

Item 25-0855: Design Hearing for future 2027 Paving Project: Oklahoma Street (Mason St. to Richmond St.)

Municipal Services Committee

Mon, Jul 21, 2025 4:30PM

Alderspersion Denise Fenton (District 6) 01:14

Our first item, 25-0855, our public hearing—design hearing for the future 2025 paving project for Oklahoma Street (Mason Street to Richmond Street). Okay, I assume that's what everybody's here to talk about. So, I'll just kind of lay out how we're going to do this today. First, our project engineer Jason Brown is going to do a presentation on the design, then we will call for people to speak. Since there are a whole lot of people, what I would ask you to do is to keep your remarks brief and to maybe not reiterate something that someone else has already mentioned. Everybody who wants to will get an opportunity to speak, but what we won't do is have a dialog back and forth. So, you'll get a chance to speak, if you have questions, staff will be keeping track of questions, and if there's something that we can't answer during the hearing, after this is done, we'll get your contact information, and somebody will reach out to you to try to answer your questions. Pretty clear? Okay, all right, so I'm going to go ahead and call—and this is a public hearing. Is there anyone who wishes to speak? We'll start with Project Engineer Brown. What mic are you on? Number three? District or director? Okay, all right.

Jason Brown (Project Engineer) 02:44

All right, Chair. So tonight, we're talking about Oklahoma Street, obviously, from Mason Street to Richmond Street. I have a picture up on the monitors. It's a very long project, a long stretch. So, if we have to zoom in to look at something in particular, we can do that, but for now, I'll just kind of leave the whole thing up there as we can see it. I will try to make my presentation brief here, as we have a lot of folks here I'm sure want to talk about this, so I'll just kind of touch on the highlights. I have information sheets for everyone, and they were in the agenda as well about all the existing information in our proposal, and I'll just—like I said, I'll highlight what we have here.

Jason Brown (Project Engineer) 03:25

So, Oklahoma Street, we're looking to 2027. This would be an asphalt reconstruction project in 2027, and our process here in the city, we would then do 2026 underground work for whatever we may need. The existing the existing traffic counts along this stretch of Oklahoma Street from Mason to Richmond, on average, is about 360 vehicles per day. There are some parking restrictions near West High School on the west end of the project, and is as well on the east side, near Richmond Street. Outside of that there are no parking restrictions within this corridor.

Jason Brown (Project Engineer) 04:07

The existing right away is 60 feet. The existing pavement width is 32 feet. I won't go through all the utilities. You can see on the sheet, on our information sheet, but there are a number of older utilities, so we certainly will be doing a lot of replacement in 2026 as part of this project.

Jason Brown (Project Engineer) 04:28

Trees are going to be a big topic tonight, I'm sure. So, what we have here is a number of trees. I believe we have 84 trees total on both sides of the street within the project limits. Our city forester did do an assessment on every single tree within the within the project limits, and he has identified 32 trees in total in poor condition that would be removed, 16 on each side, the north and the south. In addition to that, there are five trees on the north side that, due to their large size and proximity to the existing roadway, driveways and or sidewalks—those would be removed as well, just due to their proximity to the infrastructure. There's also one existing—still one

existing—ash tree on the north side that would be removed. The south side, in addition to the 16 trees in poor condition, he has identified three additional trees that are in that close proximity category that would come down due to their close proximity to the roadway.

Jason Brown (Project Engineer) 05:32

All right, so getting to the proposal, the staff proposal. As I mentioned before, we would be doing the underground work, any underground work, in 2026. The asphalt payment would be done in 2027. Staff recommendation for this project is narrowing Oklahoma street to a width of 26 feet from face of curb to face of curb. This would involve removing parking from one side. And this is consistent with our Complete Streets designation—we call it residential, smart local. This is a document that was adopted, I believe, last year. So, this is where we're starting, narrowing it to 26 feet with parking on one side only. By narrowing the street, we can save 13 additional terrace trees. So, we're always looking to do that, and in this case, I think we have 10 on the north and three on the south, that by narrowing we can save those additional 13 trees.

