

**Board of County Commissioners
Excerpt from Follow-up Memo of the
Tuesday, October 9, 2007 Meeting
Leon County, Florida**

Date: Wednesday, October 17, 2007
To: Honorable Chairman and Members of the Board
From: Parwez Alam, County Administrator
Subject: EXCERPT from the Follow-up to County Commission Meeting of October 9, 2007

Consent

ACTION TAKEN: Items # 9, #11, #15, and #20 were pulled for discussion. Commissioner Sauls moved, seconded by Commissioner Desloge, to approve staff recommendations on all remaining consent items. The motion passed 7-0.

Item 12 Approval to Grant the City of Tallahassee a 35-Foot Easement to Construct a Shared-use Path on the North Florida Fairgrounds Property
(Planning - Vincent Long/Wayne Tedder)

The Board approved Option #1: Approve the dedication to the City of Tallahassee of a 35-foot wide easement along the eastern edge of the North Florida Fairgrounds property for the Campbell Connector Shared-Use Path.

[Back](#) | [Print](#)

Board of County Commissioners Agenda Request 12

Date of Meeting: October 9, 2007
Date Submitted: October 3, 2007

To: Honorable Chairman and Members of the Board
From: Parwez Alam, County Administrator
Vincent Long, Deputy County Administrator
Wayne Tedder, Planning Department Director
Subject: Approval to Grant the City of Tallahassee a 35-Foot Easement to Construct a Shared-use Path on the North Florida Fairgrounds Property

Statement of Issue:

This item requests Board approval to dedicate to the City of Tallahassee a 35-foot easement to construct a shared-use path on the North Florida Fairgrounds property.

Background:

At a regular meeting on January 9, 2007, the Board approved, in concept, the dedication of a 30-foot right-of-way to the City of Tallahassee to construct a shared-use path on the North Florida Fairgrounds property (Attachment #1). The City of Tallahassee has received grant funding from the Florida Department of Transportation's (FDOT) Transportation Enhancement Project program to design and build a bicycle/pedestrian shared-use path from the St. Marks Trail to the intersection of Zillah Street and Paul Russell Road. A portion of this path is intended to intersect and traverse a portion of the current North Florida Fairgrounds site.

The Campbell Connector Shared-Use Path is intended to be a hard surface, shared-use path or trail, similar to other shared-use paths in the City of Tallahassee, for bicyclists and pedestrians (Attachment #2). Located near the Southside neighborhoods of Beacon Hills, Apalachee Ridge, and Indian Head, the path provides a bicycle/pedestrian link between the St. Marks Trail Extension east to the Capital City Park, Fairview Middle School, the North Florida Fairgrounds, including the Capital Stadium, the Leon County Extension Service, and terminating near the Jack L. McLean, Jr. Community Center and City Park. The project has community support from various community organizations and agencies. These letters were included as part of Agenda Item #10 of the January 9, 2007 agenda item.

The concept for this path was developed in 1995 by the City's bike/ped coordinator, and the grant application was initially sponsored by both Leon County and the City of Tallahassee. The project application has been revised several times to reflect budgetary constraints and opportunities, but it has remained unchanged in concept on the Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency's (CRTPA, formerly MPO) Priority Project List for Transportation Enhancements. In 2002, it was ranked as the #2 project, and in 2003, it was ranked as the #1 project.

Following this move, FDOT budgeted \$63,000 for preliminary engineering and design as part of its Five-Year Work Program in FY2005; \$306,000 for construction and \$1,000 for construction support in FY2008. At this time, the anticipated construction cost of this asphalt path is \$477,100.

Currently, the City of Tallahassee's Project Management Division of Public Works has received 90% plans for the Campbell Connector Shared Use Path. As presently designed, this path is approximately 1.1 miles in length and within the City of Tallahassee. It is considered an extension of the existing St. Marks Trail, and begins at the intersection of Woodville Highway (State Road 363) and Gaile Avenue, and proceeds east to end at the intersection of Zillah Street and Paul Russell Road.

The preliminary design of this path is as a nominal 10-foot wide asphalt path or trail with a minimum width of eight feet, as necessary per Federal Highway Administration guidelines and requirements. It will be designed to meet the Federal Americans with Disability Act (ADA) requirements. The conceptual design identified in the Preliminary Engineering Study requires no purchase of additional right-of-way at this time.

