

Three Day Design Charrette Gets Underway on December 5 for Cumberland Avenue

With results in from an area traffic analysis, consultants will conduct a three day public work session as part of the Cumberland Avenue Corridor Study beginning at 5:30 pm Tuesday, December 5. The meeting will be at the University Center Ballroom at Cumberland Avenue and James Agee Street/Phil Fulmer Way.

Walter Kulash, traffic engineer with Glatting Jackson Kercher, leader of the consultant team, has been analyzing traffic flow and is finding that " with the expected traffic volumes, supporting street network and University progress in diverting traffic from Cumberland Avenue is a wide range of reasonable options for the Avenue. These options include a center lane for left turns, on-street parking, removing turn restrictions and restoring two-way traffic to cross streets."

The purpose of the study is to create a more inviting, vibrant and safe Cumberland Avenue, one that enhances the connections to the University of Tennessee and area employers and improves the residential and retail character of the district while effectively moving pedestrians, motor vehicles and bicycles. Cumberland Avenue is the major traffic facility serving the University of Tennessee, Fort Sanders Regional Medical Center and the East Tennessee Children's Hospital, and is a gateway to downtown Knoxville.

The first public meeting for the project was held last month where citizens listed dozens of ideas for improvements to the corridor, from wider sidewalks and better parking, to adding more trees and attracting a wider range of retailers and eateries to create a vibrant mixed use district.

The kick-off meeting of the charrette on November 5 will be followed by two days of work sessions during the day in the Shiloh Room of the University Center. There will be a concluding presentation in the Shiloh Room at 5:30 pm on Thursday, December 7. The public is urged especially to take part in the evening meetings. Free parking is available in the adjacent parking garage.

The study area for the urban design study area is from Seventeenth St. to Twenty Second St. and from Clinch Avenue to Lake Avenue. The study area for the transportation analysis includes a broader area from I-40 to the north, Neyland Drive on the west and south and Henley Street to the east in order to assess the potential impacts that changes to Cumberland Avenue may have on the surrounding street system. The Knoxville-Knox County Metropolitan Planning Commission is sponsoring the project, which is funded in part through an agreement with the Tennessee Department of Transportation. The study is scheduled to be concluded in early 2007.

For more information contact Jeff Welch at MPC by calling 865-215-2500.