

Budget Work Session 5/10/22 – Follow up:

[AM Presentation PowerPoint](#)

[AM Presentation Recording](#)

[PM Presentation PowerPoint](#)

[PM Presentation Recording](#)

[FY23 Preliminary Fiscal Plan](#)

Morning Session:

- **Slide #12: Can you bring more detail related to support program for small scale developers of color – is this related to revolving loan program or a separate program?**

The City has a number of ways we are supporting expansion of this particular sector, including:

1. The [Environmental Site Assessment Grant](#) (ESA) is funded from Local Brownfield Revolving Loan Fund (~ \$215,000) to assist:
 - a. Projects being proposed by first-time developers
 - b. Projects or businesses located in the [Neighborhoods of Focus](#)
 - c. Projects that will help retain or grow existing businesses
 - d. Projects that will help attract new businesses to Grand Rapids
2. Within the development center, a number of initiatives are underway or anticipated, including:
 - a. An ombudsman service for small businesses and first-time users to navigate our processes;
 - b. Increasing presence of planning staff at community events outside of city hall – intended to break down barriers and enhance connections with first-time and infrequent users of permitting services; and
 - c. Partnering on development of pre-permitted plan sets (“off the shelf designs”) that can ease the permitting path for certain routine development projects

- **Can you share Grow1000 fliers with Commissioners?**

Flyers were sent to City Commission on Thursday and are also attached.

- **How much does the City support the Community Media Center?**

For audited fiscal year 2021, the City is contributed roughly 49% CMC’s total expenses of \$1,382,558. This is specifically to support GRTV (public access television) operations, which we have contracted with the CMC to provide for 30+ years. The City is projected to contribute roughly the same amount for FY22 and FY23 (approximately \$696k). The funding comes from franchise fee collections and is dictated by the terms of the current operating agreement, which expires at the end of calendar year 2023.

Capital, Health, and Environment Q&A

1. **How are things going with JustAir? What is potential for expanding?**

- In partnership with DGRI (funded \$30k for 5 sensors in downtown for two years), JustAir installed 10 sensors in June 2021 and they are being monitored. JustAir funded the 5 sensors in Grandville/Roosevelt neighborhood. Wege Foundation provided funding for education and community engagement.
- Current publicly available web site: <https://justair.netlify.app/>
- Public alert system is scheduled to be deployed in June 2022
- The sensors are measuring: Ozone, particulate matter 2.5 and 10 (dust particles), Nitrogen Dioxide, Temperature, and Humidity
- JustAir coordinated a \$500,000 grant application to the EPA in February to add 30 sensors across all Wards (for a total of 40 in the city) and monitor them for 3 years; they expect to hear in September-November about an award
 - The grantee is Michigan Black Expo Inc.
 - Part of the grant will be to coordinate and determine locations based on community feedback. We intend for all of the wards to be covered with deep attention to the neighborhoods/census tracts of focus.
 - Letters of support were submitted by: JustAir, Clarity, Spectrum Health, C4, NAACP and EGLE

2. What is the total cost of the Biodigester?

The total capital cost is currently \$86.9M which includes the addition of the estimated \$1.5M budget amendment for pump replacements and the estimated \$950k related project for the FEW line replacement. This does not include O&M costs.

SWOC, Mobility, and VSOC Q&A

1. Can MobileGR provide full detailed report on installations and map bus shelter program?

See Attached map of Bus Shelters

The City has worked with The Rapid since 2019 to expand the number of shelters in the City. The first round of nearly \$225,000 investments funded the placement of **22 shelters in 2019** and the latest round of almost \$400,000 investments is funding another **40 shelters and concrete pads**. The shelters will be installed at transit stops only within City limits and be equipped with solar-powered lighting where lighting is necessary. There will be 13 shelters installed in Ward 1, seven in Ward 2, and 15 in Ward 3. Nineteen shelters will be installed in the neighborhoods of focus. The additional 40 shelters will be finished by December 2022 for a total of 62 bus shelters.

2. Are we considering using rumble strips like ones used in other cities? Is the City considering transition to more bike and pedestrian friendly alternatives?

