

Arvada City Council Meeting Workshop, November 23, 2015

Notes taken by Susan Shirley

In attendance were Mayor Marc Williams, Mayor Pro Tem Bob Fifer, and councilmembers Don Allard, Nancy Ford, Dave Jones, Mark McGoff, and John Marriott.

Public attendance at 6:00 was 8 people.

Tonight's topics are a report on the condition of Arvada streets, and an update on the rewrite of the Parks Master Plan.

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Pavement Conditions:

For a good summary of the consultant's report on our streets, Cindi Kreutzer has posted this: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/569713413091049/>

An important warning by the consultants is that, as with so many things, spending money on maintenance sooner rather than later will result in a far lower overall cost to keep Arvada's streets in satisfactory condition. The cost goes up exponentially once roads begin to age past about twelve years old.

Arvada has 1524 lane miles of streets, including 84 lane miles added since the last assessment in 2012. Software used by the consulting firm assesses every bit of every street in the city, as well as compiling the type, quantity, and severity of problem areas. Severity is particularly important because it determines what kind of maintenance or repair will be most cost-effective; for example, crack sealing is very cost-effective, but once pavement condition falls into the poor or failed range, then it would need reconstruction instead, by doing milling and overlay. Crack seal on a poor or failed street won't bring it up out of the poor or failed range, but only maintain it in the range it's in for awhile longer.

Consultant Ben Matthews pointed out that "pavement is not a straight line depreciation," and also that weather conditions, traffic, and construction quality are all variables to be taken into account. Many roads last well for 8 to 12 years, then exhibit signs of distress and go from good or fair condition to poor/failed condition in the 13th through 16th years.

So, as noted above, a dollar spent on maintaining a good or fair condition road, turns into \$8 to \$10 when trying to reconstruct a poor or failed road. And this, says Matthews, is the basis of pavement management, and the reason for the recommendation of \$17 million expenditure on roads each year for the next ten years, to prevent further deterioration while saving life cycle dollars.

Councilmember Nancy Ford asked about factors which affect deterioration, such as streets with a more northerly exposure, or heavier traffic load, needing higher levels of maintenance. Ford also asked how it's determined what sort of repairs to use. Arvada Matthews said crackseal is a very cost effective preventive measure to keep water from infiltrating the base under the asphalt. Streets Manager Mark Bowman added that traffic is a huge factor in deterioration; the burden of 45,000 cars a day on Ralston

Road, for example, as compared with 40 or 50 car trips a day on some residential streets, results in a lifespan of 8 to 10 years for an arterial street versus 15 to 20 for residential. Crackseal is a proactive way to maintain the roads, then after 8 to 10 years chip seal, followed by milling and overlay at about the 15 year point. This would be ideal, and Bowman said the goal is to do about 10% of the streets network every year in order to be proactive.

Councilmember John Marriott asked about what appeared to be a statistical anomaly, showing an overall pavement rating of about 62 (out of a possible 100) in both 2012 and 2015, yet the graph showing a decline. Matthews explained that, because aging pavement costs more, \$5.5 million won't go as far toward improving the condition as it would have three years ago. (Twelve-year-old poor condition pavement is more costly than ten-year-old poor condition pavement to bring up to fair; so even though they're technically the same thing, they're not going to cost the same amount to maintain or repair.)

Councilmember Dave Jones asked what rating we are shooting for. Matthews said the original goal was 70%--fair to good range overall--but that was found to be too lofty a goal and the goal now is to try to stabilize things where they are.

Councilmember Bob Fifer pointed out the short season for road work, coupled with the public's level of tolerance for cone zones everywhere, and wondered what is the realistic capacity. He asked if it's even technically possible to work on 150 lane miles in one 6-month season, or to comply with the \$16 million recommendation. Mark Bowman agreed that \$16 million worth of road work in one season would be nearly impossible to accomplish, and said he would like to bring Council a more realistic scenario to consider, in February. He also thinks a better approach would be to use multiple contractors--presently only one is used--and ramp up slowly to find what the capacity is.

Mayor Marc Williams remarked that people hate the look of crackseal, but it is a good stopgap measure, prolonging the life of the pavement. Fifer asked if every year we use the full \$5.5 million. Bowman said there is often carryover from year to year because the contractors run out of time without having completed all the repairs.

There will be more discussion on the subject in future workshops.

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Parks Master Plan Update:

We are nearing the end of the process of rewriting the parks master plan for Arvada. A lot of public input and many hours of staff time and work on the part of the consultant, Design Workshop, have resulted in the information being presented to City Council at this meeting. You can see this information here: http://www.arvadarecords.org/councilpacket/current_week/02.B.%20Park,%20Trail%20and%20Open%20Space%20Master%20Plan%20Update.pdf

Landscape architect Meredith Wenskoski of Design Workshop presented information showing that four basic directions grew out of the public meetings and surveys: Community, Parks, Nature, and Wellness. Community means that people are wanting more information about parks and events at parks. People are wanting more parks and also expanded amenities, such as restrooms, at the parks we have. Nature represents a desire for more open space, and wellness refers to the expressed wishes for a more complete trail system with gaps removed.

Arvada has 1,747 acres of parkland and 3,700 acres of open space, as well as 149 miles of trails. Arvada is considered a benchmark leader in the amount of trails.

Wenskoski said there was favorable attention given to the idea of new park types, such as urban park spaces--pocket parks, common greens, pedestrian promenades, etc. Restrooms need to be placed at all community (not neighborhood) and regional parks--an example of a community park is Lake Arbor, and a regional park is something like Long Lake Ranch Park. In addition, restrooms need to go at trail hubs, and Wenskoski said a "Portland-style Loo" needs to go into Olde Town. That would be a freestanding restroom which is hooked up to water and sewer, is not a porta potty, and was implemented, to great success, in Portland, Oregon.

Wellness involves expanding the trail system, completing the gaps, and also reevaluating the uses of trails, for example, examining how they may be used by such modes as electric bikes.

Councilmember McGoff remarked that some thought should be given not just to acres of parkland per 1,000 population, but how those acres are utilized. For example, McGoff said we won't get much more parkland in southeast Arvada, but the transportation could be improved so that people who live in southeast Arvada could have better access to the parks in other areas of town. He also pointed out that it would be very useful on the Design Workshop map of trails, to show the areas where various developers are responsible for providing underpasses or other trail work. McGoff also encouraged Wenskoski to explore possibilities remaining for using our urban areas in a more park-like way, such as is done in New York City and other cities. Times Square is a permanent, full-time park, but some cities block off a street or an area on Sundays, and so it becomes a temporary pedestrian mall for the day.

Wenskoski agreed that there are many types of urban parks--a festival street such as Fillmore in Cherry Creek being one kind, and that sometimes a pilot project can be done; the transit station area might be an ideal location for that, she said.

Wenskoski will be returning with further information in January.

The workshop ended at 7:40.