



CITY MANAGER'S WEEKLY REPORT

raleighnc.gov



CITY OF
Raleigh
MANAGER'S
OFFICE

Issue 2020-19

May 15, 2020

IN THIS ISSUE

Walk Friendly Community Designation
Planning and Development Director Recruitment Update
Text Change Public Comment Portal
GoRaleigh FY21 Recommended Work Plan
Wake County CARES Act Funding
Weekly Digest of Special Events

Council Follow Up

GoRaleigh Bus Shelter Updates (Council Members Branch, Buffkin, Martin)
COVID-19 Situation Update (Council Member Cox)
Wake Bus Rapid Transit: Program Schedule Update (Mayor Pro Tem Branch)
Street Flooding on Jacqueline Lane (Council Member Cox)

INFORMATION:

Virtual Council Meeting Tuesday, May 19 - No Lunch Work Session

Council will continue to convene virtually with the third **Tuesday** regularly scheduled session at **1:00 P.M.** Please note there will **not** be a lunch work session. The agenda for the meeting was published yesterday:

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

Reminder: If there is an item you would like to have pulled from the consent agenda for discussion, please send an e-mail mayorstaff@raleighnc.gov by 11 A.M. on the day of the meeting.

You will be receiving information on joining the WebEx Events session on Monday; staff will be available to assist with log ins and joining the virtual City Council meeting.

Walk Friendly Community Designation

Staff Resource: Eric Lamb, RDOT, 996-2161, eric.lamb@raleighnc.gov

It was announced this week that the City of Raleigh had been recognized by the UNC Highway Safety Research Center as a “Walk Friendly Community”. This designation is awarded to communities for their commitments to prioritize pedestrians and create safe, comfortable and inviting places to walk. Raleigh was recognized as a Silver level community. Other cities in North Carolina with Silver level designation are Asheville, Cary, and Charlotte; Davidson is also designated as a Bronze level community.



Walk Friendly Communities is a national recognition program developed to encourage cities and towns across the United States to develop and support walking environments with an emphasis on safety, mobility, access and comfort. The program highlights communities leading the way in walkability and seeks to share their stories to inspire other communities to move toward their own innovative solutions. In the 11 years since the program began, it has recognized 76 cities across 32 States with Walk Friendly designations.

In response to our application, Raleigh was recognized for our efforts to commitments to expanding our pedestrian infrastructure through new sidewalk construction and through our development standards for pedestrian infrastructure and accessibility requirements included in the Unified Development Ordinance. We also received recognition for the development and growth of our robust greenway system.

A complete version of the City’s profile can be found at: <http://walkfriendly.org/communities/raleigh-nc/>.

(No attachment)

Planning and Development Director Recruitment Update

Staff Resource: Tansy Hayward, City Manager’s Office, 996-3070, tansy.hayward@raleighnc.gov

The recruitment posting for the Planning and Development Director position closed April 28. Human Resources staff referred 59 applications that met the minimum qualifications for the position. After review of the applications, an internal panel conducted brief web-based screening calls with seven candidates (an additional eighth candidate withdrew prior to the screening opportunity). The panel has identified four candidates that will participate in formal interviews next week. The final candidates have experience locally and nationally and represent diverse backgrounds and skill sets. The interview process will include two virtual interview panels. The first will include peer leaders from inside the organization. The second panel

will consist of external representatives from the following organizations: the Development Services Advisory Committee; the NC State School of Design; the Urban Land Institute; Wake County Planning Department; and representatives from the community.

(No attachment)

Text Change Public Comment Portal

Staff Resource: Kristin Williams, Planning and Development, 996-2494, kristin.williams@raleighnc.gov

Staff is piloting an online portal (<https://publicinput.com/textchanges>) designed to capture questions and comments from the public about proposed text changes prior to Planning Commission review. The pilot will launch on May 15 for two text changes scheduled for the May 26 Planning Commission agenda. Comments collected through this process will be reviewed by staff and included as an addendum to the staff report presented to the Planning Commission.



