

**City of West St. Paul
Open Council Work Session Minutes
January 25, 2021**

1. Call to Order

Mayor Napier called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Present: Mayor Dave Napier
Councilmembers Wendy Berry, Julie Eastman, Lisa Eng-Sarne,
Robyn Gulley, John Justen, and Dick Vitelli

Absent: None

Also Present: City Manager Ryan Schroeder
City Attorney Kori Land
Police Chief Brian Sturgeon
Finance Director Char Stark
Parks & Public Works Director/City Engineer Ross Beckwith
City Clerk Shirley Buecksler

Marcus Bush, Principal Engineer, Metropolitan Council
Kyle Colvin, Metropolitan Council

3. Review and Approve the OCWS Agenda

Motion was made by Councilmember Vitelli and seconded by Councilmember Justen to add Item 5F, Call Meeting of the Public Safety Committee, and approve the OCWS agenda, as amended.

Vote: 6 ayes / 0 nays. Motion carried.

4. Review the Regular Meeting Consent Agenda

Council reviewed and approved the Consent Agenda, as presented.

5. Agenda Item(s)

A. Inflow and Infiltration (I/I)

City Engineer Beckwith said the Inflow and Infiltration (I/I) program started in 2008 to keep clean water out of our sanitary system. Homeowners are doing a great job. We are halfway through the city at this time.

Beckwith introduced Marcus Bush and Kyle Colvin of Metropolitan Council (MCES) who presented the West St. Paul I/I Program Update for Council.

June 19, 2014 in West St. Paul

- 4" rain over a 24 hour period
- Over 100 sewage backups into homes
- Wastewater release to storm water, surface waters
- Nearly 6 times normal sewage during rainfall
 - Increased sewer construction and repair costs
 - Increased wastewater fees

I/I Program Goals

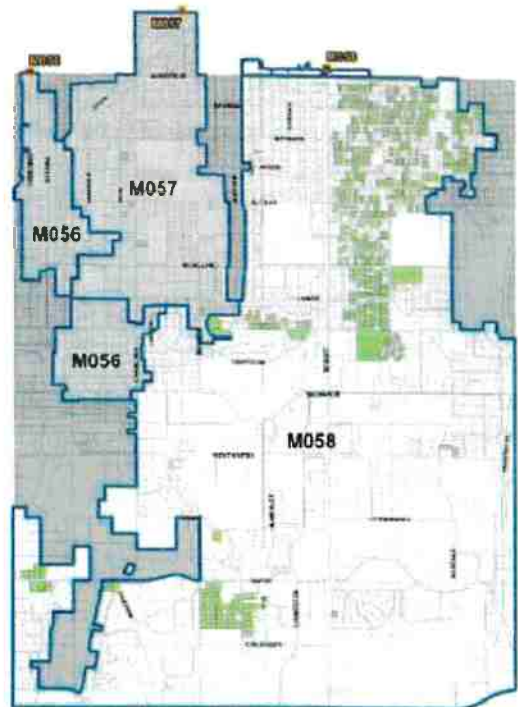
- Protect public health by avoiding backup of sewage into basements
- Protect water quality by avoiding spills to lakes and rivers
- Maintain economic efficiency by avoiding unnecessary expansion of sewers and treatment plants

Work by West St. Paul

- \$5 million before 2014 I/I credits
- West St. Paul began a \$2.7 million work plan in 2015 to mitigate the excessive flows from June 2014
- A memorandum of understanding was entered in 2016
 - More time to address significant issues
 - Private infrastructure repairs
 - MCES analyses of progress

Progress - 2013

- 20% decrease peak I/I flows
 - 2008 – 2013 compliance
 - \$560,000 grants through MCES
 - M058 is largest, most need
- 8% reduction base flows
- Return on investment is above average locally, annually



