



Office of the Town Manager

Frank Cassidy

STAFF REPORT

Warrenton Town Council

Carter Nevill, Mayor

Heather Sutphin, Ward 1

William Semple, Ward 2

Brett Hamby, Ward 3

James Hartman, Ward 4 Vice Mayor

Jay Heroux, Ward 5

Paul Mooney, At Large

David McGuire, At Large

Council Meeting Date:	October 10 th , 2022
Agenda Title:	Public Works, Roads, and Project Updates
Requested Action:	Receive the report from Staff with information for discussion.
Department / Agency Lead:	Public Works and Community Development
Staff Lead:	Michael Wharton/John Ward/Frank Cassidy/Johnny Switzer/Denise Harris

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Public Works, with Facilities, Community Development, and the Police Department continue to be engaged in many projects around the Town. The current projects for discussion in this report are:

1. New Town Hall
2. Old Town Hall- 18 Court St.
3. New Public Works Facility
4. Road and Infrastructure Improvements- Walkability and Complete Streets
5. Fleet and Facilities
6. Roundabouts

The purpose of this agenda item is to provide an overview and status of each of these projects,

BACKGROUND

For clarity and ease of navigation, we will break the history of each item separately:

1. **New Town Hall-** New Town Hall, 21 Main St. is a former bank building. It was purchased by the Town in November of 2019. This was a product of several discussions and meetings based upon the facilities at 18 Court St. (Old Town Hall) becoming a major challenge for day-to-day Town functions and meetings. The space, in short, was too small. The objective of the New Town Hall was to provide professional office space for staff versus the failing and undersized cubicles; to consolidate services, and to provide a more effective operational capacity. The pandemic closed Old Town Hall in March 2020 and provided the opportunity to transition to New Town Hall. Relocation of staff started in June 2020 and was officially open for business in August 2020. The bond will be paid off in 2039, the Series 2021B General Obligation Bond.
2. **Old Town Hall- 18 Court St.-** The Town retains ownership of this building. It has been vacant since New Town Hall was occupied. As recently as this year, we began to explore options for new use of this facility. Town Council was briefed at a Council Work Session in September 2023 regarding collaboration with the local VFW and the County for sharing the use of this space for additional meetings, joint training sessions, tabletop exercises for emergency management, and some offices

for Public Works and Utilities staff to take some pressure off the Public Works Facility on Falmouth St.

3. **Proposed Public Works Facility-** This project started in talking phases in early 2021, Council meetings and meetings with County staff were conducted through 2021 and most recently in the budget cycle for our current budget. Bohler Engineering was hired to conduct preliminary site assessments. The current facility was built in the 1950s as the Bell telephone company and has received minimal modifications or updates since then. The Town occupied the facility in 1975. The facility needs many repairs that are critical to the continued operation of a public works and utilities department. Many of the support structures are beyond their life expectancy and would require complete removal and replacement. This is in addition to the condition of the maintenance garage and aging offices. A report on the condition of the existing Public Works Facility was completed in October 2021 and presented to the Council. As recently as June 2022, at a Council Works session regarding the budget, the Council directed staff to continue to move forward with this project. We are still in the very preliminary stages of site work assessment. Currently, the landfill is going through some site work which may lend itself to the opportunity for the Town to move its salt shed and some equipment storage to the site to stage the improvements. We are working with County staff on moving forward. Additionally, we are looking for ways to take pressure off the system by identifying additional training space, alternative space for storage of small items like signs, and changing office assignments. The Old Town Hall building is one of these options.
4. **Road and Infrastructure Improvements- Walkability and Complete Streets-** The onboarding of a Project Manager has created an opportunity for the development of a five-plus-year plan for roads and infrastructure. The staff has assessed the conditions of the roads and sidewalks, they are applying the concepts of the Walkability and Complete Streets studies completed in 2017, which established the foundation for Town-wide objectives, and they are implementing their plan to resurface the roadways; repair aging sidewalks; bring sidewalks up to ADA standards; provide multi-modal lanes; and connect sidewalks. The current projects were Walker Dr., Falmouth St. (SGR with VDOT), Lee Highway from Blackwell to the interchange (SGR VDOT), Timberfence Rd., and under construction, Winchester St., and several connecting streets. The assessment criteria and plan are attached. Staff is starting to implement these infrastructure improvements with the worst condition areas and working our way around Town.

Traffic calming/Speed reduction Strategies- Staff is currently developing a "Traffic Task Group" which is a small group of staff subject matter experts from Public Works, Police, Engineering, and Community Development. This task group is designed to address on-site improvements to complaints and safety hazards. This group is responsible for many of the efforts we see around Town today including the new "Neighborhood Slow Zone" signs, the placement and movement of message boards, installing additional stop signs and speed indicator signs, and identifying proper placement for additional crosswalks. They are also working on the design for the "Court House Square" traffic flow and implementing additional concepts like temporary speed tables.

