A WORKSHOP OF THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BECKLEY REGARDING RT. 3 TRAFFIC STUDY CONVENED AT 5:30 PM ON MARCH 10, 2026, IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS AND VIA WEB-X.

PRESENT: Mayor Ryan Neal, City Manager Phillip Jarrell, City Attorney Bill File, and the Mayor's and CM's Assistant Susan Miller. Council Members: Natalie Coots, Kip Buchanan, Nancy Shoemaker-Dingess, Frank Williams, Janine Bullock, Sherrie Hunter, and Cody Reedy. The following City employees were present: IT Tech Matt Blake, Director of P&R Leslie Baker, Lt. Adam Jones with Beckley PD, Board of Public Works Director Mike Bolen, and General Manager of Beckley Sanitary Board, Jeremiah Johnson. Guest speakers: Jina Belcher Executive Director of NRGRDA and Jimmy Wriston PE – Service Line Manager with CTL Engineering, Inc.

The Mayor reminded everyone that this is a Workshop. No votes will be taken, and no decisions will be made. He called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. The public had the option to join the meeting in person, listen by WEB-X from their computer, or listen by phone, using the weblink or phone number provided the day of the meeting on the City's webpage at Beckley.org or the City's Facebook page.

You may view the workshop by logging on to Beckley.org or going to the City's Facebook page. It is open to the public, but there will be no public comments. The Mayor said that all members of Council were present.

The only item on the agenda was the Rt. 3 Traffic Study.

City Manager Jarrell said there are safety issues in various places on Harper Road. He said in 2023 the City, County, NRGRDA, Region 4, Fayette Raleigh MPO had a safety study pertaining to Rt. 3, Harper Road conducted. He said that a grant exceeding $300K for this project was received and the DOT signed the paperwork today for the engineering firm to begin. City Manager Jarrell said that it starts at Dry Hill Road and extends to the bottom of Harper Road (West Neville St.) where Sheetz is located. NRGRDA Executive Director Jina Belcher said that it is the entire corridor. Mr. Jarrell said that the reason why this came up is because a business visited code enforcement to review drawings and the Planning Commission requested that the business have a traffic study conducted. Mr. Jarrell said that he gave Council the rules and regulations pertaining to that. Mr. Jarrell said the business applied for a traffic study today.

Ms. Belcher said that Beckley does not have to tackle this project alone as it already has an ecosystem consisting of NRGRDA, Fayette Raleigh MPO, Region 1 Planning, Region 4 Planning, WVDOH, and CTL Engineering Firm. The County is onboard with this project and all involved hope that the City of Beckley will join. She said Harper Road already carries corridor-level safety and traffic pressure which makes this area hard to navigate. She said that Harper Road does more than a typical local street ranging from connecting neighborhoods to businesses, visitors, healthcare, and Harper Road is important to mobility and future development. Harper Road involves municipal and county boundaries. She said that this area appears on Raleigh County's high-crash location list. Specific areas listed as high-crash locations include Harper Park Drive, Circle View Drive, Slate Road, and Dry Hill Road. Harper Rd. also appears in the vulnerable road user systemic analysis which includes the Pikeview Drive intersection. She said this corridor has a lot of safety issue challenges and it also has traffic burden issues for pedestrians and drivers. She said that it is functioning right now, but any further traffic will exacerbate the issues.

These issues include access management, intersection function issues, and multimodal safety issues. One major safety issue is at the Harper Rd. - Pikeview Drive area and the US 64/77 exit to the Pikeview segment (commonly referred to as the intersection at the Omelet Shop). She said that the systemic analysis flags roadway segments with characteristics linked to greater future vulnerability. Road user risks were identified regarding this intersection, and it needs immediate attention. She said planning momentum is already in place for this corridor. The Safe Streets For All Comprehensive Safety Action Plan (STFACSAP) was completed at the beginning of 2025, and it included other areas but the focus of topic for tonight is Harper Road. She said additional money was requested from Safe Streets For All. It was awarded to the Raleigh County Commission to focus on the Harper Road area and that project has been funded. As of last week, all the documents have been executed for that planning grant and the City of Beckley did commit to match funding to that project and the MPO is administering that project. The goal is to put additional conceptual design and cost estimates around the Raleigh General Hospital (including pedestrian access points) and the Omelet Shop area. This is an existing funded application that is moving forward. Additionally, Raleigh County Commission applied for the Build DOT Funding which includes a budget of $3.75M and that funding went in at the beginning of March. CTL Engineering is the Transportation Firm on retainer with the Raleigh County Commission. The budget for the Harper Road project includes NEPA requirements and the finalized design so it can be ready for construction in these two high priority areas. Ms. Belcher said that Beckley is a key partner and wants to remind the City that it's not in this alone. She asked how the City wants NRGRDA to move this project forward. She said NRGRDA would like to partner with everyone involved along with the City regarding the entire corridor. Determinations need to be made about the best path forward for Harper Road and how to work with zoning and code enforcement. She offered solutions such as an overlay or a similar development management approach, as well as avoiding adding significant new traffic burden until key areas are improved or clearly defined. She talked to the Planning Commission about a safety overlay or a small business overlay district. NRGRDA is not saying that it is anti-business, or antidevelopment, it is simply saying that it's a responsible sequencing of growth and infrastructure. She said that the next step is disciplined coordination with potential strategies that the City could consider and adopt. Councilwoman Coots asked Ms. Belcher to elaborate on the overlays. Jina said that restrictions could be put in place such as, if a business wants to locate on Harper Road it would need to have the same amount of traffic volume as the business it replaces. Examples would be that a hotel would have to be purchased by another hotel. Another example of a development overlay would be accepting a business such as a sit-down restaurant for an existing sit-down restaurant or a gas station that must be purchased by a new gas station. This helps alleviate the possibility of additional traffic burden. She said this could send signals to developers that developing in this area will need to require safety over profit until some of the overloaded areas are resolved. It could also be a small business district only. Ms. Belcher said that different variations (of these that were previously mentioned) are a possibility.

