

Item 23-0286: Approve College Avenue Lane Reconfiguration Pilot Project

Common Council

Wed, Apr 05, 2023 7:00PM

Mayor Jake Woodford 32:17

Right, we come now to the time of public participation. At each meeting, the Common Council reserves 30 minutes for members of the public to express their views on items which appear on our agenda. We have eight members of the public signed up to speak this evening. When I call your name, please approach the microphone and state your name and address for the record. We ask that you please keep your comments concise and to the point. And that you please take into consideration the comments that have been made by those who've spoken before you.

Mayor Jake Woodford 32:49

Again, we have five minutes per person to speak. And these are items which appear on the agenda. I ask that all members of the public participating please direct your comments to the chair. And with that we'll get started. The first person on the list is [Deb M.] Welcome.

Deb M. (Property Owner) 33:16

Thank you, Mayor. My name is [Deb M.] I own a business at—or I own the building at 500 West Franklin Street. I actually sat where you guys sat for six years. Bill can attest to that. I think Chris can too.

Deb M. (Property Owner) 33:34

I'm here to talk about College Avenue. I moved here in '84. I've seen a lot of things happen in the city. And I also know, sitting there, by this point, you guys have heard a lot of arguments, and most of you already have your minds made up.

Deb M. (Property Owner) 33:50

Mayor, I heard you talk at ADI. I give you a lot of credit for just dealing with the issue head on. He didn't scuff around it; he went forward. But here are my concerns. The mayor even address that he understands that a lot of the retail and restaurants operate on very small margins. If you're going to cut down the traffic in half, you're going to hurt those businesses. The SBA for almost three decades, says new businesses 17% fail in the first year. 49.7% fail in five. I know this is 18 months, but 17% fail without losing traffic that they thought they were going to have to make ends meet.

Deb M. (Property Owner) 34:44

I know there's almost 500 new apartments coming down to this area. That's not going to make up for the loss of traffic. I moved here from Chicago. I'm used to traffic, but I can tell you if I could find a shorter way to get somewhere I did. And I know that's how other people feel. So, you're going to be diverting the traffic. But actually, I should be happy. Where's the traffic gonna go? My buildings on Franklin Street. My tenants who are small businesses are in Franklin Street. So, I should be happy. But I'm not because I love this city. Okay? I don't want to see this downtown was bragging about all the new businesses that came in compared to those that failed. And now we're going to make it harder for the traffic and for people to get here.

Deb M. (Property Owner) 35:33

I heard that we want a walking city. I've been walking Appleton a long time. I'm not even going to count how many years that is, since '84. Get out of your cars walk. I walked here. I love walking this town. When I'm, when

I'm here—I actually live in Georgia now, but I have a building here because I love my na—my my clients. I love this community. So, I love coming here.

Deb M. (Property Owner) 36:03

But you guys have to think about what's going to happen. I know everybody's saying, "Well, we did the smoking ban, and it didn't really hurt." Well, we did a downtown mall. What did that cost the city? And it took years, and it took a lot of private investors committed to making this building in this area work. I'm just begging you guys. I know you're saying it's 18 months. You spend the 300,000 to do that plus, you're not going to spend the same amount of money take it down. It's just not worth it. It's wasted money. You can't tell me on the capital improvement projects that there isn't someplace else that that money can go.

Deb M. (Property Owner) 36:45

And the businesses that go out of business because they don't have the traffic, nobody's going to reimburse them. Nobody's going to help them. And this is their livelihood. And they're the ones who make the downtown vibrant. And I heard that people don't want to hear the souped-up cars because they're too loud. Well, now there's one lane. Oh my gosh, they're gonna be loud longer. Get 'em through the city. Get 'em out here.

Deb M. (Property Owner) 37:10

So, I really wish—I know—like I said, I know I've sat there, and I know, our minds are usually made up by the time we get here. But I hope you reconsider because there are a lot of livelihoods that could be at stake. I know Jen works really hard to do all these events for downtown, but you can't do enough events to make up for that lost traffic. Thank you, you guys.

Mayor Jake Woodford 37:34

Right next is [Andres H.]

Andres H. (Resident) 37:39

Hi, everybody. Hi, Mr. Mayor. My name is Andres. I live in District 11 in Appleton, and I'm a Lawrence student. When we're talking about downtown, I think what's important when we're when we're trying to support these businesses, when we're trying to grow what downtown Appleton is, what's really important is people feeling safe being there. When you're crossing streets and nearly getting hit by cars, when parents don't feel safe bringing their children downtown, that is what is killing businesses. That's what's killing economic development.

Andres H. (Resident) 37:39

It's not only about having people driving through on cars, but people who come through with foot traffic. People who come through by traffic are much more likely to take the time to stop at businesses than people who are driving in cars, especially when you have to pay for parking, and everybody knows how miserable parking downtown can already be.

Andres H. (Resident) 38:38

And speaking more specifically as a young person and as a Lauren student. Downtown Appleton is not an accessible place to live right now without a car. You can't go to a grocery store and get basic foods and necessities without having a car, without being able to drive. Which is why it is so crucial that the city make the investment in new infrastructure that can allow people that don't have the money for a car, that don't have the money for gas, to still be able to go to grocery stores and base—and meet their basic necessities.

Andres H. (Resident) 39:11

It really is about keeping people in downtown. But you know when young people, when downtown is not accessible to young people, when people don't feel safe going downtown, that is certainly what will be the worst for businesses. And I want downtown Appleton to be beautiful. I want it to be a place that more of my fellow students want to stay after we graduate. But to do that, it has to be truly accessible for everybody and right now, two lanes of traffic in each direction is not accessible. Thank you, Mr. Mayor.

Mayor Jake Woodford 39:43

Next is [Deb B.]

Deb B. (Resident) 39:50

We love you too, Maiyoua, and you're not even in my district, and I love you. You're such a darling. [Deb B. at XXXXX] And I have a little menagerie here to include College Avenue. So please bear with me.

Deb B. (Resident) 40:06

Appleton's mission statement cites "We believe in Appleton having a government that is fiscally responsible for providing necessary services in a cost-effective manner. It balances special interests against the needs of the broader community." Additionally, specifically addressing the Council, "Council members take the time to analyze issues, review various alternatives, and make rational and studied decisions. Council members respect and trust each other and support the decisions made by the body." On that note, I thank you for this gift of listening time.

Deb B. (Resident) 40:37

You are mandated to be responsible stewards of Appleton's money to make decisions incorporating your aspirations to dream big, while acting to address basic needs resulting in observable outcomes. It is a delicate balance. Your decision-making impacts each one of your constituents. This time and acquiring constituent input as an investment in that important social infrastructure. Nurturing that vital relationship with a willingness to obtain a more detailed picture of the community. My hope in sharing the following info is to ignited desire for a deeper dive in the committees that put in the work, to research agenda issues prior to coming to full Council for votes. This is where the magic happens.

Deb B. (Resident) 41:16

The city receives from my property and my husband's a loan from our property taxes between \$300 and \$400 per month. That's no small amount to me. As your constituent I request that you, one, please activate your inquisitiveness and ask the next question and, two, attack the problem, not the person.