5. **Fleet and Facilities-** The Town of Warrenton merged its Fleet Services Division to become a Facilities and Fleet Management Division within the Department of Public Works and Utilities. This merger has created many efficiencies and cost savings. This was a responsibility which was not adequately addressed in prior years. The intent for Facilities is to develop an effective team based on predictive maintenance. This team works closely with all other departments to maintain all of the town's facilities which include signs, traffic lights, light poles, pedestrian safety devices, buildings, green spaces, parking lots, etc. They also provide daily maintenance to New Town Hall, Old Town Hall, Police, Public Works, the plants, and all facilities for Parks and Recreation.

By merging the two divisions, the Town of Warrenton has been able to:

- Reduce administrative costs
- Improve communication and coordination between the two divisions
- Streamline processes and procedures
- Cross-train staff
- Share resources and equipment

The merger has also allowed the Town to develop a more comprehensive and strategic approach to facilities and fleet management. This has resulted in better planning, budgeting, and maintenance practices.

Overall, the merger of the Fleet Services and Facilities Divisions has been a success for the Town of Warrenton. It has created a more efficient and effective organization that is better able to meet the needs of the community.

Sanitation and Recycling Trucks; We purchased two new recycling trucks during the pandemic through ARPA funds. Unfortunately, their delivery suffered a major delay because of supply chain issues. We maintain two recycling trucks and two sanitation trucks with one requiring replacement in FY25. Our sanitation crews provide twice-a-week trash and once-a-week recycling. We are currently re-evaluating the refuse program and the impact that the recycling trucks have on the refuse system.

Police Vehicles: The Police department has a take-home vehicle policy. In the past three years, we have replaced ten police vehicles with funding from the general fund and a grant. These vehicles are replaced based upon the Fleet Replacement Plan of eight (8) years or 115,000 miles.

The Town of Warrenton was recently designated as one of the NAFA Top 50 Green Fleets and awarded Rookie of the Year for its commitment to sustainability. The Town's Police Department hybrid vehicle program, which currently makes up 50% of their fleet, is saving the town a significant amount of money on fuel and reducing its environmental impact.

The Town's Police Department hybrid vehicle program is a prime example of its commitment to sustainability. Hybrid vehicles are more fuel-efficient than traditional gasoline-powered vehicles,

which means that they save the Town money on fuel costs. In addition, hybrid vehicles produce fewer emissions, which helps to improve air quality and reduce the Town's environmental impact.

WARF- The Warrenton Aquatic and Recreation Facility (WARF) has experienced several challenges over the past two years. The overall objective is to modernize all aspects of the WARF, and all other facilities, as parts require replacement. Although not the only facility in Parks and Recreation, the WARF is the most challenging given the amenities and use. The current condition of the WARF is good to fair as it requires several repairs that are pending. The exterior walkway and front entrance area was damaged by a water line break earlier this year. Correcting this damage will also require interior repairs. Including the WARF, the modernization of all Parks and Recreation facilities involves bringing ADA requirements up to standards, replacing aging covered areas, restoring the streams on property, and implementing the Eva Walker Park Master Plan while engaging in a comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

6. **Roundabouts-** The Town has a long-standing goal to increase safety, traffic calming, gateway enhancements, and walkability going back at least 25 years.
- 2002 Comprehensive Plan 2000-2025 included these objectives and a Lee Highway/Winchester roundabout on the Future Land Use Map.
 - 2018 Update to the Comprehensive Plan included a Lee Highway Urban Development Area (UDA) that included the goal of roundabouts on Lee Highway.
 - Plan Warrenton 2040 includes these objectives/policies/goals and metrics to increase roundabouts.
 - 2021-2022 VDOT Pipeline Study of Lee Highway found roundabouts in these locations were the preferred safety design improvement.
 - Town worked with VDOT on 2020 Smart Scale Round 4 (unsuccessful) and 2022 Round 5 (successful) applications for these roundabout locations.

100% VDOT Smart Scale Round 5 funded. There is no obligation to cost share with Smart Scale and the Town did not allocate any monies.

