



Amber Beauchamp <beauchampa@rochesterhills.org>

Fwd: Agenda 0349 Gateways questions

1 message

Leanne Scott <scottl@rochesterhills.org>
To: Amber Beauchamp <beauchampa@rochesterhills.org>

Tue, Jul 25, 2023 at 10:22 AM

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From: **Chris McLeod** <mcleodc@rochesterhills.org>

Date: Mon, Jul 24, 2023 at 11:29 AM

Subject: Re: Agenda 0349 Gateways questions

To: Theresa Mungiolit <mungiolit@rochesterhills.org>, Bill Fritz <fritzb@rochesterhills.org>, Paul Davis <davispa@rochesterhills.org>, Bryan Barnett <barnettb@rochesterhills.org>

Cc: Sara Roediger <roedigers@rochesterhills.org>, Ken Elwert <elwertk@rochesterhills.org>, Mike Viazanko <viazankom@rochesterhills.org>, Leanne Scott <scottl@rochesterhills.org>

Good Morning Theresa

Please see the response below regarding the questions you have raised. Hopefully this provides some insight into the plan and planning process we have undertaken. It is important to remember the plan is 2 parts. The gateway signage portion and the streetscape portion. The gateway signage is to be implemented more short term while streetscape elements will be implemented over time as a part of road projects and private development as appropriate.

- What is the problem we are trying to solve? Letting people know they are in RH? Why do we think signs will help, especially when people are driving 40 mph+ when going past signs that might be blocked by other vehicles? **The placement of gateway signs at strategic locations throughout the City is designed to announce your arrival to the City, to trigger a feeling of pride for those that live and work here. The gateway signs are designed to help brand the city, promoting the City's identity. In regard to the ability to see the signage when traveling, the size and placement of the signs are relative to the roadway on which they are located while being sensitive to the surrounding environment.**
- P7 - mentions private developers. Will this become a standard for real estate development in our community? Are we putting this into the ordinances they need to follow when developing new subdivisions? **The goal would be for the streetscape elements to be implemented as a part of private development. Staff would recommend that the zoning ordinance include these standards or reference these standards, much like the City's Design Guidelines. The document also recognizes that developers may propose similar elements that are determined to be compliant with the intent of the Innovative or Nature design palettes. Any proposed ordinance amendments would need to be vetted by the Planning Commission and City Council and also include the necessary public hearing prior to adoption.**
- P21 - references unsightly overhead utilities - are we going to require utilities be buried in RH? And what about all the trees that are cut to keep them out of wires - it does not relate to this topic but still ugly. **In regard to the burying of utilities, the cost for burying utilities is expensive but as road projects are undertaken the option to bury utilities should be explored as a part of the design process. However, the cost and funding for such will ultimately dictate the ability to bury utilities.**
- P21 - Conclusion -please explain how signs provide an "unforgettable experience"? **Part of the hope in providing gateway signs is to make people remember or take notice of a community, to trigger a feeling. Many people talk about the Auburn Hills signage over I-75, others talk about Oak Park signage over 696. If done correctly, our gateway signs can provide a sense of pride for those that live and work here as well as be used as another example for others as to how the City of Rochester Hills leads by example.**
- P23 - Click here doesn't work **We will have the consultant fix the link. Thank you for bringing it to our attention.**
- Lighting - why not solar lights? What is the ongoing cost of providing electricity to the signs? Where are we putting pathway lights? **Depending on location, solar lighting options may be explored in the future. However, in those locations where lighting is required to ensure safety, solar lighting may not be the best option currently due to the potential for limited charging. Pathway lighting will typically be provided as a part of private development. As a part of a crossing project pathway lighting may be incorporated as appropriate. Costs for illuminated signs will be nominal given a review of the existing costs for illuminating the City's current signage**
- P33 Sign at Walton Blvd and Great Oaks - why? where? **The sign is intended to be located just to the east of the easternmost driveway into the shopping center abutting Great Oaks. The sign is proposed to be located along Walton as you exit downtown Rochester and announce you have entered Rochester Hills due to the number of travelers along Walton, between downtown Rochester, the hospital and OU.**
- Planting options - why not pollinator plants and reduce the need to mow? **Plant types and landscaping schemes were reviewed thoroughly with the city's maintenance staff and changes were implemented based on their review.**

