



## MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Burch and City Council Members

FROM: Gregg Guetschow, City Manager

SUBJECT: Street Reconstruction Program

DATE: May 7, 2015

City Council discussed during its April 27 meeting various aspects of a street improvement program and heard from staff the rationale for focusing on those streets that were in fair condition. I did not feel that a consensus had been reached as to the best way to allocate the limited funds that we have available for this purpose. I had a conversation with Mayor Burch a few days later and suggested that Council might find it helpful if we provided information that focused on the cost of reconstruction of the worst major streets.

You will find elsewhere in the agenda packet a spreadsheet prepared by DPW Director Amy Gilson showing estimated costs associated with reconstruction of those major streets with a PASER rating of 2 (very poor). A map with the most recent PASER ratings is also included. Major streets are those that are designed and used as collectors so their condition has greater impact on the driving public. It is for that reason that these streets were chosen as the focus for this analysis.

It is impractical for a number of reasons to undertake a major street reconstruction project this year. The design process takes longer than the time we have available, we are unlikely to receive bids with favorable pricing and we cannot be sure that Consumers Energy and the City would have adequate time to complete any underground utility work required.

If a project is undertaken in 2016, Council can expect the City to have available approximately \$700,000. This would represent two years of

receipts from the County road millage and \$100,000 that could be appropriated from major street fund balance. In subsequent years, we would expect to have between \$400,000 and \$450,000 available assuming no change in transportation funding at either the State or County levels. Please note that we will also be undertaking improvements to North Sheldon Street in 2016 through the State's Transportation Improvement Program.

The estimates provided by Ms. Gilson should be approached with a degree of caution. They do not include allowances for engineering or contingencies that could be expected to increase the estimates for any given project by as much as 25%. Further, there are unique characteristics to each project that affect the practicality of undertaking it. For example, it would be desirable to widen Lovett Street a bit to provide for safer travel between rows of parked cars. That will require relocating some telephone poles. There are sections of Harris Street that carry PASER ratings of 3 and are therefore not included on the spreadsheet. These blocks should be done at the same time. Finally, the smaller the project, the higher the unit prices we will pay.

Questions were raised during the April 27 meeting about the approach the County Road Commission is using in improving its roads through the millage program in that their focus is on attacking the worst roads first. Ms. Gilson spoke to Road Commission manager Blair Ballou about this subject and will be available to provide additional details at Monday's meeting. In brief, however, he reported that their worst streets were projects that required a mill-and-fill process, an approach that we had identified for City streets rated as fair. Many other County roads only require the addition of gravel. I would also note that because their program can be accomplished over a 12-year period, it is not quite so critical where they start.

I believe this additional information should help Council in determining the approach that it wishes to take with regard to the expenditure of the funds the City has available for street improvements. We remain available to assist Council in providing any additional information that it requires in this regard.