

City plans major project on Montlieu

BY PAT KIMBROUGH
ENTERPRISE STAFF WRITER

HIGH POINT — Construction could begin this spring on proposed upgrades to Montlieu Avenue that would transform the road between N. Main and N. Centennial streets, city officials say.

Consultants are working on a final design for burial of overhead utility lines, replacement of aging underground water and sewer infrastructure, and lighting and sidewalk enhancements along the corridor.

Assistant City Manager Greg Ferguson said the plan is to solicit construction bids and then seek City Council approval of a contract for the work within the next several months.

"There would be significant improvements in the aesthetics of the corridor," he said. "Most all of the utilities would be relocated to be underground, and electric would go underground as well. So reliability on the electric side should increase."

The city in 2016 initiated a small area master plan to look into the redevelopment potential of Montlieu Avenue near the High Point Public Library.

Improving the corridor is also a priority of High Point University, which will contribute a to-be-determined amount toward the construction, Ferguson said.

The city is working to finalize the overall cost of the project, as well as the amount of HPU's participation, he said.

One goal of the project would be to make this stretch of Montlieu Avenue

SEE PROJECT/PAGE A2

PROJECT

FROM **PAGE A1**

more walkable so it serves as a “connector” from HPU to the Nido & Mariana Qubein Children’s Museum, the library, the city’s stadium and other redevelopment projects in the downtown area.

Ferguson said the design being developed for the city by engineering firm Stimmel

does not call for widening the road, so the overall character of the neighborhood would be preserved.

“We don’t anticipate that there’s much right of way, if any, to be acquired,” he said. “It’s really a utility-driven project from the city’s perspective. Those (underground) lines are very old and they’re reaching the end of their useful service life.”

Upgrading critical infrastructure while also improv-

ing sidewalks and street lighting under one contract would be the most cost-effective approach for the city, he said.

Depending on when the council awards a contract, construction could start sometime in the spring or summer. Ferguson said the hope is to keep the street at least partially open during the construction.

pkimbrough@hpenews.com |
336-888-3531