



Livable Streets Update (FIVE IN FIVE)



DowntownRaleigh

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COUNCIL APPROVES CITY PLAZA SCHEMATIC DESIGN

The Raleigh City Council voted 6-2 to approve a schematic design of the new City Plaza in the 500 block of Fayetteville Street. The design concept seeks to create a plaza, or public gathering place, that reinforces Raleigh's image as being of the most livable cities in the country.

The schematic design was drafted using urban design parameters that were approved by the City Council last fall. Those parameters center around five major areas: accessibility/sociability, legibility/organization, safety, sustainability/maintainability, and programmability.

Key components or themes in the schematic design are:

- The plaza design should include creative infrastructure -- i.e., ample conduits/connections, pipes and foundations -- in the right locations that will allow a great deal of flexibility in discussions about future markets, arts and festivals;
- The plaza should be smartly designed to support opportunities for ground-level uses. For example, the schematic design proposes retail pavilions on the edge of the plaza that encourage people to linger. The Simpson Organization, the owner of the Bank of America building in the plaza area, has committed to design, build, lease and manage the pavilions;
- The plaza should be high tech in that it has wireless connections to the internet;
- The plaza design should "encourage" entrepreneurs because properties adjacent to the plaza potentially contain approximately 45,000 square feet of new retail and restaurant space. For those entrepreneurs who are not ready to lease built space, the plaza will allow for market tents and vendors without having to close the street to traffic;

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- The plaza should be the outdoor entertainment heart of downtown in that it will be positioned and designed to host a variety of events, including concerts, parades, markets and street performers; and,
- The plaza should be designed to function as “a meeting place, front porch and living room” for nearby residential, hotel and office developments. This recognizes that new residents and visitors are keys to the revitalization of downtown.

The schematic design was developed by a design team, with considerable input from the public at design workshops last fall. The design team consisted of consultant Kimley-Horn & Associates and representatives from Project for Public Spaces, a nationally known consultant on urban design and public spaces, and DesignBox, a local creative design collaborative. Also on the design team were representatives from the City’s Planning Commission, Appearance Commission, Arts Commission’s Public Art Committee, and the Parks, Recreation and Greenway Advisory Board.

To complete full design development drawings of the City Plaza based on the schematic design, the City Council approved a contract amendment with Kimley-Horn in the amount of \$345,000. Council members also authorized the City’s Arts Commission to begin soliciting artist participation to refine certain aspects of the plaza design, and directed City Manager Russell Allen to develop agreements for public use of the plaza area and for private construction of the plaza’s retail pavilions.

COUNCIL APPROVES REYNOLDS TOWER PROJECT

The Raleigh City Council on Feb. 6 approved a mixed-use, 32-story building at the intersection of Hillsborough Street and Dawson Street. The 354,600 square foot building will include a five-story parking deck on the 1.18 acre site.

The building, when completed, will include:

- 160,000 square feet of office space;
- 86,550 square feet of hotel space with 133 rooms;
- 83,900 square feet of residential space with 25 residential condominium units; and,
- 8,640 square feet of ground floor retail space.

The Council’s Public Works Committee will review plans for the sidewalks, streetscape improvements and existing trees on the Hillsborough Street side of the project.

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Wake County
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Downtown Raleigh Alliance
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Greater Raleigh Chamber of Commerce
www.raleighchamber.org

Greater Raleigh Convention & Visitors Bureau
www.visitraleigh.com

COUNCIL AUTHORIZES DOWNTOWN PARKING TASK FORCE

The Raleigh City Council on Feb. 6 approved the creation of an 11-member task force to work with a consultant on a downtown parking study.

The parking study will provide a thorough analysis of the current and future demand of parking in the Downtown Overlay District and Pedestrian Business Overlay District. The study also will evaluate the management of the City's parking structures, parking policies, and recommendations on the use and benefit of existing facilities.

The 11-member task force will be comprised of residents who work, shop or live in downtown.

COUNCIL APPROVES CONTRACT FOR TRIANGLE REGIONAL CALL CENTER FOR TRANSIT SERVICE

The Raleigh City Council on Feb. 6 approved an interlocal agreement with the City of Durham and the Triangle Transit Authority (TTA) for a regional call center for transit operations. The call center will be managed by the TTA and will be located in its facility in the Research Triangle Park.

The center is expected to begin operations in March. Once activated, the center will centralize calls for transit information that are currently handled by each separate entity. The center will be operational between 7 a.m. and 10 p.m. during the week and between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. on the weekends.

The City of Raleigh will provide \$50,000 for the initial startup of the facility and \$146,826 in the Fiscal Year 2008.

"MAYOR MEEKER ON THE MOVE" COMES TO CITY'S WEBSITE

The City of Raleigh's web presence, www.raleighnc.gov, has launched a new feature for the site entitled "Mayor Meeker On The Move."

