



CITY OF TOPEKA

CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES

PUBLIC WORKS INFRASTRUCTURE SPECIAL COMMITTEE

CITY COUNCIL
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Date: March 15, 2021

Time: 2:00 p.m.

Location: 1st Floor Conference Room; Holliday Bldg 620 SE Madison (*option to attend virtually via Zoom*)

Committee members present: Council members Tony Emerson, Neil Dobler and Michael Lesser

City staff present: City Manager Brent Trout, Finance: Jessica Lamendola, Stephen Wade, Adam Vaughn, Josh McAnarney; Legal: Lisa Robertson, Mary Feighny; Planning: Bill Fiander, Taylor Wolfe Public Works/Engineering: Brian Faust, Hannah Uhrig, Jaci Vogel, Robert Bidwell, Jehan Zeb, Tony Trower, Brian Bigenwalt, Michelle Neiswender, Dee McElwee-Vazquez, Jason Tryon, Mark Price; Utilities: Bob Sample, Braxton Copley, Sylvia Davis; SGT Kerry Connell (TPD)

Call to Order

Chairman Dobler called the meeting to order at 2:00pm. Committee members introduced themselves.

Approve Minutes from February 15, 2021 meeting

Committee member Emerson made a motion to approve the minutes. Committee member Dobler seconded the motion. Motion passes 3:0.

CoT Bridge Overview [Time 5:10 minute mark]

{All presentations and supplemental materials reviewed at this meeting can be found on the Committee's webpage at: <https://www.topeka.org/citycouncil/public-infrastructure/> }

Jehan Zeb, Infrastructure Planner, provided the committee with a presentation regarding the bridge management system within the city of Topeka. Mr. Zeb stated there were two components of his presentation. One to provide an overview of the Topeka asset management system, and the other component is the bridge management program.

Highlights:

- Asset management is a set of coordinated activities with the organization actually take to realize the maximum value from their assets; can be best practices, information systems, process improvements, maintenance and rehabilitation.

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Minutes Approved: April 29, 2021

- The Asset Management System is per the ISO 55,000 standard, which is the management systems for asset management. It includes all policies, procedures, best practices, and information systems. The software component is one piece of the whole system, not more than 5%.
- Condition Rating for bridge inspections were discussed. There are a number of items that are included in this process. There are nine inspection standard ratings provided by National standards. Once the inspection has taken place, the ratings are filtered into a more narrowed five-point rating system implemented by the City. This step helps with consistency across the organization.
- There are six phases within the Topeka Asset Management System. The service areas reviewed are: street, bridge, traffic, facility, fleet, water, wastewater, and stormwater.
- Of the eight service areas, some initial work had taken place, however focus turned to prioritize streets first. The first three phases of the system have been completed. These phases include varying degrees of compiling information and formulating a strategic plan. The fourth phase, Develop Asset Management Plan, is currently ongoing. Mr. Zeb is hopeful to have this phase completed within three to four months. The fifth and sixth phases have not yet begun.
- Under phase 5, which includes implementation, governance structure including the roles and responsibilities will be defined. Questions pertaining to how, by whom, and when the system is to be implemented will be addressed during this phase.
- The infrastructure planning process was not previously in place. This six step process has been working through the Utilities and Public Works departments. Mr. Zeb will provide an example at the next meeting to show some of the output of the street model.
- As the information is run through the process, it will help to identify the street project for the next CIP.
- Bridge Inventory - For this asset category, the bridges are divided into four components:
 - Bridge Length Culvert (where the top is covered)
 - Reinforced Concrete (RC) decks with RC superstructure
 - RC decks with painted steel superstructure
 - RC decks with weathering steel superstructure
- The useful life for all of the bridges is 80-100 years. The City is only looking after 101 bridges. With all of the replacement values added up, the total is above \$198 million.
- Under the National Bridge Inspection standards, all reports done on the bridges re generated based on two categories: Urban Arterial Bridges and Off-System Bridges.
- Condition map showing urban arterial bridges, of the 64, most are in “good” or “excellent” condition. Seven are in “fair” condition and one is in “poor” condition.
- Condition map showing the off-system bridges, of the 37, only one is in “poor” condition with the rest being in “good” or “excellent” condition.

