

**CITY OF INDEPENDENCE  
FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING  
MAY 21, 2024  
IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING  
COUNCIL CAUCUS & VIA ZOOM**

**MINUTES**

Present: Chairman Kevin Day  
Councilperson John DiGeronimo  
Councilperson Tom Narduzzi

Also Present: Mayor Gregory P. Kurtz  
Vice Mayor Anthony Togliatti  
Councilperson Jim Trakas  
Councilperson Dale Veverka  
Councilperson Walchanowicz  
Finance Director Vern Blaze  
City Engineer Don Ramm

Finance Director Blaze said (inaudible) how things are going in the first four months, and doing okay, revenues, revenue's solid, haven't gotten into our debt service payments really yet. Starting to give away at some of the capital expenditures, infrastructure projects, and the normal operating expenses, but we could go page by page, and just kind of compare the first four months of this year through last any number of years past and what our budget estimates are for 2024 in the final right column. If anybody has any questions or if you want to follow up on this document in more detail call, stop in, send an e-mail, whatever. I'll be more than glad to review it in more detail if you want.

Chairman Day called the meeting to order. Roll call.

He said I believe Mr. Ram is going to do a presentation for us today. Do you have a handout for us?

Finance Director Blaze said you have a handout, and it will be up there too.

Chairman Day said hot off the presses is my understanding. It's so hot that we did not have it.

Finance Director Blaze said it's so hot that even the Finance Department didn't see it.

Mayor Kurtz said Mr. Chairman, if I may relay the fact that we passed our health insurance. At the mayor's meetings, we've been talking about different costs for municipalities and the three big ones that we face with negotiations this year are an increase in health insurance, the cost of wages, and then this, we're not sure where it stands with the pension; three major cost components that we're going to have to deal with. So, we'll keep you up to speed on what's going

---

---

on in Columbus. We need to start framing after we get done with this, framing strategy for negotiations for this fall.

I just say that because those three elements are going into play, and we already know what health insurance is, and so you have to determine what your strategy is going to be, and then the wages are wages, and then the pension is something that's really up in the air right now. Jim may be able to shed some light on that as we get closer, but that may be a lame-duck initiative. It may be something for 2025, but everyone's engaging that more and more. So, that's where we're at with those three major cost components that are going to affect us beyond 2024.

Councilperson DiGeronimo said just my own knowledge, with our health insurance all city employees are eligible to participate in the plan, Police, Fire. The construction unions that I'm familiar with, there's a pension component, and those members also have the health and welfare plans. So, if we didn't offer a health insurance plan, is there something available for Police and Fire that they could participate in?

Finance Director Blaze said through their union but not through their (inaudible).

Councilperson DiGeronimo asked there's not a stand-alone health plan for active employees? Every city has their union employees on, even a small city that...

Mayor Kurtz said yeah, I don't know. There may be some, that could be the exception, not the rule.

Councilperson Narduzzi said it depends on how much the city puts forward.

Councilperson Trakas said (inaudible), but it's really small. It's like a couple of townships and things like that. It's smaller ones.

Chairman DiGeronimo said thanks.

Chairman Days said so, to set the stage today, I did ask Don to come forward. I think we were more focused on 2024, possibly 2025, knowing that, you know, it's a five-year plan, but we haven't really looked that far out. You have, but you haven't been focused on that. Is that a fair assessment? So, I said at least to get started, let's relook at 2024 or partially through the year, so we can focus on that part and 2025. Is that accurate kind of?

City Engineer Ramm said yes, but when you're populating the sheets, we have a lot of large ticket projects, so invariably, I was filling out years to the right. So, in essence, you know, I'm not finished yet, everything's here, but there's a lot of things that were carried forward from a lot of prior years. So, what I've yet to do is add a list of new projects that need to still be added, but there's plenty to go through with the ones that were on and just updates. So, that's what I thought we would focus on today. So, pushing forward, just starting out with the easy ones, the maintenance contracts.

---

---

Historically, we've been adding \$25,000 every year, and it's been going along nicely. We also have occasion when we budget for other streets, we were able to package up a nice contract with the asphalt program because of this money partnered and coupled up with other streets that might have designated funding further back in these sheets. It's been a nice mechanism. In these contracts, we perform a lot of work, and as we reconstruct and rebuild neighborhoods and streets, more of our streets are moving to the good category and less are in the poor to failed category. It's good that we keep adding, I think that's just a good MO to keep adding to the budget for maintenance going forward with these programs. So, nothing too shocking with any of them, asphalt, concrete.

Mayor Kurtz asked if most of these are grind and overlay and the asphalt.

City Engineer Ramm said yeah, and the asphalt, correct. Yep. That tends to be what fits.

Mayor Kurtz said some periodic sub-base repairs, but primarily it's just a grind and overlay.

City Engineer Ramm said roads that are appropriate to do that sort of treatment to extend the surface life of the pavements. We'll talk about some of the ones that are going to be coming up on the program here in the next five-year period. Those will be standalone projects, nothing really big to go over unless there are any questions.

Chairman Day asked if this is the typical, annual base, what you guys would put in there.

City Engineer Ramm said yes.

Councilperson DiGeronimo asked Don if we will have like large capital projects, you know, those stand out year-to-year even, you probably remember, but like within our maintenance contracts, are we using the new system to kind of track exactly where we work, through the GIS. So, if you name a street Josephine or something, you could tell what something small that might have been done under a maintenance contract on that road, does that exist?

City Engineer Ramm said we're trying to get there, not presently. We have to just do things old fashioned, dig through our appendixes. We're very regimented and detailed on where the work is performed in any given contract. So, we'd have to do some hunting and pecking to try to, if a question came up as to, you know, 2-3 years ago.

Councilperson DiGeronimo asked when was the last time we did that?

City Engineer Ramm said yeah, so we can be certain. Yep.

Mayor Kurtz said but you have the data when you resurface the roads.

City Engineer Ramm said oh, yeah, we have it. Yeah.

Councilperson DiGeronimo said so, this is something small. This is some of the catch basin work.

---

---

City Engineer Ramm said yeah, these sorts of maintenance activities are a small amount of work in a lot of different areas. So, it's hard to track that way, but ideally, that would be a goal once we're up and running better. With the GIS, we'd be able to track it much, much more efficiently.

Several people began speaking at once.

City Engineer Ramm said the sanitary was one that I felt was appropriate coming out of our last meeting with the Utilities Committee, with the charge to try to do more with those vendors and with these contracts to try to just throw in a little more chunks. You see the way the number is growing from year to year is a little bit more aggressive than the other ones above it. So, that's just to try to, again, there's a lot of sewers out there, a lot of feets to clean and televisise, and just to try to make better use of the contracts and do more work and get into more neighborhoods. Historically, we talked a lot about in a five-year period trying to get through the entire city in a five-year period, and with the small amount of funding, even when we use it 100% completely, we're nowhere close to getting through it, you know, 20% of the city in the five-year period. So, I think that's another reason and the justification to increase the funding to try to get more towards that goal.

Councilperson Narduzzi asked do those contractors have the volume to do more?

City Engineer Ramm said yes, I believe so, and with our own crews.

Mayor Kurtz asked with our new equipment, our new camera equipment, and new sewer equipment would be able to supplement or augment some of that outside vendor cost?

City Engineer Ramm said sure. It's just a matter of manpower, staffing, and committing to a regiment and attacking it.

Councilperson Trakas said to that point, and this isn't the appropriate place to talk about, but I would like to try to have it maybe at the next Utilities Committee meeting. How can we work with the vendors more closely to utilize that equipment? I know you indicated that it's hard to have an outside party to utilize that equipment and go through all the work with the departments, and like you said, some of the labor cost issues that we're obviously anticipating, a blend of employees and vendors would be very important. So, wanted to see if we could put that up for our next Utilities Committee meeting, if we could kind of get some meat around the bones about that. We've got this idea on how to do it, and you've got some resources to do it, but you know, I don't think we're going to go out and hire 10 people or whatever it might be. Just hold that thought, if we can, and then how we can work with the vendors, if they need equipment, how that might be able to happen. Is that okay?

City Engineer Ramm said okay. If there aren't any more questions on this page, we'll push forward. Street striping, nothing shocking. That \$276,000 that's presently encumbered, that was a late 2023 bid, but readily set up for 2024 and 2025, a two-year striping contract. So, then we just pushed that number up and plugged it in for 2026 and 2028, you know, two-year program, and increased it accordingly. So, that's pretty simple there.

---

---

Water main breaks, kind of similar as we have the old mains getting older. We're doing fine with the \$150, but just trying to plug in, be conservative, and throw in another \$25,000 every year, nominal amount, and if we don't use it, all the better. We can adjust going forward. Simple numbers there. The next handful of projects have been closed or are in the process of being closed, at least the top couple there. Really nothing to speak to on Lafayette and upper Brookside. I think those may have been some, Finance Director Blaze, would those be PO's that are available money still?

