



Approved

**City of Ypsilanti
City Council Work Session Minutes
Tuesday, September 29, 2015
City Council Chambers, 1 S. Huron St., Ypsilanti, MI
WORK SESSION: 7:00 p.m.**

I. CALL TO ORDER –

The meeting was called to order at 7:08 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL –

Council Member Anne Brown	Present	Council Member Robb	Present
Council Member Nicole Brown	Present	Council Member Vogt	Present
Council Member Murdock	Present	Mayor Edmonds	Present
Mayor Pro-Tem Richardson	Present		

III. INVOCATION –

Mayor asked all to stand for a moment of silence.

IV. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE –

"I pledge allegiance to the flag, of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

V. AGENDA APPROVAL –

Mayor Pro-Tem Richardson moved, supported by Council Member Nicole Brown to approve the agenda as submitted.

On a voice vote, the motion carried, and the agenda was approved.

VI. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION –

None

VII. REMARKS FROM THE MAYOR –

None

VIII. WORK SESSION –

— Roads Maintenance – City Manager Ralph Lange, DPS Director Stan Kirton, and OHM Engineer Marcus McNamara

City Manager Lange provided an introduction to the presentation, and introduced OHM Engineer Marcus McNamara.

OHM Engineer Marcus McNamara provided a presentation on road maintenance. **(See Website)**

Council Member Anne Brown asked if road ratings are given once per calendar year. Mr. McNamara responded in the affirmative. Mayor Edmonds asked if the ratings were assessed at the beginning of 2015. Mr. McNamara responded ratings were assessed just last week. Council Member Anne Brown stated the construction just concluded on Prospect and asked if the rating is assessed at the time of completion. Mr. McNamara responded essentially the ratings are assessed in the fall.

Mayor Pro-Tem Richardson stated it will cost the City \$1.23 million a year for road repairs. Mr. McNamara responded in the affirmative and said it will cost \$1.23 million a year for ten years. Ms. Richardson asked what the bottom level of investment for repairs is. Mr. McNamara responded the bottom level would be an investment of \$300,000 a year which is under what the City has committed historically. Mr. McNamara responded the amount investment includes more than just capital improvements, it includes all maintenance. Mr. McNamara said a \$300,000 investment would not maintain roads at their current condition. Mr. McNamara added if the City were to invest \$500,000 a year it would only be able to support heavy maintenance. Ms. Richardson asked if a \$500,000 a year budget would maintain the roads. Mr. McNamara replied in that scenario, repair distribution would only maintain roads with middle PASER ratings.

Mayor Edmonds stated these assumptions do not include possible federal funds for road construction. Mr. McNamara responded the assumptions are based on need, how construction is funded is another question.

Council Member Murdock asked how much Act 51 funding is available for routine maintenance. Mr. McNamara responded there is not much funding available, and said from 2001 to 2006 maintenance costs were very low, because local roads were either new or being rebuilt. Mr. McNamara stated a few years after, those roads needed very little maintenance so both Major Streets and Local Streets accounts increased. Mr. McNamara added that is no longer the case, and funds were drawn down after road program monies were used. Mr. Murdock stated much of the fund balance was used this year and asked if the \$1 million to \$1.3 million the City needs for road repairs is outside of the Act 51 funding. Mr. McNamara responded in the affirmative.

Mayor Pro-Tem Richardson stated First Ave and Summit were two of the last streets repaired but they deteriorated very quickly and asked why that occurred. Mr. McNamara responded Summit's deterioration was the result of a joint but it has been repaired. Mr. McNamara stated the problems that he noticed on First were caused by shifting structures or were never tuck-pointed properly. Ms. Richardson asked what can be done moving forward to ensure that road construction is done correctly and if there is a possibility of having a warranty for road construction. Mr. McNamara responded typically warranties only last for two years, which really means the project cost is higher and it is difficult to collect on the warranty. Mr. McNamara added the only recourse the City would have is inspection and materials testing during construction. Ms. Richardson stated essentially contractors can perform faulty work without recourse. Mr. McNamara responded no, anything built that does not meet specification would not be accepted and would be rebuilt. Mr. Lange stated the best way to ensure a good final product is to have good engineering, design, and ensure proper materials are used. Mr. Lange concluded saying if a contractor performs poor work they will not be used for future projects. Council Member Vogt said he agrees, and he has litigated several cases similar

to this scenario. Mr. Vogt stated specifications need to be included in the contract and inspections need to be performed during construction.

Mayor Edmonds asked if streets completed in the same time period are compared when examining why conditions are poor or if each street is examined individually. Mr. McNamara responded when performing the field rating, historical knowledge is not a factor. Mr. McNamara stated the issue with Summit is a structural issue, and the spray patch used to fix it is simply a patch. Mr. McNamara added the software used by OHM includes all the historical information and is used in tracking assets. Ms. Edmonds asked if that analysis might dictate repairing the road in a different manner. Mr. McNamara responded in the affirmative. Mr. Lange added there are other factors that can lead to road deterioration and one is drainage which can create huge problems. Mr. Lange stated another problem can arise from soil condition, if the soil doesn't provide good drainage there will be significant damage to the road.

