



## City Administrator's Report

October 2023

To: Mayor and City Council  
From: Leslie Herring, City Administrator  
Date: October 12, 2023  
RE: Update on some of the key areas of focus of the Administration Department

### Current Priorities

2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter (April) 2023 through 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter (September) 2023

- *Public Property and Facilities Course of Action Establishment and Execution*
  - ✓ Building on the work of the 2021 Urban Land Institute (ULI) Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) and the 2022 City Facilities Assessment and Feasibility Analysis, the Mayor allowed a project proposal to be brought forward to the City Council at the March 9, 2023 regular City Council meeting which could complement the City's goals and the findings and recommendations of the two aforementioned reports/studies. [The proposal from Karbank Real Estate Company is available via this link to the City's website.](#)
  - ✓ Following the Governing Body's approval of a Funding & Exclusivity Agreement with Karbank on March 9<sup>th</sup>, the City and the Shawnee Mission School District agreed to the form and terms of a Purchase Agreement for the Rushton property (old Westwood View) and the School Board approved it on May 22<sup>nd</sup>. The City of Westwood approved it on June 8, 2023.
  - ✓ There are a number of steps in the due diligence process for the Governing Body and Karbank to work through to determine whether this project is desired and feasible. One such step is the rezoning, replatting, and development plan approval for the project. On July 10<sup>th</sup>, the Planning Commission received a preliminary presentation from Karbank, ahead of calling for a public hearing on the rezoning and preliminary development plan approval.
    - On August 7<sup>th</sup>, the Planning Commission held a public hearing on the matter and, upon staff recommendation, continued the public hearing to September 11<sup>th</sup> to allow more time to conduct technical studies and to integrate public and Planning Commission feedback into the plan. On September 11<sup>th</sup>, the Planning Commission made a recommendation for conditional approval to the City Council, which will be considered on the October 12<sup>th</sup> City Council meeting agenda.
    - The Mayor, City Administrator, City Attorney, City's Financial Advisor on the project, and Bond Counsel have worked together and with Karbank to outline expectations, mechanics for land acquisition, and other terms of agreements, which are still being negotiated. These agreements and terms were presented to the City Council on September 14<sup>th</sup> and feedback sought prior to consideration on October 12<sup>th</sup>.

- *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 27<sup>th</sup>.
  - 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>
  - An engagement pop-up event will be held at the KC Symphony's Mobile Music Box event to be held at Westwood City Hall on Sunday, October 22<sup>nd</sup> from 5 – 7 PM.
  - Final reporting out of recommendations and findings to take place in the first quarter of 2024.
  
- *Communities for All Ages – Gold Level Recognition*
  - ✓ Bronze level recognition – community awareness – was approved by the joint MARC First Suburbs Coalition and CFAA recognition review committee in November 2022.
  - ✓ Silver level recognition – community assessment – was approved by the joint MARC First Suburbs Coalition and CFAA recognition review committee in April 2023 and the official presentation by MARC was at the First Suburbs Coalition meeting on April 21, 2023, with a ceremonial presentation to the Westwood Governing Body at the June 8<sup>th</sup> meeting.
  - Council President Jeff Harris and staff are working together to create a Communications Strategic Plan, including a content calendar for the City to best integrate the work of the Bronze and Silver level work. This document will be submitted to the joint MARC First Suburbs Coalition and CFAA recognition review committee in October 2023.
  
- *Administrative Department Reorganization and Continuity Planning*
  - Since the creation of the City Administrator role during Summer 2022, the following changes have been made with the Administration Department or are currently taking place:
    - City Clerk position separated from Chief Administrative Officer (position now dissolved) and Abby Schneweis appointed to the position in February 2023 (Assistant City Clerk position dissolved)
    - Municipal Court Clerk now reporting to City Administrator (historically reported to Mayor)
    - Municipal Court Clerk (Shelley Floyd) and City Clerk began cross-training in Spring 2023 to distance the Police Department from involvement in receiving money for fines and court costs
    - During the process of assessment of the City's administrative functions, it was found that staff is cross-trained to create redundancy for most every function in the Department except for building inspections and plan review. As such, Public Works employee Nick Finck was identified as an

ideal candidate to invite to learn the building inspection and plan review trade and to work toward becoming certified to allow the City redundancy in this position as well. Nick will work with Building Official Eddie McNeil and Public Works Director John Sullivan to cross-train on right-of-way management and building and codes matters. He will maintain his primary position as Public Works Maintenance Worker and scheduling and Departmental workload will be closely monitored while he is training.

- *Cybersecurity and Continuity Planning*
  - ✓ Beginning January 2023, Johnson County is contracted to bring the Administration and Public Works Departments onto its IT system (the Police Department is already supported by Johnson County).
  - ✓ Implementation was concluded last month and glitches are currently being worked out.
  - ✓ Staff cybersecurity training has been taking place and is ongoing. This online, self-paced training is provided through the City's risk pool, Midwest Public Risk (MPR). This annual training will also be provided to Governing Body members in the months to come.

## **Upcoming Priorities**

3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter (October) 2023 through 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter (March) 2024

- *Recodification*
  - The legal review is currently being conducted by Municode (CivicPlus) and will continue through the end of the year.
  - In the first couple months of 2024, we can expect to have work for staff, the City Attorney, and the Governing Body to do to get our recodified City Code ready for formal review and adoption and get it online in a searchable and updated version.
- *Community Survey and Strategic Priorities Setting*
  - In the first quarter of the year, I plan to set out a process recommendation for conducting a city-wide survey to aid staff and the Governing Body in creating a strategic plan and performance metrics for ensuring efficiency and responsiveness of the City government to the community in alignment with stated goals and priorities.
- *Westwood's 75th Anniversary – June 7, 2024*
  - I have been working with Mayor Waters, Councilmember Wimer, and resident Karen Johnson to begin putting together a process, expectations, and names of people to help us prepare to celebrate the City of Westwood's 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of incorporation. We are expecting components to include:
    - A reprint and expansion of the City's 50<sup>th</sup> 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: None

Additions: None

Alterations: None

Demolition: None

Misc: None of note.

### *Commercial*

New Construction: None

Additions: None

Alterations: None

Demolition: None

Misc: None of note.