Item 23-0151: Complete Streets / Ped Study: Consultant Scope Approval
Municipal Services Committee
Mon, Feb 20, 2023 4:30PM

Alderperson William Siebers (District 1) 02:29
23-0151 Complete Streets Pedestrian study consultant scope approval. Do I hear motion?

Alderperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5)
Move to approve.

Alderperson Brad Firkus (District 3)
Second.

Alderperson William Siebers (District 1) 01:55
Motion's been made and seconded. Mr. Lom, do you want to comment on it? Three. Are you on?

Eric Lom (City Traffic Engineer) 02:52
I am. Thank you. Thank you, chair. For those of you that remember, it's been a little while, but we were allocated $75,000 in excess fund balance back in the middle of 2022 for a—what was coined a pedestrian study. And what we learned very quickly—or I learned, I guess—as we talked to various alderpersons, that there were a lot of different ideas out there as to what this pedestrian study ought to entail. And so, administratively, we talked a lot about well, what's the best place for our efforts here? How can we get a product that makes that fits best with what the majority of the people are looking for in the Council?

Eric Lom (City Traffic Engineer) 03:28
So, what you see here is—and I'll just go over it very briefly. I'm not going to read it to you or anything. But boiled down to the to the basics is we would have them looking at I believe it's four things. One, we would be looking at the current Complete Streets policy. So, our current complete streets policy, while possibly a little ahead of its time when it was undertaken, is fairly basic and out of date at this point. So, we would be looking at them to update that complete streets policy.

Eric Lom (City Traffic Engineer) 04:30
The second thing, which is actually listed as task three in there, is the is basically consolidating a bunch of policies that we have. Over the years, we've slowly developed—we have a Mid-Block Crosswalk policy, we have a Intersection Crosswalk Policy, and try to look at those in their totality and come up with something that works well for the city.

Eric Lom (City Traffic Engineer) 04:52
As a part of that, the second paragraph under task three talks about (and this will pick up the years of some) is we would be looking at our collector and arterial streets throughout the city and having them based on the proposed policy language, prioritize approximately 15 locations throughout the city that would be best suited for improvement. So, this could be described as phase two of our Enhanced Crosswalk Policy, or our encr—er sorry, Enhanced Crosswalk Program. So, I know there are many that are interested in that.

Eric Lom (City Traffic Engineer) 05:31
We would also develop, have them develop a complete streets design guide. So as engineers, we work off of design guides. And right now, we don't have a design guide that talks about street—about complete streets at all. So, this would really sort of integrate into the core of what we're doing, the Complete Streets philosophies, and make it part of what our daily activities as we design streets.

Eric Lom (City Traffic Engineer) 06:03
The timeline on this, they expect to be able to pull this together in about six months. And as it stands, we would be spending the full $75,000. So basically, what we do in a case like this is we say, "We have $75,000 and we have this list of things that we're trying to do. What, how much of this can we get done for the amount?" So, we're taking the unusual step tonight of having the committee and Council approve the scope. This doesn't usually happen. In fact, it never happens, that I'm aware of. Because we want to make sure before we move forward that the Council is actually getting what they think they want out of this project. And then once we know that the scope is where we want it to be, then we would—the idea would be we would negotiate with our bike and pedestrian consultant and come back with a contract that would need to be awarded.

Alderperson William Siebers (District 1) 06:56
The scope does not include the amount? Or does the scope include the amount?

Eric Lom (City Traffic Engineer) 07:02
The scope at this point simply says that the anticipated fees for the project would be $75,000. Is that what you mean?

Alderperson William Siebers (District 1) 07:09
Are we—with our vote on this, are we saying that, along with the scope, we go along with the idea of spending the $75,000?

Eric Lom (City Traffic Engineer) 07:23
Chris? I mean, you're definitely—I can tell you one thing, you're gonna get another kick at this can, because we're going to have to come back through to award it.

