



Albemarle County

Legislation Text

File #: 23-170, **Version:** 1

AGENDA DATE: 3/1/2023

TITLE:

Free Bridge Lane Conceptual Design Alternatives

SUBJECT/PROPOSAL/REQUEST: Requesting Support for a Free Bridge Lane Promenade Pilot Program

ITEM TYPE: Regular Action Item

STAFF CONTACT(S): Richardson, Walker, Filardo, McDermott, Hersh-Ballering

PRESENTER (S): Hersh-Ballering

LEGAL REVIEW: Yes

REVIEWED BY: Jeffrey B. Richardson

BACKGROUND: Free Bridge Lane is a low-volume, unstriped roadway that extends approximately one-half mile from Darden Towe Park to US 250. Along the west side of the roadway, there is a degraded, narrow shared use path. There is a future Albemarle County park site on the east side of the roadway. The 2019 Pantops Master Plan envisioned transitioning Free Bridge Lane from its current condition to a "Green Street" with enhanced bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and elements of stormwater management. Free Bridge Lane was prioritized in the Pantops Master Plan as a "catalyst" project.

Community Development staff have engaged consultant services to develop a conceptual design for improvements to Free Bridge Lane that are consistent with the Pantops Master Plan. As a preliminary step, the consultants prepared two design proposals. One design proposal features one-way (southbound) vehicle traffic, a contraflow bike lane, and a dedicated pedestrian walkway; the other proposal closes the roadway to motor vehicles and features a wide promenade open to pedestrians and bicyclists. Transportation planning staff presented these two design proposals to the public at the Pantops Community Advisory Committee on January 23, 2023. Those in attendance at that meeting spoke largely in favor of the promenade design. Parks & Recreation staff, who have been involved in the Free Bridge Lane project as stakeholders, are also optimistic about the promenade design.

STRATEGIC PLAN: Infrastructure Investment - Prioritize, plan, and invest in critical infrastructure that responds to past and future changes and improves the capacity to serve community needs.

DISCUSSION: Staff seek comments from the Board of Supervisors regarding either the one-way and/or promenade design proposals.

Further, staff request that the Board of Supervisors support the development of a Free Bridge Lane Promenade Pilot Program. The pilot program would make the minimum necessary improvements to Free Bridge Lane to allow the roadway to function as a bicycle and pedestrian promenade that is closed to motor vehicles. At the conclusion of the pilot program, Free Bridge Lane could be returned to its current condition,

transitioned to a one-way street, or further improved as a promenade.

To develop the pilot program, staff will identify the minimum necessary improvements for the roadway, establish cost estimates for those improvements, and determine a timeline for the program, among other tasks. Staff would return to the Board of Supervisors for a resolution of support prior to pilot program implementation.

BUDGET IMPACT: The Free Bridge Lane Conceptual Design Project has spent approximately \$6,000 of the \$20,000 allocated. The budget impact of the Free Bridge Lane Promenade Pilot Program, if supported by the Board, would be limited to County staff time already committed to Free Bridge Lane efforts as part of the annual work plan. Continued work on this project is not expected to reduce overall staff capacity.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommend that the Board vote to support the development of a Free Bridge Lane Promenade Pilot Program.

ATTACHMENTS:

A - Free Bridge Lane Design Proposals and Typical Cross-Sections