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INFORMATION:

Wake Bus Rapid Transit (BRT): Western Corridor

Staff Resource: Het Patel, Transportation Transit, 996-5120 het.patel@raleighnc.gov

To advance design for the Wake BRT: Western Corridor, a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) was advertised June 23, 2023. Qualifications submittals are due to the City by August 4, 2023. Staff anticipates selection of a consultant team to advance the Western Corridor's final design by Fall 2023. The advertisement of the RFQ does not mean that final design for Western Corridor will begin in Fall 2023. This approach for the Western Corridor Final Design RFQ advertisement allows for the final design team to be part of the federal ratings submission anticipated in August/September 2024 and buy-in to preliminary design assumptions submitted for ratings. The RFQ advertisement can be found on the North Carolina Interactive Purchasing System at the following link: [Wake BRT Western Corridor Final Design RFQ](#).

(No attachment)

Weekly Digest of Special Events

Staff Resource: Sarah Heinsohn, Office of Special Events, 996-2200, sarah.heinsohn@raleighnc.gov

Included with the *Update* materials is the special events digest for the upcoming week.

(Attachment)

Council Member Follow Up Items

Follow Up from the June 6 City Council Meeting

Porous Pavements (Council Member Black)

Staff Resources: Steve Halsey, Transportation, 996-5755, steven.halsey@raleighnc.gov

Kenneth Ritchie, Transportation, 996-4112, kenneth.ritchie@raleighnc.gov

During the meeting Council requested an update from staff on the use of porous pavements and the ability for requirement of porous pavements with private development.

The city has incorporated various forms of porous pavement into parking and other hardscape areas as part of projects at the Walnut Creek Wetland Center, Raleigh Union Station, Wilders Grove Solid Waste Services Facility and Lake Johnson Park. In the last year, Transportation partnered with Parks, Recreation and Cultural Resources to pilot a porous pavement application around street trees in the Glenwood South area. These applications have been light duty and designed with materials such as porous concrete, porous pavers, and an open graded aggregate/recycled tire material.



Parking spaces at Raleigh Union Station



Turnaround pad at Lake Johnson Park Community Center

To date, the city has not developed an application for porous asphalt on public streets. The city relies on North Carolina Department of Transportation specifications for asphalt mix designs and the current porous asphalt approved mixes are utilized primarily as a top layer to improve skid resistance on high speed/high volume roadways. These applications require a traditional asphalt pavement structure below the porous asphalt. This design does not allow for stormwater runoff to enter the underlying roadway pavement structure due to compaction requirements and in order to avoid settlement and damage from water freezing within the roadway structure. In these cases, stormwater runoff is directed to roadside drainage features.

There are currently no requirements for the use of porous pavements in private development projects under the Unified Development Ordinance. The Raleigh Rainwater Rewards (R3) subsidy program does provide a potential reimbursement for implementation of green stormwater infrastructure, including pervious/porous pavements, that are not being utilized to meet regulatory stormwater requirements. Staff will continue to research possible uses of porous pavements in future. As we look at expanded use of such pavements, we must remain aware of the associated maintenance costs. The use of porous pavements will increase the cost of pavement maintenance because of the need for regular vacuum cleaning, necessary to maintain pavement permeability to allow for stormwater to infiltrate through the pavement providing runoff reduction and water quality benefits.

(No attachment)

Investment Guidelines, Department of State Treasurer (Council Member Harrison)

Staff Resource: Allison Bradsher, Finance, 996-4970, allison.bradsher@raleighnc.gov

During the meeting Council requested staff provide a report on investment guidelines specific to Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) investments, at the Investment Management Division within the Department of State Treasurer. Since that time, House Bill 750, “an act to address the use of Environmental, Social and Governance criteria by state agencies and state pension plan fiduciaries” was made law through the override of Governor Cooper’s veto by the General Assembly on June 27. Codified as Session Law 2023-64, the newly enacted law requires that in an evaluation of investments by the State Treasurer, only pecuniary factors are to be considered. Specifically, a pecuniary factor “is a factor that has a material effect on the financial risk or financial return of an investment based on appropriate investment horizons consistent with the purpose of the fund” G.S. § 147-69.7(b)(5). Therefore, environmental and social considerations may be considered only if they present economic risks or opportunities.

