



WESTMINSTER

Staff Report

TO: The Mayor and Members of the City Council

DATE: March 31, 2014

SUBJECT: Study Session Agenda for April 7, 2014

PREPARED BY: J. Brent McFall, City Manager

Please Note: Study Sessions and Post City Council meetings are open to the public, and individuals are welcome to attend and observe. However, these meetings are not intended to be interactive with the audience, as this time is set aside for City Council to receive information, make inquiries, and provide Staff with policy direction.

Looking ahead to next Monday night's Study Session, the following schedule has been prepared:

A light dinner will be served in the Council Family Room 6:00 P.M.

CITY COUNCIL REPORTS

1. Report from Mayor (5 minutes)
2. Reports from City Councillors (10 minutes)

PRESENTATIONS

6:30 P.M.

1. Pavement Management Presentation
2. Water Conversation and Resource Transition Plan for Parks
3. Potential City Code Change to Require Landlords to Provide Voter Registration Forms to Tenants

EXECUTIVE SESSION

None at this time

INFORMATION ONLY ITEMS

1. West Connect Corridor Coalition

Additional items may come up between now and Monday night. City Council will be apprised of any changes to the Study Session meeting schedule.

Respectfully submitted,

J. Brent McFall
City Manager

NOTE: Persons needing an accommodation must notify the City Manager's Office no later than noon the Thursday prior to the scheduled Study Session to allow adequate time to make arrangements. You can call 303-658-2161 /TTY 711 or State Relay) or write to mbarajas@cityofwestminster.us to make a reasonable accommodation request.



WESTMINSTER

Staff Report

Information Only Staff Report
April 7, 2014



SUBJECT: Pavement Management Presentation

PREPARED BY: Kurt Muehlemeyer, Pavement Management Coordinator
Dave Cantu, Street Operations Manager

Summary Statement

This report is for City Council information only and requires no action by City Council. The Department of Public Works and Utilities staff will make a PowerPoint presentation regarding the condition of the City's street network.

Background Information

- The Department of Public Works and Utilities, Street Operations Division's goal is to provide safe and effective transportation routes for residents and visitors. A computerized pavement management system has been used to achieve this goal for the last 30 years.
- A pavement management system is a tool that is used to evaluate pavement condition, prioritize street maintenance and identify optimal times to apply pavement preservation and rehabilitation techniques to keep roads and parking lots in good condition.
- National research has shown that timely maintenance to asphalt pavements can extend service life and stretch available dollars.
- The Street Division uses a variety of techniques to maintain and rehabilitate roads and parking lots, all of which require petroleum based liquid asphalt products that have seen dramatic cost increases in the last 9 years.
- Based on the present state of the street network and current and anticipated increased operating costs, staff is able to project maintenance needs for the next 5 years (2015-2020) and the effect of different resource allocation decisions.
- City Council will be provided with a hard copy of this presentation for reference and review at the study session.

This item meets the City Council's Strategic Plan Goals of "Financially Sustainable City Government Providing Exceptional Services, and "Vibrant Neighborhoods in One Livable Community" by meeting the following objectives: well-maintained City infrastructure and facilities, safe citizen travel throughout the City by maintaining and improving neighborhood infrastructure through timely resurfacing of roadways.

Respectfully submitted,

J. Brent McFall
City Manager



WESTMINSTER

Staff Report

City Council Study Session
April 7, 2014



SUBJECT: Water Conservation and Resource Transition Plan for Parks

PREPARED BY: Richard Dahl, Park Services Manager

Recommended City Council Action

Listen to Staff presentation regarding water conservation and resource transition plans for parks and provide feedback and direction.

Summary Statement

At the August 19, 2013 Study Session, the Parks, Recreation and Libraries Department (PRL) presented a water conservation plan that would convert sections of bluegrass in three parks to native and drought tolerant grass for the purpose of reducing water consumption, managing resources and gauging public reaction to alternative vegetation within park boundaries.

As part of the needs assessment survey conducted by PRL in July 2013, 91% of respondents rated the natural environment and environmental sustainability as being essential or very important.

