

**INVER GROVE HEIGHTS CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2022. 6:00 PM - 8150 BARBARA AVENUE**

A. CALL TO ORDER: The City Council of Inver Grove Heights met in person for a Work Session on Monday, February 7, 2022. Mayor Bartholomew called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Roll Call: Present In-Person: Mayor Bartholomew; Council Members; Piekarski Krech, Gliva, and Murphy; City Administrator Kris Wilson, City Clerk Rebecca Kiernan, City Attorney Bridget McCauley Nason, Community Development Director Heather Rand, Public Works Director Brian Connolly, City Engineer Tom Kaldunski.

Absent: Council Member Dietrich.

Also Present In-Person: Timothy O'Neill, Regional Labor Market Analyst, Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED); Erin Labaree, Assistant County Engineer, Dakota County; JoNette Kuhnau, Consultant Project Manager, Kimley Horn; Brad Reifsteck, Senior Project Manager, WSB.

1. Population and Labor Force Trends in Inver Grove Heights

Community Development Director Heather Rand introduced Tim O'Neill from the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development. He is a Labor Market Analyst for the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area. She stated that he would be giving a presentation on the City of Inver Grove Heights, the population, demographic trends from the last Census, and what is going on with the Labor/Work Force.

Timothy O'Neill, Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), St. Paul, Minnesota. He is within the Labor Market Information Office consisting of Analysts who are always collecting information through Survey's and Censuses, consisting of households or business surveys. They collect information on the Labor Force, unemployment rate, industry trends, industry statistics, total payroll, average weekly wages, unemployment outcomes, projections, job vacancy surveys, hiring demand, and educational information. If thinking of Labor Market Statistics/Job Market Statistics, their office likely collects that information. Another Department to keep in mind when looking at Labor Force Statistics is the U.S. Census Bureau, more specifically the American Community Survey and the Minnesota State Demographic Center. Some slides shown during his presentation come from the State Demographer, Susan Brower, when looking at some of the trends in the State. There are 40 slides in his presentation, he will not be showing them all, but would be sharing them with Community Development Director Heather Rand who can pass them out to the rest of the members here today and anyone in the audience who would like them.

He stated DEED and the Labor Market Information Office is for making better more informed market-responsive decisions.

Population and Demographic Trends:

- A slide was shown from the Minnesota State Demographic Center which highlights National and State level data when looking at the most recent 2020 Census.
 - In Minnesota as of April 1, 2020, Population: 5,706,494

- Grew by 7.6% between 2010 and 2020
- Inver Grove Heights between 2010 and 2020 grew by 1,921 persons = 6% growth, a bit under the statewide population growth over the past decade.
- Dakota County gained 41,330 persons between 2010 and 2020. That is a 10% growth, a little above the State of Minnesota for overall growth in Dakota County.

He stated the following information is available from the Census Bureau, from himself, or the Labor Market Information Office. Go to: mn.gov/deed to find their contact information.

2010-2020 Census Data:

- Inver Grove Heights, 2010.
 - 85.7% of the population reported as white
 - Others include: Black or African American, Indigenous, or Alaska Native, Asian, some other race, or two or more races.
- Inver Grove Heights, 2020.
 - Population is becoming more diverse with time.
 - This is something that has been mirrored at the metropolitan level, 7 County Metro, 16 County Metro, as well as the State of Minnesota.
 - The State of Minnesota has been becoming more diverse over the past 10 years when looking at 2010 to 2020.
- Inver Grove Heights has a much higher share of person's reporting as Hispanic or Latino origins. To note: within the Census Bureau when reporting as Hispanic or Latino, you can also report as Any Other Race.
 - Looking at the statistics when adding up Hispanic and Latino with every other racial group, you will get over 100% for that reason.
 - Between 2010 and 2020 those reporting as Hispanic, or Latino in Inver Grove Heights grew by about 1,270 persons, or 42%.
 - Very significant growth over the past 10 years especially considering that the total population grew by 6% during that period of time.
- Growth over the past 10 years: Racial and Ethnic Groups:
 - Black or African American population in Inver Grove Heights grew by 71% between 2010 and 2020.
 - American Indian or Alaska Native population grew by 58%.
 - Asian population grew by 37%.
 - Some Other Race grew by 84%.
 - Those reporting as two or more races in Inver Grove Heights grew by 170%.
 - All of these are in comparison to the total population growing by 6%.
 - Those reporting as White in Inver Grove Heights between 2010 and 2020, population declined by 8%. Equivalent to about 2,327 people.
 - This is something that is happening throughout the Metro area and State of Minnesota. They are looking at White populations, either the growth is slowing down or showing declines over the past 10 years, where every other racial and ethnic group is showing significant growth.
 - Becoming much more diverse in Inver Grove Heights, the 7 County Metro Area, and the State of Minnesota.

The following information was provided from the 2014-2019 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates for Inver Grove Heights:

He highly encouraged everyone to check out these survey estimates. The 2025 estimates have been delayed. Hopeful that those would be coming out in March. A lot of that had to do with grabbing the information data gathering and complications due to COVID-19.

- City of Inver Grove Heights: Population broken out by Race and Ethnicity.
 - Majority of the population does report as White.
 - Looking at 5-year estimates to 2014 and 5-year estimates to 2019, just like the 2010-2020 estimates, trends notice that Inver Grove Heights is becoming more diverse with time.
 - Dakota County and Minnesota are becoming more diverse as well.

Educational Attainment in Inver Grove Heights:

- Highly educated population.
- The chart shows a blue bar displaying the share of the population broken down by race and ethnicity having a High School Diploma or equivalent and higher.
- The chart with the green bar displayed shows a bachelor's degree or higher.

