

Memorandum

DATE: April 17, 2009
TO: Mayor & Council Members
FROM: Joel Walinski, City Administrator
RE: Friday Memo for the week of April 13-17, 2009

One topic at the managers' staff meeting this week was a discussion on the increase of graffiti, vandalism, and sidewalk bike riders in the downtown area as the weather improves. In regards to the graffiti and vandalism, Police Chief Taylor has continued to support scheduling of police officers "walking the beat" in the downtown area. The focus has been on the evening and nighttime hours when the likelihood of this activity occurring increases. At this time, officers routinely "walk the beat" 3 – 5 days per week, frequency determined primarily by available staff scheduling, but also on response to other emergencies. These efforts will be ongoing but with greater emphasis.

Other work on the graffiti issue: there is work being done by an ongoing group involving downtown representatives, the Police Chief, and America In Bloom members looking at other preventative measures regarding graffiti that can be taken. Video surveillance, either public or private, and improving the responsiveness of the cleanup of graffiti on private property are two areas they have focused their time on. On City property, the current standard for cleanup and removal of graffiti is 24 hours once reported on weekdays and first of the week for items reported on weekends. Just as an update, the City has been in contact with CP Rail this week on cleaning up the graffiti on the old depot site, I hope to see some response to our dialogue within the next several weeks.

To improve safety regarding sidewalk bike riders in the downtown, the community service officer will be dedicating more time to public education involving those bike riders that disregard the city ordinance. Additionally the Public Works/Engineering folks will also be looking at signage or stencils that can be used to reinforce the current ordinances. As these efforts are put in place, the police will move towards tighter enforcement of the standing ordinance of no bike riding on the downtown sidewalks.

Two items will be added as green sheet changes to the agenda for next week's Monday evening Council Meeting. One is a resolution supporting the application of the COPS Grant for funding retention of two police officer positions. The COPS Grant was submitted April 14, 2009. The staff report and resolution is attached. The other is a resolution supporting a 2010 LCCMR Grant proposal being developed by the Environmental Quality Commission 's Energy Subgroup. The grant request is for funding of a City Energy Coordinator position for 2 years and a demonstration/workshop facility for residential energy improvement projects. The grant application deadline for the LCCMR is May 1, 2009. The grant application and specifics are being drafted at this time.

Below is information on city activities and information provided by the department directors and managers for the week of April 13-17, 2009:

CITY CLERK

Submitted by Deb Little, City Clerk

Inspectors assisting the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) under a Cooperative Agreement with the National Asian Pacific Center on Aging will be in Northfield within the next 30 days contacting businesses that may have a motor vehicle waste disposal well. Generally motor vehicle waste disposal wells are floor drains or sinks in service bays that are tied into a shallow disposal system. The inspectors provided the city with a list of potential businesses and asked for information as to whether these businesses were connected

to the City sewer system. The City Clerk and Water Division staff have completed the required information. Additional information regarding motor vehicle waste disposal well requirements can be obtained by contacting the Underground Injection Control Branch, United States Environmental Protection Agency Region 5, Water Division at 312-353-0829 or via their website at www.epa.gov/region5/water/uic

The City Clerk and Water Division staff have also completed research on addresses connected to City utilities for a company conducting a Limited Site Investigation for the MNDOT truck station located at 510 Woodley Street.

ENGINEERING

1st Street Reconstruction

Submitted by Sean Simonson, Engineering Tech. Coordinator

City Council accepted the low bid from BCM Construction at their April 6th council meeting. The low bid was \$1,788,439.25. Staff set up a Pre-Construction meeting with BCM and their suppliers and subcontractors for Monday, April 27, 2009 at 10:00 a.m. in the City Council Chambers. Engineering staff along with help from the Street Division worked with a local tree removal contractor removing trees that will be affected by construction, and also pruning trees to make room for the equipment used for the reconstruction. Residents continued to call in and schedule times for the week of April 20th, to hold on-site meetings at residences affected by construction to discuss the impacts of the project on each individual property.

Woodley Street Reconstruction

Submitted by Sean Simonson, Engineering Tech. Coordinator

Contractors representing Qwest and Xcel Gas have been on-site working on relocating small utilities that have been identified as being in conflict with Phase II of the construction which includes Woodley Street from Farehaven Drive to Prairie Street. Once these relocations have occurred, Friedges Contracting will begin work on Phase II, which is slated to start sometime in middle to late May. Staff is preparing a newsletter for property owners along the project corridor to be sent out next week detailing the upcoming schedule.

Friedges Contracting will be on-site the week of April 20th, to continue work on Phase I. Phase I includes Woodley Street from Farehaven Drive to 900' east of Jefferson Parkway. Work will include trail and sidewalk installation, final grading, and the installation of sod. This work is expected to be completed mid to late June.

