

City of Grant
 2015 Budget Discussion Points
 August 5, 2014 6PM

1. Philosophy of use of reserves or tax increases.
 - a. Risk of levy limits causing future shortages of revenue.
 - b. Risk of future emergency funding/levy limit shortages.

2. Outside forces affecting our levy:
 - a. City of Stillwater fire contract – 14% increase this year.
 - b. MS4 federal mandate \$17,000.
 - c. 2014 levy limited to 2% increase which required us to use reserves to cover the additional projected costs.
 - d. As we sit now, 2% in 2014 and 4.8% in 2015 creates 3.4% average increase.

3. Cost to residents.
 - a. The tax rate is applied against the net tax capacity as calculated by the County based upon state law and the value and classification of all taxable property within the City.
 How we compare to other cities:

2014 Rates	
Grant	14.60%
Dellwood	15.22%
Birchwood	27.01%
Forest Lake	44.65%
Hugo	36.42%
Hugo	33.07%
Mahtomedi	36.41%
Stillwater	58.40%
Stillwater	46.69%
Stillwater	43.77%

- b. Estimated tax impacts of increased levy on average home in Grant:
 Note that the County has not updated the estimates for 2015 and so this is based upon the estimates for 2014. Thus, the actual results will be affected by the fiscal disparity, added property values, legislation concerning property taxes and change is assessed values in Grant. So, this is a very rough estimate and the actual will probably be slightly lower. The jump for this example is the effect of the homestead credit.

c.

Estimated Tax Impact			
Average Home Value(2013)	\$336,500		
2015 Levy Amount	Est. Tax	Increase	%Increase
(Estimated 2014 tax)	464		
\$997,149 or 4% increase	469	5	1.1%
\$1,005,421 or 4.8% increase	488	23	5.0%
\$1,020,000 or 6.4% increase	495	31	6.6%

4. Snow & Ice Removal

See Snow Plowing Discussion and Policy, attached.

Snow and Ice Removal		
Year	Total Amount	4th Quarter Amount
2010	112,003	66,000
2011	69,179	47,000
2012	52,291	23,000
2013	116,988	35,000
2014 ytd	57,671	
Avg 10-13	87,615	42,750

5. Tax appeal costs.

The original petition was filed in 2008, so this has been an on-going battle that finally went to court. The property involved is City Center Plaza, LLC. The City is responsible for the trial fee as outlined by the County's fee schedule. At that time, the County was the City's assessor. If a property were to go to trial now, with Todd as your assessor, he would be responsible for the trial fees for the properties that he is responsible for, which is most of Grant. Todd also said that this is very unusual in this type of community as there are so few commercial properties.

6.

County Road Plans within the City of Grant

The county's 5-year CIP map is online at <http://www.co.washington.mn.us/DocumentCenter/View/2576>, and the plan itself is at <http://mn-washingtoncounty.civicplus.com/DocumentCenter/View/4628>. Beyond our 2014/2015 project on Manning Ave, the only other project shown in Grant is the construction of center left turn lanes near the Gateway Trail bridge, for which we do not show any city contribution on the project detail sheet.

We will be meeting internally in a few weeks to discuss potential projects for the next version of the 5-year CIP (it is updated every year). Some potential projects in Grant that have been discussed in the past have included the following, but there's no guarantee at this time that any of them would be added to the CIP or be built within 5 years:

- Traffic signal at CSAH 12 and Jamaca Ave (CSAH 9), would entail improvements to the south (city) leg such as paving 100 feet or so and 25% city cost share on signal.
- Traffic signal at CSAH 12 and Lake Elmo Ave (CSAH 17), would entail improvements to the north (city) leg such as paving 100 feet or so and 25% city cost share on signal.
- Traffic signal at CSAH 15 and McKusick Road, would likely entail widening of McKusick Road for approximately 600 ft to provide center left turn lanes and right turn lanes, and 25% city cost share on signal.
- Pedestrian bridge or tunnel at Gateway Trail/Jamaca Ave.
- Improvements to TH 36 / Lake Elmo Ave intersection or surrounding frontage roads.
- Center left turn lanes on CSAH 17 at 62nd, 66th, and/or 69th Streets.

The above list is just the ones that I was able to recall off the top of my head, and again there's no guarantee that any of them would be added to the CIP, nor an indication of what year they might be constructed even if they are added. The county typically adopts the new CIP in December of each year. If there are other projects not mentioned here that the City would like us to consider adding to the CIP, this would be an opportune time to suggest them.

