

March 6, 2009



Streets, Sidewalks and Utilities Committee

1. Fairchild Avenue Bridge Construction Agreement with ODOT

Jim Bowling has requested Committee time to seek Council's approval of the construction agreement between the City and ODOT for the new Fairchild Avenue bridge. The agreement details the responsibilities of ODOT and the City during the construction phase of the bridge project. This is a standard agreement that provides the terms by which ODOT will manage the construction and the City will pay its local share. (attachment)

Administrative Recommendation

With the design and right of way phases of the bridge project complete, it is time to move into the construction phase and Jim has done a remarkable job at leveraging additional state and federal funding for the project to keep City costs within budget so I would encourage Council's authorization to sign the agreement.

Council Action

Authorize staff to sign the Fairchild Avenue Bridge project construction agreement.

Work Session

2. Downtown Planning Update

Over the last 9 months City staff from Engineering, Public Service, Community Development, Economic Development and the Manager's Office have been working with an advisory committee composed of representatives from Kent State University, Main Street Kent, Kent Chamber of Commerce, PARTA and downtown businesses to create a blueprint for the greater downtown area redevelopment. The focus of that effort has been to collaboratively study and evaluate how to integrate the many redevelopment projects that are in various stages of construction and planning. There is still more planning work to be done but at this point we thought it was an appropriate time to present the basic concepts and recommendations of the advisory team.

Finance Committee Items

2. PARTA Memorandum of Understanding for Multi-Modal Project

As you may recall, Congressman Ryan was able to secure funding for Kent State University, PARTA and the City to study the feasibility of a downtown transit center. The initial phases of the study were completed early last year and now PARTA, Kent State and the City would like to continue into the next phase of facility design and draw down another allocation of the Congressional earmark. PARTA has prepared an agreement outlining the shared funding (1/3rd PARTA, 1/3rd KSU, 1/3rd City) for the local match for the next phase of the Federal earmark. The City share of the next phase is \$16,023.

Administration Recommendation

The transit center is critical for downtown redevelopment and we have adequate funds in our current budget to pay our share so I encourage Council to authorize staff to sign the MOU and contribute our share of the local match.

Council Action

Approve the MOU and authorize staff to proceed in partnership with PARTA and KSU.



Information Items

1. City Building Department Yearly Report

Our Building Services Supervisor, Bob Nitzsche has provided City Council with a copy of his 2008 Operations Report for construction activity in Kent. The report indicates that Bob and his employees were responsible for permits and inspections of nearly \$12 million (\$5.9 million commercial, \$5.9 million residential) in construction activity in Kent last year. (attachment)

2. Monthly Permit and Zoning Reports

Gary Locke has enclosed a copy of the monthly zoning and permit violations report thru February 2009. As we start 2009 off, total construction permits are down by about 4% and fee revenues are down a corresponding 44%. There were only a few zoning complaints for the month. (attachment)

3. More Information on the City's Community Reinvestment Area

I am including in Council's packet a copy of a letter from the Ohio Department of Development (DOD) that responds to the concerns raised by Mr. Raymond Brown regarding the City's CRA program activities. The letter goes through Mr. Brown's concerns and in each case the State DOD representative finds the City's program operating in good standing. (attachment)

4. Economic Development Year In Review Slides

Dan thought you might want hard copies of his presentation on the year in review for economic development activity for future reference so I have included a copy in this packet. (attachment)

5. Sidewalk Snow Removal Cost Data

Before the latest snow melt, Gene and his staff performed some time analysis work to try to quantify what it would take to clear sidewalks based on different types of equipment and labor. Gene summarized his findings in the attached memorandum. This information was provided to the ad hoc citizens sidewalk committee so Gene and I thought Council should have the benefit of the same data for possible future discussion. (attachment)

6. Sports Tourism Initiative

You may recall that last year the City partnered with Kent State University to attract more sporting events to Kent. As a result of those efforts the State of Ohio Woman's High School Rugby tournament was held here last Spring and a new regional High School lacrosse tournament was held in Kent last Fall (The Fall Brawl). As a result of those early successes, Kent has since partnered with Akron, Canton and Medina to form a broader regional sports collaborative with the goal of attracting even more events to Kent and our region. I have enclosed a copy of one of the first marketing products developed by this new collaborative. The Sports Ohio Venue Directory showcases the exceptional facilities in Kent and the region. We have also developed a detailed database of all of the school gyms and fields in Kent and our adjacent cities that we have used to market Kent as a host City for events. Currently we're working with Kent State, Kent Parks and Recreation and the Boy Scouts to host a new event – the Black Squirrel Adventure Triathlon – scheduled for August 1, 2009. Below is the logo designed by a KSU student. (attachment)

