



CITY COUNCIL ACTION REPORT

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Phillip L. Nelson, City Manager

SUBJECT: Big Beaver Corridor Study

DATE: August 10, 2006

BACKGROUND

- The City Council, the Downtown Development Authority (DDA), and others have been looking at ways to retain Troy's position as a regional economic force. As a result, the DDA commissioned the Big Beaver Corridor analysis. The intent of the study is to make the boulevard and adjacent land uses as "World Class".
- The study indicates several "key concepts" intended to be the basis for the significant number of potential programs and projects that could result from adoption of the plan.
- The DDA has adopted the "key concepts" of the plan and has started the initial phase of project development by voting the expenditure of \$6,500 to do a conceptual landscaping design at Rochester Road and Big Beaver intersection.
- Other private investment in the area is taking place with the proposed development of the Monarch condominium project, and the proposed development of the former Kmart World Headquarters

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- While no dollar amount has been determined for total implementation of the plan, participation in the plan will no doubt be expensive. However, even partial development and implementation of the plan will have significant and positive fiscal enhancements. For the City, these enhancements will come in the form of additional property values, more people coming to Troy to shop and other ancillary development related fees.
- Since the cost will be significant, the Council will no doubt want to look at economic partnerships for plan implementation. Potential partners could include: the DDA, Oakland County, the State of Michigan and MDOT, the Road Commission for Oakland County, the Troy Chamber of Commerce, private developers and other business and grant agencies.

- The Council might also want to look to staff to develop a short-range financial plan that will include a capital improvements program. The plan could indicate short-range plans for construction projects, and could indicate funding sources as well as criteria for who pays for what.
- The Council might also want to look at common area maintenance agreements to share maintenance costs with developers or tenants, revising fee structures, or looking to alternative funding sources that will minimize the impacts of the potential projects on City financial resources.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- This project will involve a great deal of contract development and oversight, and will require new zoning law and review by the Planning Commission. This overall plan is certainly not a one size fits all, and creating new and innovative ways to address new types of legal and planning challenges will take a great deal of time and energy.

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- A plan of this scope and size could have far ranging impacts on City finances and resources. If the Council chooses to adopt the key concepts of the plan, the Council might want to direct staff to develop a plan that shows potential impacts on the budget, both short and long term. The Council might also want to direct staff to develop a listing of possibilities of how future budget funds can be spent to meet the Council's "core products and priorities" that are outside of the Big Beaver projects. As a related question, Council might want to consider the question of "What potential challenges does the City face if the City and partners do not undertake such a project?"
- A project of this scope will also impact the way staff does business. To name only a few potential impacts on the way staff works, the following is a listing of just some of the possible changes to day to day routines:
 - Possible changes to police patrol especially with the focus on the area becoming more of a pedestrian friendly atmosphere; and, possibly moving traffic from Big Beaver to other arterial streets.
 - Changing land use densities could impact Fire Department equipment needs
 - Building inspection and plan review will see significantly more work
 - Addressing additional services demands on City resources including personnel and equipment.
 - Will the addition of more trees and other landscaping increase the need for additional City resources or does the City look at common area maintenance agreements whereby the development is responsible for maintenance or at least pays a portion of maintenance expenses.

- Impacts of contract review, and day-to-day legal impacts could have significant impact on the City Attorney's Office. Do we look at adding staff, contracting for services to accommodate legal needs, or do we dedicate one of the current staff to work exclusively on Big Beaver related challenges.
- Each department will see increased activities, so the Council might want to develop a listing of Council priorities and have staff identify the resources to get the job done.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Due to the fact that the process is fairly new, staff would offer the following preliminary recommendations:

- 1) As a key part of the initiation of the study, staff recommends that the Council adopt the key concepts included in the Big Beaver Corridor analysis.

If the Council chooses to adopt the key concepts of the study, follow up recommendations to start staff processes could include:

- 2) That once the basic implementation plan for the study is developed and approved, Council direct staff to do a short-term financial plan complete with 5 to 6 year capital improvements plan. As another feature of the plan, staff would recommend that criteria be formed to show who pays for what. As another part of the fiscal planning analysis, if the Council so directs, staff will also investigate any and all grant possibilities as well as potential partnerships.
- 3) That staff be directed to look at staffing or personnel needs including the City Attorney's Office and to formulate ideas and solutions for meeting the extra time and other resource demands made on staff in the coming years.

The process will no doubt change and other considerations will arise over time. Staff would recommend Council consideration on the three basic recommendations to get the process started. Should you have any questions or require more information, please contact me at your convenience.

Att: Key Concepts (Slides 17 - 24 of PowerPoint Presentation)

A vertical strip on the left side of the slide shows a topographic map of a river corridor. The map features contour lines, a river channel, and a yellow line indicating a specific study area. A white circle with a black arrow points from this area towards the right, where a dark grey horizontal bar is located.

Big Beaver Corridor Study

Staff Report

August 28, 2006

Background

- The City Council, Downtown Development Authority (DDA) and others are looking at ways to retain Troy's position as a regional economic force.
- DDA commissioned the Big Beaver corridor analysis. The intent of the study is to make the boulevard and adjacent land uses *“world class”*.

Background

- The study indicates “*key concepts*” intended to be the basis for the significant number of potential programs and projects that could result from adoption of the plan.
- DDA has accepted the “*key concepts*”.
- DDA has started the initial phase of project development by dedicating \$6,500 to do conceptual landscaping design at Rochester Road and Big Beaver.

Background

- Other private investment is taking place with the proposed Monarch condominium project and the proposed Kmart World Headquarters redevelopment.
- Planning Commission has held study sessions to review and discuss the study.

