

**INVER GROVE HEIGHTS CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
MONDAY, APRIL 2, 2018, 6:00 PM – 8150 BARBARA AVENUE**

A. CALL TO ORDER: The City Council of Inver Grove Heights met in work session on Monday, April 4, 2018, in the Inver Grove Heights Council Chambers. Mayor George Tourville called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. Roll call: Present were Mayor Tourville, Councilmembers Bartholomew, Hark, Perry, and Piekarski Krech. Staff; City Administrator Joe Lynch, Attorney Tim Kuntz, Director of Community Development, Tom Link, City Clerk Michelle Tesser, and Police Chief Paul Schnell.

1) Presentation on Active Adult Programming Partnership with ISD 199

Tracy Petersen, Recreation Superintendent introduced the item. A five-year agreement was entered into with ISD 199 in 2017 for 55 Plus Adult Services/Programs. Jessica Anderson, Recreation Coordinator, coordinates active adult programming for 25 hours a week, 15 hours per week for recreation/community center programs. Her salary is shared between the City and School District. There are quarterly meetings with School District personnel and city staff to provide updates/goals of programs and services being provided.

The three to five-year strategic plan and goals are:

- 1) Engage a wider audience of adults – broaden participation in active adult programs and services.
- 2) Expand programs, services and facilities. Provide a comprehensive scope of services to meet the needs of the wide age-span demographics (55-90) and ensure facilities meet the needs of the demographic.
- 3) Increase program awareness through improved marketing – written publications from the City, School District, and other agencies, social media, digital (email blasts, etc.), connect with other adult service providers.
- 4) Strengthen partnership with community and regional agencies such as partnering with adult and senior provider agencies to support/increase opportunities and services. They will have information on trends, resources and up-to-date information on demographics.
- 5) Create opportunities for self-supporting programs and revenue streams through grants, sponsorships for events, speakers, collaborative programs/shared expenses with similar minded agencies.
- 6) Promote independent aging and active lifestyles throughout the community by providing and supporting programs initiatives that promote active living and independent living. Also, for providing and supporting resources that enhance mobility to access the programs and services.
- 7) Input, Engagement & Evaluation – get community engagement to broaden the base of users. Get their opinions. Form advisory group(s), and volunteer initiatives by working with the City Volunteer Coordinator for recruiting volunteers for programs. Have an evaluation of programs, events and services.

- 8) Support of senior club - There is an existing senior club and the city should provide support to the club's programs and facilities needs. Help grow their membership base and partner with the club on any programming or events needs to keep them active and living independently.

Ms. Petersen stated that Jessica Anderson, Recreation Coordinator, has worked here the last year and has been a great asset. We are getting great feedback on the work that has been done this last year and believe we are on the right track.

Ms. Anderson stated the city has a very active in engaging groups of seniors. They have shared their ideas for possible programs. They would like venues where their voices can be heard. Speakers are being set up to give talks on pertinent issues. Some of the interests for programs are arts, culture, music and fitness.

Mayor Tourville asked for her thoughts on how the adult programming was coming along. Ms. Anderson said it was going well but more work needs to be done to get the community up to speed. The age range is from 55 to 105 and they have ideas for programs and services.

Councilmember Hark asked what has been the best way to reach seniors. Ms. Anderson said it depends. Social media is a good way, emails, a quarterly newsletter is sent out and word of mouth.

Mayor Tourville said an annual survey may be a good idea to pass on to the Council. He has heard good comments about what is being done.

Councilmember Hark said he has heard good comments and wanted to know if there were any issues that weren't anticipated. Ms. Anderson said there is a dichotomy with the seniors between those that want different activities and then those that enjoy playing cards. But programs are offered to satisfy both groups.