Joe Gustafson, PE, PTOE | Transportation Engineer

Direct: 651.430.4351 | joe.gustafson@co.washington.mn.us

Washington County Public Works

11660 Myeron Road North | Stillwater, MN 55082

Main: 651.430.4300 | Fax: 651.430.4350

Snow Plowing Discussion

Resolution No. 2014-07, Snow Plowing Policy – City Engineer Olson advised the purpose of a snow plow policy is to define and outline the City's snow and ice control objectives. Snow and ice control is necessary for routine travel and emergency services. The goal is to provide snow and ice control in a safe and cost-effective manner, keeping in mind safety, budget, personal, and environmental concerns.

City Engineer Olson stated a snow policy was last discussed by the City Council in December, 2011. At that time, the policy was not revised but Council agreed that snow plowing could begin at 2 inches and that priority routes would be removed from the plowing map. He reviewed the snow policy included in the packet for Council discussion.

Mayor Carr noted that not being allowed to push snow in the roadways is per state statute and not a City rule. He stated the City has never had an official snow policy before.

Council Member Bohnen stated that part of the reason for the policy is to make sure everyone is aware of the City's snow removal practise and be clear about what is expected from the plowing contractors. He stated he has had people frustrated with how the City handles snow plowing.

Mr. Hershel Weisberg, 10725 Kimbro, came forward and stated he previously wrote a letter to the City Council regarding his plowing concerns. He stated school busses are getting stuck and he is very concerned that in the last couple of years roads are not be cleared in a timely manner.

Council Member Bohnen stated the budget for snowplowing last year was \$100,000 and \$116,000 was spent. The Contractors are doing what the City is asking of them. Per the budget, the City cannot afford to clear all roads twice. It takes about nine hours for the entire plowing route. There are 78 cul-de-sacs which take a large amount of plowing time. Unless the City commits more funding the plowing situation will not change.

Council Member Huber raised the question of the contractor even investing more in equipment with the City's limited budget. He stated it seems as though timing may be an issue.

Council Member Bohnen moved to adopt Resolution No. 2014-07, as presented. Council Member Lobin seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

Renewal of Snow Plowing Contract, KEJ Enterprises – City Engineer Olson advised a snow removal contract extension with KEJ Enterprises is attached for Council consideration. This contract will extend the existing snow plow contract through April, 2017. The current snow plowing contract is scheduled to expire in April, 2014. He reviewed the proposed new pricing for the extended contract.

Council Member Bohnen advised KEJ does utilize some of the other City contractors for snow removal when necessary. Those contractors bill the City directly. He stated he would like the City to continue using KEJ for snow plowing services.

Council Member Bohnen moved to approve the Snow Plowing Contract, as presented. Council Member Huber seconded the motion. Motion carried unanimously.

CITY OF GRANT
Resolution No. 2014-07
Snow Plowing Policy

It is the policy of the City of Grant that City roads will be plowed and passable in a timely fashion based on the budgeted tools available to the City. Snow and ice control operations will be conducted only when weather conditions do not endanger the safety of personnel and equipment. For larger snowfall events, it may be necessary for the City, or its contractors, to suspend plowing operations to allow personnel adequate time for rest. Operations may also be suspended for extreme/severe weather conditions, limited visibility, or equipment limitations. The City shall utilize its discretion in directing plowing activities and shall consult with its contractors to determine whether plowing and clearing activities are appropriate.

Generally, the City will begin plowing upon confirmation of two (2) inches of snowfall. For smaller snowfall events (less than 4 inches), the City may wait until the snowfall has stopped prior to the start of plowing and clearing operations.

Based upon site conditions, the City may:

1. Prioritize snow plowing and ice control routes.
2. Complete snow plowing and ice control routes based on weather conditions and forecast.
3. Use equipment appropriate to the condition of the roads and severity of snow/ice event.

Residents are reminded that Grant is a rural residential city with agricultural fields, which encourage snow drifting. Regardless of the extent of plowing and clearing, residents are encouraged to take great caution in traveling roads which are bordered by large agricultural plots of open land.

Right-of-way

The intent of the right-of-way is to provide room for snow storage, private utilities, signage, and other City uses. However, mailboxes and newspaper receptacles are required within this area. Other private structures are not allowed.

Mailbox Repair

Mailboxes and posts should be constructed sturdily enough to withstand the impact of snow and ice from a plow.

The City will compensate a property owner up to \$50 to repair a damaged mailbox only if it is the result of City plow equipment hitting the mailbox. Damage resulting from the impact of snow and ice from the plow is the responsibility of the property owner.

Trash & Recycle Bins

The City will assume no responsibility for damage to trash or recycling containers. Containers awaiting pickup should be at least four (4) feet beyond the edge of the roadway.

Snow Removal from Driveways

City residents are reminded that it is unlawful to plow snow from driveways into or across city, county, and/or state roads. This is a violation of Minnesota Statue 160.2715. Pushing snow across roadways produces conditions that are dangerous to public safety.

Adopted this ____ day of _____, 2014 by resolution of the Grant City Council.