



City Administrator's Report

February 2024

To: Mayor and City Council
From: Leslie Herring, City Administrator
Date: February 8, 2024
RE: Update on some of the key areas of focus of the Administration Department

Current Priorities

3rd Quarter (October) 2023 through 1st Quarter (March) 2024

- *Rainbow Blvd. Complete Streets Traffic Management Plan*
 - ✓ The MARC Board approved the scope of work negotiated with the firm selected by the project steering/advisory committee of stakeholders in April and the Notice to Proceed was issued on May 31, 2023.
 - ✓ A project kick-off with WSP Consulting, MARC, and the local project stakeholders took place on June 27th.
 - ✓ Public engagement is currently taking place with an opinion survey and additional public engagement activities and opportunities will take place through November. Survey and information available here: <https://publicinput.com/rainbowboulevard>
 - ✓ Full data analysis has been completed and Steering Committee Meeting 3 of 4 was held last week.
 - ✓ A public open house to release the recommended options and to gather wider feedback from the community was held Saturday, January 27, 2024 from 2 – 4 PM. I anticipate about 50 people attended.
 - One final Steering Committee meeting will be scheduled later this month and reporting of final recommendations and findings to take place in March 2024.

- Mission Rd. Improvements (2024 JoCo CARS-funded project in partnership with Roeland Park)
 - ✓ The City was awarded County cost-share funding through Johnson County's CARS program for improvements to Mission Rd. between 47th and 53rd Streets. The cost of improvements to this stretch of Mission Rd. are also paid 50% by the City of Roeland Park, since the cities split the roadway as it's a City boundary line.
 - ✓ The results from a 2021 community survey jointly administered by the City of Roeland Park and Westwood have set City staff in both cities to pursue the following elements when the cities do street maintenance in 2025:
 - adding bicycle facilities,
 - enhanced pedestrian crossings,
 - new pedestrian-scale streetlighting, and
 - removal of on-street parking on the Roeland Park side of the street to accommodate bicycle lanes.
 - Staff involved in the project are meeting regularly to refine the scope of work and associated costs before submitting to Johnson County for programming.

- A public open house is being scheduled for later in February. Once the logistics are determined, both Roeland Park and Westwood staff will advertise widely. The anticipated deadline for submitting plans and costs to the County is April.
- *Community Survey and Strategic Priorities Setting*
 - City staff recommends that the Governing Body create a strategic plan to provide direction to staff for work activities and for budgeting and for the development of performance metrics to ensure a framework for accountability, responsiveness, and efficient use of tax-payer resources.
 - Staff recommends that this strategic plan be based on the results of a city-wide survey, to be developed and deployed with the assistance of professional partners ETC Institute and PorchLight Insights. The survey will be sent by mail to all Westwood addresses – both residential and commercial – and responses will be accepted by pre-paid return mail or online. Only one response per address will be accepted.
 - A 5:30 PM work session at tonight’s regular February meeting will allow the Governing Body to share with PorchLight Insights what it would like to know and hear from Westwood residents and businesses. This input will be used by City staff and the consultant team to create survey questions, which survey results will then be analyzed and discussed with the Governing Body moving into strategic priority and resource planning in the second quarter of 2024.
 - Performance metrics, communications objectives, and strategic priority identification are all anticipated outcomes of this process. The process is expected to conclude late in the second quarter or early in the third quarter of 2024.
- *New Feature Park Plan Creation*
 - Following the October approval by the City Council of the development plan submitted by Karbank in 2023, the City will commence planning activities for the new feature City park, included in the plan for 50th & Rainbow Blvd.
 - The process for creating a plan for the park is expected to take a full year and is anticipated to involve:
 - 2023 Q4: Create park steering committee process, draft RFQ for review by committee, determine and invite committee members
 - 2024 Q1: Park steering committee and RFQ issuance for park planning professional services
 - 2024 Q2 - Q3: Park planning and public engagement
 - 2024 Q4: Park plan concept and schedule acceptance by Council
 - This rough schedule and component parts is subject to change based on steering committee input once that group convenes
 - The Mayor has determined the appointments to the steering committee and will release those names directly.

- *City Website Relaunch*
 - The updated City website went live in March 2023 and, after living with it for a bit, I have rejected the website for issues of functionality, lack of professionalism and lack of modern feel in appearance, and hasty and incomplete migration of data by the website provider.
 - City staff – along with support from a professional communications partner, Katie Garcia at Gather Media – have re-engaged the City’s website provider and have identified an acceptable alternate website template to migrate to through a relaunch. A mock-up of the new website is being developed by CivicPlus, the website developer, and has been shared with City staff and City Council for input.
 - The full relaunch is expected take place by March 31st.

- *Westwood’s 75th Anniversary – June 7, 2024*
 - I have been working with Mayor Waters, Councilmember Wimer, and resident Karen Johnson to put together a process, expectations, and names of people to help us prepare to celebrate the City of Westwood’s 75th anniversary of incorporation. We are expecting components to include:
 - A reprint and expansion of the City’s 50th anniversary book publication. We have located the publisher and will provide that information to an ad hoc committee of residents and City Officials so that they can connect to create a new book that accounts for the past 25 years;
 - An event in June 2024 to celebrate the anniversary; and
 - Official City of Westwood merch that residents can proudly wear to show their pride in Westwood.

Building Permits

The following is a snapshot of select building permits of note issued last month:

Residential

New Construction:

- 2008 W. 47th Ter. – Construct new single family detached house

Additions: None

Alterations:

- 2720 W. 51st St. – Remove wall between kitchen and living area; remove first floor bedroom to add bathroom and walk-in closet for primary bedroom

Demolition:

- 2008 W. 47th Ter. – Demolish single family house to construct new house

Misc: None of note

Commercial

New Construction: None

Additions: None

Alterations: None

Demolition: None

Misc: None of note