The creation of this portal not only reflects the Planning and Development department commitment to increased transparency and enhanced public engagement, but it also serves as a response to the Planning Commission's request to broaden the approach used to inform the public about upcoming text changes. Staff will debrief after this pilot to determine next steps for this initiative.

(No Attachment)

GoRaleigh FY21 Recommended Work Plan

Staff Resource: David Eatman, RDOT-Transit, 996-4040, david.eatman@raleighnc.gov

In January Wake Transit released a draft work plan for Fiscal Year 2021 listing a total of \$114.2M in proposed investments for public review and comment. Since then, the coronavirus pandemic has led to a statewide stay-at-home order, which has understandably decreased the economic activity that generates the sales tax revenue expected to pay for new transit projects. Out of an abundance of caution, the Wake County Transportation Planning Advisory Committee (TPAC) has chosen to put several projects planned for fiscal year 2021 into an “unbudgeted reserve” until the pandemic’s impact on tax collections can be assessed this

fall. Upon assessment of actual tax receipts, a final determination regarding projects in the reserve will be made. Table 1 (below) illustrates the effects on Raleigh's FY21 work plan. Approximately \$671K in Operating projects and \$15.8M in Capital projects are shifted to an unbudgeted reserve, which represents about 36 percent of the City's original draft FY21 work plan budget.

In deciding what would move forward July 1, TPAC leaders relied on strict criteria that included a project's time sensitivity, transit riders' most pressing needs and the public comments received in January. City of Raleigh projects expected to advance include the next stage of the New Bern Avenue bus rapid transit corridor and additional bus service on GoRaleigh Route 21: *Caraleigh*, which serves Oak City Cares and several other human services organizations. The service will receive funding to operate every 30 minutes, seven days a week until 7 PM, for times that it currently is only operating hourly. Hourly service continues after 7 PM through 10 PM. Funding for Transit Division office space will also be included in the recommended work plan.

TPAC communications leaders are developing a virtual public engagement plan to provide information on the changes between the FY21 Draft Wake Transit Work Plan released in January and the FY21 Recommended Wake Transit Work Plan to be released in May. The outreach plan coordinates with the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO) Public Comment Period scheduled for May 15 – June 14, 2020, following the Wake Transit Public Engagement Policy, which requires a minimum of a 14-day public comment period prior to adoption. The governing boards - CAMPO Executive Board and GoTriangle Board of Trustees - will each hold public hearings at their June meetings. Please see Table 2 (below) for a detailed schedule of events.

Table 1. Wake Transit Plan FY21 Recommended Work Plan – City of Raleigh

FY21 WTP Work Plan Requests	FY21 Approved with Recommended Work Plan	FY21 Reserve
Operating – New		
T0005 – AL Improvements to Route 21 – Caraleigh	\$250,000	\$146,631
T0005 – AM Glenwood Route Package		\$471,164
T0002 – AS Transit Office Space Lease	\$156,550	
Operating Totals	\$406,550	\$617,795
Capital - Continuing		
Bus Stop Improvements		\$1,131,200
East Raleigh Transit Center		\$3,157,530
Enhanced Transfer Points		\$1,441,263

Midtown Transit Center		\$2,486,000
ADA Facility – Operations		\$2,000,000
Replacement Vehicles (12 buses CNG)		\$5,083,413
Paratransit Replacement Vehicles		\$380,000
TC005 – A1 BRT	\$28,220,000	
Capital - New		
GoRaleigh Support Vehicles		\$156,000
Transit Origin – Destination Survey Capital Planning	\$75,000	
Capital Totals	\$28,295,000	\$15,835,406

	Recommended	Reserve
FY21 Work Plan Totals (Operating + Capital)	\$28,701,550	\$16,453,201

Table 2. FY21 Wake Transit Plan Recommended Schedule

Date	Event/Milestone
May 15 th – June 14 th	CAMPO public comment period
May 20 th	CAMPO public hearing
May 27 th	GoTriangle public hearing
June 17 th	CAMPO vote
June 24 th	GoTriangle vote

(No Attachment)

Wake County CARES Act Funding

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

Wake County received direct funding from the US Treasury in support of COVID-19 response on April 24, 2020 totaling \$194M as an allocation from the CARES Act. As part of the provisions of the CARES Act, local governments who receive direct funding may distribute funds to local governments within their jurisdiction.