A link to the bill can be found here, <https://www.ncleg.gov/Sessions/2023/Bills/House/PDF/H750v4.pdf>

(No attachment)

Comprehensive Plan Vision Theme Expanding Housing Choices (Council Member Harrison)

Staff contact: Hannah Reckhow, Planning and Development, 996-2622, hannah.reckhow@raleighnc.gov

During the meeting Tim Niles shared thoughts on the way the Vision Themes in the 2030 Comprehensive Plan are interpreted in rezoning staff reports. Council asked for additional information about how the Vision Theme of Expanding Housing Choices is considered in staff reports and, more generally, how affordable housing is considered in the analysis of consistency with the 2030 Comprehensive Plan. Included with the *Update* materials is a staff memorandum prepared in response.

(Attachment)

Follow Up from the June 6 City Council Meeting

Public Comment – Traffic Calming Processes and Execution (Mayor Baldwin)

Staff Resource: William Shumaker, Transportation, 996-4175, william.shumaker@raleighnc.gov

During the meeting Mr. Larry Helfant provided public comment about concerns with recently installed traffic calming projects and specifically about the Hardimont Road project. Council requested that staff provide information related to these concerns. Included with the *Update* materials is a staff memorandum prepared in response to these concerns.

(Attachment)

Weekly Events Digest

Friday, July 7– Thursday, July 13

City of Raleigh Office of Special Events
specialevents@raleighnc.gov | 919-996-2200 | raleighnc.gov/special-events-office

Permitted Special Events

[Morning Times First Friday Market](#)

Hargett Street

Friday, July 7

Event Time: 7:00pm - 11:00pm

Associated Road Closures: E. Hargett Street between Fayetteville Street and S. Wilmington Street will be closed from 6:00pm until 11:59pm.

Other Upcoming Events

[First Friday Raleigh](#)

Friday, July 7

Downtown Raleigh

[Tears for Fears](#)

Saturday, July 8

Coastal Credit Union Music Park at Walnut Creek

[Summer Concert Series](#)

Sunday, July 9

Pullen Park

[Moore Square Market](#)

Sunday, July 9

Moore Square Park

[Matchbox 20](#)

Wednesday, July 12

Coastal Credit Union Music Park at Walnut Creek

[Moonshine by Moonlight: The Heyday of NC's Juke Joints](#)

Thursday, July 13

City of Raleigh Museum

Public Resources

[Pilot Text Alert Program](#): Sometimes spontaneous events happen downtown and in other areas that could affect local businesses. If you'd like to receive notifications when those events happen, including unpermitted ones, sign up for text alerts.

[Event Feedback Form](#): Tell us what you think about Raleigh events! We welcome citizen and participant feedback and encourage you to provide comments or concerns about any events regulated by the Office of Special Events. We will use this helpful information in future planning.

[Road Closure and Road Race Map](#): A resource providing current information on street closures in Raleigh.

[Online Events Calendar](#): View all currently scheduled events that impact city streets, public plazas, and Dorothea Dix Park.

Council Member Follow Up

To	Marchell Adams-David, City Manager
Thru	Patrick O. Young, AICP, Director
From	Hannah Reckhow, AICP, Senior Planner
Department	Planning and Development
Date	June 30, 2023
Subject	June 6 Public Comment re: Comprehensive Plan Vision Theme Expanding Housing Choices

Background

During the June 6, 2023, City Council meeting, Tim Niles shared thoughts on the way the Vision Themes in the 2030 Comprehensive Plan are interpreted in rezoning staff reports. Council Member Jane Harrison asked for additional information about how the Vision Theme of Expanding Housing Choices is considered in staff reports and, more generally, how affordable housing is considered in the analysis of consistency with the 2030 Comprehensive Plan.

