

Mayor and Council

Council Chamber, First Floor of City Hall
Bellaire, TX 77401-4411



Meeting: 08/20/18 06:00 PM
Department: Public Works
Category: Presentation
Department Head: Paul A. Hofmann
DOC ID: 2627

SCHEDULED

ORDINANCE (ID # 2627)

Item Title:

Council discussion on sidewalk program implementation and possible action to provide direction to the city manager as appropriate - Submitted by Paul A. Hofmann, City Manager.

Background/Summary:

Background/Summary

The BBB16 bond program resulted in three phases of sidewalk construction projects, to be implemented as standalone projects, that is, not included as part of a street and drainage improvement. On July 16, 2018, Council did not award design contracts for Phase 3, and on August 13, 2018, Council did not award construction contracts for Phase 1. Phase 2 is currently in design, scheduled for construction contract award in October, 2018.

During discussion on August 13, Council expressed interest in reassessing how to move forward with standalone sidewalk construction. Recent community input has included several suggestions that funds allocated for sidewalks (and/or in the future, pathways) would be better spent on drainage improvements. Others have indicated that building sidewalks would be a distraction from the higher good of improving drainage. Some comments have suggested that sidewalk construction exacerbates flooding, increases crime, and kills trees.

Another consideration is sidewalk design standard, specifically the width of sidewalks to be built. In December of 2017, the City Council, after receiving input from the Building Standards Commission, directed that sidewalks be constructed to a four foot standard, until the matter is revisited. The City Engineer is planning a presentation on this topic for the August 20 Council meeting.

Previous Council Action Summary:

Timeline of Sidewalk Milestones

May 5, 2016

Pre-budget planning workshop. Pathways (including sidewalks) established as priority. Discussion on 2016 bond election planning

June 6, 2016

Council re-establishes the practice of requiring new residential development to install sidewalks.

August 1, 2016

City Manager presents overview of November, 2016 bond election and a 2016 bond election guide document. Potential projects and programs include municipal facilities, streets and drainage, water lines, and sidewalks.

August 15, 2016

After discussion, Council votes to call November 8 bond election. Streets, drainage, sidewalks are included in one proposition.

August 29, 2016

Bond Election Town Hall

September, 2016

Distribution of bond election flyer, bond program discussions held at board and commission meetings

November 8, 2016

Bond Election

February 16, 2017

City Manager presents Council a project selection and implementation plan for the bond program. Phase 1 sidewalk locations are identified. Phases 2 and 3 to be identified via community pathways plan

March 20, 2017

Council vote to award Phase 1 sidewalk design contracts

November 24, 2017

Phase 1 sidewalk neighborhood meeting

December 4, 2017

Council vote to award Phase 2 sidewalk design contracts

December 18, 2017

Council vote to implement 4 foot sidewalks

July 16, 2018

Phase 3 sidewalk design placed on hold

July 24, 2018

Phase 2 sidewalk neighborhood meeting

August 6, 2018

Significant number of audience comments in opposition to community pathways plan. Some comments received both for and against the general subject of sidewalk construction. Plan presented to Council. Council consensus to not have plan brought back to Council

August 13, 2018

Council awards contract for Phase 1 streets and drainage improvements, including sidewalks. Council postpones indefinitely construction contract for Phase 1 sidewalk improvements.

Fiscal Impact:

\$266,920 has been spent to date on the sidewalk program on design

Recommendation:

The recommendation is that Council provide direction on how to move forward. Potential questions for consideration are:

- 1) Do we reallocate the remaining funds from the sidewalk program to street and drainage?
- 2) Do we ask the Building Standards Commission to revisit the question of sidewalk standards, both for private development and public projects? Or,
- 3) Is Council ready to provide direction on sidewalk width?
- 4) If we proceed with the sidewalk program, do we re-think the locations currently established? (Significant design work is already complete for phases 1 and 2)
- 5) Should there be a specific process for neighborhoods to either request a sidewalk to be constructed on their street, or to request a sidewalk not be built on their street?