Councilwoman Bullock asked if Council could have access to sketches. Ms. Belcher said CTL could assist with that. Councilwoman Shoemaker-Dingess inquired about traffic pattern recommendations. Mr. Wriston said that there are a lot of options like "R" cuts (used in Charleston, WV) or roundabouts could be options in alignment with forward thinking. He said 23K cars a day visit Harper Road and need to come down into Beckley. Councilwoman Shoemaker-Dingess said that businesses need options to come further out on Harper Road to get them to come into Beckley. Ms. Belcher said we need to proceed with caution when it comes to expansion in this area. Safety is the priority. Councilman Williams asked if connecting Sunset Drive to New River Drive is a possibility. Ms. Belcher said that there are some preliminary designs to connect these two streets. She said that New River Drive has been identified in the City of Beckley's Comprehensive Plan. Councilman Williams said that three lane roads will allow for growth and agrees that safety is a concern for pedestrians and drivers. Ms. Belcher said that the City and the County can work with the same firm (CTL) if the City desires. Councilman Reedy said that he agrees that this area has been a long-term problematic area. He has received phone calls monthly for years about this issue. He said it has been an issue for too long and needs to be addressed. Councilwoman Hunter asked Ms. Belcher to explain more about overlays. Ms. Belcher said that because the City of Beckley has zoning and code enforcement, it can restrict any kind of development in areas the City would prefer not to develop. She said it could be for a variety of reasons such as protecting a viewshed, a safety issue, a traffic issue, etc. She said the City can certainly tailor their requests regarding overlays. She said Andy Austin of NRGRDA has reached out to other municipalities that have zoning restriction capabilities to help guide this process. Ms. Belcher said the overlays can be temporary and do not have to last forever. The Planning Commission can review overlays at any time. She said that Council would make their request to the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission would review it and present it to Council to vote on. Councilman Williams inquired about the Omelet Shop. Ms. Belcher said it is building a new structure which would include the ability to drive around the building. He asked how that would affect the business behind the Omelet Shop. She said that is a question for the DOH which is currently reviewing the ingress and egress for that location. Councilman Reedy asked if this is pending approval. Ms. Belcher said that the business has submitted their request to the DOH for the ingress and egress. Mr. File recommended against discussing matters that have not been made public. Councilman Buchanan asked Jeremiah Johanson, General Manager of the Beckley Sanitary Board (BSB) how the infrastructure is on Harper Road. He asked if it is almost at capacity. Mr. Johnson said generally there is going to be capacity there but the biggest thing on the sanitary/sewer is the system is served by lift stations. Mr. Johnson said that this will be a factor at some point. Councilwoman Bullock asked Mr. Wriston what CTL stands for. He said it stands for Communication, Technology, and Leadership.

City Manager Jarrell said that he would be glad to work with CTL on the overlay(s). He said that he can see the need for an overlay at the Pikeview Drive intersection, but the City does not want to impact any economic development. Ms. Belcher said that this intersection is one of the

two top priorities. Councilman Reedy asked what the idea for the area near Raleigh General Hospital is. Ms. Belcher said she would recommend the idea of adhering to a "like for like" business to avoid adding more traffic. City Manager Jarrell asked Mr. Wriston approximately how long a study such as this takes (drawings included). Mr. Wriston said it can take anywhere from 8 to 18 months, but he thinks this one would be quicker. Mr. Wriston said that funding will impact the speed. Once the funding is secure, CTL has the manpower and has been in business for almost 100 years to help expedite this. City Manager Jarrell asked if the $3.75M has already been applied for and asked Mr. Wriston if he thinks $3.75M is enough. Mr. Wriston answered yes to both questions. Ms. Belcher said that while we wait to see if the $3.75M is awarded some of the overlay recommendations and preliminary design work can get attention. Councilwoman Coots asked how long it would take those recommendations to come to fruition. Ms. Belcher said that would be up to the Planning Commission's schedule.

Councilwoman Hunter asked for an update on the project requested by WVU Tech. Mr. Wriston said that work on this project will begin this year. Ms. Belcher said that this is part of the BUILD program proposal. She said the overall proposal was approximately $6.5M and this project (including the moving of the utilities was part of it). City Manager Jarrell asked if he could get a copy of the design of this project. Mr. Wriston said yes. Councilman Reedy asked if one-way streets will be involved. Mr. Wriston said that it is most likely. Councilwoman Coots asked if any concession will be made for side streets and sidewalks. Mr. Wriston said the sidewalks are separate and he can't answer that with certainty but this project ties in with the Campus Corridor Project and it takes care of Minnesota Avenue and sidewalks there. He said Beaver Avenue may be included, he isn't sure; it may be a DOH project. Councilman Reedy clarified by saying that Beaver Avenue is in City limits. Ms. Belcher said NRGRDA was not directly involved in the Campus project but if there is a desire to do overlay work to include Beaver Avenue and Minnesota, and return with an update, she thinks it may be possible. Mr. Wriston said that the Campus project is a DOH project and he would be glad to relay any information as he worked there for thirty years and thinks now is the time to do it. Councilwoman Coots said that Beckley is working to revitalize downtown, and she thinks that one-way districts hurt small towns. Mr. Wriston said that he will get the plans and share them with City Manager Jarrell. With there being no further questions, the Mayor adjourned the meeting at 6:12 p.m.

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Mayor City Manager