



# City of Grand Island

Tuesday, April 02, 2002

## Study Session

### Item -4

#### NW Grand Island Traffic Improvements Study

##### *Background*

*Safety concerns on Manchester, Mansfield and Cannon Roads near Westridge Middle School were first expressed by the Northwest Neighborhood association in March of 1998. The association believes that the extension of Independence from Manchester south to 13th Street is the solution. City staff has been hesitant to move forward with the extension of Independence because the bulk of the project cost would be the taxpayers' responsibility. The Council approved an agreement with Olsson Associates to perform the following work:*

- 61623; Perform traffic and circulation analysis for the neighborhood*
- 61623; Confirm the intersection and roadway design requirements*
- 61623; Recommend alignments for the proposed roadway improvements*
- 61623; Determine the impacts to storm drainage and detention cells*
- 61623; Prepare alternatives to address impacts of proposed improvements*
- 61623; Determine the right-of-way impacts*
- 61623; Prepare a preliminary opinion of costs*

*Olsson Associates will present the results at the April 2, 2002 Study Session.*

##### *Discussion*

###### *Issues:*

- 1. There is a need for a north-south ½ mile system of collector streets.*
- 2. Pedestrian and vehicular traffic is concentrated in front of the school raising safety concerns.*

###### *Solutions:*

- 1. Allow future development to build the network of north-south streets.*
- 2. Improve Manchester, Mansfield and Cannon Roads near Westridge Middle School.*
- 3. Extend Independence from Manchester south to 13th Street.*

###### *Pros and Cons:*

- 1. Allowing developers to build the north-south streets saves the taxpayers substantial dollars. This has always been the past practice of the City and minimizes the cost to the taxpayers.*
- 2. Improving the existing streets adjacent to Westridge will help with pedestrian and vehicular safety, but will not reduce the vehicular volumes in front of the school. The costs would be shared between adjacent property owners and the taxpayers. The property owners receive credit for the existing street width and would not be assessed for any width over 37'.*
- 3. Extending Independence is expensive with approximately 2/3 of the cost being the*

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*responsibility of the taxpayers. It improves the safety in front of the school by reducing the vehicular traffic volumes in front of the school. The streets adjacent to the school should be improved regardless of the decision on extending Independence. Taxpayers would be responsible for approximately 2/3 of the cost.*

***Recommendation***

*Olsson Associates was hired to perform the study so that a better sense of the cost/benefit could be obtained to assist Council in their decision making process. The issue that the city has been struggling with is a matter of economics. Is extending Independence the most cost effective solution?*

*If the Council desires to extend Independence, staff will direct Olsson Associates to continue with ROW design so the ROW negotiations can begin. Once the ROW is acquired, a street improvement district can be created. Depending on how well right-of-way negotiations proceed, Independence could be completed in the fall of 2003.*

***Financial Implications***

*If Independence is extended, I believe it will be a matter of choices. Other projects in the City's capital improvement budget may have to be pushed back to allow funding of Independence as well as the improvements to Manchester, Mansfield and Cannon Roads near Westridge Middle School that need to be made.*

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