
ALSO ENHANCING BIKE,
PEDESTRIAN AND TRANSIT
FACILITIES FOR THE
NEIGHBORHOOD**





OVERALL PROJECT LIMITS

AERIAL MAP



SCOPE OF IMPROVEMENTS:

- ✓ ADDITIONAL NORTHBOUND RIGHT TURN LANE ON EMMET STREET
- ✓ ADDITIONAL WESTBOUND LEFT TURN LANE (CONCURRENT DUAL LEFTS) ON BARRACKS ROAD
- ✓ TRAFFIC SIGNAL IMPROVEMENTS
- ✓ PEDESTRIAN REFUGE ISLANDS AT INTERSECTION
- ✓ UPGRADED BIKE/PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES ON BARRACKS ROAD TO HILLTOP ROAD
- ✓ NEW CAT BUS SHELTER ON BARRACKS ROAD



SMART SCALE

*Funding the Right
Transportation Projects
in Virginia*

TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET:

- ❖ TOTAL BUDGET = \$8,600,000
 - ✓ PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING - \$1M
 - ✓ RIGHT-OF-WAY - \$3M
 - ✓ CONSTRUCTION - \$4.6M

**PROJECT IS FULLY FUNDED THROUGH
SMARTSCALE**

SMARTSCALE APPLICATION

PROJECT DESCRIPTION



TIMMONS GROUP

WE ARE HERE

SCOPING & VISIONING

- SURVEY
- TRAFFIC ANALYSIS
- COMMITTEE MEETINGS
- PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT
- **PREFERRED CONCEPT DESIGN**

WINTER
2020

DETAILED DESIGN (60%)

- DETAILED ENGINEERING DESIGN
- DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING
- VDOT DESIGN APPROVAL

SUMMER
2021

CONSTRUCTION

SUMMER
2019

PRELIMINARY DESIGN (30%)

- **PLANNING COMMISSION**
- **CITY COUNCIL**
- PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING DESIGN
- CITIZEN INFORMATION MEETING

SUMMER
2020

FINAL DESIGN (90%)

- FINAL ENGINEERING DESIGN
- RIGHT OF WAY ACQUISITION
- UTILITY RELOCATION
- VDOT AUTH. TO ADVERTISE

SPRING
2023

PLANNING PHASE

DESIGN DEVELOPMENT PHASE

IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

*SCHEDULE CONSISTENT WITH
PROGRAMMING OF VDOT FUNDS

PROJECT SCHEDULE

TENTATIVE

INDIVIDUAL OWNER MEETING:

- RESIDENTS THAT LIVE WITHIN PROJECT LIMITS
- VISITED THOSE AVAILABLE ON JULY 23, 2019
- REVIEWED PROJECT SCOPE, THEN LISTENED...
- PRIMARY CONCERNS – TREE IMPACTS & SAFETY

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING #1:

- DATE - JULY 25, 2019
 - HIGHLIGHTED CORRIDOR CONCERNS & ISSUES
 - REVIEWED SMARTSCALE SCOPE & TRAFFIC STUDY
 - STRUCTURED PROJECT SURVEY QUESTIONS
 - OPENED UP FOR DISCUSSION
- KEY TAKEAWAYS – PROTECT NEIGHORHOOD CHARACTER, IMPROVE CONGESTION, REDUCE SPEEDS, MAKE BIKING AND WALKING SAFER

PROJECT WEBSITE:

WWW.BARRACKSEMMETIMPROVEMENTS.COM



STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS



INITIAL OUTREACH



PUBLIC WORKSHOP:

- PRESENTED DESIGN OPTIONS:
 - 3 INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENT OPTIONS
 - 4 BIKE/PEDESTRIAN OPTIONS
- OPENED PROJECT SURVEY TO COLLECT PUBLIC FEEDBACK



SurveyMonkey

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING #2

- REVIEWED SURVEY RESULTS
STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS
- GENERAL AGREEMENT, EXCEPT
FOR BIKE/PED OPTION



PUBLIC WORKSHOP

RESULTS OF PROJECT SURVEY



TIMMONS GROUP





HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PREFERRED CONCEPT:

- IMPROVED OPERATIONS AT THE INTERSECTION
- SAFER BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT
- REDUCED LANE WIDTHS (SPEED CONTROL)
- 10' SHARED USE PATH WITH REDUCED 3' GRASS BUFFER
- MINIMIZED RETAINING WALLS WITH TREATMENT OPTIONS



PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE

PRESENTATION OF PREFERRED CONCEPT



TIMMONS GROUP





BEFORE THE PROJECT

EXISTING CONDITIONS





AFTER THE PROJECT

POST-CONSTRUCTION





RETAINING WALL OPTIONS

ARCHITECTURAL TREATMENTS





RETAINING WALL OPTIONS

ARCHITECTURAL TREATMENTS



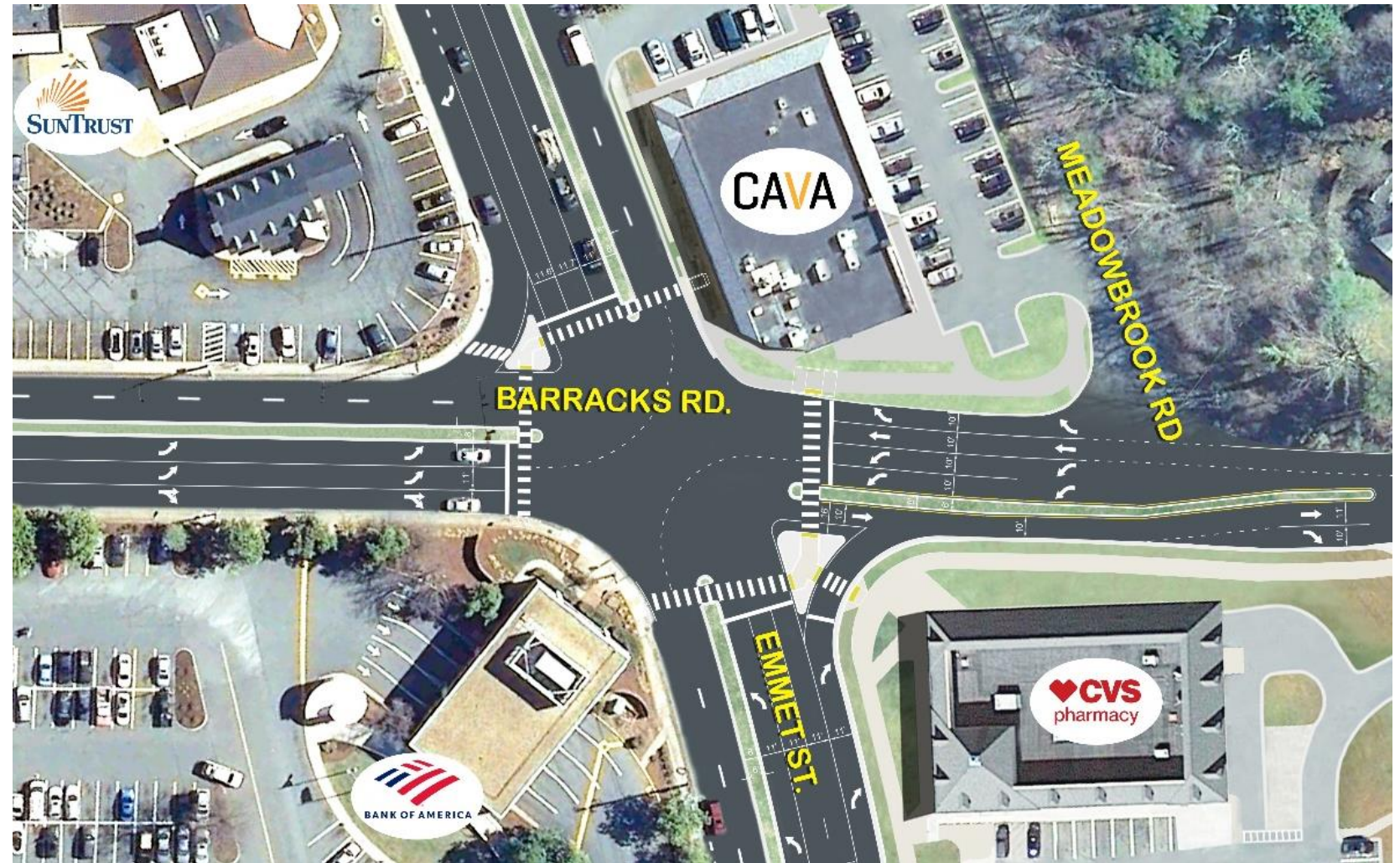


RETAINING WALL OPTIONS

ARCHITECTURAL TREATMENTS



- ✓ NORTHBOUND RIGHT TURN LANE ON EMMET STREET
- ✓ CONCURRENT DUAL LEFT TURN LANES WITHOUT IMPACT TO ADJACENT PROPERTIES
- ✓ REALIGNED CROSS-WALKS (SHORTER CROSSING DISTANCES)
- ✓ ENHANCED PEDESTRIAN REFUGE ISLANDS
- ✓ NEW TRAFFIC SIGNAL WITH PEDESTRIAN CONTROLS
- ✓ UPGRADED ADA COMPLIANT HANDICAP RAMPS



INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS

PRESENTATION OF PREFERRED CONCEPT

- ✓ ON FEBRUARY 11, 2020, PURSUANT TO VIRGINIA CODE SECTION 15.2-2232, THE PLANNING COMMISSION VOTED TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF COMPLIANCE WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE PUBLIC HEARING INCLUDE:


- SAFETY OF PEDESTRIANS AND BICYCLIST SHOULD BE THE TOP PRIORITY
- STEPS MUST BE TAKEN TO SLOW TRAFFIC ON BARRACKS ROAD
- DESIGN SHOULD SEEK TO MINIMIZE IMPACTS TO TREES AND RETAINING WALL HEIGHTS
- EFFORTS SHOULD BE MADE TO EXTEND BIKE/PED IMPROVEMENTS TO RUGBY ROAD

**RESOLUTION
OF THE CHARLOTTESVILLE PLANNING COMMISSION
RECOMMENDING THE BARRACKS/EMMETT IMPROVEMENT
PROJECT IS IN CONFORMANCE WITH THE CITY'S
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

Whereas, this Planning Commission held a public hearing on the proposed Barracks/Emmett Improvement Project concept, after notice given as required by law, NOW THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED that this Planning Commission confirms that the general character, location and extent of the proposed improvements are substantially in accord with the City's adopted Comprehensive Plan or part thereof.

