

**PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE  
CITY OF RAMSEY  
ANOKA COUNTY  
STATE OF MINNESOTA**

The Public Works Committee conducted a regular meeting on Tuesday, June 21, 2022, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present:     Chairperson Chris Riley  
                              Councilmember Debra Musgrove  
                              Councilmember Matt Woestehoff

Also Present:         Public Works Superintendent Grant Riemer  
                              City Engineer Bruce Westby  
                              Civil Engineer II Joe Feriancek  
                              Finance Director Diana Lund  
                              Community Development Director/Deputy City Admin Brian Hagen

**1.     CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Riley called the regular meeting of the Public Works Committee to order at 5:30 p.m.

**2.     CITIZEN INPUT**

There was none.

**3.     APPROVE AGENDA**

Motion by Councilmember Woestehoff, seconded by Councilmember Musgrove, to approve the agenda, as presented.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Riley, Councilmembers Woestehoff and Musgrove.  
Voting No: None.

**4.     APPROVE MINUTES**

**4.01: Approve May 17, 2022, Meeting Minutes**

Motion by Councilmember Woestehoff, seconded by Councilmember Musgrove, to approve the following minutes:

Regular Meeting Minutes dated May 17, 2022

Further discussion: Councilmember Musgrove noted on page nine, paragraph seven, it should state, "...indicates they we..."

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Riley, Councilmembers Woestehoff and Musgrove.  
Voting No: None.

## **5. COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

City Engineer Westby suggested first considering case 5.02 as a resident is not yet present for case 5.01.

### **5.02: Review Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities as Part of the 161<sup>st</sup> Avenue Street Reconstruction**

Civil Engineer II Feriancek reviewed the staff report and stated that staff recommends alternative one, reconstructing 161<sup>st</sup> Avenue as a minimum width two lane road with a six-foot boulevard and ten-foot bituminous trail on the north side.

City Engineer Westby referenced an email he received from Councilmember Woestehoff who asked about running a trail between the fields and PACT. He stated that staff did look at that option but that would place the trail within the foul area of the ball field. He commented on the high cost to move fields. He stated that staff could review that option in more detail, but it may interfere with field use and rental. He commented that this is an MSA road, therefore they are limited in the options for design. He stated that the City does have the ability to change its MSA routes, if desired, but noted that it a lengthy process as well and it would still most likely make sense to widen the road.

Councilmember Woestehoff asked if PACT could be asked to have an easement and put the trail on their property as it would provide mutual benefit. He commented that the neighborhood does not want to see loss of mature trees and it would also change the look of Central Park dramatically. He stated that he would not be in favor of the bike lane as he believed people will most likely park in that lane.

Civil Engineer II Feriancek stated that the current plan has a ten-foot gap between the property line and parking lot.

Chairperson Riley stated that is an option he would be interested in finding out more about. He stated that of the options given, option three would seem to be the best fit for safety and to lose the minimum number of trees.

Councilmember Musgrove stated that she agrees that tree removal should be avoided to the extent possible. She agreed that removing a number of trees would impact the character of the park and therefore would like to look at the possibility of another trail placement that could avoid more tree loss. She stated that she does appreciate the staff time and thought in developing these creative ideas for trails.

Civil Engineer II Feriancek confirmed the consensus of the Committee to work with the developer and try to keep the trail north, staying out of the playing fields.

Motion by Councilmember Woestehoff, seconded by Councilmember Musgrove, to direct staff to further investigate option three as well as alternative to negotiate with PACT for a ten-foot trail on the western boundary to the fields.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Riley, Councilmembers Woestehoff and Musgrove. Voting No: None.

**5.01: Consider Recommendation to City Council Authorizing Preparation of Plans and Specifications for 2022 Argon Street Drainage Improvements**

City Engineer Westby reviewed the staff report and recommendation to recommend City Council authorization to prepare plans and specifications for 2022 Argon Street Drainage Improvements.