Finance Director Blaze said I forget when you, myself, and Maggie were sitting at this table, and we were trying to review all those old PO's. Remember that, and we didn't close these out for some reason. I'm assuming that you said you still needed them to stay open for whatever reason. You're at the point where you know that Lafayette is now, finally after all these years, 100% closed out. Same thing with the upper Brookside one. We could close these POs out, and that would give us almost \$450,000 there to work with for whatever purposes Council set aside to reappropriate those funds for.

City Engineer Ramm said yeah, I'll definitely look at those. Just at the first initial glance, I'm inclined to think that that's the case, but we'll double-check those. Kleber Court, that job wrapped up last year, we're doing some final restoration here still. Just this past week, trying to just clean things up through the winter and spring. I do believe we'll be still in the black when the job is completed and finalized. Longano, that's current. It's under construction. I believe that probably the \$1.2 million, Vern, was probably something that was needed to authorize the \$2.73 million contract with TriMor. So, that takes us down to the bottom there, future streets.

Mayor Kurtz said Don, a quick question that's just for everyone's knowledge. The water line didn't test out?

City Engineer Ramm said it did, yes. Bacteria and the pressure and I think they're complete transfers, or they will be complete in the next day or two for everybody up and down the street. So, the old main will be abandoned, and they'll be on the new main, and it's three, I think three separate crews out there with TriMor. So, they're really getting after it. Dominion's contractor was out there last couple weeks, and they just left. So, it was a lot of action going on down there. Storm sewer, rear yard storm sewer is going in, a lot of activity. Residents have been really good putting up with a lot of work and very little complaints, if any, and it's been good. Weather's been cooperating fairly dry and very few cancellation days. So, it's been good.

Second Street, that street has been on our list now for a number of years, it's in very poor condition, the road pavement, the water main also, I believe under Cleveland Water, even under their own information is in poor condition. It hasn't broken in a while, but it's been on our list. So, as we've been marching one major reconstruction a year, I think Second Street is a good candidate to plug in there. It's 700-800 feet, it's not overly long, it's tired. The pavement is tired, so this is setting up some engineering money in 2024, and then the crux of the work in 2025. At least an issue, this is a very preliminary, my first attempt to try to plug things in certain years.

Ash, Poplar, and Willow, again, has been on our list. It's been pushed back, but the roads are in decent shape, and then the main is poor. I mean, decent enough, but it's ready to be, I'm not

---

---

saying they're great, but there aren't a lot potholes and it's a pretty smooth ride still. Cosmetically the streets are tired and in need of replacement, so I'm proposing some engineering money budgeted for 2024, 2025 and then, again, 2025 and 2026 for construction. It was up there in the millions, and that job would consist of pretty much similar to Lafayette, where we kind of tried to save the pavement. The curb and gutters are in nice shape. We would put a new water main in and then new sidewalks. The subdivision is in need of sidewalks, both sides of the street, and then on our way out, we would resurface the subdivision. So, it would look very much similar to Lafayette on the way out there. It's less than a complete reconstruction, but it's, you know, you hate to rip the road out when the base is good, and just really needs resurfacing. So that's the treatment that we're requesting.

Councilperson Walchanowicz said I have a question on that one. You said sidewalks on both sides of the street?

City Engineer Ramm said but for any engineering, any good practical difficulties, things like that.

Councilperson Walchanowicz said well, I understand, like my side of the street has got mailboxes, fire hydrants, and telephone poles. That would put sidewalks like 12-feet into my front yard if we're doing both sides of the street.

City Engineer Ramm said yeah, we haven't looked at it real hard. Generally, our mantra is to try to you know, when they fit grades are fairly flat through there, so there wouldn't be any challenge. It seems like they could be engineered relatively easily. Now the question would be, can we fit them in the right way and keep them without moving pole lines.

Councilperson Trakas asked is that street to code? Isn't it a little smaller than most streets? If you go in there, you might have to.

City Engineer Ramm asked the pavement itself?

Councilperson Trakas said the pavement itself.

City Engineer Ramm said no, I thought it met the standard.

Councilperson Trakas asked, does it?

Councilperson Walchanowicz said it has to be at least 17 feet.

City Engineer Ramm said, and 26 is our minimum. It might be 17-18 to asphalt, and then you got a 2 ½-inch curb and gutter on each side, (inaudible), but we would look at that.

Mayor Kurtz asked do you think there's a safety issue? Because I haven't heard of anything.

Councilperson Trakas said like I say, it looks smaller than most of our streets.

---

---

Finance Director Blaze said meaning narrower.

Councilperson Trakas said yeah.

Finance Director Blaze said on the plus side, the narrower it is, we can keep the traffic speeds a little lower too.

Councilperson Walchanowicz said no it doesn't.

City Engineer Ramm said so, a nice, new surface isn't going to help either.

Councilperson Narduzzi said for Second Street, we have to think about the Saint Michael's School drop-off and pick-up. Maybe that driveway next to the Barber shop, incorporate that somehow, and they can use that as their in or out.

City Engineer Ramm asked during construction when that road's ripped out?

Councilperson Narduzzi said yeah.

Mayor Kurtz said the school is working with the City right now. They're planning on coming through the parking lot, our parking lot next to their buildings, and then going where it cuts around the back, where that trailer used to be, they haven't done anything because they have to asphalt one section right there and then they'd wrap around Old Rec Hall. Then, they'd have safe access for the children trying to find the buses right in front of the school, then they can find their way out instead of trying to back up onto Chestnut and trying to fight their way to get right around that small loop. So, that's the strategy right now.

Councilperson Narduzzi said (inaudible) a permanent roadway.

Mayor Kurtz said well, temporary, we'll see how it works

Councilperson DiGeronimo said I don't think parents are coming in off a Second now, they're coming off of Chestnut.

Mayor Kurtz said the buses I think use Second Street, so buses are probably there.

Councilperson Narduzzi said correct, the buses are coming off Second Street.

Finance Director Blaze said something about the parking lot, but it was inaudible.

Mayor Kurtz said no, the parking lot will still be there, just at certain times there might be some traffic, but there's not a lot of cars that park in there. There are 3 parking lots, I should clarify, there's the Saint Michaels parking lot for their buildings, there's the City's small, narrow parking lot that they'll be parking on one side, next to that is the big parking lot, So, this would be the narrow parking lot with traffic on one side, coming in, going behind their building, and will wrap around Rec Hall. Your other point is well taken about alongside our building, on either side,

---

---

someday when we put that master plan together, but this is to eliminate the concerns of safety right now, coming in off and the log jam on Chestnut, and then they're fighting for a position all the time trying to get in there.

Finance Director Blaze asked you head west off of Brecksville Road through that parking lot and then you turn left or south?

Mayor Kurtz said yes, where the trailer used to be.

Finance Director Blaze said yeah, there's some big trees, there's grass there. That's going to be eliminated?

Mayor Kurtz said no, no, just there's one little, small section from the asphalt to the transition there where their parking lot was.

Finance Director Blaze said used to be.

Mayor Kurtz said, and then there's where the old trailer was. That's all paved now, so there's one little section between our parking lot and their whole parking lot they used to have.

Chairman Day said we should probably when we get to the details on Second Street, we should probably take a good hard look at that as part of the plan.

Mayor Kurtz said your point is well taken.

Mayor Kurtz said how are we going to manage this long term, and with Saint Michael's, one of the things, the uncertainty of what's the future potential of Saint Michael's and their property and our property and the master plan. We have met several times, and they've come up with several different sketches, but nothing, very preliminary, nothing I would present to Public Lands or Council at this point.

Chairman Day asked if there was anything else on page 5. There was nothing. I guess we're moving on to page 6.

City Engineer Ramm said Dalebrook. So, Dalebrook could fall under two different types of treatments, and largely predicated on how much amount of extensive work we want to try to do with the storm sewers. We all know it's an original water main, the water main needs to be replaced, and that's undebatable. The storm sewers have issues with the calcification and encrustation and have been some challenges throughout the years. So, the thought would be that by the time you might go in there, and remember you got to build a new water main aside from the existing one, so by the time you rip up a spot for that and rip through a lot of those curves, those pipe tangents go kind of straight manhole to manhole, so you could be ripping up whole sections of pavement lanes. So, the thought was to try to whole scale, replace in totality, storm sewers and water mains.

By that time, you might as well just rip the whole road out, but to do that the prices are astronomical. Those are long streets, and when you think about paying two and three million for

---

---

Kleber and Longano, it was up towards of \$10 million a year or two ago for a complete reconstruction, so that's why these numbers are budgeted out a good number of years if that was the goal, to try to do that, afford and pay and budget for a \$10 million or \$12 million project 5-10 years from now. Hence why in terms of the resurfacing the payment that's out there, if we needed to extend the surface life to get us to that point, there could be a consideration to go try to do a mill and fill now.

Mayor Kurtz asked have you given any thought to that long section, the first section, treating the construction portion differently because of the traffic on the entrance portion? It gets double the traffic of the rest of Dalebrook, Dalepoint or Montello. At one time, 25 years ago, we did look at that. I think when (inaudible) put it in originally, that section, we did something a little different. It seems to have held up pretty well.

