

Public Works Committee**Meeting Date:** 02/20/2024**Primary Strategic Plan Initiative:** Connect the community through Parks, Trails and Recreational Programming.**Title:**

Consider Trail Connection between Bowers Drive and Riverstone South

Purpose/Background:**Purpose:**

Consider construction of a public trail connecting Bowers Drive to the Riverstone South development as part of the 2024 Bowers Drive pavement overlay project.

Background:

The City's 2024 to 2033 Capital Improvement Plan includes project #21-STR-012, 2024 Neighborhood Pavement Overlays, which proposes pavement overlay improvements to various street segments in several neighborhoods including Bowers Drive. Attached is the CIP project sheet for reference.

During project development Staff recalled previous City Council direction from their regular meeting on September 8, 2020, when they reviewed the sketch plan for Riverstone South. During this meeting there was consensus among Council that the City should not pursue a paved connection between Bowers Drive and Riverstone South during the development process, but that the City maintain ownership of the outlots required to make a connection and should reconsider a paved connection when an opportunity presents itself to do so. Considering that a paving contractor will be on site in 2024, Staff wanted to take this opportunity to ask the Public Works Committee for direction on this subject. Attached is a copy of City Council case #11229, an attachment to that case showing the responses received from Bowers Drive residents to a survey asking whether they supported a public road connection (not a trail), and the approved meeting minutes.

If a trail is to be constructed, Staff recommends a 10-foot wide bituminous trail able to support all necessary maintenance equipment. The length of the trail is estimated to be 760 feet, which would be constructed through two outlots and would connect Bowers Drive to the trail along the south side of Snowy Owl Street in Riverstone South.

Attached is a copy of the Riverstone South plat, which shows Outlot F where the north half of the trail would be constructed.

Also attached is a copy of the Pearson Place plat, which shows Outlot C where the south half of the trail would be constructed.

Notification:

N/A

Time Frame/Observations/Alternatives:**Timeframe:**

Staff anticipates up to 30 minutes will be required to present and discuss this case and respond to questions.

Observations:

Vegetation in the outlots where a paved trail can be constructed have not been proactively maintained by the City to date. The longer these outlots remain unimproved, the more costly it will become to construct improvements

due to the increased costs required to clear volunteer trees and other vegetation that become established within these outlots.

Alternatives:

Alternative #1:

Motion to recommend further discussion of this topic with the full City Council at the next available work session.

Alternative #2:

Motion to recommend adding this trail connection to the plans for Improvement Project #24-07, 2024 Neighborhood Pavement Overlay Improvements.

Alternative #3:

Do nothing. Leave the Outlots unimproved and unmaintained.

Alternative #4:

Motion of other.

Funding Source:

Staff estimates the project costs to construct a 760-foot long by 10-foot wide bituminous trail at \$60,000. If gates or posts were to be installed to deter motorized vehicle access, project costs could increase by up to \$10,000.

Staff recommends using Park Trust Funds to fund these improvements.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends constructing trail improvements between Bowers Drive and Riverstone South to allow Bowers Drive residents to more easily and safely access “The Hollow” park in Riverstone South, as well as the trails along Riverdale Drive and the Mississippi River Trail south of Highway 10. Staff have received comments from several Bowers Drive residents that they would now appreciate a trail connection to the neighborhood park in Riverstone South, the trails along Riverdale Drive, and the Mississippi River Trail.

Outcome/Action:

Based on discussion.

Attachments

CCcase11229 w Mtg Minutes
CIP Project 21-STR-012
RS South Plat
Pearson Place Plat

Form Review

Inbox	Reviewed By	Date
Mark Riverblood	Mark Riverblood	02/16/2024 11:59 AM
Brian Hagen	Brian Hagen	02/16/2024 01:01 PM
Form Started By: Bruce Westby		Started On: 02/14/2024 05:22 PM
Final Approval Date: 02/16/2024		

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

The Public Works Committee conducted a regular meeting on Tuesday, February 20, 2024, at the Ramsey Municipal Center, 7550 Sunwood Drive NW, Ramsey, Minnesota.

Members Present: Chairperson Debra Musgrove
 Councilmember Chelsee Howell
 Councilmember Michael Olson

Also Present: City Engineer/Public Works Director Bruce Westby
 Assistant City Engineer Joe Feriancek
 Parks and Assistant Public Works Director Mark Riverblood
 City Administrator Brian Hagen

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Musgrove called the regular meeting of the Public Works Committee to order at 5:32 p.m.

2. CITIZEN INPUT

There was none.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

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

Councilmember Howell arrived.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Musgrove, Councilmembers Olson and Howell. Voting No: None.

