



Livable Streets Update (FIVE IN FIVE)



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DOWNTOWN RETAILERS COULD COLLECT AN ADDITIONAL \$32 MILLION IN CONSUMER SPENDING, STUDY SAYS

Downtown Raleigh has \$32 million worth of consumer demand that is not being captured by downtown retailers, according to a study by the City of Raleigh Department of City Planning.

The \$32 million figure is based on the spending power of downtown workers, visitors, and residents within a one-mile radius. This spending power totals more than \$223 million in 2007. The 236 retailers in downtown Raleigh experienced estimated sales of \$191 million in 2007, resulting in a gap of \$32 million of consumer spending that is not being captured due to the insufficient marketing, merchandising, and supply of retail stores in downtown.



By 2010 -- following the completion of the new convention center and new office, hotel, and residential buildings in the downtown area -- this same consumer demand is expected to swell by 64 percent to over \$366 million, driven largely by \$83 million in

conventioner spending and \$44 million from new downtown residents. Without an accompanying expansion in downtown marketing and recruitment, the lost opportunity could grow to \$175 million, according to the Department of City Planning study.

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"The analysis shows that the demand from downtown residents and workers is real and growing," Mayor Charles Meeker said. "The addition of our convention center and new center city hotels will truly ignite this demand."

Denny Edwards, president and CEO of the Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau, discussed the importance of shopping among visitors to North Carolina's capital city.

"In the convention and attraction business, Raleigh is competing with cities that offer shopping, dining and nightlife within close walking distance to the hotels and convention facilities," he said. "As a community, we must strengthen our downtown retail to ensure that our city offers the type of experience people have come to expect among America's great downtowns."

City Planning Director Mitchell Silver added, "Creating a downtown shopping district offers choices and convenience to downtown workers, visitors, and residents. Shopping is vital to a successful downtown, and street level activity is what people are craving.

"The perception of downtown as a retail center will continue to improve, and the findings of this study suggest that downtown Raleigh can support a more robust retail base, including book stores, clothing stores and electronic stores," Mr. Silver said.

The Department of City Planning will continue to study retail opportunities and economic development strategies as part the Comprehensive Plan update process that kicks off Oct. 25.

David Diaz, president and CEO of the Downtown Raleigh Alliance, commented about an initiative being developed that is intended to strengthen the retail mix.

"The Alliance is currently gearing up towards developing a new retail and recruitment strategy designed to both attract new retailers and improve the performance of the existing retail base," Mr. Diaz said. "This study highlights the tremendous opportunity for retail to succeed within the downtown market."

Kristopher Larson, senior planner with the Department of City Planning's Urban Design Center conducted the analysis on downtown retail spending. A summary report of the analysis can be found at http://www.raleighnc.gov/publications/Planning/Reports/Retail_Capture_Rate.pdf.

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Downtown Raleigh Alliance
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Greater Raleigh Chamber of Commerce
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Greater Raleigh Convention & Visitors Bureau
www.visitraleigh.com

CITY COUNCIL AUTHORIZES CONSTRUCTION OF FAYETTEVILLE STREET PHASE II IMPROVEMENTS

The Raleigh City Council Oct. 16 unanimously approved awarding a guaranteed maximum price (GMP) contract for Phase II of the Fayetteville Street Renaissance Project.

The \$4.7 million contract was awarded to Holder Construction Company, the construction manager at risk for the Phase II project. The contract authorizes Holder Construction to begin work on the Phase 2 improvements which involves extending Fayetteville Street to Lenoir Street and constructing a pedestrian connector between Fayetteville and Salisbury streets at the Marriott convention center hotel. The hotel is under construction on the south end of Fayetteville Street. The hotel and a nearby 500,000-square-foot convention center, also under construction, are scheduled for completion in the fall of 2008.

The Fayetteville Street Renaissance Project is an economic development and revitalization effort for the downtown street.

CITY COUNCIL APPROVES AMENDMENT REGARDING SALE OF PROPERTY FOR DOWNTOWN MIXED-USE PROJECT

The Raleigh City Council voted unanimously Oct. 16 to approve an amendment to an agreement selling City-owned property to a development company. The amendment sets new target dates for development of a mixed-use project on Hillsborough Street by Reynolds Company, LLC.

