Everything on track for new CAT facility

BY GREG OLIVER
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CLEMSON — Clemson Area Transit Executive Director Al Babinicz said Thursday that a Greenville firm's apparent low bid to construct the new Clemson Area Transit (CAT) facility on West Lane will soon go before Clemson City Council for final approval.

"Things are going fine and Able Construction Company is on track with the city of Clemson to construct the new green CAT bus facility," Babinicz said, adding that council is expected to vote on the bid and, if approval is given, enter into a contract at its March 15 meeting."

Once that occurs, Babinicz said building permits would be issued with construction set to begin shortly thereafter. A date for the groundbreaking ceremony has not been set at this time.

Able Construction was among 19 companies from four states that bid on the project. Bids ranged from $2.8 million to Able's winning selection of $2,297,000.

Babinicz said the new CAT facility's emphasis on environmental friendliness will include solar sensor light controls, so that lights will dim as daylight increases; with natural materials for the exterior, including stainless steel; a concrete deck and "a lot of glass" to allow daylight inside.

The bus washing area will include the capability of recycling water.

The new facility will have the capacity to park 31 buses under a covering and features a bus washing section, large conference section and ability to host community events. There will also be visitors parking and permeable pervious parking in that any rainfall will dissipate into an area underground.

While the front entrance features a lobby and kiosk with information on other forms of transportation and mobility systems, the bus driver area — including locker rooms and a kitchenette area — will be located out of public view.

In addition, native plants will be used in the landscape of the facility in order to minimize the need for irrigation.

In October, CAT was awarded federal stimulus funding for construction of the facility officials say will centralize bus parking and offices.

CAT first began service in Clemson in 1996. In recent years, its service has expanded to include parts of Pickens, Anderson and Oconee counties as well as connecting Clemson, Southern Wesleyan and Anderson universities and Tri-County Technical College.

Babinicz estimates it will take 10-12 months to complete construction of the new facility.

greg@dailyjm.com | (864) 882-2375



Able Construction Company, of Greenville, selected last week as the apparent low bidder to construct the new Clemson Area Transit facility on West Lane, is expected to receive final approval by Clemson City Council at its March 15 meeting. FOR THE JOURNAL