



City Administrator's Report

March 2024

To: Mayor and City Council
From: Leslie Herring, City Administrator
Date: March 14, 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 held the final week of March and reporting of final recommendations and findings to take place in April 2024 (this timeline has been extended about two months from the original contract timeline).
 - Mid-America Regional Counsel has opened its call for projects for suballocated federal funding and pre-applications are due by April 5th. City staff, the project consultant team, and the corridor stakeholder organizations are anticipated to work together to submit an application for funding to begin implementing certain improvements agreed upon. That scope of work will be refined based on direction and coordination between the members of those groups in the coming weeks and months.
- *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 2022 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 and additional pedestrian crossings,
 - new pedestrian-scale streetlighting, and
 - removal of on-street parking on the Roeland Park side of the street to accommodate bicycle lanes.
- ✓ A public open house was held on February 28th and since that time, an ad hoc committee of staff, consultants, and elected officials – Laura Steele and Andrew Buckman from Westwood – worked on an FAQ to respond to questions received. [That FAQ is available on the project page, housed on the City of Roeland Park’s website.](#)
- ✓ Staff involved in the project met regularly to refine the scope of work and associated costs before submitting to Johnson County for programming. The project cost estimate was submitted on March 8th; Westwood’s share of the construction cost at this point is calculated at just under \$500,000. Westwood’s budgeted total cost is \$716,473, which includes design, survey, and bidding services.
 - Design will continue through 2024 before project bidding in early 2025.

➤ *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. Performance metrics, communications objectives, and strategic priority identification are all anticipated outcomes of this process.
- ✓ 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 work session was held at the regular February City Council meeting where the Governing Body developed topics on which it would like to hear from Westwood residents and businesses. This input was 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. A draft of the survey is included in tonight’s meeting packet for consideration and conversation before finalizing for use by ETC.
 - The timeline from here is anticipated as such:

March 14 – 15	Survey questions finalized
Early April	ETC mails survey
Early June	ETC closes survey and delivers results to City
Late June	Governing Body retreat to review results and develop strategic plan

August 8 th	Final report of survey findings and analysis; Governing Body Strategic Plan presented for adoption; operational performance metrics presented for consideration
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➤ *New Feature Park Plan Creation*

- ✓ Following the October approval by the City Council of the development plan submitted by Karbank in 2023, the City commenced 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: Park design consultant selection process
 - 2024 Q3 – Q4: Public engagement and park design activities
 - End of Year: Park design recommendation finalized and submitted to Planning Commission and City Council for acceptance
- ✓ The Park Planning Steering Committee, chaired by Councilmember Steele and attended by Mayor Waters and Councilmember Harris, met for the first time on Monday, March 4th to review and comment on the draft RFQ.
- The next meeting of the Steering Committee is scheduled for Tuesday, March 26th to finalize the RFQ and approve it for advertisement on April 1, 2024. A 30-day response period is planned.

➤ *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.
- The mock-up of the new website was developed by CivicPlus, the website developer, and was shared with City staff and City Council for input. It was approved February 22nd.

➤ *Westwood’s 75th Anniversary – June 7, 2024*

- Councilmember Wimer convened a group of residents to put together a plan for celebrating the City of Westwood’s 75th anniversary of incorporation. This group convened on February 27th and discussed the following:
 - A reprint and expansion of the City’s 50th anniversary book publication;
 - 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.

Councilmember Wimer will share additional details and be available for questions and input at the Council meeting.

Building Permits

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

Residential

New Construction: None

Additions:

- 2601 W. 50th Ter. – Add kitchen and dining room and primary bedroom above

Alterations:

- 2707 W. 50th Ter. – Kitchen remodel

Demolition: None

Misc: None of note

Commercial

New Construction: None

Additions: None

Alterations: None

Demolition: None

Misc: None of note