5th and Water Street Reconstruction

Submitted by Sean Simonson, Engineering Tech. Coordinator

Staff completed a walk thru of the site, detailing the remaining work that needs to be completed, and also compiled a "punchlist" of repairs that need completing. This list will be sent to Heselton Construction, and a meeting will be scheduled to discuss a schedule for the work. The remaining work includes the installation of the Wear Course on Bituminous on the entire project, installation of a brick paver crosswalk near the Post Office, the installation of the Porous Hot Mix Asphalt in the Water Street Parking lot, and miscellaneous repairs. This work will require shutdowns of the Water Street Parking Lot and Fifth Street to complete the work. Staff has been taking into account both St. Olaf and Carleton graduations, and will be working with the Contractor to schedule the shutdowns to be as least evasive as possible. According to Contract Documents, all repairs and work shall be completed by July 1, 2009.

Safe Routes to Schools

Submitted by Brian Welch, GIS Technician

The Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) project is underway. SRF Consulting coordinated pedestrian/cyclist counts at the Middle School and the three elementary schools earlier this week. Volunteers from the community and the local colleges assisted with the counts. Engineers from the company spent time at each school observing traffic patterns and flow, pavement and sidewalk conditions, signs, and other factors. An online survey for parents of students at each school is available through the school district website. The

survey queries parents' impressions of pedestrian conditions around the schools, habits of getting kids to schools and perceived barriers to having their children walk or cycle to school. The pedestrian counts, on-site observations, and parent survey will contribute to the SRTS report in preparation by SRF Consulting. The report, along with recommendations for addressing specific pedestrian needs at each school will be delivered later this spring.

Mill Towns Trail Bridge

Submitted by Katy Gehler-Hess, City Engineer

Healy Construction was onsite this week gearing up for delivery of the bridge structure. At this time the cranes required to set the bridge are scheduled to arrive early next week. The bridge will arrive shortly after. The bridge will be delivered in 5 sections and reduced to two sections once onsite. The two sections will then be lowered on the abutments. The contractor has 60 working days to complete the project. By contract the work should be completed mid-July depending on weather.

Stop Light Timing

Submitted by Katy Gehler-Hess, City Engineer

The timing of the pedestrian crossing at the intersection of HWY 3 and 2nd Street was a common issue raised throughout the transportation planning process that occurred in 2007. Conversations with the MnDOT District 6 traffic engineer led to the discovery that the timing of the lights was not set in accordance to the typical standard crossing times. As such MnDOT corrected the light timing this week adding several seconds to the pedestrian cycle.

FINANCE

Submitted by Kathleen McBride, Finance Director

Ehlers weekly Market Commentary of April 13th is included for your information along with a memo from the MN Institute of Public Finance to the Tax Committee of the MN House of Representatives in response to the proposal to tax interest income on government bonds (State and local governments).

LIQUOR STORE

Submitted by: Stephen DeLong, Liquor Operations Director

It's All About The Beer

New Belgium Brewing Co. is our featured Beer of the Month for April. As part of the promotion, Jack Carroll, "Beer Ranger" for the brewery will be in the store today from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. to pour (and no doubt elucidate) the following selections:

- Fat Tire Amber Ale
- Sunshine Wheat
- Mothership Wit
- 1554 Black Ale
- Abbey
- Trippel
- Mighty Arrow

Tomorrow, April 18, we will have another in-store beer tasting from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m., featuring selections from our Beer of the Week, Widmer Brothers Brewing:

- Hefeweizen
- Drifter Pale Ale
- Drop Top Amber Ale

Monday, April 20, will mark the arrival of the highly anticipated Horizon Red Ale from Summit Brewery.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Submitted by Melissa Reeder, IT Director

The fiber optic workgroup met on Tuesday morning to discuss an aggressive schedule to prepare for anticipated federal stimulus grant money. The group also worked on the final editing for a RFI (Request For Information) that will be released to the public by the end of the week. The RFI is to identify a private partner interested in, and financially capable of partnering with the City to create a competitive fiber to the premise broadband network. Respondents have until May 1st to provide required information. Next week this workgroup will discuss financing options and partnership evaluation criteria.

IT has been working behind the scenes this week. Kurt Wolf flexed his hours to install a new rack of drives over the weekend. They will be used for the Tyler Incode data as well as our new Intranet site and GIS information. The drives are running quietly in the back room in anticipation for the formal cut over and go-live.

The fire department received a fax line this week. Their fax number is: 507-663-9329. One of the benefits of our new phone system is that IT can now program such things as fax lines, voice mail and auto attendants without additional technical support.

On Wednesday, Toshiba Business Solutions visited every city office location to inventory and monitor our laser printers. In an effort to contain costs, we are looking at laser printers, toner usage and resources. Research has proven that substantial savings can be realized by centralizing printing and using multifunction (print, copy & fax) systems. Results from this free service will be available in a couple months after the usage numbers are compiled.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Building

Submitted by John Brookins, Building Official

The Cannon Valley Veterinary Clinic addition and the Carleton College Residence Hall are on schedule. The Cannon Valley project is scheduled for partial occupancy on July 1, 2009. This will allow them to begin conducting business from the new office areas. The manufacturing portion of the building will not be completed until sometime in October of this year.