Staff is preparing to move forward with this program but first wanted to update new members of Council on the program and background for initiating this action.

The local environment is trending toward lower precipitation, which puts pressure on public water supplies, especially when a substantial amount of water resources are used to irrigate turf on public and private lands. Staff has implemented water conservation practices, but additional measures could be taken to make further improvements. Parks, Recreation and Libraries is the largest single user of the City's potable water distribution system with 274 accounts assigned to public facility and outdoor landscaping needs. Staff has been developing options to lower the percentage of water use while maintaining the highly prized landscape areas of the City's parks and public facilities. In this spirit, Park Services is pursuing taking limited portions of existing parks and convert them to a drought tolerant/native seed mix that would reduce water and maintenance needs. Staff has identified three park areas that will be converted to native grass stands in 2014 to gauge management practices and public response to such a change.

Background Information

Water conservation is an ongoing area of focus for the Park Services Division. The Parks, Recreation and Libraries Department, in consultation with the Utilities Planning and Engineering Division, continues to upgrade and improve the efficiency of irrigation at parks, golf courses and streetscapes by installing weather stations, computer irrigation controls, rain sensors and by using approved best management practices.

In 2010, City Council approved the Resource Management Plan (Tiered Maintenance for Parks) which is based on an evapotranspiration (ET) irrigation management system to maintain the 640 acres

of bluegrass parks. Beyond the tiered maintenance program and system improvements, weather and economic conditions indicate that additional steps should be taken to minimize water use and reduce maintenance costs.

In 2013 the Park Services Division, working in cooperation with the Utilities Planning and Engineering Division, developed landscape water budgets for both the 144th and the 136th and I-25 interchanges by incorporating Automatic Meter Reading (AMR) and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technology to determine actionable information about water use and efficiency improvements. The water budget will provide a reasonable estimate of expected water use per site based on the irrigated area and landscape. Comparisons on actual consumption versus water budget estimates will be provided to staff for modifications to the existing computer models.

According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency the earth's average temperature has risen by 1.4°F over the past century, and is projected to rise another 2 to 11.5°F over the next hundred Years. Small changes in the average temperature of the planet can translate to large and potentially dangerous shifts in climate and weather. Rising global temperatures have been accompanied by changes in weather and climate. Many places have seen changes in rainfall, resulting in more floods, droughts, or intense rain, as well as more frequent and severe heat waves.

In 2005 the Department of Parks, Recreation and Libraries used 216 million gallons of water at a cost of \$863,675 and in 2012 this number had grown to 319 million gallons and \$1,362,975. Between 2005 and 2012, water costs rose by \$700/acre due to increases in water rates (18%) and additional use, while the park system grew by just 65 acres (5 parks). Additionally, weather patterns that were “out of the norm,” such as the 2012 drought, contributed to increased water consumption. Without more aggressive conservation measures, the City will continue to spend increasing funds to irrigate bluegrass areas in parks.

The City has several areas of native grasses currently within the park system (examples below).



Westfield Village Park – 2013. This park was specifically designed to incorporate large swaths of native and unirrigated grasses especially at the east end of the park where it abuts the College Hills Open Space. The native grass area has taken the better part of five years to establish due to several drought years during this time period.



Armed Forces Tribute Garden, City Park – 2013. City Park has approximately 90 of its 173 acres in unirrigated native grass some of which are adjacent to open space and other portions are designated as future park development.



Legacy Ridge Golf Course – 2013. Opened in 1994 Legacy Ridge Golf Course was designed to incorporate low use and drought tolerant grasses at the periphery and wetland areas of the course. This not only made an interesting and challenging design but also saved ongoing operating and maintenance costs.

Area Targeted for Conversion of Bluegrass to Native, Drought Tolerant Grass in Parks

Although staff identified fourteen parks that have potential for acreage conversion to native and drought tolerant grass, staff is only targeting three park sites as part of a pilot program to gauge management practices and public response.

