
City of Grand Island



Tuesday, February 03, 2004

Study Session Packet

City Council:

Carole Cornelius

Peg Gilbert

Joyce Haase

Margaret Hornady

Robert Meyer

Mitchell Nickerson

Don Pauly

Jackie Pielstick

Scott Walker

Fred Whitesides

Mayor:

Jay Vavricek

City Administrator:

Gary Greer

City Clerk:

RaNae Edwards

7:00:00 PM

Council Chambers - City Hall

100 East First Street

Call to Order

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call

A - SUBMITTAL OF REQUESTS FOR FUTURE ITEMS

Individuals who have appropriate items for City Council consideration should complete the Request for Future Agenda Items form located at the Information Booth. If the issue can be handled administratively without Council action, notification will be provided. If the item is scheduled for a meeting or study session, notification of the date will be given.

B - RESERVE TIME TO SPEAK ON AGENDA ITEMS

This is an opportunity for individuals wishing to provide input on any of tonight's agenda items to reserve time to speak. Please come forward, state your name and address, and the Agenda topic on which you will be speaking.

MAYOR COMMUNICATION

This is an opportunity for the Mayor to comment on current events, activities, and issues of interest to the community.



City of Grand Island

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Study Session

Item -1

Discussion Concerning Use of 1/2 Cent Sales Tax for Overpass/Underpass on Broadwell at the Union Pacific Railroad Tracks

The sales tax survey results showed significant support for the construction of an underpass or overpass on Broadwell Avenue at the Union Pacific Railroad tracks. Without a new funding source for an underpass such as sales tax, the Broadwell Avenue Underpass may never be built. The Broadwell Avenue crossing just north of 3rd Street is the heaviest used crossing in the city. The Nebraska Department of Roads uses a calculated exposure factor by multiplying the number of vehicles per day times the number of trains per day. If the number is over 500,000, it qualifies for a grade separation (over or underpass). The NDOR has railroad grade separation projects already on their list that will take over 50 years to complete at existing funding levels.

A comprehensive railroad corridor study should be conducted before the plan for how the community addresses issues such as this Broadwell Grade Separation can be finalized. The study should look at grade separations, crossing closures, directional horns, quiet zones, an east by-pass, replacement of the Sycamore and Eddy Underpasses, etc. Staff is working on an RFP where we will ask for proposals from consulting engineering firms to prepare a Railroad Corridor Plan for all railroads in and around Grand Island.

Olsson Associates is studying the proposal to construct a grade separation on Broadwell Avenue at the Union Pacific Railroad tracks. Details regarding the study are attached. Tom Leikam will display the concepts that were studied, explain design details, discuss some of the pros and cons for each concept, touch on ROW impact, and present a budget estimate of costs for the project.

Staff Contact: Steve Riehle, Public Works Director/City Engineer

Broadwell Grade Separation

The Union Pacific Railroad tracks carries approximately 70 trains per day through the heart of Grand Island with peaks that may approach 100 trains per day. The Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad carries over 65 trains per day along the north and east edges of the community. Anyone that has driven the streets of Grand Island has experienced the impact the trains have on their trip. There are 25 at grade crossings where motorists may be delayed while waiting for a train to clear.

The 2003 traffic counts for selected crossings are as follows:

Union Pacific Railroad Crossings

Webb Road – 5,800 Vehicles Per Day (VPD)

Blaine Street/Custer Avenue – 8,462 VPD

Broadwell Avenue – 11,895 VPD

Lincoln Street – 2,105 VPD

Walnut Street – 4,359 VPD

Burlington Northern Santa Fe Crossings:

North Broadwell Avenue/Old US Hwy 281 – 6,136 VPD

Stuhr Road – 5,298 VPD

A meeting was held on December 16th, 2003 with property owners that would be adjacent to the construction. Olsson Associates prepared concepts for 2 overpasses and 2 underpasses that were overlaid onto aerial photos for exhibits at the meeting. A summary on the proposed construction was presented followed by discussions with individual property owners.

The concept that had the greatest support by those in attendance was an underpass that left Third Street open to Broadwell Avenue. Both of the overpass concepts and the remaining underpass concepts did not allow Third Street traffic to access Broadwell. City staff agrees that it is important that 3rd Street traffic be allowed to access Broadwell.

The project will have a significant impact on the properties along Broadwell Avenue. City staff and engineers will work with the affected properties as the project unfolds. We will do our best to minimize the impact to their business, accommodate requests for driveways, retaining walls, etc. Some

properties will have to be purchased in their entirety. Others will have their access changed or impacted, parking area reduced, visibility impacted, etc.

After the meeting we looked into the possibility of constructing an overpass on Madison Avenue. Olsson Associates prepared a concept and will present that concept at the City Council study session. Those in attendance also suggested that we consider an underpass on Custer Avenue / Blaine Street. Construction of a grade separation here would mean Third Street could no longer access Custer Avenue / Blaine Street. Staff feels this would have a very negative impact on traffic flows and therefore recommends against an underpass on Custer Avenue / Blaine Street.