Deb B. (Resident) 41:36

Where is the need to ask that next question. Here are some examples. And this is where I'm going to just touch on a couple topics. Electric scooters, the Post Crescent cited their use to result in a reduction of seven metric tons of greenhouse gases. How much would have been saved without the scooters? According to Jeremiah Johnson, Assistant Professor of Environmental Engineering, studies indicate two thirds of the users would have walked or used public transport. 7% would not have made the trip. Next question What about manufacturing and replacement of the lithium batteries? The vehicle that picks them up every night? How's the electricity generated to recharge them? Are we truly being environmentally conscious? The answer may not be as simplistic as one may be led to believe.

Deb B. (Resident) 42:17

And initially you were advised to ignore those scooter complaints, quote, according to Appleton, Post Crescent April 7 2021, "I'm very eager to see this move forward. I just want to caution Council and staff we're going to get a significant number of complaints; we should take those in stride. Just encourage people to get used to it and try their best to accept it." 9/21/21 Appleton Post Crescent indicated complaints about Bird scooters have been relatively sparse. 94—94 complaints in the first four months of use.

Deb B. (Resident) 42:47

Ignore the computer—the scooter complaints, and yet, you currently are considering imposing rules impacting all those with less than five acres, basically all of us, and local businesses regarding fertilizers, herbicides, and all. My next question: how many complaints were received there? Could they have been resolved in other ways? Have you consulted local Lawn Care businesses for solution?

Deb B. (Resident) 43:05

Regarding College Avenue transformation from four lanes to three lanes with the addition of bike and scooter lanes, the information publicized indicated an 80% reduction in pedestrian crashes. I've asked the next question. Do you know how many pedestrian crashes occurred in 2022? When I inquired about baseline data from Eric Lom, he shared the number for the year was two. My next question would be What were their causes and circumstances? Did it have anything to do with left turns?

Deb B. (Resident) 43:37

There was a request by business owners to prohibit scooters on College Avenue from Drew to Richmond. If they along with bicycles are allowed, I would ask where will they be parked? If cycles and scooter riders desire a thoroughfare, Washington has bike priority there, parallel street accommodates. Is there a need? Is this being done because the city has supported more apartments, residential living in the downtown, and there are noise complaints? Will this actually improve pedestrian safety? Or what if the number of pedestrian crashes increase? What's the goal to transform downtown into a quiet residential district? And ask the next question. Interestingly, when I looked at the live data regarding the police reports for traffic incidents, the two blocks to the east of Drew Street had more per block traffic incidence.

Mayor Jake Woodford 44:25

About 30 seconds remaining though.

Deb B. (Resident) 44:28

Surprisingly, the request to honor Soldiers Square donors and their descendant's desires for this to be a green space at an estimated cost of \$200,000 was denied as this was not in five-year plan, and the money was not available. My next question is how can this Council find \$130 for an experimental modification of College Avenue? Was this modification in the five-year plan? And lastly, so please ask the next question.

Mayor Jake Woodford 44:56

Time is expired.

Deb B. (Resident) 44:58

Okay. Thank you

Mayor Jake Woodford 45:00

Thank you.

Deb B. (Resident) 45:00

May I have another moment? No.

Mayor Jake Woodford 45:02

No. Next is, Jason Brozek.

Jason Brozek 45:11

Hi, good evening. Thanks, Jason Brozek from district one. I'm also a member of Appleton's Bike and Pedestrian Advisory Committee. I teach government and environmental studies at Lawrence, where I'm also teaching a little mini course on road diets and streets this term. A handful of my students from that mini class decided to come with me tonight. I'm really jazzed about that.

Jason Brozek 45:32

So, I wanted to come tonight to enthusiastically support the proposal to restripe the lanes on College Avenue. All of the evidence that director Block, Eric Lom, and others have laid out makes it really clear that this will increase safety, improve efficiency, cut down on noise, reduce crashes, and make College Avenue more accessible for more users.

Jason Brozek 45:55

But I actually think the decision is even simpler than all of that, and I actually agree with, with Deb, the speaker before me. For me, what it comes down to is a question. What do we want the city's downtown to be? Do we want the city's downtown to be a safe, pleasant place to shop and walk and bike and eat and drink and spend time? Or do we want the city's downtown to be a place for drivers to get through as quickly as possible? Honestly, what's our goal? What do we want people to say about Appleton? Do we want them to say "Downtown's great. I love walking around the shops, grabbing drinks, having dinner on the terrace?" Or do we want them to say "Downtown's great. I can get from Kimberly to Grand Chute in 22 minutes instead of 23 and a half minutes." What is our goal?

Jason Brozek 46:43

Here's what it comes down to for me. The way we design our streets should serve our goals. And I hope that our goal is to have a lively, safe downtown that's designed for all sorts of people, not just a downtown that caters to drivers who are trying to get somewhere else faster. Thanks.

Mayor Jake Woodford 47:05

Next is [Matthew P.]

Matthew P. (Resident) 47:07

Hello, everyone. My name is [Matthew P. at XXXXX] And I'm here to echo the support for the College Avenue pilot project. I—not to go back to other points that are already referenced, but I really want to emphasize the safety of this, especially—I'm a Lawrence student. And coming downtown College Avenue can be tricky definitely at times with just the amount of traffic and noise and people, and just talking to students, it's always a struggle to kind of feel safe going downtown for a variety of different reasons that I don't need to get into right now. It would just be making kind of College Avenue a safer place to go and to cross the street and get to different businesses that are really within reach, within walking. And then taking a bike and just any other transportation, that many students don't have availability to cars. And that getting there is easier than going to Walmart or going to Target or other bigger box stores are further away from the town. Just kind of staying within the city and being able to get there safely and feel safe, able to do those things. Thank you.

Mayor Jake Woodford 48:14

All right. Lisa, I see you're signed up for an item not related to the item currently under discussion. So, we'll finish up with the comments on the lane reconfiguration, then we'll come back to you. So next is Jennifer's Stephany.

Jennifer Stephany (Appleton Downtown Incorporated) 48:36

Hiding behind the screen there. Good evening. Thank you for a yet another opportunity to speak. I'm Jennifer Stefany. I'm the executive director with Appleton Downtown Incorporated. And I want to first of all say thank you for the many opportunities to have discussion around this topic. Obviously, we have members on both sides of this concept. And the ADI board of directors has really been careful to take all of that into consideration. And I know we've talked on both sides of the issue with many of you.

Jennifer Stephany (Appleton Downtown Incorporated) 49:10

We do want to be that destination that people drive to and not through. And that is definitely an important matter for us as we talk about Lane reconfiguration. We know that the research supports positive economic impact for small businesses in walkable communities around the world. This is not a new concept for communities, but it's new to us. And it means that there are still a lot of concerns around traffic congestion, around what it's going to take to get access. Right? Access is critical for us. We need to get people to our downtown.

Jennifer Stephany (Appleton Downtown Incorporated) 49:51

And it's scary. I drive downtown every day several times a day as do most of you, and it's unpredictable. There might be somebody's getting pulled over. There might be a group crossing the street that takes a little bit longer than what the light allows. There might be deliveries happening, and it might clog up a lane. It's unpredictable. It's messy sometimes. Simulation can't predict that.

