

## **Village Council Questions from 6/28/11 LRFP Meeting**

### **Streets**

*Is there sufficient budget to maintain the streets that will be annexed?*

Yes, there is sufficient budget to maintain the streets to be annexed. There is a small amount of streets that will be annexed. These streets appear to be in good to fair condition. Upon annexation they will be added to the Village's preventative maintenance system.

*How would the maintenance schedule/costs change if we try to prevent streets from falling into the 'poor' category?*

Staff estimates that our annual maintenance expenditures would need to be increased by approximately \$1.7 million to approximately \$6.9 million dollars to prevent streets from falling into the poor category.

*Does the \$25 million cost estimate for street reconstruction include more aspect of streets than just the street itself?*

The \$25 million cost estimate generally includes the removal and replacement of curbs and gutters, pavement, affected driveway aprons, and some drainage structures. Traffic calming and stormwater best management practices could be incorporated where appropriate and cost effective. Inclusion of additional features could increase the cost of reconstruction. Companion projects, such as water main replacements and storm sewer replacements will be coordinated and will have their own sources of funding identified.

*Are there other sources of funding?*

Yes. Grant funding may be available for street reconstruction. Staff continues to apply for various federal and state grants for roadway maintenance and reconstruction.

*Are there options to shift the cost of street maintenance? Are there strategies for reducing the lane miles that we maintain?*

This is an idea that would be explored further. In some locations the Village may consider a strategy of transferring the jurisdiction of some roadway sections to other government entities. An example of this might include the section of Finley road, north of Butterfield Road, which is maintained by the Village. This would involve a considerable amount of time talking with other agencies that may be reluctant to take on additional maintenance costs and responsibilities unless there were compelling reasons to do so. Other funding options that could be considered include the establishment of Special Service Areas, to pay for improvements such as curbs and gutter, sidewalks, etc., that provide a private benefit to property owners, as well as fees paid when new construction negatively impacts the condition of streets.

*What would be strategies that could extend the life of the road?*

The life expectancy of roads could be increased by using improved paving materials and practices and reducing the amount of traffic on Village-owned streets. The overall quality of asphalt has been declining industry-wide in recent years, as more of the crude is being refined into fuel and other petroleum products. Staff continues to research and implement new technologies into our pavement maintenance procedures where it is deemed that they

will add value or extend the life of the pavement. Staff has incorporated recycled asphalt, and most recently recycled asphalt shingles, into our pavement design. This not only reduces the cost of the asphalt, but hopefully extends its life and improves the sustainability of asphalt pavement. This makes extending pavement life more challenging. Staff will continue to monitor new technologies and products and will implement them as deemed prudent. The Village could reduce the amount of traffic on Village-owned streets by encouraging drivers to use major arterials owned by the State and County and discouraging drivers to use local streets owned by the Village.

*Are there any plans to improve Washington Street in the Downtown TIF?*

Washington Street from Burlington to Maple is located within the Downtown TIF area. The intention was to reconstruct this section of Washington Street, including the same streetscape design that was done in the other areas of the downtown, using money from the Downtown TIF fund. Due to uncertainty about the final road alignment and financial constraints in the Downtown TIF fund, this work was not completed with the earlier downtown street construction. The street has continued to deteriorate and staff is recommending that it be resurfaced with the street maintenance program in 2012.

*What is the status of the 'open cut' policy?*

Currently the Village requires that water and sewer services are bored under the pavement to the extent possible. Often, the sanitary sewer mains are located in the middle of the street, making this difficult. In these cases, staff permits the open cut of a street. Staff is reviewing the policy and associated fees, and will provide the Council with options for modifications to the policy.

### **Stormwater**

*How much of the stormwater system is undersized?*

A significant portion of the Village's stormwater management system, at least 50%, was constructed prior to the current standards. Current design standards are based on the following concepts:

- storm sewers - sized to handle smaller, more frequent rains
- overflow routes - between and behind homes, sized to handle the runoff that storm sewers cannot, consists of swales and ditches
- detention facilities – temporarily holds stormwater and releases it at a controlled rate

Overflow routes and detention facilities require a significant amount of land and are difficult to retrofit into established communities without significant impact and cost.

*How long will bank stabilization last? Are there maintenance costs budgeted?*

The longevity of bank stabilization varies greatly depending on factors that include the frequency and magnitude of erosive velocities that are experienced, and the type of stabilization that is used. Timber products that were typically used in the past had a life of 10 to 20 years in most locations. The concrete block stabilization like we recently used at Lacey Creek in Orchard Brook can have a life as much as 50 years. The more naturalized streambank stabilization strategies are also expected to have a longer life when they are designed properly and there are not major changes to the channel flow. The maintenance

costs for channels will be reviewed and included with the Stormwater Utility study which is currently underway.