To review the process for the roundabouts:

- Comprehensive Plans have extensive public outreach efforts, that include the transportation section, through the development and adoption process.
- UDA Adoption included a citizen Steering Committee, 1/19/2017 Public Workshop, 10/24/2017 Joint Work Session Town Council and Planning Commission, 2/20/2018 Planning Commission Public Hearing, and 3/13/2018 Town Council Public Hearing and Resolution.
- Capital Improvement Plans (CIPs) are approved annually by the Town Council with multiple work sessions and public hearings as part of the budget cycle. The Planning Commission reviews all CIP land use projects for conformance with the comprehensive plan. These roundabouts may be found in the last three CIPs.
- VDOT Pipeline Study conducted public outreach and a survey in February 2022; Town advertised the survey on its social media and website. Pipeline study Town Council Work Sessions were held on 11/9/2021 and 3/8/2022. The final VDOT Pipeline study found roundabouts to be the preferred improvements.

- Town Council applied for a Round 4 Smart Scale grant for the roundabout at Lee/Broadview/Winchester after a public hearing held on 10/13/2020.
- Town Council applied for a Round 5 Smart Scale grant for roundabouts at Lee/Broadview/Winchester and Lee/Blackwell after a public hearing on 7/12/2022.

Through all the above, the Town staff is not aware of any objections at this time.

There are multiple benefits to roundabouts. These intersections were identified as needing further study by VDOT to meet the mid-term needs of the Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board adopted VTrans vision, goals, and objectives. The corridor was identified as “Very High” for Transportation Demand Management and Congestion Mitigation. It was identified as “High” for bicycle access, pedestrian access, and safety improvements. Both intersections are listed as Priority 1 for the VDOT Construction District due to their high needs. VDOT lists the benefits of roundabouts as:

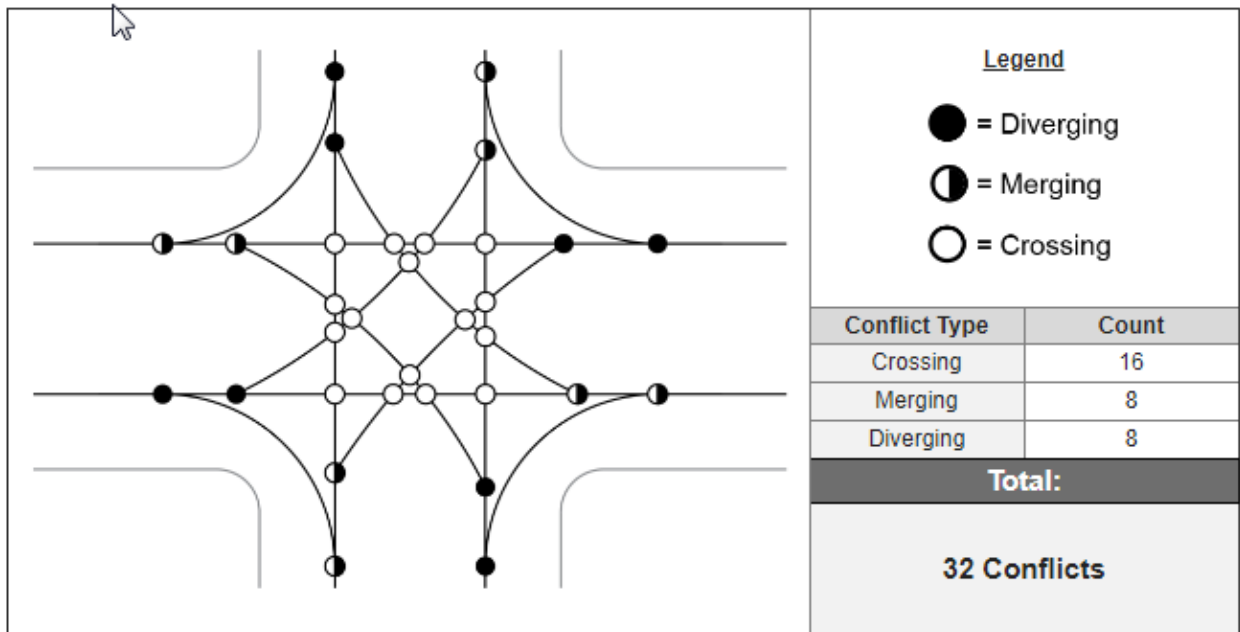
- **Improved safety:** Reduces the number of points where vehicles can cross paths and eliminate the potential for right-angle and head-on crashes.
- **Increased efficiency:** Yield-controlled design means fewer stops, fewer delays, and shorter queues.
- **Safer speeds:** Promotes lower vehicle speeds, giving drivers more time to react.
- **Long-term cost-effectiveness:** No traffic signals mean lower long-term costs for operations and maintenance.
- **Aesthetics:** Allows for landscaping and beautification