1. Upper England Park 2.1 acres (Attachment 1) - This park will be impacted by the 72nd Ave and Raleigh Bridge and channel construction scheduled for 2014. Staff is recommending a complete renovation of this park to include the conversion to native, drought tolerant grasses and a new playground and surrounding landscape, thereby minimizing potential controversy for this area. This site also has severe south facing slopes that are difficult to water and maintain.

2. Kensington Park (Triangle) 1.2 acres (Attachment 2) – Kensington Park is basically two separate areas divided by a small creek that feeds Ketner Lake Open Space. The larger area has totem poles, open play area, trails and a small amphitheater/fire pit that is used for scout activities. Staff is recommending the triangular portion of this park for conversion as it is under-utilized and currently adjacent to open space.

3. Oakhurst Park Phase II Detention Pond 5.1 acres (Attachment 3) – this site was adopted as open space in 2013 and is being converted to meet the existing requirements of the open space program. The detention pond shares a property boundary with a senior retirement complex and has generated complaints in the past regarding mowing and maintenance when the water was reduced. Conversion to native, drought tolerant grasses should make this area feel more like open space and attract surrounding wildlife.

Staff estimates that it will require \$1,850/acre in hard costs to convert Kentucky bluegrass to native, drought tolerant grasses, which includes labor, chemicals, seed and water to establish the new areas. Because an existing irrigation system is already in place, water expenses to establish the grass would be required for at least three years.

Conversion and Establishment Costs

Conversion to drought tolerant, native grasses	\$ 350 per acre
Irrigation costs to establish grass	\$1,000 per acre
Materials and equipment	<u>\$ 500 per acre</u>
Total Cost	\$1,850 per acre

The first year total conversion costs for the three recommended pilot sites would be \$16,650 (9 acres @ \$1,850/per acre.) To establish native grasses, irrigation hard costs of \$1,000 per acre would continue for two additional years.

By comparison, the annual maintenance costs of an established native grass areas is \$500 per acre which includes limited irrigation for trees and shrub beds. The annual maintenance cost for an acre of blue grass is \$2,100 per acre. Thus, after three years, conversion from blue grass to native grass results in a net savings of \$1,600 per acre per year.

To convert these parks, Staff will do the following:

- Work with Colorado State University (CSU) and local suppliers to determine the appropriate seed mix that meets established criteria for Westminster;
- Alter the existing irrigation system to ensure adequate moisture to existing trees and shrubs;
- Spray all the selected turf areas with herbicide to kill all the turf grasses;
- Mow and drill seed the area with recommended native, drought tolerant seed mix; and.
- Use best management practices to ensure a quality stand of native, drought tolerant grasses that will be sustainable in all climate conditions.

Project Implementation

During the month of April residents living within 0.5 miles of the impacted parks will be sent a letter (attached) explaining the program and the benefits of water conservation as they apply to this program. The Public Information Office has also been consulted regarding alternative methods to reach all areas of the City that may have an interest in this program.