- Conditions on the urban arterial bridges have improved, overall, from the 2017 to 2019 ratings.
- Consultants are engaged every two years to assist with evaluating the bridges. Mr. Zeb stated the City would like to take a proactive approach with determining which bridges may need major reconstruction within twenty years. By using the Aesthetic model, project identification and prioritization, and the service criteria assist with making final decisions.
- A scenario analysis is conducted to include various budgetary constraints to assist with recommendations.
- Mr. Zeb noted that results of the analysis will be brought to the next committee meeting.

Questions from the Committee:

- Chairman Dobler clarified that bridges under 20 feet long are maintained by the Storm water department, and anything over that length is maintained by Engineering. Mr. Zeb confirmed.
- The bridges identified as being in “poor” condition, are they on the list for repairs soon? Mr. Zeb confirmed they were.

Fleet Leasing Update [video 31:35 minute mark]

[The presentation will be made available on the committee’s webpage.]

Hannah Uhrig, Deputy Director Internal Services Public Works, provided a quick overview of the City’s fleet asset lease program.

Highlights:

- The City’s fleet consists of equipment ranging from snow plows, sewer maintenance trucks, road pavement trucks, police and fire department vehicles. All of which are examples of assets that are over \$5,000.
- Smaller items maintained include snow blowers, lawn mowers and weed eaters, and other items.
- In total, Topeka’s Fleet consists of more than 1,050 vehicles and pieces of equipment, with a replacement value of \$54 million. In aggregate, this is a very expensive asset that the City must maintain.
- 44% (387) of Fleet Assets, over \$5,000, are at or past the Life Cycle recommendations.
- 7% (58) are more than ten years past the recommended cycle.
- Fleet Services Department has become more of a repair shop, versus a preventative maintenance shop, as intended, as a direct result of the aging fleet.
- Long-term ownership is not something the City can continue to maintain.
- Fleet Replacement program being presented is a hybrid program with three different approaches based on the asset type.
 - Lease program for light/mid duty vehicles with limited up-lifting
 - Dedicated Bond Funded heavy-duty program (Fire and Transportation Operations currently have CIP funding). This would be included in current bond policy, of \$125,000 or more, with a 10-year life. The assets recommended for this program have an average value of \$200,000.

- Cash program for the balance of the assets. This program would require a consistent annual payment into a sinking fund, to allow for the purchase of new assets. Would require annual adjustment based on inflation, however would be relatively flat and easy to maintain from a budgetary perspective. Average value is \$45,000 apiece. In comparison to the lease value of \$27,000.
- Ideally, a cash-based program would be preferred, however the current financial situation of the City, this type of program is not able to be sustainable nor have funding to consistently meet the needs required for the full fleet.
- Current funding sources allocated to fleet replacement is \$4.7 million. Of this, 40% (\$1.9 million) is funded out of operational budgets. Mostly driven by police department, Utilities department, and the departments that are currently participating in the VERF program.
- There is a \$15 million funding cap for the “catch up” year of 2021. With an annual average funding gap of \$1.1 million projected to occur. In order to maintain the current fleet age, the \$1.1m gap would need to be eliminated.
- To improve the health of the fleet, the full \$25.9m funding gap needs to be addressed over the next ten years.
- Adding a lease program will reduce average annual gap to \$444,000 and bring down the total gap to \$16.1m (from \$25m). This estimate does not include the reduction to maintenance and fuel economy by having a newer fleet.
- Lease cost to exit (through Enterprise program), provided three options should the City wish to exit after year one, with assumptions based on the recommended 100 leased vehicles:
 - Option 1: Purchase vehicles for balance of Book Value (\$2.2m).
 - Option 2: Allow Enterprise to sell the 100 vehicles and cash purchase the replacement with the equity from leased vehicles (\$1.9m).
 - Option 3: Extend lease terms until Book Value is paid off (\$3m).
- Ms. Uhrig stated Staff is seeking feedback from the Committee with regard to the three approaches, and to establish targets for overall City Fleet Asset life cycle tolerance. This would include identifying the funding necessary to achieve the target as well as establishing a timeline.

