

**CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
CITY OF RAMSEY
ANOKA COUNTY
STATE OF MINNESOTA**

The Ramsey City Council conducted a City Council Work Session on Tuesday, January 27, 2015, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Mayor Sarah Strommen
Councilmember Jill Johns
Councilmember Mark Kuzma
Councilmember John LeTourneau
Councilmember Chris Riley
Councilmember Melody Shryock

Member Absent: Councilmember Kristine Williams

Also Present: City Administrator Kurtis Ulrich
Finance Director Diana Lund
Fire Chief Dean Kapler
Police Chief James Way
Police Chief Jeff Katers
Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Mark Riverblood
Public Works Superintendent Grant Riemer
Human Resources Manager Colleen Lasher
City Clerk Jo Ann Thieling
Community Development Director Timothy Gladhill
City Engineer Bruce Westby
City Planner Chris Anderson
Asst. City Administrator/Economic Development Manager Patrick Brama
City Attorney Joe Langel

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Strommen called the City Council Work Session to order at 5:32 p.m.

2. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

2.01: Review 2015-2019 Capital Improvement Program (CIP)

Finance Director Lund reviewed the 2015-2019 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) that had been prepared as a strategic planning tool to assist the Council in identifying proposed capital improvement projects over the next five years. She noted that each of the CIP categories includes preliminary funding sources, background information citing needs, and projected cost estimates. Finance Director Lund presented Capital Improvement Bonding Projects (includes Fire Station No. 2 that will be considered for bonding in February); Equipment Replacement

(funding through 50% equipment certificates and 50% Equipment Revolving Fund which depletes this Fund at year end 2019); and, Municipal Buildings (includes Community Center as a joint venture with option of referendum funding).

The Council asked staff to change the language for the Community Center to indicate it is unfunded.

Finance Director Lund reviewed CIP sections for Park Improvements, which lists projects in two parts: supplemental improvements (unfunded) and regular park improvements; Site Acquisitions; Storm Water Improvements, Street Improvements, Street Light Improvements, and Water Improvements. She noted the cost estimate for the Mississippi Bridge has been updated from \$5.1 million to \$5.6 million.

Finance Director Lund reviewed the road reconstruction and overlay projects that have been added to the CIP. She described funding options and explained that a 7-0 vote of the Council is required to approve bonded debt for projects.

Councilmember Riley asked if the CIP lists the worst conditioned road projects first.

Finance Director Lund answered in the affirmative. She read the CIP language relating to the possibility of obtaining revenue for park improvements through referendum.

The Council voiced no objection to that CIP language as referendum funding is indicated as a possibility.

Finance Director Lund stated tonight's Consent Agenda includes a case to call for the CIP public hearing.

Councilmember Kuzma noted the CIP indicates the City will approach the Lower Rum River Water Management Organization (LRRWMO) about funding to maintain Ditch 43.

City Engineer Westby stated he is not sure what that language refers to but staff will research the intent.

Mayor Strommen suggested striking that language from the CIP if it is not needed.

Councilmember Riley asked if the Stormwater Utility Improvements Study that is currently underway takes the CIP projects into account.

Finance Director Lund answered in the affirmative.

Councilmember Riley referenced the street improvement cost estimates and asked if it is expected to be funded by the City.

City Engineer Westby stated that language is a direct outcome of the Highway 10 Access Planning Study. He explained that Mn/DOT is not a participant in those costs and has indicated

it is up to local entities to fund those Highway 10 projects so the intent is to seek grants in partnership with Anoka County and Mn/DOT.

Councilmember Riley asked if 2017 is a reasonable estimate for the timeline.

City Engineer Westby stated that is also part of the implementation plan within the Highway 10 Access Planning Study. He explained that funding will be the driver of when the projects occur.

Councilmember Riley stated in 2016, the CIP indicates that \$5.5 million will be spent on the Bunker Lake extension in The COR. He asked if that project has to be done.

Finance Director Lund stated it is part of the Anoka County Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) in the amount of \$3.5 million and \$2 million for the Bunker Lake Boulevard Extension, west of Armstrong; timing will depend on when development occurs, and it may be funded from TIF District #14.

City Administrator Ulrich stated it could also be a developer's expense or funded by tax increment from a new project coming in.

Councilmember Riley referenced the lists of costs related to the water treatment plant. He stated at the last Public Works Committee, there was an enlightening presentation on this topic. Councilmember Riley felt the water treatment plant did not need to be in the CIP for the next couple of years as it is not an immediate need and could be pushed to a future year as a placeholder.

