

Memorandum 13-007 Main Street and Sterling Intersection

Memorandum ID: 13-007

Memorandum Status: No Status

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TO: Mayor Wythe and Homer City Council
FROM: Walt Wrede
SUBJECT: Main St. / Sterling Intersection
DATE: January 9, 2013

The Primary topic of discussion at the Committee of the Whole meeting on January 14th is the Main St. / Sterling Highway intersection. The purpose of scheduling a discussion on this topic is to give the Council an opportunity to exchange ideas and information before important action items are scheduled at future meetings.

As you know, the Council has had many conversations about this intersection in the past and has adopted several resolutions on the topic. However, movement on improvements here has been difficult for a variety of reasons including 1) insufficient funds 2) changing designs and cost estimates, 3) changing circumstances with respect to funding sources and availability, and 4) the fact the City received a Legislative grant for work at the intersection of two state roads. Circumstances have changed again and hence this discussion.

Two issues have emerged in the past few months which require Council consideration. First, DOT/PF has obtained funding in the amount of \$2.8 Million to make safety improvements at this intersection. The money can be used for either a roundabout or a traffic signal. The final decision will be based upon design, the permitting environment, and cost estimates. DOT/PF prefers a roundabout but doubts that there will be enough money because of grade considerations and the necessary land acquisitions. Planning and design can begin in 2013. It should be noted that there is also funding for a four way stop flashing signal similar to the one that exists at Lake and Pioneer for the intersection at Main and Pioneer. Second, Katie has confirmed that the \$ 2 Million Legislative Grant the City received for this project expires on June 30, 2013. The City has the option of asking the Commerce Department for a one year extension or seeking to re-appropriate the money to other City priorities.

The City will have to make some decisions relatively quickly on how it would like DOT/PF to proceed, and perhaps more importantly, what it wants to do with the \$ 2 Million. It appears as though the options are:

- Use the money to supplement the funding DOT/PF has secured to insure that a suitably sized and designed roundabout is constructed at this location.
- Use the money to make improvements to Main St. itself.
- Re-appropriate the money to other priority City projects. For example, the money could be applied to projects like the Harbor Masters Office and the Skyline Fire Station, thus knocking off two priorities on the CIP list.

Each of these options has pros and cons and we will be prepared to discuss them at the meeting. The state traffic engineer will be invited to participate also, either by phone or in perso

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