Mayor Edmonds stated SEMCOG recently held a seminar regarding green infrastructure and what those investments can do to prolong the quality of other investments. Ms. Edmonds stated drainage problems can be mitigated through green infrastructure. Mr. McNamara stated such as what is used in Depot Town. Ms. Edmonds stated green infrastructure can be very simple, especially when compared to the cost of rebuilding roads.

Council Member Robb stated after three years of the construction of Cross St. the seams are beginning to split. Mr. Robb stated when situations like that occur he expects OHM to provide a root cause analysis of why that happened.

Council Member Murdock stated the County Millage will cover \$145,000, where will the remaining \$650,000 come from. Mr. McNamara responded it is possible the City is unable to complete all repairs listed on the road selection list, he said Hamilton alone will cost \$308,000. Mr. McNamara stated the City Manager informed him the \$135,000 will be allocated to the Major Street Fund from the State General Fund. Mr. Lange stated that would provide \$280,000 and another \$20,000 from Major Streets would provide a \$300,000 road program.

Council Member Murdock asked if any federal aid funds will be used for road construction. Mr. McNamara responded the City could use federal aid funds, he stated there is \$285,000 earmarked in Michigan Department of Transportation's (MDOT) next fiscal year budget for the City. Mr. McNamara stated the issue with relatively small projects using federal aid is the process diminishes the savings. Mr. McNamara stated Washtenaw Area Transportation Study members are willing to trade federal aid dollars so more can accumulate and used during a different fiscal year. Mr. McNamara stated a decision does not have to be made for the 2017 road program, but he did want Council to begin thinking about it.

Council Member Murdock stated the eight projects for 2016 are an estimated cost of \$660,000 and asked if that is the same as what is being presented. Mr. McNamara responded the difference is Hamilton, he said the plan will require changes from a full mill and overlay to spot repairs, or a thin overlay. Mr. Lange stated the City does not have to complete each of the roads listed and urged the City to not use federal aid because it would increase costs. Mr. Murdock stated his intention of examining 2016 road repairs is to be able to plan for 2017 projects. Mr. McNamara agreed, and said the plan is to complete the eight roads on that list with the exception of Hamilton. Mr. McNamara stated staff is trying to keep up with construction costs but he feels like

estimates are accurate. Mr. Murdock stated even if Hamilton is not included it is over the \$280,000 the City would have available. Mr. Lange stated the remainder would be paid out of Major Streets and the City will have to see the amount of the bids. Mr. Lange added the City has not been given the final cost of Prospect Rd. and it is possible that costs are lower than estimated.

Mr. Lange stated there is not a rational formula to keep roads at a usable condition without the continuation of the road millage.

Council Member Murdock stated the City is at a limit on millage so it would have to be some sort of bond or a sinking fund.

Mr. Lange recommended that the road millage be renewed at 3 mills instead of 4 mills and Council approves a special assessment for \$200,000 for street lights.

Council Member Murdock asked Mr. Lange why a few months ago he stated he did not want to reduce the millage and now he is asked to reduce the millage from 4 mills to 3 mills. Mr. Lange responded one the City has done an excellent job with the Police and Fire Pension Fund. Mr. Lange stated it also has to do with economic development and if the millage is not renewed all the money that was spent for roads will be lost through road deterioration without funds to maintain them.

Council Member Murdock stated when there is discussion about roads it is not just roads being discussed. Mr. Murdock stated there are other solutions for funding such as a Category FM Dot grant for urban areas. Mr. McNamara responded that funding mechanism was used for the repairs to Mansfield. Mr. McNamara added that grant is intended for commercial routes, such as roads like Huron. Mr. Murdock stated he was thinking that it could be used as a piece of a larger project. Mr. McNamara responded in the affirmative but part of the application is if you get funded the job must be completed and he does not think the City is ready at this point.

Council Member Murdock stated there are a variety of Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) Grants available. Mr. Murdock stated he is still unclear about the Michigan Ave and the Grove Rd extension and he heard the grant was being reduced. Mr. Lange responded the grade inspection is ready but the state might not pay for design. Mr. Lange stated he was informed the design would cost around \$10,000 and does not feel the project should be put on hold. Council Member Murdock stated the City can still expect to complete the crossing as well as the Grove extension. Mr. Lange responded in the affirmative.

