



Legislation Text

File #: 12-1084, Version: 4

Resolution to Approve Entering Into Ann Arbor Connector Alternatives Analysis Memorandum of Understanding and to Appropriate \$60,000.00 from the General Fund, Fund Balance **(8 Votes Required)**

The City of Ann Arbor in cooperation with the Ann Arbor Transportation Authority (AATA), Ann Arbor Downtown Development Authority (DDA) and the University of Michigan (U-M) continue considering options to enhance transit service in the City. Enhanced transit service can improve mobility; provide attractive, time-competitive alternatives to automobile travel; and, strengthen the economic competitiveness of the city and region while adding to our sustainability. A concept for "Signature Transit" was defined in the City's Transportation Plan Update adopted by City Council in May 2009. The time frame for study of the signature transit corridor outlined in the Plan Update was "Short Term" within the first five years of the plan period.

The Ann Arbor Connector is the "Signature Transit" system intended to provide a rapid-transit linkage that connects major activity centers in the City to one another. The Connector system is also a sustainable form of travel as higher capacity systems such as this are more energy efficient and generate fewer emissions than cars or lower capacity forms of transit. Effective rapid-transit service can also assist the City in avoiding commitment of valuable land and financial resources to the parking of automobiles in our key business areas. The use of valuable land for parking in the future is likely to occur with expected growth and in the absence of effective higher capacity transit options.

In February 2011, the City in cooperation with AATA, U-M, and DDA with technical support from Washtenaw Area Transportation Study (WATS) completed the Ann Arbor Connector Feasibility Study that evaluated the need and alternative concepts for an advanced transit system to supplement the existing multimodal transportation systems in a corridor extending from northeast Ann Arbor through the U-M and downtown generally along the Plymouth Fuller Road corridors and then to the south towards Interstate 94 in the Briarwood Mall area.

The completed Ann Arbor Connector Feasibility Study concluded that:

There is a need for some type of alternative transit system in Ann Arbor.

An advanced transit system for Ann Arbor is technically feasible.

An advanced transit system could take the form of bus rapid transit, light rail transit or elevated automated guideway transit.

A higher capacity service is needed in the core between the North Campus and Central Campus/downtown.

Elements of an advanced transit system could be implemented incrementally to improve transit travel times and reliability, add capacity and improve quality of service.

A reserved guideway is needed to provide significant transit travel time reductions.

Funding for a Connector would likely come from multiple sources. Based on the ridership forecasts developed as part of this study, it appears that the Connector could qualify for New Start or Small Start funding from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

The governance of a Connector, including responsibility for planning and design, construction

and operation needs to be determined.

The next step in the planning for a high capacity transit system is to conduct an Alternatives Analysis. An Alternatives Analysis will advance the findings of the Feasibility Study by providing additional technical information to select the appropriate modal technology and more specific alignment and station locations. The Alternatives Analysis should develop and evaluate specific Connector alignments and technologies to assist the community to identify preferred alternative(s) for environmental review.

The AATA has been awarded a Federal Transit Authority (FTA) grant for the preparation of the Alternatives Analysis. The grant is an 80/20 federal-local grant. The total project budget is \$1,500,000.00 with 80%, or \$1,200,000.00 being provided by the FTA grant and the 20%, or \$300,000.00 local share being provided by the AATA (\$90,000.00), U-M (\$150,000.00) and City (\$60,000.00).

On April 27, 2012 the City sold a strip of land to the AATA which is immediately adjacent to the Blake Transit Center for \$90,000.00. These sale proceeds were appropriated to the General Fund as required by City Council Resolution R-11-391, which approved the sales agreement with AATA on September 19, 2011. The funding for the City portion of the local share of this effort is proposed to be appropriated from the General Fund fund balance, thus reinvesting transportation resources into transit system development.

Prepared by: Eli Cooper, A.I.C.P., Transportation Program Manager

Reviewed by: Craig Hupy, Interim Public Services Administrator

Approved by: Steven D. Powers, City Administrator

Whereas, To advance the planning related to the Ann Arbor Connector, a formal Alternatives Analysis study including technical information to select the appropriate modal technology and more specific alignment and station locations is an essential next step;

Whereas, the City of Ann Arbor, the Ann Arbor Transportation Authority (AATA), The Ann Arbor Downtown Development Authority (DDA) and the University of Michigan (U-M) find it necessary and desirable to undertake the Ann Arbor Connector Alternatives Analysis Study and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has provided a grant of \$1,200,000.00 to conduct such a study;

Whereas, URS Corporation was selected for the Connector Study including the completion of an Alternatives Analysis as part of a procurement by AATA, and reviewed by an evaluation team consisting of representatives from the City, AATA, U-M, and DDA for the purpose of completing the Ann Arbor Connector Feasibility and Alternatives Analysis Study;

Whereas, URS Corporation has successfully completed the Ann Arbor Connector Feasibility Study and has demonstrated the required experience personnel and competitive fee schedule to perform the work and is prepared to undertake the Alternatives Analysis; and

Whereas, The Federal Transit Administration has awarded a \$1,200,000.00 grant for this study and U-M will contribute \$150,000.00, AATA will contribute \$90,000.00, and the Ann Arbor Downtown Development Authority and Washtenaw Area Transportation Study will provide technical support towards the completion of the study;

RESOLVED, The City Council approves entering into a Memorandum of Understanding with AATA,

DDA and U-M for the completion of the Ann Arbor Connector Alternatives Analysis;

RESOLVED, That \$30,000.00 be appropriated from the General Fund fund balance to the General Fund Non-Departmental Fund budget as the City's portion of the local match of the Ann Arbor Connector Alternatives Analysis to be administered by and payable to the AATA, thus reinvesting transportation resources into transit system development;

RESOLVED, That the Mayor and City Clerk be authorized and directed to execute said Memorandum Of Understanding after approval as to form by the City Attorney and approval as to substance by the City Administrator; and

RESOLVED, That Council authorize the City Administrator to take the necessary administrative actions to implement this resolution.

RESOLVED, That the appropriated funds be for the life of the project, to be available until expended without regard to fiscal year.

Sponsored by: Councilmember Teall

As Amended by Ann Arbor City Council on October 15, 2012