Ken Olsen, Enterprise, provided additional information regarding the program.

Highlights:

- There are four categories to presentation: High level overview, structure and strategy of program, financial components, and address questions.
- High level -
 - Same company as Enterprise Holdings (Enterprise Rent-a-Car). The Fleet Management side leverages the tools needed to help entities with saving money and bringing efficiencies to mid-level department needs, such as CoT.
 - Mr. Olsen’s role is to get the partnership established, and analyzing with the team what current model is and building out financial model. He is

hopeful to design, through a structure standpoint, a partnership which would carry long-term.

- Once a partnership is established and program is running, local account team will meet 3-5 times annually, to assist with forecast with the budget timeline and analyzing additional ways to provide financial efficiencies.
- Structure & Strategy -
 - Other area governmental entities that utilize Enterprise's Fleet program include the City of Independence, Unified Government of Wyandotte County and Kansas City, and Shawnee County. They use the program in what Mr. Olsen called a depreciation side. They acquire the vehicles and have vehicles updated through Enterprise to get them delivered, use Enterprise's Equity Lease Funding model, and then sell the vehicles through Enterprise.
- Financial -
 - Being a governmental entity allows for strong buying power and receiving strong incentives. That piece is leveraged along with how well Enterprise sells vehicles.
 - A financial model is built to allow CoT to only pay for the portion that is going to be used.
 - From a retail perspective, the invoice cost for a half-ton pick-up truck would be about \$32,000. However, being a governmental entity, the cost would be \$22,000. Enterprise would take that \$22,000 and fund it to around \$19,000, and would then sell it for about \$27,000 on behalf of CoT.
 - Government clients are leveraging this model is because it is extremely beneficial, from a budget perspective. They are able to leverage the equity of the current fleet today, get into the leasing model and pay for a year, and then get a check back to offset the balance.
 - Many of the government clients are then reinvesting the equity received from these vehicles and putting them back into the next vehicle, which implements a newer and more efficient fleet of vehicles.
 - In analysis built for CoT, there are a few different categories: Emergency style vehicles, section of crime investigations vehicles which would be considered to also be non-emergency, and non-emergency vehicles. In the non-emergency style vehicles, there is a segment of 229 vehicles, which over 10 years, would receive around \$4.1m in savings. This figure was reached by taking the current cycle down to a one or two year cycle over the 10 years. The crime investigations vehicles savings would be around \$1m. In addition to the savings, the fleet would continue to be newer and more fuel efficient.
 - From initial conversations, it did not seem CoT would leverage the program for the maintenance or fuel side. Regardless, the operating expenses with fuel maintenance will be drastically decreased, which is built into the model.

Questions from the Committee:

- Is continuing a lease an option? Yes.

- Councilwoman Ortiz inquired with Enterprise about the size of the program. Program is customizable. Strategy will be customized per each department and the way they are utilizing the vehicles. Enterprise will develop a program to fit the needs of the partner. With Enterprise being local and able to meet regularly with the City, there is a greater level of opportunity to communicate and change the program based on needs. There is flexibility whether the contract is based on a one-year lease, and then bring in a new vehicle with another lease, or extend the lease out, or CoT buys the vehicle. Not a cookie-cutter type of approach.
- Will the vehicle modifications made by the Police Department, for example, change the resale value? Depends on the given vehicle. Some of the heavy duty equipment may extend out to a 60 month, whereas some of the light duty equipment may flip annually. There is an additional cost to adding the equipment, but the unit is sold “as is” and there is still the benefit of getting the equity. There will be a different model for each given vehicle, and Mr. Olsen’s team will be working to customize the strategy as the process continues.
- Have we looked at the cost of maintenance through Enterprise versus what CoT does? Ms. Uhrig confirmed and added that the cost of Enterprises’ maintenance program was included in one of the handouts. While reviewing that information, the City’s preventative maintenance shop would be able to do the work at a much cheaper rate.

