The Hiawatha City Council met in a Work Session on September 23, 2019. Mayor Bennett called the meeting to order at 5:30 P.M. Council members present: Rob Archibald, Dennis Norton, Steve Dodson, Aime Wichtendahl, and Dick Olson. Staff present: City Administrator Kim Downs, City Engineer John Bender, Community Development Director Pat Parsley, and City Attorney Mark Parmenter.

Norton moved the approval of the agenda, seconded by Archibald. Motion carried.

Snyder and Associates presentation of Tower Terrace Roadway Expansion Traffic Study and Design Review Discussion

Tony Boes and Kelli Scott from Snyder and Associates presented the Tower Terrace Roadway Expansion Traffic Study and Design Review.

Boes explained the traffic patterns and volumes are projected to change and grow significantly with the new interchange. Forecasted daily traffic is projected to grow from about 11,600 vehicles per day in the opening year (2023) to 28,500 vehicles per day in the design year (2040). Due to projected rapid growth, the opening year alternatives were analyzed, along with 10 years of growth from the opening year.

Two primary alternatives were evaluated for the traffic control at the intersection Tower Terrace Road and North Center Point Road: signal control and a roundabout. The forecasted volumes make maintaining two-way stop control or switching to all-way stop control infeasible. The functional lane needs were determined for the opening year based on 2032 traffic and for the full build based on 2040 traffic. The functional lane needs were determined using Synchro version 10 for the traffic signal and Sidra version 7 for the roundabout. Those lane configurations were then analyzed with the microsimulation analysis in VISSIM version 9. VISSIM models for the IJR were provided by the Iowa DOT and modified for this study.

Based on analyses performed for this study, both Tower Terrace Road and North Center Point Road intersection alternatives (roundabout or traffic signal) provide acceptable opening year and design year traffic operations. The signal alternative has lower initial construction costs, however, future improvements needed for this alternative to accommodate projected 2040 traffic would be more expensive than for the roundabout alternative. Total initial plus future estimated project cost for the roundabout alternative is approximately $340,000 (8%) more than the signal alternative.

Council Member Wichtendahl asked if the initial cost is greater with the roundabout but if in the long term it will be a greater savings.

Boes answered yes and considering life-cycle costs for transportation system users over 20-year analysis period, the roundabout alternative is projected to provide more than $15 million in cost savings compared to the signal alternative, including more than $2 million in safety benefits (vehicle crash and injury reductions). Therefore, the roundabout alternative is recommended as the preferred alternative.

Council Member Dodson asked if a roundabout is harder for snow plows to get through. Boes said not really harder for snow plows and the plow drivers learn quickly to navigate them, also roundabouts assumed to have a 65 percent reduction for injury crashes and 20 percent reduction for property damage crashes, per Iowa DOT CMF information.

Council Member Archibald asked if they are seeing more roundabouts instead of the signalization in the Des Moines metro area. Boes answered yes, they are seeing more roundabouts.

Council Member Olson expressed having three lanes he feels would be problematic for users. Boes said it is still ten years out before there would be three lanes in the roundabout.

Dodson asked if the $4.7 million is to build the first phase. Boes answered $4.2 million for the opening year costs plus $500,000 for additional costs to the design year.

Archibald asked if the trail crossing goes over or under. Boes said it would cross over at the grade.

Wichtendahl asked if there were any complicating factors with a diverging diamond. Boes said it wasn't a significant factor.

Boes stated they meet with the adjacent properties and the main concern with CCB was to make sure they could get in and out of their parking lot from either way.

City Administrator Downs explained Chris Sherman wants to see potential development and asked if they could share the effects of shifting the roadway to the north. Boes said they looked at moving the first six homes, because if we shifted them, we would be taking out the whole row and were looking at doing something similar to the fountains, just not sure he could meet all the parking.

Downs asked about the bus stop at CCB and it if would be affected and how it would work with a roundabout. Boes commented they have not looked into it but may need to relocate it. City Engineer Bender thought if they go north so the bus stop should be okay where it is. Boes said they may be able to leave the bus stop where it is for the opening year.

Dodson asked if there will be a sound barrier put in for the trailer park. Boes answered that it is not feasible or cost effective to put anything there.

Olson asked if would be beneficial to have a video demonstrating how to go through the roundabout for the public hearing meeting on Tuesday night. Bender said they have a video and could show it at the meeting. Olson also inquired if the project is being bundled for bidding. Boes said they can bid it as three separate bid projects or as one project.

