

## Public Works Committee

5. 2.

**Meeting Date:** 01/18/2022

**By:** Bruce Westby, Engineering/Public Works

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### **Title:**

Consider Sound Wall Improvements East of State Highway 47, North of Xkimo Street

### **Purpose/Background:**

As discussed at the Public Works Committee meeting on October 19, 2021, the noise wall constructed as part of the three (3) single-family residential unit development called Ramsey Villas North, located in the northeast quadrant of State Highway 47 and Xkimo Street, was not constructed such that it will serve its intended purpose as a noise barrier.

Though plans for this development, including the noise wall, were approved by the City, the wall was designed and constructed to extend downwards into a low area such that the top of the wall is lower than Highway 47, which prevents the wall from being effective at reducing traffic noise.

During the project approval process, several residents from Xkimo Court contacted City staff to ask what could be done to reduce traffic noise from Highway 47. The residents were informed that the developer would construct a noise wall similar to the existing wall east of Highway 47 roughly 600 feet to the north, and that the wall would extend along the west edge of the Ramsey Villas North plat.

Attached is a copy of an email received by the City Engineer from residents along Xkimo Court NW, east of State Highway 47 and north of Xkimo Court, following a meeting between the City Engineer and the residents on site on Monday, September 27, 2021. The email requests that the City consider the following items:

- Partner with MNDOT to determine if building an appropriate, effective noise wall would be their responsibility or the City's
- If MNDOT has the responsibility, then to partner and advocate for them to seek funding to build an effective noise wall on par with the height above street level of, and extending to, the existing noise wall further north along city 47
- If the City has the responsibility, pursue approval and prioritize allocating funding to build an effective noise wall on par with the height above street level of, and extending to, the existing noise wall further north along city 47
- Establish a noise ordinance to discourage vehicles from excessive acceleration or jake-breaking at the 47/5 intersection
- Seek partnership with Ramsey PD and/or the Anoka County Sheriff, to establish a presence in the area [even if simply parking in-between calls or completing paperwork] to discourage the above behavior
- Post signs on Hwy 47 to notify drivers of the noise ordinance and that it is enforced by the City of Ramsey
- Provide a plan timeline, along with regular communication on progress, regarding the above to the residents of Xkimo Ct. Nw.

After the Public Works Committee considered the residents request on October 19, 2021, the committee directed

Staff to contact the developer and their engineer to determine if either or both are willing to partner with the City to redesign, reconstruct and/or extend the noise wall to serve its intended purpose. The Committee also directed Staff to return with estimated costs to reconstruct and/or extend the sound wall to the end of the plat and/or to connect to the existing wall to the north for consideration at a future meeting.

The City Engineer contacted the developer and received the attached letter in response. Based on this letter Staff does not anticipate that the developer will be willing to partner with the City to resolve the resident's concerns either by assisting with potential design modifications and/or by contributing to costs.

The City Engineer also contacted the project engineer with Bogart-Pederson to discuss this issue. The project engineer stated he would discuss this issue in more detail after the Public Works Committee discussed this issue again this evening.

Construction of a sound wall could not begin until the ground thaws in the spring of 2022, at the earliest. This would require the collection of topo survey to determine where a sound wall could effectively be constructed along this corridor. For a sound wall to be effective it should be constructed to a height of 6-feet or more above the pavement of northbound Highway 47.

Attached is a figure showing how long the sound wall would need to extend to the north of the Ramsey Villas North plat to connect to the existing sound wall approximately 900 feet north. Staff estimates construction costs for a similar noise wall would be approximately \$210 per linear foot at today's construction costs. This would equate to a minimum construction cost of \$50,000 to salvage and reinstall the section of wall that extends below the grade of Highway 47 and to then extend the wall to the north end of the Ramsey Villas North plat, and a minimum construction cost of \$125,000 to extend a similar wall along the undeveloped parcel to the north to connect to the existing wall. These costs do not include indirect costs or costs required to enter into a Limited Use Permit with MnDOT if the wall needs to be constructed within their right-of-way.

**Timeframe:**

Staff estimates 20 minutes will be needed to present this case and respond to questions.

**Observations/Alternatives:**

**Observations:**

Staff contacted MnDOT and was informed that their preference would be for the wall to be on the private property. However, MnDOT did confirm that they would be willing to discuss construction of a wall in MnDOT right-of-way, but that they do not have funds to pay for such work. Also, the City would need to execute a Limited Use Permit to define the responsibilities of the City related to maintenance and removal of the wall, if necessary in the future.

Staff informed the Xkimo Court residents that this case would be presented at this evening's Public Works Committee meeting so Staff anticipates there will be several residents in attendance, either in person or remotely.

**Alternatives:**

Alternative #1 – Motion directing Staff to further explore noise wall improvements along the Ramsey Villas North plat.

Alternative #2 – Motion directing Staff to further explore noise wall improvements along the Ramsey Villas North plat, and to further explore noise wall improvements along the undeveloped parcel to the north.

Alternative #2 – Motion of other.

**Funding Source:**

To be determined based on the Committee's direction to Staff.

MnDOT does not have funds to share in any of these costs, and Staff is continuing to explore external funding sources for such sound wall improvements.

**Recommendation:**

Staff does not have a recommendation to offer at this time.

**Action:**

To be determined following discussions.

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**Attachments**

Noise Wall Gap Figure

Xkimo Court residents email

Ltr re Riverside Development Company Ramsey

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**Form Review**

<b>Inbox</b>	<b>Reviewed By</b>	<b>Date</b>
Grant Riemer	Kathy Schmitz	01/13/2022 04:07 PM
Kurt Ulrich	Kathy Schmitz	01/13/2022 04:07 PM
Form Started By: Bruce Westby		Started On: 01/11/2022 10:40 AM
Final Approval Date: 01/13/2022		