

**BOARD OF ALDERMEN**  
**AGENDA ITEM ABSTRACT**

ITEM NO. B(2)

**MEETING DATE: June 1, 2004**

**TITLE: Enhancement Program Applications**

<b>DEPARTMENT: PLANNING</b>	<b>PUBLIC HEARING: YES ___NO__X__</b>
<b>ATTACHMENTS:</b> <b>A. Resolution to Accept Enhancement Applications</b> <b>B. Project Maps</b> <b>C. Project Estimates</b>	<b>FOR INFORMATION CONTACT:</b> <b>Dale McKeel – 918-7329</b>

**PURPOSE**

The North Carolina Department of Transportation is accepting applications for transportation enhancement projects. Town staff has conducted an evaluation of current needs and is proposing that applications for two projects be submitted to NCDOT. A resolution authorizing the Town Manager to submit Transportation Enhancement Program applications for the projects is attached.

**INFORMATION**

The transportation enhancement program was established by Congress in 1991 through the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) as a means of ensuring that a variety of projects—most not typically associated with highway building—were implemented. The popularity of this program nationwide led Congress to reauthorize the enhancement program in 1998 through the Transportation Equity Act of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (TEA-21).

The following types of projects are eligible for funding with enhancement funds:

- Facilities for bicycles and pedestrians
- Bicycle and pedestrian safety and educational activities
- Acquisition of scenic/historic easements/sites
- Scenic/historic highway programs, including tourist/visitors centers
- Landscaping and scenic beautification
- Historic Preservation
- Rehabilitation/operation of historic transportation facilities
- Preservation of abandoned railway corridors
- Control and removal of outdoor advertising
- Archaeological planning and research
- Mitigation of highway runoff and provision of wildlife connectivity
- Establishment of transportation museums

Enhancement funds are made available annually to North Carolina and are administered by NCDOT. NCDOT has developed a biennial process through which local governments and nonprofit organizations can apply for funding of enhancement projects. Carrboro's applications will be considered for funding with other applications from Orange, Alamance, Guilford, Caswell, and Rockingham counties, which make up NCDOT Division 7.

In mid-April, NCDOT issued a call for applications. Initial applications are due June 4, 2004. The applicant may receive reimbursement for eligible costs as the work is completed. Work performed and cost incurred prior to project selection and federal funding authorizations are not eligible for reimbursement.

Carrboro has previously received funding for enhancement projects along Old Fayetteville Road, Jones Ferry Road, and portions of Brewer Lane, Hargraves Street, and Wesley Street. Town staff proposes that applications be made for two enhancement projects in Carrboro, as follows:

1. Pedestrian Enhancements at the Intersection of NC 54 and Main Street
2. Bicycle and pedestrian path connecting Bel Arbor Drive and Simpson Street.

Town staff considered developing applications for other projects, such as greenway trails and downtown pedestrian/streetscape enhancements. However, it was determined that these projects were not sufficiently defined in order to apply. When the Downtown Circulation Study and greenway trail studies are completed, however, the Town can apply for enhancement funds for these projects.

The enhancement process requires the sponsor of a project to provide at least 20 percent of the project's cost as a local cash match to show commitment by the local community. The pedestrian facilities funded by these projects were included in the list of projects to be funded from bond proceeds. If the projects are approved for funding by NCDOT, it is anticipated that the 20 percent local match will be provided by bond funds.

Final decisions on enhancement project funding will be made by the N.C. Board of Transportation. An Enhancements Advisory Council has been created to review the applications and make recommendations to the Board of Transportation. The project selection timeline is as follows:

- Mid-April -- Board of Transportation issues call for projects:
- June 4 -- Deadline for application submittal
- August 10 -- Enhancement Advisory Council develops recommendations
- September 1,2 -- Board of Transportation considers recommendations
- October 6,7 -- Board of Transportation funding awards

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS**

The proposed enhancement projects in Carrboro are listed below.

### *Pedestrian Enhancements at the Intersection of NC 54 and Main Street.*

This project will improve pedestrian access between the Carrboro Post Office and Carrboro Plaza Shopping Center by installing 160 linear feet of sidewalk. Once this work is completed, NCDOT at no cost to the town will stripe the crosswalks, modify an existing concrete median and corner island to provide a pedestrian cut-through, and install pedestrian signals and

pushbuttons (see Attachment B). This project supports initiatives by citizens and the Board of Aldermen to improve pedestrian access to shopping areas in Carrboro. The project cost is estimated to be \$7,530. If the project is selected for Enhancement Program funding, the Town would be required to provide a 20% local share, which is \$1,506.

*Bicycle and pedestrian path connecting Bel Arbor Drive and Simpson Street.*

This project would provide a bicycle and pedestrian connection between the Bel Arbor neighborhood and Simpson Street, utilizing an easement proposed for dedication to the Town when the Bel Arbor neighborhood was approved, and a portion of Phipps Street right-of-way (see Attachment B). This project supports adopted development plans, enhances safety, and fills a transportation void. An application for this project was submitted in 2002 but was not funded. The project cost is estimated to be \$65,695. If the project is selected for Enhancement Program funding, the Town would be required to provide a 20% local share, which is \$13,139.

## **ADMINISTRATION'S RECOMMENDATION**

The staff recommends that the Board of Aldermen approve the attached resolution.