Bender informed the council of the upcoming schedule:

- Public Hearing meeting is September 24
- October 2 – adopt and file the report
- October 16 – council decides on roundabout or signalization
- End of October proceed with preliminary design
- March 2020 have right-of-way plans
- Final plans fall of 2020

Olson asked when the anticipated completion date is. Boes answered 2023 for construction completion.

Subdivision Development Agreement

Parsley explained they would like to make the subdivision development a uniformed agreement and right now the code does not allow you to ask for any assurance of completion; recently had one default and looked at the code, it allows for an assessment process if council chooses to do so. Parsley proposed to council to move the acceptance requirement to one of the following in order to be assured of completion: to develop a policy that will accept these unless there is extenuating circumstances or completely rewrite the code and not put an assessment.

Downs commented for the most part our process has worked very well.

Mayor Bennett commented he does not want to tie our hands with the developers. Downs said she would hate to see it get assessed to property owners and the ownership needs to be on the developer.

City Attorney Parmenter said fair amount of time for developers and city to be fair and reasonable, will be assessed on remaining property and does not want to do anything that will slow down the development in Hiawatha.

Parsley suggested doing it when they come in with the final plat, leaving the section in the code but come up with a development agreement. Downs commented there always is one exception to the rule.

Olson asked if this is a way to take the ambiguity out of it. Parsley said there has to be a decision made with each development agreement and does not believe you take all the ambiguity out of it.

Olson asked what level would be acceptable. Parsley answered it is well under $10 million so far. Olson said greater than $10 million would need a clause and a number everyone can understand and that is fair. Parsley said a section in the development agreement where they can include additional fees can be added.

Reconsideration of our sidewalk program/plan along with ADA Compliance

Downs is asking for a little change with the older sidewalks too, sidewalks are more of a touchy subject than roundabouts. Parsley added sidewalks are highly valued here in Hiawatha, can add a five-foot requirement as ADA standards are very restrictive.

Parmenter said ADA has a ¼ inch standard – when you build it, it needs to be less than ¼ inch to be ADA. Recommends to not go more than one inch and needs to be built to ADA standards, older part of town with four-foot sidewalks are grandfathered in unless they become a nuisance; eventually all will be compliant with ADA standards.

Olson commented the ADA is looking to the future and that is what the city needs to do.

Wichtendahl asked if there is any potential for an ADA legal risk. Parsley said we can show that we are moving toward total ADA compliance, this program shows we are four feet now they can keep it but cycle it in for inspection to stay the same, the nuisance standard is to stay the same and will not have option to pre-pay for sidewalks being replaced. Process would be the same as any other nuisance process and would include a new permit and standardize a new appeal process for council.

Parsley asked council if they want it to cost what it does now or change $60 right now based on $2,000 valuation, we do studies on how much it costs to run our department – 30-60%.

Olson commented no one has complained about the $60 and does not think we should be lowering the fees.

Wichtendahl commented to make sure people pay for it, it should be lower.

Downs said there is a resident who has called in with a whole list of sidewalk issues.

Olson stated increases across the board, covering costs and do not think it should be a lower fee. Parsley said they should reduce all permits to $45 not just have one be a different price and overall the city's fees are lower than Cedar Rapids. If it gets over $500 the county will put it on their taxes for ten years.

ITC – Hiawatha Annexation/City of Robins Annexation

Downs commented she has been working with ITC on the voluntary annexation and was trying to be fair, consistent and kind had helped the City of Robins work with ITC. Downs mentioned Hiawatha wanted to annex a small portion of I-380 which makes sense from a public safety standpoint and now Robins is annexing the same small portion of I-380.

Archibald stated the City of Robins has no way to provide public services to that area. Downs agreed and asked outside of public safety what are their thoughts on annexing that area.

Olson asked what is the red area on the map. Downs answered it is the right-of-way. Olson commented Robins might be concerned that we are encroaching in their area. Archibald commented that it makes no sense from public safety concerns. Olson said he is happy because the City avoided being land locked.

There being no further discussion, Wichtendahl moved to adjourn at 7:20 P.M., seconded by Archibald. Motion carried.

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Bill Bennett, Mayor

ATTEST:

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Kari Graber, City Clerk