At the request of Wake County Finance, jurisdictions in Wake County were asked to provide an estimate of COVID-19 related costs incurred to date as well as a projection for future costs. The request was to provide expenses incurred related to the City's COVID-19 response, including (but not limited to): public health; public safety; EOC operations incurred to maintain operations while being compliant with social distancing policies, teleworking, and other restrictions.

The requested information will help Wake County develop a strategy of how to optimize the use of CARES Act funding. The following table are the estimated costs provided to the County.

Estimated Amount (in millions)	Item Description
\$2.0 - \$2.5	Operating costs include (but not limited to) COVID-19 PPE (masks, gloves, gowns, shields, goggles); Cleaning supplies and disinfectant; Thermometers; Hand sanitizer; building signage; Software licenses for virtual meetings; Plexiglass partitions to allow for social distancing of staff / public
\$2.0	Salary and Benefits include hours worked in direct response to COVID-19 including overtime hours worked and a 5% premium pay adjustment as well as any associated benefits including (FICA, retirement, etc.)
\$0.1	Community Support to Passage Home Incorporated and Triangle Family Services to provide emergency assistance to hourly workers living in hotels whose earnings have been adversely affected
\$1.0	Community Support for a small business assistance grant program funded in partnership with the Carolina Small Business Fund and Wake Technical Community College
\$7.1 (Raleigh est. \$4.1)	Funding requested by Raleigh Water on behalf of Raleigh customers and the customers of the Towns of Cary, Morrisville, Apex, Holly Springs and Fuquay Varina to expand the Utility Customer Assistance Program (UCAP) parameters in two (2) ways; the first would add \$350,000 to the existing program for low-income individuals, the second would make households who have at least one individual who has applied for or received unemployment benefits in the program timeframe eligible for one-time assistance of up to \$240 to retire debt with a Wake County water sector utility. This debt could be associated with the services provided by the water/wastewater utility, solid waste services and/or stormwater services; all of which are essential services as defined by federal agencies

(No attachment)

Weekly Digest of Special Events

Staff Resource: Derrick Remer, Special Events Office, 996-2200, derrick.remer@raleighnc.gov

All Special Events continue to be cancelled for the month of May.

(No attachment)

Council Member Follow Up Items

Follow Up from the March 3 City Council Meeting

GoRaleigh Bus Shelter Updates (Council Members Branch, Buffkin, Martin)

Staff Resource: David Eatman, RDOT-Transit, 996-4040, david.eatman@raleighnc.gov

During the meeting Council authorized execution of a contract to the fabrication of the Custom GoRaleigh bus shelters. Several questions were asked regarding the existing design and how businesses can participate in costs of shelters and passenger amenities.

Mayor Pro Tem Branch asked staff to verify that the current low bid pricing for the shelters was still valid given the length of time from the bid. The low bid has been confirmed for the shelters as originally bid. A purchase order was issued April 6.

Council Member Martin requested staff review the shelter partition seating and research alternatives to the partitions between seats. Staff was also requested to consider reducing the gap on the rear panel wall to better shelter riders from weather elements. Staff worked with the manufacturer, Jericho Palm, and was able to remove the bench seat partitions and close the gap on the rear panel wall without a change to existing pricing. Both requests are being incorporated into the final design and production.