Chairperson Riley referenced the replacement of the septic system that was mentioned and asked if there was flooding before that replacement occurred.

Luke Buchholz, 15407 Argon Street, replied that he was not aware of flooding before the previous owner replaced the septic system.

Councilmember Woestehoff asked the pavement rating for Argon and when the road is scheduled for work next.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer replied that he believed the road had a rating of five or six.

Councilmember Woestehoff asked if the improvement could be delayed until work is done on the road. He stated that perhaps if a pavement management project is planned at a future time, the improvement could become part of that project and be budgeted for. He commented that he would have a hard time developing plans and specifications and spending \$500,000 for something that only impacts four homes.

Chairperson Riley noted that the next road improvement would be an overlay, not a reconstruction.

City Engineer Westby replied that the resident has had water in their basement at least twice now and the rain events are becoming more intense each year which will lead to further flooding.

Councilmember Woestehoff stated that nothing in the case makes this seem like this was caused by the City. He stated that when he lived in Richfield his basement flooded on multiple occasions and he did not call the City to regrade his yard. He stated that he would not have a problem assisting with plans and specifications but believed there are better ways to spend \$500,000.

Mr. Buchholz stated that he did not think going to the south with a pipe would be feasible because of the grade. He commented that all the water already goes to the west. He stated that the City already did a regrading once, but it was not done correctly. He believed a proper swale would have provided a solution and suggested curving the swale around the septic. He commented that the culvert under Argon Street was not properly sized for all the water that it handles. He commented that after the last overlay, the road surface is almost at the same level as the curb, so

half the water is running off the roads into the driveways and ditches. He believed that regrading a better swale and resizing the culvert would provide a solution. He believed the pond to the west was adequately sized.

Chairperson Riley commented that again it seems that the replacement of the septic system was the cause of these issues.

City Engineer Westby replied that typically when a new system is installed it is put in a new location and perhaps that was part of the issue. He stated that staff could look to see what perpetuated the drainage issue, look at potential costs for regrading, and potential impacts.

Chairperson Riley recognized the hesitancy of the Committee to spend \$500,000 to fix something that was caused by replacement of a septic system.

Councilmember Musgrove asked if this would be a situation where a rain garden could help.

City Engineer Westby replied that he is unsure of the soil types in that area or level of the water table. He commented that with the wetland complex to the west he would guess the water table could be high. He identified other properties that have reached out to the City with complaints on this topic. He commented that when the original property owner put the septic system in, he did have problems with water coming into his basement.

Mr. Buchholz commented that per the MS4 Permit, the City is not allowed to send water from the right-of-way onto private land. He commented that if there is not drainage and utility easement through Mr. Ridgeway's property, drainage cannot be sent into that area.

City Engineer Westby replied that there is an issue, and Staff's proposed design would prevent that from occurring and prevent the City from having to purchase an easement. He explained that when the City was incorporated, it incorporated the existing drainage systems and issues.

Chairperson Riley commented that he is shocked at the cost.

Councilmember Woestehoff referenced property four in the diagram which he believed does have an easement. He asked if the issue is that the easements are not in the right place and in order to use that easement there would need to be significant tree removal.

City Engineer Westby stated that in order to direct water to that location, water would need to be rerouted which would include regrading.

Councilmember Woestehoff commented that there is an easement between properties seven and four.

City Engineer Westby replied that there is easement but that is not where the drainage wants to go. He stated that if they were going to perpetuate drainage through the yard, an easement would need to be purchased.

Councilmember Woestehoff stated that it is nice that staff has been helpful even though this does not appear to be the fault of the City at any time.

City Engineer Westby confirmed the consensus of the Committee, directing staff to pursue a less costly option.

