

 <p style="text-align: center;">Council Communication Office of the City Manager</p>	Date: June 8, 2015
	Agenda Item No. 64 Roll Call No. <u>15-294</u> Communication No. <u>15-294</u> Submitted by: Pamela S. Cooksey, P.E., City Engineer

AGENDA HEADING:

Authorize issuance of Request for Proposals (RFP) for professional services for the Downtown Walkability Study and implementation of pilot project.

SYNOPSIS:

Recommend authorization to issue an RFP for professional services to determine how to best utilize the existing roadway width to accommodate all users, including vehicles, transit, bicycles, pedestrians, and on-street parking. The study will result in a multi-modal transportation model, which can evaluate Level of Service, traffic patterns, and other operational impacts associated with these changes. Council is also asked to authorize the preparation of design documents for a pilot project on 7th Street, Locust Street, Mulberry Street, and 12th Street to evaluate different concepts to be implemented in 2015.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Amount: \$520,000 (estimated)--\$400,000 for study and \$120,000 for pilot project.

Funding Source: Project may use Tax Increment Financing (TIF), private donations, and other funding sources. This is a new project not included in the current CIP. The revised CIP will need to reallocate projects funds or use new available revenue, that may or may not, include TIF. Final funding will be presented before a contract is awarded.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

In 2013, Jeff Speck, author of “Walkable City,” was hired by the City to evaluate the current ability to walk and bike in the downtown core. City staff implemented some of Mr. Speck’s suggestions by installing bump outs along Grand Avenue and at 4th Street and Locust Street, eliminating parking restrictions on the south side of Grand Avenue, and installing bike lanes on Grand Avenue and 5th Avenue.

On March 23, 2015, a summary of Mr. Speck’s full observations was presented to the City Council at a Council Workshop. Mr. Speck was invited by the Urban Land Institute of Iowa to visit Des Moines, along with Mayor Mick Cornett of Oklahoma City. He returned to Des Moines on March 25, 2015. The purpose of the trip was to gauge community support for increased walkability and bikeability in the downtown core in exchange for a reduction in automobile travel lanes. The changes discussed included lane reductions, lane width reductions, removal of peak-hour parking restrictions, installation of pedestrian bump outs, and one-way to two-way street conversions.

The response to their visit and recommendations for the downtown was positive. As a result, staff was asked to move forward with the next steps to analyze the impact to the travelling public in downtown with these changes and determine exactly what it would take to put these changes into place.

The study will include: stakeholder coordination; existing conditions inventory and analysis; analysis of impacts to emergency response, transit, parking garages, I-235 interchanges; and alternatives analysis and development for the downtown area, as well as the E Grand Avenue and Keosauqua Avenue corridors.

Due to the detailed nature and large study area, the study is estimated to take 12-15 months to complete. To show that the City is vested in improving walkability and bikeability in the downtown and to further examine the impacts of what the suggested changes may look like for 80,000 downtown workers and 8,000 downtown residents, staff is proposing a pilot project be implemented this summer/fall.

The pilot project will include:

- Removal of peak-hour parking restrictions on 7th Street from Martin Luther King Jr. Parkway to I-235, Locust Street from 17th Street to 2nd Avenue, and Mulberry Street from 15th Street to 5th Avenue.
- Conversion of 12th Street from Mulberry Street to Grand Avenue, currently one-way northbound, to two-way between Martin Luther King Jr. Parkway to High Street.

The scope of services for the study will include analyzing the existing and future conditions in downtown Des Moines to recommend walkability improvements, including travel lanes for vehicle traffic and accommodating bicycle, transit and pedestrian travel. The study will result in a multi-modal transportation model, which can evaluate level of service, traffic patterns, and other operational impacts associated with proposed and future changes.

The study area boundary is University Avenue on the north, Martin Luther King Jr Parkway on the south, Martin Luther King Jr/19th Street on the west, and E 15th Street on the east. Consideration will also be given to connectivity south of Martin Luther King Jr. Parkway to Riverpoint and other future developments. This study will also include recommendations for the Keosauqua Way and E Grand Avenue corridors.

Timeline:

- June 2015 - Issue RFP.
- August 2015 - Recommend consultant and Professional Services Agreement and awarding construction of pilot project elements to Council.
- September 2015 - August 2016 - Model development, public input and stakeholder meetings, preparation of alternatives and recommendations.
- Mid-late 2016 - Study completion to correspond with CIP planning and programing of roadway changes.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTION(S): NONE

BOARD/COMMISSION ACTION(S): NONE

ANTICIPATED ACTIONS AND FUTURE COMMITMENTS:

Professional Services Agreement for Downtown Walkability Study and authorizing construction of pilot project elements.

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