Ms. Uhrig asked Mr. Olsen to walk through the different fleet synopsis analysis models. [video 53:45 minute mark]

- Non-emergency response vehicle fleet: focusing on 229 units to standardize the fleet, from a class perspective as much as possible, and “right type” the fleet. Average age is 10 years, average annual mileage is 5,900. Another positive of lease program is being able to keep extremely low mileage patterns on the vehicles. Staff is requesting 100 vehicles be part of the year-one program, 19 come from Crime Investigations department. 111 vehicles are over 10 years old, and 28 are over 20 years old. With this segment, there are numerous safety and efficiency concerns. Enterprise would make recommendation to shift all of these older units into the first few years at a zero-dollar savings, with a model that would break even, if it would alleviate the safety and efficiency pieces that are currently lacking. Mr. Olsen continued to provide financial information pertaining to current fleet. Current fleet budget is \$940,000. With first year of Enterprise model, 81 new units are able to be leased (compared to the 15 units per current program), and the cost for that budget will be \$470,000. The equity of the Enterprise model, from those 81 vehicles coming back is \$386,000. A portion of those units will be sold after the one year for \$368,000. Maintenance is a mixed number, but the fuel begins to decrease over years as the newer vehicles are brought in. Fuel savings within the first year, using the Enterprise lease model, will be \$758,000.
- Crime Investigations vehicle fleet: With 38 units, there is a \$1m savings aspect, using same analysis process.

Chairman Dobler summed up his understanding of what was presented, by stating Staff is requesting a three-tiered approach, where CoT would lease some vehicles (221), with larger vehicles remaining in the CIP, and cash funding some of the vehicles.

Chairman Dobler inquired as to which vehicles were being cash funded. Ms. Uhrig stated the police department patrol vehicles, highly specialized engineering trucks, that meet the threshold of not quite \$125,000 but that are highly outfitted. Ms. Uhrig noted that if, at some point, it was discovered that some of the highly outfitted vehicles could be sold to another municipality "as is", a leasing option could be explored further. Most of the vehicles will be in the \$40,000-\$50,000 range that do not fit either of the other models.

Chairman Dobler asked for simplification of the financials and inquired the following:

- What does the City spend each year? The City spends \$945,000 annually on fuel for the fleet budget.
- Year one, we lease 81 vehicles, how much are we spending overall? The equity coming out of the fleet today, is \$386,500. That would be given back to Enterprise up front as soon as the units were sold. The new units would come in and the outgoing 81 vehicles would be sold by Enterprise on the City's behalf. The equity would be given back to the City. The City would then go into a monthly payment to Enterprise, which would be \$470,535 for year one. At the end of year one, those 81 vehicles would then be sold and Enterprise would return a check of equity back to the City for \$368,000. From a cash flow perspective, it is broken into three different buckets, but from a cash outlay and without any equity coming back whatsoever, the lease cost for the 81 units would be \$470,535.
- Taking all of that into account, if our budget is \$940,000, under this scenario, after the 81 vehicles are sold, and CoT begins making the lease payments, with some of the new 81 vehicles being sold at the end of year one, the actual payment will be \$181,000, and gets up to \$464,000-\$541,000, but still never reaches the \$940,000 that CoT is currently spending, is that correct? Ms. Uhrig confirmed that is what the model shows. She included that within the maintenance cost, there will be some overhead, however with an internal maintenance program it is not necessarily one-for-one. It costs almost double to maintain a ten-year-old vehicle as compared to a one-year-old vehicle. With that, it is fair to say there would be a decrease in operational costs, and potentially a reduced need and demand in CoT's internal fleet division that could be realized over time.