Median Earnings in Inver Grove Heights by Educational Attainment:

- At every education attainment level earnings are higher in Inver Grove Heights than they are for respective attainment levels in the State of Minnesota.

Poverty Rates:

- Slightly higher in Inver Grove Heights for those reporting less than a High School education.
- Lower for every other educational attainment category.
- When looking at Inver Grove Heights and seeing that it is becoming more diverse with time, it is very important to look at educational attainment by racial and ethnic groups as well as poverty levels and median household income.

This information can be attained through the Census Bureau.

School Enrollment Data:

For further information people can contact him or reach out to the Department of Education.

- District 199 is Inver Grove Heights Schools
- District 196 reaches a bit into the City of Inver Grove Heights
 - 49.2% of total enrollment in the City of Inver Grove Heights, District 199: students reporting as persons of color or Native Americans.
 - Little bit higher than that share in District 196.
 - Younger populations in Inver Grove Heights, Metro Area, and the State of Minnesota are more diverse than older populations. Also seen for foreign born persons.
 - In Inver Grove Heights, those reporting as foreign born persons in 2014: 2,628 or 7.7% of the total population.
 - Increased to 3,726 as of 2019.
 - A little over 1,000 persons reporting as foreign born.
 - This grew over a period of five years.
 - As of 2019, a little over 1 in 10 residents of Inver Grove Heights reported as foreign-born persons, 10.5%.

- Foreign born persons are much younger than native born populations for Inver Grove Heights, the Metro Area, and the State of Minnesota.

When he presents and gives presentations, it usually hits upon seeing racial and ethnic diversity increasing. The same would also be heard from the Minnesota State Demographic Center, the Census Bureau, Minnesota Compass, Real Time Talent, or the Metropolitan Council. Those will show that we are becoming more diverse and see populations becoming older.

- Population Trends by Age for Inver Grove Heights:
 - Increases in residents reporting as 55- and 64-year-old, 65-74-year-old, and 75 years old and older.
 - Growth especially for those 55 and older.
 - Declines for 45-54-year-old likely due to the Baby Boomer Generation.
 - Likely due to those in the age group from 2014 moving toward the older age group in 2019.

The population is becoming a little bit older, becoming more diverse, the diverse populations are younger. It is very encouraging to see diversity increasing in Inver Grove Heights.

Additional information that was also done and briefly described include:

- Workers by Industry
- Occupational Group

Labor Force Statistics with Inver Grove Heights:

- There was an unemployment spike during COVID-19 in the spring months of 2020.
 - Down to 2.5% unemployment rates in Inver Grove Heights. Represents about 500 unemployed persons that are actively looking for work.

He suggested reaching out to the office if wanting unemployment figures, Labor Force figures, and information by demographics.

When looking at Labor Force Trends:

- In the State of Minnesota, the total Labor Force size pre-Pandemic to current has dropped by about 87,000 persons in Dakota County.
- Dakota County's Labor Force is down by about 7,500.
- Inver Grove Heights Labor Force Pre-Pandemic to now, is down to about 700.

These are not trends unique to Inver Grove Heights but is something when looking at hiring demand and the tight labor market, trends with aging, and with diversification.

Another thing to take into consideration is transportation, childcare, and affordable housing.

For the City of Inver Grove Heights in the 2020 Census there are 35,800. It is a growing city that is becoming more diverse.

Councilmember Murphy asked what the theory was on the decrease in individuals reporting at roughly 8-10 years and younger. He questioned if it was smaller families. Mr. O'Neill replied it could be, but he could check, and suggested Councilmember Murphy reach out to the office, and they could get that information for him.

Mayor Bartholomew asked the Community Development Director what the next step was. How they were going to relate this to Employers that are looking or Schools that are looking for partnership. Community Development Director Rand responded they have some of this data but need to update it on the city website. Staff would continue to have conversations with the River Heights Chamber and the

School Districts, which are well aware of the changes. If there is anything the Council would like Staff to do in presenting this information, Staff is open to their thoughts and suggestions.

Mayor Bartholomew addressed Mr. O'Neill and said he appreciated the information. He asked if the information would be made available to Staff and Staff would make it available to anyone that would like a copy. Mr. O'Neill responded yes.

Mayor Bartholomew mentioned he has a lot of questions just looking at the raw numbers. Mr. O'Neill responded that employment numbers can also be looked into, that could be broken down. There is also information about Industry Statistics: Firms, Total Payroll, Average Weekly Wages, and Trends for Establishments located in Inver Grove Heights or Dakota County.

Mayor Bartholomew stated that information is available. Please contact Community Development Director Heather Rand or City Clerk Becky Kiernan.

2. Progress Update on the Dakota County Regional Roadway System Visioning Study - City Project No. 2018-17

Public Works Director Brian Connolly mentioned that he started two weeks ago, this is his first Work Session. Tonight, Staff has members from Dakota County and the Consultant from Kimley Horn in attendance to provide an update of the Dakota County Regional Roadway System Visioning Study. He stated in October 2021, the Council approved entering into a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) with the City of Eagan and Dakota County to update the Regional Roadway System Visioning Study. This study was first completed by the County in 2010, this is the first chance they have had to update it. He said both Erin Labaree from Dakota County and JoNette Kuhnau from Kimley Horn would be presenting.

Erin Labaree, Assistant County Engineer with Dakota County, introduced herself.

JoNette Kuhnau, Consultant Project Manager from Kimley Horn, introduced herself.