Jennifer Stephany (Appleton Downtown Incorporated) 50:15

These are the decisions that we're going to have to weigh, you are going to have to weigh, as you're determining what to do with this proposal. So, I ask that you take a little extra time tonight to talk about the metrics, to talk about what success looks like. We've had lots of conversations about what those metrics are. I would love to hear a little bit more about how we're going to measure those, what success looks like, and what the pilot program length is going to tell us. Maybe there's an option to shorten that. Reduce some of that fear. I'd love to hear some of that conversation tonight.

Jennifer Stephany (Appleton Downtown Incorporated) 50:52

I want to thank you all for taking so much time on this. This is a big decision. And it impacts a lot of small businesses and a whole community. We want to be a destination, an important walkable destination. We know there are new residential developments and more coming, and that's exciting for us. So, I want to thank you all for making this difficult decision and taking the time to really discuss. I probably have a lot more I wanted to say but I'm going to end there because I know there are others waiting to speak. But thank you for the opportunity. Appreciate it.

Mayor Jake Woodford 51:28

Next is David Oliver.

David Oliver (Mondo Wine Bar Owner) 51:30

Hi, everybody. I know some of you. My name is David Oliver. I own Mondo Wine bar and retail downtown Appleton. As a downtown business owner, I am enthusiastically in favor of this. I've been pushing for it for a while now.

David Oliver (Mondo Wine Bar Owner) 51:54

I disagree that it's going to hurt small business. I would say that—I love the phrase. I don't know if Jen came up with it or somebody else did. But once she mentioned "drive to not through." I will tell you that we have a permit for tables outside of our establishment. In the summer of 2018, which was our first summer of operation, we put tables out there, and 2019, and 2020, and 2021. We did not in 2022. The noise level, the ridiculous cruising events made it uncomfortable for myself, my wife, my staff, and our guests to sit outside and try to enjoy a nice glass of wine on a summer evening.

David Oliver (Mondo Wine Bar Owner) 52:40

When we were looking for a spot, we knew we wanted to be downtown because we love downtown Appleton. My wife and I live walking distance to downtown. In the summer of 2017. When we were looking for a space, we would walk downtown every single night. I don't remember it being that loud. Honestly, if I had heard all the noise that we hear now, we may not have decided to start a small business in downtown Appleton. We may have chosen somewhere else. There are many times since then that I almost regret it. But not completely because I do love downtown.

David Oliver (Mondo Wine Bar Owner) 53:15

This will make a huge difference for people who actually want to come downtown to patronize small business. The people who are cruising up and down College Avenue, they're not stopping and parking and spending money. They're just driving up and down for the sake of driving up and down. I want people to feel comfortable and safe and come and visit not just my business but all other small businesses downtown. I know a lot of other small business owners on College Avenue, and I would say that on the whole most of them feel the way I do. So, I would please implore you to vote to move forward with this project. Thank you

[Cut]

Mayor Jake Woodford 55:00

No other members of the public signed up to speak. Did anybody missed the sign in sheet and wanted to speak? Just want to check. Okay, just step up to the microphone, your name and address for the record, please.

Oliver Zornow (Building For Kids) 55:18

My name is Oliver Zornow. [Address] just down the road this way. I know Jen drives downtown a lot. A lot of people drive downtown a lot. I walk downtown a lot. And I also happened to be the executive director of the Building For Kids children's museum right downstairs.

Oliver Zornow (Building For Kids) 55:33

I'll share that we are grateful at the building for kids, that the city continues to look for innovative ways to make our downtown a safer, more family friendly environment. We believe that that's essential for all of our success. I'll share just one piece of statistic that I learned in this process was that from 2019 to 2023, we're down roughly 30% in traffic down College Avenue. So, traffic going—cars going back and forth, have pre pandemic levels till now 30% down. The Building for kids Children's Museum 30% higher than ever before people coming. 30,000 people have come to the Children's Museum so far this year. Not one of them has been complaining about 30

extra seconds to go from one end of College Avenue to the other. What we have been hearing is unpredictability of crossing streets, cars darting around each other, left turns being impossible, and difficult to navigate.

Oliver Zornow (Building For Kids) 56:28

I don't know that this solution is the best solution that could possibly ever be put in place on College Avenue. I'm not a traffic engineer. What I do know is that we need to continue to find ways to innovate and be better for our residents, for our businesses, and for our community. So, we're very supportive of this pilot study and feel that the city is moving in the right direction. Thank you

Mayor Jake Woodford 56:52

Just want to check one more time. Did anybody miss the sign in sheet want to speak? Come on up. And your name and address for the record please?

Ron K. (Resident) 57:08

Good evening. My name is [Ron K. at XXXXX] First, I want to start this out with I'm one of those car guys. Do I look like one of them that you're talking about? I have an old classic. I drive up and down College Avenue. I've been doing that since I was 16 years old. We've never had the issues that we have now.

Ron K. (Resident) 57:31

What you need to do is distinguish between the two crowds, there's a younger crowd and an older crowd. The older crowd wants to come down to College Avenue. They want to spend money. They want to be able to park their car, have people view it, turn around, have a dinner, everything else. So please distinguish between the two groups. Embrace the old—the older farts. We want to get out there. We want to have fun for an evening. We're not trying to make noise and break traffic laws and everything else.

Ron K. (Resident) 58:00

I believe what needs to be done is the police have come up with the presence and turn it around. Take care of the ones that are misbehaving. There are very few. If we do have an outing, we plan an outing, first thing we do is we turn it out communicate. No misbehavior. We're not standing for it. We turn around and get on 'em. But you can't stop them when you're not in the car with them. So don't go after the whole crowd. We're turned around. I'm being pulled over just because I'm out there. I don't think that's fair. We're being targeted.

Ron K. (Resident) 58:35

So also, I want to add, I've been in this town for 65 years. I've been here since 1957, 100 years less than what the city has been here. College Avenue has always been an East/West arterial. It's the main drag going from the south side of Appleton to the north side to the west side, everything else. It's going to continue to be that unless you turn it around and change that. We don't have another place to go. Franklin street is not going to work. Have you ever been downtown after a parade or anything like that, when they open it back up and try to get down Drew Street? They're chock full. I mean you can't move. It takes a half hour afterwards.

Ron K. (Resident) 59:17

If you're going to turn around and make Appleton a destination downtown, you want to make that the place to sit back, have outside tables everything else, no traffic, then you have to accordingly plan. You have to get an East/West arterial. Oneida Street through mis-decisions and everything else has already been shut off. Are you trying to create another bridge to nowhere on College Avenue?

Ron K. (Resident) 59:41

So, another thing that I see is what are you going to do with delivery trucks? Right now, you have two lanes. Delivery trucks stop in the middle of College Avenue. All there is alleys behind most of them. Delivery trucks can't get to the businesses. So, they stop in the middle of the lanes of traffic. I mean the parking spots are full. You can't blame them. They have a schedule. But at least right now with two lanes going each way, you have an opportunity to get around them. Else you're going to be sitting here behind them.

Ron K. (Resident) 1:00:07

I think at this point right now, there's too many questions. I don't think they've been answered enough. At this point. I think this needs to be tabled and turned around, brought up where it can be investigated a little bit further. I don't think you're ready to turn around and say, we're going to turn on do this. We don't even have total cost to do it. Do we? We have no decision that [indecipherable] the other day yet what we're going to do if it doesn't work out in 18 months. We're just going to change it back and it's all going to be the same? I highly disagree with that. I think we need to turn on sit back and make sure that the plan we're going to put in place works. That's all I have to say.

