

Transportation Committee Meeting
City Council Conference Room, 2nd Floor City Hall
JANUARY 13, 2014 – 5:45 P.M.

The City Council Transportation Committee met on Monday, January 13, 2014, at 5:45 p.m. Chairman Kimble welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order.

Committee Members Present: Walter Kimble, Chairman
 Councilman Dave Kirlin
 Councilman Jim Gallagher

Guests: Rev. Dickie Spargo
 Rev. Wavy Williams
 Mr. Phil Ponder, Gaston County
 Ms. Sheree Wilson, Gaston County

Chairman Kimble stated that **Item 4: Update on Dream Center Transit Service**, would be addressed first.

ITEM 4: UPDATE ON DREAM CENTER TRANSIT SERVICE:

Chairman Kimble recognized Rev. Dickie Spargo to provide an update to the Committee on the current and proposed activities associated with their Dream Center facility located at 2782 Fairview Drive.

Mr. Paul Jakubczak, Director of Enterprise Services, presented an overview on the following three possible options to provide public transit (bus) service to the Dream Center facility, along with estimated costs for each option:

- Alter Route 1 as a direct route to the Dream Center;
- Add a new route utilizing a full size bus; or
- Add a new route utilizing a smaller bus/van option.

Committee Recommendation: A motion was made to look into a possible 3-Step process whereby:

- As a short term solution, the Dream Center would work with Gaston County Access to provide service to their facility from the Bradley Transit Center;
- Pursue a leased (smaller) bus from Gaston County which Gastonia would operate on a fixed route between Bradley Center, Erwin Center, and the Dream Center, along with other possible key non-profit facility locations in providing said bus service; and
- Pursue a long-term solution of adding a permanent (City) bus once ridership and other trip demographics can be evaluated.

In addition, the Committee directed the Staff to research the regulatory requirements needed, as well as, determining the estimated time period needed to obtain the necessary approvals from the FTA and the State in implementing Steps 2 and 3 above (and to report back to the Committee with said information within 30 days). The Committee voted unanimously (3-0) to approve this motion.

Necessary Council Action: Accept or reject the Committee's recommendation.

ITEM 1: GASTONIA COMPREHENSIVE PEDESTRIAN PLAN AND SIDEWALK SPOT IMPROVEMENTS:

Chairman Kimble recognized Mr. Ed Munn, City Manager, and Mr. Flip Bombardier, Assistant City Manager, for staff's presentation. Mr. Munn and Mr. Bombardier presented an update on the status of the development of the 'Gastonia Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan'. Based upon the NCDOT's new funding formula for these type projects, a locally adopted pedestrian plan is required prior to being considered eligible for any available DOT funding. Staff has accordingly included a list of all known local pedestrian type improvement projects within the proposed 'Plan'. The next step is forwarding to NCDOT for their approval, and then back to the City for formal adoption to complete the process.

Committee Recommendation: A motion was made to approve the final draft of the Gastonia Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan, that it be finalized and forwarded to NCDOT for final review and approval, and to endorse the Pedestrian Projects as ranked under the newly revised Strategic Transportation Investment Program for submittal to NCDOT.

The Committee voted unanimously (3-0) to accept this motion. After NCDOT approval, the Pedestrian Plan will be presented to full City Council for adoption.

Necessary Council Action: Accept or reject the Committee's recommendation.

ITEM 2: UPDATE ON GO STREET BOND IMPROVEMENTS:

Chairman Kimble recognized Mr. Rusty Bost, City Engineer, for staff's presentation. Mr. Bost provided following updates to the Committee regarding the status of GO Bond street improvements:

- (1) S. Myrtle School Road: Tree clearing is complete; utility relocation is underway, approximately 10% complete; construction dates are June 2014 - April 2016.
- (2) Titman Road: Right-of-way acquisition is underway; construction dates are October 2014 - October 2015.
- (3) Union Road: NCDOT approved typical cross section, roadway design is underway; construction dates are August 2016 - May 2017.
- (4) S. New Hope Road: Currently appraising properties to begin right-of-way negotiations; construction dates are July 2015 - Spring 2017.

Committee Recommendation: This item was provided to the Committee as information only.

Necessary Council Action: No action is required at this time.

ITEM 3: UPDATE ON I-85/US 321 INTERCHANGE PROJECT:

Chairman Kimble recognized Mr. Ed Munn, City Manager, and Mr. Flip Bombardier, Assistant City Manager, for staff's presentation. Mr. Munn advised that Staff has been in discussions with the NCDOT on several recent design changes to the Project and how the revisions may impact local traffic, Sims Legion Park, and the proposed greenway (between I-85 and Rankin Lake Park). Two specific changes involve the deletion of the (secondary) access ramp (from US 321 at Radio Street to northbound I-85), as well as, design curvature modifications to the main 'split left' access ramp when traveling from US 321 South to I-85 north (i.e., in an effort to lessen the impact to Sims Park and a conflicting electrical transmission tower).

After meeting with Division 12 Engineer Mike Holder, Staff has drafted a letter which would agree to several major points:

- a. The City would acknowledge that the Project will not adversely impact (City) recreational facilities through preparation of a *de minimus* determination letter;
- b. That the NCDOT would support and incorporate into their Project scope and field construction, the segment of greenway between I-85 and Bulb Avenue through the utilization of CMAQ funds; and
- c. That the City would be responsible for construction of the greenway segment from Bulb Avenue to Rankin Lake Park (again through the utilization of CMAQ funds and with the NCDOT's support of such).

Committee Recommendation: This item was presented for informational purposes only. (Staff will continue to work with the DOT in moving this Project forward.)

Necessary Council Action: No action is required at this time.

ITEM 5: OTHER RELATED MATTERS:

The Committee members requested an update on a Wal-Mart bus stop at Franklin Square I, and directed Staff to look into the line of sight blockage caused by bushes in median in parking lot at Chick-Fil-A at Franklin Square II. Staff will research these items and report back to the Committee.

Having no other business, Chairman Kimble adjourned the meeting at 7:35 p.m.