



Livable Streets Update (FIVE IN FIVE)



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OFFICIALS AGREE WITH ARCHITECTS' DIRECTION; CONSIDER CIVIC MEETING FACILITY ADDITION

Members of the Raleigh City Council and the Wake County Board of Commissioners on July 13 directed the architects for the new convention center to create a design that balances Raleigh's heritage with its emerging future. The elected officials also agreed to consider adding a civic meeting facility onto the new convention center.

The project's architects from Clearscapes, O'Brien Atkins and TVS posed the question: What is the balance between a convention center that is the signature image of Raleigh and a center that blends into the community? How can this structure capture our Tarheel heritage while conveying a diverse, prospering city that is leading the emerging knowledge-based economy? The team of architects said that these are the desires they heard expressed by the public throughout the project's extensive public meeting effort.

"These values and assertions are gleaned from nearly 60 public meetings," said Steve Schuster of Clearscapes. He said the design of the building must make these desires "real, palpable and usable, expressing not just taste but who we are as people."

The elected officials agreed that the architects should move on the assumptions that:

- much of Raleigh's identity is derived from its role as the capital of North Carolina;
- the design of the convention center should convey the transition from Raleigh's heritage to its emerging knowledge-based future;
- the building materials used in the convention center should reinforce this transition by using traditional materials in contemporary ways;
- the building should respond to the goals of the Livable Streets Program; and,
- the center's art should amplify North Carolina as the state of the arts. (continued on page 2)

THE FIVE IN FIVE WORK PLAN

Fayetteville Street Renaissance

Goal: Reinvigorate Fayetteville Street as the heart of Raleigh, the ceremonial corridor and the premier Downtown address for office, events and cultural activity. The top action items:

- Make active uses mandatory for ground floors fronting Fayetteville Street and provide incentives to encourage them.
- Fill in development gaps.
- Open available blocks to vehicular activity; in phases, beginning with the 200 and 300 blocks.
- Re-establish the capitol vista - Develop outdoor festival and performance space.

Convention Center

Goal: Develop and market competitive facilities to attract more national conventions and trade shows, and improve the business environment for hotels, restaurants and other visitor serving facilities. The top action items:

- Get new downtown convention center and convention center hotel adopted and funded.
- Solve lobby access.
- Suggest future expansion to south.
- Investigate mixed-use and roof-top uses.
- Develop strategy for active edge on Cabarrus Street.

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Mr. Schuster also informed the council members and county commissioners that the architects had met twice with the convention center headquarters hotel developers to make certain that the two buildings complement each other.

"If we do our job correctly, this building will be North Carolina's front porch, welcoming not only as conventioners, but as neighbors," Thomas Sayre said in his address to the elected officials.

The team of architects repeated the presentation at a 5 p.m. public meeting. The meeting will be broadcast on Raleigh Television Network's cable channel 11 at 8:30 a.m., July 17. (see Calendar)

The elected officials agreed that including a civic meeting facility in the convention center was worthy of further consideration. The 7,500-square-foot plan for the facility would offer 300-seating capacity on a flat floor at a cost of \$3 million. City Manager J. Russell Allen and Assistant County Manager Joe Durham stressed to the elected officials that the cost for this addition would not be included in the \$180 million dedicated to the convention center from the prepared food and beverage and room tax.

Upcoming Meetings

The architects will next meet with the elected officials and the public on August 10 when the subject of the presentation will be "Character Concept." On September 14 the architects will present "Evolution of Character." The public meetings will commence at 5 p.m. at the Raleigh Convention and Conference Center.

The Raleigh City Council and the Wake County Board of Commissioners will hold a joint meeting on October 14 to make a decision on the schematic design. The meeting will begin at 6 p.m. at the Raleigh Convention and Conference Center.

BID PACKAGE SCHEDULE RELEASED FOR NEW DOWNTOWN CONVENTION CENTER

The Raleigh City Council on Aug. 3 will consider awarding a partial guaranteed maximum price (GMP) contract to the construction manager at risk for the new convention center. The contract will authorize the construction manager to seek bids for Phase 1 demolition of three buildings on the construction site, which is on the south end of downtown. (continued on page 3)

Improve the Pedestrian Environment

Goal: Create an attractive, well lit, safe environment that links office and residential areas to amenities such as restaurants, museums and arts venues.

