

## **Cumberland Avenue Project Moves Forward**

City officials today announced an updated timeline and design for the Cumberland Avenue redevelopment project.

Construction along the street from 17th Street to Volunteer Boulevard is expected to begin in the late fall of 2013, after the end of next year's University of Tennessee football season, and continue for approximately 24 months. The redesigned street will carry two lanes of traffic, separated by a small grassy median with left-turn lanes at most cross streets.

"Our traffic studies have shown that a median with turn lanes will provide the best flow of traffic and increase pedestrian and vehicle safety, as well as improve aesthetics," said Anne Wallace, the City's Project Manager in the Office of Redevelopment. "The construction will obviously entail some disruption through that area, but we will do our best to minimize its short-term impact." The City will work with local businesses to ensure that access will be maintained throughout construction.

The Cumberland Avenue project began with the adoption of the Cumberland Avenue Corridor Plan by the Metropolitan Planning Commission and City Council in 2007. It is intended to make the avenue more attractive and accessible for both visitors and the local population, including UT students and employees.

Currently, the project is in final planning and design stages, including the securing of temporary easements to allow construction.

One significant change will come to City Council for approval Tuesday night: \$565,000 in additional design work, mostly to allow for the reconfiguration of electrical supply lines in the area.

"This change will actually save us money for the overall project budget," Wallace said. "In talking with KUB, we were able to change our original plans to bury the electrical transmission line within Cumberland."

Instead, because of a new substation at Dale Avenue and 17th Street, KUB will only need to run two supply lines laterally beneath Cumberland, crossing the avenue at 18th and 22nd streets. As a result, the estimated electrical infrastructure cost for the project will drop from \$2.5 million to \$1.1 million. The total project is still within its \$14.6 million budget.