



Planning, Development & Transportation

Transportation Planning & Special Projects

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: January 29, 2013
TO: Mayor and City Councilmembers
THROUGH: Darin Atteberry, City Manager
Karen Cumbo, Director of Planning, Development, and Transportation
FROM: Amy Lewin, Transportation Planner
Mark Jackson, Deputy Director of Planning, Development, and Transportation
RE: **JANUARY 22, 2013 WORK SESSION SUMMARY – RAILROAD QUIET ZONE STUDY**

On January 22, 2013 City staff provided an update to Council on the status of the Railroad Quiet Zone Study. The presentation included a summary of the technical analysis as well as some potential implementation options.

Attendees

City Council: Mayor Karen Weitkunat, Mayor Pro-Tem Kelly Ohlson, Councilmembers Horak, Kottwitz, Manvel, Poppaw, and Troxell

City Staff: Wendy Williams, Karen Cumbo, Mark Jackson, Aaron Iverson, Amy Lewin, Dan Weinheimer, and Stephanie Sangaline Anzia (FHU consultant).

Discussion Summary

- Relationship between the recent improvements on Mason and train horn noise. The improvements were done to support the two-way conversion for bus circulation associated with the bus rapid transit MAX project. Some of the improvements do help to isolate the cross street crossing areas, which define the vehicular crossing locations. Having specific locations of vehicle crossing does identify the locations where Quiet Zone treatments could now be installed, which is a step towards establishing a Quiet Zone. However, isolating the crossings for each cross street alone is not sufficient for Quiet Zone compliance.
- Potential for implementing other safety improvements to establish Quiet Zones, like red light cameras for photo enforcement wherein violators would be fined. This is an Alternative Safety Measure that requires monitoring and reporting to support its effectiveness.
- Possibility of additional credit for traffic signals and restricted left turns to reduce the calculated risk at crossings through the downtown area is currently being discussed with the FRA.
- New technologies such as retractable bollards are being reviewed for applicability in the downtown corridor. Council suggested consideration of wedge barriers that might provide a continuous barrier when activated, as opposed to the spacing still present between fully

elevated bollards. (Use of either of these technologies would need to be tested and approved by the FRA.)

- Crossing closures were considered in early Phase 1 discussions, and at the time, not generally supported. With the new construction along Mason Street, and restrictions of left turn movements at many cross streets, there is a place for this discussion as it will have an effect on the cost of Quiet Zone implementation through downtown.
- Light Rail Transit (LRT) is treated differently than heavy rail. Heavy rail vehicles, including freight and passenger, are regulated by the FRA. These vehicles have more mass and weight and less ability to stop quickly. LRT is regulated by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), not the FRA and generally has the ability to stop more quickly if needed.
- Role of Public Utilities Commission (PUC) is to regulate all public crossings of heavy rail, including at-grade and grade separated. Their jurisdiction is with regard to safety. While they are asked by the FRA to comment on Notices of Intent to Create a Quiet Zone, their comments are relative to safety only. The jurisdiction and decision-making authority for Quiet Zone establishment remains with the FRA.
- Potential timetable for implementation depends on the overall approach and funding opportunities.

Council Direction

- Coordinate potential Quiet Zone improvements with Mason improvements where possible
- Continue to monitor options for commenting on “Final Rule;” coordinate with other cities
- Provide information and/or guidance to the CML with regard to pursuing a change in the regulation
- Do not support use of wayside horns, because they do not eliminate the noise
- Continue to monitor opportunities for new technologies and other communities’ efforts toward FRA approval of new technologies for use as Alternative Safety Measures

Next Steps

- Finalize Phase 2 Technical Report and the implementation options identified in Phase 1 Addendum Memo
- Continue conversations with FRA, other communities

Staff appreciates the opportunity to discuss the Railroad Quiet Zone project with the City Council and received valuable feedback and direction for the project. For more information regarding the project, please visit: fcgov.com/quietzone.



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MEMORANDUM

Date: January 24, 2013

To: Mayor and City Councilmembers

From: Josh Birks, Economic Health Director
SeonAh Kendall, Business Retention & Expansion Strategist

Through: Darin Atteberry, City Manager
Bruce Hendee, Chief Sustainability Officer

Re: January 22, 2013 City Council Work Session Summary – Incentives Benchmarking

Councilmembers present: Mayor Karen Weitkunat, Mayor Pro Tem Kelly Ohlson, Ben Manvel, Gerry Horak, Aislinn Kottwitz, Lisa Poppaw, Wade Troxell

Staff present: Bruce Hendee, Josh Birks, SeonAh Kendall

Overview:

Overview of the business assistance package current practices, incentives benchmark study and begin to build a systems approach to assistance to primary businesses in Fort Collins. Staff proposed three key inputs to determine level of business assistance in the type and amount of rebates. Staff sought guidance from City Council in regard to the following questions:

1. Does the proposed framework meet the needs of the City, community, and businesses?
2. Does Council see any “gaps” in service? What, if anything, is missing from the classification/ranking criteria?
3. How would you prioritize the criteria? Should this be weighted?
4. What criteria items are essential, or the absence of them, would halt business assistance for the company?