[Cut]

Mayor Jake Woodford 1:01:28

All right, anybody else? All right, hearing none we'll now close public participation. We move on with our agenda.

[Cut]

Mayor Jake Woodford 1:07:46

All right, first, we're gonna take up item 23-0286 approve College Avenue Lane reconfiguration pilot project. We have a motion and a second to approve. Open the floor for discussion. Alder Croatt.

Aldersperson Chris Croatt (District 14) 1:08:10

Thank you, Mayor. Since I asked for the separate vote on this, I'd like to make a few comments, maybe some rhetorical questions, and then actual question at the end. This is one of those tough votes that we have to make throughout the year. We have to consider the facts that were presented, the input from our constituents, the input from those that speak at during public participation.

Aldersperson Chris Croatt (District 14) 1:08:35

And I did just want to say the one of the speakers earlier said that our minds are probably made up by the time we get here. Mine is not, was not. I was really struggling with this particular action item, trying to find ways to get on board with it and support it, but I have some concerns. And some of those concerns were raised here tonight during the public participation.

Aldersperson Chris Croatt (District 14) 1:09:00

I do like the fact that it's a pilot project, but I have concerns about us being willing to change back if we need to. I'd like to have a much deeper discussion about the metrics involved. I believe, ADI Executive Director Stephany brought that up as an area that she'd like to hear more about. I share those concerns. What are the metrics? We have some bullet points in a memo that talks about traffic counts, crashes, vehicle speeds, roadway closures due to aggressive driving? Not exactly sure what that means. Parking meter revenue, business, community member feedback, police and fire feedback. That's great. But what are the actual measurements that we're going to look at, and what is the process for evaluating all of that data? Who's going to make the decisions, and at the end,

what's gonna be the line that says, "We're good with it the way it is? Or we need to change it back?" And are we willing to change it back if it doesn't work out? Well, what if—what does it mean to not work out?

Alderson Chris Croatt (District 14) 1:10:15

And I think we should clarify the expense because there were some numbers thrown around. It's my understanding that it's \$130,000, to reconfigure College Avenue. And it's approximately half of that, to turn it back to the way it was, roughly speaking.

Mayor Jake Woodford 1:10:28

Roughly speaking, yes.

Alderson Chris Croatt (District 14) 1:10:28

So, we're looking at potentially \$200,000. I personally think that we can better utilize that money on some of our other infrastructure needs. We already have traffic laws and ordinances to address speed, racing, noise, all of those concerns that are, in my opinion, really driving this.

Alderson Chris Croatt (District 14) 1:10:54

One of the things that we're challenged with is making decisions that are in the best interest of the city. And I think we're all we all do that every week. But we also have to represent our constituents. And when I talked to my constituents and hear feedback from some of your constituents, I heard much more opposition to this than support for it from the constituency. And I know one of the comments made earlier was that if the goal is to have a lively, vibrant, safe downtown, and that we need to change this to get there, we're already there. I—in my opinion, we have a safe downtown, we have a vibrant downtown. ADI does a great job of working with our businesses. It's already lively and vibrant.

Alderson Chris Croatt (District 14) 1:11:36

Making this change potentially has some negative impacts. And I'd like I'd really like to hear from either from staff or some from someone on the committee as to how we're going to measure this. What is success? What is failure? And is this body—maybe it's a rhetorical question—is this body willing to go back if it doesn't work out? Thank you.

Mayor Jake Woodford 1:11:59

Alder Alfheim.

Alderson Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 1:12:04

This is indeed a difficult situation. In district 11, I have a wonderful downtown residential community. I have the Lawrence University students, as well as the bulk of the businesses on College Avenue on the south side. And I think it it's a perfect example of how do we find success together. The businesses downtown cannot find success without the residents wanting to use it. The residents want the downtown to be the shape and size they need it to want to be here. We must find ways that we can continue to grow forward together.

Alderson Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 1:12:45

Change is the most difficult thing we can do. And as a business owner, myself, I understand the fear. I understand the fear of a loss of revenue because of a loss of traffic. I stated in one of the meetings, I believe one of the numbers that we cannot measure is how many people came once downtown to enjoy that glass of wine or to have a burger at the burger bar and never came back because it was as loud as it is.

Alderson Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 1:13:17

And the unfortunate thing—and I feel for the gentleman who has the car. Because it is true. The handful of nuisance people do cause chaos for the rest of us. Unfortunately, we still have to deal with it. We have to find a way.

Alderson Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 1:13:35

My question—and I do have a hard question here. My question is, please share with me where the 18 months actually starts and ends? Where does the pilot so is it as of the date of completion? I think the first thing we have to do in order to figure out if this is going to work or whether we can or should adjust it is what is it actually scheduled to be? The 18 months starts on what date-ish based on construction.

Mayor Jake Woodford 1:14:04

I mean, ultimately, this is a policy decision for the Council to make so the Council can determine the start date. I would say the working assumption of the team would be the trial would start upon completion of the of the project. I think that's the working assumption, but again, that's a policy decision for the Council. Director Block?

Director Danielle Block (Department Of Public Works) 1:14:26

Thank you, Your Honor. We would project that the end of construction would be roughly fall 2023. So, we would start the clock then and begin data collection. That would be spring of 2025 when we would be, you know, presenting it back to committee.

Alderson Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 1:14:48

So theoretically trying to shorten that period—even if we tried to shorten it by three months, it would put us in the middle of winter which we wouldn't be able to repaint anyway? Is that accurate?

Mayor Jake Woodford 1:15:00

Director Block.

Director Danielle Block (Department Of Public Works) 1:15:01

Yes, that that's a correct assumption.

Alderson Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 1:15:03

Okay. My thought was to try and find a way that we could perhaps shorten it to give us, but based on the dates, we would be regaining the full summer season after the pilot if necessary. So, I don't believe shortening the pilot is going to be the best choice.

Alderson Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 1:15:22

But what I will put out there is the bulk of the comments that I'm hearing (and I think the bulk of us are hearing) are from a position of emotion or fear, or lack of the science behind it. And I think that we must, at some point, trust the science that says "Here's the problem. Here's a solution that has worked." I appreciate us needing more the details. But as Alder Croatt said, we have the police department, we have the fire department, we have parking meters, we have flow, we have everything that we need to be able to measure what we're saying.

Alderson Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 1:16:01

The question is, where's our starting point, and where's our end point? That should be fairly easy data to gather. So, I believe that the city has done their due diligence in establishing where we are now, where we consider it positive. I for one am, absolutely willing to undo this if it does not work. However, if we don't do it, we make no progress. And I believe it is worth the pain to go through it because I believe it can and will be successful

because there is precedence to say so. So, I will support this tonight. And I'm absolutely willing to undo this at the end of the pilot if it has not worked. Thank you.

Mayor Jake Woodford 1:16:43
Alder van Zeeland.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 1:16:46

Thank you chair. Some of the things I was going to say were already just said by Alder Alfheim. But I will ask a couple of questions. So, the metrics—I guess I'm wondering, again, how this will be measured as Alder Croatt said. But when will this information be reported to us? Are we going to see this at committee meetings? How is this information going to be communicated? Is it regularly? Is it every month? If someone could answer that question, I would appreciate it.

