



Date of Council Meeting: September 8, 2015

Information memo

**TOWN OF LEESBURG
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**

Subject: H-2/East Market Street Area Plan Project

Staff Contact: Susan Berry Hill, Director, Department of Planning and Zoning

Council Action Requested: None. Information only.

Staff Recommendation: None. Information only.

Commission Recommendation: None at this time.

Fiscal Impact: None at this time.

Work Plan Impact: This project will be accomplished using current staff resources including a Project Manager with assistance from the Preservation Planner, Planning Assistant, and the Director. In addition, staff is currently in the process of asking state universities whether this project might be eligible as a graduate student practicum.

The H-2/East Market Street Area Plan is estimated to take 12 months to complete. This project is in the Department of Planning and Zoning (DPZ) work plan and staff now anticipates starting the project in January of 2016.

Executive Summary: In 2008, the Town Council directed the formation of a committee to make recommendations on the H-2 Design Guidelines. After consideration of issues and options, the H-2 Committee made recommendations to the Town Council in June, 2009. Follow-up work on the Committee's recommendations was not started at that time because work was also underway to develop a form-based code for the Crescent District. In addition, the Planning Commission and staff began work on a multi-year project to update the Town Plan.

As a follow up to the 2012 Town Plan Update, the Planning Commission reviewed the Town Plan Action Program, and made recommendations to the Town Council that the H-2 Guidelines update be included in the short list of priority work items. In September, 2013, the Town Council accepted the Planning Commission's recommendation regarding inclusion of the H-2 Guidelines update in the Town Plan Action Plan priority list. Council also suggested that the H-2 Guideline update be combined with work on the East Market Street Small Area Plan.

Background:

The purpose of this planning effort is to develop *more specific, and more integrated approach to land use, transportation and design* for the area that exists east of the Bypass extending to the corporate limits. This is an important geographic gateway to the Town. A large undeveloped portion of the corridor is situated north of East Market Street between the Outlet Mall and Battlefield Parkway. The Town will have an opportunity through this H-2/East Market planning process to work with property owners, Town residents, the Planning Commission, Board of Architectural Review, Economic Development Commission, as well as Town Council to shape future development in an effort to align land use, transportation, and design objectives for this gateway into the Town.

Planning objectives for this project will include:

- *Land use* - The Town Plan land use for this portion of the corridor designates a significant portion for Regional Office. During the Town Plan update in 2012, there was general agreement that this designation should be expanded to consider other land use scenarios including mixed use development. In addition, recent changes to the Zoning Ordinance have recognized that current development trends ‘blur’ the line between production activities and office land uses. For example the use of 3-D printing has changed how we look at “production” activities such that they *should* be considered for office zoning as well as traditional industrial zoning. The Town Plan land use policies for the East Market corridor should be updated to reflect the Town’s desire to expand “employment uses” to be more in line with current thinking on “production” uses and other trends in mixed land use.
- *Transportation* – The Battlefield Parkway/Market Street interchange has recently been funded for design by the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA). As this design effort begins, the Town should look at the Cardinal Park/East Market Street intersection in more detail. Additionally, this planning effort will comprehensively review inter-parcel access and the planned road network for all properties in the corridor to assure that access is provided in the near term and in the future when East Market Street becomes a limited-access facility. This planning effort will also investigate opportunities to increase multi-modal mobility options in the corridor.
- *Design* - The H-2 Committee recommended that an approach be used that is a combination of guidelines and regulation to achieve the best design outcomes for all areas of the H-2 corridor. This planning process will develop specific corridor design objectives and consider if/how to revise the H-2 guidelines and if/how to develop zoning regulations to further implement the guidelines.