



# **Update on the VDOT STARS Study on W Main/Ridge Intersection**

**Neighborhood Development Services**

**March 2026**



# Project Background

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- In 2024, local VDOT staff worked with City and County staff to identify key project locations for a new round of STARS studies to develop new SMART SCALE applications
  - US 29 North and US 29/US 250 Bypass Interchange
  - West Main/Ridge Intersection
- Locations were identified as areas of concern in MPO long-range plan Moving Toward 2050 and the regional safety action plan Move Safely Blue Ridge
- West Main/Ridge was identified as a candidate for the City's first new SMART SCALE project application since returning state funds that awarded in previous rounds



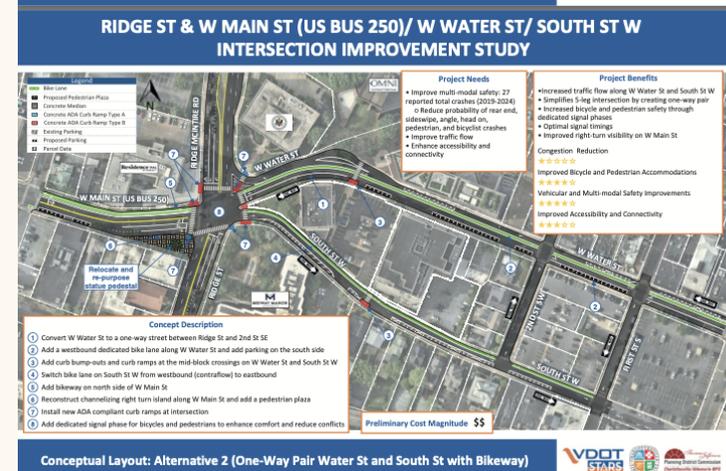
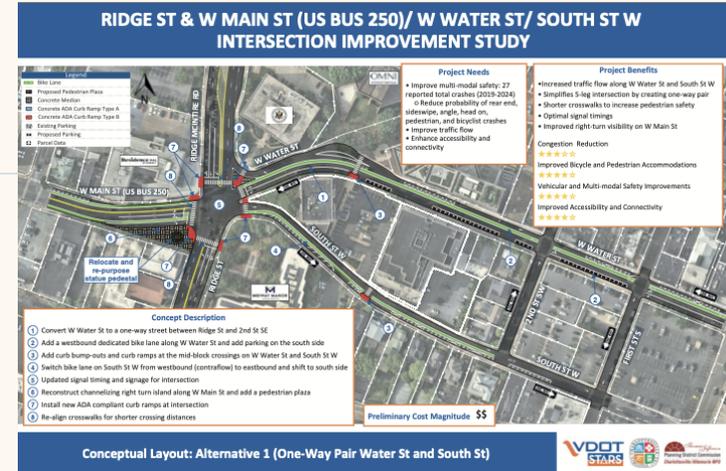
# Study purpose and goals

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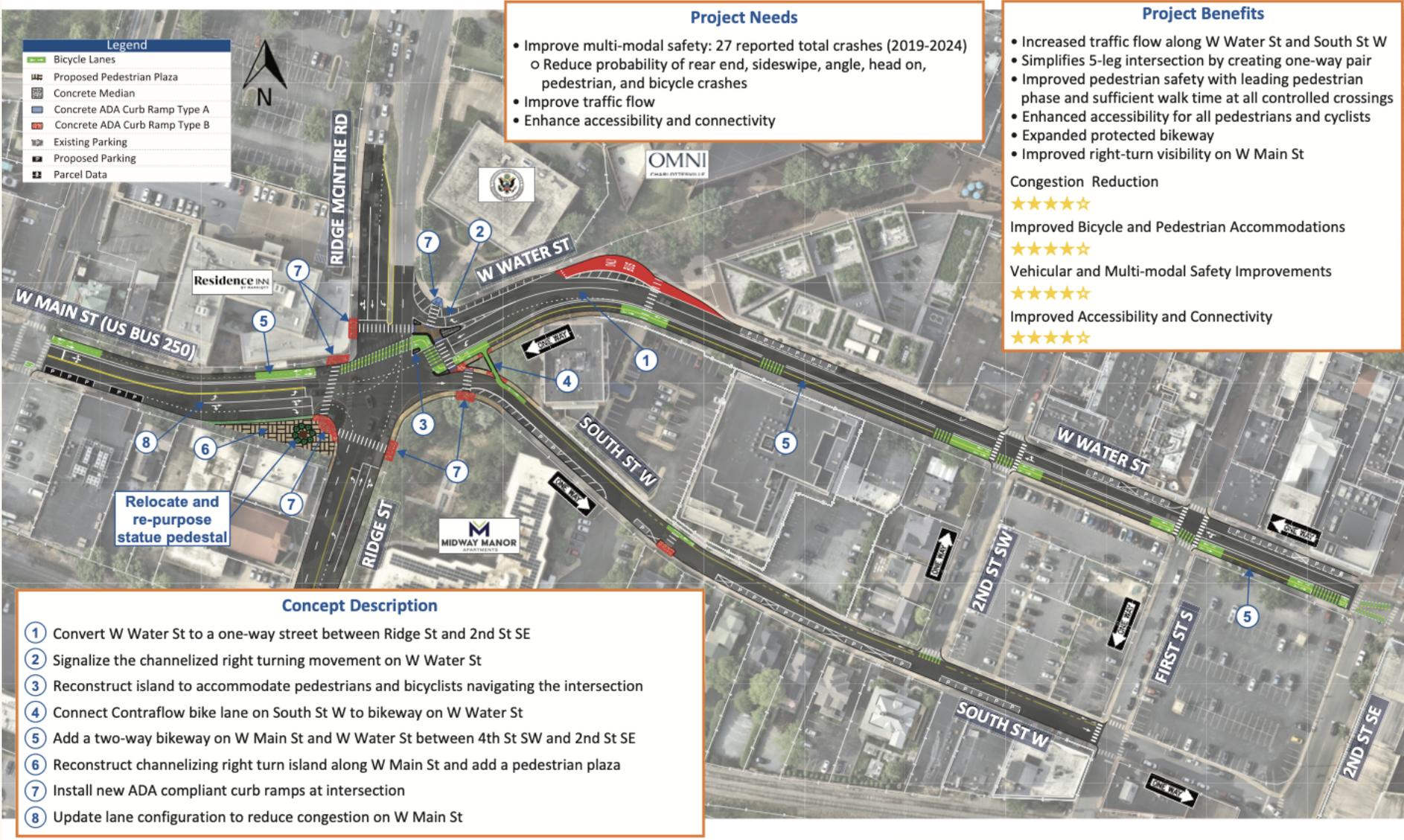
- Improve safety for all road users
- Improve traffic flow and ease of use for all road users
- Maintain the pedestal as a cultural resource for re-use
- Develop a competitive SMART SCALE application
  - Must show some benefits to congestion
  - Must be cost-competitive