Ms. Labaree stated she would be giving an overview of the Regional Roadway System Vision Study Update that was originally completed in 2010. She said she would give a high-level overview of the Study, and JoNette would be discussing the Traffic Analysis and Forecasting that is being worked on and the Schedule for the Study.

Ms. Labaree began with the Project Overview:

Study Area:

- Study area includes Eagan, Inver Grove Heights, Mendota Heights, and Sunfish Lake.
- Bounded by Trunk Highway 62 on the north.
- Diffley Road on the south.
- Trunk Highway 52 on the east.
- 35W/Lexington Avenue on the west.

This is the same study area that was done in 2010.

Need for Project:

The original Roadway Visioning Study that was done in 2010 had a long-term vision for the transportation network that projected out 20 years looking at potential impacts that development and growth that the city would have on the transportation network.

It looked at:

- Potential congestion areas and safety areas resulting from growth and what mitigation efforts would be needed to support growth through the city and on the transportation network.
- Since the original study was completed there has been significant growth and development in the city with some roadway projects being started. This includes:
 - Lone Oak and 70th Street project (ongoing)
 - Viking Lakes Development
 - Trunk Highway 55 and Argenta Intersection

Since the 2010 Study, the Comprehensive Plan has been updated. With the 2030 Studies, have seen a trend that less intense land use is being planned for resulting in traffic projections being less than what they are all planning for. They recently completed their 2040 Transportation Study for Dakota County and noticed a decrease in traffic projections throughout the County Roadway System. Due to these changes, they determined it was time to update the original study, look at the recommendations made back in 2010, see if they are still valid and if they need to include new recommendations.

Study Goals and Objectives:

Goal:

- Support the future growth and development in the cities and gain support from the affected jurisdictions including the cities in MnDOT.

Objectives:

- Meet existing needs on the roadway network.
- Planning for additional capacity needs as they see development occur and changes in the land use system.

The Study will be a planning level document that can be used to optimize future investments as they program 5-year plans and even further into the future.

Optimize Investments:

- Access to the Regional Transportation System.
- Spacing on arterial roadways.
- Looking at how any potential recommendations for expansion or interchange improvement would impact local roadway networks through existing neighborhoods.
 - Limit as much as possible.

Project Scope:

- Looking at 2040 baseline traffic numbers.
- Looking beyond at an ultimate buildout and what that might look at.
- The Study would look at:
 - Recommendations made in 2010.
 - Current and future land use.
 - Incorporate those into the alternatives that are evaluated.
- Recommendations:
 - Planning level.
 - Indicate any expansion needs on the roadway network.

- Looks at major intersections, capacity at those intersections, interchange improvements; specifically looking at the Argenta and 494 area.
- Timing of any potential recommendations or projects would not be addressed in that Study. It would be driven by development as it occurs through the city and as traffic grows.
- Will not provide details of a design level.

She mentioned at the public engagement there were a lot of questions about property impacts and roadway alignments. That is not the level of detail they are getting at; it is looking at expansion needs.

Project Process:

- At the start of the project, data was collected from cities and MnDOT for traffic and land use information.
- A Public Meeting was held in the fall to introduce the project to the public and the Agencies involved.
- Currently looking at doing traffic modeling and various scenarios.

From this point:

- Develop alternative recommendations.
- Develop a Draft set of Guidelines.
 - At this point they would come back to the public for engagement with cities to get input on the Draft recommendations.
- Have a final Study adopted.

Ms. Kuhnau stated they are in the analysis phase of the Study. There are initial findings as they are looking at land use and forecasting that informs/frames what might come out of the Study, which is being shared this evening. As they look at development trends and what the forecast land uses are, the previous study was based on 2030 forecasts. They are now looking at 2040 which is consistent with the Comprehensive Plans of cities and Dakota County.

- There are more households forecasted for 2040 compared with what they had in 2030.
- On the employment forecast, they see less retail employment than what was forecasted previously and more non-retail employment.
- This says, for example: Residential does not generate the same level of traffic as retail or office uses.
- Looking out to 2040, they are seeing traffic forecasts that are lower than what was previously forecasted.

Previous study looked at 2030 forecasts, now looking at 2040 forecasts:

Changes by different roadway types.

Beyond the 2040 Forecast - Households. A map was shown illustrating where the residential development is forecasted to happen by 2040.

- The dots depicted in blue show the residential development expected by 2040.
- The red dots identify beyond 2040. This says that the 2040 development is most of the way to being built out. There is only a small amount of residential development after 2040.

Mayor Bartholomew referenced the map shown and requested the boundaries of the area they were looking at. Ms. Kuhnau responded 494 is on the top of the map, 35E is on the left side, Highway 52 is

on the right, diagonally along the bottom is Highway 55 and 149. Public Works Director Connolly mentioned the far east/right side is actually Highway 3/Robert Street.

Ms. Kuhnau displayed a map depicting Retail Employment.

- Similar to the trend with households, expect most of the retail to be completed by 2040 with some retail development beyond 2040.
- To note: When talking about retail employment and how it relates to traffic forecast, it is land uses that generate customers.
 - Can include service type offices. Not just retail stores, includes other types of businesses that have people coming and going throughout the day.

Non-Retail Employment:

- Much of the non-retail employment, the black dots, depict what already exists.
- Noticed in terms of development, it transitioned away from multi story office, which was in some of the 2030 land use plans.
- Toward more warehouse and industrial uses, which generates traffic at a lower rate than multi story office.

Alternative Transportation Improvements:

A map was shown of the full study area with 35E on the west, 494 at the top, and Highways 55 and 52.

