



**TO:** Mayor and City Councilors

**FROM:** Rich Olson, City Manager

**REF:** FYI ~ Week Ending April 29, 2011

**COPY:** Email Distribution

1. Staff has talked to representatives of English Construction Company and URS, the design engineer for the Charles Creek Bridge, and the bridge is now substantially complete. A punch list has been provided to English, which they will be working on over the next week. There is a great deal of cleanup work around the site, in addition to smoothing the bridge rails and lighting, which will not be completed until May 6, 2011. The bridge must stay closed until we are satisfied with the work. We have requested that English place additional barricades on the bridge to prohibit vehicular traffic. The bridge is still under the control of English Construction Company until staff completes our final walk through during the latter part of next week and then accepts the bridge. I have received over a dozen phone calls complimenting the City on the design and look of the bridge. There will be a ribbon cutting ceremony on Monday, May, 9, 2011 where the City will officially open the bridge to traffic. I will provide more details about the ceremony next week.
2. On Tuesday, April 26, 2011, the Elizabeth City Police Department completed its second full week of "*Operation Eagle Eye*", a special operation aimed at reducing the number of shots fired calls reported in the City. "*Operation Eagle Eye*" is a collaborative effort involving the Elizabeth City Police Department, the Pasquotank County Sheriff's Office, the Elizabeth City State University Campus Police, the North Carolina State Highway Patrol, North Carolina Probation & Parole, ALE, and the DEA. There are approximately 25 sworn law enforcement officers working this special assignment. The mission of this special operation is to target those individuals responsible for the increase in shots fired calls in the City and to bring those individuals to justice. Cumulative totals for enforcement actions completed during "*Operation Eagle Eye*" thus far include:
  - (27) Warrants Issued for Arrest (including Felony Weapon and Assault Charges, Felony Drug Charges, and Violations of Probation);
  - (22) Interviews with Persons of Interest;
  - (14) Driving While Impaired Arrests, including (2) vehicle seizures;
  - (27) Driving While License Revoked Arrests;

- (93) Citations Issued (including Traffic Charges, Curfew Violations, Misdemeanor Possession of Drugs, and Misdemeanor Possession of Drug Paraphernalia; and
- (38) Checkpoint Stations Conducted City-wide

I would like commend Chief Crudup and all members of the various supporting agencies for their diligence in working this issue of great concern to everyone. If any citizen has information pertaining to these incidents, they are urged to call the Crime Line at (252)335-5555, where their call will remain strictly confidential.

3. Today, we set up displays for the Elizabeth Street construction project at six different locations around the city. Each display consists of a map of the project and a current calendar/timeline of the project for public viewing. The locations are as follows: the Virginia Dare Arcade at 507 E. Main Street, the Municipal Administration Building at 306 E. Colonial Avenue, the Pasquotank Camden Public Library at 100 E. Colonial Avenue, Southgate Mall at 1409 W. Ehringhaus Street, Arts of the Albemarle at 514 E. Main Street, and in the temporary construction office of Hyman and Robey at 108 Poindexter Street. This information will also be uploaded to the ECDI and City websites next week. I have provided a separate document at the end of today's FYI, which includes the current project phase plan and schedule.
4. During the preparation of the fiscal year 2011-2012 budget, staff had preliminary discussions with the North Carolina League of Municipalities (League), our insurance carrier, indicating that we could anticipate a 5% increase in our health insurance rates. To offset this increase, I proposed in my budget that City employees and retirees on our insurance plan pay \$25 per month to help defray the rate increase. In addition, City staff has been actively exploring becoming self-insured and have requested rate information from the League to serve as our third party administrator. I received notice last week that the City will receive a 5% reduction in our health insurance costs. This amounts to a savings of \$200,000, compared to the cost reflected in the proposed budget. The City's wellness program and our lower than anticipated claims experience were the reasons provided by the League officials. However, the City looking at becoming self-insured also contributed to the decrease. During the Finance Committee meeting scheduled for May 2, 2011, I will request that the Committee remove from the budget charging City employees and retirees for health insurance.
5. On Tuesday, City staff and representatives from Hyman and Robey met with a representative from CIA (formerly DCA) for our kick-off meeting on the CDBG-ER grant that the City received several months ago. This \$950,000 grant covers water and sewer line improvements for North Road Street and Pearl Street, which will also include an extensive amount of road work. The total value of the project is \$1.8 million. Staff went over the grant agreement and funding approval letter and the special conditions. The City is waiting for the environmental review process to conclude and the release of funds notification, which the City should receive in early June. We will open the bids and award the contracts by the end of June. The Pearl Street part of the project must be

completed by the end of December, while the entire project should be finished by May 1, 2012.

