

BELMONT BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT STATUS REPORT – AUGUST 2019

The Belmont Bridge project achieved a major milestone on July 15, 2019 when we received **authorization to begin acquiring right of way** from the Virginia Department of Transportation and Federal Highway Administration. Coordination with impacted property owners began during design and will continue as fair market offers are made in September 2019. This phase of the project also includes the finalization of utility plans and relocation of any private, overhead utilities once necessary property rights are acquired. The project remains on schedule for construction in Summer 2020.

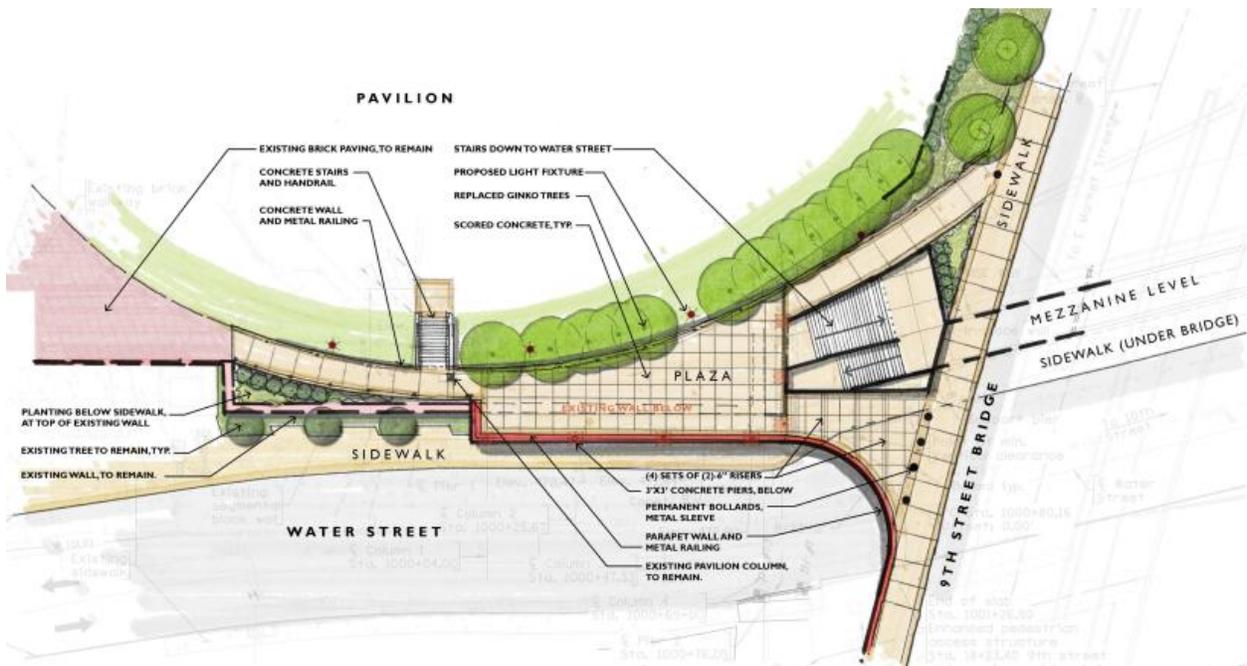
Final design has also been advancing to the point where a final Certificate of Appropriateness can be sought from the Board of Architectural Review (BAR) at their regularly scheduled meeting on August 20th at 5:30pm in City Council Chambers. The following details will be shared with BAR:

1. The current path leading from the bridge/9th Street down to the Downtown Mall along the west side of the Pavilion will be replaced and the grade lowered to 5% to improve accessibility and overall walkability. (The path will have a more gradual incline than it does today.)
2. The City has received a preliminary written determination from Buckingham Branch Railroad (BBRR) granting an exception to remove the railroad protective/pedestrian fencing on bridge. Final agreement still needs to be reached between the City and the railroad on the terms, but the City appreciates the railroad's willingness to consider this request. The City will still design the protective fencing, install supports during construction in case any incidents require installation at a later date and install cameras to further monitor bridge and deter future incidents.
3. Updated lighting, landscaping and street furnishings plans and proposed products.
4. Additional details of final railing and knuckle design as well as aesthetic treatment for the retaining wall/bridge.
5. Replacement of Scored Concrete Crosswalks with High Visibility Crosswalks at two signalized intersections – to improve consistency and constructability with a cost savings of approximately \$88,500.
6. Replacement of Scored Concrete with Asphalt in the Parking Lot on Old Avon Street - due its limited aesthetic contribution to the overall project and the magnitude of cost savings of roughly \$290,000.

Updates will be provided to the BAR in response to their previous motion: renderings displaying the horizontal concept of the MSE panels [aesthetic treatment of retaining walls/bridge abutments] with additional plan details; review of requested details on the stairs to create more fluidity and cohesion [the south stairs particularly between pedestrian plaza & pedestrian underpass to 9th/Avon Street] and more information on the new, proposed light feature.

Meeting materials have been posted online at the following link: <https://www.charlottesville.org/departments-and-services/departments-h-z/neighborhood-development-services/historic-preservation-and-design-review/board-of-architectural-review-bar/current-bar-meeting-agenda>

Please attend BAR's public meeting or watch it on Channel 10 or online (live or archived).



PROJECT WORK ACTIVITIES

Work in Process

- Preparing for BAR presentation for August 20th meeting for final COA application.
- Advancing final design for utilities and coordination with private (overhead) companies.
- Awaiting City staff comments regarding Landscaping, Lighting and Signal Design.
- Developing Stage II Bridge Report for pedestrian tunnels and Stage II Bridge Report for bridge and knuckle.

Upcoming Work (now-September 2019)

- Coordinating agreement with Buckingham Branch Railroad (BBRR) regarding granting of exception for the railroad protective/pedestrian fencing on bridge.
- Developing and approving property appraisals to begin right of way acquisition process.
- Continuing coordination with the VDOT to address any issues as plans, reports and submissions are finalized.
- Developing construction specifications and certifications for advertisement.
- Completing an appropriation to commit all funding to project through construction phase.

Project Overview

The bridge replacement project is striving to address four specific needs:

1. to improve safety for the traveling public;
2. to provide pedestrian and bicyclist accommodations;
3. to maintain connectivity with the surrounding community, neighborhoods and business activity centers; and
4. to accommodate vehicular traffic volumes.

The preferred concept proposes to address these needs with the following approved major design features:

- A replacement bridge that is shortened to approximately 236 LF in length and maintains the existing 62' width
- Roadway Section on Avon/9th Street between Levy Avenue and East Market Street intersections will consist of one travel lane in each direction, a protected 7' wide bike lane in each direction and a 10' wide pedestrian sidewalk in each direction. Turning lanes will be added/lengthened at each intersection to maximize efficiency of each signal while maintaining traffic flow.
- "Old" Avon Street will be closed to vehicular traffic between Levy Avenue and East South Street to improve the function and safety of the Levy Avenue/9th Street intersection for all modes of travel while creating a pedestrian plaza within the former roadway.
- Enhanced pedestrian lighting and landscaping will be provided along 9th Street between Levy Avenue and East Market Street.
- New sidewalk will be constructed along neighboring streets to the project corridor and landscaping will be installed – on East South Street, Avon Street, Graves Street and Water Street.
- Additional new proposed pedestrian features include:

- a pedestrian passageway under 9th Street south of the railroad,
- a reconstructed staircase connecting “Old” Avon Street to 9th Street,
- new staircases from 9th Street to Water Street on either side of the bridge north of the railroad and a mezzanine to cross 9th Street under the bridge

Website

For more information about the Belmont Bridge Replacement project, please visit the [project web site](#).