Jason Brown (Project Engineer) 06:34

The cost estimates for this particular project (and this is just for the paving only)—built at 26 feet, we're looking at about \$941,000. If it were built at the same width the 32 feet, we're looking at about \$1.1 million. In terms of the number of properties and the feedback that that I've received as of, as of so far, we have 86 properties along the entire project limits. We send out questionnaires with our informational letters. As of last Wednesday, when we had to post this for the agenda, we got 10 of those questionnaires returned. I did get three additional ones. So, we have a total of 13 questionnaires that came back from the residents along this project limit.

Jason Brown (Project Engineer) 07:24

Feedback and concerns—and probably what you're going to hear a lot tonight—there are certainly concerns about narrowing the street and reducing parking to one side. There are also concerns about the loss of the trees, and a number of them, obviously, as I mentioned before. There are also concerns about parking during the project and access during the project, during the construction projects, concerns about what the cost may be to the each individual property owner. There has been some concerns forwarded to me about West High School students taking up on-street parking, and then a general concern of the necessity of the project, asking whether we need to do the project at all. So that's basically what I've gotten for feedback through the process that leads us tonight, and that's pretty much all I need to say, and I'll open it up.

Aldersperson Denise Fenton (District 6) 08:21

Okay, thank you.

Aldersperson Denise Fenton (District 6) 08:22

All right, I've already opened the public hearing, so let's just, as you come up to speak, state your name and address for the record and then go ahead and speak.

Maureen Wallenfang (Resident) 08:33

Good evening. I'm Maureen Wallenfang. I am at [XXXXXX] West Oklahoma Street. I am near the West High School, end of the street, and, up until this meeting, nobody has asked us anything about this project. There's no input that we've been able to provide. No one asked us about our trees, which is the life blood of our street. It's the beauty of our street. It's the glory of our street. A letter was sent out just two weeks ago saying that they're going to take 41 trees, which is about half. If you've seen our street, you know that that will decimate our street. They're taking 50% of the street parking, and I am on the end of West High School. I am parked in every day by West students. I asked about residents having special preference. I was told that's not done. So, we lose our parking, we lose our trees, we lose the beauty and character of our street.

Maureen Wallenfang (Resident) 09:52

You can see that we care deeply about this. You can see that there are 30 or more people here. No one is really happy about this. I don't know if we have any choices, though. I don't think we've been given any choices. We understand that infrastructure has to be redone. We understand that there are rotting trees that have to be removed. But streets around us were not done in this way. Elsie Street was done and it was kept as wide as it was. I don't think that they took out a lot of trees. You can correct me if I'm wrong. On the—there were some trees that were already taken out this year on our street, and they've left stumps. They haven't replanted. They haven't taken out the stumps. I—we talked to a resident on the south side and said she was telling us about her tree being taken out. And we said, Well, was it replanted? And she said, "No." And she asked, and they said, "Oh, it'll be five years." That's unacceptable. It's unacceptable for there. It's unacceptable for us.

Maureen Wallenfang (Resident) 11:07

And you have to understand our street. It's a modest street. We are all under the median sale price of houses in Wisconsin. We're modest houses. And the trees are the beauty of our street. We care about this. We struggle with parking already. It's going to be worse. We struggle with overnight parking that is not enforced, and we lose our snow removal, our leaf removal, our street cleaning on a regular basis.

Maureen Wallenfang (Resident) 11:46

I would like, me personally, a couple of assurances that you are going to replace our trees, one for one in a timely fashion. I would like to know that we can have parking permits for residents, so that we are not out-parked by all of the high school students. They don't care that you built them a beautiful, \$800,000 parking lot. They don't want to park there. They want to park on our streets. I would ask that you not pass this plan until our concerns are resolved. Thank you.

Aldersperson Denise Fenton (District 6) 12:27

Thank you. Next.

Ruth Foss (Resident) 12:34

My name is Ruth Foss, and I live at [XXXXX] West Oklahoma Street, and I have some pictures for you that you can just pass around of our street. Jason, you already got this card in the mail, right?

Jason Brown (Project Engineer) 12:50

Yes.

