

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

Prepared by Barge, Waggoner, Sumner and Cannon, Inc.

CITY OF FRANKLIN, TENNESSEE

Columbia Avenue

Widening & Improvements Project



MARCH 18, 2016

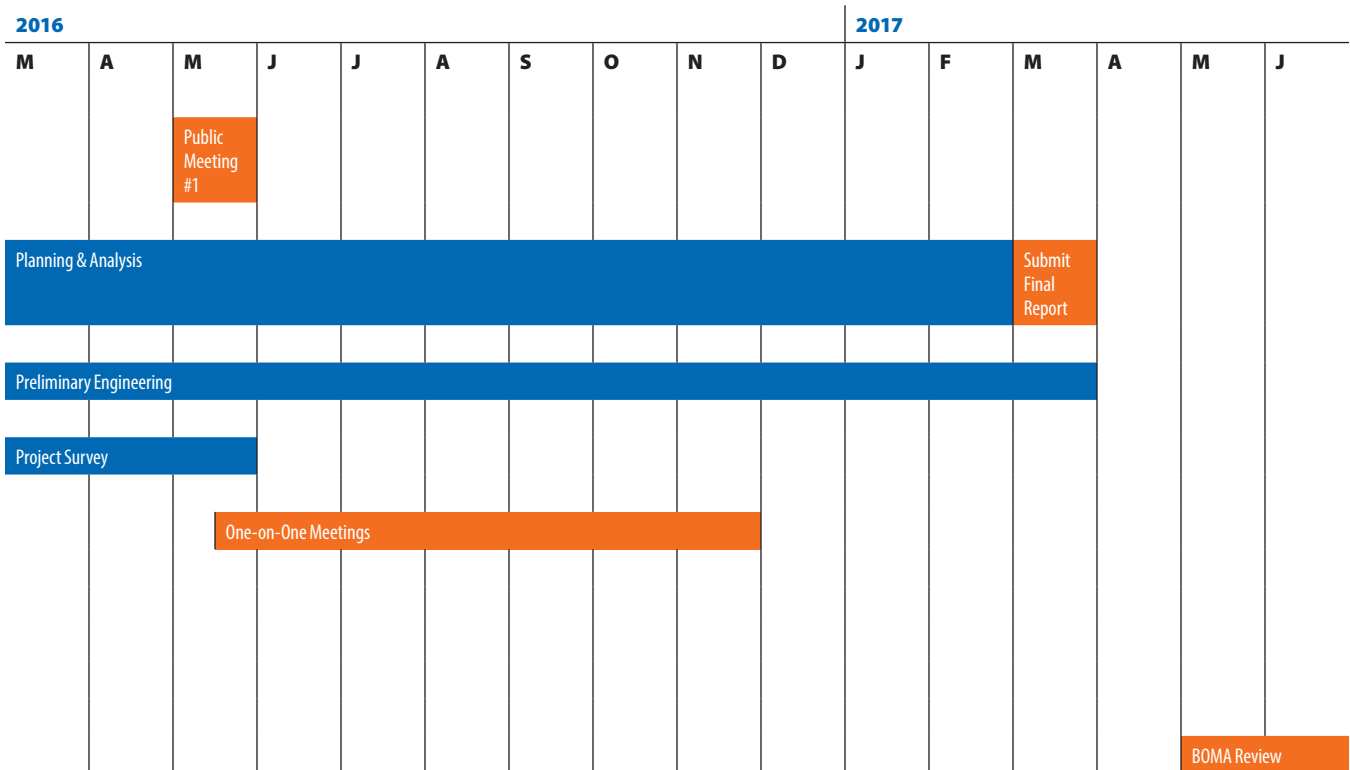
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Introduction

The widening of Columbia Avenue, State Route 6 and U.S. Route 31, (from Mack Hatcher Parkway to Downs Boulevard) is a long-awaited project that is closer now to reality. It is funded in part by the Tennessee Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration. The priority to ease traffic congestion along this corridor has been a topic of conversation among Franklin’s citizens and city leaders for years.

According to the historical traffic data obtained from the TDOT Long Range Planning Division, the 2014 Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) count is 21,039 vehicles per day for the year 2014. An annual average increase of 1% per year is expected. Officials estimate that over 31,000 vehicles will travel this corridor by year 2035. It’s important to note that Williamson County and Franklin populations are expected to double during this time.



Note:
Public Meetings #2 and #3 will be held during the Fall 2016 and Winter 2017 timeframes

Executive Summary

Barge, Waggoner, Sumner and Cannon, Inc. (BWSC) has reviewed TDOT's statewide transportation public involvement guidelines and has developed a plan to meet the current needs of Franklin and Columbia Avenue.

