



PUBLIC WORKS STAFF REPORT

MEMO DATE:	May 4, 2021
MTG. DATE:	May 11, 2021
TO:	Public Works & Properties Committee
FROM:	JJ Larson – Village Director of Public Works & Utilities
RE:	West Oak St. re-paving and improvements (2022 project)

BACKGROUND

West Oak Street is due to be re-paved with new asphalt in 2022. This stretch of street not only has failing asphalt, but regularly get reports of speeding traffic, as the route offers a shortcut between CTH N and BB that many drivers take, and the excessive width of the street encourages faster driving speeds. It is also important to note this is a neighborhood built without sidewalks; pedestrians and bicyclists of all ages share this same street. This Committee has directed Kevin and I to look into options addressing these challenges.

OVERVIEW

In your packet is a draft exhibit that shows a project that could address all of these issues and increase our community's overall bike/ped connectivity. West Oak Street's 66' right-of-way allows a simple reconstruction project to add significant improvements inside existing right-of-way. Previously we have discussed potential traffic calming options, from striping to adding physical infrastructure to intersections; with varying costs and ongoing maintenance requirements. While these can be effective retro-fit measures, reducing the width of neighborhood streets is a proven method of slowing traffic, and offers us the opportunity to add bike/ped facilities as well.

The proposed exhibit shows that West Oak St. can be reconstructed to a width of 34' curb to curb, which still allows parking along one side of the street and 12' wide travel lanes. This can then accommodate a 10' wide multi-use path to be paved along the south side of the street where there are the fewest existing driveways to cross.

ADDITIONAL ITEMS

If the committee opts for this design over previously discussed options, the project would also include the addition of a rectangular rapid flashing beacon (RRFB) and striped crossing between the existing bike path along the east side of CTH N and the new path along West Oak. Another option to increase driver awareness and encourage safe biking would be to make the remaining portion of West Oak, from Westlawn around the corner to the intersection with BB, a "shared" street or "bike boulevard." This stretch is already posted with a 15mph speed limit and has sidewalks on both sides of the street – so some simple signage, painting and driver awareness could make another complete, safe bicycle connection through a Village neighborhood.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The Financial Management Plan update last fall allocated \$415,000 for West Oak St. which included complete repaving and traffic calming additions. The proposed plan is estimated to cost \$650,000 for the street and path and an additional \$40,000 for the crossing at CTH N. If the committee opted for the "all-in" we could factor a few thousand more for signage and striping a "shared" street and the entire project could be completed for under \$700,000.

RECOMMENDATION

In the long term, having narrower streets is proven to be a speed deterrent, narrowing this very wide neighborhood street will forever correct this concern. All streets require maintenance (crack-filling, chip-sealing, patching), and reducing the width reduces the amount of asphalt requiring these treatments in perpetuity, and this option means significantly less, repetitive re-striping of elaborate traffic calming lines which would have to be contracted every few years. The Village has also shown a commitment to improving the safety and opportunity for pedestrians and bicyclists of all ages, abilities and confidence levels to get out and see their community outside of a car; this project would be another huge improvement to that infrastructure. I would recommend approval of the plan as presented.