Item 5:  

**Curb & Gutter Replacement Program — Citywide ½ Cent Sales Tax Funded**

The Curb & Gutter Replacement Program replaces failed curb and gutter identified by citizen complaints and during road mill/overlay or reconstruction projects. The program also provides funding for materials used to perform maintenance on streets throughout the City. The current funding level is $1,250,000/year.

The city's road network consists of roads with:

- open ditches,
- asphalt curbs,
- stone, brick or metal curbs, and
- concrete curbs

The vast majority of curb & gutter in Topeka is concrete. While concrete of all ages can fail, there was a period of time that the limestone aggregate was softer and absorbed more moisture. During freeze/thaw cycles, this aggregate failed with a resulting failure in the concrete. Failures typically appear at joints in the concrete and propagate outward. This type of failure is known as D-Cracking. Currently there are 728 open service requests for curb/gutter replacement.

Several years ago, the city worked almost exclusively on the oldest complaint first. This resulted in the contractor moving all over the city to replace small sections and was very inefficient for the contractor. We also were releasing large bid packages, in the ballpark of $500,000. There was a tendency for the low bid to use the curb work as 'fill-in' work and projects took all year and even into the next year to complete. About 3 years ago, the city
started releasing multiple smaller bid packages between $50,000 and $100,000 with short
timeframes to complete. Instead of one larger contract that dragged on, we had 7 to 10
smaller contracts that, while completed quicker, was a nightmare for staff to manage.

In 2019, the city began a more concentrated approach by looking at heat maps showing areas
with a significant number of curb service requests. While some were old and some were
newer, the city felt that concentrating a contractor in specific areas was a better use of
resources. Also in 2019/2020, the city began using this funding source to pay for curb
replacement in our mill/overlay areas.

**Selection Criteria:**

The city starts by reviewing a heat map that identifies all curb service requests. Projects are
selected where a significant number of the service requests can be competed in a fairly small
geographic area. It is also likely that in these areas, there are multiple curb failures that have
not been reported. Projects can grow exponentially once work starts. Also where mill and
overlay projects are planned, there is a high probability that a lot of curb is in poor condition.

Curb replacement is warranted if:

- water is ponding (not draining),
- Sections of curb are missing or blown out, or
- Failure at the joint is apparent – even if concrete is still intact

At times in the past, the city has not spent all the curb funding allocated for that year.
Between contractor workloads and staff limitations, spending the full amount has not always
occurred. As we move forward, being aggressive in smaller geographic areas and using these
funds to replace curbs associated with our mill/overlay projects, will result in a more thorough
use of available funding.