A workshop of the Greenville City Council was held on Monday, May 20, 2019, in Conference Room 337, located on the third floor at City Hall, with Mayor P.J. Connelly presiding. Mayor Connelly called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Those Present:
Mayor P.J. Connelly, Mayor Pro-Tem Rose Glover, Council Member Monica Daniels, Council Member Will Bell, Council Member Rick Smiley, Council Member William Litchfield, Jr., and Council Member Brian Meyerhoeffer, Jr.

Those Absent:
None.

Also Present:
City Manager Ann E. Wall, City Attorney Emanuel McGirt, Assistant City Manager Michael Cowin, Assistant City Manager Ken Graves, Administrative Assistant Valerie Shiuwegar

**APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

City Manager Wall stated that staff would like to present a brief video on the Arlington Boulevard Resurfacing Project if time allows at the end of the workshop. Council Member Bell made a motion to approve the agenda with the recommended addition. Council Member Daniels seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**PITT-GREENVILLE AIRPORT UPDATE**

Pitt-Greenville Airport (PGV) Director Bill Hopper provided an update on the PGV to the City Council. He stated that the Airport has gone through a rebranding process and is pursuing a small community development federal grant, noting that local community involvement is a key component of that grant. He stated that the PGV is actively working on securing a second airline and he would provide more details as they become available.

Touching on additional developments, Director Hopper stated that there is demand for the airport’s hangar service and he noted that there is land north of the airport that they would like to develop. He stated that the PGV will be coordinating with Elizabeth State University (ESU) to host an event
to raise awareness and interest in training programs offered at ESU for pilots and aircraft mechanics.

The City Council expressed concerns with the reliability of the current air service. Director Hopper stated that some concerns would be alleviated with the addition of a second airline. He stated that he would seek additional methods to address reliability with the PGV’s existing airline and address minor interior upgrades to the facility.

PRESENTATION ON UPTOWN DISTRICT SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS

City Manager Ann Wall stated that the Uptown Safety Taskforce Committee had been formed in response to recent safety concerns in the Uptown area. The Committee members include: Assistant City Manager Ken Graves, Police Chief Mark Holtzman, Fire Marshall Bryant Beddard, Lead Planner Elizabeth Blount, Chief Building Inspector Les Everett, Community Development Director Thomas Barnett, Fire/Rescue Chief Eric Griffin, Code Enforcement Supervisor Carlton Dawson, Chief Planner Chantae Gooby, and Assistant Public Works Director Kevin Heifferon.

Assistant Manager Graves listed identified concerns:

- Disturbances at entertainment establishments
- Crowd management and loitering
- Queue lines
- Issues in parking lots/parking decks with assaults, weapons violations, fights, drinking, urination, and trash

The Committee suggests addressing concerns through various strategies including zoning techniques, partnerships with business owners and East Carolina University, policy reviews, fee assessments, and ordinance modifications. They provided the following recommendations to the City Council:

- Implement a charge for late-night parking
- Initiate an ambassador program
- Crowd management
- Partner with bar operators
- Modify the amplified sound ordinance
- Establish sidewalk encroachment agreements
- Provide additional bathroom services

Police Chief Mark Holtzman addressed parking changes. He stated that the downtown area is generally policed by a few officers until 11 p.m. He stated that the activity in the downtown area increases later in the evening, receiving thousands of visitors each night, requiring approximately
20 officers and additional City resources to adequately patrol the area. The Committee recommends implementing a parking fee beginning at 10 p.m. He stated that a parking fee would help recoup some of the costs associated with nighttime operations and create accountability, allowing authorities a method of tracking who is in the area. Patrons would have the option of paying through an app or parking station and would be required to enter their license plate numbers. He stated that the Committee further suggests a 2-hour parking limit for street parking and extending parking in lots and in the parking deck.

Chief Holtzman next addressed initiating an ambassador program. He stated that current patrols drive by parking lots consistently recognizing the potential for fights and other harmful activities in those areas. He stated that contracting security services for this proposed program would help support roaming patrols and increase visibility and security. He stated that in addition to a security presence, the ambassadors would be able to provide way-finding assistance, dining recommendations, and information about the area. He stated that the ambassadors would not be armed but would be provided with a means to stay in regular contact with the Police Department. The City can decide other details such as their work uniform and their work schedule.