If this project is constructed staff recommends that this project be scheduled for construction after the Nebraska Department of Roads project to widen Second Street from Grant Street to Greenwich Avenue is built in 2007. Second Street needs to be improved before the Broadwell Underpass is constructed so it can handle the increased traffic while Broadwell Avenue is closed for the construction of the underpass and roadway on Broadwell Avenue.

Tom Leikam of Olsson Associates discussed the project with the UPRR and also sent them a schematic of the preferred underpass alternative. The project will automatically qualify for some funding by the UPRR and NDOR if the Broadwell Avenue crossing is closed. Having a comprehensive RR corridor study completed will also increase the cities ability to negotiate for more RR monies.



City of Grand Island

Tuesday, February 03, 2004

Study Session

Item -2

Discussion Concerning Use of 1/2 Cent Sales Tax for Aquatics

City Council Agenda Memo

From: Steve Paustian, Parks & Recreation Director
Meeting: 2/3/2004
Subject: Aquatics / 1/2 cent sales tax
Presenter: Steve Paustian, Parks & Recreation Director

Background

For many years the City of Grand Island has discussed the need for additional and/or updated aquatic facilities. Many enhancements have been accomplished to various aquatic facilities including Island Oasis and wading pools located in Pier, Lincoln and Grace Abbot Parks. Additionally a great deal of discussion has occurred among various organizations including the School District, YMCA and Hospital concerning enhancing the aquatic system in Grand Island. Currently expansions to Island Oasis and an up-grade or replacement of Lincoln Pool have been included in the 1/2 sales tax discussion.

Discussion

During the Study Session the City should discuss the aquatic system of the community. It appears that with many citizens and organizations having great interest in this subject it may be time to conduct a comprehensive look at the aquatic system in Grand Island. Other communities have engaged in an aquatics study aimed at surveying all facilities, evaluating each facility, measuring need, and developing a plan which provides an implementation scenario for the future. Such a study can eliminate duplication, streamline tax investment and bring about collaboration among interested parties. Additionally, Hastings, Nebraska is in the process of building a water park which may have an impact on Island Oasis. A study of the market will help us understand the dynamics of the area and help us react to changes. After a study is completed projects could be earmarked for funding using the 1/2 cent sales tax.

Alternatives

It appears that the Council has the following alternatives concerning the issue at hand.

1) Discuss the direction of our aquatics system as it relates to the 1/2 cent sales tax and proceed with the hiring of an aquatic consultant to assist in future planning.

2) *Move forward without outside assistance.*

3) *Delay discussions.*

Recommendation

City Administration recommends that the City Council consider moving forward with a study to help determine aquatic projects to be developed with the ½ cent sales tax or other revenue sources if sales tax funding is not available.

Staff Contact: Steve Paustian



City of Grand Island

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Study Session

Item -3

Discussion Concerning Use of 1/2 Cent Sales Tax for CAAP

City Council Agenda Memo

From: Steve Paustian, Parks & Recreation Director
Meeting: 2/3/2004
Subject: Discussion Concerning Use of 1/2 Cent Sales Tax for CAAP
Presenter: Steve Paustian, Parks & Recreation Director

Background

In 2000 the City finalized the purchase of 420 acres of land for a shooting facility to be located on the former Cornhusker Army Ammunition Plant (CAAP) site. Originally the purchase was necessitated with the development of the new South Locust Interstate Exit and the need to relocate the skeet and sporting clays range from the City Well Field. Over the past several years strides have been made in that development effort. To date, six skeet ranges and four trap ranges are nearing completion, a sporting Clays range has been roughed in and buildings from the former range site have been relocated to the CAAP site. A new clubhouse is also under construction and is nearly 75% complete.

Discussion

Plans call for the additional construction of a rifle/pistol range that will accommodate most calibers of rifle and pistols. Activities to be hosted on the site will include long range rifle shooting, cowboy action shooting, a 22 cal. plinking range and many other shooting activities.

Plans also call for the development of a lake for fishing and to host retriever training and trials. Construction of a modern campground that can accommodate up to sixty camping pads is also in the overall development plan.

While these additional improvements will cost over one million dollars it is anticipated that patron fees and ancillary uses will help offset some of the operational costs. It is also anticipated that the facility will bring many visitors to the Grand Island that will spend money on motels, gas food and shopping.

Sales tax proceeds will play an important part in the development of these additional facilities and the speed at which they can be developed.

Alternatives

1. Develop the facility without additional sales tax dollars.

2. Discuss the project and it's inclusion in the 1/2 cent sales tax proposal.

Recommendation

Staff recommends the continued development of the facility using Sales Tax dollars along with some of the proceeds from the additional 1/2 cent sales tax when available.

Staff Contact: Steve Paustian