The engagement and support for the widening and improvements on Columbia Avenue will be a well-publicized and involved process. Users of Columbia Avenue and the City of Franklin are invested and expect inclusion in the public process. This Phase 1 Public Involvement Plan has been created so that recommendations are made with consideration of stakeholders' needs and preferences. It provides an opportunity to gather input from a broad cross-section of users, specific to all modes of transportation (pedestrian, transit, and bike), and to inform area tenants of potential impacts during the project and following completion. Multiple channels for project communication will be used – three public involvement meetings, up to forty one-on-one meetings, website, signage, email, and social media (as necessary).

Approach

Much of Franklin's deeply rooted heritage and tradition rests along the Columbia Avenue corridor, and the consultant team's approach relies on its ability to understand the relevance of the roadway to the local community and how its improvements will benefit its stakeholders. Paula Harris and her BWSC stakeholder team will adhere to standard TDOT and Title VI requirements, but additional emphasis will be placed on implementing the outreach activities that are expected by the community.

Stakeholder Involvement

Intention will drive the success of this public involvement plan for the Columbia Avenue Widening & Improvements Project. Public outreach will include conversations with neighborhood residents, property and business owners, community groups, commuters, and other stakeholders who have a vested interest in this project. BWSC acknowledges that a current stakeholder list is not available at this time. Once the first public involvement meeting is complete, a list will be developed. The following sections are methods that will be utilized during the stakeholder involvement process.

Public Involvement Meetings

BWSC will conduct three called/advertised meetings to engage Columbia Avenue users and appropriate groups. Citizens will have the opportunity to be informed on the project's status and ask questions. Comment cards will be distributed during these meetings for those who do not wish to speak. These cards will be collected and given to city staff for public record. A stenographer will capture remarks said during a formal presentation. All public involvement meetings will be advertised at least fifteen calendar days prior to the meeting. The consultant team intends to use a location inside the Columbia Avenue corridor for these meetings. More information is below:

Public Involvement Meeting #1 – At this meeting, Paula Harris and the technical team will formally invite the City of Franklin and involved users to participate in the public engagement process. Aerial imagery will be displayed as well as blank sheets of paper. Attendees will be reminded why the project is needed through the use of traffic data. A simple, yet powerful message “we are here to listen” will then be communicated.

At this meeting, attendees will gather at round tables to discuss the issues and provide feedback. One representative for each table will take notes. BWSC will have specific information identified and presented so that good information is captured during this meeting.

Public Involvement Meeting #2 – Attendees will be given a summary of the environmental document in draft form. Content will have been driven from public comments on Public Involvement Meeting #1. The presentation of alternatives will be given. Harris and the technical team will be available to answer questions and solicit additional feedback.

Public Involvement Meeting #3 – Harris and the technical team will summarize the environmental document with edits included from Public Involvement Meeting #2. Attendees will have the opportunity to provide feedback on the revised alternatives.

One-On-One Stakeholder Meetings

Following Public Involvement Meeting #1, the consultant team will conduct one-on-one discussions with property owners, the business community, preservation groups, and neighboring stakeholders. Paula Harris and the technical team will lead these discussions. The list of participating groups will be coordinated with the Engineering Department. Per the scope, BWSC is to conduct up to forty discussions that last no more than two hours each.

BOMA Work Sessions

The consultant team will be available to meet with the Board of Mayor and Aldermen (BOMA) to answer questions and to provide clarification for Phase I activities and its public involvement plan.

At each meeting, BWSC will be responsible for presentation development (PowerPoint, display boards, and other necessary graphics). The firm will also provide a written summary, and will record and report the submitted public comments. Graphics will include static renderings and perspective views of proposed alternatives. During the public involvement process, previous cost projections may change, but BWSC will inform the city how this may impact the budget.

Project Communication

Media outlets in Franklin and surrounding areas have covered the progression of Columbia Avenue's potential widening and improvements for several years. BWSC will work with the city's Communication Division on outreach activities. Unless otherwise instructed, BWSC is expected to provide content for communication materials and intends to use in-house photography/graphic design capabilities. In addition to standard TDOT requirements, the following tools are expected to be utilized:

Topographic and Environmental Survey Letter

BWSC recognizes that any citizen communication is an important component of this public involvement plan. Topographic survey letters will be distributed to property owners along Columbia Avenue. The letter communicates to affected individuals that environmental and survey personnel may need to access private property to gather information necessary for design and permitting purposes. It's important to note that owners and their property will be treated with respect.

