



September 24, 2012

AGENDA ITEM 6 C

MONROE STREET ACCESS MANAGEMENT AND LAKE ELLA IMPLEMENTATION STUDY – WORK ORDER REQUEST AND PROJECT UPDATE

REQUESTED BY: CRTPA Staff

TYPE OF ITEM: Discussion

STATEMENT OF ISSUE

Staff is seeking approval of a resolution (*Attachment 1*) which would provide a work order to the consultant conducting the Monroe Street Access Management and Lake Ella Implementation Study to develop of a traffic signal warrant study near Lake Ella on Monroe Street.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Option 1: Approve by resolution a work order to conduct a traffic signal warrant study (\$34,500) and approve a related contract time extension (to March 31, 2013) to the contract for the Monroe Street Access Management and Lake Ella Implementation Study.

HISTORY AND ANALYSIS

At the January 23, 2012 CRTPA Board meeting, the Monroe Street Access Management and Lake Ella Implementation Study was formally kicked off. As project development activities have proceeded, the CRTPA has received requests to investigate the need for a traffic signal at Lake Ella Drive (North)/Lake Ella Publix Plaza and/or Legion Street/On The Border intersection. To that end, a traffic signal warrant study is proposed to be developed by the project consultant.

Completion of a traffic signal warrant study will assist with development of the proposed median recommendations which seek to address pedestrian and vehicular safety issues along this segment of the corridor near Lake Ella. Currently, the project is anticipated to be completed by October 24, 2012; however, contingent upon Board approval of the proposed work order, the study's completion date is proposed to be extended to March 31, 2013 to ensure completion of the study.

The work order to conduct the signal warrant study involves an analysis of the above two intersection locations and will result in development of a technical memorandum containing the findings of the signal warrant analysis. The traffic signal warrant study analysis is estimated to cost \$34,500.

PROJECT BACKGROUND:

The identification of improvements to the Monroe Street corridor in Tallahassee has been an agency focus of the Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency (CRTPA) for a number of years. This focus includes:

- North Monroe Street Corridor Management Study, approved by the Tallahassee-Leon County MPO in 1999, recommended the installation of a median at Lake Ella to provide pedestrians a mid-block refuge;
- Tallahassee-Leon Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, adopted by the Tallahassee-Leon County MPO in 2004, identifying North Monroe Street at Lake Ella as a “pedestrian emphasis intersection”;
- CRTPA Transportation Systems Management (TSM) Priority Project List designation in 2009 & 2010 of pedestrian safety improvements on N. Monroe at Lake Ella as the agency’s number one TSM priority (funding for the installation of medians, scheduled to be constructed in 2015, was ultimately identified in 2010 and is part of the study associated with this agenda item);
- North Monroe Street Design and Safety Study, accepted by the CRTPA in September 2010, was developed for the agency by Florida State University Department of Urban and Regional Planning Master’s students and provides student recommendations/ideas for the North Monroe corridor;
- E. Sixth Avenue Sidewalk Project, identified for funding in 2010, this project was included in the agency’s Regional Mobility Plan and will improve pedestrian connectivity between Monroe Street and Gadsden Street (scheduled to be constructed in 2016).

In addition to the CRTPA, other transportation partners and agencies have identified projects and initiatives in the Monroe Street corridor, these include:

- Sense of Place initiatives (Midtown and Monroe-Adams) initiated in 2010 and 2011 by the Tallahassee-Leon County Planning Department include the Monroe corridor and identify support for improvements to facilitate increased pedestrian safety and economic development;
- Frenchtown/Southside Redevelopment Area and Downtown Redevelopment Area are both located along part of the Monroe corridor. The community redevelopment areas have funded improvements in the corridor including facade, streetscape and sidewalk improvements;
- Downtown Tallahassee Pedestrian Connectivity Plan was prepared for the Downtown Improvement Authority and completed in 2005. The plan identifies proposed improvements in downtown Tallahassee, including proposed medians for a portion Monroe Street in downtown Tallahassee where right-of-way is sufficient.

The Monroe Street Access Management and Lake Ella Implementation Study will build upon the above Monroe corridor efforts through development of a comprehensive assessment to address vehicular and pedestrian safety. As the study's name implies, the Monroe Street Access Management and Lake Ella Implementation Study contains two components.

- The first component involves a study of the entire Monroe Street corridor from John Knox Road (in the north) to just south of Magnolia Drive. The purpose of the study is to develop an initial access management strategy for the corridor that will include a strategy for the ultimate installation of medians.
- The second project ("Lake Ella Implementation Study") will focus on the Lake Ella portion of North Monroe Street (Tharpe Street to E. Seventh Avenue). As members will recall, funding for the installation of medians along this segment of the roadway is identified in the CRTPA's FY 2012 – FY 2016 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). This portion of the study will result in the completion of the TIP project's first funded phase ("Planning Study") and will provide detailed access recommendations from which the funded project can proceed to its next phase (design). Funds for the design of this project are programmed in FY 2013 (\$172, 200); construction funds are programmed for FY 2015 (\$1,000,050).