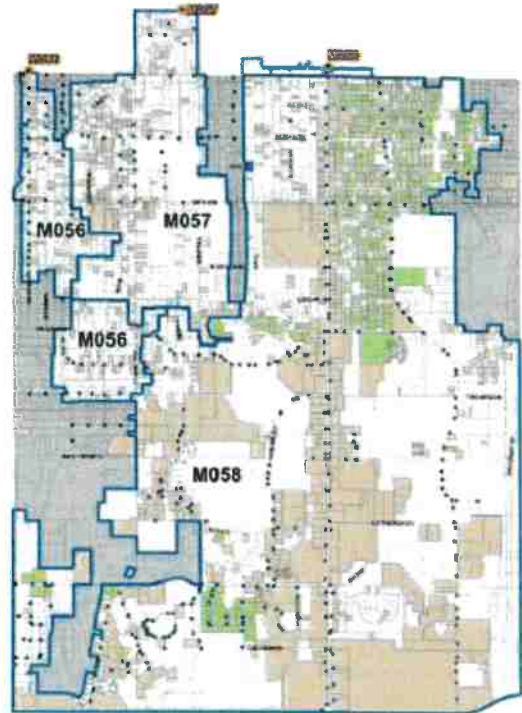
Progress – Today

- 40% peak I/I reduction in M058
- 20% peak I/I reduction M056, M057
- More reductions
 - 2014-2017 (in orange)
 - Robert Street repairs
 - I/I ordinance
 - M056, M057 and M058
 - Flow data through 2019

Since 2008, 58% of the City has been inspected. 3,172 inspections; 1,157 repairs.

Savings

- 16% annual flow is I/I
 - 16% of Municipal wastewater charge
 - \$350,000 in 2020
- 36% peak month flow
 - June 2014 = 58% of month
- 80% peak day flow



Mayor Napier said previous Councils took this serious and he is proud of our accomplishments and the results. We don't want 2014 basement flooding to ever happen again. We are making progress and the city should be proud of what we've accomplished.

Council thanked City Engineer Beckwith and Staff from Metropolitan Council for their presentation.

B. Bidwell Sidewalk Discussion

Beckwith said the City's 2011 Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan shows proposed sidewalks along Bidwell Street (Marie Avenue to Crusader Avenue), Stryker Avenue (Marie to south cul-de-sac) and on Crusader Avenue (Bidwell Street to Robert Street). In 2017, when Bidwell Street was reconstructed, City Council voted to not add a sidewalk with the project. Instead, the decision was to narrow the road by 4 feet (pulling in the west curb line) to leave a wider boulevard for future sidewalk within the right-of-way. Bidwell Street is currently 30-feet wide and has No Parking posted on the west side. The intention was, when a future improvement project was adjacent to Bidwell Street, that the sidewalk installation would again be evaluated.

The 2022 Street Improvement Project is the reconstruction of Crusader Avenue from Bidwell Street to Robert Street. Staff is currently working with an engineering consultant on the feasibility report for Crusader Avenue. A recommendation for

which side of Crusader Avenue to install sidewalk on will be an outcome of the report. Since the Crusader Avenue western project terminus is Bidwell Street, a discussion about constructing sidewalk along Bidwell Street seems appropriate at this time. The map provided in the Council's packet shows the existing and proposed trail and sidewalk in the surrounding area based on the 2011 Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan.

Adding sidewalk on Bidwell Street would require a topographic survey and design, around \$15,000. The construction cost of the sidewalk will vary depending on the amount of retaining walls needed to keep the walk within existing right-of-way. The estimated construction cost is \$100,000 and financing would come from the recently created Sidewalk Fund.

Mayor Napier said he was part of Council at that time. He recommended that the current Council drive out and look at it. This is what we are talking about when we talk about making our city a welcoming community.

Councilmember Vitelli asked how many homes are in that stretch? Beckwith said there are four or five homes. Councilmember Vitelli said \$100k for not a lot of traffic and asked if a traffic report can be done. Police Chief Sturgeon said the Police Department will do this.

Councilmember Gulley said she strongly supports it and throughout our city.

Councilmember Vitelli said he is only wondering if the \$100k is a good investment here or further north.

Councilmember Justen said this is a perfect example of how we funded sidewalks with a general fund. He would like to see this move forward.

Mayor Napier asked if costs would go up if we move it to a future date. Beckwith said it should be cheaper tying it to Crusader Avenue.

Councilmember Berry said it makes sense to do it sooner for access to the park.

Councilmember Eng-Sarne suggested tying it to Crusader in 2022.

Councilmember Berry agreed to attach it to Crusader. Beckwith said we can go through preliminary design. Council agreed.