Alderperson William Siebers (District 1) 07:31
The reason why I asked that question is that my thought is the scope is one part of this. The $75,000 which would pay for it is the other part of it, which we don't know yet. And my thought would be is that not something that should go to the Finance Committee? Because finance committee then, you know, will vote on whether or not they want to fund the scope.

Eric Lom (City Traffic Engineer) 08:05
I believe the funding is already approved. The—well the funding is already approved, whether or not it would need to go to finance I guess I would defer to...

Alderperson William Siebers (District 1) 08:16
Okay. If it's already approved.

Eric Lom (City Traffic Engineer) 08:19
Yeah.

Alderperson William Siebers (District 1) 08:19
Alderperson Firkus is going to help us.

Alderperson Brad Firkus (District 3) 08:20
Thank you Chair. I just, I guess the way I was interpreting, what you're saying is that you're presenting us a scope, but we could dice this, reduce it potentially. That could then reduce the scope and reduce the costs. So, if we see things in here that we don't think should be part of this, we can say we want to remove those by amending this item at this point, and then that would dictate then what the policy and then potentially what the price tag would be down the road.

Alderperson William Siebers (District 1) 08:45
Right.

Eric Lom (City Traffic Engineer) 08:46
Correct. That was the intention.

Alderperson Brad Firkus (District 3) 08:47
Okay.

Alderperson William Siebers (District 1) 08:49
Any other questions? Alderperson Hartzheim. You still on?

Alderperson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 08:53
Thank you, Chair. Just reiterate what Alderperson Firkus just said, we're at this point you're being asked and Council will be asked to just approve the scope. This is not an approval of the contract. The contract will be the next kick at the can as Mr. Lom mentioned. Is that correct?

Eric Lom (City Traffic Engineer) 09:11
That's the way we see it. We would come back with a negotiated—in this case, our intention is to sole source this to our bike and ped consultant, because we've had such good luck with them and we know we can trust them. So you would be signing off on that idea as well as the contract itself.

Alderperson William Siebers (District 1) 09:29
Okay.

Alderperson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 09:30
And per their memo or your their portion of this memo. They're saying they can do this for the $75,000 that we estimate.

Eric Lom (City Traffic Engineer) 09:38
That is correct. That is—sorry. That is correct. And we—what it would really end up being, based on the way we normally do this, would be a "actual cost not to exceed" type contract. So, they wouldn't necessarily spend the full amount, but it usually works out that way.

Alderperson William Siebers (District 1) 09:56
Okay.

Alderperson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 09:56
Thank you.

Alderperson William Siebers (District 1) 09:57
Any other? Alderperson Doran.

Alderperson Chad Doran (District 15) 10:00
Thank you. My, I guess, question is under the, I guess, crosswalk policy portion. And you touched on it a little bit. That the line that sort of says there through this program, there'll be proposing up to 15 additional locations for mid-block crossings. Under our current program, I believe we are finishing up with the ones that the city had proposed doing to this point this year, correct?

Eric Lom (City Traffic Engineer) 10:34
I believe it's next year. But to your other point, the idea here would be, we set a bar based on our existing phase, what we'll call phase one program. We have a bar that was set based on a point system and so forth. And that was the lowest hanging fruit. This—what we'd be asking them to do is say, "Okay, we've hit the lowest hanging fruit. Now recommend to us the next batch." And that, of course, would be subject—you know, that would just be a list of recommendations whether or not it ever gets funded as projects is a different question.

Alderperson Chad Doran (District 15) 11:15
Okay. That's the part I guess I was just curious about because, obviously, any of these that we do above and beyond what we've already done, come with a cost. And we're trying to obviously balance, you know, that spending in public safety. And I guess I just, it was, a—I guess I'm just sort of wondering if this is sort of looking for a policy to provide some new locations that we just don't already have versus looking at, do we really need to do more than what we've already done?

Eric Lom (City Traffic Engineer) 11:48
Not sure if there was a question in there, but I do have a comment. I mean, for example, one of the things that we hear the most concerns about are some of the crossings at the large roundabouts. That is not anything that was considered as part of the original phase one programs. So that is definitely something we would be looking at as part of this.

