

ITEM#: 51
DATE: 05-14-19

COUNCIL ACTION FORM

SUBJECT: CAMPUSTOWN PUBLIC IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT DELAY (WELCH AVENUE)

BACKGROUND:

The 2019/20 Campustown Public Improvements project includes replacement of water main, storm sewers, and sanitary sewers under the 100 block of Welch Avenue and a water main replacement project along Lincoln Way from Hayward Avenue to Welch Avenue.

The Welch Avenue portion of the project requires the reconstruction of the street from building-face to building-face. At the October 9, 2018 meeting, City Council directed staff to proceed with the cross section for Welch Avenue that includes two travel lanes with bike lanes in each direction. On January 8, 2019, City Council approved a professional services agreement with WHKS & Co. to complete the design of this project.

In early February, WHKS & Co. and City of Ames staff members started reaching out to area businesses to gather information about their operations and infrastructure to consider as part of the design and construction. **To date, staff has only received participation from about 50% of the businesses and none of the owners of the residential rental units that will be directly impacted by the Welch Avenue construction.**

To obtain the necessary information from affected property owners along Welch Avenue and complete the project with the least disruption, it will be necessary to delay the Welch corridor portion of the project until the 2020 construction season. **A winter (December/January) bid letting would take place with Welch construction commencing early spring 2020 (March/April), as soon as weather permits. This would enable construction along the 100-block of Welch Avenue, which has the most impact to area businesses, to have the goal of being completed in August 2020.**

Bidding the project this winter should be a more opportune time to bid and obtain lower costs, compared to a rushed bid this summer with a tight construction timeframe. Since construction for the Welch corridor will be delayed a year, City staff anticipates that the planters along the 100 block of Welch Avenue would remain in-place until construction commences. City staff will use operating budget funds to plant these with annuals for the 2019 growing season.

It is possible, however, to complete the water system improvements in the area along Lincoln Way between Hayward Avenue and Welch Avenue during the current 2019 construction season. This portion of the project can be completed

independent of the work on Welch Avenue. The Lincoln Way portion of the project will temporarily impact the parking while keeping one lane open for through traffic.

ALTERNATIVES:

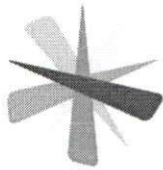
1. Confirm the delay of construction along Welch Avenue, thereby commencing the Welch construction project in early spring 2020, with the intended completion of August 2020. In addition, direct staff to proceed in the summer of 2019 to complete the water system improvements along the Lincoln Way portion of the project.
2. Direct staff to pursue a different construction schedule.

MANAGER'S RECOMMENDED ACTION:

In order to allow more time to communicate with impacted business/property owners along Welch Avenue and better assure that the disruption from construction of this project is limited to the summer months, it appears prudent to break the Campustown Improvements Program into two parts. This should also result in lower bid prices.

Therefore, it is the recommendation of the City Manager that the City Council adopt Alternative No. 1, as noted above.

No. 51



campustown
action
association

Campustown Action Association
119 Stanton Ave, Suite 602
Ames, IA 50014

May 9, 2019

Honorable Mayor Haila and Members of the Ames City Council,

We are writing to you regarding the upcoming work to be done in the 100 block of Welch Avenue. Members of the CAA board recently attended a meeting with staff from Public Works, and consultants from WHKS and RDG. It was brought to our attention that there is need for continued outreach to the businesses that will be affected by the construction. We have offered our assistance in reaching those who have not responded to the survey sent out earlier this spring. Due to the timeline, we are in agreement with Public Works that the project would be best served by delaying until spring of 2020. While we know everyone involved is anxious to have this project completed, it is critical to provide and receive timely communication. CAA hopes to continue to provide assistance in this area throughout the process.

Another important aspect of the meeting was the overall design or concept of what Welch Avenue could look like once the project has been completed. During the discussion, we voiced our desire to see street furnishings that reflect the unique vibe that is Campustown. From seating to trash receptacles, a youthful, contemporary approach would help unify the historic with the more urban facades that make up Campustown. While making decisions for the 100 block, CAA would like to encourage consideration of the entire district and moving toward a more identifiable style, with the result being a more purposeful placemaking endeavor.

It is also our hope that by making some changes to parking in the district, we can help allay the concerns of businesses regarding the removal of spaces on Welch, and potentially those displaced by a future plaza. We have met several times with City planning staff and are supportive of the changes being suggested. Specifically, the removal of the planters in the 200 block, returning those spaces to metered parking, and the updated time limits. Two additional items of note would be to maintain a designated handicapped parking space as close to the 100 block as possible and the addition of parking spaces in the 100 block of Stanton.

The Campustown Action Association is thankful to be included in these discussions. We hope to continue working with City staff on these projects as they move forward. We are appreciative of the time and investment being made to a cleaner, safer and more visually appealing Campustown that can be enjoyed by the entire community.

As always thank you for your time,

Karin Chitty
Executive Director