

1 **Work Session of the Sandy Springs City Council was held on Tuesday, March 2, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.,**
2 **Mayor Rusty Paul presiding.**

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4 **I. Invocation – Pastor Jacob Berlinski, Associate Pastor, Rivercliff Lutheran Church**

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6 **II. Staff Discussion Items**

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8 **A. 2021-090 2021 Annual Action Plan**

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10 **Matthew Anspach, Senior Planner, Community Development** stated that the Annual Action
11 Plan public comment period will open on Friday, March 19, 2021 and end on Monday, April 19,
12 2021, which is advertised and has been communicated to various organizations. Staff anticipates
13 presenting the final plan for adoption on Tuesday, May 4, 2021. The plan for 2021 as pertains to
14 the CDBG Program is to complete Phase 3 of the South Roswell Road Sidewalk Plan and continue
15 to defease the Section 108 Loan Debt. No action is required this evening.

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17 **B. 2021-091 Veteran's Park**

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19 **David Wells, Deputy City Manager** introduced John Fish, project lead designer, with Barge
20 Design Concepts.

21
22 **John Fish, Barge Design Concepts**, along with **Steve Provost**, lead designer on this project, as
23 he was on the City Springs project, presented a quick overview. The park is approximately 2.0 +/-
24 acres in size; long and linear over 1,000 feet long; defined by realigned Mt. Vernon Highway and
25 Johnson Ferry Roads, being constructed as a TSPLOST Project. The presentation 'walked' the
26 perimeter, pointing out the various points along the perimeter. Fronting Roswell Road, there will
27 be a large fountain feature, bookending the City Springs fountain, designating this to be the 'heart'
28 of Sandy Springs. The perimeter along Johnson Ferry Road features a 12' wide multi-use trail,
29 ultimately will connect to the Sandy Springs MARTA station; allowing for areas in which to
30 display feature art pieces through the City's Annual Sculpture competition. The Veteran's Plaza
31 will feature three flag poles, seating, monuments with seals of the military branches, plus an 8th
32 monument that will tell the story of the plaza and, shaded by small flowering trees. Along Mt.
33 Vernon Highway, there will be nine parallel parking spaces. It was reiterated that the monumental
34 feature sculpture shown in the presentation is just a representation; it is anticipated that Art Sandy
35 Springs will undertake choosing the monumental feature sculpture in parallel with this project to
36 choose.

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38 **Council Member Tibby DeJulio** was very pleased with the representation, especially the
39 Veteran's Plaza. He stated that having the option of pavers in this area, he himself would like to
40 feature his former unit and his branch of service. He felt this would be a great place to have
41 representation for memorial and our Veteran's Day celebrations.

42
43 **Council Member John Paulson** talked about the meaning of this park tells our veterans that they
44 were worth their service. He wanted to make sure they are proud of this and that we acknowledge
45 them and their service. He expressed that his desire is to see that the monumental feature sculpture
46 is large and grand enough to be seen from all corners of this park.

Council Member Andy Bauman and asked what are the costs attached to this project. Is there an opportunity to add digital technology? Will we have an opportunity for public feedback?

Deputy City Manager Wells replied that at this point, in design concept, without actual construction documents, this comes in close to \$5M. The biggest component is the fountain, which will mirror the City Springs fountain.

City Manager Andrea Surratt stated that this project would be considered in the FY2022 Budget, if approved to move forward. There will be chance to consider this in a few months. The design phase will probably take until July 2021, which brings the City into the new fiscal year. Late 2021 to begin any construction.

Mayor Rusty Paul commented that this is the first look for everyone at what could be accomplished here. Chief DeSimone, Council Member Paulson and Council Member DeJulio should invite veterans from across the Sandy Springs community to gather their feedback. Staff will post this presentation on the website for the community to provide feedback.

Council Member Chris Burnett suggested a goal for completion could be Veteran's Day in 2022, which would be a great way to launch the park.

Consensus of Council: Proceed to the next phase and begin toward the construction drawings and process.

III. Public Works

A. 2021-092 Draft Transportation Master Plan

Kristen Wescott, Traffic / Transportation Unit Manager, introduced the draft Transportation Master Plan. Since first shared at the Council Retreat, the City has hosted online public meetings and spent an extensive amount of time with a net-based feedback tool for citizens and others to provide comment. There were 1,210 visits to the site, with 1,368 "likes" and 327 project comments. About 279 respondents participated in the Travel Habits Survey and 98 respondents provided comments on "What's Missing." Tonight's presentation is an overview will provide a project update. Staff anticipates presenting the Transportation Master Plan to the City Council for adoption in early April, 2021.