Benefits of access management, which include the installation of medians, include:

- Safety – Improved pedestrian safety due to reduced automobile/pedestrian conflicts; improved automobile safety (fewer and less severe accidents) as a result of reduced vehicular conflicts;
- Efficiency – Higher corridor level of service for automobiles; less stop and go traffic;
- Aesthetics – Access management results in less asphalt and more attractive corridors. The installation of medians allows for the addition of increased landscaping along the corridor. With regards to Monroe Street, a more attractive corridor assists with furthering the redevelopment efforts currently occurring along the corridor.

A key aspect of the study involves public involvement. Three (3) public meetings associated with the project are scheduled to be conducted (detailed below under "PUBLIC MEETINGS"). Furthermore, the Monroe Street Access Management and Lake Ella Study will be guided by a project team that will include the agency's transportation partners and corridor stakeholders.

Ultimately, the study will result in development of a corridor action plan that will include strategies and opportunities for proceeding forward with access management recommendations for the Monroe Street corridor. With regards to the Lake Ella portion of the study, the foundation to proceed forward with the next funded phase (design) of the median implementation project will be developed including the development of detailed access recommendations.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

Two (2) of the three (3) planned public meetings have been conducted for the project. The first meeting occurred on March 6, 2012 at Tallahassee City Hall Commission Chambers. A total of forty-one (41) people signed in at this meeting and ten (10) written comments were received. The comments included concerns related to maintaining left turn access into businesses, support for pedestrian safety improvements (including a pedestrian refuge) and as well as support for landscaping any constructed medians. The second public meeting was held on Thursday, June 28, 2012 (5 pm – 7 pm) at Tallahassee City Hall Chambers and was attended by twenty-five (25) people.

Additionally, two (2) small group public meetings (focused on the North Monroe/Lake Ella and South Monroe segments of the Monroe Street corridor) occurred on May 16 & May 17, 2012, respectively. Invitations to attend these focused meetings were sent to the attendees of the March 6 public meeting who expressed interest in participating in a more refined segment specific discussion.

PROJECT WEBPAGE

A project webpage (http://www.crtpa.org/Monroe_Median_Project.html) was created in March to provide project information and resources. The webpage provides project information related to upcoming meetings as well as a source for the presentations and documentation from previous meetings. The page also contains a comments link from which citizens can leave comments or questions about the study. Furthermore, resources related to access management including links to information about its impact on corridor businesses is provided.

PROJECT TEAM

To date, the project team that is guiding the Monroe Street project has met five (5) times. The team is comprised of the CRTPA's transportation partners and includes representation from the Midtown Merchants Association, Downtown Improvement Authority, City of Tallahassee Economic and Community Development, Lafayette Park Neighborhood Association, Levy Park Neighborhood Association, Florida Department of Transportation, Knight Creative Communities, Tallahassee Public Works Department and the Tallahassee-Leon County Planning Department.

NEXT STEPS

Upon approval of the recommended action, the project consultant will initiate development of the traffic signal warrant study as part of the Monroe Street Access Management and Lake Ella Implementation Study. The third and last public meeting is anticipated to be conducted this fall with the project scheduled to be subsequently presented to the CRTPA Board for approval.

OPTIONS

Option 1: Approve by resolution a work order to conduct a traffic signal warrant study (\$34,500) and approve a related contract time extension (to March 31, 2013) to the contract for the Monroe Street Access Management and Lake Ella Implementation Study.
(RECOMMENDED)

Option 2: Provide other direction.

ATTACHMENT

Attachment 1: Resolution 2012-9-6C



RESOLUTION 2012-9-6C

A RESOLUTION of the Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency, hereby referred to as the CRTPA, authorizing the Chair to execute and Executive Director to administer a Work Order between the CRTPA and Reynolds, Smith and Hills, Inc., hereby referred to as RS&H, for services to complete the project below.

WHEREAS, CRTPA is the designated metropolitan planning organization for Florida's capital region, and in support of its mission, CRTPA desires to use Urban Attributable (SU) funds to contract with a General Planning Consultant or Consultants that will, among other things, maintain required inventory data, support the Bicycle/Pedestrian program, assist in meeting new compliance requirements related to greenhouse gas reduction and air quality, perform small studies, prepare reports and perform graphics development.

WHEREAS, a General Planning Consultant (GPC) Agreement with RS&H was executed; and

WHEREAS, RS&H has agreed to perform the following work under the GPC agreement:

1. Conduct a traffic signal warrant study near Lake Ella along Monroe Street not to exceed \$34,500.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CRTPA THAT:

1. The CRTPA authorizes the Chair to execute and Executive Director to administer a Work Order to complete the above task.

DULY PASSED AND ADOPTED THIS 24th DAY OF SEPTEMBER 2012

Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency

By: _____
Jane G. Sauls, Chairperson

Attest: _____
Harry D. Reed III,
CRTPA Executive Director