

First Public Meeting on Cumberland Avenue Corridor Study Set for November 9

The first public meeting to gain citizen input on the future of Cumberland Avenue will be held at 6:00 pm Thursday, Nov. 9 at the University Center Auditorium on the corner of Cumberland Avenue and James Agee Street/Phil Fulmer Way. "This study recognizes that a successful Cumberland Avenue has to accomplish a lot; from connecting neighborhoods, the University and our downtown, to serving businesses, commuters and pedestrians." said Mark Donaldson, Executive Director of Knoxville Metropolitan Planning Commission. "We know Cumberland can serve all of us better than it does now."

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.

A diverse group of area stakeholders has been named to an advisory committee to assist with the study. Cathy Irwin, Fort Sanders resident and member of the advisory committee said, "Huge efforts have gone into saving and restoring area neighborhoods. Cumberland Avenue could be a help rather than a hindrance to the ongoing progress of this important part of Knoxville, but we have to be willing to change it."

On behalf of the Knoxville-Knox County Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC), the consultant team led by Glatting Jackson of Orlando will work with area citizens and stakeholders to evaluate the transportation and urban design conditions in the corridor and develop an urban design and transportation plan by early 2007. 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 project is funded in part through an agreement with the Tennessee Department of Transportation.

All the public meetings will be held at the University Center and free parking is provided to attendees at the adjacent parking garage. After analyzing input from the November 9 meeting, a three day design charrette will be held at the University Center from December 5-7.

For more information contact Renee Davis at MPC by calling 865-215-2500.