



CITY OF TOPEKA

CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

CITY COUNCIL
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Date: May 21, 2024

Time: 11:00 a.m.

Location: 1st Floor Conference Room; Cyrus K. Holliday Building 620 SE Madison
(*virtual attendance option also available*)

Committee members present: Council members Sylvia Ortiz (Chair), David Banks, and Neil Dobler

City staff present: Interim City Manager Richard U. Nienstedt, Public Works Director Braxton Copley, Planning & Development Director Rhiannon Friedman, Utilities Director Sylvia Davis, Public Works/Engineering: Deputy Director Jason Tryon, Deputy Director Tony Trower, Interim Engineer Mark Schreiner, Lee Holmes, Robert Bidwell, Brian Bigenwalt; Utilities Kris Wagers Legal Mathew Mullens; Councilmembers Michelle Hoferer and Marcus Miller

Call to Order

Chairwoman Ortiz called the meeting to order at 11:00am. Committee members introduced themselves.

Approval of April 16, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Committee member Banks made a motion to approve the April 16, 2024 meeting minutes. Committee member Dobler seconded. Motion approved 3-0-0.

Polk-Quincy Viaduct Utilities Update

Utilities Director Sylvia Davis provided an update on the progress of the various utility projects that are occurring in preparation for the Polk-Quincy Viaduct (PQV) project. The PQV project is large and spans along I-70 from McVicar to 6th Street. Six smaller utility projects were developed in order to procure more competitive bids, ultimately reducing the overall cost significantly. All six of the projects have been managed separately but coordinated together to allow for a sense of organized chaos.

Highlights:

- There has been over 7,000 feet of sanitary sewer work being done.
- Over 2,600 feet of storm sewer
- Over 6,000 feet of water line
- 12,600 linear yards of pavement

1 - Public Works Infrastructure Committee

Minutes Taken: May 21, 2024

Minutes Approved: June 12, 2024

- Engineering has been sending out daily or weekly traffic updates, as things change.
- Social media and press releases have been done to keep people informed of the projects.
- There are about 88 people who have signed up to receive email blasts of updates. For anyone else who would like to sign up to receive these notifications, they may do so at: <https://www.topeka.org/utilities/pgv> from this page, you will see a green box near the top right-hand side of the page that says “Request Project Updates”. This will take you to the simple online form that will allow you to receive updates via email. There is also a button, found on the City’s homepage (<https://www.topeka.org>) that says “Road Closures”. That will take you to a map that shows where the road closures are and what those detours look like for major traffic impacts.
- Of the six projects:
 - Project 2 is complete. This was waterline on 1st Ave and was completed January 2024.
 - Project 3 is on schedule, and is about 25% complete. The construction began in March 2024 and includes work with very large, reinforced concrete box work and storm sewer work that goes under the ramp to I-70.
 - Project 4 involves a lot of sanitary sewer work and has just gotten underway.
 - Project 5 includes sanitary sewer and waterline work. It was started in April. It is a little behind schedule, but is about 12% complete. Impacts include the area around 1st Ave and 2nd Street. There have been some great coordination meetings with Public Work, Engineering, and Utilities to review the traffic control plans in trying to keep the bridge open so that folks can maintain access there. She urged people to keep an eye on social media updates for this project.
 - Project 6 involves relocation of sanitary storm and water lines. It began in March and is ahead of schedule. It is about 36% complete.
 - Project 7 is a lot of sanitary sewer work that started in April and is ahead of schedule. It is about 73% complete.

Questions/Comments:

- Committee member Banks appreciated the information about the online map to look at traffic impacts. He has a grandson who attends school near where some of those projects are occurring and this will be helpful.
- Councilwoman Michelle Hoferer attended the meeting and inquired about the budget. Director Davis stated there have been a couple of unexpected expenses pop up, however there was some anticipation of such expenses included in the authority budget, and it is currently staying within that budget. Staff monitors that, and if it becomes clear that they are approaching the threshold, staff will keep the Governing Body in the loop so plans can be made to address that.

2024 CIP Projects Exceeding \$250K

Utilities – SW Lakeside, SW Westover, SW 15th Street

Director Davis is requesting approval for a project that is ready for construction. The budget exceeds \$250K and will be for waterline improvements in the Westborough neighborhood. There will be almost 22K linear feet of water main replacement. In an effort to take a more holistic approach to waterline work, staff decided to go in and make an impact for the neighborhoods as much as possible, rather than piecemealing work block-by-block. This particular project will be \$7.5M.