4. APPROVE MINUTES

4.01: Approve January 16, 2024, Meeting Minutes

Chairperson Musgrove noted on page five, case 5.06, the second paragraph, it should state, “..the median would remain on Ute Street NW.”

Motion by Councilmember Olson, seconded by Councilmember Howell, to approve the following minutes with the noted change:

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Musgrove, Councilmembers Olson and Howell. Voting No: None.

5. COMMITTEE BUSINESS

5.01: Consider Trail Connection between Bowers Drive and Riverstone South

City Engineer/Public Works Director Westby reviewed the staff report and stated that staff recommends constructing trail improvements between Bowers Drive and Riverstone South to allow Bowers Drive residents to more easily and safely access “The Hollow” park in Riverstone South, as well as the trails along Riverdale Drive and Mississippi River Trail south of Highway 10. Staff has received comments from several Bowers Drive residents that they would now appreciate a trail connection to the neighborhood park in Riverstone South, the trails along Riverdale Drive, and the Mississippi River Trail.

Parks and Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood clarified that the trail would not just serve the Bowers Drive residents as it would also provide better connection throughout the larger trail system in addition to providing connection around the neighborhood.

Chairperson Musgrove asked if there is a sidewalk on Snowy Owl Street that goes in front of the park and asked how the trail would connect.

Parks and Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood commented that there are sidewalks on all non-cul-de-sac streets in the new development. He stated that along Snowy Owl there is a ten-foot bituminous trail.

City Engineer/Public Works Director Westby explained how the proposed trail would connect.

Councilmember Olson asked if the width of ten feet is standard.

City Engineer/Public Works Director Westby replied that ten feet is the current standard while older trails may be a width of eight feet.

Parks and Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood explained how the updated standard was determined and noted that most of the eight-foot trails are being converted to ten feet as they receive maintenance overlays.

Councilmember Howell stated that originally the residents on Bowers Drive were opposed to the connection because they did not want foot traffic in their neighborhood. She noted that this connection would seem to increase foot traffic.

City Engineer/Public Works Director Westby commented that he would expect that some Riverstone South residents would choose to walk down to Bowers Drive.

Chairperson Musgrove asked if the reconstruction of Bowers Drive would widen that road.

City Engineer/Public Works Director Westby replied that project is an overlay and would not change the road width.

Chairperson Musgrove asked where the gate would be placed if that were chosen as an element of the project.

City Engineer/Public Works Director Westby commented that would have to be determined. He stated that if there was some direction to move forward, staff could complete another survey focusing on a pedestrian trail connection whereas the last survey focused on a public safety/Public Works maintenance road connection.

Councilmember Howell asked for the number of homes on Bowers Drive.

City Engineer/Public Works Director Westby believed perhaps 83 homes were on Bowers Drive.

Councilmember Howell commented that it would seem that the general benefit would be to Bowers Drive residents which would then seem to be a cost of about \$800 per home.

Parks and Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood clarified that the funding for the trail would come from the Park Trust Fund.

Councilmember Olson commented that it seemed that the Bowers Drive residents were strongly opposed to a connection previously and therefore he would be hesitant to support this without input from those residents.

Chairperson Musgrove agreed that she would want to see input from those residents. She stated that she would tend to favor alternative one or two, providing notice to those Bowers Drive residents.

City Engineer/Public Works Director Westby commented that the City is proceeding with the Bowers Drive overlay project, therefore there is an issue of time with the request. He asked if there would be room on an upcoming agenda for this item to go to the Council.

City Administrator Hagen commented that he believed that this could fit on the next worksession, as long as the discussion remains short. He stated that perhaps the plans are developed for the trail, and it is included as an alternate on the bid as that would allow time for the survey to be sent as well and the option for the trail to be decided upon when the bid is ultimately accepted.

City Engineer/Public Works Director Westby confirmed that could be done.

Chairperson Musgrove asked if residents can currently walk across the area or whether there are signs stating that should not be done.

City Engineer/Public Works Director Westby replied that there are no signs therefore residents would most likely not know if that is public or privately owned land.

Parks and Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood commented that if a survey were to be sent there would most likely not be responses from those that do not care either way, responses may also not be received from those in support of the trail, but responses would be received from those that objected. He provided an example of a trail connection that was proposed for a Northfork development, where the HOA objected, and the City constructed the trail. He stated that after the trail was constructed, a letter was received from the HOA acknowledging that their position was wrong and most of the people using the trail were from that development.

Chairperson Musgrove commented that she agrees that people like trails but would like the process to remain transparent, even if that is a notice to residents within 350 feet of the project.

City Administrator Hagen commented that 350 feet is the land use requirement but the City policy is to extend to 700 feet. He stated that it would make sense to include all Bowers Drive residents and properties along Snowy Owl. He noted that the other option would be to send notifications/surveys to all of Riverstone South and Bowers Drive at a cost of under \$1,000. He noted that perhaps if the survey is sent out soon the results could be presented during a Council worksession in March.