Council Member Murdock stated there is also the possibility of a TAP grant for the Huron and Hamilton road diet which could be done in conjunction with the MDOT resurfacing project. Mr. Murdock stated, however, the resurfacing project has been put on hold indefinitely due to lack of funding. Mr. McNamara responded that was included in the state capital improvement plan but was pushed back past 2018. Mr. Murdock asked if the City is planning to do that project if MDOT does not move forward with the resurfacing project. Mr. Lange responded he was not intending to unless that is the wish of Council. Mr. Lange stated the project was supposed to tie into the I-94 crossing. Mr. Murdock responded the projects are not dependent on one another but it would make sense.

Council Member Murdock asked what the status of the I-94 crossing is. Mr. McNamara responded that is being handled through WATS, he said several alternatives were

drafted, an engineer was hired, and the design is either complete or very close to completion. Mr. Murdock asked if the project was going to be extended into the Township. Mr. McNamara responded he is not certain but it is the stated goal, however, the project is not fully funded. Mayor Edmonds stated without funding, construction will not be completed in the 2016 season. Mr. McNamara responded it seems unlikely, but it is possible. Mayor Pro-Tem Richardson stated that is a very dangerous area for pedestrians. Mr. Murdock stated Council needs to know what the cost of the expansion is because that project is overdue. Mr. McNamara responded he would provide Council with that information. Council Member Anne Brown asked who the applicant for the TAP grant is. Mr. Murdock responded MDOT. Council Member Anne Brown asked who submitted the application. Mr. McNamara responded WATS took over the project and solicited requests for proposals (RFPs) for the design, but he could not say who the applicant was and it is one of the reasons there is difficulty with funding. Mr. Lange asked if the Township could contribute to the project. Mr. McNamara responded in the affirmative.

Council Member Murdock asked if future TAP grants are being investigated for the train platform. Mr. Lange responded a TAP grant could cover part of the cost but before a grant could be applied for, a design would be needed, and an estimation of total costs. Mr. Lange added once the City is at that point it will look for every dollar that is feasible.

Council Member Murdock stated unused funds were transferred to the current budget for non-motorized projects, specifically the extension of bike lanes on E. Forest from Norris to Prospect, on W. Cross from Norris to Mansfield, and Miles St. Mr. Murdock asked what the status is for those projects. Mr. Lange responded the Non-Motorized Committee made a request for sidewalk replacement at Candy Cane and Hemply Parks which will cost \$16,000 to \$17,000. Mr. Lange added he has asked OHM and DPS to investigate what can be completed with the remaining funds. Mr. Murdock stated most of the cost for bike lanes is processing and painting the lines. Mr. Lange stated there is an issue with the bump outs on Miles which can be expensive.

Mayor Pro-Tem Richardson stated Mr. Lange made mention that one swing-set at Mattingly Park needed to be replaced but all of the playground equipment needs to be replaced. DPS Director Stan Kirton responded the City is waiting on Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding to replace the equipment. Ms. Richardson asked if the playground could be closed until the equipment is replaced because it is dangerous. Council Member Anne Brown stated the equipment has been painted. Ms. Richardson asked if they were painted in the last two months. Ms. Anne Brown responded in the affirmative. Ms. Richardson asked when they were painted. Ms. Anne Brown responded in July or August. Ms. Richardson stated they were not painted in late July or early August. Ms. Anne Brown responded they were painted as a part of a sorority service project. Mr. Kirton stated he will have the equipment checked for safety. Mr. Kirton added once an environmental assessment is complete the City will use the CDBG funds to install the same equipment as the Charles St. Tot lot. Mr. Lange stated he understands there is a lot of frustration with the time this is taking he said the City has gone through three CDBG administrators. Mr. Kirton stated there is high turnover, but the newest administrator seems very knowledgeable.

Mayor Edmonds stated during the next Urban County meeting she will check on the timeline for sidewalk completion. Ms. Anne Brown stated Ann Arbor Area Transit Authority would add a facility if there was a sidewalk on Huron near Leforge. Ms. Edmonds stated that property is owned by the state and Representative Rutledge informed her to clear the snow from the cement pad and bill MDOT for the service. Ms.

Anne Brown asked that sidewalk installation be looked into for the stretch on Huron from the DPS yard to Leforge. Mr. McNamara stated it is City owned but the state owns the railroad right-of-way. Mr. McNamara added there is some disagreement between the road and railroad right-of-ways. Ms. Edmonds stated in the winter it is a huge safety issue. Ms. McNamara stated he would look into the matter.

Council Member Murdock stated there are a lot of issues beyond the road service in the Huron and Leforge location. Mr. Murdock stated at that location there are no sidewalks, bike paths, Border to Border connection, and two intersections need to be adjusted, one at Huron and Oakwood, and one at Huron and Leforge. Mr. Murdock stated it is a very expensive project but it would improve that section of the City. Mr. McNamara responded to add bump outs and change intersection geometry is very expensive. Mayor Edmonds agreed with Council Member Murdock there are great concerns with that corridor. Ms. Edmonds stated there could be a partnership with the university in solving some of these issues. Ms. Edmonds stated the Leforge area was forgotten in the ShapeYpsi planning process, and she will be making a nomination to the Planning Commission who is a planning student and lives in that area. Ms. Edmonds stated safety needs to be a concern when examining all motorized and non-motorized initiatives. Ms. McNamara stated OHM projects go through all the planning stages required by the City to ensure the plans of the City are adhered to.