2) Consider Approval of Resolution to Support Local Decision – Making Authority Resolution 18-63

Michelle Tesser, City Clerk, introduced the item. There is before the Council a resolution to support local decision-making authority. There are more than 40+ bills that were introduced at the 2017 state legislation that threatens local authority. The League of MN Cities is encouraging cities to support the resolution. 100+ cities have passed the resolution and the list of cities is attached to the memo. Approval is being sought tonight because of the timeliness of the resolution.

Mayor Tourville reported that very few of the bills got passed but some of them are in hearings now. Some of the bills being introduced are not being funded by the state government but being passed onto local government for funding. He thought the resolution should be passed.

Councilmember Piekarski Krech said it sounds like the legislature wants to have control but do not want to pay for it.

Councilmember Hark said he likes the way the resolution was worded. Some of the bills proposed the last session include plastic bags and how we can budget. He likes the idea of local control. We have is a good council and staff, and we need the ability to make local decisions.

Motion by Hark second by Perry to Approve Resolution 18-63 A Resolution Supporting Local Decision-Making Authority

Ayes: 5

Nays: 0 Motion carried.

3) Railroad Quiet Zone

Tom Link, Director of Community Development, introduced the item stating this item was presented as a draft report before the Council in December. Council directed the item come back with specific ideas and funding possibilities. Being presented tonight is the final report with phased implementation. For funding, they looked at the Dakota County Environmental Grant or the DEED Host Community Grant. Both grants were spoken for in 2018 but could be applied in 2019 or 2020 for possible funding.

Chris Ryan, SRF Consultant Group, said the crossings studied included all the Union Pacific crossings along the east side of the city that include 65th Street, 66th Street, Upper 71st Street, a private crossing, 105th Street, and a Progress Rail crossing at Azalea Way.

To create a quiet zone the crossing would need minimum active warning devices – gates, flashing lights and constant warning times detectors. All the public crossings are equipped with gates and flashing lights. The 105th Street crossing is not equipped with the constant warning time detectors (CWT). To upgrade the 105th crossing to a quiet zone it would cost about \$250,000.00.

Once these minimum requirements are met for a quiet zone, it would be needed to implement safety improvements that would bring down the risk in the corridor to acceptable levels. There are two thresholds that are allowable, one is the risk index with horns (RIWH) and if you add safety improvements bringing it below current levels, then the quiet zone is good for life. The improvements that are put in place need to stay permanently in place. There would be an annual reassessment to reflect existing risk trends. If the assessment risk does not work, the city would have six months to come up with an implementation plan and three years to implement the plan.

An Improvement Scenario Summary table was shown in the presentation that included 105th Street and excluded 105th Street from the quiet zone.

Scenario 1 - improvements for every crossing in the study and the estimated cost would be \$795,000.00.

Scenario 2a - improvements at the Concord Street crossings only (65th Street, 66th Street, and Upper 71st Street - excluded 105th Street) approximate cost would be \$335,000.00

Scenario 2b – would include scenario 2a plus 105th Street and the approximate cost would be \$585,000.00 (includes \$250,000 for constant warning time detectors)

Scenario 3 – 65th Street and 66th Street crossings only with limited improvements and the approximate cost would be \$90,000 – 105th Street could not be included in this scenario

Scenarios one through three are for getting below the risk index with the train horns level, improving safety and the quiet zone would be valid indefinitely.

Scenario 4a and 4b would be to get at the national average threshold.

Scenario 4a would be with no additional improvements and 105th Street would be excluded and there would be no additional costs.

Scenario 4b would include 105th Street crossing improvements and would cost approximately \$250,000.00.

The quiet zone implementation steps are:

- 1) Diagnostic meeting (already held)
- 2) Determine necessary crossing improvements – where we are now
- 3) Notice of intent – submitted to the FRA, UP, Progressive Rail, MnDOT and other stakeholders
- 4) CWT waiver request (optional) – would need to be done if the 105th Street crossing is considered – SRF would prepare the documents
- 5) Application required if ASMs are used – If scenarios one through three were chosen an application would be required to be submitted
- 6) Install crossing improvements
- 7) Notice of establishment

An implementation path table was shown which showed the required documents based on the scenarios. Scenario 4a would be the quickest way for implementation of quiet zones.

