

## Blackman Town Hall Follow-up

Our city leadership team has prepared responses to the questions we received at the January 8 Blackman Town Hall meeting. If you have a question about a response, feel free to call the City Manager's Office at 615-849-2629.

### Roads and Traffic

- 1 The intersection of Fortress and Puckett needs a traffic signal and a second way out of the neighborhood.**

Preliminary turning movement counts indicate that the traffic volumes do not meet the required 8-hour minimums for a traffic signal at the intersection. As a second way out of the neighborhood, Manson Crossing Drive will be extended to Manson Pike across from Bill Smith Drive. This extension is included in the City master plan as part of the future development of Puckett Creek Station (property next to Walmart).



- 2 The intersection of 840 and Veterans Parkway needs a traffic signal.**

Observations of traffic flows at the exit ramp show that the traffic volumes do not currently meet the warrants for a traffic signal at this location. We will monitor the intersection traffic flow and crash data and conduct a traffic study if warranted.

- 3 The intersection of Veterans Parkway and Shores Road/Blackman Road needs a traffic signal.**  
Observations of traffic flows at the intersection of Veterans Parkway and Shores Road/Blackman Road show that the traffic volumes do not currently meet the warrants for a traffic signal. We will monitor the intersection traffic flow and crash data and conduct a traffic study if warranted.
- 4. Brinkley Road needs improvement.**  
Brinkley Road is currently under design to improve it to a 3-lane section with sidewalks. A multi-use path is currently being evaluated for the east side of the road. Currently, right of way acquisition is scheduled to begin in the summer of this year and construction is scheduled to start the first quarter of 2018. The schedule is subject to approval of the current Capital Improvement Plan.
- 5. Blaze Drive needs to be repaved.**  
Blaze Drive is under design to improve it to a 3-lane section with sidewalks and a multi-use path. Most of the right of way has been donated by developers of the adjacent subdivisions. If the current Capital Improvement Budget is approved, reconstruction of the road could begin later this spring.
- 6. Blackman Road needs improvement, including a multi use path.**  
Improvements to Blackman Road south of I-840 including the consideration of a multi-use path will occur as the adjacent property continues to develop. Improvements to Blackman Road north of I-840, primarily at its intersection with Manson Pike/Burnt Knob Road, will be considered with the development of the new west park. In addition, improvements to Blackman Road will be considered as part of the update to the major Thoroughfare Plan.
- 7. Burnt Knob Road needs improvement.**  
Improvements to Burnt Knob Road are recommended with the development of the west park by the City.
- 8. Request to widen Highway 96 from the bridge going west.**  
TDOT has designed improvements to S.R. 96 from the bridge to the county line. TDOT's latest schedule includes the construction of improvements from the bridge to the intersection of Veterans Parkway to bid by the end of 2017.

I note that the schedules for many of these items will be more clear after the current CIP schedule is approved as several of these projects will be included in it. I'll be glad to edit any of my response if you have additional information regarding the schedule.

## **Parks and Recreation**

### **9. West Park**

In 2016, City Council purchased a 123-acre parcel of land bordered by Blackman Road, Burnt Knob Road, Veterans Parkway, and I-840 in the Blackman area known as the McDonald property for the development of a park in west Murfreesboro. Murfreesboro Parks and Recreation Department is working with Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. and a team of architectural and design companies to coordinate a community visioning effort in order to develop a park master plan.

This request will be compiled and considered with other public input in determining appropriate facilities in the new park. In recent assessments, including information gathered as a part of the 2035 Comprehensive Master Plan, the demand for additional aquatic facilities including splash pads as well as recreational and competitive swimming facilities is acknowledged.

Additionally, in 2017 - 2018 Murfreesboro Parks and Recreation will be engaging professional services to develop a Departmental Master Plan, which will specify areas recreational need especially aquatic facilities throughout the City. Opportunities to provide additional input will be ongoing, including an open house to be held at Blackman High School on Tuesday, January 24th, 2017 from 5:00 – 7:00 pm; an online survey is being developed as well.

#### **10. West Park Timetable**

At a recent joint meeting with City Council and the Murfreesboro Parks and Recreation Commission, a timeline was proposed for master planning, construction documents, bidding/permitting, and construction that resulted in an opening date of August of 2019. As directed at that meeting, ways to shorten this timeframe for early play are being developed.

#### **11. Open Space Preservation**

This request, with comments specific to the agricultural significance of Murfreesboro, is key. Conservation is a foundational pillar of the role of Parks and Recreation. We strive to offer a balance of active and passive areas, protected wetlands and natural areas, greenways and trails, as well as educational programs and initiatives. Environmentally responsible design, environmental education, natural resource protection, and preservation of public lands will be considered not only at this site, but throughout our park system. Additionally, the Comprehensive Master Plan for Murfreesboro Parks and Recreation specify the need for preservation and conservation of natural spaces throughout the City and identify potential areas that would be beneficial in conservation efforts.