Ruth Foss (Resident) 12:52

Okay. I make cards, and sometimes I take pictures of our street, and that one was of a snow-covered time. So, we just want to thank you for letting our concerns be heard, and I want to thank all of you for coming. You're the heart, you're the neighbors, you're the people. And I'm going to talk about the trees, but I'm going to talk about you too. And so, we just—we just are worried about just the proposed street construction and the tree take down on Oklahoma Street in the next coming two years. I just need to remind you, just take a look at your new logo, and it's a little different. But I know I can see trees in there, and I don't know some of you that are younger on the council that April 1984 Appleton became a Tree City, and caring for older trees and planting new ones. And the beauty of the large trees, the big green canopies and the shady neighborhoods and the economic and sustainably good aspects, the health of the neighborhood, both physical and mental—neighborhood health is all rooted and supported with neighbors and with trees. And I'm gravely concerned about the stripping of the trees on Oklahoma Street and what it will mean to our neighborhood.

Ruth Foss (Resident) 14:18

I'm sure that many of you have not visited our inner-city neighborhood on Oklahoma street. That's why I needed to take those pictures. Some of those were just taken today. Now, for years, the city has been telling us the street is going to be done, the street is going to be done, and then the plan is pushed to another date. Now that date is looming at our doorsteps for the next two years. When we have, in the past, received the news about the street, we think of the street, not the trees. Our neighborhood, never received communication from the city that all of the trees would be part of this construction project. Yet, just two and a half weeks ago, we all received the letter that devastated us. You have two choices, very few trees or no trees, like in our strip, and we are from Story Street to Mason Street, but the whole construction goes from Mason Street to Richmond Street.

Ruth Foss (Resident) 15:16

Yes, the city owns the terrace, the trees, the street, but we all pay taxes, and we all know the terraces, and we all take care of the sidewalks walks that intersect our neighbors. Those sidewalk intersections are often cause for a pause underneath the shade of a tree as a neighbor steps out to chat and to catch up and just be neighborly as we care for one another. The trees are just part of us, and none of us were thinking that you would strip most every tree on Oklahoma Street, from Richmond Street to Mason Street. Yes, we realize that some of them are old and they need to be taken care of. But our tree city, your tree city, the city trees should have been staggered, so this devastation of all or nothing scenario doesn't happen. There is no win/win situation in this. The plans have been in place, and we've been on the rain check for a while, and I feel like communication, like Maureen said, just from the city has not been good in providing information about the taking away of our trees.

Ruth Foss (Resident) 16:25

I ask you, if you were purchasing a Tree City home in Appleton, Wisconsin, and you were looking for a character home almost 100 years old, would you choose a canopy of trees or none? 38 years ago, my husband and I purchased the house that we live in on Oklahoma Street, and my husband carried me at that time over the threshold, and we've lived there ever since, under the canopy of green. So, I'm so sad that you're proposing to take away that green, a part of our neighborhood, a part of us that will be ripped and stripped and dug out and carried away never to return in our lifetime. I'm 62. I'm a senior citizen. It will never be the same on Oklahoma street in the neighborhood, and you can see the beautiful trees that you've looked at and passed around. I hope all of you have seen those things.

Ruth Foss (Resident) 17:24

Oklahoma Street to me—I'm a former teacher—has kind of been like The Giving Tree. You guys remember this book? The tree gave and the tree gave and the tree gave. Have our trees given? Yeah, and I have a, just a little poem that you probably maybe some of you that are older, maybe you had to memorize when you were little. And it's by Joyce Kilmer, and it's just called "Trees". "I think that I shall never see a poem as lovely as a tree, a tree whose hungry mouth is pressed against the Earth's sweet, flowing breast, a tree that looks at God all day and lifts her leafy arms to pray, a tree that may in summer wear a nest of robins in her hair, upon whose bosom snow has lain, who intimately lives in rain. Poems are made by fools like me, but only God can make a tree." Please, remember our tree city. Please, remember Oklahoma Street in Tree City, Appleton, Wisconsin. Turn down that shady street. Come stroll in our neighborhood under the shade of the welcoming neighbors and the tree canopies of Oklahoma Street. Thank you.

Aldersperson Denise Fenton (District 6) 18:57

Next.