Alderperson Chad Doran (District 15) 12:33
Thank you. And I appreciate that. That makes sense. I think my sort of concern going forward is, you know, the difficulty we already have keeping up with the streets we have and any additional treatments that we add just increases the cost of those maintenance and replacement in the future. And I think with the difficulty we're already having just paying for the streets we have I think this is this is going to be a difficult process to incorporate more. But I think if we're—if the idea here is we're just looking at what our options could be for the future. I think that's fine. So, thank you.

Alderperson William Siebers (District 1) 13:09
Alderperson Van Zeeland.

Alderperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 13:11
Thank you chair. Um, since we're discussing the scope, I was looking at the how they are looking to gather information. And I think one place that's lacking is actually asking the alders for the places in their districts where we are aware of safety issues. They don't always make it to your department, but they usually make it to us. So, I would just like to include that in there, please. And specifically—I think it says something about coming

back to Munici—the Municipal Services Committee, but it doesn't say anything about talking to alders about their districts.

Eric Lom (City Traffic Engineer) 13:48
Certainly, if the committee would want to amend that, to include that, that is good. You know, there's a fine line between people knowing their districts really well, which is a value added thing that we can't possibly know it as well, and on the flip side of that coin is sort of a quantitative data driven approach to it, where we're looking at actual crash data and other things. So, you know, I think if that's something that the alderpersons want to see in there, then by all means we can do that.

Alderperson William Siebers (District 1) 14:26
You want to amend that then?

Alderperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 14:27
Yes, I'd like to amend it. And then I guess I also just wanted to add, I don't see those as being in competition with one another. I just think gathering all of the data then allows us to look at those locations with that data that we aren't usually privy to on this side of things. So yes, I'd like to amend it to add alderperson feedback, please.

Alderperson William Siebers (District 1) 14:49
Chair will second that. So, we have amendment on the table. And seconded. Do we have any comments questions in regards to that? Alderperson Doran.

Alderperson Chad Doran (District 15) 14:59
I guess I would just ask maybe the staff if they're supportive of the amendment, what sort of language, I guess, or what—how would you prefer that being shared with you? Is it just alders sharing a list of concerns they've heard? Do you want—would you prefer to see the alders speak directly to the study authors? Or I guess we're just, I'm not sure what, what's the most valuable for you from that standpoint.

Eric Lom (City Traffic Engineer) 15:28
Probably the most efficient and cheapest way for us to handle that would be to have, at the appropriate time in the process, for me to reach out to the alderpersons soliciting that feedback. We would aggregate that information and provide it to the consultant.

Alderperson Chad Doran (District 15) 15:49
Thank you.

Alderperson Brad Firkus (District 3) 15:50
Thank you. Thank you, Chair. I think this would be a good component to add. Because while data can definitely give us a very good picture, it's not always going to tell us about the things that people see and experience at the street level where, you know, we may not have a lot of crash data for a given intersection involving pedestrians, but that may be because pedestrians just avoid that area because of the perceived unsafety. So that would be I think, a beneficial component to add to this.

Alderperson William Siebers (District 1) 16:18
Alderperson Hartzheim again, you are?

Alderperson Sheri Hartzheim (District 13) 16:23

Thank you, Chair. I agree with that sentiment, but I do want to caution us that too many cooks spoil the soup. So, I think that having that information solicited by staff and composed by staff rather than direct contact between alderpersons on the consultant.

Alderperson William Siebers (District 1) 16:40

Okay. Anybody else? Motions been made and amended for the amendment. All in favor of the amendment signify by saying aye. Those opposed? Chair votes aye. Five zero.

Alderperson William Siebers (District 1) 16:57

Now we have an amended. Do we have any further comments? Questions? All right. So, we'll—23-0151 as amended, all in favor signify by saying aye. All those opposed? Chair votes aye. Thank you.