

City of Kewaunee 2015 Street Projects

On October 13th at 5 p.m., the Kewaunee Public Works Committee will be meeting at City Hall to discuss the Harrison and First Street projects. If there are no serious concerns the committee will recommend to the Council a plan for approval. If there are concerns that cannot be addressed or corrected, a special Public Works and Council meeting will be held on October 20th to address these issues and the Council will vote on a project recommendation then. Please contact your councilperson or Public Works Director Charles Peterson if you have any questions.

It is the Council's hope that these "questions and answers" below will help to clarify any concerns you may have.

You mentioned TID, what is a TID district, how is it funded and how can it be used?

A TID, or "Tax Increment District" is an area of property in a community created by a city or village for development or re-development. This district is funded by monies (Tax Increment) otherwise designated for use by the school district, the county, NWTC and the State of Wisconsin. This money can only be used for projects that could be designated "economic development" or repairs within the district that benefits the TID, for example the Old Hamachek property and the project on Harrison Street.

Can some of the TID money be used on the First Street project to help lower the cost?

No. This area of town does not fall within the TID.

Does the city need to reconstruct First Street due to some emergency?

No, there is no emergency that exists. However, due to the condition of the street, traffic, and the fact that the city has repaired the sanitary sewer and water main on many occasions, the council felt it would be in the best interest of the taxpayers to repair the street and its infrastructure now. The council also felt that

regardless of what happens, the street will still need to be reconstructed in the very near future.

Does the City need to widen First Street from Ellis to Lincoln?

No, infrastructure repairs do not require that section of First Street be widened. But due to the safety factor, ease of traffic and minimal additional costs, the council felt that it would be better to widen the street now as part of the project.

Do all the trees in the tree lawn from Ellis to Lincoln Street need to be removed?

Yes and no. Many of the trees on that section of street are as little as one foot from the curb. Those trees within the project area will need to be removed. It would make no sense to take some trees down and leave some trees standing. The City's goal is to keep the street uniform. Again, it would not be practical to reconstruct an entire street and work around existing trees. The new trees being planted will be a species recommended by the DNR for planting within a "tree lawn" area. Property owners will have the opportunity to select the trees that they would like to have replaced in front of their homes using a list provided by the City.

Why are you removing my trees when they are not in the City Right of Way?

Trees on private property would not be removed unless the tree is borderline as to having an effect on sidewalk construction or deemed a safety hazard. If the tree is not in the City right-of-way, the City cannot remove it unless the owner agrees to have it removed and replaced with another. Again, if the tree is dying, dead or a safety hazard, the City encourages you to have it removed. If you have questions or concerns contact the Public Works Director Charlie Peterson at 255-2300.

Could the City just resurface the street to make it easier to drive on?

Yes we could. And that would lower the project costs and save taxpayers a great deal of money right now; however it would still not address the infrastructure problem or the traffic problem. Placing new pavement over bad infrastructure would not be a good idea.

Could the City save money by not replacing the storm sewer?

Yes they could, however the storm sewer in that area is nearly 50 years old and most likely not steel reinforced concrete as it is now. The continual pounding of machinery during construction would most likely damage the existing pipe. The City does not want to run the risk of cutting into a new street to repair 50 year old pipe.

Does the sidewalk need to be replaced?

Because this would be a complete reconstruction of a street, the council felt that it would be more cost efficient and a benefit to the taxpayers in the long run to replace sidewalk now rather than continually repairing or replacing sections down the road. To save money the City would be installing 4' rather than 5' sidewalks.

Will I be able to get to my home?

There will be some limited access when construction starts, however once the curb, apron and sidewalk are poured, it is estimated that you will not be able to use your driveway for approximately 4-5 days. Parking on the road will also be limited.

Will there be parking on both sides of the road once the street is reconstructed?

No, parking will still be only on the East side of the street as it is now.

How much more can I expect to pay on my property taxes?

Because this is a G.O. Bond or (General Obligation Bond) the cost of the entire project will be distributed among all the property tax payers in Kewaunee, as was done on the Ellis, and Miller Street projects. Based on the report by the City's Financial Advisor, it is estimated that the net effective increase to property taxes for the \$3.6 Million Dollar Bond issue will be \$40.98 per \$100,000 of property valuation for 2015. Over the entire 20 year bond issue period, it is estimated that the average increase will be \$56.91 per \$100,000 of property evaluation. Again, these are estimates using a projection of 1% increase in total City wide valuation each year.

Why do I have to pay more on my tax bill, I don't even live on that street?

Projects of this nature are considered a benefit to the entire community; therefore the costs are spread out over all the taxpayers.

Why didn't you give us more of an advanced notice as to how much this was going to cost?

The costs the City received were only "estimated costs". There is no way we can provide you with "actual costs" until the bids are opened.

I am not in agreement with this project and I will not support it, what can I do?

The City Council realizes that not everyone will be in agreement with what will be proposed. Every alderperson wants to hear from their constituents and cares about how this will affect you. Your input is very important to us, but at some point in time the Council will need to make a decision as to how to proceed. Please call your alderperson with any concerns.

Lastly, does the City need to do anything on First Street? Can't we just leave it the way it is for now?

The answer isNO!! The City is not forced to do ANYTHING and your taxes will not increase. We can continually keep repairing the street and its infrastructure if that is what the community wishes. But the fact remains, that at some point in time that street will need to be reconstructed. There is no way to get around that. Moving the project 5 years down the road will not make it any less costly. As a council we are spending your money and we represent you. With the City having the opportunity to obtain financing with low interest rates and the ability to do things within the downtown area to promote economic development, it was decided to proceed with financing so that infrastructure and other improvements could occur with the least impact on taxpayers.

Mayor and City Council
City of Kewaunee