



**Date:** March 11, 2015

**To:** Thomas J. Bonfield, City Manager  
**Through:** Keith Chadwell, Deputy City Manager  
**From:** Mark D. Ahrendsen, Transportation Director  
H. Wesley Parham, Assistant Transportation Director  
Marvin Williams, Public Works Director

**Subject:** Alston Avenue Bridge Replacement Municipal Agreement  
(Bridge No. 93 over Rocky Creek)

**Executive Summary**

The N. C. Department of Transportation (NCDOT) is scheduled to replace a bridge on Alston Avenue. It is a design-build project bundled with seven other bridges that was awarded in 2013 with scheduled completion in 2016. The existing bridge no. 93 over Rocky Creek will be replaced with a culvert. The culvert will include sidewalks on both sides of the road. NCDOT has requested that the City of Durham pay for the cost of installing handrails along the structure and has requested that the City assume ongoing maintenance responsibilities for the sidewalks and handrails. A Municipal Agreement is needed to describe the terms of the City’s participation.

**Recommendation**

The Department of Transportation recommends that the City Council authorize the City Manager to execute the Alston Avenue Bridge Replacement Municipal Agreement with the N. C. Department of Transportation at an estimated cost of \$11,000.00.

**Background**

The existing bridge no. 93 over Rocky Creek on Alston Avenue was built in 1960 and is considered structurally deficient, which means it is safe, but deteriorating, in relatively poor condition, and needs to be replaced. The current bridge does not include bicycle lanes or sidewalks. There are sidewalks leading up to the bridge on the northeast, northwest, and southwest approaches to the bridge.

The bridge will be closed to vehicle and pedestrian traffic for a period of no longer than 180 days. NCDOT held a community meeting on the project on October 16, 2012.

**Issues and Analysis**

The bridge will be replaced with a culvert. The culvert will accommodate two 11-foot vehicle lanes, two 4-foot bicycle lanes, guardrails, and 5-foot sidewalks behind the guardrails on both sides. There will be handrails on the side of the sidewalks next to the creek. The sidewalks will connect to the

existing sidewalks on the northeast, northwest, and southwest approaches. On the southeast approach the sidewalk will end at the driveway to the Church of the Abiding Savior.

Since the bridge is being replaced with a culvert, NCDOT staff has said that the NCDOT Bridge Policy does not apply. The NCDOT Bridge Policy says that when a sidewalk is justified, sidewalks will be provided on bridges at no cost to the municipality. Instead, NCDOT staff has said that the NCDOT Pedestrian Policy Guidelines apply which requires that NCDOT and the City share the costs of installing sidewalks 50 percent each. Existing sidewalk is to be replaced at no cost to the municipality.

The estimated cost of the new sidewalk is \$12,860 and the handrail is \$11,000. Under the Pedestrian Policy Guidelines, the municipality would be required to contribute half of the total, or \$11,930. For simplicity, NCDOT has asked that the City pay for the full cost of the handrail only, or \$11,000. In addition, as routinely required with NCDOT projects, the municipality also must agree to maintain the sidewalk and handrail.

### **Alternatives**

Do not authorize the execution of the Municipal Agreement for the Alston Avenue bridge replacement project. The proposed new sidewalks will be removed from the project design and construction. Any existing sidewalk removed or adjusted with project construction will be replaced at no cost to the City.

### **Financial Impact**

The cost for the City of Durham is \$11,000.00. The required City matching funds are available in the City's Capital Improvement Program's Federal-State Matching Project. Upon project completion, the City will assume the ongoing sidewalk maintenance and liability for the sidewalk within the City of Durham.

### **SDBE Summary**

NCDOT 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**

- A – Project Map
- B – Municipal Agreement