City of Raleigh

Budget Note 08

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

June 1, 2015

MEMO TO: Ruffin Hall, City Manager

FROM: Kenneth Bowers, Planning Director

SUBJECT: Budget Note 08 – Mission Valley/Avent Ferry Area Plan

Background

Council Member Crowder requested a budget note regarding an area study for the Avent Ferry Road corridor, which extends from the Mission Valley shopping center to the north and the Avent Ferry shopping center at Gorman Street to the south. Among the objectives of the study expressed by CM Crowder are the following:

1. How to transform Mission Valley into a mixed-use center with diverse appeal knitting Centennial Campus, the main campus, and the surrounding area together.
2. Identify new housing development opportunities serving a population beyond undergraduates, including graduate students, professors and other university employees.
3. A reimagined Avent Ferry Road with dedicated, high quality bus facilities, recognizing that more bus riders traverse this corridor than any other in Raleigh.

Staff Response

Staff believes this area is appropriate to study due to both transportation needs as well as growth and redevelopment pressures. Prior to retaining a consultant team to assist with a study, city planning staff would conduct an in-house visioning workshop to inform the consultant scoping and selection process. The workshop products would include a briefing book, identification of opportunities and constraints, vision for the corridor, and key issues. This methodology, which has been used for several recent area and corridor plans (e.g. Six Forks, Southern Gateway), should also reduce study costs by completing the due diligence phase prior to project initiation.

Based on past corridor studies, we estimate a budget of $150,000 to perform the study. A consultant team could be chosen as early as late winter 2016 based on the needs identified during a fall workshop process, but would likely cover the following disciplines: urban design, transportation planning and engineering, real estate market analysis, and civic engagement.

Options for Next Steps

Option 1: Area Visioning Performed by Staff, Prioritize Area Plan Funding in FY17 Budget. (No FY16 Budget Impact)

Under this option, staff would complete the in-house visioning workshop in anticipation of prioritizing funding for a consultant-led area plan in the FY17 budget process.

Option 2: Area Visioning and Area Plan Performed by Staff. (No FY16 Budget Impact)

Under this option, staff would complete both the in-house visioning workshop and develop the area plan. Completing an in-house study would require an extended timeline. An in-house study would not have the benefit of an outside real estate market analysis or more specialized engineering services, but could take advantage of staff expertise in land use, urban design, and transportation planning and engineering.

Option 3: Area Visioning Performed by Staff, Fund Area Plan Study in FY16. (FY16 Budget Impact: $150,000)

Under this option, staff would complete the in-house visioning workshop and funding is provided in FY16 to conduct a consultant-led area plan. Resulting area study project proposals would then be incorporated into future year capital improvement program prioritization considerations.

Funding Options for Option 3

City Council might consider some projects in the Proposed Capital Improvement Program a lower priority, and could reprogram funding from another project to support this study. Alternatively, there is sufficient capital project savings in the CIP to fund this area planning effort. While this funding source is available, appropriating funds for this study leaves less funding available for other needs that Council may consider. Re-appropriating capital project savings also leaves less available for other unanticipated needs and next year's capital process.