Director Davis noted she would be back in the future to request funding for similar projects for the Knollwood and Montara neighborhoods. Those projects are currently in the design phase.

Committee member Banks inquired if the waterline improvement project was for preventative maintenance? Director Davis answered the Waterline Replacement Program process considers the age of the infrastructure, the main break history, if it was consequence of a failure, and other factors. For the Westborough neighborhood, the waterlines are beyond their life expectancy and there have been a lot of water main breaks. The amount of money being spent from the Operating Budget to address the breaks is a huge expense. Being able to fix the problem rather than putting “band-aids” on, will save money to the budget in the long run as well.

MOTION: Committee member Dobler made a motion to approve the request. Committee member Banks seconded. Approved 3-0-0.

Summerfield Neighborhood

Director Copley introduced a project which staff is seeking approval for \$3.3M for street and storm sewer work in the Summerfield neighborhood. Virtually all streets within that neighborhood will be impacted/improved. The breakdown of costs for the project will be \$1.2M for the street portion and \$2.1M for storm water.

The Pavement Condition Index (PCI) of the streets in the neighborhood are very low, in the 20's and 30's. The stormwater conveyance system is in even worse shape. There are many pipes that are old corrugated metal pipe and in some cases the invert has been completely lost.

MOTION: Committee member Dobler made a motion to approve the request. Committee member Banks seconded. Motion approved 3-0-0.

Chesney Park Alley Replacement

Director Copley reminded that this project was presented to the Committee a couple of months back. It is replacing the sewer and alley in the 1800 block between Lincoln and Buchanan. At that time, staff was optimistic for the Engineer's estimate for both the sewer and street work. However, when the project was put out to bid, the low bid far exceeded the amount of the project budget. At this time, staff is seeking an amendment to increase the project budget. The total project budget will be \$400K; \$220K for sanitary sewer and \$180K for the alley.

Chairwoman Ortiz noted the project was part of the DREAMS II grant. Director Copley stated it was his understanding that the project that is currently underway in the 1900 block of that alley was the portion covered by the DREAMS grant, and that this 1800 block portion is being funded out of the Utilities and Street budgets.

MOTION: Committee member Banks made a motion to approve. Committee member Dobler seconded. Motion approved 3-0-0.

SW Wegener Rd and 57th Street Intersection

Director Copley introduced a project that will involve complete reconstruction of Wegener Road at the intersection of 57th Street. There are high volumes of truck traffic, and the intersection is needing the full-depth reconstruction with concrete. The project cost is technically under the amount required for staff to receive Governing Body approval, at \$249,975, however in the case that there would be a change order that could go over that amount, he felt it would be best practice to go ahead and receive approval.

No questions or comments.

MOTION: Committee member Banks made a motion to approve. Committee member Dobler seconded. Motion approved 3-0-0.

Presentation: 2024 Safe Streets & Roads for All

Alleigh Weems, Management Analyst for the Public Works Department, was one of the multiple authors of this grant application and presented information. Ms. Weems shared that she had been informed late Friday that the City of Topeka received the winning application for the 2024 Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) program. A grant through the U.S. Department of Transportation.

Highlights:

- The SS4A is a program fund that was introduced with the passage of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law in 2021.
- A key deliverable of the applicants who receive funding is to develop a comprehensive Safety Action Plan, that is meant to provide a Community-wide plan that will allow the City to strategically address and prevent roadway fatalities and serious injuries.
- This would be the first type of plan of this nature for the City.
- In addition to this particular funding, the City has also received a Planning and Demonstration Award.
- Demonstration activities are meant to inform future implementation. These would be conducted in a pilot study format so that staff can study success in measurable outcomes to identify solutions with the Safety Action Plan.
- At a future step in the plan, there will be a need for an RFP to go out to establish a consulting firm to help develop a comprehensive Safety Action Plan.