Chairperson Musgrove commented that she would prefer that option.

Councilmember Olson noted that having the results may assist in keeping that discussion short.

Assistant City Engineer Feriancek stated that staff is currently working on the plans for the road project and believed there would be about three to four weeks of plan development. He anticipated that bids would be opened roughly in May so the plans as discussed would not impact that timeline.

Motion by Councilmember Olson, seconded by Councilmember Howell, to recommend further discussion of this topic with the full City Council at worksession and direct staff to send out a survey to adjacent neighborhoods as discussed, ahead of the worksession.

Further discussion: Chairperson Musgrove asked if there would be a desire to include the trail as a bid alternate for the road project. City Engineer/Public Works Director Westby replied that direction would not be necessary at this time.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Musgrove, Councilmembers Olson and Howell. Voting No: None.

5.02: Consider Implementation and Prioritization of Gravel Road Elimination Projects

City Engineer/Public Works Director Westby reviewed the staff report and stated that staff would recommend obtaining soil borings for all remaining gravel roads and to explore subgrade correction and stormwater management needs as required to convert the gravel roads to bituminous

pavement sections. He noted that underlying soils generally do not change over time and the CIP does not address replacement of the 1999 road grader.

Councilmember Olson asked the cost of completing the boring and geotechnical reports.

City Engineer/Public Works Director Westby replied that the cost would be estimated at \$25,000 to \$30,000. He confirmed that the soil boring information would be good for decades, while the only element that may fluctuate would be groundwater levels.

Councilmember Olson commented that completing the borings and geotechnical report would place the City in a nimble position where it could move forward if the opportunity arose and therefore supported the action.

Councilmember Howell stated that she would support the soil borings to have the information on hand but is unsure she would want to support a paving project at this time.

Chairperson Musgrove commented that she would want to look at the policy. She explained that the cost of the grader and staff time would be spread across the whole city. She stated that perhaps the formula for paving those gravel roads should be reviewed as the current policy for funding road improvements using assessments is 25 percent assessment and the remainder is covered through the levy. She stated that perhaps the residents on gravel roads would support paving if their assessment was 25 percent rather than 50 percent. She stated that she would also be hesitant to move forward with paving as some residents on the gravel roads do not want that, but would agree that having the soil boring information would be an advantage and allow them to move forward if the opportunity presented itself.

City Engineer/Public Works Director Westby commented that the special assessment policy was drafted with the 50/50 split for gravel roads. He believed that the PIR fund would be a good funding source for the borings and geotechnical work. He commented that there is a city-wide benefit to paving the roads as there is no longer a grader included in the CIP and maintenance costs and needs would decrease as well.

Motion by Councilmember Howell, seconded by Councilmember Olson, to direct staff to obtain soil borings for all remaining gravel roads and to explore subgrade correction and stormwater management needs as required to convert the gravel roads to bituminous pavement sections.

Motion carried. Voting Yes: Chairperson Musgrove, Councilmembers Howell and Olson. Voting No: None.

Chairperson Musgrove confirmed the consensus of the Committee to discuss the gravel road paving policy at a future meeting.

City Engineer/Public Works Director Westby replied that policy was never formally adopted. It was confirmed that could be a topic of discussion when the soil borings information is presented to the Committee.

6. COMMITTEE / STAFF INPUT

6.01: Receive Updates on Improvement Projects, Studies, and Items of Interest

City Engineer/Public Works Director 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.

Councilmember Olson noted the comments that he receives related to the poor street quality in Fox Ridge Estates and asked for an update.

City Engineer/Public Works Director Westby replied those roads are scheduled as a 2025 street reconstruction project. He noted that staff does continue to watch road conditions to identify roads that will need more patching, which does include Fox Ridge Estates. He noted that the plan would be to do skim patching for that development and any others that are in similar condition. He stated that staff is currently developing that plan.

6.02: Review Future Topics Calendar

Chairperson Musgrove asked for clarification on the trail gap connections listed in multiple months.

Parks and Assistant Public Works Director Riverblood provided an update on the TH 47 trail gap project.

Councilmember Howell asked if there would be potential to place a yield sign where CR 5 merges onto southbound TH 47.

City Engineer/Public Works Director Westby replied that 47 is a MnDOT roadway and therefore he can reach out to MnDOT to gain their input.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Councilmember Howell, seconded by Councilmember Olson, to adjourn the Public Works Committee meeting.

Motion carried.

The regular meeting of the Public Works Committee adjourned at 6:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Bruce Westby
City Engineer/Public Works Director

Drafted by Amanda Staple
TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.