Council Member Murdock stated west of Cornell is three lanes but once it reaches Lowell and Huron the roads are one-way. Mr. McNamara responded his understanding is when the County did that project they had information they believed the road diet would be appropriate all the way to Leforge. Mayor Pro-Tem Richardson asked if how road diets effect on the use of side streets is examined. Ms. Richardson stated the traffic on Hawkins has increased and people go 50 miles per hour down that road while children are playing. Ms. Richardson added she has seen only six people using the bike lanes since the road diet of Michigan Ave.

Council Member Murdock stated Council receives several complaints regarding speeding and requests for various traffic calming methods. Mr. Murdock stated as a goal calming measure should be included in the City's complete streets plan. Mr. Murdock stated several issues have been brought to Council's attention such as: Stanley, Hemphill, Dwight, Ferris, Douglas, and Miles. Mr. Murdock asked what the status is of the listed traffic calming requests. Mayor Pro-Tem Richardson stated there was a time when neighborhood associations would request a traffic calming device and would be required to cover the costs. Ms. Richardson stated the City might want to require neighborhood to at least pay a portion of the cost. Mayor Edmonds stated Council recently approved a traffic calming policy and Mayor Pro-Tem Richardson's suggestion is something worth evaluating as a part of that policy. Ms. Edmonds stated one of the things Council learned through that policy adoption was speed bumps are not always the answer. Ms. Edmonds added the City should look into safety related grants that could be used to install traffic calming methods in priority areas. Mr. Kirton stated speed bumps are a road maintenance nightmare. Council Member Robb suggested speaking with the Township and the Road Commission on how they maintain their roads that have speed humps. Mr. Murdock stated a number of recommendations were made as a result of a recent study and one of them was a series of traffic calming methods for Miles St, he said he would forward that information to Council. Mr. Murdock added another area that would benefit from these measures is Cornell St.

Council Member Murdock asked what the options are for regulating truck traffic. Mr. McNamara responded from an engineering perspective there is nothing in the vehicle

code that would preclude the City from creating restrictions on City owned roads. Mr. Murdock stated Prospect gets a lot of truck traffic because of R and L Trucking. Mr. Kirton stated Prospect Bridge has a weight restriction. Mr. McNamara added the cross section was designed for the volume and weight of trucks. Mayor Pro-Tem Richardson stated while in Marquette for the Michigan Municipal League Conference she noticed the roads were in much better condition. Council Member Robb responded because once those roads freeze they stay frozen. Ms. Richardson stated she understands that, but she was informed that there are weight limits on trucks. Mr. McNamara responded a weight limit would not be needed because there is much less industry. Mr. Robb stated the mechanism Council can use is to pass an ordinance specific to truckers. Ms. Richardson agreed. Mr. Lange stated that would create a hardship for trucking companies. Mr. Robb agreed but Council is here to represent the residents and we need to find out how to provide relief.

Council Member Murdock asked what the options for the expiring road debt are. Mayor Edmonds stated that can be an item for another meeting.

Council Member Robb asked what assignments will result from this work session. Mayor Edmonds responded she feels this is information Council can digest and at a later time provide direction to staff. Mr. Murdock stated there were items discussed tonight that have already been budgeted for and it needs to be decided what is going to be done. Mayor Edmonds asked what items Mr. Lange thinks that need to come back to Council. Mr. Lange responded staff will come back with action on the bike paths, roads for completion for the next construction season, and asked that City Council make a decision on the road millage. Mr. Kirton asked if staff would complete a truck route ordinance. Mr. Robb stated he will send something to the attorney's office for review. Ms. Edmonds asked if that item could be added to the Traffic Review Committee. Mr. Murdock stated the largest contributor to truck traffic is R and L Trucking and perhaps staff can speak with them to discuss an alternate route.

IX. COMMUNICATIONS –

- October 20th City Council Meeting will be held at EMU
- November 3rd Work Session regarding snow removal and enforcement starting at 6:00 p.m. before the regularly scheduled meeting.
- Stated she will begin scheduling goal session in the next couple of months.

X. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION –

None

XI. REMARKS FROM THE MAYOR –

- Welcomed former City Manager Ed Koryzno.

XII. ADJOURNMENT –

Council Member Anne Brown moved, supported by Council Member Nicole Brown, to adjourn the meeting.

On a voice vote, the motion carried, and the meeting adjourned at 8:49 p.m.