No, the City is not considering using rumble strips. Our staff research into rumble strips shows that communities using these regularly (Iowa, Minnesota, Maryland) are using them to indicate changes along roadways such as approaching intersections, or speed limit changes, they are not being used

as a speed control measure over long distances. In the case of Iowa they appear to primarily be used to indicate upcoming intersections on rural roadways. The following are concerns regarding using rumble strips for traffic calming:

1. Unsure of effectiveness –The device does not physically restrict your speed in any way such as vertical deflection or narrowing of the roadway. This is a quote from a manufacturer of rumble strips (that doesn't require grooving the pavement), " So, while the rumble strip doesn't play an active role in slowing a vehicle's momentum, it can eliminate driver inattention, and make them aware of their surroundings, but in the end it's up to the driver to slow down."
2. Noise – these devices will add considerable noise to a neighborhood street near their installation. We already get pushback and calls about the noise from speed humps. These would be significantly more noise for a neighborhood. Commissioner Lenear brought up this as a possible solution for roads like Fuller, but that is a dense residential area that would experience increased noise from thousands of vehicles a day. If she can tell us the community that she was in that she referenced, staff will reach out to them regarding their experience with the strips and what they used.
3. Potential damage to pavement – If using the style grooved into pavement that reduces the thickness of pavement, creates place for water to pool/freeze and impact the longevity of the road surface.
4. Potentially hazardous for people riding bicycles. If a tire of a bicycle catches on a rumble strip it may cause the rider to lose balance and tumble off, leaving them exposed to further dangerous conditions.

Traffic Calming Program Changes – Starting in FY 2022, the traffic calming program was expanded to better address resident speeding concerns and pedestrian and bike safety. Previous funding basically required speed hump only solutions and a single road at a time. Additional funding is allowing curb work which allows for the following as part of traffic calming projects:

- Neighborhood traffic circles – reducing speeds approaching intersections and slowing turning movements at those intersections. Side effect of reducing cut-through traffic as aggressive drivers may find them inconvenient.
- Curb extensions – beneficial from both a speed control perspective as well as reducing crossing distances for pedestrians at intersections.
- Evaluation of neighborhoods together instead of one street at a time to provide a holistic solution instead of speed humps street by street while moving traffic to the next open street.
- The City purchased 2 additional speed feedback trailers to supplement the traffic calming program for a total of 6 trailers to respond to resident speeding complaints faster.
- City staff are in the process of adding temporary test materials to our barricade contract to conduct demonstration projects prior to construction or while traffic calming projects are being designed to provide temporary relief.

3. **Should we consider reducing the size of the Vital Streets Oversight Committee because seats have been hard to fill? What would be the process for that?**

Yes, we should review the governance of the VSOC in the future. Staff will bring preliminary feedback to Commission after conferring with VSOC.

The Vital Streets Oversight Committee (VSOC) was created as an advisory body to the City Commission at a meeting on May 20, 2014, Proceeding Number 83503. It is unclear if there was any intervening Commission action on the VSOC composition since 2014, however no action was located.

In 2014, The City Commission resolved that, "The [VSOC] shall consist of 25 members appointed by the City Commission for three-year terms according to the appointment process. Membership shall consist of one member appointed by the Mayor, six members each of whom .is selected by a member of the City Commission, and one member each from the following designated entities: [list of 18 entities]." This resolution to create the VSOC followed the February 11, 2014, meeting where the City Commission approved Vital Street and Investment Guidelines in anticipation of the voters approved a Vital Streets dedicated funding measure in May 2014. The VSOC was established to make recommendations to the City Manager and City Commission on the expenditure of revenue from the income tax continuation, report to the City Commission on achievement of Vital Street and Sidewalk outcomes and advise on asset management strategies. To alter the composition of the VSOC would require a resolution by the City Commission.

There are currently 11 vacancies on the 25-person commission. Three of those vacancies are commissioner appointments, and the other eight are appointments for representatives of specific agencies. Some of the organizations no longer exist and as was noted in the Workshop, some of the organizations have not regularly had their seats filed.

A reduction and reorganization of memberships could be crafted to include a sufficient amount of viewpoints and increase efficiency. When considering the reduction, the City would likely benefit from input from the organizations listed as entities that were to be represented in the original resolution.