



River District Project Update

April 16, 2013

Streetscape Projects: The City's contractor, Virginia Carolina Paving, has nearly completed streetscape improvements on the 300 block of Main Street. Brick sidewalks, planters, street lights, signal poles, benches and landscaping on the west side have been installed, providing a good representation of the final product. The Utilities Department is installing new fire service lines to many of the buildings in the 400 block. When that utility work is complete, Virginia Carolina Paving Company will begin demolishing the sidewalk in that area. The Main Street improvements are now 30% complete. New sidewalks and refurbished street lights have been installed on North Union Street.

Virginia Carolina Paving Company won the contract to construct Phase II of the streetscape improvements in the "100% intersection" area at Craghead/Memorial and Main. Phase II includes improvements to Craghead Street and Bridge Street, constructing a trailhead from the south Riverwalk Trail, and a gateway plaza in front of Lou's Antiques and Jakes on Main. The northbound street approach to the Martin Luther King Bridge in front of these businesses will be removed to create a wide pedestrian walkway from Main Street to Bridge Street. The focal point of the gateway Plaza will be a large fountain made possible by a donation from Japan Tobacco International (JTI). Construction began on relocating the median on Craghead Street on April 9th. Double left turn lanes onto Patton Street are being provided to allow more traffic to cross the bridge.

Two-way traffic on Patton Street: Patton Street has been converted to two-way traffic to provide better access to businesses and parking lots serving stores on Main Street. The street has been repaved and a new traffic signal installed at Ridge and Patton Street. Two-way operation began on April 5th. Message boards are being used to remind drivers about the change in traffic pattern. Temporary signs have been placed at each street intersection to call attention to the two-way traffic.

New Parking Lot at 500 Main Street: City Council and the Industrial Development Authority (IDA) approved proceeding with the construction of a new thirty space public parking lot at 500 Main Street. This is the site of a former private parking lot next to First Citizens Bank. The project includes lighting, landscaping, and irrigation. A contract has been awarded to Adams Construction Company for \$120,430 to perform this work. Construction will begin in May and take 45 days to complete.

River District Parking Assessment: During February, Land Planning & Design Associates (LPDA) and its subcontractor, Carl Walker Inc., visited Danville to conduct on-site analysis for a River District parking study. The consultants worked with employees from Public Works' Traffic Control Division to coordinate occupancy and

turnover surveys of the study area. These methods have proven beneficial when gathering information on usage, demand and needs. The consultants also held a public forum, hosted meetings with River District and government stakeholders and solicited input through an online survey in order to gauge public perception of parking in the area. A final report is expected by the end of April.

Riverwalk Trail Connection: The city has received an enhancement grant from the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to connect the walking trails on the north and south side of the Dan River. A ten foot wide multiuse trail is planned to be constructed across the northbound lane of the Martin Luther King Bridge. The existing sidewalk on the downstream side will be widened to ten feet and separated from traffic by a concrete barrier. It will look similar to the multiuse trail on the Robertson Bridge. At the Riverside Drive intersection, traffic will still have separate left, through, and right lanes. The connection will extend from the trailhead and parking lot between the two bridges, across the Martin Luther King Bridge, and east along River Street before connecting to the north bank Riverwalk Trail. This project will include construction of restrooms on the south side. The city will share approximately 25% of the project cost and VDOT will contribute the remaining 75%. A bridge consultant engineer is being retained to design this project.

Utilities Work: Beginning in August 2012, Danville Utilities has worked to replace, relocate, and upgrade the utility facilities in the River District. Although with varying involvement, each of the utilities has completed major projects in advancing the revitalization effort. The Water & Gas Division has installed different combinations of water and gas service lines to 19 properties to date in the 300 and 400 blocks of Main Street. New service installations range from moving inside gas meters to the outside, to providing ready to connect domestic water, water fire lines, and gas services to potential multi-story occupancies. Similar installations for the 500 block are underway. When complete the Water & Gas Division will update utilities to 33 current and future occupancies.

The nDanville fiber optic infrastructure is being installed concurrently with the other utility upgrades being made on Main Street as part of the streetscape project. The 300 block was completed in March and work is underway in the 400 block and the 100% intersection. This will give every business along Main Street access to nDanville services and will help Economic Development attract new businesses to the River District.

While not directly associated with the River District Project, the Power & Light Division has been working on the downtown underground conversion project, which will benefit the revitalization effort. This conversion from overhead to underground will remove some unsightly overhead lines that presented code violations from the time of installation, update the facilities to more modern technology, and provide for a safer environment in the area. Not only will this project improve aesthetics it will also improve reliability in the downtown area.

Design Guidelines: A public hearing and City Council action on the proposed River District Overlay District and the River District Design Guidelines are scheduled for May 7th. The Planning Commission is recommending adoption of both.

Economic Development: Several private investments are currently being made in the River District, including the following:

- Stephen Staats, the developer of the Smith Seeds property on Lynn Street, has indicated that he is on track to receive a certificate of occupancy for 20 apartment units and commercial space before the end of April.
- Progress on the Pemberton Lofts project continues. The first phase of the project, which includes 62 market rate apartments, is well underway and includes two commercial spaces – one for a restaurant and one for an office space. It is the developers' expectation that the space will be completed by mid-July.

Marketing & Signage: The renaissance of the River District provides an opportunity to build community optimism and enthusiasm about building a better future for Danville. The River District can help the City convey an appealing, inspiring image to current residents, newcomers, visitors, and recruited businesses. To help accomplish this, staff and consultants are developing a marketing plan and designs for roadway and pedestrian signage that could eventually be extended throughout the City. Consultants will conduct initial visits to Danville during June 3 – 6 to tour the community and speak with River District stakeholders. The information collected will be used to create a River District marketing concept and graphic.

Issued by the City Manager's Office