Traffic Calming/Safety

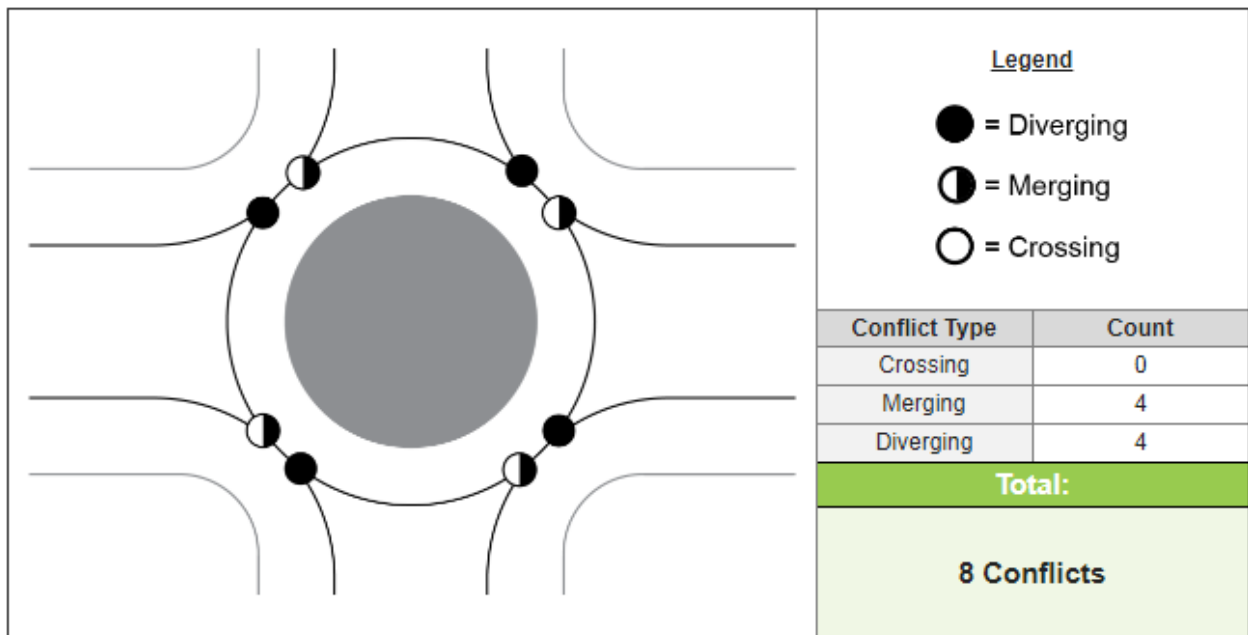
A total of 184 crashes were reported along Lee Highway during a five-year study period. 46 crashes at Lee/Broadview/Winchester; 42 crashes at Lee/Blackwell.

Alternative intersections (e.g. roundabouts) lead to less conflict points than a conventional intersection, which leads to greater safety benefits as illustrated in the VDOT graphic below:

Conventional Intersection: Conflict Points



Roundabout: Conflict Points



Congestion Mitigation

Lee/Broadview/Winchester was found to be operating at a Level of Service (LOS) of E and F for left turn movements. A roundabout improves this to LOS of C, and a B overall for the intersection. Benefit in overall intersection delays 60% lower than no build.

Lee/Blackwell was found to be operating at a LOS of D for the intersection. A roundabout improves the LOS to a B. The Greatest benefit in the overall intersection delay is 71% lower than no build.

Bicycle/Pedestrian Improvements

Both projects include bicycle and pedestrian safety improvements with the construction of pedestrian crossings and medians, HAWK signals, and sidewalks.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Receive the report from Staff with information for discussion.

Service Level / Policy Impact

These projects are all objectives of our Plan 2040-

Community Facilities Goals:

CF-1: Serve as the central inviting public service center for the Town and County residents with a proportionate share of community services provided by other governments, including a fair and reasonable balance in funding sources for community facilities.

CF-3: Green infrastructure and sustainability are incorporated into community facilities to promote energy efficiency and environmental protection.

Open Space, Parks, & Environment Goals:

P-1: Preserve, enhance, and protect the environmental, scenic, and natural quality of the Town.

P-3: Infrastructure. All Town residents will have the opportunity to access its recreational assets and natural resources, including public spaces and recreational amenities.

P-4: Create a long-term approach to the development of parks, recreation, and open space in the Town of Warrenton.

Transportation and Circulation Goals:

T-1: Improve multi-modal capacity and safety that encourages trips by walking, bicycling, and transit.

T-2: Enhance the traveling experience by creating great streets.

T-3: Promote livability in the Town by creating great places where residents and visitors feel welcome and safe.

T-4: Provide Equitable and connected Multi-Modal Network.

Fiscal Impact

Projects are funded through VDOT grants, our current CIP, CARP, and standard maintenance budgeting.

Legal Impact

N/A

ATTACHMENTS