Judy Beach (Resident) 19:06

I'm Judy Beach, [XXXXXX] Oklahoma. Okay, I know very few of these people, but I was their mail lady for many, many years, and I moved from Green Bay. I lived at 1009 Oklahoma, 1221 Oklahoma, finally bought a house at 933 because of the neighborhood, because of the looks, because of the trees. You go somewhere else and it's hot because you can't park your car anywhere without shade. If you take my tree, put another one just like it. Don't put a lilac bush or something stupid, little fluffy tree. I like my maple tree. I don't want to be considered a tree hugger, because I know we are, but it is one of the reasons I bought that house was because of the looks, because of the older home, the shade. And I know my neighbor loves my shade because he parks in front of my house all the time because of the shade. Maybe it's not him, maybe it's his son, but anyway, like they're—many walkers, they're with their dogs, and yes, we do stand out and talk to our neighbors in the shade.

Judy Beach (Resident) 20:22

So, all I'm asking is, if you take that tree, I'm going to cry. And I told my neighbor, I'm going to cry, but replace it with the same tree, the same type. I understand we got wires; it can't grow tall, but worry about that 50 years from now, when it does grow tall. All I say is, the reason my house looks the way it does is because of that tree. And I'm going to cry just like the other ladies. Thanks.

Alderson Denise Fenton (District 6) 20:53

All right, next.

Mary Wojcik (Resident) 20:54

I'm Mary Wojcik. I live at 1200

Alderson Denise Fenton (District 6) 21:05

Could you repeat it so that the microphone picks it up? Thank you.

Mary Wojcik (Resident) 21:08

I'm Mary Claire Wojcik, and I live at [XXXXXX] West Oklahoma street, and I didn't write anything down either. But I do want to speak to both the trees and the parking. Um, I've lived in my house for nine or 10 years here, and I moved into that house because my kids went to school at West High School and to the middle school, Wilson Middle School, and it is a destination neighborhood. I have people ask me to buy my house all the time, and I think it's a lot due to the neighbors and how much they care, and the trees are really a big part of that. It's just this welcoming, old-fashioned neighborhood that anybody would want to live in. You'd want to raise your kids there. The trees really are a part of it.

Mary Wojcik (Resident) 21:57

And I want to also say that I'm concerned about narrowing the street and have the parking to just one side. I'm an ordained minister, and I work out of my home, and I have clients that come and they park on the street. Right now, we are not also in school. There's no school in session, and when I drove down here today, there were 13 cars on the street parked. Those are not high school kids. Those are neighbors. We have single lane driveways, and if you have more than one car, you need a place to put it. And so, there are people who are parking on the street, and we're not even talking about the high school students. So, the street gets used. Both sides of the street get used. And I think that really the beauty of the neighborhood are the loving people and the trees. And I'm glad that Ruth actually brought the pictures, because I hadn't thought about that. And you get a chance to see, get a, get a sense for the feel of that that's really all I had. Thank you.

Alderson Denise Fenton (District 6) 23:01

Thank you. Next.

Sharon Zuberbier (Resident) 23:16

Hi, I'm Sharon Zuberbier, and I live at [XXXXXX] West Oklahoma Street. I don't really have anything written either, and the other two gals did an eloquent job of presenting their side. We live in the 900 block. We've lost our trees, whether it's been due to disease or storm damage, that type of thing, so our block doesn't—that's how their block would look, probably, the way ours does now. So, I guess I'm not—I and my family are not really so much concerned about the trees, because they're going to chew our stumps and replace them at some point in time.

Sharon Zuberbier (Resident) 24:03

We're more concerned about the parking. We have three vehicles in our driveway, which therefore have to be—somebody has to park on the street, and sometimes it's one truck, and sometimes it's truck and a vehicle. So, I think that's our biggest concern. We also have trailers. I watched my brother-in-law back out of our driveway with his big truck the other day, and I went, wow, if they pull in our our—the width of our street by six feet, we're going to be really hurting if somebody is parked on our side of the street, you know, if they're—we're parked in and then to back out. So that was pretty much so our concern.