Ms. Uhrig requested guidance from the Committee with regard to the three approaches, with an understanding that with the cash sinking an investment on CoT's part would be required, from an operational budget standpoint. Because the lease program is not something that could be sustained or funded through a bonded program, the realization would need to be understood that through a lease that

would be in the operational budget, and that the cash today is not necessarily equitable by department and would require a clear directive from the Governing Body as to what that would mean from a city-wide perspective.

Ms. Uhrig would like to establish a target, in terms of the future of the fleet and what the commitment by the City for the overall health of the fleet, as well as best approach to reach the goal, at the next meeting.

Committee member Emerson stated he liked the numbers he was seeing. He stated that at the current market, at the price we can buy a vehicle, the resale is so high relative to the price, that we are making these work. He cautioned that this may not always be the case, should more governments begin moving toward this same approach. But he feels it should be taken advantage of for as long as it remains favorable for CoT. Ms. Uhrig stated that renegotiations on terms of the particular leases and could extend them out to an appropriate term, in the instance that the one-year model is no longer favorable.

Additional inquiries:

- Have City Legal and Finance reviewed this information? Ms. Uhrig confirmed the departments have been included in the conversations regarding going into the program as well as what it would take should the decision be made to leave the program in the future
- Does this require a RFP, or can we sole-source this? The contract has been vetted as an opportunity to piggyback if we chose to. Currently evaluating a couple of other options to confirm that this is the appropriate direction forward, and expects to have a clear line within the next few weeks.
- Councilwoman Ortiz asked about the requirement for the lease. Ms. Uhrig stated there is no penalty to exit the program from Enterprises' standpoint, if it was determined to fall out of favor by the City in the future. The risk of exit is basically the financial obligation of the City, in terms of purchasing the assets to sustain operations.
- Councilwoman Valdivia-Alcalá stated she felt this direction was a positive investment for the City, however would need to review the meeting video as the audio is a little unclear currently.

Chairman Dobler provided a request to the City Manager, to ensure the deck be sent to the entire Governing Body. Additionally, he would like to hear from Legal and Finance regarding the matter and their input. And finally, to simplify the information to include:

- If we do this approach, what's the ask from a budget standpoint for 2022 and on, if there is one?
- What is it going to take to bring our fleet up to speed in the cash portion of it? The police vehicles, the CIP, the whole pro forma?

Street Sweeping Presentation [Video 1:12:40 minute mark]
[*This information can be found on the committee's webpage.*]

Tony Trower, Interim Deputy Director Public Works, noted there were three bids received for the RFP that had been solicited regarding street sweeping. Of the three bids received, one was from a local vendor who only had one street sweeper. It was felt that this was not really substantial as a bid. In reviewing the numbers, Mr. Trower requested some analysis be done to review the current operation. Mr. Trower turned the meeting over to Todd Workman. Mr. Workman stated he had reviewed the RFP and compared it with the current costs to the City. He came to the conclusion that the maintenance cost of one of the sweepers would need to exceed the amount of one of the bids in order to make it practical. The bids came in at \$110k, \$125k. During the analysis of the three street sweepers and the flush truck, the annual costs were a little over \$44,000 for maintenance. There is no cost savings on the labor side, as those positions would be re-tasked. The dump trucks could also be re-tasked. The crews would not be disposed of. The night crew would continue to sweep as per usual practice. The only solution was to cut half from the maintenance cost to come up with the cost recovery which was a little over \$24k. Contracting out the process did not seem to be any more cost effective.

It was found, through the process, that there was no set standard curb mile practice in place for sweeping areas. There are eleven zones inside of the downtown and central Topeka area that are swept. Previously, this has been done twice a year. Review of curb miles, and curb miles per hour, to also include the number of days the street sweeper employees work, showed the street sweeping slowed down within the Potwin and Oakland areas to .66mph. The average for the whole city was 1.62mph. The deciduous trees in those particular neighborhoods causing the sweepers to require slowing down, and that only sweeping those areas twice annually was not providing adequate service to those residents.

