

## AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY

February 16, 2016

City Council

### STAFF

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Dan Weinheimer, Policy & Project Manager  
Mike Beckstead, Chief Financial Officer  
Mark Jackson, PDT Deputy Director

### SUBJECT

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First Reading of Ordinance No. 022, 2016, Appropriating Prior Year Reserves in the Transportation Fund for Consulting Services Related to Interstate 25 (I-25) Traffic Solution Efforts.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The purpose of this item is to appropriate funds to contract with a lobbying and communications firm to advocate for solutions to Interstate 25 traffic congestion. City leaders have worked in partnership with regional partners to identify and pursue funding for years. Numerous efforts, initiatives, and actions have been taken or are underway to urge the Colorado legislature and Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) to accelerate improvements to Interstate 25 (I-25). This \$30,000 appropriation for advocacy would augment and enhance regional efforts and ensure Fort Collins has representation in discussions on I-25. This item supports the adopted recommendations of the 2011 North I-25 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), and also supports Council priority for I-25 funding; Strategic Plan Objectives: Transportation 6.1, 6.4; and Council legislative policy agenda. The funds would be appropriated from prior year reserves in the Transportation Fund.

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

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Staff recommends adoption of the Ordinance on First Reading.

### BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION

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Numerous efforts, initiatives, and actions have been taken or are underway to urge the Colorado legislature and Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) to accelerate improvements to Interstate 25 (I-25). Plans for road capacity and transit improvements were identified in the North I-25 Environmental Impact Statement (2011), but funds needed to make these changes are not identified by CDOT in the foreseeable future. I-25 is the key interstate linkage in Northern Colorado, and serves as a major freight route as well as traveler connection between the Denver metro area to the south. Current infrastructure deficiencies, combined with increasing travel demand on the corridor result in safety and congestion issues along the Northern Colorado I-25 Corridor.

Over the past two years local governments and business organizations in the Larimer and Weld County area have coalesced around the goal of securing funding to widen North I-25. The results so far include:

- some funding secured for projects like an additional lane on southbound I-25 on the hill south of Berthoud and to widen the bridge decks at Crossroads to accommodate an additional lane in each direction;
- identification of potential federal dollars including Colorado applying for Presidential Challenge Grant funds to widen 4 bridges (St. Vrain, Little Thompson, Big Thompson, Poudre) and TIFIA loan dollars available under the recently passed federal FAST Act;

- elevation of North I-25 in particular, and transportation in general, as a priority with state leaders.

Sandra Hagen Solin, Founder and CEO of Capitol Solutions, was retained by the FIX I-25 coalition to lead advocacy for solutions to I-25. The City would contract directly with Capitol Solutions for the purpose of I-25 advocacy.

In 2015 Capitol Solutions held dozens of conversations with CDOT officials, area legislators, legislative leaders in both parties, the Governor's office and business associations around Colorado. The purpose was to understand and influence legislators' views on transportation funding, particularly regarding the Legislature referring a measure to Colorado voters to renew the expiring TRANS bonds.

Planned advocacy in 2016 is included in three areas - coalition building, legislative, and communication.

- Statewide coalition building has been prioritized to ensure broad appeal of legislative action. The umbrella coalition is called the Fix Colorado Roads Coalition and this group has participants from business and transportation organizations.
- Legislative efforts have been fueled by 2015 work and the coalition partners. In the 2016 General Assembly session a bill will be introduced to advance a state ballot measure. The ballot measure will seek authorization to create a \$3.5 billion package aimed at funding needed infrastructure to sustain Colorado. In addition to this bond package, advocates seek ongoing General Fund dollars from the state to fund operations and maintenance of roads.
- Communication consultants have been retained to leverage unpaid and paid media in order to support coalition building and legislative efforts.

### **CITY FINANCIAL IMPACTS**

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The City would appropriate \$30,000 to secure the services of Capitol Solutions. Recommendation is that funding come from Transportation undesignated reserves.

ORDINANCE NO. 022, 2016  
OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FORT COLLINS  
APPROPRIATING PRIOR YEAR RESERVES IN THE  
TRANSPORTATION FUND FOR CONSULTING SERVICES  
RELATED TO INTERSTATE 25 (I-25) TRAFFIC SOLUTION EFFORTS

WHEREAS, numerous efforts, initiatives, and actions have been taken or are underway to urge the Colorado legislature and Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) to accelerate improvements to Interstate 25 (I-25); and

WHEREAS, plans for road capacity and transit improvements were identified in the North I-25 Environmental Impact Statement from 2011, but funds needed to make these changes are not identified by CDOT in the foreseeable future; and

WHEREAS, local governments and business organizations in the Larimer and Weld County area have coalesced around the goal of securing funding to widen North I-25; and

WHEREAS, Sandra Hagen Solin, Founder and CEO of Capitol Solutions, was retained by the FIX I-25 coalition to lead advocacy for solutions to I-25; and

WHEREAS, the Director of Purchasing and Risk Management as the City's Purchasing Agent has the authority pursuant to City Code Section 8-161 to approve an exemption to the competitive bidding process; and

WHEREAS, the City seeks to appropriate \$30,000 for the services of Capitol Solutions for the purpose of I-25 advocacy; and

WHEREAS, Article V, Section 9, of the City Charter permits the City Council to make supplemental appropriations by ordinance at any time during the fiscal year, provided that the total amount of such supplemental appropriations, in combination with all previous appropriations for that fiscal year, does not exceed the current estimate of actual and anticipated revenues to be received during the fiscal year; and

WHEREAS, City staff have determined that the appropriations as described herein are available and previously unappropriated in the Transportation Fund; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FORT COLLINS as follows:

Section 1. That the City Council hereby makes and adopts the determinations and findings contained in the recitals set forth above.

Section 2. That there is hereby appropriated for expenditure from prior year reserves in the Transportation Fund the sum of THIRTY THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$30,000) for the services of Capitol Solutions for the purpose of I-25 advocacy.

Introduced, considered favorably on first reading, and ordered published this 16th day of February, A.D. 2016, and to be presented for final passage on the 1st day of March, A.D. 2016.

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Mayor

ATTEST:

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City Clerk

Passed and adopted on final reading on the 1st day of March, A.D. 2016.

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Mayor

ATTEST:

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City Clerk