

STAFF REPORT

TO: Mayor and City Council
DATE: February 12, 2008

VIA: Gary Jackson, City Manager

FROM: Sam Powers, Economic Development Director

SUBJECT: FY 2009 Federal Priorities

SUMMARY STATEMENT: The consideration of a resolution establishing the City of Asheville's federal priorities and federal funding requests for fiscal year 2009.

REVIEW: The purpose of this agenda item is to review and request update by City Council of prioritization of federal legislative initiatives and federal funding requests for the second session 110th Congress.

On February 20, 2007, City Council adopted its current list of priorities for federal legislative initiatives and federal funding requests.

The current adopted list of federal legislative initiatives is as follows:

1. City Council supports as top priority legislative action to remedy changes to the funding of Asheville Transit system negatively affecting the system.
2. City Council supports national and state legislation/resources to address illegal immigration issues at the local level, specifically in respect to criminal behavior and the employment of illegal aliens.
3. City Council supports federal legislation securing the necessary funds to continue the North Carolina Health Choices Initiative to insure our children in North Carolina by supporting Senate Bill S.3913 (Keep Children Covered Act of 2006).
4. City Council expresses appreciation for support in raising the federal minimum wage.
5. City Council supports legislation to restore funding to HOPE 6, as well as legislation that will allow retooling of public housing.
6. City Council supports legislation that will address the significant crisis in Crack cocaine in our cities.
7. City Council supports federal legislation that will encourage development of sustainable buildings and energy efficient public buildings.

The current project that City Council has voted to request federal funding is:

1. Reid Center for the Creative Arts Renovation

In addition to the current adopted list, staff has identified the following projects as candidates to request federal funding assistance. A summary of each project is attached as Appendix A:

1. Regional Public Safety Training Facility (requested by Public Safety Committee).
2. Transit System Replacement Bus Purchase.

3. Traffic Signal Preemption.
4. Energy Conservation Retrofit for City Buildings.

Tonight the Council has an opportunity to:

- identify potential new initiatives;
- select and prioritize federal initiatives and federal funding requests for inclusion in a federal priorities agenda; and
- consider how to communicate with our legislative delegation.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends that City Council approve a resolution establishing the City of Asheville's federal priorities and federal funding requests for fiscal year 2009.

Attachments:

- (1) Appendix A
- (2) Resolution

Appendix A

REID CENTER

Extensive renovation to both interior and exterior and utilities of the W.C Reid Center for Creative Arts, a 37,000-square foot community center to support a full-service, community based recreation program and multi-disciplinary arts program with an emphasis on providing services to at-risk youth and their families.

Amount requested: \$4 to \$6 million.

ENERGY CONSERVATION RETROFITS FOR CITY BUILDINGS

The Building Energy Conservation Retrofits appropriations will allow the City of Asheville to install programmable thermostats, light occupancy sensors, high energy efficient lighting in all 51 city owned buildings after which a holistic social marketing campaign will be conducted to encourage employee behavior change. The retrofits will provide significant cost savings through utilities and decrease the carbon footprint of the city organization, while providing a strong foundation for a social marketing program to effectively create sustainability behavior change.

Amount requested: \$749,200.

TRAFFIC SIGNAL PREEMPTION

A Traffic Signal Preemption System is an electrical device(s) that allow a traffic control signal to respond by giving priority to approaching response vehicles that are outfitted with special equipment. Such systems are designed to increase the safety of the public and responders, reduce emergency response times, and enhance public transit operations.

Amount requested: \$495,000.

REGIONAL PUBLIC SAFETY TRAINING FACILITY

The Regional Public Safety Training facility is a partnership between WNC local governments, state government and AB Tech. The facility will include an emergency vehicle driving pad, burn building, and a rescue tower. The project is a modular project and can be done in phases.

Amount requested: \$4 million.

BUS REPLACEMENT

The project entails the purchasing of fifteen (15) 30-foot hybrid buses to replace 75% of the fleet which are reaching their life-cycle, with more than ten (10) years in operations. This is a multi-year project that intends to replace the fleet in a three year period. The City is recommending buying hybrid buses instead of diesel. The use of alternative fuels will help the City to achieve the carbon emission reduction goals adopted by City Council. The project will affect positively the Western North Carolina population that lives in Asheville, Weaverville and Black Mountain and depends on transit to perform the daily activities, providing a more reliable and comfortable service. At the same time will bring benefits to the environment, reducing pollution and improving the quality of life.

Amount requested: \$7,875,000 over three (3) years (\$2,625,000/year).

RESOLUTION NO. 08-_____

RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE'S FEDERAL PRIORITIES AND
FEDERAL FUNDING REQUESTS FOR FY 2009

WHEREAS, the City has identified key initiatives and projects that are important to the City and its citizens;

WHEREAS, the City desires to submit these initiatives and projects for consideration in the second session of the 110th US Congress; and

WHEREAS, the City wishes to work closely with the congressional delegation serving the City to achieve these initiatives and projects;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE THAT:

- 1) City Council establishes a federal agenda as outlined in Exhibit A and attached to this resolution; and
- 2) The City Manager is authorized to submit the noted appropriations requests and legislative requests to Asheville's congressional delegation and staff for consideration in the 110th Congress.

Read, approved and adopted this the 12th day of February, 2008.

City Clerk

Mayor

Approved as to form:

City Attorney