Monitoring and Follow-Up

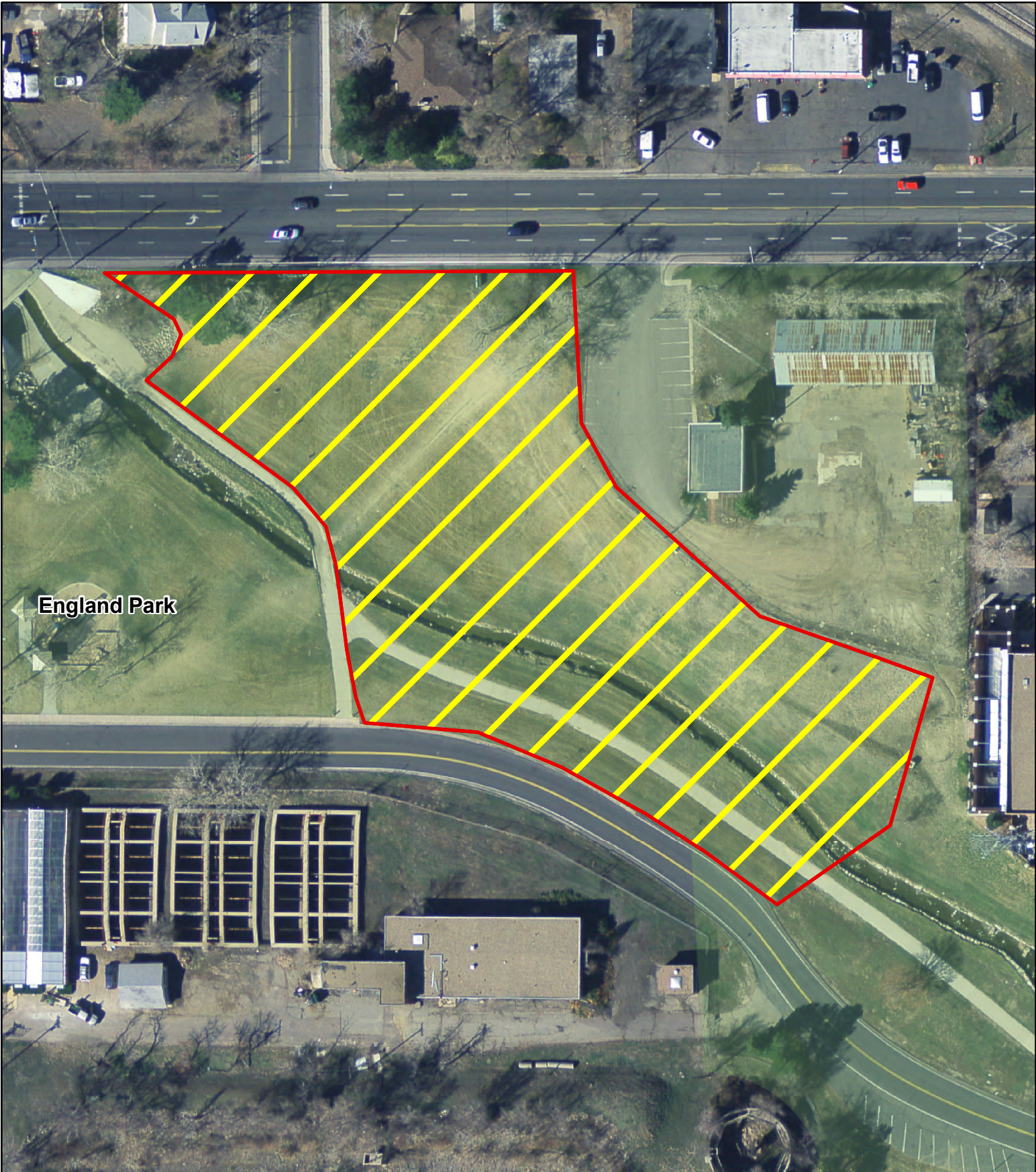
Staff estimates it will take three years to establish conversion areas to their fullest potential. These areas will be closely monitored for weed control and seed mix success. Over-seeding on a yearly basis and supplementing with swaths of wildflowers will also improve the overall look of the conversion areas. In addition to the status of each area Staff will also track any concerns or comments received from residents and timely status updates to Council will be given on a bi-annual basis.

This program meets the City's Strategic Plan Goals of "Vibrant Neighborhoods In One Livable Community" and "Beautiful and Environmentally Sensitive City."

Respectfully submitted,

J. Brent McFall
City Manager

Attachments: Upper England Park Map
Kensington Park Triangle Map
Oakhurst Park Phase II Detention Pond Map
Citizen Information Letter



Upper England Park

Acres
2.1

Potential park areas to convert to drought tolerant grasses



Kensington Park Triangle

Acres
1.2

Potential park areas to convert to drought tolerant grasses



Oakhurst Park Phase II Detention Pond

Acres
5.1

Potential park areas to convert to drought tolerant grasses

March 24, 2014

Dear Westminster Resident:

The purpose of this letter is to make you aware of a City project taking place near your home. Residents have communicated through a citizen Potential City Code Change to Require Landlords to Provide Voter Registration Forms to Tenants a survey that protecting the natural environment, promoting environmental sustainability in parks, and open space management are important to the community.

