

CITY OF SULTAN COUNCIL WORKSHOP – May 4, 2023

Mayor Wiita called the regular meeting to order at approximately 7:00 p.m. The meeting was a hybrid with attendees both in person at City Hall Council Chambers and via Zoom Internet Conference Service. Mayor Wiita announced that zoom video was malfunctioning so zoom attendees would have audio only. Mayor Wiita called roll and the following were in attendance:

Councilmembers: Morgan, Aldrich, Dearborn, Hund, Dawson, Sivewright, and Beeler.

Staff: City Administrator Ibershof, Public Works Director Morgan, and City Clerk Pevey.

CHANGES/ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA

None noted.

DISCUSSION

AB23-24_6 Year Transportation Plan and Capital Improvement Plans

Public Works Director Morgan discussed the goals of discussion regarding the city's transportation plan and capital improvement plan included a brief overview of projects within each fund, how projects are selected; how funding for these projects work; projects council would like to focus on; and projects that should be added to the list.

The transportation improvement plan included, but was not limited to, three key areas: US 2 improvements; sidewalk and maintenance program; and a potential East West Arterial Connector. Discussion amongst the council began with Public Works Director Morgan asking council if they wanted to leave the east west arterial connector in plans but push it further out or remove it altogether.

Council discussion on various elements to include, but not limited to the following topics:

- Sidewalk/Non-Motorized Trails:
 - Upgrades could be made on Sultan Basin Road and non-motorized trails to include upgrades to the evacuation trail as well as new non-motorized trails that could be implemented both north and south as well as east and west.
 - Public Works Director Morgan discussed the TAPS grant program as a possible funding source for future non-motorized projects.
 - Parks and recreation plan (PROS) focused on trails already built into HOA's and review of the city taking control of those areas and maintaining them to incorporate them as part of the discussion currently in place regarding parks levy that would create a dedicated parks department.
 - The section of Sultan Basin Road between the city limits and 124th noted as unincorporated county and concerns that are impacted by development on 124th. Staff confirmed they are in conversations with the county regarding reclassifying this road to make it eligible for funding.
- Street Repair and maintenance:
 - Discussion on funding and challenges facing the public works department. Public Works Director Morgan confirmed that money is budgeted every year, but the city will eventually need to find funding for a true chip seal repair program. Sentiment shared by all the concern that the city will keep falling behind in repairs and maintenance and confirmation that the City needs to find a more sustainable way to keep up on the maintenance. City staff are working with TSI to federally classify roads due to urban classification. Confirmation that once arterial road classification is completed, it will make sense to review the projects for larger repairs and add them to the list. The discussion confirmed the biggest challenge is funding and that there are only a handful of roads that qualify for grant funding assistance.

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- All council members agreed to remove the east west connector from the plans at this time until US 2 issues are properly addressed.
- Confirmation to push 3rd Street out to 2029.
- Continued discussion on grant funding timelines and that if grant funding is located earlier than the city anticipated on a project, the city doesn't have to wait for the year it was suggested.
- Bus routes discussed both with staff ensuring they are maintaining the current school and city bus routes and working with Community Transit (CT) to incorporate routes on the Sultan Basin Road as there are currently no community bus routes in that area. Staff confirmed they have ongoing discussions with CT on additional routes.

Conversation shifted to water system improvements to include but not limited to:

- Annual water main replacement, transmission line replacement, and side street replacements.
- Confirmation the water treatment plant upgrade is planned to start in 2023 estimated at \$11 million dollars; with a loan subsidy of 85% from the Department of Ecology due to the low interest loan the city received for the project.
- Staff confirmed once the plant upgrade is completed the focus will shift to upgrades to the transmission lines running from the water dam to the plant.
- Discussion on possibly pulling projects forward once the cost of the water plant project funding is confirmed and the project is moving forward. Staff explained the Finance Director has prepared a budget model to show how the water plant upgrade funding will affect the budget moving forward.
- Discussion shifted to utility rates and questioned if project inflationary costs were considered for ongoing years. Staff confirmed engineer consultants have software models that are currently based on the 2017 costs but will be updated as the water project kicks off and that the water systems plan is updated every 10 years and is anticipated to be reviewed in 2026.

Discussion on sewer system improvements included, but were not limited to:

- Wastewater Treatment Plant improvements, annual sewer line improvements/replacement, and upsizing key parts of the system.
- Staff confirmed the city obtained a \$2 million dollar loan for plant improvements as well as the budget each year includes a small annual budget funding projects to be able to wrap street improvements into sewer upgrade projects or emergency repairs that are required.
- Confirmation that Congresswoman Schrier and Congresswoman DelBene office's included funds in the state infrastructure bill that allowed the city to obtain a loan for sewer plant improvements and city staff are working through the paperwork process before the funding can be secured.
- Discussion on "I&I" stands for inflow and infiltration but are currently listed as a placeholder project for now in case water does seep into the pipe and an area is identified that needs to be repaired.

Discussion on stormwater capital improvements included, but not limited to:

- Culverts, replacements with larger box culverts, storm water plan, and resolving standing water in certain areas.
- Confirmation that the current utility rate study revealed a necessary increase to rates to make the fund self-sustaining and handle future improvements. Public Works Director Morgan confirmed that no improvement projects were planned in the stormwater utility until 2027.