- With the development of the Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Safe Routes to School Plan, staff identified an opportunity to focus in on the school zone and safety improvements.
- An additional key facet that does not come in through the US Department of Transportation, but rather comes from the State, is an opportunity called the Build Kanas Fund. This is unique to Kansas, with only one other state offering this type of support to municipalities. The City was able to apply for this funding because we applied for the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law opportunity to receive a matching grant requirement.
- The total amount of funding is \$5.39M, and has no fiscal impact to the City.
- This will be the highest competitive grant award that the City has received, and the first Bipartisan Infrastructure Law grant that the City has received.
- The City has also received some eligible demonstration expenses. This is the two-partner to the comprehensive Safety Action Plan. It will help the City identify the safety improvements as conferred with the plan through community engagement, which will be conducted along with the plan implementation.
- Several temporary installations identified - signage, rectangular rapid flashing beacons (rrfb), flex delineators, and high visibility crosswalk markings.
- The hope would be to address the school zones immediately and begin some of that work while waiting through the RFP process, and plan prepared with community engagement.
- Shawnee County was awarded SS4A in 2023 for their Comprehensive Safety Action Plan in 2023, and are currently pending an RFP for the development of their plan with their consultant. The City's goal would be to complement the County's plan to create and close the gap with the combined road networks.
- Thirteen key community stakeholders assisted with working in the grant space and were consistently involved with the process. They represent agencies at the state, county, school district, non-profit agencies and local agencies that have provided support for the project. This collaboration speaks volumes to the strong alliance of the community and region to work toward the shared goal.
- The National League of Cities has offered a boot camp that the City has been participating in for the past few months, and they have been a great resource to shop out the application submittals to, to receive a third-party's perspective.

Questions/Comments:

- Committee member Banks inquired about the process of choosing which places to prioritize for the work? Ms. Weems responded that, with the Safe Routes to School plan being highly engaged with the community, it was decided that would be a significant starting point, because those are already delineated. However, the idea of going forward with the development of the Comprehensive Safety Action Plan is to have all of the community stakeholders at the table and let them help inform about that process.
- Chairwoman Ortiz thanked Ms. Weems for the presentation and expressed optimism for the project.

Presentation: Topeka Blvd (21st - 15th Street)

Director Copley introduced Jason Fundis, with PEC, who is the lead consultant for the design of Topeka Boulevard; 15th Street – 21st Street. Director Copley stated this project is funded with JEDO county-wide half-cent sales taxes. JEDO funds do not have the same restrictions that the city-wide sales tax does. Both road treatment and utility projects can be done because of this. Director Copley had previously informed the Governing Body that there was not sufficient money projected to come in from the JEDO sales tax to cover the estimated project cost, so one opportunity available is to have the Governing Body make a change in the scope of the project to extend the money. However, any decision to reduce the scope needs to be done based on having the best information that is available.

Director Copley stated core samples were performed along the boulevard and it was recognized that the road was initially a state highway and was built out of concrete. From there, it had an asphalt overlay on top, that Director Copley guessed could be 30-40 years old. The base is failing. Director Copley stated that, based on that information, Mr. Fundis was going to provide information on what their research process yielded and the recommendation, in terms of being able to move forward with the project.

Highlights:

- The current CIP lists the project to consist of pavement rehabilitation on SW Topeka Boulevard from 21st Street to 15th Street. No work planned for the 21st Street nor the 15th Street intersections.
- The average Pavement Condition Index (PCI) is 33, meeting the standard for full reconstruction for a major arterial.
- The current CIP Construction Budget is \$6M.
- Potential Improvement Options
 - Full pavement reconstruction
 - Mill & Overlay/Full-depth repair
 - Storm sewer
 - Water
 - Sanitary sewer
 - Complete Street Elements
- Pavement Evaluation – Geotechnical Investigation performed 12 subsurface borings 5-feet below existing grade in Northbound and Southbound lanes.
- Pavement Evaluation:
 - The pavement cores indicate that the existing roadway is in severe deterioration.
 - Based on Geotechnical findings, Full Pavement Reconstruction is recommended, in line with the PCI of 33.
 - A Flexible Pavement (asphalt) and Rigid Pavement (concrete) will be utilized for bid alternatives.
- Additional improvements include:
 - Resurfacing the existing bridge over Shunga Creek.
 - Full pavement replacement of intersection of 17th Street/Topeka Blvd.