With this understanding, the City of Westminster's Parks, Recreation and Libraries Department is initiating a pilot program to introduce native and drought tolerant designs into the park system with the goal of creating natural space within existing parks, reducing water consumption, and enhancing the natural environment while maintaining the high value of green space within the community.

What parks are included in this pilot program?

England Park, 7190 Osceola

Percentage land scheduled for conversion – 50% (2.1 acres)

Kensington Park (triangle), 10200 Countryside Drive

Percentage land scheduled for conversion - 40% (1.2 acres)

Oakhurst Park Phase II, 9255 Ammons Street.

Percentage land scheduled for conversion - 30% (5.1 acres)

What will it look like?

There are numerous examples of native and drought tolerant grasses used within existing parks throughout the City park system. In the Countryside area, the Countryside Ball Field complex located at 106th Avenue and Oak Street is an example where bluegrass is offset by the surrounding natural vegetation of open space. The City Park complex located at 104th Avenue and Sheridan Boulevard has over 90 acres of native and drought tolerant grasses woven through the park and Westfield Village Park located at 11550 Wolff Street makes extensive use of native plantings throughout the park. On a smaller scale, Nottingham Park at 87th Avenue and Allison Street, Squires Park at 99th Avenue and Lowell Boulevard and Windsor Park at 107th Avenue and Legacy Ridge Parkway all have several acres of native grasses in each park.

The process

During the Spring of 2014, Park Services Staff will use select, safe herbicides on designated areas to eliminate the existing bluegrass and then reseed with a blend of

fescue, rye and Canadian bluegrass, which is a mixture of low growing (8 to 10 inches) native grasses known to be drought resistant. The existing irrigation system will be used to grow and help establish the grass, which could take several seasons for the desired results. Additional seeding and weed control will also be performed on an as needed basis to ensure the success of this program.

Contact us

For Staff to be successful in achieving our goal of creating a more sustainable parks system, we need to hear from you. If you have comments, questions or suggestions on how we can make this work better for you and your neighbors, we invite you to participate in an online conversation at www.westyconnect.us. On that website you can ask questions, get answers and see what your neighbors are saying. The areas of each park designated for this program along with pictures of existing natural areas within the park system can also be viewed at this web site.

You can also contact us here:

Richard Dahl, Park Services Manager rdahl@cityofwestminster.us or 303-658-2202
Jason Genck, General Operations Manager jgenck@cityofwestminster.us or 303-658-2177

The City will continue to evaluate park maintenance operations in order to manage resources and achieve a more sustainable environmental balance within the park system. The City understands and appreciates the tremendous value that these areas provide.

Sincerely,

Richard Dahl, Park Services Manager
City of Westminster
rdahl@cityofwestminster.us
303-658-2202



WESTMINSTER

Staff Report

City Council Study Session Meeting
April 7, 2014



SUBJECT: Potential City Code Change to Require Landlords to Provide Voter Registration Forms to Tenants

PREPARED BY: John Carpenter, Director of Community Development

Recommended City Council Action

Provide direction to City staff on how to proceed on this potential City Code change.

Summary Statement

At the suggestion of Mayor Pro Tem Faith Winter, staff has researched the proposal to require Westminster landlords to provide voter registration forms to tenants who move into a rental unit. An ordinance from Madison, Wisconsin was suggested as a model. That ordinance ties the requirement into Madison's rental housing licensing program.

Staff believes that it would be possible to incorporate a similar requirement as a part of Westminster's rental housing licensing and inspection program. Staff has identified some alternatives for City Council to consider.

Expenditure Required: \$ 0

Source of Funds: N/A

Policy Issue

Should the City enact a requirement that some or all owners of rental properties be compelled to provide voter registration information to new renters?

Alternatives

- 1) Require only owners of licensed units to provide voter registration information to new renters.
- 2) Require owners of both licensed and registered units to provide voter registration information to new renters.
- 3) Do not require owners of rental property to provide voter registration information to new renters but pursue enhanced efforts on voter registration citywide.

