

## 10-16-2019 Town Council Meeting

### Responses to Council Questions

#### **ITEM #1: North-South Bus Rapid Transit Traffic Analysis**

**Council Question:**

What are the NCDOT's priorities referred to north of Estes Drive?

**Staff Response:**

*The NCDOT's priority is to allow the most efficient and expedient movement of all modes of vehicular traffic.*

**Council Question:**

What does this step of adopting a final LPA mean, relative to the goal of obtaining FTA approval?

**Staff Response:**

*The final LPA is necessary to move forward with the Environmental Evaluation and the FTA process. Without a final LPA selection, NSBRT could be removed from the Small Starts Program, requiring us to restart the process by reapplying to the program.*

**Council Question:**

On 15-501/S. Columbia Street, the update on p. 22 of the agenda packet would involve constructing a new lane, correct?

**Staff Response:**

*Yes, the current LPA includes constructing a dedicated curb lane on 15-501/S. Columbia Street between Hwy 54 and Southern Village.*

**Council Question:**

What is the median island exactly and its purpose?

**Staff Response:**

*The median island is a proposed green space that can be implemented in the turn lane along the corridor in places where left/right turning movements are not necessary.*

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#### **Council Question:**

What is the staff's position on the results of the traffic study – what are the likely outcomes?

#### **Staff Response:**

*Staff is confident that the NSBRT will function well in both the convert and construct environments, presuming that the NSBRT will have a dedicated curb lane throughout the corridor, with the exception of the locations that were previously selected to run in mixed traffic. There are tradeoffs that need to be considered for vehicular traffic under convert v. construct, as there are very limited alternatives for north/south trips in the corridor, and may require further evaluation if W. Franklin Street is modified. We also believe that under a construct option that many of the benefits that are of interest to Council and our funding partners can also be achieved through lane size reductions, speed adjustments, pedestrian facilities, etc.*

*The NCDOT's priorities in the corridor include moving all modes of traffic efficiently and quickly. NCDOT representatives have indicated that level of service changes that would cause additional delay at key intersections, and/or altering intersection traffic grades to an (F) or worse, would not be contributors to their priorities.*

#### **Council Question:**

If, based on the traffic analysis, we are required to construct rather than convert lanes for bus travel, what would the implications be for:

- Overall roadway width
- Urban design
- Intersection widths
- Bike and ped facilities

#### **Staff Response:**

*Staff will bring information to the meeting on the 16th that will help answer these questions regarding intersection and roadway width at key points in the northern portion of the corridor. In both the convert and construct scenarios, it is a priority of the NSBRT project to include bicycle and pedestrian facilities.*

#### **Council Question:**

Given a budget of about \$140 million and a federal cap of \$100 million, what are the likely sources of the local match??

#### **Staff Response:**

*The current funding source for the NSBRT is the Orange County Transit Plan (\$14M). Staff members are applying for an additional \$35M in the SPOT 6.0 process to garner additional non-federal funding.*

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**Council Question:**

Might it be possible as part of the BRT project to actually reduce some intersection sizes, e.g., at Weaver Dairy/MLK?

**Staff Response:**

*Project engineers have been tasked with creating ideas and solutions to help reduce the crosswalk distance at intersections to aid in pedestrian safety and convenience.*