Council-Manager Memo #87
Wednesday, November 23, 2011

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WEEK IN REVIEW:

Mon (Nov 28)	Tues (Nov 29)	Wed (Nov 30)	Thurs (Dec 1)	Friday (Dec 2)
12:00 PM Transportation and Planning Committee, Room 280 1:30 PM City Attorney Evaluation, Room CH-14 3:00 PM City Manager Evaluation, Room CH-14 5:00 PM Council Business Meeting, Room 267 6:30 PM Citizens' Forum, Meeting Chamber		12:00 PM Meeting of Council-Elect, Room CH-14 5:30 PM Metropolitan Transit Commission, Room 267		

CALENDAR DETAILS:

Monday, November 28

12:00 pm	Transportation and Planning Committee, Room 280 **AGENDA:** Steele Creek Area Plan, Bike share program
1:30 pm	City Attorney Evaluation, Room CH-14
3:00 pm	City Manager Evaluation, Room CH-14
5:00 pm	Council Business Meeting, Room 267

Wednesday, November 30

12:00 pm	Meeting of Council-Elect, Room CH-14
5:30 pm	Metropolitan Transit Commission, Room 267 **AGENDA:** Red Line financial plan

November and December calendars are attached (see "2. NovDecCalendar.pdf").

INFORMATION:

November 26 – Small Business Saturday

Staff Resource: Gail Whitcomb, N&BS, 704-336-5849, gwhitcomb@charlottenc.gov

Economic Development staff has been working with South End businesses and other Charlotte business associations to get the word out about Small Business Saturday, a national movement to support the local, independently owned small businesses that create jobs and build strong local economies.

This year's Small Business Saturday falls on November 26, the Saturday after Thanksgiving and the busiest shopping weekend of the year. Small businesses are uniquely positioned to lead the charge in creating a strong local economy, and Charlotte's neighborhood retail corridors continue to be a critical component of the city's overall quality of life.

Charlotte businesses are being encouraged to hold special promotions and events to attract consumers on Small Business Saturday, and Charlotte residents are being encouraged to get out and support their favorite local businesses.

South End businesses are holding a special event beginning at 10:00 a.m. at Atherton Mill complete with live music, gift wrapping, Santa visits and a reading of a Mayoral proclamation. For more information on this national "shop small & local" movement please visit http://nbs.charlottenc.gov.

CharlotteBusinessResources.com – Business Web Portal
Staff Resource: Gail Whitcomb, N&BS, 704-336-5849, gwhitcomb@charlottenc.gov

As of October 31, CharlotteBusinessResources.com, the business web portal designed to connect businesses in the Charlotte community with the information and resources they need to be successful, has had 16,438 visits since the site's official launch in May 2011. Developing the portal was a strategic objective of the 2010 Small Business Strategic Plan adopted by Council. Staff presented an update on the portal to the Economic Development Committee at its November 15 meeting, including key activities to grow the site in the future. A copy of the report is **attached (see "3. CBR Report.pdf")**

Federal Legislative Update
Staff Resource: Dana Fenton, City Manager's Office, 704-336-2009, dfenton@charlottenc.gov

Attached (see "4. HR2112 Summary.pdf" and "5. EyesonWashington.pdf") is a summary of the "Minibus" federal FY 2012 appropriations bill (HR 2112) signed by the President on November 18, 2011, and a more in-depth discussion of transportation funding in HR 2112. Both pieces were written by Holland & Knight, the City's federal legislative consultant.

The City was able to achieve two of its 2011 federal legislative objectives in the Minibus. First was the securing of $50 million for security funding at the upcoming presidential candidate nominating convention to be held in Charlotte. This funding is appropriated through the Department of Justice's State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance account.

The second objective achieved was the establishment of a pool of funding from which CATS could compete for a grant for the federal share of the costs of final design and right-of-way acquisition for the Blue Line Extension (BLE). Such a pool of funding was established at a level of $510 million and is funded through the Federal Transit Administration's Capital Investment Grants New Starts program. This is the outcome the City sought to achieve at the commencement of the FY 2012 appropriations process, and is consistent with the BLE position statement found in the proposed 2012 Federal Legislative Agenda that Council will be considering on Monday, November 28.

Sustainable Communities Regional Planning Grant
Staff Resource: George Berger, E&PM, 704-432-5216, gberger@charlottenc.gov

On November 21, 2011 Shelley Poticha, Director of the US Department of Housing and Urban Development's Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities, announced that the Charlotte region has been awarded a 2011 Sustainable Communities Grant. The formal announcement was held at the UNC Charlotte Uptown Campus building in Center City. Mayor Pro Tem Cannon provided comments on behalf of the City, and additional remarks were made by Congressman Mel Watt, County Commission Chair Jennifer Roberts, and Centralina Council of Governments Chair Martha Sue Hall of Albemarle.