City Engineer Ramm said that's probably the nicest stretch, is that stretch closest to where the original homes and I was shocked.

Mayor Kurtz said we should research what they did. They either sub-based it with concrete or some material and then we surface-coated it.

City Engineer Ramm said it's noticeably better. I was shocked that even the Mannequin Smith graded that stretch the same as the back end because I would have assessed it more like fair or good versus poor.

Mayor Kurtz said we should find out what the treatment was for that because I know they consciously did it because they knew the amount of traffic, and they wanted to try something different. I think it works well, and you can grind overlay that surface and that's all you have to do just for the water main.

Councilperson Walchanowicz asked if we can't find that information, can you do a core sample on something like that to find that out?

Mayor Kurtz said for sure.

Councilperson DiGeronimo asked so, we did a large project 25 years ago there?

Several people began speaking at once.

Councilperson Narduzzi said it was the first sidewalks.

Finance Director Blaze said they got one in the mid-80s, then we had it again in the 90s or 2000s. That's when the sidewalks went in and now we're doing it again.

Councilperson Trakas asked would that have been 99, maybe? Yeah, you were right about 99, I think that's when it was.

City Engineer Ramm said so, that pavement surface is 24- 25 years.

---

Mayor Kurtz said it's seasoned, I can tell you that much, but it's not like it's a full through street, a lot of traffic, but it's all local traffic. You're not getting a lot of truck traffic, but you're not getting like some of the other streets. So, you're like a Chestnut, or you know, those streets are (inaudible).

City Engineer Ramm said so, the overall plan to try to lessen the cost would be to try to treat it similar to what we're talking about with Willow to just try to salvage the pavement, and we've been doing a lot of good regimentation of replacing curb and gutter with these maintenance contracts. So, those have all been upgraded, and you could to try to save money, time and inconvenience to the residents because those projects are much more, they're not as significant to a resident as a reconstruction is.

Mayor Kurtz said the other issue they have there, it's an anomaly, I think of sorts because the calcium is in the storm sewers.

City Engineer Ramm said right.

Mayor Kurtz said we've done some maintenance; we've sent the professionals in to try and alleviate that problem. I'm not sure what success we've had, but would that be a part of that project, and would you oversize those?

City Engineer Ramm said it could be, yeah. There's not a capacity issue, I don't believe.

Mayor Kurtz said but if the calcium builds up, unless we have the tools or the equipment that can just grind it out.

City Engineer Ramm said, and grinding it, we've been successful, but we could potentially line all those sewers after cleaning, and then just the liner would forever prevent that problem from occurring. That's expensive.

Mayor Kurtz said those liners really are, they've made those so much more efficient by going in there and then either spraying or actually pulling the liner through and then expanding it and the lateral portion. It's some of the technology I witnessed last week were like wow factor.

City Engineer Ramm said, and that trenchless is, that's a keyword because it does minimize inconvenience. Everything is done below ground. It has its costs, but it's all of the collateral damage that you avoid and save.

Mayor Kurtz said these sanitariums with the old joints and stuff, with these liners, it's amazing how they can, I watched. Somehow, they collapse it, pull it through, pop it out and then have a lateral machine just go pop the laterals, open them up to tie them in, so everything's underground and the cost is so much more efficient.

City Engineer Ramm the key is being able to clean the whole pipe. The original pipe has to be clean so that liner can expand. That segment that was down by Montello the easement was so bad that CATTS had to open cut it and dig it out because all the equipment even with C&K's

---

specialized equipment, they could not get through the problem there, so then we had to pay the big money, excavate and replace it the old fashion way. So, that's what we really need to determine if that's going to be predominant throughout the subdivision or if that just was an anomaly and everything else can be cleaned and such that it could be lined. Those are the things I think then will trigger or dictate whether we rip the whole road out or are able to salvage the streets.

Chairman Day said you got plenty of time. (inaudible), not going to happen between now and then. Thank you. Alright, let's get on to the next one, if we could, which is Eastview.

City Engineer Ramm said this one was Eastview to Brecksville Road. We had had this on more of a shorter duration project, but then when we got to the preliminary engineering halfway through it to start, we realized that we were looking at a \$5-6 million project, complete reconstruction. So, that's why it was pushed, and we did resurface the street in late 2022, I believe. So, the road is in nice condition, and brought us some time to budget for the remainder project. New water main, that would include new water main, new storm sewers, complete reconstruction, concrete, pavement, sidewalks, very similar to upper around the corner. Stone Road. I believe we had designated some funding in anticipation of the Concordia development, to try to support whether or not their utilities might need to be upgraded, water mains, storm sewer systems on Stone Road to help support Concordia because ideally, we think there might be a requirement or a desire to loop what we refer to as looping utilities. Then, coming off of Brecksville Road, ideally, you could get looped back to Stone and make for some good redundancy, and in that vein, Stone Road, I believe the water main is probably not in the best condition and we might want to upgrade it. So, we just threw some money in there, 2025-2027. I don't know if there's a designated project yet that's been identified, but it's just purely a budgetary exercise, placeholders and plumbing for future work that's identified.

Going on to sheet 7, here's where I mentioned earlier, we have a number of these roads that have been more County routes, so we would be eligible for some outside funding through the County, but Hillside Road was last resurfaced in 2010 and 2011. So, it's, you know, coming due there in the next foreseeable five-year period. We ought to start thinking about plugging away some money, and I'm just throwing in 2026 for Hillside Road. That should say west, it does not, but it should say west. The section up by Hawthorne Trace to Brecksville Road, that stretch seems like it's taking a beating more so than the easterly side I think with that new development. So, a lot more action, and the road I think is going to need to be resurfaced sooner than the east section.

Mayor Kurtz said these are placeholder numbers, but we talked several years ago about what those undulations from a safety standpoint, eliminating those, and also the water line condition. Those are major costs, but I don't see where we haven't really addressed those.

City Engineer Ramm said that water main and culvert extension shows up somewhere else down the list but yeah, these numbers are purely resurfacing.

Councilperson Narduzzi said so, that one by Joe's old house, like that gas line goes through that, that's the reason I thought we couldn't cut that down.

---

City Engineer Ramm asked the big transmission mains?

Councilperson Narduzzi said yeah.

Mayor Kurtz said well, there's one section, but one of those.

City Engineer Ramm said yeah, we looked at that, we had that preliminary engineered and the costs were pretty significant, but we did think that we would package it with the water main replacement there, and now that's not reflected here. We could get that in the next round.

Mayor Kurtz said you can talk about that when you get back.

City Engineer Ramm said yes, we can populate that. Chestnut Road was last resurfaced in 2010. So, 20 years, we anticipate in 2030 that probably need to resurface that again, so just starting to plug away some funding, and again, we should be eligible for some County funding that's not reflected here. East Pleasant Valley Road, Seven Hills to Brecksville Road. The water main is really bad, and when it breaks it's painful because it's near the interchange, and it's a lot of collateral damage that occurs. That main is definitely in need of replacement, so we thought the next time Pleasant Valley was due to be resurfaced with the County, that we would want to replace the water main as part of that project. So, that's these big dollar values, and we are trying to just get out ahead of it and starting to throw money on a budget document to try to get ready for that. Similar to what we did with from Brecksville East, you know, that was a number of years ago in 2015, we did very similar. We replaced the water main, storm sewers, widened it a little bit. So, that's kind of what this project is on the list for.

Councilperson DiGeronimo said but Don, that Pleasant Valley, I mean, take four more years of \$1.5 million.

City Engineer Ramm said generally, yes. That's probably what, I ran out of years, but that's why I put the 2032 to give you an idea what the likelihood is, and I'd have to revisit my numbers. Maybe what I'll do too is maybe plug in left of the project titles, the total dollar value so that you can kind of understand, you're not guessing that that's what my intent was. I have those numbers; I just didn't show it to you, but I can do that.

Councilperson DiGeronimo said that's like what Ron did. He had all these big numbers.

City Engineer Ramm said Sprague Road Culvert replacement, this has been on our list. We're just trying to be prudent and throw some money at it. It would be a shared project. The culvert's old, but it's holding up and typically we would get notified by the County about a project, you know, about a need for replacement. We have not been, so that's just a placeholder. It's a nominal amount of money. It's been on our list for some time. Sprague Road Drainage upgrades, that's just, again, token dollar values. We have old ditches that were enclosed, they're old rotten core metal pipes that have occasion to fail in their driveways, and so we're just accounting for some funding there. Upper Sprague Road Detention Basin project, same thing. It's been on our radar screen; we're trying to just allocate some funding and in anticipation of a project.

---

---

Councilperson Veverka asked, Don, did I miss something about Hillside Road, some of those corrugated pipes and things opposite the vineyard? Did I miss that?

City Engineer Ramm said that's coming up, that's down the page, but that's for the Hillside discussion. Page 8, the Ashwood/Chestnut signal, that's been on our list for some time.

Chairman Day asked these are Tier 4 projects, that's what you're saying? I mean, the other ones was like you said before, was just street resurfacing. Now this is all Tier 4 stuff.

City Engineer Ramm said that's right, Tier 4, that's what these are categorized as.