Mayor Jake Woodford 1:17:24

Again, I would say this is a policy decision for the Council. How often do you want the data? When do you want it? How do you want it? Do you want it at committee? Do you want it here? These are, these are parameters that are well within the Council's authority to set as you determine the direction for this project. So, I'd put it back to the Council.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 1:17:45

So, if I understand this correctly, we would still have to take a vote on the contract for the changes downtown. So, we would have time to determine that between this vote and the vote on the contract. Is that correct?

Mayor Jake Woodford 1:18:01
Director Block?

Director Danielle Block (Department Of Public Works) 1:18:04

Thank you, Your Honor. I would say, yes, that's a safe assumption. You could set the parameters then. You can set them tonight. But, yes, there'll be another vote on the contract award for the pave/mark contract.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 1:18:20

Okay, and may I follow up? The—there was a gentleman who asked him questions or actually made some statements about enforcement downtown and questions about delivery trucks. Could we have someone from the police department discuss the enforcement issues downtown and how we can't enforce our way out of this. And then the plan that we've looked at for delivery trucks from someone from DPW, please.

Mayor Jake Woodford 1:18:48
Chief Olson, on enforcement.

Police Chief Polly Olson 1:18:51

Thank you, Mayor. Yeah, to this point, the police department does not have the resources to enforce traffic laws to the degree required to address the constant and ongoing complaints that we receive related to speed, reckless driving, noise, and other types of driving in the downtown area.

Police Chief Polly Olson 1:18:56
Director Block, on deliveries.

Director Danielle Block (Department Of Public Works) 1:19:18

Thank you. Just some general notes here on loading and unloading deliveries along College Avenue. Most loading/unloading happens in the parking lanes before the stalls fill up on along College Avenue. And then in the alleys.

Director Danielle Block (Department Of Public Works) 1:19:36

DPW is creating new loading zones on some of the side streets as part of the overall A-23 bluff site, you know, redevelopment projects. We anticipate needing to consider additional loading zones on the side streets on a case-by-case basis as they occur now. Also just occupying the driving lane for deliveries is considered double parking. So that is a violation. It does occur today already. If double parking would occur at that time, I would imagine cars would do a similar maneuver to go around the delivery truck.

Mayor Jake Woodford 1:20:19

Alder Wolff.

Alderman Nate Wolff (District 12) 1:20:22

Thank you, Your Honor. I'm just going to—I have a few things to talk about. I'm going to reach into the delivery trucks for a little bit as well. Um, delivery drivers, as a former one, typically will figure it out as they go along, whether that be pulling off to a side street, or walking down a block a little bit to make the delivery. And I'm talking about like Amazon, and UPS and FedEx, I hear. And I know that they'll adapt to that change as the street changes. Since it's all about adaptation.

Alderman Nate Wolff (District 12) 1:21:04

I also want to talk about personal experience on downtown and the amount of noise that is presented downtown. There are so many instances where you'll be having a conversation, and you will stop the conversation, everyone will stop their conversation, to wait for the cars driving by. And that is at all hours in the night, every single day of the week. So, something had to be done about that. Now we know that we increase—increased police presence, and we have records and how that's been going. And we know that we need to do more downtown. So, there's that. But that's already been talked about. So, I'm going to move on.

Alderman Nate Wolff (District 12) 1:21:54

So, walking in here tonight, I kept an open mind of whether or not I would support this or not support this based on constituent feedback, since it's been about a 50/50 split. So, I've had a decent amount of interaction with people of this community. And I do think that the majority of them who utilize downtown across the city will support this in the end. And if this is not working out in 18 months, I will personally support undoing as well.

Alderman Nate Wolff (District 12) 1:22:31

And the businesses have spoken downtown. I've heard from pretty much all of the business owners on this, and I would say that, overwhelmingly, they need a change downtown, for their businesses. And based on customer feedback, it's an overwhelming thing. It's like I constantly hear about it.

Alderman Nate Wolff (District 12) 1:22:57

And then last but not least, I still think that the bike lanes should be moved to the passenger side of the car instead of the driver's side of the car. That is something that I still think should happen. I think that it's safer. And even if it's not as popular as the other side, I still think that it's safer to be on that side of the street. Thank you.

Mayor Jake Woodford 1:23:23

Alder Schultz.

Aldersperson Alex Schultz (District 9) 1:23:25

Thank you, Your Honor. I won't repeat some of the concerns my colleagues have had because I share them. And I also understand how difficult it might be to measure success or failure in 18 months—excuse me. But I'd also remind my colleagues that while the this project had its genesis in trying to abate the erratic and disruptive behavior of drivers on College Avenue, it does a couple other things that we don't have—have not yet had solutions to, and one of those is bicyclists who might want to visit the downtown. And their only legal option right now is to get off their bike and walk it from business to business or enter into two lanes of heavy traffic and try and navigate what can be some significant traffic in College Avenue at times.

Aldersperson Alex Schultz (District 9) 1:24:17

So, we're going to add a bike lane, and I think there are a lot of cyclists who probably to date avoid College Avenue altogether if they're on their bicycles because they—number one they don't want to travel down College Avenue and navigate those two lanes of traffic nor do they want to walk their bike. They'd prefer to ride. Some of them actually do elect to ride on the sidewalks even though it's illegal.

Aldersperson Alex Schultz (District 9) 1:24:38

The second thing we've done is instituted this Bird scooter program and not given them a place to go because it's illegal for them to be on the sidewalk as well. They're not allowed, and we want them to enter into two lanes of traffic. So, there's a there's a significant benefit to the one thing we're trying to solve and now we're actually solving another problem which is we've never given cyclists or other modes of transportation—skateboarders, Bird or scooter users, a place to travel safely through downtown. So that's a really significant secondary benefit.

Aldersperson Alex Schultz (District 9) 1:25:11

And it leads into the third benefit, which is you're removing any conflict off the sidewalk, which many businesses have had issues with, which prevents them—maybe not prevents them, but dissuades them from expanding their sidewalk cafes and capacity to have their patrons on the sidewalks if they don't want to deal with potential bicyclists or scooters on the sidewalk.

Aldersperson Alex Schultz (District 9) 1:25:33

So, we're doing a lot more here than just debating and addressing the traffic concerns, and I just want to remind my colleagues that there's a lot to be benefit—benefited from with this pilot program. And I think we're gonna see that. Again, I think I share others concerns about how we measure that success, but I think we're gonna feel it. I think the businesses will feel successful, more successful. I think we're all gonna feel that it's a safer environment to both come down and visit and live our lives in. Thank you.

Mayor Jake Woodford 1:26:14

Alder Meltzer.

Aldersperson Vered Meltzer (District 2) 1:26:17

Thank you. I have received a fair amount of feedback from my constituents about this. Some of them are opposed to this, some of them are concerned that this is not the right way to improve things, and they're afraid of how it might make things worse. But the majority of the feedback that I've heard has been people who are hopeful and optimistic. The proposal of this project gives them something to look forward to as far as being able to come downtown more. The sort of the that tone of hopefulness of optimism definitely had an impact on me. And I think that there are—you know, I think that having this be a pilot program to make sure that it actually is effective is a prudent way to go. But I think that there are a lot of people who are going to be cheering from the sidelines and really looking forward to this pilot programs succeeding.

