

Memorandum

TO: Mayor and City Council
FROM: Bob Morgan, Interim City Manager
DATE: August 28, 2009
SUBJECT: Items for Your Information

- IFYI HIGHLIGHTS**
- Update on Request to Armor Ditches near Cove Creek Gardens and GTA Bus Shelter
 - Downtown Development Ordinance
 - South Elm Street Redevelopment Project
 - Recommended Changes to City’s Non-Profit Financial Policy
 - “At Your Service” Tear-off Comment Sheet
 - Accelerated Bond Projects

Update on Requests to Armor Ditches near Cove Creek Gardens and GTA Bus Shelter

The Field Operations Department will proceed with the following improvements:

- Installation of 24-feet of pipe north of the Cove Creek Gardens’ driveway on the west side of Summit Avenue. This area will be covered with gravel, which will be adequate to address stormwater runoff and provide a safer area for people to board buses at the Greensboro Transit Authority bus stop.
- Re-grade, re-seed and straw the ditch on the east side of Summit and the south side of Holders Road.

The final decision to locate a bus shelter near Cove Creek Gardens will be made by the Greensboro Transit Authority Board. The GTA Board recently decided to postpone a final decision about this bus shelter until they are able to determine if the improvements planned near the bus stop will generate increased ridership at the location. GTA will update the staff from Cove Creek Gardens when a decision is made.

Update on the Downtown Development Ordinance

On Tuesday, August 25, the City hosted a public meeting on the proposed *Downtown Design & Compatibility Manual* at the Greensboro Cultural Center. Downtown property owners were invited to the meeting, as well as, downtown advocates, interest groups and representatives from nearby neighborhoods. At the meeting, City staff presented information about the vision, process and content of the *Design Manual* and proposed changes. Following the presentation, meeting participants provided comments and suggestions. Staff is reviewing these comments, and continues to meet with individuals and groups to solicit feedback. Additionally, the *Design Manual* will be withdrawn from the Zoning Commission’s September agenda to allow time for additional dialogue with the community.

The proposed *Design Manual* seeks to guide future development in downtown by encouraging high quality design and infill development as stated in Greensboro’s adopted comprehensive plan, *Connections 2025*. By providing a flexible framework, the *Manual* strives to enhance the city’s urban character, promote a variety of designs and maintain long-term compatibility. A copy of the *Design Manual* may be viewed at the City’s website: <http://www.greensboro-nc.gov/downtowndesign>. For more information, contact Mary Sertell, Planning Department, at 373.4769.

Update on the South Elm Street Redevelopment Project

The 12-acre South Elm Street Redevelopment site is located just south of Greensboro's downtown core at the intersection of Elm and Lee Streets. South Elm Street Redevelopment will reconnect downtown to surrounding neighborhoods. Since the 2007 approval of the South Elm Street Redevelopment Plan, the acquisition, relocation, and demolition phases of the project have been completed by the Redevelopment Commission. We are now entering the environmental cleanup, or remediation, phase of the project.

A Remedial Action Plan, which details how remediation activities will be carried out on the site, has been approved by NCDENR. Through a public procurement process, Triangle Grading and Paving, Inc. has been hired by the City to conduct remediation activities. Triangle is scheduled to begin work the week of August 30th with completion estimated for mid-November. The \$1.1 million contract is being funded through HUD and EPA grants and loans.

In accordance with city policy and federal requirements, a Community Involvement Plan has been developed, which includes a public meeting schedule, a plain language remediation fact sheet, and creation of a 'Learning Lab'. For details, please refer to **ATTACHMENT 1** (*Memo from Dan Curry to Andy Scott*).

Recommended Changes to City's Non-Profit Financial Policy

City staff has reviewed the City's current Non-profit Financial Policy, and **offers the following changes for Council's consideration:**

1. The City's Non-Profit Audit Policy shall apply to all agencies receiving grants and/or loans from the City.
2. Grants and loans provided by the City to any agency or entity totaling \$5,000 or less during any fiscal year shall not require an external financial audit.
3. Non-profit agencies and entities receiving grants or loans from the City of less than \$5,000 shall provide either the agency's external audit or alternative financial information that appears reasonable and transparent and is verifiable by the City's normal monitoring procedures.