Councilperson DiGeronimo said, Vern, is there something else, I mean, it's TIF eligible, but it doesn't mean it's (inaudible) accounted for.

Chairman Day said I just wanted to make sure that we cover that here, that's all, that it wasn't the street resurfacing stuff on the previous page.

City Engineer Ramm said that's a good point because that TIF doesn't show up on the prior sheets. So, the actual Chestnut, that's one of the oldest signals in town. I understand from Signal Service it's tough to repair it when things break because it's so old. We did some recent upgrades to it with the signal heads and trying for sun glare issues, and for some complaints that motorists were blowing the light for various reasons, but to having replace the signal itself. I think the one thing stopping us or perhaps pushing us off is the potential relocation of Ashwood to realign with the potential future road south pushed through to the campus between Chestnut and Hillside. So, that's always been I think the sticking point, you'd hate to spend money on replacing the signal in its current position, and then relocate the thing a short period of time afterwards. So, it tends to be something that we push off from one year to the next and just keep limping it along.

Brecksville Road, Rockside to I-480, I do believe this is the current project for which we just passed the legislation earlier today about the properties. We moved some money around in different categories from the prior version of this Capital Plan. It had always had about \$7-7.5 million plugged in for 2025, we just shifted some money around with different categories. So, \$2 million in engineering, utility, and right-of-away work. Construction, we still think the estimate is around \$5 million, and then inspection there, so a total of \$7.5 million. So, it's a heavy, I have to double check with the Finance Director, I thought that we needed to, when we were lining this project up, I thought our goal was to bid it, have it ready to go near to towards the end of the year, bid it and have a construction contract awarded prior to the end of the calendar year so in 2024. So, I have to revisit that.

Chairman Day said (inaudible) whether or not you had a budget in 2024.

City Engineer Ramm said I thought that that \$5 million was in 2024. I see that it now it's really just a matter of a month or so if we needed to still advertise near the holidays. The \$5 million for construction for Brecksville Road.

Finance Director Blaze asked what page are you on?

---

Chairman Day said he was on page 8. The question was he's got it in 2025, was it necessary in 2024.

City Engineer Ramm said I thought we had loaded about \$5 million or the \$7 million, but the crux of the \$7 million was in the 2024 column because we thought we may, while the majority of the work will physically be performed in 2025, we thought we might need to award contract in the fourth quarter of 2024 to get out of the gate. Typically, winter is a good time for an excavator to put in a water main, so during the winter months of January, February, March, we could be out, but that would be predicated on awarding a contract November, December. If the money isn't available till 2025, then we would just award it after January 1st with the 2025 appropriation. So, that's the question, I thought that the prior version had funding in 2024.

Finance Director Blaze said I'll go and get the last version that was adopted by Council in 2022, and see what year it had that number plugged in.

Chairman Day said the document you handed out, which had \$3.5 million in 2023 and \$3.5 in 2024.

City Engineer Ramm said okay, so then if you added those two up in 2024, you'd have the \$7 million. So, that's something we will probably have to (inaudible).

Several people were speaking at once.

Chairman Day said that was under construction,

Finance Director Blaze said didn't mean it was there.

City Engineer Ramm said that's right. So then, maybe I'll just put a circle around that number because we may need to, if the project stays on track, and we still desire to award that contract or we may need to shift those numbers over to 2024.

Vice Mayor Togliatti said, and the \$2 million for engineering, utility and right of way, wasn't the engineering mostly completed is what the, explain what the \$2 million would go toward at this point moving forward.

City Engineer Ramm said when there was discussion about burying the electric on the one side, if there was a pallet to pay for that because CEI would not do that on their own dime. Dominion has tried to allege that they have an easement that for their gas main, the transmission main, that even though it's well within the city's right-of-way, they had an old easement written over it way back in the 40s or 50s when it was installed originally. Such that, even if our right-of-way came across it and absorbed it, so to speak, that because they made it a legal issue, they think that it would be compensable to relocate the transmission main. We've asked them to produce the easement, they have not done it, so we are of the opposite opinion that that's to completely relocation. It's big money.

---

Councilperson Narduzzi said it's in the street.

City Engineer Ramm said it's in the right of way, yes, it's on the west side. Our contention is that it would not be compensable, but they feel it could be and that it is, but just we haven't gotten there yet. But a quick and dirty number, they said it could be between \$1-2 million. So, I'm just throwing that number in there as a placeholder, just in the event that things shake out that way. I don't think they will.

Mayor Kurtz asked how do we find that out?

City Engineer Ramm said it's just that we have to vet it through. We've asked them to produce the easement, and they've yet to do it. So, as of right now, they've been in our right-of-way, we need you moved, and it's not going to be on the City's dime.

Mayor Kurtz said so, you're saying we believe it's in the right-of-way.

City Engineer Ramm said it is in the right of way. It's just that they feel that it was originally encumbered in some easement that gave them rights to be there in perpetuity forever.

Mayor Kurtz asked which means, what difference does that mean then?

City Engineer Ramm said I think they think that it moves it from the non-compensable to compensable category.

Mayor Kurtz said I thought compensable would only be new, new construction, new subdivisions, new main roads. Did I misunderstand that?

City Engineer Ramm said it may be an easier conversation to talk with FirstEnergy. So, FirstEnergy, I think, has taken the position or through the PUCO lobbyists, and the rules have changed such that if the City desires to construct a sidewalk and told CEI they had to move poles 3-4 feet because we want to put a sidewalk in the right-of-way, they would say that's compensable, that the city would pay for that relocation. But for road widening, now talk about road widening, when it's a road issue, intersection widening, things that are driven by public safety and traffic, they understand that that's driven by just a different logic and reasoning, and they say that's not compensable. In other words, they would move that on their own, at their own cost because they're in the right of way, and we have real legitimate right of way needs to utilize our own right of way for roadway purposes and public safety purposes.

Chairman Day asked does it make sense to get the Law Director involved and communicate?

Mayor Kurtz said well, at some point, if Don is not able to work this out.

Chairman Day said but we're waiting on it, it's been a while though.

City Engineer Ramm said yeah. We've been coordinating with Dominion now. We've been trying, you know, we've had different positions on where the road widening, not widening, one

---

---

side versus another. Until all that got kind of finalized, we had always told them that eventually they were going to have to be moved.

Chairman Day said I'm just throwing it out as an option because we're budgeting a couple million dollars, that's pretty significant.

Mayor Kurtz said the other concern we have is, it was addressed at one of the earlier meetings, it might have been Utilities, Dale, I can't remember, but that water main reconstruction or relocation is a huge cost and traffic disruption. So, we're taking this time to look at various options of potentially relocating where it wouldn't be tying up on traffic, boring, by doing some other options to try and get onto Rockside Road.

Councilperson Trakas said a question for you, Don. Of this \$7.5 million in 2025 that you're looking at for Brecksville Road, is any of that related to this varying of the utilities?

City Engineer Ramm said so, the \$2 million for utility relocation, we've just recently received some numbers from the Temple to bury the utilities across their frontage, and we got the number that's still in flux, but they think between the numbers that they have confirmed and the estimates that yet to be confirmed, you total those all up, it's \$300,000-350,000 for about 300-400 feet. So, we take that cost per foot, and then we have, I think, 200 or 300 feet to the north to get to Longano, and we have a, I think, another 300 or 400 feet to get to the Cavs Drive, that's kind of the block where we considered to potentially bearing it to make for a nice, wider, longer stretch.

When we run the numbers using their cost per foot, we think it could be anywhere from a half a million to a million to do that. Now, what they didn't have to spend was easement costs, and their electric service to the new temple was always going to be under because they had proposed to put the whole circuit underground on the street. If we were to put everything underground, the three homes north and a home or two south would have to have power transferred from aerial to underground, and there's cost associated with that because you have to redo how it enters the house. So, there's a cost that in the right of way we would have to potentially secure an easement across private properties that we don't presently control, and those easement costs are in the numbers that we're trying to anticipate.

Chairman Day asked Streets and Sidewalks deals with this, correct?

Councilperson Trakas said correct, but I think if we're trying to budget that kind of money for something like this that we're not even sure we're going to do. I would try to get that...

Chairman Day said that would be my point here because this is not required, right? This is something that's an option that we may choose to do, which seems rather significant.

Several people began speaking at once.

Chairman Day said we don't want to get in the weeds at in this meeting. I think it belongs with that committee.

---

---

Councilperson Trakas said (inaudible) next year, we're already behind on how much money based on all these different things, and if you're adding another \$2 million into that, then you're further behind.

Chairman Day said that's why they need to get at it right away and decide or should there be a decision made, yay or nay, right.

City Engineer Ramm said, and these numbers are still just recently coming in. We're trying to get our hands around and give you the most current information and just be prudent and plugging in some dollar values for when you know if there's a desire, and once we finalize these numbers. We want to make sure it's budgeted if we decide to pull the trigger to move forward with this.