The original design of this path was intended to cross over Tram Road between South Meridian and Cornelia streets and then, meandering through that area of the fairground between the Capital City Park and Capital Stadium. However, because of safety and visibility concerns, and the uncertainty of redevelopment uses and plans for the Fairgrounds, the alignment of the path was shifted to cross Tram at Cornelia Street and to run parallel along the west side of Cornelia Street, the north side of Omega Avenue, and the west side of Zillah Street. This portion of the path alignment will still be located on Leon County property. This location is intended to buffer the adjacent residential areas, be accessible to residents living along or near these streets, provide visibility to path users, eliminate the need to acquire many private property easements, and reduce or eliminate crossings and costly drainage improvements in this area, including the enclosure of existing drainage ditches. The width of this buffer will also help ameliorate the environmental impact of the path by providing the opportunity to meander its location to avoid or minimize impacts to existing trees in this area.

This facility will be permitted, built, and maintained by the City of Tallahassee.

Analysis:

Staff recommends a 35-foot wide easement for this purpose along the eastern edge of the Fairgrounds property parallel to the west side of Cornelia Street, the north side of Omega Avenue, and the west side of Zillah Street. This location and width would allow the path to meander between the existing trees along the roadway, lessening or avoiding any significant impacts on these trees. Keeping the path within site of existing streets would increase the safety of trail users by the principle of "eyes on the street." The 35-foot wide area would also function as a buffer between the area to be redeveloped and the existing single-family home neighborhoods east of the Fairgrounds.

Since there are no specific development plans for the redevelopment of the Fairgrounds at present, any proposed residential or other designs could very likely easily accommodate this path, including cuts for access roadways, and even possibly minimize or even negate the need to build sidewalks along this area.

In addition, it is anticipated that adjacent, parallel on-street parking could be accommodated adjacent to the Fairgrounds, given the width of the existing right of way of the streets and the path's setback from the pavement edge. This parking would be located between the street travel lanes and the path itself.

Possible constraints upon the redevelopment of this portion of the Fairgrounds would probably include the need to minimize interruptions of this path (e.g., consolidating vehicular access points) where possible. Interruptions can be tolerated safely, but many interruptions would present a variety of turning movements and possible conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians, bicyclists, and other path users.

Trails or paths similar to this are also seen in many communities as valuable assets by existing and future residents, and the presence of a safe and well-designed shared-use path is valued especially by residents with children or by older residents who otherwise would not have a safe place to walk, skate, or ride a bicycle without being in the street.

Conclusions:

In order to locate, design, and build the Campbell Connector Shared Use Path, City Public Works and Planning Department staff have determined that the safest and most visible location is along the eastern edge of the North Florida Fairgrounds property parallel to the west side of Cornelia Street, the north side of Omega Avenue, and the west side of Zillah Street. This will require that a 35-foot wide easement along these sides of these streets be obtained from Leon County and transferred to the City of Tallahassee. Staff recommends the conveyance of the corridor as an easement only at this time so that any future redevelopment activities can utilize this area for density, intensity, and greenspace credits.

Upon redevelopment of the Fairground site, the easement should then be transferred to the City in the form of a public right of way.

Any undesired effects of this shared use path upon the future redevelopment of the Fairgrounds site is considered by staff to be minimal, and its existence may also be seen as a significant amenity. The cost to the County is expected to be negligible, consisting only of some staff time necessary to review and process the necessary paperwork to transfer and record the easement. Attachment #3 provides the legal descriptions for the Campbell Connector Shared-Use Path.

Options:

1. Approve the dedication to the City of Tallahassee of a 35-foot wide easement along the eastern edge of the North Florida Fairgrounds property for the Campbell Connector Shared-Use Path.
2. Do not approve the dedication to the City of Tallahassee of a 35-foot wide easement along the eastern edge of the North Florida Fairgrounds property for the Campbell Connector Shared-Use Path.
3. Board Direction.

Recommendation:

Option #1.

Attachments:

1. January 9, 2007 Agenda Item to Board
2. Map of Campbell Connector Shared-Use Path
3. Legal Description of Campbell Connector Shared-Use Path easement

[Back](#) | [Print](#)