C. Committee/Commission Appointment Discussion

Mayor Napier gave his recommendations to the Planning Commission for confirmation by Council on the Regular Council agenda:

- Reappointment of Maria Franzmeier, Ward 3

- Reappointment of Samantha Green, Ward 1
- Reappointment of Lisa Stevens, Ward 2
- Appointment of new member Tim Haubrich, Ward 3

Council discussed appointments to the Environmental Committee and conducted a ballot vote to move the following candidates to the Regular Council agenda for final vote:

- Appointment of Nicholas Hager, Ward 2
- Appointment of Lauren Hazenson, Ward 1
- Appointment of Ken Paulman, Ward 3

Council discussed appointments to the Park & Recreation Committee and conducted a ballot vote to move the following candidates to the Regular Council agenda for final vote:

- Reappointment of Bonnie Bellows, Ward 3
- Appointment of Sara Blair, Ward 3
- Appointment of Kelly Gibbons, Ward 1
- Appointment of Kelly Hagler, Ward 3

D. Town Hall & Strategic Planning Schedule and Agenda

Town Hall Forums

City Manager Schroeder said the City of West St. Paul hosts annual Town Hall Forums (previously called Neighborhood Meetings) to inform the public about important projects and happenings in West St. Paul, and more importantly to learn from the public what the City is doing well and what needs more attention. In previous years, these forums have been strategically held in-person in different wards around the City. Due to the large attendance these events usually bring and the prominence of the COVID-19 pandemic, we've had to adjust to planning for virtual Town Halls for 2021. After polling availability of elected officials, City and Town Square TV Staff and planning logistics, the following details are being proposed with input sought from Council.

- Town Hall Forums will take place in the WSP Council Chambers with elected officials and Staff in-person and Town Square TV broadcasting on cable and streaming the forums live to the public. No in-person public attendance.
- The agenda will consist of intro from elected officials, presentations from key Staff members, Q&A from the public via phone and email, direction on how to complete the survey.
- Town Hall schedule is proposed as follows: **Thursday, February 11th: 1-3pm (afternoon session), Wednesday, February 24th: 6-8pm (evening session), Saturday, February 27th: 10am-Noon (weekend session)**

- Interaction between the public and chambers will work similar to citizen comments during Council Meetings with Staff working the phone and the addition of emailed questions that Staff can relay to those presenting.
- With the different technological abilities and access to smart phones/internet of the public, Staff has decided the best way for the survey to be done is to refer viewers to take the survey online or via paper after the forums are complete. Direction will be given to viewers on how to complete this and data will be analyzed and compiled prior to the Strategic Planning Session. The virtual and paper surveys will be available in English and Spanish.
- An expanded survey is proposed. Staff is requesting Council read the National Community Survey example and discuss West St. Paul expanding to a similar set of questions. With 2020 Town Hall data impacted severely by COVID, 2021 may be a good starting point to begin new questions.

Strategic Planning Meeting

Biennially, the City Council meets for a full day with Staff to set out initiatives and priorities for the coming two years. After polling availability for those involved, as well as reserving available space, Staff is proposing this meeting take place on **Saturday, March 6th from 9am-5pm**. Due to COVID-19, Staff would like to hold this in-person in the Dakota Lodge at Thompson Park to be able to socially distance without having to limit the attendance of key Staff members.

Schroeder asked Council if there are things they would like to suggest or recommend to do as we continue to plan these meetings. In general terms, such as in past years where half of the meeting was to update the attendees on what we've been doing and are going to be doing, followed by a Q&A and a survey. Our intent is to have a broader survey document that would have more validity than what we've been doing in the past. If Council is agreeable, we would ask for additional feedback on what to include in the survey. Are there other issues that Council would like us to include?

Mayor Napier said we have a team putting the virtual meeting together into something that will be user-friendly because we want the community to be interactive with us. What does Council want on the agenda that they feel strongly about?

Councilmember Gulley asked where the surveys will be available for residents? Schroeder said there will be a link to access the survey available at the meeting or online.

Mayor Napier suggested that Council email Schroeder with any suggestions.

Councilmember Eng-Sarne said she looked at the Bloomington survey but it is 200 questions, which is too long. For topics, she suggested public safety and education around how economic development works. That would make our job easier and the community feel as if they input in that area.

Mayor Napier asked if we could send the agenda from the last Town Halls to Council, along with the last survey.

Councilmember Gulley encouraged the use of translation to offer a Spanish version survey. Schroeder said work is being done on this.

E. Translation Services Discussion

Motion by Councilmember Justen seconded by Councilmember Gulley to move this item to a future meeting. Councilmember Gulley requested more time be set aside to discuss this topic.

Vote: 6 ayes / 0 nays. Motion carried.

F. Call Meeting of the Public Safety Committee

Mayor Napier encouraged the Public Safety Committee to schedule a meeting to discuss snow removal and bias crimes.

6. Adjourn

Motion was made by Councilmember Justen and seconded by Councilmember Eng-Sarne to adjourn the meeting at 6:28 p.m.

All members present voted aye. Motion carried.



David J. Napier
Mayor
City of West St. Paul