Mayor Kurtz said I would just like to say just to summarize, really, the various options relative to utilities, weather line, electric, gas, some of them are outside our thought process, some of them are contained in our thought process. That's huge in terms of the potential millions of dollars or not costing us millions of dollars. So, we're trying to look at all the different options so we can present them to Council, and then we can make a decision based on what we were just talking about. Where's the money going to come from? How much? What's your appetite to spend it and what's the timing to spend it?

City Engineer Ramm said the next project is Brecksville Road, that's really, we kind of said that from the bridge over I-480 North because of some things that are in flux down there and some potential major changes that could potentially come into that Old Brecksville intersection and Brecksville Road. The desire was to push that project off, but ultimately, it was included in what we were calling from Rockside Road all the way over to Cloverleaf, was the grandiose original project. So, budgeting at \$2 million in 2027 and 2028 at the end of the five-year period, just as again, placeholders for that north end once things, if and when things shake out, and we have a solid footing to commit to move forward on that north section, that's what those dollar values are there for.

Mayor Kurtz said again, that's another example of watching how the development is going to take place because it will take some private investment to really carry this potential. So, it's all about blending private and public opportunities.

City Engineer Ramm said Brecksville Road, the north bridge esthetics, that was an ODOT project. I do believe that project is concluded. I don't know if that's available funding still in an open PO, Vern, that's represented there in bold. I'm not sure.

Finance Director Blaze asked which page are we on?

City Engineer Ramm said we're in the middle of page 8, the Brecksville Road north. We partnered with ODOT on that bridge to for some aesthetic upgrades.

Finance Director Blaze said I can see if those (inaudible) if those two POs are still valid.

---

City Engineer Ramm said, and suffice it to say, we have no identify expenditures at anything 2024 or further going forward. So, nothing there for me. Here, this grouping is a major project work that we are just trying to talk about Brecksville Road, south of Rockside, and given the significant dollar value of the project that we've been dealing with on the north of Rockside section, we just felt that maybe the strategy could be to try to break it up in just three different segments, both for construction purposes and for budgeting purposes. I don't really yet know the scope of the work for that stretch, and it's been discussed whether we continue that decorative street lighting. So right now, these are placeholders, the project's costs are in the millions, and you have the pending.

Even just for resurfacing, we know the water main, we know primarily that needs to be replaced, the water main throughout the corridor, so that's definitely a given as part of the scope, but then the rest of it, you know, we have ideally, you think we would want to replace all the curbs and sidewalks and open streetscape type work, whether we get into the street lighting, that's up for discussion. We're just, again, trying to put it on paper and start to budget for it, and to try to split it out. This is just the first preliminary idea, and because it's such a long street, and because of some potential downtown redevelopment, maybe the strategy is let's start at the south end in areas where there's less things of uncertainties where we could move forward with some defined scope that's not in a state of flux or dependent on some future thing. Maybe, you know, there's a nice way to attack it or strategize to do some work somewhere, and taking bite chunks off at a time, which has seemed to have kind of evolved and emanated at the north end. So, it's really just an idea.

Mayor Kurtz asked how does this impact the state?

City Engineer Ramm said yeah, we could discuss that.

Mayor Kurtz said you have that on the schedule for 2026-27.

City Engineer Ramm said I think 2026 fiscal year, or 2027, which is fiscal year of June of 2026. So yeah, they've been pretty flexible to work with us. You're right, they would allocate a total shooting match from Rockside to Sprague, and if then they were just simple urban resurfacing it would be grind and overlay.

Mayor Kurtz asked is there some curb work, or no?

City Engineer Ramm said they don't like to, I think, face to curb and face to curb.

Councilperson DiGeronimo asked so, the state needs to cover the overlay or are they participants?

Mayor Kurtz said they put it on their agenda. It used to be every 10 years, but it's stretched out now to, I don't know the last 15-20 years.

---

City Engineer Ramm said yeah, it's pushing 15-20.

Mayor Kurtz said so, they have us scheduled and Brecksville scheduled for 2026, 2027, those two years, I believe. They're ahead of us a year, but we talked to them about the synergy of just doing everything, so we're trying to figure out what their appetite is, but we're on the schedule, but a year or two to the state is nothing.

City Engineer Ramm said, and the dynamic of us wanting and desiring and needing to replace the water main, see that's the issue. ODOT doesn't really care about that, so they've really held off quite a while for us at the north end. We still have money reserved for the resurfacing of the project we just talked about at the north end, so it's they're able to easily push back when we tell them we need more time to accommodate more work that we want to do 100% locally at local cost. So, I got to believe they'd be willing to do that here.

Councilperson DiGeronimo asked, and wasn't there a large project considered at the state about the creek that runs under and up front here by City Hall?

City Engineer Ramm said yeah, that's a project that's coming, and it's going to be a liner type project where they can line with steel through the old concrete structure, so there should be minimal. They'll be taking up the curb lane probably to do that work. That's coming in another year or two.

Councilperson DiGeronimo said so, it shouldn't impact the road.

City Engineer Ramm said it really shouldn't.

Mayor Kurtz said they'll restore anything, but they were looking at trying to charge us at one time. There was some element of discussion as far as the city's responsibility.

City Engineer Ramm said it had to do with the downstream section, the section that's out of the right of way and it goes across the pond to the (inaudible) property. That's the section, but ironically, and coincidentally, that section was an add on, and it's newer and it's in much better shape. So, they felt, it ended up being a moot discussion because we initially wanted to line the whole thing because we said, what sense would it make not to align the whole thing, and that's when the discussion came up that the city can pay for that if the city wants to do it and/or the private developer, which is across the street, they probably would have no desire. So, that project is on the docket.

Downtown redevelopment, this is just, again, nothing identified as far as a project, but ultimately knowing the desire to develop the downtown and keep it as a separate placeholder, dollar values for things that maybe aren't germane to traditional construction with water mains, resurfacings, and concrete curbs, that's what that line item is for. Fuhrmeyer, at the end of that list there, there too we've been pushing off, and I think Old Brecksville is probably on the next sheet somewhere. The next couple of sheets. Yeah, Old Brecksville, those two streets, you know, we resurfaced Fuhrmeyer when we did Schaff, so it's been upgraded, at least from a pavement surface

---

---

standpoint. The water main, obviously, on Old Brecksville Road and Fuhrmeyer, are old and they're in need of replacement, but again, I believe because of the potential for some redevelopment down there, there's no desire to do that any time soon. Push them off, stretch it out, and just keep responding to repairs unfortunately down there.

Granger Road, this is the ODOT project. So, in 2024 we threw in the \$150,000, that was our local share that we had put up for an LPA agreement that we agreed to I think late last year. I think the amount for the legislation was \$80,000-\$90,000, so I bumped it up in case there was any desire to do some additional work, and just to be able to have the money, but that's a real project, it's an ODOT's job, we just want to make sure we have the money to pay the bill when it's due. Interchange Gateway Streetscape, we just got done with the I-77 Rockside physical lane widening and improvements there at the interchange there at Rockside. We had always intended to package up either with that work or subsequent to it, which is what we're at now, the Gateway Street Landscaping component of that interchange, really create some nice sense of purpose in place there with the beautification and major street and landscaping in that whole interchange area.

So, these were budget dollar values, and we'd like to move forward with that in some phase capacity, whether we attack the entire four quadrants of the interchange or try to phase it and to budget it in quadrants, northside versus southside all at once. We just need to route through ODOT, get permits to do the work. It's 100% locally funded, so we don't need ODOT's funding.

Mayor Kurtz said we should have some framework to talk to Council about sometime in the next 60 days, some kind of steps, and they'll have some engineers, they'll have something for us to look at. That's in preliminary discussions, but it'll be more concrete in the next, I'm saying 60 days.

City Engineer Ramm said the next project there is the project there we talked about earlier, the Hillside Road Culvert Replacement and Water Main. Back in 2011 is my recollection is when that culvert, the box culvert, in fact it was when the county was resurfacing. The last time they were there to resurface Hillside, we wanted to replace the portion of the culvert that was under the road. We did 200-300 feet and got it to where it crossed to the south side and stopped. That culvert is really in bad shape. We need to keep going all the way to near Vineyard is where that stream goes underground, and this project would be to replace that box culvert all the way to the inlet head wall visit point, and then the water main is really bad on Hillside Road. I believe it's a 10- or 12-inch water main, so this is that project, and it's kind of been on our list and pushed back a number of years.

We think it needs to go this year or next, and then that would then fall with the Hillside resurfacing and then could come right after this project, ideally, because the road is going to get beat up and tore up and trenched through with water main and service connections and it might make for a nice sequence of getting the underground done now. Again, this doesn't speak into the major reconstructions with the site's vertical curbs, but that's not here yet, but if we want to entertain it, I'll have to adjust these numbers. This is probably something that we want to get going on, at least with engineering this year to get it on the right track to put us in a position to bid something and construct it in 2025.

---

---

Vice Mayor Togliatti asked, and is this the water main from Brecksville Road west through the Seven Hills border, or what stretch of water main?