The key decision points are: include or exclude 105th Street crossing – if included, CWT waiver possible, but unlikely and the signal upgrade would cost approximately \$250,000 with very few funding opportunities. Decide the NSRT or RIWH threshold. The NSRT (scenario 4 – quicker implementation but additional improvements may be needed later), the RIWH (scenarios 1-3) would be more expensive but the quiet zone qualifies forever.

Councilmember Piekarski Krech asked what would make the risk calculations change? Mr. Ryan responded roadway and train volumes, future development, and crashes in the past five years. If there is a crash, the risk index would possibly triple. These indicators have been considered in the report. The 66th Street crossing has the highest crash risk with the highest risk index. This crossing has the most volume for trains and cars.

Mayor Tourville asked if the railroad would pay for part of the improvements? Mr. Ryan responded the railroads are typically against quiet zones and don't help with funding improvements.

Marilyn Weis, 2846 104th Court East, stated that money has been spent on other properties but nothing has been done to the 105th crossing and we are here to ask that something does happen to our neighborhood. The train noise is terrible and played a recording of the train noise from her phone that can be heard from inside her home at night. There has been money spent on improvements at other crossings.

Michael Janssen, 2785 104th Court East, stated the train horn that was played is heard several times a night. This was not an issue until the spur was put in about two years ago. He asked if there is a minimum requirement for horn blowing.

Councilmember Piekarski Krech said that residents had complained about train horn noise and the noise actually got worse.

Councilmember Hark asked if there was a minimum horn requirement. Mr. Ryan responded there are minimum requirements. He stated he believes it is 95 to 110 decibels in a pattern of two short bursts, a long burst, then a short burst. They are given a leeway in sounding as they see fit.

Mr. Janssen said this is a quiet dirt road, minimum requirements should be followed, and they should not be allowed to "lay" on the horn.

Lisa Brown, 10450 Brent Avenue, said she lives closer to the track than Ms. Weis and the train noise is a quality of life issue. She hopes the city cares about the residents and their concerns.

Brenda Sabistina, 10380 Brent Avenue East, stated she lives close to the railroad and appreciates the council adding 105th Street crossing for consideration. She wonders why the CWT waiver was not sent in sooner to at least try. The noise is horrible.

Councilmember Piekarski Krech asked about the cost of a CWT waiver. Mr. Ryan responded it is about \$1,500. Mayor Tourville asked if there was a reason why it would not be done?

Councilmember Piekarski Krech stated why waste the money if it gets denied is Azalea Way not included in the scenarios. Mr. Ryan responded that it's considered to be its own separate quiet zone and has issues like the 105th Street crossing in that it does not have CWTs and signals would need to be installed. The train volumes are lower at Azalea Way and only go through at the lunch time hour (timing of train and they go slower), and noise has not been that big of an issue. Mayor Tourville said it is a different route. Mr. Ryan suggested submitting the CWT waiver. Mayor Tourville asked if submitting the waiver would create communication with the railroad. Mr. Ryan said it does.

Councilmember Hark asked about the success of the waiver being granted. Mr. Ryan said he has submitted three waivers in the past with one being on a mainline crossing and they were supportive of that waiver. Given they are not supportive of our initial preliminary question asking, the odds are about 20% to 30% in it being approved, he believes.

Councilmember Hark asked what is the time frame for the request? Mr. Ryan said review of the waiver would take about three to six months he estimated. Councilmember Piekarski Krech asked how long the process would take without applying for the waiver? Mr. Ryan said scenario 4b would take coordination with the railroad (controls the cost and scheduling of the improvements) and estimates it would take nine to 12 months for design and implementation. The notice of intent would be for 60 days. If approved with the waiver it would be up to six months with eight months to implementation.

