

This project seeks to improve pedestrian safety, accessibility, and overall walkability along an important road segment in downtown Herndon. It involves redesigning and reconstructing the streetscape along the south side of Elden Street between Center Street to the east and a couple parcels past School Street to the west, a 0.3 mile distance. There is one signalized intersection at Grace Street.

This segment of Elden Street is within short walking distance to shops, restaurants, and civic facilities and provides an important connection into the downtown. It is also a short block from two schools, Herndon Middle School and St. Joseph's Catholic School. Students from both schools comprise of a significant portion of the pedestrian activity in the project area, both along Elden Street and across Elden Street, at the Grace Street intersection. The W&OD Regional Trail and Folly Lick Regional Trail are a block away from the project and are connected to the project area via the Town's Transportation Alternatives Program funded Downtown Streetscape Phase 3.

Pedestrian LOS in the project area is currently poor, despite regular activity generated by nearby pedestrians. To navigate Elden Street in this area today, pedestrians must use a narrow sidewalk that is reduced to less than 2' in width in a dozen areas due to overhead utility pole placement in the middle of the sidewalk. The sidewalk immediately abuts the curb and vehicle travel lane. Curb ramps are inconsistently provided and, when provided, do not comply with ADA standards due to narrowness, steepness, lack of detectable warning surfaces, and lack of flat and safe landing areas. Marked crosswalks are mostly non-existent, and the pedestrian signals do not have any audio-tactile capabilities. It is an uncomfortable and unsafe environment for any pedestrian, but is unusable for someone with a stroller or someone in a wheelchair.

To match the sidewalk on the north side of this segment of Elden Street and comply with the Herndon streetscape standards, the improvements will include reconstruction of the substandard sidewalk to a continuous 5' wide sidewalk with pavers. The project includes construction of a grass strip between the sidewalk and curb, addition of ADA-compliant curb ramps, high visibility crosswalks, and accessible pedestrian signalization at all intersection approaches with Grace Street. The grass strip is expected to add a minimum 3' wide separation between the sidewalk and the curb and travel lane. This buffer may be increased to 4' or 5' and include trees. The end result is expected to offer a safer, more comfortable facility for pedestrians that is separated from vehicle traffic and accessible for all users.

This project is not expected to require right-of-way acquisition since the curb will be moved north into the existing eastbound travel lane. To accommodate this, the existing roadway, which consists of a travel lane in each direction, separated by a stamped concrete median and dedicated turn lane, would be reduced in overall width. The travel lanes would become 11.5' wide and the median/turn lane would be 12' wide. With those lane widths, there is no expectation of impacts to vehicle mobility.

The project does not include relocation of the utility poles at this time. The sidewalk would be widened into the grass strip at the utility poles to allow for minimum 5' wide passage. The project also does not include any streetscape lighting elements. The current sidewalk is mostly lit by cobrahead street lighting mounted on the utility poles.