



Memorandum

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Bob Morgan, Interim City Manager

DATE: October 2, 2009

SUBJECT: Items for Your Information

IFYI HIGHLIGHTS

- Contact Center Feedback
- Update on Greensboro Landmark Project
- Greensboro Urban Loop Background Information
- General Contractor Licensing Seminar

Contact Center Feedback

Attached is the weekly report generated by our Contact Center for the week of 9/21/09-09/27/09. (**Attachment 1**)

Update on Greensboro Landmark Project

Attached is a memo from Chris Wilson, Parks & Recreation Department, updating you on the Greensboro Landmark Project. You may recall this partnership among the Parks and Recreation Department, the National Park Service, and the Natural Science Center was designed to stimulate Greensboro's economy through tourism and recreation.

Greensboro Urban Loop Background & Status Information

I've attached information prepared by our Transportation staff describing the purpose and status of the Greensboro Urban Loop.

General Contractor Licensing Seminar

Responding to a request from Council Member T. Diane Bellamy-Small, city staff facilitated a three-hour workshop on October 1st for small businesses on how to become licensed general contractors. The workshop, entitled "*NC General Contracting Licensing Informational Seminar*," was held at the Greensboro Historical Museum and 20 small business owners attended.

The workshop presentations included:

- NC General Contractors Licensing Board's procedures,
- NC DOT's certifications and pre-qualification programs, and
- City of Greensboro's city contracting and bidding opportunities.

ATTACHMENT 1

Public Affairs Department Contact Center Weekly Report Week of 9/21/09- 09/27/09

Contact Center

4732 calls answered this week

Top 5 calls by area

Water Resources

Balance Inquiry – 1361
New customer - 244
Request to cutoff - 101
Pay by phone - 73
High usage - 71

Field Operations

Bulk guidelines - 58
Repair green can - 47
No service green - 42
Appliance pick up - 35
Dead animal pick up - 35

All others

Police/Watch Operations – 375
Warrants - 240
Landfill/Transfer/HHW – 106
Clerk of Courts - 68
Sheriff - 63

Comments

Received 4 comments:

- 1 comment for **Field Operations**

Resident calling to say " I just wanted to call and thank the crew that came to take care of a tree that had fallen from City property in my neighborhood. They all were very polite, efficient and very accommodating. My neighbors and I are very happy with the job they did. They did a GREAT JOB!"

- 1 comment for **Transportation**

McGee and Davie, thinks the pedestrian island we're putting in (at McGee and Davie) is more inconvenient and a danger for driving traffic.

- 1 comment for **Police**

Resident called to add information to an existing accident report, said the reporting officer didn't bother to take down her side of the story. She was very disappointed about this kind of service, said that she pays taxes for their services and she thinks he should have done a better job. She requested to be transferred to someone who could help her add info to the report.

- 1 comment for **Water Resources**

Resident can't believe that we have billing and availability charges, wants us to go paperless, everyone else has!

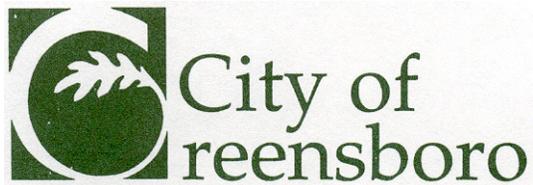
Overall

Call volumes overall were light last week, although the number of police related calls continues to climb.

Late this week the Contact Center expects to receive our one millionth call to 373-CITY since we opened 5 years ago. In those million calls, we have:

- Helped over 216,000 people to understand their water bills.
- Handled questions about loose leaf collection for 8300 people.
- Answered questions about our parks for 25,450 callers.
- Directed over 9500 people to the correct place for the Hazardous Household Waste.
- Helped repair over 2500 potholes.
- Requested that nearly 6600 new residents receive their trash containers in their new homes.

We are proud of this achievement and look forward to continuing our service to Greensboro.



Date: September 29, 2009

To: Robert Morgan, Interim City Manager
Dr. Anthony Wade, Interim Parks and Recreation Director

From: Chris Wilson, Parks, Gardens, and Program Support Manager

Subject: Greensboro Landmark Project

Last year the Parks and Recreation Department, the National Park Service, and the Natural Science Center unveiled plans for the Greensboro Landmark Project. This initiative marked part of an overall campaign to stimulate Greensboro's economy through tourism and recreation. The conceptual plan calls for the physical connection of some of Greensboro's most visited attractions, the Natural Science Center, Guilford Courthouse Military Park, Country Park, Tannenbaum Park, and Jaycee Park. The project will also yield a level of operational cooperation with one facility promoting another and providing a full array of visitor experiences in the areas of science, education, and recreation. We believe this project will increase visitation to Greensboro and potentially spur additional area development as a result of its synergy.