Mayor Tourville stated that the 105th Street crossing cost is \$585,000.00. He stated he was unsure if the railroad could increase the cost. He asked if there was a chance to sit down with the railroad to work out the payment and scheduling of the improvements. Mr. Ryan stated that the railroads typically like the payment up front.

The different scenarios were discussed along with dealing with the railroads. Joe Lynch, City Administrator, recapped scenario 4b, he stated that the \$250,000 is just for the capital costs of

improvements at the 105th Street crossing. Mr. Ryan said that is correct. Mr. Lynch asked if the city would be able to declare just that area or the entire city a quiet zone. Mr. Ryan responded there is a minimum space requirement (a quarter of a mile) between crossings all four could be an independent quiet zone and you could not break it up into smaller quiet zones because they are so close. Mr. Lynch asked if making no improvements on Concord the city would not be able to consider this a quiet zone without making those improvements. Mr. Ryan said if I understand the question correctly, on Concord it could be its own (like scenario 4a) without improvements, 105th could be its own quiet zone if the signal upgrades are made, or if the CWT waiver is approved. Mr. Lynch said the waiver is not likely to get approved. Mr. Ryan believes that is correct. Scenario 2b includes all the improvements at 105th Street, plus necessary improvements along Concord to get both areas as a quiet zone. Mr. Ryan said yes it could be as one single quiet zone. Mr. Lynch said that would be the recommendation that should be pursued. Mr. Lynch asked at the earliest - six months would be before there was some determination by the RFA either on an exemption or a determination of our application. then earliest this would be able to start is 2019. Mr. Ryan said scenario 4b includes all the crossings from 65th to 105th as one single quiet zone. If we did proceed with a waiver, say six months for review, concurrently we could do the notice of intent. All we need is the approval of the CWT waiver, we could then submit the notice of establishment. That would be six months plus 21 days from whenever the documents are submitted and the quiet zone could be implemented under scenario 4b if the waiver is approved. Mr. Lynch asked when would the money for the improvements be needed for the railroad if the waiver is granted. Mr. Ryan said it would probably be in 2019.

Councilmember Piekarski Krech said she would like to look at scenario 4b because of the future development at 65th, 66th, and Upper 71st. She stated she does not want to put in improvements and have them taken out because of future development. She stated scenario 4b is also the quickest option.

Mayor Tourville stated increasing improvements would make the crossings safer and it would be a quiet zone forever. With no additional improvements and if there is an accident the quiet zone could be reevaluated. If there is residential development you may want these areas as quiet zones. Safety should be number one and the improvements would make them safer.

Councilmember Bartholomew asked if scenario 4b could get a quiet zone at 65th, 66th, Upper 71st with no additional improvements and asked if obtaining a waiver was required. Mr. Ryan responded in the negative. You would need to outline the intent and document the risk calculation that is shown on the chart.

Councilmember Bartholomew said the down side is if there is an accident they could reevaluate. Mr. Ryan said they would reevaluate every year, no matter what, and if the risk calculation changes then the City would have three years to make additional improvements. Councilmember Bartholomew asked If we do the improvements at 105th Street could we get a quiet zone. Mr. Ryan said yes.

Councilmember Piekarski Krech asked about doing it as two separate quiet zones. Mr. Ryan responded two notices of intent and two notices of establishment would need to be done. Combined they are about \$1,500 each.

Mayor Tourville said if we made application on scenario 4a for a quiet zone on Concord Street and look at starting work on scenario 4b that would be the most prudent way to go. We could get a quiet zone established in four or five months along Concord and discuss Upper 71st and

105th. Councilmember Piekarski Krech said it would be \$3,000 to do it in two stages. Councilmember Bartholomew stated we should start on scenario 4a and then come back and look at 105th.

Mayor Tourville stated by council direction to go forward with scenario 4a for application and then the council will look into 105th.