City Engineer Ramm said it's at least from the stretch, so same similarly when we replaced the box culvert, we replaced the water main, so it's at least from that point west to Seven Hills. Whether or not I got to revisit the maps, I thought Cleveland Water had said that the section from Brecksville Road, past Fortuna, and some point west was in better shape. So, we have to pinpoint where, but ideally, we want to get it all, everything that needs to be replaced, replaced. Hence, these numbers may need to be adjusted once we determine, we were focusing on that culvert and heading west from there.

Councilperson DiGeronimo asked how do you assess, Don, if the water main is an issue? Do you know it's pressure?

City Engineer Ramm said we rely heavily on Cleveland Water's data and the age. They have good records of when certain segments were installed. So, the date and the age and then the condition they have the metric of brakes per mile per year is how they kind of use to quantify and categorize the condition of the mains. I don't know that there's there, (inaudible) a memory called a break broken at stretch from, not in a while has the section broke, the section west of Vineyard is the problematic section because residents gets hammered there because of the topography, so we have to circle the wagons there.

Councilperson Walchanowicz said I hope we didn't jinx it.

City Engineer Ramm said yeah, that's what this project is. Hillside Road west sidewalks, that's a job that was wrapped up a year or two ago. However, it's still an open PO, and I don't believe CATS is even, we're trying to close that out, but there's nothing needed from 2024 on. It's a carryover. Old Brecksville Road, we talked about that a second ago in the vein of Fuhrmeyer. Same sort of thing, pushing it out towards the end of the five-year period. At the bottom there, northwest quadrant, we had submitted it for a one time, there's a fancy acronym for a one-time Special Investment, do you recall Mayor? Transformational, it was a one-time special grant that ended up being a \$7.3 million grant. The total project cost was \$12-13 million, so this is to redevelop, it's to develop the northwest quadrant with roads and utilities.

Mayor Kurtz said we submitted this, but we also threw in 40% or 50% local participation.

Councilperson Trakas said we'll know by the end of June.

Mayor Kurtz said we'll see.

Councilperson Trakas said we'll see how good they are, how much they care about Economic Development.

City Engineer Ramm said so, I don't believe this was on a prior five-year plan, so this might be new to this year's plan, but it was prudent to put this on there and start to budget for it.

---

---

Councilperson Trakas said if you got \$1,000,000, then you got to come up with the rest within two years.

City Engineer Ramm said, and there's some triggers with Economic Development and jobs.

Councilperson Trakas said you have to deliver it.

City Engineer Ramm said or pay it back. So, Patriots Way, this is the section that we may have talked briefly at the last Streets Committee meeting that this is a private drive, this section from Lombardo to Oak Tree. However, it is really bad, and we just did a quick and dirty number to complete it. It's shot, its asphalt, and it's really bad. So, just to try to completely rip it off, replacing concrete, we allocated some funding. I don't think we're obligated, and we probably could assess it, and you probably wouldn't do anything until you developed that whole northwest quadrant.

Someone asked if it's private property.

City Engineer Ramm said it is, it's private property.

Mayor Kurtz said it reminds me of the Ancillary Road around the back of McDonald's, how bad of shape that was in for a while. We went to the owners and said, look, you need to upgrade that, so we can try to define that, and I'm not sure if it would define an agreements originally. I don't believe it's our responsibility, but if it's the three restaurants, then we should go through the process of having the law department put them on notice. They're coming in, we're going to do it even if we assess it.

Councilperson Trakas said I'd say we want to assess it over several years. It couldn't be more than \$50,000 each, right? I mean, it wouldn't be more than that depending about how much space they got, but it is like Fallujah.

Mayor Kurtz said we'll look at that one. I think that's something we should get on.

City Engineer Ramm said moving on to page 10, Pleasant Valley at Brecksville Road, this was the project that we've been discussing at length here recently. The dedicated right turn lane for westbound Pleasant Valley and Brecksville Road, so I thought to get it on to another five-year plan. We just authorized DLZ to perform a traffic study. Initially, we had a \$50,000 piece of legislation before Council for the design engineering, which did not get approved, we tabled it or removed it from the agenda, but in just looking ahead, thinking that the study will be concluded here in another month or two and we'll have the results of it that we can share with everybody.

Then, ultimately, we feel it will be justified, and then we can move forward to get it engineered, and then ultimately, the goal is always to try to get it constructed while those bridges are being worked on by the county and that the traffic was at a low period all the way through to July of 2025. So, we felt it was appropriate to try to plug in a dollar value for the construction. We would try to get something out late this year to hit the ground running and get that thing ideally to be completed by when that bridge gets opened back up for westbound traffic. That's what

---

---

those numbers are for and the logic behind it. East Pleasant Valley and I-77, there's another one, recently we authorized GPD to do a traffic study there at the interchange, and they have recently counted the cars and we've supplemented them with some NOACCA data similar to what DLZ needed because of the bridge closure. Ultimately, this is another major interchange modification similar to what we've lived through at Rockside Road.

So, it's going to be a number of years to get those, \$5-6 million was the estimate in 2024. We do hope to seek some funding through ODOT, the Highway Safety Program, and it just takes time to get on the docket. So, that's just getting it on paper and starting to plug some money in. We do believe we need to do an interchange modification study, so we tried to allocate some funding. I don't know that I have that in here anywhere yet, but ultimately as a result of the study they're doing now, we think will emanate into a full-blown IMS through ODOT. So, there'll be some need to continue to do some more studying to meet ODOT requirements to get the project on track. Then, I just left it completely blank with dollar values, but just a placeholder kind of similar to the gateway and landscaping improvements at the Rockside Interchange. I thought that probably would be a desire once this interchange gets modified and upgraded to try to beautify it a little bit. It's nothing too pleasant to look at, and if there was a desire, if not we can remove it, and not say another word about it but thought it would just be good to put something there on paper. We can identify some costs later.

Rockside Corridor Maintenance, this is an ongoing one, we allocate \$100,000 a year, typically. I threw in some very odd numbers there in 2024 and 2025, and that's very specific because in the recent contract we just awarded to CATTs, there was an alternate for some Rockside Road work, and it was approximately \$400,000, \$393,000. The beauty of that contract with the potential extension of a one year, we could have an appetite to try to break this project off and that this is the money we would need in 2024 and 2025 to authorize that alternate for 2025 work. So, that's why that number looks a little goofy there, and then, the rest are the hundreds that we traditionally have budgeted. This comes in handy when we do a lot of crack seal work down there, we've done partial debt payment repairs down there, we're always maintaining our section, and it's noticeably better than the Seven Hills section that's concrete.

So, we do a nice job in maintaining and there's a lot of traffic there. This is a very useful tool to budget these kinds of dollars. Rockside Road bridge lane. This is an old project, but it's actually going to be coming to fruition because once those East Pleasant Valley bridges get replaced, they're coming to Rockside, and then all the traffic will get detoured to Pleasant Valley. So, this is coming, yeah, and our component was some decorative lighting, that's all it was to try to make something nice down there with those bridges and partner with Valley View. So, this money has been encumbered for a number period of years, and we did ask if the numbers were still accurate.

Councilperson Narduzzi said they're the partner, then it's theirs.

Mayor Kurtz said the river is half ours.

City Engineer Ramm said yeah, that's true.

---

Councilperson Narduzzi said (inaudible). I think I voted no on that.

Councilperson Trakas said I think you did too.

City Engineer Ramm said we're not asking for any more money. I think we have what we need.

Several people began speaking at once.

Councilperson Trakas said if we're short \$200,000 at the end of the year, I got a place.

City Engineer Ramm said this is lighting to put on a bridge, it's decorative lighting.

Chairman Day said similar to down there by the canal.

Several people began speaking at once.

Chairman Day said that's Rockside Road. Okay, keep moving.

City Engineer Ramm said yeah, moving on. This job was completed, I don't know that there's anything to be said for that. Rockside Road, I-77 ramps, there again, this is on here strictly because as ODOT closes out that project with Great Lakes Construction we have a piece of legislation to try to finalize and pay our fair share of the last amount of work. Initially, we thought it was \$50,000- \$55,000. I just pumped it up a little bit to budget for potential, we're still waiting to hear from ODOT. That's what that's for. On the next page, that group of all those big numbers there, I think that's the prior project from Fabrizio a number of years ago. The Top Golf job, and there's nothing to be spoken for to that for me for 2024 and beyond. Rockside Woods North, extend to Heritage, and this one's been on our radar screen for some time.

Chairman Day asked does that mean there's \$1,000,000 in that account.

City Engineer Ramm said yeah, I don't know. I can't believe that but.

Councilperson Trakas said that's what that means.

Several people began speaking at once.

Chairman Day said I'm not going to ask because you just saw this 5 minutes ago, so I'm not going to ask anybody to respond.

Councilperson DiGeronimo said but, Don, none of this work considered Brecksville Road south, I mean, I know that was like the original project, but these dollars were only for the interchange as far as now we are going Brecksville Road, but these are really assigned to that project.