- 18 different improvements were identified that they are evaluating to understand whether they are needed.
- This includes all recommendations from the previous 2010 Study that have not yet been implemented. For example:
 - The proposed interchange at 494 and Argenta
 - Expansions on Highway 3
 - Number of lanes and the interchange, 149 and 494

Schedule:

- Currently in the analysis phase. Evaluating alternatives.
- Expect to bring more findings from the analysis out to the public and to each of the cities this spring as they move towards developing recommendations for the updated vision.
- Back before the Council sometime this spring.

Mayor Bartholomew referenced the map shown and said there were 17 or 18 spots. He asked if each one of those would be analyzed in further detail for need, traffic analysis, and the size improvement contemplated. He asked if he was correct that every one of those would be touched. Ms. Kuhnau responded that was correct. They are looking all 18 improvements and testing each one of them to identify if it is something that is still needed. In some cases, there may be two improvements analyzed and may need one or the other but not both. Those are the types of things they are looking at as they go through the traffic forecasting and analysis.

Mayor Bartholomew asked if public input/comment takes place after the analysis. Ms. Kuhnau replied yes, they plan to have another public open house this spring where they would present the analysis, some of the findings, and allow public comment. They expect to be out to each of the cities again to solicit their comments which would then lead to the final recommendations.

Mayor Bartholomew mentioned he looks forward to further information as it comes along. He requested that any updates get out to the public as quick as possible, notice of meetings, notice of input, or further study possibilities. He said they would look to their communication team to keep the Council and community apprised.

Mayor Bartholomew noticed that County Commissioner Atkins was in attendance and asked if he had anything to add regarding transportation.

Joe Atkins, 2463 78th Street, said he represents a large portion of Inver Grove Heights, but not most of this area. He said it is critical to the future of the Community. He mentioned as patterns are set out for future development, those at the County want to make sure they are good partners with this city and the City of Eagan, anticipating that there are going to be funding needs. For example, 117th Street. He said the farther out they can get ahead of things like this the more likely it is that they can get it appropriately funded, not just through City and County, but other possible partners as well. He said they appreciate the working relationship they have with the city and look forward to continuing.

Mayor Bartholomew appreciates the County's input and their relationship with the city.

3. Extension/Alignment of 65th Street from Robert Trail to Babcock

City Administrator Wilson stated this Agenda Item is definitely a challenging one. It is a subject discussed by various Inver Grove Heights City Council's over the years, many times, without resolution. It is one that asks to balance the competing desires and interests of the current day with those of the future. When talking about building roadways, particularly collector streets and arterial streets, they always reach a point where decisions made at a specific point and time affect the roadway structure for 10, 20, 50, even 80 years further out. Once development happens and parcels start to split down into individual single-family lots, there is little to no chance to retrofit for roadways and collector streets. She said that is another thing that makes this one difficult because they need to get it right the first time.

She stated the section they are discussing is 65th Street. She displayed a map of the area stating the yellow area shows approximate existing roadway. It is completed from Babcock east to Cahill, including a crossing over Highway 52. 65th is one of about 6 places in the city where there is an opportunity to cross over Highway 52. It exists from Robert Trail to the west. About 2/3 of what is on the map exists and is drivable today. The remaining connection out to Argenta is currently under construction. Contracts are out, work has been done, work will continue through this upcoming construction season. The middle section, the connection between the east side and the west side is what Staff would like to spend time discussing.

City Administrator Wilson said the Feasibility Study for this project was first ordered in 2016 and languished for quite a while. It was brought to the City Council in March 2020 just as the Pandemic was hitting. She said in reviewing the meeting minutes from March 9, 2020, the Council discussed COVID at the beginning of the meeting and then proceeded to discuss this subject along with other business items. She said there was a presentation of a Feasibility Report completed by WSB on March 9, 2020. After a lot of questions and discussion from the Council it was tabled until July 2020. At that time, it came back briefly with Staff saying they had conducted resident meetings and that it was hard to do

those meetings during the Pandemic. Staff said they had more yet to do and asked for additional time. It was brought back in November 2020. At that time, the Council received a Tree Study about the impacts of the future roadway on some high valued trees in the area and no further action on the Feasibility Report was taken. There is not an adopted Feasibility Report for this stretch of roadway.

She stated this section of roadway has a lot of challenges such as topography, cost, and tree removal. These are items they have struggled with throughout the northwest area when trying to tackle development. She mentioned she has observed in her short time here, that there is clearly a reason why this section of town is developing last, it is because it is a hard challenging section to develop. She said she has asked Staff and the Consulting Engineer to do tonight, is to take a step back from what those here when the Feasibility Report was presented saw, which was a comparison of the specific details of Options A, B, and C, about the alignment of the road. They are going to try to take a step back and talk about why this roadway connection is important and why it is needed. A continuous 65th Street has been called for in numerous City and County Transportation and Land Use Planning Documents for many years. It is in the 2010 Study they are working on updating now and in various Comprehensive Plans. The goal tonight is not to argue that the city should build it simply because it is in a plan somewhere, but to share why this segment of roadway is in that plan in the first place. What function would it serve, what benefit would it bring, and equally important, what is the potential or likely impacts of not building it, or at least continuing to plan for its construction. She said Staff is not seeking any votes or final decisions this evening but are hoping for robust discussion and a clear indication of where the Council is at regarding this roadway segment and what additional data/information is needed to bring about a final decision in the near term.