Carleton College project is scheduled to be completed sometime in August of this year.

The Building Official has been in communication with the design team for the Clinic addition. We should have plans for review in about two to three weeks.

We expect to see plans for the new Kentucky Fried Chicken Restaurant soon.

Community Development

Submitted by Brian O'Connell, Community Development Director

The Request for Proposal (RFP) for the Master Plan and Development Strategy was finalized this week and sent to 25 separate consultant companies seeking a proposal. The RFP was also posted on the League of Minnesota Cities web site for access to other companies who may be interested in providing this service to the EDA. The submittal deadline for proposals is May 29, 2009. The target date for a selection of a consultant or consultant team is June 29, 2009.

Staff is beginning the work to assist the Public Safety Center Task Force with the process of evaluating numerous sites as possible locations for a new Safety Center.

The work to conduct a hydrologic analysis of the construction of the Riverside Trail connection located within the flood way of the Cannon River has begun. The results of this effort should be available to staff in the next 3 to 4 weeks. Once staff reviews this information, the process of issuing a conditional use permit as set forth in the flood plain regulations of the city will begin.

Housing

Submitted by Michele Merxbauer, Housing Manager

Staff has been reviewing the Government websites pertaining to the stimulus money coming out of Washington DC. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA, or Recovery Grant) is the stimulus package that has several sub-components for a variety of funding opportunities, ranging from housing to social services to weatherization to transportation. Staff has been reviewing the information and noting any grant opportunities the City may qualify for. Funds received from this stimulus in a successful grant proposal will not be available until late 2009 or early 2010.

Staff has received and is processing four applications for first time homebuyers. It is a positive sign to see so many buyers actively looking at our local market. The decrease in housing prices may be disappointing for current homeowners, but also creates an environment for new buyers in the market. The current housing stock is varied by age, condition, price and type (single family or town home or condo, etc) so there is something in the local market for everyone.

Planning

Submitted by Dan Olson, City Planner

Staff attended the Bridgewater township board meeting on Tuesday to request that the Board sign a joint resolution to annex right-of-way along the southern boundary of the proposed business park (the northern half of this right-of-way was annexed in March, 2009). Staff also spent most of the week preparing staff reports for upcoming City Council meetings.

PUBLIC WORKS OPERATIONS

Facilities

Submitted by Bernie Shakal

This week work at the Senior Center included replacing water damaged ceiling tiles in the workout room. The damage was due to condensation from past exhaust fan problems. The office remodel at the Safety Center continues. The Chief's office should be completed by next week. The Liquor Store remodel continues. The OSHA mandated repairs are complete and the rest of the project should be finished by next week

Streets and Parks

Submitted by TJ Heinrich, Streets & Parks Supervisor

Spring street sweeping is nearing completion. Pothole repairs are ongoing. Spring park cleanup continues. Bridge Square will see spring planting next week with thanks sent to the Garden Club. The shade tree program closed this week. Sales were good. Planting will happen in the upcoming weeks. The City compost site saw a large amount of activity this week. Sechler Park & Babcock Park will be open by the end of the week. Staff assisted Facility staff with the repairs at the liquor store

Water

Submitted by Doug Lien, Water Superintendent

Water Operator Dean Huschle completed the yearly Consumer Confidence Report or sometimes called the Annual Water Quality Report. The report is an annual requirement of the Minnesota Department of Health and describes water chemistry and other monitoring that is done on the water system. In addition, the other purpose of the report is to advance consumer's understanding of drinking water and heighten awareness of the need to protect precious water resources. The report has been sent to the printers, and

when completed, will be distributed to all citizens of Northfield and the surrounding area. Additional copies will be available at City Hall or the Northfield Public Library.

Water Operator Jay Hall performed the semi annual intrusion alarm system inspection for all Water Division facilities as well as our monthly fire extinguisher and facilities inspections. Intrusion alarm inspections are performed every six months to help ensure the reliability of the alarm system that protects our water system and Water Division assets.

The meter shop ceiling is now complete, the taping and sanding of the ceiling was completed last Friday and the painting and texturing was completed on Monday. The next step will be to extend the heating system to the meter shop.

Wastewater

Submitted by Gerald Ness, Wastewater Systems Technician

The newly acquired Jet-Vac truck was prepared and put into service this week. This piece of equipment is used in the collection system to clean sewer main lines and manholes. As compared to the truck it replaced, the new one has increased water storage capacity and a larger debris box. This translates into more efficient operations by being able to work longer between trips to dump and time between tank fillings.

This week all the large pumps at the WWTP received annual performance inspections. Other than expected wear and tear, all pumps were within operational specifications. New pump control level floats were installed at the Ice Arena lift station.