AGENDA & MEETING MINUTES
Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee
City of Charlottesville
Thursday, June 4, 2026; 5:00 PM – 6:30 PM
City Hall Basement Conference Room, 610 E Market St
Option to join remotely via Zoom

View the recording here: [coming soon]

Attendees:
Tommy Safranek
Jen Fleisher
Kevin Sarp
Guinevere Higgins
James VanVrankin
Kyle Rodland
Meredith McCreight
Zoe Macomber
Peter Ohlms
Jim Keller (Utilities Senior Project Manager)
Tyler Hesselberth
Alberic Karina-Plun
Brennen Duncan
Natalie Oschrin
Josh Carp

Amendments to the Agenda and Meeting Minutes

No amendments. Agenda approved.

Public Comment

No public comment.

West Main Utilities, Public Utilities

Jim Keller, Utilities Senior Project Manager, presented on the West Main Street Gas and Water Replacement Project.

Project scope and timeline:

- Phase 1 is gas only, starting at the intersection of Culbreth and Rugby Road, running through Chancellor and Madison Lane.
- From Elliewood onward, the project becomes gas and water replacement, running all the way to Ridge Street — approximately 1.25 miles total.
- The water infrastructure in this corridor is pushing 100 years old.
- Project timeline is 2026–2029, with a one-year warranty period for asphalt settling extending through approximately 2029–2030.
- The project is funded in part by a federal grant with specific timeline requirements.

FOLLOW THE PROJECT HERE: https://connect.charlottesville.gov/WestMainUtilitiesProject

Important clarification on scope: Jim emphasized that Utilities works underground only, replacing gas, water, sewer, and stormwater infrastructure. Streetscape improvements above ground are a Public Works activity and are subject to entirely different funding rules, design processes, and timelines. The surface will be patched back to its existing condition after work is complete — this is not a streetscape project.

Jim also noted that because these are enterprise funds tied to federal grants, he cannot advocate for surface improvements or dovetail Utilities work with streetscape requests. He encouraged BPAC and community members to advocate directly to Public Works.

Construction impacts and traffic management:

- Peter Ohlms asked whether every sidewalk would be cut into each building. Jim confirmed that every sidewalk that has or needs a gas meter will have some section cut or removed.
- Peter also asked whether work could be staged so only one side of the street is closed at a time. Jim said that is the internal plan.
- Guinevere Higgins noted that once the underground infrastructure is in place, there will be no more excuses to address the streetscape, and expressed interest in being ready to move quickly once the warranty period is over. She also noted that temporary/quick-build solutions can still happen in the meantime.
- Guinevere asked how the team plans to manage rerouting for bikes, pedestrians, and transit — not just cars. Jim acknowledged the team "failed Zoe miserably" in the past on this front, and confirmed that Maintenance of Traffic (MOT) plans are required for all phases. The goal throughout the entire project is to never create a full road closure with a detour. Phase 1 (Rugby, Chancellor, Madison) will maintain access from both directions for cars, walkers, and bikes at all times.
- Guinevere asked whether parking would be taken. Jim confirmed yes, in active work areas.
- Jim noted that construction moves linearly down the street, spending roughly two weeks in any one location. Estimated pace is around 60 feet per day — optimistic estimates of

100 feet per day often don't hold up once crews encounter existing underground infrastructure.

- Kyle Rodland asked who is responsible for making sure construction closures (especially bike lane closures) are handled properly and visibly. Jim said Caleb (traffic control inspector) enforces high expectations and doesn't let things slide. Jim also walks sites himself and requires contractors to keep all materials and signage off sidewalks. Near schools and high-pedestrian areas, the team adjusts work hours and increases on-site traffic control staff. For the Locust Avenue project, CPD was also asked to increase presence in the area.
- Kevin Sarp asked about the warranty period and whether it would be an obstacle to future improvements. Jim clarified that it's less about the warranty period itself and more about allowing time for soil settling before repaving. If new pavement goes down before settling is complete, any warranty repair work would require tearing it back up.
- Brennen Duncan added that the city is finalizing a new policy (not yet formalized) that came out of the Locust Avenue experience: going forward, the city will repave approximately one year after major utility work is complete, regardless of when the road was last rated. This also creates a window to develop a restriping plan before repaving happens.
- Jen Fleisher asked whether community engagement materials could be explicit about where complaints and requests should go, citing confusion during the water line project where residents got bounced between RSWA, the contractor, and the city. Jim said he is the primary point of contact. He will meet residents on-site if needed. QR codes with his direct contact information will be on business cards and flyers distributed at outreach events. The project also has a dedicated website (not social media). Dispatch routes relevant calls directly to him.
- Alberic Karina-Plun asked whether trenches would be cut and covered as the project moves (similar to subway construction). Jim confirmed: trenches are approximately four feet wide, filled daily, and covered with steel plates when crews are not actively working. Cold patch / gravel is used before final paving.
- Jim noted the project is on ConnectCville and encouraged people to follow it for updates and to submit questions there.

Community outreach: **An open house is planned for June 11th from 4–7 PM.**

STARS West Main + Ridge Street Intersection Study

Brennen Duncan presented on the STARS study for the West Main and Ridge Street intersection.