Council members had to set the new target dates because Reynolds has revised plans for the mixed-use project, which will be called The Hillsborough. The 267,900-square-foot project will be at the intersection of Hillsborough and Dawson. Under the revised plans, it will include a 135,600-square-foot hotel with 136 rooms; 89,200 square feet of residential space for 26 condominium units; 17,500 square feet of ground-floor retail space; and a four-story parking deck with 216 spaces. In a separate vote, the City Council unanimously approved a site plan for the development.

The Hillsborough will be located on the combined site of 301 and 309 Hillsborough Street. The City sold the company the land for the development. The sales agreement approved by the council last year includes certain target dates or deadlines regarding development of the mixed-use project. If those target dates are not met, the City could exercise its option to repurchase the land at 301 and 309 Hillsborough St. Council members approved an amendment to the sales agreement setting new target dates to reflect the revised plans for The Hillsborough.

Under the amendment:

- The completion date for the footings was moved from January 2008 to August 2008;
- The issuance of permits for the shell construction was moved to April 2008;
- The real estate closing for the property at 301 and 309 Hillsborough Street is to occur in April 2008; and,
- The residential shell construction is to be complete by November 2009;

The approved amendment also includes provisions allowing Reynolds Company, LLC access to 301 and 309 Hillsborough Street prior to closing to begin demolition procedures, among other things.

TOWN HALL MEETING ON THE ARTS SET FOR OCT. 23

Quail Ridge Books & Music, in partnership with the City of Raleigh Arts Commission, is hosting a town hall meeting on the arts, entitled "The Creative Arts: The Soul of a Community." The town hall meeting will be held on Tuesday, Oct. 23 at 7:00 p.m. in Quail Ridge Books, located at 3522 Wade Ave. in the Ridgewood Shopping Center.

The event will include a panel discussion featuring arts leaders from the community representing different disciplines. Panel members will include North Carolina writer Sally Buckner; Chandra Cox, chair of North Carolina State University's Art & Design Department; North Carolina Symphony Conductor William Curry; Robert Galbraith, an opera director; Bob Rankin, a well known painter; and Tyler Walters, a dance expert with Carolina Ballet. The panel discussion will be moderated by Clay Stalnaker, retired professor of philosophy at N.C. State. Introductory remarks will be offered by Brian Starkey, chair of the City of Raleigh Arts Commission.

“Creative arts must challenge and shape the soul of our community,” said Mr. Stalnaker. “To do this, their deepest significance must be articulated, imaginations must be sparked, ways of thinking refined, and biases tested.” The panelists will be contributing to this examination of the arts. All attendees of the town hall meeting will be allowed to participate in the discussion.

For more information, contact Rene Martin, events coordinator with Quail Ridge Books & Music, at 828-7912 or email qrbRene@aol.com.

Established in 1977, the City of Raleigh Arts Commission is celebrating its 30th anniversary. The Arts Commission holds the distinction of being the first municipal arts commission created in North Carolina. Serving as the official advisory body and advocate for the arts to the Raleigh City Council, the Commission’s myriad activities encourage, support, and promote the arts in the Capital City.

APPROVAL GIVEN TO THE HILLSBOROUGH MIXED-USE PROJECT

The Raleigh City Council voted unanimously Oct. 16 to approve a site plan for a 24-story mixed-use project on a 1.18-acre site at the intersection of Hillsborough and Dawson streets.

The development will be called The Hillsborough. The 267,900-square-foot project will include a 135,600-square-foot hotel with 136 rooms; 89,200 square feet of residential space for 26 condominium units; 17,500 square feet of ground-floor retail space; and a four-story parking deck with 216 spaces.

CITY OF RALEIGH TO OBSERVE VETERANS DAY

The City of Raleigh’s administrative offices will be closed Monday, Nov. 12 in observance of Veterans Day. Emergency police, fire and rescue services may be reached by calling 9-1-1.

Because no collections are done on Mondays, the same-day collection of garbage, recycling and yard waste will follow the regular service schedule during the week. The City’s Yard Waste Center will be closed on Veterans Day, but will operate on a regular schedule the remainder of the week.

Capital Area Transit will operate on a normal schedule on Veterans Day.