For more information, please call the Administrative Office of Murfreesboro Parks and Recreation at 615-890-5333.

### **Solid Waste**

#### **12. City wide recycling and Long term solution for Middlepoint Landfill**

In conjunction with Rutherford County Government, The Murfreesboro City Council unanimously approved the selection of Gershman, Brickner and Bratton (GBB) as the strategic plan consultant to develop a 20-year plan for solid waste collection and disposal in Rutherford County.

GBB was selected under a competitive sealed proposal released March 29, 2016 and received May 5, 2016. The City's share of the cost, developed through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), is \$125,050. The total shared cost is \$250,100. Other cities in Rutherford County, Smyrna, La Vergne and Eagleville, could share in the cost if they elect to participate in the decision-making phase of the study.

Privately-owned Middle Point Landfill on East Jefferson Pike in Walter Hill, where 19 counties, including Rutherford County have disposed solid waste since 1989, is expected to close in approximately eight to nine years. Middle Point opened in 1987. Murfreesboro Mayor Shane

McFarland and Rutherford County Mayor Ernest Burgess organized a planning committee in April 2015 to address plans for disposing solid waste when Middle Point reaches capacity no later than 2025. The committee concluded that a strategic plan guided by a consultant was necessary.

The committee defined the consultant's scope of work to include: 1. Defining a baseline of the existing solid waste management operations. 2. Identifying, analyzing and evaluating options. 3. Developing strategy recommendations. 4. Prepare an action plan for the first two to five years.

Under an agreement negotiated in 1995, both the City and County have received free disposal of solid waste. The County receives an annual host fee of \$1.20 per ton for receiving out-of-county solid waste disposed at Middle Point Landfill. In 2014, more than 71 percent of the 909,125 tons of solid waste received at Middle Point Landfill came from 18 counties outside Rutherford county.

A number of options for disposing of solid waste by the City and County have been discussed, including recycling, transferring the waste out-of-county, a mixed-processing facility, gasification, and waste-to-energy. The committee determined that studying the viable and complex options requires competent expertise in the solid waste industry.

The study by GBB is expected to take eleven months.

### **13. Solid Waste Information Campaign**

The GBB study includes a committee comprised of Rutherford County residents to help advise the local governments on the study, including a plan to conduct a solid waste information campaign. This supplements the public information position with Rutherford County.

### **14. Timing of Solid Waste Fee**

The timing of the implementation of the \$5/can per month fee is still being analyzed.

## **Planning**

### **15. Annexation Process**

The owner of a piece of property must either petition the City for annexation in writing or sign a form providing consent. Once we receive the petition or consent form, then we begin the process of drafting the plan of services to see if we can provide services to the property. This involves contacting various utilities and City departments such as MED, MWSD, MFRD, MPD, CUD, Solid Waste, City Schools, among others.

Once we have compiled that information, we present it to the Planning Commission for consideration, at which time the Planning Commission holds a public hearing. The Planning Commission votes to make a recommendation to the City Council on the annexation itself as well as the plan of services.

The City Council then conducts a public hearing and votes on two readings regarding the annexation and the plan of services. If the City Council approves both of these items, the annexation typically goes into effect on the date that the companion zoning request goes into effect.

Once effective, the City must compile progress reports to ensure that the services are being provided per the plan of services. The first progress report is required 6 months after the effective date of annexation. Subsequent progress reports are compiled annually until all services have been extended. Public hearings are held by the City Council with each progress report. Services should be extended per the plan of services.

**16. What is a plan of services and when are city services required to be provided?**

State law TCA 6-51-102 requires all annexations include a Plan of Services (POS). The POS outlines those services that will be made available to the land being annexed and the timeframe within which services and/or amenities will be provided.

The principal purpose for a POS is to provide the Administration with an analysis of the financial impact involved in an annexation, as well as information useful in incorporating the required public improvements into the City's Capital Improvements Program.

The POS must meet the State's requirements regarding municipal annexation of any territory by the City. This document will be formally considered by the Planning Commission and City Council at a public hearing.

City departments prepared cost estimates for the delivery of service to each study area. The City will consider the fiscal impacts (cost compared to revenue, phasing plan) of the plans of service as it considers the annexations. The timeframe for city services is part of the POS.