A standard has since been put into place, and a new schedule has been completed. The areas that include Potwin and Oakland will now be swept three times within a 130-day period.

There are three sweepers that need to be replaced. Change has been made to have the vac truck sent out daily to help around the outskirts of the city limits, as well as sending the three sweeping trucks out.

Questions from the Committee:

- To better understand, we have two sweeping crews of three sweepers each, correct? No. There is one sweeping crew. There was only one flush truck, two dump trucks, and two 3-wheel sweepers going out daily. Now, the vac truck has been added in. There had basically been three additional sweepers sitting in the barn for the majority of the time. With the addition of one more sweeper, there would no longer be the need to replace all of the sweepers via contracted service. The fourth sweeper could be sent out on its own to assist with the Potwin and Oakland areas.

- The idea of outsourcing the street sweeping was to be able to provide better service to the constituents by being able to create more sweeping cycles, correct? Yes.
- Would you be looking at a way to increase cycles through all neighborhoods? It is an ongoing process with the now-implemented two processes in place. The zones are consistent, the curb mile per hour is consistent, and the variable is the length of time it takes to get through each zone. The minimum goal set is to meet 1.62mph. In some areas, that speed is below 1.62mph. Not saying “no” to other zones being serviced more than twice, however wanting to bring those particular areas mentioned up to service minimum.
- Councilwoman Valdivia-Alcala inquired about the Oakland area and the goal of cleaning the area. Mr. Workman confirmed proposal to get Oakland every 130 days.
- When talking about increased amount of cleaning Oakland, will there be a list of dates that could go out to the Council and public to let them know when the trucks will be by, so folks can know to move their vehicles off of the street? Yes.
- Will the Sardou and Branner bridges be included in this schedule? Yes. It can be added in with the night crew to ensure they are cleaning it regularly.
- How much is spent annually on street sweeping? Mr. Workman stated the total listed on the handout was for a four-year period. The sweepers which have not been in use were also included in that total figure. The active sweepers that are being used total a little over \$44k annually. The dump trucks were not included as they are used for other purposes anyway.
- The dump truck costs should be included, because they would be included in the estimates from the vendors, correct? Yes. Those adjusted figures can be provided. The maintenance and fuel costs for the dump trucks would not go away from the department, they would continue to be used by the department but would be repurposed for other projects.
- Are the blue zones on the chart showing the vac truck? Yes.
- And what is the difference between the vac truck and the others? The 3-wheelers are mechanical. The vac truck requires a driver and has a sort of regenerative air system at the bottom that sucks debris up. A similar result occurs, however the vac truck is more mobile and can reach highway speeds. This is why it is used for the outskirts of the city limits. It can also drive and dump without requiring the use of an accompanying dump truck.
- Are the vac trucks significantly more economical then, without requiring a dump truck to go along? It would be tough for using in a residential area, especially with cars, because it is a lot larger of a unit and is more difficult to maneuver. It is also not nearly as effective with lifting leaves from the ground. The mechanical is necessary to remove leaf material.

Mr. Trower noted that all of the bids received only had regenerative air units. Those were tested in the Oakland neighborhood, and were not able to clear the leaf debris to standard.

Mr. Trower noted new signs have been purchased and will be used in neighborhoods, such as Oakland, to give a date so folks know when to move their cars from the street.

Councilwoman Ortiz would like to be contacted by department staff to perhaps participate in a ride-along to better understand the equipment and job.

Committee member Emerson inquired with the sweeping schedule that was sent, only included areas 1-12, but asked if information pertaining to the outlying areas 13-21b could be sent. Mr. Trower confirmed.

Chairman Dobler asked for an update in three months as to how the new program is going.

Discussion: Street Signs [video 1:36:05 minute mark]

[*This information can be found on the committee's webpage.*]

Kristi Ericksen, Traffic Engineer, gave a presentation on uncontrolled intersections.