Mr. Link suggested that SRF put together a contract to work on scenarios 4a and 4b and bring the contracts back to Council for approval in the next couple of weeks.

Councilmember Hark asked how long it would take and is concerned about timeframes and the true cost. Mr. Ryan said the \$250,000 is an estimate and to get a detailed estimate is to get one from the railroad and there are fees associated with that. He stated the range is between \$5,000 and \$10,000. The railroads would put together an engineering estimate to give the city an actual cost. Councilmember Hark said that would be part of one of the contracts. Mr. Ryan stated in the affirmative.

It was decided that SRF would prepare two contracts, one to work on scenario 4a and one to work on scenario 4b. The contracts would then be brought back to council for approval.

4) SAC Loan Deferral Program

Mr. Lynch asked that this item be tabled as new information has come from the Metropolitan Council within the last 10 days. They have done a reexamination of their SAC charges and their policy. More time is needed to get more information from Metropolitan Council. Once the information is gathered it will be brought back to the Council.

5) Communications Strategies

Mr. Lynch presented the item stating information was heard by Council on March 12th. It is being recommended to create a new Communications Manager position. There is currently a position of Market Coordinator and there was some discussion about this position. The job description has not changed since the last time the council saw it. He stated the position was changed to reflect the fact that the position no longer supervised, scheduled, evaluated performance or was responsible for any discipline of other employees. The pay scale was not adjusted to reflect these changes. Background information was provided on similar positions in other communities. A salary review is in the memo.

He stated examples of communication plans have also been included (West St. Paul and Hastings). It is time for the city to establish the position of Communication Manager who would manage the Market Coordinator position. Both positions would be a part of the administration department. The Communication Manager would report to the City Administrator. Police have started Facebook and Twitter with positive feedback. The Fire Department would like to get a broader footprint on social media as well. We should establish a communications plan for the city and include many proactive objectives that are not being done currently.

We would have to meet with the union to establish the salary for the Marketing Coordinator position. The Marketing Coordinator position salary has been established with our Compensation and Classification Plan. We would like to get both positions hired and established as quickly as possible.

Councilmember Piekarski Krech asked why the starting salary was higher than all but two of the other cities that were compared. Mr. Lynch responded it was done in conjunction with the Compensation and Classification Plan. Councilmember Piekarski Krech said the manager position except for Eagan and St. Louis Park was significantly higher. Mr. Lynch replied we are different and the manager position will supervise the coordinator position. Lower salaries tend to not attract qualified candidates that have the years of experience, the requirements for education and background that we are looking for.

Ms. Tesser said the currently salary ranges are not the current salary ranges that Councilmember Piekarski Krech is referring to. The salary comparable were done in 2016 and the salary range is lower now. Other cities are higher now and ours would be lower. What Council is looking at is not current. Councilmember Perry said the salary range from the March 5th packet is \$81,600 to \$103,688 which is lower.

Mr. Lynch said the Parks and Recreation Department has been without a position since last year but we are getting to the point where we need to get someone on board as soon as possible for summer brochure development and marking efforts for the VMCC and golf course. We are working with a contractor to get these things done. For 2018, the coordinator position would be funded by the Parks and Recreation Department and VMCC and in the future that may shift.

Councilmember Hark asked if the coordinator position would be a marketing position or communication coordinator. Mr. Lynch responded marketing coordinator.

Councilmember Bartholomew asked if the position would be centered on marketing or communications. Mr. Lynch responded primarily marketing for recreation, the VMCC and the golf course. They would also assist the communications manager.

Mayor Tourville said he believes cities need to do a good job in communications. Looking at different media mediums, it's important that cities do it right. The departments heads and City Administrator have looked at the needs of the city. There is a need for a city of our size and this would allow the city to be proactive along with being active. The job duties may need to be tweaked as we go along. This will be positive for the city.