Direct Mail

If appropriate, BWSC will use direct mailings so that stakeholders inside the Columbia Avenue Corridor and on the adjacent roadway are well-informed about the project. The frequency of distribution will be determined at a later time.

Email

Messages will be sent via email to communicate meeting reminders and project updates. BWSC will only use email addresses obtained through comment cards.

Signage

BWSC intends to work jointly with the city's Engineering Department to display signage throughout the Columbia Avenue corridor and adjacent roadways to create high-level awareness of the project. This effort will be done to promote public involvement meetings and important project milestones. BWSC will provide the necessary information to city staff, who then will create, install, and remove signage.

Website

BWSC will work with the city's Engineering Department and the Communications Manager to setup a project page on franklintn.gov. An identifiable, direct URL address such as <http://www.FranklinTN.gov/ColumbiaAve> will be established.

Press Coverage

Press coverage will be a coordinated effort with the city's Communications Division and its local media list. Below is the tentative schedule for press notification.

- Press Release for Project Kick-Off and Public Involvement Meeting #1
- Reminder Press Release for Fall Public Involvement Meeting #2
- Reminder Press Release for Winter Public Involvement Meeting #3

Social Media

BWSC will coordinate messaging with the Engineering Department and the Communications Division to issue announcements related to meeting reminders and project updates. Comments from Franklin citizens are anticipated. Over 20,000 people follow the City of Franklin on Facebook. The city has approximately 17,000 Twitter followers. The city's YouTube account has received more than 173,000 views.

Video

BWSC has the ability to coordinate with the Engineering Department and the Communications Division on any necessary video coverage, such as Franklin *Insider*, to communicate project developments. The Communications Manager hosts the web-based show that highlights current events in the city.

Public Meeting Notice

Appendix B: Notice Requirements/Procedures on Page 38 of TDOT's statewide transportation public involvement guide states:

"There are no stipulations in the NEPA for public meeting notices. However, the TDOT will require at least one notice of public meeting for all formal community meetings. The notice should be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the vicinity of the proposed effort at least 15 days prior to the date of the meeting and a copy will be furnished to the local MPO. Notices will include a map of the project/effort location, an explanation of the meeting's purpose, and the time, date and location of the meeting(s). The notice will present information in easily understood language that avoids technical terms and industry jargon. The notice will invite public comment and provide a telephone number and mailing address of the TDOT official in charge of the effort. The meeting notice will be placed on the department's website, www.tennessee.gov/tdot".

Examples of these tools can be found in the Appendix. Columbia Avenue-specific text and graphics are subject to change. Meeting locations are to be determined.

Project Communication Examples

On the following pages are examples of project communication deliverables.

Topographic and Environmental Survey Letter



BARGE
WAGGONER
SUMNER &
CANNON, INC.[®]



HISTORIC
FRANKLIN
TENNESSEE

Property Address

May 2016

Re: Columbia Avenue Widening & Improvements

Dear Property Owner:

The City of Franklin is currently conducting environmental studies on the above referenced project. Environmental personnel may need to access your property to gather information necessary for design and permitting purposes.

The final design may be affected by the information gathered from these studies. This information will be used to determine potential impacts to wetlands, streams, hazardous materials, cultural resources, and other environmentally sensitive areas.

Your patience and understanding will be greatly appreciated. In addition, any assistance locating known environmental concerns within or near the proposed alignment would be valued.

Our employees are to respect you and your property to the highest degree. Please contact me at the following location if I may be of assistance.

bargewaggoner.com
Equal Opportunity Employer/Affirmative Action Employer

211 Commerce Street, Suite 600
Nashville, Tennessee 37201

615.254.1500 (office)
615.255.6572 (fax)

Email

CITY OF FRANKLIN, TENNESSEE

Columbia Avenue

Widening & Improvements Project

City of Franklin Announces Open Invitation to First Public Involvement Meeting for Columbia Avenue Widening & Improvements Project

The City of Franklin invites all users, corridor tenants and interested citizens to attend its first public involvement meeting for **Columbia Avenue (State Route 6) Widening & Improvements Project: Phase I** on [WEEKDAY], [MONTH AND DAY], 2016.

The meeting is from [TIME] at [LOCATION]. Attendees will have the opportunity to provide feedback with the consultant team and City officials present.

The project widens Columbia Avenue (SR-6), from Mack Hatcher Parkway to Downs Boulevard, to accommodate the projected traffic volume and increase the mobility to and from downtown Franklin. Columbia Avenue serves as one of the City's primary arterial roadways and historic routes. Phase I activities on Columbia Avenue include the appropriate environmental documentation in accordance to National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements. Additional activities include planning and analysis of the proposed improvements and preliminary engineering.