Aldersperson Vered Meltzer (District 2) 1:27:09

I do, I do agree that being able to measure that success is absolutely vital. And I also want to make it very clear that I am absolutely willing to undo this if it is not working. The only reason why we are doing this is to solve a problem. So, if it does make things worse, in any way, then I'm absolutely willing to return to the drawing board and spend the money necessary to revert this back. Thank you.

Mayor Jake Woodford 1:27:36

Alder Firkus.

Aldersperson Brad Firkus (District 3) 1:27:38

Thank you, Mayor. I remember back to my first year on Council being a member of the Municipal Services Committee. And during that first couple months I was on that committee, we had a number of downtown parking items in front of us. And I remember a number of people coming and saying, you know, there's no parking near City Center, there's no parking here now that the blue ramp is gone. And I just remember thinking, that's just so—you got, the red ramp's a block away, the yellow ramp's a block away. Why would people say there's no parking here now that the blue ramp is gone? And what it really came down to is you had people that, you know, they're trying to get to like, say the Building For Kids or some of the businesses around city center, and they just didn't feel safe, trying to get across College Avenue, trying to cross those four streets with the traffic that's coming and going.

Aldersperson Brad Firkus (District 3) 1:28:24

And even a month ago, I was downtown with my daughters. And I was trying to get across College Avenue. I had the walk signal. The cross street had the red light. Got three, three quarters of the way across guy that wanted to make a red turn, started pulling into the lane, honking at me. I just stared at them. Not the rudest ones. I had my kids with me, but I let him know it was not appreciated. It's you know, this stuff does happen. And for a lot of people, that would be a huge turnoff. They wouldn't not want to come back down here with their children, when they experience aggressive driving like that. And that's what this whole thing is about is trying to put a design cap on that aggressive driving.

Aldersperson Brad Firkus (District 3) 1:29:03

Think about this from the pri—the perspective of a parking lot. You know, nice layer of snow, it's a little slippery. If it's empty, and you're in that flat parking lot, there are going to be some people are going to start doing some donuts because they can. But you take that same parking lot and you fill it with people and you fill it with cars, they're not going to do that. Or take that parking lot. And you see how some of the newer parking lots are designed where you've got more curb and you got more greenery. There's no room to do donuts anymore.

Aldersperson Brad Firkus (District 3) 1:29:29

And that's kind of what this gets at is that if you design for safer behaviors, you're going to get safer behaviors. You can't enforce your way out of this, but you can design your way, a great deal the way out.

Aldersperson Brad Firkus (District 3) 1:29:42

I know some comments beyond tonight have made remarks about well can't the bikes take the other roads instead. Last year I started doing more biking downtown. I started biking to a lot of my meetings. I've been a driver for many, many years, but last year was the first time where I really got the experience of being a bicyclist downtown. And I can tell you this much, when you're biking down Washington Street, you're not seeing the business fronts, you're not seeing the new stores that are opening, you're not getting that window front experience that says, "Hey, why not stop in next time you got a little bit of time to have lunch here or see what

kind of merchandise this place has." You're not getting that on that backside. If you can get some of that biking—I know this isn't about just putting biking lanes on there, but you start getting some that biking traffic down there, you're gonna get some more people coming down that wouldn't have before. This becomes more of an accessible destination.

Alderson Brad Firkus (District 3) 1:30:33

I remember talking to one of my neighbors a couple of weeks ago, he was shoveling out his driveway. He is telling me about how he has an E bike. He can go—he's retired, can't, not the greatest, you know, it's a little harder for him to walk nowadays, but he gets on that bike, he can go for 30 miles. You start opening up that option for people that live in cities, you know, as far away as Neenah and Kaukauna and they can come bike downtown. They can shop a little bit. They can dine a little bit. It's going to be one of those things where you're going to get more business coming in, I think, with those kinds of opportunities opening up that just aren't very comfortable today.

Alderson Brad Firkus (District 3) 1:31:08

And the last thing I just want to say is that, you know, we think about this as an on or off. We're either going to do this and it's going to cost as much money. But if we don't want to do this, we change our mind, it's going to cost this much money to just undo the whole thing. We may find problems. We may find acute situations after this—if this happens—after it happens. And fixing those acute problems might be a heck of a lot cheaper than reversing the whole thing. So, I really want us to keep that in mind when we're thinking about how this is going to move forward. We may not—we may run into issues, but we may run to issues that are very cheap to correct versus having to cancel out this whole thing.

Alderson Brad Firkus (District 3) 1:31:45

At the end of the day, Downtown College Avenue, it can be a street that we use to build value for our community that funds the services and infrastructure that all of us use whether you go downtown, live downtown, or not at all. Or it can be a road that is a very convenient way to get through downtown get through the city of Appleton, But it just doesn't—it does not work to try and make one place people. Thank you.

Mayor Jake Woodford 1:32:13

Alder Fenton.

Alderson Denise Fenton (District 6) 1:32:14

Thank you, Your Honor. Several of the people who spoke to us this evening and some of the correspondence I've gotten from my constituents and others in the community, have asked us to think about the kind of city we want to be. So, when we look at promotional materials for the City of Appleton for businesses, and we look at the photos of downtown, the photos we see are the farm market, mile music, when we have parades downtown, when people are there without cars enjoying what we have to offer. Now I understand that it is not realistic to say that we're going to close College Avenue like the farm market. But those are the high points that we advertise, people enjoying being together, patronizing our businesses. So that's kind of the vision—to me, that's, you know, one of the highest moments for me in our town is coming downtown, being with other people, enjoying the things that has to offer. And, you know, I was really struck by the question, "Do we want to be a place we drive to, or a place we drive through?" And I want us to be a place we drive to.

Alderson Denise Fenton (District 6) 1:33:42

And some of the things I haven't heard, and even in the business roundtable from the people, the folks who run hotels downtown. I've heard several times from people who have stayed in our local hotels, even they are affected by the street noise inside, windows closed. And it's you know, it's not good for business that if people

can't sleep, enjoy a meal, enjoy a drink. So, I'll go back to what Alder Del Toro said in his invocation that we have to use our skills and our talents.

Alderson Denise Fenton (District 6) 1:34:24

I'm not a traffic engineer. I'm not a police officer. I'm not a firefighter. You know, I'm not—I don't own a small business downtown. But we've heard from our traffic engineers professionals, based on data, that they believe this is the best solution for our traffic problems downtown. We've heard from the police department that they're in favor of this, that they believe that it will make their jobs easier enforcing, and to what Alder Firkus said, you know, there's no as much opportunity for some of the problems that they have to enforce. We've heard from the fire department that they're not concerned about emergency access to buildings. So, I'm taking my cue there from the experts, and saying, if they believe that this is a good solution, I think this is a good solution.

Alderson Denise Fenton (District 6) 1:35:21

And we've all heard a lot of—I mean, we've all gotten a lot of email, ding, ding, ding, ding, ding, if you have your alerts on, on sometimes. We've all seen the social media, but I've little anecdote that that tells me—I was touring the Thompson Center a week or so ago. And I was waiting for the director to come and meet me to take me on the tour, and a gentleman came out who'd been playing cribbage in one of the rooms and wanted to know who I was from the receptionist. I had my ID badge on. And he proceeded to introduce himself to me and tell me for five minutes exactly what was wrong with the plan to reconfigure College Avenue. And I had by then my, "Well, you know, these are the things that the experts are telling us." He said, "Oh, well, I never go down there anyway." And I believe that a lot of what we were hearing is from the people who never come down here anyway.