City Engineer Ramm said they sort of were, the section, at least at the intersection and a little bit north and south to Kleber to the bridge north and south near Cornerstone of Hope, that project, that was this job, coupled with the Rockside Woods Extension. the Fabrizio job. The landfill, you

---

---

know, that maybe is one thing that hasn't been closed, the permit, because that road went through the landfill. We left that permit open, and that's really how we were able to get the wealthy parking lot project and that deal done. So, that permit still is open for the EPA, but that has nothing to do with the Fabrizi contract. I guess we'll confirm those dollar values.

Heritage Way has been on our radar for some time. It's just been taking a backseat to some of the more urgent projects and prioritizations. Rockside Woods North, another odd number plugged in for 2025, that was an alternate bid and that was for sidewalks. We just got done building them on the west side, so now this job, with an alternate bid in the CATTs contract was to extend the sidewalks on the east side from the south end of Welty's property, all the way to Rockside Road, and that's a real bid number that potentially could be authorized if we desire to construct that sidewalk next year, 2025. We had always intended for this, at the top of page 12, Rockside Woods North Street lights. I'm behind here on my sheets. There's already street lighting in the center of the median on Rockside Woods, it's just the old-style lighting, and when we did the Top Golf road, we had the nice decorative lighting.

So, we thought it would be nice to extend that decorative lighting south and replace the antiquated old lighting that's there and make it decorative, we just haven't pulled the trigger on it. It's hard to because it's a little bit out of our wheelhouse, electric and street lighting work. We threw some money at it. If we're serious about doing it, we could start getting some electrical engineering involved to get it engineered. Rockside Woods South sidewalks, so there's another alternate bid. We pushed it out to 2026, so we probably couldn't get CATTs to do it, but it's a budgetary number, or if we pushed it to 2025, that's the section on the south side to get the sidewalk extended.

Mayor Kurtz asked how much right away do we already have or have already attained?

City Engineer Ramm said they have the right of way on Rockside Woods, but then as you turn the corner, we would need the bank to help us.

Mayor Kurtz said I thought the bank, we got some right of way from the bank when we approved their project.

City Engineer Ramm said we got a commitment to donate some right of way for a sidewalk. We haven't secured it yet, but this project would allow us to move forward and show them.

Mayor Kurtz said that might be something really of interest, if we have the right of way, the functional part of it makes sense because there's no traffic. You see more people walking.

City Engineer Ramm said in the Winking Lizard people are walking there, so that's a real bid price that we could consider. The Welty parking lot, nothing that we need to budget for 2024 and beyond, but just carrying over from the prior version of the Capital Plan. We're still making payments, and still need to perform work to finalize that parking lot project. Bottom of the sheet, West Creek Trunk Sewer, I-480, this is really, the thought to build a redundant sewer crossing. We have the West Creek Interceptor sewer that runs down and that's our main sanitary sewer that takes all of Rockside, and it goes under I-480 ever since I-480 was built and it's old and we don't

---

know how to even assess it. The thought was similar to how the section segment under I-77 had failed and we rerouted that segment of sewer. We thought it would be prudent to consider building a redundant sewer underneath I-480 such that we could transfer the sewage into the new one, assess the old one, and try to be in front of an emergency. No one's making us do it, no one's forcing us to do this, but we thought it would be prudent to the Northwest development.

Mayor Kurtz asked (inaudible) with one of our professional companies, put a manhole over the pipe at one end, and then televise to see the status, the condition recognizing it. It'll tell us the urgency, so we'll spend \$50,000, but we'll have a better idea what we're going to spend, a couple million dollars on. How much do you (inaudible).

City Engineer Ramm said yeah, we can start to look harder at it. I do believe there might be manholes already there on either side.

Mayor Kurtz said yeah, (inaudible) where we would find out to see how the right conditions, the right timing because we eliminated the stuff coming from under I-77.

City Engineer Ramm said that's right. Routed it to the interceptors.

Mayor Kurtz said so, even if we tie into a section of that just to get into it without disrupting, put a machine through there. There is some really cool camera equipment out there.

City Engineer Ramm said yeah, maybe I jumped to a conclusion that you couldn't get any equipment in there because of the active flow and have difficulty to try to bypass, but maybe we just need to look at it harder, try to be able to, or use a low flow period to try to get through it. I think it's an 18- or a 20-inch pipe. It's bigger than what's typical. So, that's what that job was, and with the northwest quadrant development potentially introducing more sewage to that same system, that might amplify it.

Mayor Kurtz said if we have a \$100,000, we could buy towards testing and condition determination.

City Engineer Ramm said that's right, that encumbered in 2021 POs.

Mayor Kurtz said if we don't know, we know the alternative. If that thing collapses or there's a problem, it's going to be a major problem just to open it up just to get to flow. If we have to spend \$10,000 or \$20,000 to get some condition assessment, it's a good investment.

City Engineer Ramm said sure, and its real money.

Mayor Kurtz said it's real money. Yeah, if it goes bad it's going to be a serious fine.

City Engineer Ramm said definitely. Okay, moving on, page 13, we talked about this recently in one of our meetings, the Army Corps flood project, yeah, we have nothing shown in the budget for going forward because we think the job is no longer active.

---

Mayor Kurtz said we did meet with Seven Hills. We did talk to Valley View, and they don't have the appetite to do anything, to spend more money, and now they're asking us to spend more money and it's like, why?

City Engineer Ramm said it becomes easy from a budgetary standpoint.

Councilperson Narduzzi said I think I said that 20 years ago.

Councilperson Veverka asked, Don, do you know if that question went to our Legal Department, whether or not we can pursue trying to get some of our money back?

City Engineer Ramm said yeah, I have not. Yeah, I don't know if that would be an administrative decision and/or to try to, you know, go after the Army Corps, and you know, for the future projects or future assistance, that might drive a wedge, but something to talk about.

Councilperson Trakas said talk to Valley View for our troubles.

City Engineer Ramm said EPA stormwater compliance, another annual thing, we throw money in there. We do utilize for our stormwater program. This sheet is a little bit outdated, needs to be populated for 2027-2028, but we would propose the same dollar values extended out. Inflow and infiltration, we're going to actually try to start targeting some work, at least to try to utilize these funds potential for this subdivision to the north of us that has played with us, I and I, potential for possibly lining some sewer service connections to try to minimize the clean water that's getting into the sanitary system. I do believe we're going to be under the requirement and obligation from the Regional Sewer District, they're updating some of their requirements. They're going to start to lean on us a little bit more to actually fix these things. So, it's all good timing.

Mayor Kurtz said if I may, just one more comment. Could you give us a summary, put together a summary of Regional Sewer District, the storm sewer funding, projects, the balance, current situation, and then how much they allocate a year, so we could start looking at projects down the road.

City Engineer Ramm asked if we're talking stormwater.

Mayor Kurtz said that stormwater fund.

City Engineer Ramm said yeah, community cost share.

Mayor Kurtz said yeah, community cost share. We should really put that summary together to get that out to everybody. Because we estimated that was like \$600,000-\$700,000 a year at one time, potentially.

City Engineer Ramm said, and we're starting to build up our fund.

Mayor Kurtz said I know we used it for several different, but we should know.

---

---

City Engineer Ramm said okay. Old Rockside Road bridge, and this is the county project that we're getting wrapped up here. I don't believe there's any budgetary requirement for 2024 and beyond.

Mayor Kurtz said it's actually a very nice project.

Councilperson DiGeronimo said you did make that comment that maintenance is ours going forward, probably nothing in these five years.

Mayor Kurtz asked when does the maintenance start?

City Engineer Ramm said we had all along desired to have a bridge that was designed for a 75-year life, and that's still the case, but the minute it's done, they paid for 100% of everything, engineering, construction, construction management, project inspection. That was all on their dime, not a nickel out of our pocket. I think we were using our funds for a pass through.

Finance Director Blaze said, and we were getting reimbursed.

City Engineer Ramm said yeah. I think that was for our engineering.

Mayor Kurtz asked what was the lawsuit that we filed against, the county wanted to come in and make us pay for that bridge reconstruction, and we said \$5 million or something like that, and we said no, we're just not doing it. So, we challenged them, and we won, and that's why they put the bridge in. That was \$5 million or \$7 million project, I believe.

City Engineer Ramm said it ended up being \$7 million.

Mayor Kurtz said they expected us to pay for it.

City Engineer Ramm said I guess your point, Councilman DiGeronimo, yeah, I think once it's done, and the county closes the books on the construction project, I think it's ours, yeah. You would think we shouldn't have to spend a whole lot of money for 20 some years.

Mayor Kurtz said confirm that, Don.

City Engineer Ramm said oh, you think there was some?

Mayor Kurtz said I think there was something else in the (inaudible).

City Engineer Ramm said I think that brings us to the end. So, I do believe we'll revisit some numbers that we talked about, and then I'll populate some additional projects, some kind of second round. What I've not done is looked at any totals at the bottom of these columns because I got to believe it's going to be frightening.

Someone said that'd be great.

---

---

Councilperson Trakas asked so what's our overall number?

Chairman Day asked because it's not built into the other spreadsheet, so I'm just saying you'll actually update it, right?

