



Where Life is Sweet

Mayor and Members of the City Council
STAFF REPORT
For the Meeting of April 24, 2023

Title/Subject

Resolution 2270- A resolution declaring a public necessity to acquire real property for the Gettman Road Extension project.

Summary and Background

It is necessary for the economic well-being, public health, safety and welfare of the City of Hermiston and members of the public to establish and develop a new full-length public road connection in the southern half of the city between State Highway 207 and US Highway 395, specifically by extending Gettman Road from it's current terminus at South 1st Place to US Highway 395.

The Union Pacific Branch Line carves through the middle of Hermiston heading North/South, and as-such, creates a significant barrier to East/West travel. There are only three crossings of this rail line within City Limits which feature a full-length connection all the way from the West to the East sides of the City, represented as Elm Avenue, Highland Avenue, and Feedville Road. On the south side of the city, the gap between Highland Avenue and Feedville Road is nearly 2 miles. This reality forces most east/west traffic through the bottleneck intersection of 1st and Highland by Hermiston High School. Although installation of a traffic control signal at the 1st & Highland intersection will certainly assist with traffic management, it would do nothing to accommodate increased traffic volumes as the community continues to grow.

The City of Hermiston's adopted Transportation System Plan (TSP) takes this problem in to account, and has therefore featured a planned extension of Gettman Road since the plan's adoption more than 20 years ago. A copy of the TSP map can be viewed here:
<https://hermiston.maps.arcgis.com/apps/View/index.html?appid=14224b2c622c452ba28e985646812b13>

Development of this route is necessary for the economic well-being of the City because it establishes a new more direct route allowing workers to access employment centers. Additionally, it helps to unlock future residential development land which is planned for future housing along this roadway's route. Ensuring plentiful development land for new housing units is crucial to meeting the labor supply needs of the local economy.

Development of this route is necessary for public health, safety and welfare because it establishes a new more direct route through the southern portion of the City which allows residents faster access to various emergency services.

Development of this route, in the alignment presented, is necessary to maximize the safety of motorists and pedestrians utilizing this infrastructure in the future, with specific focus paid to the alignment of the intersections as proposed.

Development of this route, in the alignment presented, is necessary to maximize the functionality of the roadway to convey the public east/west across the southern portion of the city, with specific focus paid to the design speed of the roadway as an Urban Minor Collector, and the roadway geometry needed to accommodate that design.

Development of this route, in the alignment presented, is necessary to maximize the cost-effectiveness of the roadway to local taxpayers, with the alignment keeping costs low after accounting for alignment safety and functionality.

What the resolution does

This resolution:

- Authorizes city staff to hire appraisers, negotiators, and other consultants to assist in property acquisition.
- Requires staff and consultants to negotiate with property owners in good faith to compensate property owners justly, which ensures that they are paid fairly while also protecting the taxpayers from over-paying.
- Authorizes city staff to take appropriate legal action, if necessary, in order to obtain the necessary property in exchange for compensation determined through legal proceedings.

Next steps

Upon adoption of the resolution, the City's consultants with Anderson Perry Engineering, and Epic Land Solutions, will begin negotiations in earnest with the impacted property owners.

All impacted properties have been mailed a notice, by Certified Mail, announcing this intended action.

Tie-In to Council Goals

Transportation: Improve mobility and transportation.

Fiscal Information

The DRAFT Streets Capital Improvement Plan Budget for FY '24 includes \$300,000 intended to assist with Right of Way acquisition for the Gettman Road Extension Project. Until real estate appraisers and negotiators can begin their work, a more precise estimate of fiscal impacts is challenging. This portion of the CIP is funded through a portion of Franchise Fees charged to utility companies which use the City's Rights of Way to serve members of the public with their services.

Alternatives and Recommendation

Alternatives

1. Approve resolution 2270
2. Reject resolution 2270

Recommended Action/Motion

Motion to approve Resolution 2270

Submitted By:

Mark Morgan