

Manager's Update

raleighnc.gov



Issue 2021-01

January 8, 2021

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Work Session - Tuesday, January 12 - 4:00 P.M.

The regularly scheduled second **Tuesday work session** will be conducted **Tuesday at 4:00 P.M.** The agenda for the meeting was published yesterday:

<https://go.boarddocs.com/nc/raleigh/Board.nsf>

As with previous electronic virtual meetings, you will be receiving information on joining the WebEx Events session; staff will be available to assist with log ins and joining the virtual work session.

INFORMATION:

Temporary Small Business Parking Relief Program

Staff Resource: Matthew Currier, RDOT, 996-4041, matthew.currier@raleighnc.gov

In December 2020 Council authorized staff to create the Temporary Small Business Parking Relief Program. This program was created to provide temporary parking relief for restaurants, retailers and personal services businesses in downtown by offering a limited number of free parking passes at several downtown city owned parking garages.

Staff launched the program on January 6, with the help of partners at both the Downtown Raleigh Alliance (DRA) and McLaurin Parking. Due to the specific eligibility requirements of the program, staff has worked closely with the DRA to directly market this program to their members who would be eligible rather than a more widespread marketing campaign. Staff also worked with McLaurin Parking to place a banner on their website landing page to direct people back to the City's website for information and how to sign up for the program. As of Friday, January 8, staff has received and approved applications from 14 downtown businesses for a total of 95 parking passes. Staff anticipates reaching the current approved total of 100 parking passes by the end of the day. Applications will continue to be accepted in order to gauge demand. Businesses that apply will be notified that application is pending potential expansion of the program.

Businesses that have applied currently hold 38 paid parking passes with the City; staff anticipates those to be canceled while the businesses participate in this program.

(No attachment)

Annual Financial Report for Citizens

Staff Resource: Shelle Boudreau, Finance, 996-4965, michelle.boudreau@raleighnc.gov

Staff has published the *Citizens' Annual Financial Report* for Fiscal Year 2020. This report provides interested parties with a user-friendly overview of the City's financial results and is produced to increase awareness of financial operations. The financial information is obtained from the audited financial statements in the FY20 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR), or formal annual report.



The *Citizens' Annual Financial Report* serves as a condensed communication tool to highlight the overall financial condition and trends of the City, strategic planning initiatives, recent accolades and other subjects that may be of interest to the reader. A spotlight article in the FY20 report also features the External Grants Program to illustrate innovative ways that the City leverages resources to meet community needs.

The document is prepared to meet specific requirements outlined by the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA). The GFOA represents public finance officials throughout the United States and Canada, whose shared mission is to promote excellence in state and local government financial management. The City annually participates in the GFOA's Award Program for Outstanding Achievement in Popular Annual Financial Reporting. The program recognizes governmental entities who successfully produce high quality popular annual financial reports specifically designed to be readily accessible and easily understandable to

the public and interested parties. Finance has achieved the award for the report on an annual basis since FY 2012 and has applied to the Award Program again for the FY 2020 report.

The published report can be accessed on the City's [website](#).

(No attachment)

Shared Streets Initiative Suspended for Winter Months

Staff Resource: Rob Murray, RDOT, 996-4991, rob.murray@raleighnc.gov

The Shared Streets pilot program commenced June 2, and was designed to address community desires for increased exercise and recreational opportunities in light of COVID-19 restrictions. The program has served to help people find safe, healthy ways to enjoy outdoor activities while supporting social distancing “best practices” during the COVID-19 pandemic. Raleigh Transportation has temporarily suspended the Shared Streets initiative for a few months. The suspension will help address operational concerns that may occur during potential winter weather events. Shared Streets signs and barricades were recently removed from the five streets that were part of the pilot program.

The program implemented “soft” street closures on neighborhood streets that were geographically dispersed throughout the City. Participating streets included:

- Fiesta Way from Falls of Neuse Road to Harps Mill Road
- Mourning Dove Road from Six Forks Road to the end of Mourning Dove Road
- Pineview Drive from Kaplan Drive to Avent Ferry Road
- Rose Lane from Poole Road to the Walnut Creek Greenway access point
- Winthrop Drive from Rembert Drive to Millbrook Road

The staff goal is to refine some elements of the program and re-deploy the initiative to a new set of streets in the spring. Staff will continue to work with the community on program changes to better address needs and concerns, and will make adjustments as necessary.