Background Information

The City of Madison, Wisconsin has adopted an ordinance (attached) that requires owners of rental property to provide voter registration information to renters at the time of the initial rental of the unit. This information includes a voter registration form and the "How to Register" information available from the Madison City Clerk. The requirement is intended to increase the number of renters who register to vote by increasing knowledge of the voter registration process and making it easy to register. Historically, renters as a group are less likely to register to vote than homeowners.

Westminster has had a rental housing inspection program since August 1997. The current program revised in November 2010 requires rental properties to be either licensed or registered. All rental units within a building or buildings with 4 or more units must be licensed and are subject to regular inspections based upon the age of the units. These units are more likely to be professionally managed and owned by companies. Currently, 11,286 units are licensed. Rental units that are in single family attached, duplexes or triplex buildings are registered. There are 1,247 registered units in the City. These units tend to not be professionally managed and owned by individuals. Registered units are not regularly or proactively inspected. However, they are subject to inspection on a complaint basis.

The majority of licensed units are within larger apartment complexes which have professional management staff. Most, but not all, of the licensed units are subject to a lease. Some of the landlords of the small apartment buildings do not have rental leases.

The City has two full-time rental housing inspectors who together inspect an average of 4,584 rental units per year. The City also has a ½ time secretary who processes the licenses and registration applications as well as the inspection reports. These employees stay very busy with this work load. Staff is concerned about any significant staff time that might be required to administer this program.

Staff proposes that any ordinance would clearly place the responsibility for distributing voter registration forms on the landlord. Staff would propose to inform landlords of this change and modify the existing Rental Dwelling Registration Application and the Rental Dwelling License application to include information on this requirement. The statement could say that failure to comply with the ordinance would result in revocation of the license.

The following are some options regarding this matter:

- 1) Do not pursue an ordinance and pursue enhanced efforts on voter registration citywide;

Staff Report - Potential City Code Change to Require Landlords to Provide Voter Registration
Forms to Tenants

April 7, 2014

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- 2) Pursue an ordinance that would apply only to the 11,286 licensed rental units; or
- 3) Pursue an ordinance that would apply to both the licensed and registered rental units.

If Council determines that this new requirement is a priority to move forward with. Staff would recommend option #2. Applying this ordinance would cover about 90% of the known rental units. These units tend to be professionally managed and located in mid to large sized apartment projects. The current licensed properties are located within about 142 separately owned projects.

Conversely, there are about 1,247 separately owned registered units which tend not to be professionally managed. It is this group of owners who generally object to the City's rental housing inspection program and may find further requirements objectionable.

In the past significant proposed changes to the rental housing inspection program were shared with the affected property owners to comment. For example, in 2010 City staff notified property owners of the proposed modification of the program to adopt a licensing program. Interest in this proposed change was high. If this proposal moves forward, does Council wish for staff to notify the affected property owners prior to formal approval of the ordinance.

Staff will be present Monday evening to receive direction from City Council on how to proceed.

Respectfully submitted,

J. Brent McFall
City Manager

Attachment



City of Madison

City of Madison
Madison, WI 53703
www.cityofmadison.com

Legislation Text

File #: 26910, Version: 1

Fiscal Note

There may be a small increase in printing expense if the Clerk needs to print additional forms; however, no additional appropriation is required at this time.

Title

Creating Sec. 32.06(5) of the Madison General Ordinances to require landlords to provide a voter registration form to tenant at the time the tenant takes possession of the residence.

Body

DRAFTER'S ANALYSIS: This ordinance adds voter registration forms to the documents that a landlord must provide a tenant at the start of the tenancy. The forms are available from the City Clerk or may be downloaded from the City Clerk's website. The ordinance also requires landlords to provide each residential unit with an information sheet on how to register.

The Common Council of the City of Madison do hereby ordain as follows:

Subsection (5) entitled "Voter Registration Forms" of Section 32.06 entitled "Rental Agreements and Receipts" of the Madison General Ordinances is created to read as follows:

"(5) Voter Registration Forms. In order to increase citizen participation in elections, and in light of the many tenants residing in the City of Madison, every landlord shall provide a tenant with a voter registration form at the time the tenant takes possession of the residence. The voter registration form shall be the form made available by the City Clerk or as downloaded from the City Clerk's website. The landlord shall also provide each residential unit with the "How to Register" information available from the City Clerk."