Adopted by the Charlottesville Planning Commission, the 11th day of February, 2020.

Attest: 
Secretary, Charlottesville Planning Commission

**CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2013**



1 LAND USE Sense of Place Mixed Use	PUBLIC SPACE Regional Cooperation	INNOVATION Police Department Parks & Recreation Educational Institutions Public Buildings
2 COMMUNITY FACILITIES Fire Department Wastewater Infrastructure Water Infrastructure	ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY Innovation Sustaining Business Partnerships Tourism	ENVIRONMENT Rivanna River Water Conservation Resource Efficiency
3 HOUSING Impact on Goals & Vision Maintain & Improve	TRANSPORTATION Complete Streets Land Use & Community Design	HISTORIC PRESERVATION & URBAN DESIGN Urban Design Owner Education
4 ENVIRONMENT Sustainable Development Water Resources Protection Waste Reduction	DESIGN OPTIONS Sustainability Principles Incentives	COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH Entrance Corridors Resource Protections Sustainable Reuse

CREATED BY THE CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE, NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT SERVICES FOR MORE INFORMATION: CHARLOTTESVILLE.ORG

PLANNING COMMISSION

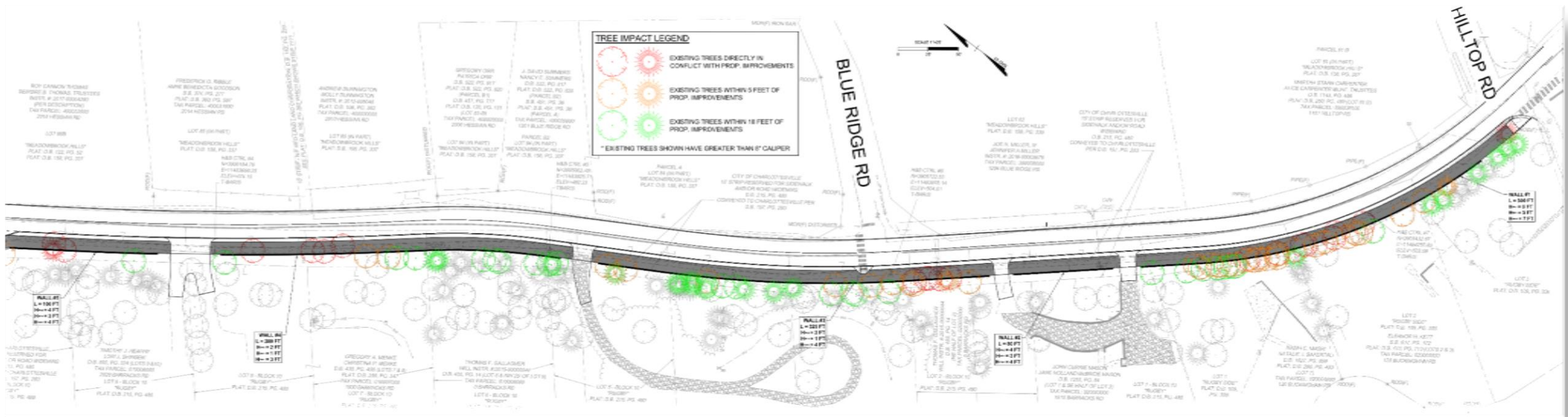
COMPLIANCE WITH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



Thank You!



TIMMONS GROUP



WALL HEIGHT & TREE IMPACTS:

✓ PRESENTED RESULTING WALL HEIGHTS FOR EACH OPTION

✓ ILLUSTRATED ANTICIPATED TREE IMPACTS

OPTION 3

AVERAGE HEIGHT: 5' TALL

MIN HEIGHT: 2' TALL

MAX HEIGHT: 9' TALL

OPTION 4

AVERAGE HEIGHT: 3' TALL

MIN HEIGHT: 1.5' TALL

MAX HEIGHT: 6' TALL

*ESTIMATED WALL HEIGHTS ALONG RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES

PREFERRED OPTION

AVERAGE HEIGHT: 3' TALL

MIN HEIGHT: 1' TALL

MAX HEIGHT: 7' TALL

TREE IMPACT LEGEND



* EXISTING TREES SHOWN HAVE GREATER THAN 8" CALIPER

WALL HEIGHT & TREE IMPACTS

PRELIMINARY