

THE CITY OF WEST COLUMBIA
ALEXANDER ROAD SIDEWALK PROJECT – PHASE II
ADDENDUM to Section 13 – Narrative Questions

BACKGROUND:

Alexander Road is a narrow, heavily traveled, two-lane road that runs in a north-south direction, parallel with the Congaree River and is the eastern border of the historic New Brookland Mill Village. It begins at Meeting Street, near the Gervais Street Bridge, and continues beyond the West Columbia/Cayce city limits and connects with Knox Abbott Drive near the Blossom Street Bridge (see attached map).

In addition to the Mill Village with approximately 150 living units and a population of approximately 450, there are now three major apartment complexes on Alexander Road including the newly constructed Sterling University Apartments. Located on the west side of the street (in West Columbia), this student housing project houses approximately 500 students. Adjacent to Sterling University Apartments is Riverside Estates (formerly University Commons), which has 204 units with an average population of approximately 700 people, and across the street is Granby Crossing, which has 168 units with an average population of 250. In addition, two new residential subdivisions are being built on the east side of the street between the city limits at Cayce and New Orleans Restaurant, which will have approximately 95 housing units when complete with an average population of 225.

The City's Riverwalk Park and Amphitheater already draws people from all over the Midlands who utilize Alexander Road. Across the street from the park at the corner of Alexander Road and Meeting Street, is a 4 acre tract of land that is currently owned by the City of West Columbia and is under contract for a major retail and commercial development. Once this tract is developed (construction to begin Summer 2008), it will be an additional attraction for the whole Midlands area, but especially for the residents of the Old Mill Village, Congaree Park and Village at Riverwalk subdivisions, and the Sterling University Apartments, as well as the neighboring apartments in Cayce.

NEED AND STEPS TAKEN:

Due to the narrowness of the road, pedestrian traffic is not safe because it requires pedestrians to walk in the roadway itself or on narrow road shoulders, some of which are lined with ditches. The City of West Columbia received grant funds from SCDOT for sidewalk improvements in the Mill Village area. These funds will be utilized to construct a sidewalk 8' wide and approximately 925' long on the east side of Alexander Road from the Riverwalk Park and Amphitheater near Meeting Street, to the point of the proposed pedestrian crossing (Phase I).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The City is requesting grant funds to construct a crosswalk from the terminus of the sidewalk on the east side of Alexander Road to the west side, and then continue a sidewalk along the west side of the street to just past the entrance to the Sterling University Apartments at the city limits (Phase II). The crosswalk will be constructed of stamped asphalt, and the sidewalk will be constructed of concrete, 8' wide and approximately 610' long. All sidewalks and crosswalks will be handicapped accessible. This project will provide a safe, pedestrian walkway from high-density residential areas to retail, commercial and recreational areas, and will help to reduce vehicular traffic and parking problems.