

UP-DATE on East McEwen Phase IV

- November 2004 – The City of Franklin (“COF”) approved a Professional Service Agreement (PSA) for the preliminary design of Phase IV
- 2007 to 2014 - Aldermen move Phase IV McEwen from rank of 47th on the Capital Investment Project (CIP) list to #21, then #7
- Note: 2012 - Cool Spring Blvd. is completed from Avalon Entrance on Cool Springs to Oxford Glen Drive
- 2012 - Phase III McEwen from Carothers to Cool Springs/ Oxford Glen Drive is completed. \$14 million
- Fall 2014 - McEwen Phase IV is ranked # 1 on CIP list
- 2014 Temporary 4-lane Connector from roundabout to east on McEwen is built and completed \$2.5 million
- 2014 - Construction and completion of Wilson Pike and McEwen intersection; and Wilson Pike and Clovercroft turn lane and installation of traffic light. \$3 million
- March 2014 – COF approved funding for final design of Phase IV \$850,000
- January 2015 – COF approved additional funding for final design of Phase 4
- March 2015 – COF approved a new PSA for completion of the final design and construction plans for Phase IV
- October 2016 – COF "approved" funding for right-of-way acquisition and construction of Phase IV
- March 2017
 - COF formally approved contract to accept \$10 million federal funds for construction of Phase IV
 - COF approved additional funding to *modify* the Phase IV design to better accommodate adjacent property owners
- May 2017 State begins environmental study for Phase IV McEwen.

Even though the City is well into the final design of the project, the acceptance of federal funds forces us to follow federal and state guidelines for the development of a transportation project. In short, that step-by-step process is: *Environmental Study; Re- Design by State where necessary; Acquire Right-of-Way (ROW); Construction of Road*. The process has been in place for many years, and it helps lessen mistakes, which could result in the loss of state or federal project funds. When we accepted the federal funds, the Franklin City engineering staff offered the following timeframe for completion of the project:

- Environmental – 12 to 18 months
- Design – 6 to 12 months
- Right-of-Way – 12 to 18 months
- Construction – 24 to 30 months

This estimated timeframe is based on City staff's extensive experience developing projects per state and federal rules. On June 13, 2017, the City approved a PSA to perform the required technical studies to produce an environmental clearance document to be approved by the Tennessee Department of Transportation (TDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Since that time, the environmental consultant has exceeded time expectations and completed all technical studies.

They are waiting on review and comments from TDOT and FHWA on 2 remaining technical studies.

Once we receive it and we have received and addressed any comments, we will submit the final environmental document to TDOT and FHWA for final approval.

Once we receive this final approval, we can proceed with further phases of the project. Our consultant estimates that we will receive this final approval in early April. This would put the final time for the environmental process at approximately 9- 10 months rather than the original estimated 12 to 18 months.

Because we are only receiving federal funds for the construction phase, the **City has asked TDOT to proceed "at risk"** (e.g. we may have to change already completed work based on comments by TDOT and FHWA) with the acquisition of ROW and easements. **In the past**, TDOT has been very reluctant to allow local agencies (e.g. cities) to perform work for any project phase (i.e. design, ROW, construction) without going through its long- standing process. **(Let me further comment right here. As your Alderman... this is very frustrating to me because I / we (the city) have no power to change it if the State does not work with us to allow us to go ahead and start the ROW. This is the most difficult part of working within government vs. corporate America. Time is not only money, but delayed time affects productivity, quality of life, and most of all SAFETY.)**

However, in a meeting the early part of Feb. 2018 between TDOT and COF staff, TDOT did expressed that they are sympathetic to the City's desire to deliver this project as soon as possible. **Therefore, they are willing to allow the City to proceed "at risk" with the ROW acquisition process.** While this is **very good news**, it is important to understand that we are still required to comply with all the same state and federal standards. So, with that said we do not know how long that will take, but I will be getting up-dates from time to time that I can share with you. Also, the City will **still need to wait on ROW certification by TDOT before moving forward with construction.**

At this point, the designer has completed the actual design of the roadway, we are now in the process of **working with the various utility providers (i.e. electric, phone, cable, gas, water, etc.)** to determine where and how they will be affected as a part of this project. Many of these utilities will need to be relocated to allow for the roadway project. **Relocation of utilities will require the acquisition of additional easements for the placement of these utilities.** Because we will need to purchase property for the roadway project *and* various utilities, we want to make sure that we have finalized all of this documentation before approaching property owners. So, I do not know at this time when we will be able to start the ROW acquisition. I will give you an up-date on that as soon as I hear anything. The engineering department is diligently working on this and they call me when they have some news to share.

Please know that we are pursuing every avenue to deliver this project as soon as possible. I hope this gives a better understanding of the project's status. Please feel free to contact me with any additional questions or concerns or comments you may have.

Thank you for your interest, concern, and most of all your patience in this very long, long process. Keeping in mind we are working with the State (and Federal funds), we WILL get McEwen started and completed as soon as it is feasibly and legally possible.

Please know that I am deeply involved with this project and I consistently communicate with our city administrator and engineering department. I just stepped down as Chairman of the CIP Committee, but I still remain on the committee. We meet regularly the 4th Thursday of the month at 4PM in City Hall board room. Feel free to attend any of these public meeting. Your comments are always welcome!

Next update should be coming around April / May time period.

In addition, *public comment is welcome* at the **beginning of any Board of Mayor and Aldermen (BOMA) Work Session and Voting Session** on any subject "NOT" on the agenda.