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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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City awards bid for River District streetscape project

The city of Danville has awarded the bid for the River District streetscape project to Virginia Carolina Paving of South Boston, which submitted the low bid of \$2.1 million.

The company will begin its work on Sept. 4; however, Danville Utilities crews already are busy upgrading gas and water services in advance of the streetscape work.

"We are moving all gas meters from inside the buildings to an underground vault outside," said Jim Harr, interim director of Danville Utilities. "We also will be checking water lines, and if they are steel, then they will be replaced."

The gas and water upgrades began on Tuesday in the 300 block of Main Street. Crews will work one block at a time. Travel along Main Street will be disrupted as the upgrades are made, Harr said.

The streetscape project will focus on Main Street from Memorial Drive and Craghead Street to Floyd Street and on North Union Street from Main Street to Spring Street.

Three companies submitted bids for the project, with bids ranging from the low bid of \$2.1 million to a high of \$2.7 million. The Virginia Department of Transportation is paying \$1.4 million of the cost.

The scope of the project ranges from widening existing sidewalks and installing brick pavers to creating more visible and safer pedestrian crossings and providing amenities such as trees, benches and new lighting.

The sidewalks will be constructed with a six-foot band of tinted concrete along the storefronts, with brick being placed from the band to the curb.

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Also as part of the project, the number of traffic lanes on Main Street will be reduced from three to two by eliminating the center turn lane. This change will allow for the wider sidewalks.

Deputy City Manager David Parrish said the city will establish a field office at 527 Main St., which formerly operated as River City General Store and Taylor's Hardware.

"Beginning Sept. 4, city staff will be at the office from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays," Parrish said. "We also will periodically schedule meetings with merchants and other stakeholders at the office."

Virginia Carolina Paving's work will begin with the installation of an underground storm sewer across Memorial Drive to the corner of Main Street and Memorial Drive. The storm sewer construction then will proceed south along Main Street.

The first brick paving will be placed in the plaza area on Memorial Drive adjacent the former Atrium building at 312 Main St.

The project then will move to the west side of the 300 block of Main Street, which extends from Memorial Drive to Market Street. The west side is occupied by businesses such as 316 Cibo's, The Venue and Virginia Bank & Trust.

Construction will proceed one block at a time, with 30 to 45 days required to complete each side of the street within a block. The contractor must maintain access to the front door of each storefront and business during construction. Industrial mats will be used to minimize the amount of dust.

The total project will take 11 to 12 months, depending on the weather.

When completed, each block will have a continuous band of brick, which will be tumbled pavers. Tumbled paving is created by taking regular paving and putting into a machine which vibrates the stones and makes the paving stones look older than they are by giving them a worn look.

The brick paving at intersections will have a darker coloring. Decorative raised flower boxes will be located near street corners. Benches and trash receptacles will be placed there as well. Tree pits lined by cobblestones will be placed throughout the streetscape.

Land Planning & Design Associates, a landscape architecture and planning firm with offices in Charlottesville and Sterling, designed the project.

The streetscape project was determined to be the most feasible public project at this time following a study last year that identified public and private projects to bring new life to the River District. The district includes the downtown and tobacco warehouse areas.

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A second phase will involve the reconfiguration of Main Street from its intersection with Memorial Drive and Craghead Street to the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Bridge. The city has been awarded a VDOT grant of \$800,000 to pay for half of the \$1.6 million cost.

In addition, LPDA is developing designs for the creation of a plaza with a large fountain on Main Street near the bridge. JTI Leaf Services is donating \$400,000 for that project.

For more information on the River District and the development project, visit the city of Danville's website at www.danville-va.gov.

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