

Letter to Kelle Maslyn (HEAD of cart Committee)

Dear Kelle,

On Thursday afternoon I had a good and productive meeting with one of your fellow CART members, Mr. Doug Mance. The purpose of the meeting was to bring clarity to both what I am proposing with respect to RTA funding, and what the CART is charged with doing as a part of their mission. I believe both goals were met.

I'm sharing this note with you and inviting you to pass it along to your members. I'll be brief and to the point.

Road repair in this region has been woefully ignored for far too long. My goal has been to identify a dedicated funding source with which the region could get about the business of fixing our infrastructure. One such source I identified early on in the discussion was the RTA sales tax. Specifically, I introduced the idea of putting to the voters the option of repurposing 20% of the existing RTA tax to a new line item in the RTA package that we'd call 'road reconstruction.' The 1/2 cent tax would still be captured in the RTA package, no pulling apart the elements of the package, and letting the voters decide. As you know, that idea is getting some scrutiny from a legal perspective. We don't have time to wait on that to be sorted out while identifying a source of funds for the roads. To that end, I'm focused on other options that do not involve RTA funds.

Simultaneously with that discussion, I have also proposed that the RTA, CART and TDOT allow for a fresh look at the alignment identified in the Broadway widening project. There are \$42M of RTA dollars allocated to the work, \$25M of county bond dollars allocated and \$4M of development fees. The county money is not available and may not be for several years. What appeared on the ballot was a description of an alignment based on the number of lanes, not width in feet. It was based on what has turned out to be flawed traffic volume projections. Unfortunately, the early conceptual design is a northern alignment that demolishes over 115 historic and/or business structures by widening to 150'. My intent is to re-engage the conversation of that design, maintaining the RTA \$42M budget but preserving the buildings along the corridor. It is not, nor has it ever been my intent to cancel the project or to repurpose RTA dollars away from it. Very simply, allow the Citizen's Task Force and the CART to look at design options that efficiently use the \$42M and save the homes and businesses, while maintaining the functionality of the roadway as was envisioned by the ballot language. Take a second look.

That goal is consistent with the third part of my discussion with Mr. Mance. That is, honor the mission of the CART. That mission is to ascertain that the RTA plan is implemented as presented to the voters, reviewing the revenue projections and taking a fresh look at the realities of the design, funding and needs. My proposal to retain the existing alignment and spend the RTA allocated money in doing that is consistent with that CART mission.

I appreciate your taking the time to read this, and if you would, to pass it along to your CART colleagues. I would be happy to meet with your group at any time if further clarification is needed. In the mean time, I will continue to look for creative ways to fund road repair in the region, and I will continue to advocate for creative design to be directed towards the Broadway project, leaving in tact the voter approved RTA money that has been identified for that project. The \$25M county financial shortfall is not an RTA or CART issue. And yet, the loss of those funds makes it imperative that we reconsider the design of Broadway in a way that we can afford, and in a way that meets the transit needs of the area.

Thank you for your consideration.

Steve Kozachik