

## STAFF REPORT

TO: Mayor and City Council Date: May 17, 2016

FROM: Cathy Ball, Assistant City Manager Prepared by: Barb Mee  
Transportation Planner

VIA: Gary Jackson, City Manager

SUBJECT: Surface Transportation Program - Directly Attributable and Transportation  
Alternative Program Grants

Summary Statement: The consideration of a resolution authorizing the City Manager to apply to the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for grants of federal transportation funds, and if the applications are successful, to accept grants and sign necessary agreements with the MPO or appropriate state or federal agencies to receive the funds.

Review: The MPO has opened a call for projects to use federal Surface Transportation Program – Directly Attributable (STP-DA) funds and Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) funding sources. The MPO expects to have approximately \$14 million in STP-DA and TAP funding available for federal fiscal years 2018 and 2019, \$13.2 million in STP-DA and \$1.06 million in TAP. This is a competitive call open to all local governments and to the two NCDOT divisions in the four-county MPO area.

Staff is pursuing funding for the following projects:

- Planning, environmental documents, and construction documents for three complete street projects in the South Slope district which are identified as transformative in the Asheville in Motion (AIM) plan: Coxe Avenue, Lexington Avenue and Biltmore Avenue, at an estimated cost of \$5 million, with 80% funded by the grant. This project is planned as preparatory for future construction grant requests.
- Update of the city's 2004 Pedestrian Plan and older public right-of-way ADA Transition Plan at an estimated cost of \$175,000, with 80% funded by the grant.
- Construction of River to Ridge Greenway Network connector routes, including pedestrian and bicycle facilities, street crossings, wayfinding between Clingman Forest, Town Branch and Beaucatcher Greenways, and making the connection to the French Broad River East greenway via RADTIP improvements, at an estimated cost of \$1.75 million, with 60% funded by the grant. This project builds upon a prior MPO grant for design of the connectors.

Each of these projects supports the initial implementation of the AIM plan and vision of the South Slope as a district that is a place in itself and yet connected to the rest of downtown, McCormick Field, Memorial Stadium and future mountainside parks, the River Arts District, and the larger city.

The MPO application requires expression of City Council's willingness to program the local match if selected to receive the grant. In all cases, while the local match cannot be other federal funds, it could be from other grant funding.

If received, these projects will be added to the city's capital and operating budgets.

This action aligns with City Council's 2036 Vision in the areas of well-planned and livable community, transportation and accessibility, and smart city and will further implementation of the Greenway Master Plan, and begin implementation of the City's Asheville in Motion (AIM) mobility plan, which calls for not only the three street projects, but also the greenway connectors and the update of the pedestrian plan.

Pros:

- Allows the City of Asheville to leverage to up to an estimated \$5.1 million in federal transportation investment
- Allows the City of Asheville to begin implementation of three complete street projects identified as transformative in the AIM plan
- Allows the City of Asheville to update the city's 12 year old pedestrian master plan
- Allows the City of Asheville to update an element of city compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act
- Allows the City of Asheville to construct clear and comfortable connections between three upcoming greenways, making them part of a growing network of transportation pathways

Con:

- Commits the city to funding to the match, at least for the time the applications are pending.

Fiscal Impact: If successful, the grant applications will allow the city to leverage up to an estimated \$5.1 million in federal funding for these projects, with a city match of up to an estimated \$1.7 million.

Recommendation: City staff recommends City Council adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager to apply to the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for grants of federal transportation funds, and if the applications are successful, to accept grants and sign necessary agreements with the MPO or state or federal agencies to receive the funds, and to express the intention to provide the required local match.

Attachments:

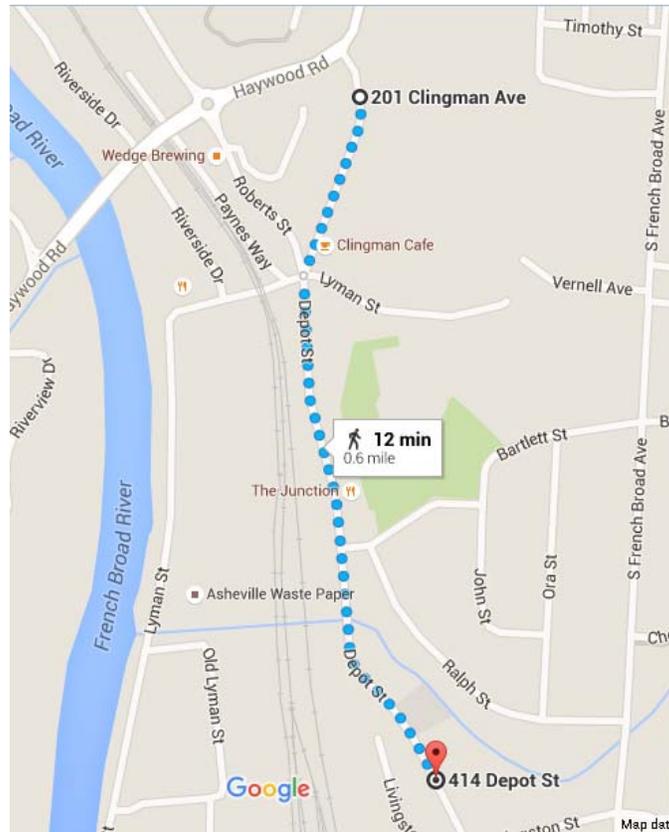
- (1) Greenway Connectors
- (2) Resolution

