



**City of Inver Grove Heights
Meeting Via In Person or Virtual Zoom**

**City Council Work Session
Monday, May 3, 2021 at 6:00 p.m.**

NOTICE TO RESIDENTS: If you are interested in participating, please contact Rebecca Kiernan prior to this meeting via telephone (651) 450-2513 or email (rkiernan@ighmn.gov) to inform her - your name, address and to what you wish to speak on. Individuals may submit written public comments in advance of the meeting by emailing comments to Rebecca Kiernan (rkiernan@ighmn.gov). Comments received prior to 4:00 p.m. on Monday May 3, 2021, will be provided to the Council at or before the May 3, 2021 Work Session.

A G E N D A

A. Call to Order - Mayor Bartholomew

1. Presentation on Housing Needs by City of IGH Housing Committee
2. Building Inspection Division Overview
3. Potential Updates to the Pavement Management Program
4. Update on Interim Public Works Director and Parks & Recreation Director Staffing
5. Public Data Request Website Module
6. NW Parks - Peltier Discussion

B. Adjourn



Request for Council Action

Potential Updates to the Pavement Management Program

		Fiscal/FTE Impact	Mark all that apply
Meeting Date:	May 3, 2021	None	
Item Type:	Worksession	Amount included in current budget	
Contact:	Klay Eckles, 651-450-2571	Budget amendment requested	
Prepared by:	Klay Eckles, Interim Public Works Director	FTE included in current complement	
Reviewed by:	Heather Rand, Interim City Administrator	New FTE requested - N/A	
		Other: Future Budget Increase	X

PURPOSE/ACTION REQUESTED

Task Force that would make recommendations to Council concerning a viable long-term PMP.

SUMMARY

The challenge

Inver Grove Heights has roughly 140 miles of local streets, with over 60 miles in poor condition and another 30 miles in marginal condition. Studies have shown that in order to maintain current conditions the city should spend almost double the current \$5M a year. Even more troubling, to permanently improve the overall condition ratings to a generally acceptable level would require tripling our current expenditures for a period of five years then dropping to \$10M a year to maintain the improved quality in perpetuity. In the next 10 years the city has plans to fully reconstruct about 16 miles of roads. In that same time, it is estimated that the city will see another 30 miles fall into disrepair. In summary, we are losing the battle to care for our valuable infrastructure using the current resources and approach.

One of the major challenges facing the city is that the soils that support a large portion of the roads are shown to be substandard. As a result geotechnical engineers recommend that when these roads are rehabilitated all the underlying soils 2 feet below the road be removed—a total reconstruct. Total reconstruction projects cost about \$500 a linear foot. In contrast for a project that doesn't involve total reconstruction, a "mill and overlay" rehabilitation project, the cost is about \$100 a foot. So mill and overlay projects result in many more miles of rehabilitation for the same dollars. But they have a lower life expectancy, and the final product isn't a brand-new street curb-to-curb.

Philosophical Shift

Geotechnical engineers are correct in their assessment of the ultimate solution. But their assessment strives for the ideal—correct the underlying problem that shortens the life of the individual street in question. In the case of the IGH challenge it is something like putting a brand-new door on a house that is falling down. An alternative philosophy involves looking at system-wide cost effectiveness. Instead of rebuilding a few miles to ideal, if we can get many more miles in "pretty good" condition, we can raise the overall average street condition, and serve many more residents.

Inver Grove Heights is starting to see some older neighborhoods with underground utilities nearing the end of their service life. When a neighborhood needs some utilities or the concrete curb replaced, that is the ideal time to correct soils under the pavement. If these other infrastructure

systems are all adequate a mill and overlay or other similar less extensive preservation technique may be a strategy that meets the goal of an improved street and time future utility replacement projects with a full reconstruction project.

The Trade off

In general simple overlays or mill and overlays are an effective PM technique that should be in every city toolbox. The pavement studies in IGH have identified some roads appropriate for Mill and Overlay rehabilitation—but only about 5% of the poor roads. The technique can be effective on many of the other of the 55 or so miles needing rehabilitation, but only if our expectations are set correctly. Instead of 20 to 25 years of life as we would expect from a M&O project where used appropriately, using the technique on roads with poor soils or weak base material might see a project with 15 years of life.

Roads wear out regardless; using overlays in less-than-ideal conditions will wear out faster. The shorter life is often still a much more cost-effective strategy when comparing the cost per foot per year. Even an overlay project that only lasts 10 years has a cost per year of \$10 per foot. Compare that to a total reconstruction project with a life of 30 years, which equates to \$17 per year per foot.