Vision Themes

The 2030 Comprehensive Plan describes the long-term vision for growth in Raleigh. To provide a full picture of the intended vision, it is described both through numerous, detailed policies and actions spanning topical areas and through bigger-picture Vision Themes. As this section of the Plan states, “The Vision Themes express and reinforce the major concerns the Plan seeks to address, and issues raised by public.” There are six in total:

1. Economic Prosperity and Equity,
2. Expanding Housing Choices
3. Managing Our Growth
4. Coordinating Land Use and Transportation
5. Greenprint - Sustainable Development
6. Growing Successful Neighborhoods and Communities.

In rezoning staff reports, consistency with the Comprehensive Plan is evaluated both through consistency with individual policies and through consistency with the Vision Themes. As with other areas of the Comprehensive Plan analysis, a request may be consistent with one or more Vision Themes while simultaneously being inconsistent with others. In this way, they often reflect the challenging tradeoffs involved in zoning cases.

Expanding Housing Choices

The Vision Theme of Expanding Housing Choices reads:

“Raleigh will have an expanded supply of affordable and workforce housing options that provide housing opportunities for all segments of our population in all areas of the city. This expanded supply of decent affordable housing will provide stability for families, improve opportunities for education and career advancement, and reduce homelessness for low- and moderate-income households. A range of housing types will be available in residential zoning districts to meet the needs of diverse households and remove barriers created by exclusionary housing practices.”

There are several ways this Vision Theme frames its intent. It refers specifically to affordability of housing, which in practice can be established directly through construction of subsidized units or, both directly and indirectly, through an increase in housing supply and choice.

With the current rising costs of materials, labor, and interest rates, and most especially land costs in Raleigh, it is generally not possible for the market to produce housing affordable to households making less than roughly 60 percent of area median income without a government or non-profit subsidy. However, significant research¹ shows that housing availability, accessibility and affordability in high-demand markets (such as Raleigh’s) are benefited through an increase in market-rate housing supply (construction of market rate units). It is also worth noting that market expansion of housing supply to promote housing affordability in Raleigh is part of a multi-pronged strategy to moderate the impact of increases to housing costs region wide. This Vision Theme is also pro-actively implemented by the City’s affordable housing program.

As such, there are several ways a rezoning request can be deemed consistent with Expanding Housing Choices. A rezoning request that includes a zoning condition guaranteeing housing units will be constructed that are affordable to a specific income level would clearly implement the Vision Theme’s focus on affordability. A rezoning request that increases the variety of housing types that can be built on a site would speak to the vision for housing choice. Finally, if a rezoning request increases the estimated number of housing units that could be built on the site, it implements the Vision Theme’s element of availability of housing.

Past practice has been to indicate a rezoning request as consistent with Expanding Housing Choices if it would increase the potential housing supply, choice, or if it would require affordable housing units. As zoning conditions requiring certain affordability are relatively rare, a majority of cases deemed consistent do so through supply and/or housing choice. Going forward, staff will better articulate which of the three elements of the Vision Theme is being met (or not met) in rezoning request staff reports.

¹ [Research Roundup: The Effect of Market-Rate Development on Neighborhood Rents](#), UCLA, 2021.
[Supply Skepticism: Housing Supply and Affordability](#), NYU Furman Center, 2018.

Affordable Housing

Outside of the Plan's Vision Themes, there are several places in the rezoning staff report where housing affordability, whether through increased availability, choice, or subsidy, is and can be noted. The main section is in the "Policy Guidance" section. In this section, Comprehensive Plan policies that the requested rezoning is consistent with and inconsistent with are noted. Frequently cited policies on housing include:

- LU 8.1 Housing Variety
- LU 8.3 Conserving, Enhancing, and Revitalizing Neighborhoods
- H 1.8 Zoning for Housing

Less often, staff reports may cite LU 4.11 Zoning for Affordable Housing in certain circumstances. For example, if zoning conditions requiring affordable units are provided, the request may be deemed consistent with the policy. Alternatively, if the request is for a height greater than is recommended by Table LU-2, and it does not include conditions for affordable housing, the request may be deemed inconsistent with the policy. In light of the lack of enabling legislation in North Carolina for inclusionary zoning, staff reports do not cite the policy for requests that do not include affordable housing conditions but align with the height guidance in the Comprehensive Plan.