*Are we using the entire cost share budget? Should we increase funding?*

In 2010, approximately half of the \$100,000 budgeted for cost-share projects was utilized and we are on track for a similar outcome in 2011. Staff is reviewing the cost-share policy to determine if there are changes that could be made that would increase the participation by residents in this program.

*Which of the High Priority Projects identified in the WIIP have been completed? Which High Priority Projects have not been completed?*

To date, the following High Priority Projects have been completed or are under construction:

- Watershed Improvements – LA-G (Lacey Creek Retaining Wall Replacement) - Phase I
- Parrish Court Drainage Improvements (LA-D)
- Storm Sewer Improvements – Carpenter St. (59<sup>th</sup> to 63rd)
- Storm Sewer Replacement – Venard & Acorn (LA-G)
- Storm Sewer Replacement – Barneswood (Saratoga-Highland) (LA-G)
- Storm Sewer Improvements – Dunham Place (PR-E)
- Watershed Improvements – SJN-C (includes Sterling North) Phase I Only
- Watershed Improvements – PR-B (includes McCollum Park)
- Watershed Improvements – SJS-J (2<sup>nd</sup> & Cumnor area)
- Watershed Improvements – SJN-E (includes Washington Pk.)
- Maple and Carpenter Storm Sewer Replacement
- St. Joseph Ck. Dredging - Mackie to Carpenter
- Storm Sewer Repairs - Fairmount from 62nd to 65<sup>th</sup>
- Watershed Improvements – SJN-J (Benton Ave.)
- Watershed Improvements – SJS-I (8<sup>th</sup> & Victor)
- Watershed Improvements – PR-B (D.G. Estates) Design Only
- Watershed Improvements – PR-C (D.G. Estates) Design Only

The following high-priority projects are not planned to be completed at this time due to a high cost-benefit ratio: Lacey Sub E (40<sup>th</sup> and Glendenning/40<sup>th</sup> and Washington), Prentiss Sub F (Hobson Triangle), and Brook and Centre.

*Is there a rating system for the stormwater system? Do we have a curve similar to the street maintenance/degradation curve?*

The pavement rating system and curve are very specific for streets, based upon their physical deterioration over time. Staff is not aware of stormwater system rating system similar to the street rating system.

*What are the maintenance costs for new stormwater projects?*

The maintenance costs associated with new stormwater projects varies greatly depending upon the type of project, which might be a storm sewer, a detention basin or a channel. These ongoing costs will be assessed as part of the Stormwater Utility study currently underway.

*Are there grants available?*

There may be grants available. Staff continues to identify and apply for grants where applicable.

*Are there issues associated with streams located on private property?*

Yes. There are issues associated with obtaining rights to enter and work on private property and addressing the private property owners' expectations of design and construction. Obtaining rights to enter and work on private property requires time working with property owners who can be difficult to reach and may not be inclined to grant this request. Staff also has to coordinate with each property owner involved so that the project is consistent and well designed, and takes into account their preferences for types of stabilization and landscaping, as they typically will then maintain the channel once the project is complete.

*What is the status the stormwater atlas? When will it be completed?*

Staff anticipates that the mapping of the storm sewer system will be completed by 2012 at our current resource level.

*What are the benefits of streambank stabilization?*

Streambank stabilization can reduce erosion and siltation of the creeks, which allows them to function more efficiently transporting water downstream. Sustainable stabilization methods can help increase water quality and improve habitat for plants, birds, animals and fish.

*Are we just stabilizing the creeks or also adding storage, etc?*

Where possible, we try to include additional storage or conveyance in these projects; however, this typically requires additional land which may or may not be available.

*How do we communicate that medium priority projects will not be completed?*

Since 2008, the Village has been indicating that only the High Priority projects will be funded. At this time staff is communicating this to specific residents when they inquire about the status of particular projects.

*What's the dollar value of the medium priority projects?*

The cost estimate for Medium Priority projects included in the WIIP was \$135 million.

### **Sidewalks**

*Are we looking for gaps in the system?*

Yes. Gaps in the sidewalk system have been identified, are being reviewed by staff and information about them will be included in the next review of the sidewalk matrix.

*Are there alternate designs for sidewalks?*

In general, concrete sidewalks provide the most level walking surface (an ADA consideration) and the longest lifespan. Alternate methods of construction can be researched where specific circumstances may dictate the use of different materials, widths, construction methods, etc.

*What is the maintenance plan for sidewalks?*

Currently the Village removes and replaces sidewalks on an as-needed basis. In 2011 we began saw-cutting trip hazards that occur in otherwise satisfactory sections of sidewalk. This will allow us to stretch our sidewalk maintenance dollars, while also providing a higher level of service.

*How will the 'complete streets' initiative affect us?*

The complete streets initiative involves including bicyclists and pedestrians into our transportation system. The Village has been proactive in both regards and at this time we do not see this as a significant change to the way we do business.