Council Member Buffkin requested staff provide the process by which a business could donate a bus shelter or other bus stop enhancement. In response to this request, staff has developed two methods to partner with individuals, corporations, businesses, etc. to provide funding for or build a new bus stop shelter. The first option allows the Transit Division to accept a cash donation and for staff to lead the site design and construction contract. The donation amount will be determined by a cost estimate provided by an on-call engineer after a review of site conditions. Procedures have been developed to accept donations; authorization will be required from Council in the form of a budget amendment in order to utilize any donations. A second method allows the business to take the lead on design and construction. Staff will work with the donor on site location, provide design guidance and approval, permitting oversight and final inspection. This method borrows from current procedures for transit infrastructure requirements, outlined in the UDO (Sec. 8.11), for many new development aspects.

Businesses interested in partnering with the Transit Division are encouraged to contact transit staff by emailing GoRaleigh@raleighnc.gov or by calling 919-996-4043. Staff will reach out to determine the feasibility of improving the bus stop identified, provide rough cost estimates and share details of how GoRaleigh Transit will participate in the partnership.

(No attachment)

Follow Up from the May 5 City Council Meeting

COVID-19 Situation Update (Council Member Cox)

Staff Resource: Fagan Stackhouse, Human Resources, 996-4711, fagan.stackhouse@raleighnc.gov

During the meeting staff was requested to provide a COVID-19 Situation Update regarding the Flexible Spending Program. Of particular interest to Council Member Cox was the spending alternatives that

employees have outside of childcare and whether there is an opportunity to rollover funds to 2021, to turn off costs and what happens to unused funds.

The Flexible Spending Program is a program of the federal Internal Revenue Service (IRS) where employees can put aside pre-tax dollars to pay for qualified medical, childcare and parking expenses which ultimately can reduce taxable income. Employees can adjust or terminate their contributions to Dependent Care and Parking Flexible Spending due to COVID-19. Medical accounts can only be changed or terminated due to an IRS qualifying event. Once employees return to work and after school care, day camps and childcare centers resume normal operations, they can then make additional changes to their flexible spending elections based on their current needs.

Employees have until March 15, 2021 to apply qualified expenses toward any balance that remains from the 2020 plan year. If the employee has funds remaining in the Medical and/or Dependent Care Flex accounts beyond March 15, 2021, they will lose those funds. The IRS will not allow an employer to reimburse the employee any unused funds due to the tax implications associated with pre-tax contributions. Unused parking funds will carry over to the next year.

(No attachment)

Wake Bus Rapid Transit: Program Schedule Update (Mayor Pro Tem Branch)

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

Kenneth Ritchie, Engineering Services, 996-4112 Kenneth.Ritchie@raleighnc.gov

During the meeting staff was requested to provide a status update for the Wake Bus Rapid Transit (Wake BRT) projects. As the project sponsor, the City of Raleigh is working on advancing the Wake BRT Program. An update regarding the current status of the program as well as schedule modifications caused by COVID-19 was provided in *Weekly Report Issue 2020-15* (April 17).

The **Wake BRT: New Bern Avenue** project completed 30 percent of the design phase in March 2020. With the completion of this phase, an [informational video](#) was developed to address frequently asked questions and visualize information presented at previous design open house meetings. The video provides an introduction and background into the overall Wake BRT Program and highlights the use of dedicated bus lanes along New Bern Avenue Corridor. It also provides information regarding planned bicycle/pedestrian improvements and includes an introduction to BRT station features and amenities. As the project advances in the next phase of design there will be various engagement opportunities for the public to interact and provide feedback to the design team on branding, wayfinding and station design elements. During the Final Design procurement, HNTB was recommended as the top ranked consultant. Staff is working on developing the scope and fee to be presented at a future Council meeting. New Bern Avenue BRT is expected to start construction in Summer 2021 with completion in Fall 2023.

