

MEMORANDUM

City of Springfield

Date: 2/24/2014
To: Gino Grimaldi
From: Len Goodwin, DPW Director
Tom Boyatt, DPW Community Development
Manager
Subject: Franklin NEPA Update and Direction

**COUNCIL
BRIEFING
MEMORANDUM**

ISSUE: City's consultant, URS Corp., has substantially completed Phase 2 work including refined intersection design, realignment of the facility to match existing center line, and draft environmental baseline reports. Staff will present the modified single line design concept and the associated Project footprint for Council review and direction in preparation for meeting with FHWA and ODOT to seek guidance for NEPA classification. The Project goal is to gain concurrence that the Project may proceed under the Categorical Exclusion process in the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA).

COUNCIL GOALS/**MANDATE:**

Maintain and Improve Infrastructure and Facilities

This important project to improve the Franklin Blvd. Corridor also leverages economic development and revitalization in the Glenwood Riverfront and Downtown, and promotes livability and environmental quality in Springfield.

BACKGROUND:

As described in Attachment 2 of this AIS packet, a project to upgrade Franklin Blvd. in Glenwood has been a City priority for many years. Phase 1 construction funding is now in the Draft 2015-2018 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program and staff, with significant consultant assistance, is carefully navigating the NEPA process that must precede right of way acquisition and construction. Recent work has focused on developing the 15 or so required environmental baseline reports covering things like endangered species, historic and cultural resources and environmental justice, and then using that information and Council's desire to minimize impacts to properties to develop project design. This has been an iterative process, and has achieved a measure of success in systematically reducing the project's NEPA and business impacts.

At the work session staff will review the design iteration process with Council and seek input on the latest design recommendation. Council's agreement with a project design concept is necessary before staff can represent that design to Federal Highways (FHWA) in seeking a categorical exclusion under NEPA, as well as vet the design concept with the public, and in particular business and property owners who are likely to be impacted.

Most projects to improve significant transportation systems or segments will have impacts to the existing physical environment. One of the key values in the development of the Franklin Blvd. upgrade continues to be finding the design solution that achieves the project's purpose while avoiding impacts where possible. Because impacts will occur the City remains committed to working with business and property owners openly, honestly, and fairly; respecting the challenges of being impacted; and working with those impacted to find workable solutions such as business relocation or site reconfiguration.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Review the Franklin project development process and associated design refinements, and reach agreement on the design to represent to FHWA for the NEPA classification discussion in March.