A rezoning request's impact on housing may also be noted in the "Public Benefits of the Proposed Rezoning" or "Detriments of the Proposed Rezoning" section, which will identify impacts that may arise from the rezoning.

In all rezoning staff reports, the full range of land uses that could be built under the requested zoning district are considered, and housing may be noted in the Comprehensive Plan analysis if it is a possibility, even when housing is not guaranteed for future development on the site.

To	Marchell Adams-David, City Manager
Thru	Michael Moore, Assistant City Manager
From	Will Shumaker, Mobility Development Supervisor
Department	Transportation
Date	July 7, 2023
Subject	Traffic Calming Project Process & Execution – Responses to Public Comment

To reduce traffic speeds and improve safety for our community, the Neighborhood Traffic Management Program (NTMP) introduces traffic calming measures to streets around the City of Raleigh. Even the most basic traffic calming projects introduce elements that influence and change people’s driving behaviors, and this change may sometimes lead to initial driver frustration as established driving behaviors and habits are disrupted. Drivers that habitually exceed existing speed limits may feel this change more significantly, since the traffic calming measures more adjustment to comply with the safer speeds.

Traffic calming projects are coordinated by staff but are heavily influenced by the desires of the neighborhood. Staff has a set number of reviewed and approved traffic calming treatment options, but there is some flexibility in their use. In advance of any public engagement, an initial review for eligibility and the existing geometry of the street is performed, and applicability of each traffic calming treatment is reviewed. Staff then includes all options available to each street based on applicable treatments and allows for the residents in that area to suggest treatments for each location to help inform the overall design and needs for each unique street and neighborhood.

Traffic calming projects take time to construct and complete. Staff has worked to minimize construction impacts with some of the smaller projects being completed in 1-2 weeks and some of the larger projects being completed typically in 4-6 weeks.

NTMP Engagement Process

Public engagement has always been a Council priority and plays a major factor with any traffic calming project. Traffic calming projects follow the approval process in the City Council-adopted NTMP policy. The approved process sets touchpoints and approval thresholds to move projects through the process administratively. As with any Council adopted policies, Council has the authority to review projects and make motions for approval/denial that differ from the adopted policies that staff follows. All recent updates and changes to the NTMP policy have been targeted at expanding public engagement and making processes more efficient.

Per NTMP policy, Staff engages with residents that live along the street and those that live within an approximately 2-block radius surrounding the project, or those where their sole access is the street eligible for traffic calming. There are pros and cons associated with expanding or contracting this engagement area. Staff has worked to find a balance that includes broader neighborhood concerns and perspectives while not outweighing the interests of the residents

that live on the street. Speeding, crashes, and aggressive driving has a direct negative impact on those that live on the street, and those negative impacts lessen the further you get from the street itself. Residents that live further away from the street may see the street as a convenient route for them to get to and from their house without experiencing the direct impacts of poor driving behaviors, and Staff has found support for traffic calming projects typically lessens the further you live away from the street with the identified need. Staff has found this 2-block radius provides a good balance between the needs of those living along the street and those in the neighborhood, and an effective traffic calming project can be designed without it being overly restrictive.

NTMP Engagement Process Improvements

The pre-2020 NTMP policy had an engagement period of approximately 18-24 months for the top 10 ranked streets. These 10 projects collectively cost approximately \$800,000 - \$1,200,000, based on the construction practices used at that time. Public engagement was in-person only, and meetings averaged 9 attendees. For example, staff worked with the residents along Dartmouth Road in 2019. Five people attended the preliminary design meeting, 6 people were at the final design meeting. (This street is also near Hardimont Road.)

After process changes for efficiencies were made, the post-2020 NTMP policy has an engagement period of approximately 8-12 months for the top 20 ranked streets. Staff analyzed impediments to efficient project delivery, like utility relocations, and worked to remove these items so that it would decrease the per treatment cost and get projects on the ground faster. Monolithic surface mounted concrete islands were identified as a construction change that would dramatically decreased project costs and complexities. This construction method allowed the 20 current planned projects to be constructed for approximately the same \$800,000-\$1,200,000 budget, the same amount that previously yielded only 8-10 projects per cycle.