She said from looking at the minutes from the Council discussion when the Feasibility Report was first presented about two years ago, there was some discussion about why they were talking about this, there was not any current development proposed adjacent to the roadway, is not this a bit premature. She said they do have some development proposed and could almost argue they may be behind a little bit on this at this point. She referenced the Summergate Development, a roughly 77-acre parcel that would be bordered on the north by a future 65th Street extension and take up almost 1/3 of that segment. There is active development activity on that parcel. If the city wants easement for future 65th Street, connections, and/or wants development to share in a future cost of 65th Street, we are going to have to come to those conclusions and decisions in the coming weeks and months. That is one of the main reasons it is back in front of the Council this evening. It is no longer a theoretical discussion, much more of something they are going to have to make a decision on.

City Administrator Wilson welcomed Brad Reifsteck, from WSB and said that Brad completed the original Feasibility Report for the city and would be walking the Council through some of the engineering information.

Brad Reifsteck, Senior Project Manager at WSB, said he was here to present the Northwest Area Collector Street Study Revisited. He has been working with the city over the past several years on the Feasibility Report and some planned street improvement projects for the 65th Street corridor. He said he would be giving background information on the Northwest Area Collector Street, details about the 65th Street Corridor, discuss conclusions, and open it up for discussion with the Council.

Background:

The northwest area of Inver Grove Heights is a very important region for the city and has been studied extensively for more than two decades. The studies included:

- Natural Resources
- Alternative Urban Area Review
- Transportation Studies
- Hydrologic Studies
- Comprehensive Planning for the City of Inver Grove Heights and the City of Eagan

The Northwest Collector Street Study was a compilation of all of this work.

- It was a comprehensive and collective effort that represented the vision of local Officials, relevant Agencies, Stakeholders, and the general public for addressing the transportation needs of the northwest area including the 65th Street Corridor.
- The northwest area near the 65th Street Corridor is bound by the City of Eagan on the west and Babcock Trail on the east.
- 65th Street east of Babcock Trail is an existing 42-foot-wide roadway and is designated as a community collector.
- 65th Street west of Trunk Highway 3 is also a 42-foot-wide community collector and mostly completed except for the last 600 feet which would be completed this year, by the County as a part of the County's Argenta Trail project.
- The middle segment between Trunk Highway 3 and Babcock Trail is currently in the feasibility phase which is one of the first steps prior to the city ordering any improvements.

65th Street Corridor:

- Why are we here
- Why is the 65th Street Corridor planned
- Why is it needed
- What important purpose will it serve

Why is it planned:

- Each of the studies prior to the Northwest Collector Street Study dealt with a specific facet of the northwest area ranging from development scenarios to the regional roadway system.
- The one component that was not specifically addressed in any detail was the identification of a Collector Street Plan to serve the area.
- The Collector Street Study mapped out the community collectors and neighborhood collectors in more detail by:
 - Identifying horizontal and vertical alignments
 - Access points to the regional transportation system
 - The appropriate size of the roadway based upon traffic projections generated by the growth in the area
- The city needed to develop a plan for a collector street network in the northwest area to direct future development and to guide public transportation systems needs during the development review and approval process.

Why is it needed:

- In developing a collector roadway system there are certain design standards and guidelines that have to be met and followed such as:

- Access spacing
- Roadway size
- Sight distances
- Other important factors include:
 - Potential impacts to nearby properties
 - Extreme topography and terrain in the northwest area and its natural resources

All of these important factors, including the public involvement, help in determining the final routes. Planned routes are needed to provide excellent access to the neighborhood with routes that are coherent and connected. City Staff uses the plan as a guide as land develops. Planned routes do not always get built on the same alignment, the alignment evolves during the feasibility and final design phase of the project.

He referenced a map of the area indicating the blue line which reflects the proposed/planned 65th Street. The Argenta Trail planned route was pointed out as well as Agate Trail and Alverno Avenue. He stated as noticed on the map, planned routes do not always get built exactly as they are planned.

Middle Segment of 65th Street:

- 65th Street east of Babcock Trail is currently a 42-foot-wide collector street.
- The segment west of Trunk Highway 3 is mostly built and will be completed as a part of the Argenta Trail project.
- The middle section is the last section that has not been built.

A topography map of the area was shown. He said as they can see on the map, there are many constraints to building this segment.

- There is open space or park reserve property that the City of Inver Grove Heights owns depicted in green.
- There is an existing neighborhood just south of the planned route of 65th Street.
- There is a large gas pipeline that runs diagonally through the parcel from Babcock Trail all the way over to Trunk Highway 3.
- On the east end there are challenges:
 - The blue area is an environmentally sensitive area, it is an Oak Savannah. It is the area they went out and inventoried as a part of the Tree Inventory they did for the city.
 - With the Tree Survey, there were approximately 250 trees that were identified, with only 6 of the trees being Heritage Trees.
 - There is a large ravine that is outlined in red which would be very difficult to navigate unless a bridge, land bridge, or some type of structure is built across it.

Overall, the alignment for 65th Street has not significantly changed over the years because the planned alignment is the one that offers the most access to adjacent lands in this area.

Conclusions:

- The collector street network in the Northwest Area, 65th Street, was planned in part to accommodate good access to adjacent properties, provide excellent access to the traveling public, public safety, and neighborhoods, and would be used as a guide by city Staff as land development occurs.
- 65th Street would serve the region as an east/west collector and will ensure development in the area is completed in a coherent and connected manner.

Councilmember Murphy asked when referring to current alignment, if Mr. Reifsteck was talking about the dotted line that went straight across. He mentioned it was stated that the current alignment allows for the best access to adjacent properties. Mr. Reifsteck displayed a map and responded the dashed line shows the planned alignment. This is the best alignment that would provide access to nearby properties.

