

Signage and Lighting

Signage

Improved and consistent signage is an integral component of the City of Chesapeake’s redevelopment and enhancement efforts for the South Military Highway corridor. Improved signage will help patrons and visitors find local businesses and services along the corridor. It will help trucks delivering and picking up materials more efficiently navigate the corridor. More importantly, replacement of the Gilmerton Bridge combined signage identifying truck routes will establish and preserve the character of the desired Community Core.

During the planning and design charrette process, lack of signage for trucks was identified as a concern. Although less evident today, the need for improved and consistent signage will become more vital to support redevelopment efforts for business owners and community members in the future. Future signage improvements for the corridor should focus on directional and/or way finding techniques that lead visitors, patrons, and truck traffic to appropriate areas of activity. As commercial and retail investment in the Community Core section of the corridor evolves, storefront signage standards and readability will be necessary. In general, future signage improvements should obey two basic rules – they should be reasonable and be recognizable. To promote foot traffic and a general pedestrian mall environment in the commercial/retail core, the City must create an enjoyable atmosphere. Signage is probably the least expensive, highest impact improvement that can be made to further this goal.

Lighting

Basic lighting placement and techniques were discussed during the planning and design charrette process. Numerous charrette participants noted the lack of lighting at the I-64/South Military Highway interchange and along the western segment of the corridor heading toward Bower’s Hill.

Poor lighting at the interchange is exacerbated by the amount of tree coverage and canopy adjacent to the roadway further diminishing the amount of natural light during early morning and early evening hours. The tree cover also darkens the corridor during nighttime operations especially at the intersection. At the interchange, tall well established trees line the roadway minimizing opportunities for natural light. The public noted their uneasiness about driving in the evening along this portion of the corridor.

While lighting is present in the central section of the corridor between the George Washington Highway and Atlantic Energy intersections, it is in need of upgrade and repair. Lighting fixtures appear to have been installed ad hoc over time. Light posts are leaning, do not emit adequate coverage, and fixture styles are inconsistent.

Similar to the western section of the corridor, the eastern section does not currently have sufficient lighting between Atlantic Energy and the Gilmerton Bridge. Lighting along this section is inconsistent and does not emit adequate coverage.