Sharon Zuberbier (Resident) 24:52

There was also a graduation party in the longer block, the 10 to 1200 block of Oklahoma Street, and the street was blocked full on both sides of the street this weekend as well. So, you know, you narrow that down in one side, and then we're, we're talking about, well, where does everybody park, you know, where do the—where do the people that own those houses park as well?

Sharon Zuberbier (Resident) 25:17

So, you know, as far as the cost perspective, I'm sure that's what the city looks at. There isn't—from what you've told us, there isn't a ton of money involved. But you know, are they going to put no parking signs on the other side of the street? If you know you can't park on that side, how are people going to know that there is only one-sided parking? And then if someone does some construction, and we've had neighbors who have done things in their backyard, etc., so now you're taking away another six feet of our street. How are we going to get around? Or how are those construction—how does that construction equipment fit in then, as well as with, you know, the neighbors getting through, other people getting through, you know, those types of things with reducing that size of the street. So, thank you.

Alderman Denise Fenton (District 6) 26:20

Thank you. Anyone else?

Sarah Leet (Resident) 26:55

My name is Sarah Leet. I live at [XXXXXX] West Oklahoma. I'd like to start by thanking Jason, as well as Mike the forester, for taking the time to answer some questions in advance of this hearing. I've owned my 1937 home since 2012. I'm a Lawrence alum, graduated in 2005 and chose to come back to Appleton and live in this neighborhood because of its age, the character, tree cover, and uniqueness of the triple block that I live on, the 10, 11, and 1200 blocks. I looked at over 80 houses in the area before finally settling on my neighborhood. Again, I chose to relocate back to the area due to its green space, small town feel, safety, and accessibility to local government. As some have mentioned, in our loco we have trees. The new logo slightly less pronounced, but it is still there.

Sarah Leet (Resident) 27:55

I'm gravely concerned about the proposal before you today. Like others, I have a number of concerns, including the annihilation of our tree cover and the parking concerns. However, first I'd like to emphasize my concern about the basics. Project management 101 calls for identifying stakeholders as part of the initial phase. While it has been documented that we have been identified on the sheet for today, the agenda for today, that there are 86 properties along the project limits, I fail to see evidence that we have truly been identified, as 86 stewards of homes built in the 1920s, 1930s, 1940s, as partners that deserve more respect and courtesy than the status of passive bystanders. Many of us were aware for some time that our street had been slated for street reconstruction. As others have mentioned, it has been delayed a number of times. However, in my conversation with neighbors, not one of us was in the slightest bit aware that, as part of the project our nearly century old trees would be sacrificed, or that our street was proposed to be narrowed, or that we had all be [unclear] before sewer construction—reconstruction.

Sarah Leet (Resident) 29:13

I'm less concerned about the decision that you eventually make than how you make it. While you have made—have provided the mandated statutory notice for this hearing, in my eyes, you have all failed in your duties to be a partner to the residents of Oklahoma street. There has not been enough time for us to process this news, to ask questions, and to understand the project as a whole. Neighborhoods used to be given the courtesy of a full informational hearing, and this short hour from 4:30 to 5:30 with such short notice—two weeks—is no substitute.

Sarah Leet (Resident) 29:50

I received three separate letters from the city in less than a month, and none of them seem to have been drafted with any thought behind the recipient of said letters. I encourage the committee and the Public Works staff to take some time to re-engineer not just the technical logistics of this project, but also the communication process. If anything, hopefully future residents can benefit from our experience.

Sarah Leet (Resident) 30:19

All of that being said, I'd also like to communicate my concerns about the proposal as it stands. Many of these concerns you have already heard from others, but they do bear repeating. The first concern is about the nonsensical proposal to narrow our street, resulting in limiting parking to one side. While it is true that our street is a luxury compared to my prior neighborhood on the lower east side of downtown Milwaukee, even its current state, I find it to be narrower than ideal. This was something that I accepted as part of an older character neighborhood. But I did not expect is for the local authorities to have such little crime and ticket revenue that they felt the need to issue me a citation for accidentally hitting my neighbor's car while backing out of my driveway at Easter a few years ago, while navigating the array of cars parked on our street. We have families in our neighborhood, as is expected, being within walking distance to the elementary, middle, and high school, and most of us having single car garages and single with driveways, parking congestion is a constant battle. This is something that I am sure Public Works is aware of, as it only complicates garbage pickup, leaf pickup, and snow removal efforts. I truly cannot imagine the chaos of a narrower street.