The $4,907,544 grant was awarded to the region's CONNECT consortium, administered by the Centralina Council of Governments (CCOG). Over one hundred consortium members and partners from across the 14 county bi-state region will contribute an additional $3,075,860 of in-kind support. No cash matching funds are required. The City of Charlotte has committed in-kind support from Charlotte Department of Transportation, Planning, Engineering & Property Management, and Neighborhood & Business Services valued at $237,344. City Council endorsed a resolution supporting the grant effort at its June 27 meeting.

The Charlotte region was one of only 26 nationally, and one of three in North Carolina, to be awarded the grant. The purpose of the grant is to link regional economic development planning with land use, transportation, housing, and environment planning through a regional "blueprinting" process conducted in partnership with the Urban Land Institute and the Lee Institute. The City of Charlotte will also benefit from new funding/financing tools for redevelopment created via this grant. The region's Travel Demand Modeling program and process will be greatly enhanced by the data provided through the blueprinting process, which will help the City's long-range transportation planning. CCOG (NC) and Catawba Council of Government (SC) are the lead agencies for the three-year effort.

Links to the state and national press releases from HUD are below:
http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/states/north_carolina/news/HUDNo.2011-11-21
http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/press/press_releases_media_advisories/2011/HUDNo.11-274

Crossroads Grant for N&BS School Partnership Initiative
Staff Resource: Aisha Alexander, N&BS, 704-336-2175, valexander@charlottenc.gov

Neighborhood & Business Services (N&BS) has received an $8,000 grant award from Crossroads Charlotte to implement a Neighborhoods and Schools Partnership Initiative. The initiative will be piloted in four schools, each located within an N&BS Service Area:

- Ranson Middle School (NW)
- Winterfield Elementary School (NE)
- Albemarle Road Elementary (SE)
- Sedgefield Middle School (SW)

The overall goal of the initiative is to increase parent and volunteer participation in each school by 20%. The initiative will also seek to:

- Facilitate stronger connections between neighborhood residents, school administration/staff, parents and students;
- Encourage neighborhoods to be more proactive in partnering with local schools;
- Encourage school staff, administration and students to be active participants in neighborhood improvement efforts in the surrounding neighborhoods;
- Improve quality of life in neighborhoods.

The grant funds will be utilized to implement capacity building workshops to assist the neighborhoods and schools to create a collective vision for their community, and to design projects and action teams to move the neighborhoods and schools closer towards their vision. Once the communities have completed their capacity building and project planning workshops, they will be eligible for up to $25,000 in N&BS Neighborhood Matching Grants to implement their ideas.

CATS Receives Zero Non-Compliance Findings From FTA State Safety Oversight Program Audit
Staff Resource: John Trunk, CATS, 704-432-2560, jtrunk@charlottenc.gov

Charlotte Area Transit System and North Carolina Department of Transportation received an outstanding evaluation from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for its Safety and Security Oversight (SSO) Program. The FTA made zero findings of non-compliance for North Carolina State's program during its audit on November 15-17.

FTA's State Safety and Security Oversight Program has emerged as one of the primary mechanisms through which FTA works with states and rail transit industry to ensure safety and security. Out of the 40 SSO audits conducted since 2007, when FTA initiated its audit program, North Carolina and CATS joins the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania as only the second state with clear and provable compliance in each of the nine areas reviewed by FTA.

FTA noted strong collaboration among operating, maintenance, quality, procurement and safety functions at CATS, as well as between CATS and NCDOT personnel as they worked together to solve challenging safety issues. Both organizations demonstrated their commitment to ensure written plans and procedures were controlled, implemented and evaluated with ample opportunity for input from employees at all levels of the organizations. FTA shared that such diligent effort by NCDOT and CATS will assist them in handling any potential safety and security challenges that lie ahead in the future.

***City Source* Tells Stories of Citizen Service**
Staff Resource: Sherry Bauer, Corporate Communications & Marketing, 704-336-2459, sbauer@charlottenc.gov

City Source is the City of Charlotte's unique 30-minute program for citizens to learn about the City's services as well as how its employees serve the community. The program airs the first and third Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. on Cable 16 (Time Warner Cable), AT&T U-verse and is streamed LIVE online at www.charlottenc.gov.

The December 1 episode is a special edition that looks at energy efficiency, conservation and how stimulus money is being used to create jobs and save energy. Viewers will learn how building retrofits, solar panels, and the Neighborhood Energy Challenge are all part of it.

This information is also promoted in CMail, the City's electronic newsletter emailed to more than 1,100 subscribers and distributed by City departments whose services, programs and employees are featured in an upcoming episode. **Attached (see "6. CitySource.pdf")** is the flier.

ATTACHMENTS:

September 29 Economic Development Committee Summary **(see "7. EconDevSummary 9.29.11.pdf)**