Kathy Fisher, Local 1065 Union President, asked if the marketing coordinator position salary is consistent with the memo. Mr. Lynch responded that it is older data. Ms. Fisher stated the union was concerned because another marketing coordinator position was equal to other coordinators at the Grove that topped out at \$80,000. When talking to HR they said it would top out at \$66,000. Mr. Lynch said the salary range was adjusted because the position does not supervise an employee. He stated updated information will be brought back to Council and the title may be changed. Ms. Tesser said the correct numbers regarding the marketing coordinator position are 10% from Recreation (\$8,373) and 90% from the VMCC (\$75,353) which includes salary and benefits.

Mr. Lynch stated updated numbers will be brought back to Council. Ms. Fisher asked that the union be communicated with in regard to changes. Ms. Fischer questioned the comparable cities. Mr. Lynch said two groups of cities were looked at and the aggregate of the two groups was used to figure the salary range. The two groups are surrounding communities and cities that are similar in population. Councilmember Piekarski Krech said she liked West St. Paul's communication plan.

6) Customer Service Policy

Mr. Lynch stated that based on the March 10th meeting, Council directed the customer service policy to be brought back to the Council for discussion. A red-lined copy and a clean copy has been provided to the Council to see the changes that have been made. Council would like to adopt this and staff would come back with a matrix. Department contacts need to be updated.

Councilmember Piekarski Krech said she did not like the wording under purpose of “define our customers as people who live, work and play in the city as well as everyone with whom the City does business including staff,” she stated it does not flow right. Mayor Tourville said when looking at drafts if there are word suggestions to get the changes to Mr. Lynch. Mr. Lynch said it is the intention to get this on the April 9th Council agenda therefore please get these changes back to him before Wednesday. Mayor Tourville said under complaints there is a contact for each. That contact has the responsibility of the complaint resolution process. Mayor Tourville stated is that really what that means. Mr. Lynch stated in the affirmative.

Councilmember Perry said under media inquiries it says staff would forward these types of requests to the City Administrator for a response. Would that stay with you or would that go under the Communications Manager. Mr. Lynch said it would move to the Communications Manager who would handle the majority of media inquiries.

Mayor Tourville was looking at the flow of department head contacts for the resolution process and asked if there would be a report maybe once a month with the amount of complaints to be reviewed? I wouldn't want each contact to report on a complaint – I look at this as how do we get better? Maybe the departments get together to summarize the complaints to present some of the areas that need to be looked at.

Councilmember Hark said this policy formalizes the process and if some resident contacts the city there is now a process where that person will be directed to a resolution. As we go forward, there is going to be some challenges on how each department records this information, but problems will be identified that need to be worked on.

Mayor Tourville said a monthly report could show a common trend/issue/problem within the departments. Councilmember Hark said this would be worked on and refined as we go along.

Mr. Lynch said he would make the suggested changes and bring it back to the Council on April 9th.

Mayor Tourville said the fire department banquet is Saturday night. The appreciation dinner for the Commissioners is on the 18th.

Mr. Lynch reported that the River Heights neighborhood meeting is Wednesday night. A report will come out of that discussion.

Mayor Tourville asked about the neighborhood fire station meeting. Mr. Lynch said it went very well. He stated 15 people showed up for the meeting. It was an open house type meeting and residents were able to look at the drawings by the architects. Fire personnel were able to answer questions about the layout of the building and its operations. Chief Thill gave a 20-minute presentation that was very good and answered a lot of questions. Questions about the smart center were also answered.

Mr. Link reported that the Planning Commission will be holding a public hearing on the fire station for the rezoning and the Comprehensive Plan tomorrow night.

Mayor Tourville asked if Interstate contacted Mr. Link regarding Inverness Park (Barnes Avenue). Mr. Link responded no.

B. Adjourn

Councilmember Hark made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilmember Perry, and unanimously carried. The work session adjourned at approximately 9:00 p.m.