

ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE
CONDITIONS, CHALLENGES, UNCERTAIN FUTURE
CITY OF WOODCREEK
December 11, 2019

Background

In April 2019, upon the resignation of Council Member Judy Brizendine, Aurora LeBrun assumed leadership of the Roads Advisory Workgroup. Council Member Brizendine had done some preliminary work, including proposing to divide the City into quadrants and seeking 2 volunteers per quadrant to become members of the Roads Advisory Workgroup and assist Council in evaluating the condition of City streets and making recommendations for improvements, repairs, or replacement.

Council Member Eric Eskelund, appointed by Council to fill the remainder of Council Member Brizendine's term, joined Aurora LeBrun on the oversight of the workgroup and project. City Manager Brenton Lewis, Public Works Director Frank Wood, and the Consulting Engineer completed the City team.

In addition to the citizen volunteers, a member of the Planning & Zoning Commission, Jack Boze, joined the group.

Planning

Aurora LeBrun called some of the citizens suggested by former Council Member Brizendine and recruited other citizens, focusing on individuals with backgrounds in engineering, construction, architecture, and public works. Prior to the first meeting of the workgroup, Council received a report on group composition, purpose, and strategy on April 10, 2019.

The following citizens composed the Advisory Workgroup: Bill Tomlinson, Gerald "JJ" Schwettman IV, Roger Adlesperger, Rogers Holt, Jason Donaldson, Charles Vann, and John Epley.

A planning meeting was held on April 15, which included both Council Members and City Staff. The meeting focused on reviewing Council priorities for repairs/replacement, reviewing budget available for fiscal year 2019, and discussing short and long term strategies based on the priorities set forth on the 2030 Master Plan Update. The planning group also agreed on workgroup composition, tasks, date of first meeting, and immediate tasks to be assigned.

Execution

At the first meeting, the purpose of the workgroup was established; the 2030 Master Plan Updates and council priorities were reviewed, as well as budget, before arriving to consensus as to most important and critical needs.

It was agreed the work would begin with on-site assessments of all roads in the City, with the exception of Brookhollow Drive which was rebuilt in 2018. The consulting engineer would assist with the design of charts to collect information on each street, as well as compiling results of the on-site reviews.

Roads would be evaluated on a scale of 1-5, with 5 being good, on the following criteria: condition, safety, site obstructions, drainage, width, potholes, surface cracks, and alligator cracks. Under these criteria, roads with the lowest rating would be considered priority for repair or replacement.

Assessments were completed and reviewed by the workgroup on June 3, 2019. The assessments were given to the consulting engineer to compile and provide recommendations on roads to be considered first for repair or replacement.

On July 2, the workgroup met to receive the priority assessment which included five roads: Woodcreek Drive, Augusta Drive, Champions Circle, Jack Miller, and Brookside Drive. The workgroup agreed to request a formal assessment summary, including a preliminary cost for each road, from the consulting engineer. It was noted that the results of the on-site assessments resulted in a different listing than the one approved by Council in December 2018. In some cases, the repairs undertaken by the City in the spring 2019 had improved some of the roads previously listed while the five in the on-site assessment continued to show major issues. These findings were presented to Council through the monthly report process. Table below shows the differences between Council Approved Priorities and Assessment Results Priorities.

December 12, 2018 Council Approved	Assessment Results – July 2019
Wildwood	
Brookside	Brookside
Jack Miller	Jack Miller
Brookmeadow	
	Woodcreek Drive
	Augusta Drive
	Champions Circle

On July 30, the assessment summary was presented and considered against a potential \$400,000 ceiling. Three options were presented: Chip Seal Overlay, Hot Mix Asphalt, and 18” ribbon curbs. The workgroup considered all options against costs and durability and voted for Hot Mix Asphalt without ribbon curbs. Preliminary costs for the three collector roads far exceeded the

ceiling; costs for the two non-collector roads were below the ceiling but considered to be understated, especially for Brookside Drive.

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The table below shows the assessment summary preliminary costs. Roads are listed in order of priority for repair based on assessment ratings:

Road Name	Length (LF)	Width(LF)	Preliminary Cost
Augusta Drive	6,000	17	\$595,702
Woodcreek Drive	5,200	24	\$846,876
Champions Circle	6,300	17	\$470,174
Brookside	1,000	15	\$85,185
Jack Miller	650	14	\$39,949

Financial Options and Considerations

Council continued to receive monthly reports and, in addition, Council Members were briefed on costs during the summer 2019 budget discussions.