Sarah Leet (Resident) 31:39

My second concern is about the trees. As stated earlier, I consider more of—us more as stewards than anything else, and you are too. Again, I brought a poster talking, showing a little bit about the trees of Oklahoma Street. While some have already spoken about this today, I want to highlight the absolute shock that I had when I first read about the plans just two weeks ago. I can say with absolute certainty that I would not have chosen to purchase my home without the tree cover on our block. You may be aware that we have a closely knit neighborhood with an annual block party. We have had this for decades. Our pictures shown here literally span

generations. Underneath these trees is where we have built those friendships and shared hardships. Underneath those trees is where we have laughed while competing in egg toss. Underneath the trees is where our kids have played, swung at pinatas, and met McGruff. Underneath the trees is where we have spoken with our mayor, also shown in the picture below. Underneath the trees is where we have nourished our spirit in all four seasons, spring, summer, fall, and winter.

Sarah Leet (Resident) 33:01

Besides the general emotion surrounding losing such an asset, I'm also concerned about our property values decreasing, our energy bills increasing and losing our investment in our individual landscaping, as many of us have planted based on the shade of those trees, and will likely lose those trees once they're subjected to full sun. We may lose some of the **[unclear]** animal population that grace our neighborhood once so many habitats are destroyed in one swoop. Again, had this been known further in advance, some may have chosen to plant trees in their front yards five or 10 years ago. It was already mentioned terrace tree removal and planting could have been staggered. That is time we cannot now make up. 10- or 20-foot trees that will be planted in two or three years are not replacements.

Sarah Leet (Resident) 33:57

My third concern is regarding the levy. Again, while many of us were aware that the street reconstruction was coming at some point, I'm not aware of anyone who knew about the levy. \$3,000 is not \$10,000; I will grant you that, but it is still something that I'm sure folks would have appreciated knowing more than a year in advance. I encourage you again, to improve communications with the city as a whole so that future neighborhoods do not face the same surprises that we did. Given the situation as a whole, I'm asking the committee to vote no on this proposed reconstruction of Oklahoma Street in its entirety. Go back to the drawing board and delay the project a year or two. While I recognize that updates will need to be made eventually, at minimum, there needs to be time and space for more information and collaboration and hopefully some better options. Thank you.

Aldersperson Denise Fenton (District 6) 34:56

Thank you.

[Members of the public applaud Sarah's speech.]

Aldersperson Denise Fenton (District 6) 34:58

Excuse me. We don't respond to speakers in a public hearing. Thank you though. Anyone else? This is a public hearing. Is there anyone who'd like to speak?

Todd Williams (Resident) 35:10

Todd Williams, **[XXXXX]** West Oklahoma. Uh, I'm the grill guy at the neighborhood watch party, and the reason I mention that is right out front of my house are two trees that provide me shade when I'm grilling. And that sounds sort of trivial, but to me, it's not. Also, property values. I wanted to—I know it's been touched on. I'm not going to go into detail, but that concerns me like no end. What is it? Is it going to be \$5,000 off my property value, 10, 20, 30? I don't know. I don't want to find out, but I guess I ask the committee and those responsible for this project to reconsider. Thank you.

Aldersperson Denise Fenton (District 6) 36:09

Thank you. Anyone else?

Darwin Hintz (Resident) 36:27

Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

Aldersperson Denise Fenton (District 6) 36:29

Can you— He left the microphone on the on the podium. There you go. Thank you.

Unidentified Staff Member 36:39

Push it in. Really hard. Okay. Now Try it.

Darwin Hintz (Resident) 36:41

I'm Darwin Hintz. I live at [XXXXX] Oklahoma. I had to go to the bank today, and on the way home with my wife she said, "Let's drive down Elsie Street." Elsie was redone recently, and as I'm driving down Elsie I said, "This looks exactly like Oklahoma Street." It doesn't look like it was narrowed. It looks covered—there's cars on both sides of the street. So, I'm wondering, Mr. Engineer, is this going to be a new change for the city that we're going to have parking in one side of the street so we have two lanes, or are some streets going to be both ways? So just a question for the committee.