**17. If sewer service is extended outside the city, can non-city residents connect?**

No water or *sewer* service of the City may be connected or serve property outside the city limits of the City until the following conditions are met:

- (1) All persons owning an interest in the subject real estate must petition the City for annexation;
- (2) If buildings are to be constructed on the subject property, the construction must be in compliance with the Standard Building Code (section 7-1 et seq.), International Plumbing Code (section 23-1), Regulations of the Murfreesboro Water and Sewer Department (section 33-1 et seq.), National Electric Code (section 11-1), International Property Maintenance Code (section 17-1), subdivision regulations (section 29-1 et seq.), streets and sidewalks regulations (section 28-1 et seq.), comprehensive zoning ordinance of the City of Murfreesboro (Appendix A) utilizing the zoning classification deemed appropriate by the Planning Commission and approved by the City Council, and the sign ordinance of the City. The owners must purchase building permits from the City as if located within the City limits, unless the City Council has voted against annexation of the subject property. All persons owning an interest in the subject real estate must sign a written agreement to the foregoing and file same with the Water and Sewer Department and the Planning Director of the City. A commitment for water and *sewer* service may not be made until the agreement of owners is accepted by the City Council. In addition to the foregoing, the Department shall receive appropriate agreements, bonds and the like customarily required.
- (3) Where City water and/or *sewer* lines exist adjacent to an existing business, residence, or structure outside the City, the Water and Sewer Board shall have determinative authority, after consultation with the Planning Commission, to contract with the property owner for service without annexation, provided the customer is served by one tap and no additional residences or businesses are to be constructed on the same parcel to be served with water and/or *sewer*; and, further

provided, that the property owner will agree in writing to annexation at a later date upon the initiative of the City or others.

## **Miscellaneous**

### **18. Berkshire Speeding**

In regards to the speeding complaint at Veteran's and Highway we do not have a speeding complaint at this time but are directing resources to address it. Officers do frequent Veterans Parkway conducting Radar between Highway 96 and 840 but we do not have any data on outcomes at this time.

In regards to traffic issues in Berkshire, we have received complaints in that neighborhood for directed enforcement which the most recent was in August of 2016. We sent officers out in the morning hours for five consecutive days to monitor speeding and vehicles passing school busses while they were loading passengers. During this time officers observed multiple vehicles traveling on Saint Ives Drive and is the major thoroughfare/straightaway in the neighborhood. There were no vehicles found to be traveling at a speed to warrant a citation and there were no vehicles observed illegally passing the school busses. Titan indicates that there have been 5 reported property damage crashes on Saint Ives Drive since January 1, 2013.

### **19. Police Staffing**

MPD is currently authorized for 243 Law Enforcement Officers and there are currently 16 vacancies (equates to a vacancy rate of 6%). We have 11 people attending the Police Academy and their anticipated graduation is in April 2017. MPD's operational capacity based upon the above figures is at 88%. We are currently in the hiring process for additional officers which we anticipate a hiring date in March/April and Academy start date in May. We are also working on the retention efforts of our employees to include examining other organizations and officer wellness.

The national vacancy rate is between 11-14% for law enforcement agencies. While our vacancy rate may be less than the national average, we strive for excellence and want to be above the norm. The City will continue to be aggressive in recruiting and retaining the excellent men and woman who service our community.

### **20. Recruitment of corporate HQ jobs**

The City has a number of long-standing companies that provide knowledge-based and well paying jobs, including State Farm, NHC, MTSU and others. Additionally, the City's investment in the Gateway property has attracted significant projects such as Kasai, St Thomas, MTMC, Consumers Insurance and others.

The City also incentivized the Fountains, which is a Class A office building equal to anything in the Franklin and Nashville markets.

The City took the proactive step of acquiring the former First Methodist Church/Franklin Synergy property downtown and issued a call for proposals for developers to re-develop the property.

The City and Chamber continue to partner to attract jobs and the Industrial Development Board offers incentive packages to qualifying projects.

The City is also in the process of creating tax increment financing (TIF) districts, which a tool used by Nashville in the Gulch, Germantown and elsewhere in Davidson County.

**23. Reverse 9-1-1**

Sign up for free, life-saving emergency alerts through Alert Rutherford. Public safety officials use this timely and reliable system to alert you and your family in the event of natural or man-made disasters. Don't wait until its too late, sign up [here](#).

**24. Is property tax relief available to seniors?**

The City participates in the State of TN Property Tax Relief Program, which is for low-income elderly/disabled homeowners and disabled veteran or their surviving spouse. The eligibility requirements change annually, and there is an application process our staff will offer assistance in completion of the paperwork. Additionally, the City also participates in the State Tax Freeze Program which is for homeowners 65 and older and is income based, which allows the homeowner to freeze the base value of their primary residence for tax purposes. The Rutherford County Trustee takes the applications for this program on behalf of the City.