TRANSIT NEEDS TO BE SENT TO NORTH CAROLINA CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION

The Raleigh City Council approved on Tuesday a list of needs for Capital Area Transit. The transit system has a backlog of existing and future capital needs. The Raleigh Transit Authority and transit staff will share the list of needs with the North Carolina Congressional Delegation in an effort to gain federal funding.

The major capital investment projects include:

- site selection, design and engineering plans for a new transit maintenance facility. The federal assistance requested is approximately \$2.8 million;
- the construction phase for the new transit maintenance facility. The federal assistance requested is approximately \$12 million;
- replace 28 fixed-route buses. The federal assistance requested is approximately \$8 million.

In the 2007 fiscal year, the City of Raleigh did not receive any federal funds for new buses.

MORGAN/HILLSBOROUGH STREET ROUNDABOUT TO BE DISCUSSED AT NOV. 7 MEETING

The Raleigh City Council will revisit the topic of proposed roundabouts and street improvements at the Morgan/Hillsborough streets intersection at its meeting on Nov. 7. The council requested additional information concerning parking spaces and requested examples of similar road improvements in other cities.

RALEIGH PROHIBITS LAWN IRRIGATION

Effective October 23

Raleigh officials Oct. 16 voted to ban lawn irrigation in a further effort to conserve water in the midst of the exceptional drought that is plaguing the area. The Raleigh City Council approved amended Stage 1 mandatory water conservation restrictions and rules that:

- prohibit watering by automatic or non-automatic spray irrigation systems;
- prohibit washing vehicles at home;
- prohibit watering by hose-end sprinklers and soaker hoses; and,
- cease the issuance of lawn and landscape irrigation establishment permits.

This amended water conservation ordinance goes into effect Oct. 23. No lawn and landscape irrigation permits will be issued after Oct. 16.

A first-time citation carries a \$200 penalty. A second offense comes with at \$1,000 penalty. A third citation would result in interruption of the customer's water service. (A total of 299 first-time citations have been issued and 11 second-offense citations have been issued since the restrictions were put into place seven weeks ago.)

City officials are hoping that prohibiting lawn irrigation will dramatically reduce use. Since the water restrictions were put into effect, the use on "irrigation days" has averaged 36 percent more than the use recorded on days when irrigation is not allowed.

The restrictions apply to all City of Raleigh water customers, including those in nearby towns that have merged water and sewer systems with Raleigh. Those towns are Garner, Rolesville, Wake Forest, Knightdale, Wendell and Zebulon.

Other conservation measures included in the Stage 1 water restrictions that have been in effect since Aug. 28 include:

- limiting watering by hand-held hoses to two days a week (odd addresses on Tuesdays and Saturdays and even addresses on Wednesday and Sundays from 6 a.m. to 10 a.m. and from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m.); and,
- limiting pressure washing to Saturday and Sunday.

The water level in swimming or wading pools may be supplemented only to the amount necessary to allow proper operation and sanitary pool conditions. The conservation ordinance restricts the adding of water to decorative ponds or fountains to the amount needed to sustain aquatic life. Leaking water services or plumbing must be repaired within 24 hours of written notification by the City's Public Utilities director.

Watering by low-volume drip irrigation is allowed at any time. Indoor water uses that are addressed by the ordinance include:

- drinking water will not be served in public restaurants, except upon request;
- hotels will request that guests spending more than one night use their towels and bed linens more than once between laundering; and,
- commercial and industrial customers must review their water uses and implement industry specific best management water conservation practices.

The continued absence of rain has drawn Falls Lake to 243.42 feet which is 8.08 feet below the lake's level when the water supply pool is full. (The latest date that the lake was at this level was May 24.) The lake's present level represents 35 percent of the water supply pool. Falls Lake's current level is only .69 feet above the all-time low of 242.73 feet that it fell to on Nov. 27, 1993.