Alderson Denise Fenton (District 6) 1:36:23

And my—I had one constituent email that was negative. I wrote him back, he called me, and we had a conversation about some of the data. I sent him links, some of the videos from the Iowa DOT. And he called me back. And he emailed me back the next morning, and he said, "Well, I've gone through everything you've sent me, and I'm okay with this now." So, I think when people are informed, and when they experience this, that they're going to find out that this is a pretty good idea.

Alderson Denise Fenton (District 6) 1:36:59

You're going to have to work to convince me to roll it back. It's going to have to, you know—it's going to be have to be more than a couple of people saying, you know, "It's taking me five minutes longer to get to work, and I just can't go there." But you know, with enough proof, I'd be willing to roll it back. But right now, I am fully in support of this and I urge my colleagues to be as well. Thank you.

Mayor Jake Woodford 1:37:27

Alder van Zeeland.

Alderson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 1:37:30

Thank you Chair. I just want to start out by saying that I, as a new alder, received an email from constituents who live in my part of town, the southeast side of town well, far away from College Avenue, and just want to read a little bit of what they sent to me. It said that they were downtown in College Avenue on a Saturday evening, the vehicles were flying around, windows wide open to laugh and jeer at the general public walking along trying to enjoy the downtown and local businesses. "We don't go downtown anymore. We don't need the harassment. My brother and his wife spent two nights at a hotel downtown a few months back. They will never do that again, either. They tried to walk to dinner and couldn't believe the drag racing these trucks were doing

and all the burnout marks on the avenue in general. Next time they plan to stay in Green Bay." For something like that to get to me means there's a real problem that we have to deal with.

Aldersperson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 1:38:31

And I'm willing to roll this back if necessary. But I have to say I wouldn't be voting for it if I thought that that's what was going to happen. I don't want to waste money. I want to listen to the experts. And I would just like to ask that we establish the metrics right away or if this or this is to pass that we work on that immediately, probably in municipal services, and that we are reporting out those metrics a minimum of every three months. And then of course, we'd have the discretion of the chair for other times. Thank you.

Mayor Jake Woodford 1:39:11

Alder Del Toro.

Aldersperson Israel Del Toro (District 4) 1:39:12

Thank you Chair. Just overwhelming support from District Four. Our district does cause cross College Avenue just outside of the affected zone. But we do feel that the impact to our neighbors, and this part of the neighborhood do feel that the impact of slowing down traffic will extend to our neighborhood as well. So over overwhelming support from District Four.

Aldersperson Israel Del Toro (District 4) 1:39:33

I also trust the science I trust the models, I'm willing to wait and see and see how the how this plays out. But I also want to just add to the data collection that I think there's an important piece of information of data that might be missing and that might be the economic growth and development that's stimulated as a result of this modification. Whether that be done by the city as a modeling exercise or hired out or by a third party like ADI, That's to be decided. But I think that's an important piece of information that we should be able to have access to.

Aldersperson Israel Del Toro (District 4) 1:40:10

I would like to see some regular reporting, perhaps not as frequently as alder, Van Zeeland, maybe six months. But in general, I would like to hear back on how things are going before the 18-month mark. Thank you.

Mayor Jake Woodford 1:40:25

Alder Croatt.

Aldersperson Chris Croatt (District 14) 1:40:29

Thank you, Mayor. I didn't know I was gonna be up. I thought there was other people in. I'm hearing—I mean, I think I know how this vote is gonna go. But I'm hearing some things that concern me. "Let's pass this and figure out the metrics later." I think we need to figure out the metrics for success and metrics for failure before we pass this. I know it's a pilot. But I'm still struggling with somebody who said, "You need to convince me with enough proof." What does that what does that mean? I don't know what that means. I need to see something in the form of metrics, how we're gonna measure this. I think there's some questions that still haven't been answered. I didn't—I don't think we established a start and end date, specifically, reporting cadence. We've just heard some differing opinions on how often we want to get reporting. And there's to my—in my opinion, there's a lot of committee work that needs to be done. I'm not suggesting to refer this back. But until I see metrics, I'm not gonna be able to support it. And I know we have some baseline metrics, but is there a document that shows "This is where we're starting. And if we end here, it's a success. If we don't end here, it's a failure"? I've seen nothing like that.

Mayor Jake Woodford 1:41:47
Alder Wolff.

Aldersperson Nate Wolff (District 12) 1:41:49

Thank you, Your Honor. I believe we did get a start and end date estimation. I would also suggest as far as updates, that we do it biweekly in Safety and Licensing under Chief Olson's like report. I think that that would be a good place for that. But that's just the suggestion. As far as figuring that out now, I don't think these things are very difficult to do now. Like that, for example, thank you.

Mayor Jake Woodford 1:42:33
Any further discussion? Alder Meltzer?

Aldersperson Vered Meltzer (District 2) 1:42:40

Thank you. I think that we do have—excuse me. I think that we do have metrics and timelines established. I think that the important thing that we need with this is communication. I think having some clarity of voice from this body, I think is important. I support Aldersperson van Zeeland suggestions as far as committee and timing. I also think that, because this is something that has a big impact, and this is something that a lot of people are going to be keeping an eye on, if it reports out to multiple committees, I think that that's, that's certainly a good thing as well. Thank you.

Mayor Jake Woodford 1:43:24
Alder Doran.

Aldersperson Chad Doran (District 15) 1:43:25

Thank you. I want to, I guess, first start by commending the mayor and the staff for listening to the feedback from the community. That's really been going on for probably a number of years now, as we kind of all recognize as this issue has continued to build, and trying to come up with a solution that we think might be workable, to address those concerns. And I certainly appreciate the feedback we've gotten from people who don't like this plan as well. I think that's all helped us to kind of really grasp all of the issues here at hand.

Aldersperson Chad Doran (District 15) 1:43:58

I think to me, one of the things that sticks out the most is that the majority of the issue that we're trying to address here relates to enforcement of some of some laws and ordinances that we have here in the community. And as Chief Olson mentioned, they don't have the staffing and the resources for that. And I know I sound like a broken record when I say this, but this administration and past and this Council and past Councils have not done a good job of, of putting enough emphasis on funding infrastructure and public safety to the level that we need to—not that we haven't done it, but not to the level that we need to. I think we all know that. And we need to start making some significant changes because now we find ourselves boxed into a corner where the only way to address the issue of not having the staffing for enforcement is to come up with a plan like this.

Aldersperson Chad Doran (District 15) 1:44:52

And I'm not necessarily against the plan at all. In fact, I think it could be a good option that hopefully will address all of these issues. But I think we have to recognize the underlying problem here that continues to persist because we continue to push it off. And that's one of my frustrations in in all of this.

Aldersperson Chad Doran (District 15) 1:45:09

I also just want to share an anecdotal story. I think we all hear from time to time that there are noise issues and complaints about all these things, but it doesn't necessarily maybe resonate with all of us. I spent a night

downtown, overnight downtown recently, and sort of the tail end of winter here, which I think is just one thing to know, because I think these issues are worse in the summer. But I was really shocked by how much the level of noise and some of the issues that that we're trying to address through this plan, really do exist. Because I don't spend a lot of time downtown at night, most of the time. But, and the issues that that we're here about, were things that were starting as early as I'd say nine o'clock at night, continued all through the night. I have spoken to a few staff about it. Really just, I was really blown away by how much these issues really, really do exist.

