

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Michael Brown, City Manager


DATE: February 10, 2021

SUBJECT: Project DeRenne Update

This memo is to provide summary information to the Mayor and Council. Work continues on the project and the Right of Way acquisition process is expected to begin in Calendar Year 2021. The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is going through the process of a formal approval at this time. The key dates and milestones are shown below.

- **June 25-26, 2019** - Preliminary Field Plan Review (PFPR): *Completed*
- **June 1, 2020** – Initiate Final Design for Boulevard: *Completed*
- **September 11, 2020** – First submission of ROW Plans to GDOT: *Completed*
- **October 1, 2020**- FHWA approval of the DEIS: *Completed*
- **November 10, 2020** - Public Hearing Open House (PHOH): *Completed*
- **September 2021**- FHWA approval of the Final EIS (FEIS)/Issuance of ROD
- **2021 ~ 2025** - Right-of-Way acquisition phase
- **1Q/2Q 2022** – Initiate Final Design for West and East DeRenne projects
- **May 2024** - Final Field Plan Review (FFPR)
- **June 2025** – Bidding for Construction

As you can see above, we are expected to receive our Record of Decision (ROD) from Federal Highway (FHWA) in September of this year. Originally the anticipated schedule to receive the ROD was June 2020. But due to impacts from COVID-19, FHWA and the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) were understandably hesitant to define guidelines for in-person meetings as would typically be the case. This impact was felt by numerous projects across the country that were going through the process of an EIS. FHWA finally approved the approach submitted and the Draft EIS and meeting date were published in the Federal Register on Friday, October 9, 2020. This was a huge step forward on behalf of the project.



One of the signature elements of the City of Savannah's commitment to the project is the formation of the Relocation Assistance Program (RAP) Committee. This team is comprised of various City of Savannah Departments and Community Partners. The team has been meeting for several months and is a requirement of FHWA to ensure that every resource that is available to the community is consolidated. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been reviewed and deemed acceptable by City Staff including the City Attorney. The MOU is a three party agreement between FHWA, GDOT and the City of Savannah. A Chairperson will oversee this group to schedule meetings and keep information flowing to the community. The RAP is a unique group that is in place to make sure that every affected property owner has a single source to obtain the assistance that they need. Most of their work will occur once the Right of Way plans are approved and a Property Owners Meeting is held. But to prepare the group, we have been meeting monthly since last summer to prepare for this process.

The RAP Committee is comprised of the following;

- City of Savannah Real Estate Services
- Savannah City Attorney's Office
- Community Housing Services Agency (CHSA)
- Housing and Neighborhood Services Department (HNSD)
- Economic Opportunity Authority (EOA)
- City of Savannah Land Bank Authority (LBA)
- City of Savannah Office of Business Opportunity
- Small Business Assistance Corporation (SBAC)
- City of Savannah Office of Human Services
- Partners – Neighborhood Improvement Association / Housing Authority of Savannah / City of Savannah Public Communications Officer / City of Savannah Development Services / Metropolitan Planning Commission / Habitat for Humanity / Community Help / United Way / Senior Citizens / World Changers / Mission Serve / Group Cares / Youth Works

I hope that this information is helpful and brings the Mayor and Council up to date on the project. Please direct any questions you may have about the project or the process to me and I will respond accordingly.