The current 30-day pumpage demand for Raleigh water customers is 52.13 million gallons per day (MGD), a 1.17 MGD decrease from the previously issued 30-day average of a week ago. Using this 30-day pumpage average, 98 days of water supply remain in Falls Lake. This projects to Jan. 22, a decrease of two days from last week's report. (This assumes the worst case scenario of no rain)

CITY OF RALEIGH TO HOLD KICK-OFF EVENT FOR COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Raleigh residents are invited to attend a kick-off event that officially begins the update process for the City's Comprehensive Plan for long-range planning. The kick-off celebration will be held on Thursday, Oct. 25 from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. in the Betty Ray McCain Art Gallery at the Progress Energy Center for the Performing Arts.

Short presentations will be given and background information will be made available. Attendees also will have an opportunity to meet and talk with members of the City Council, the Planning Commission, other City boards and commissions, City Planning staff, and the project consultants.

For the first time in nearly 20 years, the City of Raleigh is set to update its Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan is the official long-range planning document adopted by the City Council. The plan contains a vision, goals and policies to guide growth and development in Raleigh. The current Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 1989. Since that time, Raleigh's population has increased by 70 percent. Furthermore, the city has had new growth patterns emerge. City leaders say a new 20-year plan is needed to ensure that Raleigh's quality of life continues to be protected as the city grows, emphasizing neighborhood preservation, a strong economy, ample parks and recreation, improved mobility for all modes of transportation, and the protection of the City's and region's natural resources and environmental quality. The Comprehensive Plan will serve as the policy framework for a wide range of decisions concerning land use, development patterns, urban design, and public investment priorities.

The Comprehensive Plan update process is expected to take 18 months to complete. Citizen participation and input will be an integral part of the update process.

Public input workshops will be held in three sets of three meetings each, for a total of nine public meetings. This first set of workshops, which will focus on the overall vision for the City's future, will be held in November. Each of these first three meetings will have the same format, function, and background information provided. Additional public workshops will be held in all parts of Raleigh.

The November public input workshops will be:

- Nov. 13 at Shepherd's Hall at Church of the Good Shepherd, 125 Hillsborough St.
- Nov. 14 at North Carolina State University's McKimmon Center, 1101 Gorman St.
- Nov. 15 at North Raleigh Church of Christ, 8701 Falls of Neuse Road, just inside I-540.

All three public workshops will begin at 6 p.m. with registration and conclude by 9 p.m.

As part of the update of the Comprehensive Plan, the City's Department of City Planning is conducting a series of background studies. The first of these is an analysis of the City's capacity to accommodate future growth within its planning jurisdiction, based on existing vacant and developable land under current zoning. For more information about the studies and the Comprehensive Plan update, contact the City of Raleigh Department of City Planning at 516-2626 or visit the project website at www.PlanningRaleigh2030.com.

Downtown Events Calendar

10-20- 08:00 PM	Solid Gold Soul	Memorial Auditorium
10-21- 08:00 PM	REGIS PHILBIN & SUSAN LUC...	Memorial Auditorium
10-30- 08:00 PM	Mamma Mia	Memorial Auditorium
10-31- 08:00 PM	Mamma Mia	Memorial Auditorium
11-01- 08:00 PM	Mamma Mia	Memorial Auditorium
11-02- 08:00 PM	Mamma Mia	Memorial Auditorium
11-03- 02:00 PM	Mamma Mia	Memorial Auditorium
11-04 2:00 PM	Mamma Mia	Memorial Auditorium
11-04 7:00 PM	Mamma Mia	Memorial Auditorium
11-06 8:00 PM	Rent	Memorial Auditorium
11-07 8:00 PM	Rent	Memorial Auditorium
11-08 7:00 PM	Broadway Series South Presents Jungle Jack Hanna...	Meymandi Concert Hall
11-08 8:00 PM	Rent	Memorial Auditorium
11-09 8:00 PM	Rent	Memorial Auditorium
11-10 2:00 PM	Rent	Memorial Auditorium
11-10 8:00 PM	Rent	Memorial Auditorium
11-11 2:00 PM	Rent	Memorial Auditorium
11-11 7:00 PM	Rent	Memorial Auditorium
11-16 8:00 PM	Rain	Memorial Auditorium
11-17 2:00 PM	The Ten Tenors	Memorial Auditorium
11-17- 8:00 PM	The Ten Tenors	Memorial Auditorium
11-18 3:00 PM	Imani Winds	Fletcher Opera Theater
11-21 8:00 PM	Rob Bell	Meymandi Concert Hall