Jessica Choi, Kimberly-Horn and Associates, state public outreach efforts were made through the Sandy Springs Reporter and the Neighbor; the City's eNewsletter, public calendar and Week in Review; Facebook and Nextdoor; local HOAs; Perimeter Connects and focus group participants; and flyers and post cards to businesses and apartment complexes, both in English and Spanish. There were over 200 survey respondents that lived in the city and an additional 130 who work in Sandy Springs. The demographic breakdown of respondents was largely 35 years or older; the majority had an income over \$100K; most were employed full-time, followed by those retired in the community; and the majority identified as white. As to the "What's Missing" comments, there were suggestions made to expand the sidewalk network; improvements that are already

underway in various studies; and, general support for trails and sidewalks. There were other comments about sound barriers regarding I-285 and Power Ferry Road and then wayfinding signage when entering the city.

Caitlin Shankle, Transportation Manager, reported Staff scoured the list of recommendations, and where there were sidewalk projects, project staffs shared the comments with the City's Sidewalk Program managers. Taking into consideration what was received from public feedback, we compared what was presented during the January Retreat and are adding an Abernathy Sidepath between Glenridge Drive and Roswell Road. This is the segment that connects into the Abernathy Green Way, into Perimeter CID, and has a lot of housing. This was very well received. Staff is proposing this be added (+\$6.1M) along with adding a Powers Ferry Area Multimodal Circulation Study (\$+200K). Additional feedback resulted in staff removing the proposed Barfield sidepath between Mt. Vernon Highway and Abernathy Road (-\$6.5M). Also, staff has removed the fiber connection to Fire Station No. 2 (-\$60K), as the cost decreased to \$6K so can be completed sooner with available funds. For short-term projects (five years), there is an increase of about \$140K. For mid-range projects (about 10 years out), the budget is reduced by \$400K. This depends on having additional TSPLOST funding. Without TSPLOST funding, the City will not be able to do as much going forward. We are hoping to bring the final Transportation Master Plan for adoption consideration at the April 6, 2021 Mayor and City Council Meeting. The approved updated Transportation Master Plan will be used as a basis for the five-year Capital Improvement Program and candidate projects for TSPLOST programs. The Transportation Master Plan is a guidance documents, as it can help inform TSPLOST. Throughout this process, over 300 projects were evaluated, which can be referenced later for future planning.

Council Member Andy Bauman asked if simple projects like road repaving and maintenance are a part of the Transportation Master Plan. We can put something like repaving, as we have in the past, in TSPLOST? We hear a lot from constituents about traffic calming and safety. How does traffic calming fit into this? We have a policy that results in little traffic calming because of the imbedded obstacles to it. The boulevard project is something is traffic calming, but does not depend on the signatures of citizens or businesses to get it done. The City identified it as a need and added it to the plan. Going through this process, has staff identified any flaws in the City's Traffic Calming Policy?

Transportation Planner Shankle replied that the list presented is Capital projects related, not on-going maintenance. This is new projects versus maintaining what is already in place. The City has its own traffic calming policy. It is something that was mentioned in the Plan, as part of Existing Conditions, and there are projects, like the boulevarding, that would have an element of traffic calming.

Traffic / Transportation Unit Manager Wescott replied certainly safety is high on everyone's agenda. Reviewing the Traffic Calming Policy is something staff is available to do, though it was not done during this process. In the Annual Traffic Engineering Assessment complements this larger transportation master planning process, staff takes a safety focus. This has resulted in projects like the Roswell and Abernathy Road intersection project or projects in the Medical District. In that process, staff is looking at areas with the greatest prevalence of incidents, both

fatal and injury crashes, and really honing in on development projects where the City can make a difference.

Council Member Bauman stated he is referring to speeding, and would like to see a review of how many groups have inquired about traffic calming and how many traffic calming projects have been done. Finally, in various places throughout the Traffic Master Plan there are various diversity statistics. Diversity, inclusion and equity is part of the plan's scoring system under "wellbeing and environment." Does the Plan include a general policy statement on diversity, equity and inclusion, as it transcends economics and access to transportation? Do similar plans in other communities include this type of policy statement that the Council may want to consider?

Transportation Planner Shankle replied this subject was included the criteria to incorporate into the core vision of the document. Staff did try to reach out to a wide variety of people through the process with the virtual meetings, online survey, and stakeholder focus groups and one-on-one interviews, both in English and Spanish. There is more the City can do to build upon those efforts. If not for COVID, staff could have done more to meet people where they are.

Mayor Rusty Paul stated concerning is how little feedback was received from the minority communities in these conversations. Maybe the Diversity and Inclusion Task Force can look into how better to engage those communities. It is an ongoing process. Maybe a footnote can be included of the engagement processes that were used. The City will continue to work on engagement processes. Whether we need a statement in the plan about the process or not, will be left to the staff to bring back recommendations.