Councilmember Piekarski Krech said the road is feasible. She questioned when looking at the topography and other things in the area, if it was financially wise to do it this way. She looks at the destruction of some of the natural areas that is going to occur, and that Mr. Reifsteck spoke of a land bridge and the different things that would have to happen. She understands almost anything can be engineeringly feasible in some way. She asked if it made financial sense to complete this road this way.

City Administrator Wilson replied that brings the question if there were more financially feasible ways to access these parcels. She said there is a citizen submitted drawing as another way to provide road access to these parcels so that they might develop. It does not build an east/west collector street through the parcel. She said the Council may have also had this shared with them by the same person that shared it with her. She pointed out South Robert Trail, 494 on the top, and Babcock to the right, the eastern side. She pointed out an existing neighborhood of single-family homes, a parcel that the Council recently re-guided in the Comprehensive Plan which Staff anticipates a Development Application very shortly. She showed the Canvas Development located at the corner of 70th and Robert. She stated with this proposal someone would come across the 65th that is existing and instead of continuing straight, the road would pull them down south onto neighborhood streets that connect down into Canvas and go into streets that go out onto 70th. It provides a way to connect up to potential single-family development to the north of the 65th Street alignment. She said she did not have the engineering credentials to give an engineer's perspective of this but from a Staff perspective, this plan provides some attractive features. It goes around some of the more sensitive natural areas and leaves an area open.

She mentioned that as this plan was shared with her, it consists of entirely neighborhood streets. Neighborhood streets are paid for by the Developer when they develop a property. A collector roadway would have shared cost between bordering developments and the city. She said one might look at this and say it saves the city a lot of money, is more financially cost effective for the city than the alternative plan. Building out an area entirely with neighborhood streets presents its own challenges. A street system like this allows a person to get a car into the driveway of each and every one of the single-family homes. Many times, people are driving further past more single-family homes, creating more traffic in front of those streets, more potential conflict with someone backing out of a driveway, riding a bicycle, or walking a dog, because every road has all of these access points, driveways up and down it. When putting in a collector street it generally has other roads crossing it and the occasional driveway or two that cannot be planned around. For example: to reach a future single-family home if 65th Street existed, you could come across 65th Street from either place, turn north onto a street, and turn into that driveway.

She stated under the plan shown, if coming from the south on Robert, or Argenta, they would have to come down and go through all of the residential houses and turn and go up past more driveways,

around, and then up, to get into the same driveway. It is not just the driver of the vehicle of the person who lives in the house, it is School Buses, Mailmen, Door Dash delivery drivers, snowplows, and emergency vehicles, to get there. She mentioned for example, picture building a house; houses are built with a lot of studs to create the walls, they also have support beams and other portions of the structure that carry the load of the roof. If trying to build a house entirely with studs, it would not hold up, it is not strong or robust enough. If trying to build out a city street network only with neighborhood streets and skip the collectors and arterials, you would come up with a network that does not hold up in the same way. She stated that was the real challenge in trying to build out in this way. She said she was not here to say this type of structure would not be less expensive to the city. It would be less expensive. She questioned if it was the right thing to do for the development of the city 20, 30, or even 50 years from now. With a network like this, without the supporting collectors and arterials, there would be residents here complaining to future City Council Members about the cut through traffic and speeding by their driveways, by people who are in a hurry to get someplace in this web of neighborhoods. At that point it would be very difficult, if not possible, to retrofit that situation and provide a collector that was not provided when the land developed.

City Administrator Wilson mentioned another risk that is run into with something like this for example, would be if driving down 65th Street today headed east towards Robert, and there is a street here, people would continue across that street. People are accustomed to going a certain speed, they are headed for a destination somewhere. Now all of a sudden, they are dumped into a neighborhood/residential street with driveways, kids, and dogs, conflicts that exist in that type of area. It does not function as a well-done street. She responded there are more financially effective ways to build out a road network in this area. The challenge is to balance the need to be fiscally responsible with the need to plan for the long term of the city. This presents challenges in that area.

Mayor Bartholomew said there is no doubt the challenges are here and there are many. When he hears things, such as cost and when the County spoke of the study and stated that traffic needs have been on the decrease. He asked if they are prudent in the fact that this is needed. He hears that it is. He said if this were a lake, would they build a bridge across it, he did not know if they would. He mentioned the elevations are going from 40 foot low to 40 foot high, they have an elevation that is just insurmountable with the land bridge. There are natural resources they try to protect with the sedge meadow. They also have a 35% proposed, when it is an \$11.5 million dollar project which was designed in 2017/2018 and when the feasibility was made. In year 2021/2022 when the proposed road comes, it is going to be much higher than \$11.5 million. He mentioned they are contemplating a 35% assessment to property owners and minimal access. He asked about the benefit analysis. He questioned how they know the major property owners and people that are abutting this and are facing the assessment, how do they know it is justified. Those are things that he struggles with. There are rooftops in there now that are already in place and projects coming through with Summergate. His concern was cost, how they assess for it, and the ultimate need. He said they have a Feasibility Study that is old. City Administrator Wilson said the Feasibility Study was completed about 2 years ago.

