

**City of Cedar Rapids  
INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
City Hall – Council Chambers  
Wednesday, January 27, 2016**

Meeting was called to order at 1:30 p.m. by Council Member Scott Olson.

Committee Members Present: Council members Scott Olson, Chair; Ralph Russell (by phone) and Justin Shields.

City Director Team: Jen Winter, Public Works Director; Emily Muhlbach, Communications Coordinator; Sandra Fowler, Assistant City Manager Development Services; Steve Hershner, Utilities Director.

Presenters: Brad DeBrower, Transit Manager; Eric Holthaus, Sustainability Coordinator; Sandy Pumphrey, Project Engineer; Garrett Prestegard, Project Engineer; Mike Duffy, Street Superintendent; Doug Wilson, Paving for Progress Project Manager; Bruce Jacobs, Utilities Engineering Manager; Jon Durst, Sewer Superintendent.

1. Approval of Minutes from December 08, 2015 meeting.  
**ACTION:** The minutes were approved as presented. All in favor.
2. The February 16<sup>th</sup> meeting will be postponed to March 1<sup>st</sup> with the March 15<sup>th</sup> meeting occurring as scheduled.
3. **Presentation** – Transit System – *Brad DeBrower, Transit Manager*  
A summary of the existing fixed-route transit service, which includes the required ADA Paratransit Service along with bus replacement needs and transit funding options, was provided. The goal is to replace 2 buses per year on a 15 year cycle to maintain an average age of less than 8 years. An example of the new transit app [www.ridecrt.com](http://www.ridecrt.com) was shown.

Response to Committee questions:

Any issues besides funding that need addressed? Route adjustments are being made.

4. **Introduction** – Sustainability Coordinator – *Steve Hershner*  
Introduce Eric Holthaus, Sustainability Coordinator which previously held a similar position at the University of Iowa.  
**Presentation** – Proposed Sustainability Plan Development Timeline – *Eric Holthaus*  
Provide overview of City of Cedar Rapids proposed sustainability plan and development timeline. Build on current successes such as Complete Streets, Water Pollution Control (WPC) Nutrient Reduction, Electrical sub-metering at WPC. The STAR (Sustainability Tasks for Assessing and Rating) Communities framework was provided.

Council Members welcomed and acknowledged that addressing sustainability impacts the many areas the City is working on in moving toward a better city for the next generation. The purpose of the Committee is to enable the City Council to discuss and evaluate in greater detail these specific

issues that directly impact the quality and sustainability of the infrastructure of the City of Cedar Rapids.

Comment regarding Flint, MI and it was noted that WPC staff ensures that City of Cedar Rapids water meets or exceeds all requirements. Also commented on runoff and how it affects our rivers and lakes and the hope is to regain usability.

5. **Update** – Sanitary Sewer Master Plan – *Sandy Pumphrey*

The Sanitary Sewer Master Plan is used to assess the function of the City's sanitary sewer system, and aid in the selection of capital improvement projects and policy recommendations. So far we have analyzed previous studies and continue to calibrate the sanitary sewer macro model based on WPC flow reports and growth predictions. The project is currently on schedule.

Discussions regarding potential policy proposals have also been considered for further research and viability determinations. This phase of the work is due to be completed by mid-April 2016. The next consultant/staff workshop is scheduled for February 4, 2016.

6. **Update** – Storm Water Master Plan – *Garrett Prestegard*

Workshops have been held between HDR Engineering, Anderson-Bogert and City staff. Results of the basin level modeling in the Kenwood watershed evaluated and results are being used to validate previously identified capital improvement projects and to develop a 10 year capital improvement plan and financial plan. Draft plan is scheduled to be submitted in February.

Recent discussion on how storm water drainage affects the West Side Flood Control System how this interaction will benefit significantly by mitigating flash flooding, reduce cost to stormwater pump station. Policies Storm Water Utility Rate green infrastructure rate  
Next workshop is scheduled for mid-March present a draft.

7. **Update** – Street Maintenance Projects – *Mike Duffy*

There have been two significant snow events that posed a challenge due to the ice/sleet that fell yet number of events are down so plenty of material on hand.

Between snow events crews worked on project at Seminole Valley Trail using sweeper dumps to provide a sub base material to expand the slope and culvert work. We worked in conjunction with Parks, Utilities and DNR on this project. This project saved money on landfill fees by reusing the material.

Currently working on additional requests received for 2014 Flash Flooding FEMA documentation.