Aldersperson Denise Fenton (District 6) 37:36

Thank you. Anyone else?

Christine Williams (Resident) 37:51

Christine Williams, [XXXXX] West Oklahoma Street. My husband and I moved with our son to this great neighborhood 23 years ago, and we actually were moving on Commercial street just two blocks away, but this was a better neighborhood. Since that time—I was actually a police officer at the time, and the neighbors found out I was a police officer, and they put me in charge of the block. Since that time, I've been the block party captain. So, get phone calls here and there and go to the neighborhood watch meetings on the police department and things like that.

Christine Williams (Resident) 38:28

I do have a couple of things. Somebody touch on this earlier, the—there needs to be a return to the info sessions that were postponed during COVID and never reinstated. We need to get past—we're past COVID, and we need to return items like that to neighbors for the sake of the residents. The foresters, the traffic engineers, and the neighbors—I'm sorry, the traffic engineers, Public Works and traffic engineers have known about this projects for a really long time. They've been crunching numbers and things like that. And to have us not only just to come to a municipal meeting is not is not fair.

Christine Williams (Resident) 39:09

Additionally, somebody touch on this as well, the lead time for meetings should be lengthened. Again, you've all known about this meeting for about our street reconstruction for a long time. Giving neighbors just two weeks to come to a meeting, again, inconvenient at 4:30 for most people, is just it just—it's too short.

Christine Williams (Resident) 39:31

Several times I've talked to folks on our block, and luckily, we are a strong block that we have. We walk around and talk to each other, and especially after this came out. Appleton—or Oklahoma Street is going to look like Packard Street, and that's not good at all. We're going to have stubby trees for a really long time, and we're going to take down trees. This is the first time I've heard of Complete Streets. So, if—this is something, we're going to probably have to come back as a group a couple of the couple meetings from now and fight on that vision because if you plan on doing Complete Streets with every single residential neighborhood in the city, what are we going to turn into? We're not going to have—we're going to have old neighborhoods without trees and

with half the parking. And they are truly a residential neighborhood. As people have said, we have all of the kids in all three schools that that do come from our neighborhood. So, we'll definitely have to look into that.

Christine Williams (Resident) 40:38

And again, look at our—look what we're facing. Mentioned that there's 84 trees on our street. 41 of them, 50%, will be gone. And if we don't narrow the street, 13 more will be gone. So even more. You probably haven't heard a lot of the folks that have been concerned about both things. This is going to sound weird, but I would advocate losing 13 trees and not narrowing our block, because narrowing our block would be permanent. You're never going to widen our block again. The trees will grow back. And that pains me to say it, because I love trees. Folks on Oklahoma Street also contend not up—not just with West traffic, but because the folks on Mason Street lost their parking to bike lanes years ago, people on Mason Street on both sides of our block, park on our street, understandably, and this is the first part I'm more concerned about, we have had a chief of police who have said they do not have the manpower, i.e., the money, to police the streets anymore.

Christine Williams (Resident) 42:07

For years, we have had no parking since nin—the 1960s and for all good reasons, especially given by the police department. You don't have junked vehicles sitting out there. You don't have, you have a car that's moved every day back into where belongs then that's sitting there. So if you don't have a police force having the manpower to police overnight parking, this is going to continue to get worse, and we're going to—and if you continue to do Complete Streets with limiting parking for the folks that live there, then I don't know what the solution is, but it was brought up that maybe if you're going to be doing Complete Streets, maybe you go to residential parking and have some kind of a permit system. Thank you.

Aldersperson Denise Fenton (District 6) 42:57

Thank you. Anyone else? This is a public hearing. Is there anyone who wishes to speak? Going once. All right, I declare that public hearing closed. Um, but we're going to—so I took down some questions, and I'm asking staff about if there's something you heard that we want to answer today.