A formal item will be brought to Council for consideration. For more information, please refer to **ATTACHMENT 2** (*Memo to Andy Scott, Acting Assistant City Manager*).

Update: Accelerated Bond Projects

Please review the attached memo from Rick, Lusk, Finance Director regarding the authorization of the General Obligation Bonds and 2009 Accelerated Bond Projects (**Attachment 3**).

“At Your Service” Tear-off Comment Sheet

Council asked city staff to create a tear-off comment sheet in our monthly “*At Your Service*” publication to encourage residents to give us their thoughts and input regarding City government services. This will be done in the next issue that goes to print, which will be mailed with water & sewer bills beginning October 1. Responses will be compiled and shared with City Council.

An existing source of resident feedback is the weekly report generated by our Contact Center. I have attached a copy of the report for the Week of 8/17/09- 08/23/09. **(Attachment 4)**

In addition to these options for soliciting feedback, staff is exploring use of the National Citizen Survey, an instrument provided by ICMA and the National Research Center, Inc., as an alternative to the more expensive survey that we have used in the past and which has not been done since 2001 due to budget constraints. The National Citizen Survey, which has a base price of \$9,900 (compared to approximately \$68,000 for the last survey) is now used by local governments in thirty states and would allow us to compare our results to those of other municipalities for benchmarking. A formal staff recommendation will be brought before the Council for consideration.

ATTACHMENT 1



MEMO

Date: August 26, 2009
To: Andy Scott
From: Dan Curry
RE: South Elm Street Redevelopment Plan – Update and Status

Background

The 12-acre South Elm Street Redevelopment site is located just south of Greensboro’s downtown core at the intersection of Elm and Lee Streets. South Elm Street redevelopment will reconnect downtown to surrounding neighborhoods. Since the 2007 approval of the South Elm Street Redevelopment Plan, the acquisition, relocation, and demolition phases of the project have been completed by the Redevelopment Commission. We are now entering the environmental cleanup or remediation phase of the project.

Current Status

Remediation: A Remedial Action Plan, which details how remediation activities will be carried out on the site, has been approved by NCDENR. Through a public procurement process, Triangle Grading and Paving, Inc. has been hired by the City to conduct remediation activities. Triangle is scheduled to begin work the week of August 30th with completion estimated for mid-November. The \$1.1 million contract is being funded through HUD and EPA grants and loans.

Community Involvement: In accordance with city policy and federal requirements, a Community Involvement Plan has been developed, which includes a public meeting schedule, a plain language remediation fact sheet, and creation of a ‘Learning Lab’. The first of three public information meetings will be held on August 31st for community leaders from downtown, Ole Asheboro, Arlington Park, Warnersville, Asheboro Square, Southside, Gorrell Street, St. James I and Hampton Homes. Neighborhood leaders have been invited to attend to serve as a primary means of communication with their neighborhoods. The next two meetings will be broadly advertised, so that everyone will have an opportunity to comment and ask questions directly.

The Learning Lab is intended to provide students from grade school through university a chance to be a part of this redevelopment project. A UNCG senior will be coordinating the Lab as an independent study project. Potential activities and events could include a traveling display, presentations at grade schools, and an essay contest.

Next Steps

A Request for Qualifications/Proposals (RFQ/P) for a Master Developer will be offered before the end of the current calendar year. An advisory group for developer selection will be formed to assist the Redevelopment Commission in the review of development proposals.

ATTACHMENT 2

MEMORANDUM

TO: Andy Scott, Acting Assistant City Manager
FROM: Len Lucas, Internal Audit Division
SUBJECT: Non-Profit Financial Policy
DATE: August 25, 2009

At the July 22, 2009 City Council Meeting, Council asked staff to review the City's current non-profit audit policy and recommend any changes to improve accountability and transparency. After reviewing the current policy, City staff offers the following recommendations for Council's consideration:

1. The Non-Profit Audit Policy shall apply to **all** agencies receiving grants and/or loans from the City.
2. Grants and loans provided by the City to any agency or entity **totaling \$5,000 or less during any fiscal year shall not require an external financial audit.**
3. Non-profit agencies and entities receiving grants or loans from the City of less than \$5,000 shall provide **either the agency's external audit or alternative financial information that appears reasonable and transparent and is verifiable by the City's normal monitoring procedures.**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION: *On February 17, 2004, the Greensboro City Council adopted a policy for certain agencies or entities that receive grants or loans from the City of Greensboro. That policy states that all funding received adhere to the following requirements regarding financial information:*