**5.03: Consider Recommending City Council Approving Plans and Specifications and Authorizing Advertisement for Bids for Autumn Heights Street Reconstructions, Improvement Project #22-02**

Civil Engineer II Feriancek reviewed the staff report and recommendation to recommend that the City Council approve plans and specifications and authorize advertisement for bids for Autumn Heights Street Reconstructions, Improvement Project #22-02. Alternatively, the Committee could recommend revising the plans to include the “reclamation light” design at an estimated 43 percent cost savings, however, these streets would then have a different design than all other recently reconstructed streets in Ramsey which would provide a lesser pavement design strength and shorter design life.

Councilmember Musgrove asked for clarification on the eight feet of existing driveways mentioned in the report. She also asked whether there is a need for curb and gutter or whether that is just needed on one section.

Civil Engineer II Feriancek replied that 167<sup>th</sup> west of Armstrong goes uphill and turns left. He stated that the drainage along the hill goes to the ditches as there are no swales. He stated that curb and gutter would be added to that section to manage that drainage and keep soil from spilling into the road. He stated that the eight feet of driveways provides enough space to tie into the new pavement. He stated that over time parts of the road sink or raise and therefore space is needed to recreate the profile, which will cause some driveways to be slightly adjusted as well.

Councilmember Musgrove asked if the curb and gutter is only in that section.

Civil Engineer II Feriancek confirmed that the curb and gutter is only along that portion of 167<sup>th</sup>.

Councilmember Woestehoff asked how a reclamation and overlay would differ.

Civil Engineer II Feriancek replied that an overlay would mill out the top layer, but reflective cracking still occurs. He stated that there is a lot of alligator cracking on the road, which would cause the overlay to break up. He stated that a reclaim will mill off additional material to create new class five material.

Councilmember Woestehoff asked if they could do that without doing a full depth reclamation, specifically asking for more explanation on the reclamation light option.

Civil Engineer II Feriancek stated that the reclaim light would mill off the top and a little into the gravel.

City Engineer Westby replied that the reclaim is still the same in both the full depth and light options. He explained that in a full depth reclamation they remove some of the reclaim and put two lifts of pavement, whereas the light version removes less reclaim and puts one layer of pavement on top.

Chairperson Riley referenced the cost difference, noting that the light version is less than half the cost.

Civil Engineer II Feriancek stated that the reduced cost does not include the other improvements proposed, noting that the grade would not be adjusted and therefore it may not be as smooth and it would also remove the curb and gutter, culvert replacement, and other proposed improvements for the project.

City Engineer Westby replied that the road would be a touch better than the originally constructed road. He explained that the City currently constructs roads to a seven-ton design load, whereas this would only be rated for perhaps five tons. He stated that 60 years is the typical lifespan for a new road, whereas this would be maybe between 25 and 40 years.

Councilmember Woestehoff stated that doing these types of improvements could help to solve the bubble situation and spread some repairs over time and the lower cost would help to spread needed repairs to more areas.

Councilmember Musgrove asked if this project was on the 2022 CIP.

City Engineer Westby confirmed that this road was planned for 2022.

Councilmember Musgrove stated that she could support the light version if there were a plan for how many roads could be placed into that category. She stated that she also has a desire to see the road project move forward as planned.

Chairperson Riley asked if this neighborhood would be a good candidate for the light option. He asked all residential neighborhoods would be equally available for the light option or whether it would not be recommended for some roads.

City Engineer Westby replied that it would depend upon the subgrade soils. He stated that it sounds like there were some poor subgrade sections in this area where soil corrections were going to be done and if that does not happen the road would fail faster. He stated that he would target the light option on streets that have better subgrade sections.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer commented that the east side of the project basically only sees traffic from the people living there while the west side has a fair amount of cut-through traffic.

Civil Engineer II Feriancek commented that the subgrade soils on the east side are worse and the subgrade on the west side are better, but people do cut through the west side to get to other neighborhoods.

Councilmember Woestehoff stated that because this is rural residential with less density it would seem like a prime candidate for the light reclaim option. He asked if there would be a hybrid option.

Chairperson Riley asked for details on the half cul-de-sac proposed.