# Study timeline

- **November 2024:** Traffic data collected
- **March 2025:** Public survey on existing concerns in study area
- **April 2025:** Existing conditions findings published
- **August 2025:** Public information meeting and survey on three alternatives
- **January 2025:** Public information meeting and feedback collection on the draft proposed VDOT staff recommendation



# Ridge St & W Main St / W Water St/ South St W Intersection Improvement Study



- Legend**
- Bicycle Lanes
  - Proposed Pedestrian Plaza
  - Concrete Median
  - Concrete ADA Curb Ramp Type A
  - Concrete ADA Curb Ramp Type B
  - Existing Parking
  - Proposed Parking
  - Parcel Data

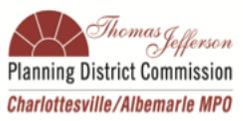
- Project Needs**
- Improve multi-modal safety: 27 reported total crashes (2019-2024)
    - Reduce probability of rear end, sideswipe, angle, head on, pedestrian, and bicycle crashes
  - Improve traffic flow
  - Enhance accessibility and connectivity

- Project Benefits**
- Increased traffic flow along W Water St and South St W
  - Simplifies 5-leg intersection by creating one-way pair
  - Improved pedestrian safety with leading pedestrian phase and sufficient walk time at all controlled crossings
  - Enhanced accessibility for all pedestrians and cyclists
  - Expanded protected bikeway
  - Improved right-turn visibility on W Main St
- Congestion Reduction**  
★★★★★
- Improved Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodations**  
★★★★★
- Vehicular and Multi-modal Safety Improvements**  
★★★★★
- Improved Accessibility and Connectivity**  
★★★★★

- Concept Description**
- 1 Convert W Water St to a one-way street between Ridge St and 2nd St SE
  - 2 Signalize the channelized right turning movement on W Water St
  - 3 Reconstruct island to accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists navigating the intersection
  - 4 Connect Contraflow bike lane on South St W to bikeway on W Water St
  - 5 Add a two-way bikeway on W Main St and W Water St between 4th St SW and 2nd St SE
  - 6 Reconstruct channelizing right turn island along W Main St and add a pedestrian plaza
  - 7 Install new ADA compliant curb ramps at intersection
  - 8 Update lane configuration to reduce congestion on W Main St

Relocate and re-purpose statue pedestal

## Preferred Conceptual Layout: One-Way Pair Water St and South St with Bikeway





# Project Benefits

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- Simplifies 5-leg intersection by creating one-way pair
  - Decreases delays
  - Reduces turning-movement conflicts
- Improved pedestrian safety with enlarged spaces for waiting, leading pedestrian phases on and sufficient walk time at all controlled crossings
- Enhanced accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists
- Expanded protected bikeway
- Improved right-turn visibility on W Main
- *Improved wayfinding signage*



## Next Steps

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- VDOT refines the preferred conceptual design, based on public and staff input, develops cost estimate (including identifying the future local match needed)
- **April 1:** Pre-applications for SMART SCALE due
- **April:** Engagement with Downtown residents and businesses
- **April/May:** VDOT and OIPI will review Pre-applications and provide feedback
- **June-August:** SMART SCALE application window, will need City Council endorsement of project application with preferred concept
- **September 2026-January 2027:** SMART SCALE applications assessed
- **Spring 2027:** Projects selected for funding by Commonwealth Transportation Board in Six Year Improvement Program
- **2027-2028:** Planning for restriping on West Main following Utilities project
- **2029:** Earliest full repaving of West Main and implementation of restriping with protected bike facilities, up to the STARS study project area
- **2033:** Funding for STARS study project construction become available



# April Engagement with Downtown Businesses and Residents

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- Working with VDOT to summarize collected feedback
- Inviting downtown residents and business to participate in focus group session to clarify and develop solutions for collected concerns
- Workshop to review feedback, provide further detail on items to consider for future refinements
- Interested? Look out for more info and RSVP to participate
- Coordinating with VDOT, Office of Economic Development, and Friends of Downtown
- Tentative date: 4/27 at City Space

Thank You

