

**ANDOVER CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP MEETING – APRIL 27, 2021  
MINUTES**

The Workshop Meeting of the Andover City Council was called to order by Mayor Sheri Bukkila, April 27, 2021 at 6:01 p.m., at the Andover City Hall, 1685 Crosstown Boulevard NW, Andover, Minnesota.

Councilmembers present:                    Jamie Barthel, Ted Butler, and Randy Nelson

Councilmember absent:                    Valerie Holthus

Also present:                                    City Administrator, Jim Dickinson  
    City Engineer/Public Works Director, David Berkowitz  
    Others

***DISCUSS INTERSECTION STUDY/NIGHTINGALE STREET NW AND VETERANS MEMORIAL BOULEVARD NW/21-28***

Mr. Berkowitz stated the direction from the Council was to proceed with a pedestrian crossing study for the intersection at Nightingale Street and Veterans Memorial Boulevard. He explained the study explored three options: a compact roundabout, hybrid HAWK system, and a Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB). Mr. Berkowitz stated the RRFB can work in conjunction with the compact roundabout. He asked the Council to provide direction on the type of improvement and where to place it in the CIP.

Councilmember Butler said residents do not feel safe in that intersection and he wants to see it improved for pedestrian safety. He has difficulty with the cost difference between the compact roundabout and HAWK system. He stated improving pedestrian safety is the most important component.

Mr. Berkowitz stated the cost of a roundabout is estimated between \$610,000 and \$830,000 while the cost of a hybrid HAWK system is estimated from \$180,000 to \$240,000.

Councilmember Butler stated the reflective beacon (RRFB) is important for the roundabout to warn drivers they are approaching a pedestrian crossing.

Councilmember Barthel stated he is leaning towards the roundabout because of future development and increase in traffic.

Mayor Bukkila pointed out the City installed a median to address traffic in that intersection and are now focusing on addressing pedestrian safety. She explained a HAWK system does not do anything to slow down traffic and vehicle speed is the biggest issue for pedestrians. Mayor Bukkila supports the roundabout with the flashing beacon. She said this intersection is a lower priority for her when compared with the Crosstown Boulevard/Crosstown Drive intersection.

Mr. Berkowitz stated the compact roundabout will provide traffic calming in the long term.

Councilmember Butler asked if the roundabouts were installed, can the speed limit be lowered. Mayor Bukkila said the stretch between the roundabouts would probably be lowered.

Kevin Kielb, with Bolton and Menk, replied the road can be analyzed by MNDOT after the roundabout is installed and agrees the speed limit will most likely be lowered.

Councilmember Butler stated that stretch of road is in a residential area and the lower speed limit will benefit the neighborhood.

Mayor Bukkila explained she wishes they would have installed a roundabout years ago when they made improvements to Nightingale Street.

The Council reached a consensus to plan for the compact roundabout as it is the safest option for traffic calming and pedestrian crossing.

Mr. Kielb said the HAWK system works better if you have signaled intersections throughout the corridor. He explained studies show that the HAWK system is dangerous if not in a signaled corridor.

Councilmember Barthel asked if there was grant money the City can apply for. Mr. Berkowitz replied this intersection does not qualify for grants; however, the Crosstown Boulevard/Crosstown Drive intersection will qualify.

Mr. Berkowitz stated staff will incorporate the project into the CIP and determine which year it fits best.

Mayor Bukkila stated she would like to see the roundabout in conjunction with other street improvements to minimize how many times the roadway is torn up. Mr. Berkowitz said 2025 would be the target date and staff will return to Council with a CIP proposal.

Mr. Dickinson stated if there is a surge of funds and if Relief Funds can be utilized, the project could be constructed earlier.

***DISCUSS INTERSECTION STUDY/CROSSTOWN BOULEVARD NW AND CROSSTOWN***

***DRIVE NW/21-29***

The City Council is requested to review and discuss the intersection study for Crosstown Boulevard NW and Crosstown Drive NW and direct staff on how to proceed. Mr. Berkowitz stated the traffic counts are higher at this intersection than at Nightingale Street/Veterans Memorial Boulevard intersection and more options are available. Mr. Berkowitz listed the options: do nothing, all-way stop, traffic signal, compact roundabout, single lane roundabout.

Mr. Berkowitz stated staff met with the Fire Chief and he supported a traffic signal but is willing to consider other options. Staff reached out to the Lakeville Fire Department who has experience with roundabouts in close proximity to a fire station. They reported no problems with response times but were involved early with design and process.

Mr. Berkowitz met with the Anoka County Highway Department and they were supportive of improvements to the intersection, primarily a single lane roundabout.

Mayor Bukkila asked the difference between a single lane roundabout and a compact roundabout. Mr. Berkowitz replied a compact roundabout has a tighter radius making it more difficult for trucks to navigate. Mr. Berkowitz stated staff prefers the center island to be surmountable curb. Mr. Kielb stated the single lane roundabout has a truck apron making it possible for trucks to easily navigate. Mr. Dickinson stated staff prefer a concrete island versus one with vegetation.

