Legislation Text

File #: 21-2261, **Version:** 1

Subject:
Plan Moving Forward with the Maud Robinson Trust for Sidewalks

BACKGROUND SUMMARY:
The Robinson Trust provided guidelines to the Town that were to be used to determine which projects are eligible for Robinson Trust funding.

The criteria:
- The potential project cannot already be funded by other funding sources.
- The potential project must not have sidewalk on either side.
- The funds can only be spent on sidewalks, not other substantial infrastructure; this led us to begin with sidewalks that already have curb and gutter.

The Department of Public Works (DPW) began to develop a list of eligible projects by a review of previously unfunded project requests as well as site visits, DPW compiled an initial list of 24 projects. The trustee of the Robinson Trust has indicated that these street projects are eligible for the Robinson funding summarized in the attached file entitled “Trust Fund Estimates”.

DPW ranked the projects using the Town’s Sidewalk Rating System that include elements such as safety, feasibility, GIS Heat Map (a suitability analysis that considers the geographic representation of the density of features), Road Classification, Traffic Volumes, Proximity to Metro, proximity to Transit, and proximity to school bus stops.

DPW prepared cost estimates for each project based upon an assumed cost per foot of sidewalk. Based on the cost estimates DPW believed that construction of all 24 projects would fully spend and fully utilize the funds provided by the Robinson Trust. Construction of these projects would provide 3.3 miles of new sidewalks and have a value (construction cost) of $10.6 million.

DPW divided the 24 projects into 3 groups based on the scoring system. The highest ranking projects generally became part of Group 1, followed by the next highest ranking designated to Group 2, etc. DPW conducted outreach with the homeowners whose properties are along the potential project streets.

DPW recommended design approval for the four projects included as part of group 1 at the February 20, 2020 Council Meeting. The four projects were Cabin Rd SE, Plum St SW, Desale St SW, and Holmes Dr NW. Cabin, Plum, and Holmes were authorized for design, and will be constructed this year (2021). The Desale St SW project did not have strong support- the Council recommended that more outreach be done.

DPW recommended design approval for six projects included as part of group 2 at the September 20, 2020 Council Meeting. The six projects were Cherry St SW, Tazewell Rd NW, Orrin St SE, Delano Dr SE, Melody Ln SW, and Melody Ln SE (from Lullaby Ln to the end of the street). The Council recommended that the Melody Ln SE project not be pursued, and recommended 5 projects be deferred pending additional public outreach.

DPW conducted outreach on the group 3 projects from November 2020 to March 2021. Four of the projects- Charles Cir SW, Branch Cir SE, Woodview Cir SW, and Circle Dr SE- are cul-de-sac streets with few homes on each street. Because construction of sidewalk in these small cul-de-sacs would not provide significant benefit to the Vienna sidewalk network, and because of a lack of support among these residents, DPW is not pursuing projects at these four locations.

A potential project along Hillcrest Dr SW will be brought to Council later this year- it is an important project for the Vienna sidewalk network; however, DPW will need to perform more outreach before making a recommendation regarding this project. At the April 26, 2021 Council Meeting, Council authorized DPW to initiate the design of the remaining 9 of 14 projects with the stipulation that DPW evaluate the specific recommendation (which side of the street) and obtain Council approval of more specifically defined project before advancing to the final design phase. These nine projects are Alma St SE, Birch St SW, Blackstone Ter NW, Charles St SE, Cherry Cir SW, Elmar Dr SW, Oak St SW, Symphony Cir SW, and Timber Ln.

In addition to the large projects above, staff is locating small segments of ‘missing link’ sidewalks on streets with existing curb and gutter that appear to be simple to construct with minimal to no design effort.

SUMMARY/STAFF IMPRESSIONS :
Of the original list of 24 projects outreach has been initiated on all 24 of the projects. Four have been authorized for design and are in final design, 9 projects have been authorized for design with the condition to obtain specific approval of the project before pursuing final design, four projects are not recommended by DPW, one project was not authorized for design (Melody Ln SE from Lullaby to the end of the street) and 6 projects require more outreach.

DPW is in the process of compiling a larger comprehensive list, including street segments submitted to DPW for consideration, to determine all street projects that are eligible for the Robinson funding criteria. So far, 6 streets have been requested to be added: Church Street NE, Ware Street SW, Glen Ave SW, Cottage Street SW, Frederick Street SW, and Adahi Road SE. DPW will use this comprehensive list to determine which streets can be added to additional list of streets.

There will be a total of four projects that will be constructed by the end of calendar year 2021: Cabin Road SE, Plum Street SW, Holmes Dr NE, and Pleasant Street SW. Pleasant Street SW was not a project on an initial list; however, it was shelved, shovel ready, from 2015 that had a 100% design, but Walk to Downton federal funding was depleted. Staff specifically requested, and received approval from the Trust, to construct this project.

PROPOSED DPW ACTION FOLLOWING COUNCIL MEETING OF APRIL 26, 2021

1. DPW will initiate the design of the nine projects utilizing On-call Engineering Services contract, RFP 19-01.

The nine projects:

- Even side of Alma Street SE from Delano Drive SE to Follin Lane SE
- Odd side of Birch Street SW from Battle Street SW to Plum Street SW
- Even side of Blackstone Terr. NW from Lawyers Rd NW to Holmes Dr NW
- Odd side of Charles Street SE from Locust Street SE to Branch Road SE
- Both sides of Cherry Circle SW from Cul-de-sac to Cottage St SW
- West side of Elmar Drive SE/SW from Park Street SE to Desale Street SW
- Odd side of Oak Street SW from Center Street S to Birch Street SW
- Both sides of Symphony Circle SW from Cul-de-sac to Melody Lane SW
- Odd side of Timber Lane SW from Tapawingo Rd SW to Harmony Dr SW

2. DPW will instruct the Engineer to perform topographic survey of both sides of the project streets, and to perform preliminary engineering.

3. Before the design advances beyond this preliminary engineering phase, DPW will evaluate each project to address concerns that were raised during the April 26, 2021 Council Meeting and to address comments received related to the projects. Additionally, DPW will provide analysis of the pros and cons that support the recommendation of each project. Factors to be considered for recommending that the new sidewalk be proposed on one side rather than the other side may include more favorable support from property owners, less impact on trees, less grading on private property, no constructability issues such as utility poles that cannot be designed around, connectivity to adjacent sidewalks, trails, schools, parks, shopping areas, or other destinations, and cost.

4. DPW will provide the project evaluations that support each project to the Council for approval before pursuing a final design of that project.

Staff is also preparing a project management strategy that will provide for an efficient roll-out of projects that will achieve an efficient 2022 construction season. The plan will be to group the recently approved projects, as well as upcoming projects, into manageable sizes and stagger the completion phases as shown in the attached document entitled “Graphic of 2021-22 Construction”. This is conceptual look at how the projects could be divided into four groups of approximate project values of $700,000 each, or about 2,300 lf each. The attached document entitled ”Projections for 2022 Construction” provides the project phases and necessary steps from project definition, design and construction.

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