

RESOLUTION 2002-01

A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE CREATION OF A WALKING SURFACE IN THE
MEDIAN OF BELLE MEADE BOULEVARD AND A COMPREHENSIVE SIDEWALK
SYSTEM FOR STREETS THROUGHOUT THE CITY

WHEREAS:

1. In recent years the volume of traffic, including automobiles, pedestrians, bicyclists, joggers and others, on the streets of Belle Meade, including especially Belle Meade Boulevard, has grown dramatically, to the end that the Commissioners of the City have become increasingly concerned about the safety of the members of the general public as they have utilized our streets.

2. Growing out of this concern, in March, 1999, a special committee, known as the "Boulevard Safety Committee", was created to study traffic conditions on Belle Meade Boulevard, and to advise the Commissioners of the seriousness of the risks being taken by the traveling public in their daily utilization of the Boulevard.

3. The Boulevard Safety Committee, after a series of meetings and an extensive study of the situation over a period of approximately twelve (12) months, reported to the Commissioners that the risks are serious indeed, and recommended that professional advice be sought of ways to better provide for the safety of those using the Boulevard, including particularly the safety of pedestrians, joggers and bicyclists.

4. Following the recommendations of the Boulevard Safety Committee, the Commissioners interviewed a number of professional firms and then selected the firms of Hodgson & Douglas, LLC, Landscape Architects and Planners of Nashville, Tennessee, RPM & Associates, Transportation Engineers, and Barge, Cauthen & Associates, Inc., Civil Engineers, as a team to develop a comprehensive sidewalk and bicycle plan for the entire City of Belle Meade, with this plan to include (i) possible changes in the utilization of the Boulevard by automobiles,

pedestrians, bicyclists, joggers and others, and also (ii) a system of sidewalks along various streets within the City.

5. The Commissioners also appointed a Citizens Advisory Committee to work with Hodgson & Douglas and its team in the development of their recommendations, and, in addition, employed RPM & Associates, Transportation Engineers, to provide the additional service of conducting a traffic study of Belle Meade Boulevard. In the course of this investigation, a number of open meetings were held for citizens of Belle Meade to express their opinions, and, in addition, Perdue Research Group was employed to interview citizens for citizen input upon the various ideas which were from time to time under consideration.

6. Hodgson & Douglas, have now presented to the Commissioners, and to the public generally, the results of the study conducted by it and the other members of its team, in the form of a Belle Meade Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, dated November, 2001, copies of which have been made available at Belle Meade City Hall for any citizen to examine. This plan includes two alternative approaches for handling the traffic on Belle Meade Boulevard – one by reducing vehicular traffic to one lane in each direction for the entire length of the Boulevard (the “Single Lane Plan”) and the second by adding a meandering walking surface for pedestrians and joggers in the median (the “Median Plan”) – both of which would, in the opinion of Hodgson and Douglas, effectively address the safety issues that currently exist on the Boulevard. In addition, Hodgson & Douglas have also proposed a comprehensive plan for sidewalks throughout the City.

7. In addition to their participation in the several open meetings, a number of citizens have written letters, notes, and/or e-mails to the Commissioners to express their opinions upon the two plans which have been suggested by Hodgson & Douglas and to offer other

alternatives, which they also deemed worthy of consideration. The Commissioners appreciate the extensive citizen participation throughout this study which has been most helpful to them in arriving at their decision.

8. Upon consideration of all of the alternatives, and the arguments in support of each, it is the conclusion of the Commissioners that a dangerous condition does in fact exist which requires immediate attention if a serious accident is to be prevented. The Commissioners have now concluded that the Single Lane Plan, which would eliminate two lanes of traffic on Belle Meade Boulevard, is not in the long term best interest of the City and it should not be pursued. The Commissioners have further concluded that the Median Plan, involving the installation of a five foot wide meandering path in the median of the Boulevard, is the preferred plan to deal with its traffic problems. It is less disruptive and will effectively separate pedestrians and joggers from the automotive traffic. It can be an attractive addition to the City, if implemented in conjunction with the City's Beautification Committee who could advise on (i) the selection of trees to be retained or removed and (ii) other steps to be taken to preserve and enhance the beauty of the Boulevard and its median. The Commissioners are concerned, however, that so much attention has been focused on the Single Lane Plan over the last several months that the positive impact of the Median Plan is not fully appreciated by the citizens of the City and that a period of time should be allowed to better explain the details and benefits of this plan. Once the Median Plan has been formally approved and authorized, it should be followed, as funding becomes available, by a phased program of sidewalk construction in selected neighborhoods throughout the City.

9. In anticipation of the completion of the study by Hodgson & Douglas and the need to commence the prompt implementation of some of the work required by the ultimate plan

to be approved by the Commissioners, a funding allowance was included in the operating budget of the City for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2002, which allowance is believed to be sufficient to cover the anticipated cost of implementing the Median Plan. It is the intention of the Commissioners to try to include additional allowances in future operating budgets of the City to fund subsequent phases of the work until the approved plan has been fully implemented; provided that such allowances can be included without causing an increase in the effective property tax rate of the City.


NOW THEREFORE, in recognition of the urgent need to make certain improvements to promote the public safety within the City, BE IT RESOLVED by the Commissioners of the City of Belle Meade that the following conclusions are hereby approved:


1. The Single Lane Plan is hereby rejected and will not be utilized as the solution to the traffic problems in the City.
2. The Median Plan is hereby approved as the preferred method of separating pedestrians and joggers from automotive traffic on Belle Meade Boulevard. A formal vote of approval of this plan is deferred until the April meeting of the Commissioners, prior to which the Commissioners will endeavor to communicate further with the citizens of the City to the end that they may be more fully informed of the details and advantages of this Plan and of the need for its prompt implementation.
3. Commencing with the implementation of the Median Plan, and as soon as additional funding becomes available, construction of a program of neighborhood sidewalks should begin and continue in the following order of priority:

- (i) Lynwood Boulevard and/or Lynwood Terrace from Harding Road to Glen Eden and then following Glen Eden to Jackson Boulevard.
- (ii) Lynwood Boulevard from Glen Eden to Harding Place and then along Harding Place from Lynwood Boulevard to Belle Meade Boulevard.
- (iii) Sidewalks along lower Jackson Boulevard should follow the first two phases of sidewalk construction, with additional sidewalks to added be in future years based on need and available funds.

Prior to the commencement of each sidewalk project, neighborhood meetings will be held for residents of the affected streets to explain the project and answer citizens' questions.

Adopted: January 23, 2002


Peggy Warner, Mayor


Dorothy L. Wheeler, City Recorder

This Resolution was rescinded by the Commissioners during discussion in the April 10, 2002 BC meeting.

"Commissioner Crook then moved that further consideration of Resolution 2002-01 be deferred indefinitely. Vice Mayor Killebrow seconded the motion"

Vote carried unanimously.