The feature will chronicle Mayor Charles Meeker's appearances each month on behalf of the City and will look ahead to his appearances in the coming month. The launch of this feature also includes a welcome message from the mayor to website visitors.

To learn more about this new addition, visit www.raleighnc.gov.

CITY MANAGER ANNOUNCES POLICE CHIEF PERLOV'S RESIGNATION

City Manager J. Russell Allen today announced the resignation of Chief of Police Jane Perlov effective March 2. Chief Perlov is leaving to join Bank of America Corporation in Charlotte as protective services executive. In that capacity, she will have overall responsibility for managing the physical protection of the corporation's associates, customers, and facilities.

"I believe Raleigh has had one of the best police chiefs in the country," Mr. Allen said. "Chief Perlov always approached her duties with a combination of integrity, knowledge, leadership, vision, passion, creativity, urgency, and plain hard work. Together with the members of her department, to whom she is always quick to credit, she has constructed a modern, problem-solving police force that is second to none."

Chief Perlov came to Raleigh in September 2001, after serving as secretary of Public Safety for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and a career with the New York City Police Department that was capped by service as a deputy chief of police.

"It has been an honor to serve as Raleigh's police chief," Chief Perlov said, "and it has been a distinct privilege to wear the department's uniform and to serve with the men and women who protect this wonderful city every day. I will always be grateful for the opportunity to work here and appreciative of the support the department received from the community and from the city's leadership."

Highlights of Chief Perlov's tenure in Raleigh include the implementation of decentralized policing, an enhanced relationship between the community and its police, advanced crime data collection and use practices, the creation of specialized units to precisely address public safety needs, greater accountability, and training and equipment improvements.

Raleigh's 2006 Part I crime rate was 33 percent lower than it was in 2001.

"We are grateful to Chief Perlov for her many contributions," said Mr. Allen, "and we wish her nothing but the best as she begins a new phase in her distinguished career."

The City Manager said Deputy Chief of Police Kent Sholar will serve as interim chief of police upon Chief Perlov's departure.

CITY COUNCIL RECEIVES ANALYSIS ON HILLSBOROUGH STREET ECONOMIC POTENTIAL, MARKET STRATEGY

In order to reach its full potential as an economically vibrant location, Hillsborough Street must become more of a destination for people throughout the Capital City area, according to an analysis of the market and development potential of Hillsborough Street. The analysis, conducted by the City of Raleigh Planning Department, was presented at today's City Council meeting.

Council members requested the Hillsborough Street analysis as they consider plans to improve the road. They took no action and asked for additional information. The council will discuss Hillsborough Street again at its Feb. 20 meeting.

The analysis focused on the section of Hillsborough Street from Pullen Road to Stanhope Avenue. It concluded that, with the proper investment strategy, Hillsborough Street could accommodate significant new development, including restaurants and bars, residential units, arts and cultural uses, nighttime destinations and retail establishments. The report identified 10 sites along Hillsborough Street that could support this new development.

To help spur the revitalization of Hillsborough Street, the Planning Department analysis mentioned several steps the City could undertake. This includes extending a business improvement district for downtown to include areas of Hillsborough Street, changing zoning designations, amending the City's Comprehensive Plan, undertaking parking reform, and targeting economic development incentives and infrastructure investment.

Included in the analysis are five options for streetscape improvements for Hillsborough Street. They are:

- Sidewalk improvements and new underground utilities between Logan Court and Horne Street;
- Sidewalk improvements and new underground utilities between Pullen Road and Oberlin Road;
- A new three-lane section without a median or roundabouts from Oberlin Road to Friendly Avenue;
- A new three-lane section with landscaped median but without roundabouts from Oberlin Road to Friendly Avenue; and,
- A new three-lane section with at-grade median and roundabouts, or traffic circles, between Oberlin Road and Friendly Avenue.

The Planning Department is recommending a new three-lane section with at-grade median and roundabouts at Hillsborough Street and Pullen Road and at Hillsborough Street and Oberlin Road. This option would create more than 200 on-street parking spaces on both sides of Hillsborough Street to support local businesses.

PROPOSED BOND ISSUE WOULD PROVIDE \$97.6 MILLION IN PARKS AND GREENWAY IMPROVEMENTS

A proposed \$97.6 million bond issue for parks and greenway improvements was presented Feb. 6 to the Raleigh City Council. Council members are considering a proposal to ask Raleigh voters to approve the bond referendum.

Council members directed the City's Parks, Recreation and Greenway Advisory Board to review and comment on the projects in the proposed bond referendum. The council plans to discuss the bond issue further at its March 20 meeting. If the council approves the proposal, a date will be scheduled to hold the bond referendum.

