



# CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Richfield, Minnesota

## City Council Work Session

May 17, 2021

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Council Member Supple at 6:00 p.m. virtually via WebEx.

Council Members Present: Maria Regan Gonzalez, Mayor; Ben Whalen; Mary Supple; Simon Trautmann; and Sean Hayford Oleary

Staff Present: Katie Rodriguez, City Manager; Kristin Asher, Public Works Director; Amy Markle, Recreation Services Director; John Stark, Community Development Director; Melissa Poehlman, Assistant Community Development Director; Jane Skov, IT Manager; and Blanca Martinez Gavina, Executive Analyst

Others Present: Amber Blanchard, MnDOT; and Andrew Lutaya, MnDOT

Item #1	<b>OBTAIN FURTHER GUIDANCE FROM THE CITY COUNCIL ON ELEMENTS RELATED TO THE FUTURE 494 CORRIDORS OF COMMERCE PROJECT. THIS DISCUSSION WILL GUIDE STAFF INPUT TO THE MNDOT 494 TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC) WHO ARE CURRENTLY WORKING TOWARDS AN APPROVED PRELIMINARY LAYOUT FOR PROJECT 1.</b>
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Director Asher provided a brief overview of the item and stated feedback is needed regarding the intersection of Portland and 77<sup>th</sup> Street.

Andrew Lutaya explained the shift of Portland at 77<sup>th</sup> Street that will need to happen to accommodate local businesses. The shift will take some space in Roosevelt Park but will not intrude on the dog park. He added the two businesses along Portland on the west side would lose direct access to Portland and would most likely be total takes in the project.

Council Member Hayford Oleary asked about business access going north on Portland but not going south.

Andrew Lutaya explained how traffic behaves differently when coming to an on-ramp versus a traffic light.

Council Member Whalen asked for clarification on sidewalk placement and possibility of bike lanes while still accommodating business parking.

Andrew Lutaya stated the bike lanes had been added to make room for shared-use trails.

Council Member Whalen spoke of the desire for a buffer zone between the sidewalks and traffic lanes so pedestrians are not walking right next to moving vehicles.

Andrew Lutaya stated there would be about 5-6 feet of buffer.

Council Member Hayford Oleary stated his preference to shift to the east rather than the west. He then spoke of needing more trails or bike paths to provide safe traveling lanes for residents on bikes or on foot. He also expressed concern over taking businesses away from the area and eliminating access points.

Council Member Whalen asked if the project were to shift to the east, how residential property owners in the north east corner would be impacted.

Andrew Lutaya stated contact with the homeowners had not been initiated in the possibility of losing some driveway.

Director Asher stated that if the project would shift to the east the bus station could move to the south side of the intersection and would be less disruption to the homeowners but would end in removal of the market in the southeast corner.

Director Stark asked if 78<sup>th</sup> Street would be eliminated and if the gas station would be eliminated at the corner of Portland and 78<sup>th</sup> Street.

Andrew Lutaya stated options are still being explored but there is a high probability the gas station and auto dealership lots would be eliminated

Amber Blanchard pointed out a shift to the east would affect the parking of the nursing home as well.

Director Stark stated preference to have Portland make a shift to the west to preserve more viable areas. He then spoke of MnDOT hanging on to parcels once they are acquired and is unsure of the possibility of remnant parcels for redevelopment.

Andrew Lutaya stated there is a very specific process to accumulate properties.

Council Member Trautmann expressed support for a shift to the west as opposed to the east in order to conserve a needed food market for the area.

Mayor Regan Gonzalez asked about the impact of MnDOT taking property in the area and how that would impact existing businesses.

Director Stark expressed concerns for the food market and nursing home if the project would shift to the east and the extreme difficulty in getting property back from MnDOT.

Director Markle expressed preference to not have a bus stop directly adjacent to the dog park and possibility of altering the dog park slightly.

Council Member Supple would like to preserve the food market if possible. She then read a statement from Council Member Hayford Oleary stating his reconsideration to a shift to the west after hearing comments.

Mayor Regan Gonzalez stated the discussion was very helpful to see alternate options and would be in support of a shift to the west.

Council Member Whalen asked for clarification on the elimination of the two businesses on the west side of Portland along with the gas station and auto lot on the east side in order to preserve the food market and senior center. He also asked about the distance between the current dog park fence and potential roadway and if it would be enough space to distance the cars from the dogs.

Andrew Lutaya confirmed there would be about 10 feet between the fence and sidewalk then a cycle track followed by a 5-6 foot grass buffer before the street.

Director Markle stated that could be enough of a buffer to the dog park fence.

Council Member Whalen asked about the potential of a small park taking the place of the gas station and auto lot that will be eliminated due to lack of access and grading.

Director Markle stated a small park would be a welcomed amenities i but asked how residents would be able to access it if placed on the lot.

Director Stark agreed that a park would support the need for the area.

Director Asher stated staff has the direction needed and MnDOT is open to the option of a park on the corner of Portland and 78<sup>th</sup> but will need to develop a plan for accessibility.

Andrew Lutaya moved discussion to updating the sidewalk on the north side of 78<sup>th</sup> to include a bike trail and the city would be responsible for the costs of the additional width.

Director Asher asked for some direction as the addition would be welcomed.

Council Member Whalen expressed support in replacing the sidewalk and adding the width would serve the needs of residents. He then asked about a sound wall being placed along 78<sup>th</sup> Street.

Andrew Lutaya confirmed the need for a sound wall.

Council Member Trautmann asked where the sound wall would be placed.

Andrew Lutaya stated sound walls are most effective when they are as close to the highway as possible.

Council Member Supple echoed comments of including the sidewalk and bike trail being sheltered by the sound wall.

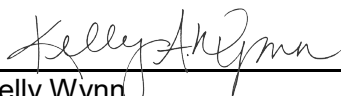
**ADJOURNMENT**

The work session was adjourned by unanimous consent at 6:53 p.m.

Date Approved: June 8, 2021



Maria Regan Gonzalez  
Mayor



Kelly Wynn  
Administrative Assistant



Katie Rodriguez  
City Manager