



Legislation Text

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RESOLUTION R-2021-93: A RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NORMAN, OKLAHOMA, CHANGING THE FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION OF JAMES GARNER AVENUE BETWEEN ACRES STREET AND MAIN STREET FROM A LOCAL STREET TO A MINOR ARTERIAL IN NORMAN.

BACKGROUND: The 2016 - Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act) federal transportation funding bill allocates approximately \$22 Million in Federal funds per year for the implementation of eligible transportation improvements in the Oklahoma City metropolitan area. Ten percent of this appropriation is used to fund safety projects at 100% of their construction cost.

In order to be eligible for this funding, the roadway on which any project is located must be on the functionally classified system. Over the years, functional classification has come to assume additional significance beyond its purpose as a framework for identifying the particular role of a roadway in moving vehicles through a network of highways. Functional classification carries with it expectations about roadway design, including its speed, capacity and relationship to existing and future land use development. Federal legislation continues to use functional classification in determining eligibility for funding under the Federal-aid program.

The 2019 Bond Project to improve James Garner Avenue between Acres Street and Duffy Street was deemed ineligible for federal funding during the Association of Central Oklahoma Governments (ACOG) Call for Projects for the FFY 2022-2025 Transportation Improvement Program because the segment of James Garner Avenue between Acres Street and Main Street, which is a portion of the project that was being submitted for funding, is not on the functionally classified system. As such, the phase of James Garner Avenue between Acres Street and Duffy Street was removed from Norman's submittal for the 2020 Call for Projects. The James Garner Avenue project, Phase 3, will be eligible to compete again in the 2021 Call for Projects once the request to add the segment between Acres Street and Main Street to the functionally classified system is approved by the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) and the Federal Highway Administration.

Every year, ACOG coordinates a regional evaluation process that identifies transportation improvements eligible for federal funding. Individual projects are rated and compared to one another using a pre-established criterion. The process ends with the formulation of the region's transportation improvement program and the decision to use federal funds to pay for a significant portion of the cost of the higher priority projects.

DISCUSSION: James Garner Avenue is identified in the Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) adopted by Council on May 13, 2014, as the primary north-south route into and out of downtown Norman and providing connection to the north side of the University of Oklahoma campus. While James Garner Avenue is also identified as a Special Context Sensitive Corridor meaning that it does not fit exactly into a specific roadway classification, its intended design as a two-lane, median divided roadway most closely relates to the Minor Arterial classification. In addition, the CTP also references

a projected average daily traffic volume of 16,000 vehicles per day in the 20 year planning timeframe of the CTP. This volume represents a significant redistribution of traffic from both Flood Avenue and Porter Avenue. For these reasons, all of James Garner Avenue should be classified as a Minor Arterial on the functionally classified system. To accomplish this, the segment of James Garner Avenue between Acres Street and Main Street will require reclassification from a Local Street to a Minor Arterial. Even though this phase of James Garner Avenue extends to Duffy Street, the portion from Main Street to Duffy Street is already on the functionally classified system. The segment of James Garner Avenue from Acres Street north across Robinson Street to Flood Avenue is new construction utilizing a portion of STBG-UZA Funding and Norman Forward Funding and will be added to the functionally classified system once construction is completed. ODOT, through ACOG has a form, attached to this memorandum, to request the necessary reclassification of James Garner Avenue between Acres Street and Main Street.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of Resolution R-2021-93 to reclassify James Garner Avenue between Acres Street and Main Street from a Local Street to a Minor Arterial on the functionally classified system. This reclassification and addition to the functionally classified system will give the City the flexibility to request Federal funds to upgrade the corridor at any time in the future. By sending the form along with the adopted Resolution to ACOG, Staff will be requesting that ODOT concur with the proposed reclassification and to submit same to the Federal Highway Administration for their approval.