Mayor Bukkila asked if the center island will be visible during the winter months. Mr. Kielb replied drivers will see the wheel paths and once the plows go through, it is easily seen. Mr. Berkowitz stated MNDOT has a video of a roundabout during a snowstorm, and it is visually apparent.

Councilmember Barthel asked if roundabouts were difficult to plow. Mr. Berkowitz said the County will plow this intersection and they are used to plowing roundabouts.

Mr. Berkowitz said the County is in favor at the staff level but has not brought it forward to the Transportation Committee yet. County staff estimates the intersection to be a 50/50 cost split with an approximate construction in 2025 or 2026. The City has the option of building it sooner and being reimbursed at a later date.

Mr. Kielb identified several options for grant money. Mayor Bukkila asked if it could fall under critical infrastructure because of the fire station. Mr. Berkowitz replied that staff will definitely include that in the applications.

Mayor Bukkila said the location of the pedestrian crossing at the roundabout does not make sense to her because there is not a trail to connect the crossing. Mr. Berkowitz replied the City

would connect the crossing to a trail.

Mayor Bukkila asked if the proposal included pedestrian signals. Mr. Berkowitz replied the beacon is not identified in the proposal. He indicated the beacon can be added at some point.

Mr. Kielb said grant funds if approved earliest availability would be for 2025-2026. Mr. Berkowitz said that sometimes it takes multiple applications to acquire a grant.

The Council reached a consensus to plan for a single lane roundabout in 2025 or 2026.

### ***DISCUSS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TEXT AMENDMENT PROGRESS***

Mr. Dickinson reviewed the history of the Comprehensive Plan Text Amendment and staff's discussions with the Met Council. He informed the Council the City received a letter from the Met Council on April 13<sup>th</sup> stating that the Comprehensive Plan is complete for review however they extended the review period for another 60 days. The Met Council indicated the Text Amendment and other components of the Plan are potentially inconsistent with Met Council Policy. Staff asked for a letter from the Met Council explaining where the City is not meeting Met Council Policy. Mr. Dickinson stated staff have not received that information yet.

Mr. Dickinson organized a meeting with the local Met Council representative to show him what the City is proposing. Staff presented the plan, history, and goals to Met Council staff and the City's Met Council representative. Mr. Dickinson stated the Met Council representative seemed to understand the City's perspective and the City received a long letter after that meeting. Mr. Dickinson stated, based on the letter, the Met Council does not understand what the City is trying to do. He explained the Met Council said the lowest density of 1.75 units per acre is a substantial departure from the proposed 2.4 units per acre the City originally proposed they are applying the 1.75 to the 500 plus acres of transitional residential land.

Mr. Dickinson is trying to continue the conversation with the Met Council and the Met Council staff has indicated they are going through the process of a plan modification. He said it appears the Met Council has assumed the City has adopted the Text Amendment and is implementing it, when in truth, the City has submitted the Text Amendment to the Met Council for review. Mr. Dickinson has contacted the Metro Cities lobbyist to assist. The Text Amendment will be going in front of the Community Development Committee on June 7<sup>th</sup> and a Public Hearing on June 21<sup>st</sup>. The Community Development Committee can take action on July 6<sup>th</sup> and the Met Council can take action on July 13<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Dickinson has reached out to multiple contacts at the Met Council and has not received a return call. At this point, he does not believe the City needs to deviate from the proposed plan and staff will have the opportunity to present the Text Amendment on June 7<sup>th</sup>.

### ***COMMUNITY CENTER MARCH 2021 UPDATE***

Mr. Dickinson provided an update on the Community Center for March of 2021. He reviewed the Community Center budget highlighting the difference in revenue from 2020 (14% of budget) and 2021 (22% of budget) mainly due to COVID. Mr. Dickinson reviewed the Community Center expansion budget explaining \$18,347,684 has been spent with a remaining balance of \$126,570. The Hockey Association contributed \$730,000 for the expansion and the YMCA contributed \$128,000 for the parking lot. Mr. Dickinson presented the table of contracts the Council has approved for the expansion project.

Councilmember Butler asked if the Community Center was able to make up lost revenue due to the shutdown. Mr. Dickinson did not have the detailed answer, but indicated the ice was in place for an extra three weeks to accommodate high school hockey. He said a number of community rinks are shutting down for required upgrades and Andover will work to accommodate their customers, bringing in an extra \$75,000 in ice rental.

Mr. Dickinson reviewed events, activities, and programs occurring in April and May. Mr. Dickinson explained altering the track hours during the summer for staffing and financial reasons. Staff will open the walking track when there is a paid rental and post the additional hours on the live calendar.