The **Wake BRT: Southern Corridor** and **Wake BRT: Western Corridor** are advancing on parallel tracks with the route selection phase. This work will help identify a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) for each corridor. Staff is continuing to work with our municipal stakeholders in Garner and Cary, respectively, to coordinate LPA decision timeline. At this time, LPAs for both corridors are anticipated by Summer/Fall 2020 immediately followed by a Project Development application through Federal Transit Administration's Small Starts program. Once Project Development has been initiated, Wake BRT: Southern Corridor and Wake BRT: Western Corridor will begin 0 to 30 percent design and environmental documentation.

Western Boulevard Corridor Study is progressing. The study focuses on land use capacity analysis, Transit Oriented Development potential and urban design recommendations. Study recommendations will be incorporated into the Wake BRT: Western Corridor Project Development phase.

Wake BRT: Northern Corridor has completed its initial pre-planning phase through the Major Investment Study. LPA selection is expected to begin in the Fall of 2020.

Equitable Development Around Transit (EDAT): The final EDAT report is set to be published in June. Next steps after publication will include delivering the report and accompanying Comprehensive Plan amendments to City Council.

(No attachment)

Street Flooding on Jacqueline Lane (Council Member Cox)

Staff Resource: Wayne Miles, Engineering Services, 996-3964, wayne.miles@raleighnc.gov

During the meeting Council Member Cox reported citizen complaints of repeated street flooding on Jacqueline Lane near its intersection with Bassett Hall Court. The Stormwater Management and the Stormwater Maintenance Group of the RDOT Transportation Field Services divisions coordinated to investigate this location. This investigation found the following items likely to contribute to this street flooding:

- Sediment accumulation in the stormwater drainage pipe;
- Storm grates not performing well because of the spacing and size of the grate;
- A catch basin that had become elevated relative to the surrounding street, resulting in reduced drainage ability; and
- Excessive sediment accumulation at the pipe outlet of the road drainage system;

The sediment was cleared from the stormwater pipe on May 12, and the grates were replaced with improved grates on May 13. The catch basin will be lowered by the middle of June. Sediment accumulation at the pipe outlet requires a right of entry on private property to address, thus this work will proceed after that has been acquired. All work is expected to be complete by August 2020.

Included with the *Weekly Report* materials is a staff memorandum, which includes photographs of the relevant stormwater infrastructure.

(Attachment)

Council Member Follow Up



Raleigh
MEMO

TO: Ruffin Hall, City Manager

FROM: Wayne Miles, PE, Stormwater Program Manager
Dan Clinton, PE, Stormwater Engineer

DEPT: Engineering Services

DATE: May 13, 2020

SUBJECT: Street Flooding on Jacqueline Lane Near Bassett Hall Court

At the May 5, 2020 City Council meeting, Council Member Cox reported citizen complaints of recurring street flooding on Jacqueline Lane near its intersection with Bassett Hall Court. Jacqueline Lane is in Northeast Raleigh off Capital Boulevard, just north of its interchange with I-540 (see Figure 1).



Figure 1. Stormwater pipes on Jacqueline Lane in vicinity of Bassett Hall Court, where reports of street flooding were investigated (note red lines are closed stormwater pipes, blue lines are open stormwater flow channels, green symbols are stormwater catch basins, inlets, and junction boxes).

Municipal Building
222 West Hargett Street
Raleigh, North Carolina 27601

One Exchange Plaza
1 Exchange Plaza, Suite 1020
Raleigh, North Carolina 27601

City of Raleigh
Post Office Box 590 • Raleigh
North Carolina 27602-0590
(Mailing Address)

In response to this request in coordination with the Stormwater Management Division, the Stormwater Maintenance Group of Transportation Field Services (TFS) investigated this location on May 7th. The Stormwater Maintenance crew found several drainage concerns between Capital Boulevard and Bassett Hall Court that were likely contributing to the reported flooding. These included:

- Sediment accumulation in the stormwater pipe;
- Storm grates not performing well because of the spacing and size of the grate;
- A catch basin that had become elevated relative to the surrounding street, resulting in reduced drainage ability; and
- Excessive sediment accumulation at the pipe outlet of the road drainage system;

While these issues were not observed during a storm event, they would likely explain the reported street flooding. These concerns are described in more detail below with a description of the completed or pending follow up actions related to each.