Make downtown accessible to all. The top action items:

- Require pedestrian oriented ground level uses with high level of detail, i.e. doorways, windows, awnings and overhangs, along the sidewalk edge in downtown.
- Connect existing and emerging neighborhoods to Fayetteville Street.
- Further study converting east / west one-way streets to two-way.
- Investigate federal funding sources.
- Connect TTA Regional Rail station area with pedestrian linkages.

Regulatory Reform

Goal: Improve business environment by removing regulatory impediments; make it at least as easy to do business downtown as any place else in the region; include incentives in regulations. The top action items:

- Centralize approvals: Establish a downtown team within the city to respond to major project proposals and construction quickly. Develop a parallel strategy for small/mid-sized projects.
- Centralize the approvals process by creating a team within the city to respond to development proposals.
 - Provide development incentives for vacant buildings and properties.
 - Address issues dealing with outdoor dining, signage and other pedestrian encroachments.

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Demolition must be completed to continue the investigation of soil contamination remaining from a coal gasification plant that operated on the site from the late 1800s to around 1914.

Skanska USA Building Inc./Barnhill Contracting Company is the team that is the construction manager at risk for the new downtown convention center. The team has developed a schedule for soliciting bid packages for various phases of construction of the convention center. The exact scope of these bid packages will be determined as the design process progresses.

The Phase 1 building demolition is scheduled to begin in late August after a contract has been awarded. Construction of the convention center will start in 2005, with completion in late 2007.

Also under the bid package schedule:

- The City Council on Nov. 2 will consider awarding a second partial GMP contract seeking bid packages for utility relocation/redirection, soil shoring systems, excavation/site demolition/soil remediation, roadway reconfiguration, and dewatering (temporary and permanent). Pending the awarding of construction contracts, work is scheduled to begin in February 2005 on utility relocation/redirection and soil shoring. Excavation/site demolition/soil remediation and roadway reconfiguration will begin in March 2005. Dewatering is scheduled to begin in May 2005.
 - Council members on April 19, 2005 will consider awarding a third partial GMP contract soliciting bid packages for precast/concrete, caisson, and foundation and retaining wall construction. After the council has awarded contracts for the work, shop drawings are scheduled to begin in June 2005. Also starting that month will be the caisson retention wall system installation that will accommodate the 50-foot plus depths of excavation. Construction of the foundation and retaining wall will be scheduled to start in August 2005, followed by the precast/concrete work in October 2005.
 - Council members on Aug. 2, 2005 will consider awarding a fourth partial GMP contract seeking bids for underground utilities, structural steel, permanent dewatering systems, mechanical equipment, vertical transportation and electrical equipment. After construction contracts have been awarded, shop drawings for the exhibit hall's under-floor utilities will be scheduled to begin in September 2005. Actual construction of the under-floor utilities will be scheduled to start the following January, along with putting up structural steel for the convention center. Construction of the permanent dewatering systems will begin in December 2005.
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Downtown Management

Goal: Take a "one-stop shopping" approach to the management and marketing of downtown. The top action items:

- Develop a comprehensive Downtown marketing program, including an expanded website. It should be developed and coordinated with all downtown resources to promote events and attractions. Maximize the capitol status.
- Create a downtown development corporation.
- Make Downtown Raleigh Alliance the organization responsible for bringing all parties to the table to oversee implementation of the vision.
- Explore development incentives and options similar to tax increment financing.



Livable Streets

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- Delivery of the mechanical and electrical equipment to the construction site is scheduled to take place in September 2006. Vertical transportation is scheduled for delivery the following month.
- The council is scheduled to vote Feb. 7, 2006 on the final GMP proposal from the construction manager at risk authorizing solicitation of bid packages for the remainder of the building and site work. The final phase of construction will begin five months later, in July 2006.

North Carolina general statutes provide the general framework for the construction manager at risk process that includes planning, managing design and construction, cost analysis, scheduling, quality control and guaranteeing the construction cost.