City Administrator Wilson said that was what Staff is looking for feedback from the Council on. If the Council wants to see a refreshed Feasibility Study using the latest traffic analysis. That might be a request the Council could make of Staff, that they could go back and take action on. She said the

Council may say to Staff and the Consulting Engineer that they want to see an alignment that reduces the amount of trees taken down to the absolute lowest, or they want to see an alignment that cost the least. Staff needs to know what it is the Council would like to see and look for. She said this cannot be placed on the shelf for another two years and still respond to the Development Application they believe is coming. Developments could come in and construct with planned connections to a future 65th. They could plat in a way that preserves this right of way and leaves open the option for the future. She said it was not a choice between spending \$11 million dollars six months from now and decide to do it and never do it at all, there are a bunch of options in the middle once Staff understands what the most pressing concerns are. She stated she will not promise that it can be built inexpensively with no environmental impact, that perfect world does not exist. It would be a matter of seeing what they value the most and trying to minimize or maximize the impacts depending on what the value is. She mentioned this is a Council decision. When a plat comes before the Council to develop in this area, and they are expecting one next to Canvas, the Council has the legal authority to plat that through with streets that do not connect to a 65th Street. Staff wants to make sure they have provided the Council with all of the information needed and a full discussion of the issue before that would happen.

She stated what is depicted in WSB's map is a straight line across. That shows the alignment of 65th. It is projected if 65th were built there, there would be at least one or possibly two north/south streets running through. Not necessarily straight shots as noted in WSB's presentation. It is estimated as to where they might be and may shift a little bit the other way or the curve becomes more severe. If this were built, there is very much a plan that it would be used to access future development in the parcels to the north, the Summergate parcel, and the parcel between the road corridor and the Canvas Development. The road currently dead ends and would presumably continue up as development happens. This is not on any set timetable, but as parcels come in at some point in the future to the north. There is a plan for access to the developing areas.

Councilmember Gliva asked if there was any knowledge if Summergate has spoken with the gentleman on the plan that was plotted. She asked if they had an opinion. City Administrator Wilson responded they do not know what it is formally. The rough concept drawings they shared with the city was at the time they asked for a Comprehensive Plan re-guiding. It showed a north/south street coming up through the development and connecting to a future 65th and planned on a future 65th. She felt it was fair to assume it was because the Feasibility Study had been published to the website. It was exactly why they do Feasibility Studies to signal to the development community that this is what a city or a County forecasts or foresees there. She said that is not to say that they would not be opposed to putting 65th Street in. There is a very real cost to this street.

Councilmember Murphy said he sees the importance of the connection of 65th Street. He is concerned about the cost. He felt they should have done 65th Street before they had done a lot of different things. With the new and proposed developments that are going in, he felt like a little more information was needed if looking to connect the streets such as; what the routes would be, what would they run into, what were the alternative routes. He questioned if it were something they could get in a timely fashion. City Administrator Wilson responded the Feasibility Study shows 4 or 5. It varies on how the connection comes through. Staff can get that Feasibility Report to him. She said the Feasibility Report also proposes a phasing and breaks down a cost as to how it might be extended through to a certain

area and a future phase. She said the city owns road right of way on the northern edge of the existing single-family development. She was unsure if it was wide enough. Additional right of way would need to be acquired. She mentioned that the different routes vary slightly because they are connecting up with an existing street on the east and west side. There is only so much creativity you are going to get when you are bound to where you are going to come out on either end.

Councilmember Murphy said earlier it was mentioned that maybe the Council wanted a new Feasibility Study. He questioned what that might show. He meant a new one versus one that is two years old. City Administrator Wilson responded it was completed in March 2020. It would probably be considered an updated Feasibility Study versus new because the ground and terrain has not changed. She said they all know this Pandemic has impacted traffic patterns. Staff is left trying to guess how permanent they are versus what their patterns might be 20 or 30 years from now.

Mr. Reifsteck said the only thing he can think of is possibly exploring the western side of 65th Street. They did take a look at a few options on the eastern side. It makes it difficult to try to find any alternatives west of the middle section parcel with Harmon Park Reserve on the north and the existing neighborhood to the south. The opportunity is probably more on the western side of the planned corridor.

Councilmember Murphy asked if he was referencing the western side before Robert Street. Mr. Reifsteck responded yes.

Mayor Bartholomew said they know they have some right of way access already; they are looking at a large significant area that they do not have right of way. He requested walking through a scenario above the new development Summergate, out to Robert Street. They do not have right of way/property. They would have to acquire access property, he requested getting a good handle on what that dollar amount was going to be for the right of way acquisition. He asked what the mechanisms were pertaining to someone that does not want to sell. He did not want a condemnation battle. He wanted to make sure the benefit to public good warrants that kind of action. He said he thought they needed a refresh of the numbers to what the overall plan is. He was fairly certain it was not \$11.5 million given the need to be conscious of the environmental impact to the large tree sedge meadow. He wants to make sure they have full knowledge of what it is going to cost to the environmental impact of that area. He urged Staff and the Consultants to get them closer to what they need to talk about. The urgency is upon them with a development that wants to develop. Having something on paper that shows where a street would go, what it costs, what the connections are going to be, is it prudent, can we pay for it, and what are the mechanisms needed for us to pay for it. He said there is 35% that is going to be assessed, that is a portion of this. There was other funding that he had discussed with the City Administrator in the past, MSA, those are committed and already out. He said they have a long way to go before they could even build that up.

City Administrator Wilson stated there is more work to do to determine how it would be paid for. One route they would look at would be how a section of 65th was paid for, what the percentages were, and what was found to be the benefits to the development on the north and south of this section of 65th. She said Staff can do that, Staff can work with the Consultants to update the estimated costs including

specifically right of way acquisition in areas it might be needed as well as construction costs. They can provide options for how it might be funded.

Mayor Bartholomew said he was familiar with the Feasibility Study but does not see clear access points to 65th. He said to make sure they have clear access to the north/south connections to 65th Street. City Administrator Wilson responded Staff could provide estimates, but those would be based on where the development comes in.

