



Legislation Text

File #: 18-0668, **Version:** 2

DATE: July 2, 2018

TO: Board of Mayor and Aldermen

FROM: Eric Stuckey, City Administrator
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SUBJECT:

Discussion and Consideration of Various Design Elements, including Bike and Pedestrian Facilities, Utility Relocations, and Access Management, for the Columbia Avenue Widening and Improvements Project
(Continued from 7/10/18 WS).

Purpose

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide information to the Franklin Board of Mayor and Aldermen (BOMA) concerning various design elements for the Columbia Avenue Widening and Improvements Project, including pedestrian and bicycle facilities, utility relocations (e.g. underground vs. overhead), and best access management practices along the project corridor.

Background

In 2006, the City of Franklin began the process of completing a Transportation Planning Report (TPR) for Columbia Avenue (SR-6/US-31), between Mack Hatcher Parkway (SR-397) and Downs Boulevard. The purpose of this TPR was to demonstrate the need for improvements to this section of Columbia Avenue. In 2008, as a part of the development of the TPR, a public meeting was held to discuss potential improvements to Columbia Avenue. The Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) approved the final TPR in November 2010.

In December 2013, the Nashville Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) formally adopted the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for fiscal years (FY) 2014-2017, which programmed a total of \$21,000,000 toward the Columbia Avenue (SR-6/US-31) South Widening project. The initial breakdown of fund participation by agency was 80% (e.g. \$16.8M) in federal funds and 20% (e.g. \$4.2M) in local funds. Because Columbia Avenue is both a federal and state route, the City of Franklin requested that TDOT participate in the project by funding the 20% local match with state funds. In June 2014, TDOT agreed to provide the 20% matching funds.

Since early 2016, the City of Franklin has been working with Barge Design Solutions, Inc. (formerly known as Barge Waggoner, Sumner and Cannon, Inc.) to complete the Preliminary Engineering - National Environmental Policy Act (PE-NEPA) phase of the Columbia Avenue Widening and Improvements Project. The PE-NEPA phase was the first major step in the development of this transportation project. The final PE-NEPA document was

approved by TDOT and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) in 2018. This document included technical studies (i.e. archeology, natural resources, noise, air quality, etc.) and functional-level roadway plans (e.g. conceptual.)

Prior to NEPA approval, in September of 2017, the BOMA approved Resolution 2017-43, A Resolution to Select the Corridor Design Concept for the Columbia Avenue Widening and Improvements Project (TDOT PIN 121454.00.) At that time, a selection of a preferred design concept, by the BOMA, was needed in order to finalize the PE-NEPA phase. The two (2) options presented by Resolution 2017-43 were the Five-Lane Concept *with* Access Control and the Roundabout Corridor Concept. The BOMA selected the Five-Lane Concept *with* Access Control.

Staff now has TDOT approval to move into the formal design phase for the project. In order to give our design team proper direction to move forward with the Five-Lane Concept *with* Access Control, staff seeks BOMA input on a few final design elements:

1. Inclusion of a multi-use path, sidewalks, and/or bike lanes (See attached exhibit/options);
2. Relocating all aerial utilities to new underground duct banks (e.g. Hillsboro Road), or keeping aerial utilities above ground with new utility poles;
3. Best traffic engineering/access management practices to apply along the corridor, balancing the safety of the corridor users and the access to/from the existing businesses. See the attached approved 5-Lane Concept with Access Control.

Financial Impact

The various design considerations attached will result in different right-of-way limits and areas of impact, but the construction cost will generally be the same. Also, the construction costs for the roadway project in general will be the responsibility of the FHWA and TDOT, per our current agreement.

Regarding the electrical and communication utilities: The project is currently funded through state and federal funding sources. If the existing aerial utilities are relocated to new overhead facilities, those associated costs are paid through the state and federal funding sources. If the City decides to relocate the existing overhead utilities into underground duct banks, then the City would be fully responsible for those associated utility infrastructure and relocation costs. As currently estimated, the City would be financially responsible for around \$10,000,000.00 in underground duct bank infrastructure and overhead utility relocation costs.

Recommendation

Staff seeks BOMA input on the various design considerations.