*What is the practice of updating the sidewalk matrix?*

The sidewalk matrix is updated approximately every two years and is approved by the Village Council with a recommendation from the Transportation and Parking Commission. In addition to the criteria that has been used for many years, staff takes into consideration any known construction projects that could impact the timing of new sidewalk construction, as well as the previously established priority criteria for each sidewalk segment.

*What is the status of the 'payment in lieu' program? Is there any money left?*

This program is used when development or redevelopment occurs and it is not feasible or appropriate at the time to construct public sidewalks. Revenue from this program has declined from \$100,000 in 2007 to \$11,500 received in 2010. This revenue source is budgeted and used each year for the sidewalk program.

*Please provide additional information on the remaining 9 miles of sidewalk matrix. How many miles fall into the other category of expenses? How many are unique projects category?*

There are 6.7 miles of public sidewalk miles left to be constructed in the matrix, and an additional 2.3 miles in the "unique projects" category.

## **Traffic**

*What is the expected lifespan for an opticom?*

Opticom equipment typically lasts about 5 years.

*Where does traffic calming fit in? Do we have a budget for those?*

Funding is currently not included in the CIP for traffic calming projects. This year we completed our first Neighborhood Traffic Study and are assessing the benefits and costs of this neighborhood approach to traffic. Staff will review how we can best incorporate traffic calming techniques into reconstruction projects. Traffic calming improvements have been identified as a "C" level priority.

*How are we using temporary speed humps?*

Compared to past years we have received a relatively small number of requests from residents to address concerns about speeding and traffic volumes. In these cases staff has held neighborhood meetings, performed speed and traffic counts, installed additional

regulatory and warning signs. Staff has not installed temporary speed humps, which is a very labor intensive activity.

*Are we using/considering solar powered traffic signs to show vehicle speed?*

Yes. The Village owns four solar powered radar feedback signs that were purchased with grant funding from the Safe Walk to School Program. These signs are used in pairs, during the non-winter months, in problem locations. Staff has requested funding again for more feedback signs through this program, and is considering purchasing more with available funds if we are not successful with grant funding.

*Are we considering pedestrian countdown clocks in crosswalks?*

Yes. The Village applied for, but did not receive, a grant to install these in the downtown area. Staff will continue to review the benefits of this type of technology.

*Is traffic calming built into street maintenance/reconstruction cost? What is the incremental cost to include it?*

Traffic calming costs are not included in the street maintenance and reconstruction costs. In many cases traffic calming could be included in reconstruction projects with minimal additional cost. More information will be provided as we proceed with project design. The street maintenance budget does not include sufficient funding to provide for traffic calming with this work.

*Are we aware/planning for the changes at Downers Grove North High School?*

Yes, we are working with District 99 staff and their consultant to review traffic changes that will occur as a result of their proposed work. The District is currently conducting a traffic study which we will review and use to identify any concerns or opportunities that may present themselves.

## **Debt Service**

*How are the debt service revenues performing?*

The Village has outstanding debt service payments for downtown TIF improvements, Fairview Avenue, water AMR system, Fire Station 2 and stormwater improvements. The revenue sources pledged to pay for the Fairview Avenue, water AMR system, Fire Station 2 and stormwater improvements debt service payments are all sufficient to cover the future payments. As discussed at the May 24, 2011 LRFP meeting, the increment from the Downtown TIF district and Parking Fund revenues are not expected to cover the future debt service payments. Other sources of revenue may be required.

*Can we phase in debt service?*

Yes. The Village could phase in debt service payments by issuing multiple bonds or by structuring bond payments that are lower in the early years than in later years. Multiple bond issues (i.e., on an annual basis) are not cost-effective as issuance costs are required for each issuance. Another approach could be to structure debt service payments to have larger amounts of principal paid in later years (i.e., after existing bonds are repaid) to keep debt

service payments down in the early years. This increases the cost of the debt service as the total interest paid on the bond is higher for bonds structured in this manner.

*How do we define debt capacity levels (low, medium, high)?*

Three of the main criteria S&P uses to determine debt capacity are:

- Annual Debt Payments
- Debt per Capita
- Debt per EAV

*What are the bond ratings of other communities?*

Following is a chart of nearby communities rated by S&P:

**Standard & Poor's General Obligation Ratings of Illinois Local Governments as of  
5/1/2011**

<b>Obligor</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Outlook</b>
Addison Vill	AA+	STABLE
Bensenville Village	A+	STABLE
Bloomington Vill	AA	STABLE
Downers Grove Vill	AA+	STABLE
Elmhurst	AA+	STABLE
Hanover Pk	AA	STABLE
Hinsdale	AAA	STABLE
Itasca Vill	AA+	STABLE
Lakewood Vill	AAA	STABLE
Lombard Vill	AA	NEGATIVE
Naperville	AAA	STABLE
Oakbrook Terrace	AA	STABLE
Roselle Vill	AA+	STABLE
Villa Pk Vill	AA	STABLE
West Chicago	AA+	STABLE
Yorkville	A	STABLE