Attachment 1

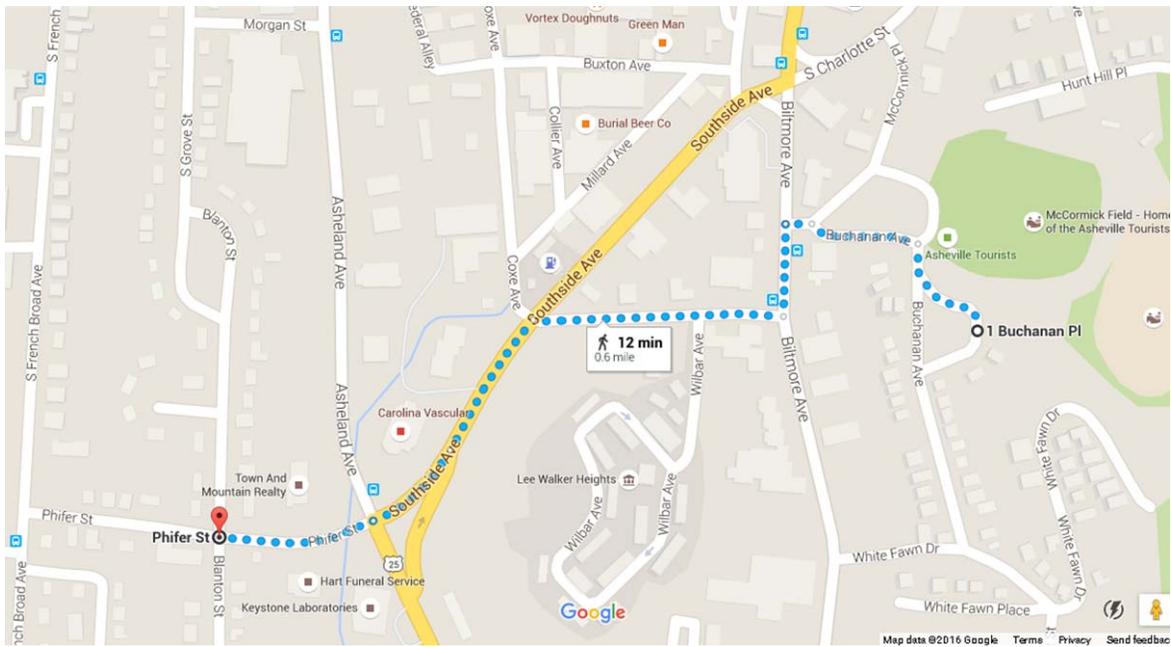


Potential Greenway Connector Cross Section  
(example from Indianapolis Cultural Trail)

## Potential Greenway Routes



Town Branch Greenway to Clingman Forest and French Broad River Greenways (all addresses approximate)



Beaucatcher Greenway to Town Branch Greenway (all addresses approximate)

RESOLUTION NO. 16-\_\_\_\_\_

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO APPLY TO AND ACCEPT FEDERAL FUNDING FROM THE FRENCH BROAD RIVER METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

WHEREAS, pursuant to 160A-17.1, local governments are authorized to make contracts for and to accept grants-in-aid and loans from the federal and state governments and their agencies; and

WHEREAS, the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization (FBRMPO) has opened a call for projects for federal Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds and Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funding sources; and

WHEREAS, the City of Asheville has identified projects which are eligible for this funding; and

WHEREAS, if any of these projects are funded, local matching funds will be required; and

WHEREAS, if any of these projects are funded, agreements can be expected to be required from the granting and administering agencies prior to receipt of the grant.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE THAT:

1. The City Council of the City of Asheville hereby authorizes the City Manager to apply to the French Broad River MPO for STP-DA and TAP funding.

2. The City Council of the City of Asheville intends to provide the required local match if grant funding is awarded.

3. The City Council of the City of Asheville hereby authorizes the City Manager to sign and execute agreements between granting or administering agencies and the City of Asheville to accept the grant(s) and approve the projects.

Read, approved and adopted this 17th day of May, 21016

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

Approved as to form:

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Attorney