At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, engagement moved from an in-person 2–3-hour meeting to on-line public comment periods that remain open for public review and comment for 4–6 weeks. Staff generates videos, presentations, and map resources for residents to review at their convenience. Communication and dialog are extremely important, so staff provides a public comment link where every comment receives a response for a neighborhood-wide conversation; it also provides the NTMP group’s email account and phone number for more one-on-one conversations with staff.

These changes have resulted in a dramatic increase in public participation. The average number of views, per street, is 63.60, and the average number of participants per street is 14.20. This represents a 606.70% increase in the average number of residents in each neighborhood seeing the materials and resources we publish and a 57.72% increase on the average number of residents actively engaging with staff.

Hardimont Traffic Calming Project

Hardimont Road acts as a neighborhood collector street and is classified as an Avenue 2-Lane, undivided street section. This street also has an average volume of around 5,500-5,700 vehicles per day. This street classification and the vehicular volumes are at the upper limits of the NTMP policy thresholds, but they meet all adopted policy thresholds for traffic calming project eligibility.

During the public engagement process, Hardimont Road surpassed the average views and participation at both the preliminary design and final design meetings. At the preliminary design

meeting, we received 177 views and 39 participants from the Hardimont Road neighborhood. At the final design meeting, we received 116 views and 21 participants from the Hardimont Road neighborhood. This only tracks the public input views and participation and does not count additional emails, phone calls, and letters received for the project.

Construction for the Hardimont Road project was anticipated to take 4-6 weeks and the work was largely completed during that time. Unfortunately, the project contractor had difficulties with the timely completion of the required traffic markings, and the overall construction period stretched to approximately 2 months. During this time, staff urged the contractor to install the traffic markings on all uncompleted projects as quickly as possible. This issue, and similar issues with the Lineberry project, highlighted a potential area for improvement in our contract language to stipulate a reasonable time between construction of the actual treatments and completion of all the necessary regulatory signage and markings. Staff is updating future contract language to include a reasonable timeline to enforce timely completion of all projects and their component parts.

Hardimont Design Elements - Public Comments

At the June 21, 2023, City Council meeting, a speaker during the Public Comment portion of the meeting posed several questions and concerns about the design of the Hardimont Road traffic calming project. A bulleted response to the concerns that have been brought to our attention follows:

- Speed humps were not extended to the curb line.
 - o Speed humps stop at the bike lane buffer and not extend into the bike lane. This design approach targets the automobiles that create the safety concerns and avoids penalizing cyclists using the bike lanes.
- Flexible delineators have been removed.
 - o Vertical delineators work in conjunction with the speed hump footprint. Delineators are placed to keep drivers in the travel lane rather than swerving into the bike lane to avoid the speed humps. This technique has been deployed on other streets and is our standard practice when installing speed humps along streets with bike lanes. Based on communications with residents in the area, there may have been deliberate efforts by some individual(s) to completely remove the flexible delineators as they were found in a pile at an adjacent construction site in the neighborhood. Staff is working to reinstall the delineators in such a manner to minimize an individual's ability to intentionally remove them.
- Bike lane buffers at intersections need to be shortened.
 - o The "split/pinch" intersection treatments at the intersections of Converse Drive and Wingate Drive are installed for a couple of purposes. First, they serve as traffic calming treatments to slow drivers down as they drive along Hardimont. Secondly, they act as a form of "turn calming" with the goal of increasing pedestrian safety. Turn calming works by restricting a driver's ability to make gradual turns at high speeds; it requires drivers to slow and to make a more 90-degree turn to and from the side streets. By inducing slower turns, pedestrian safety is increased as driver reaction times are improved by shifting pedestrians from a vehicle's blind spot and closer to the center of the vehicle and pedestrian visibility is also increased. This improvement results in safer pedestrian crossings with slower vehicle turning movements, but in no way restricts access.