Alderman Chad Doran (District 15) 1:46:06

And as hearing discussion from us tonight, reminded me of some places that I visited in the past, where I've found kind of the best downtowns have been to our areas that are really just walkable. There's no sort of traffic allowed, except around the exterior of these sort of downtowns. And I'm again, I'm not suggesting you know, we're closing off College Avenue by any means. But I think it is an important piece of, of what we're trying to accomplish here that others have said is, is that we have to decide what we want our downtown to be. And I think this this is, again, another effort to help address that.

Alderman Chad Doran (District 15) 1:46:43

And so, I will support the plan going forward. But I do hope that we keep in mind these underlying issues that put us in the position of needing to make decisions like this and we continue to work on those as well. Thank you.

Mayor Jake Woodford 1:46:58

Alder Alfheim.

Alderman Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 1:47:00

Thank you, Chair. I think that the comments coming right now are all valid. I think Alder Croatt's comment on wanting the metrics, I do believe that business owners would like that, well. I do believe the numbers exist. I think it's not anything validated, it's not going to be that difficult for the police department and public works to say, "Here's where we were these months" month on month, or year to year. That's not a hard measurement to say. The math already exists. So, we need the document that validates the starting point. And I think if you can develop that for us, I don't believe the gathering of that information that already exists should stand in the way of us moving forward on the issue.

Alderman Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 1:47:40

The only thing I would add in the data, as far as manage of—micromanagement of it. If we try and break that data down into an every two-week period, we're not seeing the big picture. There's going to be a challenge in the learning curve. We're going to go backwards a step before we go forwards. We have to acknowledge that with any change. So, as we monitor, I would challenge the chairs not to be looking at it every 30 seconds. That's not valid data. We have to be able to back up and look at the whole picture as we do it. So not to overreact.

Alderman Kristin Alfheim (District 11) 1:48:14

And one more thing was Alder Doran, thank you for staying downtown. We appreciate you. Those of us who live downtown can attest to that noise every night. Over and over and over again. If you'd like to test it, come stay at my house. You're all welcome. Thanks.

Mayor Jake Woodford 1:48:32

Alder Wolff.

Alderson Nate Wolff (District 12) 1:48:34

Thank you, Your Honor. Just on the police, department's enforcement and budgetary constraints, I would absolutely love if we had a long-term solution to our budget problems to address infrastructure. And talking with people across the city, I know that that is—infrastructure—is probably their most important issue. And I hope that at the state level, they will increase shared revenue so that we can not only afford to fix our roads, but also fund our police department better and adequately fund mental health programs in our community.

Alderson Nate Wolff (District 12) 1:49:12

I would suggest instead to look for long term solutions that are not related to shared revenue if we want something that doesn't rely on the state. I've heard a lot of criticism about not finding a long-term solution, but I also haven't heard any long-term solutions. So, I would suggest, instead of complaining about what we're not doing, to do it yourself. And long-term solutions take time to set up because you don't want to do them wrong. Thank you.

Mayor Jake Woodford 1:49:51

Alder Meltzer.

Alderson Vered Meltzer (District 2) 1:49:53

Thank you. I just want to go back to a point that my colleague Alderson Doran brought up about enforcement, about police staffing resources and to just go back to what my colleague Alderson Firkus mentioned about this design. When we have an intelligently designed thing to impact the behavior, we reduce the behavior requiring enforcement, then we don't need the same sort of police resources. So, there's, you know, there's working harder and there's working smarter.

Alderson Vered Meltzer (District 2) 1:50:27

We don't want to overtax our police department with making them—we wouldn't want to have to hire more officers to enforce more of these parking issues if we can simply design our roads so that that is no longer necessary. That's better for the police department, and it's better for all of us.

Alderson Vered Meltzer (District 2) 1:50:43

I think that the biggest underlying problem we have—this Council, previous Council's decisions that have been made and how we're not keeping up with it now—it's growth. Our tax levy is tied to net new construction. Our population growth keeps growing. As we become a bigger—

Mayor Jake Woodford 1:51:01

Alder Meltzer, if you'd please keep it germane to the to the item before the Council. I just want to make sure; we're ranging a little. The last three comments get got a little rangy into things outside what's before the Council. So, if you just bring your remarks back to the item before the Council, please.

Alderson Vered Meltzer (District 2) 1:51:18

Thank you. Yes, I think that as College Avenue continues to be in the heart of a city that is only going to continue growing more going forward, this pilot program is exactly the type of smart, innovative design work that we need in order to keep up with our growth so that weren't—so the infrastructure is not as much of a challenge for us going forward. Thank you.

Mayor Jake Woodford 1:51:43

All right, alder Hartzheim, I see you. You'll be up coming up next here. But first is Alder Thao.

Alderson Maiyoua Thao (District 7) 1:51:50

Thank you, your honor. I was struggling with this one too; however, after tonight, listening to my colleagues and also listening to the videos and some of the studies and also, you know—I just keep listening to those videos to this last week. I was—I got a few emails from my constituents but I explained to them the plans and the pilot program.

Alderson Maiyoua Thao (District 7) 1:52:24

I was afraid of spending money, you know, and raising taxes and all that for our constituents, but I feel that I had to spend money to make money. You know, that's how I do it with my business. And, you know, I know it's how when we have to spend money. We don't want to do that. But if we don't, then things that doesn't get done and we don't improve on things.

Alderson Maiyoua Thao (District 7) 1:52:55

I like to see that our city is becoming more vibrant. And if we want that. You know, other cities are developing and making it unique. And I feel that even though some of the people that doesn't want this, we have to understand that this is for the downtown area. It's going to make our city more vibrant. It's going to be unique. It's going to attract visitors. It's going to attract more business into the downtown area.

Alderson Maiyoua Thao (District 7) 1:53:29

I guess we had to train people how to use this pilot program, and we all have to learn the new way or to be in training how to use it. And I trust our staff that they are capable and they know what to do. So, I would vote for it. Thank you.

Mayor Jake Woodford 1:53:58

Alder Hartzheim, hold on. We're gonna we're gonna get the, get you unmuted here. All right, Alder Hartzheim. Okay.

[Alderson Hartzheim spoke but her comments were not on the microphone.]

Mayor Jake Woodford 1:55:50

Alder van Zeeland.

Alderson Katie Van Zeeland (District 5) 1:55:52

Thank you chair. We've had a lot of meetings about this, so forgive me that I can't recall the exact meeting in which this comment occurred, but I recall in one of the meetings, an officer explaining that the way that the road is built right now actually made it difficult to enforce—that they were unable to catch up to people who were breaking the law, and that was contributing to the problem. And I just want to make sure everyone understands that that putting more police officers out there isn't going to help if they can't reach the people they're trying to get to. Thank you.

Mayor Jake Woodford 1:56:39

Any further discussion? All right, you have a motion and a second to approve. Please cast your votes. Doran votes aye.

Mayor Jake Woodford 1:57:13

Motion passes 14 to one with Alder Croatt opposed.