City Engineer Westby explained it is a placeholder at this point in time and discussions on need continues to occur to get a better understanding of when this improvement will be needed, how much will be local costs, and how much will be the cost of regional partners.

Finance Director Lund stated this project has been in the CIP since 2004.

Councilmember Riley suggested placing the water treatment plant on a supplemental list, as was done with future park improvements.

Mayor Strommen supported not changing the placement of this project in the CIP based on current discussion on groundwater availability and moving cities to dual sources or regional systems. Mayor Strommen noted the justification language should include the more pressing issue of water availability, especially considering what is happening in the northern and western suburbs. She supported retaining this project in the CIP as it allows Ramsey to be proactive.

City Administrator Ulrich stated this project has already been pushed back several years as the property was scheduled to be purchased this year. He noted that in the not too distant future, a decision will need to be made to either dig a new municipal well (at a cost of several hundred thousand dollars) or go this route.

Councilmember Shryock stated the CIP is a goal-setting document, noting the Elmcrest Park building was in the CIP for a long period of time and pushed to future years until it became feasibility to construct. She stated the water treatment plant has been in the CIP since 2004 and she believes it is reasonable to retain in the CIP so it is a constant reminder and when a developer or grant opportunity comes forward, it is in place.

Mayor Strommen stated it also shows the Council is aware there is potential for this cost in the future.

Councilmember Riley recommended the Council receive the information presented to the Public Works Committee that other cities continue to drill wells and the Metropolitan Council continues to study this as a regional matter. He stated that information changed his opinion on what he thought was necessary.

Mayor Strommen asked staff to provide the Council with that information. She stated given the conversations happening today, she would hate to not have this project in the CIP even if only as a placeholder.

City Administrator Ulrich stated the City Engineer will bring forward a request to conduct a study to gain more specifics on the best direction for the City and how many more homes can be built and supported with the current water system. He stated this matter will probably be first considered by the Public Works Committee with recommendation to the Council. City Administrator Ulrich noted the Public Works garage will be a large project (\$10 million) in 2018. Property for that project was purchased several years ago and the 2015 budget has funding for a space needs/space layout design.

2.02: Discussion Regarding the 2015-2016 Union Contract with LELS-Patrol (Closed to the Public)

Human Resources Manager Lasher reviewed the staff report and stated this discussion relates to the 2015-2016 union contract with LELS- Patrol. She advised that under Minnesota Statutes, Section 13D.03, the meeting can move into Closed Session to discuss labor negotiations strategy for the City's union contracts. She indicated Closed Session discussion will relate to 2015-2016 negotiations for LELS-Patrol union contracts. The closed session will be tape recorded and that tape will be maintained for a period of eight years.

Motion by Councilmember LeTourneau, seconded by Councilmember Kuzma, to move to Closed Session to discuss acquisition negotiations.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Mayor Strommen, Councilmembers LeTourneau, Kuzma, Johns, LeTourneau, and Riley. Voting No: None. Absent: Councilmember Williams.

The City Council meeting moved into a Closed Session at 6:03 p.m.

The City Council reconvened in Open Session at 6:16 p.m.

Mayor Strommen stated the Council held discussion during the Closed Session and gave staff direction related to the 2015-2016 Union Contract with LELS-Patrol.

2.03: Discuss Framework for 2040 Comprehensive Plan Update Process

Community Development Director Gladhill reviewed the staff report and explained the purpose of this case is to begin discussions on establishing a framework to complete the 2040 Comprehensive Plan Update. It was noted consideration is not for approval of a work plan, expenditures, nor the Plan Update itself. He described the planning process that will be used for the 2040 Comprehensive Plan Update that will undertake it in manageable pieces and rely heavily on in-house staff.

Community Development Director Gladhill explained that significant changes are not needed with the City's Land Use Map, it is not a requirement, but it could be refreshed. The first step will be to consider the land use vision for the community from 2030 to 2040. This step has been started and will continue during the land use review, as it will impact the Sanitary Sewer Plan, Surface Water Management Plan, and creation of a comprehensive Parks and Trails Map.

Community Development Director Gladhill noted the forecast from the previous Comprehensive Plan was aggressive so a new forecast needs to be adopted. He stated the new forecast will look significantly different and be more realistic.

Community Development Director Gladhill reviewed the key studies that have been conducted since the last Comprehensive Plan Update and will be incorporated in the 2040 Comprehensive Plan Update. He advised of public opinion and feedback that supported refreshing and 'word smithing' the Vision and Value statements. He suggested that additional public dialogue would be helpful in undertaking that effort.

