



Legislation Text

File #: 20-418, **Version:** 1

TITLE:

Update on the South Greensboro Street Sidewalk

PURPOSE: The purpose of this agenda item is to provide the Town Council with an update on the development of conceptual plans for the South Greensboro Street sidewalk and to seek direction on the next steps toward selecting a preferred alignment.

DEPARTMENT: Planning

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INFORMATION: At the January 21, 2020 Town Council meeting, staff provided the Council with an update on the South Greensboro Street sidewalk project including a schedule for project completion. Design work began in the spring with the development of two conceptual designs for the sidewalk: one along the west side of the street, (the anticipated alignment when the project was scoped) and one along the east side of the street. Both alternatives include the installation of curb and gutter. This initial phase of work also involved the preparation of a capacity analysis for the southern portion of the corridor, from the roundabout at South Green to the Smith Level Road bridge near Public Works Drive, to determine the feasibility of restriping a new cross section with bike lanes as part of NCDOT's future resurfacing project.

The anticipated schedule presented in January was to hold a public meeting in the late summer/early fall to receive input on the two conceptual plans. This timeline was delayed in part to gain a better sense of how best to hold public meetings during the COVID-19 pandemic and in part to provide sufficient time for reviewing agencies to provide comments. The consulting team has also been awaiting review comments from the North Carolina State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) with regard to the potential impacts to the National Register Historic District at the northern end of the corridor. The additional time also provided opportunities for more detailed conversations with the consultant team and NCDOT with regard to the capacity analysis.

It has become apparent during the last couple of months that there may be as much as a \$500,000 cost differential between the two alignments, with the east side being the more expensive option due in part to the need to relocate utility pole and associated right of way acquisition as well as the need for additional retaining walls. Since staff has received correspondence from some neighboring property owners expressing a preference for the east side alignment, it seemed appropriate to provide an update to the Council before moving forward with the public meeting.

Comparison of East/West Alignment Options

- The east side provides a more direct connection from the 203 Project to the offices/shops at South Green

and the transit stop near Merritt Mill Road, without the need to cross South Greensboro Street. The Robertson Bike Path runs through the South Green development providing a link to downtown Carrboro and Chapel Hill.

- The west side provides more direct connections to Old Pittsboro Road, a preferred north-south cycling option, Rocky Brook Mobile Home Park and connections through Whispering Hills to the back of some of the apartments facing NC 54.
- The engineer's estimate is typically prepared at 100-percent design as part of the bid packet. Costs may change +/- as design work continues.
- There is a significant cost differential between the east and west side; additional funding would need to be identified for the Town to proceed with the alignment on the east side of the street
- The installation of a sidewalk on either side of the street will provide a significant improvement in pedestrian infrastructure.
- Sidewalks on both sides of South Greensboro/Smith Level Road provide pedestrian infrastructure within the southern portion of the corridor and on to Frank Porter Graham Elementary School and the future Morgan Creek Greenway and neighborhoods to the south

FISCAL & STAFF IMPACT: There are no fiscal impacts are associated with receiving the update, but costs will be associated with the selection of a preferred alignment for the project.

The current project budget is \$1,706,966: \$1,154,626 of federal funds and \$552,340 of Orange County Transit funds.

The project engineer has prepared a probable cost estimate based on the current 15-percent design: \$1,490,000 (west side) and \$1,980,000 (east side).

Additional funding would need to be identified for the Town to proceed with the alignment on the east side of the street

The Town may be able to use some of the transit funds as match for UPWP direct apportionment to increase the project budget, but it is unlikely that the Town would able to obtain additional funds from NCDOT or transit tax revenues.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends that the Town Council consider the resolution provided (*Attachment A*) receiving the update and providing direction for next steps.