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Public Works

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MEMORANDUM

Equipment Maintenance
Roadway Maintenance
Collection & Drainage
Building & Grounds
Engineering

To: Gregg Mandsager, City Administrator
CC: Fran Donelson, Secretary
FROM: Randy Hill, Public Works Director
DATE: October 1, 2013
RE: Sidewalk Policy and Program

INTRODUCTION:

A significant part of the city's infrastructure is sidewalks. It is roughly estimated that 60% - 70% of the community is connected with pedestrian walks and trails.

BACKGROUND:

For the past ten (10) years the City of Muscatine has not had an active sidewalk inspection program. We have functioned on a complaint driven basis. However, with the focus on a healthier lifestyle for our citizenry let by the Blue Zone initiative, existing sidewalks, development of new sidewalks and compliance with ADA mandated handicap ramps at sidewalk intersections becomes very important.

RECOMMENDATION/RATIONALE:

It is the recommendation of staff to develop a sidewalk policy and implementation program for city council's consideration. This policy and program would be designed by a Project Manager and shared with the Muscatine City Council during the budgetary process in January/February 2014. The program would feature a Policy Statement and a comprehensive approach to addressing sidewalk needs in the city. It is anticipated that implementation would be directed at inspection of existing walks, creation of new sidewalks during construction projects (i.e. Cedar, Colorado) and ADA ramps. The Blue Zone concept of the "Walking School Bus" should also have a high priority level assigned to it. No General Fund money is proposed to be used for this Sidewalk Policy and Program effort at this time.

City Council was given a power point presentation by City Engineer Jon Lutz and MAGIC Coordinator Mark Yerington at the September 12 council meeting. They demonstrated how new

technology using iPads can be used effectively in an inspection program and notification process.

City Staff continues to receive inquiries almost daily about sidewalks in one form or another – trippers, water shut off valves, lack of sidewalks in pedestrian travelled areas etc. There are many elements of a sidewalk program that require discussion – funding, new construction, maintenance of existing and replacement. For the past several years the city staff has included \$30,000 in the City Engineer's budget to hire a consulting firm to help with this. The funding has not been approved but the need for sidewalk attention has not lessened. Unless we move forward with a proactive plan to address our sidewalk infrastructure, then our only option is to continue to react on a complaint driven basis.

BACKUP INFORMATION:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Comprehensive Sidewalk Program and Policy

A. Need for Policy

a. History

- i. Current sidewalks are addressed on a complaint basis
- ii. Systematic inspection program – the last inspection program ceased 10 years ago
- iii. Time to update standards, create a policy, and determine that best way to implement.

b. Purpose: To continue to provide a pedestrian friendly community, address walkability, and provide connected city infrastructure

c. Current authority: City Code and Zoning Ordinance

d. Three pronged approach

- i. Sidewalk inspection and repairs – to include a comprehensive onsite inspection identifying need repairs and process for repair
- ii. New sidewalks – to include sidewalks to be completed with larger city projects, areas missing sidewalks or areas in need or connections
- iii. ADA assessment and repair (grade, ADA panels)
- iv. The policy will address timing, standards, inspection, notice, and funding

B. Existing Infrastructure Issues

- a. Elevated water stop boxes
- b. Broken concrete
- c. Tripping hazards

C. Infrastructure Opportunities (New Construction)

a. Infill or links connecting segments of existing infrastructure

- i. I.E. Dawson Street (\$39,000)
- ii. Please note that we are not recommending that we add Dawson street to the current project, but to ensure consistency going forward that we address the sidewalks at a later date once the policy is complete and council has adopted.

b. Adopt and Implement a Complete Streets Policy

- i. Blue Zone action item
- ii. Identified in comprehensive plan
- iii. Current projects and opportunities
 1. Colorado Street (September 2013)
 2. Cedar Street (January 2014)
 3. Mulberry Street (Houser to Fridleys)
 4. Lucas Street

iv. Safe Routes to School

1. Adequate sidewalks (new and connectors) to get childrens safely to and from schools
2. Walking school buses

v. Federal and State Mandates

1. ADA ramps
2. Required whenever adjacent streets are constructed/reconstructed or sidewalk reconstructed/installed

- D. Public Support
 - a. Neighborhood Public Meetings
 - b. Comprehensive Plan
 - c. Blue Zones Initiative and meetings
 - d. Pedestrian and Bike Master Plans (forthcoming)
- E. Powerpoint Presentation
 - a. John Lutz, City Engineer
 - b. ADA model program for inspection, tracking, and policy implementation
- F. How do we proceed with creating the policy and implementing the plan?
 - a. Contract with outside firm for an inspection and report, city implements
 - i. \$20-30,000 per year plus implementation
 - b. Complete the project in-house and in cooperation with Bi-State on the policy document (Recommended route)
 - i. Hire a project manager to coordinate and develop the policy and implement
 - ii. Additionally duties
 - 1. Coordinate and implement sidewalk program
 - 2. Acts as project manager for all construction projects (timelines, deadlines, IDOT submissions, project coordination)
 - 3. Update project sheets/status reports on City's website
 - 4. Grant writing
 - 5. ROW and easement acquisition (City-wide)
 - 6. Lean coordinator for DPW (ID time, process and cost savings)
 - 7. Additional benefit - alleviates city engineer's time to focus on city project design, increases output, saves contracted engineering dollars (limited large projects)
 - c. Costs for recommended option - \$50,000 base salary or \$74,000 with benefits
 - d. Funding
 - i. \$20-30,000 future allocation for outside engineer
 - ii. Position responsible for all project easement acquisition (Averages \$7,000 per year)
 - iii. Eliminate part-time engineering position (\$7 to \$15,000 over last three years, \$7,700 budgeted this FY)
 - iv. Grants (Application and Administration), City-Wide, main focus construction projects
 - v. Potential to complete airport project inspections (currently outside contractor) (\$5,000)
 - vi. Remainder – RUTF and TIF allocation
 - vii. Potential savings from lean activities (potential only, long term)