According to the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT), daily traffic count is approximately 21,039 vehicles with an average 1% increase per year expected. Officials estimate that over 31,000 vehicles will travel this corridor by year 2035. It's important to note that Williamson County and Franklin populations are expected to double during this time.

The City of Franklin Engineering Department and the Capital Improvement Division are responsible for the implementation and coordination of projects similar to

Signage



Website

The screenshot shows the City of Franklin, TN website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Job Openings, Calendar, Online Customer Service, and Contact Us. A language selection dropdown and a search bar are also present. The main header features the City of Franklin logo and the text 'CITY OF FRANKLIN, TN'. Below the header is a horizontal menu with buttons for HOME, WHAT'S NEW, GOVERNMENT, SERVICES, COMMUNITY, and I WANT TO... The GOVERNMENT button is highlighted. On the left side, there is a vertical sidebar menu listing various city departments such as Board of Mayor & Aldermen, Municipal City Election Information, Boards and Commissions, Administration, Building & Neighborhood Services, Engineering, Finance & Administration, Fire, Human Resources, Information Technology, Law, Municipal Code, Municipal Court, Planning and Sustainability, Parks, Parks Master Plan, Police, Sanitation and Environmental Services, Street, and Water Management Department. The main content area displays a news article titled 'City of Franklin Announces Open Invitation to First Public Involvement Meeting for Columbia Avenue Widening & Improvements Project'. The article includes a sub-header 'CITY OF FRANKLIN, TENNESSEE' and a large heading 'Columbia Avenue Widening & Improvements Project'. The text of the article states: 'The City of Franklin invites all users, corridor tenants and interested citizens to attend its first public involvement meeting for Columbia Avenue (State Route 6) Widening & Improvements Project: Phase I on [WEEKDAY], [MONTH AND DAY], 2016. The meeting is from [TIME] at [LOCATION]. Attendees will have the opportunity to provide feedback with the consultant team and City officials present.' There are also links for Font Size, Share & Bookmark, Feedback, and Print.

Press Coverage**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:****City of Franklin Announces Open Invitation to First Public Involvement Meeting for Columbia Avenue Widening & Improvements Project**

FRANKLIN, Tenn. – The City of Franklin invites all users, corridor tenants and interested citizens to attend its first public involvement meeting for **Columbia Avenue (State Route 6) Widening Improvements Project: Phase I** on [WEEKDAY], [MONTH AND DAY], 2016.

The meeting is from [TIME] at [LOCATION]. Attendees will have the opportunity to provide feedback with the consultant team and City officials present.

The project widens Columbia Avenue (SR-6), from Mack Hatcher Parkway to Downs Boulevard, to accommodate the projected traffic volume and increase the mobility to and from downtown Franklin. Columbia Avenue serves as one of the City's primary arterial roadways and historic routes. Phase I activities on Columbia Avenue include the appropriate environmental documentation in accordance to National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements. Additional activities include planning and analysis of the proposed improvements and preliminary engineering.

According to the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT), daily traffic count is approximately 21,039 vehicles with an average 1% increase per year expected. Officials estimate that over 31,000 vehicles will travel this corridor by year 2035. It's important to note that Williamson County and Franklin populations are expected to double during this time.

The City of Franklin Engineering Department and the Capital Improvement Division are responsible for the implementation and coordination of projects similar to the Columbia Avenue Widening Improvements Project. The City's website and social media accounts will communicate more information about the project as it moves forward.

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Social Media

City of Franklin
@CityOfFranklin

Save the date! Franklin Parks announces it's first community meeting on the Comprehensive Master Plan Study,... fb.me/2wE3RmEEp

RETWEET 1

3:04 PM - 4 Nov 2014

City of Franklin, TN - Municipal Government added 4 new photos.

November 14, 2014

As the City of Franklin grows...what would you like to see in our City Park System over the next 10 years? Please comment here and we'll pass your ideas along to our Master Planning team! YOUR FEEDBACK is valued!

26 Likes 89 Comments 2 Shares

City of Franklin, TN - Municipal Government added 2 new photos.

November 13, 2014

Great public meeting last night for the Parks Master Plan! We appreciate your input! Major takeaways...more connectivity, add splash pads, complete Bicentennial Park and other battlefield parks and identify land for future parks on the east and south side of Franklin! Stay tuned for more opportunities for your feedback!

10 Likes 1 Comment

City of Franklin
@CityOfFranklin

To all Interested Citizens,
The Parks Master Plan is scheduled to be discussed at the January 26th BOMA work...
fb.me/5fOeXmZST

RETWEET 1 LIKE 1

9:41 AM - 15 Jan 2016

Video