Under an interlocal agreement between the City of Raleigh and Wake County, revenue from the County's hotel/motel and prepared food and beverage tax will be used to finance construction of the convention center, which has a budget of \$180 million. A four-star Marriott convention center headquarters hotel also will be built on the south end of downtown adjacent to the convention center. The approximately \$58 million headquarters hotel will be built simultaneously with the convention center.

FAYETTEVILLE STREET ZONING CODE REVISIONS PUBLIC HEARING JULY 22

Several changes to the zoning code that will bring it in line with the City's Urban Design handbook for Fayetteville Street will be subject of a Raleigh City Council public hearing Tuesday, July 22, 6:30 p.m.

The first proposal would create a new section of the sign regulations governing Fayetteville Street. It would delete references to a pedestrian mall that will not exist once the street is restored. The signage allowance of three square feet per linear foot of frontage will remain the same.

The changes would allow portable pedestrian signage (sandwich boards) along the edges of the pedestrian zone along the building frontage or along the garden zone frontage of the restored street. The third proposed change would allow signs on the corners of buildings to project at a 45 degree angle rather than at right angles as is now required. The change would allow the signs citywide.

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DOWNTOWN OVERLAY DISTRICT ZONING CODE AMENDMENT PUBLIC HEARING SET FOR JULY 22

The Raleigh City Council will hold a public hearing July 22, 6:30 p.m. on a proposed zoning code change to combine all downtown overlay districts into one and to revise the site plan approval process. The proposed code revision provides the mechanism to achieve the changes with the necessary revision to the zoning map coming later.

The combination of the Downtown Overlay district is intended to promote development of intensive residential and nonresidential uses within the downtown area. The goal of the downtown overlay district revision is to provide living areas in close proximity to high concentrations of employment to help reduce peak-hour commuter congestion, and support downtown commercial development and redevelopment.

Downtown regulatory reform is one of the priorities in the City's Livable Streets plan. The reforms are intended to improve the business environment by removing regulatory impediments and make it at least as easy to do business downtown as any place else in the Raleigh.

The amendment also changes the site plan approval process by adopting thresholds for City Council, Planning Commission and administrative approval of downtown projects based on changes in use and size. It changes the site plan approval process to allow the Planning Commission to approve changes of use which do not expand the existing building greater than 10,000 square feet; and allows staff to approve changes of use for new structures and expansions less than 10,000 square feet in Raleigh.

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Web links

City of Raleigh
www.raleigh-nc.org

Wake County

www.wakegov.com

Downtown Raleigh Alliance
www.downtownraleigh.org

Greater Raleigh Chamber of Commerce
www.raleighchamber.org

Greater Raleigh Convention & Visitors Bureau
www.visitraleigh.com

TOWING ORDINANCE TO BE CONSIDERED AT JULY 20 CITY COUNCIL MEETING

The Raleigh City Council will consider a revised ordinance to regulate towing under Special Items during the regularly scheduled meeting at 1:00 p.m., Tuesday, July 20.

Mayor Charles Meeker has proposed that towing from parking lots in non-residential areas be prohibited between the hours of 6:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. unless a vehicle has been in the lot for six hours. During the prohibition hours a boot that immobilizes the vehicle will be used instead of towing with the fee to remove the boot limited to \$50.00.

The prohibition shall only apply to the area bounded by Peace Street to the north, West Street to the west, South Street to the south, and Person Street to the east. The towing ban would apply to all lots not owned by the State of North Carolina located within 200 feet of Hillsborough Street between Salisbury Street and Dixie Trail.

The proposal exempts restaurants and allows for a maximum towing fee from those lots to \$75.00.

An owner or the owner's designee of any restaurant or retail establishment open for business during the proscribed hours may have a vehicle towed. The authorization to tow a vehicle must be in the writing by the owner or the designee.

The ordinance will become effective upon passage.

GREATER RALEIGH CVB ANNOUNCES AWARD WINNERS; BETSY BENNETT, CITY COUNCIL AND COUNTY COMMISSIONERS HONORED AT ANNUAL LUNCHEON

Dr. Betsy Bennett, the Raleigh City Council and Wake County Board of Commissioners were honored with major awards at the Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau's 17th annual luncheon recognizing the area's billion dollar visitor industry.

