

**STUDY SESSION NOTES**  
**CITY OF WHEAT RIDGE, COLORADO**  
**Hybrid - Virtual Meeting**  
**December 19, 2022**

Mayor Pro-Tem Korey Stites called the Study Session to order at 6:30 p.m.

This meeting was conducted both as a virtual meeting and hybrid, where some members of the Council or City staff were physically present at the Municipal building, and some members of the public attended in person as well. A quorum of members (eight) of Council were present in Council Chambers for this session.

MPT Stites welcomed the Council, other elected officials, staff and interested citizens.

MPT Stites also explained the virtual/hybrid meeting format, how citizens will have the opportunity to be heard, and the procedures and policies to be followed.

Council members present Scott Ohm, Amanda Weaver, Judy Hutchinson, Korey Stites, Valerie Nosler Beck\*, Leah Dozeman, and Rachel Hultin. CM Janeece Hoppe excused herself.

Also present: City Clerk, Steve Kirkpatrick, City Treasurer, Chris Miller; City Manager Patrick Goff; Maria D'Andrea, Director of Public Works; interested citizens and guests.

\*Attended virtually via Zoom.

**Public's Right to Speak**

None tonight.

**Note about Wheat Ridge Speaks:**

Members of the public may visit the Wheat Ridge Speaks website and enter written comments of up to 1,000 words on any Council agenda item. The deadline for the public to submit comments is 12:00 Noon Mountain Time on the day of a Council session so that Council members, other elected officials and City Staff have time to review the comments before the meeting on Monday evening.

The City Clerk's Office transcribes those Wheat Ridge Speaks comments into these minutes, placing each comment along with the record for that agenda item.

No comments appeared in Wheat Ridge Speaks for this session of Council.

**1. 44<sup>th</sup> Avenue Subarea Plan Update**

**Issue**

The purpose of this study session is to provide City Council with an update on the W. 44th Avenue subarea planning process and give City Council the opportunity to provide feedback on the recommendations to be included in the Plan.

## **Staff Reports**

Senior Planner Stephanie Stevens, and MIG Inc. Planning Consultant Mark De La Torre, delivered to Council a detailed presentation about this item, and the next steps for bringing it to Council. Where the City of Wheat Ridge and consultant team, MIG Inc., restarted the W. 44th Avenue Subarea Plan in early 2022. The plan focuses on W. 44th Avenue between Youngfield Street and Clear Creek (near Field Street) and will more broadly include the portion of the City between Clear Creek and I-70.

The plan combines public input with technical analysis to establish a long-range vision and guiding principles for the W. 44th Avenue planning area. Plan recommendations will guide public and private investments in the future..

Councilmembers had questions and comments:

Councilmembers asked detailed questions about several topics, engaging in discussion among themselves along with the planning consultant, and with staff, who answered their questions in detail. Topics discussed included:

- Traffic and traffic flow and both temporary changes to flows and permanent changes.
- Maintaining the character of neighborhoods.
- Impact of changes to onramps/offramps for I-70.
- Connectivity to open spaces and trails.
- Solutions to upgrading the area while improving the environment for businesses.
- The issues raised by the presence of massive truck stops and 80-footer traffic with the needs of pedestrians, recreators, and cyclists.

CM universally thanked staff for their hard work on this and gave special thanks and appreciation to the MIG representative.

## **2. Wadsworth construction update – Phase II**

### **Issue**

The city has always hoped to complete the entire Wadsworth Improvement Project in one phase. However, in 2020, the decision was made to phase project construction, due to a lack of funding. Therefore, construction plans were completed for Phase 1 of construction which extended from I-70 to 41st Avenue. Phase 2, from 41st Avenue to 35th Avenue, is the final phase of the project.

Recently, staff solicited pricing from the city's contractor for the Wadsworth Improvement project, Concrete Works of Colorado, in an effort to assess whether there would be cost and time savings in proceeding with Phase II at this time. The intent of the Study Session discussion is to determine City Council's preferred direction for the Phase II construction.

## **Staff Reports**

Maria D'Andrea, Director of Public Works addressed Council that the first phase of construction improves Wadsworth Blvd from 41st Avenue to I-70, as well as completion of the streetscape work scheduled for Phase II from 35th to 41st Avenues. The design for the initial phase was completed in early 2021 and then advertised for bids in mid-April 2021. Bids were opened on July 1, 2021. A contract in the amount of \$34,971,468.01, (which includes the base bid, all four bid options, related water, and sanitation work) was awarded to the lowest responsive bidder, Concrete Works of Colorado (CWC) on August 23, 2021. Four federal transportation grants, three State safety grants, a CDOT MainStreets grant, a Jefferson County Open Space grant, CDOT maintenance funding, Wheat Ridge Water and Sanitation Districts funding, and City funding are being used to fund this Phase. Work began in October 2021 and will continue through fall 2024

The city's desire is to complete all work to deliver the entire Wadsworth Widening Project from 35th Avenue to I-70. Phase II would involve constructing the Continuous Flow Intersection (CFI) at 38th and Wadsworth and complete the permanent concrete pavement from 35th Avenue to 39th Avenue. This would then eliminate the need for temporary medians and asphalt overlay south of 39th Avenue. A number of topics were discussed including:

- Impact on traffic, ingress and egress to businesses.
- Communicating with businesses before, during and after the project is ongoing.
- How to fund the Phase II costs and recent bids received for materials and services.
- Plans for minimal necessary disruption of the flow of traffic.
- Plans to regularly and frequently communicate to our residents and businesses about the Project, using multiple means and methods, starting very soon and continuing until the post project analysis.
- Allowing for the impact on families and children as a result of the school closing coming to WR during the project.

Councilmembers had questions and comments:

Councilmembers asked detailed questions about several topics, engaging in discussion among themselves and with staff including Ms. D'Andrea and Mark Westberg, Senior Project Manager, who answered their questions in detail.

CM universally thanked staff for their hard work on this planning process.

MPT Stites entertained a consensus to direct staff to return to Council with

**Consensus attained.**

### **3. Staff Report(s)**

Nothing further.

#### **4. Elected Officials' Report(s)**

CM Nosler Beck – Happy Holidays everyone. She is very grateful that remote participation in meetings continues to yield benefits. She also asked about the weather forecast of an Arctic Outbreak this week and the safety of those experiencing homelessness.

CM Hutchinson asked about a specific church as a resource for those needing shelter this week from the weather and Mr. Goff replied in detail. She also commented on calls she has received from residents about the several drive-by shootings that have occurred in the past few weeks in East WR.

CM Dozeman asked what communication plans staff has in mind related to the no-tax ordinance on plastic bags. (The statute requires retailers to collect the fee, but allows the City to exempt that cost from sales taxes.)

CM Hultin wish everyone Happy Holidays. While driving around the City recently she noticed a wide variety of beautiful holiday decorations.

MPT Stites wished everyone a happy Holiday season. He reminded us that as we shop for Holiday gifts, food and drink, if we can find it in WR, buy it in Wheat Ridge.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The Study Session adjourned at 8:52 p.m.

APPROVED BY CITY COUNCIL ON January 9, 2023.



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Steve Kirkpatrick, City Clerk



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Korey Stites, Mayor Pro Tem