Discussion summary:

- Council urged staff to clarify definitions and be explicit about certain aspects of the framework, such as: manufacturing use tax, primary employment, etc. Staff will also clarify the term “benefit” vs. “health care benefits” vs. “health care plans.”

- Council has directed staff to re-evaluate and add additional items to the criteria, including reviewing the companies' environmental stewardship (such as participation in the Integrated Design Assistance Program and ClimateWise) and social impacts.
- Suggestions were made that staff rely on a few main criteria to determine company eligibility and assistance and create sub factors that allow projects to move up or down in terms of prioritization from the initial prioritization established by the main factors.
- Economic Impact Analysis improvements are moving in the right direction; however, the analysis must include all costs not just direct (e.g., power and water consumption, pollution, etc.). Staff will evaluate how best to integrate these costs into future analyses.
- Council recommended that all parties view the business assistance package policy as a continuous cycle and partnership instead of the six-step process. In addition, emphasis was placed on thinking of the business climate holistically in addition to specific business assistance efforts.
- Council suggested improving the application during the work session. Staff will review the Community Development Block Grant application and other applications for potential enhancements to the draft application included in the work session materials.
- Council cautioned staff in regard to the potential detriment the proposed framework may have on projects that are currently working through the process. City staff will continue the public outreach to gather more input from the community and businesses. Council recommended that outreach include businesses that have relocated outside of Fort Collins to research process improvements.
- Council suggested evaluating past economic assistance packages to evaluate how they would have ranked in relation to the proposed criteria.
- Council discussed the need to take the necessary time to gather public input prior to bringing a formalized business assistance package policy statement forward for consideration. Council urged staff to be thoughtful about the process and consider taking a process of steps. In addition, it was suggested that the Council Finance Committee should review the proposal before it is submitted to the entire body for consideration. Staff will propose a timeline for adoption of the framework that moves forward in steps.



Planning, Development & Transportation Services

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MEMORANDUM

Date: January 25, 2013

To: Mayor and City Councilmembers

Through: Darin Atteberry, City Manager
Karen Cumbo, Planning, Development, and Transportation Director

From: Laurie Kadrich, Community Development and Neighborhood Services Director

Re: Work Session Summary – January 22, 2013 Request by City Council to Consider Submitting a Ballot Measure for the April 2, 2013 Municipal election asking voters to ban hydraulic fracturing treatment.

City Council in Attendance: Mayor Weitkunat, Mayor Pro Tem Ohlson, Councilpersons Horak, Kottwitz, Manvel, Poppaw, and Troxell.

Presenting Staff: Laurie Kadrich, Dan Weinheimer, Wanda Nelson

In December 2012 City Council authorized a moratorium preventing any further drilling of oil and gas well in the city limits or on City-owned lands until July 31, 2013. Since that time, citizens asked the Council to consider banning hydraulic fracturing in the city. Staff requested Council's feedback on three items:

Specific Questions:

1. Should the City Council direct staff to draft a ballot measure for the April 2, 2013 Municipal election asking voters to ban hydraulic fracturing treatment in the City of Fort Collins or on City-owned lands?
2. Should the question be addressed by Land Use Code or the Environmental Health section of the Municipal Code?
3. Should the question be limited to hydraulic fracturing or apply to storage, disposal of waste materials?

Council Feedback:

- In response to Question 1, the City Council directed staff to proceed with drafting a Resolution to be considered at the February 19, 2013 Regular meeting submitting a ballot measure to ban hydraulic fracturing treatment exempting wells that were annexed in the City.
- In response to Question 2, the City Council directed staff to address the question in the Environmental Health section of the Municipal Code.

- In response to Question 3, the City Council directed staff to include storage and disposal of waste materials.

Additional Direction

Council asked staff to prepare information for the February 19, 2013 meeting to address the following:

- Describe the geology of Fort Collins and where drilling activity will likely occur.
- Locate science-based studies on hydraulic fracturing.
- To be balanced in the information presented using the “triple-bottom” line approach
- Describe the financial impacts if a ban were to be imposed.
- Pursue negotiation of an operator agreement with the local operator.