- They feel comfortable with the level of landscape being provided and the maintenance required based on size of planting areas and type of plant material chosen.
- P43 - benches - where? Litter containers - what is the cost to maintain (empty) the trash? Cost to empty litter containers is dependent on location and travel time. Typically litter emptying is done in conjunction with landscape maintenance with a small crew to save on travel time. There are no litter costs in this plan because amenities shown are standards for future reference as development occurs.
 - P51 - mid block crossing - are we encouraging walker to cross in the middle of the street? What safety precautions will be in place besides the striping? What is the cost? There are many places in the city where the pathway ends with out advanced notice to the pedestrian. Are we going to install mid block crossings at each of these spots to allow people to cross? Tienken, Adams and other streets may be a safety hazard for pedestrians to cross mid block. Mid block crossings are a tool utilized to actually help with pedestrian safety, providing a more safe and organized means of crossing roadways, rather than relying on pedestrians, walkers, runners or bikers traveling to the nearest intersection which may be a 1/2 mile away where vehicles often turn right on red before coming to a complete stop, for example. Mid-block crossings already are present on Avon, east of Livernois, Tienken, east of Livernois, Crooks, south of Hamlin, etc. Obviously if a mid block crossing is contemplated, study will need to occur to ensure the mid block crossing can be utilized in a safe manner. The costs for a mid block crossing can vary depending on the road configuration, signalization that may be necessary and any other improvements that would be required to ensure pedestrian and vehicular safety. Much like many of the recommendations of the plan, implementation may occur as a part of a larger road project. If our plan includes the promotion of such design elements, it may open the city to potential additional funding options as a part of the larger road project.
 - P50 - alternatives for crosswalk painting - please explain why? The alternatives for crosswalk provided, are just that, alternatives that may be a desired or a potential option depending on the specific location. These alternative provide further placemaking opportunities within the City. A location such as the Brooklands may provide an opportunity for an "alternative" crosswalk design, or potentially a crosswalk association with OU or RU. Again, these are alternatives for consideration and would be evaluated on a case by case basis.
 - Why the sign site selection? Do we really need 2 signs on Hamlin within 1 mile? How do we put signs on private property or property owned by other road commissions? As part of the year-long evaluation of sign location, type and design, many locations were considered. Given the location of the interchange, the boundary of the City, proximity to I-75, land uses and business in this location and directions of traffic entering the City in this area, it was determined that 2 signs were warranted.
 - Budget - \$750,000 for signs? What is the ongoing cost for electric, maintenance, water for landscaping, etc.? Ongoing electric costs will be minimal, as the signs use lower voltage LED lighting. It is expected year round electric costs will be under \$10k a year (for all sites combined), but that is a rough estimate. Sites will be watered while staff is on-sight, using our watering trucks with the 350 gallon tank (the same process we use to water young trees). There will not be irrigation installed. Grounds Maintenance staffing costs are contained within the PNR 2024 budget request. We estimate approximately 520 - 780 person hours of work during the roughly 26 week vegetation season to maintain these gateways.
 - Staffing - could this money be spent on staff or other city initiatives? Parks doesn't need more staff instead of signs? Other departments are fully staffed and money can be spent on signs? How many staff will be used to monitor/maintain the gateway signs? These funds are already budgeted for City Gateways and Park Signs. If Council votes to change the budget it could be adjusted to other Council priorities. As with Auburn Rd, Grounds Maintenance in the PNR Department will be responsible for Landscaping and sign monitoring, however sign repair/replacement will be handled by DPS. Grounds consists of 6 Full-Time team members and 7 -8 seasonal employees. These sites will be added to Grounds daily/weekly maintenance cycle.
 - Implementation plan - what is the timing for implementation? Will we remove perfectly good signs because we have the budget? Currently there is only one specific gateway sign with the City. That sign was evaluated and is showing signs of deterioration and it is suggested to be removed. The implementation plan proposed at this time is to utilize the current budget allocations and bid the project for implementation in the summer of 2024.
 - Unintended consequences - will all this be considered by Planning when approving developments? Will this be in the official ordinances? Do existing subdivisions need to adhere to this when/if they change the subdivision signs or provide on street lighting? What is the long term financial impact to the city and developers/developments? It is intended that the streetscape elements will be considered as a part of developments. Where lighting, benches, site amenities would normally be provided anyway, City staff will work with developers to implement the appropriate elements of the streetscape plan as a part of the site plan review process. Subdivision signs would not be subject to these standards. If non DTE lighting fixtures are being provided, the city would work with a subdivision to implement lighting that is consistent with the streetscape plan if appropriate. The long term impact should be nominal for developments. As noted, many of these amenities are already being required or provided, the streetscape plan would just guide the appearance of those elements already being provided. The materials chosen for the gateway signage and streetscape amenities were chosen not only for their aesthetic but also their durability and cost effectiveness.

Please let me know if you have any additional questions.

Chris

On Sun, Jul 23, 2023 at 4:17 PM Theresa Mungiolit <mungiolit@rochesterhills.org> wrote:

I have been going over the Gateways and Streetscapes proposal and have many questions.

- What is the problem we are trying to solve? Letting people know they are in RH? Why do we think signs will help, especially when people are driving 40 mph+ when going past signs that might be blocked by other vehicles?
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Thank you for your help in understanding this proposal.

Theresa Mungoli

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