



Date: September 4, 2012

To: Thomas J. Bonfield, City Manager
Through: Keith Chadwell, Deputy City Manager
From: Marvin G. Williams, Director of Public Works

Subject: Hopson Road (U-4716B, U-4716A/C) Utility Agreements

Executive Summary

The N. C. Department of Transportation (NCDOT) is scheduled to implement the Hopson Road railroad grade separation project near NC 54. The project includes closing the Church Street at-grade railroad crossing at NC 54 near Morrisville, track realignment, and the extension of Church Street (Keystone Park Drive) to Hopson Road. The purpose of the project is to improve safety, efficiency and mobility in the area around Hopson Road and Church Street. A map of the overall project is provided in the Figure 1 attachment. The project will require the relocation of existing City of Durham water line utilities that are within the project boundaries and the City is financially responsible for their cost of relocation. The relocation work will be performed by the contractor for NCDOT. The City will reimburse NCDOT for the cost of the water line utility relocation work.

Recommendation

The Department of Public Works recommends that the City Council authorize the City Manager to execute two Utility Agreements with NCDOT for relocation of water line utilities associated with the Project U-4716A/C and U-4716B, and authorize the expenditure of \$174,323.00 from the Water Extensions and Improvements Account and establish a contingency fund in the amount of \$17,432.30 (10%) for the relocation of the water lines. The agreements are provided as Attachment A and B.

Background

NCDOT plans to eliminate redundant and/or unsafe at-grade rail-highway crossings on a statewide basis as part of a comprehensive effort to improve and promote safer and more efficient rail and highway operations along heavily used railroad corridors. Based on statewide data, NCDOT has determined that a grade-separated crossing is required at the at-grade crossing on Hopson Road (SR 1978) located between Davis Drive and NC 54. The project also supports the Piedmont Improvement Program, an initiative by NCDOT, the Norfolk Southern Railway (NS), and the North Carolina Railroad (NCR) to improve passenger and freight railroad operations along the NCR Piedmont Corridor from Raleigh to Charlotte.

The proposed project was recommended for and included in the State and MPO Transportation Improvement Programs with funding anticipated from a variety of sources, including Federal Rail Administration (FRA) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

grants. A federal Environmental Assessment (EA) was then prepared by NCDOT with FHWA as the lead agency. The process included both public and agency comments. The EA was subsequently approved by FHWA on September 2, 2009. The selected preferred alternative included track realignment, closure of the Church Street at-grade crossing (at NC 54 and the Durham County line), the realignment of a portion of Church Street, Church Street extension to Hopson Road, and the Hopson Road grade separation. The project then became eligible for funding through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 through a grant agreement between NCDOT and the Federal Rail Administration (FRA). With FRA as the lead agency, the EA was revised and updated in December 2011 with no significant change to the project. A project map is provided in Figure 1. The project design is complete and construction bidding is scheduled for November 2012.

Issues and Analysis

The project will require the relocation and adjustment of City water line utilities located within NCDOT right-of-way. The related costs, terms and conditions for the municipal utility relocation are covered in two separate NCDOT Utility Agreements. The utility work associated with this project has been separated into two separate Utility Agreements for NCDOT's own purposes.

Alternatives

- Authorize the City Manager to execute the two Utility Agreements at a combined estimated cost of 174,323.00.
- Do not authorize the execution of the Utility Agreements. The proposed new project will be delayed until City forces can relocate the water line utilities.

Financial Impact

The cost to reimburse NCDOT for the water line utility relocations is \$146,136.00 for U-4716A/C and \$28,187.00 for U4716B. There are currently funds available for these agreements in the Water Extensions and Improvements account.

SDBE Summary

NCDOT municipal agreements require that their contracting procedures be followed for these projects. The Department of Equal Opportunity/Equity Assurance did not review this item for compliance with the Ordinance to Promote Equal Business Opportunities in City Contracting.

Attachments

Figure 1 – Project Map

Attachment A – U-4716A/C Utility Agreement and Exhibits A, B, C

Attachment B – U4716B Utility Agreement and Exhibits A, B, C