1. *An external audit from a CPA firm must be submitted within 90-days of the fiscal year-end of the entity.*
2. *The financial statements should be prepared under the accrual basis which is generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP).*
3. *Any Management Letters issued with these financials shall be submitted to the City of Greensboro within 90-days of their fiscal year-end.*
4. *If no Management Letters are issued a letter from the CPA firm shall be submitted to the City of Greensboro on its Letterhead stating that no management letters were issued.*

ATTACHMENT 3

MEMORANDUM

Date: August 27, 2009
To: Bob Morgan, Interim City Manager
From: Rick Lusk, Finance Director
Subject: Authorized General Obligation Bonds and 2009 Accelerated Bond Projects

The City currently has \$210 million in Authorized but Unissued General Obligation (GO) Bonds from voter referendums held in 2000, 2006 and 2008. The proposed debt issue schedule calls for issuing those GO bonds, as follows:

FY 2010-11	\$86,000,000
FY 2011-12	\$42,000,000
FY 2013-14	\$42,000,000
FY 2015-16	\$40,000,000

Attached is a list of bond projects totaling \$63,383,641 that will begin in the current year and will be financed by short-term bond anticipation notes. The notes will be paid off from the proceeds of the FY 2010-11 bond issue of \$86,000,000 noted above. The bond projects of approximately \$63,384,000 being accelerated include the projects authorized at the June 16 City Council Budget Work Session plus projects subsequently authorized, the Aquatic Center and Jonesboro/Scott Park.

Of the approximately \$63,384,000 in bond projects to be accelerated, \$34,219,000 of that amount has been appropriated and is included in bond funds established following the 2000 and 2006 bond referenda. Appropriations for the balance of \$29,165,000 in projects to be accelerated need to be established. The September 1, 2009 City Council agenda includes budget ordinances establishing appropriations for \$153,500,000 in bond projects approved by voters November 2008, which includes appropriations for the \$29,165,000 in bond projects that will be funded in FY 09-10 and \$124,335,000 in Street Improvement Projects to be funded from bonds to be issued between 2010 and 2016.

Subsequent to the adoption of the budget ordinances on September 1, 2009, additional actions will need to be taken by City Council to approve the bond anticipation note issue and any authorized two-thirds bond issue. We expect to submit those items to City Council in October.

List of Accelerated Bond Projects (Updated as of 9-1-09)

As directed by City Council, departments were asked to submit projects that could be accelerated in order to take advantage of the favorable bond and construction markets brought about by the economic downturn. Departments were directed to find projects that could be bid and/or under construction within six months and that did not have associated increases in operating expenditures. Additional projects that also stood to benefit from cheaper construction prices despite requiring additional operating expenditures in FY 10-11 & FY 11-12 were also added to the list, as well as additional projects approved by Council, including the Aquatic Center and Jonesboro/Scott Park.

Fire

Urban Loop/85/40 Fire Station	\$3,400,000	No Operating Impact
Total - \$3,400,000		

Housing and Community Development

Foreclosure Prevention	\$250,000	No Operating Impact
Down Payment Assistance	\$250,000	No Operating Impact
Revolving Loan Funds – Energy Efficiency in Affordable Rental Units	\$500,000	No Operating Impact
Total - \$1,000,000		

Neighborhood Redevelopment

Jonesboro/Scott Park Plan - EMSDC	\$500,000	No Operating Impact
Total - \$500,000		

Transportation

Battleground/Benjamin/Cone Intersection Improvements - Property	\$750,000	No Operating Impact
Battleground/New Garden Intersection Improvements – Property	\$280,000	No Operating Impact
Battleground / Westridge Intersection Improvements – Property	\$400,000	No Operating Impact
Battleground Rail Trail – Construction	\$1,845,675	No Operating Impact
Church Street Phase I – Property	\$950,000	No Operating Impact
Church Street Phase II – Design	\$290,000	No Operating Impact
Cone Boulevard & Nealtown Road Extension – Property	\$400,000	No Operating Impact
Downtown Greenway – Design and Construction	\$1,130,000	No Operating Impact
Florida Street and Randolph – Construction	\$309,966	No Operating Impact
Friendway Drive – Property	\$30,000	No Operating Impact
High Point Road – Design	\$400,000	No Operating Impact
Hornaday Road Extension – Construction	\$4,900,000	No Operating Impact
Horsepen Creek – Design	\$800,000	No Operating Impact
Jolson Street – Construction	\$121,000	No Operating Impact