Civil Engineer II Feriancek replied that would allow turn around space for emergency vehicles. He did not believe residents would provide additional right-of-way for a full cul-de-sac as it would significantly impact the resident to the north and take most of his driveway.

Chairperson Riley commented that this was planned for last year and is now planned for this year but is just being brought forward now which means it may not be completed. He asked why this did not come forward earlier.

City Engineer Westby replied that this was the last project and staff has had a heavy workload.

Councilmember Musgrove asked staff for details on a potential hybrid option and whether the reclaim light would be proposed for the west or east portion. She also asked the impact of doing a reclaim light on the eastern portion.

Civil Engineer II Feriancek replied that if the subgrade soils on the east are not corrected, that would fail faster. He commented that perhaps 20 years could be gotten, but maybe not.

Chairperson Riley stated that the Committee would be interested in hearing which projects would be feasible for reclaim light and acknowledged that if there are poor soils those roads would not be good for the reclaim light option.

City Engineer Westby commented that staff will need to track where reclaim light is done to ensure the proper maintenance schedule is followed in the future.

Councilmember Woestehoff asked if it would make sense to split the project into two projects, full reclaim on the east side and reclaim light on the west side, for tracking purposes. He believed that the light reclaim will be a viable option going forward for some roads in order to complete more improvements at a lesser cost.

City Engineer Westby stated that staff could figure out how to track this and would prefer to keep the entire project together.

Motion by Councilmember Woestehoff, seconded by Councilmember Musgrove, to recommend City Council approval of plans and specifications and authorizing advertisement for bids for Autumn Heights Street Reconstructions, Improvement Project #22-02 with the assumption that the eastern portion will be full-depth reclaim and the western portion will be reclaim light.

Further discussion: Councilmember Musgrove asked where the cul-de-sac is located and whether that would still be constructed. Civil Engineer II Feriancek replied that while the cul-de-sac is on the western portion, that portion could be full-depth in order to complete that improvement.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Riley, Councilmembers Woestehoff and Musgrove.  
Voting No: None.

**5.04: Consider Recommendation to City Council to Temporarily Increase Funding for Pavement Management Program**

City Engineer Westby reviewed the staff report and recommendation to temporarily increase annual PMP funding to mitigate immediate street reconstruction bubble needs and minimize annual maintenance costs in as few years as practical. It is important to consider that the longer the bubble continues, the greater the impacts related to street maintenance including equipment and material cost, professional services, and potentially staffing. On the flip side, the higher the annual PMP funding, the greater the impacts related to engineering costs including engineering staff and potential professional services. These costs must therefore be considered as well.

Chairperson Riley asked if the reclaim light is done, would that preclude a mill and overlay in the future.

City Engineer Westby confirmed that generally that would be true as there would not be enough pavement for that option. He commented that an overlay could be done to lengthen the lifespan, but a mill and overlay would not be an option.

Civil Engineer II Feriancek explained the differences in the proposed costs of the last case between full-depth reclaim and reclaim light.

City Engineer Westby replied that staff will provide better cost estimates at the next meeting.

Councilmember Woestehoff stated that he likes getting 25 percent more roads done. He stated that as much as he does not love the reclaim light option, it does help to spread the improvements out better over time.

Chairperson Riley confirmed the consensus of the Committee that the available ARPA funds mentioned should be spent on road projects.

Councilmember Woestehoff asked if the police body cams were still funded using ARPA dollars.

Finance Director Lund replied was excluded from the numbers and noted the estimate of the police cameras was about \$268,000 in total for the entire system.

Councilmember Musgrove asked if the ARPA funds have to be used within a certain period of time.

Finance Director Lund stated that the first half of funds were received in 2021 and the next half will be received in 2022. She stated that contracts have to be in place by December 2023 and the funds have to be spent one year after that date.

Councilmember Musgrove referenced the road rating which helps to categorize the improvements needed and asked if the subgrade information could also be included to identify the streets that would be available for reclaim light.

City Engineer Westby replied that geotechnical work would need to be done with soil borings to review the soil conditions.