WESTMINSTER

Staff Report

Information Only Staff Report
April 7, 2014



SUBJECT: West Connect Corridor Coalition

PREPARED BY: Dave Downing, City Engineer

Summary Statement

This report is for City Council information only and requires no action by City Council.

The latest of many previous efforts to construct the northwestern quadrant of a circumferential beltway around the Denver-metropolitan area has been dubbed “West Connect” by the Jefferson County Commissioners and other supporters of the project. The Commissioners have invited the City of Westminster to join the West Connect Corridor Coalition as an Affiliate Member, which does not require any financial participation in the subsequent studies, design efforts or construction contracts that may follow. The Purpose statement of the Charter of the West Connect Corridor Coalition announces that the Coalition will provide “...a forum for engaging in a coordinated and collaborative process that identifies solutions for the C-470, 6th Avenue and State Highway 93 Corridors.” Since the beltway could be of some benefit to residents and businesses of the northwestern portion of the City, it might be advisable for a City representative to sit at the table to follow these proceedings. The City Manager has assigned City Engineer Dave Downing, a long-time observer of the various W-470/Northwest Parkway/Jefferson Parkway planning movements, to serve in this capacity.

Background Information

In 2013, a Jefferson County-sponsored study of the entire western half of the proposed beltway resulted in the publication of an Illustrative Corridor Plan. This Plan divides the western half of the beltway into seven logical segments, some of which have already been built and are operational. For example, the Northwest Parkway segment, spanning from I-25 on the north to 96th Street in Broomfield to the southwest, opened to traffic in 2003. Likewise, the 26.2-mile long C-470 segment has been operational since the late 1980s. Of particular interest to residents of the City of Westminster, due to its proximity to the City’s boundaries and the decommissioned Rocky Flats Plant site, is the Jefferson Parkway segment. This 13.5-mile long toll facility, which will run from State Highway 128 near the Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport to State Highway 93 at roughly the 72nd Avenue (extended) alignment, is currently in the preliminary design stage under the management of the Jefferson Parkway Public Highway Authority.

In an apparent attempt to maintain any momentum that may exist for the eventual completion of the circumferential loop, the County is proposing to take the next step in addressing concerns associated with, perhaps, the most controversial portions of the beltway – the 4.1-mile long State Highway 93 segment that leads into Golden from the north and the 5.8-mile long Golden/US 6 segment through its corporate limits. In keeping with a practice that has been commonly employed over the past few years on other major transportation projects, it has been determined that the next step of this process

should consist of the preparation of a Planning and Environmental Linkage (PEL) Study, which might best be described as a preliminary environmental assessment. At this time, it appears that there is a strong possibility that the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) will pay the entire cost of the PEL Study, which could approach \$2 million. There is no current estimate of the amount of time that it will take to complete the Study.

While it is likely that CDOT will be the contracting agency for the PEL Study, the Jefferson County Commissioners wish to create a West Connect Corridor Coalition for the purpose of providing a forum for interested governmental and quasi-governmental entities to participate in a collaborative process to seek transportation solutions for the State Highway 93, US 6 and C-470 Corridors. Full membership that would include voting rights will likely be reserved for those jurisdictions directly impacted by these Corridors, such as Golden, Arvada, Lakewood and the County. The City of Westminster has been invited to join the Coalition as an Affiliate Member with no voting rights nor any expectations of financial participation in subsequent design efforts or construction contracts. Due to the potential benefits that a complete beltway around the metropolitan region could provide to Westminster residents and businesses, the City should have an observer at the table during the preparation of the PEL Study, and City Engineer Dave Downing has been assigned to fill this role.

The City's participation in the planning of a beltway around the entire Denver-metropolitan area supports the City's Strategic Plan goal of maintaining a Strong, Balanced Local Economy through the development of multi-modal transportation systems that provide access to shopping and employment centers.

Respectfully submitted,

J. Brent McFall
City Manager

Attachment – Corridor map

