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COUNTY DEPARTMENT AGENDA REQUEST

Department/Division: Board of Commissioners

Department Head: Carol Chandler

Presenter, if needed: Carol Chandler

Preferred Meeting Date: Wednesday, November 5, 2008

Wording for the Agenda:

Continued discussion of the request by the McIntosh Trail Historic Preservation Society for a resolution supporting the effort to obtain "Georgia Scenic Byway" designation from Georgia Department of Transportation.

Background/History/Details:

At the September Workshop, staff presented a request from a group attempting to secure Scenic Byway status from the Georgia Department of Transportation for a route that begins in Butts County, traverses five counties, including Fayette, and ends at the burial place of Chief McIntosh in Carroll County.

The Board had concerns about whether or not such a designation could adversely impact future improvements to SR 85 South. Program officials responded that roadway improvement projects take priority over this program, thus this designation would not impact future improvements. Also, during the "corridor management" phase of the project, sponsors work with local governments and property owners to more carefully identify/forecast possible changes in traffic, etc. Until GDOT is satisfied will all aspects of the planning process, the designation is not given.

What action are you seeking from the Board of Commissioners?

If the Board is willing to participate in the effort, the sponsors need a resolution of support from each governing body along the route. Fayette County is the only entity that has not yet provided a resolution.

If this item requires funding, please describe:

Has this issue come before the Commissioners in the past? No

If so, when? Wednesday, September 3, 2008

Do you need audio-visual for the presentation? No

Back-up Material Submitted? Yes

STAFF USE ONLY

Approved by Finance? Yes

Reviewed by Legal?

Approved by Purchasing? Yes

Approved by Administrative Staff? Yes

Staff Notes

There is no cost to the County. Signage is provided by GDOT if the Byway is approved.

Administrator's Approval Yes

Confirmed Meeting Date Wednesday, November 5, 2008

- ○ Recognition/ Presentation
- ○ Public Hearing
- ◉ Old Business
- ○ New Business
- ○ Consent
- ○ Report
- ○ Other

State of Georgia;
County of Fayette

A RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR THE MCINTOSH TRAIL SCENIC BYWAY

Whereas, the McIntosh Trail Historic Preservation Society, Inc. has identified a route that traverses five counties, including Fayette County, which possesses significant scenic, historic, and cultural qualities; and

Whereas, the route identified by the sponsors enters Fayette County via McIntosh Road, continues along the Highway 85 Connector to State Route 85, where it continues south into adjacent Coweta County; and

Whereas, the McIntosh Trail Historic Preservation Society, Inc. is seeking to gain "Georgia Scenic Byway" designation for this route from the Georgia Department of Transportation; and

Whereas, designation as a "Georgia Scenic Byway" for this route will support the long-standing desire of Fayette County to protect, promote, and enhance the quality of life for those who work, live and visit our community; and

Whereas, the Georgia Scenic Byways Program" is a tool to encourage tourism and responsible development in communities, bringing positive economic benefits and opportunities to Fayette County;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF FAYETTE COUNTY, GEORGIA, to support and endorse the efforts of the McIntosh Trail Historic Preservation Society, Inc., in its application to the Georgia Department of Transportation for a Georgia Scenic Byway Designation for the route described above.

So resolved this 5th day of November, 2008, by the

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
FAYETTE COUNTY, GEORGIA

_____
Jack R. Smith, Chairman

Attest:

_____
Carol Chandler, Clerk

STAFF REPORTS

McIntosh Trail Scenic Byway Project: Executive Assistant Carol Chandler informed the Board that the Georgia Department of Transportation has a program called "Scenic Byways" that allows for certain roads throughout Georgia to be designated as scenic or special. She told the Commissioners that, in light of that information, there was an effort to have a scenic byway, named the "McIntosh Trail Scenic Byway' established and that it would have its genesis at Indian Springs State Park in Butts County, would traverse through five counties, and would terminate at the McIntosh Reserve in Carroll County where Chief McIntosh is buried. She continued saying that this scenic byway has been slated to enter Fayette County at McIntosh Road, would travel through Brooks to State Route 85 Connector at Starr's Mill, and turn south onto State Route 85 where it would then exit the county. She explained that it was hoped that, by having a scenic byway, historical sites would be identified and emphasized and communities would generate revenue from its tourism and retail sales. She told the Board that the process required in order to have a road declared a scenic bypass was "arduous and cumbersome" since it involves public hearings, talking to people who live along the roadway, engaging local governments, and submitting a Corridor Management Plan that addresses the impact such a designation would have on traffic, but she added that the McIntosh Trail Historic Preservation Society, who has begun this initiative, has begun to take the steps needed for this designation. She concluded by saying that she was bringing this issue to the Board's attention, and that if the Board should desire to support this effort, she had a canned resolution that was provided by the Society for their consideration as well.

Chairman Smith asked if this effort would preclude Fayette County from doing any kind of significant improvement to the road. Commissioner Frady replied that he thought it meant only signage was required, but Chairman Smith added that there had to be at least some restrictions involved.

Interim County Administrator Jack Krakeel mentioned that the former State Aid programs were being converted to State Grant programs that could be used for road assistance projects, and he explained that under the State Grant program a county able to select up to seven projects for funding consideration. He then asked this initiative would be considered one of the seven projects and if that would limit Fayette County's ability to obtain additional grant funding for those projects that the County would have that required actual road construction work. Chairman Smith replied that he did not believe there was any money going to the project, and Ms. Chandler added that this project was not being called a grant. She clarified that this project was being called a designation, and that meant, if the Department of Transportation awarded this initiative, it would place the appropriate signage.

The Board directed Ms. Chandler to obtain clarification regarding what the impact would be of having McIntosh Trail designated a scenic byway, and to determine if such a designation would impact road funds, the County's ability to control, improve or expand the roadways, and to gain more information in general.