If approved, the bond referendum would include:

- \$13.6 million for unfunded projects that voters approved in the 2003 parks and greenway referendum;
- \$13 million for assisting in the acquisition, design and development of the Neuse River Greenway;
- \$30 million for park land acquisition;
- \$4.7 million to expand the capacity of current facilities; and,
- \$36.3 million for new facility development.

At the request of the City Council, the City's Parks and Recreation Department provided a report containing specific projects to be proposed in the referendum. The proposed projects are:

UNFUNDED 2003 BOND PRJOECTS (\$13.6 MILLION)

- Playground improvements;
- Building improvements;
- Outdoor security lighting;
- Satellite maintenance facility in west Raleigh;
- Neighborhood school parks; and
- Crabtree Creek greenway extension to the Neuse River.

NEUSE RIVER GREENWAY (\$13 MILLION)

- Funding to assist in the partial completion of the Neuse River Greenway from Falls Dam to Johnston County.

LAND ACQUISITION (\$30 MILLION)

- This component is for acquisition of various park sites located throughout the city.

CAPACITY NEEDS (\$4.7 MILLION)

- Outdoor components and amenities for Barwell Road Park;
- Expansion of Carolina Pines Community Center;
- New carriageway bridge at Pullen Park; and,
- Retrofit the carousel building at Chavis Heights Park for a new use.

NEW FACILITY DEVELOPMENT (\$36.3 MILLION)

- Construction of a senior center;
- Development of the Annie Louise Wilkerson M.D. Nature Preserve Park;
- Development of an interpretive center at Mordecai Historic Park;
- Master planning and first phase development of Randleigh Farm site;
- New aquatics facilities development;
- Construction of a community center in northeast Raleigh;
- Development of outdoor active recreation in northeast Raleigh;
- Development of a multi-use facility at Lake Johnson Park; and,
- Development of partnerships and/or utilization of commercial facilities to provide services in areas where neighborhood park land is either too expensive or unavailable.

RTN 11 OFFERS LOOK CAPITAL CITY'S 2006 EVENTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Raleigh Television Network's cable channel 11 (RTN11) is offering a brief look back at the Capital City's events and accomplishments of 2006. The 30-minute video, "Raleigh Year-in-Review 2006" is being shown on RTN11 at the following dates and times:

Tuesday, Feb. 6	12 p.m.	6:30 p.m., 10:30 p.m.	
Wednesday, Feb. 7	11:30 p.m.	Thursday, Feb. 8	11:30 a.m. 8 p.m.
Friday, Feb. 9	10:30 a.m.	Saturday, Feb. 10	9:30 p.m.
Sunday, Feb. 11	11 a.m., 9:30 p.m.	Monday, Feb. 12	6:30 p.m.
Tuesday, Feb. 13	4:30 p.m.	Wednesday, Feb. 14	9 a.m., 9:30 p.m.
Thursday, Feb. 15	1 p.m., 11 p.m.	Friday, Feb. 16	8:30 p.m.
Saturday, Feb. 17	11 p.m.	Sunday, Feb. 18	11 a.m., 4 p.m.

“Raleigh Year-in-Review 2006” will be shown on RTN11 throughout March. To check out further show times, visit the City of Raleigh website at www.raleighnc.gov and click “find the RTN schedule” under the “how do I” button on the home page.

DOWNTOWN EVENTS CALENDER

02-09 08:00 PM	North Carolina Symphony: ...	Meymandi Concert Hall
02-09 08:00 PM	Our Town	Fletcher Opera Theater
02-10	HK on J - NC Justice	Raleigh Memorial Auditorium
02-10 08:00 PM	North Carolina Symphony: ...	Meymandi Concert Hall
02-11	Jazzical Enloe	Meymandi Concert Hall
02-11 02:00 PM	Our Town	Fletcher Opera Theater
02-13 08:00 PM	Light In The Plaza	Raleigh Memorial Auditorium
02-14 08:00 PM	Light In The Plaza	Raleigh Memorial Auditorium
02-15 08:00 PM	Light In The Plaza	Raleigh Memorial Auditorium
02-15 08:00 PM	Carolina Ballet Presents ...	Fletcher Opera Theater
02-16 08:00 PM	Light In The Plaza	Raleigh Memorial Auditorium
02-16 08:00 PM	Carolina Ballet Presents ...	Fletcher Opera Theater
02-16 08:00 PM	North Carolina Symphony - ...	Meymandi Concert Hall
02-17 02:00 PM	Light In The Plaza	Raleigh Memorial Auditorium
02-17 02:00 PM	Carolina Ballet Presents ...	Fletcher Opera Theater
02-17 08:00 PM	Light In The Plaza	Raleigh Memorial Auditorium
02-17 08:00 PM	Carolina Ballet Presents ...	Fletcher Opera Theater

City Plaza Schematic