Mayor Bukkila referred to an email from Mr. Riechers inquiring why the financials did not go back further than 2020. Mr. Dickinson replied that staff can supply information from previous years. He stated staff are trying to keep the financial reports simple and easy to read. Mayor Bukkila said she would like to see trends over a longer period of time. Mr. Dickinson stated that was the format the Advisory Committee received.

Councilmember Butler said when he was on the Community Center Advisory Committee, he did not see many fluctuations from previous years, however, the greatest fluctuations came from 2020-2021.

Mr. Dickinson stated he will provide 5 years of data in a landscape format. Mayor Bukkila said that time span was sufficient.

Mayor Bukkila said she does not understand why the Community Center is taking in a lease payment of \$638,000, expending \$300,000 for the debt payment, and then levy \$155,000 from taxpayers. Mr. Dickinson replied the levy dollars are for operations, mainly focused on senior and teen programming. Mr. Dickinson estimated the end of year fund balance to be around \$69,000. Mr. Dickinson stated the lease the Community Center receives from the YMCA was designed to be operational revenue and not debt payment.

Mayor Bukkila asked how much the annual debt payment is. Mr. Dickinson stated the debt service payment on the original facility is \$1.2 million less the \$300,000 from the Community

Center for a \$900,000 levy. The expansion payment is \$1.1 million. Mayor Bukkila asked for an explanation why the City is levying for debt and operational costs. Mr. Dickinson replied the levies are different authorities – one is an operational tax levy and the other is a debt service levy. He explained having multiple revenue sources assists with being diversified and is looked at as a positive mark on the bond rating.

Mayor Bukkila asked if the Community Center could put the entire \$635,000 lease payment towards debt and then levy for operational costs. Mr. Dickinson stated it is a levy authority issue. He said the City is always prepared in the event the State places unforeseen levy limits on cities. The State has discontinued LGA and has placed strict levy limits in the past. The City is authorized to levy 100% of debt. In the event levy limits occur, the City has the ability to levy the debt to the max and free up money for other projects. He stressed it is all about budget flexibility.

### ***2022 BUDGET DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES DISCUSSION***

Mr. Dickinson stated based on the Board of Review report estimated total market value of Andover increased by 9.46%. Residential properties increased by 8.1% and only 1% is attributed to new growth. This will result in a taxable market value increase of around 7-8%. If the City maintains the same budget and levy, the tax rate will likely go down. Mr. Dickinson gave the option of leaving the tax rate the same and capturing the market value growth. He explained if the tax rate declines, the City will get less in fiscal disparities. Currently, Andover gains in fiscal disparities due to the ratio of residential to commercial properties.

Mr. Dickinson reviewed the budget guidelines as presented in the staff report. Mr. Dickinson reviewed challenges with staffing. He stated the City will be in Union contract negotiations and staff will bring that progress to Council in a closed session.

Councilmember Barthel cautioned that when people retire, the City has tended to combine positions and wants to make sure Andover is maintaining a sufficient staff level.

### ***OTHER ITEMS***

Mayor Bukkila asked to talk about the City newsletter. She said three pages were about water and drains. She feels the newsletter was chastising rather than educating. Mayor Bukkila does not feel it should be illegal to wash your car in the driveway, but it is illegal to park your car on the lawn. She would like to discuss this and be able to provide an answer to people.

Mr. Dickinson said he needs to give the newsletter more attention and it needs to be reviewed in a different manner but did reference the newsletter was distributed for review. Mayor Bukkila said the water items overshadowed the Fun Fest article. She said the newsletter focused on what residents cannot do.

Councilmember Butler would like to talk about communications as a dedicated function. He asked if the City could afford a communications employee. He recommended a part-time position because there is a group of people that are interested in part-time.

Mayor Bukkila stated if the City is going to add a position to the budget, she would need to look at the other needs of the City. Mr. Dickinson stated there are staff positions that may be retiring in the next two years and may give the City the opportunity to restructure.

Councilmember Barthel stated a communications position would take a load off the City Administrator, decide relevant content, and help the Community Center with marketing.

Mr. Dickinson stated there are social media groups and staff needs to either be engaged, or out of it. Right now, the City is out of it.

Mayor Bukkila would like the newsletter to get more attention and would like the car washing ordinance reviewed.

Councilmember Butler would like to discuss sustainable road maintenance.

Mayor Bukkila replied the City is implementing decisions made last year and this Council has not had the opportunity to look to the future yet. She indicated the Council and City Administrator will discuss the future in the coming workshops.

Mr. Dickinson stated due to Covid restrictions the Council has not had the opportunity to work with many of the Department Heads as well. He said that they will become more involved.

### ***ADJOURNMENT***

***Motion*** by Butler, seconded by Barthel, to adjourn the meeting at 8:09 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Shari Kunza, Recording Secretary  
*TimeSaver Off Site Secretarial, Inc.*