Financial Considerations

- While no dollar amount has been determined for the total project, it will be very expensive.
- However, even partial development will have significant and positive fiscal enhancements.
- Enhancements could include more property taxes and other ancillary fees.

Financial Considerations

- The plan will have to be based on partnerships, i.e., DDA; Oakland County; the State/Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT); the Road Commission for Oakland County (RCOC); Troy Chamber of Commerce; private developers; and other business and grant agencies.

Financial Considerations

- The Council might want to look to staff to develop a short-range “*Capital Improvements Plan*” (CIP).
- The CIP could indicate short-range plans for construction projects, and could indicate funding sources as well as criteria for who pays for what.

Financial Considerations

- The Council might also want to look at other options for financial support such as:
 - ▶ ***“Common Area Maintenance Agreements”*** (CAMAs) to share or defray maintenance costs.
 - ▶ ***“Build for Art Fees”*** where a fee is charged as a part of the building permit process that goes towards the purchase of art sculpture or fountains.

Financial Considerations

- ▶ Revising fee structures, or
- ▶ Developing other alternatives that will minimize the impacts of the potential projects on City resources.

Legal Considerations

- The entire project will involve a great deal of time for contract development, review and oversight.
- The project will take a great deal of time to review and amend zoning laws and be reviewed by the Planning Commission.
- Plan is not a one size fits all.
- Will mandate creative and new ways to address new types of legal and planning challenges that will take a great deal of time and effort.

Policy Considerations

- The plan will create a need to rethink budget policy, i.e., staff could develop a plan showing short- and long- term impacts on resources as well as potential boosts in revenues.
- Council might have to look at changing budget policies to concentrate on core products and the allocation of available resources to fund those core products.

Policy Considerations

- Projects of this nature will change the way staff does business and could change the nature of day to day operations. As example:
 - ▶ Plan could result in changes to public safety requirements.

Policy Considerations

- Building inspection and plan review will see significantly more work.
- Planning will also see additional work in the form of potential zoning ordinance changes, reviews for ordinance conformance, etc.
- Will the addition of trees and other landscaping increase the need for additional City resources or does the City look at CAMAs to defer a portion or majority of costs?

Policy Considerations

- Impacts on staff in the City Attorney's Office for contract review and creating legal documents could create a need to add staff or contract out some of the legal work.
- Each department will see increased work activities, so Council might want to refine the listing of priorities and have staff identify the resources to get the job done.

Policy Considerations

- Perhaps the biggest policy consideration will be:
 - What potential challenges will the City face if the City and partners do not undertake such a project?

Recommendations

- Staff recommends that the Council adopt the “*key concepts*” included in the plan.



Key Concepts

Gateways, Districts and Transitions

- ❖ Organize and contain the boulevard as a distinct place.
- ❖ Sensitivity and buffering to existing residential edges.
- ❖ Linear parks and landscape buffers as transition.



Key Concepts

Gateways, Districts and Transitions, continued

- ❖ Variations in building height (massing) from the boulevard to the north and south edges of the corridor.
- ❖ Variations in urban form along the corridor, from district to district.

Key Concepts

Trees and Landscape as Ceilings and Walls

- ❖ Plantings symbolize and encapsulate the boulevard experience.
- ❖ Boulevard landscaping.
- ❖ Forested portals.
- ❖ Linear parks.
- ❖ Pocket parks.
- ❖ Large public squares.



Key Concepts

Walking Becomes Entertainment - Much to Observe and Engage in

- ❖ Sidewalk as gathering place and public space.
- ❖ Pulses of activity along the boulevard.
- ❖ Storefronts and streetscape that engage and attract pedestrians.
- ❖ Iconic pedestrian bridges.

Key Concepts

Mixing the Uses Turns on the Lights – Energetic Dynamic of Mixed Uses with a Focus on Residential

- ❖ Infusion of residential units to create lively, vibrant new neighborhoods.
- ❖ Diverse housing stock with a variety of price points.
- ❖ Linkages to restaurants, retail, parks and places of employment.

Key Concepts

The Automobile and Parking Are No Longer #1

- ❖ Important components but do not dominate the experience.
- ❖ Variety of transportation choices including transit, bicycle, pedestrian and motor vehicle.
- ❖ Ride sharing and transit incentive programs.
- ❖ Access management and transportation demand management to improve capacity without widening Big Beaver.

Key Concepts

The Automobile and Parking Are No Longer #1, continued

- ❖ Grid street pattern in urban core to disperse traffic.
- ❖ Public parking decks, placed along parallel collector and local streets to relieve Big Beaver traffic.
- ❖ Service lanes with parallel parking in urban core.

Key Concepts

Civic Art as the Wise Sage of the Boulevard

- ❖ Telling stories, creating memories, making us smile and informing us along the way.
- ❖ Civic art at corridor gateways.
- ❖ Public art at pulse points and in public squares.
- ❖ Sleek and elegant street furniture.
- ❖ Iconic footbridges.
- ❖ Bold design of farmers' market structure.

Recommendations

- If the Council chooses to adopt the key concepts, follow-up recommendations to start staff processes could include:
 - Council direct staff to compile a short-term financial plan complete with a 5 to 6 year capital improvements plan.
 - As a feature of the plan, staff would recommend that criteria be formed to show who pays for what.
 - Another part of the fiscal planning analysis, could investigate any and all grant possibilities as well as potential partnerships.

Recommendations

- ▶ A further recommendation could be to direct staff to look at staffing or personnel needs including the City Attorney's Office and to formulate ideas and solutions for meeting the extra time and other resource demands made on staff in the coming years.
- ▶ In concert with Council, staff, and the Planning Commission, the DDA could be designated the lead agency in the development and implementation of the study.



There are risks and costs to a program of action. But they are far less than the long-range risks and costs of comfortable inaction.

John F. Kennedy