Council Member John Paulson asked should costs be considered when ranking potential projects. For example, the sidepath that goes from Roswell Road, up Roberts, and ending at Dunwoody Place. All previous plans have had it ending at the entrance to the park. Could that project be broken into two pieces? The critical portion is from Roswell Road to the entrance to the park. Then the second leg could be ranked differently. There could be ways of subdividing these projects to make them a little more financially manageable.

Transportation Planner Shankle replied that yes, there was prioritization process where there were several criteria and they took a second look to see that the things we are considering are feasible and constructible. Comparing across categories can be difficult, so prioritization was within project types. There were different about ten criteria, like equity, connection to land use, mobility, safety, etc. It does make sense to phase that specific project, which can be looked at.

Council Member Reichel asked, for those who may not know, explain the difference between a sidepath and a sidewalk.

Transportation Planner Shankle replied a sidepath is a space where both cyclists and pedestrians can walk and bike safely. It will be at least 8' wide, ideally 12' wide, and have a 5' buffer from roadway to provide comfort in biking and walking. A project typically will be 6' wide and it is for pedestrian use.

Mayor Paul stated staff will take into consideration comments made and will present the Transportation Master Plan for consideration of adoption on April 6.

IV. City Council Discussion Items

Council Member Andy Bauman stated some citizens have been asking for months about the city's plans for parking at the Indian Trail entrance, at 1425 Indian Trail NW, a street off Northside, to the national park. They are grateful for the police coming out in response to complaints. There has been some discussion in the past about, for the short-term, maybe contracting parking enforcement. Is this a possibility, particularly in the peak periods on weekends? To say move on down the road, before they actually get a ticket? Even with the tickets, it has gotten chaotic at times with people parking on both sides of the street. Also, can the City coordinate with the other stakeholders, the National Park Service, or Congressman Loudermilk's office, or is this something that an individual council member needs to be doing? It is a great amenity, but has become very chaotic in the last year.

City Manager Andrea Surratt replied that staff has invested a lot of time in attempting to figure out the bigger problem. The fundamental issue is that any enforcement needs to be done by the police department. Enforcement does not take into account visitors to the area versus residents. On-street parking is one of the critical issues, and enforcement is enforcement. There is no middle ground to do selective enforcement.

Mayor Rusty Paul stated there is not one single site within the national park network that has adequate parking. The City is building a sidepath at Powers Ferry all the way down to the Powers Ferry part of the park because people are forced to park up and down Interstate North to be able to access the park. This is a problem, and not just in the Harris Trail area. The City is having to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars to create a safe pathway for people to walk down there. We need cooperation from our congressional delegation to find resources to put adequate parking for the demand these parks are generating. We have got to find some solution with the Federal government to be able to handle the demand.

Council Member Bauman asked what are the plans for opening the PAC and its programming? Is it the intent of the City Manager and staff to advise us after things have been done? Or to bring to our attention for feedback? Who is making the decisions? Are you going to be consulting with us to get feedback? There was no feedback from individual citizens. Who is involved? To the extent we can be looped in, we certainly have connections in the community. We are from the community.

City Manager Surratt replied we are following the Governor's orders. We plan to bring the City Council meetings back to in persons meetings on April 20th. In terms of programming, PAC Director Shaun Albrechtson has plans to announce an amazing program schedule for the upcoming year. It is still a fluid situation and so what we can talk about are things that are like the Farmer's Market that begins April 17; some of the summer concert series on the Green, beginning with Driving and Crying on April 30. The full program will be shared with City Council when it is ready.

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229 **Mayor Paul** stated it is very fluid right now. Depending on the Governor's Executive Order, we
230 are planning for a return to indoor entertainment and events in the early fall. A lot of touring
231 groups are still not sure what they are going to do from a COVID response point of view. There
232 have been some groups that have been scheduled, but there is a lot left to be done. When the
233 briefing is ready for Council to provide feedback it will be brought to Council. We have never
234 done that before, try to determine what events and programming are going to go on. We have left
235 that to the professionals. Our instructions to Director Albrechtson and his staff have been to ensure
236 that you have diverse programming and to reach out into the community to get as many different
237 groups and types of entertainment and cultural and arts. A lot of work has been done. In just a few
238 weeks some announcements will be made about the basic thrust of the program. There is a task
239 force of 10-12 people that meet every Monday to see where they are and continue to plan. What
240 they do is take the demographics of the community and try to find groups that fit our demographic
241 and that fit our space.

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243 **Council Member John Paulson** asked if staff can provide a short presentation of how things are
244 going at an upcoming Staff Report. Council has not received an update about opening in a while.

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246 **Mayor Paul** replied that an update can be done, but not a formal announcement, to at least tell you
247 where we are at this point. It cannot be taken as absolute because it is probably going to change.

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249 There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at **7:25 p.m.**

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251 Approved: April 6, 2021.

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258 Russell K. Paul, Mayor

Raquel D. González, City Clerk