

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Mayor and Town Council  
**FROM:** W. Calvin Horton, Town Manager  
**SUBJECT:** Request for South Columbia Street Improvements  
**DATE:** April 6, 1998

The attached resolution would request that the North Carolina Department of Transportation design and construct certain roadway, drainage, bikelane, and sidewalk improvements on South Columbia Street (N.C. 86) between Manning Drive and Fordham Boulevard.

**BACKGROUND**

Various improvements on South Columbia Street have been considered periodically by the Town and the State since the early 1980's.

The North Carolina Department of Transportation (N.C.D.O.T.) considered funding a project on South Columbia Street in the late 1980's involving four or five traffic lanes.

Following a Public Hearing and Council work session in early 1990, the Town Council decided not to proceed with a project on South Columbia Street due to community objections regarding the extent of the proposed widening and associated impacts on the project corridor.

In the mid-1990's, the Town Council again discussed possible South Columbia Street Improvements and a public forum was held in late 1994.

The Council subsequently adopted a resolution requesting that the State perform a feasibility study for an improvement project involving limited roadway improvements, bikelanes, sidewalks, and transit improvements.

The State did not schedule such a study, and no further design development or studies have occurred since then regarding any type of project on South Columbia Street.

On October 13, 1997 the Council adopted a Transportation Project Priority List that placed the improvement of South Columbia Street as a number two priority, with the following description: "Improvement of South Columbia Street from Manning Drive to Fordham Boulevard with bicycle and pedestrian accommodations; minimize right-of-way takings."

## **DISCUSSION**

Recently, Town and University officials discussed at a Coordination and Consultation Committee meeting their mutual interest in having the State construct certain improvements on South Columbia Street.

On March 20, 1998, Town and University officials met with officials of the North Carolina Department of Transportation and our State Transportation Board Member to determine if the State would consider a limited improvement project on South Columbia Street.

The proposed improvements would include installation of a four-foot wide bike-lane and a five-foot wide sidewalk along the east side of South Columbia Street, full length curb-and-gutter, and associated drainage and intersection improvements that could be accommodated within the existing 50'-60' of right-of-way. Please see the attached sketch and descriptions.

The Secretary of the North Carolina Department of Transportation was receptive to the proposed improvements and suggested that the Town submit a formal Council resolution requesting that the State undertake the proposed project.

## **CONCLUSION**

We think that a four-foot wide striped bikelane and a five-foot wide sidewalk could be constructed along the east side of South Columbia Street within the existing right-of-way, including associated curb, gutter, and drainage improvements, with minimal disturbance to adjacent private properties. Limited widening at some intersections might also be accommodated.

The improvements would significantly enhance the function, safety, and appearance of South Columbia Street while allowing it to be shared by motorists, cyclists, and pedestrians.

## **MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION**

That the Council adopt the attached resolution requesting that the North Carolina Department of Transportation design and construct improvements on South Columbia Street between Manning Drive and Fordham Boulevard.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Map (p. 4)
2. Sketch and Description Sheet (p. 5)

**A RESOLUTION REQUESTING THAT THE NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION DESIGN AND CONSTRUCT CERTAIN ROADWAY, DRAINAGE, BIKELANE, AND SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENTS ON SOUTH COLUMBIA STREET (N.C.86) BETWEEN MANNING DRIVE AND FORDHAM BOULEVARD. (98-04-06/R-17)**

WHEREAS, South Columbia Street between Manning Drive and Fordham Boulevard is a key roadway serving the Town and the University of North Carolina; and