Jason Brown (Project Engineer) 43:46

I guess I can speak on there was there was a number of questions about the process. And so, the way that we used to do it, prior to COVID, was we would have a public information meeting, where we would invite the residents of a project to City Hall, and we would have sheets laid out on the table, and they could look at the plans, ask questions, kind of an open house scenario. Prior to COVID happening, attendance drastically changed after the city changed its assessment policy. A number of those in my time of doing this, which has been about 17-18, years, when we had assessments for reconstruction projects, I would say 80 to 90% of the reason folks showed up was to talk about assessments. Once the city eliminated the assessments and went to the wheel tax, attendance at those meetings declined quite a bit. Not zero, but it declined quite a bit. So, we would have two or three engineers, staff members, city foresters, attending two meetings. We would have two meetings, one during the day and one at night, and we might have three or four people show up at each one—maybe—sometimes none on a couple of occasions. Nonetheless, we were still doing them. COVID hit. Obviously, we all went home; we didn't have any of those meetings. When we came out of COVID, I guess there wasn't any one declaration that we wouldn't go back to that. It was just kind of a, I think, an internal staff discussion with our former director that we wouldn't go back to doing those public information meetings.

Jason Brown (Project Engineer) 45:28

Another thing with that is around that same time, we started to include—these plans that we see up on the monitors tonight, these are included on the website with a link in the letter that, you know, prior to that, you had to show up at a public information meeting to see any plan sets. Well now we're putting them on the

website and providing that link in addition to, typically, my name, my phone number, and my email address for any questions that might arise as soon as they receive the letter. So, I guess I just wanted to give you the background of where we're at. And up unto this point, we've been doing it this way for since COVID, five years, four years, whatever it is, and we hadn't received any negative feedback up to this point. So just kind of little history behind that. Hopefully it's helpful.

Alderson Denise Fenton (District 6) 46:23

And I'm going to ask one one—I think the Elsie Street came up a couple of times. Does anybody right off the top of their head know what year that one was reconstructed and lining up with like the implementation of the Complete Streets policy?

Jason Brown (Project Engineer) 46:44

I'll try.

Alderson Denise Fenton (District 6) 46:45

Okay.

Jason Brown (Project Engineer) 46:48

I think Elsie Street—and somebody asked this question in the two weeks that we've had since they had, this question, came up to me, and I don't remember—I'm not going to look at my emails right now. But I want to say it was 20—2022—Thank you, Eric—Elsie Street was done. So that was prior to the Complete Streets. And I believe that street was built at 31 feet back-to-back, 30 face to face, which was probably narrowed by one foot on each side. Prior to the Complete Streets documentation, that's kind of how we viewed local, low volume, low speed, residential streets trying to save as many trees as we possibly could by narrowing by one foot on each side and being able to maintain parking on both sides.

Alderson Denise Fenton (District 6) 47:32

Thank you. Okay, now I'm going to ask one other thing, and that is to anybody on staff. Can you just sort of lay out the next steps in the process? So, we've had the public hearing today, just for everybody here, and whoever wants to—are you on the are you on the spot again?

Jason Brown (Project Engineer) 47:52

I guess so. That's okay. So, so the next step in the process is two weeks from now we meet again, and, in theory, the committee would vote on our proposal and whatever happens with that.

Alderson Denise Fenton (District 6) 48:09

I think we're three because we have a fifth week.

Jason Brown (Project Engineer) 48:12

That's—you're right. Thank you. You're right. You're right. So, it's three weeks from here, yeah. So, assuming, you know, it—now there could be all sorts of things that happen to that, but let's just assume that the vote passes and obviously it moves to committee—or, I'm sorry, Common Council—to week and a half after that, something like that. I don't remember all the dates. But then it would—that—this project would go to common council for a final vote, at which time that vote is approved. Whatever the design proposal may be, that's what the design of the street will be, and that's how staff would move forward with designs from here on out for next year's utility project and then 2027 paving.

Aldersperson Denise Fenton (District 6) 48:56

Okay. Thank you. So, for a couple people who mentioned that, we will not be taking a vote on this project at this meeting. So, in three weeks from today there will be another municipal services committee meeting where this design will come up as an action item. All right. So, thank everybody for coming and speaking this afternoon, and we are going to move on with our agenda.