(No attachment)

Wake Bus Rapid Transit Program Update

Staff Resource: Mila Vega, RDOT - Transit, 996-4123, mila.vega@raleighnc.gov

As the project sponsor, City staff continues to work on advancing the Wake BRT Program. An update regarding the current status of the program was last provided with *Issue 2020-41* (October 30, 2020).

Wake BRT Western Corridor

The request to enter the BRT Western Corridor project in the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Small Starts Project Development was approved, effective December 23, 2020. Entry into Project Development does not imply a funding commitment or endorsement of the project by the FTA. However, this designation is an important indicator that the project is making significant progress and is on track for future funding opportunities. Acceptance into Project Development also means that a

portion of local funds spent on design and environmental review is eligible for reimbursement, if the project receives Small Start Capital Investment Grant funding allocation.

Wake BRT Virtual Open House

A Virtual Open House (VOH) for the Wake BRT project was hosted from November 2 through November 30. The purpose of the VOH was to provide an overview of the BRT program and gather public and stakeholder feedback. The VOH provided updates on all BRT projects including [Equitable Development Around Transit](#), [New Bern Avenue](#), [Western Boulevard](#), [Southern Corridor](#), [Northern Corridor](#) and [Artist-in-Residence](#). There was a combination of both virtual and non-virtual engagement opportunities.

Virtual Engagement Opportunities

On November 19, a Live Q&A session was held. Participants were able to send in questions before and during the meeting, via Public Input or phone, and have project staff answer and address them during the session. Over 60 people participated in the Live Q&A session, a recording can be viewed [here](#).

Two surveys were live during the VOH. The [Station Design Visual Preference Survey](#) presented participants with photo examples of existing transit stations and asked their preferences for design concepts and ideas for future Wake BRT stations. Roughly 100 people participated. Survey results can be viewed [here](#).

A second survey, [New Bern Avenue Public Art – Survey 2](#) began November 2 and will be live until January 12. VOH attendees were also given the opportunity to provide feedback through an [Open Comment form](#) on the site.

Non-Virtual Engagement Opportunities

To supplement the online Station Design Visual Preference Survey, polling stations were placed at various bus stations and locations along the New Bern, Western and Southern corridors. These stations each included corridor specific materials and stickers for participants to indicate their station design preferences. The polling stations asked the same three preference questions as the online survey. Survey data was collected over a ten-day period.

The project team has continued with direct community outreach along each BRT corridor. Over 175 faith-based organizations have been identified and contacted at least once through direct phone calls and emails. In these efforts, staff asked the organizations questions on their current meeting plans, communication methods and if they would be interested in distributing project information. Materials were shared digitally and physically, if requested.

Additional outreach was conducted through distribution of flyers and materials to local businesses and associations. The project team will continue to provide both virtual and non-virtual engagement opportunities to effectively reach communities and gather feedback.

(No attachment)

Council Member Follow Up Items

General Follow Up Item

Upper Durant Lake Dam Work Public Engagement Process

Staff Resource: : Oscar Carmona, Parks, 996-3285 oscar.carmona@raleighnc.gov

There are two lakes within the City's Durant Nature Preserve Park – Lower Durant and Upper Durant Lake. In 2013, an engineering firm contracted by the City deemed the dams and spillways of both lakes at Durant Nature Preserve to be structurally and hydraulically deficient and in need of repairs. In 2019, the City completed construction of modifications to the Lower Lake's dam and spillway, removing these deficiencies and enhancing the habitat and user experience at the same time by replanting the back of the dam with native grasses and wildflowers in keeping with the Nature Preserve setting.

The next step in the process for evaluating improvements at the Upper Durant facility is public engagement which was originally slated to be conducted in the fall of 2019, now scheduled for January 2021 which will include an online survey and a virtual public meeting. Included with the *Manager's Update* materials is a staff memorandum with additional information.

