



MEMORANDUM

TO: Members of the Finance Committee

FROM: Rich Olson, City Manager

DATE: October 2, 2018

REF: Consideration - Authorize Submission of Application to the North Carolina Department of Transportation for Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Grant Funds and Adopt the Attached Resolution.

BACKGROUND:

North Carolina Department of Transportation, Division of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation and Transportation Planning Branch has issued a call for proposals. Municipalities with a population of over 5,000 can apply for Bicycle or Pedestrian Plan funding; however, they cannot apply for both. City personnel from Parks and Recreation, Public Works and Finance discussed the matter at length; they determined that the most-needed plan for Elizabeth City is a Pedestrian Plan.

During their application for the Watch for Me Program in 2017, the Elizabeth City Police Department designated a number of different streets within city limits as high volume for both pedestrians and bicyclists. Those streets are East and West Ehringhaus; Halstead Boulevard Extended; East and West Church Street; Southern Avenue; Riverside Avenue; Brooks Avenue; Walker Avenue; Roanoke Avenue; North and South Road Street, River Road; Oak Stump Road; Church Street Bicycle and Pedestrian Trail; College of Albemarle Pedestrian Trail; and US High 17 (city limits).

ANALYSIS:

According to the North Carolina Department of Transportation, each year in North Carolina more than 2,000 pedestrians are involved in police-reported crashes with motor vehicles. Between 150 and 200 are killed, and an additional 200 to 300 are seriously injured. Older adults and children are especially vulnerable. With walking being the

primary mode of transportation for many of Elizabeth City's residents and the lack of sidewalks available for them to use, the decision to apply for a Pedestrian Transportation Plan was an easy decision for staff. Between 2010 and 2014, it was reported to NCDOT that the City of Elizabeth City had 25 pedestrian accidents involving vehicles. The ages ranged from three years old to 70+. Of those 25 pedestrians, 56% were injured in the travel lane. Data for 2015 through 2018 was not available at this time.

North Carolina Department of Transportation, Division of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation and Transportation Planning Branch have created a matching grant program to fund plan development. Many communities throughout North Carolina have begun to place more emphasis on providing facilities for biking and walking. It is staff's desire to not only promote the health and fitness aspect of walking, but to promote the safety side of pedestrian access, as well. With the continued pedestrian traffic around downtown and other areas within the city limits, it is staff's opinion that once implemented, a comprehensive Pedestrian Plan would assist the City of Elizabeth City in providing a safer environment as our citizens navigate through their city.

According to information received, once notified of award receipt, the specific cost of the plan will be determined through discussion between NCDOT, the City of Elizabeth City and the selected consultant. NCDOT estimates consultant cost for a Pedestrian Plan will range from \$45,000 to \$60,000 depending on the size of the municipality. The City's match would be 20%, which would be no more than \$12,000. Award notification is expected in February 2019, with funding distribution following 90 days after.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

By motion, recommend that the City Council authorize staff to submit an application for Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning grant funds to the North Carolina Department of Transportation and adopt the attached resolution.



RESOLUTION #2018-10-02
By the City Council of the City of Elizabeth City
Pedestrian Plan

WHEREAS, the North Carolina Department of Transportation, Division of Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation and Transportation Planning Branch has issued a call for proposals for Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Grant; and

WHEREAS, the City of Elizabeth City desires to improve pedestrian infrastructure, walkability and connectivity within the City; and

WHEREAS, the City of Elizabeth City desires to support a Pedestrian Plan for the purpose of developing pedestrian infrastructure improvements for its citizens, and

WHEREAS, the City of Elizabeth City intends to request grant assistance from the North Carolina Department of Transportation for a Pedestrian Plan.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

- I. The City Council requests the North Carolina Department of Transportation to provide financial assistance to the City of Elizabeth City for the creation of a Pedestrian Plan; and
- II. The City Council assumes full obligation of payment for 20% of the estimated consultant fee up to \$12,000 for the development of a Pedestrian Plan; and
- III. The City Council will comply with all applicable laws governing the award of contracts and the expenditure of public funds by local governments.

ADOPTED this the 8th day of October, 2018.

Bettie J. Parker
Mayor

April D. Onley
Interim City Clerk