8. **Update** – Paving for Progress – *Doug Wilson*

The upcoming project specific public open houses and public bid openings was provided along with a list of City staff construction projects for 2016. The January 28<sup>th</sup> open house will include rehabilitating streets along the river and 4<sup>th</sup> Street. An additional open house will be held February 11<sup>th</sup> for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue from 6<sup>th</sup> Street SW to 5<sup>th</sup> Street SE. The list of City Staff projects includes several streets in the Rolling Green neighborhood.

9. **Update** – Upcoming Utility Projects to be Filed (February, March, April) – *Bruce Jacobs*  
The filing plans and specifications for the water and WPC plant projects were provided. It was noted that the February 9<sup>th</sup> filing for HVAC upgrade probable cost has gone up. Anticipate April filing for WPCF Odor Control Upgrades. Estimated to take 2-3 years and costs will be budgeted out between the years. All significant current water main work is planned in conjunction with Paving for Progress projects.

10. **Recommendation** – Topsoil Rule – *Jon Durst*  
Presentation provided on the proposed Soil Quality Policy and the coordination of the Storm Water Master Plan and Storm Water Fee. Four of the method options were reviewed along with costs associated with each. Studies provided by builders were reviewed.

Response to Committee questions:

The external studies provided estimate higher costs than presented, is this based on the additive material versus base material? Presentation based on current requirements of General Permit No. 2 versus what is not currently required of the permit, presentation provided average but ranges are available.

What have we learned from other cities that have a similar ordinance in place? Coralville has not experienced issues with attaining the 8 inch quality layer on sites. Implementation requires change and change is not easy. City staff and the community is committed to helping developers and builders through this change by providing an efficient process built into the workflow with minimal impact on their bottom line. Comment regarding who would the change be hardest for; developers, maybe; homeowners that have experienced damage due to stormwater not draining properly due to compaction, yes.

How do builders select a method, how is the soil tested and what is the timing to keep projects on time? Simply select box for type of method on permit application. An 8 inch soil probe will be used to test front/back yards along with a visual inspection. A probe will be available for self-testing if desired.

What about coordination with utilities? Utilities require the lot to be within four inches of final grade; builders will be allowed that in order to till and respreads.

#### 11. Public Input

- a. Dustin Kern, Marion, Land Developer – shared calculations on a .4 acre lot from \$2,200 for backfill and prep to total cost of \$10,600 which includes soft costs.
- b. Jim Sattler, Cedar Rapids – group has reviewed Federal and State requirements; request scientific and/or cost data from other cities; cost/benefit basis analysis; opportunity to present alternate proposal to be provided at next meeting.
- c. Drew Rietz, Cedar Rapids – North Liberty standard put in place last fall not comparative to Cedar Rapids. There were 198 single family permits pulled in CR for 2015 of which 64 were ROOTS Program. Marion had 180 permits which show that Cedar Rapids is already choosing other communities over Cedar Rapids and adding these costs will make Cedar Rapids non-competitive. Utility Director of Bettendorf stated that Davenport

- implementation improved economic development for Bettendorf. Not aware of any studies where quantitative value to proposed policy.
- d. Randy Dostal, Cedar Rapids – Request tabling ordinance until data is compiled.
  - e. John Dusak, Cedar Rapids – Issue is lack of retention ponds, river flooding which is being addressed and older areas with no retention ponds, set too low or grading issues. Request costs benefit analysis and spend money to correct older neighborhoods.
  - f. Jennifer, Indian Creek Watershed Management Authority – Fully support, this policy works with implementation strategies to the recently approved and adopted watershed management plan.
  - g. Martin Smith, Cedar Rapids – Support strong top soil rule and it's needed to make builders more responsible versus the shortcut builders.
  - h. Ellen Fisher, Cedar Rapids – building to the lowest cost is not beneficial, skimping on insulation not recommended so why skimp on topsoil. Feels the 50 year average rainfall method should be 10 years due to higher precipitation events.
  - i. Norm Humble, Cedar Rapids – building homes in Cedar Rapids versus Marion can be for a variety of reasons not just topsoil. Homebuilders raise prices and make the City their escape goat.
  - j. Craig Seely, Cedar Rapids – suggests that all lots/parcels should be tested not just new developments. Need to reduce costs to make things better.

#### 12. Items for Future Agenda

- a. Clear Lake Study Committee (Russell)
- b. Alliant Energy Street Lights (Olson)
- c. Conversion Information Update (Poe)
- d. Assessment Policy
- e. Undergrounding of Public Utilities

The meeting was adjourned at 2:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kathy Holmes, Administrative Assistant I, Public Works Department