6. On Wednesday, the North Carolina Eastern Municipal Power Agency Board of Commissioners held their monthly meeting in Wilson. Mayor McLean and I attended. Bill Johnson, CEO of Progress Energy met with the board in closed session to discuss the proposed Duke/Progress Energy merger and addressed concerns that several city representatives expressed, including Mayor McLean. I appreciated Mr. Johnson's candor and openness with the board. In addition to Mr. Johnson's appearance, the commissioners received updates from staff on several proposed bills that are under consideration in Raleigh. The board recommended to staff to oppose all pending legislation. An update on our working capital was provided and our existing rate structure looks fine, at least to December 2013.
7. The sign that has been on display in the entrance lobby of City Hall by the staircase is a sample of the new downtown wayfinding signs. Coastal Carolina Streetscapes will pick this sample sign up on Monday to complete its fabrication. These signs will be placed at various locations downtown to identify the direction to places of interest such as the Visitor Center, public parking, the museum, courthouse, etc. to help visitors find their way. The eleven signs should be delivered in approximately one month.
8. The Technical Review Committee met on Tuesday, April 26, 2011 and approved the following projects: (1) Site Plan SP-04-11 by Goodwill Community Foundation, Inc. for property located at 502 West Ehringhaus Street. This was a revision to a previously approved site plan for modifications to the former S & R building on Ehringhaus Street. The applicant will be demolishing the structure and rebuilding a new 11,962 square foot retail store on this site; (2) Site Plan SP-05-11 by Toyota of Elizabeth City to construct an 11,800 square foot edition to their existing building at 1002 Halstead Boulevard.
9. Elizabeth City Downtown's Design Committee is sponsoring and "Extreme City Makeover" spring cleanup day tomorrow (Saturday, April 30). Volunteers will meet at Mariners' Wharf Park at 9 a.m. for instructions. The Parks and Recreation Department will provide cleaning supplies and assistance. Anyone who can is asked to help with this project and is reminded to bring any special cleaning tools they have to help sweep, weed flower beds and pick up trash. The Design Committee has also coordinated with local business owners with empty storefronts and certain city organizations to work together to revitalize these areas into an opportunity for everyone to see what Elizabeth City has to offer. It is hoped that attractive exhibits will be on display in the store windows prior to the Potato Festival on May 21.
10. Opening day for the Downtown Waterfront Market has been set for Saturday, May 7 at Mariners' Wharf Park. The market will run every Saturday from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. through October 29. I hope to have the in-street pedestrian crossing signs approved and installed by the market opening.

#### 11. Upcoming Event Reminders:

- City Council Finance Committee meeting, Monday, May 2 at 10 a.m. in Council Chambers
- Special City Council meeting to conduct the voting ward redistricting plan public hearing on Monday, May 2 at 7 p.m. in Council Chambers
- Planning Commission Regular Monthly Meeting, Tuesday, May 3 at 4 p.m. in Council Chambers
- Urban Forestry Commission Regular Monthly Meeting, Wednesday, May 4 at 5:30 p.m. in Council Chambers
- The Elizabeth City Area Chamber of Commerce is sponsoring a celebration honoring area Teachers of the Year on Wednesday, May 4 at 5 p.m. at the Albert Blanton III Campus Life Center, Mid-Atlantic Christian University.
- For those registered, Town Hall Day will be held on Raleigh on Wednesday, May 4.
- National Day of Prayer observances will be held on Thursday, May 5, as follows: Noon in Courtroom A of the Pasquotank County Courthouse and 7 p.m. at First Baptist Church, 300 West Main Street.

RCO/vdw

**ELIZABETH STREET AND UTILITY RECONSTRUCTION PHASE PLAN & SCHEDULE**

<b><u>Contract 1</u></b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Estimated Start Date</b>	<b>Estimated Completion Date</b>
<b>Phase 1</b>	<b>Construction of sewer pump station off of Pearl St. near N. Road St.</b>	<b>May 30, 2011</b>	<b>November 30, 2011</b>
<b>Phase 2</b>	<b>Widening of the intersection of Burgess/Poindexter &amp; Water St. south of the Bible College</b>	<b>May 30, 2011</b>	<b>September 30, 2011</b>
<b><u>Contract 2</u></b>			
<b>Phase 1</b>	<b>Water St. from Colonial to Elizabeth, Colonial from Water to west of Poindexter. Poindexter from north of Colonial and Main and the alley between Logan Ray &amp; Thumpers</b>	<b>May 16, 2011</b>	<b>August 16, 2011</b>
<b>Phase 2</b>	<b>Poindexter to Colonial to Elizabeth St., Colonial from Poindexter to MLK St.</b>	<b>August 16, 2011</b>	<b>October 16, 2011</b>
<b>Phase 3</b>	<b>Colonial from east of MLK to west of Road St., MLK Main to Elizabeth and Poole St.</b>	<b>October 16, 2011</b>	<b>December 30, 2011</b>
<b><u>Contract 3</u></b>			
<b>Phase 1</b>	<b>Pearl St. reconstruction of utilities sidewalk and street</b>	<b>July 1, 2011</b>	<b>December 30, 2011</b>
<b>Phase 2</b>	<b>New sewer line from Glade St. pump station and the new pump station of Pearl St.</b>	<b>November 1, 2011</b>	<b>March 30, 2012</b>
<b>Phase 3</b>	<b>Water &amp; Sewer replacement on N. Road St. from Glade St. to Ward St.</b>	<b>January 1, 2012</b>	<b>May 1, 2012</b>

**ELIZABETH STREET UTILITY RECONSTRUCTION PHASE PLAN AND SCHEDULE**

<b>State Construction</b>
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- 1. East bound Bridge Replacement**
- 2. North side of Elizabeth St.**
- 3. South Side of Elizabeth St.**
- 4. Elizabeth St. / Road St. Intersection**
- 5. Elizabeth St. / Water St. Intersection**