- Replace all ADA ramps and sidewalks that are not in compliance with current ADA requirements/guidelines.
- Adding a shared-use path, but replacing the current 6-foot wide sidewalk with an 8-foot wide path, along the Stormont Vail Event Center property.
- Additional Complete Street elements that could be implemented would be street lighting, additional shared-use paths that stretch along Topeka Blvd, or fix/replace any additional sidewalks.
- Utility portions of the project include:
 - Full watermain replacement with a new connection across Shunga Creek.
 - Coordinate with the City Utility Department to evaluate for Full Replacement vs. Repair options for the storm sewer system.
 - Coordinate with the City Utility Department for replacement and rehabilitation of structure and line repairs to the sanitary sewer.
- Utility Replacements that were found on existing water main line:
 - Replace undersized watermain (1892-1947 6-inch cast-iron pipe) with a 12-inch PVC main.
 - Add a new connection crossing across Shunga Creek to create a loop to help with redundancy issues for future water main breaks.
 - Watermain project currently under contract for design and is funded by the Utilities Department
- On the storm sewer:
 - Doing an evaluation of the existing hydrologic and hydraulic system for capacity. Most of the section South of 17th Street sets in the new FEMA flood plain. Addition of inlets and pipe crossings for the flood zone will remediate the issue.
 - Currently coordinating with City Utilities Department on evaluation of existing structures and pipes for condition.
 - Intentions to rehab or replace corrugated metal pipe (CMP) and replace the system where it does not meet City requirements.
- On the sanitary sewer rehabilitation:
 - Coordination with the Utility Department for sanitary sewer rehabilitation.
 - There is not much sanitary sewer line running linear with the street. It is mostly at the crossings. Current crossings are at 20th, 18th, 17th, and 16th
 - Most of the structure in the street are brick manholes and typically have been replaced. The recent infrastructure projects and lines that are crossing within those brick structures are aged clay pipe.
- Estimation that the cost for a full replacement project would be about \$6M, and a rehab project would be around \$5.3M for the pavement and storm sewer only.
- To conclude: The recommendation is to have full pavement replacement and to follow any utility improvements as recommended by the City's Utilities Department.

Questions/Comments:

- Committee member Dobler voiced appreciation for the presentation and photos that helped explain the borings and condition of the pavement. He feels it makes

sense to proceed with approving the \$6M project, as opposed to trying to save a few dollars only to come back later.

MOTION: Committee member Banks made a motion to approve the project as presented and the request for \$6M. Committee member Dobler seconded. Approved 3-0-0.

Chairwoman Ortiz referenced a map that had been given out by Staff at the public meeting. The map showed the project from 21st to 29th Street and she was impressed with the QR code that can be scanned to follow along with real-time updates on the project as it moves along. She encouraged staff to begin doing this for other projects as well.

Councilwoman Michelle Hoferer inquired about a timeframe for the project. Mr. Fundis confirmed that Bettis had been the selected contractor and is getting ready to move forward. They are anticipating a start date around June 1st. It would finish around the end of October.

Councilwoman Hoferer inquired if the intersection at 21st and Topeka Blvd was part of the project for the Mill & Overlay? Director Copley stated it was a separate project and should be out to bid by this week or next. The anticipated start time for that project will be August. It will require a full closure of the intersection at 21st and Topeka for the entire construction season.

Councilwoman Hoferer inquired about the timeline for 15th to 21st Street. Director Copley stated it was slated to expand over two years, 2025 and 2026, because one lane of traffic each way must be maintained throughout the project due to the volume of traffic and businesses that are in that immediate area.

Councilwoman Hoferer inquired about the phasing. Director Copley stated they were not far along enough in the process to know that information yet.

FIRM Project Memo

Public Works Deputy Director Jason Tryon provided an informational update about some amendments to project budgets that were made based on additional feedback from the project designers. There are a number of projects that are lower on cost. The fire station window updates bid came in lower than expected. It is also expected that the fire station 9 remodel will come in under the budget.

Two projects are coming in considerably higher than had been anticipated. One is the Law Enforcement Center repave. The other is the replacement of the boiler at the Law Enforcement Center. In both cases, the Engineers went through the projects and identified a base-bid and some alternates. Once the project goes out to bid, the City can decide on which alternates to select. They will then come back before the Committee to seek approval to include final estimates.

Chairwoman Ortiz inquired about the fire station windows and asked if that included all of the stations? Division Director Tryon stated it was only for the windows at four of the stations, 1, 2, 4, 6, and 8. The cost estimates for the historic stations came back significantly higher, so the scope was split up. Staff is still wanting to make those improvements through future projects.

Other Items

No additional items.

Adjourn

Chairwoman Ortiz expressed appreciation to staff for their work on projects. Chairwoman Ortiz adjourned the meeting at 11:47am.

This meeting can be viewed online at: <https://youtu.be/65-miqSq8Bo?si=uR38ksJ5fbUxIDNV>