I am pleased to report the following progress: This summer a tram was put in operation to route through a portion of Country Park and the Military Park with scheduled historic interpretive tours. A connector road has been identified between the Natural Science Center and Country Park which we hope to have paved in the coming months. This road will allow easier access for groups who utilize both facilities. The City has turned over operational management of Tannenbaum Park to the Federal Government's National Park Service. The Park Service now offers historical programming relative to the Revolutionary War and colonial life ways. A new visitor center is being planned for the operation of the adjoined sites. The Natural Science Center, an accredited zoo and museum making it one of a kind in North Carolina, has reached a new benchmark for tourism and continues to seek out improvements and innovations for its facilities. Staff recommended a master plan be produced for the joint facility consortium. We believe we have identified funding for such a master plan and will seek to begin this process as soon as possible.

The Greensboro Parks and Recreation Department continues to seek catalyst projects and efforts to support our local economy. This project in particular demonstrates a strong willingness and continued desire to form collaborative efforts for the betterment of our community

Greensboro Urban Loop Background & Status Information

History

The concept of the Urban Loop has been in the Greensboro Urban Area Thoroughfare Plan since the mid 1960's. The City has always had a well developed system of radial roadways radiating out from the central core. The Urban Loop provides a high capacity circumferential roadway which is needed to move traffic in the area. The need for the Urban Loop continues to increase as the city continues to grow and daily trip origins and destinations become more dispersed throughout the area. The area will not realize the maximum economic support and traffic handling capacity if any one section of the Urban Loop is not constructed.

Traffic

Analyses of the area's traffic demand model indicate that total vehicle miles traveled in the urban area will remain about the same with or without the Urban Loop, however; vehicle hours traveled are reduced significantly with the Urban Loop in place. The reduction in vehicle hours traveled will result in reduced fuel consumption, reduced air pollution, and reduced user costs. Reduced traffic congestion and improved roadway connections will also enhance economic develop opportunities in the Greensboro area.

Environment

The environmental impact documents prepared for the Urban Loop examined current and future traffic volumes of the area's roadway network with and without the Urban Loop. The social, economic and environmental consequences of introducing this major freeway facility were also examined. The final location of the Urban Loop was determined based on minimizing impacts to the human and natural environment while meeting the needs for the project.

During the development of the environmental impact statements and continuing through to the completion of construction a host of Federal and State agencies review, approve and issue permits; these agencies are the Federal Highway Administration, US Army Corps of Engineers, US Environmental Protection Agency, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and the divisions of the NC Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

Noise Wall Determination

Federal requirements, reflected in NCDOT's Highway Noise Abatement Policy, requires the examination of noise impacts with major highway projects. Housing, schools, churches and parks built adjacent to a project before the Date of Public Knowledge are eligible for consideration. A noise model analysis program, approved by the Federal Highway Administration, determines the number of houses, schools, churches and parks adjacent to a project that would benefit from a noise wall. Noise wall locations are determined via cost benefit analysis. A noise wall is constructed if the cost of a wall is \$35,000 or less for each benefited receptor. A benefited receptor is a house, church, school, or park where the highway noise level would be reduced by 5 decibels if the noise wall were constructed. Developments built after the date of public knowledge are not eligible for noise walls.

Greensboro Urban Loop Background & Status Information

Date of Public Knowledge

The Date of Public Knowledge is the official date of when a project is formally presented to the public and the closing of the environmental document. NCDOT uses the date of a project's public hearing as the Date of Public Knowledge.

Right-of-Way

Right-of-way acquisition is a major portion of the total project cost, especially in the Greensboro urban area where attractive locations for businesses and homes exist. To date along the Urban Loop from Bryan Boulevard to US 29 the State, City and County have acquired property for the Urban Loop through early acquisition by NCDOT and from dedication of right-of-way by developers through the land development process. The effort to date has placed approximately 60% of needed right-of-way into public ownership.

Status

There are three sections of the Urban Loop remaining to be constructed:

1. U-2524C/D from Bryan Boulevard to Lawndale Drive. Date of Public Knowledge is February 15, 1996. Estimated cost is \$230,697,000. Construction plans are complete. Approximately 70% of right-of-way has been acquired.
2. U-2525B from US 70 to US 29. Construction plans are complete. Date of Public Knowledge is May 11, 1995. Estimated cost is \$135,512,000. 50% of right-of-way has been acquired.
3. U-2525C from US 29 to Lawndale Drive. Date of Public Knowledge is May 11, 1995. Estimated cost is \$115,320,000. Roadway location established, construction plans to be complete by mid to late 2010. Approximately 60% of right-of-way has been acquired.

Statewide, new Urban Loop right-of-way acquisition and construction schedules are on hold for reconsideration. NCDOT is currently developing an objective, analytical process to prioritize all of the remaining Urban Loop projects in North Carolina. By Spring 2010 NCDOT is expected to release the new Urban Loop funding schedule.

Move the Loop?

To significantly change the location and scope of the project would require new environmental and design studies. This process would require 20+ years to complete, and possibly lead to an unviable project and/or a project that fails to secure needed approvals from Federal Highway or environmental permitting officials.

Additionally to relocate the project north of the lakes would create substantial impacts, would significantly increase the overall project cost, and be less effective in serving area traffic demand.