

## TRAFFIC & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

May 10, 2022

A hybrid meeting of the Traffic & Transportation Committee was held this date beginning at 3:33 p.m., at City Hall and by video conference.

Notice of this meeting was sent to all local news media.

### PRESENT

**Committee Members:** Councilmember Brady (Chair), Councilmember Seekings (Vice Chair), Councilmember Gregg, Councilmember Parker (joined @ 3:37 p.m.), and Mayor Tecklenburg (joined @ 3:38 p.m.)

**Also Present:** Andrea Derungs, Velvett Simmons, Robert Somerville, Michael Mathis, Edmund Most, Jason Kronsberg, Julia Copeland, Mallary Scheer, Magalie Creech, Melissa Cruthirds, Rick Jerue, Stephen Maddy, Councilmember Shahid

#### 1. Invocation

The meeting was opened with a moment of silence led by Councilmember Brady.

#### 2. Approval of Minutes

On a motion of Councilmember Seekings, seconded by Councilmember Gregg, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes from the April 12, 2022 meeting.

#### 3. Presentation – Ashley River Crossing (ARC) Bike and Pedestrian Bridge project

Mr. Most said the community had really embraced the project as a link to the West Ashley Greenway and that it would provide safety, sustainability, and accessibility benefits. He showed an image of the proposed alignment along the existing southern bridge with tie-ins at Lockwood Drive and Folly Road. He then showed a rendering of the proposed bridge with a cable-stay and bobtail swing in the middle, which would allow for boat access. He noted that the project would also lead to further links to the Greenway and additional improvements along Folly Road, Lockwood Drive, and Wappoo Road. He said the draft RFH and grant agreement were currently under review by the FHWA. Once that had been reviewed, they would release it to the industry. There were 2 design-build teams prequalified to review it. After those teams reviewed it, they would release the final RFP. They would, hopefully, have permits in hand by the summer and meet the BUILD Grant obligation date in September. By March 2023, they would award a design-build contract. He said they were using a risk-based cost estimate, which included all the escalation factors for materials, so that they would have a reasonable idea for funding. He said they had retained an additional \$14 million from FHWA and DOT, which was coming through BCDCOG. To cover the remaining cost, they were requesting an additional \$1 million from the City.

Councilmember Parker asked how much money had already been spent on the project. Mr. Most said \$1.3 million of a \$2 million contract had been spent to contract a project team to prepare 30% level documents. Mayor Tecklenburg pointed out that those funds were counted towards the City's match. Mr. Most said that, for grants like these, the Federal Government liked the match money to be spent

before the grant funds were spent. Councilmember Seekings said the major thing that had changed since the last presentation was the funding. The last time Mr. Most had presented, they were trying to scale back the size of the bridge so that they could meet the budget, which had been about \$10 million less at that time. Between the Mayor, Ron Mitchum of BCDCOG, Secretary Hall of the DOT, and others, an additional \$14 million was put forth, none of which was City money. He said it had been an extraordinary feat and that it would be a marquee project for the City. Mayor Tecklenburg thanked Councilmember Seekings for the acknowledgement. He said the groundwork had been laid in January when he visited Secretary Buttigieg in D.C. Folks up there had been very supportive of the project, and it just so happened that the following week he had had a meeting with Secretary Hall in Columbia. He said she had been fully supportive of maintaining the full size of the bridge, not scaling it back, and that it was her leadership that helped get it on BCDCOG's agenda. He mentioned that folks in D.C. asked them to apply for some unused grant funds, which could mean another \$2-3 million in funding. However, he said they wouldn't know the final price tag until it was designed, engineered, and put out for bid. He said FHWA and DOT were just waiting for Council's resolution so that they could move forward with an expedited review of the submission.

#### **4. Presentation – CARTA – Transit and Bus Stop Design Guidelines**

Mr. Dodson said the CARTA system had 860 stops, 25 routes, downtown shuttles, an on-demand service, Tel-A-Ride, and the Lowcountry Rapid Transit, which was in development. The transit and bus stop design guidelines had been developed over the last year and a half and had been kick started by the ordinance the City put together in 2019. Forty-one percent of pad stops, 41% of bench stops, and 23% of shelter stops had been improved as a result of the ordinance, and they had all been developer funded. He said the guidelines were not meant to override anything that a municipality had in place, they were meant to complement existing ordinances. He said the guidelines had been written with different audiences in mind, such as the community, BCDCOG/CARTA staff, other agency staff, and developers. For example, for community members, the guidelines included processes for how to get updates/adjustments made to stops and whom they could contact for that information. For staff members, it included images that detailed the elements for different stop types. He noted they had worked with area municipalities, SCDOT, the County, and community members, such as Charleston Moves and MUSC, to develop the guidelines and that a lot of technical work had gone into it, as well. They had looked into existing area plans and various laws that would impact how stops were developed. The guidelines also included design principles, bus stop placement, bus stop typologies and amenities, and a breakdown of the costs associated with the implementation of new stops.

Councilmember Parker asked how the City should go about improving existing structures. Mr. Dodson said the guidelines were written from a transit standpoint and were meant to complement City policies, not override anything. Councilmember Parker asked specifically how they could improve bus stops on James Island. Mr. Dodson said that was a conversation they could have directly. Ultimately, there were bus stop prioritizations that would take into account various elements and be scored according to a rubric. They were currently working on the formulation of that. Councilmember Parker asked when that would be complete. Mr. Dodson said hopefully in the fall. Councilmember Seekings said the two most important things for stops were space and money. To get the full stop with shelter, it was around \$40,000. He said if there were specific stops she had in mind for improvements, she should let CARTA

know. Councilmember Brady asked if, in response to rapid growth, CARTA would be expanding their services to Johns Island. Mr. Dodson said they didn't have a set timeline for that. Councilmember Seekings said they clearly needed to get service out there, but one of the challenges they had with adding services was they didn't want to take away existing routes. Equipment was also a big cost factor. He said 2 or 3 years ago, they doubled the frequency of Route 31 on James Island, and the ridership went through the roof, so they knew they needed to get out there sooner than later.

#### **5. Sanders Road – Traffic Signal and Sidewalk Project updates**

Mr. Mathis said Charleston County was currently working on the traffic signal at Sanders Road and Bees Ferry Road. They were waiting on the mast arms and decorative signal poles to be delivered, which should arrive in October, and then, hopefully, the signal would be completely constructed by the end of 2022. He said the Sanders Road sidewalk project, which would connect Halfshell Lane to C.E. Williams Middle School, was going through the last round of DOT comments and would, hopefully, be permitted soon. It would be a 90-120 day construction period. Councilmember Brady asked when the completion date for that would be. Mr. Mathis said it was hard to tell since they were having issues with concrete pipes but probably by the end of 2022.

Having no further business, the Committee adjourned at 4:02 p.m.

Andrea Derungs  
Clerk of Council's Office