Chairperson Riley asked if the radar would provide that information.

City Engineer Westby replied that only provides details on the bituminous and aggregate section depths but does not identify soil types.

Chairperson Riley asked if engineering would have sufficient time to plan for improvements next year if the additional funding is approved now.

City Engineer Westby commented that if staff can start moving on it right away, that should be possible. He commented that they would have a Civil Engineer working on plans full time after this construction season is done. He commented that Civil Engineer II Feriancek would also be working on plans.

Civil Engineer II Feriancek reviewed the projects currently scheduled for the following year and stated that with the additional staff person assisting, they should be able to complete those plans.

Councilmember Woestehoff asked if the intent would be to use the additional funds for reconstructs, or to focus on the reclaim light projects.

Chairperson Riley commented that is part of the discussion.

Community Development Director/Deputy City Admin Hagen commented that if the additional funding is used on roads, every project for 2023 would use that funding in order to ensure the funds are spent on time.

Councilmember Woestehoff stated that his question was more of whether this is focused on getting the most miles of roads done. He asked if staff has some of the geotechnical data on about half the roads scheduled for reconstruction.

City Engineer Westby did not believe that would be accurate. He noted that there may be data from previous projects or developments in that area. He stated that the next step for the 2023 projects was to award contracts for geotechnical and topographical surveys.

Councilmember Woestehoff asked the cost to have geotechnical work done on all the roads proposed on the CIP for the next set of years.

City Engineer Westby noted that there are some streets that have known issues and perhaps just a boring or two would be adequate to confirm that information.

Civil Engineer II Feriancek provided more details on the estimated cost for that service.

Chairperson Riley commented that there is a known CIP schedule and perhaps it would be a good idea to do the projects planned for 2023 and then attempt to get the most number of miles completed with the additional funding.

City Engineer Westby replied that if City Council approvals could be gained immediately, staff could focus on that task.

Chairperson Riley asked what that would mean.

City Engineer Westby replied that perhaps if a dome project were to come forward, that engineering work would need to be contracted out in order for City staff to stay focused on roads.

Councilmember Woestehoff asked how finance feels about spending those funds on roads.

Finance Director Lund replied that they are going into budget discussions and roads were planned to be on the levy, therefore she would assume they would stay on that tract with the additional funding for roads. She stated that roads would then be \$1,800,000 within the proposed budget. She clarified that contracts would need to be in place by December of 2024 for ARPA funds and spent by December 2026.

City Engineer Westby stated that the plan for 2023 is great but they would still need a plan for the next ten years.

Councilmember Musgrove asked some of the options.

Chairperson Riley commented that most of these are residential streets and could not use MSA funding. He confirmed that an additional \$2,500,000 is needed each year for the next ten years.

Finance Director Lund provided details on the typical terms of bonding.

Councilmember Woestehoff asked if it would be smarter to do a larger amount to get more work done if they were to use bonding.

Finance Director Lund provided details on bonding and the timeline in which the funds have to be used.

Councilmember Musgrove asked if there would be an opportunity to use the consortium if a larger amount were bonded for.

City Engineer Westby replied that the consortium does sealcoating and crack sealing. He stated that the City could bond a larger amount and that costs could be spread over up to ten years.

Chairperson Riley commented that it seems that roads need to be reconstructed rather than overlaid and asked what is driving that.

City Engineer Westby replied that these are the roads that were inherited and the roads are at or near their life expectancy. He stated that the City does about two times the number of overlays compared to reconstructs. He commented that is due to the age of the roads and lack of maintenance in the past. He explained that if there was additional maintenance done in the past, they could be doing more overlays but now the roads have deteriorated past that point and need to be reconstructed.

Chairperson Riley referenced Ute Street, south of Alpine, and asked why that would not qualify as an overlay.

City Engineer Westby replied it has a rating of three or four.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer commented on the number of potholes and wearing of the road.

