



# *City of Stevenson*

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To: City Council  
From: Carolyn Sourek, Public Works Director  
RE: Brush Mower Replacement  
Meeting Date: June 16, 2022

## **Executive Summary:**

The 1996 New Holland (Ford) Highway Mower owned by the city is at a point where it must undergo extensive repairs, including significant labor and material expense, every time it is to be operated. To meet City infrastructure maintenance obligations, a replacement option needs to be considered and approved immediately.

## **Overview of Items:**

The City of Stevenson purchased the mower used in 2014. It is used exclusively to clear brush within the city street ROW. It is at an age and of a model type that replacement parts are no longer able to be purchased. The PW crew has spent countless hours in the last couple of months applying unconventional methods and mechanical techniques to enable the machine to remain operational.

Most recently, the week of May 31 through June 3, the mower broke down at least once per day and a couple of days twice per day, having to be repaired prior to continuing operation. This reoccurring maintenance issue is not an economical or efficient use of the PW crew time. Coming into the season where the mower is required to be utilized almost daily, these operational challenges create a critical decision point for the city.

The city infrastructure includes water, sewer, parks, and streets, among other minor assets. Most of the water and sewer infrastructure is located under streets and requires little maintenance to access their cleanouts, meters, manholes, and other access points. Water and sewer infrastructure that is not located under the city streets, travels "cross country" through the middle of lots and land to connect the system. These City easements and "grandfathered" access areas frequently become overgrown, and the city currently does not have the equipment required to maintain (mow) these areas. The subject mower, because of its wheelbase, is for roadway operation only.

I propose we take action to purchase a different mowing system with more versatile mowing capability as well as off season operationality. A track excavator with attachments for mowing would enable the PW department to maintain cross county access to our infrastructure, as well as allow completion of off season (fall and winter) tasks such as excavation, repairs, and moving of assets currently too large (eco blocks for material storage delineation) to be completed with the current mini excavator owned by the city. The city currently must request use of County equipment to move our own infrastructure (eco blocks). Additionally, a second trailer to mobilize this new equipment must be purchased.

The city has requested quotes from five vendors, which range in price from \$70 to 95 thousand dollars, before tax and without an accompanying trailer, likely to add another \$20 to 30 thousand dollars. The current mower was priced for auction resale between \$3500 and \$10,000. To replace the current mower in kind, the mower attachment alone was priced at \$75,000, and used tractor appears to range from \$10,000 to \$30,000, in unknown condition and of similar age to our current machine. A new tractor is likely much more expensive than the track excavator with attachment option, as well as lacks in versatility, as discussed. I propose we locate and purchase a new track excavator with mower attachment and associated trailer with which to haul it and its attachments for a price not to exceed \$150,000.

Typically, this would be discussed as part of the initial budget, or budget amendment process. Due to the urgent need, this authorization is requested outside the budget process. Any changes or approvals would be included in the next budget amendment, which is expected to take place in August. The 2021 ending balance was \$204k, and the rates have been adjusted to address the increasing replacement costs. A copy of the past 3-year actual revenue and expenses, year to date figures and the current 2022 budget is attached. This purchase can be covered by the current budget, and there will still be room to purchase the needed replacement vehicles as outlined in the budget.

**Action Needed:**

Approve the purchase of a new track excavator with mower attachment for a price not to exceed \$150,000 and excise the current 1996 highway mower.