W. Market Street / College Road – Property	\$1,000,000	No Operating Impact
Merritt Drive / High Point Road – Property	\$100,000	No Operating Impact
New Garden Road – Phase II - Property and Construction	\$4,718,000	No Operating Impact
Street Resurfacing – Construction	\$3,500,000	No Operating Impact
Sidewalks – Construction	\$1,250,000	No Operating Impact
Tankersly Drive and Church Street – Property and Construction	\$700,000	No Operating Impact
Various Bond Projects – Design	\$370,000	No Operating Impact
Wendover Avenue and Norwalk Intersection Improvements - Property	\$70,000	No Operating Impact
Wendover and Clifton Intersection – Property and Construction	\$850,000	No Operating Impact

Total - \$25,164,641

Parks and Recreation

Smith Senior Center Renovations	\$200,000	No Operating Impact
Pool Repairs/Grimsley Pool Upgrade	\$649,425	No Operating Impact
Land Acquisition	\$2,872,000	No Operating Impact
Neighborhood Park Renovations	\$310,575	No Operating Impact
Gateway Gardens Phase II	\$1,000,000	No Operating Impact
Artificial Turf Installation at Hester Park	\$2,640,000	No Operating Impact
Restroom at Gillespie Golf Course	\$200,000	No Operating Impact

Total - \$7,872,000

Parks and Recreation

Keeley Park	\$2,653,963	Operating in FY 10-11: \$276,000
Southwest Recreation Center	\$3,946,037	Operating in FY 10-11: \$250,000
Skate Park	\$575,000	Operating Date TBD: \$10,000
Barber Park Phase II	\$3,000,000	Operating in FY 10-11: \$126,050
Aquatic Center	\$12,000,000	Operating in FY 10-11: Costs TBD

Total - \$22,175,000

Libraries

Lake Jeanette Branch Library	\$3,572,000	Operating in FY 11-12: \$527,902
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Total - \$3,572,000

Grand Total - \$63,683,641

ATTACHMENT 4

Public Affairs Department - Contact Center Weekly Report Week of 8/17/09- 08/23/09

Contact Center

5447 calls answered this week

Top 5 calls by area

Water Resources

Balance Inquiry – 1575
New customer - 223
Request to cut off - 132
Payment extension - 125
Same day cut on - 108

Field Operations

Bulk guidelines - 67
Repair green can - 84
No service green - 42
Appliance pick up - 39
No service brown - 30

All others

Police/Watch Operations – 307
Warrants - 186
Landfill/Transfer/HHW – 117
Clerk of Court - 94
Online Payments - 70

Comments:

For Field Operations:

1. Thank you comment for the yardwaste crew at location; resident is very pleased with the job you do for the city.

For Water Resources

1. Caller thinks she should have a note on her door "water will be cut off today for non-payment."
2. Resident would like the city to change all documents regarding water to read "City Water Services" not city services statement.
3. Email from resident: *"Being in Greensboro on a daily basis, watching all the watering going on, just wondering if ANY of you gov't leeches ever get off your asses and look at the lakes--- they're DRY!! Why does it take you IDIOTS so long to start conserving---this has been coming for months. Damn, does NOBODY have any common sense!?? Get out of your a/c office, off your fat ass, and do some leg work, and be PROactive. This ain't rocket science. I know, I get an auto-response that you appreciate my email, and you'll get back in touch. B.S. The whole bunch of you GSO gov't FOOLS are too lazy! But you ARE fun to watch---should have your own sit-com!"*
4. Customer could not turn on water without payment after 5:00 p.m. because Water Office was closed. Customer has an issue with due date on statement into the future but water is off.

Overall

Call volumes went up slightly from last week. It was a heavy week for water resources, with a higher volume than normal of residents who were cut off for service for unpaid bills. Otherwise, calls were the normal mix for the Contact Center.