- Reflective markings on the neighborhood traffic circle can be improved and placement of warning signs should be adjusted.
 - o Neighborhood traffic circles are marked per the federally regulated Manual for Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). The painted splitter islands with the “sharks’ teeth” at each intersection approach, yield signs with roundabout plaques, and arrows in the intersection are best practices for roundabouts and neighborhood traffic circles. Staff is actively monitoring this and the other recently completed traffic calming projects, and there have been no reported crashes since the construction of the Hardimont Road neighborhood traffic circle. Staff does not recommend further delineation at this time but will continue to monitor the project. If a crash pattern does develop, staff will consider and install additional markings on the circle itself.
 - o Speed hump signs and 25-mph advisory speed plaques are placed based on the context of the street and the design standards of the speed humps themselves. Hardimont Road has a posted speed limit of 30-mph, but the speed humps have a 25-mph design speed. To best notify drivers of this difference between the speed limit and design speed, warning signs and the advisory plaques are necessary at each speed hump location for each direction of vehicular travel. Staff will review current sign placement for compliance with best practice placement methods and will adjust if necessary.

- Barrels and warning signs were hit.
 - o Traffic calming projects naturally introduce new traffic patterns to a street to encourage slower and safer vehicular speeds and are implemented on streets with documented speeding and aggressive driving behavior issues. This change can encourage a greater and longer transition in driver behavior. An unfortunate side effect of this transitional period is that warning signs and construction barrels are sometimes hit and damaged while driver behaviors are changing. This is not untypical of most traffic calming projects with some signs being hit immediately after construction, then consistently decreasing in frequency over time. Staff is currently working with the contractor to replace any damaged signs in the project.

The status of street calming projects is communicated through the city’s website on the NTMP project page. Information includes the contractor’s information, estimated construction timelines, status of the construction throughout the process and the estimated completion of the project. One can review the status of each project by using the following link: <https://raleighnc.gov/transit-streets-and-sidewalks/services/neighborhood-traffic-management/final-traffic-calming>

Post-construction Evaluation

The NTMP evaluates individual street calming projects through after-studies; these are typically performed at approximately the 6-month mark after project completion to measure the impacts and successes of the project. Due to the interest and concerns about the effectiveness of the Hardimont Road traffic calming project, staff initiated a speed study to better understand the project’s impact speeding and safety on the street.

The speed study evaluated the pre-project conditions as compared to the recently installed traffic calming project along Hardimont Road:

- Pre-project: 85th percentile speed* was 37.61-mph in the 30-mph zone
 - Post-project 85th percentile speed* is 28.88-mph in the 30-mph zone
- (*85th percentile speed is the speed at which 85% of drivers are driving at or under)

Staff has also evaluated reported crashes along Hardimont Road. There have been two reported crashes in the approximate three months since construction activities began.

- April 5th: A driver was driving an estimated 10 mph over the speed limit and hit a concrete median island that was poured earlier the same week. Two of the nine total treatments had been installed on the date of this crash.
- May 11th: A driver ran the stop sign at the intersection of Hardimont Road at Wingate Drive and sideswiped a vehicle turning right.

From an immediate evaluation perspective, the traffic calming project is meeting the goals to reduce vehicular speeds and increase safety for all roadway users. Staff is actively monitoring all recently completed projects and will continue to ensure they are meeting the goals and intents of the traffic calming program.

Harps Mill Road Traffic Calming

A question related to engagement for the Harps Mill Road Traffic Calming projects was also raised during public comment. For both the Harps Mill Road – West and Harps Mill Road – Middle projects referenced in the public comment period, the residents of the neighborhood were involved through the 3 public comment periods and 2 ballot periods. A detailed accounting the engagement process was included in the May 26, 2023, City Manager’s Update.

Where these two projects differ from the Hardimont Road approval process was that one or more of the final ballot thresholds for administrative approval were not met. Staff presented the ballot results to Council at the January 18, 2022, City Council Work Session. Council discussed concerns about neighborhood safety based on the existing conditions and observed a majority of the residents that participated were in favor of this project. Based on this discussion, it was communicated to staff that Council desired to move the Harps Mill Road – West and Harps Mill Road – Middle projects forward to construction. This action was reported out of the work session at the February 1, 2022, City Council meeting where a motion to waive policy thresholds was made, seconded, and voted for approval.

With this approval, staff worked to move the 19 projects that were authorized for construction, forward as efficiently as possible.