

STUDY SESSION NOTES
CITY OF WHEAT RIDGE, COLORADO
Hybrid - Virtual Meeting
October 16, 2023

Mayor Starker 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 of Council were present in Council Chambers for this session.

Mayor Starker welcomed the Council, other elected officials, staff, guests and interested citizens.

The Mayor 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, Judy Hutchinson, Korey Stites, Amanda Weaver, Leah Dozeman, Rachel Hultin, and Valerie Nosler Beck

Also present: City Manager, Patrick Goff; Maria D'Andrea, Director of Public Works; Deputy City Clerk, Robin Eaton (virtual), other staff and interested residents.

Public's Right to Speak

No one came forward 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. Overview of Utility Districts within City Boundaries
Issue

Installation of drinking water and sanitation/sanitary facilities occurred as development occurred within areas of the city. Many areas were developed prior to incorporation of the city in August 1969. Similarly, storm water management and collection occurred sporadically, typically in response to issues. Pre-dating all of these was the establishment of a series of irrigation ditches and laterals for the purposes of delivering

water for domestic purposes, irrigation of agricultural lands, mining and manufacturing, and drainage.

This item is intended to be informational only. Therefore, there are no specific recommendations from staff and no specific direction requested of Council.

Staff Reports

Director of Public Works, Maria D'Andrea spoke on the background where special districts are those, like local governments, that provide services or infrastructure to promote the health, safety, prosperity, security, and general welfare of the inhabitants of the district. The Special District Act, in Title 32, C.R.S., comprises the legal framework for many different types of special districts and specifies the services that may be provided.

Drinking water and sanitary sewer services are not provided by the City of Wheat Ridge but instead, are provided through various districts. The various water and sanitation districts own mains and valves which are, primarily, located within the city's rights-of-way. These facilities are not in an exclusive easement and, therefore, are subject to the city's permitting and management oversight of the public rights-of-way.

Ms. D'Andrea described the different subject matters, and provided an overview of the city's storm water system and irrigation ditches, which included but was not limited to:

- Drinking Water/Water Districts (7); Also referred to as potable water, is the drinkable water that comes out of the faucets at a home or other building.
- Sanitary (Sewage) Districts; Sanitary sewers are a system of underground pipes that carry sewage from bathrooms, sinks, kitchens, and other plumbing components to a wastewater treatment plant where it is filtered, treated, and discharged to a river, stream, or lake.
- Storm Sewers/Storm Water Runoff; Storm sewers are a system of pipes and waterways designed to carry rainfall runoff and other drainage.
- Irrigation Ditches; In Colorado, water rights are considered a private property right. Water rights can be sold or inherited with only shareholders being allowed to take water from the ditch.

Other items included the following topics:

- Mile High Flood District (MHFD) formerly known as the Urban Drainage and Flood Control District General Fund revenue. More information can be found at: [Denver's Mile High Flood District - Our History \(mhfd.org\)](http://mhfd.org)
- Water rights
- Prescriptive easements
- Lead service line replacement

CM had comments and questions:

CM Ohm asked if Denver Water has ever notified our residents of the lead lines where Mr. Goff stated that he had in fact received notification or those. CM Ohm wanted to know more about bio-swells or detentions, in combination with the storm water sewer replacement. Ms. D'Andrea says that yes through updates and requirements we will be matching other metro jurisdictions in upgrading those along with retentions.

CM Nosler Beck, after being welcomed back live by the mayor, wanted to know if messaging to the residents might be included, being it is so dedicated. Ms. D'Andrea responded in depth and detail to CM Nosler Beck.

CM Nosler Beck also wanted to know if Denver Water might come to give us a report, maybe to speak about the lead pipes and possibly a water filter program.

CM Hultin inquired about storm water waste management where Mr. Goff responded that there is an education series through the public works department to keep the run-offs clean.

Other discussion items and comments included:

- Clear Creek access from closed facilities
- Better communication with water districts
- Connectivity along many ditches
- Flood plains and maintenance of waterways
- Sewer line inspections

Several CM and the Mayor thanked Ms. D'Andrea for the informative presentation.

CM Nosler Beck fretfully made the announcement that she had to leave the meeting and wanted to recognize the Carmelite Sisters, who were recognized for all their help through-out the years that they have been here. Most recently they have been incredibly helpful to her, and her entire family. She stated that this will most likely be her last in person meeting and that she loves the entire staff and elected officials.

