City of Asheville Staff Report

City Council Meeting Date: October 27, 2026

Staff Resources: Ashley Haire, Transportation Director; Jessica Morriss, Assistant Transportation Director

Action Requested: Adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager to enter into and execute an agreement with the North Carolina Department of Transportation in which the City agrees to reimburse the department, in an amount not to exceed $664,304, for bicycle, pedestrian, and aesthetic betterments made on behalf of the City of Asheville as part of the I-26 Connector project Section I-2513AC.

Background:

- The I-26 Connector project is an estimated $1.8 billion transportation project by the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) that begins at I-40 and ends at US 19-23 near Broadway.
- Section AC consists of the section between I-40 and Haywood Road and includes the interchanges at Brevard Road and Amboy Road.
- In May 2022, the City Council authorized the City Manager to sign a funding letter of commitment in the amount of $664,304 (not to exceed) for the for the betterments and aesthetic improvements that will be included in this section of the project that were agreed to by the City and NCDOT through the work of the I-26 Aesthetics Committee.
- For purposes of this report, a city betterment is defined as a bicycle, pedestrian, or public transportation improvement that exceeds NCDOT's standard improvements and an aesthetic betterment is defined as any treatment including aesthetic materials, landscaping, and lighting that exceeds NCDOT's standard treatments.
- These agreed upon betterments and aesthetics improvements for the AC Section include asphalt multiuse paths and/or multiuse path connections at Fairfax Avenue, Virginia Avenue, Shelburne Road, Amboy Road, sidewalk at Brevard Road, and stamped/stained concrete aprons on roundabouts, median islands, decorative lighting on the Brevard Road bridge, conduit for additional lighting on the Amboy Road and Brevard Road multiuse paths, and upgraded dark green light poles.
- The $664,304 in funding for this portion of the City's commitment to the I-26 Connector project has already been appropriated and is budgeted in the CIP (T2303) along with additional funds that are committed for the betterments and aesthetics for the BD Section of the project (the limits of which extend north from Haywood Road, cross the French Broad River, and end at Broadway).

Vendor Outreach:

- N/A

Council Vision 2036 Focus Area(s):

- Transportation and Accessibility

Council Priority Recovery Area(s):

- N/A

Committee(s):

- Aesthetics Committee overall recommended treatments via Section AC report
- Multimodal Committee (MMTC) unanimously approved letter of commitment of funds April 27, 2022

Fiscal Impact:

- The $664,304 in funding is already included in the CIP (T2303).

Suggested Motion:

- Motion to adopt a resolution authorizing the City Manager to enter into and execute an agreement with the North Carolina Department of Transportation in which the City agrees to reimburse the department, in an amount not to exceed $664,304, for bicycle, pedestrian, and aesthetic betterments made on behalf of the City of Asheville as part of the I-26 Connector project Section I-2513AC.

Attachment(s):

- Resolution

City of Asheville Resolution Number 26-___

Resolution authorizing the City Manager to enter into and execute an agreement with the North Carolina Department of Transportation for bicycle, pedestrian, and aesthetic betterments on behalf of the City of Asheville for the I-26 Connector project section I-2513AC.

Whereas, pursuant to North Carolina General Statute section 136-66.3 a municipality by agreement shall reimburse the N.C. Deptransportation of Transportation (NCDOT) for the cost of all improvements requested by the municipality that are in addition to the improvements that the NCDOT would normally include in the project; and

Whereas, Project I-2513 Section AC is currently listed in the NCDOT 2026-2035 State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) at a total estimated project cost of $290 million; and

Whereas, the Project is currently in the right-of-way phase and is pending the award of the construction phase; and

Whereas, the City Council appointed an I-26 Aesthetics Committee in 2018 to advise the City regarding recommendations for aesthetic improvements to the I-26 Connector project. The Committee made a series of recommendations for Section AC of the project which formed the basis of the $664,304 commitment of funds toward the specific betterments and aesthetic betterments outlined in the scope of work in the agreement with the NCDOT; and

Whereas, the agreement specifies that the City's costs toward the agreement shall not exceed $664,304 and that the NCDOT is responsible for all costs that exceed this amount; and

Whereas, the $664,304 in funding is already included in the CIP (T2303).

Now, therefore, the City Council of the City of Asheville hereby authorizes the City Manager to enter into and execute an agreement with the North Carolina Department of Transportation in which the City agrees to reimburse the department, in an amount not to exceed $664,304, for bicycle, pedestrian, and aesthetic betterments made on behalf of the City of Asheville as part of the I-26 Connector project section I-2513AC.

Read, approved and adopted this 27th day of October, 2026.

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Esther E. Manheimer, Mayor

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Brad Branham, City Attorney

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Magdalen Burleson, City Clerk