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- Councilmember Beeler expressed his interest in the city taking over maintenance of stormwater retention ponds from HOA's and expressed his concerns that they are not being maintained and unsure if homeowners even know how to maintain them. Requesting a study of what that would cost. Councilmember Hund confirmed in agreement but feels it will be an uphill battle to convince the public.
 - Council and staff confirmed education was needed and discussion on adding informational content to the city website as well as creating brochures staff could present at HOA meetings might help potentially subside damage down the road.
 - All in agreement the feeling is not if, but when the city will need to take over maintenance and ownership of all stormwater retention ponds within the city limits and felt education will help lessen the financial hit to the city.
 - Discussion on exploring ways to potentially kick start projects in this arena sooner rather than later and confirmed it would take resources in the city budget outside of the stormwater fund to perform a full analysis during the stormwater systems plan update. Confirmation they shouldn't commit to anything without a full picture of the situation.

Building capital improvements discussion included but was not limited to the following:

- city hall expansion, replacements of HVAC systems, and general building maintenance. Confirmation these were all funded through the general fund and is the reason there aren't as many projects in 2023 as the budget determines how many projects can be added.
- Confirmation from staff they feel the number one priority is roof repairs/replacement on city owned buildings.
- Staff confirmed some of the projects were added to ARPA fund projects and council suggested those projects be identified as such on the plan.
- Suggestion of city owned property at 401 Alder that was recently purchased, and staff requested input from council on the direction they wanted to go with this property and that would confirm how it would be incorporated into the plans.
- Discussion on potential future property investments the city might be interested in includes upgrades at current city owned sites as well as new areas of interest. Confirmation the city historically doesn't set aside money for property purchases, but when property comes of interest pertinent to their potential use, the budget is reviewed for the potential purchase at that time.

Park improvements discussion included, but not limited to:

- Staff confirmed they are close to the full design of the Sultan Basin area park and will utilize most of the funds currently budgeted.
- Staff are currently reviewing expanding sports fields and ball fields as demand has increased exponentially coming out of the covid pandemic.
- Confirmation that various park structures to include benches and garbage cans are old and need to be upgraded.
- Discussion focused on clarification regarding which projects would need to be city budgeted versus those that potentially could be grant funded.
- Confirmation from council that park lighting improvements was considered a priority by the public they interact with.
- Discussion on volunteer efforts that could be utilized, and staff confirmed would need to research to confirm laws to include liabilities, risk, and other factors before moving forward. Director Morgan confirmed many projects are done in house as many members of staff are very handy and knowledgeable; but will research possible volunteer involvement.

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Equipment improvements discussed included, but not limited to:

- The rotary mower will be removed as is not planned to be replaced.
- Staff confirmed they are working to get to a point where the equipment replacement schedule is spread out farther than is currently suggested as city has done a good job replacing and updating equipment to ensure its lifespan as well as reviewing multi use equipment versus one off items.
- Staff confirmed they would like to add the bucket truck to the equipment replacement fund as well as other equipment not purchased via the Enterprise vehicle lease program.
- Staff confirmed they are also seeking ways to expand the lifespan of equipment and were able to repair and repaint the trailers to be able to extend their usable life.
- Discussion acknowledged the state’s aggressive plan to implement electric vehicles and equipment and discussion shifted to if electric vehicle program was being considered as vehicles were exchanged via the enterprise program. Staff confirmed the lease program does offer, but currently has been cancelled and switched to gas, but will continue to review options as vehicles transition.
- Staff confirmed they are also reviewing charging station locations at public facilities and council confirmed they would like that added to the plan for grant opportunities and discussion of requirements to be included in the plan and the infrastructure moving forward.

AB23-20_Parks & Recreation Levy

Timeline reviewed before potentially bringing to voters in February 2024 which includes open houses in July and August of 2023, with public outreach the next step in the process. Confirmation that staff are currently taking pictures to start preparing for outreach as well as working on locating a local group that would be interested in promoting the levy. If interested and approved, the city would allocate resources in a future budget. Council in agreement to move forward as suggested.

Suggestion of reader board on highway to promote the meetings, which led to a brief discussion on the city potentially reviewing the potential of a reader board purchase in the future to add to the planned large poster board displays at various public areas as well as social media postings and QR code opportunities.

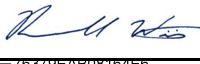
PUBLIC COMMENT

Brandon, Seattle – addressed council discussion regarding funding source monikers unknown to the public such as TAPS and ARPA; addressed council comment about paving in parks and in favor of accessibility and low maintenance but enjoy walking the trails not paved so hopes for a balance.

Mayor Wiita explained ARPA stood for the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, also called the Covid-19 Stimulus Package, and gave a brief overview of what the money was intended for. Public Works Director Morgan explained TAPS stood for the Transportation Alternatives Program, that was a Federal Highway Administration program and provided example projects this program assisted cities with funding for.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion by Councilmember Morgan, seconded by Councilmember Aldrich, the meeting ended at approximately 8:36 pm. The Zoom meeting connection was disconnected shortly thereafter.



Russell Wiita, Mayor

DocuSigned by:


Tami J. Pevey, City Clerk