On July 30, 2019, a meeting of the Advisory Workgroup was held. This meeting had five objectives:

1. Final evaluation of immediate and future needs for City streets
2. Weigh identified needs against Council established priorities
3. Develop a plan of action and strategy to meet these needs
4. (If a contract were to be awarded). Assist in the decision-making process to award contracts for major repairs or replacement.
5. (If a contract were to be awarded). Assist in evaluating results of work performed.

Financing options were also discussed, including the potential extension of current tax notes to finance the rebuilding of Augusta Drive. It was agreed Council Members LeBrun and Eskelund would present the findings and recommendations to Council, and City Manager Lewis would present options for financing the project.

Council was briefed as part of the budget workshop on August 7, 2019. There was lack of consensus as to financial options for the project, and it was clear from the discussion that Council would not consider an extension of the tax notes without a formal process to gather citizen input. Based on these discussions and the availability of funds for fiscal year 2019-2010, reconstruction of Augusta Drive may not be an option.

The Advisory Workgroup was called to a meeting on August 20, 2019 and was informed that funds would not be allocated in the new budget to reconstruct Augusta Drive. Workgroup members were informed that options were being explored to:

- Consider funding one of the smaller projects within the funds available in the new budget
- Review options to seek citizens' input and approval to extend the tax notes - under this option Council Members LeBrun and Eskelund agreed to seek legal advice as to available options. If these funds were approved it would increase the term for interest rates attached to the tax notes.

Current Status

As part of the reporting process, Council was briefed on status of the road improvements project at the September 11, 2019 meeting. It was agreed Council would receive a report summarizing the project, current status, and options available at the October Council Meeting. The report was part of the agenda but was not presented due to the October Council Meeting being cancelled. It was agreed the report would be shared with the Roads Advisory Workgroup for comment. This was done on November 8, 2019. At this meeting discussion led to some changes to the "Future Steps – Decision to be Made" section of the report. It was agreed the changes would be made in time for the report to be presented to Council at the December 2019 regular meeting. This report meets that agreement and presents the following status:

- \$200,000 has been approved for road repairs and upgrades for the new budget. \$50,000 from operating funds would go to repairs and \$150,000 from capital funds for upgrades.
- These funds are insufficient to address the needs of Augusta Drive or the other collector roads identified as priority for repairs (Woodcreek Drive and Champions Circle).
- These funds may be sufficient to improve Brookside Drive, which, although not a collector road, received the lowest ratings and highest priority for repair.
- These funds may be sufficient to address other needs within the City infrastructure. These options will be part of the recommendations made to Council at the December 2019 meeting.

Future Steps – Options to Consider – (more than one may be considered)

- Proceed with one of the smaller projects or
- Install traffic calming devices to meet the anticipated increased traffic due to completion of school on Winters Mill Parkway. Workgroup recommends to
 - Postpone this action until sufficient data is collected. Specifically, complete purchase and installation of metering devices approved by Council and collect data before and after school opening before making a decision as to install traffic calming devices and
 - Obtain valid traffic counts from the County for specific streets. Collect and analyze data before and after school opening before making a decision to install traffic calming devices and
 - Once the data is compiled, call a town hall meeting to review results with citizens and receive citizens' input on desirability of traffic calming devices.

- If Council agrees with the analysis and determination of the citywide assessment summary and wishes to proceed with major improvements to one collector road, decide on whether to call a special election in May 2020 to seek citizens' input on extension of the tax notes.
- In addition to these options, the Workgroup recommends that, independent of other decisions, the City proceed with review of repair needs and work with Hays County to complete repairs in early 2020.

Recommendation

- Place the item of road upgrades on the December 2019 Council Agenda and seek decision on items listed under "Future Steps – Options to Consider." The recommendations of the Road Advisory Workgroup will be included in this consideration.

Conclusion

Roads repairs and upgrades have been postponed for a number of years. Significant funds were spent improving Brookhollow Drive. Considerable repairs were made to City streets in the spring of 2019, but these do not address the major issues identified for the five priority roads.

Reserves are available to address the serious deficiencies on Augusta Drive. Protecting reserves is judicious and good policy, but at this time we need to weigh the continued deterioration of our streets, and the effect such can have on property values versus maintaining reserves at their current levels.

Respectfully submitted,

Aurora F. LeBrun