Mayor Starker thanked CM Nosler-Beck, and expressed his gratitude to her and her wonderful service that she has given to the City of Wheat Ridge over the years.

2. Sidewalk Maintenance Program

Issue

Sidewalks are important for equity, access, mobility, protecting the environment, and promoting health. Safe and accessible sidewalks promote equity because they enable individuals with disabilities, seniors, and those without access to vehicles to get where they need to go, such as school, work, doctor's appointments, libraries, social events, or shopping for everyday necessities. Well maintained sidewalks also encourage walking, which reduces the city's carbon footprint. Additionally, walking improves health.

Maintenance of the sidewalk network is critical to ensuring a safe network for all users.

Staff has developed a Sidewalk Maintenance Program to assist in 1) evaluating sidewalk segments for potential repair and 2) prioritizing segments due to limited funds.

Staff Report

Director of Public Works, Maria D'Andrea spoke on the background where she stated that this is an area of need and that the Public Works Department is proposing to implement a sidewalk maintenance program to ensure that all sidewalks in the city are safe and accessible for all pedestrians, as allowed through allocated resources. Given the critical nature of sidewalks to the transportation network, it is beneficial to the city to establish a program that provides for:

- Systematic inspection,
- Repair of identified hazards, based on a set of priorities, and
- Prompt responses to reports of hazards within the system.

Execution of the program is subject to availability of funding and staffing, as budgets allow. Other concrete assets including curb and gutter, concrete crosspans, and alley driveway aprons, are also included in this maintenance program.

In addition to the rating where evaluation criteria has been developed to assist in assigning a rating between 1 (Good) and 4 (Unsatisfactory) to each inspected concrete segment, repair locations will also be selected based on the following criteria:

1. Leveraging opportunities with other capital projects
2. Adjacent to an arterial or collector street
3. Within ¼ mile of a community or healthcare facility such as a school, park, library, hospital, or senior housing
4. Adjacent to a transit stop.
5. Constructability and cost

Ms. D'Andrea described some of the problem areas, the repair types, whether temporary or permanent, and how when funding allows it, sections/segments with a 3 Rating may also be considered for repair.

After the presentation, Ms. D'Andrea stood by to answer questions.

CM had comments and questions:

CM Hultin, addressed a number of issues, priorities, and financial projections including the significant gaps that might be fixed if 2J passes.

CM Ohm wanted clarification of what would fall under certain criteria, say if it were a chunk of concrete missing and if the city had a clearing house to report issues. Ms.

D'Andrea affirmed that missing or broken concrete would be cause for removal and replacement. She stated that better information and guidance would be added to the city website for reporting hazards for sidewalk and street maintenance.

Other discussion items and comments included:

- Mitigation by an arborists for tree roots and stumps causing problems.
- Color additives and how they weaken the strength of concrete.
- Trip hazard mitigation and timeframes (five days would be the goal)
- Standards of concrete and damage repair

Mayor Starker thanked Ms. D'Andrea for the great presentation.

3. Staff Report(s)

Mr. Goff spoke briefly on the recently reported flat sales tax revenue projection through August and how the September financials projection were showing an uptick to almost 5% higher than last September, with year to date being higher by almost .5%.

4. Elected Officials' Report(s)

CM Hultin reported on updates at the Happiness garden and their new crusher fines walkways and fencing. Ms. Hultin reported that she and CM Ohm were going to be hosting a District II meeting at the PNSB building, located at 7575 w. 45th Avenue.

MPT Stites walked with other councilors and the Mayor on Wadsworth Blvd in respect for the new CIF lanes. He thanks Director D'Andrea for putting that trip together, along with the instruction on the types of pipes were located in the area.

MPT Stites spoke on how Mayor hosted the business appreciation breakfast, where he had most of the dialogue for it, and congratulated Stylus and Crate for business of the year.

Mayor Starker recognized and thanked the entrepreneurs who have come into the city to invest their lives and businesses and to those who helped and attended the new Huckleberry Roaster ribbon cutting on Friday, located at 38th and Harlan.

ADJOURNMENT to Special City Council Meeting

The Study Session adjourned at 8:09 pm.

APPROVED BY CITY COUNCIL ON November 13, 2023.



Robin Eaton, Deputy City Clerk



Korey Stites, Mayor Pro Tem