Community Development Director Gladhill stated this is not an official work plan but a framework to assure the topics are correctly identified. The next step will be to consider creation of a Steering Ad-hoc Committee to oversee the Comprehensive Plan Update process. He stated the Planning Commission wants to establish a similar framework that also includes public engagement and connects with the public in a better fashion.

Mayor Strommen asked if the plan is to handle this Update largely in-house.

Community Development Director Gladhill answered in the affirmative.

Councilmember Kuzma asked when the Comprehensive Plan Update is due.

Community Development Director Gladhill answered at the end of 2018. He explained the reason to talk about it now is to agree on the land use vision and allow time for system plan updates that take advanced planning for budget resources.

Councilmember Johns stated she supports this approach to address the Update in smaller components with the goal of completing the Comprehensive Plan Update on time.

Councilmember Riley noted the task may expand to fill the time allotted, but maybe it will get done on time. He asked if the Council is to provide direction on whether the Comprehensive Plan should only be tweaked rather than undertaking a major update.

Community Development Director Gladhill stated that has not yet been determined but based on conversations that have been occurring, he has not heard a desire to make any great changes to the Plan laid out several years ago. However, there may be several parcels of property that are exceptions.

Councilmember Riley supported looking at every aspect but assumes the large majority of the Comprehensive Plan will remain untouched.

Councilmember Shryock asked how Metropolitan Council plans will impact the City's timeline, such as the population projections that are driven by what the Metropolitan Council expects the City to attain over certain time frames.

Community Development Director Gladhill stated a lot of those decisions have been made by the Metropolitan Council and the City commented on those forecasts at every opportunity. He noted that during a meeting several weeks ago with the Metropolitan Council representative, information was presented on the Metropolitan Council's Plan requirements. He stated it is understood that a significant issue with the last Comprehensive Plan was the forecast, which is also impacted by water supply and transportation.

Councilmember LeTourneau stated with regard to community involvement, he supports creating an Ad-hoc Committee that also represents citizens and to expand that to include outreach opportunity to obtain comment on the Comprehensive Plan elements and components.

Mayor Strommen stated the Council learned during past Comprehensive Plan Updates that consideration of a 200-page document is overwhelming and not often handled well. She supported starting prior to there being a document to which to react so the City can obtain the public's comments on what is important to residents, values, and what residents want Ramsey to look like in 20 years. Then those documents can be drafted to follow that input. In addition, the Council's informal conversation with the community can seek out those comments.

Community Development Director Gladhill stated the small area plan process has found good success with a Steering Committee overseeing the process that incorporates citizen engagement. He described different formats that offer opportunity for residents to provide input and make comment, such as Happy Days and informal venues.

Mayor Strommen recognized the effort of Community Development Director Gladhill and City staff for their work on this process. She also recognized the Council's determination to invest in the City's staff because they know Ramsey's residents better than a consultant. She stated she is thrilled with that outcome from the last Comprehensive Plan Update that had relied heavily on consultants.

The consensus of the Council was to support the general framework for completion of the 2014 Comprehensive Plan Update for future work planning and budget preparation purposes.

3. TOPICS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION

Councilmember Kuzma asked for a future discussion on The Draw signage as it is experiencing additional use. He supported locating another sign closer to The Draw.

Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood recommended addressing that issue at the same time as the park dedication for Parkview East, which overlooks The Draw.

Community Development Director Gladhill stated there will likely be an update to The COR Sign Plan.

Mayor Strommen reported that John Anfinson, Mississippi National River and Recreation Area Supervisor, has announced a Centennial Celebration of the National Park Service and is reaching to outlying communities to engage in the Celebration. Mayor Strommen asked staff to follow up on that opportunity.

Parks and Assistant Public Works Superintendent Riverblood confirmed that Mr. Anfinson has indicated he wants to include Ramsey in the Centennial Celebration and assure the National Park Service meets the needs of and advocates for Ramsey.

Councilmember Riley asked if it is time to schedule joint meetings with the City of Anoka and the City's legislative delegation.

Mayor Strommen stated there should be a specific topic to address so with the City of Anoka, it could be the Highway 10 project and transportation issues. She asked staff to address this matter and schedule it for discussion at a future Work Session.

4. MAYOR / COUNCIL / STAFF INPUT

None

5. ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Strommen declared the Work Session of the City Council was adjourned at 6:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kurtis G. Ulrich
City Administrator

ATTEST:

Jo Ann M. Thieling
City Clerk

Drafted by Carla Wirth
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.