The study is going before City Council on June 15th for approval to submit for a SmartScale grant. Council approval must happen by the July meeting in order to submit. Funding decisions from VDOT are expected in approximately one year, with construction 4–5 years out if awarded.

Note: The STARS study is the last item on the June 15th Council meeting agenda, which is a difficult position. BPAC members are encouraged to attend and show support.

Cycle track placement:

- The proposed cycle track is on the south side of the mall after crossing Ridge-McIntire eastbound at this intersection.
- The most common question is why it's on that side and not the north side, closer to the Downtown Mall.
- Brennen and Zoe explained that placing the bikeway on the north side would require split-phase signals, which would reduce intersection efficiency and increase congestion — factors that affect the SmartScale scoring. The south side placement allows eastbound and westbound movements to operate concurrently.
- Tommy Safranek noted the current design also earns pedestrian points in the SmartScale scoring. Brennen noted the congestion component was the primary driver.
- Natalie Oschrin asked about assumptions related to the turning radius and a continuous protected bike lane. The visual from the report showed the proposed design places the bike path behind (south of) the bus stop, avoiding a situation where cyclists would have to cross both the slip lane and the bus pull-in.

Future flexibility:

- Brennen noted the current design is a concept to secure funding, not a final design. As long as the functional intent (a cycle track at this intersection) is maintained, the specific configuration can be revisited after funding is awarded.
- Josh Carp asked about compatibility with extending a two-way cycle track to connect with the existing Water Street trail. Brennen said that's a possibility and is not off the table. There may also be options like a shared-use widened sidewalk.
- Brennen also noted that from an operational standpoint, the north side of the intersection is where you want to be when crossing Ridge-McIntire westbound, which informed the overall corridor thinking.
- Brennen confirmed that the design for the rest of West Main Street is planned for the next 2–3 years, so the two designs can be coordinated before final construction.

DBA concerns: Brennen said he will address concerns raised by the Downtown Business Association at the June 15th Council presentation, including wayfinding and access. He mentioned the possibility of a gateway feature at 2nd Street (similar to Winchester's downtown arch) to improve visibility of the Downtown Mall from the corridor.

Guinevere asked whether community support would strengthen the SmartScale application. Brennen said what's needed is City Council support — that's the threshold for submission.

Questions for Staff

Tommy Safranek noted he will send full staff updates later in the week. A few items were discussed:

Minneapolis / NACTO conference recap: Brennen and Natalie shared highlights from the NACTO conference in Minneapolis. The group rode almost two hours on a continuous cycle track without car interruptions. Natalie described a stretch along the university with road, cycle track, and sidewalk at different grades, as well as a floating bus island. Zoe noted that some of the bike-bus interactions they observed will be modeled on Rose Hill. Minneapolis made a commitment in 2015 to achieve 60% non-car trips and has a robust docked/tethered scooter and bike network. Photos and video from the trip will be shared on the BPAC page when available.

Rose Hill: Zoe noted there has been significant community feedback on Rose Hill. Details will be posted on ConnectCville soon and included in the staff update.

West Main restriping post-utility work: Jen Fleisher asked whether she had missed a discussion about restriping and tidying up after the utility work is complete. Brennen confirmed she had not. Repaving and restriping are planned, but the design effort is being intentionally delayed to minimize the gap between finalizing the design and actually implementing it. The goal is roughly a one-year window between completing design and breaking ground.

Public works project signage: Josh Carp asked about a sign he saw on Shamrock near Cherry with a QR code. Brennen explained that QR code links to the public works projects landing page, and that this signage will be used on all future paving and sidewalk projects.

Announcements / Other Business

Speed camera program: Josh Carp raised a request (noted as an agenda item but discussed here) for a more complete presentation on the speed camera program. One full school year of data is now available. Josh is interested in high-level summaries including citation trends, locations with highest counts, effectiveness at reducing speeds, and repeat offender patterns. He would also like access to a spreadsheet of violations if possible.

Kyle Rodland noted he had pulled some data from CPD, but it came from the speed camera vendor.

Tommy Safranek provided context: the city is currently in active discussions about program finances, how success is defined, data ownership, and new state legislation requiring reporting to the state. The city recently resolved a ~$180,000 back balance with the vendor and is now paying monthly fees rather than operating under a deferred compensation model. Expansion decisions would need to be made within the next six months in order to implement for the school year after next.

Jen Fleisher and Josh Carp noted that BPAC has a right to the data in the vendor portal and suggested inviting the appropriate CPD representative to a future meeting.

Guinevere acknowledged the lack of predefined success metrics was unusual, but noted the deferred compensation model meant there was no upfront cost to the city, which reduced pressure to define ROI at the outset. She agreed that safety metrics should now be defined and evaluated.

Agenda Items for Next BPAC Meeting

Josh Carp's speed camera presentation / data request will be pursued for the August or September meeting, pending staff availability.

No July BPAC meeting due to the July 4th holiday.
The next meeting is in August.

Announcements

Neighborhood Walk, Sunday, June 14th at 10am - Locust Grove

City Council Meeting - Monday, June 15th at 4pm (STARS Study presentation)

Adjourned at 6:36 PM