

COUNTY RESOLUTION NO. _____

CITY RESOLUTION NO. _____

Resolution Regarding the I-26 Connector

- WHEREAS, traffic congestion and safety are increasing problems along I-240 and I-26 through Asheville, a critical route for regional commerce and tourism; and
- WHEREAS, local and regional residents, visitors, interstate travelers and commercial freight haulers rely on this route in ever increasing numbers; and
- WHEREAS, improvements to the I-240 and I-26 corridor should be minimally disruptive to the local community and should enhance the quality of life for residents and visitors wherever possible; and
- WHEREAS, North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) in its planning of TIP Project I-2513 (the project), has indicated preliminary commitment to alternatives that, compared to earlier proposals, reduce relocation of homes and businesses, reduce sound impact through better deployment of sound walls and provide critically needed bicycle, pedestrian and neighborhood connectivity infrastructure consistent with local government master plans; and
- WHEREAS, the NCDOT and the Federal Highway Administration have expressed openness to consider design alternatives that reduce scale and cost of the project, including the number of lanes required, should upcoming traffic demand studies warrant and justify reductions; and
- WHEREAS, in the event that the selected design alternative does not include modifications to the I-240 infrastructure on the east side of the French Broad River to support urban redevelopment, improved connection of neighborhoods, and improvements to local traffic patterns; local governments will evaluate a separate future project through the French Broad River Metropolitan Planning Organization (FBRMPO) to address those concerns; and
- WHEREAS, various detailed alternatives for design and implementation of the project are to be fully evaluated and provided to decision makers for formal consideration as required under the National Environmental Policy Act in the Environmental Impact Statement in the coming months; and local leaders, working through the FBRMPO, can only then provide their final endorsement of any alternative; and
- WHEREAS, the City of Asheville, in its five-year capital improvement plan, has designated \$1 million in co-funding for the project to support critically needed community-connectivity features; and
- WHEREAS, members of the community have expressed their strong preference that the project soon be funded and constructed in a way that solves current congestion and safety

problems while mitigating negative project impacts and addressing community needs;
and

WHEREAS, NCDOT is conducting preliminary cost benefit evaluations of similar projects statewide under the Strategic Prioritization Process to establish specifically which projects will be eligible for near-term funding of design and construction under the recently adopted Strategic Mobility Formula.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Commissioners for the County of Buncombe and the City Council of the City of Asheville, as follows:

1. That the Board of Commissioners for the County of Buncombe and the Asheville City Council, along with the FBRMPO, hereby recommend that for the purpose of the upcoming scoring and ranking process, NCDOT use the estimated cost of \$230 million associated with the preliminary 3c alignment alternative for the B section of the project; and, in preparation of the draft Environmental Impact Statement for the project, NCDOT clearly include elements that will address community needs for sound barriers and bicycle, pedestrian and neighborhood connections, including location, design, and the funding methodology of associated infrastructure elements.
2. That this resolution be effective upon its adoption.

ADOPTED this the 18th day of March, 2014, by the Board of Commissioners for County of Buncombe.

ATTEST

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR
COUNTY OF BUNCOMBE

KATHY HUGHES, COUNTY CLERK

BY _____
DAVID GANTT, CHAIRMAN

APPROVED AS TO FORM

COUNTY ATTORNEY

ADOPTED this the 25th day of March, 2014, by the City Council of the City of Asheville.

ATTEST

ASHEVILLE CITY COUNCIL

MAGDALEN BURLESON, CITY CLERK

BY _____
ESTHER MANHEIMER, MAYOR

APPROVED AS TO FORM

CITY ATTORNEY