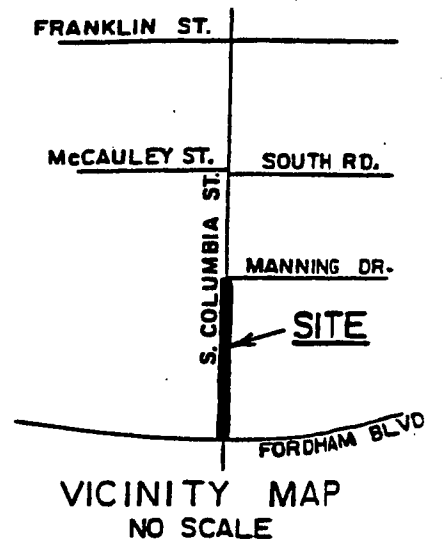
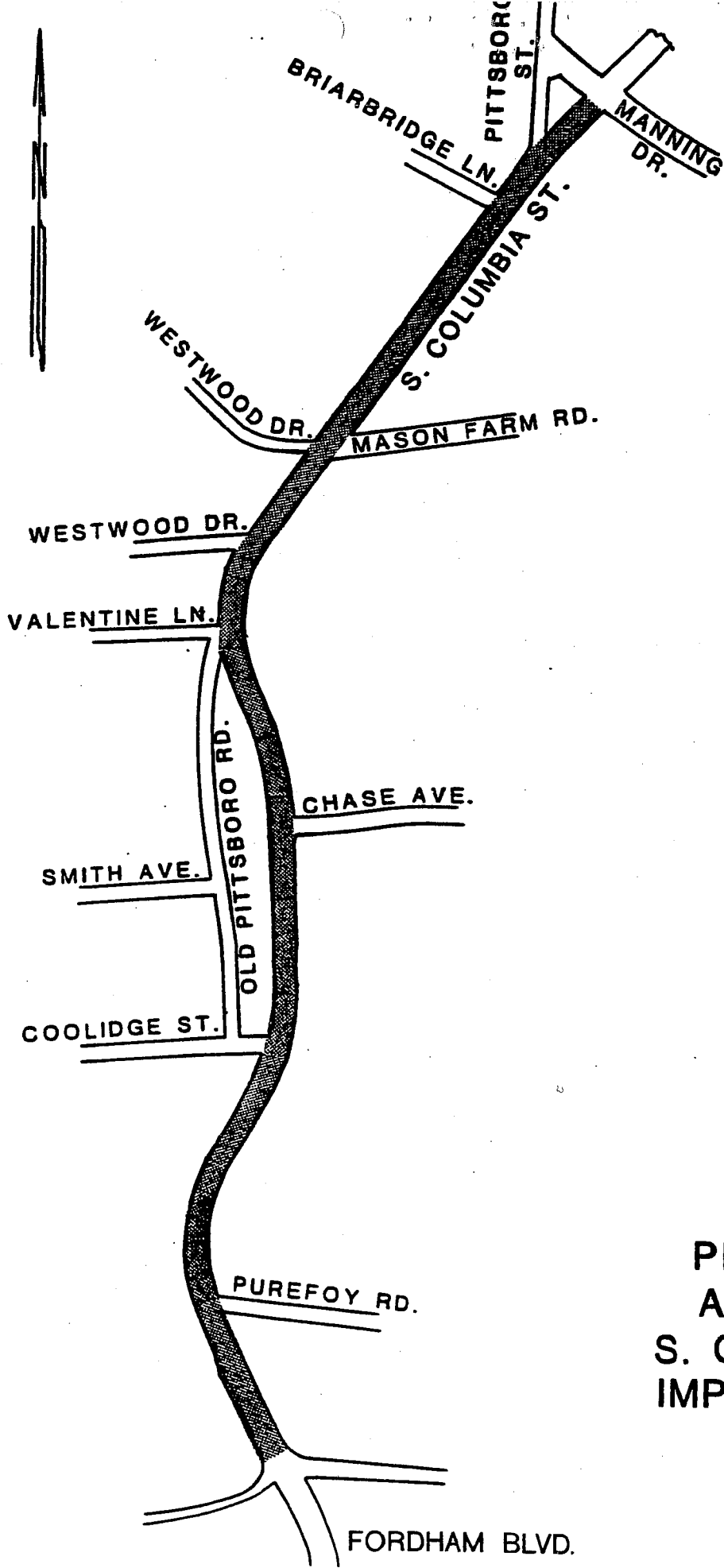
WHEREAS, both the Town and the University are interested in having the State construct certain roadway, bicycle, pedestrian, and drainage improvements on South Columbia Street to better serve all users of this important transportation corridor; and

WHEREAS, representatives of both the Town and the University have met with State officials to discuss the desired improvements which would include limited roadway widening to accommodate a four-foot wide striped bikelane on the east edge of the roadway, curb-and-gutter along both sides of the roadway, a five-foot wide sidewalk at the back of curb along the east side of the roadway, and associated drainage and intersection improvements as can reasonably be accommodated within the existing right-of-way and with minimal disruption of adjacent properties.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Chapel Hill Town Council here with requests that the North Carolina Department of Transportation design, fund, and construct the above described improvements on South Columbia Street (N.C. 86) between Manning Drive and Fordham Boulevard.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Council authorizes the Town Manager to request that the Chancellor of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill endorse the Town's proposal in writing.

This the 6<sup>th</sup> day of April, 1998.



**PROPOSED  
 AREA FOR  
 S. COLUMBIA ST.  
 IMPROVEMENTS**  
 NO SCALE