



OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK

BIANCA L. TIRADO, CITY CLERK

PUBLIC WORKS & PROPERTY VACATION

FEBRUARY 26, 2024 4:00 P.M.

Committee Members Present:

Sheila Niezgodski, Karen L. White, Dr. Oliver Davis, Sherry Bolden-Simpson, Citizen Member Jason Piontek, and Citizen Member Carl Littrell

Committee Members Absent:

None.

Other Council Present:

Troy Warner, Canneth Lee, Ophelia Gooden-Rodgers, and Rachel Tomas Morgan

Other Council Absent:

Sharon L. McBride

Others Present:

Bianca L. Tirado, Elivet Quijada-Navarro, Danica Kulemeka, Victoria Stowell, Matthew Neal, Bob Palmer

Presenters:

Eric Horvath

Agenda:

Update – Council Curb/Sidewalk Allocation
| Grading of City Sidewalks

Please note the attached link for the meeting recording:

<http://docs.southbendin.gov/WebLink/browse.aspx?dbid=0&mediaid=380844>

Committee Chair Sheila Niezgodski called to order the Public Works and Property Vacation Committee meeting at 4:00 p.m.

Eric Horvath, Public Works Director, with offices on the 13th floor of the County-City Building, presented. Sidewalks are the responsibility of homeowners and businessowners, and the City has programs to assist homeowners and businessowners with curbs/sidewalks: the Council Allocation Program, the Curb & Sidewalk Reimbursement Program, and SRTS and other Federal Aid or Developmental Projects. Gemma Stanton will be sending out an email to Councilmembers on how to utilize the Geographic Information System (GIS) website. The goal is to have Councilmembers input curb/sidewalk repair requests directly into the GIS website. This is to be available year-round, but the total amount will be limited in each district depending on the amount of funding available. Gemma Stanton would be happy to sit-down and give a tutorial on inputting information

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Danica Kulemeka
CHIEF DEPUTY/ CHIEF OF STAFF

Elivet Quijada-Navarro
DEPUTY/ DIRECTOR OF POLICY

Matthew Neal
DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL PROJECTS

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on the GIS website. Another option for Councilmembers will be to email Gemma Stanton with their curb/sidewalk request with a subject line stating “Curb/Sidewalk Allocation Request.” The Council allocation for this year was set at two thousand feet (2,000 ft) for sidewalks and one thousand feet (1,000 ft) for curbs, or alternatively two thousand, five hundred feet (2,500 ft) for sidewalks. There is no guarantee that the feet allocations will be met because it has to be done with the one million six hundred thousand dollar (\$1,600,000) budget. Curbs/sidewalks that look to be good candidates that we cannot get to this year will be revisited next year. The priority is to serve low-income households in residential neighborhoods with sidewalks in poor or failed condition. Mr. Horvath stated that GIS shows the condition of sidewalks, and if Councilmembers feel as though the sidewalk is in worse condition than the website states, to go ahead and still report that request for review. There are two million, four hundred and seventy thousand, five hundred and thirty-one feet (2,470,531 ft) of sidewalk in poor or worse condition, and there are one million, two hundred and twenty-five thousand, two hundred and seventy-seven feet (1,225,277 ft) of sidewalk in fair or better condition. A sidewalk is considered to be in a poor condition if it is broken up and has trip hazards. A sidewalk in very poor condition is a little bit worse than a sidewalk in poor condition. A sidewalk in failed condition is nearly non-existent. It is estimated to cost between one hundred and sixty-three million dollars (\$163,000,000) and two hundred and twenty-three million dollars (\$223,000,000) to fix all of the sidewalks in poor or worse conditions.

Committee Member Dr. Oliver Davis asked what factorizations go into the allocation of funds.

Mr. Horvath stated that the allocation distributions are left to the Council’s discretion.

Committee Member Sherry Bolden-Simpson asked for clarification regarding GIS.

Mr. Horvath explained that GIS is the City’s Geographic Information System, and is a tool used to map the City’s assets (water, sewer, streets, sidewalks) and provide information regarding the assets.

Citizen Member Jason Piontek asked if the costs include root and tree removal if necessary.

Mr. Horvath stated that root and tree removal costs are built into the overall projection.

Committee Vice Chair Karen L. White asked if the one million six hundred thousand dollar (\$1,600,000) budget included the monies that were not committed under the American Rescue Plan.

Mr. Horvath stated that the one million six hundred thousand dollar (\$1,600,000) budget does include the monies that were not committed under the American Rescue Plan, and that the typical budget is seven hundred thousand dollars (\$700,000). Mr. Horvath also stated that new requests will be for next year’s allocation.

Committee Member Troy Warner asked for clarification on how many houses would be covered with two thousand feet (2,000 ft) of sidewalk.

Mr. Horvath said that the two thousand feet (2,000 ft) of sidewalk would cover about twenty (20) houses.

Committee Member Troy Warner stated his appreciation for the GIS tool.

Committee Member Canneth Lee thanked Mr. Horvath for his presentation, and asked what could be done to get more funding for curbs and sidewalks.



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Mr. Horvath stated that he would like to look at other cities to see what sources they use for sidewalk allocations, and noted the possibility of utilizing Barrett's Law or filing liens on homes.

Committee Member Lee asked if this program could ever evolve into including speedbumps as well as curbs and sidewalks.

Mr. Horvath stated appreciation for Councilmembers' knowledge and prioritization of the concerns of residents, but stated that there is a limitation to what the City can afford, and that safety concerns are prioritized when deciding future improvements.

Committee Member Lee shared an anecdote where a resident was able to get their sidewalk repaired so that their kids could now ride their bikes safely in front of their home.

Councilmember Rachel Tomas Morgan stated appreciation for the GIS tool, and asked if Councilmembers could be given a list of the most serious and failing streets.

Mr. Horvath stated that they can give a list of the most serious and failing streets to any Councilmember that chooses to reach out.

Committee Member Dr. Davis asked if there is a list of all of the sidewalks the city has done since the beginning of this program.

Mr. Horvath stated that the allocation program started in 2014 and should all be on the GIS website. Mr. Horvath stated that he can compile a list of the sidewalks already completed

Committee Chair Niezgodski adjourned the Public Works & Property Vacation Committee meeting at 4:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sheila Niezgodski".

Sheila Niezgodski, Committee Chair

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Auxiliary Aid or Other Services may be Available upon Request at No Charge.
Please give Reasonable Advance Request when Poss