Concern #1 – Sediment accumulated in the storm drainage pipes. This accumulated sediment reduces the pipe capacity during storm events.

Action: TFS staff identified this sediment through use of a closed-circuit television (CCTV) camera. The sediment was removed on May 12 using a flusher/vacuum truck to remove the sediment within the storm drainage pipes. Photo 1 shows an internal view of the sediment accumulation in the pipe prior to removal.



Photo 1. Sediment buildup in the stormwater pipes under Jacqueline Lane.

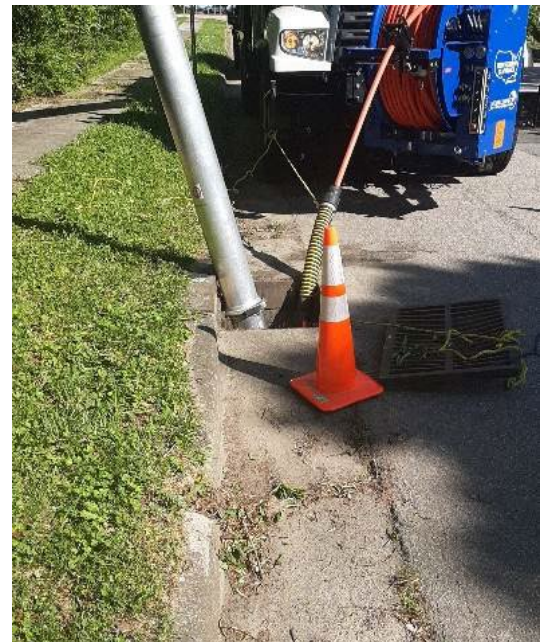


Photo 2. City Crew removing sediment from the stormwater pipe at Jacqueline Lane



Photo 3. Existing storm drainage grates with poor grate spacing on the north side of Jacqueline Lane.

Concern #2 – Poorly performing storm grate at the rear property entrance on the north side of the road.

The grates found at the entrance to the property on the north side of Jacqueline Lane had narrow openings that are susceptible to clogging from debris and pine needles.

Action: TFS replaced the grates on May 13 with ones that have larger openings that are less susceptible to clogging (see Photo 4 for example of the type of grates used for the replacement).



Photo 4. Example of Improved grates similar to those used to replace the grates near Jacqueline Lane.

Concern #3 – Elevated catch basin on the south side of Jacqueline Lane.

The existing catch basin frame and grate are elevated above the gutter flow line (see Photo 5). This condition, which could be the result of several causes including road settlement and poor installation, reduces the ability of stormwater runoff from entering the grate and results in standing water in the gutter and roadway during and after rain events. This continued saturation could cause damage to the road subgrade increasing long term maintenance requirements of the road.



Photo 5. Elevated catch basin causing pooling of water on Jacqueline Lane.

Action: TFS staff will lower the frame and grate at this catch basin to match the surrounding gutter line thus reducing the standing water. This work will be done within the next month.

Concern #4 – Sediment accumulated at the storm drainage pipe outlet.

Sediment has accumulated at the outlet of the street drainage pipes reducing the ability for the water to flow freely out of the system. This causes sediment to accumulate in the storm drainage pipes.

Action: TFS staff will remove accumulated sediment and re-establish a clear outlet (tail ditch) downstream of the storm drainage pipe. This will require the property owner to allow City staff to enter their property to do the work and thus a right of entry will be needed. The right of entry typically takes several months to obtain. The work will proceed shortly after the right of entry is executed and is anticipated to be completed in August 2020.

Conclusion:

While the exact cause of the street flooding is not known, there are several actions staff have taken and will take to reduce the risk of future street flooding. These actions are expected to be completed in the next few months. Staff will continue to monitor the area for safety purposes and ensure actions taken were effective in reducing the safety concern of street flooding.