Finance Director Blaze said yeah, we'll update it with the these, which Don indicated are just going to carry over from your previous plan. Then, he's got to new projects to add, and while we were sitting here, I was just trying to summarize what Don's proposed there for maintenance contracts, residential streets, commercial streets, TIF road projects and other road projects. Totaled those out, added the departmental capital that was presented the last couple meetings here and show the annual totals from 2024 through 2028 there, saying that right under that, that just without any consideration of borrowing or grants or anything like that, just what can the city contribute to capital purchases and infrastructure projects on an annual basis. I was in that \$10-12 million range comfortable. I've indicated here that that number should stay in that \$12-15 million range, max, without borrowing. It just depends how much cash we want to eat into our cash balance and that's always a delicate balance there because you need cash for a cushion, but we're not in the business of accumulating cash and just accumulate investing cash. We're here to serve the public.

So, it's a delicate balance between what's a good balance to carry for the rainy day as far as to satisfy ratings agencies. Down below on the bottom right-hand list, those three big cost increases that we have coming up that the Mayor indicated when we started out this meeting, we just approved the legislation for the medical insurance going up 19% a year and that starts July 1. The four collective bargaining agreements expire at the end of this year, I'm sure they're not going to be asking for five zeros for the next five years, and then the Councilperson Trakas could tell you about the proposals floating around in Columbus to increase the employer share, meaning the city's contribution, not the employees, but the employers share. Currently Fire, the City contributes 24% to the OP&F pension for each firefighter. So, with salary and overtime, you got a firefighter making \$100,000, the City writes a check every year for \$24,000 just for the pension. I think the police people have seen that and said, hey guys, we're only at 19.5%, we want 24% like the firefighters, and then OPERs is listening to all this going on and saying, well, hey, we've been at 14% since the 1980s, so we want to go to 18%, and this is all employers share, not employee share.

So, I'm looking at three potential pretty large operating cost increases next year, assuming that pension changes would get adopted in a lame duck session by the end of this year and take effect starting in 2025. Then, on the lower left, I just put that little asterisk there, that all the stuff that was presented today by Don was just current projects that had been on the previous plans for the most part. I think one or two you identified, Don, that might have been new ones. You got to go back and help add those. So, these numbers will go up from here, and then that's where the real work will start after we have all the final numbers and put it into a plan, and I'll give you something other than just a handwritten document made out at a meeting. Then we say, okay, what do we want to do here.

Chairman Day said thank you. That's good because it's one of the questions, we still have some other directors that need to come in front of this group as well with their budgets, correct?

---

Finance Director Blaze said correct. Even though you haven't heard from them, they're still listed in the departmental capital.

Chairman Day said I think my next step would be another meeting probably in the next week, if possible.

Finance Director Blaze said yeah, they should go quick.

Chairman Day said have them come and have maybe Don come back and follow up after we had an opportunity to look at all this and say, okay, you know where are we.

Finance Director Blaze said because of these new projects (inaudible).

Chairman Day said yeah, but this was to get him in front of us. So, if you could work on scheduling something, maybe Amanda, I know next week is the holidays. Now that all these athletics are done, hopefully, we'll be able to get some stuff.

Councilperson Trakas said prioritizing the projects.

Chairman Day said yeah, because again, I know in the past, I'm also looking for the Committees to prioritize as well. Like the Streets and Sidewalks and Utilities, like okay, here are the projects, what are the ones that we think we have to prioritize? You know, as your group, is that how you've done it previously or?

Vice Mayor Togliatti said it's been both ways.

Chairman Day said oh, okay.

Finance Director Blaze said it's going to boil down to this (inaudible).

Chairman Day said I understand that, but if you're not on the Utilities Committee, you don't know the top three priorities that they have, so that's my point, or the Streets and Sidewalks, unless you've gone to all the meetings.

Someone said we do, do that.

Chairman Day said I just was throwing that out.

Mayor Kurtz said it is pretty transparent. Each member of Council is here most of the time for these meetings, so they see what's their Committee responsibilities are, and they can influence that at any time.

Councilperson DiGeronimo said well, I'll jump in for the streets project, and not to go off the rails or anything, but since we talked...

Several people began speaking at once.

---

Councilperson DiGeronimo said but Brecksville Road, the three sections on there, and mentioned potentially 2026 on the state projects, so summertime Downtown, look at Downtown, everyone talks Downtown every three to four years. To me, to go and redo Brecksville Road and do what we've done, we'll be where we are at the same place. I think if we want something different, Downtown, Brecksville Road, what can we do different? I think Brecksville Road is the key piece of that, so if it's 2026, like I would just state, maybe some kind of planning, some kind of engineering stuff, we're going to have to really think about what could Brecksville Road be like in the next 30 years, knowing that there's some work out there so.

Mayor Kurtz said to add on to that comment, I think Don indicated that we could do sections, or the City is flexible with us. So, if we exclude the top of the hills, Center Hill to around here because we need more time to do utility work, or to assess the master plan with Saint Michaels and our property, we would just cut that out of there and resurface.

City Engineer Ramm said I think they'd be open to that. We can discuss it with them.

Mayor Kurtz said they've been very flexible with things like that in the past, but Jim can always call them and figure it out.

Vice Mayor Togliatti said I have a question for Don. If I remember correctly, we've received a grant to upgrade all of our traffic signalization on Rockside Road, and there was some sort of timeline with that. I know it's a multi-million-dollar project, do we need to budget?

City Engineer Ramm said that's one that I need (inaudible) NOACA, for the controllers on Rockside Road to upgrade them because they're pushing 20 years old now, and yes, I'll populate that on the next round.

Mayor Kurtz said, and that was to upgrade the signals.

City Engineer Ramm said the controllers.

Mayor Kurtz said the controllers and technology.

City Engineer Ramm said yeah, I think so. All new, probably radar detectors, fiber possibly, yeah.

Mayor Kurtz said we have extra tubes available in our underground that we store. We built over capacity when the bank went underground to be able to accommodate some of these things. The one thing I would do, Don, a breakdown, we need to at some point, sooner rather than later is get those poles painted.

City Engineer Ramm said we thought that would be a nice time to incorporate the pole painting into that same project and make them all black.

---

Mayor Kurtz said or green. To me they look nice, except that they just deteriorated or got weather beaten. Or black, I mean, whatever everybody wants to do. I don't care.

Chairman Day said before we adjourn, the other thought, I think they came up at other meetings was, again, there's these, we hired a consultant about buildings, like, about these Service Department. When do you anticipate getting some sort of report or recommendation?

Mayor Kurtz said I think they said in the last meeting in the next 60 days they should have something. It's been about 45 days.

Chairman Day asked wouldn't that be critical to all this?

Several people began speaking at once.

Chairman Day said that's something that's not even in here, so that's my point.

Mayor Kurtz said Vern has said that there's funding, internal funding. This indicates \$12-15 million, internal funding out of our cash flow. Those would not be internally funded if they're restorations or something, if there's something different, it would be a different dollar sign associated with it.

Chairman Day said yeah, I think there were some costs to repair some of the things.

Mayor Kurtz said either way there's going to be cost.

Chairman Day said right, I mean, if you're going to keep those buildings, then you would spend that money on the roofing or whatever it is, and if not, I think that was part of the discussion the questions came up in. So, it would be the repairs to those buildings and how you move forward. Perfect. Great.

Councilperson Veverka said I just have a quick comment that related to what John was saying about the center of town. Now, we have a figure, we never had a figure, there was always a guess to bury the utilities was \$1,000,000 a mile, and now we know the answer is more like \$5.3 million a mile. So, burying utilities through the center of town, which is what a quarter mile, and would that be each side of the road then, would that be, so we're looking at \$2.5 million?

City Engineer Ramm said yeah, those numbers I was talking about was strictly for the temple. So, that's just one side.

Councilperson Veverka said right, right. So, that's what I'm saying, if you were to burying utilities through that center section of town, you're looking at \$2.5 million.

Councilperson DiGeronimo said well, that wouldn't apply the whole thing.

Councilperson Veverka said no, no, but I'm just saying.

---

---

Councilperson DiGeronimo said there is easements and everything, I mean, that should be a big piece of that and tie into individual homes, you don't have that all throughout Route 21.

Councilperson Veverka said right, but I'm just saying about the center of town because we've talked about some plans and we've looked at some various things over the years and the number that's always been thrown around, it's only going to costs about \$1,000,000 to bury utilities, and now this number just as a starting point is, okay, so you got a quarter mile times both sides of the street, you're talking about \$2.5 million just on making the utilities disappear.

Finance Director Blaze said well, we got \$1.5 million in Pos.

Councilperson Veverka said that's one side of the street.

Chairman Day asked if there were any other questions, comments for the Committee, for the Mayor, the Finance Director. There were none. Thank you, Don.

**Moved by DiGeronimo, seconded by Narduzzi, to adjourn the Finance Committee meeting of May 21, 2024. Voice Vote: 3 yes/0 no; motion carried.**

The Finance Committee meeting of May 21, 2024, was then adjourned at 4:48 p.m.

---

Amanda Sharrer, Clerk of Council  
Minutes Unapproved at Time of Release 06/12/24

---