City Engineer Westby replied that staff can move forward with the plan for 2023 as discussed, or staff could bring additional information back for the July meeting if desired.

Motion by Councilmember Woestehoff, seconded by Councilmember Musgrove, to recommend City Council approval to temporarily increase Pavement Management Program using the available ARPA funds, directing staff to move forward with the planned 2023 CIP road projects and use the additional funds to provide the most benefit to roads possible.

Further discussion:

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Riley, Councilmembers Woestehoff and Musgrove. Voting No: None.

Chairperson Riley commented that in terms of planning for the years after, it would make sense to hear more information about bonding and the use of outside engineering consultants.

Councilmember Woestehoff stated that it would also be helpful to have information on future impacts to taxpayers as well.

Finance Director Lund noted that she would need to know the amount that would be bonded for in order to provide that information.

Councilmember Woestehoff stated that he is comfortable with the plan for 2023 but would want more information following that because there are other costs, such as the Water Treatment Plant, that will have impacts.

City Engineer Westby stated that if the decision is to add projects, that work needs to be done in the fall, so the discussion cannot be pushed too far down the road as there is not a funding source identified.

Community Development Director/Deputy City Admin Hagen stated that this will need to be part of the budgeting discussions because funding may need to start increasing in 2023 in order to have the needed funding for the roads going forward and spread that cost out.

Finance Director Lund commented that because she does not know what the levy will be this year and with fluctuating costs, it is hard to project. She noted that the CIP costs are based on estimates prior to this market and those may increase as well. She stated that there has to be something locked in for the levy increase and did not believe five percent is accurate for a growing city.

Chairperson Riley recognized that is more of a budget discussion that could be discussed by the full Council. He stated that if staff has a recommendation that may help the Council make that decision, that would be helpful.

Finance Director Lund stated that for the July budget meeting she will be using the current proposal as the starting point.

Chairperson Riley referenced patching methods and costs and stated that he asked for more information on that and asked what else could be done.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer provided details on the different methods of patching and associated costs.

Chairperson Riley recognized that residents continue to demand repairs, and this helps to show the work that is being done. He asked if funds are available or whether funds need to be directed in order to allocate more funds towards patching.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer believed there would be funds in the budget that could absorb the additional cost.

Chairperson Riley commented that it seems to make sense to follow the more efficient path.

Councilmember Musgrove agreed that this would be more efficient and less impact to the public works staff people.

PW Street Supervisor Shane Turner provided additional details on the more efficient patching method. He confirmed that the machinery is trailered, and that the City has the trailers available.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer noted the only piece that would be new equipment.

PW Street Supervisor Shane Turner commented that there would be a secondary bucket that would go with the machine.

Councilmember Musgrove asked how soon the equipment could be obtained if approved.

PW Street Supervisor Shane Turner commented that there is one available right now at Lano Equipment, therefore it could be a quick turnaround.

Public Works Superintendent Riemer commented that even this method would not provide a solution for some roads that need to be reconstructed, but it would be more efficient for others.

Chairperson Riley asked if this information could be shared with residents to reassure them that their concerns are being addressed.

Finance Director Lund noted that the line item was budgeted for and therefore does not need additional approval.

## **6. COMMITTEE / STAFF INPUT**

### **6.01: Staff Updates on Improvement Projects and Items of Interest**

City Engineer Westby provided an update on current and proposed City, County, and MnDOT improvement projects and studies and on other items of interest to the Committee.

### **6.02: Review Future Topics Calendar**

City Engineer Westby reviewed the future topics calendar.

Chairperson Riley recognized that this is the last Public Works Committee meeting for Public Works Superintendent Riemer. He thanked him for the contributions he has made to the City of Ramsey.

## **7. ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Councilmember Musgrove, seconded by Councilmember Woestehoff, to adjourn the Public Works Committee meeting.

Motion carried.

The regular meeting of the Public Works Committee adjourned at 8:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



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Grant Riemer  
Public Works Superintendent

Drafted by Amanda Staple  
*TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.*