Looking at crowd management, Chief Holtzman stated that the Committee recommends moving the ECU bus station from Reade Street to the Mendenhall bus stop. He stated that there are about 3,000 students that utilize the student transit system on the weekends. He stated that moving the bus stop from Reade Street would alleviate congestion at Reade & 5th and improve student safety. This would also allow a more efficient exit during downtown’s closing time. He stated that the ECU Police Chief was also agreeable to moving the bus stop to Mendenhall.

Chief Holtzman discussed partnerships with bar and nightclub owners in the downtown area. He stated that there have been regular meetings with the owners to get feedback and listen to concerns. He stated that waiting lines for establishments are a cause of concern and there have been discussions regarding the possibility of sharing the costs of off-duty officers.

Presenting the proposal to modify the City’s existing sound ordinance, Chief Holtzman stated that he recognized the increasing interest in large outdoor events for crowds numbering 500+. Currently the City’s ordinance states that the City may mandate 1 security personnel per 50 people, but 1 per 100 has worked well. The Committee does not propose including a decibel rating, but does recommend focusing on working with event coordinators regarding the positioning of speakers and other similar details to ensure that the events are not a nuisance to neighborhoods. He stated that the Committee further recommends implementing an indoor amplified permit that would provide the City with notice about events and would require the same ratio of 1:100 of security that is required for outdoor events. He stated that this would help the City take a proactive approach to events that are held in recreational venues and other rented spaces.

Chief Holtzman listed the cost of Uptown Operations:

- $50k+ in direct overtime for extra police
- Reassignment of 10+ officers from other duties to the Uptown area
- Additional parking enforcement staffing costs
- Lighting upgrades and controls
- Public safety cameras
- Public Works cleaning staff for streets, sidewalks, parking areas, and parking deck

Future costs include:

- Ambassadors for increased security and visibility at parking lots
- Police Substation near 5th & Cotanche
- Leasing additional pay stations for parking management

Chief Planner Chantae Gooby presented information about sidewalk encroachments to the City Council. She stated that encroachments allow business owners and property owners to upgrade and improve the exterior appearance on city-owned property. This private use of public spaces promotes an inviting and attractive downtown and allows for establishments to promote safety by giving them the authority to regulate loitering, giving them more control of queues and litter at entrances. She stated that staff would still be able to review these uses on a case-by-case basis like the outdoor dining process. She stated that ADA regulations require 4 ft. of unobstructed pathways for mobility. She stated that some areas present a challenge, such as Cotanche Street, with limited space.

Community Development Director Thomas Barnett spoke to the City Council about the possible creation of an overlay district in the downtown area. He stated that the creation of an overlay district would allow the City to make periodic inspections of different businesses in the district to seek greater compliance with regulations. He stated it would be an opportunity to look at various zoning changes to attract the desired development and businesses that the community would like to see in that area.

Assistant Public Works Director Kevin Heifferon stated that there is a need to provide temporary restroom facilities during peak times in the Uptown area. He stated the Committee has looked into providing trailers in the Hodges lot. Staff stated that there is a problem with club and bar patrons utilizing public spaces to relieve themselves. They stated that this is not a problem that is unique to the City of Greenville. The crowds have increased beyond what the original buildings were constructed to accommodate but there is not a way to make those buildings upgrade to today’s standards.

Council Member Litchfield asked about steps to address loitering.

Staff stated that loitering regulations must be crafted very carefully because they can be contested. Staff will continue looking into options to curb loitering.
Assistant Manager Graves stated that staff is engaging with ECU, issuing an RFP for the Uptown Master Plan, and assessing the Uptown nighttime environment by CRI-TAC. He stated that the City will also be examining a study conducted by the University about bars in the downtown area. He stated that the next steps are to vet the legal ramifications of the recommendations and conduct public engagement meetings. He stated that two of those meetings are tentatively set for June 5th and June 20th.

City Manager Wall stated that Arlington Boulevard is set to undergo a major resurfacing that will temporarily impact traffic. The Public Information Office shared a video that outlined the project with a projected timeline and point of contact.

Public Information Officer Brock Letchworth stated that handouts would be delivered and the video would be shared and made available to the City Council to share as well.

Public Works Director Kevin Mulligan stated that NCDOT confirmed that the resurfacing project will begin next Tuesday, May 28.

The City Council requested that staff ensure that the project is well publicized to give citizens advance warning of the potential impact on traffic.

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**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business before the City Council, motion was made by Council Member Bell and seconded by Council Member Glover to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously. Mayor Connelly adjourned the meeting at 5:40 p.m.

Prepared by:
Valerie P. Shiwegar
Administrative Assistant

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Barwick, CMC
City Clerk