Mayor Bartholomew said those were his concerns, the Council needs to have those in front of them, the quicker the better.

Councilmember Gliva agreed with what has been said. She said it looks easy to put the yellow line across. It is a huge dollar amount to commit to. She mentioned when someone says land bridge, she felt like they really need to make sure they want to do that.

Mayor Bartholomew mentioned he does not want them looking at an area where they are going in with 30-foot-high retaining walls and up and down and up and down. That tells that the terrain may be insurmountable. He requested getting a better handle on what it is going to look like, what in fact the overall effect of going from an 80 foot or 40-foot-high grade with 60-foot trees on it, and what happens to the site elevation when looking at it when the trees are gone. He did not feel they touched on those important issues. He said these were some of the things they (Council) have to look at as a body and make sure they want to take the next step. There are some hard dollars to talk about and some hard property decisions to be made with the people that own property in this area.

Councilmember Piekarski Krech said it was possible to do. She questioned if they want this area to look like 70th Street does now, because that is what is going to happen. She would like to avoid that. City Administrator Wilson responded that 70th Street would not look like that forever. It will take years and years for it to grow back. Councilmember Piekarski Krech said it would never be what it was.

City Administrator Wilson said they have guided this for single family development, and it is in the MUSA area. There are conflicting forces. Councilmember Piekarski Krech mentioned they have a big chunk that is not in the MUSA too, the Arlene/Athena area is not in MUSA. City Administrator Wilson responded it is not. Between what has already been approved at Canvas, the numbers approved at Summergate, and a loose assumption of two units per acre in an area, they could be pushing 500 units of housing just on this side of it. Prior to Canvas starting to be built, there were maybe 5 units of housing in the area.

Mayor Bartholomew suggested discussion on avoiding the Arlene area that is out of the MUSA and see if they can work out a plan with north/south to the west of that area, the neighborhood that is out of the MUSA line. He asked if that was something they can look into. He asked if they are forced into that, with prior requirements to connect Arlene. He suggested finding out. City Administrator Wilson responded the Feasibility Report showed a phasing plan of bringing it to a location and then maintaining the ability of possibly going the rest of the way at some point in the future. Going that far provides access in

and out for the development. In some ways it delays the point at which way people get stymied from traveling east/west. It moves it further over.

Councilmember Piekarski Krech stated it puts all of that at 65th and Robert. Having known the people that have died at that intersection many years ago, it has changed a little bit, but not that much. To her the 65th and Robert intersection is a death trap if they start getting a lot of traffic coming through there. She said she does not see the State's plan. There are big gullies on each side of Robert Street there. She does not see them expanding Robert Street into something with turn lanes. She is very concerned about that whole intersection.

Public Works Director Connolly said he would refer to City Engineer Kaldunski because his tenure here has been short so far and he is still being brought up to speed on this issue. He said he knows that there have been a number of previous studies where there has been information provided with respect to potential development and traffic loads. He has seen the same Draft Feasibility Report that the Council has seen and recognizes there are a number of challenges with this corridor. There are a lot of things to weigh. He appreciated the feedback received this evening as it gives Staff more direction to kickstart the conversation and make determinations here hopefully in the near future.

City Engineer Tom Kaldunski mentioned that he is very familiar with the project. He said the feedback they received tonight would help them find out what the right thing to do in the end would be. It makes him think as they look at going forward. He said the Consultant, himself, and others, can start looking at the comments the Council has given Staff as direction and start looking at ways to reduce retaining walls, less trees, or concerns with safety at Highway 3. He said it seemed strange to think of a roundabout there, but there may be other traffic ideas such as a semaphore, or a proper traffic control at that intersection. This is something they could look at for costs or safety, it does add costs. He said he is beginning to sense that it might be a very good thing to have WSB do a virtual reality view of the road. They used that on the 70th Street project with the County. That became a very good way for people to envision the 3D effects, which is a big part of what he is hearing from the Council tonight. He said he could see something like that being a very good idea to consider. It does cost a little bit of money, but they are able to do things so much nicer with virtual reality items now. He suggests something like that as well.

Mayor Bartholomew said he would like some consideration given to the north/south connection to 65th. Something to the west from the new development that is coming, Summergate. Some kind of connection there that goes north/south, some type of planning of how that works. He requested the Canvas north/south there. When getting further down to the neighborhood out of the MUSA, they consider just a northern connection only, no connection into the exception neighborhood. If the time comes down the road that they want to connect, everybody wants to connect, there is an opportunity.

City Engineer Kaldunski wanted to make sure the Mayor was referencing Arlene. Mayor Bartholomew responded yes. City Engineer Kaldunski said he wanted to make sure he had the right road in mind. There are options to phase a lot of things. Phasing is definitely something for them to consider.

Mayor Bartholomew suggested reaching out to Councilmember Dietrich to see if she has any concerns and would like to add some thoughts to this. City Administrator Wilson responded that Councilmember Dietrich has indicated she would be viewing tonight's tape after the fact. She said she would make sure to connect with her and get her thoughts. Mayor Bartholomew suggested getting the bullet points of what the Council has discussed.

City Administrator Wilson stated she does not have anything else to share. She has made a list as the Council has talked. She believes that Public Works Director Connolly and City Engineer Kaldunski have as well. She mentioned it is helpful to Staff as to where to go next and how to help the Council move towards a decision.

B. Adjourn:

Motion by Piekarski Krech, second by Gliva, to adjourn the meeting at 7:31 p.m.

Ayes: 4

Nays: 0 Motion carried.

Minutes prepared by Recording Secretary Sheri Yourczek.