

Memorandum

To: Honorable Mayor Bill Agan and members of the Richland Hills City Council
From: Jason Moore, Assistant to the City Manager
Date: May 5, 2015
Subject: Baker Blvd Intersection Project Update

Council Action: General Discussion and Direction

Background Information: As you will recall, in 2012 the city entered into an agreement with the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) to improve three intersections on Baker Blvd. The intersections are at Handley Ederville, Vance/Ash Park, and Rufe Snow. The current schematic design includes the following:

1. Right turn lanes at the Rufe Snow/Baker Blvd. and Handley Ederville/Baker Blvd. intersections
2. Sidewalks along Baker Blvd. (north and south sides) from Handley Ederville to Rufe Snow
3. Relocate Ash Park to intersect directly with Vance
4. Asphalt overlay at each intersection
5. Curb/gutter and drive approaches in various locations

All of the above improvements were based on the estimated construction cost in the Local Project Advanced Funding Agreement (LPAFA) of approximately \$2,700,000. When the design and other ancillary costs are included, the total cost of the project is estimated to be approximately \$3,550,500. Of this amount, the City will eventually be responsible for approximately \$91,250 as federal grants, state funds, and Tarrant County will provide funding for the rest.

Within the last several weeks, staff was contacted by the North Central Council of Governments (NCTCOG) transportation department to schedule a meeting with the City, NCTCOG staff, and TxDOT staff to discuss the project. During the meeting, concerns arose from the TxDOT Fort Worth District design personnel that this project would be pointless if the entire roadway were re-constructed in the near future. Essentially all of the completed items would be “throw-aways” since the ultimate design of Baker Blvd calls for the roadway to be lowered approximately 4 feet from where it is today. However, after further discussions and communication between NCTCOG staff

and TxDOT engineers, that concern is not warranted because the reconstruction of Baker Blvd will not happen for 30 to 40 years into the future.

After that meeting, additional questions arose from city staff. One of these was to determine why each intersection needed such an extensive asphalt overlay. The answer was, it technically doesn't, it was just part of the original project description.

Staff believes that the funding currently dedicated to re-paving these intersections might be better served to add additional curb and gutter along with drive approaches as funding allows. This would not eliminate the right turn lanes at Rufe Snow (westbound only) and Handley Ederville (eastbound only) nor would it eliminate the re-alignment of Vance/Ash Park. We would just be taking out the overlay areas that are not warranted and using those funds to address actual access and maintenance issues along the corridor. This change would require additional engineering fees as well but staff believes this increase can be absorbed within the original project budget.

The presentation and pictures aim to clarify the intent of this change. Staff will seek Council input to insure we are headed in the right direction.

With Council's direction tonight, staff will instruct Halff Associates, the project engineer, to move forward with 30% design plans. The engineer will submit the plans for TxDOT review and approval at the 30% design, 60% design, and 90% design levels. At this time, the project is still expected to be on schedule and let (bid out) by July 2016 and construction beginning by September 2016.

Board/Citizen Input: N/A

Financial Impact: N/A

Staff Contacts: Jason Moore, Assistant to the City Manager, jmoore@richlandhills.com

Attachments: Example of proposed changes at Rufe Snow/Baker Blvd intersection