(Attachment)

Council Member Follow Up



Raleigh

MEMO

TO: Marchell Adams-David, City Manager

FROM: Oscar Carmona, Director, PRCR

CC: Scott Payne, Assistant Director, PRCR
Blair Hinkle, Assistant Director, Engineering Services
Brian Smith, Natural Resources Superintendent, PRCR
Wayne Miles, Stormwater Program Manager, Engineering Services

DEPARTMENT: Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources

DATE: January 8, 2021

SUBJECT: Upper Durant Lake Dam Work, Durant Nature Preserve

There are two lakes within the City's Durant Nature Preserve Park – Lower Durant and Upper Durant Lake. The lakes and nature preserve are owned by the City and operated by the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources department (PRCR). Tropical Storm Alberto in 2006 resulted in very significant rainfall and flooding in Raleigh and prompted emergency repair of the dam at Lake Johnson and pursuit of funding to study other dams that experienced high water during that event. In 2013, an engineering firm contracted by the City deemed the dams and spillways of both lakes at Durant Nature Preserve to be structurally and hydraulically deficient and in need of repairs.

In 2019, the City completed construction of modifications to the Lower Lake's dam and spillway, removing these deficiencies and enhancing the habitat and user experience at the same time by replanting the back of the dam with native grasses and wildflowers in keeping with the Nature Preserve setting. Given the public stormwater management benefits derived, these improvements were funded by the City's Stormwater Management Program and completed in coordination with PRCR Natural Resources staff.

Modifications to the Upper Lake to address its deficiencies have not yet been undertaken. There are multiple approaches for addressing the Upper Lake's dam and spillway deficiencies and further enhancing the preserve's features. As a result, Stormwater and PRCR jointly pursued funding and initiated a study to assess conditions of the Upper Lake, its contributory watershed, and its environs to develop and evaluate four conceptual improvement alternatives including but not limited to lake and dam re-construction. These options have been evaluated through a study by NC State University's Department of Biological and Agricultural Engineering, with the technical work being conducted from 2017 to 2019, under grant funding support

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Manager's Update

from the NC Clean Water Management Trust Fund (now NC Land and Water Fund).

The next step in the process for evaluating improvements at the Upper Durant facility is public engagement which was originally slated to be conducted in the fall of 2019. In addition to COVID-19 related shifts in work prioritization, the City's Lake Preservation Policy that relates to the project was in the process of being reviewed, and updates were recently approved by City Council. Given that the updated Lake Policy process also includes and significantly heightens public involvement and public engagement, City staff decided to bring the two processes together and use the alternatives for the Upper Lake facility at Durant as an opportunity to flesh out how public engagement under the new Lake Policy will be implemented.

City staff associated with this study from both PRCR and Engineering Services have worked with Marketing and Communications staff to develop an outreach plan to guide public engagement for this study to include distribution through the following platforms at a minimum:

City of Raleigh Website
PublicInput.com Project Page
PRCR and Storm Water GovDelivery
NextDoor

Housing and Neighborhoods Registry
Natural Resources GovDelivery
Durant Nature Preserve Site Signage
PRCR/Water Utilities Social Media

In accordance with that plan, updates are being made to the existing project webpage ([Durant Nature Preserve Upper Lake | Raleighnc.gov](https://www.raleighnc.gov/durant-nature-preserve-upper-lake)) and a press release and survey tool were released on January 4, 2021. A virtual public meeting will be held on January 12, 2021 from 6:00 to 7:00 pm including a background presentation, answers to frequently asked questions based on initial survey results, and an opportunity for question and answer. The survey will remain open for an additional week, closing on January 19, 2021. City staff will review and respond to comments and feedback collected, recommend a preferred alternative for the Upper Lake, and present that recommendation first to the Parks, Recreation and Greenway Advisory Board for information sharing and input on February 18, 2021. The project will then be presented to the Stormwater Management Advisory Commission on March 4 per the Lake Management Evaluation Process under the City's newly revised Lake Policy, at which time the Commission may vote on a recommendation to City Council regarding the Upper Lake.