If such as strategy is used, education will be important. M&O on suspect base material can also experience early reflective cracking. Meaning the cracks that naturally form in pavement sometimes show up earlier—though ultimately some cracking will occur on a full replacement too. But IGH has some good experience with overlays on roads that aren't ideal candidates. The Public Works Streets Division was unable to deal with all the potholes on many of the rural roads and therefore resorted to maintenance paving we refer to as "broad area patching". Our staff used the city paver to lay thin overlays, and have successfully improved the quality of many miles of rural roads. And the life of the broad area patches has been better than expected.

Funding of Mill and Overlays

More money is needed in our overall program. Council has committed to increasing funding for PM to the tune of an additional \$500,000 each year for the next few years. Much of this funding has already been accounted for in the projects we have on the books, so more funding would be necessary to implement an aggressive M&O program. There are several funding options to consider:

1. Money held by the city that is unallocated could be put toward this project. Last year the city saw some savings in construction projects where bonding was used. Since the projects are done, the remaining funds are free to be used in other ways. Approximately \$240,000 is available. This would be a one-time opportunity.
2. Assessments could be increased. The current policy does assess a higher proportion of costs for less extensive strategies. So PM techniques that just address the upper layer of the road will also allow for more miles to be completed per city dollar spent. There may be some room for adjusting assessments, but only to what a property appraiser deems sustainable.
3. Although there are already expectations that have been set, the city could re-evaluate some of the total reconstruction projects planned in coming years and determine if a M&O might be sufficient. Because of their high cost, many more miles of M&O could be completed. The trade-off being these neighborhoods would need to be revisited sooner. Prior to going down this road, a pavement rehabilitation expert could be consulted.
4. Overall city contributions could be increased. Ultimately this is a needed step. There are several approaches that could be used, but all scenarios result in more contributions from IGH residents and businesses. This issue could be explored more thoroughly as part of a community engagement process.

Engaging the Community for Success

The issue facing IGH is a serious one. Care and renewal of our infrastructure has huge financial challenges, yet it is a challenge the city must meet and succeed. Unfortunately, the community doesn't always understand or appreciate this challenge. One approach that can help build support for the long road ahead is strong community engagement. Use of the city educational and communication resources could be employed at a sustained level.

A way to create a community-based solution would be to create a Citizens Task Force on this issue. The purpose of the CTF would be to delve deeper into the elements discussed here, and ultimately make recommendations to the Council in a CTF report. This would provide a strong basis for making changes in our program, including changes to our assessment policy and funding strategies. A CTF might have the following attributes:

1. Be made up of citizens interested in the welfare of the community.
2. Have a Council member act as the CTF chair to liaison back to Council and run meetings.
3. Be served by City Staff for doing research and providing background education on infrastructure.
4. Include limited use of an expert consultant specializing in PM.
5. A final report could be developed then adopted by the CTF and presented to Council.
6. Once the report is adopted, the CTF could be dismissed.

A process such as this might take a year to get from inception to final report, but the investment could set the city on a long-term course toward streets in a condition acceptable to the general public, Council, and maintenance staff.

Council Support

A final thought on a more aggressive PMP—more projects mean more assessments, which will yield more community push-back. In order for a project to move forward a 4/5th vote by the Council will be necessary. A CTF can help future Councils understand the challenge and the need to go forward with difficult projects. The current Council should be of a like mind prior to spending additional staff and financial resources in moving forward with this effort to accelerate the PMP.

KE/kf



Memorandum to City Council

TO: Mayor and City Council Members

FROM: Rebecca Kiernan, City Clerk

SUBJECT: Public Data Request Website Module

DATE: April 28, 2021

CC: Heather Rand, Interim City Administrator & Marc Gade, IT Manager

BACKGROUND:

The need for a software product to help facilitate Public Data Requests has grown in the past two years due to various reasons such as many businesses/Individuals looking for data on building permits issued, surveys of homes, code violations, and investigations to name a few. The time spent on facilitating and researching data requests is considerable depending on the request.

The City Clerk's office has received 43 such requests since the beginning of 2020.

The Police Department received 2,026 requests in 2020. For 2021, they have received 547 and are projected to have 2,188 by year's end.

OVERVIEW:

The city does not currently have a tracking mechanism to facilitate public data requests. Everything is being handled manually by the City Clerk through spreadsheets. The Police Department tracks the requests with their records management system, but each request has to be entered manually by their Records Specialist. Most of our requests are submitted via e-mail. This system would be a public portal on our website that would automate the request, forward the request to the staff member In charge of the data, hold the data that has been researched until payment has been received, and then release the data to the requestor.

City staff has viewed three demonstrations from different companies offering this service: NextRequest, Granicus, and JustFOIA.

Staff recommends using JustFOIA for our needs since the company is affiliated with Laserfiche, our vendor for records retention. This Item will appear on the May 10, 2021 City Council Agenda for approval.