Highlights:

- Number of different ways to control intersections: signals, yield signs, stop signs, etc. There are also uncontrolled intersections.
- Uncontrolled intersection - No signage to direct traffic. Only used in low-volume, neighborhood-type intersections.
- Signage reserved for intersections where they want drivers to stop every time they get there, or yield every time they approach.
- There are signs in some residential neighborhoods, Oakland used as example, there stop or yield signs are placed at every block as a traffic calming measure, but are not controlling the intersection. This is not an effective measure in many cases.
- State statute 8-1526: Right-of-way; approaching or entering intersection. (a) When two vehicles approach or enter an intersection from a different highways at approximately the same time, the driver of the vehicle on the left shall yield the right-of-way to the vehicle on the right. Perhaps ongoing public education on this statute would be helpful.
- Unwarranted stop signs are often ignored, especially if placed every-other-block in a neighborhood.
- Inattention versus mistakes. During design, engineers want to make room for mistakes, however cannot make drivers be attentive through geometrics or signage.
- Ultimate goal is to create Vision Zero. This term will be brought up in conversations with complete streets group. National conversation, centered on creating zero fatalities.
- Question is to control or not control intersections. There may be an opportunity to educate drivers.
- Ms. Ericksen has begun a program to implement drivers ed.

- Crosswalk in-road signs - temporary installation, received great response from drivers. Calling attention to cross walks that have been in place but drivers seem to have not noticed.
- Would like to use similar approach using different signs. However, other signs are not MUTCD Compliant, and would require submission of formal request for experimentation. Ms. Ericksen is in the process of submitting that request, and remains hopeful that it will be approved, and signs can be placed by summer.

Questions from the committee:

- Is there ever a case to install temporary speed bumps in residential areas? Yes, and there are many points for discussion, so this may be a topic to bring back in the future.
- Councilwoman Valdivia-Alcala is interested in hearing more about the public education program, and other measures discussed, in more depth noting that the Oakland neighborhood has been experiencing a higher number of speeding and traffic violations in recent years.

Residential Notifications for Sanitary Sewer Repair [video 1:50:00 minute mark]

[*This information can be found on the committee's webpage.*]

Sylvia Davis, Utilities Deputy Director of Operations, presented information regarding sanitary sewer line repairs.

Highlights:

- When repair letters are sent to residents regarding responsibility for sewer line repair, there is often a point of contention surrounding the “y” connection of pipe.
- Per Topeka Municipal Code (TMC) 13.20.150 - “The maintenance and repair of a building service line and its connection with the City sewer main is the responsibility of the owner of the property it serves. The first indication of sewer failure or potential failure may vary...”
- Code lays out that the repairs must be made within seven days of notification.
- In times of alley failure, or standing sewage above ground, the seven days really comes into play.
- Options for homeowners who need to make repairs: Owner can hire private contractor. Owner can request City make repairs and send bill. If charges are not paid, City can complete work and place lien on property.
- Pilot program implemented in 2021 - cost sharing program. Provides funding up to \$50,000 annually from wastewater budget that will allow assistance to approximately 20 low income homeowners. City will pay 50%, up to \$2,500 per applicant, in repair costs. Separate from existing Emergency Repair Program.

Questions from the Committee:

- Councilwoman Valdivia-Alcala asked if this information could come back to the committee at a future time to be discussed further. Chairman Dobler and Ms. Davis confirmed.

Items from Staff [video 2:05:00 minute mark]

Hannah Uhrig noted the FIRM program had been introduced at an earlier meeting, addressing the allotment toward emergency repairs. There was recently a break in the fire line at the Holliday Building. Bids are currently being worked up to include the emergency response that was required, fire line replacement, and replacement of very dated water main line, and the overflow. Pictures and additional information will send out additional information. Estimated \$30k-\$40k for final bids.

Items from Committee

None.

Other Items

None.

Adjourn

Additional details regarding the next meeting will be made available on the committee's webpage and the City's Public Meeting Calendar, once known.

Chairman Dobler adjourned the meeting at 4:15pm.

Video of the meeting can be viewed at: <https://youtu.be/Fr1cIPKCMwU>