Here's a rundown of the awards and the winners:

Thad Eure, Jr. Memorial Award

Raleigh City Council and Wake County Board of Commissioners

The Bureau's most prestigious award normally goes to an individual or individuals who have made major contributions to the local hospitality industry during the previous 12 months. The award is named for Eure - the late restaurateur, respected businessman and community leader. (continued on page 7)

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However, this year's award recognized a great partnership that worked exceptionally well to take the necessary steps to move aggressively to build a new and competitive convention center and headquarters hotel. The Raleigh City Council and Wake County Board of Commissioners made strong progress the past year in moving to make this project a reality. Nationwide history has shown that two governmental entities working on a project of this magnitude (\$200 million public investment) tend to differ so much that politics get in the way of progress. That has not been the case to-date with this project that has been in the works for over 15 years.

John B. Ross, Jr. Leadership Award

Dr. Betsy Bennett, Director, North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences

The GRCVB's John B. Ross, Jr. Leadership Award recognizes an outstanding executive management-level individual in the Wake County hospitality industry who displays exceptional leadership skills. The award is given in honor of John Ross who was the GRCVB Chairman of the Board of Directors in 1995-96. The award exemplifies the courage, leadership, dedication and inspiration that John portrayed in the hospitality industry for more than 20 years.

The eighth annual award goes to Dr. Betsy Bennett for leading the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences through its dynamic period of expansion, elevating it from a hidden gem to a recognized leader in environmental education and natural science research.

Her success in generating public and private funding for programs and facilities is evident in the \$75 million facility downtown facility that opened in April 2000 as the largest natural history museum in the Southeast. Under her leadership, the Museum has attracted world-class exhibitions such as Titanic: The Artifact Exhibit which attracted 240,000 people during its successful run from August-April and contributed to a fiscal year visitation of 900,000. Bennett is a strong advocate for museum involvement in the community, as reflected in the Museum's participation in First Friday events and Raleigh's Livable Streets Initiative.

The GRCVB's annual luncheon was held at the Raleigh Convention and Conference Center. Kirk Watson, a former two-term mayor of Austin, Texas, and catalyst in the drive to expand Austin's downtown convention center, delivered the keynote speech and shared lessons about the significant economic benefits gained for the entire downtown Austin area and how the business community leveraged those opportunities. (continued on page 8)

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The Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau is a non-profit agency that promotes Raleigh and Wake County for convention and visitor business to enhance the economic growth and development of the area.

	Date/Time	Purpose
New Convention Center Design Concept	Telecast of July 13 session RTN cable channel 11 July 17, 8:30 a.m. July 19, 5:00 p.m. July 20,21, 23 7:00 p.m. July 24, 5:30 p.m.	
New Convention Center Design Concept	August 10, 5:00 p.m. Raleigh Convention and Conference Center	Character concept
New Convention Center Design Concept	September 14, 5:00 p.m. Raleigh Convention and Conference Center	Evolution of Character
Raleigh City Council and Wake County Board of Commissioners	October 14, 6:00 p.m. Raleigh Convention and Conference Center	Selection of the schematic design for the new convention center.

THE FIVE IN FIVE GOALS

Complete a Fayetteville Street Renaissance to reinvigorate the Street as the heart of Raleigh, our ceremonial corridor and the premiere address for office, events and cultural activity.



2. **Fund and build a new Convention Center & Hotel** to attract conventions and trade shows and improve the business environment for hotels, restaurants and other visitor services.
3. **Improve the pedestrian environment** making downtown accessible to everyone. Balance the needs of pedestrians against those of the car. Create an attractive, well lit, safe environment that links office and residential uses to amenities such as restaurants, museums and other venues.
4. **Undertake regulatory reform** to improve

the business climate by re-moving regulatory impediments, making it just as easy to do business downtown as any place in the region. Explore adding incentives in the regulations.

5. **Expand downtown management** to take a one stop approach to management and advocacy.