

## STAFF REPORT

To: Planning & Economic Development Committee Date: August 16, 2016  
Via: Gary Jackson, City Manager  
From: Ken Putnam, PE, Transportation Department Director  
Subject: I-26 Connector Project Multi-Modal Transportation Improvements

**Summary Statement:** The consideration of multi-modal transportation improvements to be included in the I-26 Connector project.

**Review:** As the I-26 Connector project continues to move forward, the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) and the City of Asheville have agreed to establish a working group that will meet on a regular basis throughout the pre-construction phase (planning, design, and right-of-way phases). Three meetings have been held so far and the NCDOT has graciously come to Asheville for these meetings.

The NCDOT has asked the City to develop our list of multi-modal transportation improvements / betterments (pedestrian, bicycle, and transit modes) that will be discussed at the fourth working group meeting tentatively scheduled for late September 2016 or early October 2016. In order to accomplish this task, a sub-group including Transportation Department staff, Planning Department staff, two volunteers from the Bicycle & Pedestrian Task Force, one volunteer from Asheville on Bikes, and an at-large volunteer (Marc Hunt) will meet on a regular basis to review the public hearing maps in detail and to develop the list. It is important to note that the list does not have to be all inclusive and completely finalized by the fourth working group meeting. It can and probably will be tweaked throughout the entire pre-construction phase process. In addition to this immediate task, Transportation Department staff will be seeking input from the Bicycle & Pedestrian Task Force and the Transit Committee throughout the pre-construction phase process.

Ultimately, staff will prepare a summary spreadsheet (matrix) listing all of the improvements / betterments and their associated costs including a grand total cost so that City Council will be completely informed and able to make appropriate decisions about which ones to pursue. One example of an improvement / betterment that we have already requested is a sidewalk cross-section that includes a 5-foot sidewalk and a 5-foot utility (grass) strip wherever possible on all of the -Y- lines (this cross-section is the City's preferred cross-section).

Transportation Department staff is committed to keeping City Council fully informed throughout this entire process by sharing information through the Pedestrian & Economic Development Committee and by providing quarterly updates at a City Council regularly scheduled meeting.

**Action Step:** Staff is seeking support from the Pedestrian & Economic Development Committee to move forward with developing the list of multi-modal transportation improvements / betterments for the I-26 Connector project.

Please let me know if additional information is needed.

KP/